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Message from Chief Boehm

Dear Residents and Business Owners of the Village of Steger,

I am pleased to put forth the Steger Police Department Annual Report for 2017. Within, you will learn about the police department and highlights from the past year. We are committed to providing the highest level of service possible. 2017 brought new challenges for the police department, regardless the dedicated men and women of the Steger Police Department continue to work diligently to provide law enforcement services that help make the Village of Steger a safe community. We continue to work to build trusting relationships and encourage partnership with the community. Please do not hesitate to call us or report anything that seems unusual. I always say it is better for citizens to call 911 and have an officer respond to investigate, rather than wait and later discover that a crime possibly could have been prevented. All calls for service will be handled as quickly and as professionally as possible. We are here to serve the community.

Moving forward in 2018, we plan on moving into the new police facility and we will continue to strive for professional and individual excellence. I believe there is always room for improvement. I hope you find the information contained in this Annual Report valuable and should you ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me or Deputy Chief Patrick Rossi. I also encourage you to visit the police department on the village’s website and our Facebook page. facebook.com/stegerpolicedepartment

In closing, I want to thank our many residents and businesses for your continued support. Without your support we could not be as effective in our public safety efforts. Best regards!

Sincerely,

Ken Boehm
Chief of Police
Mission, Vision, Values and Leadership Statements

Mission Statement

We, the members of the Steger Police Department, are committed to excellence in law enforcement and are dedicated to the people, traditions and diversity of our village. In order to protect life and property, prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime, we will provide service with understanding, response with compassion, performance with integrity and professional enforcement with vision.

Vision Statement

In the future we seek to provide progress toward our department’s mission by forming partnership with our community. We shall strive for a public perception that views police as trusted leaders in the community.

Value Statement

Central to this mission are the values that guide our work. Our decisions will help us to contribute to the quality of life in the Village of Steger. Our values and integrity are qualities of worth and as such they are nonnegotiable. The men and women of the Steger Police Department value;

S ervice: We recognize customer service is our highest priority. We are committed to providing caring, competent, and professional police service.
T eamwork: We sustain an environment which respects individual opinion while building consensus to a common goal.
E thics: We acknowledge we must be examples of the highest order regarding integrity and moral character.
G rowth: We support, promote, and enhance the personal and professional development of our law enforcement officers.
E xcellence: We meet challenge and adversity with perseverance to attain individual and organizational goals.
R espect: We respect ourselves, our peers, those we serve, and the sanctity of the laws we enforce.

Leadership Statement

As a leader, I expect myself, my command staff and every person to be highly competent, professional and ethical, to generate a sense of pride in the department and treat everyone with respect and dignity. Furthermore, I expect all individuals to be devoted to the organization and to the development of teamwork, problem solving and innovation for the betterment of the entire organization and the community we serve.
Steger Police Department

Organizational Chart

Chief

Deputy Chief

Sergeant

Sergeant

Sergeant

Community Service Officer (P/T)

Detective

Records Clerks (1-F/T 2-P/T)

Patrol Officers (3)

Patrol Officers (3)

Patrol Officers (3)

Part Time Patrol Officers (7)
Board of Police & Fire Commissioners

The Board of Police & Fire Commission is a three-member commission appointed by the Mayor and Village Board. This Commission is responsible for setting the standards for the testing and hiring of all full time police officers and the promotional process to the rank of Sergeant of Police. The Commission is designed to be impartial and provide due process when conducting hearings on disciplinary matters concerning police officers and sergeant’s performance brought forth by the Chief of Police. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. at the Village Hall.

The members of the Commission are:

James Hanus, Chairperson
Matthew Wenzel, Commissioner
Roger Wommack, Commissioner

New police facility under construction

Since the fire damaged the Village Hall / Police Department in the summer of 2014. The Police Department has been working in a temporary facility at 3322 Emerald Ave. We are pleased to report a new police facility has been designed and was approved by the Village Board in 2017. This new facility will provide the space needed and allow for improved police operations and overall safety and security for everyone. This facility will serve the needs of the community well into the foreseeable future and has growth opportunity. We anticipate completion in the summer of 2018. Watch for the planned open house invitation and other events that will be scheduled throughout the year.
Police Operations

The Police Department is comprised of 16 full time and 10 part time dedicated employees. The department consists of the Chief, Deputy Chief, three Sergeants, nine Patrol Officers, one Detective, one Records Clerk, seven part-time Patrol Officers, two part-time Records Clerks, and one part-time Community Service Officer. These members are all dedicated service minded individuals, with a vast amount of experience and training. They routinely strive to follow the Department’s mission and provide service with understanding, response with compassion, performance with integrity and professional service to help provide a safe community to the residents and business owners of the Village of Steger.

