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# Bureau of Criminal Apprehension: Force Investigations Unit

2024 Legislative Report

January 31, 2025

Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension  
1430 Maryland Ave. East  
St. Paul, MN 55106  
651-793-7000  
<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/bca>

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# Background

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The Minnesota Legislature in 2020 passed Minnesota Statute 299C.80 requiring the superintendent of the Department of Public Safety's Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) to establish an independent Use of Force Investigations Unit (FIU) within the BCA. This unit was initially tasked with investigating officer-involved use of deadly force, criminal sexual conduct involving peace officers, as well as conflict of interest cases involving peace officers.

The Minnesota Legislature amended Minn. Statute 299C.80 in 2021 to add investigations of criminal sexual conduct involving the Minnesota National Guard where the incident occurred in Minnesota and both a suspect and victim/survivor are Minnesota National Guard members. The FIU also assists other agencies with criminal sexual conduct investigations involving the Minnesota National Guard that occur outside of Minnesota.

## Staffing

The BCA FIU staff includes:

- One special agent in charge
- Two assistant special agents in charge
- Thirteen senior special agents
- Two criminal intelligence analysts
- One victim, family, and community relations coordinator
- One public information officer
- One transcriptionist
- Two digital media examiners
- One laboratory firearms examiner

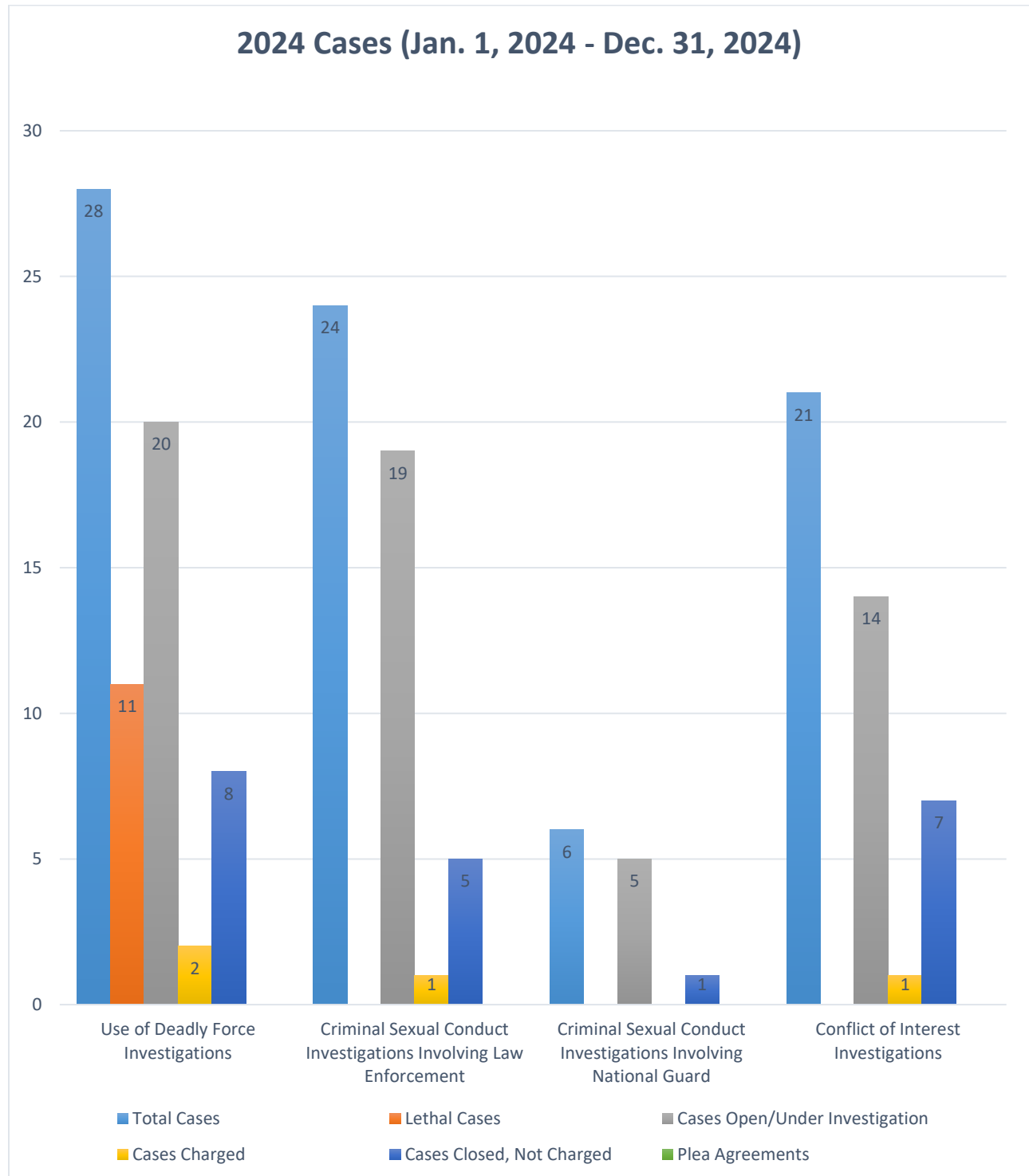
## Continuous improvement

The BCA began an in-depth, continuous improvement process in February 2020 (before FIU was mandated and created) to assess the BCA's investigative processes and protocols to ensure investigative integrity, consistency and transparency. This resulted in several notable changes, as did the passage of Minnesota Statute 299C.80.

