

CITY OF  
STAMFORD



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# Office of Public Safety, Health & Welfare

## 2023-2024 Annual Report

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## 911 Emergency Communications Center

The City of Stamford's Emergency Communications Center (ECC) is staffed by a group of dedicated civilian Public Safety Dispatchers (PSDs) who work tirelessly to ensure the needs of citizens requesting emergency and non-emergency services, as well as the needs of our first responders (EMS, Fire and Police), are met with promptness and professionalism. Processing these requests can be inherently challenging, as callers are often dealing with traumatic events. PSDs are trained to ask key questions, pertinent to each unique scenario, and obtain the nature and extent of the incident. Once this is ascertained, they need to determine the type and number of resources that are necessary to respond, and dispatch the appropriate units. This past fiscal year, a total of 147,829 non-emergency, text-to 9-1-1 and 9-1-1 calls were received in the ECC.

Technological improvements and upgrades to our infrastructure over the past fiscal year include: 1) deployment of Unication pagers to Stamford Board of Education Administrators which provide immediate up-to-date information concerning public safety issues in and around the schools, 2) enhanced communications capabilities for Police and Fire utilizing the Zello application, 3) expansion of the Automatic License Plate Reader System (ALPRS), and 3) various hardware and application upgrades within the Emergency Communications Center. We continue to emphasize leadership and customer service-based training for all of our employees, while maintaining the required certifications and qualifications. We are expanding our Peer Support Group that has been receiving specialized training in supporting the mental health and well-being of Public Safety Dispatchers, to include other members within our State Region 1.

We continue to work towards a civilianized-model for the supervision of the Emergency Communications Center as a result of a re-organization by the Police Department. We look forward to providing qualified Civilian Supervision that will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the ECC while providing a career-path for our dedicated Public Safety Dispatchers.

As we face the challenges that lie ahead, the Staff and Administrators of the Emergency Communications Center will continue to seek to innovate and improve, while remaining mindful of our responsibilities to each other and the Public.

**Stamford ECC Volume of Calls 2023**

<b>Month</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>Admin</b>	<b>Text</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Jan</b>	4719	8062	4	12785
<b>Feb</b>	4370	6980	7	11357
<b>Mar</b>	4975	8128	25	13128
<b>Apr</b>	5128	7953	10	13091
<b>May</b>	5699	9610	30	15339
<b>Jun</b>	5730	8951	9	14690
<b>Jul</b>	6072	9900	16	15988
<b>Aug</b>	5326	9480	29	14835
<b>Sep</b>	4747	8855	15	13617
<b>Oct</b>	5029	8853	17	13899
<b>Nov</b>	4471	8354	13	12838
<b>Dec</b>	4552	7846	22	12420
<b>Total</b>	60818	102972	197	163987

**Stamford ECC Volume of Calls 2024**

<b>Month</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>Admin</b>	<b>Text</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Jan</b>	4469	8078	28	12575
<b>Feb</b>	4038	7242	12	11292
<b>Mar</b>	4286	8036	26	12348
<b>Apr</b>	4299	8007	17	12323
<b>May</b>	5046	9190	20	14256
<b>Jun</b>	5357	8931	20	14308
<b>Jul</b>				
<b>Aug</b>				
<b>Sep</b>				
<b>Oct</b>				
<b>Nov</b>				
<b>Dec</b>				
<b>Total</b>				

## Fire Department

The mission of the Stamford Fire Department ("SFD") is to protect the lives and property of all citizens of Stamford and its guests from Fire, Emergency Medical, Rescue, and Disasters, natural or manmade, through education, code enforcement, and the response of highly trained Fire personnel. The SFD continuously works towards enriching the safety and effectiveness of its City-wide fire protection system.

We continue to spend considerable time and effort improving response protocols for fires in areas of the city that lack fire hydrants and other reliable water sources.

A quick response from the Fire Department is essential to reducing the impact of a fire or other emergency. We are improving our response times to serve our citizens and guests better. Total response time is measured in three components: alarm processing, turnout, and travel time. In the past, we improved response time by using GPS and sending the closest unit. This time, we focused on alarm processing and turnout time. We are automating our alarm processing time to expedite the notification of calls to the responders. We installed timers by the apparatus doors to notify responders of elapsed time and improve turnout time. With software enhancements and the new station alerting system, we plan to reduce the processing and turnout time by over a minute.

### Line Division

The mitigation arm of the SFD is known as the "Line Division". The Line Division responded to the following lifesaving incidents over the past year:

The SFD responded to 311 fires in 2023-24. Fighting fires is only a portion of the lifesaving work our firefighters perform. Daily, firefighters respond to a wide array of incidents within the city. The highest percentage of calls to the Fire Department are Rescue & Emergency Medical Services (EMS) incidents. The SFD is the "Emergency Medical Technician ("EMT") Level First Responder to all life-threatening EMS calls in the city, and with our extensive training and expertise, many lives are saved annually.

To improve the safety of our firefighters, citizens, and guests in Stamford, a second incident commander (IC) was added to North Stamford. This will reduce the time a Deputy Chief has to respond to critical incidents requiring professional scene management. A quicker and more planned strategic response drastically improves a safer, more successful operation during critical incidents. The additional IC will permanently provide a 24/7 response to fill the role of the Safety Officer at critical incidents and fire scenes

By being the lead emergency response agency to all manner of rescue incidents, the SFD serves the city, its residents, and its guests, with special operations units performing SCUBA Rescue, Heavy Rescue, Motor Vehicle Extrication, High Angle Rescue, and Confined Space Rescue. Additionally, the department now has 30 members trained in Mitigating Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents through FEMA. The department provides technician-level hazardous materials (HAZMAT) response services with the HAZMAT task force operating out of the South End fire station.

The SFD has 33 personnel assigned to Engine 5 and Rescue 1 operating out of Station 5, the Woodside firehouse. These two units comprise the technical rescue response group - and are staffed by 8 personnel per shift. In addition to fire suppression and EMS first responder responsibilities, Engine 5 and Rescue 1 personnel are trained to provide motor vehicle extrication, SCUBA/water rescue, rope rescue, confined space rescue, trench rescue, and structural collapse rescue services.

At the direction of the Fire Chief in his efforts to enhance technical rescue capabilities citywide, a rescue engine, Engine 8, has been placed in service at the Turn of River Fire Department. This rescue engine features additional compartment space to carry technical rescue equipment like that carried on Rescue 1 and is staffed with 4 personnel, bringing the total number of on-duty technical rescue personnel to 12 while enhancing technical rescue services to the Merritt Parkway and North Stamford.

	<b>Fire Department – Trends</b>		
	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
Total number of calls responded to	13,031	12,467	12,384
Total fires	311	389	359
Structure fires	41	43	38
Hazardous condition calls	764	713	815
Rescue/EMS first responder calls	6,873	7,095	7,093
False alarms	2,431	2,319	2,508
Fire investigations	133	133	203
Fire marshal inspections (total)	2,765	2,916	2,963
Fire losses	*\$2,213,500	*\$8,576,252	\$3,604,200

\* Large loss in vehicle fires due to a fire at the Armon Hotel.

## Policy

On July 1, 2024, the Stamford Fire Department added a second full time on-duty Deputy Chief. The city is now considered to be two fire response districts: the Central Fire District and the North Fire District with the dividing line essentially at Bull's Head. The addition of this second command officer necessitated changing the response of the existing Deputy Chief and resulted in numerous changes in the operational responsibilities of all SFD Officers in certain situations. These changing responsibilities and responses necessitated review and editing of virtually all SFD Standard Operating Guidelines and many SFD Policies & Procedures. Hundreds of documents had to be reviewed, taking numerous months to complete. This process had an added benefit of providing an opportunity to update, proofread, and correct the entire SOG library.

## Marine

The Stamford Fire Department's primary marine unit for Long Island Sound, Stamford Fireboat 236, remains a critical asset in our Fire & Rescue operations. Fireboat 236, a 36-foot MetalCraft Marine FireStorm 32, is powered by two 420-HP Cummins inboard motors and is stationed at East Side Station 4. While Czescik Marina remains the official home port for Unit 236, we have begun testing a new operational location near Safe Harbors Yacht Haven outside the hurricane barrier. This strategic shift aims to improve response times and coordination with the nearby police boats.

In Fiscal Year 2023-2024, Fireboat 236 saw continued high demand, particularly during the Memorial Day to Labor Day boating season, when marine traffic is at its peak. In addition to its Long Island Sound maritime rescue operations, other Marine Division assets were instrumental in

numerous land-based water rescues, responding swiftly to citywide flooding incidents impacting streets and homes.

The department also enhanced its fleet by replacing the 2000 Zodiac 13-foot inflatable with a 2024 Whaly 13-foot plastic hull craft designated as Fireboat 214. Powered by the same reliable 30-HP outboard motor, Fireboat 214 responds from Central Fire Station 1. It provides crucial response capabilities for interior city waterways while co-responding with Stamford Fireboat 236 for more significant incidents on Long Island Sound.

Training and education continue to be a key focus of the Marine Division. In the fall of 2023, nearly 80 Stamford firefighters participated in a Marina Specialist Course hosted by the Tri-state Maritime Safety Association. This training enhanced firefighter skills in marina-based firefighting operations, including stretching hose lines down docks and supplying hand lines from fireboats, equipping our personnel with advanced techniques to manage water-based emergencies better. Safe boating education remains a priority, with multiple public Connecticut Safe Boating classes conducted over the past year. Many firefighters earned their Safe Boating Certifications through these sessions, a mandatory requirement for all operators of Fireboat 236 and other departmental vessels. This certification ensures that our operators are well-prepared for routine and complex marine operations.

Further strengthening our water rescue capabilities, the department recently purchased two Oceanid Rapid Deployment Crafts (RDCs), versatile platforms for shallow water, swift water, flood, and ice rescues. These lightweight, inflatable crafts will significantly enhance our ability to respond quickly and efficiently to water-based emergencies. One of these RDCs will be placed into service on Fireboat 236. The other will be put into service in the new Marine Operations Support Vehicle, which now tows Fireboat 214. Training using these new assets will span several months, preparing our crews for various scenarios.

We also focus on expanding our cadre of trained coxswains for Fireboat 236, which requires extensive training in marine navigation, firefighting techniques, and emergency response. Ongoing training for current coxswains is being conducted in-house and with external agencies. The Coast Guard's Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels (OUPV) standards are being reviewed, and we are considering adopting the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) standards for our fireboat operators.

Finally, our Marine Division strongly partners with the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), the Stamford Police Department, and other regional marine agencies. As part of the Bridgeport Area Marine Group subcommittee, we remain committed to interagency cooperation and ensuring the highest level of readiness for marine emergencies in the region. Fireboat 236 and our Marine Program continue to grow and are a valuable asset to the Stamford Fire Department, the City of Stamford, and the local boating community.

## HazMat

The Stamford Fire Department has 83 Hazardous Materials Technicians, of which 39 are currently assigned to the units that make up our "Hazardous Materials Task Force". The Department had 692 Haz-Mat Responses this fiscal year.

Members of our Haz-Mat team continue to be involved in the Fairfield County Hazardous Incident Response Team (FCHIRT), a regional resource available throughout Fairfield County and beyond. Members participate in training sessions and educational symposiums with firefighters from surrounding departments. This fiscal year, our members have participated in approximately 130 combined hours of regional training covering such topics as response to propane emergencies, decontamination procedures, advanced metering, response to lithium-ion battery fires, and

emerging threats. Our members also attended specialized Haz-Mat training in Anniston, AL, and Baltimore, MD.

A member of the SFD continues to serve as co-chairperson of this regional organization. This organization's primary Haz-Mat Response vehicle was moved from Westport to Stamford FD, bringing significant equipment for responding to and mitigating various types of Haz-Mat incidents.

SFD members participated in a region-wide exercise in September, the "State Emergency Response Commission Exercise". The event brought together 14 towns and 20+ Emergency Support Functions in DEMHS Region 1, which successfully collaborated to mitigate a large-scale mock incident. Using State Homeland Security Funds and leveraging funding streams, we have purchased critical equipment, developed plans, and established protocols to respond efficiently to incidents of all sizes while keeping the public and firefighters safe.

Our members continue to collaborate with the Stamford Police Department Bomb Squad, FBI, and US Army Civil Support Team to develop increased interoperability and continuity of response. Recently, our members participated in explosives training delivered by the SPD Bomb Squad and the FBI.

## Fire and EMS Communications

Since 1989, the Stamford Fire Department has been an integral part of the Combined Eg11 Center. The Communications Division includes one captain and four lieutenants responsible for daily supervision and oversight of dispatching and resource allocation for fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) responses. During significant incidents or high call volume periods, the on-duty fire officer may assist the fire dispatcher. Fire and EMS Communication Supervisors ensure efficient resource allocation, guided by their deep understanding of Stamford Fire Department operating guidelines and Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) protocols.

During complex or extended events, the Communications Supervisor adheres to protocols for recalling additional or specialized personnel, including hazardous materials technicians, public safety divers, and fire boat operators. The division is also responsible for notifying essential personnel and initiating mutual aid requests within and outside the city.

In response to the city's rapid growth, fire supervisors have actively updated the CAD system and ensured the accuracy of response plans. The system now improves response times by harnessing "closest to the pin" technology, recommending units based on resource type and capabilities. This technology continuously monitors each unit's location through Automatic Vehicle Locators (AVL), using air modems installed in all fire and EMS vehicles.

The Communications Supervisor also serves as the department's Building Intelligence Officer, utilizing new building intelligence software to access critical information for all addresses within the City of Stamford. This information is relayed to responding fire and EMS units immediately upon dispatch or whenever a field unit requests or requires specific details.

The department recently transitioned to a new station and apparatus notification system provided by Purvis Systems. This new system, which uses digital voice to broadcast all incident responses, has significantly improved communication. It has reduced the turn-out times for all apparatus and provides a consistent, clear dispatch message for responding units, enhancing our overall response efficiency.

Looking ahead to next year, the department is optimistic about launching a drone program. These aerial drones will enable Communications Center staff to deploy and coordinate live visual feeds to



incident commanders directly. This resource will be highly beneficial for water rescues in Long Island Sound and provide multi-dimensional aerial views during structure fires.

## Training Division

The SFD Training Division delivers high-quality training to all members of the Fire Department, utilizing the best practices within our industry. In addition, the assigned members of the Training Division serve as Incident Safety Officers for all working fires or any special hazard incident. The Training Division maintains the training records for all fire department employees and manages ongoing training that focuses on keeping our members safe, knowledgeable, efficient, and protected from the hazards associated with a high-risk occupation. From July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, the Training Division oversaw 24427 hours of training for the members of the SFD. This includes training led by Training Division staff members, company officers, firefighters, external industry professionals, utility professionals, partner agencies, and programs mandated by Connecticut and OSHA.

From September 2023 through December 2023, the Training Division completed a comprehensive 16-week Recruit Academy for thirteen newly hired Stamford Fire Department probationary firefighters. The training included CT State Firefighter I and II, Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations, EMR medical training, "Q" License training, and Pump Operator training. All recruits completed all knowledge-based and practical skill requirements to attain these various State of Connecticut certifications.

Stamford Firefighters are regularly scheduled for mandatory training to maintain knowledge and proficiency throughout a dynamic and challenging career. Today's firefighters are exposed to many incident types and service requests requiring continuous training to properly prepare the knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience to respond safely and effectively.

Some of the training initiatives delivered during the fiscal year include:

- Structural firefighting
- Officer training
- Emergency medical training
- High-rise firefighting operations
- Alternative water supply and static drafting operations
- Rescue diver
- Technical rescue
- Marina Firefighting
- Safe Boating
- Pre-Plan Training
- Propane Emergencies
- Hazardous materials metering

The SFD Training Division is responsible for developing, administering, and implementing health and safety programs for all employees. The Department undergoes an annual physical following the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1582: *Standard on Comprehensive Occupational Medical Programs for Fire Departments*. Implementing this standard for the yearly physical for all department members requires daily monitoring and contact with the medical director and staff members administering all physicals.

In addition to the physical process, the Deputy Chief of Training serves as the Department's Health and Safety Officer. In this role, the Deputy Chief of Training monitors all injury reports and works closely with the City of Stamford Risk Management Safety Officer. The relationship between safety



officers allows both agencies to understand the types, nature, and frequency of injuries occurring within the fire department workforce. These collaborative efforts are working positively for the members of the Department. The Training Division remains fully involved in reducing injuries within the SFD. It monitors and analyzes all reported injuries for trends or common hazard sources to our members. When applicable, this information is used to develop risk mitigation measures and ongoing training focused on the most significant exposure areas.

SFD Training Division staff members oversee the daily operations of the Stamford Regional Fire School (SRFS). The SRFS is one of nine regional fire training facilities across Connecticut and operates with the SFD Training Center at 148 Magee Avenue. The SRFS receives a \$55,432 grant from the State of Connecticut each year, which assists with the operating and equipment costs associated with fire and rescue training.

## Fire Marshal Division

We continue to update our records management system to record fire marshal investigations, inspections, plan reviews, and other office activities. This has included using iPads for recording inspections and investigations in the field, thus speeding up the recording process of the fire marshal's work. These iPads continue to improve our ability to record and access data in the field. Fire Prevention Education and Events have increased exponentially in 2023-2024.

The City of Stamford continues to grow at an amazing rate each year, with thousands of new residential units, new high-rise buildings, and numerous existing buildings undergoing renovations.

The Fire Marshal's Office continues to prioritize inspections of multi-family occupancies. We increased from 928 to 986 building inspections. The number of required plan and permit reviews for building construction has increased from 1,106 to 1,126 from last year. Fire investigations increased from last year's

Fire losses for the 2023-2024 year decreased from last year. Structure fires were \$1,918,700, and vehicle fires were \$294,800, for a total of \$2,213,500, which decreased \$6,362,752 from last year.

Total Inspections – All Inspection Types were 5,516 Inspections.

