



# **2023 REPORT**

## **POLICE VEHICULAR PURSUITS**



## BACKGROUND

### AGENCY ACCREDITATION

The Salem Police Department is accredited through the Northwest Accreditation Alliance, maintaining an accreditation status since 2007. Law enforcement accreditation is an assessment by an independent body that helps ensure an agency follows proven practices in the career field, evidence-based operational procedures, and training recommendations consistent with state standards. Accreditation provides a method of measuring the performance and accountability of police agencies while improving their service and transparency to the community.

### REPORT PURPOSE & DEFINITION

The Salem Police Department prepares an annual report on the agency's police vehicular pursuits. The report provides the Chief of Police and Command Staff an opportunity to review officer actions during vehicle pursuits. The information is evaluated to address any needed changes to procedures, training, supervisory, and or administrative practices related to vehicular pursuits.

Vehicular pursuits present risks to the community, the officer, and the pursued subject. Therefore, vehicular pursuits must be balanced with comprehensive policies, directives, procedures, training, and compliance. To achieve this balance, the department evaluates available data from pursuit reports submitted by participating officers and has an internal process for reviewing these activities by its training staff. The review ensures the department's practices are consistent with proven practices throughout the law enforcement community, state statutes, and relevant case law.

All pursuit reports are reviewed by the Division Commander. Additionally, the Applied Tactics Review Board, chaired by the Professional Standards & Training Section Lieutenant, conducts a comprehensive quarterly review of all vehicular pursuits. Department Directive 5.05 describes the

duties of the board members, which include reviewing incidents and making recommendations regarding training, tactics, equipment, and department mandates.

The information in this report pertains to vehicle pursuits initiated by the Salem Police Department. Surrounding agencies may also pursue a vehicle into the city and may have expectations for assistance or assumption of the primary responsibility of their pursuit. To ensure interagency communications and expectations regarding pursuits, the Salem Police Department participates in a multiagency agreement with the Oregon State Police, Marion County, and the cities of Keizer, Woodburn, Silverton, Stayton, Mt. Angel, Aumsville, Hubbard, Gervais, and Turner.

This report covers the various aspects of a vehicular police pursuit, including details about the subjects and patterns regarding when and where pursuits occur in the city of Salem. The data is derived from the reports submitted by the primary officer involved in the event.

Additionally, Directive 4.02 Emergency Vehicle Operation, was last updated on October 7, 2022. This annual report comprises the first full calendar year since the directive update. In substance, two areas of the directive were updated.

The first updated area addresses the justification for a pursuit and the following language was added:

*Unless otherwise approved by a supervisor, sworn officers will only initiate a pursuit when the justification for the stop is a violent crime or there is reasonable suspicion the suspect poses an imminent threat of serious physical injury to the public. Officers will not enter into a pursuit when the justification for the stop is only a traffic violation or a non-violent crime.*

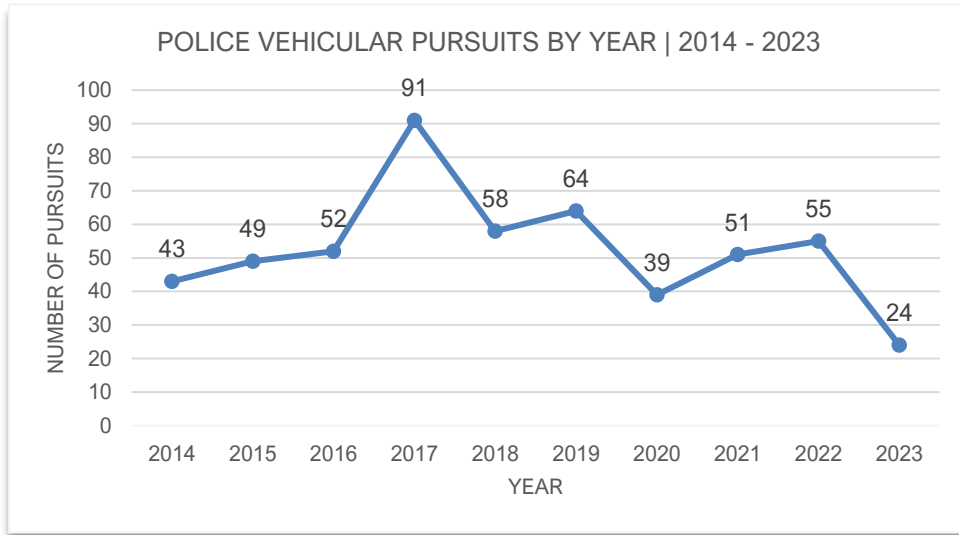
The second updated area addresses **boxing in** a subject vehicle and the following language was added:

*Considerations for boxing in needs to include, but is not limited to, the crime being investigated, suspect history if known, the location of the suspect vehicle, and the equipment available to the officers at the time of the boxing in.*

## OVERVIEW

The Salem Police Department has collected vehicular pursuit data since 2000. As shown in Graph 1, the number of pursuits has fluctuated over the last 10 years with a high of 91 in 2017. In 2023, Salem police officers were involved in 24 vehicular pursuits, a dramatic decrease compared to the previous year.

**GRAPH 1**

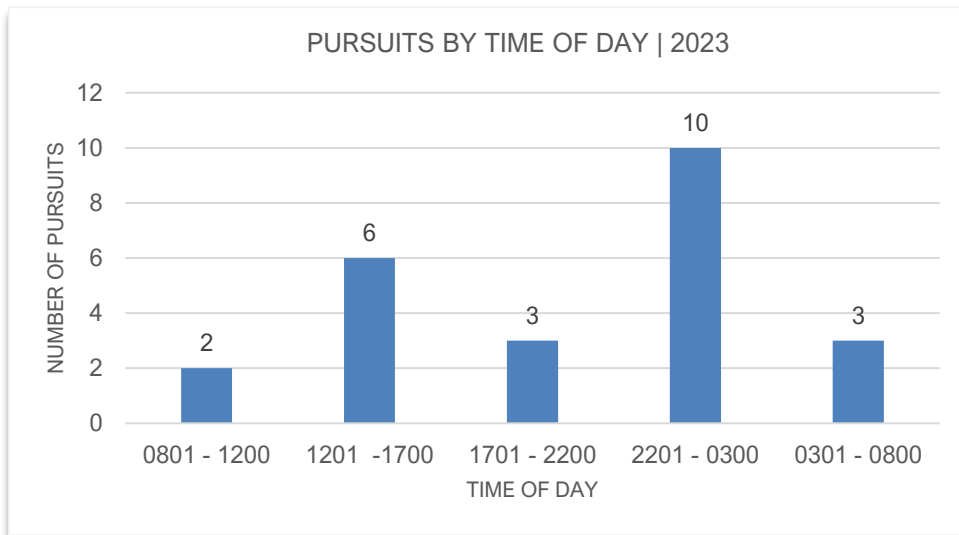


Graph 1 | The number of pursuits in 2023 decreased by 56% and is at a ten-year low.

## WHEN AND WHERE PURSUITS OCCURRED

Graph 2 demonstrates the most active time frame for pursuits is between 10 p.m. and 3:00 a.m. in 2023. Most pursuits, 41.6% (10), occurred during that period. The time frame has consistently remained the most active for the past five years.

