Office of the City Manager

WORKSESSION
March 18, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager

Submitted by: Jennifer Louis, Chief of Police

Subject: 2024 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 2024 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 18, 2025. 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. 2024 Berkeley Police Department Annual Report

2024 Berkeley Police Department Annual Report

March 18, 2025

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Introduction

In presenting the Berkeley Police Department's 2024 Annual Report, we reaffirm our mission, embrace a vision that evolves with modern practices, and recommit to our core values. This document serves as an annual snapshot of our activities and achievements in 2024; additional information and daily updates can be found on our Transparency Hub. Our work this past year was defined by a steadfast focus on delivering core services with efficiency—even in the face of staffing challenges—while upholding a tradition of data-driven, evidence-based, and problem-oriented policing.

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 2024, Command Staff strategically assessed the challenges and opportunities before us. In a low-staff environment, we focused on core services and operational efficiency while reinforcing our commitment to proactive problem solving and clear internal communication. Our efforts to harness data and feedback have laid a strong foundation for a future in which every decision is informed by evidence and dedicated to equitable public safety.

This report not only documents our measurable progress and responsible stewardship of public trust but also signals our readiness to embrace the next phase. As we look to 2025, our path is clear: we will build on the foundational work of the past several years by integrating innovative tools and practices that support a modern, data-driven, and fair approach to law enforcement.

We invite our community and its representatives to reflect on our shared achievements and join us as we continue evolving our service. Together, with more collaborative and practical approaches, we are focused on providing public safety that is evidence based, transparent, equitable and effective.

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Staffing & Workload

The Berkeley Police Department (BPD) faces significant staffing challenges, operating with 154 sworn officers (below the authorized 181) and 21 dispatchers (below the authorized 41). Despite these shortages, the department responded to 61,666 calls in 2024, with 911 calls increasing by 9% to their highest level in years. Key initiatives include expanding the Community Service Officer program to assist with non-violent calls, implementing a successful Automated License Plate Reader system, and maintaining competitive response times compared to neighboring agencies. Recruitment efforts through All-Star Recruiting have significantly increased the candidate pipeline which promises to help address ongoing staffing needs.

Staffing

The department currently employs 154 officers, 140 of whom are available to work as solo police officers—well below the authorized strength of 181 sworn personnel. Out of the 154 officers, 13 qualify for retirement, including 7 who have announced plans to retire this year.

Sworn Staff
Annual Peak Staffing Levels
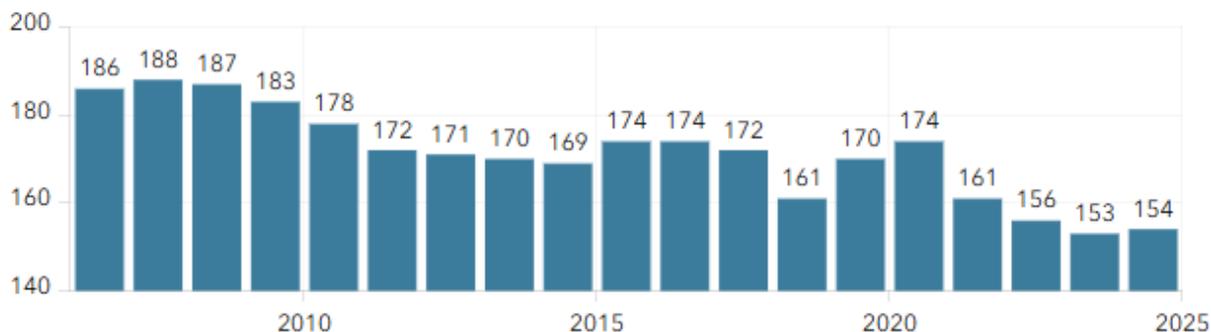
The department is authorized for 36 dispatcher positions and 5 dispatch supervisor positions, but currently staffs 17 dispatchers and 4 supervisors. Per diem and other dispatch-qualified employees help mitigate understaffing at the Communications Center. We're also expanding our Community Service Officer (CSO) capacity, with authorization increased from 22 to 28 positions in the Fiscal Year 2024 budget. Three new CSOs were hired in late 2024, enabling three existing CSOs to begin training with our patrol teams. Additional information on the new CSO program follows below.

Working with the Berkeley Fire Department, we established joint workgroups in early 2025 to collaborate on updates to our Communications Center operations. The three strategic workgroups—focused on recruitment and retention, facilities modernization, and technology integration—are working to enhance emergency response capabilities, streamline information flow, and ultimately deliver faster, more effective service to our community.
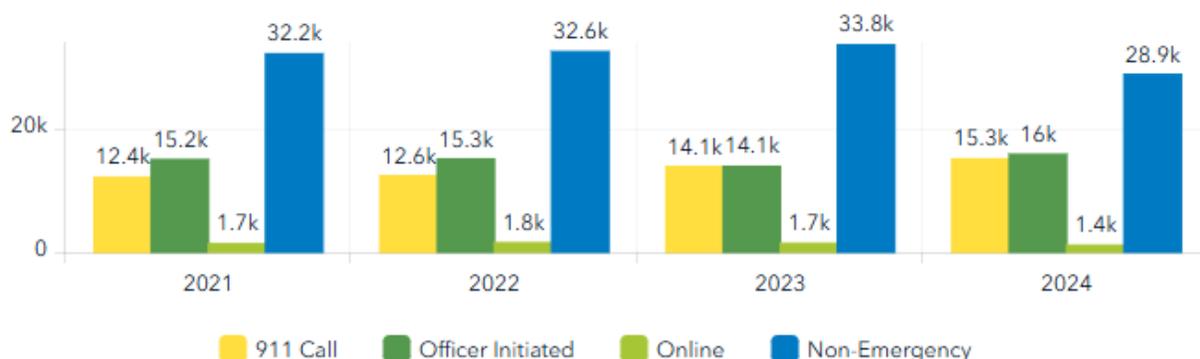
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Calls for Service

BPD responded to 61,666 calls for service in 2024. Non-emergency calls reached 28,902, officer-initiated calls stood at 16,044, 911 calls accounted for 15,297, online reports totaled 1,403, and 20 were transferred from an automated service.


Calls for Service
by Call Source

Total calls for service dropped about 3% from 2023. Non-emergency calls dropped by roughly 14%, and online reports dropped by nearly 15%. Officer-initiated calls climbed by about 14%.

Most notably, 911 calls rose by around 9% and reached their highest level in several years. Because these calls trigger the department's most urgent response, that increase reflects a growing demand for immediate assistance in critical situations.

Calls for Service & Council Districts, 2024

Certain parts of Berkeley continue to experience a heavier call load than others. In 2024, City Council District 4 logged the highest count among all districts. This trend shapes BPD's decisions about beat configurations and officer deployment, for example by directing additional patrol resources, like the Bike Unit, where they are needed most.

