



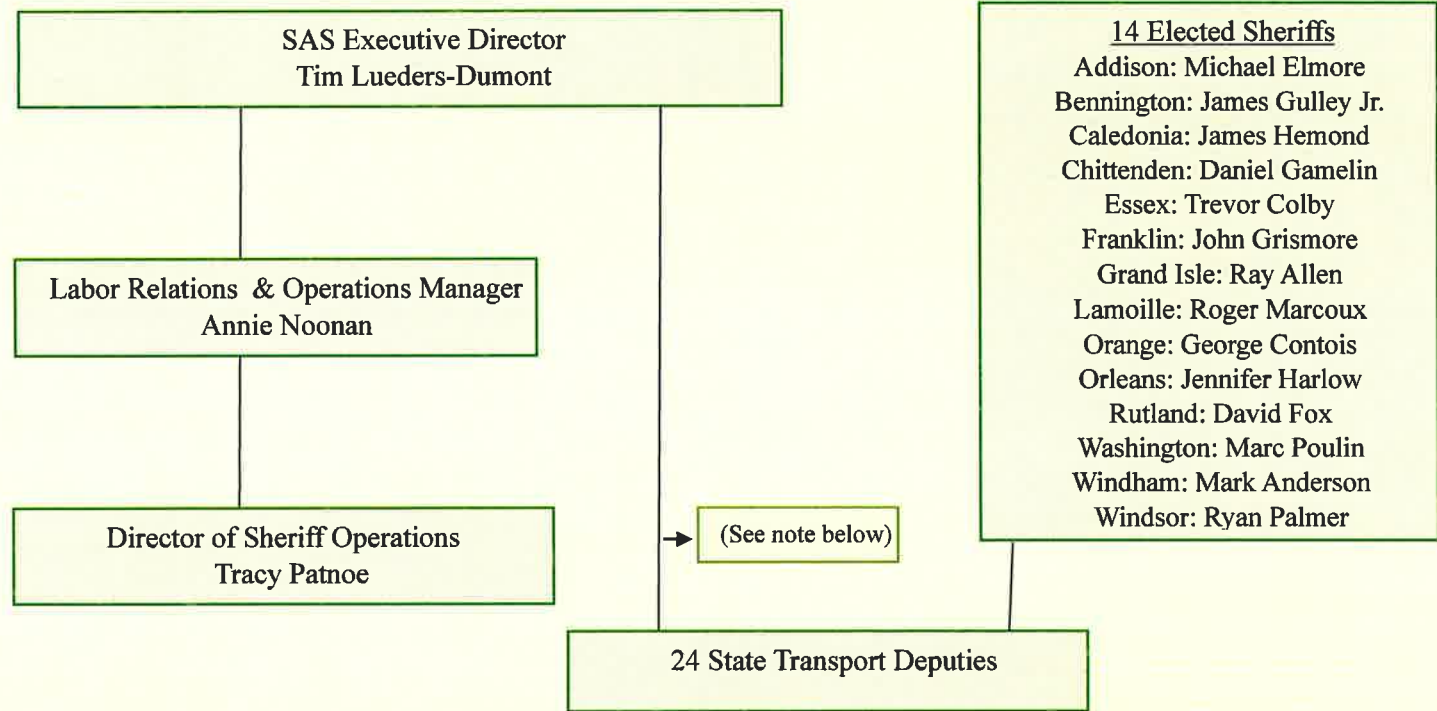
Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs

Vermont Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs

FY26 Budget Presentation

SAS Sheriffs Budget

Vermont Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs



24. V.S.A. 290(b): Full-time State deputy sheriffs whose primary responsibility is transportation of prisoners, persons with a mental condition or psychiatric disability, or juveniles being transported to court or to a court-ordered facility shall be paid by the State of Vermont. The positions and their funding shall be assigned to the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs. The Executive Director shall have the authority to determine job duties for the position, assignment of positions to county, regular and temporary work locations, assistance to other State agencies and departments, timesheet systems, daily work logs, and to have final approval of personnel matters, including, but not limited to, approval for hiring, paygrade assignment, hiring rate, discipline, and termination.



