



# '19 **INTERNAL AFFAIRS REPORT**

OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS



# **COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT**

1 Justice Square  
Columbia, SC 29201

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF



Citizens of Columbia,

The conduct of Columbia Police Dept. employees is guided by the department's vision, mission, core values, operational directives and policies. In order for us to build and maintain trust in the communities we serve, we must be accountable for our actions and transparent with our processes and procedures.

The Internal Affairs report is created annually by the Office of Professional Standards, for the public's review. The Internal Affairs unit is charged with investigations of allegations of employee misconduct; use of force incidents; vehicle pursuits; and officer involved vehicle collisions. The report compares information from last year's activities to the previous year for comparison and analysis.

I hope the information in this report is reassuring of our efforts to be transparent and accountable to our citizens. I look forward to continued collaboration and partnerships with all members of our community to make Columbia a safe and vibrant city to live, work, recreate and visit.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "W.H. Holbrook". The signature is stylized and cursive.

William H. "Skip" Holbrook  
Chief of Police

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## MISSION

The Columbia Police Department will provide professional and ethical service in protection of our citizens while preventing crime and reducing the fear of crime through problem solving partnerships.

**We will accomplish our mission by:**

- Enforcing the law with integrity, fairness and compassion
- Solving crimes
- Meeting the expectations of our community
- Upholding the constitutional rights of our citizens
- Building and maintaining public trust
- Reducing victimization
- Demonstrating fiscal responsibility

## VISION

Through our steadfast commitment to policing excellence, the Columbia Police Department will be transformed to exhibit the innovation, engagement and professionalism of an exceptional organization whose workforce truly reflects the values and diversity of the city of Columbia.

# CORE VALUES

**PROFESSIONALISM:** We will conduct ourselves in a manner that is consistent with the law enforcement code of conduct, national law enforcement standards, best practices and the expectations of our community.

**INTEGRITY:** Our commitment to the highest standards of honesty and ethical conduct will be evidenced by our accountability to each other and the citizens we serve. Integrity is the foundation of trust internally and externally, and it is pursuant to this foundation that we will perform our duties to protect and serve the citizens of the city of Columbia.

**DIVERSITY:** We will acknowledge and promote the acceptance, inclusion and professional contributions of all, and our recruitment, hiring, retention, training and development practices will reflect a strong commitment to diversity and the diverse populations we serve.

**SERVICE ORIENTATION:** We will improve the quality of life of those we serve by reducing fear, engaging the community and enhancing public safety.

**FAIRNESS:** We are committed to the fair and equitable treatment of all citizens as fundamental to the delivery of professional police service.

**COURAGE:** We will remain physically and morally courageous in all our duties.

**COLLABORATION:** We believe that cooperation and teamwork will enable us to combine our diverse backgrounds, skills and styles with the capacities of others to achieve common goals.

**COMMUNICATION:** Effective and open communication at all levels is the cornerstone of a progressive organization. We value honest and constructive discussions of ideas, suggestions and practices that help accomplish the goals of our Department and the communities it serves.

# FINDINGS AT A GLANCE

	2018	2019	↑ ↓	Change Over Previous Year
<b>Calls for Service</b>	175,037	178,500	↑	+3,463
<b>Public Complaints of Employee Misconduct</b>	101	97	↓	-4
<b>Use of Force Incidents Reported</b>	68	82	↑	+14
<b>Arrests</b>	6,641	6,496	↓	-145
<b>Persons hit in Shootings</b>	72	83	↑	+11
<b>Homicides</b>	16	25	↑	+9
<b>Firearms Seized</b>	607	888	↑	+281
<b>Officers Assaulted</b>	44	42	↓	-2
<b>Miles Driven</b>	4,435,316	4,379,588	↓	-55,728
<b>Collisions Involving Police Vehicles</b>	72	106	↑	+34
<b>Vehicle Pursuits</b>	45	62	↑	+17

# USE OF FORCE



**FIGURE 1:** Use of force continuum. **DATA SOURCES:** CPD

Officers of the Columbia Police Department must report:

- Pointing or presenting of any weapons, lethal or nonlethal, for the purpose of gaining compliance;
- Discharging a firearm for purposes other than training or recreation;
- Application of use of force using lethal or nonlethal weapons;
- Deployment of a police canine to apprehend or secure suspects; and
- Weaponless force that results in injury.

Police officers are authorized to use less-than-lethal techniques and/or weapons to protect themselves or others from physical harm, restrain or subdue a resistant individual, and bring an unlawful situation safely and effectively under control. In these situations, police officers will evaluate the totality of the circumstances in order to determine which approved weaponless control techniques and/or less-than-lethal weapons may most effectively deescalate the incident and bring the situation under control in a safe manner.



# TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

## Independent Investigations

If an officer uses deadly force, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) investigates the incident and presents the completed investigation to the 5th Circuit Solicitor's Office. The Solicitor determines whether the use of deadly force was lawful or the officer should be criminally charged. An administrative investigation is also conducted by members of the department's IA Unit to determine if department policies were violated by the officer.

## Tracking and Monitoring Use of Force Incidents

The ability to track Use of Force incidents and officer involved shootings has increased tremendously since the implementation of the software program IAPRO. The program continues to be an integral part in preparation for the Internal Affairs Report yearly. IAPRO is also used to supply quarterly reports to Executive Staff as it relates to use of force, accidents, complaints, and pursuits. The quarterly reports allow Executive Staff to actively see if the Department is trending with the same numbers as previous quarters throughout the year. When IAPRO was purchased, the Department also purchased BlueTeam. Internal Affairs implemented the use of IAPRO first; then, beginning in late 2019, the Department started the process of transitioning to use BlueTeam. BlueTeam's simplicity is essential to its role as a solution for the frontline supervisors. Incidents including Use of Force, vehicle accidents, and pursuits are entered into BlueTeam's web based interface and can then be routed through the chain of command with review and approval at each step. In January 2020, BlueTeam was implemented completely throughout the department and proven to be a great asset to the Internal Affairs Unit.

## **Body-Worn Camera (BWC) Program**

Since the implementation of CPD's body-worn camera (BWC) policy, which requires officers to wear BWCs while on duty and performing any uniformed law enforcement function, it has proven to be beneficial to the officers and to CPD. BWCs record dispatched calls for service, officer initiated calls and public contacts. BWCs are activated by the officer upon arrival at the location and remain on until the call is cleared. BWC's have helped strengthen accountability and transparency throughout CPD, and the law enforcement community as a whole. With the use of this policy it has the ability to reduce complaints, and resolve officer involved incidents. BWC's have also been a great tool in assisting with training within the department. Having the ability to go back and review incidents, discuss and make corrections as needed, has been completely beneficial. BWC video/audio files are maintained by the department for at least 60 days. The video/audio files are not subject to release pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, but the files may be released at the discretion of the Chief of Police. The department's written BWC policy is available for review at the agency website.

## **White House Police Data Initiative (PDI)**

In 2016, the department partnered with the White House for the Public Data Initiative, and developed an open data portal developed to provide accessible, convenient and transparent information to the public. Currently housed in the public data portal are datasets including Assaults on Officers, Arrests and Field Interviews. In addition to the datasets, the department provides information on officer involved shootings, calls for service, code violation properties and national data with a local community crime map. The Public Data Portal can be accessed online at <https://coc-colacitygis.opendata.arcgis.com> or through the department's website.

## **Citizen Surveys**

A text message-based survey was developed in partnership with Protexting as an additional mechanism to obtain citizen feedback regarding the department's performance. The citizen-police encounter survey provides the department with a mechanism to measure and evaluate encounters, and provides another way for the voices of Columbia citizens to be heard. Citizens can also go to [columbiapd.net/survey](http://columbiapd.net/survey) to provide feedback.

Traditionally, reported reductions in crime rates have been the primary indicator of law enforcement success, causing officer performance measures to be based on enforcement-related encounters alone. Community policing, the foundation of the department's policing strategies, has expanded the work of Columbia Police Officers to include engaging members of the community as partners in crime reduction and problem solving initiatives. The citizen feedback we get on the full spectrum of encounters, will further guide our efforts to build trust and confidence between the members of our department and the community.

## **OFFICER WELLNESS**

When an officer uses deadly force, the subject officer is placed on "Administrative Duty" status pending referral to the South Carolina Law Enforcement Assistance Program (SC LEAP), or another psychological service provider. Assignment to "Administrative Duty" status is non-disciplinary with no loss of pay or benefits. Officers remain on "Administrative Duty" status until determined "fit for duty" by the psychological service provider. Upon being determined "fit for duty" the officer's status remains as "administrative duty" until final disposition is reached in both criminal and administrative investigations.

# TRAINING

All officers are required to attend training, demonstrate proficiency with all approved lethal and/or less- than-lethal weapons, and review the department's Use of Force policy at least once every year. Officers also receive training on a regular basis on techniques to reduce use of force incidents, such as conflict resolution, cultural diversity, de-escalation, responding to people with mental disabilities, and community policing.

In order to be authorized to carry lethal and/or less-than-lethal weapons, police officers must:

- Receive and sign for a copy of the department's Use of Force policy
- Receive instruction on the Use of Force policy
- Pass the written Use of Force test
- Demonstrate proficiency in the use of all authorized weapons.

