

FAIR LAWN POLICE DEPARTMENT 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

JOSEPH DAWICKI
CHIEF OF POLICE



SERVING SINCE 1930

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Fair Lawn Police Department (FLPD) is located at 8-01 Fair Lawn Avenue, Fair Lawn NJ, 07410. Main telephone line: 201-796-1400, 9-1-1 in emergencies.

The department serves a community of 36,489, a 2.6% increase from 2024.¹ The daytime population exceeds this count by virtue of commercial establishments, industrial operations, school services, and people in transit. Fair Lawn is the fourth largest town in Bergen County by population and land mass.

As of December 31, 2025, the total number of full-time sworn personnel is 62. There are 12 part-time Class III Special Police Officers, 10 part-time Class I Special Police Officers, 6 full-time public safety dispatchers, 1 per diem dispatcher, 3 full-time civilian staff, and 1 part-time civilian staff members. In addition, there are 50 part-time school crossing guards and 10 substitute guards, tasked with safety crossing children at arrival and dismissal times throughout the year that are managed by the FLPD. New for the 2025-2026 school year, the department removed a full-time police officer from the crossing post at Broadway & 30th Street and assigned the post to a civilian crossing guard in accordance with State guidelines. This resulted in a significant cost savings, and the officer was re-assigned to other duties in the Community Policing & Traffic Division.



¹ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/fairlawnboroughnewjersey/POP060210>

PATROL DIVISION

As an agency, the Fair Lawn Police Department handled 26,233 calls for service in 2025. This is an increase of over 16% from last year's call volume. The patrol division dealt with the majority of the calls for service in the department. The patrol division is commanded by Captain Eric Leitman and consists of 4 Lieutenants, 4 Sergeants and 28 Police Officers working across 4 different 12 hour shifts. Some of the functions of the division are:



- To provide police services 24 hours a day
- Investigation of crimes
- Response to all types of calls for service
- Motor vehicle crash investigations
- Directed patrols for various law enforcement efforts
- Community engagement
- Business security checks after hours

In 2025, at the Chief's direction, the patrol division embarked on a new fixed post strategy. Officers are now assigned to fixed posts for 180 days at a time in order to build familiarity with residential and commercial districts. Fixed posts also allow responding officers to be more effective in dealing with repeat issues and to be innovative in problem solving. Walking posts were also re-introduced this year. Officers conducted 223 "Park and Walks", visiting businesses and commercial districts on foot, up from 19 such visits in 2024.



Patrol division community engagement in 2025



SELECT CALLS FOR SERVICE BREAKDOWN

This table lists select calls for service and statistics with the number and percentage change year over year.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Year over Year</u>
Aggravated Assault	5	Down 68%, vs. 16 in 2024
Burglary in the past	18	Down 30%, vs. 26 in 2024
Burglary in progress	9	Down 52%, vs. 19 in 2024
DWI Arrests	48	Up 2%, vs. 47 in 2024
Motor Vehicle Crash w/ Injuries	147	Down 16%, vs. 177 in 2024
Motor Vehicle Theft	19	Down 20%, vs. 24 in 2024
Shoplifting	117	Down 22%, vs. 164 in 2024
Traffic Stop	4,724	Up 41%, vs. 3,349 in 2024
Weapons Offenses	6	Up 200%, vs. 2 in 2024

ARREST DATA

Listing of adult arrests by degree and demographics.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
1st degree crime	1
2nd degree crime	10
3rd degree crime	63
4th degree crime	28
Disorderly Persons	85
Petty Disorderly Persons	9
Motor Vehicle Related	49
Other Violation	37
No code entered	9

Total: 291

Male: 198, Female: 93

<u>Demographic Factor</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
H-Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic	12
H- Black, Hispanic	13
H-White/Latin, Hispanic	85
N-Asian/Pacific Islander, Non-Hispanic	8
N-Black, Non-Hispanic	61
N-White, Non-Hispanic	112

