

# Mason County Sheriff's Office



*Bi-annual Report 2023*

# Table of Contents

<b>A Bit of History</b> .....	2
<b>A Message from the Sheriff</b> .....	3
<b>Staff Chart</b> .....	4
<b>Operations</b> .....	5
<b>Co-Responder Program</b> .....	6
<b>Traffic</b> .....	7
<b>K-9 Unit</b> .....	9
<b>Marine Enforcement</b> .....	10
<b>Special Operations Rescue Team (SORT)</b> .....	12
<b>SWAT</b> .....	14
<b>Search and Rescue</b> .....	16
<b>Field Training Officer</b> .....	17
<b>Media Relations</b> .....	18
<b>Community Involvement</b> .....	19
<b>School Resource Officer</b> .....	21
<b>Block Watch</b> .....	22
<b>Volunteer Chaplains</b> .....	23
<b>Property and Evidence</b> .....	25
<b>Polygraph Unit</b> .....	26
<b>Sex Offender Registration</b> .....	27
<b>Civil Division</b> .....	28
<b>Volunteers</b> .....	31
<b>Corrections</b> .....	33
<b>Litter Crew</b> .....	35
<b>Financial Management</b> .....	36

# A Bit of History

## Captain Calvin Wesley Swindal

### 1<sup>st</sup> Elected Sheriff of Mason County Washington

Brothers John and Calvin Wesley Swindal left their home in North Carolina and traveled the Oregon Trail to settle in Washington Territory, arriving in 1852. John was born in North Carolina (1828) and Calvin in Virginia (1829), to Lucy Jane Swindal, daughter of John Wesley Swindal Jr.; their father is listed as "unknown".

In 1852 Calvin received a land donation of 160 acres in Oakland, then Thurston County, Washington Territory. He is noted as helping establish the community of Oakland. In 1854 Sawamish County was created from Thurston County and, at the first election, Calvin was elected Sheriff. He took the Oath of Office on November 17, 1854, becoming the first elected Sheriff of the County and serving until 1856. At the time, Calvin was a Captain in the Washington Territorial Volunteers and in 1856 listed as Captain of Company F of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of the Washington Territory Volunteer Army. During this time there were skirmishes with the Indians, initiated by the influx of white settlers bringing unknown disease, and with the immediate start of conflict occurring in 1847 with the Whitman Massacre.

In 1857 Calvin Wesley Swindal conducted the Territorial census and is listed as the Assessor of Sawamish County. In 1861 he contracted typhoid and after a short illness, died. He was buried in the non-Mason portion of Oakland Cemetery.

Burials at Oakland Cemetery ceased in the early 1900s and by the 1960s few markers remained due to neglect and vandalism. Over the years several people interred here (mostly Masons) were moved to the Shelton Cemetery. In 2007-2008 the Manke family called upon the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, and in cooperation with the Squaxin Tribe, 64 interments were located and removed to the Squaxin Sacred Grounds. The interments were identified mostly by depressions in the ground and the remains, after well over a hundred years, were basically metal casket handles, if that. The Oakland site is private property, now part of a gravel pit.

# A Message from the Sheriff

Welcome to the 2023 Biannual report of the Mason County Sheriff's Office!

America's Sheriffs are elected by the people, accountable to the people and work to protect the individual rights and liberties of the people. Sheriffs are unique in their role and understand "the people of this state do not yield their sovereignty to the agencies which serve them."

We are committed to being accountable to our community and we will take responsibility for our actions and decisions. We are not perfect, but we strive to serve our citizens to the best of our abilities.

After reading this report if you have unanswered questions about our data or operations, please let us know.

Stay safe, stay informed, and remember, we are stronger together.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Ryan Spurling

Mason County Sheriff's Office

# Staff Chart

The People of Mason County

<b>Sheriff</b>		
Undersheriff		

<b>Chief of Civil Division</b>
<b>Support Staff</b>

<b>Front Office</b>
Phone Calls/ Walk-ins Licenses Permits Fingerprinting

<b>Civil</b>
Process Civil Docs Sheriff's Sales

<b>Records Mgmt.</b>
Public Records Records Mgmt. Statistical Data

<b>Volunteer Program</b>
--------------------------

<b>Chief of Patrol Division</b>
<b>Lieutenants</b>
<b>Sergeants</b>
<b>Corporals</b>
<b>Deputies</b>

<b>Patrol Division</b>
Traffic K-9 Unit Marine SORT SWAT School Resource Media Relations / PIO Chaplain Program Field Training Officers Civil Process Deputy Block Watch

<b>Detective Division</b>
Major Crime Invest Sex Offender Reg Evidence Handling Polygraph Unit Crisis Negotiations Background Invest Internal Affairs

<b>Information Technology</b>
System Networking Software Support Mobile Data Computers

<b>Chief of Corrections</b>
<b>Lieutenant</b>
<b>Sergeants</b>
<b>Corrections Officers</b>

Medical & Dental Supt Food Service Transport Litter Crew GED Program Drug/Alcohol Counseling Alternative Incarceration Programs DUI Classes Community Service Drug Court Rep. Warrants
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<b>Finance Manager</b>
<b>Finance Staff</b>

Budget / Payroll Accts Pay/Rec Contract/Grant Financial Reptg Contract Negs
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# Operations

Chief Criminal Deputy Jason Dracobly heads the Operations Division, the Sheriff's Office's largest unit, divided into two sub-divisions: Patrol and Detectives. Patrol, with two Lieutenants, four team Sergeants, four team Corporals, and twenty-four Deputies, handles a broad spectrum of responsibilities, including answering over 24,000 annual calls and overseeing Civil Service Processing. The demanding process to become a Deputy involves Public Safety Testing, interviews, background checks, psychological evaluations, polygraph tests, medical screenings, and extensive training.

