

# 2024

# Annual Report



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# The Elkhart County Sheriff's Office: A History

## How it all began

*The office of the Sheriff is one of antiquity. It is the oldest law enforcement office known within the common law system and we have always accorded it with great dignity and high trust. The office of Sheriff evolved out of necessity.*

*The Indiana Constitution of 1816 and county established the office of County Sheriff. In Indiana, the Sheriff is referred to as a constitutional officer. When Indiana became a state in 1816, it was a very popular shortcut to the west. A large section of northern Indiana had more Native Americans than settlers. The settlers wanted progress, so in 1830, in a log cabin on the north bank of the St. Joseph River where it joins the Elkhart River, they held a meeting at the residence of Chester Sage. After several meetings, the group of men appointed and elected the officials that would be in charge of business for a territory in the "Valley of St. Joseph," which later became Elkhart County. Elected and appointed were the following: Thomas Thomas, Clerk; Eli Penwell, Sheriff; J.W. Violet, Recorder; and William Latta and Peter Diddy, as Associate Judges. There were three Justices of the Peace: James Mathers, John Jackson, and Arminies Penwell. Elkhart County was part of a township called Mong Go Qua Nong, in which four counties were divided—Noble, LaGrange, Steuben, and Elkhart.*

*"Prisoners were kept boarded and guarded by the residents of the area who were paid 75 cents per day per prisoner."*

*Sheriff Penwell furnished his own gun, horse, and had no jail. Prisoners were kept boarded and guarded by the residents of the area who were paid 75 cents per day per prisoner. If the prisoner was sentenced, they transported them to Fort Wayne in Allen County, a journey that took three days by horseback. As the Sheriff's Office began to expand in 1833, Benjamin Casey was the Office's first known Deputy Sheriff. In 1838, Elkhart County built their first jail. Since then, there have been four jails constructed and 44 Sheriffs.*

*The Sheriff is the only viable officer remaining of the ancient offices, and his contemporary responsibility as conservator of the peace has been influenced greatly by modern society. As the crossbow gave way to the primitive flintlocks, which in turn gave way to the six-gun and automatic weapons, the Sheriff is accustomed to change. Nevertheless, perhaps more than ever before in the history of law enforcement, the Sheriff is faced with complex, moving, and rapid changes in methodology, technology, and social attitudes.*

## Workload Comparison (1980 – 2024)

In 1980, the Census Bureau states that the population of Elkhart County was 137,330. In July 2024, the Census Bureau estimated the population to be 207,436, an increase of over 70,000 people to the population in this area. As the population grew, so did the total number of calls for service. Calls for service for merit officers in 1980 totaled 20,540; and now, 68,271 in 2024, which is 2,206 fewer calls for service than in the previous year of 2023.

In 1980, the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office employed a total of 58 merit officers. There were still 58 merit officers in 1990 and an increase of 9 positions through the next decade to a total of 67 merit officers by the year 2000. The number of Merit Officers employed at the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office at the beginning of 2024 was 71, out of a total of 74 positions allotted to the Sheriff's Office. During this year, although 6 merit officers either retired or resigned, the year ended with a total of 73 Merit Officer positions filled.

Since 1980, the increase in the population of Elkhart County has, of course, contributed to an increase in the average number of inmates in the Elkhart County Jail. In 1980 the monthly average was 105 inmates; 1990 was 341 inmates/month; 2000 was 357/month. There was a monthly average of 906 incarcerated individuals in the Elkhart County Jail during the year 2024. This is an increase in the average of 111 inmates per month.

# Accreditation

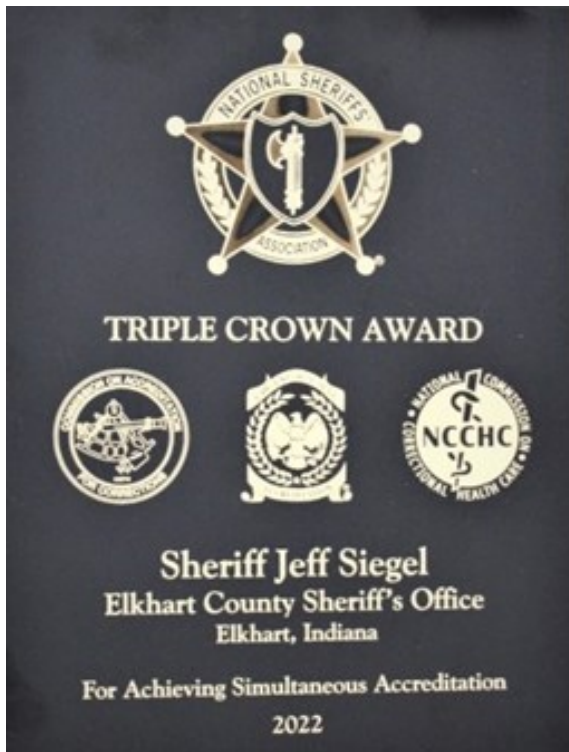
## CALEA – Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies

The Elkhart County Sheriff's Office continues to hold the distinction of being the first Sheriff's Office in the nation to receive accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) in 1984. Since September 2022, the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office has employed Joseph M. Pinch as the CALEA Accreditation Manager. Mr. Pinch officially retired from his sworn position in October 2022, after serving 27 years with the Sheriff's Office. He started his career in 1995 as a Jail Officer, then Patrol Officer, then an undercover drug unit investigator. Finally, he also served as a Detective for 10 years, before accepting the civilian position of Accreditation Manager.



## ACA – American Correctional Association

The Accreditation Manager for the American Correctional Association (ACA) is Marla Cutter, who has served in that position since 2021. The triennial ACA assessment of the Elkhart County Corrections facility was conducted in October 2023. Our agency passed this latest assessment with zero issues and will be receiving our 3rd reaccreditation award in January 2024. The last ACA award was presented in 2021, for successfully complying with ACA standards over a 3-year period, ending in October 2020.



## Triple Crown Status

The Elkhart County Sheriff's Office (ECSO) has achieved the "Triple Crown Status" with the National Sheriff's Association. This status is awarded to agencies which attain simultaneous accreditation through CALEA, ACA and NCCHC (National Commission on Correctional Health Care). As of 2022, the ECSO is one of only 20 sheriff's offices in the United States to have won the Triple Crown Award at least twice since the inception of the award in 1993.

# The Elkhart County Sheriff's Office Vision, Mission & Values

## **Mission Statement:**

*The Elkhart County Sheriff's Office will strive for a safe and secure community through implementation of premiere law enforcement and corrections practices.*

### **SERVICE**

*We will provide quality service in a courteous, responsive, efficient and accessible manner. We will fervently seek justice for victims of criminal acts. We will face danger or disaster with courage and boldness to resolve and mitigate the crisis. Information is a key to crime prevention; during ordinary times and during a crisis, we will keep our community informed and provide the opportunity for knowledge so they are empowered from becoming a victim.*

### **INTEGRITY**

*We are committed to achieving the highest standards of performance, ethical conduct, and truthfulness, on and off duty. We will act professionally to all persons, being accountable for our actions. We will keep our Oath of Office, even if societal trends induce us otherwise. Transparency will be exhibited in expenditures and the budget process for inter-government and public trust.*

### **RESPECT**

*We will regard all people, whether fellow employees, inmates, or the public, with utmost respect and dignity, exhibiting when needed an understanding of ethnic and cultural diversity. We will treat all people impartially and with compassion, while displaying discretion and fairness for the situation.*

### **RESOURCEFULNESS**

*We will invest in our employees to allow them personal and professional success, providing for the development of future leaders and highly skilled staff. We will foster community partnerships, interagency cooperation, and employee involvement to solve community problems and enhance public safety. We will be innovative and proactive to reduce crime and increase traffic safety while utilizing programming and ministry inside the correctional facility to reduce recidivism.*

## **Vision Statement:**

*The Elkhart County Sheriff's Office employees will always strive:*

- *To serve our community while living and displaying our core values;*
- *To uphold and protect the United States and Indiana Constitutions;*
- *For safety, security of, and preservation of the peace for anyone in Elkhart County; and*
- *To be the standard and leader in law enforcement and corrections; setting the bar high for all other agencies in Elkhart County.*

# The Sheriff and Chief Deputy: Introduction and Responsibilities

## Sheriff Jeff A. Siegel

Sheriff Jeff A. Siegel has been with the Elkhart County Sheriff's office since March 18, 1991. Sheriff Siegel has served as a Patrol Officer, Under Cover operative assigned to the multi-jurisdictional Elkhart County Drug Task Force, Detective and Captain. In 1997 Siegel was promoted to Detective and in 2004 he was promoted by Sheriff Mike Books to Detective Captain. Siegel served as the Detective Captain until December 2018.

