Delaware Department of Justice
Data-Driven Decision Lab (D3L)

# *Revised 2025 Asset Forfeiture Report*

Published March 23, 2026

# MEMORANDUM

**To**: Governor Matt Meyer
**CC**: Kathleen Jennings, Attorney General
**From**: Rapsody Johnson, Director of Research, Planning, and Special Projects
**Date**: February 5, 2026
**Revised**: March 23, 2026 (minor edits following internal review)
**Subject**: 2025 Asset Forfeiture Report

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## Overview

This report is published pursuant to §4788 of Title 16 of the Delaware Code, as enacted by House Bill 280 (152nd General Assembly). The statute requires the Department of Justice to compile and publish an annual report regarding civil asset forfeiture activity in the State of Delaware.

## Summary

This report presents a statewide overview of civil asset forfeiture activity in Delaware during the 2025 calendar year, based on records available to the Department of Justice as of January 21, 2026. It is published pursuant to §4788 of Title 16 of the Delaware Code.

During the reporting period, 236 seizures were made across 222 cases. The most commonly seized asset was currency, accounting for 204 instances, followed by vehicles (28), firearms (3 instances involving five firearms), and one item of personal property. A total of $684,475 in currency was seized. The value of non-currency assets could not be determined due to the absence of statutory appraisal authority or standardized valuation reporting.

Seizure activity occurred across all three counties, with the largest share of individuals associated with seizures originating in New Castle County, followed by Kent County and Sussex County. Referrals primarily originated from statewide and larger municipal law enforcement agencies, consistent with jurisdictional scope and enforcement capacity.

The criminal charges underlying seizures were predominantly drug-related, frequently involving manufacture, delivery, or possession with intent to deliver controlled substances, often in combination with firearms offenses. A smaller number of cases involved other serious criminal conduct, including weapon possession, stolen property offenses, and impaired driving.

At the time of reporting, most forfeiture cases remained pending, reflecting the procedural length of forfeiture proceedings. Of the cases that had reached resolution, forfeiture was the most common outcome, with fewer cases resulting in the return of property or non-prosecution.

A subset of 18 seizures was contested or otherwise lacked final determination at the time of reporting. These cases involved multiple asset types and a range of outcomes, including pending determinations, return of property, and forfeiture following contest.

Demographic information is reported based on available administrative records and reflects recorded classifications rather than self-identified data. As detailed in the Data Limitations section, certain demographic attributes (particularly race and ethnicity) may be inconsistently recorded and should be interpreted accordingly.

This report reflects recorded data only. Where information was unavailable, incomplete, or not required to be reported to the Department of Justice under current law, this is noted explicitly. No estimates or imputations were made. The findings presented represent a snapshot in time and may change as pending cases progress through the judicial process.

**Methodology**

The data presented in this report cover the 2025 calendar year and reflect a snapshot of records as they existed on January 21, 2026.

Data for this analysis were obtained from the Delaware Department of Justice case management system (e-Prosecutor), which is partially populated through integration with the Delaware Criminal Justice Information System (DELJIS) and partially reliant on manual data entry. Extracted records were loaded into a database server for analysis.

Following extraction, the dataset underwent a structured process of cleaning, validation, and enhancement to support accurate and reliable analysis. This process included eliminating duplicate records, standardizing coding conventions, and aligning age and demographic variables across data sources. Additional data elements available through DELJIS were incorporated where appropriate to enrich the analytical dataset.

Data processing and aggregation were performed using SQL, and audit tables and analytical metrics were developed to support validation and internal quality checks. These audit outputs were used to confirm record counts and ensure consistency between source data and analytical results.

Power BI was used to develop visualizations and summary metrics. An initial audit report was created to validate data integrity prior to visualization. Key performance indicators (KPIs), charts, and tables were then developed to present counts, distributions, and trends. Interactive dashboards were designed to allow users to explore data elements through filters and calculated fields, including DAX-based columns, to enhance clarity, navigation, and usability.