Deputies, covering Mason County's 1,000 square miles, handle everything from traffic complaints to major crimes, including Civil Service Processing. After a probationary year, they can apply for specialty positions such as SWAT, K-9, Detective, and more. The diverse job requirements focus on serving citizens and preserving peace.

Within the Operations Division, the Detectives unit, comprised of eight Detectives, handles major felonies and complex cases. Detectives undergo advanced training in various investigative areas and assist the Prosecutor's Office. They play a crucial role in the Region 3 Critical Incident Investigative Team.

Other Operations Division functions include Property and Evidence Control, Internal Affairs, and Information Technology. Detectives undergo extensive training before handling investigations, including homicides, cybercrimes, and narcotics. Guided by its Mission and Core Values, the Sheriff's Office emphasizes citizen trust and cooperation and acknowledges partners and citizens dedicated to maintaining Mason County's well-being.

# Co-Responder Program

In 2023 the Sheriff's office embarked on an ambitious project to provide the most appropriate response to people in crisis. This year the Office launched our Co-Responder Program.

Co-response refers to partnerships between first responders (police, fire, EMS, 911 centers) and human service professionals (such as social workers, community health workers, or peers). Our Co-Responder program is operated in partnership with the Mason County Health Department using contracted mental health clinicians and peer support professionals through Olympic Health and Recovery Services. The program consists of two teams embedded within the Sheriff's Office Operations Division, providing services 7 days a week.

The Sheriff's Office Co-Responder Program operates within the 911 system and typically involves behavioral health related calls and calls involving complex, chronic medical conditions. They provide in-the-moment response and follow-up community-based care coordination. Our Co-Responders facilitate direct 911 response, law enforcement referrals, outreach to target populations, and/or follow-up. Our teams draw on combined expertise and trusted community-based workers to de-escalate situations, intervene as appropriate, and support people with complex behavioral health and medical needs. The goal is to connect people with appropriate community resources to reduce the use of emergency services.

## Statistics from inception (August 1, 2023) through December 2023

Clinician hours - 1262

Peer Hours - 1505

Referrals in- 316

Contacts - 466

Follow Up Contact - 295

Declined Services - 72

# Traffic

The Traffic Unit was established in 2008 in response to the Washington State Patrol's consolidation and withdrawal from investigating traffic collisions on county roadways. The traffic unit has morphed over the years from a stand-alone unit consisting of five (5) deputies and a sergeant to currently seven (7) patrol deputies who are assigned additional traffic duties and responsibilities.

Traffic enforcement duties include traffic law enforcement and education, DUI enforcement, reporting and investigating collisions and addressing neighborhood traffic complaints.

There are two (2) deputies and two (2) detectives who have specialized collision investigation training for felony and fatal collisions. Three are technical investigators and one is a reconstruction-level investigator.

Specialized survey-style equipment, a FARO 3D Laser Scanner, is used to collect digital data to map and diagram collision scenes. The use of this technology allows for additional evidence to be collected in a faster manner than before. The use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs/drones) is in the infancy stage for use in collecting additional data at crash and crime scenes. The use of FARO 3D Laser Scanners and UAV's aid in keeping roadways open and allowing the motoring public to move about the roadways, while deputies can collect needed evidence for their investigation.

The Sheriff's Office maintains multiple traffic speed trailers that are deployed at community and deputy requests to various neighborhoods throughout the county. These trailers are radar equipped and have digital display that shows the motoring public their speed and alerts them to excessive speeds. Some trailers are equipped and able to collect traffic data in relation to speeds, traffic counts, and traffic flow. No trailer is equipped with photo enforcement and no direct enforcement can be made from the



data collected by these trailers. Data is only used for education and planning.

Traffic	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Contacts/Stops	412	651	415	366	498
Citations Issued	754	614	422	312	298
DUI Investigations	67	36	24	76	103

Collisions	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Collision Investigations	347	337	471	821	633
Property Damage	251	223	376	633	439
Injury	69	63	85	147	121



## K-9 Unit

The Mason County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit is a part of the Patrol Division. The K-9 Unit supports the patrol deputies, other staff, and neighboring agencies by employing the unique talents and capabilities of certified dogs. The Patrol K-9 teams play a vital part in the efforts to protect the members of our community and its visitors. These K-9 teams work in conjunction with Patrol and the Mason County Regional SWAT team, to assist in locating and apprehending individuals who are suspected of committing crimes of violence. Patrol K-9s are also trained in locating evidence, finding narcotics, and aiding in criminal investigations.