MOTOR VEHICLE CRASH ANALYSIS

List of reported motor vehicle crashes, including hit and run reports.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
Fatal MVA Overturn	1
Injury MVA	1
Injury MVA W/Pedestrian	16
Injury MVA W/Other MV	123
Injury MVA W/Bicycle	3
Injury MVA W/Fixed Object	12
Injury MVA Overturn	3
Injury MVA Other	2
MVA Property Damage	2
MVA Property Dam. W/Pedestrian	3
MVA Property Dam. W/Other MV	475
MVA Property Dam. W/Bicycle	1
MVA Property Dam. W/Animal	8
MVA Property Dam. W/Fixed Obj.	82
MVA Property Dam Ran Off Road	3
MVA Property Dam Others	3
MVA Minor	356
Hit & Run W/ Personal Injury	3
Hit & Run W/ Property Damage	77
Hit & Run Others	1
Hit & Run Pedestrian	1
Total:	1176

DETECTIVE BUREAU

The FLPD Detective Bureau is under the command of Detective Captain Ronald Patterson. The detective bureau is responsible for investigating a wide range of issues within the Borough of Fair Lawn. Detectives assigned to the Bureau investigate crimes reported to the department. Some of the more common type of crimes our detectives investigate are thefts, burglaries, robberies, fraud, narcotics, sexual assaults, and juvenile investigations. Some of the other functions the bureau is responsible for is conducting background investigations for police applicants, firearm purchase permits, and conducting Internal Affairs Investigations. Members of the detective bureau are also tasked with maintaining compliance with local, county, state and federally mandated training, via classroom, virtual, and tactical hands-on training.

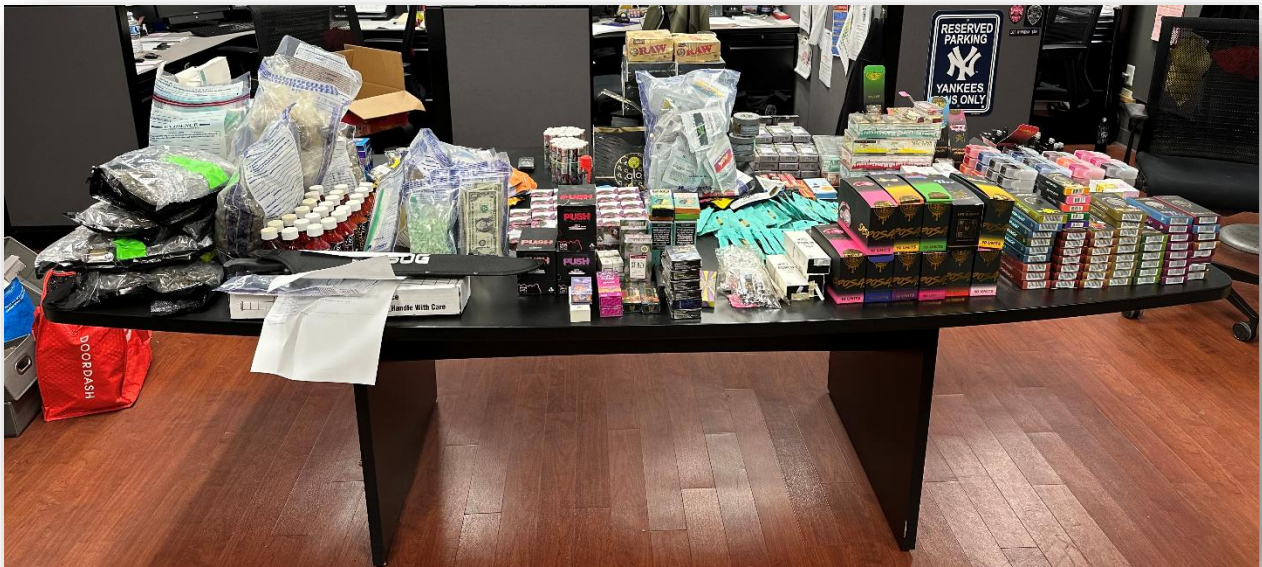
In 2025, the FLPD Detective Bureau investigated 291 crimes, resulting in 83 arrests. Some noteworthy cases:

- In March, Detectives were working alongside the patrol division to prevent an Elderly Scam that was attempted at a residence in town. Detectives arrested a suspect that came to the residence thinking they were going to pick up \$70,000 in cash from the victim.
- In May, Detectives and Patrol Officers conducted a search warrant. Evidence seized from included 1.4 pounds of marijuana, 1.2 pounds of psilocybin mushrooms, and \$152,000 in US currency.