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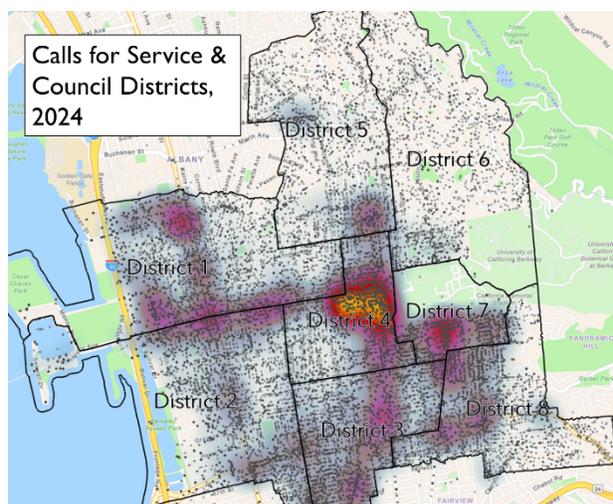
Workload

The average calls per shift is calculated by dividing the total number of non-officer-initiated calls in each shift over the year by the total number of officer shifts assigned to that shift. Between 2021 and 2022, the average number of calls per shift went up by around 2%. The following year, it rose by nearly 11%. Although 2024 experienced a dip of about 2% compared to 2023, the figure still surpasses the levels seen in 2021 and 2022.

Average Calls Handled per Officer per Shift
Non-Officer-Initiated Calls
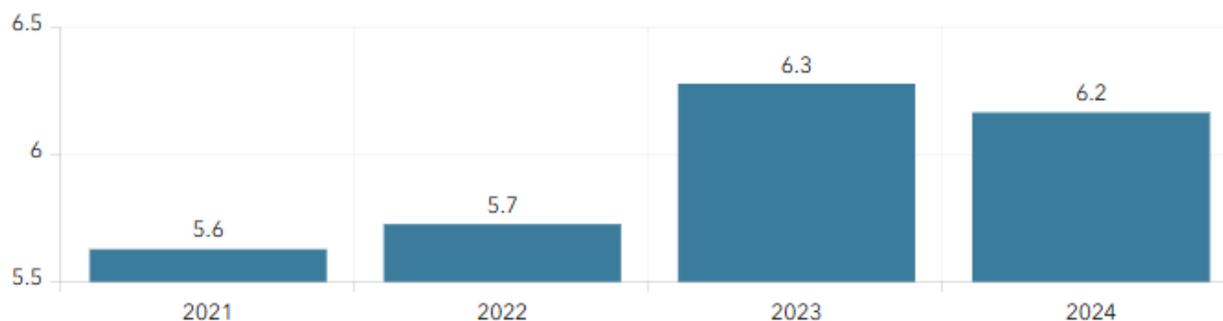
Overtime remains a critical tool to meet minimum staffing levels for every patrol team. The steady rise in calls per shift signals growing strain on resources. Careful planning and allocation remain key to maintaining consistent service. Officers continue to face mounting demands, and ongoing attention to staffing levels is needed to help preserve the quality of operations.

Our department now faces a reality where staffing challenges and a surge in service calls intersect. With officer and dispatcher numbers trailing behind authorized levels, each shift absorbs more calls than in previous years. Recruitment drives, the infusion of new Community Service Officers, and strategic partnerships have injected fresh talent into our ranks. Yet, the sustained increase in 911 calls continues to stretch our resources. Overtime fills crucial gaps while reconfigured beats help spread the demand more evenly. Our commitment to community safety remains resolute, even as we navigate these rising pressures.

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Department Initiatives

What We've Done

All Star Recruiting

BPD prides itself on rigorous evaluation of police officer applicants, as well as hiring and training some of the profession's best officers who exemplify the department's overall mission as well as the values of our diverse and vibrant city. Officers are expected not only to meet strict training and education standards but also to uphold a culture of integrity, respect, and professionalism. In 2024, All-Star Recruiting played a vital role in strengthening BPD's recruitment efforts, helping us attract and engage top talent in a highly competitive hiring landscape. Through targeted outreach, consistent candidate engagement, and a well-attended virtual career fair, All-Star has expanded our applicant pool and increased interest in policing careers. Their partnership has streamlined our recruitment process and alleviated the workload on department staff. As a result of their efforts, we have seen a 5x increase in candidates entering our pipeline compared to previous years. Their contributions have directly supported our goal of building a strong and diverse police force to better serve our community.

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How We're Doing

Even as we navigate staffing challenges, rising calls for service, and a heavier workload, our commitment to a quality response remains clear. One important measure of our

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

efficiency is how quickly we reach our community members in need. Swift response times are vital during emergencies, and our data shows that our department performs very well compared to neighboring agencies.

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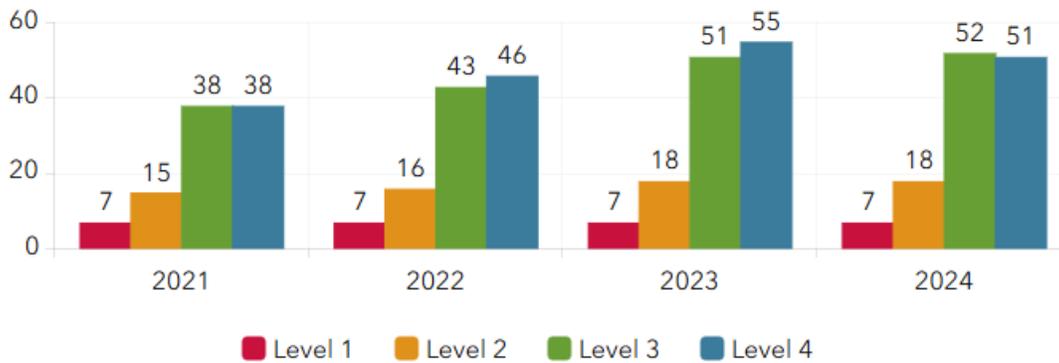
*Excludes Officer Initiated calls and call types: Audible Alarms and Traffic Stop

Below is a snapshot of 2023 response time data from nearby cities. Note that current 2024 figures are not yet available. Because each agency defines priority levels in its own way, we have included the corresponding percentage of calls for each level where that information was provided.

Median Response Times, 2023 (minutes)	Level 1 (% of all calls)	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Berkeley	7 (13%)	18 (37%)	51 (24%)	55 (22%)
San Francisco	9 (19%)	32 (30%)	105 (51%)	-
Oakland	14	184	443	-
San Jose	7 (5%)	24 (42%)	-	-

Comparison cities chosen based on data availability and region

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What's Next

Community Service Officers in Patrol and Investigations

As BPD adapts to the evolving needs of our community and the shifting landscape of public safety, we are putting new strategies in place to boost our operational readiness, hold ourselves accountable, and build stronger community bonds. One initiative we're particularly excited about is the expansion of our Community Service Officer program into patrol roles.

