



College of Liberal Arts

Center for Public Safety Initiatives

2022 Homicide Statistics for 24 U.S. Cities

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Introduction

This report examines homicide incidents that occurred in 2022 across 24 U.S. cities¹, 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 2021 to 2022 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 for 2021²; homicide data for 2022 was collected from local news outlets and individual agency websites—not the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) or other official sources. An official count of 2022 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 percent change in homicide counts and rates from 2021 to 2022. By calculating percent change, we can identify differences in homicide rates over time. The cities are ranked from highest to

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

² Rochester, Syracuse, Oakland, and Omaha did not report to the FBI in 2021. Notably, Pittsburgh did not report for 2021 or 2020.

lowest 2022 homicide rates. It should be noted that yearly fluctuations in homicide levels are a common feature of violence in America. There are three general conclusions that Table 1 supports: (1) homicide levels across U.S. cities vary greatly (66 range in homicide rate), (2) unlike years prior, the majority of cities observed (54.2%) experienced decreases in homicide rates from 2021 to 2022, and (3) while Rochester had a decreased homicide rate in 2022 compared to years prior; it continues to rank amongst the highest—moving from fifth highest to fourth highest homicide rate this year.

Chicago, Illinois experienced the largest increase in homicide from 2021 to 2022, with a year-to-year rate increase of 83.2%. Washington, D.C. experienced the second largest increase in homicide from 2021 to 2022 with a year-to-year rate increase of 74.2%. Compared to the rest of our sample, these two cities experienced an abnormally high increase; all the other cities observed experienced an increase below 33.3%.

More than half of our sample (54.2%) experienced a decrease from 2021 to 2022; a significant deviation from 2020 to 2021 when only over a third of our sample (37.5%) experienced a decrease. Compton experienced the largest decrease in homicide from 2021 to 2022 with a year-to-year rate decrease of 64.7%. This finding is incredibly interesting when one considers the fact that in years prior Compton's homicide rate had been trending upwards. Syracuse also experienced a decrease in homicide from 2021 to 2022 with a year-to-year decrease of 39.3%, moving the city to 18th highest from 14th highest in 2021. Rochester had a 6.5% decrease in homicide rate from 2021 to 2022, a marked change from the 56.1% increase reported in 2021. However, Rochester continues to rank among the highest in terms of homicide rate, moving from fifth highest in 2021 to fourth highest this year.

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.

Table 1. 24 U.S. Cities' Homicide Number, Rate, & Percent Change for 2020 – 2021³

City	2021 Homicides	2021 Population Estimate	2021 Homicide Rate	2022 Homicides	Current Population Estimate	2022 Homicide Rate	% Change Rate
1. New Orleans, LA	201	376,971	53.3	280	396,048	71.0	33.2
2. St. Louis, MO	189	293,310	64.4	200	296,262	68.0	5.5
3. Detroit, MI	303	632,464	47.9	307	616,710	50.0	4.4
4. Rochester, NY	81	210,606	38.5	76	211,556	36.0	-6.5
5. Atlanta, GA	159	496,461	32.0	170	522,328	33.0	3.1
6. Hartford, CT	34	120,576	28.2	35	119,938	29.2	3.5
7. Washington, DC	109	670,050	16.3	203	715,891	28.4	74.2
8. Richmond, VA	89	226,604	39.2	59	233,330	25.3	-35.5
9. Chicago, IL	370	2,696,555	13.7	692	2,761,625	25.1	83.2
10. Oakland, CA	123	433,823	28.4	113	455,622	25.0	-12.0
11. Indianapolis, IN	239	882,039	27.1	226	907,802	25.0	8.0
12. Buffalo, NY	65	276,807	23.5	62	283,461	22.0	-6.4
13. Dallas, TX	212	1,288,457	16.5	248	1,336,347	19.0	15.2
14. Compton, CA	36	93,597	48.1	16	95,524	17.0	-64.7
15. Newark, NJ	60	307,220	19.5	50	321,872	16.0	-18.0
16. Lexington, KY	31	321,793	10.0	44	330,601	13.3	33.3
17. Pittsburgh, PA	51	300,431	17.0	37	302,152	12.2	-28.2
18. Syracuse, NY	29	146,103	19.8	18	149,655	12.0	-39.3
19. Greensboro, NC	51	298,263	17.1	37	307,846	12.0	-30.0
20. Denver, CO	100	711,463	14.1	76	750,130	10.1	-28.4
21. Los Angeles, CA	397	3,849,297	10.3	382	3,930,586	10.0	-3.0
22. Omaha, NE	32	487,300	6.6	30	509,178	6.0	-9.1
23. Boston, MA	36	654,776	5.5	41	693,062	6.0	9.1
24. New York City, NY	485	8,467,513	6.0	433	8,992,908	5.0	-16.7
United States	22,900	333,031,554	7.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

