



**Motor Vehicle Theft
and Insurance Fraud
Prevention Board**

2022 Annual Report

New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
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www.criminaljustice.ny.gov

**New York State
Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention
2022 Annual Report**

This report is submitted as required by Section 846-1(3)(h) of the New York State Executive Law by the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services on behalf of the Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board. The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services provides staff support to the board.

Issued August 2023

Kathy Hochul

Governor

State of New York

Rossana Rosado

Commissioner

New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services

**New York State
Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention
Board Members (2022)**

Rossana Rosado, Chair

Commissioner

New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services

Kevin Gallagher

Regional Director–Northeast Region

National Insurance Crime Bureau

Edmund Golat

Major Case Specialist, Progressive Special Investigations Unit

Progressive Insurance

Joseph Kenny

Inspector

New York Police Department

James Potts

Vice President, Special Investigations Unit

New York Central Mutual Fire Insurance Company

Division of Criminal Justice Services

Office of Program Development and Funding

Yvonne J. Turner

Director

Ronda N. Ross

Deputy Director of State Supported Grants and Programs

Law Enforcement and Legal Services Unit

David Martin

Program Manager

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MVTIFP Program Representative

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I. Introduction

Motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud have a substantial impact on insurance rates in New York State and across the country. These crimes are highly sophisticated and cost law-abiding motor vehicle owners and insurance policyholders hundreds of millions of dollars in increased business expenses and significantly higher annual insurance rates.

The New York Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Program (MVTIFP) is designed to reduce the overall cost of motor vehicle insurance in the state by targeting theft and fraud and is funded by a statutorily required fee assessed on each motor vehicle insurance policy issued in New York State. The 2022-2023 state budget appropriated \$3.7 million for the program, which was used to support grants to law enforcement agencies and other entities to combat theft and fraud during the calendar year 2022, as detailed in this report.

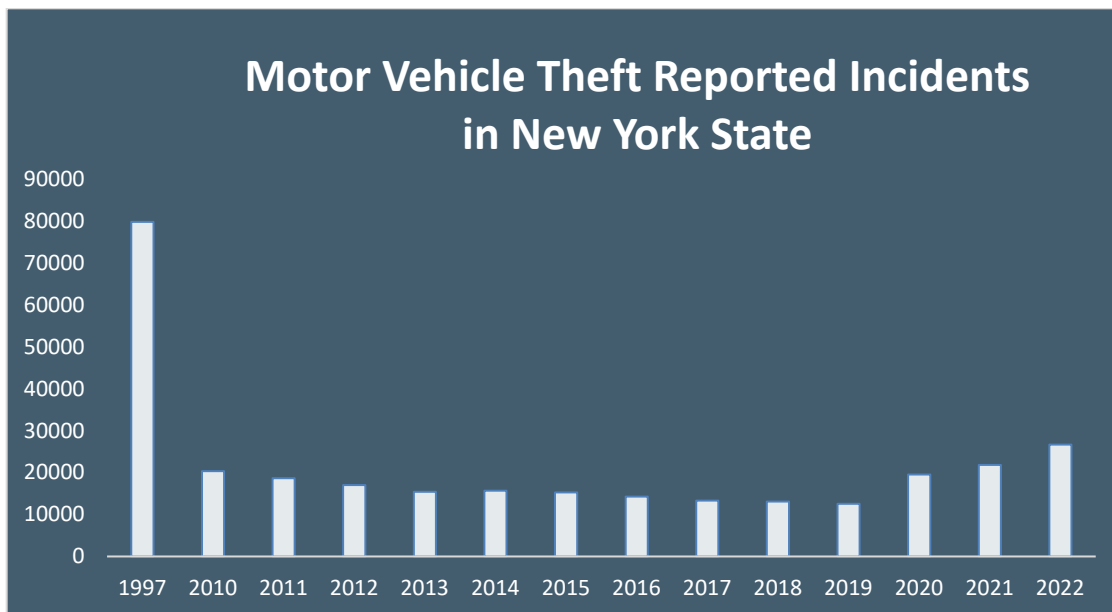
A 12-member Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board (board), which includes representatives of law enforcement, consumers of motor vehicle insurance, insurance carriers and relevant state agency representatives who are appointed by the Governor, is responsible for overseeing the program. The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) provides staff support to the board and the program's participating agencies.

A. Motor Vehicle Theft

Great strides have been made in reducing motor vehicle theft in New York. From 1997 through 2022, reported thefts decreased 67 percent. In 2022, however, there was a dramatic increase in vehicles reported stolen: 26,653, representing a 112 percent increase from the 12,573 reported stolen in 2019.¹ This was the first significant increase in motor vehicle theft since the inception of the program in 1994, and the increase exceeds the 11 percent increase in reported thefts nationwide, according to data from the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB). In 2022, vehicle thefts increased to 26,653, up from 21,956 in 2021. This is a 21 percent increase from last year. New York had one of the lowest rates of theft by population in the nation, ranking 46th of 52, but in 2022 New York was ranked 10th nationwide for number of motor vehicle thefts. While statewide theft numbers are typically driven by those occurring in New York City, NICB data indicated that the New York City Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) ranked 4th of 390 MSAs measured.

According to the NICB, the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic downturn likely contributed to the increase, as did other factors, including vehicles being used less frequently and owners not taking proper precautions to secure vehicles.

¹ The 2022 report includes numbers provided as of 4/3/2023.



Motor Vehicle Theft 2021 vs. 2022 Top Ten Counties			
County	2021	2022	% Change
Bronx	3,135	4,052	29.6
Queens	2,687	3,725	38.6
Kings	2,930	3,708	26.5
Erie	2,293	2,560	11.6
Monroe	1,722	2,033	18.0
New York	1,627	1,973	21.3
Suffolk	1,218	1,471	20.8
Nassau	629	967	53.7
Onondaga	937	940	0.3
Albany	500	770	54.0

