

AN OVERVIEW OF

# University Police and Public Safety



**PennState**  
University Police  
and Public Safety

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## Introducing UPPS

University Police and Public Safety (UPPS), which includes the units of University Police, Emergency Management, Clery Compliance and Police Records, Physical Security, and Behavioral Threat Management, provides a number of valuable services to the Penn State community, such as:

- Protecting and serving more than 100,000 students, employees and visitors
- Protecting 22,000 acres throughout Pennsylvania, including stadiums, concert and event venues, airport, and more
- Employing law enforcement and emergency response professionals at 22 Penn State campuses with the ability to investigate all crimes, offer resources to victims, and respond to major incidents, such as manmade or natural disasters
- Employing roughly 60 full-time civilian staff members to include Emergency Management; Physical Security; Behavior Threat Management; Police Records; Clery Compliance; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Public Information; and other various support staff (i.e. Quartermaster, Training Coordinator, various administrative support positions)
- Employing students through paid internships and the Student Auxiliary Officer program

## UPPS Contributions

- Penn State police officers proactively connect with the Penn State community by offering free educational programs and services, attending community meetings and events, and collaborating with University and locally-based agencies and services that help foster a safe and healthy community.
- Relationships have been long established with University units and campus groups, which allows for more effective collaboration and communication, such as:
  - Title IX
  - Residence Life
  - Student Affairs
  - Office of Student Conduct
  - Housing
  - Student organizations and clubs
- It takes a special individual to work in campus law enforcement, which is different compared to traditional policing in a municipal or state agency. Campus policing is:
  - More focused on students and their success
  - Key services for those locked out of their office or residence hall
  - Time invested in welfare checks of students (almost like a second set of parents)
  - Locking and unlocking of University facilities on a scheduled basis
  - Work orders placed for unsafe building conditions
  - Response to various building alarms
  - Special security checks at various facilities (i.e. airport, Old Main, building checks at night and during University breaks)
- Understanding compliance requirements unique to University policing and campus safety

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## Community Policing and Campus Engagement

The department embraces a philosophy of community-oriented policing and has dedicated police officers who are assigned to this function at each campus we serve. Additionally, all Penn State police officers and staff members are expected to embrace and demonstrate these values and actions daily:

- Focus on student, employee, and visitor safety
- Build and enhance partnerships and relationships with students, employees, and parents
- Be held accountable to campus stakeholders
- Maintain a balanced presence for First Amendment and social justice activities by providing a safe atmosphere for individuals to engage in peaceful rallies and demonstrations
  - Police are there to support the safety of all participants and to be a collaborative partner before, during, and after any events
- Collaboration with local law enforcement and first responders who assist with campus emergencies and large-scale campus events

## Crime Prevention

Crime prevention activities are central to a safe campus. The visibility of officers on campus is important, not only as a deterrent to criminal activity, but also as a means for reassuring the community.

Colleges and universities have characteristics that provide unique challenges to crime prevention efforts. Foremost among these is that campuses are open environments with various activity occurring day and night, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Crime prevention must be an ongoing and integral part of any viable public safety program. Critical programs include:

- Security assessments completed by the Physical Security Office for new construction as well as renovations
- An established positive working relationship with Residence Life for both investigations and quality of life issues.
- “Blue light” emergency phones
- 1,050 phones across the Commonwealth
- [View a map of emergency phones](#)
- Monitoring and patrolling facilities and equipment
- Safe Walk service, through which Student Auxiliary Officers escort students and employees to their on-campus destination from dusk until dawn upon request at University Park





# Programs and Presentations

Valuable and popular services that Penn State police provide are crime prevention and safety training classes and presentations for employees and students. On average, more than 1,000 Penn State employees and students participate in our programs each year. Throughout the year, most facilitated through the Community Oriented Policing Unit, the following programs are offered:

## Active Attacker Response Program

- The most requested program University-wide
- An overview of the Run Hide Fight model for response to an active attacker

## Alcohol Awareness

- An overview of the dangers of excessive and underage drinking and relevant Pennsylvania laws

## Domestic Violence Awareness

- A review of signs of abuse along with support and resources for victims

## Office Safety & Security

- An overview of safety in the workplace, including guidance to deal with hostile individuals or an active attacker, along with theft prevention and other personal safety tips

## Who We Are and What We Do?

- An overview of UPPS programs and services

## Drug Awareness

- An overview of the different types of commonly used drugs, their effects on the body, and resources available for treatment and support

## Sexual Assault Prevention

- With a focus on prevention, this program reviews sexual assault as it relates to Pennsylvania laws, the importance of consent, and resources and support for victims

## Car Seat Safety Check

- Multiple Penn State police officers nationally certified as Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPSTs) conduct child safety seat inspections and assist with installations

## Ride-A-Long

- Participants may ride or walk with an officer on routine patrol for up to a two-hour period to gain firsthand knowledge of police procedures and operations

## Identity Theft

- An overview of common scams and phishing attempts, which includes tips on how to avoid becoming a victim and resources for victims

On average, Penn State police officers participate in and host more than 400 events annually at campuses across Pennsylvania.







