



**Cape Coral
Police
Department**

2024

Professional Standards Bureau Annual Report



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Introduction

The Internal Affairs Unit of the Professional Standards Bureau is charged with protecting the public and the agency against all turpitude associated with our members' conduct. It is also responsible for rooting out and removing all personnel who are unfit to serve in the law enforcement profession. The unit is also tasked with identifying and correcting all policy and procedural deficiencies.

Effective law enforcement is fundamentally reliant on the respect and trust the community places in the police department. Any conduct that undermines this relationship is detrimental to the public interest and to the City of Cape Coral. In line with this principle, the Cape Coral Police Department is committed to investigating any circumstances suggesting an employee has engaged in unbecoming conduct and taking appropriate disciplinary action as necessary.

An employee's ability to perform their duties effectively is directly influenced by the respect and confidence they earn from the public. Police officers and department staff are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the integrity and trustworthiness that the community and the Code of Conduct demand. The Cape Coral Police Department strictly prohibits any form of bias-based actions by its employees.

To address concerns and allegations regarding inappropriate conduct, the Cape Coral Police Department utilizes data collection and analysis. By systematically gathering information on variables related to employee activities, the department enhances its capacity to evaluate the appropriate exercise of authority and discretion entrusted to its members.

The department utilizes dedicated software systems for complaint entry (Blue Team) and Internal Affairs case management (IA Pro). These platforms have streamlined the data collection and entry process, while also offering an expanded set of analytical tools for more effective oversight.

The 2024 Annual Report addresses the following relevant standards as outlined by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA):

- Chapter 26: LE Internal Affairs Organizational Integrity
- Chapter 1.4.1: Types of investigations by internal affairs
- Chapter 4.2.4: Annual analysis of incidents of force
- Chapter 4.2.5: Assaults on sworn officer review
- Chapter 41.2.2: Annual analysis of vehicle pursuits
- Chapter 22.4.3: Law Enforcement – Annual Analytics of Grievances
- Chapter 3.5.3: Annual analysis of grievances – Communications
- Chapter 26.3.1 Complaint type

The report reviews these chapters in accordance with both department policy and CALEA standards. It includes charts and graphs corresponding to the aforementioned chapters, followed by a detailed analysis comparing current results to those from previous years. The findings of this review will be submitted to the Chief of Police for further consideration.

Grievances - Reporting and Analysis

(CALEA Chapter Law Enforcement 22.4.3/Communications 3.5.3)

There was one (1) grievance filed with the Police Department in 2024 by the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 33 (Sworn Officers' Union) or the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, Local 2301 (representing Non-Sworn Professional Staff).

The grievance that was filed was suggested and supported by the Cape Coral Police Department and involved a non-sworn professional staff employee. This represents the same number from 2023, when employees filed only one (1) grievance.

The Professional Standards Bureau analyzed existing policies, procedures, and training related to the agency's grievance process. No issues with policies, procedures, or training were uncovered, which could have affected the filing of a grievance.

Representatives of both the sworn officers' and professional staff unions participated in the analysis. Both were content with the current status. Neither management nor labor has proposed suggestions for alterations to the process.

The analysis consists of reviewing the grievances and interviewing the representatives of each labor union. Rob Goff, President of the Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge 33, and David Jimenez, representative of the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, Local 2301, believe that the grievance process is fair and easy for employees to exercise, should the need arise. They agreed that there was an open line of communication between labor and management and had no retribution concerns if members exercised their right to file a grievance on a matter. They further agreed that the process was designed without obstacles and neither recommended any changes to the process.

