



**Governmental Disclosure on Use of Force Data:
Community Data Registries Promoting Transparency**

August, 2021

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Acknowledgements

A Message from the Executive Director:

The staff of the Lehigh Valley Justice Institute has produced this report on public disclosure of use of force incidents as a service to the communities of the Lehigh Valley. When we were formed late last year we pledged to bring information regarding the best practices nationwide to our work here in the Lehigh Valley.

We have also committed to finding *local* solutions to enhance criminal justice processes in Lehigh Valley. While state and federal action is mired in the intricacies of the legislative process, there are concrete steps which we can take locally now to promote a more equitable system of justice. We present one such step in this report.

We trust that the information presented herein will serve to promote transparency in governmental operations, and further positive interactions between local police departments and the communities which they serve.

Joseph E. Welsh
Executive Director
August, 2021

About the Lehigh Valley Justice Institute:

Lehigh Valley Justice Institute (LVJI) is an independent nonpartisan research, policy, and advocacy organization working to develop and promote a reimagined criminal justice system that is equitable and fair for all communities. The Institute employs a data-driven approach focused on the criminal justice processes of the Lehigh Valley area of Pennsylvania.

The Institute employs a three-step approach to study and reform:

Research - Utilizing the abundant academic resources of the Lehigh Valley, the Institute provides a solid empirical, data driven approach to assessing the current deficiencies and inequities inherent in local criminal justice processes;

Policy Development - Building upon solid data analysis and modeling, research of innovative and best practices nationwide, the Institute develops policy and procedural recommendations for the management of the local governmental systems; and

Advocacy - The Institute promotes the adoption of its recommended policies and procedures through interaction with stakeholders, public education and engagement, the news media, and, where necessary, advocating through public education and awareness.

About the Researchers:

Jillian P. Ferrara is a rising senior at Moravian University with a major in Political Science and a minor in Spanish and English. Ms. Ferrara is spending her summer internship with LVJI researching reentry programs and their impact on recidivism; comparing and contrasting reentry programs that employ an interdepartmental working group, versus programs that hold one person responsible for distributing resources for re-entering individuals; and researching Use of Force Databases around the country.

Cecelia R. Khorrami Ms. Khorrami is a Researcher and Administrative Coordinator for LVJI. She is a recent graduate of Moravian University holding a B.A. in Political Science/Peace and Justice Studies. This is a unique major which she developed in consultation with Moravian College. Ms. Khorrami is passionate about researching social justice issues and pinpointing potential solutions to the problem. In addition to research, she coordinates the day to day operations of the Institute.

About the Data Disclosure sites:

This study reviews three online Use of Force websites: the City of Norfolk, Virginia; the State of New Jersey; and New York City. The sites vary in the type on data and the level of detail presented. For example, the New Jersey website identifies individual officers involved in use of force incidents, whereas the other two sites do not. Regardless, of the amount of information presented, we view the creation of each of these sites as an important step toward transparency. It is through such publicly disclosed information that we will be able to build datasets which will enable informed, data driven decision making.

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, police departments across the country have been collecting and publishing Use of Force statistics through online data registries. These registries have emerged at federal, state, county, and city levels. This study focuses on three distinct Use of Force registries at the city and state levels including the city of Norfolk, Virginia; the city of New York, New York; and the state of New Jersey. Although the United States has a newly established Use of Force database at the federal level, only 27% of law enforcement agencies participated in releasing their data between 2019 and 2020. The participation was voluntary, meaning that the data shows a self-selection bias. Such self-selection impedes us from using the data to extrapolate about a larger population. This is because the data is not representative of our nation as a whole. In the meantime, *local* registries have proven to be the most effective in gathering data; giving us a representative data set for cities, counties, and states. These comprehensive local registries can set an example for the rest of the country on how to achieve greater transparency, safety, and accountability within law enforcement.

GOALS OF USE OF FORCE REGISTRIES

1. Ensures transparency and accountability within our local police departments.
2. Increases community trust.
3. Informs public policy decisions surrounding police misconduct.
4. Provides accurate and comprehensive data on Use of Force incidents, to better inform departmental training and policy.
5. Identifies incidents that are more likely to result in injury.
6. Protect both police officers and the people they serve.

USE OF FORCE

While the ratification of the United States Constitution established a central government for the nation, states, and by extension, municipalities, retained their general police powers, including the ability to use force to preserve order and enforce laws. Shortly after the Constitution was adopted, the first ten Amendments, collectively known as the Bill of Rights, were ratified. The

Fourth Amendment limited the policing power by prohibiting “unreasonable” searches and seizures. Originally, this restriction applied only to the federal government, but many state constitutions mirrored this provision. Ultimately, after the Civil War and the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment, most of the Bill of Rights, including the Fourth Amendment, was held to be enforceable against states and municipalities.

