

# NEWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

## TRUST ~ INTEGRITY ~ TRADITION



### 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

[www.NewtonPolice.org](http://www.NewtonPolice.org)

Every day, the dedicated officers of the Newton Police Department carry out their duties with an unwavering commitment to our mission – to serve, uphold public trust, and consistently exemplify competence and professionalism. As a dynamic organization, we evolve in harmony with modern policing standards, ensuring our effectiveness in a world where cultural shifts demand adaptability while meeting the expectations of our community.

As an integral part of this community, we wholeheartedly pledge to sustain and fortify our partnership. Our goal is to provide a police department that is not only proficient but also personable and professional. Our approach is firmly grounded in principles of integrity, compassion, fairness, and respect. We are steadfast in our dedication to evaluating and enhancing efficiency and effectiveness through continuous assessment of our policies and training standards.

At the heart of our values lies the understanding that trust and transparency are paramount in fostering a strong bond between our agency and the people we serve. As a department, we consistently emphasize these principles, recognizing that they are the bedrock of a successful and harmonious relationship with our community.

Our dedication to community engagement is evident through various initiatives, including Coffee With A Cop, National Night Out, the C.L.E.A.R. Program, Think Act Grow Program, Positive Ticketing, and Project Self-Sufficiency Season of Hope. We deeply appreciate the invaluable support we receive from the community, which enhances our overall effectiveness.

### TRANSITION OF PERSONNEL

In November 2024 Joseph D'Annibale took command of the department as Acting Police Chief and was sworn in on February 1, 2025, as the department's 13<sup>th</sup> Police Chief. In January 2004, he began his law enforcement career as a police officer and attended the Morris County Police Academy. In 2006, he was hired by the Town of Newton Police Department, where he served as a patrolman for the next five years. In April 2011, Joseph was assigned to the Detective Bureau. During his tenure, he held several important roles, including Evidence Custodian, Police Liaison to the Newton School District, and Firearms Instructor. He views his experience in the Detective Bureau as a strong foundation for his continued career growth. In February 2020, Joseph was promoted to Police Sergeant and took command of a patrol squad, supervising three patrol officers. He also served as the lead Firearms Instructor for the Newton Police Department. As a Sergeant, he received several accolades, including a Congressional Certificate of Recognition from Congressman Josh Gottheimer as a "Hometown Hero" for his courageous actions in extinguishing a fire inside a closed business. Additionally, he was awarded a Visions Lifesaving Award from Newton Medical Center for his life-saving CPR intervention. In June 2022, Joseph was promoted to Lieutenant and took over the Support Services Division.

In February 2025, Judy Torres was promoted to Detective Sergeant, Judy was hired on December 26, 2018, by Chief Michael Richards and attended the Morris County Police Academy and upon graduation she was assigned to patrol duty. In 2022, Judy was assigned to the Detective Bureau. Judy took on the role of School and Community liaison Detective. Judy attended and coordinated various community related activities and events. Judy has been involved in numerous duties and assignments which include Certified Child Seat Technician, LEAD Instructor and Defensive Tactics Instructor.

In February 2025, Daniel Finkle was promoted to Lieutenant and head of Support Services. Hired as a police officer in 2006 by Chief John Tomasula, he attended the Somerset County Police Academy and spent over 13 years in the Patrol Division, earning recognition for his expertise and sound judgment. In 2019, Dan was assigned to the Detective Bureau, leading many criminal investigations and specializing in digital forensics as part of the Sussex County Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. Promoted to Sergeant in 2021, he first led a patrol squad before assuming command of the Detective Bureau later that year and leading the successful reinstatement of the School Resource Officer program. He also led the creation of the department's drone unit and the Sussex County Law Enforcement Drone Association.

In June 2025, Brandon Posey graduated from the Morris County Police Academy. With a deep-rooted desire to protect and serve, he has since been honored to join the Newton Police Department. Brandon is both proud and excited to continue his journey, serving the people of Newton with integrity, dedication, and a commitment to making a positive impact on the community.

In 2025, the Newton Police Department established a new leadership role — the Administrative Sergeant — to enhance internal operations and community support services. This position provides oversight of our Animal Control Unit, supervises firearms training and application processes, and assists with body-worn camera and court discovery reviews. As the year progressed, this role became instrumental in addressing one of the community's most pressing challenges: the rise in homelessness within our town.

In July 2025, Russell Post was promoted to Sergeant after ten years of dedicated service with the Newton Police Department. Since joining the department in 2015, Sgt. Post has served with distinction, including two years in the Detective Bureau, where he gained extensive investigative experience. He is currently one of the department's Firearms Instructors and is also a certified Humane Law Enforcement Officer.

As the department's Administrative Sergeant, Sgt. Post was appointed as the Police Department's liaison to the Homeless Task Force. Working in close partnership with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, local nonprofit organizations, and Sussex County agencies, these collaborative efforts have resulted in the permanent housing of more than 13 individuals in just a few months.

