



# Department of Public Safety Budget Analysis – Executive Summary

City of Providence, Rhode Island

Prepared by PFM's Center for Justice & Safety Finance

April 13, 2021

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## Overview of Project

- The police killing of George Floyd and the protests that followed have led local governments around the country to reexamine funding for public safety and consider alternative structures to provide safety and justice to their communities.
- Mayor Elorza led Providence's approach to this critical conversation, which resulted in this project to examine and rethink how City government budgets to assure public safety and justice.
- By asking what services police and fire/EMS should provide, and why, local governments like the City of Providence can begin to address the challenge of systemic racism in a time of unprecedented economic uncertainty.
- This approach rejects the amount of spending allocated to public safety as an antiquated measurement of success, and instead recognizes that a prevention-first approach may be a better investment to create a healthier, safer, and more just Providence.



## Overview of Project

- ◆ In recent decades, in Providence and in many other jurisdictions across the nation, police have increasingly been used as the designated first-responder for non-fire, non-EMS calls for service.
  - Similarly, Fire-based EMS departments – including Providence – have seen their share of call volume continually shift toward approximately a 75% share of calls for EMS rather than Fire.
  - Additionally, the Providence Police Department (PPD) dispatch data indicated that over half of calls initiating a response were for non-violent, non-criminal matters; including behavioral health, substance abuse, chronic homelessness, and other quality of life issues.
    - In 2017, 17% of Providence’s adults reported frequent mental distress.
- ◆ Changes to historical patterns of service demand require governments to re-orient and re-examine whether the current policies and operations best meet the evolving needs of those it serves.
- ◆ This is a policy, fiscal, and operational imperative for City government.
  - **From a policy standpoint**, this underpins increased public interest to reshape public safety response to provide appropriate approaches to safety, justice, behavioral health, and social support services.
  - **From a fiscal perspective**, it is unsustainable and poor resource allocation to have some of the City’s most expensive employees performing duties that extend beyond their core functions and for which they are not best suited, trained, equipped, and supported.
  - **From an operational perspective**, this has resulted in expanding the footprint of law enforcement and stretching resources in a manner that does not proactively improve safety and justice.



## Overview of Project

- ◆ By taking a prevention-first approach to safety and justice, Providence recognizes that:
  - It can improve outcomes for safety and health *and* reduce demand for police department services and fire departments services.
  - An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure – it is almost always less costly to fund prevention than response.
  - Efforts to change the role of uniformed staff are consistent with efficient deployment of scarce and costly resources in local government.
  - There can be no sacred cows – meaning that the police department and fire department should be treated like other city departments – consistent with a strategic approach to local resource allocation and budget decision-making.



