

CIVILIAN COMPLAINTS

I. 2024 CIVILIAN COMPLAINT DATA

Each year, the RIPA Report highlights trends and data related to complaints by citizens about law enforcement. This data is significant because it shows, on a micro level, trends within individual agencies by complaint type and, on a macro level, differences in policies across agencies that may impact the complaint process. This section examines complaint data submitted by RIPA reporting agencies and provides a status update on the RIPA Board's past recommendation that law enforcement agencies remove deterrent language from civilian complaint forms.

A. Overall Civilian Complaint Data Reported by RIPA Agencies

In 2024, 526 agencies subject to RIPA's stop data reporting requirements (hereafter RIPA agencies) submitted civilian complaint data. These agencies include municipal and district police departments, county sheriff's departments, the California Highway Patrol, district attorney offices, K-12 school district police departments, University of California law enforcement, California State Universities law enforcement, and California Community Colleges law enforcement.¹

The 526 RIPA agencies reported 13,004 complaints in 2024, across three categories: non-criminal, misdemeanor, and felony. Most complaints alleged non-criminal conduct (12,519, or 96.27%), followed by complaints alleging a misdemeanor offense (310, or 2.38%). Complaints alleging a felony offense were the least common (175, or 1.35%).

Roughly three-quarters of RIPA reporting agencies (407, or 77.38%) reported receiving one or more civilian complaints during 2024, while just under one-fourth of agencies reported that they did not receive any civilian complaints (119, or 22.62%).

B. Civilian Complaints Alleging Racial or Identity Profiling Reported by RIPA Agencies

In 2024, a total of 173 RIPA agencies reported receiving civilian complaints alleging racial or identity profiling (32.89% of all reporting RIPA agencies or 42.51% of agencies receiving any complaints). These 173 agencies reported 2,282 complaints alleging racial or identity profiling.

Law enforcement agencies are also required to submit data to the California Department of Justice (CA DOJ) categorizing profiling complaint allegations into nine categories: age, physical disability, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, mental disability, gender, religion, gender identity/expression, and nationality. In 2024, the 2,282 complaints reported to allege racial or identity profiling contained a total of 2,282 allegations with an element, or elements, of racial or identity profiling, constituting 17.55% of the total complaints reported by RIPA agencies in 2024.

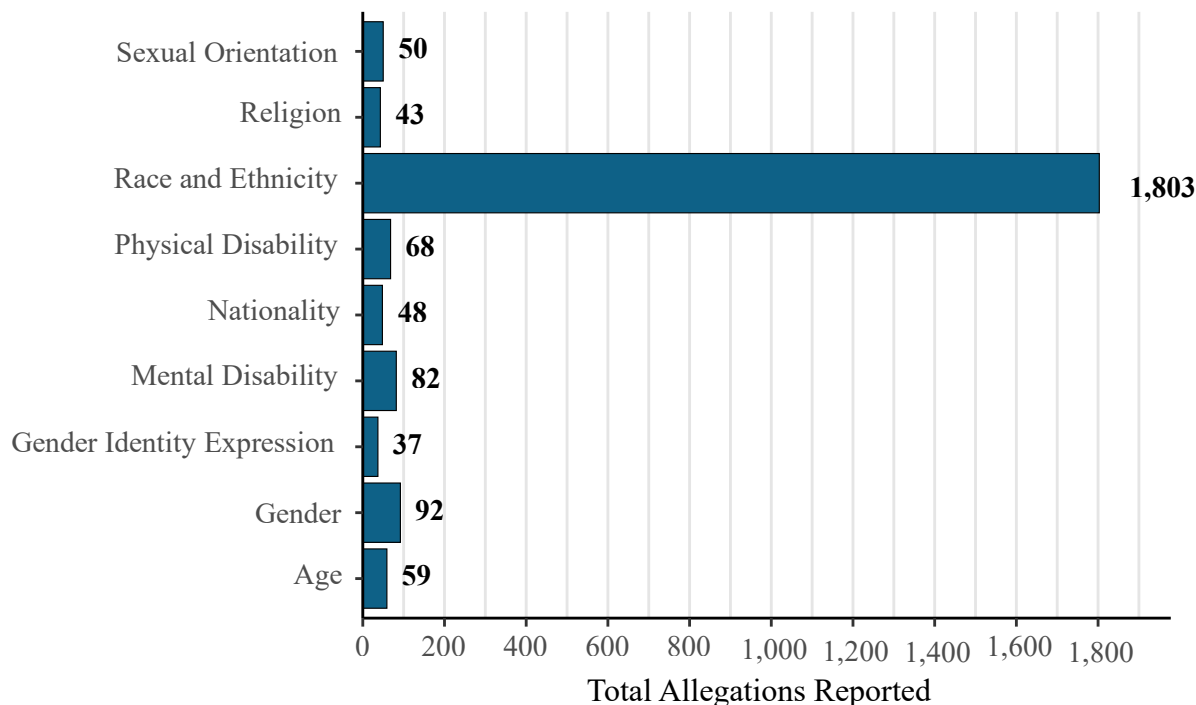
Figure 1 displays the number of reported allegations that fell into each of the nine allegation group types.

¹ For more information on the law enforcement agencies that are required to report under RIPA, see Cal. Code Regs. tit. 11, § 999.225 <<https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/ripa/stop-data-reg-final-text-110717.pdf>> [as of XX, 2025].

