Office of the City Manager

WORKSESSION
March 24, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager

Submitted by: Jennifer Louis, Chief of Police

Subject: 2025 Berkeley Police Department Annual Report

INTRODUCTION

At the request of City Council, the City Manager provides regular reports on crime in Berkeley. The Berkeley Police Department Annual Report details 2025 year-end crime, collision, stop data and use of force data. This annual report also serves to provide a number of status updates on Council referral items, department initiatives and legislative mandates.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The mission of the Berkeley Police Department is to safeguard our diverse community through proactive law enforcement and problem solving, treating all people with dignity and respect. The Department works in service to the community and in partnership with the community, the Office of the Director of Police Accountability and the Police Accountability Board, as well as other City Departments and our regional partners.

The Berkeley Police Department understands the importance of partnering with the community and maintaining accountability. We are committed to being transparent about our policies and actions, to sharing data and information, and welcoming suggestions on enhancing our service quality as we safeguard our community. To help achieve that goal, the Department launched our Transparency Hub in 2023. That hub gives the public an accessible platform to analyze critical data and insights related to policing activities, calls for service, crimes, traffic safety, and community engagement. It can be accessed at bit.ly/bpd-transparency and provides near-real-time, area-specific data directly to our community.

The Police Department's Annual Report is an opportunity to provide a more comprehensive update which is attached here and will be presented to Council during the Special Meeting on March 24, 2026. This report covers a range of topics beyond the traditional reporting on crime and collision data. It includes reporting on staffing levels, specific information on call volume, type and response, efforts related to fair and impartial policing initiatives, crime and public safety problem solving responses, as well as other important departmental efforts.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS
There are no identifiable environmental effects, climate impacts, or sustainability opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS
Specific fiscal implications related to items referred to within this report are addressed in the biennial budget process. Additional information of costs can be provided as needed.

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ATTACHMENT
1. 2025 Berkeley Police Department Annual Report

2025 Berkeley Police Department Annual Report

March 24, 2026

Contents

Introduction

The Berkeley Police Department's 2025 Annual Report provides an annual snapshot of our activities, progress, and challenges over the past year. Additional information and daily updates can be found on our Transparency Hub. This year's report reflects a department that continued to deliver high-quality professional service under persistent staffing constraints. Our standard of care does not change because staffing is lean. To meet that standard, we made deliberate investments in the tools and strategies that allow us to do more with our limited resources.

Mission: United in service, our mission is to safeguard our diverse community through proactive law enforcement and problem solving, treating all people with dignity and respect.

Vision: The Berkeley Police Department will be a team of leaders at every level. We will foster strong relationships with our community, inspiring trust through our service, building on our historic tradition of progressive policing, and dedicated to the safety of all.

Values: Service is our calling. As members of this community, the Berkeley Police Department team is committed to proactive law enforcement and problem solving, holding these as our core values:

- *Integrity*: We are ethical, fair, and trustworthy in all we do.

- *Safety*: We strive to keep our community and each other safe.

- *Respect*: We fulfill our duties with dignity, compassion, and empathy.

- *Diversity*: We value the strength of a diverse workplace and community. We endeavor to reflect the community we serve, promoting inclusion and fairness.

- *Professionalism*: We commit to organizational excellence through progressive training, positive attitude, and superior performance.

In 2025, we built on the foundational work of recent years and began to see results. Our staffing remains a challenge but we made progress in how we use the resources we have. The establishment of a Flex Team framework, initially staffed on a part-time basis, brought focused, data-driven operations to problems like organized retail theft and produced 141 arrests across 23 operations. Building on those results, BPD is standing up a full-time Flex Team in Spring 2026 with three dedicated officer positions. Our Automated License Plate Reader program directly contributed to 58 arrests in its first full year. And while we investigated one homicide via knife, for the first time in at least a decade, Berkeley recorded zero fatal or injury shootings.

These results reflect a deliberate shift: rather than asking our officers to simply absorb more with less, we are working to match the right resources and tools to the right problems.

This report documents our progress in 2025 and outlines where we are headed. As you will see in the data and initiatives that follow, the investments this department has made in people, in community partnerships, and in technology are producing measurable improvements in public safety outcomes. We invite our community and its representatives to review these results and join us as we continue this work together.

Staffing & Workload

Berkeley police responded to 60,374 calls for service in 2025 while operating well below authorized staffing levels. Despite these constraints, the department maintained competitive response times and continued expanding the Community Service Officer program. Recruitment efforts for dispatchers were a particular focus, with the department hosting specialized hiring events and participating in public safety recruitment fairs throughout the year.

Staffing

The department currently employs 154 officers, 144 of whom are available to work as solo police officers- well below the current authorized strength of 174 sworn personnel (reduced from 181 prior to the last budget cycle).

Sworn Staff
Annual Peak Staffing Levels
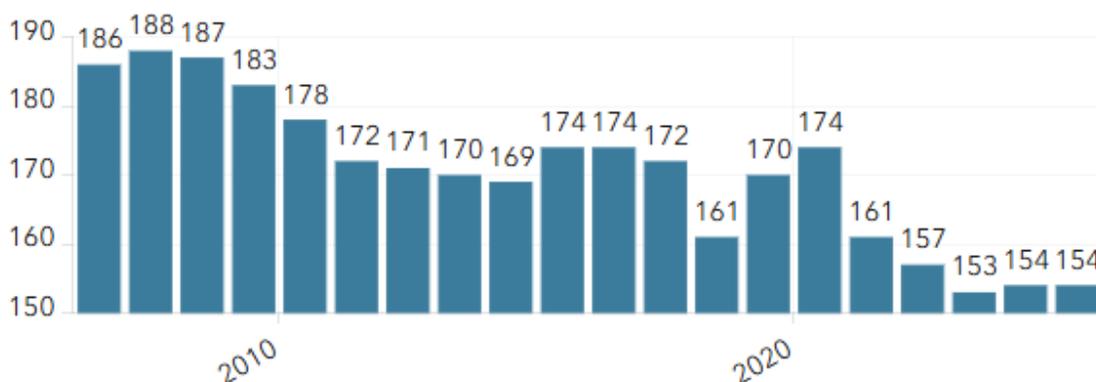
The department is authorized for 32 dispatcher positions (reduced from 36 prior to the last budget cycle) and 4 dispatch supervisor positions (down from 5) but is currently staffed with 20 dispatchers and 4 supervisors- also well below ideal staffing levels. To address this shortage in the Communications Center, the team leveraged dispatch-qualified personnel while intensifying recruitment. Key efforts in 2025 included hosting a specialized BPD dispatch seminar in April and participating in several public safety recruitment fairs to attract qualified candidates.

We have continued expanding our Community Service Officer (CSO) capacity, with authorization having increased from 22 to 28 positions in the Fiscal Year 2024 budget, where it remains today. We continue working towards full CSO staffing to enable additional CSOs to transition to our patrol teams. Additional information on the CSO program follows below.

Calls for Service

BPD responded to 60,374 calls for service in 2025, a slight decrease of approximately 2% from 2024. Of those, 27,341 were non-emergency calls, 15,543 were officer-initiated, 16,255 were 911 calls, 1,214 were submitted online, and 21 were transferred from an automated service.

Calls for Service
by Call Source

Non-emergency calls dropped by roughly 5% and online reports declined by nearly 14%, while officer-initiated calls decreased slightly by about 3%. The most significant trend was a continued rise in 911 calls- up around 6%, reaching their highest level in several years. Because 911 calls require the department's most urgent response, this increase signals growing demand for immediate assistance in critical situations.

