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**Center for Public Safety Initiatives**

# 2023 Homicide Statistics for 24 U.S. Cities

## Working Paper 2024-01

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# Introduction

This report examines homicide incidents that occurred in 2023 across 24 U.S. cities[1], including Rochester, New York. To account for population differences among the cities in this sample, we calculated the rate of homicides per 100,000 residents. This report identifies possible trends by highlighting the differences in homicide rates from 2022 to 2023 for 24 select U.S. cities. Cross-city comparisons are essential in understanding violence on a national scale. We used the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Crime Data Explorer tool to gather homicide data where agencies had reported for 2022; homicide data for 2023 was collected from local news outlets and individual agency websites - not the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) or other official sources. An official count of 2023 homicides cannot be determined by official sources for more than six months into the following year. We fully anticipate small discrepancies in homicide counts once official data is released. This paper is updated and released annually to reflect yearly data.

# Results

**Comparing U.S. Cities**

Table 1 compares trends in homicide across 24 select U.S. cities. The table shows the percent change in homicide counts and rates from 2022 to 2023. By calculating percent change, we can identify differences in homicide rates over time. The cities are ranked from highest to lowest 2023 homicide rates.

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[1] The 24 cities were chosen based on the Rochester Homicide Statistics report for 2019 & 2020.

*Table 1. 24 U.S. Cities' Homicide Number, Rate, & Percent Change for 2022-2023[2]*

| City | 2022 Homicides | 2022 Population Estimate | 2022 Homicide Rate | 2023 Homicides | Current Population Estimate | 2023 Homicide Rate | % Change Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. New Orleans, LA | 266 | 369,749 | 71.9 | 193 | 358,655 | 53.8 | -25.2 |
| 2. St. Louis, MO | 200 | 286,578 | 69.8 | 158 | 294,490 | 53.7 | -23.1 |
| 3. Detroit, MI | 308 | 620,376 | 49.6 | 252 | 615,633 | 40.9 | -17.5 |
| 4. Washington, D.C. | 197 | 670,949 | 29.4 | 274 | 677,827 | 40.4 | 37.4 |
| 5. Oakland, CA | 121 | 430,553 | 28.1 | 126 | 417,681 | 30.2 | 7.5 |
| **6. Rochester, NY** | **66** | **209,352** | **31.5** | **58** | **209,599** | **27.7** | **-12.1** |
| 7. Atlanta, GA | 168 | 499,127 | 33.7 | 135 | 487,203 | 27.7 | -17.8 |
| 8. Richmond, VA | 59 | 229,395 | 25.7 | 62 | 226,406 | 27.4 | 6.6 |
| 9. Indianapolis, IN | 208 | 880,621 | 23.6 | 216 | 866,202 | 24.9 | 5.5 |
| 10. Greensboro, NC | 40 | 301,115 | 13.3 | 74 | 299,632 | 24.7 | 85.7 |
| 11. Chicago, IL | 604 | 2,665,039 | 22.7 | 617 | 2,565,446 | 24.1 | 6.2 |
| 12. Hartford, CT | 37 | 120,196 | 30.8 | 28 | 119,440 | 23.4 | -24 |
| 13. Dallas, TX | 157 | 1,299,544 | 12.1 | 246 | 1,245,124 | 19.8 | 63.6 |
| 14. Compton, CA | 19 | 91,988 | 20.7 | 17 | 87,806 | 19.4 | -6.3 |
| 15. Pittsburgh, PA | 66 | 302,898 | 21.8 | 52 | 293,501 | 17.7 | -18.8 |
| 16. Syracuse, NY | 17 | 144,451 | 11.8 | 23 | 143,349 | 16 | 35.6 |
| 17. Newark, NJ | 53 | 305,344 | 17.4 | 47 | 298,019 | 15.8 | -9.2 |
| 18. Buffalo, NY | 67 | 276,486 | 24.2 | 38 | 273,530 | 13.9 | -42.6 |
| 19. Denver, CO | 90 | 713,252 | 12.6 | 72 | 693,279 | 10.4 | -17.5 |
| 20. Los Angeles, CA | 387 | 3,822,238 | 10.1 | 327 | 3,730,202 | 8.8 | -12.9 |
| 21. Lexington, KY | 33 | 321,184 | 10.3 | 25 | 319,969 | 7.8 | -24.3 |
| 22. Boston, MA | 44 | 650,706 | 6.8 | 37 | 599,606 | 6.2 | -8.8 |
| 23. Omaha, NE | 29 | 485,153 | 6 | 29 | 475,878 | 6.1 | 1.7 |
| 24. New York City, NY | 438 | 8,335,897 | 5.3 | 386 | 7,613,466 | 5.1 | -3.8 |
| United States | 21, 156 | 333,287,557 | 6.3 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