The K-9 Unit is currently in transition. Due to promotions and medical incidents all four of our K-9 teams are no longer in service.

Good News! Our K-9 handlers have been working hard with three new pups. Two patrol K9 teams and one Narcotics K-9 team. All three teams are currently in the process of training their new K-9 partners.

The training required to certify K-9s and their partners for any police work is rigorous and lengthy and with staffing shortages over the past few years, the process takes longer yet while the handler Deputies fill in the gaps and work overtime.

The K-9 Unit is not covered under the Sheriff's budget but is fully funded by donations from our community and by the K-9 Handlers. If you would like to support the Unit with a donation it may be sent directly to the Sheriff's Office or can be made on the Sheriff's Office website under the online payments tab.



## Marine Enforcement

Mason County is a haven for a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities. With over 700 total miles of freshwater and saltwater shoreline, this area is a prime venue for watersports recreation. The Marine Enforcement Unit (MEU) is tasked with the safety and security of our various waterways. From the inlets of South Puget Sound, the vast fjord of the Lower Hood Canal and a multitude of navigable lakes, our deputies provide recreational boater safety emphasis patrols, rescue operations, and safety inspections on our waterways. As a participant in the National Operation Dry Water Campaign, our deputies conduct boating under the influence patrols during the height of the recreational boating season.

In addition to enforcement, we also provide educational outreach programs for a variety of ages and voluntary inspections. From safety presentations at local elementary schools, mandatory Boater's Education classes, participation in paddle sports events and targeted education through use of social media, the Mason County Sheriff's Office Marine Enforcement Unit uses preventative education efforts to make our waterways safer. The Marine Enforcement Unit consists of 11 Deputies on a part-time basis. This duty is an ancillary assignment to regular patrol duties, mostly conducted on an overtime basis. We operate 3 vessels to cover the various waterways of Mason County.

The MCSV *Petraitis* is the cornerstone of our fleet. Moored year round on Hood Canal, this vessel is a 25-foot Defender Class RBS, obtained as surplus from the US Coast Guard. The MCSV *Perseverance* stands ready to respond to calls for service on the Puget Sound. The *Perseverance* is a 19-foot center console Almar patrol boat. The sister vessel, the MCSV *Sawamish*, is our ready boat capable of responding to any of our navigable lakes. In 2022, the Sheriff's Office obtained a 21-foot North River aluminum hull vessel to augment operations on Puget Sound.

2023 marked the acquisition of an Underwater Remote Operated Vehicle. Through sonar and video capabilities, this advanced piece of technology allows our Deputies to search any body of water within our jurisdiction, with a maximum depth capability

of 1000 feet. This acquisition was made possible by funding through a Federal grant and the Board of County Commissioners.

The MEU relies on an allotment from state Vessel Registration Fees and Federal Recreational Boater Safety Grants to fund the operational and administrative costs associated with this program, to include subsidizing salaries and benefits for Marine Enforcement efforts.

Water Related Calls for Service`					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Puget Sound	45	53	49	25	172
Hood Canal	44	38	46	39	167
Lake Cushman	3	1	5	3	12
Mason Lake	18	6	0	3	27
Lost Lake	1	3	3	2	9
Panther Lake	1	0	5	1	7
Tiger Lake	4	3	0	0	7
Island Lake	1	4	1	1	7
Spencer Lake	1	1	4	0	6
Lake Kokanee	3	1	0	1	5
Phillips Lake	0	3	0	0	3
Benson Lake	3	0	0	0	3
Lake Deveraux	1	0	0	1	2
Lake Limerick	2	0	0	0	2
Lake Isabella	0	0	0	1	1
Lake Nawahtzel	0	0	1	0	1
Tee Lake	0	0	1	0	1
Star Lake	0	1	0	0	1
Haven Lake	1	0	0	0	1
Robbins Lake	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>435</b>

# Special Operations Rescue Team (SORT)

The Mason County Sheriffs Office Multi-Jurisdictional Special Operations Rescue Team (SORT) is a unit which utilizes special equipment and tactics to respond to and resolve various high-risk search and rescue operations as assigned by the Sheriff or designated Commander.

SORT is a designated unit of law enforcement officers and fire personnel that are specifically trained and equipped to work as a coordinated team to resolve critical search and rescue incidents that are so hazardous, complex, or unusual that they may exceed the capabilities of first responders or volunteer units including, but not limited to, technical rope (high angle) rescue, swift water rescue, backcountry rescue, and other high-risk search incidents.

SORT has been operational for over a decade, starting with only three deputies and a sergeant and has since expanded to working with our local law enforcement partners.

A high volume of SORT calls and/or missions are in the Olympic National Forest area up to and including the High Steel Bridge and Skokomish River. Financial support for SORT comes from federal reimbursement. One mission can take days if not months to complete. Search and Rescue, on average for Mason County, responds to 12 calls for service a year.

