



SALEM POLICE DEPARTMENT

# 2020 Vehicular Pursuit Report

## **INTRODUCTION:**

The Salem Police Department prepares an annual report on the agency's police vehicular pursuits. This report provides the Chief of Police and Command Staff an opportunity to review the actions of officers during vehicle pursuits. The information is evaluated to address any needed changes to procedures, training, supervisory and / or administrative practices on vehicular pursuits.

Vehicular pursuits have inherent dangers for the community, the officer, and the pursued subject; therefore, they must be balanced with comprehensive policies, directives, procedures, training, and compliance. To achieve this balance, the Department evaluates available data from pursuit reports, and has an internal process for evaluation of these activities by its training staff. This is to ensure the Department is in parity with best practices throughout the law enforcement community, Oregon revised statutes and relevant case law.

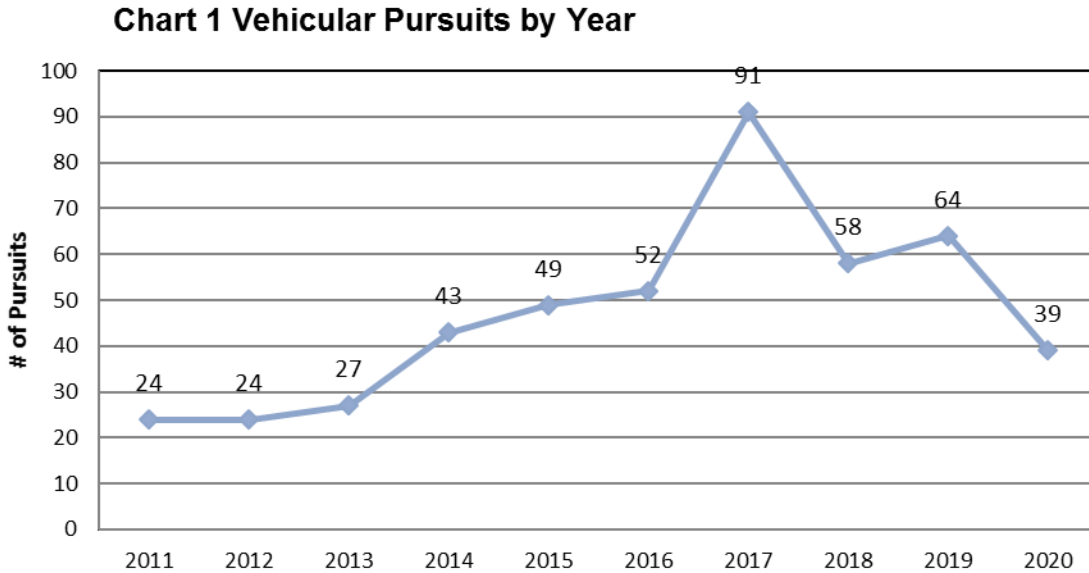
The information in this report pertains to pursuits initiated by the Salem Police Department (SPD). Surrounding agencies may also pursue a vehicle into the city and may have expectations for our assistance or takeover of their pursuit. To ensure interagency communications and expectations as to pursuits, Salem participates in a multiagency interagency agreement with Oregon State Police, Marion County and the cities of Keizer, Woodburn, Silverton, Stayton, Mt. Angel, Aumsville, Hubbard, Gervais and Turner.

This report covers the various aspects of a police pursuit, including details about the subjects and patterns regarding when and where pursuits occur in the city of Salem. The data is derived from the reports submitted by the primary officer involved in the event.

**OVERVIEW:**

The Department has been collecting data on vehicular pursuits since the year 2000 and there has been a significant fluctuation in the number of pursuits during the analyzed time frame. Chart 1 illustrates the 10-year trend.