It should be noted that yearly fluctuations in homicide levels are a common feature of violence in

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[2] In previous years current population estimates have been pulled from the U.S. Census website. Unfortunately, this year the information was not available; an alternative source was used which came to its conclusions by observing trends in U.S. Census data and using that data to inform "...sophisticated mathematical models to create detailed estimates and projections..."

America. There are three general conclusions that Table 1 supports: (1) homicide levels across U.S. cities vary greatly (48.7 range in homicide rate), (2) the majority of cities observed (62.5%) experienced decreases in homicide rates from 2022 to 2023, and (3) while Rochester had a decreased homicide rate in 2023 compared to years prior and even moved from 5th to 6th highest rate; it continues to rank amongst the highest.

Greensboro, North Carolina experienced the largest increase in homicide from 2022 to 2023, with a year-to-year rate increase of 85.7%. Dallas, Texas experienced the second-largest increase in homicide from 2022 to 2023 with a year-to-year rate increase of 63.6%. Compared to the rest of our sample, these two cities experienced an abnormally high increase; the next highest city observed experienced an increase of 37.4%.

More than half of our sample (62.5%) experienced a decrease from 2022 to 2023; a significant improvement from 2021 to 2022 when only 54.2% of cities experienced a decrease. Buffalo experienced the largest decrease in homicide from 2022 to 2023 with a year-to-year rate decrease of 42.6%. New Orleans experienced the second largest decrease in homicide rates from 2022 to 2023. In 2022, New Orleans stood at #1 with a homicide rate of 71.9 and then experienced a 25.2% decrease to a rate of 53.8 in 2023. Although New Orleans continues to be the city with the highest homicide rate, the city has begun to see some improvement.

Rochester had a 12.1% decrease in homicide rate from 2022 to 2023 (about 2x the decrease from 2021 to 2022). A significant improvement from the 56.1% increase reported in 2021. Rochester continues to rank amongst the highest when it comes to homicide rates, however, it did move from fourth highest homicide rate in 2022 to sixth highest in 2023. Compared to New York metropolitan cities in our sample, Rochester had the highest homicide rate.  Like in previous years, Buffalo,
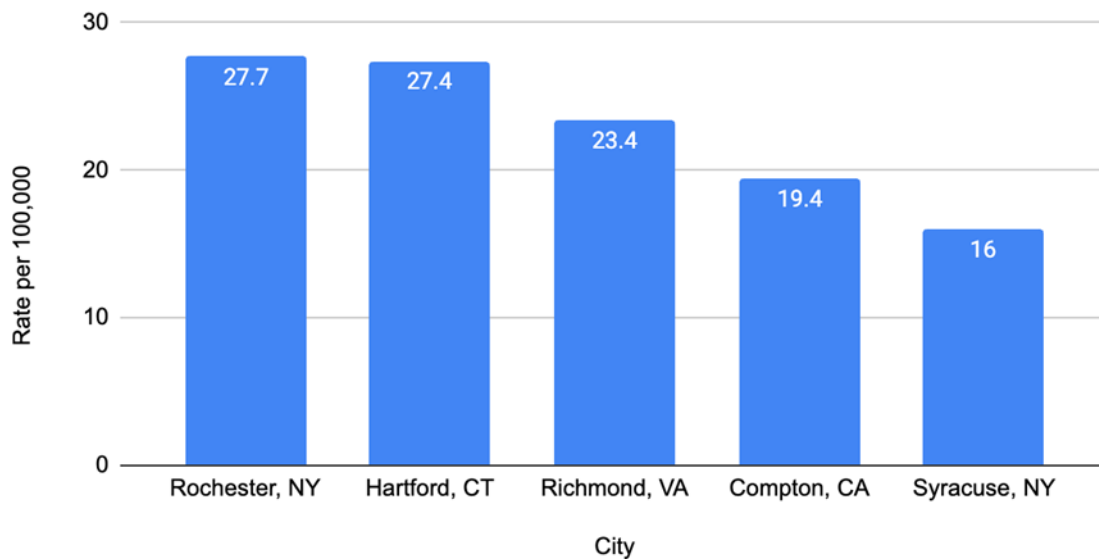
Syracuse, and New York City had lower homicide rates than Rochester in 2022.

