



Wheat Ridge Police Professional Standards Unit 2022 Annual Report



The Professional Standards Unit is responsible for several areas within the Police Department. Their primary duty shall be to ensure the integrity of the Wheat Ridge Police Department. The Professional Standards Unit's areas of responsibility include but not limited to the development, implementation, and supervision of recruitment and selection processes within the department, police department awards/recognition program, and internal investigation activities.

The Professional Standards Unit (PSU) accepts positive and negative comments from the public, professionals, and staff in regard to police services and member conduct. PSU investigates and maintains records on commendations, complaints, use of force incidents, employee-involved accidents, the early warning system, and eluding and pursuit events.

The PSU office researches, recommends, develops and writes policy revisions, and other responsibilities as assigned by the Chief of Police.

The areas of responsibility for PSU are outlined in the Annual Report. Information contained in the PSU 2022 Annual Report is compiled from the yearly activities of PSU.

Commendations

The Wheat Ridge Police Department provides recognition to those employees and citizens whose actions exemplify the qualities of our Core Values, specifically: Courage, Integrity, Respect, Perseverance, and Initiative. The Department recognized 49 individuals for exceptional performance, involving 41 separate instances in 2022. The Department received a wide range of compliments from citizens, ranging from motorist assists to life-saving efforts.

Challenge Coins

In 2022, 16 Challenge Coins were presented to 15 employees.

Department Awards

The following individuals received an award during 2022. Awards are issued throughout the year or at the Police Department Annual Awards Ceremony.

Certificates of Recognition:

Officer Cody Mitchell	Detective Kameron Dillemath
Co Responder Caitlin Haden	Officer Tyson Shaul
Community Services Officer Tim Haines	Officer Daniel Reshew
Officer Jeremy Bauth	Officer Matthew McKewen
Corporal Dwayne Baker	Officer Brian Cook
Officer Michael Cutrer	Officer Jamie Ballah
Officer Lance Gortmaker	Officer Leigh Kern

Officer Cody Mitchell
Officer Oscar Romero
Officer Keifer Longson
Corporal Cory Chauncey
Detective Mark Slavsky
Detective Justin Paugh
Sergeant Keith Weimer

Officer Matt Finkin
Officer Gary Rhoads
Officer Stephen Espinosa
Detective Cheri Ells
Detective Kira Smith
Detective Josie van Veen

Medals:

External Recognition Medal

Commander Jon Pickett
Sergeant Keith Weimer
Sergeant John Parsons
Detective Brad With
Detective Charles Hemming
Officer Lauryn Kulp
Officer Daniel Southwick
Officer Jeremy Bauth
Officer Daniel Neyra
Officer Cody Mitchell
Retired Corporal Cory Chauncey
Evidence Technician Tara Smith

Commander Scott Bellomy
Sergeant Brian Gross
Sergeant Chris Krieger
Detective Cheri Ells
Detective Kira Smith
Officer Mitch Cotten
Officer Rachel Miller
Officer Brian Cook
Officer Leigh Kern
Retired Officer Barry Malloy
Chaplain Scott Moore
Analyst Beth Daniel

Meritorious Achievement

Community Services Officer Tim Haines
Officer Joseph Mallory

Crisis Intervention Service Award

Officer Daniel Southwick

Life Saving

Officer Gary Rhoads
Officer Daniel Reshew
Corporal Kevin Lui
Officer Daniel Southwick
Officer Patrick Reardon (X's 2)
Officer Leigh Kern
Officer Michael Cutrer
Officer Rebecca Page
Officer Jamie Ballah
Officer Tyson Shaul

Commendation

Sergeant Bobbi Dawkins
Detective Kyle Boesel
Corporal Russell Henzie
Chief Christopher Murtha
Sergeant John Parsons
Corporal Kevin Lui

Medal of Valor

Sergeant Chris Krieger	Officer Stephen Espinosa
Corporal Jeremy Schmitz	Officer Kendall Rezac
Officer Cody Mitchell	Officer Patrick Reardon
Officer Roman Samuels	

Purple Heart

Officer Allan Fischer

DUI Officer of the Year

Officer Stephen Espinosa

Chief's Award

Karen Hunt	Amanda Desroches
Kristin Brooks	Chaplain Mary Van Horn
Detective Kira Smith	

Employee of the Year

Evidence Technician Cindy Case

Officer of the Year

Officer Tyson Shaul

Recruitment

Members of the Recruitment Team included: Sergeants Betsy Sailor and Bobbi Dawkins; Officers Jeremy Bauth, Cody Mitchell, Donovan Reetz, Daniel Neyra, Detectives Kyle Eversole and Bri McCarthy, and Records Technician Amanda Schweda. New members were added to the team to include CSO Tim Haines and Detective Sheena Stovall.

