



Kern County Sheriff's Office

★
2025
Annual Report



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Message from the Sheriff

As your Sheriff, I remain committed to prioritizing community policing to ensure the delivery of effective and reliable law enforcement services to the residents and visitors of Kern County. Community policing is more than a strategy; it is a defining principle of our identity as a professional public safety organization. At the Kern County Sheriff's Office, we empower our personnel to serve as dedicated problem solvers. They identify concerns, determine underlying causes, develop and implement appropriate action plans, and evaluate the effectiveness of their responses. This philosophy guides every level of our organization as we serve the community with professionalism and integrity. Through continued collaboration and engagement with the public, we move closer to fulfilling our mission. Your participation as community members and stakeholders remains vital in helping us recognize and address the challenges we face together.

Each year, the Sheriff's Office expands its outreach through prioritized community programs, including Sheriff's Office tours, National Night Out, the Community Advisory Council (CAC), and various events held throughout Kern County.

In 2024, the Sheriff's Office initiated comprehensive efforts to address recruitment and retention challenges. We later recognized that these challenges were part of a broader, nationwide trend. In 2025, we continued to focus on rebuilding our department through recruitment and retention initiatives. These efforts have shown clear results, reflected in our increased visibility at community events, career fairs, and local schools. These continued efforts have strengthened our staffing levels and renewed community interest in careers in law enforcement.

Our youth outreach programs have also grown significantly and will continue to grow, enabling more young people to engage with our organization and benefit from mentorship opportunities. Our Kern Valley and Lamont Sheriff's Activities Leagues (SAL) are intended to reopen in the near future.

The Sheriff's Office has also made considerable progress in modernizing equipment and facilities to enhance the services we provide. The newly constructed Taft Substation and Rosamond Substation are now fully operational and serving the public. The Tejon substation is currently being constructed and is set to be operational for servicing the public in 2026. Additionally, our Small Unmanned Aircraft System (drone) Team has expanded its staff and equipment capabilities, improving safety and operational effectiveness for both the community and our personnel.

In 2025, the Sheriff's Office continued to make meaningful progress toward meeting the goals established in the Stipulated Judgment. We expanded data collection and review processes, enhanced supervisory oversight, and updated key policies related to bias-free policing, use of force, and internal investigations. In September, we launched our new Axon Records Management System. This new records management system enhances our ability to gather quicker data related to crime trends and personnel behavior trends. Our commitment to transparency and to maintaining the highest standards of public trust and professional integrity remains unwavering.

Throughout 2025, we continued to prioritize efforts to strengthen transparency, build public trust, and enhance public safety through active collaboration with the community.

In 2026, the Sheriff's Office will continue to invest in the community, embrace innovation, and work in partnership with the residents of Kern County to advance public safety. Through continued engagement and shared responsibility, we aim to make our communities safer and more resilient.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to every member of the Sheriff's Office for your dedication, professionalism, and steadfast commitment to service. Your partnership with the community has made a meaningful and lasting impact on those we protect. Thank you for your continued service and dedication.

Your Sheriff,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "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.

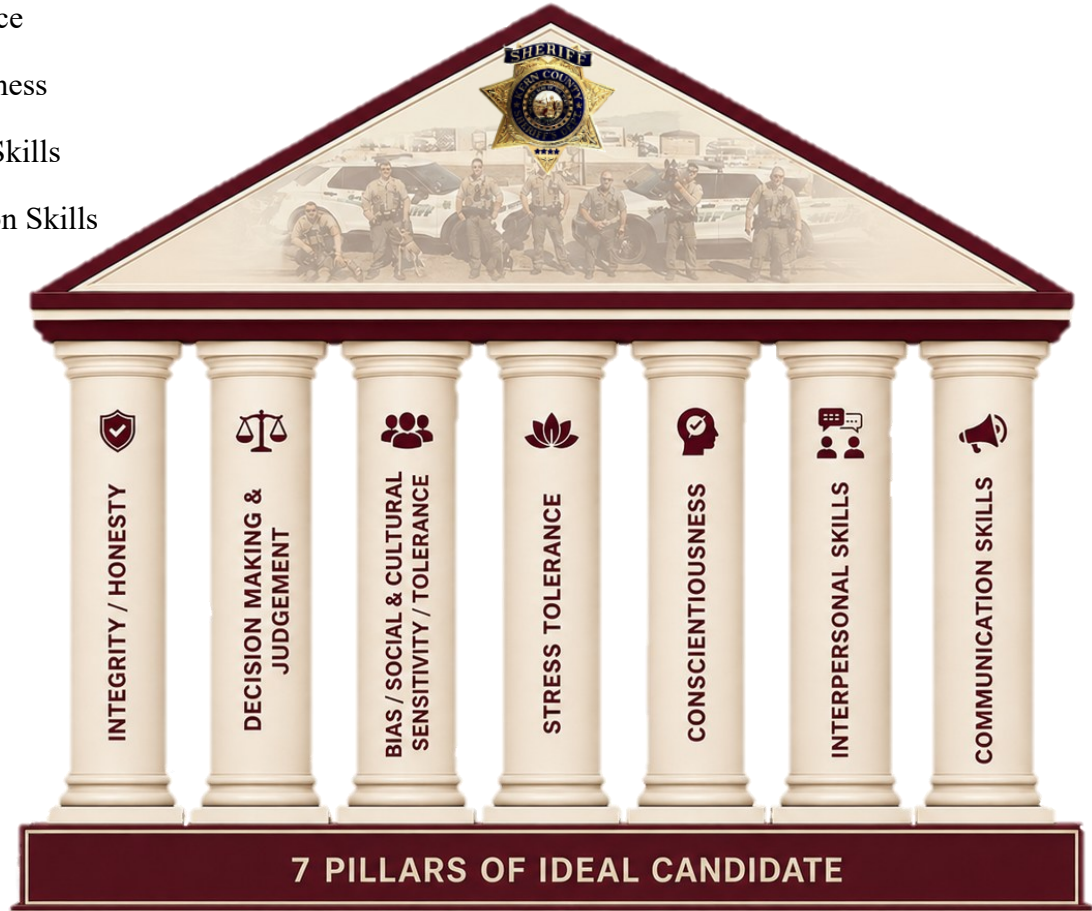


The Ideal Candidate Profile

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 that 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.

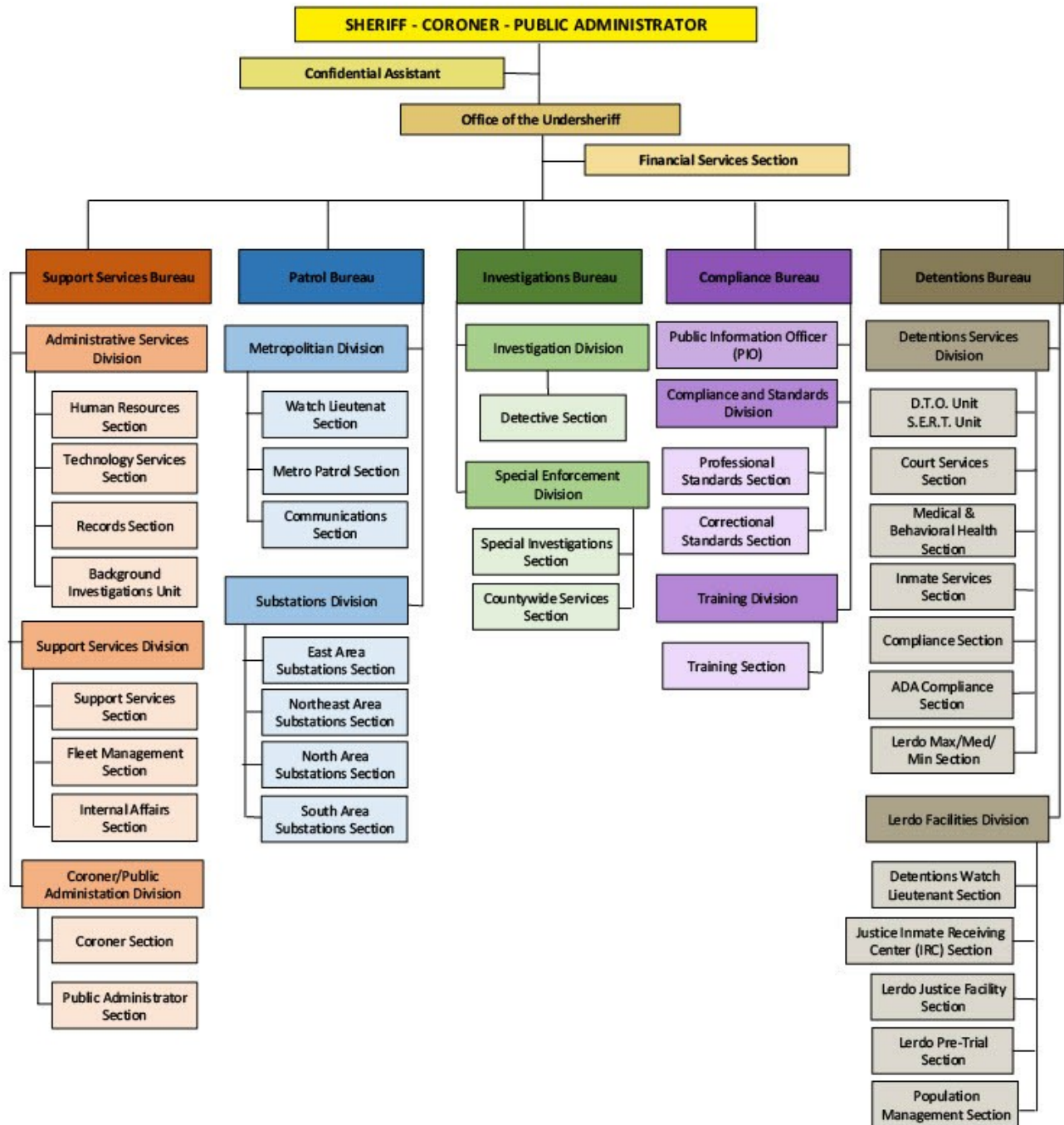
The Kern County Sheriff's Office is organized and exists to facilitate compliance with the lawfully prescribed duties of the Sheriff-Coroner. Such duties include the preservation of the peace, arrest of offenders, investigation and suppression of public offenses, maintenance of the jail system, endorsement 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 Sheriff's Office is further organized into five bureaus: the Support Services Bureau, the Patrol Bureau, the Compliance Bureau, the Investigations Bureau, and the Detentions Bureau. Each of these bureaus is managed by a Chief Deputy, who employs commanders to oversee each division and lieutenants to manage different sections within each division.





Organizational Chart





Agency Expansion

Patrol Bureau

2025 was a significant year for KCSO facility improvements, with two new substations opening (Rosamond and Taft) and a major countywide Property and Evidence Facility coming online. These projects were designed to improve public access, deputy operations, response capabilities, and long-term infrastructure across Kern County.

KCSO opened a new substation in Rosamond in April 2025. This facility restored a permanent Sheriff's Office substation in the community after previous closures and temporary relocations. This new facility enhances the Sheriff's Office's ability to serve the residents of Rosamond and the surrounding areas by providing a local point of contact for law enforcement services. Rosamond serves more than 20,000 residents and is an important service area near Edwards Air Force Base and the Antelope Valley. The opening of the Rosamond Substation reflects our continued commitment to improving public safety and community partnerships throughout Kern County.



KCSO opened a new substation in Taft and hosted a community open house in October 2025. This new facility enhances the Sheriff's Office's ability to serve the residents of Taft and the surrounding areas by providing a local point of contact for law enforcement services.

The facility includes deputy workspaces, briefing rooms, a public service counter, and meeting space for community engagement. The substation supports law-enforcement services across a large rural area of western Kern County, including Taft, Maricopa, McKittrick, Fellows, and surrounding communities.





Agency Expansion

Support Services Bureau

In September 2025, one of KCSO's largest infrastructure projects was the successful opening of a new Property and Evidence Facility located at 34970 McMurtrey Avenue, Bakersfield. The state-of-the-art warehouse replaced the aging property room and provides expanded storage, upgraded technology, and improved evidence management capabilities. The project represents a major investment in countywide law-enforcement infrastructure and improves KCSO's ability to manage evidence for criminal investigations and court proceedings.



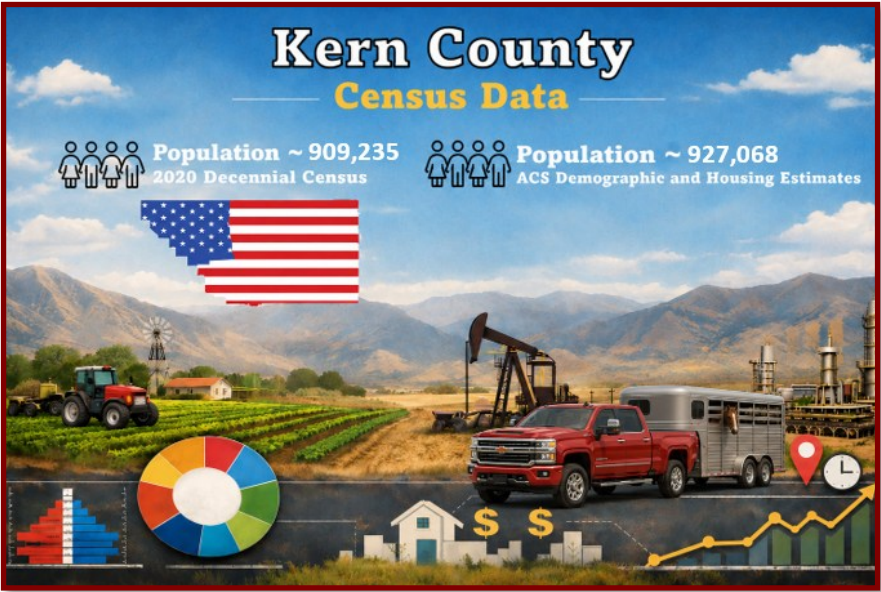


Kern County and KCSO Demographics

According to the United States Census Bureau, the population of Kern County was approximately 927,068 residents living in an area of 8,163 square miles. 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 (2025 is not available as of December 31, 2025), 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 years***. 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.

The Kern County population total and the percentages below are from the ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates, 2024: ACS 1-Year Estimates Data Profiles **. As of December 31, 2025, ACS has not uploaded data for 2025.



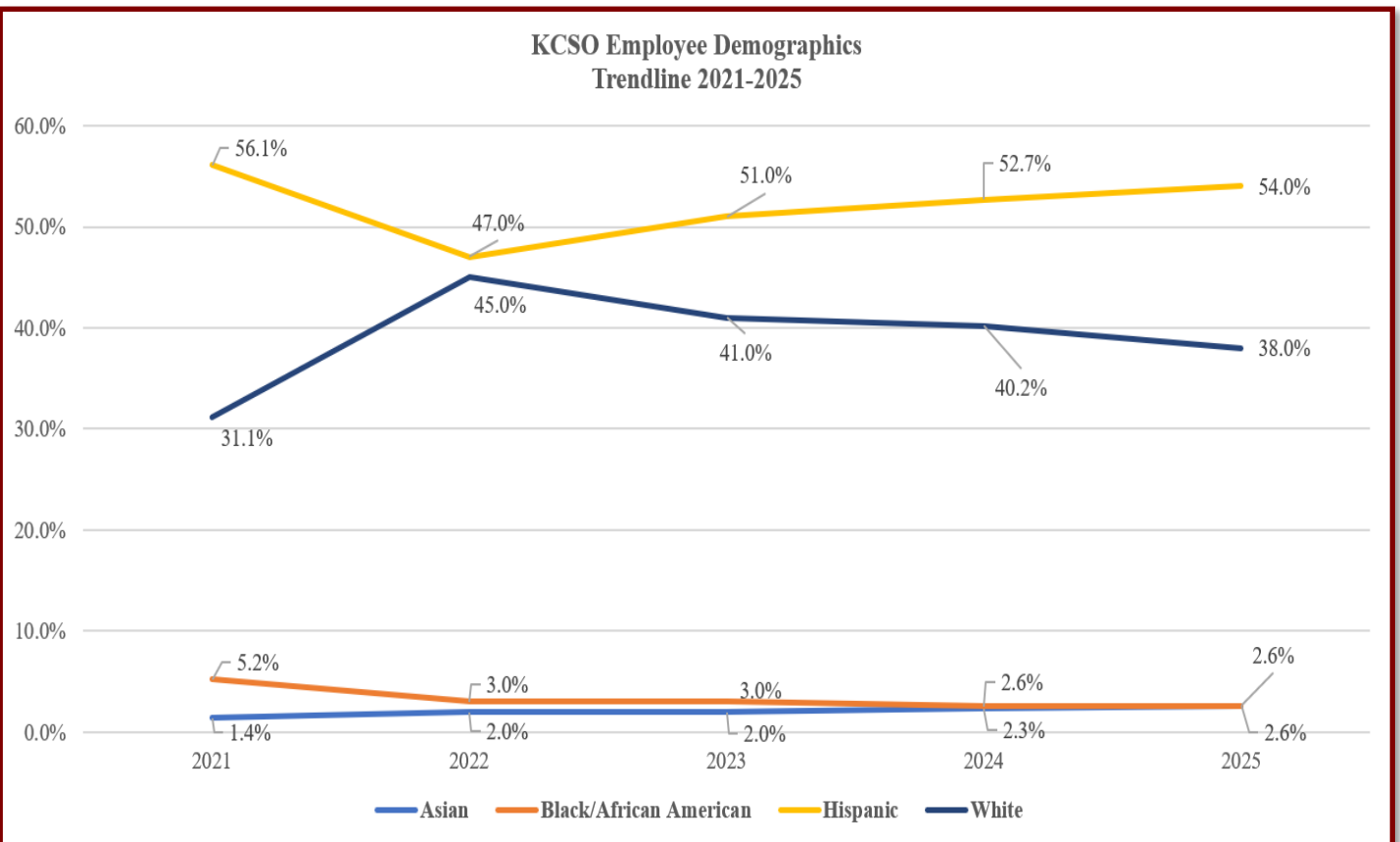
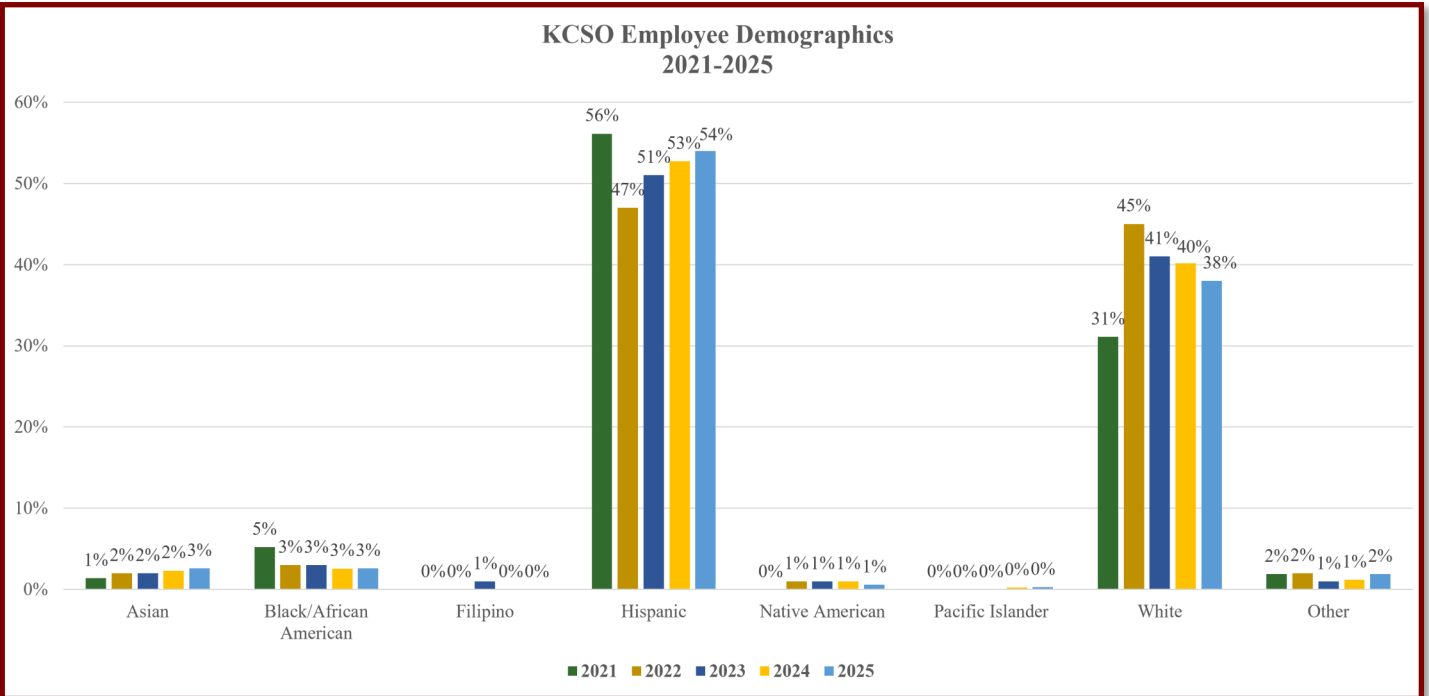
Race	Employee Percentages	Kern County Population Percentage
Asian	2.60%	5.80%
Black/African American	2.60%	6.30%
Hispanic	54.00%	56.80%
Native American	0.60%	2.80%
Pacific Islander	0.30%	0.30%
White	38.00%	30.40%
Other	1.90%	0%

*Percentages were rounded to the nearest hundredth, which may not total to 100%
** 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.
***<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 2025, the total number of KCSO employees was 1,318. Hispanic descent comprised a majority (54%) of the workforce. Of the 1,318 employees, 862 (65%) were male, and 456 (35%) were female. There were 185 vacancies within KCSO in December 2025. Upon initial hire with the Sheriff's Office, an employee can self-identify with race and gender. "Other" is given as an option to individuals who do not want to specify or have multiple identifications.





Recruitment Demographics

The KCSO Recruitment Team maintained strong outreach efforts throughout 2025, participating in **95** recruitment events and dedicating **930** hours to community engagement, candidate outreach, and workforce development.

Q1: 23 events | 249 hours

Q2: 24 events | 206 hours

Q3: 22 events | 223 hours

Q4: 26 events | 252 hours



Educational Outreach

KCSO maintained a strong presence at high schools, colleges, and universities through career fairs, hiring events, classroom presentations, and guest speaking engagements. Major partnerships included California Aeronautical University, California State University Bakersfield (CSUB), Bakersfield College, Cerro Coso Community College, and numerous Kern County high schools. These efforts promoted career opportunities, including the Cadet Program, Detentions Trainee, and Professional Support positions.

Community Engagement & Recruitment Events

Recruiters connected with residents through job fairs, military career events, community festivals, public safety expos, farmers' markets, and regional events throughout Kern County. Notable events included Job Fest, Kern County Career Expo, Kernville Summer Festival, Mojave Gold Rush Days, and multiple community outreach events.

Strategic Recruitment Efforts

The Recruitment Team hosted and participated in specialized recruitment and testing events for sworn and professional support positions, helping streamline applicant pipelines and increase access to career opportunities within KCSO.

Business & Community Partnerships

KCSO expanded outreach through partnerships with local Chambers of Commerce, including the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Kern County Black Chamber of Commerce, Mountain Communities Chamber of Commerce, and Mojave Chamber of Commerce.

Training & Process Improvements

In August 2025, recruitment personnel completed annual training focused on outreach best practices, operational updates, streamlined event coordination, and Bias Awareness Training to support equitable and inclusive hiring practices. Additionally, POST testing updates and event-based testing opportunities helped improve applicant processing and progression.

KCSO HR Annual Report

For further details, the 2025 KCSO HR Annual report may be accessed at KCSO's Transparency site:

<https://www.kernsheriff.org/documents/transparency/annual-reports/hr-report/hr-annual-report-december-2025.pdf>



Human Resources

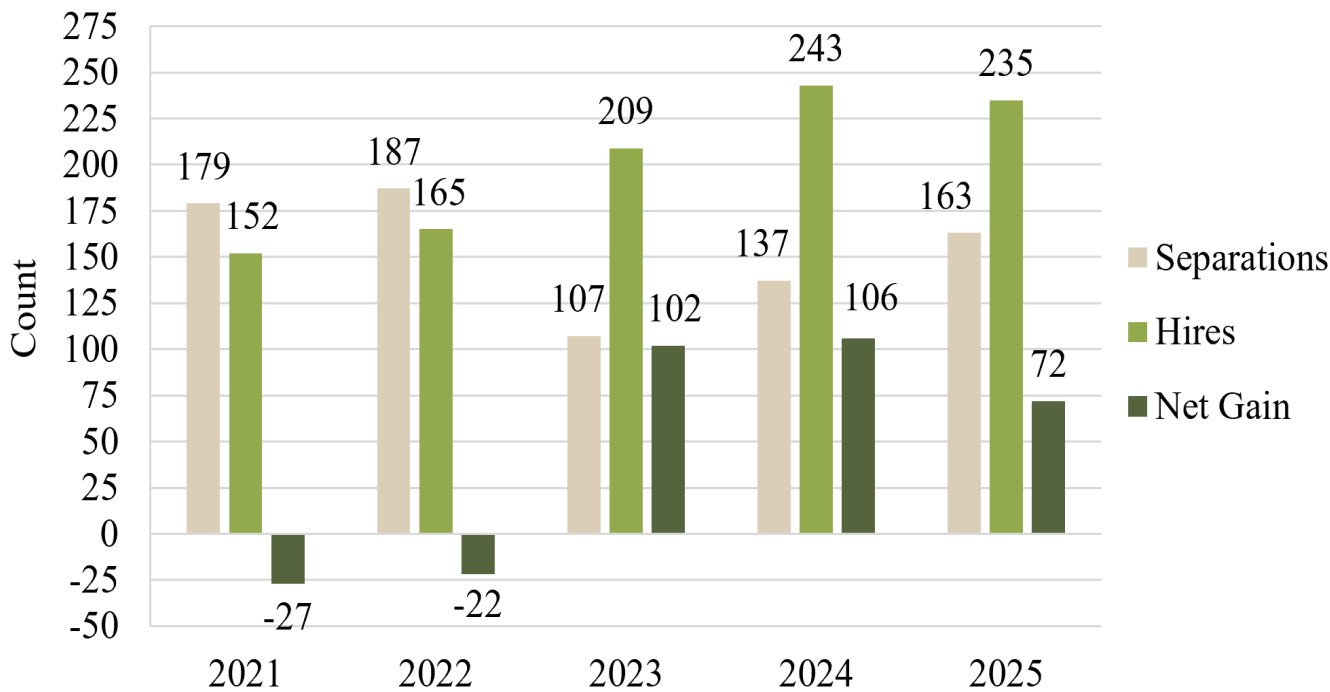
Staffing 2021-2025

In the 2025 staff reporting, the Kern County Sheriff's Office employed 1,318 personnel of the 1,503 authorized positions, resulting in 185 vacancies and an overall staffing level of approximately 87.7%, leaving an overall vacancy rate of approximately 12.3%. This staffing level represents a substantial improvement from prior years and enhances the Sheriff's Office's ability to provide public safety services throughout Kern County.

