

12/4/23 Citywide, Chicago homicide is [down 12 percent so far this year](#), from 644 to 569 thru November 26. But the *Chicago Tribune* isn't celebrating. According to its analysis, the gain reflects improvements in the city's traditionally peaceful areas. Say, [Rogers Park \(CPD Dist. 24\)](#), where homicides dropped 21%, from 14 to 11. But the city's notoriously violent areas have remained so. For example, [murders in Englewood \(CPD Dist. 7\)](#) increased from 51 to 55. That's 8 percent *worse*.

11/27/23 Chicago CRED provides youths who live in the city's most highly violence-impacted neighborhoods "with a modest stipend, a life coach, trauma treatment, education and job training." According to a recent study, young men who complete the two-year program are significantly less likely to be subsequently arrested for a violent crime. But their victimization rate is not yet provably affected. [CRED website](#) [Study](#)

11/17/23 [Juvenile deaths by gunfire are soaring in Chicago](#), with "twelve shot in under two weeks." Fifty-five Chicago youths under eighteen have been shot and killed in 2023, compared with sixty-six in all of 2022. Across the U.S., [at a Las Vegas high school campus](#), ten students beat another to death over "headphones and a vape pen." So far eight have been charged with murder. In both cities, the killings struck in chronically beset and poor neighborhoods. In Chicago, it was Austin, Avalon Park and East Side; in Las Vegas, [the high school](#) is located in a Zip code (89101) with [31.2% poverty](#).

11/9/23 Going against the current grain, a three-judge panel of the 7th. Circuit Court of Appeals let stand, by a 2-1 vote, Illinois' ban on assault weapons and large-capacity magazines, which was enacted in response to the Highland Park massacre. But the dissenting jurist cited the "historical" rationale that undepinned the Supreme Court's [Bruen](#) decision, and an appeal to the full Circuit, then perhaps to the Supreme Court, seems likely.

11/7/23 Robert Crimo Jr., the father of accused Highland Park shooter Robert Crimo III, pled guilty to recklessly facilitating his son's purchase of the guns used in the massacre by falsely certifying on an application for an Illinois Firearms card that his son was mentally competent. In fact, the father allegedly knew that Crimo III (as a brother is expected to testify) had spoken about committing suicide. Crimo Jr. was sentenced to 60 days in jail and two years probation. (See 12/12/23 update)

10/30/23 Chicago's beset North Lawndale neighborhood became the scene of yet another massacre as an armed intruder opened fire at an early morning Halloween party, wounding 15, two critically. Police arrested the still-armed shooter nearby. He had been kicked out of the gathering earlier. [One year earlier](#), a Halloween shooting in the city's equally beset Garfield Park area wounded fourteen, one fatally.

10/2/23 Robbery crews beset Chicago. Masked and attired in dark clothes, gun-toting hoodlums, including many juveniles, accost pedestrians, shoppers and persons sitting in their cars, stealing cash and goods and taking their vehicles. Robbery is up 24 percent this year, and it's striking with force at Blacks, Hispanics and residents of "disinvested" neighborhoods such as Humboldt Park. Some arrests are being made, but victims complain that a liberal agenda has led to "privileging the rights of perpetrators."

7/10/23 Another weekend of gun violence beset the nation. [NYPD officers arrested](#) an "extremely emotionally disturbed" 25-year old man who roamed Brooklyn and Queens on a scooter and randomly fired on pedestrians, killing one and wounding three. Police recovered an unserialized 9mm "ghost gun" pistol with an extended magazine. The suspect was later identified as Thomas Abreu. [In Chicago](#), a series of shootings left at least four dead and fourteen wounded. [And in Cleveland](#), an early-morning mass shooting in a nightclub district wounded nine.

7/5/23 Attired in a ballistic vest and carrying an AR-15 rifle, a handgun, extra ammunition magazines and a police scanner, a 40-year old man randomly opened fire as he walked the streets of Philadelphia's [poverty-stricken Kingsessing neighborhood](#), where he lived. He killed five persons, ages 15 to 59, and wounded two children. Kimbrady Carriker shot at police but soon surrendered. His only reported criminal record are gun and drug misdemeanor charges in 2003, for which he got probation. Carriker is said to have made "disturbing" social media posts prior to the shooting. A [video](#) shows him firing.

