



2021 Annual Report

Office of the Monmouth County Prosecutor



Mission Statement

The mission of the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office is to create and preserve an environment of safety and security for the citizens of the County. To accomplish this, task-oriented goals were adopted to provide a framework to conduct office business. The office's primary goals include:

- To protect the life and property of citizens by successfully investigating and prosecuting criminal offenses that occur in Monmouth County;
- To promote and foster education of the public about the criminal justice system, crime prevention, and victims' rights;
- To identify law enforcement and prosecutorial needs in a changing environment, as well as promulgate initiatives to meet those changing needs;
- To promote and foster cooperation with other law enforcement, public service, and prosecutorial entities with jurisdiction in Monmouth County; and
- To fulfill a public-sector leadership role in the community by forming cooperative partnerships with other agencies, public officials, community leaders, and business leaders in an effort to improve quality of life for the people of Monmouth County.

Each division, section, bureau, or unit of the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office incorporates, in whole or in part, one or more of these goals in its individual mission. The integration of these missions and goals enables the business of the Prosecutor's Office to be conducted successfully.

History of the Prosecutor's Office

The historical roots of the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office are tied to the history of the County as a unit of government. Monmouth County was one of the original four counties comprising the colony of New Jersey in 1682. The first courts were established in 1683. The position of "Chief Magistrate of the Court," equivalent to the modern-day County Prosecutor, was first held by Lewis Morris of Shrewsbury, an appointee of the English monarchy; those who fulfilled this role controlled the court and prosecutorial roles in Monmouth County until after the Revolutionary War. The first Grand Jury in Monmouth County convened in 1687; the first recorded indictment accused 16 people of horse racing and playing nine-pin bowling on a Sunday. They were found guilty, and each was fined five shillings.

It was not until 1822 that the 47th General Assembly of the State of New Jersey passed "An Act Respecting Deputies to the Attorney General," which established the "Prosecutor of the Pleas" position. Each County had a Prosecutor of Pleas appointed once every five years by the Court of Quarter Session. In 1823, Monmouth County's fourth lawyer, Corlies Lloyd, became the first Prosecutor. At that time, Monmouth County also included all of present-day Ocean County. During the administration of Peter Vrendenburgh, the third Monmouth County Prosecutor, the Governor of the State of New Jersey, rather than the Court of Quarter Sessions, was designated to appoint the Prosecutor of Pleas. The title and role of the Prosecutor of Pleas remained consistent until 1948, wherein a statutory change (*N.J.S.A. 2A:158-2*) dictated: "In any statute in which the designation Prosecutor of the Pleas is used, it shall be continued to mean the County Prosecutor."

During the 19th century, the Prosecutor of Pleas dealt with all prosecutions, ranging in severity from the theft of corn and illegal liquor sales to murder and robbery. By the middle of the 20th century, prosecutorial emphasis was increasingly placed upon the morality

crimes of gambling and prostitution. Legislative changes to the law during the mid-20th century reclassified many criminal offenses, generally designating more serious crimes for the attention of the County Prosecutor and lesser crimes to the municipal courts.



Introduction

The Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office (MCPO) is made up of three main divisions: Legal, Investigative, and Support Staff. The office is structurally organized under each division; however, given the volume of cases, it is necessary to work within multiple areas of the office to investigate and prosecute criminal offenders.

The Investigative Division incorporates three main sections, under which all bureaus, units, squads, and teams fall: Criminal Investigation, Narcotics and Criminal Enterprise Investigation, and Special Investigation. The Legal Division is responsible for prosecuting offenders, and the Support Staff assists the administration, investigators, and assistant prosecutors with the day-to-day operations of the office.

With a staff of approximately 275 employees, including 55 Assistant Prosecutors and more than 80 Detectives, the office prosecutes thousands of juvenile and adult cases every year, and implements law-enforcement initiatives to enhance the safety of the citizenry. As the Chief Law Enforcement Officer in Monmouth County, the Prosecutor also oversees 46 municipal police departments and two college police departments.

Legal Division

Appellate Unit

The Appellate Unit consists of four Assistant Prosecutors, three Law Clerks, one part-time attorney that is “of counsel,” and three clerical support staff members. The Law Clerks are law-school graduates who, at the time of their hire, may or may not have passed the bar examination; some have prior employment experience as judicial clerks, interns, or with private law firms. The Law Clerks are responsible for writing briefs, although any document filed with a court through the Appellate Unit is first reviewed and ultimately signed by an Assistant Prosecutor. The Law Clerks also appear in the Law Division to represent the State on municipal appeals and non-testimonial motion hearings. A Law Clerk’s tenure is one year, typically from September through the following August.

In addition to supervising the Law Clerks and writing the more difficult appellate and motion briefs, the Assistant Prosecutors in the Appellate Unit appear for oral argument in New Jersey Supreme Court and in the Law and Appellate divisions of Superior Court. Appellate Assistant Prosecutors also are admitted to practice in the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey, the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, and often, the United States Supreme Court.

Our part-time “of counsel” attorney is a former Deputy Attorney General who worked in the Appellate Bureau at the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General. She has significant appellate experience and is assigned appeals and post-conviction relief motions involving voluminous records. She works at an hourly rate, and her hours are flexible and set to accommodate her and the needs of the Unit.

With regard to state appellate litigation, the Appellate Unit represents the State on a) appeals from convictions obtained in Monmouth County courts, including indictable convictions and juvenile adjudications that are challenged in the Appellate Division and Supreme Court; b) on appeals of convictions of disorderly persons offenses and motor vehicle violations, which are appealed from the municipal courts to the Law Division and then to the higher appellate courts; c) on State’s appeals from interlocutory trial court orders, e.g., orders suppressing evidence, granting a defendant a new trial, or permitting a defendant to withdraw his or her guilty plea; and d) on criminal defendants’ appeals from orders granting pretrial detention and State’s appeals from orders denying pretrial detention.

The appellate attorneys prepare the appellate pleadings, research the factual and legal issues presented in a case, write the briefs arguing the State's position, and appear on behalf of the State at oral argument.

In 2021, the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office received a total of 62 Notices of Appeal and had 66 Notices of Appeal referred to it from the Office of the Attorney General. The Appellate Unit filed 53 Appellate Division briefs, 32 letters in opposition to petitions for certification, and two answers to *habeas corpus* applications. The Unit filed five motions for leave to appeal interlocutory orders in the Appellate Division. In New Jersey Supreme Court, the Unit filed one motion for leave to appeal.

Additionally, the Appellate Unit filed opposition to 27 pretrial detention appeals. The Assistant Prosecutors in the Unit appeared for oral argument in the Appellate Division or Supreme Court for 31 cases in 2021.

A total of 27 municipal appeals were opened in 2021, and 17 were briefed in the Law Division. The Unit also filed three briefs relative to municipal motions, either seeking leave to appeal to the Law Division or in opposition to consolidation of municipal complaints or dismissal of a complaint on *de minimis* grounds.