**Data Limitations**

- **Scope of Data**
  The data presented in this report reflects information available to the Department of Justice at the time of publication. The Department of Justice does not possess independent statutory authority to compel state, county, municipal, or federal law enforcement agencies to collect or submit forfeiture-related data, nor does it control the data collection practices of those entities.
  As a result, certain categories of information required by statute are incomplete, unavailable, or inconsistently reported.
- **Data Sources**
  The report relies exclusively on:
  - Internal Department of Justice forfeiture records
  - Criminal case disposition information available to DOJ via DELJIS and our internal case management system (e-Prosecutor).
  - The Department does not currently receive standardized, statewide submissions from law enforcement agencies.
- **Data Consistency and Completeness**
  Certain data elements relied upon for this report were not collected or maintained in a consistent or standardized manner across cases or over time. In particular, information related to representation status in contested forfeiture matters was not uniformly captured in earlier case records and, in some instances, may not reflect changes that occurred during the course of proceedings.
  These limitations reflect that standardized data collection practices and reporting fields were not in place at the time the statutory reporting requirement took effect, and that data capture has relied in part on manual entry and post-filing updates.
  As a result, figures reported for representation status and related procedural attributes reflect the information as documented in Department records at the time of data extraction and should be interpreted as descriptive rather than exhaustive. Where data were incomplete or unavailable, no assumptions were made.
- **Demographic Data**
  Race and ethnicity classifications reflect law enforcement reporting practices and may not be based on self-identification. Review of case records suggests that Hispanic ethnicity may be inconsistently captured, with some individuals classified as Black or White rather than Hispanic. This likely results in an undercount of Hispanic individuals and corresponding inflation in other racial categories. Accordingly, racial distributions should be interpreted as descriptive of recorded classifications, not definitive population measures.
- **Valuation of Property**
  The Department of Justice does not have statutory authority or an established methodology to appraise the value of vehicles, real property, or other non-currency assets seized or forfeited. Accordingly, estimated values for such property are not reported unless a reliable

valuation is documented in DOJ records. No inferred or estimated values have been generated for the purpose of this report.

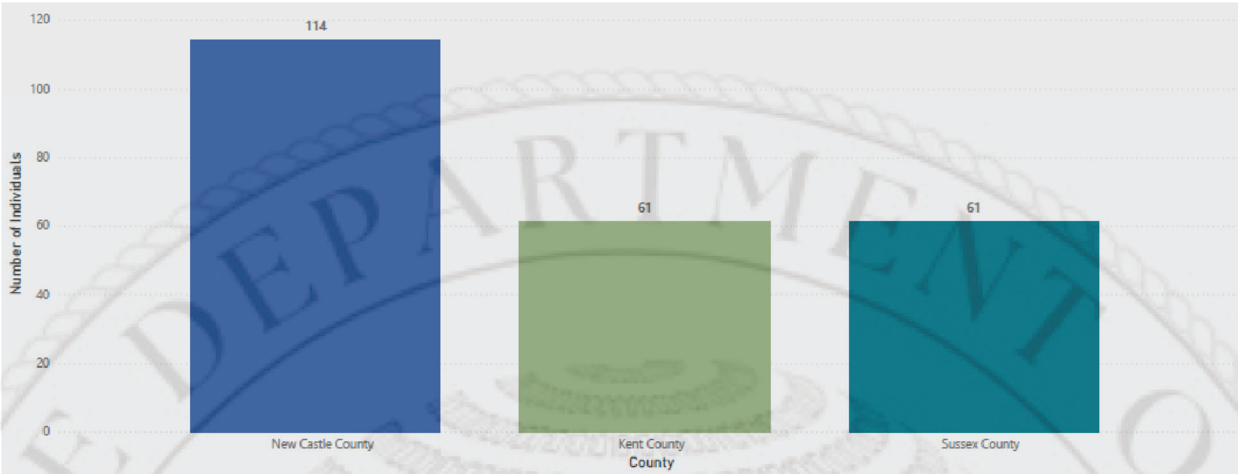
- **Demographic Information**
  Aggregate demographic information (race, ethnicity, age, and gender) is reported only to the extent that such information was available in DOJ records. Demographic data is not consistently collected or transmitted by all law enforcement agencies involved in seizures.
- **Federal Forfeiture Activity**
  Information regarding seizures referred, transferred, or otherwise diverted to federal agencies is limited to data known to the Department of Justice. Federal forfeiture proceedings and equitable sharing distributions are not centrally reported to DOJ.
- **Methodological Integrity**
  The Department does not estimate or impute missing data. Where information is incomplete or unavailable, this is noted explicitly. Figures reflect only what is documented in the Department records.

**Findings**

1. **All Seizures Statewide**
   - 236 seizures[1] were made in 222 cases.
     - Currency- 204 instances
     - Vehicles- 28
     - Firearms- 3 instances (5 firearms seized in total)
     - Personal Property- 1 (watch)
   - **Geographic Distribution:** Individuals associated with asset seizures were distributed across all three counties, with the largest share originating in New Castle County, which accounted for 114 individuals. Kent County and Sussex County each accounted for 61 individuals.

     This distribution reflects seizure activity across the state and is consistent with population density and law enforcement activity by county.

[1] In some cases, there were items from multiple categories seized (e.g. vehicle and currency) or multiples of a single category (e.g. three firearms).



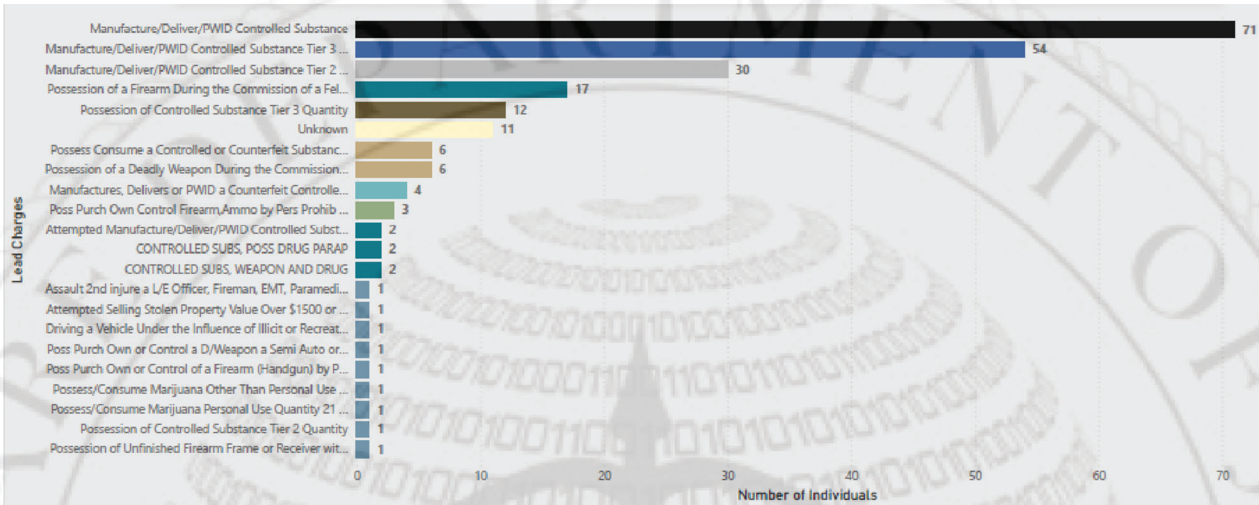

2. **Dollar Amount or Estimated Value of Property Seized Per Incident**
    - **Currency**- $684,475 was seized. Please see Appendix A for breakdown.
    - **Vehicles, firearms, and personal property value**- Unknown. The DOJ has no valuation standard for vehicles and personal property, nor appraisal authority.
    - Under current Delaware law, agencies are not explicitly mandated to report their sales to the DOJ. Thus, this Office is unable to provide this data.

3. **Lead Criminal Charges Tied to Each Seizure**
The criminal charges associated with asset seizures were overwhelmingly drug-related, with a strong secondary connection to firearms offenses, particularly where weapons were possessed in furtherance of other crimes. Please see Appendix B for a case-by-case breakdown.

**Key patterns:**

- Manufacture, delivery, or possession with intent to deliver (PWID) controlled substances accounted for the majority of cases, with the highest concentrations involving:
    - Tier 3 controlled substances
    - Tier 2 controlled substances
- Firearms-related offenses frequently appeared alongside drug charges, most notably:
    - Possession of a firearm during the commission of a felony
    - Possession or control of firearms by prohibited persons
    - Firearm ammunition offenses
- A smaller number of seizures stemmed from other serious criminal conduct, including:
    - Drug quantity possession offenses
    - Counterfeit or controlled substance consumption
    - Deadly weapon possession during the commission of a crime
    - Stolen property offenses (including high-value theft)

    - Driving under the influence of illicit or recreational drugs
- Isolated cases involved marijuana-related offenses, unfinished firearm components, and combined drug-weapon charges.




## 4. Demographics

- **Race and Ethnicity**
  Race and ethnicity reflect recorded law enforcement classifications and may not represent self-identified race or ethnicity (see Data Limitations). Most individuals associated with asset seizures during the reporting period were identified as Black, accounting for 172 individuals. White individuals represented 45 cases. All other racial or ethnic categories were represented in very small numbers, including Asian or Pacific Islander (2), American Indian or Alaska Native (1), and Hispanic (1). These figures reflect the demographics of individuals involved in cases that resulted in seizures and do not represent the broader population.
- **Gender**
  Asset seizures were predominantly associated with male individuals, who accounted for 201 cases, compared to 20 cases involving female individuals. This distribution is consistent with the overall composition of individuals charged in the underlying criminal cases that led to seizures.
- **Age**
  Seizures were most commonly associated with individuals between the ages of 26 and 45, which together accounted for the largest share of cases:

    - Ages 26–35: 63 cases
    - Ages 36–45: 64 cases

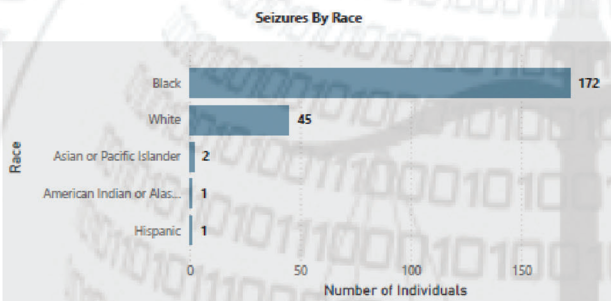
  Additional age distributions included:

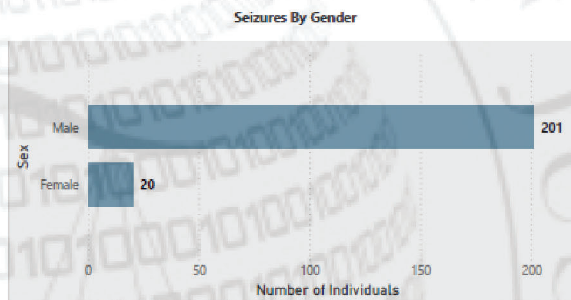
    - Ages 18–25: 40 cases

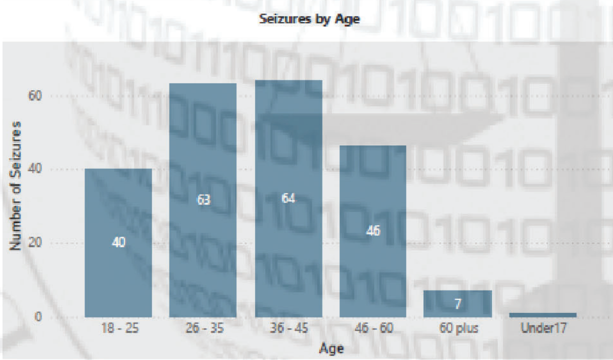
- Ages 46–60: 46 cases
- Age 60 and older: 7 cases

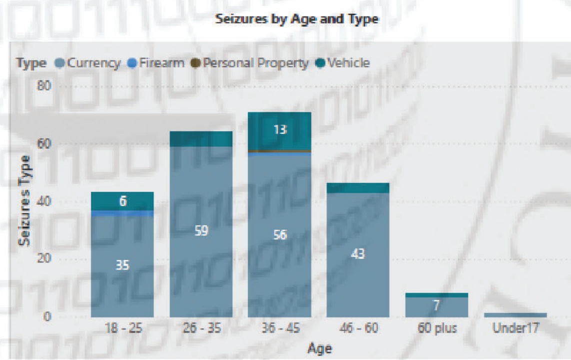
There were no seizures associated with individuals under age 17 during the reporting period.

- **Age and Asset Type**
  Across all age groups, currency was the most frequently seized asset. Seizures involving vehicles appeared most often among individuals aged 26–45, while seizures involving firearms and personal property occurred less frequently and were distributed across multiple age groups. The concentration of seizures in the 26–45 age range mirrors the overall age distribution of individuals involved in the underlying criminal cases.



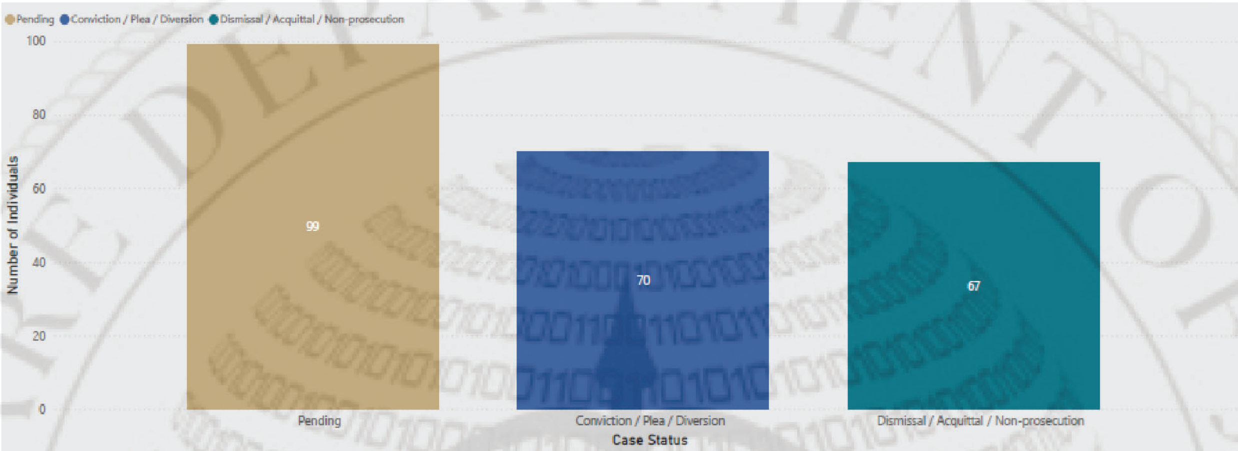




5. **Underlying Criminal Case Disposition**
   Criminal proceedings and civil asset forfeiture actions operate independently and may proceed on different timelines. As a result, the disposition of a criminal case may not coincide with the resolution of any associated forfeiture matter. Case statuses reported herein reflect information available at the time of data extraction and should be interpreted accordingly.
   - Pending cases represented the largest category, with 99 individuals, indicating that a substantial portion of matters had not yet reached final disposition during the reporting period.
   - Convictions, pleas, or diversion outcomes were recorded for 70 individuals, reflecting cases in which the criminal matter resulted in a resolved outcome short of dismissal.

- Dismissals, acquittals, or non-prosecution decisions accounted for 67 individuals, representing cases in which the criminal charge did not result in a conviction or plea.

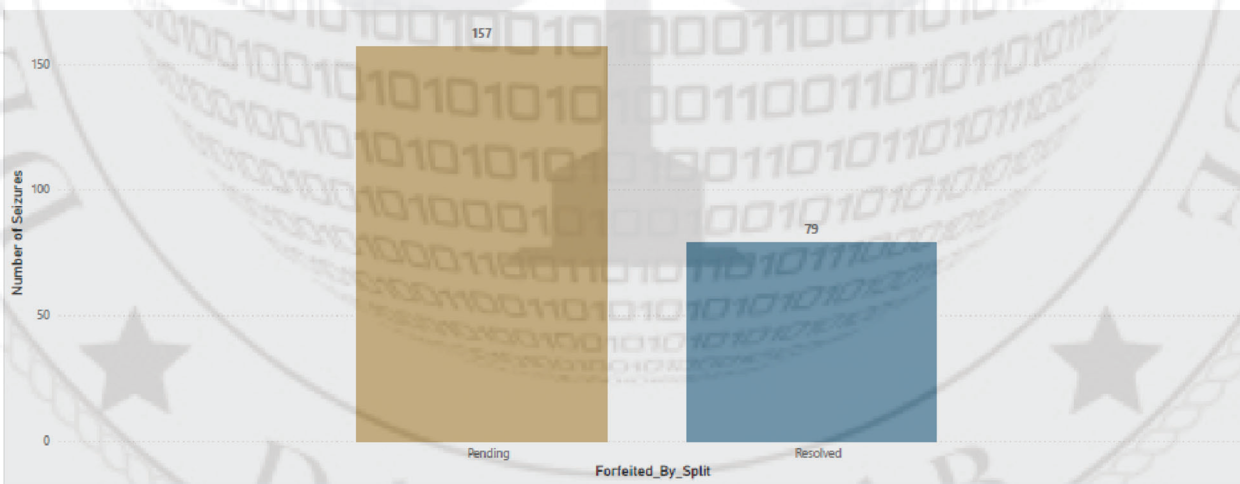
These figures reflect case status at the time of reporting and may change as pending matters progress through the judicial process.




## 6. Forfeiture Outcomes

### A. Seizures By Status: Pending and Resolved Cases

At the time of reporting, the majority of asset forfeiture cases had not yet reached final resolution. Of the total seizures statewide, 157 cases remained pending, while 79 cases had been resolved. Case status figures represent a snapshot in time and are expected to change as pending matters progress through the judicial process.




### B. Outcomes of Resolved Forfeiture Cases

Among cases that reached resolution during the reporting period, forfeiture was the most common outcome.

- 75 cases resulted in forfeiture of the seized property

- 2 cases were not pursued
- 2 cases resulted in the return of property to the owner

These outcomes reflect only cases with a finalized disposition at the time of reporting. Pending cases are not included in this breakdown and may ultimately result in forfeiture, return of property, or non-prosecution.

### C. Legal Mechanisms Used to Finalize Forfeiture

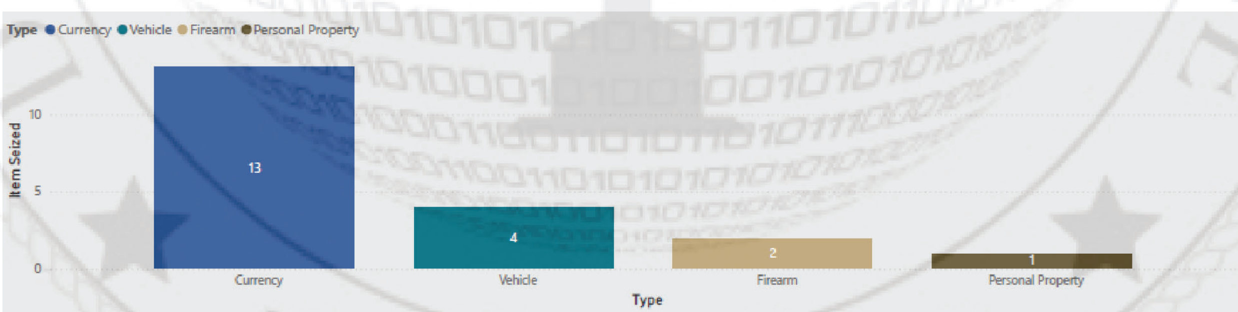
| Forfeiture Mechanism | Count |
|---|---|
| Forfeiture- Application | 42 |
| Forfeiture- Plea/Sentencing | 15 |
| Forfeiture- Court Ordered | 11 |
| Plea/Sentencing | 5 |
| Nolle Prosequi | 2 |
| Returned | 2 |
| Stipulated Order-Split | 2 |

### D. Contested Seizures

There were 18 contested seizures during the reporting period. In two cases, more than one type of asset (a vehicle and currency) was seized. As a result, the number of assets listed below exceeds the total number of contested seizures. Each matter was counted as a single contested seizure to avoid inflating case totals.

Assets involved in contested seizures:

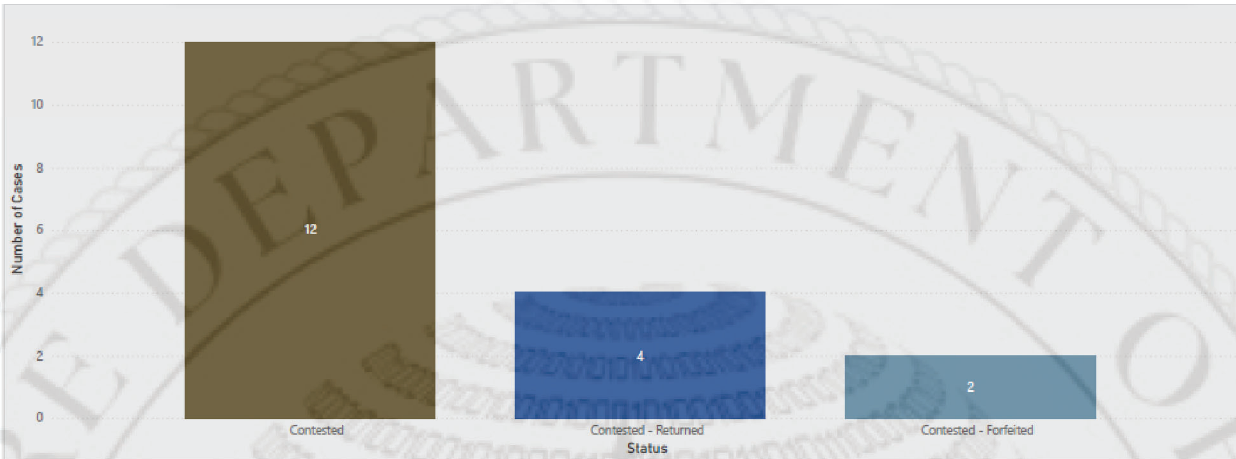
- **Currency:** 13 cases totaling $83,190
- **Vehicles:** 4
- **Firearms:** 2
- **Personal Property:** 1 (watch)




### E. Contested Seizure Outcomes

Among contested seizures:

- At the time of reporting, 12 cases were classified as "contested," indicating that a final determination had yet to be made.
- Four cases resulted in the return of seized property following contest or review.
- Two cases resulted in forfeiture after the seizure was contested.

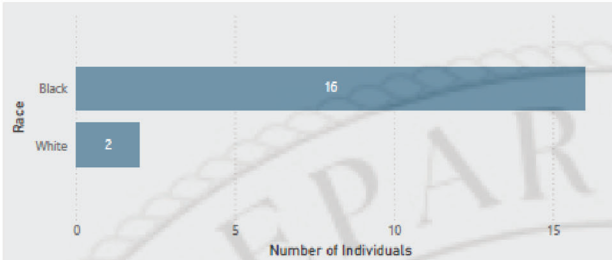



### F. Demographic Characteristics of Individuals Involved in Contested Seizures

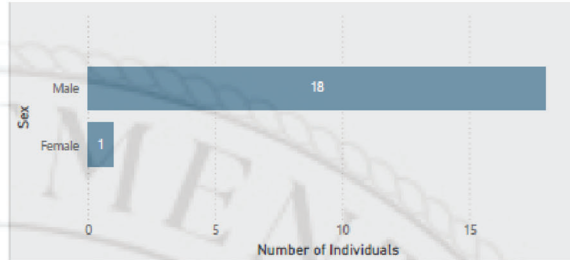
- **Race**
  Race and ethnicity reflect recorded law enforcement classifications and may not represent self-identified race or ethnicity (see Data Limitations). Most individuals involved in contested seizures were identified as Black (16 individuals). White individuals accounted for 2 cases. No contested seizures involved individuals identified in other racial or ethnic categories.
- **Gender**
  Contested seizures were overwhelmingly associated with male individuals, accounting for 18 cases. One contested case involved a female individual. Totals may exceed the number of contested seizures where more than one individual was associated with a single case.
- **Age**
  Individuals involved in contested seizures were most commonly between the ages of 36 and 45, accounting for 9 cases. Additional age distributions included:
    - Ages 18–25: 2 cases
    - Ages 26–35: 3 cases
    - Ages 46–60: 3 cases
    - Age 60 and older: 1 case

- **Age and Asset Type**
  Across age groups, currency was the most frequently contested asset. Contested seizures involving vehicles and firearms occurred primarily among individuals aged 36–45, with fewer occurrences in other age ranges. Contested seizures involving personal property were limited and occurred in isolated cases.

