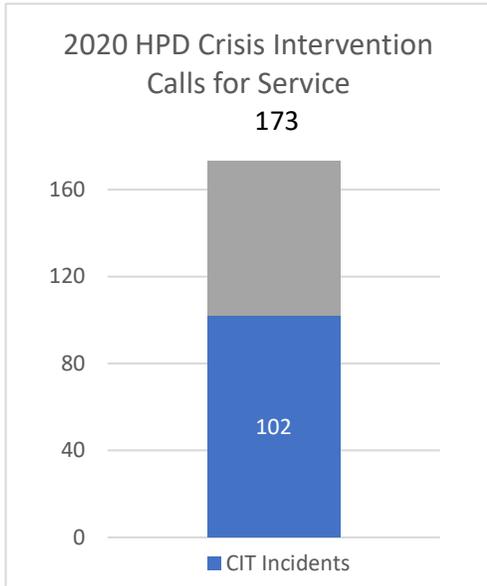
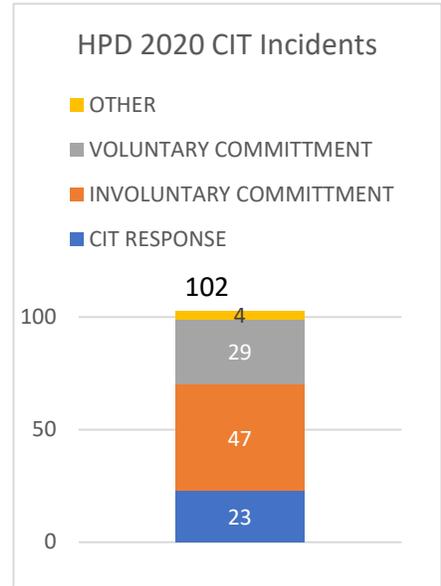


# Hillsborough Police Department Crisis Intervention Response - 2020

Police officers frequently interact with individuals in mental health crisis, in part due to the decline of public mental health budgets. In 2020, the Hillsborough Police Department (HPD) received 173 calls for service (911 calls) related to mental health, overdose, suicide attempts, or involuntary commitment (IVC). These calls resulted in 102 interactions with individuals in crisis, or 1 every 3.6 days. In 2019 the HPD filed 72 incident reports as a result of crisis intervention calls, putting the rate of increase from 2019 to 2020 at 38%.

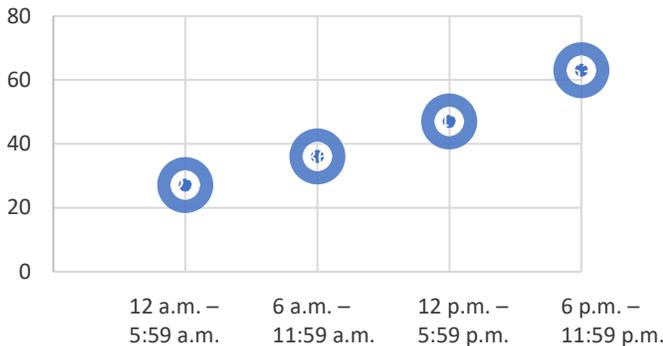


The 102 interactions are documented with incident reports and assigned an offense code. Of these incidents 69% result in the subject being hospitalized, either voluntarily or involuntarily.

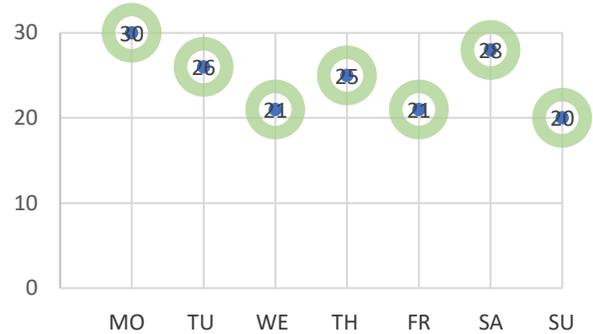


When reviewed by the time of day and the days of the week, we see a mostly even distribution, with the number of cases being higher in the afternoons and evening hours. The law enforcement crisis intervention model is most successful if community partners are available for referrals and this analysis helps to understand the necessity of 24/7 availability on the part of community partners.

