

St. Louis County Police Department
Annual Bureau of Professional Standards Report
June 2023



Introduction

The mission of the St. Louis County Police Department is to work cooperatively with the public within the framework of the constitution to enforce the laws, preserve the peace, reduce fear, and provide a safe environment in our neighborhoods. The St. Louis County Police Department is committed to the highest ethical standards and ensuring the fair treatment of all citizens. One way to ensure that all citizens are treated fairly and that Department employees are adhering to the highest ethical standards is to review and investigate citizen complaints, internal complaints, uses of force, pursuits, and Department vehicle crashes. It is imperative that the Department closely monitor those incidents and investigate any possible misconduct for these high-liability events. Within the St. Louis County Police Department, the Bureau of Professional Standards is the work element dedicated to reviewing and investigating employee misconduct.

This annual report reviews the administrative data from these high-liability events in aggregate form. The purpose of the report is to provide a review and analysis of these events to inform internal and external stakeholders. The report gives the public insights into how many of these events take place and their outcomes. By looking at aggregate data, hidden trends and patterns may emerge. The report also gives members of the public the opportunity to review the data and trends for themselves to make judgements on the performance of the Department.

Within this report are references to several of the policies and manuals that govern how the St. Louis County Police Department interacts with the public and conducts investigations of employees. Specific policies are located on the St. Louis County Police Department's public webpage ¹. This report specifically references the following policies: Emergency Vehicle Operations and Pursuits², Complaint Review Procedure³, Use of Force⁴, and the Conduct and Discipline Manual⁵.

Data and Methods

The information and data used in this report is reported by Department supervisors through a database and user interface designed to capture administrative data. Department policy governs the circumstances in which an officer is mandated to report many of these incidents to a supervisor. Once reported, supervisors respond to the scene of the incident and conduct an administrative investigation to ensure policies were followed. For example, if an officer deploys a TASER electronic control device, the supervisor will respond to the scene and ensure that medical treatment is available to the citizen, interview the citizen, and identify any witnesses. By completing these actions, the supervisor is not only conducting the investigation, but de-escalating the situation.

For this report, five years of data (2018-2022) was pulled from the administrative database during June of 2023. The data was pulled for the following types of incidents:

- citizen complaints
- internal investigations
- uses of force
- pursuits
- Department vehicle crashes

¹Police Policies and Procedures: <https://www.stlouiscountypolice.com/who-we-are/policies-and-procedures>

²GO 003: <https://www.powerdms.com/public/STLP1/tree/documents/812784>

³GO 005: <https://www.powerdms.com/public/STLP1/tree/documents/812281>

⁴GO 029: <https://www.powerdms.com/public/STLP1/tree/documents/812305>

⁵M 001: <https://www.powerdms.com/public/STLP1/tree/documents/812540>

The administrative data reviewed in this report can be examined at the incident level or the count level. Incident level summarizes all activities to one event whereas count level accounts for individual activities during the event. For example, two officers must use force in the arrest of a citizen. One officer tackles the citizen, and the other deploys pepper spray. This event can be viewed as a single incident of force, as it occurred during the same time and space. Alternatively, the event can be viewed as two counts of force, as there would be one count for the tackle and one count for the pepper spray. The count method allows us to further examine every allegation within a citizen complaint or internal investigation, or each officer involved in a pursuit or a vehicle accident.

To further examine officers involved in events, work units were analyzed. The work unit was determined by the assignment of the employee at the time of the event and not the time of the report. For example, an officer may be currently assigned to the North County Precinct. The officer previously worked in the South County Precinct in 2020 and received a citizen complaint. The complaint would be recorded under the South County Precinct for 2020. For any units that changed names or moved during the past five years, the current name or division is used in this report for comparison reasons.