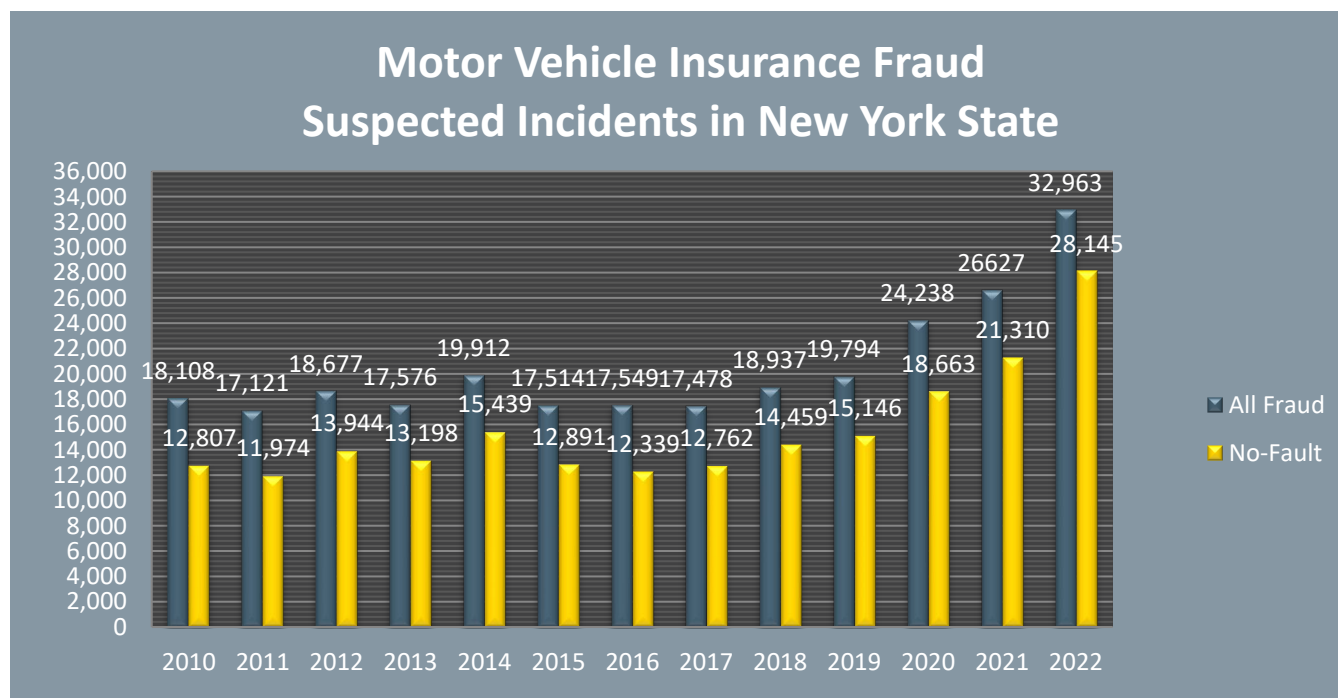
While much of the motor vehicle theft continues to occur in the New York City region, six non-New York City counties – Erie, Monroe, Nassau, Onondaga, Suffolk and Albany – rank among the top 10 counties for reported motor vehicle thefts. Six of the top 10 counties experienced moderate increases in reported vehicle thefts in 2022. Statewide, 39 of the 62 counties saw increased thefts, while 23 counties recorded decreases.

B. Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud

New York State drivers are statutorily required to have automobile insurance that includes coverage for the following:

- **No-Fault Personal Injury Protection:** To pay medical expenses, lost earnings and other reasonable and necessary expenses for a driver or passenger injured in, or a pedestrian injured by, their vehicles.

- **Liability:** To protect against the harm their vehicles – or any vehicle they drive with the owner's permission – might do to other people and their property.
- **Uninsured Motorists:** To protect against the injuries that they, their family members or their passengers might suffer in a hit-and-run accident or in an accident with an uninsured vehicle.



Insurance carriers reported 32,963 incidents of suspected motor vehicle insurance fraud to the New York State Department of Financial Services (DFS) Insurance Frauds Bureau in 2022, including no-fault, motor vehicle theft, motor vehicle arson, larceny from motor vehicles, motor vehicle vandalism, motor vehicle collision damage, falsified motor vehicle invoices and fraudulent motor vehicle insurance cards. This represents an all-time high in incidents of suspected motor vehicle insurance fraud and an increase of approximately 67 percent from levels reported in 2019. In 2022, the reported number of no-fault claims went up to 28,145. This represents a 32 percent increase from the previous year.

No-fault motor vehicle insurance fraud typically accounts for more than half of all reports of insurance fraud and three-quarters of reports of motor vehicle insurance fraud reports. In 2022, no-fault fraud remained approximately 77 percent of all suspected incidents of motor vehicle insurance fraud reported. No-fault insurance fraud reports increased from 21,310 in 2021 to 28,145 in 2022.

II. Program Goals

The goal of the MVTIFP is to provide an integrated means to prevent, deter and reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. The program provides funding for initiatives that include theft and fraud prevention education and the establishment and maintenance of specialized law enforcement units to combat motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. Eligible applicants for funding include local law enforcement agencies and not-for-profit organizations that administer one or more motor vehicle theft or insurance fraud prevention programs or driver safety programs conforming to a plan approved by the board.

As required by Executive Law Article 36-A, statewide Motor Vehicle Theft and Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Plans of Operation are updated periodically on recommendations from the board. These separate plans of operation include assessing the scope of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud problems, including a regional analysis of motor vehicle theft and/or motor vehicle insurance fraud incidents and related activities, and analyses of various methods of combating problems associated with motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud.

Both plans are available on the DCJS website under [Annual Reports and Publications](#), providing guidance on the types of projects supported by program funding.

III. Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Board

The MVTIFP is administered by a 12-member board with the DCJS commissioner or designee serving as its chair. All board members are appointed by the governor: three are recommended by the speaker of the New York State Assembly, three by the temporary president of the New York State Senate, and the remaining five by the governor. Members serve four-year terms and are not considered public officials. The board includes representatives of consumers of motor vehicle insurance, motor vehicle insurance companies, law enforcement agencies and the judicial system.

The board is charged with developing and recommending coordinated plans of operation that provide for the statewide reduction of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud. Elements of the plans must include:

- Assessments of the magnitude and scope of the problems, including an analysis of theft and fraud by region;
- Methods for combating the problems; and
- Information relevant to the development of competitive request for proposals (RFPs) to fund local programs to combat both problems.

Pursuant to the recommendations of the board, Executive Law Article 36-A authorizes the DCJS Commissioner to:

- Execute contracts
- Accept grants and other contributions
- Make grants through an RFP process
- Appoint employees and affix compensation
- Request assistance and information from the New York State Police, police departments throughout the state, DFS, state Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), state Office of Court Administration, any New York state agency or from any insurer
- Assist municipalities in the development of local programs
- Advise and assist the superintendent of Insurance pursuant to Insurance Law §2348 (this section now requires that rate filings reflect insurers' savings resulting from the program)
- Annually submit to the governor and chairs of the Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means committees a report on the board's activities, the activities of grant recipients and the results or impact of those activities.

A. Board Activity

A lack of quorum due to several unfilled vacancies and complications related to the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the board from meeting.

B. Programs Funded by The Board for Calendar Year 2022

In 2020, renewal grants were issued in the following award amounts for calendar year 2022:

New York City Region	Award
Bronx County District Attorney	\$329,991
Kings County District Attorney	\$250,873
New York County District Attorney	\$263,445
Queens County District Attorney	\$560,625
Richmond County District Attorney	\$50,144
NYPD Auto Crime Division	\$199,000
NYPD Fraudulent Collision Investigation Squad	\$100,000
NYPD Auto Larceny Fraud Investigation Unit	\$ 24,873
Fire Department of New York City (FDNY)	\$124,800
New York City Suburban Region	Award
Nassau County District Attorney	\$114,300
Nassau County Police Department	\$145,869
Suffolk County District Attorney	\$283,210
Suffolk County Police Department	\$123,556
Westchester County District Attorney	\$277,963
Yonkers City Police Department	\$122,414
Capital Region/Hudson Valley	Award
Albany City Police Department	\$33,000
Albany County District Attorney	\$65,050
Western Region	Award
Buffalo City Police Department	\$106,884
Cheektowaga Town Police Department	\$36,542
Erie County District Attorney	\$104,758
Niagara County District Attorney	\$109,443
Niagara County Sheriff Department	\$20,000
Niagara Falls City Police Department	\$23,400
Finger Lakes Region	Award
Monroe County District Attorney	\$87,000
Monroe County Sheriff Office	\$36,500
Rochester City Police Department	\$49,520
Statewide	Award
New York Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association, Inc.	\$65,100
New York Prosecutors Training Institute, Inc.	\$40,740

IV. 2022 Grant Program Descriptions

New York City Region

Bronx County District Attorney's Office

The Bronx District Attorney's Office Anti-Auto Theft Unit received a grant of \$329,991 for 2022 which partially funded salaries of two assistant district attorneys, three investigators and a forensic accountant. The Anti-Auto Theft program aims to increase the number of successful prosecutions of defendants charged with grand larceny of a motor vehicle, criminal possession of stolen property, motor vehicle fraud, auto stripping and/or unauthorized use of vehicles, and insurance fraud.

