

REPORT TO BALTIMORE COUNTY EXECUTIVE AND BALTIMORE COUNTY COUNCIL

2023

Submitted pursuant to Baltimore County Code, Section 19-1-101 (j)



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Robert O. McCullough
Chief of Police

In October 2020, Baltimore County enacted the Strengthening Modernization, Accountability, Reform, and Transparency (SMART) Policing Act. In addition to codifying important policy standards, the SMART Policing Act requires the Police Department to submit this annual report on crime trends in the County, the use of force by Baltimore County police officers, and any other crime and policing-related information the Department deems appropriate.

In 2023, interim Chief of Police Dennis J. Delp served with distinction and then resumed his rank of Colonel upon my swearing-in on April 18, 2023. I am deeply honored to lead this outstanding Police Department where I began my law enforcement career in 1985 as a Police Cadet.

During 2023, the Baltimore County Police Department continued to implement new Statewide requirements for police accountability, including use of force reporting and discipline. The Department continues to cooperate with the state-mandated Baltimore County Police Accountability Board and Administrative Charging Committee to ensure proper application of all requirements.

Two of our police officers were shot and injured in February 2023. During the calendar year, 647 officers reported being assaulted in the line of duty, a slight decrease from the 662 assaults reported in 2022. These incidents underscore the risks our brave officers face every day while responding to over 675,000 calls for service this year. To help protect each other as well as community members, in 2023 all officers were provided with individual First Aid kits that included a field tourniquet and other lifesaving material.

During 2023, the Department also continued to expand our recruitment outreach, seeking highly qualified applicants for sworn and professional staff positions to fill vacancies created by the retirements of long-serving Department members. These efforts, along with increased hiring bonuses and competitive compensation, have been yielding strong applicant interest and the most diverse group of new officers in the Department's history.

As the Department celebrates its 150th Anniversary year, having been founded in April 1874, I am honored to submit this report for calendar year 2023 to the County Executive and the County Council.

Sincerely,

Robert O. McCullough
Chief of Police



BALTIMORE COUNTY CRIME STATISTICS

2023 Part I Violent Crimes	Victims	Arrests	Cleared Cases
Homicide	29	20	70%
Rape	148	32	57%
Robbery	854	572	44%
Aggravated Assault	2,223	1,041	57%

2023 Part I Property Crimes	Incidents Reported	Arrests	Cleared Cases
Burglary	1,655	511	31%
Theft	16,601	2,048	11%
Motor Vehicle Theft	4,460	650	10%
Arson	105	43	30%

	2021	2022	2023
Total Calls For Service	714,504	750,966	688,333



South American Theft Group Burglary Trend

In 2023, Baltimore County saw 25 first degree burglaries related to a nationwide trend where high-dollar homes and the homes of Asian and Indian business owners were being targeted. Asian and Indian business owners are specifically being targeted because of the belief that they typically keep large amounts of cash and high-end jewelry in their homes. Surrounding jurisdictions also had cases that targeted these groups. There has been little forensic or video evidence recovered in these cases, but there is information indicating that organized groups of foreign nationals are committing these crimes and staying only a day or two in the target's area. The FBI is tracking these cases and has labeled the groups South American Theft Groups (SATG). The suspects appear to be mainly from Chile or Columbia. In September 2023, two Columbian nationals were arrested in Precinct 8/Parkville after committing a first degree burglary. Detectives believe these suspects were related to the larger nationwide trend.

The Department continues to investigate cases, pursuing electronic data with search warrants and studying cases in other jurisdictions for possible leads. The Department also distributed crime prevention messages throughout the community.

Hyundai and Kia Auto Theft Trend

An auto theft trend involving Hyundai and Kia vehicles increased in 2023, apparently due to social media videos demonstrating an easy method of stealing certain models that do not have a proximity key fob or a push-button start. This is a national trend that is impacting all jurisdictions in Maryland. Hyundai and Kia thefts accounted for 60.5% of Baltimore County's auto thefts in 2023, and were 90.7% of the vehicle thefts committed by juveniles, even though those brands are a small percentage of vehicles on the road. For most of 2023, the average Hyundai and Kia thefts were 225 per month. In the second half of the year, specifically from July through November, the average was closer to 300 thefts per month. Juvenile offenders were a significant factor in the Hyundai and Kia trend, with 360 juveniles arrested. The Department continues to investigate cases, working collaboratively with other law enforcement agencies. The Department also continues to distribute crime prevention messages to the community, as well as distributing steering wheel locks supplied by vehicle manufacturers and publicizing information about related software updates available from dealerships.