The state’s right to use force against its residents is, therefore, limited to “reasonable” force when making an arrest, or a “seizure” of a person. The parameters of what constitutes “reasonable” force is a doctrine which is continually evolving in the courts. The general rule is the permissible amount of force used is that which a reasonable officer would employ under the facts and circumstances in a given situation. It is an objective standard, meaning that the subjective motivations of the officer are not considered when evaluating “reasonableness.” Many police departments have adopted a use of force “continuum” which ranks levels of force, usually starting with officer presence, and verbal commands, all the way up to deadly force. The United States Supreme Court has limited the use of deadly force to only those situations in which an officer has probable cause to believe that a suspect poses a significant threat of death or serious bodily injury to the officer or others.

NATIONAL REGISTRIES

In January 2019, the FBI began collecting data through a *national* registry on police misconduct and Use of Force. The need for transparency surrounding police misconduct is a longstanding, bipartisan concern, which has prompted legislation to create a comprehensive national database tracking police Use of Force. However, this effort has seemingly fallen short; in both 2019 and 2020, only 27% of law enforcement agencies across the U.S. reported any kind of officer Use of Force data to the FBI’s registry (*The Washington Post*, June 9, 2021). Despite various legislative initiatives calling for police misconduct tracking, the FBI has struggled to gather substantial data on police Use of Force from states and local law enforcement agencies. The FBI’s registry does not require states and agencies to report data; it relies on voluntary participation. Notably, no department in the Lehigh Valley appears on the FBI list of participating agencies with regard to comprehensive Use of Force data.

In an effort to remedy the shortcomings of the FBI national data registry, The George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021 ties federal grant money to agencies reporting Use of Force data. The Act, which is still awaiting passage from the senate, calls for the creation of The National Police Misconduct Registry. This registry provides Use of Force records and police misconduct records for public review. Additionally, this act requires that the data be made available to the

public; this is a critical component that the FBI has failed to do thus far in their data collection efforts. Section 201(e) of the proposed law mandates that the National Police Misconduct Registry be accessible to the public on an internet website of the Attorney General, wherein people can search for individual law enforcement officer's records of misconduct.

This bill addresses a wide range of policies and issues regarding policing practices and law enforcement accountability. It increases accountability for law enforcement misconduct, restricts the use of certain policing practices, enhances transparency and data collection, and establishes best practices and training requirements. The bill also includes the duty to intervene when another officer uses excessive force. It is necessary to note that Derek Chauvin -- the police officer responsible for using lethal, excessive force on George Floyd -- had a history of using excessive force and had eighteen complaints filed against him prior to encountering Mr. Floyd. The City of Minneapolis has had a Use of Force data registry since 2008. However, it does not include the names or records of individual officers such as Chauvin.

OVERVIEW

Tracking police Use of Force is an important step in the road to police reform within the United States. The lack of substantial data on Use of Force incidents has garnered much concern from many governmental leaders, law enforcement officials, and civilians, regardless of their political orientation. According to *Time* magazine, "Police chiefs, community members, Republicans, Democrats, federal, and local lawmakers all agree that the absence of a comprehensive collection of use-of-force incidents by the nation's police is a roadblock to reform" (June 30, 2020). Various legislative and executive actions have attempted to remedy this issue. The aforementioned George Floyd Justice in Policing Act is the latest attempt to establish a national, public database to track police Use of Force. It has passed the House of Representatives, but has yet to be acted upon by the Senate. As *Time* magazine observed:

There is widespread agreement that no matter what happens in Washington, for now the most effective legislation is likely to happen at the state level. Some states, including California, Colorado, Connecticut, Michigan and Texas, have passed various requirements to gather and report the data from their own police departments statewide (June 30, 2020).

While various efforts are underway to develop a comprehensive federal database tracking police Use of Force, it might be more valuable to focus locally. The fate of the National Police Misconduct Registry is uncertain, and the FBI's efforts have fallen short thus far. Apart from these national registries, however, there are a multitude of state, county and city level use-of-

force dashboards that merit review; particularly the ones created in Norfolk, Virginia, New Jersey and New York City.

The three registries listed in this report offer robust and detailed data sets which set an example for other local departments to follow. New Jersey requires all police departments in the state to report data to their centralized Use of Force dashboard. Additionally, Norfolk Police Department updates its Use of Force dashboard daily to ensure accurate and relevant data. The three databases listed are open to the public. However, there are numerous other registries throughout the country that offer robust Use of Force datasets available to the public. Police Strategies LLC is one example of a company employing diverse data analysis across many departments in the United States and U.S. territories. According to *Police Force Analysis System First Summary Report*:

Police Strategies LLC has partnered with the Center for the Study of Crime and Justice at Seattle University to develop comprehensive information about the intersection of individual and contextual factors that explain situational, temporal, and spatial variation in the distribution of police coercive authority with attention to the ways in which demographic factors such as race/ethnicity, gender, and age, situational/historical/individual characteristics such as mental illness, homelessness, and location impact police-citizen interactions and police coercive control (Police Strategies LLC, 2020).

