



2021

PURSUIT REVIEW REPORT

Bloomfield Township Police Department  
4200 Telegraph, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302  
238-433-7755

## OVERVIEW:

The information in this report is obtained by reviewing police reports, conducting officer debriefings, and reviewing dash cam video/audio recordings of our police pursuits. All written reports and camera reviews are conducted to verify compliance with department policy. This review will cover both vehicular and foot pursuits.

## BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP FLEE & ELUDE / PURSUITS

A vehicular pursuit is defined by our policy as, **“An attempt by a police officer in an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend the occupants of another moving vehicle; provided, the driver of such vehicle is aware of the attempt and is resisting apprehension by maintaining or increasing the speed of his/her vehicle, and by ignoring the officer's direction to stop.”**

On an annual basis, the Bloomfield Township Police Department reviews and analyzes the pursuit policy and the data collected from each pursuit occurrence. The information gathered during the analysis assists with policy review, changes, implementation, and departmental training.

In accordance with Bloomfield Township Policy 2.03c, a vehicular pursuit may be initiated if both of the following criteria are met:

1. The suspect exhibits the intention to avoid apprehension by using a vehicle to flee or refuses to stop at the direction of a police officer.

AND

2. The officer reasonably believes that the suspect, if allowed to flee, would present a danger to human life or cause serious injury.

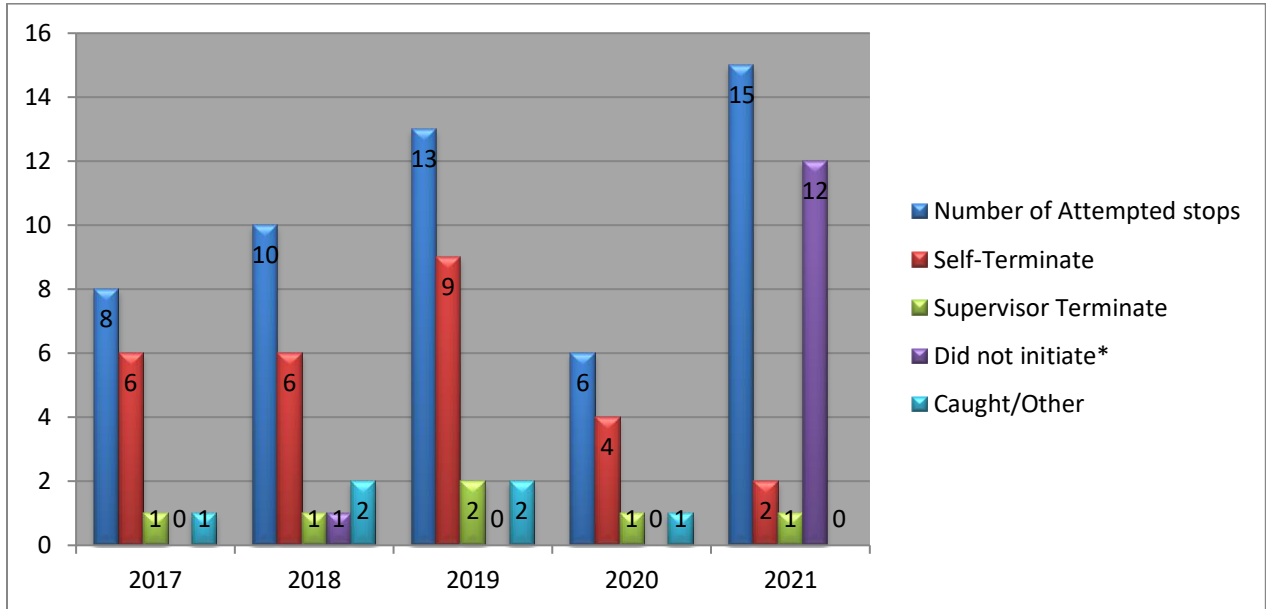
The Bloomfield Township Police Department recognizes the dangers of police pursuits to all parties involved and innocent bystanders. Our Pursuit Policy states, ***“A vehicular pursuit should be attempted only when, in the judgment of the officer, the danger created by the possible escape of the fleeing suspect outweighs the danger created by the vehicular pursuit, and no reasonable alternative exists.”***

## BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP VEHICLE PURSUIT STATISTICS

In 2021, Bloomfield Township police officers were involved in 15 incidents where a driver willfully disobeyed an officer's attempt to stop the vehicle. Traffic violations were the primary reason for the attempted traffic stops. Of the 15 incidents, 12 involved an officer who made a reasonable attempt to stop the vehicle and the officer did not initiate a pursuit when the violator failed to stop, two self-terminated after losing sight of the vehicle and one incident was

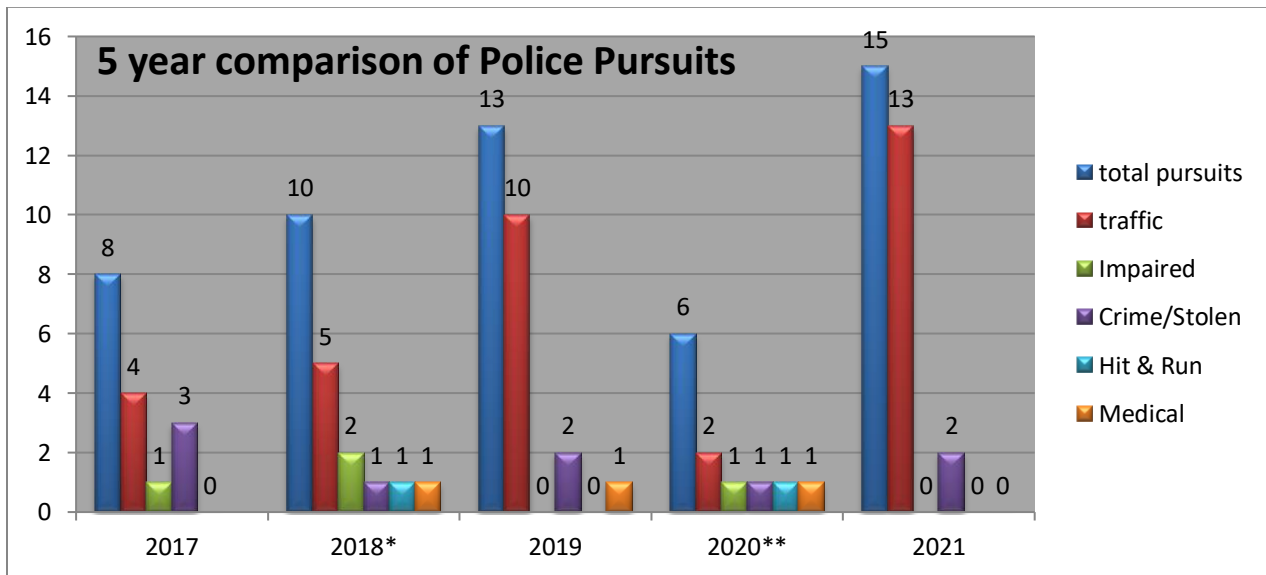
terminated by a supervisor due to the dangers created by the pursuit. Two incidents resulted in discipline for violation of department policies.

The following graph shows the number of attempted stops and the actions taken by the officers involved.

