

City of Phoenix

*Meeting Location:
City Council Chambers
200 W. Jefferson St.
Phoenix, Arizona 85003*



City of Phoenix

Agenda

Wednesday, March 4, 2026

10:00 AM

City Council Chambers

Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee

*Councilman Kevin Robinson, Chair
Councilwoman Betty Guardado
Councilwoman Ann O'Brien
Councilman Jim Waring*

OPTIONS TO ACCESS THIS MEETING

Virtual Request to speak at a meeting:

- Register online by visiting the City Council Meetings page on phoenix.gov at least 2 hours prior to the start of this meeting. Then, click on this link at the time of the meeting and join the Webex to speak:

<https://phoenixcitycouncil.webex.com/phoenixcitycouncil/j.php?MTID=md97da585d66c7b68da5f0b5ad0b02ef2>

- Register via telephone at 602-262-6001 at least 2 hours prior to the start of this meeting, noting the item number. Then, use the Call-in phone number and Meeting ID listed below at the time of the meeting to call-in and speak.

In-Person Requests to speak at a meeting:

- Register in person at a kiosk located at the City Council Chambers, 200 W. Jefferson St., Phoenix, Arizona, 85003. Arrive 1 hour prior to the start of this meeting. Depending on seating availability, residents will attend and speak from the Upper Chambers, Lower Chambers or City Hall location.

- Individuals should arrive early, 1 hour prior to the start of the meeting to submit an in-person request to speak before the item is called. After the item is called, requests to speak for that item will not be accepted.

At the time of the meeting:

- Watch the meeting live streamed on phoenix.gov or Phoenix Channel 11 on Cox Cable, or using the Webex link provided above.

- Call-in to listen to the meeting. Dial 602-666-0783 and Enter Meeting ID 2550 246 5029# (for English) or 2553 357 6374# (for Spanish). Press # again when prompted for attendee ID.

- Watch the meeting in-person from the Upper Chambers, Lower Chambers or City Hall depending on seating availability.

Para nuestros residentes de habla hispana:

- Para registrarse para hablar en español, llame al 602-262-6001 al menos 2 horas antes del inicio de esta reunión e indique el número del tema. El día de la reunión, llame al 602-666-0783 e ingrese el número de identificación de la reunión 2553 357 6374#. El intérprete le indicará cuando sea su turno de hablar.

- Para solamente escuchar la reunión en español, llame a este mismo número el día de la reunión (602-666-0783; ingrese el número de identificación de la reunión 2553 357 6374#). Se proporciona interpretación simultánea para nuestros residentes durante todas las reuniones.

- Para asistir a la reunión en persona, vaya a las Cámaras del Concejo Municipal de Phoenix ubicadas en 200 W. Jefferson Street, Phoenix, AZ 85003. Llegue 1 hora antes del comienzo de la reunión. Si desea hablar, regístrese electrónicamente en uno de los quioscos, antes de que comience el tema. Una vez que se comience a discutir el tema, no se aceptarán nuevas solicitudes para hablar. Dependiendo de cuantos asientos haya disponibles, usted podría ser sentado en la parte superior de las cámaras, en el piso de abajo de las cámaras, o en el edificio municipal.

Miembros del público pueden asistir a esta reunión en persona. El acceso físico al lugar de la reunión estará disponible comenzando una hora antes de la reunión.

CALL TO ORDER

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

- 1 **Minutes of the Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee Meeting** **Page 6**

Attachments

[02.04.2026 PSJ Minutes Draft.pdf](#)

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION (ITEMS 2-4)

- 2 **Crime Lab Overview** **Page 23**

- 3 **Downtown Operations Unit Overview** **Page 26**

- 4 **Phoenix Fire Department Staffing and Response Time Report** **Page 31**

Attachments

[Attachment A - Fire Staffing and Response Time Report.pdf](#)

INFORMATION ONLY (ITEMS 5-6)

- 5 **Community Assistance Program (CAP) Expansion Implementation Report** **Page 40**

Attachments

[Community Assistance Expansion and Implementation Report - March 2026.pdf](#)

- 6 **Phoenix Police Department Recruitment, Hiring and Attrition Update** **Page 46**

Attachments

[Attachment A - March 2026 \(December 2025 Data\).pdf](#)

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURN

For further information or reasonable accommodations, please call the City Council Meeting Request line at 602-262-6001. 7-1-1 Friendly.

Persons paid to lobby on behalf of persons or organizations other than themselves must register with the City Clerk prior to lobbying or within five business days thereafter, and must register annually to continue lobbying. If you have any questions about registration or whether or not you must register, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 602-534-0490.

Members:

Councilman Kevin Robinson, Chair
Councilwoman Betty Guardado
Councilwoman Ann O'Brien
Councilman Jim Waring



Minutes of the Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee Meeting

This item transmits the minutes of the Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee Meeting on February 4, 2026, for review, correction or approval by the Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee.

THIS ITEM IS FOR POSSIBLE ACTION.

The minutes are included for review as **Attachment A**.

Responsible Department

This item is submitted by Assistant City Manager Lori Bays and the City Manager's Office.

Attachment A

Phoenix City Council Public Safety and Justice (PSJ) Subcommittee Summary Minutes 04 February 2026

City Council Chambers
200 W. Jefferson St.
Phoenix, Arizona

Subcommittee Members Present

Councilman Kevin Robinson, Chair
Councilman Jim Waring
Councilwoman Betty Guardado – arrived at 11:02 a.m.
Councilwoman Ann O'Brien

Subcommittee Members Absent

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Robinson called the Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee (PSJ) to order at 10:03 a.m. with 3 members present.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

1. Minutes of the Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee Meeting

Councilwoman O'Brien made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2026, Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee meeting. Councilman Waring seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 3-0.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION (ITEMS 2-5)

2. Fireworks Safety Task Force Update

Assistant City Manager Lori Bays thanked the task force for its efforts in addressing illegal fireworks complaints raised by Council. Ms. Bays shared the interdepartmental team has worked within state law constraints to improve enforcement, ensure thorough inspections of vendors, and enhance communication with the community. She recognized Chief Alexander and the team for their leadership and collaboration, and an update on progress will be provided.

Assistant Fire Chief Justin Alexander thanked the team for the work they have done and outlined the presentation, which covered the task force's background, mission, objectives, and strategy. Mr. Alexander shared the task force was formed in response to

increased fireworks complaints and a rise in Police and Fire calls during major holidays. He emphasized its mission to protect public safety, reduce nuisances, and improve health by eliminating illegal aerial fireworks within city limits. Chief Alexander explained the taskforce applied the community risk reduction model, collecting and analyzing data to guide enforcement and planning. He shared the taskforce is committed to enforcing code provisions regulating the sale, possession, and use of fireworks while prioritizing public safety and highlighted great progress within the parameters of the State law to complete enforcements and ensure communication with the community to address concerns.

Assistant Fire Marshal Eric Williams noted the Phoenix Fire Code prohibits consumer fireworks and State law preempts and limits local jurisdictions from enforcing and permitting permit use during dates listed in the Arizona Fire Code. Assistant Marshal Williams emphasized as a result, Fire prevention only conducted inspections of sale sites whose quantities of fireworks required permitting in accordance with State law, which was a small percentage. He shared, starting for the fourth of July and New Years 2025, Fire staff inspected all permitted, identified, and potential firework sites to help validate that only legal permissible consumer fireworks are being sold and done so safely in the community. He highlighted this initiative resulted in more than 600 inspections last year which led to encounters of a few locations where non-permissible fireworks were identified. Mr. Williams shared postseason inspections conducted after the holiday will help verify if fireworks are removed from businesses and tents in the community once the State law dates expire.

Deputy Communications Director Ashley Patton shared the Communications Office created a coordinated, multimedia, multiplatform, education campaign titled Celebrate Safely to ensure the community is aware of all of the work. Ms. Patton emphasized the goal is to raise awareness and reduce fire related incidents. She highlighted collaboration efforts through engagement with several stakeholders including the Mayor, Council, Neighborhood Services Department, Public Works Department, Communications Office, and external partners such as ValleyWise Health. She also shared the Communications Office also worked with Maricopa Association of Government (MAG) on the impact to air quality and public health. She highlighted the team's community engagement Ask Me Anything approach through Reddit which garnered 37,000 views and demonstrates Phoenix's leadership in digital engagement.

Ms. Patton shared a sampling of the campaign and highlighted the Light Up the Sky in District 5 event, supported by Councilwoman Guardado. Ms. Patton also highlighted the After Dark in the Park in District 1 which won the Blue Sky Award from Valley Metro and congratulated Councilwoman O'Brien. She then shared Celebrate Safely Campaign examples.

Lieutenant Brian Rimsza discussed the Police Department's support of the City's Firework Safety Task Force. Lieutenant Rimsza stated the fireworks educational campaign began in June 2025 and the Police Department focused on community

engagement, Community Connect and dedicated staffing. He explained the Community Connect software allows staff to communicate with the community and provided callers with a link to the fireworks educational platform. Lieutenant Rimsza explained two officers in each precinct were assigned to respond to fireworks calls and additional training provided to all officers explaining the educational campaign. Lieutenant Rimsza shared community engagement began weeks prior to the 4th of July and New Years holidays and involved the use of hotspot maps from previous years to contact residents and attend events across all seven precincts. He added leading up to the fourth of July, there were approximately 1,500 contacts, and nearly 3,000 contacts before New Years.

Lieutenant Rimsza emphasized fireworks calls for service increased significantly in 2025 due to a dedicated radio code and education efforts, correcting prior underreporting when calls were grouped under city ordinance offenses. He added for New Years, efforts focused on fireworks and celebratory gunfire, emphasizing Shannon's Law, a Class 6 felony named after Shannon Smith, who was killed by a stray bullet in 1999. He noted during the New Years holiday, two arrests were made for celebratory gunfire, with additional cases under investigation. Lieutenant Rimsza concluded fireworks calls have risen over the past four years due to education and tracking improvements, while celebratory gunfire calls remain higher during New Years, with New Years Eve being the most active date for gunfire in the city.

Chief Alexander stated that categories of calls were analyzed to measure the impact of efforts on the Phoenix Fire Department's emergency response during the 4th of July and New Year's holidays. Chief Alexander highlighted that on the 4th of July last year, the Phoenix Fire Investigation staff were dispatched to five fire incidents between 10 p.m. and midnight: three house fires and two debris fires. He explained two incidents identified fireworks as the ignition source, while others had multiple potential sources, including fireworks. Chief Alexander emphasized in 2024, nuisance fire activity on the 4th of July decreased by approximately 38 percent, and in 2025, by another 18 percent, totaling a 49 percent reduction over two years. He noted that calls for service during the past two New Year's holidays decreased by 44 percent. Chief Alexander shared moving forward, the task force will continue planning fireworks education and risk reduction initiatives, strengthen regional partnerships, and collaborate with MAG to address health and air quality impacts of fireworks. He emphasized joint messaging will continue through the Fireworks or Breathtaking campaign, and the legal team is reviewing potential City code amendments to align with State law and enhance enforcement.

Councilman Waring asked what does State law allow regarding fireworks and can you use them as long as they stay on the ground.

Chief Alexander replied consumer fireworks are legal by State law and permissible by the City.

Councilman Waring stated it sounds like we are accurately saying we could send officers out, but there's a good chance this is going to be a legal activity during New Years, Christmas, and fourth of July cause of State law.

Chief Alexander replied that is correct, that is legally permissible during those times and the Fire Department is looking for ways to leverage enforcement and our inspections. Mr. Alexander stated the health messaging is especially promising, and folks understand the repercussions of even ground-based fireworks, the team hopes the community will respond and lessen their use.

Councilman Waring expressed skepticism about focusing on air quality messaging for individuals using fireworks and suggested that tougher penalties and increased officer presence might be more effective. Councilman Waring then emphasized most people likely know celebratory gunfire is illegal and questioned whether awareness campaigns have significant impact. He then asked if there were a couple hundred incidents but only a handful of prosecutions.

Lieutenant Rimsza stated yes, that is true, there were two arrests.

Councilman Waring asked was the 49 percent reduction and the 44 percent reduction related to fireworks incidents only, or to all fires during those time periods.

Chief Alexander replied those are categorized as fires likely to be caused by fireworks.

Councilman Waring stated concerns about roof fires caused by fireworks are valid and echoed by residents who contact him each year, but enforcement is limited by State law and legal fireworks cannot be prosecuted. Councilman Waring asked if authorities are ever able to identify and hold individuals accountable in cases where a firework sets a roof on fire.

Lieutenant Rimsza replied every significant fire is investigated by the Phoenix Fire Investigation Task Force and in July 2025, two fires were definitively classified as intentionally caused by fireworks.

Councilman Waring asked if the Task Force caught the actual person who caused the fire and were they prosecuted for burning down someone's house.

Chief Alexander replied without discussing specific investigations, he could confirm that in one case, charges were pressed against an individual.

Councilman Waring stated increasing penalties for offenders might be more effective than relying on awareness campaigns, noting past success with tougher DUI penalties. Councilman Waring expressed skepticism about the impact of health messaging and videos, stating that stronger deterrence and focused messaging on legal consequences could be more effective.

Ms. Bays added one of the next steps is to present potential code amendments to strengthen enforcement. She explained the recommendations will include increasing penalties to emphasize the seriousness of violations and consequences. She stated the proposals will be briefed to the Council, discussed in this subcommittee, and then brought forward for full Council approval.

Councilman Waring stated current efforts such as community meetings do not reach everyone and suggested leveraging HOA's and other groups to amplify messaging. He emphasized penalties for serious incidents such as house fires caused by fireworks should be highlighted in advertising.

Councilwoman O'Brien expressed her appreciation for the inspections of consumer fireworks vendors and tents. She asked how many fireworks were confiscated, how many vendors were non-compliant, and what criteria determined whether fireworks were confiscated versus returned to distributors.

Assistant Marshal Williams replied no fireworks were confiscated last year and approximately six to twelve retail locations were found with non-permissible fireworks, typically due to shipments from national distributors that included products legal in other states but not in Arizona. He added the items were removed from sales, isolated, and returned to the distributor and confiscation only occurs when fireworks are sold illegally by individuals or convenience stores without a legal distributor to return them to.

Councilwoman O'Brien shared her appreciation for retailers not being punished for distributor mistakes but emphasized retailers have an obligation to know what is permissible to sell in Arizona. She asked if retailers who repeatedly have non-permissible fireworks are being tracked and how will repeat violations be handled.

Assistant Marshal Williams replied it is being tracked and the Fire Department has advised the retailers, corporate offices and distributors if there are repeated violations the department will move into a confiscation phase.

Councilwoman O'Brien clarified her understanding that retailers get one chance before stricter action is taken and asked after the first violation, if the second time results in confiscation, what additional penalties apply beyond taking the product.

Assistant Marshal Williams answered under the Fire Code, selling illegal fireworks results in either a civil citation or a Class 1 misdemeanor and penalties include confiscation and fines ranging from 500 dollars to 2,500 dollars. Mr. Williams added if prosecuted criminally, penalties can include up to six months in jail. He explained citations are issued to the responsible party, which can be challenging for large corporations but straightforward for individuals or small stores.

Councilwoman O'Brien stated she anticipates a briefing on the recommended changes to the ordinances. She emphasized the need to review penalties for businesses while continuing to lead with education and outreach and noted illegal fireworks disrupt

neighborhoods, traumatize pets, and impact air quality despite progress shown by a 50 percent reduction in fireworks-related calls on the fourth of July and 44 percent at New Years. Councilwoman O'Brien expressed appreciation for the Fireworks Safety Task Force and its collaborative efforts with city departments and MAG. She added moving forward, enforcement should include penalties for those who refuse to follow the rules, alongside education and alternatives. Councilwoman O'Brien urged continued efforts to make holidays safer, improve air quality, and ensure peaceful neighborhoods.

Chairman Robinson thanked the presenters and Fireworks Safety Task Force.

4. City of Phoenix 2025 Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team Report- Citywide

Human Services Department (HSD) Director Jacqueline Edwards stated she will be reviewing the definition of domestic violence, national and city statistics, an overview of the Phoenix Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team (DVFRT), and updates on recommendations from the January 2025 report. She added that case information and recommendations from the 2025 DVFRT report would also be shared.

Ms. Edwards emphasized the importance of starting with a clear definition: domestic violence is a pattern of abuse used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. She noted that this includes physical, sexual, emotional, economic, psychological, and technological abuse or threats. She highlighted that over ten million adults experience domestic violence annually, with 41 percent of women and 26 percent of men affected in their lifetime. She shared that in 2024, Phoenix Police Department recorded 33,048 domestic violence calls for service and 23,889 incident reports, with assaults being the most reported type. She added that 35 cases were classified as stalking, which is relevant to this year's case. Ms. Edwards noted that the most common abuser-victim relationship in Phoenix was among unmarried persons, and physical force was the most used weapon. She shared that the Phoenix Family Advocacy Center assisted 4,822 children, while the Human Services Department served nearly 4,000 adults and provided over 15,600 individualized services, including protection orders and shelter connections. Additionally, 785 medical referrals were made to Honor Health.

She explained that the DVFRT, created in 2006, examines domestic violence fatalities and near fatalities to improve system responses with a team of city staff and external representatives from criminal justice, advocacy, health care, and academia. She stated the team is chaired by HSD Assistant Director Tracee Hall and Police Commander Steve Martos. Ms. Edwards highlighted five recommendations from the 2024 case review and provided updates including: updated protocols requiring Police and Fire to coordinate on domestic violence calls, medical follow up with documentation from Honor Health, and added strangulation category to the Police Department's records system, a new case management system, new policies for client engagement and full strangulation training by June 2026.

Human Services Department Assistant Director Tracee Hall stated the case requirements for Phoenix DVFRT review include that the case must involve a fatality or near fatality occurring in Phoenix and be fully adjudicated by the court system. She shared that this year's case involved a heterosexual married couple with three children who lived together but had contemplated divorce. She explained the wife was seeing another man, and the husband used a geo-tracking system to stalk her location. Ms. Hall noted in May 2022, the husband messaged his wife accusing her of being with her boyfriend and threatened to post a suggestive photo on social media to shame her. She added the wife threatened to call the police and stayed away from home for several days in response. Ms. Hall stated when the wife returned, the husband had left with his belongings and a gun and later that month he picked up the children, took them to his mother's house, and then drove to the boyfriend's home. She explained after an unanswered call to his wife, the husband entered the home, fatally shot the boyfriend, and threatened the wife before leaving to then later contact family to see the children and turn himself in. Ms. Hall emphasized that while less common, assaults and fatalities targeting new romantic partners of domestic violence victims occur and represent another tragic outcome. She noted that due to the complexity of this case, the committee found it challenging to identify multiple systemic enhancement recommendations. She added that the recommendations in the 2025 report are broad approaches to education, prevention, and response.

Police Commander Steve Martos stated DVFRT developed three key recommendations from the 2025 case assessment. Commander Martos emphasized the need to research domestic violence education and prevention programs, noting the growing influence of technology and social media on relationships, particularly among youth. He explained that the team recommends creating a subcommittee to explore community-based initiatives focused on healthy relationships, boundaries, and technology use, as well as developing a resource library to share widely with community members and partners.

Commander Martos highlighted the importance of expanding domestic violence education and awareness campaigns and noted in this case, there were multiple missed opportunities for intervention and support. He shared the team suggests reviewing and enhancing existing city training materials, developing a domestic violence training module for all city employees, potentially on an annual basis, and exploring external partnerships to increase awareness and improve prevention efforts. Commander Martos provided the third recommendation which is researching options to amend sentencing statutes to include a domestic violence enhancement. He emphasized this would involve exploring legislative changes to add an additional two to five years to sentences for homicide convictions where domestic violence elements are proven.

Councilman Waring expressed concern about the recommendation to increase sentencing by two to five years for homicide convictions involving domestic violence. He emphasized it does not prevent fatalities and questioned why the focus isn't on earlier intervention. Councilman Waring noted tougher penalties for precursor crimes might

have greater impact and stressed the importance of preemptive measures to stop escalation before homicide occurs.

Ms. Edwards acknowledged Councilman Waring's concern and stated the team can include research on potential legislative changes earlier on in the process to have penalties that prevent homicides from occurring.

Councilman Waring questioned whether tougher penalties for serious prior offenses such as strangulation or threatening with a weapon, could prevent tragedies. He also highlighted the impact on children who witness abuse, noting that exposure to violence at home can lead to abusive behavior later in life.