On November 6, 2018, the citizens of Elkhart County elected Siegel to serve as the 45th Sheriff of Elkhart County. On November 8, 2022, Siegel was once again elected as Sheriff of Elkhart County. Indiana Sheriffs are term limited to serving two consecutive 4-year terms. Sheriff Siegel not only serves the community at the Sheriff's Office but also serves on many local boards. Siegel actively participates on the following boards: Public Safety Communications Center, Oaklawn, Elkhart County Fair, Community Corrections, The Justice Reinvestment Advisory Council, and is also the current President of the Elkhart County Drug Free Partnership.



*Together, they have served the Elkhart County Community and its Citizens for over 50 years.*

## Chief Deputy Sean J. Holmes

Chief Deputy Holmes began his career with the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office in 1994 with the Corrections Division. In 1995, he was promoted to the patrol division where he served as a patrol officer for six years. He was promoted to Corporal and then Sergeant in 2001. In 2004 he was promoted to Captain of the Patrol Division. During his time in the patrol division, he served as a field-training officer (FTO) and was a member of the bike team, dive team, and the Emergency Services Unit (SWAT). He held several positions on the Emergency Services Unit: operator, team leader, and finally commander, serving a total of 15 years with the unit. Chief Deputy Holmes also served as the coordinator for the Elkhart County Traffic Safety Partnership where he earned recognition as the coordinator of the year by the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI). He currently serves as a board member for the Elkhart County Drug Free Partnership and has previously served on the board as the Treasurer and Vice President. Chief Deputy Holmes served in the United States Navy, holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Indiana University and has earned a master's degree in criminology from Indiana State University. He is a graduate of the Police Executive Leadership Academy (PELA).



# The Captains



**Captain Jim Smith**

*Detective Division Commander*

Captain Jim Smith started his career in law enforcement as a jail officer in 1987. He was promoted to the patrol division in 1990. After 2 years in patrol, he was selected to work as an undercover operative in the Elkhart County Drug Task Force for the next 4 years. He returned to the Patrol Division and in 2004 he was promoted to the Detective Division where he worked property crimes investigations and was the Sex and Violent Offender Registration coordinator for 3 years. He was promoted to Detective Lieutenant for a short time until he was promoted in 2019 to his current rank of Captain. Captain Smith has served on the Sheriff's Office Emergency Services Unit (SWAT) for 9 years, was a founding member of the agency's Motorcycle unit, Senior Commander of the Honor Guard since 1998, firearms instructor, Polygraph examiner and member of the American Polygraph Association.



**Captain Brian Holloman**

*Patrol Division Commander*

Brian Holloman began his career with the Sheriff's Office in the middle of an internship, during his final semester of college in the spring of 1995. In his tenure with the agency, he has held the position of Corrections Officer, Patrol Officer, Patrol Sergeant, Detective, Detective Lieutenant, Detective Captain, and is currently the Captain of the Patrol Division, a position he transferred to in April 2019. Beyond the divisions he has served, Brian served on the Emergency Services Unit, the Crash Investigation Team, and was the county-wide coordinator for the Fatal Alcohol Crash Team. He also served for many years as a Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) and a DRE instructor. Brian's formal education includes a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and Criminology from Ball State University as well as a Master of Criminal Justice from Boston University. Brian is also a graduate of the Police Executive Leadership Academy. In his spare time, he taught for many years as an adjunct faculty member of Indiana Tech, teaching courses ranging from theory to forensic scene processing, to death investigations, crime analysis, and criminal profiling.

# The Captains



**Captain Michael Culp**

*Administrative Division Commander*

Capt. Michael Culp started his career in law enforcement as a Patrol Officer with the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office in 2004, following his graduation from the Indiana Police Corps. In 2007, he was promoted to Patrol Corporal and in 2008, Patrol Sergeant. In 2011 he was promoted to Patrol Captain, serving in that position until transferring to the position of Administrative Services Captain in 2019. He attained a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and criminology from Ball State University. He is a Police Executive Leadership Academy (PELA) graduate. Captain Culp previously served on the Emergency Services Unit (SWAT) as a precision marksman team leader and unit commander. Currently, he serves as a firearms instructor and is the grant coordinator for the Elkhart County Traffic Safety Partnership.



**Captain David Lanzen**

*Corrections Division Commander*

Captain David Lanzen holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Cornerstone University. He started his career in law enforcement as a patrol officer with the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office in 2004. He was awarded the Academic Achievement Award and the Indiana Sheriff's Association Scholastic Award upon graduation from the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy. He served as a Field Training Officer for 7 years and was an operator on the Emergency Services Unit (SWAT) team for 15 years. He is a less-lethal weapons instructor and a firearms instructor. Captain Lanzen was promoted to Patrol Corporal in 2008, and then Patrol Sergeant in 2011. While a sergeant, he attended and graduated from the Police Executive Leadership Academy. He served as Training Sergeant starting in 2019 before earning a promotion to the position of Corrections Captain in 2020.

# COMMUNITY EVENTS

## Salvation Army

Each year, employees of the Sheriff's Office are permitted to volunteer for an hour during their workday to ring the Christmas bells at the red donation buckets outside whatever nearby retail establishment has granted permission for the Salvation Army to collect the well-known annual donations. Usually during the winter, when this activity typically takes place, one hour out in the cold is long enough!



## Shop With a Sheriff

On December 18, 2024, the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office hosted the annual Shop With a Sheriff event, which partners an officer with at least one child whose family may be experiencing various hardships. Various private donors from the community provide funds for each child to be escorted to a local department store, where the child can then purchase Christmas gifts for themselves or anyone else in their family. This year, donors provided enough money that each child was allowed to spend around \$150.00. The officer will arrive at the child's house and drive the child, in a police car, back to the Sheriff's Office. Once all participants have arrived, everyone proceeds to the department store in a full police procession, with emergency lights and sirens activated. After the children are finished shopping for their gifts, they are returned to the Sheriff's Office, where the gifts are wrapped for Christmas and everyone enjoys a meal of pizza, soda pops and other light snacks. Once the festivities are over, the officer then delivers the child back to their residence, with all their gifts. This year 26 children were able to participate in this program due to the generous monetary donations of private citizens, cooperation of the chosen department store and over 30 officers who volunteered their own time to give back to these kids. Additionally, there happened to be 3 different families that had been signed up, but their children were unable to attend the event for undisclosed reasons. Lists were obtained from those families and officers did the shopping for them and delivered the gifts to their houses. When the officers returned the children to their homes, each family was presented with a \$100.00 voucher to purchase various foodstuffs or clothing (no alcohol, tobacco, or lottery).



Shop With a Sheriff

• 2024 •



# COMMUNITY EVENTS

## RAD (Rape Aggression Defense)

Ordinarily, the RAD Program holds 6 classes during the year. In 2024, as in the prior year 2023, because of a need for additional manpower to work in the jail and not enough available instructors, there were only a total of 3 classes. They were conducted at the following locations in Elkhart County:

CAPS (Child And Parent Services)	19 attendees in March
Elkhart County Sheriff's Office	19 attendees in April
Elkhart Health & Aquatic Center	30 attendees in October



Det. Brandon Martin is still awaiting an opening to become certified as a RAD Instructor. He is scheduled for that course in March 2025. Other officers who assist in RAD training on a regular basis are Det. Pizana, Reserve Officer Stanfill and Lt. Walsh.

Det. Alber, who has overseen the program for approximately 25 years, is preparing to retire in 2025. She will be “passing the torch” to Det. Brandon Denesuk, who has been one of her main assistants for roughly 10 years.

## Star Martial Arts Trunk-or-Treat

Officers and employees of the Sheriff's Office volunteered to open the back doors of the SWAT vehicle and give away candy to kids who were brave enough to approach during the Halloween season.



## Halloween Campfire and Hayride at Oxbow County Park

During the same time frame, other officers and employees did the same with a new patrol vehicle.

