

2020 BCSO - Annual Report

Benton County Sheriff's Office



Our Mission: We provide professional public safety services with integrity and accountability.

Your Tax Dollars at Work

Benton County operates on a biennial (two-year) budget cycle, with a fiscal year (FY) which runs from July 1st through June 30th, and follows the process as outlined by Local Budget Law which is defined by Statute. The current FY 2019-21 ends June 30, 2021.

Every two years, the Sheriff and his command staff develop a budget tied to specific services and strategic goals. One of the challenges we face every year is the unpredictable nature of public safety and emergency management, such as a major crime investigation, a natural disaster, wildfires or a pandemic.

Expenditures include categories such as materials and services at 28%, internal service funds at 2%, capital outlay at 4%, and personnel. Personnel services is the largest expense with 66% of our FY 2019-20 expenditures in this category.

Revenues are comprised of funds received from local property taxes, the Local Option Levy, federal & state grants, general revenues, internal fund transfers, beginning balances, and charges for services. The General Fund at 51% and the Local Option Levy at 19% were the majority source of our revenue for FY 2019-20, with grants coming in at 13%.

Even after the budget is adopted, our office continues to aggressively seek out grants, contracts, and other ways to lower the burden on the Benton County taxpayer. Despite the many challenges faced with the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Sheriff's Office has maintained their historical ability to stay within budget.



Looking Ahead with Sheriff Jef Van Arsdall



The Benton County Sheriff's Office operates with a degree of professionalism that brings great honor and pride to me as Sheriff. I'm proud to serve side-by-side with the deputies and professional staff and look forward to facing the challenges, successes, and future learning opportunities as a team.

I'm incredibly proud of how this office handled the challenges presented in 2020, across our five divisions. I'm honored to be the Sheriff of Benton County. My expectation is that members of our office be polite, professional, and prepared.

Moving forward into 2021, my goals for the Office are to:

- Proudly represent you, our community, and the law enforcement profession as a whole.
- Be accessible and accountable to the community we serve.
- Continue working towards the goal of being a premier law enforcement organization.

Sheriff Jef Van Arsdall

In 2020, the Benton County Sheriff's Office answered the call and provided exceptional service during an unprecedented time in the chronicles of history.

The Administrative Division continued their duties such as processing civil instructions, issuing concealed handgun licenses, coordinating training and certifications, documenting accreditation, coordinating volunteers, managing budgets and contracts, and collaborating with fellow Benton County departments and community partners.

The Emergency Management team, in partnership with the Benton County Health Department, operated our Emergency Operations Center for the majority of 2020. During this time, they coordinated volunteers who provided assistance and resources to the community during the COVID-19 pandemic and unprecedented wildfires. Our pandemic response was coordinated with state, local and national efforts. We believe we can see the finish line, but don't know when we will cross it.

The Patrol Division continued to respond to calls across the county, ensuring our community received superior services daily. In 2020 deputies worked with law enforcement partners to attain convictions in two murder investigations that began in 2018. These cases demonstrated diligence, knowledge and dedication on behalf of all the deputies involved from initial response to subsequent investigations. The deputies utilized advanced investigative technology such as drones and crime scene diagramming.

The Corrections Division limited intakes of custodies due to the pandemic, in an effort to improve community safety and wellness. The jail slightly increased its capacity through creative use of existing space, to better utilize our outdated and aged facility. The division also supervised and implemented the Work Crew Program to assist in numerous cleanups and facilities maintenance.

The Parole & Probation Division is an integral part of the entire criminal justice system. Efforts to assist, supervise and manage post-conviction adults continued during the pandemic. New options for success were implemented and optimistic results are anticipated for our clients and partners.

Benton County Sheriff's Office pledges to be a forward-thinking, innovative, professional public safety organization.

Undersheriff Greg Ridler

Come visit us online at: www.co.benton.or.us/sheriff • 541-766-6858

Special Services Division

Manager Kevin Higgins

Our primary focus is Search & Rescue (SAR). By Oregon law, the Sheriff of each county is responsible for SAR activities. The Benton County Sheriff's Office is fortunate to have many dedicated volunteers involved in our SAR program. The program consists of six non-profit units, with each unit focused on a specific area of expertise. To become SAR-certified, volunteers complete a minimum of 90 hours of training. Unfortunately, we were unable to hold the annual SAR academy due to COVID-19, we plan to resume in 2021.

Search and Rescue (SAR)

This is accomplished with the support of approximately 120 volunteers, who are divided into volunteer units, based on particular skill levels and interests. Current units with the BCSO are: Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES), Benton County Sheriff's Mounted Posse (BCSMP), Corvallis Mountain Rescue Unit (CMRU), Marys Peak Search and Rescue (MPSAR), SkySAR and Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue (SOSAR).