The department is always looking to improve efficiencies, reduce liabilities or partner with others to accomplish our goals and improve services. We operate with an approximate 2 million dollar annual budget, which the majority expense consists of employee salaries and benefits. We aggressively pursue grant opportunities whenever they become available or qualify to help offset budgetary costs. In 2017 the department did receive grant funding for equipment or services in excess of $40,000.00.

In 2017 the department contracted with Lexis-Nexis, Inc. to manage and maintain all vehicle crash reports that occur within the Village. This service helps streamline our Records Management and allows for copies of the crash reports to be available on line 24 hours a day, thus eliminates the need for individuals to come to the department during business hours to obtain a copy of the crash report and allows the Records Clerks to focus their attention on other matters. On average just over 200 vehicle crash reports are handled by the department annually.

In addition our School Crossing Guard Program was contracted to Andy Frain Inc. although still overseen by the department. This services is more cost effective and reduces liabilities associated with risk management and personnel. It also has eliminated the need for Patrol Officers to perform these duties which permits officers more time to focus on school patrols/traffic enforcement, neighborhood patrols and other priority policing responsibilities.
In today’s environment no individual police department can provide all the specialized services and manpower needed in critical situations, in a fiscally responsible manner. Therefore in order to provide the best police services possible in a variety of specialized capacities the department has joined forces with the following specialized Task Forces. These multi-jurisdictional units provide the benefits of additional manpower, expertise and equipment to effectively respond and investigate critical incidents and conduct specialized investigations. Through these partnerships the department is fiscally responsible and affords the community a higher degree of professional police services that otherwise could not be provided.

**South Suburban Major Crimes Task Force**
The SSMCTF is a multi-jurisdictional criminal investigative task force which focuses their expertise with significant criminal events that require a high degree of expertise, equipment, resources and manpower such as homicides and related offenses within South Cook County.

**Will & Grundy County Major Crimes Task Force**
This multi-jurisdictional task force similar to that of the South Suburban Major Crimes Task Force, focuses on major crimes that occur within Will and Grundy Counties. Crimes are prosecuted by county of jurisdiction, and Steger has a significant jurisdiction within Will County.

**South Suburban Major Accident Reconstruction Team**
The SMART is comprised with officers from numerous south suburban police department with expertise and equipment to properly document and reconstruct a serious personal injury and/or fatal motor vehicle accident. This helps in determining the cause of the accident and whether or not it is related to reckless acts, engineering or other causes in determining fault.

**South Suburban Emergency Response Team**
This is commonly known as S.W.A.T. The SSERT also is a multi-jurisdictional task force with specialized training and equipment needed to respond to high risk incidents, i.e. Search/Arrest Warrants, Hostage/Barricade situations, Active Shooter situations.

**Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System**
ILEAS is a statewide police mutual aid system with over 700 member agencies, Steger is a member of Region IV of the ILEAS plan. Through our active membership ILEAS will provide significant public safety resources quickly should the village experience a significant emergency situation that would typically strain our abilities, thereby improving our overall efficiencies at no cost to the Village.
21st Century Policing

In 2014, then President Obama signed an executive order establishing the Task Force on 21st Century Policing. The mission of the task force was to strengthen the relationship between law enforcement officers and the communities they serve by providing guidelines and recommendations. In May 2015, the task force released a comprehensive report on its research. In 2016 I began comparing our practices to those suggested to see how we measured up to the report’s standards. In 2017 we continued to make progress in our community policing efforts. We also recognize the collaborative work that has been done between the Illinois Chiefs of Police Association and the NAACP. Therefore the department vows to work together and affirm the following principles regarding the relationship between law enforcement and the people we serve.