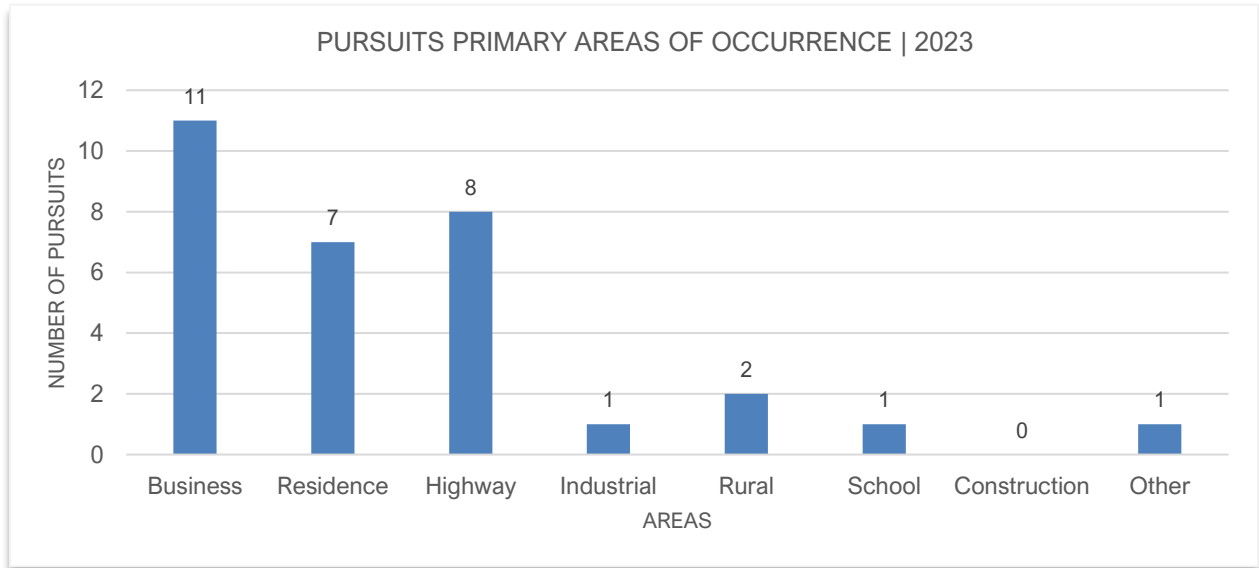
**GRAPH 2**



Graph 2 | Pursuits occurred throughout the day, most frequently during late evening and overnight hours.

As displayed in Graph 3, vehicular pursuits occurred most often within business districts, 45.8% (11), and highway areas, 33.3% (8).

**GRAPH 3**

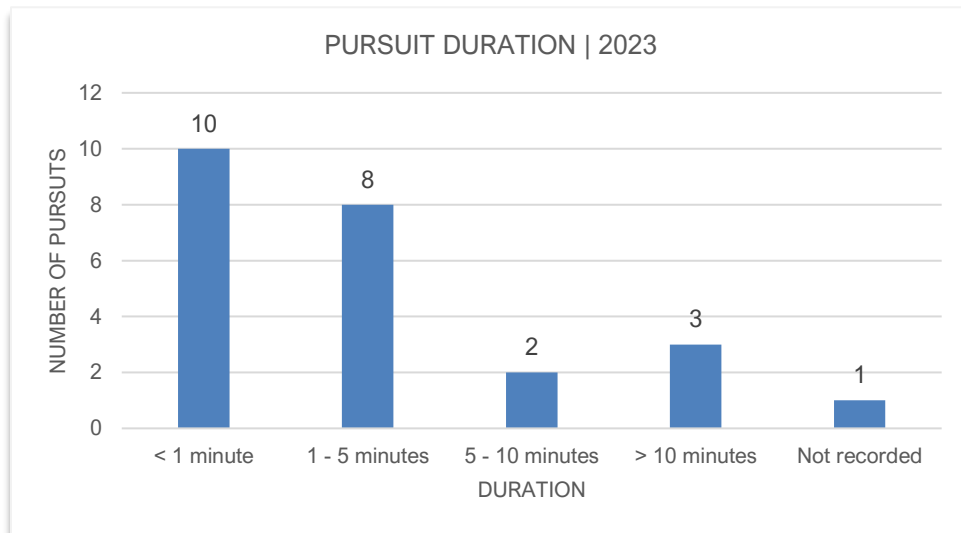


*Graph 3 | Pursuits primarily occurred in business areas and may have covered more than one area type.*

**PURSUIT DURATION AND DISTANCE**

As shown in Graph 4, the majority of pursuits lasted less than five minutes, specifically, 41.6% (10) lasted less than one minute and 33.3% (8) lasted between one and five minutes.

