

Jefferson County Sheriff's Report

Fiscal Year 2017-2018



August 2018

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Jefferson County Sheriff's Report

Pete Dougherty, Sheriff

Jefferson County is the easternmost county of West Virginia, at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, and is part of Washington/Baltimore Metropolitan Statistical Area.¹ The U.S. Census Bureau estimated Jefferson County's 2017 population to be 57,762. Jefferson is now the 9th most populous of the state's 55 counties moving up two in the past year. The largest city in Jefferson County is Charles Town, the county seat. There are four other incorporated communities, Ranson, Bolivar, Harpers Ferry and Shepherdstown. There are 83 identified unincorporated communities. An estimated 81% of Jefferson County residents reside outside of four municipal corporations that have their own municipal law enforcement. Those residents are primarily served by the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. The County Population is 88.9% white; 6.4% black; 5.7% Hispanic; 1.7% Asian and 3.2% other. Jefferson County is 212 sq. miles with approximately 900 miles of roads. There was an estimated 434 million miles of vehicular traffic on Jefferson County public roadways during 2017. No county without an interstate highway had more vehicle miles than Jefferson. There were 25,504 calls for service dispatched through Jefferson County's Emergency Communications Center; 22,648 or 88% were taken by the Sheriff's Office deputies.



Brief Summary of Activity:

Increase:

Significant increases:

Number of calls for law enforcement service each of the last 5 years

Number of felony and misdemeanor arrests

Impaired driver arrests

Violations of traffic laws [citations]

Call for animal control [humane officer complaints]

Volunteer hours by Reserve Deputies

¹ The map and overview is designed to give readers a sense of the geographic proximity of our county to the State. Jefferson County is the easternmost county and in close proximity to Baltimore, MD and Washington DC.

Modest Increases:

Writs and serve of process
Concealed weapons permits
Tax bills processed and collections

Decrease:

Mental Health involuntary commitments and transports
Persons under home confinement
Personal Protection Orders

Little or No Change:

Number of automobile accidents/crashes
Hotel Motel taxes collected
Family Protection Orders

Duties of the Sheriff of Jefferson County:

- Serve as the Chief Law Enforcement Officer in the county
- Serve as ex-officio Treasurer of the County
- Serve and execute all returns, notices and processes issued by the courts
- Enforce court orders
- Provide Court Security Officers at court proceedings and security in County Courthouse buildings/ grounds
- Transport prisoners and accused facing extraditions
- Detain and when appropriate transport those adjudicated under mental hygiene laws
- Provide fiduciary services to individuals who are unable to do so for themselves
- Review applications and issue licenses for concealed carry permits
- Collect all state, county, municipal and school taxes; disburse money to appropriate agencies
- Maintain all tax records
- Enforce payment of delinquent taxes
- Collect Hotel/Motel taxes
- Administer Animal Control Office to enforce animal cruelty statutes and ordinances

Tax Office:

The Sheriff's Tax Office is located on East Washington Street, Charles Town. The office is open for the public Monday-Friday 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

During Fiscal year 2016-17 the Tax Office prepared 53,796 tax bills and supplement bills an increase of 628 bills and collected \$56,365,709.60, a countywide total increase of \$1,123,679 [a .02% increase] from the previous year.

Jefferson County Commission:	\$13,161,612
Jefferson County Board of Education:	\$40,327,599
Ranson:	\$ 1,153,079
Charles Town	\$ 1,156,435
State of West Virginia:	\$ 227,885
Shepherdstown:	\$ 175,158
Bolivar:	\$ 101,210
Harpers Ferry:	\$ 62,733

During the last fiscal year the Jefferson County Commission received approximately 23% of all funds collected last year; the Board of Education 71.5%; Ranson and Charles Town less than 2%; and Shepherdstown, Bolivar and Harpers Ferry and the State of West Virginia received less than one percent.

Hotel/Motel Taxes:

The Sheriff’s Office collects from hotel and motel facilities a fee of 6% that is added to patrons lodging bills. During Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2018 the Sheriff collected \$772,715.96. The fees collected are placed into a restricted account and funds are used only to support Jefferson County Parks and Recreation; Convention and Visitors Bureau, Historic Landmarks Commission and Arts and Humanities Alliance.

Animal Control:

The Animal Control Office is located at 161 Poor Farm Road, Kearneysville, near the Jefferson County Fair Grounds. The Office is open Monday-Friday 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM and on Saturday’s from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. During Fiscal Year 2017-18 Animal Control Officers responded to:

- 2,745 calls for assistance within the County and the municipal corporations in Jefferson County; an increase of 5% from the previous year and more than 35% over the past two years ago. Among the most frequent calls were
- 671 loose dog complaints; 726 animal bite complaints; 75 animal cruelty complaints; 49 rabid animal complaints; 72 dogs locked in vehicles; 100 injured animals; 55; livestock complaints; 54 wildlife complaints; and 58 aggressive animals.