# Department of Public Safety

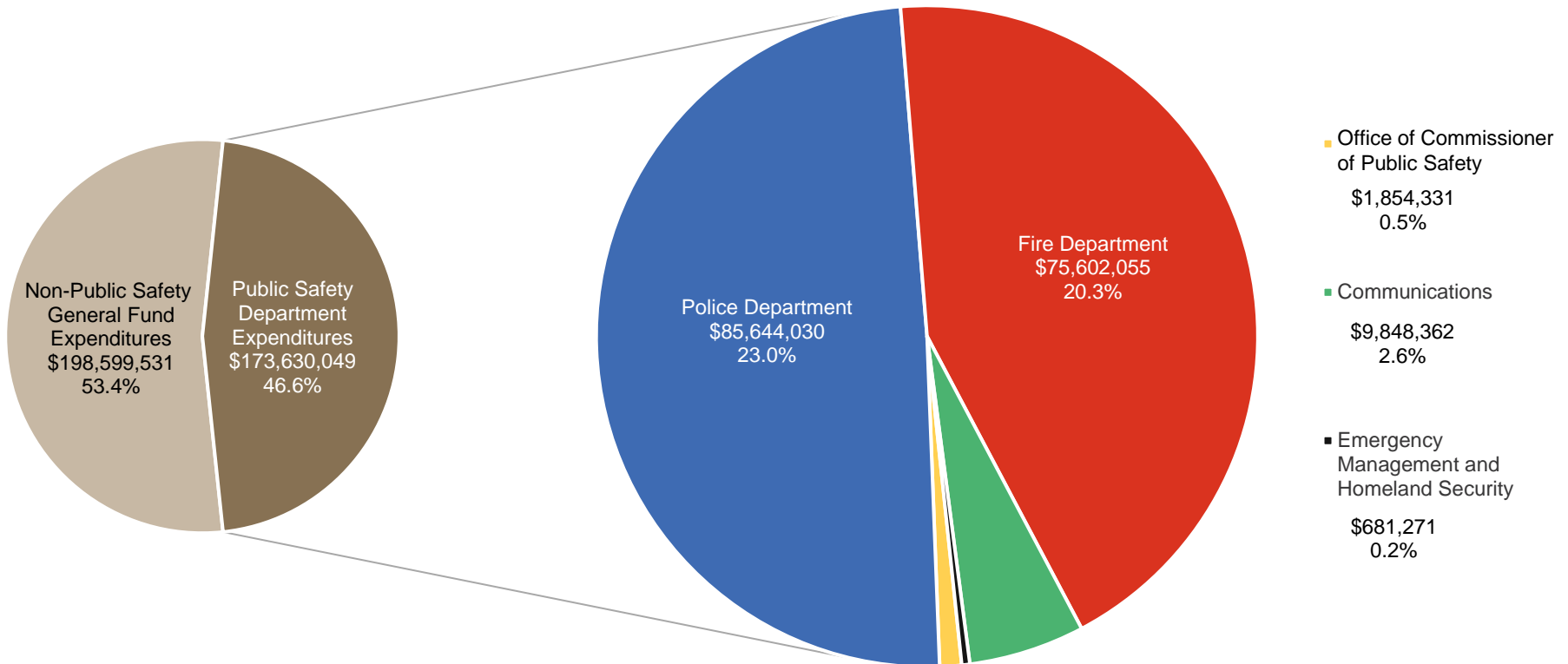
## *Primary Findings*



# Providence General Fund Budget

- The Department of Public Safety is the largest non-schools department in Providence – accounting for 46.6% of the City’s non-schools general fund budget in FY2020.

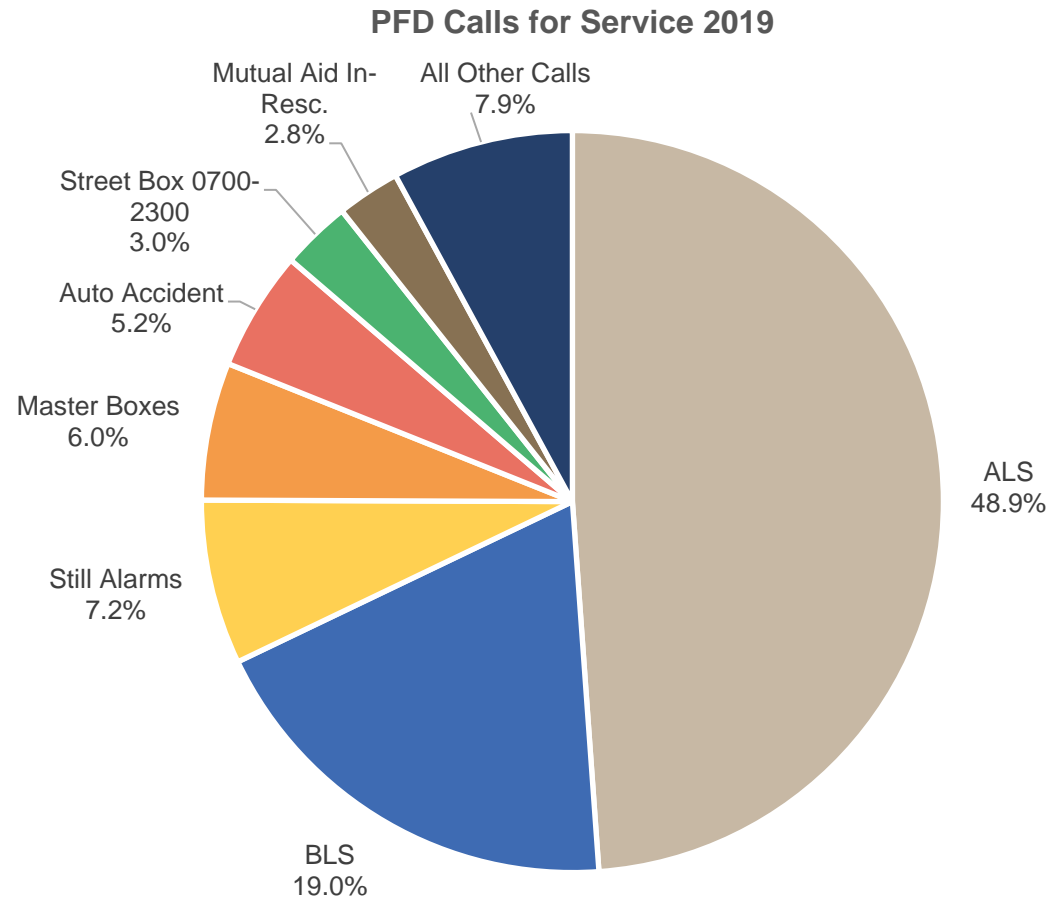
2020 General Fund Budget Expenses





## Calls for Service – 2019

- In 2019, PFD responded to 45,350 calls for service.
  - Average of 124 calls per day.
- Calls for Advanced Life Support (ALS) and Basic Life Support (BLS) were 67.9% of total calls for service.
- When including auto accidents and other incidents that are also considered ALS due to their response requirements, 73.5% of PFD's total calls were for EMS.
- Calls for service were categorized in 28 distinct incident types.
  - The chart to the right illustrates the incident types that were 3% or more of total calls for service.
  - The "All Other Calls" portion of the chart represents the 21 different incident types that each comprised 1% or less of total calls for service.