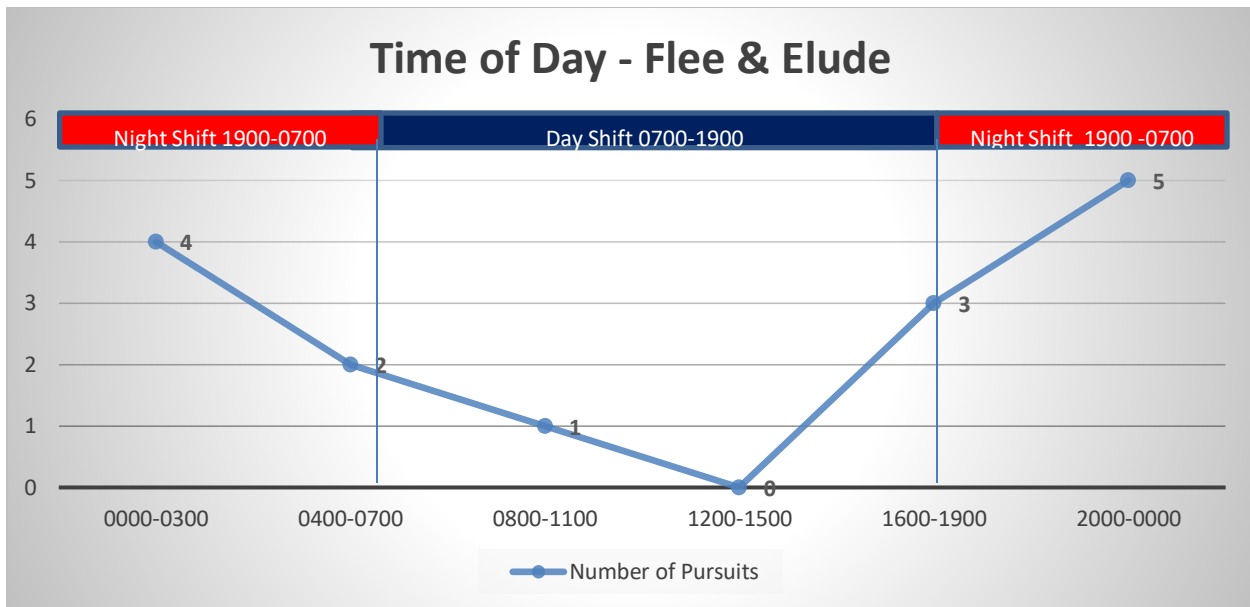


\*did not initiate includes vehicles that initially complied but fled during the stop and where officers chose not to pursue.

Over the last five years, 65% of the incidents were initiated because of a traffic violation, i.e. red light, speeding, lane changes violations; 17% were involved in a crime or involved a stolen vehicle.



\*2018 began accreditation reporting of pursuits / \*\*2020 decline likely due to COVID-19 decline in traffic related incidents



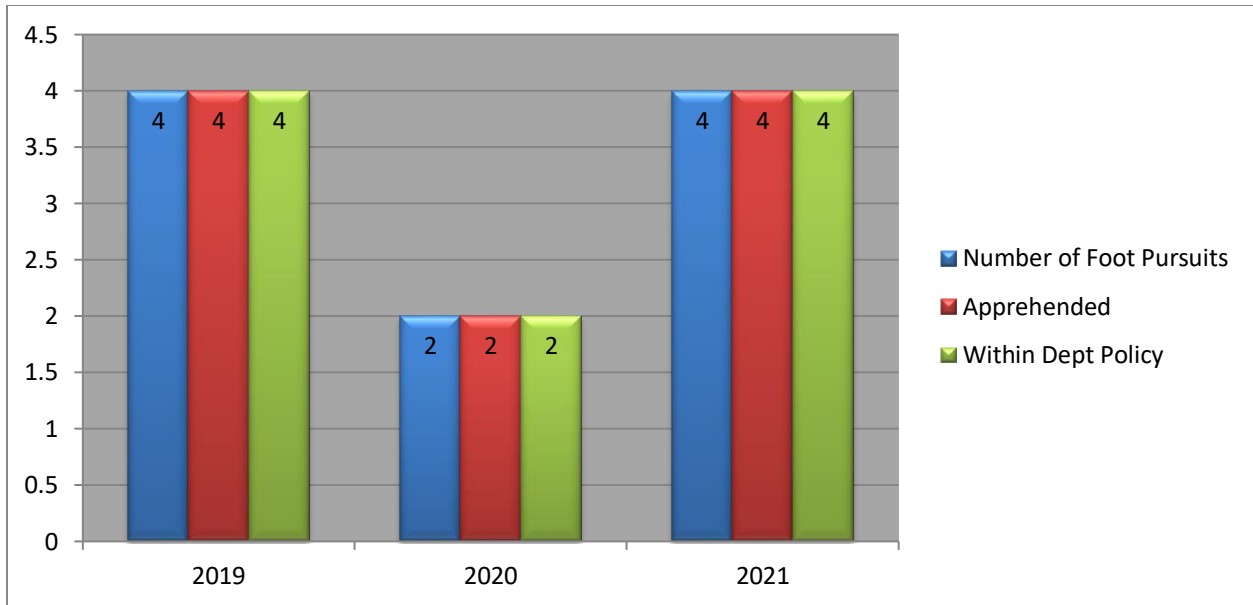
## FOOT PURSUITS

A foot pursuit is defined in our policy as **“A situation in which an officer chases a subject on foot in an effort to detain or arrest an individual, whom he/she has reasonable suspicion to believe is about to commit, is committing, or has committed a crime, or is being taken into protective custody, and is resisting apprehension by fleeing from the officer on foot.”**

Foot pursuits are inherently dangerous police actions. It is the policy of the Bloomfield Township Police Department that officer and public safety shall be the overriding consideration in determining whether a foot pursuit will be initiated or continued. Foot pursuits occur in a wide variety of circumstances. Therefore, our foot pursuit policy is intended to provide overall direction and guidance to officers when deciding if such pursuits are warranted and how they should be conducted.

## FOOT PURSUITS STATISTICS

In 2021, Bloomfield Township officers were involved in four foot pursuits. Each incident involved person(s) actively committing a crime or fleeing the scene of a crime. All subjects involved in each foot pursuit were apprehended. The officers involved in each foot pursuit were found to be within the department policy.



## SUMMARY OF CASES ENDING IN ACCIDENT OR INJURY

- In 2021, no vehicle accidents or injuries occurred as the result of a police pursuit involving a vehicle.
- One (1) foot pursuit resulted in scrapes and lacerations to an officer. No suspects were injured as a result of foot pursuits.
- Two (2) foot pursuits resulted in use of force due to the subject's actions upon apprehension (included in use of force review report).

On February 13, 2021, Officers were dispatched to a physical fight involving two males and a female. As officers arrived a subject fled on foot. Officer Smith located the subject at Telegraph and Quarton. Officer Smith gave the subject verbal commands to stop. The subject ignored the commands and fled. Officer Smith caught the subject in the pool area of the Whethersfield Apartments. The subject failed to comply with all verbal commands. Officer Smith tackled the subject and with the assistance of Officer Zaremba the subject was taken into custody. No injuries as a result of the foot pursuit to the subject or officers. Subject complained of injuries sustained in a prior incident not involving Bloomfield Township Police Department.

On March 1, 2021, Officer Harwood and F.T.O Wegienka attempted to stop a vehicle for a traffic violation. The vehicle stopped on Hillsdale Drive. Upon approaching the vehicle, the driver fled on foot. Officer Harwood chased the driver on foot behind several homes in the neighborhood. Officer Harwood caught the subject behind a residence. The subject refused verbal commands and resisted arrest by grabbing at Officer Harwood's gun belt and actively tried to fight and flee. Officer Harwood deployed a Taser and was able to control the subject

until backup officers arrived on scene and secured the subject. Officer Harwood received minor scratches to his hands and forehead. The subject did not complain on any injuries.

## SUMMARY

The Bloomfield Township Police Department is committed to the safety of our officers, residents, and visitors to Bloomfield Township. The safety of the involved officers and the public are the most important aspects of a police pursuit. In 2021, Bloomfield Township Police Officers initiated 8,269 traffic stops. Of those traffic stops, 15 violators (.001%) willfully disobeyed the officer's reasonable attempt to stop their vehicle. 93% of the incidents involving a fleeing vehicle were terminated by the officer or the officer did not initiate a pursuit when a driver of a traffic violation fled the officers attempt to stop.

Our officers responded to 26,970 calls for service and only four (4) foot pursuits occurred when violators fled from the scene of a crime or on foot from a traffic stop.

Every incident involving a vehicle pursuit or foot pursuit was reviewed with the officers involved to ensure compliance with department policies and procedures. Radio communications was found to be the area in need of most improvement. In both instances of discipline, the officers involved failed to properly advise dispatch of the circumstances involving the pursuit.

This report reflects the continued need for Emergency Vehicle Operations Training. The majority of the incidents involving a potential vehicle pursuit occurred on the midnight shift where historically the less experienced officers are assigned. We shall continue to review the policy and procedure in roll calls and share information learned during each administrative review.

The information contained in this report confirms the practical knowledge learned during department training, policy & procedure reviews, and administrative reviews of all incidents is considered by the officers when deciding their course of action in real time incidents.

## KEY POINTS

- Review policies and procedures related to pursuits several times a year.
- Timely review with involved officers and shift personnel.
- Share lessons learned after administrative reviews.
- Emergency Vehicle Operation Training, including refresher courses.
- In 2021, Officers used sound judgement and self-control when considering whether to engage in a pursuit.