

# Americus Police Department

## 2020 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



**Backpacks for Back to School**

Page 2

### Message from the Chief

Turn to Page 2 for a message from Chief of Police, Mark A. Scott, and a summary of the crime statistics for 2020.

Page 4

### Community Relations

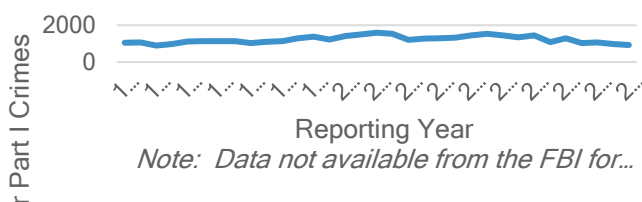


Page 5

### Operations Analysis



### Americus, GA UCR Part I Crime Totals 1985 through 2020



### 2020 CRIME STATISTICS

The number of reported Part I Crimes in the City of Americus continued the downward trend. Turn to Page 3 for a summary of current statistics and a look at the numbers over the past 30 years.

## Message from the Chief



The theme for last year's message to the community was the start of a new decade and a look back at how much has changed during my 30+ years in law enforcement. Little did we know how challenging 2020 would turn out to be. The first few months of the year we were focused on protests and marches for racial equality and social justice. We sat glued to our TV's and smart phones as riots broke out in major cities and businesses were looted and police stations attacked and burned. We met with local activists to answer questions and open a dialogue about police and community interactions and relations and joined in events to bring awareness to both local and national concerns. During the first quarter of 2020, several best practices for police departments were prominent in the news, including specific guidelines for police use of force and training. As we reviewed the recommendations, we found that we were already in compliance with all the major guidelines. Since the presidential order tied compliance with grant funding, we submitted our policies and procedures to state and national credentialing organizations for review and we have been certified for eligibility for continued federal funding opportunities.

Then the pandemic! Like everyone else, the police department has had to drastically change the way that we provide customer service. We are handling as many low priority calls as possible over the telephone to limit personal contact. We are routing as many requests for administrative services as we can to phone and email. Municipal Court has been radically changed by extending court hours and the number of court days to limit the number of people in the courtroom. Of course, the nature of law enforcement requires that our officers frequently make direct contact with victims and suspects. We are providing them with masks, gloves, and plenty of sanitizer to help keep them safe as they continue to keep the community safe. So far, about a quarter of our employees have had the virus and recovered. Hopefully, continued safety precautions coupled with vaccination will limit the number of new cases in 2021.

As we move into 2021, we can only hope and pray that this year will be less stressful than last year. I would add that it can't be much worse, but I fear that it actually could be a whole lot worse! No matter what the year holds, we will continue to work together with the community to meet whatever challenges come our way and make Americus as safe as we possibly can.

As you read this report, I think you will see that the men and women of the Americus Police Department are hard at work every single day earning your trust. We are proactively working to solve crime and arrest those few individuals who prey on the rest of the community. We are also working to educate our young people about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse and the importance of making good life choices (and the consequences of making bad ones). Our officers and support staff are a part of this community. We live and work here. We are raising our families here. This is our home and we care deeply about this community. Whether we are patrolling the streets, chasing down felons, working a fender bender, holding pressure on a serious injury while we wait for EMS to get there, or shopping with foster kids, cooking hotdogs in a park, teaching GREAT classes in the schools, or coaching our kids' sports team, we are Americus and we will not rest until this is the safest community in Georgia.