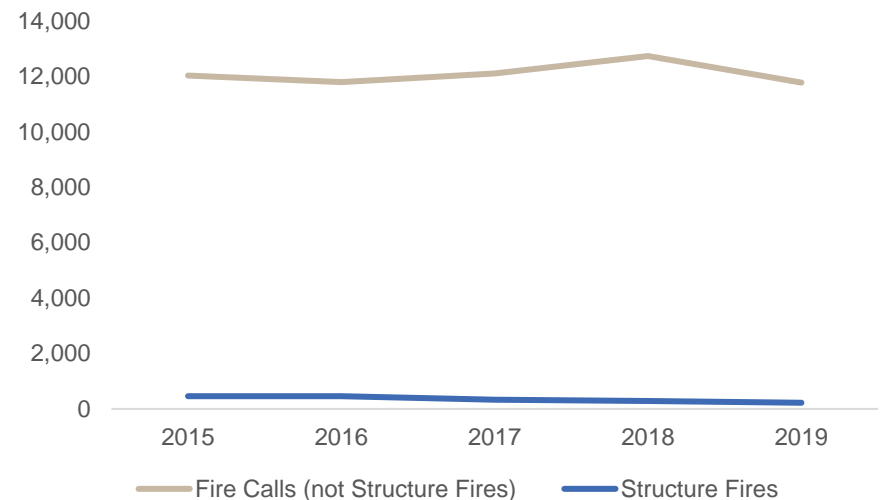




## Calls for Service – 2015 - 2019

- ◆ From 2015 to 2019, PFD's call volume was driven by EMS and non-structure fire calls for service.
  - EMS and non-structure fire calls for service were 97.2% of the Department's calls.
  - Structure fires were 2.9% of PFD's fire calls (all calls other than EMS).
  - From 2015 to 2019, PFD's total calls for service increased 8.3%, from 41,873 to 45,353.
  - This increase represents an additional 10 calls per day.
- ◆ During this period, EMS calls averaged 73.5% of the Departments calls for service.
- ◆ All other calls – representing all calls for service other than EMS calls – declined 4.0%, from 12,494 to 12,001.
  - All other calls averaged 26.5% of PFD's calls for service.

**PFD Fire Calls vs. Structure Fires 2015 to 2019**







## Calls for Service\*

- Approximately two of every three calls for service were one of the top 15 call type.
  - None of the top 15 call types were for Part I crimes.
- The most frequent calls for service are traffic stops and traffic accidents.
  - These calls represented 17.0% of all calls during CY2019.
- Business alarms and well being checks accounted for more than 12.1% of all calls.
- Bolded call types were among the fastest growing call types from CY2015-CY2019.

Highest % of Calls for Service	CY2015	CY2016	CY2017	CY2018	CY2019	CY2020 (partial)	CY2015-CY2019 CAGR	% of all calls in CY2019
<b>Traffic Stop</b>	<b>7,906</b>	<b>5,749</b>	<b>10,846</b>	<b>13,642</b>	<b>11,768</b>	<b>5,474</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	<b>8.9%</b>
Traffic Accident	11,023	11,152	11,171	11,044	10,704	5,419	-0.7%	8.1%
<b>Alarm - Business</b>	<b>8,081</b>	<b>8,479</b>	<b>8,471</b>	<b>8,801</b>	<b>9,025</b>	<b>5,700</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>
<b>Check Well Being</b>	<b>6,101</b>	<b>6,047</b>	<b>6,473</b>	<b>6,557</b>	<b>6,997</b>	<b>4,996</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>
Loud Music/Party	6,050	6,323	6,828	5,893	6,060	6,186	0.0%	4.6%
Suspicious Person/Activity	6,584	6,901	6,977	6,624	5,908	3,566	-2.7%	4.5%
Keep the Peace	5,852	5,909	5,753	5,288	5,469	4,033	-1.7%	4.1%
911 Hang Up/Open Line	5,166	5,059	5,114	5,265	5,032	3,051	-0.7%	3.8%
Alarm - Residential	5,652	5,578	5,404	5,306	4,562	1,989	-5.2%	3.5%
Officer Initiated Calls	5,627	5,600	5,544	5,243	4,456	2,389	-5.7%	3.4%
<b>Illegal Parking</b>	<b>3,062</b>	<b>3,098</b>	<b>3,527</b>	<b>3,642</b>	<b>4,042</b>	<b>1,962</b>	<b>7.2%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>
Larceny	4,619	4,619	4,410	3,826	3,750	1,275	-5.1%	2.8%
A Unknown Incident	4,468	4,425	4,064	3,397	3,665	2,503	-4.8%	2.8%
Disturbance - Public	3,953	3,802	3,560	3,523	3,451	2,176	-3.3%	2.6%
<b>Animal Complaint</b>	<b>2,748</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>2,615</b>	<b>2,811</b>	<b>3,353</b>	<b>2,471</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>
<b>Total of Top 15</b>	<b>86,892</b>	<b>85,241</b>	<b>90,757</b>	<b>90,862</b>	<b>88,242</b>	<b>53,190</b>		
<b>Total of All CFS</b>	<b>130,923</b>	<b>129,356</b>	<b>136,632</b>	<b>134,674</b>	<b>131,957</b>	<b>82,953</b>		
<b>Top 15's % of total CFS</b>	<b>66.4%</b>	<b>65.9%</b>	<b>66.4%</b>	<b>67.5%</b>	<b>66.9%</b>	<b>64.1%</b>		