HPD, 2020 Crisis Calls for Service by Time of Day



HPD, 2020 Crisis Calls for Service by Day of Week



Crisis calls include a range of situations and they frequently result in subjects being transported to the hospital. Typically, a family member or friend is concerned for the subject and calls 911 to enlist assistance with erratic or self-harming behavior. A few examples from 2020 follow:

Example 1. A woman called 911 to ask assistance because she was having suicidal thoughts. She was at her daughter's apartment but was not able to tell the dispatcher exactly where the apartment was. After searching based on vague descriptions for 25 minutes the daughter called and gave the exact location. She was transported to the hospital for evaluation and treatment voluntarily.

Example 2. Officers respond to a call regarding a young man with mental issues carrying an axe. When they arrive, he gives them the ax and does not seem violent or likely to harm himself, although he does seem to be in crisis. The officers tell his family the process for obtaining an IVC, which they do the same day. Officers locate the young man under the I-85 bridge and transport him to UNC-Chapel Hill.

Example 3. A suicidal subject is reported, and officers find him. He says he is going to jump off the I85 S. Churton bridge and the only way they can stop him is to shoot him. One of the officers continues to talk with him and he eventually allows them to transport him to the hospital. Given the immediacy of the situation it qualifies as an emergency custody, although no force was needed. Commitment papers are acquired after transport.

Example 4. Officers respond to a suicide call at the methadone clinic on Mayo Street. The subject had been discharged from the hospital and sent to the clinic to get his dose of methadone. Staff at the clinic was familiar with the subject and said they could not provide the methadone due to a known pattern of repeat overdose on methadone, or other non-prescribed medicines. Officers advised staff that without an IVC they had no authority over the subject, and it did not seem there was probable cause for an IVC, due to the subject being sober at the time. Subject agreed to go to the hospital voluntarily because that was the only option to obtain methadone, officers provided transportation for the subject, and clinic staff went to the hospital to explain the concern for a repeat of established behavior patterns.

#### *Use of Force*

In 2020, the HPD used force in 6 of the crisis intervention responses, which is a rate of 6%. All 6 incidents resulted in involuntary commitment, 2 of them were juvenile subjects, 2 of them were calls to assist another agency, and for 5 of them EMS was also at the scene. In the incident not involving EMS, child protective services were contacted for case information.

1. Call for assistance to EMS for attempted suicide. Subject did not want to accompany EMS to hospital. In the process of handcuffing subject kicked and bit, and reasonable force was used to gain control. Subject also kicked as EMS attempted to put their shoes on.
2. Call regarding subject passed out on bench, after huffing from a can and vomiting. Earlier in the day this same subject had been trespassed from Walmart due to passing out in the bathroom. Subject wakes up. EMS and Fire arrive. EMS wanted to transport to hospital considering this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> incident in one day. Subject tries to flee on bicycle, is stopped, brought to knees in order to handcuff, and transported to hospital on emergency commitment.
3. Called to home for IVC order. Mother met outside and warned her son/subject might flee or fight. Officers explain to subject they will take him to hospital. As they attempt to put him in handcuffs he flees, is stopped, brought to the ground, and handcuffed. After being placed in patrol car he bangs his head on back of car and tries to strike the cage. EMS arrives. Subject tries to remove handcuffs, injuring himself. Kicks door of car. Spits on Officer. Spit hood placed on subject. Subject restrained on stretcher. Subject has ups and downs throughout and was removed from all restraints after arriving at hospital.
4. IVC papers, taken out by mother, received for subject who had been reported earlier in the day as highly intoxicated. When officers respond, he is passed out asleep on the floor. EMS responds as well. After some time, he wakes up and starts eating food that is on the stove. Officers explain he will be transported

to the hospital and ask him to stop eating so they can take him. He refuses. Subject resists and is taken to the ground to handcuff and is transported to the hospital on a stretcher.

