

Anne Arundel County FFY2024 Problem Identification

Overall

Anne Arundel County accounted for 9.6% of the population and 10.4% of the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the State of Maryland on average over the past three years (2019-2021). During that time, an annual average of 43 traffic fatalities have occurred in the County, which have increased and then decreased, ranging from 42 (7.9% of all fatalities in the State) to 49 (8.6%) to 39 (6.9%). The number of serious injuries (defined as KABCO=4 on the police crash report) over the past three years in Anne Arundel County has seen a significant increase, ranging from 228 to 244 to 262, which are 7.3%, 9.0%, and 8.6% of the State total for serious injuries in 2019, 2020, and 2021 respectively.

Usually several hundred thousand citations for traffic violations are issued across the State and adjudicated in Maryland District Courts each year (435,907 in 2019 and 320,078 in 2020). However, only 308,384 citations were issued and adjudicated in the year 2021 across the State. Over the previous three years, the number of traffic citations issued in Anne Arundel County has fluctuated from 39,589 (9.1% of statewide traffic citations) in 2019 to 28,368 (8.9%) in 2020 to 30,044 (9.7%) in 2021. These citations were issued anywhere within the boundaries of Anne Arundel County to a resident of any jurisdiction, state, or country.

Aggressive Driving

Aggressive driving fatalities in Anne Arundel County during the past three years have been alternating, with 6 occurring in 2019, 8 in 2020, and 3 in 2021. Serious injuries resulting from such crashes in the County have trended up then down, ranging from 16 in 2019 to 24 in 2020 and 17 in 2021. Aggressive driving crashes occurring in 2021 accounted for 9.1% of all fatalities and 10.0% of all serious injuries in the State.

Aggressive driving citations are rarely issued because a driver must be observed committing three or more specific infractions to qualify under the aggressive driving statute. In Maryland, 738 such citations were issued on average over the past three years. Of those, an average of 93 were issued in Anne Arundel County (104 in 2019, 96 in 2020, and 80 in 2021).

Distracted Driving

Since 2019, there have been an annual average of about 13 distracted driving fatalities occurring in Anne Arundel County. In 2021, distracted driving in the County added 11 deaths to the State's distracted driving fatalities, a point on a trend that has been decreasing over the previous three years (13 in 2019 and 14 in 2020). Serious injuries resulting from distracted driving crashes in the County have seen a significant increase over the past three years, from 91 in 2019 (6.1% of all distracted driving serious injuries in the State) to 100 in 2020 (8.3% of all) to 119 in 2021 (8.5% of all). In 2021, 28.2% of all fatalities and 45.4% of all serious injuries recorded in Anne Arundel County resulted from distracted driving crashes.

Distracted driving citations issued in Maryland during the past three years have decreased significantly, ranging from 33,974 in 2019 to 19,432 in 2020 and 17,466 in 2021. During the same period, distracted driving citations issued in Anne Arundel County have oscillated, ranging from 3,023 in 2019 to 1,817 in 2020 and 2,129 in 2021. As a proportion of the distracted driving citations issued statewide, those handed out in the County accounted for 8.9% in 2019, 9.4% in 2020, and 12.2% in 2021.

Impaired Driving

Over the past three years, an average of 10 impaired driving fatalities occurred per year in Anne Arundel County. Fatalities from such crashes have been increasing, ranging from 8 (5.3% of all impaired driving fatalities in Maryland) in 2019 to 7 (5.8% of all) in 2020 to 15 (8.4% of all) in 2021. Serious injuries resulting from such crashes in the County over the same time period have increased, ranging from 45 in 2019 (9.2% of all impaired driving serious injuries in the State) to 45 in 2020 (10.1% of all) to 57 in 2021 (12.5% of all). In 2021, 38.5% of all fatalities and 21.8% of all serious injuries in Anne Arundel County resulted from impaired driving crashes, compared to 31.6% of all fatalities and 14.9% of all serious injuries from impaired driving crashes occurring throughout the State.

Impaired driving relates to driving while impaired by alcohol and/or drugs or controlled dangerous substances. Several citations may be issued at the point of an encounter with an impaired driver. Therefore, all judicial figures related to impaired driving will be quantified using arrests, not individual citations. Impaired driving arrests have seesawed in Maryland over the past three years, from 19,022 in 2019 to 14,017 in 2020 to 14,855 in 2021. During the same period, impaired driving arrests have seesawed in Anne Arundel County, ranging from 1,757 in 2019 to 1,326 in 2020 to 1,612 in 2021. As a proportion of impaired driving arrests in the State, the number of impaired driving arrests in the County accounted for 9.2% in 2019, 9.5% in 2020, and 10.9% in 2021. Of the impaired arrests in the County in 2021, 2.2% were of older drivers (ages 65+) while 2.6% were of young drivers (ages 16-20).

Speeding

During the past three years, Anne Arundel County averaged 10 speeding related fatalities per year, which have increased and leveled off over that time: 8 in 2019, 11 in 2020 and 12 in 2021. Serious injuries resulting from such crashes in the County over the past three years have leveled after an increase, ranging from 26 in 2019 to 38 in 2020 and 37 in 2021. In 2021, 12.5% of statewide speeding related fatalities and 10.6% of statewide speeding related serious injuries resulted from crashes in Anne Arundel County. Over the same year, 30.8% of all fatalities and 14.1% of all serious injuries recorded in Anne Arundel County were the result of crashes involving driving speed.

Speeding citations are very common even though those adjudicated through the District Court do not include automated enforcement. Speeding citations issued in Anne Arundel County have seen a significant decrease over the past three years, with 14,795 (8.1% of statewide speeding citations), 11,738 (7.8% of statewide), and 10,259 (7.3% of all) issued in 2019, 2020, and 2021, respectively. Statewide speeding citations have decreased significantly over the same

three years: 182,169, 151,093, and 139,797. Speeding citations comprised 34.1% of all Anne Arundel County citations in 2021.