\* Not every call for service resulted in a dispatch. Additionally, calls for service are also categorized by priorities such as, life, routine, urgent, and update. More detailed information about priority codes as well as dispatch to close and dispatch to arrive average times can be found in the appendix.



## Calls for Service\*

- The top 15 calls types with the largest numerical decreases from CY2015-CY2019 accounted for 39.6% of total call volume for CY2019.
  - Bolded call types are also on the top 15 most frequent call type list.
- “Officer initiated calls” saw the largest numerical decline from CY2015-CY2019 – largely due to a change in reporting by PPD to code calls as specific call types instead of this more generic categorization.

Largest Decline over time (calculated by number)	CY2015	CY2016	CY2017	CY2018	CY2019	CY2020 (partial)	CY2019-CY2015 difference	% of all calls in CY2019
<b>Officer Initiated Calls</b>	5,627	5,600	5,544	5,243	4,456	2,389	-1,171	3.4%
<b>Alarm - Residential</b>	5,652	5,578	5,404	5,306	4,562	1,989	-1,090	3.5%
<b>Larceny</b>	4,619	4,619	4,410	3,826	3,750	1,275	-869	2.8%
<b>A Unknown Incident</b>	4,468	4,425	4,064	3,397	3,665	2,503	-803	2.8%
<b>Suspicious Person/Activity</b>	6,584	6,901	6,977	6,624	5,908	3,566	-676	4.5%
Assist	2,529	1,897	1,846	2,029	1,854	949	-675	1.4%
B & E Report	1,342	1,269	1,093	965	773	514	-569	0.6%
Disturbance - Public	3,953	3,802	3,560	3,523	3,451	2,176	-502	2.6%
Malicious Mischief	1,936	2,009	1,937	1,420	1,442	776	-494	1.1%
<b>Keep the Peace</b>	5,852	5,909	5,753	5,288	5,469	4,033	-383	4.1%
Arrest	485	432	381	131	124	52	-361	0.1%
<b>Traffic Accident</b>	11,023	11,152	11,171	11,044	10,704	5,419	-319	8.1%
Person Annoyed	2,896	2,725	3,114	2,858	2,640	1,562	-256	2.0%
Dispersal	3,349	3,214	3,359	2,970	3,110	2,597	-239	2.4%
Shots Fired	604	534	537	459	387	370	-217	0.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,919</b>	<b>60,066</b>	<b>59,150</b>	<b>55,083</b>	<b>52,295</b>	<b>30,170</b>		
<b>% of total CFS</b>	<b>46.5%</b>	<b>46.4%</b>	<b>43.3%</b>	<b>40.9%</b>	<b>39.6%</b>	<b>36.4%</b>		



## Calls for Service\*

- ◆ Like many police departments, most PPD calls for service are not related to the most serious crimes.
  - In CY2019, calls for service relating to Part I crimes, as defined by the FBI, comprised 3.9% of all PPD calls and continued a multi-year decline in these calls.
- ◆ From CY2015-CY2019, Part I calls for service declined by a CAGR of -4.9% -- and across every call type.
- ◆ Larceny was the main driver for Part I calls for service, though it decreased by a CAGR of -5.1% during the five-year period.
- ◆ Aggravated Assault calls for service decreased the most (CAGR of -16.3%) during this period.

Est. Part I Calls for Service**	CY2015	CY2016	CY2017	CY2018	CY2019	CY2020 (partial)	CY2015-CY2019 CAGR
Aggravated Assault	61	52	37	25	30	15	-16.3%
Shooting	79	74	87	57	50	49	-10.8%
Carjacking	9	15	8	11	6	11	-9.6%
Break in Progress	263	242	222	231	176	133	-9.6%
Stabbing	152	160	128	95	111	119	-7.6%
Robbery	339	351	306	285	252	129	-7.1%
Larceny	4,619	4,619	4,410	3,826	3,750	1,275	-5.1%
Stolen Auto	772	885	794	815	760	535	-0.4%
Home Invasion	0	0	3	13	12	6	-
<b>Total Part 1 CFS</b>	<b>6,294</b>	<b>6,398</b>	<b>5,995</b>	<b>5,385</b>	<b>5,147</b>	<b>2,272</b>	<b>-4.9%</b>
<b>Total CFS</b>	<b>130,923</b>	<b>129,356</b>	<b>136,632</b>	<b>134,674</b>	<b>131,957</b>	<b>82,953</b>	<b>0.2%</b>
<b>Part I CFS % of Total CFS</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>-5.1%</b>

\*Not every call for service resulted in a dispatch.

