

**Bellingham Police Department
Use of Force Statistics
July 2018**

Bellingham

POLICE

Washington State Accredited Agency

Your Bellingham Police Department maintains a commitment to our community by respecting the people we serve, acting with integrity and demonstrating accountability to those that we serve.

As entrusted guardians of our community, our interactions in the performance of our official duties sometimes brings us into conflict with members of society that fail to heed our community's wishes for order and peace. It is the policy of your police department that your officers may only use that amount of force that is objectively reasonable and necessary in the performance of their legal duties. Your police department's use of force policies are consistent with the laws of the United States and the State of Washington. Your police department also strives to have policies that are consistent, with identified "best practices," and contemporary scientific discovery and application.

The components for constitutional policing are training, policy and supervision. Your police department maintains the highest standards and attention to all three areas and will continue to be an agency that serves its community with commitment, vision and values.

SECTION ONE: Incident Information

Total number of use of force incidents:	14 / 0.24%	YTD 152 / 0.39%
• Incidents involving one officer:	4 / 29%	YTD 8 / 5%
• Incidents involving more than one officer:	10 / 71%	YTD 144 / 95%

According to the city's Computer-Aided Dispatch information from July 1st through July 31st of this year, your Bellingham Police officers responded to 5882 calls for service. These calls for service also included officer-initiated activities where an officer contacted someone, performed a traffic stop or witnessed an incident and were investigating further.

For fans of numbers, this means that **0.24%, or less than one-quarter of one percent** of incidents in July resulted in your officers using lawful force against a citizen. (39228 calls this year)

Incident origin:

• Call for service from 911	11 / 79%	YTD 124 / 82%
• Self-initiated by officer(s)	3 / 21%	YTD 28 / 18%

Put into perspective with the previous information this means that in all 5882 calls for service that your police officers responded to in the month of July, only **three times** did an officer's self-initiated contact result in one of your officers using lawful force against a citizen.

In numbers: **0.051%, or less than one-tenth of one percent.**

Reason for use of force:

• Active resistance to lawful commands	8 / 57%	YTD 110 / 72%
• Actively aggressive	2 / 14%	YTD 17 / 11%
• Assaultive	4 / 29%	YTD 20 / 13%
• Life-threatening	0	YTD 5 / 3%

Your police officers are allowed by law to use force in the discharge of their duties.

As the information above has already shown, your police officers very rarely have to use force to accomplish their lawful objectives. The reasons listed above show that some citizens do not wish to submit to officers' lawful authority. How the citizens resist lawful actions of your officers is detailed hereafter, along with officers' responses.

Citizen Resistance

• Barricaded	0	YTD 3 / 1%
• Fled	0	YTD 18 / 6%
• Hiding	0	YTD 9 / 3%
• Physical resistance	10 / 42%	YTD 101 / 37%
• Refuse lawful commands	14 / 58%	YTD 145 / 52%

Officers' Force Response

• Physical control(s)	29 / 52%	YTD 294 / 44%
• Physical impact(s)	0	YTD 13 / 2%
• TASER display	0	YTD 25 / 4%
• Verbal command	24 / 43%	YTD 282 / 42%
• Weapon pointing	0	YTD 4 / <1%
• Restraints	0	YTD 8 / 1%
• Less Lethal Shotgun	0	YTD 9 / 1%
• Less Lethal Shotgun display	0	YTD 3 / <1%
• K9 application	0	YTD 9 / 1%
• TASER usage	1 / 2%	YTD 15 / 2%
• Vascular Neck Restraint	1 / 2%	YTD 3 / <1%
• Chemical Irritant	1 / 2%	YTD 4 / <1%
• Pursuit Immobilization Technique	0	YTD 1 / <1%
• Firearm	0	YTD 0
• Impact Weapon	0	YTD 0

A citizens' resistance to lawful commands can take more than one form; sometimes your officers' response to these situations necessitates finding a solution that safely resolves the situation. For example, a citizen may refuse a lawful command, then flee on foot and ultimately resist physically when located. For that one incident, three specific items are documented. In the same manner, one of your officers may give a lawful verbal command. When that lawful command is disregarded the officer may need to employ a physical control technique such as tackling a fleeing citizen. Thus, two specific items are documented.

Of note, your officers noted that for this particular data set, citizens in 14 of the 14 incidents (100%) disregarded verbal commands wherein your officers used lawful force. Citizens were more likely to offer physical resistance to lawful commands after that. Your officers used authorized physical controls like grabbing arms for handcuffing or holding folks from fleeing far more than deploying other modalities of force like TASERs or physical strikes.

Your officers used lawful force against a citizen in July in **0.24%, or less than one-quarter of one percent** of incidents. Your police department using force to accomplish lawful objectives is a rarity.

