



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024



**Atlantic Beach Police Department**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

Dear AB residents,

I am pleased to share with you the Atlantic Beach Police Department 2024 Annual Report. This report offers a snapshot of our department's work to serve and collaborate with our community and summarizes our day-to-day commitment to making Atlantic Beach a safe place to live and work.

In 2024 one of our areas of focus was to develop the current and next generation of Atlantic Beach police officers. Like any organization, people are our greatest asset, and it is critical to invest in them as the primary means of delivering our product to our customers. Small police agencies will always face challenges to deliver professional service to the public in world that is ever changing and increasing in technological complexity. We continue to look for ways to improve service through leveraging technology, partnerships, and community feedback. This report contains crime data collected and reported through the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS), however, our crime statistics only tell part of the story of what our officers do throughout the year. In 2024, the City of Atlantic Beach saw an 18% decrease in violent crime, a 6% increase in property crime, and a 16% increase in cases cleared. The ABPD works in partnership with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Crime Analysis and Information Systems Management Units to evaluate and analyze the most current crime data to provide the highest level of service to our citizens. I hope you find information in this report that helps better explain the wide variety of services we provide to our community and how we strive to improve our service to the public.

It is an honor to work with the dedicated and professional men and women of the Atlantic Beach Police Department who serve you 24 hours a day. On behalf of our officers, civilian staff, and volunteers, we look forward to continuing to serve Atlantic Beach with Integrity, Courage, and Excellence.

**Victor L. Gualillo**  
**Chief of Police**  
**April 2025**





## ACCREDITATION

Accreditation has long been recognized as a means of maintaining the highest standards of professionalism. The Atlantic Beach Police Department is accredited by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA) and the Florida Telecommunications Accreditation Commission (FL-TAC).

The accreditation process requires an in-depth review of every aspect of our agency's organization, management, operations, and administration. The CFA is the accrediting body for law enforcement within the state of Florida. Our communication center is the Public Safety Answering Point (911) for residents, businesses and schools within Atlantic Beach. Accreditation with the FL-TAC is specific for emergency communications centers and is an additional certification along with the CFA law enforcement accreditation. Adherence to the accreditation process requires significant commitment and ability to continuously improve. This process leads to more effective and efficient delivery of services to the community, greater accountability and transparency as an organization, and a sense of pride that our officers embody and represent the very best in law enforcement.



FLA-TAC reaccreditation on-site in October 2023, awarded in St. Augustine February 2024  
 CFA reaccreditation on-site in December 2024, awarded in St. Augustine February 2025 (*pictured*)

## ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARIES

### FAIR AND IMPARTIAL POLICING

The purpose of this review is to determine agency compliance with current laws prohibiting biased based profiling, review agency policies and practices, and ensure that any actions or allegations involving biased based profiling were properly documented and investigated.

The result of this year's review concluded that all current policies in effect are in compliance with state legislation prohibiting biased based enforcement activities. All enforcement activities audited during this review were the result of enforcement of a criminal law and met the burdens of proof as required. Agency policy specifically prohibits any member of the Atlantic Beach Police Department from taking action based, in whole or in part, on a person's physical characteristics or heritage. From the documents reviewed during this analysis, agency practice conforms to these regulations.

The full report can be viewed at: <https://coab.us/694/Annual-Reports>.

### RECRUITING AND RETENTION

Throughout 2024, 2 full time sworn members and 1 full time civilian member resigned. Four full time sworn members and 1 civilian member were hired in 2024. As of December 31, 2024, there were 3 full time sworn officer vacancies. In 2024 one newly hired officer resigned during the Field Training program, and 1 full-time officer resigned due to medical issues.

In 2024, the law enforcement profession continued facing many recruiting challenges. Police academies throughout the state continue to see a decrease in enrollment. Hiring good officers is extremely competitive, with wages and benefits being strong factors. Most of our recruiting success is through word of mouth from existing employees, but we also have had great success in using sponsored police academy trainees as recruiters within their academy classes. We have sponsored luncheons and Q&A sessions during the academy secessions. We have become much more flexible in our applicant testing scheduling – often allowing the availability of qualified candidates to dictate the scheduling of various testing procedures. Our police pay scale was raised significantly to stay competitive with surrounding agencies, which was a great help when recruiting and retaining officers. The department's website is updated regularly with current information and photos to advertise this as a great place to have a career in Law Enforcement.