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Figure 1. Total Allegations of Racial and Identity Profiling Reported in 2024



C. Dispositions of Civilian Complaints Reported by RIPA Agencies

In addition to the number of complaints received, RIPA agencies must report the disposition (i.e., outcome) of those complaints to the DOJ. Complaint dispositions are categorized as: “Sustained,” meaning that the investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to prove the truth of the allegation in the complaint by a preponderance of evidence; “Exonerated,” meaning the investigation clearly established that the employee’s actions that formed the basis of the complaint were not a violation of law or policy; “Not Sustained,” meaning the investigation failed to disclose sufficient evidence to clearly prove or disprove the complaint’s allegation; and “Unfounded,” meaning the investigation clearly established that the allegation is not true.²

RIPA agencies reported 13,004 civilian complaints received in 2024. Agencies reported a total of 9,745 complaints reached a disposition during the calendar year.³ Among the 9,745 complaints that reached a disposition in 2024, 939 were sustained (9.64%), 1,655 were exonerated (16.98%), 1,162 were not sustained (11.92%), and 5,989 were deemed unfounded (61.46%).

A total of 1,552 racial or identity profiling complaints reached disposition in 2024. Of these, just 3 were sustained (0.19%). Of the remaining 1,549 complaints, 94 were exonerated (6.06%), 166 were not sustained (10.70%), and 1,289 were deemed unfounded (83.05%).

Figure 2 displays the distribution of disposition types within the 2024 data for (1) all complaints

² Pen. Code, § 13012, subd. (a)(5)(B).

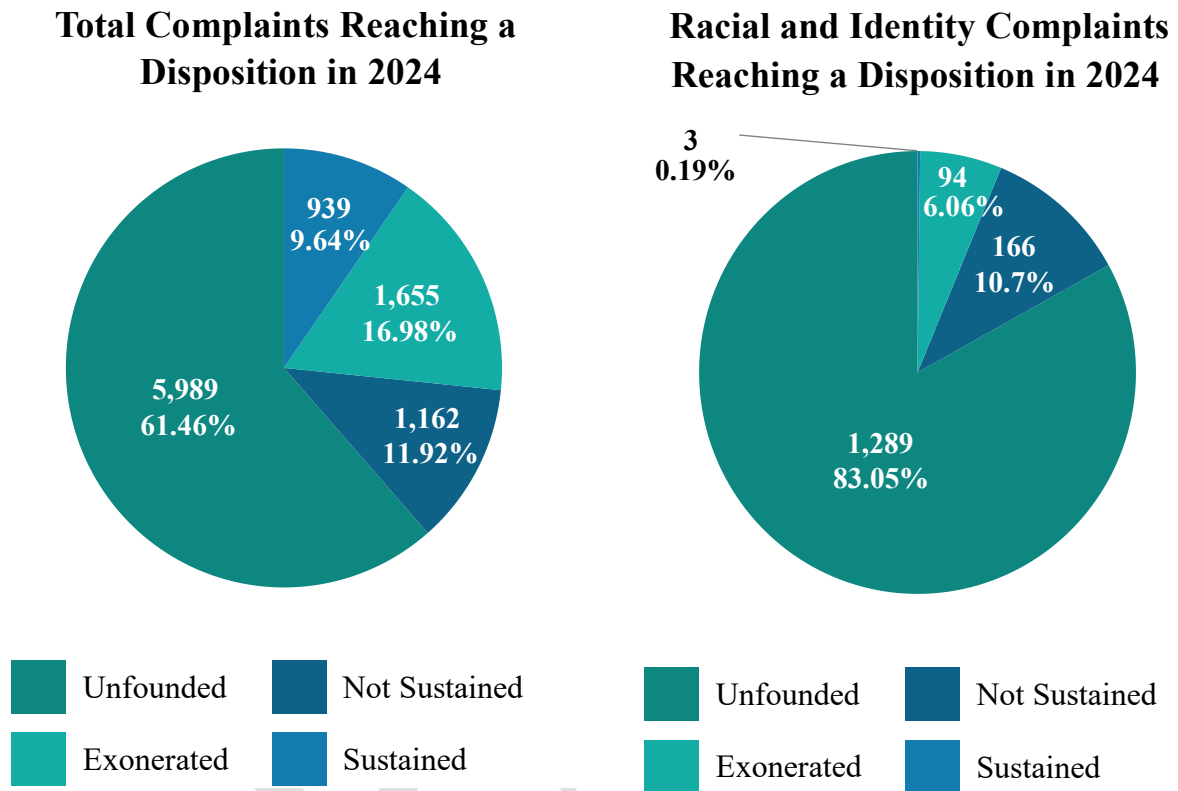
³ It is important to note that not every complaint reached disposition during the same year it was initially reported; therefore, it is possible that at least some complaints that appeared in the 2024 disposition categories were first reported in 2023 or earlier.

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that reached disposition and (2) complaints of racial and identity profiling that reached disposition.⁴

Figure 2. Disposition Distribution of 2024 Complaints



D. Cross-Year Comparison

A cross-year comparison of civilian complaints data can aid in monitoring individual agencies from year to year and any changes in complaint procedures that may correlate with the changes in civilian complaint data. For example, radical differences in complaints from year to year could result from changes in civilian complaint policies and procedures. However, because complaint procedures are handled differently in each agency and there is not a uniform definition of civilian complaint, it is important to consider that trends in complaint numbers may not necessarily reflect improvements to an agency's complaint processes. For example, a high number of complaints may demonstrate a robust complaint review process at one agency, while, for another, it may be more indicative of failures to make complaints reasonably accessible to members of the public. For these reasons, it is imperative to view this data in relation to policies at individual agencies.

