

KERN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE 2024 ANNUAL REPORT





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Message from the Sheriff

As your Sheriff, I continue to believe that community policing is a key component of effective law enforcement. It is not just a strategy—it is a philosophy that defines who we are as an organization. Every member of the Kern County Sheriff's Office is expected to approach their work as a problem solver, committed to identifying issues, developing practical solutions, and serving our community with professionalism and integrity.

Partnership with our community continues to be the key to achieving that mission. I believe the public must play an active role in identifying and solving the challenges we face together. The Sheriff's Office has continued to expand outreach efforts through programs such as Community Academies, National Night Out, Sheriff's Office tours, the Community Advisory Council (CAC), and participation in numerous community events across Kern County.

In 2024, the Sheriff's Office began to overcome the challenges we previously faced in recruitment and retention. This problem was not unique to our organization, but our focused efforts are paying off. Building on the momentum of 2023, we have expanded our recruitment presence at community events, schools, and career fairs across the county. These efforts have resulted in continued staffing gains and renewed interest in law enforcement careers.

We also made significant progress in modernizing our facilities and equipment. The two new Airbus H125 helicopters acquired last year are now fully operational and have already enhanced our ability to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies. In addition, our new Coroner and Public Administrator facility has been completed and opened to the public. This facility represents a significant step forward in improving public service and accessibility, as well as ensuring state-of-the-art working conditions for our staff.

In 2024, the Kern County Sheriff's Office made significant progress toward achieving the goals outlined in the Stipulated Judgment. Our organization has expanded our data collection and review processes, improved supervisory oversight, and worked tirelessly to update our policies on use of force, bias-free policing, and internal investigations. The Sheriff's Office remains firmly committed to transparency and continuous improvement, and holding ourselves to the highest standards of public trust and professional integrity.

Throughout 2024, our focus remained on strengthening trust, increasing transparency, and improving public safety, all while partnering with the community. We will continue to embrace innovation, invest in our people, and work hand in hand with the residents of Kern County to make our communities safer and stronger.

I want to thank every member of the Kern County Sheriff's Office for their professionalism and dedication, and I extend my deepest appreciation to our community members for their continued partnership and support. When we work together, we create lasting solutions and a safer future for all who call Kern County home.

Your Sheriff,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Donny Youngblood".

Donny Youngblood



Mission Statement and Core Values



The Kern County Sheriff's Office is committed to work in partnership with our community to enhance the safety, security, and quality of life for the residents and visitors of Kern County through professional public safety services.

The following core values are vital to the success of the Kern County Sheriff's Office and complement our Mission Statement.

Community Policing

The Sheriff is committed to the philosophy of community policing and problem solving. Members of the Kern County Sheriff's Office should consider themselves as problem solvers. It's easy to point out a problem, but not so easy to find solutions. The phrase, "We can't do it because..." is unacceptable and must be dismissed. Let's figure out how we can.

Integrity

This is a noble profession, not a job. Any misconduct that reflects negatively on this organization or the community we serve will be dealt with swiftly and decisively.

Uniformity and Pride

The Kern County Sheriff's Office is built on tradition, pride, and earned respect. Treat the public with respect and never tarnish the badge or good reputation of our organization.

Honesty

We demand honesty. Honesty, credibility, and ethical conduct should describe who we are and nothing less is acceptable.

Accountability

The Kern County community will hold us accountable. We hold each other and ourselves accountable.

Education and Experience

Future leaders should pursue educational opportunities and diversity in experience to become well-rounded and informed.

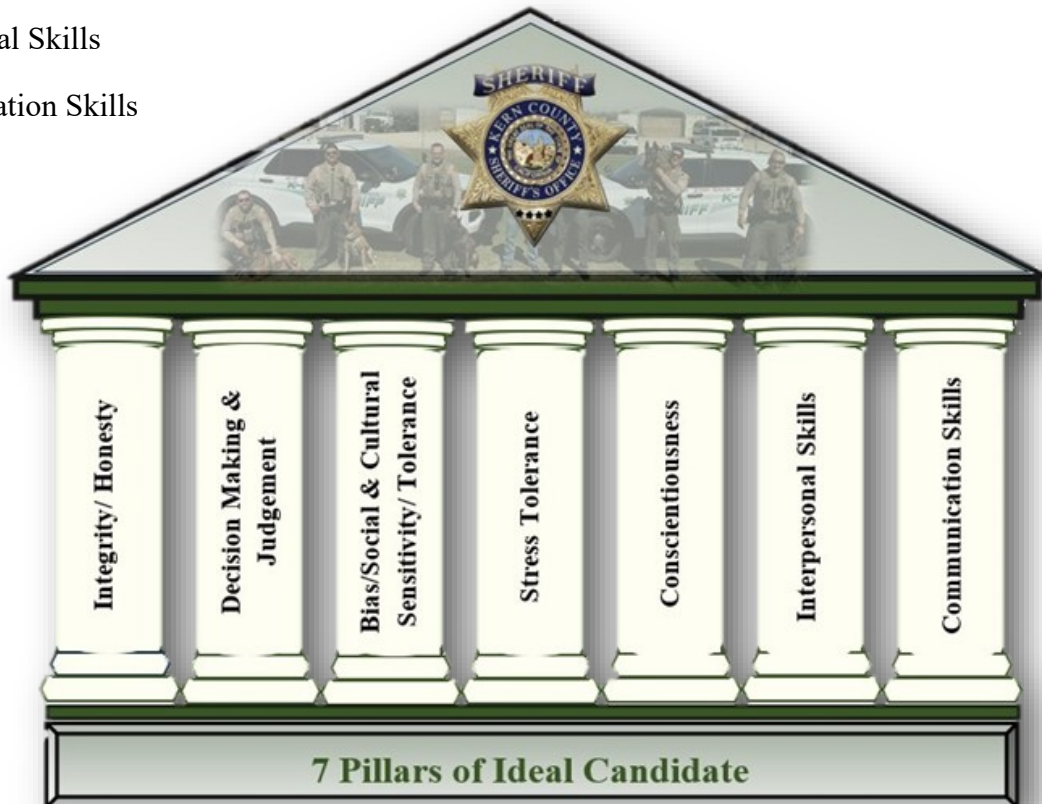


The Ideal Candidate Profile

The Kern County Sheriff's Office uses the POST Background Manual, which serves as the industry standard in providing the framework for minimum standards and mandatory disqualification factors. However, the Sheriff's Office seeks to attract, hire, and promote individuals who exceed POST minimum standards and have the skills, attributes, and qualities that are consistent with the Ideal Candidate Profile. This profile seeks to incorporate the law enforcement code of ethics into practice and reinforce these tenets throughout an employee's career. These seven pillars will continually be assessed through related performance dimensions contained in annual Employment Performance Reports (EPRs). These qualities can be improved through time, training, and experience.

The KCSO has developed an ideal candidate profile which identifies characteristics that are essential to a workforce focused on serving the community with integrity. The Kern County Sheriff's Office has identified **seven** characteristics necessary for employees for a successful career serving our diverse community. It is imperative that every KCSO employee strives to fulfill the characteristics in providing law enforcement services to the community.

- ◆ Integrity/ Honesty
- ◆ Decision Making/ Judgement
- ◆ Bias/ Social & Cultural Sensitivity/ Tolerance
- ◆ Stress Tolerance
- ◆ Conscientiousness
- ◆ Interpersonal Skills
- ◆ Communication Skills





Legal Authority and Structure

The Kern County Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator exercises original jurisdiction in the unincorporated area of Kern County and provides supportive assistance and mutual aid to local and neighboring agencies for law enforcement duties pursuant to Section 26600 through 26778 of the Government Code. In 1995, the Kern County Board of Supervisors enacted Kern County Ordinance 2.10.010, which consolidated the Public Administrator's Office and Coroner's Office with the Kern County Sheriff's Office.

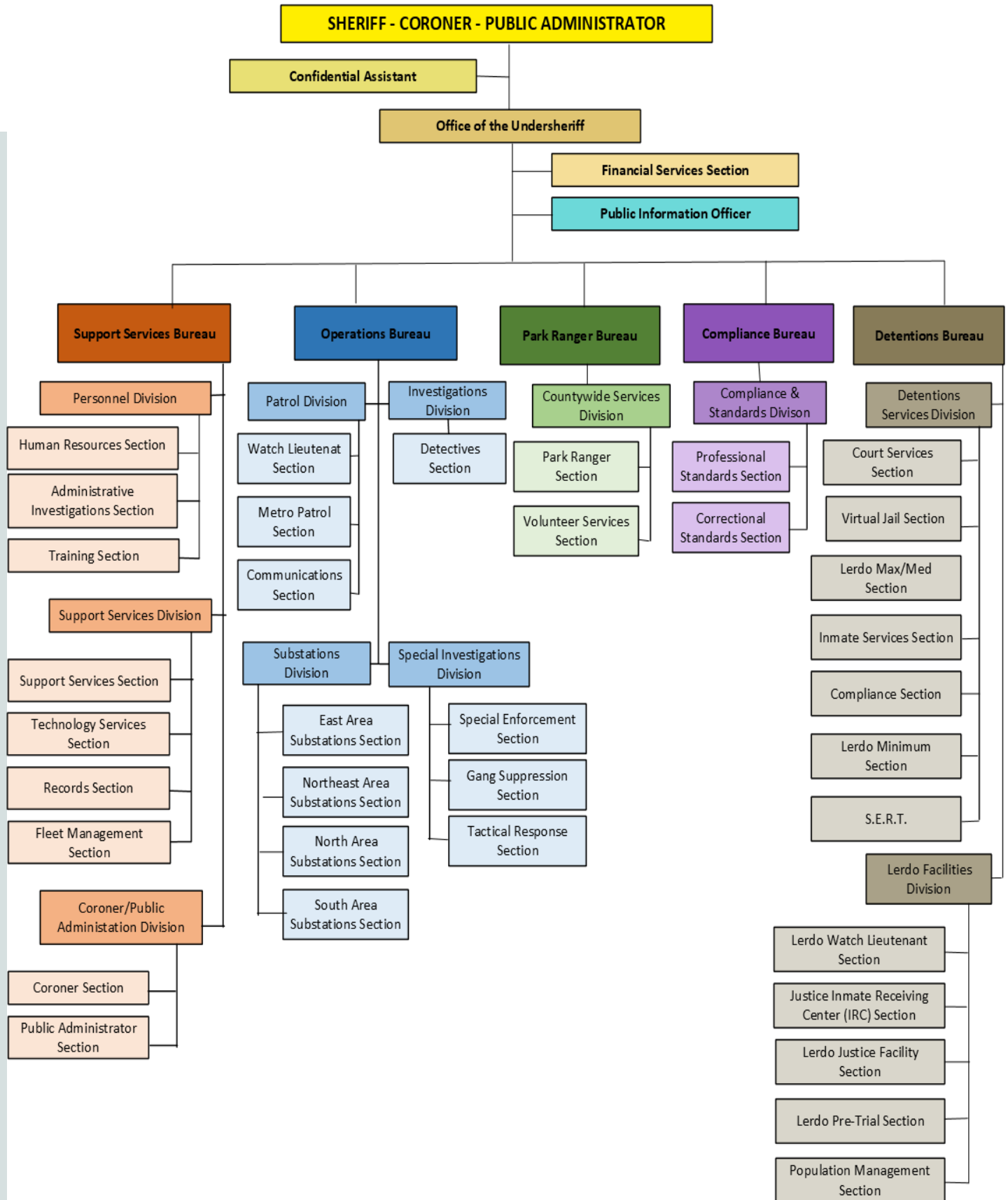
The Kern County Sheriff's Office is organized and exists to facilitate compliance with the lawfully prescribed duties of the Sheriff-Coroner. Such duties include the preservation of the peace, arrest of offenders, investigation and suppression of public offenses, maintenance of the jail system, endorsement and service of processes and notices, attendance upon Superior and Municipal Courts, search and rescue of lost or endangered persons, and such other duties as may be required by law.

The Kern County Sheriff's Office is structured to ensure an optimal chain of command. The Sheriff oversees the Office of the Undersheriff, which includes the Financial Services Section. The Office of the Undersheriff consists of five bureaus: the Support Services Bureau, the Operations Bureau, the Compliance Bureau, the Park Ranger Bureau, and the Detentions Bureau. Each of these bureaus is managed by a Chief Deputy, who employs commanders to supervise each division.





Organizational Chart





Agency Expansion

Operations Bureau

In 2024, the Sheriff's Office added the Tejon Substation to the South Area Substations Section. It serves the Tejon Ranch area and surrounding communities, providing law enforcement services and ensuring public safety. The substation is responsible for responding to calls for service, conducting investigations, and engaging with the community to address local concerns.

The deputies stationed at the Tejon Substation handle a variety of tasks, including patrolling the area, enforcing traffic laws, and preventing crime. They work closely with other Sheriff's Office substations and local agencies to maintain a safe environment for residents and visitors. The new Tejon Substation is expected to be completed in 2026.

Support Services Bureau

The Sheriff's Office continued construction on a facility that will house multiple units assigned to the Support Services Bureau. This building and the staff assigned to it will be able to serve the community more centrally by combining services currently located at several different locations. This new location is intended to provide services related to the following Sections and Units. The facility will open in 2025!

Coroner Section

Civil Processing Unit

Internal Affairs Unit

Public Administrator Section

Civil Litigation Unit

Property Room Unit

Civil Field Enforcement Unit





Agency Expansion

Park Rangers Bureau

During the 2024 calendar year, the Kern County Board of Supervisors transferred the oversight of the County Park Ranger Program to the Sheriff's Office. The Park Ranger Bureau was established and is tasked with the safety and security of County parks, designated county buildings, and structures.

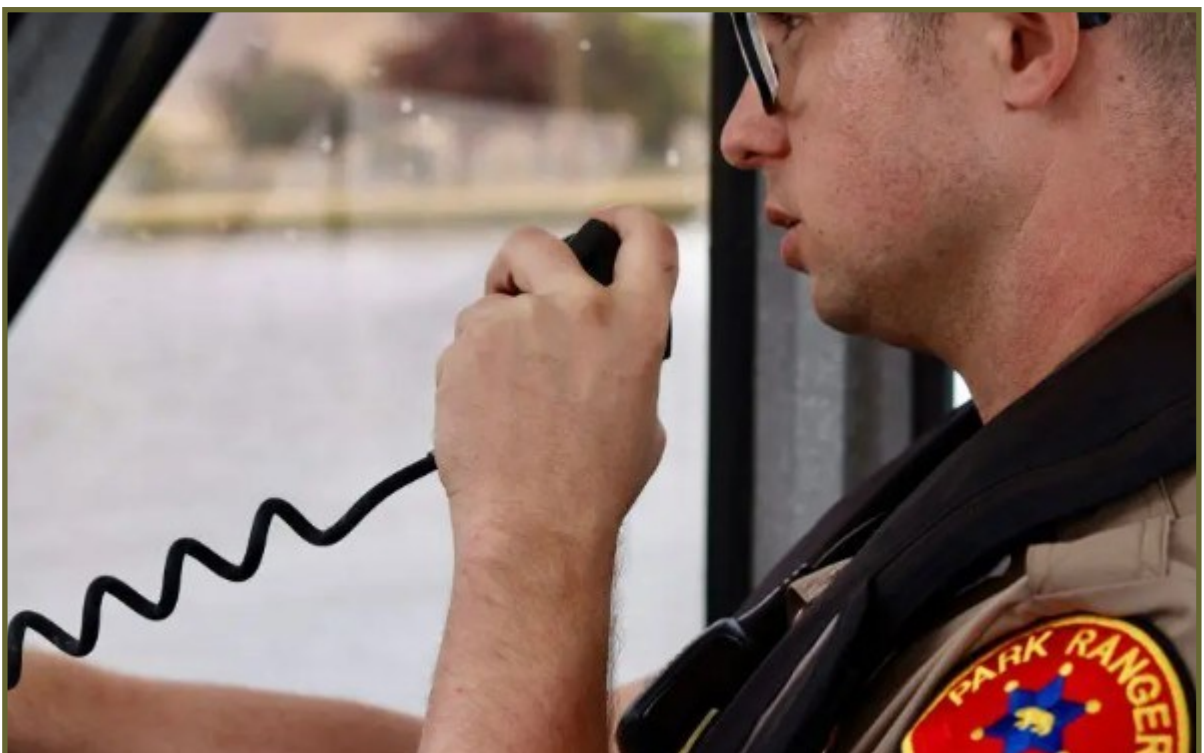
The Kern County Sheriff's Office Park Ranger Bureau manages law enforcement activities conducted by Kern County Park Rangers. This bureau is composed of uniformed patrol personnel responsible for ensuring the safety and security of various county parks and buildings. Within the Park Ranger Bureau, two distinct divisions exist: the Park Operations Division and the Building Protection Division.

Park Operations Division

The Park Operations Division is responsible for the management and oversight of several key recreational areas, including Lake Isabella, Lake Ming, Buena Vista Aquatic Recreational Area, Hart Park, and Lake Woollomes. Additionally, this division oversees the safety and security of the county's 35 neighborhood parks and campgrounds, spread across Kern County.

Building Protection Division

On the other hand, the Building Protection Division is primarily focused on safeguarding various county properties. These properties include the County Administration Center, the Department of Human Services, Child Support Services, the Public Service Building, and the Southeast Center.





Inside the Monitoring Team

The Sheriff's signing of the Stipulated Judgment in December of 2020, mandated the use of a monitoring team as an oversight mechanism; however, the Department of Justice does not provide funding for this role. A monitoring team was assigned to oversee all Kern County Sheriff's Office compliance efforts.

The monitoring team is comprised of private sector consultants with varied experience in different fields. Monitoring team costs are not paid by the Department of Justice but are the responsibility of the agency, pursuant to the Stipulated Judgment. In 2024, the County of Kern paid \$680,593.67 in monitor and consultant fees, bringing the total payments in this regard to \$2,747,621.75 since 2021.

The monitoring team hierarchy includes a pair of co-lead monitors who oversee a team of consultants. The consultants are subject matter experts in topics ranging from human resources to use of force, from language access to community policing, and many disciplines in between. While the monitors and many of the consultants use support staff for research and analysis, the Kern County Sheriff's Office worked directly with a specific team of people in 2024. We would like to acknowledge the team that contributed to this effort in 2024.



Joe Brann is a co-lead monitor, the founder of Joe Brann & Associates and a former Hayward Police Chief.



Angie Wolf is a co-lead monitor and the Chief Program Officer at Evident Change.



Chris Hartney is a Senior Program Specialist and the founder of Two Wolves Consulting.



Georgina Mendoza McDowell is a Senior Policing Fellow at Evident Change.



Inside the Monitoring Team



Ron Sanchez is a consultant, the founder of Veritas Assurance Group, and a former commanding officer with the Los Angeles Police Department.



Paul Figueroa is a consultant, the founder of Oakfig Consulting, and the former Assistant Chief of Police at the Oakland Police Department.



Louis Verdugo is a consultant and a former California Deputy Attorney General.

Those interested in getting to know the monitors and consultants more, including their areas of expertise and career biographies, can visit the Sheriff's Office monitoring site at

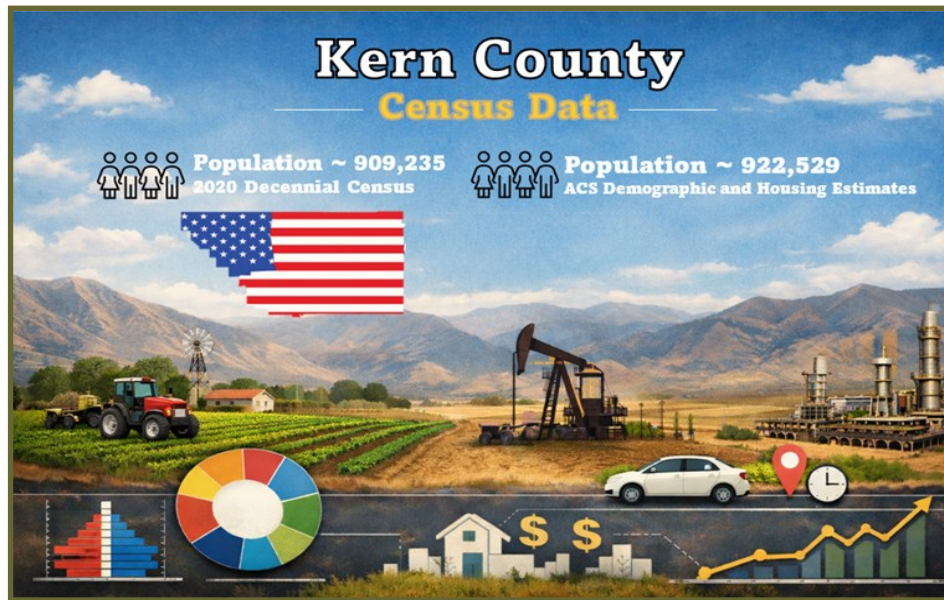
<https://kcsomonitoring.info/about/about-the-monitors/>.



Kern County and KCSO Demographics

According to the United States Census Bureau, the population of Kern County was approximately 922,529 residents living in an area of 8,163 square miles. The Kern County population total and the percentages below are from the ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates, 2024: ACS 1-Year Estimates Data Profiles¹. The American Community Survey (ACS) uses a sample of households to estimate how people in the U.S. live. Results depend on who is sampled, who responds, and how responses are weighted to represent the whole population.

The American Community Survey Research Note offers guidance for comparing the 2024 estimates, noting that methodological updates—particularly an improved approach to estimating net international migration—led to a higher population count and influenced many estimates compared with prior years². Because ACS figures are estimates that contain uncertainty and are shaped by survey methods and response patterns, they should not be treated as exact or strictly factual. Instead, the data are most useful for analyzing trends and patterns, with a focus on percentages, averages, and consideration of margins of error.



Race	KCSO Employees	Employee Percentages	Kern County Population Percentage
Asian	29	2.33%	5.80%
Black/African American	32	2.58%	6.30%
Hispanic	654	52.7%	56.80%
Native American	10	0.81%	2.80%
Pacific Islander	3	0.24%	0.30%
White	499	40.18%	30.40%
Other	15	1.21%	0%
Totals	1242	100%	102.4%

*Percentages were rounded to the nearest hundredths, which may not total to 100%.

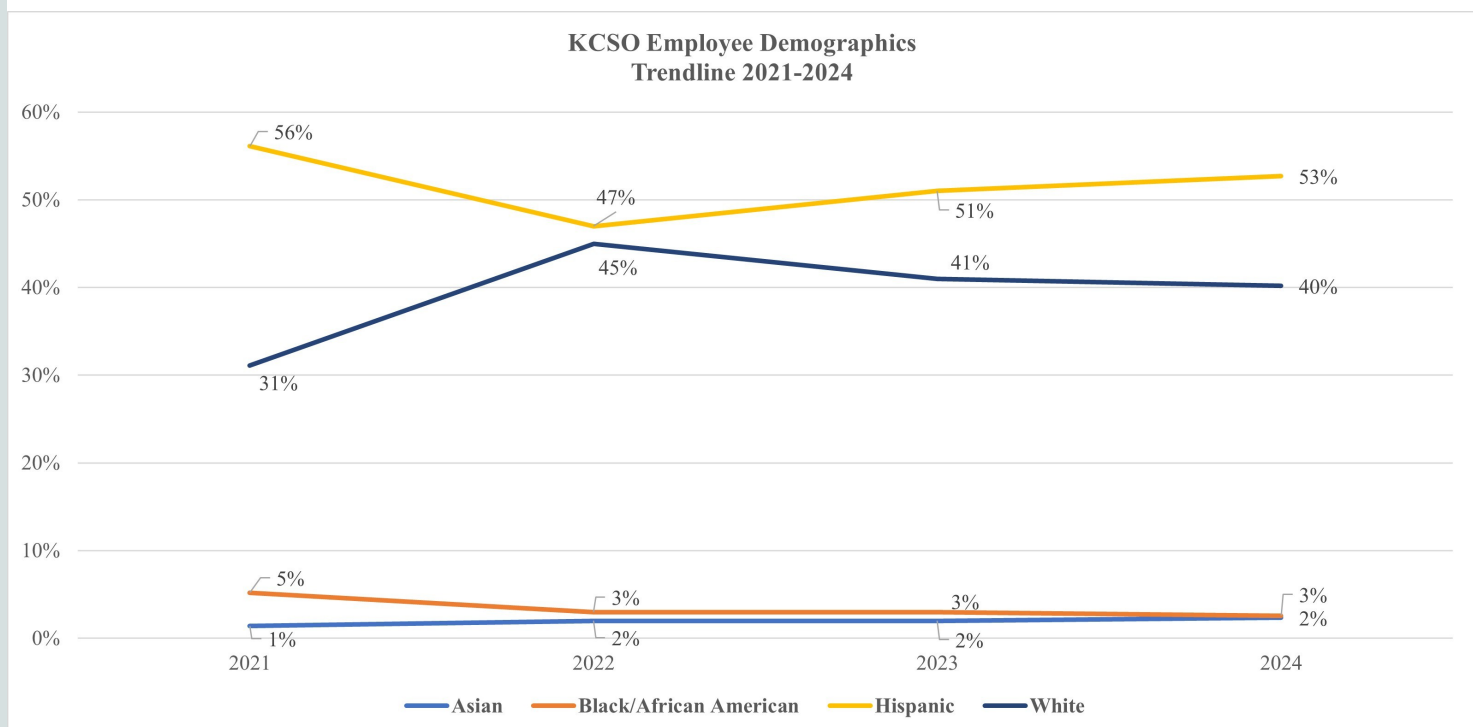
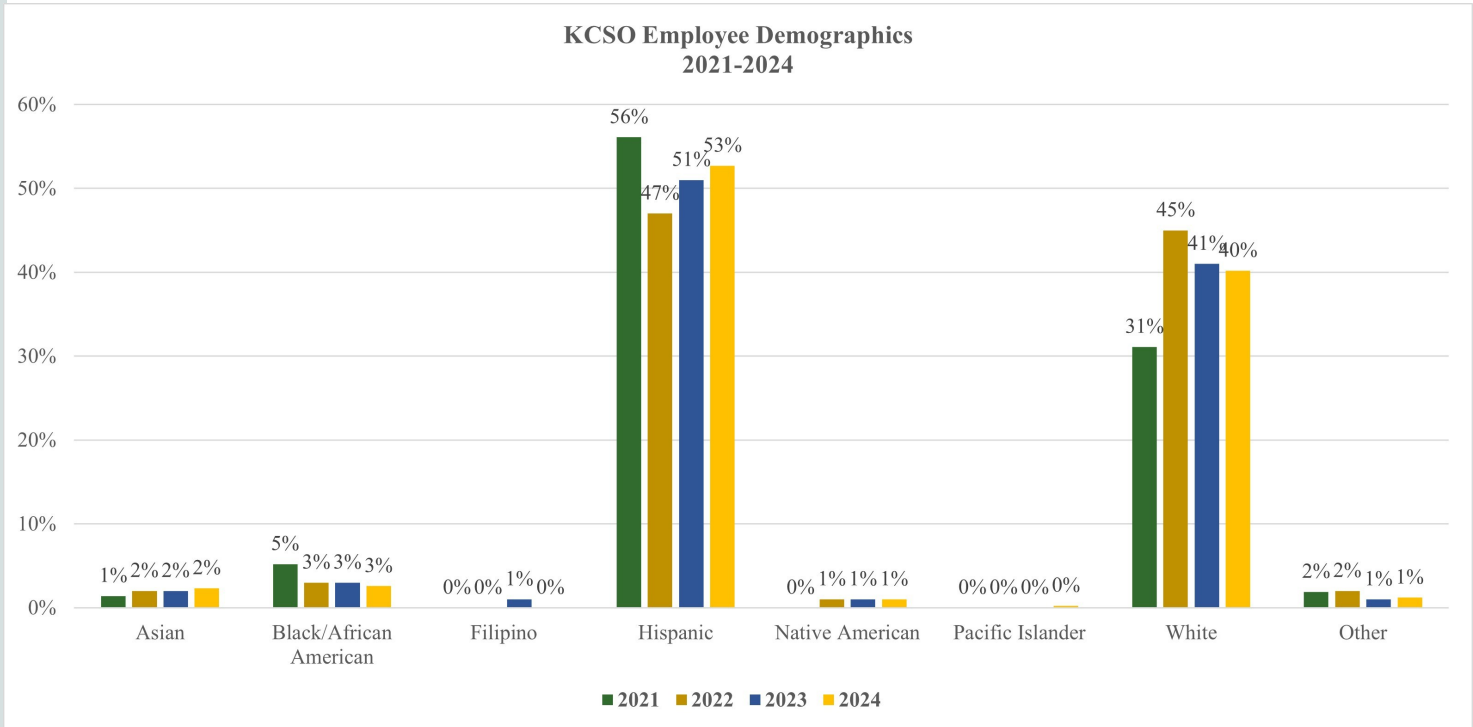
1 U.S. Census Bureau. "ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates." *American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP05*, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP1Y2024.DP05?q=2024+Kern+County&g=050XX00US06029&moe=true>. Accessed on 14 Jan 2026.

2 <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/programs-surveys/acs/tech-doc/user-notes/2024-acs-1-year-research-note.pdf>



Kern County and KCSO Demographics

As of December 2024, the total number of KCSO employees was 1,242. Hispanic descent comprised a majority (53%) of the workforce. Of the 1,242 employees, 802 (65%) were male, and 440 (35%) were female. There were 271 vacancies within KCSO in December 2024. Upon initial hire with the Sheriff's Office, an employee can self-identify with race and gender. The category of "Other" is given as an option to individuals who do not want to specify or have multiple identifications.