SAS Sheriffs FY26 Budget Narrative

Mission:

Each of the fourteen Vermont Sheriffs is responsible in varying degrees for the following work tasks:

- Direct the development and implementation of goals, policies, and procedures for the department.
- Represent the Sheriff's Department in government meetings and coordinate with other public services.
- Coordinate with other law enforcement agencies on the county, State and federal level.
- Represent the Sheriff's Department with community organizations and the media.
- Oversee all law enforcement functions in their department's jurisdiction.
- Develop and manage effective recruitment, interviewing, selection and training of all personnel.
- Oversee all business and accounting to include payroll, employee benefits, retirement and holidays, OT, sick and vacation time.
- Prepare and manage budgets and funds from the county for their department.
- Help Vermont courthouse security by contract with the Judiciary.
- Monitor and manage the transportation of prisoners, juveniles, and persons with mental health problems.
- Help AHS by monitoring juveniles in DCF custody while awaiting transport or placement.
- Oversee the property maintenance and management of sheriff's department, county lockups and other sheriff's department properties.
- Provide law enforcement services to local communities.
- Complete required VCJC certification training and department training.
- Negotiate and manage all contracted services and projects and all related funds and personnel.
- Purchase and manage vehicles, uniforms and equipment.
- Manage local and regional emergency communications sites, PSAP's, equipment, personnel and mandatory training and certification(s).
- Responsible for implementing and overseeing state and federal mandates applicable to their department.
- Respond to Legislative questions and concerns, and provide testimony at legislative committee hearings.
- Conduct public education, engage with schools, churches, community and social service programs.
- Assist with the needs of the community members particularly victims of crime; those struggling with addiction, food insecurity, homelessness, mental health issues, or other problems that may bring a person or family in contact with the Sheriff department staff.
- As an elected official, a Sheriff must communicate in a timely manner to constituents.
- Must be available to assist the State of Vermont, the Governor, other law enforcement agencies and first responders during any calls for assistance during emergencies.

Page 2. Sheriffs FY26 Budget Narrative

A statutory review of the assignments given to the Sheriffs includes the following:

- 12 VSA 691: serving civil or criminal process
- 12 VSA 696: receive, execute and return writs or precept
- 13 VSA 4948: serving warrants
- 13 VSA 7554: electronic monitoring
- 15 VSA 800: child support enforcement
- 16 VSA 1125: ex officio truant officers
- 18 VSA 617: assistance to local health officer
- 20 VSA 27: auxiliary State police in emergencies
- 20 VSA 1847: assistance in missing persons and search and rescue missions
- 20 VSA 2053: assistance in supporting uniform criminal recordkeeping and checks
- 20 VSA 2221: governor-called assistance for preservation of public peace
- 21 VSA 225: serve VOSHA citations or WC misclassification citations
- 24 VSA 299: general reference to peace officer
- 24 VSA 296: transportation of prisoners
- 24 VSA 307: employment of deputy sheriffs

In addition, the Sheriffs are included in various statutorily-established councils, boards and panels:

- Racial Disparities in the Criminal and Juvenile Justice System Advisory Panel
- Governor's Opioid Council
- Vermont Communications Board
- Governor's Emergency Preparedness Advisory Council
- Vermont Criminal Justice Council
- Governor's Snowmobile Council
- Law Enforcement Advisory Board
- Animal Cruelty Investigation Advisory Board
- Vermont Enhanced E-911 Board

Operation and Funding:

The Sheriff is an independently-elected, constitutional, county position, employing State and non-State employees. It is estimated that the Sheriffs employ more than 600 Vermonters among the 14 offices, in both civilian and law enforcement roles. The Sheriff is responsible for the management, oversight and direction of all their employees. Those employees with law enforcement certification are also required to comply with all policies generated by the Vermont Criminal Justice Council, including Act 56.