Inquiries

(CALEA Chapter Law Enforcement 26 / Communications 1.4.1)

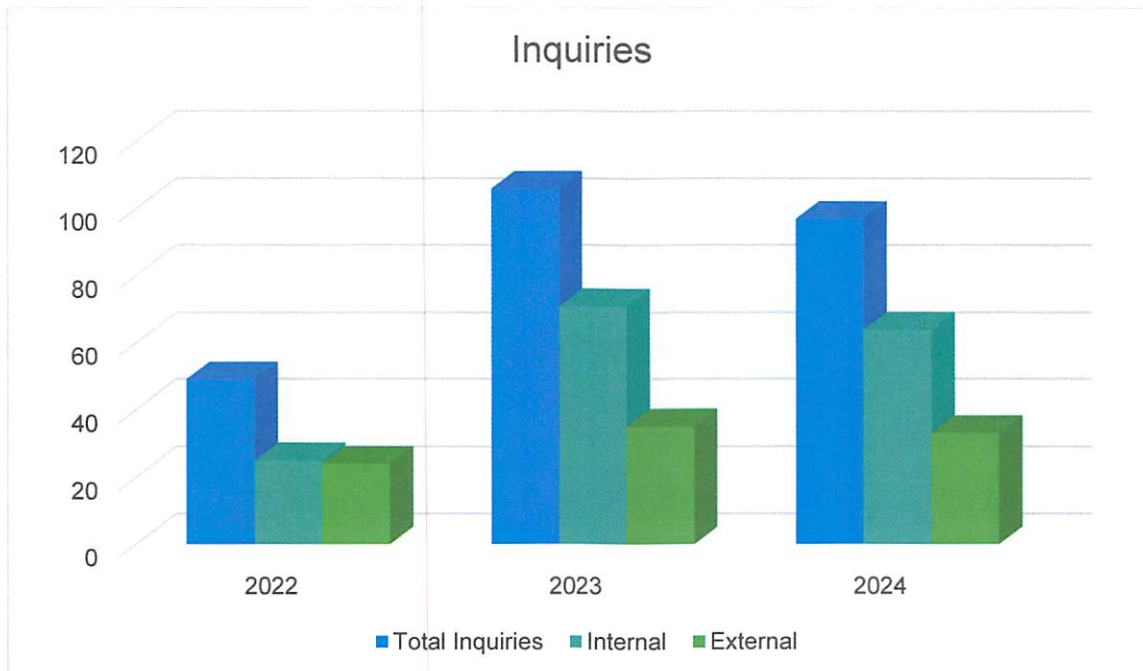
Inquiries and complaints may be initiated from an external source, such as a citizen, or internally from a Cape Coral Police Department employee, supervisors or city employees from other departments.

In 2024 there were ninety-seven (97) inquiries and minor complaints investigated. This is a net decrease of nine (9) inquiries year-over-year. Sixty-four (64) inquiries originated as internal complaints, with the remaining thirty-three (33) originating from outside the organization. The dispositions of the ninety-seven (97) inquiries and complaints were as follows:

Internal Inquiries – Sixty-three (63) were sustained, and one (1) was determined to be a policy failure.

External Inquiries – Eight (8) were sustained, four (4) were not sustained, eighteen (18) were unfounded, one (1) was exonerated, and two (2) had more than one disposition.

A large portion of the internal and external complaints were investigated and handled at the line-level as they did not meet the threshold of being investigated by the Professional Standards Bureau.



From 2022 through 2024, the Cape Coral Police Department investigated an average of eighty-four (84) inquiries over three years. In 2023, that number increased to one hundred

and six (106) due to the implementation of Blue Team and IA Pro software. In 2024 that number decreased to ninety-seven (97).

In 2024, Cape Coral Police interacted with the public (between citizen calls for service, self-initiated activity, traffic stops, and administrative calls) on 212,775 occasions. Of over 212,000 contacts with the public, only thirty-three (33) of those contacts resulted in an externally generated complaint. While year-over-year, this represents a five (5%) decrease from the thirty-five (35) documented in 2023; this is a remarkably low number at 0.00015% of contacts generated a complaint. The Professional Standards Bureau believes that the Body-Worn Camera (BWC) Program and the emphasis on training in verbal defense and de-escalation continue to impact the number of citizen complaints.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE CPD-13 – COMPLAINT PROCEDURES & INTERNAL AFFAIRS INVESTIGATION:

“THE CAPE CORAL POLICE DEPARTMENT SHALL ACCEPT AND INVESTIGATE ALL COMPLAINTS, INCLUDING ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS, WHICH ARE DIRECTED AGAINST THE AGENCY OR ITS MEMBERS.