Call volume continues to vary significantly across the city. As illustrated in the heat map, City Council District 4 again recorded the highest call count among all districts in 2025. These patterns directly inform BPD's deployment decisions, including where to direct additional resources such as the Bike Unit to maintain timely response in areas with elevated demand.
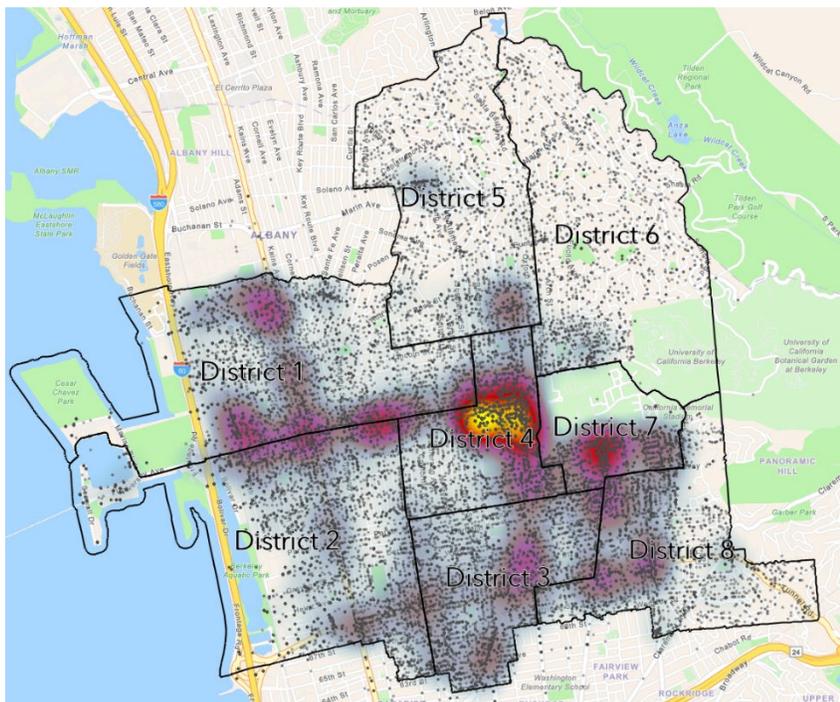
Workload

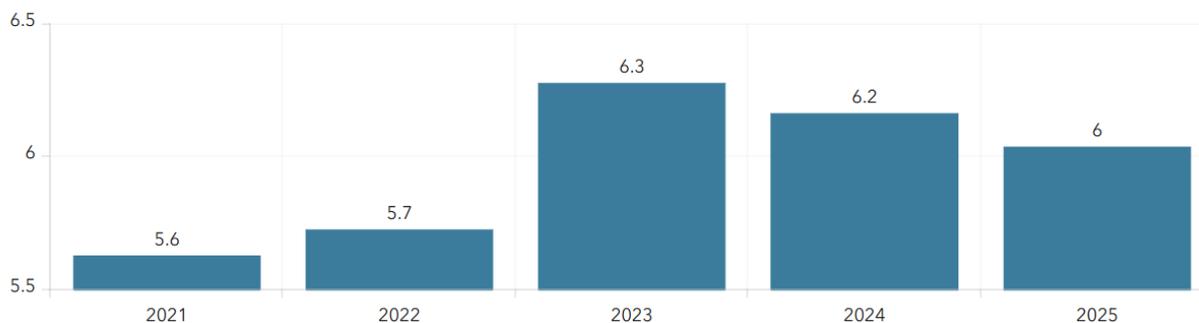Average calls for service per officer per shift rose sharply through 2023, peaking at 6.3 before beginning to come down. In 2024 and 2025, that number declined to 6.2 and then 6.0, reflecting the early impact of programs designed specifically to reduce the burden on patrol officers.

Average Calls Handled per Officer per Shift
Non-Officer-Initiated Calls

The most direct contributors to that decline are the CSO patrol program, the Bike Unit, and the Flex Team. Each of these programs was built with the goal of bringing the right resources to each community need.

The three patrol CSOs who completed field training in 2025 independently handled over 1,500 non-emergency calls, routine reports, and traffic control assignments, all calls that previously would have gone to patrol. The Bike Unit has similarly allowed BPD to maintain timely response in high-demand areas like District 4 without pulling officers from other beats. The Flex Team's proactive retail theft operations target the organized offenders driving repeat calls for service rather than waiting to respond after the fact.

The result is a workload trend that, for the first time in several years, is moving in the right direction. With three additional CSOs transferring to patrol in 2026 and the Flex Team expanding to three dedicated officer positions, the department expects this trend to continue. Overtime remains essential for maintaining minimum staffing on every shift, and overall call volumes remain elevated compared to Covid-era levels, but the investments made in 2024 and 2025 are producing measurable relief for the officers handling them.

Department Initiatives

What We've Done

Community Service Officers in Patrol and Investigations

The CSO patrol program, which revives a successful approach from the early 2000s, was created in 2024 and fully rolled out in 2025. Three CSOs completed their field training and began independently handling non-emergency calls, routine reports, and traffic control on patrol.

Together, they responded to over 1,500 calls for service in their first year.

That volume matters. Every call a CSO handles is one that doesn't pull a sworn officer away from higher-priority work. With emergency call volumes elevated and staffing still below authorized levels, CSOs give us a practical way to keep up with demand while freeing officers for the situations that require them most.

We hope to be fully staffed at the CSO position soon, enabling additional CSOs to transition to our patrol teams. As the program grows, we also plan to expand CSO roles into investigations, where they can support detectives with evidence collection, report preparation, and data entry.

The CSO program is also a key piece of the City's broader Reimagining Public Safety initiative, which has been working since 2020 to build a more community-centered approach to public safety in Berkeley. A core goal of that effort is shifting work that doesn't require a sworn officer to other trained professionals. Patrol CSOs are one of the most concrete examples of that idea in practice, and their results in 2025 show the model works.

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How We're Doing

Even as the Department navigates staffing challenges and rising 911 call volume, response times remain strong. Speed of response is one of the most direct measures of whether

Our median response time for Priority 1 calls was 7 minutes, meeting or exceeding regional standards.

our community receives the service it needs in critical moments, and our 2025 data shows BPD continues to perform well relative to the region.

The table below provides a snapshot of median response times across priority levels for Berkeley and nearby cities. Priority levels, with 1 being the most urgent, are determined by the whether the call is in progress or "cold" as well as the seriousness of the call type. Definitions for priority levels vary by jurisdiction, so we have included the corresponding share of calls for each level where data was available to illustrate the differences in definitional boundaries. The figures shown below reflect the most recent data published by that agency.