Vice Narcotics Trends

Baltimore County Police Officers deployed naloxone (Narcan) 93 times in 2023. Naloxone is effective against overdose for opioids including Fentanyl, Heroin, Methadone, and Oxycodone. All officers carry naloxone in their police vehicles.

Fentanyl continues to be present in the majority of overdose deaths. In 2023, Fentanyl was present in 181 overdose deaths in Baltimore County; in 2015, Fentanyl was only present in 47 fatal overdoses. Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic opioid that is 50 -100 times more potent than Morphine. China and Mexico are the leaders in synthetic Fentanyl production. Heroin is no longer prevalent in our area.

Fentanyl was approved for the treatment of severe pain, typically advanced cancer pain, and is prescribed in the form of transdermal patches or lozenges. However, powdered Fentanyl is being specifically sought after and requested by those with opioid misuse disorder and it is frequently being found mixed with Cocaine. There is also an increase in the presence and seizures of pressed Fentanyl pills made to look like prescription Oxycodone. The drug is marketed through social media platforms.

Xylazine deaths are on the rise. Xylazine is used in veterinary medicine as a large-animal sedative with analgesic (pain relief) and muscle relaxant properties. Xylazine is being used as a cutting agent with Fentanyl and is not responsive to Narcan.

A detective from the Vice Narcotics Section responds to every fatal overdose that occurs in Baltimore County. The detective conducts on-scene interviews and collects evidence. The goal of this quick response is to identify where the victim obtained the narcotics and identify a dealer. Many times, these cases are worked backward and undercover operations are conducted to substantiate felony distribution charges involving the dealer. The Vice Narcotics Section also works closely with the Health Department and other Baltimore County agencies to provide assistance to at-risk persons, in an ongoing effort to reduce and prevent overdose deaths.

Sanctity of Life



Baltimore County's SMART Policing Act requires the Department to adopt rules that include affirming that police officers hold the highest regard for the sanctity of human life and the dignity and value of all persons. Subsequently, a new State law was enacted requiring all police officers, as a requirement of their Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (MPTSC) certification, to sign an affirmative written sanctity of life pledge to respect every human life and act with compassion toward others. As required, all Baltimore County officers have signed this pledge:

In accordance with Maryland law and the Baltimore County Code, I pledge and affirm to hold the highest regard for the sanctity of human life and the dignity and value of all persons. I shall respect every human life and act with compassion towards others.

Use of Force



Use of Force (incidents reviewed by Internal Affairs)

In 2023, the Department recorded **207** Use of Force incidents by officers.

Type of Force Used

Hands	236
CED (taser)	78
OC Spray	38
K9 Dog	15
Knee	10
Service Weapon	7
Department Issued Baton	6
Foot	6
Chemical Munitions	5
Other	4
Take Down	2
Pepper Ball	1
Elbow	1
TOTAL	409

21136	3
21223	2
21162	2
21219	2
21239	2
21093	1
21040	1
21218	1
21205	1
21120	1
21231	1
21230	1
TOTAL	207

*An incident may involve multiple types of force.

Zip Code Where Incident Occurred

21221	22
21222	17
21207	17
21204	14
21237	13
21286	12
21234	12
21133	12
21117	10
21220	10
21227	9
21228	8
21244	7
21236	6
21229	6
21224	4
21206	4
21208	3
21030	3

Type of Call for Services

2nd Degree Assault	57
1st Degree Assault	22
Theft/Shoplifting	21
Domestic Abuse	14
Theft/Motor Vehicle	12
Emergency Evaluation	12
Possess Deadly Weapon	8
Recovered Motor Vehicle	6
Trespassing	6
Traffic Arrest / DWI	4
Disturbance	4
Warrant/Summons Srvs.	4
Burglary/4th Degree	3
Traffic Arrest/Other	3
Burglary/2nd Degree	3
Burglary/1st Degree	3
All Animal Bites	2
Narc/Officer Initiated	2
Robbery, Carjacking	2
Commercial Robbery Armed	2
Viol. Protective Order	2

