

HUDSON, MASSACHUSETTS

POLICE DEPARTMENT

PERSONNEL AND WORKLOAD ANALYSIS

APRIL 2026

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REPORT

POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFFING ANALYSIS HUDSON, MASSACHUSETTS

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INTRODUCTION

The Town of Hudson, Massachusetts, retained the services of Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI) of Plymouth, New Hampshire, to provide technical assistance to the town in researching, analyzing, and recommending police staffing allocations. In the months that followed, MRI collected various data from the Town of Hudson and conducted a substantive review and analysis of the current data available.

MRI would like to thank the staff of the Hudson Police Department for their insight and professional commitment towards the enhancement of services provided to the residents and visitors of Hudson, and provide thanks to Police Chief Richard DiPersio and Captain Chad Perry for their assistance as MRI requested and gathered copious amounts of data for this analysis.

THE POLICING ENVIRONMENT

Examination of the policing environment is an essential prerequisite to an informed judgment regarding policing culture, practice, policy, operations, and resource requirements. The geography, service population, economic conditions, levels, and composition of crime and disorder, workload, and resources in Hudson are salient factors that define and condition the policing requirements, response capacity, and opportunities for innovation.

The main purpose of a police agency is to ensure public safety within the community. This objective is accomplished primarily through the patrol division, which has the responsibility to

maintain order, respond to Calls for Service (CFS), conduct traffic enforcement, maintain high visibility to deter criminal activity, and, with the expectation of having positive interactions with those in the community. These public contacts are essential to establish good rapport, build relationships, and to bolster and ensure ongoing community trust. In a smaller agency such as Hudson, additional patrol officer responsibilities are expansive and include conducting preliminary investigations; identifying, pursuing, and arresting suspects; rendering aid to victims, including psychological, emotional, and physical care; preparation of cases for court, including testimony; and writing reports that accurately document descriptions of events.

MRI observed that the community expectations for the Hudson Police are very high, and the staff of the department work diligently to meet those expectations. In large part, this is due to the extraordinary level of commitment to customer service in their daily interactions with the community. MRI was duly impressed with the dedication to resolving all incidents of crime within the community. While this may sound counterintuitive, considering police exist to do just that, the reality in most New England communities is that the workload pressures begin to impact the ability to dedicate adequate time to resolving crime and solving problems. As an example, it would not be unusual in many police agencies to respond to the vandalized mailbox and complete a report that is purposely focused upon serving as an insurance statement. However, in Hudson, MRI understands that the goal of this type of incident is to have the officer thoroughly investigate by conducting a neighborhood canvass, attempt to add patrol to a targeted area, and engage other methods to satisfactorily resolve the issue. In gathering data to develop this report, MRI noted this level of attention to every incident by the staff of the Hudson Police Department. It is a challenge to continue with this level of commitment despite workload demands, for which the department is very proud, which deeply concerns Chief DiPersio.

At the time of this report, the Hudson Police Department has an authorized and budgeted staff of thirty-six (36) full-time sworn police officer positions. While one officer has been deployed as a member of the military reserves for well over two years, staffing levels at the Hudson Police Department have remained relatively constant. There is a pending retirement anticipated, which will activate the recruitment and selection process. Once a candidate is identified, the probationary officer will be scheduled to attend the police academy for twenty-six (26) weeks of basic training. Upon graduation, the officer will be placed in field training for at least twelve (12) weeks, possibly as long as seventeen (17) weeks. Essentially, this officer will be able to patrol alone approximately nine (9) months after hiring.

This snapshot highlights the issues that Chief DiPersio and his administration face in ensuring that there are ample resources to provide police patrol services to the Hudson community. As this

report will highlight, while there is an authorized allotment of thirty-six (36) police officers, they are not always available to provide services.

In researching data points for this report, MRI learned that the Hudson Police enjoy a relatively stable workforce. While this report is not designed to perform a comprehensive study as to why, MRI did observe several factors, such as exceptional management oversight, reasonable pay scale for the region, a caring work environment, and community support and respect for the agency, as significant factors that sustain officer retention. Comparatively, this is fortuitous: nationally, attracting viable candidates to the police profession is at a crisis point. While there seems to be no one defining reason for the lack of desire to work for the government, research points to multiple social, political, and economic forces that are simultaneously at play in shaping the current state of recruitment and retention. So dire is the situation that neighboring police administrators are actively “poaching” certified police officers from area communities, a strategy thought to be reprehensible just several years ago, is now becoming the norm due to the hiring crisis and the lack of interested and qualified police officer candidates.

Larger police agencies with positions like Detective, Traffic, Community Policing, Tactical, Canine, and School Resource officers have always been appealing due to opportunities for diverse assignments over an officer’s career. While the desirability of smaller agencies, where the ability to engage in problem-solving and community-oriented policing holds significant attraction, the financial incentives of a community nearby that will compensate an experienced officer with pay grades into the \$90,000 range are simply too compelling. Consequently, regardless of this report’s conclusions, if the agency cannot retain its valued and experienced officers, the objective of this report becomes moot. As a result, MRI will also briefly describe costs associated with losing these valued employees, combined with the inherent challenge associated with the agency being constantly in the recruitment and selection mode. However, as noted, whatever the combination of factors, employees appear to remain at Hudson Police, which, as this report will highlight, is a fiscally and managerially sound strategy.

Hudson is in Middlesex County, bordering the I-495 beltway with convenient accessibility to I-290 and the Worcester metroplex. The population has been relatively constant over the past few years, supported by numerous businesses and a vibrant downtown, which recently was recognized as “Best Main Street in America” and hosts the Spirit of Hudson Food and Brewfest. On Route 62, at the junction of I-495, the regional draw is the extensive shopping offered by Highland Commons, hosting numerous big box stores. In the core of the community, a combination of multifamily rental housing, single-family homes, and/or condominiums combine with numerous upscale developments.

MRI noted that there are numerous 55+ housing projects being constructed or in planning stages. While these are exceptionally attractive projects that do not add burden to the biggest cost center in a community, schools, they can challenge the police as unique targets for financial scammers and other elder fraud crimes. Both the former Intel complex and the Bruen Road military complex are being converted for additional use. The Toll Brothers have a number of developments, including Lakemont, with access to these major transportation corridors, demonstrating that Hudson is an excellent location providing easy access to virtually anywhere in the region. Unfortunately, these same corridors offer an easy opportunity for those with nefarious intent to travel to and from Hudson, which often challenges the Hudson Police.

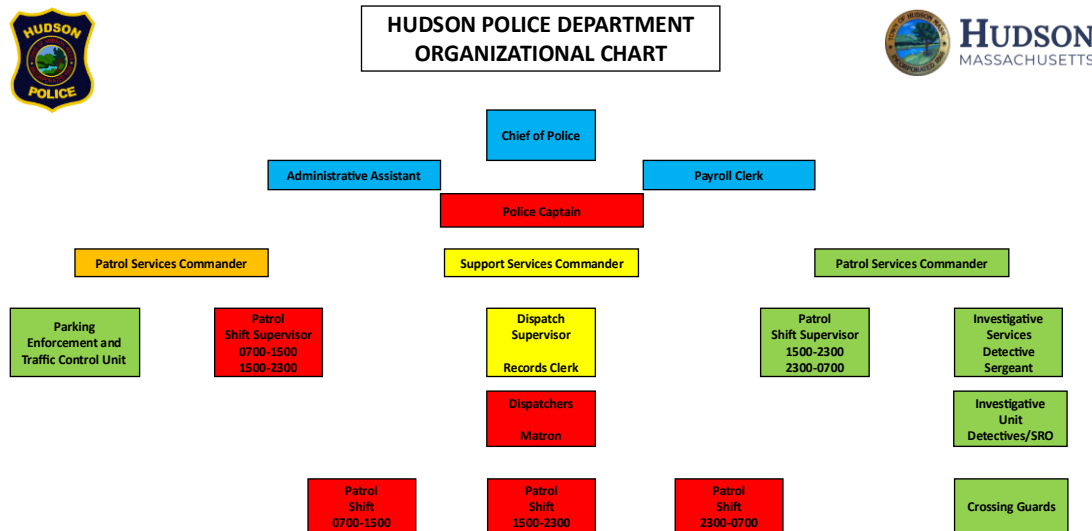
MRI noted with concern that myriad administrative tasks were increasing in number due to recently implemented State legislation pertaining to weapon permitting regulations and the nuances of police reform. For example, the importance of accreditation under the Massachusetts program demands that there is a high level of managing risk to protect the financial integrity of the community, which requires detailed attention to administrative documentation, critically important to risk management. The department and Chief DiPersio are concerned that their previously robust community initiatives programs are under strain due to the workload of the staff. While the Chief desires to create a community liaison that could also serve as a court prosecutor, he would need to take an officer from patrol to fill that position, thereby further straining patrol services. Another area he would like addressed is the assignment of a staff member to oversee the management of vehicles and other equipment. Unfortunately, to accomplish these additional tasks, patrol staff will either be reassigned (further straining the patrol function) or will have added duties that will also strain patrol service delivery while (potentially) having a negative impact on officer wellness.

As will be highlighted, there is an overwhelming workload associated with judicial functions, which may warrant a staff person focusing on prosecutorial roles such as processing arrests, summonses, attending proceedings, as well as preparing discovery requests associated with the litigious environment of law enforcement. The only viable strategy has been for the Hudson Police to remove staff from the patrol function or augment responsibilities to already busy staff. With the prolonged military deployment and the pending retirement, 5% of the agency is unavailable to perform patrol functions, let alone administrative tasks.

Hudson Police Department

Organizational Chart

March 2026



For some time, Chief DiPersio has had mounting concerns that the department is becoming one-dimensional, with officers responding to 911 calls, taking reports (seemingly for purposes other than for instigating investigations or other valid *police* purposes), and not having time to engage in a proactive, problem-solving style of policing that the residents of Hudson expect to receive. Chief DiPersio expressed apprehension that the organization is heading towards becoming “reactive” without time to engage in community-oriented programs designed to build relationships and/or trust capacity through a proactive, highly visible policing strategy.

A review of historical records revealed that there were thirty-two (32) sworn staff members employed in 2020. Interestingly, there were several reserve officers who had augmented patrol shifts and provided support to full-time staff. Today, there are no reserve police officers employed by the Hudson Police who can augment staffing at times of need. This loss is attributed to recent legislation that requires all police officers, regardless of the number of hours they are expected to work, to hold the same level of basic police academy training. Regardless, the loss of

this supplemental human resource is a significant challenge for Chief DiPersio as he manages personnel to ensure that all calls for service are addressed promptly and professionally.

