



STONEHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT

Why the Override Matters

Community Safety & Staffing Update

Historical Staffing (2001)

- 40 Officers (2 in academy)
- Study Recommendation: 43 Officers
- Staffed with 15–16 Auxiliary Officers (eliminated due to POSTC regulations)

Current Staffing (2025)

- 40 officers total (includes 4 in field training)
 - 4 unfilled positions (FY24, FY25, 1 resignation, 1 retirement)
 - No Auxiliary Officers due to POSTC regulation changes
 - Additional challenges: Injuries, FMLA, retirements, unfilled positions (due to budget)
 - Six (6) sworn officers eligible to retire within the next five (5) years
 - In comparison, the year 2001 had 40 officers — staffing has remained nearly flat despite a 42% rise in calls for service and an increase in demand for services
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Call Volume & Growth

- 2000: 13,116 calls for service
 - 2024: 18,620 calls – a 42% increase
 - 6% increase from 2022 to 2024
 - Town population as of today ~23,244; SPD should have ~46 (minimum) officers (based on national standard of 2.0–3.0 officers per 1,000 residents, adjusted for community needs)
 - Estimated 1,113 residential units being added in town (48 Officers)
 - Wilmington: 52 officers
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Community Comparison Snapshot

Budget, Staffing, and Service Overview (FY25)

Community	Population	FY25 Budget	Expense Budget	Overtime	2023 Calls
Melrose	29,817	\$5,925,648	\$262,825	\$577,900	15,749
Saugus	28,619	\$9,400,000	\$464,000	\$800,000	24,000
Danvers	28,087	\$7,311,484	\$445,964	\$1,173,358	24,786
Wakefield	27,090	\$7,514,617	\$501,807	\$772,200	13,817
Winchester	22,970	\$6,457,375	\$420,229	\$502,913	12,869
Reading	25,518	\$6,356,400	\$325,500	\$415,000	20,031
Wilmington	23,349	\$6,272,288	\$333,030	\$720,000	23,889
Stoneham	23,244	\$5,511,755	\$388,590	\$490,000	18,280
North Reading	15,554	\$4,317,827	\$471,621	\$570,466	16,723

Department Makeup

Community	Total Staff	Deputy Chief/XO	Capt's	Lt's	Sgt's	Patrol Officers
Melrose	50	0	0	4	10	35
Saugus	68	1	0	8	9	50
Danvers	47	1	2	3	8	33
Wakefield	47	1	0	2	11	32
Winchester	40 Sworn	0	0	4	8	27
Reading	46	1	0	4	8	32
Wilmington	52	1	0	5	7	38
Stoneham	40	0	0	3	7	29
North Reading	32	XO is a LT.	0	3	7	21

Overtime & Training Cost Overview

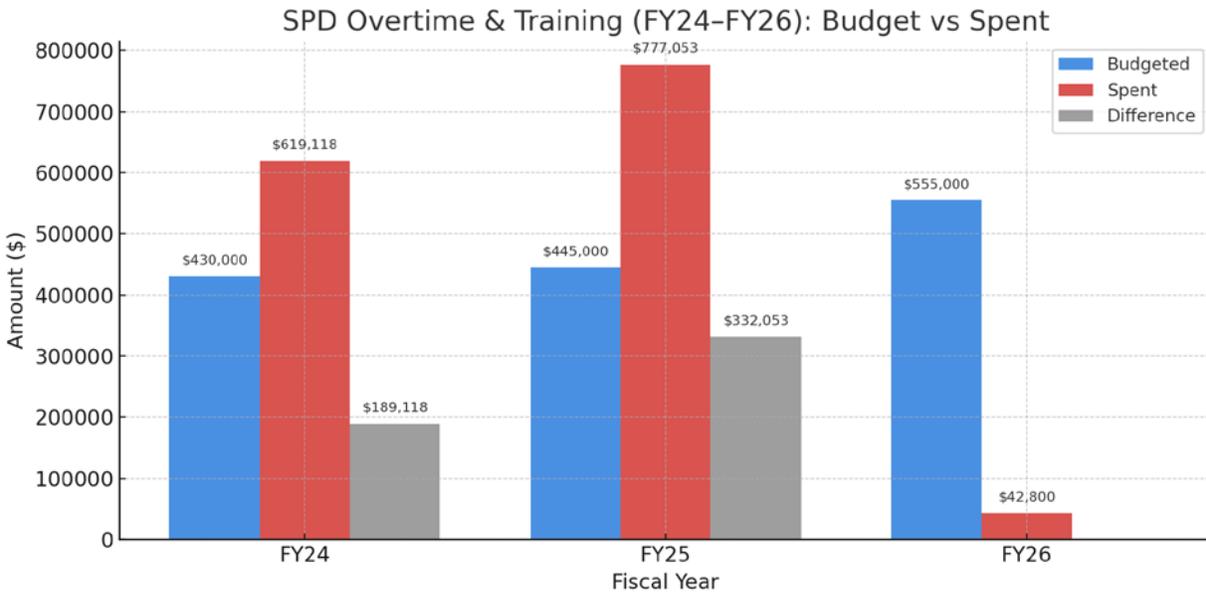
Overtime (OT) spending is a critical part of our annual budget. OT is used to ensure full police coverage when staffing levels are impacted by the following factors:

