

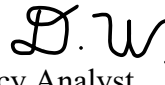


April 26, 2024

MEMORANDUM

TO: Wanika B. Fisher, Chair
Health, Human Services and Public Safety (HHSPS) Committee

THRU: Joseph R. Hamlin 
Director of Budget and Policy Analysis

FROM: David Williams 
Budget and Policy Analyst

RE: Office of Homeland Security
Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Review

Budget Overview

- Based on the FY 2025 Proposed Budget the Office will not request a supplemental budget in FY 2024. However, the Office will be making a supplemental grant request of \$992,500.
- The FY 2025 Proposed Budget for the Office of Homeland Security is \$47,284,300, representing a \$176,800 or 0.4% increase above the FY 2024 Approved Budget.
- Primary drivers of the budget increases are salary adjustments, increases in overtime, and increased OIT charges.
- \$2,305,700 of the \$47,284,300 total budget is anticipated to be grant-funded, which encompasses 4.9% of the FY 2025 Proposed Budget.
- Revenues: in FY 2023 the Office collected \$12,468,300 IN 9-1-1 (wired lines, wireless, and pre-paid) surcharge in fees in FY 2023. \$16,500,000 in 9-1-1 fees was budgeted in FY 2023. \$18,180,000 for FY 2024 and \$18,361,800 is proposed for FY 2025.

Multi-Year Budget Overview:

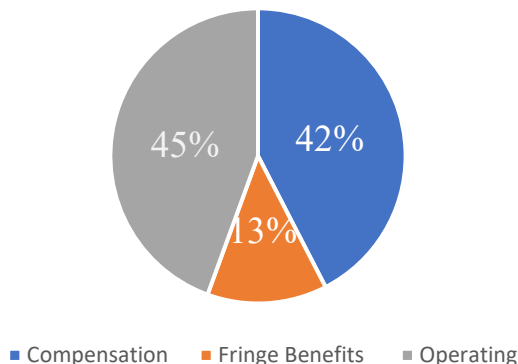
Fund	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Budget	FY 2024 Estimated	% Change - Est vs App	FY 2025 Proposed	\$ Change, Prop vs App	% Change
General Fund	\$ 38,067,311	\$ 39,711,220	\$ 45,168,800	\$ 40,646,200	-10.0%	\$44,978,600	\$(190,200)	-0.4%
Grants	1,464,526	1,900,657	1,938,700	2,529,800	30.5%	2,305,700	367,000	18.9%
Total	\$ 39,531,837	\$ 41,611,877	\$ 47,107,500	\$ 43,176,000	3.8%	\$47,284,300	\$ 176,800	0.4%

Budget Comparison – General Fund

Category	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Approved	FY 2024 Estimated	FY 2025 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change (Approved Budget)	Percentage Change (Estimated Budget)
Compensation	\$ 17,050,138	\$ 17,887,700	\$ 16,867,300	\$ 18,943,400	\$ 1,055,700	5.9%	12.3%
Fringe Benefits	5,118,075	6,242,800	5,144,500	6,061,900	(180,900)	-2.9%	17.8%
Operating Expenses	17,543,457	21,038,300	18,634,700	19,973,300	(1,065,000)	-5.1%	7.2%
Capital Outlay							
Total	\$39,711,670	\$ 45,168,800	\$ 40,646,500	\$ 44,978,600	\$ (190,200)	-0.4%	10.7%

- The Office's General Fund proposed budget is comprised of 42% of funds allocated for compensation, 13% allocated for fringe expenditures, and the remaining 44% is allocated for operational expenses.

FY 2025 Proposed General Fund Expenditures by
Category



Compensation

- FY 2025 General Fund compensation is proposed at \$18,943,400. In FY 2025, General Fund compensation expenditures are budgeted to increase by \$1,055,700 or 5.9% above the FY 2024

Approved Budget (or 2,076,100 or 12.3%, above the FY 2024 estimated level of expenditures). The increases are driven by the annualizations of FY 2024 salary adjustments and anticipated overtime.

- In FY 2025, the authorized General Fund staff complement is proposed at 219 authorized full-time and 1 part-time position, which represents no change from FY 2024.