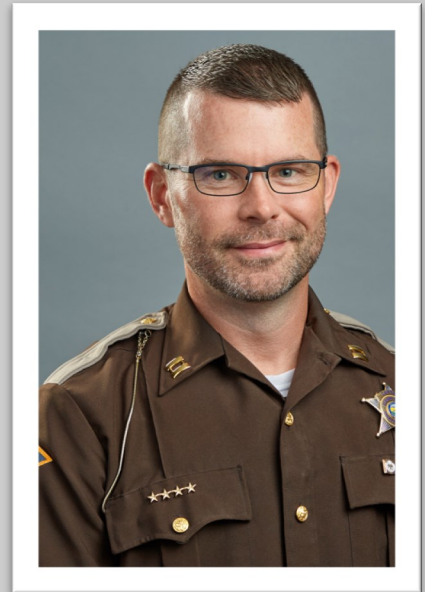


# Administrative Division

Records, Process, Court Security, and Training are supervised by the Administrative Services Captain. Responsibilities of Records and Process are comprehensive and are composed of civilian personnel such as a Clerical Supervisor, several Administrative Support Clerks, and Process Servers to assist with the day-to-day operations. Court Security currently has one Sergeant and 12 limited deputies, split between the two courthouse facilities in Elkhart County. Since 2023, there has been an increase in the number of Court Security Officers in anticipation of the opening of the new Elkhart County Courthouse at a still undetermined date in 2025. Training is composed of a Training Specialist and two Sergeants. One Sergeant is a Merit Officer and the other is a Corrections Officer. Additional Instructors, who assist with the multiple components of training, are spread throughout all four divisions of the Sheriff's Office.

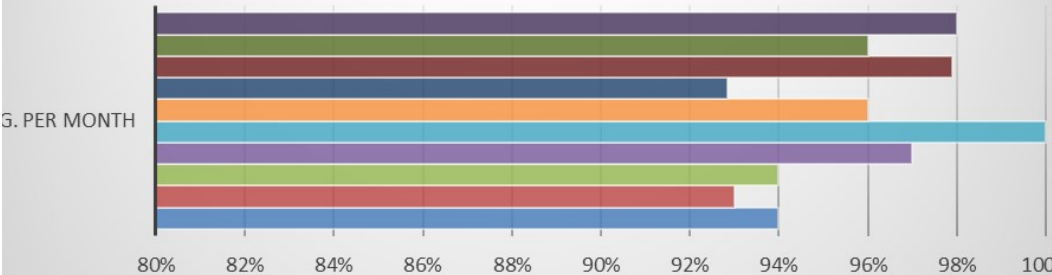
## Manpower

It should be noted that the Administrative Services Division personnel work differing amounts of hours during a given week. The personnel in this division are divided into both merit and civilian personnel. Some civilians work 36 or 37.5 hours per week. Administrative Court Security officers work at least 84 hours during each 2-week pay period. And, some Merit officers work 80 hours in a 2 week pay period. This accounts for the differences listed in the man-hour availability report.



**Michael Culp**  
Administrative Services Captain

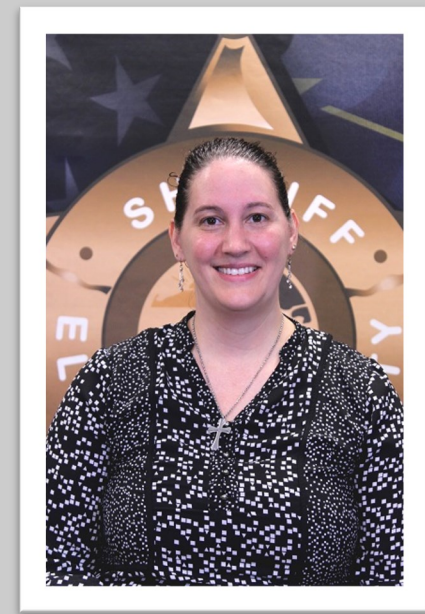
### Total Manpower Capacity Records



Avg. Per Month

2024	98%
2023	96%
2022	98%
2021	93%
2020	96%
2019	100%
2018	97%
2017	94%
2016	93%
2015	94%

Percentage of Capacity



**Sherrie Routh**  
Clerical Supervisor

## Administrative Duty:

The Elkhart County Sheriff's Office receives many thank you letters and calls during the year. ECSO also receives complaints and grievances from the public and employees concerning the agency. It is the duty of the Administrative Division to respond to these complaints and initiate inquiries or investigations, if necessary. The complaints and the findings of inquiries/ investigations into those complaints are tracked throughout the year.

### Firearms Permits

The Sheriff's Office processes applications for firearms permits for those who reside in Elkhart County. Because of an Indiana state statute, which took effect on July 1, 2022, Indiana residents, who are allowed to legally own a handgun, are no longer required to obtain a permit to carry a handgun. So began a dramatic decrease in 2022 of the total number of applications that were processed. As a result, the 2022 applications for permits to carry handguns dropped by more than half. There were only 8 five-year permits applied for in 2022 and only 620 lifetime permit applications. This is in stark contrast to the over 1500 total firearms permits applied for in the year 2021. The chart below shows the most current 2024 statistics. The applications have evened out, but are still considerably fewer than previous years, before the repeal of the requirement to obtain a permit to carry a handgun. Additionally, this chart also displays applications to the ATF for persons to become firearms dealers.

<b>2024</b>	<b>Four/ Five</b>	<b>Lifetime</b>	<b>ATF</b>
January	1	22	12
February	0	17	4
March	0	25	22
April	0	31	19
May	0	26	11
June	0	9	5
July	0	12	9
August	2	24	16
September	1	17	19
October	0	8	3
November	0	9	7
December	0	2	7
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>134</b>

### Sheriff Sales

The Sheriff's Sales are monthly auctions of foreclosed properties. One clerk handled and processed a total of 165 mortgage foreclosure sales during 2024. Starting in April 2023, Synergetic Resources Integration, Inc. (SRI) took over the management of the Sheriff's Sales. With the implementation of using a private corporation, all Sheriff's Sales documentation from the courts is now sent directly to SRI, thus reducing the workload for ECSO Records staff. ECSO is notified by SRI of the persons or corporations requiring the service of civil process documents. After each sale is concluded by SRI, all funds are sent to the Sheriff's Office for processing and return of funds to the appropriate court.

<b>Internal Affairs Analysis</b>	
<b>Yearly Totals</b>	
2020	0
2021	2
2022	3
2023	2
2024	1

## Court Process



Paperwork generated by the courts needs to be served daily by the Sheriff's Office's personnel. Various types of process paperwork are Sheriff's Sales, Protection Orders, Writs of Restitution, Evictions, Summons, Subpoenas, etc. In 2024 a total of 22,429 documents were returned to the court as being served

#### By Month:

##### Total documents served

January ----- 1,648  
 February ----- 1,676  
 March ----- 1,584  
 April ----- 1,811  
 May ----- 1,670  
 June ----- 1,562  
 July ----- 1,528  
 August ----- 1,602  
 September ----- 1,416  
 October ----- 1,914  
 November ----- 1,418  
 December ----- 2,010

#### By Court:

##### Total documents issued to be served

Circuit -----248  
 Superior I -----618  
 Superior II -----446  
 Superior III -----270  
 Superior IV -----1,227  
 Superior V -----10,668  
 Superior VI -----1,036  
 Juvenile -----452  
 Title IV-D -----3,460  
 Foreign -----1,487

# Patrol Division

The men and women in uniform are responsible for a wide variety of duties to include:

- Response to general calls for service
- All initial law enforcement related emergency calls (i.e., Homicides, Domestic Violence, Shootings, Burglaries, Home Invasions, Thefts, etc.)
- Crash investigations (fatal, serious bodily injury, property damage)
- Initial Investigations
- Warrant Service
- Community Oriented Policing Initiative
- Ordinance Violation
- Officer Training
- Traffic Enforcement
- Liaison with other law enforcement agencies and emergency services
- Special Crime Details
- Salvage Title Inspections
- Background Investigations



**Captain  
Brian Holloman**



**Lieutenant  
Casey Lehman**

## Actual Patrol Division Manpower Available per month in 2023

Month	Actual Working Staff Available	% of allotted staff
January	41	93.2%
February	37.7	85.7 %
March	38.7	88.0%
April	38	86.4%
May	38.3	87.0%
June	38.75	88.0%
July	39.5	90.0%
August	40.2	91.4%
September	40.4	91.8%
October	39.3	89.3 %
November	37	84.1%
December	39	88.6%
<b>2023 Average Available staff for Workload</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>88.6% of allotted staff</b>

## Single Calls for Service

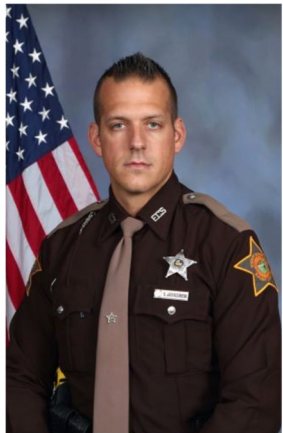
In 2024, the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office responded to 37,961 calls for service handled by a single officer.

