

Americus Police Department

2025 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



Citizens Police Academy Class of 2025

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Message from the Chief

Turn to Page 2 for a message from Chief of Police, Mark A. Scott, and to page 3 for a summary of the crime statistics for 2025.

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Community Relations

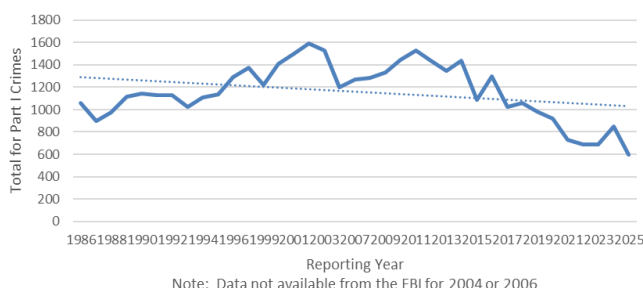
Turn to page 5 for a summary of our community involvement initiatives in 2024.

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Operations Analysis

Turn to Page 7 for an analysis of department operations, including traffic enforcement, vehicle pursuits, and use of force incidents.

Americus, GA UCR Part I Crime Totals
1985 through 2024



2025 CRIME STATISTICS

The number of reported Part I Crimes in the City of Americus 28% from 2024 to 2025. Turn to Page 3 for a summary of current statistics and a look at the numbers over the past 40 years.

Message from the Chief



. As 2025 comes to a close, I want to take a moment to reflect on the year behind us and, more importantly, to thank the citizens of Americus for your continued trust, partnership, and support of the Americus Police Department. Like many communities across the country, Americus faced its share of challenges this year. Staff shortages, increasing calls for service, and the ever changing nature of public safety required our officers and staff to adapt quickly while continuing to meet the expectations of professionalism, accountability, and service that our community deserves. These challenges tested us—but they also strengthened us.

Despite these pressures, 2025 was a year of meaningful progress for our department. Our officers worked tirelessly to keep neighborhoods safe, respond to emergencies, and engage with residents in ways that build trust and understanding. We continued to emphasize training, accountability, and modern policing practices to ensure our team is prepared not just for today's challenges, but for those ahead.

This year, we expanded community engagement efforts, strengthened partnerships with local organizations, schools, and faith-based groups, and focused on being visible and accessible to the people we serve. Programs like Coffee with A Cop, Shop with A Cop, our Back-to-School Event and the Citizen's Police Academy allowed us to have open conversations about policing, public safety, and the shared responsibility we all have in making Americus a better place to live.

Internally, we focused on building a stronger department by investing in our people—through training, leadership development, and an emphasis on officer wellness. The men and women of the Americus Police Department consistently demonstrated resilience, integrity, and compassion, often under difficult circumstances. I am proud of their dedication and proud to serve alongside them. As you will see in the Recruitment Section of this report, we made great progress in recruiting and hiring new police officers.

Public safety is not achieved by law enforcement alone. It is the result of cooperation, mutual respect, and shared commitment between a community and its police department. In 2025, the citizens of Americus showed that commitment through your cooperation, your feedback, and your willingness to work with us to address problems and improve quality of life.

As we look ahead to 2026, our mission remains clear: to serve with honor, integrity, and respect. We will continue to focus on transparency, accountability, and community-focused policing while adapting to the changing needs of our city. On behalf of the entire Americus Police Department, thank you for allowing us to serve you. We wish you and your families a safe, healthy, and prosperous New Year.

