

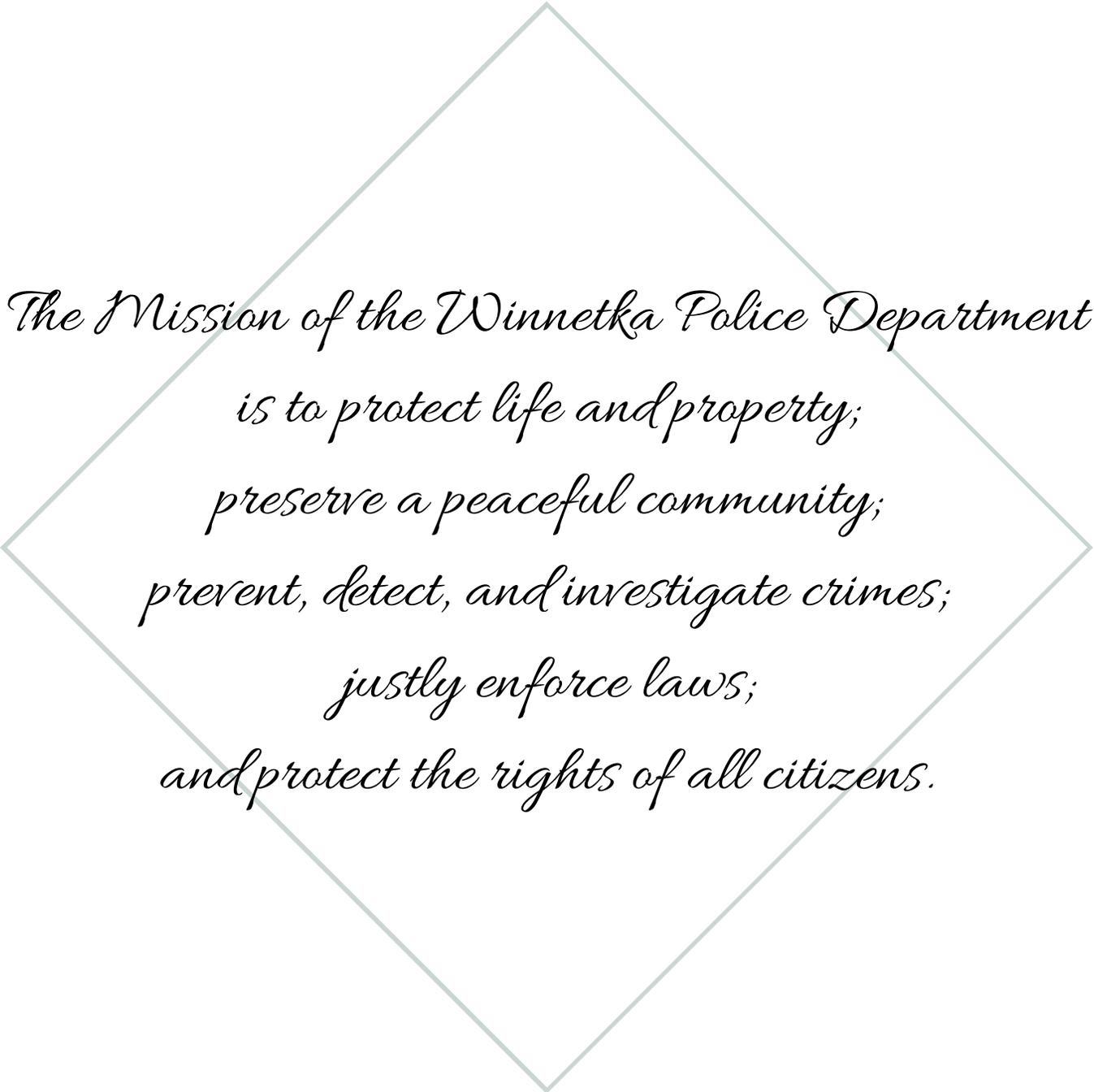


Winnetka  
Police  
Department

Brian O'Connell  
Chief of Police

# 2023 Annual Report

# Mission Statement



*The Mission of the Winnetka Police Department  
is to protect life and property;  
preserve a peaceful community;  
prevent, detect, and investigate crimes;  
justly enforce laws;  
and protect the rights of all citizens.*



Winnetka  
Police  
Department

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# Message from the Chief

I am pleased to present you with the Winnetka Police Department annual report for 2023 and share some of our accomplishments for the year.

