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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key Learnings and Current Status

In June 2012, when the federal Secure Rural Schools funds were phased out and the local ballot measure to replace these funds failed, Josephine County experienced a significant reduction in county funds, which reduced the capacity of the county Sheriff’s Office (JCSO) and other agencies. To understand the impact of these funding cuts, NPC Research gathered information from multiple state and local databases and talked with dozens of staff and stakeholders from local county agencies.

Key Learnings

The funding cuts reduced the total JCSO staff by 67%. When the cuts took effect, the JCSO went from having 23 deputies and patrol coverage 20 hours per day for 7 days of the week to having three deputies and patrol coverage for 8 hours per day for 5 days of the week. The three remaining deputies, tasked with patrolling the 1,642 square miles of the county, spent their shifts running between emergency calls that could be up to an hour away from each other. The JCSO established a triage system that prioritized deputy response for person and violent crimes and de-prioritized property crimes and other crimes that were not in progress. Since 2016, the number of JCSO deputies has increased over time, although patrol coverage for the county has remained limited. JCSO lost all of its detectives in 2012 and has regained none of those positions, restricting its ability to conduct investigations.

The reduction in JCSO deputies left the county outside of Grants Pass with scarce law enforcement coverage (Grants Pass Police Department did not lose funding). Oregon State Police (OSP), which traditionally patrolled state highways and responded to crime on state property, stepped in to provide some patrol coverage during the hours that JCSO deputies were not on patrol. OSP’s response was limited to certain types of crime, including person and violent crimes. Troopers did not respond to calls about property crimes. OSP also absorbed JCSO’s investigations, creating very high caseloads for its detectives. To handle the expansion of duties, OSP doubled the number of local staff and established an area command to handle the necessary coordination.

Even with OSP’s help, Josephine County’s patrol capacity was outpaced by the increasing crime rates, and this underag left many county residents without help when they needed it. Each year after the funding cuts, JCSO and OSP were each able to provide patrol response to about half of the calls for service they received. Each year from 2015 to 2018, due to capacity constraints, more than 5,000 calls for service to JCSO did not receive a deputy response and more than 1,000 calls for service to OSP did not receive a trooper response. In 2018, specifically, 7,993 calls for service from county residents (6,407 to JCSO and 1,586 to OSP) did not receive response by a law enforcement officer.
The 2012 cuts reduced the capacity of the county jail from 120 beds to 55. Some of this capacity was regained after a couple of years. When capacity was limited, the number of arrested offenders was often greater than the number of jail beds, which would force jail supervisors to release an offender into the community to make room to lodge another, potentially more dangerous offender. Since 2012, thousands of jail bookings have ended in forced releases—in 2018, there were 2,396 such releases occurred.

When the jail capacity was limited, law enforcement was unable to take offenders into custody because there was nowhere to lodge them. As a result, officers were constrained to implement “cite and release” policies, whereby offenders were arrested and given a paper citation with a court date. Stakeholders condemned this practice as an ineffectual crime deterrent, demoralizing for police officers, emboldening for would-be offenders, and disheartening for the public as they saw criminal behavior increase with little recourse.

The combination of limited patrol coverage and limited jail capacity created opportune conditions for criminal behavior. Rates of crime—especially property crime—increased; rates of motor vehicle theft soared. Leaving offenders on the streets through cite and release practices or putting them into the community before their adjudication due to a forced release supported the potential for recidivism. Indeed, after the 2012 cuts, rates of recidivism doubled, especially for property and drug crimes.

Among offenders arrested in 2017 in Josephine County, 43% were re-arrested within 1 year, compared to the state rate of 37%. Among offenders arrested in 2015 in Josephine County, 63% were re-arrested within 3 years, compared to the state rate of 52%.

Local stakeholders described Josephine County, especially some of the rural areas, as “lawless” after the JCSO was starkly reduced in 2012 and they expressed concern that county residents were not receiving critical public safety services. Yet, county ballot measures to fund law enforcement failed annually, until 2017 when a 5-year levy was passed to fund the juvenile detention center and adult jail. These funds enabled the distribution of resources to increase JCSO staff and patrol coverage.

**Status of Josephine County in 2019**

Even with the increases made possible by the levy, the JCSO remained under-capacitated 2 years later. When taking the number of staff and hours of operation into account, in 2019, the JCSO had roughly half of the patrol coverage, half of the dispatch capacity, one quarter the records capacity, and none of the detective capacity that it had before 2012. Importantly, the 2017 levy was approved for 5 years. Without another source of longer-term funding, in 2022, Josephine County could re-experience the impacts of the 2012 funding cuts. Notably, even with the levy in place, Josephine County residents paid substantially less for county sheriff patrol deputies than residents of neighboring counties.

In 2019, Josephine County remained heavily reliant on OSP for patrol coverage, investigations, and emergency response for residents outside of Grants Pass. Josephine County’s reliance on the state agency for the provision of critical local public safety services creates additional risk, because the sustainability of OSP’s local support is unknown.
**Executive Summary: Timeline of Key Events**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal SRS funds end, Funding cuts happen</td>
<td>System adjusts, Problems increase</td>
<td>Proposed funding measures fail annually</td>
<td>Problems persist, Levy passes</td>
<td>With levy, capacity begins to increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County ballot measure to fund Sheriff fails. Cutbacks start June 2012. JC Sheriff’s Office reduced from 85 staff to 28, leaving 3 patrol deputies, 0 detectives. JCSO patrol reduced to 8 hrs/day, 5 days/wk. 7,858 calls for service to JCSO do not get deputy response. Jail capacity reduced from 120 to 55 beds. 277 offenders are released from jail due to reduced capacity. Juvenile detention center (14 beds) and residential facility (12 beds) close; 20 full-time jobs lost. District Attorney’s Office staff reduced by 40%. Oregon State Police begins to respond to limited crimes within Sheriff’s jurisdiction.</td>
<td>County justice funding-tax measure fails. With no jail capacity, law enforcement officers “cite and release” offenders. Juvenile justice leases 3 beds in neighboring county to lodge most violent offenders. Property crime increases and law enforcement response to it in the county decreases. City of Grants Pass leases 30 beds in the county jail. 911 calls transferred to OSP triple to 6,000. Concealed carry permits in the county double. Recidivism rates double, especially for property and drug possession crimes.</td>
<td>Three County justice funding-tax measures fail (one per yr). OSP doubles the number of troopers and detectives in the County and opens an area command to manage them (2015). OSP receives more calls for service within JCSO jurisdiction than its own, and can respond to about half. JCSO deputies can respond to less than half of the calls for service. New sheriff takes office (2015).</td>
<td>5-year levy for adult jail and juvenile detention center passes (May). OSP continues to receive calls for service within JCSO jurisdiction and can respond to about half. 190 medical emergencies are delayed response due to lack of available law enforcement. 1,817 offenders are released from jail due to capacity limits (2017). Recidivism remains high. County rates are higher than the average rate across the southwestern counties and the state rate.</td>
<td>Adult jail capacity increases to 185 beds (2018). Juvenile detention center and residential facility re-open (2018). JCSO staff increases to 15 deputies (2018) and then to 20 deputies (2019). No detective positions are added. JCSO patrol increases to 12 hrs/day, 7 days/wk (2018). Need still outpaces capacity. 6,407 calls for service to JCSO do not receive deputy response, and 1,586 calls for service to OSP do not receive trooper response (2018).</td>
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INTRODUCTION

Funding Changes in Josephine County

For more than 25 years, the US government has provided financial relief to several Oregon and California counties due to reduced natural resource activities on federal lands, which caused notable declines in the timber industries and, as a result, local economies. This funding was originally intended as “emergency” assistance to temporarily support counties while their local economies adjusted. However, persistent need in rural areas has led the federal government to extend these funds for more than two decades. Starting in 2000, this assistance was provided through the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) program.

Josephine County officials were aware that the federal SRS funds would be phased out of the county in 2012. Understanding that replacement funds were necessary to keep critical county services active, county officials began preparing a funding measure in 2011 to put on the county ballot in May 2012. This measure proposed a tax that would generate revenue to fill the gap in the county budget left by the removal of the SRS funds.

In May 2012, the ballot measure to replace the SRS monies failed. In June 2012, Josephine County began the fiscal year with insufficient funds to cover the costs of operating all county services and cutbacks started immediately, including staffing reductions and facility closures. Cutbacks directly and significantly impacted the Josephine County Sheriff’s Office.

This Report

In 2018, NPC Research (NPC) was hired by the local nonprofit, Securing Our Safety, to collect information about the 2012 funding cuts and any impact of those cuts on Josephine County’s local system and communities. NPC was asked to collect data from various sources that could factually represent any changes that occurred during this time. To do this, NPC gathered information from:

- Publicly available data sources, including Oregon’s Uniform Crime Report, Oregon’s Criminal Justice Commission recidivism dashboard, Oregon State Police databank, Oregon Department of Transportation, and the Oregon Healthy Teens Survey;

- Local administrative data sources, including Josephine County 911 Call Center; the records departments within Josephine County Sheriff’s Office (JCSO), Grants Pass Police Department (GPPD), and Oregon State Police (OSP); Josephine County jail; staffing records within JCSO, GPPD, OSP, Josephine County Juvenile Justice, and Josephine County Community Corrections; records from local private security companies and the Grants Pass Sobering Center;

- Interviews with key local stakeholders, including personnel from the Josephine County Sheriff’s Office, District Attorney’s Office, Juvenile Justice Department, and Community Corrections
Department; Grants Pass Police Department, Public Safety Department, and Public Health Department; Josephine County 911 Call Center; Oregon State Police; Illinois Valley Fire Department; Rural Metro Fire Department; Grants Pass Sobering Center; Concierge Home and Business Watch; CJ (Cave Junction) Patrol; Illinois Valley Safe House; and Illinois Valley CaNDO.

About NPC Research

NPC Research (www.npcresearch.com) is a research and evaluation firm located in Portland, Oregon. For more than 30 years, NPC has provided quality research, program evaluation, policy analysis, technical assistance, and training to clients across a variety of systems including federal, state, and local government agencies; not-for-profit organizations; Tribal entities; schools; primary care clinics; and foundations.

NPC brings a multi-disciplinary and multi-method approach to research and evaluation. NPC staff has extensive experience in an array of methodologies to ensure that each research and evaluation project is matched with the most appropriate scientific methods. Projects range from large scale randomized clinical trials to smaller formative and qualitative process studies. NPC provides academically rigorous research and evaluation of programs while maintaining a strong commitment to working collaboratively with local program staff and other key stakeholders to ensure that studies address the most pressing local questions. In addition, NPC reports study findings in ways that are meaningful to and actionable for policy development, program implementation, program management, and service delivery and using methods that are accessible to a wide array of audiences, including program managers, service providers, legislative decision-makers, and service recipients.

NPC staff have technical expertise in organizing and managing complex, multi-site research and evaluation projects; measurement development and testing; quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis; database development and management; outcome and performance standards development; evaluation consultation and training for community-based programs and government agencies; compiling and analyzing archival and administrative data; and using data to inform program development. NPC also routinely accesses and works with state and local administrative databases to investigate the impacts of changes in policies and service environments. NPC has particular expertise conducting studies of partnerships within the criminal and civil justice systems and has completed nearly 200 evaluations of treatment courts. NPC staff are dedicated to contributing to the improvement of services offered to individuals, children, families, and communities.
THE CHANGES

How did the 2012 funding cuts impact Josephine County staffing and services?
COUNTY AGENCIES’ STAFFING AND SERVICES

The funding cuts that occurred in June 2012 impacted several of Josephine County’s agencies, including the Sheriff’s Office (JCSO), the county jail, Juvenile Justice (JCJJ), and the District Attorney’s Office (JCUDA). In many cases, across these agencies, there was a reduction in the number of staff and in the hours during which staff were available to provide services.

Sheriff’s Office (JCSO)

In June 2012, when the cuts went into effect, the Sheriff’s Office staff went from 85 to 28 employees. This drop included the JCSO staff being reduced from:

- 23 to 3 patrol deputies;
- 6 to 0 detectives;
- 8 to 0 records staff;
- 9 to 1.5 dispatch staff.

Figure 1. Sheriff’s Office Staffing, 2010-2019

Note. Data from Josephine County Sheriff’s Office
**Patrol deputies.** Patrol deputies are officers who patrol communities, respond to 911 calls, and handle crime situations. Before 2012, patrol service was available throughout the county nearly around the clock. Specifically, deputies patrolled the county 20 hours per day, 7 days per week. After the funding cuts in June 2012, patrol coverage was substantially reduced: Deputies patrolled the county 8 hours per day, 5 days per week. Patrol coverage remained at this level until 2015, when it increased to 10 hours per day, 7 days per week. In 2018, after the successful levy passage, it increased further. As of July 2019, JCSO deputies patrolled the county 12 hours per day, 7 days per week. Despite the improvement in 2018, **patrol coverage in 2019 is roughly half what it was before 2012.**

Due to the reduction in deputies in 2012, patrol coverage was stretched thin, with fewer deputies covering larger areas of the county. As a result, deputies were often unable to respond to every call for service while they were on duty. To support the most effective use of limited resources, JCSO command established a general protocol to triage calls for service. This protocol prioritized calls involving person crimes and calls with imminent danger to health or safety, and it de-prioritized calls regarding property crimes and other crimes not in progress. In 2015, when the new sheriff took office, these protocols were revised to broaden the number of calls that received immediate patrol response, although property crimes remained a lower priority, given that patrol resources still remained limited.

**Detectives.** Detectives are the officers who investigate crimes and collect evidence to assist with the prosecution of guilty parties. These officers also participate in the Major Crimes Team with detectives from Grants Pass Police Department (GPPD) and the Oregon State Police (OSP). This team jointly investigates major crimes such as homicides and prepares for coordinated response to major events such active shooters. With no detectives on staff, JCSO has not been part of the Major Crimes Team since 2012. Before 2012, JCSO had a team of six detectives. After the funding cuts, all detective positions were lost. **As of 2019, none have been reinstated.**

**Dispatch staff.** Dispatchers receive information about crimes and send patrol deputies to the scene to assess the situation, make arrests, and assist crime victims. They are the critical link to get officers to the scene of a crime. JCSO dispatchers most often receive 911 calls that are routed to JCSO through the County’s 911 Call Center, and they can also receive calls directly to JCSO. Before 2012, JCSO had nine dispatch staff who managed the phone lines 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. After the cuts in 2012, there was one full-time dispatcher and one part-time dispatcher who jointly managed the lines 8 hours per day, 5 days per week. In 2015, this number increased to four staff who cover the lines between 10 and 12 per day, 7 days per week. **In 2019, dispatch capacity is half what it was before 2012.**

**Records staff.** Records staff manage many administrative duties in JCSO. Importantly, they answer the non-emergency phone line, which county residents use to report property crimes and other non-
emergency issues. Before 2012, there were eight records staff members and they were available 16 hours per day, 7 days per week. After 2012, all records staff positions were cut. One position was reinstated in 2017, and that person is available 8 hours per day, 5 days per week. In 2019, the records staff capacity is roughly one quarter what it was before 2012.

