
ANNUAL CRIME REPORT - 2019

Friendswood Police Department

JANUARY 23, 2020

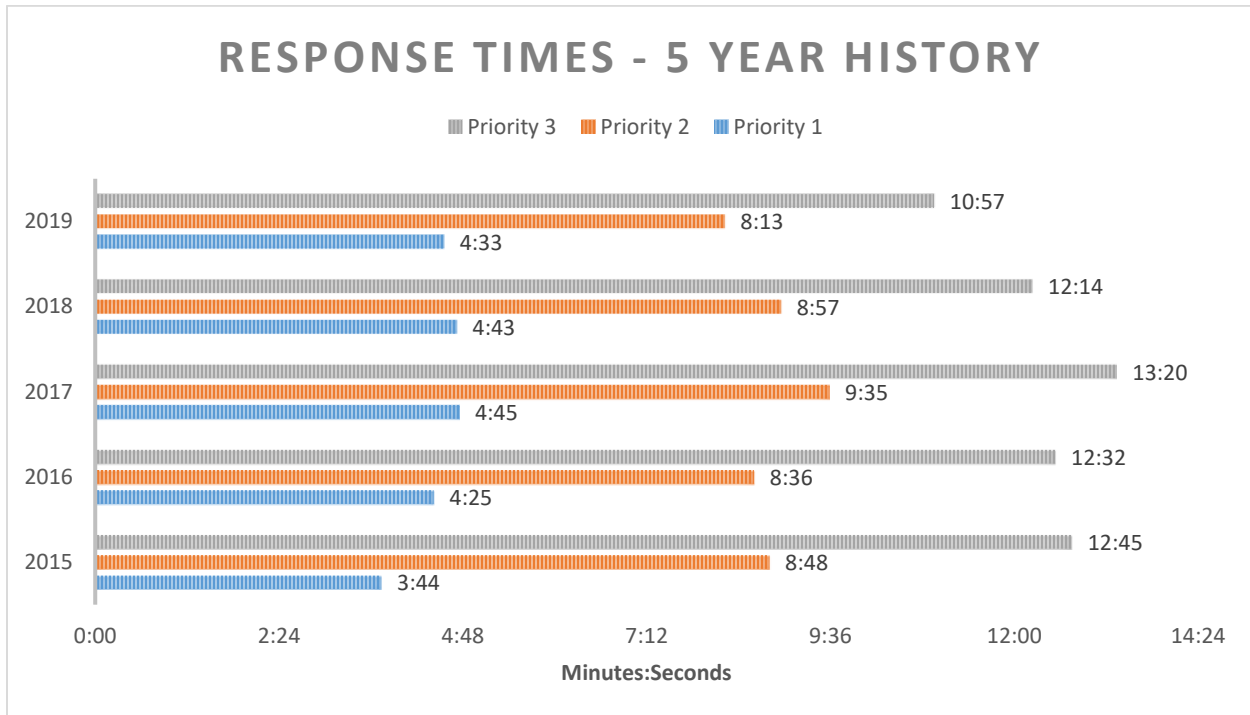
FRIENDSWOOD POLICE DEPARTMENT
1600 Whitaker Drive, Friendswood, TX 77546

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Overview

The Friendswood Police Department has an authorized strength of 66 sworn police officers and serves a community of 41,291 residents – a ratio of 1.6 officers per 1,000 residents. In 2019, Friendswood Police Department received 19,053 police calls for service. Those calls were answered promptly with data showing an 8% decrease in overall response times.



Priority 1 calls are defined as those requiring an immediate response and presence of law enforcement to protect individuals from injury, life-threatening, or other emergency situations.

Priority 2 calls are events reported of an occurrence and there are no indicators of risk or threat associated with Priority 1 calls; i.e., thefts and accidents involving damage only.

Priority 3 calls are events that require an officer to respond where the situation will not deteriorate if the assigned officer is not immediately available; i.e., vehicle unlocks and reports of criminal mischief not in progress.

In accordance with the national change in crime data collection protocol and reporting methods, the Friendswood Police Department has just completed transitioning from Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) to National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). While transitioning to the new method can be somewhat troublesome, and – because of the greater level of reporting specificity in NIBRS – it can initially appear that an agency has higher levels of crime after switching to NIBRS. The new system will provide more useful statistics that promote constructive discussion, measured planning and informed policing. Friendswood transitioned to NIBRS at the end of 2019 – October, November and December. Therefore, this annual report will reflect summary data used in accordance with the UCR protocol.

