

SAFETY OVERVIEW

OCTOBER 15, 2020 – DECEMBER 1, 2021



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

OVERVIEW

The safety of the Ohio State community is the university's highest priority.

Following the tragic death of student Chase Meola, President Kristina M. Johnson in October 2020 announced a task force to review safety issues on campus and in neighborhoods near the university — and to identify, implement and advocate for additional approaches that address violence, crime, and high-risk activities and behaviors. To date, the university has initiated implementation of 13 of the task force's 15 recommendations. In September 2021, Dr. Johnson announced an additional \$2 million a year over the next decade to enhance safety and security on and around campus, bringing the total campus public safety budget to \$35 million annually.

The university remains fully committed to refining and broadening its approach to addressing crime.

SAFETY MEASURES AND ACTIONS

This document provides an overview of the actions the university has taken between October 15, 2020 and December 1, 2021, to enhance safety as well as how these actions have been – and continue to be – shared with the community.

OCTOBER 15, 2020

Following the tragic death of student Chase Meola, President Johnson announced the establishment of a task force to review safety issues on campus and in neighborhoods near the university — and to identify, implement and advocate for additional approaches that address violence, crime, and high-risk activities and behaviors.

OCTOBER 2020

Increased police presence in the off-campus area with a combination of OSUPD and CPD officers through a crime interdiction program that pays officers overtime to add patrols.

NOVEMBER 6, 2020

The university re-launched the Community Crime Patrol, which is a group of highly trained citizen patrollers working to increase safety in Columbus neighborhoods by being extra eyes and ears for community partners. Office of Student Life staff supplemented these efforts by monitoring University District neighborhoods, reporting necessary incidents to property owners.

NOVEMBER 17, 2020

The task force presented its [recommendations](#) during the Board of Trustees Academic Affairs, Student Life and Research Committee meeting. Recommendations focused on improving communication, engagement and support of residents on campus and in the near-campus neighborhoods. To date, the university has initiated implementation of 13 of the task force's 15 [recommendations](#).

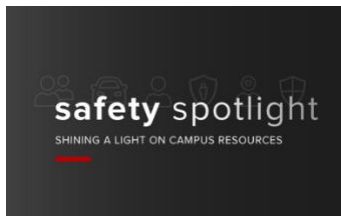


*NOVEMBER 2020

Improved lighting through immediate repairs of more than 350 lights and a lighting survey for longer-term enhancements, in partnership with the city of Columbus. These efforts are ongoing.

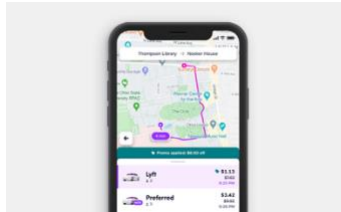
JANUARY 2021

Office of Student Life provided safety devices (window/door alarms, safety timers and smoke alarm batteries) to students. Five thousand of these devices have been provided through early September.



*JANUARY 2021

Launched comprehensive safety communications and community outreach effort, including the "[Safety Spotlight](#)" [video series](#), comprehensive safety [webpage](#) and the [OSUPD Instagram](#) account for Ohio State police to meet students where they are. These efforts are ongoing. Additionally, creating online safety class to launch this fall and teach students through interactive scenario-based exercises and videos.



*JANUARY 14, 2021

Expanded [discounted ridesharing hours](#), which run 9 p.m. to 7 a.m.

FEBRUARY 2021

Increased police presence in the off-campus area with a combination of OSUPD and CPD officers through a crime interdiction program that pays officers overtime to add patrols.

*FEBRUARY 2021

Enhanced cultural diversity training for OSUPD. This effort is ongoing with training sessions scheduled during the fall as well as in 2022 and 2023.

*FEBRUARY 21, 2021

Issued a student safety survey to gauge the overall perception of safety both on and off campus as well as awareness of Ohio State's resources and programs.

APRIL 14, 2021

Business Advancement leadership first met with Amazon to explore partnership for smart security systems that would be available to student tenants and their landlords. Student Life and Public Safety joined Business Advancement on July 21, 2021, for more follow-up, and discussions are ongoing.

*Specific action steps related to the Task Force on Community Safety and Well-Being recommendations.

APRIL 19, 2021

Student Safety Virtual Dialogue hosted by task force. The virtual dialogue was an opportunity to share what safety means to them to a panel of university and external representatives, including OSUPD, CPD, Student Life and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

JUNE 2021

Event space and support provided by Student Life for 8-week summer "Pathways to Progress" program for 100 youth (16-18 years old). Completed weekly through August 6.

*JULY 12, 2021

Announced a partnership with the University District Organization to provide a [full-time, licensed independent social worker](#).

AUGUST 2021

Expanded Office of Student Life service boundaries and staffing in the University District, as well as hiring additional student community ambassadors for autumn 2021 (ongoing).