RIPA Complaint Data by Waves

Figures 3 through 8 display the total number of complaints and the total number of complaints

⁴ For an agency-level breakdown of how many profiling complaints reached each disposition type in 2024, see [Appendix Table X](#).

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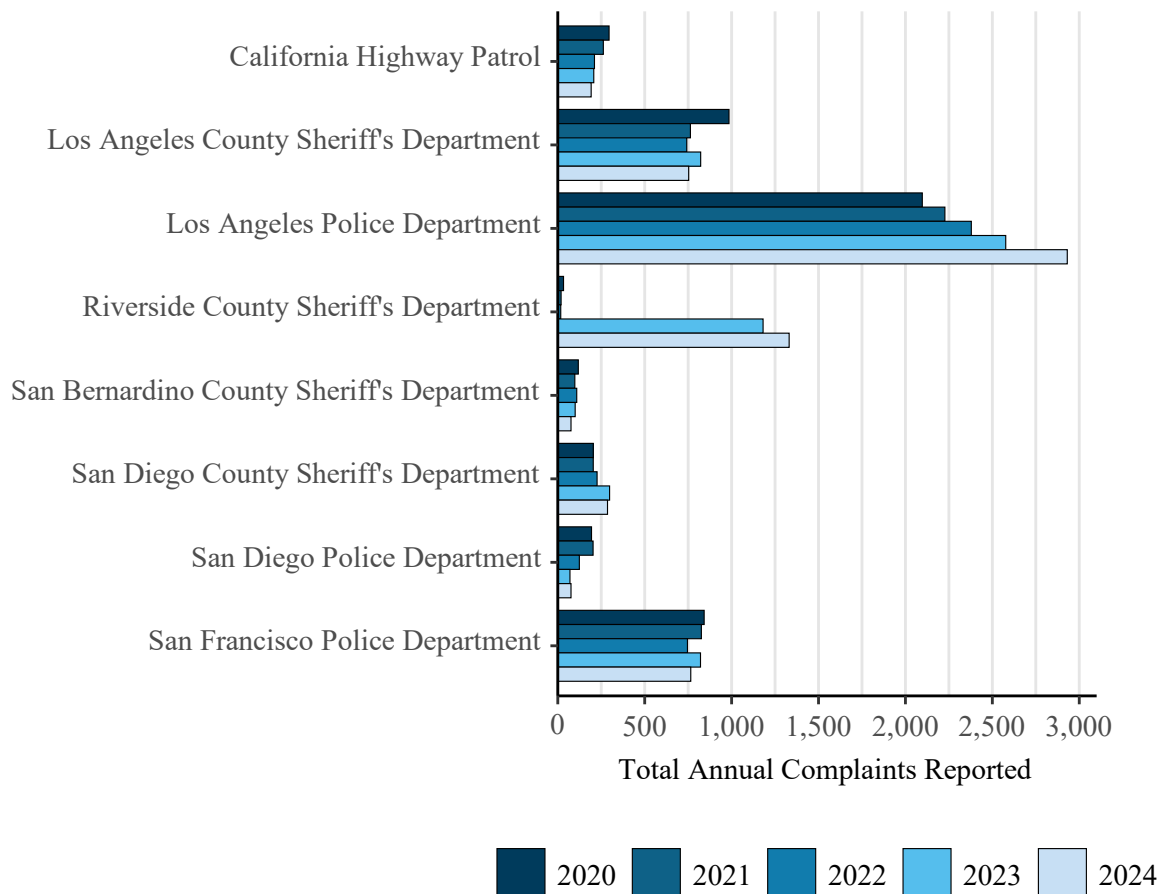
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alleging racial and identity profiling submitted by all RIPA reporting agencies in Waves 1 through 3, across five years. Given that Wave 4 is over 400 agencies, aggregate cross-year comparisons are provided in the body of this section and the individual agency counts are provided in an appendix table.

Wave 1 Agency Total Complaints Reported (2020-2024)

In 2024, Wave 1 agencies reported 6,410 civilian complaints. This constituted a 5.50% increase relative to the total civilian complaints reported in 2023 (6,076), a 40.76% increase from 2022 (4,554), a 39.29% increase from 2021 (4,602), and 34.44% increase from 2020 (4,768). Five out of eight agencies experienced a decrease in the number of civilian complaints reported between 2023 and 2024. The agency that experienced the largest decrease was San Bernadino County Sheriff's Department (24.00%, from 100 in 2023 to 76 in 2024), whereas the Los Angeles Police Department experienced the largest relative increase (13.74%, from 2,577 in 2023 to 2,931 in 2024).