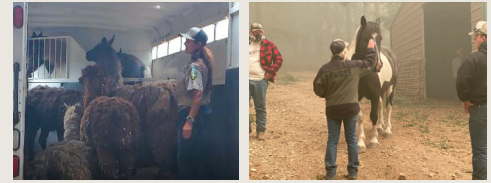
SAR Missions

During 2020, Benton County had 96 calls for service for missing people and six water rescue calls. Most were resolved by first responders, but SAR members were deployed on 13 missions totaling about 729

hours of volunteer time. This was an unusually slow year for SAR in our county. These calls ranged from looking for missing hikers and mushroom pickers to rescuing stranded mountain climbers and recovering the deceased. Often times the missions include assisting neighboring counties when additional resources are needed.

Drones

We use many tools to keep our community safe. Among them are Small Unmanned Aerial Systems (sUAS), more commonly known as drones. This technology is useful in reducing costs and improving the safety of the public and deputies. At the same time, the use of sUAS by our agency is strictly regulated to ensure that privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties are protected. Drones are well suited to be used in search & rescue, traffic crash reconstruction and law enforcement response. We had 26 missions totaling 17 hours of flight time. This includes missions for SAR and other law enforcement activities.



Wildfire Response

In September, the Benton County Sheriff's Mounted Posse assisted in evacuating and rescuing animals from the ravaging wildfires that occurred across Oregon. They delivered a variety of animals to three county fairgrounds, which included horses, donkeys, llamas, alpacas, cows, pigs, dogs, cats and an iguana. A few of the rescues were quite challenging as some livestock had never been in a trailer before. In total, they logged 168 volunteer hours and traveled 1,134 miles. They also provided overnight security shifts at the Benton County Fairgrounds, where many animals were brought in from several other counties as well as our own.

Crisis Response Team

This team provides immediate critical incident stress management services to individuals, groups, and organizations. Volunteers from the community with background in human service and helping professions are carefully selected and trained for this team. The goal is to lessen the immediate and long-term effects of a crisis.

Emergency Management Division

Manager Bryan Lee

Emergency Response

Emergency Management helped guide Benton County through an extraordinary set of unprecedented emergency events in 2020. This included the COVID-19 pandemic with the ever-changing circumstances and hurdles it presented as well as the devastating wildfires that swept across Oregon. Emergency Management activated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for the initial COVID-19 response for 160 days. After a short reprieve the EOC was then activated again for 34 days due to wildfire response and recovery. Emergency Management then shifted to supporting the Health Department Operations Center for ongoing COVID-19 related response for an additional 70 days. The County EOC, under the direction of Emergency Management, reactivated again at the end of 2020 to help prepare for the COVID-19 mass vaccination which began in early 2021. A high level of response is likely to continue into the first half of 2021.



The efforts around emergency planning paid off during our multitude of responses, COVID-19, wildfires, winter storms and flooding. Through the diligent work of Emergency Management in previous years, Benton County employees were equipped with the needed Incident Command Systems and National Incident Management System training for all the emergencies 2020 presented. This training was integral in allowing the County to access the Federal funds available with the two Presidential Disaster Declarations Benton County was included in.

Emergency Management also finalized the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), in an effort to continue being prepared and ready for the next challenge. In 2021 our focus will be on finalizing the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, Emergency Operations Plans Annexes, National Hazard Mitigation Plan, and additional response protocol to increase our efficiency.

Emergency Management Grants

During 2020, Emergency Management obtained several grants to support general emergency response, EOC readiness, mass care and sheltering, and our COVID-19 response which totaled \$250,220.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Benton CERT has grown rapidly. Prior to COVID-19, Benton County Emergency Management offered multiple CERT Basic courses a year to help our community become more prepared and trained to help their neighbors. CERT has been integral in supporting all of our disaster response efforts during the COVID-19 response and wildfire response.

We want to express our appreciation for all the support and volunteer efforts that our community has put forward to help with all of the emergency response efforts.

Law Enforcement

Captain Don Rogers

OFFENSE	2019	2020
Murder	0	0
Manslaughter	0	0
Rape	1	5
Robbery	2	0
Aggravated Assaults	25	20
Burglary: Residence	25	37
Burglary: Business	16	14
Burglary: Other Structure	11	26
Larceny/Theft	208	238
Arson	0	1
Forgery/Fraud	83	87
Vandalism	86	84
Weapons Law Offenses	19	19
Sex Offenses	52	65
Kidnapping	0	1
Drug Offenses	156	141
DUII	117	92
Suicide	1	5
ID Theft	32	38
Liquor Law Offenses	1	9
Disorderly Conduct	28	23
Trespass/Prowler	105	154
Runaway Juveniles	13	12
Offenses Against Family	29	30

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES	2019	2020
Calls for Service Dispatched	19,521	17,547
Arrests	1,461	1,519
Warrants	576	617
Minor in Possession	21	4
Traffic Citations	2,150	2,310
Motor Vehicle Crashes	278	236
Fatal Vehicle Crashes	7	4



Our law enforcement deputies respond to calls for service and proactively patrol the county to enforce traffic laws and prevent crime. A law enforcement career provides many opportunities to face new challenges and use training and experience to adapt and overcome those challenges. The year 2020 provided some unique opportunities.

With the global COVID-19 pandemic, deputies were faced with a new safety concern not only for them but for the public we serve and their families. Law enforcement deputies still came to work every day. They were given additional protective equipment, new policies for contacting the public, and new procedures when arresting individuals who violated the law. Some deputies were tasked with assisting the Benton County Emergency Operations Center and given the opportunity to learn new skills in managing a disaster.

When our neighboring counties were evacuating due to wildfires, deputies were tasked with assisting evacuees and keeping their livestock safe.

With the demand for police reform and Oregon's new laws, we evaluated our use of force policy, training, and procedures to ensure we were using the best practices and compliant with the law. We conducted additional training and adjusted our tactics accordingly. Of the 1,519 individuals arrested in 2020, deputies used force in 1.4% of those arrests. Of those uses of force, six arrestees received minor injuries.

During these challenges, we received many letters of thanks and messages supporting us in our efforts to serve and protect our community. With this support, we look forward to the challenges and opportunities 2021 will bring.

"During these trying times it is refreshing to know our staff will always work toward the common goal of protecting each other and providing professional service to the communities we serve."
-Lt. Marr, Corvallis PD

BCSO Reserve & Auxiliary

Reserve Deputies participate in a wide variety of law enforcement activities based on their skill level. They serve civil papers, enforce state and local laws, control traffic, provide crime scene security, transport prisoners, provide security at the Fair, amongst many other activities.

The requirements for a reserve deputy are the same as a patrol deputy and they go through the same in-house training. The Reserve Program is a great way to gain valuable experience and serve the community. We had 15 reserve deputies and two administrative aides on the team in 2020.

Auxiliary Volunteers do not have law enforcement authority but, they provide important, cost-saving services to the office. These tasks can include setting up the speed trailer, performing speed surveys, scanning, filing, providing community outreach services, etc. In 2020 we had three members who donated 241.5 hours.

If you are interested in volunteering with BCSO, go to: co.benton.or.us/sheriff/page/volunteer-opportunities.



Jail

Captain John DeVaney
Jail Commander

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about many changes to the Benton County Jail. The Oregon State Jail Commanders Council through the Oregon State Sheriff's Association met weekly at the onset of the pandemic to discuss how jails should move forward statewide. Through those discussions, following guidance by the Center for Disease Control, many restrictions were introduced. The largest of which was limiting which arrested individual would come to jail based on their offenses. These guidelines reduced the number of arrested persons that could be booked into the jail. In addition, protocols were developed to restrict the Coronavirus from getting into the jail and preventing it from spreading, if a COVID-19 case did appear in our facility. The restrictions in place led to only 1,003 subjects being booked into the jail in 2020 compared to 1,717 in 2019. The jail got to a low of 17 adults in custody (AIC) in April. By the end of the year, after changes in charges allowing individuals to be lodged, the jail was back to its normal

numbers, averaging AIC in the 30's even reaching 40 on one particular day. Due to the limited capacity of our jail, even with pandemic restrictions on who we could accept into custody, an average of 16 Benton County AIC were housed elsewhere utilizing the Jail Bed Rental program funded by the Health and Safety Local Option Levy.

Waiting Cells Modified

The jail only had two waiting cells in the booking area; both had previously been used for cooperative subjects. In 2020, those cells were modified to create two more holding cells for uncooperative individuals when needed. Our jail staff always looks for ways to improve our facility.



Capacity Increased to 50

Limited funding and limited space requires the jail to continue looking for better options to house justice-involved individuals (JII) safely while working with our aging facility's shortcomings. We were able to increase our total holding by ten individual beds. This was achieved by modifying single use cells with specially designed double bunks. However, due to COVID-19, we have only been able to capitalize on this improvement on a single occasion.