AUGUST 2021

Four new OSUPD officers were sworn in working toward the safety task force goal of increasing joint patrol coverage off campus. The hiring of additional officers will continue.

AUGUST 10, 2021

[Announced](#) that all Ohio Stadium entry gates will be equipped with new technology — walk-through metal detectors that guests need to pass through for entry. Fans do not need to empty their pockets unless instructed by stadium security.

AUGUST 17, 2021

With the start of the autumn semester, shared enhanced communications on safety issues by using text and email from [Ohio State News](#) to provide brief, timely updates to the university community. These news and updates are designed to provide safety tips, health resources, timely traffic information and more.

AUGUST 17, 2021

Launched student-focused effort to coincide with the start of the autumn semester for a concerted safety messaging push. The goal is to raise awareness and drive use of university safety resources.

AUGUST 20, 2021

The Office of Student Life hosted a "TacoBout It" event in the off-campus neighborhoods to connect with students and police and to encourage open dialogue about safety resources. On the right is a photo from the event.



AUGUST 20, 2021

Ohio State app push to students: "Stay Safe, Buckeyes. Enhance your safety with tips and resources from Ohio State. Learn more and locate safety info in the app."

AUGUST 24, 2021

President Johnson met with new City of Columbus Chief of Police Elaine Bryant to discuss mitigation strategies and to reinforce the university and the City's partnership focused on enhancing safety and support of all students and community members, including critical efforts in addition to policing that will advance a safer community for everyone.



AUGUST 23-27, 2021

Hosted [Coffee with a Cop](#) in the Ohio Union, handing out free coffee to students and offering a chance to ask questions and speak with Ohio State police officers.

AUGUST 27, 2021

Increased police presence in the off-campus area through redeployment of additional CPD officers. Also added a combination of OSUPD and CPD officers through crime interdiction paying officers overtime to add more patrols in the off-campus area.

AUGUST 27, 2021

Placed 10 additional light towers and four additional mobile surveillance cameras (for a total of 13 additional cameras added over the last year) along pedestrian pathways in the off-campus area. Added security officers via Ohio State security personnel, or



private security. Also continued to deploy Community Crime Patrol security and the CPD and crime interdiction officers to increase safety personnel Thursday through Saturday evenings.

SEPTEMBER 2021

Department of Public Safety augmented Community Crime Patrol with additional security officers for Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

SEPTEMBER 2021

Securing partnership with Block by Block to increase our presence in the University District along with a continued partnership with Community Crime Patrol. Similar to Community Crime Patrol, Block by Block provides trained ambassadors who will provide a consistent, recognizable, community presence.



SEPTEMBER 1, 2021

Ohio State Administration and Planning leadership [joined members of CPD](#) at a joint press conference to address crime trends in the campus area and agree to take a comprehensive approach to make the campus area safer.

SEPTEMBER 7, 2021

CPD and OSUPD partnered on a social media video sharing the top three tips to prevent crime in the University District. It was shared on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.

SEPTEMBER 20, 2021

Personal safety alarms begin distribution from the Willie Young, Sr. Office of Off-Campus and Commuter Student Services.

SEPTEMBER 21, 2021

Launching a series of 10 revamped Second-Year Transformational Experience Program (STEP) workshops, based on feedback from parents and families, for students living in residence halls while also working to offer live and recorded parents/family workshops on transition to off-campus housing.

SEPTEMBER 23, 2021

Launched an online safety class to help students enhance their own safety on and off-campus. The one-hour, video-based module is available to students in BuckeyeLearn and covers topics such as crime prevention, crime reporting, when and why the university issues safety notices, responding to people on the street who aggressively ask for money and more. Parents can also access the 10 video modules via YouTube.

SEPTEMBER 24, 2021

President Johnson held a news conference with Mayor Ginther to address off-campus crime and [announced](#) an additional \$2 million a year – a total of at least \$20 million over the next decade, bringing the university’s total public safety budget to \$35 million annually. Enhancements from this additional funding include:

- Immediately expanding off-campus security, including by using additional private security, as well as continuing to support the Community Crime Patrol. This increased security will include additional campus service officers, who will immediately expand their patrols into the University District.
- Adding additional mobile lighting and at least another 10 mobile camera systems to saturate the pedestrian pathways where our students live.
- This is in addition to the 10 new light stations and 13 mobile surveillance cameras announced previously.
- Extending the Lyft Ride Smart program on High Street to include getting students to and from the Short North area, which began that same day.
- Engaging an external safety expert to examine the effectiveness of the university’s expanded approach to off-campus safety in partnership with the city of Columbus.

SEPTEMBER 27, 2021

Expanded access to parents, families and the community to receive Ohio State News text alerts when there is a timely update for students, faculty and staff about health and safety on and around campus such as safety tips, health resources, timely traffic information and more. Parents, families and others can provide their cell phone number to receive the news alerts via text message by texting 'NEWS' to 644678.