Commander Martos agreed with Councilman Waring's and noted that aggravated domestic violence charges already include enhanced penalties similar to DUI laws after repeat offenses. He added that his bureau is discussing what types of crimes, based on case data or anecdotal evidence, tend to escalate into more violent acts.

Councilman Waring asked if the aggravated domestic violence charge imposes harsher penalties starting with the second offense and noted he may have misunderstood the earlier statement and wanted confirmation.

Commander Martos replied he was trying to imply it works similar to a DUI conviction.

Councilman Waring stated while DUI laws impose mandatory penalties even for first offenses, domestic violence should be treated with even greater severity. He questioned whether a zero-tolerance approach, with immediate consequences such as mandatory jail time for the first offense, would be more effective than waiting for repeat offenses. Councilman Waring emphasized domestic violence is different than DUI and suggested stronger initial penalties to send a clear message and prevent escalation. He asked if an individual has to serve 24 hours after being convicted with a DUI.

Commander Martos replied that is correct.

Councilman Waring asked if the team can revisit first-time convictions to prevent escalation.

Commander Martos replied the team can look into that.

Commander Martos stated that the third recommendation is to research options for amending statutes to include a domestic violence sentencing enhancement, as previously discussed. He then presented the fourth and final 2025 recommendation: to share the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team's annual report with local government agencies, including the City of Phoenix and external partners, to promote collaboration and awareness.

Ms. Hall stated in addition to the DVFRT recommendations, the Human Services Department proposes three actions: provide the next review team with an overview of the City's domestic violence services and programs, present the DVFRT report to key city commissions and task forces, and explore creating a Family Advocacy Center resource guide. She added next steps include requesting the City Manager to appoint members for the 2026 DVFRT, beginning the case review process, conducting interviews, and making recommendations. Ms. Hall noted that the 2025 recommendations presented today will also be included in the 2026 report.

Ms. Edwards thanked the members of DVFRT for their work and expertise.

Chairman Robinson asked the members to stand and acknowledged them.

Councilwoman Guardado thanked the team for the presentation and Councilman Waring for his leadership on the matter. She questioned if the information will be provided in Spanish as the team conducts outreach.

Ms. Edwards replied awareness campaigns are done in English and Spanish.

Councilwoman Guardado asked how closely the team is working with the school districts to reach high school students.

Ms. Edwards answered the team works with school districts to provide information at resource fairs in both the Paint Phoenix Purple and Teen Dating Violence campaigns which occur in February.

Councilwoman Guardado thanked the team for their hard work and shared she is looking forward to hearing more about the Family Advocacy Center.

Councilman Waring noted this marks approximately 20 years of DVFRT reports, following legislation passed in 2005 and implemented in 2006. He stated the goal was to reduce fatalities by learning from experience and asked whether data exists to show progress toward that goal. He compared this to DUI tracking, where annual data is monitored, and requested similar information for domestic violence fatalities. Councilman Waring then asked whether the annual DVFRT reports have been used effectively over the past 20 years to reduce domestic violence incidents and fatalities.

Ms. Edwards answered last year's recommendations on strangulation were not being tracked and there were points in the process that were not previously tracked but are now tracked. She noted protocols have been updated so strangulation incidents are now documented at multiple points; from police, fire, and CRT response through victim services. Ms. Edwards explained this ensures victims and families receive tailored support, including medical care from partners like Honor Health and assistance from Human Services staff. Ms. Edwards emphasized that this demonstrates how the review process can lead to meaningful system changes.

Commander Martos reported in 2024, there were 19 domestic violence-related homicides. He stated official numbers for 2025 are still pending, but preliminary data suggests a decrease in reported domestic violence cases compared to 2024. Commander Martos noted during the pandemic, domestic violence homicides were significantly higher and while it is difficult to measure direct impact, he expressed hope that the team's efforts have contributed to prevention and support for victims.

Councilman Waring asked Commander Martos to refresh his memory on how many total homicides in 2024.

Commander Martos replied in 2024 there was about 146.

Councilman Waring stressed the importance of early intervention before escalation, suggesting measurable goals such as cutting domestic violence fatalities in half over time. Councilman Waring acknowledged achieving zero fatalities may be unrealistic but stated that reducing the number significantly would be an achievable goal with sustained effort.

Chairman Robinson referred to slide six and asked if the individuals who were victimized by an ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend were high schoolers or teenagers.

Commander Martos stated he does not have that information readily available but he can go retrieve that information.

Chairman Robinson suggested maybe there needs to be a more concerted effort on the school's part to make better awareness of domestic violence.

Chairman Robinson referred to slide 17 which shares the case and asked if the Police Department had been to the address or spoke to the couple before the incident became fatal.

Ms. Hall replied to her recollection there had been no police interaction or priors, but the perpetrator had received counselling through the military and recovery for alcoholism. She added the couple had gone to therapy once, but the perpetrator felt the therapist was favoring the wife because she is a female. Ms. Hall acknowledged there were language barriers in finding alternative therapists.

Chairman Robinson referred to slide 16 and asked for clarification on what is considered near fatal and if it requires hospitalization.

Commander Martos explained charging decisions often influence case outcomes and noted while some offenders may intend for a situation to end in homicide, it is often easier to charge aggravated assault rather than attempted homicide because the legal threshold for aggravated assault is lower. He stated charging practices can impact how cases are classified and addressed.

Councilwoman O'Brien shared her appreciation of the team working with the schools to get the information out and encouraged the team to find creative ways to reach young people through partnerships with youth organizations, social media, and community events rather than relying solely on schools due to heavy workload. She shared her experience of dating an abuser in college and explained that she only recognized the abuse after seeing a flyer in a doctor's office. Councilwoman O'Brien stressed the need for broader outreach and education.

Chairman Robinson thanked the team for their hard work.

3. Police HEAT Unit Overview

Police Chief Matthew Giordano thanked the chairman and subcommittee members and stated the team will highlight the work of the Human Exploitation and Trafficking (HEAT) squad. He shared he was once part of an undercover vice team in the Organized Crime Bureau and comparing those investigations to what we're doing today, the progress and impact we've made across the city is truly impressive.

Commander Julie Egea highlighted the HEAT squad investigates and disrupts trafficking and related exploitation, protects victims, and enforces laws through proactive operations, community engagement, and interagency collaboration. She explained the unit is staffed with two sergeants, nine detectives, and three civilians: an analyst, a civilian investigator, and a liquor liaison. Commander Egea emphasized the squad's core functions which include: targeting human and sex traffickers, investigating child and adult sex trafficking, conducting undercover operations, enforcing prostitution and sexually oriented business laws, and reducing demand through commercial sex buyer enforcement. She added the unit also rescues victims and connects them to services.

Commander Egea highlighted 2025 results along the 27 Avenue corridor which includes 27 traffickers arrested, 52 juveniles recovered, 394 arrests from operations, 21 customer apprehension operations resulting in 123 arrests, and 9 hotel outreach operations contacting 79 individuals who were offered services. She announced the partnership with Grand Canyon University (GCU) to integrate GCU technology with the Cactus Park Real-Time Crime Center and conduct joint prostitution operations. She shared the partnership has increased enforcement near campus and the 27 Avenue/Indian School corridor.

Police Lieutenant Chris Parese stated a lot of the work done over the last couple of years involves numerous operations and significant data. He emphasized on major case the Royal Inn Hotel investigation, which was a collaborative effort between the FBI and the Heat Unit. Lieutenant Parese explained that his team handled much of the undercover work, ultimately leading to the shutdown of the hotel, which had essentially operated as a brothel. He noted that many neighborhood complaints originated from Palver Street, and since the operation, visible activity in that area has significantly decreased, though some activity may have shifted elsewhere.

Lieutenant Parese shared the unit it seized 1.2 million dollars and 4.5 million dollars in commercial and residential property through collective surveillance, undercover deals, and numerous arrests. He clarified the individuals involved no longer own these properties and announced that future plans include the demolition of the hotel.

Ms. Edwards shared the Human Services Department's Victim Services Division provides trauma-informed support to individuals who have been victims of human trafficking including assistance with crisis intervention, safety planning, victim's rights, navigation through law enforcement and court systems, emergency shelter and housing, orders of protection, and addressing basic needs disrupted by victimization. She recalled in 2025, HSD served nearly 300 clients who were victims of human trafficking, including prostituted individuals with a total of 1,485 unique services provided to the clients. Ms. Edwards added HSD's mobile victim advocate, focused on human trafficking, partnered with the Phoenix Police Department on 40 separate occasions, including street enforcement and hotel outreach, to connect victims of trafficking and prostitution to essential services. She shared staff also visited the county's intake, transfer, and release facility at the county jail 10 times throughout 2025 to engage victims arrested during street operations the previous night.

Ms. Edwards announced HSD leads the City's efforts to raise awareness about human trafficking among both the community and city staff which is led and chaired by Councilman Waring through the Human Trafficking Task Force. She also announced the City earned the Cities Empowered Against Sexual Exploitation (CEASE) designation in February 2025 from the Arizona Anti-Human Trafficking Network followed by training completed by over 90 percent of City staff.

Chairman Robinson asked Grand Canyon University (GCU) Police Chief Mark Heimall to share what he has been seeing in his area and how the partnership has been going.

Chief Heimall stated Lieutenant Parese and his team have been exceptional in their service, collaboration, and intelligence sharing. He acknowledged the team has also welcomed innovative ideas on potential solutions to address the issue.

Councilman Waring acknowledged Lieutenant Parese has done a fantastic job Councilman Waring stated that people convicted of these crimes deserve their punishments and expressed that he was very glad sentences tend to be heightened. He praised the dedication and care of the unit's members, noting that they clearly understand the importance of their work and approach it with a robustness he personally appreciates. He concluded by thanking them for their efforts.

Councilwoman Guardado thanked the team for their hard work and thanked Senator Flavio Bravo for his hard work at the State level. She asked Chief Giordano if staff is experiencing backlogs, delayed timelines, or difficulty meeting expectations for constraints.

Chief Giordano replied staffing issues and resource allocation remain ongoing challenges. He stated that timelines could always be adjusted with more manpower. He reflected on his own time working in the unit, noting it was completely different, and suggested that there are things that can be done differently now. He explained that they had a brief conversation last week and that the lieutenant has creative ideas, such as temporarily moving staff from patrol for short stints, both to learn the issues and techniques and to act as a force multiplier. Chief Giordano confirmed that the unit struggles with caseload and workload and responded to the question about staffing needs by stating that the team believes a fully staffed unit would include one sergeant and eight detectives for street investigations, plus one sergeant and eight detectives for background and intel work; about 16 personnel with two sergeants.

Councilwoman Guardado asked what are the consequences of the unit being stretched too thin due to case outcomes, response times, staff burnout, or retention.

Chief Giordano replied stated that the biggest hindrance for the unit is the inability to help as many victims as they could if they were fully staffed and had more personnel. He acknowledged that, despite this limitation, the team does a phenomenal job assisting members of the community but emphasized the desire to do more.

Councilwoman Guardado asked if there are tests and cases being delayed or deprioritized due to limited staffing.

Chief Matthew Giordano stated, as with anything involving finite resources, priorities must be set. He explained that the team focuses on the most severe cases and places those at the top of the list.

Councilwoman Guardado asked if staff compared HEAT unit staffing levels to peer cities.

Chief Giordano stated staff has not looked at peer staffing models around the country but shared this is something staff can do.

Councilwoman Guardado requested those staffing models be looked into and discussed at the next briefing.

Councilwoman Guardado asked what does a well-resourced unit typically look like for a city of Phoenix's size and demand.

Chief Giordano replied that would be a part of the same research done on the previous question.

Councilwoman Guardado asked Lieutenant Parese how long the Royal Inn investigation took from beginning to end.

Lieutenant Parese replied about two years.

Councilwoman Guardado asked if it would have taken less time if the department had more resources.

Lieutenant Parese answered it would not have taken less time due to the nature of the investigation.

Councilwoman Guardado stated she supports the mission of the HEAT Unit and acknowledged the significant workload the unit has taken on. Councilwoman Guardado expressed gratitude to GCU for partnering with the City and acknowledged the many efforts from the Human Services Department, as well as support from the State. She requested another HEAT update that includes staffing and budget recommendations to increase levels and implement relevant best practices. She noted that these improvements should provide clear timelines for achieving objectives.

Chairman Robinson thanked the unit for their hard work.

5. Community Assistance Program (CAP) Expansion Implementation Report

Community Assistance Program Administrator DC Ernst presented the first class of 2026, noting that the slide displayed the current group. She stated that another recruitment closed on February 2, with over 170 applications submitted, and expressed anticipation in reviewing those applications as the program works toward achieving 10 crisis response teams and nine behavioral health teams. Ms. Ernst reported that the program has reached its goal of nine behavioral health units in service, available 24/7 and dispatched through the 911 system. She emphasized ongoing collaboration with Alexandra Edwards from Police Communications to ensure proper call transfers.

Alexandra Edwards shared on December 15, 2025, 911 operators began asking a new triage question: “Do you need police, fire, or behavioral health?” She explained that the goal is to identify at the start of the call whether the caller needs police, fire, behavioral health services, or a combination of those. Ms. Edwards noted that this additional question provides more insight into what is occurring and helps operators triage calls to ensure the right services are dispatched from the beginning. She reported that since implementing the new question, there has been a significant increase in calls directed to behavioral health units. Comparing the first eight months of 2024 to the same period in 2025, there was a 98 percent increase in call volume. She highlighted that the 701 calls transferred in December 2025 represent the highest number recorded since the call transfer procedures were established. This milestone demonstrates the continued growth and utilization of the system and the increasing demand for coordinated behavioral health response. Ms. Edwards concluded by noting the effectiveness of the assessment process and the impact of adding the additional question, as well as the ongoing partnership between Phoenix PD 911, the behavioral health team, and fire services.

Ms. Ernst presented that not only has there been an increase in call volume transferred to behavioral health units, but actual calls for service have also risen, reaching a

milestone of over 1,000 calls in one month. She reported that when comparing total calls in 2024 to 2025, there was a 96 percent increase in calls for behavioral health units. Ms. Ernst explained that December's data shows whether responses were handled as a singular unit or in a co-response model, noting that 79 percent of calls were responded to as a singular unit. She added that crisis response units are still hiring, currently at 60 percent of the goal of 10 units. However, due to reallocation of shifts in January 2026, the program now provides 24/7 coverage for crisis response units citywide. She noted that call volumes for crisis response teams have remained consistent over the past three years, with December recording 481 calls for service. Despite the increase in behavioral health calls, average response times have remained under 25 minutes, with behavioral health units responding in 20 minutes in December. She highlighted a map illustrating current and future locations.

Councilwoman O'Brien stated that she wanted to thank everyone for their hard work and congratulated them on the successes they have achieved and will continue to achieve. She acknowledged the number of calls being handled is remarkable. Councilwoman O'Brien requested that staff keep an eye on call volume and ensure the council is alerted about the impact on staff and response times, emphasizing the importance of taking care of employees while serving citizens.

Chairman Robinson asked Ms. Edwards when operators ask if a caller needs police, fire, or behavioral health, what responses are typically received. Chairman Robinson inquired if she could share what callers are telling operators and how those responses guide the decision-making process for dispatching services.

Ms. Edwards explained that some members of the community understand what the term behavioral health means and can answer the question appropriately, indicating the call is tied to a behavioral health situation. She noted that others are unsure of the term, emphasizing that continuing education around behavioral health is important for everyone. Ms. Edwards clarified that if callers do not answer the question or are unsure, operators use a set of four additional questions during the call to determine whether it needs to be transferred to behavioral health or has a behavioral health component.

Chairman Robinson thanked the team for the presentation.

INFORMATION ONLY (ITEMS 6-7 varies)

6. Phoenix Fire Department Staffing and Response Time Report

Information only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

7. Phoenix Police Department Recruitment, Hiring, and Attrition Update

Information only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Elizabeth Venable stated that there is a need to see services fully integrated into law enforcement rather than siloed. She observed that there has been more of a one-size-fits-all approach but emphasized that better outcomes occur when different approaches are combined. Ms. Venable reiterated the importance of keeping shelters open and investing more into those services and public safety.

Dorian Vrenden stated that police should not escort or assist Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), as doing so decreases the promised and projected coverage of city assistance that officers are jurisdictionally obligated to provide. He explained that less coverage results in either broken promises to the community or overextension of officers and budgets not approved by that community. Mr. Vrenden highlighted the recent purchase of the Surprise Warehouse by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for 70 million in cash, noting that this demonstrates DHS has its own budget and does not need local officer assistance.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Councilwoman O'Brien stated that in May, when the school resource officer agreements come forward relative to the grant application, she would like the presentation to include how the city will handle rehiring retired officers to help fill SRO positions. She noted that there was recently a conference related to school safety where all districts were encouraged to request SROs. Councilwoman O'Brien emphasized the need to ensure the city is prepared to handle these requests as best as possible, as she anticipates they will significantly increase.

Ms. Bays replied, staff are planning to include this information.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Robinson adjourned the meeting at 12:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Taniya Williams
Management Fellow



Crime Lab Overview

This item provides the Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee with a report on the Phoenix Police Department's Laboratory Services Bureau.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION.

Summary

Established in 1960, the Phoenix Police Department's laboratory began with two chemists working in a converted kitchen of an Elks Lodge at 320 W. Washington Street. In 1969, the Laboratory Services Bureau (LSB) was officially established as part of the Technical Services Division under its first Laboratory Director, Mr. William J. Collier. By 1975, the LSB relocated to the basement of Police Headquarters at 620 W. Washington Street, where it remained for more than three decades. During this time, the Bureau expanded its capabilities beyond chemistry to include latent prints, firearms, and serology. A major milestone came in 2000 when the LSB became a DNA-certified laboratory, followed by national accreditation in 2001 through the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors - Laboratory Accreditation Board. In 2007, the Bureau moved into a new, state-of-the-art facility at 621 W. Washington Street, marking a new era of growth and modernization.

Today, the LSB is a full-service crime laboratory accredited under the ANSI National Accreditation Board's ISO/IEC 17025 Forensic Testing Laboratory program (AR 3125). Its mission is to provide the highest quality forensic science services to our community with integrity, innovation, and impartiality. The Bureau offers services in the following scientific disciplines and corresponding work units: Toxicology, Controlled Substances, Evidence Screening, Firearms, Trace/Fire Debris, Latent Print Comparative, Forensic DNA, Crime Scene Response, Case Management, and Administrative Support.

- Toxicology: Responsible for analyzing biological samples (blood and urine) from DUI and drug-facilitated sexual assault cases for alcohol and drugs.
- Controlled Substances: Examines seized drug samples for controlled and non-controlled substances.
- Evidence Screening: Analyzes crime scene evidence for latent prints suitable for latent print examination and biological materials suitable for DNA analysis.

- Latent Print Comparative: Compares latent prints developed from crime scene evidence to known prints of individuals.
- Forensic DNA: Develops DNA profiles from biological evidence for legal and investigative purposes.
- Firearms: Examines firearms and related evidence, including bullet and cartridge comparisons, shooting scene reconstruction, serial number restoration, and firearms function testing.
- Trace/Fire Debris: Analyzes trace evidence such as gunshot residue, fibers, footwear/tire impressions, fire debris, duct tape, and low explosives.
- Crime Scene Response: Processes complex crime scenes, documents evidence, and performs forensic testing on items that cannot be transported to the laboratory.
- Case Management: Serves as the liaison between investigators, attorneys, and the laboratory to facilitate the analysis of the best evidence using the best scientific processes available today and reducing the introduction of undue influence and bias.

Since its inception, the LSB has grown significantly in both personnel and capability. Today, it employs 170 authorized positions, including forensic scientists, crime scene specialists, laboratory technicians, and administrative staff. Over the past decade, the Bureau has issued on average 22,000 laboratory reports, corresponding to more than 67,000 items of crime scene evidence each year.

The LSB is recognized nationally for its leadership in forensic science. Its commitment to continuous improvement is evident through active participation in developing technical standards and best practices. Members represent the City of Phoenix on influential bodies such as ISO Technical Committee 272 on Forensic Science, NIST's Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC), the Scientific Working Group on Digital Evidence (SWGDE), the NIJ Forensic Laboratory Needs Working Group, and the FBI's Technical Working Group on 3D Toolmark Technologies. In 2021, the LSB was honored by NIST for adopting the largest number of OSAC registry standards of any U.S. laboratory at that time.