The Bronx District Attorney's Office owns several bait cars and a surveillance van used to enhance undercover operations. Working jointly with police precincts throughout Bronx County that have experienced an increase in car theft, the bait cars are positioned in high crime areas with plainclothes police officers stationed nearby. In 2022, prosecutors worked with Bronx precincts to conduct bait car operations and to use a license plate reader to supplement investigations. Joint operations between the NYPD and the district attorney's Auto Crime Unit led to the recovery of 219 vehicles in 2022, valued at approximately \$5,911,151. The NYPD reported a 29 percent increase in reported grand theft auto larcenies in Bronx County in 2022.

The office utilizes a vertical prosecution model for vehicle theft and fraud cases. Prosecutors are involved in cases from the earliest stages, working with detectives to review, draft and present search warrant applications and seek cooperation from defendants after arrest.

Investigators and assistant prosecutors at the Bronx District Attorney's Office have maintained relationships and communications with collaborating partners in the fields of auto theft and insurance fraud. In 2022, investigators and prosecutors conferred with the following partner agencies: NICB, the New York City Auto Crime Squad, Auto Larceny Unit and NYPD precinct commands, adjacent and remote local police commands, the New York State Police, DFS, other prosecutors' offices, both inside and outside of New York State DMV, and special investigations units of major motor vehicle insurance carriers.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	36	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	38
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	23	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	278
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	516	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF Cases	\$0

Kings County District Attorney's Office

The Kings County District Attorney's Office received a \$250,873 grant in 2022 paying for part of the salaries of four assistant prosecutors, two senior prosecutors, one detective investigator and one deputy bureau chief, in addition to necessary training on advances in the field. Motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases are primarily handled by the Trial Division Zones, while the Investigations Division focuses on long-term investigations.

The Kings County District Attorney's Office utilizes the Zone Program, which breaks Brooklyn's 23 police precincts into five trial zones. Each zone, comprised of four to five precincts, is structured to establish and foster ongoing communications and relationships with NYPD precinct commanders and community leaders.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	0	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	133
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	2
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	855	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF Cases	\$0

New York County District Attorney's Office

The New York County (Manhattan) District Attorney's Office received a \$263,445 grant in 2022 funding three part-time assistant district attorneys, an analyst and a paralegal. This bolsters the district attorney's ability to investigate and prosecute crimes, such as motor vehicle theft, unlicensed operation of motor vehicles, automobile-part theft rings, fraudulent insurance broker schemes, and combat the production, possession, and use of counterfeit auto insurance and other motor vehicle related documents. Significantly, over the last five years, the program has helped fund a major investigation into the tow truck industry.

Throughout 2022, grant-funded attorneys continued to investigate the tow truck industry and build criminal cases against numerous defendants, as they have in prior years, with a new focus on auto body shops that work in concert with towing companies to artificially inflate insurance claims. The investigation is ongoing but we continue to identify groups of individuals that are 1) creating geographic-based monopolies, 2) falsifying business records with government agencies to illegally acquire tow licenses, 3) engaging in coercion and violence to maintain their dominance over their geographical area, 4) participating in insurance fraud schemes by towing vehicles to one or more body shops owned/controlled by owners of the tow truck company and 5) engaging in money laundering to secret their illicit proceeds.

In addition to the tow truck investigation, the Rackets Bureau continues to investigate other motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud-related offenses such as staged-accident rings, injuries as a result of being struck by vehicles, and individuals claiming to have been injured as a result of a motor vehicle accident, but evidence suggests that either the collision never occurred, or the individuals were not present at the time of the collision. Investigations are ongoing and continue to provide invaluable evidence.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	21	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	121
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	2	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	284
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	885	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF Cases	\$0

Queens County District Attorney's Office

The Queens County District Attorney's Office received a \$560,625 grant in 2022 paying for three full-time assistant district attorneys, one supervisor and three full-time investigators assigned to the Specialized Auto Crime and Insurance Fraud Unit. This unit is comprised of attorneys, investigators, and paralegals with special expertise in auto theft and insurance fraud. The unit focuses on long-term investigations and the handling of specially selected cases for trial and targets organized auto theft and insurance fraud activity. A major emphasis is placed on building enterprise corruption cases to ensure that the foundations of criminal activity are uprooted and to aggressively pursue individual prosecution and obtain maximum sentencing.

The Queens County District Attorney's Office has a comprehensive approach to auto crimes and insurance fraud by continuing their efforts of strong partnership and coordination with local, state, federal law enforcement, and insurance agencies. These long-term investigations use confidential informants, electronic surveillance, human surveillance and sting operations.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	36	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	133
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	23	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	422
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	973	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF Cases	\$179,556

Richmond County District Attorney's Office

The Richmond County (Staten Island) District Attorney's Office received a \$50,144 grant in 2022 partially supporting four assistant district attorneys. The Trials Bureau investigates and prosecutes all program felony cases, and the Criminal Court Bureau prosecutes cases with felony charges that have the potential to be pleaded down to a misdemeanor.

The primary goal of the MVTIFP is to provide an integrated means to prevent and reduce incidences of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud in Richmond County. The district attorney's approach to case reviews includes interviews of suspects and witnesses to gain intelligence about defendants' typical methods and to learn about the latest technologies employed by criminals. The district attorney's office works closely with its key partners to address insurance fraud-related crimes.

Attorneys continued to note the trend of vehicles stolen while left running unattended or with keys left inside. In response, the district attorney's office and the NYPD utilized social media to remind the community of the importance of locking vehicles and not leaving them running unattended.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	174	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	218
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	696
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	1994	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF Cases	\$0

New York City Police Department Auto Crime Division

Part of the Criminal Enterprise Division of the Detective Bureau of the NYPD, the Auto Crime Division's mission is to reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and motor vehicle insurance fraud within New York City through a coordinated approach involving law enforcement, crime analysis and prosecution. The Auto Crime Division utilizes an integrated approach to prevent motor vehicle crime as well as to detect, investigate and prosecute these crimes. The Auto Crime Division received a grant of \$199,000 in 2022 to fund police overtime, vehicle forensics training, equipment and rental vehicles for surveillance and investigations.

The Auto Crime Division utilizes several strategies in combatting motor vehicle related crime. The unit utilizes an in-house team of analysts to monitor trends and data related to auto theft and insurance fraud crimes and to disseminate such information throughout the NYPD and other neighboring jurisdictions to help determine locations for targeted enforcement.

Through investigations into the sale of stolen vehicles and parts on social media and the internet, the Auto Crime Division has gained investigative leads into organized theft rings and has recovered numerous stolen vehicles and parts through buy-bust operations. The use of undercover officers and informants enhances these investigations. The division also maintains extensive interstate and federal law enforcement contacts, which enable investigators to develop information on individuals outside of New York who use the internet for criminal activity.

The use of modern technology – including social media, wiretaps, GPS tracking devices, license plate readers, cameras, and smart phone technology – plays an important role in auto crime investigations. Smart phones allow investigators to obtain immediate information in the field, including important records from DMV, the NICB, E-Justice and vehicle salvage records. In addition, advanced computers are used to view and enhance photos and videos to assist in the identification of stolen vehicles or vehicles used in crimes. In 2020, the Auto Crime School conducted a training class on the use of Berla vehicle forensics technology, providing training and vehicle forensics kits to auto crime investigators and ensuring citywide availability of this technology.