## Accreditation

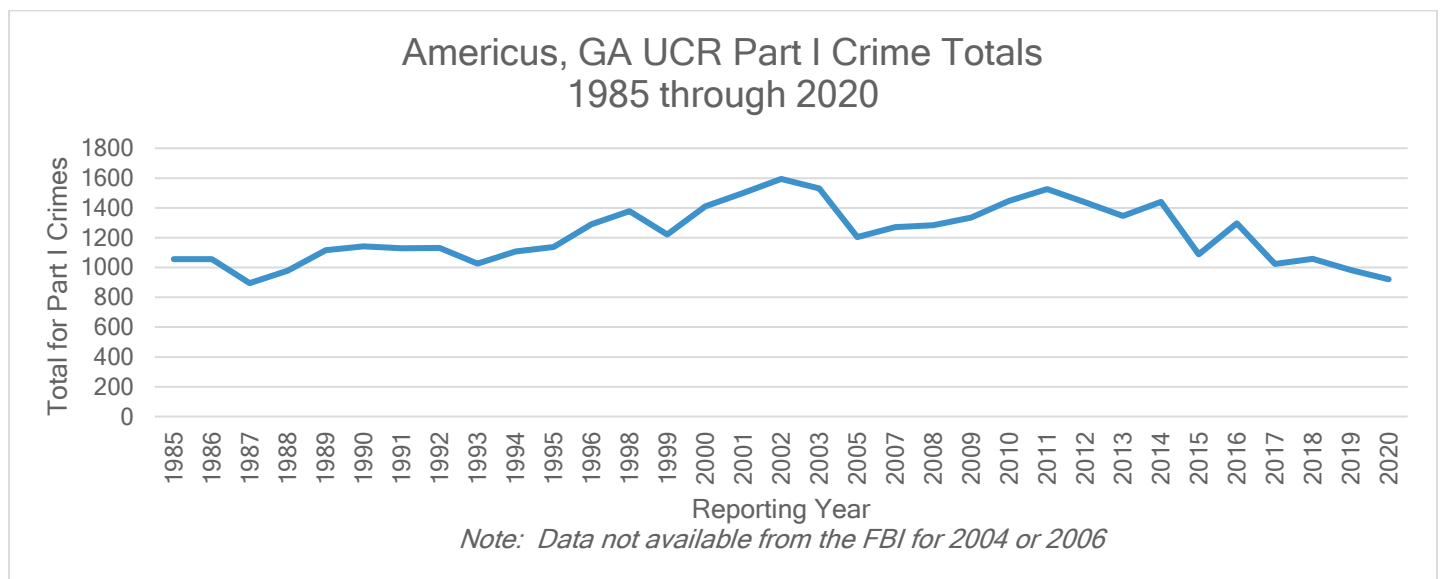
Two of our recent major accomplishments as an agency were to become a State Certified Agency through the Georgia Law Enforcement Certification Program and a nationally accredited agency through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). We were awarded accredited status by CALEA in November of 2019 following an extensive review of our written policies and a four day on site inspection. We were reaccredited by GLECP during the summer of 2020, in the midst of the pandemic.



Accreditation is a big deal. There are only a handful of nationally accredited agencies in the State of Georgia and across the nation. Accreditation is important, because it encourages us to constantly review our policies and practices and stay current with the accepted best practices and legal changes that govern how we do business. Two of the main areas that open a law enforcement agency to liability are out of date policies and failure by employees to follow established policies and procedures. The accreditation process ensures that our policies and procedures are constantly being reviewed and updated as the standards are updated. Annual reviews of our files by CALEA staff ensure that we are current with best practices and that we are actually doing the things that our policies say we should do.

Of course, the accreditation process isn't easy, and it isn't free. It costs us \$4065.00 a year to participate in the program. Fortunately, our insurance carrier recognizes the benefits of increased professionalism and less liability that the accreditation progress brings. The company offers a significant discount on our liability insurance which offsets the annual cost of the program.

## Crime Statistics



The men and women of the Americus Police Department are committed to our community. We will continue to pursue and arrest individuals who choose to victimize others. More importantly, we will work tirelessly in 2020 to address the issues that negatively impact our community in partnership with others in Americus who truly care about making our city a safe place to live, work, and play. Each month we report our crime statistics to the FBI along with most of the other law enforcement agencies in the United States. The FBI makes an annual summary of these statistics available to the public each year in a publication called "Crime in the United States". It is available on the FBI's web site and is usually one year behind, meaning that the report posted at the end of 2020 is based on 2019 numbers.

Fortunately for us, we can access our crime statistics in real time and are able to provide the public with the information as soon as the calendar year ends. We are pleased to report that our Part I Crime numbers for 2020 continued the downward trend, decreasing by 6% from 2019 and are the lowest they have been in over 30 years. In fact, the last time our total serious crime count dipped lower was in 1987. Part I Crimes are the more serious crimes tracked by the FBI and include Homicide, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny from an Auto, Larceny Other, Vehicle Theft and Arson. These are all crimes that are generally reported to the police by the public and are driven by criminal activity, rather than police activity. These type crimes tend to be fairly constant in a community and are a good indicator of trends in criminal activity. The city experienced decreases in all these categories except two, Aggravated Assault and Larceny Other, which showed increases over the numbers reported in 2019. Looking at specific categories, we had four homicides in 2019 and two in 2020. We went from 28 robberies in 2019 to only 18 in 2020. Unfortunately, the number of reported aggravated assaults increased from 82 in 2019 to 90 in 2020. As frequently reported in social media, we have also seen an increase in the number of incidents of criminals shooting into houses and cars.

