

SANDOVAL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE ANNUAL REPORT YEAR 2021

Teamwork

Respect

Integrity

Stewardship

Professionalism

Safety

Mutual Trust

Transparency

Accountability

Proudly Serving
Since 1903





MISSION STATEMENT



*The Sandoval County Sheriff's Office is committed to working in a partnership with individuals, communities, businesses, and other divisions and agencies to provide **Safety and Quality Service** in order to promote a high quality of life for the people of Sandoval County. This will be accomplished through fair enforcement of the law and diligent defense of the rights of all. The Sheriff, deputies and staff strive to provide professional services to the public in an effective, efficient and timely manner through communication, consideration and cooperation.*



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ABOUT SANDOVAL COUNTY

County History

Sandoval County has a rich culture and was a thriving area centuries before Don Francisco de Coronado explored and camped near present-day Bernalillo in 1540. Prehistoric artifacts in many areas of the County date back thousands of years, with archaeological finds suggesting that Sandia Man lived and hunted in the area thousands of years ago.

The area consisting of modern-day Sandoval County was included in one of two partidos, or districts, created in the New Mexico territory. It became part of Santa Ana County, one of seven political subdivisions created in 1852. Sandoval County was first established as a separate entity on March 10, 1903, nine years before New Mexico's statehood. The area that forms Los Alamos County was separated from Sandoval County in 1949.

County Today

Today, Sandoval County encompasses 3,714 square miles of diverse geography and has a population of approximately 140,000 people. It includes the incorporated municipalities of Bernalillo, Cuba, Corrales, Jemez Springs, Rio Rancho and San Ysidro, as well as numerous unincorporated communities, all or portions of seven Indian pueblos, and all or portions of six Tribal entities/lands.

Sheriffs Office General Information

54 Sworn Deputies

3 Court Security Officers

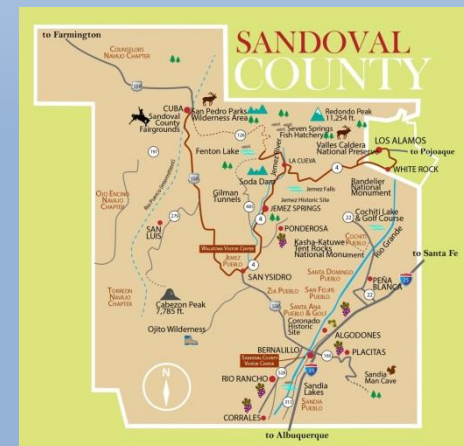
2 Animal Control Officers

6 Civilian Support Employees

1,516 Miles of Roads Maintained that are Patrolled

3,714 Square Miles in Size

13 Pueblos and Tribal Entities/Lands we assist with Law Enforcement concerns



Message from the Sheriff

This past year was full of challenges, for law enforcement, and for our community. I am proud to be your Sheriff and lead our deputies and dedicated civilian personnel as they work every day to provide professional service to the citizens of Sandoval County. I believe it is important to continually promote high expectations and a clear mission for the sheriff's office. The Sheriff's Office is committed to be proactive to the unique needs of our community.

*This report was designed to provide you noteworthy and transparent information regarding how we carry out our responsibility to protect you and your families. Throughout the year the Sheriff's Office has worked to build dynamic partnerships with state, local, tribal and federal partners to fight crime and promote a safer community. Working together with our partners, countless crimes were solved and prosecuted, including several violent crimes, habitual property crime offenders, Drug Trafficking individuals and organizations. **In most categories, crime in Sandoval County is significantly lower when compared to previous years.** (Highlighted in this report)*

Additionally, as your Sheriff I am committed to my fiduciary responsibility to the citizens of Sandoval County. Funds requested by the sheriff's office will yield results to enhance the safety and security of the taxpayers, keeping Deputies on the streets, streamlining administrative functions and minimizing costs. An example, in late 2019, the Sheriff's Office engaged in an evaluation of online training for Deputies. Online training has proved useful in areas such as state mandated training and has allowed for more Deputies on the street.

While I am proud of our accomplishments, I recognize many variables that contribute to Sandoval County being a safe place where people want to live and work. The strong support from the County Manager and County Commissioner's, and community support and partnerships with the citizens throughout Sandoval County are clearly reflected in our ability to help keep Sandoval County safe.





Frequently asked questions regarding the Sheriff's Office.



Our dedicated employees serve the citizens of Sandoval County 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We are committed to providing the public with the quickest, most efficient response to emergency calls and respond to “all” essential calls for service. The Sheriff's Office does not screen calls for service and as a matter of practice, a Deputy will be dispatched in person to all calls. However (in a non-emergency) there are times when it is appropriate to ask the dispatcher to speak to a Sheriffs Supervisor. If a Sheriffs Supervisor is not immediately available, the dispatcher will take your information and a Sheriffs Supervisor or Deputy will return your call as soon as possible. For non-emergency questions during business hours you can call the Sheriff Office at 505-867-7526.

Who am I calling when I dial 911 or the non-emergency number 505-891-7226?

The Sandoval County Regional Emergency Communications Center (SCRECC) receives and dispatches all sheriffs, police, fire, medical, and animal control emergency 911 and non-emergency calls for Sandoval County. Dispatchers are highly trained to send the appropriate type and number of emergency services units in response to your calls for assistance. Please remember, you are not talking to a Sheriffs employee when you call dispatch, SCRECC is a separate agency from the Sheriff's Office. If you are seeking information regarding an incident, reports, or an issue of concern or other questions more appropriate for a Deputy, **and it is a non-emergency issue**, please call the Sheriff's Office directly at 505-867-7526, during business hours.



Where do I find Information on the internet, regarding the Sheriff's Office & Services the County provides?



www.sandovalcountynm.gov is the Counties Official web site. The web site has “Quick Links” that are helpful in answering frequently asked questions.

