BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

2018 Homicide Year End Report

HOMICIDE UNIT

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Deputy Superintendent Marcus C. Eddings, Criminal Investigation Division
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HOMICIDE UNIT MISSION STATEMENT

The Boston Police Homicide Unit is committed to providing a comprehensive and timely investigation of all homicides and suspicious deaths in the City of Boston. All of our investigations will conform to the laws and constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the United States of America. We pledge uncompromising diligence and integrity will be adhered to in the quest to bring justice to those individuals responsible for murdering persons in the jurisdiction of the City of Boston. The Homicide Unit with the assistance of the Victim Witness Advocates will provide physical and emotional support to family survivors of homicide victims.
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ABOUT THE HOMICIDE UNIT

The Boston Police Homicide Unit serves as the lead investigative group for homicides, suspicious deaths, fatal collisions, cases in which the victim may die as the result of a criminal act, as well as the investigation of the sudden death of infants and those apparently stillborn. The Boston Police Department (BPD) is committed to providing Boston residents with professional and effective investigations.

The Homicide Unit works with the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office, who by statute is in charge of all death investigations conducted in Suffolk County. The Homicide Unit comprises eight squads that are assigned on a rotating schedule to investigate a homicide.

HOMICIDE UNIT BREAKDOWN:
PERSONNEL BREAKDOWN:

Total Number of Persons in Unit
- 46 Total
- 44 Sworn Personnel
- 2 Civilian

Male/Female Breakdown
- 38 Male Sworn
- 6 Female Sworn
- 2 Female Civilians

Rank/Ethnic Background for Investigators
- 1 Male Caucasian Lieutenant Detective
- 10 Male Caucasian Sergeant Detectives
- 1 Female African American Sergeant Detective
- 8 Male African American Detectives
- 1 Male Hispanic Detective
- 16 Male Caucasian Detectives
- 3 Female Caucasian Detectives
- 2 Male Caucasian Police Officers
- 2 Female Hispanic Police Officers

HOMICIDE UNIT ASSIGNMENTS

Homicide Victim Advocacy
The Victim-Witness Service component of the BPD Homicide Unit advocates for family members of the victim during the stages of grief and recovery. It is staffed by Victim-Witness Resource Officers. The purpose of Victim-Witness Resource Officers is to maintain positive communication between detectives and these survivors through meetings, forums, initiatives, and other community events. Advocates work with investigators to help grieving families by connecting families to funeral and burial resources and making referrals to public and non-profit counseling and trauma services.

Unsolved Case Squad
The Unsolved Case Squad comprises one Sergeant Detective and 3 Detectives. The Squad is responsible for cases that have been worked on by the original assigned detective(s) for a period of up to (10) ten years and all leads have been exhausted and no additional lead(s) are known. The Unsolved Case Squad of the Boston Police Homicide Unit is also responsible for providing any additional investigative services and primary oversight required by the Boston Police Department in the cases of any Chapter 278A motion/appeals. These motions/appeals are usually generated through the Defense Bar’s “Innocence Program” or the Office of the District Attorney’s “Conviction Integrity Program.”
The Unsolved Case Squad is also responsible for providing case review, research and creating a report summarizing the homicide incident prior to any parole hearings for persons convicted of, or having pleaded guilty to Murder in the Second Degree or in cases of convictions for Murder in the First Degree by persons who were under the age of 18 at the time the Murder was committed. In 2018, the Unsolved Case Squad processed 27 parole requests.

**Fugitive Unit**
Reporting directly to the Homicide Unit Commander, the Fugitive Unit is made up of one (1) Sergeant Detective, eight (8) Police Officers and four (4) Detectives with one (1) Detective and (1) Police Officer assigned to the U.S. Marshals HIDTA T.F. “full time”. One Detective is also assigned to Renditions full time as well. In addition the Fugitive Unit works on a regular basis with members of the U.S. Marshals, Mass State Police VFAS and CPAC, Brookline P.D., U.S. Marshals OCDETF New England, Suffolk County Sheriff’s Dept., and a host of other local cities and towns.