## Calls for Service

The day-to-day operation of our University Police unit involves a combination of vehicle, bicycle, and foot patrols; investigating reports of criminal activity; traffic enforcement; and responding to calls for service.

Calls for service vary widely and include reports of criminal activity as well as medical emergencies. Our officers are often the first on-scene for cardiac arrest and other life-threatening calls. All police officers are trained in CPR and First Aid. Officers are also equipped with AEDs (automated external defibrillator) to use in cardiac arrest emergencies as well as Naloxone medication to treat opioid overdose victims.

At University Park, the largest campus we serve, UPPS employs Police Dispatchers who receive phone calls for assistance, enter each call into the computer aided dispatch system, dispatch the appropriate staff and summon assistance or resources for the officers, where needed. UPPS Dispatchers are trained in security procedures as well as emergency response. They are knowledgeable in the various campus policies related to parking, maintenance reporting, and locking schedules.

At University Park, this vital function is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Additionally, the lobby is always open, and individuals can walk in for assistance 24-hours a day. Dispatchers answer, and police officers respond to, a variety of calls for service, such as:

- Medical emergencies
- Crimes in progress
- Traffic accidents
- Suspicious activity
- Requests for walks/escorts
- Student welfare checks
- Vehicle assistance, such as lockouts and "jump starts"
- And more

Police Dispatchers at University Park noted 22,803 entries related to calls for service in calendar year 2019.





# Specialized Police Units

University Police is a full-service police unit with sworn police officers who have full law enforcement authority. University Police is one, cohesive law enforcement unit serving 22 campuses across Pennsylvania. Specialized law enforcement units include:

## Criminal Investigations

- Essential for the investigation of crimes that occur on campus, ranging from theft to sexual assault

## Hazardous Device Team

- Essential for the University's many large-scale events, such as Penn State football at Beaver Stadium

## K-9

- Essential for the University's many large-scale events, such as concerts at the Bryce Jordan Center

## Bike Patrol

## Drone Unit

## Student Auxiliary Officers

- UPPS employs numerous students throughout the year, including during academic breaks
- The program has allowed countless students over the years to gain professional, paid experience that enhanced their resumes while serving the University community
- Many student employees have gone on to law enforcement careers and several currently serve as leaders within UPPS

# Investigations

Our police officers have the capability and responsibility to investigate all complaints filed by students, employees, and visitors, and pursue investigations to their conclusion.

Detectives conduct follow-up investigations, with support when necessary from local, state and federal law enforcement partners.

Penn State police detectives are responsible for:

- Conducting investigations of crimes committed on campus as well as any property owned or leased by Penn State
- Providing services, support, and resources to crime victims
- Coordinating investigations with campus administrators related to the Student Code of Conduct
- Working closely with the Office of Student Conduct and meeting when necessary to discuss incidents and processes
- Collaborating with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies when students are involved in criminal activity off-campus
- Providing assistance and information when legally justifiable and within established statutes, laws, and local protocols
- Collaborating with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies on patterns of serious criminal activity on and around campus







## Police Records

The University Police Records Unit provides records management, security, and dissemination of police records for 22 University Police stations. Records Specialists are responsible for:

- Reviewing all police incident reports for compliance with state and federal reporting requirements
- Providing statistical reports and analysis of crime data for required reporting and statistical analysis
- Providing support to police patrol units and to the Compliance unit for data collection and production
- Providing oversight and first level support of the Police Records Management System
- Processing arrest documents as well as court ordered expungements
- Disseminating information within state, federal and policy guidelines

## Threat Assessment

In order to enhance emergency preparedness and prevention efforts, Penn State has established a Behavioral Threat Management Team (BTMT). UPPS co-chairs BTMT and manages its budget. The objective of the BTMT is to systematically identify, evaluate, and manage potentially threatening situations, including persons of concern, at the University. The multidisciplinary team is composed of people from across the University. In addition to the BTMT at the University Park campus, each Commonwealth campus also has a team responsible for managing concerning situations on their respective campus.

- BTMT is committed to the safety and well-being of the University community through education, communication, planning, assessment, and management toward the goal of mitigating behavioral threats
- Utilizes a multi-disciplinary threat assessment team approach
- Partner with University and Community Resources
- Collaborates with Stakeholders

## Mental Health and Well-being Assistance

UPPS fills an important role in collaborative initiatives to address the needs of individuals who require mental health assistance or experience a mental crisis on campus. Penn State police officers are trained to respond to mental health crises and work in close collaboration with Penn State's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and other community mental health agencies. University Police is one of the few resources available at a moment's notice to assist with matters, such as:

- Suicide intervention when individuals have taken steps towards self-harm





- Wellness checks on members of the University community when requested
- Important for parents and guardians who may be hours away or even across the world
- Tracking parents' reports of missing students, which require immediate attention
- Collaboration with mental health providers for voluntary and involuntary assessments

## Compliance

Penn State must comply with numerous federal and state requirements related to campus safety and security. The most well-known of these is the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, which requires colleges and universities to disclose both timely and specific information and annual summary information about campus crimes and security policies. Other requirements include the issuance of Timely Warnings, PSU Alerts, and the maintenance of a daily crime log.

