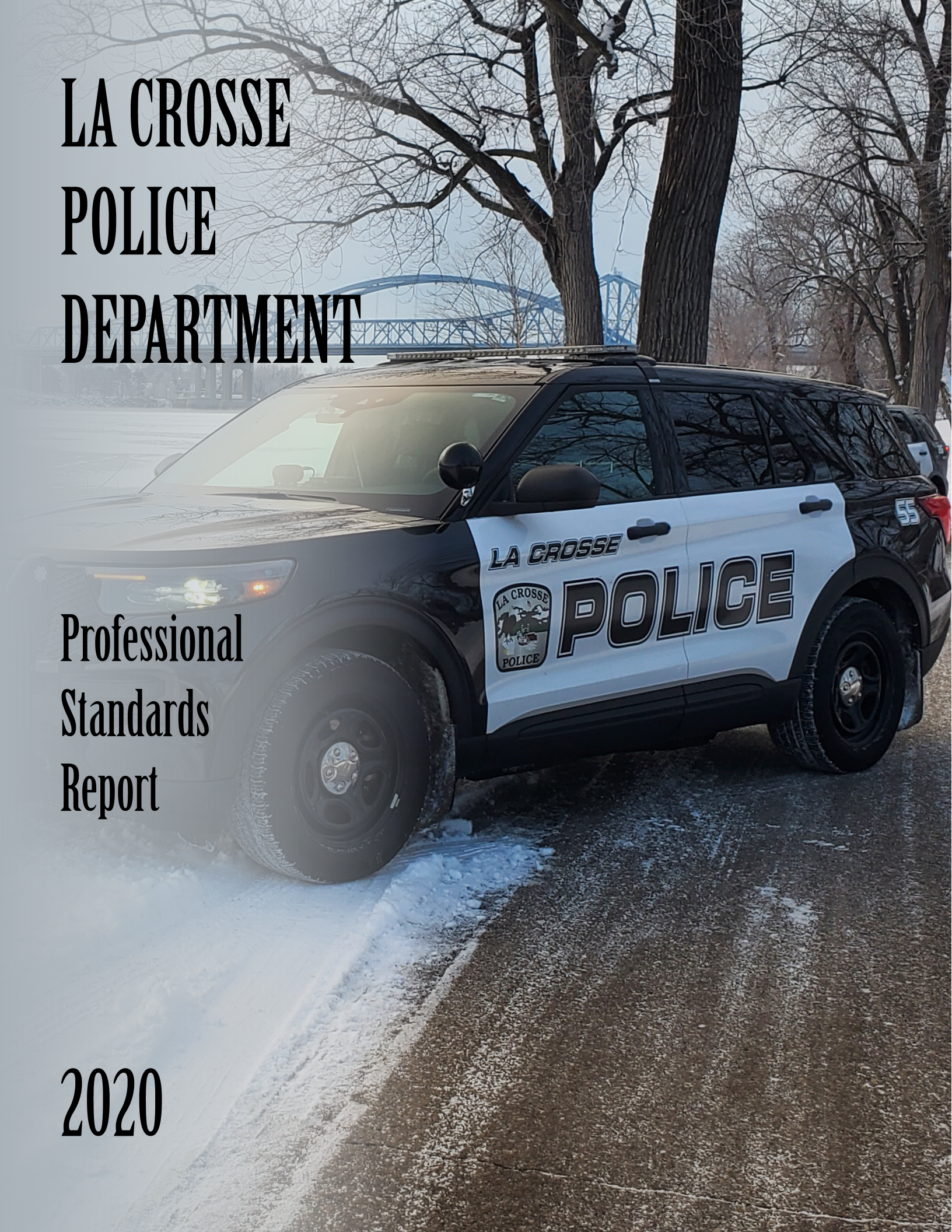


LA CROSSE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Professional
Standards
Report

2020



From the Chief

The members of the La Crosse Police Department are committed to our Mission: “Leaders in providing a safe and vibrant community.” Serving the La Crosse community with compassion, keeping our community safe, and meeting the needs of La Crosse’s citizens is paramount to carrying out our mission. Integrity, accountability, and transparency are critical in developing and maintaining community trust in our Police Department.

Late in 2020, the La Crosse Police Department established a resource on its website for community members to [submit compliments and complaints](#) online about the Department and its employees. The La Crosse Police Department takes the concerns of citizens and the sharing of approval very seriously.

To aid transparency, the Department developed this report to communicate with our community the compliments and complaints received the prior year. This report highlights departmental awards and compliments. It provides a summary of our complaint process including classifications, dispositions, and levels of discipline. This report also details our Code of Conduct policy.