³ 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...”

Comparing U.S. Homicide Rates Among Cities with Similar Populations

To gain a broader understanding of violence in American cities, we compared 2022 homicide rates among cities of similar population sizes. Figure 1 shows a comparison of Rochester, New York with cities that have a population below 250,000. As seen in Figure 1, Rochester had the highest homicide rate at 36 homicides per 100,000 residents. Rochester and Richmond remain closely ranked; with a difference of 6.8 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 range between 36 and 12 homicides per 100,000 residents. In 2021, the range of homicide rates for these cities was between 38.8 and 19.6 homicides per 100,000 residents. These findings indicate greater variation in homicide levels among these cities.

Figure 1.

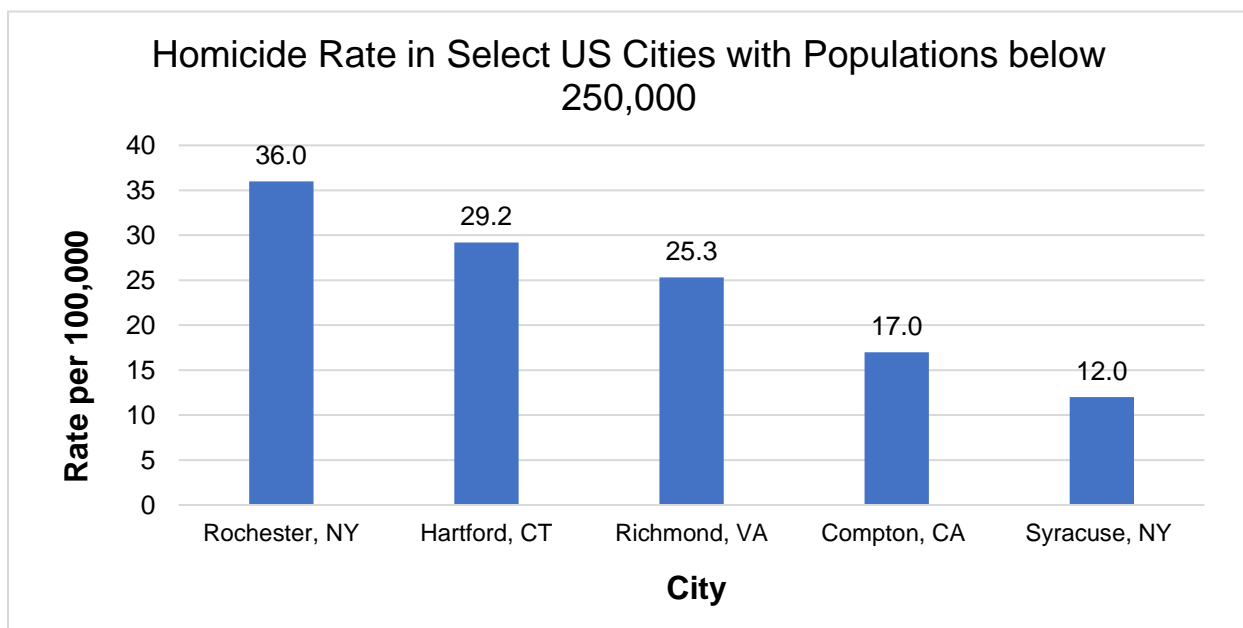


Figure 2 is a comparison of seven cities within our sample with populations between 250,000 and 400,000. New Orleans and St. Louis immediately stand out with homicide rate of 71 per 100,000 residents and 68 per 100,000 residents respectively. This year St. Louis was replaced as the leading city in our sample. Consistent with previous homicide reports, variation in homicide levels for 2022 were present between these cities. An important caveat to these observations is the fact that the data collected