5. Respond to wellbeing check for Airbnb tenant, called in by owner. Subject was locked in bathroom, taking a bath, and huffing canned air. Officers enter and ask subject to stop huffing. Subject does not and officers take the can. EMS called and arrives. In the past 2 months same subject had been involuntarily committed by 2 other agencies. EMS clears subject of needing medical attention. Other tenant reports behavior was ongoing all day. Subject is downstairs and starts huffing again. Subject resists while officers take can and handcuff subject. Subject transported to magistrate's office for IVC request, which is granted. Hospital staff say subject should not be brought in for huffing again. Subject has not sought help after previous incidents. Subject is cited for inhaling a toxic substance and is transported back home.
6. Respond to a disturbance. The subject is juvenile and in a parked car with 2 adults. Another adult is on porch of house and is subject's legal guardian. Subject wants to go with woman but is told it is not possible. Subject gets out of the vehicle, is angry, throwing his shoes and yelling. Attempts to leave on a bike and is blocked. Gets a dog on a leash with aim of attacking officers and is forced to let go of leash. Gets a laptop and yells song lyrics, it is taken away. Gets broom stick and is hitting a pole with it. Officers assist subject to sit on porch. Subject asks officers to shoot them and wants a knife to stab himself. IVC papers are obtained. Meanwhile subject calms down and is transported to hospital without further complaint.

### *Training*

Law enforcement training that focuses on dealing with people in crisis is offered in the basic academy, and post-academy as part of some annual in-service training, and in specialized courses.

- In the basic academy there is a 24-hour Individuals with Mental Illness and Developmental Difficulties course that specifically address interacting with these populations. In addition, similar themes are woven into blocks on use of force and responding to victims and the public, as well as other blocks.
- Annual in-service topics are set by the State. The topic areas change from year to year, but typically include a block on mental illness response every year or every other year.
- One focused tool is a course called Crisis Intervention Training (CIT). CIT is a week -long class offered through a partnership of law enforcement, community colleges and mental health providers. The course involves hands-on scenario training and focuses on resources and escalation. This course is typically only offered 1-2 times a year, and we can typically only get 1-2 officers into each session. At this time, 68% (13/19) of our patrol officers have completed this training. Our goal is to have 110% of our staff CIT certified.

HPD Crisis Intervention Response 2020 – supplemental data  
1/22/20

HPD 2020 Mental Health Crisis Demographics

	All Incidents (102)	IVC (53)
Black	31%	40%
White	68%	58%
Asian	1%	0%
Male	63%	68%
Female	37%	32%
18-24	15%	19%
25-49	43%	17%
50-64	16%	49%
65-74	1%	15%
> 75	2%	0%

35 of 102 incident reports in 2020 involved repeated cases with the same individual

- 9 individuals had 2 incidents
- 4 individuals had 3 incidents
- 1 individual had 5 incidents
- 1 individual had 6 incidents

Mental Health Crisis Incidents, Year over Year

2016	54
2017	44
2018	88
2019	74
2020	93

Note on year over year data back to 2016. The total for 2020 differs from above because I added crisis records to this data set above through a careful review. Rather than do that for each year, I am using the lower number for 2020 for this comparison.

Note: Hillsborough’s African American population is higher than the county as a whole – at 21%.

	North Carolina	Hillsborough town, North Carolina	Mebane city, North Carolina	Carrboro town, North Carolina	Chapel Hill town, North Carolina	Orange County, North Carolina
Population estimates, July 1, 2019	10,488,084	7,161	16,262	21,190	64,051	148,476
White alone, percent	70.6%	64.1%	66.7%	73.7%	71.7%	76.9%
Black or African American alone, percent	22.2%	20.9%	24.7%	11.0%	10.9%	11.8%
Hispanic or Latino, percent	9.8%	11.0%	6.9%	7.1%	6.3%	8.6%
Asian alone, percent	3.2%	3.6%	2.3%	9.4%	13.0%	8.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent	1.6%	2.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Two or More Races, percent	2.3%	2.0%	3.1%	4.2%	2.9%	2.6%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	62.6%	60.4%	63.0%	68.2%	66.9%	69.5%

Source: United States Census, Quickfacts, accessed 12/15/20

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/NC,mebanecitynorthcarolina,hillsboroughtownnorthcarolina,carrborotownnorthcarolina,chapelhilltownnorthcarolina,orangecountynorthcarolina/PST045219>