For the Record

Did you ever wonder which division at the Woodland Police Department (WPD) would be considered central? Most agree that it is the one led by Portesure Jones, Police Records Supervisor. She describes the Records Division as "the guts of the department." Records is responsible for entering and processing all crime, traffic, warrant, citation, towed vehicle, and property information into computerized databases. Timely and accurate data entry is critical for the Department's data-driven policing efforts known WATCH, the new COMSTAT. The division's data verification processes require close attention to detail to ensure that statistical crime and arrest data is properly reported to the Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation every month. The Records team also assists officers who must prepare records for court and handles public records requests from the public.

To get a glimpse of the technical information that Records produces in a timely manner, visit the Arrest Log or Case Log on the WPD website. Search the logs to see the information which is part of the transparency needed for the WPD's core values: visible and trustworthy community relations, respectful and compassionate service, honest and ethical conduct, and the accountability required of a team of professionals.

Records staffs the front counter where they take reports from citizens. They can also process release requests for impounded vehicles, certain tickets, and Electronic Live Scan for employment applicants. Long time Records ViP, Isabel Isherwood, works in Records four mornings each week. When possible, she enjoys using her friendly personality and bilingual skills to work directly with the public at the front counter.

One of the major projects currently in the works is a digitization of paper records. The volume of physical records is apparent when first seeing the movable stacks of files from about the past 10 years. Rather than continue to maintain these files and then move them to storage, they will now be scanned and entered into an increasingly vast WPD information system. To facilitate the transition from a paper-based to cloud-based documentation system, the department has been installing the public safety record management system (RMS), Inform RMS. This system brings together field reporting and records management into a single web-enabled solution for the both officers in the field and staff located at the department. Inform RMS allows officers to efficiently create, update, and submit reports from the field with a phone or tablet. This ultimately lets them spend less time with record-keeping and more time on the streets. ViP Isabel says that reading an officer's handwriting is a learned skill and that the new system will save them a great deal of time for both officers and Records. Inform RMS will allow Records staff to focus on verifying data and preparing it for the analysis needed for modern, data-oriented policing. The WPD staff are working diligently to transition Records to the cloud and train all staff on Inform RMS, which will take about one year. Once the new procedures are implemented, ViPs will be trained so that rather than file or enter report records in a variety of computer systems they will support Inform.

Portesure said that Records welcomes ViP support. She is very grateful that the WPD invests in the ViP program. ViPs are welcome to work occasionally or on a regular schedule, like ViP Isabel. Tasks include filing case records and citations, which provides a clear view of department procedures. ViPs trained on the Crossroads computer system, a great skill for anyone in a Criminal Justice program, are always needed. Shelly Quinonez, Senior Records Specialist, often needs support with warrants. Glenda Alexander, Senior Records Specialist, heads the large project to digitize and purge 2008 files. To get started, let Morgan or Jasmin know when you want to start and they will arrange training. After that, show up and ask if anyone needs help. For the record, the entire team will be glad to see you!