In 2024, as a means of offering career enhancements we responded to the officer's requests and offered exceptional training opportunities, we provided more advanced equipment and software for the officers

to use during their workday. We offered a red-dot pistol optic course and upon successful completion, outfitted the officer's department issued pistol with the optical sight. We also provided advanced firearms and scenario training, as well as hosting numerous advanced police training classes in house. The agency continues to research and implement new and innovative recruiting methods to and bring positive attention to our agency.

The full report can be viewed at: <https://coab.us/694/Annual-Reports>.



## RESPONSE TO RESISTANCE

The department reviews its activities and compiles annual reports on various topics including response to resistance. This year the department implemented a new response to resistance reporting system. The entire process is now done via computer in a professional standards program that ensures accuracy and accountability. All statistics are now captured and calculated by an automated system. The system generates two (2) reports. The reports include a "Use of Force Summary", and a "Use of Force vs Events Comparison. None of the incidents requiring a response to resistance report under ABPD policy met the threshold for reporting to the state of Florida use of force reporting database.

This year the total number of Response to Resistance incidents was thirteen (13), which is slightly higher than last year. Of the thirteen (13) incidents requiring Officers to complete Response to Resistance reports, all were reviewed internally by their immediate supervisor and chain of command. All were found to be in compliance with policy and State and Federal law. All the use of force incidents required only low-level force options to control the resistance presented by the subject. There were no deadly



force incidents. In addition to adhering to policy and legal standards, the data demonstrates that Officers are acting within the scope of their training and policy.

The full report can be viewed at: <https://coab.us/694/Annual-Reports>.

## **PURSUIT REPORT**

Having a standardized process for reporting and analyzing pursuit data is just one step to assist law enforcement agencies in engaging in safer vehicle pursuit practices. This year the department implemented a new pursuit reporting system. The entire reporting process is now done via computer in a professional standards program that ensures accuracy and accountability. The software captures important data for addressing employee issues when they are reviewed. It is the policy of the Atlantic Beach Police Department to complete an annual analysis of all pursuits. The statistics are comprised of the information captured and calculated by the automated pursuit reporting system. The purpose of this analysis is to identify any patterns or trends. If the analysis reveals any negative patterns or trends, the information is reviewed by subject matter experts to determine if those patterns indicate a need for re-training, or policy modifications.

It is the policy of the Atlantic Beach Police Department that a motor vehicle pursuit is justifiable only when the necessity of immediate apprehension of the suspect(s) outweighs the level of danger to the community created by the pursuit. In instances where immediate apprehension cannot be made with reasonable safety, an officer shall attempt to obtain sufficient information to make an arrest later.

Even though we have over 13,000 residents and thousands more traveling through Atlantic Beach every day, police pursuits are a rare occurrence. In 2024, 7,666 traffic stops were conducted. With only 3 vehicle pursuits, this is an occurrence rate for vehicle pursuits of 0.0003%. This is similar with 2023, which saw 6,588 traffic stops and 5 vehicle pursuits, an occurrence rate of 0.0007%. Despite an increase of 1,078 traffic stops, a 16% increase, the rate of vehicle pursuits decreased 40% from 5 to 3. No specific trends were identified in this analysis that would indicate a deficiency in policy or need to change agency policy.

The Atlantic Beach Police Department is proactive in assessing vehicle pursuits, as well as fostering a culture of safety and accountability when engaging in the justifiable vehicle pursuits. The agency concentrates efforts to train officers to understand when vehicle pursuits are authorized, as well as fostering safe driving skills through periodic emergency vehicle operations training.

The full report can be viewed at: <https://coab.us/694/Annual-Reports>





## INVESTIGATION & ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

### ANIMAL CONTROL

In the last year Atlantic Beach Animal Control Officers handled nine hundred ninety-two (992) telephone consultations with citizens, thirty-two (32) animal bite investigations and twenty-five (25) animal cruelty investigations. Fifty-five (55) animals were returned to owners. Forty-eight (48) traps were loaned/issued. Two hundred fifty-two (252) written warnings and citations were issued.