Citizen Complaints

Citizen complaints are defined as an allegation of employee misconduct from a non-department citizen. These complaints have several sources of intake, such as in-person, over the phone, or online. The Department will even take these complaints from anonymous sources. For additional information on the complaint procedure, please see the Conduct and Discipline Manual (M 001) and the Complaint Review Procedure (GO 005). For a better understanding of the various tables and graphs associated with citizen and internal investigations received by the Department, the following definitions are provided:

- Complaint – An allegation(s), if proved to be true, constitutes misconduct on the part of the Department employee.
- Allegation – An alleged violation of law or Department rule, regulation, or procedure that, if proved true, will result in discipline.
- Citizen Complaint – Allegation(s) of misconduct on the part of one or more Department employee received by the Department from a member of the public.
- Internal Complaint – Allegation(s) of misconduct on the part of one or more Department employee received by the Department's Bureau of Professional Standards from a Supervisor within the Department.
- Suspension – Suspension of an employee from Department duties with or without pay.
- Written Reprimand – Written admonishment of an employee's actions, received from a supervisor in the employee's chain of command.
- Safe Driving Credit – An employee is granted a credit value of \$1,000 for each complete year (January through December) worked, during which the employee was not involved in a preventable accident. There is no limit to the credit amount that can be accrued. When a preventable Department vehicle accident occurs, the employee's accumulated safe driving credit value is deducted from the vehicle damage estimate. This value is used in conjunction with the accident disciplinary chart to determine the level of discipline to be administered to the employee.
- Exonerated – Incident occurred, but employee actions were lawful and proper.
- Unfounded – Allegation false or incident did not occur.
- Not Sustained – Evidence was insufficient to prove or disprove the allegation.
- Sustained – Evidence was sufficient to prove the allegation.

- Closed – Investigation was terminated because circumstances existed to make the investigation unsuccessful (i.e., the citizen was unable to identify the specific officer)

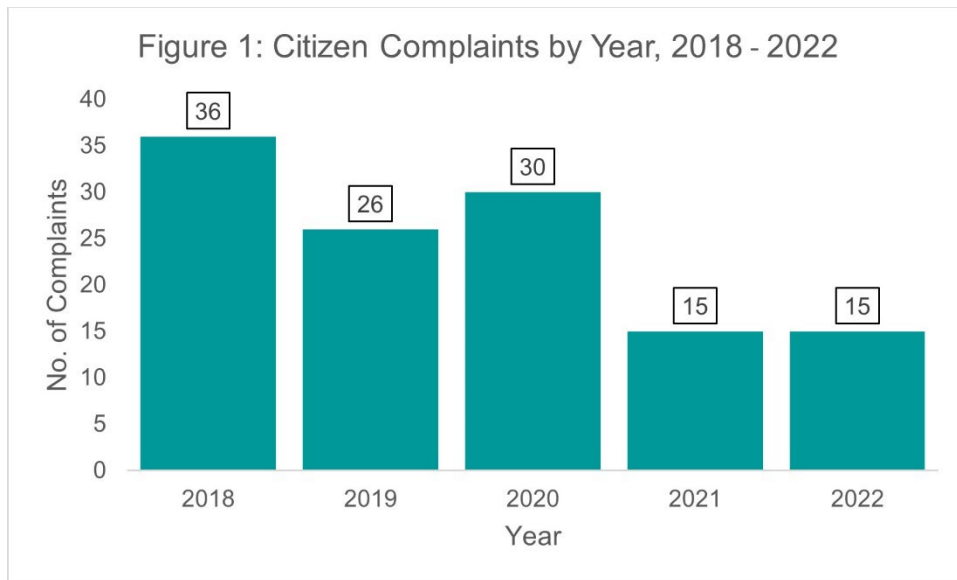


Figure 1 shows the number of complaint incidents by year. There were 15 citizen complaints received by St. Louis County Police Department in 2022, compared to 15 in 2021.

Disposition	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Unfounded	55.6% (20)	34.6% (9)	16.7% (5)	13.3% (2)	6.7% (1)
Sustained	33.3% (12)	30.8% (8)	60.0% (18)	46.7% (7)	66.6% (10)
Not Sustained	5.6% (2)	26.9% (7)	13.3% (4)	13.3% (2)	6.7% (1)
Exonerated	2.8% (1)	3.8% (1)	3.3% (1)	6.7% (1)	6.7% (1)
Closed	2.8% (1)	3.8% (1)	3.3% (1)	13.3% (2)	13.3% (2)
Pending/Active/ Forwarded	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3.3% (1)	6.7% (1)	0.0% (0)

Table 1 shows the dispositions that the citizen complaint incidents were given. If an incident had any allegations that were sustained, then that incident was classified as sustained. The percentage of all cases by year are listed, as are the number of incidents.