Crime analysis is a multifaceted process, and though as a police department we would like to take full credit for the reduction in crime, there are many different factors at work. The CoVID 19 pandemic definitely had an impact on the number of cases initiated by police officers such as traffic stops and arrests for minor crimes. As the pandemic infection rate begins to decrease, our officers will resume their normal patrol and traffic interdiction activities. Addressing this type of violent street crime is difficult. We occasionally receive information from concerned citizens or through monitoring social media that some type of violent activity may be planned in a particular area, but that is rare. Most of the time we respond after the fact and find very few witnesses who are willing to come forward and little physical evidence. Working with community leaders to address street violence will continue to be a major focus in 2021.

We also track and report Part II Crime numbers to the FBI. These are crimes that the FBI considers to be less serious such as simple assault, criminal trespass, drug charges, disorderly conduct, forgery, DUI of alcohol or drugs, etc. These numbers reflect both crimes reported to the police by citizens and crimes discovered by the police through patrol operations. Part II Crime numbers can vary considerably, based on the activities of the police. For example, the number of Part II Crimes documented by the agency decreased by 13% from 2019 to 2020. This would seem to be a good trend, but the major areas of decrease were in officer-initiated arrests, such as DUI, drug cases and criminal trespass cases. These type cases decreased primarily because we scaled back on traffic enforcement and citizen encounters during the height of the pandemic.

## **Community Relations**

It is the responsibility of every employee of the Americus Police Department to foster a positive relationship with members of our community. All employees are encouraged to be active participants in community activities and many employees are members of local civic and service organizations and serve as volunteer coaches and mentors. Sgt. John Brown is responsible for helping to coordinate our community relations activities.

Sadly, Community Activities took a major hit in 2020 as the CoVID 19 pandemic greatly reduced the number of community events we were able to sponsor starting in March. The Sumter County School System has been in virtual learning mode for the entire 2020-21 school year, forcing us to cancel the GREAT and DARE Programs in the schools. We were also unable to offer our usual summer camp program last summer due to CoVID 19 restrictions. We have tried to get creative in finding ways to stay connected to the community. We have increased our social media presence and have continued to



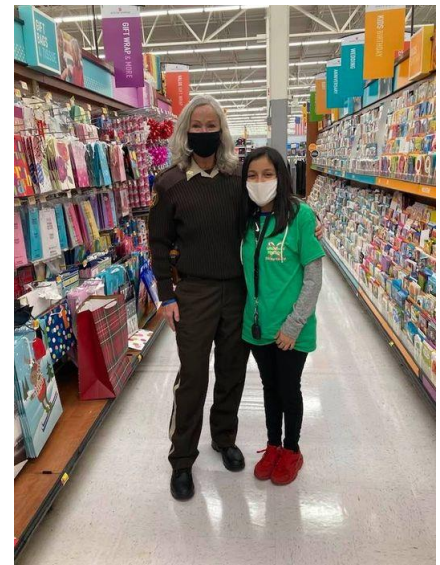
meet with community groups through online meetings. We have also participated in numerous “drive by celebrations” with other public safety partners to recognize people on their birthdays and special occasions. In response to the pandemic we have worked with area churches and the food bank to assist with distribution of food and medical supplies. In all we were able to participate in some way in over 34 different community events, despite the social distancing challenges.



As we entered the Christmas season, we were determined not to let the CoVID Grinch steal our Christmas spirit. Lt. Tim Allen and the members of Patrol Team B rallied the department with a challenge to give fifty bicycles away to local kids for Christmas. He and his coworkers collected donations and dipped into their own pockets for weeks purchasing bikes and storing them in the supervisor’s office. When the day for the giveaway arrived, we presented sixty bicycles to deserving kids and also provided several computer tablets to older kids who needed them.

We finished out our 2020 community outreach efforts with the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Shop with A Cop event. This event pairs police officers with kids from the community to go shopping for Christmas gifts. This year was a challenge. Donations poured in throughout the year and we were able to fund gift cards for thirty community children. The challenge was holding the event and still keeping everyone safe in the process.

Where there’s a will, we can find a way. We partnered with Chik fil A to provide the kids and their families with a hot meal in a socially distanced environment. We then gathered in the parking lot of Wal Mart, donned our masks, sanitized our hands, and paired the officers off with their assigned kids to shop. In addition to GSW Public Safety Officers and Georgia Department of Juvenile Services Officers, deputies from the Sumter County Sheriff’s Office joined the event this year. Judging from the smiles on their faces, we believe they will be back again next year.