In 2021, New York City established the first in the nation catalytic converter labeling program. This program gives Law Enforcement the ability to identify stolen catalytic converters and enhance prosecution. The theft of catalytic converters in New York City has increased more than 300 percent over 2020. 2022 continued the Catalytic Converter labeling program in NYC. This program gives Law Enforcement the ability to identify stolen Catalytic converters and enhance prosecution. The theft of catalytic converters has actually decreased in NYC by 23 percent over 2021 because of our initiatives.

In addition to its investigative work, the Auto Crime Division also maintains one of only two college accredited courses on auto crime and insurance fraud in the country. This four-day course is conducted twice a month and 402 attendees were trained in the fundamentals of auto theft and insurance fraud. These trainings were sponsored by National Insurance Crime Bureau, New York Anti Car Theft & Fraud Association, New York State Department of Motor Vehicle and The International Association of Auto Theft Investigators.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	254	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	3
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	13,750	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	0	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	0
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	10,393

New York Police Department Fraudulent Collision Investigation Squad

The NYPD Fraudulent Collision Investigation Squad (FCIS) received a \$100,000 grant in 2022. The grant paid for overtime for uniformed members and investigators, training and rental vehicles for surveillance, search warrants and arrests. The FCIS works with the Health Care Fraud Task Force to combat no-fault insurance fraud at the state and federal levels, conducting both short- and long-term investigations.

The squad utilized a portion of grant funding to attend training conducted by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners. The training covered the entire fraud investigation process, including identifying fraud schemes, conducting interviews, preparing documentation, resolving fraud allegations, and fundamental legal concepts involved in a fraud examination.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	NA*	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	7
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	NA	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	15
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	NA	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	7
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	NA	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	7

*The FCIS responds solely to insurance fraud cases and does not track theft-related statistics.

New York Police Department Auto Larceny Fraud Investigation Unit

The NYPD Auto Larceny Fraud Investigation Unit is a specialized unit formed to combat auto theft fraud in Patrol Borough Queens South. The unit consists of six full-time employees, four investigators and two supervisors. The sole function of the unit is to investigate reported vehicle thefts that have indications of

fraud. In 2022, the unit received a grant of \$24,873, which was used primarily to support overtime for the unit's investigation of fraudulent theft reports.

Investigators review all auto theft reports for indicators of fraud. When a case is selected for further investigation, the relevant parties from the insurance industry are contacted, and insurance investigators and Auto Larceny Fraud Investigation Unit members coordinate efforts to reveal any inconsistencies in the details of the report. The unit's collaborative program strategy to combat automobile fraud also includes routine communication with the Queens County District Attorney's Office for case development and to ensure that maximum charges are brought against perpetrators of insurance fraud. Additionally, unit members often provide assistance and guidance to patrol officers to improve efforts to detect and prevent auto theft fraud.

Due to manpower shortage within the NYPD, this unit was disbanded before the end of the grant period and there is no one there who could report their annual data.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	0	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	0	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	0	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	0
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	0

Fire Department of New York City

The FDNY received a \$124,800 grant in 2022 to fund fire marshals assigned to the Auto Fraud Squad. The Auto Fraud Squad continues to screen all motor vehicle fires throughout the five boroughs of New York City to identify priority incidents and incidents of fraud. The focus of these investigations is forensic examination of the fire scene, evidence recognition and collection and thorough examination of vehicle owners' documents. The Auto Fraud Squad's strategy is to employ all investigative techniques available in a coordinated effort to identify fraud.

The Auto Fraud Squad continued its focus on citywide vehicle fire activity, specifically focusing on incidents involving staged theft, arson, insurance fraud, conspiracy, and associated crimes. The Squad identified, investigated, and brought to prosecution numerous incidents of arson and insurance fraud, resulting in convictions and/or denied or withdrawn insurance claims.

Members of the Auto Fraud Squad screened over 1,900 car fires in New York City in 2022 utilizing 1,444 hours of overtime. After screening, cases are selected for investigations that may lead to denial of fraudulent insurance claims, arrest of those making the claims, and apprehension of those hired to torch the vehicles. The Auto Fraud Squad maintained a strong collaborative relationship with the NYPD Auto Larceny Fraud Investigation Unit, the Queens District Attorney's Office and DFS, leading to successful investigation and prosecution of serial larceny and arson cases. Grant funding allows the assigned fire

marshals additional work time to enhance investigations by canvassing for video and witnesses, screening relevant data from License Plate Readers, viewing various city-controlled security cameras and reviewing E-ZPass® records.

2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Activity			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated	1,973	Responses to Motor Vehicle Fires where Fraud Is Suspected	42
Total Arrests	33	Number of Fire Insurance Claims Cancelled Due to Initiation of Law Enforcement Investigation	10
Responses to Motor Vehicle Fires	545	Total Value of Claims Denied/Withdrawn	\$354,077

New York City Suburban Region

Nassau County District Attorney's Office

The Nassau County District Attorney's Office received a \$114,300 grant in 2022 partially funding one assistant district attorney, one bilingual investigator and a legal secretary dedicated to investigating and prosecuting theft and fraud cases. The office's Vehicle Theft and Fraud Unit was created in 2008 to prosecute motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases, while working closely with members of the Nassau County Police Department, the NICB, and other law enforcement and insurance agencies to detect and reduce the incidence of these crimes.

The Nassau County District Attorney's Office ("NCDAO") has 206 attorneys with a total staff of over 438 employed in various roles for the 5th largest prosecutor's office in New York State. In 2022, District Attorney Anne T. Donnelly created the Revenue, Auto, Insurance, and Labor Crime Bureau ("RAIL"). One of RAIL's mandates is to concentrate on and address the problems of motor vehicle related insurance fraud, auto theft and related crimes. DA Donnelly staffed RAIL with prosecutors who each have decades of experience. These ADAs collaborate with agencies such as the Nassau County Police Department ("NCPD"), the National Insurance Crime Bureau ("NICB"), the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles ("DMV"), and New York State Police ("NYSP") to investigate and prosecute motor vehicle related crimes.

The unit investigates and prosecutes cases relating to motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. Staff work with and act as liaisons to other prosecutors' offices, law enforcement, private entities and the public. The office's Just Ware Case Management System allows data analysis in tracking vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases to better follow and report these charges, analyze the types of offenses seen and record dispositions. The unit works closely with the district attorney's technical investigators on technical aspects of investigations, including monitoring and maintaining surveillance equipment and conducting forensic analysis of electronic devices.

The office coordinated with the police department's Major Case Bureau Vehicle Theft Section on the re-arrest and prosecution of numerous defendants who re-offended and faced significantly longer sentences after previously being charged with grand larcenies for theft of unlocked vehicles with the keys left inside overnight.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	25	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	8
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	234
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	284	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF Cases	\$858

Nassau County Police Department

The Nassau County Police Department (NCPD) received a \$145,869 grant in 2022 to pay for overtime and training for officers, detectives, supervisors and intelligence analysts. This award allows police to conduct numerous operations designed to prevent, deter, and reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud within Nassau County.

The police department, in collaboration with the district attorney, created strategies to prevent and reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud within Nassau County. Strategies cover street level enforcement, investigations and prosecution. The police department strategy involves detectives, police officers, intelligence analysts and supervisors throughout the county and incorporates intelligence-based policing for targeted and comprehensive enforcement and investigations.

