

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

RHODE ISLAND CAPITOL POLICE

ANNUAL REPORT

2020



Prepared by: Chief Joseph T. Little, Jr.

**Rhode Island Capitol Police Headquarters
One Capitol Hill, Suite 200
Providence, RI. 02908**



RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
Rhode Island Capitol Police
Headquarters



A State Accredited Agency

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Colonel James M. Manni
Director, Department of Public Safety
Superintendent, Rhode Island State Police

Joseph T. Little, Jr.
Chief of Police
Rhode Island Capitol Police

Rhode Island Capitol Police

2020 Annual Report

Overview

The Rhode Island Capitol Police was established in 1974 so that the Rhode Island State House would have a police force unique unto itself and trained to deal with its specific security needs. Today, the Capitol Police are assigned to sixteen facilities including, the Pastore Complex in Cranston, Rhode Island to provide police and security services.

The mission of the Rhode Island Capitol Police is to provide basic protection for life and property, enforce all laws and ordinances, maintain order at demonstrations and public events, prevent and repress crime, detect violations of the law, and apprehend violators at the Rhode Island State Capitol and annexes, properties contained therein, and the other state buildings, grounds and premises where they maintain security responsibilities.

In addition, the Capitol Police ensure the safety and security of the general officers, state legislators, judges, state employees, and members of the public who work in and visit these public buildings. Officers operate the metal detectors and x-ray machines at the entrances to all the courthouses, the State House, and certain state agencies. They are responsible for the screening, and if necessary, searching employees and visitors entering these public buildings. They not only patrol these facilities to maintain a safe environment, they also respond to calls for service to investigate criminal, domestic, traffic and parking related incidents that occur on and/or within the state properties and facilities they patrol.

The Capitol Police is an umbrella agency under the Department of Public Safety that was established in June of 2009. Our Commissioner is State Police Colonel James M. Manni. The Chief of the Capitol Police is Joseph T. Little, Jr., who was appointed to the agency in August of 2010 by then Commissioner Colonel Brendan P. Doherty.

Chief Little is responsible to plan, develop, direct, supervise, and administer the operation of the Capitol Police force and to provide policing and protection for all of buildings, grounds and premises where they maintain security responsibilities, against the ordinary hazards of trespass, theft, fire, and damage, and to do related work as required.

COVID-19:

In March of 2020, the COVID-19 virus began a rapid progression in Rhode Island as it did for the rest of the country. As a result, Governor Gina Raimondo issued several Executive Orders pursuant to State Law. Included in these orders were the closure of numerous state buildings to the public. Similarly, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Paul Suttell, also issued an Executive Order closing the courts to the public. That order was later modified, and the courts reopened with strict limited access to those individuals who had scheduled judicial matters pending.

Because of the pandemic, this agency had to adjust its operations focusing on security duties and shifting our focus to COVID screening at many of our buildings. As a result of this limited access, readers of this report will note a 70% decrease in the number of screenings at our building, a 90% decrease in traffic tickets issued, while our calls for service slightly increased as compared to 2019.

As an agency, we have fared well in terms of members who have contracted the COVID-19 virus. In December of 2020, most officers had received the first of two Moderna shots for this virus. I am proud of the men and women of this agency for their commitment to our mission with their flexibility in changing duties and for coming to work continuously during this unprecedented and difficult time.

State Accreditation:

This agency became accredited through the Rhode Island Accreditation Commission in June of 2016. The entire process began in June of 2013 when I designated Lt. Joseph Habershaw as

the Accreditation Manager for the agency. We then began the arduous process of reviewing all of our operations and developing policies based on 204 state standards. As a result, we developed one hundred and twenty policies based on one hundred eighty-nine (189) standards that directly applied to this agency.

A frequent question that is asked is what is the benefit of being an accreditation agency? The answer is that it improves the delivery of law enforcement and security services to the community we serve. It also provides transparency and accountability in our day-to-day operations as we operate to the highest industry standards.

