



Bureau of Criminal Apprehension: Force Investigations Unit

2025 Legislative Report

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Background

The Minnesota Legislature in 2020 passed Minnesota Statute 299C.80 requiring the superintendent of the Minnesota 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 and conflict of interest cases involving peace officers.

The Minnesota Legislature amended Minnesota 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

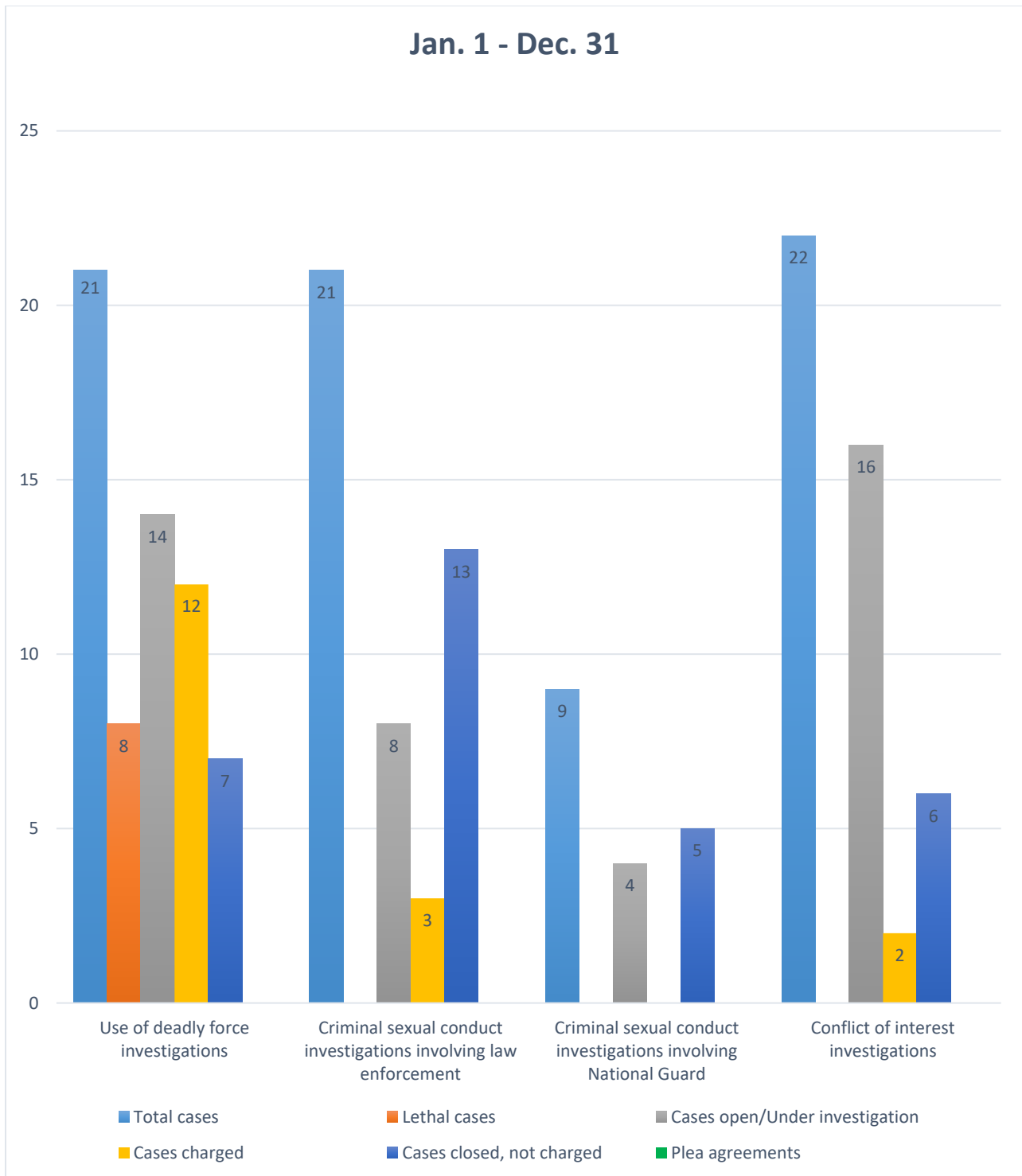
Continuous improvement

The BCA began an in-depth, continuous improvement process in February 2020 (before FIU was mandated and created) to assess the BCA's investigative process 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. This position works directly with families during use-of-deadly-force investigations, helping them understand the process and connect with support and resources. This person also works closely with communities, stakeholders and organizations to grow their understanding of the BCA's investigative and legal process 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 FIU agents 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 2025



The BCA FIU responded to 21 use-of-deadly-force incidents. A firearm was used by law enforcement in 21 of the incidents.