In 2021, the Appellate Unit filed 78 post-judgment and prejudgment motion briefs in the Law Division. In addition, the Office was served with 18 petitions for post-conviction relief; 21 briefs in opposition were filed on behalf of the State. Thirty-five petitions for post-conviction relief were decided in 2021. All were denied except one, to which the State consented.

In 2021, the Unit also handled 46 name-change applications.

In addition to the responsibilities discussed above, the attorneys in the Appellate Unit assist the Assistant Prosecutors in the Trial and Investigative divisions with legal research and the more difficult, complex, or novel issues raised by motion or during the course of trials. Particularly, when an Assistant Prosecutor is trying a murder case or other matter with serious or complicated charges, an attorney from the Appellate Unit will assist with reviewing proposed jury instructions, researching and analyzing contested evidence issues, providing legal advice, and, where appropriate, filing an emergent appeal with the Appellate Division.

Criminal Justice Bail Reform Unit

With 2017 criminal justice legislation, the prior resource-based bail system was replaced by a risk-based system. Unless a person is charged with a petty disorderly persons offense, the old system of calling a judge to “set bail” is no longer in place. Starting in 2017, if a warrant-complaint (versus a summons-complaint) is signed against an individual, within 24-48 hours, that person must be brought before a municipal court judge for a “first appearance” at the county jail. At the first appearance, the defendant, represented by counsel, will be presented with a copy of the complaint, advised by the Judge of certain rights, and provided with his or her Public Safety Assessment (PSA) scores. After hearing input from the State and defense, the judge will set conditions for release, such as reporting requirements, no victim contact, or home detention. An intake Assistant Prosecutor represents the State at these proceedings.

Not all defendants are released at the first appearance. If the State files a motion for pretrial detention, asking the court to hold a defendant without bail pending trial, the defendant remains in custody until the detention hearing. The State can request pretrial detention for indictable crimes and for any disorderly persons offense that is considered to be an act of domestic violence. Detention hearings are heard in front of a Superior Court judge, generally within three business days of the first appearance. An intake Assistant Prosecutor will represent the State at the detention hearings as well, regardless of whether the charge is indictable or a disorderly persons domestic. After the hearing, the disorderly persons cases are returned to their respective municipal courts for prosecution. The indictable matters continue on in Superior Court.

In 2021, the Monmouth County Prosecutor’s Office filed slightly more than 840 detention motions, requesting that the defendant be held pretrial. Of these contested hearings, the Court granted about 33 percent of the motions, meaning the defendants were ordered to be detained without bail until their trial. The Court denied approximately 37 percent of the detention motions and released those defendants on conditions, over the State’s objection. The balance of the hearings were either motions to reconsider or revoke release, or matters that were resolved through a variety of other means, including the defendant consenting to detention, the parties entering into a plea agreement, or the State withdrawing the motion after further consideration of relevant factors.

The Intake Screening Unit also reviews all indictable adult cases, whether signed on a summons or warrant, from the 53 municipalities in Monmouth County.

Police reports, criminal case histories, and any other relevant documentation are assembled in a case file and sent to the Unit Director for screening.

After each case is reviewed, a decision is made by the Director to forward the matter for presentation to the Grand Jury, list the case for the Pre-Indictment Program (PIP), remand the charges as lesser offenses to municipal court, or administratively dismiss the charges outright. Relevant screening factors include the following: the facts of the case, the strength of the evidence, the possibility of evidence being suppressed by a court, the defendant's prior criminal history, the wishes of the victim, the rehabilitative needs of the defendant, and the impact of the crime on society in general. Some cases originally referred to a Grand Jury are re-screened when further information becomes available. The Intake Unit received and screened approximately 4,132 cases last year, including 158 disorderly persons domestic violence cases opened solely for detention purposes. As a result of the screening process, approximately 55 percent of the cases were remanded to municipal court, and 1 percent were administratively dismissed. The rest of the cases were prosecuted in Superior Court.

The Intake Unit also incorporates other programs that represent an alternative to traditional prosecution, namely the EDC and Drug Court.

The Early Disposition Court (EDC) provides an opportunity for early resolution of simple cases. It is typically scheduled on a weekly basis, with approximately 30-35 cases listed. EDC provides an opportunity for a defendant, as represented by a defense attorney, to confer with the EDC Assistant Prosecutor regarding pending criminal cases. Generally, EDC is appropriate for cases that are straightforward in nature, with presumed non-custodial sentences, involving defendants who are not subject already to supervision or who have matters pending in the Trial Division.

Monmouth County Drug Court is part of a statewide program to combat drug addiction by focusing on rehabilitation, rather than incarceration. Defendants apply to the program to regain their health and become productive members of society. Not all substance abusers qualify for admission; those accepted into Drug Court must fall within parameters that balance the amenability toward rehabilitation against the need to protect the safety of the community.

The purpose of Drug Court is to provide a treatment-based alternative to offenders who suffer from a moderate to severe substance use disorders. One of the roles of the Drug Court Assistant Prosecutor is to review each application for Drug Court.

To determine if a defendant is an appropriate candidate for Drug Court, an Assistant Prosecutor reviews the current criminal charges, the facts leading up to the pending charges, and past criminal history, including Superior Court criminal records, Family Court records, municipal court records, and juvenile and domestic violence records. The Assistant Prosecutor assigned to Drug Court determines whether each defendant is legally eligible for Drug Court, and if so, whether the Prosecutor's Office should object to that defendant's application. In deciding whether to object to an application, the Prosecutor's Office considers factors such as the extent to which a crime was motivated by a compulsion to satisfy an addiction, and the extent to which a defendant may constitute a danger to the community.

There are two tracks in Drug Court. Track B is the low-risk/high-need track. Track A is the high-risk/high-need track. The major differences between the tracks include the number of phases, the amount of time in the last phase, and the addition of a pro-social habilitation phase for Track A participants. Track B applicants report more frequently to court and probation.

There are no longer just four phases for all participants. While there are four phases for Track B participants, Track A has five phases. Additionally, a Track B participant is eligible for graduation when they have had a minimum of two years in Drug Court, one year of sobriety, and a minimum of 120 days in Phase 4. A Track A participant is eligible for graduation when they have a minimum of two years in Drug Court, one year of sobriety, and a minimum of 90 days in Phase 5.