SORT works as a hasty team that can respond quickly when needed. Team members are expected to complete and maintain a high degree of complex training. This training is conducted monthly at various locations. The initial basic training is broken into four categories:

**Law Enforcement Mountain Operations School. (LEMOS).** This course covers the basics of travel, survival, wilderness first aid and rescue, wilderness ethics, and navigation, as well as tactics. A 60+ hour course taught in an outdoor setting, LEMOS provides classroom instruction combined with extended outdoor practice.

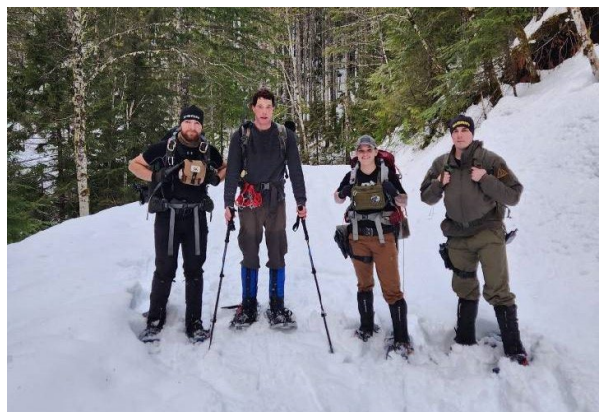


To pass the course, students are expected to come prepared, complete all exercises, and pass a written test.

**Rope Rescue Technician Course.** This course covers the following skills: Equipment selection, inspection, and maintenance; knots; anchors; patient packaging; mechanical advantage systems; belay techniques (including traditional or "slack" belays, tensioned belays, and the use of Twin Tensioned Rope Systems); lowering systems; rappelling; knot passing through rappels, raising and lowering systems; system safety factors; litter rigging and tending; and pickoffs. Practical application is taught through scenarios drawn from actual rescue experience.

**Swift Water Rescue Technician Course.** This course provides rescuers with the fundamentals of survival in moving water and is recommended for anyone who may be called upon to effect in-water rescues. Students gain knowledge in hydrology and river classifications, size-up, site control and scene management. Practical skills include self-rescue, Swiftwater swimming and the fundamentals of shore, boat, and in-water rescues.

**ATV training course.** This course provides instruction and develops safety knowledge and awareness. Students will practice riding skills and patient care along with using an attached ATV rescue litter trailer.



# SWAT

The Mason County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team is a group of specially trained Deputies and Officers tasked with resolving critical incidents.



SWAT gets activated to assist with apprehending violent and dangerous felons in the safest way possible by using less than lethal munitions, specialized equipment, and highly trained personnel. Additionally, SWAT provides support upon request to agencies in need of tactical expertise. For example, SWAT has been called upon to assist surrounding jurisdictions with critical incidents that are either prolonged in time or large in size.

SWAT is a regional team which means it is made up of sworn Law Enforcement Officers from agencies within Mason County. The MCSO heads the team and partners with Shelton Police, Washington State Fish and Wildlife, and Squaxin Island Tribal Police Officers. Each member of the team has a robust knowledge of tactics, specialty weapons and equipment that is available to us to tactically deescalate a critical incident. This is accomplished through monthly training that adds up to a minimum of 120 hours per year.



SWAT also has Tactical Emergency Medical Support (TEMS) as an integral part of the team which is made up of specially trained paramedics that respond to the scene to provide immediate medical care for anyone in need during a SWAT mission. The TEMS unit trains with the team and is part of the entry and perimeter elements on missions.

SWAT has an armored vehicle operator team that is assigned to operate, maintain, and train on our armored vehicles. This group is currently made up of MCSO Deputies. The operators drive the armored vehicle to the scene and are the first line of defense for SWAT.

SWAT is an additional duty for every member on the team. All members have a primary duty of Patrol, Patrol supervision, or as a paramedic. Each member on SWAT is on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Each member of SWAT has a high level of dedication and commitment to protecting citizens, the responding units, and anyone else that is involved with a dangerous incident.





# Search and Rescue

Pursuant to RCW 38.52.400, The Sheriff's Office coordinates Search and Rescue (SAR) missions within the unincorporated areas of Mason County, Washington, including the portion of the Olympic National Forest within our jurisdiction. At the request of local police agencies, searches are also coordinated within city limits. Mutual aid for our neighboring counties and national parks is also provided. Typical SAR Missions include searching for:

- Missing children, disabled persons, or the elderly in suburban and rural locations.
- Searching for hikers, hunters, and other missing persons in forestlands.
- Assisting persons who are injured in forest areas not accessible by road.
- Searching for missing aircraft and locating radio distress beacons used by aircraft and boats.
- Searching for evidence of major crimes in outdoor settings.
- Recovering victims of drowning and other marine emergencies.
- Assisting with floods and other disasters.

The SAR Coordinator cadre consists of 13 deputies trained in Search Tactics, Search Management, and advanced incident command operations who serve in this capacity in addition to their primary assignments. The Sheriff's Office uses the Special Operations Rescue Team, local and out-of-county volunteer organizations, and federal mutual aid resources to conduct these vital missions to safeguard the lives of citizens and visitors to our County.

Mason County Emergency Management works with the Sheriff's Office in a coordinating capacity directly supporting all search and rescue operations. Emergency Management is also responsible for the registration of search and rescue workers from the various local organizations.