1. We value the life of every person and consider life to be the highest value.
2. All persons should be treated with dignity and respect.
3. We reject discrimination toward any person that is based on race, ethnicity, religion, color, nationality, immigrant status, sexual orientation, gender, disability, or familial status.
4. We endorse the six pillars in the report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing. The first pillar is to build and rebuild trust through procedural justice, transparency, accountability, and honest recognition of past and present obstacles.
5. We endorse the four pillars of procedural justice, which are fairness, voice (i.e., an opportunity for citizens and police to believe they are heard), transparency, and impartiality.
6. We endorse the values inherent in community policing, which includes community partnerships involving law enforcement, engagement of police officers with residents outside of interaction specific to enforcement of laws, and problem-solving that is collaborative, not one-sided.
7. We believe that law enforcement and community leaders have a mutual responsibility to encourage all citizens to gain a better understanding and knowledge of the law to assist them in their interactions with law enforcement officers.
8. We believe de-escalation training to ensure the safety of the community members and officers. We endorse using de-escalation tactics to reduce the potential for confrontations that endanger law enforcement officers and community members; and the principle that human life should be taken only as a last resort.
New Employees in 2017

Ricardo Brambilia joined the Police Department in July 2017 as a part-time Police Officer.

In Memory

It is with deep sadness that the Steger Police Department announced the sudden passing of retired Police Officer Michael K Sauter, age 63 on November 20th, 2017. Officer Sauter worked for the Steger Police Department for 32 years before retiring on May 15th, 2014; he also previously served as a police officer for the Village of Beecher.

The members of the Steger Police Department offer our deepest condolences to the Sauter family. We ask that you keep the Sauter family in your thoughts and prayers. He touched the lives of many through his years of service and will be dearly missed.
Best Wishes

Congratulations to our former CSO John Beck, who was officially sworn in as a Police Officer in Chicago Heights, in addition he was the valedictorian of his academy class. (John is second from left).

Congratulations

Congratulations to Sergeant Gerald Ruff for completing 20 years of service with the Police Department. Sgt. Ruff was hired as a police officer in August 1997 and promoted to Sergeant in May 2009. He has fulfilled many roles of responsibility and leadership within the department and continues to demonstrate a high level of dedication and professionalism.

Department Awards

“In recognition of outstanding dedication and commitment above and beyond expectation, for providing professional service and loyalty to the community, and representing the Steger Police Department in the highest caliber”.

The Steger Police Department held its annual awards recognition to honor the numerous members of the department for their professionalism and dedication involving a number of incidents that occurred in 2017. There is no doubt that this is not an all-inclusive list of the
professional and dedicated service the members of the Department provide every day, but just a sampling of some exceptional efforts that were identified as exemplary.

**Officer of the Year:** Presented to Sergeant Gerald Ruff, earned this recognition for his high level of professionalism, dedication and commitment to the Department. Consistently throughout 2017 Sgt. Ruff demonstrated a positive attitude and went above and beyond his normal assigned duties, by unselfishly supporting the mission of the department through his numerous professional contributions and personal sacrifices.

**Commendations:** Officers Boren, Farkas and Lane all received Letters of Commendation for their professionalism, tenacity and commitment involving numerous incidents for which they demonstrated a high level of self-initiative.

**Letters of Recognition:** Sergeant Bautista, Officers Elza, Fajman, Farkas, Kozinski, Lacheta and Lane all received Letters of Recognition for their professionalism, dedication and commitment for their involvement in a number of incidents in which they demonstrated exemplary individual efforts and team work.

**Letters of Appreciation:** Officer’s Hillman and Smith received Letters of Appreciation for their individual professionalism, dedication and commitment to the mission of the department as it relates to their commitment to raising the professional training standards of the department.

Also the following were recognized for their enforcement of motorists driving while intoxicated (DUI) by the Alliance Against Intoxicated Motorists, (AAIM) organization. This included Sergeant Bautista, Officers; Banicki, Boren, D’Anna and Lane.