Sheriff's Law Enforcement Administrative Office:

The Jefferson County Sheriff's Office [JCSO] Law Enforcement Office is located at 102 Industrial Boulevard, Kearneysville, WV. The business office hours are Monday through Friday 8 AM till 5:30 PM to allow patrons needing to pick up or drop off a report or application. The office is staffed with deputies 24 hours a day to respond to emergency matters.

Service of Process:

The Sheriff's Office served 2,854 pieces of process (summons) last year and executed 149 writs. This represents an 18% increase in summons and in writs from the previous year.

Mental Health Issues:

There were fifty-three [53] petitions filed against persons accused of being in imminent danger of harming themselves or others pursuant to the State's Mental Hygiene laws. After being detained and after a hearing 20 were court ordered to be involuntarily committed and were transported to state approved institution.

These detentions, hearings, medical clearance and transports demands significant time and prompt actions as most hearings are held at night and transports regularly occur after midnight. After a hearing is held and prior to transporting mental hygiene patients the detained individual must be medically cleared at a local hospital. That requires Sheriff's staff to take them to the hospital and stay with them normally for 2-4 hours before they are "cleared" to be transported. The time in manpower and transportation is significant

Concealed Weapons Permits:

A total of 671 persons were issued a permit to carry a concealed weapon during the last fiscal year. This is an 11% increase from the previous year; there was a 30% decrease the previous year. Changes in law during past few years allow most persons to conceal carry in West Virginia without completing an application; having a background check or having any training. Those that wish to lawfully carry their firearms out of state still need to file a concealed weapons application; complete an approved training class; and successfully pass a criminal background check to determine the applicant is not a prohibited person (convicted felon/involuntary committed under mental health statutes; alcoholic or convicted of impaired driving or domestic battery).The law requires the Sheriff to complete the review within 45 days. If denied a permit the applicant may appeal to Circuit Court.

Law Enforcement

The Sheriff's Office has primary responsibility to investigate crimes, patrol roads and promote the safety of the public within the 212 square miles of Jefferson County. Jefferson County is diverse in geographic features, permanent and transient population and in its attractions that draw thousands into the county on a daily basis. The Sheriff's Office reports deputies responded on average to more than 436 calls for service each week or 1,889 each month.

Calls for Assistance:

The Sheriff's Office recorded 22,648 law enforcement calls/actions for service during this fiscal year. This is an increase of 4,499 during the past year and a two year increase of 6,345 actions equating to a 29% increase.

Arrests:

Sheriff County Deputies arrested 1134 of individuals; 943 for misdemeanor crimes and 197 for felony crimes. This number reflects the number of persons arrested not the number of crimes as many individuals are arrested for multiple violations. The number of arrests last year shows an increase of nearly 41% from the previous year.

Family and Person Protective Orders:

The Sheriff's Office served 235 Family Protective Orders [FPOs] and 49 Personal Protective Orders [PPOs] last year. The number of FPOs has remained somewhat constant over the past three years; however the number of PPOs has declined. Nonetheless this remains a problem as it translate to 5.5 serious issues on average every week.

FPO and PPOs have an extensive amount of work associated with it that requires deputies to go to the residence and may remove the person from their domicile; secure and remove firearms, catalog them and secure them at the Sheriff's Office pending court disposition. Weapons initially removed are returned only after the Court issues an order to the Sheriff to complete a background check prior to releasing those weapons secured to the defendant.

Home Confinement:

The Sheriff's Office provided home confinement services to 51 individuals during this fiscal year. The numbers of persons has increased substantially over the past few years. As the current fiscal year ended we are seeing an increase in the number of persons placed under home confinement supervision. We expect the number to increase in the new fiscal year. Home confinement when effectively used saves the county money but diverting persons from jail especially those with non-violent offenses.

Those under court approved monitoring are tracked with a devices that monitors them 24 hours a day 7 days a week to insure that they are at their home, place of work or at an appropriate place based upon the home confinement requirements. This effort by the Sheriff is done in coordination with Circuit, Family, and Magistrate Courts and with the Day Report Center. Persons are monitored after sentencing and some are monitored pending court hearings.

Citations/Accidents/DUI:

Deputies responded to 1,032 traffic crash/accidents last year a 4% decrease from the prior year. A total of 512 crash [accidents] reports were completed a decrease 4%. Reports of serious car crashes especially those with personal injuries or extensive damage take many hours of time by trained deputies to conduct accident reconstruction reports.