The men and women of the La Crosse Police Department are committed to serving the La Crosse community through engagement, relationship building, and problem solving. The La Crosse Police Department takes pride in the services we provide, but continually seeks ways to improve. This document represents that the adherence to our Code of Conduct is a significant tenet of serving the La Crosse community as Police Officers.

Sincerely,



Shawn P. Kudron
Chief of Police
La Crosse Police Department



Mission Statement

Leaders in providing a safe and vibrant community.

Vision Statement

Eliminate crime through community engagement.

Core Values

The following values guide our attempt to achieve our mission and vision.

- ⇒ Employee Safety & Wellness
- ⇒ Integrity
- ⇒ Accountability
- ⇒ Communication
- ⇒ Respect
- ⇒ Transparency
- ⇒ Dedication
- ⇒ Professionalism
- ⇒ Community Policing

Law Enforcement Oath of Honor

On my honor,
I will never betray my badge,
my integrity,
my character,
or the public trust.

I will always have the courage
to hold myself and others
accountable for our actions.
I will always uphold the Constitution,
the community
and the agency I serve.

Code of Conduct

The La Crosse Police Department believes the cornerstone of its effectiveness is public trust and faith in the police. One of the key components to accomplishing this is through the development of and adherence to a Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct must be rooted in the La Crosse Police Department's Mission and Vision Statements, as well as the core Values.

Our Vision Statement describes what we seek to achieve. Our Mission Statement describes how our department will achieve that vision. Our Mission is based on our Core Values that represent what we stand for and how we will get the job done. These values reinforce one another and ensure that we are working together to serve our citizens.

Our General Order Manual details standard practices for most situations likely to be encountered in the course of our duties. The agency recognizes that police work is inherently complex; therefore, not all situations can be covered in even the most comprehensive general order manual. In these situations, our decisions and actions must be guided by our core values. For this reason, it is essential that all members be familiar with our values and Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct is not limited to an officer on duty, but off duty as well. A breach of this Code can erode public trust and bring discredit upon the agency, as well as the entire law enforcement profession. Breaches of the Code, whether on or off duty, may lead to investigation and discipline by the agency.

An investigation into a breach of the Code of Conduct will take into consideration the degree of neglect or deliberate fault of a member and the severity or nature of the misconduct. The investigation will be prompt, thorough, and impartial.



Awards and Recognition

It is the Policy of the La Crosse Police Department to recognize the experience and achievements of our members. Annually, members of our Department can nominate their peers or citizens to receive awards. The nominations are reviewed by the Awards/Recognition Committee and approved by the Chief of Police. Sworn members of the department can be awarded the following:

- ⇒ **Medal of Honor**—Awarded to an Officer (or his/her family in the event of the Officer's death) for conspicuous gallantry while on or off duty.
- ⇒ **Silver Star**—Awarded to an Officer (or to his/her family in the event of the Officer's death) who performs an act of heroism with great personal risk to him/herself, based on the Officer's knowledge that the act involved inherent danger and that the Officer acted with unusual disregard to his/her safety. The actions were beyond the normal expectations of duty and the Officer showed a high level of character and integrity.
- ⇒ **Departmental Citation**—Awarded to an Officer who has accomplished outstanding and or meritorious service on or off duty and did so with knowledge that the action involved a high degree of danger to him/herself resulting in a felony arrest or other favorable outcome.
- ⇒ **Superior Achievement**—Awarded to an Officer who has shown a high degree of professionalism and dedication to a particular incident resulting in a felony arrest or other favorable outcome.
- ⇒ **Lifesaving Award**—Awarded to an Officer who performs an action that preserves life without known additional extraordinary risk to him/herself. This could include use of an AED or giving CPR .
- ⇒ **Chief's Achievement Award**—Awarded by the Chief of Police to an Officer, Civilian Individual, or Organization to whom has provided the community exemplary service. This award is the Chief's Award and is not issued or vetted by the Awards & Recognition Committee.
- ⇒ **Northwestern Staff and Command Graduate**—Awarded to an Officer who has successfully graduated from Northwestern Staff and Command School.
- ⇒ **FBI National Academy Graduate**—Awarded to an Officer who has successfully graduated from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy.

- ⇒ **Traffic Safety Award**—Awarded annually to the Officer or Officers who provide education via the use of traffic related programs and/or the use extraordinary traffic related law enforcement resulting in the improvement of traffic safety in and around the La Crosse Community.

Non-Sworn Employees and Citizens can be awarded the following:

- ⇒ **Citizen Merit Award**—Presented to a Citizen who prevents loss of life or great bodily harm to another while paying no regard to their own personal safety.
- ⇒ **Citizen Award of Excellence**—Presented to any Citizen who acts commendably in assisting law enforcement and/or the community. Awarded actions generally lead to an arrest or other favorable outcome.