**County Jail**

The funding cuts in June 2012 reduced the capacity of the county jail by roughly half, from 120 beds to 55 beds. This reduction meant that, when the cuts went into effect, roughly half of the jail population was released into the public due to the lack of resources to lodge them. The jail capacity remained diminished for most of 2012 and 2013. Because the county jail lodged offenders arrested by any law enforcement agency in the county, its limited capacity impacted multiple agencies, including GPPD which did not lose patrol officers in the cutbacks. From July 2013 to July 2017, GPPD rented 30 jail beds to lodge the offenders detained by GPPD for crimes within the city limits. These additional resources modestly expanded the jail’s capacity, but did not increase the number of beds available to lodge offenders arrested in the rural parts of the county.

Figure 2 on the next page shows the average daily count of the offenders lodged in the county jail. Because the jail was operating at full capacity during this time, the average daily count provides a reasonable estimate of overall jail capacity. As seen in Figure 2, the capacity remained fairly stable from 2014 to the beginning of 2017. The capacity increased during 2018, as a result of the successful levy passage in 2017, and reached the highest levels in 7 years.

*Figure 2. Average Daily Count of Offenders Lodged in County Jail, 2012-2018*

*Note.* Data from Josephine County Sheriff’s Office
Juvenile Justice (JCJJ)

Before 2012, Josephine County Juvenile Justice Department (JCJJ) operated a 14-bed juvenile detention center, a 12-bed non-secure juvenile residential facility, and a variety of court and field services by juvenile probation officers. When the funding cuts occurred in June 2012:

- The detention center closed, changing the county capacity from 14 beds to 0;
- The residential facility closed and related services were stopped, changing the capacity from 12 beds to 0;
- 20 full-time employee positions related to these two centers were lost.

Detention center. The juvenile detention center housed juvenile offenders who had committed person-to-person or felony crimes. When the 2012 funding cuts occurred, the county went from having 14 beds to lodge juvenile offenders to having 0. JCJJ rented three beds from a neighboring county from 2012 to 2017. These three beds were usually full, often with Measure 11 offenders who could not be released, leaving little capacity to lodge other potentially violent juvenile offenders. In 2018, with

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Figure 3. Number of Beds in the Juvenile Detention Center and the Non-Secure Juvenile Residential Facility, 2010-2018

Detention center. The juvenile detention center housed juvenile offenders who had committed person-to-person or felony crimes. When the 2012 funding cuts occurred, the county went from having 14 beds to lodge juvenile offenders to having 0. JCJJ rented three beds from a neighboring county from 2012 to 2017. These three beds were usually full, often with Measure 11 offenders who could not be released, leaving little capacity to lodge other potentially violent juvenile offenders. In 2018, with

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1 Ballot Measure 11, passed by Oregon voters in 1994, requires mandatory minimum prison sentences for 21 different “serious crimes against persons.” Measure 11 offenders receive no parole or reduction of sentence for good behavior while in prison. Juveniles age 15 and older charged with a Measure 11 crime are lodged in juvenile detention but tried as adults.
funding from the levy that passed in 2017, the detention center re-opened and was once again operating at capacity.

**Non-secure residential facility.** The non-secure residential facility housed juveniles who could be in the community while going through the court process, but had nowhere to live. This group of youth included, for example, offenders of lower-level crimes who could not go home (e.g., home was deemed to be unsafe or unavailable) and youth waiting for a foster home. The facility also offered various services for youth. In June 2012, the facility closed and the services ceased until 2017, when funding from the successful levy allowed it to become operational again.

**District Attorney’s Office (JCDA)**

When the funding cuts happened in June 2012, the District Attorney’s Office staff was reduced by roughly 40%. In 2013, state funds were used to hire another deputy DA and, 1 year later, another deputy DA was hired. The DA’s office was able to restaff more quickly than the other county agencies. It had regained the total number of staff by 2015.
In response to the lack of local law enforcement and the potential ramifications for public safety, Oregon State Police (OSP) increased its presence in Josephine County. From 2011 to 2017, **OSP doubled its local staff**, increasing the number of:

- Troopers from 8 to 16;
- Major crimes detectives from 4 to 8;
- Leadership positions (e.g., sergeants, lieutenants) from 1 to 3.

In 2015, **OSP opened a new area command in Josephine County** to accommodate the increase in staff and necessary coordination.

**Figure 4. Oregon State Police Staffing in Josephine County, 2010-2019**

*Note. Data from Oregon State Police*

**OSP’s expanded response protocol.** Prior to 2012, OSP troopers patrolled the I-5 corridor and other state highways, while JCSO patrol deputies responded to all crimes (person and property) within the county outside of the Grants Pass city limits. When the funding cuts occurred in June 2012, and there was a stark reduction in JCSO deputies and detectives, OSP stepped in to fill some of the void. OSP
troopers began responding to crimes in rural parts of the county that were not within OSP’s traditional jurisdiction. Generally speaking, OSP expanded its patrol response protocol to include person crimes, other violent crimes, and those posing imminent threat to safety that occurred in the county during the hours that JCSO deputies were not available. (OSP’s expanded protocols did not involve response for property crimes.) Also, OSP detectives assumed much of the responsibility for criminal and child abuse investigations that were historically within JCSO’s jurisdiction.

**How do Josephine County’s current rates of law enforcement compare with those of neighboring counties?**

**Table 1. Characteristics of Josephine and Neighboring Counties**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Median Age (yrs)</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate</th>
<th>Median Househol</th>
<th>Poverty Rate</th>
<th>Square Miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Josephine</td>
<td>86,395</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>$37,867</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1,641 mi²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coos</td>
<td>63,275</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>$39,110</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>1,629 mi²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry</td>
<td>22,915</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>$38,661</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>1,648 mi²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas</td>
<td>111,735</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>$42,052</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>5,071 mi²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson</td>
<td>219,200</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>$46,343</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>2,801 mi²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klamath</td>
<td>67,960</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>$41,951</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>6,135 mi²</td>
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*Note. Total Population figures for 2018 retrieved from Portland State University’s Population Research Center: https://www.pdx.edu/prc/population-reports-estimates
Demographic data retrieved from 2016 American Community Survey.
Square Mileage retrieved from the Oregon Blue Book: https://www.sos.oregon.gov/blue-book/Pages/local-county.aspx*
Figure 5. Map of Oregon Counties

Ratio of Patrol Deputies to Rural Residents

In the 2018-2019 budget year, Josephine County’s Sheriff’s Office (JCSO) had budgeted for 23 patrol deputies. Having 23 deputies is a marked increase over the staffing levels in 2012 and 2013 (i.e., three deputies), when funding was at its lowest, and it might therefore seem that the office is now adequately staffed. However, a review of current staffing levels across several peer counties—specifically, Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, and Klamath Counties—indicates otherwise.

Table 2 shows the number of patrol officers and detectives per capita for each of the counties. With the exception of Coos County, which is undergoing a similar stark reduction in resources, Josephine County ranks the lowest in terms of its ratio of patrol deputies to county residents. In particular, Josephine County had one patrol deputy for every 2,135 rural county residents. The other counties (omitting Coos), averaged one patrol deputy for about every 1,200 rural residents—nearly half of Josephine County’s ratio. This difference means that Josephine County’s patrol deputies are stretched further than their counterparts in other counties, which could result in service deficiencies. To adopt a similar ratio to its peer counties (1:1,200), Josephine County would need to staff approximately 41 patrol deputies for its current estimated rural population of 49,110.

2 Rural population of each county was calculated by subtracting the populations of cities with police departments from the total county population.
Ratio of Detectives to Rural Residents

Also shown in Table 2, in the 2018-2019 budget year, JCSO had budgeted for zero detectives. All of the five peer counties—Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, and Klamath Counties—budgeted for at least one detective position, with their counts ranging from one detective to 13. With the exception of Coos County, which is undergoing its own budget cuts, the other peer counties averaged one detective for every 10,700 rural residents. To adopt a similar ratio to these peer counties, JCSO would need approximately five detectives for its current rural county population.

Table 2. Number of County Sheriff Patrol Deputies and Detectives (FY2019) by Local Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County Sheriff</th>
<th>Rural Pop.(^a)</th>
<th>Patrol Deputies</th>
<th>Detectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Ratio</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josephine County</td>
<td>49,110</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1 deputy: 2,135 ppl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coos County</td>
<td>27,175</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1 deputy: 2,718 ppl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry County</td>
<td>12,875</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1 deputy: 757 ppl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas County</td>
<td>65,630</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1 deputy: 1,094 ppl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson County</td>
<td>71,680</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1 deputy: 1,493 ppl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klamath County</td>
<td>45,255</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1 deputy: 1,509 ppl.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Data obtained by contacting the sheriff’s office in each county. Figures include budgeted personnel for fiscal year 2019, although some positions were vacant.

\(^a\) Rural population of each county was calculated by subtracting the populations of cities with police departments from the total county population.

Cost Paid for Sheriff Patrol Function in Josephine and Neighboring Counties

The 2018-2019 budgets for Josephine County and its five neighboring counties were reviewed to calculate the cost per capita paid for the patrol function of the Sheriff’s Department in each county. Table 3 shows, for each county, the estimate listed in the budget for Sheriff patrol, the number of patrol deputies listed in the budget, and, if available, the hours and days of patrol coverage paid for. The table also lists each county’s population. Dividing the budget amount for patrol by the county population yields an approximate “per capita cost” paid by residents of each county for their patrol function of their local sheriff.

In 2019, Josephine County residents paid roughly half of what residents in similar counties paid for patrol coverage. Josephine County had one patrol deputy for every 2,056 rural residents—roughly half the rate of the other counties—and coverage for half the number of hours.
As seen in Table 3, Josephine County residents paid significantly less for patrol than residents of neighboring, similarly sized counties did. In fact, they paid less than half of what residents of Coos, Curry, and Klamath Counties paid. As a result, they appear to receive about half the coverage (12 hours per day, as opposed to 20 or 24 hours per day).

Table 3. Cost per Capita Paid for Sheriff Patrol by County (2018-19)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County Sheriff</th>
<th>County Pop.</th>
<th>Budget Estimate for Sheriff Patrol</th>
<th>Patrol Deputies Listed in Budget</th>
<th>Per Capita Cost</th>
<th>Coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Josephine County</td>
<td>86,395</td>
<td>$2,058,813</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>$23.83</td>
<td>12 hrs/day, 7 days/wk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coos County</td>
<td>63,275</td>
<td>$3,330,106</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>$52.63</td>
<td>(not listed in budget)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry County</td>
<td>22,915</td>
<td>$1,399,333</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>$61.07</td>
<td>(not listed in budget)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas County</td>
<td>111,735</td>
<td>$4,283,223</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>$38.33</td>
<td>(not listed in budget)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson County</td>
<td>219,200</td>
<td>$8,001,432</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>$36.50</td>
<td>24 hrs/day, 7 days/wk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klamath County</td>
<td>67,960</td>
<td>$4,048,889</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>$59.58</td>
<td>20 hrs/day, 7 days/wk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a 2018 population estimates obtained from Portland State University’s Population Research Center.

*b Per capita cost calculated by dividing the budget estimate for Sheriff Patrol by the county population.


d Cty. budget: http://www.co.coos.or.us/Portals/0/Treasurer%20Department/Budget%20Book/FY19%20Budget%20Book.pdf


f Cty. budget (p. 115, footer); $2,964,784 with estimated benefits from ratio in table: http://www.co.douglas.or.us/finance/documents/2020/FY20_Proposed_budget.pdf

g Cty. budget (p. 343, footer): https://jacksoncountyor.org/Departments/Administration/County-Budget

THE IMPACTS

What happened as a result of the reductions to county services?
REPORTED CRIME

In this section, data illustrate crime reported by Josephine County residents from 2010 to 2018. Two types of data are presented. First, data from Josephine County’s 911 Call Center are shown, which enumerate the total number of calls for service that were transferred to the Sheriff’s Office (JCSO) and to Oregon State Police (OSP) within Josephine County. Second, data from Oregon’s Uniform Crime Report, created annually by the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, illustrate the number of calls for service, by crime category, that were received by law enforcement agencies in Josephine and neighboring counties over time.

911 Calls for Service

Josephine County contracts with Grants Pass to operate the Josephine County 911 Call Center. All 911 calls in the county go to this center, whose staff take the call and then dispatch help or transfer the call to the relevant agency depending on type of incident (whether it requires response from law enforcement, fire, or emergency medical services [EMS]) and location. Calls related to crime within Grants Pass city limits are dispatched to GPPD; calls for crime outside the city are transferred to JCSO or OSP, depending on the type of crime and time of day. When OSP’s expanded response protocols went into place in June 2012, the 911 dispatchers were trained regarding when to connect callers with OSP dispatch and when to connect them with JCSO dispatch. Figure 7 on page 16 illustrates this dispatch process.

Figure 6 on the next page shows the number of calls that the 911 Call Center transferred to JCSO and to OSP each year from 2010 to 2018. Before 2012, the 911 dispatchers transferred more than 6,000 calls per year to JCSO and just over 2,000 to OSP. In 2012, the number of calls transferred to JCSO sharply decreased and the number transferred to OSP sharply increased. In 2013, more than 6,000 calls were transferred to OSP and less than 2,000 to JCSO. This reflects OSP troopers accommodating the loss of local county law enforcement.

In 2013, when OSP expanded its response protocol to address the JCSO patrol reduction, the number of 911 calls transferred to OSP tripled.