### AUDITS OF CASH FUNDS

The police department is responsible for the management of three cash accounts: petty cash, offsite payments and the confidential funds account. During 2024, quarterly audits were conducted for all accounts, all entries were deemed accurate and all expenditures, if applicable, were within policy.

### CITIZEN SURVEY SUMMARY

In 2024, sixty (60) surveys were mailed and seventy-two (72) were distributed by officers to citizens who had interactions with our officers. Eighteen (18) of the surveys were filled out and returned, all with favorable ratings. Seven (7) were marked return to sender or had address issues.

### COMPLAINTS

In 2024, there were nine (9) official complaints made on department members. Six (6) were alleged policy violations, two were exonerated, three were unfounded and one was sustained. Two (2) were for unprofessionalism, specifically rudeness, determined to be unfounded after body camera review. The final one (1) was for attendance and it resulted in a warning. On any sustained complaints, the course of action/discipline is based on the severity of the offense. The only complaint that rose to the level of an internal affairs investigation during 2024 resulted in a written reprimand.

### CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANTS

A confidential informant is any person who, by reason of his or her familiarity or close association with suspected or actual criminals, can make a controlled purchase or controlled sale of contraband, can or does supply regular information about suspected or actual criminal activities to law enforcement, or can otherwise provide information important to ongoing criminal intelligence gathering who, through such efforts, may be seeking to improve his or her status in the criminal justice system.

In January of 2024 Commander Layson reviewed the practices for recruiting, control, and use of confidential informants and found them in compliance with agency policies and procedures as well as Florida Statutes. The use of a tracking log is in place for documenting who and for what purpose a confidential informant file was accessed. The confidential informants' policy, Order 403, was also reviewed and found to be consistent with FSS 914.258 (Rachel's Law). The funds associated with this process were audited quarterly as discussed in the cash fund section of this report.

## **JUVENILES**

Addressing juvenile crime and diversion are a priority for the ABPD. The agency strives to use the lowest appropriate level of law enforcement intervention when addressing juvenile offenders. The Fourth Judicial Circuit's Juvenile Civil Citation program continues to be the preferred means of providing an alternative to arresting juvenile offenders, when appropriate. The Atlantic Beach Police Department contacted thirteen (13) juvenile offenders during 2024. Seven (7) of these were eligible for diversion through the Civil Citation Program managed by the State Attorney's Office and the Juvenile Justice Department and six (6) were not. Five (5) of the seven were issued citations and two (2) were arrested and processed through the Fourth Judicial Circuit's Juvenile Justice Division.

## **PROPERTY AND EVIDENCE AUDITS**

The property and evidence division is a critical component of our agency. We have very specific and stringent protocols for the security and handling of the property and evidence in our possession. We use inspections, audits and inventory counts to ensure strict adherence to these protocols are consistently being followed.

The property and evidence division received an unannounced inspection from the Chief of Police on 7/15/24. The Chief found that it was operating within the guidelines of established controls, policies and operational procedures. No corrective actions were required. On 8/19/24, Officer Cody Miller conducted the annual examination of the property and evidence division and found the condition to be acceptable and passed in all examination categories. On 8/27/24 a random, spot inventory was conducted by Property and Evidence Custodian, Vicki Schmechel and Support Services Manager, Loren Rellah. The locations of all items under review were verified and all items were accounted for.