Quick Links

- Request Public Records
- Pay Ambulance Bill
- Pay Taxes Online
- Meeting Agendas
- Meeting Videos
- Boards, Councils & Committees
- 2022 Calendar
- Financials & Transparency
- Animal Welfare Services – Lost Pets
- Code Enforcement Complaint Form
- Open Burning Information
- COVID-19 INFORMATION
- Search Property Records
- County Codes & Ordinances
- Inmate Lookup & Video Visitation
- Employment
- Requests for Proposal
- Landfill/Recycling
- Request Road Maintenance Service
- Sandoval County Tourism
- Filming Opportunities

The Sandoval County Sheriff's Office, County Web Page, www.sandovalcountynm.gov/elected-officials/scso/ is also full of information about the Sheriff's Office and has links specific for:

- *Sheriff's Office Record Request “How you get a copy of a report”.*
- *Submitting a Tip!*
- *Sheriffs Facebook page*
- *Sex Offender registry “ How you find out if a sex offender lives in your neighborhood?”*
- *Dialogue with a Deputy*
- *And various information about the Sherriff's Office.*



Common Questions from Residents



At times, I see Sheriffs Units sitting in parking lots or rest areas for long periods of time.

Deputies complete reports on a mobile terminal in their unit, and also complete Law Enforcement training on the computer that is required to retain certification. Completing these duties while remaining parked and available in the community, allows a visible deterrent and a quicker response to an emergency.

Will the Sheriff's Office check my residence while I am out of town?

Yes, the Sheriff's Office conducts vacation checks as a part of its preventative patrol program. To set up a vacation check, simply go to the link on the Sheriffs County Web Page "Submit a Close Patrol Request Form"

When I call to report something, do I have to give my name?

No. It is not required, however, leaving your name and a phone number is appreciated and allows a Deputy to follow-up with the caller on the information you provided.

Why do we sometimes see City or Town Officers conducting police activity in the unincorporated areas of the County?

Law enforcement agencies within Sandoval County work as a team and this benefits everyone involved. On occasion, the Sheriff's Office requires assistance from municipal or state agencies for certain issues, an example would be a multicar crash incident, search for a dangerous felon, SWAT or Bomb situation, etc.

Why do we sometimes see Deputies in Rio Rancho, Town of Bernalillo or the Village of Cuba.

Sandoval County Sheriff's Deputies have authority anywhere within Sandoval County and adjoining jurisdictions. This includes, inside the city of Rio Rancho, Town of Bernalillo, Village of Cuba etc.

Information on Free Roaming Horses in Placitas.

*Information regarding the Free Roaming Horses in Placitas can be found in the Animal Welfare Programs & Services area of the **Community Services Link**.*



2021 End of Year Overview

Street Crimes Taskforce: Created in 2020 the Street Crimes Taskforce, expanded its Informational Sharing and Multi-jurisdictional footprint in 2021, to include Navajo Nation. A goal is to better address issues that affect the safety of women, children and their families. Specialized units within the Sheriffs have completed a Navajo Police Commission Course and have Navajo Police cross commissions that provide jurisdictional authority on the Navajo Nation. Joint operations are ongoing with Navajo Nation, to include assisting with welfare checks on families and children that are staying off the reservation and assisting Cuba School District regarding Native American children that attend public school off the reservation, and counter-narcotic trafficking operations.

Recruiting & Hiring: One of the many issues facing the law enforcement community today is staff turnover and 2021 has proven to be a challenging year. The negative climate surrounding law enforcement has hastened retirements, along with aggressive recruiting by surrounding agencies promising greener grass and large sign up bonuses. 2 Sergeants and a Detective retired. 13 Deputies left to other agencies. The good news is, 16 Deputy Positions have been filled by Veteran Law Enforcement Officers, including several out of state Law Enforcement Officers relocating to our area.

Cops Grant Awarded: In 2020 the Sheriff worked feverishly with County Officials and the County was able to obtain a COPS grant for (5)-five new deputy positions. In 2021, the Sheriff's Office continued its participation in the Cops Grant Program. The continued population growth, new businesses and significantly increased traffic volumes over the past few years. All this directly contributes to increased need for more Deputies on the streets. The Sheriff's Office has focused on aggressive recruiting and hiring in order to keep staff levels at maximum.

Capital Outlay Money- The Sheriff met with officials at the 2020 New Mexico Legislative Session for the purchase of desperately needed equipment. One item in particular was body cameras for every deputy, to bring us into compliance with the state mandate. Other items include outdated computers plagued with communication problems with the new regional Computer Aided Dispatch System which are now on order and due to be delivered in 2022. Several Patrol vehicles and an Animal Control Vehicle have been purchased to replace the aging fleet utilizing state funds. The Sheriff will continue seeking State and Federal monies in order to responsibly fund the Sheriff's Office and continue keeping our community safe.

Training Update. The Sheriff's Office has significantly increased the training deputies receive, in order to stay abreast of new laws and procedures and best police practices. This initiative includes several online training platforms that allow a Deputy to train at their own pace, and in their vehicle sitting stationary. This allows deputies a significant increase of professional training, while visibly in their assigned district and readily available to assist the community in an expeditious manner.

Animal Shelter. After several years of planning, in February 2021 a new high-quality, climate-controlled tiny animal shelter was opened that houses animals on a short-term basis before they're returned to an owner or transferred to a permanent facility. The Sheriff's Office has significantly increased Animal Protection efforts. We follow the No-kill, as a philosophical principle, and this year we have been extremely successful working with Community Services with our adoption program in finding homes for animals that were taken into our custody.