Figure 3. Wave 1 Total Complaints Reported (2020-2024)



Wave 1 Racial and Identity Profiling Complaints (2020-2024)

Figure 4 displays the total number of racial and identity profiling complaints reported by Wave 1 agencies from 2020 to 2024. The total number of racial and identity profiling complaints

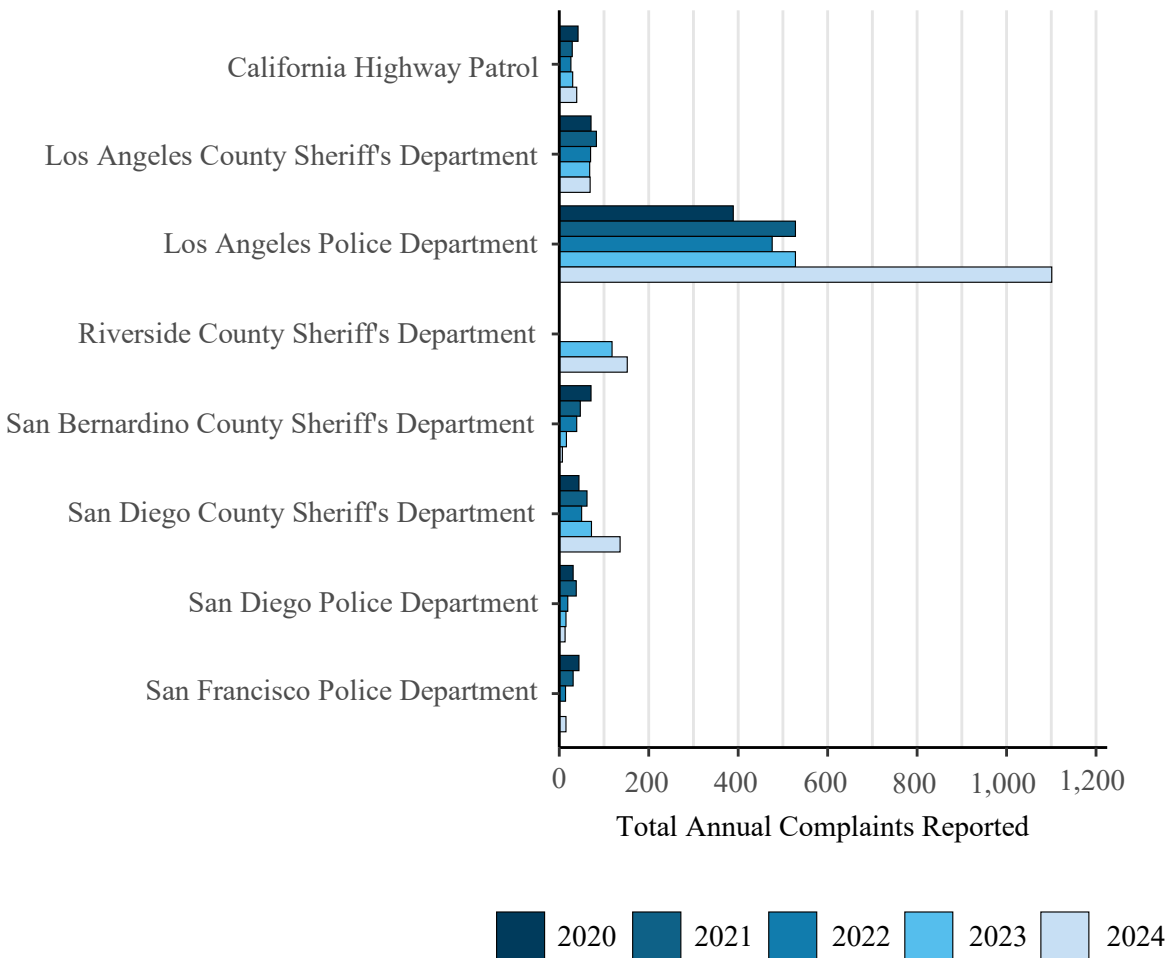
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reported was 1,532 in 2024, which is an 80.87% increase from 2023 (847), a 120.75% increase from 2022 (694), an 87.29% increase from 2021 (818), and a 121.39% increase from 2020 (692).

During the 2024 calendar year, three quarters of Wave 1 agencies (6 out of 8) experienced an increase in the number of racial and identity profiling complaints reported between 2023 and 2024. The San Bernadino County Sheriff's Department had the largest relative decrease (56.25%, from 16 in 2023 to 7 complaints in 2024). Los Angeles Police Department had the largest relative increase (108.52%, from 518 in 2023 to 1,101 in 2024), whereas the San Francisco Police Department went from not reporting any racial and identity profiling complaints in 2023 to 15 reported in 2024.

Figure 4. Wave 1 Racial and Identity Profiling Complaints Reported (2020-2024)



Wave 2 Agency Total Complaints Reported (2020-2024)

Wave 2 agencies reported 1,267 complaints in 2024, representing a 61.58% decrease from 2023 (3,298), a 13.10% decrease from 2022 (1,458), a 26.12% decrease from 2021 (1,715), and a 48.37% decrease from 2020 (2,454). However, the Oakland Police Department was unable to report complaint data within the reporting timeframe for 2024 due to a cyberattack. Due to 2024