The NCPD created strategies tailored to prevent, deter, and reduce the incidence of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud within Nassau County. These strategies correspond with the MVTIFP NYS Statewide Plans of Operation, recognizing that a key to success is inter- and intra-agency coordination and collaboration. The strategy is crafted as a continuum of services, ranging from street level enforcement to investigations to prosecution. The NCPD strategy, spearheaded by the Burglary Pattern Team, Auto Crime Squad (ACS), involves detectives, police officers, intel analysts, and supervisors incorporating intelligence-based policing to perform targeted and comprehensive MVTIF enforcement and investigations. As auto crime was at an all-time high in 2021 and 2022, the NCPD employed a variety of techniques to target MVTIF related crime, utilizing approximately 1,400 hours of grant funded overtime, and many, many more hours during officer and detectives' regular duty. NCPD intelligence analysts-maintained data, mapped locations of MVTIF crimes, and created intelligence bulletins used by NCPD personnel to conduct both overt and covert enforcement and investigations, resulting in vehicle recoveries and arrests. NCPD personnel reviewed theft data, examined stolen vehicle reports and field interviews for theft and fraud indicators, conducted database searches for recovery information including parking tickets, plate readers, International Organization for Standardization (ISO), CARFAX, and New York State Police Information Resource Management (NYSPIN); indexed stolen vehicles with NICB; and much more. Nassau County continues to identify and investigate crime patterns, including residential thefts, thefts of catalytic converters, thefts of vehicles for use in the commission of other crimes, and tire and rim thefts. ACS detectives are regularly called to utilize their expertise in conducting vehicle examinations in order to identify VIN numbers and other information, particularly in cases of fire and suspected arson. Nassau County continues to experience the theft of high-end vehicles from driveways of private residences along the north and south shore of Long Island. These thefts are monitored by the ACS for fraud indicators and recovery locations. The ACS has been working with multi-jurisdictional agencies: New Jersey State Police Task Force, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Suffolk Police Department Auto Crime Unit, NYPD Auto Crime Unit, New York State Police, NICB and the Waterfront Commission of New York & New Jersey, as

a majority of the high-end vehicles continue to be recovered in Newark, N.J., or on shipping containers on Staten Island, in Virginia and Massachusetts. There are several on-going investigations related to this pattern. The ACS also reports detecting a pattern of the larcenies of tires and rims in the confines of Nassau County. Investigating detectives have recorded, analyzed and are investigating multiple grand larcenies occurring from residential streets, driveways and dealerships. A coordinated effort has been established between investigating detectives, NCPD crime scene detectives, and crime analysts from the NCPD Asset/Intel Unit and forensic examiners from the Nassau County Medical Examiner's Office for continuing investigations. For instance, ACS detectives assisted in an investigation at an Auto Expo dealership in Great Neck, where two subjects were seen on video entering the building and removing numerous key fobs for vehicles parked on the lot. It was determined that 10 vehicles had been stolen. ACS detectives recovered nine of the ten by using GPS tracking and by canvassing the area where the vehicles had been left. All were recovered in New York City, and they were processed for fingerprints and DNA. The vehicles have been returned, and the investigation continues. Additionally, the Burglary Squad - Auto Crime Section has discovered a pattern of larcenies of catalytic converters. Investigating detectives and police officers, especially those from the Department's Bureau of Special Operations, spent hours patrolling the county investigating vehicle break-ins and catalytic converter thefts. Targeting several different residential and commercial areas within Nassau County resulted in a reduction of these crimes.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	97	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	989	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	668	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	0
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	20

Suffolk County District Attorney's Office

The Suffolk County District Attorney's Office has a Financial Investigations & Money Laundering Bureau that targets white collar crimes, including insurance fraud and motor vehicle theft. The district attorney received a \$283,210 grant in 2022 to fund five positions: two assistant district attorneys, a detective investigator, an office assistant and a paralegal.

The creation and maintenance of the bureau has allowed investigators and prosecutors to strengthen resources and knowledge, while increasing coordination, experience and expertise to combat vehicle-related crimes. The bureau prosecutes all cases related to insurance fraud and motor vehicle theft, as well as all motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases generated by unit investigators, the Suffolk County Police Department, the New York State Police and village police departments on the East End. The Bureau also handles referrals from DMV, DFS, the NICB and the Special Investigative Units of insurance carriers.

The Financial Crimes Bureau ("FCB") of the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office ("SCDAO") utilizes different tactics to effectively target motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud offenders. FCB's objective is to allow investigators and prosecutors to strengthen resources and knowledge while achieving an

increased level of coordination and expertise in combatting vehicle-related crimes. FCB prosecutes all cases generated by FCB investigators and the Suffolk County Police Department's District Attorney Squad ("SCPD DA's Squad") related to insurance fraud and motor vehicle theft. FCB also handles referrals from NYS DFS, NYS DMV, NICB, and the insurance industry SIUs. FCB maximizes interagency cooperation through the permanent placement of investigators from NYS DFS, NICB, SCPD DA Squad detectives, and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office ("SCSO") Deputy Sheriffs. These assignments augment the already dedicated FCB staff of investigators and ADAs.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	1	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	18
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	1	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	13
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	30	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF Cases	\$0

Suffolk County Police Department

The Suffolk County Police Department received a \$123,556 grant in 2022 to pay for overtime and training and employs an intelligence-based and data-driven approach to investigating motor vehicle and insurance fraud crime. The police department utilizes the Property/Auto Crime Unit to maintain a centralized approach and a dedicated command focused on motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud. This is for a 565-square-mile area with a population of 1.5 million.

2022 funding provided 1,323 overtime hours allowing enhanced investigations and initiation of 84 Vehicle Theft and 2 Insurance Fraud investigations under the program and an additional 2 for the department (4 total). We also observed a sharp 615 percent increase in catalytic converter thefts, 1,778 were reported in 2022 compared to 289 reported in 2021.

There were 1,747 vehicles reported stolen in Suffolk County, 519 more than in 2021. In 2022, 1,316 vehicles were recovered, a 38.53 percent increase from 2021 in which 950 vehicles were recovered. Recovery rate decreased slightly in 2022 to 75.33 percent, a 1.03 percent change from 2021 in which the rate was 77.36 percent. It is important to remember that recovered vehicles may not correlate to those reported stolen.

2022 saw a continuing trend with the majority of vehicle thefts, 1,132 involving leaving the car running and/or leaving keys within the vehicle or nearby unsecured. The most common stolen vehicle make during the year was Honda with 125, Toyota with 97, and Nissan with 108. Honda Accord (35) and Nissan Altima (35) tied as the most reported stolen vehicle throughout all four quarters of 2022 and Toyota Camry followed with followed with 25 stolen.

Vehicle theft investigations resulted in five misdemeanor and 17 felony arrests during 2021. PAC detectives arrested three individuals and charged a total of seven counts of auto stripping. One individual was arrested and charged with two counts of first-degree auto stripping for removing parts to eight different vehicles. Three individuals were arrested and charged a total of 12 counts of auto stripping. Two of them were arrested following months of investigation into tire/rim thefts from multiple dealerships.

2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	84	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	2
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	1,747	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	1
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	1316	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	0
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	2	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	231

Westchester County District Attorney's Office

The Westchester County District Attorney's Office received a \$277,963 grant in 2022 to fund an Auto Crimes Unit (ACU) with a senior assistant prosecutor and two police investigators. A crime analyst assigned to the unit works with a similar squad at the Yonkers Police Department. In addition to pursuing its own investigations, the unit provides daily assistance to the 42 police departments within the county and conducts extensive investigations with the local agencies.