COMPLAINTS SHALL BE ACCEPTED IN PERSON, BY MAIL, EMAIL, TELEPHONE, OR OTHER MEDIA DEVICES (HEARING IMPAIRED). COMPLAINTS MADE IN PERSON CAN BE DOCUMENTED ON FORMS CONTROL # F-45, OFFICER INTERACTION FORM.

ALL COMPLAINTS SHALL BE ACCEPTED AS INQUIRIES UNTIL IT IS DETERMINED THAT THE COMPLAINT CONTAINS SUFFICIENT FACTUAL INFORMATION TO WARRANT AN INVESTIGATION.”

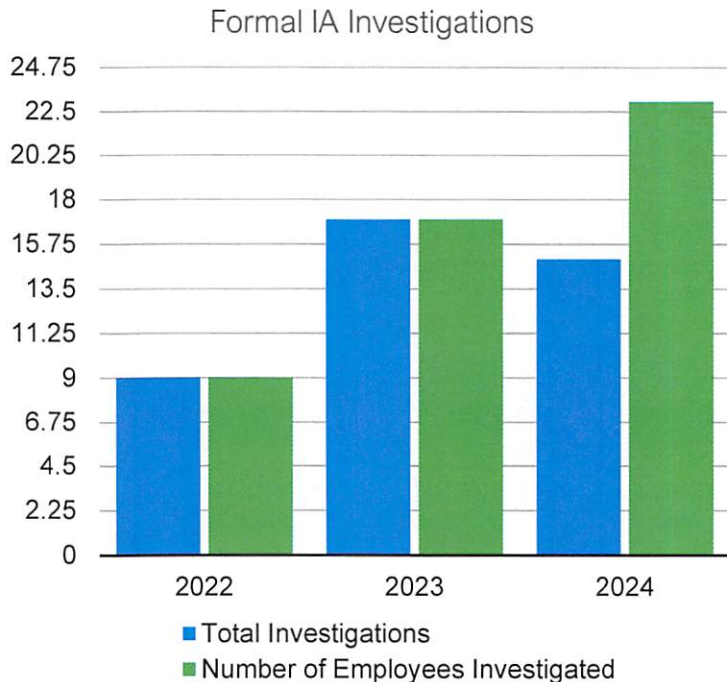


Internal Affairs Investigations

The Professional Standards Bureau Internal Affairs Unit is responsible for Internal Affairs investigations. Formal Internal Affairs investigations include but are not limited to, allegations of criminal or gross misconduct, dereliction of duty, excessive force, civil rights violations, and state and federal law violations. Internal Affairs investigations may contain more than one allegation.

Allegations may be received from any member of the police department or initiated at the direction of the Executive Staff.

The following represents fifteen (15) Internal Affairs investigations in 2024 compared to the seventeen (17) in previous year. One (1) of the investigations involved three (3) subject officers, one (1) involved seven (7) subject officers, and six (6) of the investigations involved a subject officer that was involved in more than one Internal Affairs Investigation.



From January 1 to December 31, 2024, the Professional Standards Bureau initiated fifteen (15) Internal Affairs investigations involving twenty-three (23) Department members. The number of Internal Affairs investigations for 2024 decreased by two (2) year-over-year, an eleven (11.76%) decrease.

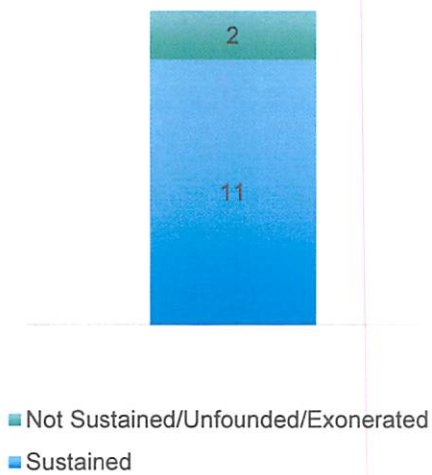
Internal Affairs conducts the Administrative Investigation based on the severity of the violation Policy Violations. The Administrative Policy violations are a violation of a departmental policy that **can** encompass both Internal Affairs Investigations and Line-Level Inquiry Investigations. Of the fifteen (15) Internal Affairs Investigations, eleven (11) were sustained and issued corrective actions, two (2) were unfounded, and two are still in the investigative process.