In an effort to more effectively recruit former military service members, a military recruitment team was created consisting of officers with former military experience. This team attended a recruitment event held at Ft. Carson on December 14, 2022 which resulted in numerous contacts and applications. Those recruited during this event are currently moving through the hiring process.

Recruitment efforts at local community colleges continued in 2022. Commander Bellomy attended the Community College of Aurora to meet with the POST class about employment opportunities with the Wheat Ridge Police Department. Recruitment team members also attended a job fair at Arapahoe Community College.

Officers continue to attend law enforcement specific job fairs throughout the year.

PSU facilitated the hiring process for all positions within the Police Department and assisted with internal transfers. PSU worked closely with the Human Resources Division to develop recruiting strategies and marketing techniques.

Hiring Processes, Promotions & Demographics

In 2022, 416 people applied to be sworn police officers with the City of Wheat Ridge. This is a decrease from 475 in 2021.

Note: Gender/Ethnicity information is not required during the application process. The percentages detailed below are of the total information available.

- 82% of the applicants were men
- 18% of the applicants were women
- 57% of the applicants were Caucasian
- 11% of the applicants were African-American
- 23% of the applicants were Hispanic
- 1% of the applicants were Asian/Pacific Islander
- 1% of the applicants were American Indian
- 7% of the applicants identified as “Other” or “Prefer not to Answer”

During 2022, the Department hired no lateral police officers; however, eight recruit police officers were hired. The demographics for those hired in 2022, were five Caucasian males, one Pacific Islander male, and one Black female.

Department, Community, and Enforcement Demographics

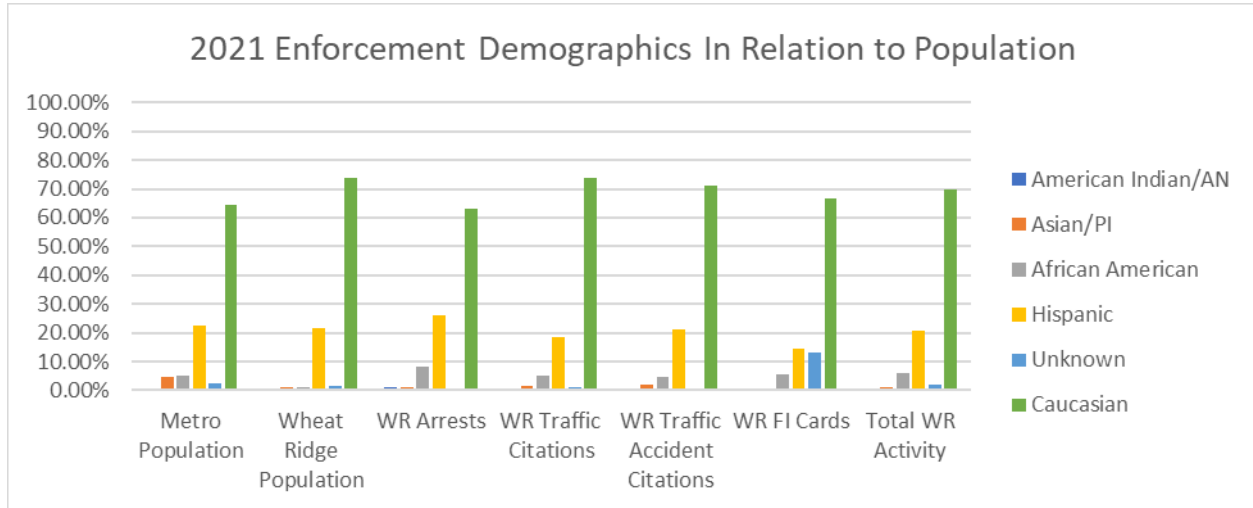
The City of Wheat Ridge is a Home Rule Municipality located in Jefferson County Colorado. Wheat Ridge is a western suburb of Denver. The Wheat Ridge Police Department strives to achieve staffing demographically aligned with our service community. The most recent data regarding demographics in Wheat Ridge is found in the 2022 estimate provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. While these are the estimated demographics of the city residents in 2022, these statistics do not include the individuals traveling through, commuting to, or temporarily residing in Wheat Ridge. For this reason, caution should be used when directly comparing Wheat Ridge resident demographics to police employee demographics.