# Patrol Division

## Allotted Manpower



**Sergeant  
Andy Ahlersmeyer**



**Sergeant  
Steve Jastrzembski**

Most of the Patrol Division is assigned to work a twelve (12) hour shift except for a “detail” officer, who works eight (8) hour shifts. The detail officer is responsible for ensuring compliance of the various approved towing services used for impounding vehicles and removal of crashed vehicles at motor vehicle crash scenes. Additionally, the detail officer is responsible for evictions, serving writs of restitution and other civil process orders from the courts, which may involve the removal of persons or items from a property.

The total number of officers allotted to the Patrol Division, specifically oriented toward patrol operations, is forty-six. The positions breakdown as follows:

Administrative (one Captain, one Lieutenant):	2
Sergeants:	4
Corporals:	4
Patrol Officers:	36
Patrol Operations Staffing Allotment Total:	44

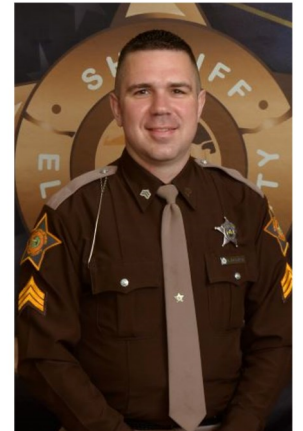
Additionally, there are 3 other positions within the Patrol Division. One position is a Merit Detective, serving as an Evidence Custodian/ Technician and Crime Scene Investigator. A second position is a civilian, serving as a Forensic Specialist/Evidence Custodian and Crime Scene Investigator. The third position is the Secretary for the Patrol Division.

In 2023 the duties and responsibilities of the CSI/Evidence function was transferred from the charge of the Detective Bureau and is now under the authority of the Patrol Division. This move was in response to a promotion within the Detective Bureau that resulted in the new DB Lieutenant having chain-of-command authority over a spouse, who is a Detective assigned to CSI. This transition made sense for 2 reasons:

To avoid any allegation of impropriety that could arise because of nepotism issues, and

Most of the CSI workload is a result of the 24/7 operations conducted by the Patrol Division.

One Detective is permanently assigned to the CSI Crime Lab as a Crime Scene Investigator. This position does not have an active investigative case load. Instead, the Crime Scene Investigators are almost always “on-call” and are responsible to respond to crime scenes as needed, and to collect, process, and store evidence for the entire agency. Additionally, the Crime Scene Investigators are responsible for transporting evidence to governmental and private laboratories for analysis (i.e. – fingerprint, DNA, computer forensics, etc.).



**Sergeant  
Adam Leeper**



**Sergeant  
Jesse Reust**

# Patrol: Year 2024 in Review

Comparing 2024 to 2023, the percent of change was as follows:

- Calls for service: Decrease of 0.84%
- Multi-car total: Decrease of 3.13%
- Cases taken: Decrease of 0.81.50%
- Crashes taken: Increase of 7.22%
- Traffic stops: Decrease of 5.12%
- Written traffic contacts: Decrease of 12.61%\*\*

\*\* - This focused strictly on officers with a primary patrol focus. The contacts (initiated and written) by the County Highway Dept. officer, as well as any written traffic contacts by the Captain, Lieutenant, or any other officers, while conducting grant work, were not counted toward the overall number. This is the measure that will continue to be utilized moving forward in the years to come.



**Congratulations**  
Officer Swanson and  
Officer Guzman-Delarosa



## Reserves

The reserves provided regular law enforcement coverage as needed throughout the year for the Sheriff's Office and surrounding communities. This included patrol assistance, corrections assistance, CIT (Crash Investigations Team) call outs, drone call outs, SWAT call outs and any other coverage requested by the ECSO, Nappanee, Middlebury, Wakarusa, Millersburg, and Bristol.

### Executive Summary

In 2024, the Elkhart County Sheriff's Reserves contributed 5056.70 hours of service to the Sheriff's Office, surrounding agencies and the community.

Admin -----	1,040 hrs	Patrol -----	2,921.20 hrs
FTO -----	173.25 hrs	Training -----	489 hrs
Fair -----	353.25hrs	Meeting -----	80 hrs

### 2023 Reserve Administration

Reserve Chief – Micah Hicks R70  
Assistant Reserve Chief – Owen Fischler R60  
Secretary/Treasurer – Owen Fischler R60

## Reserve Specialties

### Owen Fischler R60

Licensed pilot for ESU drone program – assists with ESU and CIT call outs needing overhead security or photography

### Rebecca Graybill R92

Continued as a member of CIT and ESU as a hostage negotiator and tactical resource officer. In 2023, Graybill became certified as a breath test operator and as a TruNarc operator. Graybill also became an FTO.

## 2024 ECSO Reserve Highlights

### **Reserve Special Events:**

- Elkhart County Fair – Traffic control
- Freedom Fest
- Middlebury Homecoming
- Haunted Hilly Mini-Marathon
- Ideal Beach Triathlon

### **Reserve Training**

All reserves have completed all mandated annual training for 2023.

Corey Smith R88 serves as the Reserve Officer Training Coordinator.

The ECSO Reserve Officers provide regular law enforcement coverage throughout the year for the Sheriff's Office and surrounding communities. They can schedule their own work hours. Frequently, Reserve Officers can be found working alongside Patrol Officers during the noticeably busier times, such as weekend late afternoons and evenings, adding extra responding officers for increased workload assistance. When the Patrol Division holds a divisional meeting, or the Sheriff's Office holds a meeting for all Merit Officers, the Reserve Officers are scheduled to cover duties in all Patrol zones in the county, so continuity of service is maintained for the duration of the meeting.

### Reserve Personnel Changes

Randy Lehman and Mike Tarala resigned from the Reserve Unit. Isaac Schmidt was added to the roster as a Reserve Officer, but shortly thereafter, was hired by ECSO as a full-time Probationary Patrol Officer.

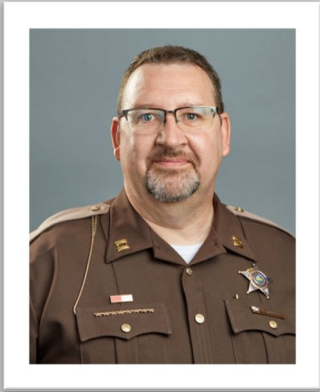
# Detective Bureau/Investigations

The Detective Bureau staff is tasked with conducting both basic and complex criminal investigations, as well as an occasional civil investigation or complaint. These investigations range from homicide to criminal mischief (vandalism) to harassment and everything in between. Full-time Merit Detectives are assigned into one of three different investigatory units:

Property Crimes Investigations,  
Child Victims Unit,  
Special Victims Unit.

Other responsibilities of the Detective Bureau are:

- Jail Investigations – *conducted by a full-time civilian limited Deputy.*
- Elkhart County Homicide Unit (ECH)
- ICE (Interdiction & Covert Enforcement) – *undercover drug enforcement.*
- Warrants
- JDAI (Juv. Det. Alternatives Initiative)
- Criminal Details
- Polygraphs / Computer Voice Stress Analysis (CVSA)
- Cell Phone Analysis
- Crime Analysis
- Public Presentations
- Community Oriented Policing
- Internal Affairs Investigations
- Homeland Security Liaison
- Inmate Transports (*As needed due to manpower shortages in Corrections*)
- Court Transportation / Trial Security
- Child Fatality Review
- Child Protection Team
- Sex Offender Registry and Home Checks
- Indiana Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- Computer Forensics



**Captain  
Jim Smith**



**Lieutenant  
Bob Smith**

## Manpower

In 2024, the actual manpower allocated to the Detective Bureau was a total of 14 Detectives, divided amongst the three different investigatory units noted above. Of the overall total of sworn personnel assigned to the Detective Bureau (20 positions), 5 Detectives are assigned separately to the ICE Unit (3 positions) and the ECH Unit (2 positions).

