



Mendon Police Department 5 Year Summary

In June 2023 I took over as Chief of Police at Mendon PD after retiring from the Portage Department of Public Safety. Chief Kennedy retired after 37 years in law enforcement. At Portage Department of Public Safety, I was able to work in various assignments that included the Portage Uniformed Drug Team (3 years), Meth Response Team (13 years), and Crime Scene Unit (14 years). I started my law enforcement career with Constantine PD and worked part-time for White Pigeon PD. During my time with Constantine PD, I was assigned to the Major Crime Scene Task Force/St. Joseph County Sheriff's Office as a temporary detective.

My goal as the Mendon Police Chief is to work with the Village Council, Village Manager and business leaders in continuing to make Mendon a place where people want to live and feel safe.

Another one of Mendon PD goals is to be transparent. There are some things that can't be shared because it could affect an investigation or security for our department or the Village of Mendon.

Mendon PD provides a monthly summary to the Village Council and Village Manager. The monthly summary is posted on the Village of Mendon website.

Mendon PD also provides a weekly summary to the Village Council and Village Manager that keeps them updated so that if citizens reach out to a Village Council member or the Village Manager, they can assist in providing information about incidents that occur in the Village of Mendon.

The following is a 5-year summary for Mendon PD that will assist in providing transparency to the citizens of Mendon.



Traffic Stops

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Traffic Stops	60	101	67	243	206
Citations	5	16	15	50	55
Monthly Avg./Traffic Stops	5	8.4	5.5	20.25	17.1
Monthly Avg./Citations	.41	1.3	1.2	4.1	4.5

Traffic Stop Summary:

Mendon PD has increased traffic stops and citations since I took over the department in June of 2023. In 2020 Covid-19 affected police departments and officers were directed to limit contacts with citizens to reduce man hours lost if an officer became infected with the Covid-19

Mendon PD has a more proactive approach and will continue to be proactive. We have listened to citizens and conduct directed patrols when a citizen brings traffic concerns to the department's attention. Stationary Radar is conducted in our high traffic areas. Traffic stops will continue to be a priority so the citizens of Mendon can feel like they can safely walk to the downtown businesses and parks.



Arrests

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Misdemeanor	7	12	10	12	28
Felony	2	0	6	8	15

Arrest Summary:

Arrests include misdemeanor traffic stops. Arrests have steadily increased from 2020 to 2023. The increase in 2024 coincides with the Mendon PD proactivity that includes search warrants. Many of the arrests in 2023 and 2024 were subjects that came to the Village of Mendon to commit a crime. The arrests send a message to others that if you come to Mendon and commit a crime you will be identified and you will be arrested. Mendon PD has also worked diligently to identify problem houses within the Village of Mendon.

There are many investigative tools that Mendon PD uses to identify a suspect(s). The most successful tools are the citizens of Mendon and security cameras. The tip information that Mendon PD receives from citizens is invaluable. The goal for Mendon PD is to continue that partnership to help keep the crime rate down.



CRIMINAL COMPLAINTS/ASSAULTIVE BEHAVIOR

CRIME	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Arson	0	0	2	0	0
Assault	1	1	2	6	1
Criminal Sexual Conduct	4	1	1	2	3
Disorderly	0	0	2	4	5
Domestic Violence	3	1	2	2	2
Malicious Destruction of Property	4	1	2	2	5
Resisting/Obstructing	0	1	5	5	11
Weapons Offense	0	0	1	0	1

Assaultive Crimes Summary:

Crimes involving assaults/stalking have remained low. The highest total for assaultive crimes was 2024.

Resisting/Obstructing covers complaints related to resisting arrest, vehicle and foot pursuits, personal protection orders, and restraining orders. The highest total for R/O was in 2024. Mental Health and drug/alcohol addiction can play a part in assaultive crimes.

The goal for Mendon PD is to continue to use the resources in St. Joseph County that include Pivotal. Mental Health Petitions can assist a person in getting the help that they need and reduce the chances that the person will be less likely to commit an assault.



CRIMINAL COMPLAINTS/LARCENY – FRAUD

CRIME	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Breaking/Entering	2	0	1	7	15
Fraud	3	3	3	5	6
Larceny/Larceny from Vehicles	3	16	5	18	13
Receiving/Concealing	0	1	0	0	1
Retail Fraud	1	0	0	2	7
Motor Vehicle Theft	3	1	0	0	1

Larceny and Fraud Summary:

Larcenies and larcenies from vehicles are the biggest issue in the Village of Mendon. These crimes correlate with drug use. Typically subjects steal to feed their drug habit. The stolen items are sold on various social media sites or to another person in exchange for drugs. This is a crime that can be reduced by citizens in partnership with Mendon PD. Citizens can lock their vehicle or residential doors. Take valuable items out of your vehicle. If that is not possible keep the valuable items out of sight and lock your vehicle doors.

When you find your vehicle has been entered and items have either been moved around or stolen contact Mendon PD. This helps Mendon PD keep track of criminal trends during certain times, days, and months of the year.