The new patrol CSO program revives a successful approach from the early 2000s. CSOs will handle non-emergency calls, manage routine reports, and support tasks like traffic control. At the same time, we will be broadening opportunities for CSOs to assist in investigations. In the Detective Bureau, dedicated CSOs will help collect field evidence, prepare detailed reports, and handle data entry—providing crucial support that allows our detectives to concentrate on complex cases.

Three CSOs are currently in training under the guidance of seasoned Field Training Officers. They are making good progress and are expected to complete their training and work independently by April. This structured, hands-on training ensures that every CSO is well-prepared for the challenges of the field.

By integrating CSOs into both patrol and investigative roles, we are addressing the challenges of rising call volumes and staffing shortages. This initiative positions us to maintain exceptional service levels regardless of staffing fluctuations, ensuring that our community continues to receive the reliable, high-quality response they deserve.

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Crime & Investigations

Crime trends in 2024 showed notable improvements compared to 2023, reflecting a return toward historical norms. Shootings decreased by 26%, robberies saw a substantial reduction of 43%, commercial burglaries dropped by 30%, and vehicle thefts declined by 23%. While robberies fell significantly below pre-COVID levels, vehicle thefts remained higher than their pre-pandemic rates. Thefts and burglaries are back within historical ranges.

Since October of 2023 there has been an increase overall in the number of anti-Jewish hate incidents, and an uptick in Anti-Arab or anti-Muslim hate incidents. In 2024 Anti-Jewish hate crimes made up 18.6% of overall hate crimes. Anti-Muslim made up 4.65% and Anti-Arab was 6.98% of the 2024 total.

Department initiatives achieved significant results, with firearm recoveries increasing 28% and retail theft operations leading to 79 arrests over six months. Future plans include following through on City Council direction and installing fixed surveillance cameras in high-traffic public areas to complement the existing Automated License Plate Reader network in order to create a comprehensive security system to enhance both deterrence and investigative capabilities.

Crime Data

When reviewing crime data, it is important to distinguish among calls for service, case reports, and confirmed crimes. Calls for service are the public's initial contacts with our department. They include reports of suspicious behavior and requests for emergency help. When these calls prompt an investigation and evidence suggests a crime may have occurred, an officer prepares a case report. This document details the evidence gathered, witness statements, and initial conclusions. The District Attorney then reviews the case report to determine whether they will charge the case or not.

The statistics in this report come from case reports. In previous years, data was compiled for submission to the California Department of Justice (DOJ) using the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Summary Reporting System (SRS), which summarizes major crime categories for consistency over time and across jurisdictions. Last year, in 2024, we began collecting data using the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). Unlike the SRS, which records only a single offense per incident based on a hierarchy rule, NIBRS documents every offense occurring in an incident. It also distinguishes between attempted and completed offenses and collects weapon details for all violent crimes. Furthermore, NIBRS gathers extensive information

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about victims, offenders, and their relationships. This richer data set provides the California DOJ a more complete picture of criminal incidents and supports more detailed analysis.

Key Differences Between SRS and NIBRS

UCR SRS

- Reports aggregate counts for crimes based on the date it was reported.
- Records one offense per incident, suppressing lesser offenses when multiple crimes occur.
- Does not differentiate between attempted and completed offenses.
- Collects weapon data only for homicide, robbery, and aggravated assault.
- Provides arrest counts for the eight index crimes and twenty-one additional offenses.

NIBRS

- Reports aggregate counts for crimes based on the date it occurred.
- Collects detailed data on victims, offenders, and their relationships across twenty-three categories covering fifty-two offenses, plus arrest data for these and ten additional categories.
- Records every offense that occurs in an incident.
- Differentiates between attempted and completed offenses.
- Gathers weapon information for all violent offenses.

Incident Reporting Examples

Incident	SRS	NIBRS
A bank robbery followed by a hit and run	Robbery	Robbery / Hit and Run
A domestic violence incident in which a phone is vandalized and a purse is stolen	Domestic Violence	Domestic Violence / Vandalism / Theft
A kidnapping followed by a vehicle theft	Kidnapping	Kidnapping / Vehicle Theft

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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. NIBRS differs from the older SRS by recording every offense in an incident, providing a more detailed and accurate crime picture.

The Berkeley NIBRS reporting is as follows:

Group A Crimes

Offense	2024
Murder	4
Negligent Manslaughter	1
Justifiable Homicide	0
Non-consensual Sex Offenses:	
Sexual Assault	59
Fondling	53
Aggravated Assault	475
Simple Assault	839
Intimidation	293
Kidnapping/Abduction	59
Consensual Sex Offenses:	
Incest	0
Statutory Rape	3
Human Trafficking, Commercial Sex Acts	0
Human Trafficking, Involuntary Servitude	0
Crimes Against Persons Total	**1,789**

Offense	2024
Robbery	221
Burglary/Breaking & Entering	779
Larceny/Theft Offenses	4,397
Motor Vehicle Theft	1,088
Arson	48
Destruction of Property	767
Counterfeiting/Forgery	75
Fraud Offense	604
Embezzlement	15
Extortion/Blackmail	24
Bribery	0
Stolen Property Offenses	124
Crimes Against Property Total	**8,145**

Offense	2024
Drug/Narcotic Violations	313
Drug Equipment Violations	360
Gambling Offenses	0
Pornography/Obscene Material	10
Prostitution	0
Weapons Law Violation	238
Animal Cruelty	8
Crimes Against Society Total	**929**

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Select Crime Categories

Because we only have one year of NIBRS data, the following section uses statutes and internally tracked categories as a baseline for monitoring future trends. This framework draws on legal definitions alongside in-house classifications to paint a clear picture of Berkeley PD's current crime landscape. Each category is carefully structured to form a starting point for spotting shifts as more data rolls in. The approach offers insight into distinct facets of criminal activity while setting us up for meaningful comparisons in the years ahead.

Robberies

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

Shootings

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

Sexual Assaults

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

Property Crimes

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

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Hate Crimes & Incidents

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

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

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

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Department Initiatives

What We've Done

> **Combatting Gun Violence**
>
> In 2024, our department deepened its partnership with the City-run Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention Program (GVIPP), alongside community-based organizations Live Free and the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR). This collaboration strategically addresses gun violence through targeted life coaching, mentorship, and essential support services for individuals most at risk while also responding to incidents, including shooting scenes and hospital visits.
>
> Additionally, GVIPP is committed to capacity building for Berkeley-based community-based organizations that support violence prevention efforts, strengthening their ability to provide long-term, sustainable solutions. This includes collaboration with organizations like Berkeley Tech and the Berkeley HUB, as well as fostering regional coordination with Oakland's Department of Violence Prevention (DVP) and Richmond's Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) to ensure a cohesive and effective approach to reducing gun violence across jurisdictions.
>
> Complementing GVIPP's community-centered approach, our detectives expanded their proactive follow-up investigations and doubled down on conducting search warrants. Their efforts helped the department recover 110 firearms associated with crimes—a 28% increase over last year. Detective-led investigations alone yielded 51 firearms, a notable increase from previous years. Proactive traffic stops yielded an additional 10.
>
> | | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
> |---|---|---|---|---|
> | **Total Guns Seized as Evidence** | 108 | 121 | 86 | 110 |
> | *Of the total, as a result of a Search Warrant* | 43 | 43 | 19 | 51 |
>
> Every firearm undergoes processing through the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network. This nationwide collaboration, coordinated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, 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.