Police Strategies LLC's services are widespread across the country. They have collected incident reports from 88 law enforcement agencies from 7 states. To name a few - California, Minnesota, and the Virgin Islands are under contract with this company. Police Strategies LLC is a Washington-based company that employs a team of researchers who analyze incident reports given by police departments seeking transparency for their communities. The team of data researchers is composed of law enforcement professionals, attorneys, and academics. Police departments around the country can contract Police Strategies LLC for their data analysis services. The *Police Analysis System's* interactive dashboard provides data on time, location, force tactics, injuries, subjects, charges, arrest rates, and Use of Force rates. One benefit of using the same company to analyze data across different departments is that it offers consistent data fields and the same methodology for reporting stats. The company measures the same data fields across all departments; and uses the same methodology when reporting findings. This aids in transparency and accountability, as all departments are subject to the same data findings. This uniformity aids data-driven policy analysis and reform.

NORFOLK CITY, VA - POLICE USE OF FORCE DATA REGISTRY

The Birth of One Local Data Registry

In June 2020, demonstrators in Virginia surrounded Norfolk City Hall and the courthouse for six days, demanding that the city release police Use of Force reports. A historical lack of trust between the Norfolk Police Department and its community members, combined with the national demand for police reform, spurred this community demonstration. Previous to the launch of Norfolk's Use of Force Data Registry, the Department, like most, withheld their Use of Force reports from the public. According to the *The Virginian-Pilot*, "The secrecy, which has been in place for years, makes it impossible to tell whether police use force differently in different parts of the city, or against black people — or whether any officers have committed a disproportionate number of shootings" (*The Virginian-Pilot*, Jun 30, 2020). It was the community's increasing desire to know what's going on in their local police departments that prompted the creation of the Norfolk Police Data Hub.

Overview:

The City's CivicLab worked with the Norfolk Police Department over the last year to create the [Norfolk Police Data Hub](#). This hub provides the public with five years of data, refreshed every weekday, regarding police personnel, citizen complaints and use of force in an interactive, easy to read format. The hub builds on NPD's ongoing efforts to improve transparency, community relations and policing in Norfolk.

The robust data hub provides officer and citizen demographics for the overall Norfolk population and is broken down by interactions by race. Citizen complaints, allegations and findings are also included. Arrest demographics are displayed side-by-side with population demographics. Use of force data is available by zip code as well as by demographics.

The raw data used for the data hub is available in a table embedded in the hub as well as in the city's [Open Data portal](#). A glossary, including links to applicable policies, is available and provides definitions of policing terms that may be unfamiliar to the public.

Norfolk Police Department policy requires a Use-of-Force report every time an officer must do more than routine use of handcuffs or hands to hold, guide, or lead a person. (Norfolk.gov, 2021)

The data hub offers a comprehensive list of data from a five year period spanning from July 13th, 2016 to July 12th, 2021. The data sets included are:

1. Total number of Calls For Service
2. Use of Force Incident Count
3. Citizen Fatalities
4. Incidents with Citizen Injuries
5. Incidents with Citizens Sent to the Hospital
6. Incidents with Officer Injuries
7. Incidents with Officers Sent to the Hospital
8. Police Equipment Used in a Use of Force Incident (ex: Baton/impact weapon, Canine)
9. Incidents Resulting in Arrest
10. Incidents by Initial Service Type
11. Incidents by Zip Code
12. Calls for Service by Zip Code
13. Citizen Complaints, Allegations, and Findings
14. Trends (ex: calls for service by year)
15. Officer and Citizen Demographics
16. Arrest Demographics
17. Citizen interactions by race and sex

Civilian Fatalities:

Along with tracking the total number of civilian fatalities in a five-year window, the data hub provides a summary of events, details, and narratives that lead to fatal incidents. Summaries for each case include context, such as the individuals involved, location of event, date and time of event, initial service type, nature of the call (ex: domestic dispute), sequence of events that lead to escalation, time of death, and if body worn cameras were in use and recording during the encounter. Details include the number of civilians involved, and the type of weapons used by either the officer or a community member. These details provide a comprehensive background on the sequence of events leading to the fatality. As an example, below is incident number 18365:

“On 7/2/2017, the Norfolk Police Department responded to 9600 blk of 14th Bay St. for the report of a person with a weapon. Officer 1, Officer 2, and an on-duty sergeant responded to the scene and encountered Citizen 1 who was armed with a handgun. Citizen 1 opened fire, striking the Sergeant’s ballistic vest. Officer 1 and Officer 2 returned fire with their service weapons, striking Citizen 1 multiple times. Citizen 1 was pronounced deceased on scene at 0101 hours. Body-worn cameras were activated and recording during the entire incident” ([Norfolk Police Data Hub](#)).

Civilian Fatalities data:

1. Incident number
2. Date
3. Hour
4. Location
5. Zip Code
6. Initial Service Type
7. Force Type
8. Officer Injured
9. Officer Sent to Hospital
10. Citizen Demographics
11. Citizen Arrested
12. Citizen Sent to Hospital
13. Citizen Injury
14. Other Demographics

Data Master List

Norfolk Police Data Hub’s Data Master List includes a comprehensive list of data on individual incidents, as well as allegations and findings related to the incident. This includes the incident number, date/hour/location, initial service type, incident type, force type, whether the person was arrested/ injured/ hospitalized/ killed, and civilian/officer demographics.