Homicide	2
Kidnapping	1
Non-Commercial Robbery	1
Traffic Non-Arrestable	1
Commercial Robbery/Unarmed	1
Destruction of Property	1
Escape / AWOL	1
Burglary/3rd Degree	1
Traffic No Arrest, MA C	1
Non-Comm. Robbery Armed	1
Theft/from Motor Vehicle	1
Animal Complaint	1
Behavioral Health Referral	1
Indecent Exposure	1
TOTAL	207

Assignment of Officer Involved

Precinct 2	38
Precinct 12	37
Precinct 6	36
Precinct 11	35
Precinct 1	31
Special Operations Section	22
Precinct 9	22
Precinct 3	16
Precinct 8	13
Precinct 4	10
Property Crimes Section	9
Vice/Narcotics Section	4
Wellness Section	3
Precinct 7	3
Persons Crimes Section	1
TOTAL	280

*Incident may involve multiple officers.

Officer Demographics

Race	Male	Female	Total
Asian	12	0	12
Black	51	8	59
Hispanic	4	3	7
White	180	22	202
TOTAL	247	33	280

Subject Demographics

Race & Ethnicity	Male	Female	Unknown	Total
Black	129	13	0	142
<i>Hispanic or Latino</i>	1	0	0	1
<i>Not Hispanic or Latino</i>	126	12	0	138
<i>Unknown</i>	2	1	0	3
White	54	5	0	59
<i>Hispanic or Latino</i>	13	0	0	13
<i>Not Hispanic or Latino</i>	41	4	0	45
<i>Unknown</i>	0	1	0	1
Unknown	0	0	2	2
<i>Unknown</i>	0	0	2	2
TOTAL	183	18	2	203

*Demographics information with zero values are not represented.

*Four UOF incidents on animals are not included here.

Use of Force-Command

Due to the legal changes enacted by the Maryland General Assembly in the Police Accountability Act of 2021, the legal requirements for reporting uses of force drastically changed. The new legislation redefined when police officers are authorized to use force and the requirements surrounding its use and reporting. Maryland Public Safety Code 3-524 states, **(1)** A police officer may not use force against a person unless, under the totality of the circumstances, the force is necessary and proportional to: **(i)** prevent an imminent threat of physical injury to a person; or **(ii)** effectuate a legitimate law enforcement objective. **(2)** A police officer shall cease the use of force as soon as: **(i)** the person on whom the force is used: **1.** is under the police officer's control; or **2.** no longer poses an imminent threat of physical injury or death to the police officer or to another person; or **(ii)** the police officer determines that force will no longer accomplish a legitimate law enforcement objective.

Reportable force is defined in the Field Manual, under Article 12-1.0, as any execution of a physical act to control a person, overcome resistance and/or defend oneself or another. Force may entail the use of body parts, issued departmental equipment, or an instrument of necessity. There are exceptions to the reporting of force. Actions such as routine handcuffing and escorting of persons where there is minimal or no resistance do not require reporting.

These legal and policy changes, which took effect July 1, 2022, necessitated the documentation and tracking of a substantially larger number of incidents, which were not considered a reportable use of force under prior law or policy. In order to comply with these changes, the department bifurcated use of force incidents into two types/classifications. The newly documented incidents, which are minor in nature and scope, are classified as "Use of Force-Command." These incidents are documented, reviewed at the command level, and sent to the Internal Affairs Division for statistical entry. For incidents which would have required the reporting of use of force under the previous law and policy, (i.e., firearm discharges, use of departmental equipment such as OC Spray and batons, strikes, kicks, punches, or incidents resulting in injury), the review process now includes the Division Commander and continue to be assessed for policy compliance by the Internal Affairs Division. Both classifications of use of force incidents are statistically tracked and maintained by the Internal Affairs Division.