Median Response Times
First Unit, Minutes
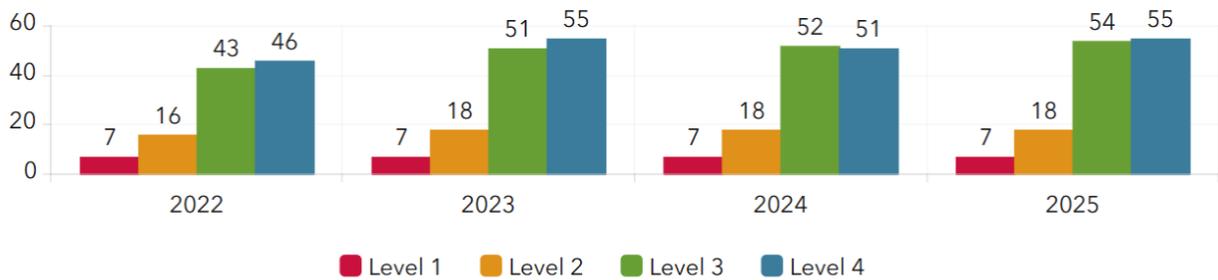
*Excludes Officer Initiated calls and call types: Audible Alarms and Traffic Stop

Median Response Times (minutes)	Level 1 (% of all calls)	Level 2 (% of all calls)	Level 3 (% of all calls)	Level 4 (% of all calls)
Berkeley (2025)	7 (12%)	18 (30%)	54 (17%)	55 (30%)
San Francisco (2025)	9 (11%)	28 (23%)	77 (65%)	-
Oakland (2024)	9 (20%)	240 (50%)	-	-
San Jose (2025)	7 (3%)	28 (28%)	-	-

Comparison cities chosen based on data availability and region

While our response times compare favorably to nearby agencies, the increasing volume of 911 calls and persistent staffing constraints mean that maintaining these numbers will require more than personnel alone. Tools like a Drone as First Responder program offer the potential to get eyes on scene even faster, not because our current times are inadequate, but because faster situational awareness leads to better outcomes for officers and the community alike.

What's Next

Communication Center Initiatives

BPD's Communications Center has operated below strength for years, and by the start of 2025, almost half of our dispatch positions were vacant. That level of shortage put real strain on working dispatchers and limited our ability to operate at the pace our community needs. Closing that gap is a top priority and the investments we've made this year position us for meaningful progress in 2026.

As part of an ongoing workgroup in collaboration with the Fire Department, we have built a foundation of initiatives designed to grow and sustain the Communications Center for the long term.

On the recruiting side, quarterly Virtual Recruiting Events have reached 1,197 potential candidates, and our partnership with All Star Recruiting continues to expand our applicant pool. We also rolled out CritiCall, a pre-employment assessment candidates can complete on their own time. By testing for the core skills the job actually requires like typing speed, data entry, decision-making, listening, and multitasking under pressure, we can direct our resources toward candidates most likely to succeed, and those who advance come in better prepared.

The training pipeline itself has been redesigned to support stronger outcomes. A new Call Taker position gives recruits a more manageable entry point, allowing them to build foundational skills before taking on the full scope of dispatch operations. Early results are encouraging, with new Call Takers completing training at a higher rate and we expect this model to pay dividends as we continue hiring.

Two additional initiatives are moving toward implementation. Protocol-based dispatching tools have been identified, and stakeholder discussions are being finalized; once in place, standardized call-handling procedures are expected to improve training outcomes, reduce workload stress, and increase overall efficiency. We are also exploring a virtual agent to triage non-emergency calls, which would reduce routine call volume for dispatchers and improve response times for higher-priority requests.

We hired nine new dispatchers in 2025, though attrition resulted in a net gain of three. That is a reminder of why recruiting alone isn't enough. Retaining and better onboarding the people we bring in is just as critical as filling seats. With the structural changes now underway, we enter 2026 with a clearer path toward a Communications Center that is adequately staffed and built to stay that way.

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Crime & Investigations

Berkeley saw broad improvements in crime trends in 2025. Shootings fell 40%, robberies dropped 20%, commercial burglaries declined 31%, and vehicle thefts were cut nearly in half. Total Group A offenses fell 11% overall, driven primarily by an 18% reduction in property crimes. Robberies continued their decline below pre-COVID levels, and vehicle thefts- while still above pre-pandemic rates- dropped to their lowest point since 2021.

Not all trends moved in the right direction. Felony sexual assaults rose from 78 to 96, aggravated assaults increased 16%, and hate crimes reached their highest five-year total at 50.

On the enforcement side, BPD recovered 114 firearms, the Flex Team conducted 23 retail theft operations.

Crime Data

To accurately interpret our crime data, it is essential to distinguish between the three primary stages of police response: calls for service, case reports, and formal criminal charges. Calls for service represent the public's initial request for assistance, or a report of criminal activity requiring police response and investigation. When our response yields evidence that suggests that a crime has occurred, officers conduct investigations and document their findings in a case report. Once complete, these cases undergo a legal review to determine if the evidence warrants formal charges by the District Attorney. Simultaneously, this data is processed and compiled for submission to the California Department of Justice (DOJ), ensuring our local activity is accurately reflected in state and federal crime reporting databases.

In 2024, we transitioned from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Summary Reporting System (SRS) to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) for data submitted to the California Department of Justice. NIBRS provides a more complete picture of criminal incidents: it records every offense in an incident rather than just the most serious one, distinguishes between attempted and completed offenses, collects weapon details for all violent crimes, and gathers detailed information about victims, offenders, and their relationships. With two years of NIBRS data now in hand, we are beginning to establish the year-over-year baselines that will support more meaningful trend analysis going forward.

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NIBRS Group A

NIBRS Group A offenses fall into three categories: Crimes Against Persons, Crimes Against Property, and Crimes Against Society. Unlike the older Summary Reporting System, NIBRS records every offense in an incident, providing a more detailed and accurate picture of criminal activity. 2025 marks the second year of Berkeley's NIBRS reporting, allowing for the first direct year-over-year comparisons under this system.

The Berkeley NIBRS report is as follows:

Group A Crimes

CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS

		2024	2025	Percent Change
HOMICIDE OFFENSES	Murder	4	1	-75%
	Negligent Manslaughter	1	0	-100%
	Justifiable Homicide	0	0	NC
SEX OFFENSES	Rape	43	63	47%
	Sodomy	11	12	9%
	Sexual Assault with Object	11	15	36%
	Fondling	57	45	-21%
	Incest	0	0	NC
	Statutory Rape	4	1	-75%
ASSAULT OFFENSES	Aggravated Assault	482	561	16%
	Simple Assault	840	838	0%
	Intimidation	296	248	-16%
KIDNAPPING / ABDUCTION & HUMAN TRAFFICKING	Kidnapping / Abduction	60	65	8%
	Human Trafficking, Commercial Sex Acts	0	0	NC
	Human Trafficking, Involuntary Servitude	0	0	NC
TOTAL CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS		**1,809**	**1,849**	**2%**
				NC – NON-CALCULABLE

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CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY

		2024	2025	Percent Change
ROBBERY	Robbery	221	177	-20%
BURGLARY/ THEFT	Burglary/ Breaking & Entering	788	719	-9%
	Larceny / Theft Offenses	4,420	3,696	-16%
	Motor Vehicle Theft	1093	572	-48%
PROPERTY DESTRUCTION	Arson	48	58	21%
	Destruction of Property	770	658	-15%
FRAUD & FINANCIAL CRIME	Counterfeiting / Forgery	77	115	49%
	Fraud Offense	680	662	-3%
	Embezzlement	15	8	-47%
	Extortion / Blackmail	25	32	28%
	Bribery	0	1	NC
MISC. PROPERTY CRIME	Stolen Property Offenses	140	118	-16%
TOTAL CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY		**8,277**	**6,816**	**-18%**

NC – NON-CALCULABLE

CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY

		2024	2025	Percent Change
DRUG OFFENSES	Drug/ Narcotics Violations	313	338	8%
	Drug Equipment Violations	360	536	49%
REGULATORY OFFENSES	Gambling Offenses	0	0	NC
	Pornography/ Obscene Material	12	14	17%
	Prostitution	0	0	NC
	Weapons Law Violations	240	216	-10%

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ANIMAL CRUELTY	Animal Cruelty	8	7	-13%
TOTAL CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY		**933**	**1,111**	**19%**
				NC – NON-CALCULABLE

TOTAL GROUP A OFFENSES

		2024	2025	Percent Change
CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS		1,809	1,849	2%
CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY		8,277	6,816	-18%
CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY		933	1,111	19%
TOTAL GROUP A OFFENSES		**11,019**	**9,776**	**-11%**
				NC – NON-CALCULABLE

Note: The 2024 figures shown in this report reflect finalized data submitted to the California Department of Justice and may differ slightly from the preliminary figures published in last year's annual report. These revisions are a normal part of the NIBRS reporting process as incidents are reclassified or updated.

