

2021 Annual Review- Conflict Resolution Reports (Use of Force)

In 2021, there were 112 individual uses of force against persons. Use of force is calculated by incident and by highest level of force utilized, not by the number of officers involved. A 12% increase in total uses of force was noted from the year 2020. There were 92 uses of force in 2020 and 70 uses of force in 2019.

Use of Force Incidents - 2021

Type of Force	Times Utilized	Percentage of force Utilized
Firearm Fired	0	0%
Firearm Pointed	30	26.8%
K-9	35	31.3%
TASER	5	4.5%
Physical	40	35.7%
ASP only	0	0%
OC only	1	0.9%
Less Lethal Impact	1	0.9%
OC & TASER	0	0%
ASP & OC & K9	0	0%
TOTAL	112	

Use of Force Injuries - 2021

Injuries associated with use of force as compared to 2020 are as follows: Officer Injuries increased from 3 in 2020 to 6 in 2021; Suspect Injuries increased from 36 in 2020 to 49 in 2021; there were 3 incidents in 2021 in which both Officer and Suspect were injured; Suspect Deaths remained constant from 2020 to 2021 at zero. Officer Deaths have also remained constant at zero. In 2021, there was injury in 46 percent of Gaston County Police use of force incidents. In 2020, there was injury in 41.3 percent of incidents.

Use of Force Injuries - 2021

Injured	Number	Percentage of injury incidents
Officer only	3	5.8%
Suspect only	46	88.5%
Officer/Suspect	3	5.8%
Officer Death	0	0%
Suspect Death	0	0%

Use of Force Comparison - 2017-2021

Incidents of force were compared for the last five years. Force was used in 64 incidents in 2017, 79 incidents in 2018, 70 incidents in 2019; 92 incidents in 2020 and 112 incidents in 2021.

Officer Actions Comparison - 2017-2021

Type of Force	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Firearm Fired	0	0	1	1	0
Firearm Pointed	20	27	28	37	30
K-9	17	20	24	27	35
OC	0	2	1	0	1
Physical	22	25	12	21	40
Taser	2	4	3	6	5
OC & Taser	0	1	0	0	0
Taser & ASP	0	0	0	0	0
OC & ASP	0	0	0	0	0
OC & TASER & ASP	1	0	0	0	0
OC & ASP & K9	1	0	0	0	0
Less Lethal Impact	1	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	64	79	70	92	112

Injury Comparison - 2017-2021

In 2021, there was a 26.9% increase in injuries overall as compared to 2020, and the injury rate increased by 5% with 2020 having an injury rate of 41% and 2021 having an injury rate of 46%.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Officer	1	3	3	2	3
Suspect	22	27	26	35	46
Officer/Suspect	0	1	1	1	3
Officer Death	0	0	0	0	0
Suspect Death	0	0	0	0	0
No Injury	41	48	40	54	60

Injury Rate	36%	39%	43%	41%	46%
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No incidents of excessive force were found during the year 2021. One early warning was generated in which cases were reviewed and determined to have been appropriate.

Offender Injury Analysis - 2021

Offenders were injured in 44 percent of Use of Force incidents, up from 39 percent in 2020. Of these 49 injuries, 94 percent involved the use of TASER or a K9 bite. The successful application of both of these types of force, by their nature, resulted in reportable injury and medical treatment for the removal of TASER probes or the treatment of dog bite injuries. There are no further identified trends or patterns to offender injuries in general, and no modification to training or policy is recommended.

Officer Injury Analysis - 2021

Officers were injured in 5.4 percent of Use of Force incidents. This is up from 3.3 percent in 2020. These injuries include sprained joints, strained muscles, and abrasions that occurred during physical force encounters. There is no identified trend or pattern to officer injuries in general and no further modifications to training or policy is recommended.

Date and Time of Incidents - 2021

There were Use of Force incidents on every day of the week, with incidents occurring least frequently on Friday (7) and most frequently on Monday (20). The breakdown of incidents by day of the week is as follows:

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Sunday</u>
20	10	14	15	7	19	19

Use of Force incidents occurred on weekends (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) 43 percent of the time.

Use of Force incidents occurred on weekdays (Monday - Thursday) 57 percent of the time.