\*\*This table was created by PFM's team based on assumptions of which calls would indicate a potential Part I crime being committed, based on the FBI's definition. This table is not a perfect representation of every call for service that indicated a Part I crime occurred. We are waiting for input from the city on the accuracy of our assumptions.



## Arrest by Type\*

- Arrest data includes custodial and non-custodial arrests (e.g., citations and summons).
- In CY2019, 24.3% of PPD arrest did not have a recorded offense in its data system – a consistent result across the five-year period.
- In more than 25% of total arrests, PPD interpreted State law to mandate it to make an arrest.
  - Rhode Island state statute compels an arrest for bolded charges.
  - If including arrests for certain driving without or with suspended license, the percentage of non-discretionary arrests increases significantly.
  - Additionally, all criminal offenses involving a domestic relationship require an arrest with no discretion per state law.

Top 15 Arrests by Type - CY2019	% of Total Arrests - CY2019	CY2015	CY2016	CY2017	CY2018	CY2019	CY2015-CY2019 CAGR
Null	24.3%	811	678	791	965	<b>962</b>	4.4%
<b>Driving After Denial, Suspension Or Revocation Of License</b>	13.6%	425	485	576	491	<b>538</b>	6.1%
Domestic-Simple Assault/Battery	6.4%	160	150	200	255	<b>252</b>	12.0%
<b>Bench Warrant Issued From Superior Court</b>	5.2%	80	76	184	146	<b>204</b>	26.4%
Disorderly Conduct	4.8%	132	150	105	135	<b>190</b>	9.5%
<b>Bench Warrant Issued From 6th District Court</b>	4.1%	546	385	245	226	<b>164</b>	-26.0%
Simple Assault Or Battery	4.0%	181	149	177	166	<b>160</b>	-3.0%
Possession Of Schedule I II III	2.7%	109	81	89	114	<b>105</b>	-0.9%
<b>Warrant Of Arrest On Affidavit - All Other Offense</b>	2.6%	91	97	105	86	<b>102</b>	2.9%
Resisting Legal Or Illegal Arrest	2.5%	92	80	104	72	<b>97</b>	1.3%
Manufac/Poss/Deliver Sch 1/II	2.0%	84	86	81	100	<b>80</b>	-1.2%
Shoplifting-Misd. - Shoplifting	1.8%	78	74	67	76	<b>73</b>	-1.6%
Felony Assault/ Dang. Weapon Or Substance	1.6%	55	58	66	57	<b>62</b>	3.0%
<b>Driving After Denial, Revocation Or Suspension For Misd.**</b>	1.1%	6	11	44	39	<b>45</b>	65.5%
Driving Under The Influence Of Liquor Or Drugs (=>.08<.1)	1.1%	54	43	26	46	<b>42</b>	-6.1%
<b>Top 15 arrests as Percentage of Total Arrests</b>	<b>77.76%</b>	<b>73.06%</b>	<b>71.49%</b>	<b>72.87%</b>	<b>75.58%</b>	<b>77.76%</b>	
<b>Total Arrests</b>	<b>3,956</b>	<b>3,975</b>	<b>3,641</b>	<b>3,925</b>	<b>3,935</b>	<b>3,956</b>	

\*Arrest data includes custodial and non-custodial arrests (e.g., citations and summons)

\*\*For 3rd and subsequent offenses.



% points greater than each race's 2019 census population estimates

## Arrests by Ethnicity and Race (Top 15 Arrest Types)\*

+5% points	-5% points
+10% points	-10% points
+15% points	-15% points

- More nuanced analysis beyond the scope of this engagement is required to fully explore arrest practices by race and ethnicity. This information is intended to raise questions to explore rather than definitively answer questions.
- Non-discretionary arrests by State law have a meaningful impact on the racial composition of PPD arrests – particularly among Black individuals.
  - Of the 2,114 arrests (excluding Null) in the top-15 arrest types, 1,008 arrest (47.7%) were for license offenses or warrants issued by courts.
- Black individuals were generally arrested at a share of offenses by several percentage points greater than their 15.3% share City population.
- White individuals were generally underrepresented as a share of arrests when compared to share of City population.
  - Within the top 15 arrest types, White individuals were never overrepresented as a percentage of total arrests.
- Hispanic individuals (of any race) were arrested closest to their representative percentage of the population (44.2%).