## **Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)**

In 2018, the Columbia Police Department joined over 400 Law Enforcement agencies across the nation when it pledged to join the International Association of Chiefs of Police "One Mind" campaign. This campaign lays a foundation for successful interactions between police officers and persons affected by mental illness.

As part of this initiative, the department implemented partnerships with other agencies such as the South Carolina Department of Mental Health, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Columbia-Richland Communications, Midlands Probate Court-Mental Health, and Richland and Lexington Emergency Services. The purpose of this partnership is to join together in developing a model policy and response to person's in mental health crisis. Additionally, all sworn Columbia Police Officers receive basic Mental Illness

Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) from certified NAMI instructors and in 2019, 125 officers received advanced training in CIT. In addition, the department recently completed the practices and steps provided through the “One Mind” Campaign and assigns at least one CIT trained officer on each squad in each patrol region.

## 2019 USE OF FORCE INCIDENTS

In 2019, the Columbia Police Department reported 82 use of force incidents. The number of use of force incidents represents approximately .04% of the citizen encounters with officers, and approximately 1.3% of arrests. Traffic stops accounted for six incidents in which a use of force occurred. Drugs, alcohol and mental health issues are significant factors in use of force incidents, accounting for 34 occurrences of use of force in 2019. Use of ECDs (Tasers) rose from 13 uses in 2018 to 34 uses in 2019; this accounts for the increase overall in use of force incidents from 2018 to 2019.

Use of Force, Public Encounters and Arrests			
	2018	2019	Change Over Previous Year
Total Use of Force Events	68	82	+14
Total Public Encounters	175,037	178,500	+3,463
Total Arrests	6,641	6,496	-145

**FIGURE 2:** Number of times officers used force or made an arrest as a result of contact with the public. **DATA SOURCES:** CPD

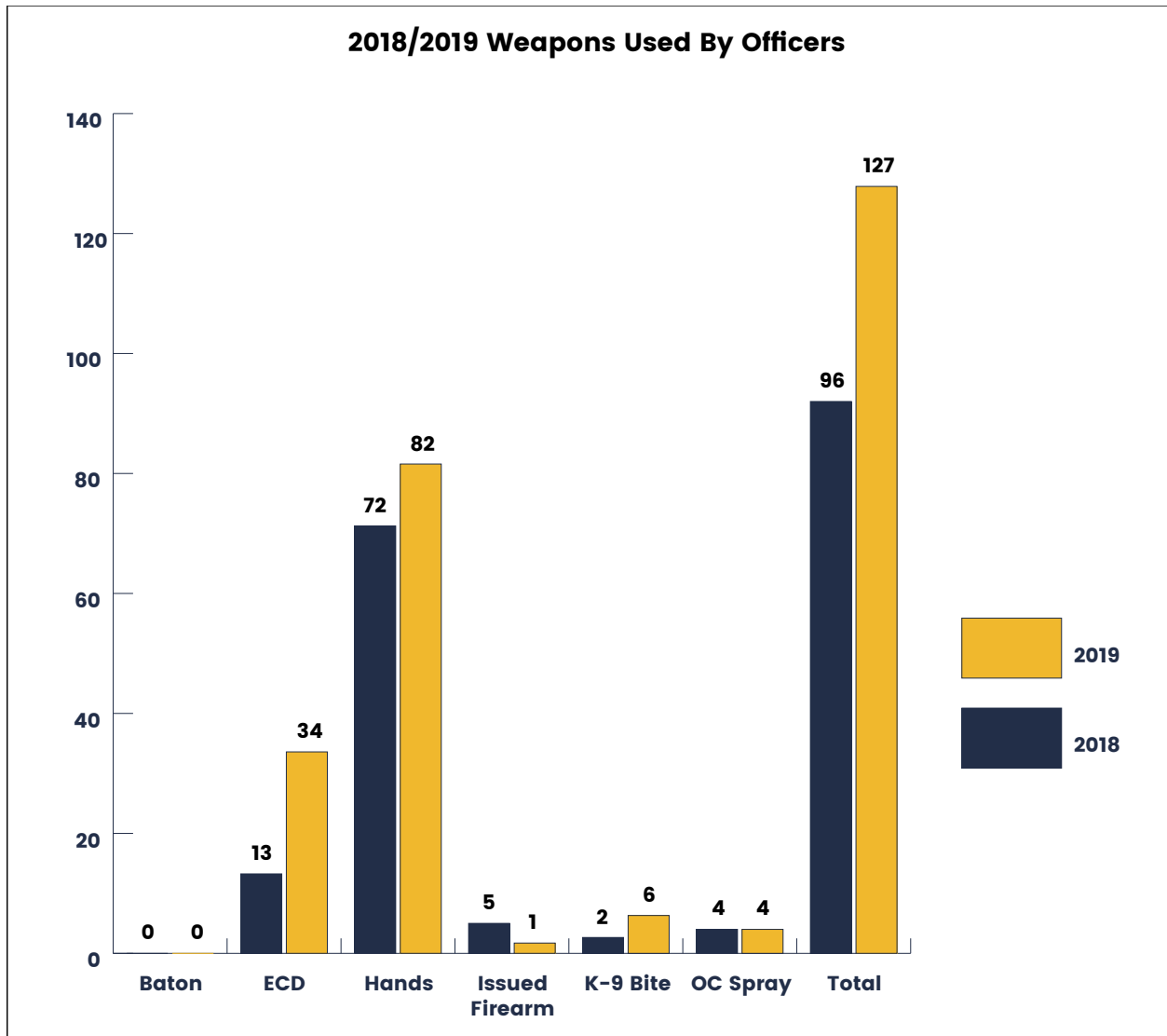
As in the previous three years, the Appellate Court decision in *Armstrong Vs. Village of Pinehurst* is central to the policy regarding use of Electronic Control Devices (ECDs). The Department has added information regarding the use of ECDs and *Armstrong Vs. Village of Pinehurst* to the certification training, as well as the recertification training.

Use of ECDs has increased since 2018. Officers have reported to Internal Affairs that because of additional training, they are clear on the proper use of ECDs, and they have become more comfortable using them. Officers are using ECDs in Drive Stun mode more, often when they are unable to get the suspects into handcuffs. In 2018, officers reported using the Drive Stun Mode of their ECDs twice. In 2019, officers reported using the same technique 17 times. When an officer moves in to detain a passively resisting suspect, the use of the ECD is prohibited. However, suspects often actively resist once an officer makes physical contact with them. At that point, when an officer is close to the suspect, the drive stun can be the most effective way of reducing the resistance and is permitted by *Armstrong*.

Additionally, the overall rise in Use of Force incidents can be attributed to several other factors. Several Use of Force incidents resulted from calls for service involving ShotSpotter. In 2019, ShotSpotter was fully implemented, and officers responding to such calls were on alert the suspects they encountered were likely to be armed with firearms, and therefore likely to use force on uncooperative suspects. Adding to this increased officer awareness in armed suspects, the murder rate increased in Columbia, from 16 in 2018 to 25 in 2019.

Vehicle pursuits often end with suspects running from officers and force having to be used to get such suspects in custody. Pursuits increased from 45 in 2018 to 62 in 2019. Use of Force or Display of Force occurred in conjunction with 20 pursuits in 2019 and only 6 times in 2018.

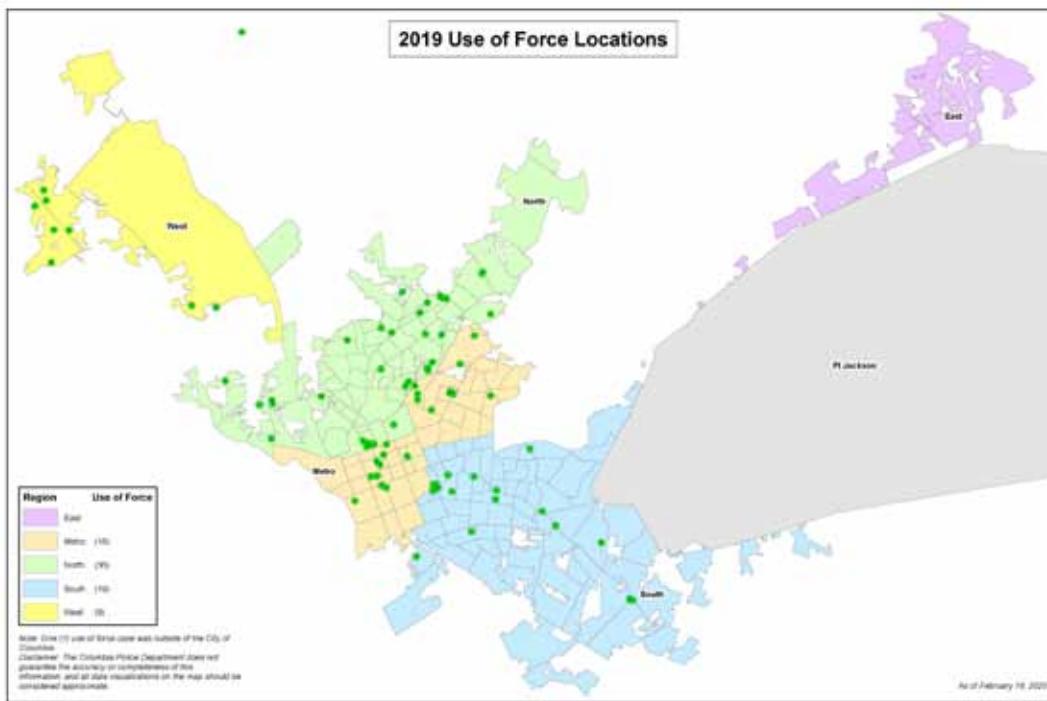
The most commonly used weapon in use of force situations were hands and feet, which are categorized as a form of less-than-lethal force.