This year was full of progressive initiatives, continuing the partnership we have with the community. Based on the recommendations of a regional working group, we proposed amendments to the gasoline-powered leaf blower ordinance which were approved by our Village Council. The ordinance now allows only spring and fall cleanup during the months of April, October, and November. Over the last two years, we have observed a promising shift to battery-operated leaf blowers throughout the community in compliance with the ordinance.

Another significant initiative originating this year is a redesigned Social Services Program. Although we have maintained a social services position dating back to 1981, it has changed numerous times since its inception, most recently as a part-time social worker. Over the last couple of years, calls involving mental health across the state have drastically increased. In Winnetka alone, calls for mental health assistance have risen over 46% between 2021 and 2023. As a direct result of this growing need for resources, we once again reevaluated the program and hired a full-time, licensed clinician to serve as our Social Services Manager. While the primary goal is to provide the appropriate services for people in the community, it also will assist with the important function of wellness programming for the members of the Winnetka Police Department.

We are especially proud of the efforts made this year in implementing a new emergency alerting system. Police staff worked diligently in partnership with Cook County Emergency Management, Glenview Public Safety Dispatch Center, and Highland Park Police Department to implement the Integrated Public Alert Warning System (IPAWS). IPAWS uses a geofence-style programming system to disseminate emergency messaging to all cellular phones within a certain area. This system can also alert people entering or traveling into the community affected by a critical or dangerous incident.

Finally, we began several new technology initiatives during 2023, including the implementation of our Body Worn Camera (B.W.C.) pilot program. Although we are not mandated to use body cameras until 2025, developing the program now allows officers to familiarize themselves with the technology, and also reflects our commitment to maintaining transparency with the community. Another significant technology advancement for our agency this year is the development of a Drone Program. For years, the laws specific to drones greatly limited law enforcement's ability to use drones for large scale community events. Just before the 4th of July, Governor Pritzker signed a bill into law allowing for drone use for special events. We aggressively worked to properly develop a Drone Program, purchasing drones and certifying our officers as pilots. This program provides us another option to provide the best safety possible for large community events such as the Memorial Day Parade, Winnetka Music Festival, and the 4th of July festivities.

Our primary goal every year continues to follow the mission statement of protecting life and property, preserving a peaceful community, preventing and investigating crimes, enforcing the law, and protecting the rights of all citizens. Our police professionals are motivated to continue growing our partnership with the community and providing the best quality service to the residents of Winnetka.

# Social Services

The police department has either employed or contracted for social worker services dating back to 1981. The first social worker was a non-sworn, full-time position which remained unchanged until 2003. At that time, a recommendation was made to utilize New Trier Township for contracted social worker services and eliminate the position from the police department. In 2014, the position was reintroduced as a part-time village employee within the department.

In 2023, the police department once again evaluated the social service needs of the department and the community. With the support of the Village Manager's Office, the part-time social worker position was transitioned to a full-time Social Services Manager. The Social Services Manager continues to serve as the social worker and takes case referrals from police officers; however, the position is now also responsible for implementing internal wellness programming for our officers and professional staff. The wellness program focuses on all aspects of wellness, including mental, physical, and nutritional health. It includes programs such as peer support, critical incident stress debriefings, and training to comply with state mental health mandates.

This evolution of the social services program enables the department to not only take care of our external community stakeholders, but also focus on the wellbeing of our officers which is critical to their success. We are proud to have this resource available to us moving forward.





