EAST CHICAGO life

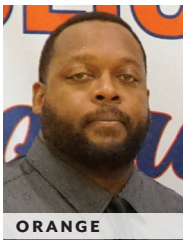
YOUR LOCAL SOURCE FOR EAST CHICAGO NEWS AND EVENTS

City of East Chicago
Hope & Progress
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CHIEF JOSE RIVERA


ORANGE


COSSEY


ACURI

NEW TEAM TAKING ECPD TO NEXT LEVEL

NEW CHIEF & RECRUITS

At a time when police departments across the country are having trouble filling vacancies, I am pleased and proud to announce we have a brand new class of recruits in training.

When they finish their classes, this dynamic group will begin street patrols under the command of our new Police Chief Jose Rivera.

This chief is exactly what East Chicago needs.

He is a native son and the first Central High School graduate to become police chief. He inspires others by his enthusiasm for the profession he loves even more today than he did when he began as a 911 dispatcher 25 years ago.

Chief Rivera believes in a team approach to leadership and is already working to develop plans to keep the department evolving as technology advances without losing sight of the need to always put our East Chicago residents first.



NEW ADMINISTRATION

Chief Rivera's new administration – Deputy Chief Justin Orange, Administrative Cmdr. George Cossey and Uniform Patrol Cmdr. Louis Arcuri – is already making a difference. In this issue, read about the exciting plans to take the ECPD to that next level of excellence.

ANTHONY COPELAND
Mayor City of East Chicago

SEE SOMETHING. SAY SOMETHING.

Police Chief Jose Rivera encourages all East Chicago residents to get involved.

"One way to help us improve our city is to report suspicious activity in your neighborhood," he said. "See Something. Say Something.

You can report suspicious activity to our non-emergency number at (219) 660-0000 or our anonymous tip line at (219) 391-8500.

"The spirit of service that exists in our community is one of our best character traits," Rivera said.

PUBLIC SAFETY

[TO SERVE AND PROTECT]



Chief Jose Rivera

When Jose Rivera joined the East Chicago Police Department in 1997, it was for a civilian job as a 911 dispatcher. A year later, the Army veteran became a probationary police officer.

A stint in the patrol division led to a decade in the gang unit and another five years as a lieutenant on patrol. Rivera, who was the first lieutenant to earn the rank by testing and interviewing for the position through a merit system, was then promoted to assistant chief and tapped this summer as chief.

The constant in his 25-year career is a passion to serve and protect that never wavers.

"Every job I've had in the East Chicago Police Department has reinforced my decisions to choose law enforcement as a career and my hometown as a place to serve," said Rivera, who holds a Bachelor's degree and a Masters degree in Public Safety Administration from Calumet College of St. Joseph. "Policing is in my blood."

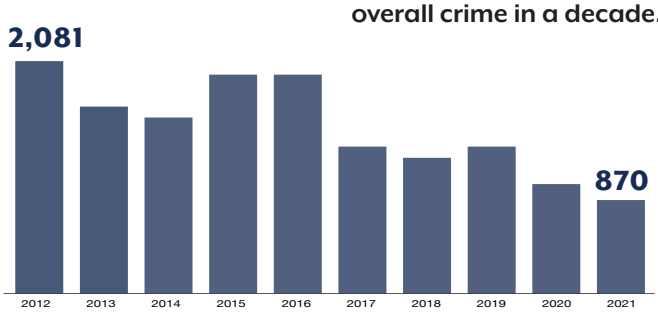
With a team approach to leadership that began with former Chief Hector Rosario, Rivera said his transition to top cop was seamless, leaving the department in great stead to begin a host of advancements, including: a comprehensive upgrade of department rules and regulations that are staged electronically, guaranteeing no officer misses a law; and, a body camera program integrated with the department computer system.

There are plans to bring back bike patrols, the citizen's police academy and the Street Crime Unit.

"Our goal is to remain a highly respected, professional and compassionate police department that serves as a model for the region," Rivera said. "Everything we are doing is making us better at being police officers," he said. "That means we are better able to serve our community."

[OVERALL CRIME LOWEST IN 10 YEARS]

Through their dedication and hard work, East Chicago police continue to make our city safe. In 2021, the city reported the lowest overall crime in a decade.



[2021 CRIME STATISTICS]

East Chicago is at, or near, record-low criminal activity in several categories. The chart below compares 2021 incidents to the highs of the last 10 years.

CATEGORY	HIGHEST	2021	
Homicide	13	13	
Rape	17	11	▼
Robbery	163	30	▼
Assault	190	190	
Burglary	612	69	▼
Larceny	1063	442	▼
Vehicle Theft	254	110	▼
Arson	8	5	▼
Total NIBRS*	2,081	870	▼

* National Incident-Based Reporting System (formerly UCR-Uniform Crime Report) is the total criminal activity recorded annually by the FBI from every municipality across the country.