In 2015, the number of calls transferred to JCSO increased to nearly 4,000; this timing corresponds to when JCSO expanded its patrol capacity to 7 days per week. Since then, number of calls transferred to JCSO has steadily risen to 5,000 in 2018. Throughout this time, despite the increase in JCSO capacity, the number of calls transferred to OSP has remained at or above 6,000 per year. This finding suggests that although JCSO has increased its capacity, the current capacity is still insufficient to meet the demand for services in the county and OSP’s resources are still filling an important gap.
From 2013 to 2018, a similar increase in calls for service was seen in Grants Pass (not shown in the figure). The number of 911 calls dispatched to GPPD increased from 16,256 in 2013 to 18,411 in 2018. (Data prior to 2013 were not available.) These upward trends, seen in the county and the city, suggest that crime rates increased during this time period.

Information from Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholders reported that the reduction in JCSO dispatch and records staff impacted the County 911 Call Center. For instance, when county residents would call 911 for help with crimes that were not part of the limited response protocol (e.g., property crimes, other crimes not in-progress), 911 dispatchers would explain that they could not dispatch any law enforcement to the scene and instruct callers to call the JCSO non-emergency line. However, because the JCSO records department was not staffed, calls to the non-emergency line were very rarely answered and, in some cases, calls were placed on hold for hours. Residents would call back to 911 repeatedly to plead for help with these issues. Many would get angry.

When residents would call 911 for help with a person or other in-progress crime that did meet the response protocol and was during JCSO available hours, 911 dispatchers would attempt to transfer the emergency call to JCSO dispatch. However, when JCSO dispatch was sparsely staffed, these emergency calls would often ring for several minutes before being answered.

Stakeholders expressed concern that, over time, because they were not getting a response, county residents just stopped calling 911 and JCSO for help. Stakeholders thought that any potential decrease in calls for service did not reflect a decrease in crime (they all felt sure that crime had increased in the county), but instead it reflected a decrease in residents’ belief that there would be any response.

Most citizens do not understand that multiple agencies are involved in the full process of answering and responding to 911 calls, and many think that the 911 dispatchers are part of law enforcement, which they are not. Thus, the 911 dispatchers often took the brunt of callers’ anger over not getting a response from law enforcement.
Figure 7. Dispatch Process for 911 Calls for Service

- **Within Grants Pass city limits**
  - **LAW ENFORCEMENT**
    - Call dispatched to GPPD
    - JCSO dispatch reviews call
    - If meets response protocol and deputy is available, JCSO deputy is dispatched to scene
    - If call does not meet protocol or no deputy is available, call is logged and no deputy responds. Deputy may follow up when available.

- **FIRE**
  - Call dispatched to Grants Pass Fire/Rescue
  - GPPD dispatch sends out patrol officer; coverage 24/7

- **MEDICAL**
  - Call dispatched to Grants Pass Fire/Rescue
  - 911 Dispatch sends out emergency medical staff; coverage 24/7

- **Outside of Grants Pass city limits**
  - **LAW ENFORCEMENT**
    - If person crime or imminent threat, and during available hours, call transferred to JCSO
    - JCSO dispatch reviews call
    - If meets response protocol and deputy is available, JCSO deputy is dispatched to scene
    - If call does not meet protocol or no deputy is available, call is logged and no deputy responds. Deputy may follow up when available.
  - Call dispatched to either Rural Metro, Wolf Creek Fire, Williams Fire, or Illinois Valley Fire Department, depending on location
  - If property crime, caller told to call JCSO non-emergency line or submit online report

- **FIRE**
  - Call dispatched to either Rural Metro, Wolf Creek Fire, Williams Fire, or Illinois Valley Fire Department, depending on location
  - If criminal or safety threat, call also transferred to law enforcement
  - If LE available, LE and AMR/Fire respond jointly
  - If no LE available, AMR/Fire delay response until LE arrives

- **MEDICAL**
  - Call dispatched to either Rural Metro, Wolf Creek Fire, Williams Fire, or Illinois Valley Fire Department, depending on location
  - If no criminal or safety threat, AMR or Fire responds; coverage 24/7
Crime Reported to Law Enforcement

Data in this section were gathered from Oregon’s Annual Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) from 2007 through 2017. On a monthly basis, law enforcement agencies throughout Oregon submit data to the state about different types of crimes, and this information is compiled to generate the annual UCR. UCR data include the number of offenses and the number of arrests for various crimes.

To approximate the rate at which residents were experiencing crime—and not necessarily the rate at which offenders were being apprehended—this section shows the numbers of offenses reported by law enforcement agencies, not the number of arrests. Offenses are defined by the UCR as “known criminal acts occurring within the reporting agency’s jurisdiction” and include both complaints and calls for service received by the law enforcement agency. Data are shown for four crime categories, as defined by the UCR. From 2007 to 2017, the offense rate (per 100,000 population) is shown for:

- **Person crimes** — “criminal offenses where the victim is present and the act is violent, threatening, or has the potential to be physically harmful.” Includes murder, homicide, rape, sex crimes, kidnapping, other criminal threat, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault.

- **Property crimes** — “criminal offenses that involve something of value by theft, deception, or the destruction of property.” Includes burglary, larceny (theft), motor vehicle theft, arson, forgery/counterfeit, fraud, embezzlement, bribery, extortion, stolen property, and vandalism.

- **Behavioral crimes** — “crimes that represent society’s prohibitions on engaging in certain types of activity, such as criminal offenses that violate laws relating to personal conduct, responsibility, and public order. Although not necessarily violent offenses or property offenses in themselves, they may often contribute to other criminal acts.” Includes weapons laws, prostitution, pornography/obscene materials, peeping tom, drug laws, gambling, offenses against family, driving while intoxicated (DUII), liquor laws, disorderly conduct, curfew, runaway, and others.

From 2012 to 2017, the crime rate (offenses and arrests) is show by county for:

- **Drug crimes** -- comprises all violations (including offenses, citations, and arrests) of state and local laws, specifically those relating to the unlawful possession, sales, use, growing, and manufacturing of illegal drugs. These data were available for the years 2012 and later and at the county level only (i.e., these data were not available by law enforcement agency).

For each crime category, offense rates are shown, over time, for Josephine County (illustrated by the red dashed line) and each of the five neighboring counties (solid lines). The graph in the top left corner shows the rates reported by all law enforcement agencies within the county (“Total County”). The graph at the top right shows the rates reported by each county sheriff. The bottom left graph shows the rates reported by the police department in each county seat (for Josephine County, this is Grants Pass Police). The graph on the bottom right shows the rates reported by OSP within each county.
Person Crime (Reported Offenses)

In 2010, before the funding cuts, person crimes in Josephine County were reported at a rate of about 1,000 per 100,000 population, which was average among the counties in the southwest region of the state. After 2012, the overall rates of reported person crimes increased. When data were examined separately by the law enforcement agency receiving the call for service, rates of person crimes reported by JCSO showed a decrease while rates reported by OSP showed an increase. This pattern aligns with the related changes in staffing and protocols—namely, the overall reduction in response by JCSO and the expansion of response by OSP to include person crimes in the county.

Rates of person crime in Grants Pass (Josephine’s county seat) notably increased after 2012, although GPPD did not lose funding or reduce the size of its force. Stakeholders thought this accurately reflected the reality and offered several reasons for it. First, the loss of the county jail and consequential “cite and release” practices, whereby offenders were arrested and given a paper citation but not taken into custody, emboldened would-be offenders who knew there would be no consequences for criminal behavior. (Note that the rate dropped slightly in 2015, when GPPD began to rent jail beds.) Second, the increased crime in the county due to the loss of JCSO coverage bled into the city. Third, county residents started to call GPPD to report crimes because they were not getting any response from JCSO.

Figure 8. Person Crime Offenses by Law Enforcement Agency and County (Rate per 100,000)

Note. Data obtained Oregon’s Uniform Crime Reports. Some counties were missing data for some years. The scale on the vertical axis is not the same across all graphics, because some agencies handled a larger volume of calls than others. However, the graphics are the same size so that the trajectory within each agency is clear.
Property Crime (Reported Offenses)

Before the funding cuts in 2012, property crimes in Josephine County were reported at a rate of about 5,000 per 100,000 population. This rate was higher than most of their southwestern county neighbors. When data were disaggregated by law enforcement agency receiving the complaint or call for service, rate of property crimes reported by JCSO showed a small bump in 2012 and then decreased notably after that. From 2015 to 2017, the reported rates were half of what they were in 2007. This decrease is due to the lack of JCSO records staff to answer these non-emergency calls and the lack of JCSO deputies to respond to lower level crimes. As described earlier, remaining law enforcement in the county—both JCSO and OSP—were working with very limited resources and had to prioritize calls for deputy response. Property crimes, especially those not in-progress, were typically deprioritized in the face of person or other violent crimes.

After 2013, once the expanded response protocols were in place, the rates of property crime offenses reported by OSP increased over time. This increase was less severe than the increase seen for person crimes, because OSP did not typically respond to property crime calls.

Figure 9. Property Crime Offenses by Law Enforcement Agency and County (Rate per 100,000)

Note. Data obtained Oregon’s Uniform Crime Reports. Some counties were missing data for some years. The scale on the vertical axis is not the same across all graphics, because some agencies handled a larger volume of calls than others. However, the graphics are the same size so that the trajectory within each agency is clear.
The rate of reported property crime in Grants Pass was the highest among the county seats in neighboring counties. Although this rate was high before the funding cuts, there was a notable bump in 2013, after the law enforcement cuts in the county occurred.

**Motor vehicle theft.** Included in the property crime numbers is the number of reported motor vehicle thefts. As shown in Figure 10, for the last decade, Josephine County has had one of the highest rates of motor vehicle theft in the southwest region of the state. This rate doubled in 2013, after the law enforcement funding cuts, and it has stayed high since then.

![Figure 10. Rate of Motor Vehicle Thefts by County (per 100,000)](image)

Information from Stakeholder Interviews

All stakeholders described a substantial increase in property crime as a result of the county law enforcement reduction. Many of them used words like “lawless” and “chaos” to describe the circumstances in the county during 2013 and 2014 and recounted stories of what they perceived as rampant criminal behavior. This situation applied to all kinds of crime, but especially property crime, because property crime was often not met with law enforcement response due to the reduced response protocols.

In 2013, JCSO launched an online reporting system for property crimes that was intended to buffer the impacts of losing a records clerk, who typically answered the non-emergency line through which property crime was reported. Unfortunately, the online system had a significant glitch. It required the user to download an application in order to submit a report. However, this application was not supported by most common operating systems. As a result, most citizens could never get the system to work. This glitch was fixed in 2019, and the online system now functions well and citizens can use it to report any type of crime.

**Stakeholders resoundingly reported that property crime increased after the funding cuts.**
Alternatively, people could go to one of the JCSO substations in the county to report property crimes. In 2019, there were two substations in the Illinois Valley and one in Merlin. Each substation was open between 3 and 5 days per week and staffed completely by volunteers. The substations could not provide a law enforcement response, but they could access the online reporting system to log a property crime and create an incident number.

Stakeholders felt sure that the decreases in the rates of reported property crime were not a result of less crime, but a result of people giving up on calling for help. People calling to report property crimes had sat on hold for hours, had been told that no officers were available to respond, and had been instructed to use the non-functional online reporting system. Stakeholders understood that, as a result, people grew less and less likely to call law enforcement. Several stakeholders recounted stories of residents who, after being the victim of a property crime, became increasingly frustrated when they could not get what they needed in order to file an insurance claim. Having no way to report the property crime left them with no way to obtain a police report number, which they needed to file a claim. Stakeholders from GPPD recalled incidents of people who were not Grants Pass residents claiming that their property had been taken or vandalized while in Grants Pass, so that they could obtain the necessary police report number from GPPD to file their claim.

Stakeholders expressed concern about the impact of the high rates of property crime on local insurance rates. Private insurance companies rank regions according to various types of risk (such as fire, flood), and they do not reveal their proprietary formulas for calculating the ratings for each region. However, the insurance industry publicly states that local crime rates do factor into insurance calculations and that higher rates of local crime (which translate into higher probability of the insured person filing a claim) can lead to higher premiums for both homeowner’s insurance and automobile insurance. Stakeholders wondered whether the high rates of property crime generally—and the very high rate of motor vehicle theft, specifically—was causing their insurance premiums to increase and then wondered whether the money that county residents were paying toward higher insurance rates might be better spent on funding law enforcement which would reduce the crime rate.

Several stakeholders also mentioned the impact of property crime on local businesses. They understood that most businesses, especially small ones, cannot absorb the costs of replacing broken windows or stolen goods or the expense of hiring security. These costs were therefore passed on to customers through higher prices. Some stakeholders explained that property crime can deter businesses from opening or cause them to leave. This pattern can negatively impact the local economy, because fewer companies means fewer jobs for residents. They worried that the crime rate helped to facilitate an overall disinvestment in Josephine County. As one stakeholder said, “We are all paying, one way or another, for the lack of law enforcement.”
Behavioral Crime (Reported Offenses)

Over the course of the last decade, behavioral crimes in Josephine County were reported at a lower rate than most of the southwestern neighboring counties. When data were disaggregated by law enforcement agency, the rate of behavioral crimes reported by JCSO was about 750 per 100,000 population and then, after 2012, fell to almost zero. From 2013 to 2017, the reported rates were about one third of what they were in 2010, due to the reduction of JCSO response to lower level crimes. In contrast, behavioral crime rates reported by OSP rose in 2012, where they stayed relatively flat until they spiked in 2016. The higher rates of response by OSP make sense given that DUII offenses are counted within behavioral crime. The rate of behavioral crime within Grants Pass has been higher than neighboring counties for most of the past decade.

**Figure 11. Behavioral Crime Offenses by Law Enforcement Agency and County (Rate per 100,000)**

Note. Data obtained Oregon’s Uniform Crime Reports. Some counties were missing data for some years. The scale on the vertical axis is not the same across all graphics, because some agencies handled a larger volume of calls than others. However, the graphics are the same size so that the trajectory within each agency is clear.
Drug Crimes (Offenses, Citations, and Arrests)

Drug crime data were available beginning in 2012. In 2012, Josephine County’s rate of drug crime was on par with the state rate, at about 400 crimes per 100,000 population. In 2013, after the county law enforcement cuts, Josephine County’s drug crime rate increased to roughly 3 times the state rate, to 1,300 crimes per 100,000 population. It has stayed high since then.