# Officers' Mailbox

May 2023

I write today to commend Sergeant Tyson and Officers Sparks and Sandoval. On Thursday evening, I received a phone call from Sergeant Tyson informing me one of my parishioners had died. I agreed to go to the home. Sergeant Tyson met me outside the building and directed me to the unit. When I entered, I encountered Officers Sparks and Sandoval showing compassion that I cannot remember ever seeing from first responders. I have been in similar situations in the city and suburbs scores of times in my 33 years of being a priest. Professionalism, compassion, kindness, and understanding filled the room. I just want you to know that the professionalism and compassion shown by your frontline officers did not go unnoticed by a pastor in the neighborhood. Thank you for a job well done.

September 2023

Saturday evening our alarm went off as we had mistakenly set it when we had left a visiting family dog in the house. Officer Janes and several others responded, found a door we had left unlocked, searched the house to make sure all was OK, then gave us updates through the dispatcher and when we got home as there was a burglary incident a street away. We just want to express our thanks for the very prompt, thoughtful assistance by the police officers who help us.

March 2023

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for rescuing our dachshund last week while we were on vacation. He is a little afraid, old, and ornery so our apologies for his behavior. You saved the day!

September 2023

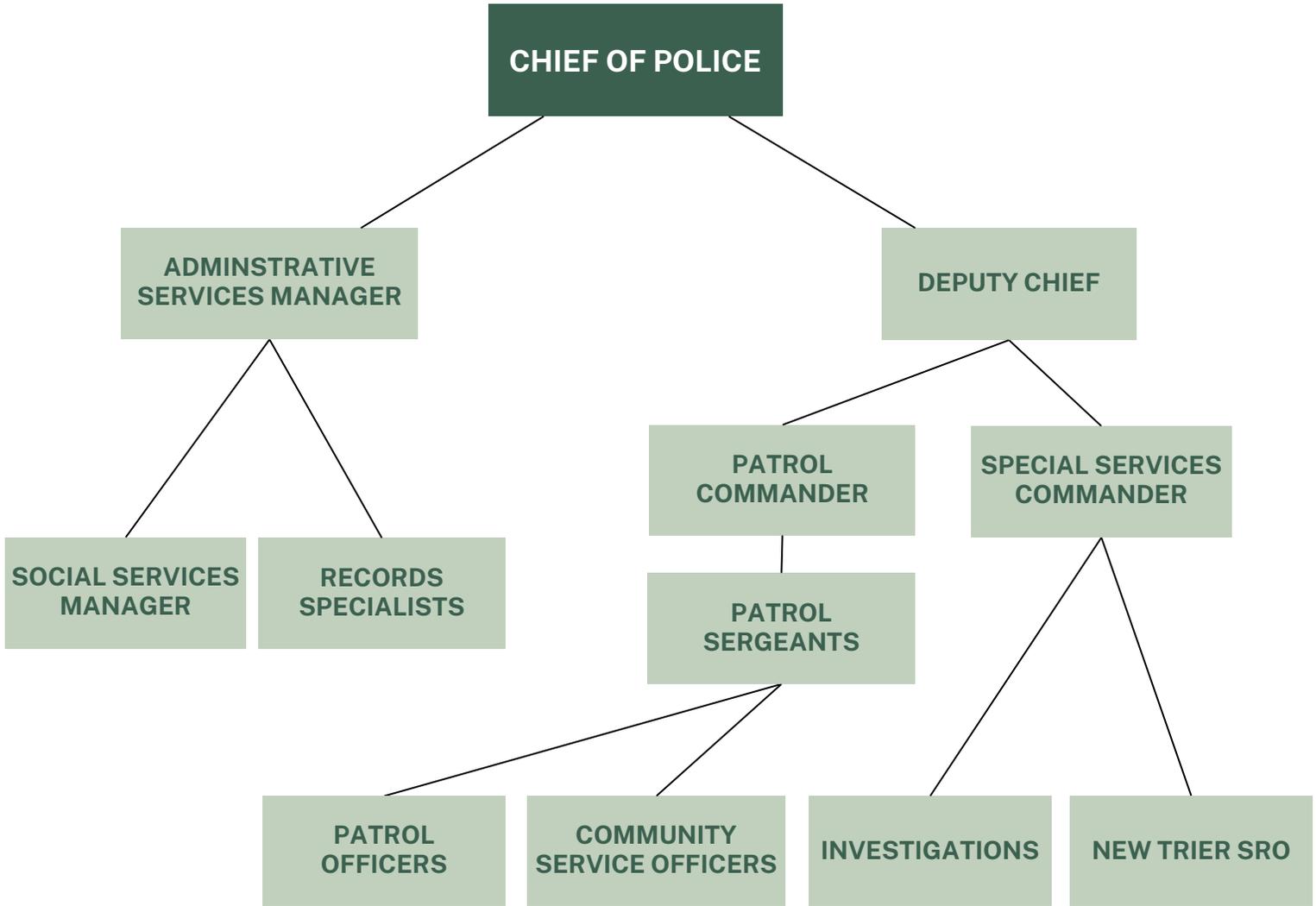
Kim, I wanted to reach out to thank you for your help making the 2023 Susan G Komen Chicago 3-day a huge success. We got so many compliments about the route and they LOVED Winnetka. I wanted to send you a most heartfelt thank you for all your help.