In 2023, the Department recorded **660** Use of Force-Command incidents by officers.

Type of Force Used

Hands	1,532
Foot	24
Other	13
Knee	11
Instrument of Necessity	6
Take Down	3
Control Hold	1
TOTAL	1,590

*An incident may involve multiple types of force.

21286	44
21244	41
21222	40
21117	39
21207	39
21220	36
21236	34
21234	32
21208	32
21133	26
21136	17
21227	17
21228	16
21224	11
21030	10

Zip Code Where Incident Occurred

21221	64
21237	57
21204	48

21206	7
21093	6
21209	6
21219	5
21162	5
21229	4
21212	4
21217	3
21087	3
21214	2
21128	2
21131	1
21223	1
21230	1
21218	1
21215	1
21205	1
20714	1
21051	1
21120	1
21043	1
TOTAL	660

Theft/Other	7
Assistance Request	5
Non-Commercial Robbery	5
Burglary/2nd Degree	3
Domestic Incident	3
School Activity, Disrupt	3
Commercial Robbery Armed	3
Burglary/Attempt	2
Violation of Peace Order	2
Robbery, Carjacking	2
Viol. Protective Order	2
Arson	2
Overdose	2
Firearms, Discharging	1
Unauthorized Use	1
Burning, Malicious	1
Behavioral Health	1
Theft/from Motor Vehicle	1
Assault 1st/2nd workplace	1
Hit/Run Acc./Pers. Injury	1
County Code Viol./Other	1
Traffic Non-arrestable	1
Behavioral Health Incident	1
Narc./Citizen initiated	1
Rape	1
Behavioral Health Voluntary	1
Hit/Run Acc./Prop. Damage	1
Attempted Robbery	1
Auto Accident/Prop Damage	1
Sick/Injured Subject	1
Juvenile Complaint	1
Behavioral Health Referral	1
Theft/Purse Snatching	1
Custody Dispute	1
Suspicious Condition	1
Missing Child	1
Suspicious Subject	1
Suspicious Vehicle	1
Homicide	1
Indecent Exposure	1
TOTAL	660

Type of Call for Services

2nd Degree Assault	171
Emergency Evaluation	104
Theft/Shoplifting	48
Domestic Abuse	36
Trespassing	33
Disturbance	33
1st Degree Assault	29
Theft/Motor Vehicle	20
Narc/Officer Initiated	20
Possess Deadly Weapon	13
Recovered Motor Vehicle	13
Traffic Arrest / DWI	12
Burglary/4th Degree	11
Warrant/Summons Srvs.	10
Burglary/1st Degree	9
Traffic Arrest/Other	8
Burglary/3rd Degree	8
Traffic No Arrest, MA C	7
Destruction of Property	7

Assignment of Officer Involved

Precinct 11	217
Precinct 6	216
Precinct 9	189
Precinct 2	162
Precinct 4	130
Precinct 3	114
Precinct 12	91
Precinct 1	66
Precinct 8	56
Precinct 7	41
Vice/Narcotics Section	40
Wellness Section	16
Property Crimes Section	8
Persons Crimes Section	7
Special Operations Section	5

Operations Support Section	3
N/A	1
TOTAL	1,362

*An incident may involve multiple officers.
N/A is the result of an officer not assigned to an individual Command.

Officer Demographics

Race	Male	Female	Total
Asian	35	2	37
Black	182	51	233
Hispanic	50	13	63
Indian	2	0	2
White	875	152	1,027
TOTAL	1,144	218	1,362

* Demographic information with zero values are not represented.

Subject Demographics

Race & Ethnicity	Male	Female	Transgender	Total
Asian	5	0	0	5
<i>Hispanic or Latino</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Not Hispanic or Latino</i>	5	0	0	5
<i>Unknown</i>	0	0	0	0
Black	335	139	1	475
<i>Hispanic or Latino</i>	3	0	0	3
<i>Not Hispanic or Latino</i>	331	139	1	471
<i>Unknown</i>	1	0	0	1
White	127	52	1	180
<i>Hispanic or Latino</i>	23	4	1	28
<i>Not Hispanic or Latino</i>	103	47	0	150
<i>Unknown</i>	1	1	0	2
TOTAL	467	191	2	660

*Demographic information with zero values are not represented.

