



We took a look inside the Capitol Police budget after the deadly riot

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The police department that guards members of Congress while they do their jobs at the U.S. Capitol is one of the best-funded in the country, and one of the most secretive.

The Capitol Police have a 2-square-mile jurisdiction, with exclusive jurisdiction over roughly one-half-square-mile in downtown Washington.

When their agents testify in threat case hearings, they say that their mission extends well beyond the Capitol building itself via security details and investigations around the country.

We don't know everything that the agency does because it is not subject to the federal Freedom of Information Act. But after the riot on Jan. 6, USA TODAY gathered as much data about the Capitol Police budget as it could find.

The budget for the current year is about a half-billion dollars. That's less than some of the biggest police departments in the country, but more than police departments in cities such as Dallas, San Antonio and San Jose.

Police department budgets in the 10 largest U.S. cities and Capitol Police

"It's the biggest police force you've never heard of," says Daniel Schuman, policy director of the progressive advocacy group Demand Progress.

Most of the money goes to pay the 2,300 officers and civilian employees. There's also money for general expenses, which includes equipment. In 2019, for example, the department spent \$24 million on items labeled equipment. And between 2000 and 2008, there was \$64 million set aside for something called security enhancements.

Most of Capitol Police's money goes to people

"It doesn't seem to be a lack of money that was the problem here," said Chris Edwards, the director of tax policy studies at the Cato Institute. "It seems to me it was probably a management and training failure."

The budget has steadily increased almost every year. Most recently, Congress increased the Capitol Police budget from \$462 million to \$516 million. That was an more than 11 percent increase.

U.S. Capitol Police Department budget over time

The Capitol Police is budgeted to spend a little less money this year than the Metropolitan Police Department, which oversees the vast majority of the city of Washington, excluding federal buildings. While the Capitol Police has more than 2,300 people on staff; the Metropolitan Police has about 3,700 on staff.