- Officer vacancies due to resignations, retirements, or unfilled positions (3)
- Coverage for officers on vacation, sick leave, FMLA, Injured on Duty.
- Mandated annual training and specialized courses
- Major incidents or extended investigations
- Community policing and event coverage

As staffing levels fall short, OT costs increase to maintain public safety. This becomes especially costly when covering for multiple positions simultaneously or fulfilling mandated training requirements while maintaining patrol operations.

Due to ongoing understaffing, Sergeants and Lieutenants may work overtime as Patrol Officers to maintain minimum staffing, allow days off, and reduce forced overtime on Patrol Officers. However, they are paid at their higher Sergeant/Lieutenant rate, which increases the impact on the overtime budget.

FY24/FY25, there were 5 vacancies due to retirements & resignations,



Mental Health Grant Funding Update – FY26 Impact

For several years, including FY25, the Stoneham Police Department has received a \$155,000 annual grant from the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health. This critical funding has allowed the department to:

- Support the position of a dedicated mental health clinician
- Provide comprehensive mental and behavioral health training for officers
- Cover overtime costs associated with Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) community follow-ups

In FY25, the department conducted 237 CIT follow-up visits, demonstrating our commitment to proactive, community-based mental health response.

Beginning in FY26, this grant has been significantly reduced. Current funding for the first quarter is only \$30,000, which will cover the clinician's position but not:

- The \$15,000 previously allocated for CIT overtime
- The \$20,000 required for essential mental health training for officers

This shortfall places a considerable burden on the department. Our current overtime budget cannot absorb these additional costs, jeopardizing the sustainability and reach

of our CIT program. Without restoration of full funding, our ability to continue providing high-quality mental health services and support to the community will be significantly impacted.

The next section outlines the rising demands on training and compliance, which directly contribute to increasing OT requirements.

Training & Increasing Demands

- Takes ~1 year to fully hire, train, and deploy a new officer
 - Not filling positions has a compounding effect across the entire department — more workload and pressure on fewer staff
 - Massachusetts officers are now required to complete extensive annual training under POST Commission mandates, including de-escalation, mental health response, use of force, defensive tactics, biased policing awareness — all costs are passed on to the department
 - Body-worn cameras, annual active shooter/threat response, all-hazard, annual policy review, are key examples of increasing new training demands
 - Cost of police academy tuition is expected to double in the coming year
 - Training costs include tuition, equipment, travel, and overtime coverage while officers are away
 - Training demands and equipment expectations are growing each year
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Dispatch Needs

- Midnight shift currently staffed by only 1 dispatcher
 - Ideal: 2 dispatchers for coverage, emergency response, and employee breaks
 - A single Midnight dispatcher is responsible for handling emergency 911 calls, officer radio traffic, and walk-in requests at the station
 - Dispatcher also handles radio traffic, dispatch, and coordination of Fire Department, and EMS
 - Simultaneously managing multiple incidents heightens the risk of errors and delays without proper staffing support
 - Having two dispatchers ensures coverage during breaks and critical incidents, and reduces the need to assign officers from patrol to dispatch, reducing the number of officers on the street
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Why It Matters

- Understaffing causes burnout and morale issues
- Importance of keeping pace with neighboring communities in staffing and service levels
- Full staffing is critical for officer recruitment and retention — understaffed departments struggle to attract and keep qualified personnel
- Limited time off and increased safety concerns
- Proactive policing is harder to maintain

- Without full staffing, the burden on each officer increases, affecting mental and physical well-being
 - Overtime Impacts
 - Recruitment is harder when departments are perceived as understaffed, new Civil Service Hybrid hiring process poses challenges
 - The community may face longer response times (for non-emergency calls), reduced visibility, and limited engagement initiatives as demands grow
 - Departments that maintain staffing can offer better service, build stronger community trust, and keep pace with modern demands
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Community Expectations

- Residents expect and deserve responsive, professional police service
- Our goal is to meet and exceed modern standards of public safety
- Proper staffing ensures community-oriented, proactive policing
- A well-staffed department means more visibility, community engagement, and the ability to address issues before they escalate
- Fully resourced departments help build trust, provide consistent service, and support a safer town for all
- Your support helps us stay ahead of the demands of 2025 and beyond