Figure 12. Rates of Drug Crimes for All Substances by County (Rate per 100,000)

Narcotics and Heroin

Figure 13 shows the rate of drug crimes related to narcotics generally and to heroin specifically since 2012. Josephine County’s rate of these crimes show an upward trend over time. In 2017, Josephine County had the second highest rate of these crimes among neighboring counties. This increase was consistent with stakeholders’ reports that heroin use had become more prevalent.

Figure 13. Rates of Crime Related to All Narcotics and to Heroin Specifically by County (Rate per 100,000)
Synthetic Drugs and Methamphetamine

Figure 14 shows the rate of drug crimes related to synthetic drugs generally and to methamphetamine specifically since 2012. Five of the southwestern counties’ rates of these crimes showed an upward trend over time, suggesting a regional issue. Of note, Josephine County’s rates showed increases from 2012 to 2013, when the county law enforcement was reduced, and again from 2015 to 2017. In 2017, Josephine County had the highest rate of these crimes among neighboring counties. This increase was consistent with stakeholders’ reports that methamphetamine use had become more prevalent.

Figure 14. Rates of Crime Related to All Synthetic Drugs and to Methamphetamines Specifically by County (Rate per 100,000)

Information from Stakeholder Interviews

All stakeholders noted that drug crime (including growing, manufacturing, sales) in the county had increased. They lamented that the reduction in law enforcement, in concert with the legalization of marijuana, had opened the door for Josephine County to become an ideal location for major drug operations. Several stakeholders mentioned criminal activity incidental to the rising drug industry, including tensions between competitors that sometimes turned violent.

Stakeholders also noted that drug use had increased among people in the county. Many related the higher levels of use with heightened levels of property crime, as some offenders were stealing things to support their drug habit. Stakeholders from law enforcement and those from juvenile justice specifically mentioned higher rates of marijuana, heroin, and methamphetamine use among the people arrested.
RESPONSE TO CRIME

As described earlier, Josephine County’s 911 Call Center makes an assessment of each incoming call for service and then dispatches a response or transfers the call to the appropriate responding agency. Once the call is received by the responding agency, their own dispatchers make an assessment of the call and then dispatch an officer to the scene. Upon receiving a dispatched call, officers often decide what type of response is appropriate and possible given other demands. The previous section of this report showed the numbers of calls that were transferred by the 911 Call Center to each law enforcement agency. This section shows what happened once calls were received by the responding agency’s dispatch.

Sheriff’s Office Response to Calls for Service

The Sheriff’s Office (JCSO) receives calls for service through the county 911 Call Center and via direct calls (i.e., residents call the JCSO emergency and non-emergency numbers). Calls go to the JCSO dispatchers, who screen and forward appropriate calls to available deputies. (Note: Due to a change in internal case management system, JCSO data were not available before 2012. As a result, there is no true “baseline” estimate of JCSO functioning when close to fully staffed.)

Calls for Service Logged by JCSO Dispatch

The dark blue line in Figure 15 shows the total number of calls for service logged by JCSO dispatch each year from 2012 to 2018. The sharp decrease from 2012 to 2013 is attributable to the JCSO losing most of its dispatchers and deputies in 2012, leaving few available staff to answer the calls and respond to them. In fact, the reduction in calls closely corresponds to the timing of the funding cuts and subsequent staffing cuts: From January to June 2012, JCSO dispatch logged twice as many calls for service as they did from July to December 2012, after the funding cuts went into effect.

The number of calls addressed remained low (just over 6,000) during 2013 and 2014, when there were few dispatchers and limited hours of operation (8 hours/day, 5 days/week). When the JCSO dispatch increased its capacity in 2015 (10 hours/day, 7 days/week), the number of calls logged increased to 8,744 in 2015, and again to 10,439 in 2016. In 2018, after the JCSO regained records department staff (who answer the non-emergency line) and increased dispatch operation to 12 hours per day, 7 days per week, the number of calls logged grew to 14,571.

In 2018, JCSO dispatch logged 14,571 calls for service. Of these, 6,407 calls—17 calls per day—did not receive a deputy response due to limited resources.

4 These figures reflect the number of calls for service and incidents with JCSO intervention (e.g., when a deputy encountered a crime while patrolling). These figures do not reflect the number of times deputies performed other functions, such as serving papers.
Of the calls that JCSO dispatchers answered, a notable proportion did not receive a response from a JCSO deputy, due to the limited number and availability of deputies (shown by the light blue line in Figure 15 above). In 2012, when the cutbacks began, a total of 7,855 calls for service—more than 20 calls per day—did not receive a deputy response. Most often, these calls were determined to be “beyond available resources” or outside of the reduced response protocols. For example, if a resident called to report a property crime that was not in-progress, the dispatcher would log the information but would not send out a deputy.

Figure 16 (on the next page) shows the percentage of calls for service logged by JCSO dispatchers that ended with various dispositions each year from 2012 to 2018. The dark blue bar shows the percentage of calls that did not receive a response by a JCSO deputy. In 2012, when the staffing cuts first occurred, more than half of the calls for service (53%) did not receive a deputy response. In 2013, this percentage dipped, possibly because the overall number of calls decreased. Between 2015 and 2017, when the number of calls was increasing but the available patrol resources were still very limited, more than half of calls did not receive a deputy response. Notably, in 2018, with the increase in JCSO patrol coverage after the levy passed, the proportion of calls without deputy response decreased to 44%. For the first time in 4 years, after being provided increased resources, the JCSO was able to send a deputy to respond to the majority of calls for service.

The light blue bar shows the percentage of calls for service that resulted in an arrest, citation, warning, or crime report being filed. In 2012 and 2013, approximately one third of calls ended this way. From
2014 to 2017, about one fourth of calls ended this way. In 2018, 29% of calls for service resulted in the JCSCO deputy making an arrest, giving a citation, giving a warning, or filing a crime report.

The yellow bars in Figure 16 illustrate the percentage of calls for service that were deemed to be “other” circumstances. This category includes false alarms, civil (not criminal) complaints, unfounded allegations, calls referred to another agency, system tests, and incidents assessed to have no crime to be reported. These calls warranted response by a deputy, but did not result in an arrest, citation, warning, or crime report. Across all years, unfounded allegations and calls referred to other agencies comprised the majority of the “other” incidents. From 2014 to 2017, about 14% of calls resulted in an “other” disposition. In 2018, this proportion jumped to 22%.

Totaling the calls for service that resulted in an arrest, citation, warning, or report filed with the calls that resulted in an “other” disposition provides an estimate of the total number of calls that received a deputy response. In 2018, these two categories accounted for just over half of the calls for service. In 2018, JCSC deputies were able to respond to 51% of the calls received by JCSO dispatch–up from 39% in 2017. This increase is likely due to the additional resources and expanded patrol coverage made possible by the levy funds.

Notes. Data from Josephine County’s Sheriff’s Office
Information from Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholders felt sure that crime had increased, not decreased, since the funding cuts in 2012. They explained that the number of calls for JCSO service decreased in 2013 and stayed low because the cutbacks left no JCSO staff to answer the phone. This situation resulted in callers staying on hold for long periods of time and perhaps not getting their issue addressed at all. Stakeholders also thought that people stopped calling for help because they were not getting a response; in effect, they lost trust in the JCSO. JCSO staff expressed frustration and regret in understanding that the reduction in resources had impacted the community this way.

Stakeholders noted the obvious challenges of not having sufficient deputies to respond to calls for service and patrol the county. When the cuts began in 2012, the remaining three deputies spent all of their time running from one emergency call to the next, with the crime scenes being up to an hour away from each other. They were able to conduct virtually no highway or preventive patrolling. The environment was exhausting, with the remaining staff doing the best they could with very little.

Stakeholders explained the myriad challenges created by not having any detectives. The lack of detectives contributes to JCSO’s lower arrest rate because there is no one available to follow up on solvable cases. If JCSO had detectives, more crimes could be investigated, more cases could be solved, and more arrests would be made. Without detectives, the JCSO has not been participating in the county’s Major Crimes Team or the RADE (drug enforcement) team. Historically, JCSO, GPPD, and OSP collaborated to ensure effective and coordinated response to major crimes and preparation for crisis situations. Stakeholders worried that community emergency planning has suffered due of the lack of law enforcement staff available for proactive planning. For example, GPPD has done a lot of work to prepare for an active shooter within city limits, but until 2017 JCSO had not been present for these conversations and the county had done substantially less preparation. If there is an active shooter, stakeholders worried about there being a coordinated response. Some stakeholders drew comparisons with other counties with more resources and more well established Major Crimes Teams; for example, one stakeholder explained that an officer-involved shooting in Jackson County would take hours to investigate, but the same event would take days in Josephine County due to the lack of resources for the investigation to happen efficiently.

While the impact of the funding cuts on law enforcement availability was clear, stakeholders also expressed concern about other ways in which the cuts impacted the JCSO’s capacity. Specifically, stakeholders noted how the cutbacks had caused the layoffs of many seasoned officers and, with them, the JCSO lost substantial institutional knowledge. Longer-serving JCSO deputies had established connections within the county, had linkages with other agencies, and gained experience working in the various communities. The detectives, in particular, were experienced at working crime scenes and collecting evidence that would support effective

In 2015, Josephine County elected a new sheriff, who has worked to expand patrol coverage and repair the JCSO’s relationship with the community.
prosecution. In losing these staff, the JCSO not only lost available officers to conduct daily enforcement duties, it also lost notable institutional knowledge and experience. The process of hiring and training new patrol deputies takes several months, and newly trained deputies benefit from serving alongside of, and learning from, more experienced officers. Though the recent levy funds helped augment the number of deputies employed, stakeholders knew that it would be years before the JCSO regained the level of experience and capacity it had before the cutbacks.

In 2015, a new sheriff was elected in Josephine County. He revised the JCSO response protocols to broaden the number of calls that would prompt a deputy response, and he has made efforts to connect with the community and other groups. Stakeholders reported that these efforts have been beneficial and many were optimistic about healing some of the rift that was created during the severest cutbacks. With the successful levy passage in 2017, and the additional resources that this funding afforded JCSO and the jail, the sheriff now intends that all arrests will result in the offender being taken into custody and hopes that the change will show the public what is possible with a resourced Sheriff’s Office and county jail.

HIGHLIGHT: JCSO Residential Deputies

In 2017, JCSO established three residential deputy positions, one each in Illinois Valley, south valley (Murphy to Williams), and north valley (Merlin to Wolf Creek). Each of these deputies lives in the community where they are working and interacts closely with the residents. Historically, JCSO deputies patrolled the entire county and, as a result, spent much of their time running from one call to another. In contrast, the residential deputies are embracing a community policing model and are given the flexibility to perform community-related tasks, such as visiting schools, attending local events, and mentoring. They are able to address local livability issues and, when possible, more deeply delve into local investigations.

Animal Care

In 2017, the Sheriff’s Office assumed the responsibility of the county’s animal care unit. This unit handles calls related to animal neglect and cruelty. In 2018, they received 1,112 calls for service and they responded to 1,059 (95%) of them.

OSP Response to Calls for Service

As mentioned earlier, Oregon State Police (OSP) attempted to fill some of the gap created by the defunded Sheriff’s Office. OSP expanded its response protocol to broaden the types and locations of crimes to which its troopers would respond. In short, OSP began to respond to calls that were historically handled by the JCSO (i.e., “within the Sheriff’s jurisdiction”).
Calls for Service Logged by OSP Dispatch

Figure 17 shows the number of calls for service logged by OSP’s dispatch annually from 2012 through 2018. Calls are shown by jurisdiction—that is, those within OSP’s traditional jurisdiction (calls that OSP would typically handle, shown by the light blue line) and those within JCSO’s traditional jurisdiction (calls OSP picked up as part of their expanded response protocol, shown by the dark blue line). As shown in Figure 17, after establishing the new response protocols, the number of calls for service logged by OSP dispatch each year increased notably.

In 2013 (the first year for which there were complete data), OSP received 794 calls for crimes within its own jurisdiction and 2,044 calls for crimes within JCSO’s jurisdiction. Each year since 2013, the number of calls for service in JCSO’s jurisdiction has notably outpaced the number of calls for service within OSP’s own jurisdiction. Even with a dip in 2015, when JCSO gained some additional patrol coverage, this pattern has continued over time and appears have increased in recent years. In 2018, OSP received 1,170 calls for crimes within OSP’s jurisdiction and 2,314 calls for crimes within JCSO’s jurisdiction.

Figure 17. Calls for Service Logged by OSP Dispatch, by Jurisdiction, 2012-2018

Note. Data from Oregon State Police. Data for 2012 reflect 6 months (June – December 2012).

OSP Trooper Response

Once a call for service is received by OSP dispatch, it is dispatched out to an OSP trooper. If the call is within OSP’s jurisdiction, the trooper responds. If the call is within JCSO’s jurisdiction, the trooper reviews the specifics of the call to ascertain whether it meets the criteria of the expanded response protocol and then determines the most appropriate response. As part of the service expansion in Josephine County, OSP troopers must categorize the calls to which they respond by the specific crime type, such as traffic crashes, domestic violence, and general law violations. If a call involves a situation that warrants a response but is not significant enough to require a police report (e.g., a domestic disturbance in which no crime was committed), troopers classify the incident as “log entry.”
Importantly, troopers classify any calls for service that do not meet the criteria for response under the expanded protocol as “calls not meeting response protocol.”

As shown in Figure 18, each year from 2013 to 2018 (years with complete data), OSP troopers responded to the following calls for service within JCSO’s jurisdiction:

- between 60 and 75 traffic crashes (note that OSP responded to between 375 and 750 crashes within their own jurisdiction);
- between 20 and 40 domestic violence incidents; and
- between 100 and 165 general law violations.

Importantly, each year from 2013 to 2018, OSP troopers classified between 880 and 1,600 calls as not meeting the criteria of their expanded response protocol. These calls did not receive a response by OSP. Whereas the number of traffic, domestic violence, and general law violation calls have remained relatively consistent over time, the number of calls for crimes that do not meet the protocol requirements has increased from 2014 to 2018, which is likely due to the steady increase in calls for behavioral and property crimes as shown earlier. In 2018, 1,586 calls for service from rural county residents did not receive a law enforcement response. (During this time, OSP troopers also recorded between 280 and 575 calls annually for crimes within JCSO’s jurisdiction as “log entry,” where a response was documented but a crime report was not submitted.)

In 2018, 1,586 calls dispatched to OSP—more than 4 calls per day—in the rural county did not receive a trooper response because they were outside of the protocol.

