



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

## Charles County Sheriff's Office

6915 Crain Hwy, La Plata, MD 20646

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## 2024 FAST FACTS

County Population*	174,478*
Sworn Officers	308
Corrections Officers	124
Court Security Officers	13 Full Time, 1 Part Time
Automated Enforcement Unit (AEU)	1 Officer, 1 Supervisor, 4 AEU Specialists
Civilian Employees**	195
Calls for Service	251,932
Arrests	3976
Motor Vehicle Citations	7701
Warnings	19,518
Safety Equipment Repair Orders	1004
DUI Citations	520
Automobile Fatal Crashes***	7
Alcohol or Drug DUI Related Arrests	221

\*Number based on U.S Census Bureau 2024 Estimate

Crime statistics for Charles County, to include crimes investigated by the Maryland State Police and the La Plata Police Department, are available in the Maryland Uniform Crime Report. Citizens can also search for crimes investigated by the Charles County Sheriff's Office using CrimeReports.com, which provides citizens with near instant access to calls for service data.

## A MESSAGE FROM SHERIFF TROY D. BERRY



As the Sheriff of Charles County, it is my honor to present the Charles County Sheriff's Office 2024 Annual Report. This report reflects a year of progress, innovation, and dedication—driven by the tireless efforts of more than 650 sworn and civilian professionals who proudly serve our agency.

In the face of a growing population and the ongoing nationwide shortage of police officers—a challenge we feel here at home—we continue to rise to the occasion.

Our team remains committed to finding new and effective ways to prevent and combat crime. We leverage advanced technology in our investigations, collaborate with allied agencies to identify and address crime trends, and strengthen our partnerships with neighborhoods, businesses, and community organizations across Charles County.

Public safety is a shared responsibility, and we are truly stronger together. The trust and support we receive from our community are essential to our success, and I remain grateful for the strong relationships we have built with the citizens we serve.

Together, I am confident that we will continue to achieve great things and ensure Charles County remains a safe and vibrant place for our families, our future, and all who call it home.

Sincerely,

Troy D. Berry

# OUR HISTORY

As the primary law enforcement agency in Charles County, the Charles County Sheriff's Office (CCSO), one of the oldest law enforcement agencies in the United States, is a full-service operation. The CCSO provides all the services commonly associated with police departments and sheriffs' offices and operates the Charles County Detention Center.

The CCSO has a hallowed obligation to maintain law and order and to protect life and property. Centuries of growth and innovation have transformed how the CCSO fulfills its mission, but its rich history is an indelible element behind its modern achievements.

When the CCSO was established in 1658, it was staffed by only one law enforcement officer, Sheriff Nicholas Gwyther, who served dually as sheriff in St. Mary's County. Sheriff Gwyther's responsibilities were collecting taxes, serving warrants, apprehending criminals, and occasionally investigating witchcraft. He conducted business wherever he could, usually at his home.

Nearly 100 sheriffs have served as Charles County's chief law enforcement officer since Sheriff Gwyther, and throughout the years these sheriffs have addressed the perpetually growing demand for law enforcement services, most of which are a result of commercial and residential growth. As the responsibilities of Charles County Sheriffs grow, so too grows their contingent of personnel. Today, the CCSO employs more than 650 police, corrections, and civilian personnel.

As the CCSO transformed from a one-man operation into one of its community's largest employers, it expanded its physical presence in Charles County. In the 20th century, the Sheriff's Headquarters moved from the County Courthouse to an abandoned military site and then to a renovated truck stop, which now serves as the La Plata District Station. The current Headquarters, which sits adjacent to the La Plata Station, opened in 2000 and was the first building erected specifically as the CCSO's flagship. Additional district stations are operated in Waldorf and Bryans Road. A Community Services and Property Management annex opened in 2005 beside the Charles County Emergency Operations Center, a state-of-the-art facility for police communications officers and the county's Emergency Services Department personnel.

The first county jail was built next to the county's original courthouse in Port Tobacco, the former county seat. The second jail was built in 1897 behind the current courthouse in La Plata and a third, which the CCSO still uses for Court Holding, was built beside it in 1926. A detention center behind the La Plata Station operated from 1981 to 1995 and reopened in 2007 as an annex of the current detention center.

The CCSO earned accreditation from the Commission on the Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) in 2001 and 2004, 2007, 2010, 2013, and 2016. The CCSO earned

CALEA's flagship status in 2010 and from 2020 - 2024 was accredited with Excellence, the highest rating possible, designating it as one of the best among accredited agencies worldwide.

# MISSION AND VALUES

## Mission Statement

The men and women of the Charles County Sheriff's Office are dedicated to service through superior performance. We believe mutual respect, trust, and pride in our organization, combined with traditional values and innovative techniques, will ensure the community's right to a safe environment.

## Value Statements

The men and women of the Charles County Sheriff's Office are bound by a higher standard of conduct as exemplified in the following values (P.R.I.D.E.):

Professionalism - We believe in delivering a level of service which will reflect the pride we have in our community and organization.

Respect - We believe in individual human dignity and the preservation of human rights under the rule and spirit of law, always treating others as we would like to be treated.

Integrity - We believe in maintaining the public trust by holding ourselves accountable to the highest moral and ethical standards.

Duty - We believe the protection of life is our highest priority.

Excellence - We are dedicated to service through superior performance.



# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2024, we gathered with community members and organizations, celebrated the successes of our employees, and further developed ourselves professionally as individuals and as an Agency. The CCSO is steadfast in its dedication to fostering positive relationships with the community, particularly with the youth. Recognizing the importance of collaborative efforts in ensuring public safety and building trust, the Agency remains committed to sustaining and enhancing training in critical areas and enhancing transparency.

## Key Initiatives:

1. **Community Policing Programs:** The Agency actively engages in community policing initiatives that prioritize building strong relationships with residents. Officers participate in neighborhood events, attend community meetings, and actively seek feedback to better understand the needs and concerns of the community.
2. **Youth Outreach Programs:** A range of youth-centric outreach programs has been a priority for Sheriff Berry since taking office in 2014. These programs include school resource officers, after-school activities, the Youth Advisory Council, youth sports camps, and mentorship programs, which aim to provide positive role models and foster a sense of community among the youth.
3. **Crisis Intervention Training:** Recognizing the complex nature of encounters involving individuals experiencing mental health crises, officers receive specialized Crisis Intervention Training. This training equips them with the knowledge and skills to respond to such situations with empathy, understanding, and an emphasis on de-escalation rather than confrontation.



