

The Valori Group LLC

Comprehensive Assessment of the Dover Police Department

Prepared For:

The Town of Dover, New Jersey

Prepared By:

The Valori Group LLC

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Date:

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Contents (Overview):

This report provides a comprehensive assessment of the Dover Police Department, including operations, staffing, scheduling, fiscal analysis, and areas of concern, supported by contractual and organizational documents.

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1. Objective of the Assessment

The Town of Dover engaged The Valori Group to perform an initial strategic and operational assessment of the Town's Police Department.

The purpose of the analysis is to furnish awareness and recommendations for defining and implementing an enhanced operating model to create an even more exceptional law enforcement agency.

In finalizing this report, The Valori Group would like to thank The Honorable James P. Dodd, Mayor of the Town of Dover, for his leadership and willingness to engage in honest dialogue about staffing, scheduling, and operations of his community's largest and most important department.

We also recognize the leadership of the new Business Administrator, Dr. Edward Ramirez, who is looking to ensure the community provides the highest quality of dependable services at the lowest reasonable cost to the hard-working Dover taxpayers.

The Valori Group would also like to recognize and praise all staff members for their daily dedication to the Dover Police Department and community. The law enforcement profession is one of the most honorable professional endeavors, and we support our men and women in blue who sacrifice their time and lives in the furtherance of community safety.

2. Background on Personal Development

2.1 Assessment Team and Methodology

Approach: Mixed-methods review combining: (a) document analysis (contracts, special orders, organizational charts, annual reports); (b) quantitative budget and overtime trend analysis; (c) shift structure and minimum-staffing policy review; and (d) comparative practice benchmarking. **Scope:** 2022–2025 budget, overtime, scheduling policies, calls-for-service methodology, and governance structure.

Principal Profiles

Dr. Louis A. Valori, Ed.D.: A Visionary in Law Enforcement, Security, and Leadership

Dr. Valori is a visionary in law enforcement, security, and leadership, with decades of service in both public safety and the private sector. A retired Detective Sergeant from the Parsippany–Troy Hills Police Department and a retired U.S. Army Reserve Lieutenant Colonel, he brings deep expertise in investigations, risk management, and organizational leadership.

He is the principal owner of Royal Security Services LLC and The Valori Group LLC, firms recognized for delivering premier security, private investigations, and municipal consulting solutions to corporations, government agencies, and private clients. Dr. Valori also leads innovative academic–industry partnerships, most notably the Security Certification Program at Centenary University, which is training the next generation of security professionals.

A lifelong learner, Dr. Valori earned a Doctorate in Education, an Education Specialist degree, dual Master's degrees in Public Administration and Education, and a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, all from Seton Hall University. His leadership extends beyond security and investigations, having served as both a Board of Education member and a Township Council member in Parsippany–Troy Hills Township.

Chief Michael S. Richards (Ret.): Transforming Communities Through Leadership and Innovation

Chief Richards exemplifies dedication and innovation in public safety and organizational leadership. As the Manager for a private nonprofit organization in Sussex County, he oversees an extensive operation with a \$3 million budget, a large Board of Directors, and a staff of nearly 200 employees and volunteers. Before this, Chief Richards served as the Police Chief of Newton, NJ, spearheading initiatives that transformed community safety and law enforcement training.

A graduate of the West Point Command & Leadership Program, Chief Richards has held pivotal roles, from County PBA President to County Police Chiefs' Association President. His leadership helped establish Sussex County's 9/11 Memorial and the county's first indoor law enforcement training range. Passionate about tackling societal challenges, Chief Richards co-founded the Sussex County C.L.E.A.R. Program to combat the opioid epidemic—a nationally recognized model replicated in communities across the United States.

Lt. Daniel Bendas (Ret.): A Lifetime of Service to Country and Community

Lt. Bendas is a United States Navy Submarine Veteran who served with distinction, gaining invaluable experience in high-stakes, high-pressure environments. Following an honorable discharge, he transitioned to law enforcement, ultimately retiring as a Police Lieutenant. He later specialized as a Health, Safety, and Environmental Manager for an international manufacturing company, applying leadership skills to ensure safe work environments and regulatory compliance.