Chart 1



**2020 IN REVIEW:**

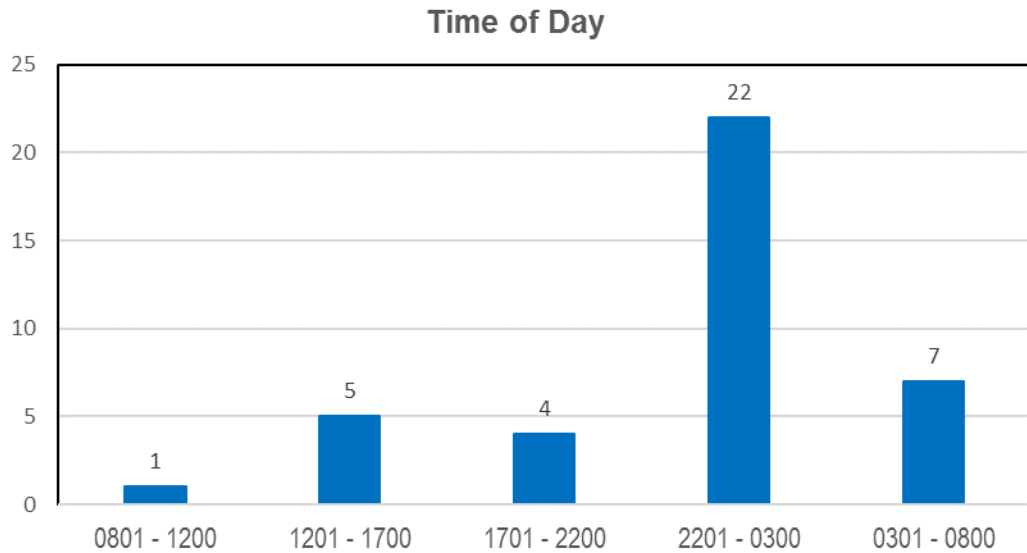
Salem police officers were involved in 39 vehicular pursuits in 2020 which is 25 fewer pursuits or a 39.1% decrease from 2019. 38.5% of the pursuits in 2020 were of less than a 1-minute duration, and 61.5% were less than a mile in length. Suspects were arrested in 30.8% of the pursuits.



**WHEN AND WHERE PURSUITS OCCURRED:**

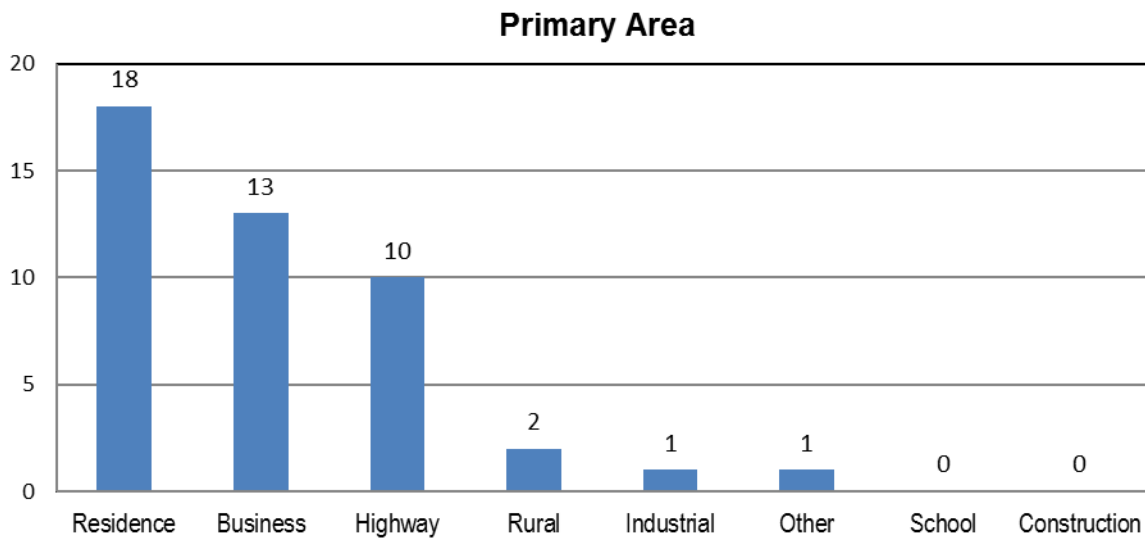
The most active time frame for pursuits was the graveyard shift and, more specifically, between the hours of 22:01 to 03:00 (or 10:01 p.m. to 3:00 a.m.) with 48.4% (31) of all pursuits occurring as shown in Chart 2. This time frame been consistently the most active for the past 5 years.