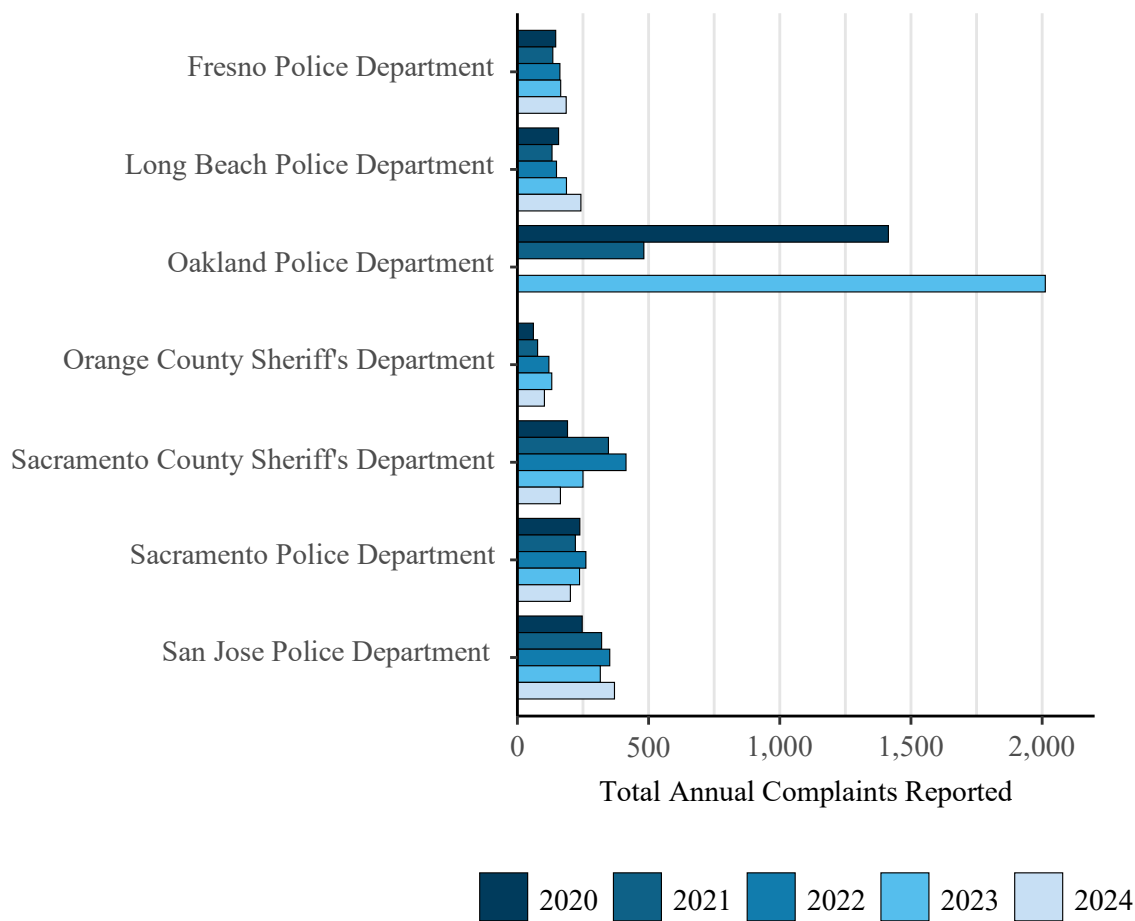
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totals for Wave 2 agencies not including Oakland PD, percent change is not directly comparable. In 2023, Oakland PD reported 2,012 total complaints, accounting for 61.02% of complaints for Wave 2 agencies. When excluding Oakland PD data to make 2023 and 2024 more comparable, Wave 2 agencies saw a 1.48% decrease from 1,286 complaints in 2023 to 1,267 in 2024.

Half of Wave 2 agencies (3 out of 6)⁵ experienced an increase in the total number of civilian complaints reported between 2023 and 2024. The agency that experienced the largest relative increase was the Long Beach Police Department (29.41%, from 187 in 2023 to 242 in 2024). Sacramento County Sheriff's Department experienced the largest relative decrease (34.40%, from 250 in 2023 to 164 in 2024).

Figure 5. Wave 2 Total Complaints Reported (2020-2024)



Wave 2 Racial and Identity Profiling Complaints (2020-2024)

Wave 2 agencies reported a 2.24% increase in racial and identity profiling complaints from 2023

⁵ Oakland Police Department was unable to report civilian complaint data for 2024 within the reporting timeframe due to a cyberattack.