## Field Training Officer

The MCSO Field Training Officer Program begins for new deputy recruits after they complete the 720-hour Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA) at the Criminal Justice Training Center (CJTC) in Burien, Washington. Upon successful completion of BLEA new recruits return to their agency for additional on-the-job training from CJTC Certified Field Training Officers (FTOs).

The FTO Program is intended to provide a standardized program to facilitate a deputy's transition from the academic setting to the actual performance of general law enforcement duties. The FTO Program is designed to prepare the new deputy to perform in a patrol assignment, possessing the skills needed to operate in a safe, productive, and professional manner.

The FTOs provide instruction to the trainees on all aspects of law enforcement operations including jail, civil, dispatch, evidence, detectives, special operations, and patrol.

Once the deputy trainee successfully completes field training, approximately 12 weeks, their performance is evaluated in its entirety. If the new deputy's performance is deemed acceptable by the FTOs and command personnel, the new deputy begins working in their own assignment as a Patrol Deputy.

The FTO Program includes training lateral deputies. A lateral deputy is someone who transfers from another agency who has already completed BLEA or equivalency. The training period for a lateral deputy may be modified depending on the trainee's demonstrated performance and level of experience, but no less than six weeks in length.

## Media Relations

The Mason County Sheriff's Office values transparency, timely communication, and community engagement as foundational elements of our mission.

Recognizing that the Sheriff's Office thrives when supported by our community, we emphasize the integral role of fostering an effective relationship with the public in achieving this goal. Designees within the Sheriff's Office are authorized to release information to the media and public, with the Sheriff holding ultimate stewardship for all responses and positions.

Ensuring the public's access to timely and accurate information is vital to fulfilling the mission of the Mason County Sheriff's Office. To achieve this, we utilize various communication channels, including news media and our social platforms on X (Formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Public Information Officers are dedicated to disseminating information of general and newsworthy interest to the media, public officials, and the community.

The Public Information Division is committed to being responsive and professional, always acting in the best interest of the agency. Our primary objective is to provide accurate information to the citizens of the community, fostering a positive working relationship with both the community and the media, and recognizing the mutual benefits of transparent and effective communication.

You can check out our website...

<https://masoncountywa.gov/sheriff/>

Or follow us on Facebook...

<https://www.facebook.com/masoncosheriff/>

# Community Involvement





# Lunch With Sheriff Spurling

Thursday, March 9 - 12:00pm

Join us in welcoming Sheriff Ryan Spurling to the Hoodspout area as he gives updates on the Sheriff's Office and more. Space is limited, Please arrive early.



# School Resource Officer

The Mason County Sheriff's Office recognizes the value of having sworn Deputies assigned to various schools in Mason County to serve as School Resource Officers (SROs). These SROs are highly trained deputies who are committed to serving and protecting the most important resource of the community, its children. As a law enforcement officer, the SRO plays a crucial role in ensuring the safety and security of the school campus, while also fostering a positive and supportive school environment.

Safety is a critical aspect of the SRO's role, as they help in the development and implementation of safety plans, conducting security assessments, and responding to emergency situations. They work closely with school administrators, teachers, and staff to identify potential safety concerns and develop strategies to address them. Additionally, the SRO provides a visible and reassuring presence on campus, helping to deter criminal activity and ensuring that students feel safe and secure while at school.

The SRO's diverse roles include serving as a law-related counselor and educator, providing students, teachers, administrators, and parents with valuable resources and information. They provide students with a positive role model and a balanced view of law enforcement, while encouraging them to make good decisions. Additionally, the SRO is a vital member of the school's administrative team, working collaboratively to identify and solve problems within the school community. The program's central focus is on mentoring, and SROs have the opportunity to form lasting impressions on young people, helping to shape their character and values.

Overall, the SRO program is an essential component of the Mason County Sheriff's Office's commitment to building strong, safe, and supportive communities. Through their dedication and hard work, SROs help to create a positive school environment that promotes learning, growth, and success for all students, while prioritizing their safety and well-being.

## Block Watch

**Block Watch Mission:** "To increase the effectiveness of the Mason County Sheriff's Office by working in partnership with the community to safeguard life and property and to enhance the quality of life in our neighborhoods."

The Mason County Sheriff's Office has two Deputies that, in addition to their normal duties, meet with various community members throughout the county to address community Block Watch groups. The Deputies help establish and organize new Block Watch groups as well as maintain contact with current groups.



The Sheriff's Office Block Watch Deputies not only facilitate crime prevention training but also coordinate other community safety training through their partners in Fire/EMS, Mason General Hospital, the PUD, and the Department of Emergency Management. Included in the training is First Aid/CPR, Disaster Preparedness, and other community safety training awareness.

The success of the program has been shown in various communities throughout Mason County with successful identification and apprehension of suspects, return of stolen property, and reduction of criminal activity due to the increase in community awareness.

Please contact the Mason County Sheriff's Office to learn more about setting up a Block Watch Program in your community.

# Volunteer Chaplains

The Volunteer Chaplain Program for the Mason County Sheriff's Office was established in 2007. The program includes two year-round volunteer Chaplains and one summer months Chaplain who joined us in 2023 to assist at a time when the population of Mason County can soar to over 100,000.

