

Prince George's County FFY2024 Problem Identification

Overall

Prince George's County accounted for 15.2% of the population and 15.8% 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 117 traffic fatalities have occurred in the County, which have oscillated, ranging from 112 (20.9% of all fatalities in the State) to 110 (19.2%) to 130 (23.1%). The number of serious injuries (defined as KABCO=4 on the police crash report) over the past three years in Prince George's County has varied, ranging from 523 to 341 to 435, which are 16.8%, 12.5%, and 14.2% 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 Prince George's County has decreased significantly from 83,297 (19.1% of statewide traffic citations) in 2019 to 59,992 (18.7%) in 2020 to 54,973 (17.8%) in 2021. These citations were issued anywhere within the boundaries of Prince George's County to a resident of any jurisdiction, state, or country.

Aggressive Driving

Aggressive driving fatalities in Prince George's County during the past three years have seesawed, with 6 occurring in 2019, 11 in 2020, and 7 in 2021. Serious injuries resulting from such crashes in the County have dipped and increased, ranging from 28 in 2019 to 21 in 2020 and 26 in 2021. Aggressive driving crashes occurring in 2021 accounted for 21.2% of all fatalities and 15.3% 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 246 were issued in Prince George's County (277 in 2019, 276 in 2020, and 185 in 2021).

Distracted Driving

Since 2019, there have been an annual average of about 49 distracted driving fatalities occurring in Prince George's County. In 2021, distracted driving in the County added 57 deaths to the State's distracted driving fatalities, a point on a trend that has seen an increase over the previous three years (41 in 2019 and 48 in 2020). Serious injuries resulting from distracted driving crashes in the County have seesawed over the past three years, from 312 in 2019 (20.8% of all distracted driving serious injuries in the State) to 194 in 2020 (16.0% of all) to 235 in 2021 (16.9% of all). In 2021, 43.8% of all fatalities and 54.0% of all serious injuries recorded in Prince George's 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 Prince George's County have seen a significant decrease, ranging from 6,337 in 2019 to 4,844 in 2020 and 3,664 in 2021. As a proportion of the distracted driving citations issued statewide, those handed out in the County accounted for 18.7% in 2019, 24.9% in 2020, and 21.0% in 2021.

Impaired Driving

Over the past three years, an average of 30 impaired driving fatalities occurred per year in Prince George's County. Fatalities from such crashes have fluctuated, ranging from 32 (21.1% of all impaired driving fatalities in Maryland) in 2019 to 22 (18.2% of all) in 2020 to 37 (20.8% of all) in 2021. Serious injuries resulting from such crashes in the County over the same time period have been alternating, ranging from 65 in 2019 (13.3% of all impaired driving serious injuries in the State) to 42 in 2020 (9.4% of all) to 48 in 2021 (10.5% of all). In 2021, 28.5% of all fatalities and 11.0% of all serious injuries in Prince George's 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 trended down then up in Prince George's County, ranging from 2,970 in 2019 to 2,418 in 2020 to 2,447 in 2021. As a proportion of impaired driving arrests in the State, the number of impaired driving arrests in the County accounted for 15.6% in 2019, 17.3% in 2020, and 16.5% in 2021. Of the impaired arrests in the County in 2021, 1.5% were of older drivers (ages 65+) while 2.3% were of young drivers (ages 16-20).

Speeding

During the past three years, Prince George's County averaged 16 speeding related fatalities per year, which have seen an increase over that time: 10 in 2019, 18 in 2020, and 20 in 2021. Serious injuries resulting from such crashes in the County over the past three years have decreased and leveled off, ranging from 74 in 2019 to 39 in 2020 and 40 in 2021. In 2021, 20.8% of statewide speeding related fatalities and 11.4% of statewide speeding related serious injuries resulted from crashes in Prince George's County. Over the same year, 15.4% of all fatalities and 9.2% of all serious injuries recorded in Prince George's 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 Prince George's County have decreased significantly over the past three years, with 23,627 (13.0% of statewide speeding citations), 21,347 (14.1% of statewide), and 18,615 (13.3% 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 33.9% of all Prince George's County citations in 2021.

Non-motorists

Non-motorists are defined here as pedestrians (on foot) and bicyclists. Pedestrian fatalities in Prince George's County have leveled after an increase over the previous three years, from 30 (2019) to 35 (2020) to 35 (2021), while serious injuries have oscillated, ranging from 65 (2019) to 60 (2020) to 67 (2021). The occurrence of bicyclist fatalities in Prince George's County has stayed about the same, with 2 in 2019, 2 in 2020, and 0 in 2021, while serious injuries to bicyclists have fluctuated, ranging from 7 in 2019 to 4 in 2020 to 8 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 Prince George's County 81 were issued to drivers against pedestrians or bicyclists in 2021, while 26 were issued to pedestrians or bicyclists that year. As a proportion of statewide totals (648 and 182), those numbers represent 12.5% and 14.3%, respectively, in 2021.

Motorcycles

Motorcycle rider fatalities have remained almost steady over the past three years in Prince George's County, ranging from 11 (2019) to 11 (2020) to 13 (2021). Serious injuries to motorcyclists have oscillated, ranging from 29 (2019) to 39 (2020) to 37 (2021). The 2021 figures account for 17.1% of motorcycle rider fatalities and 11.2% 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 Prince George's County have remained relatively constant (an average of 1 per year). However, 15 seriously injured riders in Prince George's County were unhelmeted in 2021, which is 14.4% of the State total (compared to 10 in 2019 and 11 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 Prince George's County averaged 14 over the same period (ranging from 10 in 2019, 13 in 2020, to 18 in 2021). Further, serious injuries resulting from these crashes in the County have trended down then up, ranging from 107 in 2019, 35 in 2020, to 47 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 Prince George's County has seen a significant decrease from 2,647 (15.0% of those issued statewide) in 2019 to 1,723 (15.8%) in 2020 to 1,443 (13.9%) 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 8 fatalities involving young drivers in Prince George's County, a number that has increased and then decreased over time, with 7 in 2019 and 10 in 2020. Further, serious injuries due to crashes involving young drivers have increased over the same period, from 39 in 2019 to 39 in 2020 to 46 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 Prince George's County has decreased significantly: 6,262 (15.3% of those issued statewide), 4,924 (14.0%), and 4,593 (13.7%) 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 varied over the past three years in Prince George's County, ranging from 27 (2019) to 19 (2020) to 31 (2021). Serious injuries have oscillated over the same period: 61 (2019) to 38 (2020) to 66 (2021). The 2021 values accounted for 22.3% of the unrestrained fatalities and 17.2% 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 Prince George's County, 3,476 such citations were issued in 2021, representing 23.2% of the statewide total, compared to 5,766 in 2019 and 4,264 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 Prince George's County was 98.1%.

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