



# Duluth Police Department

2021 Annual Report



[www.duluthmn.gov/police](http://www.duluthmn.gov/police)

"Strengthening partnerships between the Duluth Police Department and the community is a bridge to problem-solving and overall community safety."  
-Chief Mike Tusken



# Message from the Chief

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In 2021, we are still living in a time of pandemic and available vaccinations will give us the opportunity to keep our community and the guardians who protect and serve us, safe and well. We mourn for all of those family, friends, and community members whom we loved and lost.

We look to the future with hope that a return to normalcy will be on the horizon. As we plan for the future in these difficult times, it is with hope for better days ahead and a dedication towards continuous improvement that is the focus of our work.

Policy and procedures drive our work and bring focus to best practices. The Duluth Police Department is embarking upon a journey for the next three years to become the first municipal police department in the State of Minnesota to earn accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). Accreditation will allow DPD to adopt standardized best practices that enhance how we deliver public safety services and improve outcomes. Gaining and sustaining accreditation requires continuous internal and third-party assessment to be in compliance. Law enforcement has seen a sea of change in the past year and providing the best services to our community requires keeping an eye towards innovation and meaningful change.

We value the social contract we have with our community and appreciate its fragility, so when our community questioned disparities and insisted on ensuring equity in policing, we took their concerns seriously. We hired a consultant to conduct a Demographic Disparity Analysis. Additionally, DPD worked with a community-led group on a Request for Proposal (RFP) to select a consultant to conduct a Racial Bias Audit. This audit is expected to take place in 2022.

The pandemic is changing society and how we live, go to school, meet, and recreate. It has also impacted our ability to have access to an audience with people in our community. The people in our community are a force multiplier of eyes and ears to help keep us safe. This is why building and maintaining strong relationships is our mission at DPD. We have reinvented how we are engaging our community.

A new pontoon was donated to us by the Irving Community Club, which gives us the opportunity to get out fishing with kids in our "Get Hooked on Fishing" Program. We also engage members of our community by using a converted minibus, which was donated by the DTA. This bus goes to neighborhoods and attends community events, to build relationships that are so vital to our success.

Finally, the people at DPD, sworn and professional staff, have all pledged to help provide a safe Duluth for all.

We are proud of our people and are committed to recruiting people of great character who want to serve here in our city and for our citizens. It is our honor and privilege to serve you.

-Chief Mike Tusken

# Mission Statement

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To provide a safe Duluth for all by strengthening relationships and serving in a respectful, caring, and selfless manner.

## Core Beliefs

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- We recognize that our authority comes from our social contract with the community.
- People will believe that we are there to serve them if we are kind, caring and compassionate, and our actions match our words.
- People will trust us if they believe we are protecting their rights.
- Every interaction leaves a lasting impression.
- The safety of both our community and officers are paramount.

## Values

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Fair  
Accountable  
Caring  
Transparent

# 2021 STATS

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**81,400**

Total Calls for Service

**152**

Sworn Personnel

**40**

Civilian Personnel

**38% Decrease**

Crimes Against Persons  
(assault/rape/homicide/robbery)

**14.6% Increase**

Crimes Against Property  
(burglary/fraud/theft/vandalism)

**23.6% Decrease**

Drug Offenses

# Community Feedback

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"Thank you so much for the excellent, fast service when I called 911. The dispatcher and officers were/are top notch!"

"You guys and gals are phenomenal and we thank you so much and are so proud to call you our Police Department."

"Thank you DPD for keeping us safe everyday, all day! Please know the sacrifices that you & your family make to protect and serve Duluth do not go unnoticed. Thank you for the service to our community! Stay safe!"

"Thank you so much for all that you do to keep us protected and safe! We really appreciate you!"

"Thank you so much for all of your hard work and dedication! We all hope that you will stay safe while you serve our world."

"Here in Duluth we are so lucky to have the awesome law enforcement we do. They are kind, compassionate and have to deal with all types of people and situations each and every day! Thank you for keeping us safe while trying to keep yourselves safe as well!"