The MCSO Chaplains are a diverse group, available to respond to the needs of public safety personnel and their families, as well as the general public, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, caring for the people of the community regardless of their faith. In general, chaplains provide the following to the community:

- On-Scene Support: emergency assistance for first responders & members of the community.
- Crisis Intervention: suicide prevention, mental health, first aid and other crisis mediation services.
- Death Notifications: assist to contact, notify, and support next of kin after the loss of a loved one.
- Community Outreach: participate in events that strengthen relationships with the community.

Additionally, the volunteer chaplains provide counseling, crisis intervention training, family support and support in the event of line-of-duty death to our personnel, their families and other public safety staff.

Chaplains are non-denominational, do not advocate for their own personal beliefs, work with all faith groups, and provide needed assistance in times of crisis regardless of a person's religious beliefs. The MCSO Chaplains stand ready to assist the needs of the Sheriff's Office as well as serve other police, fire, corrections, and public safety agencies.

The year-round Chaplains are both veterans as well as college graduates, have extensive experience in both community and military ministries and have



successfully completed a Washington State Criminal Justice Training Chaplains Academy. The part-time Chaplain works with the San Diego Police Department during the winter months.

In 2023 alone, the MCSO Chaplains responded to 15 calls for pastoral service, logged over 350 miles, performed 23 hours of counseling and provided 240 hours of volunteer service. In addition, the Chaplains conduct weddings, memorial services and other rites as their denomination allows for officers, deputies, employees, and other public safety staff and any other such tasks requested by law enforcement.

We look forward to the return of the snowbird Chaplain this coming May.



# Property and Evidence

Designing, operating, and maintaining the evidence and property control function in the criminal justice system is more critical than ever for professional law enforcement agencies.

The MCSO has been recognized as meeting the most stringent and best practices in the ever-evolving area of evidence maintenance by receiving and maintaining accreditation with the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC). We proactively address the challenges of evidence and property management in criminal prosecution, evidence preservation and disposition, and general property handling.

Accreditation provides assurance that we meet recognized standards in the field as well as a formal on-going process for evaluation and improvement. Accreditation strengthens collaboration and accountability between public safety, the court systems, and our communities.

The property and evidence room is operated by two Evidence Technicians who are responsible for receiving, recording, storing, retrieving, and disposing of every physical item according to departmental policy, accreditation standards, and Washington State Law. The Evidence Technicians also respond to scenes to collect and process evidence and are responsible for digital media collected via vehicle and body cameras.

The Sheriff's Office evidence property system currently holds over 16,000 items, stored at the main property room at the Sheriff's Office and an offsite facility.

Average Property intake is between 2,000 and 3,000 items per year and disposal of over 2,000 items a year per departmental policy, accreditation standards, and Washington State Law. Disposal can include returning the item to its owner or next of kin, incineration, auctioning, and appropriate disposal.

# Polygraph Unit

The Sheriff's Office began a Polygraph Unit in 2009 and currently employs three Detectives who are nationally certified polygraph examiners. All examiners attended the Northeast Counterdrug Training Center Polygraph School where they received over 480 hours of instruction. In addition, to remain certified, the examiners are required to attend at least 40 additional hours of training every two years.

The examiners work in concert with one another providing quality control reviews of each examination. Since its inception, the Polygraph Unit has administered over 500 criminal and pre-employment s exams for MCSO and numerous other local and federal law enforcement agencies. This partnership with the supporting agencies has saved them thousands of dollars that would have been paid out to private examiners to perform the same work. The criminal examinations performed have resulted in clearing innocent persons of accusations against them, as well as securing confessions to criminal charges on guilty persons for numerous charges to include sexual assaults, robbery, arson, child assaults, thefts, and murder.

## **BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS**

Detectives conduct background investigations on all prospective employees, reserve deputies, and volunteers who apply for positions with the Sheriff's Office

Background investigations are extensive and thorough as they delve into the prospective candidate's criminal history, driving history, financial history, work history, and references to ensure that the candidate is worthy of the public trust given to law enforcement.

Applicants for Sheriff Deputy must pass a written examination, physical agility assessment, medical examination, oral board interview, psychological examination, polygraph examination and background investigation prior to being hired. A background investigation can take many weeks to complete. A large portion of the candidates who apply do not pass the background process due to indiscretions discovered during the background process.

# Sex Offender Registration

The Sheriff's Office registers and monitors all sex and/or kidnapping offenders residing in Mason County. When an offender moves into the community they are assessed and classified into one of three groups: Level 1 (low risk to re-offend); Level 2 (moderate risk to re-offend); and Level 3 (high risk to re-offend).

One Detective is assigned full time as the sex offender registration coordinator. Patrol deputies assist with address verifications, and one support specialist is assigned part-time to assist with filing and the administration of the program.

The Detective completes registration paperwork on offenders required to register, conducts risk-level assessments, completes investigations, arrests those who fail to comply with their requirements, and updates all of the offender information into Offender Watch.

