

SAANICH  
POLICE  
DEPARTMENT

2024  
ANNUAL  
REPORT





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*We acknowledge that the District of Saanich lies within the territories of the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples represented by the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations and the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples represented by the W̱JOḺELP (Tsartlip), BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin), STÁUTW (Tsawout), W̱SIKEM (Tseycum) and MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat) Nations.*





## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

On behalf of the Saanich Police Department, I am proud to present our 2024 Annual Report!

Inside, you will find updates on various initiatives, statistics, and insights into how we are advancing the goals of our strategic plan, all while addressing the needs of our growing community.

I'm heartened by the passion and devotion that everyone in our department demonstrates as we continuously strive to improve and grow, while providing reliable and responsive policing and public safety services to the people of Saanich.

In 2024, we maintained a focused approach to meeting the priorities outlined in our Strategic Plan. This allowed us to remain balanced and flexible as we responded to the emerging and unanticipated pressures, needs, and demands of a growing and changing community – while also supporting modernization initiatives and employee health and wellbeing.

Over the past year, we refreshed our approach in finding solutions that address the modern-day challenges associated with staffing – namely recruiting new and experienced officers and retaining staff. We embraced a creative and inspiring model that focuses on purpose, opportunity, health, and relationships. This refresh has moved us in new and

exciting directions that have empowered staff throughout the organization as they serve our community. Other major pressures that were experienced in 2024 – which have been carried over year after year – involve the downloading of duties that are not core policing services that encompass the fundamental responsibilities of law enforcement and crime prevention. Most notably, the effective and efficient management of *Mental Health Act* calls and the impacts related to the affordable housing crisis. What we know is that compassion and a rightsizing of professional services needs to be at the centre of any solution, and it will require partnerships and investment at the provincial level to adequately address and improve.

We are also very happy to share many important accomplishments and achievements that were realized in 2024, which include, new employee health and wellness initiatives, an enhanced Community Safety Officer program, and the introduction of a new SPD crest, all of which you can read more about in this report.

It is my hope that you gain a stronger understanding of our work and of the people and the culture that make the Saanich Police Department a leader and such a special place to make a positive and lasting difference to public safety and people's lives.

# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

The Saanich Police Board (the Board) sincerely thanks the Saanich Police Department (the Department) and its network of integrated teams for their ongoing dedication, resiliency, and commitment to the safety of our community. The Department, under the guidance of Chief Constable Duthie, has done an exemplary job in 2024. While facing recruitment and resourcing pressures the Department has handled the many challenges of day-to-day policing with professionalism and compassion.

The Board is pleased to support the Department's 2024 Annual Report. The report provides a summary of 2024 policing data and focuses on the work the Saanich Police and its volunteers do to keep the community safe every day.

The Saanich Police Board operates under the Authority of the BC *Police Act* and serves as a civilian oversight and governance body for the Department. The Board is independent from municipal and provincial governments.

Currently, there are six members of the Board, with the Mayor of Saanich appointed as the Chair. The Board has four committees, Governance, Human Resources, Finance, and Stakeholder Outreach.

The role of the Board is to provide direction to the Department in accordance with relevant legislation, standards and community needs.

## THE BOARD:

- Establishes the priorities, goals and objectives for the Department with the Chief Constable, who is responsible for day-to-day operations;
- Is the employer of all Department staff with a focus on employee health and wellness;
- Ensures individuals, community and business groups have opportunities to contribute their views or raise concerns about the Board and Department;
- Provides financial and budget oversight;
- Establishes rules to ensure the Saanich Police Department follows standards, guidelines and policies; and,
- Is the authority for Service and Policy Complaints.

The Board holds monthly public meetings; members of the public are encouraged to attend at 760 Vernon Avenue in the Kirby Room. Meetings are scheduled for the second Tuesday of each month except the summer months of July and August. Police Board enquiries can be made by contacting the Executive Assistant to the Board at [secretary@spdboard.ca](mailto:secretary@spdboard.ca) or 250-475-4309. To learn more about the Saanich Police Board, please [click here](#).