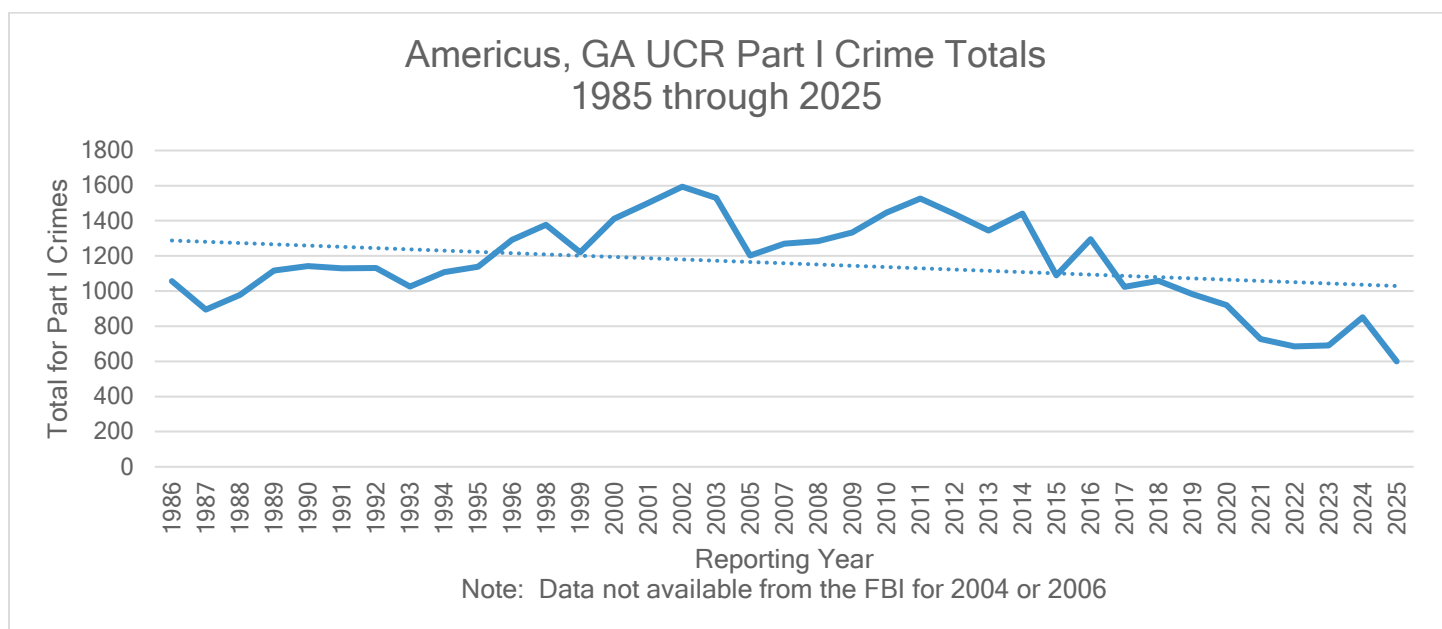
Accreditation

The Americus Police Department is a State Certified and Nationally Accredited Law Enforcement Agency. This means that we voluntarily comply with a comprehensive set of standards published by the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police through the Georgia Law Enforcement Certification Program (GLECP) and standards published by the Committee on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). The department participated in an audit of over 100 standards by CALEA assessors in November of 2025. We were found to be in compliance with all reviewed standards and no issues were noted during the annual assessment. Our state standards were assessed in 2025. Because the police department holds advanced CALEA accreditation, we are only required to document compliance with 30 Georgia specific State Certification Standards. Capt. Tamera Sears from the Crisp County Sheriff's Office conducted our state onsite in January of 2025 and found us to be in compliance with all applicable state standards.



Accreditation is a major component of the culture of the Americus Police Department and a point of pride. 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 doing the things that our policies say we should do.

Crime Statistics



The men and women of the Americus Police Department work tirelessly 24 hours a day to provide a timely and effective response to criminal activity reported to us by the public. We also strive, through routine patrol operations, directed patrol, special projects, and public education to prevent as much

crime as we possibly can. Our constant goal is to make the City of Americus 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 2025 is based on 2024 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.

Our Part I Crime numbers leveled out in 2023 after 6 years of steady decline and increased sharply in 2024. We ended 2024 with 851 reported Part 1 crimes, up 18.8% from the 691 reported in 2023. The increase in 2024 was primarily driven by a rash of thefts from cars. These incidents were primarily juveniles walking through neighborhoods at night, taking items from unlocked cars. We were able to make several arrests and these incidents decreased significantly. The **good news** is that the numbers dropped 28% across the board from 2024 to 2025. The primary drivers in the reduction were:

Aggravated Assaults	Down 43%
Burglaries	Down 35%
Entered Autos	Down 48%
Larcenies	Down 16%
Misdemeanor Assaults	Down 28%

The only categories which went up were Robbery, which increased by 3 incidents from 2024 and DUI Arrests which also increased by 3 incidents (that's a good thing). The cameras in the housing authority areas were a major factor in reducing crime on AHA properties. As stated, part of the dramatic decrease from 2024 was due to the dramatic increase in property crimes we had in 2024. Even so, **these are the lowest crime numbers recorded and reported to the FBI since 1985.**

Crime analysis is a multifaceted process, and though as a police department we would like to take full credit for the reduction in overall serious crime, there are many different factors at work. Addressing violent street crime is difficult. We work diligently to identify those responsible for specific incidents and arrest them, but arrests do not address the root issues of poverty, erosion of family structure, and the proliferation of street gangs (which are glorified by our current pop culture). Addressing root causes of crime cannot be effectively accomplished by the police alone but can be addressed by the community as a whole, working together.