For a Track B participant, the four phases include the following: Phase 1 (Acute Stabilization), Phase 2 (Clinical Stabilization), Phase 3 (Adaptive Habilitation), and Phase 4 (Continued Care). A Track B participant needs to be in Phase 1 for a minimum of 60 days, there is no sobriety requirement, reporting is every three months to court and weekly to probation, and such participants undergo twice-a-week drug screening and monthly home visits. For Phase 2, Track B participants need a minimum of 90 days in this phase, a minimum of 14 days sober, to report every three months to court and biweekly to probation, and twice-a-week drug screenings and monthly home visits. A Track B participant needs to be in Phase 3 for a minimum of 120 days, have a minimum of 30 days sober, report to court every three months, report biweekly to probation, undergo drug screenings twice a week, and have bimonthly home visits. A Track B participant is in the final phase for a minimum of a 120 days, with a minimum of 60 days sober, reporting to court every three months, reporting to probation monthly, and undergoing drug screening twice a week, with bimonthly home visits.

For a Track A participant, there is also a duration of 60 days in Phase 1 and no requirement for sobriety; however, there is weekly court and probation reporting, along with biweekly drug screening and monthly home visits. Track A participants are in Phase 2 for a minimum of 90 days, with a minimum of 14 days sober, reporting to court biweekly and probation weekly, undergoing twice-a-week drug screening, with monthly home visits. For Phase 3, there is a minimum of 90 days, with 30 days of sobriety. There is a requirement of monthly court reporting, biweekly probation reporting, twice-a-week drug screening, and bimonthly home visits. In Phase 4, there is also a minimum of 90 days, a minimum of 60 days sober, along with monthly court reporting, biweekly probation reporting, twice-a-week drug screening, and bimonthly home visits. This is the same for Phase 5, except the probation reporting is monthly instead of biweekly.

The Drug Court graduation criteria includes: a) a continuous minimum one-year period when the participant is clean and sober; b) a full-time job, full-time schooling, or a combination of the two; c) residence in a stable, sober environment; d) unification with family, if that is conducive to the participant's sobriety; e) payment of all municipal fines, 80 percent of Superior Court fines, all arrearages in child support, and an acceptable percentage of restitution, if applicable; and f) a full-time sponsor/home group and a sober network, if available.

As of December 2021, there were 271 active Drug Court participants, 2,018 applications, and 2,142 accepted applicants. The retention rate for 2021 was 56.6 percent, compared to 51 percent since the inception of Monmouth County's Program.

Trial Division

The Trial Division of the Prosecutor's Office handles most of the County's adult criminal prosecutions and is primarily responsible for additional case screening, Grand Jury preparation and presentation, and the trial or disposition of those indictments in one vertical process. The Director of the Trial Division supervises the Division and works closely with the directors of the Criminal Justice Bail Reform/Intake and Appellate units in matters relating to the Trial Division. The Trial Division is composed of three Trial Teams. Each Trial Team consists of six Assistant Prosecutors, two investigative paralegals, a Grand Jury clerical, two trial clericals, and a discovery clerical.

A Trial Team Leader directly supervises each Trial Team. Trial Teams handle caseloads assigned to two Superior Court judges.

Assistant Prosecutors are responsible for reviewing cases before presentation to the Grand Jury, trial preparation, and resolution of the file, whether through a guilty plea or trial. Assistant Prosecutors handle sentencings, violations of probation, motions, and any other court appearances.

The Trial Division receives most files from the Criminal Justice Bail Reform/Intake Unit and from municipalities that forward criminal complaints to the Division for review. Other cases are referred to the Trial Division by other units within the Prosecutor's Office and by the New Jersey State Police. Occasionally, cases are direct presentment matters requested by local police departments. These cases require approval from the Director of the Trial Division before being opened for presentation.

Investigative paralegals work under supervision of the assigned Assistant Prosecutors and are primarily responsible for preparation of Grand Jury presentations, compiling all reports, documents, test results, and other necessary items for the presentation of cases to the Grand Jury.

Investigative paralegals work with the assigned Assistant Prosecutors and are primarily responsible for the preparation of the files for prosecution by gathering all of the discovery, including but not limited to police reports, statements, laboratory reports, photographs, surveillance, and media. Investigative paralegals also assist during some trials by preparing exhibits, photo books and running the courtroom technology.

In 2021, a total of 5,439 defendants were referred to the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office. A total of 2,269 defendants had their charges administratively addressed either through remand, dismissal, change of venue, or other considerations prior to presentation to a Grand Jury. A total of 1,260 defendants were indicted through the Grand Jury process. A total of 150 defendants had their cases remanded or dismissed through the Grand Jury process. A total of 695 defendants waived the right to have their cases presented to a Grand Jury and proceeded by way of accusation. In 2021, 109 defendants were admitted into the Pre-Trial Intervention Program.

In 2021, a total of 883 cases resolved with a plea of guilty, and 14 defendants were tried to completion. Ten were found guilty after a trial by jury. Three were found not guilty after a trial by jury. One was found not guilty after a bench trial.

Family Unit

The Family Unit of the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office handles all prosecutions of juveniles in the county, as well as the prosecution of all cases involving the disorderly persons offense of contempt for violations of domestic violence restraining orders, as well as weapons forfeitures related to domestic violence restraining orders.

In 2021, the Family Unit's juvenile section docketed 328 cases with the Family Court. The Family Unit also opened files on approximately 239 different juveniles. Of the cases docketed, approximately 165 cases were initially diverted and 288 cases were eventually adjudicated delinquent. 161 juveniles received diversions in 2021 and 202 juveniles went through the formal adjudication process. In addition to diversions and formal adjudications, 184 Station House Adjustments were also conducted by local law enforcement agencies throughout the County.

In January of 2021, the juvenile section of the Family Unit implemented Attorney General's Directive No. 2020-12, which was formally issued on December 3, 2020. This directive established policies, practices and procedures to promote juvenile justice reform. This directive added greater emphasis on alternatives, such as diversions, to formal prosecution, while continuing to promote public safety. The issuance of the directive also coincided with the expansion by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) of the statewide complaint systems, eCDR, to include "juvenile eCDR." Beginning in January of 2021 all juvenile complaints were required to be issued using the juvenile eCDR system to be consistent with the Attorney General Directive.

In 2021, approximately 309 Contempt cases involving violations of temporary and final domestic violence restraining orders were opened and prosecuted in the Monmouth County Superior Court – Family Part. Each of those prosecutions was handled by Assistant Prosecutors in the Family Unit. Additionally, the unit also opened 90 cases involving the forfeiture of weapons and permits seized pursuant to the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act.

Forfeiture Unit

The Forfeiture Unit of the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office is responsible for conducting the legal review of property seized by law enforcement pursuant to state law. Pursuant to the applicable statute, this includes property that allegedly has been or is intended to be used in furtherance of unlawful activity, property that has become or is intended to become an integral part of illegal activity, and property that is the proceeds of illegal activities.

Forfeiture is a civil proceeding. The Forfeiture Unit is also responsible for tracking and distributing seized and forfeited property, as well as monitoring the law enforcement trust accounts maintained by local law enforcement agencies.

The Forfeiture Unit consists of one Assistant Prosecutor, one investigative paralegal, two prosecutor's agents, and two clerical support staff members.