In the past, members of the Department were encouraged to submit nominations for awards as incidents occurred. In the spring of each year, the Awards/Recognition Committee would review nominations and submit their recommendations to the Chief. Once the Chief made the determination, the Officers or Citizens would be invited to accept their award at an annual Awards/Recognition ceremony held during National Police Week in May.

In 2019, the Department launched a pilot program wherein each time an officer or citizen was nominated for an award, the Committee would review the nomination and decide on an award right away. Then, the Officer or citizen would be presented with their award at the regular Common Council meeting to immediately recognize the good work of Officers or citizens. By the end of 2019, it was clear that members of our Department appreciated the alternate option of having a formal Awards/Recognition Ceremony.

In 2020, we intended on re-establishing the Awards/Recognition Ceremony, but our plans were thwarted by COVID-19 restrictions. We look forward to continuing this tradition in the near future.

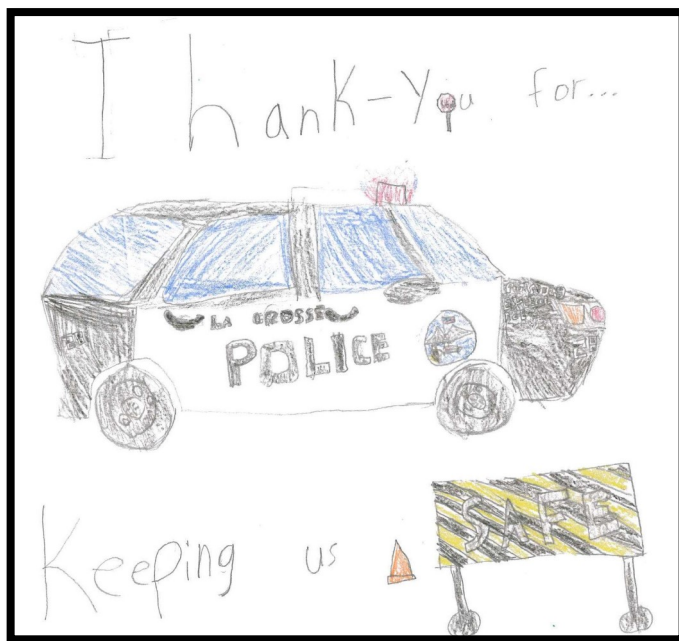
Unsolicited Compliments

Throughout the year, citizens, businesses, and local organizations reach out with messages of support and compliments for our staff for jobs well done. These often come through a phone call, email, or a letter.

We also have an internal method wherein staff can share examples of good work by other staff through a positive Field Notice or Supervisory Note.

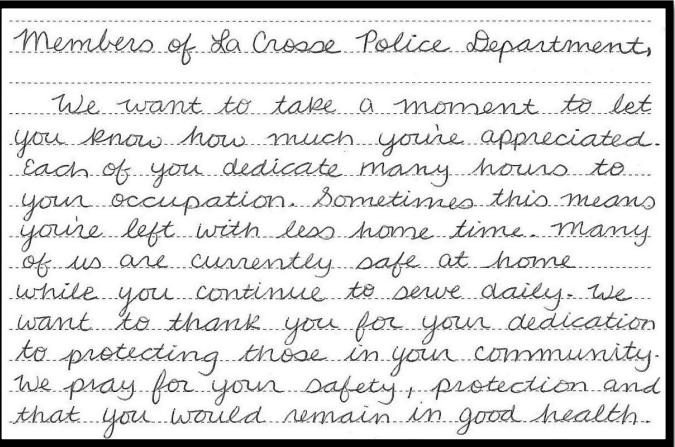
In late December of 2020 we established a way for citizens to submit compliments (and complaints) through an online form on our website. We received great feedback on the ease of use of this form and hope that our citizens utilize these methods for providing feedback to our staff.

These are several examples of the unsolicited compliments received in 2020:



Letter from Citizen

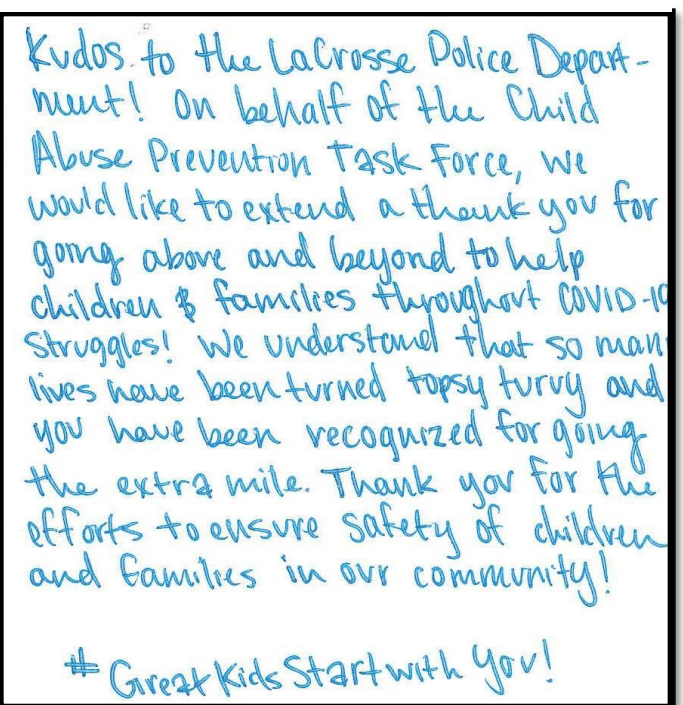
Chief Kudron received a letter from a citizen complimenting an Officer's work in retrieving his stolen property, noting the Officer was, "courteous, professional and communicated clearly. I am grateful to meet and witness an example of competent, respectful, and professional local law enforcement."



Field Notices

A supervisor complimented an officer for his professionalism and "extraordinary patience" he displayed as he worked with a citizen experiencing a crisis, effectively talking him out of self-harm to safety.

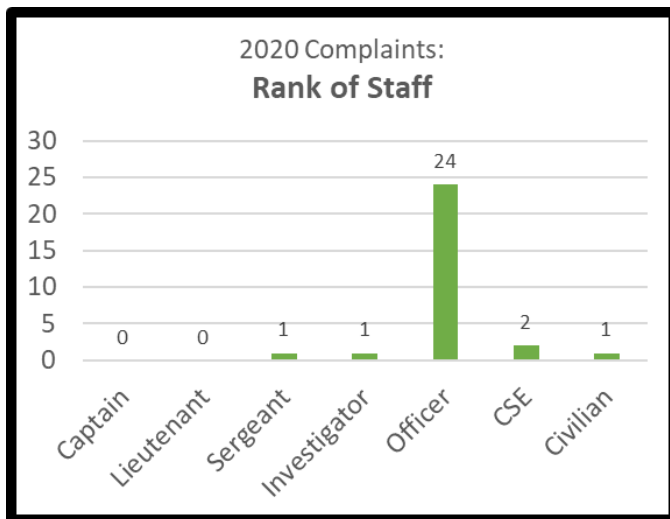
A supervisor complimented an Officer saying, "this investigation is a good example of the follow-through that the Officer conducts in his position as NRO utilizing resources such as the downtown cameras to result in quick apprehension of suspects."



Complaints

As a Department, we take complaints very seriously in our effort to achieve the level of professional policing expected by our citizens.

In 2020, the La Crosse Police Department addressed a total of 29 infractions/complaints. Of these 29 complaints, 18 were supervisor-initiated and 11 were outside/citizen-initiated. The following ranks were held by those identified in the complaints:



Complaint Classifications

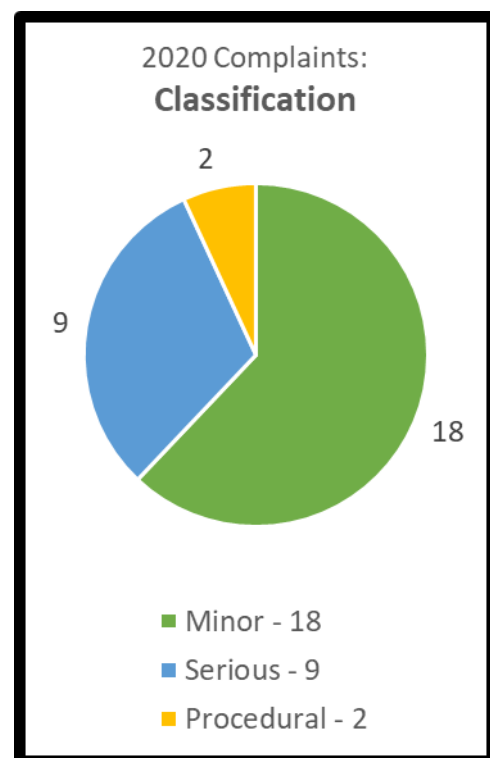
All complaints are classified as follows:

- ⇒ **Personnel Complaint:** A complaint regarding the practices or personnel of the La Crosse Police Department. Personnel complaints will generally be categorized as procedural, minor, or serious complaints.
- ⇒ **Procedural Complaint:** A complaint based on actions, (rather than the conduct, behavior, or demeanor of an employee) that, if performed properly, are acceptable according to legal guidelines and/or department policy; e.g., complaints over towing vehicles, parking enforcement, traffic enforcement, etc.
- ⇒ **Minor Complaint:** An infraction/complaint based primarily on the conduct of the officer identified in the complaint and alleging a deliberate or neglectful, though minor, violation of a department policy, rule or regulation. Examples of minor misconduct include rudeness, verbal indiscretion, minor traffic infractions, failure to

follow standard operating procedures, failure to properly document police activity, attendance problems, etc. Another determinant of minor misconduct is that the alleged action, if sustained, would most likely result in disciplinary action ranging from verbal counseling to a suspension.