School Resource Officer: In 2021, the Sheriff's Office entered into an agreement with the Cuba School District to provide a School Resource Officer "SRO" for the Cuba School District. The position is paid in full by the Cuba School District. The SRO an integral role in ensuring the physical safety of a school building and all inside, and is an important resource to protect, counsel, and mentor students.

Sheriff's Office First Ever Formal Inspection:

The Sandoval County Sheriff's Office had its first ever, formal inspection. Deputies, Sergeant, Lieutenants and Command Staff was present. Sheriff's office personnel were inspected for compliance with grooming and dress standards, general appearance, readiness for duty, and general condition of equipment.





COMMAND & SUPERVISORY STAFF



Jesse James Casaus, Sheriff
Joe Gonzales, Undersheriff
Allen Mills, Chief Deputy

Jason Benally, Lieutenant – *Patrol, Traffic Investigations, Fatal Crash Team.*

Frank Tomlinson, Lieutenant – *Civil Division, Community Services & Animal Control.*

Bryan Peters, Lieutenant – *Criminal Investigations, Street Crimes & Intelligence Unit.*

John Castaneda, Lieutenant – *Administrative, Professional Standards, K-9 Unit.*

Scott Holt, Sergeant- *Patrol*

Brandi Kie, Sergeant- *Patrol*

Luke Osborn, Sergeant – *Patrol*

Rene Alvarado, Sergeant- *Patrol*

Orlando Carrillo, Sergeant- *Patrol*

Jonathan Crespín, Sergeant- *Patrol*

Olga Guymon, Sergeant – *SORNA*

Audeliz Nieves, Sergeant- *Civil Division*

Thomas Griffin, Sergeant – *Criminal Investigations Division*

William Dunaway, Sergeant - *Street Crimes & Intelligence Unit*



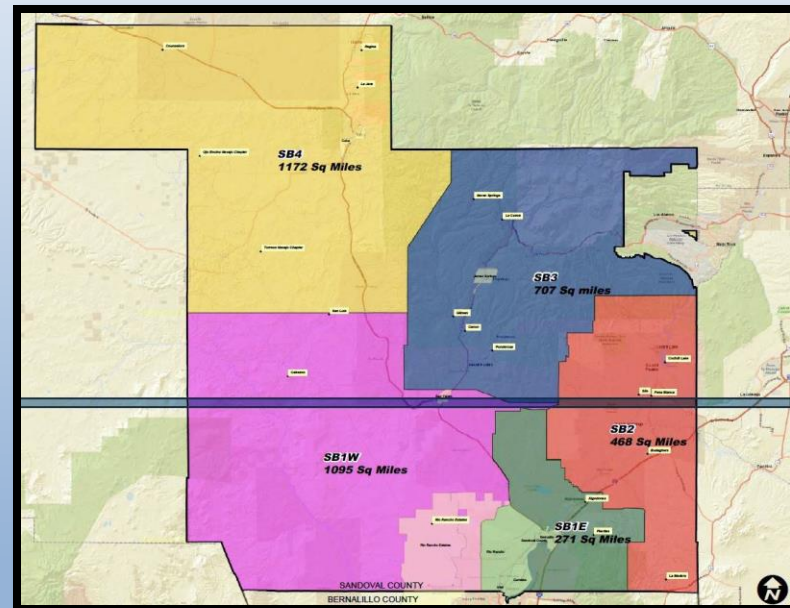


Patrol Division



Patrol is the largest division in the Sheriff's Office. Patrol is currently made up of three shifts that work around the clock, 365 days a year.

When fully staffed, Patrol is staffed with 26 Deputies & 6 Sergeants. Patrol Deputies are primarily responsible to provide public safety by maintaining order, responding to emergencies, protecting people and property, enforcing motor vehicle and criminal laws, and promoting good community relations.





CALLS FOR SERVICE AND OFFICER INITIATED INCIDENTS



Total Calls for Service – 20,521

911 Hang Up Calls – 238

Alarm Calls – 289

Suspicious Activity Calls- 370

Traffic Stops – 4993

Motor Vehicle Crash Calls – 493

Self-initiated Area, Business and Home Checks- 3799

Calls Assisting Other Agencies- 196

DWI Arrests – 69

Domestic Violence Calls- 247

Neighborhood Disputes – 40

Total Arrests -469

Animal Control Calls – 860

Shots Fired Calls - 250 (*Typically Unincorporated area of the Mesa*)





Crime Statistics At a Glance



Crime in "Unincorporated" Sandoval County.

Criminal Homicide:

- 2017- 4
- 2018- 1
- 2019- 1
- 2020- 5
- 2021- 1 (*Suspect in custody awaiting trial*)

Assaults Reported:

- 2017- 128
- 2018- 109
- 2019- 149
- 2020- 78
- 2021- 22

Forcible Rape Reported:

- 2017-3
- 2018-1
- 2019-1
- 2020-2
- 2021- 0

Robbery Reported:

- 2017- 0
 - 2018- 2
 - 2019- 1
 - 2020- 2
- All Robbery cases are assigned to an Investigator and investigated by the Street Crimes Unit.*

Auto Burglary:

- 2017- *Not Recorded.*
 - 2018- 31
 - 2019- 27
 - 2020- 26
 - 2021 – 9
- All Auto Burglary cases are assigned to an Investigator and investigated by the Street Crimes Unit.*
- Several in Jemez trail heads and river parking. areas.*

Residential Burglary:

- 2017- 56
 - 2018- 47
 - 2019- 46
 - 2020- 31
 - 2021- 18
- (Residential Burglary is occupied homes and excludes homes under construction or sheds.) All Burglary cases are assigned to an Investigator and investigated by the Street Crimes Unit.*

It should be noted we had 3 Reports of Vehicles Stolen in Sandoval County.