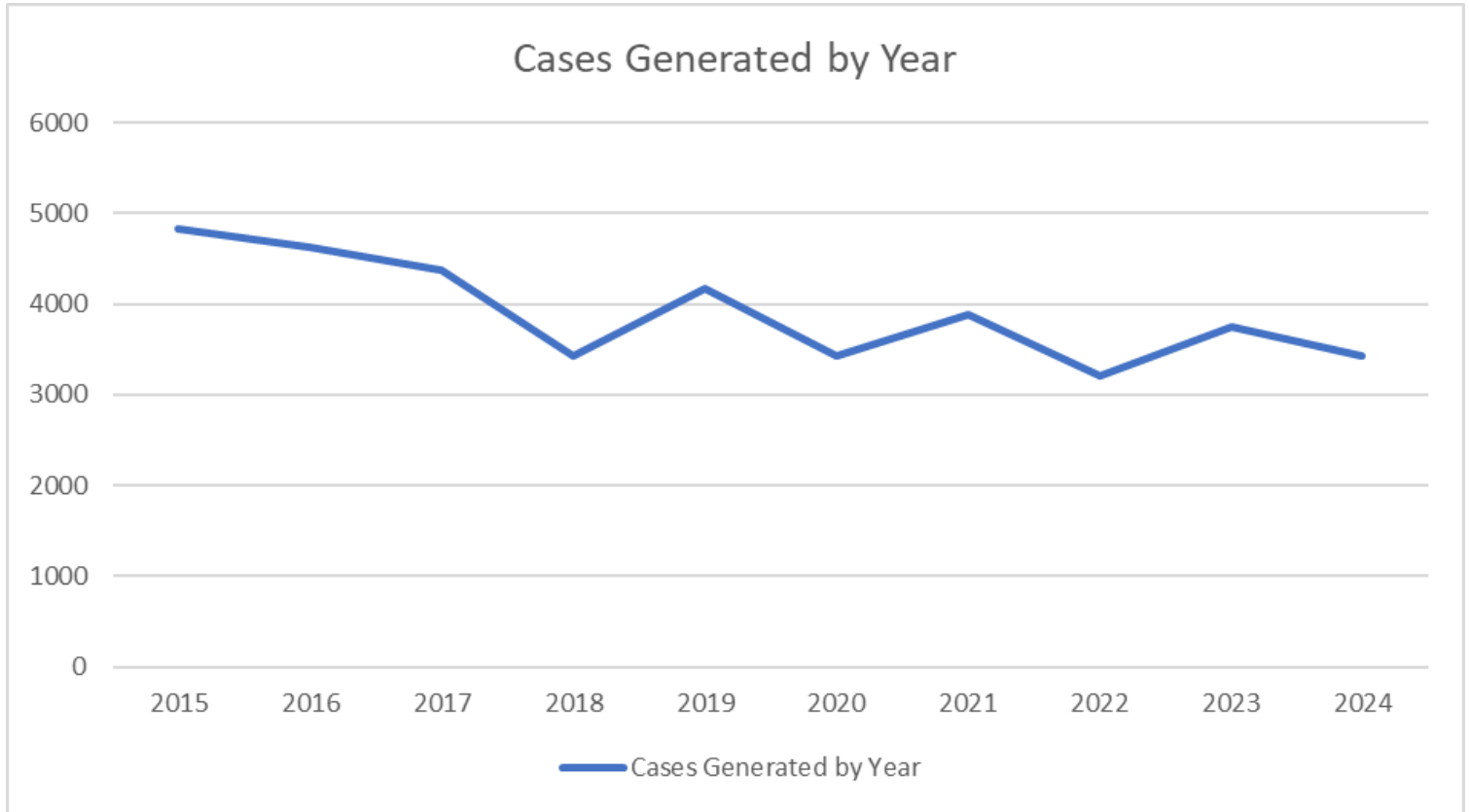
During 2024, 2 Patrol Officers were promoted to fill 2 of the 3 vacant positions in the ICE Unit that the Sheriff's Office is obligated to fill.



# Investigations: Year 2024 in Review

## Case Management

In 2024, the ECSO generated 3430 case reports, compared to 3745 cases in the year 2023. The historical trend of generated cases, since the year 2015 is as follows:



Of the 3430 criminal cases generated during 2024, the Detective Bureau was assigned to investigate a total of 1789 of those cases. This is an increase of 413 cases from the 1376 cases assigned in 2023. Because the number of investigators was down by 2 for a portion of the year, the case assignments were dispersed across all three investigatory units, except the Child Victim cases, which were still assigned to the Child Victim Unit because of the specialized nature of those investigations.

The Elkhart County Homicide Unit is comprised of several detectives/investigators from various agencies throughout Elkhart County. This unit has 2 Detectives assigned from the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office. During 2024, the Homicide Unit responded throughout the county to a total of 34 incidents of homicide, suicide, or other suspicious death investigations. The Homicide Unit, under the authority of the Prosecutor's Office, is also responsible to continue cold case homicides and to investigate any police action shooting involving any agency in the county.

# Corrections Division

Corrections Officers are limited deputies, who make sure inmates in the Elkhart County Jail are safely and securely housed and treated respectfully. The Corrections Division is also assigned to either transport inmates to court on time for appearances or assure the inmates are present at any video conference hearings for which they are scheduled. The video conference hearings are a by-product of COVID-19 restrictions that have proven to be very beneficial, both financially and for facility security. With the advent of the video conferencing capabilities, there are now fewer inmates being transported outside of our jail, reducing the costs of transports to and from the various courts, providing fewer opportunities of escape, attempted escape, or other unforeseen incidents, such as attempts to introduce contraband into the jail facility. The Corrections Officers are also responsible for escorting various attorneys for inmates to visitation rooms for counsel visits. In 2024 there was an average of 906 inmates per month. 2024 saw an increase of 111 more inmates per month. Inmates are fed three meals a day and provided with recreation time in an open area that has access to outside air. They are also offered opportunities to take classes to help better their future and hopefully, reduce recidivism.

In 2022, a developing program was fully implemented in the Elkhart County Jail in which inmates were assigned an electronic tablet, similar to what most people know as an iPad. Inmates can use these tablets (for a fee) to communicate via email with their friends and family. The implementation of the tablet program eliminated the need for a physical library, as books and other screened materials were available to the inmates electronically. Some of the other materials include movies and personalized music playlists.

Jail staff have the following responsibilities:

- Custody
- Medical Care of inmates
- Food Service
- Programming
- Chaplaincy
- Volunteers
- Transportation
- Classification
- Training
- Inmate Commissary
- Grant Writing
- ECSAP (Elkhart County Sheriff's Alternative Program)

## Administration

Captain: 1

Lieutenant: 3

## Corrections Officers

Sergeant: 4

Corporal: 4

Corrections Officer: 74

## Clerical/Support

Clerks 15

## Allotted Manpower

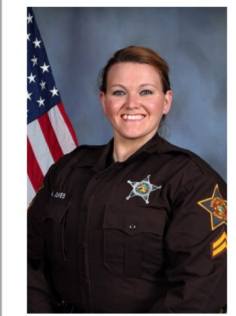
During 2023, an administrative decision was made to reorganize the shift schedule of the Corrections Division. An 8-hour shift schedule had been used in 2022, but it was found that a return to a 12-hour shift would make better use of the current manpower availability so the jail could be managed more efficiently and safely. With this change, came a need for an additional Sergeant and Corporal because the organizational structure created 4 "teams" of Corrections Officers, instead of 3 "shifts" of officers. This change means that each officer now works only 7 days during each 14-day pay period and the employee's work hours increase from 80 hours per pay period to 84 hours per pay period. Another benefit realized by each officer is having every other Friday, Saturday, and Sunday off work. There are 4 administrative positions in the Corrections Division, consisting of 1 Captain and 3 Lieutenants. The three Lieutenants are responsible for:

- a) Operations (Officers)
- b) Inmate Services
- c) Logistics

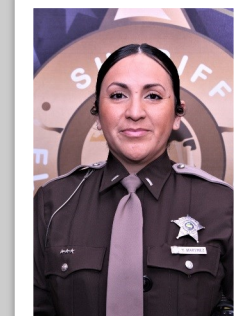
The Corrections Division also maintains 15 clerical/support positions, which is an increase of 6 position from 2023.



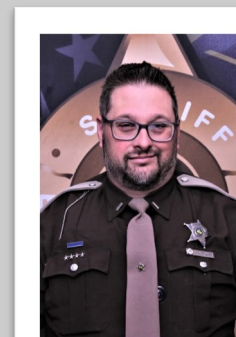
**Captain David Lanzen**



**Lieutenant Amanda Jones**



**Lieutenant Yvette Martinez**



**Lieutenant Jeremy Overmyer**

# Corrections: Year 2024 in Review

## Facility Populations

The Elkhart County Corrections Complex has a capacity of 950 beds. On average, 906 inmates were housed each month throughout the year 2024.

## Reentry Programs and Classes

The correctional facility philosophy is not to “warehouse” in-mates, but rather, make an effort to affect change in the inmates’ hearts and minds in an attempt to reduce recidivism. Therefore, the Programs offer classes and programs for inmates. Examples of some of the courses provided by the staff and outside educators include the following: Anger Management, Domestic Violence, High School diploma or equivalency, Inside Out Dad, Financial Literacy, Master Your Money, Moral Recognition Therapy (MRT), Seeking Safety, Staying Quit, Taking the High Road, and the Victim Impact.