for 2022 did not come from official sources. Given the mild difference between New Orleans' homicide rate and St. Louis' homicide rate (three additional homicides per 100,000 residents), it is possible that when the FBI releases official 2022 data St. Louis will return to the highest ranked spot. Regardless, the elevated homicide rate in New Orleans and St. Louis for 2022 is concerning and further research should focus on the similarities between these cities that may be contributing to their elevated rates of homicide.

Figure 2.

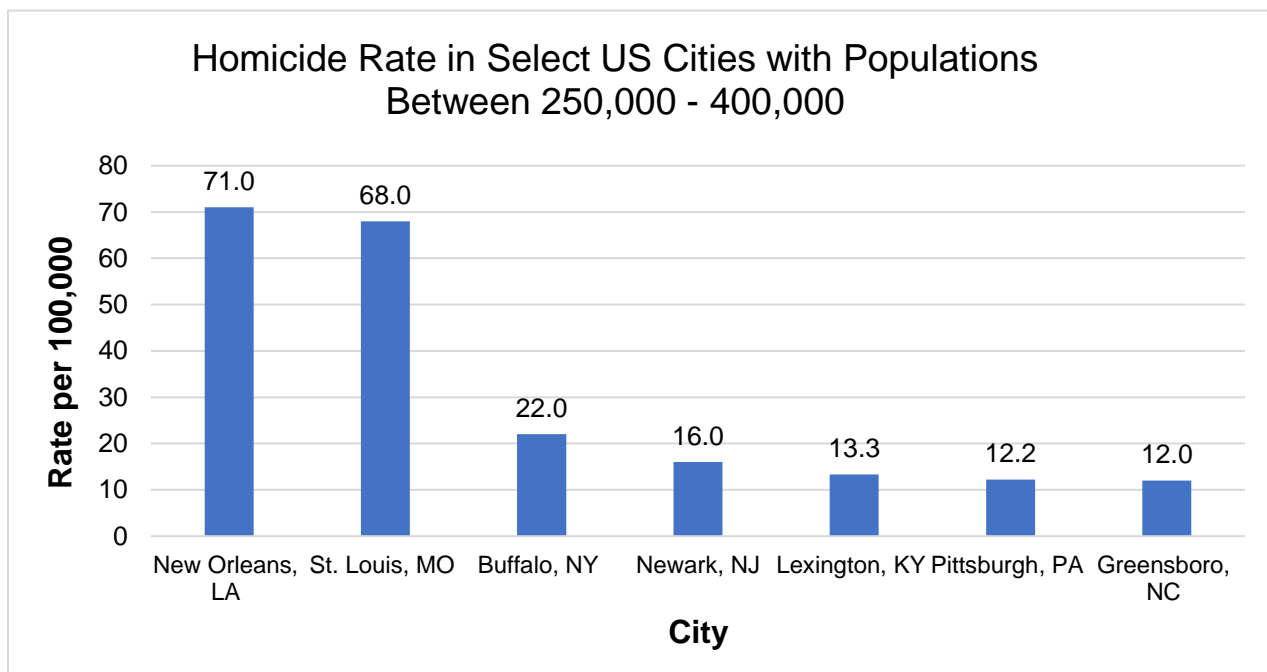


Figure 3 displays homicide rates of our sample cities with populations between 400,000 and 1,000,000. Like previous years, Detroit had the highest homicide rate in this population category, with a homicide rate of 50 per 100,000 residents. In 2022, Detroit again ranked third highest homicide rate in our entire sample. Figure 3 also highlights the variations in homicide levels within this population category. Detroit's homicide rate is five times higher than Denver's and about eight times higher than Omaha and Boston's. Conversely, several cities depicted in this figure also have the lowest homicide rates in our sample. Denver, Omaha, and Boston currently rank 20, 22, and 23 in homicide rates, respectively. Further examination is required to attempt to explain the large differences within this population category.