The Sheriff's Office has continued to make progress in strengthening its workforce over the past several years. Following consecutive years of net staffing gains beginning in 2023, overall staffing levels have increased while vacancies have declined. Current staffing levels reflect success in continuous recruitment and retention efforts, despite ongoing attrition and a competitive labor market.

While vacancies remain in several operational and support areas, the Sheriff's Office has maintained staffing levels sufficient to support functions across all bureaus. Continued recruitment, hiring, and retention initiatives remain a priority to further reduce vacancies and ensure the Sheriff's Office can meet current and future service demands.

KCSO Staffing Totals (2021-2025)

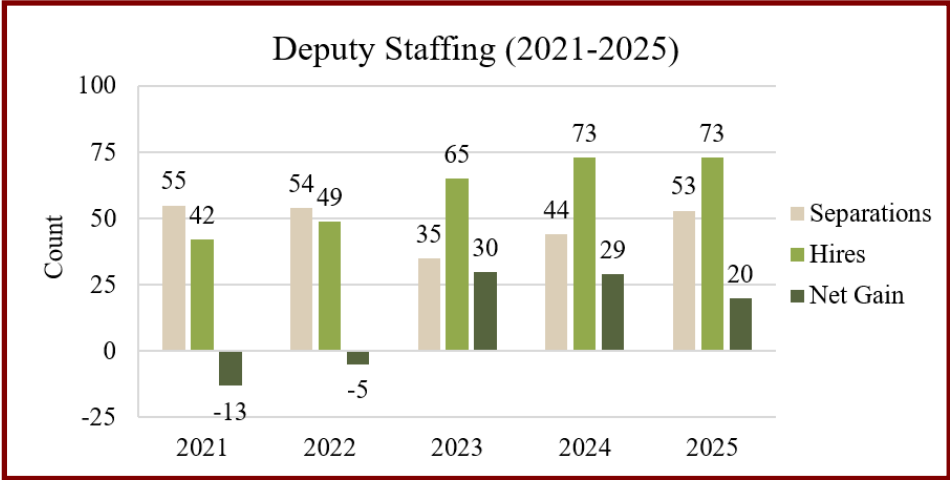




Human Resources

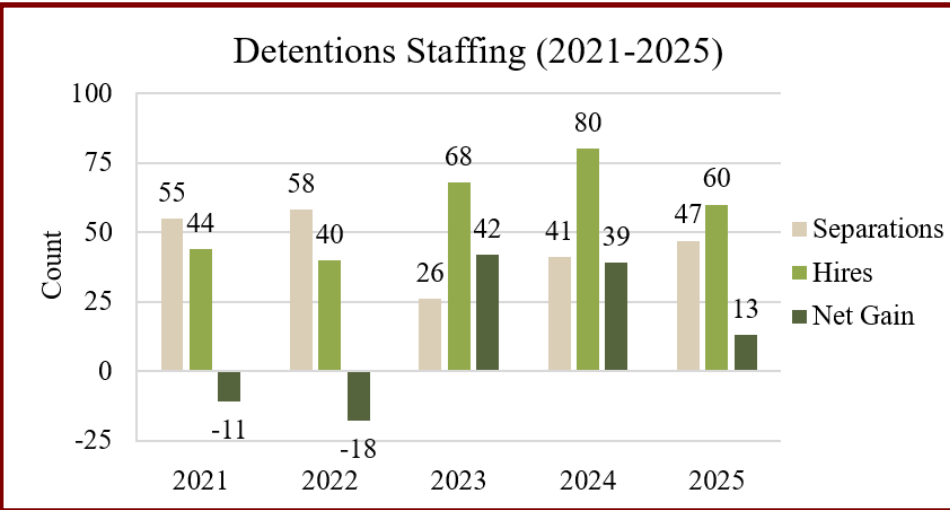
Deputy Staffing

Deputy staffing levels have shown a notable turnaround since 2021, transitioning from net losses in 2021 and 2022 to sustained gains over the past three years. The Sheriff's Office experienced net losses of 13 deputies in 2021 and 5 deputies in 2022. Beginning in 2023, hiring outpaced separations, resulting in net gains of 30 deputies in 2023, 29 deputies in 2024, and 20 deputies in 2025. Although separations increased to 53 in 2025, the Sheriff's Office matched its highest hiring total with 73 new deputies, continuing a positive staffing trend. This sustained growth reflects the Sheriff's Office's ongoing commitment to strengthening patrol and investigative resources, maintaining service coverage, and enhancing response capabilities throughout Kern County.



Detentions Staffing

Detentions staffing experienced one of the most significant improvements across all staffing categories over the past five years. After net losses of 11 positions in 2021 and 18 positions in 2022, the division achieved a substantial turnaround in 2023 with a net gain of 42 positions. Strong hiring momentum continued in 2024, resulting in a net gain of 39 positions, followed by an additional net gain of 13 positions in 2025. While separations increased to 47 in 2025, hiring remained positive with 60 new employees added to Detentions staffing. The sustained gains reflect targeted recruitment efforts and retention strategies designed to address the unique operational demands of detention facilities, improve staffing stability, and maintain adequate facility coverage.

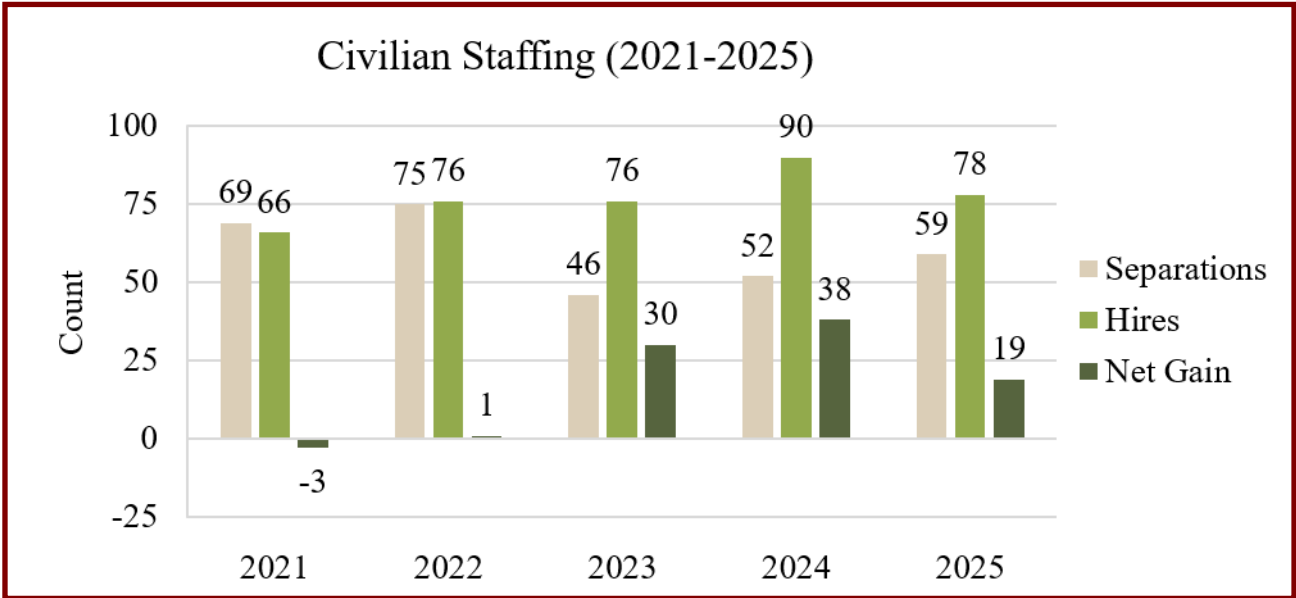




Human Resources

Civilian Staffing

Civilian staffing has demonstrated steady growth over the past five years, recovering from a slight net loss of 3 positions in 2021 and achieving a modest net gain of 1 position in 2022. Growth accelerated in 2023 with a net gain of 30 positions and continued in 2024 with a net gain of 38 positions. In 2025, the Sheriff's Office maintained positive momentum, adding a net gain of 19 civilian employees despite an increase in separations. These trends underscore the critical role civilian professionals play in supporting administrative, technical, operational, and community service functions that contribute to the Sheriff's Office's overall effectiveness. Continued investment in recruiting and retaining skilled civilian personnel has strengthened organizational capacity and promoted long-term workforce stability.



Overall, the five-year staffing data reflects a significant recovery from workforce shortages and a sustained period of growth across the Sheriff's Office. While deputies, detentions, and civilian classifications experienced staffing challenges in 2021 and 2022, each category has posted positive net gains since 2023. In 2025 alone, the Sheriff's Office achieved net increases of 20 deputies, 13 detention deputies, and 19 civilian employees despite continued attrition across all classifications.

These results reflect the effectiveness of KCSO's ongoing strategic recruitment initiatives, expanded outreach efforts, competitive hiring incentives, and retention-focused programs. Maintaining this positive staffing trend will be essential to supporting patrol operations, detention facility staffing, and administrative functions, making the Sheriff's Office more readily available to handle services required by those who visit and reside in Kern County.

Further details of these efforts may be found in KCSO's HR Reports on the Transparency page-

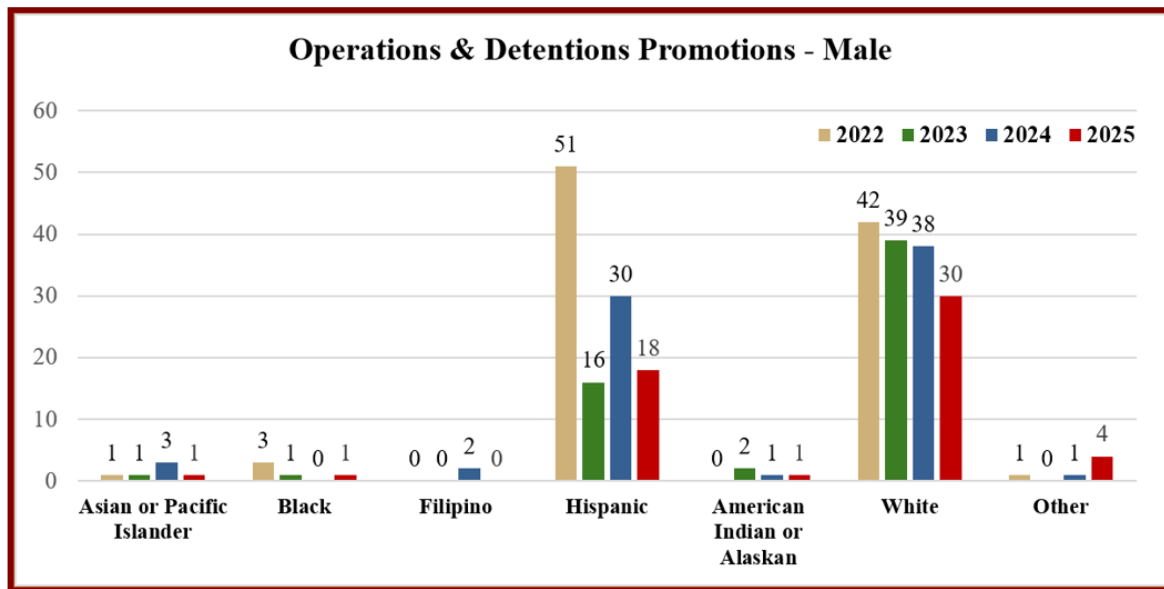
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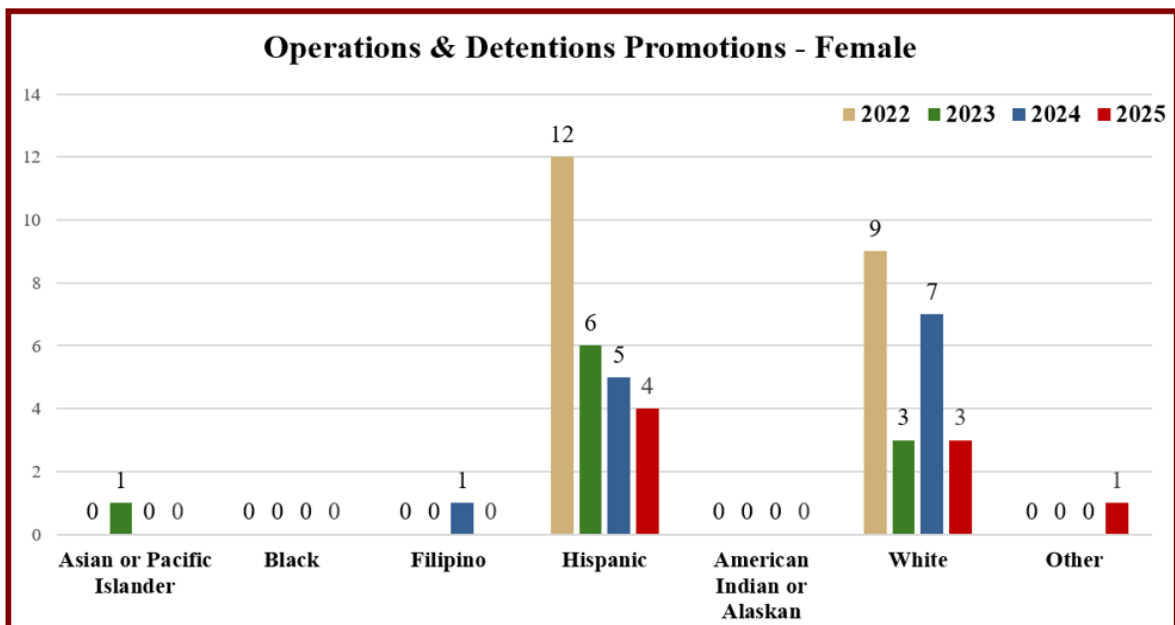
Promotion Demographics

KCSO has a rich history of dedication and service to the community. As an organization, we continue to develop and seek opportunities to enhance service, commitment, trust, and our core values. Embracing innovation and adapting to change remain central to our guiding principles. The Sheriff's Office is committed to recruiting highly qualified candidates, across all ranks, who reflect the diverse communities we serve.

In 2025, the Sheriff's Office promoted a total of 62 employees, including 54 males (87%) and 8 females (13%). Hispanic and White applicants accounted for the largest share of promotions, while additional promotions were made among Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, American Indian or Alaskan, and Other demographic groups. These promotional outcomes reflect the Sheriff's Office's continued efforts to attract qualified candidates from a broad range of backgrounds and strengthen the workforce needed to serve Kern County residents.



Among males, White received the largest number of promotions, followed by Hispanic.



Among females, Hispanic personnel received the highest number of promotions, followed by White.

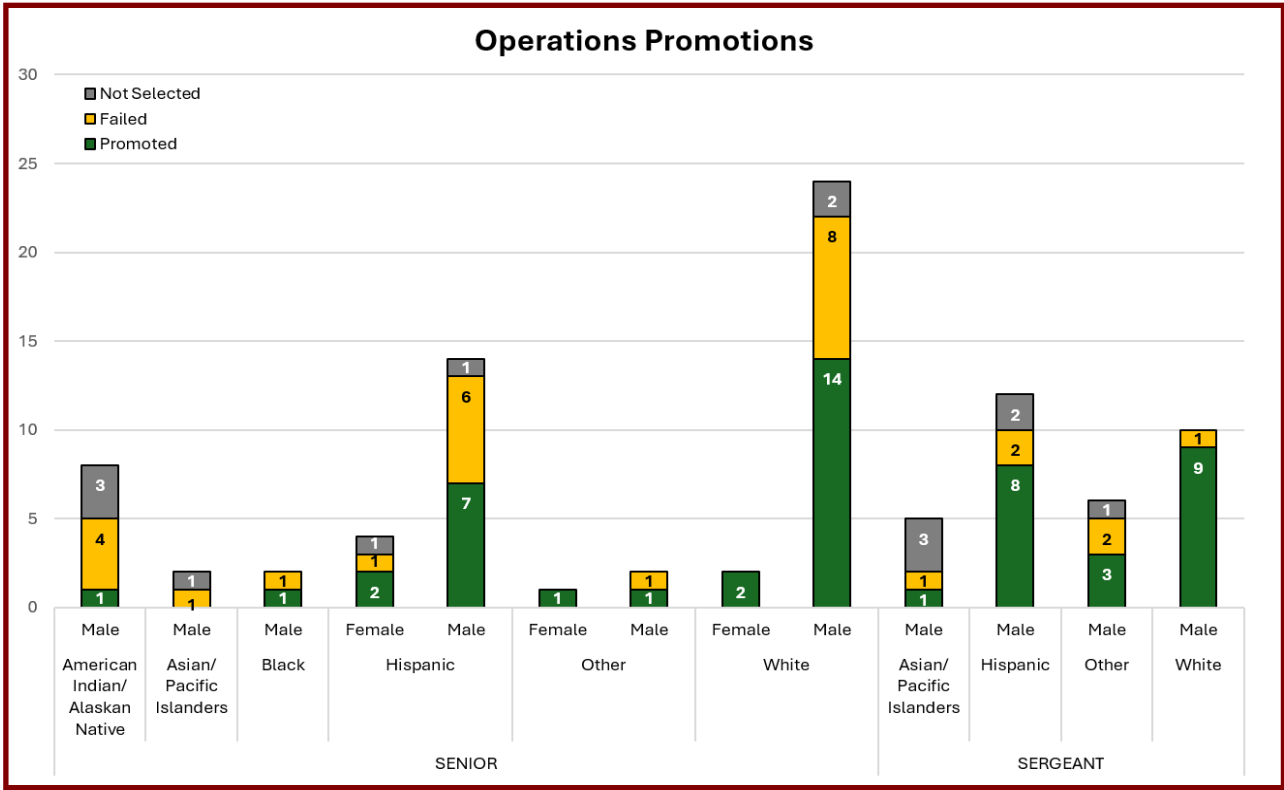


Promotion Demographics

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 supervisory level (Senior Deputy, Sergeant) and management level (Lieutenant, Commander, Chief Deputy, Undersheriff).

The promotional 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. There are many different factors that may impact the decision of employees to participate in the voluntary competitive promotional process. These factors, as well as others, will be included in the Promotional Policy and Plan KCSO is developing to increase transparency about the promotional process, which will be published in 2026.

The chart below shows the outcomes of promotions in 2025 for Senior Deputy and Sergeant.



In 2025, a total of 29 Deputy Sheriffs were promoted to the rank of Senior Deputy (24 Male & and 5 Female). The majority of those promoted were White males (14), followed by Hispanic males (7). Additional promotions selected went to two Hispanic females, two White females, one American Indian/Alaskan Native male, one Black male, one male and one female in the Other category.

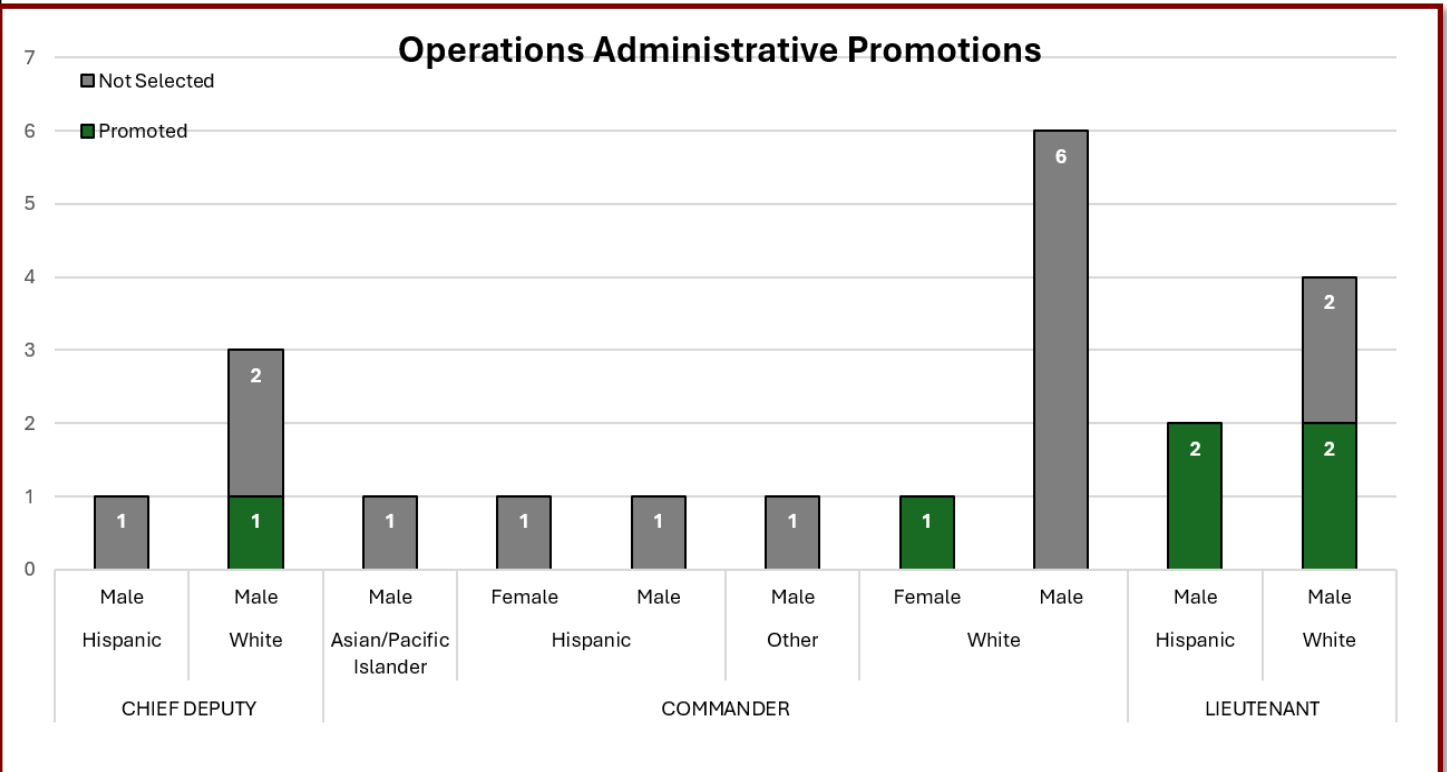
During the same period, 21 Senior Deputies were promoted to the rank of Sergeant. The majority of those promoted were White males (9), followed by Hispanic males (8). Additional promotions included three males identified in the Other category and one Asian/Pacific Islander male.

Overall, White and Hispanic employees accounted for the majority of promotions, reflecting the largest demographic groups represented within KCSO’s workforce.



Promotion Demographics

Those within the Kern County Sheriff's Office who aspire to serve residents and visitors in a management capacity are few, both in interest and available positions. This demanding process mirrors previous levels, but includes interviews with the highest-ranking officials of the Sheriff's Office. The chart below shows the breakdown of the applicants for sworn management positions.

