



Village of Croton on Hudson
Police Department

1 Van Wyck Street
Croton on Hudson N.Y. 10520
(914) 271-5177 Voice (914) 271-3916 Fax

John H. Nikitopoulos
Chief of Police

2021 Department Annual Report

Mayor, Board of Trustees and Village Manager:

The Croton Police Department provides public safety twenty-four (24) hours per day, three hundred & sixty-five (365) days per year. We are a full service, community-oriented Police Department approved for twenty-one (21) full-time Sworn Police Officers, currently staffed at twenty (20) Officers including myself. The Department has one (1) full-time Police Dispatcher, one (1) full-time Parking Enforcement Officer, one (1) part-time Parking Enforcement Officer and, four (4) School Crossing Guards. We currently maintain five (5) crossing guard posts with the assistance of our full-time Parking Enforcement Officer assisted by our Patrol staff when needed. Additionally, the Department employs two to five (2 to 5) Seasonal Park Rangers. This year, we employed three (3) due to seasonal needs.

The Department currently consists of two (2) divisions: The Patrol Division and the Detective /Youth Division.

This year, all Police Department personnel (including myself) participated in Unified In-Service Training at the Westchester County Police Academy that is run by the Westchester Department of Public Safety.

This training included:

Day 1: Firearms Training, which consisted of firearms safety and maintenance, and on and off duty weapons requalification.

Day 2: Juvenile justice, domestic violence and use of force.

Day 3: Felony stops (Lecture & Practical), legal updates, CPR, first aid and OSHA review.

Day 4: Supervisor training (supervisors only), Unified Response Team training, report writing and reviewing, and mental health and leadership thought process.

The members of this Department also participated in other training throughout the year:



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Procedural Justice Training, DCJS (Department of Criminal Justice Services) curriculum. The course is an evidence-based program by academic institutions.

Procedural justice refers to the idea of fairness in the processes that resolve disputes and allocates resources in policing. It is a concept that, when embraced, promotes positive organizational change and bolsters better relationships between police departments and the community they serve. Procedural justice speaks to four principles, often referred to as the four pillars: Voice of Others (listen), Neutrality (be fair), Respectful Treatment (be respectful) and Trustworthiness (fair and transparent process). Fifteen (15) out of twenty (20) Officers completed this training in 2021 and others are registered in class this year.

Community Resource Officers Course (CRO): The Community Resource Officer is a new concept in community policing. Like the School Resource Officer, it creates a new vision of police officers within the community, establishes proactive ideas to promote a community/police bond and breaks down the barriers and misconceptions of policing in community settings. This course was designed to train officers in community minded policing and to promote police in a new light through positive and collaborative ideas. It creates bonds between law enforcement and community members. The course furthers officers' ability to become welcome leaders within the community. Officers Jeremy Davis & Nicholas DiTomasso were selected to participate in this new course due to their keen interest in developing better community relations and new ideas to foster community outreach. They attended a weeklong 40 hours of training. The course topics included: Implementing and Promoting Community Concepts, Community Policing, Guarding the Guardians Through Effective Leadership, Implicit Bias Training, De-escalation Techniques, Understanding Mental Health/Special Needs, Presenting Skills, Community Skills, Social Media Crimes and Tools, Record Keeping/Activity Reports, Developing Community Events and Currents Events in the Community.

School Resource Officer (SRO): Officer Kevin Ward was selected to attend this course due to his interest in educating students through courses such as D.A.R.E., Halloween Safety and, Bicycle Safety, as well as other forms of interaction and teaching within our schools. He attended a weeklong 40 hours of training. This course certified him as an SRO. This class included all of the above information, and he learned ways to work with school administration and staff to develop positive outcomes for students and parents. Although we currently do not have any SRO's working within our local schools, I felt that the training was justified due to our recent focus on Police Reform/Community Policing. I believe that building strong relationships and collaborating with school administration, staff and students, as well as their families, will be instrumental in



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bringing the schools, the community, and the Police Department closer together. I plan on sending more Officers this year to both of the above-mentioned trainings.

Unified Response Team Training: Sgt. Thomas Leonard and P.O. Nicholas DiTomaso have attended Unified Training. These Officers are part of a county-wide team that are trained to work together with Officers from other county agencies. This team can and will work as one unit when deployed in an emergency throughout the county. During 2021, they were utilized on several occasions.

Child Passenger Safety Technicians: This Department sent three (3) Officers to complete re-certification this year. The Croton Police Department currently has four (4) Officers, two (2) Sergeants and two Patrol Officers, trained and certified as Child Passenger Seat Technicians. By appointment, they will conduct and assist members of the public with the proper installation of child safety seats by inspecting them while explaining to parents and caregivers the proper selection, installation and use of car seats, booster seats, as well as the proper use of seatbelts. We also have several safety seats on hand, purchased through a state grant program, to provide to those that need assistance due to financial restraints.

Practical De-Escalation Tactics and Critical Decision-Making Instructors Course: This course covered the following training: Situational Assessment, De-escalation Methods, Evaluation Methods, Temper Control, Tactical Reasoning, Tactical Communication, Articulation, Report Writing and more. Sgt. Thomas Levins & Sgt. Thomas Leonard attended this course and are certified as General Topic Instructors within this Department. They are certified to teach other members of this Department on these course topics and have brought back valuable techniques and training for our Department.