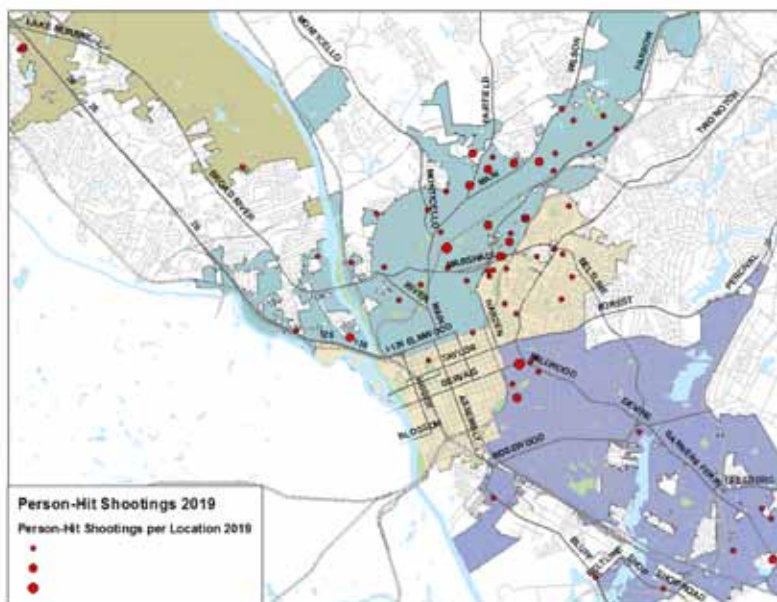
**FIGURE 3:** Weapons used by Officers during use of force situations.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Any single use of force event may have included the use of multiple weapons by one or more officers, which is why the number of weapons used is greater than the number of events. **DATA SOURCES:** CPD

Officers must also report to their chain of command when their firearm is displayed to gain compliance. In 2019, officers displayed firearms in 116 incidents.



**FIGURE 4:** 2019 Use of Force Incidents by CPD Region. **PLEASE NOTE:** One Use of Force incident occurred in the jurisdiction of the Richland County Sheriff’s Department pertaining to a pursuit that started in North Region  
**DATA SOURCE:** CPD



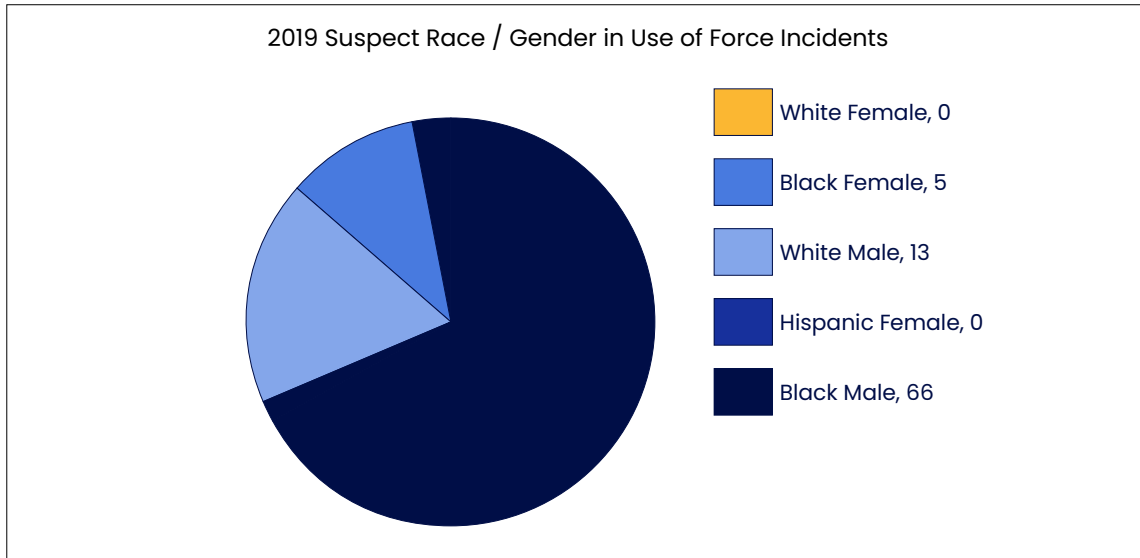
**FIGURE 5:** 2019 Persons Hit by CPD Region. **DATA SOURCE:** CPD

Typically, patterns of gun crime correlate with higher numbers of use of force incidents. In 2019, the Columbia Police Department received 2611 shots fired calls, with 83 victims shot within the city of Columbia related to 83 confirmed shootings. Of the 25 homicides in 2019, 20 were committed with a firearm.



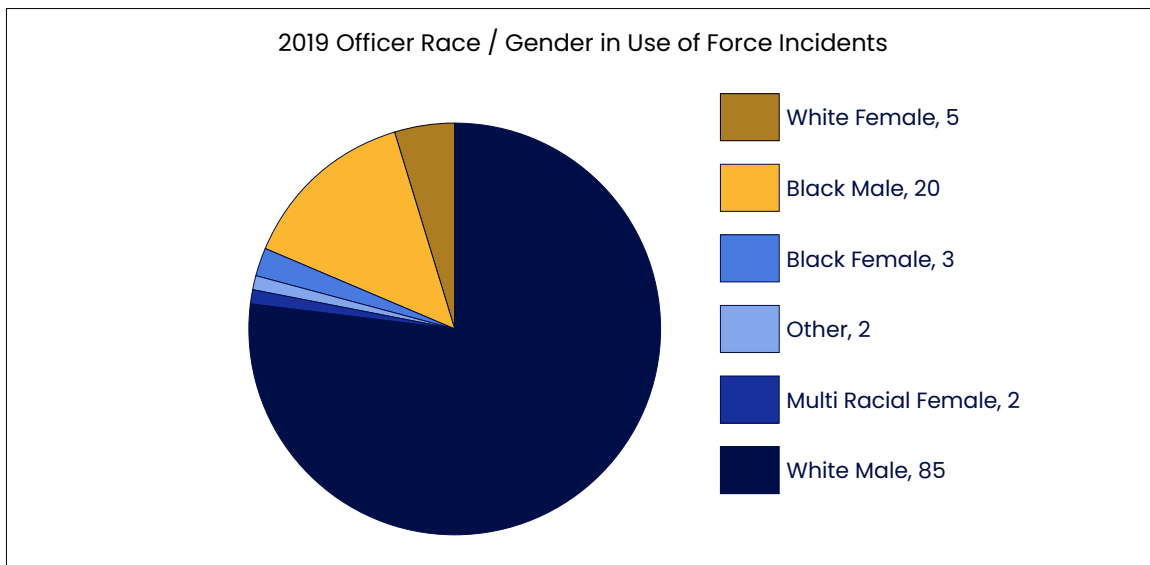
## 2019 Demographics in Use of Force Incidents

There were 84 suspects involved in use of force incidents in 2019 (71 black and 13 white). Again, the overwhelming majority of suspects in the use of force incidents were male. There were 118 officers involved in use of force incidents (90 white, 23 black, 1 Native American, 1 Hispanic, and 2 multi-racial).



**FIGURE 8:** 2019 Suspect Race / Gender in Use of Force incidents.

**DATA SOURCE:** CPD

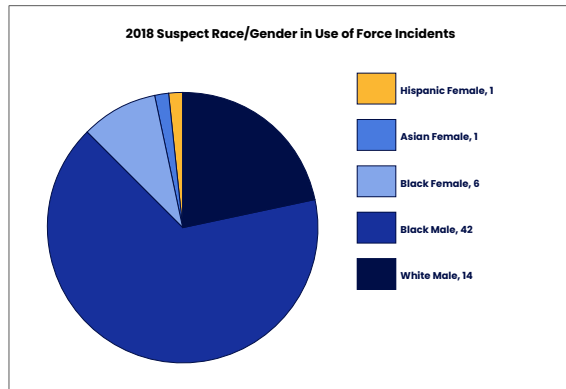


**FIGURE 9:** 2019 Officer Race / Gender in Use of Force incidents.

**DATA SOURCE:** CPD

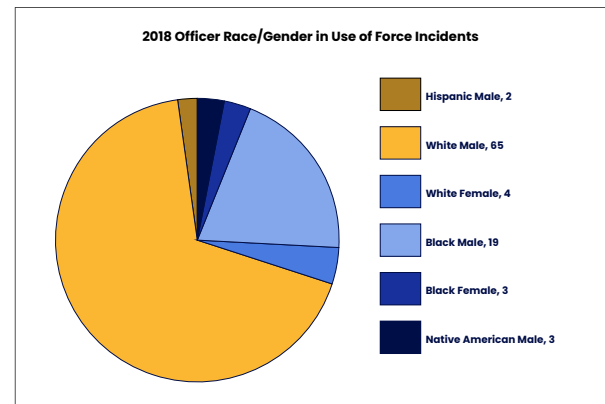
## 2018 Demographics in Use of Force Incidents

There were 64 suspects involved in use of force incidents in 2018 (48 black, 14 white, 1 Asian, and 1 Hispanic any race). The majority of suspects in the use of force incidents were male. 96 officers were involved in use of force incidents in 2018 (69 white, 22 black, 3 Native American, and 2 Hispanic). Four use of force incidents involved aggressive dogs.