Figure 18. Number of JCSO-Jurisdiction Calls Taken by OSP by Call Type, 2012-2018

Note. Data from Oregon State Police. Data for 2012 reflect 6 months (June – December 2012)

5 The expansion of services in Josephine County required additional resources. To justify these resources, OSP must collect data to reflect how these resources are being used. To this end, OSP troopers must categorize the calls to which they respond to track the number and nature of JCSO calls that OSP resources are addressing. OSP does not perform this level of data collection anywhere else in the state.
OSP Detective Response

OSP detectives handle several types of investigations, including those for criminal cases and certain child abuse cases. When the funding cuts occurred in 2012 and JCSO lost all of its detectives, OSP picked up some of the resulting slack in investigation capacity.

Criminal investigations. Historically, OSP detectives have conducted investigations of various crimes within its jurisdiction in Josephine County, such as homicides and assaults. The light blue section in Figure 19 shows the proportion of investigations done by OSP detectives that are within OSP’s jurisdiction. The number of these investigations has increased over time, from 37 in 2013 to 60 in 2018, suggesting a general increase in crime over this period. In 2012, OSP detectives assumed the responsibility for the major person crime investigations within JCSO’s jurisdiction, such as homicides, felony assault, and sexual assault. These investigations are reflected by the dark blue section in Figure 19. This change resulted in OSP taking on an additional 46 to 74 cases each year, essentially doubling the number of investigations handled by OSP detectives.

Figure 19. Number of Criminal Investigations Conducted by OSP Detectives by Jurisdiction, 2012-2018

Note. Data from Oregon State Police. Data for 2012 reflects 6 months (June – December 2012)

Child abuse investigations. In most counties around the state, child abuse investigations are typically handled by the county-level law enforcement agency. Historically, OSP detectives investigate child abuse cases that occur on a state highway, in a state facility, or are inter-jurisdictional (i.e., involving multiple counties or states). Child abuse cases can be closed after moderate investigation or can require a full investigation, a more resource-intensive process for the officers.
Assuming the responsibility for child abuse investigations within JCSO’s jurisdiction substantially increased the number of cases handled by OSP detectives. Table 4 shows the number of moderate and full investigations conducted each year by jurisdiction. From 2013 to 2017, within OSP’s jurisdiction, detectives conducted fewer than 40 moderate investigations and fewer than 20 full investigations each year. In 2018, these rates increased to 66 moderate and 29 full investigations. Across years, this new role constituted a 10 to 50-fold increase in the number of moderate investigations and a 6 to 17-fold increase in the number of full investigations handled by OSP detectives.

Table 4. Number of Child Abuse Investigations Conducted by OSP Detectives by Jurisdiction, 2012-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>OSP Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Sheriff Jurisdiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate Investigation</td>
<td>Full Investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Data from Oregon State Police. Data for 2012 reflects 6 months (June – December 2012)

Information from Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholders from all agencies expressed appreciation for OSP’s role in helping to fill the void left by the 2012 funding cuts. They simultaneously voiced strong concern about relying on state resources to provide their county’s services. They believed OSP’s current role was temporary and wondered for how long OSP would be willing and able to carry such a large portion of the law enforcement burden in Josephine County. They worried about the void that would be left when OSP had to refocus its resources elsewhere. They understood that relying on state resources, over which they had no control, put them in a precarious position with regard to longer-term public safety capacity. Additionally, many stakeholders wondered whether and when the taxpayers from other parts of the state would become aware that they are essentially “subsidizing law enforcement in Josephine County” and protest.

OSP’s investment in Josephine County was considerable. As mentioned above, OSP essentially doubled the number of staff dedicated to the county and created an area command there in 2015. Stakeholders explained that these changes were in direct response to the funding cuts and the reductions of JCSO. OSP troopers and detectives were tasked with handling the JCSO calls and investigations (meeting the criteria of the response protocols) in addition to those they were handling within OSP’s jurisdiction.
Stakeholders explained that these additional duties yielded longer hours and busier shifts for troopers, who were still expected to patrol state highways and state properties, and made for longer days and substantially heavier caseloads for OSP detectives, who assumed the responsibility to investigate major crimes and child abuse allegations within the county. Stakeholders emphasized the impact on OSP detectives, as the number of child abuse investigations alone significantly increased their caseloads. Stakeholders referred to the OSP detectives as being “stretched very thin,” which consequently increased the time for investigations to be completed and offenders to be prosecuted, and increased the rate of burnout among staff.

Stakeholders from OSP explained that the substantial investment in Josephine County was borne out of the state agency’s commitment to providing law enforcement support to Oregon’s rural communities. They also mentioned that the level of investment in Josephine County was unparalleled in other areas of the state. They noted that, in recent years, OSP has experienced a general staffing shortage and has struggled to maintain a full roster of troopers around the state. They mused whether this shortage would eventually make it difficult to sustain an intensive presence in Josephine County.

**Prosecution of Cases**

Once an arrest is made and the evidence is collected, the arresting law enforcement agency sends the case to the Josephine County District Attorney (JCDA) for prosecution. JCDA judiciously uses its limited resources and employs stringent criteria to determine which cases to prosecute, taking only those with a high probability of conviction of the guilty party. This assessment is based on the type and quality of evidence gathered by law enforcement, which is directly related to the availability of law enforcement detectives to investigate cases, as well as officers’ knowledge of and experience with effective evidence collection practices. Logically, the number of cases prosecuted also depends on the capacity of available district attorneys. With the cutbacks in 2012, the JCDA’s staff was reduced.

**Cases Referred for Prosecution from Law Enforcement**

Figure 20 on the next page shows the number of cases that the JCDA received from law enforcement each year from 2010 to 2018. The number of cases referred by GPPD steadily increased over time, from 2,118 in 2010 to 3,455 in 2018. The number of cases referred by JCSO fell by 59% when the funding cuts occurred—from 1,031 in 2011 to 420 in 2012—and decreased further after that. Since 2016, the number of cases referred by JCSO has begun to slowly increase. The number of cases referred by OSP increased in 2013, when it expanded its response protocol, and has generally increased since then.
**Study of the Reduction in Law Enforcement Funding in Josephine County 2010–2018**

**Figure 20. Number of Cases Referred to District Attorney by Law Enforcement Agencies, 2010-2018**

![Figure 20](image)

*Note. Data from Josephine County District Attorney’s Office*

**Cases Prosecuted by District Attorney**

Figure 21 shows the number of cases prosecuted by the JCDA each year. The JCDA’s decision to prosecute is strongly influenced by the type and quality of evidence gathered by law enforcement as part of its criminal investigation, which is dependent on the availability of detectives to thoroughly investigate crimes and their experience doing so. Without any detectives, and with few experienced deputies, the JCSO’s ability to thoroughly investigate cases and provide JCDA with quality evidence declined, which made it more difficult for the JCDA to prosecute cases referred by the JCSO.

Recall that the JCDA’s Office also reduced its staff as a result of the funding cuts. This decrease primarily affected the office in 2013, as they were able to re-staff fairly quickly. However, this temporary reduction in legal staff impacted the capacity of the office, as is evident by the reduction in cases prosecuted that year. Notably, of those cases that went to trial between 2011 and 2017, the DA maintained a conviction rate between 75% and 89% (not pictured).

**Figure 21. Number of Cases Prosecuted by the District Attorney, 2010-2018**

![Figure 21](image)

*Note. Data from Josephine County District Attorney’s Office*
Information from Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholders explained that, when the funding cuts reduced the JCDA staff, the office did not have the capacity to prosecute all of the cases referred to them, even with the reduced referrals from JCSO. As a result, the remaining deputy district attorneys had to prioritize which cases to take on. Person crimes and cases with solid evidence were prioritized, which meant that lower level crimes (e.g., shoplifting, low-level theft, some DUII under .12) were often not charged. Stakeholders thought that this triage process may have unfortunately impacted the behavior of law enforcement officers who were less likely to arrest someone for a crime they were sure would not be prosecuted, and the behavior of would-be offenders who felt emboldened by the lack of prosecution and the lack of jail capacity.
COUNTY JAIL

The funding cuts decreased the capacity of the county jail by half (120 beds to 55 beds), leaving a very limited number of beds to lodge people who were arrested. Because there were so few beds, the jail was typically full to capacity. When new arrests were made and the offenders were brought to the jail, the number of offenders was often greater than the number of available jail beds. In these situations, JCSO jail supervisors were forced to decide which offenders to lodge and which to release in order to keep the jail population within capacity. This situation is referred to as “forced release.”

Without adequate capacity at the county jail, law enforcement officers had nowhere to bring arrested offenders. This dilemma was especially the case for those individuals arrested for lower level crimes, who would likely be subject to a forced release to yield a jail bed for an offender of a more dangerous or serious crime. Given these circumstances, local law enforcement agencies (GPPD, JCSO, and OSP) implemented “cite and release” policies for many crimes, whereby officers would arrest someone by giving them a paper citation (a ticket) instead of taking them to jail. The ticket would indicate the offense committed, as well as the time and date that the offender should appear in court.

Forced Releases

Figure 22 on the following page shows the total number of bookings of offenders into the jail and the number of times that the county was forced to release offenders because the jail did not have the capacity to lodge them. In 2012, of the 3,129 jail bookings, there were 277 forced releases (9%). In 2013, the number of forced releases dropped to 82 (3%). This decrease was most likely due to the stark reduction in Sheriff’s deputies, which resulted in fewer arrests being made, as well as the “cite and release” policies undertaken by local law enforcement agencies. In short, fewer offenders were being arrested and brought to jail because there was nowhere to lodge them. Indeed, stakeholders explained that, during this time, the limited jail beds were reserved for the most dangerous offenders (e.g., those arrested for Measure 11 crimes) and those arrested for lower-level crime were typically not able to be lodged. In 2014, the number of forced releases grew, likely as a result of the cessation of the “cite and release” policies and more offenders being brought in. Even with this increase, the proportion of bookings that ended in a forced release remained under 10% from 2012 to 2015.

From 2016 to 2018, the county jail was forced to release one third of the offenders booked, because there was not sufficient capacity to lodge them. In 2018, there were 2,396 forced releases.

6 The county jail building has a total of 262 beds, but its capacity is based on the resources needed to ensure adequate supervision (e.g., correctional officers and other staff). Due to the persistent shortages in law enforcement funding and personnel, Josephine County’s jail has never operated with all 262 beds available.
In 2016, there was a notable increase in the number of forced releases. Of the 4,561 jail bookings that year, 29% (1,337) ended in a forced release. In 2017, 36% of all bookings ended in a forced release (1,817 out of 5,073). In 2018, after the jail added capacity due to the successful levy passage, the number of bookings into the jail increased notably to 7,548. The number of forced releases correspondingly increased, with 2,396 forced releases that year (32% of all bookings).\

**Information from Stakeholder Interviews**

Stakeholders described the reduction in jail capacity as one of the most crucial elements of the funding cuts, because it handicapped other elements of the system, such as law enforcement and the courts, and its impacts were wide-ranging.

Stakeholders lamented how law enforcement efforts are functionally impotent without an operational jail. Without beds at the county jail, law enforcement officers were constrained to implementing “cite and release” in many circumstances, which stakeholders condemned as broadly ineffectual at deterring crime. Interviewed officers reported re-arresting the same person multiple times in a day and having offenders rip up the citation and walk away. These situations were demoralizing for many law enforcement officers who felt that they could not effectively do their jobs. Stakeholders also felt that the implementation of “cite and release” practices furthered the public’s waning trust in law enforcement and their concerns about public safety.

Stakeholders noted the incredible detriment to public safety of forced releases from the county jail. They knew that the jail was relegated to lodging only the most dangerous offenders and that hundreds of offenders were being released into the community each year. They recognized the precarious task of calculating the risk across various offenders to determine who to release.

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7 These numbers reflect the number of bookings, not the number of offenders. It is possible for one individual to be booked and released multiple times. Available data did not allow for the examination of repeat offenders.
Stakeholders reported that the low jail capacity and the use of cite and release methods increased the “failure to appear” (FTA) rate at the county court. When lodged in jail, offenders are brought to their court hearing, so none miss it. This system allows the entire adjudication process to flow efficiently and quickly. However, when offenders are given a citation and told to show up to court some days or weeks later, few do. When the offender does not appear, a warrant is issued and the case stays open until the person is re-arrested. Stakeholders expressed frustration about guilty criminals remaining at large in the community and expressed concern about the added costs to the system incurred as a result of the FTAs (e.g., costs related to the hearing, to the preparation of another warrant, to the case remaining open). Unfortunately, court data on the FTA rate were not available for the years of interest.

Most of all, stakeholders felt sure that the absence of a fully operational jail strongly contributed to high rates of crime and high rates of recidivism. Leaving offenders on the streets through cite and release practices or putting them into the community before their adjudication due to a forced release only supported the potential for recidivism and ultimately made the county less safe. Stakeholders explained that a jail sentence is an effective deterrent for some would-be criminals and that the lack of a jail appeared to encourage criminal behavior. They thought that knowledge of the jail closure engendered a “you can’t do anything to me” attitude among criminals in the county who felt they could act with relative impunity. Many stakeholders thought that this effect was stronger than the effect of the reduced patrol presence. With fewer deputies, offenders knew that there was a reduced chance they would be caught for a crime. However, with no jail, offenders knew that, even if they were caught, virtually nothing would happen to them.

Some stakeholders thought that the cite and release practices likely artificially lowered the reported crime rates in the county. They recalled instances when officers spent time writing a citation only to have the offender tear it up or throw it away on the spot, with no recourse. These stakeholders acknowledged that this type of behavior led to some officers feeling demoralized and, in some circumstances, not bothering to file crime reports or spend the time to arrest someone.

HIGHLIGHT: Jail-based Treatment Services

Josephine County has actively participated in Oregon’s Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI). Justice Reinvestment is an approach to spending resources more effectively with the goals of reducing recidivism, decreasing prison use, protecting the public, and holding offenders accountable. Josephine County has applied its JRI funds toward a variety of approaches to further these goals. One such approach has been providing substance use treatment to offenders lodged in the county jail. Since 2015, Josephine County has allocated roughly 46% of its JRI funds—approximately $260,000 per year—toward the provision of jail-based treatment.
As shown earlier, when the cutbacks occurred in June 2012, the juvenile detention center (14 beds) and the non-secure juvenile residential facility (12 beds) closed and all associated staff positions were lost. Josephine County subsequently rented three juvenile detention beds from a neighboring county. Stakeholders explained that these three beds were consistently full. Similar to the county (adult) jail reduction, the reduced juvenile detention capacity prompted the implementation of “cite and release” practices for lower level offenders and necessitated forced releases of juvenile offenders. As with the adult jail, when there was a new juvenile felony intake, staff had to assess who was in custody, the level of offense, and relative risk of offenders, and then decide who would be lodged and who would be released.