⇒ **Serious Complaint:** An infraction/complaint based primarily on the conduct of the officer(s) identified in the complaint and alleging a deliberate or neglectful, serious misconduct or violation of a department policy, procedure, rule or regulation, or public law. Examples of serious misconduct include, but are not limited to the following:

- ◇ Dereliction of duty
- ◇ Inappropriate or excessive force
- ◇ Breach of civil rights
- ◇ Exhibition of bias or harassment
- ◇ Untruthfulness under oath, during an investigation, in a police report or about official matters
- ◇ Insubordination
- ◇ Abuse of position, authority, or access to confidential information
- ◇ Unbecoming conduct
- ◇ Repeated acts of minor misconduct
- ◇ Commission of a felony or misdemeanor
- ◇ Corruption
- ◇ Solicitation of gifts or gratuities
- ◇ Failure to report others who commit serious misconduct

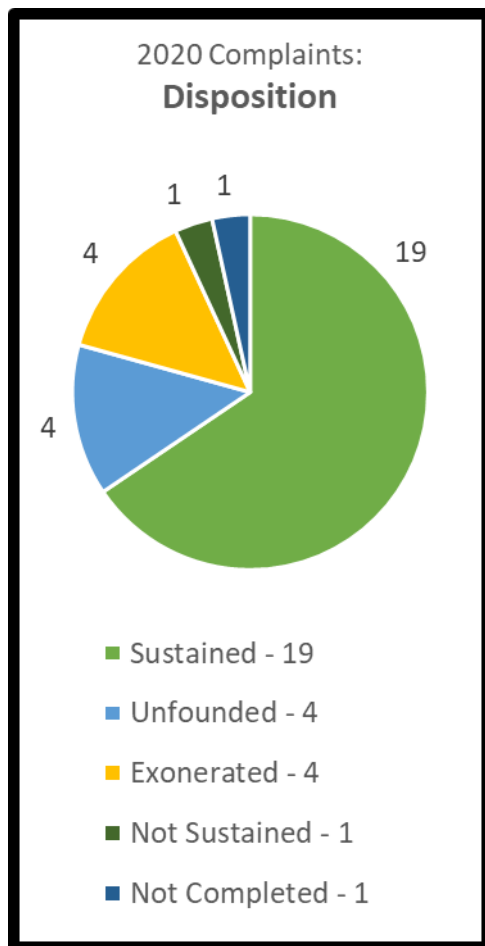


⇒ Another determinant of serious complaint is that the alleged action, if sustained, could result in disciplinary action to include suspension, dismissal, and/or criminal charges.

Disposition

Completed inquiries and internal investigations shall be classified using the following guidelines:

- ⇒ **Unfounded:** Investigation indicates that the allegations are false.
- ⇒ **Not Sustained:** Insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegations.
- ⇒ **Sustained:** The allegations are supported by sufficient evidence to conclude they are true.
- ⇒ **Exonerated:** Investigation indicates that the incident occurred, but was justified, lawful, and proper under the circumstances.
- ⇒ **Policy Failure:** The investigation reveals that the allegations are true; however, the employee was acting in accordance with established department policy.



A conclusion of fact shall support the final complaint classification. No records of complaints that resulted in the findings of Unfounded, Exonerated, Not Sustained or Policy Failure will be maintained in an employee's file.

Of the 29 complaints, the employee in 1 resigned prior to completion of the investigation.

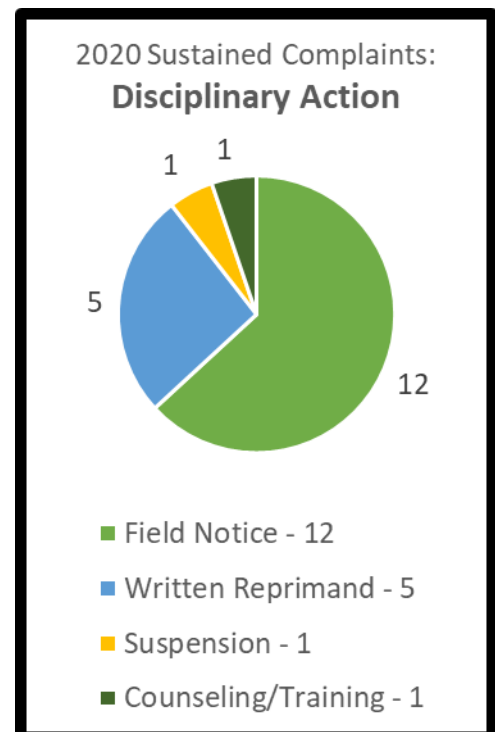
Levels of Discipline

Levels of discipline applied to any given situation may range from, but are not limited to, the following:

- ⇒ **Field Notice**
- ⇒ **Written Reprimand**
- ⇒ **Suspension or Loss of Leave**
- ⇒ **Demotion**
- ⇒ **Dismissal**

These levels are guidelines. The Chief of Police may take disciplinary action outside these guidelines when circumstances are present to warrant deviation.