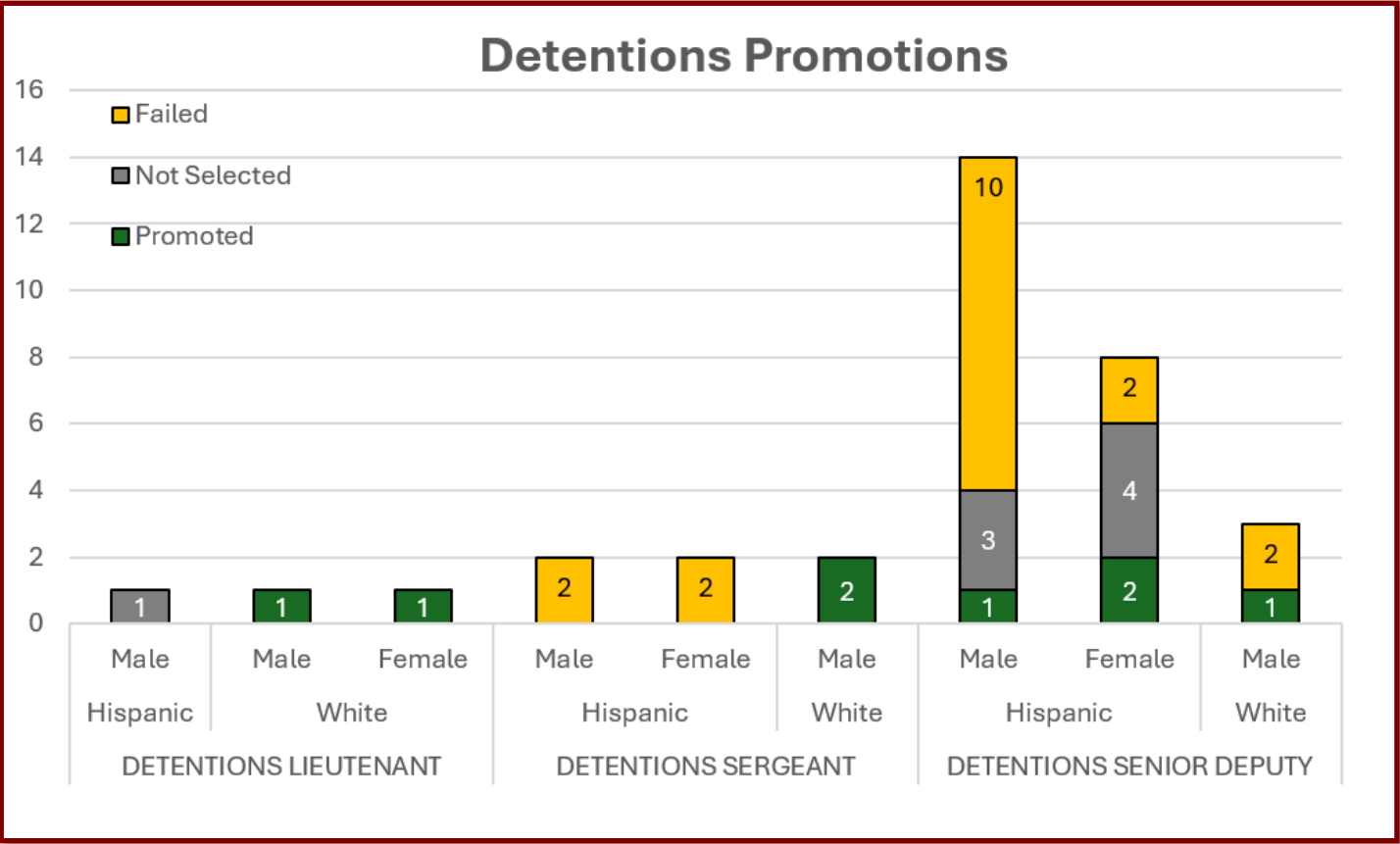


Of the 21 sworn personnel who applied for these administrative positions, six (6) were promoted. For Chief Deputy, one promotion went to one White male. For Commander, one promotion went to a White female. For Lieutenant, a total of four promotions were made (two White males and two Hispanic males). No Undersheriff promotions were made during this reporting period.



Promotion Demographics

Overall, eight (8) employees were promoted in the Detentions Bureau during 2025. The highest rank in the Detentions Bureau is a Detentions Lieutenant. Of those promoted, four were White males, one White female, one Hispanic male, and two Hispanic females. The chart below shows the race and gender breakdown of detentions promotions for 2025.



For Detentions Senior Deputy, four Detentions Deputies were selected for promotion: one Hispanic male, two Hispanic females, and one White male.

For Detentions Sergeant, two Detentions Senior Deputies were selected for promotion: two White males.

For Detentions Lieutenant, two Detentions Sergeants were selected for promotion: one White male and one White female.

Promotional processes are not gender-specific and are designed to ensure equal opportunity for all qualified candidates. Selection decisions are based on merit, qualifications, and performance throughout the promotional process.

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/documents/transparency/annual-reports/hr-report/hr-annual-report-december-2025.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 2025.

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 is 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.

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 from 2021 to 2023 by KCSO. With Dr. Joo's guidance, the Kern County Sheriff's Office analyzed stop information to identify potential disparities, trends for community-oriented solutions, inform policy/procedures, and develop ongoing training to improve KCSO services. Dr. Joo's full findings will be published on the Sheriff's Office transparency page in the near future, along with an Executive Summary by KCSO.

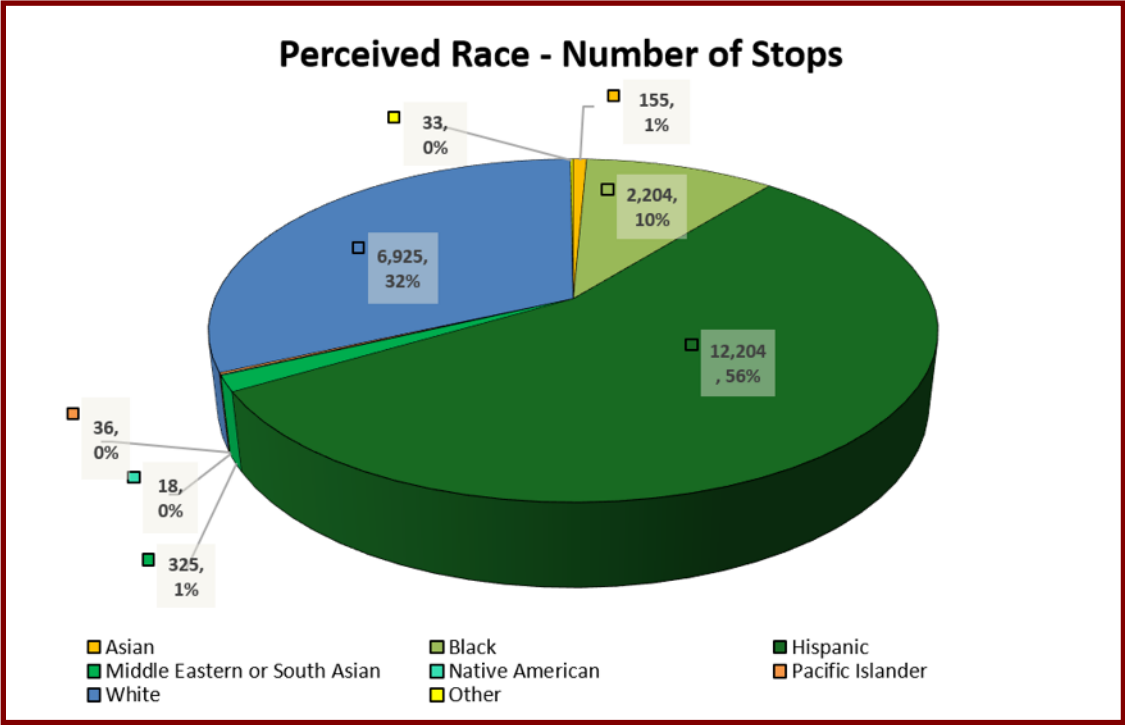
The stop information that follows is displayed in tables (exact percentages) and charts (rounded percentages).

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



Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)

In 2025, the Kern County Sheriff’s Office conducted 21,900 stops in Kern County. A majority of the perceived race of the person stopped was Hispanic/Latino(a) (55.73%), followed by perceived to be White (31.62%), and followed by perceived to be Black (10.06%). 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 57.80%, White 29.2%, and Black 6.1%), totaling 93.10%.



All races mentioned in the graph above were **perceived** by the deputy making the stop. Compared to the population, Asians were underrepresented and Blacks were overrepresented. The remaining ethnicities were comparable.

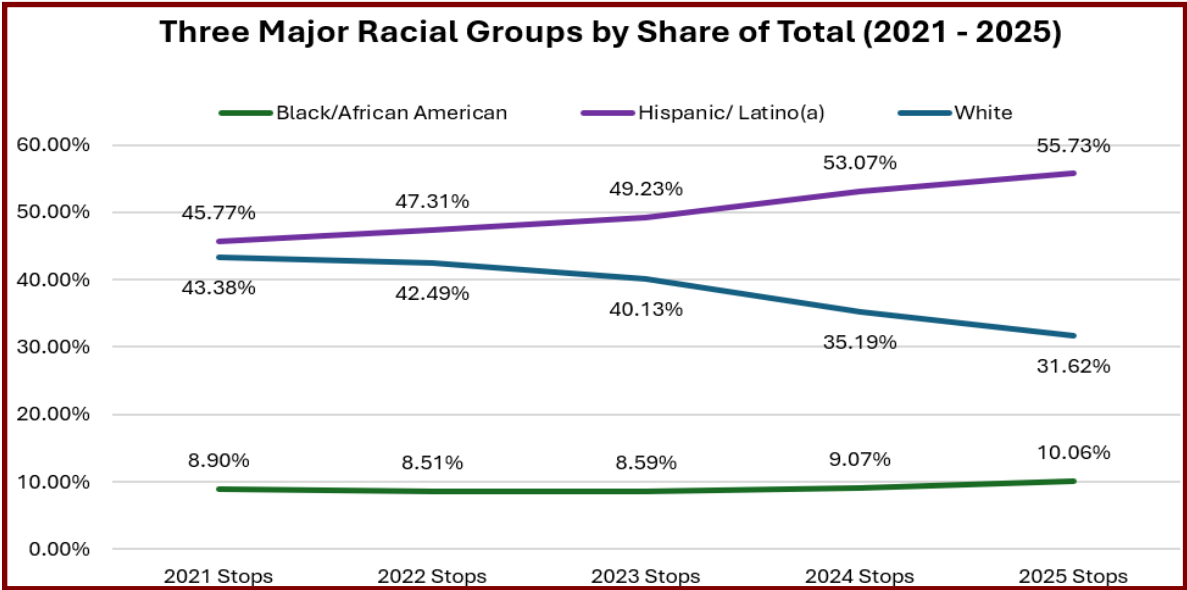
Perceived Race	RIPA Stops	RIPA %	Kern County Population Percentage
Asian	155	0.71%	5.80%
Black	2,204	10.06%	6.30%
Hispanic/ Latino(a)	12,204	55.73%	56.80%
Middle Eastern or South Asian	325	1.48%	1%
Native American	18	0.08%	.60%
Pacific Islander	36	0.16%	.30%
White	6,925	31.62%	30.40%
Other	33	0.15%	0%
Grand Total	21,900	100.00%	101.20%

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

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



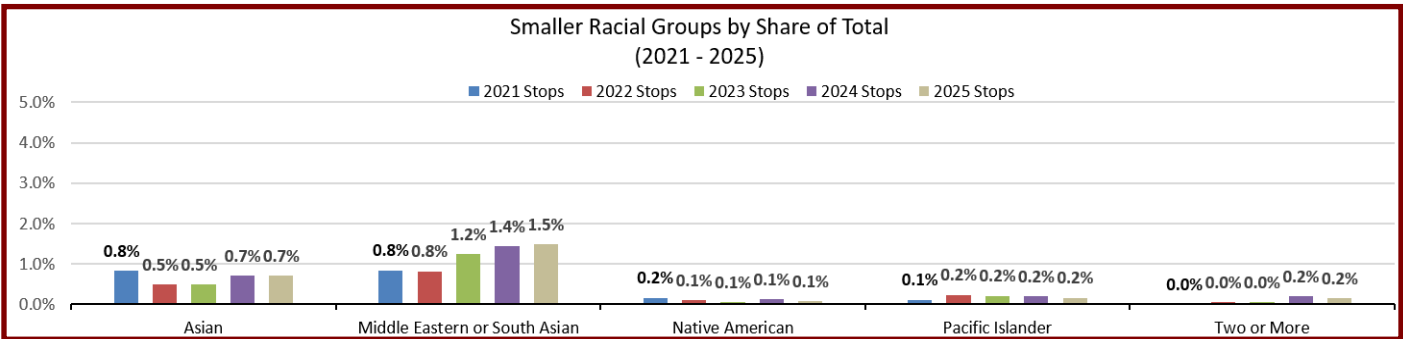
Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)



Between 2021 and 2025, the total number of recorded stops increased from 12,413 to 21,900, representing an approximate 76% increase. Over this period, the racial distribution of stops shifted, reflecting changes in overall stop activity and proportional representation among groups.

The Hispanic/Latino(a) population consistently represented the largest share of stops each year, increasing from 45.8% in 2021 to 55.7% in 2025. This reflects both growth in total stops and alignment with overall population percentages. In contrast, the White population remained the second-largest group but declined proportionally from 43.4% to 31.6%, indicating a reduction in their share of total stops over time and alignment with population representation.

Despite being overrepresented, the rate at which Black/African American stops occur in Kern remain below the 2024 statewide average (12.09%) according to the 2026 RIPA Board Report. In Kern, these rates have remained relatively stable, fluctuating between 8.5% and 10.1% 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 3%** of total stops combined. Within these categories, stops involving Middle Eastern or South Asian individuals showed gradual growth, increasing from 0.8% in 2021 to 1.5% in 2025.



Overall, the most prominent changes are the increasing proportion of Hispanic/Latino(a) individuals and the corresponding decline in the proportion of White individuals, both of which reflect alignment with population. Other racial and ethnic groups generally remained stable or experienced only slight fluctuations across the reporting period. KCSO found no significant disparities and continues to analyze this data to assist in identifying practices that may have a disparate impact on any group relative to the public. These patterns may reflect a combination of factors, including changes in enforcement activity, increased KCSO staffing levels, and broader demographic changes among the population since 2020.

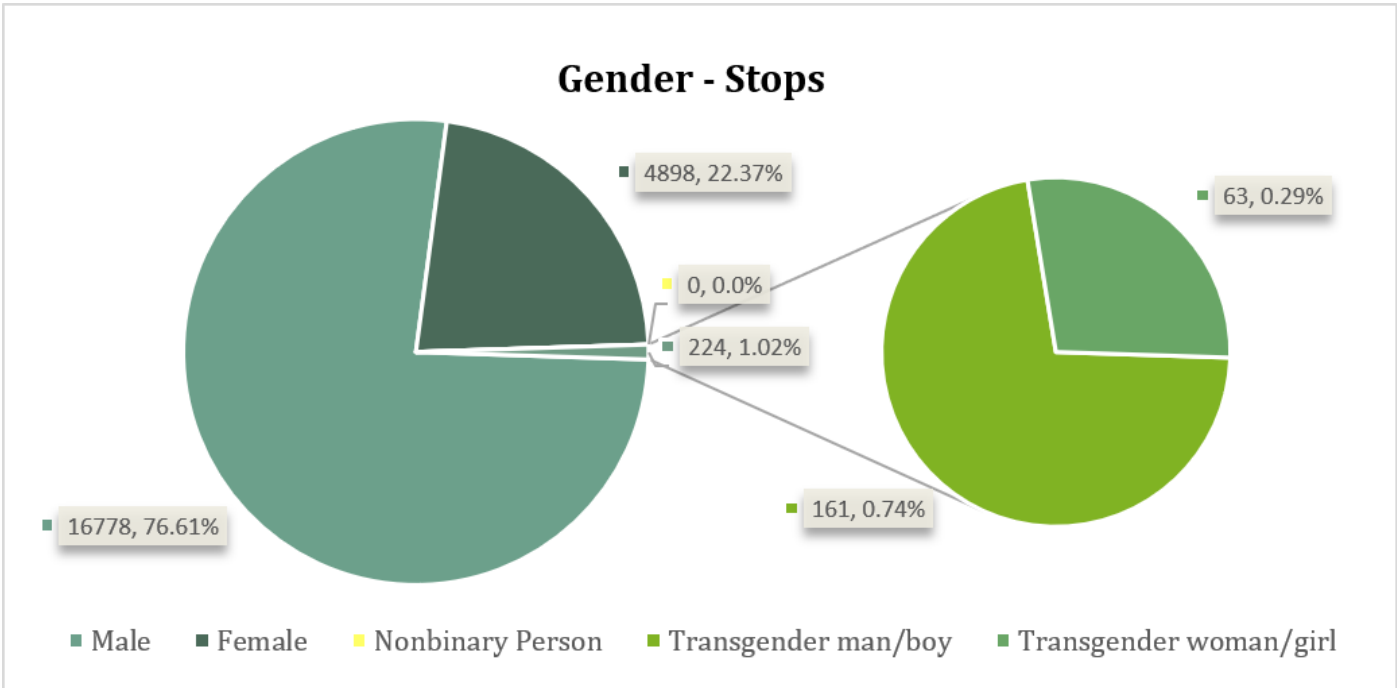


Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)

Of the 21,900 stops conducted by the Kern County Sheriff’s Office, approximately 76.6% of individuals were perceived as male (16,778 stops) and 22.4% were perceived as female (4,898 stops). An additional 0.7% (161 stops) involved perceived transgender men/boys, 0.3% (63 stops) perceived transgender women/girls, and 0% (0 stops) were perceived as nonbinary persons.

For context, the United States Census estimates the Kern County population to be approximately 50.7% male and 49.3% female, indicating a higher proportion of stops involving individuals perceived as male relative to their share of the population.*

No further gender breakdown will be included on subsequent pages unless the distribution is disproportionate to the population data presented above.



Gender	Stops	Stops Percentage	Kern County Population
Male	16778	76.6%	50.7%
Female	4898	22.4%	49.3%
Nonbinary Person	0	0.0%	-
Transgender man/boy	161	0.7%	-
Transgender woman/girl	63	0.3%	-
Grand Total	21,900	100%	100%

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

* 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 1 July 2026.

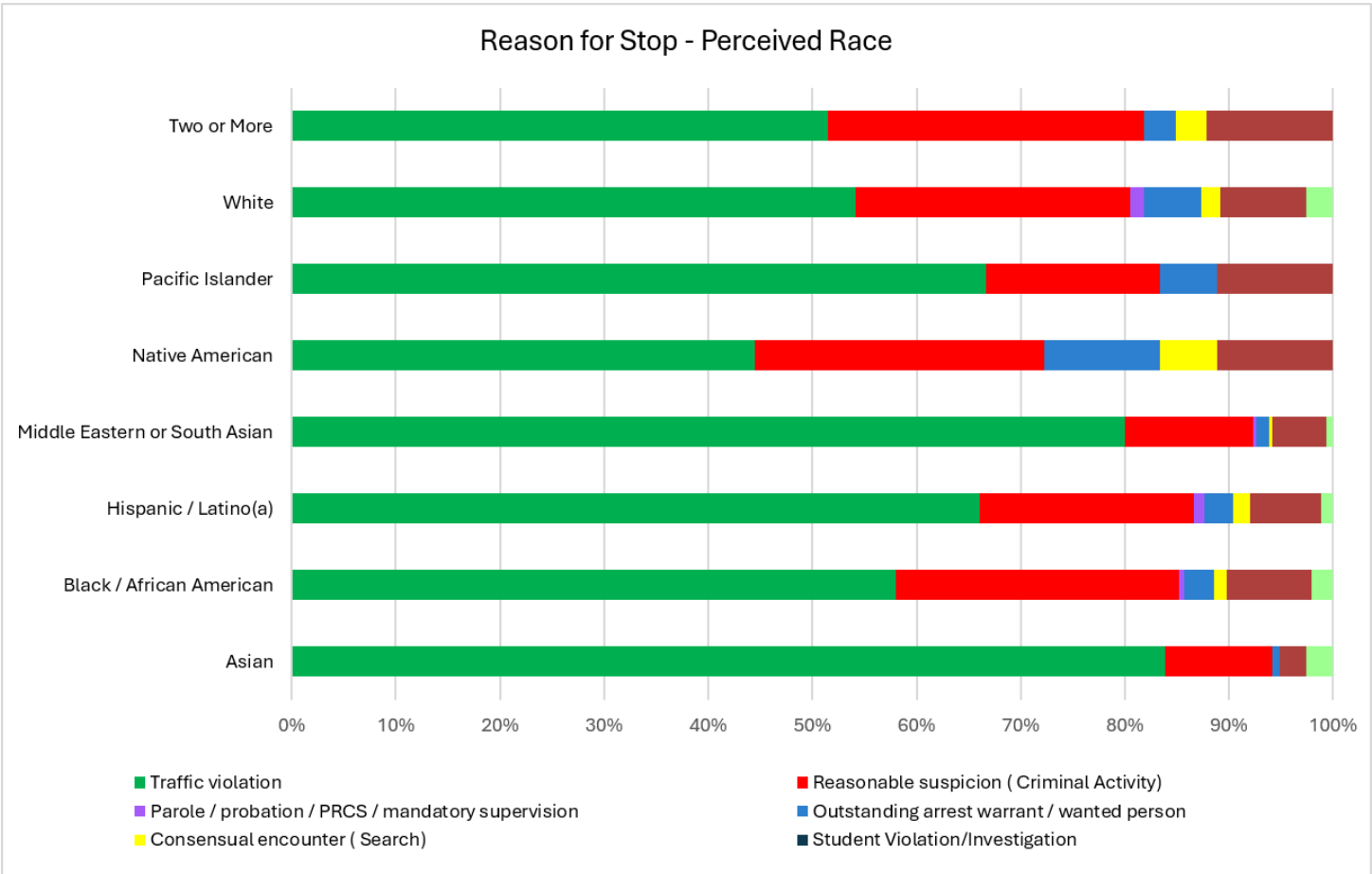


Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)

The RIPA data fields provides a descriptive summary of 21,900 recorded law enforcement stops, categorized by both the “Reason for Stop” and the “Perceived Race” of the individuals stopped. The Kern County Sheriff’s Office further analyzed the “Reason for Stop” and “Perceived Race” provided by deputies. By Perceived Race, the largest share of stops involved Hispanic/Latino(a) (12,204; 55.7%), followed by White (6,925; 31.6%) and Black/African American (2,204; 10.1%). Smaller proportions of stops involved Asian (155; 0.7%), Middle Eastern or South Asian (325; 1.5%), Pacific Islander (36; 0.2%), Native American (18; 0.1%), and Two or More Races (33; 0.2%).

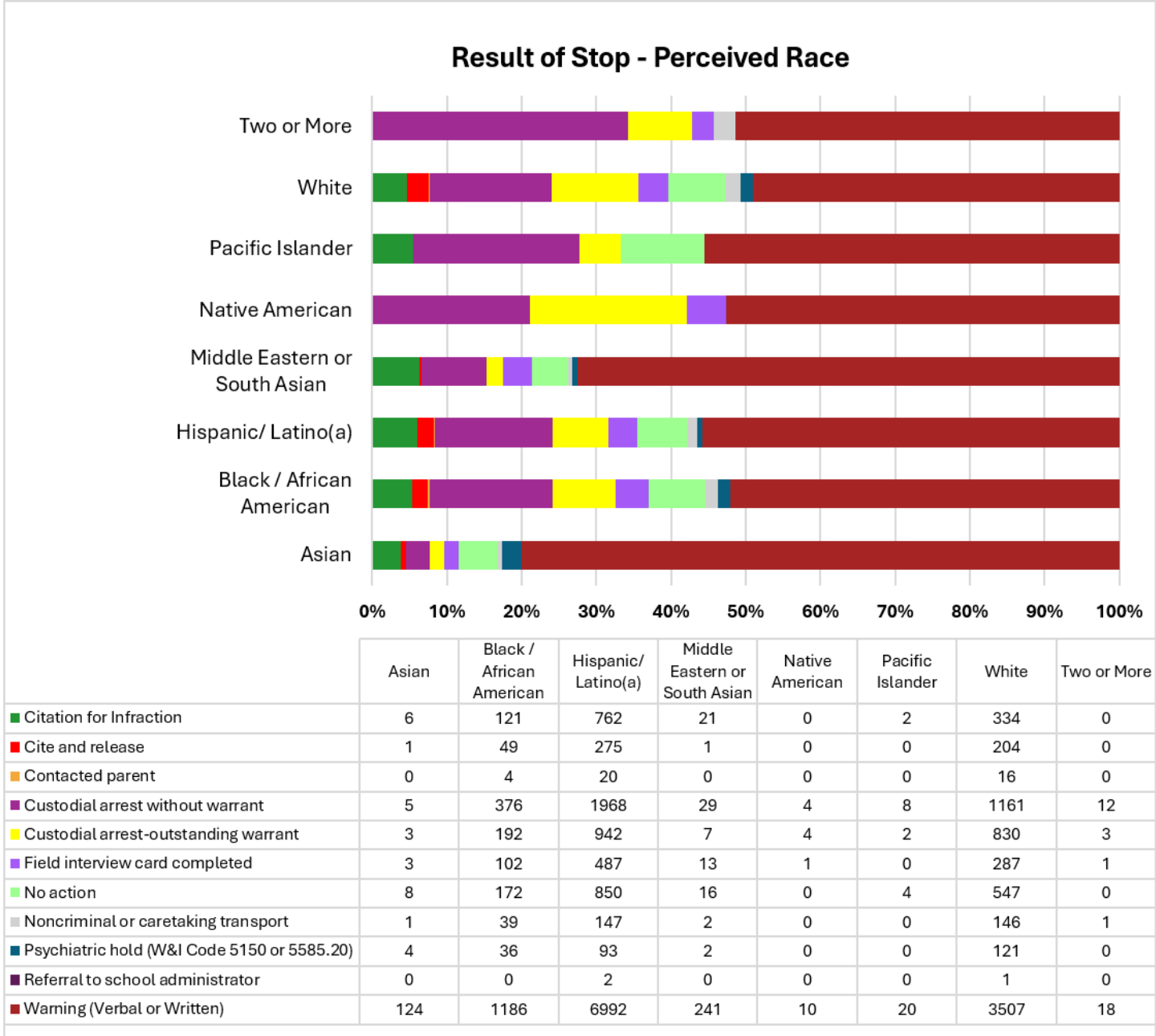
Overall, **traffic violations (13,522; 61.7%) (moving, nonmoving, and equipment)** represent the dominant “Reason for Stop” for stops across all racial and ethnic groups, followed by reasonable suspicion and probable cause-based encounters. The distribution of stop reasons is generally consistent across demographic categories, with no single group showing a fundamentally different pattern of enforcement type within the dataset.

However, the dataset does not include contextual variables such as population exposure, driving frequency, geographic concentration, or situational factors at the time of contact. As such, the information should be interpreted strictly as a descriptive summary of recorded stop incidents rather than an explanation of causation or enforcement disparity. It provides a structured overview of how law enforcement contact reasons are distributed across reported racial and ethnic groups.





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.