As difficult as preparing for accreditation was, once we became accredited, we began the process to collect “proofs” for our files for a group of accreditors who came in to review them in early 2019. These proofs verify to them that we are following and training to our established policies. As part of this process, they also seek input from members of the public and other law enforcement agencies.

As a result of that review, we received our first reaccreditation in October of 2019. We are now in the continuing process of reviewing our operations for our next reaccreditation that will be scheduled for 2022.

Twenty for 2020 Campaign

On June 25, 2020, Chief Little along with forty-seven (47) other member Rhode Island Chiefs of Police signed the pledge committing to the principles in the Rhode Island Police Chiefs Twenty for 2020 campaign. This campaign provides twenty (20) promises for our various communities in the State that we are committed to, which broadly fall into four categories:

1. Training
2. Transparency
3. Communications
4. Human Rights

These principles provide our communities with the best police practices to better serve all of our communities and the State of Rhode Island. While this agency is limited in some of these promises due to our specific security mission, we are nevertheless committed to all these pledges to the extent that they apply to our agency. The entire document can be found at

[Twenty for 2020 \(ripolicechiefs.org\)](https://www.ripolicechiefs.org)



Capitol Police by the Numbers 2020



Calls for Service

The Capitol Police logged 34,591 calls for service. This is up from 31,091 calls for service in 2019. These calls for service represent officer-initiated calls as well as calls from members of the public. In addition to all proactive security related patrols, this agency serves as the primary responders to all calls for emergencies at our locations. Any serious calls which require lengthy investigations or serious arrests are handled by the State Police.

Traffic Enforcement/Citations

The agency also issued eight (8) traffic citations which - due to COVID - was down from seventy-two (72) citations last year. These citations were for various parking enforcement issues including handicap parking and fire lane parking issues in state parking lots. Six (6) were paid by the violators, one was dismissed in court due to a good driving record and one was dismissed.

Screening

The State does not allow weapons or firearms into any state facility. All Capitol Police Officers have received specialized training and undergo biannual testing for the operation of the scanners and magnetometers. This is done to ensure that everyone who works and visits these facilities can do so in an unfettered and safe environment. The agency also screens all mail and packages that come into the State House.

The numbers for entrants for 2020 are as follows:

	Archway Counts 2019	Archway Counts 2020
State House	109,237	24,644
DHS – Elmwood Ave	226,332	47,465
Courts	354,124*	126,588
TOTALS	689,693	198,697

The archway counts represent the number of visitors who came into each building. In 2020, The agency screened 198,697 people who entered those facilities where there is full screening. As noted earlier in the report, we screened 70% fewer entrants than in 2019. *Please note that the numbers provided by the courts are partial figures due to a collection error.

Professional Standards

The cornerstone of any professional police agency is a vibrant and robust method of internal review, oversight and accountability. The professional standards duties are overseen by Captain Donald Sousa. This unit also investigates complaints against Capitol Police Officers that are received by the agency from members of the public. By policy, after a thorough review, the incidents are closed in the following manner:

- Sustained – Evidence sufficient to Prove the allegation
- Not Sustained – Insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation(s)
- Exonerated – Incident occurred but was lawful or proper
- Unfounded – Allegation is false or not-factual
- Policy Failure – Flaw in policy caused the problem

As part of our internal controls, we also compile a quarterly sick time review where we monitor and track member’s use of sick time for any type of patterned abuse or early warning signs. The breakdown in numbers for this year is as follows:

	Number of Complaints	Sustained	Not Sustained	Exonerated	Unfounded	Policy Failure	UOF Review
Citizen Complaint	4	0	2	1	1		
Internal Review	22	16	4	1	1		0

Any complaints that are sustained can result in progressive discipline from an informal counseling, a formal counseling, an oral reprimand, a written reprimand, a suspension, or a Last Chance Agreement and termination.