Select Crime Categories

With only two years of NIBRS data available, the following section uses statutes and internally tracked categories to monitor trends across key crime types. This framework draws on legal definitions alongside in-house classifications and provides the first year-over-year comparisons under our current reporting system. The five-year view in each table combines pre-NIBRS and NIBRS-era figures to preserve historical context while the newer system matures. Because these categories are tracked independently from NIBRS, totals for a given offense may differ slightly from the NIBRS Group A figures above. Prior-year figures in these tables reflect the numbers as originally published in each year's annual report.

Robberies

Robberies	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Pedestrian	119	148	205	106	88
Commercial	118	117	135	97	64
Home Invasion	8	8	5	2	9
Bank/ ATM	6	4	2	1	2
Carjacking	14	15	39	15	14
Total	**265**	**292**	**386**	**221**	**177**
By Gun (% of total)	74 (28%)	69 (24%)	111 (29%)	41 (19%)	20 (11%)

Shootings

Shootings	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Non-Injury	44	38	24	17	15
Injury	6	12	8	5	0
Fatal	0	3	2	3	0
Total	**50**	**53**	**34**	**25**	**15**

Sexual Assaults

Sexual Assaults	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Felony	57	89	97	78	96
Misdemeanor	50	81	62	42	40
Total	**107**	**170**	**159**	**120**	**136**

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Property Crimes

Select Property Crimes	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Commercial Burglaries	316	435	574	396	274
Vehicle Thefts	1098	836	1350	1053	567
Catalytic Converter Thefts	573	847	457	312	248

Hate Crimes & Incidents

Hate Crimes	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Race/Ethnicity/National Origin	29	24	27	20	28
Religion	11	3	9	10	13
Sexual Orientation	2	11	9	14	9
Gender	0	0	0	0	0
Disability	0	0	1	1	0
Total	**42**	**38**	**46**	**45**	**50**

Hate Incidents*	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Race/Ethnicity/National Origin	16	22	24	21	33
Religion	1	5	19	12	4
Sexual Orientation	4	4	7	4	5
Gender	0	0	0	0	1
Disability	1	0	0	0	1
Total	**22**	**31**	**50**	**37**	**44**

Hate incidents are acts of prejudice that are not crimes and do not involve violence, threats, or property damage.

Department Initiatives

What We've Done

Combatting Gun Violence

The foundation for BPD's approach to gun violence was built over the last several years. In 2025, that work matured into measurable results: zero gun violence related homicides or injuries for the first time in at least a decade, and a 40% drop in shootings (from 25 to 15).

Our partnership with the City-run Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention Program (GVIPP) and community-based organizations Live Free and the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) continued to anchor the prevention side. GVIPP provides life coaching, mentorship, and direct support services to individuals most at risk, and responds to incidents including shooting scenes and hospital visits. GVIPP also continued its capacity-building work with Berkeley-based organizations like Berkeley Tech and the Berkeley HUB, and maintained regional coordination with Oakland's Department of Violence Prevention and Richmond's Office of Neighborhood Safety.

On the enforcement side, gun arrests rose 31% (from 58 to 76) even as overall gun cases dropped 38% (from 150 to 93). That combination tells an important story: there are fewer gun incidents in Berkeley, and when they do happen, we are making arrests at a higher rate. Detectives continued expanding proactive follow-up investigations and search warrants, recovering 114 firearms associated with crimes. Of those, 52 came from search warrants and 17 from proactive traffic stops.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Guns Seized as Evidence	108	121	86	110	114

Every recovered firearm is processed through the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network, a nationwide collaboration coordinated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms that connects ballistic evidence from shooting scenes with records of firearm ownership and purchase. The department also processes each weapon for DNA and fingerprints to identify individuals involved in shootings or illegal possession.

Beyond enforcement, detectives and patrol officers continued to coordinate with GVIPP to connect impacted individuals and families to life coaching, mentorship, and support services in line with the department's dual approach of holding offenders accountable while investing in the community conditions that prevent future violence.

These results reflect what a sustained, multi-year investment in both community partnerships and targeted enforcement can produce. The goal for 2026 is to sustain this momentum through the same combination of enforcement, investigation, and community partnership.

Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR)

With Council approval, BPD deployed its ALPR network citywide in 2025. The technology has fundamentally improved how officers patrol and how detectives investigate crimes spanning a range of serious offenses including robbery, kidnapping, carjacking, burglary, weapons violations, organized retail theft, stolen property, and DUI.

On the patrol side, ALPRs give officers real-time alerts when a stolen vehicle or a vehicle linked to a felony enters the city. Before ALPRs, spotting these vehicles depended almost entirely on an officer happening to recognize a plate or match a description. Now, officers are notified immediately and can respond with confirmed information rather than suspicion. In 2025, the system generated 621 stolen vehicle alerts and 78 felony vehicle alerts. Each one of those is a moment where an officer received actionable information they otherwise would not have had. That precision means more targeted stops and less risk for both officers and the public.

For investigations, the impact has been just as significant. Detectives now have access to historical plate data that lets them track suspect vehicle movements after the fact, build timelines, and connect cases that might otherwise stay isolated. This has been especially valuable in robbery investigations, where suspect vehicles often appear across multiple incidents. ALPR data gives detectives the ability to link those cases together and identify patterns that would have been extremely difficult to piece together manually.

In its first full year, the ALPR program contributed to at least 37 stolen vehicle recoveries, played a role in 58 arrests, and supported 121 cases.

The value of the ALPR system multiplies when it operates as part of a regional network. Vehicles involved in crimes frequently travel across city lines, and when neighboring agencies share ALPR data, a suspect vehicle flagged in one jurisdiction can be identified in another and apprehended by local officers. Berkeley Police Department's system is integrated into this broader regional infrastructure, enabling officers and detectives to track suspect vehicles throughout the East Bay. This regional connectivity transforms ALPRs from a local tool into a resource multiplier for public safety across the region, allowing for coordinated, timely, and effective law-enforcement responses.

ALPRs are a critical component of a broader strategy to provide officers with better real-time information. When patrol officers have more accurate intelligence before arriving on scene, they make better, safer decisions. When detectives can analyze vehicle movement across both time and geography, they can solve cases more efficiently and effectively.

The ALPR program's first year has shown what that looks like in practice, and its role will only grow should Council approve to continue and expand public safety technologies.