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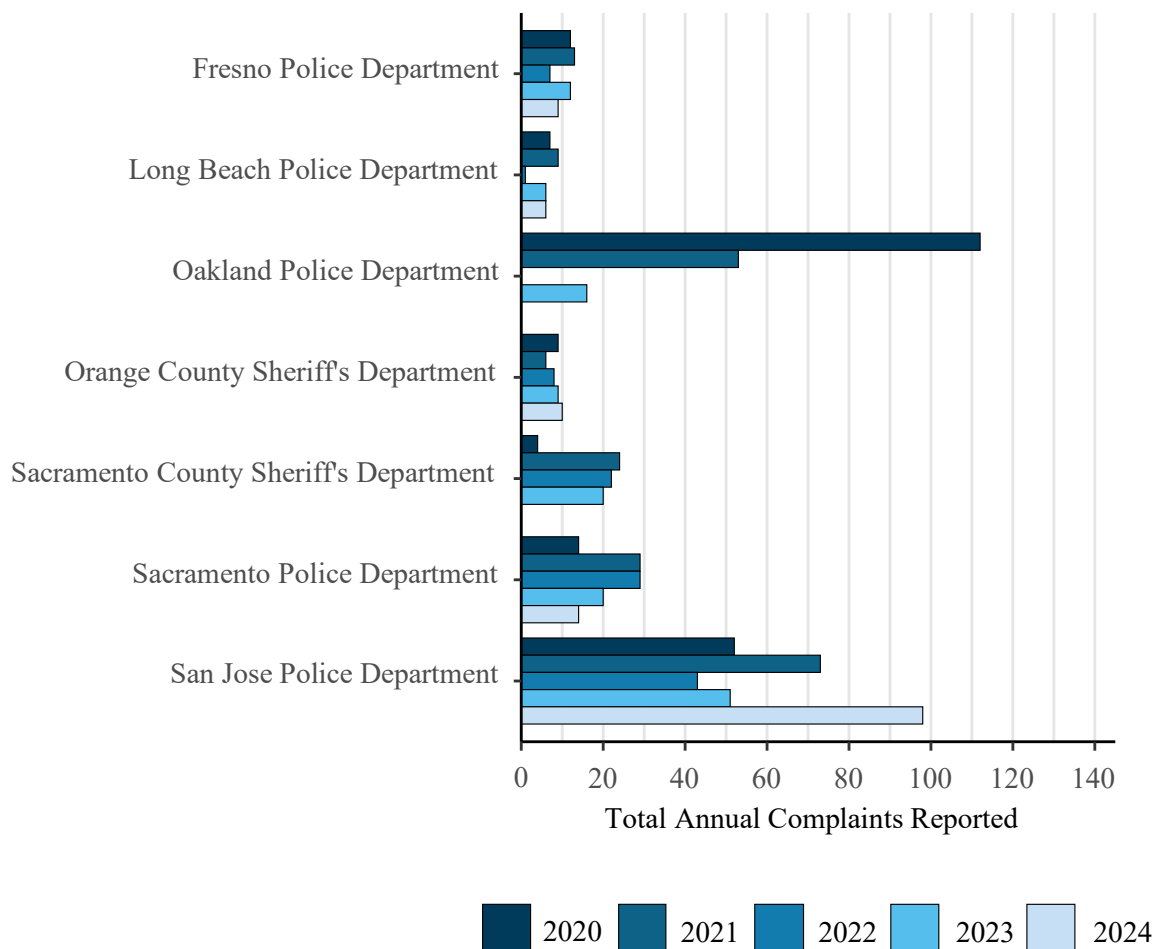
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to 2024 (from 134 in 2023 to 137 in 2024). This also marks an increase in racial and identity profiling complaints relative to 2022 (up 24.55% from 110). However, this represents a 33.82% decrease from 207 complaints in 2021 and a 34.76% decrease from 210 complaints in 2020.

As previously mentioned, Oakland PD experienced a cyberattack that prevented the submission of complaints data. As such, percent change between years is not directly comparable. In 2023, Oakland Police Department reported 16 racial and identity profiling complaints, accounting for 13.56% of racial and identity profiling complaints for Wave 2 agencies (134 complaints total). When excluding Oakland PD data to make 2023 and 2024 more comparable, Wave 2 agencies saw a 16.10% increase from 118 complaints in 2023 to 137 in 2024.

Half of Wave 2 (3 of 6)⁷ agencies reported an increase in the number of racial and identity profiling complaints between 2023 to 2024. The San Jose Police Department experienced the largest relative increase (92.16%, from 51 in 2023 to 98 in 2024). The Sacramento County Sheriff's Department experienced the largest relative decrease (100.00%, from 20 in 2023 to 0 in 2024).

Figure 6. Wave 2 Racial and Identity Profiling Complaints Reported (2020-2024)



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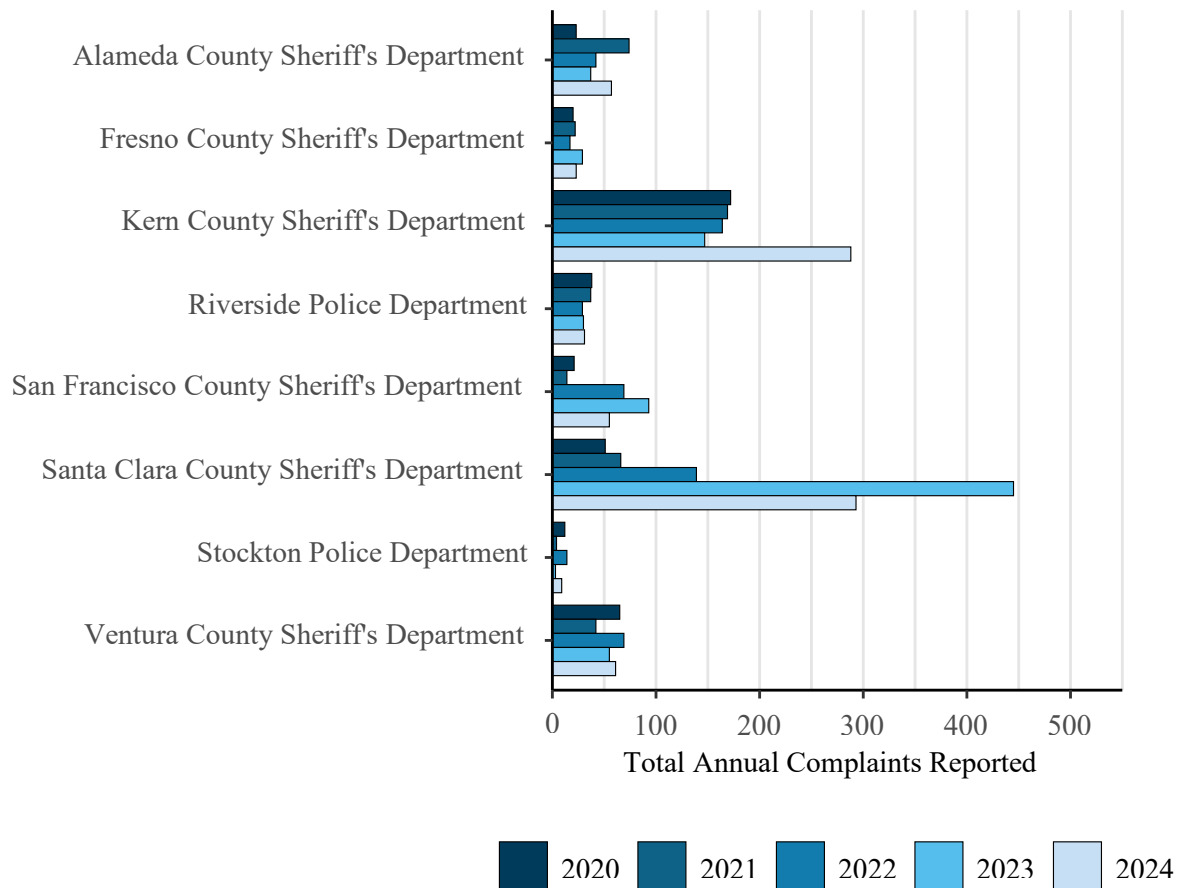
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Wave 3 Total Complaints Reported (2020-2024)