Furthermore, investigations resulted in six (6) subject officers being issued a Written Reprimand, three (3) officers received a suspension, and two (2) subject employees resigning in lieu of termination.

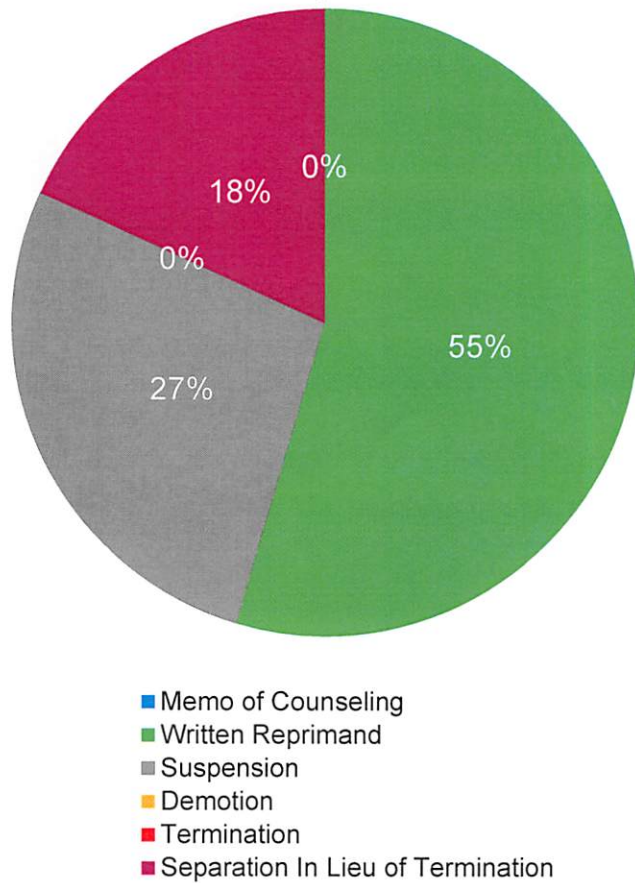
TYPES OF CORRECTIVE ACTIONS/IA INVESTIGATIONS

	2022	2023	2024
Memo of Counseling	3	2	0
Written Reprimand	1	5	6
Suspension	1	0	3
Demotion	0	0	0
Termination	2	0	0
Voluntary separation	2	1	2
Total	9	8	11

2024 Findings in Administrative Investigations



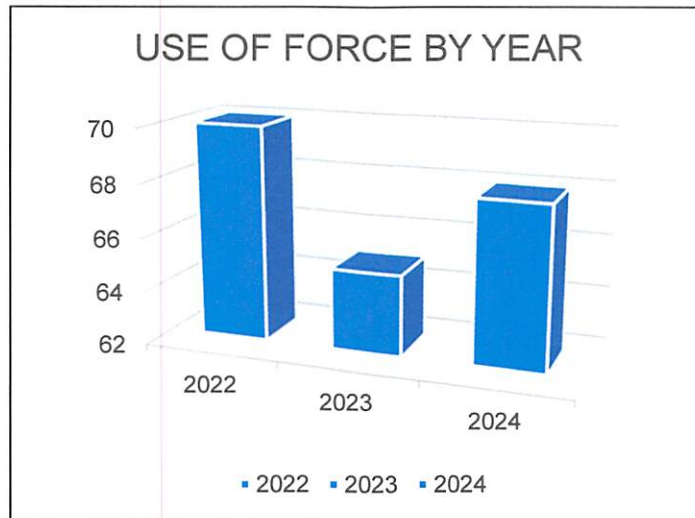
2024 Corrective Actions in Administrative Investigations



Use of Force - Reporting and Analysis

(CALEA Chapter Law Enforcement 4.2.4)

In 2024, there were sixty-eight (68) Resistance Control (Use of Force) reports filed with the Professional Standards Bureau. The total number of reported Use of Force incidents increased by three (3) incidents, or 7.4%, in 2024 compared to 2023.