He holds a Bachelor of Science in Emergency Planning and Management, equipping him with advanced knowledge in risk mitigation, disaster preparedness, and crisis management. Combining military discipline, law enforcement leadership, and environmental management expertise, Lt. Bendas brings a comprehensive perspective to safety and emergency planning.

3. Executive Summary

The Valori Group has concluded its comprehensive review of the staffing, scheduling, and fiscal operations of the Dover Police Department. This assessment combined qualitative and quantitative analysis to identify areas where efficiencies can be gained, costs controlled, and accountability strengthened.

Our findings demonstrate that while the Dover Police Department provides vital public safety, structural issues in scheduling, overtime, and governance have created a system where excess costs are routine rather than exceptional. This report is not intended to assign blame, but to present clear and factual insights that support the long-term sustainability of Dover's public safety services.

3.1 Dover Demographics & Community Context

- Population: ~18,400 (2020 Census).
- Composition: Majority–minority, with more than half of residents Hispanic or foreign-born.
- Median Household Income: ~\$70,500 (below NJ average).
- Per Capita Income: ~\$31,600.
- **Implication:** Dover taxpayers already carry high property taxes relative to income. The town has limited capacity to absorb rising police costs without sacrificing other essential services.

3.2 Key Findings

1) Budgetary Trends (2022–2024)

- Department budget grew from \$9.0M (2022) to \$10.3M (2024) — a 14% increase.
- Police consistently consume ~27% of the municipal budget.
- Growth driven by salaries (+\$1.16M) and rising “Other Expenses” (+32%).
Implication: Police spending is absorbing a disproportionate share of Dover’s modest tax base.

2) Contractual Scheduling Framework

- Patrol: 12-hour shifts (4 on/ 4 off)
- Sergeants: 12-hour shifts (4 on/4 off), with 116 hours of “Bank Time” annually — creating unavoidable coverage gaps.
- Optional: 10-hour shifts (4 on/3 off) without Bank Time.
- Chief’s Discretion: Authority to assign shift types.
Observation: The 12-hour system structurally generates overtime, even when staffing levels are adequate.

3) Overtime & Fiscal Impact

- Spending: \$439K (2022); \$584K (2023); \$468K (2024).
- Extra Duty: \$806K (2022); \$339K (2023); \$490K (2024).
- Overtime = 15–20% of payroll (vs. best-practice 5–7%).
- High Earners: 11–13 officers >\$200K annually; one exceeded \$300K.
- One Lieutenant assigned to the Community Affairs Unit earned excess of \$300,000 in a single year. While community outreach is an important function, the deployment of a command level officer at this salary to a nonoperational role reflects a misalignment of resources.
- Household Burden: \$170–\$230 per household annually — just for police overtime.
Conclusion: Overtime is systemic, inflating compensation far beyond sustainable levels.

4) Chief’s Minimum Staffing Mandate

- July 2022 memo requires minimum of 4 patrol officers + 1 Sergeant per shift, regardless of call volume.

- Gaps from Bank Time, sick leave, or vacation automatically trigger overtime.
 - Applied even during low-demand overnight shifts.
- Result:** Minimum staffing embeds overtime into daily operations.

5) Calls for Service – Credibility Concerns

- Reported 107,729 + calls (2022–2025).
 - Very broad categories, an audit should be performed to verify accuracy and transparency.
 - Public Services: 46,241
 - Traffic Enforcement: 17,691
 - Parking Enforcement: 9,751 & Admin 12,303
 - ~80% of calls were officer-initiated/administrative.
- Implication:** The way calls for service are recorded can create the appearance of inflated activity, which in turn justifies staffing and overtime levels in a way that may mislead taxpayers.

6) Detective Bureau Utilization

- Detectives average only 4–6 call-outs per year, despite on-call pay.
 - Patrol often resolves incidents before detectives are engaged.
 - Temporary duty assignments reduce in-house coverage.
- Recommendation:** Reallocate detectives to patrol to reduce overtime reliance.

