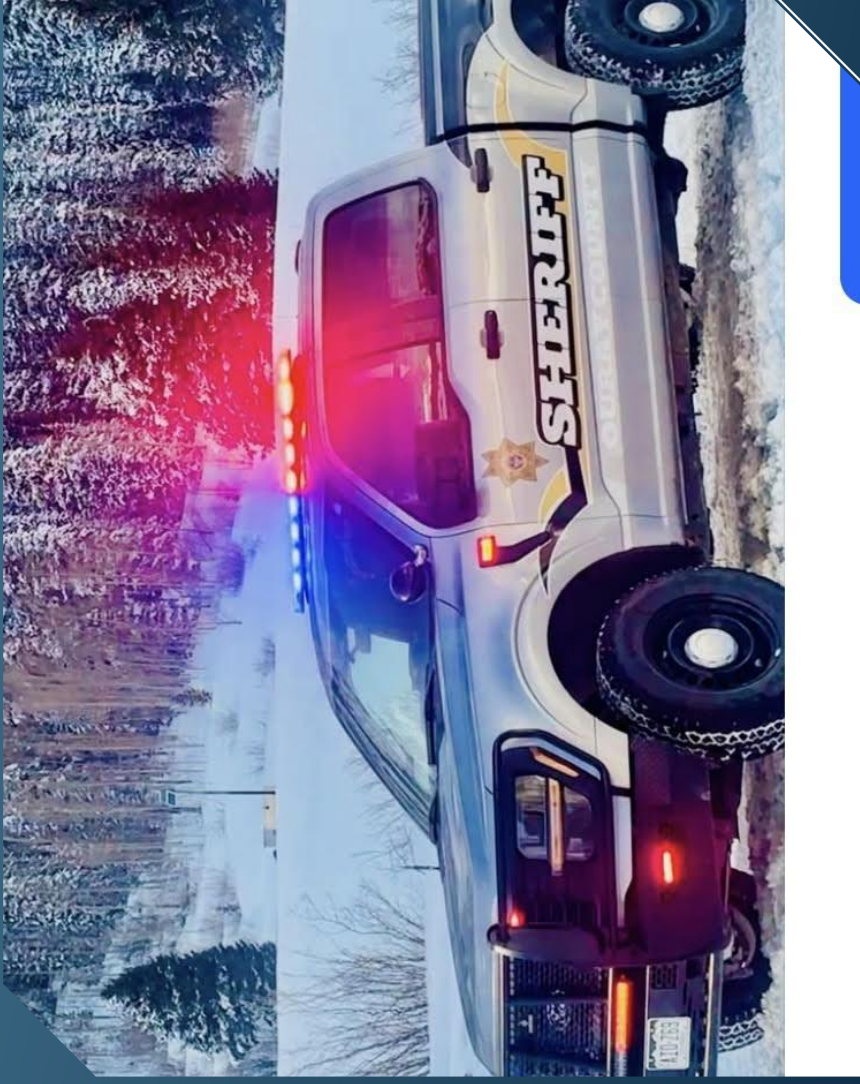


2024 Ouray County
Sheriff's Office
year-end report



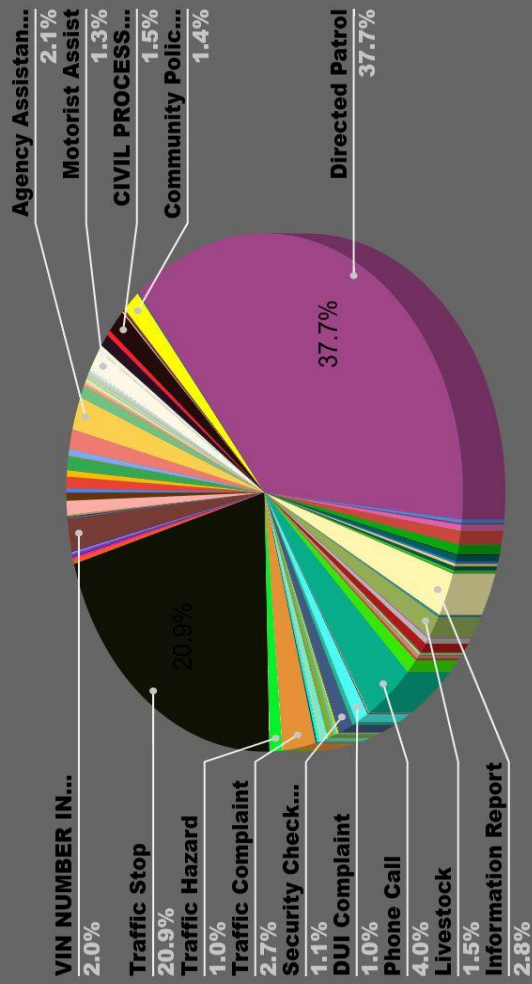
As we close out 2024, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on the many achievements and milestones the Ouray County Sheriff's Office has reached this year. Our success is a reflection of the hard work, dedication, and commitment of our team to serve and protect this incredible community