In addition to looking at the number of incidents that occurred each year, the allegations within incidents can be examined. Table 2 shows the allegation types by year. In 2022, there were a total of 28 allegations of misconduct within the 15 incidents. The most common allegation in 2022 was “disobedience of orders”. This allegation means that the employee violates one of the Departmental policies. For a complete list of definitions of allegations, please see the Department’s Conduct and Discipline Manual (Manual 001).

Allegation	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Unlawful or Oppressive Exercise of Authority	24	14	8	5	9
General Article	12	7	11	6	1
Disobedience of Orders	10	11	20	7	11
Neglect of Duty	4	10	8	6	3
Not Specified	1	4	3	2	3
False Official Statement	1	3			
Improper Disposition or Damage of Departmental Property			2	1	
Failure to Exercise Supervisory Responsibilities					1
Corrupt Practices	1	1			
Conflict of Interest			1		
Dishonorable Business Dealings			1		
Insubordinate Conduct		1			
Altering Department or Public Records		1			
Total	53	52	54	27	28

Internal Investigations

As defined in the previous section, an internal investigation is an allegation of misconduct on the part of one or more Department employees received by the Department’s Bureau of Professional Standards from a supervisor within the Department. Internal investigations are critical to the optimal functioning of the department. Police departments must be able to police themselves to maintain legitimacy within the communities they serve. The St. Louis County Police Department investigates far more allegations originating internally than externally. In 2022, the Department investigated 125 internally generated incidents (Figure 2, page 6). Of the 125 cases received in 2022, 72.8% of them have been sustained (Table 3, page 6). As of June of 2023, there are still 4 cases from 2022 that are listed as active, pending, or forwarded.



Disposition	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Sustained	82.5% (141)	85.6% (119)	78.6% (103)	79.1% (106)	72.8% (91)
Unfounded	1.7% (3)	5.0% (7)	4.6% (6)	0.0% (0)	0.8% (1)
Pending/Active/ Forwarded	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3.0% (4)	3.7% (5)	3.2% (4)
Closed	7.0% (12)	5.8% (8)	6.1% (8)	10.4% (14)	12.8% (16)
Not Sustained	4.7% (8)	2.9% (4)	2.3% (3)	4.5% (6)	7.2% (9)
Justified	2.9% (5)	0.0% (0)	0.8% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Preventable	0.6% (1)	0.7% (1)	2.3% (3)	0.0% (0)	1.6% (2)
Exonerated	0.6% (1)	0.0% (0)	2.3% (3)	2.2% (3)	1.6% (2)

Table 4 (page 7) shows the number of internal investigation allegations for 2018-2022. Within the 125 internal investigation incidents that were received in 2022, there were 158 allegations of misconduct. The top allegation that the Department investigated was “improper disposition or damage of departmental property.” This can include any time an employee damages any Department owned property, including vehicle accidents. The second most common allegation over the past five years was “disobedience of orders”. As with citizen complaints, the complete list of allegations can be found in the Department’s Conduct and Discipline Manual (Manual 001).