7/3/23 A tripling in the number of applications for firearms restraining orders (i.e., "red flag laws") and a doubling in citizen submissions of "clear and present danger" reports to police have followed on last year's Fourth of July massacre in Highland Park, Illinois. According to the State Police director, widespread awareness of these options has increased their use. But Illinois' use of red flag laws still lags, and moves are afoot to strengthen their provisions and encourage their use.

6/28/23 Chicago PD has logged 11,000 complaints of officer misconduct during the four and one-half year run of its Federal consent decree, which was imposed after the [2014 police killing of Laquan McDonald](#). But an overseer reports that the agency has come into "full compliance" with only five percent of the decree's 552 paragraphs. Officers in Districts that suffer more violence get more misconduct allegations. But in three particularly crime-ridden districts, the number of homicides ("more than 850") have actually exceeded the number of complaints (755).

6/21/23 Three top members of the notorious “Goonies” street gang are on Federal trial for terrorizing the residents of Chicago’s poverty-stricken, violence-ridden Englewood district through a wave of violence that took ten lives during 2014-2016. Romeo Blackman, Terrance “T” Smith and Jolicious “Jo Jo” Turman are charged with racketeering and murder, and if convicted face life without parole. A subset of the Gangster Disciples, “Goonies” acted as “urban hunters” and acquired large numbers of guns through straw purchases in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

5/31/23 In 2014 Illinois generally barred the police use of drones (click [here](#) for the law). Eight years later came the [July 4th. 2022 massacre](#) in Highland Park. A bill now sits on the Governor’s desk that amends the law to permit the use of drones to monitor special events, help in search and rescue, and aid victims or identify suspects when responding to dispatched calls for service (click [here](#) for the bill).

5/24/23 Illinois is dispatching more than thirty civilian “peacekeepers” trained in de-escalation and violence interruption to Chicago. Timed for the Memorial Day weekend and the start of summer, it’s hoped that street outreach workers will help tone down the violence that besets the city’s gang-ridden neighborhoods. This move is part of a “holistic”, not just police approach to violence that’s championed by Governor J.B. Pritzker and Chicago’s progressive new mayor, Brandon Johnson.

4/5/23 Elected by a slim margin, Brandon Johnson, Chicago’s progressive new Mayor, faces the city’s seemingly intractable problem of gun violence, with murder counts exceeding more populous Los Angeles and New York City. Johnson has “walked back” promises to cut police. But his plans to replace vacant officer slots with community workers, to increase detectives by cutting patrol, and to remove Shot Spotter gunfire detectors because they can cause dangerous encounters remain on the table.

2/23/23 According to a new study published in JAMA Open, “[Comparing Risks of Firearm-Related Death and Injury Among Young Adult Males in Selected US Cities With Wartime Service in Iraq and Afghanistan](#),” those living in the most violent ZIP codes in Chicago and Philadelphia were at substantially higher risk of being shot dead than wartime service personnel. That did not hold true for the most violent Zip codes in Los Angeles and New York City.

2/21/23 A nighttime vehicle-to-vehicle shooting on Chicago’s I-57 expressway killed a 19-year old youth, a 14-year old child and a one-year old infant. Three other occupants, including two children, were wounded. [According to the Tribune](#), it was the *sixteenth* shooting on a local expressway this year. The assailant vehicle fled and no arrests have yet been announced.

1/28/23 With Chicago's Mayoral campaign in full swing, crime is taking center stage. Touting her pro-police record, Mayor Lori Lightfoot blasted one challenger as a notorious "defunder" and another for "embellishing...his so-called public safety bona fides." Problem is, violence has risen since Lightfoot took office in 2019, but she notes the numbers have come down. Meanwhile her competitors insist they're all for the cops. One, Willie Wilson, criticized Lightfoot for putting too many restrictions on police and seconded his former comments that persons fleeing officers should be "hunted down like rabbits."

1/11/23 "Groups of armed and masked men" have taken to robbing street food vendors in Chicago's impoverished Little Village area, taking "cash, sometimes their phones, and even the tamales". Days ago robbers held a pistol to a vendor's head. Robberies in the 10th Police District are way up, with 541 last year v. 378 in 2021. But police say they don't have enough cops to increase patrols. So local residents have formed their own patrols, and monitor the streets between 4 and 9 am each day.