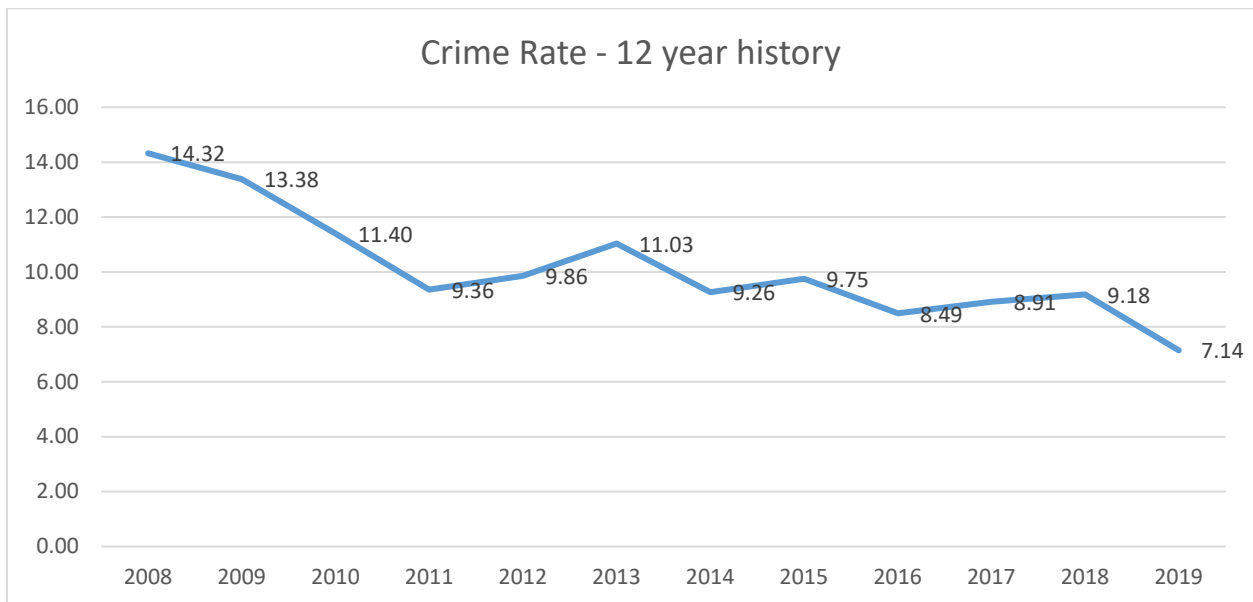
A significant difference between NIBRS and UCR Summary Reporting is that for Crimes against Persons, NIBRS counts the number of victims, while UCR counts the number of incidents. Consequentially, NIBRS data tend to show more Crimes against Persons than UCR figures due to the manner in which the count takes place. This may be mistaken for an overall crime increase, whereas the count of incidents may not rise.

As with any change, Friendswood has experienced some challenges while making this transition to NIBRS. The primary misconception is that after an agency’s transition to NIBRS, the agency will automatically experience an increase in the community’s crime rate. To explain any increase, the updated crime rate is simply a more detailed measure of crime. If the rate happens to be higher under NIBRS than it was under UCR, it does not necessarily represent an actual increase in the crime experience; it is merely a more detailed reflection of crime that has already been occurring. Friendswood Police leadership will use this more comprehensive data to better assess the public safety challenges in the community and work to mitigate variations caused by the conversion of reporting protocols.

Crime classifications are based upon preliminary information supplied to the department by the reporting parties and, as such, offense types may be changed at a later date based upon additional investigation.

Crime Rate

The crime rate is calculated by adding up the total Part 1 UCR crime of a jurisdiction, dividing the sum by the total population and multiplying by 1,000. The crimes counted in the UCR index include: Murder, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Theft, Motor Vehicle Theft and Arson. The crime rate reflects the rate of crime as it impacts the City’s fixed population and does not consider the many visitors that come into the city to work, recreate or visit.



Friendswood is a safe place to live and work. The Department utilizes a variety of strategies to assure crime control, traffic safety, reduce emergency response times and improve the delivery of law enforcement services. The audited 2018¹ crime statistics, as validated by the FBI, are presented in the table below.