Fringe Benefits

Fringe Benefits Historical Trend						
	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Budget	FY 2024 Estimated	FY 2025 Proposed
Compensation	\$ 15,476,981	\$ 15,790,700	\$ 17,050,138	\$ 17,887,700	\$ 16,867,300	\$18,943,400
Fringe Benefits Expenditures	\$ 4,822,220	\$ 4,909,500	\$ 5,118,075	\$ 6,242,800	\$ 6,061,900	\$ 6,061,900
As a % of Compensation	23.8%	23.7%	23.1%	25.9%	26.4%	24.2%

- In FY 2025, fringe benefits expenditures are proposed at \$6,061,900, representing a decrease of -2.9% below the FY 2024 Approved Budget level (or \$917,400, or 17.8% above the FY 2024 estimated level of expenditures).

Operating Expenses

- FY 2025 General Fund operating expenditures are proposed at \$19,973,300, representing a \$1,065,000 or -5.1 decrease below the FY 2024 Approved Budget level (\$1,338,600, or 7.2% above the FY 2024 estimated level of expenditures). The proposed decreases are due to a reduction in computer dispatch maintenance contractual services and telephone, utilities, data/voice, operating equipment to align with historical spending.
- A comprehensive list of proposed operating expenses is provided in response to the *FY 2025 First Round Budget Review Question No. 27 Attachments 3 and 4*. The largest decrease (\$2,136,800) is proposed for the Data-Voice category (for body-worn cameras), the second largest increase (\$129,500) is in the Telephone category, and the third largest decrease (\$106,700) is in the General & Administrative Contracts category.

Grants

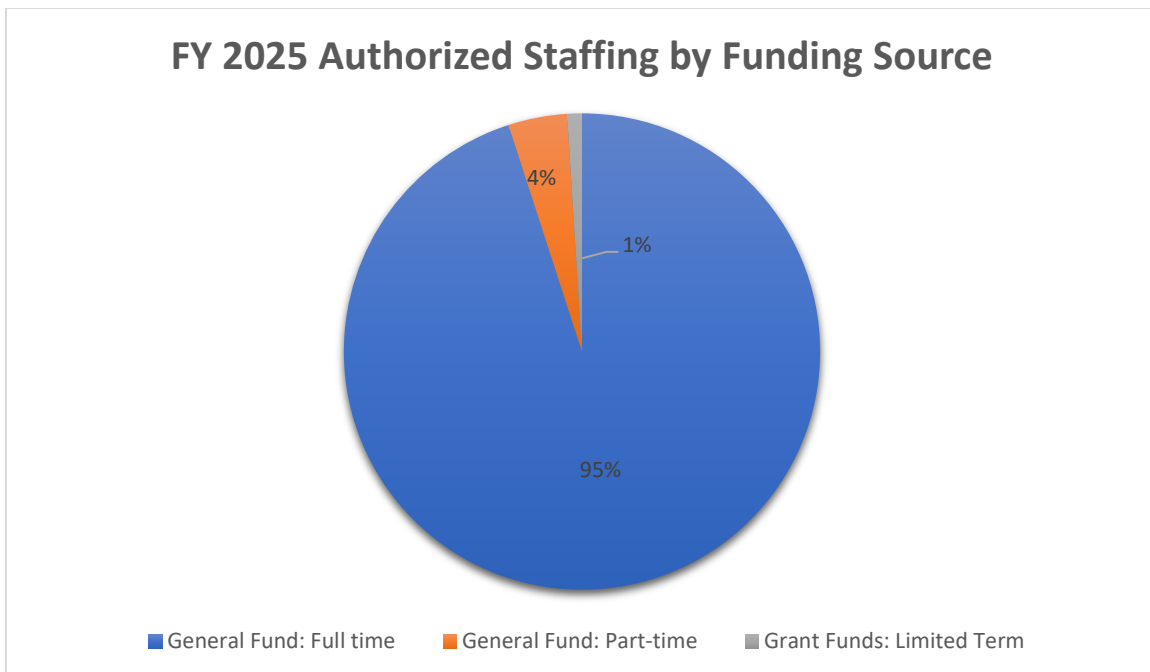
Category	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Approved	FY 2024 Estimated	FY 2025 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change
Compensation	\$477,767	\$680,332	\$871,800	\$603,600	\$925,700	\$53,900	6.2%
Fringe Benefits	\$252,804	\$81,343	\$131,200	\$85,600	\$142,100	\$10,900	8.3%
Operating Expenses	\$733,955	\$986,841	\$935,700	\$1,840,600	\$1,237,900	\$302,200	32.3%
Capital Outlay		\$152,141				\$0	
Total	\$1,464,526	\$1,900,657	\$1,938,700	\$2,529,800	\$2,305,700	\$367,000	18.9%

