

TRAFFIC STOP DATA

The Lower Merion Township Police Department is making available its annual traffic stop data. The attached chart collates and sorts all traffic stops by race and gender of the driver. Traffic stops are further categorized by the type of enforcement action taken during the stop (i.e., cited vs. receiving a warning or faulty equipment notice).

While benchmarking and analysis are difficult, we openly provide our traffic stop data for your review. A table which illustrates the racial composition of residents in some local and surrounding towns as well as a table showing the average daily traffic counts of several of our roadways is also included.

Traffic Stops 2019

Total Vehicle Stops in 2019: 14,998

Driver's Residency †	Percentage of all Stops		Percentage Cited		Percentage Warned	
Resident	29.08%	4359	21.38%	932	78.62%	3427
Non-Resident	70.98%	10639	23.96%	2549	76.04%	8090

Race	Percentage of all Stops		Percentage Cited		Percentage Warned	
White	54.26%	8133	23.04%	1874	76.96%	6259
Black	36.51%	5472	23.23%	1271	76.77%	4201
Hispanic	2.91%	436	23.39%	102	76.61%	334
All Others	6.38%	956	24.58%	235	75.52%	722
	Total:	14988	Total:	3482	Total:	11516

Gender	Percentage of all Stops		Percentage Cited		Percentage Warned	
Male	54.90%	8229	23.34%	1921	76.66%	6308
Female	44.93%	6734	23.02%	1550	76.98%	5184
Not Reported or N/A*	0.23%	35	31.43%	11	68.57%	24

Race and Gender	Percentage of all Stops		Percentage Cited		Percentage Warned	
White Male:	29.70%	4451	22.85%	1017	77.15%	3434
White Female:	24.56%	3681	23.28%	857	76.72%	2824
Black Male:	19.92%	2985	23.95%	715	76.05%	2270
Black Female:	16.59%	2487	22.36%	556	77.64%	1931
Hispanic Male:	1.82%	273	22.34%	61	77.66%	212
Hispanic Female:	1.09%	163	25.15%	41	74.85%	122
All Others	6.39%	958	24.53%	235	75.47%	723

Each count represents a single stop of an operator. These numbers do not reflect the number of citations or warnings issued. A stop is categorized as "Cited," if any number of citations are issued regardless of warnings being issued as well.

*May Include Citations Mailed to Vehicle Owner or Business

† Based on Driver's Zip Code - Zip Codes 19010 and 19003 Include Parts of Delaware County

TRAFFIC STOP DATA

Lower Merion Township Population and Local / Surrounding Towns (2010 Census)

Area	Population	White %	Black %
Lower Merion Township	57,825	84.0	5.5
Bala Cynwyd	9,416	87.8	3.5
Gladwyne	3,780	93.8	1.3
Ardmore	12,519	78.6	12.9
Wynnefield, Phila	41,172	14.5	79.1
Overbrook, Phila	29,883	10.8	84.5
Haverford Township	48,491	91.2	2.7
Radnor Township	31,531	85.9	3.9
Upper Merion Township	28,395	76.0	5.5
Norristown Borough	34,324	40.9	35.9

Average Daily Traffic (PennDOT)

Roadway	Average Daily Traffic (Vehicles)
City Avenue	39,000
Haverford Road	13,000
Lancaster Avenue	20,000
Montgomery Avenue	16,000
Belmont Avenue	19,000
I-76	127,000
Conshohocken State Road	15,000

What does the data mean or how can it be interpreted? Unfortunately, this cannot be easily answered. Progressive police agencies and accreditation commissions all agree that this data should be collected as part of broader efforts to identify and / or prevent the effects of implicit and explicit biases. This concept also appears as a recommendation in *The Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing* (May 2015). Analyzing the data, however, can be quite difficult.

At first glance, a layperson will usually say that the data should be compared to the census population of the jurisdiction. However, this method of “benchmarking” is flawed. A municipality’s residential population is hardly representative of its daytime and transient highway populations. The many factors and complexities of the scientific analyses involved are thoroughly examined by the Police Executive Research Forum’s 2005 project publication, *Understanding Race Data from Vehicle Stops: A Stakeholder’s Guide*. A link to the 95-page document is provided below.

https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/publications/understanding_Race_Data.pdf

While Pennsylvania does not require or collect this data for traffic citations / stops, our agency does, even though methods for large scale benchmarking and analysis remain difficult. As these methods evolve, we will continue to collect the data and glean from it what we can. We continue, as we always have, to focus on comprehensive training and supervision of our officers.

In addition to annual reviews on department wide statistics, all officers are closely supervised and constantly evaluated. Each traffic enforcement action, detention, and arrest require supervisory review. Each officer’s productivity and statistics are further reviewed monthly, quarterly and annually. Dash and body cam videos are reviewed randomly and for specific arrests / actions. Additionally, our agency maintains a consent search policy which is more restrictive than state and federal law. Officers are prohibited from conducting consent searches based upon a “hunch”. They must be able to articulate the reasons why such a search is needed, and the person voluntarily submitting to the search acknowledges their approval via a signed consent form.