In 2023, there were two officer-involved deaths investigated, as required by State law, by the Independent Investigative Division of the Maryland Office of the Attorney General. For the first incident, the Office of the Baltimore County State's Attorney determined that no criminal charges would be filed or pursued against any Department members. For the second incident, the Office of the Attorney General determined that no criminal charges would be filed, finding that officers acted in self-defense and in defense of others.



Training

The In-Service Training program for 2023 trained sworn members of the agency on a variety of topics during a two-day program. These topics included de-escalation techniques, implicit bias awareness, use of force, police interactions in dealing with vulnerable persons, the prohibition of neck restraint, community-based speakers, community policing, the process for filing complaints, rendering aid to those in police custody, and police use of a victim-centered approach. Officers observed a video highlighting the community-based speakers from peer counselors from within Baltimore County about heroin overdoses, officer interactions with those suffering from addiction, and the use of naloxone.

Officers were also provided tactical medical instruction, including the Tactical Emergency Casualty Care, designed to equip officers with the skills and equipment to respond to and treat life-threatening, traumatic injuries of other first responders, victims, and suspects. The skill drills and scenario-based training included officer response to Active Assailant incidents. Other training segments covered use of force, officer intervention, officer wellness, case law, agency policy and the complaint/disciplinary process through a case study of various police involved events across the country. Body worn camera footage from across the country was viewed, discussing the actions/inactions of officers through the lens of ethics and values. Officers also covered various Phoenix model tactics with drills with regards to contact teams and response to Active Assailants including bounding and stairwell clearing. Tactics and officer safety as well as high-risk stops were demonstrated using the latest and safest techniques. De-escalation and mental health-related issues were addressed through various scenarios including one involving workplace violence (with a military veteran) and resources were distributed agency wide. Officers also handled scenarios involving individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, elderly subjects and those victimized by fraud. Lastly, officers partnered and trained with members of the Baltimore County Fire Department for scenario-based training and an update on Terrorism, Incident Command and the use of FEMA door marking symbols. Also reviewed was each agency's equipment in the event of an officer or firefighter rescue.

The Police Entrance Level Training Unit provides instruction on numerous aspects relating to requirements in the SMART Policing Act. Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) is a program which illustrates officers' duty to intervene while teaching and empowering recruits to do so when necessary. Academy recruits are also instructed in Fair and Impartial Policing (FIP), which teaches them to recognize implicit bias. Recruits are taught how and when to render aid during Law Enforcement Emergency Medical Care. The recruits are also taught de-escalation tactics during Verbal Judo and a program designed by the Police Executive Research Forum, known as Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics, or ICAT. As part of Force Training, recruits are taught techniques for achieving police objectives with minimal use of force, as well as the importance of proportional force and when deadly force is justifiable.

Many of the same topics are also covered with officers and recruits during Range training and certifications. Instruction in de-escalation techniques includes discussions that stress the sanctity of life, and the value of human dignity. Prohibitions against neck restraints, officers' duty to intervene, prevention of excessive force, and the importance of quickly rendering aid are among other topics incorporated into training on ICAT's Critical Decision-Making Model. This model teaches officers to continually gather and reassess information and evaluate police objectives and potential actions through a lens of ethics, values, proportionality, and the sanctity of human life. Discussions add instructional layers covering officer accountability and proper reporting of use of force incidents.



Behavioral Health-Related Calls for Service

The Department further expanded the Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) in 2023. Eight co-responder crisis teams consisting of an officer and a mental health clinician now operate 24/7 responding to individuals in an acute behavioral health crisis. The teams continue their mandate to help resolve situations in the community and where possible, divert individuals in a crisis from the criminal justice system and unnecessary hospitalization. In 2023, MCT handled 2,727 calls for service; 377 of those calls resulted in an Emergency Petition, and on 1,415 calls the team was able to divert the person in crisis into voluntary services instead of having to pursue criminal charges or an involuntary Emergency Petition that would otherwise have been necessary.