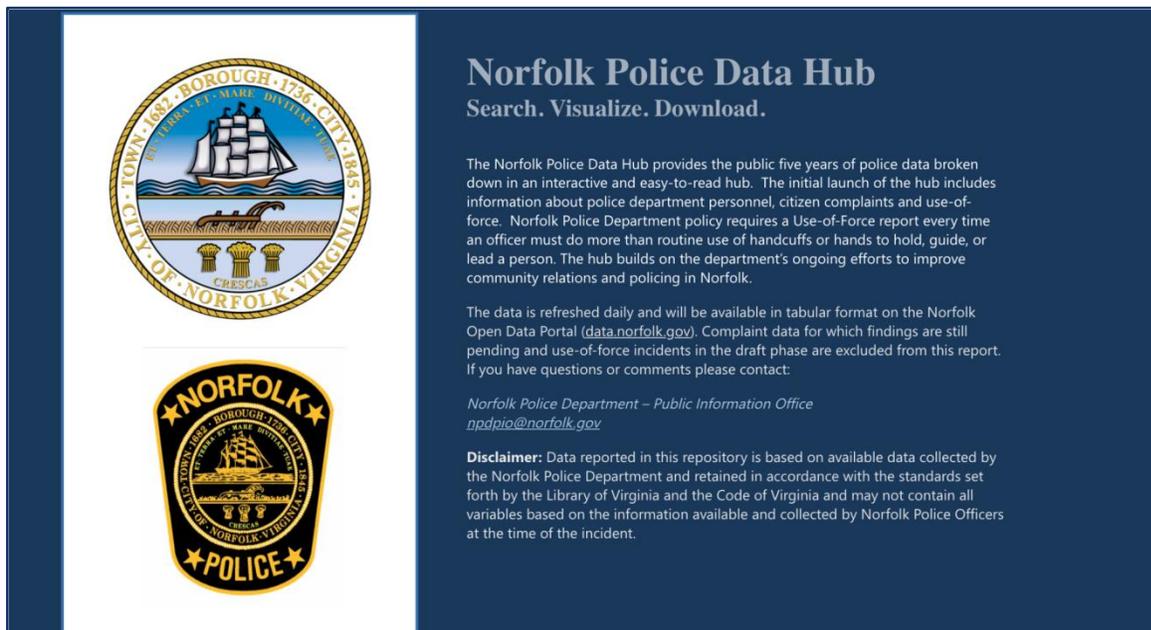


Figure 1. Welcome. From “[Norfolk Police Data Hub](#),” by the Norfolk Police Department

A valuable aspect of the Norfolk Police Use of Force Data Registry is that it is updated daily, thereby providing accurate, real-time data on use of force incidents within the city. A critical aspect of publically reporting this data is ensuring that the data is as precise and up-to-date as possible. These are the characteristics for which the Norfolk Dashboard excels.

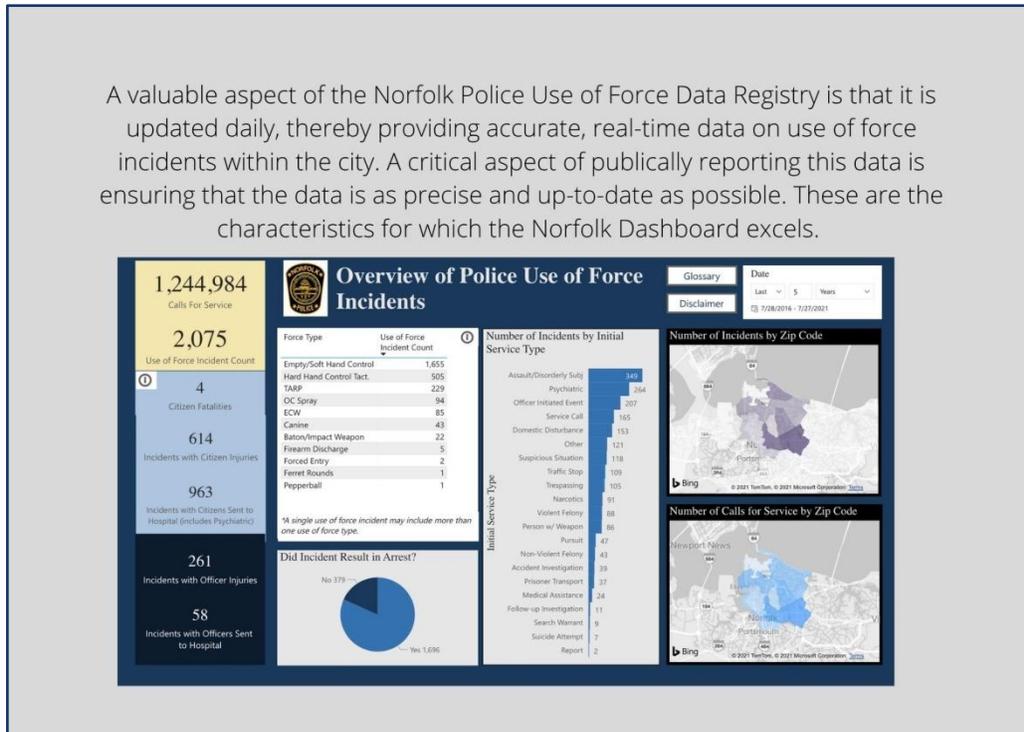


Figure 2. Overview of Police Use of Force Incidents. This screenshot displays an overview of data in the dashboard which is updated daily. From “[Norfolk Police Data Hub](#),” by the Norfolk Police Department