The 2022 United States Census Bureau showed that Caucasian men and women make up 74.8% of the Wheat Ridge population. At the end of 2022, the Wheat Ridge Police Department consisted of 89% Caucasian officers.

Hispanic officers accounted for 6.0% of the department’s sworn staff at the end of 2022; whereas, the service population is approximately 19.8% Hispanic. African-American officers accounted for 2.4% of the department’s sworn staff at the end of 2022; whereas, the service population is approximately .8%.

The Department employed two Asian/Pacific Islander officer (2.4%) in 2022; whereas the service population is approximately 1.3% of the Wheat Ridge population. The Department did not employ American Indian/Alaska Native officers in 2022.

The below chart represents an analysis of the percentage of total WRPD enforcement actions in 2022 from arrests made, traffic citations issued, traffic summonses issued as a result of traffic accidents, and field contact cards in relation to population demographics of Wheat Ridge and the Denver Metropolitan Area (data obtained from the 2022 estimate):



An analysis of the above data shows:

The Caucasian population comprises 74.8% of the Wheat Ridge population and 64.6% of the overall Denver metropolitan population. In 2022, 67% of WRPD contacts and enforcement actions involved the Caucasian population.

The Hispanic population comprises 19.8% of the Wheat Ridge population and 22.6% of the Denver metro population. In 2022, 21.4% of WRPD contacts and enforcement actions involved the Hispanic population.

The African-American population comprises .8% of the Wheat Ridge population and 5.2% of the Denver metro population. In 2022, 7.0% of WRPD contacts and enforcement actions involved the African American population.

The American Indian population comprises 1.2% of the population of Wheat Ridge and 0.5% of the Denver metro area. In 2022, 0.9% of WRPD contacts and enforcement actions involved the American Indian population.

The Asian/Pacific Islander population comprises 1.3% of the population of Wheat Ridge and 4.6% of the Denver metro area. In 2022, .8% of WRPD contacts and enforcement actions involved the Asian/Pacific Islander population.

Wheat Ridge contact and enforcement actions were listed as 3% unknown in Niche RMS.

Biased-Based Profiling

Bias-Based Profiling complaints are thoroughly investigated and subjected to an administrative review. Complaints are typically investigated by the named department member’s direct supervisor. The supervisor takes into account the citizen’s concerns, department policies, and municipal, state, and federal law. The investigating supervisor thoroughly documents the results

of the investigation and makes a recommendation regarding disposition. The documented investigation is then forwarded to each link in the named department member’s chain of command. The case is reviewed by each successive member, each of whom documents their findings and makes their recommendation for disposition. The Chief of Police makes the final review of the investigation and taking into account each previous recommendation and issues a final disposition.

There was one bias-based profiling allegation received in 2022. A female reported the incident and named three male officers. The female alleged that officers would not arrest her husband for domestic violence crimes because he is white and she is black. This allegation was thoroughly investigated and there was no evidence to support the allegation.

Pursuits

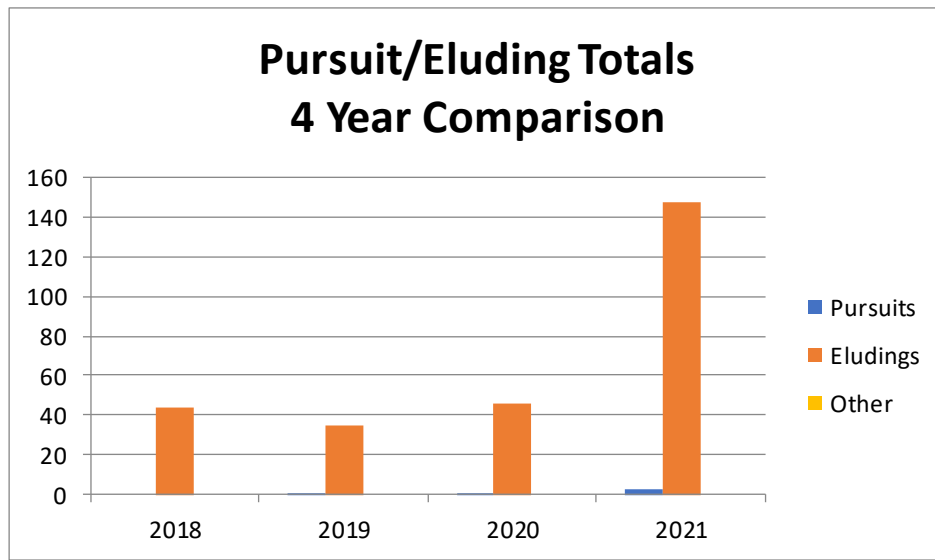
The Wheat Ridge Police Department defines a *pursuit* as the active attempt by an officer in an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend the operator of a motor vehicle who, having been given an audible and visual indication to stop, attempts to avoid apprehension by maintaining or increasing speed or using other evasive tactics, and ignoring the attempts of the officer to stop the driver.