Year	Population	Full-time Police Officers
1950	8,211	11
1980	16,408	24
1990	17,233	29
2000	18,113	28
2010	19,063	30
2020	20,092	32

Forty years ago, there were no specialty police officers like those that exist today, and police were not routinely dealing with complicated legal, mental health, and addiction challenges that police officers routinely encounter today. Furthermore, MRI noted that administrative tasks have escalated due to the Massachusetts Police Reform, various supplementary State legislation, weapon permitting requirements, increased expectations of the community, and other managerial tasks associated with the litigious environment of law enforcement. To meet these demands, the strategy has been for the Hudson Police to remove staff from the patrol function to assign those officers to ancillary support functions, while not adding personnel back into patrol to replace them. Over the years, calls for service that the department must respond to have increased, thereby substantially impacting the amount of time available for officers to effectively address law enforcement and police service needs.

Ideally, each Hudson Police Department patrol shift is designed to have a Lieutenant and a Sergeant as “working supervisors” who routinely respond to calls for service, especially during times when calls require back-up or multiple officers to address the complexity of a given call for service. While lieutenants primarily have a host of administrative tasks to complete in the police station during their shift, they often recognize that the patrol officers on shift are busy and/or backed up responding to calls for service. During these times, the Lieutenant’s often leave the station to assist with reducing workload and risk. Patrol Sergeants, on the other hand, are primarily on the street patrolling and acting as the on-scene supervisors. They assign patrol officers activities, delegate call response, answer calls, act as “back-up,” and serve as the primary first responder to many calls when patrol officers are already committed. Hudson Police do not have any contractual union requirements pertaining to minimum staffing of patrol shifts, which many other agencies do, supporting the premise that management can be indifferent to the call volume that officers address. It is Chief DiPersio’s desire that no patrol shift should be staffed with fewer than a Sergeant and three (3) patrol officers except during the 11 PM to 7 AM shift,

where the officer allocation may be as low as three (3), due to the diminished call for service demands. However, routinely, Lieutenants and/or Sergeants are absent, and senior patrol officers may be assigned to act as Officer in Charge (OIC). The fact that Chief DiPersio is committed to this level of staffing may offer insight into the positive work environment that appears to exist within the organization. It was evident that Chief DiPersio realizes the need for adequate patrol coverage; consequently, the union is not relegated to demanding minimum staffing from management and the town through negotiations.

The busy corridor of Interstate 495 traversing the town provides easy access to Boston, Worcester, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, creating numerous challenges for Hudson Police. On many occasions, Hudson Police are often the first to respond to calls for service on I-495 due to a mutual aid agreement with the Massachusetts State Police. In addition to the police centric calls for service, Hudson Police, who are actively patrolling the community 24/7, also respond to the majority of medical calls to provide emergency first aid services prior to the Hudson Fire Department (HFD) arriving.

As illustrated in the chart above, the authorized structure of the organization is thirty-six (36) sworn officers comprised of a Police Chief, a Captain, and three (3) Lieutenants (two with responsibility over Operations and another over Support services). There are six (6) Sergeants: five (5) assigned to patrol duties while one oversees three (3) Detectives. Patrol, the backbone of any police organization, currently has twenty (20) police officers assigned to twenty-one patrol shifts each week (three per day). Finally, there are two (2) School Resource Officers (SRO) assigned to work collaboratively with the Hudson schools.

As noted previously, Patrol Sergeants are assigned as the “on street” commander for each of the three established patrol shifts, which function from 11 PM to 7 AM, 7 AM to 3 PM, and 3 PM to 11 PM with four (4) days on and two (2) days off. These Sergeants are considered “working supervisors” while assigning officers to various calls and other tasks; they also act as first responders and will be used in the calls for service calculations to adequately depict the policing environment.

The Hudson Police recently transitioned to the Nashoba Valley Regional Dispatch District (NVRDD). Many progressive law enforcement agencies are realizing the benefits of regionalization, as it is an opportunity to enhance emergency services by consolidating resources, potentially reducing costs through economies of scale, and addressing the difficulties of hiring and retaining professional dispatchers. Regional communication centers can focus on ensuring that their personnel are provided with specialized training, enhanced technology, and offer improved inter-agency coordination for handling large-scale incidents.

The switch to an off-site communications strategy has created a void in the past practice of having the Hudson Police facility staffed with personnel 24/7. Chief DiPersio is addressing this vacuum so that basic assistance to people arriving at the facility can have their issue addressed at least during the primary hours until 11:00 PM each night. A communications network has been installed in the vestibule of the police station so that those in need of police assistance simply push a button and are linked directly to a dispatcher on duty at the Nashoba dispatch center. For matters of substance, an officer is sent to the station to meet with the customer.

If there is an arrest and the person is detained in one of the agency's jail cells, most times the Lieutenant or another officer can monitor the cells. However, if there is an aggressive and/or disruptive prisoner in the facility, an officer must be removed from active patrol to remain in the police facility to ensure prisoner and facility safety and attend to various needs of the prisoner. While removing an officer from active patrol duties is an absolute necessity to manage the risk of having a confined person in custody of Hudson, it reduces the patrol capability of the agency during this period by at least 25%.

At present, there is an officer who has been deployed for military service for more than two (2) years and is obviously unavailable to provide patrol services. Other than this lone vacancy and the knowledge of a pending retirement this spring, the workforce at Hudson Police has remained stable. However, with smaller agencies such as Hudson, unavailable officers severely impacts patrol capacity. There is no situation like a patrol officer vacancy to highlight the issues associated with smaller police agencies and the impact on flexibility to fill shifts. Additionally, the limited number of patrol staff that management needs to call upon to work overtime, basically "going to the well" repeatedly, especially as the well is so shallow, can be problematic.

Another challenge uniquely associated with smaller agencies is the ancillary issues that must be accomplished regardless of the size of the police agency; residents simply anticipate that the service exists regardless of the size of the agency/community. It is evident to MRI that the Hudson Police is an agency that conveys a positive community-centric work ethic of "sure, we can do that" as they strive to provide a high level of service options to the community. Additionally, as is common in most smaller agencies, almost every officer has one or more collateral duties. While the list is exhaustive and will not be fully articulated here, it is noteworthy that the agency performs such functions as Street Crimes, Senior Citizen Liaison, Community Action Team member, Defensive Tactic Instructor, Accreditation Manager, Fleet Maintenance, Domestic Violence Liaison, Drug Take-Back Program, Drone Unit, Evidence & Property Management, Firearms Licensing, Field Training Officer, Civil Asset Forfeiture, Body Worn Camera Program, CEMLEC Tactical Team, Court Officer, NIBRS Coordinator, CJIS Representative, Grant Writing, Sex

Offender Registry Coordinator, Armorer, Less Lethal Taser Training Officer, and FTO Coordinating Officer.

While it is important to articulate the host of ancillary duties performed by staff of the Hudson Police, the primary focus of this report is to determine the capacity of the patrol function who are exclusively tasked with responding to calls for service. As noted, it is rare to find any police agency at full staff during these challenging employment times. However, for computation purposes, MRI will use the authorized and budgeted staff of twenty-five (25) sworn officers dedicated to responding to calls for service, comprised of twenty (20) patrol officers plus the five (5) patrol Sergeants. These are the calculations that determine the capacity of the Hudson Police to adequately respond to the demands of the Hudson community.

THE SERVICE POPULATION

The Town of Hudson is in Middlesex County with a 2020 census population estimated at 20,364. Hudson is a bedroom community servicing the Boston and Worcester metroplex region. Despite its size, Hudson operates under an open town meeting form of government led by Town Manager Thomas Gregory who reports to a five (5) member Selectboard. He has the responsibility of overseeing daily operations of each department through the various department heads.

While it is important to note that MRI staffing model does not rely on population as the sole variant for calculating staff demands, MRI recognizes that increases in population typically result in additional workload, and any population shift is often predictable and measurable. Hudson is not impacted by any significant fluctuation, although there are numerous community events that often draw participants from neighboring communities. Municipal Resources, Inc. expands upon staffing needs based on officer availability and workload, not simply the wide variants associated with the transient population, as well as any associated seasonal or event demands of a residential community. Another important measure for determining police staffing needs, and for monitoring police department activities and operational success, involves an examination of crime data. MRI conducted a significant analysis of the crime data, as well as the calls for service (CFS) for the Town of Hudson, to gain a greater perspective of the policing environment.

COMPETENT POLICE RESPONSE TO CITIZEN'S REQUESTS

Just how many police officers are required to adequately provide competent services to a community has always been a topic for debate in the profession. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has long tracked the number of police officers per 1,000 residents. Using that calculation, the largest police presence is found in Washington, DC, where there are 5.7 officers

for every 1,000 residents, followed closely behind by Wilmington, Delaware, with 4.3 officers per 1,000. Obviously, larger agencies have a greater call volume to address, but they also have flexibility to assign their larger staff numbers to issues as they arise. According to FBI statistics, New England communities with a population between 10,000 and 25,000 residents have an average of 2.3 police officers per thousand residents¹. The Hudson Police Department is below that data point with 1.7 officers per thousand. Unfortunately, the Hudson Police Department does not have the same organizational flexibility to reassign officers in the way that a larger police organization would have. Additionally, as the report has highlighted, other demands upon the department have removed officers from the patrol function to address the workload in such areas as training, accreditation, school resource officer, and court responsibilities.

As discussed, population is an important consideration in understanding the allocation of police officers. However, it is important to reiterate that the MRI staffing model does not rely on population as a single variant for calculating police staffing demands. The inherent problem with doing so is related to the distinctly different composition of that population. If the population consisted of 1,000 college-aged students as opposed to 1,000 active retired residents, the policing environment would be manifestly different. However, Municipal Resources, Inc. recognizes that you cannot simply dismiss population as a factor, as any increase in population will undoubtedly result in additional workload thrust upon the police. Additionally, these population shifts are often predictable and measurable and must be understood to have an impact on the demands for limited police services. As the report will highlight, if there is a need for staffing increases at Hudson Police, it will be based on a “totality” approach that considers workload demands, officer availability, and the challenges of the police agency to respond adequately to the community on a 24/7 basis.

Determining the optimum allocation of human resources in a police department is a perplexing problem not only for the police manager but also for town administrators, elected officials, and ultimately, the taxpayer. No one formula is interchangeable from one community to the next. Likewise, the quality of law enforcement is often directly related to the effective distribution of police personnel, especially patrol officers, who represent the most important element in the police service. For this reason, the proper staffing and distribution of personnel should be given prime consideration and be well-conceived by the governing body. While what occurs in one community may have no relationship to another, it is always interesting to note what comparable communities are investing in to provide police services within their community. While each community has a variety of unique dynamics that drive the composition of its police agency, often

¹ <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2017/crime-in-the-u.s.-2017/tables/table-70>

they are more similar than not and can offer insight into how Hudson is approaching a competent delivery of policing services.

The selected comparable communities found below were chosen solely based on population similar to that in Hudson. MRI used the populations of Massachusetts communities² and identified the next ten (10) communities with more population and then the immediate lower population communities from that website. While each community was solicited to respond with information, several chose not to participate and did not provide data. It is important to note that this data is not relevant to the calculations used to determine how many officers are needed in Hudson. This information is designed solely to offer some insight into how similarly populated communities may address their policing needs.