During 2024 there were 13 different classes/courses offered to female inmates. The enrollment in those courses added up to 300 positions taken up by female inmates. Of those 300 positions, 167 were successfully completed. The male inmates were offered 22 separate classes or courses. A total of 1186 (compared to 594 in 2023) enrollments in these classes/courses resulted in a total of 720 (compared to 413 in 2023) successful completions of the male courses. Reasons for the higher enrollment number compared to the lower completed number are due to inmates being released from the facility, by either posting bail, sentences being served, or the inmate being transferred to another facility before completing the course.

While the classes mentioned above are administered by the Programs Director and Intensive Case Manager, there are several volunteers and religious members who administer various programs, Bible studies, and have organized a library of reading material for inmates at the correctional facility.

The completion by inmates of some programs or courses offered in our facility may earn them credit time, thereby providing an opportunity for an early release from their sentence. In 2024 there were a total of 361 credit days granted to inmates because they completed their programs. The early release of these inmates saves the Elkhart County taxpayers several thousand dollars each year, which would have been needed to continue to keep these individuals incarcerated for the duration of their original sentences.

## WellPath Service

Wellpath Care is the contracted medical provider for the Elkhart County Sheriff’s Office. This company delivers medical and behavioral healthcare to inmates housed in the Elkhart County Correctional Facility. The following is a list of services provided by Wellpath in 2024:

<u>Physician Visits</u>	4103
<u>Physicals Completed</u>	1882
<u>Mental Health Screens</u>	932
<u>Psychiatrist Visits</u>	881
<u>Counselor Visits</u>	3980
<u>Off Site ER Visits</u>	182
<u>Off Site Hospital Admits</u>	59
<u>Off Site Psychiatric Admit</u>	1
<u>Dental Visits</u>	663
<u>Dental Fillings</u>	69
<u>Dental Extractions</u>	235
<u>X-Rays Taken</u>	498
<u>Lab Draws completed</u>	802
<u>EKG’s completed</u>	143

# Advanced Knowledge and Skill Assessment

The Elkhart County Sheriff's Office depends on its employees to acquire skills in specialty areas to best serve the needs of the community. These advanced areas require additional training, education, and experience in job-related situations. The career development program involves formal rewards for employees developing specializations that include advancement through the ranks. Starting in April of 2015, Elkhart County Sheriff's Office employees are now awarded points, specific to each specialty area. These points allow the employees the opportunity to earn a higher wage, based on the skills and training they possess. Skill assessment certifies an employee possesses competency in the advanced areas.

## Advanced Areas for both Merit and Corrections Deputies:

- Certified General Training Instructor
- Master Training Instructor
- Language Proficiency
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Firearms Instructor
- Scuba Diver
- Honor Guard and Color Guard
- Child Passenger Safety Technician
- Field Training Officer
- Project Lifesaver Responder
- Canine Handler
- Polygraph Examiner
- Internal Affairs Investigator
- Emergency Services Unit
- Gang Coordinator
- Project Coordinator

In addition to the Advanced Areas handled by both merit and corrections deputies, each divisions' deputies have advanced training specific to that division. This training is used in situations that may arise while on duty that require knowledge specific to the duties as defined in the job description.



*Honor Guard*



*RAD Class*



*CSI—Crime Analysis*

# Demographic Data

The Elkhart County Sheriff's Office annually publishes demographic statistics of various categories. The following includes information of the demographics for 1) use of force (by Merit Officers and Corrections Officers separately), 2) hired applicants for all open positions compared to applications received per race/sex, and 3) traffic enforcement statistics.

## Use of Force— Merit Officers

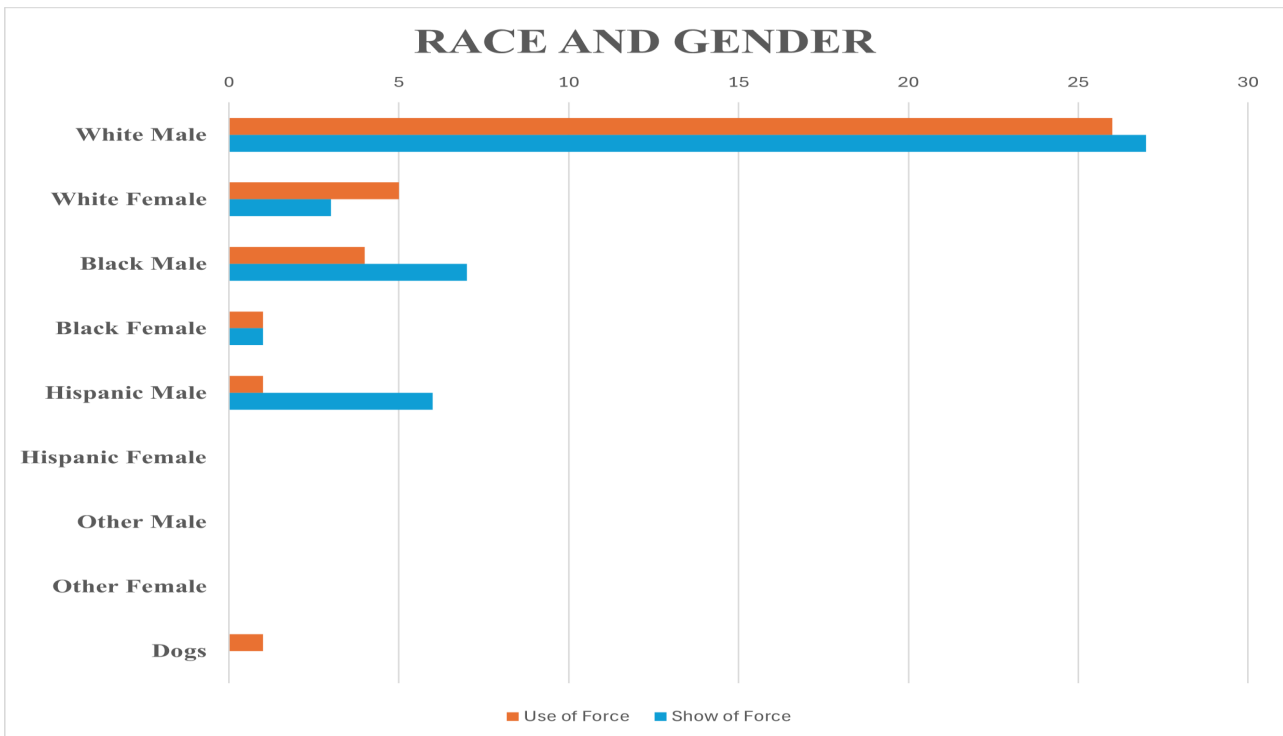
### Merit Officers

Comprehensive records are kept on cases where officers become physical or take defensive action to control a subject either with or without a weapon.

In 2024, there were 78 reported incidents when members of the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division reported uses/shows of force. One of these incidents was a call for service that was determined to be a "Swatting" call. Detectives are also Merit Officers. In 2024 there were no reportable incidents of Use of Force amongst any of the members of the Detective Bureau. This is a decrease of 19 incidents from 2023, in which there were 97 use of force incidents. Since 2022, which saw the implementation of a different method of tracking uses of force, the Use of Force statistics have been split into 2 categories: 1) Use of Force and 2) Show of Force. The Show of Force category is described as an incident in which an officer displays preparedness to use additional force, such as pointing a Conducted Electrical Weapon (CEW – commonly referred to as a Taser), pointing a firearm, use of a K-9, or other less lethal weapon or instrument. The perpetrator then complies with the officer's verbal commands and no additional force is needed, except the securing of the individual in handcuffs. There was one documented incident for a Show of Force in which there were no actual suspects. This incident was a case of an internet fad called "Swatting" in which an anonymous person makes an emergency call for service to an address. The type of call for service usually produces a large police response, including the use of a SWAT response because of the dangerous circumstances reported by the prank call. The Use of Force category would be a deployment of one or more weapons, forcing the perpetrator into compliance through actual use of a weapon, along with the officer's verbal commands. No citizen complaints against ECSO Merit officers, regarding Use of Force, were received in 2024.

When analyzing types and methods of force used by officers during these instances in 2024, many of those used by officers followed similar patterns from previous years with verbal commands and handcuffing and escort techniques.

Below are further items of interest when analyzing use of force reports for 2024.