Juvenile offenders are put into detention facilities when they have committed person crimes or felonies. Measure 11 crimes, a special class of felony crimes, among juvenile offenders is an automatic waiver to adult court. These youth are prosecuted as adults but housed in juvenile detention. Because they are required to be lodged, the three available juvenile detention beds from 2012 to 2018 were generally full with Measure 11 offenders, leaving other potentially dangerous offenders to be released.

Information from Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholders described the difficulties with the restricted system, the considerable challenges in forced releases, and the consequential risk to public safety. These sentiments echoed those made regarding the adult jail, detailed above. Stakeholders also noted that, during the cutbacks, JCJJ was not able to intervene with as many at-risk youth because they stopped receiving referrals from the JCSO (historically, 25%-30% of their youth were referred by JCSO). In contrast to the punitive adult correctional system, JCJJ uses Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and a wraparound service model, through which they strive to serve youth by engaging the school, parents, and mental health and substance use services. Stakeholders lamented that most youth in the county who were engaging in risky criminal behavior were not receiving any attention, and the opportunity for JCJJ to intervene early and provide services was lost. Because of the reduction in staffing, JCJJ staff spent less time with youth than is considered ideal. Moreover, stakeholders expressed considerable concern regarding the juvenile offenders whom they were forced to release due to limited detention capacity. Once these youth, who were known to be at-risk, were released, it was virtually impossible to track them and provide services. As with the adult offenders, the failure to appear (FTA) rate increased.

Stakeholders explained the losses that were felt as a result of the non-secure juvenile residential facility closure. This facility housed youth who did not have a safe or appropriate placement in the

The juvenile residential facility provided a range of services to youth. When the center closed, these services were not replaced.
community and provided a range of services for youth including mental health services, nursing care, and residential substance use treatment, including individual and group counseling. This facility had operated close to capacity for several years, indicating that youth in Josephine County needed its services. When it closed, there was nothing to replace it. Stakeholders expressed concern that youth were in sub-standard placements because there was no other option available and that the quality and availability of youth-oriented services decreased or stopped altogether.

Lastly, stakeholders also noted the difficulties inherent in lodging offenders in a different county. For example, attorneys could no longer meet in person with the youth they were representing, and transporting youth to and from each court date was a challenge. JCJJ established a video system for youth to appear in court via video, although the court did not prefer this method of appearance. Lodging youth in a different county also presents other challenges. Generally speaking, juvenile justice departments strive to house youth locally, so that they can maintain access to their families. A key goal of the juvenile justice system is to engage and connect families to the juvenile offender and to services, and to help family members maintain or develop the capacity to be effective supports for and supervisors of the youth. Lodging youth far away from their families complicates this effort.
RECIDIVISM

This section shows the data on recidivism (for adult crime) as it is tracked at the state level by Oregon’s Criminal Justice Commission (CJC). The CJC tracks three components of recidivism:

- Arrest for a new crime, represented by the dark blue line in the following graphs;
- Conviction for a new misdemeanor or felony crime, shown by the yellow link in the graphs; and
- Re-incarceration for a new felony crime, represented by the green line in the graphs.

Each of these components is tracked separately, so a single offender can be counted in more than one of the measures, if more than one applies.

The CJC tracks 1-year and 3-year recidivism rates. An offender is counted as recidivating if they are arrested, convicted, or incarcerated for a new crime, within 1 (or 3) years of release from prison, release from a felony jail sentence, or imposition of a probation sentence.

1-Year Recidivism Rates

Figure 23 on the next page shows the 1-year recidivism rates for Josephine County, as well as the rates for the state and for the southwest region. The southwest region includes Josephine, Douglas, Coos, Curry, Jackson, Klamath, and Lake Counties. This figure shows the recidivism rates for all types of crime combined (including person, property, sex, drug possession, drug non-possession, other).

As can be seen in Figure 23, Josephine County’s 1-year recidivism rates for arrests (blue line) and convictions (yellow line) dipped for those released in 2012, which is likely due to the reduction in local law enforcement—that is, there were fewer officers to make arrests in late 2012 and early 2013. After this brief dip, the recidivism rates for arrests and convictions sharply increased for those released in 2013 and 2014. Recidivism for arrests doubled, from 24% in 2011 to 48% in early 2014, and recidivism for convictions followed suit, from 24% to 38%. This stark increase in Josephine County stands out in comparison to the more modest upward trend throughout the southwest region and the state.

Despite these increases in arrest and conviction recidivism rates, the re-incarceration rate remained relatively stable over time. This result is likely due to co-occurring factors, such as the reduction in county jail capacity and the “cite and release” policies that were in place, which would be logged as an arrest but the offender may fail to appear in court.

1-Year recidivism rates by crime category. Figure 24 shows the 1-year recidivism rates separated by crime type, including (a) person crimes, (b) property crimes, (c) drug crimes involving possession, and (d) drug crimes not involving possession. Across all crime types, there is a dip in recidivism rates for
arrests and convictions in 2012, followed by a jump in 2013 and 2014. However, these increases are especially noteworthy for property crimes and drug possession crimes. The 1-year re-arrest rate for property crimes went from 29% in late 2011 to 62% in late 2013, and the 1-year rates for drug possession crimes went from 37% to 65% during this same period.

(See figure on next page.)
Figure 23. 1-Year Recidivism Rates for Oregon, the Southwest Region, and Josephine County

What Do One Year Recidivism Rates Look Like Over Time by Region and County?

Statewide

Southwest Region

Josephine County

Note. Data from Oregon’s Criminal Justice Commission. Figures are available at: https://www.oregon.gov/CJC/SAC/Pages/Recidivism-dashboard.aspx
Figure 24. 1-Year Recidivism Rates for Josephine County by Crime Type

*Note.* Data from Oregon’s Criminal Justice Commission. Figures are available at: [https://www.oregon.gov/CJC/SAC/Pages/Recidivism-dashboard.aspx](https://www.oregon.gov/CJC/SAC/Pages/Recidivism-dashboard.aspx)
Figure 25. 3-Year Recidivism Rates for Oregon, the Southwest Region, and Josephine County

Note. Data from Oregon’s Criminal Justice Commission. Figures are available at: https://www.oregon.gov/CJC/SAC/Pages/Recidivism-dashboard.aspx
3-year Recidivism Rates

Figure 25 shows the 3-year recidivism rates for Josephine County, as well as the rates for the state and for the southwest region. These figures show the recidivism rates for all crime categories. Given the time lag needed to compute the 3-year recidivism rate, the 2018 rates are based on individuals released from prison/jail or sentenced to probation in 2015. Thus, the graphics in Figure 25 show dates through 2015 because they are pegged to the original release date.

As can be seen in Figure 25, Josephine County’s 3-year recidivism rates for arrests (blue line) and convictions (yellow line) increased sharply among individuals released from prison/jail after 2012, after which they remained high. The 3-year recidivism rate for arrests went from 45% for those released in 2011 to 67% for those released in 2013. The recidivism rate for convictions followed suit, from 35% among those released in 2011 to 56% among those released in 2014. As with the 1-year recidivism rates, Josephine County’s sharp increases after 2012 contrast with the more modest upward trends in recidivism throughout the southwest region and the state.

The re-incarceration rate remained comparably stable until a jump in the rates among those released in 2014. This result may be due to the increase in jail capacity around that time.

Information from Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholders explained how less law enforcement patrolling and the reduction in the county jail’s capacity created the perfect circumstances for offenders to perpetrate repeated crimes. However, because recidivism, as it is measured, requires a re-arrest to occur—which requires law enforcement—it can be tricky to have the data reflect the actual circumstances. For much of the cutback period, stakeholders were concerned that the recidivism rate looked low on paper, but that was a function of the reduced number of law enforcement officers able to make arrests, not an actual reduction in repeated crime.

Stakeholders noted that this has begun to change with the increases in law enforcement and jail capacity since 2017, which have expanded the county’s ability to arrest offenders and therefore log recidivism. Stakeholders from Josephine County Community Corrections stated that, in 2019, they have more than 1,200 offenders under supervision, which is the highest population of supervised offenders that the county has seen.

Stakeholders also mentioned that the “cite and release” practices may have impacted the ability to document recidivism. Namely, when an offender was arrested using “cite and release,” the arrest did not entail photographs or fingerprints, creating less robust means for tracking repeat offenders. All stakeholders interviewed felt sure that recidivism was a significant problem and that forced releases in the jail had created a “revolving door” of the same offenders over time.
EMERGENCY RESPONSE CALLS

Emergency Medical Response

When someone calls 911 to request emergency medical response, and the circumstance indicates potential criminal activity or other danger (e.g., shooting, stabbing, drug overdose, person threatening to harm self or others), regulations require that law enforcement officers respond along with emergency medical personnel to secure the scene. Law enforcement response is critical to keep the public safe, and to ensure the safety of responding medical personnel who are typically not armed.

After the funding cuts occurred in 2012, and law enforcement patrol in the rural parts of the county became sparse, emergency medical responders in the county experienced dangerous situations (and some staff were directly assaulted) when they arrived on the scene before law enforcement and the scene had not been secured. As a result of these situations, responders from the Illinois Valley Fire Department (IVFD) now wear mandatory ballistic vests to all non-fire calls. Also a result of these situations, in 2013, responders began to delay their arrival to potentially dangerous calls until after law enforcement arrived, and 911 dispatchers began to track these calls separately (i.e., a special code, “NOLE,” to indicate that the response was delayed due to no available law enforcement). Figure 26 shows the number of these calls from 2013 to 2018 in the Illinois Valley. Notably, in 2018, 246 medical emergencies had a delayed response due to there being no available law enforcement.

Figure 26. Number of Calls with Delayed Medical Response Due to No Available Law Enforcement in the Illinois Valley, 2013-2018

Note. Data from Illinois Valley Fire Department
Information from Stakeholder Interviews

There were no data available to quantify the length of NOLE delays. However, stakeholders within the emergency response system (i.e., 911 dispatchers, EMS/fire personnel) recalled circumstances in which the delay spanned an hour or more. During the delay, the emergency medical personnel are stationed nearby, ready to respond when law enforcement arrives, and are therefore unavailable to respond to other emergency calls, while the condition of the person in need of medical help is often worsening.

Stakeholders involved in the dispatch process described NOLE calls as being especially difficult and, in many cases, exacting a considerable emotional toll on dispatchers. For instance, 911 dispatchers would often have to remain on a call with someone who was having a medical emergency, or a caller who was with someone in medical distress, and explain that they could not dispatch EMS to the scene until law enforcement had arrived. One stakeholder recalled an emergency call from a woman whose daughter was bleeding profusely from multiple stab wounds. The dispatcher had to stay on the phone with the woman and wait to dispatch EMS until law enforcement arrived, which was 45 minutes later. Generally, at the onset of the call, dispatchers were not aware how long the delay would be and were unable to tell callers how long they would have to wait for medical personnel.

Stakeholders described the necessity of having law enforcement on the scene for certain emergency medical calls. For example, law enforcement officers must secure the scene when there is an active shooter or assailant or other imminent threat to safety. In the case of traffic accidents, law enforcement must be there to assess the driver for intoxication and perform any necessary arrest for DUI. Officers must also help divert traffic from the scene, so that the medical personnel can safely perform CPR and other life-saving practices on the side of the roadway without endangering themselves or the patient.

Stakeholders also mentioned that residents have become savvier over time with regard to the best way to merit an emergency response. For example, stakeholders reported that, without Sheriff’s deputies, people started calling the fire department in order to get an emergency intervention, even when there was no fire. When people learned that emergency medical personnel would not respond to certain situations, they began to depict their circumstances differently to the 911 dispatcher—for example, they would call 911 for help with “chest pain” when it was actually a gunshot wound. These kinds of scenarios—borne out of residents’ desperation for emergency response when law enforcement resources were not available—created confusion and risk for emergency responders.
Fire Protection

Information from Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholders reported strong concern that Josephine County is poised for a major wildfire without sufficient resources to contain or combat it. This fear is consistent with the results of a recent fire analysis, which ranked areas of Josephine County in the top 5 areas at risk for a major fire.8

Residents within the city limits of Grants Pass receive fire protection from Grants Pass Fire and Rescue. However, there is not universal fire protection for the rural parts of the county. To receive automatic emergency fire and rescue services, a community must be a “fire district” that implements a tax to pay for their local fire department. There are a few such fire districts throughout Josephine County—including Illinois Valley, Wolf Creek, and Williams—but there are many rural areas of the county that are not fire districts and therefore residents do not have automatic fire protection. Establishing a fire district requires a ballot measure to pass. Because local leaders deemed resources for the Sheriff’s Office as the most pressing priority for the county, the vote necessary to establish fire districts, and to protect residents in those areas, has been delayed, leaving areas of the county unprotected.

Stakeholders also noted that the reduction in JCSO deputies has resulted in less fire prevention activity. For example, prior to 2012, the county’s 911 Call Center would dispatch JCSO deputies to address fire hazards, such as fireworks and dirt bikes on dry grass. With the reduction in the number of deputies and the restriction in protocols, these calls are no longer dispatched, increasing the risk of fire.

8 Available at: http://pyrologix.com/ftp/Public/Reports/RiskToCommunities_OR-WA_BriefingPaper.pdf
FATAL TRAFFIC CRASHES

Data from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) were gathered to show the rate of automobile deaths in Josephine County and its neighboring counties. As seen in Figure 27, Josephine County (shown by the dashed red line) has had a consistently high rate of fatal automobile crashes relative to the state (the gray line) and most of the other counties in the southwest region. County data show a bump in the rate of fatal crashes in 2012, followed by a dip in 2013 and 2014. However, these rates nearly doubled in 2015 and 2016, from 15 fatal crashes per 100,000 population in 2013 to 29 per 100,000 in 2015. In 2016, Josephine County had the highest rate of fatalities in the region.