*Sheriff Berry greets high school students as they arrive to remind them of the importance of safe driving practices as part of CCSO's We Care initiative in collaboration with Charles County Public Schools.*



# ABOUT OUR AGENCY

## The Office of the Sheriff

The Office of the Sheriff is comprised of the Sheriff, Chief of Staff, three Assistant Sheriffs, the Office of Professional Responsibility, and the Office of the General Counsel.

Sheriff Troy D. Berry is a 32-year veteran of the Charles County Sheriff's Office and was first elected as Sheriff in 2014. He was re-elected in 2018 and again in 2022. He leads an Agency of over 700 employees and is the final authority on all matters of policy, operations, and discipline.

Mr. Brian Eley serves as Sheriff Berry's Chief of Staff. He is the highest responsible senior administrative and supervisory authority of all employees of the Agency. He is directly responsible for the Office of the General Counsel and the Executive Services Division. Chief of Staff Eley is a retired CCSO Captain and previously served as the Assistant Sheriff of Administration.

Three Assistant Sheriffs are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Agency. Major William Edge serves as the Assistant Sheriff of Operations and is responsible for Patrol Operations and the Criminal Investigations Division. Major Michael Almassy serves as the Assistant Sheriff of Administration and is responsible for the Corrections Division, the Special Services Division, the Information Technology Division, the Training Division, and the Administrative Services Division. Major David Kelly serves as the Assistant Sheriff of Field and Support, and is responsible for the Special Operations Division, Community Services Division, and the Training Division.

## The Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR)

The Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) is an independent component of the CCSO and maintains the integrity of the Agency by ensuring the professional conduct of Agency personnel. OPR's two functions include *Internal Affairs* and *Standards and Audits*, and it operates under the command of Captain John Dodge.

An internal investigation can be comprised of multiple misconduct violations, each of which is closed with one of the following dispositions:

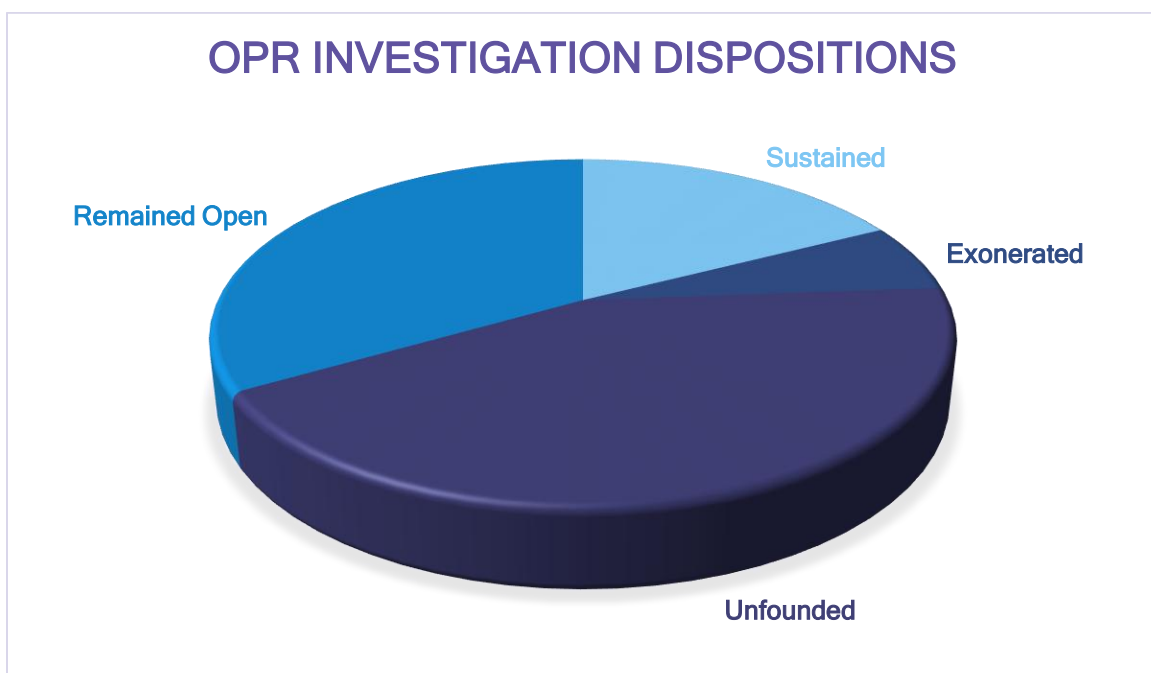
- Sustained: The investigation supported the conclusion that the officer engaged in the alleged conduct and violated a policy by doing so.
- Exonerated: The investigation supported the conclusion that the incident did occur, but the officer's actions were legal, proper, and reasonable.
- Unfounded: The investigation supported the conclusion that the officer did not engage in the alleged conduct and did not violate an agency policy by doing so.
- Not Sustained: The investigation did not prove or disprove the alleged conduct.

Internal Affairs handled 63 internal investigations in 2024. Of the 63 investigations:

- 49 were received from the public.
- 14 were initiated internally.

The complaints involved 54 police officers, 8 correctional officers and 1 civilian employees. As of the close of 2024, the dispositions of the investigations were as follows:

- 11 investigations were found to have at least one sustained allegation.
- 4 investigations were found to have at least one exonerated allegation.
- 27 investigations were found to have at least one unfounded allegation.
- 21 investigations remained open.



## The Office of General Counsel (OGC)

The Office of the General Counsel (OGC) is responsible for providing legal advice to and representing the Office of the Sheriff. Additionally, OGC acts as the agency's liaison with the Maryland Attorney General's Office.

The Office is led by Mr. Jerome Spencer, a former prosecutor and circuit court judge, who serves as General Counsel. He is supported by Ms. Misty Good, Deputy General Counsel. OGC plays a key role in the ongoing legal education of the Sheriff's Office. This includes delivering annual in-service training for sworn officers and offering instruction in criminal law and procedure at the Southern Maryland Criminal Justice Academy.

OGC also actively contributes to broader legal and policy discussions through participation in several professional organizations. These include the Maryland Chiefs' and Sheriffs' Associations Legislative Committee, the Maryland Police Legal Advisors Group, the Maryland State Bar Association's State and Local Government Section, and the legal and impact projectile sections of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

## Patrol Division

Charles county citizens rely on the protection of the CCSO's first responders – the officers of the PATROL DIVISION – to maintain law and order and restore peace when public safety is threatened. The Patrol Division prevents and investigates crime, responds to calls for service (including crimes in progress, non-emergency calls, and medical emergencies), and enforces traffic laws. The Patrol Division also assists with safety at large community events such as the Charles County Fair and Fourth of July events. It is the CCSO's most visible component.