² https://www.massachusetts-demographics.com/cities_by_population

Comparable Communities³

Town	Population	# of Officers	Calls (2025)	FY25 Budget	Calls Per Officer	Cost Per Resident	Officers per thousand
Mansfield	24,077	39	25,000	\$6,800,000	641	\$282	1.6
Winchester	23,953	40	14,500	\$6,600,000	363	\$275	1.6
Wilmington	23,802	52	23,500	\$6,664,541	451	\$279	2.1
Westborough	21,360	41	26,459	\$5,200,000	645	\$243	1.9
Gardner	21,287	33	28,287	\$4,976,543	857	\$234	1.5
Hudson	21,000	36	23,504*	\$5,197,738	652	\$247	1.7
Ludlow	20,118	42	18,449	\$4,948,085	439	\$246	2
Marblehead	20,576	31	20,548	\$5,000,000	663	\$243	1.5
Grafton	20,352	24	16,794	\$3,367,339	700	\$166	1.2
Hopkinton	19,971	29	19,000	\$3,717,250	655	\$186	1.5
Sudbury	19,805	30	14,000	\$4,654,773	466	\$235	1.5
Scituate	19,598	39	22,774	\$6,641,546	583	\$339	1.9
Norton	19,830	38	13,106	\$4,813,761	344	\$246	1.9
Ashland	19,500	29	14,406	\$4,552,889	496	\$233	1.5
Newburyport	19,163	32	28,924	\$5,040,000	903	\$263	1.6
Sharon	18,762	34	30,000	\$4,581,734	882	\$244	1.8

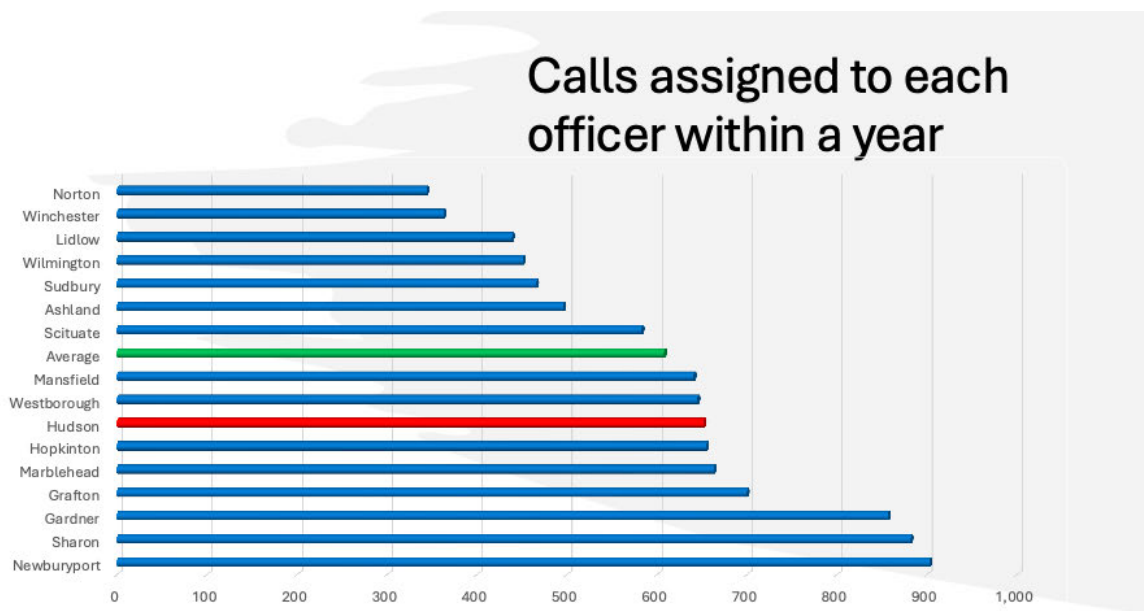
³ Due to the transition to the Nashoba Valley Regional Dispatch District (NVRDD) this year, ascertaining calls for service data for 2025 was challenging. MRI reviewed several strategies to achieve a viable number and determined that the average increase over the past several years was 4.5%. So as not to skew the comparable data, this number was used for the development of this matrix.

The manner in which law enforcement services are provided by the police department and the types of services that it provides are a reflection of the character and demands of that community. The continuing challenge for the Hudson Police Department will be the ability to define the appropriate allocation and deployment of officers to meet the demands of the residents of Hudson. Continuing with MRI's approach to collect, analyze, and interpret a wide array of data, allowing us to uncover trends, patterns, and correlations, engaging a wide array of statistical data that provides insight into performance, customer demands, and future dynamics. Just as discussed with the population data, this report could also focus on crime statistics as the driving factor for determining how many police officers are necessary. MRI believes that this is a counter-productive strategy as more crime may dictate more police; but if there is less crime, should there be less police? Which gives rise to the inevitability that those with poor intent would be enabled to fill the void. MRI believes that an agile programming strategy that embraces stabilization of community expectations, organizational, and per officer productivity, as well as budget expenditures, is the more prudent approach for the governing body to make decisions.

In today's policing profession, calls for service are obligatory functions to which officers must respond effectively. Many calls are not criminal in nature, but police are expected to be responsible for resolving the issue in an efficient, compassionate, and professional manner. The police do not have the option to discard a matter that many may personally consider of little importance or trivial in nature. Consequently, one of the most interesting components of the comparable communities list calls for service and the corresponding number of calls handled per officer. Logically, the more calls for service an officer must address, the less time that officer has to dedicate to resolving the issue. Or critically important, will the Hudson resident feel satisfied that their problem was handled earnestly and professionally by an officer who has the time to do so?

The police profession is constantly evolving. Today's police are challenged with complicated issues such as mental health, juvenile offenses, and other incidents that are not easily or immediately resolved. If officers do not have adequate time to address service demands, community satisfaction wanes, and the need to manage risk by the agency increases. Additionally, many obligated calls for service demand multiple officers to respond. While not all officers may remain after the initial response, the issue often requires a triage strategy approach before the decision can be made to release assisting/secondary officers back to patrol to answer new or pending calls for service. In Hudson, a multiple officer call for service obviously removes personnel from their assigned patrol sectors for an indeterminate amount of time. Calls for service that engage multiple officers can quickly exhaust and/or eliminate a proactive policing approach to any given shift. In a smaller agency like Hudson, there is an expectation that patrol officers are required to follow-up informational investigations only during their working shift.

As an example of just one problem this reality creates, officers assigned to work late night hours cannot reasonably contact victims and/or witnesses during their sleeping hours.

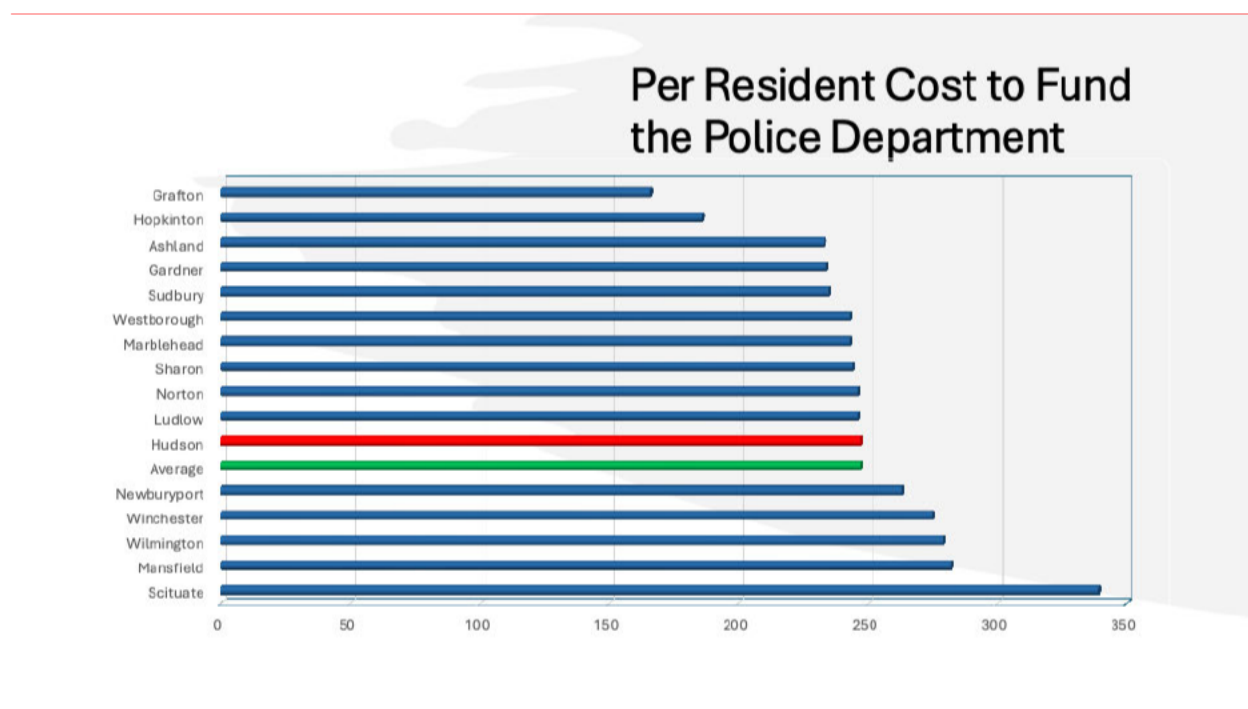


The number of “calls assigned to each officer” matrix above reveals that Hudson Police are addressing 7% more calls per officer than the average of other police agencies used as a comparable community. Fully 48% more than Norton, with the lowest number of calls handled by each patrol officer. The workload placed upon each patrol officer can have wide-reaching impacts on an officer’s ability to perform at a high level. Police need to be available to accomplish more than just responding to calls for service. While admittedly a simplistic view of calls per officer, many of these same calls demand multiple officers, further impacting patrol officer time. In fact, Hudson commanders report that almost 90% of all calls for service required more than one officer to initially respond. This is a significant challenge for the agency that consumes time desired for proactive patrol until the call can be safely triaged, thereafter releasing secondary officers to leave and continue patrol.

Additionally, the purpose of the police department, and particularly those who work within the patrol function, is to arrest criminals, reduce crime, reduce the fear of crime, and use proactive problem-solving methods in partnership with the citizens of Hudson. This is accomplished through active patrol, traffic enforcement, DUI enforcement, criminal investigations, evidence/crime scene processing, drug enforcement, and other highly visible police functions.

Patrol personnel respond to emergency and non-emergency calls for service, and when not responding to these calls, they use non-obligated time to actively patrol the community. The more workload on each officer, the less time available is devoted to these preemptive activities. And after a continued absence, it is highly likely the community will begin protesting the lack of visibility, traffic enforcement, and other initiatives they view as important.