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Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR)

The City of Berkeley introduced ALPRs as part of a broader move toward modern technology designed to support both investigations and efficient response to stolen vehicles and vehicles associated with a felony. Council approved 52 cameras, with 32 now active and the remaining 20 awaiting Caltrans approval. We launched a controlled pilot on October 1, 2024 that involved seasoned officers, supervisors, and detectives. This early phase provided intensive training and allowed us to fine-tune our operational protocols before rolling out the technology to all personnel in December.

The ALPR program serves as a critical tool for swiftly identifying vehicles tied to criminal activity and supporting both reactive and proactive investigations. The technology makes our proactive stops more precise, as officers can now focus their discretionary patrol time directly on vehicles known to be stolen or linked to felony activity. In the first three months of the program, from October through December 2024, ALPR technology played a role in 14 arrests, helped recover 10 stolen vehicles, generated 14 investigative leads, and contributed to the issuance of 2 warrants.

We continue to refine our practices based on hands-on experience and ongoing feedback from the field. The results from these first three months give us confidence that further integration of such technology will contribute to safer streets and a more responsive police service.

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Organized Retail Theft Operations

Organized retail theft continues to challenge not just our local community but has emerged as a broader regional and national concern. Despite ongoing staffing limitations, we have prioritized addressing this challenge through data-driven, problem-oriented strategies. We strategically expanded our enforcement operations, proactively tracking theft patterns and focusing resources on areas demonstrating higher risk. Launched in June, these operations have produced substantial results. Over a six-month span, 12 dedicated operations resulted in 79 arrests. Nearly 70% of those detained faced additional criminal charges beyond retail theft, such as identity fraud, possession of burglary tools, narcotics offenses, and outstanding warrants linked to more serious robbery cases. One in five of those arrested already had active warrants, and about a quarter were on probation or parole at the time of arrest.

These efforts occurred at key retail locations like REI and Walgreens on Gilman Street, among other establishments identified through data analysis and retailer feedback. According to internal reports from our retail partners, these initiatives have directly contributed to a notable decrease in theft incidents within their stores.

Looking forward, we plan to pilot a Flex Team in 2025 to provide focused support in response to evolving crime trends. This specialized unit will address specific issues such as organized retail theft and tactics like stolen license plates intended to evade detection by ALPRs.

How We're Doing

Group A crimes per capita and BPD clearance rates provide valuable insights into our effectiveness and our ongoing efforts to enhance public safety in our community.

With a population of approximately 118,962 (as of July 2023), Berkeley experienced about **98 Crimes Against Persons** per 10,000 residents in 2024. There were roughly **674 Crimes Against Property** per 10,000 residents, and **77 Crimes Against Society** per 10,000 residents.

Clearance Rates*	2021	2022	2023	2024
Homicide	100%	100%	100%	100%
Felony Sexual Assault	22%	32%	31%	33%
Robbery	36%	39%	30%	34%
Felony Assault	62%	53%	49%	52%
Burglary	12%	8%	9%	10%
Theft	11%	11%	10%	17%
Stolen Vehicle	9%	12%	11%	12%
Arson	30%	30%	29%	33%

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.

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What's Next

Fixed Surveillance Cameras

In 2025 we will be installing fixed surveillance cameras at intersections and public spaces with high pedestrian traffic. Our analysis of crime trends and community input pinpointed these areas as maximally beneficial for bolstering public safety. The cameras will record clear, real-time footage during incidents, giving law enforcement immediate access to crucial evidence.

Installing these modern cameras in busy public areas is expected to discourage criminal activity. Their placement in locations where people naturally gather will not only strengthen local security but also provide law enforcement with reliable visual records. This capability will help reconstruct events, support rapid responses, and ensure detailed post-incident reviews to keep our communities safer.

The new fixed cameras will complement the ALPRs mentioned above. ALPRs monitor key entry and exit points and busy roadways, and the addition of cameras in high pedestrian traffic areas strategically extends our coverage. Officers and detectives will receive a complete view of both vehicular and pedestrian activity through this layered network.

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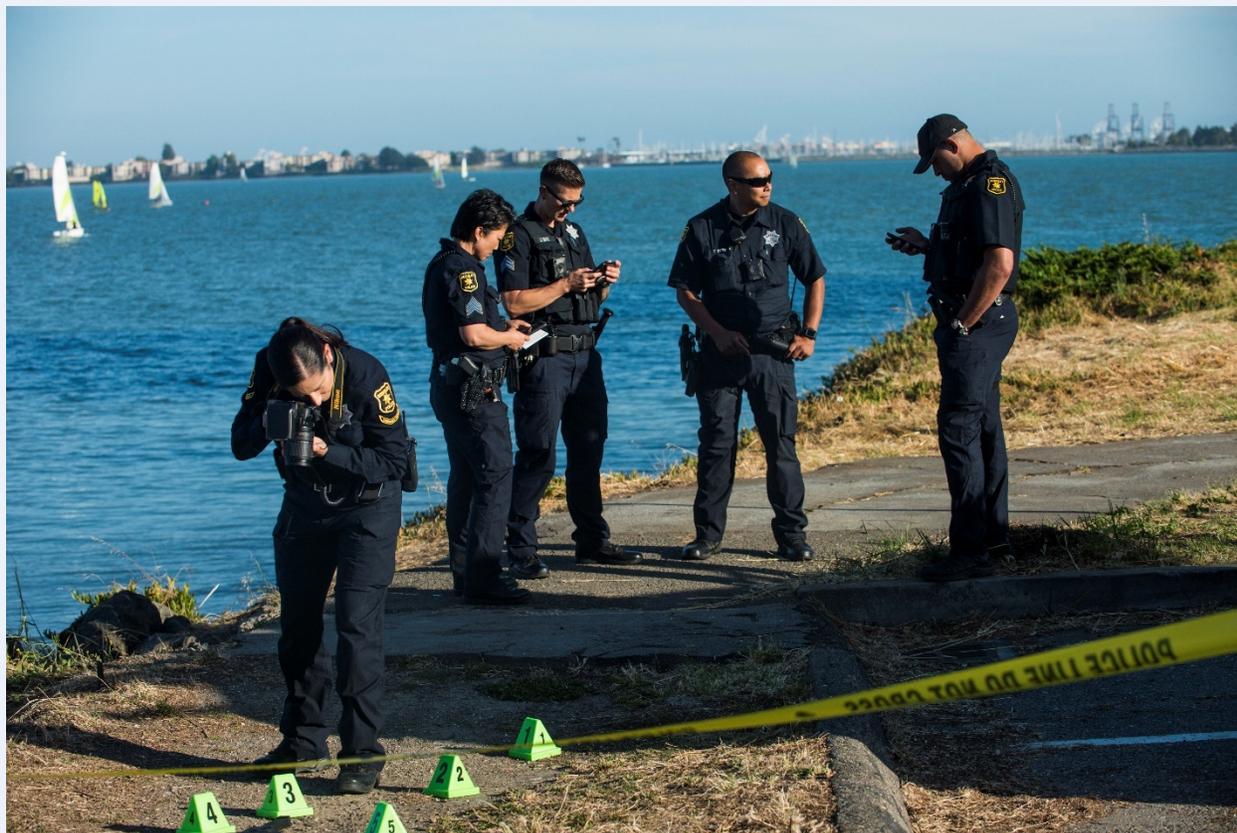
Road Safety & Collisions

