



# Contacts Between Police and the Public, 2020

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In 2020, an estimated 21% of U.S. residents age 16 or older (about 53.8 million persons) reported experiencing contact with police during the past 12 months (**figure 1**), down from 24% in 2018. Approximately 10% of residents had experienced a police-initiated contact in 2020, while 11% experienced a resident-initiated contact and 3% were involved in a traffic accident that led to a police contact.

Findings in this report are based on data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics' (BJS) 2020 Police-Public Contact Survey (PPCS), with selected data from the 2018 and 2015 PPCS data collections. The PPCS is a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), which collects information from a nationally representative sample of persons age 12 or older in U.S. households. The PPCS collects information from persons age 16 or older on nonfatal contacts with police during the 12 months prior to the interview. Police contacts were classified by the year of the survey and not by the year of the contact.

## Police contact in the past 12 months

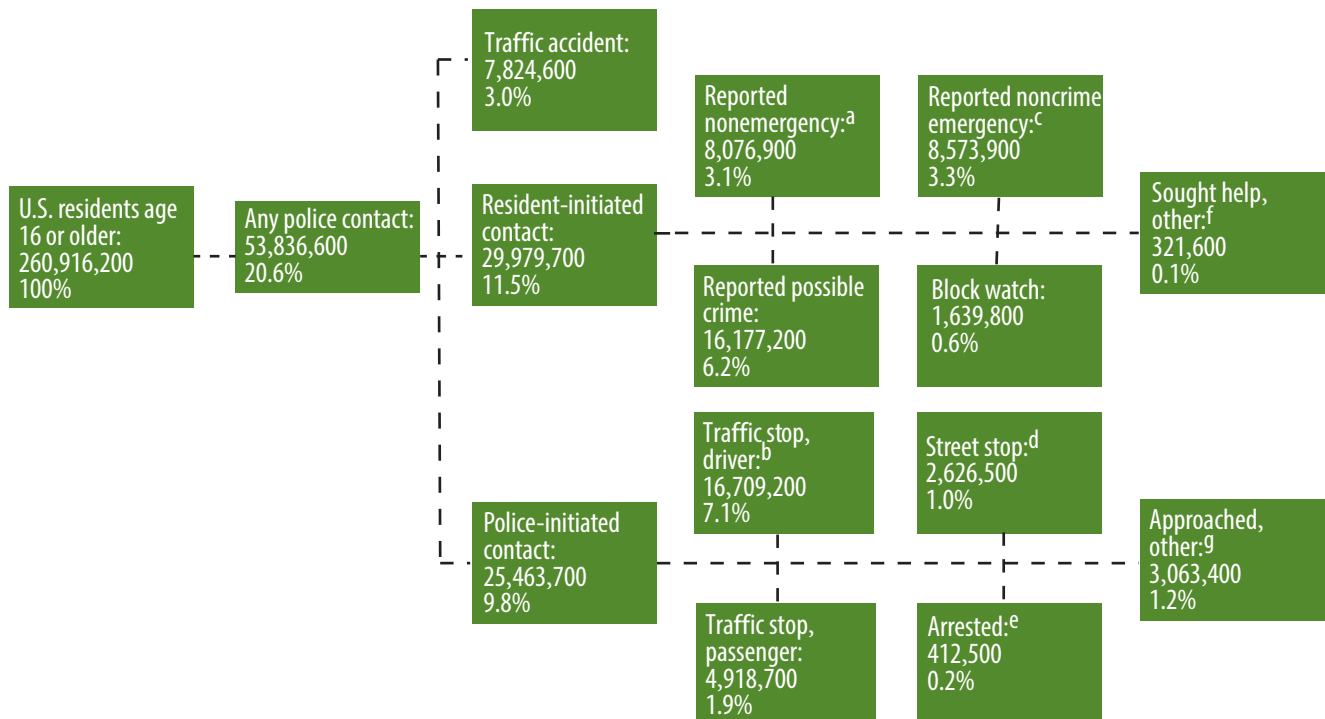
In 2020, U.S. residents were asked about instances in the past 12 months where they contacted police (resident-initiated contacts), instances where police approached or stopped them (police-initiated contacts), and contact related to a traffic accident. Resident-initiated contacts include reporting a possible crime, disturbance, or suspicious activity; reporting a noncrime emergency, such as a medical emergency; reporting or seeking assistance with a nonemergency, such as custody enforcement; participating in a block watch or other anti-crime program; and approaching or seeking help from police for another reason. Police-initiated contacts include being stopped by police while driving or riding as a passenger in a motor vehicle (i.e., a traffic stop); being stopped by police while in a public place or parked vehicle (i.e., a street stop); being arrested, excluding arrests due to some other type of police contact; and being stopped or approached by police for some other reason.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- About 21% (53.8 million) of U.S. residents age 16 or older had contact with police in 2020.
- A smaller share of persons had contact with police in 2020 (21%) than in 2018 (24%).
- In 2020, females (12%) were more likely than males (11%) to initiate contact with police, while males (11%) were more likely than females (9%) to experience police-initiated contact.
- Among U.S. residents who initiated their most recent contact with police, almost half (49%) did so to report a possible crime.
- Most residents who initiated police contact (88%) were satisfied with the police response.
- Black (6%) and Hispanic (3%) persons were more likely to experience the threat of force or use of nonfatal force during their most recent police contact in 2020 than white persons (2%).
- The share of persons who said they experienced police misconduct during their most recent contact was not statistically different between 2018 and 2020 (1% each).
- The majority of persons whose most recent police contact was a street stop experienced no enforcement action.

**FIGURE 1**

**U.S. residents age 16 or older who had police contact, by type of contact and reason, 2020**



Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding and because residents could experience more than one type of contact. See appendix table 1 for standard errors.

<sup>a</sup>Includes residents who asked for directions, custody enforcement, a court order, or another nonemergency service.

<sup>b</sup>Estimate is based on the driving population, which was 234,321,518 in 2020.

<sup>c</sup>Includes residents who reported a medical emergency or traffic accident that they witnessed but were not involved in.

<sup>d</sup>Includes residents who were approached by police while in a public place or parked vehicle.

<sup>e</sup>Includes residents who reported an arrest outside of the context of

a traffic stop, street stop, or traffic accident as the sole type of police contact. A contact that involved arrest as an outcome of another type of contact is counted in the initial type.

<sup>f</sup>Includes residents who contacted police for some other reason, such as accidentally calling 9-1-1 or setting off an alarm system, for animal control, or as part of the resident's work as a first responder or volunteer.

<sup>g</sup>Includes residents who reported police-initiated contact for some other reason, such as for information about a crime, to inform the resident about issues in the neighborhood or perform a wellness check, police accidentally went to the wrong address, police were looking for a lost pet, or as part of the resident's work as a first responder or volunteer.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2020.

## Definitions and measures of race and ethnicity

In the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) uses the race and ethnicity categories specified by the Office of Management and Budget's 1997 Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity. The standards include five categories of race (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, black, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and white) and two categories of ethnicity (Hispanic and not Hispanic) for purposes of data collection. Given that NCVS data derive from surveyed respondents, the small sizes of certain demographic groups relative to the overall U.S. population can pose measurement difficulties. In addition, the relatively rare occurrence of certain types of contact with police in a population can compound these measurement challenges, often

leading to even smaller sample sizes for particular demographic groups, including persons who are American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Asian, or of two or more races. In accordance with standard statistical analysis methodology for reporting estimates from sample data, BJS may combine demographic categories into an "Other" group to generate valid and reliable estimates or to protect the identity of individuals.

In this report, NCVS estimates for specific race and ethnicity groups are based on data availability and measures of reliability. Some differences between these estimates that may seem meaningful may not be statistically significant, due to the larger standard errors that typically result from smaller sample sizes. See *Methodology*.

## Males were more likely than females to have any contact with police

In 2020, males (21%) were more likely than females (20%) to have contact with police in the past 12 months (table 1). While males (11%) were more likely than females (9%) to have police-initiated contact, females (12%) were more likely than males (11%) to initiate contact with police. There was no significant difference between the percentages of males and females who had police contact related to a traffic accident.

Across race and Hispanic origin, white persons (22%) were more likely than black (18%), Hispanic (17%),

or Asian (16%) persons, but less likely than persons of another race (28%), to have contact with police in 2020. White persons (3.0%) were less likely than black persons (3.6%) but more likely than Hispanic persons (2.5%) to have police contact related to a traffic accident.

Persons ages 18 to 24 were the most likely age group to have police-initiated contact (17%) and police contact related to a traffic accident (5%) in 2020. Persons ages 18 to 24 (10%) were more likely to initiate police contact than those ages 16 to 17 (4%). They were less likely than those ages 25 to 44 (13%) or 45 to 64 (12%) to initiate police contact.

**TABLE 1**  
**U.S. residents age 16 or older who had police contact, by type of contact and demographic characteristics, 2020**

Demographic characteristic	U.S. residents age 16 or older	Any police contact		Police-initiated contact		Resident-initiated contact		Traffic accident	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total</b>	260,916,200	53,836,600	20.6%	25,463,700	9.8%	29,979,700	11.5%	7,824,600	3.0%
<b>Sex</b>									
Male*	126,524,700	26,751,200	21.1%	13,887,200	11.0%	13,657,500	10.8%	3,886,100	3.1%
Female	134,391,500	27,085,400	20.2 †	11,576,500	8.6 †	16,322,300	12.1 †	3,938,500	2.9
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>									
White <sup>a*</sup>	163,405,100	36,677,800	22.4%	16,863,900	10.3%	21,145,600	12.9%	4,959,500	3.0%
Black <sup>a</sup>	31,382,000	5,656,300	18.0 †	2,895,000	9.2 ‡	2,747,100	8.8 †	1,115,100	3.6 ‡
Hispanic	44,074,400	7,283,900	16.5 †	3,627,800	8.2 †	3,914,900	8.9 †	1,112,800	2.5 †
Asian <sup>a</sup>	16,192,100	2,595,000	16.0 †	1,275,700	7.9 †	1,202,700	7.4 †	435,500	2.7
Other <sup>a,b</sup>	5,862,500	1,623,600	27.7 †	801,300	13.7 †	969,500	16.5 †	201,700	3.4
<b>Age</b>									
16–17	7,989,100	1,025,400	12.8% †	652,600	8.2% †	357,400	4.5% †	247,400	3.1% †
18–24*	29,497,800	7,513,500	25.5	4,914,300	16.7	2,993,400	10.1	1,438,900	4.9
25–44	86,908,100	20,787,400	23.9	10,630,400	12.2 †	11,425,100	13.1 †	2,864,100	3.3 †
45–64	82,434,400	16,634,300	20.2 †	6,713,100	8.1 †	10,186,100	12.4 †	2,147,200	2.6 †
65 or older	54,086,800	7,876,000	14.6 †	2,553,300	4.7 †	5,017,800	9.3	1,127,100	2.1 †
<b>Household income</b>									
\$49,999 or less <sup>c*</sup>	102,251,400	19,507,700	19.1%	9,219,500	9.0%	10,891,500	10.7%	2,769,800	2.7%
\$50,000–\$74,999	46,012,000	9,821,400	21.3 †	4,913,600	10.7 †	5,288,200	11.5 ‡	1,380,700	3.0
\$75,000 or more	112,652,800	24,507,500	21.8 †	11,330,600	10.1 †	13,800,000	12.3 †	3,674,100	3.3 †

Note: The Police-Public Contact Survey collects data on persons age 16 or older living in noninstitutionalized residential settings in the United States. Details may not sum to totals because residents could experience more than one type of contact. Missing data on annual household income were imputed. From January 1, 2020 to June 30, 2022, 24% of persons age 16 or older in the National Crime Victimization Survey sample were missing data on annual household income. For more information on imputation procedures, see *National Crime Victimization Survey, 2016: Technical Documentation* (NCJ 251442, BJS, December 2017). See appendix table 2 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

<sup>b</sup>Includes persons who are American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or of two or more races.