Innovation is another hallmark of the Bureau. Its evidence screening process was highlighted in the NIJ's Report to Congress as a promising practice for aligning crime scene evidence with the best science. The Bureau's case management strategies for firearms evidence were similarly recognized. In 2021, the LSB received the FORESIGHT Maximus Award from the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors for operational efficiency.

Recognizing the unique challenges faced by forensic professionals, the LSB has

implemented a robust Employee Wellness Program to address vicarious trauma, stress, and burnout. This includes wellness training for new employees, Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) resources, and regular wellness-focused events. In 2024, the Bureau welcomed Beaker, a therapy dog donated by the Fetch Foundation through the Phoenix Police Foundation. Beaker has become an invaluable source of comfort and morale for the team.

From its humble beginnings in a converted kitchen to its current status as a nationally recognized leader in forensic science, the Laboratory Services Bureau exemplifies the City of Phoenix's commitment to public safety, innovation, and excellence. Through its dedicated professionals, cutting-edge technology, and unwavering focus on integrity, the LSB continues to provide critical support to law enforcement and the justice system, ensuring that science serves the truth for our community.

Location

621 W. Washington Street
Council District: 7

Responsible Department

This item is submitted by Assistant City Manager Lori Bays and the Police Department.



Downtown Operations Unit Overview

This report provides the Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee an overview of the Phoenix Police Department's Downtown Operations Unit.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION.

Summary

The Downtown Operations Unit (DOU) was originally created to address the rapidly growing downtown core of the City of Phoenix. The addition of multiple sports and entertainment venues, restaurants, businesses and permanent residences necessitated a more centralized focus on crime suppression, community policing, and special event management.

DOU is assigned to cover the "Downtown Core," which is defined as being bound by 7th Avenue to the west, 7th Street to the east, the railroad tracks north of Lincoln Street to the south and Moreland Street to the north. This footprint encompasses City of Phoenix buildings, local and county courthouses, sport and event arenas, hotels and residences, and many commercial businesses.

Unit Staffing

The Downtown Operations Unit is currently comprised of:

- Police Commander
- Three Lieutenants
- 12 Sergeants
- 50 Officers
- 20 Police Assistants
- 8 Municipal Security Guards

Downtown Shift 3 Squad

On June 1, 2025, the Downtown Operations Unit began a Crime Suppression Pilot Program during Shift 3 hours to focus specifically on the late evening activity generated by the numerous restaurants and active downtown nightlife. This pilot squad was responsible for calls for service and business and community engagement in the

downtown area during the Shift 3 overnight hours to alleviate the need for response from the Central City Precinct officers when DOU personnel were not on-duty. This Pilot Program was an immediate success and the new X91 Shift 3 Squad went live on August 20, 2025. This squad operates Wednesday through Saturday, from 6 p.m. to 4 a.m. with one sergeant and four officers. Since implementing this new third shift squad, it has made an immediate impact in addressing calls for services while enhancing business and community engagement. The X91 Squad has produced the following results from August 1, 2025 - February 15, 2026:

- 88 Arrests
- 240 Incident Reports taken
- 54 Citations issued
- 6 Traffic accidents investigated
- 5 Firearms recovered

In 2026, the Department's goal is to designate an additional squad to these efforts, which would give DOU 24/7 coverage downtown. DOU will continue to evaluate and make any necessary adjustments as needed.

Collaboration with Central City Precinct

In August 2025, the Central City Precinct officially assumed responsibility for the Downtown Shelter area. Prior to August, this was a function assigned to the Downtown Operations Unit, but was outside DOU's Downtown Core area of responsibility. In the months leading up to this transition, DOU staff worked closely with Central City Precinct's Walking Beat Squad, Neighborhood Enforcement Team (NET), Community Action Officers (CAO) and 3rd Shift patrol squads to provide training on responsibilities and expectations, including interacting with people experiencing homelessness. Previously under DOU, the Shelter area was staffed with only one-two officers due to manpower shortages and only during 1st and 2nd shifts with precinct personnel covering the area during Shift 3 hours. This transition provided a more effective and efficient use of personnel and resources from the precinct to address this area, while bringing the areas of responsibility for DOU and the Precinct into proper alignment. Central City has more resources available to work the shelter area by utilizing their Walking Beat squad, NET squad, CAO squad, 3rd shift patrol squads.

First Friday Events

Another component to this realignment included the Downtown Operations Unit taking over the planning and event management for the monthly First Friday events along Roosevelt Row. This event is located within the DOU footprint. The transitional handoff from Central City Precinct to the Downtown Operations took place in June 2025. Since then, the First Friday event has continued to see steady growth in attendance, and

with that, the need for increased security to safely manage this event. DOU has continued to partner with the Community and businesses along Roosevelt Row and has made a series of adjustment each month. These adjustments included adding additional officers, but also re-designing the staffing personnel deployment model in a more efficient manner. Adjustments to the traffic and barricade plan have assisted in providing safer pedestrian passage during the event as well as expediting egress at the conclusion of the event. Working with event staff, the conclusion of the event was moved from 10 p.m. to 9 p.m. to aid vendors and Police in clearing the venue more quickly and with less impact to the surrounding community. What started as a small community event drawing 15,000 attendees requiring approximately 30 officers has grown significantly with the February 6, 2026, event drawing the largest attendance to date of more than 35,000 people requiring approximately 160 police personnel to manage. DOU and the Police Department will continue monitor these events closely and make necessary adjustment as needed.

Public Safety Response Team (PSRT)

The DOU commander and Event Lieutenant were assigned to working groups that focused on updating policy and training related to PSRT and First Amendment demonstrations. They served as subject matter experts and helped guide policy to align with current national best practices and the current capabilities of Phoenix Police. The PSRT deployment model was modified to increase the mobility and flexibility of PSRT operations. This included:

- Creating smaller squads that are more agile and self-sufficient.
- Implementing a more layered and methodical approach to deploying PSRT resources.
- Modified law enforcement focus from enforcement to more of a First Amendment support function utilizing enforcement or the appearance of enforcement as a last resort.
- Implemented an introductory PSRT class to the Post Academy curriculum.
- Developed and presented PSRT training for supervisors during the annual supervisor's retreat.
- Developed web-based video training addressing PSRT operations and expectations, First Amendment rights, First Amendment best practices for patrol officers and supervisors.
- Currently working with the academy on PSRT and First Amendment training for the 2026 annual module.
- Updated the annual PSRT recertification course whereas the classroom portion provides policy updates, deployment model updates, national trends and best practices, and current applicable case law. The scenarios are more realistic and properly align with current policy and standard operating procedures for PSRT

operations.

E-Bike Project

In an effort to enhance DOU's relationship with the downtown community, increase our visibility and patrols, DOU sought out E-bikes. Scottsdale Police and Tempe Police have had Police E-bikes for several years now and were instrumental in helping Phoenix create our E-bike program. Through donations from the Phoenix Police Foundation and other partners, including the Office of Councilwoman O'Brien, 10 E-bikes were purchased. Officers will use the bikes daily to patrol downtown and will focus on positive interactions with the community while also increasing visibility in areas such as parking garages and alleys with poor lighting. DOU is currently in the process of creating a block ownership map which will assign officers to clearly identified blocks downtown. They will be expected to develop relationships with the businesses in their area and address community concerns and crime trends that may arise.

Special Events

The Downtown Operations Unit continues to manage all security and traffic control for the Arizona Diamondbacks, Phoenix Suns and Phoenix Mercury home games. During calendar year 2025, DOU was responsible for managing 434 special events and is currently on track to support more than 260 special events in 2026. These events range from local community events, conferences, First Amendment demonstrations and marches and concerts, to recent high-profile sporting events such as the Super Bowl, MLB All-Stars, NBA All-Stars, Men's NCAA Final Four and coming soon, the Women's NCAA Final Four tournament.

Women's NCAA Final Four Preparation

The 2026 NCAA Women's Final Four will be in town from April 3 - 5, 2026. This event features two national semifinal games on Friday, followed by the championship game on Sunday. Other events scheduled in downtown include Tourney Town at the Phoenix Convention Center (with interactive games, giveaways, photo opportunities, basketball contests, food and licensed merchandise), Super Saturday Concert at Hance Park, and the Women's Final Four Bounce.

DOU has been participating as a member of the planning committee, along with other City of Phoenix departments, the NCAA, and the Phoenix Local Organizing Committee as essential partners. They are also working with the Homeland Defense Bureau to create staffing plans for all affected locations and positions requiring Police personnel, such as the Convention Center, Mortgage Matchup Center, team hotels and multiple traffic control positions. The goal is to develop a comprehensive staffing model that includes off-duty, on-duty, and Police Reserve Officers while remaining fiscally

responsible to minimize excess spending.

Location

7th Avenue to 7th Street, Lincoln Street to Moreland Street
Council Districts: 7 and 8

Responsible Department

This item is submitted by Assistant City Manager Lori Bays and the Police Department.



Phoenix Fire Department Staffing and Response Time Report

This item updates the Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee on the Fire Department's current staffing, hiring, community engagement, service demand, and patient transport activity.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION.

Summary

This report provides an update on the Fire Department's Key Performance Indicators related to:

- Sworn staffing levels
- Recruitment and hiring efforts
- Community engagement
- Emergency response times
- Calls for service
- Patient transport activity

Sworn Staffing

The Fire Department's HR team recruits, tests, and hires new firefighters throughout the year to maintain staffing levels and reduce vacancies. Considering the 14-week fire academy, strategic workforce planning is essential for managing attrition. The department is authorized for 2,059 sworn positions, which includes 134 positions funded through the Transaction Privilege Tax. Currently, 1,938 sworn positions are filled, including 63 recruits in the academy scheduled to graduate May 15, 2026. This milestone reflects the department's continued commitment to building its workforce and meeting its hiring target.

Recruitment Efforts

The Fire Department remains committed to maintaining optimal staffing levels and meeting the operational demands of our growing city by continuously recruiting, hiring, and training new firefighters. The Training Section plays a critical role in ensuring that each graduating firefighter is fully prepared to serve Phoenix's residents. In a significant modernization effort, the department has implemented online testing for

firefighter candidates, a first in its history. This transition has streamlined the application and testing process, improving efficiency for candidates while reducing administrative burdens associated with in-person testing logistics. Online testing also expands access to the eligibility list, thereby strengthening the department's ability to attract and evaluate a diverse, qualified candidate pool. The most recent online testing cycle yielded 1,034 applicants, of whom 803 completed the testing process, and 405 were selected for the interview process.

Community Engagement

The Fire Department actively engages with the community through a robust social media presence and participation in public events, ensuring widespread outreach and communication. Over the last month, social media interactions have been significant, with Instagram reaching 662,261 video views and Facebook and X, generating over 800,000 impressions. In January, the department strengthened its community connections by hosting and participating in key events, including PFD Recruit Information Sessions held at the Fire Training Academy, community events, and career fairs at local community colleges and high schools to encourage interest in fire service careers. Additionally, the department has leveraged billboard campaigns across the valley to promote firefighter recruitment and fire safety initiatives, including smoke alarms, heater safety, and drowning prevention efforts, reinforcing its commitment to public safety and education.

Emergency Response Times

The Fire Department measures emergency response times from dispatch to on-scene arrival, using the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards as benchmarks. Based on the 90th percentile response times, in January 2026, the first-arriving unit for Critical EMS citywide averaged 7 minutes and 15 seconds, exceeding the NFPA standard of 5 minutes. Citywide ambulance response times for Critical EMS arrived in 9 minutes and 15 seconds, meeting the AZDHS benchmark of 10 minutes. Efforts to improve response efficiency remain a top priority to align with national standards and optimize emergency services.

Calls for Service

The Fire Department closely monitors emergency response activity levels to evaluate system performance and assess capacity for additional service delivery. Historical trends show a steady year-over-year increase in call volume, with a 4.5 percent rise from 2023 to 2024 and a 1.9 percent increase from 2024 to 2025. In January 2026, the department responded to 19,429 incidents across the city, down from 25,135 in January 2025, representing a 22.7 percent decrease.

Patient Transport Activity

The Fire Department has provided emergency transportation services for nearly forty years, with demand steadily rising. A three-year analysis of monthly average activity shows a consistent upward trend. In January 2026, the total number of patient transports reached 8,769, a decrease of 103 from January 2025. Although this is slightly lower than the previous year, January transports are still 4.5 percent higher than in 2024, underscoring the continued need for additional emergency medical services and the importance of maintaining operational efficiency and effective resource management.

Responsible Department

This item is submitted by Assistant City Manager Lori Bays and the Fire Department.

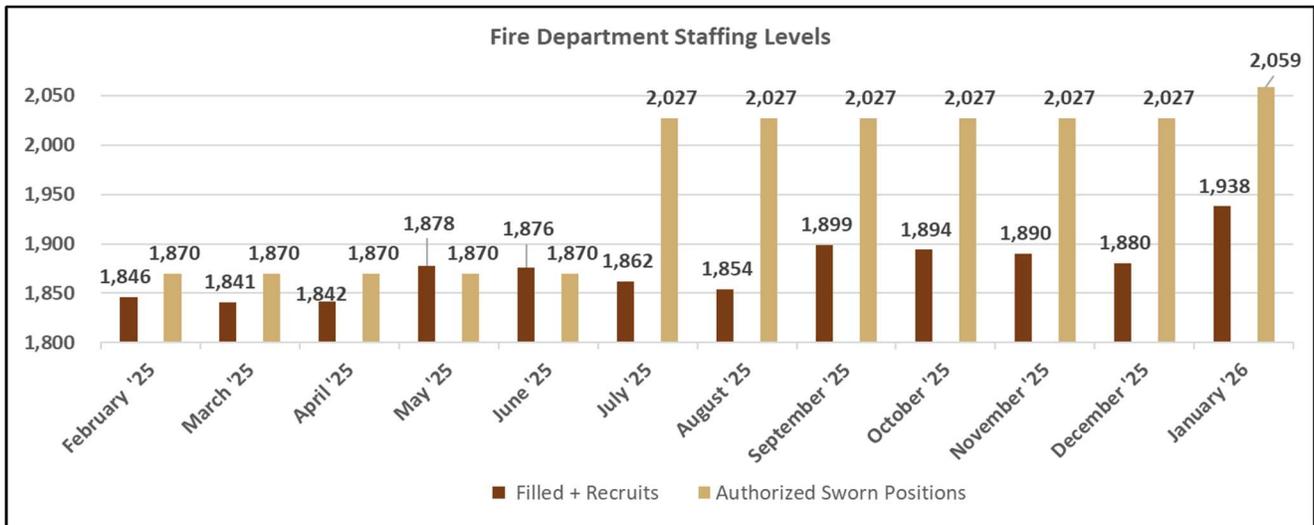


Fire Staffing and Response Time Report March 2026

Fire Department Staffing

Thanks to the continued prioritization and support of the Mayor and Council, as well as funding from Transaction Privilege Tax (TPT) revenues, the number of authorized sworn positions has continued to increase. The current number of authorized sworn positions increased by 32 on January 1, from 2,027 to 2,059.

The increase in authorized sworn positions is driving the department to move forward aggressively with accelerated recruit training academies to ensure these new roles are filled quickly and effectively. These academies are structured to align with the opening of new fire stations, the deployment of additional apparatus, and the procurement of critical equipment. In addition, supplemental sworn positions are being advanced to strengthen emergency transportation services (i.e., ambulances) across the City of Phoenix, addressing rising service demands and ensuring timely response to the community's needs.



Note: Report Data Through January 31, 2026.



Firefighter Recruitment and Hiring

The Fire Department recruits, hires, and trains new firefighters year-round to meet staffing needs. The Training Section ensures that each graduating firefighter is fully prepared to serve the residents of Phoenix. Testing frequency is determined by the number of applicants and the number of available full-time positions to maintain a strong candidate pool. The department hosted the Recruit Entrance Written Exam, with approximately 803 candidates participating. The table below compares testing and recruits trained over the past five years.

Recruit Classes	Applicants	Applicants Tested	Selected for Interview	Recruits Trained
2026	1034	803	405	
2025	1267	765	516	136
2024	1105	600	407	154
2023	1271	730	467	135
2022	1445	921	634	68

Online Recruitment Process

The Phoenix Fire Department officially transitioned from an in-person written exam to a fully online testing format for firefighter recruitment. The second online testing cycle has been completed, with the application window running from January 5 to January 22, and the online testing period closed on January 26.

This process requires candidates to complete two separate exams: a public safety general exam (approximately 224 questions) and a department-specific exam (100 questions based on the official study packet). Although written testing is now conducted online, the first- and second-round interviews still take place in person.

This new process takes place twice a year and is designed to offer greater flexibility and accessibility for applicants. By enabling remote testing over a longer window, candidates can better prepare and complete their exams at their convenience. The biannual schedule provides more frequent opportunities to apply, helping to streamline recruitment efforts and maintain a steady flow of qualified candidates for the department.



Note: Report Data Through January 31, 2026.

Firefighter Recruit Training

The chart below outlines the progress and graduation dates for the 2026 recruit training academies. Enrollment in each session is maximized whenever possible, with space also reserved for students from regional partners. Final graduation numbers may vary as the process advances.

Recruit Class 25-3		47 Recruits	Graduated	01.09.2026
Recruit Class 26-1	Started January 2026	63 Recruits	Graduating	05.15.2026
Recruit Class 26-2	Starts June 2026	47 Recruits	Graduating	09.18.2026
Recruit Class 26-3	Starts September 2026	34 Recruits	Graduating	01.22.2027

Community Engagement

The Fire Department actively engages with the community through social media and public events, ensuring consistent communication and outreach. The chart below presents key metrics on recent social media interactions and engagement levels for December.

	Posts	Interactions	Reach
Instagram Main PFD	44	43,923	662,261
Instagram Recruiting	12	10,980	177,471
Facebook	47	13,225	736,062
X (Twitter)	88	836	75,249
Nextdoor	4	21	7,722

PFD Social Media Outreach - January 2026

Community engagement extends beyond digital outreach to include social and community events, which are vital in strengthening connections with residents. The Fire Department actively hosts and participates in various events throughout the year to recruit new members, foster relationships, promote safety, and enhance public awareness. For more information on upcoming events and outreach programs, visit the Fire Department website:

<https://www.phoenix.gov/administration/departments/fire/community-outreach.html>.



Note: Report Data Through January 31, 2026.

Response Times & Call Volumes

Response times are measured, monitored, and managed daily to maximize coverage and resource deployment. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) established response time standards for fire and emergency medical service delivery, and the Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS) established the response time standard for emergency transportation services.

The chart below displays response times by Council District for critical emergency medical service (EMS) incidents, including the first-arriving engine to a fire incident, the first-arriving ladder to a fire incident, ambulance response times for critical EMS, total incident call volume for each Council District, citywide totals, and the associated standard.