## OPERATIONS DIVISION

### COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

The police department maintains a 24/7 communications center that serves as a public safety answering point (PSAP) for the City of Atlantic Beach. The members of our communications center operate 911 systems, phone lines, radio systems, computer aided dispatch (CAD) systems, criminal database systems, and numerous other computer systems used by the police department. They are the first link in our public safety system, receiving and dispatching emergency services and assisting in the coordination of the various agencies responding to public safety situations within the city. In 2024, our communications center received twenty-two thousand five hundred forty-seven (22,547) non-emergency phone calls and two thousand four hundred twenty-two (2,422) emergency calls through 9-1-1, both of these statistics are increases compared to 2023. A total of twenty-five thousand (25,000) calls were processed in the computer aided dispatch system (CAD), with twenty-two thousand eight hundred six (22,806) calls handled by officers requiring input, monitoring, and disposition through the use of the CAD system. During 2022, the communications center made thirty-three (33) entries into the Florida and National Criminal Databases, FCIC/NCIC. These entries include stolen vehicles, tags, other items, and missing persons. The communications center was also audited by FDLE for compliance with Criminal Justice Information Services, or CJIS, compliance. CJIS maintains a set of requirements mandated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation related to the security of technology and information systems used to access confidential criminal justice information. While this affects the police department, a large section focuses on the communications center due to its access to databases like FCIC/NCIC. The department successfully passed the audit and achieved compliance with CJIS requirements with no violations. Training plans, policies, and procedures are reviewed and updated as necessary. All equipment designated for use in critical incidents or during unusual occurrences was inspected and tested for operational readiness and was found to be in working order, and ready for use.



ATLANTIC BEACH POLICE



REPORT



## INFECTIOUS DISEASE/EXPOSURE CONTROL PLAN

There are many positions within the police department where the potential for exposure to infectious disease is possible. We regularly train and review exposure protocols to ensure the safety of our members. On March 20, 2024, Lieutenant Jamison conducted the annual review of the department's exposure control plan and minor revisions to post-exposure blood testing procedures and protocols were made.

## OCEAN RESCUE

Atlantic Beach Ocean Rescue (ABOR) consists of over forty (40) seasonal lifeguards. The season runs from April – September. All new recruits complete 45 hours of Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) training and 45 hours of United States Lifesaving Association Lifeguard training. The graduating recruit class then enters a field training phase, working with a senior lifeguard for 16 hours. New lifeguards receive over 100 hours of training before they are eligible to work alone on the tower. Returning lifeguards receive 16 hours of pre-season refresher training as well as personal watercraft and emergency vehicle operation classes for those that qualify. Last year, ABOR watched over 71,865 beachgoers. They performed seventeen (17) rescues, responded to thirty-five (35) medical cases, fourteen (14) marine animal contacts, and assisted in locating seven (7) lost people.

For more information, please visit: <https://coab.us/29/Ocean-RescueLifeguards>



**ATLANTIC BEACH OCEAN RESCUE**

**WE ARE HIRING**

**STARTING PAY: \$17/HOUR**  
(PAY INCENTIVE: ADDITIONAL \$2/HR FOR EMT OR PARAMEDIC CERTIFICATION)

**REQUIREMENTS**

- SWIM 550 YARDS IN 10 MINUTES OR LESS
- 0.5 MILE SWIM + 0.5 MILE RUN IN 30 MIN. OR LESS
- TRYOUTS 3/2 AND 3/9 11:00AM @ FLETCHER POOL

**SCAN HERE ->** 



## CROSSING GUARDS

Our department provides crossing guard services at two key locations in our city: Sherry Drive at the crosswalk in front of the school, and at Seminole Road and Seaspray Av. These dedicated crossing guards are on duty every morning from 7:45 AM to 9:00 AM, and every afternoon from 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM. Besides our two permanent crossing guards, we have four volunteers and two civilian employees who are fully certified as crossing guards, ensuring that we have a well-trained team available to fill in as needed. All certified crossing guards participate in annual training and recertification to maintain the highest safety standards for our community.



## COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

As part of our ongoing commitment to strengthening relationships with community members, the department actively participates in a variety of local events throughout the year. In 2024, we proudly hosted our 8th Citizens Police Academy, a 10-week program held one evening per week, offering participants an in-depth look into our department and its various divisions.



We also continued our tradition of hosting the annual Not-So-Scary Haunted House and Trick-or-Treating event, which saw nearly 1,000 attendees. In addition, we emphasized bicycle safety by educating local elementary school students and participated in a bike rodeo event at the school.

Throughout the year, we welcomed over 20 groups for guided tours of the police station, including local school children and club members, providing them with a closer look at the work we do. Our outreach extends to daycares and summer camps, where we speak with children about the role of police officers in their community.