Use of Force incidents occurred most commonly between 12pm and 12am (69%). The breakdown of incidents by time of day is as follows:

<u>12am-6am</u>	<u>6am-12pm</u>	<u>12pm-6pm</u>	<u>6pm-12am</u>
9	23	36	36

Types of Encounters Resulting in Use of Force - 2021

Force was used in the following types of encounters:

Call for Service	16 (15%)
Pursuit	26 (25%)
Warrant Service	19 (18%)
Arrest Activity	20 (19%)
Traffic Stop	13 (12%)
Involuntary Commitment	4 (04%)
Other Incident	2 (02%)
Psychiatric Subject-other	3 (03%)
Suspicious Activity	1 (01%)

Race, Age, and Gender of Subjects Involved - 2021

There were 112 offenders in the incidents of force in 2021. Use of Force incidents by offender race is as follows:

<u>White non-Hispanic</u>	<u>Black non-Hispanic</u>	<u>Hispanic-Latino</u>	<u>Other</u>
73 (65.2%)	33 (29.5%)	6 (5.3%)	0

	<u>Number of Offenders</u>	<u>Percentage of Incidents</u>
White males	59	52.7%
White females	14	12.5%
Black males	24	21.4%
Black females	9	8.0%
Hispanic males	6	4.4%
Hispanic females	0	0%
Other males	0	0%
Other females	0	0%

The average age of offenders in Use of Force incidents in 2021 was 32.

The youngest offender was 11.

The oldest offender was 79.

Use of Force incidents in 2021 involved male offenders 79.5 percent of the time.

There is no apparent trend or pattern of Use of Force related to race, age, or gender of offenders involved when compared with the demographical makeup of the population served by the Gaston County Police combined with demographical makeup of custodial arrests made by the Gaston County Police.

Arrest Demographics- 2021

Gaston County Police made 3,506 arrests in 2021, up 4.5 percent from 3,354 in 2020.

Arrests by offender race is as follows:

<u>White non-Hispanic</u> 2,726 (77.8%)	<u>Black non-Hispanic</u> 595 (16.9%)	<u>Hispanic-Latino</u> 133 (3.8%)	<u>Other</u> 16 (.5%)	<u>Unk.</u> 33 (1%)
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	<u>Number of Arrests</u>	<u>Percentage of Arrests</u>
White males	1,943	55.4%
White females	783	22.3%
Black males	486	13.9%
Black females	109	3.1%
Hispanic males	115	3.3%
Hispanic females	18	.5%
Other males	16	.5%
Other females	0	.0%
Unk males	15	.4%
Unk females	14	.4%

Population Demographics – 2021

As reported by the American Community Survey of the United States Census Bureau in 2021, Gaston County’s total population was 228,327. Population by percentage is as follows:

<u>White non-Hispanic</u> 71.1%	<u>Black non-Hispanic</u> 17.9%	<u>Hispanic-Latino</u> 7.6%	<u>Other/Multi</u> 3.4%
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Totals by Demographic – 2021

Gaston County	White non-Hispanic	Black non-Hispanic	Hispanic-Latino	Other	Multi or Unknown
Population Percentage	71.1%	17.9%	7.6%	1.2%	2.2%
Arrest Percentage	82.1%	17.0%	3.8%	.5%	1.0%
Use of Force Percentage	65.2%	29.5%	5.3%	0%	0%

The Body Worn Camera program, implemented in October, 2017, continues to allow for further review, evaluation, and critique of Use of Force incidents by supervision, trainers, and command staff going forward through 2021 and beyond. In 2021, the part-time employees who review BWC reviewed upward of 3,000 individual BWC files. There are no recommendations for changes in policies, practices, equipment, or training at this time.

Of note:

Physical force in the preceding 5 years made up approximately one-fifth of all GCPD uses of force. This increased in 2021 in that *physical* force made up over **one-third** of all GCPD uses of force to become the force most frequently used. *Firearm pointed*, ranking first in the previous 5 years, fell to third behind K9 bite.

Officer injuries **doubled** in 2021 to their highest number in the last 5 years and either officer or offender was injured in 46% of all uses of force, the highest rate in the last 5 years.

Pursuits became the leading type of encounter resulting in force for the first time in the last 5 years. Arrest Activity and Call for Service have typically been the highest force encounter types.

Less lethal beanbag shotguns were deployed to patrol in mid-2021 and give line officers an additional non-lethal tool to resolve force situations without deadly force. They were used on one occasion.

There were 11 reportable firearms discharges, all related to wildlife field euthanasia, all consisting of deer struck by vehicles.