



HARRISONBURG | VA FRIENDLY BY NATURE



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HPD releases Use of Force, arrests data for public review

HARRISONBURG, Va. – The Harrisonburg Police Department (HPD) and Chief of Police Eric D. English are working to make more information and data concerning the use of force by officers, and the number of arrests made in Harrisonburg, easily obtainable by members of the public.

Today, HPD has made documents available online that go into detail about incidents that involved the use of force by officers in 2019 and 2018. The 2019 data indicates when the 46 use of force incidents that year took place, the type of force that was used, if a citizen was arrested and the race of citizens involved. The 2018 data includes the same details for the 40 incidents that occurred that year.



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Also being made available at this time is the number of arrests HPD has made, and traffic summons issued, dating back to 2013, and the demographic information for both. In total, data shows there were 34,509 arrests made in Harrisonburg during that time. Of those arrests, 79.5 percent have involved individuals who are White or Hispanic, and 19.4 percent involved individuals who are Black. A more detailed breakdown is available in the online data, though the reporting tool has not allowed data to be pulled individually for Hispanic individuals for all years and those numbers are included in the “White” column.

“The Harrisonburg Police Department requires its personnel to report any force used outside of normal handcuffing procedures,” Chief English said. “This data will be made available each year regarding arrests and use of force. We are also working on providing crime data to keep everyone abreast of incidents that may be occurring throughout the city.”

The use of force can include a number of different actions. All use of force cases in Harrisonburg are reviewed by HPD’s Use of Force Review Board. This board is comprised of a Captain, Lieutenant, Sergeant, an employee peer and two civilian members of Harrisonburg that have attended our Community Police Academy. The board reviews the written report, the body worn camera video along with HPD policy to make the determination of whether the officer was within department guidelines. While the determination may be made that they were within policy, the board can also make recommendations on how the incident could have been handled better.

All data mentioned above is available at www.harrisonburgva.gov/police.

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 54,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is available online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.

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