The Sex Offender Registration Program, as well as information about all Level 2 and Level 3 registered offenders residing in Mason County can be found on the Mason County Sheriff's Office website: <http://masoncountywa.gov/sheriff/>

## Sex Offender Registration Statistics

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Level 1	204	216	214	235	210
Level 2	42	46	50	39	48
Level 3	25	25	22	22	25
Total	271	287	286	296	283

# Civil Division

**Mission:** The Civil Division will provide the highest level of customer service and lawfully and timely execute civil process and public disclosure.

The Sheriff's Office Civil Division is the backbone of the Sheriff's Office and consists of a dedicated group of specially trained people to assist the Sheriff's Office and citizens of Mason County. The greatest achievements in the past five years are the implementation of paperless processes in addition to the robust number of electronic services now available to the public, allowing them to conveniently conduct their business with our offices remotely online through the Sheriff's Office website. This division currently has a total of seven support specialist positions and is under the direct supervision of the Chief Civil Deputy. There are three teams of Specialists in the Civil Division: Front Office, Records and Civil Process.



Front Office: This team serves as the first point of contact for citizens contacting the Sheriff's Office for assistance. They have been trained in a variety of clerical and reception duties including greeting and assisting the public at the counter or on the phone, issuing concealed pistol licenses (CPLs), dangerous dog licenses, harvest permits, and sex offender paperwork in addition to a variety of other duties.

Records: This team processes all investigative reports and other documents generated by the deputies, detectives, and corrections staff. This includes dissemination, retention and purging of those records in addition to the entire Sheriff's Office as a whole. One aspect of their job which holds the most liability is public disclosure. This task includes researching, redaction and disseminating requests for documents to the public pursuant to the Public Records Act (PRA).

#### PUBLIC DISCLOSURE REQUESTS

YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER	TOTAL TIME SPENT (IN HOURS)
2023	1915	987.6
2022	1782	806.48
2021	1873	1032
2020	1826	1025
2019	2138	921

Civil Process: This team processes domestic violence orders, small claim motions, child custody, summons, and subpoenas for service throughout the county. In addition, this position enforces orders of the court such as evictions, attachments, and executions of real and personal property. Currently, there is one commissioned deputy assigned to assist in the service of the majority of the civil papers and standbys on court orders and evictions. This specialized position holds the most liability within the Civil Division and also demands a clear understanding of the civil Revised Code of Washington (RCWs) and Washington Administrative Code (WACs) to perform these duties.

### CIVIL PROCESS STATISTICS

YEAR	SHERIFF'S SALE	SERVICE	STANDBY	EVICTON W/ DEP ASST	EVICTON	TOTAL
2023	9	3758	38	26	10	3841
2022	9	3714	50	40	8	3821
2021	11	3404	31	18	4	3468
2020	15	3272	31	18	10	3346
2019	34	6853	30	44	10	6972

The Sheriff's main business office in Shelton is currently open to the public from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM to allow the limited staff to complete mandated services. Please note that many services are by appointment only, so it is recommended that you visit our website or call before you come in.

<https://masoncountywa.gov/sheriff/civil/index.php>

# Volunteers

The Mason County Sheriff's Office Volunteer Program was established in 1998. The intent of the program is twofold: 1) it provides an opportunity for many citizens of Mason County who wish to donate their time and talents to further the goals of the Sheriff's Office and 2) it provides needed assistance to the staff and deputies in many areas.

The Chief Civil Deputy oversees the Volunteer Program which includes an average of 20 volunteers.

Goals of the Volunteer Program:

1. Bring specialized skills, experience, and abilities that would otherwise not be available in the Sheriff's Office budget.
2. Grow in partnership with law enforcement and increase assistance to the Sheriff and his staff allowing deputies to focus resources on more urgent law enforcement and community needs.
3. Provide opportunities to interact with the community to educate and increase understanding and goodwill between law enforcement and the citizens of Mason County.

Volunteers at the North Precinct in Belfair keep the business office open five days a week doing a variety of administrative functions for the deputies and the citizens of North Mason County while those in the Shelton Office assist in a variety of supportive tasks and special projects.





Volunteers also work outside the office doing hulk inspections, attending community functions, and assisting with seasonal boat inspections.

Year	# of Vol	Hours				
		Total	Events	Hulk & AV	Other	Office
2023	19	2153	89.5	226	28.5	1809
2022	23	2410	28	218	0	2164
2021	21	1731	0	299	3	1429
2020	26	1733	0	100	1	1632
2019	29	3765	11.5	451	17	3285.5

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, you may obtain an application on the Mason County Sheriff's website at

<https://masoncountywa.gov/sheriff/civil/volunteers.php>

The Volunteer Program is funded solely through your generosity. If you would like to donate to the Volunteer Program, please go to our website at

<https://client.pointandpay.net/web/MasonCountySheriffWA> and click on the Online Payments tab.



# Corrections

**Mission: Together:** maintain custody, security, and control in a safe, efficient and constitutional manner.

## Jail History:

The Mason County Jail provides incarceration services for Mason County law enforcement agencies. Washington State Law establishes that the Board of County Commissioners is responsible for the physical facility and that the chief law enforcement officer (Sheriff) is responsible for facility operations. The facility is located adjacent to the County courthouse in the incorporated area of Shelton, Washington.