Eluding is defined as the act of knowingly attempting to evade a peace officer while driving a motor vehicle, and the officer disengages pursuing the vehicle—following department policy and procedure.

In 2022, there were 150 total incidents in which suspects failed to yield to police officers. Two were deemed a justified Pursuit while the third incident was deemed an unjustified pursuit.

2022	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	Total	Justified	Not Justified
Pursuits	0	01	0	2	3	2	1
Eluding	40	51	31	25	147	147	0

The chart below illustrates a four-year comparison of Pursuit/Eluding totals.



Full pursuit and eluding information and analysis are more completely detailed in the 2022 Pursuit Analysis Report.

Response to Resistance

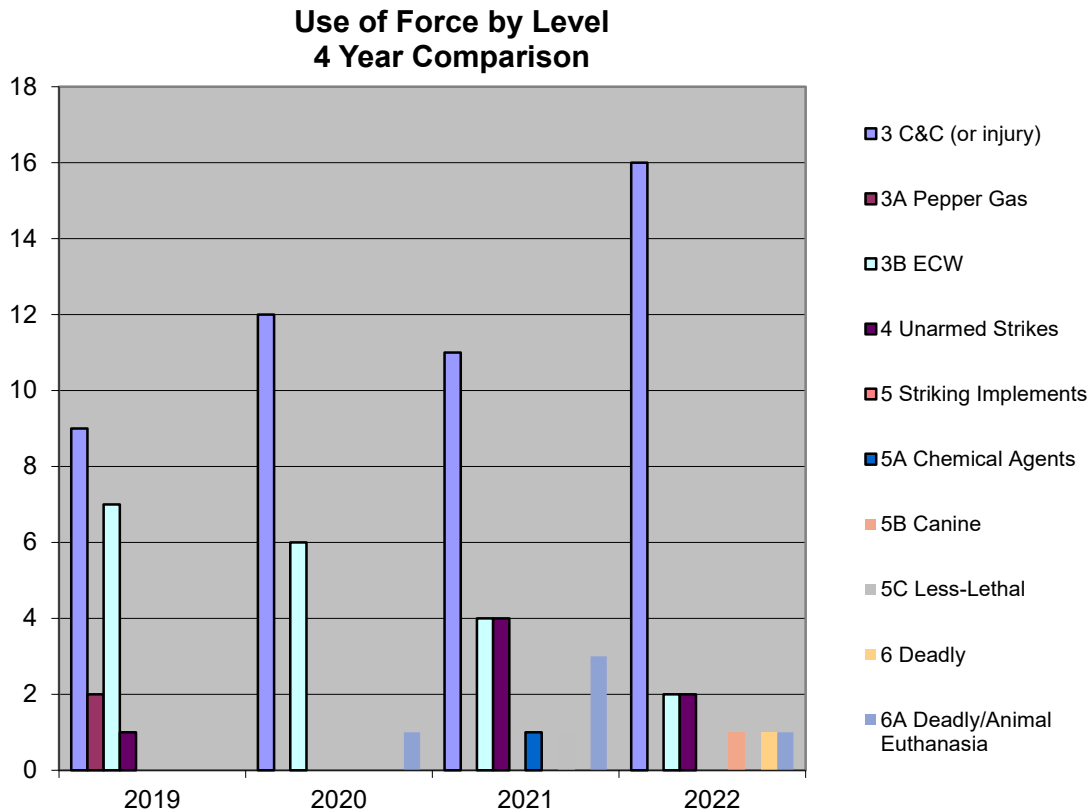
Officers are required to complete a Use of Force report when they use force greater than Level 3, control and compliance, or whenever any person sustains an injury. *Control and compliance* is defined as the use of some combination of leverage and strength to generate compliance, including joint locks, pressure points, takedowns, and come-along techniques. Supervisors review the reports and make recommendations as to whether the incident needs further investigation.