**Firearm Discharge Investigation Team**
The Firearm Discharge Investigation Team (FDIT) has sole responsibility for investigating firearm discharges involving a member of the Department. The FDIT is a team of highly skilled investigators and technicians that respond at two different levels depending on the seriousness of the firearm discharge, Blue and Red. The Blue Response is for all firearm discharges that result in the killing of a dangerous or injured animal; all discharges not resulting in death, injury or significant property damage; all Rule 303A less-lethal force (“bean bag”) and 303B (Taser) discharges. The Red Response is for all firearm discharges resulting in death or injury and discharges where a violation of criminal law cannot be eliminated.

**Fatal Collision Investigation Team**
The Fatal Collision Incident Team (FCIT) is composed of one Sergeant, two Detectives, and three Police Officers. The Team responds to motor vehicle accidents that result in life threatening injuries or death and investigates the incident to ensure parties are held responsible if criminal. The team utilizes resources specific to motor vehicles crashes and forensic units, as appropriate.
In 2018, Boston experienced 56 homicides, an increase of 2% from last year. Districts B2 and B3 accounted for nearly 55% of all homicides. District C11 experienced the greatest decrease in homicide counts, with nine less when compared to last year.

In the calendar year 2018, the BPD reported a Uniform Crime Report statistic (UCR) of 56 homicides.

**2018 Homicide Clearances**

In the calendar year 2018 the BPD Homicide Unit cleared 27 homicide cases through arrest or exceptional clearance. Of the 27 cases cleared, 23 of the homicides occurred in 2018, 2 homicides occurred in 2017, one occurred in 2016 and one occurred in 2014.
2018 ADDITIONAL INVESTIGATIONS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In addition to investigating 56 homicides in 2018, the Boston Police Homicide Unit responded to many additional calls for service. The Unit responded to 78 “Specials”. Specials are incidents in which Homicide is requested to respond and initially investigate the case with the assistance of district units and forensic groups. If circumstances, such as victim survival or the case is deemed an unsuspicious death, district detectives then resume as lead investigators of the case.

The Firearm Discharge Investigation Team responded and investigated 11 Officer Involved Shootings in 2018, 1 of which was Code Red. These investigations utilize many resources to fully investigate cause and actions of all individuals involved.

The Fatal Collision Investigation Team responded to 24 Motor Vehicle Crash scenes, which resulted in 11 fatalities. These scenes consisted of 7 pedestrians, 3 motorcyclists, and 1 involved a vehicle vs. fixed object. Two fatalities were hit and run incidents and in both cases, suspects were located, arrested and indicted. Three other cases were indicted by the grand jury.

Fugitive Unit

2018 may have been one of the most productive years for the BPD Fugitive Unit. Although it is impossible to capture every arrest category or all of the investigations that were conducted, the chart below and narrative to follow give a good indication about the amount of work accomplished by this city wide unit.

The Fugitive Unit faces inherent danger of attempting to locate and arrest some of the most dangerous suspects in the city. Due to this danger, training is a priority for all members. This year, members of the Fugitive Unit, either as a group or individually, completed many courses. 2018 training includes, but is not limited to; Combat Shooting Course; Tactical Building/Room Clearing; Door Breaching Training; Tactical First Aid Course; Tourniquet Course; Undercover Survival Techniques and a Physical Surveillance Course.

Some of the arrests described in the above table include several long term fugitive investigations related to high profile homicides and violent crimes perpetrated in the City of Boston. The Fugitive Unit, often with the assistance from the US Marshals HIDTA Fugitive Task Force, tracked, located, and arrested some of the most violent criminals in Boston even when they fled the city, state, or country to avoid capture. These types of arrests often quell retaliatory violence in neighborhood streets, as well as bring some closure to grieving families and victims.

One example of this was the lengthy fugitive investigation and subsequent capture on July 5, 2018 of a suspect wanted in a homicide that occurred in September 2014. The suspect fled the country and was finally located and arrested approximately four years later in the Dominican Republic. He was successfully extradited back to Boston and booked.
on murder charges on September 13, 2018, almost exactly four years after committing this heinous crime. This fugitive investigation, arrest, and successful extradition was made possible by the continuous efforts of the Fugitive Unit, Homicide Unit, US Marshals, and Suffolk County DA’s office and further signified to the victim’s families that their loved one was not forgotten.