Deputies responded to 410 intoxicated driving complaints and charged 406 individuals with driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs a doubling of arrests from the previous year. In May 2018, five deputies from Jefferson County were recognized at the Governor's Highway Safety Conference for being among the Top 52 officers in the state. Jefferson County had the most officers recognized. These deputies and others are recognized by Mothers Against Drunk Drivers [MADD] for their efforts. Two deputies are certified as "drug recognition experts" [DREs]. This designation is helpful as an increasing portion of those stopped for impaired driving are under the influence of drugs. These deputies were called out 17 times during the year to assist deputies and other law enforcement agencies in helping to determine if a driver was driving under the influence of drugs.

Deputies wrote 2214 citations identifying 2559 violations of traffic laws a tripling of violations from the previous year.

Courthouse Security:

The Sheriff has primary responsibility to provide security in the Jefferson County Courthouse complex and its courtrooms. Court Security Officers [CSOs/Bailiffs] are the first line of security within those buildings.

The Sheriff's Office provided security for the Circuit, Family and Magistrate Courts and to county offices and Probation Office located at the Courthouse complex. In addition services as provided during events held in the Courthouse; during tours given by the National Park Service as well as during extended hours during periods such as early voting.

Dedicated staff monitor security cameras allowing CSOs at entrances to concentrate their attention on those entering and exiting the buildings without being distracted. Safety enhancements to the buildings are constantly reviewed and annually grant funding is requested to enhance safety of those working and visiting Courthouse buildings. Efforts are made to have CSOs to attend the WV Supreme Courts bailiff training as well as to provide them with other local trainings. All bailiffs are required to qualify with firearms prior to and to maintain proficiency during their terms of service.

Schools:

The Sheriff's Office works in coordination with federal, state and local law enforcement and Jefferson County Schools with a multijurisdictional law enforcement response to threats in schools. The effort has focused to inform and educate administrators, staff and students on appropriate actions to take to reduce risk if a threat is in their building or grounds. The objective is to keep schools safe yet friendly places to work and study.

This past year Jefferson County under grant funding and with support from the County Commission and Jefferson County Board of Education placed a deputy into Jefferson High School; the largest school in the County. That initiative has been very successful resulting in a drastic reduction of disciplinary referrals and no serious crimes.

Sheriff's deputies periodically visit schools to become familiar with the facility, staff and students to be seen as a friendly face to those who work, study and visit local schools.

The Sheriff's Office annually reviews school safety plans with school administrators and meet with the Superintendent and Board of Education on any suggested policy and procedures to enhance safety.

Reserve Deputies:

The Jefferson County Deputy Sheriff's Reserves had 4 Cadets scheduled to complete the training this year. Reserve Cadets generally have no prior law enforcement certification and therefore must complete a 150 hour structured robust curriculum and on-the-job experiential training. The Eastern Panhandle Deputy Sheriff Reserve Academy overseen by the Sheriffs of Berkeley, Jefferson and Morgan Counties. The Academy is recognized by Blue Ridge Community and Technical College where cadets may earn college credits upon completion of the academy.

The Reserves completed 10,886 hours of service this year a 28% increase from the previous year. This activity includes assists to law enforcement officers on road patrols and targeted patrols on public roads and subdivisions, at accident scenes, and at many community events including the Arts and Crafts Festival, the Jefferson County Fair, Parks and Recreation dances at Sam Michael Park and other civic events in the County throughout the year.

Training:

Training for members of the Sheriff's Office is vital to keep deputies current on changes in the law; to enhance investigative skills for both criminal investigations and vehicle crashes; and to be prepared to take appropriate action to protect the public and themselves. All deputies are required to maintain certification receive at least of 16 and supervisors 24 hours of state approved training.

Sheriff Office law enforcement officers received 1,928.5 hours of training, including 832 hours credited to one deputy that graduated from the WV State Police Training Academy. The 1,928.5 hours were approved by the WV Division of Justice and Community Services' Law Enforcement Professional Standards Office and does not include hundreds of hours of local specialized training. It is critical to keep law enforcement officers current on the law; to enhance skills and to minimize adverse actions due to a lack of proper training. Deputies also participated in hundreds hours of K-9 training; qualifications testing for both Day Light and Low Light Shooting; training for terroristic events and crisis response and other local training conducted under supervised conditions but not recorded with the Law Enforcement Professional Standards Office.

Several deputies in the Sheriff's Office are designated and approved as "master trainers" allowing them to provide high quality state approved training locally without paying outside instructors; reducing travel time and costs.

Multijurisdictional Efforts to Curb Drugs

Jefferson County's Drug Threat

Jefferson County is a member of the Washington/Baltimore High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas [HIDTAs]. This designation enhances our ability to work in a collaborative effort with many law enforcement authorities in the Washington-Baltimore area to destroy and disrupt drug trafficking efforts within Jefferson County.