Operation and Funding (continued):

Funding for a Sheriff's department comes from:

State of Vermont (e.g. through SAS for salaries and benefits for the Sheriff, 24 State Transport Deputies, Sheriff Operations Director, and one Administrative/Fiscal support person)

Contracts with State agencies and departments (e.g. Judiciary, Mental Health, DCF)

DSP contracts for sheriffs' assistance with certain activities

Federal funds for various activities and services including COPS Program (assists with recruitment), NHTSA for highway safety, etc.

Contracts with towns/municipalities for local services

Contracts with private entities (construction, health care, concert and other events, other)

Act 30 included provisions for the amount of money a Sheriff can utilize for salary and operations.

Who We Serve:

Citizens of the county from which the Sheriff is elected, plus other counties if contracted for services.

The State of Vermont as a whole, and certain agencies and departments by statute or contract. See the information listed above.

Budget Issues and Pressures for FY26:

FY26 budget would require a vacancy savings of \$673,170 – an increase of \$396,304. This will require holding approximately 6 State Transport Deputy positions vacant for the majority of the fiscal year.

The union contract provided for a pay equity review for the State Transport Deputies which will increase salary costs for both FY25 and FY26 beyond what is currently budgeted and what is projected.

The State Transport Deputies are incurring more overtime each year due judges not allowing remote court proceedings/hearings in most cases, and DOC's staffing problems have reduced their transport team's ability to move defendants to a closer facility for scheduled hearings.

Single audit cost increases due to changes in the audit company by the State Auditor as a result of only one bidder for the work.

Recommendations for Programs/Work to be Shifted from Sheriffs to Other Agencies / Delivery of Services

No recommendations at this time

New Initiatives:

In the past year, Sheriffs have provided more assistance to municipalities, at their request, during this year which is a result of increased crime and drug-related, and inability to recruit and retain law enforcement staff.

Regionalized policing and dispatching.

Continuing to implement the provisions of Act 30

Programs/Issues Posing Most Significant Challenges:

Recruitment and retention of law enforcement officers
Trying to cover the increased transport orders from Judiciary with only 24 State Transport Deputies
Increased crime activity in all areas of the state

What Work has been done to Address These Challenges?

In some cases, Sheriffs have adopted strategies for recruitment such as sign-on bonuses; hiring non-certified individuals and paying salary and costs for their attendance at the Police Academy; addressing the long-standing discrepancy in retirement systems by securing Group G option for their (non-State) law enforcement officers; and increasing salary and other compensation.

We are seeking 6 new permanent State Transport Deputies for FY26.

Significant Financial Changes:

FY26 budget --vacancy savings of \$673,170. This will require holding approximately 6 State Transport Deputy positions vacant for the majority of the fiscal year.

Pay equity review for the State Transport Deputies – impact in FY25 and FY26.

The State Transport Deputies overtime each year due to judges not allowing remote court proceedings/hearings in most cases, and DOC's staffing problems have reduced their transport team's ability to move defendants to a closer facility for scheduled hearings.

Single audit cost increases due to changes in the audit company by the State Auditor as a result of only one bidder for the work.

Source of Federal Funding:

National Highway Safety Administration

Stone Garden – grant received by DPS, and some Sheriffs and municipal agencies are subrecipient

Internal Performance Goals:

Compliance with the continuing work and goals of Act 30.

Completing work to finalize Transport Manager timekeeping system

Additional training for Sheriffs and Deputies

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FY26 Sheriffs' Budget

- FY26 Gov Recommend: \$5,888,629
- Total GF increase 7.6% (all GF, no other funding source)
- Proposed budget would necessitate a Vacancy Savings figure of \$673,170, increase of \$396,304
- Act 30 requirement for Director of Sheriff Operations hired; position paid through FY25 allocation to Sheriffs' budget.
- Budget and Staffing pressures
- Reclassification of Transport Deputies based upon level of certification and pay equity review for longevity.
- Overtime pressures resulting from collective bargaining increase and increased transports due to courts full reopening (remote hearings not occurring), and less availability of DOC support to move defendants from facility to facility for court hearings due to DOC understaffing;
- Recruitment challenges: finding certified law enforcement officers (level 2 or 3)
- Single audit costs due to changes in audit companies