**Comparing U.S. Homicide Rates among Cities with Similar Populations**

To gain a broader understanding of violence in American cities, we compared 2023 homicide rates

among cities of similar population sizes. Figure 1 illustrates a comparison between Rochester, NY and

cities with a population below 250,000; it is evident that Rochester had the highest homicide rate at

27.7 homicides per 100,000 residents.

*Figure 1*



Rochester and Richmond, VA remain closely ranked; they have a difference of only 0.3 homicides per

100,000 residents. Unlike years prior, Richmond did not have the most elevated homicide rate in this
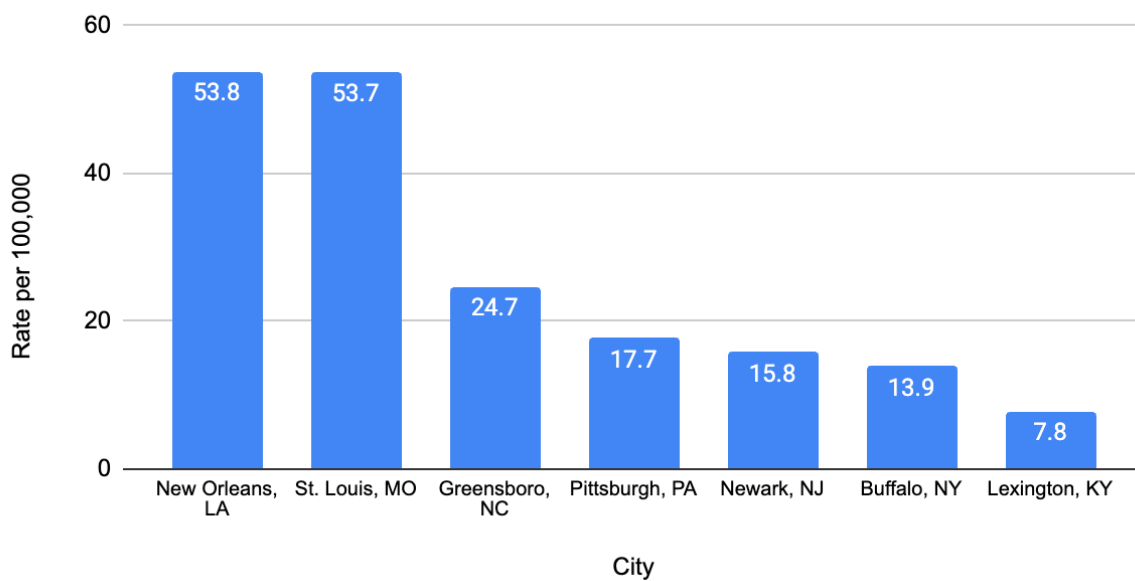
population category.

The homicide rate for our sample cities with populations below 250,000 ranges between 27.7

and 16 homicides per 100,000 residents. In 2022, the range of homicide rates for these cities was

between 36 and 12 homicides per 100,000 residents. These findings indicate less variation in 2023

homicide levels among these cities.

Figure 2 is a comparison of seven cities within our sample with populations between

250,000 and 400,000.