STAFFING & RECRUITMENT



East Chicago Police Chief Jose Rivera (front left) and his fellow police officers (pictured here at the 2022 East Chicago Central graduation commencements) provide security and safety to the more than 26,000 residents that call East Chicago home. A homegrown East Chicago resident and career police officer, Rivera believes working together strengthens the department. [East Chicago Police Department photo]

[STAFFING FORMULA]

The addition of six new officers to the East Chicago Police Department — Morgan Salazar, Luis Sanchez, Flavio Huerta, Jason Corral, Ronnie Moore and Victor Rodriguez (certified Officer) — brings the city's sworn strength to 2.6 officers per 1,000 residents.

That places East Chicago at the high end of a national statistical formula that helps cities and towns determine how many officers are needed based on a host of factors that begins with population.

Police Chief Jose Rivera said other major factors considered to develop a community staffing needs are call volume and crime.

"Based on the statistics, we should have no fewer than 47 officers and no more than 67," Rivera said. "Even before new recruits are factored in, we have 61 officers and one civilian jailer, which means we have ample officers to serve the needs of our 26,100 residents."

[WE'RE HIRING]

The East Chicago City Council has budgeted enough resources for a police department that would include 98 sworn officers.

"This doesn't mean we aren't hiring," Rivera said. "We have been in a constant state of hiring for nearly a decade. We have officers who move to other departments. Others retire. I continue looking for qualified recruits. By hiring more officers than statistically needed, we can assign police to specialized task forces and divisions to expand our reach."

[DID YOU KNOW?] The City of East Chicago was incorporated in 1893, but the history of the East Chicago Police Department only dates back to 1905. Our first Chief of Police was Thomas Conroy, who was appointed on February 6, 1905. One of his sons also served as police chief from 1939 until June 1946.

TECHNOLOGY & INITIATIVES

Research shows the most effective police departments are those that combine technological advancements with boots-on-the-ground law enforcement. Just one example: the East Chicago Police Department has a mobile phone tool that sends city laws to every officer.

[SHOT SPOTTER]

An army of sensors located strategically throughout the city along with a platoon of residents who call 911 when they hear gunshots means police are able to find — and stop — shooters more quickly than ever before.

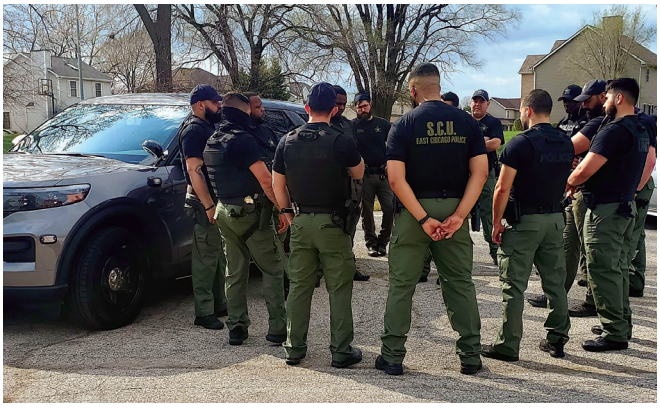
It all comes down to triangulation — which uses all available information from any direction to pinpoint a shooter's location within 25 meters — and the ability of the system to differentiate gunfire from other loud, popping sounds.

Officers no longer go to calls with little or no information. They arrive swiftly, locate shooters and preserve evidence. East Chicago is the only police force in Northwest Indiana to use the technology.

[BODY CAMERAS]

High on the priority list for Police Chief Jose Rivera is a body camera program designed for enhanced safety and greater accountability — for both those being stopped and detained as well as officers.

"We already have 800 cameras monitoring activity throughout the city," Rivera said. "But, that does not replace the need for on-scene cameras on every car that document police activity in the here and now. It's verification of what happened beyond written reports." The system should be operational this year.



[STREET CRIME UNIT]

Seizing illegal guns and getting narcotics off the streets are just two of the goals of a reorganized Street Crime Unit that will be back out in the neighborhoods this fall.

Deputy Police Chief Justin Orange, who led the original unit, said the team is back up to its full strength of 12 officers and ready to hit designated areas with a show of strength to the criminals and reassurance to citizens the city is taking steps to make their neighborhoods safer.

Officers assigned to the Street Crime Unit have no set schedules or location. They amass resources — canine officers and their handlers, narcotics officers and detectives — based on need.

"Our job is to reduce illegal activity," Orange said. "We focus heavily on spending time with neighbors. We want them to know we are there to help."