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. The number of Part II Crimes documented by the agency decreased significantly by 27% in 2024 after having increased dramatically by 32% from in 2024. There were several drivers behind the decrease in Part II crime reports. Misdemeanor Assaults, Fraud and Forgery Cases, Vandalism, Misdemeanor Weapons Charges, and Misdemeanor Sex Offenses all decreased significantly. The only Part II crime category that increased in 2025 was DUI Arrests, which went up 6%.

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. Carolina Pittman is responsible for helping to coordinate our community relations activities.

Our officers and volunteers participated in over 40 different events last year, even though we were short staffed throughout the year and any of the events required employees to volunteer to come in on their days off to participate.



Furlow Charter School
First Responder Day

2025 Community Activities

ACTIVITY	LOCATION
Career Day with Vonn	Sumter County Primary School
Dance with Seniors	Perfect Care
Career Fair	Schley County High School
Career Fair	SGTC
Career Fair	Sumter County Elementary School
Career Fair	Georgia College & State University/Milledgeville
Hot Glass Craft Beer Festival	Downtown Americus
Career Fair	Albany Ga. Civic Center
Easter Egg Hunt	Sumter County Fair Ground
National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week	E-911 and Americus Police Department
Georgia Cities Week	City of Americus
National Prayer Day	Americus Police Department
Public Service Recognition Week	City of Americus
National Police Week	City of Americus
National Peace Officer Memorial Day	Americus Police Department
Sumer County Fire Kids Bike Fest	Wal-Mart Parking Lot (1711 East Lamar St)
Student Career Day	Americus Downtown Business Community
Resource and Job Expo	Albany High School
Community Water Day	Rucker Street and North Jackson Street

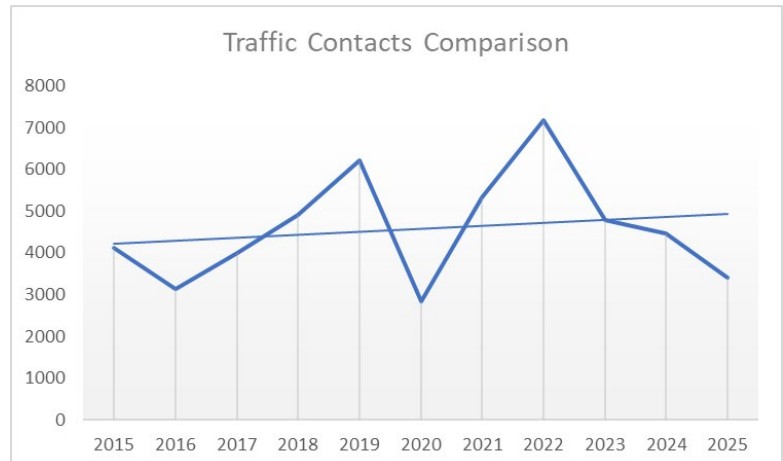
Community Water Day	Cherokee Street
Back to School Bash	Central Baptist Church
Book Bag Giveaway	Americus Police Department
GSW Americus Showcase	GSW College
Operating Clear Tracks	North Lee Street & Mayo Street
Sumter High School Parade	Downtown Americus
Citizens Police Academy	Americus PD., Sumter County Fire Dept., & SGTC
Coffee with a Cop	Chick-Fil-A
Cowpoke Carnival	Sumter County Fair Ground
Sumter High Special Needs Students	Americus Police Dept.
Fall Career Fair	SGTC
Taste of Sumter	Downtown Americus
Faith & Blue	Lowe's Parking Lot
Truck or Treat	Chick-Fil-A
Pet Parade & Treat or Treating	Downtown Americus
Red Ribbon Week	Sumter County HeadStart
Phoebe Sumter Breast Cancer Walk	Phoebe Sumter Hospital
Shop with a Cop	First United Methodist Church & Walmart
Fallen Officer Remembrance Ceremony	GSW
Christmas Parade	Downtown Americus
Wreaths Across America	Andersonville Cemetery
Angel Tree Gift Pickup	Americus Police Dept.