<sup>c</sup>The 2020 datafile combines the categories “\$24,999 or less” and “\$25,000 to \$49,999.” These categories are presented separately in 2018.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2020.

## Resident contact with police was lower in 2020 than in 2018

In 2020, about 21% of U.S. residents age 16 or older (more than 53.8 million persons) had contact with police in the past 12 months (table 2). This was down from 24% (61.5 million) in 2018 but similar to the 21% (53.5 million) in 2015. The decrease in police contact was driven by a lower percentage of resident-initiated contact in 2020 (11%) than in 2018 (14%).

All types of resident-initiated contact, including reporting a possible crime and participating in a block watch or other anti-crime program, declined between 2018 and 2020.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Contacting police to report or seek assistance for a nonemergency (such as asking directions) was added as a reason for police contact beginning with the 2018 PPCS. This type of contact would have been captured as “seeking other help from police” in 2015. Adding this type of contact as its own category in 2018 contributed to a decrease in the “seeking other help” category.

The portion of U.S. residents experiencing any type of police-initiated contact was lower in 2020 (10%) than in 2018 or 2015 (11% each). This reflected a pattern of decline in the percentage of residents experiencing police contact as drivers in traffic stops from 2015 (9%) to 2018 (8%), and to 2020 (7%). A smaller share of residents had contact with police related to a traffic accident in 2020 (3.0%) than in 2018 (3.4%), but there was no statistically significant difference in the percentages between 2015 (3.1%) and 2020.

**TABLE 2**  
U.S. residents age 16 or older who had police contact, by type of contact and reason, 2015, 2018, and 2020

Type of contact and reason	2015		2018		2020*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Any police contact</b>	53,469,300	21.1%	61,542,300 †	23.7% †	53,836,600	20.6%
<b>Police-initiated contact</b>	27,415,900 †	10.8% †	28,880,900 †	11.1% †	25,463,700	9.8%
Traffic stop, driver <sup>a</sup>	19,204,500 †	8.6 †	18,666,000 †	8.1 †	16,709,200	7.1
Traffic stop, passenger	5,964,100 †	2.4 †	5,702,600 †	2.2 †	4,918,700	1.9
Street stop <sup>b</sup>	2,503,700	1.0	3,528,100 †	1.4 †	2,626,500	1.0
Arrested <sup>c</sup>	814,800 †	0.3 †	386,000	0.1	412,500	0.2
Approached, other <sup>d</sup>	1,946,700 †	0.8 †	3,638,100 †	1.4 †	3,063,400	1.2
<b>Resident-initiated contact</b>	27,060,200 †	10.7% †	35,468,500 †	13.7% †	29,979,700	11.5%
Reported possible crime	16,928,100	6.7 †	19,109,200 †	7.4 †	16,177,200	6.2
Reported noncrime emergency <sup>e</sup>	8,841,900	3.5	9,971,500 †	3.8 †	8,573,900	3.3
Reported nonemergency <sup>f</sup>	...	...	10,068,700 †	3.9 †	8,076,900	3.1
Block watch	2,366,200 †	0.9 †	2,160,900 †	0.8 †	1,639,800	0.6
Sought help, other <sup>g</sup>	2,478,400 †	1.0 †	641,200 †	0.2 †	321,600	0.1
<b>Traffic accident</b>	7,950,500	3.1%	8,882,000 †	3.4% †	7,824,600	3.0%

Note: Details may not sum to totals because residents could experience more than one type of contact. See appendix table 1 for standard errors.

\*Comparison year.

†Difference with comparison year is significant at the 95% confidence level.

...Not available.

<sup>a</sup>Estimates are based on the driving population, which was 223,315,375 in 2015, 231,290,951 in 2018, and 234,321,518 in 2020.

<sup>b</sup>Includes residents who were approached by police while in a public place or parked vehicle.

<sup>c</sup>Includes residents who reported an arrest outside of the context of a traffic stop, street stop, or traffic accident as the sole type of police contact. A contact that involved arrest as an outcome of another type of contact is counted in the initial type.

<sup>d</sup>Includes residents who reported police-initiated contact for some other reason, such as for information about a crime, to inform the resident about issues in the neighborhood or perform a wellness check, police accidentally went to the wrong address, police were looking for a lost pet, or as part of the resident's work as a first responder or volunteer.

<sup>e</sup>Includes residents who reported a medical emergency or traffic accident that they witnessed but were not involved in.

<sup>f</sup>Includes residents who asked for directions, custody enforcement, a court order, or another nonemergency service.

<sup>g</sup>Includes residents who contacted police for some other reason, such as accidentally calling 9-1-1 or setting off an alarm system, for animal control, or as part of the resident's work as a first responder or volunteer.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2015, 2018, and 2020.

## About 2% of persons experienced the threat of force or nonfatal use of force during any police contact in 2020

U.S. residents age 16 or older who had any police contact in the past 12 months were asked if they experienced the threat of force or nonfatal use of force. While the number of residents experiencing the threat of force or nonfatal use of force was higher in 2018 than 2020, there was no statistically significant difference in the percentage of residents experiencing the threat or use of force from 2018 to 2020 (2% each) (table 3).

In 2020, a higher percentage of males (3%) than females (1%) experienced the threat of force or use of force. Black persons (4%) and Hispanic persons (2%) were more likely than white persons (1.5%) to experience the threat or use of force. Residents ages 18 to 24 (3%) were more likely to experience the threat of force or use of nonfatal force than those ages 45 to 64 (1%) or age 65 or older (1%). In general, similar shares of residents in most demographic categories experienced the threat or use of force in 2018 and 2020; however, Hispanic persons were more likely to experience the threat or use of force in 2018 than in 2020.

**TABLE 3**  
U.S. residents age 16 or older whose police contact involved the threat or nonfatal use of force, by demographic characteristics, 2018 and 2020

Demographic characteristic	2018			2020		
	Any police contact	With threat/nonfatal use of force <sup>a</sup>		Any police contact	With threat/nonfatal use of force <sup>a</sup>	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
<b>Total</b>	61,542,300	1,254,300	2.0%	53,836,600	1,045,600	1.9%
<b>Sex</b>						
Male*	30,467,400	917,900	3.0%	26,751,200	721,200	2.7%
Female	31,074,900	336,400 †	1.1 †	27,085,400	324,400 †	1.2 †
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>						
White <sup>b*</sup>	42,525,700	647,100	1.5%	36,677,800	560,200	1.5%
Black <sup>b</sup>	6,545,700 †	250,700 †	3.8 †	5,656,300 †	241,800 †	4.3 †
Hispanic	8,238,400 †	280,100 †	3.4 †	7,283,900 †	172,900 †	2.4 †
Asian <sup>b</sup>	2,419,500 †	30,900 †	1.3	2,595,000 †	26,600 †	1.0
Other <sup>b,c</sup>	1,813,000 †	45,500 †	2.5	1,623,600 †	44,000 †	2.7
<b>Age</b>						
16–17	1,143,500 †	39,200 †	3.4%	1,025,400 †	:	:
18–24*	8,859,700	280,000	3.2	7,513,500	229,800	3.1%
25–44	23,518,700 †	625,500 †	2.7	20,787,400 †	513,500 †	2.5
45–64	19,160,700 †	274,400	1.4 †	16,634,300 †	213,500	1.3 †
65 or older	8,859,600	35,200 †	0.4 †	7,876,000	69,200 †	0.9 †

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding. Includes residents who had any police contact in the last 12 months. See appendix table 3 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

:Not shown. Sample size is below the minimum threshold or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Includes residents whom police threatened with force, handcuffed, pushed or grabbed, hit or kicked, used chemical or pepper spray, used an electroshock weapon, pointed or fired a gun, or used another type of physical force.

<sup>b</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

<sup>c</sup>Includes Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or persons of two or more races.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2018 and 2020.



## Most recent police contact

Residents who experienced any contact with police were asked more detailed questions about the nature of their most recent contact. This section describes characteristics of the most recent police-initiated contact and findings related to misconduct, threat of force, and nonfatal use of force reported during such contact. Findings from the most recent resident-initiated contact are also included.

### Police-initiated contact

#### *Males were more likely than females to be pulled over while driving*

In 2020, drivers in traffic stops accounted for the majority (63%) of persons whose most recent police

contact was initiated by police (table 4). Males (68%) were more likely than females (56%) to be the driver in a traffic stop, while females (22%) were more likely than males (11%) to be the passenger.

White persons (63%) were as likely as black persons (62%) but less likely than Asian persons (65%) to be the driver in a traffic stop during their most recent police contact. A smaller percentage of white persons (15%) than Asian persons (18%) or persons identifying as American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or two or more races (28% collectively) were most recently the passenger in a traffic stop. A smaller share of Hispanic persons (7%) than white persons (9%) most recently had contact with police during a street stop.