Recruitment Demographics

The Kern County Sheriff's Office Recruitment Team attended 102 recruitment events:

- ◆ 20 High School Events
 - ⇒ Career Fairs, Academy Experience ROC/CTEC, Women in LE Leadership Sun
- ◆ 8 Job Fest Events
- ◆ 8 Library Events
- ◆ 13 Sworn Events
- ◆ 9 KCSO Civilian Events
- ◆ 11 College Events
- ◆ 33 Community Events
 - ⇒ Sikh Riders of America Annual Ride, Home and Garden Show, Que Buena Radio Soccer Tournament, Coffee and Concha with a Deputy events

The Kern County Sheriff's Office has also regularly engaged with the Community Advisory Council (CAC) during meetings to generate recruitment leads. The department continues to post recruitment events on the CAC website calendar and encourages participation through ongoing engagement at CAC meetings.

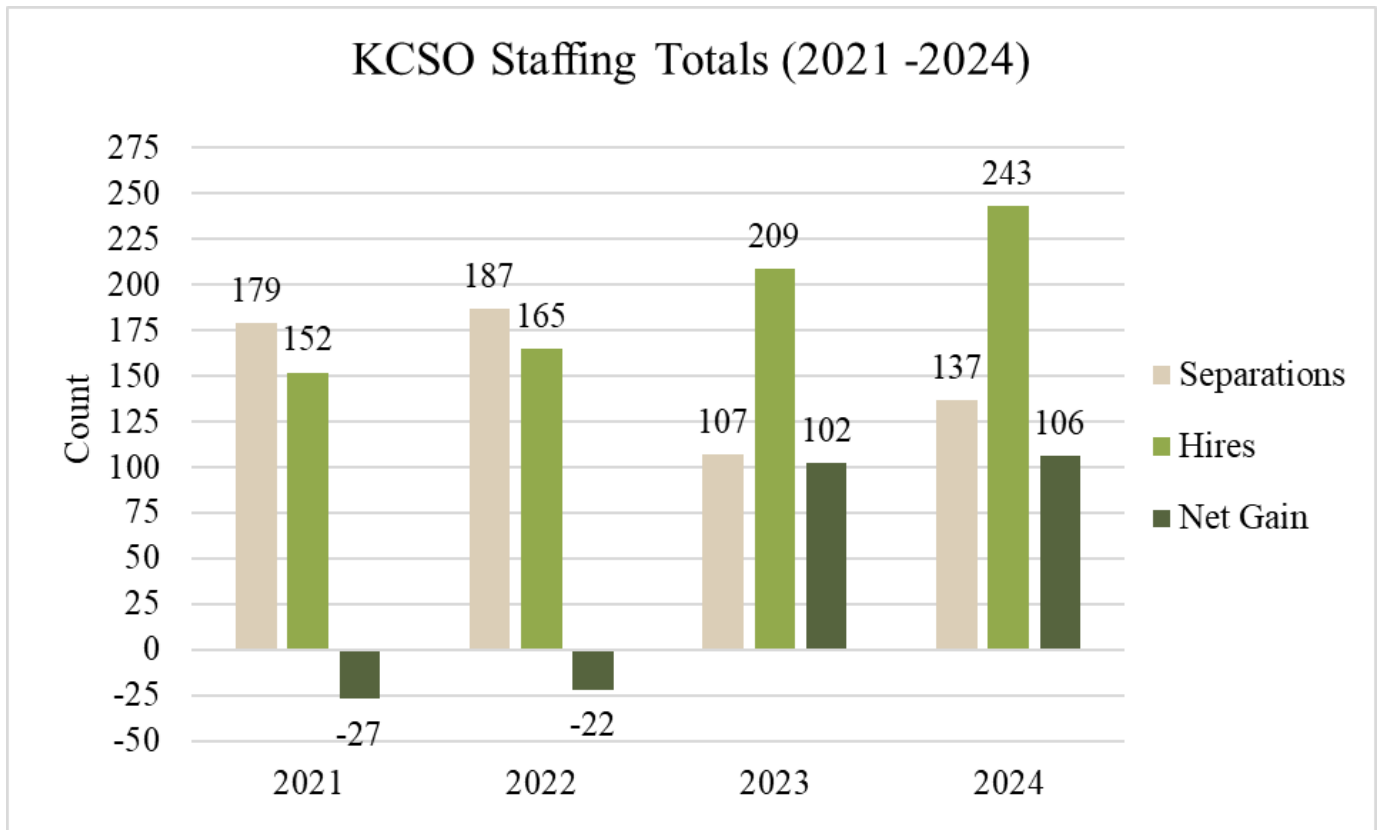




Human Resources

Staffing Trends (2021–2024)

Between 2021 and 2024, the Kern County Sheriff’s Office demonstrated sustained progress in recruitment and retention, transitioning from a period of net losses to consecutive years of positive staffing growth. After successive declines in 2021 and 2022, staffing increased significantly in 2023, resulting in a net gain of 102 personnel. The upward trend continued through 2024, with net gains of 106. These improvements reflect the effectiveness of ongoing recruitment initiatives, hiring incentives, and workforce stabilization efforts implemented over the past three years.



The Department experienced net losses in 2021 and 2022; however, staffing levels have increased each year since that time. Despite attrition of more than 137 employees during 2024, KCSO ended the year with a net gain of 106 employees, reflecting continued progress in workforce growth.

In 2023, the Kern County Board of Supervisors authorized pay increases for various classifications within the Sheriff’s Office, and enhancing the overall salary and recruitment incentives. In addition, KCSO and County HR made numerous changes to streamline hiring practices. KCSO also began running multiple overlapping academies per year.

Staffing improved significantly over this period, with the Department moving from 73% staffed in 2022 to 82% staffed in 2024, representing a substantial increase in overall capacity. In 2024 alone, KCSO hired 243 new employees, including 73 deputy sheriffs, 80 detention deputies, and 90 civilian staff members.

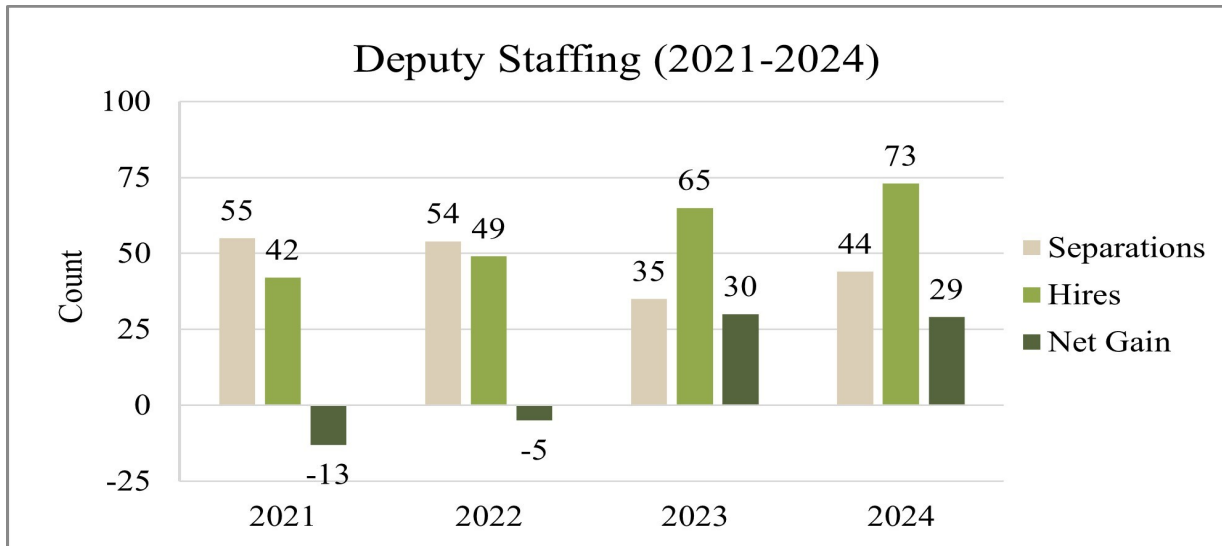
As of December 2024, the overall vacancy rate stood at approximately 18% (17.9%), with vacancy rates of 5.6% (35) for operations and patrol deputies, 3.6% (13) for detentions deputies, and 8.7% (42) for support staff positions.



Human Resources

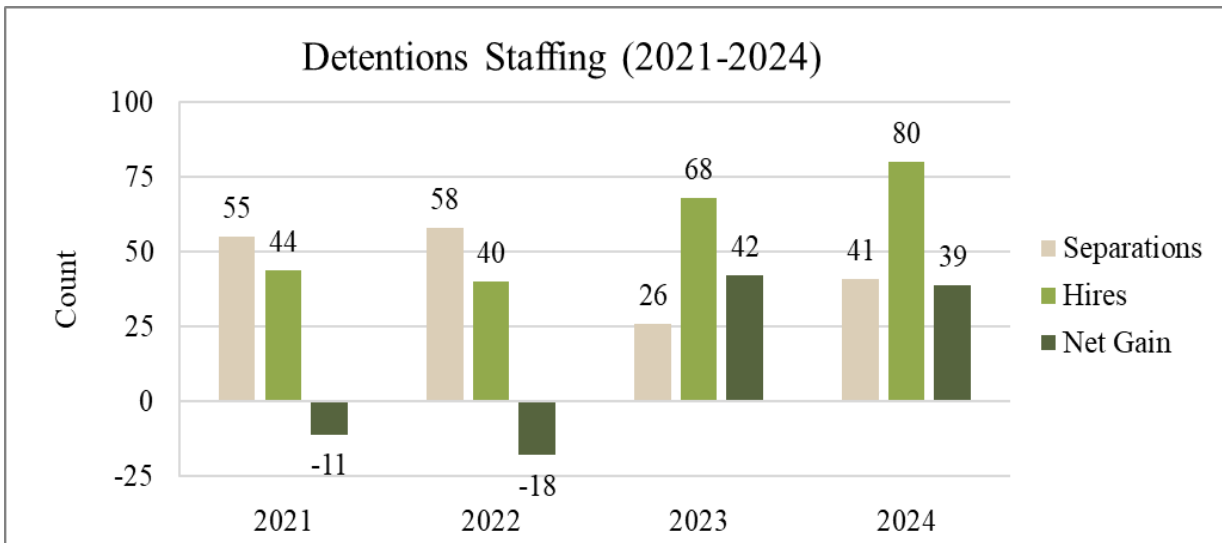
Deputy Staffing

Deputy staffing levels followed a similar trajectory, shifting from net losses in 2021 and 2022 to consistent gains beginning in 2023. The Sheriff's Office added 30 net increase in deputies in 2023 and maintained that growth with 29 net increases in 2024. While the rate of separations has remained steady, the consistent hiring of new deputies underscores the Sheriff's Office's focus on strengthening patrol and investigative capacity. The continuation of this trend is critical for sustaining service coverage and enhancing response capabilities across the county.



Detentions Staffing

Detentions staffing experienced one of the most significant improvements across all categories. After consecutive net losses in 2021 and 2022, the division posted a substantial turnaround in 2023, achieving a net gain of 42 positions. This positive momentum carried forward into 2024, with net gains of 39. The reversal reflects targeted hiring efforts and improved retention strategies designed to address the unique challenges of detention operations, including workload demands and facility coverage.

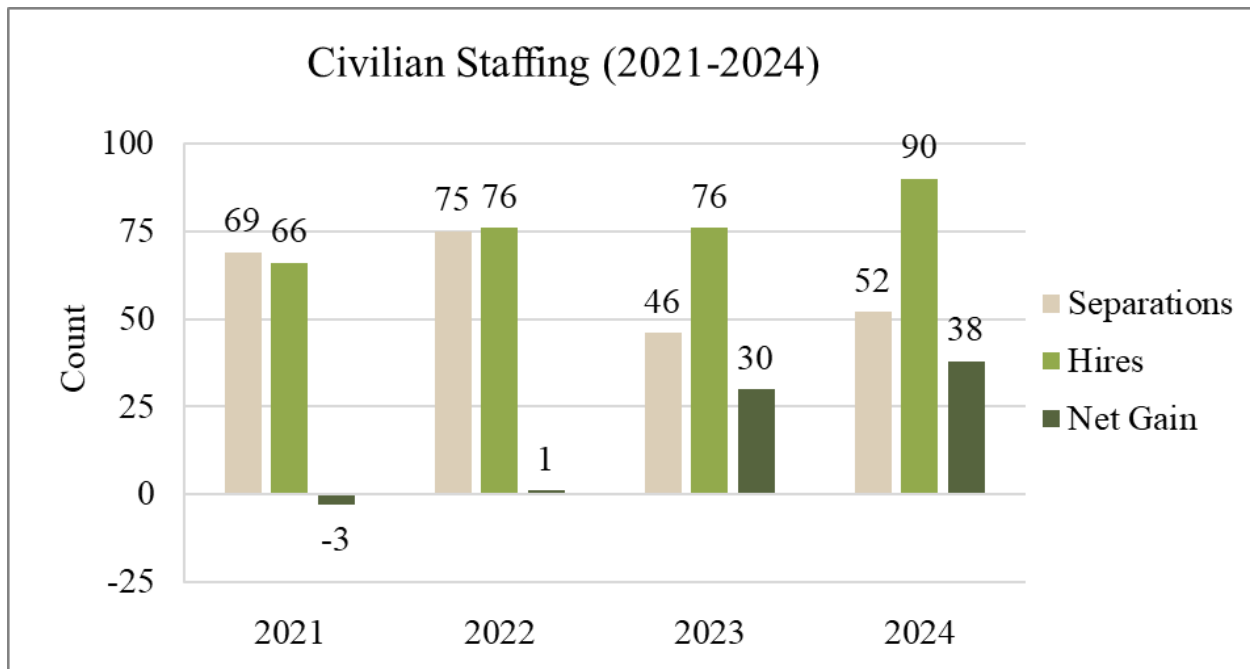




Human Resources

Civilian Staffing

Civilian staffing has also seen consistent improvement following early deficits in 2021 and 2022. Net growth began in 2023, with 30 additional hires and continued through 2024, with gains of 38. These figures highlight the importance of civilian professionals in supporting administrative, technical, and community service functions that are essential to the Sheriff's Office's overall efficiency. Continued emphasis on recruiting and retaining skilled civilian personnel has contributed to overall organizational stability.

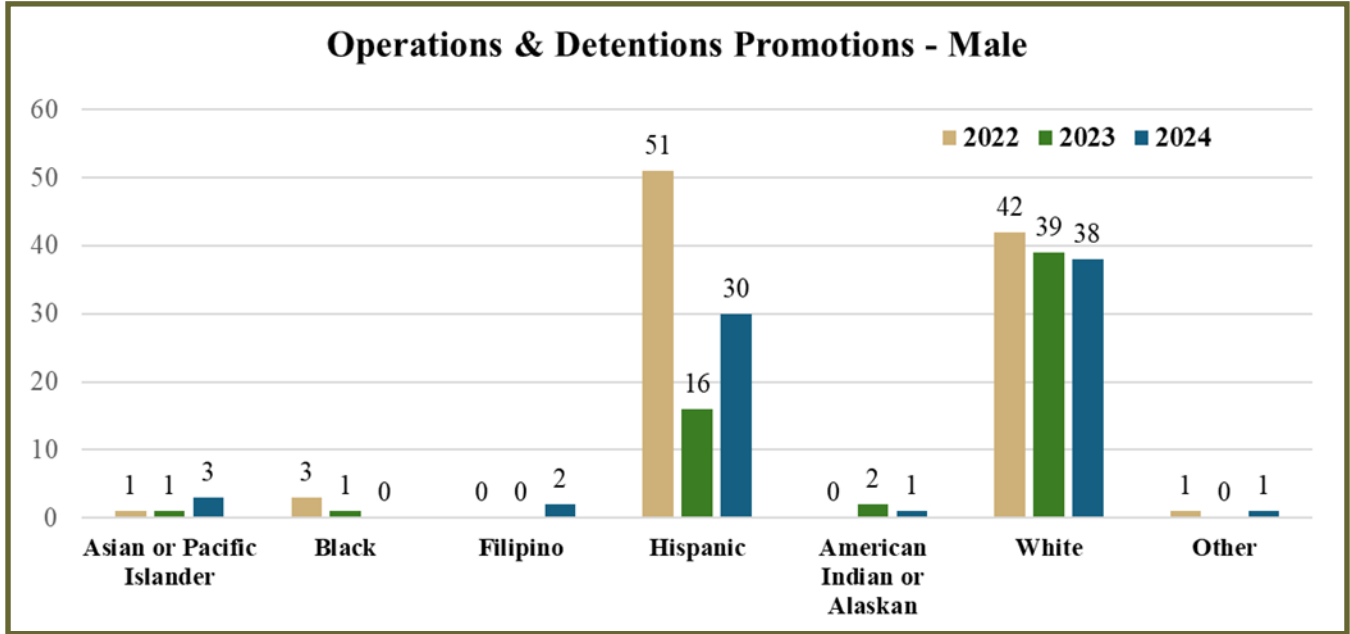


Overall, the four-year staffing data reflects a clear recovery from early workforce shortages to sustained positive growth across all divisions. Strategic recruitment programs, competitive incentives, and an emphasis on employee retention have collectively strengthened the Kern County Sheriff's Office's operational readiness. Maintaining this positive trajectory will be vital to supporting long-term public safety objectives and ensuring the delivery of effective, professional service to Kern County residents and visitors.

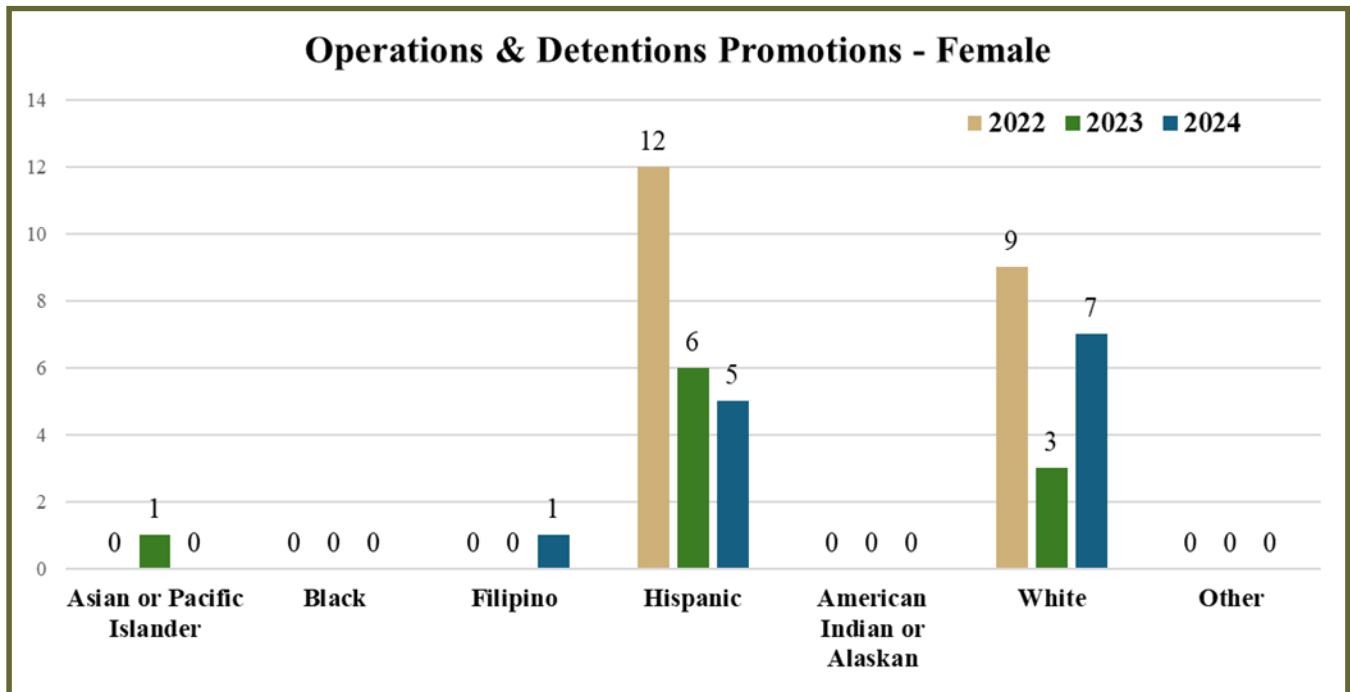


Promotion Demographics

The Kern County Sheriff's Office has a rich history of dedication and service to the community. As an organization, we continue to develop and look to improve service, commitment, trust, and values. Envisioning and adapting to change throughout our organization is at the forefront of our guiding principles. The Kern County Sheriff's Office promotes the most qualified personnel in the operations and detentions ranks to represent the residents of Kern County best. In 2024, a total of 88 personnel were promoted throughout the ranks within both operations and detentions. Of the total promotions, 85% (75) were male promotions, and 15% (13) were female.



Most male promotions across all Operations and Detentions ranks were White, followed by Hispanic.



Most female promotions across all Operations and Detentions ranks were White, followed by Hispanic.

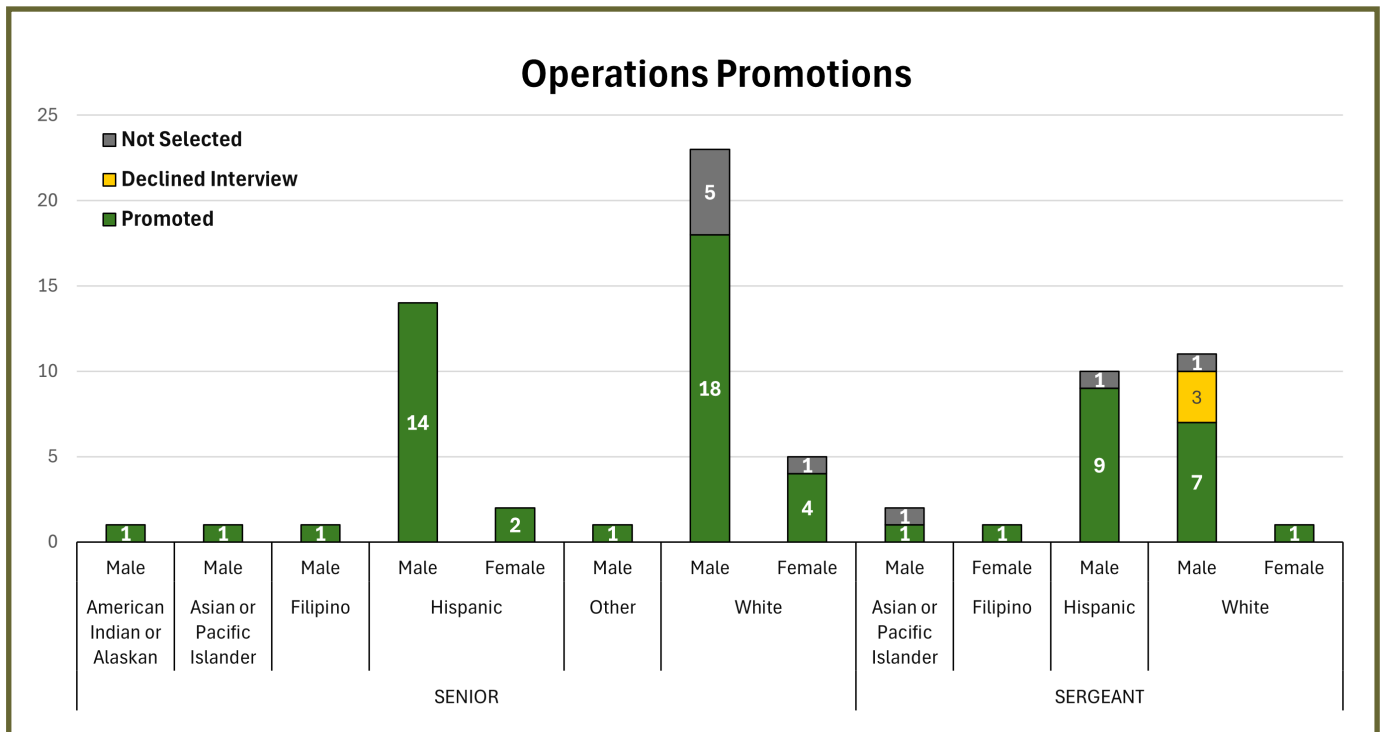


Promotion Demographics

The Kern County Sheriff's Office promotion process across all ranks, including both Operations and Detentions, is rigorous and highlights the need for experience, knowledge, and leadership. Most ranks require at least two years of experience before applying for a promotion. Operations promotions will be divided between line staff (Senior Deputy, Sergeant) and command staff (Lieutenant, Commander, Chief Deputy, Undersheriff).

The process for operations may include a test, an interview with leaders of law enforcement agencies in and outside of Kern County, and an interview with Kern County Sheriff's Office leaders.

The chart below shows the outcomes of promotions in 2024 for Senior Deputy and Sergeant.



In 2024, a total of 42 Deputy Sheriffs were promoted to the rank of Senior Deputy. The majority of those promoted were White males, followed by Hispanic males. Additionally, one male Asian or Pacific Islander, one male American Indian or Alaskan Native, and one male Filipino received promotions. Five female Deputy Sheriffs were also elevated to the rank of Senior Deputy.

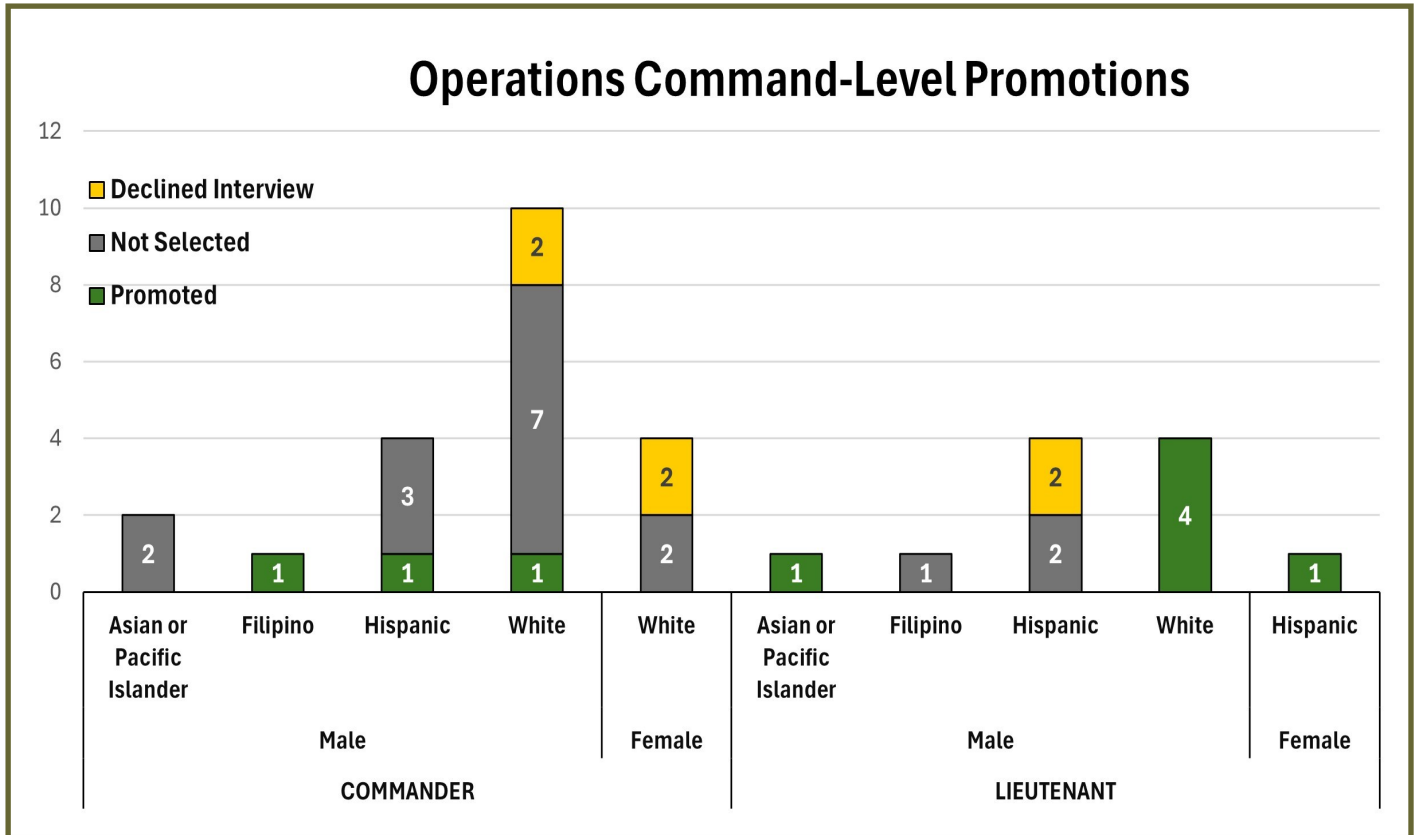
During the same period, 12 Senior Deputies advanced to the rank of Sergeant. The majority of those promoted were White males, followed by Hispanic males. In addition, one Filipino female and three White females were promoted to Sergeant.

Overall, the distribution of promotions closely reflects the broader racial and ethnic composition of the county's population, with White and Hispanic individuals representing the largest groups.



Promotion Demographics

Those within the Kern County Sheriff's Office who aspire to serve residents and visitors in an administrative capacity are few, and the process is demanding. The process consists of a single interview with the highest-ranking officials of the Sheriff's Office. The chart below shows the breakdown of the applicants for operations command positions.



Of the 32 sworn personnel who applied for these positions, 18 were White (five were promoted), nine were Hispanic (one male and one female were promoted), none were Native American, two were Filipino (one male promoted), and three were Asian or Pacific Islander (one male promoted).

For those who applied for a Lieutenant position (five male and one female were promoted), four Whites, one Asian or Pacific Islander, and one Hispanic were promoted.