BCA use-of-deadly-force investigations by date & city/township

Date	City or township	Date	City or township
1. Apr. 7	Crookston	12. Aug. 8	Walker
2. May 9	St. Cloud	13. Aug. 11	Moorhead
3. May 21	Coon Rapids	14. Aug. 28	South St. Paul
4. June 2	Paynesville	15. Nov. 13	Bagley
5. June 10	Albert Lea	16. Nov. 16	Turtle Lake Township / Onigum / Cass County
6. June 11	Brooklyn Center	17. Nov. 25	Plymouth
7. June 14	Brooklyn Park	18. Nov. 25	Monticello
8. June 29	Rochester	19. Dec. 3	Bloomington
9. July 9	Frazee	20. Dec. 11	Minneapolis
10. July 11	St. Paul	21. Dec. 21	St. Paul
11. July 15	Duluth Township / St. Louis County		

Cases charged synopsis

On Oct. 12, 2023, the FIU was requested to conduct a use-of-deadly-force investigation in Benton County. Members of the Sherburne County Drug Task Force were serving a search warrant at the residence of Karl Holmberg when Holmberg shot and wounded five officers. Holmberg was also injured during the incident and was taken into custody. On Oct. 31, 2025, Holmberg was sentenced to 76½ years in prison.

On Nov. 25, 2024, the BCA was requested to conduct a criminal sexual conduct (CSC) investigation due to a conflict involving the Minneapolis Police Department, with assistance from FIU. The subject of the investigation was employed by a nonprofit organization affiliated with the Minneapolis Police Department. As a result of the investigation, the subject was charged in Hennepin County District Court with first-degree criminal sexual conduct. A trial is pending.

On March 11, 2025, the FIU was requested to conduct a conflict investigation involving a St. Paul police officer for an alleged CSC offense that reportedly occurred while the officer was off duty but licensed as a peace officer with the City of St. Paul. The officer was charged in Ramsey County District Court with neglect or endangerment of a child, a gross misdemeanor. A trial is pending.

On April 30, 2025, the BCA was requested to conduct a CSC investigation involving a Minnesota State Patrol trooper, with FIU assisting in the investigation. The trooper was charged in Scott County District Court with one count of first-degree criminal sexual conduct. The trooper was subsequently charged in federal court and pleaded guilty to production and distribution of child pornography. Sentencing will be scheduled at a later date.

On June 14, 2025, officers from the Brooklyn Park Police Department learned of a home invasion in the City of Champlin where a Minnesota state senator and his wife were shot multiple times. Brooklyn Park officers proactively responded to the residence of Melissa and Mark Hortman to check their welfare. Upon arrival, officers encountered an armed suspect, later identified as Vance Boelter, near the front door of the residence. Upon seeing the officer, Boelter shot and killed Mark Hortman in the doorway and ran into the home. The Brooklyn Park officer attempted to shoot Boelter as Boelter ran into the home. Multiple shots were heard from inside the home in the seconds after the officer shot and then silence. Officers extricated Mark Hortman and brought him to a place where aid was rendered. Investigators believe Melissa was killed just seconds after Mark. The suspect then fled on foot. An extensive manhunt followed. Boelter was apprehended in Sibley County. He was charged in Hennepin County District Court with two counts of Murder in the First Degree, four counts of attempted Murder in the First Degree, felony cruelty to an animal and Impersonating a Peace Officer. Boelter was also federally charged and indicted by a federal grand jury on two counts of stalking, two counts of murder and two firearms offenses. A trial is pending.

On June 30, 2025, FIU was requested to conduct a conflict investigation involving an employee of the Minneapolis Police Department for an alleged theft. The employee was accused of logging multiple hours of overtime worked attending neighborhood association meetings, when those meetings did not actually occur. The employee was charged in Hennepin County District Court with theft by swindle. A trial is pending.

On Aug. 8, 2025, the FIU was requested to conduct a CSC investigation involving a Minnesota State Patrol trooper. The trooper was charged in Morrison County District Court with one count of fifth-degree criminal sexual conduct. A trial is pending.

Conclusion

In 2025, the BCA FIU investigated 21 use-of-deadly-force incidents that resulted in the deaths of eight people. One law enforcement officer was shot and one law enforcement officer was stabbed with a knife during these incidents.

Thorough, unbiased and independent investigations into law enforcement use of force continues 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 and the communities they serve.