



Fort Walton Beach Police Department

Year in Review 2021

Robert Bage, Chief of Police

Throughout 2021, the Fort Walton Beach Police Department continued its commitment to the success of the community. It was a unique year with the continuation of COVID 19 as well as all of the variants, and continued demands for police reform. The department's professionalism and dedication to the community, combined with great teamwork, played an essential role in accomplishing the mission of making the community safer.

Core Responsibilities:

- Ensure a highly visible police presence by utilizing innovative strategies, technology, equipment, and community involvement to create a safer community for all.
- Provide professional and courteous services to all members of the community.
- Reduce the fear of crime and improve the City of Fort Walton Beach's quality of life through proactive crime prevention and investigative initiatives.
- Utilize intelligence-based policing through timely statistical analysis and crime trends to customize crime reducing strategies based on specific problems and geographic locations.

2021 Major Accomplishments:

- Community Events
 - Hosted the following events: Kids Fishing Day, Star Wars Day, Rollin with 5.0 roller skating event, and two Junior Police Academies.
 - Parades - coordinated and participated in numerous small parades for birthdays or other special occasions. Coordinated a holiday parade around an assisted living facility for the residents who could not have visitors. Participated in the annual Billy Bowlegs Torchlight parade in May, and the FWB Christmas parade.
 - Participated in: several trunk-or-treat events with local community groups, National Faith and Blue Weekend in which police departments partnered with churches to conduct community outreach, Brooks Street Community Halloween event, and Wreaths Across America.
- Planned and participated in a 20th Anniversary Commemoration of Sept. 11th.
- Hosted a Winter Wonderland at the police department which 734 toys for Toys for Tots as well as \$652 in cash donations were collected.
- Co-hosted Operation Santa with Bank United in which 565 toys were collected for local foster children as well as \$1,000 in cash donations.
- Increased to over 2,620 Instagram followers and 17,600 Facebook followers.
- Made several high water rescues during localized flooding caused by summer storms.
- Implemented a License Plate Reader (LPR) Program and began to share and receive detections with other Florida agencies to assist with investigations of crimes.
- Implemented a Rapid ID Fingerprint program for quicker verification of identities.
- Implemented monthly dashboards that track overdose calls, narcan deployments, arrests, and high crime hotspots.
- The department received the following grants: Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) grant, Two Covid grants (CESF - Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding), and COPS (Community Oriented Policing Services) grant.
- Two officers selected as subject matter experts to assist the Florida Department of Law Enforcement with developing statewide standards.
- Created a Citizen Advisory Panel to provide community input into the policies and procedures.
- Installed security upgrades and enhancements to the infrastructure at the public safety complex.
- Traffic crashes were down by 25% and traffic citations increased by 23%.
- Narcan deployment increased by 54% and overdose calls increased by 65%.
- Calls for service increased by 3% but crime was also down by 3% to the lowest level in over 15 years.



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Quantitative Performance Measures	2021	2020	2019
Part One Crimes (murder, manslaughter, sex offenses, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, and arson)	532	547	543
Use of Force Incidents	27	30	22
Officers Hired	6	8	10
Traffic Crashes	899	1,193	1,118
Traffic Tickets	1,920	1,566	1,313
Adult Arrests	590	513	677
Juvenile Arrests	38	79	55
DUI	92	79	89
Public Requests for Calls for Service	18,856	18,396	22,524
Officer Initiated Calls for Service	21,841	19,305	15,334
Total Calls for Service	40,697	37,701	37,858
Response Time to Priority Calls	4:42	:56	3:07

2022 Major Projects and Initiatives:

- Continue partnering with local stakeholders, educating the public, and mentoring youth.
- Enhance the daily operations by providing state-of-the-art technology and practical training.
- Develop a validated Physical Abilities Test for all police officers.
- Develop crime tracking and prevention initiatives to reduce crime and the fear of crime.
- Recruit, hire, train, mentor, and retain the most qualified workforce.
- Focus on professionalism and respect throughout daily activities within the community and department.
- Complete the accreditation process.
- Identify and apply for grants from public and private sources to expand capacity and resources with minimal impact on fiscal resources.
- Staffing and deployment analysis for efficient and effective policing across the City with an emphasis on reducing the fear of crime, traffic enforcement, and improved response times.
- Conducting a feasibility study for a new firing range and police training center.
- Strength partnerships with local law enforcement partners.