7) Governance & Oversight Weaknesses

- Chief’s Contract (2023–2029): Broad discretion over scheduling and overtime approvals.
- Union Agreement: Guarantees Bank Time, longevity pay, and self-approval of leave.
- Oversight Gap: Resistance to centralized payroll and electronic timekeeping prevents transparency.
- Leadership Conflict: Tension between Mayor and Business Administrator weakens accountability.

8) Core Concerns

- Chronic budget overruns.
- Pyramiding of comp time, sick leave, and shift-swapping.
- Resistance to real-time transparency in staffing and payroll data.

3.3 Recommendations (High-Level)

1. **Audit:** Independent review of calls-for-service and overtime coding.
2. **Scheduling Reform:** Phase out 12-hour/Bank Time model; shift toward 10-hour or demand-driven scheduling.
3. **Minimum Staffing Reform:** Replace “flat 4 per shift” mandate with deployment tied to call data.

4. Operations, Staffing, and Areas of Concern Analysis

4.1 Chief's Contract (2023–2029) — Cost Drivers

1. **Guaranteed Term and Job Security**
 - Contract secures the Chief's position through 2029; early termination or restructuring likely triggers severance or legal costs.
 - **Implication:** Taxpayers bear the cost of stability; the Town loses flexibility to adapt when budgets or needs change.
2. **High Base Compensation**
 - Chief Delaney's current salary is **\$255,280.08** among the highest in the County/State, executive benchmark influences wage environment across ranks.
 - **Implication:** Elevated executive pay amplifies salary pressure department wide.
3. **Longevity, Stipends, and Benefits**
 - Longevity pay, stipends, vehicle allowance, health benefits, and professional development perks compound total compensation.
 - **Medical Contribution** is not the same percentage as the town employees (which all pay the same percentage based on their income) average medical contribution is approx. \$8,500.00 annually as the Chief's medical contribution is \$3,500. annually over the lifetime of the contract.
 - **Implication:** Total benefits are extremely expensive for the taxpayers.
4. **Control of Scheduling and Overtime**
 - Sole discretion to assign 8-, 10-, or 12-hour shifts; 12-hour + Bank Time + minimum manning structurally generate OT.
 - **Implication:** Authority over scheduling operationalizes costly staffing policies.
5. **Autonomy in Assignments**
 - Discretion to detail officers to outside agencies (e.g., FBI TFO); if not reimbursed, Dover funds both the assignment and backfill OT.
 - **Implication:** Potential double-cost to taxpayers.
6. **Weak Accountability Mechanisms**
 - Administrative reporting to BA rather than directly to elected officials; diffuses accountability and limits fiscal discipline.
 - **Implication:** Costly decisions can persist unchecked.
 - The contract between Dover and Chief Delaney is highly unfavorable to the Town because it locks the municipality into an unusually long six-and-a-half-year term while stripping away nearly all the management rights and accountability provisions that normally safeguard the public interest. Key standards of responsibility and oversight were deleted, including scheduling authority, management rights, and limitations on discrimination and indemnification, thereby insulating the Chief from discipline or reduction in salary for the life of the contract. Compensation provisions are excessive: salary was raised dramatically with no scale, fixed raises tied to other ranks, and added

benefits such as doctorate stipends, doubled uniform allowance, removal of deductibles, full reimbursement for conferences and subscriptions, and guaranteed travel and cell phone perks. Grievance and disciplinary procedures were rewritten to favor the Chief, ensuring continued full pay and benefits even while suspended. In addition, the new contract reallocates control of office space, vehicles, equipment, and all day-to-day police policies exclusively to the Chief, effectively eliminating municipal authority. Taken together, the contract cedes managerial control, inflates costs, and strips away accountability mechanisms, leaving the Town of Dover with little leverage for nearly seven years