- FY 2024 grants:
 - The Office is anticipated to expend \$2,529,800 or 30% more than the grant fund budget of \$1,938,700.
 - A total of nine (9) grants were budgeted for FY 2024, and all anticipated grants were awarded.
- FY 2025 Grants are proposed at \$2,305,700, an increase of \$367,000 or 18.9% above the FY 2024 approved level (or \$224,100, 9.7% decrease from the FY 2024 anticipated level of expenditures). The increase is driven by the addition of the UASI- Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities award.
- Six (6) grant awards are anticipated in FY 2025. Information about the grant-funded programs is available on page 417 of the FY Proposed Budget Book.
- The FY 2025 budget proposes a Grant Funded staff complement of 10 limited-term positions. This represents no change from the FY 2024 grant-funded staffing level.

	FY 2022 Approved	FY 2023 Approved	FY 2024 Approved	FY 2025 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change
Limited Term	10	10	10	10	0	0.0%
Total	10	10	10	10	0	0.0%

Staffing

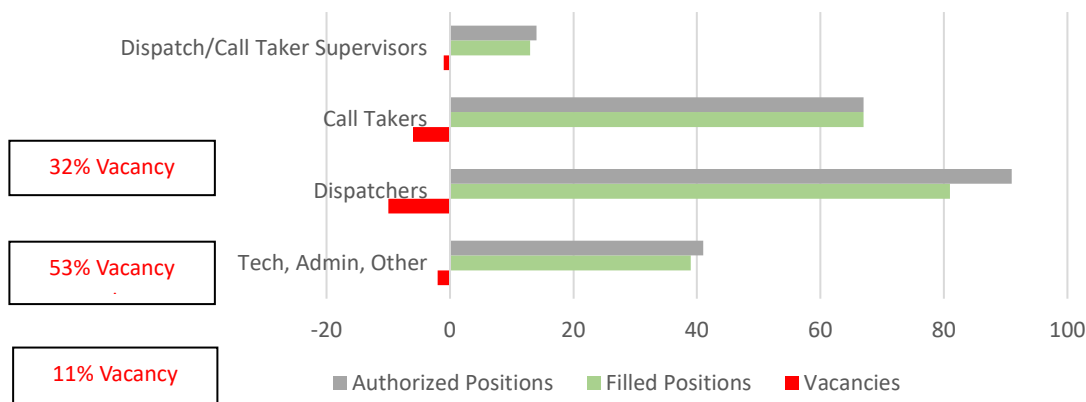
- In FY 2025, the Office’s General Fund full-time authorized staffing level is proposed to be 219 General Fund full-time positions, representing no change from the FY 2024 approved staffing level. Grant funds are proposed to provide funding for ten (10) limited-term positions.



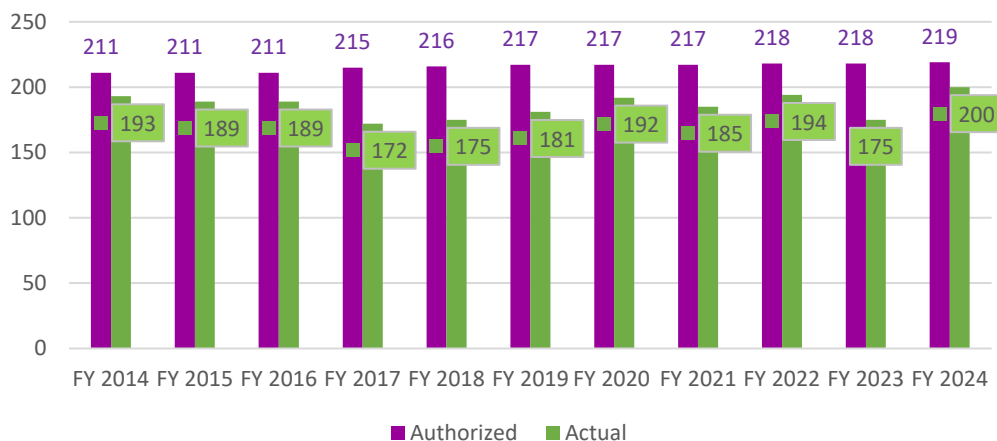
■ Vacancies:

- In FY 2024, as of March, the Office reported having 19 General Fund full-time vacancies out of 219 positions, which represents an effective General Funded full-time vacancy rate of 9%.
- In FY 2024, as of March, the Office had three (3) limited term Grant Funded vacancy out of ten (10) positions. This represents a limited-term Grant Funded vacancy rate of 30%
- Between March 2023 and March 2024, General Fund full-time vacancies have decreased from 43 in 2023 to 19 in 2024. The vacancy rate subsequently has decreased from 20% to 9%.
- 19 General Fund full-time vacancies are composed of: 32% vacancy rate for Call Takers, 53% vacancy rate for Dispatchers, and 11% vacancy rate for Tech/Admin, Other category.

FY 2024 YTD General Fund Full-Time Vacancies and Filled Positions by Categories



General Fund Full-Time Positions: Authorized vs. Actual



- Employee retention and attrition:
 - In FY 2024, as of March, the office has lost a total of 22 employees to attrition, with 18 out of 22 resigning.
 - The high proportion (81%) of employee separations due to resignation in FY 2024 to date is similar to patterns observed in prior years, and it is indicative of retention challenges as employees do not work until retirement.
 - Retention challenges and high vacancy rates lead to “*severe employee burnout*” for the Public Safety Communications Dispatchers and Call Takers. Consistent staffing shortages place additional pressure on remaining personnel adversely affecting workloads.
 - In FY 2025, the Office’s attrition rate is equivalent to 1.83 employees per month.
- In the past, the Emergency Dispatcher Apprenticeship program has been successful at filling Dispatcher vacancies by providing upward training opportunities to Emergency Call Takers. However, the high number of “*Emergency Call Taker vacancies (32% vacancy rate) has restricted the ability to move personnel into the apprenticeship program*”. Staffing levels, according to the Office, need to increase and stabilize to allow for the apprenticeship program to continue, and currently, the Office remains at risk of losing trained staff due to the lack of upward mobility.

Dispatcher Apprenticeship Program			
Description	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024 YTD
Completed the program and promoted to Dispatcher I	6	4	2
Currently in the Apprenticeship Program	0	0	1
Applied, pending next Apprenticeship Cycle after	2	0	3
Did not complete-Resigned prior to completing	0	0	0
Did not complete-Withdrew from the program	0	0	0
Did not complete-Unable to satisfactorily complete	0	0	0
YTD as of : March 28, 2024			

- Recruitment:
 - In FY 2024, the Office planned to run six (6) classes, each with up to 10 Emergency Call Taker/Dispatcher recruits.
 - The four (4) recruit classes run to date produced 24 new employees (out of an anticipated 30).
 - One (1) class is currently underway and is expected to graduate up to 6 recruits in May of 2024.
 - Another class is expected to begin in April if sufficient number of applicants apply.
 - The recruit classes provide new Emergency Call Taker and Emergency Dispatcher employees with State required 9-1-1 Specialist training and certifications and internal training requirements to include working knowledge of the equipment that is used as a part of their duties and responsibilities. The classes last on average 60 days.

