

# Gloucester Township, NJ Police Department

## General Officer Safety

The Gloucester Township Police Department serves a residential population of approximately 70,000 citizens, is the 19<sup>th</sup> most populous municipality in New Jersey and the township covers 24 square miles. State Highway 168 and the Atlantic City Expressway are main thoroughfares through Gloucester to provide direct access to Philadelphia, PA and Atlantic City. GTPD employs 133 sworn officers, 8 armed special officers, 20 unarmed special officers, 17 communications dispatchers, 16 non-sworn staff and over 40 volunteers.

**All full time and Class II officers are issued custom fitted level III soft body armor and required to wear them on duty and while at the range.** The vests were paid for by the New Jersey Body Armor Replacement Fund federal grant and replaced every five years as recommended by the manufacturer, or sooner if they become damaged. Non-uniformed officers are required to have their vest with them when responding to incidents. Additionally, the 17 Special Response Team officers also have front and rear rifle plates in their vests. The department also issues level IV rifle plates and ballistic helmets with face shields to each of their officers and they are required to wear both in high risk situations such as barricaded subjects, hostage incidents, sniper incidents, terrorist incidents, possible armed suicidal subjects and other dangerous calls.

All officers are issued Sig Sauer P365 9mm handguns with red dot sights. Upon issue, officers must attend a two-day familiarization course and qualify with the weapon. Handguns are also equipped with weapon-mounted lights. Every patrol vehicle is also outfitted with a shotgun. At this time, 48 patrol officers and 8 school resource officers are certified to carry Colt rifles. Both long guns are mounted in a rack inside the patrol vehicle.

The State of New Jersey requires peace officers to qualify bi-annually with their handguns, shotguns, rifles and back-up weapons. **GTPD requires their officers attend an additional tactical range training session each year** and display proficiency with any weapon the officer is authorized to carry. The department also offers open range training dates that officers are encouraged to attend.

**Officers also have access to two ballistic shields, which are carried in the supervisor's vehicle,** and all officers are trained on their use. The special response team also has two ballistic shields that are carried in their response vehicle. **Officers are all issued their own gas mask and fit-tested annually.**

**For less-lethal force situations, the department purchased the pepperball system. Another less-lethal option for officers is the Taser 7 conducted energy device which officers carry on the non-firearm side of their duty belts to minimize the opportunity they will draw their firearm instead of the Taser.**

**GTPD has three patrol K-9s and a bloodhound tracking dog. All dogs are equipped with ballistic vests.** Vests were purchased with funds donated by private citizens and companies. **The department K-9 teams also have two thermal imaging cameras** to assist in locating subjects in the dark.

**Officers have been wearing body worn cameras since 2017.** Officers are required to wear their BWC while on duty and they are activated manually by the officer, when the patrol vehicle lights are activated and when the officer's handgun is removed from its holster. Cameras are required to be activated for all calls for service and all citizen contacts. In addition to after serious incidents, supervisors are required to review 3 recordings per month for each officer. **During critical incidents, the BWC video is live streamed to the dispatch center. Supervisors can watch this in real time to assess what resources will need to respond to the situation. All patrol vehicles are also equipped with in car cameras.**

**All marked patrol vehicles carry a medical trauma kit which contains oxygen, Narcan, trauma supplies and an extra tourniquet. All officers are trained in the use of all equipment. Each officer is also required to carry a tourniquet on their person. With respect to the department's use of Narcan, to date, officers have deployed Narcan on 218 occasions with 194 documented lives saved.**

**In 2013 the department purchased a Lenco BearCat armored vehicle.** This vehicle allows officers to safely approach potentially deadly situations with the cover of an armored vehicle to rescue citizens and first responders to evacuate them in life-threatening situations such as barricaded subjects and active shooter situations. The BearCat also has a thermal imaging system and a ramming bar. **Since the department started keeping data on its use, the BearCat has been used on 94 search/arrest warrant assignments and 13 critical incidents where the Special Response Team responded. In January of 2018, the BearCat responded for a barricaded subject with two hostages. During negotiations, the subject then began firing his rifle at officers. The subject shot the BearCat, striking the windshield and front end. No officers were injured and the subject ended up committing suicide, but no officers or citizens were injured.**

**When the COVID pandemic hit the United States in 2020, the department implemented a thorough safety policy to reduce staff exposure to the virus.** Officers were issued N-95 masks, gloves and hand sanitizer. The front office at the department was closed and employees who could, were allowed to work from home. Minor reports were taken by phone or on-line and roll call briefings were moved outdoors to a covered area where they could practice social distancing. **Locations within the department were disinfected daily by the use of 2 portable UV-C lantern systems.** The department purchased an AeroClave RDS3110 sanitizer for larger areas and where prisoners were held and 4 Bioplast portables sprayers for sanitizing vehicles. Patrol cars were disinfected after every prisoner transport. All officers are also issued personal protection kits with full body suits.

**The department also conducts active shooting training** at several schools and closed commercial buildings. During this training, officers include dispatchers and local fire departments and use Simmunition training weapons. Local college acting student volunteers are used as role players during scenarios. GTPD also has specially trained crisis intervention team (CIT) to respond to scenes where persons in psychological crisis situations are believed to be involved. All officers are also required to carry crisis information cards as handouts to give information to where subjects can receive assistance.

**GTPD also trains their officers monthly in de-escalation of force.** They use the department's computer-controlled MILO range system and officers must interact with the scenario being shown on the screen to try to de-escalate the situation. Scenarios also include shoot/don't shoot situations depending on the officer's actions to attempt to diffuse.

**In 2025, GTPD purchased two tactical robots for clearing buildings and other tactical functions. In 2020 the department, through their participation in the federal surplus program, received its third robot which features a tactical arm, wide-angle camera with infra-red capability.**

**The GTPD has an unmanned aircraft (UAV).** The UAV program is overseen by a sergeant and seven officers, all of whom are certified by the FAA as remote pilots. In addition to being used in tactical situations and searches for subjects, the UAV is used to document motor vehicle crashes and crime scenes to minimize the time officers may be on the roadway.

**\*\* This summary is only a brief overview of many of the Glouster Township, NJ Police Department's programs. In the actual submission you will see that GTPD has other programs and incentives to benefit its members. Please review their entire submission and its associated documents to gain a complete understanding of their program.**