Top 15 Arrests by Type - CY2019	Total-CY2019	Black alone Arrests (%)	White alone Arrests (%)	Hispanic or Latino (all races) Arrests (%)
Null	962	31.6%	18.7%	41.8%
<b>Driving After Denial, Suspension Or Revocation Of License</b>	538	32.7%	6.1%	53.3%
Domestic-Simple Assault/Battery	252	30.6%	16.3%	46.0%
<b>Bench Warrant Issued From Superior Court</b>	204	37.7%	31.4%	28.4%
Disorderly Conduct	190	39.5%	13.2%	38.4%
<b>Bench Warrant Issued From 6th District Court</b>	164	34.1%	30.5%	32.3%
Simple Assault Or Battery	160	35.0%	16.3%	42.5%
Possession Of Schedule I II III	105	31.4%	24.8%	39.0%
<b>Warrant Of Arrest On Affidavit - All Other Offense</b>	102	43.1%	14.7%	36.3%
Resisting Legal Or Illegal Arrest	97	43.3%	17.5%	32.0%
Manufac/Poss/Deliver Sch 1/II	80	28.8%	12.5%	52.5%
Shoplifting-Misd - Shoplifting	73	31.5%	19.2%	35.6%
Felony Assault/ Dang. Weapon Or Substance	62	29.0%	12.9%	51.6%
Driving After Denial, Revocation Or Suspension For Misd.	45	37.8%	13.3%	44.4%
Driving Under The Influence Of Liquor Or Drugs (=>.08<.1)	42	9.5%	19.0%	61.9%

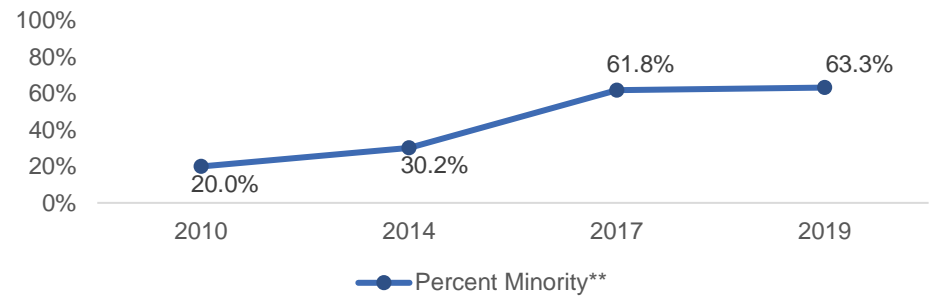
\*Arrest data includes custodial and non-custodial arrests (e.g., citations and summons)  
 Arrest Data is for PVD residents only and excludes 436 arrests that were coded with either unknown or "null" ethnicities in order to ensure that census and arrest data comparisons were as accurate as possible.



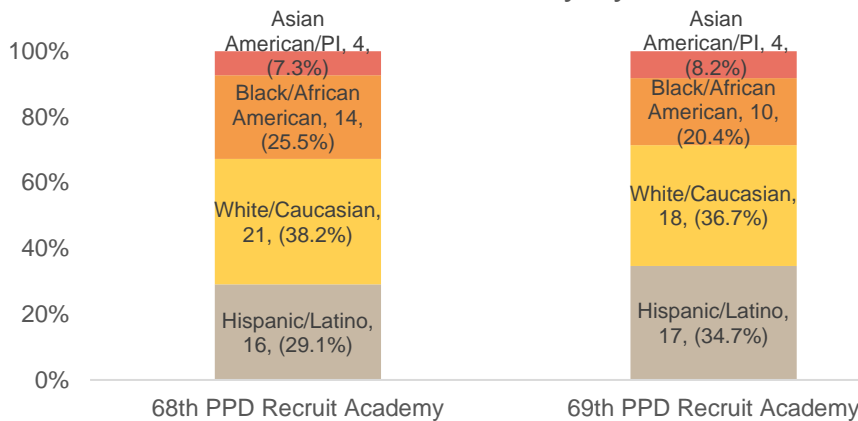
## PPD Demographics

- The 68<sup>th</sup> and 69<sup>th</sup> PPD recruit academy saw similar racial and gender compositions that appear to outpace national level of representation of race and gender in policing – a positive trend for recruitment efforts.
- PPD’s last four classes have grown in minority representation, most dramatically between 2014, 2017, and 2019. Since the 2010 class, minority representation grew by more than 40 percentage points.
- Prior to the 2017 class, no PPD academy in at least 25 years had more than 34% of minority representation.