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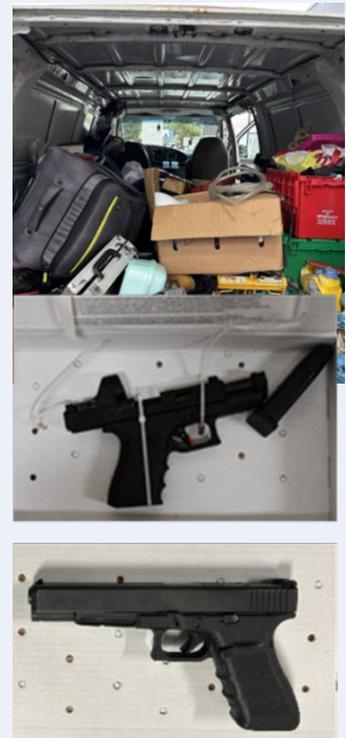
Flex Team Operations

In 2025, BPD stood up a dedicated Flex Team by creating a new Flex Team Sergeant position to run targeted, data-driven operations. The results speak for themselves: 23 operations, 141 arrests, and a theft clearance rate that has jumped from around 10% in prior years to 20% since operations began.

The Flex Team's primary focus has been organized retail theft, which has evolved from a series of isolated shoplifting calls into a more organized, regional problem. Rather than responding to these incidents one by one after the fact, the Flex Team uses crime data and partnerships with local businesses and loss prevention teams to run proactive operations that catch suspects during the commission of a theft. Apprehending people in the act significantly increases the likelihood of successful prosecution and sends a clear deterrent signal to regional theft crews.

What those operations uncovered went well beyond retail theft: nearly 72% of those arrested faced additional criminal charges including identity fraud, possession of burglary tools, narcotics offenses, and outstanding warrants for crimes as serious as kidnapping and carjacking. On two occasions, individuals were arrested with illegally possessed firearms. 42% of those arrested were on probation or parole at the time, or their arrest qualified as a felony under Proposition 36.

Feedback from retail partners has been overwhelmingly positive, with some reporting that their shrinkage has dropped by nearly $1 million since operations began. The logic behind the Flex Team is straightforward: disrupting organized theft crews means fewer repeat offenders and, over time, fewer calls for service flowing back to patrol. Based on these results, BPD is allocating 3 dedicated officer positions to the Flex Team in 2026, allowing the team to run more operations, respond faster to emerging patterns, and build stronger cases alongside our retail and business partners.

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How We're Doing

Group A crimes (the more serious group of crimes defined by NIBRS) per capita and clearance rates are two of the most important measures of our department's effectiveness.

With a population of approximately 121,749, Berkeley experienced about 152 Crimes Against Persons per 10,000 residents in 2025, roughly 560 Crimes Against Property per 10,000 residents, and 91 Crimes Against Society per 10,000 residents.

Clearance rates (defined here as the percentage of cases closed within a year of being reported) improved in most categories. Robbery clearance rose from 34% to 49%, reflecting the impact of ALPR-supported investigations. Theft clearance jumped from 17% to 20%, and felony assault clearance reached 63%, the highest in the five-year window. Homicide clearance remained at 100% for the fifth consecutive year.

Clearance Rates*	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	CA Avg.
Homicide	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	64%
Felony Sexual Assault	22%	32%	31%	33%	32%	27%
Robbery	36%	39%	30%	34%	49%	30%
Felony Assault	62%	53%	49%	52%	63%	50%
Burglary	12%	8%	9%	10%	12%	11%
Theft	11%	11%	10%	17%	20%	11%
Stolen Vehicle	9%	12%	11%	12%	11%	6%
Arson	30%	30%	29%	33%	41%	30%

*Here we show 1-year clearance rates for BPD cases. A 1-year clearance rate is the percentage of cases that were closed within a year of being reported. The CA Avg is the number of cases cleared divided by the number of reported cases in 2024.

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What's Next

Drone as First Responder

In 2026, BPD will ask Council to authorize a Drone as First Responder (DFR) program. When a call comes in, a drone would launch from the roof of the Public Safety Building and arrive on scene ahead of officers, streaming live video of the incident (not the flight path) back to dispatch. Before a single patrol car pulls up, officers would already have eyes on the situation and a better understanding of what they're responding to.

The operational advantages are significant. A drone can reach most locations in the city in a fraction of the time it takes a patrol car, especially during peak traffic. For some call types, the aerial view may be enough to resolve the situation without dispatching an officer at all, thereby freeing that unit for calls that require a physical presence. For calls that do need an officer, the live feed means they arrive with real-time information about the scene: how many people are involved, whether there's an immediate threat, and where exactly the activity is happening. That kind of situational awareness leads to better decisions and safer outcomes for officers and the community.

The DFR program also fits into BPD's broader investment in technology that multiplies the impact of existing staff. Like the ALPR network, it's a tool that makes each officer more effective rather than asking more of an already lean roster.

The program's success can be measured by four metrics: response time from dispatch to eyes on scene, the number of calls cleared without sending an officer, case clearance rates for DFR-supported incidents, and the speed at which those cases move from report to resolution.

Road Safety & Collisions

Berkeley recorded 784 total collisions in 2025, including 5 fatal incidents, 499 injury collisions, and 280 non-injury collisions — an overall decrease of 11% from 2024, though fatal collisions rose from 4 to 5. The most hazardous intersection was University Ave & West Frontage, with 15 collisions and 13 resulting in injuries.

Throughout 2025, the department conducted targeted High Intensity Traffic Enforcement operations at high-collision locations, guided by both historical data and community input from the public-facing Traffic Concern Survey. Our three-pronged approach to traffic safety continued to show strong alignment between the moving violations recorded during vehicle stops and the primary collision factors identified in our data. The department also deepened its collaboration with Vision Zero stakeholders, expanded Drive Safer, Drive Longer classes for aging drivers, increased DUI checkpoints, and continued using collision data from the Transparency Hub to guide enforcement priorities.
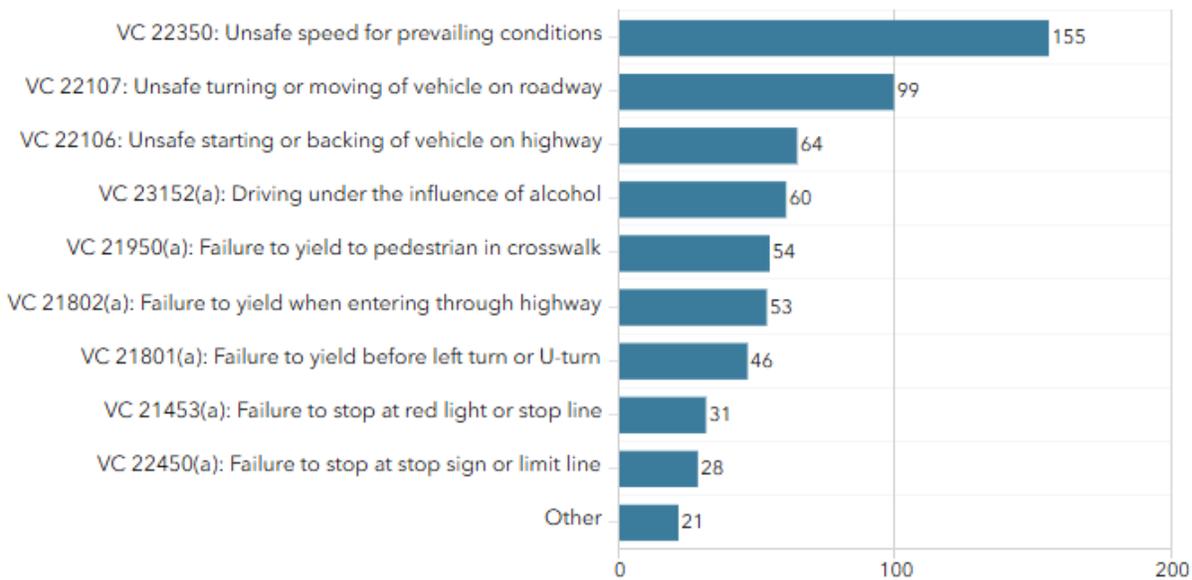
Collision Data

Collision Totals:

Collisions	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Fatal collisions	7	2	0	4	5
Injury collisions	431	548	514	559	499
Non-injury collisions	351	346	359	314	280
Total	**789**	**896**	**873**	**877**	**784**

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Top collision locations:

High Collision Intersections, 2025	Total Collisions	Injury Collisions	Suspected Serious Injury*
University Ave / West Frontage	15	13	1
Haste Street / Shattuck Ave	13	13	1
Ashby Ave / Sacramento St	10	7	0
Ashby Ave / Shattuck Ave	8	2	0
Ashby Ave / Telegraph Ave	8	7	1
Ashby Ave / College Ave	7	3	0
Curtis St / University Ave	7	5	1
California St / University Ave	6	5	0
Channing Way / College Ave	6	4	0
Oxford St / University Ave	6	4	0

Suspected serious injury is any injury other than a fatality that results in significant injury as defined in the CHP Collision Investigation Manual (CHP, 2017, p. 5-5).

Primary Collision Factors

Department Initiatives

What We've Done

> **Traffic Safety Partnerships**
>
> In 2025, BPD deepened its collaboration with Vision Zero stakeholders to identify high-risk locations, study the root causes of collisions, and design targeted interventions. Our High Intensity Traffic Team (HITT) operations brought together 11 local law enforcement agencies, including the Alameda County Sheriff's Office, CHP, and departments from across the East Bay. A single HITT operation in February put 17 officers on Berkeley streets and produced 185 citations in five hours, targeting speed, cell phone use, seatbelt violations, and locations identified through collision data and community complaints.
>
> We continued using Office of Traffic Safety grant funding to support both enforcement and education. The Drive Safer, Drive Longer program hosted four classes at the North and South Berkeley Senior Centers, helping aging drivers maintain their mobility and independence while staying safe on the road. We expanded DUI checkpoints and used collision data from the Transparency Hub's Traffic Safety page to guide where and when we deploy enforcement resources.
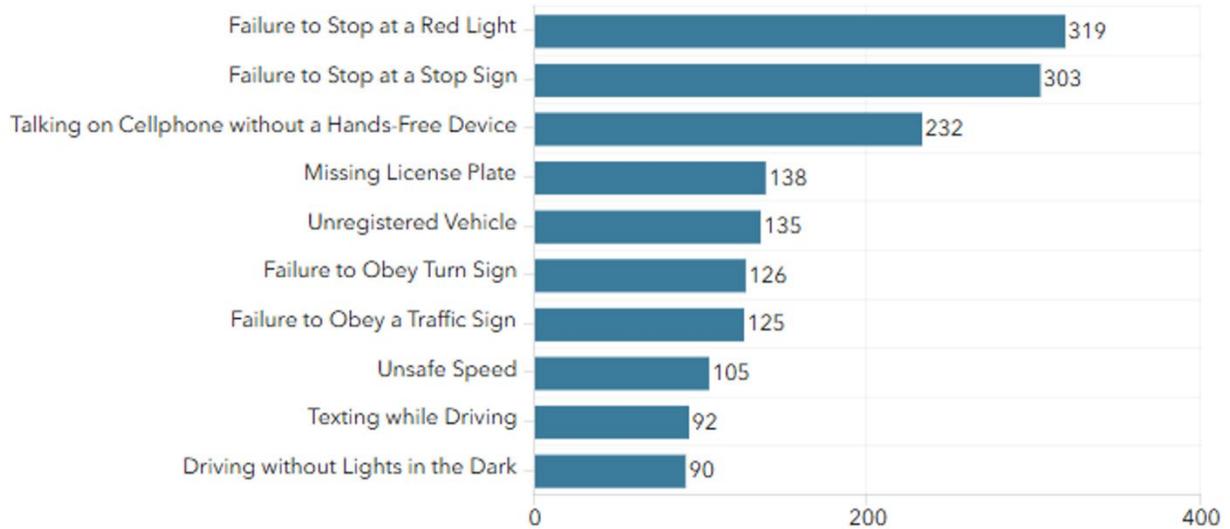>
> Our three-pronged approach to traffic safety continued to show strong alignment between the moving violations recorded during vehicle stops and the primary collision factors identified in our data (more on that below). That connection between what we enforce and what actually causes collisions is what keeps the strategy grounded in real-world impact.

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How We're Doing

Moving Violations

The chart below compares moving violations recorded during vehicle stops against the primary collision factors (PCFs) identified in our collision data. As in prior years, there is substantial overlap between the violations officers enforce and the behaviors that actually cause collisions, which indicates that our enforcement strategy remains well-aligned with real-world safety risks.

Most frequent vehicle violations

Violation	Count
Failure to Stop at a Red Light	319
Failure to Stop at a Stop Sign	303
Talking on Cellphone without a Hands-Free Device	232
Missing License Plate	138
Unregistered Vehicle	135
Failure to Obey Turn Sign	126
Failure to Obey a Traffic Sign	125
Unsafe Speed	105
Texting while Driving	92
Driving without Lights in the Dark	90

*Excludes stops made in response to calls for service and information-based stops

What's Next

Expanding Speed Enforcement

Speed remains one of the most consistent factors in serious and fatal collisions. In 2026, BPD is making a targeted investment in our ability to enforce it. We are acquiring 5 new LIDAR units and expanding LIDAR training beyond the Traffic Unit into patrol, so that speed enforcement capability is spread across the department rather than concentrated in a single team.

This matters because the Traffic Unit can only cover so many locations at once. By training patrol officers on LIDAR, we can run speed enforcement at high-collision intersections during regular patrol shifts, not just during dedicated traffic operations. More coverage at more locations means a stronger deterrent and more consistent enforcement at the places where speed-related collisions are most likely to happen.

These efforts build on our existing partnerships with Vision Zero stakeholders and our continued use of Office of Traffic Safety grant funding, and will be guided by the same collision data that has driven our enforcement strategy to date.

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Accountability

Accountability is foundational to the trust between BPD and the community we serve. We analyze stop data and use-of-force incidents in detail each year, applying statistical tests to detect potential bias and ensure our practices are fair and impartial. In 2025, our data continued to support the conclusion that enforcement actions are driven by behavior and circumstances rather than race. Our search yield rates improved, our force rates remained low relative to call volume, and our bias testing methods continue to show alignment with race-neutral policing.

Stop Data Report

In 2025, BPD conducted 4,587 stops: 3,144 vehicle stops, 1,369 pedestrian stops, and 74 bicycle stops. Discretionary stops accounted for approximately 61% of encounters, largely addressing traffic violations; the remaining 39% resulted from calls for service or specific information.

According to data published in the most recent RIPA board report, Berkeley's yield rate was higher than 93% of all agencies in California.

Of these stops, 967 led to at least one arrest, 1,449 resulted in citations, and 1,776 concluded with warnings. Officers conducted searches in 11% of stops, with contraband found in 61% of those searches, up from 51% in 2024. Searches resulted in the seizure of 62 weapons, including 21 firearms. Discretionary searches, or those not driven by an arrest, search warrant, vehicle inventory, or emergency, had a yield rate of 58%.