Charles County covers 643 square miles. For the purposes of law enforcement, the county is divided into two divisions - North and South. Captain Clarence Black serves as the Commander of the Northern Division and Captain Andrew Schwab serves as the Commander of the Southern Division.

Five shifts of 23-24 patrol officers and supervisors provide police services day and night throughout Charles County. An additional shift consisting of nine officers, one sergeant and one lieutenant serves as the permanent midnight shift, allowing the other five shifts to rotate between days, evenings, and midnights. Additionally, lieutenants serve as shift commanders in the Patrol Division, ensuring a commander is always on duty in both the Northern District and Southern District. Shift commanders coordinate the Patrol Division's response to major incidents and make critical operational decisions.

## The K-9 Unit

The agency's K-9 Unit is assigned to the Patrol Division. The K-9 Unit consists of two corporal trainers, one civilian trainer, and twelve dogs which include:

- 6 Patrol/Narcotics Detection canines.
- 2 Patrol/Explosive/Weapons Detection canines.
- 1 Weapon Detection canine.
- 2 Bloodhound/Trailing canines.
- 1 Narcotic Detection canine.

Each K-9 team is certified by our agency, International Police Working Dog Association (IPWDA) and Old Dominion SAR/K-Star standards. In 2024, the unit was utilized as follows:

- 28 suspect searches/non-apprehension.
- Nine suspect searches/apprehension.
- 19 suspect apprehensions.
- 12 perimeter security.
- 8 non-suspect searches (missing persons).
- 91 narcotic searches.
- 15 firearms/ammunition searches.
- 31 building searches.
- 3 detention center deployments.
- 3 bomb searches.
- 19 article searches.
- 3 use of force (K-9 bite) reports.



*Canine Tango shows off his new vest!*

## Special Operations Division

The Special Operations Division performs tactical assignments and provides services to keep the community safe. Captain Jason Carlson is the division's commander. The division includes the Field Operations Section.

The **Field Operations Section** is supervised by Lieutenant Matthew Thompson and includes the Traffic Operations Unit, Security Response Vessel, Unmanned Aerial System (UAS), Emergency Services Team, Automated Enforcement Unit, Intoximeter Operator Function, Motorcycle Function, and the Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) Function.

The **Traffic Operations Unit** investigates traffic fatalities, school bus crashes, school bus complaints, and abandoned vehicles; conducts radar operations and commercial vehicle inspections; manages crossing guard assignments; provides funeral escorts; and manages all traffic-related grants awarded to the CCSO.

The **Security Response Vessel** is a specially trained team of officers and civilians who provide law enforcement services on the waterways of Charles County. The vessels are specially designed for law enforcement use and are equipped to handle a variety of possible situations.



*Lt. Kaylor prepares for an Unmanned Aircraft demonstration during a community event.*

The **Unmanned Aerial System** are specially trained and federally licensed Unmanned Aircraft pilots who provide aerial support during operations requiring a bird's eye view or tactical search using the aircraft instead of exposing an officer to extreme danger.

The **Emergency Services Team** is a group of specially trained and equipped officers who are called upon to handle high-risk calls, rescues, and the service of high-risk search warrants.

The **Automated Enforcement Unit** oversees and administers the school zone Speed Cameras program, the Red-Light Camera Program, and the Bus Patrol Camera Program.

The **Intoximeter Operator Function** is a group of specially trained and certified officers who perform the breath test procedures for officers investigating Driving While Intoxicated incidents.

The **Motorcycle Function** is a group of specially trained and certified officers who operate agency police motorcycles for funeral escorts and special events.

The **Drug Recognition Expert Function** is a group of specially trained and certified officers who have been certified to investigate Driving While Under the Influence of Drugs. They have been extensively trained in the detection of persons under the influence of a controlled dangerous substance.



*Cpt. Baker and Pfc. Graham greet Friday Night Lights & Sirens attendees with frozen treats!*

## The Community Services Division

The Community Services Division provides community and school-based services that engage citizens and businesses in public safety activities. As a testament to the success of our Agency's Community Services programs and its commitment to working closely with citizens and businesses to prevent crime, the CCSO has received the Maryland Governor's Crime Prevention Award each year since 1988. Captain Caroline Baker is the division's commander. The division includes two sections: Community Relations and School Resource.

The CCSO's **Community Relations Section**, under the command of Lieutenant Travis Yates, combines a unified effort from the Community Engagement Unit and the Community Policing Unit to plan, schedule, and coordinate many events throughout the year. In 2023, these efforts included:

- 120 meetings.
- 97 Presentations.
- 88 General events.
- Seven block parties.
- 27 Seasonal events.
- 53 National Night Out events.
- 199 business file updates.
- 12 surveys.
- 582 community/business contacts.

In addition, the Section provided services in the areas of crime prevention talks, community policing enforcement efforts in the neighborhoods, Project Lifesaver, National Night Out, the County Fair, graduations, and Project Graduation. The Section's focus on the community also extends to local



businesses. The **Community Organizer** attends the Charles County Chamber of Commerce monthly meetings. This fosters and strengthens communication with local businesses where they exchange ideas, trends, program successes, and failures, to improve the partnership. The combined efforts demonstrate the importance the agency puts on community relations. In 2024, the Agency continued growing the grassroots efforts to build positive community/law enforcement relationships through varied outreach and engagement programs.

The **Fingerprint Unit**, which is also part of the Community Relations section, includes a Civilian Coordinator and Civilian Specialist. Fingerprinting services are offered by appointment only in our office in the St. Charles Towne Center.

The **Crisis Negotiations Team** is specially trained to bring situations involving barricaded individuals and hostages to peaceful conclusions. Negotiators volunteer for the team in addition to their regular duty assignments.

The **School Resource Section**, under the command of Lieutenant Christopher Strafella, facilitates the strong alliance between police and Charles County school students. As part of an agreement with Charles County Public Schools, officers are assigned to each elementary, middle, and high school to provide programs such as Safe Schools, Truth and Consequences, and Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE). The officers host an annual Ladies Leadership Soccer Camp, Badges for Baseball Camp, Cops for Kids Football Camp, Just Say No Camp, a Summer Youth Achievement Program, and We Care, a program designed to reduce teen traffic fatalities by using innovative methods to encourage young motorists to drive safely. High school students considering a career in law enforcement have an opportunity to learn about the criminal justice system as part of their academic curriculum in the **Criminal Justice Program** offered through an alliance between the CCSO and Charles County Public Schools. The program is held at North Point High School.



