



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2024.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: _____

Program Title: _____

Program Category: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: _____

Title: _____

Department: _____

Telephone: _____ Website: _____

Email: _____

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Embracing Technology: Chesterfield County's Innovative Approach to Overcoming Police Staffing Challenges

Chesterfield County Police Department and Information Systems Technology

Submitter: Captain Mark Haynes, Police Department - Technology & Project Management Leader

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Abstract:

Police departments face ongoing challenges associated with recruiting and retaining police officers, which ultimately has an impact on community safety and crime response. Chesterfield County's proactive approach to addressing these challenges through the strategic use of technology has significantly reduced the administrative workload for officers, allowing them to dedicate more time to essential policing activities. The results from the partnership between Chesterfield Police and the county's Information Systems Technology (IST) department demonstrates the potential for technology to serve as a force multiplier in law enforcement, enabling departments to do "more with less" and ensuring the protection of the vulnerable and preservation of life in the community.

Problem/Program Need:

Police staffing has been a topic of great concern nationwide. The shortage of applicants, the voluntary separation of mid-career officers, and the retirement of veteran officers has created an environment where the societal and community protections previously offered are not as sure as they once were. The main goal of a police department is to protect the vulnerable and preserve life. How a police agency responds to calls, addresses the rise in crime, and provides fair and impartial police services is something with which communities across the nation are grappling during this staffing shortage. This issue presents departments and governing bodies across with nation with an opportunity to evaluate how technology can be used to offset these shortages while increasing the level of service to the public.

Chesterfield County, like many other agencies in the nation, has dealt with the same challenges in recruiting and staffing. Our response has been to leverage technology as a force multiplier to gain greater efficiencies in how we respond to crime, additional administrative burdens, and expanded workloads. Embracing the benefits of technology and leveraging the power that such technology can bring has allowed us to do "more with less" while not overloading our existing officers.

Description of the Program

Chesterfield has explored and invested in automation technology to help reduce the administrative burdens that have accrued over the years. These burdens can take up a significant amount of work hours to manage and complete. Utilizing various products, workflows, and technologies Chesterfield County has implemented automation to free officers up for their primary focus. An example of this is around traffic stops. In the past, officers would stop a vehicle for a traffic violation, write a ticket, and then move on to the next assignment. Today, an officer conducts a traffic stops, turns on their body worn camera (BWC), makes the stop, writes the ticket, tags and labels their BWC footage, and then logs their data collection information. These administrative functions can easily add 7-8 minutes to each traffic stop. An officer who seeks to improve traffic safety through proactive enforcement can easily spend 20% of their day handling administrative functions where they are not free to respond to calls. Traditional models of policing would have a department add more positions, but considering the staffing challenges that exist, Chesterfield County has used technology to solve these issues.

Cost of Program

Since inception, a total of \$318K has been spent to enable 153 users: 13 initially in a pilot then followed by an additional 140 users in the phase I rollout. This included \$205K in software licensing, maintenance and hosting and \$113K in hardware, mounts, thermal paper, and accessories.

The current recurring licensing costs are approximately \$30K a year. The plan is to add another 140 users as part of a second phase of the rollout by the end of the year, so the ongoing, annual licensing cost will likely settle in around \$60K a year as the program reaches its full capacity.

Results/Success

Chesterfield County attacked the problem through a coordinated approach with multiple departments. The police department, in conjunction with the county IST and finance department spent the past year and a half deploying technologies to alleviate and automate these administrative burdens. The technology that is being leveraged is:

1. E-Summonses: this two-pronged approach sped up the issuing of tickets or warning, while at the same time completing the Community Policing Data collection form that is required by law for every traffic stop.
2. Auto-Tagging: this utilized an automation programming script that compared the BWC video footage with an officers assigned calls and then tags the video with the required information.
3. Case Matching: this allows officers to create a folder within the BWC storage system. Once created the system will now search all the tagged videos and link them to the folder. Officers no longer must spend time each day searching for any newly uploaded videos related to a call. This also expedites the sharing of videos with the Commonwealth Attorney's Office.

These three changes have had a dramatic impact on an officer's administrative burdens. In the police department's Traffic Unit, these technological enhancements have reduced the amount of time spent on administrative burdens by an hour and a half per day. This is seven and a half hours a week (almost one whole workday) that traffic officers can now use to help address complaints from the public. Two of the leading causes of Chesterfield County's fatality vehicle crashes are speeding and lack of seatbelt use. When officers are tied up on administrative work, they can't address the public's safety concerns. Patrol officers, likewise, are finding a significant reduction in their administrative workload allowing them to be available to respond to calls. This has helped mitigate the open positions that we have and reduced the pressure on officers who seek to provide excellence in public safety.

Worthiness of Award

Through leveraging technology and innovative uses of automation, police departments can help offset the staffing challenges they are dealing with across the nation. Chesterfield County's targeted application of technology and effective utilization of productivity tools, and its ability to work across department lines, has helped relieve a significant burden on its police officers which helps keep our public safe and secure as they go about their lives.