<b>Existing Building Inspections</b>			
	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
Multi-family	986	928	916
Hoarding	30	10	16
Schools/day care centers	151	115	126
All other occupancies	1,035	1,121	1,127

<b><i>New Construction Inspections &amp; Testing of Life Safety Systems</i></b>			
	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
Certificate of Occupancy	167	289	361
Partial Certificate of Occupancy	23	8	49
Life Safety Systems testing	371	445	368

<b><i>Fire Investigations</i></b>			
	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
Accidental	3	47	85
Incendiary	2	3	4
Undetermined	108	25	43
Follow-up of original investigation	30	58	71

<b><i>Fire Losses</i></b>			
	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
Structure Fires	\$1,918,700	\$4,146,700	\$2,906,100
Vehicle Fires	\$294,800	\$4,429,552	\$698,100
Total	\$2,213,500	\$8,576,252	\$3,604,200

## Vehicle & Equipment Maintenance Division

The SFD is awaiting delivery of two new fire apparatus units from Pierce Manufacturing of Appleton, WI that were ordered during F/Y 22-23. The units ordered in May 2023 are pumpers assigned to Station 2 and Station 7, the Springdale Firehouse. Both engines will be equipped with 1500-gallon-per-minute pumps. One engine will have a larger 1000-gallon water tank to serve the rural areas of North Stamford, and the other a 750-gallon tank for the downtown city district. The engines are expected to be delivered in 2025. The new engines will replace a 2006 and 2009 HME engine that will be kept in reserve as spares.

## Volunteer Division

The Volunteer division consists of 160 Nationally Certified Firefighters. Of these members, 40 are considered Ready for Duty firefighters. This means Volunteer Firefighters who are immediately available and can respond to emergencies. These firefighters work out of seven stations in various parts of the city and belong to one of the five volunteer fire companies.

This year, several training initiatives have been conducted, including Basic Nationally Registered Firefighter 1 and 2, Fire Instructor, and Fire Officer. This will compensate for the members hired by other Career Fire Departments, including Stamford FD.

New equipment, such as Vehicle Extrication tools and new hoses and nozzles, has been delivered and placed in service.

A new program called "Volunteer Safety Officer" has been implemented so that any "Working Fire" in the volunteer district will have a Nationally Registered Safety Officer respond to the scene to assist the Career Deputy Chief with firefighter accountability.

On October 14th, a large-scale Water Supply drill was conducted in North Stamford. Like much of North Stamford, this part of the city does not have fire hydrants, and the Fire Dept must deliver water for firefighting with tanker apparatus. During this drill, a flow of 1100 gallons per minute was delivered utilizing the combined efforts from the Stamford Career and Volunteer depts. as well as out-of-town units. Over the last few years, the Stamford Fire Dept has developed a very strong Mutual Aid procedure whereby Tankers will respond to fire automatically in these non-hydrant districts. This plan is used regularly and is now being implemented in other towns in our area.

<b>Volunteer Fire Membership</b>						
2023-2024	Belltown	Glenbrook	Long Ridge	Springdale	Turn of River	Total Certified
Certified Firefighters	40	21	40	17	42	160
<b>Volunteer Fire Incidents</b>						
2023-2024	Incidents Responded		Total Incidents		Percentage	
Belltown	423		423		100%	
Glenbrook	450		378		84%	
Long Ridge	542		542		100%	
Springdale	624		447		72%	
Turn of River	1,870		364		20%	

## Health & Human Services

The Department of Health and Human Services works to improve the health and safety of those who live and work in City of Stamford by applying the basic principles of health promotion and disease prevention through the programmatic activities undertaken by the department. The local director of health or his authorized agent or the board of health shall enforce or assist in the enforcement of the Public Health Code and such regulations as may be adopted by the Commissioner of Public Health.

### The Department's Vision

Achieving healthy and safe outcomes for the community we serve.

### The Department's Mission

Promote and protect health, wellbeing, and quality of life through advocacy, collaboration, practice, and education.

### The Department's Values

We use an equity lens in all we do  
 We strive to be a trusted source of information and response  
 We maintain excellence through continuous performance improvement  
 We work with and care for our community  
 We are caring and respectful in our approach  
 We hold ourselves accountable

The State of Connecticut's General Statute 19a-207a requires that all Departments of Health engage in the *Ten Essential Services (ES) of Public Health*. These 10 ES are grouped into these major areas:

- I. **Assessment**

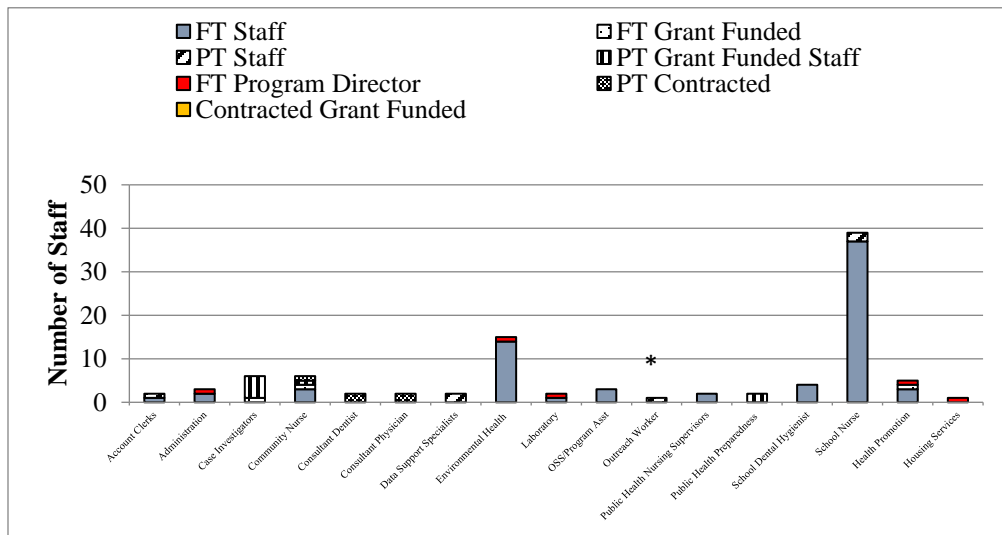
1. Monitor Population Health
2. Investigate and Address Health Hazards
- II. **Policy Development**
  3. Effective Health Communication
  4. Mobilize Community & Partnerships
- III. **Assurance**
  5. Develop Policies
  6. Enforce Laws and Regulations
  7. Ensure Equitable Access to Health Care
  8. Assure a Diverse and Skilled Workforce
  9. Evaluation, Research and Quality Improvement
  10. Support a Strong Public Health Infrastructure

Through its vision, mission, and values, the Stamford Department of Health and Human Services aligns its activities with these ten essential services. Additionally, the department worked in tandem with Stamford Health (Hospital) to create the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and subsequent 2023 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The Director and other staff members continue to participate in the work of the CHIP and track the progress on all measures.

### Staffing

In fiscal year 2023-2024, 97 positions were in place in the Stamford Department of Health & Human Services. Figure 1 below demonstrates the staffing levels by program when fully staffed.

**Figure 1. Stamford Department of Health Staffing by Program Fiscal Year 2023-2024**



The department is overseen by the Director of Health and Human Services with support from a part-time Medical Advisor. The Director of Health and Human Services reports to the Director of Public Safety, Health, and Welfare. The Health Commission provides an advisory role. The department consists of the Environmental Health & Inspections, Nursing & Dental Services, Laboratory, and Health Promotion and Emergency Preparedness and Response Divisions. The Administrative Supervisor and her team support the work of the entire Department.

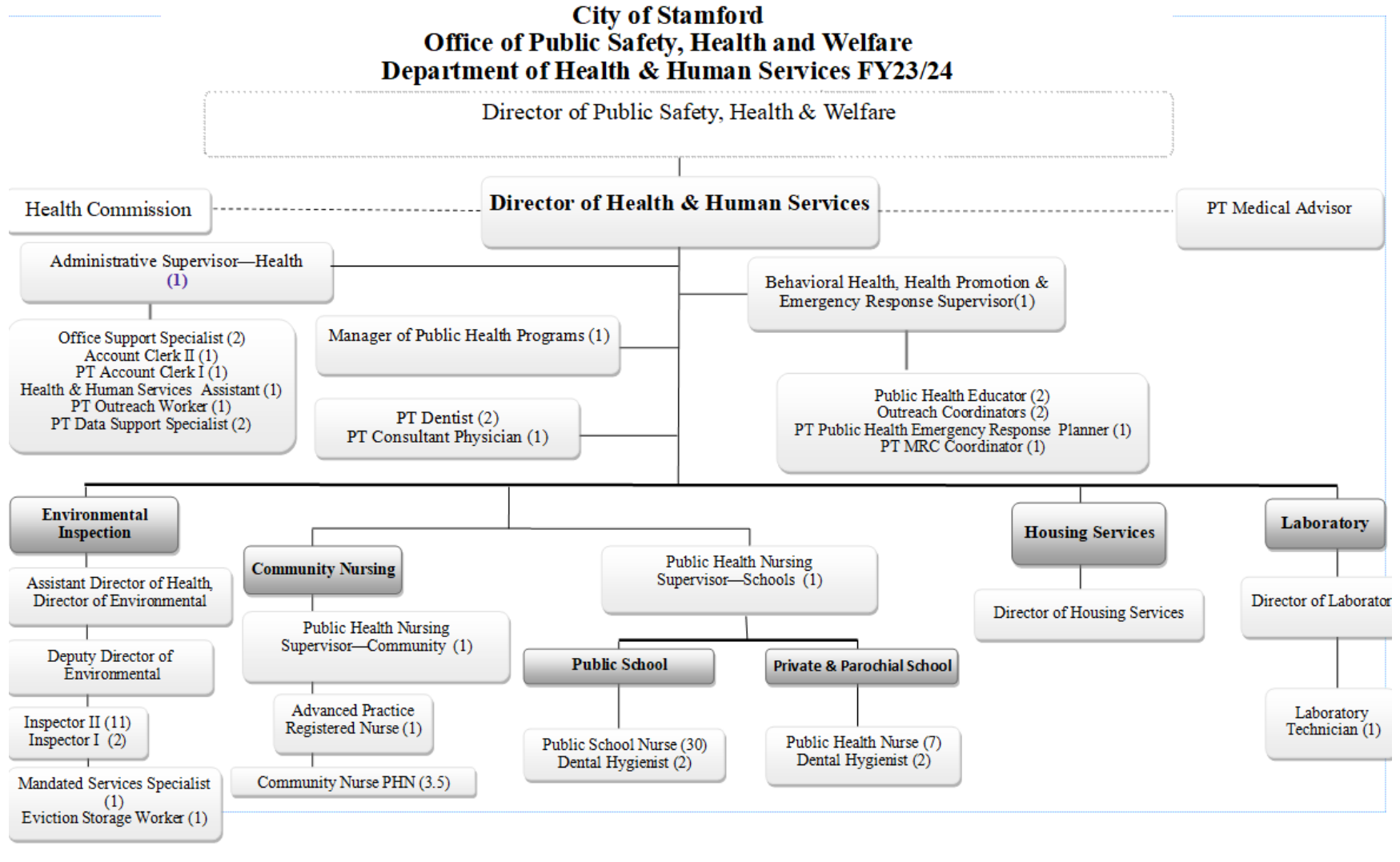
The Department has realized staffing challenges in areas of Environmental Health and Nursing and Dental Services. Losses due to resignations, retirements, medical leaves, and professional shortages have impacted the leadership team who have had to maintain the same level of response with fewer staff.

In October 2023, The Department hired a Manager of Public Health Programs to support the work of all divisions, oversee the strategic plan, assist with budget and grant management, workforce development and performance management. The position was possible by replacing the existing but unfilled position of Director of Nursing and Dental Services. The manager has made considerable progress toward setting up systems to track department progress and support staff.

In spring of 2024, the Department was reorganized eliminate the Social Services Division and incorporate staff under Health Promotion and Environmental Health. A newly created position of Director of Housing Services was created to address housing, the third highest health need identified in the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment.

**Figure 2** shows the organizational chart for the department. Some grant funded temporary staff such as the case investigations team are not included on the chart.

**Figure 2. Stamford Department of Health & Human Services Organizational Chart Fiscal Year 2023-2024**



## Administration

The administrative division works to enhance departmental procedures, systems, and customer service efficiencies. The continued enhancement of city systems allows for interdepartmental communication, transparency, and record retention. The Administrative Supervisor continues to spearhead the licensing and permitting system as the department seeks to transition to another vendor platform. The current system ViewPoint Cloud is limited in functionality of inspections, record retention, and status features, which led to the decision being made to work with another vendor, Oracle/OPAL (Online Permitting and Licensing).

As the department and technology continues to evolve, the Administrative Supervisor updates and creates policies & procedures for division programs; providing clear and uniformed processes for how the department conducts business.

A major renovation of the reception area occurred during this FY requiring the Administrative Supervisor to collaborate with the Facilities Division. This is phase one of a larger renovation project for the entire floor.

The department has applied for public health accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). To be accredited, the department must complete the standards within ten domains, submitting evidence of having met each standard. Department staff has spent many hours writing/updating policies and procedures and obtaining examples of coinciding work. Included in the required documentation are a strategic plan, performance management system and workforce development plan.

Leadership team staff was trained in Lean Six Sigma quality improvement process and identified projects to improve efficiency and effectiveness in key areas. The project related to administration was conducted and designed to improve internal and external communication flow in the department. The project involved identifying unused telephone lines, revising the phone tree and creating a comprehensive department guide for staff to use in communication.

As part of the department's workforce development plan, a workforce development survey was distributed to all staff in November 2023. Education and training resources were identified based on staff needs and distributed. Some team members took advantage of individualized growth plans developed with their supervisors with support from the Manager of Public Health Programs.

The department, in conjunction with the Grants Department administers many grant programs that support the work of each division. The Manager of Public Health Programs and Administrative Supervisor assist with fiscal management and ensure the program deliverables are met. Current grant programs include Covid response, immunizations, STD/TB, public health emergency response, workforce development, blood pressure monitoring, senior transportation, health insurance enrollment, air quality monitoring, and health promotion.

## Mental Health and Wellness

The Youth Mental Health Alliance (YMHA) a coalition of the Mayor's Office, Dept of Health and Human Services, Health Commission, Stamford Public Schools. Vita Health and Wellness Partnership (and over 35 community agencies) formed to promote a community-based awareness and response to the mental health crisis among youth with an emphasis on universal promotion of mental health wellness, prevention, early intervention, and targeted services/care coordination dovetailed into the existing or newly created mental health infrastructure. The Department supports the Alliance with participation by the Director as a lead facilitator and procuring grant



funding for community trainings and media communications. Many hours of staff time are dedicated to the Alliance by participating on workgroups and developing specific projects.

The Director of Health and Human Services leads the Postvention team, responding to untimely deaths or death by suicide in the Stamford community. Data related to this program is reported later in the report.

Wastewater testing for substances was added this FY. The department partnered with Biobot Analytics and the City's Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) to collect biweekly wastewater samples to test for substances. The Biobot program was funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse as a national program. Stamford was selected to participate. Data was share with Stamford Police and Liberation Programs.

Additional programs are outlined throughout the report.

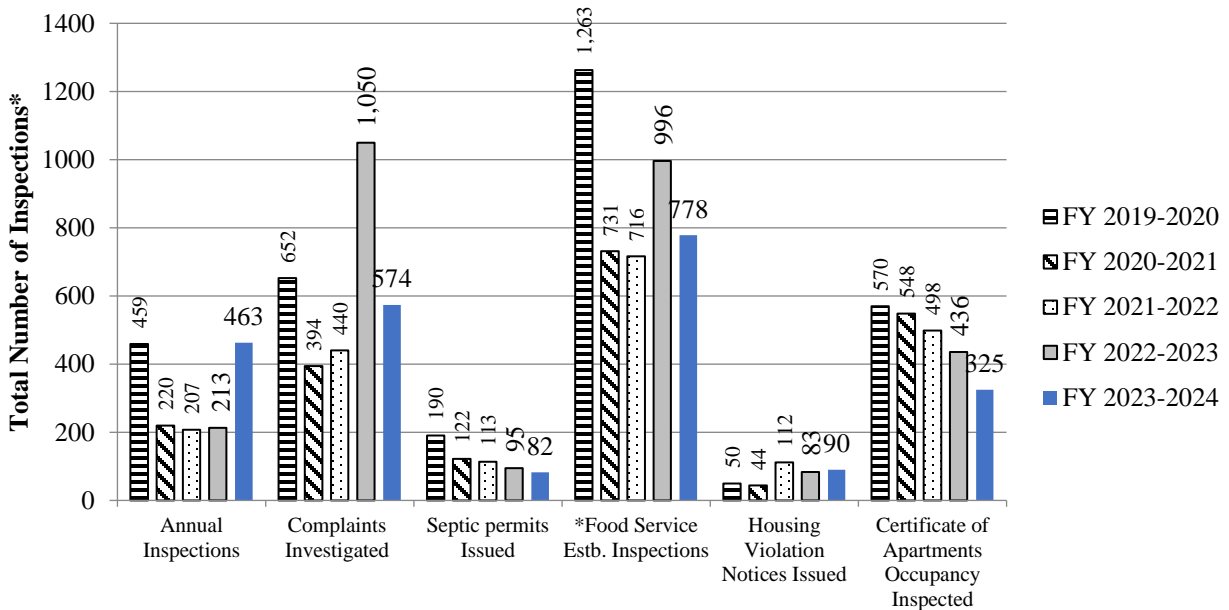
## Environmental Inspections

The Division continues to be short staffed, as there is a shortage of public health professionals especially in Environmental Health. During this FY, two Inspector I's were promoted to Inspector II. One continues to work to obtain certification for food. Two Inspector I's were hired in spring 2024. The department has one open Inspector II position.

The licensing and permitting program used by the Division is constantly being refined by the Administrative Supervisor to better be able to meet the needs of both internal and external users. Enhancements have been made to the licensing system to help all users navigate the database. At the same time, the Director of Environmental Health and Inspections together with the Administrative Supervisor are working to ensure the successful transition from Viewpoint Cloud system to the city's Oracle/OPAL licensing and permitting system.