Chart 2



Vehicular pursuits were most likely to occur in a residential area with 46.1% (18) incidents. Some pursuits were recorded as occurring in multiple area categories.

Chart 3

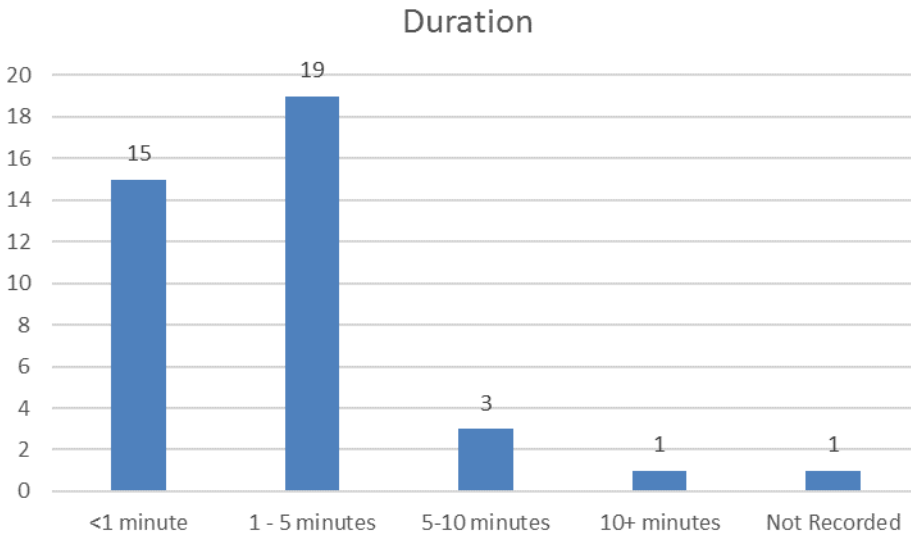




### PURSUIT DURATION AND DISTANCE

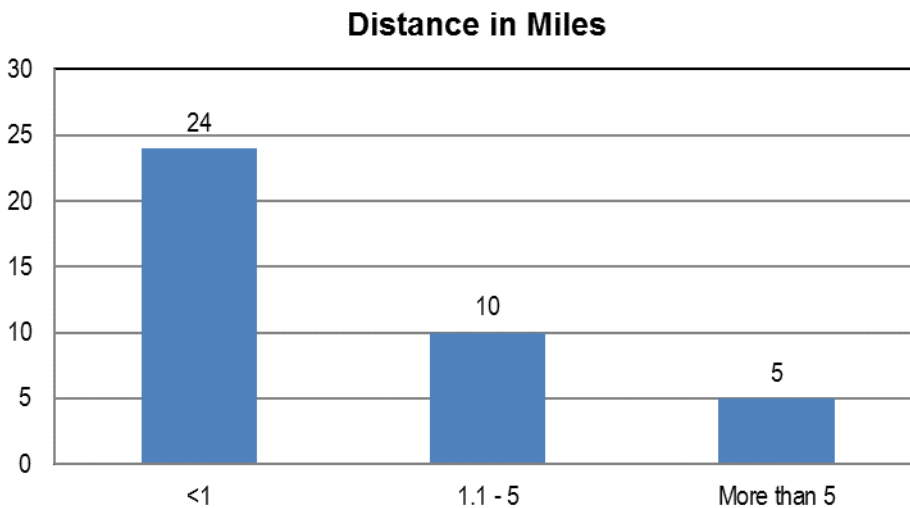
38.5% (15) of the pursuits lasted less than one minute; 48.7% (19) lasted between one and five minutes and 10.3% (4) pursuits lasted more than five minutes. No duration was included in one report. Chart 4 gives the breakdown of duration in minutes.

Chart 4



In 61.5% (24) incidents, the distance traveled one mile or less; 25.6% (10) traveled between one and five miles and in 12.8% (5) of the incidents the distance traveled was more than five miles. Chart 5 shows the breakdown of distances.