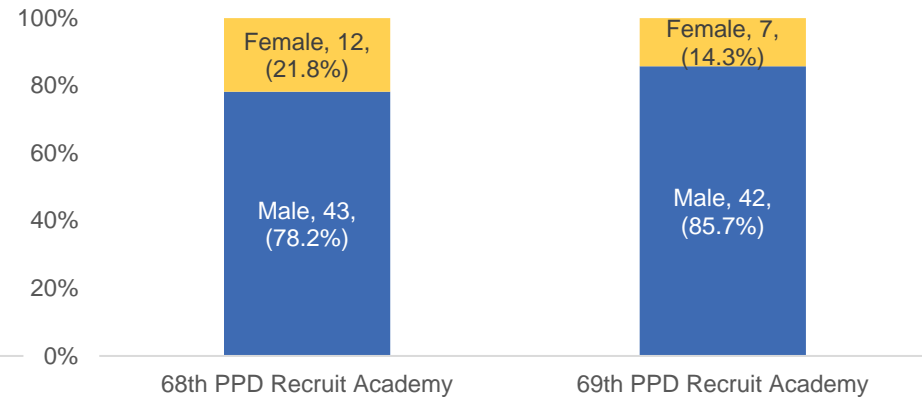
PPD Recruit Academy Classes



PPD Recruit Academy by Race\*



Gender of PPD Academy Classes\*



\*Not all recorded recruits were able to finish the academy. See appendix for additional information.

\*\*Percent Minority includes Asian and Pacific Islander, Black, and Hispanic.

Sources: 2019 Census Data – Table DP05.



**A Prevention-First Approach:**

***Opportunities for Alternative Approaches***



## A Prevention-First Approach to Safety and Justice in Providence

- ◆ Based on the analyses in the preceding sections, the following pages detail a series of options to help the City shift toward its goal of a prevention-first approach to public safety that creates a healthier, safer, and more just Providence.
- ◆ Consistent with a prevention-first approach to safety and justice, the presented options detail opportunities to:
  - Improve outcomes for safety and health and reduce demand for police department services and fire departments services.
  - Identify long-term cost savings from prevention efforts that can be re-invested in safety and justice.
  - Efficiently deploy scarce and costly uniformed staff consistent with strong fiscal and operational stewardship.
  - Implement a strategic approach to local resource allocation and budget decision-making by treating outcomes and results – not the size of individual departmental budgets – as the measures of success.





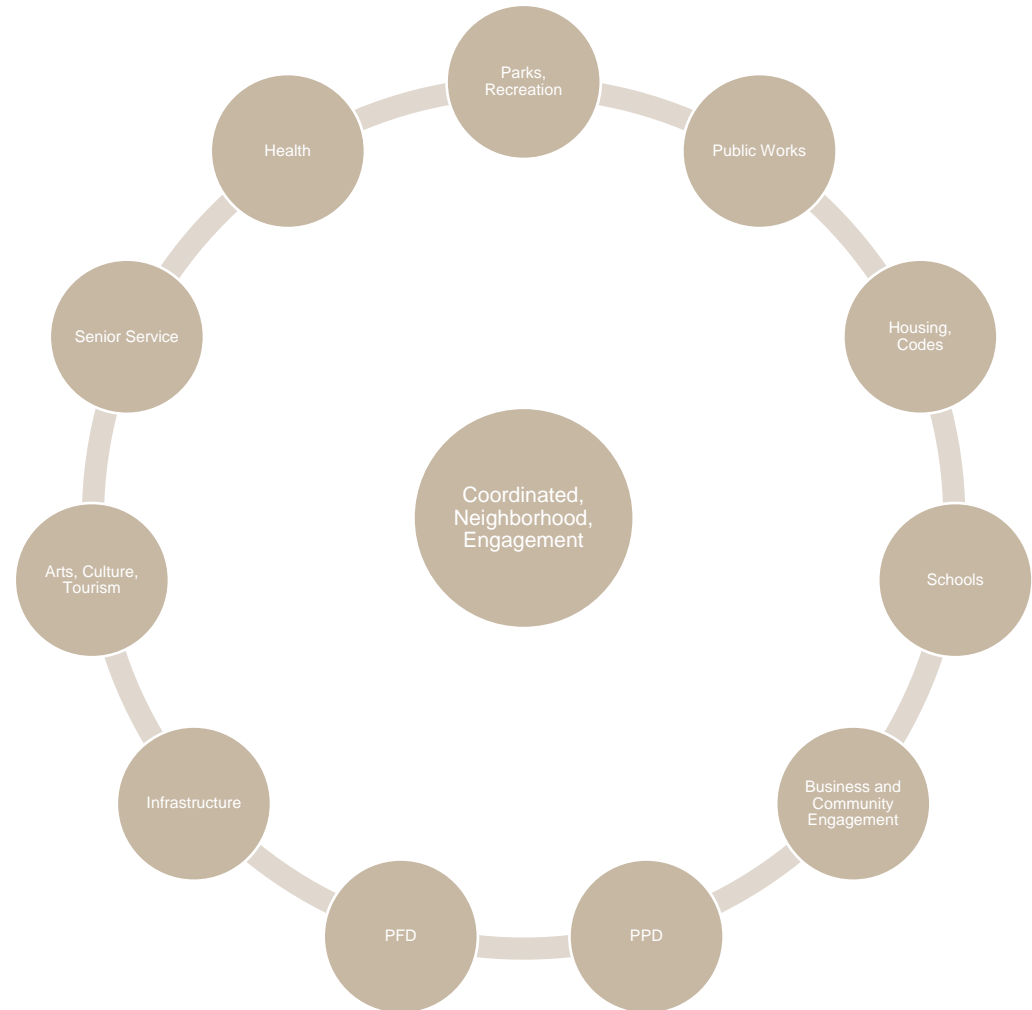
## A Prevention-First Approach to Safety and Justice in Providence