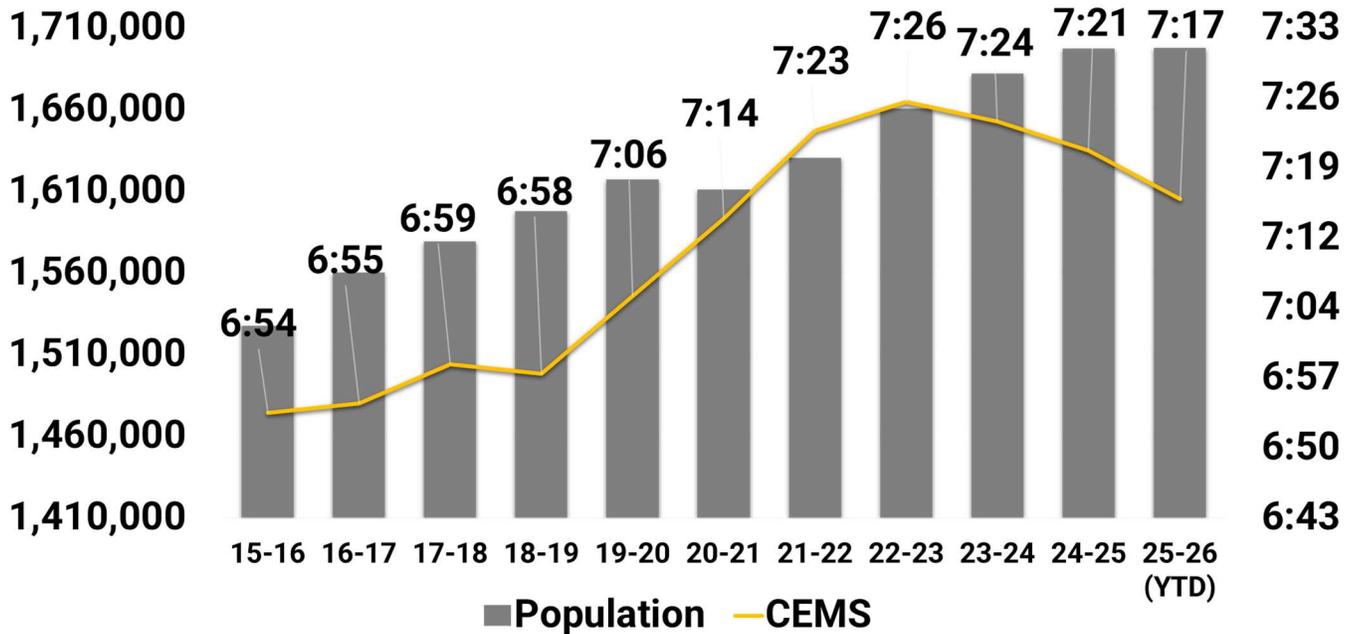
	First Arriving ALS Unit (can be any type) to Critical EMS Incident	First Arriving Engine (Water) to a Fire Incident	First Arriving Ladder to a Fire Incident	Ambulance Critical EMS	Total Incident Call Volume 2026
NFPA Standard	5:00	5:20	9:20	10:00	
District 1	7:37	4:28	7:09	9:26	2,044
District 2	8:04	6:17	11:33	10:10	1,516
District 3	7:23	5:35	10:02	8:48	2,320
District 4	6:33	5:31	8:57	8:08	3,112
District 5	6:49	5:22	9:17	8:22	2,116
District 6	7:00	6:09	7:00	9:22	2,025
District 7	7:34	5:59	8:51	9:34	2,826
District 8	6:56	4:53	8:47	9:07	3,470
Citywide	7:15	5:53	9:26	9:15	19,429

Based on 90th percentile response times, not averages from January 1, 2026, to January 31, 2026.



Note: Report Data Through January 31, 2026.

Ten-Year Response Time Trend with Population Growth



This chart shows the citywide 90th percentile (CEMS) critical emergency medical service response time in relation to the population from 2015 to the present.

Over the past decade, the city has seen steady population growth, reflecting the region’s rapid urban development. For much of this period, the Fire Department's emergency service capacity did not increase at a corresponding rate, resulting in rising response times. Response times have stabilized in recent years due to the positive impact of adding emergency service resources to the system. This overall trend demonstrates that the city’s strategic investments in emergency services personnel, equipment, and infrastructure, including the construction of new fire stations, expansion of ambulance services, and technology upgrades, are positively impacting response times amid the city’s growth.

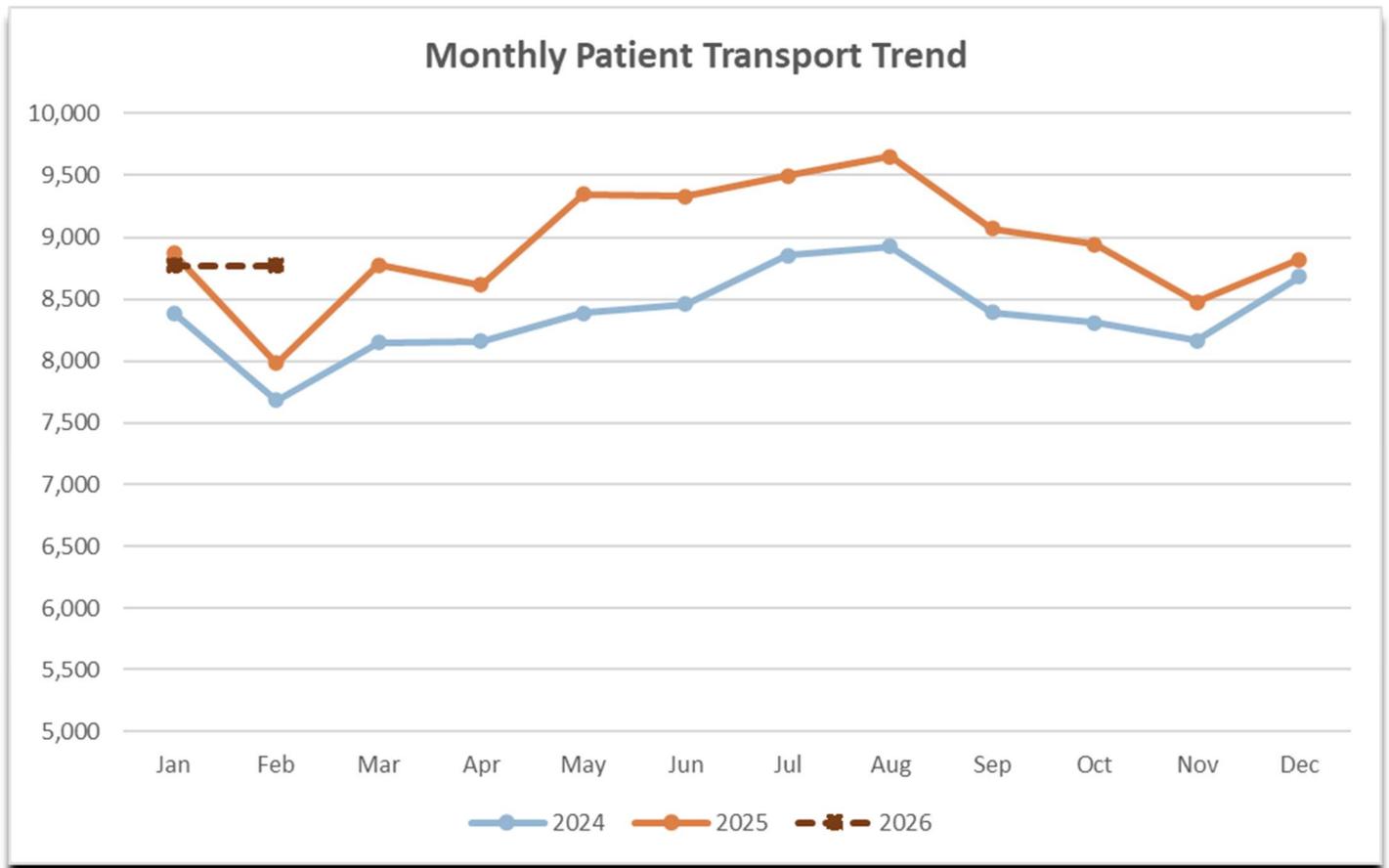
Note: Report Data Through January 31, 2026.



Emergency Patient Transportation Activity

The Fire Department has operated its emergency transportation service for nearly four decades. Analyzing the monthly average activity levels over the past three years reveals a consistent upward trend in service demand.

The total number of patient transports for January 2026 was 8,769, a 1.2 percent decrease from the 8,872 transports recorded in January 2025.



Note: Report Data Through January 31, 2026.





Community Assistance Program (CAP) Expansion Implementation Report

This item includes a report on the Phoenix Fire Department's Community Assistance Program (CAP) hiring and recruitment efforts. The report also details information on CAP's responses to calls for service.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

Summary

The report is included as **Attachment A** for updates on hiring and recruitment, as well as recent dispatch data trends.

Responsible Department

This item is submitted by Assistant City Manager Lori Bays and the Fire Department.



COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

EXPANSION AND IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

MARCH 2026

SUMMARY:

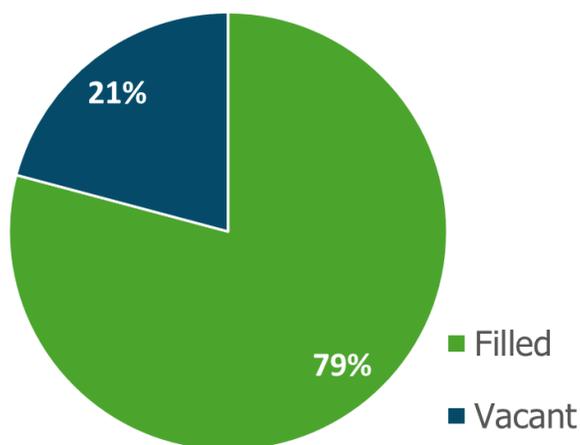
The Community Assistance Program (CAP) consists of Behavioral Health and Crisis Response Units. Calls for service are recorded through the electronic patient care record system, with each call representing an incident where a CAP team was dispatched.

In January 2026, CAP responded to a total of 1,326 calls for service. Of these, 631 calls were transferred from Phoenix Police Communications to CAP Behavioral Health Dispatchers. During January, fifteen CAP units were actively in service.

RECRUITMENT & STAFFING:

In January 2026, CAP operated nine Behavioral Health Units (BHUs) providing 24/7 citywide coverage, supported by round-the-clock Behavioral Health Dispatch services. Additionally, six Crisis Response Units (CRUs) offered citywide coverage 24/7 citywide coverage.

Recruitment efforts to increase staffing and enhance service capacity remain ongoing. The 26-01 onboarding class for Crisis Intervention Specialists began on January 5, 2026 and will begin in their new roles in February.

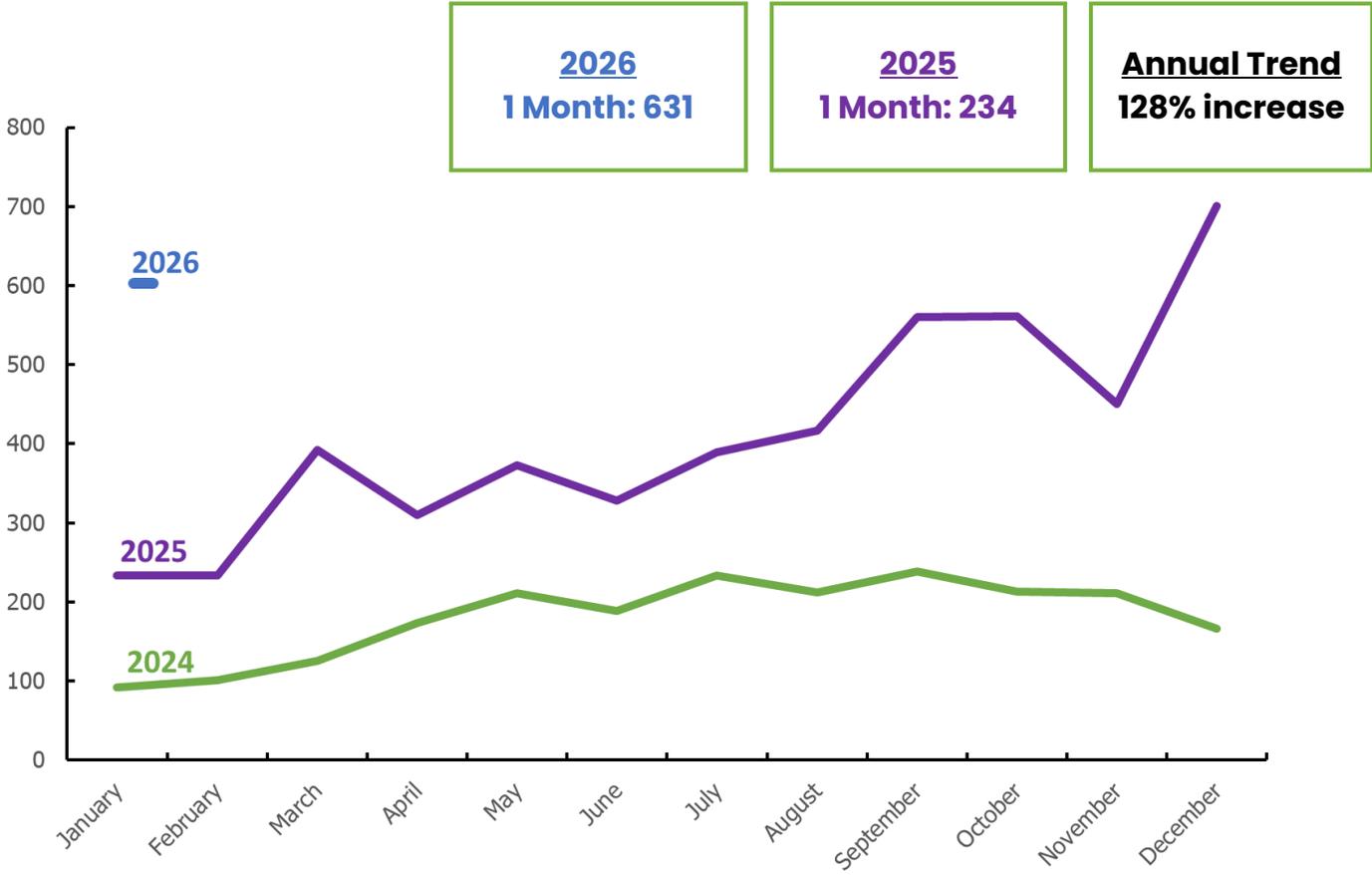


CALLS TRANSFERRED FROM POLICE COMMUNICATIONS:

In 2025, the number of calls transferred from Police Communications to CAP Behavioral Health Dispatchers increased by 128% compared to 2024. This growth reflects ongoing collaboration efforts, including the placement of one CAP supervisors in Police Communications for 40 hours weekly to help identify appropriate calls for transfer.

In January 2026, 68% of all Behavioral Health unit calls originated from transfers by Police Communications. The remaining 32% were initiated by fire and police personnel or generated directly by Behavioral Health units.

On December 15, 2025, 911 operators began a new triage question specifically asking "Do you need police, fire or behavioral health?" Police Communications will continue to triage calls to ensure the right services are sent at the right time.



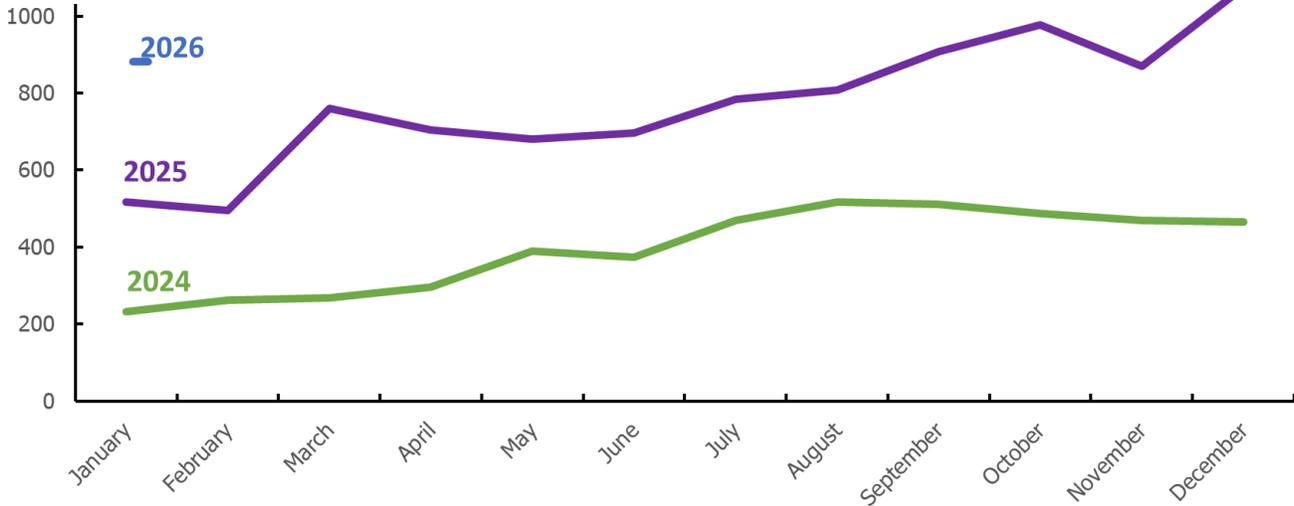
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CALLS FOR SERVICE:



2026
1 Month: 922

2025
1 Month: 517

Annual Trend
96% increase



The data on individuals assisted and services provided below is sourced from the electronic care records system. CAP services may be delivered to multiple individuals during a single call, or in some cases, services may be declined. As a result, the number of individuals assisted may not directly align with the total volume of calls for service.

The BHUs are specifically designed to respond independently to calls, serving as an alternative to traditional police or fire response. **In January 2026, BHUs responded to 922 calls for service**, making direct contact with individuals on 522 calls (56%). The remaining calls were either canceled prior to arrival or the units were unable to locate the individual upon arriving on scene. **Of 714 calls that were dispatched as a single unit BH response, 689 (96%) remained as a single unit response with only 4% requiring Police, Fire or a combination to assist on the scene.**



Primary Call Types (Total: 522)

- Check Wellbeing: 339 (65%)
- Mental Health: 108 (21%)
- Social Service Related: 41 (8%)



Single Unit BH Response

- 714 responses; **77%**



Transports: 128



Responding with Police

- 119 responses; **13%**



Average Response Time: 21 minutes



Responding with Fire

- 69 responses; **8%**



Adults Served: 586
Children Served: 68

*number of individuals assisted may differ from the calls for service volume



Responding with Police & Fire

- 20 responses; **2%**

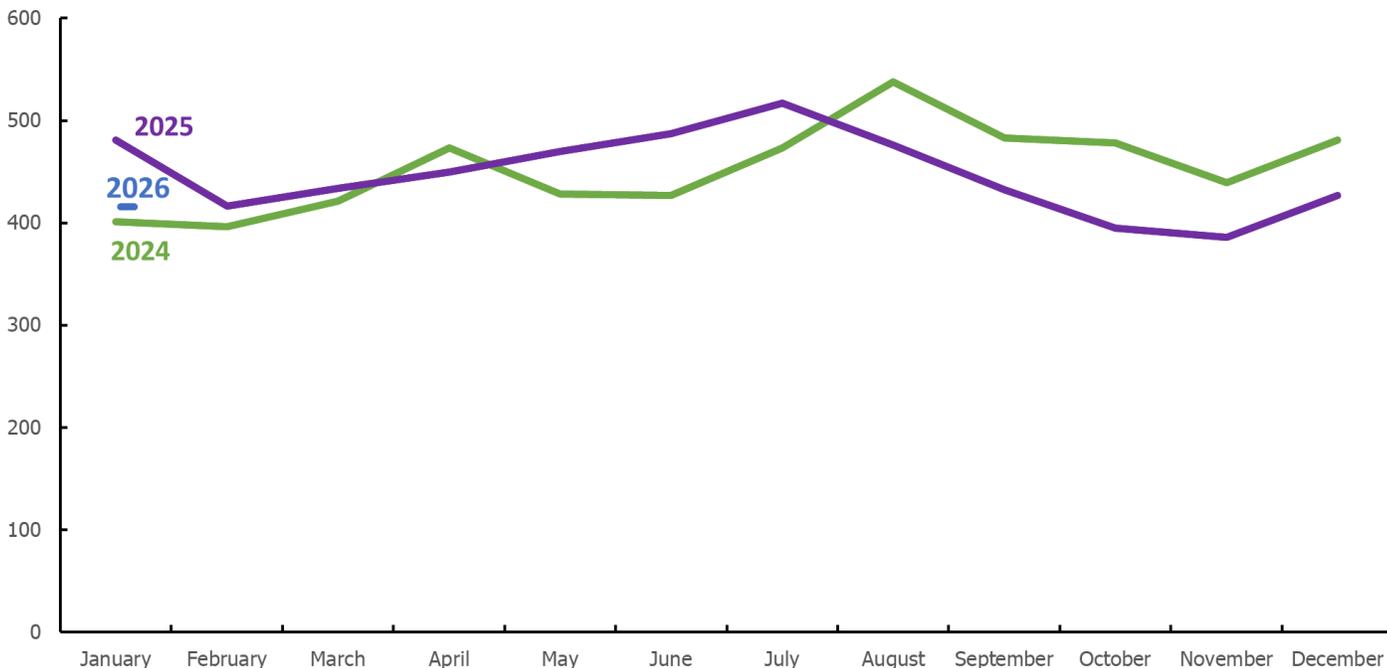
CRISIS RESPONSE CALLS FOR SERVICE:



2026
(1 Month): 404

2025
(1 Month): 481

Annual Trend:
Consistent



The data on individuals assisted and services provided below is sourced from the electronic care records system. CAP services may be delivered to multiple individuals during a single call, or in some cases, services may be declined. As a result, the number of individuals assisted may not directly align with the total volume of calls for service.