911 Diversion Training: This training is a collaborative effort by Westchester County among the Department of Emergency Services, Department of Public Safety and Department of Community Mental Health. This training helps Desk Officers and Dispatchers identify and refer qualifying non-emergency mental health-related calls for immediate connection to a crisis counselor with the option for a mobile mental health responder or co-response with emergency services. To date ninety percent (90 %) of this Department has now attended this training.

In addition to the above-mentioned training, there are a number of mandated training courses for all members of the Department. All personnel are required to take these



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courses annually. These include Firearms & Taser, First Aid, De-escalation, Hazardous Communication, Bloodborne Pathogens, Harassment Prevention and Sexual Harassment.

Civilian Complaints: During 2021, in conjunction with, and under the guidance of, the Police Advisory Committee, this Department researched and re-wrote our Civilian Complaint Form. This form is now on-line in both English and Spanish and includes an info-graphic to assist civilians in completing this form. To date, this form has not been utilized, although some complaints have been received via e-mail. These complaints consist of the following: one complainant thought the Officer was being too intrusive because they were asked for their date of birth; one involved a Police SUV speeding on Quaker Bridge Road and into Black Rock Park; one involved an Officer asking questions during a traffic stop and then issuing a summons; one was a concern from a parent that they hadn't received a return call after calling in a complaint; and one complaint about Police Brutality (Verbal). I immediately notified the Village Manager, Mayor and Deputy Mayor of this last complaint. After a thorough investigation, this complaint was not able to be confirmed.

Other civilian complaints that were directed to the Police Department were primarily complaints about speeding throughout the Village.

Civilian appraisal: During 2021 we received numerous letters of support from members of the community. Many were directed at individual Officers for their assistance while performing their jobs. In one (1) case, a party had just been arrested and processed by this Department. Upon his release, he asked the Desk Sergeant for a piece of paper and pen. He then wrote me a note explaining that the Officers involved in his arrest and arraignment "displayed the highest order of professionalism."

Community Events: During 2021, the Croton Police Association sponsored three (3) events: Cones with a Cop, Pumpkin Painting at the Municipal Building and our 2nd Annual Toy Drive with Croton Caring. Officer Jeremy Davis also worked in conjunction with CHHS administrators and had a large amount of student participation/volunteers. Officers also participated at Fall Fest in Vassallo Park and had great interactions with local residents and students alike.

Drug Take Back Day: The Croton Police Department has continued to take part in the National D.E.A. Drug Take Back Day. We are now partnered with the Croton Rotary Club which graciously stepped in to assist since the Croton Coalition has ended. There are two (2) events held each year, In addition, we maintain a prescription drug drop-off box located in the lobby of Police Headquarters. The Detective Division is in charge of



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emptying, securing, logging and the future disposal of all drugs deposited in the box. There are two (2) events a year. The National Prescription Drug Take Back Day addresses a crucial public safety and public health issue. According to the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 9.7 million people misused prescription pain relievers, 4.9 million people misused prescription stimulants, and 5.9 million people misused prescription tranquilizers or sedatives in 2019. The survey also showed that a majority of misused prescription drugs were obtained from family and friends, often from the home medicine cabinet. The DEA's Take Back Day events provide an opportunity for Americans to prevent drug addiction and overdose deaths.

Police & School Resource Training: In previous years, the Croton Police Department administered the D.A.R.E. program in conjunction with the school district. The Croton Police Department currently teaches a new version that was designed in conjunction with school administrators and teaching staff. This program is taught to the 5th and 6th grade students at PVC Middle School. It touches on many important topics that students have the potential to face on an everyday basis such as bullying, stress and stressful situations, risks and consequences, good decision making, and the health effects of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping. This year, the programs new design has been shortened to a five (5) week program per grade. The new 8th grade program will be held later in the school year and will be a transitional program to assist students moving from middle school into high school. It will cover many of the same topics as a refresher as they may become more exposed to tobacco products, alcohol, drugs and peer pressure. This program not only teaches the students about all these important and necessary topics, but it also helps build a strong and trusting relationship between the students and the police.

Accreditation Program: During 2021 this Department continued moving towards the accreditation application process. We have our new policies and procedure manual completed and combined all our smaller evidence holding rooms into two (2) separate rooms in one (1) central location. While combining these locations, we purged, returned and disposed of old evidence, some of which was over twenty-five (25) years. We are continuing our construction improvements to meet the safety standards needed for accreditation and assure the safety of our employees and members of the public. On March 30, 2022 I have three Supervisors scheduled to attend a preparation training class that will assist us in our final steps prior to completing and submitting our application. Once our application is completed and submitted this Department's work will/may intensify prior to final approval, which may take up to a year.

The New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services Accreditation Program, is comprised of a set of standards developed to further enhance the capabilities of law enforcement agencies and certify those departments that meet or exceed best policing



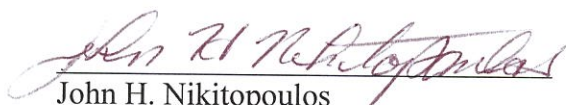
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practices as defined by the State of New York. Our mission is to strive for professional integrity within this Police Department.

<u>Description</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Total Calls for Service	4,065
Total Cases Investigated	216
Total Vehicle and Traffic Tickets	882
Total Parking Tickets	1,992
Total Juvenile Arrested	1
Total Juvenile Encounters	23
Total Persons Arrested	109
Total Motor Vehicles Accidents	187
Total Fire and Ambulance Calls	731
Total Residents Fingerprinted (non-criminal)	7
Total Courtesy Child Safety Seat Inspections	10
Total Vehicle Lock outs.	71


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Date MARCH 14, 2022