



# Middletown Police Department



*Erik M. Costa | Chief of Police*

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## Goals & Objectives 2025

### Community Services Division

**Goal #1:** Promoting your Brand - The Community Service Division starts at the top. Division Command staff must create an environment to develop future leaders to *Communicate* (listen), *Inspire* and *Empower*, *Trust*, *Maintain Constant Stability*, and seek out *Feedback*.

We are meeting our community service goals, but this is a goal that continually evolves. We have placed a strong emphasis on establishing and maintaining robust community relationships through operational taskforces and initiatives. Programs like the boxing initiative, created through our non-profit Police Activity League, serve as exemplary models of officers proactively engaging with the community in meaningful ways. Additionally, we emphasize the importance of Community Officers being self-starters, empowering them to take ownership of their roles and responsibilities. Our proactive approach, exemplified by the establishment of an ownership patrol, ensures we address community issues before they escalate and develop innovative solutions that foster trust and strengthen the bond between our agency and the community.

We are deeply committed to the ongoing professional development of School Resource Officers, Community Officers, and other personnel within the department. Recognizing the growing complexity of community needs, we prioritize equipping our officers with the knowledge and skills required to address mental health challenges and navigate the diverse dynamics of the communities they serve. Mental health training is particularly essential, ensuring that officers respond with sensitivity and understanding in situations that require specialized care.

We continue to have our mission on our "Goal" as we are committed to developing strategies that encourage officers and civilian employees to actively engage in problem-solving with community members beyond traditional enforcement roles. This collaborative approach emphasizes open dialogue, partnerships, and community input in crafting solutions, rather than solely relying on enforcement tactics. Moving forward, we will continue to foster transparency, accountability, and trust while

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working alongside the community to create sustainable solutions that address the root causes of issues and strengthen our shared commitment to public safety.

**Goal #2:** Create a multifaceted approach to reach all members of the community. Efforts should be put forth in order to address community concerns regarding their rights as citizens when interacting with the police.

Middletown Police Department has created a public comment section on its website to encourage community input. Additionally, open meetings have been established for MPD personnel. The Chief of Police has formed two task forces focused on community engagement and operations.

We have been organizing "meet and greet" events throughout the city and are committed to continuing this initiative to achieve our goal of stronger community connections.

We have successfully conducted two Citizen Police Academies. However, the third session was canceled due to low participation. We will continue to promote and publicize future classes to increase enrollment.

We have developed and maintained an active social media presence. Currently, we are working on updating the city's main website to improve accuracy and functionality.

**Goal #3:** Increase police participation and positive encounters with the youth.

We are continuing efforts to improve this goal. We have implemented new programming and seen an increase in participation in our P.A.L. (Police Activity League) program, which has helped foster better relationships between youth and law enforcement.

We have not yet achieved the goal of increasing enrollment in the cadet program, but efforts to improve participation are ongoing.



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## *Patrol Division*

**Goal #1:** Prevent crime and reduce citizens' fear of crime. All citizens deserve to feel safe in their homes, neighborhoods, businesses, and daily activities. Additionally, we aim to build public confidence by ensuring that commanders, supervisors, and officers in the Patrol Division are proactive in their duties and consistently visible to the community.

We have invested in Digital Traffic Enforcement Cameras, and this initiative will be fully implemented within this calendar year.

We have established a dedicated patrol in the downtown district, where officers are engaging with businesses and non-profit organizations to build relationships and proactively address issues in the area.

Command staff and specialized unit commanders have been provided with training and the autonomy to develop programs that align with national policing trends, ensuring continuous improvement and innovation within the department.

Vision Zero initiatives and Safe Streets projects are actively underway in the city. All patrol shifts have been tasked with conducting traffic enforcement in areas with high rates of motor vehicle crashes. We aim to expand the traffic division to further enhance both traffic and pedestrian safety.

We are still developing a data policy to better guide our operational focus. Efforts to refine and improve this workflow are ongoing.

We remain committed to continuously evaluating how we provide effective services to the city, and we will continue this effort to ensure our operations meet the community's needs.

**Goal #2:** That officers always present a professional and positive image of themselves and the police department. Ensure that officers conduct themselves in a positive and professional manner at all times when engaging with the community that they serve. The uniformed patrol officer is the face of the Middletown Police Department. They are almost always the first contact that any citizen has with the department. This interaction creates a lasting impression that can be positive or negative.



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To ensure that officers consistently treat all citizens with respect and dignity during every interaction, we are tracking progress through our Professional Standards and Training Division. This tracking includes monitoring the number of complaints and positive feedback generated monthly for each officer. While we have not yet fully achieved this objective, we are actively working towards implementing a real-time system to track officer performance.