**TABLE 4**

**U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact was police-initiated, by reason and demographic characteristics, 2020**

Demographic characteristic	Police-initiated most recent contact		Reason									
	Number	Percent	Traffic stop, driver <sup>a</sup>		Traffic stop, passenger		Street stop <sup>b</sup>		Arrested <sup>c</sup>		Approached, other <sup>d</sup>	
			Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total</b>	21,837,200	100%	13,718,100	62.8%	3,468,300	15.9%	1,918,800	8.8%	268,600	1.2%	2,463,500	11.3%
<b>Sex</b>												
Male*	12,102,900	100%	8,267,700	68.3%	1,327,200	11.0%	1,077,600	8.9%	190,100	1.6%	1,240,300	10.2%
Female	9,734,300	100%	5,450,500	56.0 †	2,141,000	22.0 †	841,200	8.6	78,500	0.8	1,223,200	12.6
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>												
White <sup>e,f</sup>	14,376,600	100%	9,031,500	62.8%	2,127,300	14.8%	1,311,500	9.1%	177,300	1.2%	1,728,900	12.0%
Black <sup>e</sup>	2,484,900	100%	1,537,100	61.9	364,000	14.6 ‡	252,300	10.2	43,100	1.7	288,300	11.6
Hispanic	3,179,600	100%	2,061,600	64.8	595,900	18.7	221,800	7.0 ‡	36,100	1.1	264,200	8.3
Asian <sup>e</sup>	1,162,400	100%	759,900	65.4 †	206,100	17.7 †	79,500	6.8	:	:	110,600	9.5 †
Other <sup>e,f</sup>	633,700	100%	328,000	51.8 †	174,900	27.6 †	53,700	8.5	:	:	71,500	11.3 †
<b>Age</b>												
16–24*	4,742,000	100%	2,663,000	56.2%	1,243,500	26.2%	485,700	10.2%	55,600	1.2%	294,200	6.2%
25–44	8,964,400	100%	6,014,500	67.1 ‡	1,208,000	13.5	726,900	8.1	126,100	1.4	888,900	9.9 †
45–64	5,839,500	100%	3,731,200	63.9 †	719,100	12.3 †	471,500	8.1	75,800	1.3 †	841,800	14.4 †
65 or older	2,291,400	100%	1,309,500	57.1 †	297,700	13.0	234,700	10.2 †	:	:	438,600	19.1 †

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding. See appendix table 4 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

:Not shown. Sample size is below the minimum threshold, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Estimates are based on the driving population, which was 234,321,518 in 2020.

<sup>b</sup>Includes residents who were approached by police while in a public place or parked vehicle.

<sup>c</sup>Includes residents who reported an arrest outside of the context of a traffic stop, street stop, or traffic accident as the sole type of police contact. A contact that involved arrest as an outcome of another type of contact is counted in the initial type.

<sup>d</sup>Includes residents who reported police-initiated contact for some other reason, such as for information about a crime, to inform the resident about issues in the neighborhood or perform a wellness check, police accidentally went to the wrong address, police were looking for a lost pet, or as part of the resident's work as a first responder or volunteer.

<sup>e</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., "white" refers to non-Hispanic white persons and "black" refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

<sup>f</sup>Includes persons who are American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or of two or more races.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2020.

## The Impact of COVID-19 on the Police-Public Contact Survey

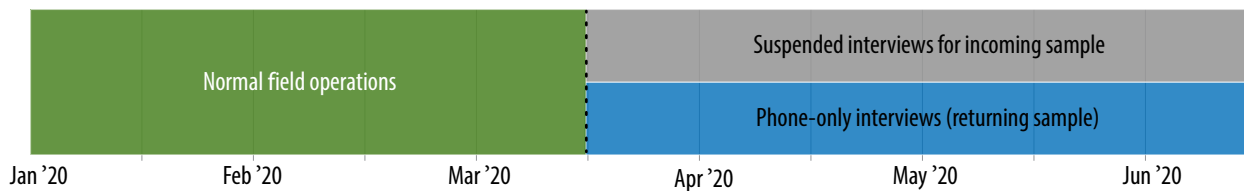
The 2020 Police-Public Contact Survey (PPCS) was conducted from January through June 2020. As a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), the PPCS was administered at the end of the NCVS interview to persons ages 16 or older within households sampled for the NCVS (figure 2).

Households selected for the NCVS remain in the sample for 3.5 years, and eligible persons in these households are interviewed every 6 months, for a total of seven NCVS interviews. As part of standard procedures, new households entering the panel (incoming sample) are interviewed in person (personal visits). Households that have already been interviewed at least once (returning sample) are interviewed either in person or over the phone.

Due to increasing risks related to COVID-19, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), in coordination with the U.S. Census Bureau (who administers the survey for BJS), suspended all incoming sample interviews and shifted all returning sample interviews to telephone calls starting in mid-March 2020. Under normal circumstances, NCVS field representatives try to interview returning households by telephone first, and more returning households generally complete the survey by phone than in person. During data collection for the PPCS, since incoming sample interviews were suspended between mid March and June, most respondents were from returning households. Any effects from changing the mode of interview to telephone-only were minimal.

For more information on the impact of COVID-19 on the NCVS in 2020, see *Criminal Victimization, 2020* (NCJ 301775, BJS, October 2021).

**FIGURE 2**  
**Police–Public Contact Survey Field Operations procedures, 2020**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020

**Female drivers were more likely to be given a warning than male drivers**

In 2020, about 10% of drivers in traffic stops experienced no enforcement action by police, while about 43% were given a warning and 43% were given a ticket (table 5). There were no statistically significant changes in outcomes for drivers in traffic stops from 2018 to 2020.

Female drivers (45% in 2018 and 46% in 2020) were more likely than male drivers (40% in 2018 and 41% in 2020) to be given a warning during a traffic stop, while male drivers (7% in 2018 and 6% in 2020) were more

likely than female drivers (2% each year) to be searched or arrested. There were no statistically significant differences by sex in the percentage of drivers who were given a ticket or experienced no enforcement action in 2018 and 2020.

In 2020, black drivers (15%) were more likely than white drivers (9%) to experience no enforcement action during their most recent traffic stop. Among those who did experience an action, white drivers (45% in 2018 and 47% in 2020) were more likely to be given a warning than drivers of any other race or Hispanic origin in 2018 and 2020. A higher percentage

**TABLE 5**  
**Percent of U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact was as a driver in a traffic stop, by enforcement action and demographic characteristics, 2018 and 2020**

Demographic characteristic	2018 <sup>a</sup>					2020 <sup>b</sup>				
	Total	No enforcement action	Enforcement action <sup>c</sup>			Total	No enforcement action	Enforcement action <sup>c</sup>		
			Warning <sup>d</sup>	Ticket	Search/arrest <sup>e</sup>			Warning <sup>d</sup>	Ticket	Search/arrest <sup>e</sup>
<b>Total</b>	100%	9.4%	41.8%	44.1%	4.7%	100%	9.6%	43.2%	42.8%	4.3%
<b>Sex</b>										
Male*	100%	9.0%	39.7%	44.7%	6.7%	100%	10.2%	41.1%	43.1%	5.6%
Female	100%	10.0	44.9 †	43.2	1.9 †	100%	8.9	46.4 †	42.4	2.4 †
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>										
White <sup>f*</sup>	100%	9.6%	45.5%	41.3%	3.6%	100%	9.0%	47.2%	39.9%	3.9%
Black <sup>f</sup>	100%	14.1 †	35.7 †	44.0	6.2 †	100%	14.7 †	34.3 †	45.4	5.6
Hispanic	100%	5.7 †	32.7 †	52.3 †	9.2 †	100%	8.4	36.4 †	49.6 †	5.6
Other <sup>f,g</sup>	100%	7.2	36.7 †	52.5 †	3.6	100%	9.9	35.3 †	50.9 †	3.9
<b>Age</b>										
16–24*	100%	6.5%	38.9%	48.2%	6.3%	100%	7.2%	44.3%	43.0%	5.5%
25–44	100%	8.6 ‡	39.6	46.5	5.3	100%	8.4	41.1	45.4	5.1
45–64	100%	11.4 †	43.1 ‡	41.6 †	3.9 †	100%	11.2 †	42.4	42.4	3.1 ‡
65 or older	100%	12.9 †	54.0 †	31.8 †	1.4 †	100%	15.8 †	50.6 ‡	31.6 †	2.0 †
<b>Income</b>										
\$49,999 or less*	100%	9.6%	39.1%	44.4%	6.8%	100%	8.6%	44.2%	41.4%	5.8%
\$50,000–\$74,999	100%	12.6 †	43.1 ‡	39.7 †	4.6 †	100%	11.5 ‡	37.6 †	46.0 †	5.0
\$75,000 or more	100%	7.7 †	43.7 †	45.8	2.8 †	100%	9.6	44.9	42.5	3.0 †

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding and because enforcement action was unknown for some residents. See appendix table 5 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Denominator excludes about 1.1% of residents in 2018 for whom enforcement action during the traffic stop was unknown.

<sup>b</sup>Denominator excludes about 1.3% of residents in 2020 for whom enforcement action during the traffic stop was unknown.

<sup>c</sup>The most serious enforcement action was counted for residents who experienced more than one action. A warning was designated as the least serious, a ticket as the next most serious, and search or arrest as the most serious.

<sup>d</sup>Includes residents who received a written or verbal warning.

<sup>e</sup>“Search” refers to residents who experienced a personal or vehicle search.

<sup>f</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

<sup>g</sup>Includes persons who are Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or of two or more races.

<sup>h</sup>The “\$24,999 or less” category used in 2018 was combined with the “\$25,000 to \$49,999” category in 2020.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2018 and 2020.



of Hispanic persons (52% in 2018 and 50% in 2020) and persons who are Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or of two or more races (52% in 2018 and 51% in 2020) received a ticket than white persons (41% in 2018 and 40% in 2020). Persons with household incomes of \$49,000 or less were more likely to be searched or arrested in 2018 and 2020 than persons with household incomes of \$75,000 or more.