**FIGURE 6:** 2018 Suspect Race / Gender in Use of Force incidents.

**DATA SOURCE:** CPD



**FIGURE 7:** 2018 Officer Race / Gender in Use of Force incidents.

**DATA SOURCE:** CPD

## 2019 Sworn Race/Gender as of December 16, 2019

Race and Gender - (Sworn)			
Total Sworn/Sworn Part Time			
Race/Gender	Job Status	Totals	%
African American Female	Sworn	30	8.20%
African American Male	Sworn	93	25.41%
Asian Female	Sworn	1	0.27%
Asian Male	Sworn	1	0.27%
Hispanic Female	Sworn Part Time	1	0.27%
Hispanic Female	Sworn	4	1.09%
Hispanic Male	Sworn	7	1.91%
Native American Male	Sworn	1	0.27%
Other Female	Sworn	2	0.55%
Other Male	Sworn	5	1.37%
White Female	Sworn	26	7.10%
White Male	Sworn Part Time	3	0.82%
White Male	Sworn	192	52.46%
<b>Total</b>		<b>366</b>	

# Summary of 2019 Deadly Force/Officer Involved Shooting Incidents

**Date/Time of Incident:** August 24th, 2019 at 02:45 a.m.

**Location:** 1013 Broad River Road

**Officers Involved:** Officer Sean Rollins (age 25, W/M, 1 year of service)

**Summary:** On August 24th, 2019, at about 0245, CPD Officer Rollins was operating a marked police vehicle driving south on Broad River Road when he observed a vehicle behind him flashing his headlights. Due to the flashing lights, Officer Rollins believed the driver was trying to get his attention and needed assistance. For that reason, Officer Rollins initiated a suspicious vehicle traffic stop at the 1000 block of Broad River Rd. The vehicle pulled into the Food Lion parking lot at 1013 Broad River Road, at which time Officer Rollins made contact with the driver of the vehicle. A Richland County Sheriff's Deputy observed the stop and pulled in to assist Officer Rollins. Officer Huestess also arrived as a back-up officer. Officer Huestess recognized the driver, from a prior incident the day before and was aware the driver had a suspended SC driver's license. Officers Rollins and Huestess asked the driver what he was doing and why he was flashing his lights.

Knowing the driver did not have a valid driver's license, officers asked the driver to exit the vehicle, however the driver did not comply. Officer Rollins then opened the driver-side door of the vehicle. During this time, the driver made repeated movements toward the center console, giving officers the impression he may attempt to flee and/or may have a weapon. truck.

After officers made several additional requests for the driver to exit the vehicle, Officer Rollins grasped the driver's left arm in attempt to require him to exit the vehicle. A physical struggle ensued and Officer Rollins

was pulled into the vehicle. During the struggle, the driver was able to place the vehicle in drive and accelerate away at a high rate of speed. The driver sped through the parking lot with the officer entrapped in the vehicle. The officer repeatedly begged the driver to stop the vehicle. However, the driver continued driving around the south side of the Food Lion. He then drove down an embankment, and crashed the vehicle with such force that the vehicle's airbags were deployed. Officer Rollins was still trapped inside the vehicle with the driver after the crash.

Officer Rollins gave multiple verbal commands to the driver to stop the vehicle while it was traveling through the parking lot. Officer Rollins unholstered his duty weapon after the crash while giving commands for the driver to comply by stopping the vehicle. When the driver failed to comply, Officer Rollins discharged one round from his service weapon striking the subject in the head and causing non-life threatening injuries. Officer Rollins was then able to exit the vehicle and safely secure the driver. The driver was arrested for multiple felony and misdemeanor criminal violations. Back-up officers arrived on the scene and rendered aid to Officer Rollins and the driver. EMS transported the driver and Officer Rollins to Prisma Health.

**Conclusion:** The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) conducted a criminal investigation into the incident. The investigation included a review of body worn camera and in car camera footage, ballistic evidence, and photographic evidence. It also included interviews with the driver, the officer and other witnesses. On October 24, 2019 SLED concluded their investigation and turned their findings over to the 5th Circuit Solicitor's Office. The 5th Circuit Solicitor's Office reviewed SLED's investigation and subsequent findings. On November 20, 2019, the Solicitor's Office issued a letter in which Solicitor Gipson determined Officer Rollins' use of deadly force was lawful under the circumstances. Lastly, the Internal Affairs Unit conducted an administrative investigation and determined the officer's lawful actions were not in violation of any of the police department's policies and procedures.

# INTERNAL AFFAIRS STRUCTURE AND PROCESS

The department has a well-established process for receiving, investigating, and adjudicating complaints made by citizens, co-workers and supervisors regarding employees' inappropriate behavior.

## Internal Affairs Unit

The Internal Affairs Unit (IA) facilitates the complaint process, investigates allegations of officer misconduct, and conducts administrative reviews of use of force incidents, officer involved shootings, criminal charges against employees and collisions involving department vehicles. The staff of the IA Unit ensures that all complaints are handled fairly and objectively and are thoroughly investigated. The personnel assigned to IA are dedicated to protecting the rights of all persons involved in the complaint process and treating everyone with dignity and respect. IA currently has staff of one (1) Lieutenant, two (2) Sergeants and one (1) Administrative Assistant. IA staff members report to the Captain/ Commander of the Office of Professional Standards, who in turn, reports directly to the Lieutenant.

Complaint investigations involving allegations that would constitute a violation of law, misconduct, and breach of departmental directives, policies or procedures, are handled by an investigator in the IA Unit or someone in the officer's chain of command. The below listed allegations are always investigated by an internal affairs investigator:

- Use of force (or any incident) involving serious injury or death
- Criminal misconduct
- Moral turpitude - an act or behavior that gravely violates the sentiment or accepted standard of the community

## Command Review Board for Discipline (CRB)

Procedural Justice is one of the cornerstones in 21st Century Policing. It's based on the idea that people's perceptions of police legitimacy are influenced more by their experience of interacting with officers than by the end result of those

interactions. The concept includes focus on principles of fairness, respect, and dignity while embracing transparency and neutrality. In implementing Procedural Justice, it is recognized that the importance extends to internal matters as it influences external police actions.

In keeping with the implementation of Procedural Justice at the Columbia Police Department, the department established a Command Review Board (CRB) in 2015. The purpose is to provide a more transparent decision-making process for administrative investigations and solicit the community to participate. The CRB is comprised of the following personnel, assigned by the Chief of Police or his designee:

- Chief of Police/Deputy Chief of Police will serve as Chairperson of the Board
- Professional Standards Division Commander (advisory capacity)
- Bureau/Division Major
- Regional Commander/Captain (Chain of Command)
- Regional Executive Officer/Lieutenant (Chain of Command)
- Regional Sergeant/Corporal (Chain of Command)
- Peer Member (same job classification and/or tenure as accused employee)
- Columbia Police Department's Citizen Advisory Council representative

In 2019, the CRB met on eight (8) occasions to review completed internal investigations that resulted in an initial finding of sustained, with a recommendation for disciplinary action of written reprimand, suspension, demotion or termination.

In each of these meetings, the CRB made recommendations for disposition and disciplinary action to the CRB Chair. The Chief or Deputy Chief of police serve as the Chairperson of the CRB and makes the final determination concerning disciplinary actions.

The Chief of Police or a designee may also convene a CRB hearing for any circumstance deemed appropriate.

# CITIZEN ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Columbia Police Department Citizen Advisory Council (CAC) was formed in 2015 to strengthen relationships between the police department and the community by establishing open dialogue and transparency concerning department policies and procedures. The CAC provides insights and recommendations on many issues, including but not limited to, law enforcement and safety concerns in the community, policy review and development, police training and improving police-community relations. A member of the CAC also serves on the Command Review Board to provide citizen input in administrative cases involving officer misconduct. The CAC is comprised of at least 10 members representing the diverse demographics of the city of Columbia. The Mayor/City Council appoints seven (7) representatives and the Chief of Police appoints three (3) representatives to the CAC. The Council meets at least quarterly.

In 2019, the Citizen Advisory Council met four times.