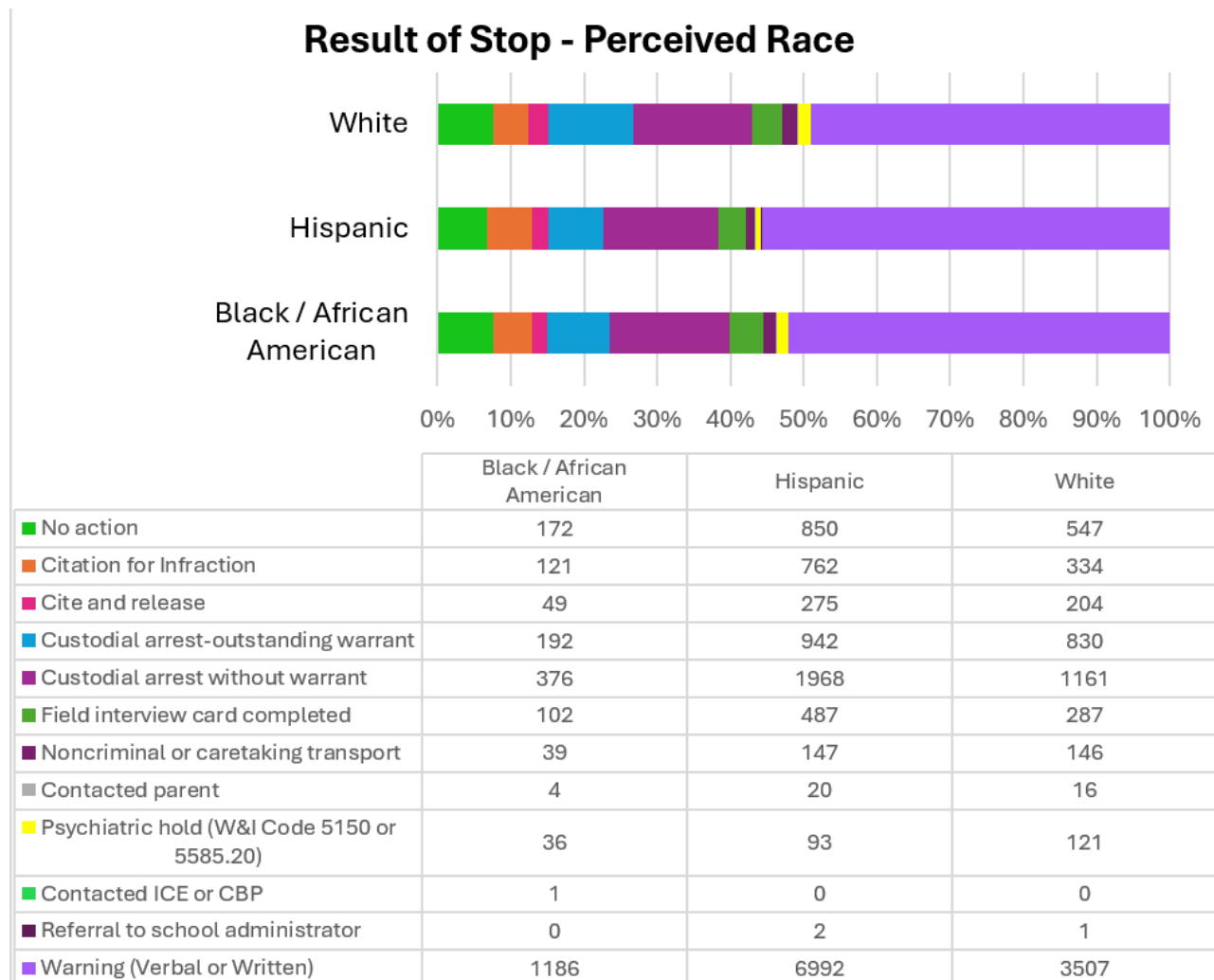


Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)

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.



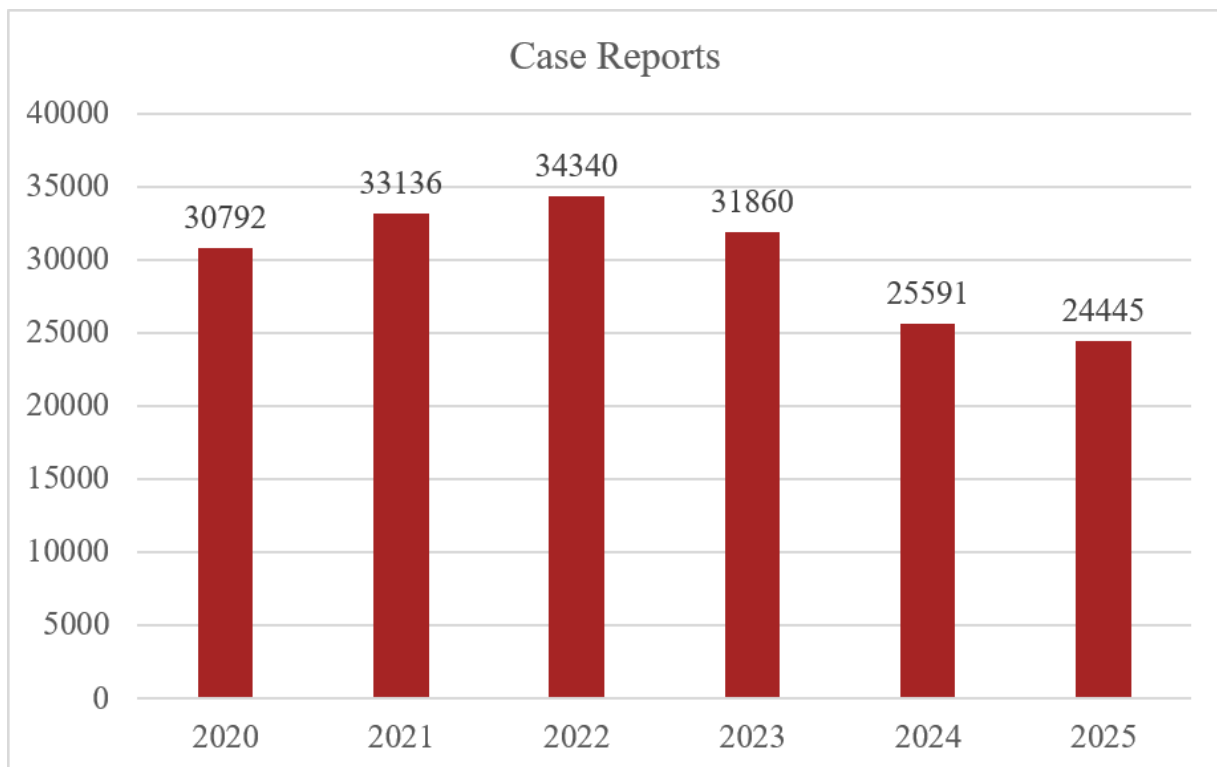


Calls for Service

In 2025, the Communications Center answered 204,161 9-1-1 calls and 1004 Text-to-911 messages. This resulted in 199,823 calls for service. Other calls for service not accounted for in this count were handled by the Telephone Report Desk, were canceled before our arrival, or were transferred to another agency. These figures are based on information from the Sheriff's Office database, and population demographics were retrieved from the United States Census Bureau American Community Survey for 2023.*

In 2025, the Metro Patrol area accounted for the most calls for service, with 88,208 of the total 199,823, representing 44% 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 20,439 of the total calls for service. The Kern Valley Substation had the third-highest radio call count among all stations, with 17,947 calls.

Between 2020 and 2025, 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 24,465 in 2025, a reduction of nearly 23% over two years. While year-to-year case volume is influenced by a variety of factors, the downward trend may reflect changes in community activity, crime patterns, reporting practices, and law enforcement strategies. Throughout this period, the Sheriff's Office continued to focus on proactive policing, strategic deployment of resources, targeted crime prevention efforts, and community partnerships to address public safety concerns. 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 2025, the Kern County Sheriff's Office made 1,250 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). *For information on Use of Force, refer to page 49 of this report.*

It is important to note that Kern County Sheriff's Office deputies 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. 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.

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.

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 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

Adjudication Results

Dismissed	Pled Guilty/No Contest	Not Filed	Pending	Plea Deal	Not Submitted	Sealed	Total*
59	123	169	252	273	365	9	1250

Of the 1,250 cases documenting a resisting offense, 4.7% were dismissed, 9.8% resulted in a plea of guilty or no contest, 13.5% were not filed, 20.2% are currently pending, 21.8% were resolved through a plea deal, 29.2% were not submitted, and 0.7% were sealed during this timeframe.

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 or “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 plead 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.

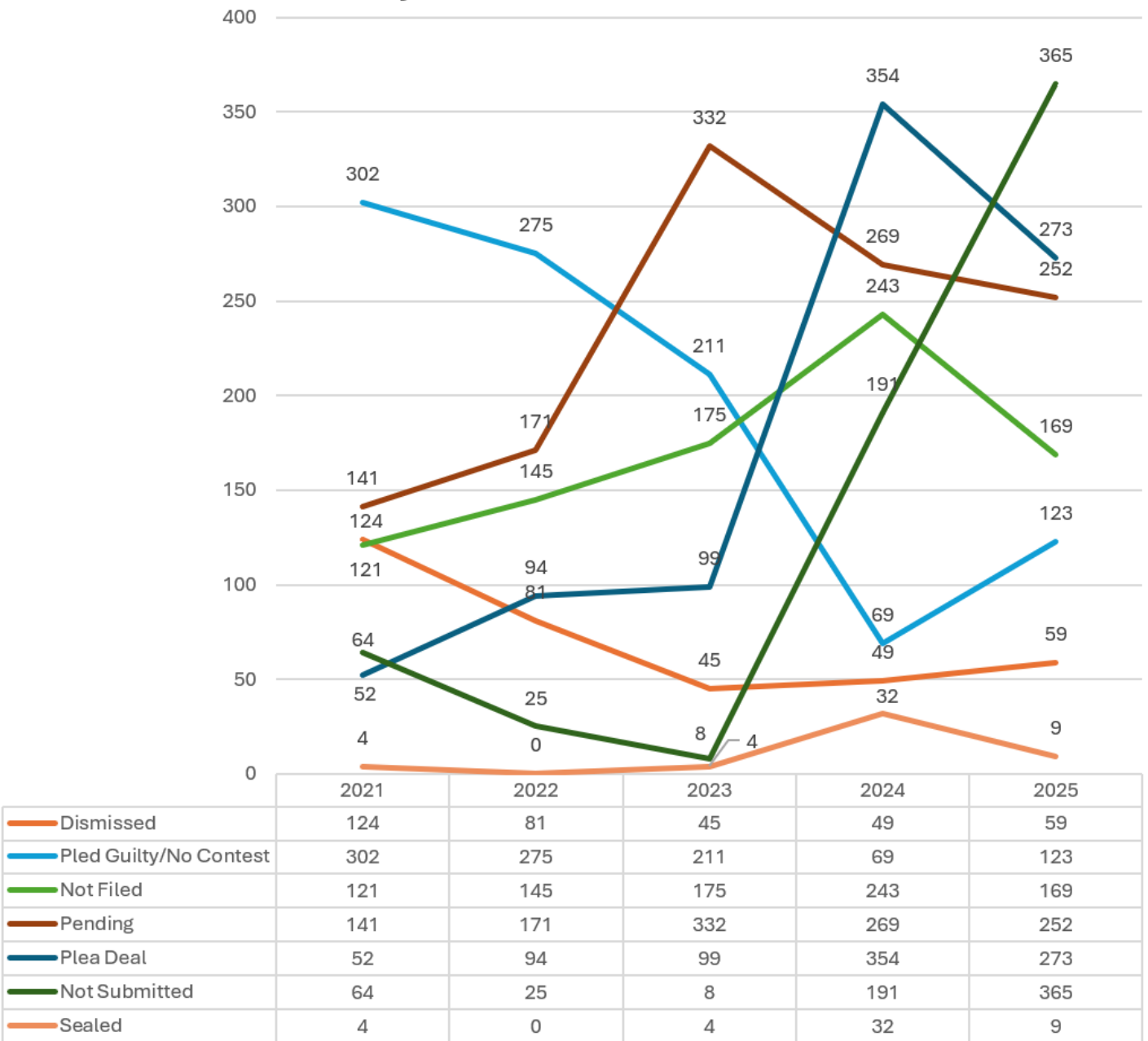


Case Adjudication Data

Case adjudication activity has changed notably over the past five years. While **"Dismissed"** cases and **"Pled Guilty/No Contest"** outcomes generally declined, **"Plea Deal"** cases increased substantially, particularly in 2024. **"Pending"** cases peaked in 2023 at 332 and declined to 252 by 2025, reflecting a reduction in pending matters during the latter part of the reporting period. **"Not Filed"** cases also increased through 2024 before declining in 2025.

The most significant change occurred in **"Not Submitted"** cases, which increased from 8 in 2023 to 191 in 2024 and 365 in 2025. **"Sealed"** cases remained comparatively low, ranging from 0 to 32 annually. The total number of cases increased each year from 2021 through 2025, rising from 808 cases in 2021 to 1,250 cases in 2025. This represents an increase of 442 cases, or approximately 55%, over that period.

Case Adjudication Data 2021-2025





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 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 discuss 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.



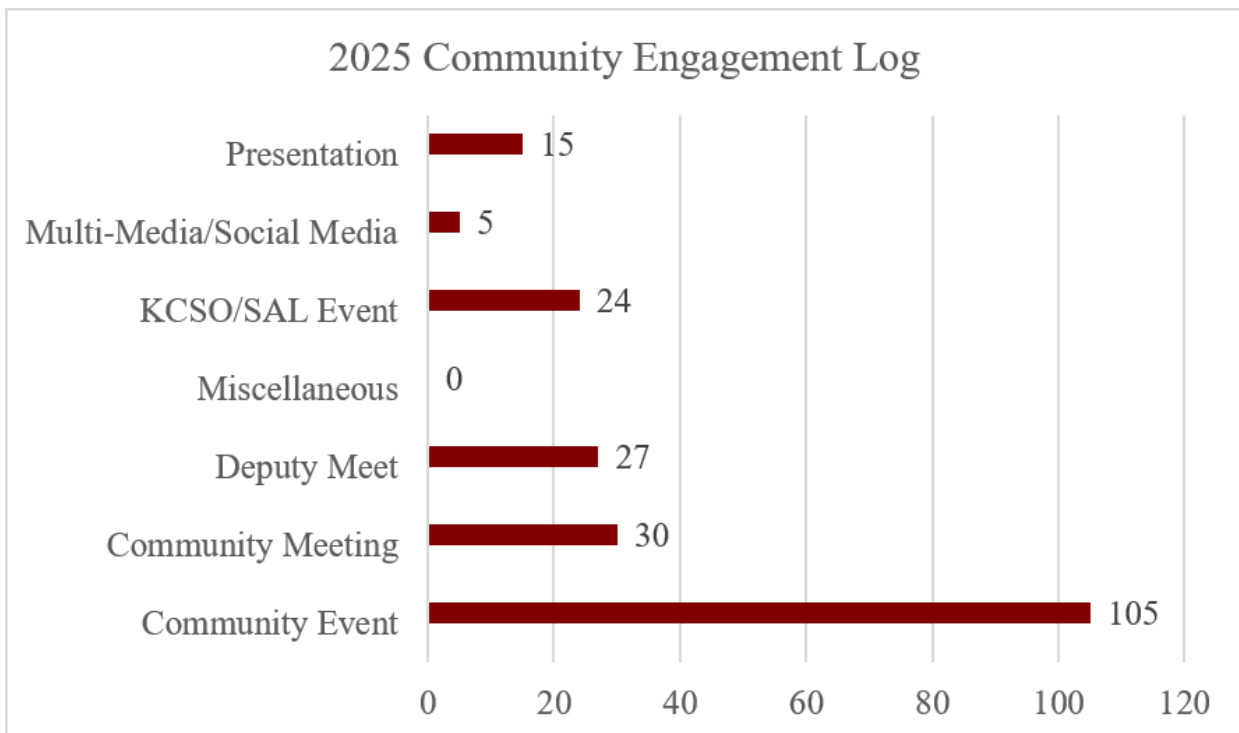
KCSO hopes to address issues identified by the community by developing new partnerships, holding more community events, and prioritizing recruitment. Programs offered by the CRU include resource fairs, media interviews, internet safety training, bullying information meetings, neighborhood watch programs, 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. Each year, the CRU has more event and program requests than in previous years. These meetings and events are educational opportunities for all parties to collaborate on solutions.



Community Oriented Policing: Community Relations Unit

The Kern County Sheriff's Office Community Relations Unit (CRU) served approximately 80,774 community members in 2025 through participation in community events and outreach programs. During the year, CRU received 339 requests for events and programs and fulfilled 206 requests, resulting in an fulfillment rate of 61%. A total of 133 requests were declined due to staffing limitations or scheduling conflicts with previously committed events.

The chart below depicts the number of events by type. Despite resource constraints, CRU maintained a substantial community presence and engaged tens of thousands of residents throughout Kern County. The volume of requests received demonstrates strong community demand for CRU services and programs. Additionally, the 39% of requests that could not be accommodated highlight opportunities to expand outreach efforts through increased staffing, additional volunteer support, or greater scheduling flexibility. Enhancing CRU capacity could allow the Sheriff's Office to meet more community requests, strengthen partnerships, and further its mission of fostering positive relationships between law enforcement and the communities it serves.



For definitions of events listed in the Community Engagement Log, please refer to the glossary in the 2023 Annual Report — <https://www.kernsheriff.org/documents/transparency/annual-reports/annual-report/kcso-annual-report-2023.pdf>



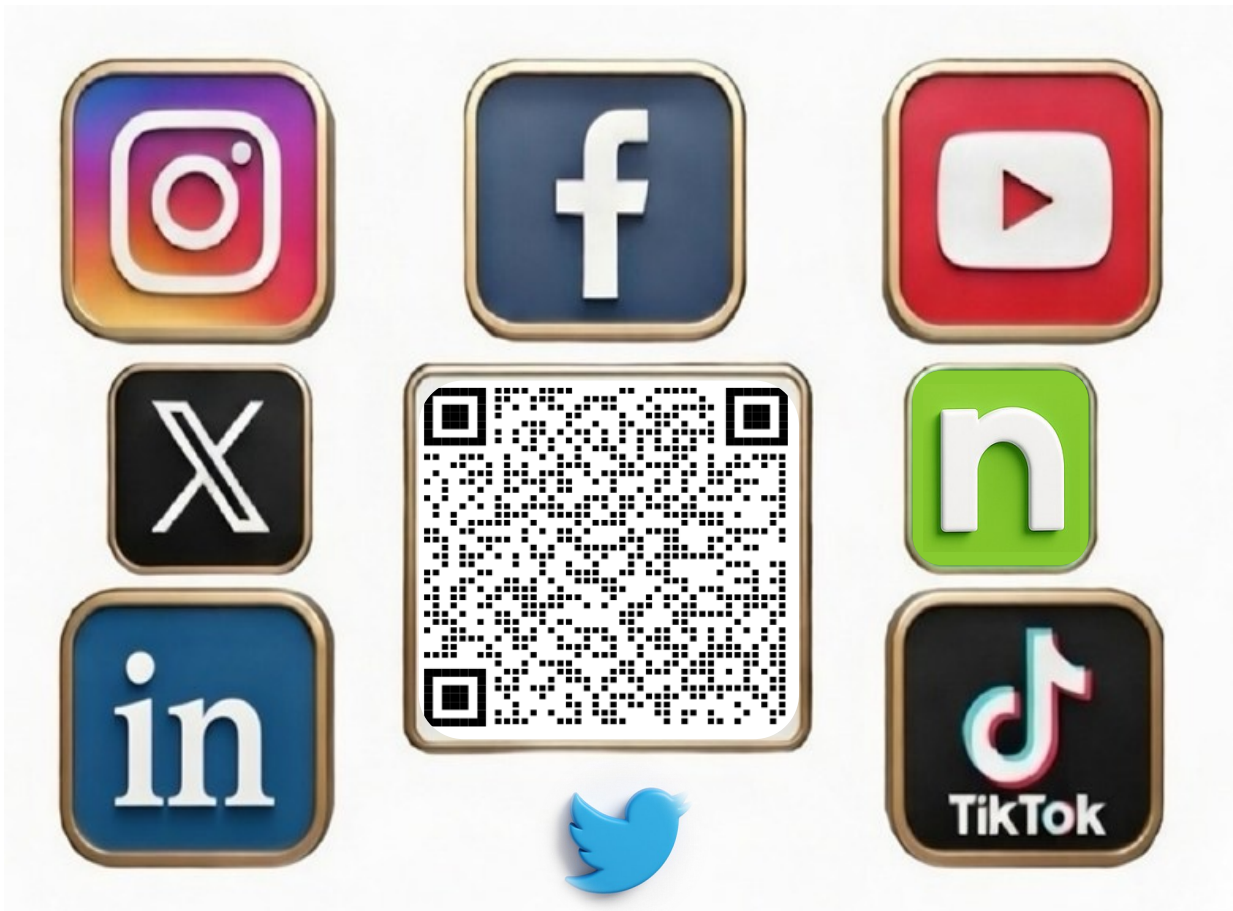
Community Oriented Policing: Social Media

The Kern County Sheriff's Office is committed to maintaining and promoting open communication with Kern County residents. To support this goal, the Public Information Officer and Community Relations Unit actively engage with the community through a variety of social media platforms to inform, educate, and connect with the public while furthering the mission of the Sheriff's Office.

Although digital communication methods may not reach all community members, particularly those without internet access, social media has proven to be an effective tool for rapidly disseminating information, sharing public safety messages, highlighting community programs, and fostering engagement with residents.

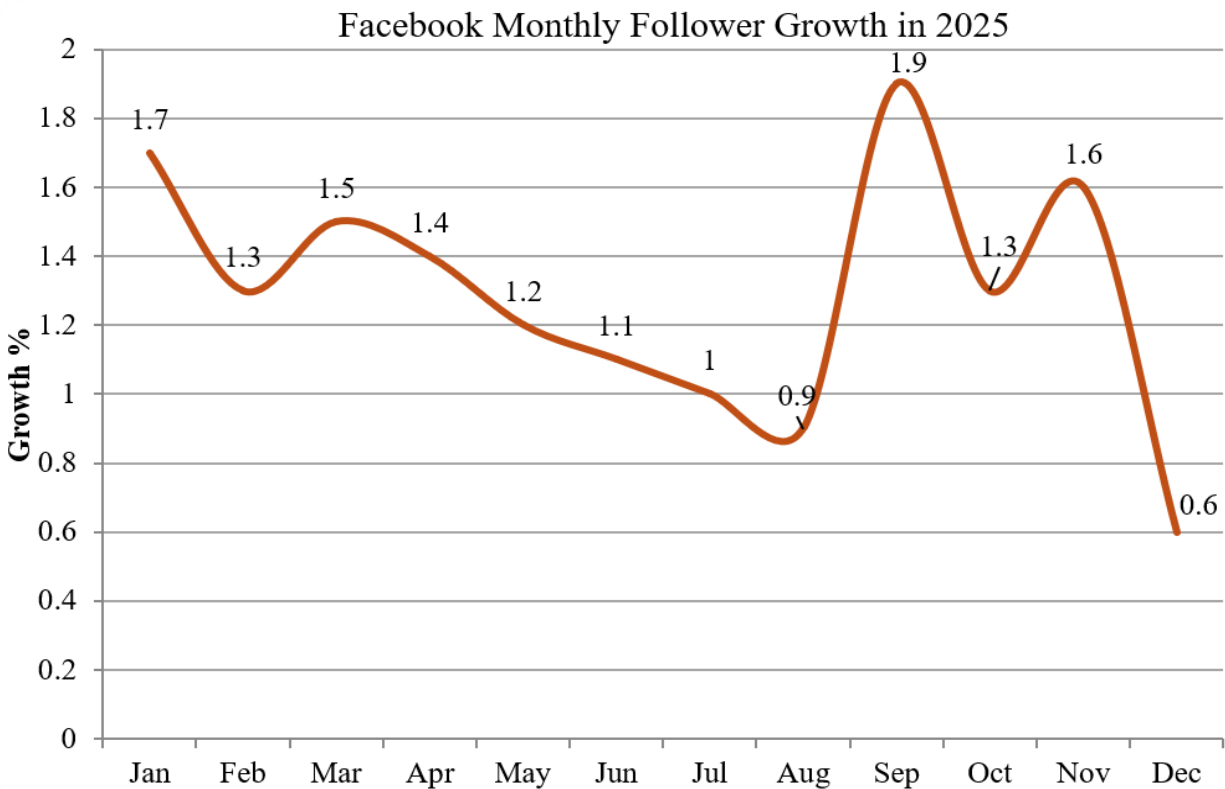
The Sheriff's Office maintains a presence on several widely used social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, and Nextdoor. Residents can access these platforms and additional online resources through the Kern County Sheriff's Office Linktree page — <https://linktr.ee/kerncosheriff>.