Chart 5

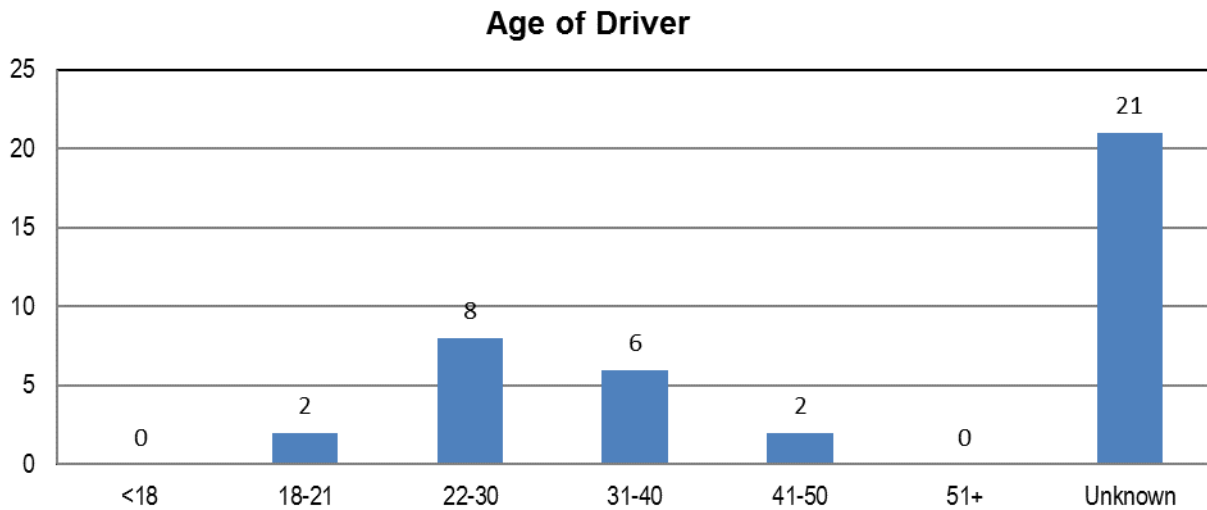


## SUSPECT INFORMATION

In 2020, as in previous years, suspect drivers were most likely to be male. Males made up 86.7% (26) and females 13.3% (4) of identified drivers. In 23.1% (9) incidents of pursuit the driver's gender could not be determined.

The chart below shows the breakdown of the age of pursued drivers. Some of the ages are estimates of suspects who were not identified. Officers may select the response category of "Unknown" if the officer cannot identify the suspect or the suspect was not apprehended.

Chart 6

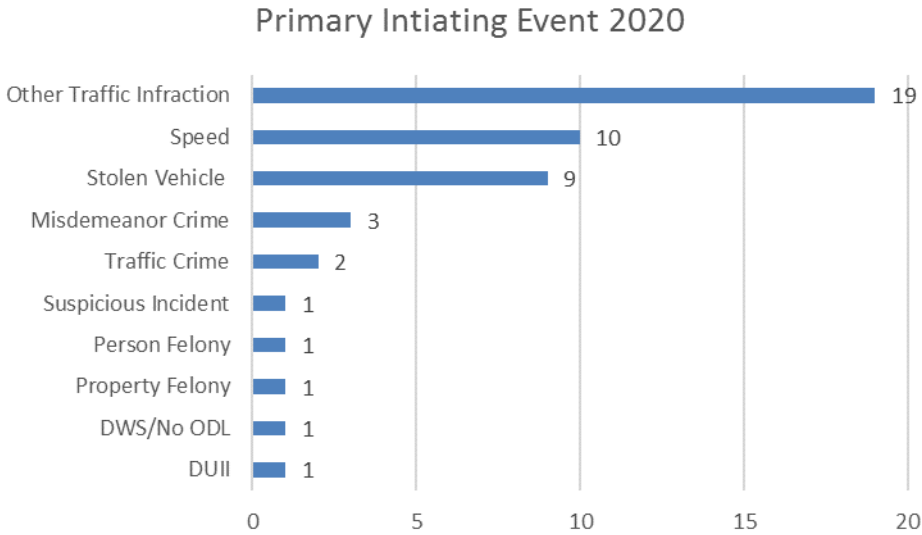


Historically, the reports have shown that a pursued driver is likely to have a suspended driver's license. In 2020, of the 18 drivers who had a known status, 61.1% (11) of the drivers were found to have a suspended license; 5.6% (1) had no driver's license and 33.3% (6) had a valid license. The status of the driver's license was marked unknown in 53.8% (21) of the reported pursuits.

