



ARLINGTON COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICE PRACTICES

The Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) truly values the strong relationship we've built between law enforcement and the Arlington Community over the past 79 years. We are committed to partnering with the community to maintain a relationship built on trust and recognize that effectively communicating is an essential component to this. It has come to our attention that recent political mailings and communications have suggested that the agency participates in problematic police practices. While we have no intention of engaging in the political process, we do feel that it is necessary to share relevant information with the public to allow for independent review and decision making on police practices in our community.

Claim: Refused to prosecute police officers in cases of brutality while taking thousands of dollars from law enforcement

The source of this statement is an officer involved shooting that occurred on Tuesday, May 19, 2015, in the 4200 block of N. 2nd Road. On that day, officers responded to the report of a domestic dispute inside a residence. As the officers were investigating, the male subject became combative and was fatally shot after attacking an officer with a metal pole, causing a serious injury to his face. During the ongoing physical struggle, the officer discharged his firearm out of fear for his safety and the safety of others. A comprehensive [criminal and administrative investigation](#) and review of facts and evidence collected determined that the officer's use of deadly force was justifiable in response to an immediate and serious threat of imminent danger to himself and others present at the scene. Any insinuation of police brutality surrounding this incident is inconsistent with the facts.

ACPD is a separate and independent agency from the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney and provides no funding for its operation. During the political process, individuals identified as having an occupation in law enforcement took advantage of their constitutional rights to support a candidate running for public office.

Claim: Enforces a marijuana policy that unfairly impacts people of color

The source of this claim is a statement that African Americans are at least 8 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than whites, despite the fact that studies show that different racial groups use marijuana at about the same rate. This claim has been disproportionately based on Arlington population statistics and does not account for the diverse community of the National Capital Region. When analyzing marijuana data, we must consider the demographics of the region and residency of arrestee to make an informed conclusion.

From January 1, 2013 – May 2, 2019, there were more than 3,300 arrests for narcotics offenses involving marijuana. While 26% more black individuals were arrested for marijuana charges than white individuals, the majority of arrestees (74%) reside outside Arlington County. Of the total number of black individuals arrested for marijuana charges, a significant number (44%) reside in the District of Columbia or Maryland. Arlington County residents account for roughly a third (34.2%) of all marijuana arrests, with white individuals (54%) making up the majority of these arrests. For additional information, see [marijuana statistics](#).

Charges for possession of marijuana have declined in both 2017 and 2018. More than half of those arrested for marijuana possession (56.1%) are cited and released on a summons, not taken to jail. Custodial arrests occur if there are additional jail-able offenses, the suspect has outstanding warrants, the suspect refuses to identify themselves or sign the citation.

ACPD is committed to serving our diverse and inclusive community. In 2017, officers completed implicit bias training and new officers receive this as part of basic training at the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Academy. In 2018, three allegations of racially-biased policing were investigated and each determined to be unfounded.



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Claim: Facilitates a school-to-prison pipeline for Arlington students

ACPD is committed to the safety and well-being of students, teachers and staff in Arlington Public Schools (APS). The School Resource Officers (SROs) are a visible presence in the schools throughout the year providing instruction as guest lecturers, conducting proactive patrols around our schools and building relationships vital to the safety of our school community. The [school disciplinary process](#) is handled by APS and SROs are not involved unless requested by a school administrator.

In 2017, ACPD made 28 felony arrests of juveniles on school property. The number of felony arrests decreased to 14 in 2018. Of those arrested in 2017, only one received jail time after violating their probation. Please note that 2017 is the most recent data available for dispositions as not all cases from 2018 have concluded their process through the court system. For additional information, see [juvenile arrest statistics](#).

General Police Information

ACPD is committed to providing officers with exceptional training. A review of training records over the previous five years indicated that sworn staff have attended an average of approximately 59,600 hours of training annually (this number includes new officer training). Additionally, ACPD is committed to interacting with individuals with mental illness in an informed and thoughtful manner. Currently, 76% of the patrol division have been certified in [Crisis Intervention Training](#).

In recognizing the significant trust the community places in the agency, the Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) investigates any allegation of officer misconduct to ensure we are holding ourselves accountable to the highest standards of professional law enforcement. Of the 83,007 calls for service in 2018, ACPD received only 23 citizen complaints against officers. An analysis of this data shows that we receive complaints in less than one-tenth of a percent of the documented police/citizen encounters. Furthermore, out of the thousands of documented interactions ACPD only received one complaint of excessive force in all of 2018, which was rigorously investigated and was not sustained. [Community satisfaction surveys](#) continue to show high community satisfaction percentages above the national average.

In the event an officer is required to use deadly force, this action is thoroughly investigated by members of the Criminal Investigations Section, and the entire investigative file is forwarded to the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney for independent review. Additionally, the circumstances of any use of deadly force are investigated by staff from the OPR.

While the population of Arlington County continues to grow, the [overall crime rate](#) continues to trend downwards. Despite this, officers remain forward thinking to address emerging trends affecting public safety to include proactive initiatives to address [opioids](#) and [alcohol-related harm](#). Additionally, ACPD aims to ensure the safety of all travelers, including bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists through education and enforcement. A review of traffic citation data from 2017-2018 indicates that 62.8% of all citations were issued to individuals identified as White, 28.1% to individuals identified as Black, and the remaining 9.1% issued to a combination of Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, Unknown and Other race individuals. These percentages are in line with the most-recent regional demography numbers available through the [U.S. Census for the National Capital Region](#).

The public's trust in our agency is paramount and we recognize that it is earned and maintained each day with every interaction. The officers of the Arlington County Police Department are a dedicated force who demonstrate on a daily basis that they are committed to upholding and protecting the constitutional rights of all individuals.

This information is provided to allow all members of the community to make an informed decision regarding the effectiveness of our agency. Additional information and data regarding this fact sheet can be found on the [police website](#). Specific questions can be addressed to police@arlingtonva.us.