Long Term Goals

The resolution to improve police transparency in Norfolk, VA, was passed in June 2020 and thus, created the Use of Force Data Hub. While it is too soon to make conclusions on whether or not employing a data hub reduces police Use of Force, we can still make conclusions on local policing norms presented in the five years of data. For example, according to a report from *The Virginian-Pilot*, the data shows that “Black people account for nearly 73% of arrests in Norfolk, despite making up about 41% of the city’s population. Roughly 26% of arrests were among white people — almost 47% of the city’s population” (The Virginian-Pilot, Jul 14, 2021). The routine use of a data registry allows departments and community members to identify local policing trends and their relationship to factors such as on race, gender, and zip code.

NEW JERSEY- USE OF FORCE DASHBOARD

On October 1st, 2020, the Attorney General of New Jersey began requiring all law enforcement agencies within the state to submit Use of Force reports to a centralized data portal. The Attorney General’s Office of Public Integrity & Accountability, in conjunction with SAS Data Analytics, developed a comprehensive statewide portal - the *New Jersey Use of Force Dashboard* - to help track Use of Force by law enforcement.

New Jersey's Use of Force policy requires police officers to report any instance of force used against a civilian to the dashboard within 24 hours of the incident. Although still in development, this interactive dashboard is open to the public, readily available on the NJ Attorney General's online website. Additionally, Use of Force datasets are available for download in a variety of file formats on the final page of the dashboard.

The Attorney General's website also provides links to a User Guide to assist the public in navigating and interpreting the data dashboard. Additionally, the User Guide contains a glossary to help explain policing terms found in the dashboard that might be unfamiliar to the general public.

Overview:

Currently, the dashboard contains data ranging from October 1, 2020, to May 31, 2021, and only displays information on reports that are completed or closed as of June 1st, 2021. The dashboard receives reports from all New Jersey law enforcement agencies, over 500, but not from the New Jersey Department of Corrections, which is to be added at a later date. Use of force data from individual counties, agencies, and officers of New Jersey is available to view on the dashboard.

Sections of Data Dashboard

1. Introduction page
2. Overall Report Data page
3. Type of Force-Interactions Data page
4. Subject Data page
5. Injury Data page
6. Use of Force Report Details page
7. Questions & Feedback page

Overall Report Data

This page provides a synopsis of overall data on Use of Force that is available in the dashboard.

It includes information on:

- Total number of reports submitted/total number of incidents that were reported.
 - The number of incidents and reports of a particular county, agency, or officer is also available on this page.
- Frequency of various types of contact origins of incidents (officer was dispatched, officer initiated encounter, civilian initiated encounter, pre-planned contact, etc.).
- Overall trends in the number of force reports over time (October 2020-May 2021) illustrated in the form of a line graph.

Type of Force-Interactions Data

This page displays information pertaining to the type of force used within interactions.

It contains graphs which illustrate:

- Number of Physical Force actions categorized by type of action
- Number of Non-Physical Force actions categorized by type
- Frequency of various forms of Subject Resistance
- Frequency of various Subject Actions that led to Use of Force

Subject Data

This page of the dashboard contains data regarding the subjects of police Use of Force incidents.

It includes information on:

- Total number of subjects within Use of Force reports
- Perceived Condition of Subjects- data on the officer's perception of the subjects condition during incidents (whether the officer perceived the subject to be under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or both, or facing some mental health incident, etc)
- Demographic information of Subjects- overall breakdown of subject gender identity, age group, and race/ethnicity.
- Subject Arrest Data- Data on the percent of subjects arrested subsequent to the Use of Force incident, as well data on why the subject was not arrested (medical/mental health incident, subject fled scene, etc.)

Injury Data

The injury data page contains graphs and charts explaining data elements related to officer and subject injury within Use of Force reports.

The data elements include:

- Frequency of officer injury/Frequency of subject injury
- Number of Officers/Subjects injured by each specific Injury Type
- Number of Officers/Subjects by medical treatment status
- Hospital outcomes for subjects

Use of Force Report Details

This page provides more in-depth details about specific incident reports. It functions as a master list, compiling various elements of data that are present in previous sections of the dashboard.

The data can be filtered by county, agency and officer name, and includes the following fields:

- County
 - Agency Name
 - Officer Name
 - Officer Gender
 - Officer Race
 - Incident Date
 - Incident Type
 - Officer Injured
- Interaction Type
 - Subject Type
 - Subject Age
 - Subject Gender
 - Subject Race
 - Subject Resistance
 - Subject Injuries
 - Subjects Actions

Questions & Feedback section

The New Jersey Use of Force Dashboard also has a Frequently Asked Questions section, as well as a section to submit feedback on how the NJ Office of Attorney General (NJOAG) can improve the website and make the data more useful and/or accessible.