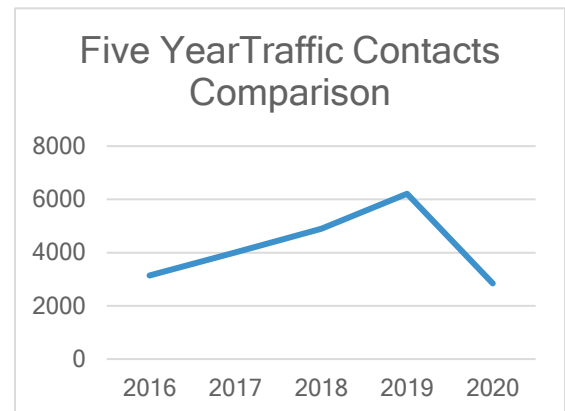


### Traffic Enforcement Analysis

The number one goal of traffic enforcement is to try to decrease the number and severity of traffic accidents inside the city limits. Officers of the Americus Police department responded to 545 traffic crashes in 2020 with 60 reported injuries and no fatalities. This is up slightly from the 533 traffic accidents reported in 2019. An analysis of all traffic activity reveals that officers issued 1,432 citations and 1,410 warnings in 2020, for a total of 2,842 traffic contacts, which is a 54% decrease in traffic contacts from the 6,212 traffic contacts documented in 2019. This decrease is directly attributable to the curtailing of traffic enforcement activity due to the CoVID 19 Pandemic. Beginning in March officers were directed to limit traffic enforcement to responding to traffic crashes and monitoring only those areas of the city with documented high crash numbers. It was necessary to limit discretionary exposure to members of the public as much as possible in an effort to curtail the spread of the virus. In addition to these measures, the public areas of all city buildings were closed, and Municipal Court was

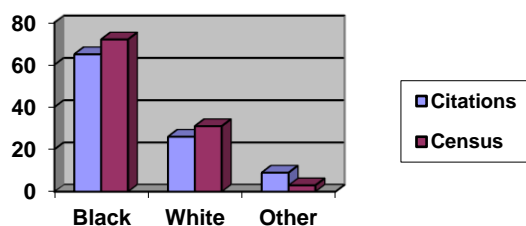
suspended. As the infection numbers decreased during the Fall, we increased our traffic enforcement efforts and reopened Municipal Court. Following the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, a spike in reported cases caused us to cut back on traffic enforcement once again.

Biased Based Profiling is clearly defined in Chapter 14-1 of the Americus Police Department Standard Operating Procedures Manual as the targeting of people based on their race, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, religion, economic status, age, cultural group, or any other identifiable group. This practice is strictly prohibited. For example, the fact that a person is African American, Hispanic, or a member of any other ethnic group is not a basis for suspecting that person of wrongdoing. Any law enforcement-initiated actions that rely upon membership in a particular people group, rather than on behavior are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such actions include but are not limited to traffic contacts, field contacts, and asset seizure and forfeiture efforts. No officer of the Americus Police Department shall endorse or act upon stereotypes, attitudes, or beliefs that a person's background increases the probability that the person will act unlawfully. An individual may only be detained and/or law enforcement action taken based on factors related to a violation or the investigation of a violation of Federal Law, State Statute, or Local Ordinance.

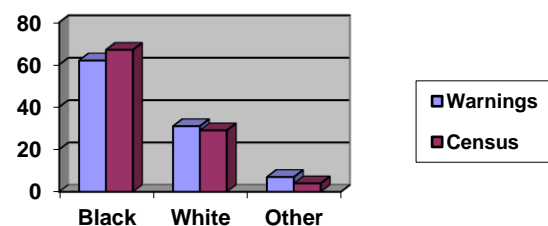


The percentages in the accompanying charts and analyses are based on the data captured from the issuance of electronic citations and warnings. The number counted as "Other" reflects all races other than Black, White, or Hispanic.

**2020 Citations by Race %  
Compared to 2010 Census Data**



**2020 Warnings by Race %  
Compared to 2010 Census Data**



There were no complaints made with the department in 2020 alleging bias-based profiling on traffic stops or officer/citizen contacts. As depicted in the graphs, the racial breakdown of citations is a close match to the racial composition of the City of Americus according to official US Census data (2019 estimate). There is nothing in the statistical analysis that indicates disparate treatment of persons in traffic enforcement encounters according to their race. Analyzing the data by gender shows that females of all races receive fewer citations and warnings than males. A recent study by the University of Michigan indicates that the number of male and female drivers on the road is evenly split with 51% being male and 49% being female on average. However, traffic analysis data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) shows that 57% of all traffic accidents involve male drivers and that male drivers are involved in 72% of all fatal traffic accidents. This statistic is an exact match for the percentage of males in our jurisdiction who receive citations and may be a good explanation for the difference in traffic enforcement by gender.