Non-motorists

Non-motorists are defined here as pedestrians (on foot) and bicyclists. Pedestrian fatalities in Anne Arundel County have declined over the previous three years, from 11 (2019) to 10 (2020) to 5 (2021), while serious injuries have risen and plateaued, ranging from 22 (2019) to 26 (2020) to 27 (2021). The occurrence of bicyclist fatalities in Anne Arundel County has increased and then decreased, with 1 in 2019, 4 in 2020, and 0 in 2021, while serious injuries to bicyclists have trended up then down, ranging from 3 in 2019 to 9 in 2020 to 6 in 2021.

Very few non-motorist citations are issued throughout the State, to either the pedestrian or the motor vehicle driver. Typically, more violations are issued to drivers, and in Anne Arundel County 30 were issued to drivers against pedestrians or bicyclists in 2021, while 7 were issued to pedestrians or bicyclists that year. As a proportion of statewide totals (648 and 182), those numbers represent 4.6% and 3.8%, respectively, in 2021.

Motorcycles

Motorcycle rider fatalities have seesawed over the past three years in Anne Arundel County, ranging from 9 (2019) to 11 (2020) to 4 (2021). Serious injuries to motorcyclists have seen an increase, ranging from 27 (2019) to 26 (2020) to 34 (2021). The 2021 figures account for 5.3% of motorcycle rider fatalities and 10.3% of rider serious injuries that occurred in the State.

Maryland has had a universal helmet law in place for several decades; consequently, the incidence of unhelmeted motorcyclists involved in a crash is low. The State has averaged 9 unhelmeted motorcycle rider fatalities per year over the past three years; unhelmeted motorcycle fatalities in Anne Arundel County have remained relatively constant (an average of 1 per year). However, 9 seriously injured riders in Anne Arundel County were unhelmeted in 2021, which is 8.7% of the State total (compared to 5 in 2019 and 5 in 2020).

Older Drivers

In Maryland, older driver safety programs focus on drivers of age 65 years or older. The data presented here on fatalities and serious injuries include any person involved in a crash with an older driver. Older drivers were involved in crashes that resulted in an average of 91 fatalities in Maryland each year (105 in 2019, 91 in 2020, and 78 in 2021). During that time, serious injuries resulting from these crashes in Maryland have oscillated, ranging from 512 in 2019 to 381 in 2020 to 429 in 2021. Fatal crashes involving older drivers in Anne Arundel County averaged 7 over the same period (ranging from 8 in 2019, 9 in 2020, to 5 in 2021). Further, serious injuries resulting from these crashes in the County have varied, ranging from 32 in 2019, 29 in 2020, to 39 in 2021.

A total of 10,350 citations for moving violations or restraint usage were issued to drivers of age 65+ in Maryland in 2021. Over the past three years, the number of traffic citations issued to older drivers in Anne Arundel County has oscillated from 1,342 (7.6% of those issued statewide) in 2019 to 826 (7.6%) in 2020 to 907 (8.8%) in 2021.

Young Drivers

In Maryland, young driver safety programs focus on individuals between ages 16 and 20. The data presented here on fatalities and serious injuries include any person involved in a crash with a young driver. Young drivers were involved in crashes that resulted in an average of 54 fatalities in Maryland each year (46 in 2019, 56 in 2020, and 61 in 2021). During that time, serious injuries resulting from these crashes in Maryland have been alternating, ranging from 407 in 2019 to 345 in 2020 to 376 in 2021. In 2021 there were 7 fatalities involving young drivers in Anne Arundel County, a number that has increased over time, with 2 in 2019 and 5 in 2020. Further, serious injuries due to crashes involving young drivers have been decreasing over the same period, from 36 in 2019 to 34 in 2020 to 31 in 2021.

A total of 33,462 citations for moving violations or restraint usage were issued to drivers of age 16-20 in Maryland in 2021. Over the past three years, the number of traffic citations issued to young drivers in Anne Arundel County has steeply decreased: 3,515 (8.6% of those issued statewide), 2,933 (8.3%), and 2,903 (8.7%) in 2019, 2020, and 2021, respectively.

Occupant Protection

An unrestrained occupant is defined as a child under the age of eight reported to be not restrained in a child safety seat (which includes harness and booster seats) or a person over the age of eight reported as not restrained by a seat belt while riding in a passenger vehicle or light truck. Unrestrained occupant fatalities have seen an increase over the past three years in Anne Arundel County, ranging from 3 (2019) to 12 (2020) to 16 (2021). Serious injuries have fluctuated over the same period: 27 (2019) to 29 (2020) to 24 (2021). The 2021 values accounted for 11.5% of the unrestrained fatalities and 6.3% of the unrestrained serious injuries occurring in the State.

In 2021, 14,994 citations were issued statewide for safety equipment violation (including seat belt violations and child safety seat violations), which decreased significantly when compared to the numbers issued in the previous years (29,653 in 2019 and 16,833 in 2020). In Anne Arundel County, 1,161 such citations were issued in 2021, representing 7.7% of the statewide total, compared to 2,216 in 2019 and 1,097 in 2020.

The MHSO conducts an annual roadside survey of seat belt usage in Maryland. The statewide observed seat belt usage rate for Maryland in 2022 among drivers and front seat passengers of all vehicles was 92.7%, while the overall observed seat belt usage rate for Anne Arundel County was 92.4%.

Note: Citation frequencies and percentages reported here may be underestimates of actual issued citations due to an ongoing system conversion.