The predominant trends in auto thefts in Westchester County in 2022 are the following: (1) thefts of vehicles; (2) thefts of unlocked vehicles with ignition keys/fobs left in the vehicle; (3) thefts of unattended running vehicles; (4) theft of vehicle parts including catalytic converters; (5) fraudulent inspection stickers and out-of-state license plates; (6) stolen vehicle arrests as a result of license plate reader (LPR) technology. The majority of prosecution involved the possession of stolen vehicles that were stolen from outside the jurisdiction, theft of motor vehicles within the jurisdiction, and catalytic converter thefts.

Five individuals were indicted from a multi-month investigation into catalytic converter thefts. These 5 individuals were responsible for over 50 catalytic converter thefts.

"Operation Sledgehammer" continued in 2022 with multiple plea deals to insurance fraud related charges resulting from this investigation.

The use of LPR, pursuit mitigation technology and instant inter-agency communication had a great effect this year in speeding up response times to vehicles that are identified as being stolen. This has allowed local law enforcement to recover more stolen vehicles and arrest more perpetrators of motor vehicle crimes.

It has become clear that auto crimes are closely connected to other crimes, including violent- and gang-related crimes. Therefore, the prosecution of auto crimes perpetrated by organized groups has provided very good intelligence that has allowed the ACU to assist other agencies with violent crime investigations.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	35	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	37
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	2	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	107
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	286	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF Cases	\$0

Yonkers City Police Department

The Yonkers Police Department received a \$122,414 grant in 2022 to pay for a full-time detective and overtime for complex investigations, as well as officer training expenses. The department investigates reports of stolen vehicles, cars with stolen parts, altered VINs, bogus registration and inspection stickers, and out-of-state dealer plates or other suspicious tags. The department works closely with other agencies, such as the NYPD, New York State Police, and other local jurisdictions to combat auto crimes across the City of Yonkers.

The Yonkers Police Department continued its commitment to hosting a designated specialized auto crimes unit within the Detective Division, funding a full-time detective to combat motor vehicle theft and pursue fraud investigations. The unit works closely with the NYPD, the New York State Police, the Westchester County District Attorney's office, DMV and NICB to investigate auto crime.

The auto crimes unit continued the department's technology-driven approach to investigating motor vehicle crimes. The assigned detective installs temporary surveillance cameras and license plate readers in critical motor vehicle crime locations, allowing these areas to be monitored during late night and early morning hours. The detective also installed a license plate reader on an unmarked patrol vehicle. These strategies have proven successful.

The Auto Crimes Unit has been instrumental in progressing the Yonkers Police Department's technology-driven approach to investigating motor vehicle crimes. Temporary installations of several surveillance cameras at critical motor vehicle crime locations have enabled monitoring of activity at these locations, even during late night and early morning hours to obtain information, including license plate numbers, when suspicious activity has occurred. This has led to the successful apprehension of multiple offenders. Additionally, one of the detectives had a license plate reader installed on an unmarked vehicle that he uses when conducting patrols. This has also proved to be valuable to the success of these investigations.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	155	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	1
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	261	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	206	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	0
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	33

Capital Region/Hudson Valley

Albany City Police Department

The Albany Police Department received a \$33,000 grant in 2022 to pay for police overtime and training for officers assigned to its Auto Crimes Task Force. This task force consists of 36 members, including patrol officers, detectives, sergeants and lieutenants. It operates within the department's Criminal Investigation Division, supervised by a detective lieutenant and a detective sergeant. The primary objective is to investigate all auto-related thefts and auto-related insurance fraud. The grant funding allows members of the task force to work outside normal shifts to thoroughly investigate vehicle crimes through surveillance, follow-up interviews and coordination with outside agencies. In 2021, the task force partnered with agencies including New York State Police, Albany County Sheriff's Office, the Colonie Police Department, and DMV to investigate vehicle crime.

The Albany Police Department worked to solidify and expand its core group of officers and detectives who comprise the task force, further developing the skills and specializations of current members. The task force has utilized several approaches in deterring auto-related theft. Using information gathered by the Capital Region Crime Analysis Center, the task force works in concert with the Traffic Safety Unit, as well as the Neighborhood Engagement Unit, to stay up to date with current trends and to investigate crimes and crime sprees that may extend beyond normal day-to-day duties of task force members.

With the assistance of the ACCAC and NYSP SIU, APD was able to arrest an individual who was well known for thefts of numerous catalytic converters, as well as vehicles, including U-haul rental vehicles. They also made a major arrest of an individual who was stealing vehicles that were left running and unattended. Both of these cases are still in the courts.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	90	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	563	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	375	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	0
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	186

Albany County District Attorney's Office

The Albany County District Attorney's office received a \$65,050 grant from DCJS in 2022 to fund a part-time assistant district attorney and a part-time supervisory prosecutor. This enabled the office to address appropriate cases through the Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Unit. The unit coordinated with law enforcement agencies on education, training, detection, investigation and prosecution of motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases.

The Albany County District Attorney's Office did not provide any narratives for this report.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	0	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	6
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	33
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	143	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF Cases	\$0

Finger Lakes Region

Monroe County District Attorney's Office

The Monroe County District Attorney's Office received \$87,000 in 2022 to fund an assistant district attorney and travel expenses. The assistant district attorney evaluates cases and prosecutes both felony and misdemeanor offenses; works closely with law enforcement; and is aided by investigators who interview witnesses, serve subpoenas, gather and organize evidence, and work with law enforcement to help solve crimes and build cases for prosecution.

The district attorney participates in the Monroe County Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Task Force, which includes the Rochester Police Department, the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, the New York State Police, the Brighton Police Department, DMV, DFS, and other local police departments. The task force meets monthly to share information about pending investigations, to review referrals provided by DFS and to assign cases for investigation.

The major trend is the theft of vehicles stolen with the keys/fob still in the vehicle, burglaries where keys are stolen, then the vehicle with the stolen keys, armed carjacking, and rented vehicles not being returned on the agreed upon date.

Many of these vehicles have been stolen by repeat offenders who have been found to have stolen multiple vehicles before being caught. Two-thirds of these cases had to be transferred to family court due to the age of the defendants. Four juveniles were arrested for multiple offenses. Sixty-six individuals were arrested more than once for MVTIF offenses in 2022. One individual was arrested for multiple accounts of posing as someone looking to buy a car and taking during a test drive then selling the vehicles for scrap.

Catalytic converters continue to be a major issue in Monroe County. In 2022 Monroe County created a special task force just to combat the rising problem of catalytic converter thefts. The arrest of a man known for catalytic converter thefts has shown to have made a significant reduction in the amount of catalytic convert thefts since his arrest.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	46	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	66
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	1	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	200
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	613	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF Cases	\$0

Monroe County Sheriff's Office

The Monroe County Sheriff's Office received a \$36,500 grant in 2022 to pay for training and overtime to investigate theft and fraud cases. The sheriff's office participates in the Monroe County Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Task Force, assigning a sergeant and three investigators who collaborate with other members of the law enforcement community in Monroe County, including the district attorney, the Rochester Police Department, New York State Police, DFS, and DMV, to reduce motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud within the county.

The sheriff's office utilizes grant funds to conduct investigations into motor vehicle theft, auto stripping and insurance fraud. In 2022, the sheriff's office responded to 291 reported motor vehicle thefts and recovered 156 stolen vehicles. Members of the county task force investigated 14 cases of possible motor vehicle insurance fraud, resulting in 16 arrests. Additionally, task force members investigated 3 cases of auto stripping, resulting in 1 arrest. These investigative efforts also resulted in the denial of 14 separate insurance claims.