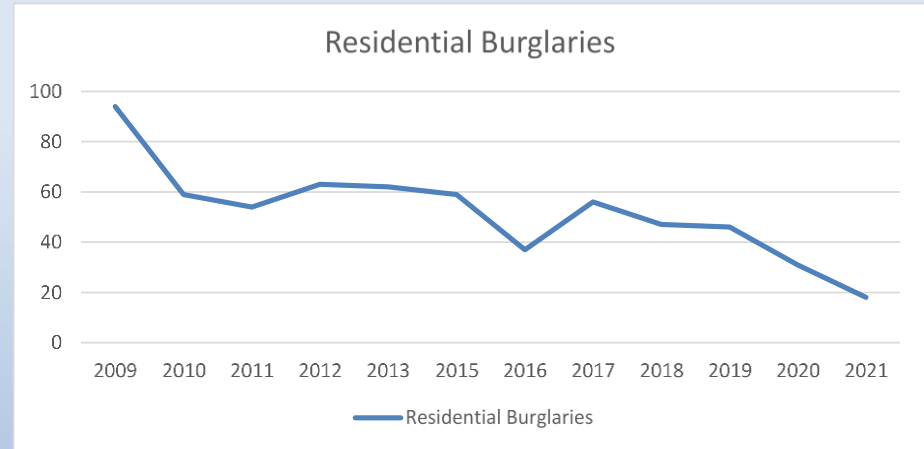
Approximately 20 stolen vehicles, trailers, UTV,s and industrial equipment were stolen from Gov/commercial areas, recovered by Street Crimes Unit investigating an organized theft ring, arrests and vehicles were recovered and returned to owners. Approximately 22 stolen vehicles were recovered, during traffic stops or found stripped in mesa that were reported stolen in other jurisdictions (typically ABQ).



Sandoval County's Crime is Typically Lower Than Surrounding Jurisdictions



Property Crimes in the unincorporated areas of Sandoval County have historically dropped over the last decade. Many of the Residential and Vehicle Burglaries over the years and today are committed by drug addicted individuals who were passing through Sandoval County from neighboring communities (Albuquerque, Los Lunas, Belen, Santa Fe) and found themselves in a residential area in the unincorporated area of Sandoval County. Typically these individuals will break into a few homes or vehicles (*Vehicles parked at Hiking Trail Areas are attractive targets*) and don't stay or reside in Sandoval County. The Sandoval County Sheriff's Office assigns each and every Residential Burglary and Vehicle Burglary to an Investigator (*which is not a common practice at surrounding agencies*). This practice has helped to increase the solvability rate of Burglary Crimes. As an example- an Investigator learning a credit card stolen in the burglary was used immediately at a local store. This information leads to a swift identification of the suspect and at times an arrest of the suspect and recovery of stolen property before more crimes are committed. Another common tactic is saturating the area a burglary occurred with marked patrol units for several days or weeks after the burglary in hopes of catching the burglar or at a minimum to detour the burglar from burglarizing again. One question that always comes up when a home is burglarized, is regarding construction workers in the area. Although the presence of construction workers is always taken into consideration, rarely it is found a construction worker is responsible for the burglary. However a residential area with a lot of construction does allow a burglar to blend into the area and it is less likely a citizen will call to report a suspicious person. This is one reason a residential area with ongoing construction might have higher crime and is an area that requires closer patrol by marked units.





The Sheriff's Office responds to all calls and incidents.

Regardless of the type of call, deputies are encouraged to listen and work with citizens to solve problems together. Occasionally a call might not necessarily be a law enforcement problem. However, Deputies are encouraged to be problem solvers, flexible and take the time with a citizen and help the citizen with their problem. Sometimes, this means coordinating with other government or social groups or services that can help with quality of life concerns. This strategy seems simple but extremely important in creating public trust with the community. Time and time again, a citizen who has gained the public trust of the deputies later provides information that helps the community or leads to solving a crime.

The Sheriff's Office investigates all incidents and criminal cases.

The Sheriff's Office has Crime Analytics and Mapping and software tools that assist in following crime trends, and this software has proven helpful, however the Sheriff's Office does not utilize a computer to select what cases are assigned for follow-up investigation, since ALL FELONY CASES ARE INVESTIGATED.

All Felony cases are reviewed telephonically by an on-call Detective/Investigator while a Deputy is on the scene of a crime, regardless of the time of day or night. A decision is made if an Investigator will immediately respond or pick up the case the next day. All Burglary cases and other various Felony cases are assigned to either Criminal Investigations or the Street Crimes unit, in an effort to make sure no incident falls through the cracks. This approach has helped increase the number of incidents solved and prosecuted and creates a stronger relationship between Law Enforcement and the community.

The Sheriff's Office is committed to working with adjoining jurisdictions as a team. The Street Crimes & Intelligence Unit sponsors a bi-weekly Taskforce meeting with local, state, federal and the Office of the District Attorney. Crime trends, individual case, suspect and Teamwork strategies are among the issues discussed. Participants in the Taskforce routinely work together on a common case or group of suspects that are committing crimes that effect multiple jurisdictions. In 2021, a good example is the case of a Bernalillo resident who was arrested for Possession of Stolen Vehicles (*8 vehicles, travel trailers, storage trailers and misc. property*) Trafficking Methamphetamine, Felon in possession Firearm, and other various theft/burglary charges. This individual and associates were committing crimes in various jurisdictions in and around Sandoval County.



Traffic Services Unit



Traffic Services Deputies work in a partnership with patrol deputies and surrounding agencies to continually improve traffic safety thru enforcement, crash investigation, special event planning and safety education.

Enforcement activities include: excessive speed enforcement initiatives, road rage and aggressive driving enforcement, BKLUP, Click-It-Or-Ticket enforcement, participation in DUI Task Force initiatives, Placitas “Free-Roaming Horse” corridors traffic enforcement, bicycle safety saturation, and drug interdiction operations.