Berkeley saw 877 total collisions in 2024, including 4 fatal incidents, 559 injury collisions, and 314 non-injury collisions. The most hazardous intersection remained Ashby Avenue/San Pablo Avenue with 16 total collisions and 10 resulting in injuries. The department conducted targeted High Intensity Traffic enforcement operations at high-collision locations, using both historical data and community input from our public facing Traffic Concern Survey to prioritize efforts. The three-pronged approach to traffic safety has tightened alignment between moving violations recorded during vehicle stops and the primary collision factors identified. For 2025, the department plans to enhance collaboration with Vision Zero stakeholders, expand education programs including Drive Safer, Drive Longer classes for aging drivers, increase DUI checkpoints, and continue using data-driven enforcement strategies to improve road safety throughout Berkeley.

Collision Data

Collision Totals:

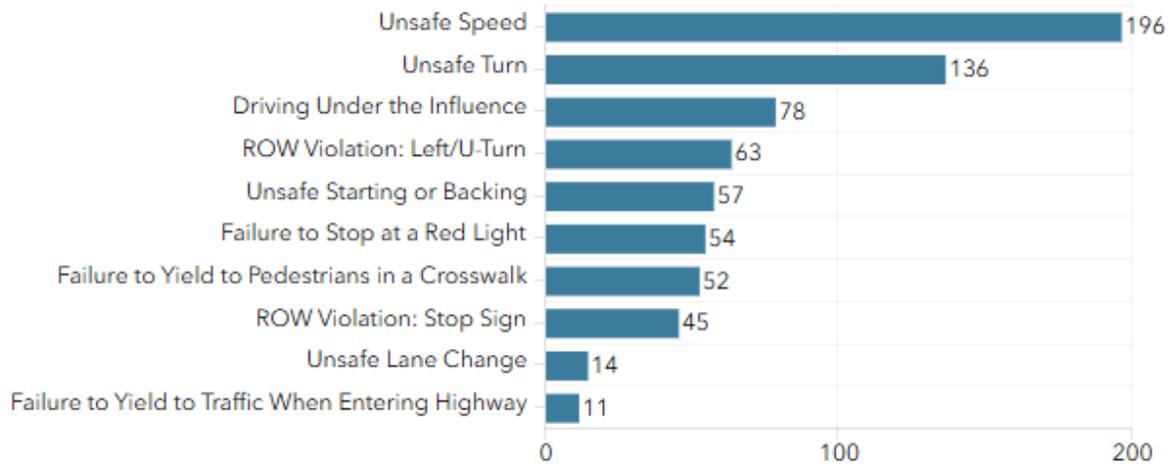| Collisions	2021	2022	2023	2024
Fatal collisions	7	2	0	4
Injury collisions	431	548	514	559
Non-injury collisions	351	346	359	314
Total	**789**	**896**	**873**	**877**

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Top collision locations:

High Collision Intersections, 2024	Total Collisions	Injury Collisions	# of People Injured	Suspected Serious Injury*
Ashby Ave / San Pablo Ave	16	10	17	0
Gilman St / San Pablo Ave	10	8	10	4
Alcatraz Ave / Sacramento St	9	8	11	3
Adeline St / Ashby Ave	8	4	4	1
Ashby Ave / Sacramento St	8	8	11	0
Dwight Way / Shattuck Ave	8	3	6	0
Ashby Ave / Seventh St	8	7	12	2
Addison St / MLK Jr Way	7	3	3	0
Adeline St / Alcatraz Ave	8	5	5	0
Adeline St / MLK Jr Way	7	5	6	0
Bancroft Way / Dana St	7	6	6	2
Dwight Way / Sacramento St	7	6	9	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, 2024
All Collisions

Factor	Count
Unsafe Speed	196
Unsafe Turn	136
Driving Under the Influence	78
ROW Violation: Left/U-Turn	63
Unsafe Starting or Backing	57
Failure to Stop at a Red Light	54
Failure to Yield to Pedestrians in a Crosswalk	52
ROW Violation: Stop Sign	45
Unsafe Lane Change	14
Failure to Yield to Traffic When Entering Highway	11

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Department Initiatives

What We've Done

Drive Safer Drive Longer

In 2024, our organization delivered four community events under the "Drive Safer, Drive Longer" banner. These sessions took place at both the North Berkeley and Sound Berkeley Senior Centers and provided practical guidance on sustaining safe driving practices among senior citizens. At each event, experts from the Berkeley Police Department Traffic Bureau explained the influence of health conditions on driving and offered actionable advice for steering clear of risky road situations. Participants received information on vehicle comfort and safety, DMV licensing procedures, and a range of supportive resources.

The program received grant funding from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Positive community responses have reinforced our commitment to supporting senior drivers, and we look forward to hosting similar events in the future.
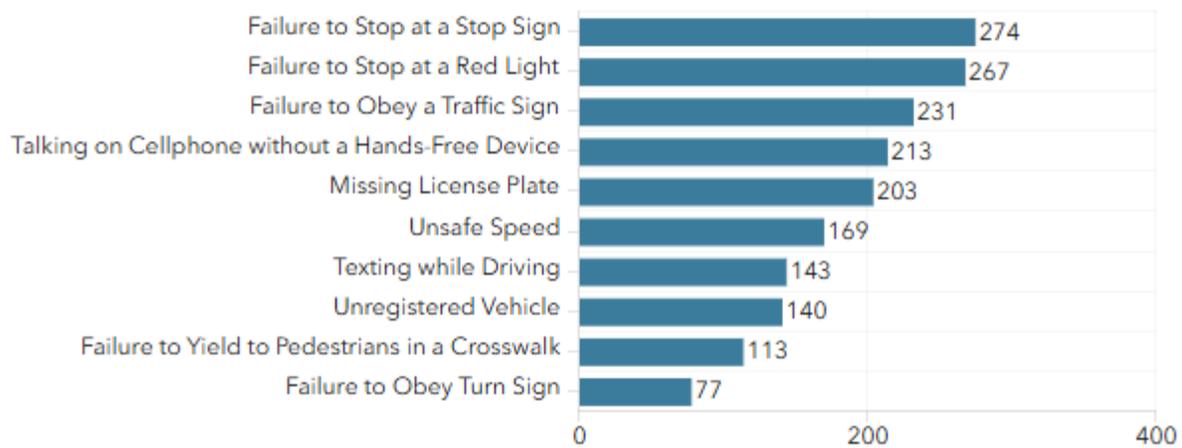
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How We're Doing