# Continuous Improvement

The Duluth Police Department is committed to finding innovative ways to serve our community. In the wake of the murder of George Floyd, new laws were proposed and passed. DPD is proud to be a leader in having adopted most of the proposed legislation prior to any mandates. In some cases, DPD had policy and practices in place for years before this new legislation was proposed.

See how DPD meets and exceeds these legislative changes on our [website](#).

We are committed to continuous improvement, accountability, and transparency.

"The Duluth Police Department has dedicated and caring police officers who we hire for their character, are guided by best practice policy, led by ethical leaders, and dedicated to continuous improvement in our training to show up in a professional, respectful, and just manner."

-Chief Mike Tusken



During the Citizen Police Academy, members of the Duluth Police Department present a variety of topics to members of the public so the community better understands their police department.



During training, Duluth Police Officers learned the proper techniques of handcuffing from Sergeant Joel Olejnicak.



Members of the Tactical Response Team conducting training.

# COVID-19 Response

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2021 continued to be a year where we faced restrictions and mask mandates, which affected the ways we interact with members of our community.

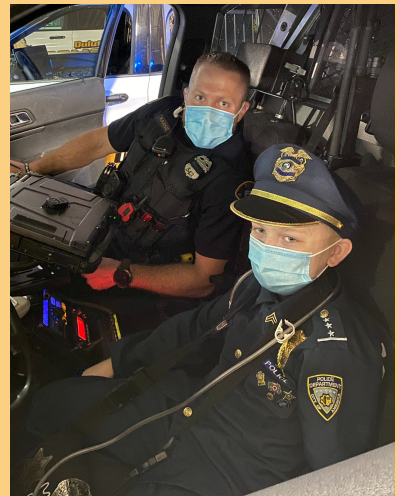
From November 2020 to May 2021, our Investigative Division schedule was altered to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Several investigators were reassigned to the Patrol Division to ensure there were appropriate resources dedicated to responding to 911 calls for service. Officers were at the forefront of the pandemic, potentially exposing themselves to the virus we still know very little about.

During the pandemic, the Duluth Police Department was able to limit exposures with detailed protocols and provide consistent services to our community through mask-wearing, social distancing, and virtual events. DPD continued to strive to build relationships and engage with those in the community.

Despite COVID-19, DPD was able to attend 314 community engagement events in 2021, which included ice cream socials, visiting with children in the park, and attending school events.

## PARTNERSHIPS

We recognize that our authority comes from our social contract with the community.



We pledge to be partners with our community in our efforts to keep Duluth a safe place to live, work, and play.

# Recruitment and Retention

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New recruits from left to right: Officers Christopher Robinson, Katie Catton, Maddy Robertson, and Stephen Shelton.

In 2021, the Duluth Police Department swore in four new officers. This recruit class also welcomed the first mother-daughter duo in the Duluth Police Department's history. Officer Maddy Robertson was sworn in and pinned by her mother, Officer Angela Robertson, who's part of the CORE (Mental Health/co-response) Unit.

DPD uses character-based hiring, understanding that the community wants to see themselves in their police department.

Health and wellness are also important for members of the police department. Sworn officers are allocated an hour of time per week to work out while on shift, and are encouraged to have a mental health check-in with a counselor, which is paid for by the department.

The physical and emotional impact officers endure frequently results in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Officers are leaving or retiring from the profession at previously unseen rates, and students are not enrolling in law enforcement due to the national narrative. Agencies are fighting over the same pool of applicants, affecting recruitment and retention across the country and state.

The Duluth Police Department is continuing to work to be competitive to recruit new officers and retain current employees.

## Community Service Officer-Intern Program



Community Service Officers Katie Latourelle and Paulina Johansen assist the Duluth Police Department with a variety of tasks.

This program has evolved into an important recruitment tool for the police department. Community Service Officer-Interns provide front desk coverage and take low-level calls for service. Our program allows students to work up to 40 hours/week and results in a broader base of experience, expedited training, and in-depth knowledge of Departmental procedures.

# Professional Development



Our Professional Standards Unit works to ensure we meet or exceed all mandated Minnesota POST training. In order to achieve this, we've added additional training days for officers.