Traffic Services Deputies are responsible on a daily basis for the investigations of major vehicle crashes to include fatal collisions. In 2021, Sandoval County Deputies responded to 493 vehicle crashes. Deputies coordinated numerous special events, including funeral motorcade escorts.

Education activities include: child safety seat installation events, participating at high schools driver safety events, and social media message via “Traffic Tip Tuesday”.

Throughout the year the Sandoval Sheriff’s Office participates and commits deputies to Safer New Mexico Now programs that enhance roadway safety and help make communities safer.





Traffic Fatal Team



When a fatal or serious traffic crash occurs in Sandoval County the Sandoval County Sheriff's Office Fatal Crash Investigation Team is responsible for the investigation. The need for a highly trained and specialized team was brought about by the intricacy of traffic collisions and to further understand complex causal factors. The Fatal Crash Investigation Team consists of a Lieutenant, Sergeant and Deputies with advanced training in crash investigation and reconstruction. The object of the team is to provide the Sheriff's Office with the tools and knowledge to investigate and analyze major injury or fatal collisions. The goal of the team is to be able to identify the factors and causes of collisions that occur in the County and develop information that may lead to the prevention of further incidents.

Members of the team are deputies assigned to Traffic and other units within the Sheriff's Office. Members can be called in at any time of the day or night for an investigation. They are trained in various levels of collision investigation including At Scene Investigations, Crash Reconstruction, and Mathematical Calculations to Determine Speeds, Skid Mark Analysis and Velocity Calculations. Members are also versed in the use of scanning equipment and computer aided diagramming software. This equipment is used to create a factual diagram of the scene, which can later be used in the reconstruction of a collision or for use in court.

In 2021 team members have investigated 5 fatal or major injury collisions and have assisted the Operations and Investigations Division on numerous crimes scenes. Members are committed to providing quality investigative assistance and to identifying causational factors to help prevent further incidents from occurring in the County of Sandoval.

In addition to collision investigations, team members are available to respond to assist the Operations and Investigations Divisions with homicides or other major cases.





Criminal Investigations Unit



The Criminal Investigations Division is comprised of highly motivated and trained sworn deputies who provide support in many areas. The division's values of Integrity, Professionalism, Accountability, High Quality Service and Customer Focus are in line with the Sheriff's Office Mission.

Criminal cases requiring further investigation are received in large part from the initial reports taken from deputies while on patrol. Initial Incident reports are submitted to the Criminal Investigations Division and reviewed by the Detective Sergeant for assignment. Detectives are responsible for various types of investigations, which may include: homicide, robbery, burglary, auto theft, identify theft, organized crimes, missing persons, juvenile crime, fraud, narcotics, criminal intelligence, aggravated assault/battery, sexual assault, computer crime, domestic violence, arson, and other various crimes. Detectives spend a considerable amount of time assisting deputies in the field and responding to calls to assist, while maintaining their own caseload. Detectives also utilize several online programs to track property and locate stolen property. Currently, the unit is supervised by a Lieutenant and staffed by one sergeant and two detectives.





STREET CRIMES & INTELLIGENCE UNIT



“THE STREET CRIMES & INTELLIGENCE UNIT”, was created 2019 to address the Sheriff’s mandate to combat the illegal drug problem in Sandoval County. The Street Crimes & Intelligence Unit”, is a multi-purpose unit that could address not only street level drug trafficking, but also other criminal activity. The unit consists of a Lieutenant, Sergeant, & Investigator. The Street Crimes Unit also has an Investigator assigned to the Detention Center (SCDC) that specifically address Narcotic Activity and various Crimes committed within the Detention Center.

In 2020, the unit also started a task force initiative with the Town of Bernalillo Police, Corrales Police and Rio Rancho Police with the mission to address not only street level drug trafficking, but also property crimes, specifically burglaries. In 2021, Navajo Nation Police and ATF also participated in the task force and have been valuable partners.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY/SEIZED	QUANTITY/WEIGHT	STREET VALUE
STOLEN VEHICLES	16	
STOLEN LICENSE PLATES	2	
FIREARMS	12	
WARRANTS	38	
NARCOTICS- HEROIN	24.1g	\$3,615
NARCOTICS- FENTANYL	1,244 Pills	\$9,952.00
NARCOTICS- COCAINE	7.8g	\$390.00
NARCOTICS- SUBOXONE	206 Dosage Strips	\$1,030.00
NARCOTICS- METHAMPHETAMINE	704.98g	\$56,398.40
NARCOTICS- OXYCODONE	33 Pills	\$330.00
NARCOTICS- MARIJUANA	907.18g	\$9,600.00
NARCOTICS- METHADONE	298g	\$786.72
NARCOTICS- XANAX	98 Pills	\$980.00
NARCOTICS- PRESCRIPTION PILLS	432 (Mixed)	UNK
Narcotic Arrests (Non-Warrant Based)	6	
		TOTAL: \$83,082.12



CIVIL DIVISION



The Sheriff's Civil Unit is supervised by a Lieutenant and staffed by a Sergeant, (3)-three deputies, (3) Court Security Officers and a civilian Clerk. The Civil Unit provides a wide variety of services for Sandoval County, these include, but not limited to:

- Acts as a messenger of the Courts in all civil matters such as service of civil process, execution of court orders and process service.
- Provides armed Law Enforcement Officers at the County Court House and adjacent county buildings, to ensure the safety of persons and property.
- Responsible for the court ordered transportation and extradition of prisoners from detention facilities to and from court. Prisoner extraditions can occur as close as a neighboring County to as far as the state of New York.
- The Sheriff's Civil Clerical personnel process incoming requests for service, enter them into the civil computer system and distribute process service and enforcement actions to the field deputies for completion. Clerical personnel collect money pursuant to wage garnishments, bank levies and other enforcement actions and distribute it to the judgment creditor(s) or a designee towards satisfying the judgment. Clerical personnel also process claims, stays, exemptions and bankruptcies on civil enforcement actions and communicate with the courts to determine dispositions. Clerical personnel maintain records, return writs to the court and distribute proofs of service or service attempt reports to the requester of a service or enforcement action.



K-9 UNIT



The Sandoval County Sheriff's Office established its K9 Unit in 2019. The current unit consists of Sergeant Luke Osborn, with K9 Maverick Baron Harris and Deputy A.J. Noriega with K9 Titan. In early 2021, K9 Candice (*Narcotic Specific Dog*) was transferred to the Sandoval County Detention Center due to her expertise regarding jail facility searches. K9 Titan (*a multipurpose K9*) was acquired by the Sheriff's Office in 2021 with the assistance and strong support of Commissioner Block. K9 Titan (*a multipurpose K9*) assigned to Deputy A.J. Noriega provides an addition to the K9 Unit that is versatile in many patrol situations and environments that adds a level of safety to Deputies and provides a greater advantage in criminal apprehension.

Both K9s serve an invaluable role assisting the agency and others in the accomplishment of mission objectives. The superior sense of smell, hearing and potential aggressiveness of a trained law enforcement canine is a valuable supplement to law enforcement manpower. Sergeant Osborn and Noriega have a strong commitment to the program. The dogs live with the family of the handler and obey their handlers without hesitation and are able to work under the most stressful situations. The dogs have an innate sense of when they will be required to assist their partner, and they look forward to coming to work.

K9 Maverick and K9 Titan are trained in criminal apprehension, narcotic detection, and tracking. The unit train for real life applications of tracking, building searches, area searches, obedience, suspect apprehensions and anything else a patrol K9 might encounter. Both dogs are specifically trained in the tracking and trailing of fleeing felons and lost children or missing persons. Maverick and Titan are trained in searching large areas or buildings for hiding suspects, and can enter small areas that deputies would not be able to access. They are also invaluable in high-risk situations such as foot chases where the dogs' speed and tracking ability are extremely useful.

The K9 Unit also participates in numerous civilian functions each year. These include school visits and demonstrations at local civic groups, public education programs and recruiting events.

K9 Maverick was donated in 2019, by The Hometown Foundation Inc. who supports Law Enforcement agencies with Police K9s as well as to support them with vital safety equipment and training.





2021 Animal Control Statistics

Sandoval County opened a new a new high-quality, climate-controlled tiny animal shelter in 2021, just in time for the alarming spike of homeless pets not only in Sandoval county but nationwide. The addition of the shelter, has significantly increased Animal Protection efforts and has proven to be a lifesaver for many pets. The shelter houses animals, on a short-term basis before they're returned to an owner or transferred to a permanent facility. Sandoval County follows the No-kill, as a philosophical principle, and the Sheriffs Office's partnership with the Community Services Department this year has proven extremely successful in caring for impounded animals and in finding homes for animals that were taken into our custody.

Total Calls for Service: 478
Self-Initiated Calls: 487
Total Citations: 118
Total Reports: 234
Total Livestock Attacks: 39
Total Bite (Human) Reports: 7
Total Other (Dog vs Dog) Attacks: 7



Total Animals Handled:

Dog: 234 Cat: 29 Bat: 0 Snake: 7
Horse: 2 Livestock: 39 Skunk: 7 Other: 1



SEX OFFENDER REGISTRATION UNIT



The Sandoval County Sheriff's Office Sex Offender Registration Enforcement (SORE) Unit, is composed of (1)-one Sergeant, a civilian coordinator and is assisted by Deputies in the field. The SORE Unit registers and keeps track of registered sex offenders "Approximately 146 sex offenders" , through registrations at the Sheriff's Office and home verification visits. SORE also registers offenders on several pueblos. The unit assists Probation & Parole on special enforcement operations, including keeping kids safe "Halloween Operation's".

The New Mexico State legislature finds that sex offenders pose a significant risk of recidivism; and the efforts of law enforcement agencies to protect their communities from sex offenders are impaired by the lack of information available concerning convicted sex offenders who live within the agencies' jurisdictions. The purpose of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act is to assist law enforcement agencies' efforts to protect their communities by: requiring sex offenders who are residents of New Mexico to register with the county sheriff of the county in which the sex offender resides; requiring sex offenders who are residents in other states, but who are employed in New Mexico or who attend school in New Mexico, to register with the county sheriff of the county in which the sex offender works or attends school; requiring the establishment of a central registry for sex offenders; and providing public access to information regarding certain registered sex offenders.



COMMUNITY RELATIONS TEAM



The Community Relations Team is committed to improving the quality of life within Sandoval County. Many strategies are utilized to fulfill this commitment, including a strong partnership with Patrol Deputies, Traffic Deputies, Detectives, School Resource Deputy, various civilian employees, and supervisors depending on the task. Community Relations Team also works hand in hand with Sandoval County Community Services and the County Public Information Officer.

The team's primary mission is to encourage the concept of partnerships between the Sheriff's Office and the community. Community Relations Team members work with residents, homeowners' associations, citizen advocates, Neighborhood Watch and various community agencies to identify and address problematic issues.

The bond between the citizens and the Sandoval County Sheriff's Office has always been strong and united; with prevention, problem solving and communication between citizens and deputies being key to protecting our community from crime and its consequences.

2021 was a challenging year for Community Relations, the difficulty in problem solving and by communication between citizens and deputies in many instances was initiated in new ways using email, text and social media platforms, due to COVID.