Figure 3.

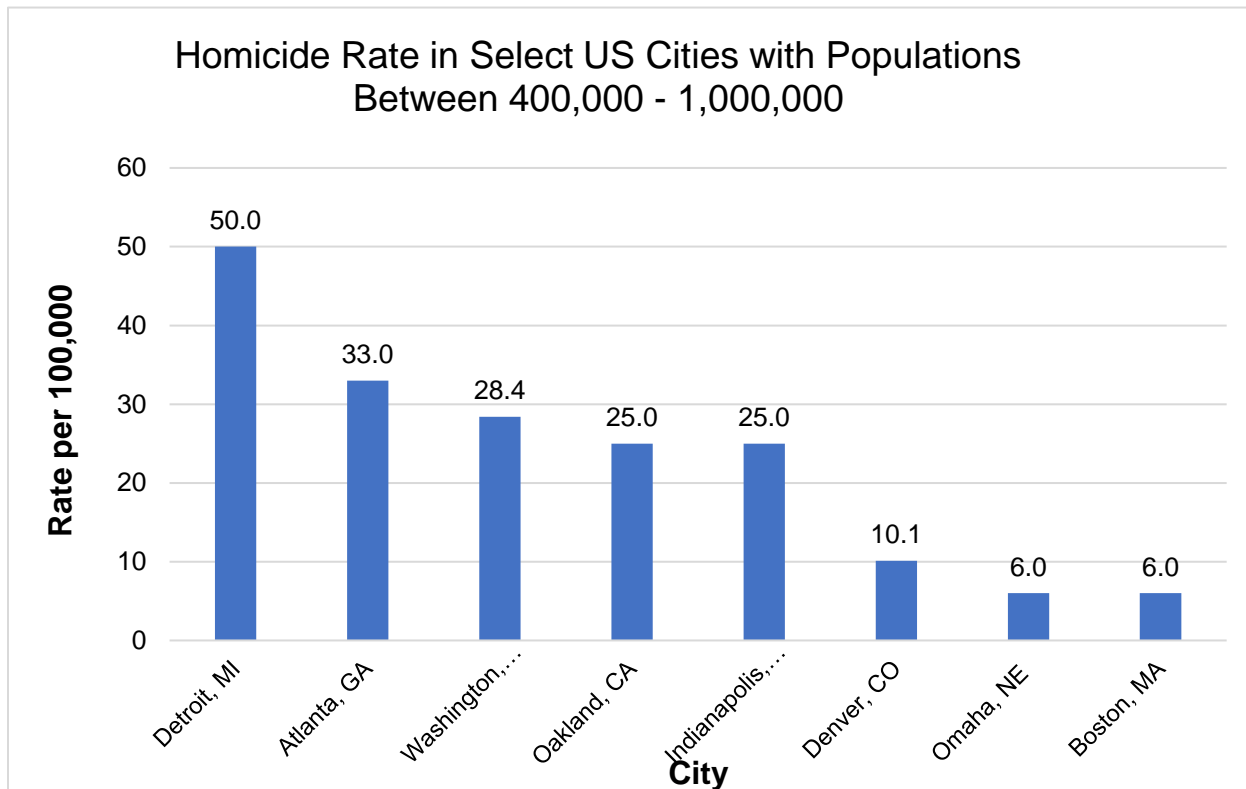
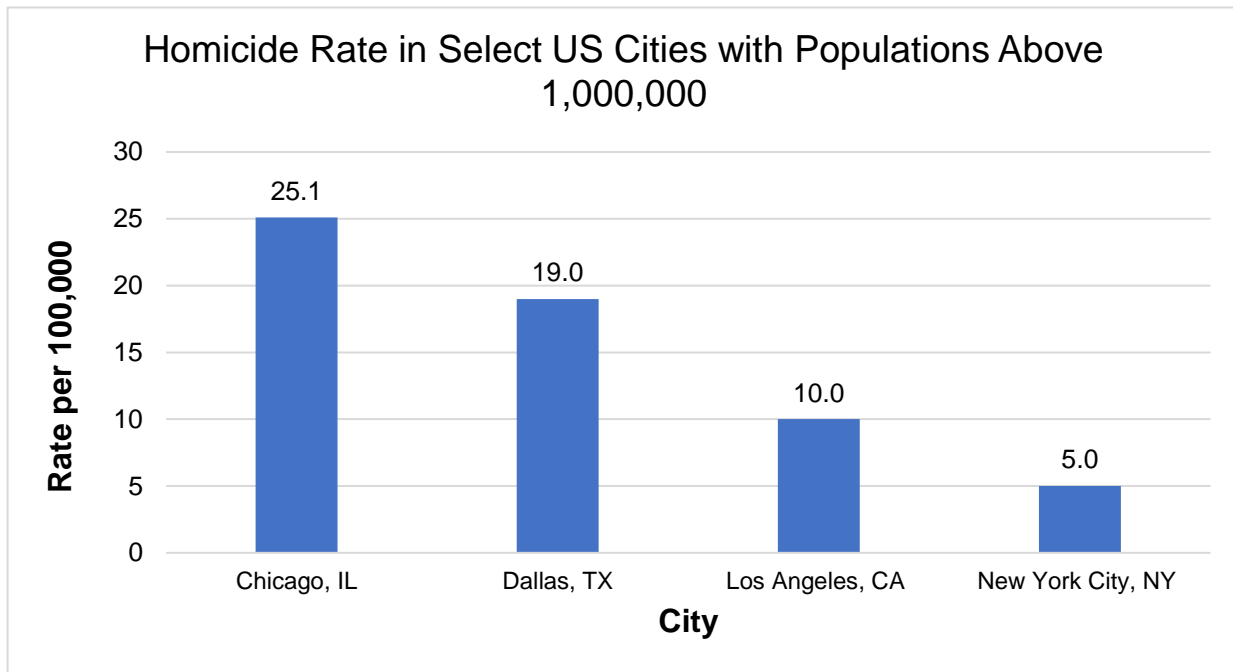