The Crisis Response Units (CRUs) operate as co-response teams, working alongside Police and/or Fire personnel. **In January 2026, CRUs responded to 404 calls for service**, successfully making contact with individuals on 249 calls (62%). The remaining calls were either canceled prior to arrival or upon arrival on scene.



Primary Call Types (Total: 249)

- Death: 121 (49%)
- Occupant Services: 38 (15%)
- Crime: 32 (13%)



Transports: 40



Average Response Time: 21 minutes



Adults Served: 557
Children Served: 182

*number of individuals assisted may differ from the calls for service volume



Single Unit CR Response

- 41 responses; **10%**



Responding with Police

- 79 responses; **20%**



Responding with Fire

- 89 responses; **22%**



Responding with Police & Fire

- 195 responses; **48%**



CITY OF PHOENIX FIRE DEPARTMENT CAP UNIT LOCATIONS

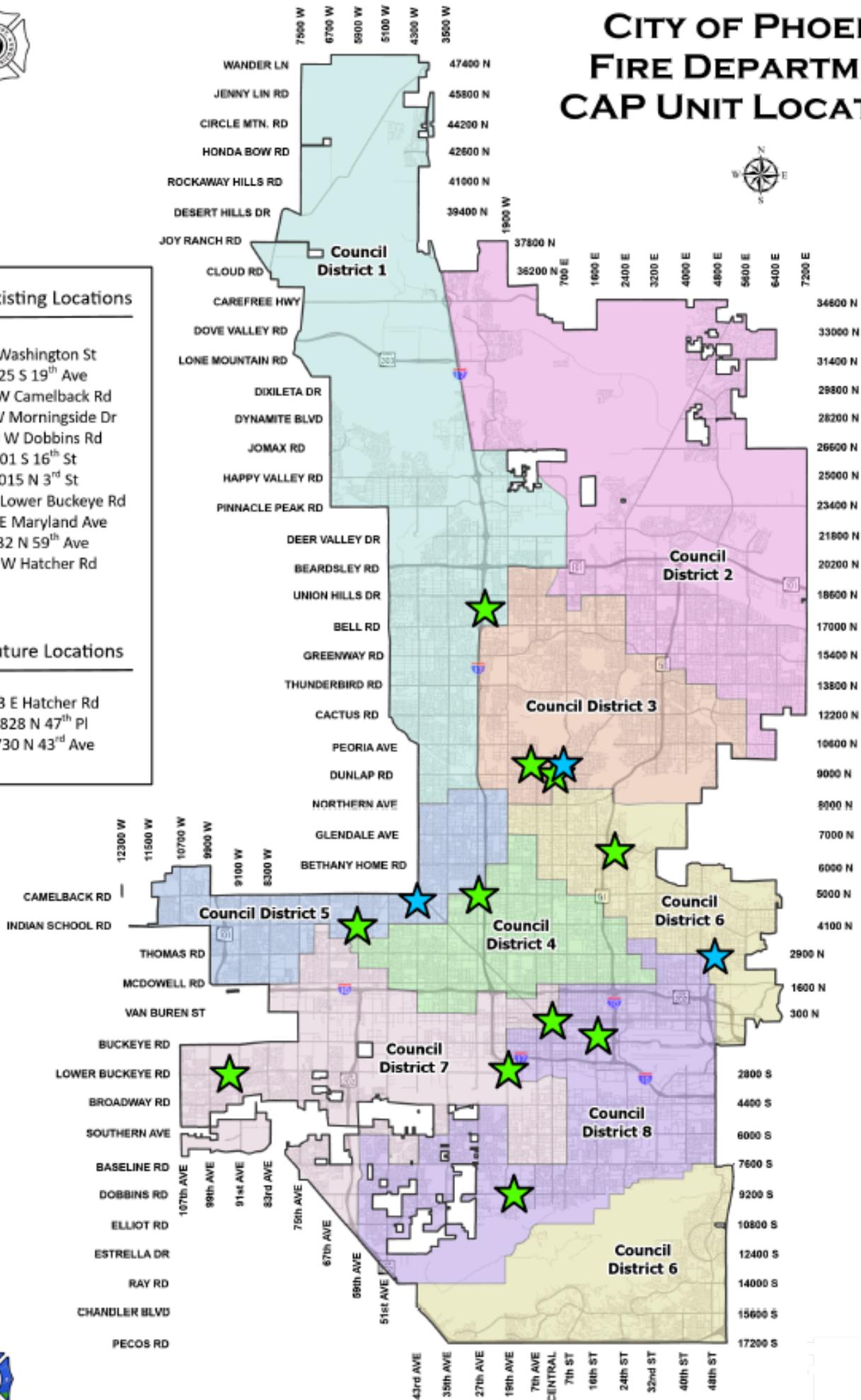


★ Existing Locations

- 1 E Washington St
- 2625 S 19th Ave
- 2657 W Camelback Rd
- 2501 W Morningside Dr
- 1660 W Dobbins Rd
- 801 S 16th St
- 9015 N 3rd St
- 9300 W Lower Buckeye Rd
- 2057 E Maryland Ave
- 4032 N 59th Ave
- 914 W Hatcher Rd

★ Future Locations

- 403 E Hatcher Rd
- 2828 N 47th Pl
- 4730 N 43rd Ave





Phoenix Police Department Recruitment, Hiring and Attrition Update

This item includes a report on Phoenix Police Department's hiring and recruitment efforts as well as an overview of the department's recent attrition figures. The report also details information on initiatives of the Police Department related to staffing.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

The Police Department's Recruitment, Hiring and Attrition Report is included for review as **Attachment A**. Below is a glossary of terms used in the report for reference:

- **Sworn Hiring Target** - The authorized number of sworn officers the department aims to employ. For Phoenix PD, the target is 3,125 sworn positions, representing full operational capacity.
- **Recruit** - An individual hired by the department and attending the Police Academy for initial training before becoming a sworn officer. Recruits in the academy are tracked as part of the hiring pipeline.
- **Sworn Positions** - Roles held by certified officers at all ranks who have taken an oath. Includes patrol officers, officers in training (Field Training), detectives, supervisors, and executives.
- **DROP (Deferred Retirement Option Plan)** - A benefit for employees hired before Jan 1, 2012, allowing eligible officers to work while earning salary and accumulating pension benefits. DROP lasts five years, with an optional two-year extension. Attrition from this category includes those completing the basic five year drop or completing the extended DROP.
- **Early DROP** - Officers who leave before completing the DROP period or during any part of its extension. This is an attrition category tracked in the report.
- **Retired** - Officers who have completed their service and separated from the Department and City. Officers who in this category retire at the following various points of service. This is a primary attrition category tracked in the report.
- **SWET (Strength and Wellness Education Training)** - A free fitness and wellness program offered by the Academy and Recruiting Team to prepare applicants for the Physical Agility Test. Year-to-date: 1,880 participants, 36 graduates, 46 currently in the academy.

Responsible Department

This item is submitted by Assistant City Manager Lori Bays and the Police Department.