Table 4. Internal Investigation Allegations by Year, 2018-2022

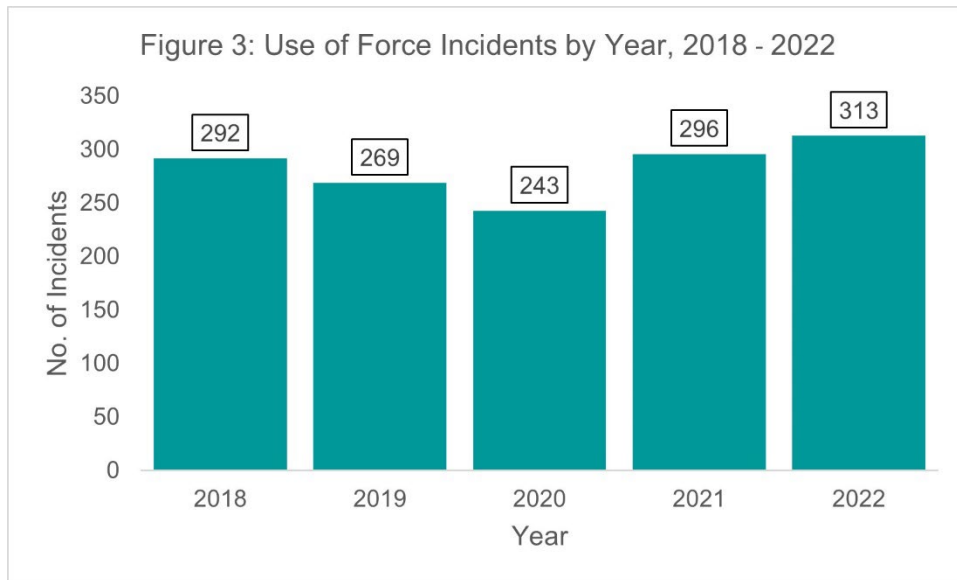
Allegation	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Improper Disposition or Damage of Departmental Property	87	63	58	57	44
Disobedience of Orders	48	45	52	36	31
General Article	35	21	25	21	27
Neglect of Duty	10	7	9	7	12
Not Specified	18	6	6	19	20
Disobedience of Orders (Workplace Harassment)	8	9	7	8	5
Improper Use of Intoxicants	8	6	5	1	2
False Official Statement	3	7	3	1	1
Unauthorized Absence	4	5	2	10	5
Insubordinate Conduct	7		4		
Unlawful or Oppressive Exercise of Authority	5	1	3	4	6
Administrative Firearms Review	2	5	8	3	
Failure to Exercise Supervisory Responsibilities		4			
Improper Release of Prisoner	5	2	2		
Breach of Confidence	4	3			1
Employee Charged with a Criminal Offense	3				1
Maltreatment of Subordinates	1	1		2	1
Corrupt Practices	1				
Soliciting an Offense	1				
Misconduct During the Promotional Process		2		1	
Conspiracy To Commit an Offense	2				
Being An Accessory After the Fact	1	1			
Employee Suspensions and Investigations					
Altering Department or Public Records	1				
Being a Principal				1	
Conflict of Interest				1	1
Improper Appointment			1		
Malingering				1	1
Total	254	188	185	173	158

Table 5. Internal Allegations by Work Unit and Year, 2018-2022					
Work Unit	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
North County Precinct	52	34	28	32	36
Central County Precinct	19	25	15	17	13
Affton Southwest Precinct	26	8	27	21	15
South County Precinct	22	12	2	5	12
City Of Fenton Precinct	2	2	3	2	2
City Of Wildwood Precinct	6	1	3	4	6
West County Precinct	17	13	23	6	4
City Of Jennings Precinct	10	19	16	5	9
Bureau Of Transit Police	11	15	8	8	6
Central Records	6	5	2	2	
Chief's Office	11	6	4	4	4
CMPA	1		2	1	3
Communications	16	1	3	13	5
Crime Lab	14	7		3	
Deputy Chief's Office				2	1
Drug Enforcement	2	5	8	2	3
Security Services	14	10	7	8	9
Special Response Unit	3	5	13	6	5
Tactical Operations	5	4	5	1	2
Other- DCI	12	5	7	10	3
Other- Human Resources	1	2	8	6	11
Other- Operational Support	1	2	1	2	1
Other- Special Operations	2	7		11	6
Unknown	1			2	2
Total	254	188	185	173	158

Table 5 shows the number of allegations by work unit and year. The variation in the number of allegations by work unit is primarily a function of the number of employees in the work unit. Most units have a consistent number of internal investigations each year, however a couple of work units had large drops in the number of internal investigations. A small number of investigations involved allegations without a specific employee identified.

Use of Force

Use of force is defined as using techniques other than verbal direction and standard handcuffing to seize a citizen. This includes using physical restraint, striking, pepper spray, TASER, baton, canine, less lethal, firearm, or other objects to gain compliance of a citizen. Whenever an officer uses one of these techniques, they must report the incident to a supervisor who will investigate the incident and create an administrative report. Figure 3 shows the number of incidents in which force was used during the past five years. In 2022, the number of use of force incidents was consistent with years 2017, 2018, and 2021. Due to the Covid pandemic, the numbers of incidents for 2020 were lower than other years. Table 6 (page 10) shows the number of times each type of force was used within the incidents. There can be multiple uses of force in each use of force incident, which is why the total uses of force is much higher than the number of incidents. 2020 and beyond have seen a higher number of total uses of force. The use of body worn and in-car cameras, which began in 2020, has led to an overall increase in uses of force numbers, not because of a change in reporting by officers, but the use of body worn and in-car cameras have allowed the Department to accurately capture exactly what occurred during a single use of force incident.