These achievements have had a measurable impact on the community, including a significant reduction in special summons complaints and a noticeable improvement in the overall quality of life in our downtown district. This innovative approach reflects our continued commitment to problem-solving, compassion, and building a safer, stronger Newton for all.

In December 2025, Lieutenant Michael Wolanski retired after 25 years of dedicated service in law enforcement. In January 2001, Michael was sworn in as a full-time police officer by Chief John Tomasula. He was promoted to Sergeant in 2019 under Chief Robert E. Osborn, taking on responsibilities in firearms investigations, accreditation compliance, and community outreach programs such as the Youth Corps and Domestic Violence Response Team. Serving as lieutenant and head of operations, Michael considers it his greatest honor to lead the patrol division, where he served for the remainder of his career.

In December 2025, Anthony Keiling was promoted to Sergeant. Anthony was hired by Chief Michael Richards in 2017 where he worked in the patrol division dedicating himself to serving the community with professionalism and integrity.

In December 2025, Jared Zappa was promoted to Lieutenant and head of operations. In July 2017, Jared was sworn in as a full-time police officer by Chief John Tomasula. He was assigned to the Detective Bureau in 2021. He was promoted to Sergeant in 2022 under Chief Steve VanNieuwland, taking on responsibilities of the Patrol Sergeant.

The Newton Police Department places a strong emphasis on internal affairs processes and professional standards. Our officers are held to the highest standards of conduct, and any citizen complaints are thoroughly investigated to ensure accountability. The disciplinary actions taken are progressive and corrective, contributing to our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement.

To maintain transparency in our Internal Affairs process, we have compiled the following statistical report summarizing complaints received about officers and their dispositions for the year 2025. The matters investigated and documented within our internal affairs process may have originated from various sources, including citizen complaints, anonymous reports, or internal observations and supervision of personnel.

If no complaints were received in a specific category, such as domestic violence or complaints of improper search, it is not listed in the report. Cases without conclusive outcomes at this time are categorized as pending. This report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of our commitment to accountability and transparency in handling internal affairs matters.

Type of Internal Affairs Complaint	#	Outcomes
Demeanor	5	2 Unfounded, 2 Exonerated, 1 sustained
Excessive Force	0	N/A
Improper Arrest	1	Pending
Other Criminal Violation	0	N/A
Other Rule Violation	20	9 Sustained, 3 Exonerated, 6 Unfounded, 1 Not Sustained, 1 Pending
Total	26	No disciplinary action was taken that resulted in a fine or suspension of 10 days or more

The department maintains a computerized record system that documents the activity of its police officers. Provided below is statistical information regarding some of the calls to which Newton Police Officers have responded, and the number of investigations conducted for certain types of incidents.

Type of Call/Police Activity	2022	2023	2024	2025
Homicide	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Robbery	2	1	1	<b>1</b>
Kidnapping	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Burglary/Attempted Burglary	17	6	11	<b>25</b>
Sexual Assault/Contact	13	25	20	<b>31</b>
Assault	37	41	29	<b>43</b>
Theft	75	79	63	<b>98</b>
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	0	2	<b>1</b>
Motor Vehicle Accidents	401	421	420	<b>508</b>
Medical Emergencies	1,438	1,423	1,430	<b>1,535</b>
DWI Arrests	17	29	17	<b>11</b>
Black Bear	70	68	77	<b>43</b>
Criminal Mischief	24	19	21	<b>22</b>
Domestic Dispute/TRO Request	207	215	197	<b>274</b>
Fight/Verbal Dispute/Disturbance	428	457	437	<b>654</b>
Missing Person Adult/Juvenile	27	16	24	<b>27</b>
Vehicle Lock-Out Assist	208	160	188	<b>151</b>
Motor Vehicle Stops	11,570	12,663	11,384	<b>11,342</b>
Weapons Offense/Guns	2	1	3	<b>4</b>
Burglar Alarms	205	181	233	<b>196</b>
Total Arrests Made	164	202	215	<b>224</b>
Total Summonses Issued	3,464	3,613	3,521	<b>3,559</b>
Total Ordinance Violation Summonses	113	107	136	<b>414</b>
Narcan Administration	38	28	25	<b>15</b>
Total Incidents of All Calls	27,755	30,659	28,785	<b>30,537</b>

Explore the wealth of services provided by the Police Department on our website [www.newtonpolice.org](http://www.newtonpolice.org) and connect with us on social media. Our online platforms showcase daily updates and detailed information on our activities, accessible through the Crime Map page on our website.

Our connection with the community is integral to our success, and we deeply value the support we receive. With this in mind, we are committed to fostering an open dialogue with the public and sharing information about our activities to strengthen our partnership in ensuring public safety.

In our relentless pursuit of enhancing the quality of law enforcement services, we anticipate and appreciate continued public support and cooperation. Together, we play a vital role in maintaining Newton as an outstanding place to raise a family, visit, and conduct business. Your ongoing engagement is key to our collective efforts in creating a safe and thriving community.