The sheriff's office continues to identify and track emerging crime patterns, including motor vehicle thefts and auto stripping cases. These patterns are communicated during monthly meetings of the Monroe County MVTIF Task Force to further identify patterns that may be occurring in other jurisdictions. In addition, the sheriff's office works with the Monroe Crime Analysis Center to better map and track emerging crime patterns.

The sheriff's office also continued to conduct proactive details in areas where patterns of vehicle theft and/or auto stripping have been identified. These details often involve the use of both marked and unmarked units to interdict vehicle thefts and auto stripping incidents. As an example, in 2021, the sheriff's office noted a dramatic uptick in the theft of catalytic converters from parked vehicles. The task force sat down and studied the known players and mapped out all events and discovered a network of stolen catalytic converters and stolen vehicles. It just so happened that the head of this network was wanted in connection to a shooting in Rochester, and the subject was arrested and the case sent to the DA for prosecution.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	10	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	14
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	291	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	156	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	14
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	1	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	100

Rochester City Police Department

The Rochester Police Department received a \$49,520 grant in 2022 to pay for overtime for investigations and training on the latest motor vehicle crime trends. The Auto Theft Unit, under the command of the

department's Special Operations Division, is responsible for coordinating investigations into motor vehicle related crime initiatives and utilizes personnel from other divisions within the department, as needed.

The department's auto theft grant manager coordinates investigations involving motor vehicle crime, utilizing personnel from various divisions within the department. As a result, theft investigations are not directly linked to grant funding. The investigator is assigned to the multi-agency Monroe County MVTIF Task Force, which also consists of investigators from the district attorney's office, DMV Field Investigations Division and DFS' Criminal Investigations Unit, as well as representatives of other local law enforcement agencies.

This past year actively targeted known MVTIF offenders. The results of this focus were the arrest of known car/catalytic convert thieves. Since these arrests we have seen a dramatic decrease in stolen vehicles and of catalytic converters.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	25	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	33
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	1,135	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	11
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	1,139	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	22
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	13	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	431

Western New York Region

Buffalo City Police Department

The Buffalo Police Department received a \$106,884 grant in 2022 to pay for detective overtime and travel and training costs to enhance the program's effectiveness. Due to organizational restructuring in 2018, motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud investigations are now handled by detectives in the department's five patrol districts and overseen by the investigative services captain. In addition, the Neighborhood Engagement Team has begun community education on auto theft prevention to strengthen the department's proactive approach to vehicle crime.

In 2022, the Buffalo Police Department utilized grant funding for overtime to allow detectives to investigate 1,615 instances of reported vehicle theft and recover 2,175 stolen vehicles. The department continued to collaborate with other agencies and the insurance industry.

The department continued its major educational outreach effort regarding the dangers of leaving vehicles running unattended. In the winter months, the Neighborhood Engagement Team was mobilized to distribute over 3,000 flyers and posters throughout the city, especially in areas with high incidence of car theft. Television and print news also covered the effort.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	1,615	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	1,601	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	2,175	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	7
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	250

Cheektowaga Town Police Department

The Cheektowaga Police Department received a \$36,542 grant in 2022 for police overtime and training. Eleven of the agency's 19 detectives handle motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases.

The police department has one detective assigned to lead the Auto Theft Squad. This detective coordinates motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud investigations and assigns cases to other detectives. This strategy has been in place for several years and has successfully reduced motor vehicle theft and fraud cases in Cheektowaga.

The Cheektowaga Police Department has continued to focus its grant activities on investigations into motor vehicle thefts and larcenies of property/auto parts from motor vehicles and fraudulent activities, including insurance fraud, forged vehicle identification numbers and forged titles. Grant funds were utilized to provide 509 hours of overtime for detectives' investigations and to combat motor vehicle related crime.

The police department has a strong commitment to working with other agencies. Inter-agency cooperation and intelligence sharing are main components of grant activities. A close working relationship with outside agencies proves to be beneficial for both Cheektowaga and the surrounding municipalities. In 2022, examples of such inter-agency collaboration included: fraud investigations with several different insurance carriers; multiple checks of confidential VIN numbers with assistance from NICB, and a coordinated investigation with the Buffalo Police Department.

In investigating auto thefts, crime scene detectives photograph and process every recovered stolen motor vehicle, submitting any evidence collected to the Erie County Central Police Services Laboratory for further processing. In 2022, 28 vehicles were processed.

The police department also continued a community awareness and education program in response to thefts of vehicles that were left running unattended and thefts of property from unlocked vehicles. A flyer was developed and distributed to advise the public of the risk of theft of unattended vehicles, as well as some simple deterrents to auto theft. Detectives also routinely surveilled locations, such as gas stations and convenience stores, and, when unattended vehicles were observed, detectives advised the owners of the risk of theft and New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law regarding unattended vehicles.

2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	180	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	2
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	181	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	284	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	0
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	126

Erie County District Attorney's Office

The Erie County District Attorney's Office received a \$104,758 grant in 2022 to pay for training and a full-time assistant district attorney. The assistant district attorney assigned to motor vehicle theft and insurance fraud cases is supported by the staff of the Special Investigations and Prosecutions Bureau. The prosecutor works closely with detectives from the Buffalo and Cheektowaga police departments and other law enforcement agencies throughout the area to collaborate with ongoing investigations. The prosecutor vertically prosecutes the more serious motor vehicle theft crimes, as well as all the insurance fraud cases in Erie County.

Due to changes in the Bail Reform laws, motor vehicle theft offenders are arrested and then released because the offenses do not qualify them to be remanded. These offenders proceed to commit other offenses after being released. The prosecutor has begun to employ Grand Juries on a number of these cases, successfully indicting many of them.

Vehicle theft in Erie County can be divided into two distinct types: crimes of opportunity and crimes for profit. Most vehicle theft cases fall into the first category and involve vehicles left running unattended or vehicles parked with the keys inside. The vehicles are often taken for joyriding or are stripped for parts and then dumped. These crimes seem to be committed mostly by people between the ages of 16 to 25. The second type of vehicle theft often involves drug-related thefts and/or thefts from rental agencies, which is a pervasive problem in the community. Many cars are being stolen from dealerships, rental agencies and repair shops. There is now the growing problem of the "Kia Challenge," in which YouTube videos show people how to steal Kias without keys.

Nearly 20 indictments have been handed down for the most serious offenders. In one case, an indictment was issued for an individual who had 30 MVTIF criminal cases. Another case was the arrest of an individual who deputies tried to stop for a stolen Kia from Pennsylvania. A chase ensued ending when the individual rammed a police car. The subject was arrested and found to be wanted in PA and had drugs on his person at the time of the arrest. This individual plead guilty to a D felony and sentenced to 2-4 years.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	158	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	14
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	109
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	0	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$0

Niagara County District Attorney's Office

The Niagara County District Attorney's Office received \$109,443 in grant funding in 2022 to support a Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Unit, which consists of a full-time assistant district attorney and a full-time investigator. The assistant prosecutor and investigator collaborate with all law enforcement agencies operating within the county, as well as other insurance fraud investigators. Investigations by law enforcement agencies are referred to the assistant district attorney for vertical prosecution to ensure that all cases are prosecuted to the fullest extent possible. Stolen catalytic converters and vehicles being stolen while left running or the keys still inside the vehicle continue to be a monumental problem in Niagara County. There have been a couple key arrests in these areas and it is hoped that these arrests will lead to reductions in catalytic converter thefts and theft of running vehicles.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	34	Total Indictments for MVTIF Offenses	35
Investigations Initiated – Fraud	47	Total Convictions for MVTIF Offenses	72
Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	0	Amount of Restitution Ordered as a Result of MVTIF cases	\$9,756

Niagara County Sheriff's Office

The Niagara County Sheriff's Office received a \$20,000 grant in 2022 to pay for staff overtime and training. The Sheriff's Office Stolen Vehicle Task Force includes deputies, supervisors and investigators tasked with reviewing cases, trends, and field intelligence to combat theft and fraud. The sheriff's office continues to collaborate with other law enforcement agencies to reduce theft and fraud throughout Western New York.