Of the 19 complaints that were sustained, the following disciplinary actions were taken:



2020 Complaints

| Rank | Complaint Classification | Description | Disposition |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Officer | Serious | Anonymous Facebook posts regarding improper conduct | Unfounded |
| Civilian Service Employee | Minor | Vehicle accident | Sustained |
| Officer | Minor | Poor discretion | Sustained |
| Officer | Minor | Vehicle accident | Sustained |
| Officer | Serious | Inadequate investigation | Sustained |
| Officer | Serious | Speech / Conduct - Off duty | Sustained |
| Officer | Minor | Inadequate investigation | Not Sustained |
| Investigator | Minor | Demeanor / Neighbor dispute - Off duty | Unfounded |
| Civilian Service Employee | Minor | Vehicle accident | Sustained |
| Officer | Serious | Conduct - Off duty | Sustained |
| Officer | Serious | Animal abuse complaint - Off duty | Unfounded |
| Officer | Serious | Violation of due process / Harassment | Exonerated |
| Officer | Minor | Failure to complete reports in a timely manner | Sustained |
| Officer | Serious | Improper search of arrestee | Exonerated |
| Officer | Minor | Demeanor | Exonerated |
| Officer | Minor | Vehicle accident | Sustained |
| Officer | Procedural | Dissatisfied with neighbor complaint investigation | Unfounded |
| Officer | Procedural | Accidental discharge | Exonerated |
| Sergeant | Minor | Hunting violation out of state - Off duty | Sustained |
| Officer | Minor | Late for duty | Sustained |
| Officer | Minor | Vehicle accident | Sustained |
| Officer | Minor | Vehicle accident / Due regard driving | Sustained |
| Officer | Minor | Vehicle accident | Sustained |
| Officer | Serious | Conduct - Off duty | Not Completed |
| Officer | Serious | Use of Force* Demeanor** | Exonerated* Sustained** |
| Officer | Minor | Demeanor with co-worker | Sustained |
| Officer | Minor | Vehicle accident | Sustained |
| Officer | Minor | Vehicle accident | Sustained |
| Civilian | Minor | Vehicle accident | Sustained |

As a way to emphasize the importance of this Code, each member of the Department has been provided with a Code of Conduct booklet, and each newly hired member is presented with one on their first day. The information contained in the booklet includes General Order 13.1 - Code of Conduct.

General Order 13.1 - Code of Conduct

13.1(A) Accountability:

1. All employees have the responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by the General Orders, Directives, Notices, SOPs, and all other rules and orders specific to their respective assignments. The General Orders and Directives of the Department are accessible to all employees electronically at all times.
2. All personnel must promptly notify a supervisor of a violation of order/directive.
3. Failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement and/or maintain policies and/or goals is prohibited; prohibits any omission/failure to act by a member which would be reasonably required, it applies to those who fail to implement orders and directives.
4. Sworn personnel shall be knowledgeable of State Statutes, City Ordinances, and fundamental rules of evidence so they may properly investigate and refer a case to the appropriate authority for disposition.
5. All sworn personnel, while on duty and within the jurisdiction of the City, shall protect life and property, preserve the public peace, prevent crime, detect and arrest violators of the law, and enforce all Statutes and Ordinances of the State of Wisconsin and the City of La Crosse.
6. Personnel shall be punctual and alert when reporting for duty, roll call, or briefings at the time and place required by assignments and orders. They shall be properly equipped and prepared to immediately perform their duties.
7. When required to appear in court, be punctual and appear in uniform or appropriate plainclothes specified in orders; be properly prepared and have property to be used as evidence available.

8. Failure to testify or give evidence before any hearing, etc. when there is no properly asserted constitutional privilege or when immunity has been granted is prohibited; failure to cooperate when called to give evidence statements by a supervisor or the Police and Fire Commission when evidence/statements sought relate specifically to police duties is prohibited; if constitutional privilege is asserted, required to cooperate if advised that statements given cannot be used in a criminal case.