- ◆ Critical aspects of the plan require that the City contemplate:
  - Creating a new Office responsible for "whole of government" coordination of community engagement which builds upon the PPD's community engagement efforts, but frees PPD to be a "spoke" in the delivery instead of the "hub."
  - Increasing PFD operational efficiency and prioritizing prevention-first EMS services through rebalancing and increasing staff and resources.
  - Creating alternative responses for certain PPD calls for service (e.g., mental health, substance abuse, chronic homelessness, etc.).
  - Utilizing different approaches to call management strategies.
  - Focusing future collective bargaining efforts to drive promotional and operational changes.
  - Increasing the use and public reporting of performance data.
  - Advocating for meaningful changes in state law and policies.
- ◆ Regardless of the combination of options that the City chooses to pursue, efforts will take time to achieve – and are best structured and implemented as a part of a comprehensive multi-year approach to a healthier, safer, and more just Providence.



## Re-thinking the Hub and Spoke Model of Public Safety

- ◆ Many communities have expressed a desire to reduce unnecessary police responses and more closely focus police resources on preventing and solving crime.
- ◆ At this inflection point, Providence can transition from “community policing” to “community health, safety, and justice.”
- ◆ This shift would change the responsibility for neighborhood engagement and coordination from PPD to a new entity, while PPD would remain a critical spoke in the hub of government response and still operate on a community basis in conjunction with other service providers.
- ◆ Achieving this transition will take time.
  - Associated policy and operational changes are best contemplated as part of a deliberate multi-year implementation strategy.





## Opportunities for Alternative Approaches

- ◆ The PFM team considered a multitude of various investment ideas.
- ◆ The recommendation to create an Office of Neighborhood Services stems from the belief that City funding for public safety can be better coordinated and targeted.
- ◆ Before exploring other worthy investment ideas, Providence should focus on coalescing its current functions and spending in a manner consistent with its policy goals.
  - Following sections of this report detail alternative approaches for PFD and PPD operations/services.
  - These identified approaches provide options to improve the fiscal and operational efficiencies of the departments – some which can be done quickly and produce immediate results and others that will require time and cooperation beyond the control of City government.
- ◆ With a more efficient, effective, and transparent approach to City spending on health, safety, and justice, Providence can then better assess subsequent investment needs and reinvest savings in “prevention-first” activities.
- ◆ Alternative investment ideas to increase health, safety, and justice could be pursued in isolation from, or in tandem with, the Office of Neighborhood Services – such as:
  - Universal pre-K.
  - Workforce training.
  - Supportive housing.
  - Capital improvements in historically underinvested neighborhoods.
  - Social support services.



## A Prevention-First Approach to Safety and Justice – Summary of PFD Options

- Summary of Fire Department Options
  - City Controlled Operations and Policies
    - Conduct comprehensive deployment analysis.
    - Enhance data-driven management and decision making.
  - Requires Collective Bargaining
    - Consolidate additional apparatus.
    - Dedicate Uniformed Personnel to Emergency Response Services.
    - Expand Prevention-First Health Services.
  - Changes Not Under Direct City Control
    - Seek authority to bill for transport to non-hospital providers.
    - Advocate for changes to state law related to fire overtime threshold.



## A Prevention-First Approach to Safety and Justice in Providence

### ◆ Summary of Police Recommendations

#### • City Controlled Operations and Policies

- Alternative response model.
  - Designate a non-police entity as primary response for *at least* mental health, substance abuse, and chronic homelessness calls for service and expand beyond those call types as feasible.
  - Alarm mitigation efforts (including city buildings/schools).
  - Increase use of online reporting.
- Enhance regularity and clarity of data reporting and utilize public input.

#### • Requires Collective Bargaining

- Reform promotional processes to focus on diversity of experiences, knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Reduce reliance on seniority in for assignments and shift bidding (and pursue steady shift approach).
- Create separate bargaining unit for Superior Officers.

#### • Not Under Direct City Control

- Pursue reforms to state laws governing LEOBOR and collective bargaining process.
- Partnership with State and Judiciary to reduce compulsory arrests for certain bench warrants and improve the functionality and equity of the State's criminal justice system.