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





Community Oriented Policing: Social Media



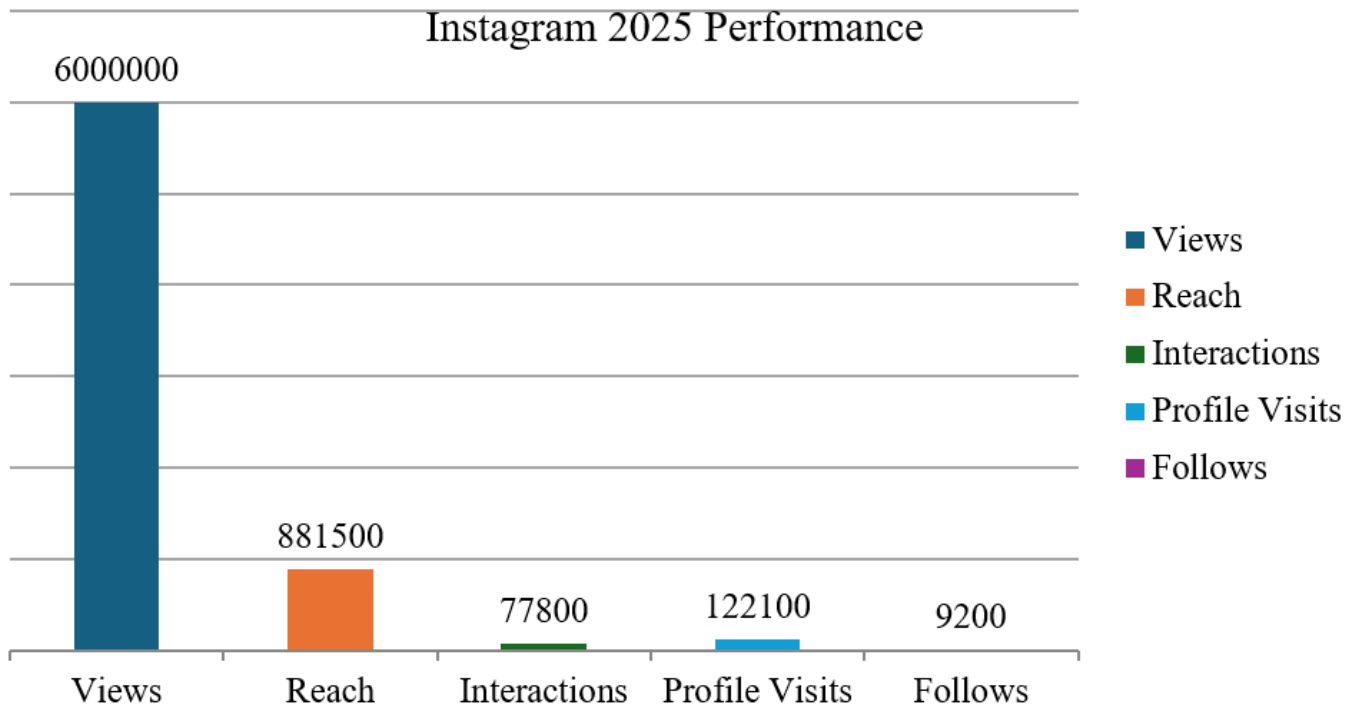
Facebook continued to demonstrate steady audience growth throughout 2025, finishing the year with approximately 78,054 followers. Audience demographics and geographic distribution remained largely unchanged throughout the year. Bakersfield continued to represent the largest concentration of followers, accounting for approximately 69 percent of the audience. The vast majority of followers were located within the United States, with smaller audiences in Mexico, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Nigeria. Women continued to represent the majority of the department's Facebook audience.

The strongest follower gains were observed during periods of heightened public interest, including emergency incidents, enforcement operations, recruitment campaigns, and community-focused events such as National Night Out, memorial observances, and holiday activities. Paid hiring and cadet recruitment promotions also generated measurable increases in audience growth, demonstrating the effectiveness of targeted outreach efforts.

Overall, Facebook remained an effective platform for informing the public, promoting transparency, and engaging Kern County residents. Although follower growth varied throughout the year, the consistent upward trend and sustained engagement indicate that the Sheriff's Office continues to successfully leverage social media as a key communication tool for public safety information, recruitment, and community outreach.



Community Oriented Policing: Social Media



Instagram continued to serve as one of the Sheriff's Office's most effective platforms for audience engagement and content discovery throughout 2025. The account generated approximately 6.0 million views, reached more than 881,500 users, recorded 77,800 content interactions, generated 122,100 profile visits, and gained approximately 9,200 new followers during the year.

Growth remained strong across nearly all performance metrics, indicating that Instagram content consistently reached audiences beyond the department's existing follower base. Reach and visibility increased substantially throughout the year, while engagement metrics reflected continued public interest in KCSO content. High levels of profile visits and follower growth suggest that users who discovered content were frequently motivated to learn more about the organization and follow the account for future updates.

Several periods of elevated activity corresponded with high-profile incidents, recruitment campaigns, public safety messaging, community events, and collaborative operations. Similar to Facebook, content involving emergency incidents, enforcement activities, search and rescue operations, and community outreach efforts often generated the strongest audience response and visibility.

Overall, Instagram proved to be a valuable platform for expanding audience reach, increasing public engagement, and promoting awareness of the Sheriff's Office initiatives. While Facebook continued to provide a stable and highly localized audience base, Instagram delivered the strongest discovery and engagement performance, allowing the department to connect with both existing followers and new audiences throughout Kern County and beyond. The continued use of visual storytelling, timely public information, recruitment messaging, and community-focused content positions the department for sustained growth and engagement in 2026.



Community Oriented Policing: Social Media

While growth occurred consistently across most months, several noticeable increases coincided with high-profile incidents, recruitment campaigns, public safety messaging, and community engagement initiatives. Unlike previous years, where growth patterns were often gradual, 2025 saw periodic spikes associated with paid promotions, viral public-interest stories, search and rescue operations, and multi-agency collaborations.

Notably, February was the only month during 2025 to experience a significant decline in followers. The decrease closely aligned with posts regarding Vagos Motorcycle Club arrests and a countywide phone outage, making it the only period in which specific content appeared to correlate with a measurable loss in followers. In contrast, all remaining months showed overall net audience growth.

While several follower increases could be linked to identifiable events, many growth periods were not attributable to a single post or campaign. Instead, audience gains often appeared to result from a combination of public safety messaging, community engagement efforts, recruitment initiatives, and ongoing public interest in the Sheriff's Office activities. One particularly noteworthy trend occurred in November, when a significant increase in followers was observed on a day with no new content published, suggesting delayed audience response to high-interest posts from the preceding weeks.





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 the Sheriff's Office 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.

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, which 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 CAC strives to make law enforcement practices more transparent and community-centered. The CAC'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, 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.

In 2025, the Kern County Sheriff's Office **facilitated 4 quarterly meetings** and participated in numerous monthly subcommittee meetings. Formal minutes were maintained for the quarterly meetings, while subcommittee members documented their respective working sessions. These member-generated records were utilized, where applicable, to compile portions of this annual summary. In 2025, CAC subcommittees—the Policy, Communications and Engagement, and Community Policing Subcommittees—conducted approximately **21** meetings.

The CAC Quarterly Meetings provided a consistent forum for KCSO, CAC members, and subcommittees to review progress, address organizational matters, and discuss community engagement. Key themes throughout the year included policy review and Stipulated Judgment compliance, Language Access, community outreach, CAC recruitment, Community Policing, transparency, governance, and strengthening relationships between KCSO and the community.

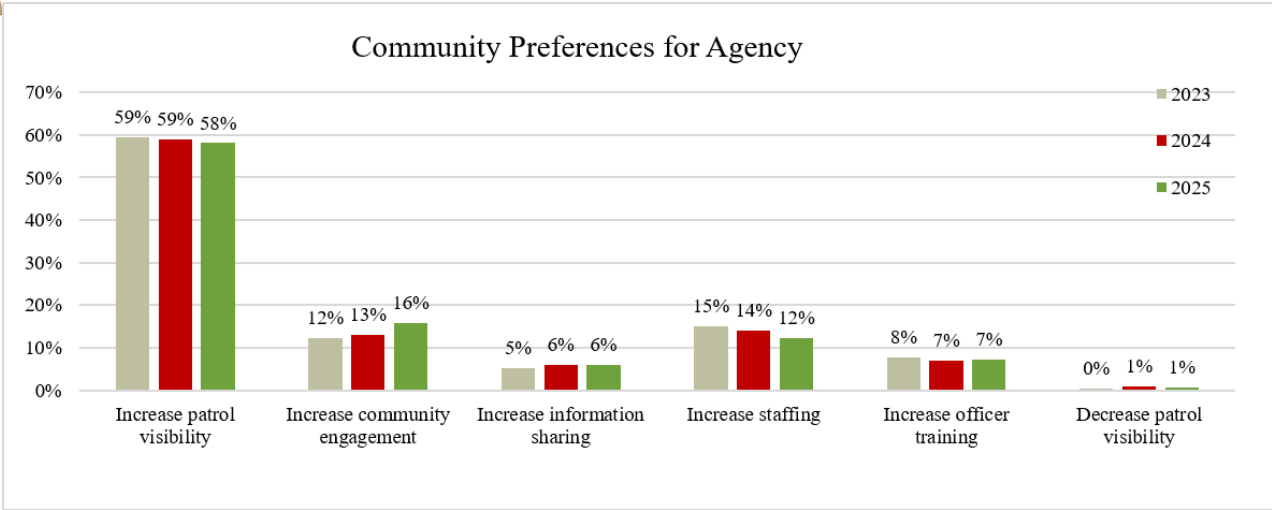
The quarterly meetings also reflected the CAC's continued efforts to expand community participation, improve access to information, and establish processes for providing meaningful community input into KCSO policies and practices.



The CAC continually seeks additional community participation. Interested community members are encouraged to apply at <https://kerncac.org/get-involved>. Meeting minutes (https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ZCMD93fVZAs2GoJ4Y_KwwPBQQbEEXdFw) and recorded videos (<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1VS0COX8JkgF5RMtcc4NfRPZLkvSAAIgy>) are available.



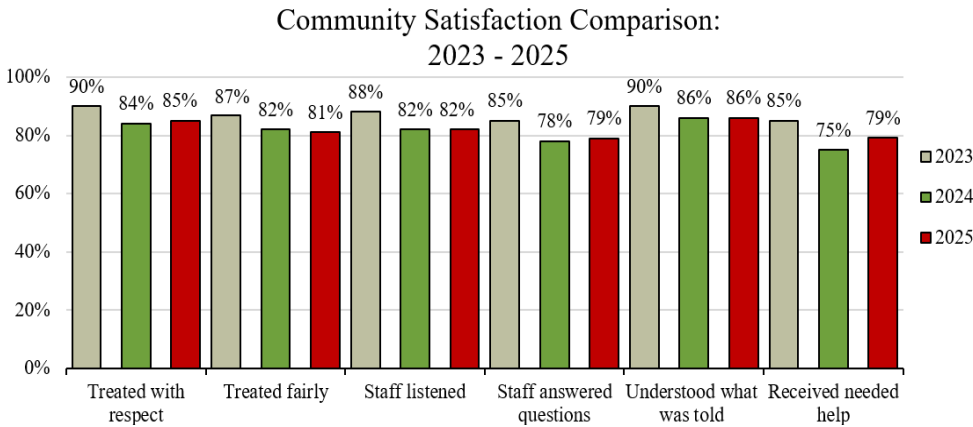
Community Surveys



In late 2023, KCSO began utilizing 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 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 Sheriff’s Office 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 that a visible law enforcement presence continues to serve as both a deterrent and a reassurance for community members. 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 2025. It should be noted, 2023 data was not a full year. Overall satisfaction remained positive in 2025, with most ratings remaining consistent with or slight improvement from 2024. Improvements were observed in the percentage of respondents who reported that staff answered their questions and provided the help they needed. Ratings for being treated with respect also increased slightly from 2024, while other categories remained stable or showed minor decline. Despite these fluctuations, all satisfaction measures remained at or above 75%, reflecting continued confidence in the professionalism and courtesy of Sheriff’s Office personnel.



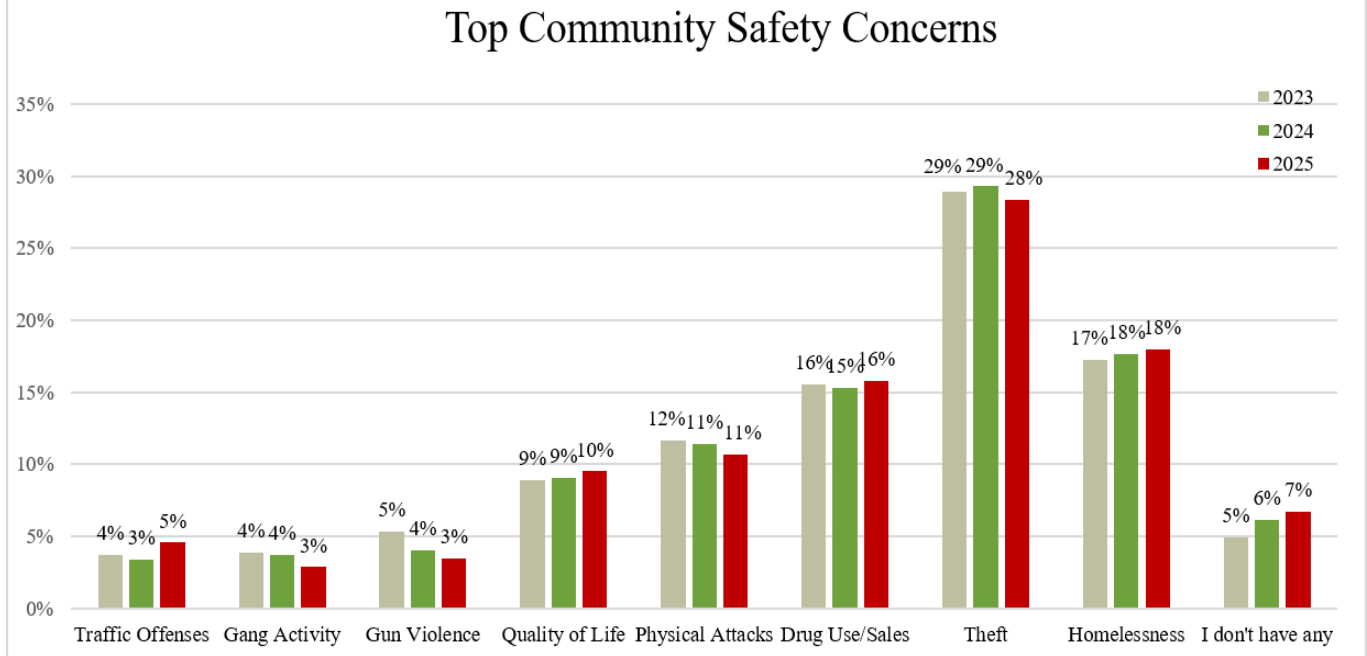
Community Surveys

Community feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with words such as “Appreciate,” “Professional,” “Respect,” “Quick,” “Listen,” and “Response” appearing more prominently based upon the frequency these terms were used. This suggests community members valued KCSO’s professionalism, responsiveness, respectful interactions, and willingness to listen. While some negative terms were present, they appeared far less frequently than positive feedback.



The chart below highlights a shift in the community’s safety priorities. Traffic offenses and drug use/sales were cited more frequently as top community concerns in 2025 compared to 2024. Conversely, concerns about gang activity and gun violence declined notably. The data suggests that while safety issues like gang activity and gun violence have eased, traffic offenses and drug-related crimes are once again becoming a more significant concern for residents, emphasizing the need for proactive community policing and targeted enforcement strategies.

Top Community Safety Concerns



The 2025 community feedback results indicate that overall public satisfaction with the Kern County Sheriff’s Office remains strong, despite modest declines in several area 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 traffic, quality of life 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.

KCSO plans to increase the amount of problem-oriented policing projects in 2026, with the implementation of a new Community Policing Policy and Strategic Plan.



Language Access

The Sheriff's Office continued efforts throughout 2025 to improve language access and ensure meaningful communication with individuals who have limited English proficiency (LEP). These efforts support the Sheriff's Office's commitment to providing equitable access to public safety services, information, and programs for all residents of Kern County.

As part of its ongoing compliance efforts, the Sheriff's Office continued to work in partnership with the County toward the implementation of a comprehensive language access framework. The CAC has members with experience in language access, community engagement, and public service delivery. These collaborative efforts support the requirements outlined in the Stipulated Judgment entered into with the California Attorney General's Office. These requirements include development of a language access policy, employee training, designation of a language access coordinator, and implementation of an audit process to evaluate effectiveness and compliance.

The Sheriff's Office currently utilizes multiple resources to assist individuals with limited English proficiency. Certified bilingual employees provide direct language assistance when available. Additionally, the Sheriff's Office uses professional interpretation services to provide telephonic interpretation for field operations, station interactions, detention facilities, and emergency communications. These services allow deputies, dispatchers, and detention personnel to communicate with individuals speaking a wide range of languages when bilingual staff is unavailable. KCSO communications personnel also have access to interpreter services for emergency and non-English-speaking callers through established 9-1-1 translation capabilities.

While these resources have significantly improved language access capabilities, the Sheriff's Office recognizes that challenges remain. Certain encounters may involve languages that are difficult to immediately identify or languages for which interpreter availability is limited. As a result, the Sheriff's Office continues to evaluate additional solutions that can enhance language access in both emergency and non-emergency settings.

In 2025, the Sheriff's Office explored emerging technologies and services designed to expand language accessibility during community meetings, public events, and outreach efforts. These efforts included evaluating web-based translation platforms capable of providing real-time multilingual translation services through artificial intelligence (AI) to participants attending public meetings and community engagement events. Currently, the Sheriff's Office is testing the accuracy of this technology and seeking additional vendors to meet the community's needs.

KCSO also continued efforts to improve accessibility of public-facing resources. The Sheriff's Office previously launched an online complaint form available in English, Spanish, and other languages including those that the County must provide to voters during an election. These efforts support the Sheriff's Office's goal of ensuring that all community members can report concerns, access information, and communicate with the Sheriff's Office regardless of their primary language.

Language access remains an important component of public trust, community engagement, and effective public safety service delivery. By continuing to expand interpretation resources, improve multilingual communications, and implement language access policies and training, KCSO is working to ensure that all residents can effectively communicate with law enforcement, understand their rights, and access critical services when needed.



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.

The Sheriff's Office Crisis Intervention Team consists of trained deputies who are next to respond when MET resources are unavailable. The Sheriff's Office 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 the Sheriff's Office.

All new deputies receive CIT training as part of the Academy, and the Sheriff's Office continues to work toward training all deputies. At the time of this report, the following represents the proportion of personnel trained. The Sheriff's Office added CIT courses in 2025, offering more opportunities to take the course, which has resulted in nearly 100% of deputies, detentions deputies, and dispatchers trained.

Assignment/ Classification	CIT- Trained 2022	CIT- Trained 2023	CIT- Trained 2024	CIT- Trained 2025	Pending CIT- Trained	Out of Total Staff
Patrol	79%	86%	98.27%	98.7%	1.73%	519
Detentions	0%	98%	100%	99.1%	.9%	319
Dispatchers	0%	83%	100%	88.8%	11.2%	45
Park Rangers	—	—	77.1%	91.4%	8.6%	35

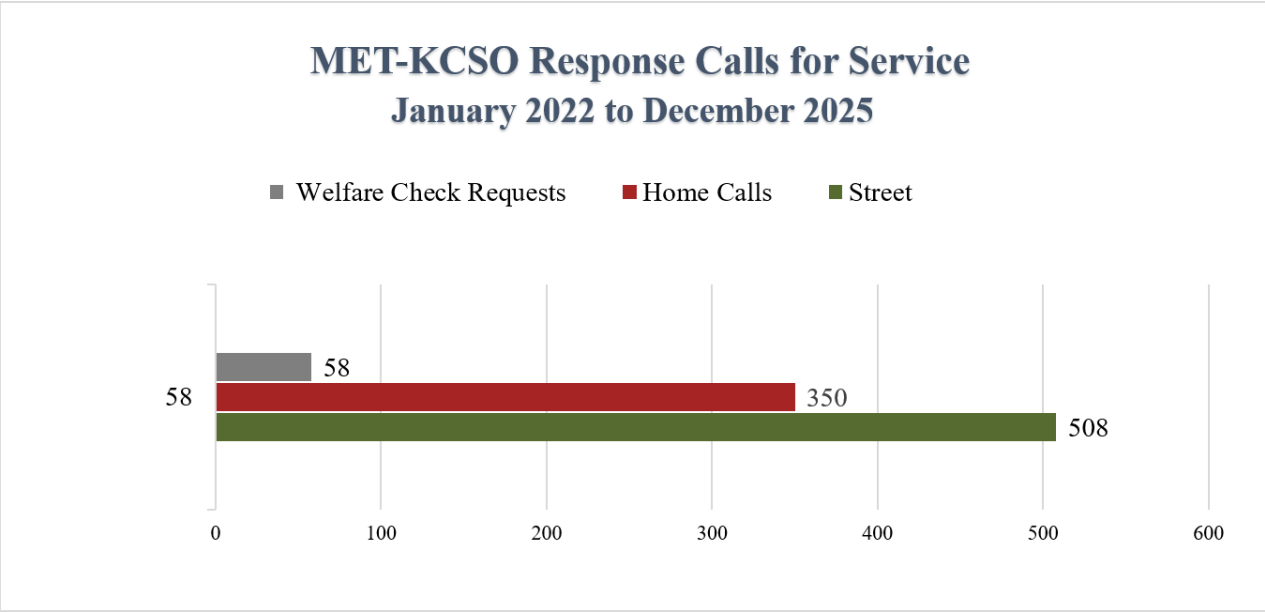
Refresher Training

The Sheriff's Office has 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 submitted a proposal to the Monitoring Team and DOJ regarding the necessary amount of in-service CIT training as mandated in the Stipulated Judgment, weaving it into Use of Force De-Escalation Training. This was approved and training is ongoing.



Kern County Mobile Evaluation Team (MET)



In addition to these efforts, KCSO and Kern County Behavioral Health provide staffing for a deputy and a Mobile Evaluation Team (MET) member to form a Joint Evaluation Team (JET) since 2023; there are currently 2 JET teams. Co-response calls for service data collected since that time includes both welfare check requests and field response contacts occurring in the community.

During 2025, the Sheriff's Office and MET responded to 12 welfare check requests, 76 street contacts, and 166 home call responses (the number of home calls tracked was added in 2024). Welfare check requests are typically initiated by members of the public who express concern regarding an individual's well-being. Street contacts involve encounters occurring in public settings, while home-call responses involve contacts made at residences or other private locations.

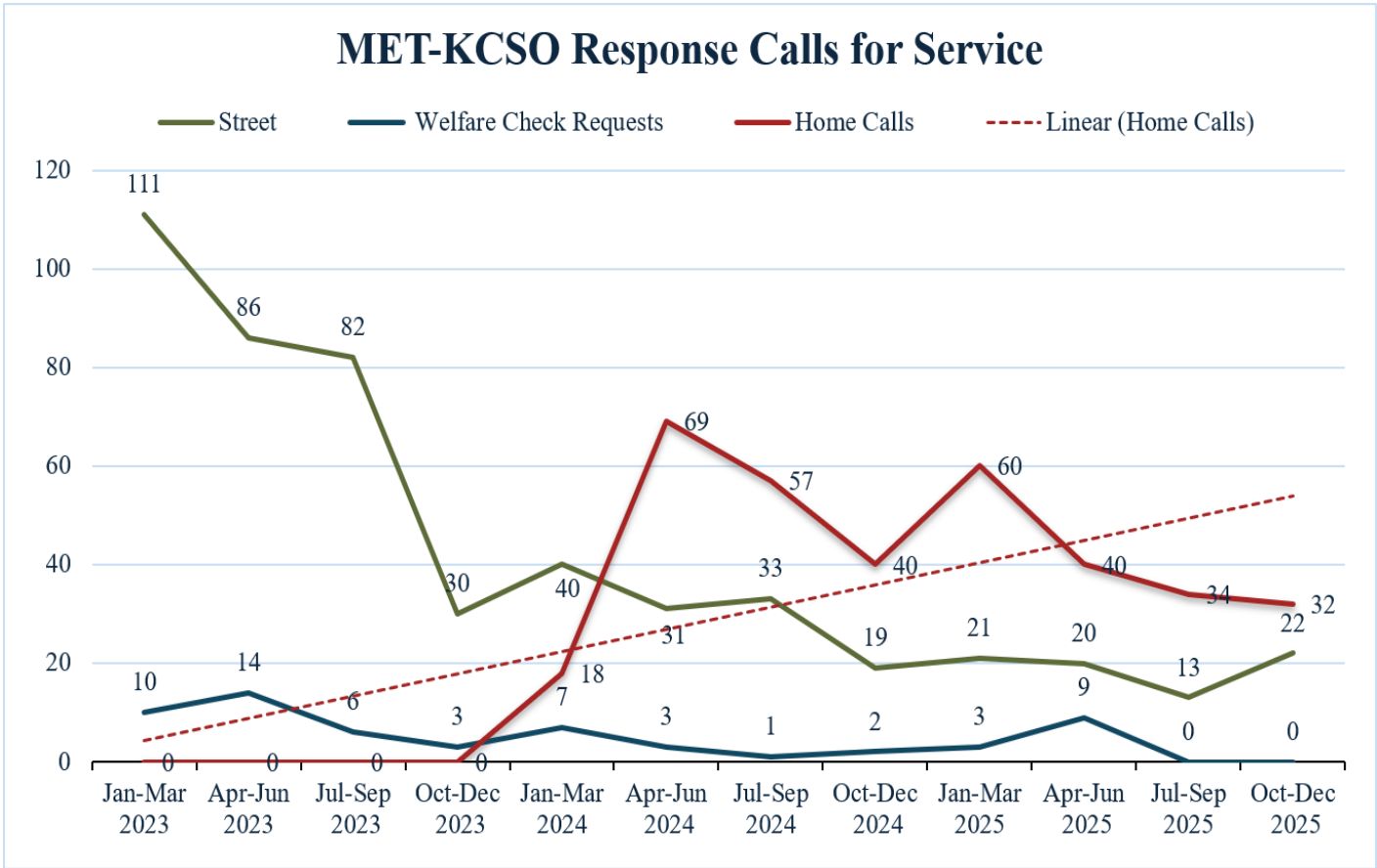
Since tracking began, the MET program has responded to a total of 79 welfare check requests, 707 street contacts, and 350 home-call responses. The continued use of the co-response model demonstrates the ongoing partnership between the Sheriff's Office and Kern County Behavioral Health in addressing behavioral health-related calls for service, connecting individuals to appropriate resources, and reducing the need for more restrictive interventions when possible.