The Environmental Inspections program addresses environmental issues that affect the health and safety of the public. These include but are not limited to issues related to housing, lead, radon, mold, asthma, air pollution, food, daycare, bedbugs, pools, weights and measures, rodent, septic, permits, stagnant water, water pollution, noise, and general complaints. In fiscal year 2023-2024, there were 2,312 environmental health related activities. Figure 3 below shows the five-year activity trends.

**Figure 3. Environmental Health and Inspections Five-year Activity Trends**



\*Includes repeat inspections.\*

**Annual Inspections** are conducted on Assisting living, Cosmetology/Personal Care, Daycares, Garbage Trucks, Hotels, Public Beaches, Rooming Houses, and Schools.

**Complaint investigations** are conducted throughout the year on a variety of issues including Air pollution, Bedbugs, Housing, Garbage, Lead and No Heat.

**Septic permits** are issued on subsurface sewage regarding new systems, additions, repairs, subdivision reserves, and code complying areas.

**Food inspections** are conducted throughout the year on all food establishments including retail establishments and temporary events.

**Housing notices/orders** are issued to owners or tenants who are in violation of the Connecticut Public Health Code, General Statutes of the State of Connecticut and Stamford City Code of Ordinances.

**Certificate of Apartment Occupancy (CAO) inspections** are inspections on structures that contain four (4) units or more and are at least 15 years of age or older.

Operation safe house inspections, which focus on illegal and unsafe housing matters, was reinstated in October 2022 and continued through this FY. This increased awareness regarding enforcement of housing code governing safe and healthy housing.

A certificate of apartment occupancy (CAO) inspection relies on owners calling to indicate that a dwelling-unit has been vacated, has been repaired or renovated, and is ready for inspection before a new tenant takes occupancy. As such, this type of inspection is based on the owner's knowledge of the regulation and willingness to comply.

Under the State of Connecticut Public Act 17-93, enacted on October 1, 2017, food establishments are classified as Class I, II, III, V dependent upon the type of food prepared, served and sold and population served. The number of inspections required is based on classification. The division also manages vendors for temporary events and related inspections. Temporary Food Service Establishment means a food service establishment that operates at a fixed location for a temporary time-period, not to exceed two (2) weeks, in connection with a transitory gathering. Much staff time

is dedicated to this activity during the spring, summer and fall months to ensure public health and safety for attendees.

A new Food and Drug Administration (FDA) food code was adopted by the CT Department of Public Health in February of 2023. As a result, the FDA food inspection form has been created in ViewPoint Cloud pending approval for use from the CT Department of Public Health. This new FDA code focuses on public health risk factors and good retail practices. In addition, the adopted FDA food code discourages food inspection failures and concentrates on promoting education and food safety awareness among establishment owners, managers, and food workers.

The number of food establishment inspections decreased this FY. There are multiple reasons for this decrease including loss of certified food inspectors and increased time to complete inspections using the FDA Food Code and corresponding form. Ensuring compliance in completing required inspections remains a focus for the department.

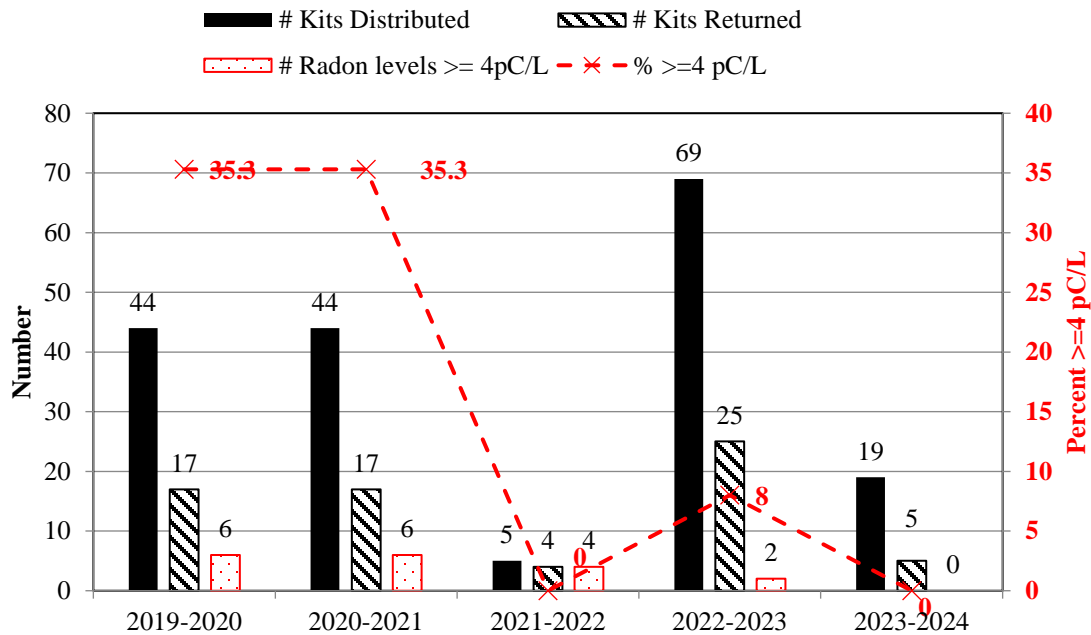
### Radon Testing Program

In January 2022, the Department of Health in collaboration with the State Department of Public Health initiated the free voluntary Radon Testing program for home owners. Initially, radon surveillance was conducted during the months of January to March. In 2020, DPH changed this to an all-year activity.

The Stamford Department of Health and Human Services offers home owners free radon kits that the owner installs in his or her home to test the air for radon. The kits are returned to the Department of Health and Human Services where they are sent to a laboratory for testing. When the radon test results are equal to or higher than  $\geq 4$  pC/L; which is considered to be harmful, homeowners are given advice on how to remediate their homes.

Figure 4 below shows the radon results since voluntary testing started. Given that this is a convenience sample, the positivity rate may not be reflective of the actual positivity rate of homes in the city. The lower number of kits distributed in fiscal year 2018-2019 is most likely due to the fact that the radon public awareness activities did not occur that year. In 2020 outreach resumed and the number of kits requested increased by 158%. However, only 38.6% of the kits were returned compared to the prior two years. Numbers remained the same for 2020-2021. Response was very low in 2021-2022. The low level of interest in the program, highlighted the need to increase publicity of this important environmental health program. With increase publicity by CTDPH, Region 1 and Stamford Department of Health and Human Services, there was renewed interest in the program and 69 kits were distributed. Although participants are reminded to return the kit, less than half are returned for processing. The number of kits distributed this year was decreased again, due to the lower level of outreach and advertising, highlighting the need to remind residents of the availability of this service.

**Figure 4. Radon Testing of Air Samples in Homes**



### Mosquito Control Program

The Environmental Health and Inspections Division inspects all reports of environmental areas and conditions that may potentially support the growth of mosquitoes. Whenever possible, inspectors take appropriate actions to eliminate mosquito-breeding sites and prevent the development of adult mosquitoes.

The creation of a Mosquito Control Program within the Environmental Inspections Division has enabled the inspectors to more effectively eliminate mosquitoes and the diseases carried by them. Health promotion information to increase community awareness through education on how to reduce mosquito exposures and mosquito breeding sites around commercial and home environments is disseminated through the media.

In an effort to suppress the development of adult mosquitoes through the elimination of mosquito larvae, the city's entire catch basin system is treated with a larvicidal product through the services of a contracted agent. Larviciding currently occurs four times per year to maximize the efficacy of the larvicide.

During the 23-24 FY the program responded to complaints involving mosquitoes and stagnant water.

### Mandated Services: Eviction Storage & Relocation

#### Eviction Storage

After a residential eviction or foreclosure has occurred Connecticut law requires any unclaimed property of the evicted tenant(s) to be removed from the rental premises (by a state marshal) and delivered to a municipally designated location for storage. Possessions remaining unclaimed after

fifteen days may be sold at a public auction. In Stamford, evictees possessions are delivered to, and stored in city-owned bins located at Magee Avenue.

The Department's Mandated Services Supervisor is responsible for administering the eviction storage program and, as appropriate to individual circumstances, assisting evictees in locating safe, secure permanent housing or placement in temporary shelters. The number of evictions in Fiscal year 22-23 tripled compared to the last 2 years. In February 2022 pandemic related eviction prevention protection lifted, and the State added additional funding to support eviction prevention which became exhausted. Payment agreements and one time help from local nonprofit organizations is the only option for many to remain housed. Significant increases in rent have also contributed to the rise in evictions.

Relocation

The State of Connecticut Unified Relocation Assistance Act mandates that municipalities must provide certain assistance to individuals displaced due to their code enforcement actions. Tenants displaced by housing code enforcement receive assistance with finding a new apartment, relocation costs and emergency housing as mandated by the Uniform Relocation Assistance Act. Relocation cases require a great deal of mediation between landlord and tenants and coordination with multiple departments and agencies to get the tenant rehoused.

In 2023-2024 staff worked hard on landlord accountability. The objective is to have landlords take more financial responsibility up front, to reduce the City's budgetary expenditures. Ensuring that landlords provide relocation assistance upfront reduced the department's expenditures on moving, temporary housing and permanent rehousing which produced a budget cost savings.

Trend data pertaining to mandated services are located on Table 1.

Table 1: Mandated Services

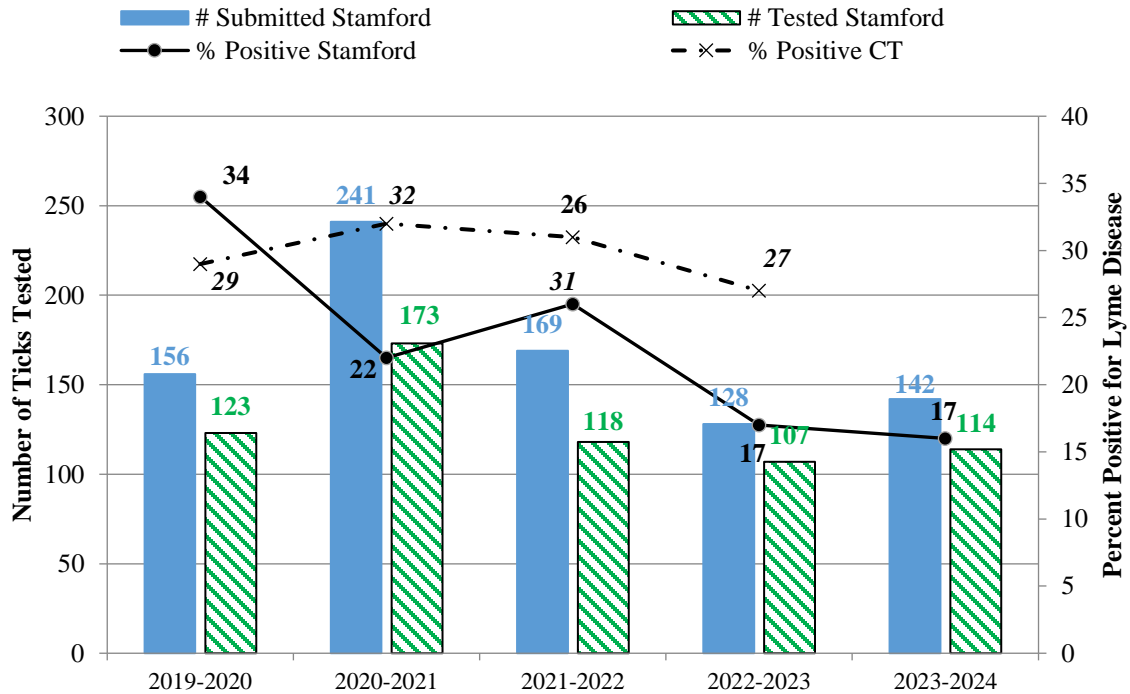
	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>
Evictions	56	90	251	201
	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	
Relocation Services	17	18	24	40

Laboratory Division

The Laboratory provides supportive services to the various divisions of the Department of Health and Human Services. For example, the above programs, radon testing and larviciding, are managed as a collaboration between the laboratory and environmental health staff. The Laboratory Director manages the Purple Air Monitoring program and will assist in the implementation of an additional air quality monitoring program funded by the Environmental Protection Agency. He also assists the public health clinic staff with vaccine management and response to reports of foodborne illness. Additionally, the laboratory conducts water testing, tick identification, facilitates animal rabies testing and tick testing for Lyme disease, and provides public health information to the citizens of Stamford. Every year the laboratory also tests the beach waters weekly in Stamford beginning in May and continuing through Labor Day. A total of 289 beach samples were collected and tested in FY 2023-24. Based on test results, beaches may be closed to swimming and shoreline activities.

Figure 5 shows the five-year trend of *Ixodes scapularis* tick (a vector for Lyme disease) submissions and the percent that tested positive for Lyme disease. The rate of Lyme disease positivity in ticks collected in Stamford has traditionally been similar to the overall rate in the State of Connecticut.

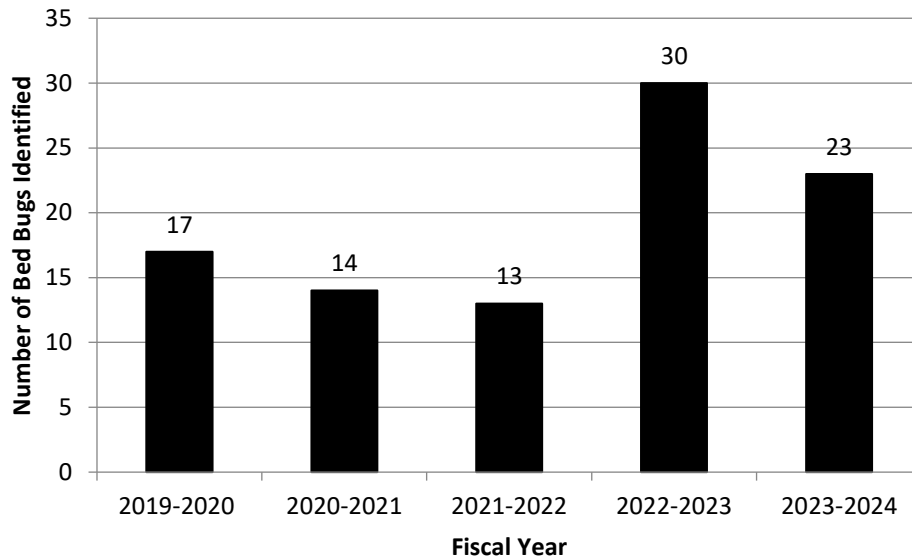
**Figure 5. *Ixodes scapularis* Ticks Tested in Stamford vs. Statewide and Percent Positive for Lyme Disease**



### Bedbugs

Figure 6 shows the number of bedbugs identified over the past five years. Connecticut State Law requires landlords to remediate bedbug problems. Based upon complaints reported to the Department of Health and Human Services, environmental inspectors will perform a home inspection on rental properties and if bedbugs are found, issue orders to the landlords for extermination. Sometimes school staff will submit a specimen. Guidance is provided to school staff on mitigation.

**Figure 6. Number of Bed Bugs Identified**



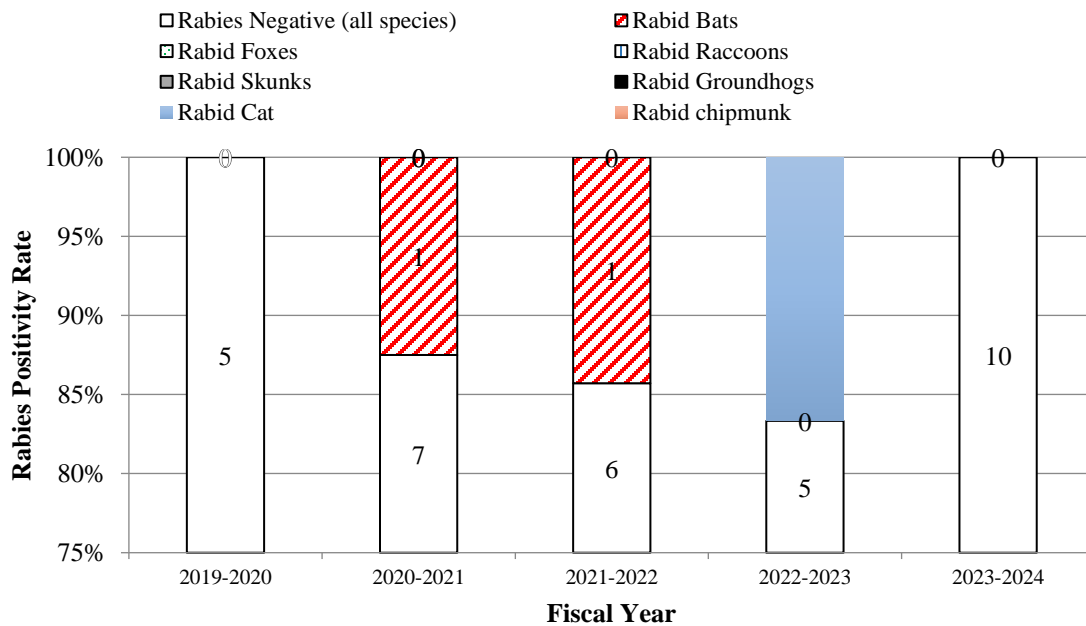
### Rabies Testing

Rabies testing is conducted on suspected rabid animals that have had either human or domesticated animal contact. The Laboratory, along with the city's Animal Control program, ensures that animal specimens that need to be submitted for rabies testing are transported to the State Public Health Laboratory for testing. The Laboratory or Animal Control follows up with residents who have been exposed to an animal that tests positive for rabies to advise them to seek medical attention.

Figure 7 shows the five-year trend in samples submitted for testing and the percent that tested positive for rabies by species.