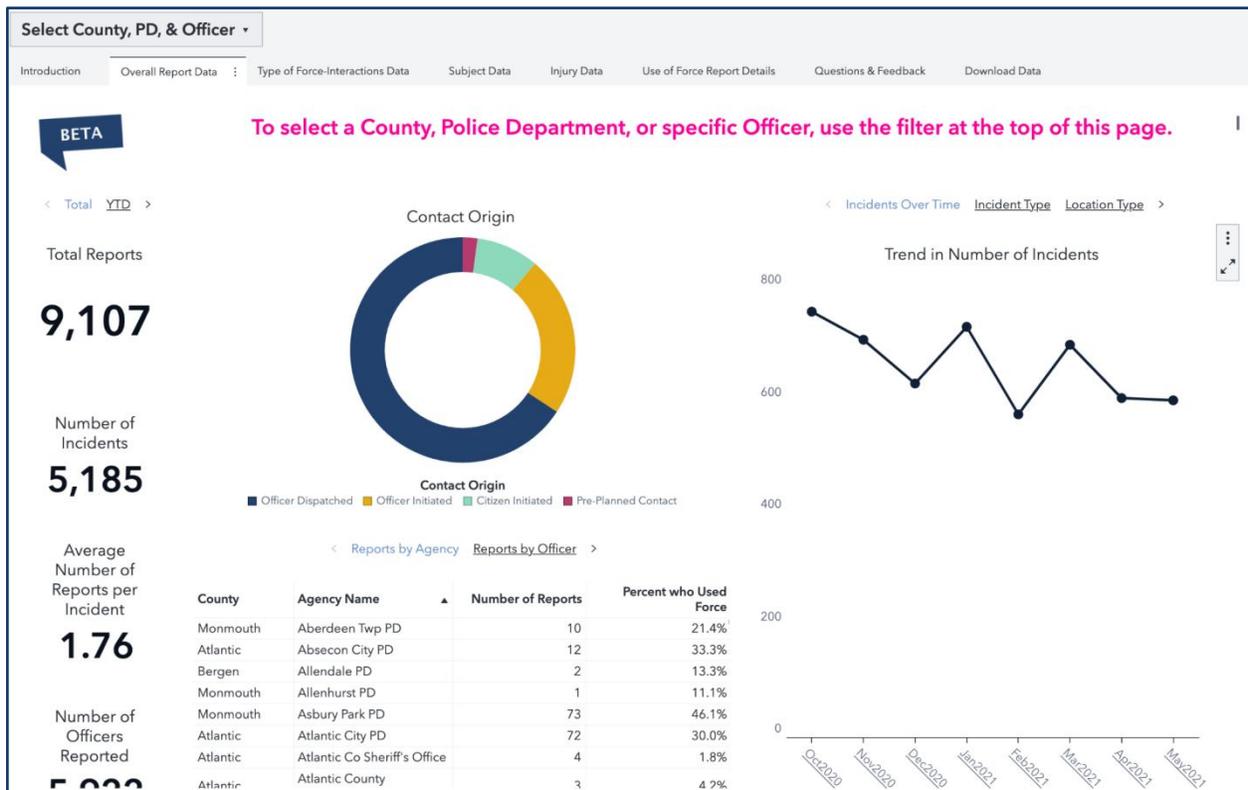


Figure 3. Overall Report Data. This page of the New Jersey Use of Force dashboard provides overall information on total Use of Force incidents reported to the dashboard. From “Use of Force Dashboard,” by the New Jersey Office of Attorney General.

Local data registries can grant the public access to use of force data specific to the communities they live in, the officers they interact with, and the agencies funded by their communities. For example, New Jersey’s Use of Force Dashboard provides data on specific police departments and even includes officer’s full names within reports. Users can filter any of the datasets present in the dashboard by an individual officer, as seen in the picture below.

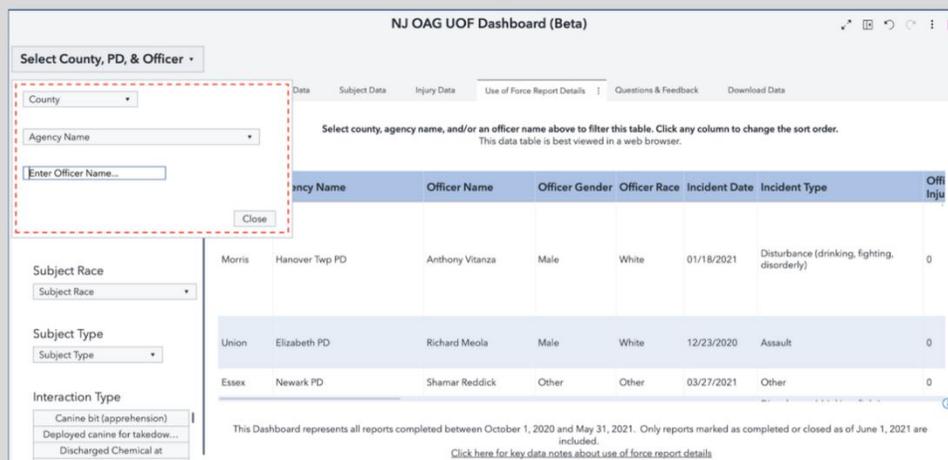


Figure 4. Use of Force Report Details. This screenshot illustrates the “Officer name” look-up feature on the New Jersey Use of Force Dashboard. From “Use of Force Dashboard,” by the New Jersey Office of Attorney General.