Additionally, the more workload placed on individual officers, the higher the stress on their performance and satisfaction with the work environment.⁴ As an aside, while MRI did not conduct a detailed salary comparison for this workload analysis, there could be a reasonable concern if other nearby police agencies are paid higher or even similarly to Hudson, and have a less demanding workload, all of which may be an attractive draw. While there is no demonstration of officers leaving the employ of the Hudson Police for higher pay in neighboring departments, the topic warrants attention by the police administration as well as the governing body. In the current employment environment and the cost associated with the selection process, the need for retention is paramount!



Funding the Hudson Police Department is calculated to cost each resident \$247 annually. Of the comparable communities, the Town of Hudson is paying the average of the comparable agencies identified to MRI. While this statistic is interesting to note, it is admittedly one-dimensional and

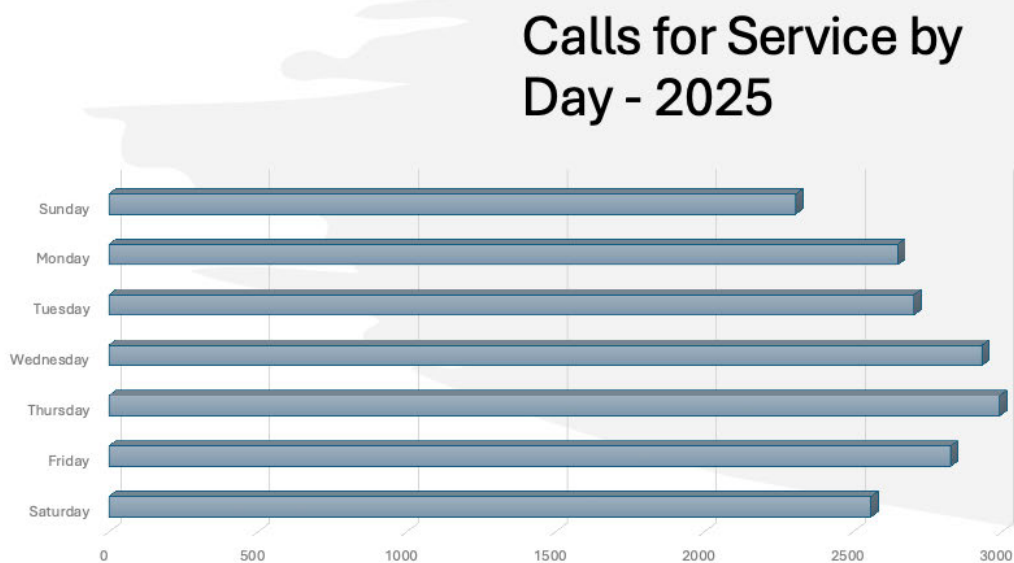
⁴ <https://mail.ajmesc.com/index.php/ajmesc/article/view/613>

does not address the complex nature of calculating an individual tax base for a community, nor the funding streams that support various initiatives.

A Brief Discussion Regarding “Calls For Service” in Hudson

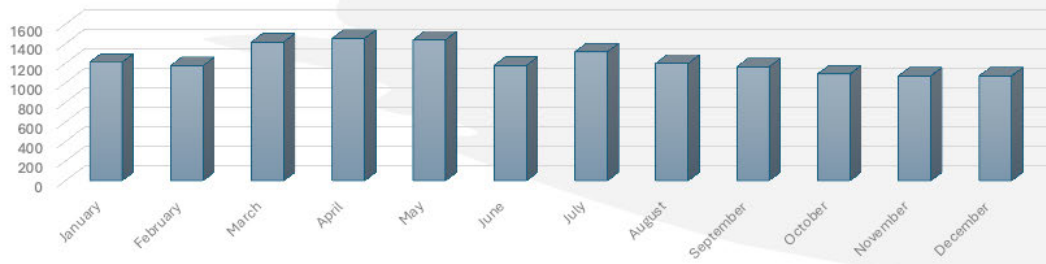
There is no definitive guide in the profession as to how a police department should measure the demands placed upon it. Most agencies simply “assign a number” to track calls for service whenever they are called upon to perform a task. Whether the call was initiated by a patrol officer observing a suspicious incident that warranted additional investigation, a vehicle disabled by the side of the road, or a call originated by a resident to resolve a problem, calls for service most often refer to the requests made to a police department by members of the public for assistance with various issues or emergencies. These requests can be made through phone calls, emails, social media, or other forms of communication and are generally responded to by police officers who are dispatched to the location of the call. Calls for service are a critical part of policing, as they represent the primary way in which police departments engage with the public, provide services, and create a sense of safety in the community.

Assigning a historical number to each incident that took time from the officers’ day accomplishes a multitude of tasks. There is memorialization of the event, regardless of the priority the call for service was deemed to be. The ability to track and locate an event that was attended to by an officer is a critical component of managing risk. If later there were additional facts or concerns about an event, it could be located by the number assigned. Additionally, assigning a number to a task memorializes for the governing body how and where precious taxpayer resources are being expended.



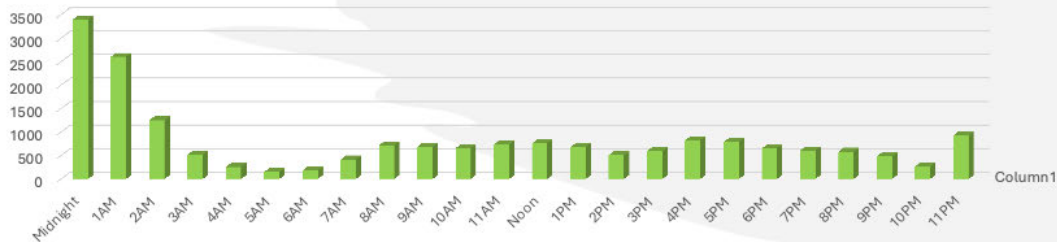
In an attempt to ascertain if there were dramatically busier days than others, MRI was not able to discern any significant deviations other than a gradual rise from Monday to Thursday, with a drop on Saturday and Sunday. Clearly, the call volume of the Hudson Police is significant on a daily basis; however, this data is what MRI would expect to observe from a full-service agency. The data does support the premise that Hudson is a shopping and business destination, as calls for service drop off on weekends. Due to the mid-week nature of the daily calls for service, MRI does concur with Chief DiPersio that patrol officer distribution during the day has already been addressed. While MRI appreciates the community centric philosophy of Chief DiPersio and his “can do, just do” attitude that permeates the Hudson workforce, without an actual depiction of the workload placed upon each officer, there can be wide reaching impacts upon an officer’s ability to perform at a high level. Ultimately, the police need to be available to accomplish more than just responding to calls for service.

2025 Monthly Activity



The monthly activity of the Hudson Police was revealed in that many police agencies experience increases during the summer months due to daylight savings and warmer weather. Data analysis of Hudson activity by month is remarkable for the months of March, April, and May, with a slight decrease in June and a minor uptick in July, with a steady declining demand for service through December. While a deep analysis was not accomplished via this report, administratively, it may behoove the department to monitor vacation, training, and other tasks where overtime is optional. MRI does not conclude that this data warrants an adjustment of work schedules to meet demands.

Calls for Service by Hour-2025



MRI found that the Calls for Service by Hour interesting due to the large volume of calls during the midnight to 2 AM period. A deeper examination found that the department had an active traffic initiative during those hours to address Operating Under the Influence (OUI) as well as potential drug trafficking that may emanate from the I-495 corridor. Additionally, the agency has a proactive building inspection program during these hours. After the 2 AM period, the inactivity is reflective of the quieter environment of Hudson, while the consistent escalation of calls between 4 PM and 6 PM warrants additional analysis of the types of calls. Given this reality, MRI recommends consideration of an overlapping patrol shift to address this obvious and consistent increase in demands from the Hudson community.

Back to the Analysis...

Due to the rather random nature of service demands and needs, it is a challenge to distribute patrol forces effectively. Police managers design purposeful patrol activities to prevent a given number of incidents, but for purposes of tabulation and statistical analysis, being definitive with the number of incidents that were prevented is not possible, as you can't accurately measure what didn't happen. However, the objective for any police manager is to create a highly visible police presence, thereby discouraging those with nefarious intent from committing crime in Hudson. The implication of merely displacing crime, rather than stopping crime altogether, is not the ideal; it is the reality of a democracy in which taxpayers have a significant say about how their money is spent. However, creating this high visibility environment is a difficult premise to

accomplish if officers are constantly “responding” to calls for service and have little time to be proactive.

Regardless of the level of funding, in communities such as Hudson, there is a firm expectation that police services will be delivered in a timely, very personal, and compassionate manner. Meeting these expectations often consumes a significant amount of time. An additional, yet possibly the most critical component of managing personnel in a law enforcement agency, is the expectation that they will actually be available to perform requested or required tasks. While police operational budgets must calculate that employees are compensated for 52 weeks within the budget year, factors such as vacation, training, sick leave, and/or court time make officers unavailable to perform obligated work. All these influences deduct from a police officer’s availability to respond, thereby reducing the ability of the department to react in a timely fashion to the community’s requests.

The following exercise is designed to assist the Town of Hudson in determining officer availability and, therefore, the number of officers required to meet the existing demands of the community. Additionally, it may serve as one factor enabling the Town of Hudson to plan accordingly for the setting of benchmarks or when hiring additional personnel should be considered.

As stated earlier, performing a workload analysis for a police department is not an exact science. One strategy, which was developed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), is based upon the premise that suggests an officer’s day should be divided by time into three equal functions, including:

- Obligated police officer work or responding to calls for service
- Administrative/Report writing
- Proactive community policing and/or preventive patrol

Ideally, an officer should be responding to calls for service demands and resolving problems for approximately one-third of their day. This is referred to as “obligated” work, as police have no option but to respond to these requests. Police work is recognized as a very paper intensive profession. For virtually every action an officer performs, there is the necessity to complete a report or form so that the events and subsequent actions are memorialized. It is often the reality that the time committed to report development and the writing of the report may take longer than the act of resolving the original issue that resulted in the report. These report writing/follow-up functions account for another third of the officer’s time. The remaining one-third of the officer’s time should be committed to community policing or active patrol designed to protect and deter criminal activity, as well as to conduct traffic enforcement initiatives so highly demanded throughout the community.

Without the positive impact of a high visibility strategy where police officers are observed patrolling throughout the community, criminal activity will undoubtedly fill that void. As technology evolves, criminal activity is often not seen or detected by an officer in a patrol car; “cyber-crime” is an ever-emerging challenge that is substantially increasing demand on police departments and is further stretching limited resources. In this day and age, the community is predisposed to want meaningful interaction with their police officers, even if it is as basic as performing directed traffic patrols throughout neighborhoods and seeing their police on the commonly used social media platforms in a meaningful way.