Wave 3 agencies reported 817 complaints in 2024. This was a 2.62% decrease from 2023 (839), a 50.46% increase from 2022 (543), a 90.89% increase from 2021 (428), and a 103.23% increase from 2020 (402).

Of the eight Wave 3 agencies, the majority (5 of 8) experienced an increase in total civilian complaints, while the remaining 3 experienced a decrease in the total number of civilian complaints reported between 2023 and 2024. The Stockton Police Department experienced the largest relative increase (200.00%, from 3 in 2023 to 9 in 2024). The agency that experienced the largest decrease was the San Francisco County Sheriff's Department (40.86%, from 93 in 2023 to 55 in 2024).

Figure 7. Wave 3 Total Complaints Reported (2020-2024)



Wave 3 Racial and Identity Profiling Complaints (2020-2024)

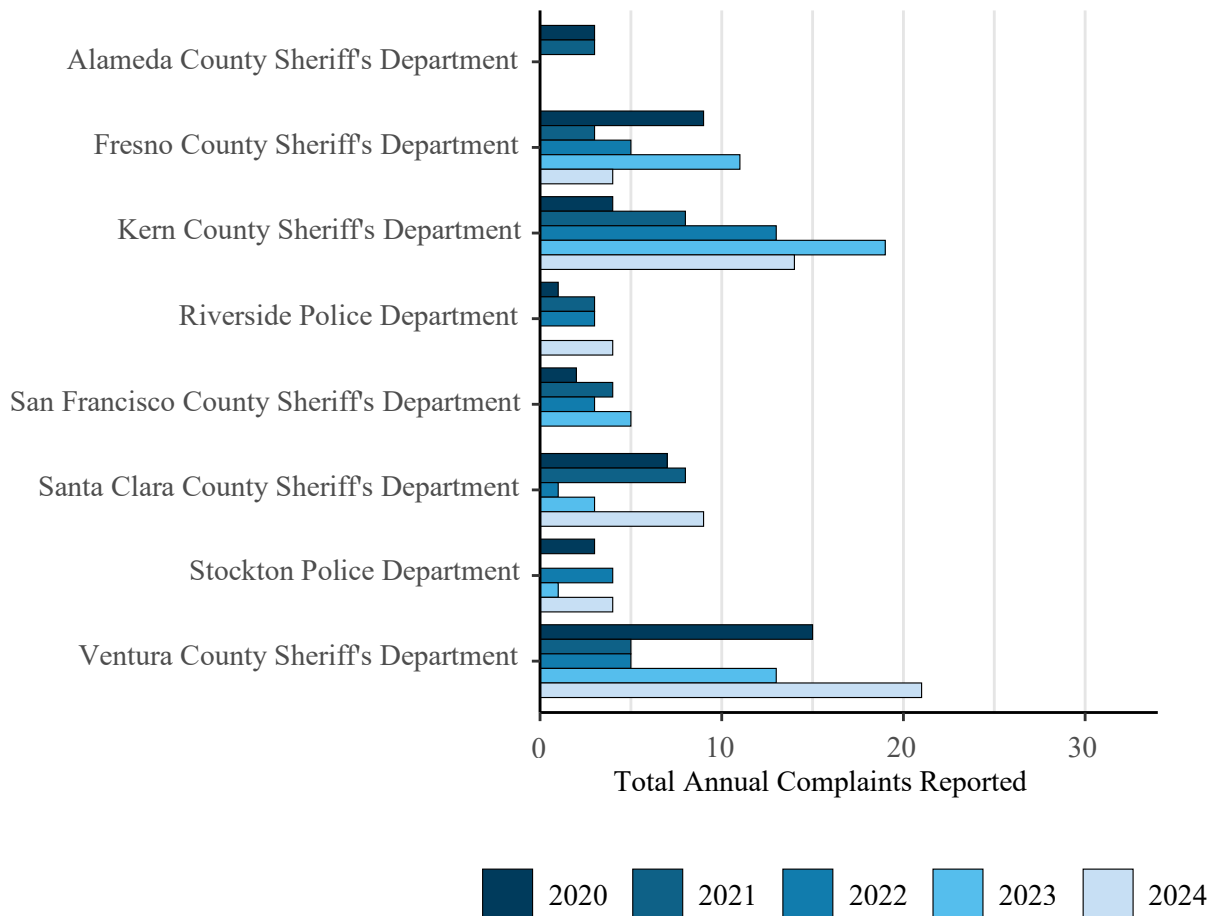
Wave 3 agencies reported 56 racial and identity profiling complaints in 2024, a 7.69% increase compared to 2023, a 65.71% increase from both 2022 and 2021 (both had 34 total racial and identity profiling complaints), and a 27.27% increase from 2020 (44).