Kern County Mobile Evaluation Team (MET)

The chart below illustrates MET co-response activity from 2022 through 2025, including street contacts, home-call responses, and welfare check requests. While street contacts have generally declined over the reporting period, the addition of home-call tracking beginning in 2024 provides a more complete picture of service demand. When both street and home-call responses are considered together, overall field contacts have remained relatively consistent, reflecting the continued need for behavioral health-related services throughout Kern County.

Welfare check requests have fluctuated over time rather than following a consistent upward or downward trend. Although some periods experienced fewer requests, quarterly activity varied throughout the reporting period, indicating ongoing community reliance on the MET program for behavioral health-related welfare concerns. Overall, the data demonstrates sustained utilization of the co-response model and continued collaboration between the Kern County Sheriff's Office and Kern County Behavioral Health in responding to individuals experiencing behavioral health crises.



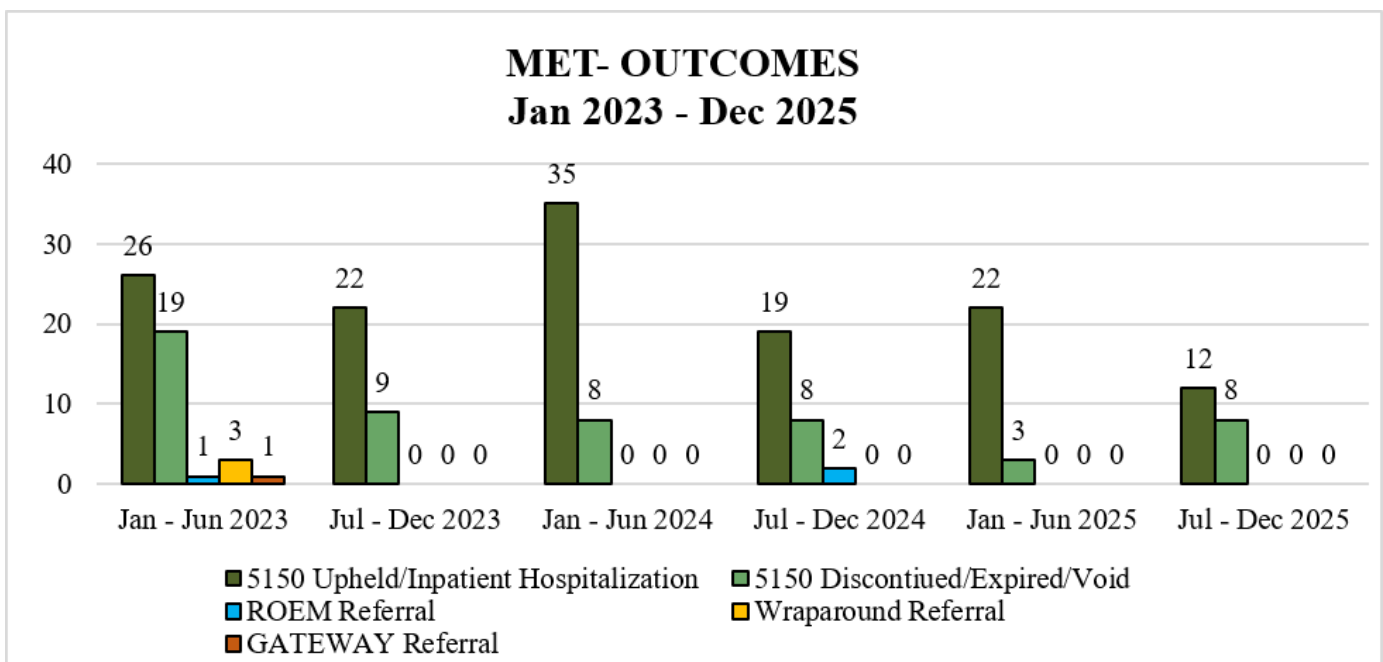


Kern County Mobile Evaluation Team (MET)

The MET team is designed to evaluate and identify the medical needs of individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. The goal is to facilitate appropriate referrals based on each person's needs, including involuntary psychiatric evaluation (Welfare and Institutions Code § 5150) when warranted.

During the reporting period, the MET team handled 197 documented outcomes. Of those, 69.0% resulted in a 5150 upheld/inpatient hospitalization, while 27.9% involved a 5150 that was discontinued, expired, or voided, indicating the individual was stable enough that immediate hospitalization was not necessary. Additionally, 1.0% resulted in referrals to the Relational Outreach and Engagement Model (ROEM) program, which provides outreach and engagement services for homeless and hard-to-engage individuals seeking assistance. 1.5% were referred to Wraparound services, which provide intensive, family-centered support for youth with complex needs, and 0.5% were referred to Gateway, which connects individuals struggling with substance use with treatment.

The chart below illustrates semiannual call volumes from 2023 to 2025. 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.



Providing MET response in outlying areas and in or around the City of Bakersfield has been a challenge. KCSO worked in collaboration with MET to develop a Virtual MET policy, in which Sheriff's Office 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. JET utilizes a co-response model that pairs a behavioral-health professional with a KCSO deputy to address situations requiring both behavioral-health intervention and public-safety support. Together, these resources support KCSO's goal of safely responding to individuals experiencing behavioral-health crises while reducing unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system. Sheriff's Office believes that the MET team is a great collaboration and looks forward to their continued partnership to ensure ongoing improvements in handling MET crisis calls.



Civil Litigation

As with any government organization civil litigation claims are occasionally made 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 as unlawful 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 the involved employees. When misconduct occurs, KCSO also holds its employees accountable through a robust disciplinary process and files criminal charges against employees, when appropriate.

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		
Year	Case	Allegation
Pre-2021	Lewis, Jr., Mickel (CC202117742 / USDC 1:21-CV-00378)	Officer-Involved Shooting / Use of Force
2023	Deveroux, Alain, et al. v. County, et al. (USDC 1:23-CV-00239)	Excessive Use of Force
2024	Arriana Maria Sanchez v. Kern County & Craig Reinhart (KCSC BCV-24-102376)	Excessive Use of Force
2025	Phillips v. County of Kern (EDCA 1:25-CV-00875-KES-CDB)	Use of Force / Civil Rights
	Hughes v. County of Kern, et al. (KCSC BCV-25-10145)	Excessive Use of Force
	Garrido v. County of Kern, et al. (EDCA 1:25-cv-01313-CDB)	Excessive Use of Force



Use of Force

LEGAL STANDARDS

Federal and State law define 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 inmates' 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 park rangers 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 that 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 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's 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.

The Sheriff's Office currently has a variety of less-lethal devices available to personnel for daily field operations and other tactical situations. When possible, less-lethal options are used to lower likelihood of causing more serious injury.





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.

In custodial facilities, stun shields offer protection for detentions deputies 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; projectile and chemical agents can cause unintended injury or affect bystanders, TASERS require proximity and present medical risk in some populations, and physical control tools demand rigorous training therefore 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:

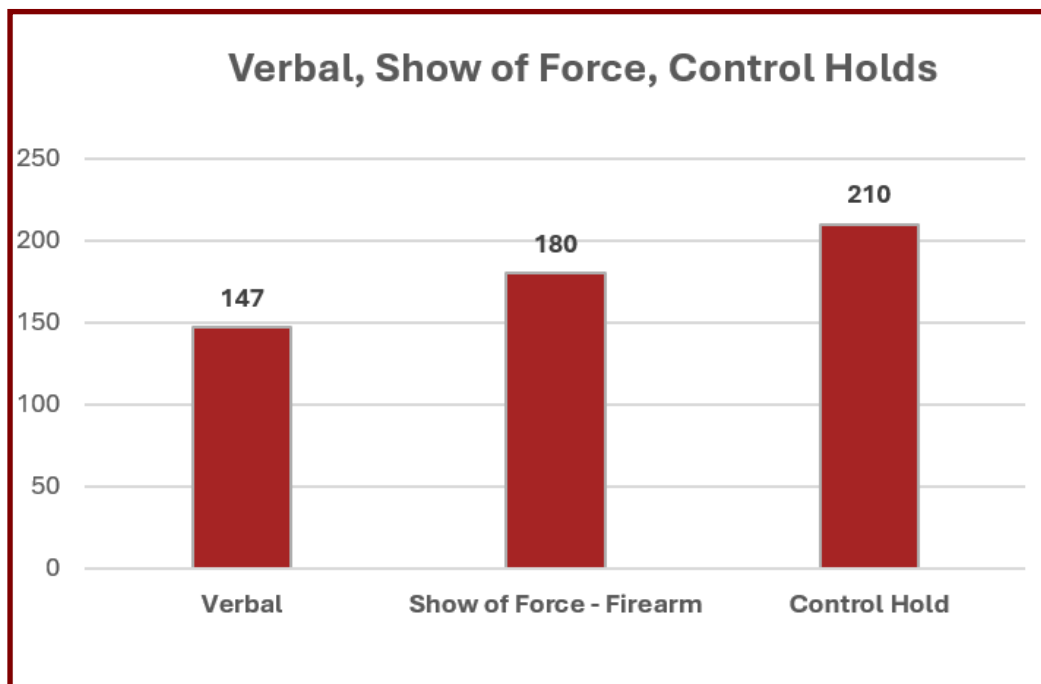
Less-Lethal Force Options Usage

In situations where a suspect is not actively resisting (requiring the need for immediate force to overcome their resistance), deputies will seek to gain voluntary compliance. Additionally, a show of force, along with a warning, can lead to a suspect submitting to the arrest. Successful de-escalation that leads to a suspect voluntarily complying without needing to use force is not counted as a reportable use of force. Deputies frequently use control holds during handcuffing that also may not be considered a use of force.

The chart below shows when “Control Holds,” “Verbal,” and “Show of Force - Firearm” occurred between deputies and a suspect. Yet, a use of force was still reported 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.

The chart below highlights 180 “Show of Force - Firearm” incidents, 210 control holds, and 147 verbal commands given within incidents. This information does not represent the total number of UOF incidents. Rather, it reflects the individual UOF options or tactics reported within those incidents. For example, the 180 reported shows of force may represent multiple deputies involved in a single incident or multiple uses-of-force options documented within the same incident. Accordingly, the data should be interpreted as the frequency of specific UOF options reported, rather than as the number of distinct UOF incidents.



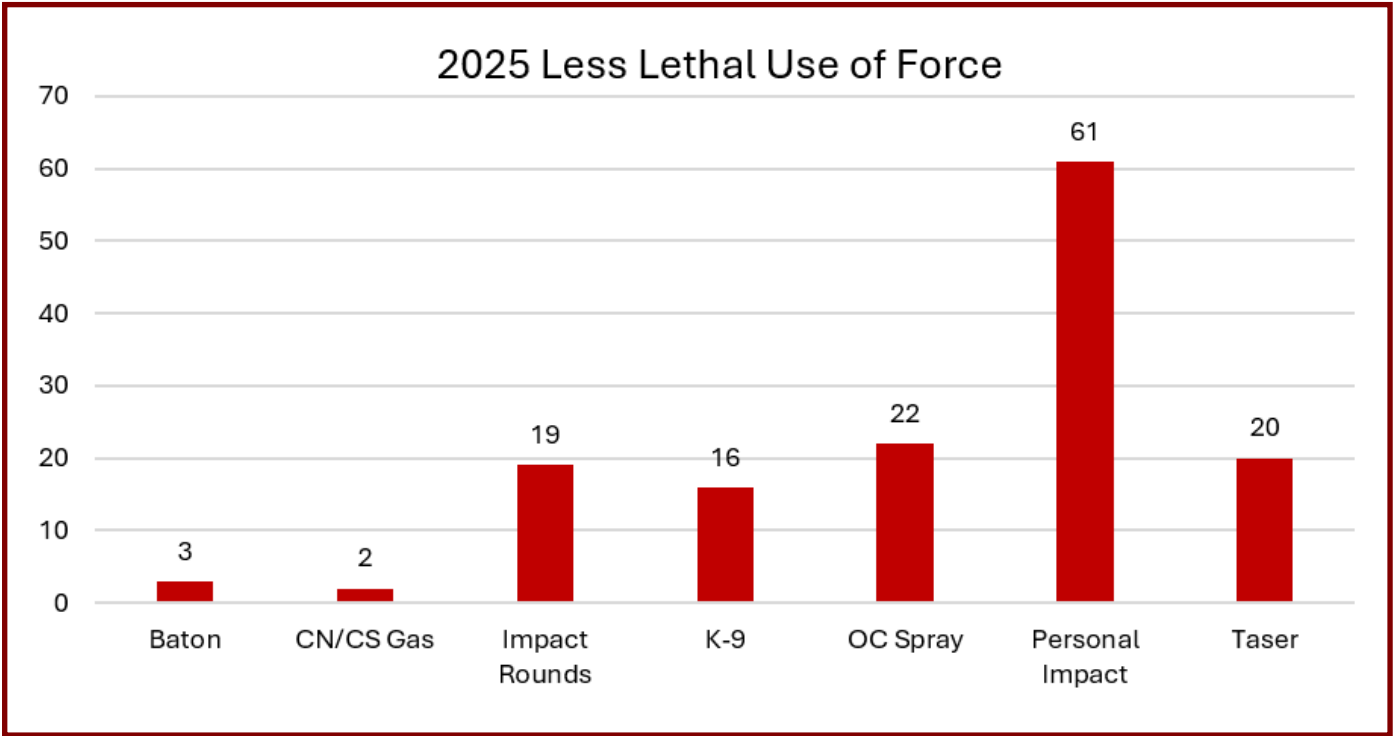


Use of Force:

Less-Lethal Force Options Usage

In incidents where a suspect continued to resist law enforcement efforts to effect a detention or arrest, deputies used force to gain compliance and safely resolve the encounter. The chart below illustrates the use of less-lethal force options during 2025. The "Personal Impact" category includes strikes such as punches, kicks, or the use of body weight to overcome a suspect's resistance. Personal Impact was the most frequently used less-lethal force option, accounting for 61 applications. Other less-lethal force options included OC Spray (22), Taser (20), Impact Rounds (19), K-9 deployments (16), Baton (3), and CN/CS Gas (2).

The data indicate that Deputy Sheriffs most commonly relied on hands-on control techniques and other lower-level force options to gain compliance when subjects resisted arrest or detention, while specialty less-lethal tools were used less frequently and as circumstances required. Please note that each force option category shown may have been used in the same incident.



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

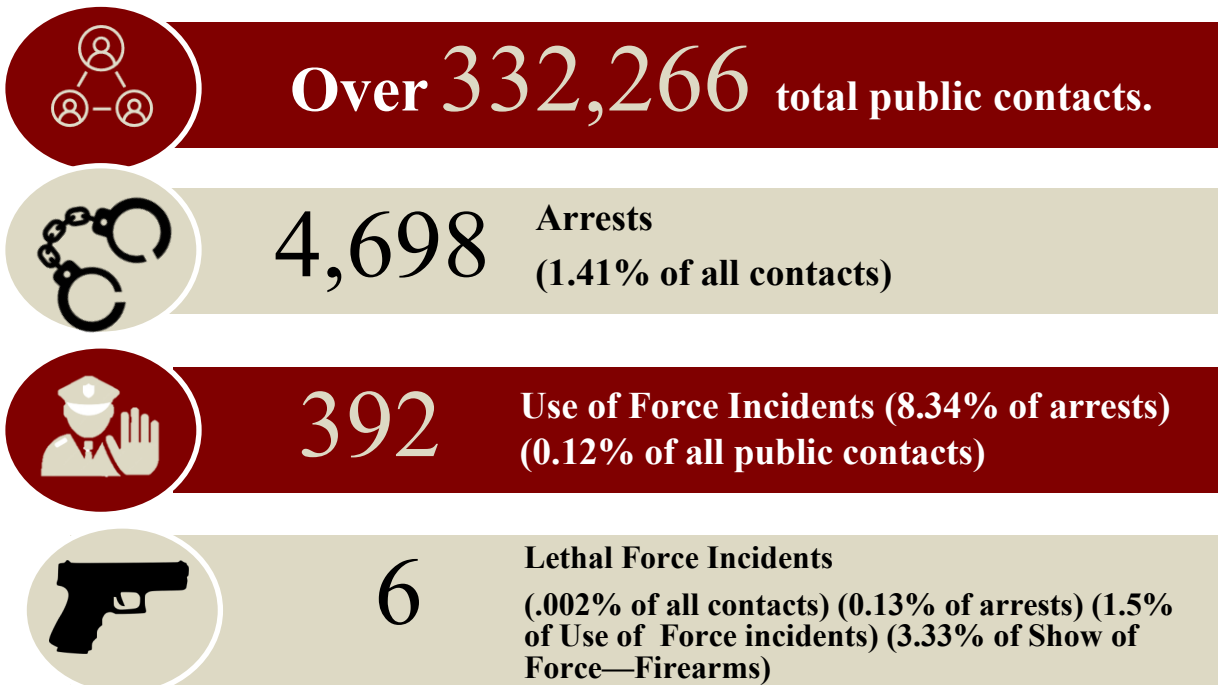
** It should be noted that none of these option occurred during civil unrest incidents. Any such incidents are reported on KCSO's Transparency Page in accordance with Penal Code 13652.1(Assembly Bill 48—2021).

***As a result of this analysis, KCSO is exploring the option to add "Body Weight" as an additional option to separate from "Personal Weapons" for better tracking.



Use of Force: Patrol Bureau

In 2025, the Kern County Sheriff's Office Deputy Sheriffs responded to 166,133 calls for service from victims and reporting parties. During these calls for service, KCSO estimates an average of two members of the public per call, totaling 332,266 public contacts for the year. As a result of these contacts, 4,698 arrests were made, and 392 use-of-force incidents occurred (6 of which were officer-involved shooting incidents). Those arrested in the figures below do not include those cited and released, court remands, and court-ordered commitments.

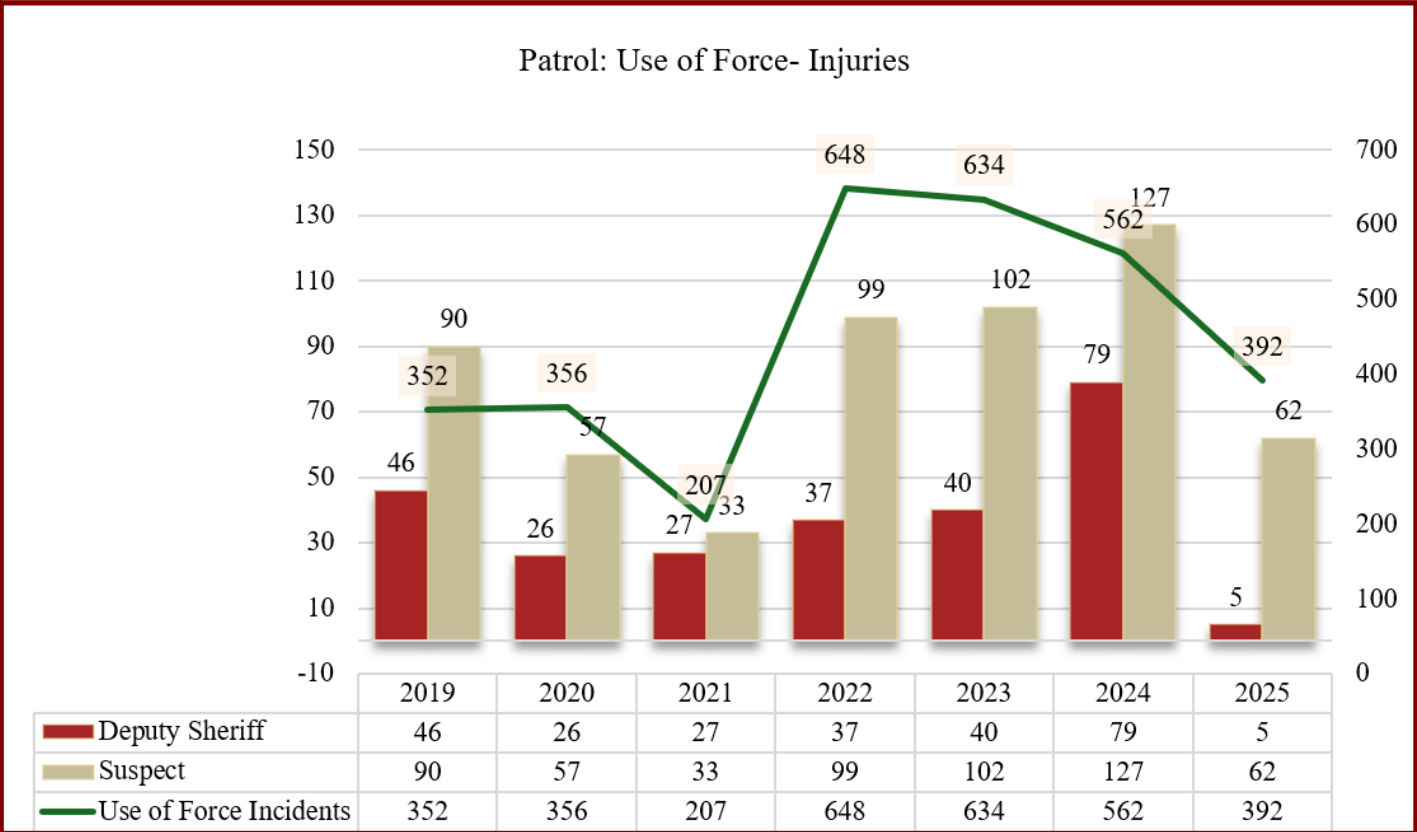


Following the Critical Incident Review, which is outlined in DPPM F-1200, the PIO will work with the Investigations Division to release informational videos that summarize critical incidents. The videos are posted to the KCSO social media platforms and submitted to local media outlets. In addition, the Transparency Page of the KCSO website will serve as a repository of all such videos. Critical incident videos and additional statistics are available online at <https://www.kernsheriff.org/Transparency>.



Use of Force: Injuries

In 2025, the Kern County Sheriff's Office documented 392 Use of Force (UOF) incidents, representing a decrease from 562 incidents in 2024. Reported injuries also declined, with 62 suspect injuries and 5 Deputy injuries recorded in 2025, compared to 127 suspect injuries and 79 Deputy Sheriff injuries in 2024 . Throughout the seven-year reporting period, suspect injuries consistently outnumbered Deputy injuries. The decline in both incidents and injuries during 2025 suggests continued efforts to safely de-escalate situations through effective tactics, communication, and increased staffing have been improving.



It is important to note that the methodology used to track use-of-force-related injuries has evolved over the reporting period. For 2019 through 2021, injuries were recorded at the incident level, meaning each use of force event was counted if it involved an injury to either a suspect or a Deputy Sheriff, regardless of the number of individuals injured during the incident.

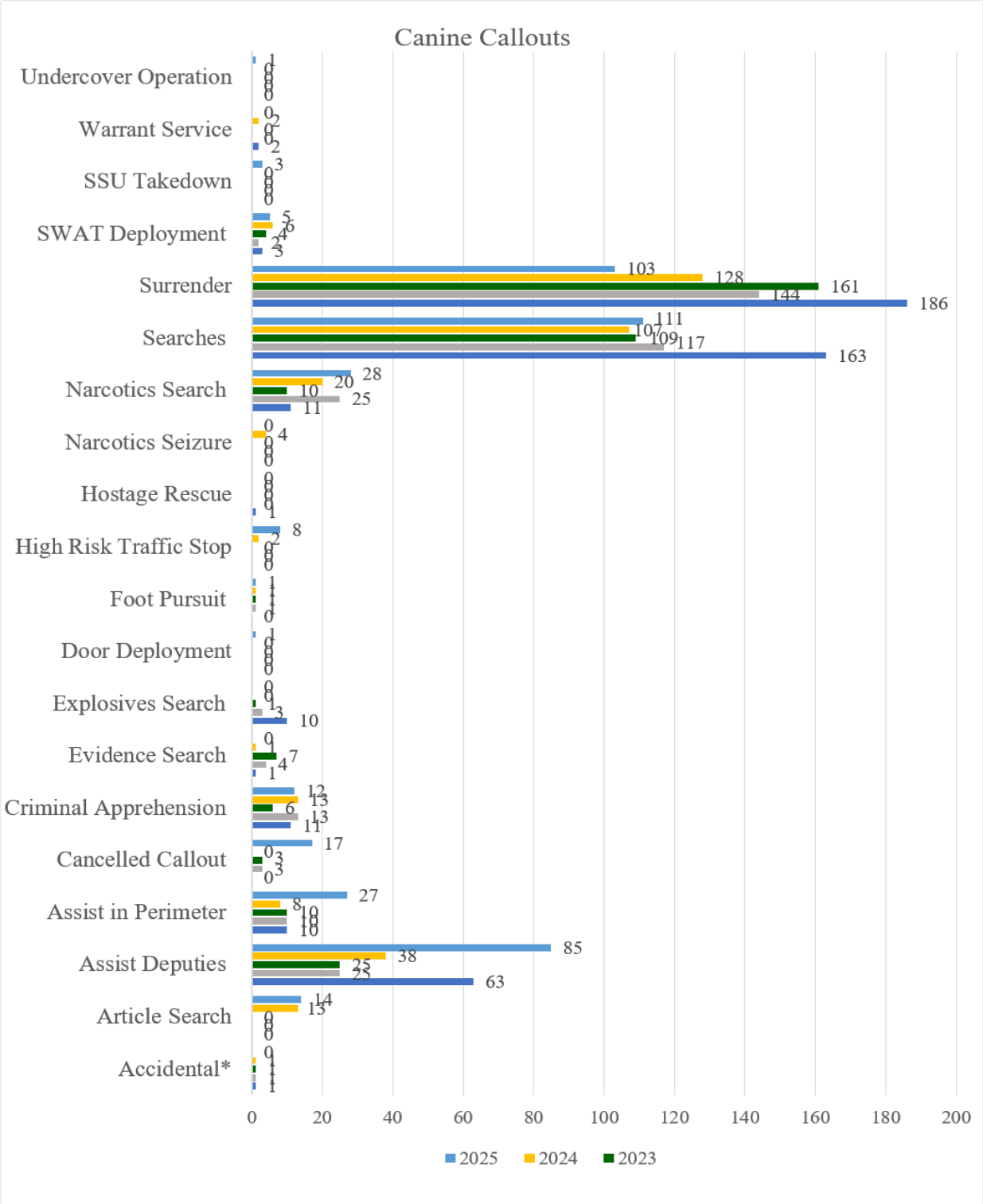
Beginning in 2022, the data collection process was modified to record each individual suspect and Deputy Sheriff who sustained an injury during a use of force incident. In 2024, the methodology was further refined to document injuries associated with each distinct use of force within an incident, providing a more comprehensive and detailed account of injury occurrences.

As a result of these changes in reporting practices, direct comparisons across years should be made with caution. While the chart reflects a decrease in the overall number of use of force incidents in recent years, the enhanced data collection methods contributed to an increase in the number of reported injuries involving both suspects and Deputy Sheriffs beginning in 2022, particularly when compared to earlier years that utilized incident-based reporting.



Use of Force: Canine Unit

Sheriff's Office Canine Unit responded to 5,036 calls for service and was involved in 416 deployments during 2025. Of the 416 deployments, 103 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 16 occasions. The remaining 297 deployments did not involve any individuals.



*Canine accidentally apprehended a member of the public in 2021, and a KCSO staff member in 2022, 2023 and 2024.



Use of Force: Canine Unit



Viktor



Rocky



Kajo



Rico



Duke



Turbo

Understanding how police canine deployments typically unfold helps provide perspective on bite 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 out of over 30,000 police dog arrests nationwide, only about 6.2 % resulted in a bite, meaning the vast majority of 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 that most deployments successfully locate, control, or deter a suspect without requiring a bite**. The Kern County Sheriff’s Office reports a bite-to-deploy ratio of 3.9 % (Bites / Deployments), meaning that only a small fraction of KCSO canine deployments result in an actual bite. This low ratio reflects the department’s emphasis on handler control methodology to safely locate or detain suspects in manner the seeks to reduce use of force.



*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/>



59



Use of Force: Officer Involved Shootings

In 2025, there were six 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>.

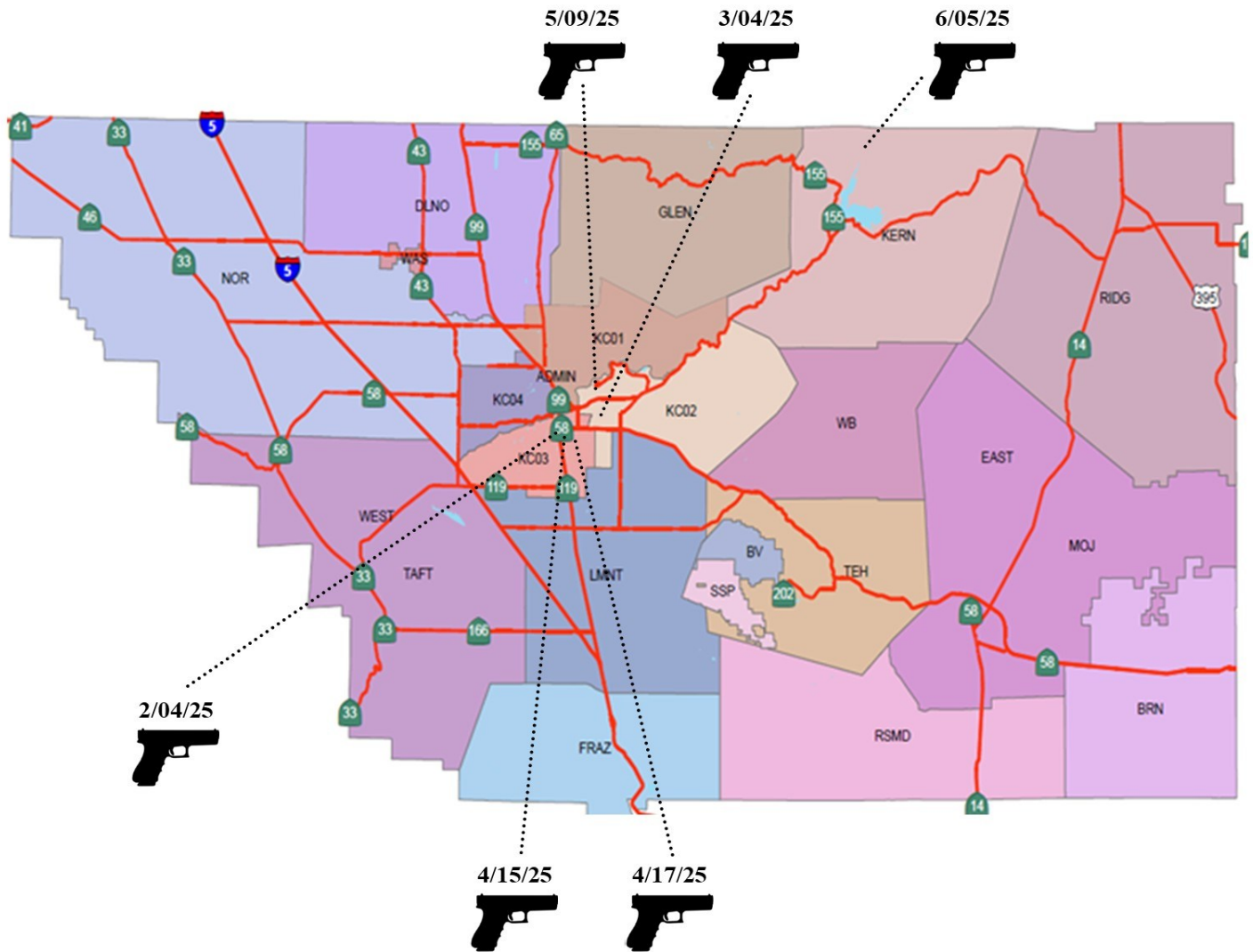
Suspect Weapon	No. of Incidents	Percentage
Handgun	2	33.3%
Rifle	1	16.7%
Officer’s Weapon	0	0%
Knife	2	33.3%
Shotgun	1	16.7%
Attacked Officer	0	0%

Suspect Ethnicity	No. of Individuals	Percentage	County Population
Black	1	16.7%	6.3%
Hispanic	3	50%	56.8%
White	2	33.3%	30.4%
Other	0	0%	6.5%

66.7% OF SUSPECTS WERE ARMED WITH A FIREARM
33.3% OF SUSPECTS WERE ARMED WITH A KNIFE



Use of Force: Officer Involved Shootings



In 2025, five (5) Officer Involved Shooting occurred in Metropolitan Bakersfield and one (1) occurred in Kernville. Please see summaries of each incident on the following pages.



Use of Force: Officer Involved Shootings

2025-00015848: On February 4, 2025, around 2320 hours, Air 1 located a pickup truck, which was reported stolen earlier in the day. Patrol deputies attempted a traffic stop, but the driver fled, leading to a short pursuit in East Bakersfield. The vehicle crashed into a fence near East Brundage Avenue and South Fairfax Road, and the suspect driver and the suspect passenger ran from the scene. As the suspects ran northbound toward a deputy, one suspect was reaching toward their waistband, causing the deputy to believe this suspect was attempting to retrieve a firearm, knife, or other weapon. The deputy drew their firearm and fired one round southward toward one of the suspects, but did not hit anyone. The passenger suspect surrendered nearby and was detained, while the driver suspect was chased down and taken into custody. No injuries occurred. The driver suspect was found in possession of methamphetamine, pliers, and a knife, and the passenger suspect had a glass smoking pipe. Both suspects were booked in a Kern County jail for felony and misdemeanor charges.

<https://youtu.be/WMmarefYo6Y>

2025-00027892: On March 4, 2025, deputies investigated a child molestation allegation against a male suspect involving inappropriate touching of an 11-year-old victim. Deputies obtained an emergency protective order (EPO), prohibiting the suspect from any contact with the victim. Deputies eventually located the suspect at Virginia Avenue Park in East Bakersfield. When deputies approached the suspect to serve him with the EPO, the suspect reached behind a nearby tree, grabbed a shotgun, and held it behind his back. Despite repeated commands to drop the weapon, the suspect refused those commands. The suspect lifted the shotgun from behind his back and pointed it at deputies. Both deputies fired their handguns, fatally striking the suspect. Deputies provided medical aid to the suspect, but he died at the scene.

https://youtu.be/u42UjX5OKCA?si=W_W7AJvYVD4-vBuv

2025-00046104: On April 15, 2025, deputies responded to a theft at Rite Aid on South H Street involving four 12-packs of beer stolen by a male suspect, who fled on a skateboard. A deputy located the suspect minutes later, but he ran into a backyard in the 1700 block of Marshall Street. During the chase, the suspect fired at the deputy with a handgun, prompting an exchange of gunfire between the suspect and the deputy. The suspect then fled through neighboring yards. A large perimeter containment was set up with patrol, K9, Air Support, and a Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT) response. The suspect was eventually found hiding in a storage shed within the neighborhood. After chemical agents were deployed, the suspect surrendered and was taken into custody without further incident. The suspect had a complaint of pain but had no visible injuries from the shooting. The suspect was booked on numerous felony charges, including attempted murder of a peace officer.

<https://youtu.be/KNketvWo-N8>

2025-00047067: On April 17, 2025, deputies responded to a peace disturbance in the 1700 block of Cheatham Avenue after a reporting party reported seeing a wanted male suspect. The suspect had recently stabbed a victim and had multiple active warrants, including for attempted murder. The reporting party told responding deputies the suspect was armed, mentally unstable, and had threatened to kill the reporting party. Deputies located the suspect at Belle Terrace Park around 1002 hours. As they approached, the suspect reached into his pocket, produced a large knife, and swung it at the deputies, narrowly missing a deputy's upper body area. Multiple deputies fired their handguns at 1006 hours, fatally striking the suspect. Deputies immediately began CPR and used an AED, but the suspect was pronounced dead at the scene.

<https://youtu.be/YRFcxn6tGzA>



Use of Force: Officer Involved Shootings

2025-00057050: On May 9, 2025, around 0628 hours, deputies were dispatched to the 600 block of Water Street for an unknown situation. Dispatch received a phone call from a victim, who was hysterical on the phone, requesting law enforcement. The victim reported that a male suspect was forcing entry into the residence with a hammer. While deputies were responding, the victim described that the suspect fired a gun into the residence's door, and now he was inside the residence. Before deputies' arrival, the victim was shot by the suspect. Deputies arrived moments later and encountered the victim and suspect exiting the residence. As deputies ordered the suspect to get on the ground, the victim fled the immediate area to safety. Seconds later, the suspect pulled a firearm from his waistband and pointed it at the deputies, prompting an officer-involved shooting. A deputy fired toward the suspect with their handgun, and the other deputy fired with their rifle. The suspect then fell, believed to have been struck by the deputies' gunfire. While on the ground, the suspect fired two to three rounds back at deputies, hitting a deputy in the left hand. Deputies returned fire, and the suspect stopped moving on the porch. Deputies approached, detained the suspect, removed additional weapons from his person (a hunting knife, machete, and hammer), and provided medical aid. The suspect was struck with multiple gunshots throughout his body. The suspect was transported to a local hospital, as well as the deputy who was shot. The victim was also transported to a local hospital with multiple gunshot wounds. The suspect was booked into the Kern County jail for several felony charges, including attempted murder.

<https://youtu.be/F8PjoahVrV8>

2025-00069406: On June 5, 2025, at about 0109 hours, deputies responded to a welfare check of a male suspect, who called saying he was outside a bar with a knife, suffering from bipolar disorder, depression, and insomnia, and was contemplating suicide by cop, in the 11000 block of Kernville Road. Deputies contacted the suspect over the phone, and he told deputies that he intended to ambush arriving deputies and mentioned firing shots into the air and at vehicles. Deputies believed the suspect was near Kernville Road attempting to lure them into an ambush, where deputies established a perimeter and continued trying to negotiate his surrender. While deputies were attempting de-escalate the situation the suspect was making threats to shoot them and others. Around 0400 hours, a witness reported seeing the suspect on the roof of a building on Big Blue Road. Deputies confirmed his location. At 0422 hours, deputies encountered the suspect on the roof, who was armed with a rifle. An officer-involved shooting occurred, and the suspect was struck multiple times. The suspect eventually complied with commands, was taken into custody, and treated by medical personnel. The suspect's rifle was located on the roof of the building. The suspect was treated at a local hospital for his gunshot wounds and booked into a Kern County jail for multiple felonies, including assault with a firearm upon a peace officer.

<https://youtu.be/PJp4Q4IDZh0>

Additional information regarding these officer-involved shooting incidents can be found on the Sheriff's Office transparency website: <https://www.kernsheriff.org/critical-incidents>.

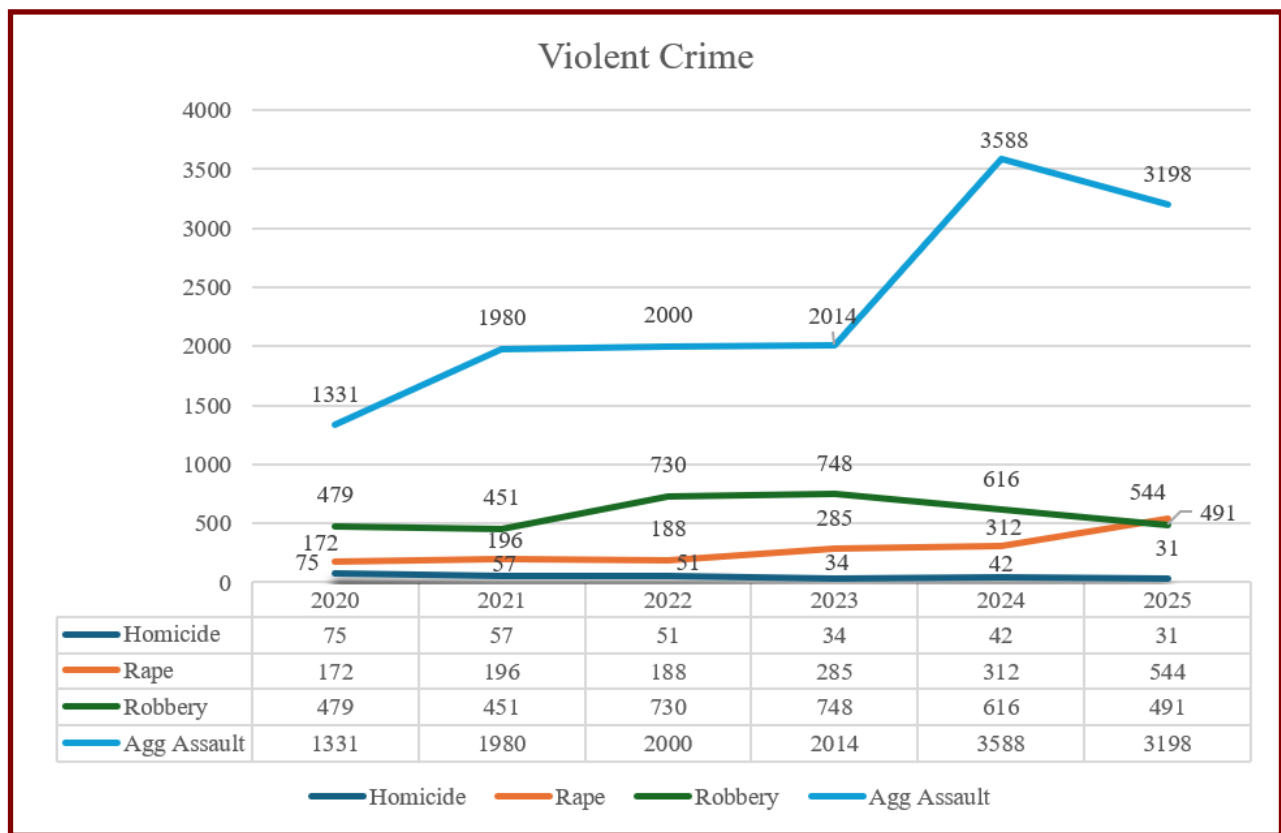


Violent Crime

In 2025, the Kern County Sheriff's Office recorded 4,264 violent crimes, a decrease of 294 incidents (6.5%) from the 4,558 violent crimes reported in 2024. Despite this year-over-year decline, violent crime remained significantly higher than levels observed between 2020 and 2023.

Homicides declined from 42 in 2024 to 31 in 2025, reaching the lowest level recorded during the six-year period. Robberies also continued their downward trend, decreasing from 616 to 491 incidents after peaking in 2023. In contrast, reported rapes increased substantially, rising from 312 in 2024 to 544 in 2025, representing the highest total in the six-year period. Aggravated assaults remained the most frequently reported violent crime, decreasing from 3,588 to 3,198 incidents but continuing to account for the majority of all violent crime reports.

Overall, the reduction in violent crime during 2025 was primarily driven by decreases in aggravated assaults, robberies, and homicides, although the significant increase in reported rapes partially offset those gains.



Kern County Sheriff's Office Seized Firearms	
2020	928
2021	1,027
2022	1,012
2023	1,357
2024	1,357
2025	1,419

The Kern County Sheriff's Office seized 1,419 firearms in 2025, representing the highest annual total during the six-year reporting period. This marks an increase from 1,357 firearms seized in both 2023 and 2024 and continues the overall upward trend observed since 2020, when 928 firearms were seized. Firearm seizures exceeded 1,000 annually beginning in 2021 and have remained above that threshold each year since. The continued increase in firearms recovered reflects the Sheriff's Office's ongoing proactive enforcement efforts, targeted investigations, and commitment to reducing illegal firearm possession and firearm-related criminal activity throughout Kern County.



Crime Data

Overall, the year-to-year comparison indicates a slight shift in total victims and suspects, with some categories increasing while others declined, and a continued concentration among Hispanic and White populations as the most frequently represented groups.

- In 2025, Hispanic individuals accounted for 2,336 victims and 1,858 suspects, compared to 2,257 victims and 2,143 suspects in 2024, reflecting an increase in victims but a decrease in suspects.
- White individuals also showed a decline in both categories, from 1,434 victims and 1,146 suspects in 2024 to 1,302 victims and 1,024 suspects in 2025.
- Black individuals decreased from 512 victims and 649 suspects in 2024 to 494 victims and 516 suspects in 2025.

Among smaller demographic groups:

- Asian/Pacific Islander totals decreased in 2025 to 6 victims and 1 suspect, compared to higher combined totals in 2024.
- Hawaiian victims increased notably from 5 in 2024 to 19 in 2025, while suspects rose slightly from 6 to 9.
- American Indian/Alaskan Native remained stable in victims (7 in both years) with a slight increase in suspects (3 to 4).
- "None Listed" declined sharply from 112 victims and 247 suspects in 2024 to just 1 victim and 103 suspects in 2025, suggesting improved classification or reporting practices.
- Other categories, such as Asian Other and Asian Indian, remained relatively stable, while smaller groups, including Cambodian, Samoan, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, and Vietnamese, accounted for minimal totals across both years.

Overall, the data reflects a modest overall decline in suspect counts and a mixed but generally stable pattern in victim counts between 2024 and 2025, with no indication of a uniform upward or downward trend across all demographic categories.

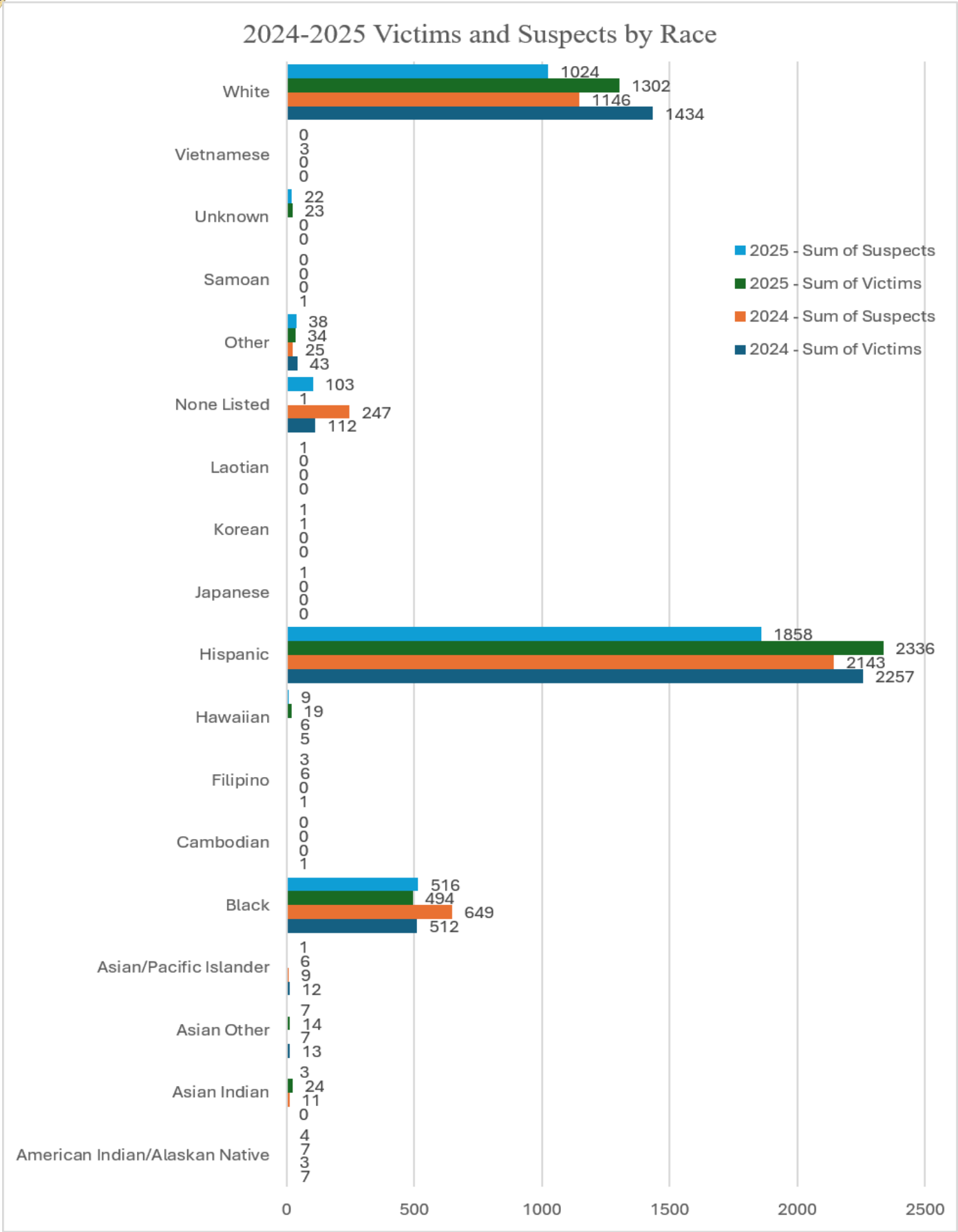
Year-to-year comparisons indicate declines in several categories, including White victims and suspects, Black suspects (649 to 516), and substantial reductions in the "None Listed" category for both victims (112 to 1) and suspects (247 to 103). In contrast, notable increases were observed among Hawaiian victims (5 to 19) and Asian Indian victims (0 to 24), while Hispanic victims experienced a slight overall increase.

The corresponding chart detailing these comparisons is provided on the following page.

****NOTE: The Race codes used for crime data differ from those used in Census and RIPA.**



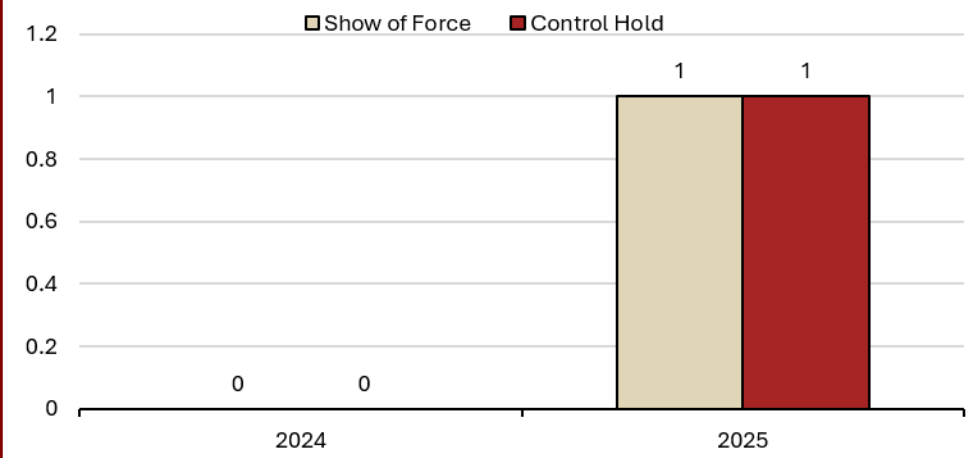
Crime Data





Use of Force: Patrol Bureau

Patrol Bureau: Park Rangers Show of Force & Control Holds



The Park Ranger rank completed its first full calendar year operating under the Sheriff's Office in 2025. During the reporting period, Park Rangers documented one reportable use of force incident involving a complaint of pain. The incident was documented and reviewed in accordance with department policy. No other use of force incidents were reported during the 2025 reporting period.





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's 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 2025, the Kern County Sheriff's Office Detentions Bureau Personnel had over 4 million inmate interactions. During those contacts, 274 assaults occurred, and 367 use-of-force incidents occurred (0 of which were OIS incidents).



4

Over 4 million inmate interactions



274

**UOF Incidents with Assault on a Detentions Deputy
(0.01% of inmate interactions)**



367

**Total Use of Force Incidents (0.01% of all interactions)
75% of UOF incidents with Assault on a Detentions Deputy**



0

Officer involved shootings occurred in the Detentions Bureau.

In 2025, the average daily inmate population within Kern County detention facilities was 1,850. This reflects an increasing trend spanning four years, demonstrating continued high demand for detention operations. It is estimated that the Detentions Bureau engaged in approximately over 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. Based on a population of 1,850 inmates and a minimum of four interactions per inmate per day, the detention facilities would have a baseline of 7,400 interactions per day ($1,850 \times 4$). Allowing for an estimated 5% daily population turnover, the calculation assumes an average of 1,757.5 inmates per day ($1,850 \times 95\%$), resulting in approximately 7,030 interactions per day ($1,757.5 \times 4$). Over 365 days, this represents approximately 2,565,950 required inmate interactions annually ($7,030 \times 365$), or approximately 2.6 million interactions per year. 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.

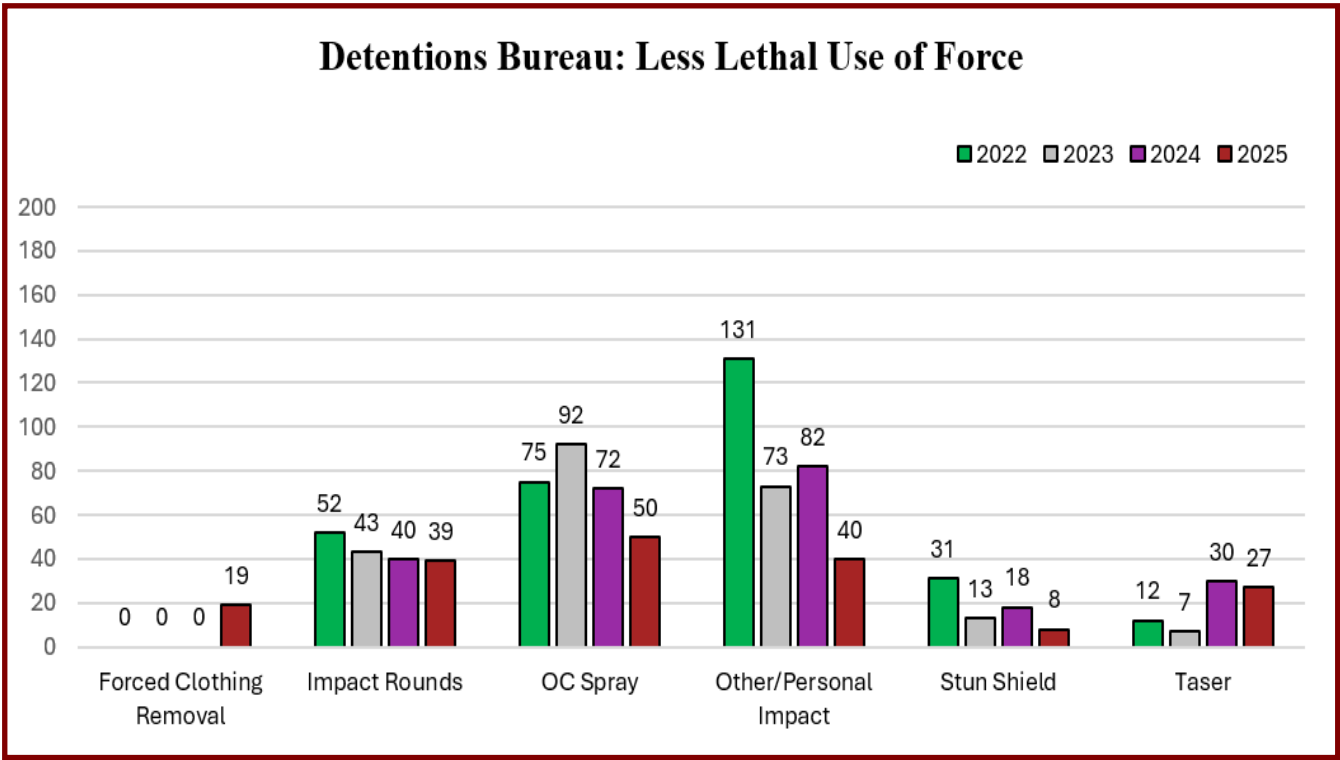


Use of Force: Detentions Bureau

The Detentions Bureau wrote 23,403 reports on incidents that occurred in detentions facilities in 2025, a decrease of 676 investigations from 2024. 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 2025. “Other/Personal Impact” can include strikes such as a punch, a shove, and/or the use of body weight. In 2025, a majority of less lethal use of force was “Other/Personal Impact” followed by “OC Spray.”

“Forced Clothing Removal” was a new trackable use of force category added in 2025. “Forced Clothing Removal” means the use of reasonable force to remove an incarcerated person’s clothing. It is necessary that an incarcerated person be readily identifiable by their clothing to confirm proper housing and to prevent access to prohibited areas of the facilities or escape from custody. It is also necessary to ensure that an incarcerated person being placed on suicide watch or in a safety cell be dressed in an appropriate safety garment. Reasonable force may be used to forcibly remove clothing when an incarcerated person refuses a lawful order to exchange one set of clothing for another (e.g., exchanging civilian clothing for incarcerated person clothing, exchanging specific color of incarcerated person clothing upon transfer or change of classification) after being given a reasonable opportunity to comply.

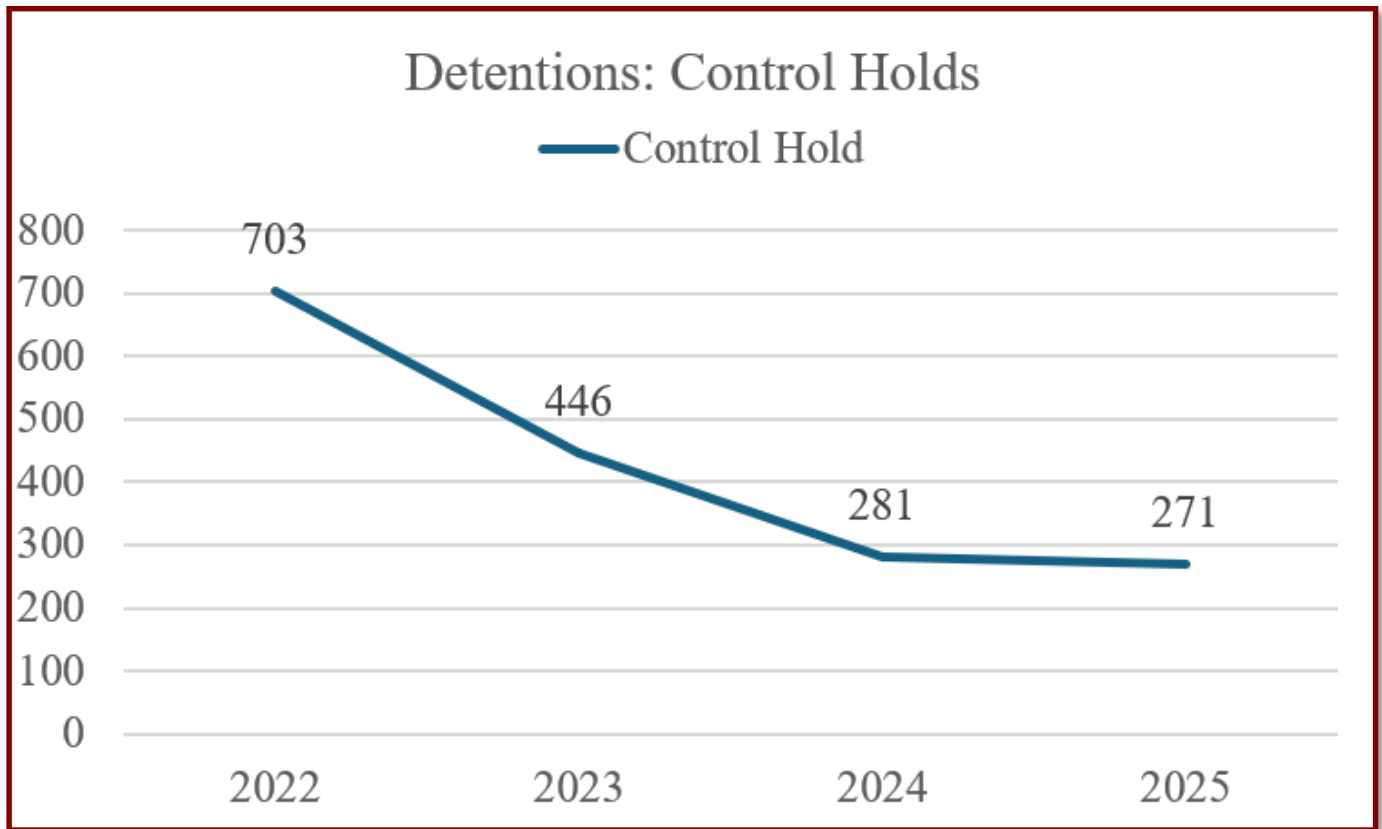




Use of Force: Detentions Bureau

A “control hold” is a lower-level use of force designed to safely gain control of an individual who is resisting while minimizing injuries to both the individual and the deputy. The purpose is to achieve control and compliance.

“Control holds” decreased steadily each year from 2022 to 2025. The number dropped from 703 in 2022 to 446 in 2023, then fell further to 281 in 2024 and 271 in 2025. Overall, this represents a reduction of more than 60% over the four-year period, with the largest declines occurring between 2022–2023 and 2023–2024, followed by a relatively stable trend from 2024 to 2025. As KCSO staffing levels increased from record lows, it appears UOF inversely lowered. This suggests a correlation between increased officer safety and reduction of force related to control holds.

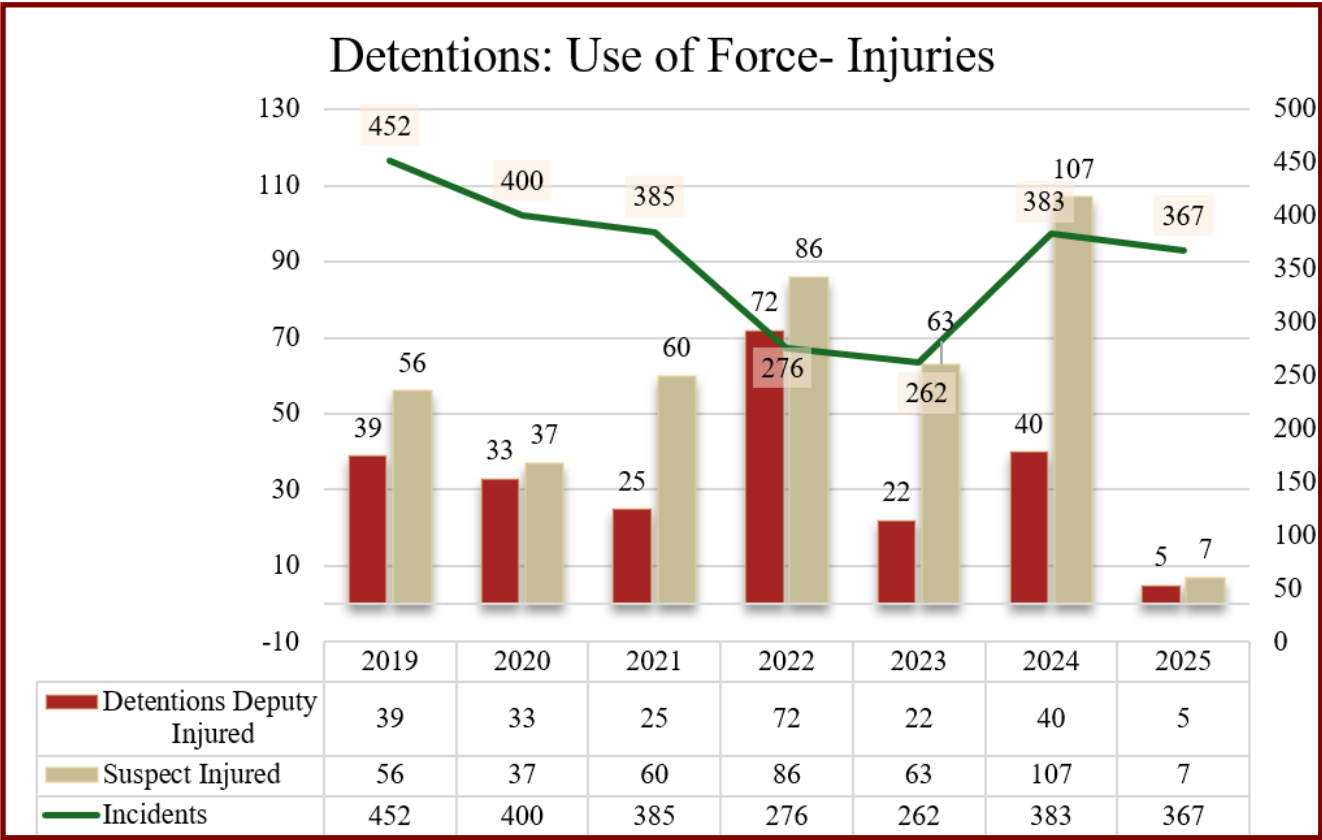


The Kern County Sheriff’s Office works closely with Kern Medical and the various ambulance companies throughout Kern County to provide long-term and immediate care and treatment of individuals injured while in custody. When injuries are sustained due to the use of force, or they inform a Detentions Deputy 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 are 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 tracks 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.



Use of Force: Detentions Injuries



The chart “Detentions: Use of Force—Injuries” (2019–2025) shows that total incidents (green line) declined steadily from 452 in 2019 to 262 in 2023, before increasing sharply to 383 in 2024. In 2025, incidents totaled 367, remaining above pre-2024 levels despite a slight decrease from the previous year. The green line measures the number of **separate incidents**, counting each incident once regardless of how many actions it contained.

Detentions Deputy injuries (red bars) fluctuated throughout the period, starting at 39 in 2019, decreasing to 25 in 2021, peaking at 72 in 2022, falling to 22 in 2023, and rising again to 40 in 2024. Through the reporting period in 2025, deputy injuries totaled 5.

Suspect injuries (tan bars) showed a similar pattern, beginning at 56 in 2019, dropping to 37 in 2020, increasing to 86 in 2022, declining to 63 in 2023, and reaching a seven-year high of 107 in 2024. Through the reporting period in 2025, suspect injuries totaled 7.

Overall, use-of-force incidents declined substantially between 2019 and 2023, followed by a notable increase in 2024 and a slight decrease in 2025. Both detentions of deputies and suspects’ injuries increased in 2024, particularly among suspects. The lower injury totals in 2025 likely reflect partial-year data and should be interpreted with caution when compared to prior full-year figures.

Between 2023 and 2024, the Detentions Bureau began implementing a new housing program to reintegrate into larger populations instead of being in administrative segregation. This may be the cause of an increase in the use of force incidents between suspects and detentions deputies. However, as incarcerated persons have adapted to this change, use of force appears to be on a downward trend between 2024 and 2025. The Sheriff’s Office will continue to monitor this to determine if modifications to reintegrating housing are needed.



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. Established in October 2020, the program coordinates efforts between the Sheriff's Office, Correctional Behavioral Health, and Kern Medical to improve inmate stabilization, safety, and rehabilitation outcomes. The partnership between the Sheriff's Office, Behavioral Health, and Kern Medical has improved outcomes for staff and incarcerated individuals alike. This collaborative approach has enhanced communication, medication compliance, treatment access, and referral processes while reducing liability, use-of-force incidents, and delays in the administration of justice. It has also contributed to better bed-space management, improved inmate hygiene, increased accountability, and a more stable jail population.

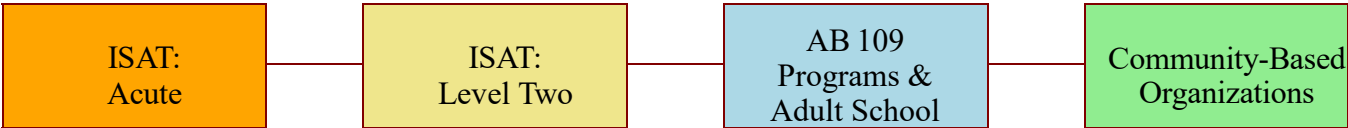


Primary Responsibilities

Custodial & Safety	Programmatic
Medication compliance Hygiene support Welfare checks Direct Observation Unit management Suicide watch bed-space management	Intake & risk assessments Case management Targeted interventions Discharge planning Data collection & analysis



Stabilization Pathway

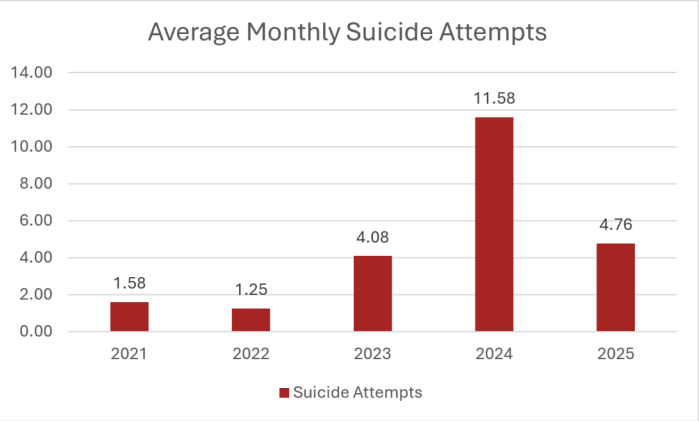




Inmate Resources

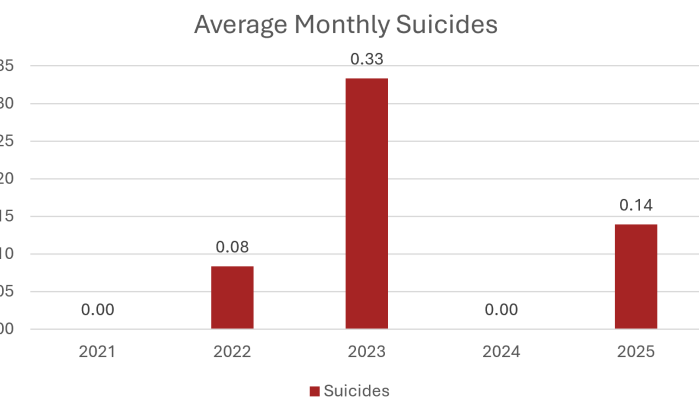
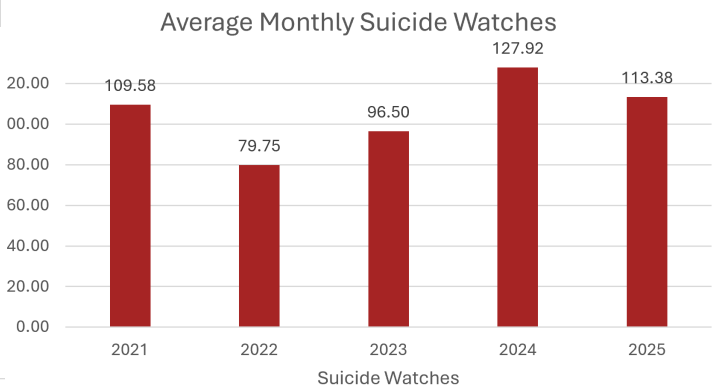
Inmate Stabilization and Assessment Team

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



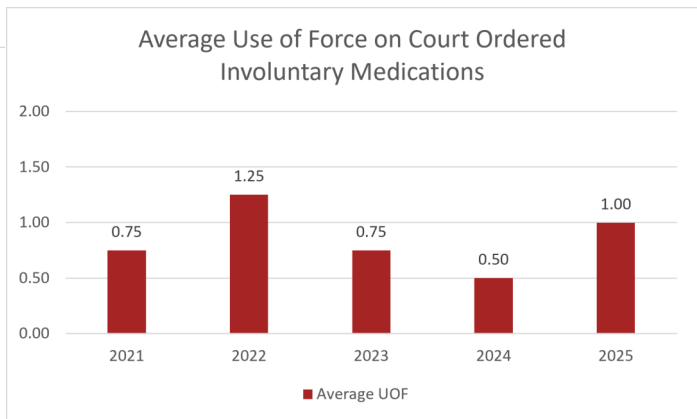
Average monthly suicide attempts remained relatively stable in 2021 and 2022 at 1.58 and 1.25 attempts per month, before increasing to 4.08 in 2023 and peaking at 11.58 in 2024. In 2025, the average declined to 4.76 attempts per month but remained above pre-2023 levels. The increase observed in 2023 and 2024 indicates a substantial rise in mental health crises requiring intervention, while the decrease in 2025 may suggest improvement but continues to require close monitoring and ongoing prevention and support efforts.

The average monthly number of Suicide Watches fluctuated during the period, decreasing from 109.58 in 2021 to 79.75 in 2022, then increasing to 96.50 in 2023 and peaking at 127.92 in 2024. Although the average declined to 113.38 in 2025, it remained above 2021–2023 levels, reflecting continued monitoring and intervention efforts for individuals experiencing behavioral health crises.



Completed suicides remained rare throughout the period. No completed suicides were reported in 2021 or 2024, while the average monthly rate was 0.08 in 2022, increased to 0.33 in 2023, and was 0.14 in 2025. Despite fluctuations, the overall numbers remained low, reflecting continued prevention, monitoring, and intervention efforts within the facilities.

Use of force during court-ordered involuntary medication procedures peaked in 2022 at 1.25 incidents per month before declining to 0.50 in 2024. Although the average increased to 1.00 per month in 2025, it remained below the 2022 peak, reflecting continued emphasis on de-escalation techniques and safe medication 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, 34 beds are occupied, with 71% of those in the program being Kern County inmates. The current restoration rate of Kern County inmates is 79%.

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 5 Detentions 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 2025, the Sheriff's Office had 1295 BWCs across several classifications, from deputies working at the Inmate Receiving Facility to command staff. Deputies with patrol assignments are provided with two BWCs to ensure they always have one in their possession while operating a patrol vehicle. The Sheriff's Office recorded 407,443 individual videos.

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.



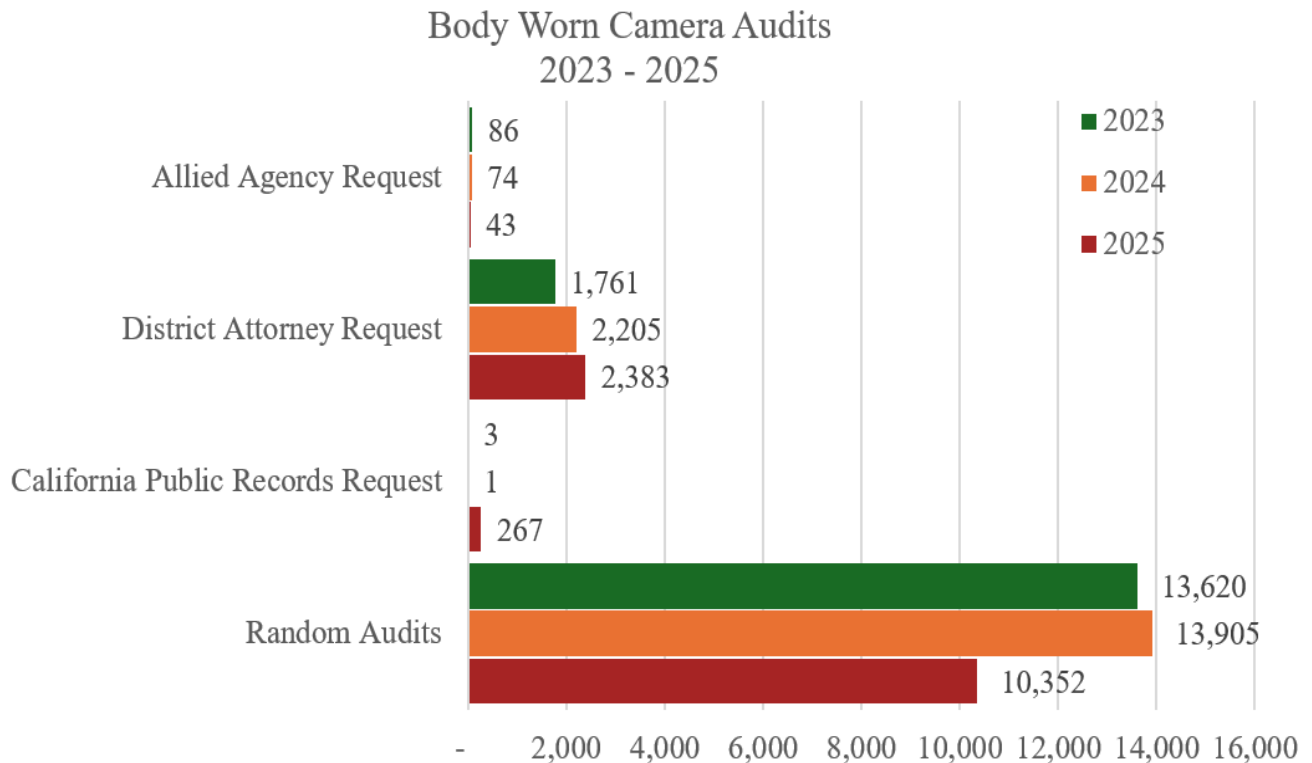


Body Worn Camera Audits

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 2025 Overview	Number
Random Audits	10,352
California Public Records Request	267
District Attorney Request	2,383
Allied Agency Request	43





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