4.1.1 Chief’s Contract vs. Dover Taxpayer Capacity (Comparison)

Category	Chief’s Contract (2023–2029)	Dover Taxpayer Reality
Base Salary	High, locked through 2029 with increases/protections	Median household income ~\$70,500; limited capacity for tax hikes
Longevity & Stipends	Add-ons stack on top of base	Households rarely receive such add-ons
Health & Retirement Benefits	Full coverage; pension accrual; allowances	Residents fund own healthcare/retirement, facing rising taxes
Scheduling Authority	8/10/12-hour tour discretion; 12-hour + Bank Time	Taxpayers indirectly fund structural OT (~\$500K/year)
Overtime Approval	Centralized with Chief/Acting Chief	OT approvals become routine due to policy design
Outside Assignments	Discretion to detail officers; reimbursement varies	Possible double pay (assignment + backfill OT)
Contract Term	Runs through 2029; costly to restructure	Police ≈27% of municipal budget; flexibility constrained

4.2 Superior Officers Association (SOA) Contract (2023–2025) — Cost Drivers

Why the SOA Contract is Costly

1. **Guaranteed Salary Increases & Longevity** — Raises locked in; cumulative add-ons inflate salaries and OT bases.
2. **Bank Time for Sergeants (116 hrs.)** — No carryover; forces coverage gaps → OT.
3. **12-Hour, 4-On/4-Off Schedule** — Exceeds a 40-hour week over cycle; OT becomes routine.
4. **Inflated OT Calculations** — $OT = 1.5 \times (Base + Longevity + Stipends)$.
5. **Self-Approval of Leave** — Reduces Oversight; increases unmonitored time off.

- 6. Generous Benefits & Outside Assignments** — Adds tens of thousands per officer; potential double-cost if backfill OT is required.

4.2.1 SOA Contract vs. Taxpayer Impact (Comparison)

SOA Contract Provision	How It Works	Impact on Taxpayers
Guaranteed Salary Increases	Annual raises locked in	Payroll rises regardless of fiscal condition
Longevity Pay & Stipends	Add-ons included in OT base	Each OT hour is significantly more expensive
Bank Time (116 hrs./Sgt.)	Must be used each year	Built-in gaps necessitate OT
12-Hour Tours	4-on/4-off + Bank Time	Structural OT driver
OT Pay Formula	1.5× (Base + Longevity + Stipends)	Premium overtime rates
Self-Approved Leave	Emergency self-approval allowed	Weak oversight → more OT
Generous Benefits	Health, tuition, uniforms; outside details	Raises true cost per officer

4.3 Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association (PBA) Contract (2023–2025) — Cost Drivers

Why the PBA Contract is Costly

- 1. Guaranteed Salary Increases & Step System** — Automatic progression grows payroll annually.
- 2. Overtime Rules and Premiums** — OT at 1.5× of base + add-ons; seniority increases cost per hour.
- 3. Leave Provisions and Coverage Gaps** — Generous leave creates frequent backfill needs.
- 4. Holiday and Specialty Pay** — Stipends inflate both base and OT multipliers.
- 5. Minimum Staffing Requirement** — 4 officers + Sergeant per shift; any absence triggers OT.
- 6. Extra Duty and Court Time** — Premium categories add cost; tracking inconsistencies obscure net taxpayer burden.
- 7. Generous Benefits Package** — True cost per officer often reaches \$150K–\$200K+ with OT and benefits.

4.3.1 PBA Contract vs. Taxpayer Impact (Comparison)

Provision / Practice	How It Operates in Dover	Direct Impact on Taxpayers
Annual raises & step system	Guaranteed increases + tenure steps	Locked-in payroll growth
Overtime formula (1.5×)	Multiplies base + stipends/longevity	Expensive premium hours
Minimum manning policy	4 officers + Sergeant	OT becomes structural
12-/10-/8-hour tour mix	Bank Time creates gaps	Coverage edges → OT backfill
Leave provisions	Vacation/personal/sick/holiday	Backfill OT to maintain minimums
Holiday & specialty pays	Differentials, uniforms, stipends	Inflates base and OT
Court/training time	Paid outside tours	More premium hours
Extra duty details	Reimbursable but variable	Risk of subsidy if not reconciled
Grievance protections	Slow schedule/pay changes	Costs persist during disputes
Benefits	Health, pension, tuition	All-in cost far exceeds base salary