Type of Force	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Firearm	10	8	11	13	1

Table 6. Uses of Force by Type, 2018-2022					
Type of Force	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Baton	3	6	1	1	2
Canine	21	16	6	11	7
Taser	103	80	72	59	83
Pepper Spray	30	25	25	10	24
Physical (Striking)	104	73	50	63	77
Physical Restraint	348	332	500	632	684
Other	25	24	43	22	32
Not Noted	0	0	0	0	23
Total	644	564	708	811	933

Table 7 (page 11) shows the uses of force by the work unit of the Department. Typically, work units are consistent year-to-year. Most precincts have reported increases in the number of uses of force per incident since 2020. Specifically, there is an increase in the number of physical restraint force reported, which is a direct result of the body worn and in-car cameras.

Table 7. Uses of Force by Work Unit, 2018-2022					
Work Element	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
North County Precinct	167	130	276	353	356

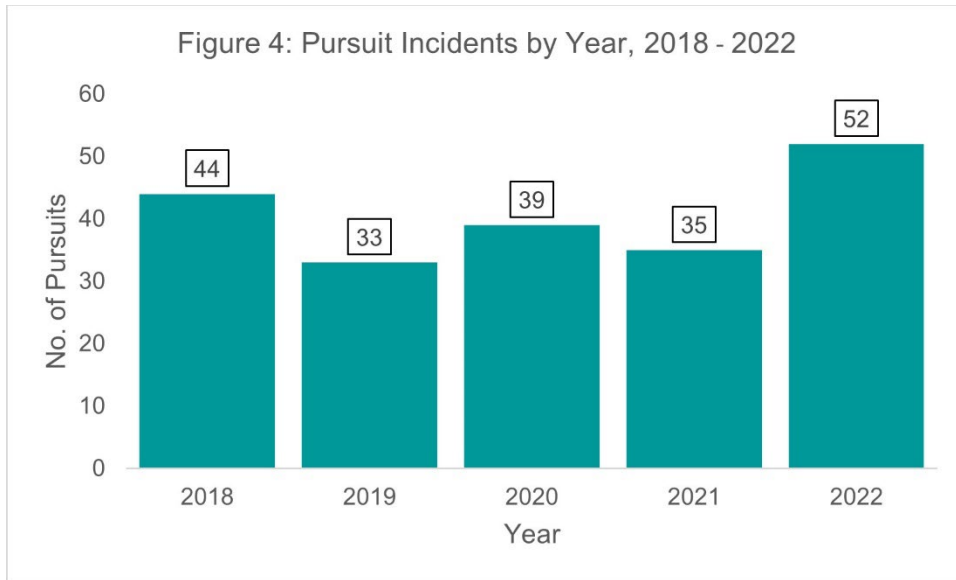
Table 7. Uses of Force by Work Unit, 2018-2022

Work Element	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Central County Precinct	33	38	44	51	67
Affton Southwest Precinct	60	50	36	76	87
South County Precinct	116	99	68	88	77
City Of Fenton Precinct	18	13	7	9	7
City Of Wildwood Precinct	8	9	0	16	13
West County Precinct	41	28	42	36	37
City Of Jennings Precinct	62	59	55	36	124
Bureau Of Transit Police	65	55	63	49	77
Canine Unit	22	21	11	14	10
Criminal Investigation	7	18	13	8	11
Drug Enforcement	22	15	25	29	39
Highway Safety Unit	0	0	4	2	8
Special Response Unit	11	22	35	34	5
Tactical Operations	2	3	21	1	14
Other	10	4	8	8	1
Total Uses of Force	644	564	708	811	933

Pursuits

Vehicle pursuits are one of the most dangerous tasks for a police officer. Vehicle pursuits are dangerous for the officer(s) and citizen(s) in the pursued vehicle. They are also dangerous to the public as they occur on public roadways. Because of the inherent danger involved in pursuits, the Department has an Emergency Vehicle Operation and Pursuit Policy (GO 003) that only allows officers to pursue vehicles for the most serious public safety interests. Pursuits that do occur are reviewed by supervisors on scene and administratively by senior managers.

Figure 4 shows the number of pursuits from 2018-2022 (page 12). In the past five years, the Department has averaged between 33 and 52 pursuits per year, with 52 occurring in 2022.