All of our training is rooted in the foundation of the sanctity of every life and our desire to gain voluntary compliance.

The Professional Standards Unit is an integral part of the recruitment process and development of our Duluth Police Department's Recruit Academy.

From left, Sergeant David Drozdowski, Investigator Steve Pruse, Investigator Ian Johnson, Sergeant Joel Olejnicak, Lieutenant Mike Ceynowa, and Investigator Robert Schmidt are members of the Professional Standards Unit at DPD.

Not pictured - Dawn Cole, Executive Assistant.



Members of the Duluth Police Department's K9 Unit participates in continuous trainings to hone in on their skills.



Officers Dana Letica and Nate Smith are training on handcuffing. This is one of multiple trainings sworn officers go through every year to ensure they are up to date with best practices.



New recruits training in CACT. This is one of multiple trainings they do to continue to improve on their skills.

## Core Trainings:

Fair & Impartial  
Crisis Intervention  
Defensive Tactics  
Use of Force  
Verbal Judo

The Duluth Police Department values and respects the sanctity of every life and identifies our role as a lifesaving organization. The Duluth Police Department emphasizes the use of de-escalation and encourages tactics and strategies to gain voluntary compliance.

## 380

Total Training Hours in  
Duluth Police Department's  
Recruit Academy

# A **SAFE** Duluth

People will believe that we are there to serve them if we are kind, caring and compassionate, and our actions match our words.



## Community Partnerships

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The primary focus of the Duluth Police Department is community policing and working with our community to build partnerships for effective problem-solving and crime prevention. We're only as strong as the community we serve with, and nothing we do would be possible without the partnerships and support we receive from our community. The community is our force multiplier in holding people accountable for their actions.

The Duluth Police Department has continued to build and maintain community partnerships, understanding that our authority comes from the social contract we have with the community.

Our partners include PAVSA, Safe Haven, First Witness, Boys and Girls Club, Neighborhood Youth Services, Valley Youth Center, ISD-709, and more.



# Community Engagement



Kids, Cops & Cars  
Blue Santa  
Get Hooked on Fishing Program  
Operation K9  
Ice Cream Social  
National Night Out  
Christmas City of the North Parade  
Torch Run for Special Olympics  
Polar Plunge for Special Olympics



# Strengthening Relationships



Building relationships with those who live, work, and play in the City is our priority.

"The people are the police and the police are the people."  
-Sir Robert Peel, 1829



# Patrol Division

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## ACCOUNTABILITY

People will trust us if we are protecting their rights.



Deputy Chief Steve Stracek lead the Patrol Division at the Duluth Police Department in 2021. During the pandemic and with the national narrative on police, this division worked tirelessly to build and maintain relationships with those in our community.

The Patrol Division modified their schedules to serve those in our city to ensure services weren't interrupted during the pandemic.

These are the men and women who will respond to your calls showing care, empathy, and compassion in every interaction.

Duluth Police Officers responded to a call of a vehicle striking multiple other vehicles on Mesaba Avenue. Upon arrival, the vehicle was idling in the middle of the road. Officers located an unresponsive male and administered Narcan. The individual, who admitted to using heroin, became responsive. Quick response and access to Narcan saved a life.

# Investigations Division



Deputy Chief Nick Lukovsky leads the Investigations Division. The Investigations Division is comprised of two main components, Major Crimes Unit and Organized Crimes Unit.

This Division continues to work tirelessly to advocate for victims, hold offenders accountable, and use innovative investigative strategies to continue providing a safe Duluth for all.

## Partnerships, Prevention, Problem Solving

The Duluth Police Investigations Division continues to address gun violence. Investigators work with local, state, and federal partners when incidents of gun violence are committed. Our efforts include intervention by taking guns from people who possess and use them illegally and holding them accountable. In one incident, Duluth Police Investigators identified and arrested five individuals for their role in relation to a homicide investigation.

Duluth Police Investigators also worked collectively to piece together an incident that led to multiple vehicle pursuits, robbery incidents, shots being fired, and a six-hour barricaded standoff in West Duluth. As a result of the case put together by the Duluth Police Investigative Division, the individual responsible was charged with over 20 offenses.