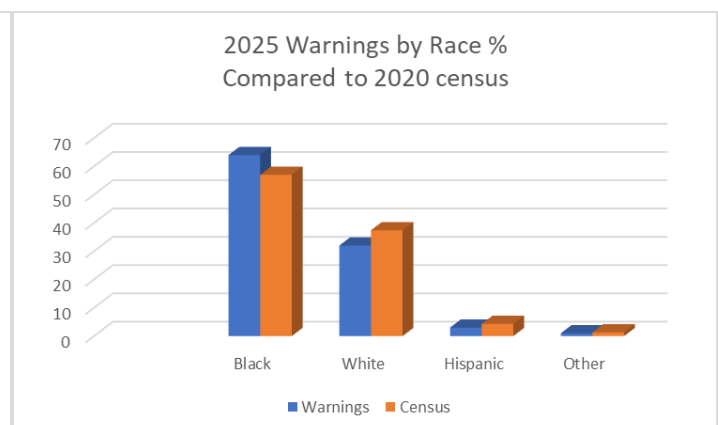
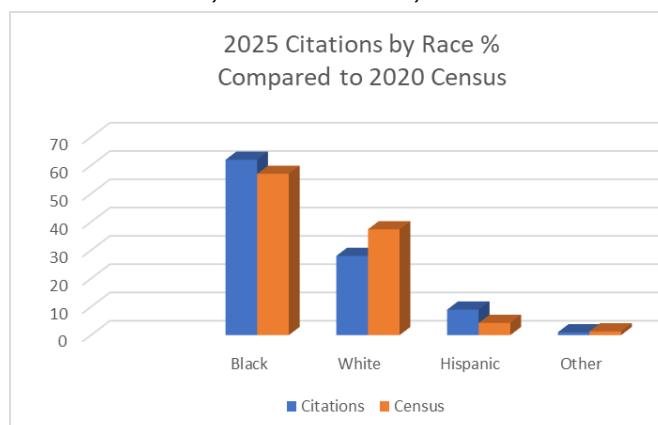
2025 Coffee with A Cop

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 427 traffic accidents on the roadways of Americus and 190 on private property for a total of 617 traffic crashes in 2025. There were 66 reported injuries and 3 fatalities worked by the agency. This was down 9% from the number of accidents reported in 2024 and continues a downward trend in reported accidents. An analysis of all traffic activity reveals that officers issued 1,920 citations and 1,490 warnings in 2024, for a total of 3,410 traffic contacts. This is a 23% decrease from the 4,474 citations and warnings given in 2024. This decrease is primarily a result of staffing shortages which have hampered the department's ability to focus on traffic enforcement.



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.

There were no complaints made with the department in 2025 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 (2020

census data). There is nothing in the statistical analysis that indicates disparate treatment of people 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) consistently shows that male drivers account for the majority of traffic fatalities, often driven by riskier behaviors (speeding, impaired driving, low seatbelt use) and greater overall exposure (miles driven).. This statistic is a close 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
Black	62%	64%	57%
White	28%	32%	37.4%
Hispanic	9%	3%	4.3%
Other*	1%	1%	1.3%
Male	59%	56%	47.55%
Female	41%	44%	52.45%

**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 people. 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 were four documented vehicle pursuits in 2025. Three of the pursuits were initiated traffic violations and one was initiated on a wanted person. Three of the pursuits were conducted within department guidelines and one was not within policy guidelines. All four pursuits ended with no injuries reported. In three of the pursuits the violator stopped after a short distance. In the fourth incident, the pursuit was terminated. The Internal Affairs Officer conducted a review of the department's pursuit guidelines and reporting procedures. This report was provided to the Chief of Police, and policy violations or issues were identified. The review determined that supervisors are following the guidelines for managing and reporting pursuits. No policy changes were recommended.