April 2023

I wanted to tell you that Officers Huinker and Powers were amazing yesterday with our daughter who did the Ride to School. It was such an incredible, positive experience. It's all she's been able to talk about and her teacher reached out to tell me how excited the whole class was all day long. My husband and I agree we've never seen her smile this much. My daughter has now decided she wants to be a police officer like Officer Huinker.



# Organizational Structure



# Department Overview



The Winnetka Police Department is comprised of 38 employees who serve in both full and part-time capacities. The department employs 28 sworn officers, including the Chief of Police, who are responsible for enforcing local and state laws throughout the community. In addition to the sworn officers, the police department includes 10 civilian staff members who are responsible for all non-law enforcement duties, including administration, record keeping, parking enforcement, and social services. In 2023, the Winnetka Police Department responded to 21,401 calls for service. For detailed information regarding crimes, arrests, and citations, refer to the chart on page 14.



## Patrol Division

The Patrol Division is the most publicly visible unit of the department. It is led by the patrol commander who oversees 5 sergeants and 16 uniformed patrol officers. Sergeants and patrol officers work 12-hour shifts and regularly rotate between day and night shift. The Patrol Division is responsible for self-initiated field activity such as traffic enforcement and premises checks, as well as responding to emergency and non-emergency calls for service. This includes traffic crashes, burglaries, and suspicious activity.



## Investigations Division

The Investigations Division is comprised of two investigators, a school resource officer, and is led by the special services commander. This division conducts complex criminal investigations that require more time and involvement than the calls for service handled by patrol. These cases include identity thefts, burglaries, death investigations, and more. Additional responsibilities include conducting inspections of liquor vendors, identifying emerging crime trends, and participating in task forces such as NORTAF Burglary and Major Crimes.



## Records Division

The Records Division is staffed by three records specialists who are overseen by the administrative services manager. This division is the primary customer service hub of the department. Records specialists assist all police department visitors and non-emergency callers by answering questions or directing calls to proper staff. They are responsible for maintaining all police records, including cases, arrests, traffic crashes, and citations/warnings. They also process expungements, Freedom of Information requests, false alarm invoices, and administrative adjudication requests.

## Community Services

The Winnetka Police Department employs two full-time and three part-time Community Service Officers (CSOs). They primarily work during the day and are tasked with handling a variety of non-crime related calls for service, including parking enforcement, animal control, and school crossings.

## School Resource Officer

Since 1992, the police department has assigned a School Resource Officer (SRO) to New Trier High School. The SRO serves as a liaison between the school and police and primarily investigates crimes that occur on school grounds. The SRO also conducts educational presentations to students.

## Business Liaison Officer

The Business Liaison Officer assignment was created in 2020 to provide business owners a point of contact in the police department. This officer addresses local business owners' concerns and ensures they are aware of crime trends in the area that could affect them.

## Evidence Technician Unit

The department currently has 10 members trained as evidence technicians (ETs). All members of the unit are required to complete the basic ET course prior to appointment. They continue with advanced specialized training including photography and fingerprint development and recovery.

## Youth Investigations

Officers regularly interact with juveniles through juvenile-in-crisis complaints, child abuse allegations, or criminal investigations. Such cases require the expertise of officers trained in juvenile law. The department had 16 certified juvenile officers in 2023.



# Crime Prevention & Community Programs

The Winnetka Police Department is committed to assisting residents with crime prevention and safety. To assist in these efforts, the police department offers the following services to residents:

House Watch	Burglar Alarms	C.O.R.E. Cards	Special Watches and Checks
966 house watches in 2023	698 burglar alarms in 2023	425 C.O.R.E. cards issued in 2023	6,277 special watches and checks in 2023

## House Watch

When a resident is absent from a home, they can add their residence to the vacation watch list. Officers periodically walk the exterior of the home to ensure it appears secure. Officers conducted 966 house watches in 2023.

## Burglar Alarms

The police department encourages residents to utilize their burglar alarms as residences are often burglarized when a functioning alarm has not been set. Patrol officers respond to all alarms, even though most ultimately prove to be false. In 2023, officers responded to 698 burglar alarms.

## C.O.R.E. Cards

C.O.R.E. stands for “Crime Opportunity Reduction Education.” These cards notify residents of criminal opportunities involving their property. Officers can leave C.O.R.E. cards at residences, businesses, or on vehicles when they see vulnerable property. Officers issued 425 cards in 2023.

## Special Watches and Checks

Patrol officers utilize the special watch database to familiarize themselves with traffic concerns, special patrol needs, community events, and parking issues. Officers add information regarding recent crimes to ensure all department members are aware. Officers performed 6,277 special watches and checks throughout the year.

# Employee Recognitions



## Retirements

In 2023, Chief Marc Hornstein retired from the department after almost 30 years of service. We wish him happiness and success in his future endeavors.



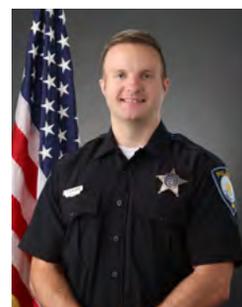
## Promotions

The department was honored to promote Deputy Chief Brian O'Connell to Chief of Police in June 2023. Additionally, Commander Dylan Majcher was promoted to Deputy Chief of Police in November 2023.



## New Hires

The department welcomed three new police officers in 2023 - Charles Janes, Jeffrey Laabs, and Robert Lombardo. We look forward to many successful years ahead with each of them.



# Regional Cooperatives & Partnerships

## Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System (ILEAS)

ILEAS is a statewide law enforcement mutual aid system established after September 11th, 2001. ILEAS provides support through manpower and equipment when a law enforcement agency has exceeded its own capabilities.

## Northern Illinois Police Alarm System (NIPAS)

NIPAS is a coalition of agencies who provide mutual aid to one another in the event of an emergency. NIPAS is divided into two teams: Emergency Services Team (EST) and Mobile Field Force (MFF). The Winnetka Police Department is an active member of NIPAS and provides an officer to serve on each team. The EST is comprised of personnel who are trained in special weapons and tactics for hostage and barricade incidents, high-risk warrant service, major crime scene searches, and other tactical incidents. The MFF provides crowd control for public demonstrations, civil disturbances, and other events involving large crowds. Both teams train on a regular bases throughout the year.

## NORTAF Violent Crimes Task Force

In 1997, thirteen north shore suburbs formed the North Regional Major Crimes Task Force to assist member communities with significant criminal investigations that exceed a single agency's resources. The Violent Crimes Task Force investigates homicides, kidnapping, and critical school violence incidents. Each member department supplies personnel, expertise, equipment, and support. In addition to responding to call-outs, this unit participates in training to enhance the skill level of all personnel. The task force consists of administrative and support personnel, investigative personnel, and forensic specialists. NORTAF Violent Crimes Task Force had five activations during 2023.



## **NORTAF Major Crash Assistance Team**

The NORTAF Major Crash Assistance Team (MCAT) was developed to assist member agencies with the investigation of fatal or near-fatal motor vehicle crashes. MCAT provides a rapid response and professional crash investigation for all major crashes in the NORTAF communities. Winnetka currently has one officer assigned to MCAT as a crash investigator. MCAT had 29 activations during 2023, 17 of which were fatal.

## **NORTAF Burglary Task Force**

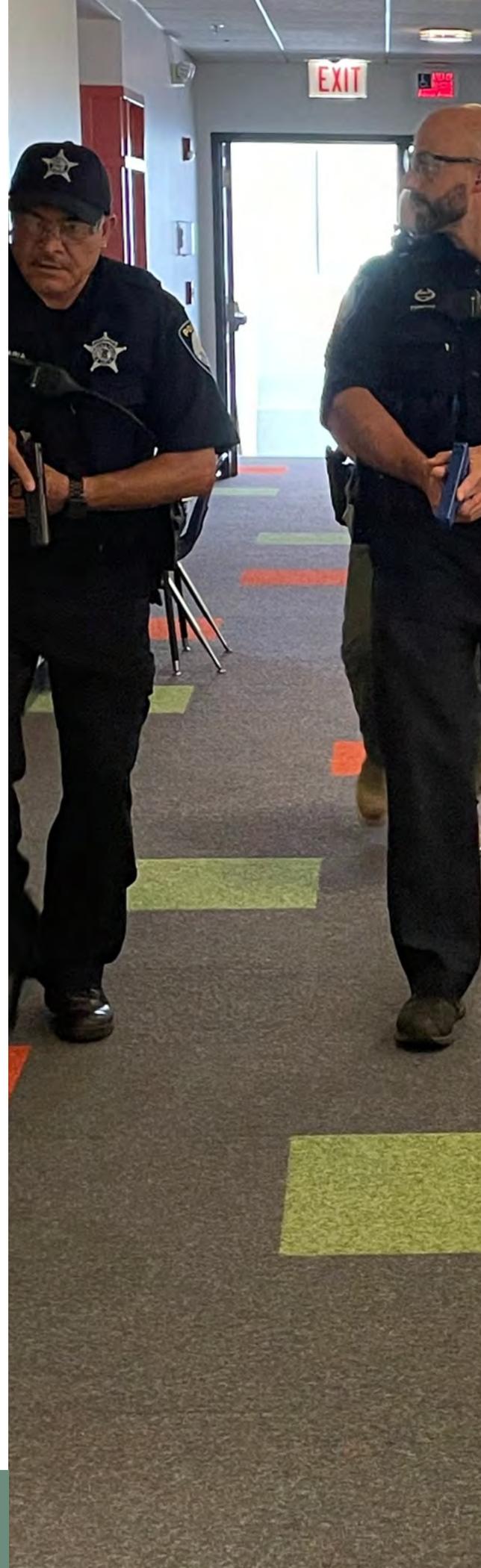
The Burglary Task Force is responsible for investigating burglary patterns throughout the member communities. They are activated when any member agency observes a residential or commercial burglary pattern occurring in their area. The Winnetka Police Department currently has one officer assigned to this task force.

## **Northeastern Illinois Public Safety Training Academy**

The police department is a member of the Northeastern Illinois Public Safety Training Academy (NIPSTA) which provides a cooperative approach to emergency preparedness and response. Located in Glenview, NIPSTA currently has 33 member agencies that enjoy year-round curriculum. For police members, NIPSTA provides training in subjects such as tactical driving, forensics, and tactical scenarios.

## **Northeastern Illinois Regional Crime Laboratory**

The police department is a member of the Northeastern Illinois Regional Crime Laboratory (NIRCL). NIRCL offers a wide variety of analysis, including forensic biology (DNA), chemistry, fingerprint and footwear analysis, toxicology, and more. This partnership allows the police department to have crime scene evidence processed and analyzed in a timely manner.



# A Year in Photos



**WINNETKA POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
*Crimes, Arrests, Citations and Activities, 2021 - 2023*

GROUP A OFFENSES	REPORTED		
	2023	2022	2021
<b>Crimes Against Persons</b>			
Murder	0	0	0
Negligent Manslaughter	0	0	0
Justifiable Homicide	0	0	0
Non-Consensual Sex Offenses	2	3	2
Aggravated Assault	0	5	4
Simple Assault	11	25	8
Intimidation	3	3	0
Kidnapping / Abduction	0	0	0
Consensual Sex Offenses	0	0	0
Human Trafficking	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL Crimes Against Persons</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Crimes Against Property</b>			
Robbery	0	0	0
Burglary / Breaking & Entering	21	8	8
Larceny / Theft Offenses	51	70	48
Motor Vehicle Theft	4	17	2
Arson	1	0	0
Destruction of Property	43	43	31
Counterfeiting / Forgery	3	2	2
Fraud Offenses	139	88	72
Other Crimes Against Property	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL Crimes Against Property</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>163</b>
<b>Crimes Against Society</b>			
Drug / Narcotic Violations	3	32	26
Drug Equipment Violations	0	12	6
Other Crimes Against Society	0	3	0
<b>TOTAL Crimes Against Society</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>COMMON CALLS FOR SERVICE</b>			
<b>Total Calls for Service</b>	<b>21,401</b>	<b>18,736</b>	<b>19,768</b>
Burglar Alarms	698	709	707
Fire Department Assist	454	356	325
Noise / Other Disturbance	272	286	305
Parking Complaint	510	421	394
Suspicious Incident	591	587	491

ARRESTS & CITATIONS		2023	2022	2021
<b>TOTAL Custodial / Arrests</b>		<b>187</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>TOTAL Ordinance Citations</b>		<b>228</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>209</b>
<b>OFFENSE TYPES</b>				
Animal Violations		7	13	19
Battery		11	2	8
Burglary		2	6	3
Cannabis Violations		45	45	30
Criminal Damage to Property		5	1	9
Disorderly Conduct / Harassment		4	16	3
Domestic Battery / Violation O.P.		3	6	4
DUI		24	28	16
Excessive Speed		90	44	51
Hit and Run		0	2	1
Liquor Offenses		5	3	6
No Valid D.L. / Suspended D.L.		38	33	31
Other Agency Warrant Arrests		7	5	7
Other Drug Violations		3	0	1
Public Nuisance		104	32	109
Theft		6	5	12
Trespass		23	27	10
Other Arrests & Citations		38	33	23
<b>PARKING</b>				
Total Parking Citations		2,668	2,747	1,485
<b>TRAFFIC</b>				
Traffic Citations		950	652	756
Traffic Warnings		1,642	1,124	1,100
Injury Traffic Crashes		35	22	26
Non-Injury Traffic Crashes		244	265	256
<b>OTHER DEPARTMENT SERVICES</b>				
House Watch		966	643	520
Directed Traffic Assignments		2,488	2,138	2,341
Special Watches and Checks		6,277	5,992	5,230
Crime Prevention Cards		425	590	682

# Winnetka Police Department

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