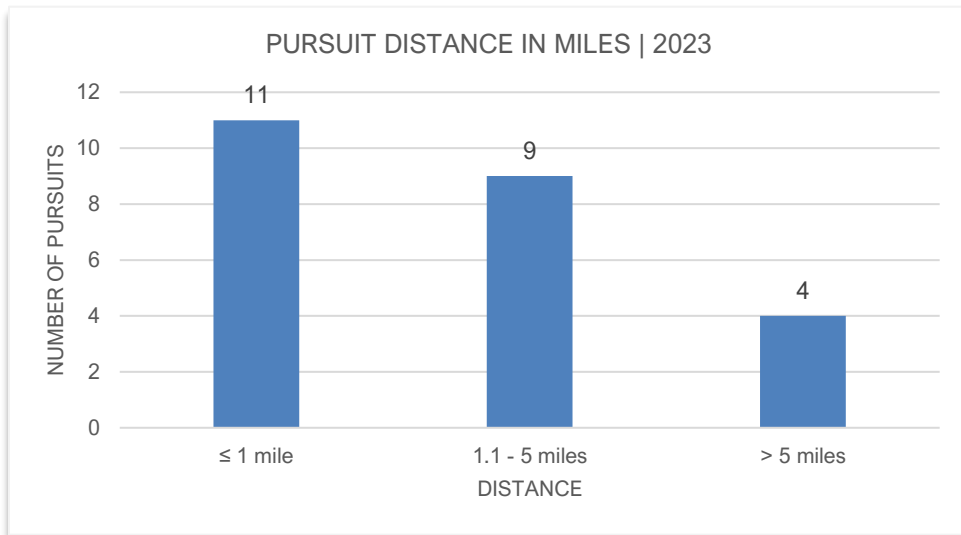
**GRAPH 4**



*Graph 4 | Of the pursuits that recorded a duration, five, or nearly 22%, exceeded five minutes.*

As shown in Graph 5, 45.8% (11) traveled one mile or less. Only 16.6% (4) of pursuits traveled more than five miles.

**GRAPH 5**

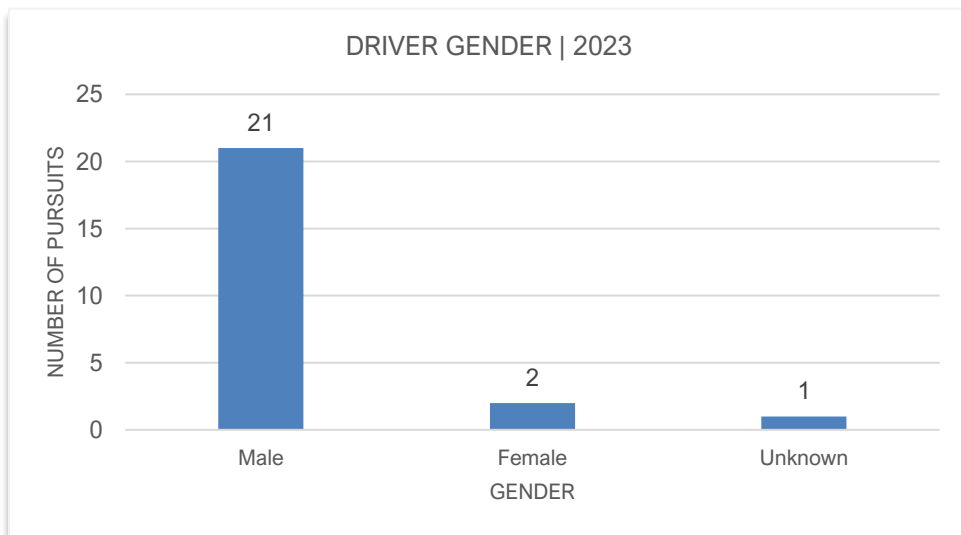


*Graph 5 | Four, or 16.7% of pursuits covered more than five miles.*

**SUBJECT INFORMATION**

As shown in Graph 6, subject drivers were most likely to be male, comprising 87.5% (21) of identified drivers in 2023. In one pursuit, the driver's gender could not be determined.

