



City of Columbia, Missouri



Police Department

September 30, 2025

Dear Parents and Community Members,

The Columbia Police Department has received numerous requests for comments from individual citizens and media partners following recent incidents of violence in the downtown business district. I want to acknowledge those concerns directly. The community expects and deserves transparency, and we welcome open conversations about violent crime, public safety, and the steps we are taking to address them.

Saturday morning's shooting marked the fourth, fifth, and sixth uninvolved bystanders struck by gunfire in downtown Columbia since March 2024. This incident, like the others before it, is deeply troubling. Our thoughts are with the victims, their families, and all those affected by gun violence in our community. We recognize the fear and frustration these events bring, especially for parents and families, and we share in the urgency to stop them.

Citywide there have been 58 confirmed incidents of shots fired in the first 9 months of 2025, compared to 105 during the same nine-month period in 2024. The department has investigated 4 homicides in the first 9 months of 2025, compared to 10 during the same period in 2024. While gun violence remains a serious concern, the downward trend is a positive sign.

Violent crime is disproportionately higher downtown compared to previous years. Since 2019, there have been 39 confirmed instances of shots fired in the downtown area, with 64 percent of those occurring between midnight and 3 a.m. and only one occurring between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. The connection between late-night social activity and violence is clear, and that is where we continue to focus our efforts.

In response to the June 8, 2025, downtown shooting, the department launched a downtown enforcement initiative focused on proactively addressing misdemeanor crimes that often precede such violent incidents. Our department continues to prioritize recruiting, hiring, and training police officers to ensure we can meet the complex and evolving needs of our community.

Prior to the recent weekend events, we were already exploring the reestablishment of a dedicated downtown unit, targeted for implementation in the summer of 2026. Additionally, we have been investing in advanced technology that enhances our ability to investigate and solve gun-related crimes, further supporting public safety throughout the city.

Since the tragic events this past weekend, our department has been actively communicating and coordinating with key partners, including the President of the University of Missouri, the Colonel of the Missouri State Highway Patrol, the Chief of the University of Missouri Police Department, the Boone County Sheriff, the Boone County Prosecuting Attorney, City leaders, and many others. Together, we are working to develop a comprehensive plan to enhance safety in our community, with a specific focus on downtown and protecting both residents and students.

Chief Jill Schlude

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