\$152k in cash and narcotics seized

- In September and October of 2025, members of the detective bureau investigated a missing 16-year old from town. The investigation took several weeks and several out of state trips. The missing juvenile was located in the Bronx, NY by the detective bureau and returned to her family safely.
- In 2025, the detective bureau conducted several search warrants, resulting in the arrests of drug dealers and prostitutes that were operating in town.



Seized narcotics and currency from one Detective Bureau search warrant done in 2025

COMMUNITY POLICING UNIT

The Community Policing and Traffic units are under the command of Captain Brian LaRosa. These units provide a multitude of vital services to the community. On any given day, officers from community policing can be found performing some of the following tasks:

- Public speaking engagements, to educate the public about a wide variety of topics such as pedestrian safety, school safety, crime awareness, and fraud prevention and other timely information.
- Law Enforcement Against Drugs (LEAD), offered to 5th and 6th grade students.
- Citizen and Junior Police Academies, held in the spring and summer yearly
- Police Cadet Post 1126, open to high school and college age individuals who have an interest in law enforcement. Monthly meetings and training are held, as well as a yearly summer week long academy. Police Cadets are also visible around town at special events under supervision of Sgt. Eleshewich and Det. O'Shaughnessy.



L-R: former FLPD Cadet James Harte, now Wyckoff PD, Det. Chris O'Shaughnessy, current FLPD Cadets, Sgt. Eleshewich, and former FLPD Cadet Ian Moskal, now a FLPD Class I officer.

- Citizen ride-along program with officers
- Street fairs, including National Night Out held every August
- Coffee with a cop, citizen outreach



In the fall of 2025, the FLPD held its' first ever Pumpkin Painting with the Police. Over 100 pumpkins were painted by Fair Lawn School children with officers from Community Policing, current Police Academy Recruits and the Chief.

TRAFFIC DIVISION

The FLPD Traffic Division consists of Sgt. Sean Nagle and 2 dedicated officers under his command. They are responsible for addressing a wide variety of traffic related issues to include:

- Motor vehicle enforcement
- Receive & address citizen complaints
- Work zone safety projects to improve traffic management and safety at construction zones
- School crossing guard hiring, training and supervision. In 2025, Fair Lawn had 60 crossing guards to help ensure the safety of school children.
- Crossing guard audits were conducted at the start of the 2025-2026 school year to ensure resources were being allocated in the right areas.
- New traffic patterns were implemented this fall at TJ Middle School and Memorial Middle School to help ease congestion and improve pedestrian safety.
- New Borough ordinances were enacted near the middle schools to improve parking and traffic flow.
- Speed monitoring & surveys via pole mounted radar equipment
- Timed parking enforcement, via the part-time parking officer and officers in the unit
- Child car seat installations, 33 were performed in 2025. To schedule an appointment for a free install, call the main desk at 201-796-1400 on Wednesdays or Saturdays from 9am-1pm to confirm availability.

HONOR GUARD

The FLPD Honor Guard was formed in 1973, and is currently under the command of Sgt. Eric Eleshewich. For over half a century, the Honor Guard has represented both the FLPD and the Borough of Fair Lawn with distinction both locally and regionally in the tristate area and along the eastern seaboard of the United States of America. The Honor Guard serves to memorialize law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty, our nation's Veterans, and also for momentous occasions such as police graduations and other ceremonial functions.



