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PRESS RELEASE

About 1 in 5 U.S. residents experienced contact with the police in 2022

WASHINGTON – In 2022, an estimated 19% of U.S. residents age 16 or older (about 49.2 million persons) reported experiencing contact with police during the past 12 months, down from 21% in 2020, according to *Contacts Between Police and the Public, 2022*, which was released October 4, 2024 by the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

“The number and percentage of U.S. residents who came in contact with police for any reason was lower in 2022 than in 2020,” said Kevin M. Scott, Ph.D., BJS Acting Director. “Resident-initiated contact remained stable between 2020 and 2022. Police-initiated contact and contact due to traffic accidents both declined from 2020 to 2022.”

Males (8%) were more likely than females (7%) to experience police-initiated contact in 2022, while females (12%) were more likely than males (11%) to initiate contact with police. Among U.S. residents who initiated their most recent contact with police, almost half (46%) did so to report a possible crime.

Police-initiated contact includes being stopped by police while driving or riding as a passenger in a motor vehicle (a traffic stop), being stopped by police while in a public place or parked vehicle (a street stop), being arrested and being contacted for some other reason. Reasons for resident-initiated contacts include reporting a possible crime, seeking help for an emergency or nonemergency, participating in a block watch program and seeking other help.

“The majority of residents who initiated contact with police in 2022 were satisfied with the police response,” Dr. Scott said.

In 2022, black persons (6%) were more likely to have experienced the threat or use of nonfatal force than white persons (2%), Hispanic persons (2%) or persons of another race (1%) during their most recent police-initiated or traffic accident-related contact. About 4 in 10 residents who experienced the threat or use of nonfatal force during their most recent contact perceived the force as excessive. The share of persons who reported experiencing police misconduct during their most recent contact was not statistically different between 2020 and 2022 (1% in each year).

The majority (78%) of persons whose most recent police contact in 2022 was a street stop experienced no enforcement action in 2022. Females (84%) were more likely than males (74%) to experience no enforcement action during their street stop, and white (15%) and black (18%) persons were more likely than Hispanic persons (7%) to receive a warning during their street stop.

Findings are from the 2022 Police-Public Contact Survey, with selected data from the 2020 and 2018 collections. This survey is a supplement to BJS’s National Crime Victimization Survey, which collects information from a nationally representative sample of persons age 12 or older in U.S. households.

[Contacts Between Police and the Public, 2022](#), written by BJS Statisticians Susannah N. Tapp, Ph.D., and Elizabeth J. Davis; related documents; and additional information about BJS’s statistical publications and programs are available on the BJS website at bjs.ojp.gov.

About the Bureau of Justice Statistics

The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Justice Programs is the principal federal agency responsible for collecting, analyzing and disseminating reliable statistics on crime and criminal justice in the United States. Kevin M. Scott, Ph.D., is the acting director. More information about BJS and criminal justice statistics can be found at bjs.ojp.gov.

About the Office of Justice Programs

The Office of Justice Programs provides federal leadership, grants, training, technical assistance, and other resources to improve the nation's capacity to prevent and reduce crime; advance equity and fairness in the administration of justice; assist victims; and uphold the rule of law. More information about OJP and its program offices – the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office for Victims of Crime, and SMART Office – can be found at www.ojp.gov.

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