The holiday season was particularly busy, as we partnered with local organizations to provide winter jackets to children in need and collected toys for a community toy drive. Our volunteer corps also worked tirelessly to deliver food baskets to residents, ensuring that those in need were supported during the holidays. Additionally, families had the chance to meet Santa and his elves during several evening visits at our station.



To further enhance community engagement, we assigned a part-time officer to connect with local business owners, addressing any concerns and strengthening our relationships with the business community. He also made visits to the local community centers where he engaged with the youth.







## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our department continues to use a variety of platforms to connect with and keep residents informed. Currently, we actively engage through the city website, Facebook, Instagram, and Saferwatch to share important updates and information. In addition to keeping the community informed, we regularly post crime prevention and traffic safety tips across our social media channels.

By sharing surveillance footage and doorbell camera images on social media, we have successfully received tips that have contributed to solving over 10 local crimes, further demonstrating the power of community collaboration in enhancing public safety.

The SaferWatch app is a two-way communication platform that also allows the reporter to send text, photos and video anonymously. The police department can also use this app to send messages and information to subscribers of the service. The anonymity component of the app is attractive to many citizens who wish to provide information without identifying themselves.

SaferWatch is free to download and is available on both iOS and Android platforms.



## TRAINING SUMMARY

Advanced training is an integral part of maintaining highly skilled and knowledgeable employees. Besides the mandatory retraining that is required by the state of Florida, our employees attend advanced training specific to their assignments. In 2024, some of the advanced training that personnel attended include: firearms instructor, traffic radar/laser operation, general instructor techniques, interviews and interrogations, Glock armorers' course, FL public records laws, overdose death investigations, CPR instructor certification, animal bite investigations, Active Shooter Incident Management and Leadership training conducted by the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Leader Development



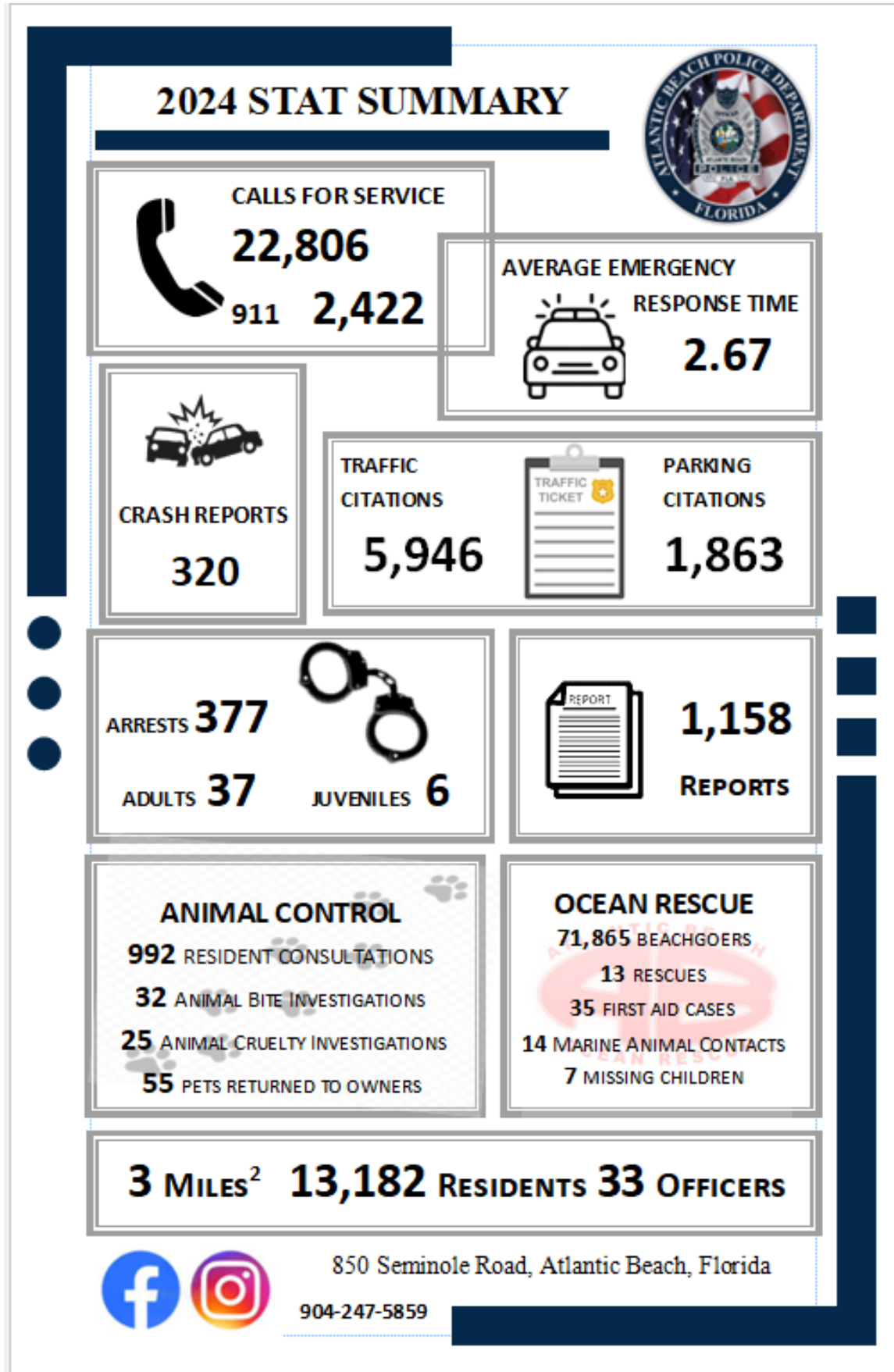
Association. All employees completed all mandated training that is required by the state.