# Partnerships, Prevention and Problem Solving

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## Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag Reward Fund

Duluth Police Investigations added community-based partnerships to address serious crimes impacting our Indigenous and two-spirited communities. In an attempt to bring the Sheila St. Clair Missing Person investigation (reported in 2015) to resolution, community-based organizations have partnered with the City of Duluth to create a reward fund to assist in the investigation. Mending the Sacred Hoop and the Native Lives Matter Coalition agreed to be the co-fiscal agents of this reward fund, named Gaagige-Mikwendaagoziwag (Ojibwe meaning “They will be remembered forever”) Reward Fund. This reward fund will be used to assist in solving violent crimes committed against Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People (MMIW2Sg). This initiative is being discussed, at the MN state legislature, as a blueprint for other law enforcement agencies to better serve victims from these marginalized communities.



## Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force

In 2021, the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force, of which the Duluth Police Department is a member, took on additional partnerships to address the ever-growing crime of online exploitation of our children. Already a member of the FBI Child Exploitation Human Trafficking Task Force, the Duluth Police Department formalized two additional partnerships to further increase our investigative resources to address this horrific victimization. The Duluth Police Department has added the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and the US Department of Homeland Security as partners to fight online exploitation of children.

"The Duluth Police Investigations Division is fortunate to have many local, state, and federal partners. Our partnerships with criminal justice agencies, community groups, and victim advocacy groups is vital in our mission to provide a safe Duluth for all."

-Deputy Chief of the Investigative Division, Nick Lukovsky

# Administrative Division

The Administrative Division serves as an integral part of the Duluth Police Department. Some of those in this unit are seen and unseen. People in the administrative division do some of the most critical work in responding to community concerns, developing policies and best practices, supporting our operations, and keeping a focus on organizational transparency and accountability. Laura Marquardt, the Deputy Chief of Administration, oversees the Administrative Division.

**Parking Services Unit-** DPD's Parking Services Unit's overarching goals of preservation of fair public access to parking and promotion of public safety were successfully maintained throughout 2021. The final phase of implementation of new parking payment technology in Duluth's redeveloped downtown section of Superior Street was completed, and new graphics were installed on all existing parking payment kiosks, resulting in a refreshed look and improved clarity in messaging.

**Animal Control-** The Duluth Police Department's Animal Control Unit consists of two full-time and one part-time employee. This unit is committed to the responsible care of animals. This unit provides the following services; lost and found pets, and domestic animal issues.

**Records and Support Unit-** The Records and Support Unit primarily focuses on the maintenance and dissemination of law enforcement reports and information in the records management system (RMS). This unit facilitates the flow of information into RMS and ensures cases are compliant with federal reporting requirements. The unit also processes citations, report dictations, and other myriad projects in addition to responding to a large number of data requests per year involving redaction of case reports, drafting of public data releases, and compilation of aggregate data.

**Public Information Officer-** The Public Information Officer (PIO) provides communication to the community in a meaningful, engaging, and transparent way about the daily duties and responsibilities of the department through internal and external communications.

**Professional Standards Unit-** The Professional Standards Unit is responsible for all aspects of the internal investigation process as well as all training, development, recruitment, and hiring for the Duluth Police Department.

**Budget and Grants-** DPD's Budget and Grants Unit is in charge of the department's budget. In 2021, the budget was \$24 million, which doesn't allow us to provide all the services our community has grown to expect from us. We continue to seek and secure both federal and state grants to help DPD continue to be innovative in our outreach to the community.

# Grant Awards

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In 2021, DPD applied for and received seven State and Federal Grants.

To highlight a few:

- 2021 COSSAP Grant has allowed us to hire two additional Peer Recovery Specialists, bringing our total to five, to help address the opioid crisis that has disproportionately impacted our city and county. This award will also fund the full team, including our Diversion Officer, through September 2024.
- 2021 COPS Office Accreditation award. CALEA requires departments to meet 459 standards. This grant will allow us to purchase and maintain a software system that will support us in managing and streamlining that process.