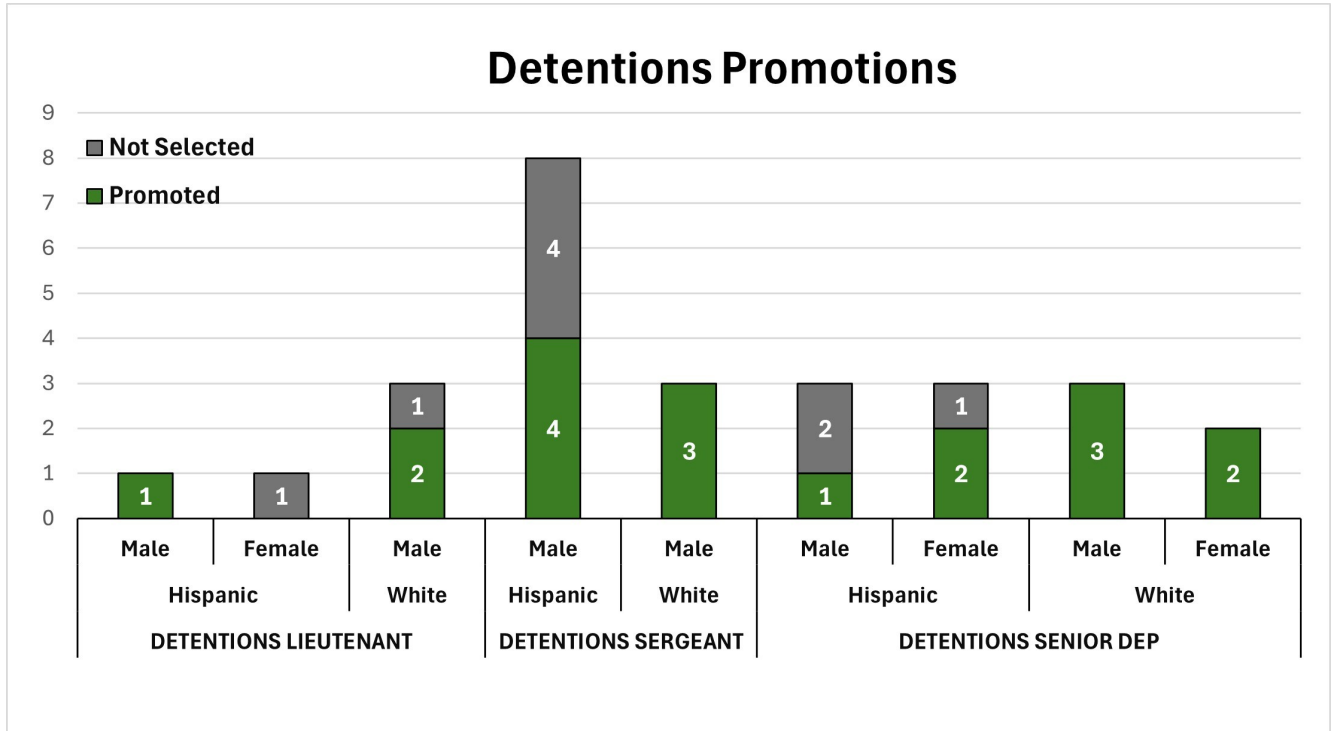
For those who applied for a Commander position (all male), one White, one Hispanic and one Filipino were promoted.

No Chief or Undersheriff promotions were made.



Promotion Demographics

The Kern County Sheriff's Office Detentions Bureau saw eighteen promotions in 2024. Of the total number of promotions across all ranks, ten White, (eight were male, two were female) promoted and eight Hispanics (four of whom were female) were promoted. The highest rank in the Detentions Bureau is a Detentions Lieutenant. The chart below shows the race and gender breakdown of detentions and promotions for 2024.



For the position of Detentions Senior Deputy, a total of eight employees were selected for a promotion. Three White males and two White females, one Hispanic male, and two Hispanic females.

For Detentions Sergeant, three White males and four Hispanic males were promoted.

For Detentions Lieutenant, one Hispanic male and two White males were selected for promotion.

These specific classifications and promotional processes are not gender-specific which ensure equal opportunity for all qualified candidates.

Additionally, the Kern County Sheriff's Office Human Resources Bi-Annual Report provides a dedicated analysis of gender and racial diversity within the workforce and promotional trends.

https://www.kernsheriff.org/document-library/20250130134214_Human-Resources-Bi-Annual-Report---December-2024.pdf



Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)

The Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA) of 2021 created the Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board*, which is a diverse group representing the public, law enforcement, and educators. At the direction of the Legislature, their charge is to eliminate racial and identity profiling and improve diversity and racial and identity sensitivity in law enforcement. The RIPA Board aims to strengthen law enforcement-community relations in California through collaboration, transparency, and accountability. The California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, has primary oversight of the RIPA Board.

The Kern County Sheriff's Office, along with all law enforcement agencies in California, is required to gather and submit stop information to the California Department of Justice. Kern County Sheriff's Office Detentions Deputies are not required to gather and submit stop information within the custodial setting. A stop is defined as any detention, consensual encounter resulting in a search, or any search that results from the volunteer transport of a person. The Kern County Sheriff's Office collected and reported stop information to the California Department of Justice for 2024.

In June 2023, KCSO contracted with Dr. Heejong Jacob Joo to conduct a cross-sectional analysis of the Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA) stop data collected by KCSO. With Dr. Joo's guidance, the Kern County Sheriff's Office analyzed stop information to identify trends for community-oriented solutions, inform policy/procedures, and develop ongoing training to improve officer and community safety. A detailed analysis report and executive summary of his findings will be published in the near future.

In the meantime, KCSO continues to analyze stop data and report on it with this annual report. The stop information will be displayed in tables and charts. Charts will contain rounded percentages. Please refer to the tables for exact percentages. RIPA required the following information:

The following stop information was required to be gathered/submitted by deputy sheriffs:

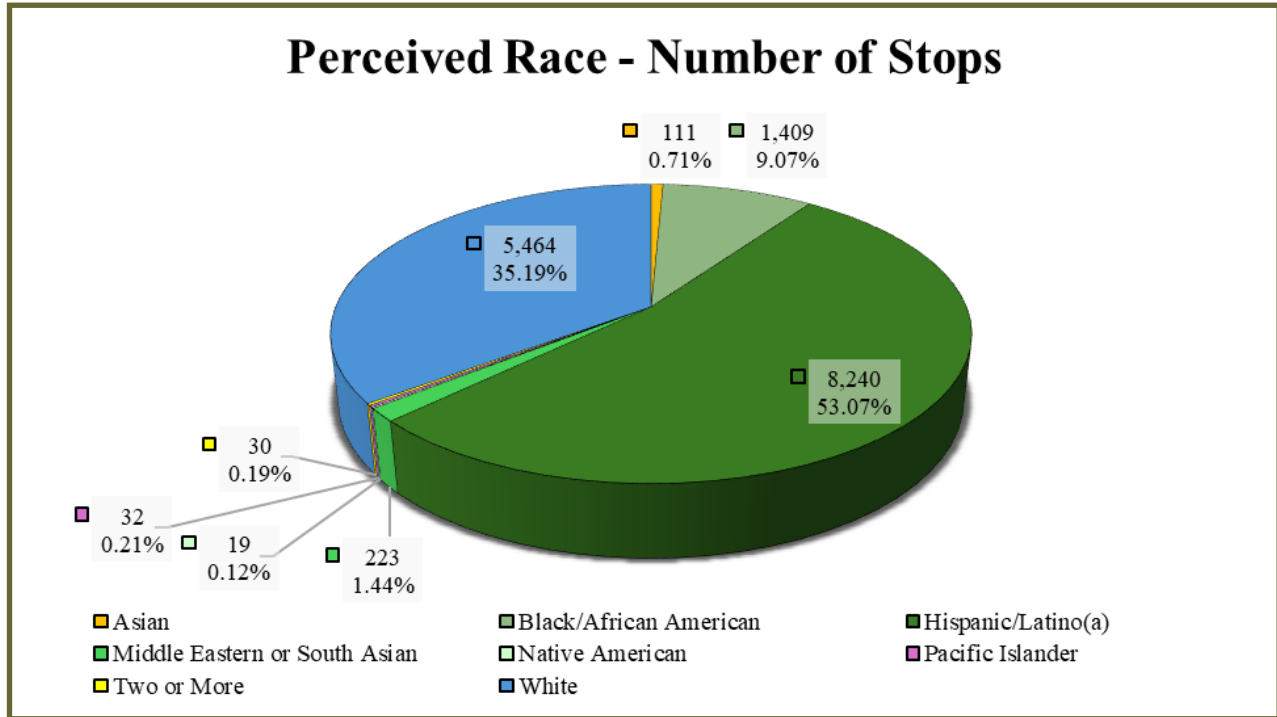
1. The date, time, and duration of the stop / the location of the stop,
2. The race/gender/age of the stopped person/disability as **perceived** by the Deputy Sheriff.
3. Whether the Deputy Sheriff **perceived** the stopped person to be LGBT.
4. Whether the Deputy Sheriff **perceived** the stopped person as having limited or no English fluency.
5. The reason for the stop.
6. Whether the stop was made in response to a call for service.
7. All the actions taken by the Deputy Sheriff during the stop.
8. The basis for any search / whether consent was asked for and given / whether any contraband or evidence is discovered.
9. The result of the stop.
10. The Deputy Sheriff's years of experience at the time of the stop.
11. The Deputy Sheriff's demographics (race/ethnicity & gender).
12. The Deputy Sheriff's assignment at the time of the stop (such as patrol or gang enforcement).
13. The duration of the stop.

*<https://oag.ca.gov/ab953/board/reports>



Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)

In 2024, the Kern County Sheriff’s Office conducted 15,528 stops in Kern County. A majority of the perceived race of the person stopped was Hispanic/Latino(a) (53.07%), followed by perceived to be White (35.19%), and followed by perceived to be Black (9.07%). These three perceived races totaled about 97% of all stops. Compared to the United States Census Bureau population estimate, which is 105% due to the nature of population estimates, these three races make up the highest percentage of Kern County residents (Hispanic 56.80%, White 30.40%, and Black 6.30%), totaling 93.50%. This reveals our stop data closely aligns with that of our population makeup for the top three racial categories.



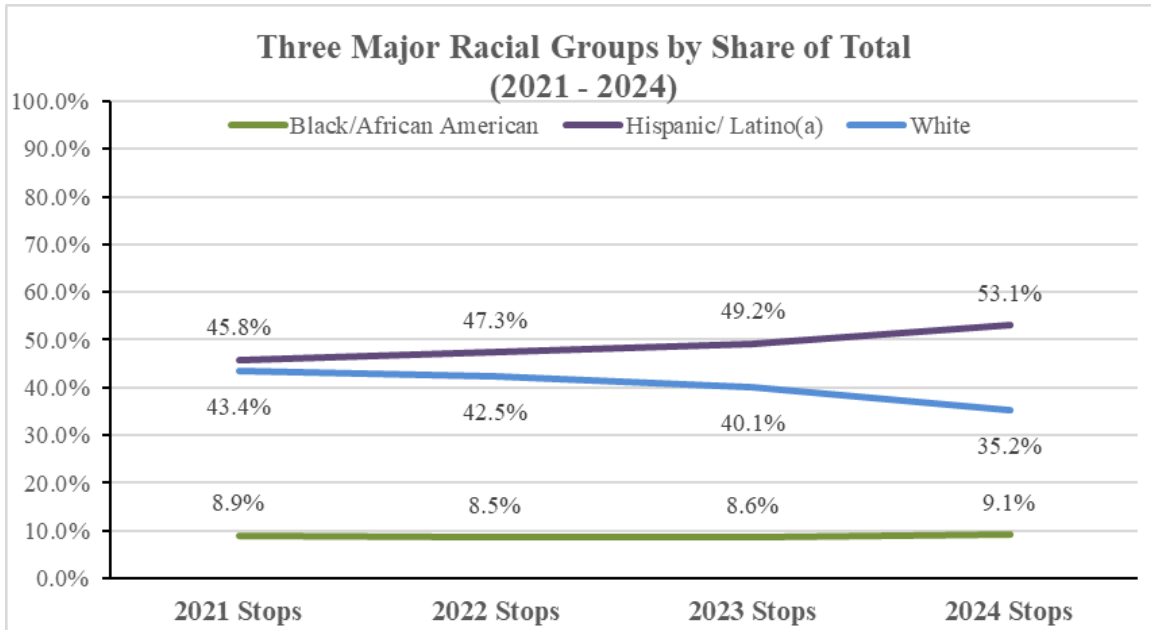
All races mentioned in the graph above were **perceived** by the deputy making the stop and RIPA regulations instruct deputies to not ask about race in any way in reporting this data.

Perceived Race	RIPA Stops	RIPA %	Kern County Population Percentage
Asian	111	0.71%	5.80%
Black/African American	1,409	9.07%	6.30%
Hispanic/Latino(a)	8,240	53.07%	56.80%
Middle Eastern or South Asian	223	1.44%	1%
Native American	19	0.12%	2.80%
Pacific Islander	32	0.21%	.30%
Two or More	30	0.19%	1%
White	5,464	35.19%	30.40%
Grand Total	15,528	100.00%	105.00%

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/kerncountycalifornia>



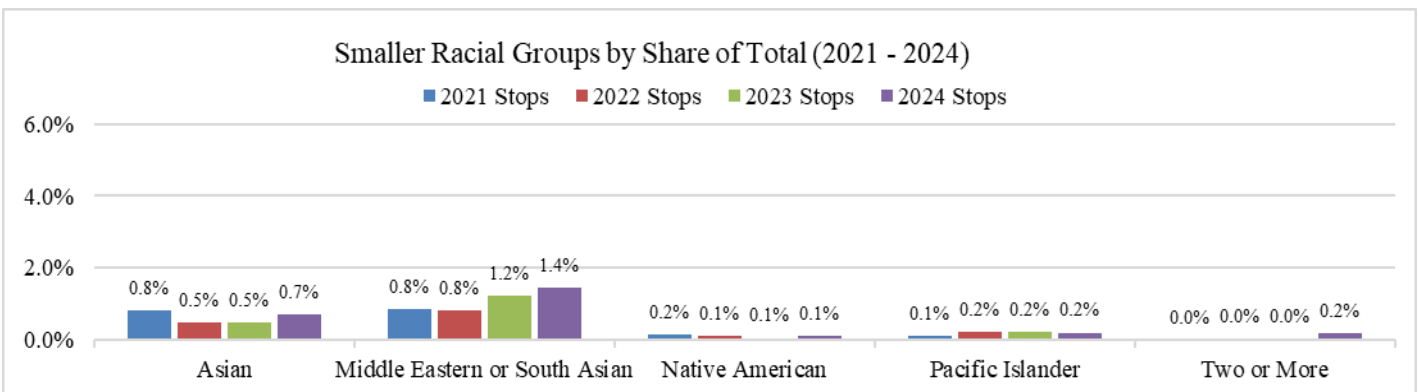
Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)



Between 2021 and 2024, the total number of recorded stops increased from 12,413 to 15,528, a roughly 25% increase. During this period, the racial distribution of stops for Whites and Hispanic/Latino(a)s shifted significantly.

The Hispanic/Latino(a) population consistently accounted for the largest share of stops each year, rising from 45.8% in 2021 to 53.1% in 2024. This upward trend shows both an increase in total stops and a greater proportion of the overall total. In contrast, the White population, while remaining the second-largest group, experienced a steady decline from 43.4% to 35.2%, suggesting a proportional reduction in stops among White individuals over time.

Black/African American stops remained relatively stable, fluctuating between 8.5% and 9.1% across the four years. **Smaller racial groups**, such as Asian, Middle Eastern/South Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, and Two or More, accounted for **less than 2%** of total stops combined. Notably, stops involving Middle Eastern or South Asian individuals showed gradual growth, increasing from 0.8% in 2021 to 1.4% in 2024.

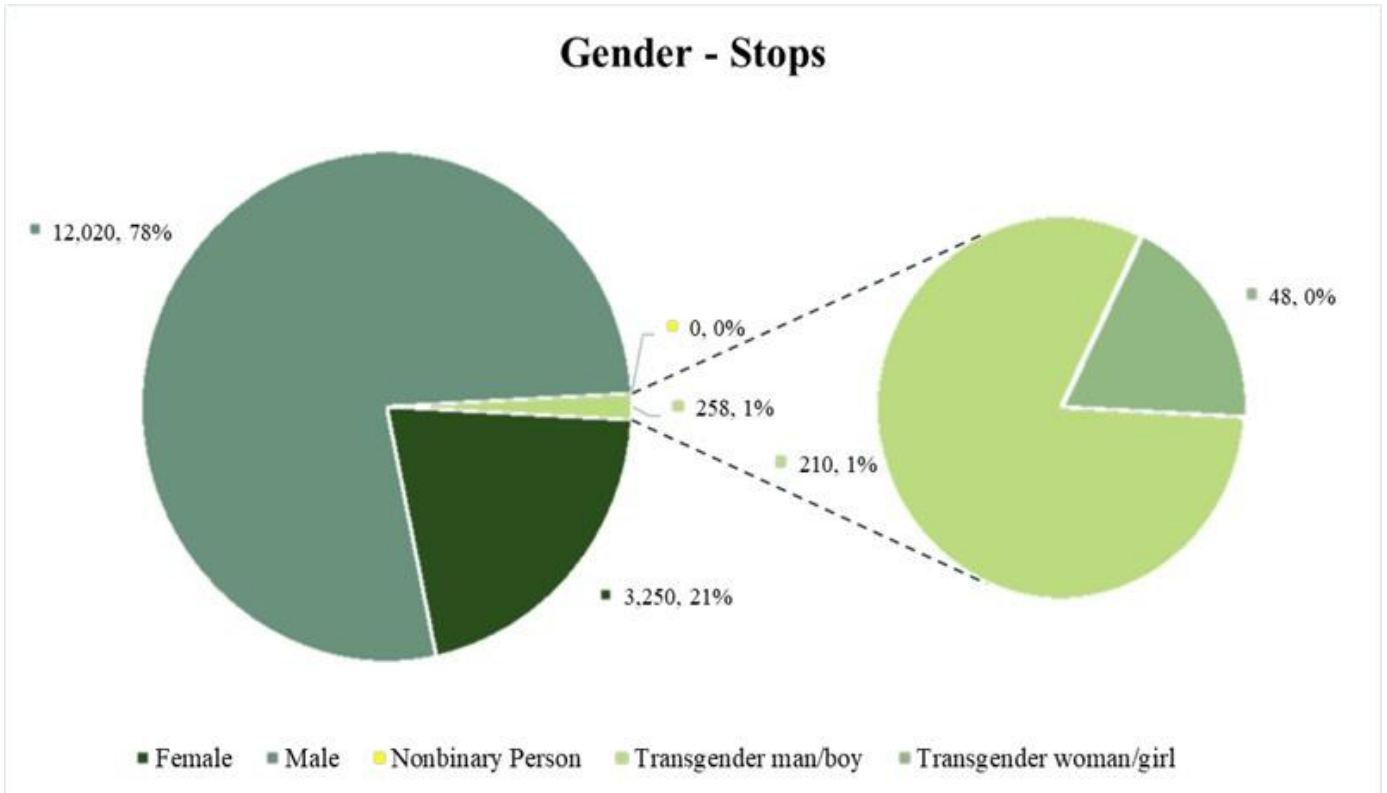


Overall, the data reveals a clear demographic shift in the composition of stops over time. The increase in Hispanic/Latino(a) representation and decline in White representation are the most prominent trends, while other groups show little to no change. Despite this increase, Hispanic/Latino(a)s remain underrepresented in proportion to the Kern County Population. A more detailed analysis will be covered in Dr. Joo's report.



Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)

Of the 15,528 stops by the Kern County Sheriff's Office, 77% of persons were perceived as male, 21% were perceived as female, a total of approximately 98%. The United States Census estimated the male population of Kern County to be 51.1% and the female population to be 48.9%. No further information will be displayed for gender on the following page unless the percentages are disproportional to the gender information displayed below.



Gender	Stops	Stops Percentage	Kern County Population
Female	3,250	20.93%	49.00%
Male	12,020	77.41%	51.00%
Nonbinary Person	0	0.00%	-
Transgender man/boy	210	1.35%	-
Transgender woman/girl	48	0.31%	-
Grand Total	15,528	100.00%	100.00%

The census does not account for Nonbinary, Transgender man/boy, or Transgender woman/girl, but is a part of RIPA data and requires deputy sheriffs to include that information if perceived.

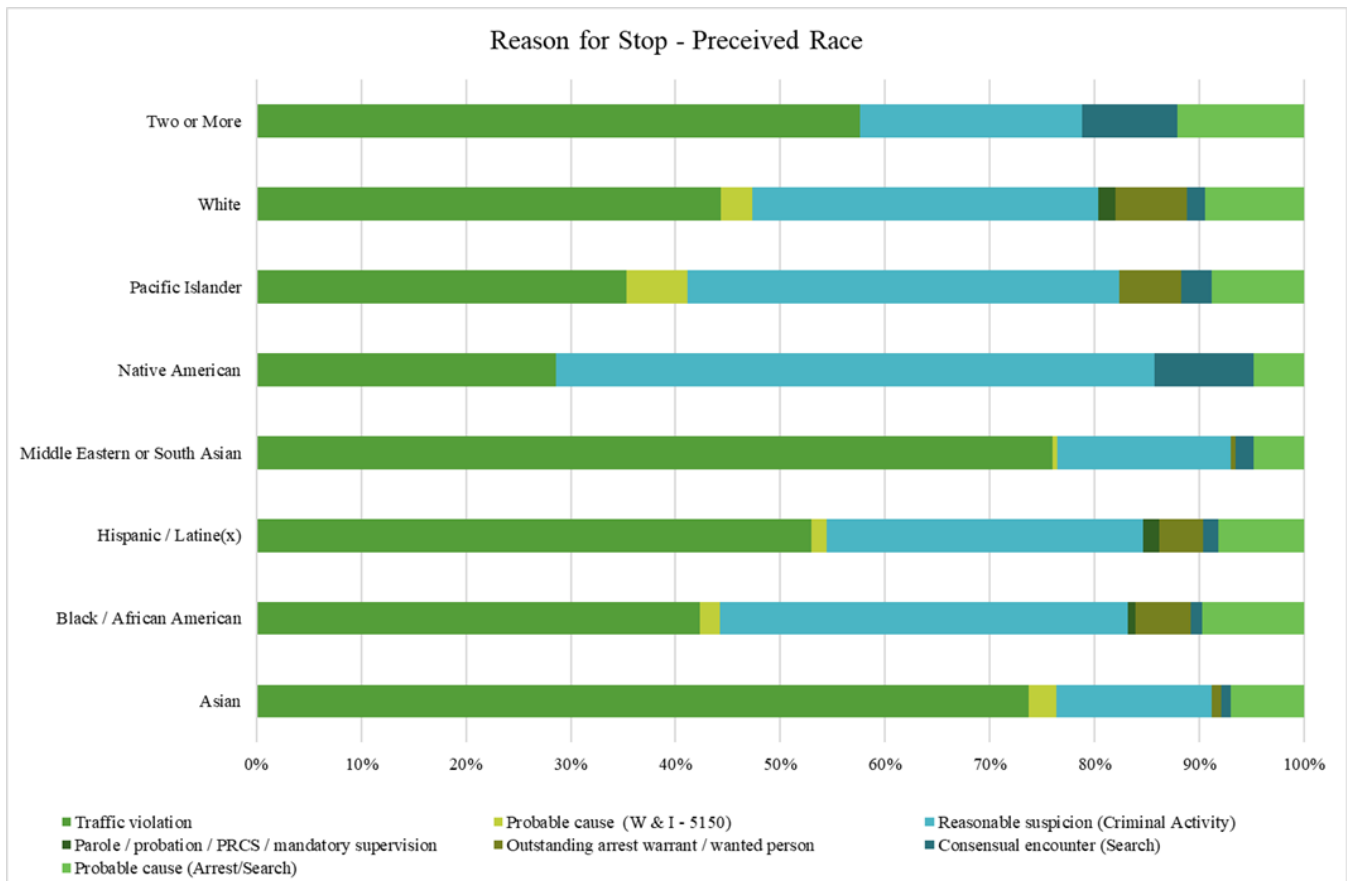


Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)

The Kern County Sheriff’s Office further analyzed the “Reason for Stop” and “Perceived Race” provided by Deputy Sheriffs. The dataset provides a descriptive summary of 15,528 recorded law enforcement stops, categorized by both the “Reason for Stop” and the “Perceived Race” of the individuals stopped. The data show that the largest share of stops involved Hispanic/Latino(a) individuals (8,240, or 53.1%), followed by White individuals (5,464, or 35.2%) and Black/African American individuals (1,409, or 9.1%). Other groups—Asian (111), Middle Eastern/South Asian (223), Native American (19), and Pacific Islander (32)—collectively accounted for less than three percent of total stops.

Across all racial and ethnic groups, **traffic violations** represent the most frequent reason for a stop, accounting for nearly half of all recorded incidents. The next most common reason is **reasonable suspicion** of criminal activity, followed by **probable cause** to arrest or search, and knowledge of an outstanding **warrant**. These four categories together comprise the overwhelming majority of all entries in the dataset. Other listed reasons, such as consensual encounters or educational code violations, appear only rarely.

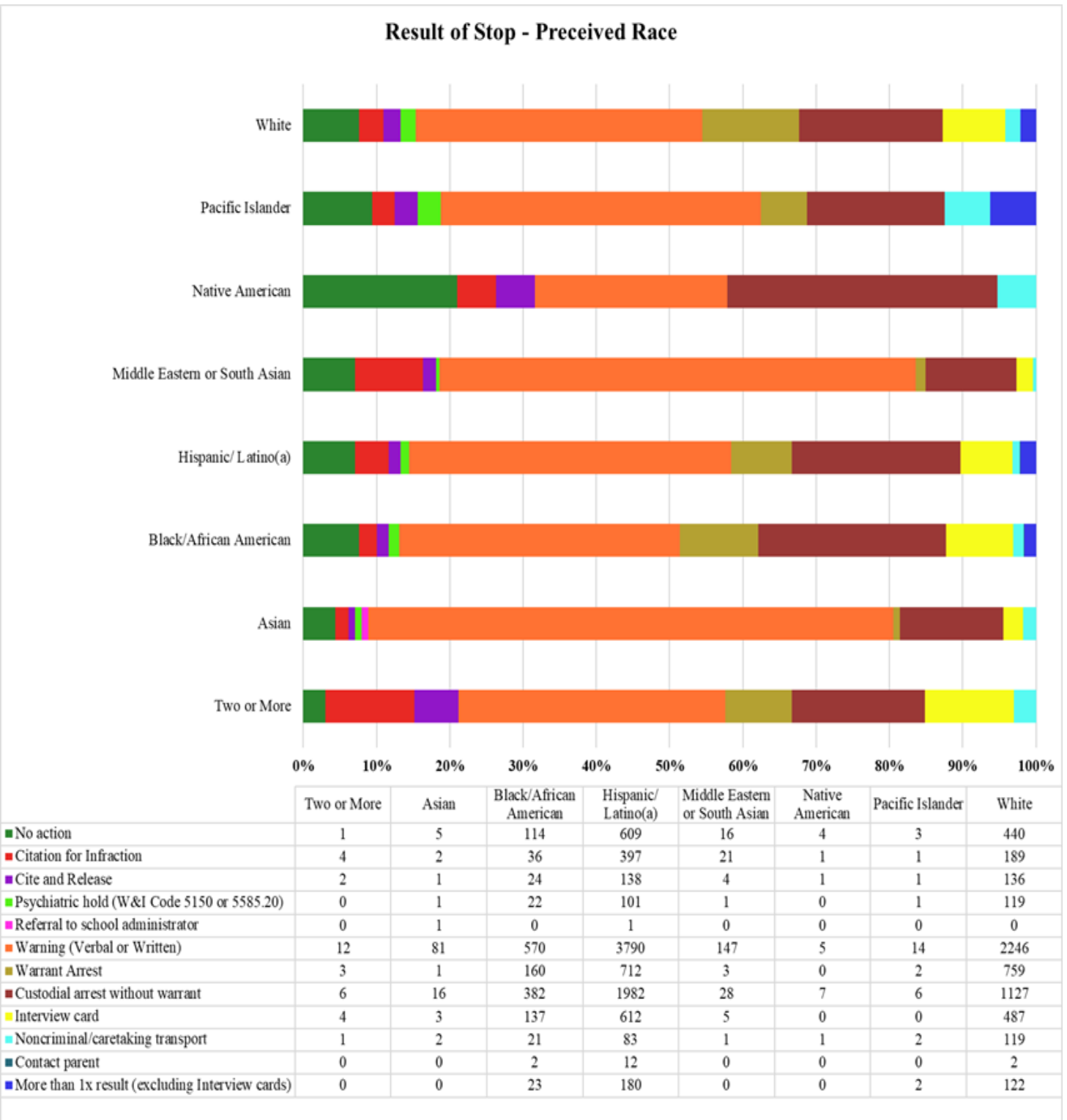
The distribution of reasons for stops is broadly consistent across groups: each racial or ethnic category shows traffic enforcement as the primary factor, followed by suspicion- or cause-based stops. However, the dataset alone does not include information on population demographics, exposure rates (e.g., driving frequency or location), or encounter outcomes. Without such contextual information, it is not conclusively possible to determine whether the observed differences reflect enforcement patterns, population distribution, or other factors. It provides a useful quantitative overview of how reasons for law enforcement interactions are distributed across perceived racial/ethnic groups. Due to such limitations, a review of this data does not support conclusions about bias, disproportionality, or causality. Therefore, the data should be interpreted solely as a descriptive accounting of recorded stop incidents.





Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)

The chart and table titled “Result of Stop – Perceived Race” provide a descriptive summary of the outcomes of law enforcement stops, categorized by the perceived race or ethnicity. Each racial or ethnic group’s outcomes are expressed as both absolute counts and proportional distributions. The total includes multiple outcome types such as warnings, citations, custodial arrests, and other administrative actions.