TACTICAL RESPONSE TEAM



The Tactical Response Team (TRT) is a group of specially trained deputies that are utilized in a variety of law enforcement situations that exceed the capabilities of standard patrol resources. The TRT is used when circumstances exist that would establish a reasonable belief that there is a potential for violence sufficiently greater than that which would face police officers during normal and lawful execution of duty.

Each Tactical Response Team member must complete a minimum 60 hour Basic S.W.A.T. certification course covering instruction in areas of special weapons applications, tactical operations used in the apprehension of violent individuals, use of force, less than lethal weapons & munitions, search and rescue techniques, and chemical restraints. Each member receives additional training to include defensive tactics, tactical shooting, building entry, tracking an individual in any terrain, land navigation and orientation skills, running sustained operations in rural areas or compromised urban environments and other skills utilized in Search and Rescue (SAR) missions.

Members of the Tactical Response Team serve in other capacities within the agency, and are only called upon as a team during incidents where they are needed. Qualifications to become a member of the Tactical Response Team include successful completion of a rigorous physical agility test, advanced firearms qualifications and work-performance evaluations.





SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM



Traditionally, Sheriff's Patrol deputies are the first to respond to a lost or missing person. Search & Rescue calls are characterized by constantly changing task demands and collaboration between emergency response agencies, such as Law Enforcement, Fire, Health Services "EMS" and various State and volunteer organizations. The ability to save a life or affect a successful rescue is often dependent upon how quickly a person can be found or reached. In 2019, the Sheriff mandated the creation of a dedicated Search & Rescue Team to improve the agency's abilities to collaborate and coordinate efforts during an emergency. This newly established program is currently staffed with a Lieutenant and (2)-two Sergeants *(Will expand as potential team candidates are trained.)* who have a sufficient understanding of the responsibilities, needs, plans, and capabilities of their own and other participating agencies. A team member will assist deputies in the field as a coordinator, resource manager, etc. and once on scene will be the Incident Commander for the Sheriff's Office. Each team member will have access to resource contact lists regarding specialized personnel with the Sheriff's Office, an example Tactical Tracking Team, K-9 Unit and contact lists for outside agency resources, such as Air Support, High Angle Rescue SAR units, etc. Based on the size and scope of the incident, other responding team members will be tasked with specific tasks and responsibilities depending on the situation, having the ultimate goal of providing additional expertise that assists in a successful rescue.





PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS



The Professional Standards Unit is an internal administrative investigations unit staffed with personnel who report directly to the Undersheriff and Sheriff. Lieutenant John Casteneda oversees the day to day operations of receiving, tracking and managing the case load of complaints and compliments. To ensure the public's trust and maintain the Offices' integrity, this unit conducts immediate and objective investigations of all complaints. It is essential that all allegations of employee misconduct are thoroughly and objectively investigated to assure the public that official misconduct will not be tolerated and, at the same time, provide a vehicle whereby officers unjustly accused can be vindicated. Lieutenant Casteneda handles the majority of complaints that are based on a misunderstanding of accepted law enforcement practices or the duties of the officer or other agency member. Many times, this type of complaint is quickly resolved after speaking with a supervisor and the citizen filing the complaint. When lengthy, complex or serious allegations of employee misconduct are alleged, Lieutenant Casteneda is assisted by supervisory staff that serves in other capacities within the agency. All assisting staff have extensive criminal and administrative investigation expertise and training. Another function of the unit is to investigate risk management issues, conduct internal audits concerning appropriate use of force standards, vehicle driving issues and other department policies and functions. The unit also works in cooperation with the County Attorney and reviews matters of civil liability for the Sheriff's Office and other county entities. The Professional Standards Unit also oversees Deputy Compliments and Awards. (See 2021 Deputy Awards page)

Standards provide a measure for accountability. Sheriff Deputies are appointed by the Sheriff and exercise extraordinary authority over their fellow citizens. This responsibility requires accountability. Accountability is achieving by imposing high standards of conduct on police, including through a discipline code which deputies voluntarily accept upon their appointment. These higher standards apply to conduct both on and off-duty. Sheriff Deputies want to both be seen as professional, not just for their own satisfaction, but to enjoy public confidence that is necessary for democratic policing to succeed. It may be more so now, when law enforcement is under consistent scrutiny. The Sheriff believes fostering and promoting a sense of professionalism strengthens the relationship and trust between the citizens of Sandoval County and the Sheriff's Office.



DEPUTY AWARDS



2021 Deputy of the Year: Deputy Bill Sanchez

Nominee for 2021 Deputy of the Year: Deputy Pedro Chacon
Deputy Donaciano Pacheco
Deputy Diana Valencia
Sergeant Luke Osborn

Commander Commendation Award: Deputy Rudy Fields
Deputy Anthony Armijo
Deputy Michael Huckleby

Outstanding Public Service Award: Deputy AJ Noriega
Deputy Rudy Fields
Deputy Michael Huckleby

Sheriffs Unit Citation Award: Sergeant Al Nieves
Deputy Brenda Gutierrez
Deputy Brian Espinoza
Deputy Robert Strand

Employee Performance Award: Janice Salazar
Gabriella Chacon
Terrie Montoya



2021 Deputy of the Year:
Deputy Bill Sanchez



SHERIFF'S FLEET MANAGEMENT & EQUIPMENT UNIT



The primary function of the "Sheriff's Fleet Management & Equipment Unit" is to provide:

- Sheriff's Office employees with safe and reliable vehicles so they can more effectively perform their duties, responding to emergencies and providing quality police service to those who live and work in Sandoval County and surrounding areas.
- Sheriff's Office employees with uniforms, protective equipment, materials, and other "police specific" equipment. Makes equipment and supply purchases and maintains inventory records. Identifies and evaluates "police specific" equipment and technologies that are the most effective, safe, functioning and long lasting.