*Teams celebrate their success on the final day of the Cops for Kids Football Camp.*

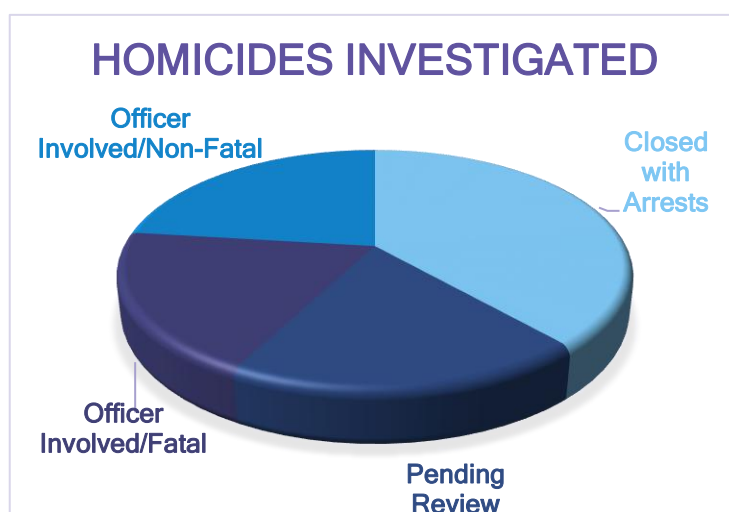
**Teen Court** provides first-time youth offenders with an opportunity to accept responsibility for traffic offenses, misdemeanor crimes, and cannabis and alcohol offenses without the stigma of a formal criminal record. Youth offenders are represented by youth defense attorneys, prosecuted by youth prosecutors, and sentenced by youth juries. An adult volunteer serves as a judge. The program teaches students about the criminal justice process, helps them resolve problems better, and reduces recidivism. In 2024, Teen Court heard 56 cases and sentenced youth to 2,167 hours of community service. The School Resource Section Lieutenant also commands the Public Safety Cadets Post, School Crossing Guards, and the Search Management Function for the Agency.

## Criminal Investigations Division

The Criminal Investigations Division (CID) investigates complex crimes and crime trends. Under the command of Captain Harry Ivers, the division operates five sections – Persons Crimes, Property Crimes, Forensic Science, Homeland Security, and Narcotics Enforcement.

The **Persons Crimes Section**, commanded by Lieutenant Anthony Celia, includes the Major Crimes, Special Victims, Robbery, and Digital Forensics Units.

The **Major Crimes Unit** investigates homicides, deaths, shootings, stabbings, life-threatening assaults, cold cases, missing persons, and the rare occurrences of police-involved shootings. Detectives investigated five homicides in 2024. By year's end, two of the five cases were closed with arrests; one is pending review with the State's Attorney's Office. There was one fatal officer involved shooting and one non-fatal officer involved shooting in two separate incidents. The fatal officer involved shooting was investigated by the Maryland Office of the Attorney General's Independent Investigations Division. 18 missing person cases were assigned for further investigation.



The **Special Victims Unit (SVU)** investigates rapes, sexual assaults, physical and sexual child abuse, and the exploitation of the elderly. The circumstances of these investigations can be difficult and very emotional for detectives. Of the total cases assigned to SVU, at the year's end:

- 61 cases were closed.
- 83 cases were closed with arrests.
- 3 cases were closed exceptional.
- 11 cases were closed unfounded.
- 65 cases were open/suspended.
- 8 cases are open warrant service.
- 61 cases are still active.
- 97 intakes were accepted.
- 488 intakes were screened out for various reasons.
- 384 cyber tips were received from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.
- Liberty, the Unit's Comfort K-9, had 22 victim contacts and was invited to many community events. There were also additional contacts internally through different components of the agency.
- 450 intakes from the Board of Education were also received. These intakes were cross referenced with child abuse intake reports received internally within the Charles County Sheriff's Office, as well as reports received from the Department of Social Services.
- Managed anywhere between 194-204 sex offenders throughout 2024.

The **Robbery Unit** investigates citizen and commercial armed robberies. In 2024, the unit was assigned 48 robbery investigations. Of those cases, at the end of the year:

- 22 were closed with arrests.
- 7 remained open/suspended.
- 17 investigations remained active.

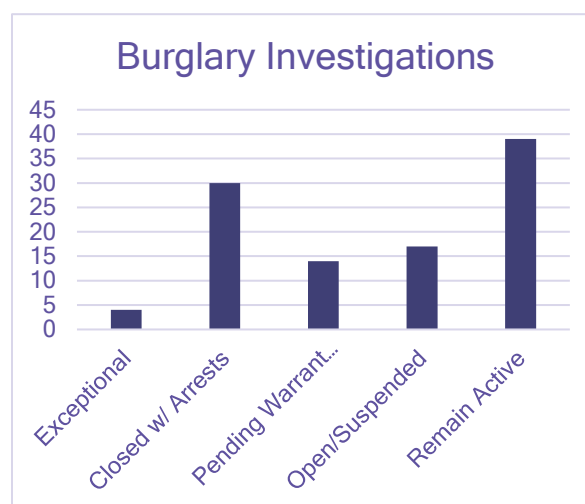
The unit also conducted 16 miscellaneous investigations. Of these miscellaneous investigations, 8 were closed with arrests. Additionally, detectives secured and executed 187 search and seizure warrants for their investigations.

The **Victim Services Function** ensures that crime victims have access to appropriate support and resources. This includes providing immediate assistance at crime scenes, as well as ongoing support after traumatic events, during investigations, and following arrests. The Victim Services Coordinator primarily responds to incidents such as domestic assaults, suicides, assaults involving weapons, sexual assaults, rapes, homicides, and death investigations. Although less frequent, support is also

provided for incidents like armed robbery, armed carjacking, and fatal motor vehicle collisions. In 2024, Victim Services made initial contact with 243 victims, including 17 on-scene responses and 54 direct referrals from officers.

The **Property Crimes Section**, commanded by Lieutenant Erica Budd, investigates property and financial crimes, analyzes crime trends, and provides services to crime victims. The Burglary Unit investigates residential and commercial burglaries, large shoplifting incidents, and any other theft that requires a detective to be assigned. In 2024, the unit was assigned 111 Burglary investigations. The status of these cases is as follows:

- 4 were closed exceptional.
- 30 were closed with arrests.
- 14 were pending warrant services.
- 17 were open/suspended.
- 39 remain active.



In addition, we were also assigned 29 investigations involving ATM break ins and/or thefts. These are still open as we have identified several organized criminal groups that are operating in the area. We are working in close conjunction with other Law Enforcement Agencies to develop these cases further.