Growing Our Team

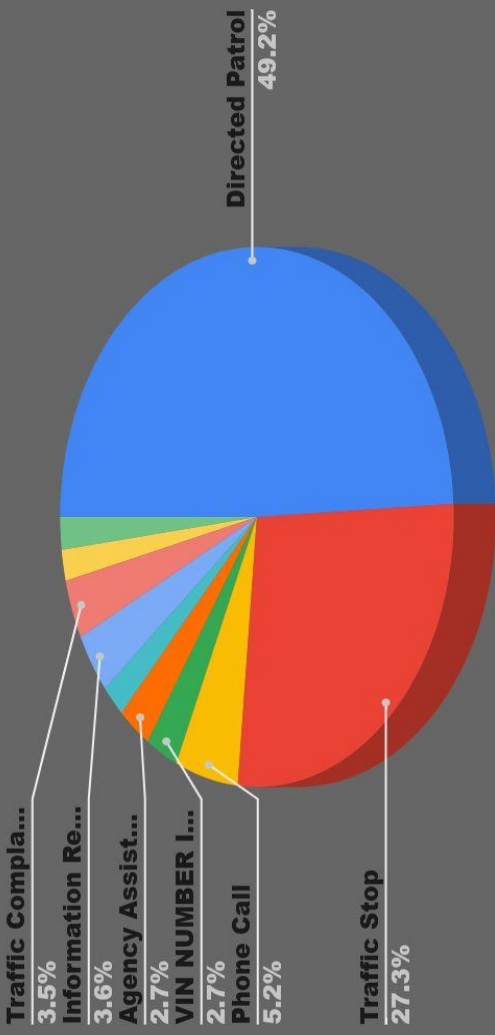
This year, we proudly added two deputies to our ranks, allowing us to respond to calls more efficiently and effectively. With additional personnel, we've reduced response times and expanded our coverage, ensuring we are available when and where the community needs us most. We saw an increase in calls for service in 2024 of 25.91% from 2023. In summary, the additional personnel have been key in serving our county.

	2023	2024	%Change
Total Calls for Service	6655	8379	25.91%

2024 Overall Call Nature by Percentage



Top 10 Calls for Service



Investing in Our Team

This year, we prioritized training and professional development for our deputies and sergeants, ensuring they are equipped with the skills and knowledge to perform their duties at the highest level. We sent personnel to a variety of top-notch programs, including:

- **FBI-LEEDA Leadership Training**, strengthening the leadership and decision-making capabilities of our team.
- **Advanced Interview and Interrogation Techniques**, enhancing our ability to gather accurate information during investigations.
- **Desert Snow Drug Interdiction Training**, providing tools to identify and combat illegal drug trafficking.
- **Standardized Field Sobriety Test (SFST) Training**, refining our ability to address impaired driving on our roadways.
- **NISMART (National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Throwaway Children)** training, improving our response to cases involving vulnerable youth.
- **Working with Individuals with Disabilities**, ensuring compassionate and informed interactions with all members of our community.
- **Basic Homicide Detective Course**, Investigative level training to enhance skill set on death investigations.
- **Level Up Mental Health Conference** is designed to strengthen bonds between responders and provide the support and knowledge needed to do vital work.
- **Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance (COVA)**, training aimed to better serve victims of crime.
- **Sexual Assault and Intimate Partner Investigation**, scenario-based training designed to teach Law Enforcement how to better interview and investigate allegations of abuse.
- **Mandatory In-Service training in driving, firearms, and Defensive tactics. All are perishable skills; we cover policy and practical training in each discipline.**
- **First Aid/CPR and AED training.**

These and many other training programs have enhanced our team's ability to serve Ouray County effectively and compassionately. A total of **1355.45** training hours was completed by the Ouray County Sheriff's Office deputies and staff.

Engaging with Our Youth

One of our biggest priorities is community outreach, particularly with our youth. This year, we partnered with the Ridgway and Ouray Schools to teach essential safety programs, including:

- **Internet Safety and Situational Awareness.** These programs empower students to make informed, safe decisions in their everyday lives. Additionally, we have been actively involved with Ouray EMS, assisting with a
- **First Responder** class at the Ouray School. This involves talking with students about first-responder safety and roleplaying in first-responder medical scenarios.
- **Mock Crash** In May of 2024, the Sheriff's Office actively participated in a Mock Crash at the Ouray County Fairgrounds. This is a full-scale exercise designed to educate students from Ridgway and Ouray Schools, grades 8-12, about the dangers of driving while under the influence of drugs and alcohol.
- **Shop with a Cop** In December of 2024, members of the Sheriff's Office participated in a program that helps provide holiday gifts for children and allows them to pick out gifts for their family members, for some kids these may be the only gifts they receive.
- **National Night Out** On August 6, 2024, we participated in an annual event that aims to build community and strengthen police/first responder-community relations.

