



To assist the department in determining the appropriate officer staffing level the Boulder Police Department contracted with an independent academic expert to conduct a workload analysis and provide recommendations for staffing levels. The analysis followed the industry recognized **Rule of 60** which was developed by the International City/County Managers Association (ICMA). Through its research across the country, ICMA has developed guidelines for best practice, collectively known as the Rule of 60. The Rule of 60 guidelines have two parts:



1. 60% of all sworn officers should be assigned to patrol and respond to routine incidents.



2. 60% of patrol officer time should be committed to responding to the service demands of the community.¹

Following the Rule of 60 allows officers more time to work with the community on proactive, problem-oriented policing. Research consistently shows that a purely reactive posture by a police department is unlikely to address crime problems. Solving crime problems requires technically sophisticated analysis grounded in the everyday experiences of line-level officers, combined with command staff and line-level officers willing to try new strategies and tactics to identify and solve public safety problems. Proactive, problem-oriented policing is about working with the stakeholders involved to reduce crime and prevent harm.

As a result of the workload analysis, BPD received the following recommendations:

- Based on this workload analysis, BPD should bolster the number of sworn officers over the coming years to reach recommended compliment.
- Vacant patrol positions should be filled, and BPD should focus on recruitment and retention of officers.
- BPD should continue to enhance its crime prevention and problem-solving capabilities to address increasing complexities of calls for service. To ensure Boulder Police Officers are engaging in evidence-based practices, officers should not be solely reactionary to community requests for service, but instead proactively working to prevent crime, disorder, and community harm.

Several significant themes were present in the analysis which spanned the years 2013 through 2020.

- There was a marked shift in activity from proactive incidents such as traffic stops, pedestrian contacts, and foot patrols to reactive incidents, mostly 911 responses. In 2013, nearly half of BPD's

¹ On average, the Rule of 60 guidelines have been found to be effective at providing enough coverage to handle workloads while not needlessly overstaffing departments. The Rule of 60 is a benchmark that should be used to guide staffing decisions. These are general guidelines and deviations are expected. It is not the case that 60% of every shift for every officer will be limited to responding to citizen requests, even when staffing is based on that target.

LEARNING TOGETHER: WORKLOAD STAFFING

workload (46.8%) was proactive. By 2020, just 25.7% of BPD incidents were proactive.

- Violent incidents increased from 2013-2020, from 1,700 to 2,750, an increase of 60%. Most significantly:
 - Harassment incidents increased 100%
 - Menacing increased 525%
 - Weapons incidents increased 98%.

Property crime also increased during the 2013-2020 period.

Crimes against persons are more complex, are a higher priority and take more time to investigate than property crimes. As a result, the average number of officer-minutes per incident has increased from 37.8 minutes in 2013 to 46.5 minutes in 2020 and 45.2 minutes in 2021. The percentage of incidents with more than one officer on-scene increased from 26% in 2013 to 35% in 2020.

As these reactive incidents increased, proactive contacts with the public have declined. From 2013-2020, the number of non-traffic proactive incidents has dropped by more than 59%, from more than 8,000 in 2013 to 3,200 in 2020. Both officer-initiated events and pedestrian contacts have declined. Traffic incidents have also declined, with nearly all the decline coming from traffic stops (from nearly 20,000 incidents in 2013 to 6,300 in 2020).

Several possible explanations exist for the increasing violent and property crime. An important component to policing efforts to prevent crime is the ability to proactively engage with the community, build partnerships with businesses, and participate in neighborhood programs to problem-solve before circumstances escalate. BPD has been less able to do this from 2013 to 2020 as it experienced the aforementioned call load and staffing issues.