The four-man unit executed 179 search and seizure warrants on residences, phones, and business records.

Additionally, one of the detectives in the unit is responsible for the pawn program. He is responsible for conducting inspections of pawn establishments, facilitating investigations that lead to the recovery of stolen goods from pawn shops. In 2024, the detective assigned to pawn opened 7 cases resulting in 4 arrests and the recovery of \$115,850.00 in stolen property.

In 2024, the Financial Crimes Unit investigated 19 cases. Of those, there were 7 arrests and 12 that remained open/suspended. The unit served 10 search warrants. Financial Crimes wrote 123 supplemental reports this year.

**Auto Theft Detail** was assigned 48 cases in 2024. 17 arrests were made and 28 remained open/suspended. Additionally, the Auto Theft Detail wrote 87 search warrants. There were 333 stolen motor vehicles. 67 of those vehicles were also recovered in Charles County. 120 of them were

recovered in other jurisdictions. In addition to those stolen from Charles County, detectives recovered 106 vehicles that had been reported stolen in other jurisdictions.

The **Victim Services Unit** works with local, state, and regional agencies including the Center for Abused Persons, the Center for Children, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, and Victims Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) to ensure victims understand their rights and have access to counseling and compensation. In certain circumstances, the Victim Services Unit also provides support to victims and witnesses on the scene of serious and tragic incidents.

The **Forensic Science Section (FSS)**, managed by Deputy Director Noelle Gehrman, is comprised of a Forensic Science Supervisor, a Quality Assurance Manager, a Forensic Chemist, four Forensic Science Technicians, and two Latent Print Specialists who provide critical support to patrol officers and detectives by processing crime scenes and analyzing evidence. FSS is currently in the process of hiring a Forensic DNA Analyst to join the Section.

In 2024, the FSS was assigned more than 665 cases. Technicians processed more than 119 scenes, including crime scenes, vehicles, attending autopsies, and assisting with Search Warrants. They investigated approximately 523 cases involving DNA—totaling approximately 2,488 DNA items, and at least 160 cases involving firearms—totaling approximately 250 firearms.

## JANE DOE

# IDENTIFIED

## AFTER 25 YEARS



Jane Doe, 1998 - 2023



LaQuanda Denise "Niecey" Williams



The Charles County Sheriff's Office is dedicated to pursuing justice for victims of crime. Our commitment is not just a statement; it is a promise that we will never give up.

*Hard work and dedication of our Detectives, Forensic Science Investigators, and Media Relations team led to the identification of LaQuanda Williams, who was found deceased in Charles County in 1998.*

During 2024, the Latent Print Specialists worked on 273 latent fingerprint cases resulting in 164 identifications made. In addition to working active cases, the Latent Specialists also worked 3 additional cases in the Maryland Automated Fingerprint Identification System “Unsolved Latent” queue.

In September 2019, the Section began utilizing the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) - a program managed by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). The NIBIN program automates ballistics evaluations and provides actionable investigative leads in a timely manner by allowing forensic examiners to compare ballistic evidence to crimes throughout the region. Additionally, the FSS assisted allied agencies including St. Mary’s County Sheriff’s Office, Calvert County Sheriff’s Office, and the La Plata Police Department in completing NIBIN acquisitions. In 2024, the FSS had 228 cases with NIBIN entries resulting in 319 acquisitions, 141 leads, and approximately 5 cases warranting microscopic comparison.

The **Homeland Security & Intelligence Section**, commanded by Lieutenant William Welch, investigates street gangs, outlaw motorcycle gangs, extremist activities, threats against public officials, terrorism, and organized crime. The Section receives and disseminates intelligence information and publishes law enforcement bulletins for the CCSO and allied agencies nationwide. An investigator from the Homeland Security & Intelligence Section is also part of the Southern Maryland Information Center (SMIC), a regional operation that facilitates information sharing between the CCSO, the Calvert and St. Mary’s County Sheriffs’ Offices, the Maryland State Police and the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center. Representatives from each agency analyze reports and identify cross-jurisdictional crime trends.

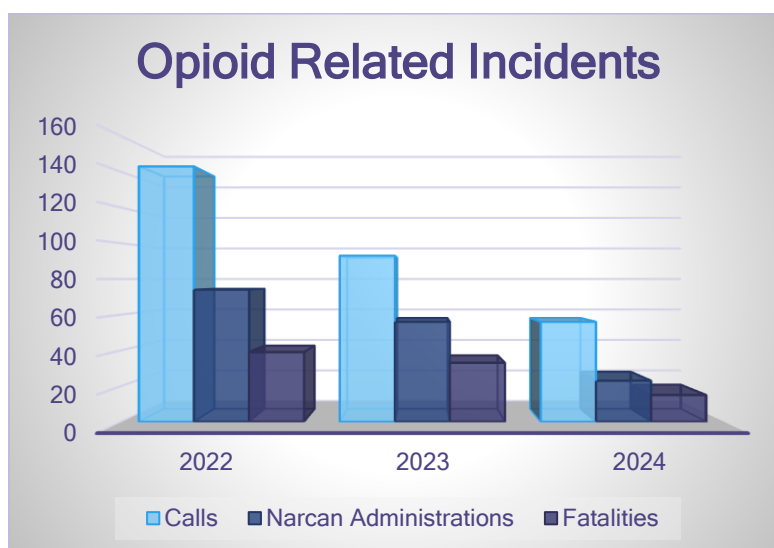
The **Crime Analysis Unit** collects, analyzes, and disseminates crime data for the CCSO’s CompStat program. CompStat is an analysis-driven method of proactively addressing crime problems. District Commanders use the crime analysis data as part of weekly CompStat meetings to address crime in their districts.

The **Firearms Investigations Unit (FIU)** is a team of experienced detectives who investigate cases involving the illegal manufacture, sale, and/or possession of firearms, gun trafficking, and other crimes involving firearms. The FIU coordinates their efforts with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and is responsible for following-up on leads developed from NIBIN (National



Integrated Ballistic Information Network). The Firearms Investigations Unit conducted 16 investigations in 2024 resulting in the recovery of 13 firearms and seven persons charged. Three of those investigations were still active at the end of 2024.

The CCSO employs a full-time **Narcotics Intelligence Analyst** as part of the Opioid Addiction Program. In 2024, Charles County received 56 calls related to opiates (compared to 93 in 2023). Fifteen of those calls resulted in fatalities (compared to 33 in 2023). According to the CCSO Narcotics Intelligence Analyst, overdose numbers across the state of Maryland have decreased. Potentially, the decrease can be attributed to several factors such as increased Narcan distribution, the number of Peer Recovery Specialists hired, and decreased potency in street drugs.