**GRAPH 6**

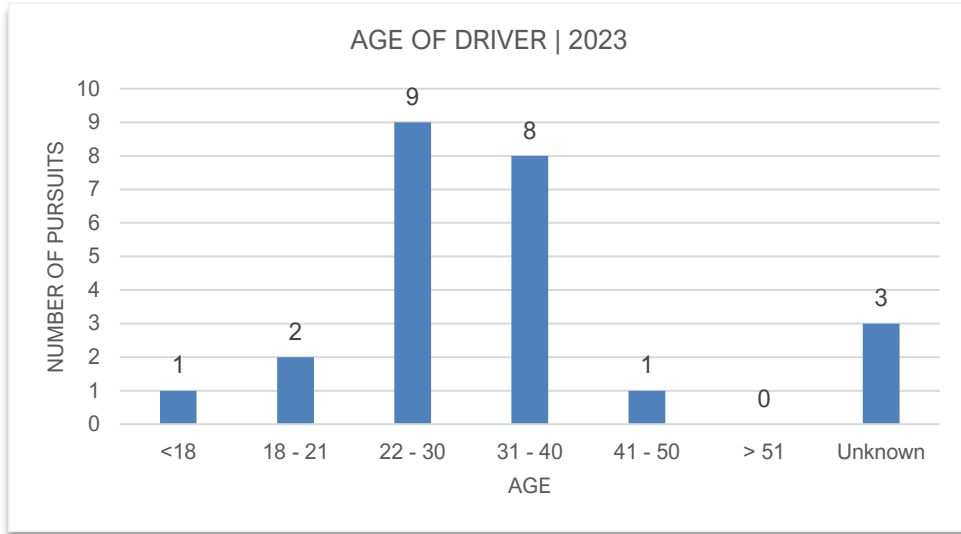


*Graph 6 | Less than ten percent (8.3%) of drivers involved in police pursuits were women.*

As shown in Graph 7, the age of subject drivers was sometimes undetermined. Drivers in the age groups of 22 to 30 were most often involved.

It must be noted that officers may select the response category of **unknown** when a driver is not apprehended or positively identified.

**GRAPH 7**

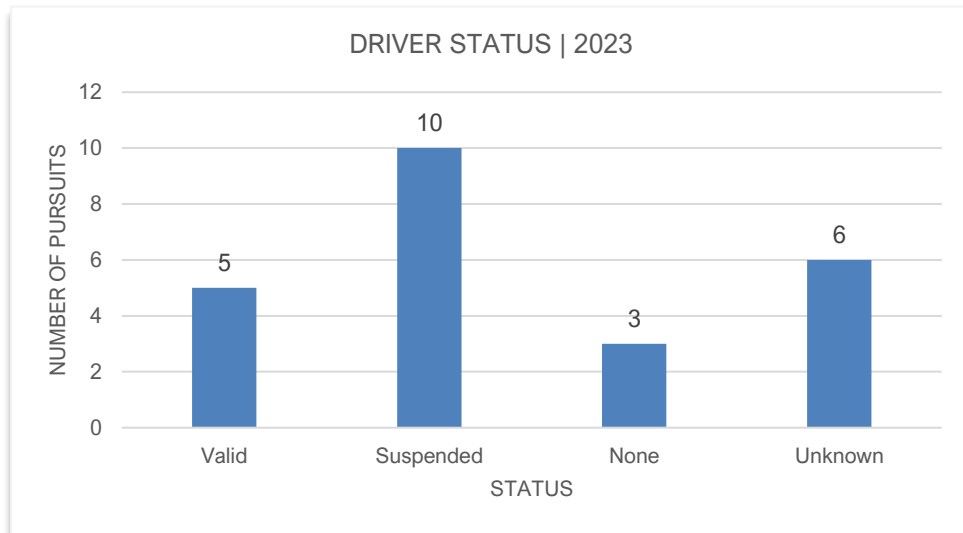


Graph 7 | Adults between the ages of 22 and 30, or 70.8%, were involved in police pursuits in 2023.

**DRIVER STATUS**

Historically, incident reports have shown that a pursued driver is likely to have a suspended driver license. As shown in Graph 8, 55.5% (10) of drivers had a suspended license when the license status was known. Drivers with no license comprised 16.6% (3), and 27.7% (5) had a valid license.