DPD applied for and received the 2020 COSSAP Grant:

- Funds allowed us to add staff to our Substance Use Response Team (SURT) and hire an additional full-time Peer Recovery Specialist and a full-time Assessor



**Property and Evidence Unit-** The Property and Evidence Unit is in the Administrative Division and is responsible for maintaining the security and protection of approximately 16,000 pieces of evidence. This unit ensures that evidence is packaged and stored properly and is also responsible for proper clearing of evidence, whether it be returning items to owners, auctioning items, or destroying them. The Property and Evidence Unit prepares items to be sent to the state crime lab (BCA) for testing, along with preparing evidence for court. The unit also assists on search warrants by collecting and logging evidence.

# LSDVC Task Force

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**131**

Search warrants

**330**

non-fatal overdoses (41.6% increase since 2020) and 35 fatal overdoses. From April 2013 - 2021 DPD saved 255 lives by carrying Narcan.

**60**

Task Force Arrests

**2,224**

grams of fentanyl confiscated (364% increase since 2020)

**2,758**

grams of meth confiscated

**54**

Firearms seized

## Federal Partners:

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives  
Drug Enforcement Administration  
Homeland Security Investigations

## Local Partners:

Superior Police Department  
St. Louis County Sheriff's Office  
Hibbing Police Department  
Virginia Police Department

The Lake Superior Drug and Violent Crime Task Force, along with partnering agencies, charged 21 alleged members of a Chicago-based Drug Trafficking Organization with participating in a criminal organization that transported substantial quantities of fentanyl and heroin from Chicago to Duluth in January. Between June 2021 and December 2021, the DTO was responsible for transporting and selling over 10 pounds of heroin and fentanyl, which has a street value of \$725,600 and is 18,140 doses.

# SURT, Diversion Program, CORE

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## Substance Use Response Team

SURT is a Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative (PAARI) modeled program within the Duluth Police Department. SURT was created in 2018 as part of a federal overdose outreach grant through the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). SURT employs three Peer Recovery Specialists and through a partnership with the Center for Alcohol and Drug Treatment, SURT also employs an ADC-T who is able to offer Comprehensive Assessments to individuals in their homes or out in the community, and typically within 48 hours. SURT's primary goal is to get individuals struggling with substance use out of the criminal justice system and into recovery support services. SURT provides outreach to opioid overdose survivors, performs street outreach, accepts family and friend referrals, offers in-reach into local jails, and receives referrals from partner agencies.

Every sworn officer in the Duluth Police Department has been equipped with Narcan since 2016. In 2021, there have been 67 individuals who were experiencing an overdose that was saved by Narcan.

### **2021 Quarter 4 SURT Stats**

**35** Comprehensive Assessments  
(formally Rule 25) within 24  
hours of referral  
**58** new clients  
**1.8** people accessing recovery  
supporting services per day

## Diversion Program

The Duluth Police Department's Substance Use Disorder Diversion Program helps prevent people with first-time, low-level drug offenses from entering the criminal justice system and provides these individuals with treatment options in our community. The Diversion Program works closely with our Substance Use Response Team in seeking recovery support services for those who are suffering from Substance Use Disorders.

## CORE Unit

The CORE Unit is the new name for the Mental Health Unit. CORE uses a co-responder model and it began as a way to address the numerous responses to mental health calls in Duluth. Since March 2017, 790 people have been referred to CORE and in 2021 there were 230 people who were referred to the CORE Unit.

There are 72 people that are currently on the Community Intervention Group list and calls for service are being monitored for 27 people who frequently call 911. Mental health holds have been trending down, indicating that our CORE Unit is making an impact in the community. There's still a lot more work to do and members of our CORE Unit are excited to continue to build relationships to get individuals the help that they need.

# 2021 Innovative Initiatives

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## CODE4

CODE4 is a new community engagement bus used during multiple community events. It's also used as a recruitment tool, as an emergency shelter for evacuees, as a mobile break room for cops at special events, and more.



## Catalytic Converter Initiative

The Duluth Police Department announced a new initiative to curb the amount of catalytic converter thefts that occurred within the City of Duluth in 2021. Members of the community can get their converter 'marked' at participating auto body shops to deter thieves from taking converters.