The **Narcotics Enforcement Section (NES)**, commanded by Lieutenant John Elliott, works covertly and aggressively to disrupt drug trafficking in Charles County. The effective disruption of drug trafficking is vital to the reduction of crime overall. The section includes the Major Narcotics Unit and the Narcotics Street Enforcement Unit. In 2024, NES investigations led to the service of 81 search warrants and the seizure of:

- Firearms: 42
- Currency: \$123,676.25
- Vehicles: 15 vehicles worth \$138,977.00
- CDS Street Value: \$1,590,054.00

## Support Services Division

The employees of the SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION, commanded by Captain Louis Schmidt, are the critical link between citizens and the police and between officers and the information they need to do their jobs safely and efficiently.

The **Records Management Section**, commanded by Deputy Director Amber DiToto, is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the centralized Records Unit, the Body-Worn Camera Unit, and the public-facing lobby at Sheriff's Office Headquarters. As the Custodian of Police Records, Deputy Director DiToto ensures that all records are complete, legible, accessible throughout their retention period, and properly disposed of once that period concludes. The section is also responsible for maintaining and monitoring police record systems and managing the security, storage, retention, retrieval, and disposition of all police records.

In 2024, Deputy Director DiToto successfully launched the Agency's online records request portal, **NextRequest**, significantly improving public access to police records. This innovation eliminated the need for in-person visits to district stations and headquarters, as well as the use of outdated payment methods for the request of records. Accessible via the CCSO website, the portal is available 24/7 for submitting requests.

Through the NextRequest portal, Records Technicians processed and fulfilled **10,307** requests, resulting in the dissemination of **25,342** documents to the public. The median turnaround time for these requests was just **4 days**.

### Key 2024 Achievements:

- Provided frontline customer service by handling all initial inquiries from visitors at the Sheriff's Office Headquarters building.
- Processed and cataloged **19,990** police and supplemental reports, including incident, accident, missing person, and alcohol influence reports.
- Completed **1,195** expungement requests.
- Processed **28,226** citations, including ETIX, parking citations, warnings, traffic stop data sheets, and safety equipment repair orders.
- Handled **520** DUI-related citations.
- Validated **2,660** METERS entries.

Processed and fulfilled:

- **3,543** requests for in-car and body-worn camera video
- **2,502** discovery requests from the State's Attorney's Office
- **9,861** other report requests
- Managed **15,585** pieces of postal mail.
- Completed **865** law enforcement background checks.

The **Communications Section**, commanded by Lieutenant Patrick Tona, provides police radio communications to officers and clerical coverage of the district stations in La Plata, Bryans Road, and Waldorf. Each district station is staffed by Station Clerks responsible for answering the CCSO's non-emergency telephone lines and for helping citizens who visit the district stations. The station clerks' training prepares them to handle a variety of citizen reports and inquiries, from life-threatening emergencies to the occasional non-police matter. Their primary mission is to obtain clear and concise information and relay that information to Police Communications Officers (PCOs), who dispatch the information to officers conducting patrol or other assignments. In 2024, the Communications Section answered 251,932 calls for service.

## Information Technology Division

The Information Technology Division (ITD), led by Director David Hanna, is vital in ensuring the CCSO functions efficiently in our digital world. ITD develops and implements a strategic plan to maintain and evolve systems, infrastructure, physical and virtual servers, enterprise applications, security, cloud, mobile initiatives, training, and future growth to support the objectives and success of the Charles County Sheriff's Office. The highly knowledgeable staff assigned to the Technical Support, Applications Support, and Systems Operations Support Sections maintain hundreds of PCs, printers, networks, complex servers, and software applications. Every function of the CCSO relies on the daily use of computers and digital police databases. ITD personnel are always available to ensure law enforcement services are uninterrupted.

In 2024, the Information Technology Division (ITD) deployed Body-Worn Cameras to 165 sworn officers, with full deployment to all sworn personnel planned for 2025. ITD also initiated a testing phase with multiple vendors to implement a Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) login process to enhance cybersecurity. A digital Missing Persons check feature was added to the mobile police application, allowing real-time notifications and immediate input into the federal NCIC database.

Additionally, ITD developed a digital impound notification system that enables Police Station Technicians to receive electronic copies of impound forms as soon as an impound is completed. This system streamlines the notification process, reduces paperwork, and keeps officers on the road by minimizing administrative tasks.

## Special Services Division

The Special Services Division, commanded by Captain Charles Baker, handles judicial matters, ensures the security of the Charles County Courthouse, and maintains the Agency's fleet, supply stock, and property inventory.

The **Judicial Services Section**, commanded by Lieutenant Christopher Cusmano, serves arrest warrants, civil papers, and other legal documents, and addresses child support and domestic violence problems. In 2023, the Judicial Services Section served:

- 1,300 criminal summonses
- 1,245 warrants
- 8,605 criminal summons and warrant service attempts
- 4,574 civil summonses
- 2,058 evictions
- 2,272 protective orders
- 1,482 peace orders
- 134 extraditions
- 6,831 rent notices
- 40 criminal arrests

The **Property Management Section**, commanded by Lieutenant Scott Grove, manages the CCSO's Quartermaster, Fleet Management, Property Held Unit, and Firearms Tracking Operations.

The Courthouse Section, commanded by Lieutenant Charles Glass, contains Volunteers in the Community (VICS) and the Court & Judicial Security Unit. The Court & Judicial Security Unit is responsible for physical security, maintenance of courtroom order, and general law enforcement duties within the Charles County Circuit Court.

## Executive Services Division

The Executive Services Division, commanded by Captain Ashley Burroughs, manages Planning and Accreditation, Media Relations, and the Chaplain program and acts as the liaison to the Sheriff.

**Planning and Accreditation**, managed by Deputy Director Laurie Coyle, is responsible for maintaining the Agency's policy manuals and forms, coordinating the process for obtaining grant funding and overseeing the Agency's accreditation process.

The Agency continues to maintain the highest standards. In November 2024, the CCSO was awarded the prestigious Accreditation with Excellence designation by the Commission on Accreditation for Law

Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), Inc., an internationally recognized standard for public safety agencies. Out of 143 agencies that received accreditation or reaccreditation at the November CALEA conference, the CCSO was one of only five to receive the distinguished Accreditation with Excellence Award. This award is reserved for agencies demonstrating superior performance in policy development, data analysis, continuous improvement, and a commitment to best practices in law enforcement.