**Patrol Unit**

The primary operations of the Police Department is comprised of officers assigned to the Patrol Unit, which consists of all the day to day duties of providing protection and policing services for our diverse community of just over 9,500 residents. The Patrol Unit is committed each day to delivering exceptional police service and maintaining public safety to all people within the Village of Steger. We provide continuous service to the community 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A typical patrol shift consists of a Sergeant and two Patrol Officers.

The Patrol Unit is responsible for both emergency and non-emergency calls for service. It is dedicated to protecting the lives and property of the public, understanding and responding to the specific needs of the community, preserving the public peace, reducing crimes through high visibility and community oriented policing concepts. The Patrol Section is also responsible for conducting preliminary investigations, investigating traffic crashes, and upholding the pillars established by the Constitution of the United States of America, the laws of the State of Illinois, and the local ordinances of the Village of Steger.
All officers have completed an extensive hiring process, graduation from an intensive three month Police Academy, a four month Field Training Program and continue to receive on-going, legal updates, specialized law enforcement and public service minded training throughout their careers.

In 2017, Officers handled 15,808 calls for service. Response times are important and we strive to respond to all calls for service in less than 5 minutes on a priority basis. 911 and other calls for service are being dispatched from a centralized dispatching facility. There are numerous police and fire departments that are using the services of this dispatching facility. As a result, communities benefit from the economies of scale and shared resources. In late 2017 as a result of State legislative changes, limiting the number of emergency police-fire dispatch centers per county, EastCom, Lincolnway, Romeoville, Joliet and Will County Sheriff’s Office all consolidated into the new state of the art Laraway Communications Center, located in Joliet.

In 2017 the department through a grant was able to outfit two squads with the LoJack monitors (above) which is designed to alert officers of any stolen vehicles or equipment that is registered with the LoJack Anti-Theft Tracking System. When activated the system sends out a covert signal to these monitors, allowing officers to converge upon the stolen vehicle whether moving or parked.
Investigations Unit

The Police Department has a patrol officer assigned as a full time Detective. He works an 8-hour day, five days a week and is available on-call when off duty. An investigation is most often started after a Patrol Officer refers a case that cannot be completed without significant resources, expertise or within the Patrol Officer’s work day. The Detective reviews these cases, applying several solvability factors to determine the likeliness of solving the case. These factors include, but are not limited to seriousness of the crime; clear descriptions to identify the offender or vehicle used physical evidence available or a pattern of similar crimes, physical evidence, etc. The Detective will build a case using all information and evidence discovered and presents this case to the County Prosecutor. The goal of each case is to paint a clear picture of the crime that a Judge or Jury can render a verdict of guilty beyond reasonable doubt. Throughout the entire process, the Detective maintains an open line of communication with victims, witnesses and offering referrals and resources as appropriate. Throughout the year, team members are continually receiving training to improve skill and knowledge. Networking with surrounding police agencies and members of the law enforcement community is performed daily. Patrol Officers are also utilized in a specialized capacity to perform other investigative assignments relating to drug and gang investigations when scheduling and manpower permits. In 2017, 96 Cases were formally investigated, including 15 Task Force activations, (which occurred in other communities) as part of our partnership with the South Suburban Major Crimes Task Force.

In 2017 the Police Department took a more proactive approach to drug and weapons enforcement within the Village. Investigators utilized various investigative measures and conducted numerous search warrants resulting in the seizure of a significant amount of narcotics and weapons from the streets of Steger. We will continue to take an aggressive zero-tolerance approach on this issue.

2016 Investigation's Case Disposition

![Pie chart showing case disposition]
Traffic Safety

Every year hundreds of people are killed and thousands are injured in traffic related accidents. The department is committed to traffic safety and is doing what we can to reduce motor vehicle and pedestrian accidents through education and enforcement to improve the safety of all who travel through and live within the community. During 2017, Officers received additional training on Impaired Drivers Enforcement. Impaired drivers and unsafe driving practices are an individual choice, by choosing to drive impaired or unsafe they thereby turn their vehicle into a weapon that can have devastating effects on innocent victims. If you would like to request traffic enforcement for a specific area of the Village that you believe needs additional enforcement please contact Deputy Chief Rossi at 755-0223 or email prossi@villageofsteger.org

New for 2017 the department now has two state certified Child Safety Seat Inspectors, which are available to inspect for proper installation of child car seats. Appointments can be made by contacting Sgt. Maria Bautista at 708-755-0223 extension 313.