<u>Moving Violations</u>

The chart below presents the moving violations recorded during vehicle stops, compared against the primary collision factors (PCFs) identified in the previous section. This year's data reveals substantial overlap between common moving violations and the key PCFs, indicating a strong connection to critical traffic safety issues. Additionally, the data highlights other significant violations that support our comprehensive three-pronged strategy for enhancing road safety.

Most frequent vehicle violations, 2024

Violation	Count
Failure to Stop at a Stop Sign	274
Failure to Stop at a Red Light	267
Failure to Obey a Traffic Sign	231
Talking on Cellphone without a Hands-Free Device	213
Missing License Plate	203
Unsafe Speed	169
Texting while Driving	143
Unregistered Vehicle	140
Failure to Yield to Pedestrians in a Crosswalk	113
Failure to Obey Turn Sign	77

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

What's Next

Collaboration with City, Regional and State Partners

In 2025, our work on traffic safety begins with a closer partnership with Vision Zero stakeholders. BPD leadership will work with these key partners to identify high-risk locations, study the root causes of collisions, and design targeted interventions that inform our overall safety strategy. Our efforts also extend to High Intensity Traffic operations (HIT) involving a regional collaboration of 10 local law enforcement agencies. HIT uses data analytics and community input to pinpoint dangerous zones and implement specific measures that discourage risky driving behaviors while improving road safety.

We will continue using Office of Traffic Safety grant funding to support both enforcement and educational programs. This strategy includes expanding the Drive Safer, Drive Longer classes for aging drivers, increasing DUI checkpoints, and employing collision data from the Traffic Safety page of the Transparency Hub to guide our enforcement actions. Combined with our three-pronged approach to traffic safety, these initiatives create a comprehensive strategy rooted in real-world data and collaborative insight.

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Accountability

BPD maintains a commitment to equitable, transparent, and accountable policing practices. We carefully analyze our data related to stops and use of force, employing rigorous methods to detect and address any implicit biases. Our philosophy emphasizes proactive, data-driven law enforcement combined with respect for community trust. This is reflected in our low rates of force, high standards for officer accountability, and ongoing efforts to ensure fair and impartial policing.

Stop Data Report

In 2024, our department conducted 4,771 stops. These included 3,312 vehicle stops, 1,392 pedestrian stops, and 67 bicycle stops. Discretionary actions accounted for approximately 60% of these encounters, largely addressing traffic violations. The remaining 40% resulted from calls for service or were based on specific information.

According to data published in the most recent RIPA board report, Berkeley's yield rate was higher than 82% of all agencies in California.

Outcomes from these stops varied: 878 stops led to at least one arrest, 1,573 resulted in citations, and 1,795 concluded with warnings. The department conducted searches in 13% of stops, with contraband found in 51% of these searches. Overall, searches resulted in the seizure of 63 weapons, including 12 firearms recoveries. Notably, discretionary searches—those not related to reasons other than an arrest, search warrant, vehicle inventory, or emergency conditions—had an even higher yield rate of 60%.

Tests for Bias

We are committed to the principles of fair and impartial policing and take great care to ensure that our practices do not contribute to disparate outcomes. One way we honor that commitment is by employing statistical tests for implicit bias in officer decision-making. These tests allow us to isolate the specific impact of officer bias from other factors that might drive disparities between stop demographics and census demographics.

At-Fault Collision Demographics

A key part of our approach involves comparing the demographics of drivers involved in at-fault collisions with those stopped for moving violations. This comparison checks whether traffic stops follow objective, race-neutral criteria—a crucial test since moving violations made up 73% of discretionary stops in 2024. Collision data provides a snapshot of who is driving in Berkeley and establishes a baseline for the population encountered during stops. By focusing on drivers deemed at fault in collisions, we narrow this sample to those driving dangerously. If our traffic enforcement is fair, the demographics of at-fault drivers should closely match those of drivers stopped for moving violations. Our analysis of 2024 data showed a strong alignment between these groups, suggesting that stops likely result from driving behavior rather than implicit bias.

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At-Fault Collision & Discretionary Moving Violation Demographics, 2024
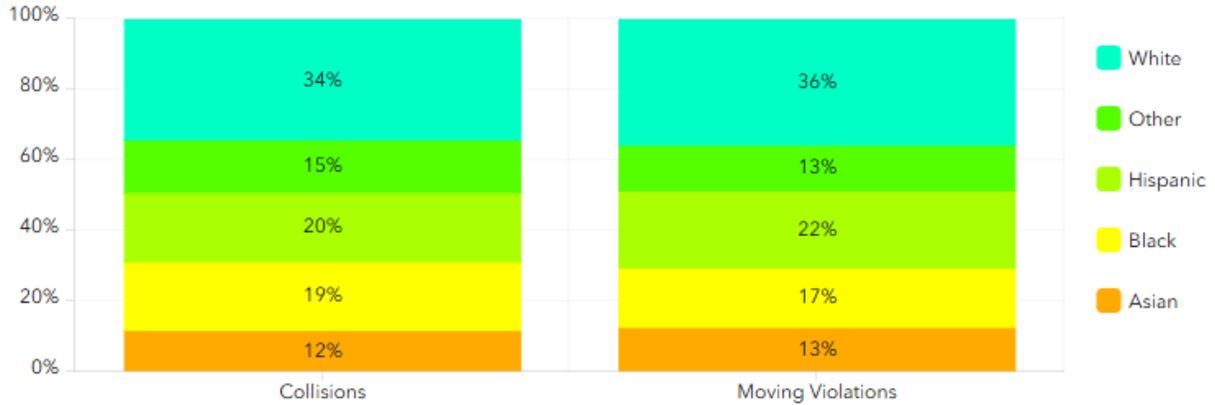
Yield Rate Analysis

The yield rate for police searches refers to the proportion of searches that result in the discovery of contraband or evidence. It is a measure of the effectiveness of searches, calculated as the number of successful searches (those yielding contraband) divided by the total number of searches conducted. This method can be used to better understand whether implicit racial bias influences officers' decisions to conduct searches. For example, it can be used to evaluate whether officers apply a lower threshold of suspicion when searching White individuals compared to others. The underlying assumption is that race-neutral factors should predict the chance of finding contraband equally across all groups. A higher yield from searches of White individuals than Black individuals might indicate that searches involving Black individuals are happening with less evidence of the need to search – i.e. Black people are being searched more often because they are Black and not based on other standards. Our findings reveal the opposite: lower yield rates for White individuals, suggesting that search decisions are made without racial bias. A regression analysis by the RIPA board in 2024 reviewed 2022 data and found no significant effect of race—whether Black or Hispanic—on the likelihood that a search would yield contraband (the RIPA board did not run this test in the 2024). This evidence indicates that our search practices are likely based on race-neutral factors.