RECRUITMENT, HIRING, AND ATTRITION REPORT

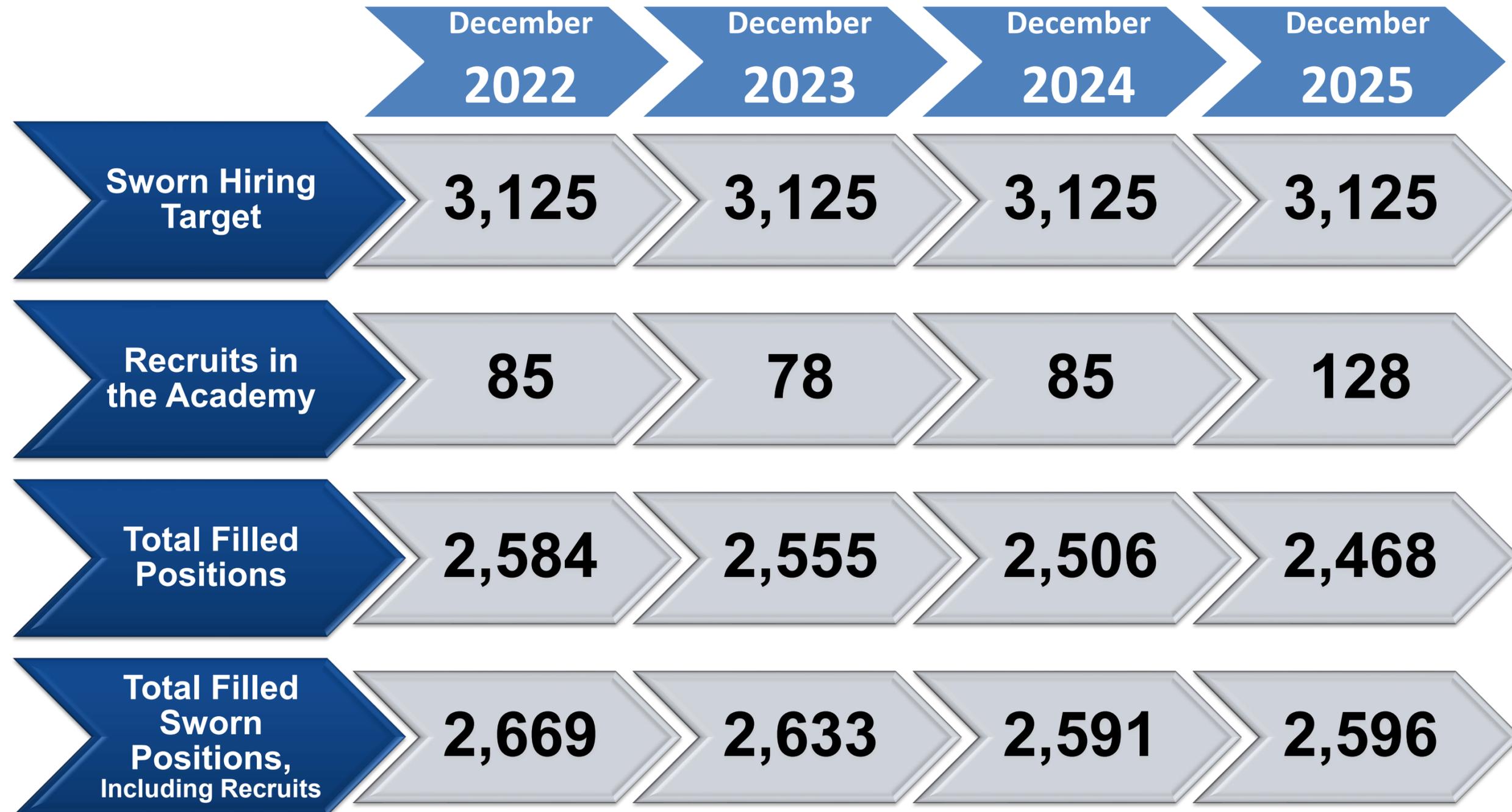
March 2026

Phoenix Police Department

Recruitment, Hiring, and Attrition Report

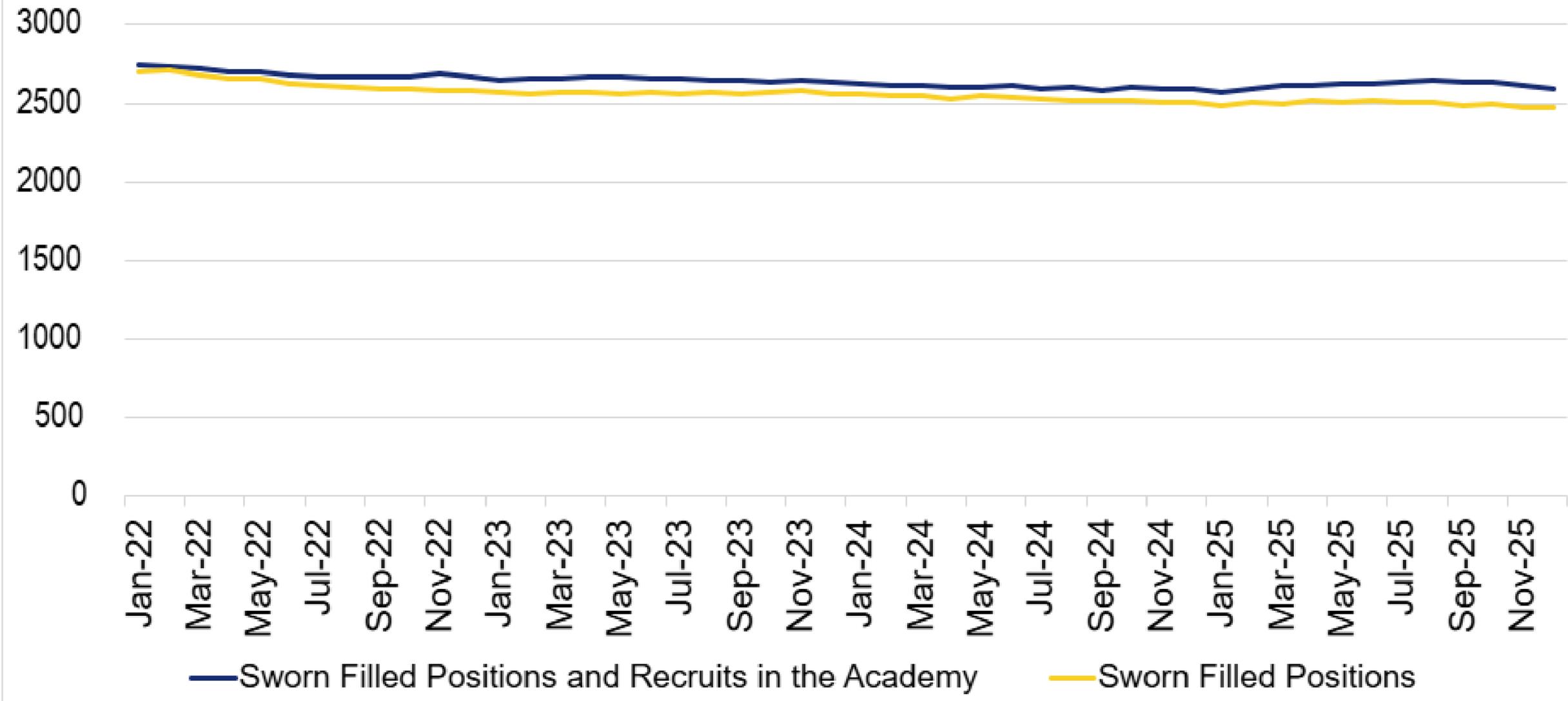


Total Filled Sworn Positions 2024 vs. 2025





Number of Filled Positions 2022-2025

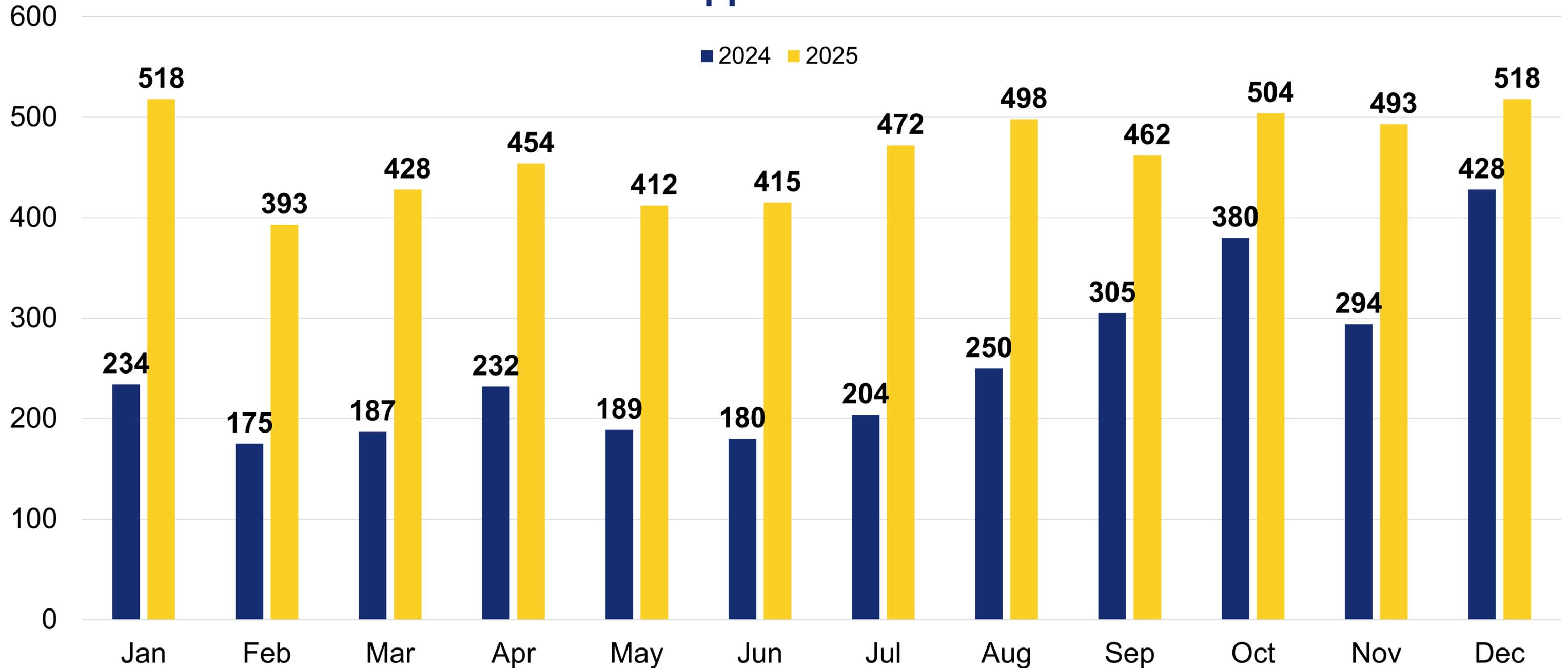


Phoenix Police Department

Recruitment, Hiring, and Attrition Report



Total Recruit Applicants 2024 and 2025

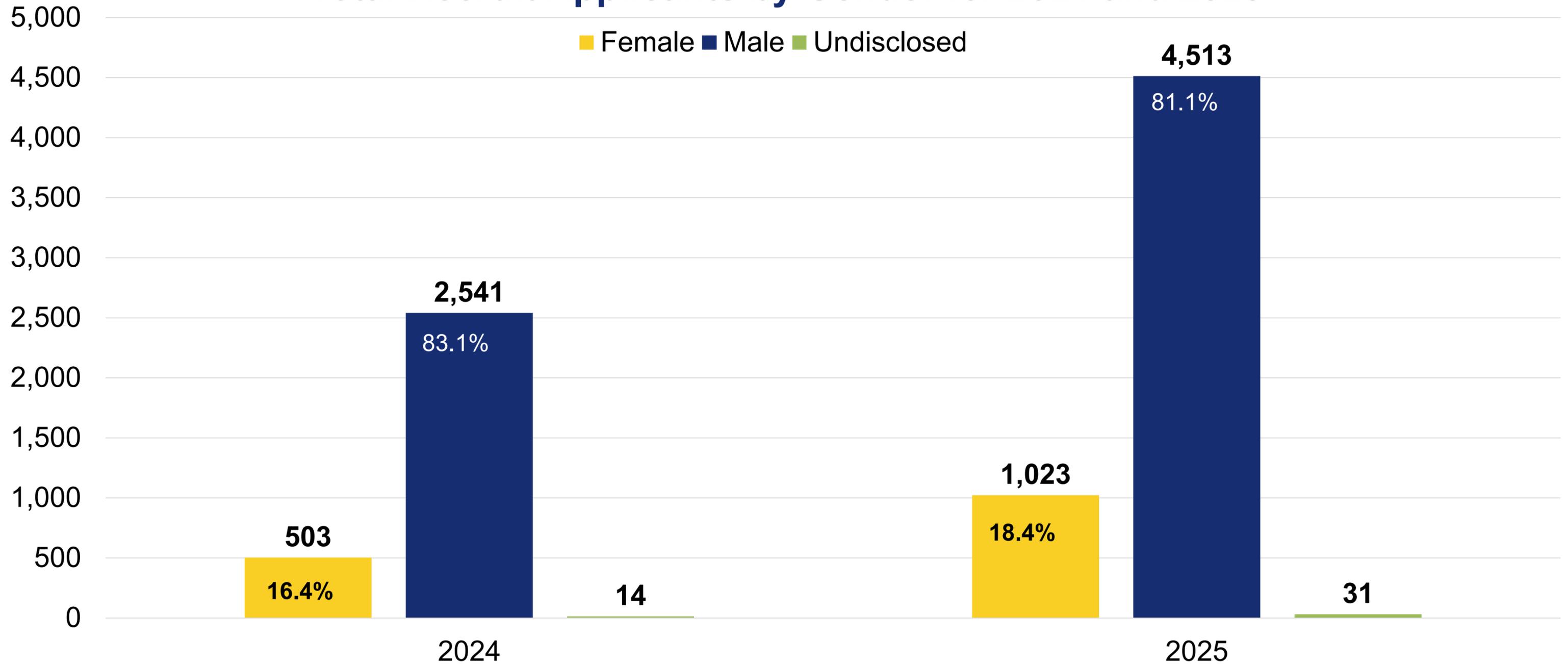


Phoenix Police Department

Recruitment, Hiring, and Attrition Report



Total Recruit Applicants by Gender for 2024 and 2025

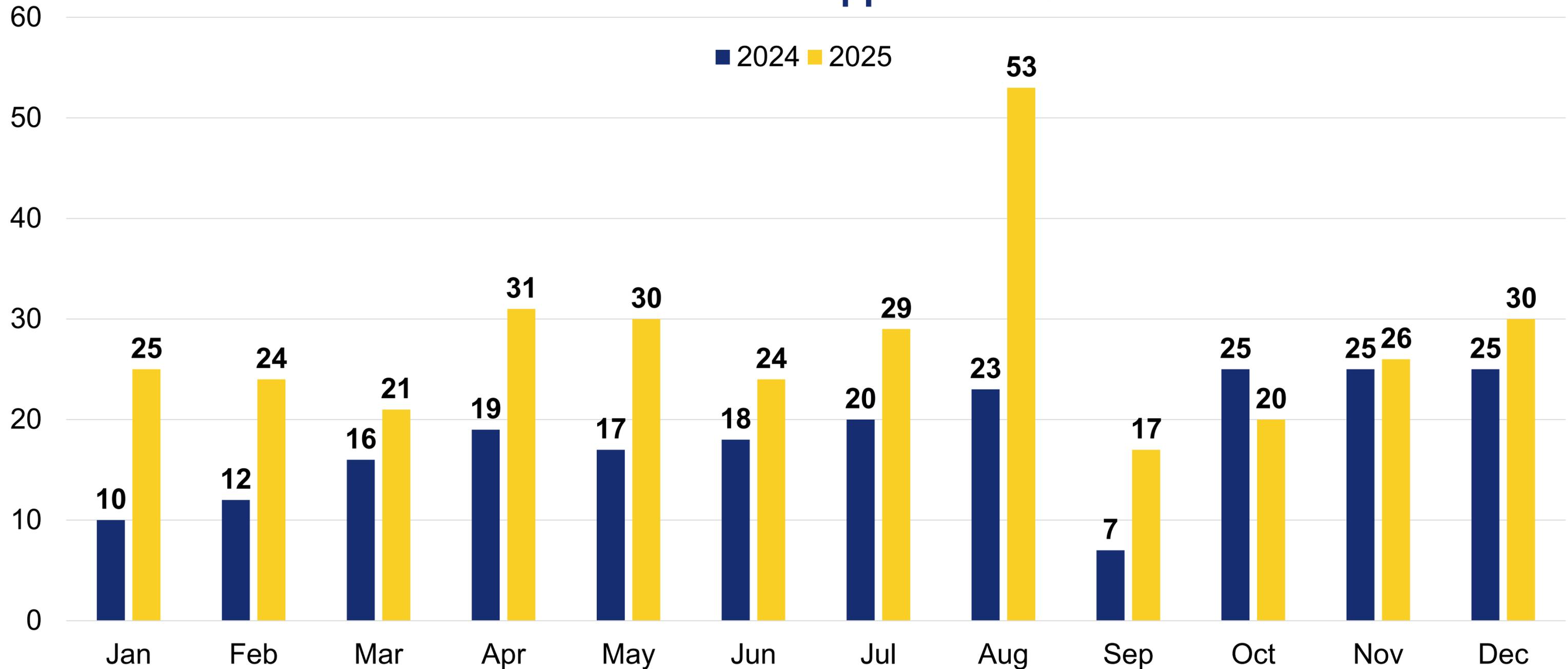


Phoenix Police Department

Recruitment, Hiring, and Attrition Report

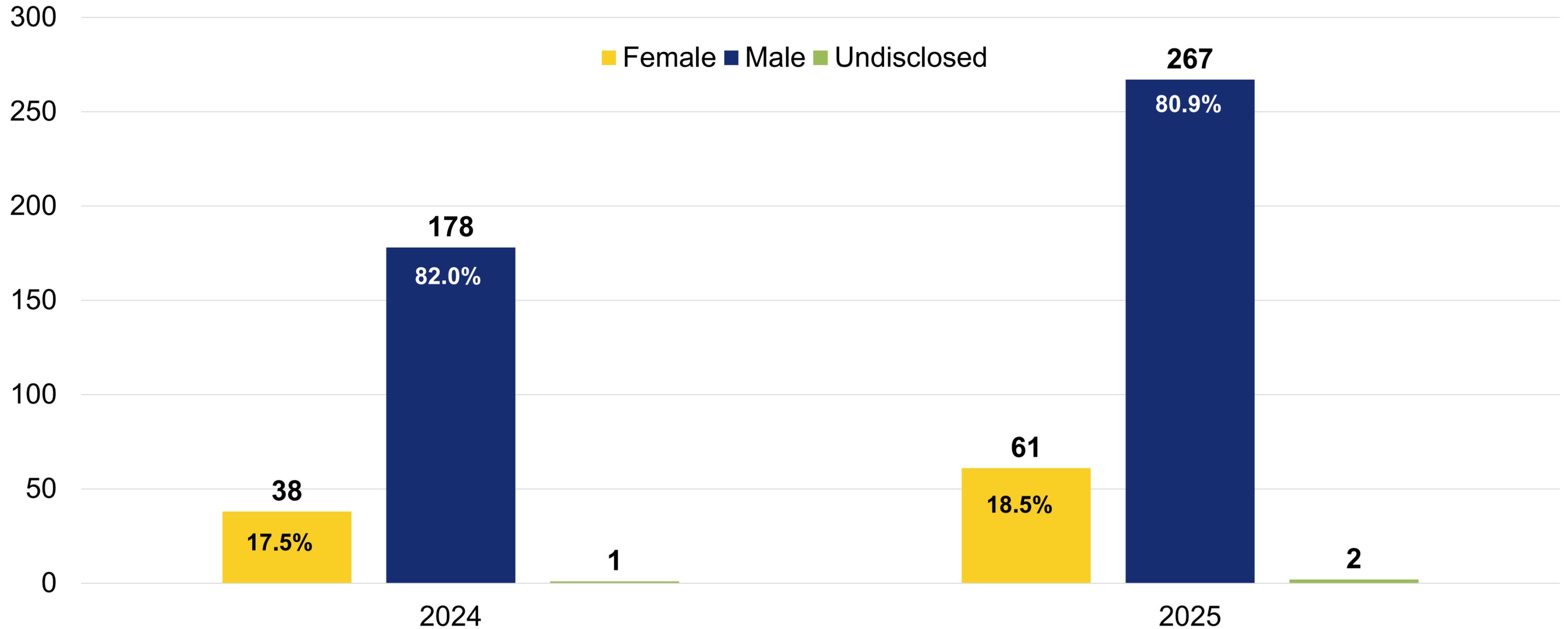


Total Lateral/Reinstatement Applicants 2024 and 2025



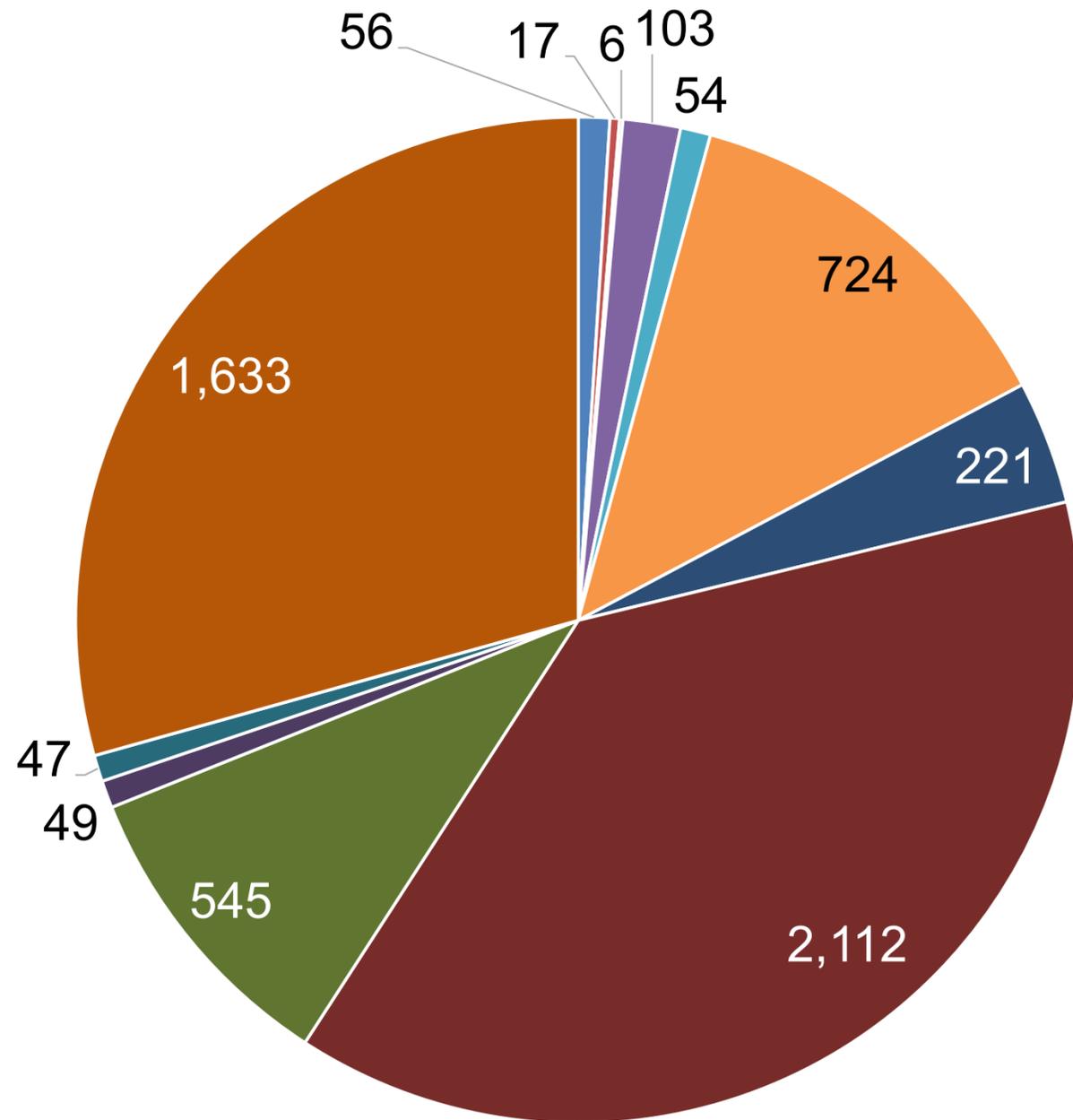


Total Lateral/Reinstatement Applicants by Gender for 2024 and 2025





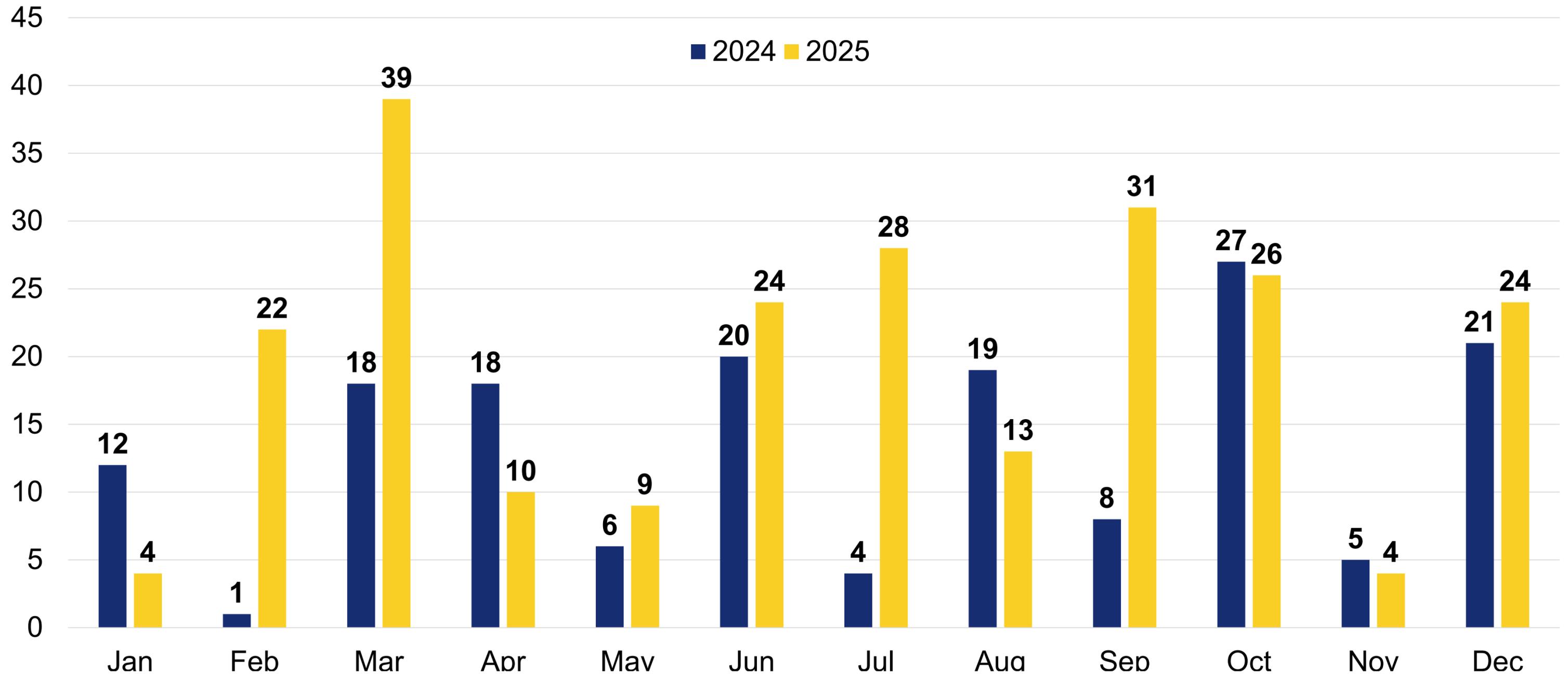
Police Recruit Applicants by Ethnic Group for all of 2025



	Ethnic Group	2025 Apps	Hired
	American Indian	56	2
	American Indian/Black	17	0
	American Indian/White	6	0
	Asian	103	5
	Asian/White	54	3
	Black	724	23
	Black/White	221	5
	Hispanic	2,112	85
	No Answer	545	0
	Other Blend	49	1
	Pacific Islander	47	0
	White	1,633	110