**The majority of persons whose most recent police contact was a street stop experienced no enforcement action**

In 2020, the majority (75%) of U.S. residents whose most recent police contact was a street stop experienced no resulting enforcement action (**table 6**). Residents who did experience an enforcement action most often received a warning (16%), while being searched or arrested (5%) or given a ticket (3%) was

**TABLE 6**  
**Percent of U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact was a street stop, by enforcement action and demographic characteristics, 2018 and 2020**

Demographic characteristic	2018 <sup>a</sup>					2020 <sup>b</sup>				
	Total	No enforcement action	Enforcement action <sup>c</sup>			Total	No enforcement action	Enforcement action <sup>c</sup>		
			Warning <sup>d</sup>	Ticket	Search/arrest <sup>e</sup>			Warning <sup>d</sup>	Ticket	Search/arrest <sup>e</sup>
<b>Total</b>	100%	72.2%	12.2%	2.7%	12.8%	100%	75.1%	16.3%	3.4%	5.2%
<b>Sex</b>										
Male*	100%	67.9%	11.8%	3.0%	17.3%	100%	68.3%	19.3%	3.8%	8.6%
Female	100%	78.3 †	12.8	2.3	6.6 †	100%	83.2 †	12.8 †	:	:
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>										
White <sup>f</sup> *	100%	79.0%	11.0%	2.7%	7.4%	100%	77.4%	15.9%	3.7%	3.0%
Black <sup>f</sup>	100%	58.2 †	13.5	:	26.5 †	100%	63.4 ‡	16.8	5.6	14.2 ‡
Hispanic	100%	62.5 †	13.7	:	19.7 †	100%	70.3	19.6	0.7 †	:
Other <sup>f,g</sup>	100%	63.3	16.7	:	18.2	100%	:	:	:	:
<b>Age</b>										
16–24*	100%	59.0%	19.8%	3.8%	17.4%	100%	62.8%	26.6%	5.8%	4.8%
25–44	100%	73.3 †	9.0 †	1.7	16.0	100%	78.6 †	9.9 †	3.2	8.3
45–64	100%	81.5 †	9.6 †	3.1	5.8 †	100%	82.1 †	14.1 †	:	3.2
65 or older	100%	84.2 †	9.4 †	:	:	100%	76.1 ‡	19.1	:	:
<b>Income</b>										
\$49,999 or less <sup>h</sup> *	100%	71.1%	9.1%	2.4%	17.4%	100%	72.3%	14.2%	4.9%	8.6%
\$50,000–\$74,999	100%	72.9	12.5	:	12.7	100%	76.0	21.7 ‡	:	:
\$75,000 or more	100%	73.5	16.6 †	3.6	6.2 †	100%	78.2	16.8	2.1	2.9 †

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding and because enforcement action was unknown for some residents. See appendix table 6 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

:Not shown. Sample size is below the minimum threshold, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Denominator excludes about 5.1% of residents in 2018 for whom enforcement action during the street stop was unknown.

<sup>b</sup>Denominator excludes about 7.5% of residents in 2020 for whom enforcement action during the street stop was unknown.

<sup>c</sup>The most serious enforcement action was counted for residents who experienced more than one action. A warning was designated as the least serious, a ticket as the next most serious, and search or arrest as the most serious.

<sup>d</sup>Includes residents who received a written or verbal warning.

<sup>e</sup>“Search” refers to residents who experienced a personal or vehicle search.

<sup>f</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

<sup>g</sup>Includes persons who are Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or of two or more races.

<sup>h</sup>The “\$24,999 or less” category used in 2018 was combined with the “\$25,000 to \$49,999” category in 2020.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police–Public Contact Survey, 2018 and 2020.

less common. About 5% of residents were searched or arrested during their street stop in 2020, marking a nearly 60% decline from the 13% searched or arrested in 2018.

Females (78% in 2018 and 83% in 2020) were more likely than males (68% in both years) to experience no enforcement action during their street stop. A higher percentage of white persons (77%) than black persons (63%) experienced no enforcement action during their street stop in 2020. In both 2018 and 2020, persons ages 16 to 24 were less likely than any other age group to experience no enforcement action during a street stop.

### Misconduct and threat or use of force

#### *White persons were less likely than persons of any other race or Hispanic origin to experience police misconduct*

U.S. residents who had police contact, except as part of a block watch or other anti-crime program, were asked if police behaved properly during their most recent contact. Residents who reported that police behaved improperly were asked follow-up questions about police behavior, including whether police called them a slur or degrading name, seemed motivated by prejudice or bias toward them, or spoke to or touched them in a sexual manner.

In 2020, about 1% of U.S. residents experienced such misconduct during their most recent contact with police (**table 7**). One percent felt police behaviors were motivated by prejudice or bias, and 0.1% said police called them a slur or degrading name. White persons (less than 1%) were less likely than black persons (5%), Hispanic persons (1%), or persons of another race (2%) to experience any type of police misconduct in 2020. A larger share of Hispanic (2%) and white (0.6%) persons experienced misconduct in 2018 than in 2020 (1% of Hispanic persons and 0.4% of white persons). There were no significant differences in the percentage of persons in 2018 and 2020 reporting that police called them a slur or degrading name or treated them with bias or prejudice.

**TABLE 7**  
Percent of U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact involved misconduct, by demographic characteristics, 2018 and 2020

	2018	2020
<b>Any misconduct</b>	1.2%	1.1%
Slur <sup>a</sup>	0.2	0.1
Bias <sup>b</sup>	1.1	1.0
Sexual misconduct <sup>c</sup>	0.1	:
<b>Sex</b>		
Male*	1.5%	1.2%
Female	0.9 †	0.9
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>		
White <sup>d*</sup>	0.6%	0.4%
Black <sup>d</sup>	4.4 †	4.7 †
Hispanic	1.6 †	1.0 †
Other <sup>d,e</sup>	1.3 †	2.0 †
<b>Age</b>		
16–24*	1.9%	1.4%
25–44	1.4	1.5
45–64	0.9 †	0.7
65 or older	0.3 †	0.3 †

Note: Details may not sum to totals because residents could experience more than one type of misconduct. Includes residents who had any type of most recent police contact for any reason except as part of a block watch or other anti-crime program. Denominator includes about 0.2% of residents in 2018 and 0.2% in 2020 for whom police misconduct was missing. See appendix table 7 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

:Not shown. Sample size is below the minimum threshold, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Includes residents whom police called a slur or degrading name.

<sup>b</sup>Includes residents who felt that any police behavior during the contact was motivated by prejudice or bias due to their actual or perceived race or Hispanic origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

<sup>c</sup>Includes residents whom police made a sexual comment to, touched in a sexual way, or had any physical contact with that was sexual in nature.

<sup>d</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

<sup>e</sup>Includes persons who are Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or of two or more races.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police–Public Contact Survey, 2018 and 2020.

**In 2020, black and Hispanic persons were more likely than white persons to experience the threat of force or nonfatal use of force by police**

U.S. residents whose most recent contact was police-initiated or related to a traffic accident were asked whether the contact involved police shouting, cursing, or threatening the use of force or using nonfatal force. The use of force includes handcuffing, pushing or grabbing, hitting or kicking, using a chemical or pepper spray, using an electroshock weapon, pointing or shooting a gun, or using some other type of physical force.<sup>2,3</sup> Threat of force, handcuffing, pushing or grabbing, hitting or kicking, and using a weapon were combined in this report to create overall estimates of the threat or use of force.

<sup>2</sup>Responses to questions about whether police threatened residents with a ticket or arrest were excluded from this report.

<sup>3</sup>Responses about use of chemical or pepper spray, an electroshock weapon, and some other type of physical force were combined during data processing due to disclosure concerns.

In 2020, approximately 4% of residents experienced some type of police action during their most recent police-initiated or traffic accident-related contact, with 3% experiencing the threat or use of force (table 8). Persons most commonly experienced handcuffing (2.1%) or shouting (1.6%) by police. Residents were more likely to report that police displayed or used a weapon in 2018 than in 2020.

Black persons (7%) and Hispanic persons (5%) were more likely to experience at least one type of police action than white persons (3%) in 2020. Black (6%) and Hispanic (3%) persons were also more likely than white persons (2%) to experience the threat or use of force. Black persons (3%) were more likely to be shouted at by police than white persons (1%).

**TABLE 8**  
**Percent of U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact was police-initiated or related to a traffic accident, by race or Hispanic origin and police action, 2018 and 2020**

	2018					2020				
	Total	Race/Hispanic origin				Total	Race/Hispanic origin			
		White <sup>a*</sup>	Black <sup>a</sup>	Hispanic	Other <sup>a,b</sup>		White <sup>a*</sup>	Black <sup>a</sup>	Hispanic	Other <sup>a,b</sup>
Any police action <sup>c,d</sup>	3.7%	2.7%	6.8% †	5.9% †	2.5%	3.7%	3.0%	7.0% †	4.5% †	2.6%
Shouting	1.7%	1.2%	2.9% †	3.0% †	1.5%	1.6%	1.4%	3.1% †	1.6%	1.4%
Cursing	0.6%	0.5%	1.7% †	0.7%	:	0.6%	0.5%	1.4%	:	:
Threat/nonfatal use of force <sup>e</sup>	2.8%	2.0%	5.3% †	4.8% †	1.9%	2.7%	2.1%	5.5% †	3.4% †	1.8%
Threat of force	0.7	0.5	2.0 †	1.2 ‡	:	0.6	0.3	2.2 †	0.8 ‡	:
Handcuffing <sup>f</sup>	2.3	1.6	4.4 †	3.5 †	1.9	2.1	1.9	2.9	2.8 ‡	1.7
Pushing/grabbing/hitting/kicking	0.7	0.4	1.6 †	1.4 †	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.6 †	0.7	:
Using weapon/other force <sup>g</sup>	0.4	0.2	0.9 †	0.8 ‡	:	0.2	0.1	:	0.0 <sup>h</sup>	:

Note: Details may not sum to totals because residents could experience more than one type of police action. See appendix table 8 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

:Not shown. Sample size is below the minimum threshold, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

<sup>b</sup>Includes persons who are Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or of two or more races.

<sup>c</sup>Denominator includes about 0.6% of residents in 2018 and 0.6% in 2020 for whom police action was missing.

<sup>d</sup>Includes shouting, cursing, threat of force, or use of nonfatal force.

<sup>e</sup>Includes residents whom police threatened with use of force, handcuffed, pushed or grabbed, hit or kicked, used a weapon on, or used any other physical force on.

<sup>f</sup>With or without arrest.

<sup>g</sup>Includes residents whom police used chemical or pepper spray on, used an electroshock weapon on, pointed or fired a gun at, or used some other type of physical force on.

<sup>h</sup>Value indicates 95% statistical confidence that 0.00% to 0.36% of the Hispanic population experienced police use of a weapon, based on the sample of Hispanic respondents to the Police-Public Contact Survey.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2018 and 2020.