**Figure 7. Animal Rabies Testing**

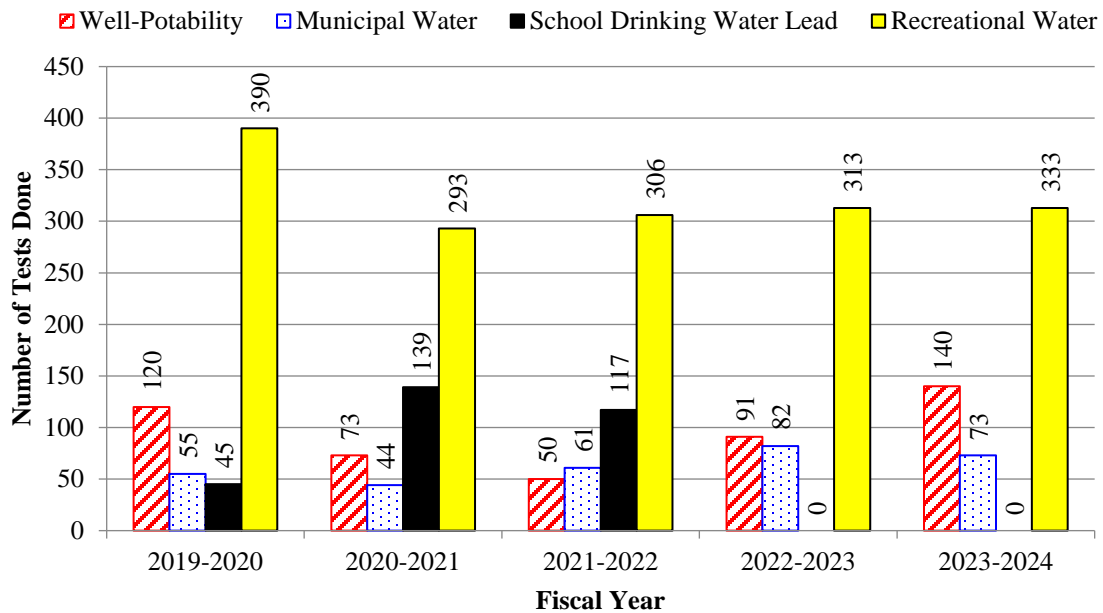


### Water Testing

The Laboratory's core activities relate to water testing. For a fee, municipal water testing for lead and copper, well water testing for potability, recreational water testing is available to the public. The Laboratory conducts biennial testing of school drinking water for lead and does beach water testing as is required by Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 98, Section 7-148.

Figure 8 shows the five-year trends for water testing. Well potability testing requests decreased slightly during the COVID pandemic while recreational and municipal water testing requests have remained relatively constant.

**Figure 8. Water Testing**



### Public Health Nursing and Dental Hygiene Services

The Public Health Nursing program consists of Community Nursing and School Nursing and in combination with the School Dental Hygiene program supports ES 1 to 10. Many residents take advantage of the breadth of nursing and dental services the department offers including access to medical care.

#### Community Nursing

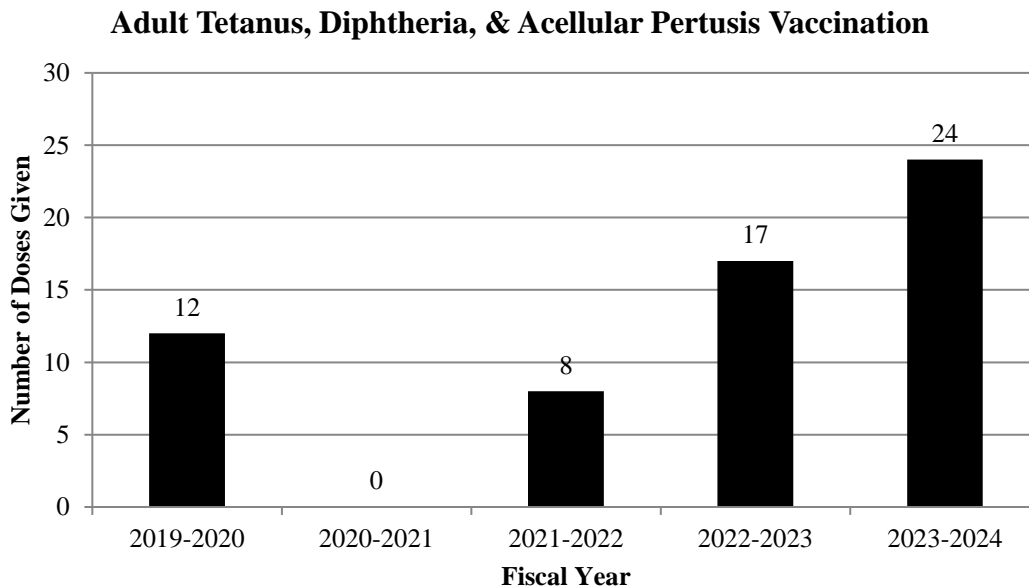
Community nurses provide oversight to multiple programs: Cocoon (Adult Vaccine) Program, Influenza Prevention Program, Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) Program, the Tuberculosis (TB) Program, Well Child Program, Pediatric Lead Prevention Program, Reportable Diseases, and the Adult Wellness Program. Community Nurses also participate in outbreak investigations and Public Health Emergency Response. To improve efficiency and effectiveness of services provided, the clinic staff undertook an improvement project to increase appointment compliance and decrease the no show rate. Compliance increased from 87% to 93% and the no show rate decreased from 8% to 7%.

#### Cocoon Program

The Cocoon Program is a state funded program sponsored by the State Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that provides free tetanus diphtheria and acellular pertussis (Tdap) vaccine to any adult family member who has contact with an infant. The goal is to protect the child against pertussis infection (aka Whooping Cough) that may be transmitted from the adult caregiver to the infant. The vaccine is provided for free by Sanofi Pasteur through a program the State Department of Public Health and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Figure 9 shows an improvement in number of doses given since, just post the Covid19 Pandemic 2021-2022 & 2022-2023. While improved the relatively low administration of the vaccine may be attributed to several reasons such as, pharmacies now offer this vaccine, persons with insurance are getting the vaccine from their providers, and lack of awareness that the vaccine is provided by the Adult Vaccine Program. Health promotion efforts will be directed to this going forward.

**Figure 9. Cocoon Program Five-Year Trends**



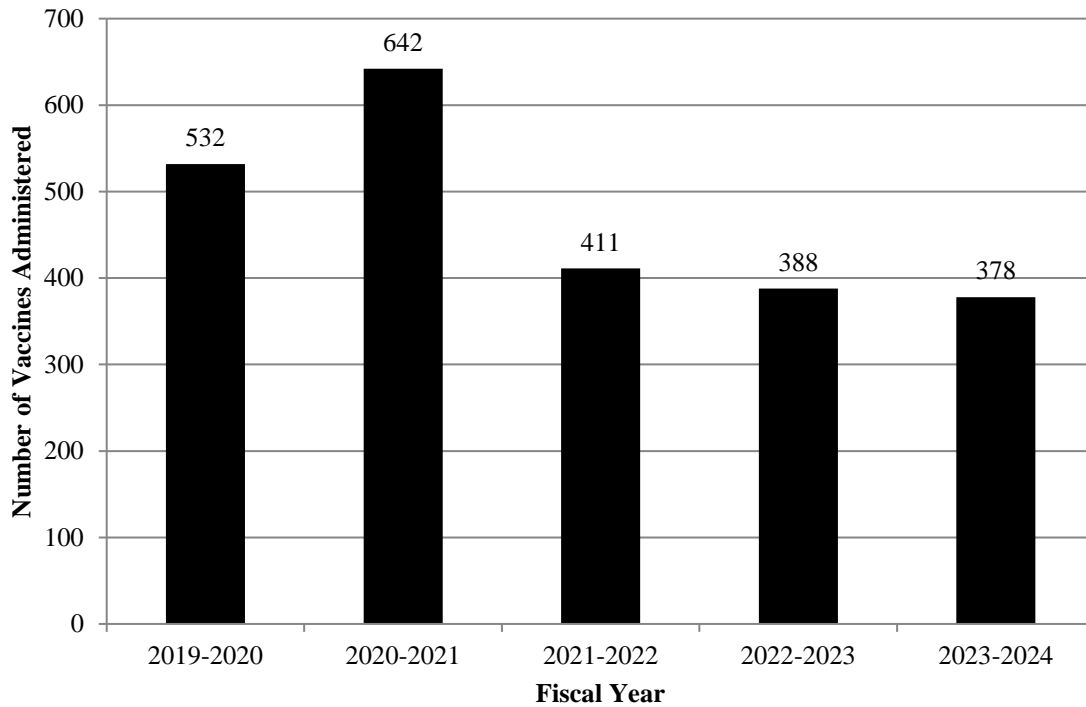
### Influenza Prevention Program

The goal of the influenza prevention program is to increase the vaccination rates in the city, thereby increasing herd immunity. Herd immunity will better prepare the city to withstand the effects of an influenza pandemic. To help achieve this goal, the Department of Health and Human Services provides influenza vaccine to all eligible persons' ages six months or older. The Department of Health and Human Services takes part in the Children's Vaccines Program (CVP) for our infants and school age children up to 18years old providing free immunizations for that population.

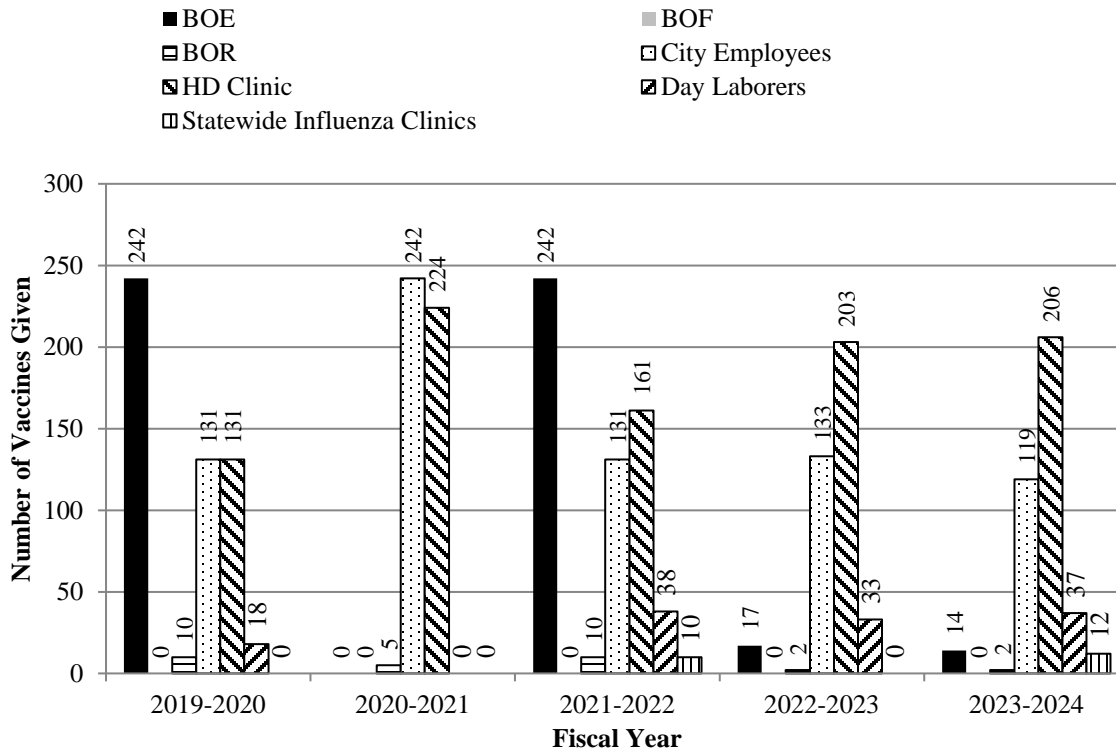
The 2023-2024 annual Influenza campaign was "kicked off" September 30th, 2023 at the Yerwood Community Center during the Family Day Celebration where Mayor Caroline Simmons, Director & Assistant Director of Health & Human Services Jody Bishop & Ebrima Jobe respectively, Medical Advisor Dr. Henry Yoon, and Director of Infectious Disease at Stamford Health, Dr. Asha Shah all spoke to the importance of getting immunized against influenza during the 2023-2024 season. Partnering with the City's Human Resources Department, Flu vaccination was offered to all City of Stamford and Board of Education employees, and Boards of Finance and Representatives members. Vaccine clinics were conducted at the Stamford Senior Center, senior housing facilities, women and men shelters, and to the day worker population ensuring vaccine availability to vulnerable populations. Vaccine demand was high during the pandemic and the department sponsored drive through Flu vaccine clinic in the fall of 2020 had high attendance. The years following have seen a decrease in uptake, which could be due to increased access to flu vaccines at pharmacies and provider offices for insured residents. The department continues to ensure vaccine available for the uninsured.

Figures 10 and 11, respectively, show the five-year trends in the adult influenza vaccine administration and the populations targeted.

**Figure 10. Influenza Vaccination Program**



**Figure 11. Influenza Vaccination by Population Served**



## Covid Vaccine Program

The rollout of the new Covid vaccine for the 23-24 respiratory virus season changed from local health to primary administration to adults by pharmacies. Local Health had access to vaccines for uninsured which ensured the department could promote health equity. Community nurses were able to administer 99 vaccines to the uninsured population at the public health community clinic or at community partner sites. Three hundred and twenty-two (322) vaccines were administered to children under the CT Vaccines for Children Program (CVP). Since pediatricians often do not offer the Covid-19 vaccine, the clinic is popular for children. In addition, the community nurses administered 44 Covid vaccines at the Stamford Senior Center. They coordinated with a pharmacy provider to administer Covid vaccines at five senior housing sites and one at the Veteran's Resource Center. Thirty-two (32) Covid vaccines were administered to the homebound population.

The case investigation and outbreak response team responded to 2,603 reported cases of COVID-19 during the fiscal year. Of these reported cases, 579 were found to be exempt from our investigation due to being monitored by either a long-term care facility or hospital. Another 181 were deemed not to be active cases due to being in the 90-day period following their latest infection. Of the remaining 1,843 cases, 263 were unreachable or did not respond to repeat attempts at making contact. However, 1,580 cases were successfully contacted by the team and were provided with guidance relevant to their condition and living situation. This included educational information on vaccines, test to treat, antiviral medication and advice to follow up with their healthcare provider.

The team also provided guidance and mitigation strategies to Stamford's long-term care facilities (i.e., nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and memory care units). Additionally, the team conducted multiple check-ins each week to stay on top of any emerging COVID-19 outbreaks. There were 535 cases of COVID-19 reported at these facilities during the monitoring period, including 373 resident cases and 162 staff cases.

## Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Program

The Stamford Department of Health's Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Clinic is partially supported by a grant from CTDPH that is funded through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The program provides comprehensive diagnostics, treatment, and counseling for the most common STDs including syphilis, gonorrhea, Chlamydia spp., Trichomonas spp., and Herpes viruses. The program assists with the identification of the sexual partners of persons diagnosed with a STD and offers prophylactic treatment when appropriate. Service is free of charge to anyone 13 years or older. Free HIV testing is also offered through the program and positive individuals are linked to care through partnership with Stamford CARES (Coalition for AIDS Resources, Education and Services), a Family Centers program. Hepatitis A and B vaccines are provided by DPH and are offered free of charge to STD clinic patients. Table 2, details the City of Stamford trend in STD positivity rates, which are reflective of the national trend. The positivity rate for syphilis decreased for the second year, and other STDs tested showed a decline during this FY. The number of initial visits remains stable.

**Table 2. Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic Five-Year Trends**

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
No. of initial visits	245	248	273	269	277
No. of follow up visits <sup>1</sup>	47	96	248	313	57
No. of STD tests <sup>2</sup>	256	659	521	588	901
No. (%) of syphilis positive	7 (2.7)	21(9.9)	30 (12.0)	13 (5.0)	6 (2.2)
No. (%) of <i>Chlamydia</i> spp. positive	13 (5.1)	17(8.0)	25 (9.0)	38 (14.1)	32 (11.5)
No. (%) of gonorrhea positive	5 (2.0)	7 (3.3)	11 (4.0)	17 (6.3)	14 (5.0)
No. of HIV tests done (% positive)	129 (0)	206 (.5)	248 (.008)	247 (0)	259 (0)
No. of pregnancy tests done (% pregnant)	0	0	0	4 (0)	0

<sup>1</sup>Follow up visits are for counseling, medications, second dose of vaccines, rechecks for positive tests, and recheck if the patient remains symptomatic.

<sup>2</sup>When STD testing is conducted, each patient is routinely tested for syphilis, gonorrhea, and *Chlamydia* spp. at the initial visit if there was no prior testing done or if testing was done and the patient is still symptomatic at initial visit. If needed, at the follow-up visit some patients are retested if they remain symptomatic

All persons who were diagnosed with a STD were treated in the clinic. The STD grant requires that clients are treated within seven (7) days of their initial visit. To ensure compliance, treatment is usually started empirically and is changed if needed based on the confirmatory diagnosis. Not all patients treated are tested at the clinic; some are referred for treatment based on positive test results elsewhere.

### Tuberculosis (TB) Program

The Stamford Department of Health has a primary responsibility for preventing and controlling the spread of TB. To meet this challenge successfully, the TB control program engages in a number of activities that include the following key components:

- Conducting overall planning and development of policy
- Identifying persons who have clinically active TB
- Managing persons who have or are suspected of having TB disease
- Providing directly observed therapy (DOT) to persons with active TB. DOT is a process during which the nurse observes the patient take his or her TB medications
- Identifying and assessing the contacts of persons who are identified with active communicable TB
- Identifying and managing persons infected with TB
- Providing laboratory and diagnostic services
- Providing education to staff, clients, and providers about the prevention, diagnosis, and control of TB.

The Stamford Department of Health Adult TB Clinic services are conducted via a collaborative agreement between the Department of Health and Human Services, Optimus Health Care, and Stamford Health's Pulmonary Division. Table 2 describes the five-year TB trends. It should be noted

that none of these TB cases resulted in exposures that caused new infections. This is most likely a result of the Department's efforts to encourage providers to increase TB screening to facilitate early detection and treatment of TB cases and to communicate with the Department for quick involvement. Direct Observation Therapy (DOT) to ensure that patients adhere to medication regimens remains the cornerstone of effective TB treatment. DOT is a labor-intensive process that requires many nursing interactions with each patient. The clinic conducts rigorous contact investigations and continuously identifies persons who show latent TB and recommend treatment to prevent subsequent TB disease and transmission. Many referrals for evaluation and follow up are received from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention monthly.