In 2024, there were sixty-eight (68) Resistance Control (Use of Force) reports filed with the Professional Standards Bureau. The total number of reported uses of force incidents increased by three (3) incidents, or 4.6%, in 2024 compared to 2023.

In 2024, of the 212,775 interactions our officers had with the public, 3,563 resulted in an arrest. Of those interactions there was only sixty-eight (68) of those arrests resulted in a use of force. Five (5) reported uses of force occurred during attempts to take subjects into protective custody under the provisions of the Baker Act, a decrease of four (4) such cases from the previous year.

There are varying degrees of control that may be justified depending on the dynamics of a situation. In some cases, the arrestee resists arrest, and some type of physical force may be necessary to affect the arrest and protect others. The amount of force may escalate or de-escalate, depending on the suspect's offered resistance.

In 2024, the TASER was involved in twenty-seven (27) uses of force, or thirty-nine percent (39.70%) of the types of force applied, which is a seventeen percent (17.39%) increase from 2023.

Hands/Fist/Feet/Takedowns were also applied in thirty-four (34) incidents accounting for fifty percent (50.00%) of use of force incidents, a three percent (3.03%) increase from

2023. By department policy, only control holds and takedowns that result in injury or complaint of injury are reported.

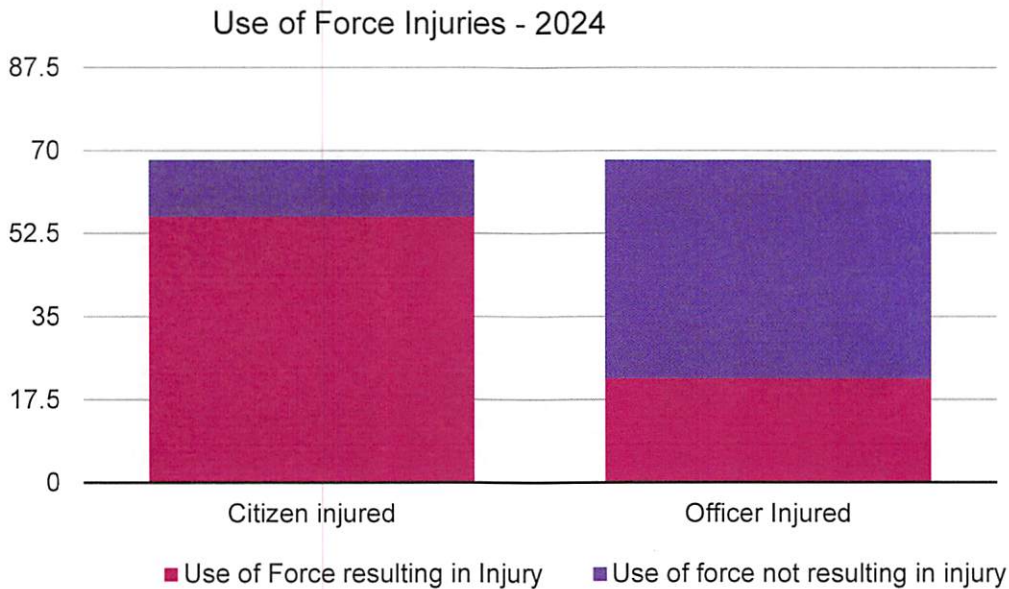
Uses of force involving Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) saw a slight increase in 2024 from 2023 when it was used in six (6) incidents or eight percent (8.82%) of total uses of force accounting for a fifty percent (50%) increase from 2023.

There was one (1) K-9 use of force, the same as the year before in 2023. The K-9 bite was dictated by the call-for-service and suspect resistance.

Finally, firearm/lethal force incidents decreased from one (1) in 2023, to zero (0) in 2024, a one hundred percent (100%) decrease.

Injuries are documented whenever there is a visible sign of injury or **complaint of injury**. In 2024, uses of force resulted in fifty-six (56) reported suspect injuries, accounting for eighty-two percent (82.35%) of our uses of force, which is a fifty-one percent (51.35%) increase from the previous year.