Hispanic persons were more likely than white persons to be handcuffed in both 2018 and 2020. There was no statistically significant difference in the likelihood of black (3%) and white (2%) persons being handcuffed in 2020, while black persons (4%) were more likely than white persons (2%) to be handcuffed in 2018. There were no other significant differences between 2018 and 2020 in the percentage of persons experiencing any type of police action.

**Almost half of residents who experienced the threat or use of force felt police used excessive force**

In both 2018 and 2020, about 3% of U.S. residents experienced the threat or use of force during their most recent police-initiated contact or contact related to a

traffic accident (**table 9**). The threat or use of force was more commonly experienced by those who were male (4%) than female (1%) in both years. It was also more commonly experienced by persons who were black (5% in 2018 and 6% in 2020) or Hispanic (5% in 2018 and 3% in 2020) than persons who were white (2% in both years). Persons ages 16 to 24 (4%) were twice as likely as those age 45 or older (2%) to report the threat or use of force in 2018 and 2020.

In 2020, about 31% of residents who were most recently involved in a police-initiated or traffic accident-related contact perceived police's threat or use of force as necessary, while 46% saw it as excessive. These percentages were not statistically different from 2018.

**TABLE 9**  
**U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police-initiated or traffic accident-related contact involved the threat or nonfatal use of force, by perceptions of force and demographic characteristics, 2018 and 2020**

Demographic characteristic	2018				2020			
	Police-initiated/traffic accident-related contact	With threat/nonfatal use of force <sup>a</sup>	Perceived force as <sup>b</sup> —		Police-initiated/traffic accident-related contact	With threat/nonfatal use of force <sup>a</sup>	Perceived force as <sup>b</sup> —	
			Necessary <sup>c</sup>	Excessive <sup>d</sup>			Necessary <sup>c</sup>	Excessive <sup>d</sup>
<b>Total</b>	31,089,300	2.8%	27.5%	50.9%	27,961,700	2.7%	30.6%	45.9%
<b>Sex</b>								
Male*	16,569,300	4.2%	26.0%	52.9%	15,139,200	3.7%	30.4%	44.1%
Female	14,520,000	1.1 †	34.0	42.5	12,822,500	1.4 †	31.5	51.4
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>								
White <sup>e*</sup>	20,560,500	2.0%	31.7%	44.3%	18,302,000	2.1%	38.9%	37.7%
Black <sup>e</sup>	3,713,800	5.3 †	25.8	62.9 †	3,360,900	5.5 †	:	:
Hispanic	4,534,400	4.8 †	16.9 †	53.7	3,979,700	3.4 †	:	:
Other <sup>e,f</sup>	2,280,600	1.9	:	:	2,319,100	1.8	:	:
<b>Age</b>								
16–24*	6,761,300	3.6%	18.3%	59.8%	5,921,900	3.8%	:	:
25–44	12,292,200	3.6	30.9 †	46.8 ‡	11,150,400	3.1	38.6%	35.1%
45 or older	12,035,800	1.5 †	31.6 †	48.9	10,889,400	1.7 †	20.9	56.1

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding. See appendix table 9 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

:Not shown. Sample size is below the minimum threshold, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Includes residents whom police threatened with use of force, handcuffed, pushed or grabbed, hit or kicked, used chemical or pepper spray on, used an electroshock weapon on, pointed or fired a gun at, or used some other type of physical force on. Denominator includes about 0.6% of residents in 2018 and 0.6% in 2020 for whom use of force was missing.

<sup>b</sup>Residents could respond “yes” to the two survey questions about whether the force seemed necessary or excessive, “no” to both questions, or “yes” to one question and “no” to the other.

<sup>c</sup>Denominator includes about 5.7% of residents in 2018 and 9.3% in 2020 who did not know if the force was necessary.

<sup>d</sup>Denominator includes about 3.6% of residents in 2018 and 7.0% in 2020 who did not know if the force was excessive.

<sup>e</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

<sup>f</sup>Includes persons who are Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or of two or more races.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2018 and 2020.

**Males were more likely than females to engage in at least one action toward police**

U.S. residents were also asked about their own conduct or actions during their most recent police-initiated or traffic accident-related contact. Those actions included complaining to the officer(s); verbal actions such as disobeying or verbally interfering, arguing with, cursing at, insulting, or verbally threatening the police officer(s); and physical actions such as trying to get away; resisting being handcuffed, searched, or arrested; or physically doing anything else to police.

An estimated 5% of residents engaged in at least one action toward police in 2020 (table 10). The most common action was complaining to police (4%), followed by verbal action (2%) and physical action (0.3%). Males (6%) were more likely than females (4%) and black persons (7%) were more likely than white persons (4%) to engage in at least one action toward police. Persons ages 16 to 24 (4%) were less likely than those ages 25 to 44 or ages 45 to 64 (5% each) to engage in an action toward police.

**TABLE 10**  
Percent of U.S. residents age 16 or older who engaged in action toward police during their most recent police-initiated or traffic accident-related contact, by demographic characteristics, 2020

	Percent
<b>Any resident action<sup>a</sup></b>	4.7%
Complaining	3.9
Verbal action <sup>b</sup>	1.7
Physical action <sup>c</sup>	0.3
<b>Sex</b>	
Male*	5.6%
Female	3.6 †
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>	
White <sup>d*</sup>	4.5%
Black <sup>d</sup>	7.0 †
Hispanic	3.9
Other <sup>d,e</sup>	4.0
<b>Age</b>	
16–24*	3.5%
25–44	4.9 ‡
45–64	5.2 †
65 or older	4.6

Note: Details may not sum to totals because residents could engage in more than one type of conduct or action toward police. See appendix table 10 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Denominator includes 0.3% of residents for whom action toward police was missing.

<sup>b</sup>Includes residents who argued with, cursed at, insulted, verbally threatened, disobeyed, or verbally interfered with the officer(s) at any point during the contact.

<sup>c</sup>Includes residents who tried to get away; pushed or grabbed the officer(s); hit or kicked the officer(s); resisted being handcuffed, searched, or arrested; or physically did anything else at any point during the contact.

<sup>d</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

<sup>e</sup>Includes persons who are Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or of two or more races.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2020.



## Resident-initiated contact

Among U.S. residents who initiated their most recent contact with police in 2020, almost half (49%) did so to report a possible crime (table 11). Nearly a quarter (23%) did so to report a noncrime emergency, about another quarter (24%) did so to report a nonemergency or seek help for another reason, and 4% participated in a block watch or other anti-crime program.

Males (25%) were more likely than females (23%) to contact police to report a nonemergency or seek help for another reason. There were no other significant differences by sex in resident-initiated contact with

police. Black persons (51%) and Hispanic persons (56%) were more likely than white persons (47%) to have had their most recent resident-initiated contact with police be reporting of a crime. White persons (23%) were more likely than Hispanic persons (22%) to contact police to report a noncrime emergency. Persons ages 16 to 24 were more likely to have had their most recent resident-initiated contact with police to be reporting a possible crime (51%) than those ages 45 to 64 (49%) or those age 65 or older (41%).

**TABLE 11**

**U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact was resident-initiated, by reason and demographic characteristics, 2020**

Demographic characteristic	Reason									
	Resident-initiated most recent contact		Reported possible crime		Reported noncrime emergency <sup>a</sup>		Reported nonemergency/sought help, other <sup>b</sup>		Block watch	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total</b>	25,798,200	100%	12,546,700	48.6%	6,003,200	23.3%	6,099,900	23.7%	1,148,400	4.4%
<b>Sex</b>										
Male*	11,582,400	100%	5,580,800	48.2%	2,623,800	22.7%	2,852,400	24.6%	525,400	4.5%
Female	14,215,800	100%	6,965,900	49.0	3,379,400	23.8	3,247,500	22.8 †	623,000	4.4
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>										
White <sup>c*</sup>	18,309,500	100%	8,616,600	47.1%	4,263,200	23.3%	4,570,900	25.0%	858,800	4.7%
Black <sup>c</sup>	2,289,200	100%	1,172,000	51.2 ‡	566,900	24.8	418,800	18.3	131,500	5.7
Hispanic	3,302,300	100%	1,837,400	55.6 †	735,100	22.3 †	663,400	20.1 †	66,500	2.0 †
Asian <sup>c</sup>	1,065,100	100%	537,300	50.4	186,600	17.5	279,900	26.3	61,300	5.8
Other <sup>c,d</sup>	832,000	100%	383,500	46.1	251,500	30.2	166,900	20.1 †	30,200	3.6 †
<b>Age</b>										
16–24*	2,612,900	100%	1,333,100	51.0%	589,400	22.6%	630,000	24.1%	60,300	2.3%
25–44	9,608,200	100%	4,923,100	51.2	2,240,800	23.3	2,202,800	22.9	241,400	2.5 †
45–64	9,001,300	100%	4,413,100	49.0 †	1,975,400	21.9 †	2,131,200	23.7 †	481,600	5.4 †
65 or older	4,575,700	100%	1,877,300	41.0 †	1,197,500	26.2 †	1,135,900	24.8 †	365,000	8.0 †

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding. Denominator includes about 0.1% of residents whose most recent contact was missing due to recoding of contacts originally classified as “other-specify.” See *Methodology*. See appendix table 11 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Includes residents who reported a medical emergency or traffic accident that they witnessed but were not involved in.

<sup>b</sup>Includes residents who asked for directions, custody enforcement, a court order, or another nonemergency service and residents who contacted police for some other reason, such as accidentally calling 9-1-1 or setting off an alarm system, for animal control, or as part of the resident's work as a first responder or volunteer.

<sup>c</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

<sup>d</sup>Includes persons who are American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or of two or more races.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2020.



**The majority of residents who initiated police contact were satisfied with the police response**

Residents who initiated their most recent contact with police (except as part of a block watch or other anti-crime program) were asked about their perception of police. Approximately 88% reported that they were satisfied with the police response, with 93% saying they would be more or as likely to contact police again in the future (table 12). About 84% of residents reported that police responded promptly. Males (93%) were more likely than females (90%) to report that police behaved properly.

White persons (89%) were the most likely racial or ethnic group to report being satisfied with the police

response. A higher percentage of white persons (94%) said they would be more or as likely to contact police in the future than black persons (89%) or persons who are American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or of two or more races (87%).

The majority of residents (64%) reported that police improved the situation. Asian persons (56%) and persons who are American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or of two or more races (53%) were less likely than white persons (64%) to believe that police improved the situation.