OCTOBER 2021

CPD partnered with OSUPD and the Office of Student Life to walk around off-campus neighborhoods in advance of planned weekend block party activities to discuss safety with students, as well as provided a significant, visible presence of law enforcement officers throughout the weekend. Collectively, these efforts in addition to outreach to landlords and other safety messaging from the university contributed to a safe and successful block party weekend.

OCTOBER 13, 2021

Increased access to the Lyft Ride Smart discount ride program to 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. instead of starting at 9 p.m. This change was made via feedback from students and came after the Sept. 24 announcement from President Johnson to expand Lyft Ride Smart's boundaries to the Short North area.

NOVEMBER 5, 2021



Announced the launch of Buckeye Block Watch, in which civilian safety partners patrol the off-campus area and offer resources and information while reporting suspicious activity. Buckeye Block Watch is trained in how to deal with difficult situations and engage with the public. Training is also tailored to University District-specific information including working in popular and well-trafficked areas, and members are tasked with quality-of-life improvements such as recording streetlight outages. Buckeye Block Watch utilizes our existing partner, Community Crime Patrol, and adds a partnership with the Block by Block organization.

SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS OVERVIEW

Safety is a top priority for Ohio State, and that is reflected in the university's communications. Below is a summary of how Ohio State has communicated about existing safety offerings and enhancements since the start of 2021 (unless otherwise noted).

"STAY SAFE, BUCKEYES"

Launched in August 2021 to coincide with the start of the autumn semester, this framework supports the recommendations of the task force and works to raise awareness of university safety resources.

Since the start of the 2021-22 academic year, the university introduced Ohio State News Alerts to supplement safety communications, including text messages that were targeted directly to students to get them important safety information about enhanced programs that would benefit them right away. In addition to Ohio State News Alerts, the university has three types of safety notifications: Buckeye Alerts, Public Safety Notices and Neighborhood Safety Notices. To date:

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

President Johnson and campus leaders regularly send email messages to an audience of 117,900 faculty, staff and students – inclusive of safety updates and resources. Safety items are also regularly published in university e-newsletters to students, faculty and staff, as well as to an audience of 53,000 parents and families.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

PRESIDENTIAL SAFETY VIDEO MESSAGES

To enhance the reach of safety messaging, on September 14, President Johnson began a series of regular updates about safety in video format. These video messages have been included in campus-wide communications, shared on social media and posted on the President's website both as features as well as in the comprehensive archive of her messages. Between September 14 and December 1, 16 video messages about safety were shared with the campus community and collectively have more than 89,500 views across these channels. Between Nov. 8 to Nov. 30 – the period since the last safety overview – President Johnson's social media account posts featuring safety content created 56,115 impressions and 4,356 engagements.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE SOCIAL MEDIA

The impact of safety communications across the university since January 2021 includes 6,976,311 impressions and 459,147 engagements. Top-level university social media accounts that have regularly shared safety information include President Johnson's Twitter and Instagram, Ohio State enterprise account channels, Office of Student Life and OSUPD social media accounts.

Between Nov. 8 to Nov. 30 – the period since the last safety overview – safety communications shared via social media recorded:

594,970
IMPRESSIONS

33,753
ENGAGEMENTS

MEDIA

OHIO STATE NEWS

Twenty-seven Ohio State News stories focused on safety measures at the university, which help to spur coverage in the news media. Examples include the [February 4](#) story on rolling out recommendations from the safety task force, a [July 12](#) story on adding a full-time social worker to the off-campus area, a [September 1](#) story on our partnership with CPD and a [November 8](#) story highlighting the launch of Buckeye Block Watch.

27

OHIO STATE NEWS STORIES FOCUSED ON SAFETY MEASURES

32,000

VISITS TO STORIES

1/3

STORIES RECEIVING MORE THAN
1,000 VISITS EACH

SAFETY STORIES OF NOTE

[Ohio State adding trained patrols to University District through new program](#)

WSYX, November 5

The Ohio State University is adding trained patrols to the University District through a new program called Buckeye Block Watch. President Kristina Johnson shared the news on Friday. She added that the program is part of the university's approach to safety and security resources for students, staff, faculty, and visitors. ...

Members of the Buckeye Block Watch will patrol the off-campus community and offer resources. They will also be able to report suspicious activity.

[Ohio State Launches Community Patrol Program As Additional Security Measure](#)

WOSU, November 5

After boosting its security efforts recently in response to an increase in crime, Ohio State University launched an additional program Friday with more community patrols for the university area.

The program is called Buckeye Block Watch, and the patrols will act as monitors for safety concerns. The members will wear bright orange gear as they patrol by foot, bike and vehicles. They will also provide resources for anyone needing to report suspicious activity.

[Ohio State junior Jack] Alberti said the new program is very needed.

"It's definitely something that needs to happen," Alberti said. "I'm glad that the university is stepping up to make it happen. I'm glad we're seeing change because I know a lot of students don't feel safe on campus as of right now."