**Table 3. Tuberculosis Five-Year Trends**

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
No. of new TB cases	6	6	7	9	4
No. (%) of new cases that are adults	6 (100)	6 (100)	7 (100)	9 (100)	4 (100)
No. (%) of multi-drug resistant TB cases <sup>1</sup>	1 (16.7)	1 (16.7)	1 (14.3)	0	0
No. of extremely drug resistant TB cases <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0	0	0
No. of visits to client on DOT <sup>3</sup>	1,300	1280	1820	1920	706
No. of tuberculosis skin tests and or blood tests for TB administered	51	18	106	63	80
No. (%) of positive TB tests	6 (7.2%)	4 (22.2%)	5 (4.72%)	8 (12.7%)	10(12.5%)

<sup>1</sup>Multi drug resistant (MDR) are cases in which the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* strain is resistant to isoniazid and rifampin

<sup>2</sup>Extensively drug resistant (XDR) are cases in which the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* strain is resistant to isoniazid and rifampin and any fluoroquinolone and at least one of three injectable drugs namely Amikacin, Kanamycin, or Capreomycin

<sup>3</sup>DOT – directly observed therapy. This is used to ensure that persons who have active communicable TB disease are compliant with taking their medications.

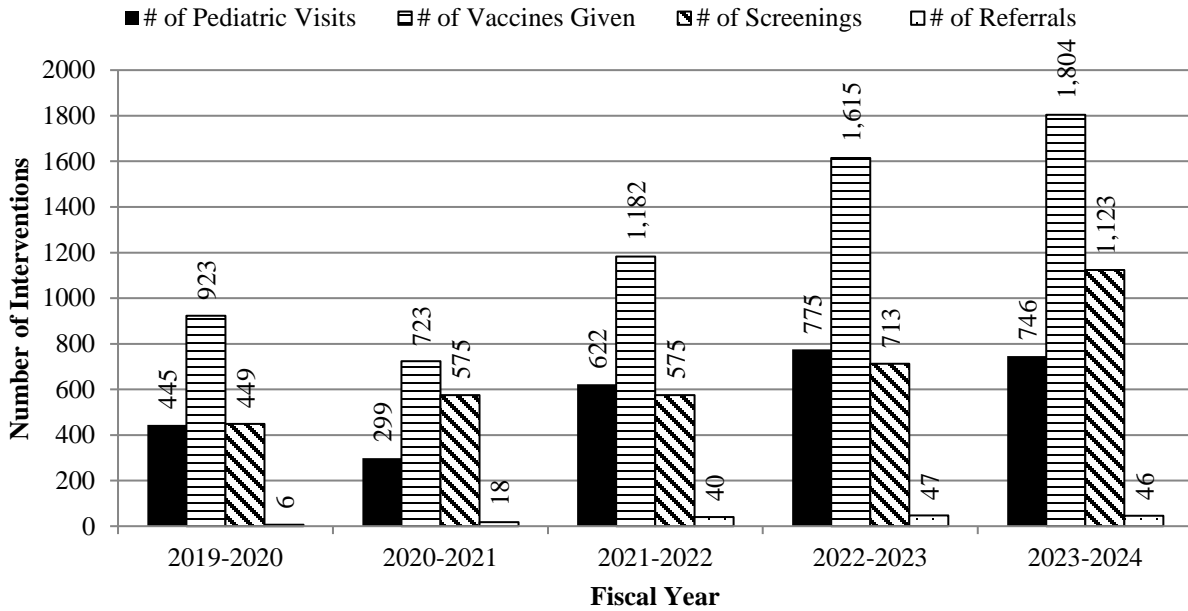
### Well Child Clinic

The Stamford Well Child Clinic provides primarily underinsured or uninsured children with physicals, vaccinations, medical screenings, social and psychological needs assessments, referrals to primary care and necessary referrals to specialists. Medical providers, school nurses, the Stamford Health and other sources refer children to the clinic. Well Child Clinic visits are also used to educate families about child development, nutrition, sleep, safety, diseases, other health topics, and available community resources. The ultimate goal is to link children to a medical home to ensure continuity of care for the child. The clinic is an available resource for families who need physicals and vaccinations for the children to enter school. Vaccines are given for free to the Department of Health from CTDPH via the Federal Vaccine for Children program to ensure that children are up-to-date on their vaccines. FY 21-22 began to see an increase in visits toward pre-pandemic levels as parent's attempt to ensure their children are up-to-date with physicals and vaccines. With the influx of new families to Stamford, especially those new to the country, the demand for school physical and vaccines have increased greatly.

Figure 12 details the five-year trends.



**Figure 12. Stamford Well Child Clinic Five-Year Trends**

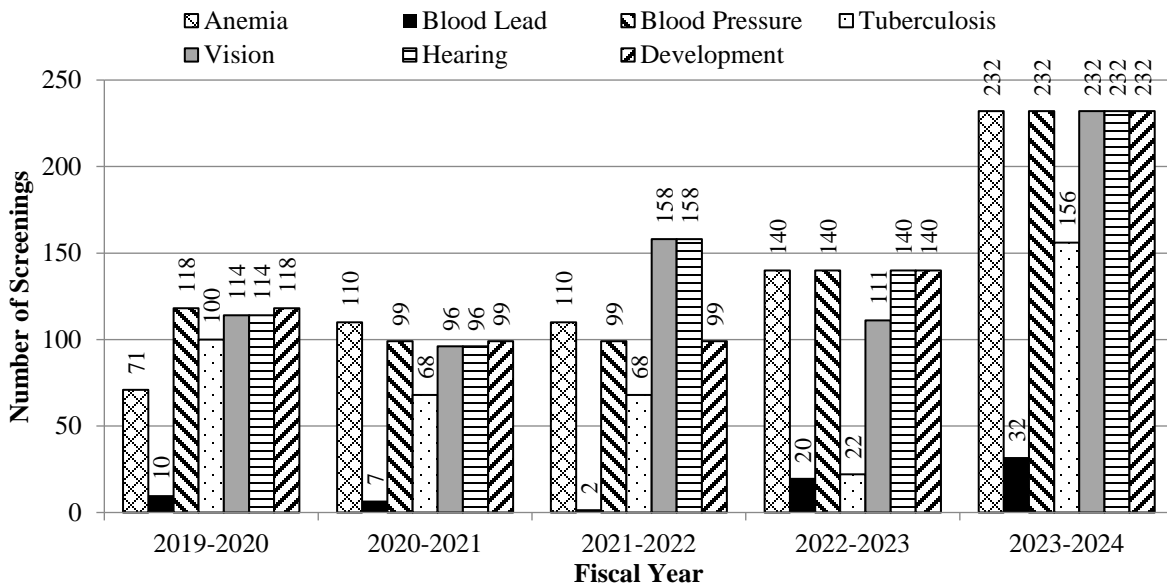


<sup>1</sup>Screenings refer to vision, hearing, scoliosis, dental, developmental screenings, hemoglobin blood tests and lead blood tests

<sup>2</sup>Referrals are to other providers include but are not limited to the following, outside medical providers for evaluations and medical homes, dental clinics, School Based Health Centers, Community Based Health Centers

Figure 13 shows the number and types of screenings that are conducted in the clinic.

**Figure 13. Well Child Clinic Screenings**



**Pediatric Lead Poisoning Prevention Program**

Pediatric lead surveillance is required by Connecticut General Statute §19a-110(d). Pediatric lead screenings are required for all children up to age 5 years & 11 months. An EBLL is defined as a BLL >3.5 ug/dl. When a lead level is reported from the DPH lab as 3.5mg/dl or higher, and a PCP has not yet been established, the Well Child Clinic community nurse takes a venous sample for testing

that is sent to the state lab for continued evaluation. The Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) follows up on all reports of pediatric elevated blood lead levels (EBLL) in Stamford. The APRN educates the parents about the dangers of lead poisoning, and ensures that the child is appropriately monitored by his or her healthcare provider by alerting the child's parents of the importance to take their child for follow-up testing and that testing continues until the venous BLL level falls below 3.5 ug/dl.

When the BLL is at or above 5mg/dl it is necessary for the community nurses to conduct a home visit to collect clinical, and behavioral information about the child to be reported to the state, health, school, and social agencies for the child to receive assistance as needed to keep them mainstreamed and at appropriate age level of function.

When the lead level is >10mg/dl community nurses will collaborate with the Environmental Inspections Division, for the environmental division to inspect the home to identify and gather any potential source of environmental lead. Both the Environmental Inspections Division and Community Nursing provide guidance and education for the family to eliminate areas where lead is found.

In fiscal year 2023-24, There was a food and Drug Administration recall of a product that was the potential cause for EBLL in children. The community nurses investigated 11 EBLLs that were reported from the State Lead Surveillance program to Stamford Department of Health and Human Services. Of these, 11, one family used the recalled product, and one home was found to require environmental abatement for lead on the property. All families were transient, regularly travelling back to their home countries, where it was suspected they also were being exposed. Overall there were 253 interactions with families regarding children with reported elevated blood lead levels.

#### [\(Non- TB, STD, & HIV\) Reportable Diseases Program](#)

Under Connecticut General Statute Section 19a-2a and Section 19a-36-A2 the Commissioner of Health establishes a list of diseases and conditions that must be reported to CTDPH and to Local Departments of Health. Local Departments of Health either investigate these cases independently or provide support to the CTDPH-lead investigations. In the fiscal year 2023-2024, there was one nursing home food outbreak related investigation, three MPox cases, two Salmonella cases, and one Measles possible contact that were surveilled and managed by the community nurses.

#### [Community Nursing Outreach Activities](#)

In 2020, funding from a Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant provided an Adult Wellness Program which continued until September 30, 2023. The Department of Health & Human Services contracted a nurse to provide blood pressure screenings and coordinate nutrition and exercise education to adults in the community. The program offered exercise classes and cooking demonstrations to promote low sodium meal preparations and overall better management of hypertension. Participants were offered blood pressure devices, free of cost, for self-monitoring and to report to their Primary Care providers as needed. Following the end of the grant, the program continued without the grant funded cooking and exercise classes, but continued the screening and education portion. During this FY, three hundred thirty-eight (338) participants received blood pressure screenings.

Program data are shown in **Table 3**.

**Table 3: Community Nursing Outreach**

<b>Stamford Department of Health Community Nursing Outreach</b>	<b>Number 2021- 2022</b>	<b>Percent 2021- 2022</b>	<b>Number 2022- 2023</b>	<b>Percent 2022- 2023</b>	<b>Number 2023- 2024</b>	<b>Percent 2023- 2024</b>
No. (%) screened with normal blood pressure readings (< 120/80).	55	26%	42	33%	105	30%
No. (%) screened with elevated readings (120-129/<80).	59	28%	24	19%	53	16%
No. (%) screened with stage 1 hypertension (systolic 130-139 or diastolic 80-89)	52	25%	27	21%	82	24%
No. (%) screened with hypertension stage 2 readings (>140 systolic or >90 diastolic)	41	20%	36	28%	96	28%
No. (%) screened with hypertensive crisis: >180 systolic and/or >120 diastolic	2	1%	0	0%	2	1%
No. (%) screened with elevated blood pressure readings that were aware of elevation.	81	39%	48	55%	142	79%

## School Nursing Program

The School Nursing Division employs 37 registered nurses to cover 23 public schools, 11 private and parochial schools and 3 special ed programs caring for students with specialized medical needs. School nurses provide care and screenings for more than 18,000 students matriculated in public, private and parochial schools in Stamford. The School Nurses begin each school year reviewing registration documents including every Health Assessment Record, sports physical and immunization schedule. They screen each Health Assessment Record for chronic medical conditions, allergies, developmental conditions and student participation level. School Nurses also review each medication order ensuring each order is completed, the medication is correct and accompanies that order. School Nurse's prepare and provide a list of medical conditions for building administration and review with teachers the needs of specific students. They provide training for school staff including epi pen training, specific medical monitoring needs, field trip planning guidelines and medication administration for field trips. They create nursing care plans and are part of the 504 and IEP process providing guidance in relation to existing medical conditions. Our School Nurses have moved to contacting families using available technology rather than sending letters via the mail.

The students' health and safety is our main concern and priority. School Nurse daily duties include assessing student injuries and illnesses. They administer medications and treatments as ordered. They provide support and guidance for families caring for their children with special needs and/or medical conditions. They also teach students with medical conditions how to manage their disease process. In many cases, these students receive daily support and guidance from the school nurses surrounding their chronic health conditions. This education is vital for these students, but our goal is to keep healthy students in the classroom learning. Some of the data reflecting special treatments and medications fluctuate from year to year due to new technology, extended absences due to medical complications and sometimes due improvements in the student's health status.

	<b>FY 2019- 2020</b>	<b>FY 2020 – 2021</b>	<b>FY 2021- 2022</b>	<b>FY 2022- 2023</b>	<b>FY 2023- 2024</b>
No. of public-school buildings	23	24	24	24	24
No. of private/parochial school buildings	15	11	12	12	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100,031</b>	<b>176,147</b>	<b>305,598</b>	<b>367,227</b>	<b>252,287</b>
No. (%) <sup>3</sup> of sick visits	50,349 (50.0)	33,009 (18.73)	64,073 (20.97%)	71,343 (19.43%)	68,459 (27.1%)
No. (%) <sup>3</sup> of injury-related visits	14,706 (15.0)	11,469 (6.51)	32,649 (10.68%)	37,219 (10.14%)	35,960 (14.25%)
No. (%) <sup>3</sup> of medication orders received and reviewed	4552 (4.5)	4,222 (2.39%)	2586 (.84%)	3,476 (.95%)	3,704 (1.46%)
No. (%) <sup>3</sup> of medications given	11,705 (11.7)	44,641 (25.34)	90,704 (29.69%)	107,520 (29.28%)	20,690 (8.2%)
No. (%) <sup>4</sup> of management of cases		67,632 (38.39)	85,192 (27.88%)	75,300 (20.51%)	81,457 (32.28%)
No. (%) <sup>3</sup> other nursing activities	22,275 (22.0)	15,174 (8.61)	30,394 (9.94%)	35,150 (9.57%)	42,017 (16.65%)

School Nurses conducted 21, 444 mandatory screenings in the public, private and parochial schools last school year. They completed hearing and vision screenings in grades K, 1, 3, 4 and 5.

They performed scoliosis screenings for girls in grade 5 and 7 and for boys in grade 8 or 9. The School Nurses are now utilizing a new vision screening tool, the spot vision screener, approved by the State of CT for vision screening.

The School Nursing Program benefits from the oversight of the city's Medical Advisor and the city's Medical Consultant who work closely with the School Nurse Supervisor to provide and update protocols, provide medication orders for emergency use, provide guidance to schools and review special medically related requests. The Medical Consultant also assists with reviewing homebound instruction requests with the School Nurse Supervisor.

School Nurses are also visible at many community health fairs and events serving the community and providing immunization and school health information. Over the summer, some nurses are hired back as summer school nurses and others to review school registration medical forms.

**Table 5: School Nursing Activities**  
**Clinical Treatments performed by School Nurses**

No. (%) of blood glucose testing (23-24 most are now monitored continuously)	5,164 (5.0)	15,466(57.13)	20,652(53.52)	25,113(52.45%)	7,652 (54.99%)
No. (%) of insulin management	1,321 (1.3)	4,984(18.43)	8,028(20.81)	10,179 (21.26%)	2,067(14.86%)
No. (%) of oral suctioning	997(1.0)	687(2.54)	733(2.0)	1,460 (3.05%)	1 (.003)
No. (%) of catheterizations	537 (.60)	1,115 (4.12)	1905 (4.94)	2,427 (5.07%)	521(3.74%)
No. (%) of gastric – tube feedings	573 (1.20)	4,202 (15.54)	5,963 (15.45)	7,555 (15.78%)	5456(51.52%)
No. (%) of nasogastric tube feedings	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
No. (%) of intravenous therapy (I.V.)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
No. (%) of ostomy care	601 (.60)	581 (2.14)	636 (1.65)	755 (1.58%)	71(0.51%)
No. (%) of oxygen administered	89 (>10)	1 (0.003)	263 (.68)	267 (.56%)	129 (0.92%)
No. (%) of tracheostomy suctioning	494 (.50)	0 (0)	0 (0)	82 (.17%)	147 (1.05%)
No. (%) of ventilator care	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	45(.09%)	1(.003%)

### Mandated Screenings

No. (%) vision screening	3,762	7,883	7,811	7,971	8993
No. (%) of referrals from vision screenings	248 (.20%)	451 (5.7%)	610 (7.8%)	590 (7.4%)	609 (6.9%)
No. (%) of hearing screening	3,734(3.70%)	5,200 (%)	7,738(%)	7,599	8372
No. (%) of referrals from hearing screenings	28 (.75%)	312 (6%)	51 (.65%)	52 (.68%)	56 (0.6%)
No. (%) of scoliosis screenings	769 (.80%)	2,613 (%)	4,162 (%)	3,814	4079
No. (%) of referral from scoliosis screenings	35	22(.84%)	24(0.57%)	24(.63%)	18 (0.44%)
No. (%) 911 calls	36	11	47	60	125
No. (%) COVID -19 positive cases in the schools		1,278	4,020	1,543	
No. (%) COVID –19 quarantines due to school contacts		3,590	1,010		

### School Dental Program

The Stamford Dental Program provides a range of clinical and educational services. Proper oral health is crucial for proper childhood development and is a key component of good nutrition as it facilitates proper mastication that enhances the metabolism of food. Children with oral health

problems learn less either because they are unable to focus in class or they simply miss more school.

The dental hygienists provide oral health education in classrooms and conduct dental screenings for preschoolers, elementary, and middle school students. When an oral health issue is identified in a student, their parent/guardian is given a referral to the Westhill School Based Health Clinic, community clinics or private dental providers, This FY the department was able to recruit a 4th The second-grade sealant program fully re-opened.

Table 6 below details the five-year trends for the school dental program.