City	Population	Offenses	Crime Rate
Memorial Villages	12,402	76	6.13
Friendswood ²	40,419	366	9.06
Missouri City	75,628	917	12.13
Santa Fe	13,600	188	13.82
Angleton	19,650	273	13.89
La Porte	35,591	522	14.67
Deer Park	34,155	522	15.28
Pearland	124,179	1,958	15.77
League City	108,275	1,923	17.76
Sugar Land	89,919	1,619	18.01
Alvin	26,798	524	19.55
Rosenberg	38,541	785	20.37
Lake Jackson	27,568	603	21.87
Dickinson	20,600	454	22.04
Pasadena	154,101	4,146	26.90
Texas City	49,044	1,725	35.17
Galveston	50,896	1,804	35.44
Houston	2,344,966	118,159	50.39
La Marque	17,107	977	57.11
Webster	11,194	821	73.34

Here is a historical perspective on crime in Friendswood.

Historical Data	1977	1987	1997	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019
Population	9,000	20,157	29,053	29,037	34,283	37,980	39,700	41,291
No. Sworn Officers	14	31	40	42	50	57	61	66
Officers/1,000 residents	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.6
Crimes/1,000 residents	51.56	30.56	15.52	16.53	13.80	11.40	9.75	7.14
Total UCR Part 1 Crimes	464	616	451	480	473	433	387	295

¹ (Crime in Texas, 2020)

² This chart shows FBI audited numbers for 2018. The crime rate differs from our previously published crime rate for 2018 due to differences in population estimates. All other data in this report is for 2019.

Crime

In 2019, the Friendswood Police Department began reporting all crime using the Federal Bureau of Investigations' National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). However, this new data collection method was not implemented until October. Therefore, this will be the final year that statistical data will be presented in accordance with the Uniform Crime Report (UCR).

Part 1 UCR Crimes	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Murder	1	1	0	0	0
Sexual Assault	15	6	10	16	13
Robbery	4	9	12	9	9
Aggravated Assault	7	6	9	9	5
Burglary	61	36	56	62	52
Theft	279	265	255	253	196
Motor Vehicle Theft	17	16	19	20	17
Arson	3	0	1	8	3
Total Index Crime	387	339	362	377	295

There were no murders reported in 2019. Sexual assault decreased by 19% - 16 in 2018 compared to 13 in 2019. Robberies remained the same at 9 incidents. Aggravated assaults decreased by 44% - 9 reported in 2018 compared to 5 reported in 2019. Incidents of burglary and theft decreased – in 2018 there were 62 burglaries compared to 52 in 2019 and in 2018 there were 253 thefts compared to 196 in 2019. Of particular interest the number of vehicles burglaries dropped from 112 in 2018 to 67 in 2019. Motor vehicle theft also decreased 15% - 20 in 2018 compared to 17 in 2019.

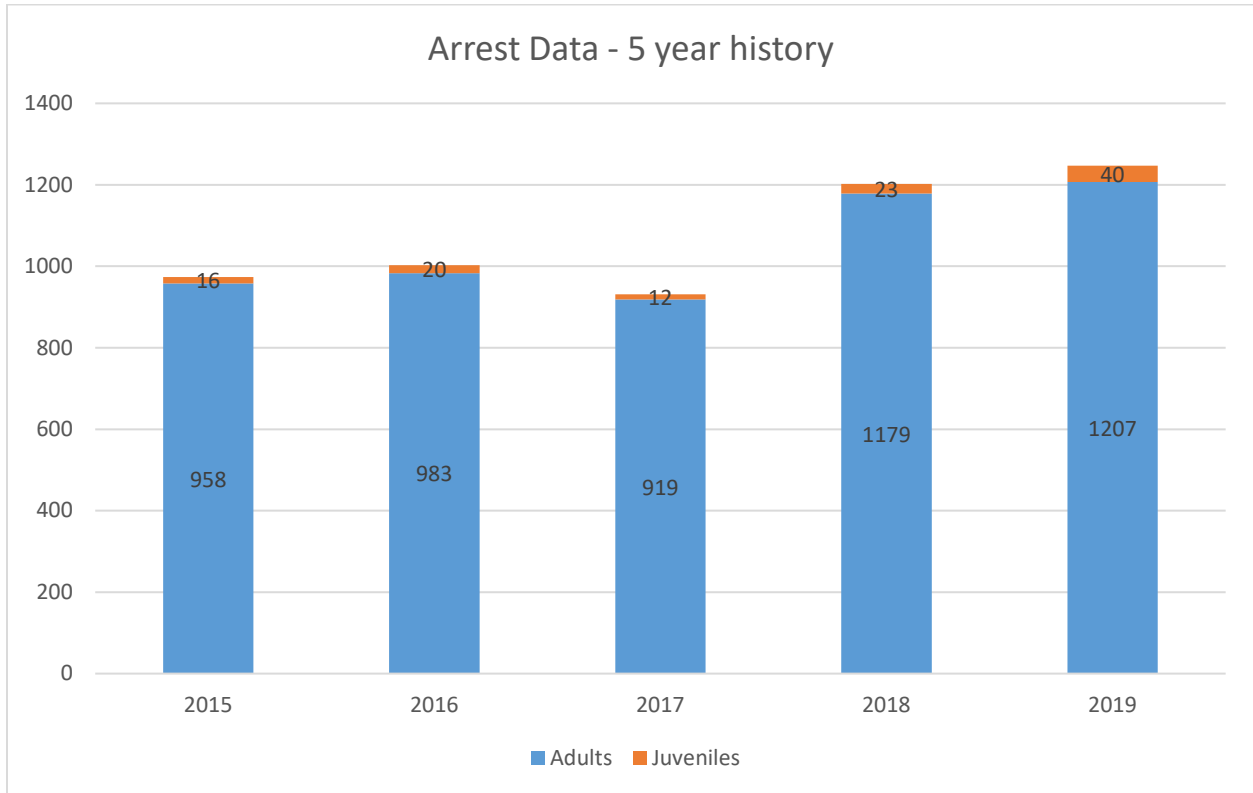
Other crimes tracked by the Department include the following:

Part 2 Crimes	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Criminal Mischief/Vandalism	106	72	89	50	54
Driving Under the Influence	117	104	121	135	268
Drugs/Narcotics	257	262	143	201	185
Forgery/Counterfeit	41	38	34	37	23
Fraud	236	205	156	176	173
Liquor Law Violations	20	18	8	7	9
Runaway	12	4	14	7	6
Sex Offenses	6	3	7	2	7
Simple Assault	150	126	107	143	169
Weapons Violations	24	34	24	19	30
Other Offenses	406	451	330	326	341
Total Part 2 Crimes	1375	1317	1033	1103	1265

NIBRS crime reports will report data as Group A Offenses and Group B Arrests.

Arrests

There was a 2% increase in the number of arrests in 2019 – 1247 in 2019 compared to 1202 in 2018. An analysis of arrest data shows that 75% of the arrests by the Police Department involved persons who do not reside within the City. This statistic highlights major areas of concern for the community – organized criminal activity in the region, an increase in population/mobility through the City and finally, the large amount of illegal drug-related activity in the greater Houston area.



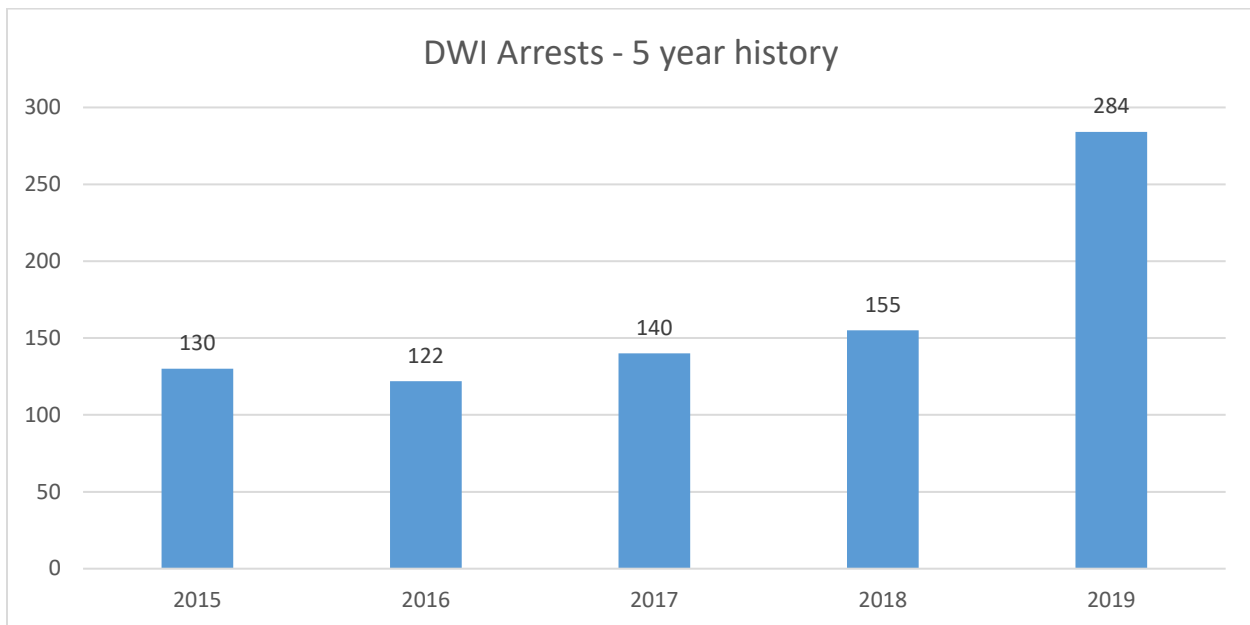
The effect of spillover crime from adjacent communities is created by the ease that criminals travel from one community to another. Friendswood borders Pearland, League City, Houston, Alvin and Webster. Criminals maximize their opportunity to commit crimes in areas with the highest expected net payoff per crime given their mode of travel. Jurisdictional boundaries are usually not a factor. In fact, criminal episodes of burglary, robbery and theft frequently cross jurisdictional boundaries.