Discretionary Yield Rate by Race, 2024

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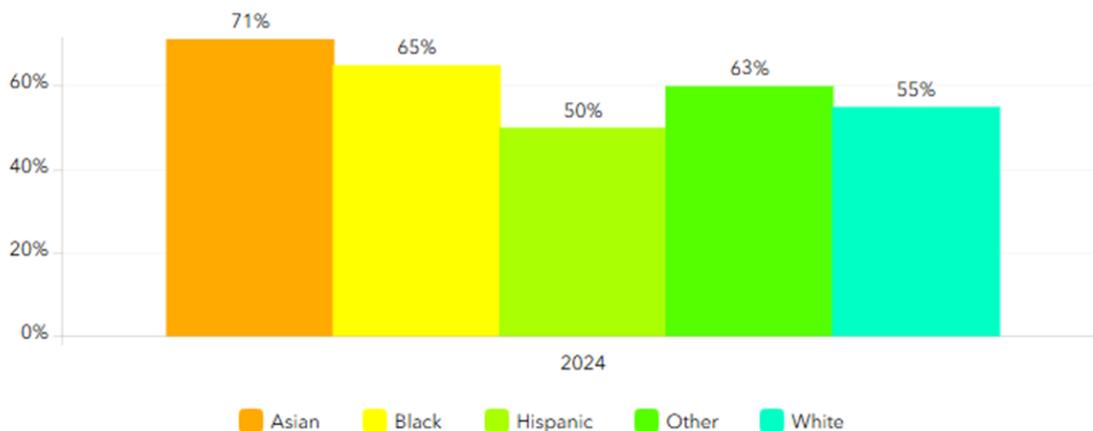
Veil of Darkness

This test examines whether bias plays a role in the decision to stop individuals by comparing the proportion of stops for a racial group in daylight with those after dark. For instance, if Black individuals are stopped more frequently during daylight than at night, visible race might influence these decisions. The test employs specific times, such as 6:30 p.m., that are dark during part of the year and light during part of the year to control for hourly variations in traffic activity. The graph below illustrates this comparison. A difference could indicate bias, while a minimal difference does not conclusively prove its absence. The close alignment of demographic groups for discretionary stops in the dark and in the light seen below is what we would expect to see if those stops were being made based on race-neutral factors.

Discretionary Stop Demographics during Inter-twilight Period, 2024
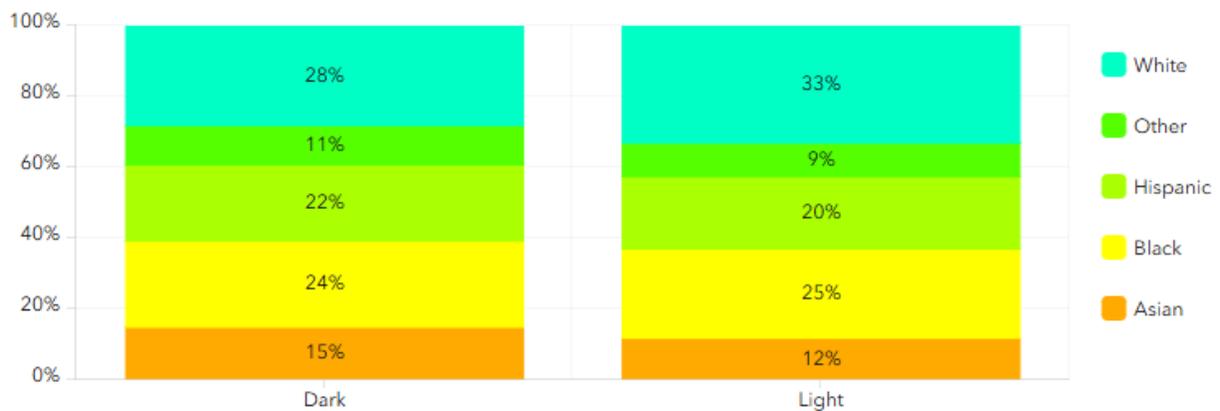
Often, comparisons are made between the racial or ethnic composition of stops and that of the residential population. However, this baseline can be misleading because differences may arise from factors entirely outside of police control. In fact, as noted in the annual RIPA Board report, "[d]ifferences between stop population proportions and residential population proportions for each racial or ethnic group can be caused by several factors, including potential differences in exposure to criminogenic factors, allocation of law enforcement resources, elements that draw large populations of non-residents to congregate in a place, and officer bias." This means that even a department operating without bias might still see a disparity when comparing stop data to census figures.

To ensure that we hold ourselves accountable for the drivers of disparities that we can control—namely, officer bias—we focus our analysis on officer-initiated stops. Research shows that implicit bias is most evident when officers exercise discretion, such as in stops made without a call for service or specific identifying information. By concentrating on these encounters, we can better detect and address potential biases in our decision-making processes, so that our enforcement actions are based solely on objective behavior rather than on race or other irrelevant factors.

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Use of Force Report

The Berkeley Police Department takes pride in accomplishing our work with minimal reliance on force by emphasizing de-escalation techniques, an understanding of mental health crises, and appropriate responses—all of which are reinforced through regular training. Under our policy, reportable force is divided into four levels:

Use of Force Level
By Uses, 2024

Level 1 71.1%
Level 2 24.86%
Level 3 4.05%

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

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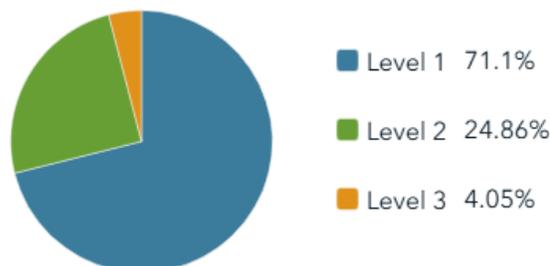
Level 3 – Involves the use of a weapon, subject injury, or complaint of pain. This category also applies to specific circumstances when an officer does not activate their body-worn camera.

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

Officers are required to report any use of force to their sergeant, who documents the incident in a formal report that is then reviewed by a lieutenant and a captain.

In 2024, there were 294 incidents involving 1,041 uses of force—of which 71% were Level 1 and 25% were Level 2, together accounting for 96% of all uses. Of the 61,666 calls for service received in 2024, 0.48% resulted in a use of force, and 0.05% (29 incidents) led to force that produced more than a minor complaint of pain or involved a weapon (Levels 3 and 4).