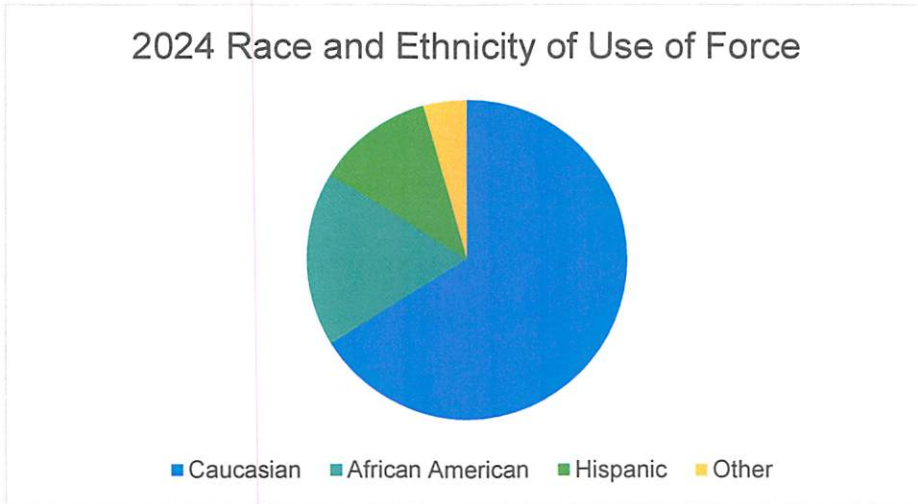
Twenty-two officers (22) reported injuries during a use of force encounter, accounting for twenty-three percent (23.35%) of incidents. Most officer injuries occurred while going hands-on with suspects.



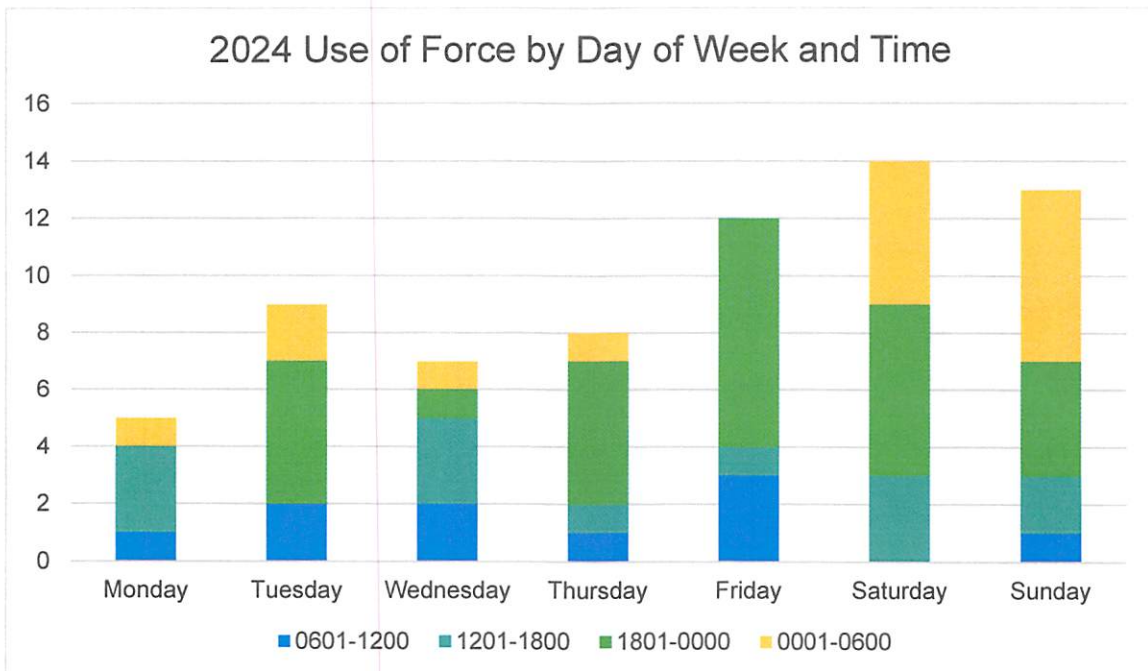
* A use of force is considered to have an associated injury when there is a visible sign of injury or a complaint of injury by the suspect.

