



# VIRGINIA STATE CRIME COMMISSION

## 2023 INTERIM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Virginia State Crime Commission was established within the legislative branch of government in 1966. The Crime Commission is a criminal justice agency (Virginia Code § 9.1-101) that is authorized to study, report, and make recommendations on all areas of public safety and protection (Virginia Code § 30-156 *et seq.*). The Crime Commission consists of thirteen members – six members of the House of Delegates, three members of the Senate, three non-legislative citizen members appointed by the Governor, and the Attorney General or his designee.

During 2023, Crime Commission staff conducted two large comprehensive studies - intentional homicides and motor vehicle, pedestrian, and bicyclist fatalities. Staff also continued work on the sealing and expungement of criminal history records. Additionally, staff participated as a member of the Virginia Pretrial Advancement Team which was formed as part of the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services' pilot of the Public Safety Assessment (PSA).

Staff's homicide study focused on intentional homicides that occurred in Virginia between 2017 and 2022, including the nature and circumstances of the homicides, victim and offender demographics, charges filed and case dispositions, and criminal history records of convicted offenders. As part of the study, staff manually reviewed, catalogued, and analyzed the criminal history records of 930 adults who were convicted of intentional homicide during this 5 year timeframe.

Similarly, staff examined motor vehicle, pedestrian, and bicyclist fatalities that occurred in Virginia between 2017 and 2022. Because highway safety encompasses numerous disciplines, staff approached the study from a criminal justice perspective. Staff examined various highway safety laws in Virginia and other states, charge and conviction data for specific Virginia offenses, and measures to better promote highway safety.

The Crime Commission met on November 21st and heard staff presentations on intentional homicide, motor vehicle, pedestrian, and bicyclist fatalities, and the sealing and expungement of criminal records. Members also heard from several guest presenters - Thomas Abt (General Principles for Curbing Violent Crime), Chief Rick Edwards (Gun Violence), Dr. Bryan E. Porter and Dr. Nic Ward (How did COVID impact traffic safety?), and Stephen Read (Pedestrian Safety Factors & Actions).

The Executive Director of the Crime Commission serves as the designee for the Chair of the Crime Commission on the Forensic Science Board, Indigent Defense Commission, and the Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence.

The Crime Commission will publish its 2023 Annual Report which will include detailed study reports by June 30, 2024. Additional information about the Crime Commission is available on the agency website at <http://vscc.virginia.gov>.