4.4 Chief's Special Order (July 2022) Cost Drivers

Why the Special Order is Costly

- **Rigid Minimum Staffing Requirement** — 4 patrol + 1 Sergeant at all times; OT auto-triggered on absence.
- **Self-Approval of Unplanned Leave** — Weakens oversight; more gaps → OT.
- **Reactive Overtime Filling (PlanIt)** — Vacancies filled by text blast; if no volunteers, force OT; detectives cannot cover patrol shortages.
- **No Demand-Based Staffing** — Flat floor not tied to call demand; overstaffs quiet periods.
- **Chief's Discretionary Overrides** — Permits >18 hrs in 24; undermines safeguards and inflates OT.

4.4.1 Special Order vs. Taxpayer Impact (Comparison)

Memorandum Provision	How It Operates	Impact on Taxpayers
Minimum Staffing Rule	4 patrol + 1 Sergeant at all times	Forces OT even during low demand
Self-Approval of Leave	Supervisors can self-approve	Weak oversight → OT gaps
Reactive OT Filling	PlanIt text blast; force if no volunteers	Ensures premium backfill

Flat Staffing Model	Not tied to CFS demand	Premium staffing during quiet hours
Discretionary Overrides	Hours beyond typical caps	Inflated OT; weaker safeguards

4.5 Calls for Service (CFS) Analysis

Counting Practices

- National standard (FBI/NJSP): a Call for Service = a single incident/request, regardless of number of responding officers.
- Dover methodology appears to count per responding officer/unit, inflating totals and impeding year-over-year comparability.
- **Category Reported 107,729 + calls (2022–2025).**
- **Public Services (46,241)** Vague/undefined; unclear activity mix.
- **Traffic & Parking Enforcement (27,442 combined)** — Totals unusually high if per-officer counting is used.
- **Administration (12,303)** Internal tasks should not be logged as CFS.

Impacts

- Inflated CFS justifies higher staffing and OT.
- Recalculating to incident-based standard indicates actual workload ~30% lower than reported.
- Transparency and fiscal accountability concerns warrant immediate reform.

CFS Reform Requirements

1. Provide a clear written definition of “Call for Service.”
 2. Clarify inclusions under “Public Services” and “Administration.”
 3. Adopt FBI/NJSP incident-based methodology for all future reporting.
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4.6 Comparative Analysis – Contractual & Policy Cost Drivers

4.6.1 Chief’s Contract (2023–2029) vs. Taxpayer Impact

Provision	How It Operates	Impact on Taxpayers
Guaranteed Term (2029)	Locks in executive employment	Limits flexibility; potential settlement costs

High Base Salary + Benefits	Base, longevity, stipends, vehicle, health, PD	High benchmark drives costs across ranks
Scheduling Authority	8/10/12-hour tours; maintains 12-hour + Bank Time	Institutionalizes costly schedules
OT Approval Power	Centralized OT approvals	Structural gaps make approvals routine
Outside Assignments	FBI/Task Force details	Backfill OT risk if not reimbursed

4.6.2 SOA Contract (2023–2025) vs. Taxpayer Impact

Provision	How It Operates	Impact on Taxpayers
Guaranteed Raises & Longevity	Automatic increases and add-ons	Annual payroll escalation
Bank Time	Must be used; no carryover	Built-in OT triggers
12-Hour Tours	Exceeds 40-hour week over cycle	Structural OT driver
OT Formula	1.5× including add-ons	Premium pay multipliers
Self-Approved Leave	Emergency self-approval allowed	Weak oversight → OT

4.6.3 PBA Contract (2023–2025) vs. Taxpayer Impact

Provision	How It Operates	Impact on Taxpayers
Raises + Step Increases	Tenure-based automatic growth	Locked-in payroll growth
OT Pay	1.5× of base + add-ons	Expensive premium hours
Minimum Manning	4 officers + Sergeant	Automatic OT on absence
Leave Provisions	Generous paid time off	Frequent OT backfill
Holiday/Specialty Pay	Stipends/differentials	Compounds base & OT