Total Police Recruit Hires all of 2024 and 2025

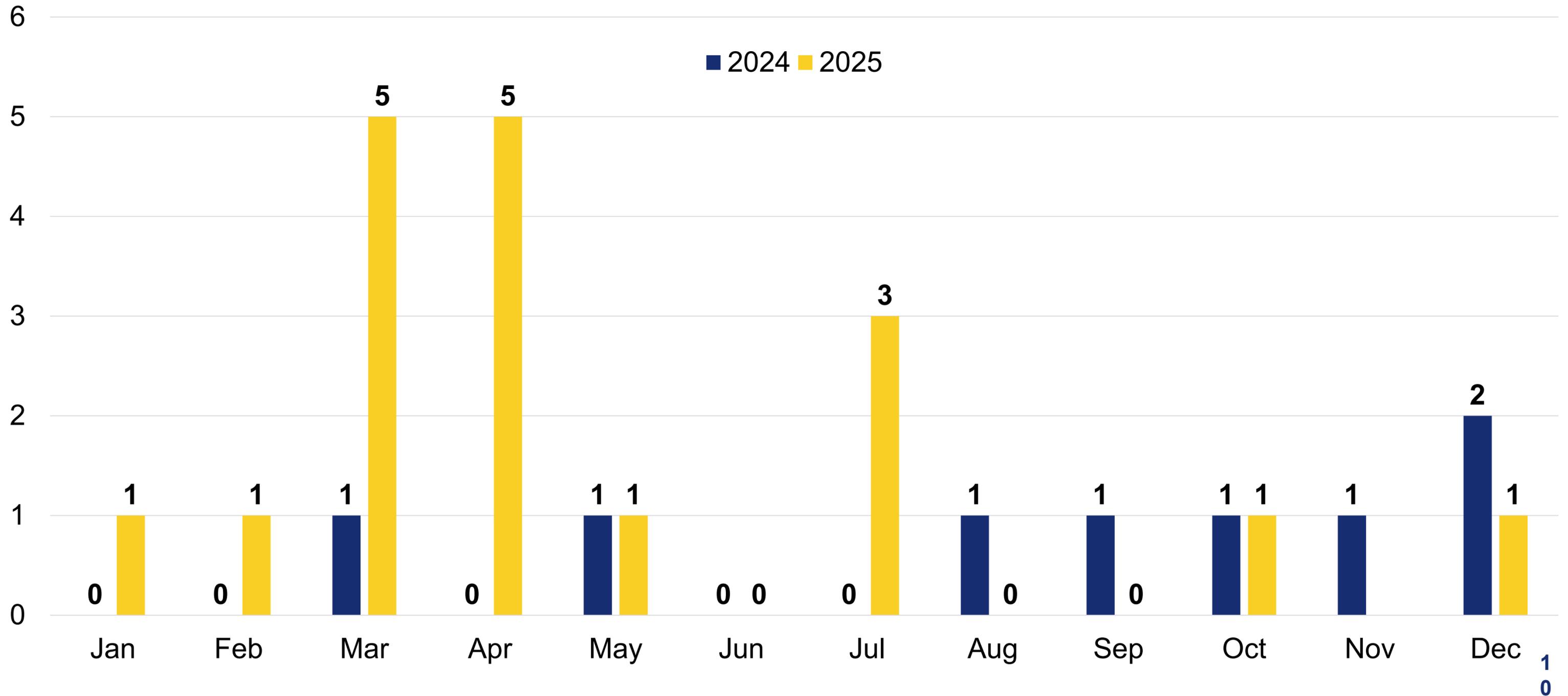


Phoenix Police Department

Recruitment, Hiring, and Attrition Report

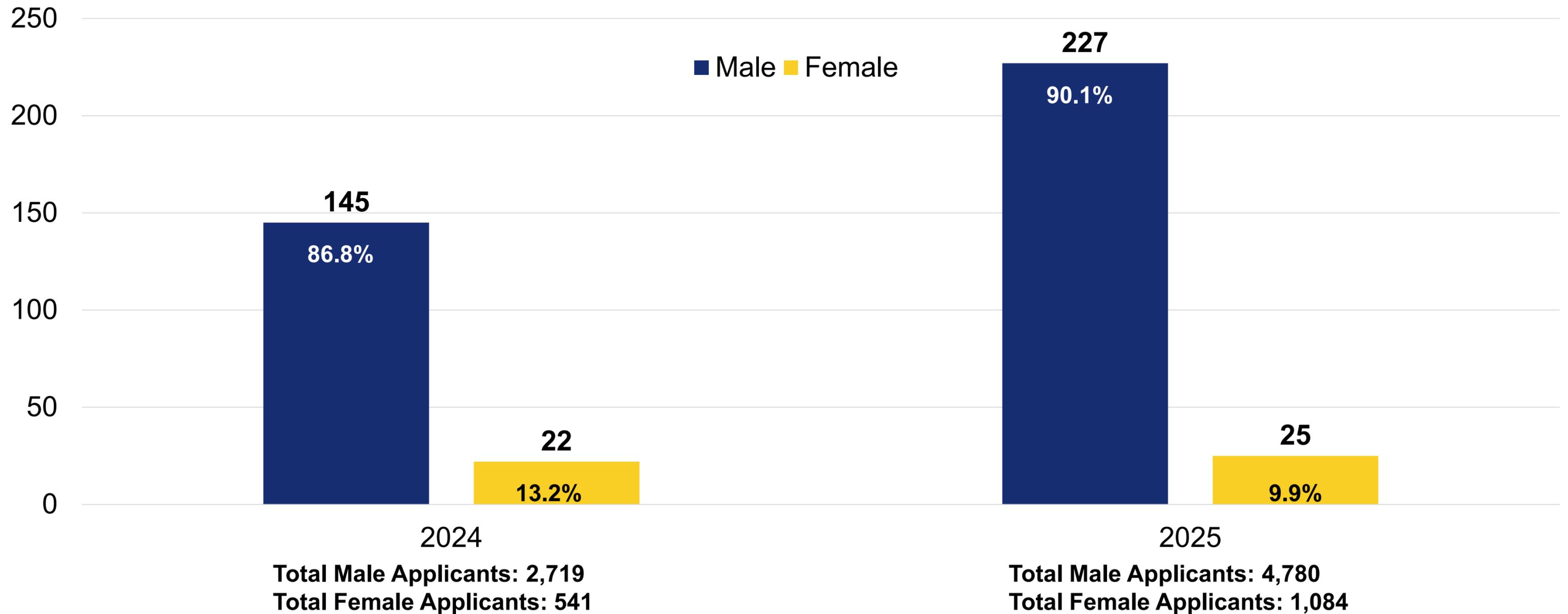


Total Lateral/Reinstatement Hires for 2024 and 2025



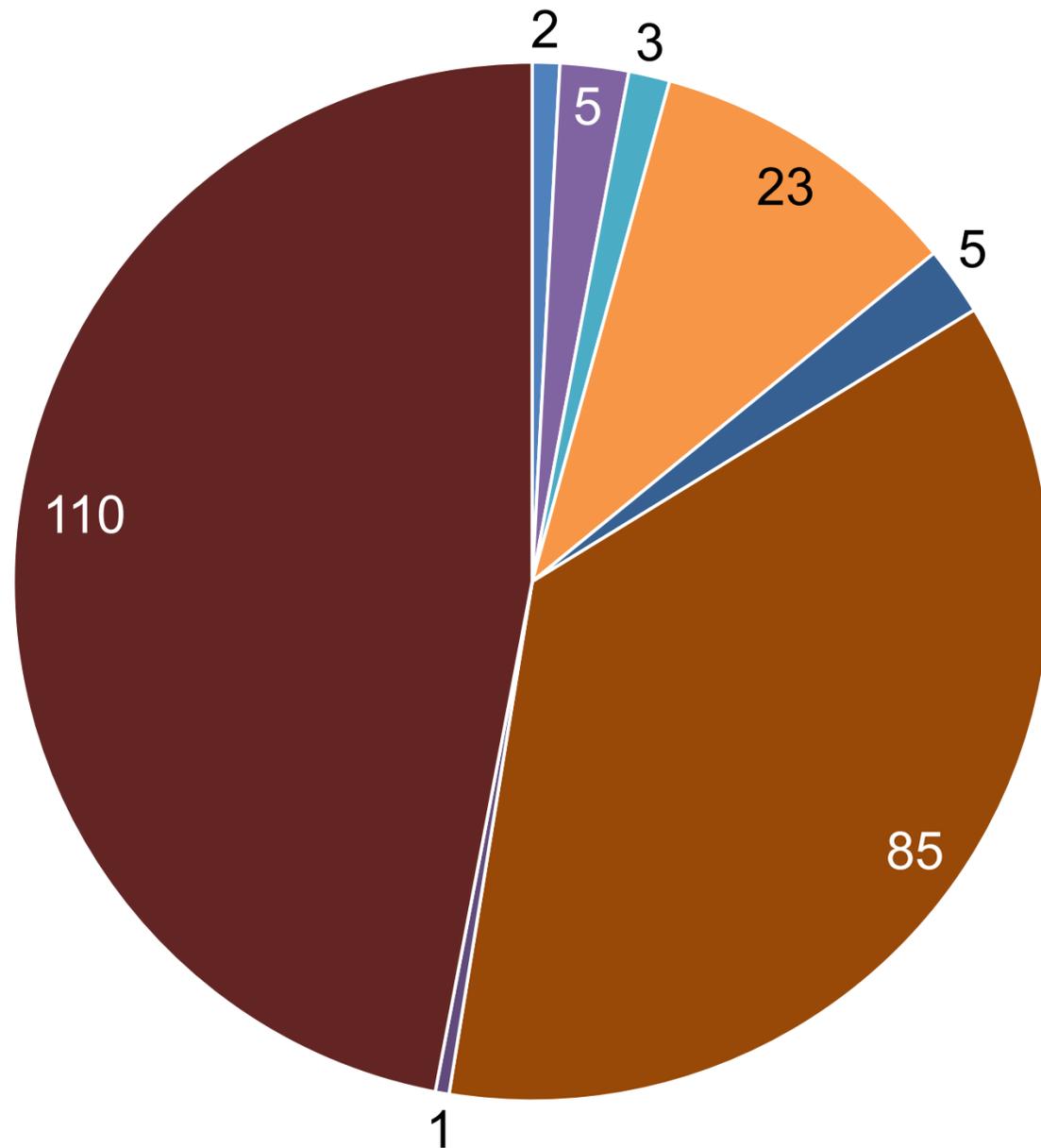


Total Sworn Hires by Gender for 2024 and 2025





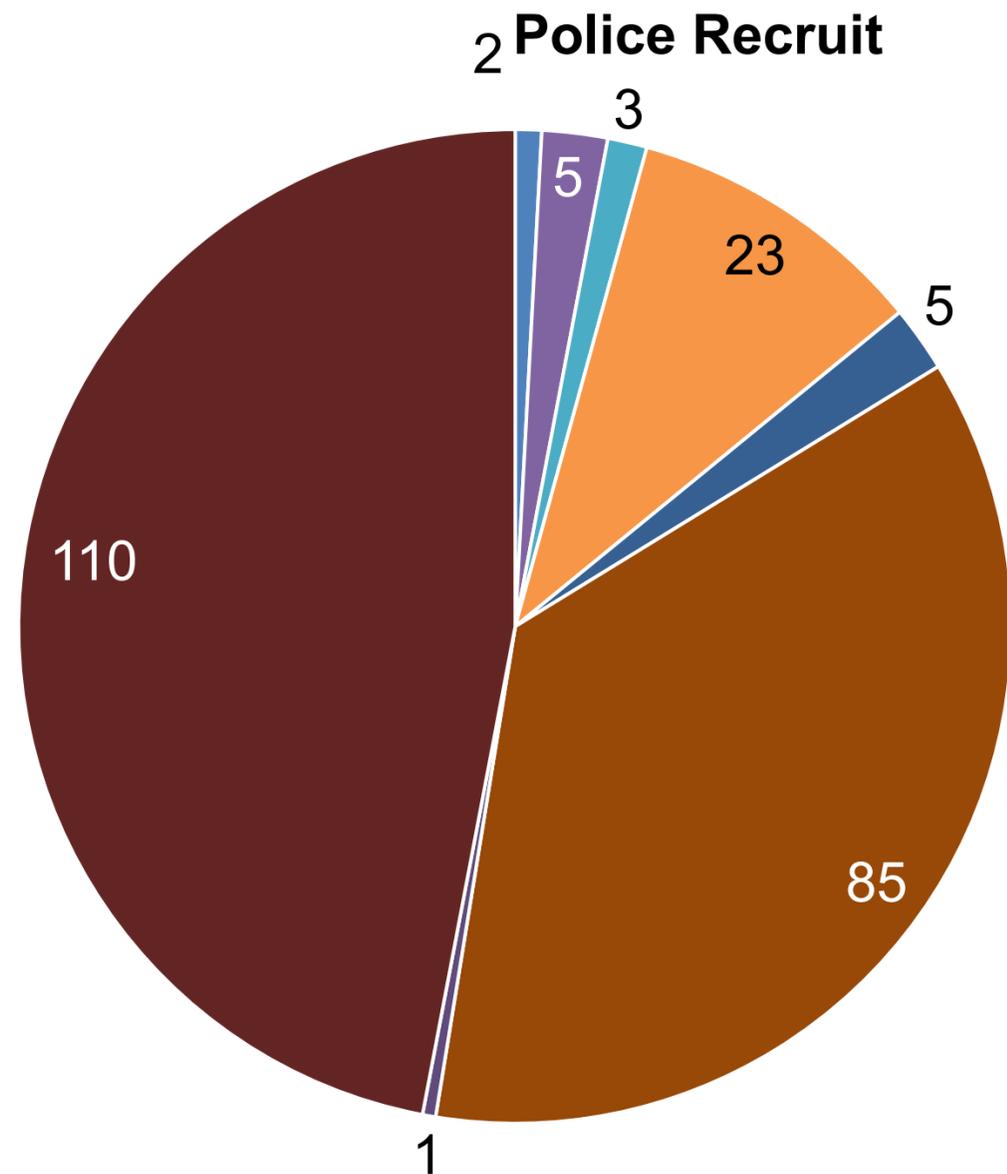
Police Recruit Hires by Ethnic Group for 2025



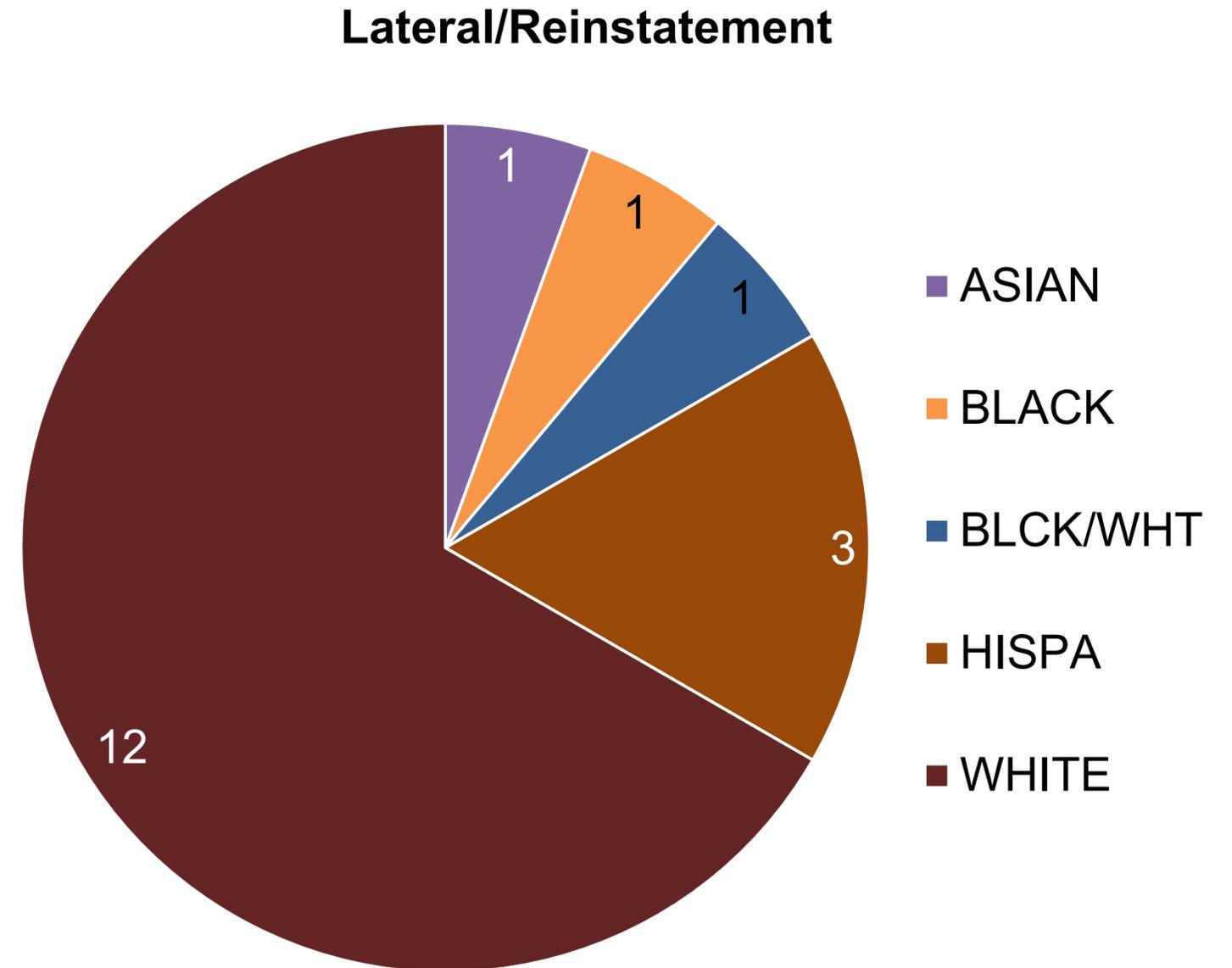
	Ethnic Group	Hired
	American Indian	2
	Asian	5
	Asian/White	3
	Black	23
	Black/White	5
	Hispanic	85
	Other Blend	1



Total Police Recruits & Lateral/Reinstatements Hired by Race for 2025



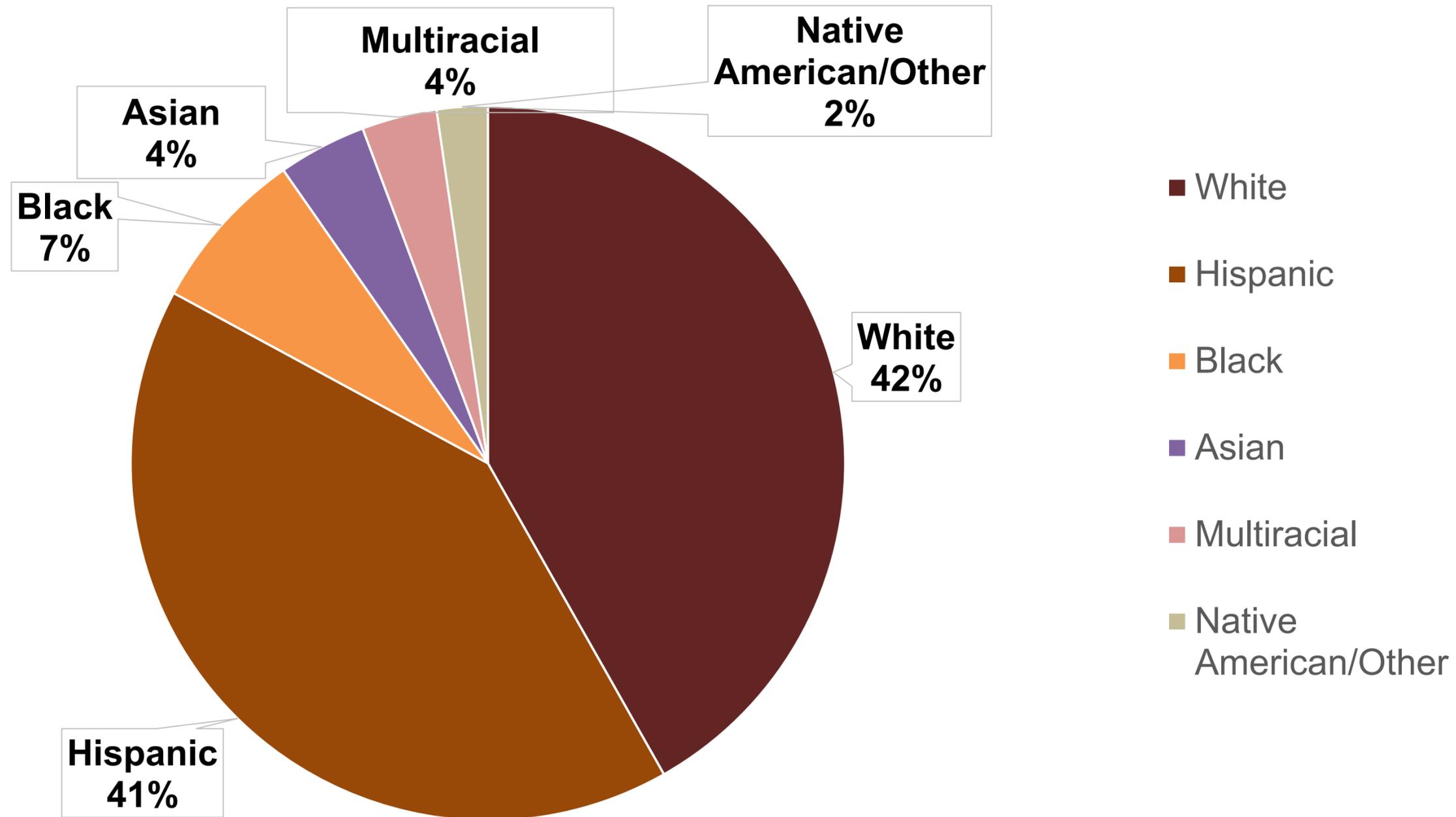
- AMIND
- ASIAN
- ASIAN/WH
- BLACK
- BLCK/WHT
- HISPA
- OTHRBLND
- WHITE



- ASIAN
- BLACK
- BLCK/WHT
- HISPA
- WHITE



City of Phoenix Demographics





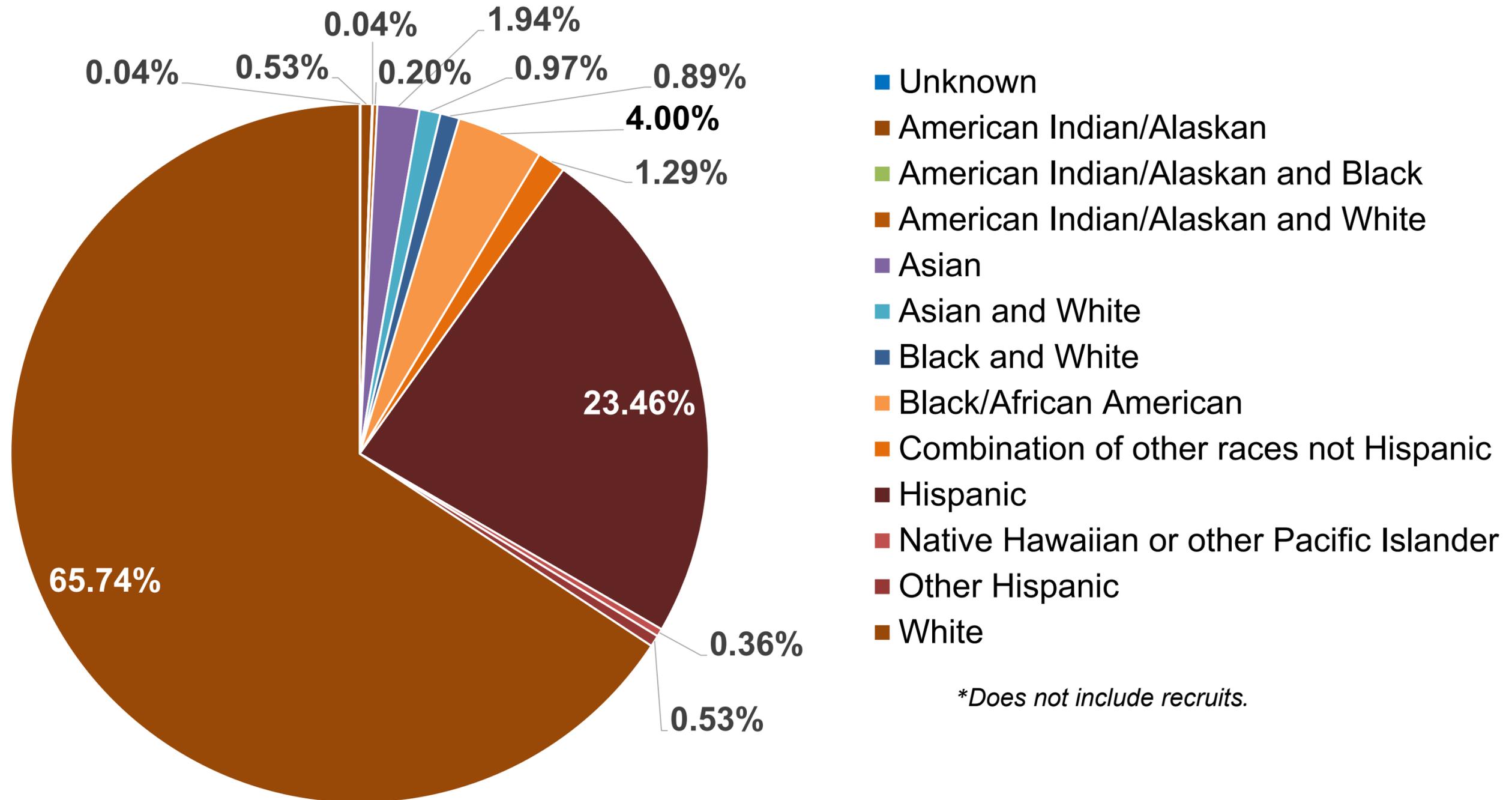
Total Sworn and Recruit Employees by Rank and Gender as of December 31, 2025