**Table 6: Dental Services Five-Year Trends**

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	23-24
Dental Hygienists	4	3	3	3 <sup>1</sup>	4
Classroom Instruction	214	0	196	294	312
No. of Elementary & Middle School Children Screened	5557	0	3208	6703	6837
No. (%) of Elementary & Middle School Children Screened Requiring Dental Care	529 (9.5)	0	310 (9.6)	657 (9.8)	715 (10.5)
No. of Children Requiring Dental care who receive their Preventive care at the Department of Health's Dental Clinics (#Patients/#Visits)	244/278	0	0	0	N/A
No. of Children Requiring Dental care who receive their treatments at the Department of Health's Dental Clinics Treatment Services (#Patients/#Visits)	128/205	0	0	0	N/A
Sealants Grade 2	175	0	0	0	353

<sup>1</sup> Retirement of one staff member mid-year

Since the dental hygiene program suspension on in March 2020 due to the pandemic, the percentage of referrals from the dental screening program has increased highlighting the need for prevention and early intervention this program offers.

The dental hygiene program collaborates with Department of Health and Human Services and Stamford Public Schools staff and administrators, as well as many community agencies to meet the oral health needs of Stamford school population. They are also responsible for maintaining the CTDPH licensing for each school dental clinic

## Health Promotion

The health promotion program focuses on building trust with the community, disseminating accurate information about public health concerns, and educating the public on relevant health topics. This program is managed by the Behavioral Health, Health Promotion, and Emergency Response Supervisor.

This program has been growing for the past several years, but this year saw significant growth. Two public health educators were hired in the spring of 2024, allowing for more continued capacity to develop partnerships in the community, create and disseminate health communications, and support other divisions in health education efforts. This program also absorbed the two outreach coordinators from Social Services this FY.

### Maternal Health

This FY, we offered two (English and Spanish) six-week sessions of an evidence-based postpartum depression prevention program, Mothers and Babies. The program was facilitated by the Public Health Nursing Supervisor; Behavioral Health, Health Promotion, and Emergency Response Supervisor; and Outreach Coordinator. The program is based in principles of cognitive behavioral therapy, attachment theory, and mindfulness.

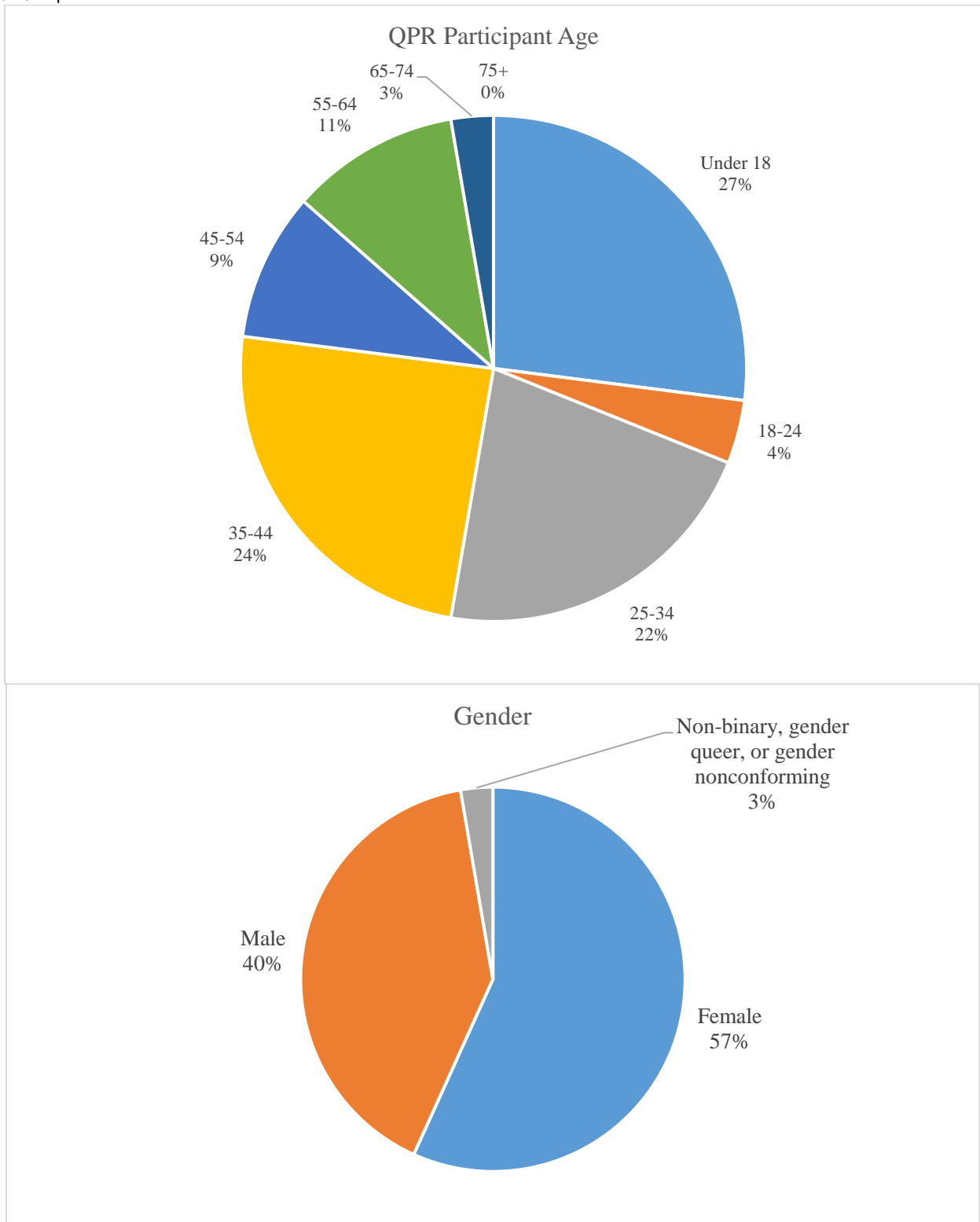
As in previous years, retention proved challenging, but preliminary qualitative data from the evaluation showed that the program was well received by participants. We are hoping to revamp the program this year to better meet community needs according to feedback from program participants.

In addition, the Behavioral Health, Health Promotion, and Emergency Response Supervisor participated in the Stamford Maternal Health Working Group convened by the Mayor's Office. This group collaborated on a HRSA grant application, a strategic plan to address local inequities, and discussions around potential opportunities.

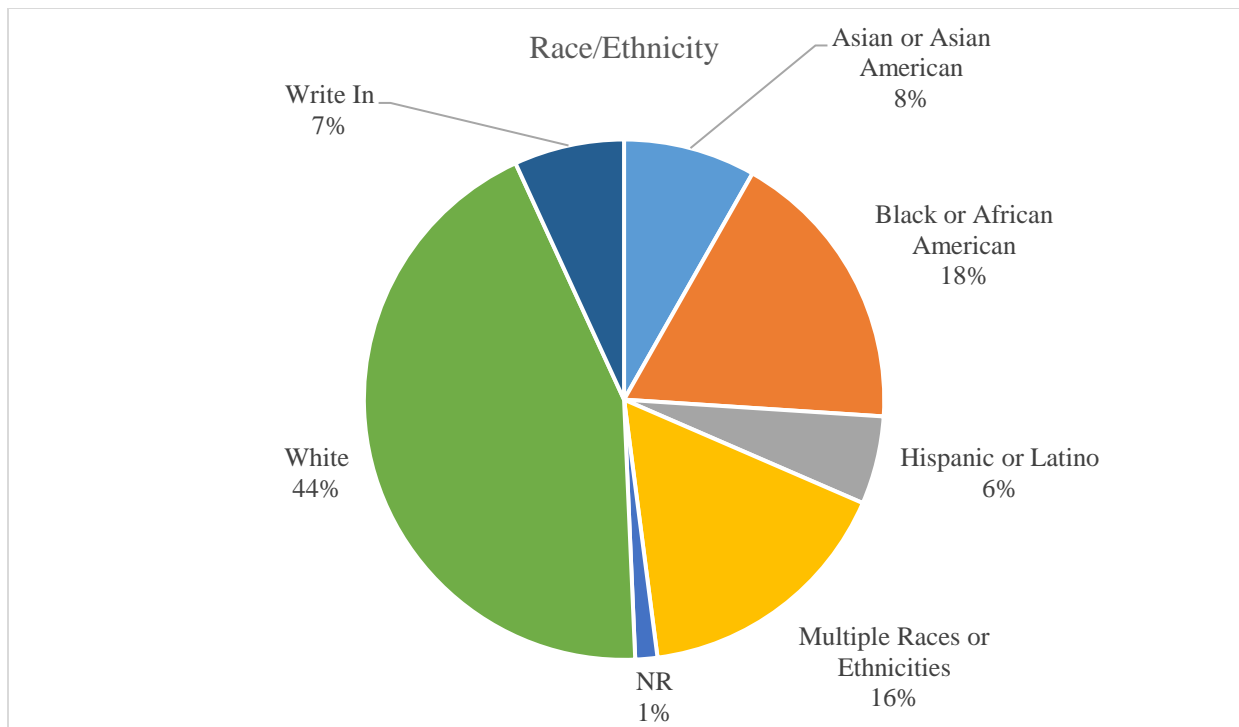
### QPR (Suicide Prevention Training)

This year, we continued to offer Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR), an evidence based suicide prevention training focused on bystander intervention. Staff from the Department, in addition to trainers from our partner organizations Liberation Programs and The Hub, trained over 100 participants. Groups trained included Veterans Resource Center staff, Mayor's Youth Leadership Council, and Pacific House staff. We also offered trainings to the public through the Ferguson Library. Results from the evaluation are shown below in Figure 14.

Figure 14.







Participants indicated high satisfaction levels with the training:

- 92% said the training met their needs “very” or “extremely well”
- 97% said the presenter had good knowledge of the subject matter
- 99% said the ideas presented were “very” or “extremely easy to understand”
- 99% said the training provided information that was valuable to them

In addition, 95-97% of participants felt that their knowledge increased around risk factors, prevention, and warning signs of suicide. 93% indicated that they felt prepared to help if someone expressed suicidal thoughts or intentions to them.

### Health Education and Outreach Events and Workshops

In addition to ongoing education, staff attend many community events to provide public health information related to disease prevention, environmental health, mental health and housing. The department attended 12 community fairs/events to distribute information and promote department services.

Staff held health education workshops on an ad-hoc basis throughout the FY. In October 2023, we partnered with the Mayor’s Office and UCONN Stamford to host a community conversation and panel discussion around Black women’s health in Stamford. It was extremely well received by the 75 participants.

We also partnered with Stamford CARES in February 2024 to provide a sexual health education session for a young men’s workforce development program at DOMUS, as requested by the program’s manager.

Finally, to respond to ongoing requests for stress management support from staff, one of our Medical Reserve Corps volunteers provided mindfulness classes weekly from December to February. Staff wellness is an ongoing initiative for our Department.

## Community Coalitions

Department staff have been active leaders and participants on community coalitions throughout the FY. In particular, staff have been engaged with the Stamford Youth Mental Health Alliance in robust capacity. The Behavioral Health, Health Promotion, and Emergency Response Supervisor led the evaluation workgroup throughout this FY.

Department staff partnered with Norwalk Health Department and LGBTQ+ community leaders and nonprofits to respond to the mpox epidemic in summer and fall of 2022. Throughout the course of the FY, as mpox concerns waned, the group pivoted to focus on a range of public health issues impacting the local LGBTQ+ community and engaged in joint messaging, outreach, and planning together. This is co-facilitated between the Behavioral Health, Health Promotion, and Emergency Response Supervisor and Norwalk's Health Educator and supported by several department staff. This year, we focused on formalizing a logo, mission, vision, and values and produced a variety of health education materials. The Behavioral Health, Health Promotion, and Emergency Response Supervisor also shared the coalition's work on mpox response and health education materials at the NACCHO Preparedness Summit in March.

Staff continue to serve on a range of community and regional coalitions focused on public health topics, including the Local Prevention Council, Mayor's Advisory Council on Aging, and Regional Suicide Advisory Board, among others. We partnered with many community agencies throughout the year, including the Rowan Center to provide staff with sexual violence prevention training, the Local Prevention Council to educate legislators on tobacco merchant education, and more. Across the Department, staff attended health fairs to share information on programs and resources. The Behavioral Health, Health Promotion, and Emergency Response Supervisor also attended the Invest Health conference in December as part of a citywide team focused on innovative community health ideas.

## Accreditation

Working towards Departmental accreditation has been a major focus for this FY. Our Behavioral Health, Health Promotion, and Emergency Response Supervisor has been serving as Accreditation Coordinator, working closely with the Director of Health and Human Services and Manager of Public Health Programs and with support from the Leadership Team, health educators, and other Department staff at all levels.

An initial readiness and training process through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) began in January 2023 and finished the FY with 83% of documentation identified and gathered. We are on track to submit our application by January 2025.

## Social Media

Creating informative, relevant, and plain language communications is a critical function of the health promotion program. This FY, we underwent a rebranding process, overhauled our website, and produced a range of flyers, brochures, and other materials for community distribution. Of particular note – over 3,000 mental health resource brochures were distributed throughout the FY.

Social media continued to be a key tool for health education of the community. Monthly social media calendars were developed to highlight monthly awareness events and DHHS resources, as well as pertinent public health issues such as mental health, mpox, and emergency preparedness. We partnered with community partners on key health topics, such as producing a PSA with the

Mayor's Youth Leadership Council on consent and sexual violence during Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Importantly, metrics across the past few years are not consistent. We have had varying levels of funding and support for social media advertising depending on grants. Nevertheless, it is critical to point out that despite fewer posts this year, engagement and followers increased. We have been focused on developing quality content that is more engaging for the community.

Statistics for this and previous fiscal years across all platforms are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7: Social Media Communication Data**

	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>
Number of Posts	1,432	958	694
Total Engagements	77,543	2,057	3,238
Total Impressions	4,010,827	803,853	254,303
Total Followers	1,393	1,896	2,418
New Followers	-	503	522

### Intern Program

DHHS continued to partner with local schools of public health to host interns and support local public health workforce development. Throughout FY 23-24, we hosted three health promotion interns- all MPH students – and sponsored a staff member's MPH capstone project. Their projects focused on their interests, as well as the needs of the Department and their school.

Responsibilities included, but were not limited to:

- Creation of social media content
- Development of communications campaign on importance of primary care
- Revision of local mental health resources brochure
- Creation of videos to showcase Department services and inform public about 9-1-1 and 9-8-8
- Audit of Department website
- Presentation for seniors on mental health in English and Spanish

### Insurance and Benefits Enrollment

Health insurance and benefits enrollment has been a long-standing function of the former Social Services Division and is now an aspect of the health promotion program, helping to address residents' social determinants of health needs. Residents needing health insurance are provided one on one enrollment assistance. Applicants also receive assistance and advocacy with re-determinations, unpaid medical bills, fair hearings, and spend-downs. Total enrollments for current and previous years can be found below.

**Table 8: Insurance Enrollment**

<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>
1,426	1,691	855	952

Most enrollments for this FY were for children on HUSKY A, HUSKY B, and temporary medical assistance. A particular focus of this FY was enrollment of undocumented children under 13, as they newly qualified for state medical coverage and could be covered through age 18 if enrolled before their 13<sup>th</sup> birthday. The Outreach Coordinator held outreach events with United Way, Building One Community, SPS, and Americares to share information in the community.

### Renters' Rebate

Renters' Rebate is another function of the former Social Services division that was added to health promotion at the end of this FY. The Connecticut Renters' Rebate Program provides rebates to older adult or disabled renters whose incomes do not exceed certain thresholds. Yearly, between April 1 and October 1, qualified individuals apply to our office. Applications are processed and the applicant receives an award or a denial letter stating how much they will receive. Since applicants provide their income information, if staff discovers they are eligible for other programs such as HUSKY health coverage, staff will enroll them at the time of application. Yearly application numbers can be found below. This past FY was slightly higher than but consistent with previous years.

**Table 9: Renters' Rebate Data**

<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>
1,567	1,600	1,568	1,689

### Senior Transportation Program

The transportation program is a partnership the CT Department of Transportation to provide. much needed access to transportation services for the senior and disabled residents in the Stamford community. The Share the Fare program provides subsidized, half-price taxicab rides for Stamford senior citizens and disabled individuals. With services provided by Norwalk Transit, Stamford enables reduced fare, door-to-door transportation services for senior citizens. Riders use this service for transportation to senior nutrition sites, medical appointments, and shopping. The program supports the Stamford Senior Center to provide cultural trips. In addition approximately 500 free of cost CT transit tickets to shelter partners and senior living partners in the community were provided.

### Public Health Emergency Preparedness

Staff in the emergency preparedness program plan, train for, and respond to emergencies. The program is staffed full time by the Behavioral Health, Health Promotion, and Emergency Response Supervisor with two additional grant-funded part time positions – Public Health Emergency Response Planner and MRC Coordinator.

### Partnerships

The Department works closely with regional partners to ensure emergency preparedness. We attended regular virtual meetings for ESF8, Critical Workforce Planning Group, and Cities Readiness Initiative.

As with last FY, we engaged in meetings with other state and local agencies to prepare for the possibility of a bus of migrants arriving in our jurisdiction. We also attended meetings with the US

Army Corps of Engineers about the proposed FY 25-26 hurricane barrier project and continue to prepare accordingly for that response.

We continued to deepen connections with local non-profits who are able to provide support during mass sheltering response, including Salvation Army, Rapid Relief Team, and the Red Cross. The Behavioral Health, Health Promotion, and Emergency Response Supervisor also attended a tour of managed alcohol programs and other harm reduction centers with the Mayor’s Office and Liberation Programs in June 2024.

### Emergency Planning

The part-time Public Health Emergency Response Planner was hired in November 2022 under a grant provided by the CT Department of Public Health. This year, he updated our surge management plan, as well as developed various trainings and tools for the Department.

### Training

We hosted a shelter training on June 28, 2023 with the Red Cross for our staff and MRC and CERT volunteers. We provided an overview of the updated shelter plan (from last FY) and practiced different responsibilities in sheltering, including registration and dormitory.