**Mayor Dean Murdock**  
(Chair)

**Linda J. Murray**

**Jim Cambridge**  
(Vice Chair)

**Shelley Allan**

**Craig Morton**

**Gurcharn Beckett**



# NEW CREST DESIGN

The Saanich Police Department (SPD) began redesigning our crest in 2020 to reflect our commitment to community policing and honour the ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples. SPD obtained support from all W̱SÁNEĆ and ləkʷəŋən First Nations for the inclusion of Indigenous art. The new crest, approved in 2024, involved consultation with the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council and followed their art protocol to identify a W̱SÁNEĆ artist in the community. We then collaborated on the design with Douglas “Bear” Horne, the W̱SÁNEĆ artist who illustrated the raven, and Clarence “Butch” Dick, a ləkʷəŋən artist, who illustrated the maple leaves. Tom LaFortune was also involved as he proposed the raven for the central element in the shield.

Our new crest symbolizes the core values of SPD and our unwavering commitment to ethical, accountable, and professional public safety services.

## Canadian Royal Crown

The Canadian Royal Crown symbolizes SPD’s role in administering Canadian law. It has a distinctively Canadian design that communicates the range of peoples and landscapes in this country.

## Mountain Peaks

The twin peaks represent two of Saanich’s regional landmarks: Mount Douglas Park (PKOLS) and Mount Tolmie.



## The Raven

The raven is a skilled communicator and guardian, representing key pillars of community-based policing.

## The Maple Leaves

The maple leaves are illustrated with a split U shape common to Coast Salish Indigenous art, and symbolize the two traditional territories. ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ, on which Saanich was founded.

# STRATEGIC PLAN KEY COMMITMENTS

This report is organized in alignment with our 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, highlighting four main commitments: Service Excellence, Enhancing Community Connections, Strategic Foresight and Innovation, and Organizational Resilience and Growth. These commitments guide our actions and enable us to respond to new challenges and changing community needs.

## SERVICE EXCELLENCE

GOAL: Reduce crime and social disorder using evidence-based practices.

- Police Legitimacy
- Specialized Services
- Advanced Investigations
- Road Safety

## ENHANCING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

GOAL: Enhance meaningful relationships with the community.

- Community Supports
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Youth Engagement

## ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE & GROWTH

GOAL: Supporting our people to better serve the public.

- Recruiting Efforts
- Organizational Review
- Employee Wellness

## STRATEGIC FORESIGHT & INNOVATION

GOAL: Use innovative approaches to address existing issues and emerging challenges.

- Advancements on the Frontline
- Facilitating Collaboration & Partnerships
- Advancing Policy



# SERVICE EXCELLENCE

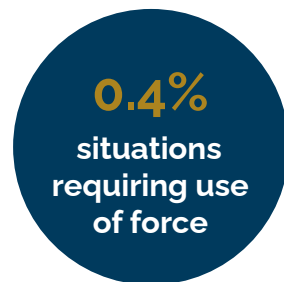
## POLICE LEGITIMACY

### Use of Force

Officers are trained in de-escalation techniques to resolve situations without using force whenever possible.

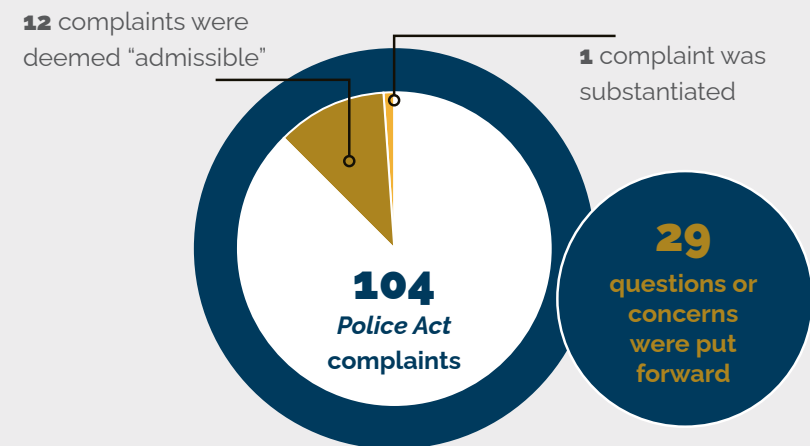
Did you know that police use of force often doesn't involve physical contact? It may involve situations where weapons such as oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray, conducted energy weapons (CEWs), firearms, and other items are drawn and displayed, even if they are not actively used. A police service dog displayed to demonstrate its presence is also considered a use of force. Use of force options are frequently used as deterrents to prevent situations from escalating.

In 2024, SPD managed 24,434 calls for service, with only 105 calls involving use of force and requiring Subject Behavior Officer Response (SBOR) reports. This indicates that 99.6% of situations were resolved without the use of force.



## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

SPD is committed to fostering transparency and accountability.



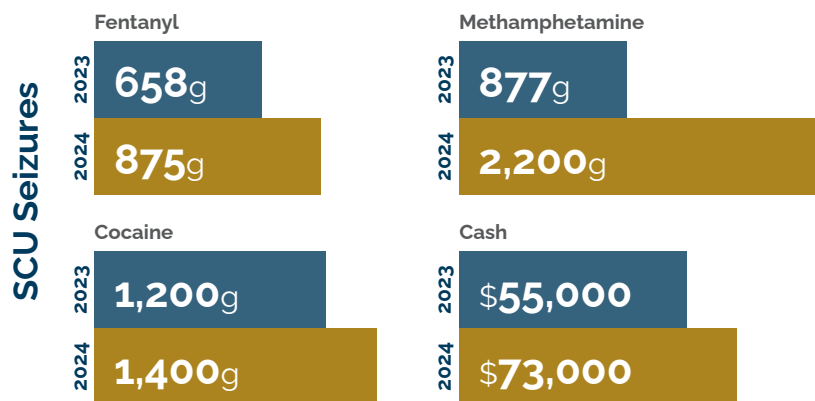


## SPECIALIZED SERVICES

### Street Crime Unit

The SPD Street Crime Unit (SCU) targeted mid-level drug traffickers in Saanich in 2024, leading to the seizure of significant quantities of drugs, including Fentanyl, Cocaine, Methamphetamine, and others. SCU seized over \$73,000 in Canadian and American currency and confiscated illegal items such as brass knuckles, knives, body armor, ammunition, and a converted 9mm handgun.

SCU conducted over 25 investigations, using covert techniques and collaborating with various internal sections as well as external agencies. SCU collaborated with Victoria Island Regional Correctional Centre (VIRCC) to prevent the delivery of Fentanyl into the correctional facility, resulting in a successful operation.



### Integrated Units

SPD considers Integrated Units to be crucial for delivering specialized police services efficiently and cost-effectively to the residents of Saanich. SPD is part of 12 integrated units, including the new Capital Regional District Internet Child Exploitation (CRD ICE) Unit.

## Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team (GVERT)

The Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team (GVERT) has been delivering police services to the Capital Region since 1976, making it our longest serving integrated unit. Working closely with patrol divisions and investigative units across the region, GVERT officers assist in the safe resolution of complex and high-risk incidents. Critical Incident Commanders, Crisis Negotiators, Tactical Officers, Medics, and Explosives Technicians are some of the specialized roles GVERT provides in support of frontline police operations.

Total GVERT activations in 2024

**154**

### SPD Activations

Criminal Barricades	Hostage Taking	High Risk Search Warrants
<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>19</b>
Mental Health Apprehension Barricades	High Risk Arrest/Apprehension	
<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	

### Suspect vs. Subject

- Suspects: **39**
- Subjects: **9**  
*All Mental Health Apprehensions and one High Risk Arrest*

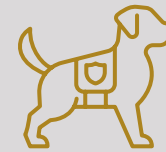


## ADVANCED INVESTIGATIONS

### Major Crime Unit

The SPD Major Crime Unit (MCU) handles several serious cases each year, requiring advanced investigative expertise and techniques. These complex cases require a structured approach, often involving multiple crime scenes and diverse evidence streams. Typical cases investigated by MCU include robberies, aggravated assaults, suspicious deaths, weapons offenses, and high-risk missing persons cases.

MCU initiated 49 investigations in 2024 with the majority related to fraud, sudden death, and missing persons files. Some of these investigations lasted for months, with additional cases carried over from 2023.



Our department's Operational Stress Intervention Dog (OSID), Beacon, continues to support witnesses and victims during interviews.

## Special Investigations Section

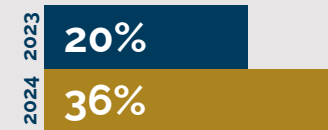
The Special Investigations Section (SIS) manages investigations into sexualized violence and sexual assaults involving both adults and children, internet child exploitation, and child abuse. SIS dealt with 226 new files in 2024 and conducted 225 interviews: 175 utilizing SPD Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP) interview rooms and another 50 held at the Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC).

### SIS File Type and Percentage of Caseload

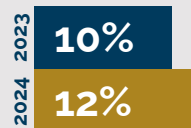
#### Sexual Assault (Adults)



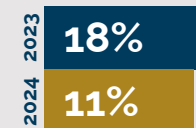
#### Internet Child Exploitation



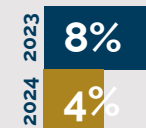
#### Sexual Assault (Children)



#### Child Abuse



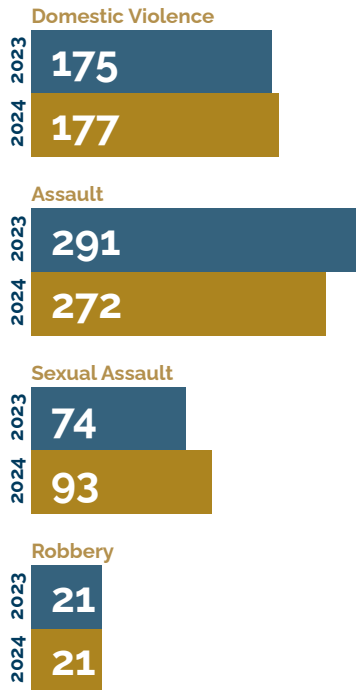
#### Assist Other Agencies



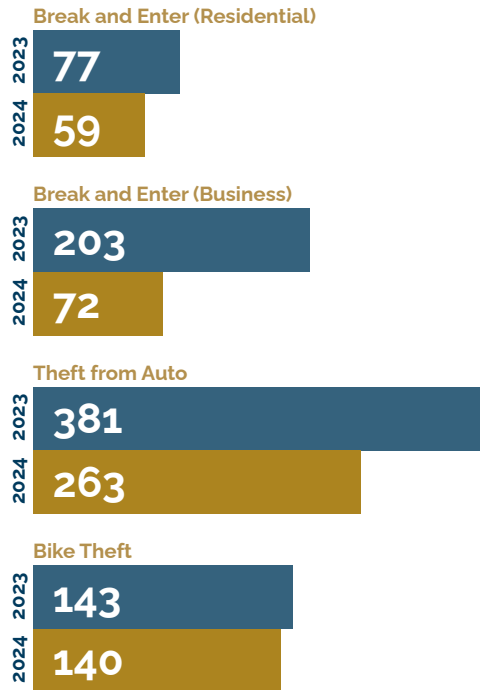
# Crime Statistics

Click here to view our [Quarterly Reports](#). These reports provide statistics on violent crime, property & financial crime, traffic incidents, and non-criminal events.

## Violent Crime

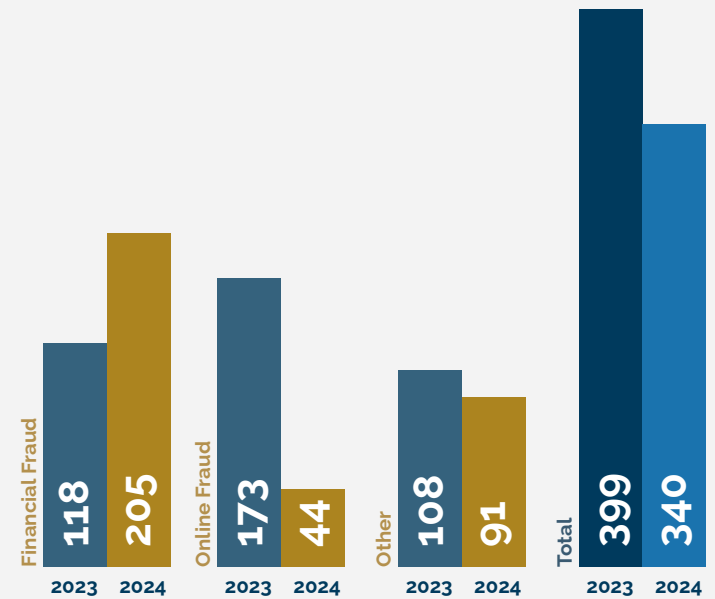


## Property Crime



## Fraud - Cybercrime

With the increasing reliance on digital platforms, offenders have found new ways to exploit vulnerabilities, leading to an increase in cybercrime incidents. This emphasizes the need for advanced investigative techniques and robust cybersecurity measures to combat the evolving landscape of digital crime.



*Have you attended one of SPD's "Beat the Fraudster" presentations?*

*In 2024, our department conducted over 80 presentations, reaching more than 2,500 Saanich residents.*

## ROAD SAFETY

Click here to view our [Road Safety Dashboard](#) which is updated quarterly.

We are committed to ensuring the safety of our community for residents, workers, visitors, and explorers. Our proactive enforcement efforts continue to target impaired, distracted, and dangerous drivers to keep our streets safe.

	2022	2023	2024
<b>Motor Vehicle Act Ticket</b>	<b>3,021</b>	<b>3,342</b>	<b>4,252</b>
Driving While Disqualified/ Suspended	183	199	176
Suspension Issued	390	469	629
Distracted Driving	266	332	296
Impaired Driving Criminal Offences	294	233	282
Impaired Driving Prohibitions	393	469	629



## COLLISIONS

Since 2022, there has been a significant reduction in traffic collisions involving injuries, especially those affecting pedestrians and cyclists.

	2022	2023	2024
<b>Total Collisions</b>	<b>1,056</b>	<b>1,012</b>	<b>1,080</b>
Collisions Involving Injuries	279	218	180
Collisions with pedestrians involving injury	62	24	18
Collisions with cyclists involving injury	50	48	43
Collisions Involving Fatalities	2	3	2
Fatal collisions involving pedestrians	0	2	1
Fatal collisions involving cyclists	0	0	0



# ENHANCING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

## COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

Police officers often encounter individuals in need of support, such as victims and those facing mental health crises. At SPD, our officers undergo extensive training to manage these challenging situations. We work closely with integrated units and community groups to ensure that individuals receive the necessary support.

### Mental Health

#### Apprehensions

*Mental Health Act*



#### Calls for Service

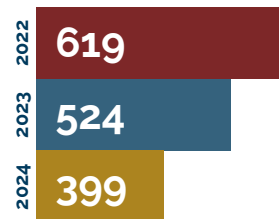
*Mental Health + Check Wellbeing*



### Hospital Wait Times

The average wait time for our officers at hospitals in 2024 increased to 2 hours and 30 minutes, a significant increase from 2023.

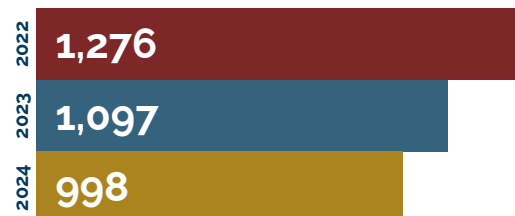
#### Total Files



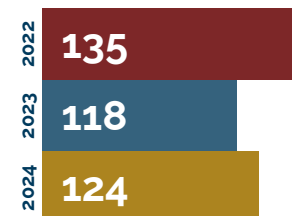
#### Average Wait Time (h:mm)



#### Total Wait Time (Hours)



#### Number of Wait Times Over 3 Hours



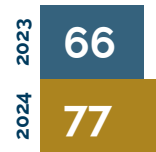
# Victim Services

Our partnerships with the Greater Victoria Police Victim Services (GVPVS), the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre, and other key victim services providers have been invaluable. These providers offer tailored support and practical information to victims 24/7. In 2024, we saw an increase in accepted victim services referrals for both adults and minors.