Tests for Bias

We apply three statistical tests each year to evaluate whether implicit bias influences officer decision-making. These tests are designed to isolate the impact of officer discretion from other factors that might drive disparities between stop demographics and census demographics. Our methods and results for 2025 are summarized below.

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At-Fault Collision Demographics

We compare the demographics of at-fault collision drivers with those stopped for moving violations. This is a meaningful benchmark because moving violations made up 73% of discretionary stops in 2025. If enforcement is race-neutral, the two groups should closely align. Our 2025 analysis showed strong alignment, consistent with prior years, suggesting that traffic stops result from driving behavior rather than implicit bias.


At-Fault Collision & Discretionary Moving Violation Demographics, 2025

Yield Rate Analysis

The yield rate measures how often searches produce contraband. If officers were applying a lower threshold of suspicion for any racial group, we would expect lower yield rates for that group, meaning officers searched with less race-neutral indicators of contraband present. Our 2025 data again showed lower yield rates for White individuals than for other groups, suggesting that search decisions are not influenced by racial bias.


Discretionary Yield Rate by Race, 2025

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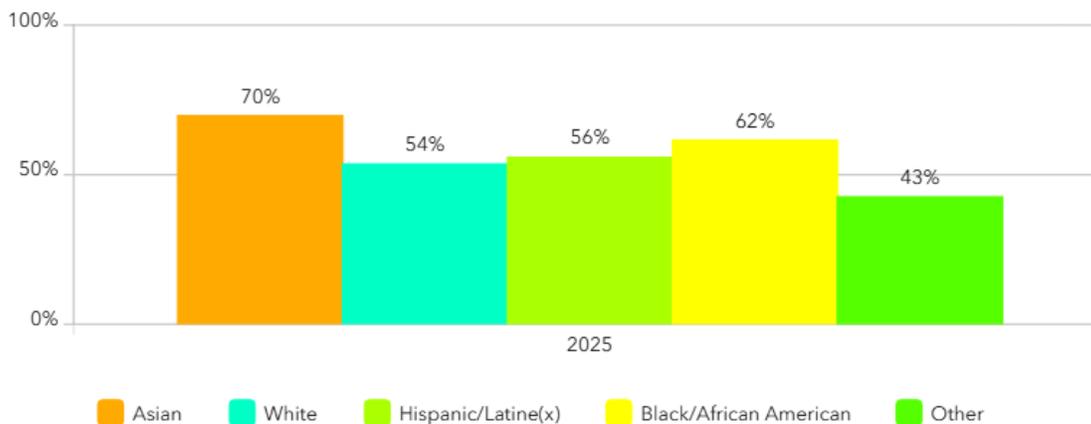
Veil of Darkness

This test compares the racial composition of stops made in daylight versus after dark. If visible race influences the decision to stop, we would expect a higher proportion of stops of a given racial group during daylight, when race is visible. The 2025 data showed close alignment across demographic groups between daylight and darkness stops, consistent with race-neutral decision-making.

Discretionary Stop Demographics during Inter-twilight Period, 2025
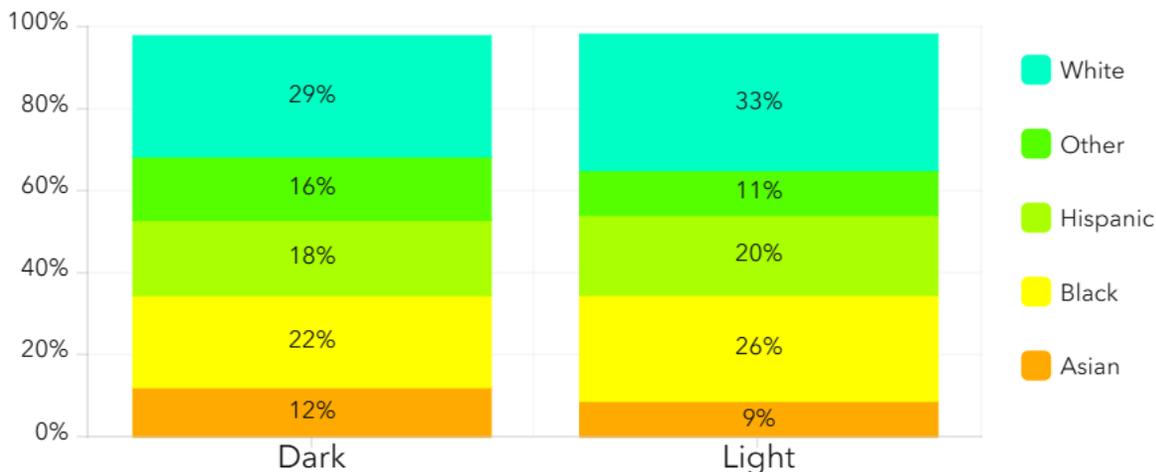
A note on census comparisons: It is common to compare the racial composition of police stops against residential census demographics. However, as the annual RIPA Board report notes, differences between stop demographics and residential demographics can result from many factors beyond officer bias, including differences in exposure to criminogenic factors, resource allocation, and non-resident populations that concentrate in particular areas. For this reason, we focus our bias analysis on officer-initiated discretionary stops, where the research shows implicit bias is most likely to surface. This approach allows us to hold ourselves accountable for the factor we can control, namely officer decision-making, rather than conflating it with external variables.

Use of Force Report

The Berkeley Police Department takes pride in accomplishing our work with minimal reliance on force, emphasizing de-escalation techniques, mental health crisis response, and proportional action, all reinforced through regular training. Under our policy, reportable force is divided into four levels:

Level 1 – Involves grabs, control holds, the use of leverage, or body weight with no injury or complaint of pain.

Use of Force Level

Level 1 70.03%
Level 2 23.03%
Level 3 6.94%
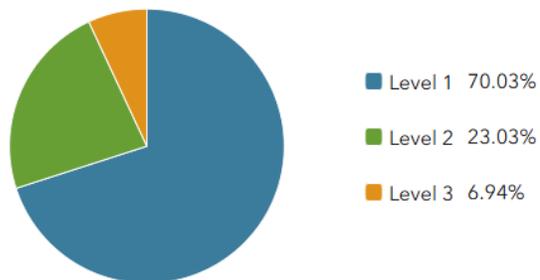
Level 2 – Applies when an officer points or deploys a firearm while interacting with someone. It also applies to a Level 1 force that involves more than momentary discomfort but does not have an injury or complaint of pain.

Level 3 – Involves the use of a weapon, subject injury, or complaint of pain. This category also applies to specific circumstances when an officer does not activate their body-worn camera.

Level 4 – Applies when an officer uses a firearm or when there is an in-custody death.

Officers report all uses of force to their sergeant, who documents the incident in a formal report reviewed by a lieutenant and captain.