FLPD Honor Guard and Officers, Memorial Day Parade, 2025

POLICE RECORDS

The FLPD Records Bureau is staffed by two full-time civilian employees and one part-time employee. The records bureau is responsible for maintaining, filing, sorting, storing, and disseminating all records created by the FLPD. This includes all incident reports and related paperwork such as arrest records, photographs, motor vehicle crash reports, property and inventory reports, and all other legal documentation that is required by the State and Federal Government. These documents are requested on a daily basis for the following needs:

- Legal discovery for prosecution & defense
- OPRA requests, 311 fulfilled in 2025, up 9% from 284 in 2024
- Municipal, state, and federal agency requests
- Insurance companies
- Involved parties to police incidents

In addition, the Records bureau is tasked with:

- Borough parking pass sale & registry:
 - 1,014 yearly permits, up 38% from 731 in 2024
 - 155 monthly permits, up 72% from 90 in 2024
- Solicitor permit sale & registry, 31 processed in 2025
- Processing 151 citizen reports in 2025
- Record & background checks
- Monthly FBI crime statistic reporting. As of June 2025, the FLPD is now NIBRS compliant. NIBRS is the FBI's new national standardized crime reporting database, (National Incident Based Reporting System).

CLASS III OFFICERS

FLPD Class III Special Police Officers are under the command of Detective Captain Ronald Patterson. They are retired law enforcement officers in accordance with [guidelines](#) from the State of New Jersey Police Training Commission who are tasked with providing security to the Fair Lawn Middle and Elementary Schools. Officers work closely with school personnel to ensure a safe environment for all. The unit has 12 Officers assigned part-time, and each public school is covered on a daily basis.



FLPD Class III Officers, First day of school, Sept. 2, 2025

CLASS I OFFICERS

FLPD Class I Special Police Officers are tasked with providing support to the Police Department in the following disciplines:

- Courtroom security
- Special event security & crowd control
- Weather related emergencies
- House of worship patrol

Sgt. Eric Eleshewich is in charge of the Class I officers, all 10 of which are assigned part-time.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications handles in excess of 100,000 telephone calls and 9-1-1 calls per year. The volume of radio traffic is even higher. The communications room is staffed 24/7 by six rotating dedicated full-time personnel and supplemented by per diem staff and police officers on occasion. You can count on them to get the officers heading to your situation!



FLPD Communications Room & Police Desk

PROPERTY & EVIDENCE FUNCTION

In 2025, the FLPD property & evidence function handled an intake of 440 items of property. One item of property technically may have dozens of items associated to it however. Property ranges from evidence to contraband to confiscated items and found property. The total number of items currently in inventory is 5,552. In addition, there were 1,548 items removed from inventory and disposed of and 93 items were returned to their owners.

FIREARMS APPLICATIONS & PERMITS

The FLPD investigated & processed the following numbers of firearms items:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
Pistol permit applications	210
Firearms ID applications	144
Carry permit investigations	409
Duplicate ID applications	34

The total number of firearms applications and investigations was 797, up from 671 in 2024, over an 18% increase.

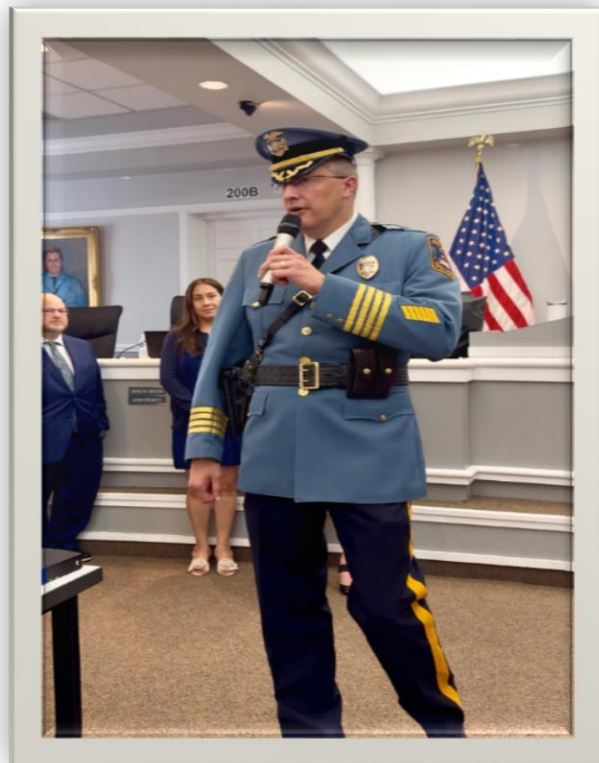
DEPARTMENT NEWS

In 2025, the following was noteworthy:

- In January, the department regrettably announced that SPO Class III Jose Valentin passed away. Jose was a beloved member of the Thomas Edison School and served as a friend, mentor and role model to so many children.
- Chief Glen Cauwels retired on March 1, 2025. Chief Cauwels served 31 years for the FLPD and is a United States Marine Corps Veteran. Chief Cauwels implemented many programs currently in operation in the FLPD

including the SPO Class III program, firearms simulator, drone program, and the FLPD Social Media outreach programs.