Figure 4 examines homicide rates of sample cities with populations above 1,000,000. Of these four cities, Chicago has consistently had the highest homicide rate for the past five years. In accordance with past years, New York City had the lowest homicide rate within our population category and overall sample. Though the most populous city in America and reporting the highest total number of homicides (433), the overall general risk of New York City residents is lower than any other city in our sample.

Figure 4.



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 71 homicides per 100,000 residents (New Orleans) and as low as five

homicides per 100,000 residents (New York City). Fluctuations in homicide levels are common, but it is still unclear why these differences exist. Further research will be critical in determining the causes of this phenomenon.

Unlike in 2021, we found that the homicide levels in more than half (54.2%) of our sample cities experienced 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 2021 to 2022, Rochester's homicide rate decreased by 6.5%, a marked change from the 56.1% increase observed in 2021. 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 2022 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 policy makers in their attempts to evaluate current strategies to decrease violence in our city.

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About the Center for Public Safety Initiatives

The Center for Public Safety Initiatives is a unique collaboration between RIT's [Department of Criminal Justice](#), the City of Rochester, and the criminal justice agencies of Greater Rochester including the Rochester Police Department and Monroe County Crime Lab. Its purpose is to contribute to criminal justice strategy through research, policy analysis and evaluation. Its educational goals include training graduate and undergraduate students in strategic planning and policy analysis.

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