## Wednesday Walks

Wednesday Walks is a way for our staff to get out in the community and engage with those who are out and about. We meet people in their places and spaces, answering questions and handing out stickers. Every Wednesday, a different member within the Duluth Police Department visits with residents and visitors in our city.

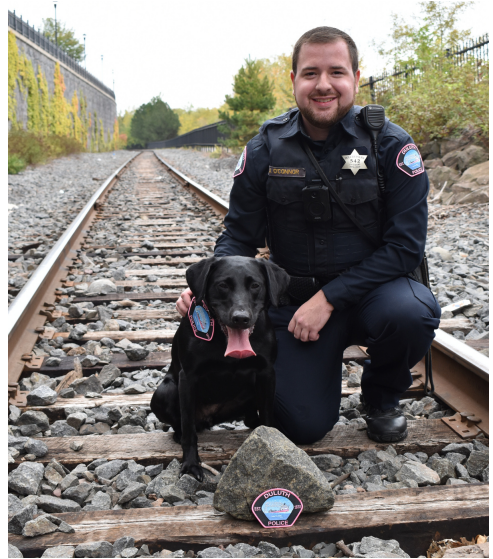


# 2021 Initiatives Cont.

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## Pink Patch Project

October 2021 was the first year that the Duluth Police Department participated in the Pink Patch Project for Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October. DPD Pink Patches were sold for \$10 to the public, and \$2,853 was raised through DPD's Pink Patch Project and went to the American Cancer Society.



## CALEA

The Duluth Police Department initiated an accreditation process with the [Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies \(CALEA\)](#) in April 2021. Our Department is the first municipal police department in the state of Minnesota to seek this accreditation. This will require us to update our written directives and policies to reflect best practices and standards, which will enhance how we deliver public safety services and improve outcomes.

## Red Ribbon Week

In partnership with the Drug Enforcement Administration - DEA, the Duluth Police Department is participating in the Red Ribbon Campaign. The campaign not only brings awareness to drug use and the problems related to drugs facing our community but also honors Enrique Camarena, a DEA Special Agent who was killed by drug traffickers in 1985.

**#RedRibbonWeek**  
Remembering Kiki Camarena

# 2021 Initiatives Cont.

## Get Hooked on Fishing Program

Every Tuesday during the summer, Duluth Police Officers and kids in the community go fishing, which is part of the department's 'Get Hooked on Fishing' program. This program builds relationships between youth and officers with the Duluth Police Department. The program started in 2017 with a grant from Cabela's and has grown tremendously since then. In 2019, Minnesota DNR gave another grant to the program. The Duluth Police Department now has a pontoon, which is used to take kids out on Lake Superior.



## Improved Reporting

With our updated Tyler Enterprise Records Management System (RMS) we are now able to better track stop data which includes perceived race. This RMS also houses all key components of law enforcement records in one system.

National Incident-Based Reporting System allows for proactive crime prevention and deployment of resources where they will have the most impact on public safety.

We also started a comprehensive Response to Resistance & Aggression Report for 2020, a Complaint Accountability Report for 2018 - 2020, and a Demographic Disparity Analysis. We contracted with Police Strategies LLC. to review our statistics and create a Demographic Disparity Report.

## K9 Athena

K9 Athena joined the Duluth Police Department's K9 Unit in June 2021. Athena is trained in narcotics and evidence detection, apprehension, and tracking. Athena's handler is Officer Kaine Kaase.



# 2022 Goals & Initiatives

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## Goals

- Community Survey
  - To gather the communities input on the Duluth Police Department and see how safe people feel living in the City of Duluth.
- Demographic Disparity Analysis
- Complaint Accountability Report
- Response to Aggression and Resistance Report
- Racial Bias Audit
- Large participation in health and wellness program
- Continuous training to meet the needs of our community
- Recruit/Retain Officers
- Continue CALEA certification process

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[www.duluthmn.gov/police](http://www.duluthmn.gov/police)



@DuluthMNPolice



Thank you for reading the Duluth Police Department's 2021 Annual Report.  
We look forward to continuing to protect and serve with the citizens of Duluth  
for many years to come.