Accepted Victim Service Referrals

Accepted Referrals for Minors



# Park Patrols

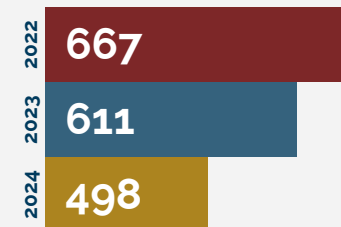
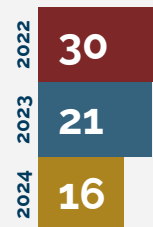
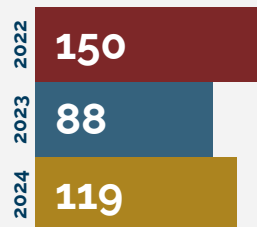
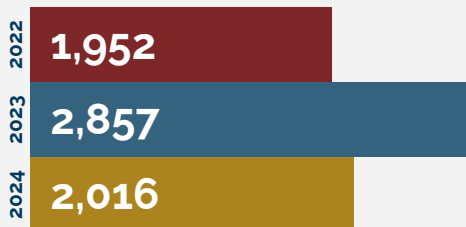
In Saanich, there are guidelines for temporary overnight sheltering in parks for people who are experiencing homelessness. In 2024, our officers spent almost 500 hours patrolling Saanich's parks, completing a total of 2,016 patrols.

Number of Park Patrols

Number of Public Reports

Number of Confrontational Occupants

Total Time Spent Patrolling (hrs)



# EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

## Specialized Name Tags

As part of our ongoing commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and relationship-building, SPD introduced specialized name tags to honor and recognize significant cultural, social, and community groups and events.



### Pink Name Tag with a Heart

Introduced in 2024 for Pink Shirt Day, this tag supports anti-bullying initiatives and shows our commitment to fostering a safe and inclusive environment.



### Orange Name Tag with a Feather

Worn during National Indigenous Peoples Day, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, and Red Shirt Day, this tag symbolizes our respect and support for Indigenous Peoples and communities.



### Pride Flag Name Tag

Displayed during Pride Month in June and at other Pride events, this tag represents our support for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

## Indigenous Training

In line with our Strategic Plan and our mission to provide culturally informed, community-responsive public safety services, we partnered with the District of Saanich to offer an Indigenous Relations Learning Curriculum. In 2024, SPD staff were supported in attending the following Indigenous learning opportunities:

### Experiential Learning:

- ləkʷəŋən Territory Tours
- Community Lunch Volunteering
- Drumming Sessions

### Live Classroom Learning:

- Cultural Competency 101
- Building Local Relationships
- ləkʷəŋən Peoples: History, Philosophy, and the Impacts of Colonization

### Self-Paced Learning:

- Book Club



## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

### Youth Leadership Certificate

Building positive relationships with youth is crucial for crime prevention and fostering trust and confidence in the police, both now and in the future. To strengthen our proactive engagement with youth, SPD partnered with Saanich Parks and Recreation to offer a Police Youth Leadership Certificate.

This one-day program is designed for youth Grade 8+ interested in becoming first responders. It offers various activities and sessions such as a K9 demonstration, physical obstacle course, tours, and presentations from Forensic Identification Services (FIS), Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team (GVERT), and our community engagement team.

### SPD Engagement with Schools

Our department has maintained police officers in schools for over 40 years, enhancing safety and security in the learning environment. During this time, we have learned the value of connecting with students in a meaningful way while fostering a positive relationship between youth and police.

Currently, we have four Community Liaison Officers working with five schools in the Saanich School District and in 16 private/independent schools.

Of the Greater Victoria School District's 45 schools, 25 are in the District of Saanich. We look forward to providing the valuable benefits of liaison officers to these schools in the coming school year.

# ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE AND GROWTH

## RECRUITING EFFORTS

SPD is actively pursuing initiatives to attract outstanding recruits and experienced officers for current and future roles. These efforts aim to establish a strong foundation for recruitment and retention. In 2024, we expanded our Recruiting Section by adding a Sergeant and Constable to enhance recruitment efforts, improve training capacity, and provide a better onboarding experience for applicants.

### In 2024, our Recruiting Section achieved the following:



Hired **16** police officers and **6** Community Safety Officers (CSO)



Assisted with onboarding **9** new Reserve Constables



Made changes to the hiring process for exempt officers to increase efficiencies and cover transition expenses



Held **4** information sessions for future applicants  
One information session was women-focused



Hosted **12** Police Officer Physical Abilities Tests (POPAT)  
Introduced a monthly free practice POPAT session  
Hosted **8** free practice sessions

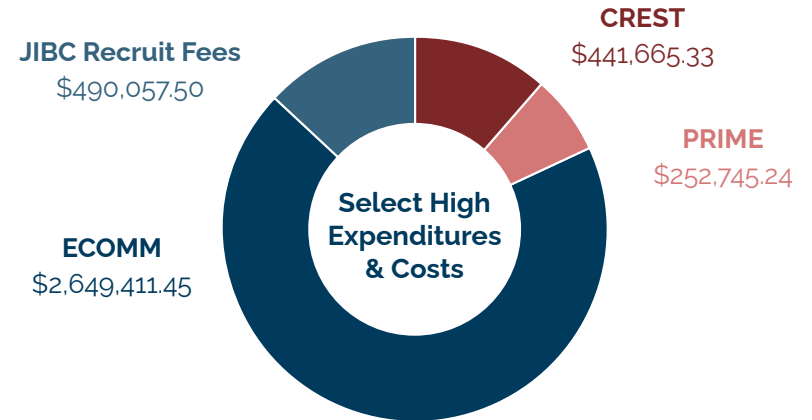


Participated in various job fairs and community events, including the JIBC and Camosun College job fairs, and the Santa Claus Parade

## ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW

To support our Strategic Plan priority of Organizational Resilience and Growth and to ensure appropriate resourcing, SPD began an Organizational Review in 2024. This review aims to identify potential efficiencies, determine appropriate staffing to meet the needs of our growing community, and assess the resources required to meet current and future police standards. The review will provide quantitative justification for adding or reallocating budgeted positions and resources within the organization. As our community evolves, our organization must also adapt to meet current and future public safety needs and expectations.

Given the substantial costs associated with essential police expenditures—such as CREST, PRIME, ECOMM, and JIBC Recruit Fees—this Organizational Review is crucial. These expenses highlight the necessity of thorough planning and resource allocation to ensure our department remains well-equipped and capable of meeting the demands of our growing community.



## EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

### Annual Wellness Check-ins

SPD prioritizes employee wellness, recognizing the impact of exposure to traumatic events. To support staff, we have introduced mandatory annual wellness check-ins with a mental health clinician. This initiative helps employees build early relationships with mental health professionals, seek further treatment as needed, and promotes mental health awareness and resilience. It also aligns with the BC Coroners Service's recommendation for annual psychological check-ins for all police officers.



### On-Duty Wellness Breaks for Staff

We understand the challenges staff face in finding time for well-being amidst busy schedules, especially for Patrol members who may be called away at a moment's notice. In addition to our sworn and civilian staff who are encouraged to utilize their lunch break for wellness activities, Patrol members also now have designated wellness break times to be utilized during shifts when resource levels allow.

### Wellness Culture

The SPD Health & Wellness Committee is dedicated to organizing and overseeing educational programs and events that promote the physical and mental well-being of our staff.

In 2024, the Health & Wellness Committee distributed a Wellness Survey to gather information for shaping the direction of future wellness programs and activities tailored to the needs and interests of our staff. As a result of the information that was gathered from this survey, SPD is working to create more of a wellness culture by creating flexible opportunities to engage in wellness practices, highlighting the benefits of physical and mental health, fostering open communication, and leading by example.