[LICENSE PLATE READERS] East Chicago has License Plate Readers throughout the city as well as on some of the squad cars. The LPRs notify police whenever a stolen car, wanted subject, suspended driver or suspicious vehicle enters our city.

COMMUNITY POLICING

Town Halls, scheduled in each of the six districts, along with others tailored to hear the concerns of business owners and clergy have been added to revamped programs sidelined during the pandemic. It's all part of strengthening the fabric of policing that touches every segment of the community.

[AUTISM-ALZHEIMER'S BRACELET]

Three years after North Township and local police departments launched an identifying bracelet program for individuals with autism, East Chicago Police are going on their own to revive it. Deputy Chief Justin Orange said the original program will be revamped to include individuals with Alzheimer's Disease and dementia. "We'll be adding a GPS tracking device into the bracelets along with identifying numbers to be able to better track people if they go missing," Orange said. "We know there is a great need. At least once a week, we get a call from residents asking if we have some way to help them better track relatives who tend to wander."

[CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY]

The first post-COVID Citizens Police Academy will be offered to residents this fall. Police Chief Jose Rivera said officers — and residents — tell him they have missed the program, which gives citizens the opportunity to get up-close-and-personal with police work. "There is no individual who has gone through the program who hasn't said how much they learned from it," Rivera said. "Many of these individuals come back as ambassadors who help run the program."

INFO: For more information about the Citizens Police Academy or to apply, please call (219) 391-8318.

[BIKE PATROLS]

With the easing of COVID restrictions, East Chicago has seen the return of police bike patrols — in neighborhoods, along the lakefront, at the parks and civic events. Town hall meetings in neighborhoods — from Roxana to North Harbor and everywhere in between — are next on the to-do list. "Mayor Copeland and I have mapped out a series of meetings that will be held in different districts along with separate groups that will address the concerns of the business community and those of the local clergy," Rivera said. "We want to get all facets of the community engaged and make changes that will be better for all."

[CARDINAL CONNECT APP]

An new app is expanding the city's "See Something: Say Something" initiative. Cardinal Connect puts students – who are being bullied – in immediate contact with the East Chicago Police Department. A $243,323 Community Policing Grant from the U.S. Department of Justice helped fund the app, which is available on android and smart phones. Designed for the school-age population, Chief Jose Rivera said the app is available to anyone who needs immediate contact with police.

INFO: For more information, call (219) 391-8318.



[WHAT'S NEW?] A fleet of new vehicles are replacing police cars showing their age. A gun range, weight room and two K-9 officers have also been added. Chief Jose Rivera said the upgrades are thanks to Mayor Copeland, who made equipping the department a priority.

LAW ENFORCEMENT CAREER PROGRAMS

The East Chicago Police Department offers programs for high school and college students interested in exploring a career in law enforcement. Here are the details about the programs:

CIVILIAN JAILER PROGRAM

College students studying criminal justice or who have an interest in law enforcement can apply for our Civilian Jailer Program. Qualified candidates must be at least 19 years old. The program allows a student to work as a part-time jailer while attending school.

East Chicago Police also offer other police training to give candidates a feel for the job. “If they still work for us and turn 21, we will help them become an East Chicago police officer if they choose to work for us, Police Chief Jose Rivera said.

Info: Applications are available from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. at the East Chicago Police Department.

HIGH SCHOOL CADETS

East Chicago Central High School will offer its first Police Cadet Program for credit this fall as part of the Career and Technical Education curriculum. From fingerprinting to the actual process of solving crimes using evidence found at the scene, Deputy Chief Justin Orange said cadets get a broad look at the many facets of policing from East Chicago police officers who do those jobs every day.

Info: Please contact Maren Lee, Director of CTE and Adult Education, at (219) 378-7310 or mlee@ecps.org.

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WE ARE HIRING!

EQUIPMENT

- State-of-the-art police department
- Indoor gun range
- Intel Center
- Weapons Simulator
- Weight Room
- New Vehicle Fleet
- State-of-the-art detention center

SPECIALIZED UNITS

- K-9
- Gang & Narcotics
- Detective Bureau
- Street Crimes Unit





BENEFITS

- Starting salary: $50,000.10
- Salary after 3 years: $60,475.48 (MPO or three years of police experience)
- 12-hour shifts
- Paid vacation up to 240 hours
- Paid sick leave
- Medical, dental and vision insurance

$30,000
DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE FOR A HOME IN THE CITY

$2,500
RESIDENCY BONUS

$1,200
CLOTHING ALLOWANCE

$1,200
HOLIDAY PAY

APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE FROM 9 AM–4 PM MONDAY–FRIDAY.
QUESTIONS? CALL ROSIE SERRANO AT (219) 391-8312.