Day of Week

Sunday	1 / 7%	YTD 21 / 14%
Monday	2 / 14%	YTD 18 / 12%
Tuesday	4 / 29%	YTD 27 / 18%
Wednesday	2 / 14%	YTD 18 / 12%
Thursday	1 / 7%	YTD 19 / 12%
Friday	2 / 14%	YTD 21 / 14%
Saturday	2 / 14%	YTD 28 / 18%

Time of Day

0620 - 1020	1 / 7%	YTD 6 / 4%
1020 - 1620	3 / 21%	YTD 33 / 22%
1620 - 2020	7 / 50%	YTD 47 / 31%
2020 - 0300	1 / 7%	YTD 52 / 34%
0300 - 0620	2 / 14%	YTD 14 / 9%

SECTION TWO: Involved Persons' Information

The data presented in this section will provide information on the citizens involved in your police department's use of force incidents, along with information on your police officers involved in those incidents.

Injuries to Citizens due to Officers' force: 5 / 36% YTD 46 / 30%

- Abrasions, small laceration and TASER puncture

For the month of July, your officers used lawful force **0.24%, or less than one-quarter of one percent** in the incidents they responded to. Of the 5882 incidents your officers responded to, only five of those contacts resulted in any kind of notable injury to a citizen.

In numbers: **0.085%, or less than one-tenth of one percent** of incidents responded to by your officers resulted in an injury from your officers using lawful force against a citizen.

Citizens Transported to Hospital: 4 / 29% YTD 47 / 31%

- Three emergent detentions, one jail requirement

Your officers noted that in instances where they applied lawful force, three citizens appeared to be having a mental health issue that posed a danger to themselves or others. Your police department strives to have mental health issues handled by the hospital, not the jail, and thus your officers took the citizen to the hospital for the appropriate care.

Injuries to Officers:	3 / 21%	YTD 23 / 15%
Officers Transported to Hospital:	0	YTD 0
Median Age of Citizen:	41.5 years	37 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youngest 11 , Oldest 56 		
Median Age of Officer:	34 years	35 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youngest 22, Oldest 51 		

Median ages were determined to be the best descriptor in these two categories, as the reader can gain a better appreciation for the more-likely ages rather than having an average age be skewed by outliers.

In addition, this information serves as a good reminder to the fact that your officers encounter folks from all age ranges in the performance of their official duties and sometimes encounter unlawful resistance from citizens, both younger and older.

Race of Citizen

• White	11 / 79%	YTD 111 / 73%
• Black or African American	1 / 7%	YTD 10 / 7%
• American Indian	0	YTD 17 / 11%
• Hispanic	2 / 14%	YTD 13 / 9%
• Asian	0	YTD 1 / 1%

Race of Officer

• White	31 / 97%	YTD 336 / 93%
• Black or African American	1 / 3%	YTD 4 / 1%
• East Indian	0	YTD 13 / 4%
• Hispanic	0	YTD 9 / 2%
• Asian	0	YTD 1 / <1%

Resident of Whatcom County / Bellingham?

• Yes	12 / 86%	YTD 140 / 92%
• No	2 / 14%	YTD 12 / 8%

Statistical analysis of police use of force often has a discussion component concerning the population demographics of the involved citizens. The reader is cautioned to remember that from a statistical basis, comparing outlying events to population demographics often will not give the reader an accurate assessment of the situation.

For example, in the month of July 92% of citizens that your officers used lawful force on were residents of either Whatcom County or the City of Bellingham.

However, do not forget that in the month of July your officers used lawful force in only **0.24%, or less than one-quarter of one percent** of incidents. So these incidents are truly outliers and thus may not adhere to population demographics. For example in July, in order to achieve lawful objectives lawful force was used by your police department two times against persons of Hispanic ancestry, or **0.034%, or around three one-hundredths of one percent** in the incidents for the month. This is nowhere near the city demographic.

Gender Identification of Citizen

- | | | |
|----------|----------|---------------|
| • Male | 10 / 71% | YTD 118 / 78% |
| • Female | 4 / 29% | YTD 34 / 22% |

Gender Identification of Officer

- | | | |
|----------|----------|---------------|
| • Male | 28 / 87% | YTD 316 / 87% |
| • Female | 4 / 12% | YTD 47 / 13% |

Considerations for Citizen's Actions

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------|--------------|
| • Alcohol use perceived | 2 / 9% | YTD 53 / 27% |
| • Mental health issue perceived | 7 / 33% | YTD 53 / 27% |
| • Drug use perceived | 3 / 14% | YTD 31 / 16% |
| • Combination | 3 / 14% | YTD 23 / 12% |
| • Nothing perceived | 6 / 29% | YTD 36 / 18% |

This information was provided by your police department to better inform the community we serve about use of force incidents. Your officers are empowered by the laws of the United States and the State of Washington to lawfully use force when objectively reasonable and necessary. This authority is viewed as an awesome responsibility to our community and your officers wish to be transparent so that our community understands that, although a statistical rarity, sometimes your officers have to lawfully gain compliance in the performance of their official duties.

Future information will also display the year-to-date information so that the community maintains a trusting relationship towards their police department in the topic of police use of force.

Should you have any questions, comments or concerns please do not hesitate to contact Lieutenant Don Almer at 360-778-8641 or dalmer@cob.org.