The Fugitive Unit was also responsible for the arrest of a suspect wanted on murder charges stemming from a double homicide that occurred on June 30, 2018. This was a multi-state fugitive investigation lasting six months before the suspect was tracked down and arrested in the Atlanta, Georgia area on December 14, 2018. The suspect was successfully rendered back to Boston to face charges for the murder of two young victims.

### 2018 Fugitive Unit Activity

- Total Arrests (327)
- Murder/Homicide Related Arrests (42)
- Rape/Sexual Assaults (32)
- Domestic Violence-Related Arrests (41)
- Violent Assault Arrests (47)
- Armed Robberies (23)
- Federal Warrants Cleared (43)
- State Warrants Cleared (864)
- Witness/Capias Located (39)
- Firearms Recovered (11)
- Search Warrants Conducted (24)
- DNA Recovery Investigations (4)

The Fugitive Unit frequently assists the Sexual Assault Unit in locating the most dangerous of their sexual predators. In November 2018, a 10 year old female was kidnapped and assaulted in the South End area of the City. A suspect was identified and warrants issued. The Fugitive Unit immediately began an intense fugitive investigation resulting in the suspects arrest in Bayonne, New Jersey on December 11, 2018. This swift out of state arrest ensured that there would be no further victims of this sexual predator. In addition to these successful captures of violent suspects who fled the state to avoid being arrested, the Fugitive Unit assists many districts and specialized units within the Boston Police Department on a variety of requests. Some of these are, but not limited to, long term surveillances, search warrants, DNA recovery, witness location assistance, intelligence gathering, and warrant apprehension.
In 2018, the Fugitive Unit also participated in (3) large scale multi-agency operations to remove violent felons from the streets of Boston.

The Fugitive Unit also has a “rendition section” which handles most of the renditions and extraditions that are conducted for the entire Boston Police Department. In 2018, the Fugitive Unit rendition section conducted 89 rendition investigations which included 18 renditions of suspects wanted on Boston warrants who were brought back to Boston by Fugitive Unit Detectives from other states and countries. The rendition section also facilitated the rendition of 53 criminals back to the jurisdiction from which their warrants for arrest originated.

In spite of all the above work and accomplishments, the Fugitive Unit is most proud of the fact that they never forget the victims of violent crimes and work tirelessly to track, locate, and arrest violent criminals wherever they may hide. With the utmost respect for the public and hard work towards this goal, the Fugitive Unit has brought closure to countless victims of violent crimes and their families in the City of Boston in 2018.

Unsolved Case Squad (Cold Case)

In 2018 the Unsolved Case Squad of the Boston Police Department’s Homicide Unit researched, assessed and re-examined multiple, previously unsolved homicide cases, in addition to other that were already actively being re-investigated from previous years. As in previous years, many of these investigations were in response to inquiries and requests made by friends and family members of the deceased, from former/retired investigators or from other, active law enforcement, media and social service providers both from within and outside the Department.

In addition to past collaborations, the Unsolved Case Squad and the Boston Police Crime Lab have begun identifying unsolved homicide cases that have the potential to benefit from the emerging DNA-based genealogy search capabilities. In several cases, testimony by investigators and civilian witnesses was given before a Suffolk County Grand Jury. In an effort to interview witnesses and even potential suspects, Unsolved Case Squad investigators routinely traveled throughout Massachusetts as well as most of the New England states. In addition, investigators traveled to New York, California, Florida and Alabama.

Increasingly in 2018, as a facet of the effort to accommodate and provide service to the families of these homicide victims, the Unsolved Case Squad, the Homicide Unit’s Victim-Witness Advocates and the Office of the Suffolk County District Attorney have participated in several “in-person” family meetings. The squad members dedicate significant time to re-examine, assess and bring these cases to currently accepted investigative standards and provide the families all available information.