## THE COMPLAINT PROCESS

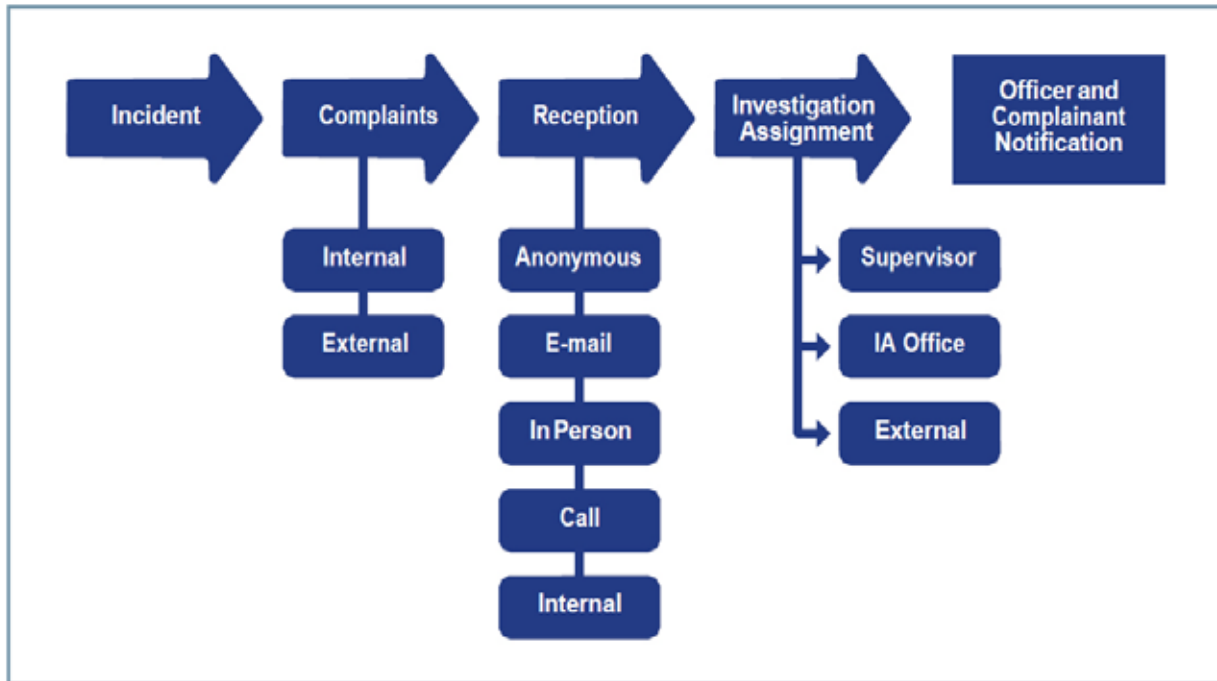
Employee misconduct complaints can originate externally (from a citizen of Columbia or anyone outside of the Columbia Police Department), or internally (from an employee of the Columbia Police Department).

### Making A Complaint

Complaints against CPD employees can be submitted in a variety of ways:

- **Online** – Visit [www.ColumbiaPD.net/employee-complaint/](http://www.ColumbiaPD.net/employee-complaint/) and complete the form.
- **In person** – File a written complaint at CPD headquarters or any region office.
- **Mail** – Send a letter to:  
Attn: Lieutenant Fred Bryant  
CC: Internal Affairs Unit  
Columbia Police Department  
1 Justice Square  
Columbia, SC 29201
- **Phone** – Call the IA Unit at **803-545-3655**.

Upon receipt of citizen complaints, the IA Unit will notify and provide the information submitted to the subject employee's Unit/Section Commanding Officer and Region/Division Commanding Officer. Each complaint is taken seriously and every effort is made to process them in a timely manner. To learn more, please visit [www.ColumbiaPD.net](http://www.ColumbiaPD.net), select "Inside CPD," and click "Office of Professional Standards." This area of our website contains detailed information about the complaint process.



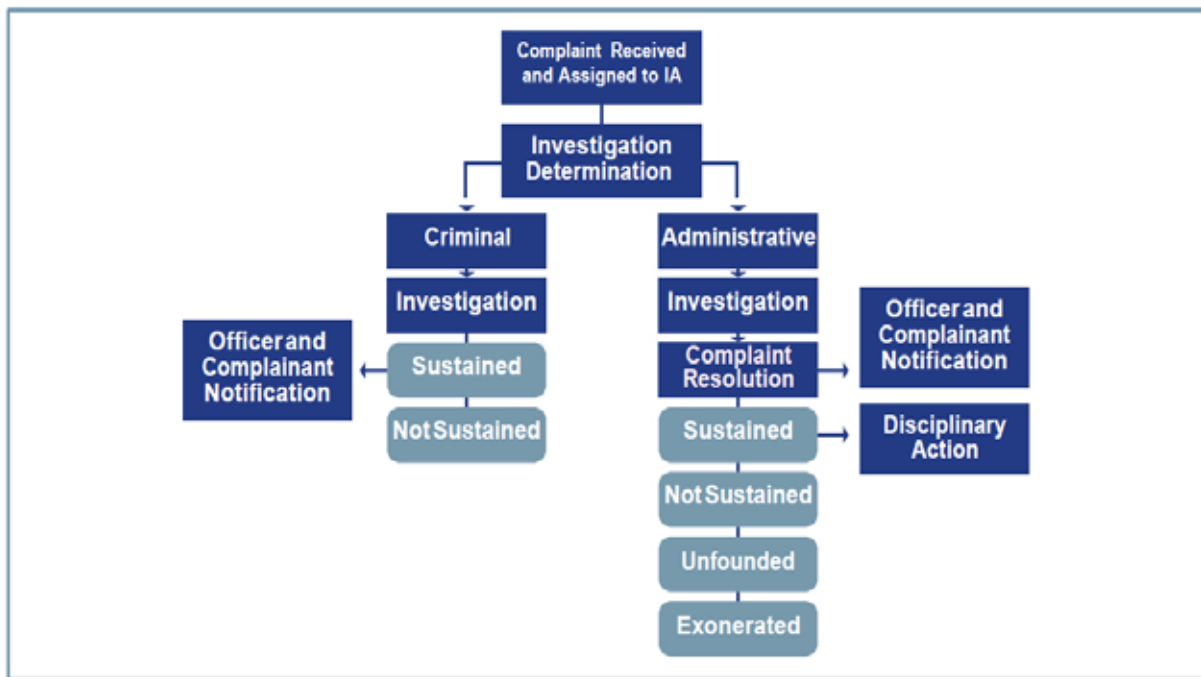
**FIGURE 10:** The Complaint Process **DATA SOURCES:** Building Trust Between the Police and Citizens they Serve: An Internal Affairs Promising Practices Guide for Local Law Enforcement, U.S. Department of Justice COPS Office 2009



# Investigations

After a complaint is filed, the following procedures are followed:

- The complaint is processed through the IA Unit for tracking purposes and assigned to the employee's supervisor or the IA Unit to investigate
- An investigator will contact the complainant and arrange an interview. Anonymous complaints are also investigated.
- At the time of the interview the complainant is placed under oath and a sworn statement is taken. Complainant interviews are recorded.
- Once the statement is prepared in writing, the complainant is given the chance to review the statement for accuracy and signature.
- Interviews and statements are obtained from all witnesses in each incident. All documentation is assembled in the case file for review by the employee's chain of command, the department's command staff, and in appropriate circumstances to the Command Review Board.



**FIGURE 11:** The Complaint Investigation Process **DATA SOURCES:** Building Trust Between the Police and Citizens They Serve: An Internal Affairs Promising Practices Guide for Local Law Enforcement U.S. Department of Justice COPS Office 2009

# Types of Dispositions

Complaint dispositions are classified as one of the following:

- **Exonerated** – The incident occurred but was lawful and proper.
- **Sustained** – The allegation is supported by sufficient evidence to indicate that the allegation is true.
- **Not Sustained** – There is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation.
- **Unfounded** – The allegation is false or there is insufficient evidence to support the allegation.

If an allegation is found to be Exonerated, Not Sustained or Unfounded, then the Commander of the IA Unit will review the investigation with the subject employee's chain of command. Cases are referred for a Command Review Board hearing when a disposition of sustained is determined and a disciplinary action of suspension, demotion or termination is recommended.

At the conclusion of the hearing, for each allegation of employee misconduct, the Board will recommend a final disposition to the Chair. The Chief of Police or Deputy Chief serves as Chairperson of the Command Review Board. Board members also make recommendations for corrective action to the Chair based on the department's disciplinary philosophy.

Upon disposition of a complaint allegation, the IA Unit mails a letter to the complainant to advise them their complaint has been thoroughly investigated and resolved. The Columbia Police Department makes every effort to investigate and adjudicate all complaint allegations within a practical time frame from the time a complaint is made. However, circumstances such as case complexity and witness availability, can prolong complaint investigation.

## Discipline Philosophy

The department is committed to a system of discipline that minimizes abuse of authority and promotes the department's reputation for professionalism. The Chief of Police makes the decisions regarding appropriate disciplinary actions, ensuring all such actions are consistent with CPD's established Discipline Philosophy. The department's Discipline Philosophy is based on the understanding that employees will occasionally make errors in judgment in carrying out their duties, and that some errors call for greater consequences than others.

Employees are expected to conduct themselves, both in interactions with each other and the public, in a manner that conveys respect, honesty, integrity, and dedication to public service. In turn, CPD employees can expect to be treated fairly, honestly and respectfully, by their peers and other employees of the department holding positions at all levels of organizational authority. The department has an obligation to make its expectations for employee behavior and the consequences of failing to meet those expectations very clear to employees. Disciplinary action can range from counseling/ retraining to a recommendation for employee termination. In many cases, employees receive additional training in the subject areas where violations occur. When behaviors occur that are not in keeping with the expectations of the department, the consequences or discipline imposed is based upon a balanced consideration of several factors. These factors are interactive and carry equal weight, unless there are particular circumstances associated with an incident that would give a factor greater or lesser weight. All of these factors will not apply in every case. Some factors may not apply to a particular incident.