13.1(B) Communication:

1. Upon completion of an assignment or call for service, sworn personnel shall immediately report back in-service advising Dispatch of the disposition.
2. Do not leave an assignment without permission except for police necessity; if required to leave, notify supervisor or dispatcher.
3. Personnel will communicate promptly to a supervisor/dispatcher crimes, important public occurrences, complaints, and relevant data brought to their attention; don't withhold data.
4. Failure to report to the Chief/Supervisor that a member is under investigation by another agency is prohibited.
5. Personnel will not publicly engage in political talks while on duty.
6. Do not engage in public statements/etc. pertaining to the Department which may impair its efficiency or the confidence in it or its members by: false statement, defamatory/abusive language, invective or epithets.
7. Personnel shall not discuss Departmental business that is confidential information and is not to be given to anyone except those for whom it is intended, as directed by a supervisor or due process.
8. Personnel shall promptly inform the Chief of Police whenever there is any knowledge or intent to organize any association, society or club that could affect Department operations.
9. Do not commence civil action related to duty without filing a report of the incident and/or communicating with the Chief.

13.1(C) Community Policing:

1. All personnel, while on duty and within the jurisdiction of the City, shall report and take the appropriate action on issues of community concern including public nuisances, hazardous conditions, traffic problems, and any other circumstances requiring police action.
2. Personnel shall respond to those who seek assistance in an efficient, understanding, and professional manner. Personnel shall cooperate with and afford other government agencies all the assistance and authorize information they are entitled to receive in order to promote a professional working environment.
3. All personnel shall assist the public within the scope of their duties, being always mindful of positive police community relations.

13.1(D) Dedication:

1. Personnel shall have general knowledge of the city, including its geography, names and locations of streets, all city, county, state, and federal buildings. Personnel shall also be familiar with the organizational structure of this Department and the relative duties of all its Divisions.
2. Personnel are not allowed to engage in outside employment while on sick leave.
3. Personnel are not allowed to engage in outside employment while on Family Medical Leave unless they have received permission from the Chief.
4. Personnel shall have assigned duty hours and when not so employed, shall be considered off-duty.
Off-duty personnel shall be subject to recall at the direction of supervisory personnel. Hours are dependent on assignment and labor agreement.
5. Sworn personnel will assist, as trained, to protect the public and fellow officers in time of danger or under conditions where danger may be impending.
6. Officers who are off-duty and witness criminal activity within the City of La Crosse shall notify the Department as soon as possible and have the discretion to take appropriate police action. Any officer unable to take action

because he/she is not properly equipped and/or the officer feels it is tactically not safe to act, will not be subject to discipline.

7. While on duty, personnel shall not engage in personal business. Personnel shall give their entire attention to their respective duties and/or carry out, without delay, all assignments and responsibilities.
8. Personnel are prohibited from sleeping/idling/loafing or leaving duty assignment without authorization.

13.1(E) Employee Safety & Wellness:

1. Personnel shall not, by act or omission, create a situation of unnecessary risk of injury to themselves, other employees, or any other person. Personnel shall wear/use all required safety equipment.
2. Personnel shall act together to assist/protect each other. All personnel will treat each other professionally.
3. Personnel subjected to discrimination or personnel witnessing discrimination will immediately advise a supervisor; complaints will be made to the Chief.
4. Personnel may carry authorized items by holder/briefcase which is not detrimental to the Department by design or composition; the Department may open/inspect items in member's possession; members must cooperate with inspections.

13.1(F) Integrity:

1. Personnel will conduct themselves at all times, both on and off duty, in a manner that reflects most favorably upon the Department. They shall not conduct themselves in a manner that brings the Department into disrepute or reflects discredit upon the employee as a member of the Department or which impairs the effective operation of the Department or employee.
2. Personnel will not use their position for personal gain.
3. Personnel shall not engage in conduct that could constitute a violation of the State or Federal Criminal Codes, or an Ordinance that corresponds with a State Statute, which constitutes a crime.
4. Personnel shall be truthful at all times. This

section does not apply to untruthfulness as part of legitimate investigative activity or negotiation techniques undertaken in the course of duty, such as in undercover work, critical incidents and in accordance with and as permitted by law. Do not speak with disregard for the truth or with lies.