PSU received 24 reported Response to Resistance incidents in 2022. Response to Resistance incidents have remained fairly consistent with 21 in 2020, and 19 in 2019.

Response to Resistance Incidents

4 Year Comparison

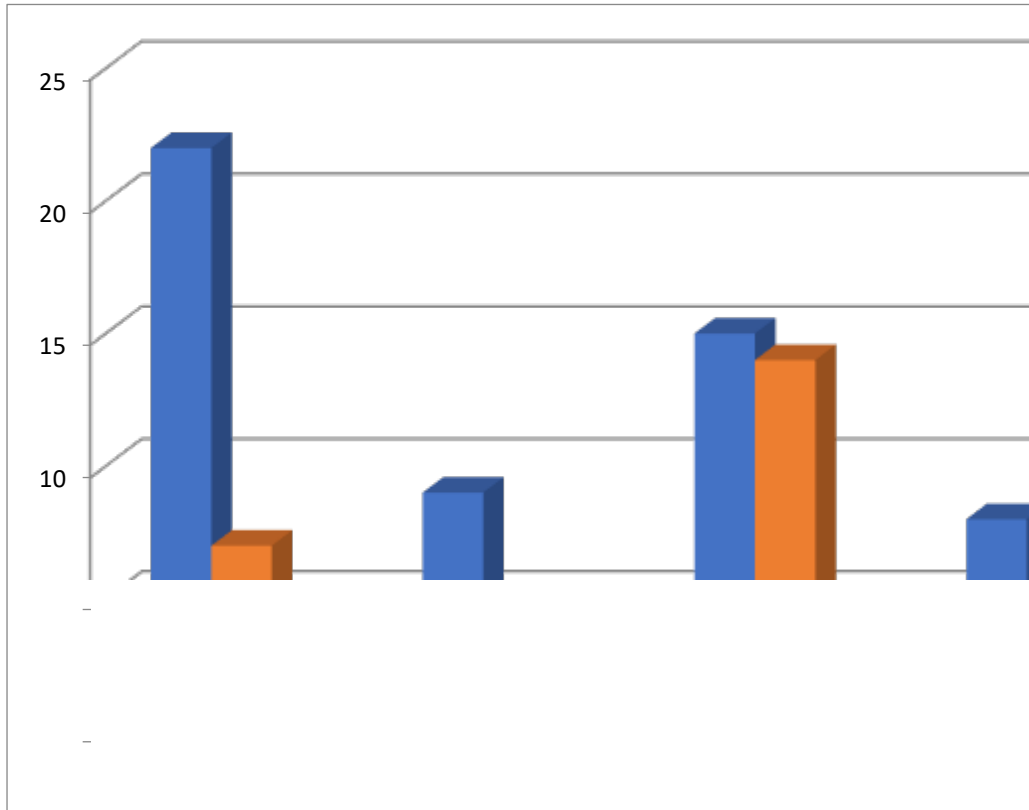
Level D Response to Resistance (Control and Compliance) remained the most widely used level of response to resistance. The chart below illustrates a four-year comparison of reported Response to Resistance incident by force level.



Refer to 2022 Response to Resistance Analysis report for complete information and analysis of the use of force incidents.

Employee Involved Traffic Accidents

Wheat Ridge Police employees were involved in eight accidents in 2022. Three were deemed to be not preventable, while five were preventable. This is a decrease from a total of fifteen in 2021. The most common reasons for the accidents are backing, parking car to car, and crashing into stationary objects while making a turn. The graph below shows a four-year comparison.