The Sheriff's Fleet Management & Equipment Unit is under the supervision of a Lieutenant with a Deputy assigned as the Fleet & Equipment Coordinator. The Sheriff's Office's fleet includes marked Patrol vehicles, Command vehicles, Investigations and Administrative vehicles. In addition, the Sheriff's Office has support, utility, tactical and Search and Rescue equipment. The Coordinator is responsible for many aspects involving our vehicles, including assisting Fiscal Year budgeting, acquisition, licensing, insurance, emergency equipment up-fitting, preventative maintenance and repair. In addition, the coordinator handles fleet related equipment and supplies, vehicle driver assignments and rotation, to ensure the most efficient and effective long term use of each of our vehicles. The coordinator is also responsible for the general oversight of the Sheriff's Office's equipment and supply function, to include, issuing equipment and other supplies to department personnel, identifying and evaluating "police specific" equipment, making equipment and supply purchases, and maintaining inventory records. The Sheriff's Fleet Management & Equipment Unit also assists administrative personnel with the oversight and inventory of other department assets as needed.





TRAINING AND SAFETY COORDINATOR



The Sheriff and Undersheriff recognize that effective law enforcement is a cornerstone in the protection of our constitutional rights; and the mission of law enforcement is not only to protect and serve, but to operate in an efficient, effective manner that is in the best interest of the community we serve.

The Training and Safety Coordinator works under the supervision of a Lieutenant. Duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

TRAINING

Coordinates and assists with:

- NMLEA Biennium Training & Training through the department's Virtual Academy program.
- Training in the field and classroom setting & Continuing Professional Training and other training programs as assigned.
- Education programs related to the Sheriff's Office and the community.
- Implementing training goals and objectives set by the Sheriff's Office as assigned.
- Maintaining Training Request Routing and Processing Procedures as set by the Chief Deputy.
- Monitoring and making recommendations to command staff for remedial training.
- Conducting research, schedules training, prepares training materials as assigned.
- Performs a variety of administrative, professional, and technical tasks in support of the assigned area of responsibility.
- Accurately maintain and update records and files both in house and with NMLEA.

SAFETY

- Participates as a liaison between the Sheriff's Office and Sandoval County Risk Management
- Issues Risk Awareness Program training on a weekly basis & maintains records and required documentation to Risk Management
- Attends Risk Management meetings as a committee member
- Complies with OSHA rules and standards regarding the Sheriff's Office Building.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE AND POLICY UPDATE

Updates outdated written procedures and policies to reflect "Best Police Practice" that are constitutional, effective, reduce liability and improve communication, skills, knowledge, ethics, and attitudes that will improve overall policing of the community.



END OF WATCH



Joseph “Joe” Anthony Harris, Sr. was born in South Ozone Park, Brooklyn, New York to Arthur and Helen Harris. He grew up on Long Island with his big Italian family. In the late 1970s, he moved to New Mexico with his parents and finished school at Cibola High School. In 1984 he joined the Rio Rancho Police Department and was one of the original Rio Rancho Police Officers. Harris was cross trained in Law Enforcement/Fire Fighting and EMT. While at RRPD He started the D.A.R.E. program, the G.R.E.A.T. program, Neighborhood Watch, Mc Gruff the Crime Dog, and worked with the Citizen Police Academy and any other program he could bring to the department that had to do with community safety. Sergeant Harris served with the Sandoval County Sheriff's Office for six years prior to his untimely death. While serving with Sandoval County, he started the D.A.R.E. program and was very instrumental in expanding Neighborhood Watch programs throughout the county.



Sergeant Harris was killed, while working a Sheriff’s Office stakeout targeting the “Cookie Bandit”, who was an unidentified suspect in cabin burglaries in the Jemez area for over 6 years. Sergeant Harris, during the arrest, although mortally wounded by gunfire was able to return fire and kill the “Cookie Bandit” who was later identified as Joseph Henry Burgess wanted for a double homicide in Canada. Burgess is also a potential suspect for other murders in New Mexico, California, Arizona, and Oregon, and had eluded Law Enforcement for over 40 years.

He is survived by his wife and five children and is buried at Vista Verde Memorial Park in Rio Rancho, New Mexico.



END OF WATCH



Robert W. Baron was born on September 10, 1966 to James Bernard and Karola Baron of Simi Valley, California. He graduated from California State, Northridge with a BA in Political Science and Public Administration. Early in his career Baron worked as a Juvenile Probation Officer in Los Angeles County. Prior to moving to New Mexico Baron worked as a Wildland Firefighter and as a Federal Park Service Ranger. As a Federal Park Ranger, Robert received the “Exemplary Act Award” for his quick actions in saving the life of a park visitor who suffered a major heart attack. Robert joined the Sandoval County Sheriff’s Office in 2006 and was a dedicated Deputy, Detective and Sergeant, and he had a passion for improving the Sheriff’s Office. Assigned as a Detective, he was extremely diligent, hardworking, always answered the call and was conscientious of victims and their families while working all cases regardless of their seemingly insignificant importance or their high profile nature of a case, such as homicide. Robert loved his community, church and helping others. He dedicated time as a Boy Scout leader mentoring scouts and in law enforcement organizations such as Law Enforcement United, an organization committed to "Honor the Fallen, and Remember the Survivors.” He participated in the in the 2010, 250+ mile Memorial Bicycle Ride ending in Washington D.C. Memorial, in memory of Sgt. Joe Harris in 2010.



On December 5, 2013, Robert had been dispatched to I-25 in response to reports of multiple, minor motor vehicle crashes and disabled vehicles under blizzard conditions. He was fatally injured when he was outside of his vehicle and struck by a motorist while assisting motorists and investigating the crashes.

He had served in law enforcement for a total of 25 years and is survived by his wife and son.