### **The factors considered in disciplinary matters are:**

- **Employee motivation:** An employee's conduct will be examined to determine whether the employee was operating in the public's interest or if they were motivated by personal interest.
- **Degree of harm:** The degree of harm an error causes is also an important aspect in deciding the consequences of an employee's behavior. Harm

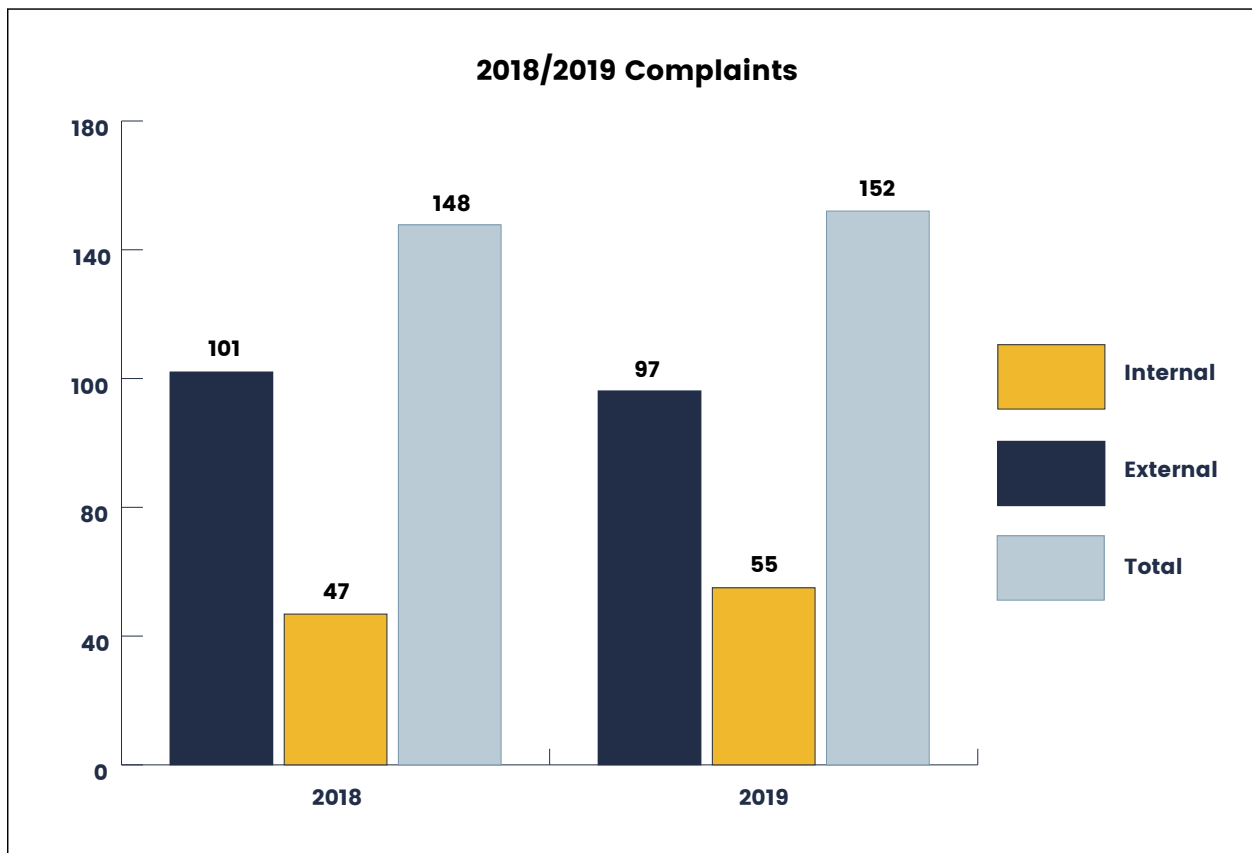
can be measured in terms of monetary cost to the department and community, personal injury, and by the impact of the error on public confidence.

- **Employee experience:** The experience of the employee will be taken into consideration as well. A relatively new employee will be given more lenient consideration when errors in judgment are made. Employees with more experience who make the same errors may expect to receive more serious sanctions.
- **Intentional/Unintentional Errors:** An unintentional error is an action or decision that turns out to be wrong, but at the time it was taken, seemed to be in compliance with policy and the most appropriate course, based on the information available. An intentional error is an action or a decision that an employee makes that is known (or should be known) to be in conflict with law, policy, procedures or rules at the time it is taken. Generally, intentional errors will be treated more seriously and carry greater consequences. Within the framework of intentional errors there are certain behaviors that are entirely inconsistent with the responsibilities of police employees.
- **Employee's Past Record:** To the extent allowed by law and policy, an employee's past record will be taken into consideration in determining the consequences of a failure to meet the department's expectations. An employee that continually makes errors can expect the consequences of this behavior to become progressively more punitive. An employee that has a record of few or no errors can expect less stringent consequences.

Disciplinary actions are not taken if an employee resigns while under investigation. Although resignations in lieu of terminations may be accepted by the Chief of Police, resignations accepted while the employee is still under administrative investigation are still subject to the outcome of the investigation and any disciplinary documentation that would apply. The results of such findings are reported to the South Carolina Criminal Justice Training Academy Misconduct Unit for further action.

# 2019 COMPLAINTS AND DISPOSITIONS

The IA Unit processed 152 complaints of misconduct against employees of the Columbia Police Department in 2019. The vast majority of complaints, nearly 64%, were initiated by the citizens of Columbia.



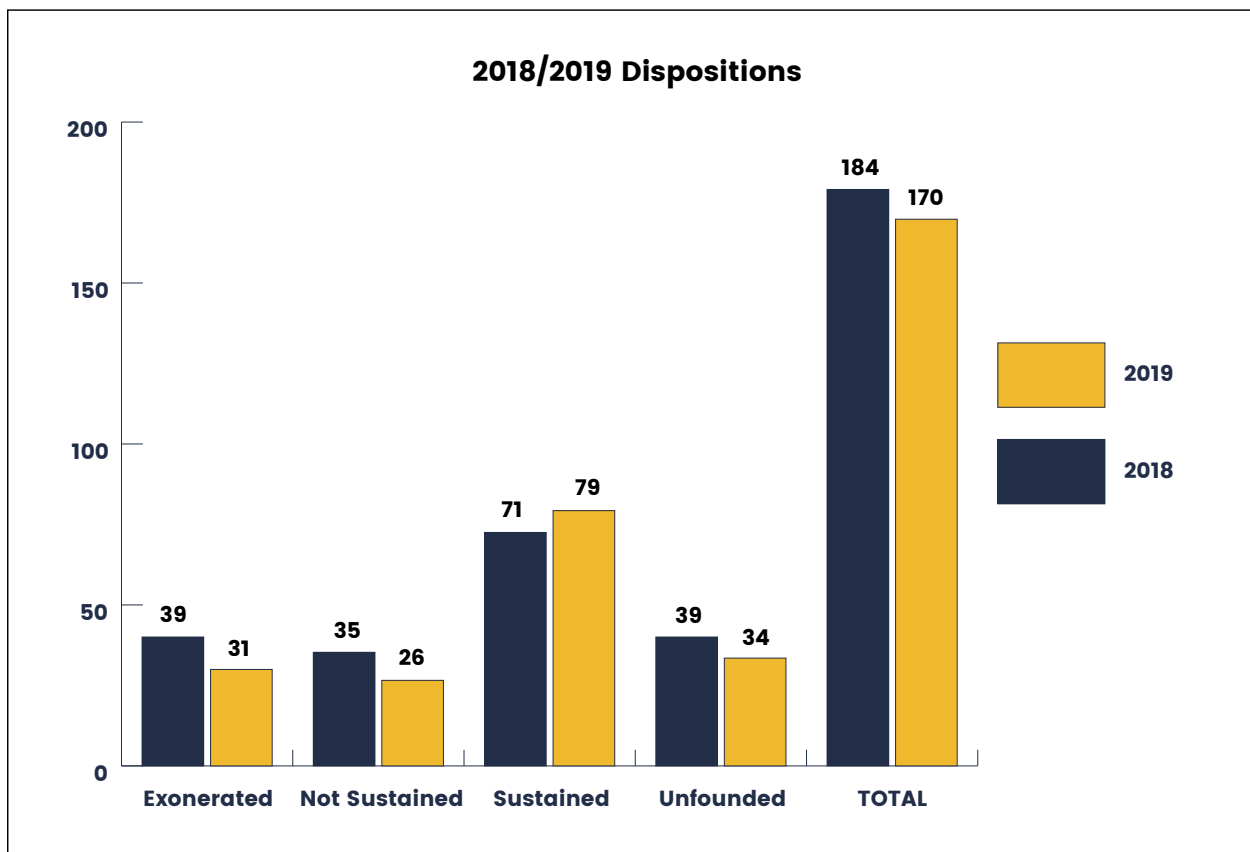
**FIGURE 12:** The total number of internal and external complaints received in, 2018 and 2019. **PLEASE NOTE:** Complaints may contain multiple allegations.

**DATA SOURCE:** CPD

A 4% decrease in Public Complaints was observed in 2019.

In 2019 the Columbia Police Department received two complaints for excessive force and one complaint involving racial profiling. One incident involved an intoxicated female who claimed an officer gave her a bloody lip. Video from

the incident revealed her lip was bleeding before officers approached her. The other excessive force complaint involved officers detaining a man who was seen leaving the scene of an armed robbery and shooting. Officers appropriately displayed their firearms and ECDs at the man, and released him immediately after discovering he was not the suspect. The racial profiling complaint involved a traffic stop when it was found that the driver's car had suspended tags. After thorough investigations, all officers involved were exonerated.