With this entire premise determined to be true in any community, but especially in Hudson, where policing is required to be more “engaging and personal,” one must first gain insight into the actual availability or optimal use of a Hudson Police officer. The importance of this segment of the exercise is recognition of the reality that even though a community compensates an employee within a budgeted calendar year for 52 weeks of employment, they are factually not available for actual patrol duties for that same time period, as the following exercise demonstrates:

40 hours of work per week X 52 weeks

2080 hours

By contractual agreement, Hudson Police are entitled to vacation or annual leave. Annual leave fluctuates according to a system of seniority that awards more vacation time the longer an officer has been employed. An analysis of that data revealed that each of the police officers has an average of 230 hours accrued vacation, with several senior employees having many more additional weeks. To remain conservative with the calculations, an average of 200 hours of leave is used:

Average 200 hours combined vacation leave

200 hours

Remaining

1880 Hours

The Hudson Police accrue sick leave at 10 hours per month and can accumulate to a maximum of 1,200 hours. However, it appears sick leave is used conservatively: the average availability of unused sick leave for each officer is relatively high, particularly when compared to MRI’s experience in other communities. During 2024, the average *use* of sick time per officer was approximately 70 hours:

70 hours of sick leave

70 hours

Remaining**1810 hours**

During 2025, Hudson Police officers completed a significant amount of training to remain current with best practices and to satisfy Massachusetts training mandates. Many of these training hours occurred as newly hired officers were assigned to the Massachusetts POST academy. Specialized training of drone operators, as well as K-9 updates, were noted but not encapsulated in the equations. MRI remained conservative in these calculations to determine the average time each officer committed to training and calculated that 100 hours was reasonable. Of course, during these training classes and exercises, the officer is eliminated from patrol activity. Another area that consumes officer time is roll-call training, which expends additional hours of each officer's time but was not calculated by MRI as it was determined that officers could leave the police facility and respond to the emergency call for service if necessary. Regardless of where this training occurred, off-site or in-house, officers were not engaged in proactive or reactive police initiatives while the training occurred. Training is recognized as a critically important component to managing a police agency, and in Massachusetts, the hours are mandated for an officer to maintain certification. However, understanding the absence of staff due to these needs is an important component for management to gauge.

Average training for all officers

100 hours**Remaining****1710 hours**

Whenever a Hudson Police officer makes an arrest or issues a traffic summons, there is the possibility that they will need to attend court proceedings, taking them away from performing tasks within the community. Hudson is an extremely busy policing environment requiring the officers to attend court for trials or consultation on a regular basis. While most police actions will not result in any court responsibilities, officers are regularly preparing for the potential of trial. Hudson Police are routinely tasked with attending the nearby district court, located in Marlborough. Superior Court, for more serious felony charges, are heard in Woburn, a two-hour round trip from Hudson. Additionally, by contractual obligation, Hudson Police Officers are provided a minimum of four (4) hours of overtime whenever they attend court if they are off duty. Over the course of a calendar year, more than a week and a half of patrol staff availability is consumed by court activities, including trials, case preparation, and pre-trial conferences. This is despite the necessitated negotiated pleas designed to keep officers out of court and available for patrol activities.

Average time for officers to be in court activity

60 hours

Remaining **1650 hours**

Hudson Police have a robust community outreach program that is not patrol related, which consists of safety presentations, responding to school events, a fishing derby, shop with a cop, holiday stroll, and downtown trick or treat, to mention a few. These tasks are critically important and are a hallmark of the Hudson Police's desire to create positive interactions with the community. MRI calculated that an average of twenty-six (26) hours per officer has been committed to community outreach that is not part of the ordinary high-visibility preventive patrols.

Hours committed to community policing activities **26 hours**

Remaining **1624 hours**

Officers are entitled to maternity or paternity leave throughout the year, and while not an annual situation, and an almost impossible occurrence to predict, MRI will use an average of 80 hours to anticipate the absence and those that may occur in the future.

Average number of hours for maternity/paternity leave **80 hours**

Remaining **1544 hours**

Unfortunately, there is the passing of loved ones, resulting in the use of bereavement time spent in attending to the death and the wide array of responsibilities. Contractually, employees are allowed up to 24 hours. However, continuing to engage conservative data, MRI is calculating an average of eight (8) hours for an employee to attend to bereavement matters.

Average number of hours for bereavement leave **8 hours**

Remaining **1536 hours**

The Hudson officer's union contract authorizes two (2) days off for Personal Time. These days are "use or lose" annually, and the department average reflects that fact. In 2025, the personal time off was 16 hours.

Average number of hours for Personal time off 16 hours

Remaining 1520 hours

Finally, the Hudson Police use a strategy to offer comp time in lieu of overtime in some instances. While this approach recognizes immediate savings in overtime costs, it is a “kick the can down the road” strategy that allows an officer time off later. Chief DiPersio explained that using comp time is not often allowed if it creates the necessity for additional overtime to fill that vacant patrol shift. Regardless, comp time is accruing but differs for each staff member. As an example, supervisors have a cap of 400 hours that can be accrued, with patrol staff, via union contract, has only 120 hours. And it must be understood that comp time is calculated at 12 hours for every 8 hours worked. These calculations may create significant financial liability at retirement time, as officers retiring will undoubtedly request their remaining hours. However, the data provided by the department allowed for a determination that as many as ten (10) days or 80 hours is a very justifiable average of time used by officers, taking them away from the patrol function.

Average number of hours for Comp time 80 hours

Remaining 1440 hours

Injured on Duty (IOD)

MRI wanted to compliment the administration of the Hudson Police for their management of risk, which is a frequent partner in the police profession. Often at this juncture of the workload report, there are significant calculations pertaining to officers being Injured **On Duty** or **IOD**. In Massachusetts, injury on duty is designated as “111F.” These situations create a serious challenge for a police administrator as the IOD officer remains on the payroll during recuperation, yet there are vacant shifts that can only be rectified by overtime expenditures. Additionally, IOD recuperation routinely takes significant time as the officer seeks to return to work. Payroll does not exist to hire additional staff to cover vacant patrol shifts, yet the police department must continue to deliver services to the community. Because of the inability to predict how many officers and/or work hours away can be accurately calculated within a budget year, and the reality that any number that could be assigned would skew MRI’s attempt at developing a conservative determination of officer availability, IOD will not be included in these calculations. However, it is important for the governing body to understand the reality of IOD and the

significant implications placed on Chief DiPersio as he attempts to ensure there is adequate staff to respond to the demands of the Hudson community.

Military Obligations

Another factor impacting the ability to staff patrol shifts is military service obligations by current police officers. At the moment, there are three (3) sworn staff members who are serving our country as citizen soldiers. The officers are compelled to be absent for one weekend monthly and two (2) weeks annually for their comprehensive military training. If the officers are not “called up” for active deployment, these training requirements impact their availability to fill a patrol shift at Hudson and increase by an additional 272 hours annually, leaving 1,168 hours left for obligated work by a single officer. On occasion, these citizen soldiers may be assigned to attend specialized military training, further challenging the department. Additionally, MRI was advised that one of these officers has been actively deployed for over two and a half years (2.5), leaving an immense gap that essentially reduces the agency's sworn staff from 36 to 35. While not all military absences impact the delivery of patrol services, often sworn personnel may be assigned to other duties; this is another significant piece of data that will not be calculated into the workload analysis, as the random nature would hamper the clarity of officer availability. This is yet another dramatic influence facing Chief DiPersio as he attempts to design patrol shifts to best serve the Hudson community while remaining within budget allocations.

Administrative Leave

Administrative leave is a temporary, paid removal from active duty, typically used when an officer is under investigation for alleged misconduct, such as excessive force, or if they are involved in a traumatic, high-stress incident, such as the discharge of their firearm. Regardless of whether the leave is disciplinary or non-disciplinary, the action protects the integrity of investigations, ensures community trust, and allows for officer evaluation. Some administrative leave enables the officer to receive pay and benefits during this period, which can last from a few days to several months. Regardless, the officer/s are unavailable to perform patrol duties, leaving a vacancy. The agency has managed an administrative leave situation recently, causing a vacancy within the patrol function. Due to the inability to predict these events, MRI computations will not include this category. However, once again, regardless of the conclusions of this report and the conservative mathematical approach to determining officer availability, this is a very real situation that Chief DiPersio must adequately address.

As this report has exposed, there are many factors that influence patrol officer availability designed to respond to requests for service from the Hudson community. While MRI has

determined not to include several of these influences due to their unpredictable and random nature, they are still present and are factors that must be considered. Regardless, MRI has determined that there is sufficient data to complete the calculations. Based upon the “one-third principle,” the remaining 1,440 hours are divided by 3, leaving 480 hours that the officers at the Hudson Police Department can commit annually to each task as demonstrated in the following manner:

• Obligated police officer work	480 hours
• Administrative/Report writing	480 hours
• Proactive community policing and/or preventive patrol	<u>480 hours</u>
	1,440 hours

MRI has used the term “call for service” throughout this report, which, as noted, is any event or task that the public requests the department address. Regardless of the magnitude of the event or how the police view the situation, the Hudson Police Department must respond and satisfactorily address the issue. MRI concluded that all officers, including patrol sergeants, who are deemed “working supervisors,” routinely respond to calls for service. However, the exercise is also designed to quantify and articulate the fact that simply because an officer is employed by an agency, does not necessarily indicate that the officer is available to provide patrol services and respond to these calls for service. As we have learned, after all the external and internal influences upon officer time are calculated, each officer has 1,440 hours annually in which they can deliver police service to the citizens of Hudson, not the entire 2080 hours for which the officer is budgeted and compensated. In essence, each patrol officer is *unavailable* to provide patrol services to the community for sixteen (16) weeks out of each fiscal year. This creates an immediate shortfall in staffing capabilities.

$$2,080 \text{ hours} - 1,440 = 640 \text{ hours}$$

$$640 \text{ hours divided by 40-hour work week} = 16 \text{ weeks}$$

Ultimately, the single most important factor in determining adequate staffing for a police agency is what level of service the community demands. Often, this is driven by how much the community determines to spend on police resources, as personnel are the costliest items in any police budget. While a community ultimately determines staffing levels, there are several questions that must be answered by the community, such as how long residents are willing to wait for an officer to respond to a routine (non-emergency) call for service? Do the community members desire a highly visible police patrol presence, designed to deter crime or address those who speed through neighborhoods? Hudson has not yet seen the value and supported special

programs such as a traffic enforcement component, but each program ultimately removes officers from patrol. While it could be justifiably argued that there is a need for these specialized police services, ultimately, they do deduct personnel from the patrol function, and without replenishing the capacity to respond to obligated calls for service, the calculations provided in this report will fail.