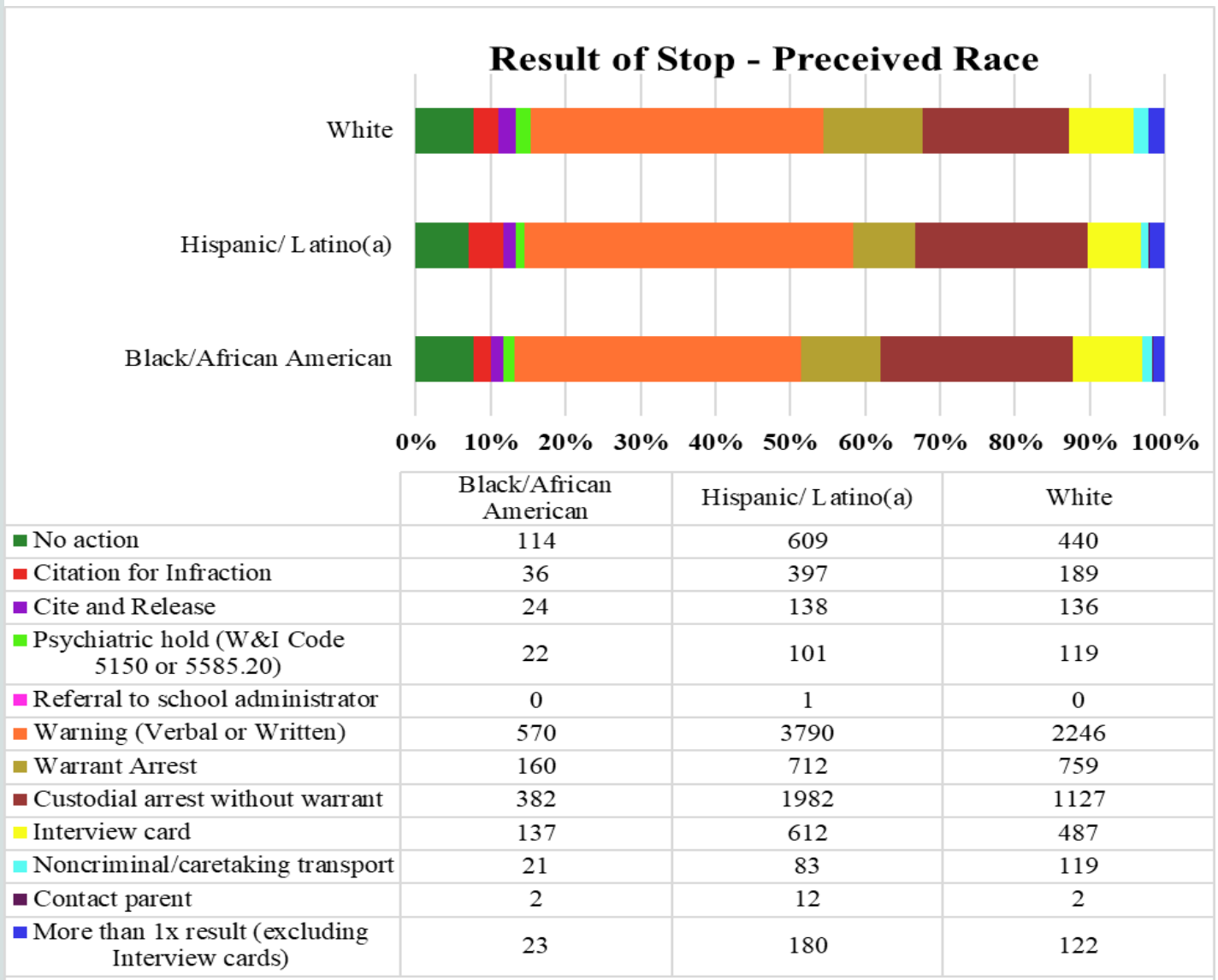


Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)

Across all racial and ethnic categories, the **two most frequent** results of a stop are **warnings (verbal or written)** and **custodial arrests without a warrant**. These outcomes collectively account for the majority of all stops represented in the dataset. Warrant arrests, citations for infractions, and no-action outcomes appear less frequently, while categories such as psychiatric holds, referrals to school administrators, and contact-parent actions occur only rarely.

When broken down by group, the data show similar overall patterns amongst Kern County’s three major racial groups. Hispanic/Latino(a) and White individuals account for the largest number of total outcomes, followed by Black/African American individuals. Each group’s distribution is dominated by warnings and custodial arrests, with other categories making up smaller shares. Smaller groups—including Asian, Middle Eastern/South Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander, and individuals of two or more races—show comparable proportional patterns but with substantially fewer total stops recorded.

While minor variations exist amongst groups, there were no notable disparities. Overall, actions taken amongst all racial groups appear to closely align with one another. The following snapshot helps narrow the focus and highlights the similarities between the three major racial groups.



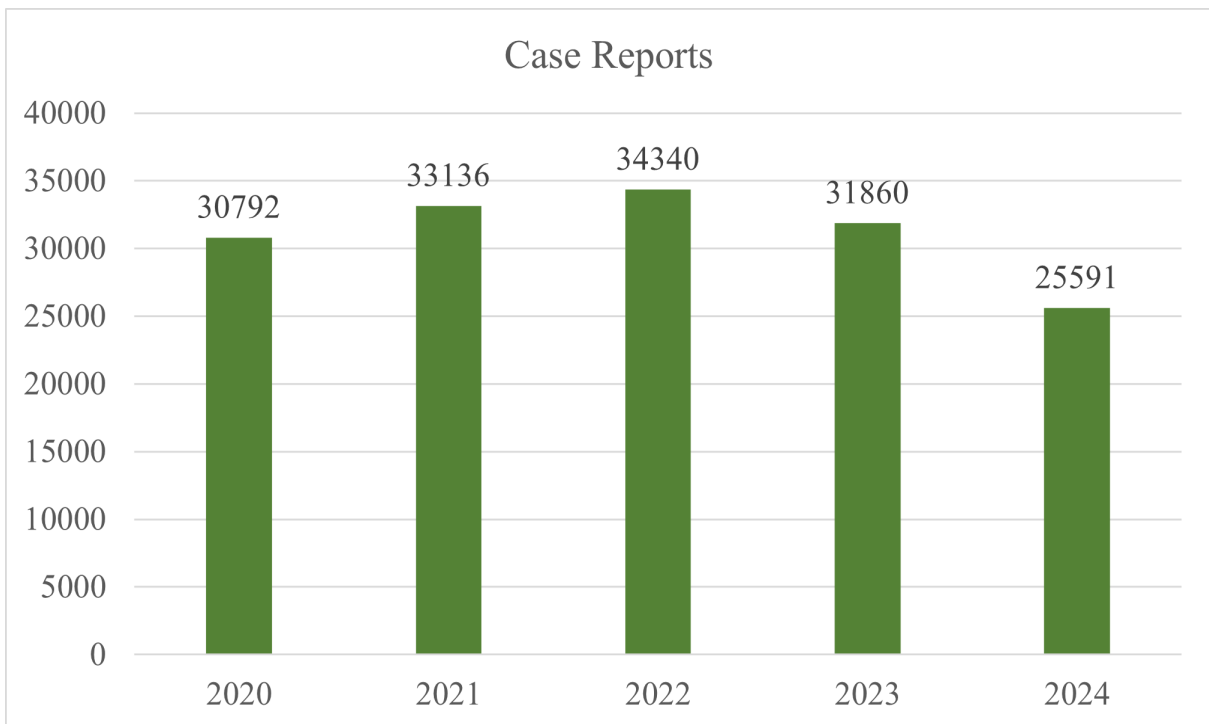


Calls for Service

In 2024, the Communications Center answered 205,112 9-1-1 calls and 574 Text-to-911 messages. This resulted in 151,146 calls for service. Other calls for service not accounted for in this count were handled by the Telephone Report Desk, were cancelled before our arrival, or were transferred to another agency. These figures are based on information from the Kern County Sheriff's Office database, and population demographics were retrieved from the United States Census Bureau American Community Survey for 2023*.

In 2024, the Metro Patrol area accounted for the most calls for service, with 92,210 of the total 151,146, representing 61% of all calls for service generated for the Sheriff's Office's 16 response areas. The Lamont Substation accounted for the second-highest call for service count, with 10,287 of the total calls for service. The Kern Valley Substation had the third-highest radio call count among all stations, with 9,721 calls.

Between 2020 and 2024, the Kern County Sheriff's Office experienced a gradual decline in total case reports, following an initial period of growth. Case totals peaked in 2022 at 34,340 reports, after which they began to decrease, reaching 25,591 in 2024—a reduction of nearly 26% over two years. This downward trend may be attributed to a combination of proactive policing strategies, enhanced problem-solving approaches, and increased emphasis on community engagement aimed at addressing underlying issues before they escalate into reportable crimes. Expanded crime prevention efforts, data-driven deployment, and collaboration with community stakeholders may have contributed to reducing repeat incidents and improving voluntary compliance. Additionally, shifts in reporting practices, service demand, and post-pandemic community activity levels likely influenced overall case volumes. Despite the decline, the data reflect the department's continued effectiveness in managing a significant caseload while prioritizing investigative quality, strategic resource allocation, and community-oriented policing objectives.



*Website below has data from 2022 & 2023 has not been updated as of publication:
<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/news/data-releases.2022.html>



Case Adjudication Data

In 2024, the Kern County Sheriff's Office made 1,207 arrests related to resisting arrest. The Sheriff's Office is now publishing the adjudication information connected to these offenses. The adjudication process primarily lies with the court system. The court system includes the District Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, and the Judicial authorities appointed by the State of California (judges).

It is important to note that Kern County Sheriff's Office deputy sheriffs must establish probable cause before making an arrest or obtaining an arrest/search warrant. Probable cause requires sufficient facts and circumstances that would lead a reasonable person to believe that a crime has been committed and that the person being arrested or searched is likely responsible. Beyond a reasonable doubt is a higher standard of proof used in criminal trials, which requires evidence so convincing that no reasonable doubt exists in the minds of a jury of the defendant's peers of the defendant's guilt.

As with any other arrest offense, some charges may be submitted by the arresting agency but not filed by the District Attorney's Office. Other times, the District Attorney's Office will file the charge(s) but later dismiss them for various reasons, including civil remedies, plea deal negotiations, the furtherance of justice, or a perceived lack of evidence. Therefore, it is common that even filed offenses fail to reach an adjudication status of guilty, not guilty, or nolo contendere.

Further, a deputy may have probable cause to believe a crime has occurred, but not all reports are submitted to the District Attorney's Office for prosecution. This is not common practice for the Patrol Bureau, but it often happens in our Detentions Bureau. When the Kern County Sheriff's Office creates an Incident Report, a criminal charge is included if the necessary elements are present. However, even if a report is not submitted for prosecution or if force is used, the incident is documented for future reference and investigative purposes. Some reports are not submitted to the District Attorney's Office if the inmate is already in custody serving a long sentence, as adding a charge may overwhelm the court system. The charges will usually run concurrently with their existing sentence in such cases.

The Kern County Sheriff's Office analyzed the frequency and nature of uses of force. The Kern County Sheriff's Office is committed to transparency, especially regarding resisting-arrest-type charges. To accomplish this, we compiled arrest data for the following Penal Codes*:

PC 148(a)(1)

PC 243(b)

PC 69

PC 245(c)

For information on Use of Force, refer to [page 45](#) of this report.

*For detailed definitions of each penal code, you may refer to our 2023 Annual Report Page 28—https://www.kernsheriff.org/document-library/20250404135054_KCSO-Annual-Report---2023.pdf or visit <https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov>



Case Adjudication Data

Of the 1,207 cases documenting a resisting offense, 4.1% were dismissed, 5.7% pled guilty/no contest, 20.1% were not filed, 22.3% are currently pending, 29.3% took a plea deal, 15.8% were not submitted, and 3.7% were sealed during this timeframe.

Adjudication Results

Dismissed	Pled Guilty/No Contest	Not Filed	Pending	Plea Deal	Not Submitted	Sealed	Total*
49	69	243	269	354	191	32	1207

Adjudication Types and Definitions:

Dismissed: The court or prosecutor has decided that the charge against the subject should not be pursued, terminating the case.

Guilty/No Contest: Subject pleads guilty to the charges filed and admits to the allegations or is found guilty after trial. No contest/"nolo contendere" means the defendant agrees to accept a conviction but does not admit to factual guilt when entering a plea. A no contest plea typically has the same legal effect as a guilty plea, except that a no contest plea to a misdemeanor cannot result in a lawsuit against the defendant. In certain civil cases, it is seen as evidence of criminality.

Not Filed: The District Attorney's (DA) Office did not file the charges; sometimes, due to further investigation needed, incorrect filing, lack of evidence, civil remedies, or filed more serious offenses.

Pending: The court case has yet to reach a verdict of guilty, not guilty, dismissed, or a plea deal. The court case still has pending hearing dates.

Plea Deal: The Prosecution may offer the defendant a plea deal to avoid trial and perhaps reduce their exposure to a more lengthy sentence. A defendant may plea guilty only if they actually committed the crime and admit it in open court before the judge. Some charges may be dismissed provided the plea remains in effect.

Not Submitted: Refers to a situation where law enforcement officers have investigated an incident or crime and have created a report documenting their findings but have chosen not to submit the report to the DA's Office for prosecution. This decision may be based on various factors, such as insufficient evidence to support a prosecution, the perpetrator already in custody for other crimes, victims deciding not to prosecute or being uncooperative with the investigation/prosecution, and/or other reasons that may make it impractical or unnecessary to pursue prosecution. However, even when the report is not submitted to the DA's Office, it is typically documented in law enforcement records for future reference and investigative purposes.

Sealed: Record sealing is a legal process that removes criminal records from public view. The records cannot be viewed or accessed by the general public, although they could still be available to certain government agencies or individuals with a court order.



Community Oriented Policing: Community Relations Unit

The *Community Relations Unit (CRU)* serves the community by providing services that reduce crime and improve the quality of life through mutually beneficial partnerships in the county's communities. The unit's primary function is to increase safety through awareness. CRU offers safety programs, presentations, resources, public events, and more. CRU's goal as a community liaison is to initiate an open dialogue with all members of the community. CRU is dedicated to educating the public on safety steps to improve the security of neighborhoods and businesses by making them less desirable to criminals, increasing the public's resistance to crime, and ultimately enhancing the safety, security, and quality of life for all residents and visitors of Kern County.

The *Community Engagement Log* shown on the next page includes community events where CRU was present. These events also include sworn personnel who may have attended community events where employees field questions for community stakeholders about KCSO activities, identify issues facing the county, and crime trends in the area. Furthermore, KCSO meets with local businesses to address security concerns and threat assessments, attends neighborhood watch meetings, and participates in school assemblies on safety and how to report crimes.

In addition, *Canine Unit* demonstrations are held to discuss how canines are trained and handled, which drugs canines are trained to detect, and the importance of canines in our agency. KCSO holds Q&As in schools that allow students to ask questions and show how the canines bite using the bite suit. Some other events include Trunk-or-Treat events where candy is handed out to the community, guest speakers to teach children about gun safety, distributing food baskets, and giving stuffed toys to needy families.



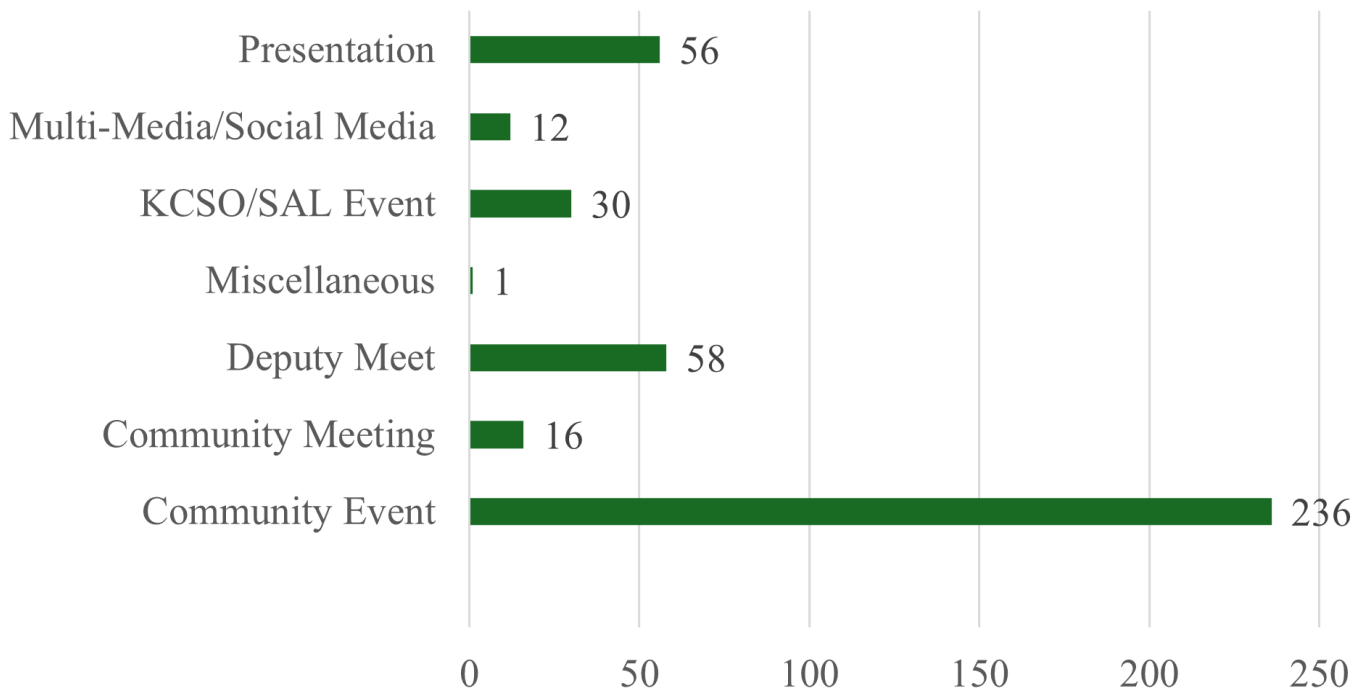
In 2024, the CRU fulfilled more event and program requests than in previous years. The Kern County Sheriff's Office hopes to address issues identified by the community by developing new partnerships, holding more community events, and prioritizing recruitment. Programs offered by the CRU include resource fairs, media interviews, internet safety training, bullying information meetings, neighborhood watch programs, drug awareness for parents, human trafficking presentations, and senior scams and frauds. The CRU is constantly developing more programs and events that align with the needs and wants of the community, based on feedback from the community or deputies in the field. These meetings and events are educational opportunities for all parties to collaborate on solutions.



Community Oriented Policing: Community Relations Unit

In 2024, the Kern County Sheriff’s Office Community Relations Unit (CRU) served approximately 70,615 community members. There were a total of 409 requests for events and programs, 310 requests were fulfilled and 99 were declined. This amounts to a KCSO attendance rate of 76%. The reasons for declined requests were a lack of staffing or an event that conflicted with the requested time and date. There were 259 “Deputy Assists,” in which a deputy assisted the CRU at an event or program. The chart below depicts the number of events by type. The miscellaneous event in the below table is a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Site Inspection.

2024 Community Engagement Log



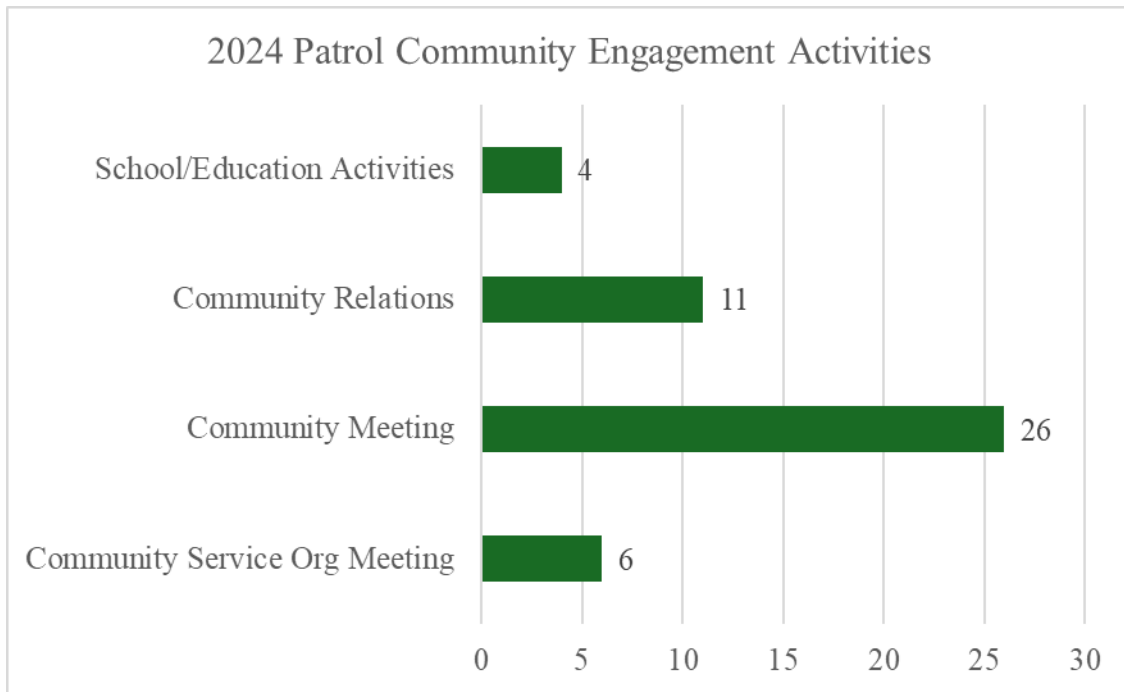
Overall, the data suggests sustained demand for CRU services and highlights opportunities for increased staffing or scheduling flexibility to expand outreach and meet unmet community needs.

For definitions of events listed in the Community Engagement Log, please refer to the glossary in the 2023 Annual Report — https://www.kernsheriff.org/document-library/20250404135054_KCSO-Annual-Report---2023.pdf



Community Oriented Policing: Patrol Activities

In 2024, the Kern County Sheriff's Office Patrol Personnel also engaged in similar events to the CRU. Patrol Personnel served approximately 3474 community members. The chart below depicts the number of events by type, which were attended by a variety of Patrol Personnel.





Community Oriented Policing: SARA Model

The SARA model is a decision-making model that incorporates analysis and research, tailoring solutions to specific problems and, most importantly, evaluating the effectiveness of those responses. When members develop POP projects, the activities shall be entered into the COPs log for each stage of the SARA model.

Scan

Use available resources to identify recurring problems of concern to the public and law enforcement. Prioritize those problems and confirm that the problems exist. Determine how frequently the problem occurs and how long it has occurred.

Analyze

Collect and review relevant data, such as crime statistics, and research the cause of the problem. Determine how the problem is currently addressed and the strengths and limitations of the current response. Narrow the scope of the problem as specifically as possible. Identify various resources that may assist in developing a deeper understanding of the problem, including local schools, the Chamber of Commerce, non-profit organizations, the community, and stakeholders.

Respond

Develop solutions to bring about lasting reductions in the problem. Research what other communities with similar problems have done. Carry out the plan.

Assess

Evaluate the success of the response through surveys and crime analysis. Conduct ongoing assessments to ensure continued effectiveness.

In 2024, KCSO completed ten POP Projects: two in Buttonwillow, two in Lamont, four in Taft, and two in Frazier Park. This year's POP Projects addressed a variety of issues: increase in criminal activity, burglaries and thefts, quality of life related calls, abandoned vehicles, stolen packages, traffic violations, suspicious person investigation, and loitering transients. Many of these POP Projects were successful in addressing these quality of life issues. During this last year, KCSO created a new Community Policing Policy aiming at standardizing and improving these efforts. This policy is pending approval.



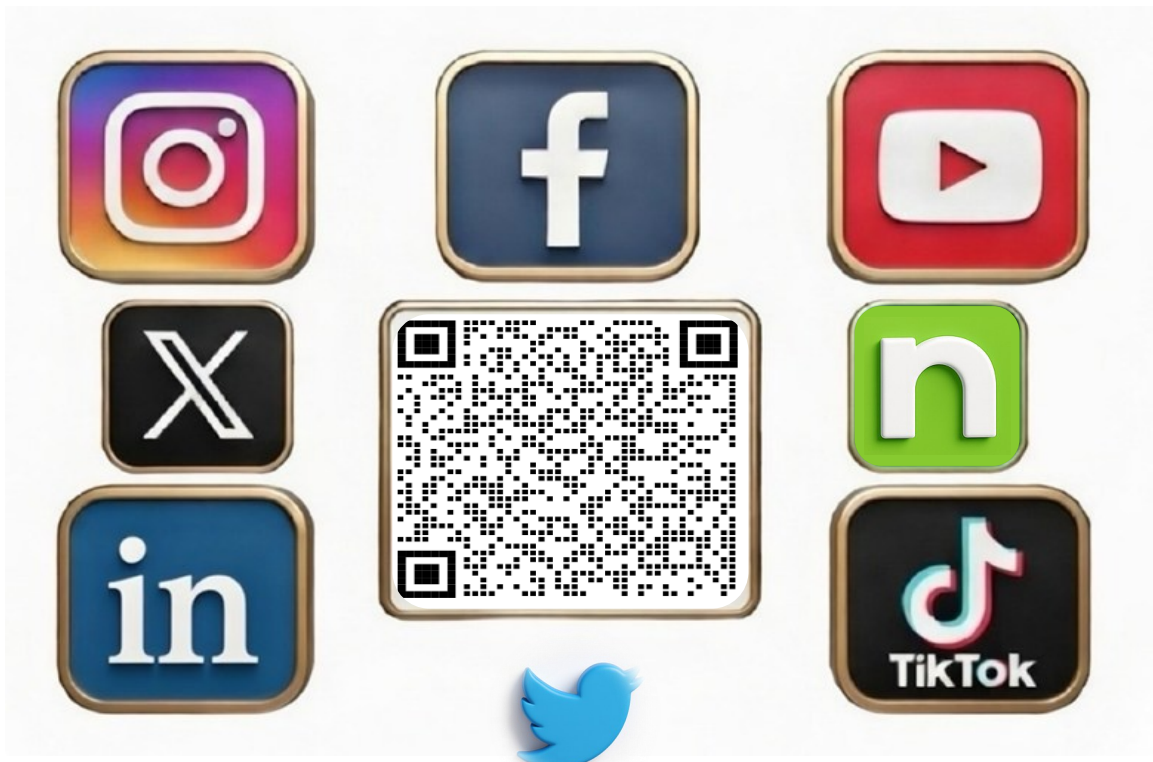


Community Oriented Policing: Social Media

The Kern County Sheriff's Office is committed to maintaining and promoting active communication with Kern County residents. With this goal in mind, the Public Information Officer and the Crime Prevention Unit are actively engaging with the community through various mainstream social platforms to inform, connect, and further the mission of the Kern County Sheriff's Office. While these avenues of information may be limited to community members without internet access, the ability to quickly inform, educate, and provide information to community members through social media has been impactful.

KCSO is committed to providing information through the most used social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, and the Nextdoor app). Please visit our linktree at—<https://linktr.ee/kerncosheriff> for further social media options.

Scan the QR code below to visit our linktr.ee!

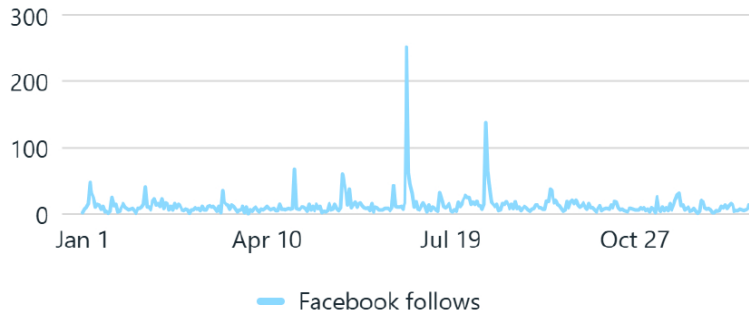




Community Oriented Policing: Social Media

Follows ⓘ

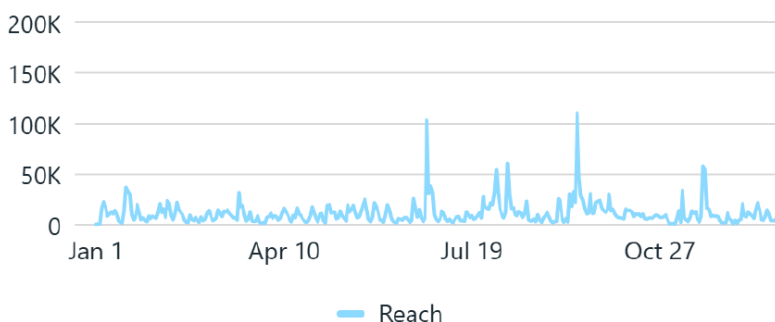
4,434 ↓ 19.4%



despite the overall yearly decrease. These moments suggest that while overall retention fell, the department continued to reach new audiences through high-impact posts and timely public safety communication.

Reach ⓘ

1,121,578 ↑ 101.6%



media habits or audience turnover, the consistent engagement levels demonstrate that KCSO's communication strategy continues to inform and connect with Kern County residents effectively.