- Seven (7) recruit classes of up to 10 recruits are proposed for FY 2025. If additional applicants apply for Emergency Call Taker and Emergency Dispatcher positions, then the Office's Training Section will be able to schedule additional training classes for the additional recruits.
- The Office has previously reported that it would greatly benefit from a comprehensive classification-staffing study given the ongoing employee recruitment and retention challenges as well as the switch to the Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911), which would require adjustments to classification of positions within Public Safety Communications (PSC). According to the Office of Homeland Security, the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) is tasked with conducting such a study, which is to be done by a third party. However, the information confirming or denying whether such study is indeed planned for either FY 2024 or FY 2025 has been requested from OHRM but has not been obtained in time to be included in this Report.
- No funds have been included in the FY 2024 Proposed Budget to support the implementation of the anticipated comprehensive classification-staffing study recommendations.
- In FY 2024, the Office retained Sahara Communications to launch its recruitment campaign for 911 specialists. Between May 15-September 30, 2023, the Office received a total of 1,259 applications (690 for Call Taker and 569 for dispatcher) averaging about 90 weekly applications per week. Total expenditures from Sahara Communications is \$282,650.
- The 9-1-1 Call Center used language translation services an average of 87 times per day in CY 2023, and 90% of these calls required translator services for Spanish-speaking callers. The number of calls that require translation services represent approximately 1.8% of all calls, or 2.2% of all incoming calls. The Office also has eight (7) certified bi-lingual employees that supplement the service provided by the translation service contractor.

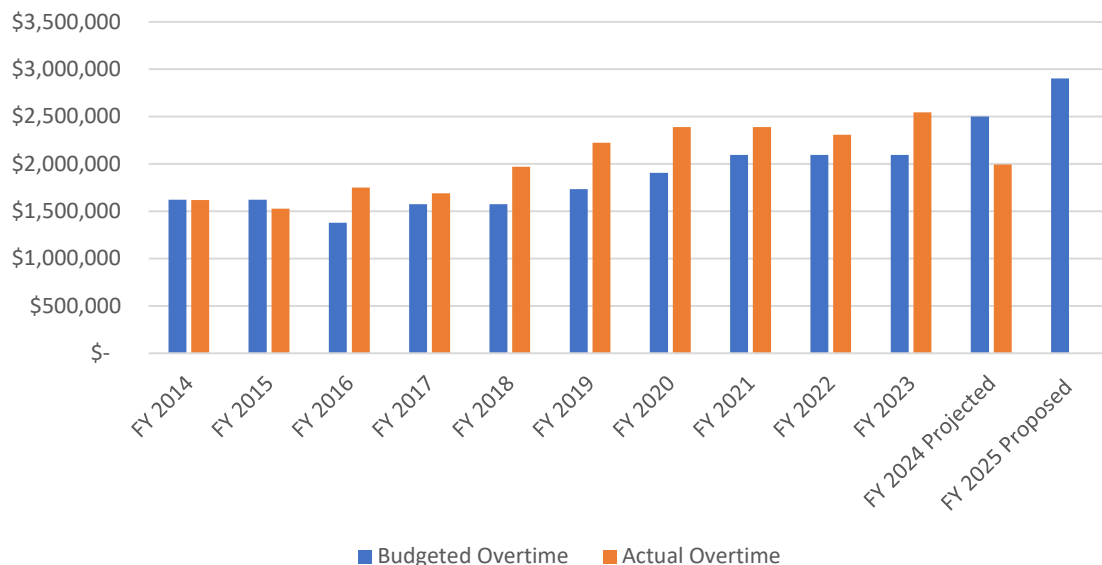
Overtime

The Office relies on overtime to augment short staffing levels in critical areas. The use of overtime and compensatory time helps to meet the Office's operational goals and service mandates.

(see next page)

<i>Office of Homeland Security Overtime Overview</i>				
<i>Year</i>	<i>Budgeted Overtime</i>	<i>Actual Overtime</i>	<i>Variance</i>	<i>Percentage Variance</i>
FY 2025 Proposed	\$2,902,700			
FY 2024 Projected	\$2,500,000	\$1,995,086	\$504,914	-21%
FY 2023	\$2,096,300	\$2,545,172	(\$448,872)	21%
FY 2022	\$2,096,300	\$2,307,730	(\$211,430)	10%
FY 2021	\$2,096,300	\$2,388,192	(\$291,892)	14%
FY 2020	\$1,905,700	\$2,390,877	(\$485,177)	25%
FY 2019	\$1,732,500	\$2,223,253	(\$490,753)	28%
FY 2018	\$1,575,000	\$1,971,335	(\$396,335)	25%
FY 2017	\$1,575,000	\$1,690,133	(\$115,133)	7%
FY 2016	\$1,379,200	\$1,750,330	(\$371,130)	27%
FY 2015	\$1,621,900	\$1,526,692	\$95,208	-6%