*Figure 2*



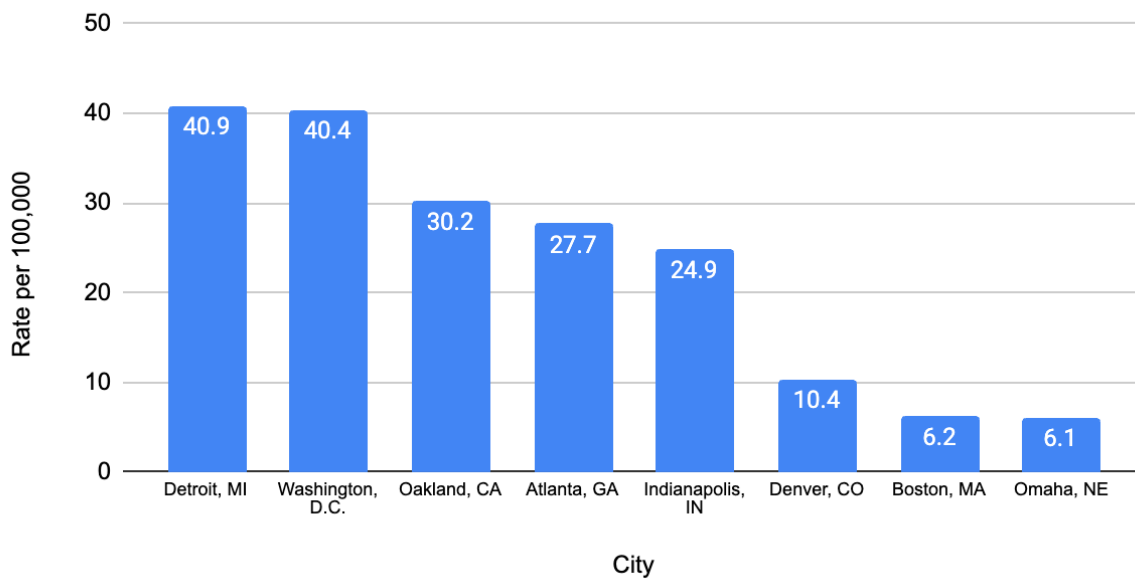2023 Homicide Rates of Select U.S. Cities with Populations Between 250,000 - 400,000

New Orleans and St. Louis immediately stand out with almost identical homicide rates of 53.8 per

100,000 residents and 53.7 per 100,000 residents, respectively. Like in 2022, New Orleans remained

the city with the leading homicide rate in our sample, although St. Louis is an extremely close runner-

up. An important caveat to these observations is the fact that the data collected for 2023 did not

come from official sources. Given the mild difference between New Orleans' homicide rate and St.

Louis' homicide rate (only 0.1 additional homicides per 100,000 residents); it is possible that when

the FBI releases official 2023 data, St. Louis will take the highest-ranked spot. Regardless, the

elevated homicide rate in both New Orleans and St. Louis for 2023 is concerning and further research

should focus on the similarities between these cities that may be contributing to their elevated rates

of homicide

Figure 3 displays homicide rates of our sample cities with populations between 400,000 and

1,000,000.

*Figure 3*

2023 Homicide Rates of Select U.S. Cities with Populations Between 400,000 - 1,000,000
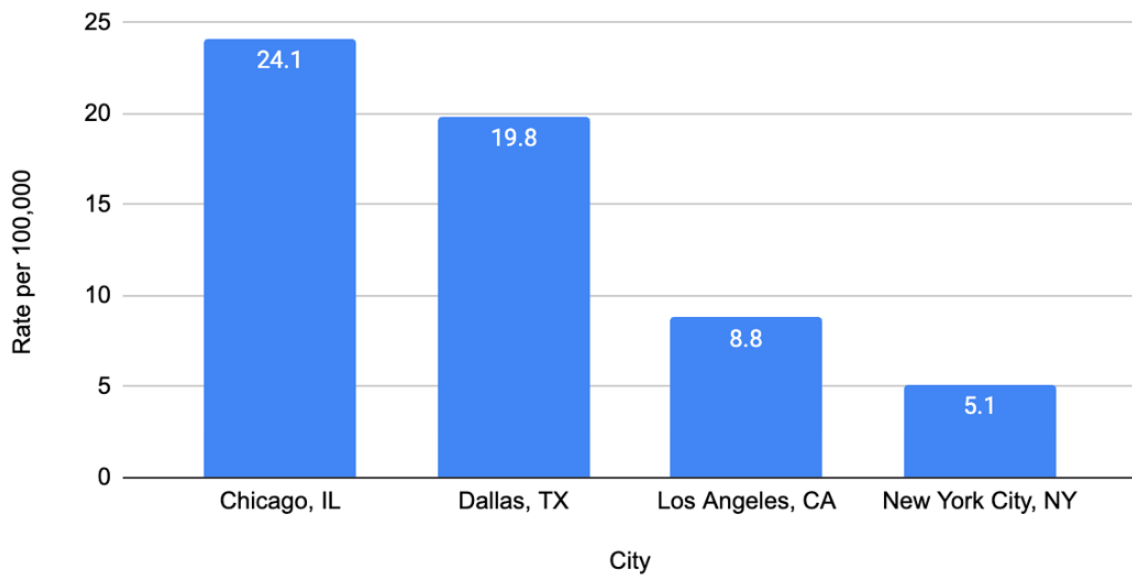