The Kern County Sheriff's Office experienced a decrease in Facebook followers in 2024, adding only 4,434, compared to 5,500 followers in 2023. While this marks a decline from the previous year, engagement patterns indicate that public interest remained active around major announcements and community-focused content. Notable events such as the May 24 "Movies in the Park" community outreach and the June 26 [Bakersfield Hells Angels enforcement](#)* action drew considerable attention online, resulting in temporary upticks in followers

Despite the reduction in total followers, the department's Facebook reach remained strong, fluctuating between approximately 50,000 and 200,000 views across 2024. Engagement notably increased in the fall, coinciding with community initiatives such as National Night Out, Coffee with a Cop, and updates on Gang Suppression enforcement. These posts reflect the Sheriff's Office's continued success in using digital platforms to share information and foster transparency with the public. While the decline in total followers may point to changing social

*https://local.nixle.com/alert/11128199/?sub_id=0



Meet the Community Advisory Council

The Community Advisory Council (CAC) was established to enhance transparency, accountability, and community partnership with the Kern County Sheriff's Office (KCSO). The Council functions as an independent advisory body dedicated to providing meaningful community input on KCSO policies, practices, and operations. By bringing together residents from diverse backgrounds across Kern County, the CAC fosters open dialogue between the Sheriff's Office and the communities it serves, ensuring that law enforcement strategies are responsive to public needs, equitable in their impact, and reflective of local values.

Kern CAC's mission is rooted in collaboration, communication, and trust-building. The Council works to bridge the gap between law enforcement and the public by reviewing policies, identifying areas for improvement, and promoting initiatives that strengthen public safety while protecting civil rights. Its committees—focused on policy review, community engagement, communications, and training—provide structured avenues for public participation in shaping how the Sheriff's Office operates.

Through public meetings, listening sessions, and outreach efforts, the Kern Community Advisory Council strives to make law enforcement practices more transparent and community-centered. The Council's work not only supports compliance with the Stipulated Judgment but also advances the broader goal of establishing a culture of accountability and mutual respect within Kern County. In doing so, Kern CAC plays a critical role in promoting a safer, more informed, and more connected community, where public trust and effective policing reinforce one another in the service of all residents.

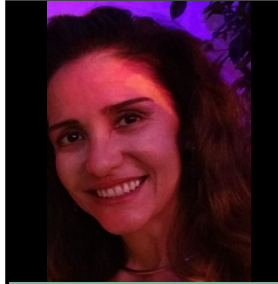




Meet the Community Advisory Council



Bryan Bowens



Hilda Jimenez



Manuel Carrizalez



Linda Fiddler



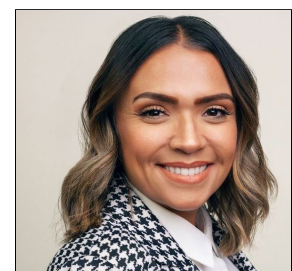
Rosa Lopez



Genora McClanahan



Joel Mackay



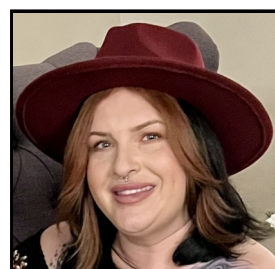
Alexis Garay



Jeremy Price



Jay Tamsi



Stephanie Gutierrez



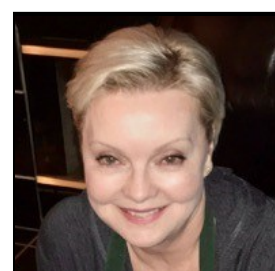
James Luff



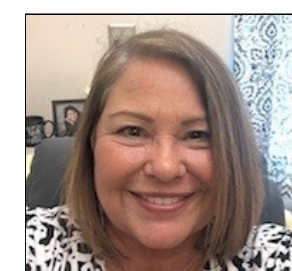
Ana Huerta



Anthony Lee



Li Gibbs



Robin Walters



Daniel Rodela



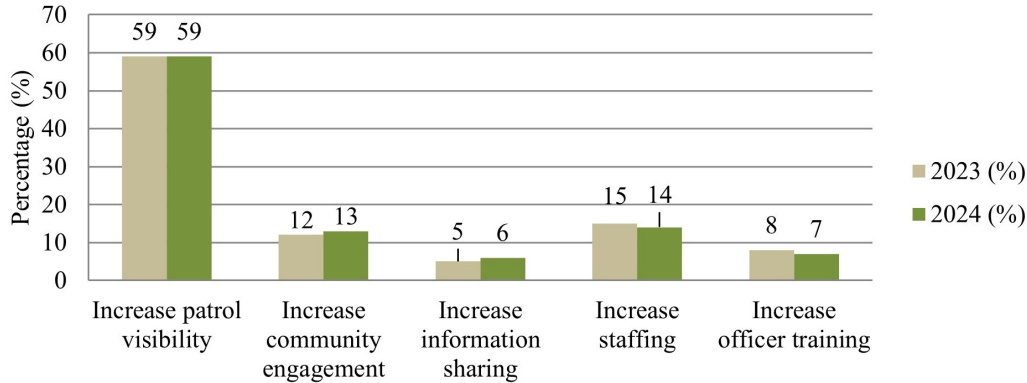
Michael Bryant

- ★ Claudia Catota (not pictured)
- ★ Alex Garcia (not pictured)
- ★ Noe Garcia (not pictured)
- ★ Martina Lara (not pictured)
- ★ Daniel Taylor (not pictured)



Community Surveys

Community Preferences for Agency Improvement (2023-2024)

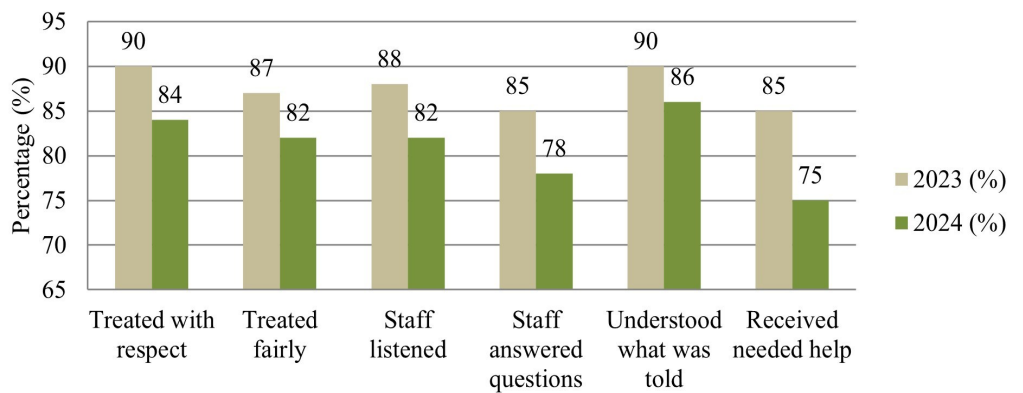


The Sheriff's Office utilizes Axon's My90 for post-contact community surveys. My90 serves as an invaluable engagement tool, bridging the gap between police leadership, deputies, and the communities they serve. In line with the Tools for 21st Century Policing, this

data-driven technology aims to foster transparency, trust, and communication. My90 achieves this through post-contact surveys.

My90 seamlessly integrates with the Computer Aided Dispatch Software, sending a confidential survey via text message to the reporting person once a call for service (CFS) is closed. The department has carefully selected the CFS type that will receive the survey. Community members choose to fill out the survey, and their information is confidential unless they choose to disclose it in the comment box. When asked how the Sheriff's Office could best improve safety, most community members emphasized increased patrol visibility, followed by community engagement and staffing levels. This strong preference for visibility—identified by nearly 60% of respondents—indicates

Community Satisfaction Comparison: 2023 vs 2024



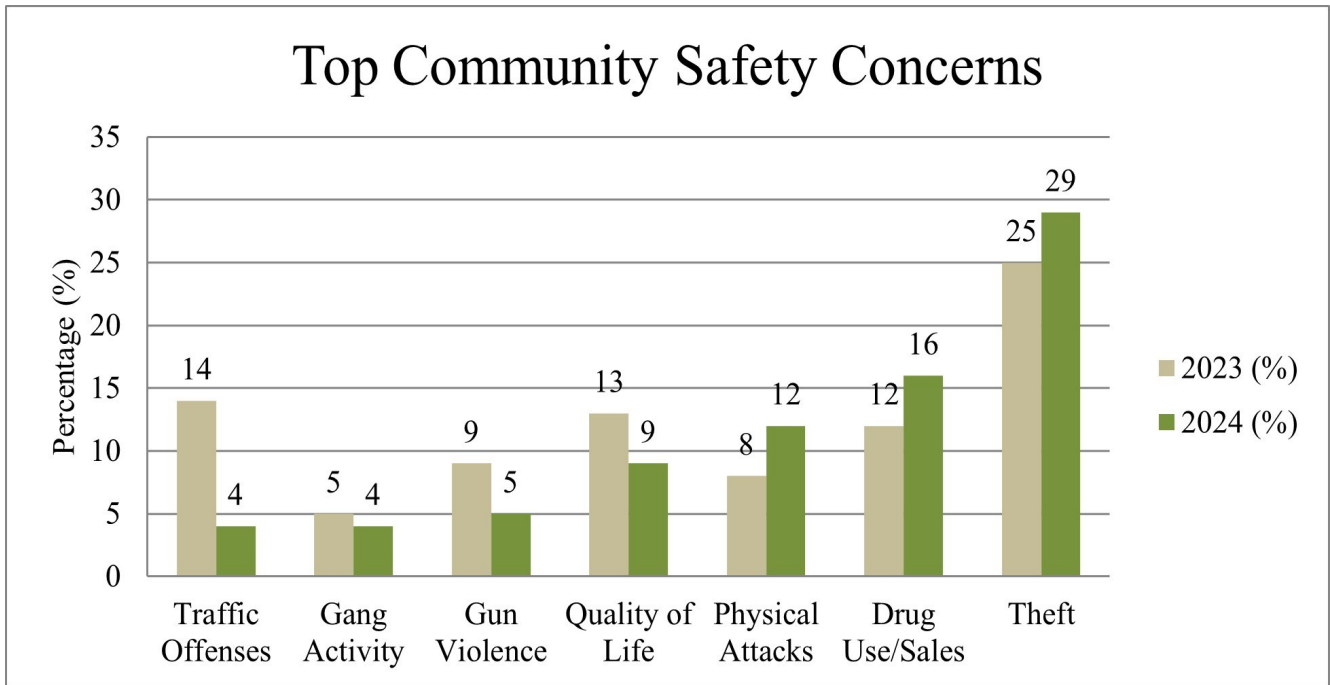
that a visible law enforcement presence continues to serve as both a deterrent and a reassurance for residents. The results also suggest a desire for more communication, transparency, and officer training to strengthen public trust and service quality.

The community satisfaction comparison shows a modest decline in several key areas between 2023 and 2024. While overall ratings remain positive, fewer respondents in 2024 reported feeling respected, treated fairly, or fully understanding their interactions with staff. The percentage of respondents who felt listened to and received the help they needed also declined slightly. Despite these dips, most scores remain above 75%, reflecting continued confidence in the professionalism and courtesy of Sheriff's Office personnel.



Community Surveys

The chart below highlights a shift in the community’s safety priorities. Theft, drug use, and physical attacks were cited more frequently as top community concerns in 2024 compared to 2023. Conversely, concerns about traffic offenses and gun violence declined notably. The data suggests that while traditional safety issues like traffic and noise have eased, property and drug-related crimes are becoming a more significant focus for residents, emphasizing the need for proactive community policing and targeted enforcement strategies.



The 2024 community feedback results indicate that overall public satisfaction with the Kern County Sheriff’s Office remains strong, despite modest declines in several perception indicators compared to 2023. Respondents continue to express confidence in the professionalism and respectfulness of Sheriff’s Office personnel, while simultaneously emphasizing the need for increased visibility and engagement within the community. The findings highlight evolving public safety concerns, with rising attention to property crime and drug-related issues. Continued investment in proactive patrol strategies, transparent communication, and community collaboration will be essential to maintaining public trust and enhancing safety outcomes throughout Kern County.



Language Access

The Sheriff's Office is working to establish policies to develop and implement a language access policy that ensures meaningful access to KCSO programs and services for individuals with limited ability to speak, read, write, or understand English. KCSO works with Kern County's Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). The CAC has members who have experience in language access. KCSO is currently exploring services to better support deputies in the field.

Currently, deputies who have bilingual certificates are available to translate. If this access is unavailable, deputies may ask community members for help. KCSO has recognized this is an area of concern and plans to make improvements in the future. KCSO was awarded a grant from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services to use state-funded translation services during 9-1-1 calls.

The KCSO uses third-party interpretation providers, Cryacom and LanguageLine Solutions, to assist with field, station, and detention facility translation services. These services allow a deputy in the field to call for assistance to facilitate communication with a person with limited English proficiency (LEP). However, this will only resolve some challenges encountered, such as when the deputy cannot discern the language with which a person needs interpretation assistance. Issues may arise if the person with LEP speaks a language not commonly provided by the interpretation service. The KCSO is also looking into Wordly for 2025. This web-based language translation service provides live translation for community meetings and events.

The Kern County Sheriff's Office, the County of Kern, and the CAC will continue to make progress toward compliance with the Stipulated Judgment, which consists of four main components: (1) creation of a language access policy in meaningful collaboration with the CAC; (2) training in the language access policy for all KCSO deputies, communication supervisors, call-takers, and dispatchers; (3) designation of a language access coordinator; and (4) development and implementation of a language access audit protocol.

On December 19, 2023, the KCSO deployed the online complaint form in English and Spanish on the KCSO's public website. This electronic fillable form allows the complainant to retain a copy of the complaint via email, download, or print. Currently, the KCSO's Technology Services Section is working to convert the additional languages into this electronic, fillable form for the public website. The complaint form website can be located at <https://www.kernsheriff.org/complaints>.

Language access is essential to ensuring that all community members, regardless of their primary language, can fully understand their rights, communicate effectively with law enforcement, and access critical services. By providing interpretation and translation services, agencies can build trust, enhance public safety, and ensure equitable protection under the law for all residents.



Kern County Mobile Evaluation Team (MET)

Kern County Mobile Evaluation Team (MET) is comprised of behavioral health professionals who are specifically trained to respond to calls involving persons in a mental health crisis or suffering from a mental health disability and in the application of de-escalation techniques. The MET Team is given priority when responding to such calls and is dispatched when a behavioral health crisis is identified in the community. The MET Team does not replace law enforcement officers; they respond alongside deputies but approach situations only after law enforcement officers deem the situation safe enough. MET provides crisis intervention, voluntary and involuntary psychiatric hospitalization assessments, and connections to behavioral health services and community resources.

KCSO Crisis Intervention Team refers to trained deputies who are next to respond when MET resources are unavailable, and no immediate threat of harm to others is evident. The KCSO Crisis Intervention Team is managed by a Crisis Intervention Coordinator, who holds the rank of Commander, and a Sergeant with significant expertise in crisis intervention, who sits on the CIT steering committee and coordinates training with the Training Section Lieutenant. Kern County Behavioral Health collects and tracks the MET Response calls for service and shares the data collected with KCSO.

All new deputies receive CIT training as part of the Academy, and KCSO continues to work toward training all deputies. At the time of this report, the following represents the proportion of personnel trained. KCSO added CIT courses last year offering four opportunities to take the course in 2024, and it aimed to have 100% of deputies, detentions deputies, and dispatchers trained.

Assignment/ Classification	CIT- Trained 2022	CIT- Trained 2023	CIT- Trained 2024	Pending CIT- Trained	CIT- Refresher Course	Total Staff
Patrol Deputies	79%	86%	98.27%	1.73%	0%	519
Detentions Deputies	0%	98%	100%	0%	87.16%	310
Dispatchers	0%	83%	100%	0%	0%	44

Refresher Training

The Sheriff's Office will have routine refresher training for newly promoted supervisors within the classification ranks of dispatchers, deputy sheriffs, and detention deputies. Once staff in these classifications receive a promotion to these ranks, an email will be sent with a due date to complete the training. Furthermore, resource materials will be attached to the email to provide the most up-to-date information on resources available to staff members and their staff within Kern County.

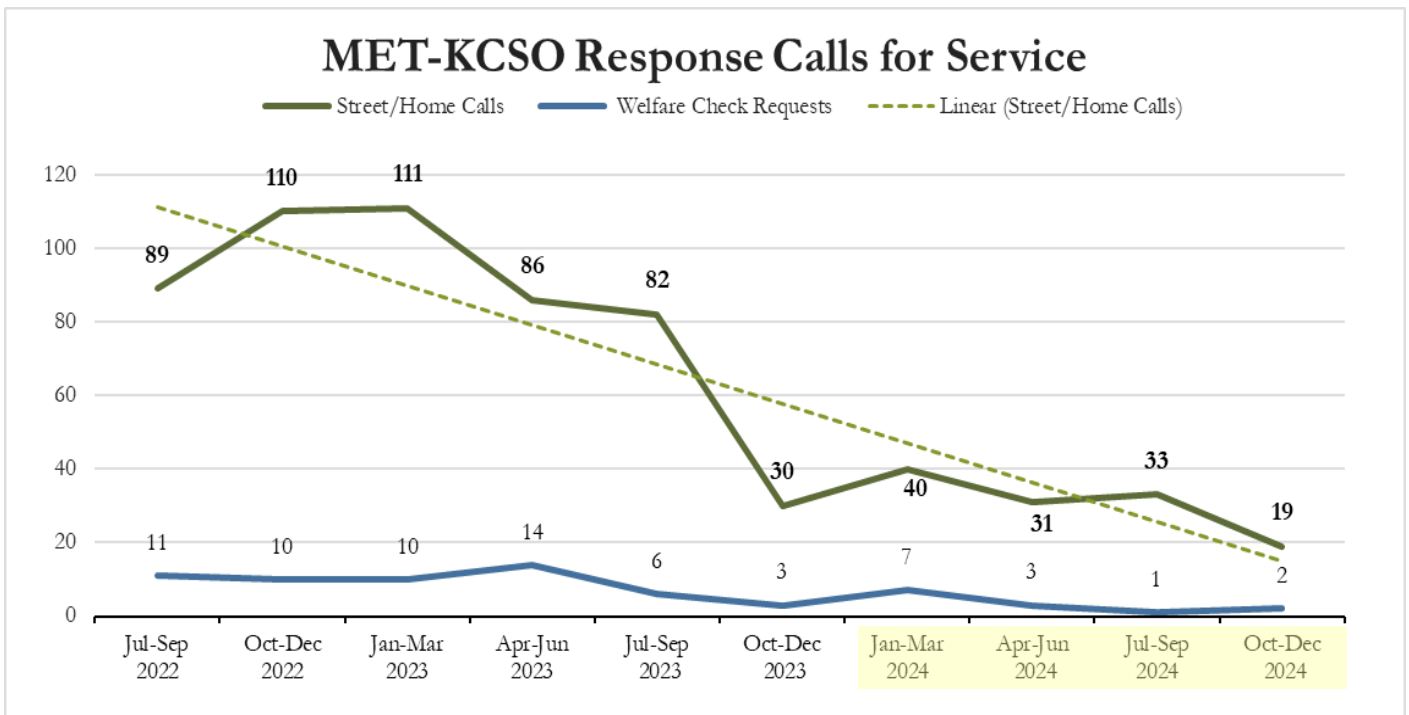
KCSO and the MT have not determined the necessary amount of in-service training as mandated in the Stipulated Judgment, but we will work together to use observations and data from audits and supervisory reviews to identify specified topics for annual in-service training.



Kern County Mobile Evaluation Team (MET)

Kern County Behavioral Health began tracking KCSO MET response calls for service starting about July 2022. The quarterly call volumes from 2022 to 2024 indicate a consistent decline in Street/Home Calls (a total of 631) over the observed period. Welfare check calls (a total of 67) also show a notable downward trend during this timeframe.

The highlighted period reflects January 2024 to December 2024, where KCSO received 13 phone calls requesting welfare checks and 123 response calls for service (Street/Home Calls). Welfare check requests are initiated by members of the public, while street or home visits refer to those encounters deputies have when responding to events not primarily classified as welfare checks.



KCSO and the County established BMH triage in the dispatch center in November 2024, which safely reduces the number of calls to which KCSO deputies respond. The MET Unit Assigned to Communications Center (CMET) can determine whether a call requires a co-response (MET and deputies), MET only, transfer to 988, or merely provision of resources. The County is in the process of contracting for an “East Kern Mobile Evaluation Team” to provide additional services to individuals in crisis.

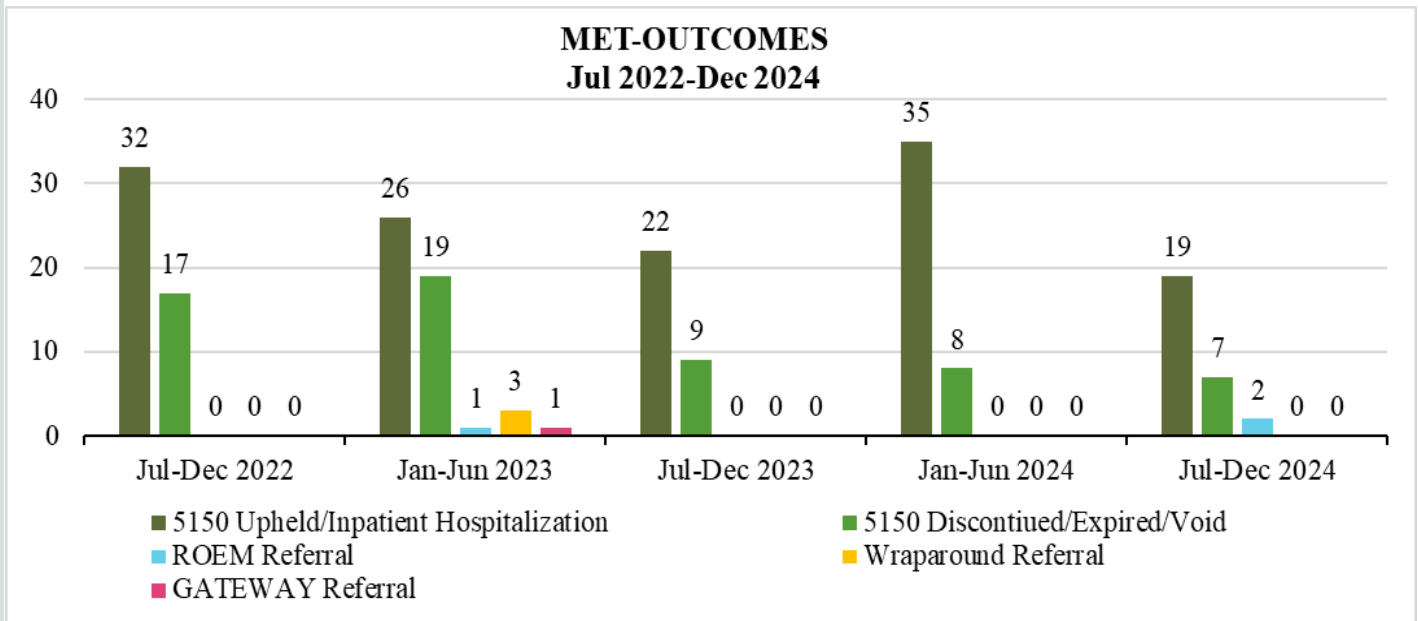
KCSO and the County authorized 34 additional Detentions Deputy positions and mental health staff for a new mental health observation unit in a section of the Lerdo facility. In the mental health observation unit, detentions deputies will be present all day alongside the individuals housed in the unit, with an emphasis on forming relationships and responding to the needs of individuals in a timely and productive manner. KCSO is planning to provide access to tablets (with controlled internet access) along with a point-based behavior modification system where individuals can earn points and rewards when agreed-to goals are achieved (e.g., maintaining hygiene or active participation in classes).



Kern County Mobile Evaluation Team (MET)

The MET team is designed to evaluate and identify the medical needs of persons who are going through a mental crisis. The goal is to facilitate appropriate referrals based on the individual needs of a person experiencing a mental crisis (5150). To date, 66.67% of crisis calls have been to individuals who ended up being upheld and/or requiring inpatient hospitalization, and 29.85% of individuals who may have had a crisis but were stable enough not to require immediate hospitalization. 1.49% were referrals to the Relational Outreach and Engagement Model (ROEM) program: which has a team that engages homeless, and hard-to-engage individuals who want services, 1.49% were wraparound referrals: intensive, family-centered support for youth with complex needs, and 0.50% were gateway referrals: gateway connects individuals struggling with substance use with treatment.

The chart below illustrates semiannual call volumes from 2022 to 2024. Data indicates a consistent decline in service-related calls (Street/Home Calls) over the observed period. Welfare check calls also show a notable downward trend during this timeframe.



One issue that the DOJ and Monitors note is that there were problems with MET response in outlying areas and in or around the City of Bakersfield. As part of its Virtual MET program, KCSO staff are provided with an iPad or iPhone for FaceTime with MET members. Still, this service ultimately depends on reliable cell phone coverage and on MET staff who are available to reply, which is not always the case. During ride-alongs, some deputies reported that they appreciated having developed good working relationships with MET members, which facilitated better communication and connections. KCSO feels that the MET team is a great collaboration and looks forward to building the partnership/relationship to ensure continuous improvements in handling MET crisis calls.



Civil Litigation

Civil litigation does arise against the County, the Kern County Sheriff's Office, and individual deputy sheriffs and/or employees. Such litigation can arise from law enforcement incidents, traffic accidents, or incidents involving incarcerated persons. Civil lawsuits may be filed in state or federal district courts. Before a lawsuit can be filed, a litigant must comply with the claims statute by filing a Government Tort Claim pursuant to California Government Code § 900, et seq. The laws governing federal lawsuits differ from those governing state law matters. Claims and lawsuits must be served on the Kern County Clerk of the Board.

In a civil case, an alleged use of force refers to a claim that one party used physical force against another party. This can include actions such as hitting, pushing, or restraining someone. The term "alleged" is used because the claim of force is still being investigated or has not been proven in a court of law. In a civil case, the burden of proof is generally lower than in a criminal case. The standard for proving an alleged use of force is often based on a standard of preponderance of the evidence or clear and convincing evidence, meaning that it is more likely than not that the force was used or the evidence leaves you with a firm belief or conviction that it is highly probable that the factual contentions of the claim or defense are true. If the alleged use of force is proven in a civil case, the victim may be entitled to damages such as compensation for medical bills, lost wages, or pain and suffering. However, it is important to note that civil cases are separate from criminal cases, and a finding of liability in a civil case does not mean that the person who used force committed a crime or will face criminal charges.

Lawsuits involving the Sheriff's Office are handled by the County Counsel's Office. The Sheriff's Office works closely with County Counsel to defend the County, the Sheriff's Office, and involved employees. Extensive discovery efforts occur between the parties in lawsuits. Discovery is the exchange of records and information and the taking of sworn testimony from witnesses and experts. Discovery is an essential part of litigation because it assists the litigants in determining the extent of damages or uncovering mitigating (defending) factors in lawsuits. Lawsuits are a long, slow process, often taking several years to go from the claim stage to the conclusion. Lawsuits may be concluded by a court judgment on a dispositive motion, settlement of the issues, or jury trial.





Civil Litigation

Pending Cases

Pre-2023

Jon-Erik Roosevelt Bolds, Jr., v. Luevanos, et al. – USDC Case No.: 1:21-CV01668

– *Excessive Use of Force*

Lewis, Jr., Mickel CC202117742 – USDC Case No.: 1:21-CV-00378

– *Use of Force: Officer-Involved Shooting*

Roberts, Willie CC202117942 – USDC Case No.: 1:21-CV-00725

– *Use of Force: Officer-Involved Shooting*

2023

Deveroux, Alain, et al. v. County, et al. – USDC Case No. 1:23-CV-00239

– *Excessive Use of Force*

2024

Charles Ellis v. Dwight Lemon, Matthew Alvarez, Brandon Gifford, Devin Boyd; USDC 1:22
-CV-00436

– *Excessive Use of Force*

Malissa Flores v. Isaac Azua, Dylan Rice, Yousef Aou Harb, USDC 2:24-at-01073

– *Excessive Use of Force*

Joshua Molina v. Mitchell Adams, USDC 1:24-CV-00019

– *Excessive Use of Force*

Arriana Maria Sanchez and v. Kern County & Craig Reinhart, KCSC BCV-24-102376

– *Excessive Use of Force*



Use of Force

LEGAL STANDARDS

Federal and State law defines general use of force policy standards and practices for all law enforcement agencies. The Department's prescribed policies and procedures can be more restrictive when compared to the broader legal guidelines. Therefore, officer-involved shooting (OIS) incidents and other applications of force utilized by Department personnel can be adjudicated as out of policy, regardless of the lawfulness of an officer's decisions or actions. Force used within the Kern County Sheriff's Office facilities shall never be for the purpose of maliciously or sadistically causing harm [(Johnson v. Glick (1973) U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit) and (Whitley v. Albers (1986) U.S. 312)]. Deputy sheriffs shall never be "deliberately indifferent" to inmate's' rights, health, or safety. The 8th and 14th Amendments of the United States Constitution protect inmates against cruel and unusual punishment.

FEDERAL LEGAL STANDARDS

The United States (U.S.) Constitution and extensive case law dictate how all law enforcement organizations across the nation establish and maintain their UOF policies. The federal legal standard used to determine the lawfulness of a UOF is the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. In *Graham v. Connor*, the U.S. Supreme Court determined that an objective reasonableness standard should apply to a civilian's claim that law enforcement officials used excessive force when making an arrest, investigatory stop, or other "seizure" of his/her person. *Graham* states in part: The reasonableness of a particular use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer at the scene rather than with the 20/20 vision of hindsight. The calculus of reasonableness must embody allowance for the fact that police officers are often forced to make split-second judgments in tense, uncertain, and rapidly evolving circumstances. The test of reasonableness is not capable of precise definition or mechanical application. The U.S. Supreme Court's ruling established that the force used must be reasonable under the circumstances known to the officer at the time. Therefore, the Department examines all use of force incidents from an objective, rather than a subjective, reasonableness standard.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA LEGAL STANDARDS

In accordance with California Penal Code Section 835a, law enforcement personnel may only use the amount of force that is "objectively reasonable" to:

- Effect an arrest;
- Prevent escape; or,
- Overcome resistance.