5. Personnel will not make a false/misleading oral or written report.
6. Testify with truthfulness and accuracy and neither suppress/overstate. Answer with readiness/civility in support of the charge.
7. Personnel will not negotiate/arrange for anyone, anything which may allow escape; do not suggest or recommend an attorney.
8. Personnel will not communicate data which may enable persons engaged in (quasi) criminal acts to escape the law or which may permit disposal of evidence.
9. Personnel shall not accept or solicit any form of gratuity for any purpose or reason. Although not all inclusive, a gratuity is defined as money, gift(s), tangible or intangible property, food, beverage, loan, promise, service, or entertainment for the sole benefit of the employee. This section does not prevent an employee from accepting a gift of insignificance or of token value such as a meal provided at a presentation, coffee mug, pen or hat in accordance with the City of La Crosse Ethics Code and Guidelines. This section shall not apply to solicitations or fund raising activities that have received the prior written approval of the Chief of Police.
10. Do not sell items/collect money while on duty without permission from the Chief, Assistant Chief or Captain.
11. Criminal Associations - Personnel shall avoid regular or continuous association, dealings or fraternizations with persons who they know or should know are under criminal investigation or who have an ongoing reputation for involvement in criminal behavior. Personnel are exempt from the above restriction if such an association is specifically required as a matter of police duty or unavoidable because of family relationships.
12. Render aid in civil cases when the City is a party and do not testify in civil cases related to duty unless summoned.

13.1(G) Professionalism:

1. Insubordination/disrespect to supervisors is prohibited; a charge of insubordination shall result against any employee refusing to answer questions when lawfully ordered to do so by a supervisor. A charge of insubordination shall result against any employee for refusing to comply with a lawful order or instructions issued by a supervisor. A charge of insubordination may result in dismissal.
2. All Department personnel shall be civil, orderly, discreet, courteous, patient, and respectful in any situation while on duty. Personnel shall not engage in any unjustified altercation, physical or otherwise, and shall make every effort to refrain from using profanity, insulting, or inflammatory language and gestures.
3. Personnel will not interfere unnecessarily in the private business of any person. Nor shall any personnel use their position with the Department to promote or advertise for a private business without the authorization of the Chief.
4. Sworn personnel will not post bail for persons other than immediate family.
5. Personnel shall not encourage/participate or support strikes, demonstrations, work slow-downs or other action against the Department.
6. Personnel will not use their position within the agency in an attempt solicit political votes; nor shall they allow the use of their photos/names, referencing their employment – for advertising or by testimonial or recommendation of a political candidate.
7. If a member runs for political office, they shall notify the Chief; while running, do not approach anyone for political purpose while on duty; do not use the police position to attempt to influence persons for a political purpose.
8. No illegal game of chance for wagers will be played while on duty or in a Department building or vehicle.
9. No personnel while on duty or when acting in an official capacity, shall conduct union related business, except as allowed by contract.
10. Personnel will not use their position with the La Crosse Police Department to process or serve civil papers on or off duty unless directed by the Department/supervisor.

13.1(H) Respect:

1. Member receiving an in-house call will give rank/title/name.
2. Member getting an outside call: answer "La Crosse Police Department", rank-title/ name.
3. Employees, while on duty, shall not express to the public any prejudice, bias or disparate treatment based upon a person's race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, political affiliation, disability, marital status, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, age, culture group, or any other identifiable characteristic.
4. Personnel shall not promote rumors or engage in criticism which is defamatory, clearly undermines or impairs the operation of the Department, or displays a reckless or knowing disregard for the truth.
5. No employee shall post, mark, deface, or alter, any document (written, electronic or printed) or alter any item within the Department that creates an offensive, obscene, threatening, or derogatory message.
6. Personnel shall not audio and/or video record conversations or communications with another department member without the knowledge of all parties involved in the conversation and/or communications, unless otherwise authorized by the Chief/designee.

13.1(I) Transparency:

1. If requested by a member of the public, all personnel shall verbally provide their complete name (first and last) and Department 4-digit identification/badge number in a courteous manner.
2. Personnel will keep notes to enter data relative to their assignment.
3. Money received as reward, etc. for services on duty, other than salaries, are routed to a supervisor with a memo of how why money was received; it is routed to the Administrative Services Lieutenant who, with the Chief's approval, will turn it over to Finance unless the donor specifies a program.
4. Witness fees paid to personnel for data acquired on the job will be brought to his/her supervisor's attention.

5. Personnel charged with a crime, taken into custody, placed under indictment, identified as a suspect of a crime, or cited for a violation of the law will report such incident to the Chief of Police, as soon as practical.
6. Personnel shall immediately report in writing any loss, suspension or revocation of their driving privilege to the Chief of Police.
7. On-duty employees will remain neutral during any political activity. No nomination or endorsement papers will be left to sign in the Department.
8. Personnel will not hide vehicles unless for a specific police purpose.

Conclusion

The La Crosse Police Department is committed to serving the La Crosse community with dignity and respect. This report represents our commitment to transparency and the high ethical standards required to serve the La Crosse community as a Police Officer.

The La Crosse Police Department is honored to serve La Crosse as, **"Leaders in providing a safe and vibrant community."**



For more information about the La Crosse Police Department and our efforts to increase and maintain transparency with our community, visit our website at:

www.cityoflacrosse.org/police/transparency

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