Nearly all pursuits initiated by Department officers over the past five years follow policy. Table 8 shows the number of pursuits by year and the percent of pursuits following Department policy. In 2022, all pursuits initiated complied with Department policy.

Disposition	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Complied with Policy	43	33	38	35	52
Non-compliant/Further Investigation	1		1		
Suspended/Pending			1		

Table 9 shows the number of pursuits by work unit and year (page 13). The North County Precinct has initiated more pursuits than any other work unit over the past five years. The North County Precinct also has the highest number of violent crimes, which are often associated with pursuits. Outside of the Division of Patrol, the Special Response Unit and Highway Safety Unit have the most total pursuits initiated in the past five years.

Table 9. Pursuits Initiated by Work Unit, 2018-2022

Work Element	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
North County Precinct	17	9	16	16	22
Central County Precinct	3	1	1	4	1
Affton Southwest Precinct	3	2	4	2	3
South County Precinct	0	1	1	0	3
City Of Fenton Precinct	0	1	0	0	0
City Of Wildwood Precinct	2	1	1	0	0
West County Precinct	0	3	0	0	2
City Of Jennings Precinct	14	5	3	3	13
Other	5	10	13	10	8
Total	44	33	39	35	52

Department Vehicle Accidents

Department vehicle accidents are events where a marked or unmarked vehicle that is owned or operated by the Department is involved in an accident. The Department tracks and analyzes these events because of the risk of injury to officers and citizens, and because accidents create a liability risk for taxpayers. Figure 5 shows the number of Department accidents from 2018 through 2022.

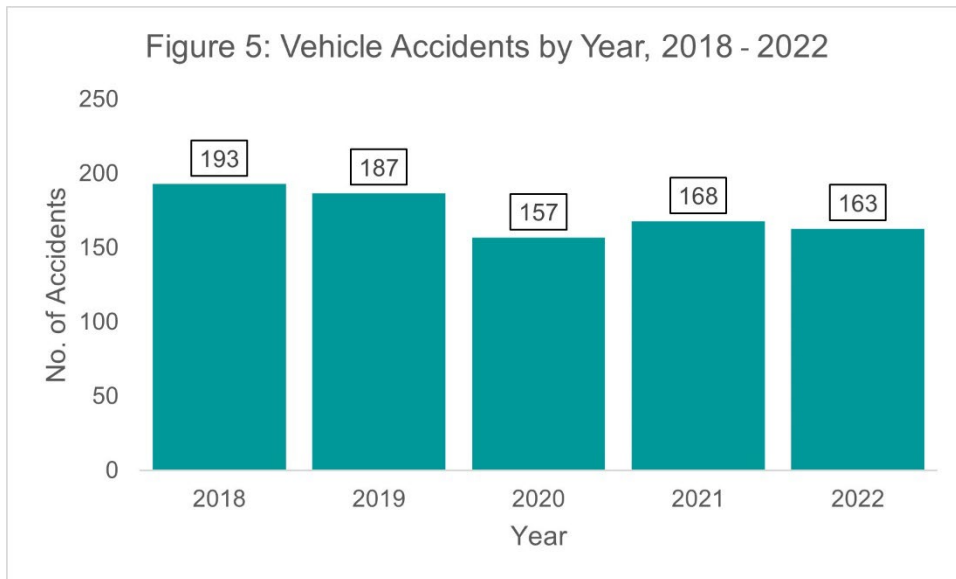


Figure 6 (page 14) shows the proportion of accidents each year for which employees were at fault. The chart shows that over the five-year period, between 57% and 67% of the accidents were not the employees' fault. In 2022, 57.7% were not the employee's fault compared to 61.3% in 2021.