Comparable Community Police Organizational Structures

City	Chief	Dep. Chief	Capt.	Lt.	Sgt.	Det.	Patrol	Specialty	Total Sworn	Dispatch	Civilian Staff
Mansfield	1	1		3	6	4	22	2 SRO	39	Regional	9
Winchester	1	1		3	8	4	21	2 SRO	40	6FT 3PT	6
Wilmington	1	1		5	7	6	28	2 SRO	52	11	5
Westborough	1	1		4	6	3	25	1 SRO	41	Fire Dept	2
Gardner	1	1		2	5	4	19	1 SRO	33	12	5
Ludlow	1			3	8	3	23	1 SRO 1 Court 1 Records 1 Evidence	42	9FT 3PT	3
Marblehead	1		1	4	4	2	18	1 SRO	31	8 FT 1PT	2
Hudson	1		1	3	6	3	20	2 SRO	36	Regional 5 lobby receptionists	6
Grafton	1			2	4	2	12	1 SRO	22	5	1
Hopkinton	1	1		2	7	1	16	1 SRO	29	12	2
Sudbury	1			2	6	2	17	2 SRO	30	Regional	6
Scituate	1	1		2	8	2	21	2 SRO	39	9	2
Norton	1	1		2	5	4	20	2 SRO	35	Regional	1.5
Newburyport	1			2	5	3	20	1 SRO	32	5	2
Ashland	1	1		2	6	2	16	1.5 SRO	29	9	2
Sharon	1	1		3	5	2	21	1 SRO	34	4FT 3PT	1.5

The matrix above dissects the same comparable communities used initially in this report by breaking down the organizational make-up of each police agency. It is designed to share what other communities are doing with their human resources in the police field. While it may have no bearing on the policing philosophy of Hudson nor reflect what the Hudson community desires from their police, it is interesting to note how other communities commit to the administrative,

supervisory, patrol, and investigative functions and/or other initiatives such as School Resource Officers, Traffic, and/or the community policing programs of the agency.

Continuing with the calculations associated with the workload analysis, Chief DiPersio has attempted to maximize the complement of officers to the community's best interests with the following configuration that does not include the Lieutenant that may be assigned during the day and evening shifts, but not midnight:

Day Shift	7 AM-3 PM	Five (5) officers
Evening	3 PM-11 PM	Five (5) officers
Midnight	11 PM-7 AM	Four (4) officers

However, this complement of personnel is based upon officer availability, not service demands, and has not been realized for quite some time, as staff are not always available. Chief DiPersio is also very aware that the warmer weather has different impacts upon various neighborhoods of Hudson and the call volume. Additionally, when police are requested, the obligation must be to respond to calls for service within a reasonable time span. There are no options to ignore or postpone a call from the public. While most police calls in Hudson can be categorized as quality-of-life issues, such as crimes against people, traffic complaints, and assisting the public, they must all be answered. Combined with the rather transient population shopping and traversing through Hudson, these challenges combine to pose a significant problem while the agency strives to maintain a high-level of responsiveness to the residents of Hudson.

While one officer is actively deployed and there may be others pending maternity leave in the future, the calculations cannot adequately foresee all situations. Consequently, MRI concludes that the most reasonable approach is to focus on the current situation, as these temporary vacancies will be negated. The question remains: Is the current budgeted and authorized strength of the Hudson Police Department appropriate to address the obligated demands of the Hudson community? MRI believes that the best approach is to focus upon the budgeted patrol staff of twenty-five (25) officers assigned to patrol duties in the Town of Hudson: five (5) sergeants and twenty (20) patrol officers:

Twenty-five (25) X 40 hours per week X 52 weeks equate to 52,000 hours.

In other words, *if* each of the twenty-five (25) full-time officers were available for patrol activity for 2,080 hours per year, those officers could adequately cover 52,000 hours of work within a

year. However, as the previous exercise demonstrates, MRI concludes that due to previous contractual obligations and other tasks required of the patrol officers throughout the year that prevent them from being available for their patrol duties, the twenty-five (25) officers are only present for a total of 36,000 hours annually.

Twenty-five (25) officers X 1,440 hours annually equate to 36,000 hours

52,000 hours – 36,000 hours = 16,000 hours

This creates a gap of 16,000 hours; the equivalent of seven (7.69) personnel. When equating to people, the fraction is insignificant but essentially equates to eight (8) police officers (2,080 hours X 8 = 16,640), which is not filled to address obligated patrol duties. Nor does it address the scheduled patrol shifts that Chief DiPersio has determined are essential for minimally providing services to the community of Hudson. This gap guarantees the need for one of three events: significant overtime costs, comp time costs, or a vacant shift, thereby dramatically reducing the ability of the Hudson Police to respond to residents' requests throughout the fiscal year.

16,000 hours divided by 2,080 hours = 7.69 officers

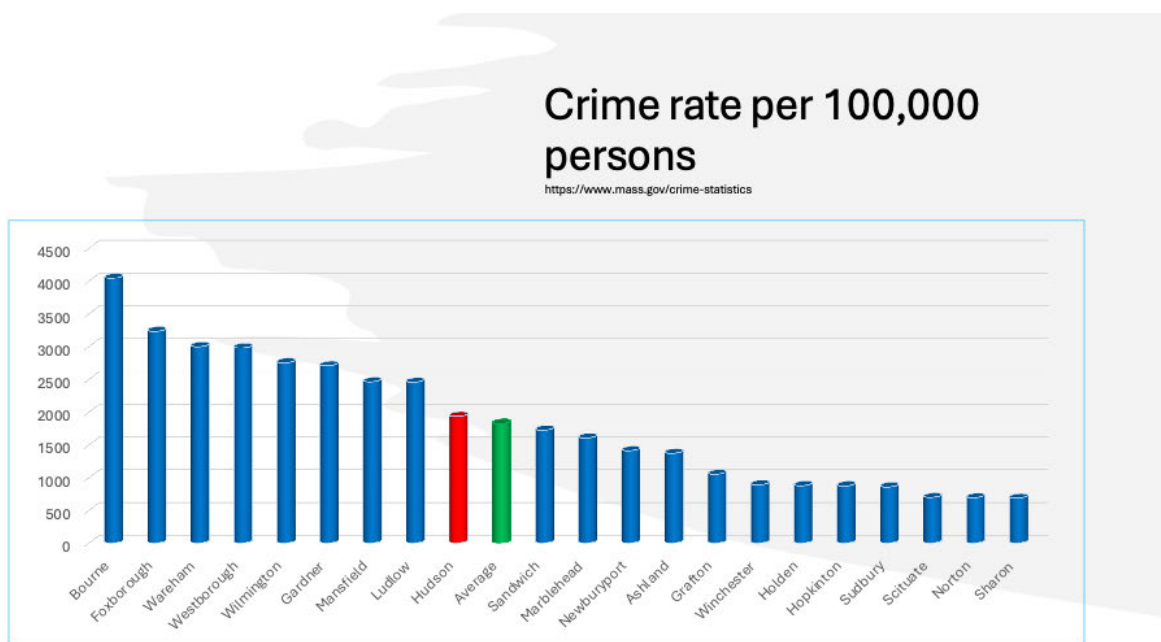
As with any mathematical approach to a profession that must respond and satisfy subjective consumers, the residents/taxpayers of Hudson, there are acknowledged shortcomings, including slightly more than half of an officer (.69). MRI suggests caution be exercised in interpreting these results. However, there is ample information within these calculations that should provide Chief DiPersio and the governing officials of Hudson with abundant evidence that staffing levels at the Hudson Police Department are below those necessary to provide adequate, and possibly minimum staffing levels on a 24/7 basis by at least seven (7) patrol officers.

Crime Rates

Massachusetts is the third safest state in the country⁵. However, the Hudson community is above the average crime rate among the identified comparable communities. While MRI cannot exclusively correlate crime rates to the lack of a visible police presence, it is one factor that must be considered along with others that MRI has articulated. As discussed, another influence that must be contemplated is the convenient traffic corridor of I-495 traversing the town, giving easy access for visitors and lawbreakers alike. Undoubtedly, the regional draw of Highland Commons

⁵ https://ma.beyond2020.com/ma_tops

is another factor influencing this data. Whatever the collection of reasons, the current crime rate for Hudson is 1,931⁶. This figure is based on data retrieved from Mass.gov, which describes the crime rate per 100,000 people. Obviously, Hudson does not have a population of 100,000 people. However, this mathematical formula establishes the national standard of how crime rates are determined in communities across the United States and essentially means that for every 100,000 persons, 1,931 will be the victim of a crime. As noted, the average crime rate among these comparable communities is 1,820.

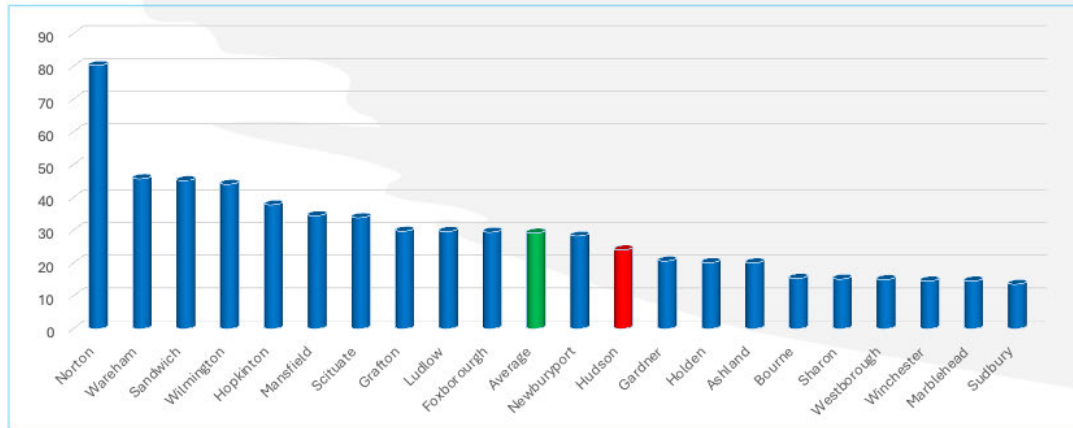


Local government officials must recognize that the criminals whose behavior results in the crime rate in Hudson do not concern themselves with jurisdictional boundary lines! One of the goals of Chief DiPersio is to create a highly visible, readily available, and more proactive police agency so that criminals will not be able to exploit the community. Given the conditions analyzed, MRI concludes that the Town of Hudson could be more effective at preventing and/or creating a high visibility police environment if officers were not so busy responding to calls for service, thereby hindering this goal. *By all data analysis, MRI must conclude that out of necessity, Hudson police are reacting to crime rather than proactively thwarting criminal activity.*

⁶ https://ma.beyond2020.com/ma_tops

Percentage of Crimes Cleared by Police

<https://www.mass.gov/crime-statistics>



Adding to this conclusion is the data gleaned from the above graph, where the Hudson Police are below the average of the comparable communities in solving crime that occurs in Hudson. The same stress on the agency to prevent crime is also impacting their ability to dedicate time and effort to solve those crimes that do occur. Resource availability where there is a high officer workload, strained staffing, and resulting administrative delays can hamper criminal investigations.