Calls for Service and Use of Force Incidents

Calls for Service: 61.7k (2024)
Use of Force: 294 (2024)
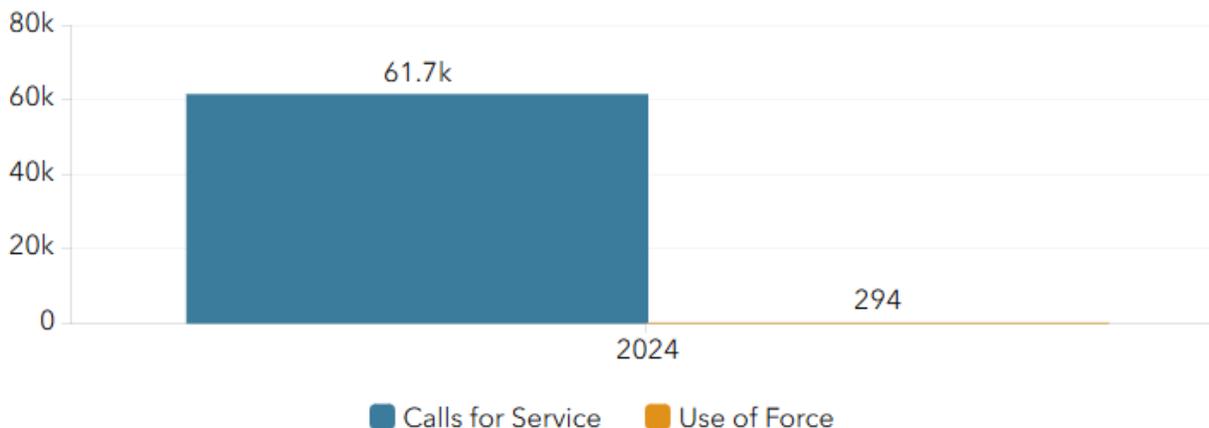
Currently, our department reports more use-of-force types than many comparable police agencies due to expansive Level 1 reporting. We anticipate modifying our reporting practices in 2025 to better reflect common standards among peer agencies. Simplifying reporting will

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decrease administrative tasks that have not contributed significantly to oversight and allow supervisors to prioritize field leadership. This adjustment will ensure we are capturing meaningful and actionable force data, helping us better understand and evaluate trends, improve officer performance, and maintain transparency with our community.

We test for bias in the decision to use force by comparing the percentage of arrests where force is applied across racial groups. Using the number of arrests as our baseline is valuable because it focuses on the most common situation in which force is used, isolating the arrest scenario as a key variable.

Arrest Use of Force Rates
All Use of Force Levels
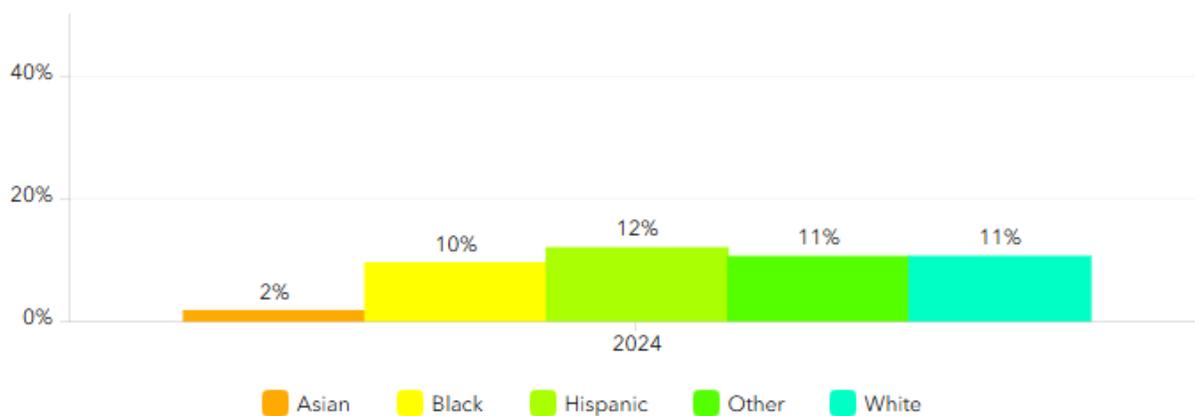
The consistent percentages seen indicate that decisions to use force are driven more by the circumstances of the arrest rather than by race.

The department also tracks complaints related to the use of force. While every use of force is reviewed by a lieutenant and captain, use of force incidents linked to a personnel complaint undergo an additional investigation by the Internal Affairs Bureau. The complaint investigation results, including body-worn camera footage, are then submitted along with recommendations to the Chief. In 2024, the department received a total of 13 allegations regarding use of force incidents; to date, investigations of 11 allegations have been completed, including 5 that were also investigated by the Office of the Director of Police Accountability, while 2 are still under evaluation. None of the 11 completed allegations resulted in sustained findings of misconduct. We remain committed to continuously collecting, evaluating, and assessing our use of force data to inform our policies and training—with a focus on achieving positive outcomes.

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Looking Ahead

The Berkeley Police Department is committed to modernizing our policies and operational practices to deliver efficient, transparent, and accountable service that aligns with our community's values. This past year, despite staffing challenges and increasing demand, we successfully expanded our ranks through our partnership with All-Star Recruiting, bringing new talent into our ranks, and set the stage to significantly bolstering our personnel by integrating Community Service Officers into patrol and investigative roles.

We have enhanced our effectiveness through technology and strategic partnerships, including the implementation of Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs) and the preparation of fixed-camera surveillance systems. These technologies, along with intensified Organized Retail Theft operations and targeted gun recovery efforts, enable the department to address crime proactively and enhance public safety through evidence-driven approaches.

Collaboration with community partners continues to guide our approach. Through efforts like the Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention Program (GVIPP), Drive Safer Drive Longer classes, and our ongoing involvement with the City's Vision Zero initiative, we focus on long term solutions that are responsive and effective when tackling the priorities identified by our community.

Transparency stands at the heart of our work. Our Transparency Hub constantly evolves to meet public needs. In the coming year, we plan to broaden this resource further. It will offer regular updates about crime patterns, enforcement activities, and how our department uses technology. This commitment is essential for building public trust and demonstrating accountability.

As we look toward the future, we are focused on advancing our abilities to be more precise and data driven, with an eye toward increased prevention and real-time response capabilities. Advancing technologies look to improve rapid deployment capabilities, immediate situational awareness, and improved safety outcomes during a number of public safety responses from critical incidents to natural disasters. By exploring these innovative solutions, we aim to maintain the trust and safety of our community while setting a new standard in public safety. We look forward to continued partnerships with City Council, other city agencies, and community members to advance our shared goals for a safer, more responsive Berkeley.