We continued to engage in regular training with local and regional partners to exercise our response capabilities. Tabletop exercises attended by Department staff this FY included:

**Table 10: Emergency Preparedness Training**

Date(s)	Topic	Hosted By
11/9/23	Balloon Parade Tabletop	Director of Public Safety, Health, & Welfare
12/5/23	Volunteer Reception Center Training	Region 1 Health Departments
3/12/24	VOICES Mass Casualty Training	VOICES Center for Resilience
3/25-28/24	Preparedness Summit	NACCHO
4/23/24	CT Emergency Management Symposium	Connecticut Conference of Municipalities
5/2/24	CT Suicide Prevention Conference	CT Clearinghouse
5/14/24	Social Media in Crisis	Region 1 Health Departments
5/21-24/24	MRC National Summit	NACCHO

### Postvention Response

We continued to respond with local partners to cases of untimely death and death by suicide in the community. Our postvention plan developed FY 2022-2023 continued to support and guide our response efforts. reach out to the surviving family and friends and offer condolences, grief and mental health support resources, guidance on things they need to do after losing a loved one. Partners are contacted to provide additional support depending on the extent of the response

needed. Between July 2023 and June 2024 the postvention team responded to 35 untimely deaths and death by suicide. The response has been positive and welcomed by the surviving loved ones.

### Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers continued to support our Department's public health response throughout this FY. MRC volunteers were activated to attend trainings, support blood pressure screening events, assist with community health fairs, and more. 41 volunteers worked a total of 165.5 hours throughout the fiscal year.

In December 2023, we hosted our annual recognition event to thank our volunteers for their work throughout the year and identify those who contributed the highest number of volunteer hours. City leadership were in attendance to provide remarks and express gratitude for their hard work.

This year's training plan was adapted to focus on building rapport between volunteers. In the previous FY, our training plan consisted of mostly virtual meetings, and the volunteers expressed a desire to get together in person. To accommodate this request, beginning in January 2024, we hosted quarterly in-person trainings. This FY, we have held trainings on ICS basics and providing support before first responders arrive to an emergency. We will be continuing this throughout the next FY.

On April 13, 2024, we hosted an emergency go-bag giveaway at the Ferguson Library, in conjunction with first responder partners, CERT, and the library staff. This event was supported by funding from the CT Healthcare Coalition. We provided 200 residents with emergency bags within the first hour, and many more wanted to participate. Each participant would hear information about preparedness in English, Spanish, or Haitian Creole and then walk around the room filling up the empty backpack with preparedness supplies. This event was a resounding success in terms of outreach and provided MRC and CERT volunteers with the opportunity to practice ICS structure. We hope to continue this event in future years.

Both MRC staff members received awards to attend the MRC National Summit in May 2024, with all expenses covered by NACCHO. This was an invigorating opportunity to learn from other MRC leaders across the country on strategic planning, innovative community projects, recruitment, and more.

Our Behavioral Health, Health Promotion, and Emergency Response Supervisor was appointed to the Board of Directors for Stamford CERT. We look forward to continuing to grow and partner with CERT.

### PPE Distribution

The Department distributed PPE to community organizations, city departments, and residents in vulnerable groups throughout the course of the FY. Distribution numbers of various mitigation supply items are below.

**Table 11: Infectious Disease Mitigation Supply Distribution**

Item	Quantity
COVID-19 Home Test Kits	3,675
Surgical Masks	700
N95 Masks	60
Kinsa Thermometers	50

## Director of Housing Services

Access to safe and affordable housing is key social determinant of health. Housing was identified as the third highest health need on the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment and is top priority for the Mayor. To meet that demand the role of Social Services Director was vacated and changed to Director of Housing Services. The Director of Housing Services role is responsible for overseeing and implementing housing services related programs and policies including Fair Rent. The core areas of focus for the Director of Housing Services are housing literacy, community engagement, landlord tenant relations and establishing working collaborations to improve access to housing and shelter.

In the 23/24 Fiscal year, the Director of Housing Services fielded over 5,000 requests for services (calls, walk-ins, appointments, referrals), 230 meetings, and 38 Conferences and trainings and 11 presentations on housing for residents and community partners.

### Fair Rent

In 2023, state legislation was passed requiring municipalities with populations of more than 25,000 to adopt ordinances creating Fair Rent Commission. Stamford Social Services Commission acts as the City's Fair Rent Commission. The Director of Housing Services serves as coordinator to the Commission. With respect to the Fair Rent process, the Director is responsible for receiving, investigating, and mediating complaints and assisting administratively with the hearing process. In its Fair Rent capacity, the Social Services Commission is empowered to make studies and investigations, conduct hearings and receive complaints relative to rental charges on housing accommodations within the city, in order to control and eliminate excessive rental charges on such accommodations.

In June of 2024, The Director of Housing Services (Commission Coordinator) presented on Fair Rent at Connecticut Coalition to End homelessness 21st Annual training Institute in Hartford CT and is a member of the newly formed Statewide Fair Rent Commissions Coalition.

**Table 12: Fair Rent**

	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>
Fair Rent Complaints	25	32	12	20

### Warming Centers/Cooling Centers

Warming/Cooling Centers are centers where residents can find respite during extreme weather conditions. Space is offered during the daytime for cooling and overnight in cases of extreme cold. Each year, community partners are contacted to determine if they will serve as a warming center site and their information is compiled into a list that is on the City of Stamford website, WebEOC and 211-United Way.

### Other Activities

The Director of Health reviewed and approved 51 noise waiver applications and reviewed death certificates to provide funeral directors with 12 non-contagion letters that allowed the removal of bodies for burial outside of the country.



# Stamford Police Department

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Stamford Police Department is committed to partnering with the community to provide quality police services and create a safe environment through fair and impartial enforcement of the law. We recognize the needs of the diverse community and it is our responsibility to maintain order and to protect individual's rights.

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Police Chief and his entire Police Command staff are responsible for initiating and maintaining collaborative partnerships at the local, state and federal level with community groups, judicial partners, parole, probation, neighborhood associations, local service providers and citizen groups to ensure the entire Stamford community is engaged in our shared public safety efforts.

## INTRODUCTION

The Stamford Police Department continues to be a leader in the law enforcement field in addressing quality of life issues and crime. The department's priority is to develop and strengthen collaborative partnerships that have positive affects for all residents of Stamford. The Stamford Police Department has a community based policing philosophy as the core of service to the community. Currently, there are 270 members of the police department and over the past year, the department responded to 89,690 calls for service. The city of Stamford consistently remains ranked as the safest city in Connecticut and New England based on population.

The Department has aligned the goals and vision of the Stamford Police Department with the six "pillars" articulated by the President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing to promote effective crime reduction strategies while building public trust. The SPD has applied the pillars as follows:

- **Building Trust and Legitimacy**- through enhanced collaborative community partnerships
- **Policy and Oversight**- revising all departmental policies and Achieving tier 3 State of Connecticut Police Accreditation, five member civilian police commission
- **Technology and Social Media**- enhanced use of body cameras and increased footprint on social media platforms
- **Community Policing and Crime Reduction**- implemented a mental health initiative, implemented partnerships with diverse groups such as the clergy and youth, started a new Police Activities League (PAL)
- **Officer Training and Education**- expanded Crisis Intervention Training, de-escalation training and cultural sensitivity training, and is planning future enhanced Virtual Reality firearms training.
- **Officer Safety and Wellness**- officers completed Health and Wellness training, Crisis Intervention Training, gym upgrades, peer support and SPA family events, cardiac screenings.

In order to increase accountability, transparency and address the needs of the community, the department continued or pursued five major initiatives this year:

- 1) Connecticut Police Accreditation
- 2) Improving public safety responses and outcomes for individuals with mental illness and co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse.
- 3) Stamford Regional Police Academy
- 4) Social Media Unit
- 5) Stamford Police Activities League

## Connecticut Police Accreditation

On May 11, 2023, the Stamford Police Department was awarded Tier III Accreditation status by the State of CT POST (Police Officer Standards & Training) Council. State accreditation is a process



through which police departments demonstrate proficiency in management and service by complying with CT State Accreditation Standards. There are only 65 law enforcement agencies out of 163 in Connecticut that have attained this accreditation status. The Stamford Police Department is committed to providing the highest quality service to our community. The project required the SPD to revise its entire policy manual to meet accreditation standards and to provide a consistent and uniform standard of policies to assist the SPD improve the quality and equitability of its service delivery to residents.

Key partners in this project included a professional police consulting firm with vast experience in police policy development, and a host of local community groups invested in having the SPD function to the standards of an accredited agency. Community groups who partner in this project are; the Stamford Clergy Coalition, the Stamford Chapter of the NAACP and the civilian Stamford Police Commission.

### Mental Health Initiatives

- The Police Mental Health Collaboration which partners the SPD with service providers and advocates to improve the mental health response and outcomes for individuals. This collaboration is the first of its kind in the state.
- The Mental Health Crisis Adaptive Patrol Response Program which partners the Police Department with the Stamford Emergency Medical Services (SEMS) and the 911 Communications Center. The restructuring and adaptive response has led to SEMS providers taking the lead role while Police assist in a supporting role, and only when needed. The restructuring has led to a 30% decrease in the number of calls for service with direct police involvement with individuals experiencing a mental health episode. The 911 Dispatchers have been trained to identify callers who are experiencing a mental health crisis and are not a danger to others. Based on the 911 Dispatchers assessment they can then appropriately direct the response to calls for service.
- The City has obtained several grants offset the cost to embed Licensed Clinical Social Workers in the SPD by contracting with the Recovery Network of Programs, Inc. (RNP) to improve the public safety mental health response. This is the first Public-Private partnership in the state and has had an enormous impact in the sixteen months that it has been operating.

### Stamford Regional Police Academy

With the construction completed, the Training Division commenced Class #013 of the Stamford Police Recruit Academy class in May 2024. The scheduled graduation date is November 25, 2024. The class consists of 18 recruits. Stamford has nine recruits, while the other nine recruits are made up from seven other agencies/municipalities throughout the state. The majority of instruction for this Academy class has come from our own Stamford Police instructors, who are all P.O.S.T. certified. As our graduation date approaches, the staff is preparing for another recruit class to begin in early 2025. A number of outside agencies have already shown interest in securing seats for our next class. A primary goal of creating the academy was to attract and encourage more local citizens to pursue a career in law enforcement and specifically, with the Stamford Police department.

### Social Media Unit

In January of 2023 the Stamford Police Department enhanced its social media footprint with the creation of a new Social Media Team. The unit currently consists of five patrol officers, one special police officer, and one civilian professional staff member under the direct supervision of a lieutenant. Team efforts and contributions to the unit are in addition to their normal duties. The purpose of the unit is to ensure that the Stamford Police are using every possible avenue to communicate and create an authentic two-way exchange of information with its community members. The greatest asset of a modern police department is an informed, engaged, and

supportive community. The officers posting on social media will help ensure frequent and consistent communication to build partnerships and mutual trust between community members and officers. The program will also strive to strengthen department morale and improve officer safety by building upon community relationships. The officers work to create content that engages and empowers community members to take an active role in the crime fight. The Stamford Police have more than 30,000 followers on our social media platforms, have reached over 51,000 additional non-followers', and have responded to over 30,000 messages.

### Stamford Police Activities League, Inc.

The PAL board of Directors comprises members from the Police Department, the Stamford Police Association, and the community. The PAL program promotes partnerships between youth, law enforcement, and the community through educational, athletic, and recreational programs designed to encourage team building and foster positive relationships. The PAL center is located on the west side of town and continues to focus on promoting the mission throughout the city of Stamford.

With the assistance of our partner, the Southfield Village Limited Partnership and Beacon Communities, we have continued our mission of helping the youth within our city. We continue to collaborate with our in-house partners, the Ferguson Library, St. Joesphs Family, and other local service providers who are all inspired to push the mission of PAL forward. The PAL programs have been growing and now include The Mighty Might Basketball program, Mentoring and Tutoring programs, Library services, Youth Leadership, a Computer Lab, Dance, Art, Middle School Culinary, a Youth Crime Prevention program, Gardening, and other programs consistent with our vision and mission. In addition, we have partnered with other local groups to provide services such as tablet giveaways, backpack giveaways, and several other community-oriented services. The funding for this organization has been through generous donations and grants.

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Stamford Police Department's Community Outreach Program is critical in the department's refocused approach to achieving and sustaining gains against crime by strengthening community relationships and trust. The department partners with community leaders, civic organizations, block associations, and concerned citizens to educate them on police policies and practices and to develop solutions to challenges that arise within the city's many diverse communities. This will be the department's ongoing efforts to enhance the quality of life for all communities of Stamford.

The Department's expanded 20-member team is now equipped to address the needs and issues within our city. Each officer has received special Community Policing training designed to prepare them with the necessary knowledge to address the community-related problems and concerns. Our unit has continued its growth and has added several new initiatives and programs. The "Shoulder to Shoulder" program has grown and now includes a panhandling segment. The program's mission is to address the quality-of-life issues and concerns that negatively impact the communities we serve. Each week, community outreach members have been working with community leaders and numerous social service agencies, assisting and helping those in our community who are most needed. The Youth Anti-Violence Program is another new initiative of our team. The Youth Anti-Violence Program is a competitive program for municipalities and nonprofit agencies that aims to serve youth ages 12 to 18 who have been involved in violence and bad decision-making. The Youth Anti-Violence Program aims to reduce youth violence by providing programs, mentoring, and education to youth ages 12 to 18 within Stamford. Funding for this program comes solely from a grant. The grant will run for the next two years and is expected to be renewed over a three-year period.

Some of the programs spearheaded by the Community Outreach (COR) officers are:

- ~ Coffee with a Cop - The COR officers engaged with community partners and leaders and handed out cups of coffee to community members. Officers were able to have open discussions regarding community and policing topics. This event is one of our most popular community events and has created a sense of trust within the community. This program has been extremely successful because officers have established new relationships with business owners throughout the city. Officers provided safety tips and assisted citizens with general neighborhood complaints. McDonalds, Target, and Starbucks have become some of the biggest supporters of this program and have collaborated with us on several community events.
- ~ Pizza with the Police - The COR team partnered with community pizza restaurants at several establishments. Officers engaged with community members, and various community questions and issues were addressed. Subsequently, the restaurants provided free pizzas to several of our community senior housing complexes. COR Officers were able to have pizza with senior residents throughout the city.
- ~ Food Giveaway—The COR officers collaborated with IIMPACT, a local group that provides meals to needy families. Through the collaboration, officers have provided free monthly bags of food to over two hundred families.
- ~ Coat Drive—Lt. Junes coordinated the collection efforts of over 750 new and slightly used winter coats. Many coats were handed out to families at our PAL facility, and the others were donated to Person to Person, a community-based organization.
- ~ National Night Out - National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie. COR officers partnered with local businesses and leaders, and we hosted a night of fun-filled events. We also partnered with the State Police, UConn Police, and MTA Police.
- ~ Faith & Blue—COR officers collaborated with local faith-based leaders and participated in the National Faith & Blue Weekend. This collaboration facilitates safer and stronger communities by engaging law enforcement officers and residents through the connections of faith-based organizations. This program consisted of a community walk, BBQ, religious service visits, and a final prayer with a senior resident complex.
- ~ Book Bag Giveaway—COR officers partnered with the Stamford-based Salvation Army to give away 500 book bags to school-aged children. The book bags were filled with school supplies and additional information to prepare the kids for a great start to the school year.
- ~ Healing Hearts. Healing Hearts is a program for young adults with special needs. It assists these young adults in living a more independent and structured life. COR Officers conducted roundtable discussions that included safety tips and the dangers of misusing social media. Canines have continued to be a vital part of this program. The members of Healing Hearts have formed a bond with our canines.
- ~ Vape Diversionary Program - This program targets kids in middle and high schools who have been caught on school grounds with a vape cartage and or vaping. There are three components of this program. 1. The Stamford Public School provides data regarding vaping and education. 2. The Liberation Programs provide data regarding vape use and short and long-term damage to the brain and body. 3. The Stamford Police provide data regarding State Laws and penalties for possession and use. We have had over one hundred and fifty school referrals attend the class.
- ~ Community Housing Complexes—COR members met with residents of Charter Oaks and Augustus Manor housing complexes, where we facilitated community meetings that addressed various community issues. COR members strengthened their relationships by partnering with the different complexes and having summer BBQs.
- ~ Cultural Community Events—Our COR members partnered with local communities and have been able to host dinners and cultural celebrations. These events have been offered to various community cultures and are geared at establishing trust between Law Enforcement and segments of our diverse community.

- ~ Clear Program- CLEAR "Community Law Enforcement Addiction & Recovery" has partnered with the Liberation Programs, where we offer individuals who have overdosed information that could lead them into recovery. Each officer has received special training, allowing them to identify, address, and assist those in need.

## PATROL DIVISION

Patrol is the largest division of the Police Department and currently consists of 140 Officers and Supervisors. Patrol is led by one Patrol Captain and four Patrol Lieutenants. The Lieutenants are Squad commanders and responsible for all aspects and good order of the personnel placed in their charge. Additionally, they are responsible for the prevention of crime throughout the city and coordination efforts of all resources that the agency offers. The tasks include coordination with community groups and their collective community outreach efforts. The City of Stamford is divided into four geographical patrol districts. These districts include Downtown and the South End, West Side, North Stamford, and the East Side. Patrol officers are assigned beats within these districts, which offers community members steady contact with familiar officers allowing the citizens to voice concerning various issues that they are facing.

Most community interactions that occur daily are with a member of the uniformed patrol division. We do our best to highlight the importance of being positive role models for our community and create positive dialogue and partnerships within our community. Officers have been credited with saving multiple lives this year which include physically restraining suicidal jumpers and preventing their fall, providing Narcan to overdose victims who would likely otherwise have succumbed to opioid induced death, and providing medical intervention to people with severe neck wounds, gunshot wounds, and other medical problems. The Patrol Division has heard the community's concern of traffic related violations. We have boosted our capability by training 20 newer officers in the use of radar/ laser speed enforcement. We have also provided Traffic Enforcement patrol cars to bolster traffic enforcement efforts city-wide. The division has worked jointly with the agency's Traffic Enforcement Unit to combat "hot spots" that have been brought to our attention by community leaders.

In addition to regular patrol duties, officers have continued high visibility programmed patrols at our schools, parks, and other locations of concern across the city. Officers conducted over 16,000 programmed patrols and 2700 at area schools. Programmed patrols are employed for high police presence, community engagement, and as an overall crime prevention strategy.

Pedestrian safety is always a major concern for a city that possesses a large Downtown area such as Stamford's. We have continued our effort in this regard by doubling down on our unrelenting initiative of Enforcement and Education. This is in addition to collaborating with city officials on our input towards engineering improvements that may be made to make certain areas safer.

## INVESTIGATIVE DIVISIONS

The Investigative Division is comprised of the following units: Major Crimes, Property Crimes, Crime Scene Unit, Special Investigations Juvenile Offenses, Special Victims Unit, Behavioral Health Unit, Digital Forensics, Narcotics and Organized Crime and the CrimeStopper Tip Line.

The Division is responsible for investigations and follow-ups for all serious criminal investigations. These include but are not limited to homicides, sexual assaults, robberies, assaults, burglaries, auto thefts, car break ins, larcenies, computer and white-collar crimes, fraud, crimes involving juveniles, crimes against the elderly, domestic violence, stalking, bank fraud, child pornography, narcotics, organized crime and firearms violations.

**Major Crimes** investigated 43 untimely deaths, 29 robberies, and 42 assaults. From July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, 2 homicides occurred in the City.

**Property Crimes** is split into 2 units, Burglary and Financial Crimes as the investigation of each is specialized. The Burglary Unit concentrates on burglaries, arsons, and motor vehicle thefts, thefts from motor vehicles and theft of motor vehicle parts. The Financial Crimes Unit investigates computer crime, fraud, bank fraud, internet crimes, bad and/or forged checks and a variety of larcenies.

**The Burglary Unit** investigated in fiscal year 23/24; 87 burglaries, 256 reports of theft from a motor vehicle and 157 stolen vehicles. The department recovered a total of 65 stolen motor vehicles within city limits. Most stolen vehicles were attributed to unlocked cars with the key or fob left inside the vehicle. The burglary unit completed 68 arrest warrants and made 40 warrant apprehensions and 33 on site arrests. Of those 73 arrests, the vast majority of offenders were from outside of Stamford and traveled into Stamford to commit the crimes.

**The Financial Crimes Unit** in fiscal year 23/24 applied for 151 search warrants, 27 arrest warrants and made 22 arrests for various crimes. The nature of identity theft and the fact that many of the perpetrators are located overseas has made this a very challenging task for the Unit. Key components of the Financial Crimes Unit are continuous training and ongoing relationships with other investigative units including municipal, state and federal agencies. In addition to the Units investigative responsibilities, they continue to educate the community to reduce victimization, especially with our more at-risk populations.

Detective Bozentko has been selected as the IAFCI International Member of the Year. There are over 6,000 members so this is no small feat. Although the award recognizes contributions to the IAFCI, the mutual objectives between them and our department are many. What benefits the IAFCI, also benefits the Stamford Police Department. Det. Bozentko's role as the CT Chapter president also puts us in a uniquely valuable position where we can leverage her role for increased benefits to our unit.

Detective Stempien traveled to Malaysia in his role as an FBI TFO and worked with authorities there to arrest a suspect in a multi-million dollar Business email Compromise with Stamford losses. After no initial luck, the investigators went to a nearby restaurant where Detective Stempien observed the suspect walk in. He advised the Malaysian authorities, and two suspects were arrested and eventually extradited to the US.

Detective Coughlin is a new FTO with the US Postal Inspector Service and has been very busy with checks being stolen from local post offices by employees. A search warrant execution led to the arrest of one suspect and the recovery of a handgun. After she fled to the Carolinas and did not show for court, we received information that she was back in town and after a vehicle pursuit and standoff in her apartment we were able to re-arrest her.

**The Major Crimes Unit** has continued efforts in supporting the patrol division with real time intelligence to assist in incidents that occur during the shift. Leveraging the investigative resources such as access to License Plate Readers (LPR) data, traffic cameras, and other law enforcement databases increases the patrol officer's situational awareness, safety, and overall chance of conducting a successful investigation. The effectiveness of this collaborative approach was noticeable and as a result the Department initiated a project to bring all of the agency's investigative technological and data driven resources, such as LPR data, NCIC terminal, traffic cam feeds, outside agency communications, and other items of interest into a single workspace in the Major Crime Office. In addition, the Unit has collaborated with city IT and BOE Security Sgt (ret.) Joe Kennedy to gain access to BOE cams to allow improved coordination of school emergency responses. In conjunction with this capability, major crimes investigators trained with BOE Security prior to the beginning of the school year. Also, Major Crimes Sergeant Luis Serna has been appointed as a part-time task force officer at the Westchester County Real Time Crime Center (RTC). Stamford PD has developed a



strong connection with the RTC over the recent year and agencies have successfully collaborated on numerous cases benefiting both departments. LPR's has proven the prevalence of inter-state crime and our participation with a TFO and the benefits that it entails will improve the Unit's access to resources and overall effectiveness. Lastly, the Department now has a trained National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) analyst embedded within major crimes (Detective Kerilyn Whitehead). (NIBIN) is the only national network that allows for the capture and comparison of ballistic evidence to aid in solving and preventing violent crimes involving firearms. This technology is vital to any violent crime reduction strategy because it enables investigators to match ballistics evidence with other cases across the nation. This process also helps reveal previously hidden connections between violent crimes in different states and jurisdictions.

**Special Investigations Juvenile Offenses Unit** plays a key role in our outreach and crime fighting efforts. The SIJO investigates all crimes involving juveniles, as either victim or offender, including Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC). The Unit is involved with truancy and at-risk youth programs and offers mediation and conflict resolution including a Juvenile Review Board (JRB). In fiscal year 23/24 the Unit took on 243 new cases and made 151 arrests.

**The Special Victims Unit** works closely with the Domestic Violence Crisis Center and the Victims Advocate Office. They focus on domestic violence cases, stalking, and elder abuse. The unit's work does not end with an arrest, they are also involved with helping the victims create a safety plan and assist in obtaining various protective and restraining orders. The unit conducted 71 proactive home visits in fiscal year 23/24 in addition to the taking on 108 new cases resulting in 76 arrests.

**The Behavioral Health Unit (BHU)** is the core of the Stamford Police Department's Mental Health Initiative. This innovative initiative has allowed the Stamford Police Department to establish the State's first public/private partnership with Recovery Networks Programs (RNP). This initiative is aimed to combat the growing mental health problem within the State. Within the past year, BHU has become a stand-alone unit. BHU consists of a Captain, Lieutenant, Sergeant, two Detectives, and three clinicians. Such progress is attributed to receiving a federal grant. This expansion allowed BHU to enhance Stamford Police's relationship with Emergency Medical Services, the Fire Department, Stamford Health, the Judicial System, the Probate Court, and various community providers. This cross-system collaboration has allowed the BHU to provide effective interventions to address mental health, elder abuse, and social services needs within the community. With the assistance of a new grant, BHU has enhanced the intervention to address youth mental illness. As the BHU unit grows, we are developing policies, procedures, and data collection tools. Our goal is to document cases and subsequent outcomes while evaluating program effectiveness. BHU partnered with the MTA Police and addressed homelessness and public health issues at the Stamford Train Station. The BHU remains committed to supporting families and connecting individuals to essential services to improve their quality of life.

**Digital Forensics Unit** is tasked with a tremendous responsibility. This Unit handles evidence and information that we receive from digital and electronic sources. They assist with such cases as child pornography and exploitation as well as any case where digital evidence may exist. Evidence in almost all criminal cases these days involves cell phones, computers, and video and it is the Digital Forensics Unit's responsibility to receive, obtain, and process all of this evidence. It is a tremendous task for such a small unit. In fiscal year 23/24 the Unit received requests to process 153 electronic devices consisting of cellular phones, computers, and data storage devices. Additionally, the Digital Forensics Unit assisted in 8 child pornography investigations where a total of 32 electronic devices were processed for evidence. The Unit is also involved in the Technical Investigation Unit of Southwest CT. This task force increases our capabilities and resources in this area. The task force has been involved in many high-profile criminal investigations.

**Narcotics and Organized Crime Unit** made 212 arrests this year. In addition to the impressive seizures below, NOC officers spearheaded a successful federal, multi-agency wiretap investigation into a regional drug trafficking ring dealing fentanyl throughout Fairfield County. NOC officers are responsible for investigating illegal firearms, including the many firearms tips generated from the CrimeStopper Tipline. Also, NOC has continued to regularly partner with state agencies to investigate illegal THC sales and vape sales to minors at the city's various smoke shops.

Seizures:

Crack Cocaine	\$36,540
Powder Cocaine	\$294,980
Marijuana	\$15,445
PCP	\$4,890
Heroin/Fentanyl	\$32,010
Prescription Pills	\$350
Other	\$4,500
Cash Seizures	\$56,912
Illegal Gun Seizures	26

**The SPD CrimeStopper Tipline** is a partnership between the Stamford Police Foundation, a not for profit 501(c) 3 and the Stamford Police Department. A small group of investigative and supervisory personnel have been trained to receive tips on a 24/7 dedicated tip line, with the primary goal being the removal of illegal firearms from our community. All tip money is provided by the Stamford Police Foundation, no City or Department funds are expended for this initiative.

## SPECIALTY TEAMS

### **Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Unit**

The Stamford Police Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Unit calls for service in FY' 23-24 were 261 calls. This was a 13.47 % increase from the previous year of 230 calls for service. These calls for service consist of suspicious packages, unattended bags, EOD K-9 explosive sweeps / bomb threats, military ordnance removal, EOD K-9-gun searches, presentation and EOD K-9 demos. The EOD Unit consists of six nationally certified Hazardous Devices Technicians, three Hazardous Devices Technician Assistants and three Explosive Detection canines. Requests for explosive K-9 sweeps and explosive ordnance disposal related services continue to be in high demand within the City of Stamford and throughout Region 1 in Fairfield County. The FBI requires that all Bomb Technicians receive 24 hours of training per month and 40 hours of specialized training per year. Along with our FBI partners, our goal is to enhance police training and educate our civilian population as well as business corporations on explosive hazards / threats. Through involvement in community partnerships such as the Stamford Public Safety Citizens Academy and the "If you see something, say something" campaign we continue to stress situational awareness and public safety as a community police priority.

The EOD Unit Calls for Service have been broken down into the following four categories:

1. Presentations/Demonstrations- 72 calls
2. Explosive Sweeps/Unattended Bags- 120 calls
3. Suspicious Packages/Vehicles, Military Ordnance, Explosive Chemicals and Commercial Fireworks- 42 calls
4. K-9 Firearm Ballistic Searches- 27 calls (4 positive)

### **Hostage Negotiation Team**

Our HNT consists of 14 negotiators. The Team was activated a total of two (2) times this year. The incidents consisted of criminal barricaded persons. All incidents ended peacefully. This year

showed a dramatic drop in incidents requiring negotiators, possibly as a result of the work being done by the Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) in proactively addressing residents' feelings of helplessness. The team has remained prepared with innovative training including scenario-based situations using BHU and outside actors as role players. The team travelled to NYC and Southington to participate in training with worldwide experts.

### **K-9**

The K-9 unit consists of five canine handlers and three canine Decoys/Assistants. The SPD K9 Unit's training capabilities are second to none. Each K9 team's initial 400 hours of training and subsequent 192 hours of annual training is conducted "in-house", by members of our unit. In addition, the Darien and Brookfield PD K9 unit's monthly training is conducted with and overseen by our unit. Our K-9 Officers paired with their K-9 partners specializing in Patrol and Gun Detection and Patrol and Narcotics Detection. Patrol functions include Tracking, Building Searches, Evidence recovery and Apprehensions. Our K9 teams are also integrated with our SRT team during their operations. Throughout the year, the K-9s were directly involved in the arrest/apprehension of 83 suspects, with only one resulting in a K-9 bite. This statistic not only highlights the skill of our handlers, but the influence of the dog's presence, in de-escalating a potentially dangerous situation and keeping officers and suspects safe from additional harm. Members of the K9 unit also conducted 34 public demonstrations throughout the year.

### **Marine Division**

The Stamford Police Department Harbor Unit is operational year-round. During the boating season it is staffed by 1 sergeant and 2 officers, supplemental officers are brought in during special events and holiday weekends, during winter months the Unit is reduced to 1 sergeant and 1 officer, additionally, there are 6 officers who are certified and trained to go out with our full-time personnel in the event of an emergency. Officers applied for multiple grants this year with no funding awarded as of yet. The construction of a new Police Patrol Boat was started in 2023, currently in Phase II (welding) with a delivery date of 3rd week in November 2024. A second 2023 project is the purchase of a Jet-Ski for Harbor Patrol, with the generosity and help of; Mr. Evan Weis, the Police Foundation, the Stamford Harbor Commission, and Halloween YC, \$17,000 has been raised in donations (85% funded). The Harbor Unit has been very active within the Stamford Boating community attending regular meetings of; Stamford Harbor Commission, as well as USCG, Region One Marine Group. SPD Harbor Unit responded to a \*Mass Casualty Incident, (SAR's Mission) Assist other Department, (Westport) with a call for service wherein 30 PIW, persons reported in the water off of Compo Beach, (Norwalk, Westport town line) the incident occurred in late March, during a storm at approximately 5pm. Dark, rough water, wind driven sleet, Stamford Harbor Unit was one of the first Marine Assets on site, assisting in the search and rescue of all 30 persons. Miraculously only 2 people needed hospitalization for hypothermia, the water temperature was 58, if these were anything other than a High School Athletic Team, in would have been a mass drowning. Other Incidents; Responded to an occupied boat fire 2-POB (1-cat) saved. 2-Hurricanes (Don & Lee). 1- DOA Body found in the water (Mill River). 1- Assault 13A/520 Shooting Czesik Marina. 1- Assisted Milford PD 520/120 Investigation, suspect working local Marina. Worked 1st Polar Plunge Swim Event 100 + swimmers in February. Provided LEO Delegation from Poland with tour. Assisted in the "Talking" a suicidal veteran out of barricaded situation, wherein he surrendered to SRT/HNT.

01JULY2023 - 30JUNE2024

Harbor Unit Calls for Service (CFS) = 2,573

Rescues 11 (\*not counting the 30 PIW SAR's from Westport)

Safety Checks 273

Verbal warnings 189

Infractions 9

Incidents 21

Assist vessels in distress 8



Sinking Vessels 12  
Abandoned Vessels 2  
Retrieve Runaway Docks or Hazardous Debris 5

### **Special Response Team (SRT)**

This highly trained team currently consists of 18 members who completed 156 hours of rigorous training. The Team additionally trains 16 hours each month and continues to maintain good relationships and train with other teams such as the FBI Hostage Rescue Team, CT and MA State Police, NYPD, Bristol PD, New Haven PD and Stratford PD.

One of the Team's most valuable operations is that of High-Risk Warrant Service (HRWS) for persons and weapons. Out of the 10 High Risk Warrant Service operations the Team was involved in, they recovered 9 guns. The high ratio of HRWS to instances of seized guns is an indication of excellent intelligence gathered by NOC and BCI. It is also a good indicator that the Team is being utilized in a responsible manner and only when significant threat to officers or civilians exists. The Team realizes that it is important that the units they are working with all place the goal of saving lives as a priority.

SRT responded to (5) barricaded subject calls this fiscal year. One of these was in response to a burglary that occurred at Hugo's Taco's. The city had been plagued with burglaries that showed the suspects carrying handguns, even while people slept. Two suspects were located hiding on the roof of the building.

### **Traffic Enforcement Unit/C.A.R.S. (Collision Analysis Reconstruction Squad)**

As mentioned in the Patrol Division section, traffic safety continues to be a concern in Stamford, so the Traffic Enforcement Unit is dedicated to enforcement of traffic laws. During FY24 the unit issued 3,712 motor vehicle infractions/misdemeanor summons'. Unfortunately, during this fiscal year there were 8 traffic related fatalities that were investigated by TEU/CARS.. The unit also coordinates the D.O.T. grants for Distracted Driving Enforcement, OUI Enforcement and the Click It or Ticket campaigns.

## **Stamford Emergency Medical Services (SEMS)**

SEMS' mission is to provide consistent, compassionate, high quality, pre-hospital paramedic service to the citizens and visitors of Stamford. SEMS continues fulfilling this mission to the City of Stamford as it has faithfully since May of 1992.

SEMS responded to 17,298 calls for medical aid this year. For the third year in a row, we have experienced our highest call volume in service history. Of those calls, 7,822 required our highly trained paramedics to perform Advanced Life Support (ALS)/Paramedic level interventions. This volume of calls requires SEMS to operate six ambulances during peak hours of the day to ensure quality patient care following our mission. SEMS responded to 95.4% of all calls within 8 minutes and SEMS has an average response time of 5.12 minutes to ALS calls. The use of Emergency Medical Dispatching (EMD)has significantly reduced the utilization of "lights and sirens" responses, which in turn aids in decreasing risk to the public and SEMS personnel.

For fiscal year 2023/2024 SEMS personnel continue to treat COVID-19 patients.

While 100% of our staff are fully vaccinated, we are still encouraging all personnel to obtain boosters. With the noted increase in requests for medical aid in the previous fiscal years, SEMS incorporated a dedicated BLS transport unit comprised of two EMTs to offset the workload from the ALS Paramedic level units. With the addition of this BLS unit, we have noticed a decrease in dependency on mutual aid while still ensuring quality patient care, bringing our operation up to six ambulances during peak hours. We are continually investigating strategic placement for this unit as well as need for any additional units.

All of SEMS' services are performed by a full-time staff of forty-five providers supported by per-diem employees and an active contingency of twenty-five volunteers.

SEMS - Briefly	
Calls for medical aid	17,672
Number of patients transported to hospital	12,708
- Number of advanced life support interventions	7,822
Percentage responded to within 8 minutes	95.4%
Average Code 3 ALS response time in minutes	5.12
Code 3 Responses (lights & sirens)	10,839
Code 1 Responses (no lights & sirens)	6,827

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