4.6.4 Special Order (July 2022) vs. Taxpayer Impact

Provision	How It Operates	Impact on Taxpayers
Minimum Staffing Rule	Flat floor, all shifts	Overtime embedded
Reactive OT Filling	PlanIt text blasts; force OT	Premiums backfill by default
Flat vs. Demand-Based	Not tied to CFS	Overstaffing during quiet hours

5. Conclusion and Special Thanks

5.1 Governance and Oversight Concerns

Public Perception and Trust

Allegations of unauthorized wiretapping involving the Dover Police Department—regardless of legal outcome—risk eroding community trust, diminishing officer morale, and damaging departmental credibility.

Fiscal and Operational Strains

Overtime expenses continue to climb. CFS categorization and reporting lack transparency, making it difficult to align staffing, resource deployment, and performance metrics with true demand.

Transparency in Financial Records

Limits on the Business Administrator's access to payroll and financial records complicate budgetary management and compromise fiscal accountability.

Transition to Civilian Oversight and Collective Bargaining Reform

The findings of this assessment underscore that many of the Department's cost drivers are structural and tied directly to the existing governance model. As long as scheduling authority, overtime approvals, and minimum staffing mandates remain within the unilateral discretion of the Chief's office, the Town will face ongoing fiscal strain and limited flexibility to implement meaningful reforms. Establishing a civilian Public Safety Director would provide the Town with an accountable mechanism to introduce transparency, enforce data-driven staffing models, and realign departmental operations with community needs.

Equally important, both the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (PBA) and Superior Officers' Association (SOA) contracts are set to expire this year. A transition to a civilian Director provides Dover with a timely and practical opportunity to renegotiate these agreements in light of the fiscal realities identified in this report. New leadership, coupled with expiring agreements, creates the conditions necessary for collective bargaining to address the systemic inefficiencies—such as Bank Time, rigid minimum staffing, and premium overtime multipliers—that currently burden taxpayers. In this way, the Director model serves not only as an oversight reform but also as a catalyst for sustainable change through the collective bargaining process.

Supporting New Jersey Examples (Civilian Leadership Models)

- **North Brunswick Township** — Civilian Police Director oversees policies, operations, discipline; reports to Mayor; maintains organizational structure and civilian staff oversight.
- **Trenton** — Civilian Police Director, formally designated as head of department; emphasizes public administration credentials and authority comparable to a chief.

- **Jersey City** — Transition to civilian oversight of police operations (2021), demonstrating commitment to reform and accountability.

Legal Foundation

New Jersey courts have acknowledged that appointing a civilian Police Director—distinct from a police chief—aligns with legislative intent, enabling municipalities to introduce oversight roles with clear civilian accountability without contravening civil service or statutory promotion frameworks.

5.2 Acknowledgments

In conclusion, studies of this magnitude require many hours and many conversations with key municipal leaders. We extend our sincere thanks to **Mayor James P. Dodd, Business Administrator Dr. Edward Ramirez**, and other staff members who assisted in providing documents and data over the past several weeks. We also thank the **Mayor and Town Council** for the opportunity to work collaboratively for the betterment of the Town.

Additionally, we extend our thanks to the men and women of the **Town of Dover Police Department**. Police officers in Dover and throughout America are facing challenging times in the delivery of law enforcement services on a 24/7 basis. We commend those officers who, day in and day out, put their lives on the line so we may live free. All police departments have strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges. The Valori Group is grateful to be part of the evolution, betterment, and growth of the Town of Dover Police Department and municipal organization.

Appendices

Appendix A: PBA Contract Local 107 (January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2025)

Appendix B: SOA Contract Local 107 (January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2025)

Appendix C: Chief of Police Contract (July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2029)

Appendix D: Town of Dover Police Department Annual Report 2024

Appendix E: Town of Dover Chief of Police Special Order 2022-02

Appendix F: Dover Police Department Organizational Chart 2025

Appendix G: Dover Police Department Chart (2022, 2023, 2024, 2025)

Appendix H: Dover Police Department Calls for Service (2022, 2023, 2024, 2025)