California Penal Code 835a:

(a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(1) That the authority to use physical force, conferred on peace officers by this section, is a serious responsibility that shall be exercised judiciously and with respect for human rights and dignity and for the sanctity of every human life. The Legislature further finds and declares that every person has a right to be free from excessive use of force by officers acting under color of law.

It is important to note that peace officers or deputy sheriffs can also mean detentions deputies or detentions officers for the purpose of this section.



Use of Force

A Deputy Sheriff who makes or attempts to make an arrest need not retreat or desist from his efforts by reason of the resistance or threatened resistance of the person being arrested, nor shall such officer be deemed an aggressor or lose his right to self-defense by the use of reasonable force to effect the arrest or to prevent escape or to overcome resistance. On August 19, 2013, the California State Supreme Court held, in the case of Hayes v. County of San Diego, that under California negligence law, liability can arise from tactical conduct and decisions employed by law enforcement preceding using deadly force. In 2019, the signing of Assembly Bill 392 reinforced this and Senate Bill 230 established training requirements to support the same. As such, a Deputy Sheriff's tactical conduct and decisions leading up to the use of deadly force are evaluated to determine the objective reasonableness of an incident.

Kern County Sheriff's Office Use of Force Policy

The Kern County Sheriff's Office's use of force policy is to provide Deputy Sheriffs with guidelines on the objectively reasonable use of force. It is the policy of the Kern County Sheriff's Office that Deputy Sheriffs, in the performance of their duties, shall use objectively reasonable force, given the facts and circumstances known or reasonably believed by the Deputy Sheriff at the time of the event, to effectively prevent escape, overcome resistance, or effect arrest.

"The decision by a peace officer to use force shall be evaluated from the perspective of a reasonable officer in the same situation, based on the totality of the circumstances known to or perceived by the officer at the time, rather than with the benefit of hindsight, and the totality of the circumstances shall account for occasions when officers may be forced to make quick judgments about using force" (Penal Code Section 835a(a)(4)).

In addition to Penal Code Section 835a, law enforcement officers on a custodial assignment may use reasonable force to establish and maintain custody of prisoners and to maintain the safety and security of the facility. The use of such force by officers shall conform to Penal Code Section 831.5(f) and the policies, procedures, and any applicable sections in the Kern County Sheriff's Office Detentions Bureau Manual.

Nothing in the Kern County Sheriff's Office use of force policy is intended to hinder or prevent a Deputy Sheriff from using deadly force immediately to protect or defend themselves, another deputy, or any other person from a significant threat of death or serious bodily injury.



Use of Force: Law

California Penal Code Section 835a provides in part:

Any peace officer who has reasonable cause to believe that the person to be arrested has committed a public offense may use objectively reasonable force to effect the arrest, to prevent escape, or to overcome resistance.

A peace officer who makes or attempts to make an arrest need not retreat or desist from their efforts by reason of resistance or threatened resistance of the person being arrested; nor shall such officer be deemed an aggressor or lose their right to self-defense by the use of objectively reasonable force to effect the arrest or to prevent escape or to overcome resistance. "Retreat" does not mean tactical repositioning or other de-escalation tactics.

California Penal Code Section 831.5(f) provides that:

A custodial officer may use reasonable force in establishing and maintaining custody of persons delivered to the custodial officer by a law enforcement officer.

No policy can realistically predict or cover every possible situation deputies might encounter. Each deputy, therefore, must be entrusted with discretion in determining the force necessary in each incident. While it is the ultimate objective of every law enforcement encounter to minimize injury to everyone involved, nothing in this policy requires a deputy to actually sustain physical injury or allow physical injury to any other person before using reasonable force.

DEFINITIONS

"Law enforcement officers" or "officer" shall include Kern County Sheriff's Office Deputies and Detentions Deputies.

"Force" means physical contact with a person by hand or instrumentality to gain control of that person when verbal commands are unavailing, inappropriate, or futile in the circumstances.

- Force shall not mean or include routine or incidental physical contact with a person as is necessary to take the person into actual, physical custody during a routine arrest situation when the arrestee does not offer physical resistance. Similarly, force does not mean or include the application of a wrist lock or control hold to handcuff an inmate prior to movement for security reasons when there is no physical resistance by the inmate.

"Deadly force" means any use of force that creates a substantial risk of causing death or serious bodily injury, including but not limited to the discharge of a firearm (Penal Code 835a(e)(1)).

The term "Deliberate Indifference" means the conscious or reckless disregard of the consequences of one's acts or omissions. It entails something more than negligence but something less than acts or omissions intended to cause harm or undertaken with the knowledge that harm will result (18 U.S.C. § 242).

RELATIONSHIP WITH LAW

The KCSO policy does not have the effect of law and is not intended to have the effect of law. Law is contained in the federal and state constitutions, statutes, and court decisions. The ultimate liability of law enforcement officers under law can only be determined by the courts. Violation of this policy does not and is not intended to mean that the involved law enforcement officers are liable under the law.



Use of Force:

KCSO Philosophy and Performance Evaluation

The Kern County Sheriff's Office values the sanctity of human life and the freedoms guaranteed by the United States and California constitutions. The use of force by a Deputy Sheriff is an important concern to the community. The role of law enforcement is to safeguard the life, dignity, and liberty of all persons without prejudice to anyone. Deputy Sheriffs shall carry out duties, including using force, in a fair and unbiased manner. Use of force policies apply to Deputy Sheriffs and Detentions Deputies.

At times, Deputy Sheriffs are called upon to make split-second decisions. In such cases, the time available to evaluate and respond to changing circumstances may impact a Deputy Sheriff's decision. When judging a Deputy Sheriff's decision, this fact shall be given due consideration and weight. Each Deputy Sheriff is expected to use objectively reasonable force under the circumstances at the time to prevent escape, overcome resistance, effect arrests, restore order, and maintain the safety and security of the facility and inmates. The decision to use force rests with each Deputy Sheriff.

SB230 Section 1 (b) - Law enforcement officers shall be guided by the principle of reverence for human life in all investigative, enforcement, and other contacts between officers and members of the public. When officers are called upon to detain or arrest a suspect who is uncooperative or actively resisting, may attempt to flee, poses a danger to others, or poses a danger to themselves, they should consider tactics and techniques that may persuade the suspect to voluntarily comply or may mitigate the need to use a higher level of force to resolve the situation safely.

A Deputy Sheriff shall consider the principles of proportionality in looking at the totality of the circumstances by weighing the severity of the offense, the reasonably perceived level of resistance, and the need for apprehension before using force. A Deputy Sheriff may only use force they reasonably believe is proportional to the seriousness of the suspected offense or the reasonably perceived level of actual or threatened resistance. A Deputy Sheriff shall continually evaluate their tactics when determining the appropriate use of force response. If necessary, a Deputy Sheriff shall render medical aid pursuant to DPPM Section P-0600 (Emergency Care for Individuals Under Sheriff's Office Care or Control) as soon as reasonably possible.

A Deputy Sheriff shall employ de-escalation and crisis intervention techniques when feasible and when doing so does not increase the risk of harm to officers or another person. When making use of force decisions, a Deputy Sheriff should be mindful that subjects may be physically or mentally incapable of responding to police commands due to a variety of circumstances including, but not limited to, alcohol or drugs, mental impairment, medical conditions, or language and cultural barriers.

Deputy Sheriffs shall use deadly force only when reasonably necessary in defense of human life or serious bodily injury. The decision by a Deputy Sheriff to use force shall be evaluated from the perspective of a reasonable officer in the same situation, based on the totality of the circumstances known to or perceived by the officer at the time rather than with the benefit of hindsight. The totality of the circumstances shall account for occasions when Deputy Sheriffs may be forced to make quick judgments about using force. The Kern County Sheriff's Office shall evaluate the use of force by Deputy Sheriffs to ensure the use of such force is lawful and consistent with this policy.

The Kern County Sheriff's Office will continue to regularly review and update the use of force policy with developing practices and procedures.

To view the KCSO Policies and Procedures, please visit <https://www.kernsheriff.org/Policies>.



KCSO Philosophy: De-Escalation

The Kern County Sheriff's Office's guiding principle when responding to a potential use of force incident is the sanctity of human life. Once a Deputy Sheriff has developed reasonable suspicion of criminal activity by a member of the public, they may detain that person while conducting a criminal investigation. Additionally, Deputy Sheriffs may develop probable cause during an investigation and arrest a public member suspected of committing a crime. With the sanctity of human life in mind, Deputy Sheriffs use the most current de-escalation techniques to safely detain or arrest members of the public who are suspected of committing a crime.

When feasible, Deputy Sheriffs use their uniformed presence and communication to peacefully detain and/or arrest members of the public who are suspected of committing a crime. These de-escalation techniques, among others detailed on the next page, have the goal of calming a chaotic situation to gain voluntary compliance and/or lower the need for Deputy Sheriffs to use force and/or force which has a higher likelihood of causing injury to a member of the public or the Deputy Sheriff.

When a suspect resists a detention or an arrest, Deputy Sheriffs may use objectively reasonable force, as stated in the federal law, state law, and Kern County Sheriff's Office policies in the pages above, to overcome their resistance. The totality of the circumstances will determine the appropriate force option for the Deputy Sheriff to overcome the suspect resistance. Most notably, the severity of the crime being investigated, whether the suspect poses an immediate threat, whether the suspect is actively resisting, or trying to escape are key determining factors for Deputy Sheriffs making split second use of force decisions. When possible, Deputy Sheriffs warn the suspect that they will use force in an effort to gain compliance before using force.

Deputy Sheriffs have a variety of less-lethal force options to safely detain or arrest a resisting suspect with minimal injury to the suspect and Deputy Sheriffs. When possible, less-lethal options which have a lower likelihood of causing injury, are used. The Sheriff's Office currently has a variety of less-lethal devices available to personnel for daily field operations and other tactical situations.





Use of Force: Less-Lethal Force Options

The Kern County Sheriff's Office employs a range of sanctioned less-lethal options to manage volatile encounters while minimizing risk of serious injury; these include 40-millimeter less-lethal launchers and projectiles (for delivering impact rounds at standoff distances), the FN-303 pneumatic less-lethal launcher (for accurate, low-velocity projectiles), PepperBall launchers, and oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray for short-range chemical incapacitation. Conducted within policy constraints and appropriate medical oversight, conductive energy weapons (CEW), canines, and impact tools such as batons provide intermediate force alternatives, while stun shields offer protection for officers during contact and containment. For post-incident control and prolonged non-compliance, restraint chairs are available as a last-resort administrative tool, subject to strict use-of-force and health-safety protocols. Each option carries operational limitations and medical/ethical considerations. Deployment must be guided by clear policy on necessity, proportionality, de-escalation priorities, mandated training and certification, prompt medical evaluation after use, thorough documentation, and periodic review to ensure accountability and community trust.





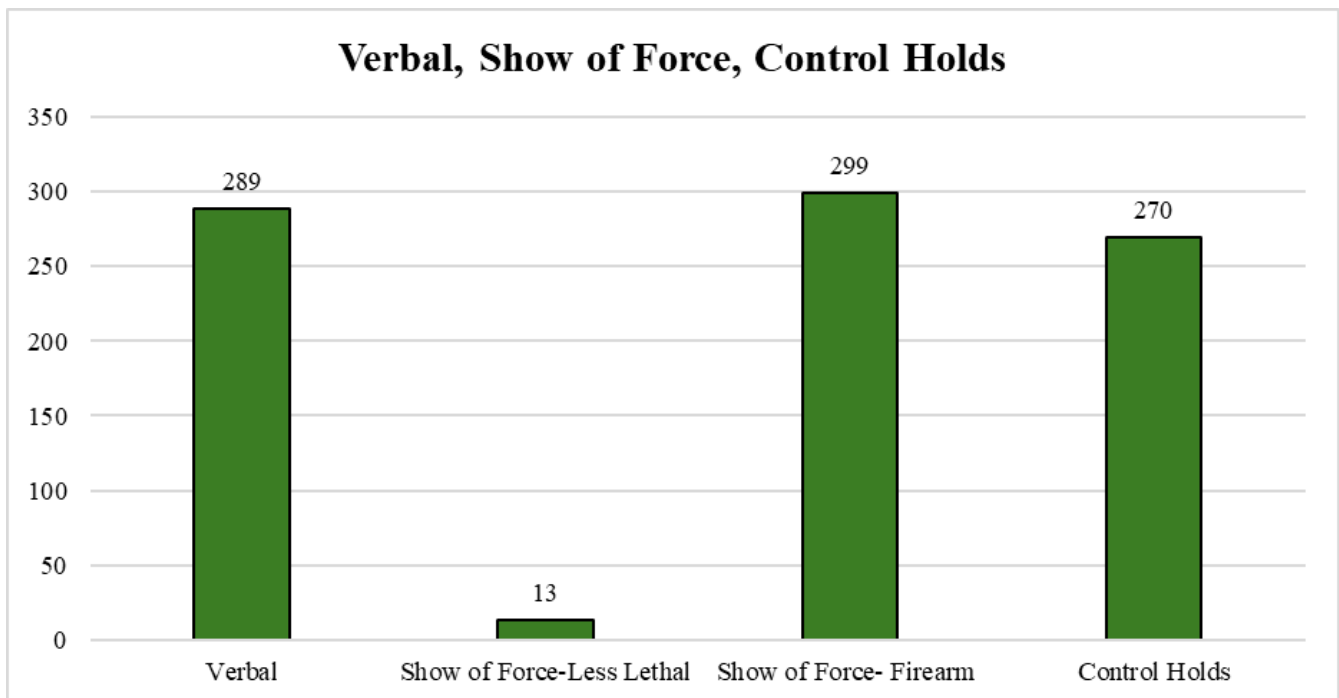
Use of Force: Less-Lethal Force Options Usage

In situations where a suspect is not actively resisting (requiring the need for immediate force to overcome their resistance), Deputy Sheriffs will speak with the suspect to attempt to gain voluntary compliance. Additionally, a show of force, along with a warning, can lead to a suspect not resisting but submitting to the arrest of a Deputy Sheriff. Successful verbal communication that leads to a suspect voluntarily complying without a Deputy Sheriff needing to use force is not counted as a use of force. The Kern County Sheriff's Office deputies frequently use control holds due to the lower possibility of injury as a result of this use of force.

The chart below shows when "Control Holds," "Verbal," "Show of Force - Less-Lethal" occurred between deputies and a suspect. Yet, a use of force was still necessary because the suspect continued to resist. A "Show of Force -Firearm" must be documented when a firearm is intentionally pointed at an individual, regardless of whether force was used or the individual was arrested.

In those incidents, deputies frequently issued commands when the suspect allowed them to de-escalate the situation and avoid using force. The chart below shows the results of attempts to gain compliance through communication, by displaying force, or by using a control hold. Each use of force is based on each incident, which can have multiple shows/uses of force. In total there are 562 incidents of force for 2024. There could be multiple shows or uses of force within these incidents. The following pages show this information across 3 charts.

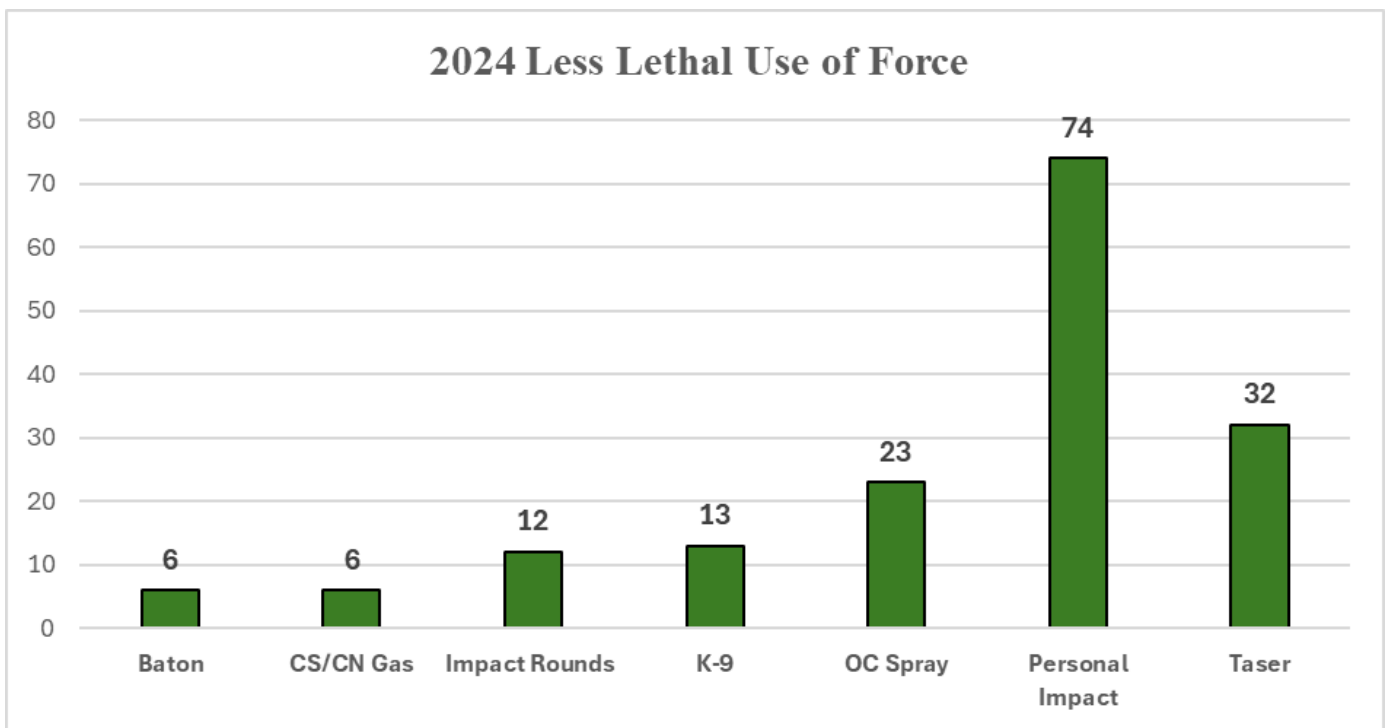
The chart below highlights 312 show of force incidents; 270 control holds, and 289 verbal commands given within incidents. This information demonstrates the effort made to avoid force and the Deputy Sheriffs' ability to communicate with suspects in high-stress situations, resulting in positive outcomes for both the suspect and Deputies.





Use of Force: Less-Lethal Force Options Usage

In incidents where a suspect still resisted a Deputy Sheriff's efforts to effect a detention or arrest, Deputy Sheriffs used force to gain compliance. The chart below shows the usage of less-lethal force options in 2024. The "Personal Impact" category includes strikes such as punches, kicks, or the use of body weight to overcome a suspect's resistance. Deputy Sheriffs most often used the CEW or "Personal Impact" categories to overcome resistance, compared to other less-lethal force options shown in this chart. Each category in the chart below may have been used in the same incident. Personal impact was the most common less lethal use of force, followed by taser, and then OC spray.

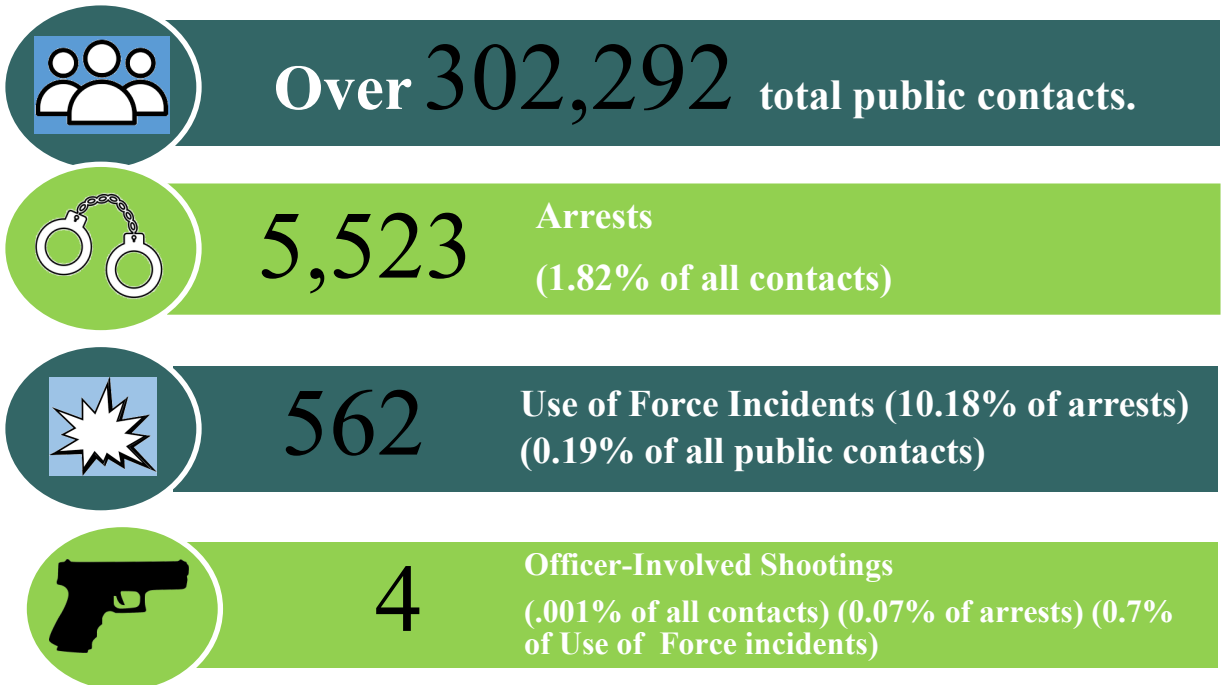


*Impact rounds are less-lethal rounds such as PepperBall, 40mm, and FN303 rounds. These are designed to be non-lethal rounds to gain compliance.



Use of Force: Operations Bureau

In 2024, the Kern County Sheriff's Office Deputy Sheriffs responded to 151,146 calls for service from victims and reporting parties. During these calls for service, Deputy Sheriffs contacted an average of two members of the public, totaling 302,292 public contacts for the year. As a result of these contacts, 5,523 arrests were made, and 562 use-of-force incidents occurred (4 of which were officer-involved shooting incidents). Those arrested do not include those cited and released, court remands, and court-ordered commitments.



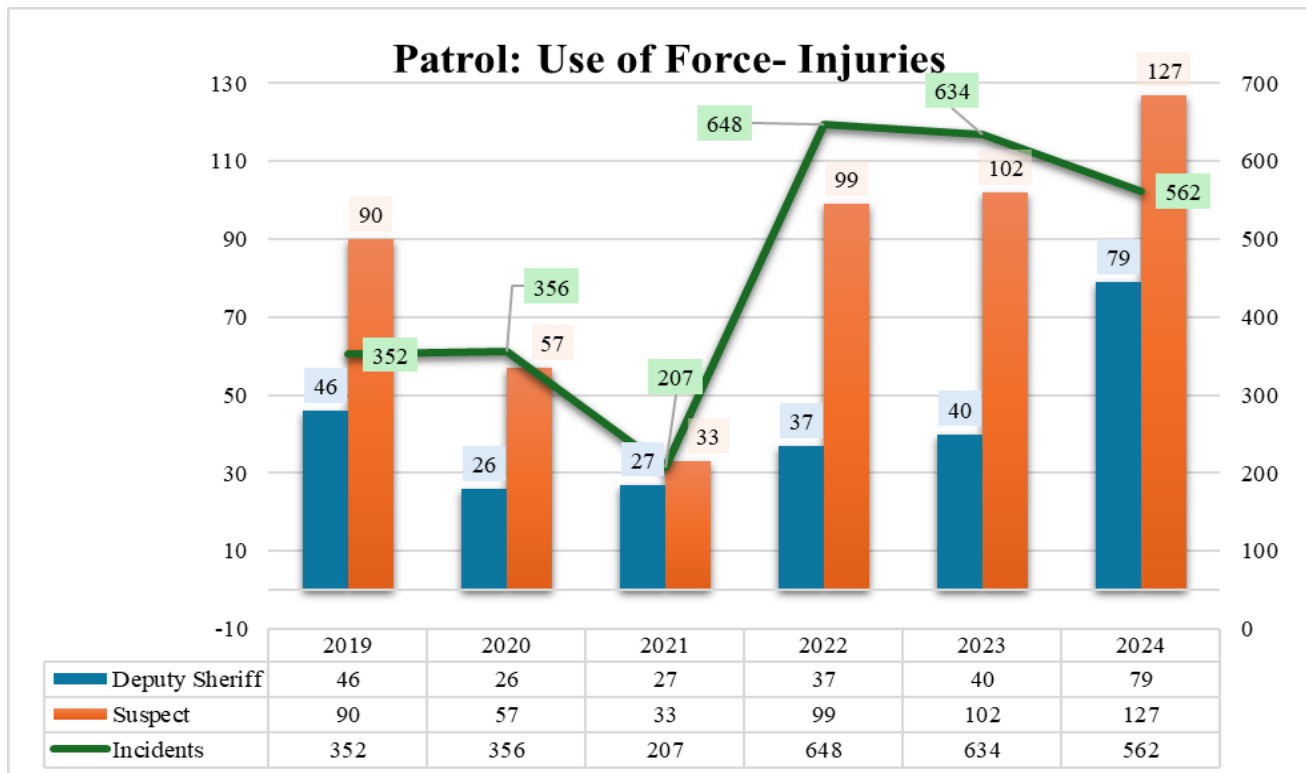


Use of Force: Injuries

Between 2019 and 2024, the Kern County Sheriff’s Office experienced notable fluctuations in both injuries and use-of-force incidents. From 2019 through 2021, the data shows a general decline. Deputy injuries dropped from 46 in 2019 to 26 in 2020 and remained low at 27 in 2021. Suspect injuries followed the same pattern, decreasing from 90 in 2019 to just 33 in 2021. During this same period, use-of-force incidents fell significantly from 352 to 207, marking 2021 as the lowest year across all three categories.

Beginning in 2022, however, the numbers showed an increase. Use-of-force incidents more than tripled from the prior year, jumping to 648. Suspect injuries also increased to 99, and deputy injuries increased to 37. The upward trend continued into 2023, when 634 use-of-force incidents were recorded along with 40 deputy and 102 suspect injuries. While the total number of incidents declined slightly in 2024 to 562, both deputy and suspect injuries climbed to their highest levels in the six-years—79 and 127, respectively.

These patterns suggest that although the total number of use-of-force incidents began to stabilize after 2022, each incident in recent years has become more likely to result in injuries to both deputies and suspects. The year 2024, in particular, saw an increase in injury severity even as the number of incidents declined. Overall, the data indicate that 2021 was the lowest year on record, while 2022 through 2024 saw a marked rise in both the frequency and intensity of force-related encounters.



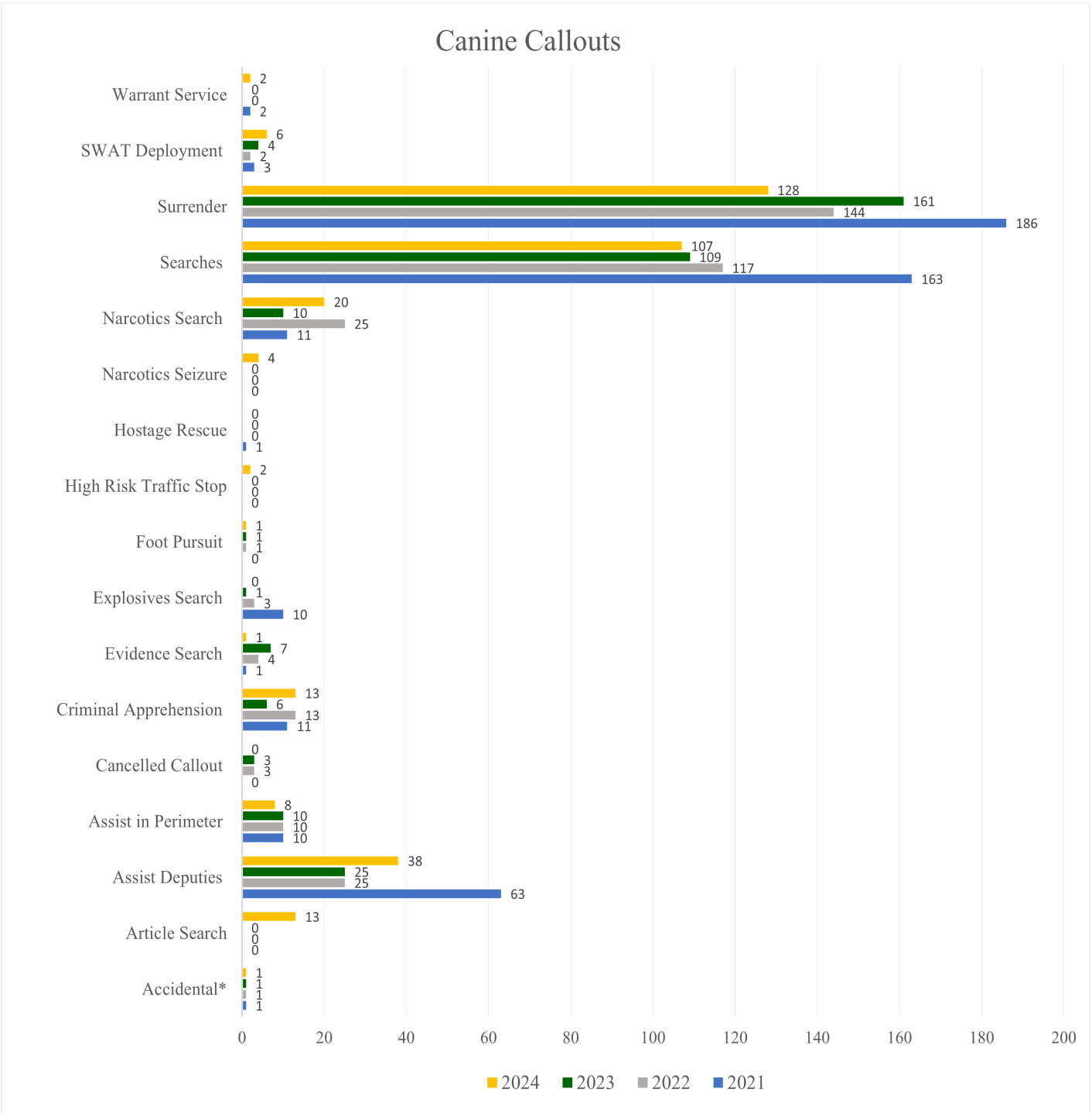
It is important to note that the data analysis method has changed over time. In earlier years, use-of-force-related injuries were recorded by incident—counting each event in which a suspect or a Deputy Sheriff was injured, rather than tracking the number of individuals involved. This approach was used for 2019, 2020, and 2021, as shown in the chart below.