Budgeted vs Actual Overtime

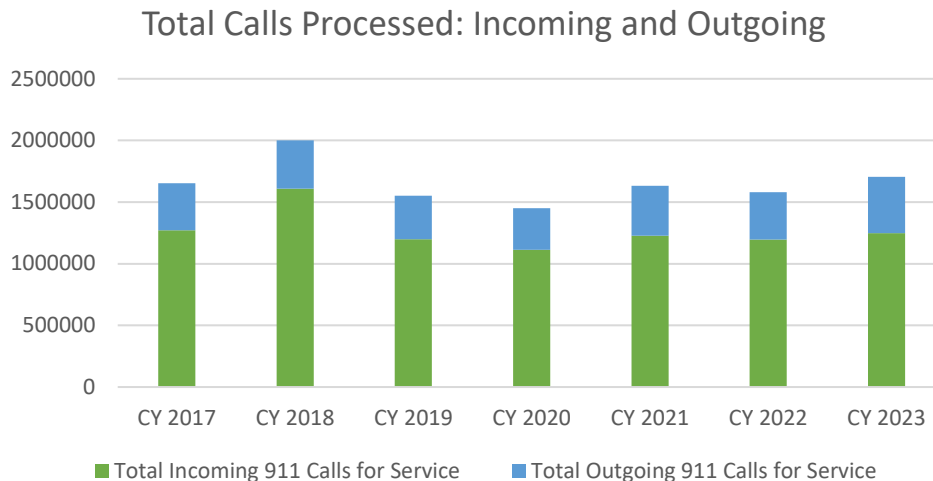


- FY 2025 General Fund overtime is proposed at \$2,902,700, representing a \$202,700 (7.5%) increase above \$2,700,000 included in the FY 2024 Approved Budget.
- As of March 2024, the Office's overtime expenditures were reported at \$1.9 million. The Office projects that it will incur \$2.7 million in overtime expenditures by the end of the FY 2024, which will exceed its budgeted amount by approximately \$200,000.
- According to the Office, most of its overtime costs are associated with backfilling for vacant positions in order to comply with the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), which requires a Maryland Public Safety Answering Point to answer all 9-1-1 calls for service within 10 seconds.
- Overtime tracking enables the Office to determine what are the primary drivers of overtime expenditures. As reflected in table provided in response to the *FY 2025 First Round Budget*

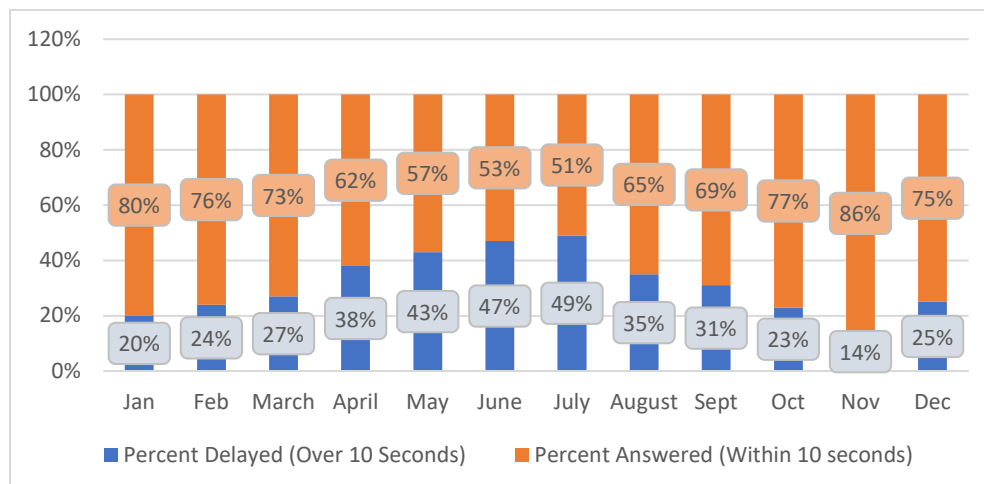
Review Questions No. 25 Attachment 2, the first reason for overtime use is shift created overtime (due to the existing shift structure as explained in response to *Question No. 25a*). The second largest component of overtime expenditures in FY 2024 is overtime due to backfilling employees who are on sick leave, followed by overtime needed to meet “minimum operating tasks” (usually answer calls within the mandated 10 seconds requirement).