## CIVILIAN VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The Police volunteer program began in 2017. Interest in the program and community response has been great. The work of our wonderful volunteers enhances the quality and level of the service we provide. We currently have 21 active volunteers. They are trained in different areas, including administrative duties, parking enforcement, traffic control, animal control, walking patrol of the city parks, building maintenance, and serving as a liaison between the police department and local businesses. In 2024, there were one thousand four hundred and forty-nine (1,449) hours of work provided by our volunteers which equates to \$ 48,543.76. Although we put a dollar value on all the hard work our dedicated volunteers performed, the relationships created during those hours are immeasurable.



## 2024 AGENCY STATISTICS





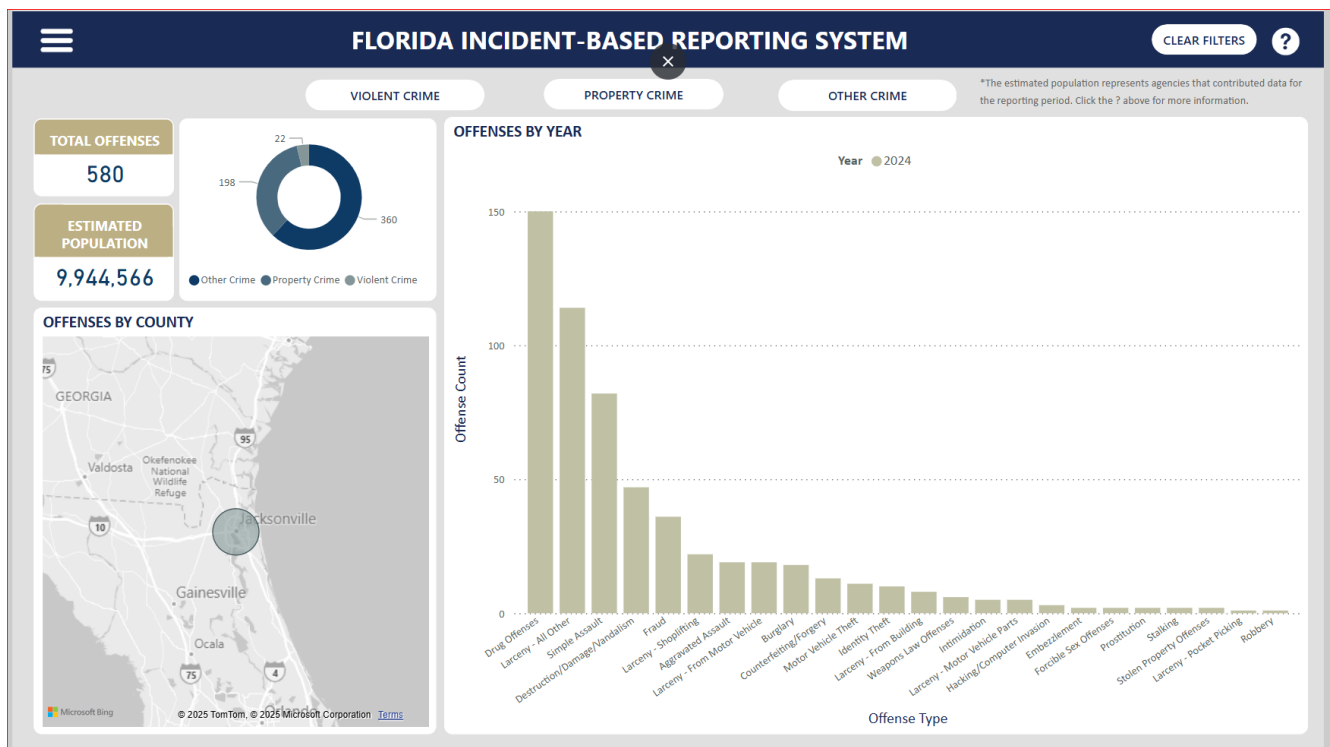
# CRIME STATISTICS

## UNIFORM CRIME REPORTING

Agency uniform crime reporting (UCR) reports are used to provide standardized reports on crime statistics to categorize and compare data throughout the state and across the nation.

Based on the uniform crime reporting index, Atlantic Beach saw a 3% increase in crime rate. Using the more detailed incident-based reporting methods, we see that the actual number of incidents are the same as last year, but the population numbers used by the state to calculate the crime rate are reduced. When we look at the breakdown in the types of offenses, we see an 18% decrease in the violent crime rate and a 6% increase in the property crime rate. The crime category representing the greatest increase was “all other larceny”. A summary of FIBRS/NIBRS data collection and categories are presented below:

Table 2 FIBRS/NIBRS:



For more on State-level crime statistics, visit the Florida Department of Law Enforcement:

<https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/CJAB/UCR/Annual-Reports/FIBRS>

For more on National-level crime statistics, visit the FBI's Crime Data Explorer:

<https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/crime-trend>