In 2024, forty-five (45) Caucasian citizens were the subject of a use of force which is sixty-six percent (66%) of the 68 total uses of force. Twelve (12) African American citizens were the subject of a use of force which is eighteen percent (18%) of the 68 total uses of force. Three (3) use of force was across other demographics such as Asian, Pacific Islander,

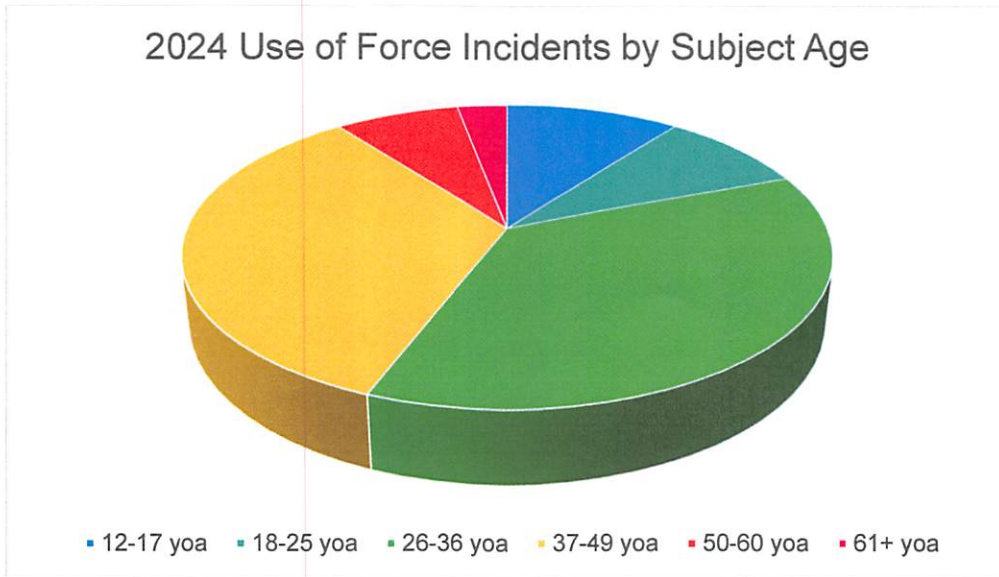
and "Other" which is four percent (4%) of the 68 total uses of force. Those of Hispanic origin, regardless of race, accounted for eight (12), or twelve percent (12%). According to the most recent US Census, this distribution across demographic groups closely mirrors Cape Coral's demographic breakdown.



During 2024 males accounted for fifty-nine (59) of the 68 use of force incidents which is over eighty-six percent (86.76%). Females accounted for the remaining nine (9) incidents.



The age range of individuals involved in the sixty-eight (68) use of force incidents spanned from 12 to 71 years. The majority of these incidents involved subjects between the ages of 26 and 49.



Upon reviewing the aforementioned use of force data, no recommendations have been made to alter current training or equipment.

The Cape Coral Police Department completed the construction of its new Training Center at the close of the 2024 calendar year. This facility is designed to serve as a dedicated space for the training of department personnel. The Training Center features office space for the Training Unit, a multi-lane firearms range, classrooms with the capacity to accommodate over 100 students, a Defensive Tactics room, and a Reality-Based Training and Simunitions room with a movable wall system. This state-of-the-art facility will significantly enhance the quality and breadth of training available to department personnel.

The agency will continue to review all Body-Worn Camera (BWC) footage related to use of force incidents and will ensure that each video is documented as administratively reviewed by the Chain of Command within the AXON Evidence.com dashboard.

The Cape Coral Police Department continues to provide training in Verbal Defense and Influence (also known and referred to as Verbal Judo), Defensive Tactics, and Use of Force on an annual basis. This training includes reality-based training from the Force Science Institute. Officers also conduct training on true-to-life scenarios, which better prepare them for the real-world encounters they face in the community. Although there were no identifiable patterns and/or trends, the type of confrontations in 2024 remained consistent when compared to previous years.