If officers are always reacting to calls for service, they are unable to commit time to resolving the incident. It should be illustrated that the average clearance rate of crimes in Massachusetts is 25.67%⁷. The average among these comparable communities is 29%, with Hudson's clearance rate at 24%. It is worth noting that the second-lowest crime rate of the comparable communities is held by the Town of Norton, which also has the highest clearance rate at 80%, as well as the lowest per officer calls for service ratio. One possible conclusion is that Norton patrol officers have time for proactive, high visibility policing, thereby keeping the crime rate low while solving those crimes that do occur. These data points add to the MRI hypothesis that when officers have time to create a high visibility patrol strategy, crime is deterred, and when it does occur, there is ample time available for the staff to resolve the issue. It is Chief DiPersio's desire to prevent the

⁷ https://ma.beyond2020.com/ma_tops

incident in the first instance rather than have a community member suffer the trauma of being a victim of a crime.

This is yet another affirmation of why MRI reviews multiple factors rather than one single focus area before rendering recommendations. In the area of crime data, when the Town of Hudson's data is scrutinized, MRI detected a problem area associated with the lack of proactive policing. We can conclude that this is due to the high quantity of calls handled by each officer (940) with an accompanying limited patrol staff leading to a lack of proactive, high-visibility patrol, ultimately resulting in an above average crime rate (1,931).

There is evidence that the Hudson Police Department is evolving into a reactive agency as opposed to using a proactive, problem-solving, and engaged strategy to prevent the commission of crime in the first instance. With a calculated presumption based upon history, there will likely emerge a gap of resident dissatisfaction and officer awareness that they could and should be accomplishing more. Before the potential of community dissatisfaction arrives at that intersection, and while the need to address the seven (7) patrol officer shortfall is more immediate, there will also be the opportunity to strategically plan by gradually addressing staff challenges and community satisfaction. While these expectations will undoubtedly surface due to the lack of services, such as a concerted traffic initiative, it remains that each call for service requires an appropriate police response. When police response to service requests are delayed or ignored due to more serious incidents or a large volume of calls, there needs to be an assessment of the level of services the department can provide. If the backlog becomes too lengthy, or criminal clearance rates decline due to the Hudson Police's inability to adequately investigate, or traffic accidents increase due to the agency's inability to perform directed patrols, there must be preparation for suggestions that may not be embraced by a community accustomed to personalized service. Ultimately, without additional human resources, the community will need to determine the level of service that it desires and can ultimately afford.

	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Calls for service*	23,504	24,444	25,422	26,439	27,496	28,596	29,740
Budgeted # Patrol Officers	25	25	27	29	31	32	32
Calls Per Officer	940	977	941	912	887	893	929

*A multi-year look-back suggests the 4% increase projected here for this analysis.

The exercise above is designed to further enhance the ability of the Hudson community to monitor demands upon the existing staff and react accordingly. Hudson police respond to a significant number of calls for service each year. In the attempt to provide a snapshot of future calls, MRI has continued to maintain a conservative approach, estimating a call volume increase of 4% per year to anticipate demands upon the agency in the immediate future and the number of patrol officers required.

When this data was calculated in the earlier matrix comparing similar communities, MRI used the entire agency's complement of 36 officers, divided into the number of calls for service. But the reality is that calls for service are being directly addressed by only twenty-five (25) personnel, consisting of patrol sergeants and patrol officers. The calculations in the above matrix provide a true representation of the workload placed upon the patrol officer assigned to responding to obligated calls for service. At the current level of calls for service that each officer is handling during a year, the agency must be viewed as reactive. By all indications, the Hudson community is satisfied with the degree of services provided by their police, although an MRI recommended community survey may validate this assumption. Therefore, MRI must conclude that the workload levels must be stabilized, or better yet, lowered, enabling the patrol staff to proactively address community issues. The lower the calls per officer become, the more attentive and problem-solving the officer can be. For instance, if the number of calls per officer were maintained or lowered to the 800-900 range by adding additional patrol staff, the more positive resolution for the resident taxpayer. MRI recognizes that hiring seven (7) officers in one fiscal year is simply not feasible and most likely a non-starter. However, MRI believes that reducing the number of calls per officer by adding two (2) patrol staff in 2027, two (2) officers in 2028, two (2) officers in 2029, and one (1) in 2030, may permit further assessment and allow the agency to maintain a more proactive strategy rather than become a one-dimensional reactive style organization.

MRI's analysis is designed to determine the number of police officers required to meet the existing demands of the community, not the ability to politically resolve or fund that need. We recognize it is often the case that demands placed upon any police department and the financial realities/capacity of the community to fund the service may simply not intersect.

The data above focuses upon patrol capacity to respond to obligated calls for service. If there are any deviations of personnel to specialized assignments such as an additional School Resource officer, a task force assignment, or administrative function, the projections will fail unless the position removed from patrol is replaced. While MRI did not examine the explicit and immediate need for a Detective to be added to the agency, during data retrieval and research for this report,

it was noted as an emerging challenge. For an organization the size of the Hudson Police, with a lower-than-average solvability rate and the tasks required of investigating the host of crimes that are perpetrated by people living outside of the community, not having additional personnel dedicated to conducting investigations is most likely a flawed strategy. As Detective Sergeant Merrill stated, "We have a formula through the accreditation program that allows us to assign a solvability matrix to each case. Because we are so busy, we need to assess which case we can solve before we commit valuable personnel time to the investigation." Many crimes that result in arrest do so because of the "detective work" of the patrol officer who responded to the initial call for service. If the patrol officer cannot conclude the investigation with an arrest, the case would routinely be turned over to a Detective who has the primary job of gathering information. Hudson Police occasionally assign patrol staff to assist with some of the more significant incidents, all at overtime rates, with oversight by the Lieutenant, but this strategy is problematic. Personnel assigned to the patrol function cannot easily conduct interviews of victims, witnesses, and suspects, especially those not residing in Hudson, when the officer(s) must also respond to obligated calls for service and may be working a midnight shift.

The task of responding to calls for service will ultimately fall to the patrol officers, not detective/s or command staff, who are required to fulfill a host of administrative and other tasks. When patrol staff begin simply responding and not problem-solving due to the pressures of calls for service backing up, then community dissatisfaction will escalate, creating a crisis situation for town government that will ultimately cost more taxpayer funds as opposed to a well-planned, systematic approach. Additionally, it is important to note that the town should plan to add additional police officers as the community grows in population or calls for service rise sharply. FBI statistics cite an average of 2.3 full-time officers per 1000 inhabitants in New England communities with populations between 10,000 and 25,000 inhabitants. Hudson is at 1.7 officers, and many of the communities analyzed do not have a major corridor, such as I-495, bisecting the community.

The challenge of recruitment, selection, and retention

The Hudson Police over the last ten years have lost ten (10) experienced and valuable police officers to several neighboring communities' police agencies, the Massachusetts State Police, and others to federal law enforcement. Additionally, another eleven (11) have resigned or retired during this period. Hudson must strive to maintain quality employees, especially during this period of a tight market and waning attraction to the police profession.

As a smaller agency that is perceived to have a lower rate of compensation and benefits, as well as a lack of internal promotions and opportunities for specialized assignments, Hudson is already

at a disadvantage over many larger agencies due to the national crisis⁸ regarding attracting qualified people who are interested in a police career. In today's environment, there is a "perfect storm" of challenges that make it difficult for agency leaders to maintain appropriate staffing levels and generate job satisfaction as well as positive morale. Separating from the Massachusetts Civil Service system enables Hudson to control their own destiny and create a viable recruitment and selection process that fits the community's needs while eliminating a bureaucratic labyrinth that the police administration had to deal with to hire personnel. Hudson does not desire to become a training ground for area police agencies that swoop in and take experienced police officers for their own use.

A 2021 survey from the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) showed a 45% increase in retirements, and nearly 20% spike in resignations over the previous year⁹, the most recent data on the topic. Unfortunately, the applicant pool for police officers across the nation is not very deep. Nationally, police agencies are struggling to keep departments fully staffed as resignations increase and hiring gets tougher in a tight labor market. At the same time, officers describe the job as more stressful, more criticized, and less rewarding than it was in the past, and are aware that the role of policing is expanding with new duties requiring officers to have a greater breadth of unique skills.

Once hired, the challenge is finding affordable ways to retain good officers. This fact results in certified and highly trained officers evaluating their positions and exploring opportunities elsewhere. The demand for qualified applicants from a labor pool that is sparse is challenging police agencies, who have now attached a name to the reality that is occurring openly in the profession. "Poaching" certified officers to higher paying police agencies has evolved into a definitive strategy by some police administrators to fill their vacant positions. By all accounts, which appears to be the situation, several trained officers have left Hudson for area agencies where there is more career diversity, higher wages, modern equipment, and a lessened workload. Police managers throughout New England face multiple challenges in recruiting and retaining staff. "Poaching" is becoming more prevalent throughout the Commonwealth to the detriment of smaller communities. Like an effective crime prevention program, Hudson should consider a proactive and cost-effective approach to officer retention that may reduce the instances of having officers poached.

Employee turnover is an expensive proposition. Significant research has concluded that it is better to avoid the necessity of recruiting "new" employees by focusing efforts on retaining

⁸ <https://www.policechiefmagazine.org/recruitment-retention-and-attribution/#:~:text=It%20is%20estimated%20that%202024,program%20that%20includes%20retention%20programs>.

Retrieved June 8, 2024.

⁹ <https://www.policeforum.org/workforcesurveyjune2021>

incumbent staff. While some of the retention techniques used by police agencies have included increased salaries and benefits, there is significant data to support the premise that job satisfaction, supportive work environment, mentoring programs, and other job enhancement strategies have more to do with why employees remain in a position. Simply stated, they find that positions offering these attributes provide them with fulfillment. In their book, "The Leadership Challenge," Kouzes and Posner suggest that employees remain in their positions in spite of significant pay increase opportunities elsewhere when they are "proud to tell others they are part of the organization, they feel a strong sense of team spirit, they see their own personal values as consistent with those of the organization, they feel attached and committed to the organization and ultimately have a sense of ownership of the organization¹⁰." However, if the pay disparity is so wide, regardless of the positive work environment, officers will leave.

In the past, the cost of employee turnover has simply been considered the price of doing business and is routinely absorbed into the operating budget. Since these costs do not appear as a line item, little attention has been given to the cost of losing employees. However, it is important to first have a full understanding of the organizational and financial investment an agency has in its staff. Often, there is a tendency to focus on the short-term costs of replacing an officer and ignore the investment that has compounded over the years. Much of the knowledge and experience an officer possesses can only be obtained by doing the actual job itself. A great portion of this knowledge is gained in the first five years of employment. When an officer is recruited away, or "poached", the financial and time investment in knowledge and experience for the officer leaving for greener pastures is lost forever. This investment serves as a substantial grant to the new employer. Basically, the contributing agency paid to train the officer for the receiving employer. Compounding the problem, the strength and cohesion that a department gains by having experienced staff is diminished and cannot be replaced with a new hire immediately. Over time, agencies with higher turnover and less experienced officers often suffer reduced productivity, lower quality of service delivery, more frequent complaints, and higher liability risks. While these costs are difficult to quantify, they are just as real to the community and the organization as salaries and training costs.