Proposed cases are referred to the Forfeiture Unit from various sources, including other subdivisions of MCPO, municipal police departments in Monmouth County, and the New Jersey State Police. The cases are screened to ensure that the legal elements necessary to support a forfeiture action are present. If the criteria are satisfied, a verified complaint is prepared. Once a verified complaint has been filed and served, all subsequent dispositions of the property are subject to judicial review.

When all or a portion of the property is forfeited, the forfeited property is distributed to law enforcement agencies, or, in the case of motor vehicles, sold at public auction or retained for official use by a law-enforcement agency. The funds derived through forfeiture actions are used solely for non-budgeted expenses in furtherance of law-enforcement goals and in accordance with the guidelines promulgated by the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General.

In 2021, a total of \$536,724 was seized and a total of \$147,284 was forfeited. This total includes vehicle cash settlements in the amount of \$6,375. In 2021, a total of \$272,332 was distributed to local law enforcement agencies and \$111,726 was distributed to the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office.

In 2021, the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office also forfeited cryptocurrency related to a narcotics distribution operation. That cryptocurrency was valued at approximately \$198,000.

Investigation Division

The Investigative Division performs investigative and support functions critical to the enforcement aspect of the prosecutor's office responsibilities, while striving for fair and impartial application of justice.

Detectives are sworn law enforcement officers who serve the public and are ambassadors of the Prosecutor, fostering principles of cooperation in their daily contacts with other law enforcement agencies, government entities, the business community, and general public.

The Investigation Division is divided into three main sections and their bureaus/units:

A. Criminal Investigation Section

1. Major Crimes Bureau
 - Homicide Unit
 - Property Crimes Unit
 - Cold Case Unit
 - Fatal Motor Vehicle Accident Investigation Unit
 - Arson Unit
 - Environmental Crimes Unit
 - Asbury Park Satellite Office Unit
2. Forensic and Technical Services Bureau
 - Crime Scene Unit
 - Forensic Evidence Presentation Squad
3. Special Victims Bureau
 - Sex Crimes/Child Abuse Unit
 - Megan's Law Unit

B. Narcotics and Criminal Enterprise Investigation Section

- Criminal Enterprise Bureau
- Gang and Criminal Enterprise Unit
- Electronic Surveillance Squad
- Intelligence Unit
- Monmouth County Emergency Response Team (MOCERT)

4. Narcotics Bureau
 - Narcotics Strike Force
 - Drug Enforcement Agency
 - Bayshore Unit

C. Special Investigation Section

5. Financial Crimes & Public Corruption Bureau
 - Financial Crimes/Special Prosecutions Unit
6. Computer Crimes Bureau
 - Computer Crimes Unit
 - ICAC Task Force
7. Professional Responsibility & Bias Crime Bureau
 - Trial Support/Fugitives/Juvenile Crime/Administrative Services Unit
 - Professional Responsibility & Bias Crime Unit
 - Family & Domestic Violence Unit
 - Intelligence Unit
 - Staff Services Unit
 - Forfeiture Compliance Support

Major Crimes Bureau

Detectives assigned to the Major Crimes Bureau are responsible for conducting criminal investigations of serious crimes throughout Monmouth County; they lead investigations, but work cooperatively with our local partners on most cases, as well as a number of county, state, and federal agencies.

The Bureau divides these investigations into four primary units: the Homicide Unit, Property Crimes Unit, Cold Cast Homicide Unit, and Fatal Motor Vehicle Accident Unit. The Bureau is also tasked with investigating most high-profile incidents occurring in the county that may not necessarily fit into one of the designated units.

Investigations conducted by the Major Crimes Bureau are handled by 12 sworn Detectives and two civilian agents. The Bureau is comprised of one Lieutenant in the MCPO main office in Freehold and further supervised by three Sergeants working out of two locations, two in Freehold and one at the Asbury Park Satellite Office.

The unit responsibilities are as follows.

Homicide Unit

The Homicide Unit's primary responsibility is death investigations. While murder investigations are of paramount importance, the Unit also investigates some attempted murders.

Additional investigations handled by the Unit include, but are not limited to, shootings, stabbings, suicides, fatal drug overdoses, drownings, juvenile deaths, missing persons, and police-involved shootings.

In 2021, the Homicide Unit opened 144 cases. Of these, 77 stemmed from the Major Crimes Bureau in Freehold (this does not include fatal accident cases), and 67 arose from investigations conducted by detectives assigned to the Major Crimes Bureau's Asbury Park Satellite Office.

Detectives also investigated six fatal overdose cases in 2021, and assisted local detectives in a less formal way with numerous others. They also investigated 56 shooting cases, 20 death investigations, four infant death cases, and numerous other types of cases, including six suicides and six fire investigations.

In 2021, the Unit was involved in four homicide investigations, including fatal shootings in Asbury Park, Freehold Borough, and Middletown, as well as a fatal physical assault in Manalapan. All four cases were cleared via arrest.

Property Crimes Unit

The Property Crimes Unit is primarily responsible for investigating armed robberies. However, the Unit's responsibilities also include investigations into the following: bank robberies, home invasions, serial burglaries, and high-value thefts. The Unit is sometimes assisted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) during these cases.

Asbury Park Satellite Office Unit

The Asbury Park Satellite Office enables the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office to enhance and improve the screening process for cases originating in Asbury Park and surrounding municipalities.

With the inception of the Speedy Trial Act, the formal screening process for Asbury Park cases now occurs in the Main Office, but the Detectives and the Assistant Prosecutor assigned to the Asbury Park Satellite Office still play a vital role in the screening process, monitoring investigations, and ensuring that Assistant Prosecutors in the Main Office have all necessary resources to prosecute these cases.

In 2021, the Detectives with the Asbury Park Satellite Office provided formal assistance to the Asbury Park Police Department, Neptune Township Police Department, and a variety of other area police departments in 67 investigations, while also providing less formal support in countless other cases. The Detectives also provided routine assistance to the Asbury Park Police Department whenever possible and/or believed to be necessary.

In this regard, the Detectives constantly monitor local frequencies on their police radios in order to be aware of any high-risk calls that require backup assistance, and respond when needed.

In December 2007, a community outreach program was initiated out of the Asbury Park Satellite Office. The program is now very active in the community and has several faith-based, educational, law enforcement, and social service partners with which it engages. The Asbury Park Community Development Initiative (CDI) was formed by the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office Community Outreach Program in February 2011.

The CDI is one of seven municipal planning boards in New Jersey. The Municipal Planning Board Program was started by the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General as a way to implement a crime prevention strategies in New Jersey's highest-crime areas. The Attorney General provides each of these planning boards with a facilitator who helps with the logistics involved in maintaining an active coalition such as the CDI. The coalition meets every 6-8 weeks and is open to any organization that shares the same commitment to the community as it does.