# Demographic Data

## Use of Force— Corrections Officers

Elkhart County Corrections Officers were involved in 307 use of force incidents in the Elkhart County Jail during 2024. This is an increase of 38 incidents from the prior year of 2023. Most Uses of Force within the Corrections facility occurred within 3 areas. They are Booking, the Medical Ward, and K Pod. Reasons that likely explain the higher levels for Use of Force in these 3 areas are:

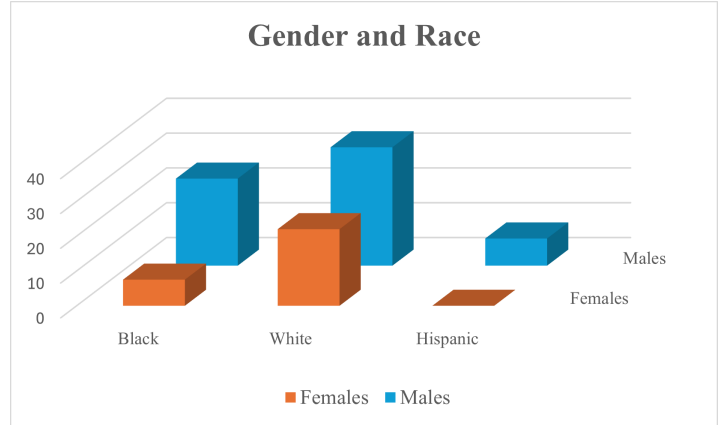
Booking – where combative and intoxicated inmates first enter the facility.

Medical – where inmates suffering from mental health episodes or detoxification are housed.

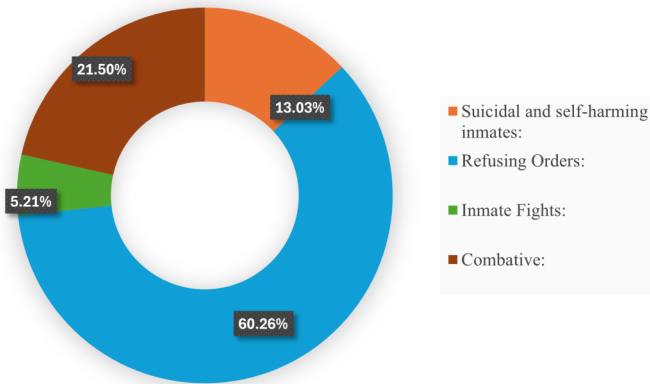
K Pod – where inmates are housed because of violent tendencies as well as inmates who are housed in disciplinary segregation.

The gender and racial demographic statistical data used for reporting purposes in 2024 was documented as male/female and black/white/Hispanic. The race/ethnicity and sex percentages of incidents of uses of force against inmates are as follows:

RACE	%
Black Females	7.5%
White Females	22%
Black Males	25%
White Males	34%
Hispanic Females	0%
Hispanic Males	7.8%



## Types of Incidents that Initiated Uses of Force Against Inmates



The largest age group of inmates, upon which force was used in 2024, was the 26–35-year-old. This age group accounted for 137 of the uses of force. This generally correlates with the age range of inmates in the jail.

Below is a statistical breakdown of the types of incidents that initiated uses of force against inmates.

<b>Suicidal and self-harming inmates:</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>(13%)</b>
<b>Refusing Orders:</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>(60%)</b>
<b>Inmate Fights:</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>(5%)</b>
<b>Combative:</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>(21%)</b>

There were 4 incidents involving use of force by ECSO Corrections Officers upon juvenile offenders. These 4 incidents were isolated to the Elkhart County Juvenile Detention Facility, which is connected to, but a separate entity from, the Elkhart County Jail. Juvenile Detention staff members requested emergency response from our Corrections Officers to assist with juvenile detainees inside their facility. Of these 4 instances, 2 responses were for juveniles who were 11 years old and 2 responses were for juveniles who were 16 years old.

# Applicant Information

During 2023, because of an extreme lack of manpower, the Sheriff's Office began a hiring campaign, independent from the Elkhart County Government Human Resources hiring process. To streamline the process, ECSO began using various on-line job search forums in search of applicants, in combination with the already established application process through the Elkhart County Human Resources. ECSO made direct contact with those applicants who submitted their information through the on-line job search forums and apps. In 2024 ECSO received approximately 872 applications to be considered. Many of these on-line job search forums do not require the applicant to enter their demographic data, therefore the age/race/ethnicity/gender statistics for 2024 are largely unknown for those applicants, who did not, for whatever reason, follow through with our application process. Every applicant who provided any type of contact information was contacted and asked to schedule an appointment for a face-to-face interview. A substantial number of applicants never called back for an interview. Additionally, a high number of persons who did sit for an interview were ineligible to continue in the hiring process for a law enforcement agency for various reasons ranging from admitting to very recent use of illegal substances to an admission of serving prison time for dealing narcotics and, even involuntary manslaughter. Most applicant demographic data is not actually documented until the applicant has advanced to the physical agility phase of our hiring process (for Corrections and Merit applicants). The known, documented demographic data for applicants who were hired can be seen below:

## 8 Patrol Officers hired 2024

Males = 8

W/M =	6
B/M =	0
H/M =	0
O/M =	2
Unk/M =	0

Females = 0

W/F =	0
B/F =	0
H/F =	0
O/F =	0
Unk/F =	0

Unknown = 0

W/Unk =	0
B/Unk =	0
H/Unk =	0
O/Unk =	0
Unk/Unk =	0

*Applicant Information is collected from all applicants who attend a testing process or interview process for any open position held in the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office. These positions are Patrol Officers, Corrections Officers, Court Security Officers, and Clerical staff.*