**TABLE 12**  
**Percent of U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact was resident-initiated for any reason excluding block watch, by perceptions of response and demographic characteristics, 2020**

Demographic characteristic	Resident-initiated most recent contact excluding block watch	Perceived police as <sup>a</sup> —			Resident was <sup>a</sup> —	
		Responding promptly <sup>b</sup>	Improving the situation <sup>c</sup>	Behaving properly <sup>d</sup>	Satisfied with police response <sup>e</sup>	More/as likely to contact police in future <sup>f</sup>
Total	9.5%	84.4%	63.6%	91.6%	88.1%	92.7%
<b>Sex</b>						
Male*	8.7%	85.0%	63.5%	93.1%	88.6%	93.0%
Female	10.1 †	83.9	63.7	90.4 †	87.7	92.4
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>						
White <sup>g*</sup>	10.7%	85.5%	63.8%	92.1%	89.4%	93.7%
Black <sup>g</sup>	6.9 †	85.0	67.3	90.5	86.1 †	89.1 †
Hispanic	7.3 †	81.4 †	65.4	91.9	86.2 †	91.7
Asian <sup>g</sup>	6.2 †	80.9 ‡	55.7 †	89.9	83.1 †	90.2
Other <sup>g,h</sup>	13.7 †	76.8 †	52.5 †	85.1 †	78.9 †	86.9 †
<b>Age</b>						
16–24*	6.8%	84.3%	65.5%	93.7%	88.7%	90.4%
25–44	10.8 †	83.7	62.1	90.5 †	86.9	92.3
45–64	10.4 †	84.7	63.6	91.7	88.5	93.0
65 or older	7.8 †	85.5	66.0	92.6	89.7	94.2 †

Note: Includes residents whose most recent police contact was resident-initiated for any reason except as part of a block watch or other anti-crime program. See appendix table 12 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Denominator includes about 0.1% of residents whose perceptions of police were missing due to recoding of contacts originally classified as “other-specify.” See *Methodology*.

<sup>b</sup>Denominator includes 2.9% of residents who did not know if the police responded promptly and 0.3% of residents for whom whether the police responded promptly was unknown.

<sup>c</sup>Denominator includes 20.5% of residents who did not know if the situation improved and 0.4% of residents for whom whether the situation improved was unknown.

<sup>d</sup>Denominator includes 3.8% of residents who did not know if the police behaved properly and 0.1% of residents for whom whether the police behaved properly was unknown.

<sup>e</sup>Denominator includes 0.7% of residents who did not know if they were satisfied with the police response and 0.4% for whom satisfaction with the police was unknown.

<sup>f</sup>Denominator includes 1.8% of residents who did not know if they would be more likely, less likely or just as likely to contact the police in the future and 0.4% of residents for whom contacting the police in the future was unknown.

<sup>g</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

<sup>h</sup>Includes persons who are American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or of two or more races.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2020.

# Methodology

## Data collection

The Police-Public Contact Survey (PPCS) is a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), which the U.S. Census Bureau carries out for the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). The NCVS collects data on nonfatal crimes against persons age 12 or older from a nationally representative sample of U.S. households. The NCVS sample includes persons living in group quarters (such as dormitories, rooming houses, and religious-group dwellings) and excludes persons living in military barracks and institutional settings (such as correctional or hospital facilities) and homeless persons.<sup>4</sup>

Since 1999, the PPCS has been administered on a recurring basis. The 2015 PPCS was administered from July 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015; the 2018 PPCS, from July 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018; and the 2020 PPCS, from January 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020. For the 2020 PPCS, persons age 16 or older in sampled NCVS households who successfully completed their NCVS interview by self-response received the PPCS at the end of the NCVS interview. The NCVS allows for proxy interviews in which another person can answer questions for a household member who is unable to participate in the interview due to a physical, mental, or other reason. NCVS proxy interviews are considered a response for the NCVS but are ineligible for the PPCS and are therefore considered PPCS nonresponses. For more information on proxy respondents, see *National Crime Victimization Survey, 2016: Technical Documentation* (NCJ 251442, BJS, December 2017).

Beginning with the 2015 PPCS, persons who completed their NCVS interview in a language other than English could complete the PPCS in the same language. All NCVS and PPCS interviews were conducted using computer-assisted personal interviewing by telephone or personal visit. Of the 125,900 NCVS-eligible respondents age 16 or older in 2020, approximately 95,300 completed the PPCS questionnaire, representing a response rate of 76%.

The combined unweighted PPCS unit response rate for NCVS households, NCVS persons, and PPCS persons was 50.8% (50.3% unweighted). PPCS

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<sup>4</sup>For more information, see *Methodology in Criminal Victimization, 2020* (NCJ 301775, BJS, October 2021).

nonrespondents consisted of persons within an interviewed NCVS household who did not respond to the NCVS, NCVS proxy interviewees, persons who refused to participate in the PPCS, persons who were unavailable to complete the PPCS, and other nonrespondents. There were approximately 30,600 nonrespondents in 2020. Among all weighted persons age 16 or older in responding households, 21.1% did not self-respond to the NCVS and another 3.3% self-responded to the NCVS but did not respond to the PPCS. Because of the level of nonresponse, a bias analysis was conducted to compare distributions of respondents and nonrespondents and nonresponse estimates across various household and demographic characteristics. The analysis also examined the impact of any differences on key PPCS estimates.

The nonresponse bias analysis found significant differences in response rates and in respondent and nonrespondent distributions among different demographic subgroups. However, nonresponse weighting adjustments were expected to minimize these differences as the demographic subgroups were used in creating the adjustment. Model-based predicted estimates showed no evidence of nonresponse bias in any of the key estimates before or after nonresponse weighting adjustments. For more information on nonresponse bias analysis, see *Source and Accuracy Statement for the 2020 Police-Public Contact Survey in the PPCS 2020 Codebook* (<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/NACJD/series/95>). For more information on weighting in the NCVS, see *Nonresponse and weighting adjustments* in this report and in *National Crime Victimization Survey, 2016: Technical Documentation* (NCJ 251442, BJS, December 2017).

To produce national estimates on police-public contacts, sample weights designed for the PPCS were applied to PPCS data so that respondents represented the entire population, including nonrespondents. PPCS weights were generated starting with the final NCVS person-weights for each sample case. A nonresponse adjustment was applied to PPCS respondents to reduce the effects of PPCS nonresponse. The nonresponse adjustment was based on characteristics believed to be correlated with police contacts, such as respondents' place of residence, sex, race or Hispanic origin, age, and response propensities. The 2020 PPCS is the second implementation of the PPCS after the NCVS national weighting methods changed to produce weights for state-level estimates for the largest 22 states.

The 2020 PPCS nonresponse weighting adjustment also adjusted weights within the largest 22 states or, for the remaining states, within the census region. The sample cases in 2020 were weighted by the PPCS weights to produce a national population estimate of 228,278,000 persons age 16 or older.

The 2020 NCVS weights included another adjustment to address the impact of modified field operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information on modified field operations, see *Criminal Victimization, 2020* (NCJ 301775, BJS, October 2021). Because supplements to the NCVS usually start with final NCVS person-weights as base weights, the weighting adjustments implemented for the core NCVS also affected the PPCS. Analysis conducted in coordination with the U.S. Census Bureau determined that the PPCS estimates were comparable to past administrations of this supplement and any significant differences observed were due to a true change in the estimate rather than an impact of the data collection changes in the NCVS. The mean final PPCS weight was 2,072.

For more information on the weighting adjustments used for the NCVS and applied to the PPCS in 2020, see *Source and Accuracy Statement for the 2020 National Crime Victimization Survey* in the *NCVS 2020 Codebook* (<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/NACJD/studies/38090/datadocumentation>), *Source and Accuracy Statement for the 2020 Police-Public Contact Survey* in the *PPCS 2020 Codebook* (<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/NACJD/series/95>), and *National Crime Victimization Survey, 2016: Technical Documentation* (NCJ 251442, BJS, December 2017).

### Disclosure assessment

Prior to release of the PPCS data file, the U.S. Census Bureau's Disclosure Review Board conducts a disclosure assessment to ensure that the file's contents do not violate any disclosure avoidance measures. In coordination with the U.S. Census Bureau, BJS conducts a disclosure assessment prior to releasing the public-use file for the PPCS.

Race, age, and household income data come from the NCVS and are collapsed in the PPCS for disclosure reasons. Place size (population) categories are available in the 2015 PPCS data file but not the 2018 and 2020 PPCS data files. In addition, data that may have provided geographic information by inference were suppressed for purposes of confidentiality.

### Imputation of household income

The U.S. Census Bureau's sequential hot-deck procedure is used to impute missing or rejected values for household income of interviewed persons. For each missing value, the procedure assigns a value reported for a person with similar characteristics, also known as a donor record, or based on other known information about the individual. In addition, variables on the incident report may be allocated based on consistency edits with other variables. In 2020, the imputation rate for household income was 25.4%. For more information, see the *Source and Accuracy Statement for the 2020 National Crime Victimization Survey* in the *NCVS 2020 Codebook* (<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/NACJD/studies/38090/datadocumentation>).

### Standard error computations

When national estimates are derived from a sample, as with the NCVS, caution must be used when comparing one estimate to another or when comparing estimates over time. Although one estimate may be larger than another, estimates based on a sample have some degree of sampling error. The sampling error of an estimate depends on several factors, including the amount of variation in responses and sample size. When the sampling error around an estimate is taken into account, estimates that appear different may not be statistically significant.

One measure of the sampling error associated with an estimate is the standard error. The standard error may vary from one estimate to the next. Generally, an estimate with a small standard error provides a more reliable approximation of the true value than an estimate with a larger standard error. Estimates with relatively large standard errors are associated with less precision and reliability and should be interpreted with caution.

For surveys with complex sample designs, such as the NCVS, there are several methods that can be used to generate standard errors around a point estimate (e.g., a number, percentage, or rate). In this report, the Taylor Series Linearization (TSL) method was used for variance estimation. The TSL method directly estimates variances through a linearized function by combining variance estimates from the stratum and primary sampling units (PSUs) used to sample households and

persons.<sup>5</sup> In the PPCS, the design parameters used for computing TSL variances were PSSTRATA (PSU stratum) and SECUCODE (self-representing strata).