### Written Citations and Warnings Issued

	Citation	Warning	Census
<b>Black</b>	65%	62%	67%
<b>White</b>	26%	31%	29%
<b>Hispanic</b>	8%	3%	2%
<b>Other*</b>	1%	4%	2%
<b>Male</b>	57%	53%	44%
<b>Female</b>	43%	47%	56%

*\*The Other category includes those persons whose race was not recorded on the citation.*

### Vehicle Pursuits

A pursuit is defined by department Standard Operating Procedure as: An active attempt by a law enforcement officer in a motor vehicle to apprehend one or more occupants of another moving motor vehicle, where the driver of the fleeing vehicle is aware of the attempt and is actively resisting apprehension.

The Americus Police Department is aware of the tendency for a violator to attempt to avoid arrest by fleeing the police. We are also aware that pursuit of violators poses a threat to the safety of all concerned and to non-involved citizens. This department therefore acknowledges both the utility of pursuit actions as necessary for apprehension and the importance of protecting the life and property of all persons. The decision to initiate pursuit is that of the individual officer, but at no time shall an officer act outside the parameters of department policy regarding chase or pursuit.

Pursuit is a judgment-initiated call that relies on good common-sense decisions on the part of the officer. Officers shall consider the following question when initiating pursuit; "Will the risk to other drivers be heightened because of the pursuit; and does the severity of the violation justify the risk involved?" Many factors must be considered when an officer decides to initiate pursuit. They include, but are not limited to:

1. Severity of Violation
2. Weather Conditions
3. Time of Day
4. Area of Pursuit (Open highway, residential, school zones, etc.)
5. Traffic Congestion/Pedestrian Activity
6. Jurisdiction

Traffic law enforcement is a major function of this department. Officers may employ basic apprehension action in order to stop a traffic law violator. However, once a traffic violator has clearly exhibited a refusal to stop for police and an intention to elude, the officer shall cease pursuit and resume safe driving practices and attempt to bring the suspected violator to justice by other means. Pursuit of a motor vehicle for any traffic or misdemeanor violation is strictly prohibited.

When an officer knows that the occupant of a vehicle is a forcible felon (armed robbery, aggravated assault/battery or other violent crime, see OCGA 16-3-1) he/she may initiate and continue pursuit until such time as the forcible felon is apprehended or the risks associated with the pursuit outweigh the risks associated with the felon's escape. The primary principle the officer must keep in mind is the level of threat to innocent persons that the felon may pose if he or she escapes, compared to the possibility of injury to the pursuing officer or others resulting from the pursuit. Even in the case of a forcible felon, if at any time the officer or his/her supervisor feels that the threat of injury to others caused by the pursuit is greater than the threat of injury if the felon escapes, the pursuit must be terminated.

When an officer knows that the occupant of a vehicle is a felon, but not of a forcible nature, he/she may initiate pursuit of the felon vehicle. The standard for termination of the pursuit is much lower, however, for a non-forcible felon. Since the felon poses no known threat to life if he/she escapes, the lives of pursuing officers and innocent bystanders must not be risked in apprehending the felon. The pursuit may continue only as long as the pursuing officer and his/her supervisors feel that the pursuit does not pose a significant threat to the lives of others. If conditions change or the fleeing suspect exhibits a reckless disregard for others or an intentional attempt to hurt others, the pursuit must be terminated. For example, if a non-forcible felon disregards a stop sign or light, passes other vehicles, or in any way exhibits dangerous driving practices, the pursuit must be terminated.

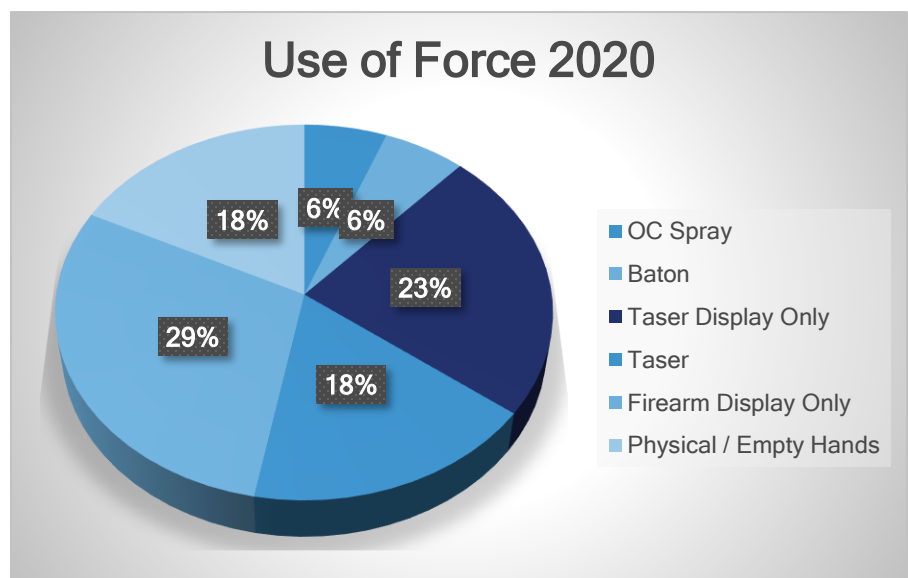
Juvenile drivers are statistically known to be less safe drivers than adults. Juvenile offenders are more likely to make poor decisions and take unnecessary risks when attempting to elude capture in a vehicle. When the pursuing officer knows or is almost certain that the fleeing vehicle is operated by a juvenile and the offense is a misdemeanor or non-forcible felony, pursuit should be immediately terminated. If the fleeing juvenile is known to have committed a forcible felony and poses a threat to others if allowed to escape the officer may initiate pursuit. However, the pursuing officer must take the age of the offender into consideration and should terminate the pursuit if the juvenile exhibits a pattern of driving which poses a greater risk of injury to others than the risk of the juvenile's escape.