The BCA created a victim, family, and community relations coordinator position. The person in this position meets with and is a conduit of information and resource referrals for families who have a connection to use-of-deadly-force investigations. This person also works closely with communities, stakeholders and organizations to grow their understanding of the BCA's investigative and legal processes and build community relationships.

The BCA also conducts annual reviews to ensure FIU policies and procedures align with best practices. Part of improving is ensuring that agents within the FIU receive the most up-to-date training on officer use of deadly force, critical incident and sexual assault investigations, and other educational opportunities that could enhance these investigations in Minnesota.

# Use-of-force investigations 2024



The BCA FIU responded to 28 use-of-deadly-force incidents. A firearm was used by law enforcement in 27 of the incidents.

### 2024 BCA use-of-deadly-force investigations by date and city

Date	City	Date	City
1. Jan. 6, 2024	Saint Paul	15. May 25, 2024	Pierz
2. Jan. 9, 2024	East Grand Forks	16. May 30, 2024	Minneapolis
3. Jan. 30, 2024	Fargo, ND	17. May 31, 2024	South Saint Paul
4. Feb. 4, 2024	Willmar	18. June 12, 2024	Minneapolis
5. Feb. 18, 2024	Burnsville	19. June 23, 2024	Brooklyn Park
6. March 2, 2024	Saint Michael	20. June 27, 2024	North Branch
7. March 11, 2024	Oakdale	21. June 30, 2024	Crookston
8. March 26, 2024	South Lake Minnetonka	22. July 5, 2024	Richfield
9. April 10, 2024	Minnetonka	23. Sept. 7, 2024	Minneapolis
10. April 15, 2024	Montrose	24. Sept. 15, 2024	Boyd
11. April 22, 2024	Woodbury	25. Sept. 21, 2024	Minneapolis
12. May 4, 2024	Chanhassen	26. Sept. 26, 2024	Belle Plaine
13. May 6, 2024	Saint Paul	27. Oct. 28, 2024	Saint Paul
14. May 16, 2024	Crookston	28. Nov. 9, 2024	Saint Paul

## Cases charged

On July 31, 2023, troopers from the Minnesota State Patrol initiated a traffic enforcement stop on a vehicle for an inoperative tail light. The troopers contacted the driver and discovered he was wanted for violation of a protection order in Ramsey County. The troopers attempted to arrest the driver, and he drove off. One of the troopers was dragged by the vehicle, and another trooper discharged his firearm at the driver, striking him. The driver died from his injuries. The BCA FIU was contacted and requested to investigate the incident. After the investigation was completed, it was turned over to the Hennepin County Attorney's Office for review. The trooper who used deadly force was charged by Hennepin County Attorney's Office with one

count each of second-degree murder, first-degree assault and second-degree manslaughter. On Oct. 30, 2024, the case against the trooper was dismissed.

On Oct. 25, 2023, the FIU was requested to conduct a conflict investigation of an Eagan police officer for misconduct of a public officer or employee. The officer was charged with misconduct of a public officer or employee. On Jan. 30, 2024, a Dakota County judge dismissed the case against the officer.

On Feb. 18, 2024, Burnsville police officers responded to a call for service in the city of Burnsville. Upon arrival, officers met with the complainant, who reported that she believed her boyfriend had been assaulting one of the children. The subject barricaded himself and several children in an upstairs bedroom. After several hours of negotiations the subject opened fire on the officers inside and outside of the residence. Two Burnsville police officers and one Burnsville firefighter/paramedic were shot and killed. Two additional Burnsville Police Department officers were hit by gunfire. Officers returned fire, striking the subject once in the leg. The subject later shot and killed himself. The FIU investigated the incident. The girlfriend of the subject (and original 911 caller) was identified as the person who purchased the firearms used during the incident for the subject and knew he was legally prohibited from obtaining and possessing firearms. She was indicted in U.S. District Court on 11 counts including conspiracy, straw purchasing and false statements during the firearms purchases. On Jan. 14, 2025, the female subject pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court to two counts of straw purchasing and the remaining charges were dismissed as part of the plea agreement. Sentencing had not been scheduled as of the writing of this report.

On July 11, 2024, the FIU conducted a criminal sexual conduct investigation of a Rochester police officer. The investigation was turned over to the Olmsted County Attorney's Office, and the officer was charged with one count of disorderly conduct. A trial is pending.

## Conclusion

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In 2024, the BCA FIU investigated 28 use-of-deadly-force incidents that resulted in the deaths of 11 people. Six law enforcement officers and one firefighter/paramedic were shot during the year. Of the first responders shot, three law enforcement officers and one firefighter/paramedic were shot and killed during the performance of their duties.

Thorough, unbiased and independent investigations into law enforcement use of force continue to be a crucial need across Minnesota. The BCA FIU's efforts to increase transparency and understanding of these incidents are important for building trust between local law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve.