



**INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATIONS
DIVISION**

Report Concerning the Police-Involved Death in
Calvert County on December 12, 2025

March 16, 2026

Public Release: March 23, 2026

Declination Report Concerning the Officer-Involved Vehicle Collision that Resulted in the Death of Servon Gatewood on December 12, 2025

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 Attorney General determines that the investigation provides sufficient grounds for prosecution, then the IID “shall have exclusive authority to prosecute the offense.”²

I. Introduction

On Friday, December 12, 2025, at approximately 12:30 a.m., a deputy with the Calvert County Sheriff’s Office (CCSO) observed a Nissan sedan drive past his cruiser in the 500 block of Md. State Route 4. The deputy followed the Nissan and turned on his emergency equipment in an attempt to stop the car for a traffic violation in the area of N. Prince Frederick Boulevard and Chapline Place Road. The driver of the Nissan did not stop, and the deputy pursued it. Approximately one mile after the attempted car stop, the Nissan entered the intersection of Stoakley Road and Solomons Island Road N., where it struck a Honda sedan driven by an adult woman. A third vehicle, a Kia SUV, was struck in the collision. The officer’s vehicle did not collide with any vehicles during the incident.

The female driver of the Honda was transported to a local hospital where she was pronounced dead. The driver and passenger of the Kia were transported to a local hospital and treated for non-life-threatening injuries. The driver of the Nissan was taken into custody and transported to an area hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

After completing its investigation and evaluating all available evidence, the Office of the Attorney General has determined that the subject officer did not commit a crime under Maryland law. Accordingly, the Attorney General has declined to prosecute the subject officer in this case.

The IID’s investigation focused exclusively on potential criminal culpability relating to the subject officer’s conduct. By statute, the IID only has jurisdiction to investigate the actions of police officers, not those of any other individuals involved in the incident. Moreover, the IID’s analysis does not consider issues of civil liability or the department’s administrative review of the officers’ conduct. Compelled statements by subject officers may be considered in civil or administrative processes but may not be used in criminal investigations or 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.

This report is composed of a factual narrative followed by a legal analysis. Every fact in the narrative is supported by the evidence obtained in this investigation, including autopsy reports, police radio transmissions, dispatch records, police and EMS reports, police body-worn camera footage, photographs, department policies, and a crash investigation report. The subject officer did not make a statement in this case, which has no impact on the prosecutorial decision.

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

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

The legal analysis explains why the IID will not bring charges under the relevant Maryland statutes.

This investigation involved one decedent, the driver of the fleeing Nissan sedan, and one subject officer.

- A. The decedent, Servon Gatewood, was 58 years old at the time of the incident. She was a Black woman who lived in Lusby, Maryland.
- B. The driver of the fleeing Nissan, Savon Q. Samuel, was 32 years old at the time of the incident. He is a Black man who lived in Pikesville, Maryland.
- C. Deputy Ryan Campbell has been employed by CCSO since January 2024 and had three years of prior law enforcement experience. He is a White man who was 29 years old at the time of the incident.

The IID reviewed all available departmental disciplinary records and criminal histories of these involved parties and where they existed, determined none were relevant to the legal analysis.

II. Factual Summary

On December 12, 2025, at approximately 12:30 a.m., CCSO Deputy Ryan Campbell was in a marked patrol cruiser parked in the median on Maryland State Route 4 (“MD 4”) when he observed a Nissan sedan with a brake light out. Deputy Campbell followed the vehicle onto W. Dares Beach Road, then onto N. Prince Frederick Boulevard. Just before 12:31 a.m. near a roundabout at N. Prince Frederick Boulevard and Chapline Place Boulevard, CCSO Deputy Campbell activated his emergency lights and sirens to attempt a traffic stop. The Nissan did not stop, and Deputy Campbell immediately radioed dispatch to inform them that he had begun a pursuit, which a supervisor acknowledged.

In total, the pursuit covered approximately 0.8 miles and lasted roughly forty seconds. During the pursuit, Deputy Campbell informed dispatchers that he was in a pursuit on N. Prince Frederick Boulevard headed toward Stoakley Road, and reported that the fleeing vehicle was traveling at a speed of 83

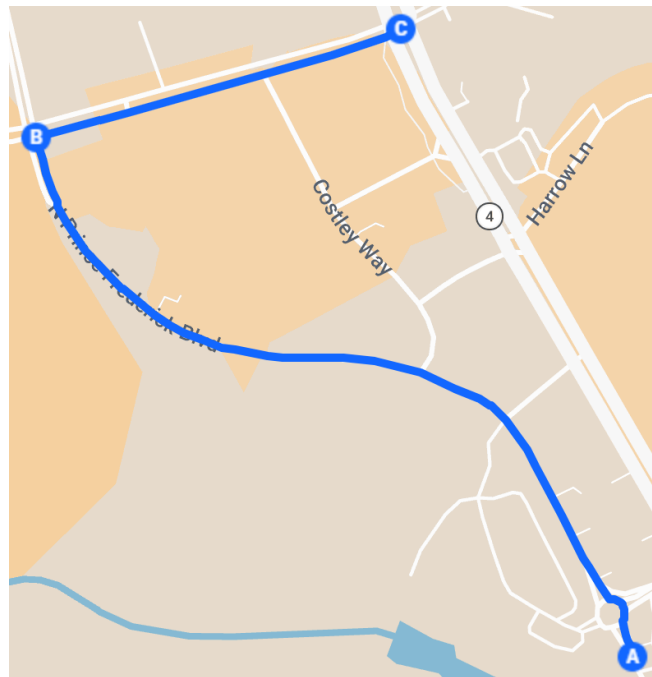


Image 1: A map showing the path of Deputy Campbell’s interaction with the Nissan, starting with Point A where Deputy Campbell activated his emergency lights and siren and began the pursuit. Point B is a right turn onto Stoakley Road, and Point C is where the crash occurred.

m.p.h. There was light traffic in the area. Deputy Campbell remained between seven and eight seconds behind the Nissan, kept his emergency lights and sirens on, maintained control of his cruiser, and did not run any red lights throughout the pursuit.

At approximately 12:31 a.m., the Nissan turned right onto Stoakley Road and, seconds later, drove at a high rate of speed through a red light at the intersection of Stoakley Road and MD 4. As the Nissan entered the intersection, it “T-boned” Ms. Servon Gatewood’s Honda sedan, which was traveling southbound through a green light on MD 4. The impact pushed both the Nissan and the Honda into a Kia SUV that was sitting stationary in a northbound turn lane on MD 4.

Deputy Campbell radioed dispatch about the crash as it occurred and arrived at the scene about eight seconds later. Once on scene, Deputy Campbell immediately approached the Nissan and arrested its sole occupant, later identified as Savon Samuel. Other CCSO deputies arrived shortly afterward and began attempting to render medical aid to Ms. Gatewood and the Kia’s occupants. Ms. Gatewood was found unresponsive and trapped in her vehicle. Later, EMS arrived on scene and took over treatment of the people involved in the crash, eventually transporting Ms. Gatewood, Mr. Samuel, and the occupants of the Kia to a local hospital. Mr. Samuel and the Kia’s occupants were treated for non-life-threatening injuries. Ms. Gatewood was pronounced dead at the hospital. Mr. Samuel has since been charged with multiple criminal offenses by the Calvert County State’s Attorney’s Office.

III. Supplemental Information

A. Autopsy

On December 12, 2025, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (the “OCME”) performed an autopsy on Ms. Gatewood. The Medical Examiner determined that Ms. Gatewood died from multiple injuries sustained as a result of a motor vehicle collision. The manner of death was ruled an “Accident.”³

B. Maryland State Police Crash Investigation Report

The Maryland State Police completed a detailed Crash Investigation Report. The report’s results were consistent with the above description of the crash.

³ Manner of death is a classification used to define whether a death is from intentional causes, unintentional causes, natural causes, or undetermined causes. The Maryland Office of Chief Medical Examiner uses five categories of manner of death: natural, accident, suicide, homicide, and undetermined. “Accident” applies when injuries caused the death in question and there is little or no evidence that the injuries occurred with the intent to harm or cause death. These terms are not considered a legal determination, rather they are largely used to assist in the collection of public health statistics. “A Guide for Manner of Death Classification,” First Edition, National Association of Medical Examiners, February 2002.

C. Department Policy

The Calvert County Sheriff's Office Administrative & Operational Manual provides guidance to its officers through specific policies and procedures. Specifically, the department policy provides guidelines for deputies involved in traffic stops and pursuits.

CCSO Policy 11-301 indicates that deputies are allowed to engage in pursuits when "it is necessary to apprehend a violator of the laws of [Maryland]." A pursuit is justified when the deputy knows or has reasonable suspicion to believe that a suspect has committed or is attempting to commit a crime, or a traffic infraction where the suspect refuses to stop and the necessity of the apprehension outweighs the danger created by the pursuit. Essentially, deputies must weigh the urgency of the pursuit and the tactics used against the potential for injuries or property damage possibly caused by the pursuit. Deputies must also consider the continued actions of the suspect. The CCSO policy gives deputies "wide latitude in deciding to pursue and after pursuit has begun, in choosing the methods of conducting and ending the pursuit." Once a pursuit is initiated, the deputy must immediately advise dispatch of the reason for the pursuit and seek supervisor approval to continue the pursuit.

According to CCSO policies 11-302 and 11-303, deputies must consider factors such as the type of offense, the deputy's ability to drive at high speeds, the characteristics of the roads, traffic density, and the danger to the public. Additionally, deputies are required to use their emergency equipment and attempt to apprehend the suspect as soon as possible to minimize the risk of injury. According to CCSO policy 11-304, the decision to abandon pursuit is within the discretion of the pursuing deputy.

IV. 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 only charge a person with a crime when they can meet the State's burden of proof; that is, when the available evidence can prove each element of the alleged crime beyond a reasonable doubt. Prosecutors also need to determine whether the person accused of the crime could raise an affirmative defense. In those cases, prosecutors not only need to prove the crime, but they also need to determine whether the evidence could disprove the defense beyond a reasonable doubt. Ultimately, the decision to bring any charges rests on whether the available evidence is sufficient for prosecutors to meet that standard.

The relevant offense that was considered in this case is criminally negligent manslaughter by vehicle. This offense requires proving that an accused person caused the death of another person by operating a vehicle in a criminally negligent manner.⁴

If a prosecutor cannot prove criminally negligent manslaughter by vehicle based on the available evidence, they cannot prove the more severe charge of manslaughter by vehicle,⁵ which

⁴ Md. Code, Criminal Law § 2-210.

⁵ Md. Code, Criminal Law § 2-209.

requires a prosecutor to prove that the defendant drove with gross negligence, a level above criminal negligence. Both offenses require proof of causation—the evidence must show that the defendant’s actions were the legal cause of the death or harm at issue.

There is insufficient evidence to prove that Deputy Campbell drove his vehicle in a criminally negligent manner. Accordingly, the IID will not pursue criminal charges against him. This report explains below in further detail why, based on the evidence, a prosecutor could not prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Deputy Campbell committed a crime.

A. Criminally Negligent Manslaughter by Vehicle

Proving criminally negligent manslaughter by vehicle requires a prosecutor to establish three elements beyond a reasonable doubt: (1) that the accused drove a motor vehicle; (2) in a criminally negligent manner; and (3) in doing so caused the death of Ms. Gatewood.⁶ Criminal negligence requires proof that the accused “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.”⁷ In Maryland, negligence is measured on a spectrum—with simple negligence on one end, criminal negligence in the middle, and gross negligence on the other end.⁸ Where alleged negligence involves a law enforcement officer, the “reasonable person” perspective is replaced with a “reasonably prudent police officer” perspective, which must account for the fact that an officer is permitted to violate some traffic laws under certain circumstances.⁹

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.¹⁰ When examining the weight given to the violation of departmental policy, the Supreme Court of Maryland has held that, “a violation of police guidelines *may* be the basis for a criminal prosecution.”¹¹ The Court clarified that, “while a violation of police guidelines is not negligence *per se*, it is a factor to be considered in determining the reasonableness of police conduct.” Maryland courts have considered officers’ policy violations as evidence of negligence, recklessness, unreasonableness, and corrupt intent.¹² However, a “hyper technical” violation of

⁶ MPJI-Cr 4:17.10 (3d ed. 2024)

⁷ 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).

⁸ See *Beattie v. State*, 216 Md. App. 667, 683 (2014) (explaining “a gross deviation from the standard of care” by comparing it with a similar Kansas statute that used the “material deviation” standard, stating: “a ‘material deviation’ from the standard of care require[s] ‘something more than ordinary or simple negligence yet something less than gross and wanton negligence.’”).

⁹ *Boyer v. State*, 323 Md. 558, 589 (1991).

¹⁰ See, e.g., *Boyer*, 323 Md. at 591; *Taylor v. State*, 83 Md. App. 399, 404 (Ct. Sp. App. Md. 1990).

¹¹ *State v. Pagotto*, 361 Md. 528, 557 (2000) (citing *State v. Albrecht*, 336 Md. 475, 502-03 (1994)) (emphasis in original).

¹² See, e.g., *Albrecht*, 336 Md. at 503; *Pagotto*, 361 Md. at 550-53; *Koushall v. State*, 249 Md. App. 717, 729-30 (2021), *aff’d*, No. 13, Sept. Term, 2021 (Md. Feb. 3, 2022); *Kern v. State*, No. 2443, Sept. Term 2013, 2016 WL 3670027, at *5 (Md. Ct. Spec. App. Jul. 11, 2016) (unreported); *Merkel v. State*, No. 690 Sept. Term 2018, 2019 WL 2060952, at *8 (Md. Ct. Spec. App. May 9, 2019) (unreported); *Mayor and City Council of Baltimore v. Hart*, 395 Md. 394, 398 (2006) (civil litigation).

policy, without more, is not sufficient to establish gross negligence.¹³ Applying these principles to the present matter, prosecutors must individually analyze Deputy Campbell's decision to try to stop the Nissan and his actions while the cruiser was in motion.

Regarding the decision to engage in the pursuit, CCSO policy authorized Deputy Campbell to pursue the Nissan when it fled after Deputy Campbell used his emergency lights to signal a traffic stop.¹⁴ This pursuit occurred at a time and location with low traffic density, and Deputy Campbell's decision to engage in the pursuit was approved over the radio by a supervisor. In brief, Deputy Campbell's decision to pursue the Nissan was in accordance with CCSO policy and within his legal authority. Accordingly, there is insufficient evidence to prove that Deputy Campbell's decision to pursue the Nissan created an unjustifiable risk that was a gross deviation from the reasonable standard of care. Therefore, we cannot prove that Deputy Campbell was criminally negligent.

Regarding Deputy Campbell's actions while the cruiser was in motion, he activated his emergency lights and sirens, maintained control of his cruiser, used the appropriate radio procedures, and did not run any red lights during the pursuit. Those actions were consistent with CCSO policy and training. Thus, we cannot show that Deputy Campbell's actions during the pursuit created an unjustifiable risk that was a gross deviation from the reasonable standard of care.¹⁵

Given the totality of the circumstances, there is insufficient evidence to prove that Deputy Campbell acted in a manner that created a substantial and unjustifiable risk to human life during the pursuit. Further, we cannot prove that Deputy Campbell failed to perceive an unjustifiable risk to human life in a manner that constituted a gross deviation from the reasonable standard of care. Accordingly, the Office of the Attorney General will not charge Campbell with criminally negligent manslaughter by motor vehicle in this case.

V. Conclusion

This report has presented factual findings, legal analysis, and conclusions relevant to the December 12, 2025, police-involved vehicle collision in Prince Frederick, Maryland that resulted in the death of Servon Gatewood. The Office of the Attorney General has declined to pursue charges in this case because, based on the evidence obtained in its investigation, the subject officer did not commit a crime.

¹³ *State v. Pagotto*, 127 Md. App. 271, 304 (1999), *aff'd*, 361 Md. 528 (2000).

¹⁴ Md. Code, Transportation § 21-904.

¹⁵ Because there is insufficient evidence to establish that Deputy Campbell acted with criminal negligence, this report does not analyze the causation element of this offense.