## USE OF FORCE REPORTING

The ABPD has been submitting local data on police use of force incidents since it became mandatory in July 2022. Any police use of force resulting in serious bodily injury, death or discharge of a firearm at a suspect is required by law to be submitted to the State of Florida to be included in the nationwide counts. There were no use of force incidents that met these criteria for 2024.

State use of force data dashboards managed by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement will be available in the future. The FBI reports that in 2024, 334 out of 455 agencies in Florida participated and providing use-of-force data. This represents 84% of sworn law enforcement officers in the state.

## CITIZEN ONLINE SERVICES


For easy access to let us know when you would like; vacation watches preformed at your residence, provide key holder information (in the event of burglar alarm activation) for your home or business, to see what our Thorguard lightening prediction system says about potential lightening in our area or to register your bicycles serial number with our agency please use The Atlantic Beach Police Department Citizen Online Services section of the webpage which can be found at:

<https://www.coab.us/2050/Citizen-Online-Services>


Home › Departments › Police › Citizen Online Services

### Citizen Online Services


Below you will find links to various online services offered by the Atlantic Beach Police Department. We hope you will benefit from the quick and convenient way for you to request services or obtain information from the Atlantic Beach Police Department directly to your computer. You can also submit helpful information to this agency that can be useful in an emergency.




[Vacation Watch](#)




[Key Holder Registration](#)



[Thorguard](#)  
([Lightning Warning Detection](#))



City of Atlantic Beach Crime Mapping (see below disclaimer and link to mapping site)



[Atlantic Beach Resident Bicycle Registration](#)





Atlantic Beach Police Department  
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Non-emergency: **904-247-5859**

Website: **[www.coab.us/police](http://www.coab.us/police)**