*Sheriff Troy Berry, Chief of Staff Brian Eley, Cpt. Ashley Burroughs, Deputy Director Laurie Coyle and Planning and Accreditation staff celebrate the agency's Accreditation with Excellence Award received from CALEA.*

The CCSO was awarded more than \$2 million in grant funding in 2024, increasing the Agency's ability to provide enhanced training opportunities for employees and initiate new projects and programs to fulfill the CCSO's mission.

The **Media Relations Office** coordinates the distribution of information about police investigations, crime prevention, and CCSO events to the news media and the public. The office issues regular press releases; manages portions of the content of the CCSO's website; produces the Annual Report,

advertisements, brochures, posters, and fliers; and develops content for and manages the CCSO's social media accounts. At the end of 2024, the CCSO had more than 65,000 followers on Facebook and Instagram combined.

Local clergymen offer guidance and inspiration to CCSO personnel, their families, and the public through **Chaplain Services**. Chaplains minister to CCSO personnel in times of personal need or strife and provide comfort to those who are injured or afflicted. They accompany officers who must notify families of the death of a loved one and assist in notifying the family of an officer who was seriously injured or slain. In addition, they play a critical role in acting as a liaison between the Agency and the faith-based community. Chaplains also provide invocations and benedictions at CCSO ceremonies.

## Administrative Services Division

The CCSO is committed to maintaining a highly qualified workforce, utilizing financial resources efficiently, and maintaining thorough and accurate record-keeping. The Administrative Services Division, commanded by Captain Joseph Pratta, is responsible for helping the CCSO meet its strict personnel, budgetary, and records management standards.

The **Budgeting Section**, managed by Deputy Director Erin Shoemaker, provides leadership on all accounts and projects that affect the budget for the Office of the Sheriff. This section is responsible for preparing the annual budgets and financial analyses of the Sheriff's Office operations for upper-level management and County agencies. A well-trained team of budget professionals promotes sound budgetary management practices, oversees the budget preparation process, and assists in meeting the CCSO's personnel and operational needs.

The FY2024 approved budget (7/1/23 through 6/30/24) was \$121,304,100. This included the sworn officers continuing with year five (5) of the pay parity as it relates to the Maryland State Police pay scale. Through cooperation and good faith negotiations, sworn officers received a five (5) percent cost of living increase (COLA) effective July 1, 2024. A step increase was also included for the eligible sworn officers. The correctional officers and the civilian staff were provided with a merit increase on the employee's anniversary date, as well as a 2% cost of living (COLA) increase effective January 26, 2024. All full-time employees employed on or before June 30, 2023 received a one-time \$500 take-home bonus. Full-time reduced-hours employees saw a prorated share based on their budgeted hours.



The authorized strength of the Sheriff's Office is increasing by 4.36 full-time equivalent positions: Two (2) Sworn Officer positions (April 2024 hire), a full-time Digital Forensic Analyst (April 2024 hire), an Application /Web Developer position (April 2024 hire), and the upgrade of a part time to full time reduced hour Special Projects Coordinator position (effective January 2025).

The FY2024 Capital Improvement Program, coordinated with the Department of Public Works, includes funding to continue the Detention Center Pump Station Rehabilitation.

The FY2024 approved budget included \$1,327,200 for Sheriff's Office vehicles and various other equipment.

The **Accounting Section**, managed by Deputy Director Amy Mayor, promotes sound financial management practices, accounts for agency-owned property, and assists in meeting the operating needs of the Sheriff's Office. The section is composed of four major areas, which include Accounts Payable, General Accounting, Payroll, and Inmate Accounting.

The **Human Resources Section**, managed by Deputy Director Brian Daniels, handles administrative personnel tasks for potential and current employees. Once the Human Resources Section determines a job applicant meets the position requirements, the Pre-Employment Unit performs an extensive background investigation of police officer, correctional officer, and civilian applicants. The unit's mission is to ensure only the applicants with the highest levels of integrity are awarded positions with the CCSO. Background investigations for police officer and correctional officer applicants involve polygraphs, psychological examinations, physical examinations, and drug screenings.



*Recruitment staff on site at the Army National Guard Job Fair in Washington D.C.*

The **Pre-Employment/Recruitment Unit** seeks the best potential police and correctional officer candidates for employment with the CCSO. The unit attends job fairs and other events to engage and guide those who are interested in pursuing careers in law enforcement. The unit increases awareness of available roles through various marketing methods.

Below is a list of locations the recruiting team visited throughout the year.

#### **Career Fairs:**

MD Job source, Waldorf West Library  
Dept. Of Criminal Justice Job Fair, Lycoming College  
CoSM, Criminal Justice Fair  
College and Career Fair at Fairmont Heights  
Career Fair, Waldorf High School

Old Dominion University  
HITS Expo  
DC Army National Guard, Military Recruitment  
Ocean City Chamber of Commerce Fair  
Tri-County Spring Career Fair  
Temple of Praise Career Fair

Veterans/Service Career Fair	LE Career Fair, PG County
Military Career Fair, VA Peninsula Chamber	St. Mary's Job Fair
Calvert County Job Fair	Forrest Center Tech Fair
Veterans Job and Resource Fair	

### **Community Services Events/Recruiting Information Tables:**

Wakefield Block Party	Fieldside Block Party
Pinefield Block Party	La Plata Block Party
Kingsview Block Party	Heritage Block Party
Kent Avenue Block Party	Fall Festival
National Night Out	Community Day at Elementary School
Trunk or Treat	Teen Court Chat sessions
Juneteenth Celebration	Hunters Brook Block Party
Cobb Island Day	Worthington Block Party
Celebrate La Plata Community Day	Charles County Fair
CCPS Community Day	Project Graduation
Kunta Kinte Festival	Truck and Rodeo

### **High Schools**

All Charles County High Schools	General Smallwood Career Day
Northern High School	Chopticon High School
Huntingtown High School	Great Mills High School
King George High School	Forrest Tech Center
Patuxent High School	St. Mary's Ryken High School

In addition, recruiting officers assisted in Mock Senior High School Interviews with:

- Lackey High School
- Thomas Stone High School
- St. Charles High School
- Westlake High School
- McDonough High School

During 2024 the Recruitment & Pre-Employment Unit used the following marketing methods:

### **Recruitment Advertising:**

- Blue Crabs Stadium - Commercial on 70 games, ½ playbill
- Charles County Mall - Fingerprinting Office
- US Army Research Marketing Group
- Multiple College websites
- Multiple online employment seeking websites, Indeed, Jobs.com, Maryland Workforce Exchange
- Social Media - Facebook, Instagram, Twitter
- Handshake - College connection website
- PoliceOne.Com & Correctionsone.com website
- College Websites: CSM, Prince Georges Community College, Bowie State University, John Jay College
- High Schools - Charles, St. Mary's, Calvert, Virginia - connections through counselors
- Local public libraries
- Comcast 2023-2024 contract ended October 2024
- SOMD Radio
- Digital Advertising through Grant - currently running.