MCT is a critical component in the Baltimore County Crisis Response System, which is operated collaboratively by the Police Department, the Baltimore County Health Department, and contracted vendor Affiliated Sante Group. Further collaborative efforts have been established with Baltimore County’s new Mental Health Court and Drug Court to provide continued care for individuals who are in need of services and are involved with the criminal justice system.

The work of encouraging cultural change and reducing the stigma of seeking behavioral health support continues within the Department. The Department’s Peer Support and Wellness Team continues to educate all Department members and facilitate services regarding mental, emotional, financial, spiritual and physical health needs. Drawing on the Baltimore County Employees Assistance Program (EAP), the Department has acquired a new part-time mental health clinician to address the unique professional and personal stressors that may affect personnel.

Employment

In 2023, the Department recruited the most diverse group of police officer recruits in the Department’s history, with the majority hired (55%) being African-American, Hispanic, Asian, or Pacific Islander; and with over one quarter (28%) being women.

Recruit Class Demographics

<u>Academy Class</u>	<u>168th</u>	<u>169th</u>	<u>170th</u>	<u>171st</u>	<u>2023 Totals</u>
Total Hired	30	18	27	41	116
Male	21	13	21	29	84 (72%)
Female	9	5	6	12	32 (28%)
Black	15	6	12	15	48 (41%)
Hispanic	1	4	2	3	10 (9%)
Asian	1	1	1	1	4 (3%)
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	2	2 (2%)
White	13	7	12	20	52 (45%)

Throughout the year, the Employment Section continued to implement multiple recruitment strategies designed to attract a diverse and highly qualified candidate pool to the Department. Advertising campaigns targeted potential applicants through social media platforms, Maryland Transit Authority buses, radio advertising during Baltimore Orioles and Baltimore Ravens game simulcasts, advertising throughout Baltimore area movie theaters, and billboard displays in Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania. These recruitment initiatives were on top of multiple community and pop-up hiring events held in 2023. The community hiring events included static displays by specialized units as well as on-site written and physical agility testing. Some of these events also included interactive virtual training scenarios in which prospective applicants could practice de-escalation techniques. Pop-up events were posted on Department social media platforms and strategically placed throughout the county to attract candidates from diverse communities.

At the beginning of 2023, the Employment Section began utilizing a new Mobile Application Center at events throughout the area. The Mobile Application Center is a converted recreational vehicle that allows potential applicants to learn about the agency and initiate the hiring process by completing an application on-site. The Mobile Application Center has approximately 5 workstations for use by applicants. The outside of the vehicle is wrapped with images of the Baltimore County Police Department and equipped with emergency lights. The Mobile Application Center's appearance garners significant attention when it is brought to events throughout the region.

The Recruitment Team continued to maintain a presence at every high school as well as multiple colleges and universities in the region. The Employment Section partnered with the Criminal Justice program at Coppin State University and held multiple recruitment and informational events in 2023. Section members continue to recruit at other regional universities, such as John Jay College in New York City where they participate in career fairs twice a year for university students. By maintaining these ongoing partnerships, the agency is able to recruit for entry level positions as well as for the department's internship program. The internship program continued to thrive in 2023 by expanding the program to high school students from Carroll County Career Tech. By adding high school students to the existing program, we can increase our potential Police Cadet applicant pool as the students spend several months working in different units within the agency.

The Employment Section continues to offer referral bonuses to department members and has increased bonuses offered to applicants. In 2023, the departmental referral bonus for department members increased from \$500.00 to \$1,000.00 for Experienced Police Officers. The sign-on bonus for Experienced Officers also increased from \$10,000 to \$15,000.00. The Employment Section further obtained state grant funding to allocate bonus funding of \$2,000.00 for applicants with prior military service. Lastly, bonuses from \$2,000 to 4,000.00 are being offered to bilingual applicants who pass language competency examinations. This bonus is particularly helpful in attracting candidates with language skills that will enhance the Department's services to diverse communities.

Lastly, the Employment Section recognized the importance of talent retention within the agency and hosted two large events for members of the agency as a small way of showing the Department's appreciation. The events were for all Department members and their families to enjoy and were held at Oriole Park at Camden Yards and the National Aquarium. These events were an overwhelming success.