NEW YORK CITY, NY - NYPD FORCE DASHBOARD

Overview:

The [NYPD Force] Dashboard is a dynamic tool meant for the effortless public consumption of data regarding force incidents involving members of the Department. The dashboard’s data includes instances when members use force against subjects, as well as when force is used against our members (NYPD Force Dashboard).

The NYPD Force Dashboard was created to provide in-depth information about Use of Force incidents involving members of the NYPD and community members. The *NYPD Force Dashboard* contains data from January 2020 through March 2021, and is available to the general public on the “Use of Force” section on the NYPD’s website. Data from the dashboard is available for download at the NYC Open Data website.

The primary way in which the NYPD records Use of Force incidents is through the Threat, Resistance, or Injury (TRI) Report. Such reports are used to record all reportable instances of force, whether used *by* or *against* a member of the NYPD. The NYPD Force Dashboard was constructed with data captured from these TRI reports (NYPD Force Dashboard).

The dashboard consists of three main sections: “Incidents,” “NYPD Members Using Force,” and “Subjects.” The final pages contain information about the NYPD’s Use of Force Policy, as well as explanations and guidance on how to use and interpret the data dashboard. There is also a section for definitions of policing terms used in the database that might not be familiar to the general public.

Incidents

The “Incidents” page shows only the incidents where Officers used force (NYPD Force Dashboard).

This section provides an overview of the force incidents including:

- Total number of incidents per month
- Number of force incidents by precinct
- Percent of incidents using specific types of force (Electrical weapon, firearm, impact weapon, OC Spray, Physical Force, Police Canine)
- Percent of incidents initiated by a specific basis for police encounter (crime/violation in progress, person in crisis, prisoner, wanted suspect, etc.)

NYPD Members Using Force

This page displays information about the Officers who used force within the incidents described in the previous section (NYPD Force Dashboard).

Such information includes:

- Percent of force type used by NYPD Officers by force type
- Category of Injury Sustained by Subject by injury type
- Demographic data about NYPD Officers who have used force
 - Includes data on race, gender, assignment, and rank/title of members

Subjects

This section of the NYPD Force Dashboard displays information regarding all Subjects that are associated with the incidents found in the first section (NYPD Force Dashboard).

Such information includes:

- Type of Force used by Subjects against Officers of the NYPD

- Category of injury sustained by NYPD Officer
- Overall demographic information of subjects, including race, gender and age

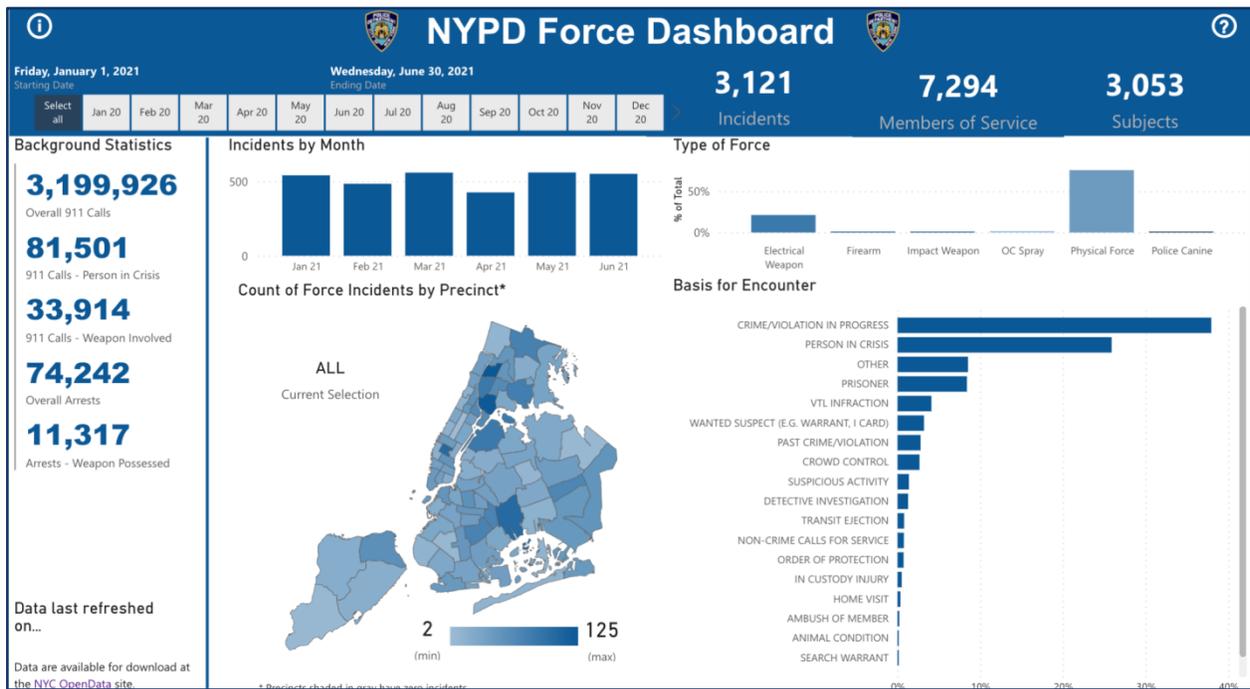


Figure 5. Incidents. This screenshot provides an overview of the data on Use of Force incidents reported to the NYPD Force dashboard. From “NYPD Force Dashboard,” by the New York Police Department.