Portable Fingerprinting at the Law Enforcement Building

A portable fingerprinting machine was purchased and stationed in the basement of the Law Enforcement Building. This new location for fingerprinting provides local law enforcement jurisdictions an additional option of processing JII. This allows for another location for fingerprinting JII when the jail is at capacity. Training was provided to our deputies and other local law enforcement partners.



Work Crew / Transports

The Jail Division took over managing the Sheriff's Work Crew operations. This program, previously called Corrections Work Crew was overseen by the Natural Areas & Parks Department. The Work Crew program provides an effective sanction for justice-involved individuals (JII) to perform tasks needed in the community instead of going to jail. Projects range from clearing brush along county roads and bridges, to painting park benches or picking up litter. JII are assigned to Work Crew, by

order of the court or by the Parole & Probation Division. The COVID-19 pandemic caused this program to be shut down for several months.

Transports

The jail transport unit consists of two certified corrections deputies. They provide safe and secure transport services for adult and juvenile JII to State Courts, other County and State correctional institutions, medical facilities, and other locations as ordered by the court. They are also tasked with transporting JII to and from our contracted jail beds. The funding for this program is supported by revenues allocated from the Local Options Levy.



JAIL ACTIVITY	2019	2020
Total AIC Transported	1,051	644
Total Transport Miles	45,968	39,695

JAIL ACTIVITY	2019	2020
Total Bookings	1717	1003
Cite /Matrix Releases	236 /285	47/113
Forced Release	72	96
Facility Closure	17	14

Parole & Probation

Captain Justin Carley

The Parole & Probation Division (P&P) is also known as “Community Corrections” because our job is to work with justice-involved individuals (JII) supervised in the community. Our goal is to protect the community by holding individuals accountable while helping them become law-abiding, contributing citizens.

We use validated risk assessments, individualized case planning, community referrals, sanctions, and services to help individuals get the resources they need to succeed.

During 2020, P&P supervised approximately 350 adult JII every month. Their offenses were varied and ranged from burglary and theft to assault, sex offenses, and other violent person-to-person crimes.

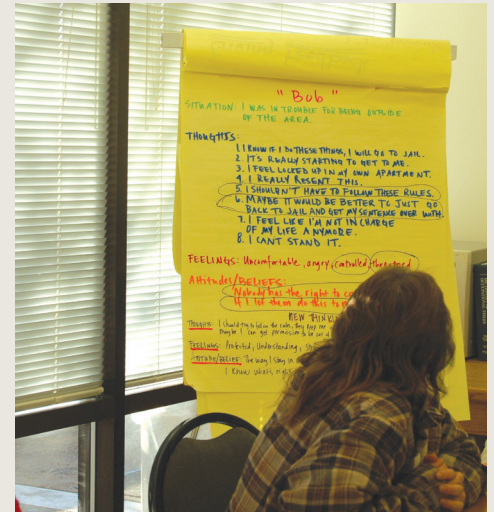
Division Funding

Community Corrections is state-funded with Grant-in-Aid dollars, allocated through the Department of Corrections and the Local Option Levy (LOL). The LOL provides full funding for the Transition Center. The remainder of funding for our division comes primarily from the state Community Corrections Act. The uncertainty of funding is an ongoing challenge. We prioritize our resources by adhering to evidence-based principles and focusing on those who pose the most significant risk to the community.

P&P ACTIVITY	2019	2020
Adult Offenders Under Supervision <i>(average per month)</i>	401	352
Sex Offenders Under Supervision <i>(average per month)</i>	71	62
Restitution Collected from Offenders	\$144,018	\$17,686
Supervision Fees Collected from Offenders	\$57,069	\$53,883
Work Crew Hours	5,416	4,432

Supervision

Our Parole & Probation deputies supervise JII to make sure they follow through with the conditions of their supervision and are held accountable for their behaviors. One of the first steps in supervision is to conduct a validated, evidence-based risk assessment. Objective risk assessment tools are used to identify a JII risk to reoffend. Justice-involved individuals are assessed as either high, medium, or low risk, with resources prioritized for higher-risk individuals.



Programming

Our Parole & Probation Deputies use supervision strategies, case management and evidence based practices. Examples of these programs are:

Drug Treatment Court

In 2020, we continued to collaborate with the Benton County Drug Treatment Court (DTC) program. Even through the significant changes in the court system, DTC found ways to continue to allow JII access to this collaborative program.

This program helped guide JII identified as drug-addicted into treatment. The DTC provided individuals facing probation or conditional discharge an opportunity to address serious substance abuse issues in an intensely supervised environment.

