



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE26001
Prompted By: SGO Report
Date Opened: 01/28/2026
Investigator: Paul Parker **Reviewer:** Cheryl Rose
Approver: Tanya Topka
Subject: Waymo AV striking a child in the area of a school.

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: Waymo LLC
Products: 5th Generation ADS
Population: 3,067 (Estimated)

Problem Description: Waymo AV striking a child in the area of a school.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	EWR D&I	Other	Total	EWR Field Reports
All Incidents:	0	0	0	1	1	0
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0	1	1	0
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0	1	1	0
Number of Injuries:	0	0	0	1	1	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0	0	0	0

Description of Other:
SGO Report 30270-13850

ACTION/SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: Open this Preliminary Evaluation (PE)

Summary:

On January 23, 2026, Waymo LCC (Waymo) reported to the Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) that a Waymo Automated Vehicle (AV) had struck a child near an elementary school earlier that day. Waymo provided its required report under SGO 2021-01 on January 28, 2026.

NHTSA is aware that the incident occurred within two blocks of a Santa Monica, CA elementary school during normal school drop off hours; that there were other children, a crossing guard, and several double-parked vehicles in the vicinity; and that the child ran across the street from behind a double parked SUV towards the school and was struck by the Waymo AV. Waymo reported that the child sustained minor injuries.

At the time of the incident, the Waymo AV was operated by Waymo's 5th Generation Automated Driving System (ADS). No safety operator was present in the vehicle.

ODI has opened this Preliminary Evaluation to investigate whether the Waymo AV exercised appropriate caution given, among other things, its proximity to the elementary school during drop off hours, and the presence of young pedestrians and other potential vulnerable road users. ODI expects that its investigation will examine the ADS's intended behavior in school zones and neighboring areas, especially during normal school pick up/drop off times, including but not limited to its adherence to posted speed limits. ODI will also investigate Waymo's post-impact response.