The department also participated in numerous State-wide Traffic Safety Campaigns to help promote traffic safety through awareness, education and enforcement. These campaigns included but not limited to; Distracted Driving Week, Speed Awareness Day, Rail Safety Week, etc. We encourage everyone to drive safely!
Community Service Officer

The Community Service Officer (CSO) position is a part time position, consists of a uniformed, non-sworn member of the Department who works 4 hours a day five days a week. The CSOs support the efforts of the Police Department by providing services to the community, while also supporting the Police Department. The CSO has a significant impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of police services. The duties include enforcing local and parking-related ordinances, investigating animal complaints, and handling calls for service which do not require a sworn officer. The CSO general duties include assisting with code enforcement, handling vehicle lock-outs, animal control functions, traffic control and prisoner booking, found/lost property, abandoned vehicles. Other activities include picking up/delivering correspondence for the Department/Village, Crossing Guard substitutions, vacation house checks, placement of speed monitoring radar trailers. In addition, the CSO often performs administrative duties such as vehicle maintenance, errands, deliveries, and support for our Records personnel. Like all department personnel, Community Service Officers display a positive image for the Steger Police Department while contributing to a more efficient and professional organization.

Department Training

The Steger Police Department continues to invest in professional development of its officers. In conjunction with increased State mandated training officers are continuing to receive updated and on-going monthly training to effectively perform their duties. For example; each officer is required to attend on-going training throughout the year on such topics such as Firearms, Less Lethal Weapons, Defensive & Tactical Tactics, Legal updates and practical procedures. In addition, Officers are provided specialized training in a variety of categories, such as Evidence Tech, Narcotics Enforcement, Accident Investigation, Hostage Negotiations, SWAT, Active Shooter training etc. All members from the Chief down are mandated by the State of Illinois to complete numerous hours of training annually.

The Field Training Program continues to be an integral part of a new officers training. In 2017, the Field Training Program had 1 new part-time police officers assigned to the 12-week hands-on training program to develop critical skills, therefore preparing them to be on his own at the
end of the 12th week. The program is broken down into four phases. During each phase, the new officers are evaluated on ten assessment categories ranging from Interpersonal Relationships to Patrol Tactics. If completed successfully, the Field Training Officer (FTO) will recommend the release of the officer to solo patrol. When the officer is on their own, he/she is still evaluated monthly by an FTO until that officer completes an 18 month probationary period.

Crime Prevention

Crime Prevention is pro-active efforts to inform residents of ways to prevent crimes. We also continue to encourage the philosophy of “If you see something, say something” by calling 911.

In 2017, the department renewed and improved its use of social media in an effort to enhance communication and collaboration with the community. The Department added its own Facebook page at; facebook.com/stegerpolicedepartment.

New in 2017 the department partnered with the Cook County Sheriff’s Department Prescription Drug Take-Back Program. A collection box is located in the police department foyer and available for residents to drop off unwanted medications. (pills only - no liquids).

The department offers a House Watch Program for residents whenever they will be away from home for an extended period of time. Officers will conduct a daily safety check of the premise during the allotted timeframe. Vacation house watch request forms are available on the Village website at www.villageofsteger.org, or can be requested in person at the police department.

The department offers crime prevention seminars to seniors and community groups. We have been trying to improve communications and implore residents, HOA’s, Apartment Complexes and Business owners to be more proactive within the Community Watch Programs. We strongly encouraging anyone to call 911 whenever suspicious activities are observed, you can remain anonymous.

Several officers are trained as D.A.R.E. (Drug Awareness Resistance Education) Officers. Officers have actively been teaching the D.A.R.E. curriculum to all 4th & 5th grade students. In addition, the Chief, Deputy Chief and DARE Officers participate in monthly safety meetings with all Steger School District Principals. The Chief and Deputy Chief also meet monthly with Bloom Trail H.S. staff on Safety/Security related issues.