As MRI attempts to project a conservative estimate of Hudson's financial investment in an employee, the goal is to focus upon the cost of selecting and training a newly hired police officer. However, there are a host of intangible costs when an officer leaves employment, such as the deviation of the Chief's, Captain's, or Lieutenant's salary and benefits from the role already expected of this position to address a new recruitment effort. While often mundane work, there are a host of tasks that need to be addressed in the process of selecting a new employee.

¹⁰ The Leadership Challenge; Kouzes and Posner

In the current state of the Hudson Police Department, newly hired personnel who have been recruited are put “on the street” as reasonably soon after they’ve received basic police training at the Massachusetts POST academy and the eight (8) to twelve (12) week Field Training (FTO) by a certified officer. The twenty-six (26) week MPTC Academy training provides new police officers with certification and a playbook of minimum skills needed to address the most basic calls for service. The Hudson Police then take the new graduate and train them for the nuances associated with working in the Hudson community. Such skills as roadway knowledge, report writing, radio procedures, policy, and procedure distinctions are the focus of this training and consume almost ten (10) months before they are capable of providing patrol services to the community. The cost of the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA) gap between an entry-level police officer and one substantially tenured is almost impossible to calculate...until the town is litigated. Tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, or even millions of dollars may be the measure.

In the exercise below, MRI attempts to analyze the costs for a variety of functions within the Hudson Police recruitment, selection, and training processes that are implemented when a new employee is sought. The values below are exclusively the hourly pay rate of the employee engaged in the selection process and do not include benefits. MRI was very pleased and congratulates the Hudson Police for achieving and adhering to best practice strategies, policies, and procedures related to recruitment, selection, and retention through the Massachusetts Accreditation program.

Recruitment Costs

Chief DiPersio and a Lieutenant are directly overseeing the selection process. They are both tasked with reviewing each resume and determining a list of qualified applications expressing an interest in working for the Hudson Police Department. Each viable candidate is contacted to advise them that they are under consideration and to confirm their continuing interest. If nothing is heard, the applicant is contacted again, ensuring that their silence is deliberate. The rates for the Chief and the Lieutenant at this stage are at straight time calculations. However, they are being removed from accomplishing other tasks. The time in reviewing, analyzing, and determining who proceeds to the next phase consumes approximately eight (8) hours of time over the course of this part of the process:

There is an annual public relations line in the budget that comprises advertising costs. Including this entire line in this equation would skew the data for the cost of identifying, outfitting, and training a candidate, so the \$7,200.00 will not be reflected in this data.

Chief DiPersio	8 X \$87.00 =	\$696.00
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Lieutenant	8 X \$56.00 =	<u>\$448.00</u>	\$1,144.00
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Once viable candidates are identified, each candidate is scheduled to participate in a physical agility test to ensure that the candidate has the capacity to pass the Massachusetts mandated PT exercise protocol. Without successful passage, the candidate is unable to gain entrance into the Massachusetts police academy and becomes ineligible to be hired. A Lieutenant and a Sergeant are tasked with overseeing this process, but because the Chief and Captain are attempting to gain as much insight into each of the candidates, they attend and watch this segment. They want to observe the effort each candidate puts into the exercises, whether the candidate encourages their peers during this strenuous exercise, whether they are clearly a self-motivating person, and how do they carry themselves when under stress. All these observations assist in making a final decision on who will best fit into the Hudson Police culture. For this portion of the selection process, MRI will not utilize the salary of the Chief and Captain. However, there are proctors overseeing the process who are doing so at overtime rates, which will be calculated in an effort to assign a cost to the hiring process.

Lieutenant	\$83.50 X 2	\$167.00	
Sergeant	\$70.00 X 2	\$140.00	
3 officers X \$55.00 X 2 hours =		<u>\$330.00</u>	\$637.00

A number of potential candidates are invited to the important Oral Board interview process. Chief DiPersio is committed to involving a cross-section of the agency, wanting to ensure that they recognize their value as stakeholders while ensuring that a diversity of opinions regarding candidates is heard. The Oral Board typically includes eight (8) members consisting of three (3) patrol officers, two (2) Sergeants, two (2) Lieutenants, and the Captain. Depending upon the number of interviews, this could be an all-day process. For purposes of this exercise, six (6) hours will be used with the average pay rate of those members:

Captain	6 X \$89.00	\$534.00
Lieutenant	6 X \$83.50 X 2	\$1,002.00
Sergeant	6 X \$70.00 X 2	\$840.00

Patrol 6 X \$55.00 X 3 \$990.00

\$3,366.00

Candidates are scheduled for a medical examination, drug screening, and psychological testing by the Lieutenant. There is significant coordination required with each candidate and the appointments, and they are so necessary to ensure viable applicants.

Lieutenant 4 hours X \$56.00 **\$224.00**

The Detective Bureau conducts a thorough background investigation on each candidate. According to Chief DiPersio, each thorough background check consumes a minimum of forty (40) hours of time.

Background by Detective 40 hours X \$46.25 for each candidate **\$1,850.00**

Also, during this early phase, the Chief is briefed on each candidate, and a final meeting with the Chief and the Captain is scheduled with each candidate.

Selection Process Costs

Cost of initial screening \$1,144.00

Physical Agility Testing \$637.00

Cost of initial oral board interview \$3,366.00

Cost of scheduling testing \$224.00

Cost of the applicant's medical screening \$400.00

Cost of psychological screening exams \$375.00

Background Investigation \$1,850.00

Total selection costs per candidate: **\$7,996.00**

New Employee Costs

Once the position is offered, there is an orientation/onboarding process for salary, benefits, issuing new employee credentials, and ancillary completion of required employment paperwork. In addition to the new officer's salary and benefits for the time committed to these tasks, these numerous administrative duties consume most of one day for an officer who accompanies candidate/s to assist and coordinate:

On-Boarding Tasks by Lieutenant 8 hours X \$56.00 \$448.00

The new employee requires a set of uniforms and equipment to attend the academy.

\$3,500.00

\$3,948.00

Training Costs

Massachusetts charges tuition and supplies for basic police training:

\$3,600.00

Recruit's salary and benefits while attending academy training:

\$82,000.00

Once academy graduation occurs, the officer is provided with uniforms and other equipment associated with providing services to the Hudson community. Field Training (FTO) commences, during which the officer is accompanied by a certified Field Training Officer so that the new officer can be oriented to the nuances of providing police services to the Hudson community. Familiarity with all the community streets, businesses, radio protocol, and report completion requirements are accomplished throughout this twelve-week period and are part of this critical primacy training period. The Hudson Police Department has a well-structured and established FTO program with certified officers conducting the training at an average of \$40.00 hourly.

480 hours x \$40.00: \$19,200.00

Total Training costs **\$104,800.00**

There are a number of ancillary tasks that require completion, and while it is factual that these tasks are accomplished by people already on the Hudson Police Department payroll, when they are focusing on a new hire, they are not accomplishing their original job description. Additionally, MRI notes that having the Chief, Captain, and/or Lieutenant accomplish many of these mundane

tasks is not ideal, but realistic. In addition, these are the tasks and nuances associated with employee retention, which, while difficult to dissect appropriately, can dominate the agency's time and distract it from the mission of the organization.

Selection Process Cost	\$7,996.00
New Employee Cost	\$3,948.00
Training Cost	<u>\$104,800.00</u>

\$116,744.00

The above exercise allows MRI to ascertain that the estimated cost associated with recruiting, selecting, and training one new employee before they are certified to assume a patrol shift on their own is conservatively assessed at **\$116,744.00**. Ten (10) officers have left the Hudson Police Department for other law enforcement positions, and eleven have retired or left the profession entirely within the last ten (10) years. When you multiply the identified costs by only those ten (10) officers who have left employ of the Hudson Police Department to take positions elsewhere, \$1,167,440.00 has been expended by the town to (essentially) train officers for other communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Hire seven (7) police officers: MRI calculations determined that the Hudson Police should budget seven (7) additional officers to the staff, focusing exclusively upon patrol obligations. As noted, the strategy should be embraced to ensure patrol staff reach the desired level of forty-three (43) officers to meet *current* demands. If any officers are diverted from patrol to meet the demands of other duties, they should be replaced by additional personnel. Ironically, MRI has concluded that the work ethics and effectiveness of the Hudson Police staff in providing services to the community may have become a detriment, as their success permits the governing body to conclude that the agency is sufficiently staffed.

Review ability to civilianize positions: MRI noted that there may be an opportunity to review job tasks to ensure that sworn, highly trained officers are not removed from obligated patrol responsibilities. A review of any current administrative tasks that are being performed by police officers to determine the viability of civilianizing the role may be warranted. Engaging highly trained and compensated police in the role they are designed to accomplish while replacing them with a trained, yet lower-salary civilian to fulfill administrative tasks could be a strategy for Hudson to explore. In discussions with Chief DiPersio, he explained that using comp time is not often allowed if it creates the necessity for additional overtime. MRI noted that the desire for

fleet oversight may be combined with other tasks not requiring a sworn officer, such as transporting evidence for analysis. Additionally, Chief DiPersio expressed his desire to add an administrative sergeant and reclassify the current captain title to a deputy chief to more accurately reflect the job tasks this position accomplishes.

Conduct a community survey in 2027: MRI suggests that the Hudson Police conduct a survey to confirm the level of community satisfaction. Additionally, it would be informative to note whether there were initiatives that the community would like the department to adopt, such as traffic or drug enforcement efforts.

Create a new patrol shift: If the MRI recommendations are accepted and additional staff are retained, creating a new shift of 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM or 1:00 PM to 9:00 PM, or even 2:00 PM to 10:00 PM, is encouraged. The hours the patrol shift spans are not critical and can be fine-tuned by Chief DiPersio. The added patrol coverage will supplement patrol staff capabilities during periods of higher rates of calls for service while creating an overlap that maintains patrol activities during the 3 PM shift change.

CONCLUSION

This document is designed to provide a valid workload analysis for the Hudson Police Department based upon a snapshot of the agency in 2025. This is an agency struggling to maintain what is considered to be an adequate response to the demands of the Hudson community. The goal of this report is to quickly identify the number of patrol officers required to address the existing demands of the agency with a defensible prediction of future needs. While seven (7) immediate hires are recommended, this number could easily expand to address the community's desire for a focused traffic and drug addiction initiative and the recommended addition of investigative personnel. Without additional staffing, the agency may be unable to maintain even the pretense of a proactive policing strategy and will slowly evolve into one of reaction.

With vast experience consulting with other communities in the Commonwealth, MRI has found that low staffing levels contribute to increased rates of attrition. Fatigued and overworked officers often seek alternative work situations, both in and outside of law enforcement. The cost of recruiting and training a new officer to the competency level of senior officers who have left the agency far exceeds the cost of supporting a program of officer wellness through appropriate staffing levels and retention in the first instance.

It is MRI's hope that this report provides a viable approach that is acceptable to the taxpayers of Hudson and allows the agency an opportunity to quickly focus upon those topics where

enhancement would benefit the Hudson Police organization as it provides policing services to the community of Hudson.

Respectfully submitted,

David Kurz

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