Our goal is to guarantee that both citizens and officers are aware that all criminal investigations and calls for service are conducted thoroughly, fairly, and properly documented. We remain committed to ensuring full transparency, with victim advocacy and customer service at the forefront. The implementation of Middletown Police Case Workers will further support this initiative.

To ensure officers use only the necessary and justified force based on the circumstances they face, every use of force incident undergoes a complete and thorough review by supervisors and commanders. We have worked to minimize unnecessary use of force and have expanded our training to reflect fundamental changes in this approach.

Our strategy for consistency in enforcement includes regular patrol assignments, ongoing reviews of enforcement initiatives, supervisory performance assessments, customer feedback, and an annual report. We will continue to refine our data collection by training officers to accurately input information into our RMS system, providing a clearer picture of their day-to-day work. Additionally, we will conduct audits, enhance community interaction, and continuously assess and improve enforcement initiatives and program measures.

## *Investigative Services Division*

**Goal #1:** Thoroughly investigate major crimes and serious incidents with an appropriate sense of urgency to identify offenders, acquire evidence for criminal prosecution, and prevent the recurrence of such crimes. Investigative Services Division (ISD) personnel have special expertise in investigating serious crimes of a complex nature. These detectives will focus on crimes of sufficient complexity for which patrol officers cannot devote adequate time and resources to successfully investigate. Many of the most violent crimes are committed by a small segment of the population; therefore, arrest and successful prosecution of these offenders will have a positive impact on the reduction of violent crime.

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The ISD continues to invest in technology to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of criminal investigations, ultimately increasing the clearance rate for cases and supporting all investigative functions within the Police Department.

The department will continue to utilize data to assess both successes and areas for improvement.

ISD maintains a strong professional relationship with the Middlesex County State's Attorney's Office, which provides guidance on investigations, identifies areas of deficiency, and explores opportunities to improve success through training and case studies.

ISD has also assigned multiple detectives to federal task forces, including those with the DEA, FBI, and HSI. These partnerships have significantly benefited the Middletown Police Department, offering valuable resources and enhancing crime-solving capabilities.

Additionally, ISD is actively exploring how technology can improve communication with mutual aid partners. This includes leveraging cellular data to map criminal activity, linking suspects to crime scenes, their residences, and recovered evidence along the way.

Furthermore, ISD has dedicated a detective to the FBI's Financial Crime Task Force. This collaboration is vital in effectively addressing fraud cases and helping victims recover stolen funds, particularly in cases involving scams and identity theft.

**Goal #2:** Identify serious crime trends - Identify crime trends and disseminate information for the purpose of preventing any escalation in criminal activity. Proactive policing requires adequate intelligence on current and future crime trends. ISD will be diligent in communicating actionable information that may be used to prevent further and escalating crime victimization. The intent is to identify and take action for small, isolated incidents before they become large, wide-scale criminal events.

ISD has received approval to implement the Slack program, which facilitates information sharing and trend identification across the State of Connecticut. This communication platform is also utilized internally to assist patrol officers in identifying ongoing issues and proactively addressing enforcement efforts.

ISD remains actively involved in Middlesex Detectives meetings, which include participation from the Connecticut State Police and federal partners. The Police Chief has also taken an active role in both the Connecticut Chiefs of Police Association and the Capital Region Chiefs of Police Association.

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The Middletown Police Chief, along with case workers, is deeply engaged in the Middletown Opioid Task Force, working to provide support services for overdose victims. Moving forward, we will continue to strengthen our presence in prevention councils, addressing the root causes of crime in the city.

**Goal #3:** Provide victim advocacy services and mental health resources through the newly established case worker program. Case workers will provide outreach to victims of serious crimes to ensure that they have sufficient resources to prevent re-victimization. Case workers will provide victims with access to important support services for ISD and Patrol Division. These services will ultimately reduce the likelihood of the victim being re-victimized in some manner.

MPD Case Workers will play a key role in facilitating communication between the Middletown Police Department and River Valley Services (CIT) to ensure the provision of adequate mental health services. This collaborative relationship is still in the process of refining its workflows.

Additionally, case workers will begin training in human trafficking and domestic violence prevention. This training will serve as both a career development opportunity and a means to expand the case workers' ability to better serve the broader Middletown community.

**Goal #4:** Provide training and career development for MPD Personnel. Evaluate the role of each detective assigned to the division and establish primary areas of responsibility to maintain a well-coordinated workflow.

The Middletown Police Department (MPD) is committed to providing ongoing career development opportunities for our detectives to enhance their proficiency and advance the agency's capabilities in specialized investigations. By dedicating detectives to federal partners for investigations such as violent crime, financial crime, and narcotics, we have expanded our agency's ability to tackle complex cases.