The Unsolved Case Squad of the Boston Police Homicide Unit continues to be responsible for providing any additional investigative services and the primary oversight required of the Boston Police Department in cases of any Chapter 278A appeals and motions for
new trials. These motions/appeals are usually generated through the Defense Bar’s grant funded “Innocence Project” or the Office of the District Attorney’s grant funded “Conviction Integrity Program.” In 2018, the squad facilitated and coordinated investigative services for multiple such cases. While a number of these cases were newly initiated in 2018, several other cases are/were on-going, continuing investigations that originated as early as 2015 and had continued throughout 2016 and 2017.

Throughout the early months of January, the Unsolved Case investigators prepared in earnest for the then pending Suffolk Superior Court trial of James Paige for the 1987 murder of Ms. Dora Brimage. This preparation included collaborative meetings, an updated assessment of the entire case file, and forensic reviews of all of the physical evidence that was assessed and prepared for presentation at trial. The Squad participated, along with the ADA, in preparing the various witnesses for their expected testimony. On March 16, 2018, James Paige was found guilty of Murder in the First Degree.

**Homicide Victim Advocacy**

The Homicide Unit has continued to build relationships and provide impactful programming to assist victim’s families with services. To further the important work being done, the Homicide Unit has hired a second resource officer to provide additional support and referral services to survivor families. These officers have participated in many events and community meetings for survivors of homicide victims and witnesses.

In recognition of Survivors of Homicide Victims Awareness Month (November 20-December 20), the Boston Police Department Homicide Unit hosted “A Survivors of Homicide Victims & Resource Providers Holiday Dinner Event” on Monday, December 3, 2018 at Boston Police Headquarters. This holiday celebration has been an ongoing initiative from 2009-2013 by the Homicide Unit’s Victim-Witness Resource Officers/Advocate Program. The “Holiday Season” has shown to be an extremely difficult time for family members who have lost loved ones to murder; the timing and renewal of this annual initiative will be forever crucial. This important event along with the “Annual Survivors of Homicide and Resource Providers Network BBQ events” has afforded the Boston Police Homicide Unit the opportunity to bridge the gap and keep open communication between surviving families and homicide investigators in an informal setting. It has also brought together internal units and BPD City-Wide District Community Service Officers, Boston City Hall, Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office, Boston Public Health Commission, Boston Street Workers, Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance (MOVA), The Office of Attorney General’s Office-Victim Compensation Division and many other local, state, community support groups, non-profit organizations along with the much needed clinical and trauma support.

The Homicide Unit Advocates have participated or provided assistance in many workshops and events related to homicide and trauma across the city. For instance, Homicide Unit officers attended the 4th Annual Mother’s for Justice and Equality against Violence
National Conference in support of surviving families and mothers that lost loved ones to homicide, and have participated in the ongoing Witness Intimation Steering Committee meetings with the DA’s Office and the Boston Housing Authority facilitated by Aequitas.

The Homicide Unit Advocates also attended the 2018 Garden of Peace Annual Honor Program for commemorating state-wide victims of homicide and a living reminder of the impact of violence. The memorial is located in Downtown Boston near the State House.

Boston Police continue to feature unsolved homicides on BPDNews for the “Series for Justice” videos and Fox25 Bob Ward New England’s unsolved featuring surviving families & homicide investigators on spotlighting and seeking the public’s assistance in hopes of encouraging them to come forward with any information relative to unsolved homicide cases.
Despite the progress and successes throughout 2018, homicides are the most challenging crimes for detectives to investigate. These cases take time to investigate and solve through forensic testing and grand jury process. Through this process, the Homicide Unit solves about 10% of homicides that were committed in previous years. These case clearances are hard to measure through statistics on an annual basis, but we take great pride in the closure it provides to the families.

The Boston Police Homicide Unit is committed to thorough, professional and complete investigation to ensure justice for all. The Boston Police Homicide Unit desires several outcomes in solving homicide case:

- Identification, apprehension, prosecution and conviction of the suspect.
- A sense of justice for the victim and survivors.
- A sense of contributing to public safety within the neighborhoods of the City of Boston and the community.

We are committed to working in partnership and reinforcing our relationships with all survivors groups and community organizations in the upcoming years.

Sincerely Yours,

Lieutenant Detective Darrin P. Greeley
Commander Boston Police Homicide Unit