In 2019, the following counseling(s)/discipline(s) were imposed:

Counseling	Oral Reprimand	Written Reprimand	Suspension	Last Chance Agreement	Termination
7	5	2	1	0	1

In 2020 there were no complaints of racial bias lodged against officers. In addition, five, (5) members of the agency were recognized for superlative activity with the awarding of eight (5) Letters of Acknowledgement.

Training

In accordance with Rhode Island General law 11-47-15.3, all sworn members of the department are qualified pursuant to statute and POST approval, with pistol and shotgun. These courses included reduced light firing, moving targets, use of cover, hand drills and close quarter firing. Additionally, all officers reviewed the agency’s Use of Force policies and were tested in all the less lethal force options. All officers are also certified in CPR, First Aid and Narcan certification from the Department of Health.

Using PowerDMS software, every Capitol Police officer reviewed all of the agencies policies including, workplace harassment, mental health, blood borne pathogens, criminal intelligence, impartial policing, records/ public information and social networking. Officers were also tested in many of these policies including legal updates, 4th amendment issues and accreditation.

The agency also sent several officers to various specialty training programs either to outside locations or remotely by computer.

TRAINING DATE	TRAINING COURSE OF STUDY	OFFICERS ATTENDING
Jan 14	NEOGOV for Supervisors	4
Feb. 3	Cyber Security Training	48 (Department)
Feb. 5	Physical Assessment Training	2
March 9	Competency Based Training	1
March 16	Risk Management & Policy Development	1
April 1-2	Medical Preparedness and Bomb Response	1
July	Implicit Bias	48 (Department)
August 13	Taser Instructor	4
August 31	Handcuffing Instructor	2
September 1	OC Instructor	2
October	ICS 100/700	19
November	Quick Clot Belt Tourniquet	48 (Department)
	Total	180

PASTORE COMPLEX:

On September 5, 2019 the agency temporarily assigned two (2) Capitol Police Officers to the Pastore Complex. The Pastore complex is in Cranston on approximately 325 acres of land that has 35 buildings that provide office space for a variety of state office facilities. These include the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Department of Labor & Training, the Department of Business Regulation, the Executive Offices of Health & Human Services, the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals, the Department of Human Services, the Healthcare Exchange, Office of the Child Advocate, Governor's Commission on Disabilities, Fire Code Appeals Board, Labor Hearing Board, Traffic Tribunal, Parole Board, Department of Corrections, Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner, Department of Children Youth & Families, and the Eleanor Slater Hospital Network.

The Capitol Police substation is in the Department of Motor Vehicles and officers respond to calls for service at these facilities. Officers assigned to the campus work with the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) personnel and staff at many of these facilities to ensure the safety and security of the building. In 2020, which was our first full year on the campus, Capitol Police Officers logged four thousand, seven hundred ninety-six (4796) calls for service.

AGENCY STAFFING:

The Capitol Police currently has an authorized FTE strength of 51 members. This year, Sergeant Reginald Packer retired from the agency after serving the State for 21 years. Prior to that time, he served the Town of Lincoln as a police officer for 20 years and retired as a Lieutenant. We wish Sergeant Packer well in his well-deserved retirement.

His replacement is Sergeant Dennis Charbonneau who was promoted on December 6, 2020. Sergeant Charbonneau has been with this agency for 8 years, having retired from the East Providence Police Department at the rank of Captain.

Currently, we have fifty active members including the Chief of Police, one Captain, one Lieutenant, three Sergeants and an Administrative Assistant to the chief. The Chief, the Captain and the Administrative Assistant are non-union positions.

The supervisory staff of the Capitol Police is as follows:

Chief Joseph T. Little, Jr.

Captain Donald J. Sousa, Jr.

Lieutenant Joseph P. Habershaw

Sergeant Robert D. Brown, Jr.

Sergeant David Sweeting

Sergeant Dennis Charbonneau

Mrs. Edina Zuena, Administrative Assistant to the Chief

Patrol Officers (43)

The Table of Organization listing the disbursement of personnel is on the following page.

**Table of Organization
Rhode Island Capitol Police**

