



INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

Report Concerning the Police-Involved Death in
Harford County on June 9, 2026

September 23, 2026

Public Release: September 30, 2026

The Independent Investigations Division of the Maryland Office of the Attorney General (the “IID”) is charged with investigating “police-involved incidents that result in the death of individuals or injuries likely to result in death.”¹ If the Office of the Attorney General determines that the investigation provides sufficient grounds for prosecution, then the IID “shall have exclusive authority to prosecute the offense.”²

I. Investigation Summary

On June 9, 2026, the IID began an investigation of a fatal vehicle collision in Harford County involving a man later identified as Tremayne Murphy,³ a Harford County Sheriff’s Office (HCSO) deputy, and multiple civilian bystanders. The IID’s investigation focused exclusively on potential criminal culpability relating to the subject officer’s conduct. During the investigation, the IID obtained evidence, including police radio transmissions, dispatch records, police and EMS reports, police body-worn camera footage, photographs, department policies, interviews with civilian and law enforcement witnesses, and a crash investigation report.⁴ Based on that evidence, the IID has made the following factual findings.

On June 9, 2026, at 3:24 p.m., HCSO Senior Deputy Allen Jennings⁵ used the emergency lights and sirens of his marked patrol cruiser to attempt a traffic stop of a Buick sedan near the intersection of eastbound U.S. Route 40 (U.S. 40) and Otter Point Road in Abingdon, Maryland. The Buick, later discovered to be driven by Tremayne Murphy, braked and slowed slightly. Deputy Jennings radioed dispatch that he believed the Buick was slowing to stop.

Just before 3:26 p.m., however, Murphy began accelerating and weaving in and out of traffic. Deputy Jennings radioed dispatch that he was beginning a pursuit. A supervisor asked for the reason for his initial stop. Deputy Jennings responded that the stop was for speeding, a seatbelt violation, and possible “CDS”—controlled dangerous substance—activity.⁶ The supervisor gave Deputy Jennings permission to continue the pursuit.⁷

¹ Md. Code, State Gov’t § 6-602 (c)(1).

² Md. Code, State Gov’t § 6-604 (a)(1).

³ Murphy was a Black male from Edgewood, Maryland who was 45 years old at the time of the incident.

⁴ Compelled statements by subject officers may not be relied upon in criminal prosecutions due to the subject officers’ Fifth Amendment rights. If any compelled statements exist in this case, they have not been considered in the IID’s investigation. Further, the subject officer did not make a statement to the IID in this case, which had no impact on the prosecutorial decision.

⁵ Deputy Jennings has been employed by HCSO since February 2016. He is a White male who was 35 years old at the time of the incident.

⁶ On the date of the incident, HCSO made a public Facebook post stating that the reason for the stop was because HCSO deputies “observed a suspected drug transaction occur on Meadowood Drive.” The IID’s investigation corroborated a seatbelt violation and speeding, which under HCSO policy and training (*see infra* n. 8), permitted the pursuit of Murphy’s Buick.

⁷ HCSO Operational Policy 0402 states that deputies may initiate a pursuit when they have “a reasonable belief that the driver of the subject vehicle is knowingly failing to stop” in response to the deputy’s lights and sirens, regardless of the underlying offense. Deputies must immediately notify dispatch of the pursuit via radio and must receive permission from a supervisor to continue the pursuit. Deputies must also provide dispatch with the reason for the pursuit, a description of the subject vehicle, the location and direction of travel of the vehicle, and the speeds involved. The decision to initiate and continue a pursuit rests with the deputy’s and the supervisor’s evaluation that the perceived

The pursuit lasted less than one minute and covered approximately 1.5 miles eastbound on U.S. 40 during moderate traffic in daylight. Throughout the pursuit, Deputy Jennings updated dispatch on vehicle location, direction of travel, and speed. Deputy Jennings also reported additional traffic violations by Murphy, including driving on the shoulder of the road and running a red light. On multiple occasions, Deputy Jennings adjusted his driving and slowed down to account for uninvolved bystander vehicles and intersections.⁸ Dashboard camera footage shows that Deputy Jennings was one to two seconds behind the Buick when he activated his emergency lights, roughly three seconds behind the Buick when the pursuit began, and ten to eleven seconds behind the Buick at the time of the crash. During the pursuit, Dep. Jennings reported that the Buick had reached an estimated speed of over 78 m.p.h., and that his cruiser reached speeds near 100 m.p.h. while trying to catch up to the Buick.

At approximately 3:27 p.m., Murphy drove the Buick through a red light at the intersection of U.S. 40 and Riverside Parkway, where he collided with a civilian vehicle that was making an authorized left turn. The initial collision impacted other uninvolved vehicles nearby. Dashboard camera footage shows that the Buick caught fire nearly instantly after the crash, though the other vehicles did not. Dep. Jennings reported the crash to



Image 1: A map of the pursuit route, with Point A representing the location of the attempted traffic stop, and Point B representing the site of the crash.

dispatch and requested both backup and emergency medical services (EMS). When Deputy Jennings arrived at the intersection roughly ten seconds after the crash, the Buick was fully engulfed in flames.

Over the next several minutes, Deputy Jennings and other officers helped evacuate uninvolved bystanders from the area. Additionally, the officers tried to use fire extinguishers to put out the Buick's flames but were unsuccessful. Firefighters arrived a short time later and extinguished the flames. They later removed Murphy from the Buick and pronounced him deceased.⁹

danger of not apprehending a fleeing suspect outweighs the risk of injury to the deputy or the public from a vehicle pursuit. An interview with an HCSO trainer confirmed that deputies are trained according to this policy and expected to follow it.