The use of force analysis involves the Professional Standards Bureau reviewing each use of force report to identify patterns of subject resistance and the control options utilized by officers. This analysis is further supported by consultations with Subject Matter Experts within the agency and the nationally recognized use of force experts in the Training Unit. The identified patterns and trends are discussed with supervisors and Command Staff to ensure ongoing improvement and accountability.

Assaults on Sworn Officer - Reporting and Analysis

(CALEA Chapter Law Enforcement 4.2.5)

In 2024, there were eight (8) assaults upon Cape Coral Police Department Officers. This was a 77.14% decrease in assaults on Cape Coral Police Department Officers from 2023. All appear to be cases of Simple Assault, defined by FDLE's Florida Uniform Crime Report as "an unlawful physical attack by one person upon another where neither the offender displays a weapon, nor the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury involving apparent broken bones, loss of teeth, possible internal injuries, severe laceration or loss of consciousness." These instances all resulted in arrests with charges of either Assault on a LEO or Battery LEO.

In the eight (8) incidents, suspects used personal weapons (hands/fists/feet) against the officer(s). These incidents resulted from interacting with subjects or arrestees and occurred during these interactions' investigation, arrest, or processing/transport phase.

There was no instance of an apparent premeditated attack against Cape Coral Police Officers in 2024.

There were no identifiable trends or patterns with these incidents. As such, there are no training issues or recommendations. Currently, there is no need to revise the policy.

Assaults on Law Enforcement Officers

	2022	2023	2024
Assault on LEO	17	35	8
Aggravated Assault on LEO	4	1	0
Total	28	36	8

Traffic Crash/Damage

From January 1 to December 31, 2024, the Cape Coral Police Department logged 76 vehicle damage reports. Of those incidents, twenty-nine (29) were determined to be a violation of policy, accounting for 38.16%, a decrease of 6.45%, compared to 2023. Overall, there was an eight percent (8.57%) increase in incidences of traffic crashes and vehicle damage from 2023 to 2024. The increase in vehicle damages is minimal, while there is a notable decrease in the number of incidents that were out of policy.

TRAFFIC CRASH/DAMAGE – CAPE CORAL POLICE DEPARTMENT (CITY VEHICLES)

Types	2022	2023	2024
Violation of Policy	26	31	29
Within Policy	80	39	47
Total	106	70	76

Pursuits - Reporting and Analysis

(CALEA Chapter Law Enforcement 41.2.2)

Three (3) vehicle pursuits were reported to the Professional Standards Bureau in 2024, which is the same number from the previous year. No officers were injured, and no department vehicles were damaged. Two (2) of the pursuits were not within policy. Two (2) of the pursuits were initiated for felonies and one (1) was for a traffic offense.

Pursuits 2022-2024

Pursuits	2022	2023	2024
Total Pursuit	2	3	3
Pursuits Resulting in Crashes	0	0	2
Suspect Rammed Officer	0	0	0

Policy revisions in June of 2008 only allow an officer to initiate a pursuit when he/she reasonably believes the fleeing suspect has committed a "forcible felony" as defined by Florida State Statute. This change has continued to result in a markedly low number of vehicle pursuits.

In 2017, specific language was added to policy to differentiate between a Vehicle Pursuit and Failure to Stop. Vehicle Pursuit is now defined as a deliberate attempt by an officer in an authorized emergency vehicle utilizing lights and a siren to apprehend a suspect actively attempting to elude apprehension. Failure to Stop is defined as a situation in which a violator fails to stop but does not actively try to flee or elude from the authorized emergency vehicle. In 2022, Standard Operating Procedure CPD-05, titled "Emergency Vehicle Operations" was established to differentiate non-emergency and emergency vehicle operations.

The Professional Standards Bureau incorporated additional language emphasizing that the officer must feel confident in their ability to conduct the pursuit safely, with due regard for the safety of all life and property. Furthermore, the officer is required to continuously assess the risks associated with continuing the pursuit and recognize that terminating the pursuit may be the safest course of action.

All members of the Department receive annual vehicle operations training, which includes a review of Standard Operating Procedure CPD-05, with a focus on Section VIII, titled "Pursuits." This SOP was revised on October 2, 2023, and the annual pursuit policy review for all personnel was conducted in January 2024 via PowerDMS.