# STRATEGIC FORESIGHT AND INNOVATION

## ADVANCEMENTS ON THE FRONT LINE

### Community Safety Officer Program

In 2022, SPD initiated the Community Safety Officer (CSO) Program to boost police presence and support our Patrol Division. CSOs, who are Special Municipal Constables, handle lower-risk and lower-priority tasks on the frontline while also being involved in community events and initiatives.

Thanks to the program's success in making our Patrol Division more efficient, we doubled the number of CSOs from four to eight in 2024.

### Tactical Emergency Medical Support (TEMS) Program

SPD is committed to improving how we serve the community by investing in our team's training. We joined the Tactical Emergency Medical Support (TEMS) Program.

This program helps us provide immediate medical care in dangerous situations where emergency services might be delayed. TEMS is now a top standard in policing because it has saved officers' lives. Our SPD TEMS team can now offer advanced trauma care similar to what highly trained paramedics provide.

### Patrol Tactics Course

SPD implemented the Patrol Tactics Course to enhance training for new recruits and experienced officers joining SPD. This course builds individual knowledge and skills, ensuring a consistent approach to critical incidents across the department.





## FACILITATING COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIPS

### Post-Secondary Practicum Program

In 2024, SPD continued to enhance its policing strategies through strengthened academic partnerships. A notable collaboration with Royal Roads University led to the creation of a practicum program designed to provide students with hands-on policing experience.

### Research Partnerships

SPD's commitment to integrating academic insights into policing practices is highlighted by its formation of research partnerships with various reputable institutions. Many members and staff are also part of professional associations that collaborate with academic institutions to legitimize and strengthen public safety in Saanich.

## ADVANCING POLICY

### Media Releases Involving Missing Persons

SPD acknowledges that while media releases are crucial in missing person investigations, they can also have long-term negative impacts when personal information is made public. To address this, we updated our policy to exclude a missing subject's last name and date of birth from media releases.

Once a missing person is found, all photos are removed, and the only update provided to the public is that the person has been located.

# SPD CULTURE AND STAFFING

## BC TOP EMPLOYER

For the fourth year in a row, SPD has been selected as one of **BC's Top Employers**. It is an honour to receive this designation for a fourth consecutive year as it recognizes our ongoing collective and shared efforts, contributions, and commitment to progressive and forward-looking initiatives that focus on modernization, relationships, and organizational health and growth.

Although this is a notable recognition, our organization acknowledges that this designation serves as a platform to continuously improve and further support the community and our staff.



## 30X30 INITIATIVE



The **30x30 Initiative** is a coalition of police leaders, researchers, and professional organizations who have joined together to advance the representation and experiences of women in all ranks of policing. SPD's 30x30 Committee is dedicated to reducing the gender imbalance and experiences of women officers through initiatives such as:

- Targeted recruitment
- Breaking down physical barriers
- Encouraging work-life balance
- Ensuring fairness and transparency in promotion and career advancement

Staff Information (2024)	Number
New Hires: Recruits (Police Officers)	12
New Hires: Experienced (Police Officers)	4
New Hires: (Civilian Employees)	7
Police Officers	185
Civilian Employees	67
Volunteers	17
Reserve Constables	31
Community Safety Officers	8
Number of employees who speak a language other than English*	57

Languages Spoken: Afrikaans, American Sign Language, Dutch, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian, Urdu

### Join Saanich Police as an experienced officer!

- **Streamlined hiring process:** Complete the process in as little as one month, with remote interview options.
- **Incentives:** \$5,000 for local officers, \$10,000 for non-local officers.\*\*
- **Guarantees:** Years of service honoured for salary and annual leave.

\*Language information based on volunteered information \*\*Monetary incentives available for a limited time.



**SAANICH POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**760 Vernon Avenue, Victoria, BC, V8X 2W6**

**[Saanichpolice.ca](http://Saanichpolice.ca)**

**[Joinspd.ca](http://Joinspd.ca)**

 **Saanich Police**

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 **@SaanichPolice**

 **@saanichpolice.bsky.social**