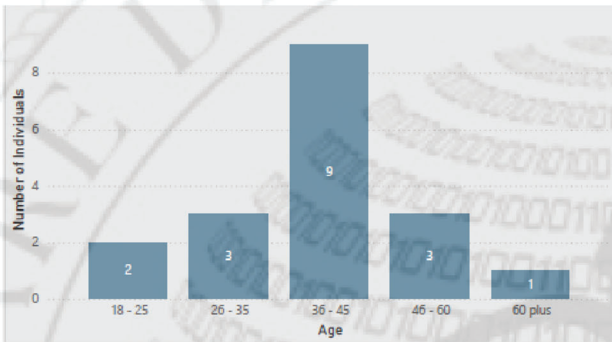
Contested Seizures By Race



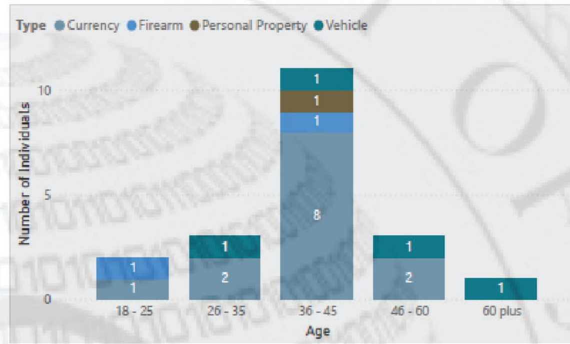

Contested Seizures By Gender




Contested Seizures by Age




Contested Seizures by Age and Type




7. **Seizures by Agency**

The Delaware State Police accounted for the largest share, with 114 cases, representing nearly half of all seizures. Among local agencies, the highest numbers were associated with:

- Wilmington Police Department: 35 cases
- New Castle County Police Department: 33 cases

Several municipal police departments contributed more moderate numbers of cases, including:

- Milford Police Department: 11
- Dover Police Department: 10
- Seaford Police Department: 8
- Laurel Police Department: 5
- Newark Police Department: 6

The remaining agencies each accounted for one to four cases, reflecting more limited involvement during the reporting period. Please see Appendix C for the full list.

Overall, the data indicates that asset seizures were primarily associated with statewide and larger municipal law enforcement agencies, consistent with their broader jurisdictional scope and enforcement capacity.

8. **Federal Referrals**

One case was referred for federal prosecution. As a result, the assets seized in that matter are excluded from the asset totals reported herein. The seized property consisted of $1,310 in currency. Information regarding any funds returned to State or local agencies as a result of federal forfeiture proceedings is not available to the Department of Justice. Federal forfeiture activity and related equitable sharing distributions are not centrally reported to the DOJ.

9. **Representation Status in Contested Forfeiture Cases**
   Among the contested forfeiture cases, eight defendants were represented by counsel, while one defendant proceeded pro se. Representation status was recorded only for cases in which a contest or challenge was filed and reflects the status at the time of reporting. Representation status was not consistently recorded across all cases and may not reflect changes over time. Figures are reported as documented at the time of review.

10. **Total forfeiture applications filed**
    During the reporting period, the Department of Justice filed thirteen forfeiture applications. These applications represent matters in which the State sought forfeiture of seized assets pursuant to applicable statutory procedures.

11. **Total proceeds from forfeited property, and how much went to the General Fund.**
    Information regarding the total proceeds generated from forfeited property, including the amount distributed to the General Fund, is not available to the Department of Justice. The Department does not control or receive centralized reporting of post-forfeiture financial distributions, as current law does not require it. Accordingly, this report does not include financial distribution data related to forfeited assets.