BJS conducted statistical tests to determine whether differences in estimated numbers, percentages, and rates in this report were statistically significant once sampling error was taken into account. Using statistical analysis programs developed specifically for the NCVS, all comparisons in the text were tested for significance. The primary test procedure was the Student's t-statistic, which tests the difference between two sample estimates. Findings described in this report as higher, lower, or different passed a test at either the 0.05 level (95% confidence level) or 0.10 level (90% confidence level) of significance. Tables in this report should be referenced for testing on specific findings.

Estimates and standard errors of the estimates provided in this report may be used to generate a confidence interval around the estimate as a measure of the margin of error. The following example illustrates how standard errors may be used to generate confidence intervals:

Based on the 2020 PPCS, an estimated 11.0% of male U.S. residents age 16 or older experienced some type of police-initiated contact during the year. (See table 1.) Using the TSL method of direct variance, a standard error of 0.27% was determined for the estimate. (See appendix table 2.) A confidence interval around the estimate was generated by multiplying the standard error by  $\pm 1.96$  (the t-score of a normal, two-tailed distribution that excludes 2.5% at either end of the distribution). Therefore, the 95% confidence interval around the 11.0% estimate is  $11.0 \pm (0.27 \times 1.96)$ , or (10.45% to 11.50%). In other words, if BJS used the same sampling method to select different samples and computed an interval estimate for each sample, it would expect the true population parameter (the percentage of males who experienced some type of police-initiated contact) to fall within the interval estimates 95% of the time.

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<sup>5</sup>Woodruff, R. S. (1971). A simple method for approximating the variance of a complicated estimate. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 66(334), 411–414. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01621459.1971.10482279>

For this report, BJS also calculated a coefficient of variation (CV) for all estimates, representing the ratio of the standard error to the estimate. CVs (not shown in tables) provide another measure of reliability and a means for comparing the precision of estimates across measures with differing levels or metrics.

### Missing data for most recent contact

The PPCS screener was divided into two sections, with the first series of questions covering types of resident-initiated contact and the second covering types of police-initiated contact. For more information, see the questionnaire (<https://bjs.ojp.gov/data-collection/police-public-contact-survey-ppcs>). After each series of questions, respondents were given the opportunity to report any other contacts that they were not already asked about. U.S. Census Bureau field representatives recorded all of these responses as “other-specify” text responses even though a large portion of them fit into preexisting categories. This process could have affected how respondents answered questions about the most recent contact. For the analysis of the 2015, 2018, and 2020 data, other-specify responses were recoded into the correct screener categories by U.S. Census Bureau data analysts when possible. Also, in some instances, respondents should have been administered the questions about the nature of their traffic or street stop but were skipped out of that series of questions. These respondents were counted in the total number of persons who experienced a traffic stop, but their answers were missing on all traffic stop questions, such as whether they were given a ticket. Missing data accounted for 2.8% of the most recent contacts in 2020.



## APPENDIX TABLE 1

Standard errors for figure 1 and table 2: U.S. residents age 16 or older who had police contact, by type of contact and reason, 2015, 2018, and 2020

Type of contact and reason	2015		2018		2020	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Any police contact</b>	998,696	0.30%	1,073,740	0.30%	920,147	0.30%
<b>Police-initiated contact</b>	617,902	0.20%	593,005	0.18%	604,274	0.21%
Traffic stop, driver	447,052	0.16	443,859	0.16	429,694	0.17
Traffic stop, passenger	223,034	0.08	186,564	0.07	199,780	0.07
Street stop	131,084	0.05	148,721	0.06	141,449	0.05
Arrested	67,043	0.03	43,045	0.02	52,277	0.02
Approached, other	106,102	0.04	151,032	0.05	146,034	0.05
<b>Resident-initiated contact</b>	560,931	0.19%	694,308	0.21%	559,191	0.19%
Reported possible crime	383,674	0.13	412,694	0.13	344,493	0.12
Reported noncrime emergency	259,485	0.09	249,595	0.09	251,290	0.09
Reported nonemergency	~	~	286,859	0.10	256,140	0.09
Block watch	117,969	0.05	98,499	0.04	98,638	0.04
Sought help, other	105,856	0.04	49,544	0.02	32,151	0.01
<b>Traffic accident</b>	216,355	0.08%	232,308	0.08%	237,009	0.08%

~Not applicable.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2015, 2018, and 2020.

## APPENDIX TABLE 2

Standard errors for table 1: U.S. residents age 16 or older who had police contact, by type of contact and demographic characteristics, 2020

Demographic characteristic	U.S. residents age 16 or older	Any police contact		Police-initiated contact		Resident-initiated contact		Traffic accident	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total</b>	2,792,128	920,147	0.30%	604,274	0.21%	559,191	0.19%	237,009	0.08%
<b>Sex</b>									
Male	1,469,965	484,335	0.33%	361,207	0.27%	283,096	0.21%	158,328	0.12%
Female	1,448,278	518,765	0.33	320,482	0.22	355,583	0.24	149,412	0.11
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>									
White	2,350,365	748,283	0.36%	470,181	0.25%	471,324	0.23%	176,080	0.10%
Black	1,004,787	244,790	0.70	172,483	0.51	139,850	0.43	94,572	0.30
Hispanic	1,025,280	278,902	0.51	178,185	0.35	181,760	0.37	90,632	0.19
Asian	396,089	119,591	0.60	88,784	0.48	77,586	0.47	52,057	0.31
Other	276,507	130,626	1.58	88,313	1.24	82,872	1.10	40,587	0.66
<b>Age</b>									
16–17	303,602	93,380	1.17%	75,748	0.94%	57,511	0.71%	44,600	0.56%
18–24	766,515	332,052	0.92	261,336	0.76	174,607	0.56	115,287	0.37
25–44	1,102,139	391,866	0.37	294,814	0.30	243,533	0.25	122,606	0.13
45–64	920,472	315,320	0.33	196,261	0.23	227,345	0.24	92,398	0.11
65 or older	700,177	210,441	0.33	102,095	0.19	165,935	0.27	64,142	0.11
<b>Household income</b>									
\$49,999 or less	1,620,710	459,710	0.42%	312,262	0.29%	302,798	0.28%	132,033	0.13%
\$50,000–\$74,999	886,471	286,358	0.01	212,001	0.42	192,036	0.35	74,126	0.16
\$75,000 or more	1,558,933	525,141	0.36	318,682	0.24	320,723	0.24	158,859	0.13

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2020.

### APPENDIX TABLE 3

Standard errors for table 3: U.S. residents age 16 or older whose police contact involved the threat or nonfatal use of force, by demographic characteristics, 2018 and 2020

Demographic characteristic	2018			2020		
	Any police contact	With threat/nonfatal use of force		Any police contact	With threat/nonfatal use of force	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Total	1,073,740	81,519	0.13%	920,147	82,480	0.15%
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	594,950	68,306	0.22%	484,335	70,061	0.25%
Female	575,107	34,660	0.11	518,765	41,171	0.15
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>						
White	882,891	50,964	0.12%	748,283	61,158	0.16%
Black	242,562	34,872	0.54	244,790	47,044	0.77
Hispanic	276,436	34,110	0.41	278,902	25,920	0.34
Asian	116,720	12,620	0.51	119,591	10,863	0.42
Other	112,298	13,854	0.73	130,626	16,159	0.94
<b>Age</b>						
16–17	69,978	13,215	1.15%	93,380	:	:
18–24	305,767	47,055	0.53	332,052	48,640	0.62%
25–44	510,340	54,278	0.23	391,866	48,806	0.22
45–64	397,820	28,088	0.15	315,320	27,475	0.16
65 or older	219,460	8,182	0.09	210,441	15,919	0.20

:Not calculated. Sample size is below the minimum threshold, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2018 and 2020.

### APPENDIX TABLE 4

Standard errors for table 4: U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact was police-initiated, by reason and demographic characteristics, 2020

Demographic characteristic	Police-initiated most recent contact Number	Reason									
		Traffic stop, driver		Traffic stop, passenger		Street stop		Arrested		Approached, other	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	517,087	370,325	0.91%	163,843	0.63%	121,681	0.52%	42,716	0.19%	127,021	0.50%
<b>Sex</b>											
Male	318,002	254,042	1.03%	88,167	0.65%	75,423	0.59%	34,805	0.28%	90,264	0.71%
Female	268,270	181,477	1.23	116,957	1.03	76,768	0.74	18,396	0.19	80,687	0.71
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>											
White	386,370	286,081	0.95%	105,157	0.68%	88,153	0.55%	34,651	0.24%	90,614	0.55%
Black	156,686	109,835	2.11	44,865	1.55	37,850	1.48	15,609	0.62	49,470	1.77
Hispanic	164,107	130,557	2.07	62,160	1.59	31,333	1.03	10,600	0.34	38,272	1.12
Asian	83,571	72,856	3.51	33,858	2.66	21,134	1.79	:	:	21,762	1.87
Other	78,279	41,227	5.42	48,318	5.33	15,217	2.46	:	:	16,457	2.06
<b>Age</b>											
16–24	253,676	165,663	1.84%	104,697	1.84%	61,355	1.17%	24,158	0.50%	56,586	1.09%
25–44	263,589	206,753	1.26	78,425	0.78	70,443	0.73	24,523	0.27	66,973	0.68
45–64	172,979	127,150	1.21	52,774	0.78	41,934	0.67	14,941	0.25	59,326	0.95
65 or older	95,984	66,887	1.88	28,884	1.13	32,668	1.28	:	:	37,315	1.46

:Not calculated. Sample size is below the minimum threshold, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2020.



## APPENDIX TABLE 5

Standard errors for table 5: Percent of U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact was as a driver in a traffic stop, by enforcement action and demographic characteristics, 2018 and 2020

Demographic characteristic	2018				2020			
	No enforcement action	Enforcement action			No enforcement action	Enforcement action		
		Warning	Ticket	Search/arrest		Warning	Ticket	Search/arrest
<b>Total</b>	0.43%	0.83%	0.88%	0.34%	0.54%	0.89%	0.93%	0.39%
<b>Sex</b>								
Male	0.54%	0.90%	1.01%	0.55%	0.71%	1.20%	1.28%	0.57%
Female	0.74	1.41	1.42	0.28	0.78	1.44	1.51	0.50
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>								
White	0.48%	1.02%	1.08%	0.31%	0.59%	1.03%	1.10%	0.43%
Black	1.76	2.30	2.35	1.23	1.87	3.15	3.27	1.59
Hispanic	0.89	2.03	2.19	1.51	1.64	2.65	2.36	1.01
Other	1.63	3.05	3.11	1.08	1.86	2.95	3.14	1.38
<b>Age</b>								
16–24	0.92%	2.22%	2.20%	1.01%	1.34%	2.56%	2.76%	1.15%
25–44	0.71	1.14	1.14	0.56	0.70	1.40	1.39	0.66
45–64	0.83	1.50	1.59	0.55	0.89	1.46	1.35	0.54
65 or older	1.33	2.22	2.26	0.47	1.61	2.53	2.40	0.77
<b>Income</b>								
\$49,999 or less	0.69%	1.32%	1.46%	0.67%	0.82%	1.49%	1.70%	0.75%
\$50,000–\$74,999	1.19	1.82	1.83	0.84	1.38	2.04	2.15	1.18
\$75,000 or more	0.58	1.20	1.14	0.40	0.77	1.36	1.28	0.42

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2018 and 2020.