- Joseph Dawicki was named acting Chief on March 1, 2025 and was promoted to Chief on June 19, 2025. Chief Dawicki is the department's 10th Chief in its history, and a 24-year veteran of the department. He is a graduate of the 289th Session of the FBI National Academy and a graduate of the University of Virginia with a Master's degree in Public Safety.



Chief Dawicki swearing in

- Promotions to Captain, Lieutenant and Sergeant were made on March 3, 2025. Eric Leitman was promoted to Captain, in charge of the patrol division. Sean Macys was promoted to Lieutenant of a patrol shift. Geovanny Buitron was promoted to Sergeant of a patrol shift.

- In June, the department swore in Devarjaye “DJ” Daniel as an Honorary Police Officer. “DJ”, who is 13 years old, from Houston, Texas, has been battling brain and spine cancer and has been on a nationwide mission to be sworn in to as many police agencies as he can. To date, he has been sworn in to over 1,000 agencies including the United States Secret Service. FLPD was proud to bestow the honor upon him at a ceremony with our partners in the Cliffside Park, NJ Police Department.



“DJ” with Chief Dawicki, Sgt. Vasquez and Sgt. Eleshewich

- Also in June, Luis Vasquez was promoted to Sergeant of a Patrol shift, and the department hired three Fair Lawn residents as police recruits – Kyle Milnes, Daniel Pinnola and Brendan Perry. Milnes and Perry also have US Military backgrounds (US Army and NJ National Guard) and we value their service to their community and to their Country.
- In October, several members of the department were honored at the Bergen County 200 Club Valor Awards. PO Hearon was awarded the Distinguished Service award for arresting an individual with a loaded handgun. PO’s Rovetto, Pindyck, Urgiles, Castor and Marotta along with

Sgt. Buitron, Det. DiGuglielmo, D/Lt. Tim O'Shaughnessy and D/Sgt. Mark Wyka were awarded the John R. Rinaldi Unit Citation award for their joint efforts in safely disarming an armed individual and subsequently seizing \$152,000 in US currency and narcotics following a search warrant.



Bergen County 200 Club Valor Awards

JOIN THE FLPD

Interested in joining one of the leading departments in Bergen County? We offer a generous total package to include:

- Academy starting pay of \$50,844 (1-1-2026)
- 424 hours of annual PTO to start
- 4 on 4 off 12-hour patrol schedule
- Enrollment in NJ Police & Firemen's Retirement System & NJ State Health Benefits Plan
- Specialized training and units available
- Participation in regional SWAT and RDF teams
- Education incentive per credit and for Associates, Bachelors or Masters for degrees in Police Science, Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement or Police/Public Administration
- Mentor program for new hires & Employee Wellness Program, new in 2026



File for the NJ Civil Service Commission Exam at

<https://www.nj.gov/csc/jobs/publicsafety>

We also keep resumes on file for Police Officer, SPO Class I, SPO Class III, Dispatch, and Lateral Police Officers for when there are openings. Send your resume and cover letter to Chief Joseph Dawicki at: jdawicki@fairlawnpd.com

THE BOROUGH OF FAIR LAWN IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

EEO/Affirmative Action Policy Statement

The Borough of Fair Lawn maintains a strong policy of equal employment for all employees and applicants for employment. The Borough hires, trains, promotes and compensates employees on the basis of personal competence and potential for advancement without regard for race, religion, color, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), parental status, national origin, age, disability, family medical history or genetic information, political affiliation, military service, other non-merit based factors as well as other classifications protected by applicable federal or state laws.

This equal employment opportunity philosophy applies to all aspects of employment with the Borough, including recruiting, hiring, training, promotion, job benefits, pay, dismissal, educational assistance and social and recreational activities.