- **Additionally,** our collaboration with the Victim Advocate program has allowed us to introduce new initiatives to support and educate both students and families on important topics related to **personal safety** and **well-being**.



Prison with a cop



As Undersheriff, I have taken on additional rewarding tasks to stay involved with partner organizations, including:

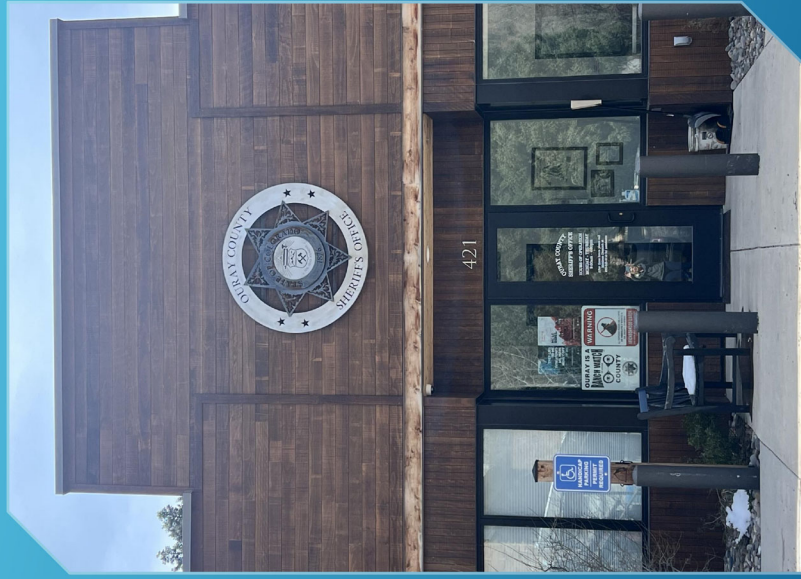
- Teaching at both the Technical College of the Rockies (Delta Police Academy) and the Western Colorado Law Enforcement Academy (Montrose)
- Serve on the Legislative Committee for the County Sheriffs of Colorado
- Served as the Vice President of the Western Colorado Peace Officers Association
- Serve on the 7th Judicial Community Corrections Board
- Worked with Horsefly Fire to obtain portable radios via donation from the Mesa County Sheriff's Office
- Serve on the West Region POST Board
- Facilitated the Ouray County Sheriff's Office Back Country Committee

As we move into 2025, we remain committed to serving Ouray County with integrity, professionalism, and compassion. Our team will continue to grow, improve, and work closely with the community to ensure the safety and security of everyone who lives, works, and visits here. On behalf of the Ouray County Sheriff's Office, thank you for your support and trust throughout this past year. It is an honor to serve you, and we look forward to continuing to protect and support our beautiful community in the years to come.



Divisions of the Ouray County Sheriff's office

- ❖ PATROL
- ❖ INVESTIGATIONS
- ❖ OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR/RECORDS
- ❖ Court Security
- ❖ EVIDENCE
- ❖ VICTIM ADVOCATE



PATROL

2024 Annual Report from Sergeant Linnell

2024 was a great year for the Sheriff's Office. In April, we welcomed two new deputies, Deputy Wilson and Deputy Breshears, who together brought around 35 years of experience to Ouray County. Both deputies successfully completed our field training program and began working independently throughout the summer. Filling these two additional positions has significantly improved our patrol operations. With two deputies responding to critical calls, we not only enhanced safety but also reduced our response time due to the increased manpower on patrol.

Throughout the year, deputies attended various training sessions beyond the mandated annual requirements. Here are a few examples:

- In March 2024, Sergeant Chism and I attended a week-long FBI LEEDA Leadership Training in Grand Junction. This was the first of three trainings in a trilogy series designed to provide comprehensive leadership education. This training will empower us to improve our leadership capabilities.
- In August, Deputy Breshears, Deputy Wallace, and I participated in Desert Snow training in Ignacio. This three-day course focused on criminal narcotics interdiction, enhancing our ability to identify illegal transportation of narcotics during traffic stops.
- We also participated in Standard Field Sobriety Testing (SFST) training provided by the Colorado State Patrol. All deputies needing certification or a refresher attended this training. It helps us detect impaired drivers in Ouray County so that we can conduct fair and thorough investigations, ensuring the safety of all motorists on our roadways.

- During the year, deputies also took part in the Click It or Ticket campaign, funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Additionally, deputies engaged in Forest Run patrols, funded through the Forest Service. They enjoyed these patrols as they allowed them to experience our beautiful backcountry and interact with visitors. This program not only helps the Sheriff's Office establish a presence in remote areas but also allows us to monitor for unattended campfires and illegal off-trail driving in the tundra.
- Our deputies actively engaged with the community throughout the year by visiting schools, participating in school sports, attending National Night Out, and supporting the Shop with a Cop program. We cherish the interaction we have with children and community members during these events, as they help us build positive relationships within our community.
- During this year, I continued my second term on the 7th Judicial Community Corrections Board for Ouray County. I also had the opportunity to join Undersheriff Stoup in several monthly POST Board meetings, keeping me informed about upcoming training opportunities for deputies.
- None of our training and support could have been accomplished without your continued backing over the past year. With your ongoing support, we will continue to provide the best law enforcement service possible.

Thank you,

Sgt. Derrick Linnell

2024 Annual Report from Sergeant Bernie Chism

This year started with a change of position from Investigations to Patrol Sergeant. Shortly after my promotion, I was able to attend a week-long Leadership Training through FBI LEEDA to sharpen my skills as a leader within our organization. I also attended the annual Level Up Mental Health Conference. The conference provided very good information about identifying challenging situations that you or your co-worker may be dealing with, and resources available to strengthen bonds between coworkers. I continued as co-lead with the Critical Incident Investigation Team.

Deputies have invested a lot of time strengthening the relationship between law enforcement and our local youth. Through-out the year over 100 reports were generated attending various events at the Ouray and Ridgway Schools. Some of the events included reading books to elementary school student, attending sporting events, and completing presentations covering several different topics. We also participated in the CSOC Youth Baseball Camp, along with shop with a cop, and delivered turkey dinners to local families.

Thank you for your support. We will continue working hard towards serving our community with integrity, compassion, and accountability
Thank you,

Sgt. Bernie Chism

INVESTIGATIONS



The Investigations Division conducted 24 Major Investigations

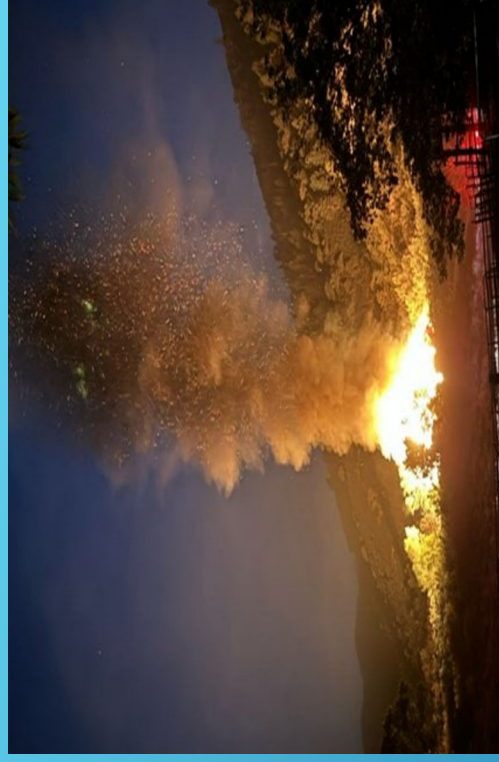
- **Sex Assault/ Sex Offenses:** Investigated 3 sex-related offenses. In one of the investigations, the victim decided not to continue with the process. The second investigation, still waiting for lab results. The third investigation is a multijurisdictional case, involving Garfield County Investigations Unit and Boulder County Investigations Unit. Waiting for the District Attorney's office to review the case. Agencies that assisted in the investigation included Blue Sky Bridge in Boulder, CO, Denver Child Advocacy Center, and the Ouray County Child Protection Services.
- **Unattended Deaths:** Ten unattended death investigations were completed and it was determined that no suspicious event on the cause of death. Nine of the ten involved an autopsy being completed.
- Responded to two suicide events and one attempted suicide. Two autopsies were completed; the party involved in the attempted suicide received mental health resources.
- **Fire:** Two fire investigations were completed. One incident took place at Cornerstone resulting in approximately one million dollars in damages. Montrose Fire Department was not able to determine a definitive cause of the structure fire.

The fire investigation at Lynx Road was determined to be accidental due to a damaged propane supply line. The damage to the propane line could have been caused by a tree that fell in the area, in addition to the potential woodpile collapse (after the tree was cut into pieces). Agencies that assisted during the investigations were the Montrose Fire Department and Knott Laboratory (Insurance Investigators).