Beginning in 2022, the tracking method was revised to document each suspect and each Deputy Sheriff injured during a use-of-force incident. In 2024, the data collection method was refined again to record injuries by each distinct use of force within an incident, providing a more detailed and accurate reflection of injury occurrences. As a result, the chart shows a decrease in the total number of use-of-force incidents, but an increase in injuries to both deputies and suspects between 2022 and 2023.



Use of Force: Canine Unit

Sheriff's Office Canine Unit responded to 4,520 calls for service and was involved in 344 deployments during 2024. Of the 344 deployments, 128 were incidents during which a suspect was located or confronted with a canine but surrendered without being apprehended by the canine. A canine physically apprehended or bit a suspect and used force on 13 occasions. The remaining 203 deployments did not involve any individuals.



*Canine accidentally apprehended a member of the public in 2021, and a KCSO staff member in 2022-2024. The three accidental bites of KCSO staff were a result of deputy error and not the handler/canine error.



Use of Force: Canine Unit



Viktor



Rocky



Kajo



Rico



Duke



Turbo

Understanding how police canine deployments typically unfold helps provide perspective on bite incidents versus non-bite outcomes. While there are no official government-published “bite-to-deploy” averages* for California or the U.S., independent reporting from the K9 Activity Tracking System (KATS) shows that of over 30,000 police dog arrests nationwide, only about **6.2%** resulted in a bite, meaning many deployments did not involve physical contact**. This aligns with guidance from TacticalK9USA, which suggests that a bite ratio under roughly **30%** is a reasonable benchmark for a well-controlled canine unit, reflecting the goal of most deployments to successfully locate, control, or deter a suspect without requiring a bite***. The Kern County Sheriff’s Office reports a bite-to-deploy ratio of **3.8%**, meaning that only a small fraction of canine deployments result in an actual bite in 2024. This low ratio reflects the department’s emphasis on controlled, professional use of its K-9 units to safely locate or detain suspects without unnecessary physical contact.



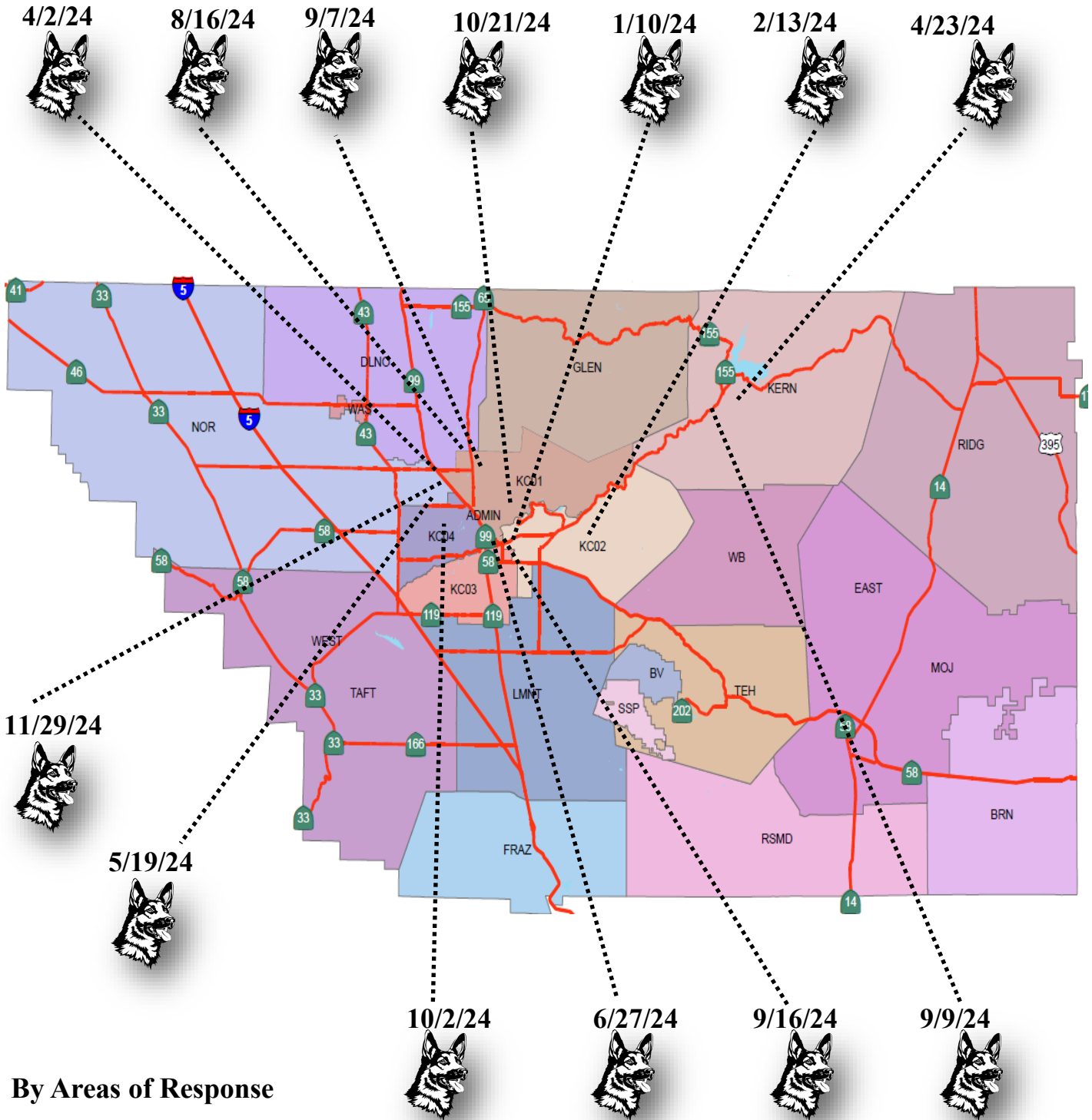
*Bite ratios are calculated by the number of canine use of force incidents involving a bite divided by the total number of canine deployments.

**K9 Activity Tracking System. (n.d.). California Bill AB742 | K9 Activity Tracking System Law Enforcement Software. <https://katsplatinum.com/california-bill-ab742>

***TacticalK9USA. (n.d.). Justified bite ratio. <https://www.tacticalk9usa.com/justified-bite-ratio/>



Use of Force: Canine Unit



By Areas of Response

- Metro—11
 - North Zone—2
 - East Zone—1
 - South Zone—2
 - West Zone—6

Kern Valley—2



Use of Force: Officer Involved Shootings

In 2024, there were four incidents in which deputies discharged their firearms at a person. All shooting incidents were found to be in compliance with the Sheriff’s Office policy, Federal, and California State law. The Kern County District Attorney’s Office also independently reviewed each incident. Critical incident videos and additional statistics are available online at <https://www.kernsheriff.org/Transparency>.

Suspect Weapon	No. of Incidents	Percentage
Handgun	0	0%
Rifle	1	25%
Officer’s Weapon	0	0%
Knife	0	0%
BB Gun/Air Rifle	2	50%
Attacked Officer	1	25%

Suspect Ethnicity	No. of Individuals	Percentage	County Population
Black	0	0%	6.3%
Hispanic	0	0%	56.8%
White	4	100%	30.4%
Other	0	0%	6.5%

75% OF SUSPECTS WERE ARMED WITH A FIREARM OR A DEADLY WEAPON

AB 1506 defines “Deadly weapon” as follows*:

“‘Deadly weapon’ includes, but is not limited to, any loaded weapon from which a shot, readily capable of producing death or other serious physical injury, may be discharged, or a switchblade knife, pilum, ballistic knife, metal knuckle knife, dagger, billy, blackjack, plastic knuckles, or metal knuckles.” (Gov. Code, § 12525.3, subd. (a)(1).) All firearms, and BB/pellet guns, even if unloaded or inoperable, are deadly weapons.

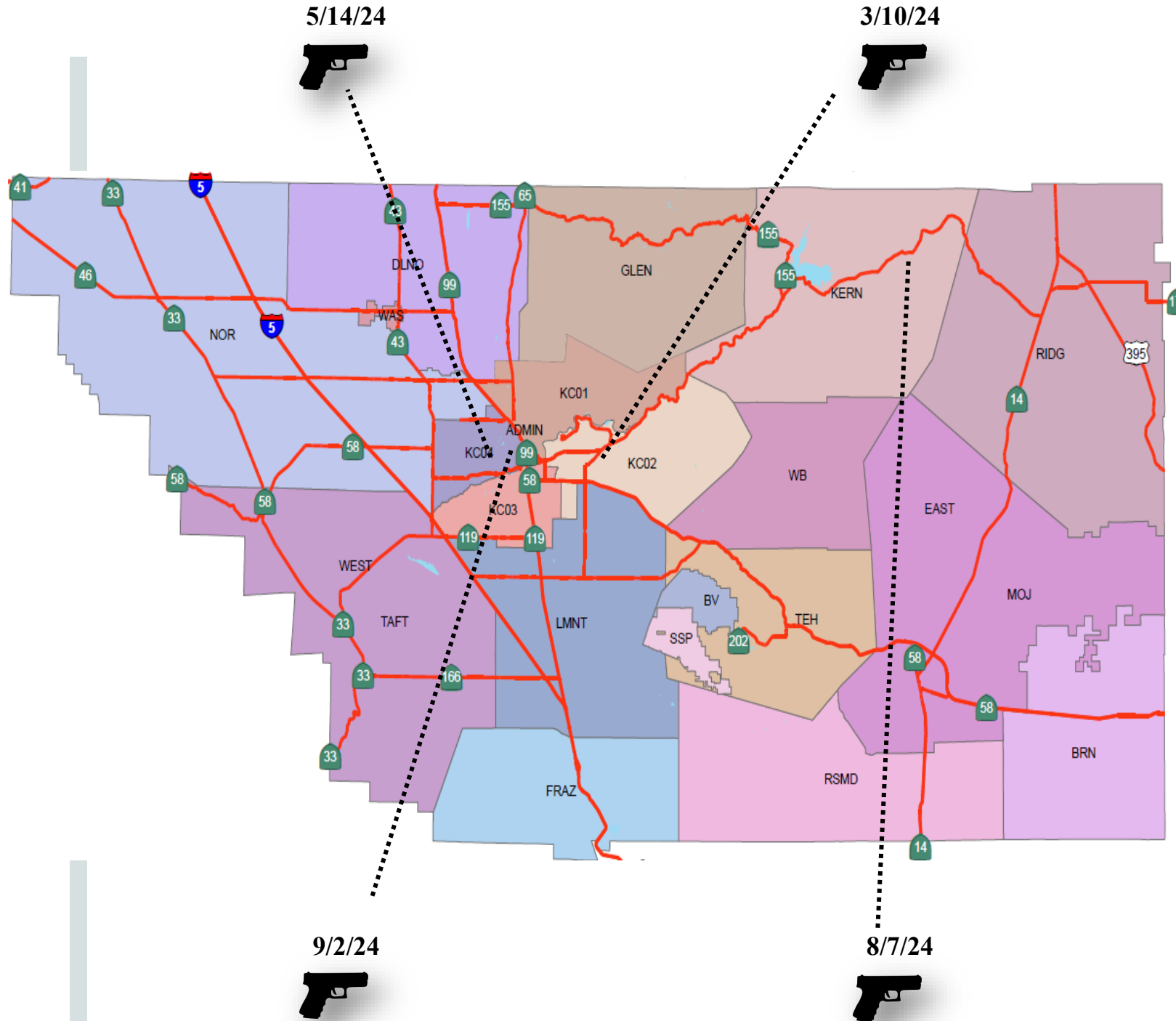
Objects that have a legitimate non-weapon purposes are considered deadly weapons only when, based on all the circumstances, they are actually being used in a manner likely to produce death or great bodily injury. The following are examples of objects that have been considered a deadly weapon when used in that manner: knives, box cutters, screwdrivers, bottles, chains, automobiles, rocks, razor blades, and iron bars.

Replica firearms are not considered deadly weapons unless they are used in some particular manner likely to produce death or great bodily injury (e.g., as a bludgeon).

*<https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/2021-dle-03.pdf>



Use of Force: Officer Involved Shootings



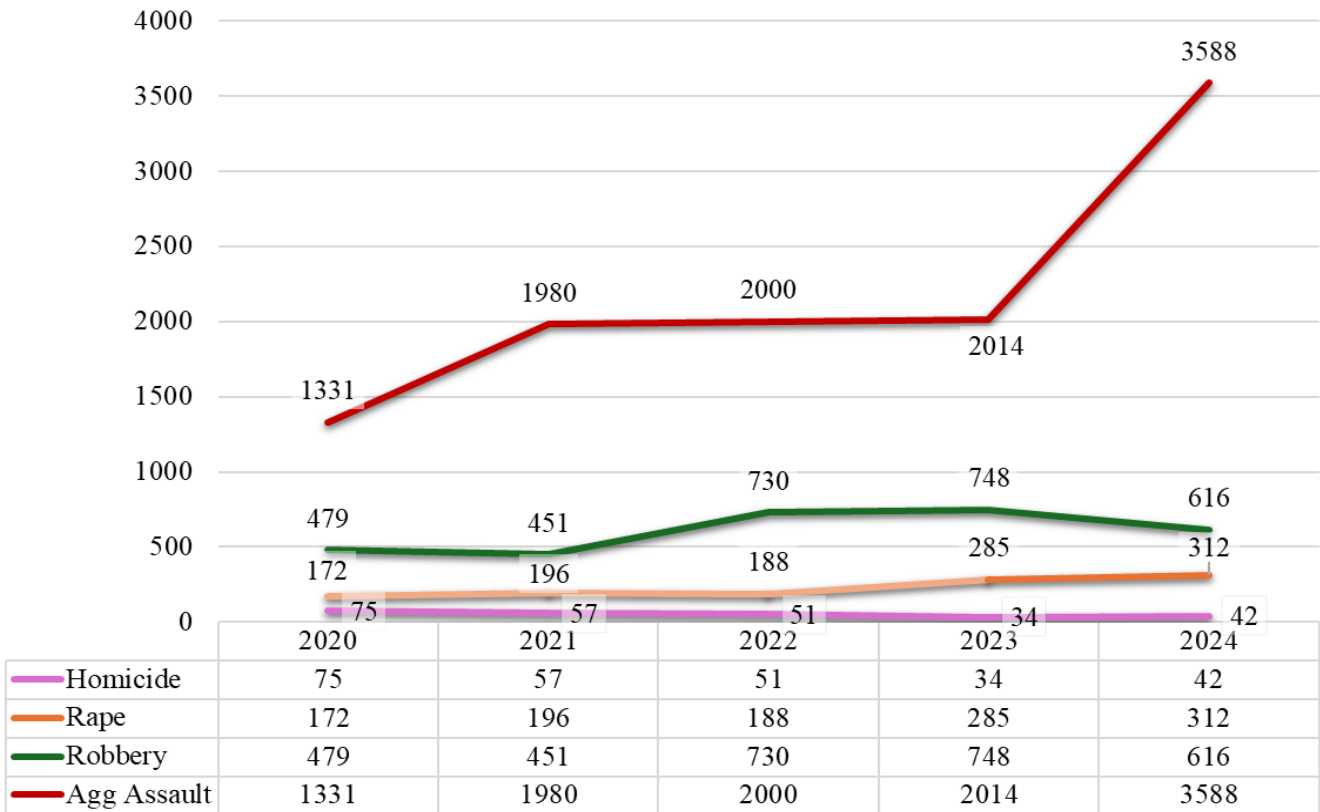


Violent Crime

In 2024, there were a total of 4,558 violent crimes reported in the Kern County Sheriff's Office's jurisdiction, which accounted for an increase of 1,477 more violent crime occurrences, compared to 3,081 in 2023. Of 4,558 violent crimes, 4,246 suspects and 4,398 victims were identified.

Homicides declined steadily from 2020 through 2023 before increasing in 2024, indicating a recent reversal after several years of improvement. Reported rapes have risen consistently over the five-year period, with notable increases beginning in 2023 and continuing into 2024. Robberies surged in 2022 and 2023 but declined in 2024, suggesting possible stabilization or shifts in enforcement or offender behavior. Aggravated assaults increased gradually through 2023 and then spiked sharply in 2024, driving the majority of the overall rise in violent crime. In 2024, "Kern County has higher rates of violent crime, property crime, and arrest rates (felony and misdemeanor) compared to the statewide average.*"

Violent Crime



Kern County Sheriff's Office Seized Firearms	
2020	928
2021	1,027
2022	1,012
2023	1,357
2024	1,357

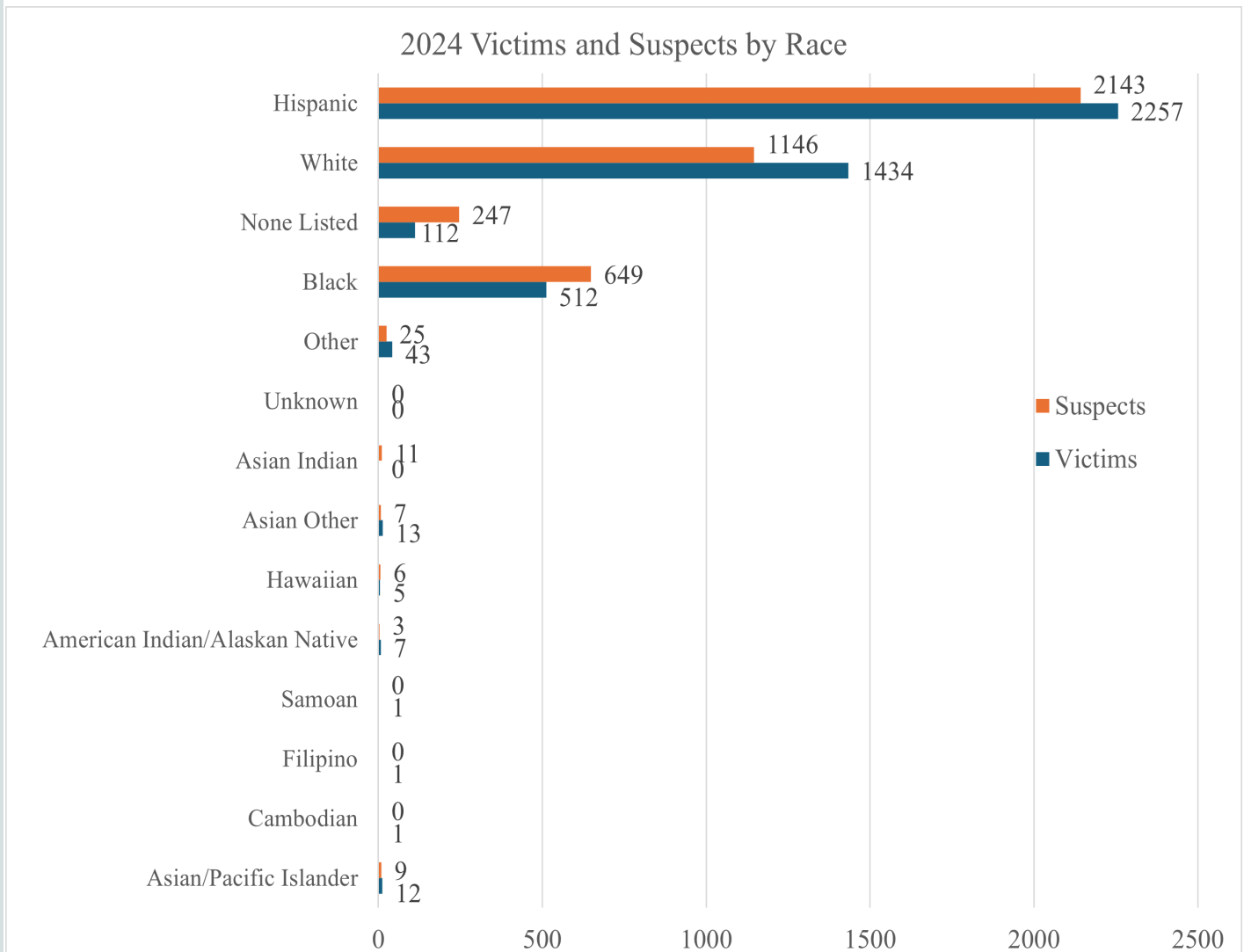
The Kern County Sheriff's Office seized 1,357 firearms in both 2023 and 2024, maintaining the highest annual total in the five years. This stability follows a gradual increase from 928 firearms seized in 2020 to over 1,000 in both 2021 and 2022, suggesting continued proactive enforcement and investigative efforts targeting illegal firearm possession and related criminal activity.

*<https://www.gov.ca.gov/2024/05/16/enforcement-efforts-result-in-crime-reduction-in-the-central-valley/>



Crime Data

Overall, the year-to-year comparison indicates not only an increase in the total number of victims and suspects but also consistency in demographic distribution, with Hispanic and White populations remaining the most frequently represented. This is consistent with RIPA data previously discussed. A comparative review of 2023 and 2024 data reveals a measurable increase in both victims and suspects across all racial categories. In 2023, a total of 3,098 victims and 2,630 suspects were recorded. By 2024, those totals had risen to 3,712 victims and 3,008 suspects, reflecting an overall upward trend in reported incidents or case volume. In both years, Hispanic and White individuals represented the most significant proportions among both victims and suspects. In 2023, Hispanic individuals accounted for 1,601 victims and 1,391 suspects, followed by White individuals with 928 victims and 692 suspects. This pattern continued in 2024, with Hispanics and Whites again comprising the majority of both groups. Black individuals represented the third-largest demographic, increasing from 226 victims and 324 suspects in 2023 to 512 victims and 649 suspects in 2024. Other racial groups, including Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, and others, accounted for comparatively smaller numbers in both years.





Detentions Bureau

The Kern County Sheriff's Office has a legal obligation to manage the needs of people incarcerated within the Kern County Jail System. The Kern County Sheriff's Office operates a system of professionally staffed detention facilities designed to manage the complex process of providing for each of those needs. The Kern County Jail accepts approximately 46,000 new arrests annually. Each arrestee must be processed into a limited system of jail beds (just over 2,800).

The Detentions Bureau is responsible for providing a variety of services within the scope of jail and court security. Foundational duties within the Detentions Bureau include jail security, court security, inmate processing, inmate transportation, and inmate classification. Other functional responsibilities include maintaining the welfare of those incarcerated (medical & mental health treatment, education, support services, and recreation). These obligations are managed by approximately 600 dedicated employees within the Detentions Bureau.

The Lerdo Facilities Division is comprised of the following Sections: Pre-Trial Facility, Justice Facility, Maximum-Medium Facility, Minimum Facility, Compliance Section, Population Management Section, and Inmate Services Section. The Downtown Services Division is comprised of the following Sections: Central Receiving Facility, Court Services Section, and the Virtual Jail Section. The Virtual Jail was conceived as a mechanism to offset the growing number of people entering the local jail system. The Virtual Jail offers several alternatives to conventional incarceration, including Electronic Monitoring, Sheriff's Parole, and Work Release.

The Kern County Sheriff's Office currently partners with the State of California to provide security for numerous Superior Court facilities. The Transportation Section provides logistical support for the many movements within the Detentions Bureau. In fact, the Transportation Section facilitates the movement of thousands of inmates monthly.

The Detentions Bureau works in partnership with our community to provide inmate labor and education and utilizes alternative programs to reintroduce inmates into our community. The goal is to significantly reduce the underlying causes that have historically contributed to recidivism.

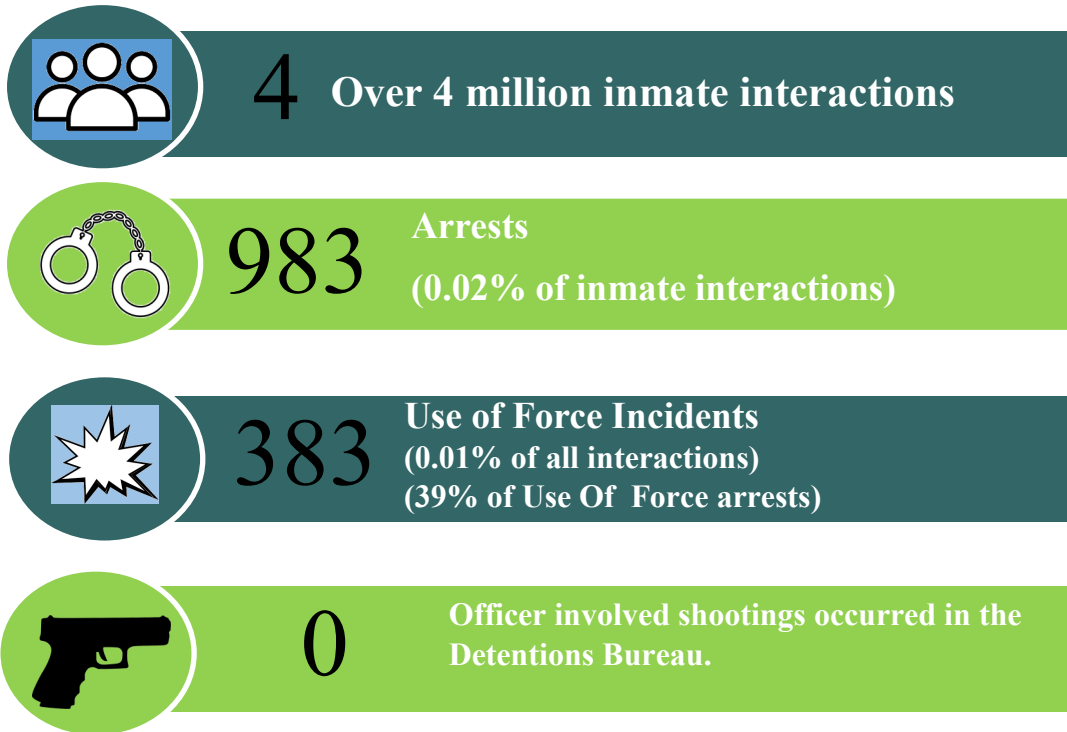
Members of the Detentions Bureau remain committed to providing the highest levels of service and professionalism. Our commitment to the community remains fundamentally grounded in the principles of service and duty. Those driving principles support the Kern County Sheriff's Office primary mission to enhance the quality of life for those in Kern County.





Use of Force: Detentions Bureau

It is important to note that the vast majority of staff interactions with individuals in custody do not result in the use of force. In 2024, the Kern County Sheriff's Office Detentions Bureau Personnel had over 4 million inmate interactions. During those contacts, 983 arrests were made, and 383 use-of-force incidents occurred (0 of which were OIS incidents).



In 2024, the average daily inmate population within Kern County detention facilities was 1,796, resulting in an annual average occupancy of 655,540 inmates. This reflects an increase from the 2023 daily average of 1,613 inmates, demonstrating continued high demand for detention operations. It is estimated that the Detentions Bureau engaged in approximately 4 million interactions with individuals in custody throughout the year; however, due to the continuous and complex nature of detention operations, it is not possible to determine an exact count of every interaction. These interactions include a wide range of routine and operational activities, such as booking procedures, meal distribution, daily counts, investigations, inmate movements, releases, and court transports, as well as public interactions managed by court bailiffs and guards.