Police Chief	Percentage
Male	100%
Assistant Chief	Percentage
Male	100%
Commander	Percentage
Female	20%
Male	80%
Lieutenant	Percentage
Female	7%
Male	93%

Sergeant	Percentage
Female	7%
Male	93%
Officer	Percentage
Female	14%
Male	86%
Recruit	Percentage
Female	10%
Male	90%



Total Current Sworn by Race as of December 31, 2025

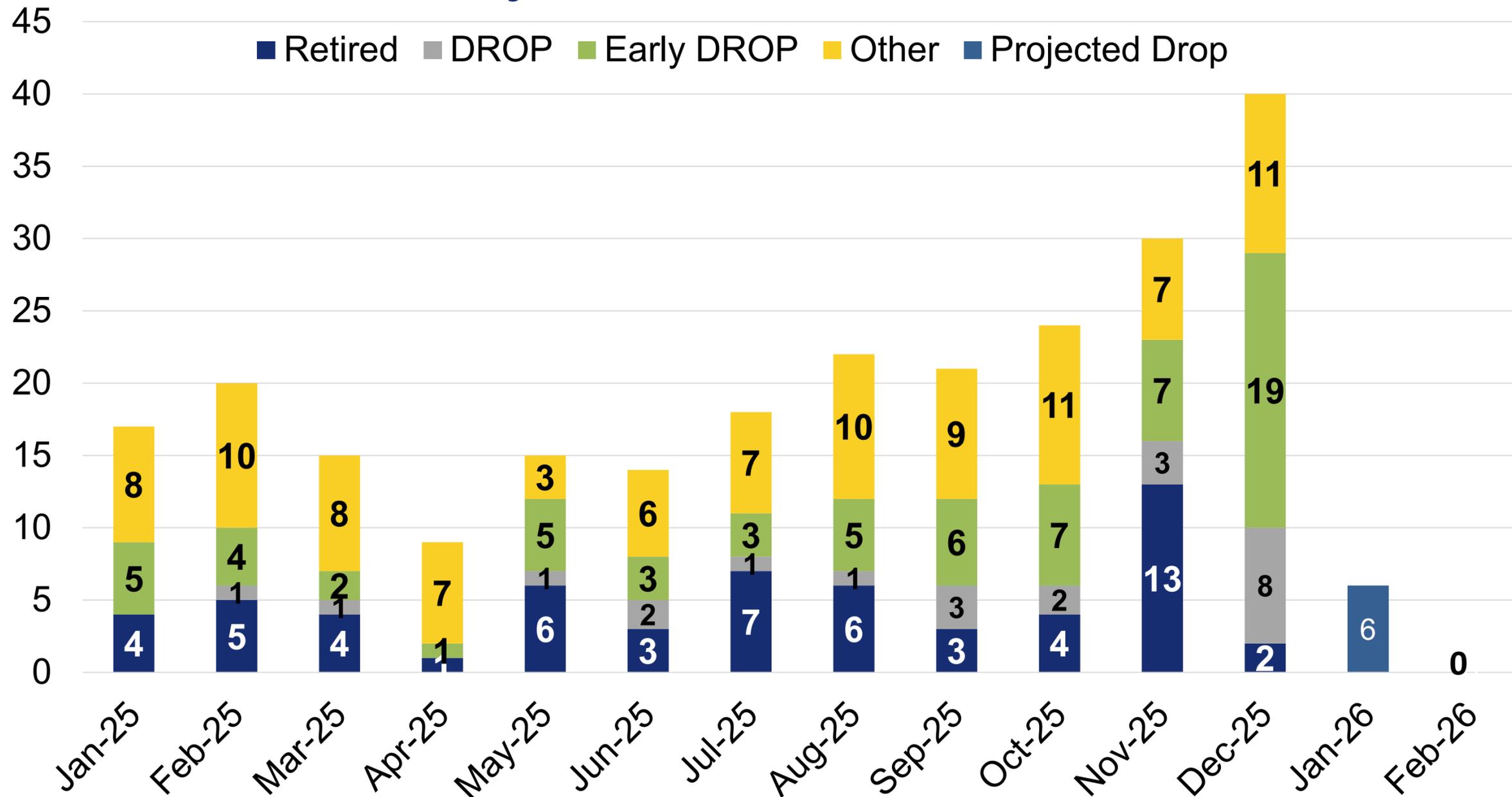


Phoenix Police Department

Recruitment, Hiring, and Attrition Report



Current and Projected Attrition as of December 31, 2025



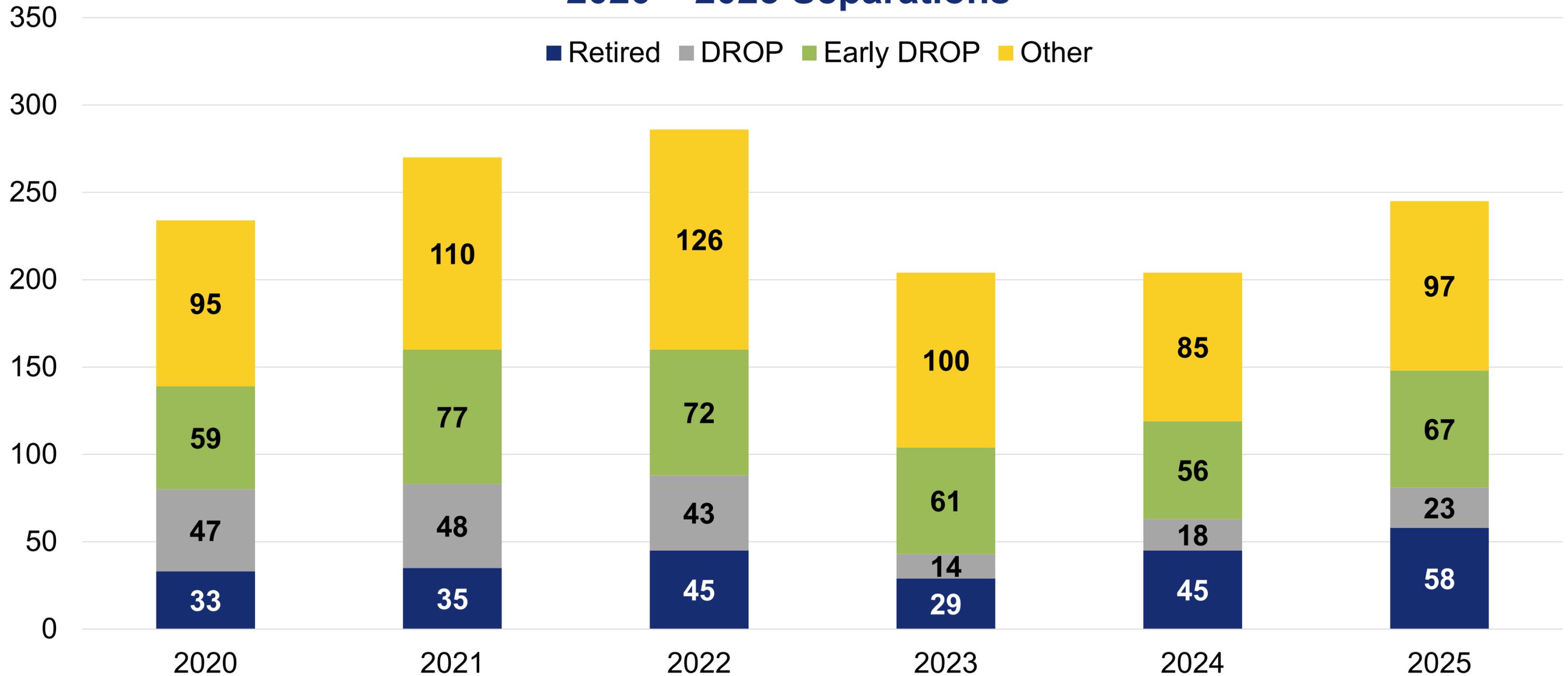
SEPARATIONS BY YEARS OF SERVICE YEAR-TO-DATE	
51	< 1
27	1 to 5
20	6 to 10
0	11 to 15
15	16 to 20
68	21 to 25
64	26+

Phoenix Police Department

Recruitment, Hiring, and Attrition Report

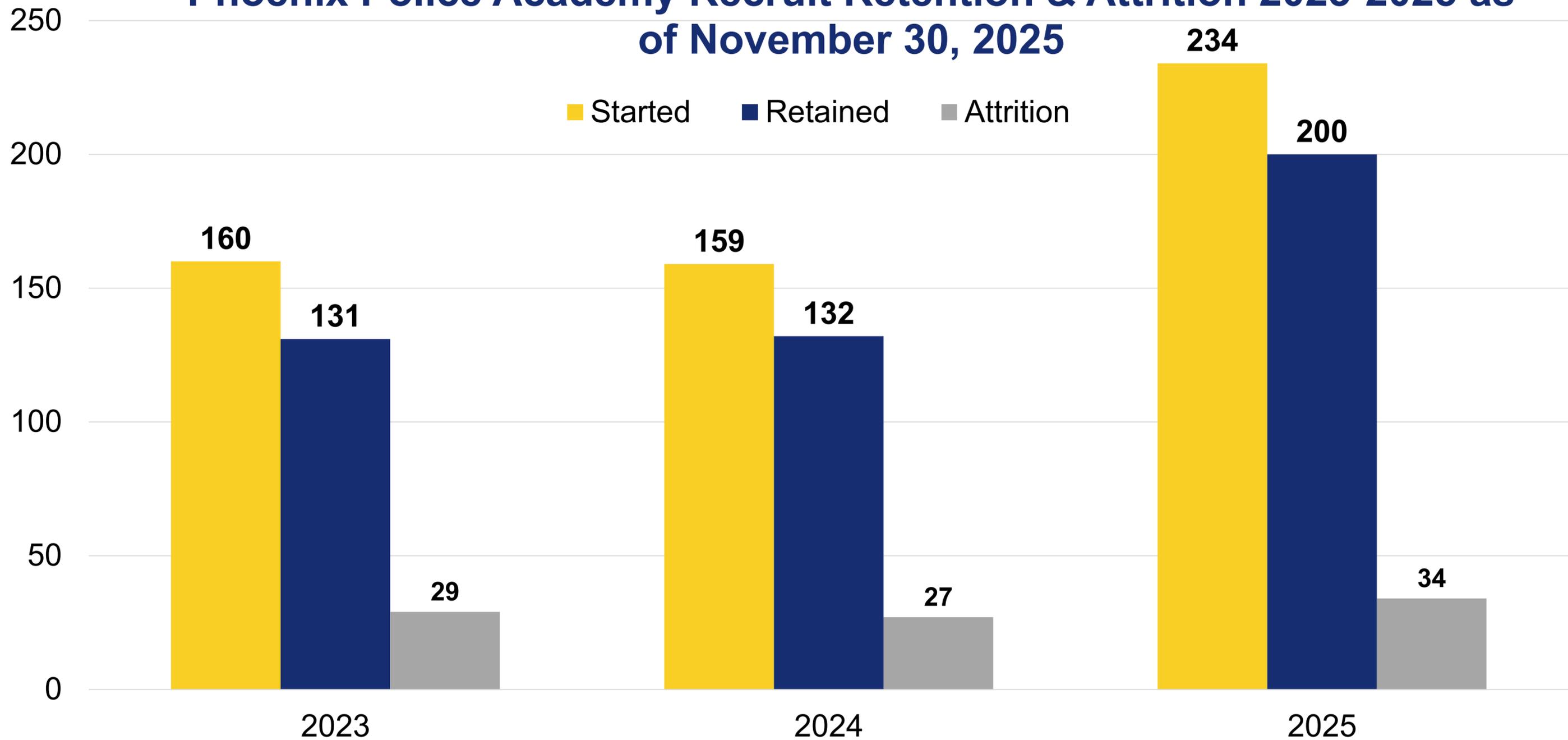


2020 – 2025 Separations





Phoenix Police Academy Recruit Retention & Attrition 2023-2025 as of November 30, 2025



Phoenix Police Department

Recruitment, Hiring, and Attrition Report

As of December 31, 2025



FTO	Officers in Training	Separated	Retention Rate
2022	85	17	80%
2023	138	33	76%
2024	107	29	72.9%
2025	182	17	90.2%



SWET Totals Year-to-Date as of December 31, 2025



1,968
Total SWET participants

- 930 Females
- 1,038 Males



49
Total SWET graduates from the
academy

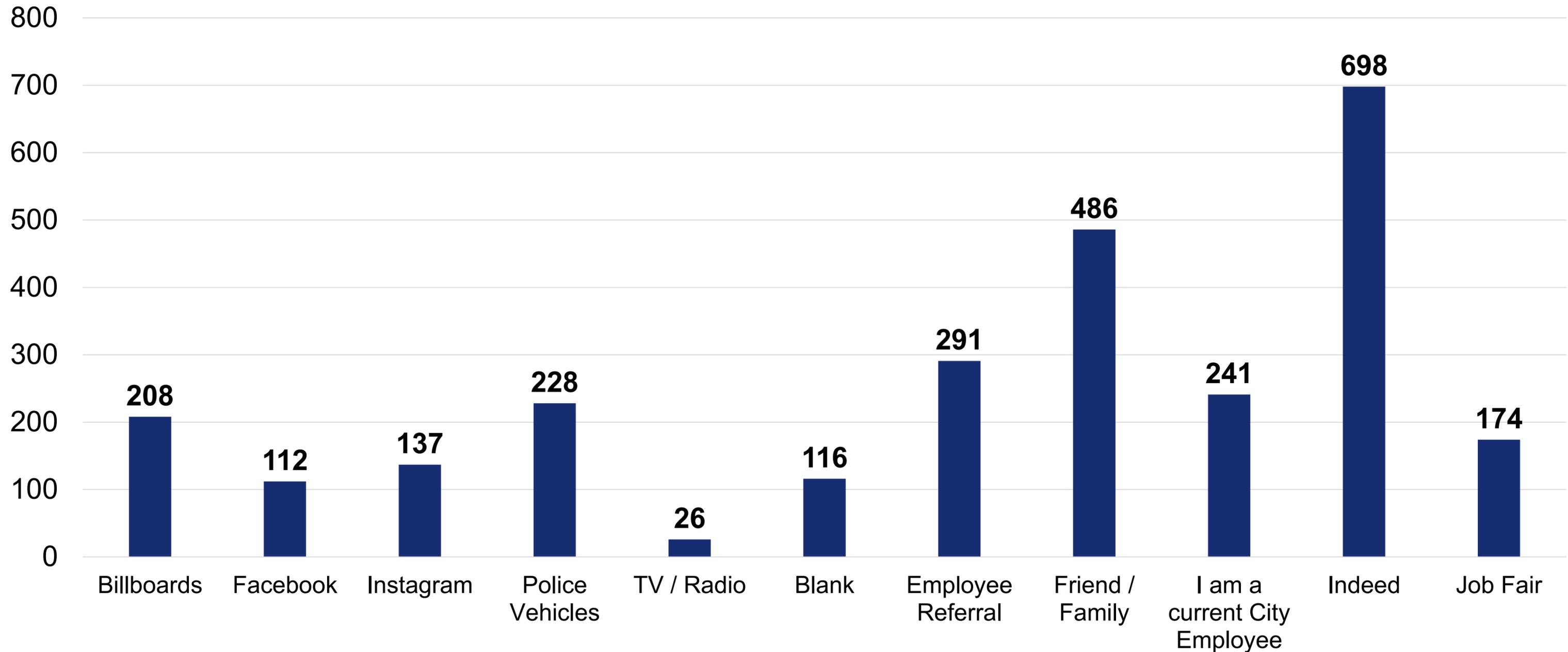


46
SWET participants currently in
the academy





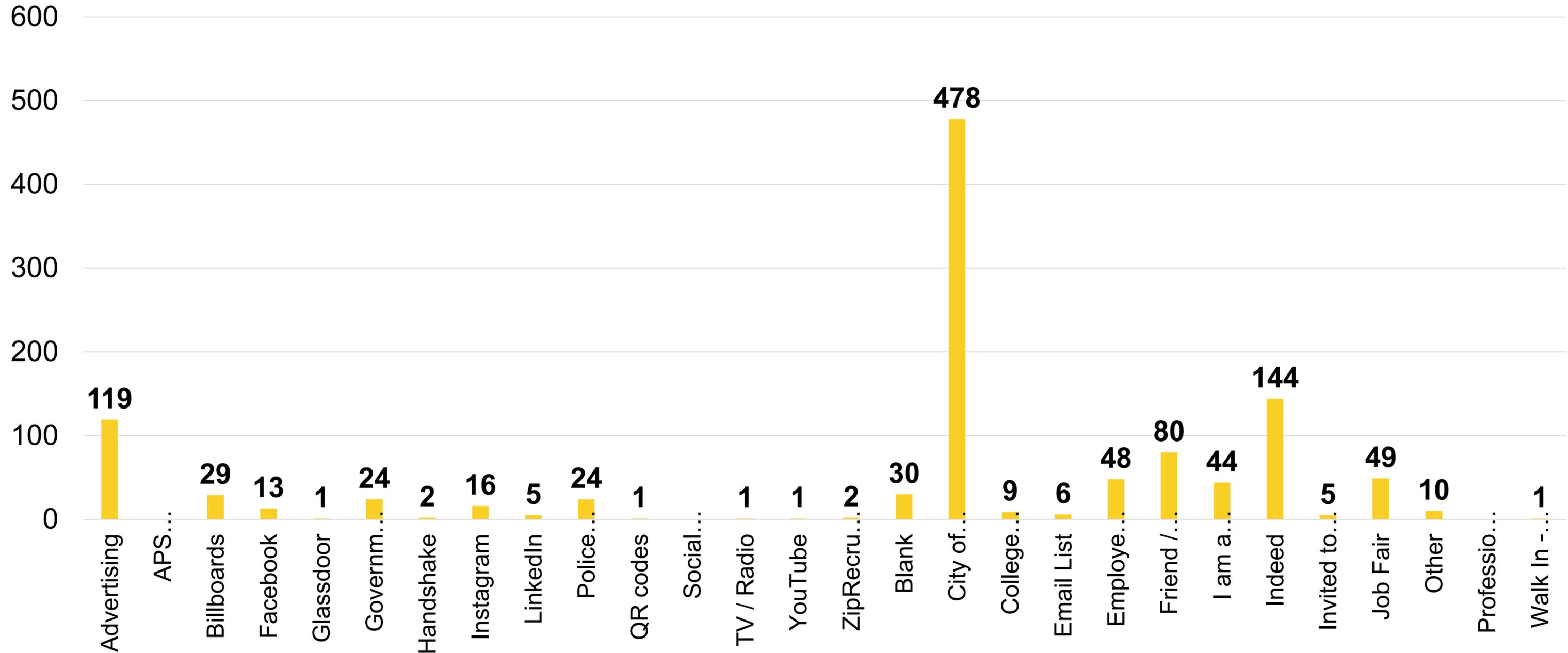
2025 Police Recruit Applicants by Source for all of 2025



**Based on data where applicants provided a source. Some applicants chose not to provide a source.*



2025 Female Recruit Applicants by Source for all of 2025



*Based on data where applicants provided a source. Some applicants chose not to provide a source.