UPPS plays a significant role in the achievement of compliance with the Clery Act. Key to those efforts are tracking changes in the laws and guidance as well as monitoring the documentation and implementation of compliance responsibilities of the various on and off campus units by developing and maintaining relationships.

UPPS has the responsibility of monitoring Clery Compliance for all of Penn State and the daily crime log for the 22 campuses where the University provides police services. Additionally, key members of the organization collaborate in real-time to review situations as they arise and determine if a Timely Warning or PSU Alert needs to be issued based on the situation at hand.

### Title IX

- UPPS, specifically our Criminal Investigations Unit, has a close working relationship with the Office of Sexual Misconduct Prevention & Response to provide support to victims and investigate incidents, including sexual assaults
- UPPS Compliance Unit works closely with the Office of Sexual Misconduct, Prevention and Response, and the Affirmative Action Office regarding the intersections between Title IX and Clery Act Compliance

### Clery Act Mandates

- The Clery Compliance Manager and staff members coordinate the publication of 23 Annual Security Reports as required by the Clery Act. These publications, Policies, Safety & U, serve as the University's official documentation of safety and security policies and processes and provide students and employees information to help them to be proactive about their safety
- The UPPS Compliance Team also coordinates the Clery Act compliance efforts across the University to include units outside of UPPS. Timely Warnings and Emergency Notifications originate from UPPS and can be issued 24/7/365

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- University Police dispatchers and police officers are frequently in the best position to issue PSU Alerts (emergency notifications) within minutes of an active emergency
- Penn State police officers draft and release Timely Warnings, which are mandated under the Clery Act

## Emergency Preparedness

Universities must be prepared to manage critical incidents such as weather emergencies in the form of hurricanes and tornadoes, power outages, lab explosions, fires and medical emergencies that threaten the very existence of the institution.

Active shooter incidents have also led colleges and universities to re-examine every facet of their emergency response plans including notification systems, business continuity plans, and National Incident Management System (NIMS)/Incident Command System (ICS) training.

Emergency preparedness mandates and expectations for reducing risks to the campus are a critical and time-consuming responsibility in which UPPS plays a key role through the Office of Emergency Management (OEM).

OEM is tasked with meeting requirements for employees who serve events, emergency operations centers, crisis management teams, and other organizations that assist with our preparedness culture. Inclusion of the entire campus community heightens awareness, reduces fears, relays expectations, gains support, and allows the campus to better respond to all levels of emergencies. Efforts include:

- Preparing critical incident plans and management for the various campuses and situations, which may be unique to that area, including in advance of an event, during the event, and after the event
- Coordinating and assisting in the overall function of an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for a variety of emergencies, such as natural and manmade emergencies
- Managing VIP visits during an emergency
- Supporting public safety during large-scale campus events
  - Football games
  - Concerts
- Managing FEMA communications, trainings, and courses
  - Facilitating tabletop exercises to train staff members related to roles and responsibilities during true emergency events
- Collaboration with municipal, state, and federal agencies for both compliance, resource sharing, and emergency response
- Assists with response to public health emergencies
  - COVID-19





- Managing the messaging system for PSU Alerts
- Assist in crafting and sending out messages related to emergencies and hazards
- Assisting in the recovery process following an emergency
- Leading after-action sessions to review the University's response to an emergency and identify lessons learned for future events

## Special Events

Campuses have a variety of special and unique events throughout the academic year as well as during summer, winter, and other academic breaks. Many of these events would not be possible without the involvement of UPPS to plan, prepare, and provide staffing to support the safety of all involved. These "behind the scenes" preparations and a visible presence at the events require a significant amount of work that is too often invisible to those outside UPPS. Efforts include:

- Sporting event safety and crowd management
- Student and parent orientations
- Concerts
- Special guests and dignitaries
- Move-in days/Move-out days
- Commencement

## Physical Security

The Office of Physical Security within UPPS manages the University's closed-circuit cameras, including 11,000 camera views on 105 recorders across the Commonwealth.

This system is a valuable resource for monitoring events and active emergencies as well as allowing for follow-up investigations after an incident has concluded.

Physical Security is also responsible for Access Control or card readers, including:

- Installation and maintenance of 5,900 card readers across the Commonwealth
- Providing remote ability to secure facilities
- Allowing for auditing of access privileges and access timelines
- Enabling efficiency to administer and limit or deactivate access versus traditional keys







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Photo by Patrick Mansell, Penn State