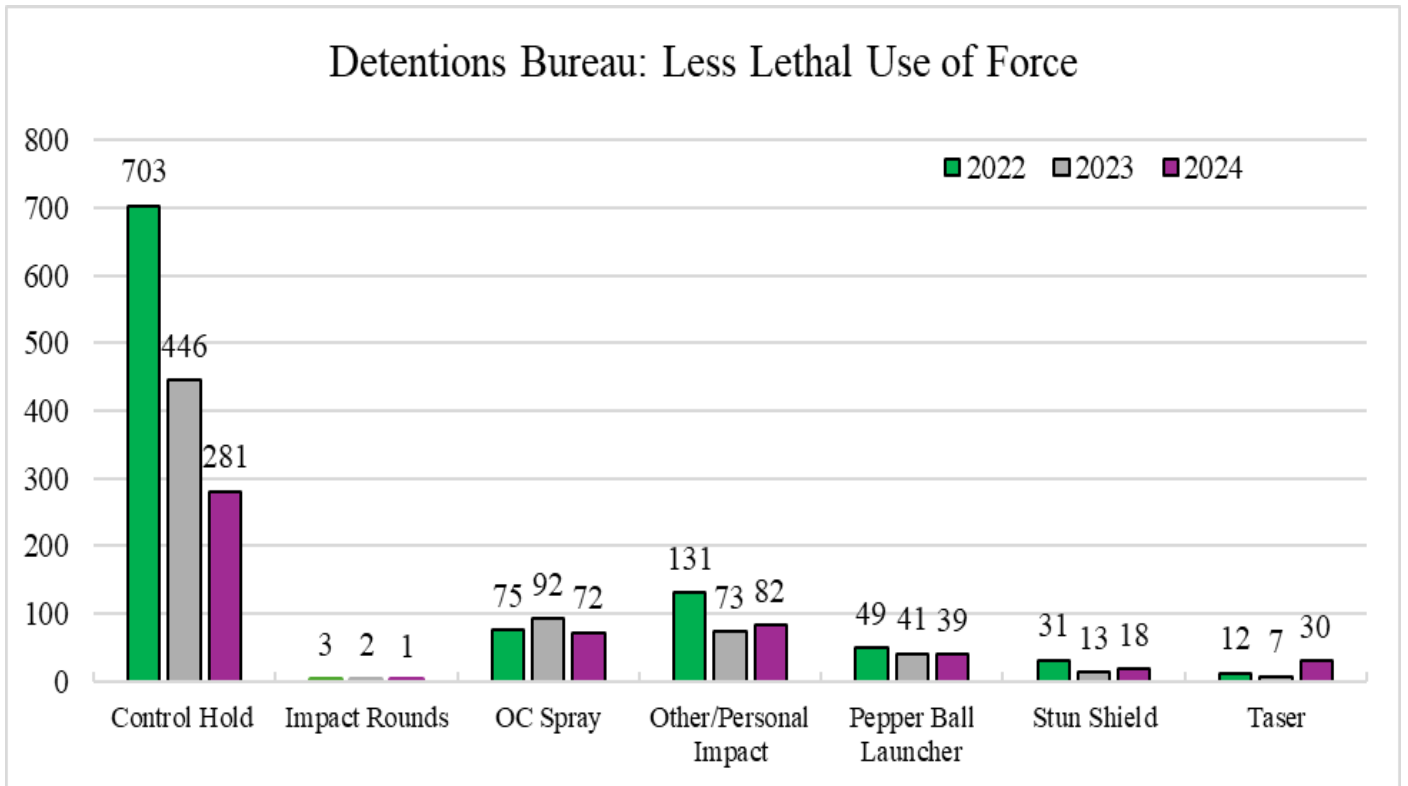


Use of Force: Detentions Bureau

The Detentions Bureau wrote 24,079 reports on incidents that occurred in detentions facilities in 2024, a decrease of 376 investigations from 2023. When an inmate resisted or assaulted detentions staff, despite feasible de-escalation attempts, a use-of-force incident occurred.

The chart below displays the use of less-lethal force by detentions deputies in 2024. “Other/Personal Impact” can include strikes such as a punch, a shove, and/or the use of body weight.

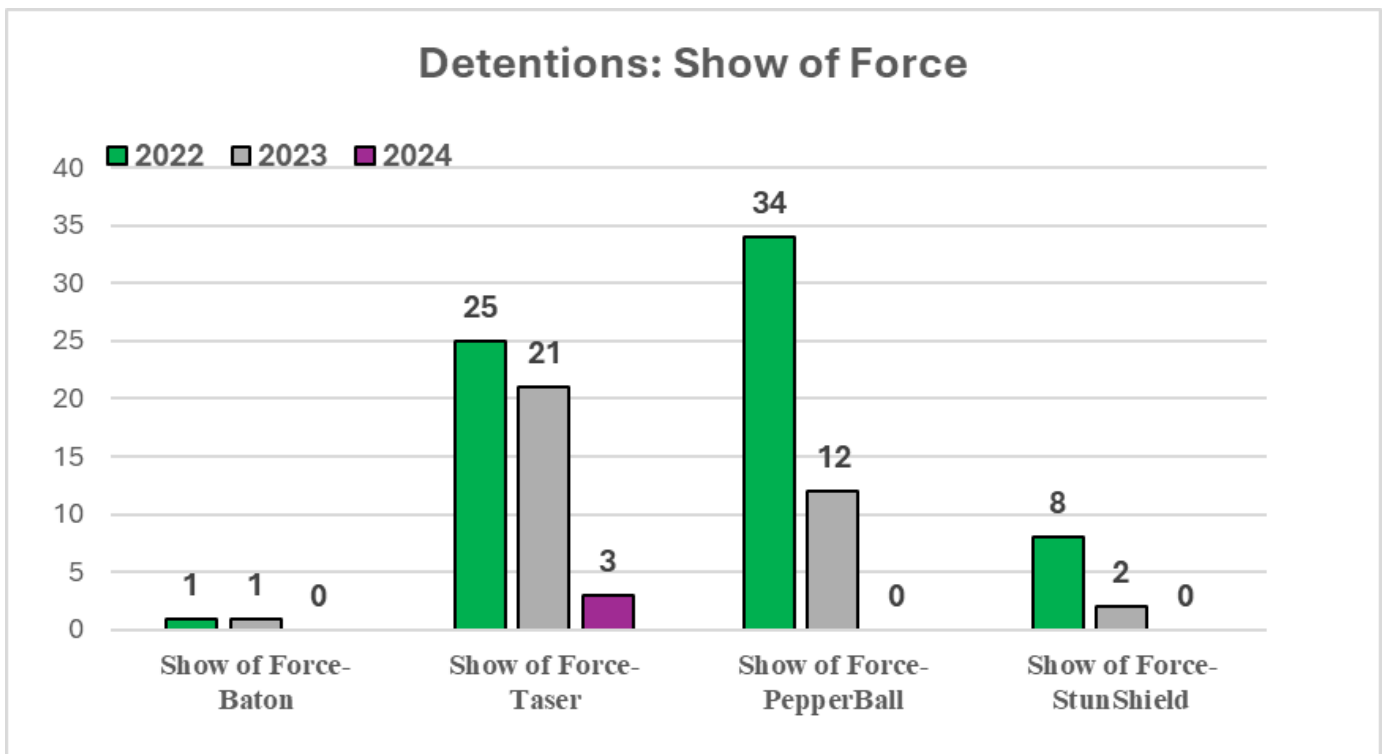
In 2024, a majority of less lethal use of force was by detentions deputies using control holds, followed by “Other/Personal Impact” and “OC Spray.”





Use of Force: Detentions Bureau

In 2022, the Kern County Sheriff's Office began documenting a show of force. The chart below displays the Detentions Bureau's "Show of Force" for 2022, 2023, and 2024. The most notable change between 2022 and 2024 was the overall decline in the show of force across all less-lethal force options, as expected, since the show of force other than a firearm was no longer tracked in 2024.

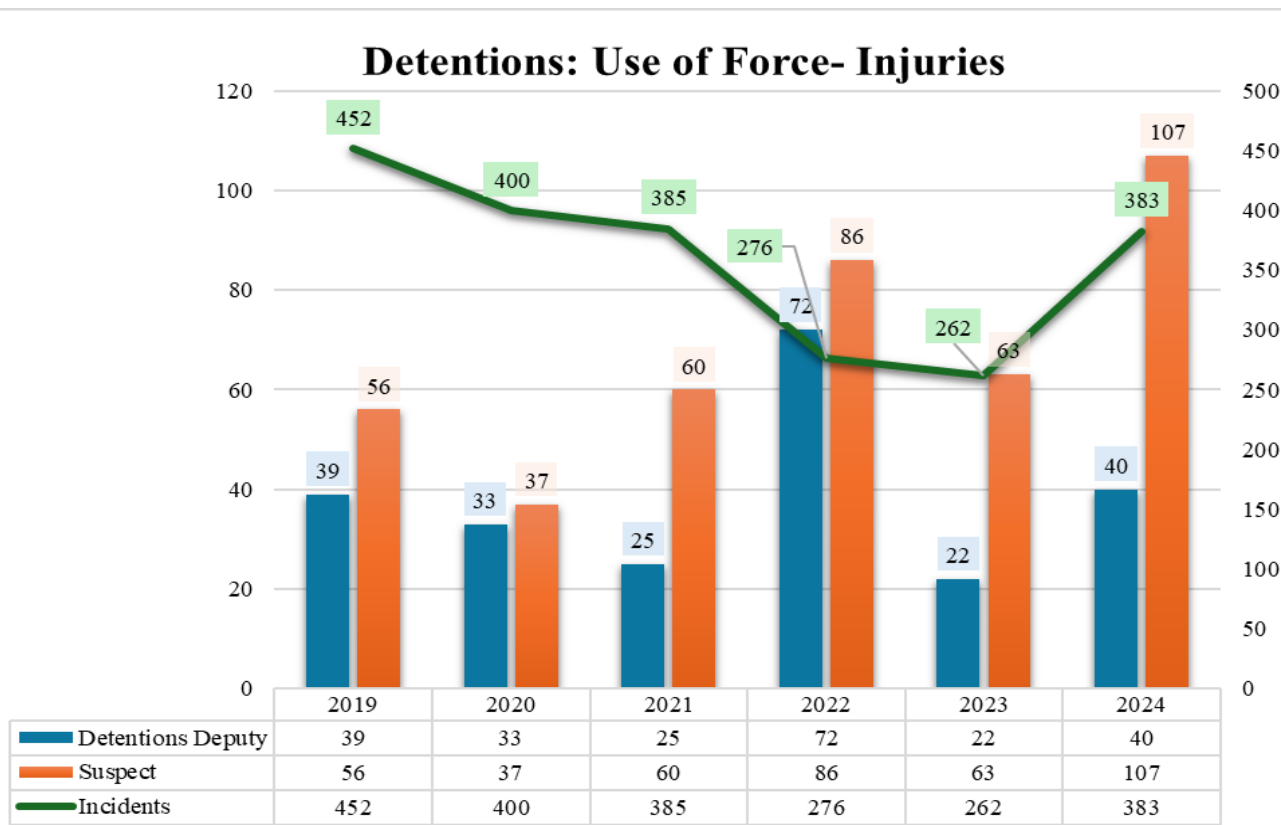




Use of Force: Detentions Injuries

The Kern County Sheriff’s Office works closely with Kern Medical and the various ambulance companies throughout Kern County to provide long-term and immediate care and treatment of individuals injured while in custody. When injuries are sustained due to the use of force, or they inform a Detentions Deputy of an injury, the individual will be examined on scene by medical personnel. For minor injuries, the individual will be moved to the infirmary for medical clearance. For more serious injuries, medical personnel will determine the safest mode of transportation to the hospital for treatment.

All use of force-related injuries is documented in an incident report. Each use of force is reviewed for compliance with policy and state law. For incidents found not to meet a law or policy standard, they are referred to the Internal Affairs Unit or the Professional Standards Unit for investigation. Suspect and Detentions Deputy injuries increased in 2022 due to how the Kern County Sheriff’s Office traces injuries. In previous years, injuries were tracked by the incident. In 2022, the Kern County Sheriff’s Office began tracking injuries by individual suspects and deputies.



The chart “Detentions: Use of Force—Injuries” (2019-2024) shows that total incidents (green line) declined steadily from 452 in 2019 to 262 in 2023, then rose sharply to 383 in 2024. The green line measures the number of **separate incidents**, counting each incident once regardless of how many actions it contained. **Deputy injuries** (blue bars) fluctuated— starting at 39, dropping to 25 in 2021, peaking at 72 in 2022, falling to 22 in 2023, and rising again to 40 in 2024. **Suspect injuries** (orange bars) varied similarly, beginning at 56, dipping in 2020, climbing to 86 in 2022, and reaching a six-year high of 107 in 2024. Overall, incidents declined through 2023 but rebounded in 2024, with both deputy and suspect injuries increasing, especially for suspects.



Inmate Resources

Inmate Stabilization and Assessment Team

The Inmate Stabilization and Assessment Team (I.S.A.T.) shall be proactive in rendering professional custodial and social services to the inmates at the Kern County Jails who are suffering from the most grievous mental, behavioral and intellectual disabilities.

Four Core Values

Empathy

Adaptability

Courage

Sprit of Volunteerism

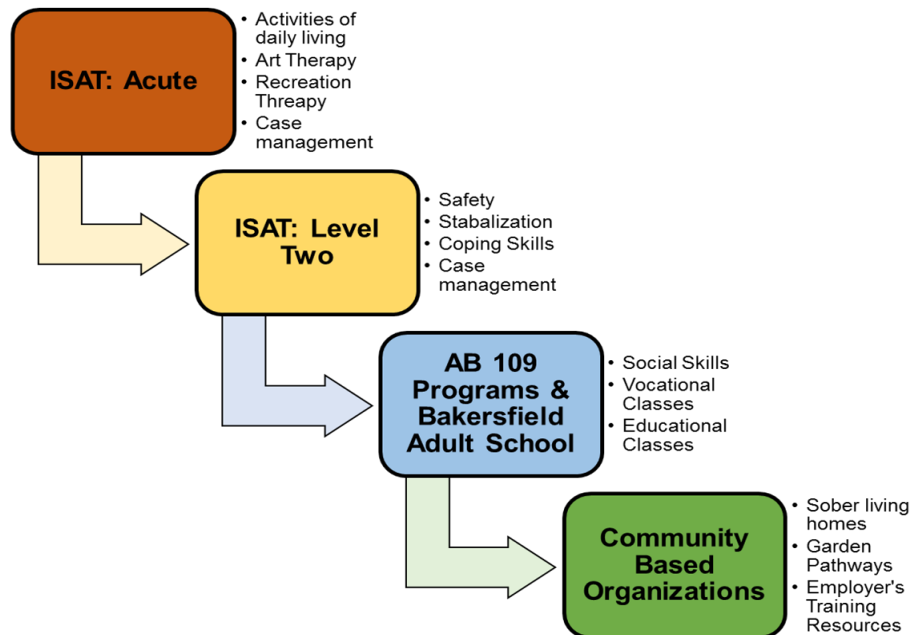
The program was started in October 2020 by a Detentions Senior Deputy as a response to inmate suicides. His Commander saw the benefit of the program and authorized its implementation. It is designed to be a team that coordinates between the Sheriff's Office, Correctional Behavioral Health, and Correctional Medicine. The program and staffing are expected to grow every year to include all facilities.

The team has focused on the following custodial concerns:

- ◆ Medication Compliance
- ◆ Managing the Direct Observation Unit.
- ◆ Cleaning Cells.
- ◆ Managing Suicide Watch Bed Space.
- ◆ Administrative Welfare Checks of Segregated Inmates.

The team has focused on the following programmatic concerns:

- ◆ Creating a Case-Management System.
- ◆ Targeted Interventions
- ◆ Creating a Caseload.
- ◆ Discharges
- ◆ Intake.
- ◆ Data Collection and Analysis
- ◆ Risk Assessments.



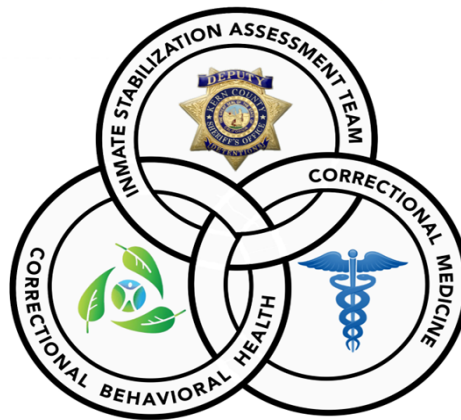


Inmate Resources

Inmate Stabilization and Assessment Team

Team Kern County Sheriff's Office

- Reduces Liability
- Compliance with DOJ Paragraph 93
- Positive Public Relations
- Cleaner and Safer Facilities
- Reduced UOF Incidents
- Training & Accountability
- Speedier Administration of Justice
- Increased Bed Space
- Facility Integrity
- Less Inmate Discipline



Team Correctional Behavioral Health

- Better Communication
- Easier Access to Clients
- More Follow-Through
- Medication Compliance
- Consistency
- More Accurate Referrals
- Compliance with Inmate Rights

Team Kern Medical

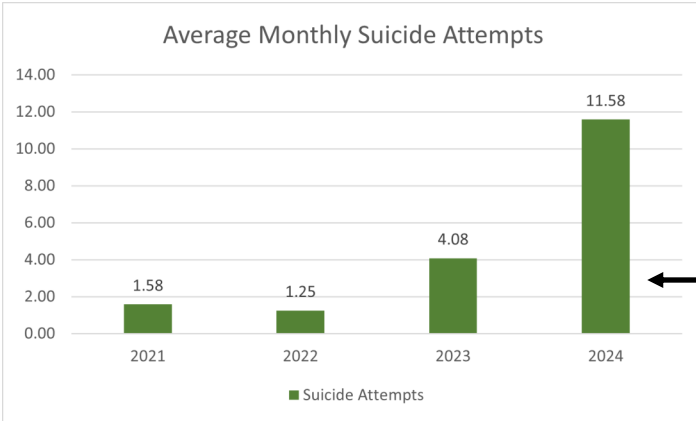
- Better Communication
- Stabilized Inmates are Easier to Treat
- Bed Space Management
- More Hygienic Inmates



Inmate Resources

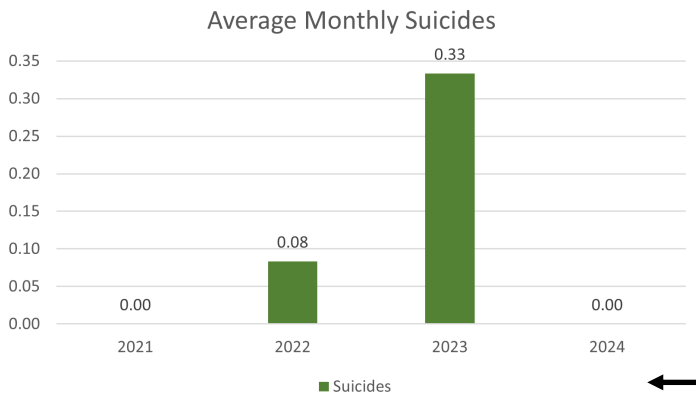
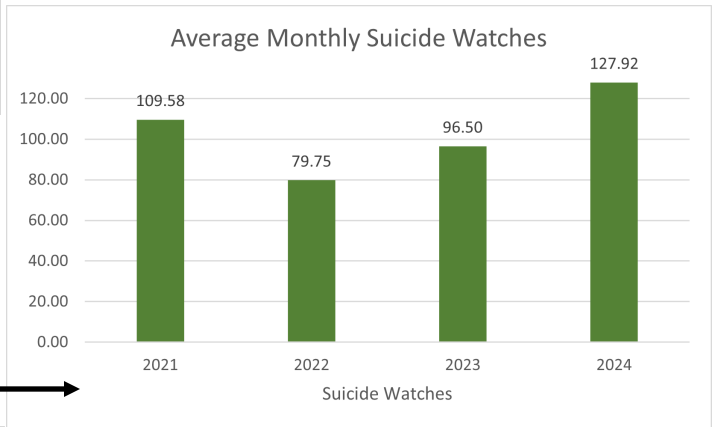
Inmate Stabilization and Assessment Team

KCSO defines a suicide attempt as: A non-fatal, self-directed, potentially injurious behavior with intent to die; suicide attempts might not result in injury. This includes behavior that would likely have resulted in death or serious injury had staff not intervened



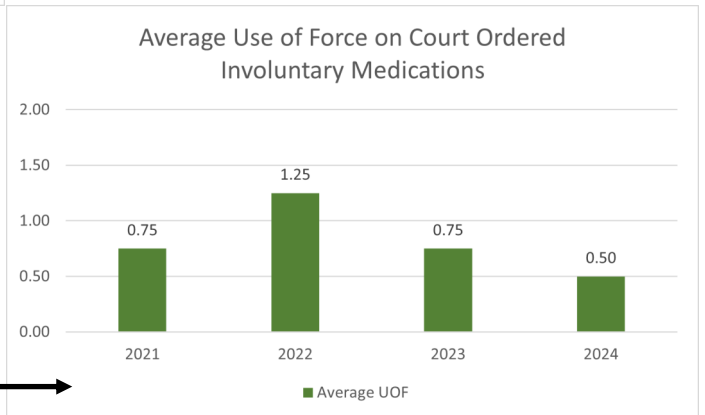
Suicide attempts show a marked rise over time from an average of 1–2 attempts per month in 2021–2022 to over 11 per month in 2024. The sharp increase suggests a significant escalation in mental health crises requiring immediate intervention and ongoing monitoring, underscoring the need for enhanced prevention and support measures.

The average monthly number of Suicide Watches increased notably from approximately 80 in 2022 to 128 in 2024, reaching the highest level in the four years. This upward trend indicates increased observation and intervention activity, reflecting a proactive response to behavioral health concerns within the facilities.



Completed suicide attempts remained low throughout the four years, with slight activity in 2022 (0.08 per month) and 2023 (0.33 per month), but none were reported in 2024. The absence of completed attempts in 2024, despite higher attempt rates, may indicate improved early intervention, staff vigilance, and access to crisis management resources.

Use of force during involuntary medication procedures peaked in 2022 (1.25 per month) before decreasing to 0.5 per month in 2024. The consistent reduction highlights progress in staff training and the application of crisis intervention methods that prioritize safety and minimize physical confrontation during medical administration.





Admission, Evaluation, and Stabilization (AES)

In 2018, the Kern County Sheriff's Office opened the Admission Evaluation and Stabilization (AES) Center inside the Lerdo Pre-Trial Facility. The AES Center is a 60-bed jail-based State Hospital program operated under the umbrella of the California Department of State Hospitals (DSH). Incarcerated persons who are found to be incompetent to stand trial by the court system are **admitted** to the State Hospital system, **evaluated** for needed treatment, and **stabilized** on medication (AES). Currently, 56 beds are occupied, with 69% of those in the program being Kern County inmates. The current restoration rate of Kern County inmates is 71%.

With the assistance of contracted mental health personnel, including psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and mental health technicians, incarcerated persons are evaluated for a variety of mental health issues. The AES Center provides a safe housing location and promotes evidence-based treatment plans that can be tailored to the incarcerated persons' needs. Detentions Deputies assist mental health professionals daily in identifying issues that enable appropriate treatment pathways to be identified and carried out safely.

Before the AES Center opened in 2018, Kern County incarcerated persons had to wait as long as 11 months from the time they were found incompetent to stand trial until they were admitted to a State Hospital for treatment. The wait time from being found incompetent to stand trial to admission to a State Hospital program is as short as 1-2 months. The Kern AES Center handles the most admissions and has the highest restored competency rates among jail-based competency programs (JBCTs) in the state.

Recovery Solutions operates the program on a contract basis with the Kern County Sheriff's Office, which provides law enforcement. The AES Center differs from other JBCTs in having an in-house medical team, including a medical doctor, nursing staff, and a psychiatric team. Recovery Solutions employs mental health technicians who stay in unit one, with a deputy, 24 hours a day. This allows a check for Inmates/Patients (I/Ps) in all units every 30 minutes or more frequently, as needed. Mental health technicians assist deputies with encouraging the I/Ps to care for themselves and clean their cells.

Once the I/P arrives, they are evaluated by medical staff and escorted to their new housing location. Upon arrival at the AES Center, a "stabilization unit" is used. All new arrivals start in this unit and remain there for at least 72 hours. AES also houses a small monolingual Spanish-speaking I/Ps population who participates with Recovery Solutions and KCSO staff. Some I/Ps that attend the program are subject to involuntary medication orders by the court, allowing medical staff to administer antipsychotic medication despite a patient refusing. Some I/Ps do not have an involuntary medication order but continue to take medicines of their choosing. The AES Center has also pursued new orders for involuntary medications through the courts, allowing them to medicate I/Ps who display a danger to themselves and others or a lack of capacity to make rational decisions.

The AES Center employs dedicated teachers for class activities and social workers for individual activities. During class time, between 10 and 16 I/Ps are together in the day room. They are instructed on various topics, including what will occur inside the courtroom, mental health and stress management, general wellness education, competency restoration, and various issues as needed, like coping skills.

Throughout their stay, I/Ps are evaluated by Recovery Solutions psychologists to return the I/Ps to court. If the I/P is deemed competent by Recovery Solutions staff, the I/P is transported back to their county of origin the next day to attend court. The AES program currently utilizes 4 Detention Deputies, 1 Detentions Senior Deputy, and 1 Detentions Sergeant. These deputies are all hired to work for the program by applying and going through an interview process.



Body Worn Cameras

The Body Worn Camera (BWC) Unit went live in September 2021. It took time for the department to train and learn, strengthening the Unit's foundation and expanding body-worn camera use throughout the Sheriff's Office. This unit is now staffed with one sergeant and eight Sheriff's Aides, who are trained to examine the footage with the experienced discernment of deputies. The Kern County Sheriff's Office currently deploys BWCs to all patrol deputies and is also in the process of issuing BWCs to all Detentions Deputies. These devices and their related software play a crucial role in streamlining data collection and evidence sharing. The effective management of the ever-growing repository of digital evidence is critical, given that these systems' overriding goal is to increase transparency while assisting the department and its personnel in performing their duties.



CAMERA DEPLOYMENT

In 2024, the Kern County Sheriff's Office deployed 1204 cameras across classifications, from deputies working at the Inmate Receiving Facility to command staff. Deputies assigned to patrol are provided with two BWCs to ensure they always have one in their possession while operating a patrol vehicle. The Sheriff's Office recorded **284,934** individual videos, totaling **48,960** hours of video.

EQUIPMENT

BWC equipment includes a body-mounted camera, a built-in microphone, and a separate handheld viewing device. The BWC is worn facing forward on the outside of the uniform. The BWC recordings are stored digitally on the camera's internal memory and can be viewed immediately on department-issued smartphones or, once uploaded, on any tablet or computer. The recordings cannot be manipulated, altered, or deleted. Before usage and deployment in the field, department personnel assigned a BWC must complete the department's training on proper use, maintenance, and activation criteria. Supervisors are required to ensure that subordinates adhere to department BWC policy and procedures by providing the necessary guidance, training, and compliance with both mandatory and proactive implementation standards.



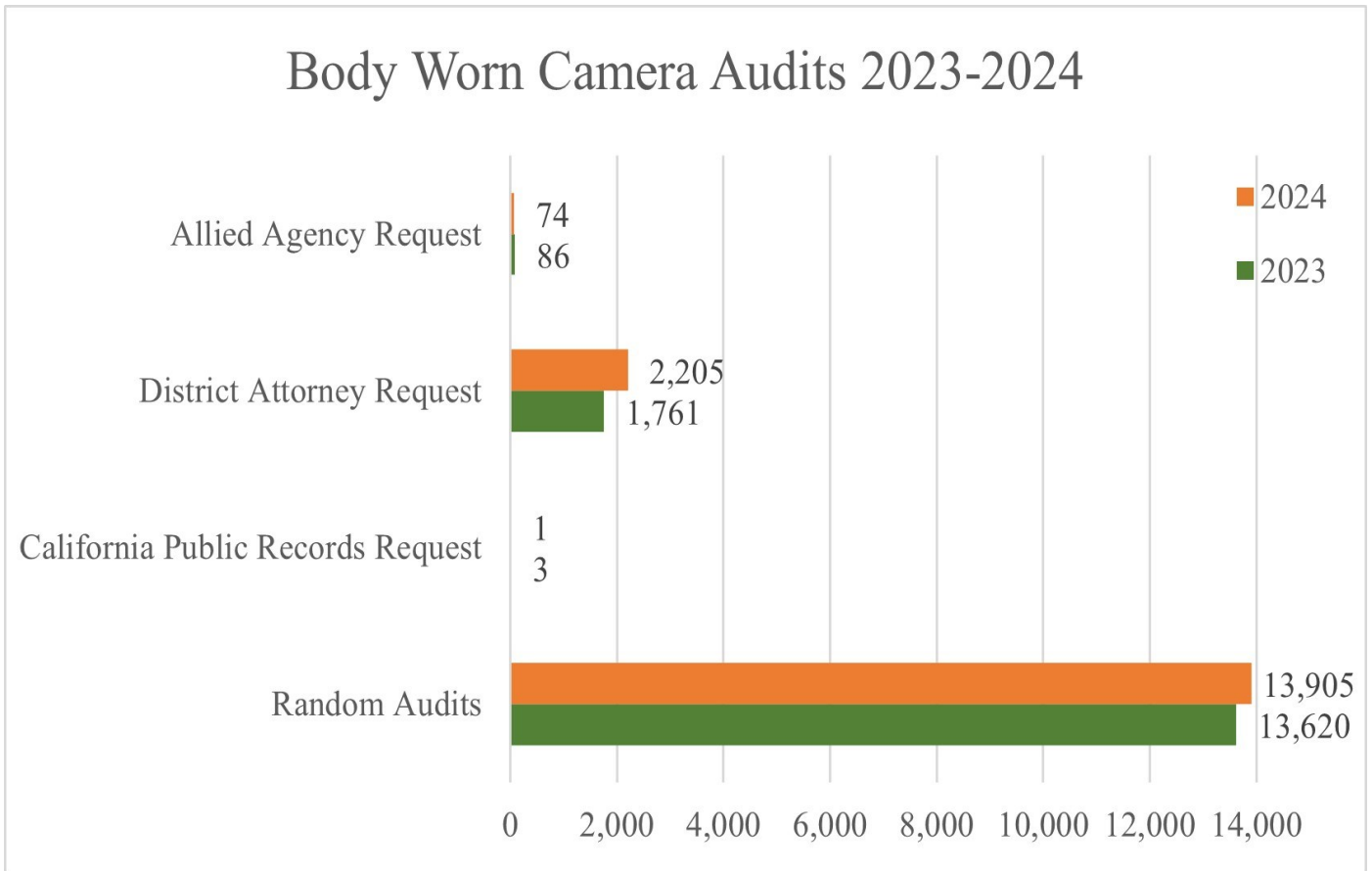


Body Worn Camera Audits

The department's goal is to utilize these platforms to enhance accountability, deter criminal activity and uncooperative behavior, assist in resolving personnel complaints, and provide information for officer training and improvement. In addition, these platforms have facilitated the department's initiative to release video recordings as part of the critical incident video release, thereby enhancing transparency and building public trust.

The BWC Unit was created to examine BWC footage. The BWC staff is also responsible for completing randomized audits and redactions and providing BWC footage to allied agencies and the District Attorney's Office upon request.

Body Worn Camera Unit 2024 Overview	Number
Random Audits	13,905
California Public Records Request	1
District Attorney Request	2,205
Allied Agency Request	74





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