There was only one pursuit reported in 2020. The traffic stop was initiated for a traffic violation and the violator refused to stop. The officer terminated the stop attempt after a short interval when it was clear the suspect was attempting to elude.

### Use of Force Analysis

Police officers are occasionally required to use physical force against persons who have committed a crime in order to affect an arrest or to protect the life or wellbeing of others. It is the policy of the Americus Police Department that the value of human life is immeasurable and that officers will use only that force necessary to protect life and effect lawful objectives.

Department records show that officers of the Americus Police Department answered 36,842 calls for service in 2020, down 18% from the 45,219 calls for service answered in 2019. Calls for service include both incoming requests for police service from the public and officer-initiated calls, such as traffic stops. The marked reduction in total calls for service in 2020 is due to restrictions on officer-initiated activity due to CoVID19. Officers made 958 arrests in 2020 which is down 14%, consistent with the decline in call volume. Out of all these arrests, there were twenty-two Use of Force Reports submitted by officers for which five of those Uses of Force reported were that against aggressive animals or animals to be dispatched. Only seventeen Uses of Force were reportable use of force incidents in 2020 for a forcible arrest percentage of approximately 1.19%. The race and gender of the officers involved were consistent with the demographics of the department. Only two of these incidents resulted in minor





injury or complaint of injury to the suspects arrested and two of the incidents resulted in minor injury to the arresting officer. None of the injuries required hospitalization.

The Americus Police Department is governed by the United States Constitution, State law and department policy in its use of force to obtain lawful objectives. Officers are given extensive training in the use of force and are supplied with several options for dealing with a combative subject. Each time that force must be used by an officer, the officer must file a written report detailing the incident. These reports are reviewed by the Chief of Police and the department's Command Staff.

There are several different types of force which an officer may have to use in performing his or her duty. The type of force used by the officer is dictated primarily by the person with whom the officer is dealing. The first force option which officers may employ, aside from the officer's presence on the scene, is verbal. Officers of the Americus Police Department are trained in the proper way to use verbal commands and communication skills to convince a person to comply with the officer's requests. In most cases, verbal direction is all that is required by an officer to safely affect an arrest. If the officer is unable to verbally gain control of a suspect or if the suspect becomes violent toward the officer or toward others, officers are authorized to use other means to gain control of the suspect.

The next force option is empty hand physical control of a suspect. Officers are trained in a variety of tactics designed to allow the officer to gain physical control of a suspect offering resistance to the officer's attempt to make an arrest. In the event that an officer is unable to gain physical control of a suspect or if the suspect is violent and causing or threatening to cause harm to the officer or other persons, officers are authorized to use a variety of non-lethal devices to gain control of the violent suspect.

All sworn officers of the Americus Police Department are issued oleoresin capicum (OC) spray. OC spray is a non-chemical natural agent made from the essence of cayenne or habanero pepper. The spray causes immediate irritation to the mucous membranes in the eyes, nose, mouth, and bronchial tubes of the person being sprayed. The initial effects of the spray last for 15 to 30 minutes with a burning sensation lasting for up to 60 minutes. The spray impairs the vision of the person sprayed and causes an intense burning sensation to the exposed skin and mucous membranes.

Officers are trained to provide a suspect with facilities to flush the affected areas with water as soon as possible after exposure. Normally, copious amounts of water and washing with non-oil-based soap are all that is required to counter the effects of the spray. Rarely is further treatment at a medical facility required. Officers are instructed during training to watch for respiratory distress or failure during transport of the suspect to the holding facility.

All sworn officers of the Americus Police Department are issued an expandable baton. The baton is designed as a defensive weapon to be used against a violent suspect. Officers are trained in the proper use of impact weapons and will only use impact weapons to counter a physical attack on the officer or on others by a suspect.