Cornerstone Fire



Lynx Road Fire



- Assisted Patrol Division with follow-up investigations. In one of the investigations, a search warrant was obtained for a cell phone. That was a drug-related case.
- Another search warrant (Rule 41.1, non-testimonial identifications, buccal swab) was obtained for a domestic violence and sex assault investigation case.
- One Internal Affair Investigation.
- Assisted Montrose County Sheriff's Office in a child abuse investigation. Forensic interviews were conducted at the Center for Children in Grand Junction, CO.
- Fraud/Theft Case Investigation: The investigations Division received a fraud/theft report. The contractor received money for a project and used the money for something else. The same contractor was involved in a 2023 case involving victims in Teller County and possibly some other locations. Production of records for bank information was obtained and completed an arrest warrant for the suspect. The approximately amount in this investigation is approximately \$300,000.00. The case has been filed and it is in the court system.
- Harassment case was completed resulting in two juvenile convictions.
- Investigation Division also participated in multi-jurisdictional operation with BATTLE WEST (Beat Auto Theft Through Law Enforcement), which includes personnel from the Delta County Police Department, Montrose Police Department, Montrose County SO, CBI Agents, Colorado State Patrol, and Ouray County SO. Those operations have resulted in multiple arrests in different jurisdictions.
- Assisted Colorado State Patrol with an accident investigation (crash resulted in death) follow-up.
- Completed three background investigations for Deputy applicants.
- Assisted the 7th Judicial District Drug Task Force in a couple of operations.

- **Trainings:**
- Sex Assault Investigations
- Background Investigations for Police Applicants
- Basic Detective Course
- Robbery Investigations
- Foundational Homicide Investigations Course
- NISMART (National Incidence Studies of Missing, Runaway, and Throwaway Children)
- Documenting the Suicide Scene.



OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR/RECORDS

Office Administrator 2024 recap

- Processed 321 paid MTC citation payments
- 40 new concealed handgun permits and 58 permit renewals
- Processed 47 Civil papers for service
- Fingerprinting for concealed carry applications, shuttle drivers, and court-ordered prints
- Registered 5 sex offenders and registered 2 new offenders for our county
- Renewed my CCIC/NCIC coordinator training
- Renewed my notarial certificate
- Daily billing requirements and submission to finance for payment
- Completed records requests as needed
- Product ordering for our department
- Continued monthly statements for Donation, Suspense, and Wayfarer accounts
- Forest Service billing
- Conducted a successful Angel Tree drive

COURT SECURITY



2024 COURTHOUSE SECURITY YEARLY REPORT

<u>MONTH</u>	<u># OF PEOPLE</u>	<u># OF DAYS WORKED</u>	<u># OF WEAPONS</u>
JANUARY	771	17	35
FEBRUARY	900	16	43
MARCH	667	16	33
APRIL	1,001	18	52
MAY	1,008	17	46
JUNE	1,098	15	57
JULY	1,339	18	68
AUGUST	1,138	17	50
SEPTEMBER	1,200	17	57
OCTOBER	1,143	18	45
NOVEMBER	653	15	28
<u>DECEMBER</u>	<u>616</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>30</u>
TOTAL:	11,534	200	544

Courthouse Security personnel continued to stay busy in 2024. The year 2024 continued to be busier than 2023, with eleven more people coming into the building and going through the single point entry.

There were seventy-eight fewer weapons brought into the building than in 2023.

There were seven straight months with over 1,000 people coming into the building. In reviewing the statistics, it was interesting to note that there were no jury trials held in the year. There were twelve scheduled, but none occurred. These hearings were either vacated or continued until another date.

There were six full-day or Multiple-day court trials scheduled, and of these hearings, only one three-day trial occurred. When looking at the number of people coming into the courthouse, jury trials and court trials did not play into the increased number of people.

One full-time Deputy and three contract deputies staff the Courthouse Security. The contracted deputies were scheduled as needed.

There were twelve days during the year when extra security was Needed to be present in the courtroom. Most of these days, the extra security had to be filled by the Patrol Division. This was due to

The unavailability of personnel in the contract pool. There were also 12 days of extra security covered by the contract pool in the Elections Office during the 2024 election.

The Deputy investigated a suspicious package left outside the Courthouse. Nothing out of the ordinary was discovered in the package, and the package was returned to its owner. A special acknowledgement goes out to the County employee who saw it outside of their work area and reported it.

The deputy did the following training: First Aid / CPR, Interacting with People with Disabilities, recertified in LEADS / CCIC, Cyber Security training, Victim Rights, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives, Pursuit Driving, Officer Tactical training, Use of Force, Tactical Operations, Defensive Driving, Firearms, Qualification, and Range proficiencies, and NIBRS monthly training.

The types of weapons that the Security team stopped were: 45 Leatherman tools, 20 canisters of pepper spray, 4 screwdrivers, 2 corkscrew openers, 4 credit card tools, 1 loaded magazine, 1 exacto knife, 3 box cutters, 3 pairs of scissors, 2 sets of Nunchakus, 3 KitKat personal defensive weapons, 3 guns, 1 credit card knife, 1 Taser, 1 metal punch and 450 regular pocketknives. The highest number of weapons brought into the building on a day was ten. This happened Twice. An interesting point was one of the two days, one couple came into the courthouse to obtain a marriage license. Out of the ten weapons stopped that day, six belonged to this one couple.

The administrative duty the Deputy performs is the NIBRS entry. The Deputy made 71 entries for NIBRS, 12 entries for "Use of Force," which resulted in "no report," and 12 entries for Citizen Contacts. The information, for these last two categories, is required by the State, and

What is required to show is the following: When a fatality occurs to a person Occurs connected to the use of force by a law enforcement officer.

When there is serious bodily injury to a person connected to a of force by a law enforcement officer, or in the absence of either death or serious bodily injury, when a firearm is discharged by law enforcement at or in the direction of a person. The Ouray County Sheriff's Office had no incidents at this level.

In March 2024, we had four different panic alarms at different times of the day. We conducted testing of all the panic alarms and discovered a couple that were not operating properly. The alarm company came out and fixed these alarms. We continued to have issues this year with the Voti x-ray machine. Rapiscan had bought Voti out of bankruptcy. The technician from Rapiscan came out several times throughout the year and was able to replace compatible equipment. However, on December 24, 2024, the machine broke down again. This time , the machine was not fixed by the end of the fiscal year. This machine was purchased in May 2020 under the Underfunded Courthouse Grant.

Respectfully submitted,
Leo Rasmusson
Deputy Sheriff
Courthouse Security

EVIDENCE



EVIDENCE

Ensure proper chain of custody for evidence and property.

Audit the evidence vault to ensure all items of evidence are accounted for, stored correctly, and purged appropriately.

Ensure vault security.

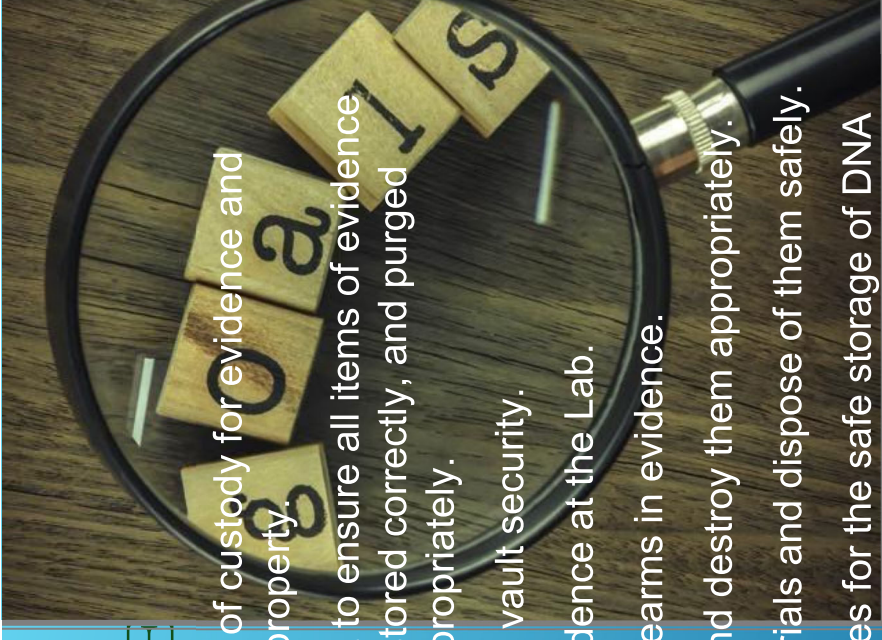
Track evidence at the Lab.

Trace all firearms in evidence.

Secure drugs safely and destroy them appropriately.

Secure hazardous materials and dispose of them safely.

Abide by legal guidelines for the safe storage of DNA evidence.



Categories are used to organize evidence in the Vault/ lab:

- For Destruction
- Lost and Found
- Safekeeping
- At the Lab
- Firearms
- Drugs
- Documents
- Long guns
- Oversized Items
- Long-term Storage
- Cold Store
- Available for release
- Cash
- Electronics

**CATEGORIZING EVIDENCE IN STORAGE/
(ORGANIZED BY TYPE)**





Evidence Intake Process:

- Deputy seizes item & packages securely
- Deputy submits item to locker or direct submit to evidence tech
- Evidence tech inputs the item into the records management system
- Creates barcode to adhere to the item
- Stores Item in vault according to evidence type
- Purge- by DA permission (written)

CHAIN OF CUSTODY

A chain of custody is a documented, unbroken record of the handling of evidence, from its collection to its presentation in court, ensuring its integrity and admissibility. This process is vital in criminal investigations to prove evidence hasn't been tampered with or altered. It involves documenting every person who handles the evidence, along with the date, time, and reason for each transfer.

COMPLETED DIGITALLY IN EVIDENCE MODULE

EVIDENCE	Agency: _____	Case No.: _____
	Item No.: _____	Time of Collection: _____
	Date of Collection: _____	Collected By: _____
	Description of Evidence: _____	_____
	_____	_____
	Location of Collection: _____	_____
	_____	_____
	Type of Offense: _____	_____
	Victim: _____	_____
	Suspect: _____	_____
	CHAIN OF CUSTODY	
	Received From: _____	By: _____
	Date: _____	Time: _____
	Received From: _____	By: _____
	Date: _____	Time: _____
	Received From: _____	By: _____
	Date: _____	Time: _____

AUDITS

Records management software in Spillman allows us to audit vault easily by scanning barcodes of evidence and the assigned shelf associated barcode. The program will indicate if an item is missing or if there is items on the self.

Program can also generate a reminder date to review an item of evidence for purge.

Audits should be completed annually.

Audits are important for evidence integrity and to catch errors. (Our most common error is storage on a wrong shelf.



LAB ANALYSIS WITH CBI

Available Laboratory Services:

Digital Evidence Analysis

The analysis of computer hard drives, thumb drives, cell phones and any other data storage devices.

DNA Database

The Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) database section analyzes offender samples and maintains the state DNA index system.

Drug Chemistry

This unit conducts the analysis of cannabis and all controlled substances.

Firearms/Toolmarks

The analysis of a specific weapon/tool/ammunition and the subsequent comparison to the evidence found at the crime scene. This section utilizes and maintains the National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) database.

Footwear/Tire

The analysis of shoes/tires and the subsequent comparison to the shoe/tire tracks found at the crime scene.

Biological Sciences (Forensic Biology/DNA)

The analysis of body fluids for the presence of genetic material used for identification purposes. This section develops DNA profiles utilizing STR and YSTR technology, and then performs interpretations and comparisons. In addition, the analysts enter eligible DNA profiles from evidence samples into CODIS.

Latent Prints

The analysis of fingerprints found at the crime scene and the subsequent comparison to the fingerprints of an individual. This section utilizes and maintains the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) database.

Toxicology

The chemical analysis of biological fluids for the presence of drugs.

Trace Chemistry

The analysis of substances that do not fall under Drug Chemistry such as fire debris and gunshot residue. Additionally, this section is responsible for the analysis of wood, fibers, paints, tapes, airbag residues, polymers, metal fragments and other unknown materials.

FIREARMS

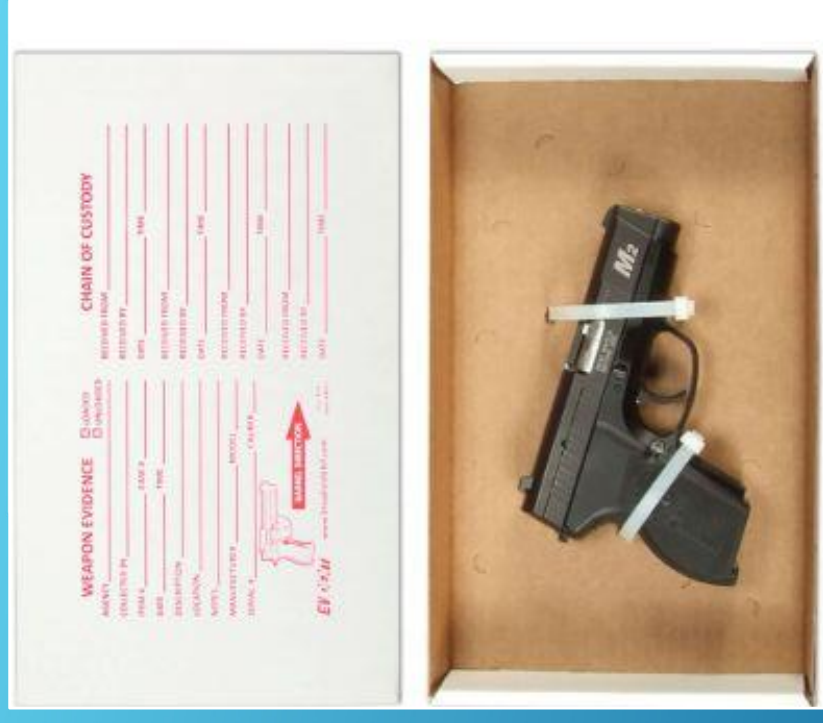
Can be safekeeping or evidence.

All Firearms are ran through state and national crime information center (CCIC & NCIC)

Stored securely (ammo stored separately)

All firearms are ran through the ATF (Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms) Trace Center. This gives us purchase, owner, seller, transfer information. Can be used as a tool to identify an owner.

EX: found firearm



DNA

DNA evidence, specifically DNA profiling, is a powerful tool in forensic science used to identify individuals based on their unique genetic makeup. It involves analyzing biological evidence from crime scenes, such as blood, saliva, or skin cells, to create a DNA profile. This profile can then be compared to known samples from suspects or searched against DNA databases like CODIS to potentially identify a perpetrator or link crimes.

Stored in COLD STORAGE for preservation.

Time in storage is dependent on statute of limitations and crime type.



FOR DESTRUCTION

To destroy items of evidence, you must determine the case status, the crime associated with the case, the offense, and what the item is. Then, obtain a Case Disposition from the DA's office along with a letter for permission to destroy evidence signed by the undersheriff.

