

Hewitt Police Department

2024



AN ANALYSIS OF VEHICLE PURSUITS
FOR
THE HEWITT POLICE DEPARTMENT

Vehicle Pursuit Analysis for 2024

This analysis was conducted to review the Hewitt Police Department's Vehicle Pursuits for calendar year 2024. Vehicle Pursuits are inherently dangerous to both the officers involved and the public. The Hewitt Police Department takes its obligations seriously to provide the most effective and efficient police service with the least adverse impact on our citizens. The Hewitt Police Department is committed to protecting our citizens but at the same time ensuring how we do so does not place the public at risk of greater harm. This process requires continuous evaluation of the risks and benefits of each action. This analysis is conducted each year to comply with Texas Law Enforcement Best Practice 7.14 and to identify methods for reducing the number of vehicle pursuits and the inherent risks involved.

Officers are trained by the department in pursuit tactics and emergency driving. However, as skilled as an officer might be in these situations, the vehicle being pursued may not have a competent driver and many times the driver may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Law enforcement officers must make quick decisions in a matter of seconds. This must be done while balancing the obligation to protect and serve with the obligation to apprehend a suspect. Police pursuit driving is just one example of decision-making dilemmas officers deal with every day.

The Hewitt Police Department has built an organizational infrastructure that assists officers with evidentiary-based data that ultimately affects their street-level decisions. This was accomplished by the following:

1. Making report writing on all pursuits mandatory.
2. Analyze data collected.
3. Apply knowledge from analysis to training, policy creation or amendments, and daily practice.
4. Staying knowledgeable about both state and federal laws, court deliberations, and also trends in pursuits in similar agencies, and within their larger regions and states.

Information is collected for transparency and legitimacy while providing the ability to analyze pursuit data to improve policies and effectiveness. Reports gather information about the officer and the suspect involved, the nature of injuries, accidents, or other outcomes, and information about supervisory actions. This is critical to maintaining accountability and our ability to examine data to improve future responses.

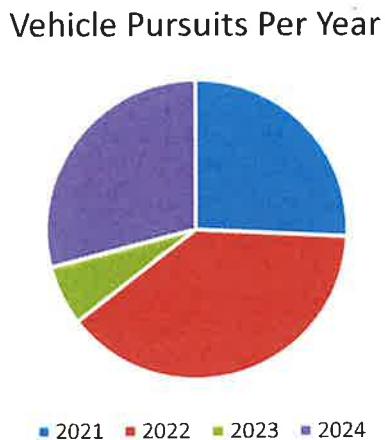
As with many other police activities, by clearly informing the public of pursuit policies, legal precedents, and police actions, we can improve our legitimacy with the public and also better match citizen expectations and understanding with actual police actions.

REVIEW OF HPD PURSUITS

For 2024

The Hewitt Police Department participated in (9) pursuits between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024. This compares with (2) pursuits in 2023, (12) in 2022, and (8) in 2021. Thus, there have been (31) pursuits during the 4 years with 2023 having the fewest of the last four years.

Vehicle Pursuits per Year (2021-2024)



Details for pursuits in 2024:

2/8/2024 - An officer observed a vehicle with an unreadable temporary registration tag. When the officer initiated a traffic stop the vehicle failed to stop and continued to travel at a low rate of speed. A plastic bag was thrown from the passenger window before the vehicle stopped.

4/14/24 – An officer observed a vehicle that he knew belonged to a suspect with warrants with the city and the county. After confirming the suspect's warrants were still active and observing the suspect was driving the vehicle, he attempted to initiate a stop. The suspect fled and the pursuit was stopped after 1 ½ miles.

5/6/24 - An officer attempted to conduct a traffic stop for a moving violation and the vehicle failed to stop. The vehicle's driver came to a dead end, exited the vehicle and evaded on foot. The vehicle was determined to be stolen.

5/31/24- An officer attempted to conduct a traffic stop on a vehicle for a moving violation and the vehicle failed to stop. The pursuit was terminated due to the suspect vehicle's distance ahead of the patrol unit.

6/15/24 - An officer observed a physical altercation in the parking lot of a convenience store and one of the parties sped off in a vehicle. The officer attempted a stop on the vehicle for investigative purposes and the vehicle failed to stop. After approximately 2 miles the suspect stopped the vehicle and the suspect was arrested without incident.

7/21/24 - Officers attempted to stop a vehicle believed to be stolen for investigative purposes. The vehicle failed to stop and after evading in the vehicle, the driver exited the vehicle and evaded on foot.

7/28/24- An officer attempted a traffic stop on a vehicle for a defective brake lamp and the suspect failed to stop. The officer pursued and observed a clear plastic baggie and a bottle thrown from the vehicle.

8/24/24 - An officer observed a lawnmower being driven on a public roadway at night without any lights and traveling in the wrong direction. The officer initiated a traffic stop, but the driver failed to stop. The officers were able to physically remove the suspect from the lawnmower to end the pursuit.

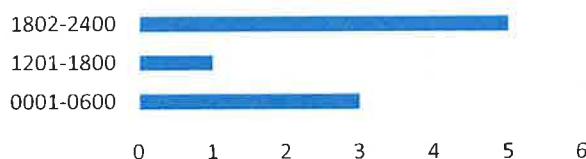
8/30/24 - An officer attempted a traffic stop for a moving violation and suspicion of an intoxicated driver. The vehicle failed to stop and was involved in a single-vehicle crash. The driver then fled on foot.

Time of Pursuits

Occurred between 0001 and 0600 hrs. - 3

Occurred between 1201 and 1800 hrs. - 1

Occurred between 1802 and 2400 hrs. - 5



Pursuit Average Miles

Less than 1 Mile 1

1 to 2 Miles 4

2.1 to 5 Miles 2

Beyond 10 Miles 2

Type of Vehicle Pursued

8 of the 9 Vehicles Pursued were automobiles. 1 of the Vehicles was a lawnmower.

Vehicle Pursuit Outcomes

Stopped in the interest of public safety	2
Suspect Stopped Vehicle	6
Suspect Vehicle Crashed	1

Driver being Pursued was arrested for DUI

Driver was Arrested for DUI	3
Driver was not Arrested for DUI	6

Factors for DUI

Alcohol and Drugs	1
Drugs	2

Within Policy

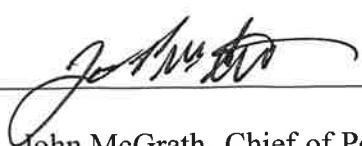
Determined to be Within Policy	8
Determined to be not Within Policy	1

Summary and Recommendations

All pursuits were reviewed and it was determined that eight of the nine were within policy. The Hewitt Police Department Pursuit policy was amended on June 17, 2024. The pursuit policy was adjusted to conform to contemporary pursuit policies that are in agreement with current law enforcement philosophy. The pursuit that was not within policy occurred shortly after the policy was adjusted. The initiating officer in that pursuit was counseled after it was determined he did not fully understand the policy as it was written. Officers received further clarification on the justification for pursuits to comply with department policy.

This confirms that Officers and Supervisors are conforming to the policies and standards of the department, and appropriately addressing performance issues as necessary. Recommendations are for the Department to continue to review the data and make updates and changes as necessary.

Reviewed and approved by:


John McGrath, Chief of Police

Date 2/7/2025