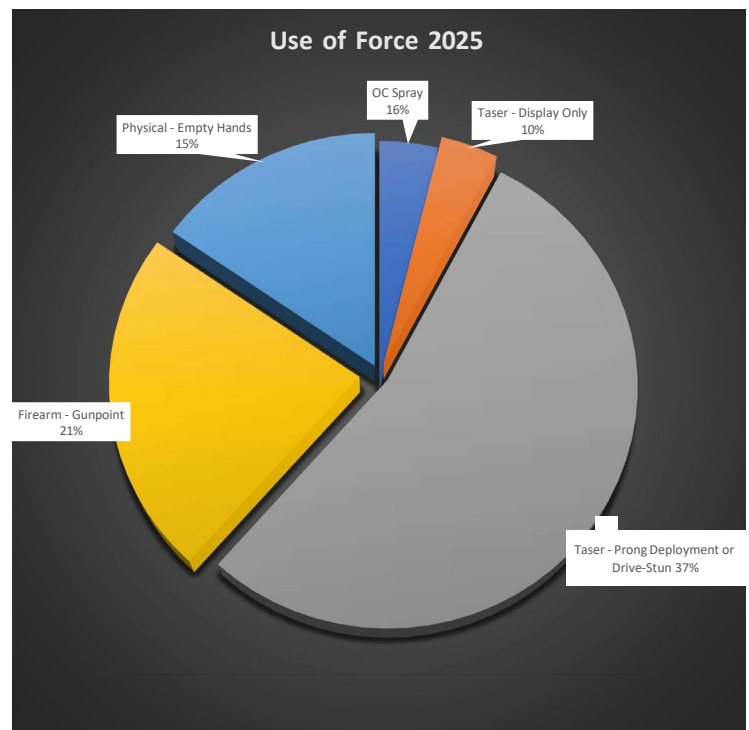
Use of Force Analysis

Police officers are occasionally required to use physical force against persons who have committed a crime to make 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.

The Americus Police Department answered 26,908 calls for service in 2025, which is down 10% from the 29,948 calls for service in 2024. This continues a downward trend and represents a 14% decrease from the number of calls received or self-initiated in 2023. Since calls for service include both those generated by

citizens and those self initiated by officers the dramatic decrease in calls correlates directly with a decrease in officer initiated activity such as traffic stops. This decrease is due primarily

to staffing shortages which limit our ability to be proactive. Officers made 772 arrests in 2025. This was down by 8.7% from the 839 arrests made in 2024 and in line with the 28% decrease in reported incidents. Out of the 773 arrests, officers had to use some level of non-deadly force in 21 incidents or 2.7% of the time. The majority of the force reports, 47%, involved an officer utilizing a Taser to subdue a violent suspect. There were no incidents requiring an officer to discharge a firearm. The remaining force incidents involved the drawing of a firearm, one incident where OC Spray was deployed and the use of weaponless physical force to bring a suspect under control. The race and gender of the officers involved were consistent with the demographics of the department. One suspect was treated for a minor fracture of the arm. There were no other major injuries to suspects reported. All suspects complaining of injury were given medical evaluation and attention. Three officers were assaulted by suspects while trying to make an arrest.



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 resisting the officer's attempt to make an arrest. If 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 capsicum (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 contact 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

2025 Internal Affairs Complaints

Control Number	Date of Complaint	Nature of Complaint	Finding
2025IA0001	01-10-2025	Policy Violation	Sustained
2025IA0002	03-06-2025	Rudeness and Citation Complaint	Unfounded
2025IA0003	03-06-2025	Rudeness & Racial Profiling	Unfounded
2025IA0004	04-15-2025	Civil Rights Violation-Freedom of Speech	Exonerated
2025IA0005	04-21-2025	Unwarranted Threat of Arrest	Sustained Other
2025IA0006	06-05-2025	False Arrest	Unfounded
2025IA0007	06-25-2025	Violation of Criminal Procedure	Unfounded
2025IA0008	09-17-2025	Falsification of Police Report	Unfounded

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 disciplinary action may also be assigned for investigation through the internal affairs function.

A review of departmental records for 2025 shows a continued decline in employee complaints, reflecting the Americus Police Department's ongoing commitment to professionalism and accountability. During the year, eight complaints were filed involving 13 sworn officers. No complaints were filed against civilian employees or cadets.

This represents a substantial decrease compared to prior years. In 2024, 17 complaints were filed; in 2023, 20 complaints; and in 2022, 22 complaints. Between 2022 and 2024, the department averaged approximately 19.6 employee-related complaints per year. When the eight complaints recorded in 2025 are included, the four-year trend reflects a continued reduction in complaints, including an approximate 53 percent decrease from 2024 to 2025 alone.

All complaints received during 2025 were documented and investigated promptly in accordance with department policy. Each case was resolved, and complainants were notified of the outcome in a timely manner through written correspondence, in-person meetings, telephone contact, or a combination of these methods. Officers involved were also formally notified of both the initiation and the outcome of the investigations.