The police department utilizes Taser brand electronic incapacitation devices for use by sworn officers. Taser devices utilize compressed nitrogen to project two small probes up to 21 feet. These probes are connected to the Taser device by insulated wire. An electrical current is transmitted through the wires to where the probes make contact with the body or clothing, resulting in an immediate loss of the person's neuromuscular control and the ability to perform coordinated action for the duration of the impulse. Officers receive extensive training in the use of the device before the device is issued. The department has also implemented a clear and comprehensive policy which guides the use of the devices.

The final force option which officers may use is deadly force. The use of deadly force is strictly governed by both Georgia law and department policy. The Americus Police Department Use of Force Policy is as follows:

An officer may use lethal force only when the officer reasonably believes that the action is:

1. In defense of human life, including the officer's life or
2. In defense of any person in imminent danger of serious physical injury, or
3. When necessary to stop or prevent the commission of a forcible felony where the victim is in imminent danger of serious physical injury or death, or
4. In the apprehension of a fleeing felon, when:
  - a. The officer has probable cause to believe that a forcible felony has been committed and the person to be arrested has committed it, and
  - b. The officer has identified himself as a police officer and given notice of his/her intention to arrest (time and circumstances permitting), and
  - c. The officer reasonably believes that the suspect's freedom represents a significant imminent threat of serious physical injury or death to the officer or to other persons, and
  - d. All other reasonable means of apprehension have been exhausted or are precluded before lethal force is used. (Americus Police Department Standard Operating Procedures Manual)

Each time that an officer uses force to arrest a suspect, the officer must complete a Use of Force Report which is submitted to the Office of Professional Standards. Each report is reviewed by the Chief of Police and critiqued by the department's Command Staff.

### **Internal Affairs**

It is the mission of the Americus Police Department to provide service to all citizens based on the foundations of honesty, integrity, and respect. To ensure that all employees maintain a culture of transparency and uphold our foundational values, the Americus Police Department treats all complaints against our employees seriously and all complaints made to the department are thoroughly investigated. To file a complaint, a person may contact any member of the Americus Police Department or come by the Public Safety Building at 119 S Lee Street to fill out a complaint form. The complaint form contains the name of the complainant, the name of the employee against whom the complaint is made, and a brief written summary of the complaint. Persons wishing to make a complaint against an employee are encouraged to make the complaint in person; however, the department will take complaints over the phone, through the internet, or by other means. Each formal complaint is assigned a tracking number and logged for follow up.

Internal affairs investigations may also be initiated at the request of the Chief of Police. Such investigations typically involve violations of department policy or situations involving one or more supervisors. Requests for consideration of a disciplinary action may also be assigned for investigation through the internal affairs function.

There were eight complaints made against a total of eight different officers and one non-sworn office staff member in 2020. Two of those complaints were against one officer involving two separate events. Two complaints were made by sworn officers within the agency, one of which was filed for investigation purposes only and did not involve any specific allegations.

The remaining complaints were made by different citizens from the community. All the complaints received by the department were recorded and thoroughly investigated. All the complaints were resolved in some manner and the results were relayed to the original complainant except one, for which

various means on various dates of attempted contact were exhausted with no contact made nor was any further complaint made.

Five of the eight complaints were sustained, meaning that the employee was found to have committed some violation of department policy. All the sustained complaints resulted in disciplinary action with one employee being Terminated for

Control Number	Date	Nature of Complaint	Finding
2020IA0001	01/13/2020	Rudeness	Unfounded
2020IA0002	01/27/2020	Historical Misconduct	Unfounded
2020IA0003	02/19/2020	Family Violence	Sustained
2020IA0004	03/19/2020	Theft	Sustained Other
2020IA0005	04/15/2020	Conduct	Sustained
2020IA0006	04/15/2020	Conduct	Sustained
2020IA0007	07/28/2020	Rudeness	Unfounded
2020IA0008	08/18/2020	Improper Procedure	Sustained

Conduct, one being Terminated for an off-duty Family Violence incident, and one having Resigned while Under an Internal Affairs Investigation. The remaining employees received written reprimands or verbal counseling. The remaining complaints were ruled to be unfounded, meaning that the allegation made by the complainant was found to be untrue.

## Recruitment

Through our recruitment efforts, we had 24 people apply for the position of Police Officer during 2020. That is a 38% decrease from the number of applications received in 2019. Out of those 24, we were able to hire five candidates. The Americus Police Department has an ethnic composition that is 1.8 percentage points under the community demographics for Caucasians and 1.4 percentage points over the community demographics for African Americans. Other ethnic groups, including Hispanics, comprise 5.9% of the service population, and comprise 2.7% of the department's sworn officers. Although the composition of the department is not an exact match with the community, it is much more representative than other departments in the Southeastern United States, according to statistics from the US Department of Justice.