There are three main factors that influence the drug threat in Jefferson County and local law enforcement's ability to address the threat:

First, proximity to three major drug markets: Washington, D.C. 60 miles away, Baltimore, MD 70 miles, and Philadelphia, PA, 171 miles;

Second, Jefferson County continues to grow in population and it is estimated that more than four million visitors come to Jefferson County annually

Third, our county provides a convenient alternative route for drug traffickers to avoid detection and interdiction along the two major Interstate highways in the area Interstate 70 and 81.

Drug Use and High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area [HIDTA]

The misuse of illegal drugs continues to escalate. There continues to be a plentiful supply of illegal drugs being sold to those addicted in and near Jefferson County. This problem is further complicated by the issue of the drugs being sold and consumed are in many cases inconsistent in their quality and potency. Heroin continues to be a major source of drug overdoses.

The reporting of overdose incidents and deaths and follow up investigations continues to be a high priority for the Sheriff's Office. Our efforts in concert with medical responders continues to remain high. Jefferson County in coordination with the Washington/Baltimore HIDTA has instituted an enhanced system of reporting overdose cases especially where naloxone was used and the results were recorded. During the past fiscal year there have been 324 overdoses reported in Jefferson County. While the number is significant it does reflect a downward trend. December and February were the largest number 39 and 49 respectively; July and May were the lowest 14 and 10.

Sheriff's Official National, State and Local Involvements:

Member, National Sheriff's Association
Board Member, Board of Directors of the WV Sheriff's Association
Board Member, Commission on Drunk Driving Prevention.

Board Member, WV Association of County Officials
Member, Supreme Court's WV Central State Mental Health Registry.
Director, Eastern Panhandle Violent Crimes and Safe Streets Initiative
Board Member and Treasurer, Jefferson County Day Report Center
Member, White Collar Crimes Consortium
Member, US Attorney's Anti-Terrorism Council; Northern District of WV

Law Enforcement Staffing:

Law Enforcement:

2 Lieutenants	6 Sergeants
7 Corporals	7 Deputies First Class
10 Deputies	7 Administrative/Office Staff

Tax Office:

1 Chief Tax Deputy	5 Assistant Tax Deputies
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Animal Control

2 Animal Control Officers II	1 Animal Control Officer I	1 Animal Control Officer
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Courthouse/Court Security Officers

1 Chief Bailiff	25 mostly part-time Court Security Officers/Bailiffs
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Process/Trip Guards/Home Confinement:

1 fulltime; 1 part-time employee	18 part-time special deputies
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Needs:

***Law Enforcement:**

The Sheriff's Law Enforcement Office is one of if not the most active offices in the state. The ability to have sufficient vehicles and training to meet the demands of law enforcement is critical. Based on

national minimum standards the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office should have more than 38 deputies*.

If the preferred standard was used Jefferson County Jefferson County would have 57 deputies *. Deputies work under very difficult conditions their salaries need to be increased as we are falling behind other law enforcement agencies while deputies have significantly increased their productivity.

[Minimum Federal Standards call for 1 officer per 1,500 residents; preferred standard is 1 officer for 1,000 residents. [Number of Deputies in Jefferson County is not high in comparison to other counties in WV, and in adjoining jurisdictions – e.g. Fayette County with a population of 46,000 has 32 deputies [1,435.5]; Marshall County with a 33,000 has 23 Deputies [one deputy per 1,439 citizens]; Jefferson has one deputy for more than, 1,800 citizens]*

Court Security Officers [Bailiff] Services:

There continues to be a need to continue to have additional Court Security Officers/Bailiffs. With two full time Circuit Court Judges, one Family Court Judge and three Magistrate Court Judges. Our Courts have active civil and criminal caseloads. Court Security Officers secure more than 20 prisoners a week into holding cells, moving them out of secured buildings for trials and hearings and transport them to jail prisoners. Those demands require a large number of staff along with securing all entrances and patrolling the other offices in the Courthouse area.

Tax Office:

Even with the reduction of two fulltime tax deputy positions over the past two years we have managed to maintain a high level of customer friendly service.

The Tax Office is inadequate and a new facility is needed since a modification of this facility to make it handicapped accessible seems unattainable. The online payment system activated early this year has been successful allowing the public to make payments without having to come to the tax office.

Animal Control:

The reduction in staff from five to four Animal Control Officers as requested by the Sheriff has had minimal negative impact upon the operations of the office. It has made scheduling for coverage more difficult but so far this cost reduction has had no negative impact on responding to calls for service.

The Animal Control facility is in bad condition and a new facility is needed.