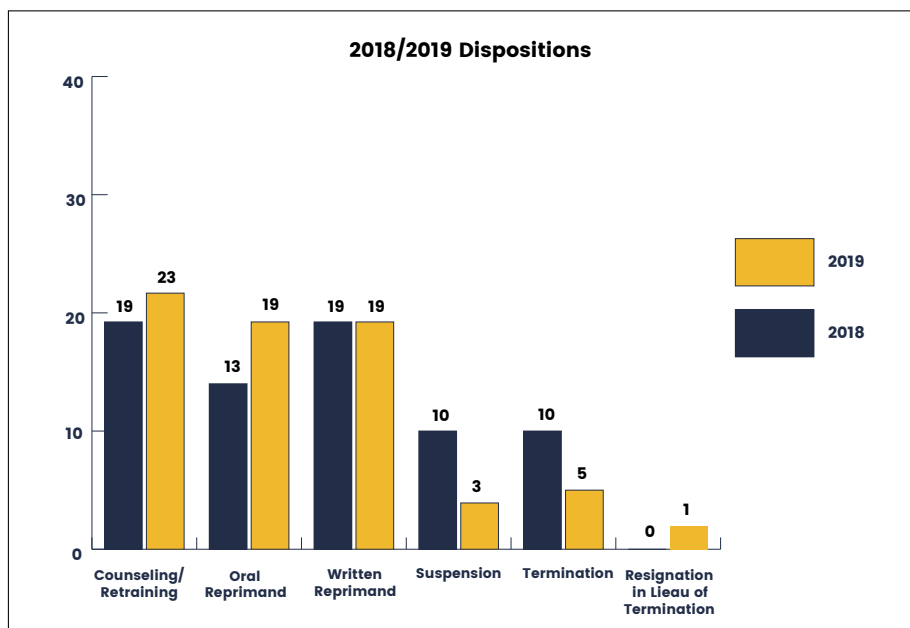
**FIGURE 13:** The findings of misconduct and rule violations alleged in complaints in 2018 and 2019. **PLEASE NOTE:** Complaints can contain multiple allegations therefore, the number of allegation dispositions can be greater than the number of complaints received. **DATA SOURCE:** CPD

The following disciplinary actions were taken as a result of the complaints sustained.

	External	Internal	Total
<b>Counseling/Retraining</b>	10	13	23
<b>Oral Reprimand</b>	4	5	19
<b>Written Reprimand</b>	5	14	19
<b>Suspension</b>	0	3	3
<b>Termination</b>	2	3	5
<b>Employee Resigned</b>	0	0	0
<b>Resignation in Lieu of Termination</b>	1	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>70</b>

**FIGURE 14:** Disciplinary actions taken in conjunction with sustained allegations in 2019. **DATA SOURCE:** CPD

Disciplinary actions may also result from policy or rule violations not related to formal complaints.



**FIGURE 15:** The types of disciplinary actions taken for policy or rule violations not related to a formal complaint investigation. **DATA SOURCE:** CPD

# CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS INVOLVING EMPLOYEES

When an employee is accused of a crime within the city of Columbia's jurisdiction, the case is referred to an independent agency, such as SLED, for investigation. If the alleged crime occurs outside of city of Columbia Police Department's jurisdiction, the agency with jurisdiction in that area conducts the criminal investigation in accordance with local procedures. The facts revealed by the criminal investigation are presented to the appropriate prosecutorial authority, for a determination of whether the officer should be criminally charged.

The IA Unit conducts independent administrative investigations that run concurrent after the criminal investigation, unless directed by the Chief of Police.

The completed administrative investigation is presented to the CRB for review to determine if any directives and/or procedures were violated. Decisions on the final disposition of criminal and administrative cases are made independently of one another.

Employees charged with a crime, including certain traffic offenses, are required to report the charges to their immediate supervisor and/or the Staff Duty Officer. Employees may be placed on Investigatory Suspension pending resolution of the charges. Depending on the outcome of the charges, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment.

**No criminal charges were filed against any employee in the Columbia Police Department in 2019.**



# IN-CUSTODY DEATHS

CPD has several policies relating to prisoner care and transportation. These policies are periodically reviewed and updated to guide employees in their handling of persons in custody. Officers receive annual training on these policies.

If a person dies while in the custody of CPD, the Richland/Lexington County Coroner's Office and SLED are requested to conduct an independent criminal investigation. The investigation is presented to 5th Circuit Solicitor's Office who reviews the criminal investigation and decides whether to file criminal charges against involved officers. An Internal Affairs investigation is concurrently conducted to determine policy compliance. At the conclusion of the internal investigation, the case is reviewed by the officer's chain of command or the Chain of Command Review Board to determine the disposition, and any disciplinary action, if appropriate.

- **In 2019, no in-custody deaths occurred.**

# VEHICLE PURSUITS & COLLISIONS

## Vehicle Pursuits – Policy and Practice

Pursuit driving is one of the most serious and dangerous duties and responsibilities of police officers. The primary responsibility of an officer in pursuit of a violator is safety: the safety of the public, the violator, and police officers. The department's policy authorizes officers to engage in a vehicle pursuit only when they have cause to believe the necessity of apprehension outweighs the immediate danger created by the pursuit to the officer and the public. The need for immediate apprehension of the violator must continuously be weighed against the inherent risks created by pursuit driving.

If a pursuit is initiated by an officer of the department, the officer's supervisor will take oversight responsibility for the pursuit and ensure compliance with all policies. Supervisors respond to the area of the pursuit while monitoring the pursuit on the radio and continuously evaluate the circumstances surrounding the pursuit. The supervisor completes an After Action Report which provides a written summary of the incident and forwards the Vehicle Pursuit Packet through the chain of command to the Office of the Chief. The Office of Professional Standards reviews and analyzes each pursuit packet to identify potential needs for additional training and/or policy/directive modifications.

<b>PURSUIITS</b>		
	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Pursuits:</b>		
Vehicles/Officers Involved	92	107
Terminated by Supervisor	9	12
Terminated by Officer	12	13
Terminated by Suspect	23	47
Terminated by Suspect due to Collision	14	29
Policy Compliant	39	42
Policy Compliant/Remediation	4	0
Policy Non-compliant	6	20
Justified Pursuits w/o Policy Violation	39	42
Justified Pursuits w/ Policy Violation	6	0
Unjustified Pursuits	0	0
Collisions resulting from Pursuits	20	29
Total Pursuits	45	62
<b>Injuries:</b>		
Officer	1	0
Suspect(s)	3	9
Third Party	4	0
<b>Reason Initiated:</b>		
Traffic Offense	14	15
Criminal Offense	31	47

**FIGURE 16:** 2019 Pursuits. **DATA SOURCE:** CPD

## Vehicle Pursuits – Definitions

**Justified** – the pursuit is legal according to State Law. The officer is justified in regards to SC State law in initiating a traffic stop and/or pursuing the vehicle.

**Unjustified Pursuits** – pursuits that may have occurred because they were initiated due to unjust, wrong, and/or unlawful reasons, lacking reasonable suspicion and not of an actual or suspected law violator.

**Policy Compliant** – does not violate policy, the incident complied with policy.  
**Policy Not Compliant** – violates policy directly related to the pursuit policy or any other policy during the pursuit

**Justified without Policy Violation** – the pursuit was legal and lawful (at a minimum reasonable suspicion existed for the traffic stop) and there were no violations of policy

**Justified with Policy Violation** – The pursuit was legal and lawful (at a minimum reasonable suspicion existed for the traffic stop) and the pursuit violated policy.

**Vehicles/Officers Involved** – the number city vehicles involved in the pursuit, and officers in the vehicles.

**Terminated by Supervisor** – The pursuit is terminated by the supervisor, for various reasons such as: time of day, surrounding, charges etc.

**Terminated by Officer** – The pursuit is terminated by the initiating officer for various reasons such as: time of day, weather conditions

**Terminated by Suspect** – The pursuit is terminated by actions of the suspect such as: collision, fleeing the vehicle etc.

**Terminated by Suspect due to Collision** – The pursuit is terminated due to accident, involving the suspect vehicle.

**Collisions Resulting from Pursuits** – Pursuits that ended with an accident.

<b>Reasons for Initiating Vehicle Pursuits</b>	
<b>Offenses Initiating a Pursuit</b>	<b>2019</b>
Homicide	0
Burglary/Home Invasion	3
Assault on Government Officer or Employee	0
Assault w/ Deadly Weapon	0
Auto Breaking	0
Sexual Assault (Rape/Sex Offense)	0
Larceny of a vehicle	22
Hit and Run	0
Unlawful Entry into an Enclosed Area	0
Kidnapping	1
Robbery (Armed)	4
Traffic Offense (Not DUI)	15
Wanted Person	3
Weapons Law Violation	1
Arson	0
Criminal Offense - Non Felony	9
DUI	1
Person with a gun	0
Shots Fired	0
Suspicious Person	3
Narcotics Violation	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62</b>

**FIGURE 17:** Violations initiating pursuits in 2019. **DATA SOURCE:** CPD

The rise in Vehicle Pursuits from 2018 to 2019 may be related to the changes in Policy (General Orders). General Orders were updated which broadened justification to conduct a pursuit from Violent Felony to include Violent Criminal Activity and Serious Criminal Activity. The purpose was to provide further guidance and direction of authorized pursuit situations.