In 2017, MCPO announced the formation of its Community Law Enforcement Unit (CLEU), which maintains the goal of strengthening trust and communication between law enforcement and the communities in which they serve. To this end, the CLEU and the CDI bring about a structured and proactive approach to community outreach, giving law enforcement a viable leadership role within the community.

Cold Case Unit

The Cold Case Unit's primary responsibility is to focus on and investigate unsolved homicides after all initial investigatory leads have been explored and all items of physical evidence and probative value have been evaluated, as to their present condition and availability. This Unit has one Detective who works cooperatively with local and state agencies during such investigations.

Fatal Motor Vehicle Accident Investigation Unit

This Unit works in tandem with the Monmouth County Serious Collision Analysis Response Team (SCART), a multi-jurisdictional entity that investigates serious and/or fatal motor vehicle and pedestrian strikes occurring countywide.

In 2021 there were 50 such investigations initiated. There were 32 fatal motor vehicle collisions countywide in 2021, resulting in 34 fatalities, as well as 13 motor vehicle collisions that resulted in serious bodily injury.

There were also 10 fatal pedestrian-involved collisions investigated, as well as five incidents that left two bicyclists dead and three others injured.

Crime Scene Unit

The Crime Scene Unit is currently comprised of four Detectives, one Sergeant, one Lieutenant, and one clerical. The primary function of this Unit's sworn law-enforcement personnel is to respond to all major crime scenes, including but not limited to homicides, suspicious deaths, child deaths, custodial deaths, drownings, armed home invasions, shootings, bank robberies, fatal fires, arsons, fires with catastrophic loss, kidnappings, recovered human remains, clandestine graves, and missing persons.

The Unit's responsibilities also include executing search warrants on a variety of criminal activity. Members are required to commit to an on-call schedule and to be available for larger all-hands incidents, such as homicides, even when they are not on call.

Crime Scene Unit personnel are responsible for documenting these crime scenes through various methods, depending on the needs of each case. Documentation can include photography, videography, sketching, and the utilization of a drone and/or 3D scanner. Documentation is done in a methodical and precise manner, to include overall, mid-range, close-up, and macro views, utilizing placards and scales as necessary. Scenes may include the primary scene, secondary scenes, scenes of search warrant execution, and autopsies.

Scenes are processed for evidence such as fingerprints, DNA, gunshot residue (GSR), weapons, narcotics, electronic devices, and any other items that tend to show the violation of penal laws of the State of New Jersey. Where applicable, scenes are analyzed for ballistic trajectory (laser, flight path rods, and/or strings), bloodstain patterns, latent biological stains, tool marks, footwear impressions (casting or electrostatic dust print lifter), and/or latent fingerprint evidence (powders or Mikrosil). Crime Scene Unit personnel are responsible for the short-term preservation of evidence and the packaging and submission for long-term storage.

The Crime Scene Unit personnel also conduct further evidence processing under controlled laboratory conditions and coordinate the submission of evidence to both governmental and private laboratories, such as those of the New Jersey State Police, Secret Service, Bode, and RJ Lee Group. Personnel are also called upon to forensically process evidence for local departments that do not have the capability. This includes but is not limited to Ninhydrin, DFO, iodine, cyanoacrylate, and presumptive tests. Crime Scene Unit personnel are also called upon regularly to conduct employee drug screens and to photograph and video-record document trainings, swearing-in ceremonies, retirement ceremonies, and other office events, as requested by the Administration.

The Crime Scene Unit also conducts both a five-day Basic Crime Scene Investigation course and a two-day Introduction to Fingerprinting and Processing in-service instruction, along with extensive multi-jurisdictional classroom instruction, including but not limited to the Monmouth County Police Academy Basic Course of Police Officers (BCPO), Class II Special Law Enforcement Officers (SLEO), Accelerated Waiver (AW), Basic Course for County Corrections Officers, Division of Criminal Justice Basic Course for Investigators, and Basic Course for Arson Investigators, as well as numerous teaching assignments at local schools, the Naval Weapons Station Earle, and junior police academies. When warranted, the Crime Scene Unit conducts the aforementioned trainings virtually.

Members of the Crime Scene Unit also participate in gun buyback programs and assist the Evidence Vault with regular destructions of narcotics and weapons. Additionally, the Unit oversees the release or destruction of vehicles involved in homicides and various crimes. Junk titles are obtained from the Department of Motor Vehicles for vehicles to be destroyed.

In addition to these duties, the Crime Scene Unit is the liaison for the Middlesex Regional Medical Examiner's Office and conducts cooperative investigations into post-mortem examinations and human remains identification. Members of the Crime Scene Unit must also attend continuous training to maintain their level of competency. This includes but is not limited to training for the Faro 3D scanner, drone utilization, and all facets of crime scene investigation.

Technical Presentation Squad

The Technical Presentation Squad is comprised of two civilian agents working in concert with Assistant Prosecutors and other investigative divisions within the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office and local law enforcement. Their primary function is to enhance investigative efforts through digital technology and maximize prosecutorial efforts during case preparation and courtroom presentation.

The Presentation Squad is responsible for the photography of employees for ID cards and retirements. They also design, print, and mount court presentations, maps, engineer diagrams, fingerprint diagrams, and lab charts. They are involved in most large-scale disc duplications and can redact or enhance surveillance, interview, and body-worn camera video footage.

Special Victims Bureau

The Special Victims Bureau (SVB) prosecutes all sexually based offenses within Monmouth County and provides investigative support to state, county, and local law enforcement. Additionally, the SVB acts as the anchor of the Monmouth County Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) for all child abuse matters and operates the Monmouth County Child Advocacy Center (MCCAC). The MDT provides cooperation and communication among those who respond to child abuse cases, for a coordinated investigative response. This coordinated response is centered at the MCCAC, where trained MCPO detectives conduct specialized forensic child interviews and coordinate the investigations with caseworkers from the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency and local police. Finally, the SVB Megan's Law Unit is the lead in the county for implementing and enforcing the Registration and Community Notification Laws, commonly known as "Megan's Law."

Sex Crimes and Child Abuse Unit

The Sex Crimes and Child Abuse Unit (SCCA) investigates and prosecutes sexual and physical assaults against children and sexual assaults of adults. Its mission is to provide services and assist in criminal investigations with the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P), as well as state and local authorities.

Once a case is received by the Special Victims Bureau, prior to grand jury presentation, it is assigned to one of the Unit's four Assistant Prosecutors or Director to allow them the opportunity to meet with the victim or victims of the crime. That Assistant Prosecutor remains assigned to the case throughout its prosecution – from arraignment to pretrial conference, trial,

disposition, and sentencing. This method of vertical prosecution is ideally suited to the particularly sensitive nature of the offenses handled by the Unit. Much of the Assistant Prosecutors' time involves communications with the victim or victims of the crime.