## PRIMARY INITIATING EVENTS

Chart 7 below shows the various initiating event categories and the frequency with which they occurred. Officers can select more than one option when reporting the initiating event.

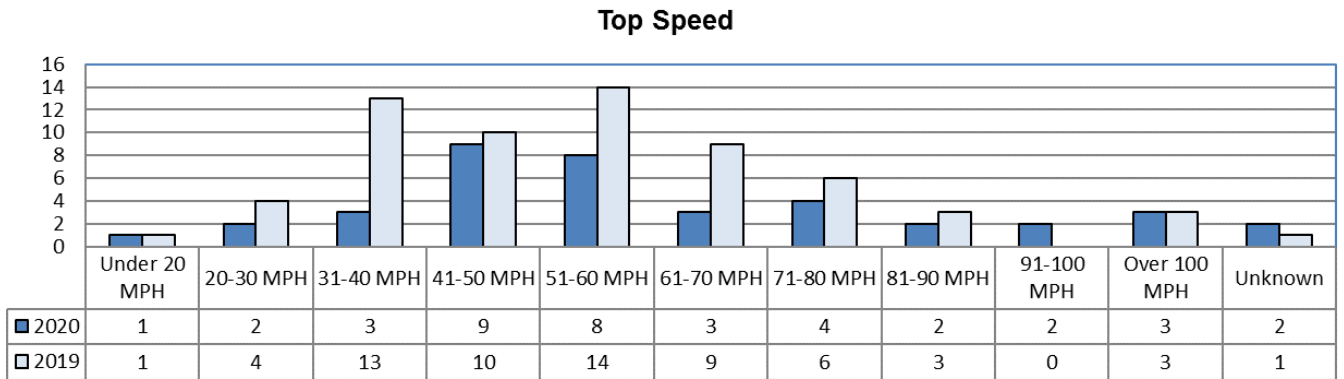
Chart 7



## PURSUIT SPEEDS

The speed at which these incidents may occur is another aspect of vehicular pursuits. In 2020 28.2% (11) of the pursuits were in excess of 70 MPH. 9.1% (1) of these lasted less than 1 minute. 27.3% (3) lasted more than 5 minutes

Chart 8





## **PROACTIVE TACTICS**

### **Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT):**

While attempting to end a pursuit, officers may employ the use of proactive tactics, such as the PIT maneuver. Of the 39 pursuits, the PIT maneuver was successfully used in 2 incidents. The maneuver was most often (34, 87.2%) not used because of the “lack of opportunity or set up time”. 3 times the PIT maneuver was not used because of a prohibited vehicle. The number of attempts, both successful and unsuccessful, decreased from 4 in 2019 to 2 in 2020.

### **Tire Deflation Devices (Stop Sticks):**

The use of stop sticks is another technique employed to bring a vehicular pursuit to conclusion. In 2020, 3 of the pursuits used stop sticks to end the event successfully. In 3 more, they were deployed, but unsuccessful. The reasons given for not using the technique included (33, 84.5%) “lack of opportunity or set up time. The number of attempts, both successful and unsuccessful, decreased from 9 in 2019 to 6 in 2020.