**GRAPH 8**



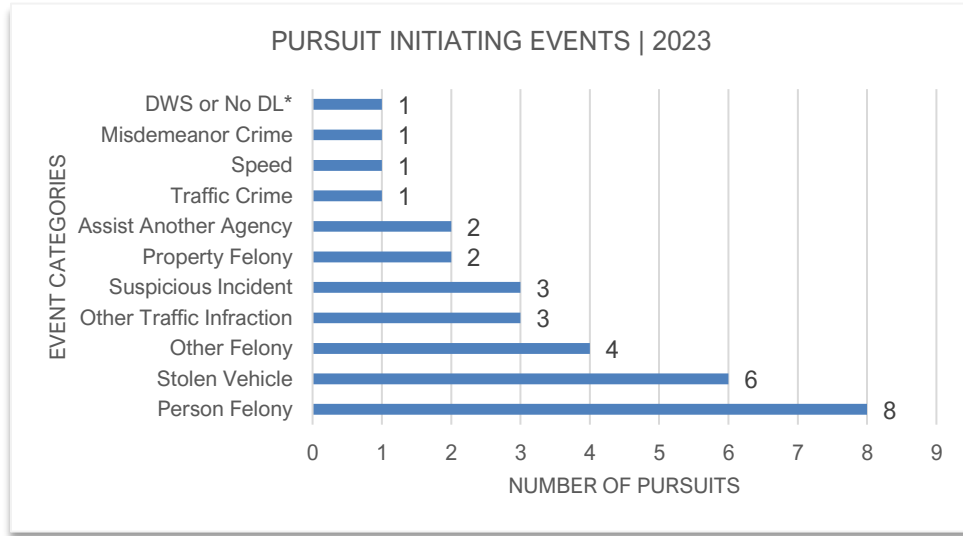
Graph 8 | A driver license status was unknown for 25% (6) of the total reported pursuits.

## PRIMARY INITIATING EVENTS

Graph 9 illustrates the various initiating event categories and the frequency with which they occurred. Officers can select more than one option when reporting the initiating event.

As previously stated, 2023 was the first full year the updated directive related to pursuits took effect. The most frequent initiating event changed from Traffic Infraction (2022) to Persons Felony (2023).

**GRAPH 9**

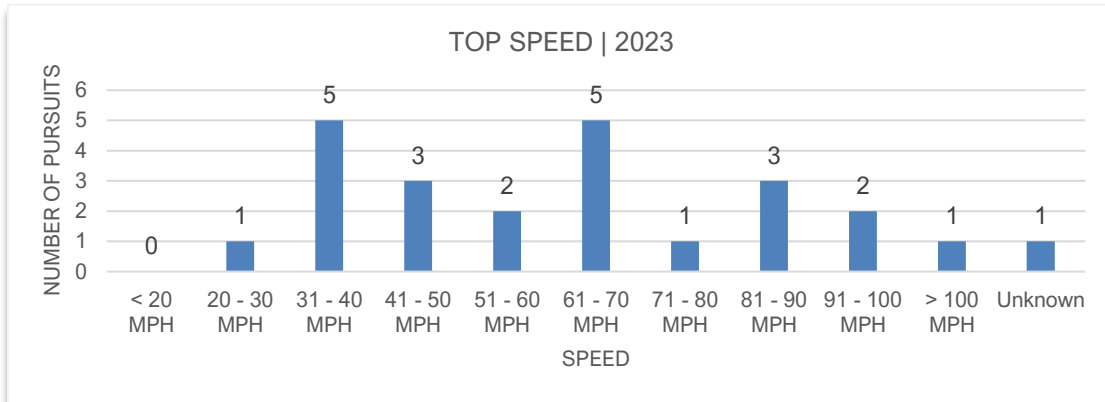


*Graph 9 | Officers may select more than one initiating event category.  
\*DWS, or driving while suspended, DL, or a driver license*

## PURSUIT SPEEDS

As shown in Graph 10, the most frequent top speeds during pursuits in 2023 ranged from 31-70, a decrease from the 2022 range of 20 to 100 miles per hour.

**GRAPH 10**



*Graph 10 | Less than one-third of pursuits exceeded speeds of 71 miles per hour or higher.*



## PROACTIVE TACTICS

### Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT):

While attempting to end a pursuit, officers may employ the use of proactive tactics following policy and training, such as the PIT maneuver. Of the 24 pursuits, the PIT maneuver was successfully utilized in three incidents. In 45.8% (11) of all pursuits, officers reported the maneuver was not used due to the lack of opportunity or set-up time.

### Tire Deflation Devices (Stop Sticks):

Stop sticks are another technique employed to bring a vehicular pursuit to a conclusion. In 2023, seven of the pursuits used stop sticks to end the pursuit. The primary reason given by officers for not using the technique was the lack of opportunity or set-up time, 50% (12). The number of attempts to employ stop sticks, both successful and unsuccessful, decreased from twelve in 2022 to seven attempts in 2023.