### **Recruiting Materials**

The agency evaluates recruiting materials yearly for changes. These items are displayed throughout the county at schools, health and fitness facilities, and other locations.

- Rack Cards- updated with new information and photos to make easier for displaying.
- Flyers made in house.
- Banners
- In house sign boards - used for advertising events.
- Promotional Items - pens, note pad, sanitizer, bags, etc.

### **Videos/Commercials:**

Police and corrections commercials have aired through Comcast/Effectv. We ran a contract from October 2023 through October 2024 that included two commercials that were broadcast throughout

southern Prince George's County, the Eastern Shore and Northern Virginia. The commercials were produced with assistance from the Charles County Government Media Team.

## Training Division

The training division ensures the CCSO meets state-mandated requirements and provides a variety of other training needs to sworn, civilian, and corrections personnel. Commanded by Captain Bobby Kiesel, the division is comprised of the Southern Maryland Criminal Justice Academy, the Training Unit, the Firearms Instruction Detail, and the Cadet Program.

The Southern Maryland Criminal Justice Academy (SMCJA) provides entry-level training to all police and correctional officers in Southern Maryland. The SMCJA is funded and governed by the sheriff's offices in Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary's Counties, which provide the Academy's full-time staff of instructors and support personnel.

Once officers have completed entry-level training, they must complete a required number of hours of "in-service" training. The Training Division handles all annual in-service training classes including ethics, bias-based policing, cultural diversity, interacting with persons suspected of having mental health issues, use of force, and other topics mandated by the Training Commission and the Sheriff. The Training Division ensures all required documentation is submitted to the Maryland Police and Corrections Training Commission (MPCTC) to maintain each officer's State certification as a sworn police officer.

The Firearms Instruction Detail is comprised of highly skilled instructors who must maintain expert proficiency in firearms. The Chief Firearms Instructor and his staff provide regular firearms training to all new and veteran officers and to Correctional Officers who carry firearms in the performance of their duties.

In addition to the required classroom instruction, officers must complete annual handgun, shotgun, and rifle qualification courses. Officers are also trained in tactical scenarios, responding to active shooters, shooting on the move, shooting behind various types of cover, general marksmanship skills, and various other courses of fire related directly to the performance of duties as a police officer.

People ages 18-21 who want to pursue a career as a CCSO police officer or correctional officer gain invaluable on-the-job experience in the Cadet Program. Cadets perform a variety of duties while learning law enforcement techniques, CCSO policy and procedure, and criminal and traffic law. These duties include assisting all components of the Agency and assisting with the areas of responsibility of the various Divisions. Cadets take part in ride-along operations with Patrol Officers, assisting with the training of officers and acting as role-players, truck and school bus safety inspections, traffic safety operations, and other duties as assigned.

## Corrections Division

The responsibility of keeping those held at the Charles County Detention Center (CCDC) secure rests with the Corrections Division under the command of Director Ryan Ross and Deputy Director Gerald Duffield. In addition to his role as Director, Director Ross is also the President of the Maryland Correctional Administrators Association, Chairman of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Corrections Chiefs Committee and Vice Chairman of the Maryland Correctional Training Commission.

*Sgt. Gilroy honors those who have fallen in the line of duty during the Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony in Washington, DC.*



Correctional Employee Week and Police Week are observed during the month of May. Our Agency, with Director Ross as emcee, members of the Corrections Division, and the Agency Honor Guard, proudly participate in the National Law Enforcement Officers Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony in Washington DC which serves to honor those officers who fallen in the line of duty.

The CCDC is a secure facility that opened in 1995 and stretches 140,000 square feet with 219 cells. In 2024, The Corrections Division processed 5187 arrests through intake and booked 1560 individuals into the facility. The CCDC maintained an average daily population of 218 offenders.



The **Custody and Security Section**, commanded by Captain Tony Oliver, is responsible for the internal and external security of the facilities. This section is comprised of four security teams which are the main operational element of the Corrections Division.

Four Lieutenants, who serve as Shift Commanders, manage the daily security operations of the detention center. The four Shift Commanders are Lieutenant Richard Hulvey, Lieutenant Matthew Becker, Lieutenant Michael Smith, and Lieutenant Matthew Kline.

The **Special Services Section**, commanded by Captain Matthew Dixon, is responsible for standards and accreditation, training, security maintenance, inmate commissary, and supplies.

The Standards and Accreditation Commander is Lieutenant Matthew Irby. He conducts audits and inspections to ensure the CCDC operates according to the hundreds of standards set by the Maryland Commission on Correctional Standards (MCCS). In 2001, the CCDC became the first detention facility in Maryland to score 100 percent on an MCCS audit and achieved 100 percent scores after audits in 2004, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2016, 2019, and 2022.

In 2023 the CCDC earned accreditation from the National Commission on Correctional Health Care by demonstrating compliance with NCCHC's nationally recognized standards of care for correctional health services in jails. Accreditation recognizes the Charles County Detention Center's commitment to providing quality health services for the incarcerated population.

Lieutenant Ryan Taylor serves as the Corrections Division's Training Commander. He ensures all correctional officers fulfill training obligations mandated by the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commissions (MPCTC). This position is also responsible for finding additional training opportunities and handling arrangements for Correctional employees to attend.

Lieutenant Kevin Conley serves as the Corrections Division's Facilities Management Commander. He ensures the facilities are well-maintained and properly supplied. He also works closely with contractors who maintain various systems and equipment within the detention center.

The **Support Services Section**, commanded by Captain Brian Gardiner, is responsible for central processing and programs and services. This section also oversees the inmate library and the law library.

Lieutenant Jonathan Palmer serves as the Central Processing Commander. He ensures the completeness, accuracy, and security of records and maintains communication with court systems, police agencies, and other correctional facilities. The unit is comprised of Records, Intake, Finance, Transportation, and Court Holding.

Lieutenant James Kelly serves as the Jail Services Commander. He strives to reduce recidivism by offering programs that help individuals re-enter society as productive citizens. The detention center became the sixth branch of the Charles County Public Library in 2023, offering library cards and literary programs to those incarcerated. A GED Program, grant-funded certification programs through the College of Southern Maryland, and the annual Re-Entry Fair are highlights from the year.

Lieutenant Stacy Kelly serves as an Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) investigator to ensure the integrity of Corrections Division personnel.