Complaints Investigated in 2022

Misconduct Allegation	S	NS	EX	UNF	PF	MED
3.42.02 Directives & Expectations	4	2		1		
3.42.03 Laws		1		1		
3.42.04 Truthfulness				1		
3.42.05 Conduct Unbecoming						
3.42.06 Respect for Others	1	1				
3.42.07 Customer Service				1		
3.42.08 Police Authority						
3.42.09 Neglect of Duty	1			2		
3.42.10 Care of Property and Equipment						
3.42.11 Conflict of Interest						
3.42.12 Use of Force (complaints only)				1		
3.42.13 Pursuits (complaints only)						
3.42.14 Traffic Accident						

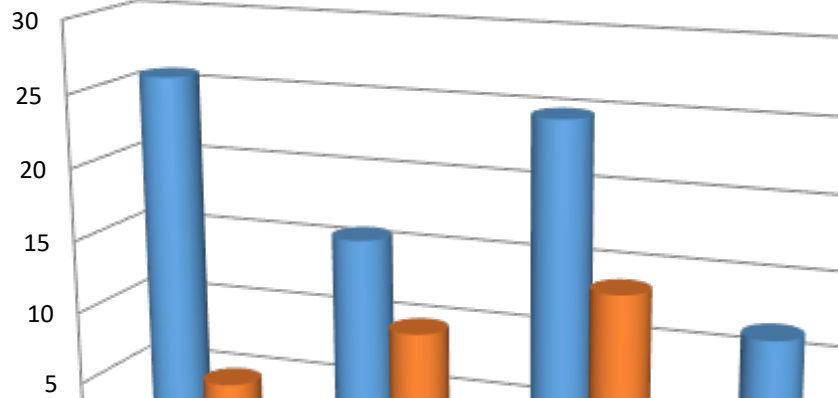
Explanation of Abbreviations	
S = Sustained Complaint	EX = Exonerated
NS = Not Sustained	UNF = Unfounded
PF = Policy Failure	MED = Mediation

PSU received and the Department investigated eighteen complaints in 2022. The investigations were classified as eleven Minor, one Divisional and six Inquires.

The eighteen complaints involved 20 officers. Out of the total officers, four officers had two complaints made against them.

The graph below shows a four-year comparison.

Complaints/ Inquires 4 Year Comparison



Complaint Analysis:

The Wheat Ridge Police Department investigates all complaints against the agency or its employees, including those made anonymously. All complaints are investigated objectively and in a timely fashion.

Wheat Ridge Policy 3.43.05 (B) outlines the process to keep the complainant notified of the investigation status and the results of the investigation upon conclusion.

Wheat Ridge Policy 3.43.02 Complaint Definitions outlines the three complaint categories as, Inquiry, Divisional, and Misconduct. The Misconduct category has two subcategories, Minor and Major Allegations. The severity of the allegation will determine the assigned complaint category.

Wheat Ridge Policy 3.43.10 Disposition Classification outlines the seven disposition classifications for any allegation of misconduct. The dispositions include, Inquiry, Unfounded, Exonerated, Not Sustained, Sustained, Misconduct Not Based on Complaint, and Policy Failure. The disposition is based on the evidence or lack of evidence in a complaint investigation.

Completion Time:

In cases of Inquiries, Divisional, and Minor complaints, every reasonable effort was made to ensure that the investigation was completed and a disposition reached within 30 days. In cases of Major complaints, additional time was generally necessary due to the complexity of the investigation. In those cases, every reasonable effort was made to ensure completion within 60 days. In all cases, the Chief of Police may grant extensions; department members who are the subject of the investigation are notified of the extension.

Due to the cyber incident that occurred in August of 2022, all active investigations at that time were significantly delayed.

In 2022, case completion time varied considerably, for a variety of reasons:

Inquiries: The average time to complete an inquiry case in 2022 was 21 days. The shortest completion time was one day; the longest was 31 days.

Divisional: The average completion time for Divisional complaints in 2021 was 1 day.

Administrative: There were no administrative complaints in 2022.

Minor: The average completion time for Minor complaints in 2022 was 39 days. The shortest completion time was 8 days; the longest was 167 days. The case that took 167 days to complete was during the cyber incident. Two cases in this category were during the cyber incident, therefore skewing the average completion dates.

Major: There were no major complaints in 2022.

Source of Complaints:

According to the 2020 Census provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, Wheat Ridge is home to approximately 32,722 residents. eighteen complaints, including inquiries, were received in 2022, a complaint to citizen ratio of 1/.00055009.

Out of the total complaints/inquiries received in 2022, twelve were initiated by a citizen and six by Wheat Ridge PD employees.

Patrol Operations and Support Services:

Out of the eighteen cases, fifteen involved personnel were assigned to the Patrol Operations Division. One complaint involved a member of the Records team, and four complaints involved members of the Investigations team.

Complaint by call type:

There were no viable trends with relation to the call for service type. Of those included were traffic, domestic violence, harassment, disturbance, and suspicious persons calls.