DRUGS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DESTRUCTION

After case disposition, DA
approval, and Undersheriff
approval:

Items are incinerated (witness,
document, receipt)



STATS SINCE LAST MEETING

- 99 New Items Submitted into Evidence
- 6 Items Sent to Lab
- 16 Items Destroyed
- 23 Items Released to Owner

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

Evidence Integrity- Chain of Custody
All items are barcoded and stored securely

Smoothly operating

Purge to intake

Vault Security- new alarm system, coded for door audit,
motion sensors in vault, 24 hour monitoring

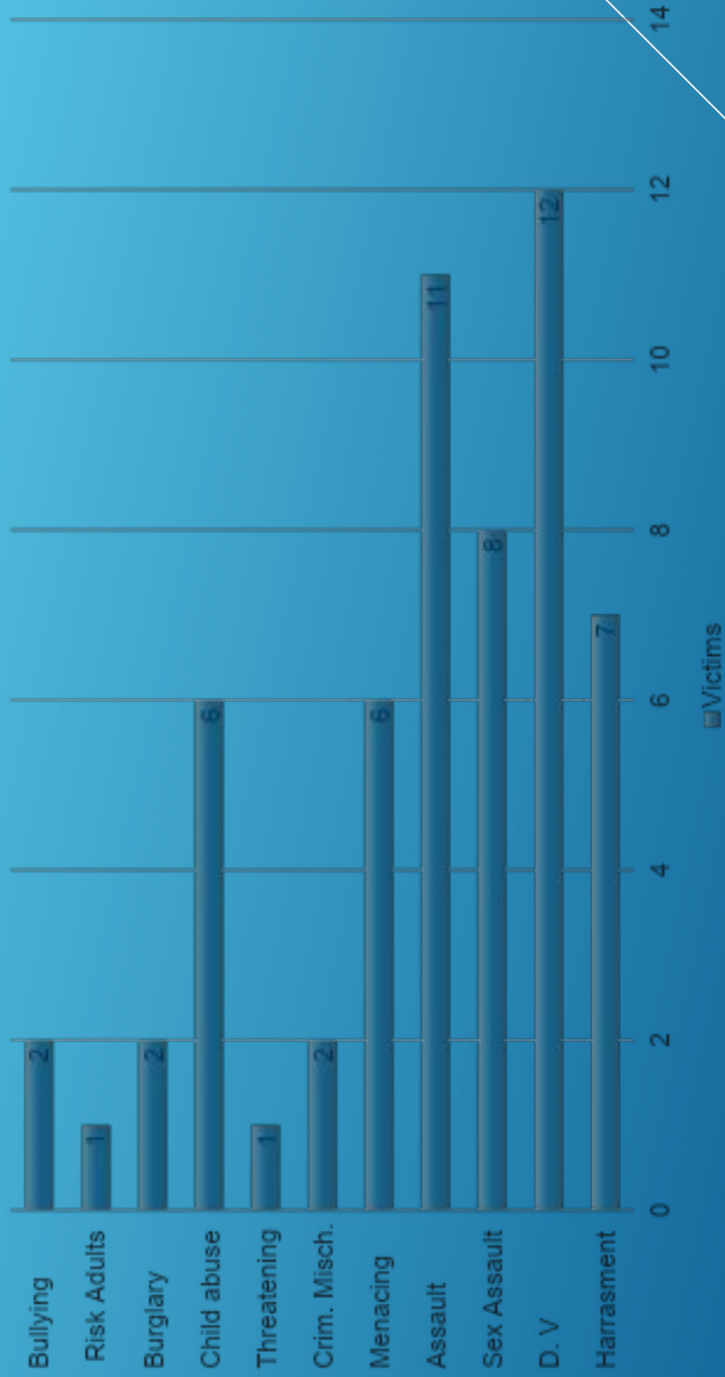
Audit clearance of 100%

VICTIM ADVOCATE



RESPONDED TO 36 VRA CASES IN 2024

- 29 PRIMARY VICTIMS
- 7 SECONDARY VICTIMS
- 11 MEN
- 25 WOMEN



Updates and Trends

- Out of 12 Domestic violence cases, 7 of these included strangulation.
- Although the numbers are just over half of the 2023 case, it's important to note that the victims needed long-term support.
- The Advocate does not only respond to the scene and provide support during medical exams, but as needed provides support throughout the entire judicial process.
- The crimes reported in 2024 were far more complex and involved more dangers, risks, and injuries.

REVIEW OF 2024

- ☐ Facilitated two community training events:
 - Stick it to Sex Assault
 - Podcast for Sexual Assault.
- ☐ Assisted twelve families with death response
- ☐ Worked closely with OCSAP and MEND to create essential partnerships and relationship-building
- ☐ Attended over 40 hours of various training
- ☐ Trained two volunteers
- ☐ Provided two trainings at the Ridgway Secondary Schools about Domestic Violence and Consent
- ☐ Provided four VRA training and assisted with DV and Strangulation training.

Sheriff