- Constructed 1985, opened in 1986 with 45 beds and was immediately over capacity.
- Multiple studies have been done with results saying jail is overpopulated and understaffed.
- 1993 there were 58 total beds and 62 inmates in custody. In 2004 the inmate population grew to 95.
- County approved double bunking, expansion, and remodels throughout the years. Today there are 93 inmate beds and 18 inmate labor program beds.
- In 2015, the inmate population rose to 150.
- In 2016 the County approved outsourcing inmates to other facilities.
- County outsourced an average of 30 inmates per day.
- 2017 the final remodel and renovation was complete, and the outsourced inmates were returned to Mason County.
- Still significantly over jail capacity, the Sheriff was forced to implement booking restrictions.
- In 2019 the combined inmate population averaged 110. Staffing the jail and filling vacant positions became more prevalent and problematic.
- 2020 Covid hit and the courts severely restricted public access. Arrests dropped significantly. More jail staff left, and no one was on the eligibility list to fill the vacant positions. Inmate population plummeted to about 50% of capacity.

- 2022- Jail population remained about 50% of capacity but vacant jail staff positions rose to nearly 30%.
- 2023- Jail staffing became an emergency. Couldn't fill overtime shifts had to rely on administrative staff and road deputies to fill jail shifts. Had to reduce minimum staffing from 4 Corrections staff on dayshift to 3. County approved outsourcing to drop inmate population to assure inmate and staff safety.
- Suspended Alternative Sentencing program, due to lack of staffing and the need of that personnel to staff the jail.
- County and Sheriff's Office on staff recruitment and advertisement. We have hired and are training replacement staff, but training and implementation won't be complete until mid-2024.

**WANTED**  
**CORRECTIONS DEPUTIES**

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is Looking to Hire You!

\$4757 - \$5783 Monthly

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**Hiring Bonus**  
**\$10,000**  
**Hiring Bonus**

MASON COUNTY  
**SHERIFF**

## Litter Crew

The Litter Crew is funded mostly by Washington State Department of Ecology grants. The crew consists of one Community Services Officer who supervises 2 - 3 minimum security inmates. The crew performs litter pickup on public roadways and lands in Mason County.



The crew cleans up over 100,000 pounds of garbage per year.

Litter Crew Activities					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Inmate Hours</b>	4989	3811	3034	3362	2716
<b>Road Miles</b>	1938	1351	1261	884.5	671
<b>Acres Cleaned</b>	59.3	52.5	76.4	51.85	44.34
<b># Dump Sites</b>	156	250	267	257	202
<b>Pounds Litter</b>	97285	60330	40254	31370	28140
<b>Pounds Dump Sites</b>	160995	136100	151610	111478	108060

Unfortunately, due to staffing shortages in the Corrections Division, the amount of litter removed from our roadways has steadily decreased while the amount dumped continues to climb.

Mason County citizens can call 360-427-9670 X 172 or send an email to the Sheriff's Office if they would like the Litter Crew to investigate a particular roadway or dump site.



# Financial Management

The Finance Department conducts many “behind the scenes” tasks to in order to perform its role of administration and accountability of public funds:

- Development of the Sheriff’s Office budget, in conjunction with division managers, in a manner that supports the department goals and objectives of public and employee safety.
- Oversight of community donations and grants.
- Creation of financial reports and presentations.
- Performing an advisory role to staff on financial matters.
- Maintaining strict controls over cash and credit cards.
- Ensuring accuracy of the payroll and time entry process.
- Overseeing all aspects of Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivables functions, ensuring principles and practices of government accounting are being followed.
- Coordinating and collaborating as needed with other County departments to create a more connected workplace that encourages open communications and transparency.

Finance Department staff consists of one manager and one finance specialist. Due to efficiencies that were achieved in 2023, the department was able to reduce staffing levels by one full time employee.

### Budget Oversight

	Population	Calls for Service	Sheriff Budget
2023	~ 69,103	24,679	\$16,089,917
2022	~ 68,166	23,281	\$14,913,350
2021	~ 67,229	23,775	\$14,555,735
2020	~ 66,029	25,357	\$13,373,363
2019	~ 66,939	24,093	\$12,863,715

The department budget is submitted by the Sheriff and approved by the Mason County Commissioners. The focus of the requested funding is to protect our community, support enforcement of the law, prevent crime and provide emergency response services.

### Oversight of Community Donations and Grants

Even with the approved budget, the Sheriff's Department still relies on supplemental funds from generous community donations that allow several non-budget programs to continue:

- K9 - Includes funding for the purchase and training of the K9 officer.
- Explorer - Provides education and activities for young adults who may be interested in law enforcement careers.
- SWAT
- Chaplains who are available to public safety personnel as well as their families, and to the general public.
- General donations as designated by the donor.
- Volunteer hours that support both office and field functions.

Additionally, the Finance Department administers and oversees several grant-funded programs that lower the operating costs of the department, including:

- Bullet proof vests
- Inmate Litter Pick Up
- Boat Safety Inspections
- Sex Offender Registration