The Police Department also receives a grant by the Illinois Liquor Commission to conduct retail tobacco compliance checks upon local businesses. This is intended to ensure businesses are educated and are compliant with the laws that help prevent under age alcohol and tobacco use.
Community Events

Officers routinely engage the community to bridge the gap and help build positive relationships. As part of this commitment the department has organized or participates in a variety of National, State and local organized events, i.e.

The department participates annually in the Illinois Special Olympics “Torch Run”. The department raised over $3,000.00 to support the event through fundraising efforts which include shirt/hat sales. Numerous members actually run the route on Chicago Ave between its borders.

The department organized its second annual National Night Out event. National Night Out is an annual (first Tuesday in August) community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer and more caring places to live. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community and provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances. This year numerous kids school back packs filled with school supplies were handed out to raffle winners. All Village departments participated in the event and provided insightful interactive information about their department.
The department participated in 7-Eleven’s Operation Chill, a program that aims to reduce crime and build rapport between kids and law enforcement. If an officer spots a child doing good deeds or exhibiting positive behavior, wearing a helmet, picking up trash or observing crosswalk rules, he or she could get a “ticket” for a free, small Slurpee at 7-Eleven.

Safety Pup made a special appearance this year at the St Liborious, fun fair.

The department participates along the Steger School District in “Pop with a Cop”, a unique opportunity for officers to interact with the school kids and build relations.

The department organized its first annual “Coffee with a Cop”, which is national event to bridge the gap, open communications and create partnerships with the community.
The department was graciously invited to participate in the Veteran’s Recognition Day at Columbia Middle School. Our very own Officer Brambilia who previous served in the Armed Forces provided an inspiring speech. Our respect and gratitude is extended to all those who made the sacrifice and served our country not only on this day but every day.

First Responder Appreciation Fest, several members participated in the dunk tank fundraiser – can you guess who they were? Fun was had by all!

The department participated in the Halloween “Trunk or Treat” event at St. Laborious. Fun and scary moments were had by all. This year we had fun with our “Dunkin Donuts” display.

Due to the generosity of several organizations, the Steger Police Officer Association again partnered with our local K-Mart Corporation to offer “Shop with a COP”. This year we were able to double the number of school age children from 5 to 10 who participated in this memorable event. “Shop with a Cop” is a way for Law Enforcement Officers to share a little Christmas cheer, as well as have positive interaction with the children. It is also another way for
the police officers to give back to the community and show how much they wish to spread good cheer.

The Police Department sponsored Christmas tree on the Boardwalk.

Other noteworthy community events the Police Department participated in included the Boy Scout Jamboree, and Village Kuwanis Christmas basket distribution.

**Records Unit**

The Records Unit is responsible for the processing, distribution, and retention of all police documents. These documents include offense/incident reports, traffic citations, written warnings, warrants, crash reports, and any supporting documents. The Records Section also serves as a citizen support center, taking calls and speaking face to face with the citizens of Steger. The Records Unit receives and processes Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests related to police documents, handles parking violation complaints and payments, and forwards citizens to the appropriate officer for incident related complaints. Dissemination of information must comply with all department, state, and federal laws, guidelines, and confidentiality procedures. Internally, the Records Section works with officers by identifying and correcting data errors, communicates with Cook and Will Counties in transmission of information and subpoenas, and handles expungement orders. The Records Unit is comprised of one full time Records Clerk and 2 part-time Clerks. The hours of operation are typically 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and occasional Saturday mornings from 8 a.m. to noon.
# 2017 Department Statistics

<table>
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<th>Month</th>
<th>Calls For Service</th>
<th>Case Reports</th>
<th>Accident Reports</th>
<th>Felony Arreasts</th>
<th>Misd. Arreasts</th>
<th>Warrant Arrests</th>
<th>State Tickets</th>
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## 2017 Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting (Drugs Arrests)

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**Notes:**

- **CH** = Criminal Homicide, **MVT** = Motor Vehicle Theft,
- **HT SEX** = Human Trafficking Sex Acts, **HT Serve** = Human Trafficking Involuntary Servitude
- **CCA** = Cannabis Controlled Act, **Con Sub** = Controlled Substances Act,
- **HSNA** = Hypodermic Syringes and Needles Act, **DPA** = Drug Paraphernalia Act,
- **METH** = Methamphetamine Act