Cognitive Behavioral Programs

Another tool that P&P deputies used in 2020 was cognitive behavioral interventions. These are researched based programs that aim to teach and practice prosocial skills and coping mechanisms that reduce criminal behavior. Prior to limited in-person contact requirements resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, these programs used an engaging classroom setting to challenge and change dysfunctional attitudes, beliefs, and values by being problem-focused and action-oriented. Participants reported experiencing an improvement of their emotional regulation and problem solving skills.

Learn more about the Community Corrections Plan by visiting the P&P page at: www.co.benton.or.us/sheriff/page/sheriffs-office-parole-probation

Transition Program

The Transition Program helped to enhance public safety through effective transitioning of adults in custody (AIC) from state custody to the community. Approximately 180 days before the AIC’s release date to live in Benton County a P&P deputy initiated the reach-in process consisting of targeted interaction to prepare the AIC for re-entry into our community. The purpose is to engage an AIC before release and provide them with practical information about the various facets of re-entry into the community. This program also may provide indigent AIC with short-term financial assistance and re-entry services to ensure a smooth transition from custody to the community. Other provisions may include financial assistance to indigent AIC in need of transitional housing, food, work-related clothing, haircuts, medication and transportation. Crisis intervention is also provided when necessary.

Community Service Highlights

Members of the Sheriff's Office are actively engaged in the community, volunteering to make a positive difference.

The Benton County Sheriff's Office CERT team was instrumental in coordinating collection of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) from our community to help outfit our frontline workers at the on-set of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thousands of supplies were donated, including 12,490 pairs of gloves!



Members of BCSO generously supported The Annual School Supply drive. Collected classroom supplies were delivered to County schools in anticipation of in-person learning.



BCSO coordinated the 26th Annual Shop with a Cop for youth in Benton County. The program, supported entirely by donations from members of the community and law enforcement, helped brighten the holidays for 43 children during an especially difficult year. This year was definitely different due to COVID-19 restrictions but the children were still able to enjoy a positive experience with their friends in law enforcement.



BENTON COUNTY

Sheriff's Office

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Corvallis, OR 97330

Support Services

The Support Services division helped keep the Sheriff's Office running smoothly throughout 2020. Always with flexibility and the ability to adapt to changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This division continued to work their regular jobs as well as assist with pandemic related needs, including tasks for the County's Emergency Operations Center, working together for the continuity of BCSO operations.

While some jobs, such as the civil division, saw a slowdown due to the closure of the County Courthouse, others were busier than ever. There were 1134 Concealed Handgun Licenses issued. We also continued to recruit and hire new employees.

BCSO PERSONNEL PROFILE	2019	2020
Total Employee FTE*	82	84
Sworn Deputy FTE	68	69

* FTE = Full Time Equivalent

New Faces

Sierra Anderson – Emergency Management
Moved to a full-time position as the Emergency Management Planner in January.

Leah Boone – Law Enforcement
Transferred in February to a Patrol Deputy after working as an Administrative Specialist in P&P for close to 3 years.

Caitlyn Lilly – Parole and Probation
P&P welcomed Caitlyn to the team as an Administrative Specialist in February.

Jessica Goodwin - Strom – Jail
The Jail was pleased to have her transition into a full-time Corrections Deputy in March after almost 3 years as an on-call deputy.

Madeline Edmonds – Parole & Probation
Joined our team in May as a Parole & Probation Deputy.

Brenden Fricke – Law Enforcement
Started his career with BCSO as a Patrol Deputy in June.

Ted Vaughn - Law Enforcement
Hired as a Patrol Deputy in September bringing with him 5 years of law enforcement experience.

31+ Years of Service: Corporal Al Schermerhorn Retires



This year saw the retirement of long time deputy Al Schermerhorn on July 31, 2020. His career began as a reserve deputy in Monroe, Oregon in 1989. He first joined BCSO as a reserve deputy in 1991. Al was hired as a full-time patrol deputy in 1994, promoting to the rank of Corporal in 2002. In his 31 years, he was a member of both the SWAT Team and the Wilderness Response Team. He retired as range master, firearms instructor, and forest patrol deputy.

A highlight of Al's career is the creation of the Marys Peak Cleanup Event. In 2015 Al noticed that a popular shooting site on Marys Peak was overrun with trash. He talked his colleagues, with BLM and US Forest Service, into collaborating with him on



a plan to clean the area up. Through his efforts, over 40 volunteers came out to pick up everything from shell casings and trash, to furniture and tractor tires. Al's initiative, resourcefulness and teamwork resulted in the cleanup of the site. This has become an annual event.

In addition, over his career, Al earned many awards including: Distinguished Service, the Sheriff's Award of Merit and the BCSO Life Saving Award for the springtime rescue of a swimmer in the frigid Willamette River in 2018.