1/3/23 Complaints about slow 9-1-1 response continue to beset Chicago police. In an episode last August, officers didn't arrive for over an hour after citizens reported an early-morning bar fight. In the meantime the assailant drove his car into the crowd, killing three. According to the *Tribune*, Black and Hispanic areas endure substantially slower response times than majority White areas. Delays are especially lengthy in the city's South side, which has a Black majority.

12/30/22 Alleged serial killer Wesley Brownlee, whom authorities recently charged with murdering three Stockton (Calif.) residents last year, is now accused of committing four additional killings in 2021. Two of his victims also lived in Stockton, while the others resided in surrounding Alameda County. Brownlee also faces an attempted murder charge in the wounding of a middle-aged Stockton woman. As a twice-convicted drug felon, Brownlee was barred from buying guns, so he used a "ghost gun" instead.

12/28/22 Crime and violence on Chicago's public train system, the "L", has subsided a bit since last year's record-high numbers, but they remain well above pre-pandemic levels. At the same time, arrests plunged. Ditto the clearance rate. That's discouraged many Chicagoans. After helping out a victim of violence, one young rider switched to buses. "Even with the security guards and cameras and a decent police response time, there are no arrests made...And it doesn't seem like there's anything to deter this kind of crime on the trains if there aren't arrests when it happens.

12/13/22 Survivors of two recent Chicago-area massacres - at the 4th. of July parade in

Highland Park, and on Halloween night in East Garfield Park - testified at an Illinois House hearing in favor of proposed gun control laws. Among its provisions would be prohibitions on the sale of assault-style weapons and high-capacity magazines. Persons under 21 would also be barred from obtaining permits to buy guns.

12/12/22 [Gunfire broke out](#) during an early morning fight in a Chicago tavern, leaving three dead and a woman in critical condition with a head wound. And so far this year [sixteen juveniles have been shot dead in D.C.](#) That's twice 2021's toll at this point. Eighty-two youths have also been wounded. D.C.'s police chief blames courts for "being too soft." But the head juvenile prosecutor attributes the problem to "inadequate investment in social services." D.C.'s Attorney General agrees. "There are other, evidence-based ways of providing accountability and putting young people on a path toward success."

11/3/22 As many areas of Chicago continue to be beset by violence, the newly formed Community Commission for Police Safety and Accountability criticizes "slow [police] response times and inadequate staffing at the times crime and violence occur the most." While Police Commissioner David Brown insists that he deploys according to crime trends, analyses continue to show striking disparities between officer deployment and the times and places where shootings occur. Meanwhile, a Federal consent decree requires that officers have regular shifts and the same supervisors to promote "unity and control."

11/2/22 Fourteen persons, including three children, were shot in a drive-by Monday night as they attended a vigil in Chicago's troubled East Garfield Park neighborhood. A camera captured the image of two persons firing shots into the crowd from a "black Audi." Injuries ranged from minor to critical, and so far no one has died. Police could offer no motive. "I just want to know why. Why would you shoot into a crowd of women and children?" asked the area's Alderman.

10/24/22 Nine persons (yes, *nine*) were shot and killed in Chicago "overnight," between Saturday evening October 23 and Sunday morning, October 24. A flurry of gunfire during an early a.m. "drifting" event left three gang members dead and two wounded. A drive-by took the life of a 16-year old boy and wounded a 13-year old girl. And five Chicagoans, ages 18 to 63, were shot dead in private homes, a parking lot and elsewhere.

10/21/22 Lakeview East, home of Chicago's Wrigley Field, is in the [violence-beset 19th. police district](#). Five kidnappings and armed robberies happened there last weekend, leading residents to demand an increased police presence. Police say they will deploy

specialized teams and pay particular attention during Halloween. Meanwhile [an alderman and candidate for mayor plans, if elected](#), to create a 1,000-police officer reserve comprised of retirees.