Our staffing levels at MPD have increased, and we plan to implement a rotation system for officers through our specialized units. This initiative aims to provide officers with exposure to specialized fields early in their careers, preparing them to eventually step into roles as detectives and frontline supervisors.

MPD remains dedicated to offering internship opportunities to students from universities and colleges across the State of Connecticut. We will continue to provide this valuable experience to support and mentor the next generation of law enforcement professionals.

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## *Professional Standards and Training Division*

**Goal #1:** To provide quality training designed to increase individual and organizational development.

The Middletown Police Department (MPD) has enrolled officers in the POST-C MOI instruction program to facilitate in-house training. This initiative enables officers to conduct roll call training, enhancing their knowledge of department operations and ensuring compliance with new state and federal regulatory requirements.

MPD's Professional Standards and Training division has been approved for Cert Assist, a system now in place to track all officers' training and ensure they remain in compliance with POST-C certification requirements.

To further foster professional growth, MPD recognizes the need to establish a leadership and mentorship program aimed at developing the next generation of leaders within the department.

MPD continues to prioritize social interactions through customer service and cultural awareness training. We have also established community outreach programs that have significantly strengthened trust and positive relationships within the community.

**Goal #2:** That the Professional Standards Division ensures the integrity of the police department is maintained through a system of internal discipline where an objective, impartial investigation and review includes transparency. Also, it is the responsibility of PSD to ensure that all use of forces that are conducted by police department members are within policy. To ensure that PSD is conducting fair and impartial investigations and that officers within the police department are using force options correctly.

The Middletown Police Department (MPD), through its Professional Standards Division (PSD), has undertaken internal investigations prompted by concerns raised by frontline supervision and command staff. These efforts are aimed at upholding the ethical guidelines and standards within the department. In alignment with the Union Contract and the City of Middletown Employee Handbook, disciplinary action has been taken where necessary.



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Moving forward, it is essential to continue identifying and implementing both in-person and online training opportunities to enhance the policing experience for both officers and civilians.

MPD's professional standards investigations have been conducted thoroughly and reported accurately. However, further development of data sets is needed to strengthen preventive measures aimed at reducing complaints and misconduct within the department. Additionally, we are continuing the pilot phase of the First Sign Project, led by the State of Connecticut.

Furthermore, MPD has established a Use of Force Task Force, created by the Chief of Police, to conduct quarterly reviews of all use-of-force incidents. This task force plays a key role in identifying training needs, pinpointing operational deficiencies, and developing strategies for preventing misconduct.

## *Administrative Services Division*

**Goal #1:** To provide our personnel and the public with administrative and other essential support services for the effective and cost efficient delivery of police services.

Administrative Services have identified annual contracting requirements that will support the department's financial objectives, enhancing and/or maintaining staffing levels.

Additionally, we are working to implement a training program for civilian staff to ensure ongoing competency in response to the evolving landscape of records management and state regulations.

**Goal #2:** Strengthening fiscal management.

The Administrative Services Division (ASD) meets weekly with the Chief of Police to ensure that spending and financial budgeting adhere to established standards, making necessary adjustments throughout the fiscal year to maintain fiscal responsibility.

There is a need to develop strategic financial planning at the command level to enhance efficiency and sustain operational effectiveness.

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**Goal #3:** Infrastructure expansion, fleet and capital investment.

The Administrative Services Division (ASD) has identified capital expenditure needs that address both facility and operational requirements. They are currently collaborating with all divisions and specialties to ensure that equipment is being updated as necessary.

Additionally, we are exploring available spaces to accommodate large fleet operation vehicles and secure evidence storage.

MPD remains committed to maintaining a strategic approach to potential capital expenditures, which may include the development of a new police station, a regional police academy, and the acquisition of large-scale equipment.

**Goal #4:** The Records Bureau to have full paperless document transmission to the courts through CISS.

The CISS network is in the process of transitioning to improve its efficiency in sending RMS records to the court. We are actively collaborating with the CISS team to identify and implement IT solutions that will enhance system performance for our officers.

In addition, we are cross-training staff to ensure proficiency in all areas of the Records Management Department. We are also working closely with unions to ensure that job classifications are being properly adhered to.

**Goal #5:** IT investments

MPD is collaborating with the City of Middletown's IT Department to implement training and safeguards to protect against cyber threats. Ongoing training and infrastructure upgrades are necessary to ensure the continued security and integrity of our IT systems.

**Goal# 6:** Accreditation

The goal for accreditation is to continue to make all policies meet CALEA standards and to continue to make progress in gathering proofs for standards. This will ensure that we will be ready for our onsite assessment within our three-year timeframe.

Implement personnel evaluations for all employees. Ensure we are preparing for OSHA compliance. These goals are ongoing as we approach our first site inspection.