Of the eight complaints reviewed in 2025, one was classified as Exonerated, meaning the incident occurred, but the officer's actions were lawful, justified, and consistent with department policy. In this case, officers acted appropriately to address disruptive behavior during an arrest, and no protected speech rights were violated.

Five complaints were determined to be Unfounded, indicating that the allegations were not supported by the evidence. No complaints were classified as Not Sustained, which would indicate insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation.

The remaining two complaints were resolved with findings of Sustained and Sustained-Other. A Sustained finding indicates that a violation of department policy occurred. In one case, disciplinary

action was taken, and the employee later resigned within the same year. The Sustained-Other finding involved a policy violation not directly alleged in the original complaint; specifically, the failure to activate a body-worn camera. That employee was counseled, and no similar issues have occurred since.

These results demonstrate the department's continued focus on transparency, accountability, and corrective action, while also highlighting a significant reduction in complaints and a positive trend in employee conduct and community interactions.

Recruitment

Through our recruitment efforts, we had 75 people either apply for the position of Police Officer or respond to an online interest form in 202. That is an increase of 67% from the 45 contacts recorded in 2024 and a whopping 150% increase over the 30 contacts in 2023. Out of those 75 contacts only 30 people followed through by filling out an application and participating in the hiring process. Our recruitment team processed these 30 applicants, and we were able to hire ten people for the position of Police Officer. The Americus Police Department has an ethnic composition that is 12 percentage points over the community demographics for Caucasians and 6 percentage points under the community demographics for African Americans. This is a recent reversal of the ethnic makeup of the department, which has been consistent over the past five years. Other ethnic groups, including Hispanics, comprise 11% of the service population, and comprise 5% of the department's sworn officers. The number of ethnic groups listed as Other in Americus rose significantly in the 2020 census data. 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. Nevertheless, our goal is to mirror the community we serve as closely as possible, and we will continue to recruit and hire the best possible applicants to meet that goal.

As of December of 2025, we had eleven vacant positions for police officer. We have aggressively recruited applicants through advertisements and attendance at career fairs over the past year. The Americus City Council approved an increase to our starting salary from \$34,308 to \$40,000. They also agreed to lower the minimum age for a police officer from 21 to 19. These changes enhanced our ability to recruit in 2025 as two of the new hires were under the age of 21. The demographic composition of the applicants processed in 2025, and the demographics of the department are depicted in the following tables.

Recruitment Activities from January 1 to December 31, 2025

Race/Sex	Applications Received	Applicants Hired	Percent Hired	Percent of workforce
Caucasian/Male	8	3	38%	16%
Caucasian/Female	3	0	0	18%
African American/Male	24	6	25%	30.5%
African American/Female	12	1	8%	26.5%
Hispanic/Male	5	0	0	2%
Hispanic/Female	0	0	0	2%
Other	0	0	0	5%
Total	52	10	19%	100%

Current Composition of Sworn Employees

	WHITE		BLACK		OTHER		TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Number on Staff	13	0	15	3	2	0	33
Percentage of Staff	50%	0%	36%	7%	7%	0%	100%

Department Profile Compared to 2020 Census			
	Black	White	Other
Department	56%	39%	5%
2020 Census	62%	27%	11%

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 in 2017 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. As of the end of 2024 the Foundation has given over \$230,000 in grants to local law enforcement agencies and scholarship funding to Georgia Southwestern State University and South Georgia Technical College.



The primary fundraiser for the foundation is the Paint the Town Blue Gala which is held every March at the GSW Storm Dome. The Gala features dinner and dancing with a silent auction and presentations honoring the Employee of the Year for Americus PD, GSW PD and the Sumter County Sheriff Office. Thanks to the generous donations of our community partners, the foundation was able to purchase a Computer Voice Stress Analysis system for the police department as well as a new traffic laser.

<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.

We Do Not Forget



Employee of the Year



Officer Marcus Dice

Public Safety Memorial

The City of Americus, in partnership with the Americus Junior Service League, designed and built a Public Safety Memorial in front of the Russell Thomas Public Safety Building. The monument commemorates all those public safety officers who have given their lives in service to their community and is dedicated to all the men and women of Sumter County who serve as Law Enforcement Officers, Firefighters and Emergency Medical Technicians. It was dedicated on December 7th, 2021. The eternal flame was installed in the summer of 2022.