Workload and Program Management

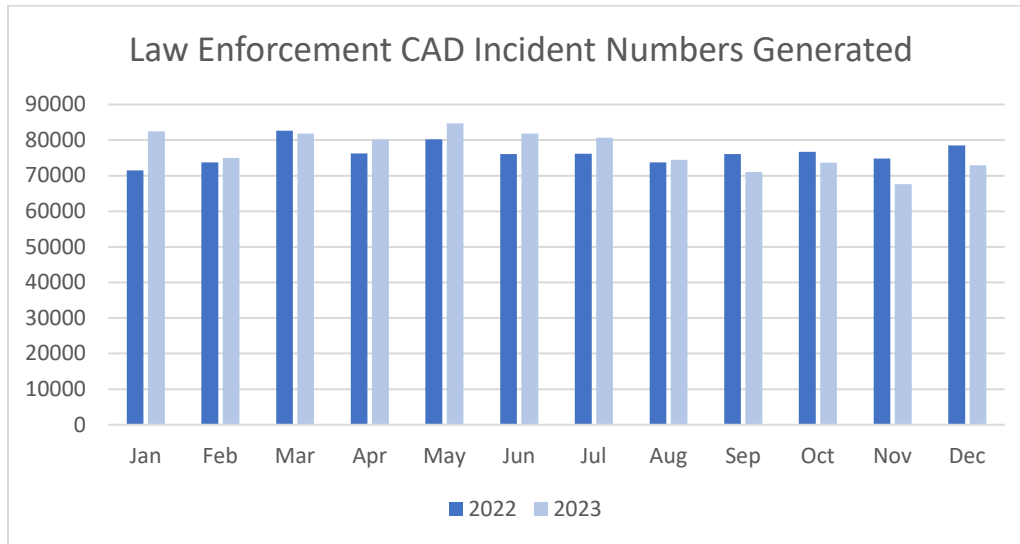
- The Office reports that although the 9-1-1 call volume and the number of dispatchers have remained static, the key change that affects the Office’s ability to meet its workload demands is employee attrition. According to the Office, there is a need to reprogram radios.
- In CY 2023, the Public Safety Communications 9-1-1 Call Center processed a total of 1,704,046 calls composed of 1,247,885 incoming calls and 384,281 outgoing calls.



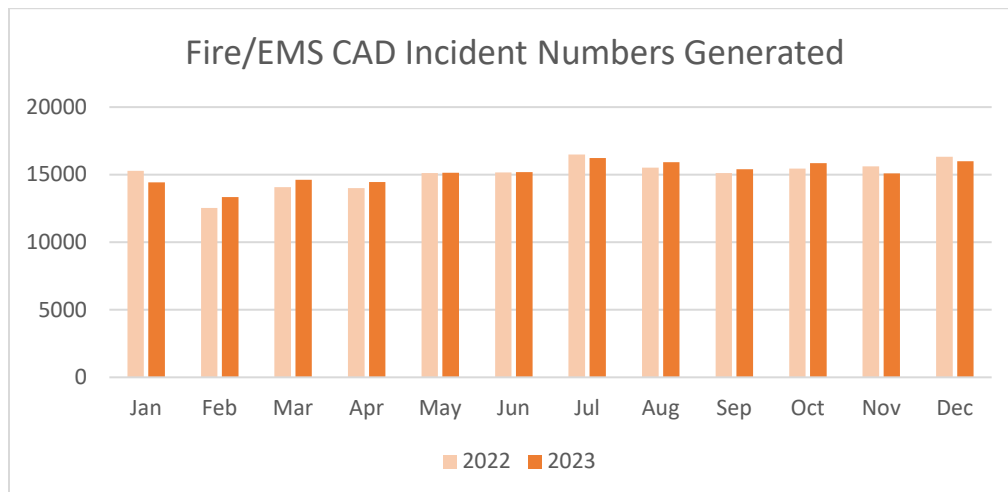
- In CY 2023 75% of the calls for service were answered within the state-mandated 10 seconds. In CY 2022 on average 81% of the calls were answered within 10 seconds, and 84% in CY 2021.



- Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system incident numbers generated data:
 - In CY 2023, 926,217 law enforcement CAD incident numbers were generated, representing an increase from 916,442 CAD incident numbers generated in CY 2022.



- In CY 2023, 181,632 fire/emergency medical services/rescue CAD incident numbers were generated, representing an increase from 180,725 CAD incident numbers generated in CY 2022.



- Law enforcement dispatch data:
 - In CY 2023, 691,413 dispatches were made for County Police, a decrease from 699,351 calls dispatched in CY 2022.
 - In CY 2023, 90,904 dispatches were made for Municipal Law Enforcement Agencies, a decrease from 103,145 dispatched calls in CY 2022.

- In CY 2023, 60,545 dispatches were made for Sheriff Deputies, an increase from 50,900 dispatched calls in CY 2022.
- Fire/emergency medical services/rescue dispatch data:
 - In CY 2023, 35,064 dispatches were made for fire services, a decrease from 37,243 calls dispatched in CY 2022.
 - In CY 2023, 117,496 dispatches were made for emergency medical services, a decrease from 122,327 dispatched calls in CY 2022.
 - In CY 2023, 17,187 dispatches were made for rescue services, a decrease from 19,945 dispatched calls in CY 2022.
- The Office has now successfully implemented the diversion pilot program where calls are transferred to the Community Crisis Service, Inc (CCSI) where specific calls are transferred to trained mental health specialists. The agency has a memorandum of understanding with a multiple other agencies to successfully execute and maintain this program.
 - In 2023 182 calls were diverted to the CCSI from the 911 Center.
 - The 911 Center will divert calls on a 24-hour basis as opposed to a 12-hour day.
 - The Office has expressed a need for project coordinator.
- Public Safety Communications Division: Technical Services, Mobile Technology Center (MTC):
 - The Radio Communication Section performs programming, installation, and repair of radios, monitors and support infrastructure to ensure uninterrupted availability of the Public Safety Radio Network.
 - The CAD/RMS Section supports operations of critical public safety software and hardware applications including in-car and body worn cameras, the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), the Law Enforcement Records Management System (RMS), the Fire/EMS RMS, and the Countywide Mobile Data Computer (MDC) deployment.
 - In FY 2024, as of March, the MTC has 13 merit employees and nine (9) contractors and uses overtime when needed to meet the workload demands 13. Note that last year MTC had a total of 22 positions, and 23 positions in 2022, so the number of positions has decreased.

PSC Technical Services Division CAD/RMS and Radio Sections Workload Demands			
Entity	Type of Work	Number of Tasks Completed in CY 2022	Number of Tasks Completed in CY 2023
Board of Education	Radio Installation	110	115
Public Works & Transportation	Radio Installation	17	62
Fire/EMS Department	Radio Installation	18	12
Fire/EMS Department	Radio Reprogramming	2305	2750
Police Department	Radio Installation	176	275
Police Department	Radio Reprogramming	376	325
Office of the Sheriff	Radio Reprogramming	45	47
Fire/EMS Department	Mobile Data Computer Installation	8	12
Police Department	Body Worn Camera Vehicle Installation	150	580
Office of the Sheriff	Body Worn Camera Vehicle Installation	0	10
Public Safety	Mobile Data Computer Update to Windows 10	230	325

Equipment, Information Technology (IT) and Facilities

- Overall, no new information technology initiatives have been identified for FY 2025.
- It appears that several types of critical equipment/infrastructure will require replacement and/or new maintenance agreements in FY 2025. While the Office supports an array of critical equipment, there does not seem to be an equipment replacement plan. According to the Office, replacement requirements have been discussed in the FY 2025 budget cycle and funding requests are expected to be submitted in FY 2026.
- The Office has submitted a purchase order to replace the carpet.
- The Office plans to pave the walkway behind OHS Headquarters (Anchor Street building) to the Emergency Management storage facility estimated at \$11,250.