Larcenies from vehicles can also lead to fraud. If a wallet or purse is stolen and they contain personal information the subjects can use the personal information to open fraudulent accounts in the victim's names.

When credit or debit cards are inside the stolen wallet or purse the suspect(s), try to charge as much as they can as quickly as they can before the victim can close the credit/debit card accounts. Mendon PD encourages you to have your bank or credit union help you set up alerts.



MISCELLANEOUS CRIMINAL COMPLAINTS

CRIMES	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Harassment/Stalking	2	3	1	2	2
Misdemeanor Traffic Violations	1	4	0	6	12
Ordinance Violations	1	1	3	10	11
Runaway/Truancy	0	0	0	2	1
Trespass	1	1	0	2	7
Viol. Of Controlled Substance Act	0	0	0	1	3

Miscellaneous Criminal Complaints Summary:

The increase in Ordinance Violations is a collaborative effort by the Village Manager, St. Joseph County Enforcement Officer and Mendon PD to take a more proactive approach to ensure that people follow the ordinances that were set by the Village Council. We try to work with the residents by providing a copy of the ordinance and issuing a 10-Day Notice of Violation to allow enough time to correct the issue. In some cases, we will extend the timeline if the resident is trying to correct the issue. For the houses that are continuously violating the ordinances we bypass the 10-Day Notice of Violation and issue a citation.

Mendon PD also has worked with Mendon businesses that are a victim of a crime by issuing a trespass letter, at the businesses' request, to the suspect(s) that bans them from the property. The businesses can also use the trespass letter for employees that have been terminated and may present a safety concern. The timeline is typically one year but can be extended.



**TOTAL CRIMINAL COMPLAINTS AND NON-CRIMINAL
COMPLAINTS**

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Criminal	29	39	30	82	115
Non-Criminal	112	142	146	180	257
Total Complaints	141	181	176	262	372

Criminal and Non-Criminal Complaints Summary:

As you can see, most Mendon PD calls are non-criminal. Examples of non-criminal complaints are civil issues/disputes between family members, child custody, mental health calls, medical calls, ordinance complaints (civil), school patrol, and public relations that include patrol during the Riverfest, Harvest Fest, parades, and at times traffic assistance for funerals.

Criminal complaints have increased each year except for 2022. There are a multitude of reasons for the increase. The increase can be attributed to the suspect(s) drug use, mental health, or both. The increase can also be attributed to the proactivity of Mendon PD.



Challenges:

Mendon PD has one full-time officer (Chief) and four part-time officers. Mendon PD is unable to provide 24/7 coverage for the Village of Mendon due to budget constraints. When there is not an officer on duty St. Joseph County Sheriff's Office and Michigan State Police will assist with calls and patrol.

A possible solution are grants to help pay a full-time officer's salary and benefits. The problem with grants is that they typically will only pay a percentage of the salary/benefits for a set period (usually 3-4 years). Each year the percentage decreases and at the end the Village of Mendon is responsible for paying the entire salary/benefits, which is not feasible under our current and previous budgets. Grants for salary are not guaranteed and funding for grants can end at any time.

The solution that the Village Council and Mendon PD came up with was to pool the full-time officer money in the budget into the part-time officer budget. That allows us to be more competitive with part-time wages and satisfy our staffing needs.

Due to our limited budget, we must find solutions that provide a feeling of peace of mind for the citizens of Mendon. Examples are license plate readers and security cameras. That comes with a financial cost. Mendon PD has been blessed to have the Village Council approve upgraded items that are much needed to make the police department more efficient. Mendon PD has also been blessed with donations from various businesses and groups.

Another challenge for Mendon PD and the Village Office is keeping up with technology. The combination of the cost of new technology and the limited budget makes it a challenge. Thankfully there is a solution. There are multiple grants that can help the Village of Mendon when it comes to technology. The Village of Mendon currently doesn't have a grant writer. There have been multiple discussions by the Village Council, Village Manager, and Mendon PD about trying to find a grant writer.



Ending Summary:

When I agreed to become Chief of Mendon PD I did it because it was my career goal to lead a small police department in St. Joseph County where I have lived much of my life. The community embraces the schools and their teams. The “small town” family atmosphere is another benefit. The community shows up to all events like the parades, the Riverfest, and Harvest Fest.

Mendon citizens embrace having their own police department. It is a given that Mendon PD is not going to make everyone happy. That is okay. Everyone is entitled to their opinion. What I can tell you is that every decision I have made or any discussions I have had with the Village Council and Village Manager has been in the best interest of Mendon. The same is expected of any officer that works for Mendon PD. Mendon PD officers have a total of 70 years of law enforcement experience. That is something that I’m proud of as the Chief of Mendon.

Mendon PD has a great working relationship with the St. Joseph County Sheriff’s Office and other St. Joseph County Agencies.

Mendon PD has worked closely with the Administration at Mendon Community Schools to provide a safe environment for the students and faculty.

In closing I would like to thank the Village of Mendon residents, the Village Council, and the Village Manager for their continued support for Mendon PD.

Respectfully,

Chief Michael Kline