## **TERMINATION AND CONCLUSION OF PURSUITS**

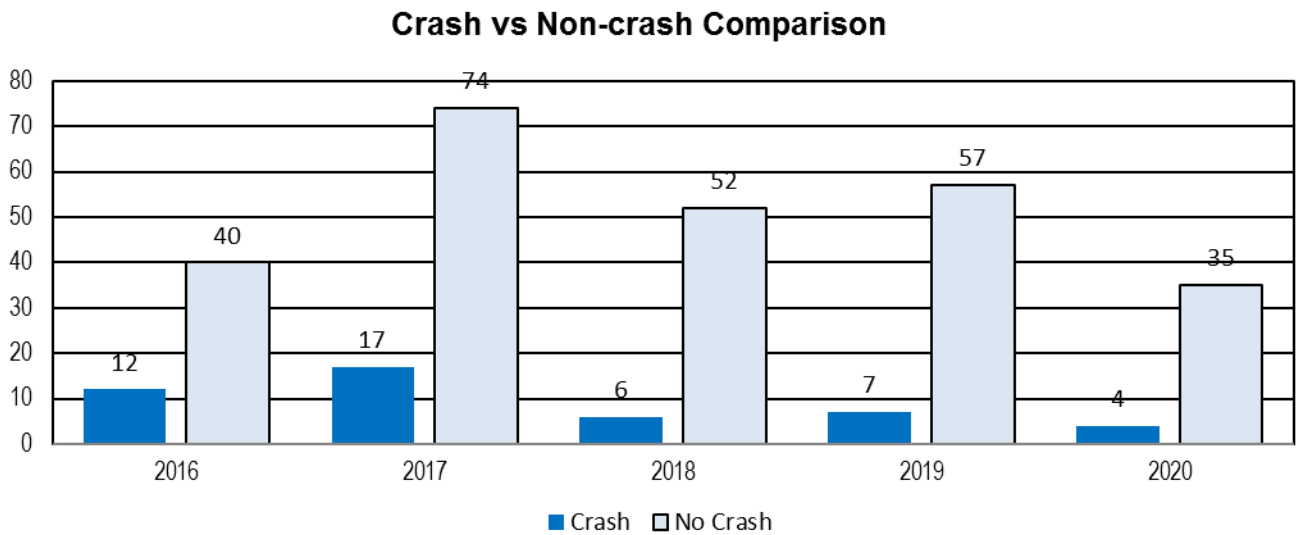
Vehicular pursuits come to an end in one of two ways: termination or conclusion. In a termination, the officer or a supervisor makes the decision to stop the attempt to apprehend the driver of a fleeing vehicle. This is usually done for safety concerns or if the driver has been identified and can be apprehended later. Conclusion of a pursuit means the event continued until the suspect vehicle stopped.

When a pursuit is terminated, officers deactivate their overhead lights, siren, and discontinue their attempt to stop the vehicle. In 2020, 31 (79.5%) of the 39 pursuits were terminated prior to conclusion. Of these, 23 (74.2%) were terminated by the pursuing officer, 15 (25.8%) by the supervisor. The percentage of pursuits that were concluded decreased from 29.7% in 2019 to 20.5% in 2020.

## PURSUIT CRASHES

Vehicular pursuits can involve crashes because of the unpredictable circumstances that evolve in these incidents. Chart 10 depicts the number of pursuits that resulted in collision at some point during or at the conclusion of the pursuit compared to those that did not. In 2020 there were 4 pursuits that resulted in crashes. Damage to the suspect vehicle occurred in each crash, injury to the suspect in 1, damage to a patrol vehicle in 2, and with damage to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party occurring in 1.

Chart 9



## CONCLUSION

Over the last twenty years, vehicular pursuits reached a low of 24 in 2012 and a high of 91 pursuits in 2017. 2020 had 39 pursuits. COVID 19 provided unique circumstances that makes direct comparison to other years problematic.

While the department's vehicular pursuit directive allows for officer discretion, it is supported by ongoing training that emphasizes continued officer and field supervisor assessments of the risks and benefits of engaging in or continuing a pursuit.

### In summary:

- Of the 39 vehicular pursuits that occurred in 2020, 31 (79.5%) were terminated before conclusion. The percentage of terminated pursuits increased from 2019 (70.3%). Officers terminated 23 pursuits and supervisors terminated 8.
- 12 (30.8%) of the vehicular pursuits resulted in arrests. This is a decrease over 2019 (42.2%)
- There were 4 vehicle crashes that occurred during pursuits. All involved damage to the suspect's vehicle, injury to the suspect in 1, damage to a patrol vehicle in 2, and with damage to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party occurring in 1.
- 22 (56.4%) of the pursuits occurred between 22:01 and 03:00 hours (10:01 p.m. and 3:00 a.m.).
- 24 (61.5%) of the pursuits traveled 1 mile or less. 5 (12.8%) pursuits were listed as longer than 5 miles.
- 15 (38.5%) of the pursuits lasted less than 1 minute. The longest pursuit lasted about 12 minutes. 1 did not record a duration.
- 18 (46.2%) of pursuits went through residential areas in 2020.
- Stop Sticks were used successfully in 3 (7.7%) pursuits in 2020. PIT was used successfully in 2 (5.1%) pursuits.
- No pursuits were forwarded to the Traffic Control Unit for further review.