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Half (4 of 8) of Wave 3 agencies experienced an increase in racial and identity profiling complaints between 2023 and 2024. One agency (Alameda County Sheriff's Department) had no change in profiling complaints with zero reported for both 2023 and 2024. The agency with the largest relative increase was Stockton Police Department (300.00%, from 1 in 2023 to 4 in 2024). San Francisco County Sheriff's Department reported a 100.00% decrease in racial and identity profiling complaints (from 5 in 2023 to 0 in 2024).

Figure 8. Wave 3 Racial and Identity Profiling Complaints Reported (2020-2024)



Wave 4 Total Complaints Reported (2020-2024)

Wave 4 agencies reported 4,510 complaints in 2024. This was a 6.57% increase from 2023 (4,232), a 25.14% increase from 2022 (3,604), a 34.75% increase from 2021 (3,347), and a 40.41% increase from 2020 (3,212).⁶

⁶ The number of Wave 4 agencies exceeds 400. Accordingly, complaint counts for all Wave 4 agencies cannot be displayed within a single graphic in the body of this report. Instead, the cross-year total complaint and racial and identity profiling complaints are reported in the appendix.

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Wave 4 Racial and Identity Profiling Complaints (2020-2024)

Wave 4 agencies reported a 49.73% increase in racial and identity profiling complaints from 2023 to 2024 (from 372 in 2023 to 557 in 2024). This also constitutes a relative increase from the three preceding years: a 41.01% increase from 2022 (395), a 51.36% increase from 2021 (368), and a 67.27% increase from 2020 (333).⁷

The Board will continue to monitor reporting agencies' complaint data and recommend that agencies adopt policies that allow for a more robust and effective complaint process, including adopting a universal definition of civilian complaint. For more information on best practices and policies regarding complaints please see XX of the Report.

II. UPDATES ON PRIOR BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Remove Deterrent Language from Complaint Forms

The Board has previously expressed concerns that Penal Code section 148.6⁸ could have a chilling effect on members of the public seeking to file a complaint.⁹ Specifically, the Board is concerned that requiring a complainant to sign a written statement acknowledging that an individual may face criminal liability for filing a false complaint could discourage community members from submitting valid complaints.¹⁰ In light of these concerns, the Board previously recommended that the Legislature delete or amend the language of Penal Code section 148.6¹¹ to remove the advisory statement, as well as the requirement that a complaint be signed and in writing.¹²

identity complaint totals for individual agencies are contained within **Appendix Tables XX and XX**.

⁷ **Three Wave 4 agencies did not report civilian complaint data in 2024:** Rio Vista Police Department, Trinity County District Attorney, and Yuba Community College Police Department. Rio Vista Police Department and Trinity County District Attorney also did not report complaint data in 2023. Yuba Community College Police Department did report complaint data in 2023, but reported a total of 0 complaints in 2023.

⁸ Penal Code section 148.6 provides that a law enforcement agency accepting an allegation of misconduct against a peace officer shall require complainants to read and sign an advisory that states, in part: "IT IS AGAINST THE LAW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT THAT YOU KNOW TO BE FALSE. IF YOU MAKE A COMPLAINT AGAINST AN OFFICER KNOWING THAT IT IS FALSE, YOU CAN BE PROSECUTED ON A MISDEMEANOR CHARGE." (Pen. Code, § 148.6, subd. (a)(2).)

⁹ See Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, *2025 Report*, pp. 170-173; Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, *2024 Report*, pp. 195-196; Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, *2023 Report*, p. 179; Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board *2022 Report*, p. 229.

¹⁰ Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, *2020 Report*, supra note 624, at p. 74; Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, *2021 Report*, supra note 625, at p. 134, fn. 294; Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, *2022 Report*, supra note 625, at p. 232; Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, *2023 Report*, supra note 625, at pp. 182-183.

¹¹ Penal Code section 148.6 provides that, to accept an allegation of misconduct against a peace officer, law enforcement agencies must require complainants to read and sign an advisory that states, in part: "IT IS AGAINST THE LAW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT THAT YOU KNOW TO BE FALSE. IF YOU MAKE A COMPLAINT AGAINST AN OFFICER KNOWING THAT IT IS FALSE, YOU CAN BE PROSECUTED ON A MISDEMEANOR CHARGE" (capitalization in original).

¹² See Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, *2023 Report*, p. 182-183; Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, *2022 Report*, p. 232; Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, *2021 Report*, p. 134, fn. 294; Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, *2020 Report*, p. 74-75.

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As of [DATE], deterrent language in California law enforcement agencies' complaint forms remains an active issue which may be impacted by the California Supreme Court's forthcoming ruling on the constitutionality of Penal Code section 148.6.¹³

The Board will continue to monitor this case, and the use of deterrent language in civilian complaint forms, in future reports.

III. 2026 BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

[For Board discussion]

IV. VISIONS FOR FUTURE REPORTS

[For Board discussion]

¹³ See *Los Angeles Police Protective League v. City of Los Angeles*, Cal. Case No. S275272.

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