## TERMINATION AND CONCLUSION OF PURSUITS

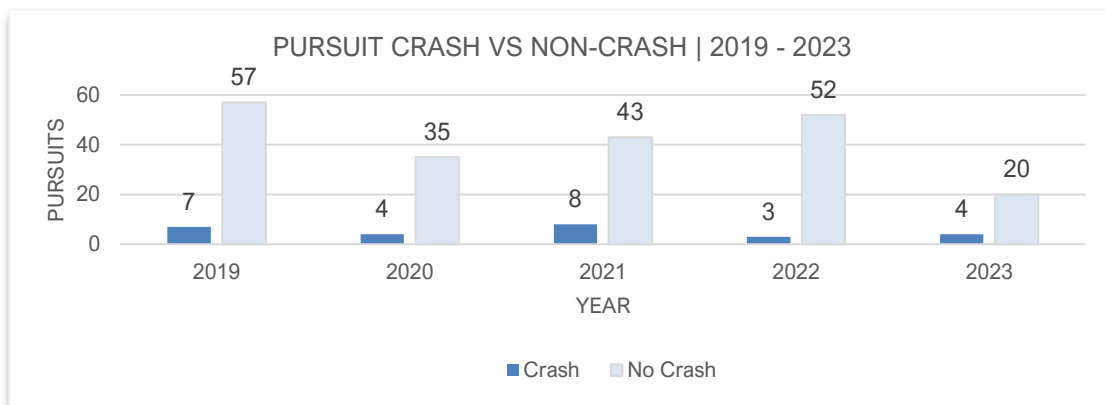
Vehicular pursuits end in one of two ways: termination or conclusion. In a termination, the officer or a supervisor stops the efforts to apprehend the driver. As outlined within policy, this is usually done for safety concerns or if the driver has been identified and can be arrested later. The conclusion of a pursuit means the event continued until the subject vehicle stopped.

When a pursuit is terminated, officers deactivate their overhead lights and sirens and discontinue their attempt to stop the vehicle. In 2023, 45.8% (11) of the 24 pursuits were terminated before the conclusion. Of these, 54.5% (6) were terminated by the pursuing officer, and 45.5% (5) by the supervisor.

## PURSUIT CRASHES

Vehicular pursuits can involve crashes because of unpredictable and evolving circumstances. Graph 11 illustrates the number of pursuits that resulted in a collision during or after the pursuit, compared to those that did not. In 2023, four pursuits resulted in crashes, a 0.8% decrease compared to the average over the past three years.

**GRAPH 11**



*Graph 11 | Four, or 16.7% of pursuits in 2023 involved a collision.*

## CONCLUSION

Over the last twenty years, vehicular pursuits reached a low of 24 in 2012 and a high of 91 in 2017. In 2023, there were 24 pursuits, making this the lowest year for vehicular pursuits since 2012. The top speeds of vehicular pursuits also decreased compared to the average top speeds in 2022.

While the department's vehicular pursuit directive allows for officer discretion, it is supported by ongoing training that emphasizes continued officer and field supervisor assessments of the risks and benefits of engaging in or continuing a pursuit.



## APPENDIX

The following appendix contains data from the years 2021 through 2023. While some data points are consistent, others, such as month or day of the week, do not have a strong correlation from year to year.

MONTH OF OCCURRENCE					
MONTH	2021	2022	2023	3-YEAR AVERAGE	% CHANGE FROM THE 3-YEAR AVERAGE
January	6	4	2	4.0	-50%
February	9	7	5	7.0	-29%
March	3	7	1	3.7	-73%
April	3	7	2	4.0	-50%
May	6	4	2	4.0	-50%
June	6	8	3	5.7	-47%
July	1	8	1	3.3	-70%
August	3	4	1	2.7	-63%
September	5	2	1	2.7	-63%
October	5	0	2	2.3	-14%
November	3	2	2	2.3	-14%
December	1	2	2	1.7	20%

DAY OF THE WEEK					
DAY	2021	2022	2023	3-YEAR AVERAGE	% CHANGE FROM THE 3-YEAR AVERAGE
Sunday	5	6	5	5.3	-6%
Monday	5	10	6	7.0	-14%
Tuesday	9	12	2	7.7	-74%
Wednesday	10	10	5	8.3	-40%
Thursday	8	3	0	3.7	-100%
Friday	5	7	4	5.3	-25%
Saturday	9	7	2	6.0	-67%