Victims of child abuse and sexual abuse often have more emotional needs and require more consultation than the average crime victim. With the assistance of the Victim-Witness Advocate specifically assigned to the Special Victims Bureau, Assistant Prosecutors discuss all aspects of the process with the victims and their families, including the defendant's actual jail exposure and the victim's right to provide a "victim impact statement" at the defendant's sentencing.

Additionally, vertical prosecution provides Assistant Prosecutors with the ability to consult with police officers during the investigation. As such, the Assistant Prosecutors assigned to the Unit are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to provide legal advice and investigative guidance to local police, county detectives, and others involved in the investigation of a case. Involvement at the preliminary stages of an investigation enhances the overall quality of the prosecution and avoids duplication of law-enforcement efforts. The Assistant Prosecutors work closely with the Detectives assigned to the Unit. The Director of the Special Victims Bureau also works closely with the Lieutenant, Sergeant, and six Detectives assigned to the Unit and jointly supervise the investigative work conducted by the Detectives.

In 2021, the Detectives in the Unit screened 382 referrals, which resulted in 172 active investigative activities, either initiated within this Office or handled as cooperative investigations with local police departments and DCP&P. Assistant Prosecutors filed for pre-trial detention in 65 SCCA cases. The Unit presented 153 cases to a Monmouth County Grand Jury, resulting in 127 indictments, while 23 cases were no-billed and three cases were remanded to municipal court. There were also four trials conducted in 2021.

Assistant Prosecutors assigned to the Unit also provide training and community outreach to schools, community groups, medical professionals, child protective workers, and law-enforcement agencies. This activity constitutes an important part of the community relations of the Prosecutor's Office and fosters productive working relationships.

Megan's Law Unit

The Megan's Law Unit is the lead entity in the county for implementing and enforcing the Registration and Community Notification Laws, commonly known as "Megan's Law." The mission of the Unit is to fulfill the statutory responsibilities delegated to prosecutor's offices.

The Unit is comprised of members of MCPO staff from the legal, clerical, and detective divisions. Detectives assigned to the Unit have five primary duties: tier classification of the offender, service of tier classification documents, providing community notification, address verification of offenders scheduled for release from incarceration, and enforcement of the criminal statutes for statutory violations and for violations of Community/Parole Supervision for Life.

In 2021, there were 723 sex offenders registered in Monmouth County. The Unit handles all violations of Community Supervision for Life (CSL) and Parole Supervision of Life (PSL) and determines which offenders qualify for Internet registry. The Unit also attempts to verify information provided by correctional institutions throughout the state and country regarding the release of sex offenders back into the county.

When a new sex offender registers within the county or leaves prison and provides information of their intent to reside in the county, a classification file is opened. The Unit obtains and reviews criminal case files, Avenel reports, and probation and parole documents in preparation for classification of the registrant using the Registrant Risk Assessment Scale. The registrant is then classified into an appropriate tier – I, II or III – depending on risk of reoffending. The Unit also prepares and serves the registrants with tier classification documents.

Civil hearings are usually required to determine the appropriate tier classification for individual registrants with a proposed tier of II or III. Task Force members gather the maps and supporting documents to be offered as evidence. Task Force Detectives also testify as witnesses. The Assistant Prosecutor handles all aspects of these court proceedings, writes all legal memorandums and briefs, and is responsible for responding to all legal writings and/or arguments concerning Megan's Law classification.

Once a registrant is classified and the Court orders notification to specific schools, community groups, and residents living within a particular radius of the registrant's home and/or work, the Unit prepares notification packages and serves those entitled to receive notice.

In 2021, a total of 52 new classification files were opened, and 13 separate Tier II Notification Orders were served to the appropriate schools and community organizations. The average Tier II Notification also required visiting approximately 15 schools and community organizations.

In addition to the classification process, Detectives are responsible for enforcing the registration laws and working with parole to enforce conditions for sex offenders supervised under CSL and PSL. The Detectives locate and track eligible registrants and arrest violators. In

2021, there were 13 investigations by the Detectives assigned to the Megan's Law Unit. Pre-trial detention motions were filed in 16 cases.

The Assistant Prosecutors assigned to the Unit presented 26 cases to Grand Jury in 2021, and 25 resulted in indictments. The Assistant Prosecutors also handled 15 accusations, wherein sex offenders waived their right to a Grand Jury presentation and entered guilty pleas.

The county also has a Megan's Law Officer's Association, incorporating one police officer from each municipality in the county, a county Detective, as well as members from probation and parole. The members meet regularly and receive updates on the law.

Criminal Enterprise Bureau

The MCPO Criminal Enterprise Bureau is comprised of the Gang and Criminal Enterprise Unit, Electronic Surveillance Squad, and the Monmouth County Emergency Response Team (MOCERT).

Gang and Criminal Enterprise Unit

The Gang and Criminal Enterprise Unit was established due to the proliferation of criminal gang violence and other activity, both locally and nationwide. The Unit maintains an intelligence database on criminal activity and gang affiliation, and provides intelligence, when appropriate, to other units within MCPO, as well as to outside agencies.

In 2021, the Unit opened 38 gang-related cases with 46 targets, executing 13 search warrants and making 35 arrests, seizing quantities of heroin, cocaine, marijuana, and prescription medications. The Unit also seized more than \$51,000 in cash and seized six firearms and four vehicles.

Electronic Surveillance Squad

The Electronic Surveillance Squad provides MCPO with service of a technical/electronic nature to enhance its ability to meet the goals and objectives as defined by law and MCPO policies and procedures. The Squad researches and identifies equipment and procedures that improve the ability of the office to fulfill its mission while reducing labor intensity through technology.

In 2021 the Squad completed 65 assignments involving electronic and digital surveillance and recording means.

Narcotics Bureau

The MCPO Narcotics Bureau is comprised of the Narcotics Strike Force and the Bayshore Unit. The mission of the Bureau is to provide narcotics enforcement on the local and county levels, and to assist state and local authorities. The Bureau also provides enforcement, service, and support in criminal investigations.

In 2021 the Narcotics Strike Force opened a total of 39 cases with 51 targets, executing 33 search warrants and effectuating 42 arrests. It also seized quantities of heroin, cocaine, marijuana, and prescription medications, seizing nearly \$240,000 in cash and seizing nine firearms and nine vehicles.

In 2021 the Bayshore Unit opened a total of 15 cases with six targets, executing three search warrants and effectuating seven arrests. It also seized quantities of heroin and prescription medications, seizing more than \$9,000 in cash.

The federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is provided a section of the office and supervised by their designated administration. A MCPO Detective is temporarily assigned to the DEA in the capacity of a Task Force Officer (TFO) for the purposes of assisting in the conducting of multi-jurisdictional narcotics investigations throughout the state.

Financial Crimes & Public Corruption Bureau

Cases handled by the Bureau generally involve thefts in excess of \$75,000. The types of crimes investigated in the Bureau include frauds pertaining to insurance, mortgages, investments, securities, healthcare, construction, and charities, as well as employee thefts and Internet/email scams. The victims of these crimes stretch across a range of entities and individuals, from corporations to businesses, retailers, homeowners, and consumers.