These outcomes could be attributable to OSP troopers having a reduced presence patrolling state highways, as more of their time has been spent responding to crime in the county. Fewer highway patrols likely lead to more dangerous road conditions.

Figure 27. Rate of Fatal Automobile Crashes (per 100,000), 2007-2016

Note. Data obtained from Oregon Department of Transportation
EROSION OF PUBLIC CONFIDENCE AND USE OF OTHER RESOURCES

There is inherent public value in having a functional criminal justice system. In a functional system, if someone believes that they have been the victim of a crime and they call for help and provide coherent and reasonable facts, they would get a timely response from law enforcement. The crime would be documented in the law enforcement system, and evidence about the crime would be collected effectively and efficiently. If the officer has at least probable cause, the case would be forwarded to the district attorney for prosecution. Guilty parties would be held accountable. Victims would be offered supportive services. All parties would have their day in court to tell their side of the story. When this system is fully functional, the community and its residents are protected from further pain. During interviews, stakeholders acknowledged that the system in Josephine County has not been functioning effectively due to the cutbacks and that county residents were not getting the help they needed.

Information from Stakeholder Interviews

Many stakeholders expressed serious concern that deficiencies in Josephine County’s current system had eroded residents’ confidence in the criminal justice system generally, and the Sheriff’s Office in particular. Many of these stakeholders, especially those who were part of the emergency response system (dispatchers, law enforcement officers, fire fighters, etc.), worried that county residents had grown to believe that in a time of crisis, “No one is coming to help me.” They were troubled by this reality, but they also understood how that perception had developed over time, as crime increased and the ability for law enforcement to respond decreased. These stakeholders expressed that they were actively working to provide services to the best of their abilities and that they were also frustrated by the system constraints. Many of them resided in the county (outside of Grants Pass) and had their own experiences with increased crime in recent years. They wanted the public to understand that the dearth of funding, not the county staff, was responsible for the lack of service.

When discussing the erosion of public confidence in the criminal justice system, several stakeholders also described how some county residents would turn to other resources to protect themselves, their families, and their properties. On one end of the spectrum, there were anecdotes of vigilante justice, where residents took the law into their own hands or threatened to do so, sometimes in dangerous
ways. On the other end of the spectrum, there were stories of home-grown neighborhood watches, where small numbers of neighbors came together to try to keep their homes safe.

Indeed, data collected from multiple sources suggest that, in the absence of law enforcement, county residents sought other means to protect themselves and their properties. These strategies involved arming themselves, hiring other security professionals, and creating their own security forces.

**Concealed Carry Permits**

There was a concern among stakeholders that, because county residents felt that they could not rely on police to keep them and their families safe, they would need to protect themselves. The evidence supports this belief. **After 2012, when the law enforcement cuts occurred, the number of concealed carry permits issued nearly doubled from 712 to 1,382.** The number of permits continued to rise for several years after, hitting 1,785 in 2015 and peaking at 2,147 in 2016. Note that, in Oregon, concealed carry permits are valid for 4 years. Therefore, the number of permits approved in any year is only a fraction of the number of people with active permits.

![Figure 28. Number of Concealed Carry Permits Issued in Josephine County, 2012-2018](image)

*Note. Data from Josephine County Sheriff's Office*

**Private Security Companies**

After the 2012 cuts took effect and county law enforcement was starkly reduced, stakeholders described a sharp increase in property crime. Because of the lack of resources, neither JCSO nor OSP could respond to all of the property crime calls throughout the county, and their reduced levels of patrol meant they had little prevention capacity. Data suggest that, in the absence of law enforcement, county residents and business owners, who had the means to do so, sought help from private security companies to prevent property crime. These companies do not replace law enforcement. Although
they do have the authority to arrest people, they do not receive dispatched 911 calls. Their focus is on property crimes, and their goal is prevention through regular patrols, safety checks, and frequent community presence. The primary local company to provide these services in Josephine County is Concierge Home and Business Watch.

Concierge began in 2009 as a way to address the need for crime prevention and to help fill the gap between what law enforcement can do and what community members can do. Concierge staff typically conducts regular checks on homes and businesses, responds to alarms and calls for service, provides security presence for specific events (e.g., transferring money, irate customer) and special events (e.g., concerts, fairs), and provides surveillance of homes when owners are away for long periods of time. Concierge started as a small company that provided security for residential customers—mainly watching people’s homes when they were away. However, following the reduction in county law enforcement in 2012, and at the request of multiple clients, they began providing services for businesses and commercial properties as well.

As seen in Figure 29, Concierge had a total of 173 clients in 2011. By the end of 2012, their client roster had more than doubled—to 427 clients. **In the 2 years following the law enforcement reduction, Concierge’s client list grew from 173 to 610—an increase of 252%**. Residents and business owners are still finding this service valuable, as Concierge maintained 695 clients in 2018.

Concierge’s internal data show the number and type of incidents to which its officers responded over time. In 2014 (the first year with available data), Concierge officers most often responded to alarms (287 incidents; depicted by the green line in Figure 30), and the number of alarm incidents has remained relatively flat over time. In contrast, the number of trespassing incidents notably increased from 13 in 2015 to 451 in 2016 (yellow line), and it has remained relatively flat thereafter. Moreover, the number of incidents related to loitering (dark blue line) and transient individuals (light blue line) has increased dramatically over time. **In 2018, Concierge responded to 1,962 calls about loitering and transient individuals (up from 163 such calls in 2014).**
Concierge provides its clients with regular patrols and safety checks of their properties. As a result, Concierge officers sometimes encounter a crime (or would-be crime) before it is called into the office. Figure 31 below shows the number of incidents to which Concierge provided a response that were learned about through: (a) a call for service by the client or other resident, (b) the officer encountering a crime while patrolling, and (c) alarm notification. As can be seen from the graphic, the majority of incidents are detected by the officers while patrolling properties. This number has steadily increased over time, whereas the number of calls and alarms have not fluctuated much. Considering Figures 30 and 31 together, it is likely that the increasing rates of officer-encountered incidents primarily involve loitering and transient individuals.
Concierge’s internal data indicate that its officers involve law enforcement in approximately 2%-5% of incidents. This low percentage makes sense, given Concierge’s focus on property crimes, which have been de-prioritized by JCSO and were not included in OSP’s expanded response protocols.

**Community-based Patrols**

In some areas, residents formed their own local groups to try to keep their communities safe. One example of such an effort is an organized and long-running group in Cave Junction, the largest community in the Illinois Valley, called “CJ Patrol.”

CJ Patrol was formed in 2015 in response to the growing property crimes in Cave Junction, which local stakeholders perceived as a direct result of the reduction in county-level law enforcement. One stakeholder explained, “We are all the working poor out here. When someone hits your house, it hurts....We were down to a few [JCSO] deputies for the whole county. So, there was no response or really slow response. This created a nice environment for the criminals in our area to have their free will at night. So, we decided to do some preventive work on our own.”

CJ Patrol started with a couple of people patrolling their own neighborhood, after one had been the victim of a property crime. The effort grew over time, with many more volunteers joining the patrol ranks and the development of formal protocols for patrollers to follow. The group focuses on property crime prevention. They patrol various areas of Cave Junction and monitor specific properties (e.g., businesses, residences with owners on vacation). They also receive calls from local residents about crimes, suspicious cars and people, and other threats, and they respond as they are able. They keep information about suspicious cars, suspicious people, and squatter houses for either law enforcement or the fire department. They are not a replacement for law enforcement, and they do not have the authority to arrest.

CJ Patrol staff report that when they first started to patrol the area, the nights were very dangerous. They would routinely run into dozens of offenders each night and would often be assaulted (e.g., shot at, rocks thrown at). However, they have noticed an improvement in the last couple of years, which they attribute to the new sheriff and the recent increase in JCSO patrol coverage.
HIGHLIGHT: Grants Pass Sobering Center

The Grants Pass Sobering Center opened its doors in spring 2016. It was developed in response to growing levels of public intoxication, which local stakeholders describe hitting an all-time high with the reduction in law enforcement in 2012. Public intoxication alone is not a crime, and the reduction in jail capacity curtailed law enforcement’s ability to arrest and detain inebriated individuals who had committed low-level crimes (or were trespassing, loitering, etc.). As a result, law enforcement generally had little effective recourse for these situations—until the Sobering Center was opened.

The Sobering Center is a private nonprofit and a stand-alone facility that includes 12 locked units where intoxicated people can be lodged for 24 hours. People are referred to the center by a range of organizations, including the local hospital and emergency room, community corrections, local alcohol and drug treatment agencies, the Gospel and Rescue Mission, 12-step fellowships, concerned family members, and concerned community members. People can also admit themselves. A significant proportion of clients are brought to the center by law enforcement. The Sobering Center has given law enforcement a way to intervene with public intoxication that does not require a jail bed, and officers have utilized this resource (See Table 5). In 2018, GPPD officers brought 417 people to the center and OSP troopers brought 194. So far, the JCSO deputies have used the center less.

The Sobering Center maintains good working relationships with local law enforcement, substance use treatment agencies, the county mental health treatment agency, and the local hospital. The center offers an alternative to jail, which reduces burden on the local correctional system; increases efficiency for local law enforcement officers; supports public safety by housing people who are intoxicated in public; provides hospital staff with a safe place to discharge someone; connects people with needed mental health services; and refers people to more extended substance use disorder treatment services.

Table 5. Law Enforcement Referrals to the Sobering Center by Agency, 2016-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Grants Pass Police</th>
<th>Oregon State Police</th>
<th>JC Sheriff’s Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Data from the Grants Pass Sobering Center. Figures reflect only those people referred by law enforcement. The full population served by the Sobering Center also includes people referred by the hospitals and those who self-refer.
PUBLIC HEALTH

Stakeholders thought that higher rates of crime and lower rates of public safety had detrimental effects on aspects of public health in Josephine County. The section briefly reviews high school student surveys data and mortality rate data.

High School Student Surveys

Most Oregon high schools administer an annual statewide survey to 11th grade students. The survey asks a wide range of questions, a few of which pertain to students’ feelings of safety. As shown in Table 6, in 2014, 15% of Josephine County 11th grade students reported missing school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to/from school, compared to 14% of 11th grade students across the state. In 2016, the state’s rate remained unchanged, whereas the rate among Josephine County students increased to 19%. That is, **one in five 11th grade students in Josephine County reported missing school because they felt unsafe.**

Table 6 also shows the percentage of 11th grade students who reported ever feeling that they had no one to protect them. In 2014, 6% of Josephine County students felt this way, which increased to 7% in 2015 and 9% in 2016. These rates were close to the state’s rates of 4%, 6%, and 8%, respectively.

**Table 6. Percentage of 11th Grade Students Reporting Feeling Unsafe on School Survey, 2014-2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of 11th grade students that reported missing school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to/from school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josephine County</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of 11th grade students that reported ever feeling they had no one to protect them</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josephine County</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Data from Oregon Healthy Teens Survey and Student Wellness Survey*
Mortality Rate

Table 7 shows data related to the years of potential life lost before age 75 and the age-adjusted overall mortality rate. With regard to both metrics, residents of Josephine County appear to be faring worse than their counterparts in other areas of the state. In 2016, per 100,000 population, residents of Josephine County lost approximately 9,956 potential life years before age 75, as compared to 6,481 years among Oregon residents. When looking at age-adjusted overall mortality, Josephine County’s rates in 2015 and 2016 (861 and 866) were notably higher than the rate for all of Oregon (730 and 715, respectively).

Table 7. Years of Potential Life Lost before Age 75 and Age-Adjusted Mortality Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years of potential life lost before age 75, per 100,000 population</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>6,524</td>
<td>6,521</td>
<td>6,481</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josephine County</td>
<td>9,194</td>
<td>10,473</td>
<td>9,956</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age-Adjusted overall mortality rate per 100,000 population</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>715</td>
<td>718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josephine County</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>861</td>
<td>866</td>
<td>847</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mental Health and Substance Use

Stakeholders reported that mental illness and substance use disorder were becoming more prevalent throughout the county. They thought that, in many instances, criminal activity correlated with these issues. As described earlier, substance use is frequently associated with the perpetration of property crime, as individuals may resort to stealing property in order to support their addiction. Further, stakeholders thought that the legalization of marijuana and low levels of law enforcement created ideal conditions for marijuana production, and the presence of multiple rival factions in the county heightened tensions between competitors that sometimes turned violent. As far as stakeholders were concerned, drugs were one of the root causes of criminal activity in the county, whether people were producing them, selling them, or using them. In addition, some stakeholders connected increasing mental health problems to the growing and more apparent population of homeless individuals in the county.
The funding cuts incurred by Josephine County in June 2012 led to changes across multiple county agencies that reduced both the number of staff and the hours during which services were available. Specifically, the cuts led to reduced capacity of the county adult jail, closure of the juvenile detention center and non-secure residential facility, and a reduction in the number of prosecutors within the District Attorney’s Office. The cuts most dramatically impacted the Sheriff’s Office (JCSO), which lost the majority of its staff and therefore radically reduced the patrol coverage provided to the county. These changes had far-reaching impacts for county residents, including higher rates of crime, less reliable emergency response, and diminished faith in law enforcement and the public safety system.

Josephine County Sheriff’s Office (JCSO)

When the funding cuts took effect in June 2012, the JCSO lost 67% of its staff—more than 50 employees. As part of this reduction, the JCSO went from having 23 deputies who collectively provided patrol coverage 20 hours per day for 7 days of the week to having 3 deputies who patrolled 8 hours per day for 5 days of the week. These three remaining deputies, tasked with patrolling the 1,642 square miles of Josephine County, were stretched very thin. During this time, they spent their shifts running between emergency calls that could be up to an hour away from each other. Due to the limited capacity, they did virtually no preventive patrolling and they were unable to respond to many calls for service. To ensure that the most critical calls received help, the JCSO command initially established a triage system that prioritized deputy response for person and violent crimes and de-prioritized property crimes and other crimes that were not in progress.

With the 2012 cutbacks, JCSO also lost most of its dispatch staff, all of its records staff, and all of its detectives. Since 2016, the number of JCSO deputies has slowly increased. Despite these modest increases in staff, patrol coverage for the county has remained limited and the total amount of coverage is still less than that provided prior to 2012. The number of dispatch and records staff have also remained very low, limiting the JCSO’s ability to field emergency and non-emergency calls from county residents. No detective positions have been regained, restricting JCSO’s ability to conduct investigations and solve cases.