Complaint by allegation:

The Department's highest complaint allegations were Directives and Expectations (7) and Neglect of Duty (3) in 2022. Of the seven Directives and Expectations complaints, four were sustained, one was not sustained, and one was unfounded. Of the three Neglect of Duty complaints, one was sustained and two were unfounded.

Complaint by case type:

When viewed by case type, the overwhelming majority of cases continue to be classified as minor investigations.

Early Warning System

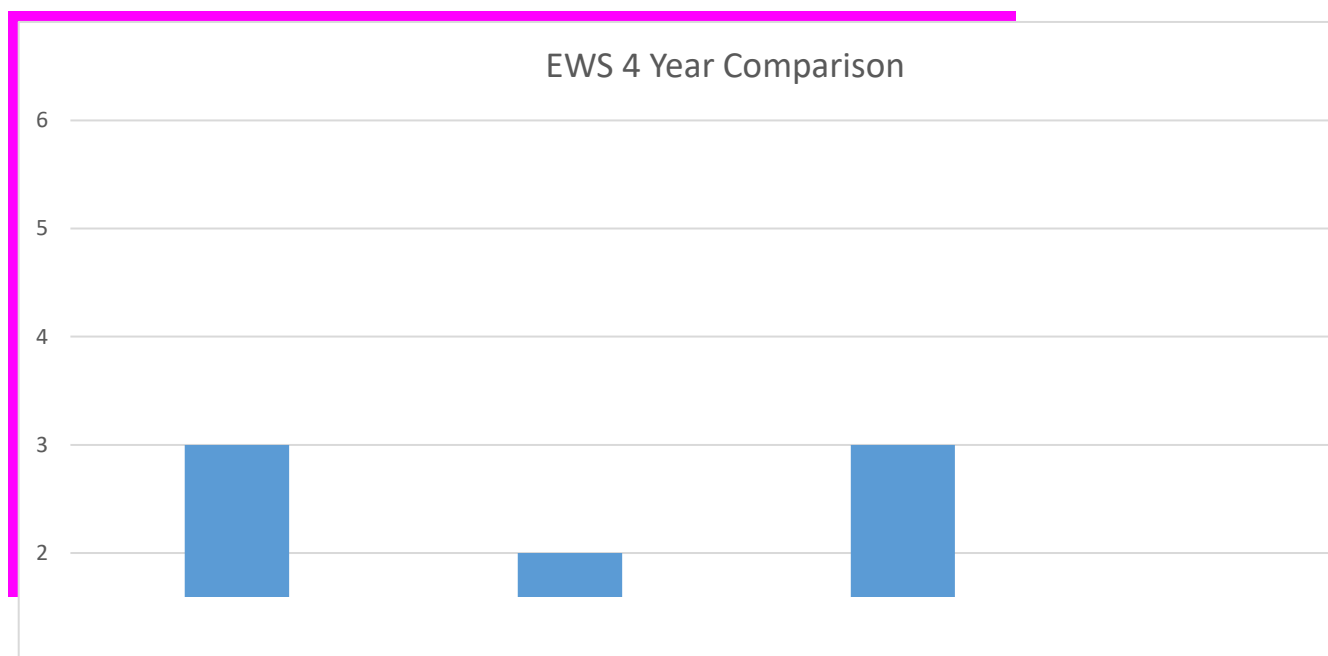
The Early Warning System was developed to identify employees who may be having difficulties with specific functions of their job performance, or who may be having behavioral issues. Police Department policy requires a supervisory review of the Professional Standards history of employees who have:

- Received two sustained complaints or four complaints, regardless of disposition, within a 12-month time period.
- Been involved in two preventable traffic accidents, while operating a City-owned vehicle, within a 12-month time period.
- Is involved in four or more use of force situations, regardless of disposition, during any 12-month period that require a Use of Force report, as defined in Policy 5.03.03

The review consists of reviewing each case to determine patterns or practices that require correction, either through counseling or directed training.

Early Warning System Analysis:

In 2022, five Early Warning System (EWS) special reviews were initiated. Two employees received two sustained complaints within a 12-month period, and three employees were involved in four use of force incidents within a 12-month period, which generated the EWS alert. The below charts show a four-year comparison related to Early Warning System alerts.



Officer’s respective supervisors and chain of command reviewed each of their performance. It was determined no further action was necessary.