**Violent Criminal Activity:** Any activity that resulted in death or bodily injury, or any act by the subject where the public or an officer is threatened with bodily injury or death. e.g. the subject has used or threatened to use a weapon.

**Serious Criminal Activity:** Any activity which would be adjudicated in the Court of General Sessions if a person were arrested and convicted for engaging in that activity.

Furthermore, the Pursuit Authority defined in the Police Emergency Vehicle Operation and Motor Vehicle Pursuit Policy of General Orders (General Order 01.03 Section 3.2) was updated to say, "Officers are authorized to engage in a vehicle pursuit only when they have reasonable suspicion to believe that the driver or occupant of the other vehicle has engaged or is about to engage in violent criminal activity or serious criminal activity AND the pursuit assessment indicates pursuit is reasonably warranted." (Whereas the previous General Order stated: "Officers are authorized to engage in a vehicle pursuit only when they have reasonable suspicion to believe that the driver or occupant of the other vehicle has committed or is about to commit a violent felony.")

Additionally, the definition of Pursuit Assessment was also included in the policy in order to better help officers and supervisors assess if a pursuit is warranted and is defined as: the process of weighing the factors to the pursuit to decide whether the necessity to immediately apprehend the fleeing suspect outweighs the level of inherent risk created by a motor vehicle pursuit.

In 2019, there was one fatality resulting from a pursuit initiated by the Columbia Police.

## Summary of 2019 Deadly Pursuit

**Date/Time of Incident:** July 14th, 2019 at 02:30 a.m.

**Location:** Shandon/Rosewood area

**Summary:** On July 14th, 2019, at 0730, a Columbia Police Officer was patrolling the Shandon neighborhood when he observed a Ford Crown Victoria make an unlawful turn. The officer, checking the Department of Motor Vehicle files, discovered the vehicle's license plate did not match the Crown Victoria, and instead belonged to a Honda. The officer activated his blue lights in an attempt to stop the car on Blossom Street. However, the Crown Victoria did not stop, and a vehicle pursuit ensued.

The pursuing officer maintained radio contact with dispatch and his supervisor as the pursuit continued through Shandon into Rosewood. Officers suspected the car was stolen, and the improper tag placed on the car was an attempt to conceal its status. Being that it was early morning on Sunday, traffic was light, and an additional Columbia Police Officer, equipped with a K-9, joined in the pursuit. However, the fleeing vehicle was able to elude the officers.

Several minutes later, two other Columbia Police Officers spotted the car and attempted to stop the Crown Victoria again. The vehicle fled once more, and officers lost sight of the car on Superior Street. Moments later, they discovered the fleeing vehicle had struck a wall on Superior and flipped over, landing on Rosewood Avenue. The driver was ejected, and, despite the efforts of the Columbia Police Officers and EMS, he later died at the hospital from injuries sustained in the crash. The incident was recorded by the officer's in car cameras as well as by surveillance cameras on Rosewood.

**Conclusion:** The incident was reviewed by the South Carolina Highway Patrol. Their analysis determined the driver of the Crown Victoria was responsible for the collision. The Department also conducted a parallel investigation into the incident and determined all officer actions were within policy. Officers are permitted, after an assessment of the dangers posed, to pursue vehicles they have a reasonable belief the driver is engaged in violent criminal activity or serious criminal activity. Serious criminal activity is defined as any activity which would be adjudicated in the Court of General Sessions if a person were arrested and convicted for engaging in that activity. The officers had a reasonable belief, based on the circumstances, that the vehicle was stolen, and knowingly operating a stolen vehicle meets the Serious Criminal Activity definition. Officers knew that should the vehicle escape, they would not be able to identify the driver. Additional factors such as civilian traffic, pedestrians, and adverse weather conditions were absent.



## **Employee Motor Vehicle Collisions**

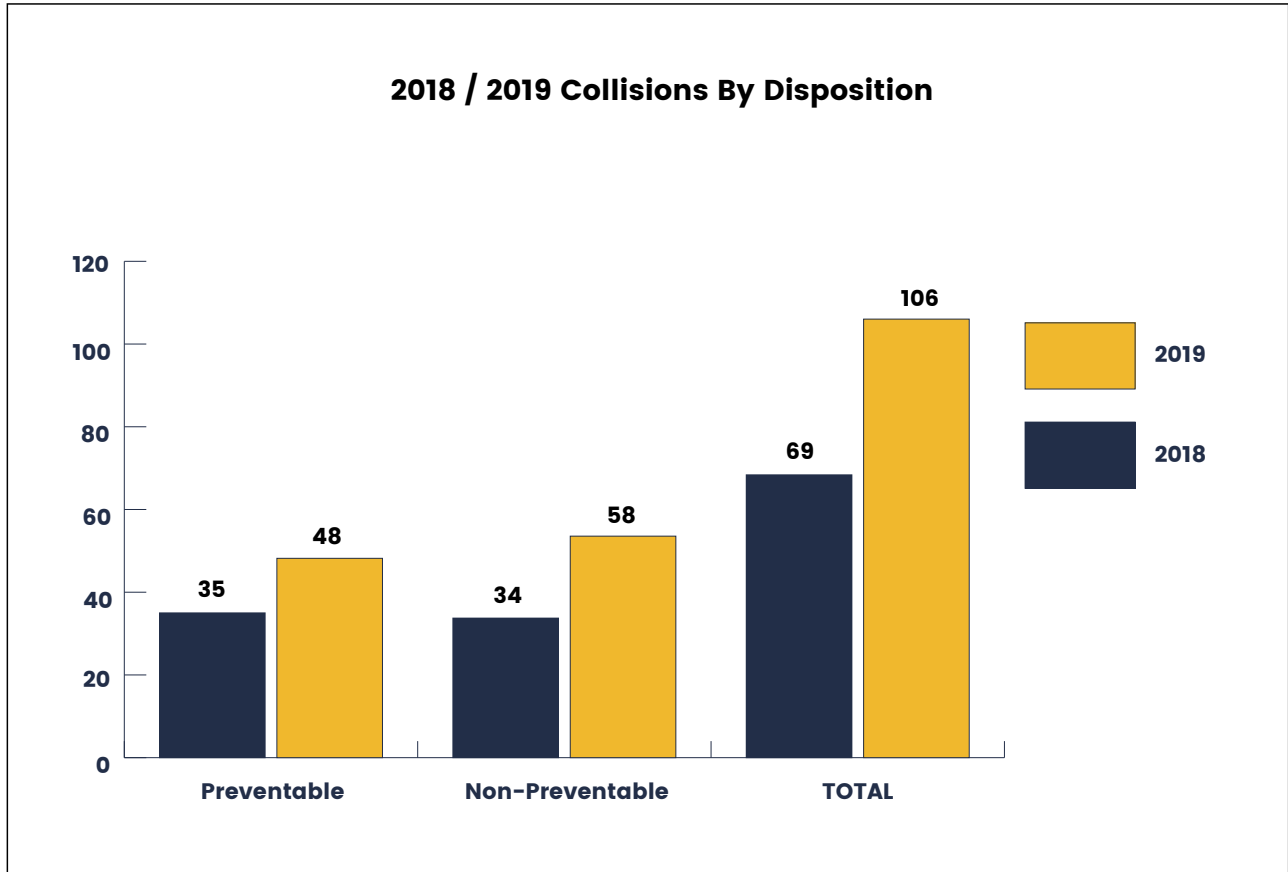
To provide police services throughout urban and suburban Columbia, designated employees drive a significant number of miles in department vehicles. The geographic jurisdiction for the Columbia Police Department includes the city of Columbia and the unincorporated areas covering 141 square miles with additional annexations added throughout the year. In total, the department has approximately 440 vehicles in operation, with many vehicles being operated 24-hours a day. In 2019, department vehicles were driven a total of 4,379,588 million miles.

In 2019 one hundred and six collisions involving the department's motor vehicles were reported, an increase of 35 from the previous year. State law (Section 56-5- 765) requires the State Highway Patrol to investigate all collisions involving law enforcement vehicles to make a determination as to whether the agency vehicle/motorcycle was operated properly within the guidelines of appropriate statutes and regulations.

Internal administrative reviews are conducted on all collisions involving Department vehicles. An independent Vehicle Accident Review Board is composed of the City of Columbia's Risk Management Office, the City Fleet Services Division, and officers from the traffic and training unit. The Board, appointed by the IA Unit Commander, reviews the results of the internal investigations to determine if the accident was preventable or not preventable. As seen in Figure 18, half of the collisions that occurred in 2019 were determined to be preventable.

When an employee is involved in a preventable collision, the Vehicle Accident Review Board determines appropriate corrective action. Corrective actions include counseling and retraining through punitive actions such as written reprimands. In conjunction with these actions, personnel may also be required to attend drivers training or emergency vehicle operation course as a remedial action. At the end of 2019, a specialized class was developed by the training unit for officers who had been in one or several preventable collisions in order to correct driving shortcomings.

In addition, the Board identifies patterns of driving, circumstances, equipment or training deficiencies that contribute to accidents and recommends strategies to resolve these issues. These recommendations and strategies are reviewed by the departments training unit and incorporated into training lesson plans proctored during annual recertification of sworn officers and/or for individual application.



**FIGURE 18:** Dispositions reached in investigations of department vehicle accidents. **DATA SOURCE:** CPD





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