Unlike other dashboards, the NYPD Force Dashboard tracks use of force incidents against civilians *and* those committed against NYPD members, illustrating how use of force data registries can also help protect police officers. Including such data and framing these registries as a mutual safety benefit for both civilians and officers might help persuade more law enforcement agencies to begin tracking use of force data.



Figure 5. NYPD Members Using Force. This screenshot shows data on incidents of force used against members of the NYPD. From “NYPD Force Dashboard,” by the New York Police Department.

BENEFITS OF USE OF FORCE REGISTRIES

Now more than ever, Americans are questioning the actions of law enforcement agencies. Data collection provides clarity and transparency to the communities these agencies serve. Tracking police Use of Force functions to protect the safety of community members and officers alike. Employing a local registry allows us to understand policing culture relevant to our community through the intersections of race, sex, gender, geography, time, context, etc.

After the murder of George Floyd, the call for police transparency amplified. When advocating for a public police database, local communities refused to take no for an answer. Undoubtedly, the implementation of Norfolk and New Jersey’s databases has been inspired by the post-Floyd era. Meanwhile, NYPD has been releasing annual data reports since 2016. Since December 2020, *all* New York City police departments, sheriff’s offices, and the New York State Police have been required to submit Use of Force incidents that occurred on or after November 1, 2020, through the use of a force reporting interface. Because these three data registries are newly

established, time will tell if employing a public Use of Force Registry will ultimately reduce unlawful Use of Force incidents. In the meantime, these registries can be used to analyze policing trends.

As data registries become established over lengths of time, it is likely that unlawful Use of Force incidents will decrease. For example, Police Strategies LLC has been tracking data for the San Jose PD since 2015 and the Vallejo PD since 2017. Considering the time Police Strategies LLC began tracking incidents for the San Jose Police Department, the department has seen a decrease in Use of Force incidents by 13.4% between 2015 to 2019, according to *NBC Bay Area*. According to the article, "...some racial disparities appear to be diminishing during the same time period as well" (NBC Bay Area, Jun 4, 2020). Use of force incidents have also decreased by 28% in Vallejo City in a three year period from 2017-2019.

PENNSYLVANIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY: 2020 ACT 57

Pennsylvania does not have a state wide Use of Force registry, however, some local police departments release Use of Force incidents through year end reports. Creating an interactive dashboard open to the public -- updated daily -- is a progressive next step for our local departments.

One step toward accountability occurred on July 14, 2020, when the establishment of a police conduct database was signed into law by Governor Tom Wolf. It is evident that the murder of George Floyd pushed this bill into law, however, Attorney General Josh Shapiro has been aiming for reform policies since 2018, when an East Pittsburgh police officer shot and killed 17- year-old Antawn Rose (*Triblive*, Jul 29, 2021). Pennsylvania Act 57 of 2020 mandates that the Municipal Police Officers Training and Education Commission establish and maintain an electronic database containing separation records, which, except as provided for in the hiring report, are exempt from disclosure under the Right to Know Law. The bill includes a background investigation for law enforcement before hiring, disclosure of employment information, and a state electronic database for the separation records of officers when disciplinary actions are taken against them.

Act 57 is certainly a step in the right direction. It ensures that police officers with a history of disciplinary actions, charges or complaints are identified and recorded so that an officer with such history cannot easily be accepted into a new department without scrutiny. According to Josh Shapiro, this was implemented " So that the public can have confidence that they don't have police officers with long lists of misconducts patrolling their communities, and fellow police officers know that their colleagues are people they want to be serving with" (Pittsburgh's Action

News 4, Jul 14, 2020). Unfortunately, neither the database itself nor the annual report is open to the public. In addition, “The bill also does not require departments to track the race or gender of people whom officers use force against” (The Philadelphia Inquirer, Jun 24, 2020). This impedes departments from analyzing racial disparities in Use of Force against black people versus white people. Studies show that people of color are more likely to be killed by police than their white counterparts.

CONCLUSION

Demands for transparency and accountability from law enforcement agencies have amplified since the murder of George Floyd. Now more than ever, there is public pressure in cities across the nation to ensure law enforcement agencies are truly serving and protecting the communities they represent.

Tracking police Use of Force incidents at the local level is a progressive step to achieving true accountability and reform-- but it is necessary to make this data publicly available. The three data registries outlined in this report- Norfolk, New Jersey, and NYPD Use of Force dashboards- are not the only publicly existing databases that track police Use of Force at local levels; they serve as solid examples of what one can look like. In creating databases that track police Use of Force at the city, county, and state level, we can afford the public the power to hold their local police officers and departments accountable, and create a more equitable and just system of law enforcement.

Citations

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