Traffic Statistics

Transportation safety is an important concern of the Friendswood Police Department and officers are focused on ensuring the safety of all travelers, including bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists. The crash data provided is comprised of all traffic crashes that occurred in Friendswood, investigated by the Friendswood Police Department. Friendswood saw crash volume hold relatively steady in 2019 with only a 4% increase in the number of reportable accidents. Injuries from traffic collisions increased 30% - 96 injury accidents in 2018 compared to 125 injury accidents in 2019. There were increased alcohol-involved collisions, even though the Department focused on increased DUI enforcement.

Accident Data	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Fatalities	2	2	1	0	0
Injury Accidents	96	98	113	96	125
Non-injury Accidents	466	455	420	418	412
Total Accidents	564	555	534	514	537

The most frequent crash locations are on the three farm-to-market roadways, accounting for 70% of the reported crashes. The Friendswood Police Department is committed to conducting high-visibility transportation safety campaigns to reduce the number of crashes on our roadways and ultimately save lives. In 2019, officers conducted 17,710 traffic stops.



The DWI enforcement program is a specific enforcement campaign focused solely on identifying, stopping and arresting drivers who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. There was an 83% increase in the number of DWI arrests in 2019 – 155 DWI arrests in 2018 compared to 284 DWI arrests in 2019.

Community Policing

The Friendswood Police Department is committed to actively engaging with the public to build strong community-based partnerships and foster police interaction and cooperation with those we serve. The Department believes that an engaged community is a safer one and strives to effectively communicate to ensure the public’s trust. The Department hosts and attends various engagement opportunities, conducts seasonal campaigns, provides safety presentations, work proactively with businesses and commercial areas and conducts patrol and crime prevention initiatives.

The public’s trust in our agency is paramount and we recognize that it must be earned and maintained each day with every interaction. Maintaining that trust is why we are committed to being active

members of the community. You will see officers throughout the City, whether they are proactively patrolling the neighborhoods, providing lectures in our schools, interacting with faith-based communities, engaging with business owners, providing community training events, or building partnerships, one interaction at a time.

Stay Informed

- Sign up for Code Red to receive emergency notifications from Friendswood City Government
- Subscribe to police news for information on significant investigations, traffic alerts, program information and outreach events.
- Read the weekly crime report to learn about significant criminal incidents investigated by Friendswood PD
- Follow the City of Friendswood on Twitter, Facebook and Nextdoor to engage with us on social media.

Friendswood is safest when everyone is engaged and alert.

Recruitment and Retention

Like many police agencies across the country, the Friendswood Police Department faces recruitment and retention challenges. Despite staffing challenges, the members of this agency continue to provide high-quality police services to our residents, visitors and businesses. We remain committed to proactively policing neighborhoods in Friendswood to prevent and reduce crime while continuing to engage the community to build strong police/community partnerships which are vital to public safety.

Friendswood PD in the Schools

The Friendswood Police Department is committed to the safety and well-being of students, teachers and staff within the City. As such, the City has agreements for the provision of various police services. In Friendswood Independent School District, the School Resource Officer Unit is a visible presence throughout the year providing instruction as guest lecturers, conducting proactive patrols in and around our schools, collaborating with administrators and building relationships vital to public safety. For Clear Independent School District, the City provides crossing guards to ensure the safety of our students as they go to and from school.

Ensuring that schools continue to be safe and healthy learning environments is of utmost importance to the Department. In 2019, notably in the wake of the tragic school shooting in Santa Fe, the Department saw an uptick in the number of reports of school-related incidents.

References

Crime in Texas. (2020, January 13). Retrieved from Texas Department of Public Safety:
http://www.dps.texas.gov/administration/crime_records/pages/crimestatistics.htm