Detectives in the Bureau also investigate public corruption crimes committed by municipal, county, and state public officials. In cases such as these, private individuals often supply important tips, leads, and background information to investigators. This inside information can often make the difference between a marginal case and a successful prosecution. To encourage contributions such as these from the citizens of Monmouth County, MCPO established a Corruption Hot Line in order to generate information on corrupt officials from members of the public or from other government workers with inside knowledge of official misconduct.

Each year, the Bureau also handles election law violations and related issues that arise in municipal, county, state, and federal elections. On Election Day, members of the legal and investigative staff are assigned to the office to handle any issues that may arise.

The Bureau consists of a Director, two Assistant Prosecutors, a Lieutenant, one Sergeant, and five Detectives. Technical and legal assistance from the Bureau is constantly sought by Monmouth County's municipal police departments. Members of the Bureau's investigative and legal staff are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Bureau also aids local departments with subpoenas, and provides advice on investigating and prosecuting financial crimes.

The Bureau also consistently provides advice and assistance to other units in the office, such as Major Crimes, Narcotics, Professional Responsibility, and the Trial Teams, when their cases develop a financial crimes facet.

This assistance often involves the issuance of subpoenas, review of financial records, financial analysis, and courtroom testimony. Additionally, a Bureau Detective is assigned each weekday to welcome "walk-in" complainants from across Monmouth County. Bureau Detectives also review email case referrals registered on the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office website. Financial crimes and public corruption cases are invariably complex investigations that involve the subpoenaing, organizing, and analyzing of thousands of pages of bank records, financial documents, contracts, wills, securities, corporate charters, real-estate transaction documents, retainer agreements, civil depositions, and many other different types of papers. Often, these investigations take years to complete. Due to the intricacies of the Bureau's investigations, the assigned Detectives often need to solicit the help of experts in the fields of accounting, auditing, forensic accounting, insurance, healthcare, Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, trusts and estate work, taxes, real estate, attorney ethics, and many other areas.

Many of the Bureau's investigations lead our Detectives outside the boundaries of both Monmouth County and the State of New Jersey. These multi-jurisdictional cases find our Bureau's Detectives joining forces with other law-enforcement agencies and administrative agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Postal Inspection Service, the New Jersey Department of the Treasury, the New Jersey Division of Taxation, the New Jersey State Police, the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs, and the New Jersey Department of Human Services. The Bureau also frequently consults other law-enforcement bureaus, departments, and administrative agencies, refers matters to such agencies, and in turn accepts referrals from such agencies.

The Bureau also conducts joint investigations with local police departments in Monmouth County. Detectives and Assistant Prosecutors remain ever-cognizant of the supervisory and leadership roles they exert in financial crimes and public corruption investigations in this County. To that end, in the spring of 2021, the Bureau's Detectives conducted a two-day financial crimes seminar, attended by investigators throughout the State.

The Bureau's support staff handles a large number of responsibilities very well. Bureau clericals type various documents for the Bureau's Assistant Prosecutors and Detectives and are responsible for the closing and opening of the many files that come through. The Bureau also employs two investigative paralegals who have the daunting task of preparing thousands of pages of documents, records, and reports for discovery in every case. It is incumbent on them to coordinate their work with Grand Jury, clerical staff, and the Monmouth Vicinage's Office of Criminal Case Management. Investigative paralegals also assist in court with the organization of exhibits and preparation of and use of visual aids such as PowerPoint presentations.

The Bureau has one financial analyst on staff. The analyst compiles data, analyzes records, and creates spreadsheets and/or flow charts. The analyst's primary responsibility is to ensure that complex matters are easily understood. The analyst is a retired detective and CPA from the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, where he worked for more than 20 years in the Financial Crimes Unit.

In 2021, the Bureau opened 92 financial crimes cases. These cases involved large-scale thefts, insurance fraud, healthcare fraud, check fraud, investment fraud, forgery, misconduct by corporate officials, email and Internet scams, and employee thefts, as well as various other types of consumer fraud and thefts. The Bureau also performed 430 subpoena assists, resulting in the issuance of over 1,300 subpoenas.

The Bureau also opened 14 public corruption cases in 2021. These matters involved allegations of official misconduct, theft, forgery, and other frauds committed by public officials throughout Monmouth County municipalities.

Computer Crimes Bureau

The mission of the Computer Crimes Bureau is to investigate and prosecute computer-facilitated crime committed in Monmouth County and provide technological and legal support to other units and agencies involved in the investigation and prosecution of computer-related crime (and other crimes for which evidence is electronic in nature).

The Bureau is a member of the New Jersey Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force and works closely with the New Jersey State Police, the New Jersey Regional Computer Forensics Laboratory (NJRCFL), the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), and other state and federal agencies in combating online child predation and other computer-facilitated crimes.

The Bureau consists of one Assistant Prosecutor, one Lieutenant, one Sergeant, five Detectives (one of whom is on loan part-time to the NJRCFL), and one prosecutor's agent. As the caseload for the Computer Crimes Bureau has greatly increased, three additional Assistant Prosecutors have also been assigned to assist with cases. The Computer Crimes Bureau is supervised by the Director of the Financial Crimes and Public Corruption Bureau.

In 2021, the Computer Crimes Bureau continued operation of the ICAC Task Force launched in 2010, and greatly expanded its partnerships with law-enforcement agencies in Monmouth County that joined the Task Force. The Task Force is now comprised of members of the MCPO Computer Crimes Bureau, the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office, and the police departments in Asbury Park, Belmar, Bradley Beach, Eatontown, Holmdel, Howell, Long Branch, Keyport, Manalapan, Marlboro, Middletown, Ocean Township, Red Bank, Spring Lake, Spring Lake Heights, Tinton Falls, and Wall Township, as well as U.S. Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

The mission of the Task Force is to combat electronically facilitated crime, especially Internet child predation and the possession and distribution of items depicting the sexual exploitation or abuse of a child. Task Force operations are ongoing. Local law-enforcement officers who join the Task Force work with the Bureau approximately one to two days per week for a period of six months, whereby they are exposed to the workings of the Bureau and specifically trained to investigate referrals from NCMEC.

In 2021, the Bureau opened more than 249 cases, including 247 ICAC referrals and two of its own proactive investigations. The Bureau also ensured that assistance was provided to other units on homicides, sex crimes, narcotics offenses, financial crimes, and other cases. The Unit prepared and executed 35 search warrants and 87 communications data warrants. Bureau Detectives performed 68 computer forensic examinations and 227 forensic examinations on mobile devices such as cell phones and tablets. The Bureau also prepared and served more than 425 subpoenas requesting various forms of communications data and more than 98 non-disclosure orders accompanying such subpoenas. As part of community outreach and education efforts, the Bureau also gave six Internet safety lectures in 2021.