2020 Pursuit Report

**APPENDIX**

The following appendix contains the past five years' worth of data. While some data points are consistent, others, such as month or day of the week, do not have strong correlation from year to year.

Month of Occurrence					
Month	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
January	6	7	4	4	9
February	5	14	4	3	4
March	3	6	7	8	1
April	3	8	4	2	1
May	2	4	1	3	1
June	5	7	6	7	1
July	6	4	2	9	3
August	4	4	8	13	5
September	3	8	5	4	5
October	4	14	6	5	5
November	5	5	7	3	1
December	6	10	4	3	3

Day of Week					
Day	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Sunday	6	13	4	8	4
Monday	7	14	12	7	6
Tuesday	9	12	2	11	6
Wednesday	8	11	9	10	3
Thursday	7	16	11	6	6
Friday	5	11	11	14	10
Saturday	10	14	9	8	4

Time of Day					
Time Span	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
0801 to 1200 hrs	7	11	4	3	1
1201 to 1700 hrs	9	15	12	6	5
1701 to 2200 hrs	6	10	9	10	4
2201 to 0300 hrs	25	39	26	31	22
0301 to 0800 hrs	5	16	7	14	7

Primary Area					
Area	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Residential	23	41	26	37	18
Highway	9	14	8	13	10
Business	21	33	26	12	13
Rural	3	8	1	2	2
Industrial	1	4	2	2	1
Other	0	0	2	2	1
School	0	1	1	0	0
Construction	0	0	0	0	0

## 2020 Pursuit Report

Pursuit Duration					
Time Span	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Less than 1 minute	21	19	25	27	15
1 to 5 minutes	29	48	30	31	19
5 to 10 minutes	2	2	1	4	3
10 to 20 minutes	0	0	2	2	1
more than 20 minutes	0	0	0	0	0
No response/Unknown	0	22	0	0	1

Pursuit Distance					
Distance Span	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
1 mile or less	40	63	39	49	24
1.1 to 5 miles	11	24	13	11	10
5.1 to 15 miles	1	4	1	4	5
15.1 to 20 miles	0	0	1	0	0
20.1 miles or more	0	0	0	0	0
No response	0	0	4	0	0

Suspect Gender					
Gender	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Male	43	63	44	50	26
Female	2	13	5	4	4
Unknown	7	15	9	10	9

Suspect Age					
Age Span	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
< 18 years	1	2	2	0	0
18 to 21 years	1	12	2	8	2
22 to 30 years	9	22	18	12	8
31 to 40 years	9	10	5	9	6
41 to 50 years	6	4	1	3	2
51 and older	1	1	2	3	0
Unknown	25	40	28	29	21

Top Pursuit Speed					
Speed range	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<20 MPH	0	0	0	1	1
20-30 MPH	1	1	3	4	2
31-40 MPH	9	10	7	13	3
41-50 MPH	10	23	16	10	9
51-60 MPH	5	9	13	14	8
61-70 MPH	9	10	6	9	3
71-80 MPH	4	10	7	6	4
81-90 MPH	3	8	3	3	2
91-100 MPH	2	3	1	0	2
>100 MPH	2	2	0	3	3
No response	7	15	2	1	2

Proactive Interventions					
Intervention Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Successful PIT	1	3	1	2	2
Successful stop sticks	1	4	3	7	3

Pursuit End					
Pursuit Conclusion	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Concluded	10	28	6	19	8
Terminated	42	63	52	45	31

For more information, contact the Salem Police Department Intelligence Support Unit at 503-588-6123.