⁸ This conduct appears to be consistent with HCSO Policy 0402, which instructs deputies to utilize their lights and sirens throughout a pursuit, operate the vehicle with due care and caution under the circumstances, and approach intersections with caution to ensure that they are clear before proceeding.

⁹ Murphy's identity was initially unknown but, after a comprehensive investigation, was confirmed on July 31, 2026.

After completing its investigation and evaluating all available evidence, the Office of the Attorney General has determined that Deputy Jennings did not commit a crime under Maryland law. Accordingly, the Office of the Attorney General has declined to prosecute Deputy Jennings in this case. The legal analysis explains why the Office of the Attorney General will not bring charges under the relevant Maryland statutes.

II. Legal Analysis

After a criminal investigation is complete, prosecutors must determine whether to bring criminal charges against someone. When making that determination, prosecutors have a legal and ethical duty to charge a person with a crime only when they can meet the State's burden of proof; that is, when the available evidence can prove each element of the alleged offense beyond a reasonable doubt.

The relevant offense that was considered in this case is criminally negligent manslaughter by vehicle.¹⁰ To convict a defendant of criminally negligent manslaughter by vehicle, a prosecutor must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant drove a motor vehicle in a criminally negligent manner and in doing so, caused the death of another person.¹¹ Criminal negligence requires proof that the defendant "should have been aware, but failed to perceive that his or her conduct created a 'substantial and unjustifiable risk' to human life and that the failure to perceive that risk was a 'gross deviation' from the standard of care that a reasonable person would exercise."¹² Where alleged negligence involves a law enforcement officer, the "reasonable person" perspective is replaced with that of a "reasonably prudent police officer," which must account for the fact that an officer on duty is permitted to violate some traffic laws under certain circumstances.¹³ In determining whether an officer's actions constitute criminal negligence, the totality of the circumstances must be considered, including relevant factors such as department policy, use of warning devices, traffic conditions, speed, yielding to traffic signals, and erratic driving.¹⁴

Applying these principles here, prosecutors must analyze both Deputy Jennings's decision to pursue the Buick and his actions while his cruiser was in motion. Regarding the decision to initiate the pursuit, Deputy Jennings initiated a traffic stop for a seatbelt violation, which was within his authority under HCSO's policy and consistent with his training.¹⁵ When Murphy fled the traffic stop, Deputy Jennings radioed his decision to initiate a pursuit and he received permission from a supervisor to continue it; both acts are consistent with Maryland law and HCSO policies and training.¹⁶ The fact that the supervisor concurred with Deputy Jennings's decision that a pursuit was appropriate is evidence that Deputy Jennings was not exhibiting behavior that was a

¹⁰ Md. Code, Criminal Law § 2-210.

¹¹ MPJI-Cr 4:17.10 (3d ed. 2024).

¹² For a more detailed discussion of the different negligence standards, see [this opinion](#) written by the Office of the Attorney General. 96 Md. Op. Atty. Gen. 128 (2011).

¹³ *Boyer v. State*, 323 Md. 558, 589 (1991).

¹⁴ See, e.g., *Boyer*, 323 Md. at 591; *Taylor v. State*, 83 Md. App. 399, 404 (Ct. Sp. App. Md. 1990).

¹⁵ See Md. Code, Trans. § 22-412.3; Md. Code, Trans. § 26-201.

¹⁶ See Md. Code, Trans. § 21-106 (granting emergency vehicles utilizing their lights and sirens the privilege to violate certain traffic laws in the exercise of their duties); Md. Crim. Proc. § 2-301 (setting the conditions for law enforcement officers to engage in fresh pursuit).

gross deviation from the standard of care expected of an HCSO deputy. Against this backdrop, there is insufficient evidence to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Deputy Jennings' decision to initiate and engage in the pursuit created an unjustifiable risk that was a gross deviation from the reasonable standard of care.

Regarding Deputy Jennings' conduct while the cruiser was in motion, we cannot prove beyond a reasonable doubt that he acted unlawfully. HCSO policies and training require deputies to drive with due care and caution during pursuits, as well as to be mindful of intersections and civilian traffic. The risk factors at the time included a moderate amount of traffic during daylight and dry weather conditions. Deputy Jennings activated his emergency lights and sirens, maintained control of his cruiser, used the appropriate radio procedures, and significantly decelerated around uninvolved vehicles and at intersections. None of those actions represented significant deviations from the standard of care outlined by HCSO training and policies. As a result, we cannot prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Deputy Jennings' conduct during the pursuit created an unjustifiable risk that was a gross deviation from the reasonable standard of care for an HCSO deputy.¹⁷

Given the totality of the circumstances, there is insufficient evidence to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the subject officer failed to perceive an unjustifiable risk to human life in a manner that constituted a gross deviation from the reasonable standard of care.¹⁸ Accordingly, the Office of the Attorney General will not charge the subject officer with criminally negligent manslaughter by motor vehicle in this case.

III. Conclusion

This report has presented factual findings, legal analysis, and conclusions relevant to the June 9, 2026, police-involved vehicle collision in Harford County, Maryland that resulted in the death of Tremayne Murphy. The Office of the Attorney General has declined to pursue charges in this case because, based on the evidence obtained in its investigation, we cannot prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the subject officer committed a crime.

¹⁷ Because there is insufficient evidence to establish that Dep. Jennings acted with criminal negligence, this report does not analyze whether he caused the death of the decedent.

¹⁸ Because prosecutors could not prove that the subject officer drove in a criminally negligent manner, we could not prove the more severe charge of manslaughter by vehicle, which requires a prosecutor to prove that the defendant drove with gross negligence, a level above criminal negligence.