## 33 Corrections Officers hired 2024

Males = 24

W/M =	15
B/M =	0
H/M =	9
O/M =	0
Unk/M =	0

Females = 9

W/F =	4
B/F =	1
H/F =	4
O/F =	0
Unk/F =	0

Unknown = 0

W/Unk =	0
B/Unk =	0
H/Unk =	0
O/Unk =	0
Unk/Unk =	0

## 11 Clerical personnel hired in 2024

Males = 4

W/M =	3
B/M =	1
H/M =	0
O/M =	0
Unk/M =	0

Females = 7

W/F =	5
B/F =	1
H/F =	1
O/F =	0
Unk/F =	0

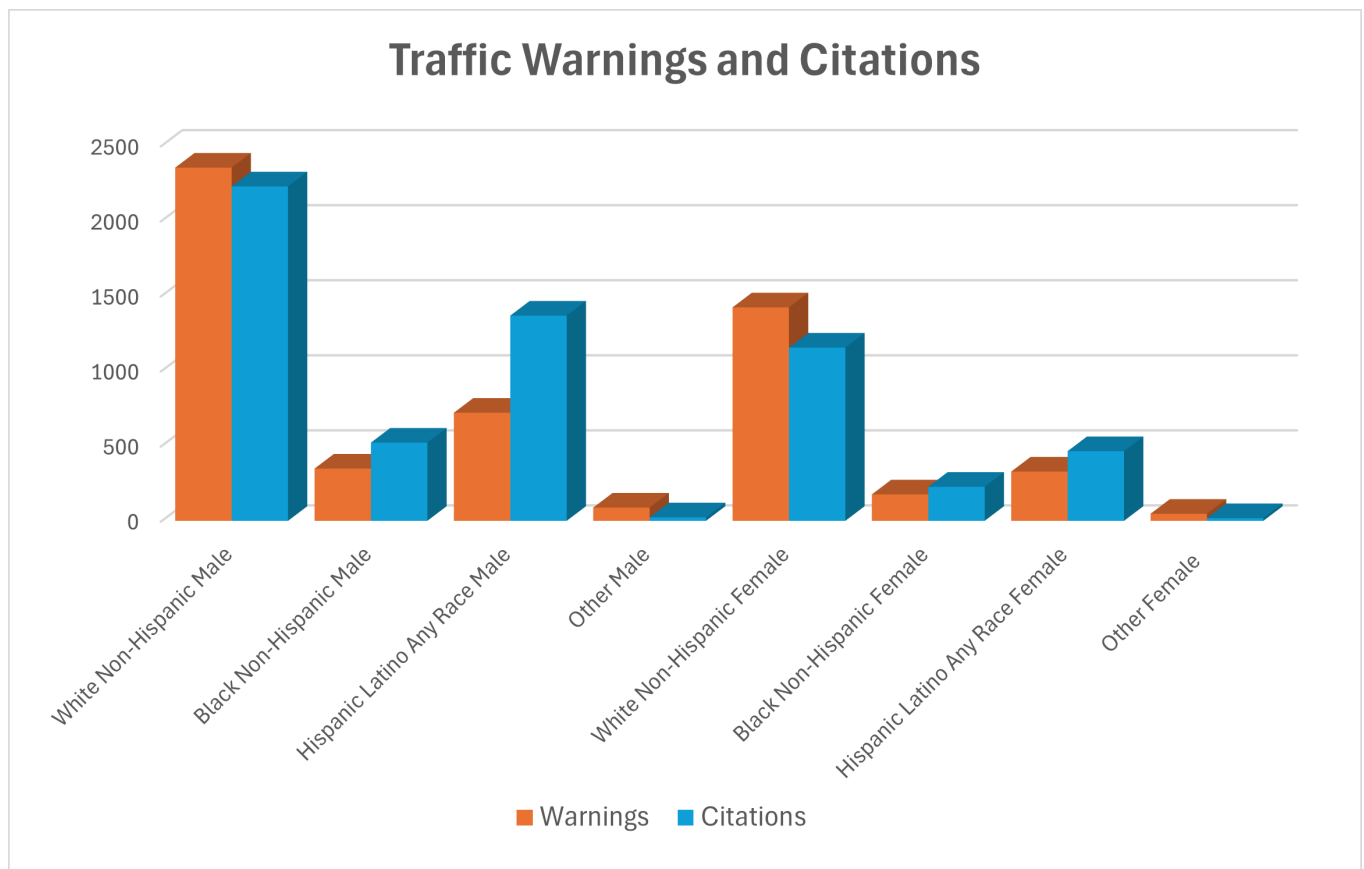
Unknown = 0

W/Unk =	0
B/Unk =	0
H/Unk =	0
O/Unk =	0
Unk/Unk =	0

*Open positions can be found on the Elkhart County website and [joinecso.com](http://joinecso.com).*

# Traffic Enforcement

## Traffic Warnings & Citations



Race/Sex	Warnings	Citations	Total
White Non-Hispanic Male	2353	2228	4581
Black Non-Hispanic Male	348	521	869
Hispanic Latino Any Race Male	720	1367	2087
Other Male	88	23	111
White Non-Hispanic Female	1422	1154	2576
Black Non-Hispanic Female	176	227	403
Hispanic Latino Any Race Female	328	464	792
Other Female	47	18	65

The demographics displayed in the table above are based citations and warnings issued during traffic stops. Citations and warnings are issued for violations of Indiana Statute and Elkhart County ordinance violations. Total number of citations and warnings have been broken down per race and gender.

## Chaplain Corps



The Chaplain Corps is comprised of professionals who are trained to help officers as well as victims in the areas of critical emergency situations. In July 2023 the Sheriff appointed Jenny Lanzen as the agency's new Senior Chaplain. Michael Pennington has been in the Chaplain Corps for several years and he will stay on as the Assistant Chaplain.

The Chaplain Corps services include crisis support for an officer or family member who is sick, injured, or killed. They conduct Critical Incident Stress Debriefings at the request of the ECSO administrative staff. They also provide instruction in matters of ethics and other special topics when requested.



*In 2024, the Chaplain Corps volunteered in various situations. The Chaplain Corps has become an integral resource of the Sheriff's Office for all persons involved with law enforcement, whether victim, officer, or family member.*

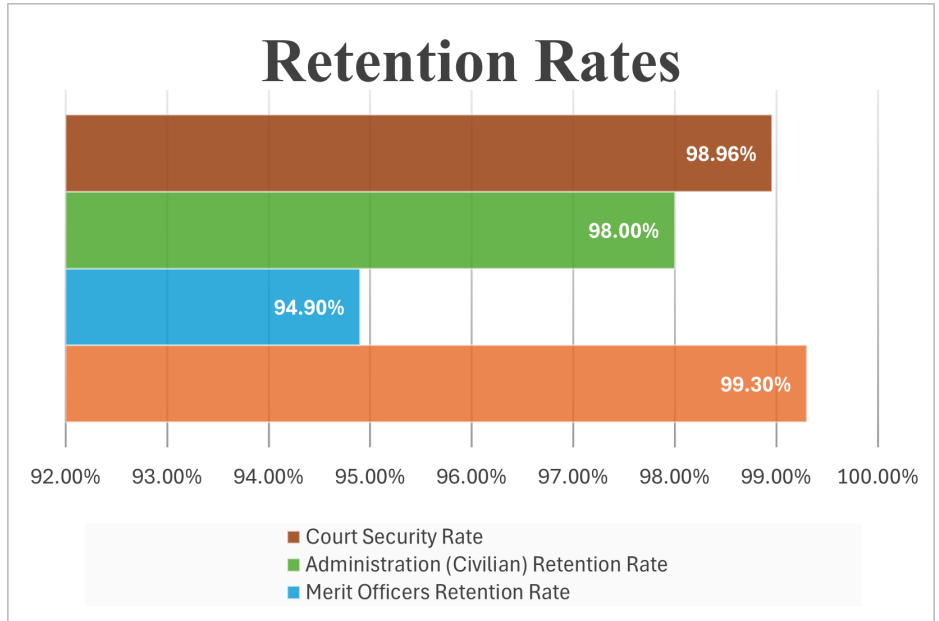
# Agency Retention/Turnover Rates

## Retention Rates

The Elkhart County Sheriff’s Office strives to retain employees who continually work to meet the goals and values of this office as written in the Vision and Mission Statements. The Elkhart County Sheriff’s Office had an overall Retention Rate of 97.42% for 2024. This is an increase of over 32 percentage points from 2023.

Every percentage is figured by considering all full-time employees, no matter duration of time with the division. Regular part-time, part-time, and temporary positions are not included in the totals. Per Division, the 2024 retention rates are as follows:

Number of Agency Employees at the beginning of the year	181
Number of Agency Employees Retained	190
Agency Retention Rate	97.42%



Court Security Retention Rate:	98.96%
Administrative (Civilian) Retention Rate:	98.00%
Merit Officers Retention Rate:	99.30%
Corrections Retention Rate:	94.90%

## Turnover Rates

The turnover rate considers the number of employees who resigned or were otherwise separated from employment during 2024 compared to the average number of employees employed with the Elkhart County Sheriff’s Office during that same time. As a whole, the Elkhart County Sheriff’s Office had a turnover rate of 30% for 2024, which is a lower rate by about 3% than in 2023.

Every percentage is figured by considering all full-time employees, no matter the duration of time with the division. Regular part-time, part-time, and temporary positions are not included in the totals. Per division, the 2024 turnover rates are as follows:

Number of separations to date (Excludes Internal Transfers)	58
Employees at the beginning of 2024	181
Employees at end of 2024	193
Turnover Rate:	30%

Corrections	5.10%
Merit Officers (Patrol & Detective)	0.71%
Court Security Turnover Rate	0.83%
Administration	2.265%

<b>Employees that left within 1 year:</b>	
Corrections	21
Merit	0
Civilian	2
Court Security Officers	0
Agency total:	23

# Career development and Promotions in 2024

As positions became available, the employees of the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office worked diligently toward career development, and several have assumed positions in leadership. The promotional process requires a full day of examination, requiring preparation and study. The process begins with a written exam applicable for the available position. Those who have passed the written exam continue to an interview process before a panel. Several questions are asked of the candidate and each panel member then evaluates the answers provided by the candidates. Additional points are granted for different factors such as academic degrees obtained, previous number of years in leadership, specialties, and the length of employment at the Sheriff's Office. Here is a list of employees who were promoted in 2024:

## Promoted to Corporal

<u>Corporals</u>	<u>Division</u>	<u>Date of Promotion</u>
Bradley Newcomer	Patrol	April 2024

## Promoted to Sergeant

<u>Sergeants</u>	<u>Division</u>	<u>Date of Promotion</u>
Jesse Reust	Patrol	April 2024



*Congratulations to three officers who received promotions during the April Merit Board meeting. (Left to Right) Jesse Reust was promoted from Patrol Corporal to Patrol Sergeant, Bradley Newcomer was promoted from Patrol Officer to Patrol Corporal, and Joseph Swanson was promoted from Probationary Patrol Officer to Patrol Officer. Congratulations, officers.*

# From the Sheriff

Dear Elkhart County Citizen

The 2024 annual report is a summary of the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office achievements and activities. The success of this office can only be realized when we reflect on the hard work of the individuals serving you. The work being done at the Sheriff's office is truly a team effort. Every division and every staff member is critical as we strive to achieve our mission. Our staff has recognized the importance of pitching in regardless of the staff members' current assignment. Understanding what affects one today has the potential to affect all of us tomorrow. Please review our annual report of activities conducted here at your Sheriff's Office.

I am still very proud to be serving Elkhart County as your 45th Sheriff. Again, I attribute our successes to all the individuals serving in over 200 positions here at the Sheriff's Office. As we focus on 2025, I look forward to reporting our successes and goals for the remainder of my time here at the Sheriff's Office.

Sheriff Jeff Siegel