Intelligence Unit

The Intelligence Unit gathers information from all sources in a manner consistent with the law to analyze in order to provide tactical and/or strategic intelligence on the existence, identities, and capabilities of criminal suspects and enterprises generally, and in particular, to further crime prevention and enforcement objectives and/or priorities identified by the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office and local law enforcement.

In 2021, the Unit handled 1,056 general requests, including 294 HIDTA de-conflictions, 82 requests for assistance by local, county, state, and federal agencies, and 293 intelligence system incidents.

Trial Support/Fugitive/Juvenile Unit

The Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office is charged with the investigation of criminal activity and making arrests for violations of criminal law. In that regard, the Trial Support/Fugitives/Juvenile Crime Unit is responsible for coordinating and facilitating the custodial transfers of incarcerated subjects for criminal court appearances.

The Unit, working in conjunction with the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office, maintains 24-hours-a-day availability for extradition matters.

The Juvenile Crime Unit was established to provide investigative support in the prosecution of all juvenile and Family Court cases, as well as weapons forfeiture cases relating to seizures pursuant to domestic violence incidents.

Staff Services Unit

The Staff Services Unit was established to provide services administrative in nature to the Investigation Division, the prosecutorial Trial Teams, and any other divisions within the Prosecutor's Office that may require support in the furtherance of a criminal or administrative function.

Professional Responsibility and Bias Crimes Bureau

The Professional Responsibility and Bias Crimes Bureau, which encompasses both the Professional Responsibility and Bias Crimes units, is headed by a Director and comprised of a Lieutenant, a Sergeant, four Detectives, one clerical, and one keyboarding clerk. The Bureau is on call 24 hours a day. The Professional Responsibility and Bias Crimes Bureau falls under the Administrative Section of the Investigation Division.

The Professional Responsibility Unit investigates allegations of criminal wrongdoing committed by law-enforcement officers within Monmouth County. This Unit also reviews certain incidents of use of force, weapons discharges, and vehicular pursuits within the county for compliance with established policies of the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office and the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General. In addition, this Unit conducts background investigations of prospective Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office employees. This Unit also supervises the internal affairs functions of our local agencies. Furthermore, the Unit conducts internal affairs investigations into allegations against local police chiefs and certain allegations of misconduct against local-law enforcement officers, and is involved in internal affairs investigations of Prosecutor's Office employees. Additionally, this Unit is responsible for ensuring that all local agencies implement and utilize an early warning system for tracking and reviewing incidents of risk and providing timely intervention for police officers whose conduct warrants such intervention.

In 2021, the Professional Responsibility Unit opened 508 case files, including 38 background checks, 186 weapon discharges, 84 Early Intervention System notifications; six conducted energy device deployments, 12 police domestic incidents, one death in custody, and 181 allegations of police misconduct, to include allegations of criminal activity, administrative issues, and general complaints about police (of the 186 weapons discharges, all but one involved euthanasia of seriously injured deer or wildlife). Many of the allegations of police misconduct are ultimately referred to local departments for administrative review and action after an investigation by the Unit determines that there is no evidence (or insufficient evidence) that a crime was committed. While these cases have no criminality, there may be administrative violations, which are addressed by the officers' employers. However, in 2021, the Unit charged four municipal police officers with criminal offenses after conducting investigations.

The Bias Crimes Unit conducts cooperative investigations of bias crimes with municipal police agencies and maintains a working relationship with community organizations in Monmouth County. The Unit also maintains statistics of bias incidents throughout the county. In 2021, there were 204 bias-related incidents reported to the Unit. None of those cases were ultimately charged as bias crimes, as a legal review determined that the conduct did not rise to the level of a crime under the Bias Intimidation Statute.

Administrative and Support Services Unit

The Administrative and Support Services Unit is responsible for the effective and efficient operation of the Prosecutor's Office, handling all personnel, payroll, and benefits-related matters. The Director works with the Chief of Staff to prepare the annual budget for the office and allocation of office staffing.

Additional routine functions include procurement of office equipment and supplies, and preparation and submission of purchase orders and vouchers to the county's Purchasing and Finance departments. The Unit's efforts ensure that office personnel are equipped to perform their duties and responsibilities in a manner that best serves the citizens of the county.

Grants Unit

The Grant Unit maintains federal and state grants awarded to the Prosecutor's Office and is staffed by a Grant Administrator and a clerical support staff member. The Grant Administrator is responsible for completing all applications, preparing budgets for submittal, and processing requests for the disbursement of awarded grant funds. The Grant Administrator is also responsible for researching and executing new grant proposals.

Victim-Witness Advocacy Unit

The Victim-Witness Unit provides crime victims and witnesses with services & support to ensure that their rights are protected as vigorously as the constitutional rights of the accused. Pursuant to state law, certain services must be afforded to victims of and witnesses to indictable crimes. The unit consists of a Director, seven victim advocates, and three support personnel.

The advocates are responsible for identifying victims on each case prior to screening from the Intake Unit. Advocates reach out to victims offering support services and criminal justice information. Funds through the STOP VAWA Grant provided a full-time domestic violence advocate designated to specialize in the handling of victims of domestic-related crimes. The STOP VAWA Grant now is used to fund a new anti-strangulation program.

The Director and advocates attend training to remain current with the latest knowledge and skills necessary to improve services provided to crime victims. The Director and all advocates are certified for Basic Regional Crisis Response. In addition, the Director and three advocates also hold the Advanced Certification for Regional Response. The Director is also a Certified Compassionate Care Bereavement Care provider.

This training prepares community leaders to help groups of affected people cope with their immediate emotional reactions when a crisis strikes their community. In addition, one advocate is certified for advanced crisis response.

Members of the Victim-Witness Unit constantly seek new ways to assist victims and to improve the level of service. The Unit has enhanced its services to victims who are in need of financial assistance.

Through the online Victims of Crime Compensation Office (VCCO) filing of applications, advocates offer direct support with electronically submitting the applications to ensure an efficient response.

The Unit also provides the following services: criminal justice orientation and information sessions; assistance with completing victim impact statements; crisis intervention and support services; case status notification; court accompaniment and transportation services; child care during required criminal court appearances; restitution assistance; employer/creditor intercession; property return assistance; maintaining a secure and private victim-witness waiting room containing a closet full of court appropriate attire; parole eligibility and release notification; translation services; information about and referral to appropriate resources; assistance with claims to the VCCO; and forwarding victim impact statements to Assistant Prosecutors before formal charges and sentencing. Pamphlets, information, training, and other resources are available by contacting the Victim-Witness Unit.

The Director and advocates continue to participate in the training of all recruits and special officers at the police academy. In addition, our unit continues to educate police recruits, prosecutors, paralegals, and law-enforcement personnel by providing presentations and trainings to school professionals, private nonprofits, and any appropriate entity that requests information.

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