Like previous years, Detroit had the highest homicide rate in this population category, with a

homicide rate of 40.9 per 100,000 residents. In 2023, Detroit again ranked third highest homicide rate

in our entire sample. Figure 3 also highlights the variations in homicide levels within this population

category. Detroit's homicide rate is about four times higher than Denver and almost seven times

higher than Omaha and Boston. Conversely, several cities depicted in this figure have some of the

lowest homicide rates in our sample. Denver, Boston, and Omaha currently rank 19, 22, and 23 in

homicide rates, respectively. Further examination is required to attempt to explain the large

differences within this population category.

Figure 4 examines homicide rates of sample cities with populations above 1,000,000. Of these four cities, Chicago has consistently had the highest homicide rate for the past six years.

*Figure 4.*



Following the trend of past years, New York City had the lowest homicide rate within our population category and overall sample. Though the most populous city in America and reporting the highest total number of homicides (386), the overall general risk of New York City residents is lower than any other city in our sample.

# Conclusion

The overall objective of this report was to analyze homicide rates and yearly changes across the nation. We found that American cities have considerable differences in homicide levels, with rates as high as 53.8 homicides per 100,000 residents (New Orleans) and as low as 5.1 homicides per 100,000 residents (New York City).

In 2022, we found that the homicide levels in more than half (62.5%) of our sample cities experienced a decrease from 2022 to 2023. This is even more of an improvement from 54.2% of cities in this sample experiencing a decrease from 2021 to 2022. While this finding is promising it is important to remember that changes in year-to-year homicide rates are not enough to identify long-term trends. Additional research should examine five to ten years of homicide-level data to determine overall trends.

From 2022 to 2023, Rochester's homicide rate decreased by 12.1%; a marked change from the 6.5% decrease observed in 2022. While this is certainly good news for the community, it still leaves more to be desired. Current homicide reduction efforts may need revision, and it is still incredibly necessary to support the development of new initiatives to reduce homicides in American cities. The Center for Public Safety Initiatives has conducted this study for the last few years. When the FBI releases updated data on 2023 homicides, we intend to return to this report to compare the accuracy of our calculations against theirs. We hope this report serves as a valuable tool for local agency leaders and policymakers in their attempts to evaluate current strategies to decrease violence in our city.

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The Center for Public Safety Initiatives (CPSI) is a multi-disciplinary research center that examines strategies to reduce crime and enhance the administration of justice. It provides program evaluation, data analytics, and project management services to area law enforcement, community non-profits, and other criminal justice professionals, and it contributes to general knowledge generation of the nature and causes of crime and violence.  Its educational goals include training graduate and undergraduate students in strategic planning, program evaluation, and policy analysis.

The foundation of the Center is the practice of action research in which relevant data and analyses are brought to bear on the day-to-day decision-making processes of organizations. The Center serves the practice of policy development and implementation in real time and is a testing ground for 21st century university engagement, demonstrating how rigorous research and analysis can play a role in improving the lives of society's most marginalized citizens.

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