## APPENDIX TABLE 6

Standard errors for table 6: Percent of U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact was a street stop, by enforcement action and demographic characteristics, 2018 and 2020

Demographic characteristic	2018				2020			
	No enforcement action	Enforcement action			No enforcement action	Enforcement action		
		Warning	Ticket	Search/arrest		Warning	Ticket	Search/arrest
<b>Total</b>	1.76%	1.09%	0.57%	1.55%	2.09%	1.54%	0.90%	1.37%
<b>Sex</b>								
Male	2.61%	1.56%	0.73%	2.26%	2.96%	2.23%	0.99%	2.36%
Female	2.75	1.85	0.86	1.66	2.60	2.01	:	:
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>								
White	1.68%	1.35%	0.68%	1.07%	2.12%	1.61%	1.26%	0.96%
Black	6.33	3.60	:	6.68	7.73	5.80	1.81	6.08
Hispanic	5.50	4.10	:	4.93	8.24	6.23	0.08	:
Other	9.92	3.62	:	8.72	:	:	:	:
<b>Age</b>								
16–24	4.07%	3.01%	1.33%	3.66%	4.98%	3.34%	2.80%	2.33%
25–44	2.99	1.85	0.73	2.46	3.44	1.96	1.12	2.89
45–64	2.71	2.12	1.28	1.45	3.46	3.40	:	1.12
65 or older	4.27	3.28	:	:	5.45	5.09	:	:
<b>Income</b>								
\$49,999 or less	3.17%	1.35%	0.85%	2.87%	3.64%	2.53%	1.65%	2.61%
\$50,000–\$74,999	3.81	2.18	:	3.32	4.06	3.72	:	:
\$75,000 or more	2.66	2.50	0.84	1.39	3.13	3.10	1.01	1.10

:Not calculated. Sample size is below the minimum threshold, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2018 and 2020.

## APPENDIX TABLE 7

**Standard errors for table 7: Percent of U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact involved misconduct, by demographic characteristics, 2018 and 2020**

	2018	2020
<b>Any misconduct</b>	0.09%	0.11%
Slur	0.03	0.03
Bias	0.09	0.11
Sexual misconduct	0.03	:
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	0.15%	0.18%
Female	0.10	0.12
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>		
White	0.07%	0.06%
Black	0.61	0.82
Hispanic	0.26	0.23
Other	0.33	0.44
<b>Age</b>		
16–24	0.33%	0.44%
25–44	0.15	0.21
45–64	0.12	0.11
65 or older	0.08	0.12

:Not calculated. Sample size is below the minimum threshold, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2018 and 2020.

## APPENDIX TABLE 8

**Standard errors for table 8: Percent of U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact was police-initiated or related to a traffic accident, by race or Hispanic origin and police action, 2018 and 2020**

	2018					2020				
	Total	Race/Hispanic origin				Total	Race/Hispanic origin			
		White	Black	Hispanic	Other		White	Black	Hispanic	Other
<b>Any police action</b>	0.22%	0.22%	0.93%	0.78%	0.75%	0.28%	0.31%	1.28%	0.63%	0.70%
<b>Shouting</b>	0.16%	0.15%	0.56%	0.51%	0.57%	0.17%	0.20%	0.79%	0.40%	0.51%
<b>Cursing</b>	0.11%	0.09%	0.58%	0.28%	:	0.11%	0.12%	0.59%	:	:
<b>Threat/nonfatal use of force</b>	0.21%	0.20%	0.86%	0.72%	0.69%	0.25%	0.27%	1.20%	0.55%	0.61%
Threat of force	0.12	0.10	0.62	0.39	:	0.11	0.07	0.68	0.31	:
Handcuffing	0.19	0.17	0.79	0.65	0.69	0.22	0.26	0.74	0.51	0.60
Pushing/grabbing/ hitting/kicking	0.11	0.09	0.56	0.39	0.47	0.11	0.11	0.57	0.29	:
Using weapon/ other force	0.09	0.06	0.33	0.31	:	0.08	0.05	:	:	:

:Not calculated. Sample size is below the minimum threshold, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2018 and 2020.

## APPENDIX TABLE 9

Standard errors for table 9: U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police-initiated or traffic accident-related contact involved the threat or nonfatal use of force, by perceptions of force and demographic characteristics, 2018 and 2020

Demographic characteristic	2018				2020			
	Police-initiated/ traffic accident- related contact	With threat/ nonfatal use of force	Perceived force as—		Police-initiated/ traffic accident- related contact	With threat/ nonfatal use of force	Perceived force as—	
			Necessary	Excessive			Necessary	Excessive
Total	585,206	0.21%	2.40%	2.99%	601,390	0.25%	3.17%	3.50%
<b>Sex</b>								
Male	380,333	0.35%	2.61%	3.45%	367,019	0.39%	4.34%	4.86%
Female	290,205	0.17	5.33	5.50	311,302	0.23	2.38	3.27
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>								
White	485,481	0.20%	3.08%	3.35%	448,981	0.27%	3.61%	3.50%
Black	160,283	0.86	4.91	5.44	196,072	1.20	:	:
Hispanic	202,465	0.72	5.84	8.60	190,271	0.55	:	:
Other	99,888	0.69	:	:	141,979	0.61	:	:
<b>Age</b>								
16–24	243,049	0.61%	4.32%	6.99%	282,661	0.75%	:	:
25–44	315,257	0.36	3.44	3.46	296,976	0.33	5.37%	4.65%
45 or older	263,432	0.19	4.34	4.57	240,408	0.24	4.65	5.53

:Not calculated. Sample size is below the minimum threshold, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2018 and 2020.

## APPENDIX TABLE 10

Standard errors for table 10: Percent of U.S. residents age 16 or older who engaged in action toward police during their most recent police-initiated or traffic accident-related contact, by demographic characteristics, 2020

	Percent
<b>Any resident action</b>	0.26%
Complaining	0.23
Verbal action	0.15
Physical action	0.07
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	0.43%
Female	0.32
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>	
White	0.30%
Black	1.00
Hispanic	0.64
Other	0.86
<b>Age</b>	
16–24	0.59%
25–44	0.42
45–64	0.51
65 or older	0.63

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2020.

## APPENDIX TABLE 11

Standard errors for table 11: U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact was resident-initiated, by reason and demographic characteristics, 2020

Demographic characteristic	Resident-initiated most recent contact Number	Reason							
		Reported possible crime		Reported noncrime emergency		Reported nonemergency/sought help, other		Block watch	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total</b>	459,679	251,749	0.69%	195,496	0.57%	190,105	0.55%	84,715	0.32%
<b>Sex</b>									
Male	234,453	152,814	1.06%	120,268	0.89%	119,188	0.84%	48,880	0.42%
Female	311,805	194,440	0.88	118,287	0.64	127,452	0.71	54,652	0.38
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>									
White	391,569	203,778	0.72%	163,403	0.65%	161,079	0.68%	73,221	0.39%
Black	111,845	80,973	2.19	46,035	1.61	42,153	1.79	24,242	1.00
Hispanic	157,804	103,759	1.93	62,908	1.47	60,806	1.59	16,237	0.47
Asian	71,734	51,780	3.71	29,027	2.36	36,682	3.02	15,755	1.39
Other	75,699	50,936	4.13	44,447	3.83	26,911	3.28	9,831	1.27
<b>Age</b>									
16–24	164,758	111,162	2.82%	70,372	2.36%	64,783	1.97%	27,382	1.01%
25–44	199,752	140,784	1.07	96,540	0.80	94,124	0.87	34,649	0.36
45–64	210,341	140,682	1.19	89,901	0.84	104,703	0.95	45,143	0.50
65 or older	153,669	79,440	1.20	72,650	1.21	62,379	1.06	34,711	0.73

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2020.

## APPENDIX TABLE 12

Standard errors for table 12: Percent of U.S. residents age 16 or older whose most recent police contact was resident-initiated for any reason excluding block watch, by perceptions of response and demographic characteristics, 2020

Demographic characteristic	Resident-initiated most recent contact excluding block watch	Perceived police as—			Resident was—	
		Responding promptly	Improving the situation	Behaving properly	Satisfied with police response	More/as likely to contact police in future
<b>Total</b>	0.16%	0.54%	0.61%	0.35%	0.45%	0.38%
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	0.17%	0.77%	0.94%	0.46%	0.64%	0.51%
Female	0.21	0.68	0.87	0.51	0.63	0.46
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>						
White	0.19%	0.55%	0.68%	0.36%	0.50%	0.39%
Black	0.32	1.85	2.28	1.35	1.62	1.43
Hispanic	0.33	1.59	1.93	1.11	1.41	1.28
Asian	0.42	2.62	3.71	2.20	2.91	2.29
Other	1.10	3.79	4.08	3.02	3.84	2.65
<b>Age</b>						
16–24	0.40%	1.95%	2.54%	1.08%	1.59%	1.52%
25–44	0.22	0.83	0.99	0.70	0.81	0.60
45–64	0.23	0.75	1.03	0.51	0.65	0.49
65 or older	0.24	1.05	1.43	0.66	0.80	0.61

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2020.



The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice is the principal federal agency responsible for measuring crime, criminal victimization, criminal offenders, victims of crime, correlates of crime, and the operation of criminal and civil justice systems at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels. BJS collects, analyzes, and disseminates reliable statistics on crime and justice systems in the United States, supports improvements to state and local criminal justice information systems, and participates with national and international organizations to develop and recommend national standards for justice statistics. Alexis R. Piquero, PhD, is the director.

This report was written by Susannah N. Tapp and Elizabeth J. Davis. Alexandra Thompson and Stephanie Mueller verified the report.

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