TIME OF DAY					
TIME SPAN*	2021	2022	2023	3-YEAR AVERAGE	% CHANGE FROM THE 3-YEAR AVERAGE
0801 – 1200	3	5	2	3.3	-40%
1201 – 1700	10	8	6	8.0	-25%
1701 – 2200	13	6	3	7.3	-59%
2201 – 0300	17	26	10	17.7	-43%
0301 - 0800	8	10	3	7.0	-57%

\* 24-hour clock

PRIMARY AREA					
TYPE	2021	2022	2023	3-YEAR AVERAGE	% CHANGE FROM THE 3-YEAR AVERAGE
Business	13	25	11	16.3	-33%
Residential	23	21	7	17.0	-59%
Highway	6	15	8	9.7	-17%
Industrial	5	4	1	3.3	-70%
Rural	4	3	2	3.0	-33%
School	0	1	1	0.7	50%
Construction	0	0	0	0.0	—
Other	0	3	1	1.3	-25%

PURSUIT DURATION					
TIMESPAN	2021	2022	2023	3-YEAR AVERAGE	% CHANGE FROM THE 3-YEAR AVERAGE
< 1 minute	5	26	10	13.7	-27%
1 – 5 minutes	41	23	8	24.0	-67%
5 – 10 minutes	5	3	2	3.3	-40%
10 – 20 minutes	0	3	3	2.0	50%
> 20 minutes	0	0	0	0.0	—
No response, unknown	0	0	1	0.3	200%

PURSUIT DISTANCE					
TIMESPAN	2021	2022	2023	3-YEAR AVERAGE	% CHANGE FROM THE 3-YEAR AVERAGE
≤ 1 mile	42	31	11	28.0	-61%
1.1 – 5 miles	8	17	9	11.3	-21%
5.1 – 15 miles	1	6	4	3.7	9%
15.1 – 20 miles	0	0	0	0.0	—
≥ 20.1 miles	0	0	0	0.0	—
No response	0	0	0	0.0	—

SUSPECT GENDER					
GENDER	2021	2022	2023	3-YEAR AVERAGE	% CHANGE FROM THE 3-YEAR AVERAGE
Male	39	38	21	32.7	-36%
Female	5	2	2	3.0	-33%
Unknown, unspecified	7	15	1	7.7	-87%

SUSPECT AGE					
AGE SPAN	2021	2022	2023	3-YEAR AVERAGE	% CHANGE FROM THE 3-YEAR AVERAGE
< 18 years	0	2	1	1.0	0%
18 – 21 years	5	5	2	4.0	-50%
22 – 30 years	3	9	9	7.0	29%
31 – 40 years	6	7	8	7.0	14%
41 – 50 years	5	1	1	2.3	-57%
> 51 years	2	1	0	1.0	-100%
Unknown	30	30	3	21.0	-86%

SPEED					
SPEED RANGE	2021	2022	2023	3-YEAR AVERAGE	% CHANGE FROM THE 3-YEAR AVERAGE
< 20 MPH	2	0	0	0.7	-100%
20 – 30 MPH	3	9	1	4.3	-77%
31 – 40 MPH	6	8	5	6.3	-21%
41 – 50 MPH	14	4	3	7.0	-57%
51 – 60 MPH	7	9	2	6.0	-67%
61 – 70 MPH	11	5	5	7.0	-29%
71 – 80 MPH	2	6	1	3.0	-67%
81 – 90 MPH	4	9	3	5.3	-44%
91 – 100 MPH	0	5	2	2.3	-14%
> 100 MPH	0	0	1	0.3	200%
No response	2	0	1	1.0	0%

PROACTIVE INTERVENTIONS					
INTERVENTION TYPE	2021	2022	2023	3-YEAR AVERAGE	% CHANGE FROM THE 3-YEAR AVERAGE
Successful PIT	1	3	3	2.3	29%
Successful stop sticks	7	6	7	6.7	5%

PURSUIT END					
OUTCOME	2021	2022	2023	3-YEAR AVERAGE	% CHANGE FROM THE 3-YEAR AVERAGE
Concluded	11	9	13	11.0	18%
Terminated	40	46	11	32.3	-66%



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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
about this report, please contact the  
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