The Niagara County Sheriff's Office Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Task Force, with road patrol deputies and investigators from the Criminal Investigation Bureau, continued to work diligently to curb motor vehicle theft, larcenies of vehicle parts and accessories, and insurance fraud in 2022. Despite these efforts, the number of reported vehicle thefts doubled, and incidences of auto stripping and larcenies from vehicles also increased significantly.

There have been successes though. An individual was arrested for multiple counts of fraud throughout Niagara County and an adjacent county. We also arrested multiple juveniles and adults for committing larcenies from vehicles, as well as auto theft. The use of analytical mapping, surveillance cameras, and data from partnering police agencies combine for a strong force against auto crimes.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	58	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	39	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	32	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	0
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	29

Niagara Falls City Police Department

The Niagara Falls Police Department received a \$23,400 grant in 2022 to pay for staff overtime and training. The Motor Vehicle Theft and Fraud Unit is managed as a special operation by the captain of the Criminal Investigation Division and emphasizes investigations and appropriate follow-up. In addition, the unit collaborates with the Traffic Division to identify suspicious accident reports and possible fraud cases.

The Niagara Falls Police Department covers an area of approximately 16.8 square miles while bordering Canada and consists of two international bridge crossings. In 2022, this grant money went to assist patrol and detectives in the Motor Vehicle Theft Unit which concentrated on stolen vehicle investigations (given the uptick of stolen Kia and Hyundai's) as well as stolen catalytic converters.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Investigations Initiated – Theft	0	Investigations Initiated – Fraud	0
Reported Motor Vehicle Thefts Agency Wide	184	Accidents Investigated in which Fraud Is Suspected	0
Recovered Stolen Motor Vehicles Agency Wide	32	Claims Withdrawn or Denied Due to Investigation	0
Thefts Determined to be Fraudulent Agency Wide	0	Total Arrests for MVTIF Offenses	142

Statewide

New York Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association, Inc.

The New York Anti-Car Theft and Fraud Association, Inc. is a statewide not-for-profit educational organization whose mission is to reduce auto crime and insurance fraud in New York. The association received a \$65,100 Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud grant from DCJS in 2022 to produce training webinars, seminars and conferences. The association also offers educational and training programs, collaborative sharing opportunities and online resources for law enforcement personnel and for insurance special investigation units and claims personnel. The association provides information about motor vehicle theft and fraud to consumers and continues to sponsor and manage training events, meetings and

outreach efforts in auto crime prevention and insurance fraud detection and investigations throughout the year.

The association's training efforts concentrated on both vehicle crime and insurance fraud, providing effective professional training in theft and fraud investigation and deterrence. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the association switched its focus from in-person conferences and trainings to virtual meetings, trainings and webinars. This has proven to be beneficial because it opens up the training and meeting to more agencies. Thus, the association continues to expand its outreach by improving cooperative working relationships with other associations and New York State agencies.

The spirit of cooperation fostered at the conferences and training events continues through the communication networks that are established among law enforcement investigators long after the programs conclude. The association's training classes offer attendees the ability to access many different agencies that they may not have contact with during the normal course of business. The association's training seminars have opened new information resources to law enforcement to aid with investigations of insurance fraud and other crimes through the sharing of information and expertise.

<i>2022 Grant-Funded Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud Activity</i>			
Performance Measure	Total	Performance Measure	Total
Seminars, Trainings & Conferences	9+	Webinar Trainings Produced	6
Verified Attendees	972	Verified Webinar Views	121
MVT Articles Published	0	MVIF Articles Published	0
Webinars for Law Enforcement Agencies	24	Webinars for Prosecutorial Offices	24

V. Appendix—2022 Statistics

<i>2022 Reported Incidents of Motor Vehicle Theft</i>						
Rank	County	MV Theft		Rank	County	MV Theft
1	Bronx	4,052		32	Clinton	49
2	Queens	3,725		33	Jefferson	47
3	Kings	3,708		34	Chemung	46
4	Erie	2,560		35	Sullivan	45
5	Monroe	2,033		36	Madison	44
6	New York	1,973		37	Otsego	33
7	Suffolk	1,471		38	Franklin	31
8	Nassau	967		39	Montgomery	28
9	Onondaga	940		40	Genesee	27
10	Albany	770		41	Putnam	27
11	Westchester	766		42	Cortland	25
12	Richmond	519		43	Orleans	25
13	Niagara	301		44	Herkimer	24
14	Oneida	277		45	Seneca	24
15	Schenectady	258		46	Columbia	23
16	Broome	232		47	Warren	23
17	Orange	204		48	Washington	22
18	Rensselaer	180		49	Livingston	21
19	Dutchess	132		50	Allegany	19
20	Chautauqua	127		51	Delaware	17
21	Oswego	94		52	Greene	17
22	Ulster	81		53	Fulton	16
23	Rockland	79		54	Chenango	14
24	Steuben	74		55	Essex	13
25	Cattaraugus	71		56	Schoharie	13
26	Wayne	63		57	Tioga	13
27	St. Lawrence	60		58	Wyoming	9
28	Ontario	57		59	Yates	9
29	Saratoga	57		60	Schuyler	8
30	Cayuga	54		61	Lewis	6
31	Thompson	50		62	Hamilton	0

Appendix—2022 Statistics *(continued)*

2022 Suspected Motor Vehicle Insurance Fraud Incidents						
Rank	County	MV Insurance Fraud		Rank	County	MV Insurance Fraud
1	Kings	10,322		32	Chautauqua	17
2	Queens	6,771		33	Allegany	17
3	Bronx	4,612		34	Chemung	15
4	Nassau	3,442		35	Madison	13
5	New York	2,284		36	Genesee	13
6	Suffolk	1,073		37	Greene	13
7	Richmond	572		38	Columbia	13
8	Westchester	464		39	Lewis	12
9	Erie	331		40	Otsego	12
10	Monroe	241		41	Warren	12
11	Albany	224		42	Fulton	11
12	Orange	143		43	Washington	11
13	Onondaga	121		44	Herkimer	10
14	Rockland	109		45	Tioga	10
15	Dutchess	74		46	Chenango	9
16	Niagara	59		47	Cortland	9
17	Broome	55		48	Cayuga	9
18	Oneida	48		49	Cattaraugus	9
19	Schenectady	48		50	Seneca	9
20	Rensselaer	39		51	Montgomery	9
21	Saratoga	30		52	Orleans	9
22	Sullivan	29		53	Franklin	8
23	Ulster	27		54	Tompkins	8
24	Jefferson	27		55	Livingston	8
25	Essex	21		56	Delaware	8
26	Wayne	20		57	Clinton	6
27	Ontario	19		58	Schoharie	5
28	St. Lawrence	19		59	Wyoming	4
29	Steuben	19		60	Schuyler	4
30	Oswego	18		61	Hamilton	3
31	Putnam	18		62	Yates	2