Calls for Service and Use of Force Incidents
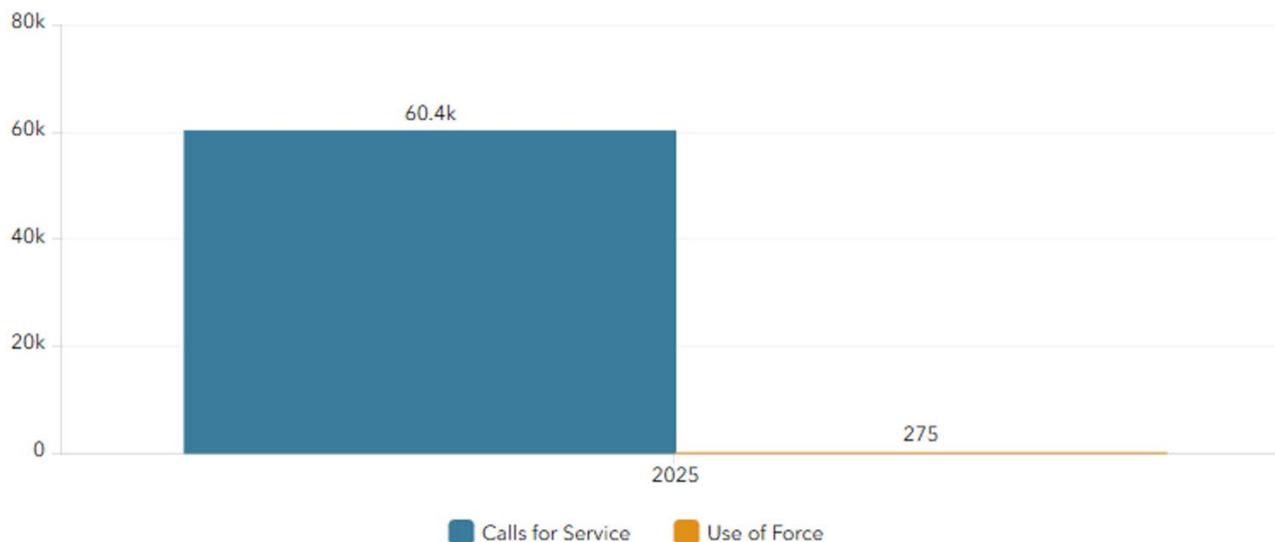
In 2025, there were 275 incidents involving 1,273 uses of force. Level 1 and Level 2 actions accounted for 93% of all uses (70% and 23%, respectively). Of the 60,374 calls for service received in 2025, 0.46% resulted in the use of force, and 0.07% (45 incidents) involved level 3 or level 4 force.

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Arrest Use of Force Rates, 2025
All use of Force Levels
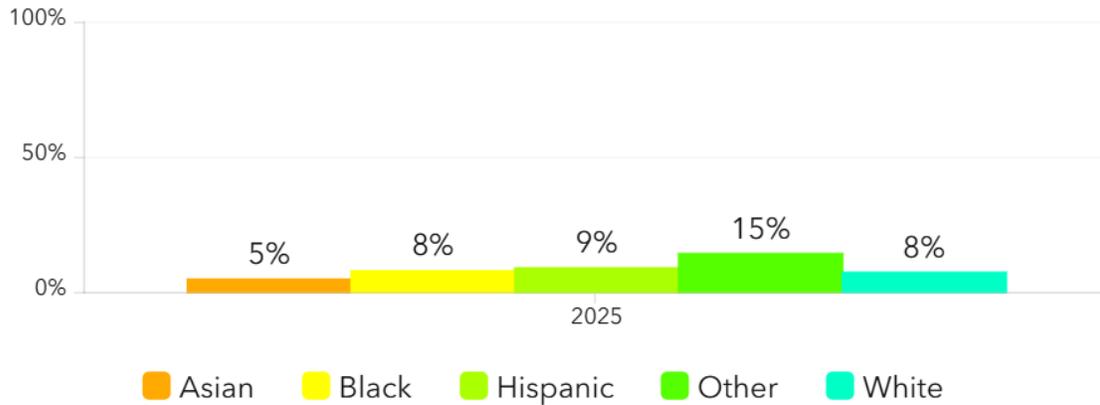
We test for bias in force decisions by comparing the percentage of arrests in which force is used across racial groups. Using arrests as the baseline isolates the scenario in which force most commonly occurs.

The consistent percentages across racial groups suggests that force decisions are driven by the circumstances of the arrest rather than by race.

Use of Force Complaints

Every use of force is reviewed through the supervisory chain. When a use-of-force incident is also the subject of a personnel complaint, the Internal Affairs Bureau conducts an additional investigation. Results, including body-worn camera footage, are submitted with recommendations to the Chief.

In 2025, the department received a total of 26 allegations across 11 complaints regarding use-of-force incidents. To date, investigations of 10 allegations have been completed, while 16 remain under evaluation. 2 allegations within the 10 completed allegation investigations resulted in sustained findings of misconduct.

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2025 INTERNAL AFFAIRS BUREAU STATISTICS

Complaints							
	Complaints Received	Sustained	Not Sustained	Exonerated	Unfounded	Admin Closed	Active Complaints
External PAB	33						
*External IAB	42						
*Total External	42	1	1	2	5	17	16
**Total Internal	16	14	0	0	0	1	1
Total Complaints	58	15	1	2	5	18	17
Allegations							
	Received	Sustained	Not Sustained	Exonerated	Unfounded	Admin Closed	Active
Improper Use of Force	26	2	0	0	3	5	16
Discourtesy	33	1	0	0	9	6	17
Improper Stop/ Search/Seizure/Arrest	38	0	0	2	1	17	18
Inadequate Investigation	50	5	1	0	9	14	21
Improper Detention (Jail)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Discrimination	31	0	0	0	6	9	16
Harassment	13	0	0	1	4	4	4
Improper Procedure	54	12	3	8	3	12	16
Improper Citation / Tow	7	0	0	1	0	2	4
Other	6	0	0	0	0	1	5
Dishonesty	3	0	3	0	0	0	0
Total Allegations	261	20	7	12	35	70	117

Looking Ahead

The results in this report make a clear case: when our officers have better tools and better information, outcomes improve. Shootings dropped 40%. Robberies fell 20%. Vehicle thefts declined 48%. Our ALPR program and Flex Team operations combined for nearly 200 arrests. These gains came without adding sworn officers- they came from putting the right technology and strategy behind the people we already have.

Our staffing reality has not changed. We continue to operate well below authorized strength, and that is unlikely to reverse quickly. What has changed is our ability to multiply the impact of each officer on the street. Technology that provides real-time information like the license plate readers we already have or the future addition of surveillance cameras and drones makes each officer more effective: faster to respond, better informed on arrival, and more precise in enforcement so that we reduce unnecessary stops and focus on confirmed criminal activity.

This approach also matters for recruitment and retention. The next generation of officers expects to work with modern tools. Departments that invest in technology are better positioned to attract and keep qualified candidates. Falling behind puts us at a competitive disadvantage in an already difficult hiring environment.

In 2026, we will bring forward proposals to expand our public safety technology capabilities, including renewal of our ALPR program, deployment of fixed surveillance cameras in high-pedestrian areas, and a Drone as First Responder program. The larger vision is to bring these tools together in a Real-Time Intelligence Center: a centralized hub where camera feeds, license plate data, and aerial footage are monitored and relayed to officers in the field as incidents unfold. The best available research supports this model. A peer-reviewed study of the Miami Police Department's Real-Time Crime Center, published in Justice Quarterly, found that cases supported by the center had 66% better odds of being cleared than comparable cases without that support. That is the kind of difference that translates directly into more crimes solved, more victims served, and a safer community.

These investments extend beyond sworn operations. The Communications Center initiatives now underway, from protocol-based dispatching to virtual call triage, along with the continued expansion of CSOs into patrol and investigations, are equally central to our ability to deliver faster, more effective service with the resources we have.

We remain equally committed to the partnerships and community-centered work that underpin everything we do, from the Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention Program to Vision Zero to our business district engagement. Technology supports this work; it does not replace it. We look forward to presenting these proposals and to continued partnership with City Council and our community as we work toward a safer, more responsive Berkeley.

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