10/17/22 Stockton, Calif. police announced the arrest of Wesley Brownlee, 43, a long-time resident, for committing a string of killings that were linked by ballistics. Identified as a suspect with the help of citizen tips, he was arrested as police watched him apparently preparing for another killing. Brownlee, who has an arrest record, was wearing dark clothes, was armed with a pistol and had a mask around his neck. (See 10/5 update)

10/15/22 Decked out in camouflage, a 15-year old high-school sophomore whom neighbors said exhibited “unusual behavior” went on a shooting rampage in his Raleigh, North Carolina neighborhood, killing his 16-year old brother and four unrelated adult residents ages 29-53. He also wounded two other adults, one critically. Austin Thompson was soon cornered by police and is hospitalized in critical condition. He reportedly carried a long gun, possibly a shotgun, and perhaps a handgun.

10/5/22 Is a killer on the loose in Stockton? Ballistics have apparently led police in the economically beset, [violence-stricken](#) central California city (pop. 322,000) to conclude that five murders between July and September were committed with the same gun. Each victim was male; four are Latino, and all were unconnected. Also part of the chain are the wounding of a Black Stockton woman this year and the killing of an Oakland man last year. Indistinct surveillance images from several scenes depict a tall man. (See 10/17 update)

9/30/22 Families of mass shooting victims at Texas’ [Uvalde Elementary](#) and the [Fourth of July parade](#) in Highland Park, Ill. have filed lawsuits. Defendants include the gun industry. Daniel Defense, the maker of the assault rifle used in Texas, allegedly “violated federal law by negligently entrusting their deadly weapons to the Uvalde school shooter.” Smith & Wesson, manufacturer of the assault rifle used in Illinois, supposedly linked the weapon to the military so as “to appeal to individuals like Mr. Crimo.” Its seller also ignored that an assault weapons ban was in effect at the youth’s city of residence.

9/29/22 Six adults were wounded - two, critically - by gunfire at an Oakland school complex. Two were reportedly carpenters who got caught up in “crossfire.” Oakland’s severe violence problem - it’s reported 93 homicides so far in 2022, with eight in the past week - [led Police Chief LeRonne Armstrong to declare](#) “we are going all-hands-on-deck to address the gun violence in the city of Oakland.” He promised more

investigators and increased deployment in areas dominated by gangs. But activists insist that the violence is caused by “poverty and disinvestment,” and that more cops are not the solution.

9/22/22 Oakland’s fourth fatal shooting in less than a day, which happened just outside City Hall, led the City Council to take a quick break. With 91 murders so far this year - in 2021 there were 100 at this point - that’s the reality in the crime-beset community. A violence interrupter bemoans that young people have “normalized” the harm: “they feel like there’s no chance and it’s supposed to be like this.” So they do “whatever [they] can to survive. It’s survival of the fittest.”

8/10/22 In 2017 Chicago PD entered into [DOJ Consent Decree](#) to correct a “pattern or practice of unconstitutional use of force.” To that end it established an “Office of Constitutional Policing and Reform (OCPR).” But violence and a shortage of cops have beset the city. That recently led Police Supt. David Brown to request that OCPR send 46 officers back to patrol. But Robert Boik, OCPR’s head, protested it would interfere with his cop-training efforts, including a gender-based violence course. So he was fired.

8/9/22 Authorities don’t think that the circumstances that brought Robert Crimo to police attention three years before the Highland Park massacre would have merited a restraining order. After all, Crimo didn’t then have any guns. His family could have sought one, but they apparently didn’t know about the option. Still, Illinois lags behind other States in the use of restraining orders, and training and outreach efforts are underway to promote their use.

8/3/22 Rebelling against progressively-minded D.A. Kim Foxx, Chicago prosecutors continue to resign. Most recently that includes James Murphy, who headed the prosecution of murder and other serious crimes. He called his boss’s excuse, that the shift away from prosecuting lower-level crimes was a way to concentrate on serious matters, a lie. “This administration is more concerned with political narratives and agendas than with victims and prosecuting violent crime. That is why I can’t stay any longer.”

7/26/22 Chicago isn’t just short on cops. One “longtime prosecutor” told reporters “we’re so short of attorneys, there’s twice as much work with no help.” Over the past year 235 employees have left, compared with 130 during a pre-pandemic year. Shortages and overwork have “cratered” morale and backlogged prosecutions. And another violence-filled summer looms.