The stark reduction in JCSO staff (combined with curtailed jail capacity) had immediate ramifications for local public safety (i.e., response decreased, crime increased). And the effects of this reduction will likely be felt for several years, as it constituted a substantial loss of institutional knowledge and expertise among county law enforcement. Restaffing the JCSO with new, inexperienced officers may replenish the number of deputies in patrol cars, which is critical, but it will take years before these individuals become seasoned officers who are knowledgeable, experienced, and connected within the community. This also applies to the loss all detectives and the eventual reinstatement of these positions. Overall, it will take considerable time for the JCSO to rebuild its internal capacity.
Oregon State Police (OSP)
The reduction in JCSO deputies left the county outside of Grants Pass with scarce law enforcement coverage (Grants Pass Police Department did not lose funding). OSP traditionally patrolled state highways and responded to crime on state property. In 2012, when the cutbacks occurred, OSP stepped in to provide some patrol coverage to the county during the hours that JCSO deputies were not on patrol. To accommodate this expansion of duties, OSP had to limit its response to certain types of crime, including person and violent crimes. Troopers did not respond to calls about property crimes. OSP also absorbed JCSO’s investigations, creating very high caseloads for its detectives.

This expansion of duties led OSP to augment its local presence substantially. From 2011 to 2017, OSP doubled the number of troopers, detectives, and supervisory staff dedicated to Josephine County. In 2015, OSP established an area command to handle the necessary coordination among these additional staff and the expanded response protocols. This level of investment by OSP in a local jurisdiction was unparalleled in other areas of the state.

Patrol Response
In an effort to most efficiently use the limited resources to address the most critical needs, both JCSO and OSP adopted new protocols that governed their patrol response. For both agencies, these protocols prioritized responding to violent person crimes and crimes currently in progress, and they de-prioritized responding to other types of crime. Property crime, in particular, generally went without a law enforcement response.

Even with OSP’s assistance, Josephine County’s law enforcement capacity was outpaced by the increasing crime rates. In particular, the patrol officer underage left many county residents without help when they needed it. In each year after the funding cuts, JCSO and OSP were each able to provide patrol response to about half of the calls for service they received. Each year from 2015 to 2018, due to capacity constraints, more than 5,000 calls for service to JCSO did not receive a deputy response and more than 1,000 calls for service to OSP did not receive a trooper response. In 2018, specifically, 7,993 calls for service from county residents (6,407 to JCSO and 1,586 to OSP) did not receive response by a law enforcement officer.

The lack of law enforcement availability also impacted response for medical emergencies. Some medical emergencies require law enforcement to secure the scene before medical personnel can respond to provide care to wounded or sick individuals. In 2018, nearly 250 medical emergencies had a delayed response because there was no available law enforcement to secure the scene. Moreover, the lack of preventive highway patrol has likely also contributed to a rise in the rate of fatal car crashes.

Jail Capacity
The 2012 cuts reduced the capacity of the county jail from 120 beds to 55. Some of this capacity was regained after a couple of years; however, stakeholders described the jail as having a “revolving door” for several years. When capacity was limited, the number of arrested offenders was often greater than
the number of jail beds, which would then force jail supervisors to release an offender into the community to make room to lodge another, potentially more dangerous offender. Since 2012, thousands of jail bookings have ended forced releases—in 2018, there 2,396 such releases occurred.

The reduction in jail capacity impacted other components of the local system, such as handicapping law enforcement and increasing the burden on courts. When the jail capacity was limited, law enforcement officers were unable to take offenders into custody because there was nowhere to lodge them. As a result, officers were constrained to implement “cite and release” policies, whereby offenders were arrested and given a paper citation with a court date. Stakeholders condemned cite and release practices as an ineffectual crime deterrent, demoralizing for police officers, emboldening for would-be offenders, and disheartening for the public as they saw criminal behavior increase with little recourse. In many circumstances, the lack of an operational jail deemed law enforcement officers functionally impotent at deterring crime. They recalled instances of offenders ripping up citations on the spot and walking away, only to be arrested again for another crime the next day. Cite and release policies also reportedly led to high rates of offenders failing to appear at their hearings, increasing the burden on the court system.

Crime and Recidivism
The combination of limited patrol coverage and limited jail capacity created opportune conditions for criminal behavior to flourish in the county. Rates of all types of crime—most especially property crime, for which there was generally no law enforcement response—increased. Rates of motor vehicle theft soared. High rates of property crimes created significant hardship for county residents as well as for small businesses, which can impact community livability and quality of life. Stakeholders acknowledged that pervasive property crime can make it difficult for businesses to thrive and can discourage new businesses from opening, both of which can negatively impact the local economy, opportunities for employment of local residents, and general community vitality.

Repeated crime was also a problem. Leaving offenders on the streets through cite and release practices or putting them into the community before their adjudication due to a forced release increased the potential for recidivism. Indeed, after the 2012 cuts, rates of recidivism in Josephine County doubled, especially for property and drug crimes. Among offenders arrested in 2017 in Josephine County, 43% of were re-arrested within 1 year, compared to the state rate of 37%. Among offenders arrested in 2015 in Josephine County, 63% were re-arrested within 3 years, compared to the state rate of 52%. These recidivism rates, as high as they are, may be underestimated, given that there were fewer law enforcement officers to make re-arrests.

Stakeholders’ Perceptions
Local stakeholders described Josephine County, especially some of the rural areas, as “lawless” after the JCSO was starkly reduced in 2012 and they expressed concern that county residents were not receiving critical public safety services. Many stakeholders, especially those who were part of the
emergency response system (e.g., 911 operators, law enforcement officers, fire fighters, etc.) worried that county residents had grown to believe that in a time of crisis “no one is coming to help me.” They found this troubling, but understood how that perception had developed over time as crime rates had increased and the capacity of law enforcement to respond had decreased.

This erosion of public confidence in the local criminal justice system appears to have led to county residents finding other ways to protect themselves and their properties. In some cases, residents choose to arm themselves. The number of concealed carry permits issued in the county doubled after the 2012 law enforcement cuts occurred and continued to climb for several years afterward. In other cases, residents hired private security companies to patrol their properties in an effort to prevent crime. One such company saw its client roster more than double in the 2 years after the funding cuts. This company has also documented the level of crime encountered by its patrolling security officers steadily increase over time.

When describing the changing context in Josephine County since 2012, stakeholders mentioned a few notable correlates. First, the legalization of marijuana, in conjunction with a relative lack of law enforcement in the county, was thought to have opened the door for drug-related activity and crime. Second, stakeholders described observing a rise in homelessness in the county during this time, much like many other regions on the west coast. Increases in homelessness were thought to be correlated with increasing rates of substance use, trespass and loitering behavior, and mental health issues, all of which were thought to be associated with increased criminal activity.

**Funding Attempts**

In May 2012, Josephine County proposed a ballot measure to prevent the deficiencies in county services that would be caused by the loss of SRS funds in June 2012. This measure failed, and the cutbacks took place immediately. Each year from 2013 to 2016, the County or citizen groups proposed a new ballot measure to fund county law enforcement, and each of these attempts failed. In May 2017, voters passed a 5-year levy to fund the juvenile detention center and adult jail. The funds from this levy enabled the redistribution of resources to increase JCSO staff and patrol coverage, beginning in 2018.

**Status of Josephine County in 2019**

All stakeholders described notable improvements in Josephine County’s criminal justice system functioning, and the community context, after the levy passed in 2017. However, even with the increases made possible by the levy, the JCSO remained under-capacitated 2 years later. When taking the number of staff and hours of operation into account, in 2019, the JCSO had roughly half of the patrol coverage, half of the dispatch capacity, one quarter of the records capacity, and none of the detective capacity that it had before 2012. In comparison to several neighboring counties, Josephine County had a lower than average ratio of patrol deputies to county residents. In particular, in 2019, Josephine County had one patrol deputy for every 2,135 rural county residents, whereas five neighboring counties averaged one patrol deputy for about every 1,200 rural county residents.
Josephine County residents also paid substantially less for county sheriff patrol deputies than did residents of neighboring counties—in some cases, less than half of what others paid.

This low ratio of deputies per capita and the lower than average patrol cost have likely been sustainable in Josephine County because the state (OSP) has been filling much of the law enforcement gap. In 2019, Josephine County remained heavily reliant on OSP for patrol coverage, investigations, and emergency response for residents outside of Grants Pass.

The capacity of Josephine County’s criminal justice system—especially the adult jail, juvenile detention facility, and the Sheriff’s Office—have notably improved since the successful passage of the levy in 2017. However, it is important to note that this levy was approved by voters for 5 years. Without another source of stable, longer-term funding, in 2022, Josephine County could re-experience the impacts of the 2012 funding cuts. Further, Josephine County’s reliance on OSP for the provision of critical local public safety services creates additional risk, because the sustainability of OSP’s current level of support is unknown. If OSP reallocates its resources statewide and decreases its local investment in the county, Josephine County will lose a substantial proportion of its current law enforcement capacity, without the resources to compensate.

**Recommendations**

With this project, NPC Research collected data to understand and illustrate the changes that occurred in Josephine County since, and as a result of, the funding cuts in 2012. Much of the information collected was historical and all of it was aimed toward addressing specific research questions related to the cutbacks. As part of this effort, NPC did not conduct a comprehensive assessment of the local criminal justice system or public safety resources. In order to make data-driven recommendations for broader system improvement, a more thorough assessment of current system functioning would be necessary. Based on the data gathered specifically for this study, a limited number of recommendations can be offered:

- **Secure a source of stable, long-term funding for the Sheriff’s Office.**

This recommendation is obvious, but it is also worth stating plainly. Without stable, long-term funding—funding that does not rely on a successful ballot measure every few years—the JCSO will remain in the precarious position of inevitable cutbacks and in the perpetual cycle of defunding and restaffing. This cycle inhibits the development and sustainment of reliable practices, institutional knowledge, and internal capacity, which are central to a solid law enforcement agency. This cycle also results in vacillations in service capacity (e.g., restricted response protocols in times of insufficient staffing), which contributes to public safety problems and erosion of public trust. Maintaining a consistently funded and reliably staffed Sheriff’s Office enables the development of a trusting relationship with the public.

Josephine County leadership could use costs paid by neighboring counties for law enforcement, and the manner in which law enforcement is funded by these counties, as benchmarks for appropriate
funding targets and mechanisms. Supporting local law enforcement with county funds (i.e., not relying on state agencies) will allow for more local control over resources and will help safeguard against cutbacks caused by external volatility.

- **Increase JCSO patrol coverage in the county outside of Grants Pass.**
  
  Data indicate that the current rate of patrol coverage is not meeting the needs of county residents. Namely, thousands of calls for service each year go without deputy response. If OSP reduces its current level of local support, this gap in service will widen. Providing adequate patrol coverage for the county will require increases in the number of JCSO patrol deputies and expanding the hours of patrol coverage, which will likely necessitate an increase in dispatch resources.

  Josephine County leadership may decide to use the deputy per capita ratios of neighboring counties as a benchmark for appropriate patrol staffing numbers. Current data suggest that an average allocation would be approximately at least 1 patrol deputy for every 1,200 county residents who live outside of the county seat (and therefore have other police resources). Josephine County’s current ratio is about half of this.

- **Reinstate detective positions to the JCSO.**
  
  Data indicate that the lack of JCSO detectives is creating tension in the system and potential risk to county residents. Specifically, hundreds criminal and child abuse investigations each year are being handled by OSP detectives who are managing very high caseloads. If OSP reduces its current level of local support, there will be no detectives available in the county to investigate crimes or child abuse. Maintaining detectives as part of its staff will also enable the JCSO to once again participate in the Major Crimes Team and RADE drug enforcement team, which are key to the coordination of resources to respond to major crime events and, as such, reflect an important element of agency capacity.

  Josephine County leadership may decide to use the detective per capita ratios of neighboring counties as a benchmark for appropriate staffing numbers. Current data suggest that an average allocation would be approximately at least 1 detective for every 10,700 county residents who live outside of the county seat (and therefore have other police resources).

- **Ensure the JCSO can collect and submit valid and reliable crime data.**
  
  OUCR data that is submitted by local law enforcement agencies to the state are an essential foundation to understand crime across Oregon. These data are vital for any effort to monitor crime and law enforcement response in any community. They also require local law enforcement staff to submit them monthly to the state. Ensuring that the JCSO has staff to conduct these duties and that the data are reliably submitted each month will provide Josephine County leadership with appropriate data to monitor the rates of crime in the county and assess any changes in the crime rates in conjunction with changes in enforcement resources.
• **Conduct public awareness campaigns regarding the status of law enforcement resources, and the impact of the cutbacks, in Josephine County.**

Data suggest that the broader public is relatively uneducated about the local county public safety system, including the differences between GGPD, JCSO, and OSP; how the 911 calls are transferred and who responds; and how fire protection coverage is provided. In this confusion, it may be easier for residents to make assumptions about available resources and priorities and what their tax dollars pay for. Educating the public about their local system could help create an understanding that might ease conversations about local resource allocation. This understanding may support to residents’ willingness to contribute to the support of their local system.

County residents may also benefit from learning about:

- Current level of law enforcement staffing relative to prior years in Josephine County (i.e., what they have now versus what they had prior to 2012);
- Apparent impacts of the 2012 cutbacks (e.g., documented increase in crime and recidivism);
- Needs of Josephine County residents that are not being met due to diminished law enforcement resources (e.g., calls for service that do not receive deputy response, delays in emergency medical response, lack of child abuse and criminal investigation capacity);
- What constitutes a typical law enforcement presence (i.e., current level of law enforcement in neighboring counties and the amounts paid by residents for patrol coverage);
- Improvements made possible by the 2017 levy and what additional funds can do.

Quantitative data can be a useful tool to facilitate conversations and establish common ground in situations that entail multiple factions of people with conflicting opinions and divergent perceptions. Data can create a common language and can help establish a more uniform understanding of an otherwise dynamic situation. Thus, presenting quantitative data to reflect the bullet points above (and other points in this report) may help progress a conversation about local county resources that, to this point, has been stymied.

• **Consider holding a vote to establish necessary fire districts.**

Several stakeholders pointed out that crime was not the only threat to Josephine County that required additional system resources—the threat of fire was not to be ignored. Holding votes to establish the fire districts necessary to ensure that all county residents have adequate fire protection should remain a priority for local officials.