

US police killed record number of people in 2024

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End of the year statistics released by Mapping Police Violence, a non-profit research group that has been tracking police killings in the US since 2013, found that police in the United States killed over 1,250 people in 2024. This grim figure marks the deadliest year ever recorded by the organization, which tracks police killings by government records and news reports.

Overall the research group found that there were only 13 days in 2024 in which police did not kill someone. On average, Mapping Police Violence found that someone in the US succumbs to police violence roughly every 7 hours. While the vast majority of those deaths were the results of police shootings, cops also deployed tasers, batons and their vehicles with deadly force.

Notably only 31 percent of police killings, 387 people, began with an alleged violent crime taking place. On the other hand, 18 percent of those killed by police—over 200 people—were killed after being pulled over for an alleged traffic violation or after police were called to conduct a welfare check. Another 8 percent were killed in situations in which the victim was not alleged to have committed any crime, while 17 percent were killed in situations in which police alleged the victims were perpetrating “other non-violent offenses.”

Mapping Police Violence noted that even as the rate of police killings continues to increase, where police are killing people is changing, with more deaths recorded in rural and suburban zipcodes as opposed to large cities. The top five states with the highest rate of people killed by police in 2024 include New Mexico, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana and North Dakota.

Local police departments constituted the bulk of killings in 2024 at 58 percent, with county sheriff’s departments accounting for 31 percent of deaths.

Victims of last year’s reign of police terror included babies, toddlers and teenagers:

- One of the youngest victims this past year was 2-month-old baby Destinii, killed along with her mother Maria Pike. Both were gunned down in their Missouri apartment on November 7 after Destinii’s grandmother called the police to report that Maria had assaulted her. Nearly two months after the killing, police have yet to release the full body-camera footage or charge any officer with a crime.

- Another child who was shot and killed by police this year was four-year-old Terrell Miller of Macomb, Illinois. The boy was taken hostage by his mother’s boyfriend in their home. Police showed up to the home and within 16 seconds shot Miller and the boyfriend, killing them both. No charges have been filed against Miller’s killer, Lt. Nick Goc.

- On Thanksgiving last month in Akron, Ohio, 15-year-old Jazmir Tucker was shot and killed by police. Police claimed they heard gunshots in the area after 11:00 p.m. local time, which prompted them to investigate. Body camera footage shows police chasing after a fleeing Tucker and shooting him. None of the officers involved in the killing have been publicly identified or charged with a crime.

Keeping track of the number of people killed by police in the United States is difficult, as there is no federal government agency charged with compiling data from local police departments. Not every department keeps records and many, with the support of local press and capitalist politicians from both parties, obfuscate the lethal character of police interactions.

Furthermore, Mapping Police Violence’s figures do not take into account the many unreported killings across the United States’ sprawling prisons and jail

gulag that incarcerates nearly 2 million people.

It is highly significant that police killings increased across the United States every single year under the Democratic administration of President Joe Biden. In the wake of massive anti-police violence protests following the police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May 2020, Biden and the Democrats campaigned on “reforming” the police, but, as the data shows, they have instead overseen a massive expansion in deaths with no accountability. Mapping Police Violence notes in their report that over 98 percent of cops involved in police killings between 2013 and 2023 have not been convicted of a crime.

While the mainstream press, the Democratic Party and the pseudo-left constantly seek to frame police violence as an expression of racism, the data shows that police killings occurred in every state and impacted people of every racial and ethnic background. While there are some racial disparities, the largest share of those killed by police in 2024 were identified as white, underscoring the class character of police violence.

The Biden administration and both parties rejected popular demands to “defund the police” during the George Floyd protests, instead funneling billions of dollars to hire and arm more police, including overseeing the construction of “Cop Cities” in virtually every state.

While providing police all the weapons and “training” they need to suppress the working class, Biden’s Justice Department has implemented a few token “consent decrees” on police departments that have done nothing to stem police violence. Incoming President-elect Donald Trump has promised to end these toothless decrees, claiming that they are part of a “war on police.” In reality, they are a tool used by the ruling class to obscure the fact that police violence cannot be “reformed” away and is, in fact, endemic to the capitalist system that both parties uphold and defend.

Trump’s support for the police as they kill with impunity is an expression of the class character of the capitalist state. Police violence is bound up not only with the oligarchic character of US capitalist society but is also inextricably tied to imperialist violence abroad. As US imperialism continues to arm and supply Israel’s genocide in Gaza and the war against Russia in

Ukraine, the police will be increasingly called upon to violently suppress any working class opposition to war and inequality.

Trump’s plans for a mass deportation operation, which is already garnering Democratic Party support, will require greatly expanding the already existing police state at the expense of the working class. The fight to end police violence is a class question that requires not reforms but the abolition of the police and the overturning of the capitalist system they defend and the establishment of a socialist society organized on human need, not profit.



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