One area of concern for this department and for police departments across the country continues to be the lack of female sworn employees and female applicants for employment. Based on current census estimates, females represent 53.9 % of the service population, and 49.7 % of the available workforce in the Albany Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Within the police department, however, females represent only 13.5% of the sworn ranks. Although this percentage is slightly better than the national average of 11.6% for female sworn officers, there is clearly room for improvement in our recruitment and employment efforts.

As of January of 2021, we have seven vacant positions for police officer (one of our current officers is on long term military leave). We have aggressively recruited applicants through advertisements and attendance at career fairs over the past year. The demographic composition of the applicants processed in 2020 and the demographic of the department are depicted in the following tables.

**Recruitment Activities from January 1 to December 31, 2020**

Race/Sex	Applications Received	Applicants Hired	Percent Hired	Percent of workforce
Caucasian/Male	8	1	25%	16%
Caucasian/Female	0	0		18%
African American/Male	10	2	50%	30.5%
African American/Female	6	1	25%	26.5%
Hispanic/Male	0	0		2%
Hispanic/Female	0	0		2%
Other	0	0		5%
Total	24	4	100%	100%

**Current Composition of Sworn Employees**

	WHITE		BLACK		OTHER		TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Number on Staff	12	0	19	5	1	0	37
Percentage of Staff	32.4%	0%	51.4%	13.5%	2.7%	0%	100%

Department Profile Compared to 2010 Census			
	Black	White	Other
Department	64.9%	32.4%	2.7%
2010 Census	63.5%	30.6%	5.9%

**Community Partners**

The police department could not work in this community effectively without the cooperation and support of our community partners. It would be impossible to list all the groups and individuals that have given us support over the past year. One group, however, does deserve recognition for their major contributions to the agency.

The Smarr-Smith Foundation was incorporated last year following the murders of Officers Nick Smarr and Jody Smith on December 7th, 2016. The foundation provides funding for scholarships at our two local colleges and also provides money to local law enforcement agencies for training and equipment. The foundation provided over \$20,000 in scholarships and over \$30,000 in equipment to the Americus Police Department, Georgia Southwestern State University Police Department, Sumter County Sheriff Office, and Georgia State Patrol.



Thanks to the generosity of the Smarr-Smith Foundation we were able to purchase new Tasers for all our patrol officers. This allowed us to make sure that all sworn personnel assigned to enforcement activities are equipped with this non-lethal force option. We also purchased First Aid/Trauma Kits for all our patrol units in 2019 and 2020.

Unfortunately, due to pandemic restrictions, the Annual Paint the Town Blue Gala had to be cancelled in 2020. This is the primary fundraiser for the foundation and severely hampered the foundation's ability to provide scholarships to the colleges or grants to the local departments. Persons wishing to contribute



to the foundation may do so through the web site: <https://www.smarrsmithfoundation.com/>. Donations can also be made continually each time you make a purchase on Amazon.com through Amazon Smile. By using Amazon Smile, a portion of every qualified purchase will go to the charity of your choice at no additional cost to you. For information on how to sign up, go to:

<https://www.aboutamazon.com/news/community/how-to-sign-up-for-amazonsmile>

Be sure to designate The Smarr Smith Foundation as your charity of choice.

**Officer of the Year**

Lt Anthony Jackson was selected as our Officer of the Year for 2019. The award is usually presented in March of the following year at the Smarr Smith Foundation's Paint the Town Blue Gala. Unfortunately, the event was cancelled due to pandemic restrictions and Lt. Jackson received the award later in the year.

## We Do Not Forget

Members of the Americus Police Department, Sumter County Sheriff's Office, and the Georgia Southwestern State University Police Department sponsored a Peace Officer Memorial Day Observation on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Due to the prohibition on public gatherings at that time due to the pandemic, we were not able to host a public ceremony. Instead we videotaped messages from local law enforcement leaders and put them together with a videotaped ceremony involving only the families of our local fallen officers. The video can be viewed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=quW3C9IHm18&feature=youtu.be>

We do not forget.



Memorial Wreath and Flag Display in Front Lobby





The Americus Police Department, Sumter County Sheriff's Office  
and GSW State University Police Department invite you to:

## National Peace Officer Memorial Day Ceremony

Russell B. Thomas Public Safety Building  
119 South Lee Street  
on May 15th, 2020 at 2:00 PM

### Virtual Memorial Ceremony Announcement



Memorial Flag placed on grave of Sheriff John Kimmey