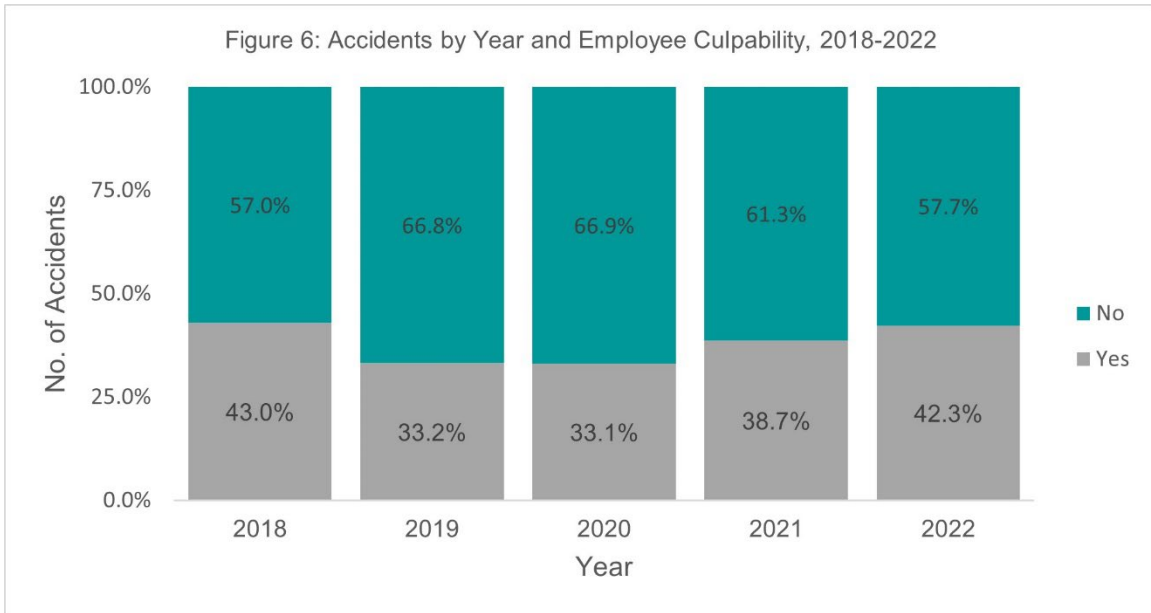


Table 10 (page 15) shows the number of officers involved in accidents by the work unit of the officer. In 2022, there were 163 officers involved in the 163 accidents. Most work units have had consistent numbers of officers involved in accidents year to year.

Table 10. Accidents by Involved Officer Work Unit, 2018-2022

Work Unit	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
North County Precinct	43	34	27	30	48
Central County Precinct	18	13	13	15	9
Affton Southwest Precinct	15	19	24	18	18
South County Precinct	18	19	11	14	14
City Of Fenton Precinct	6		8	2	3
City Of Wildwood Precinct	15	5	7	6	4
West County Precinct	21	16	11	12	11
City Of Jennings Precinct	11	14	5	5	5
Bureau Of Transit Police	4	6	6	6	1
Canine Unit	5	4	1	3	2
Chief's Office	8	5	8	7	3
CMPA		1		1	2
Deputy Chief's Office					1
Drug Enforcement	8	12	12	16	12
Highway Safety Unit	2	1	3	3	2
Human Resources	2	1	2	2	2
Security Services	1	1			4
Special Response Unit	9	2	8	10	2
Tactical Operations	8	5	3	4	2
Other- DCI	11	12	7	12	11
Other- Operational Support	2	3	2	2	6
Other- Patrol	1				
Other- Special Operations	1	4	1	4	1
Total	209	177	159	172	163

The final area to explore with Department vehicle accidents concerns injuries to employees and citizens. Fortunately, the overall number of injuries from the accidents is low. Tables 11 and 12 (page 16) show the injuries to employees and citizens, respectively. In 2022, approximately 10% of incidents resulted in an injury of at least one involved officer, and 4% resulted in an injury of at least one citizen.

Table 11. Accidents and Employee Injuries, 2018-2022					
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Injury	10.4% (20)	9.1% (17)	8.3% (13)	7.1% (12)	9.8% (16)
No Injury	89.6% (173)	90.9% (170)	91.7% (144)	92.9% (156)	90.2% (147)

Table 12. Accidents and Citizen Injuries, 2018-2022					
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Injury	9.8% (19)	8.6% (16)	7.6% (12)	9.5% (16)	4.3% (7)
No Injury	90.2% (174)	91.4% (171)	92.4% (145)	90.5% (152)	95.7% (156)

Conclusions

Accountability to the public is of great concern to the St. Louis County Police Department. It is a pillar of maintaining legitimacy within the community. A vital component to that accountability is the ability of the Department to monitor and police its own actions. The data presented in this report examines and analyzes the internal data of the Department. The findings in this report offer citizens the opportunity to judge the actions of the Department for themselves and to make conclusions on the effectiveness of the Department and its officers. By offering this data to the public, the Department creates another safeguard against bad practices and misconduct.