

Boston Police Department Payroll Investigation Proposal

CS 506 in collaboration with WGBH and BU Spark!

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Motivation:

The Massachusetts police departments are highly secretive in regards to their practices, particularly when it comes to officers moving to different districts after getting reprimanded. We aim to combine various datasets regarding the Massachusetts's Police Department to better understand their conduct. To do this, we will analyze and use datasets of public police payroll (i.e. Boston City Payroll, MA State Payroll, etc.).

Goals:

We aim to combine various datasets regarding the Massachusetts Police Department to better understand their conduct. To do this we will analyze and use datasets of public police payroll (i.e. Boston City Payroll, MA State Payroll, etc.) We will be investigating the data by analyzing any anomalies, including but not limited to the following: officers being moved to different districts after legal troubles and differences in salaries among different races or genders. We will do this by creating a general profile of the Boston and State Police Department officers.

Non Goals (out of scope):

Other questions we hope to answer are questions such as:

- Which/What officers are being paid the most?
- Are there any officers with the same name being paid in different cities within a short period of time?
- What political campaigns are most officers donating to?
- Were any officers decertified in the past?
- What is the gender breakdown among BPD and other state MA officers?
- Are there any pay gaps between races or genders among BPD and other state MA officers?
- Are neighborhoods considered “safer” when there's a police station nearby?

Ultimately, we aim to flag any promising data that could lead to further investigation of the Boston and State Police Department.

End Result:

Our end result will include detailed figures and representations of the Boston and Massachusetts State Police Department after our analysis of the gathered data. Through this profile, we will have highlighted patterns and points of interest that might flag a concern for further investigation.

Uncertainties:

We are not certain that there is anything to be found until we find any correlation or promising leads. That being said, we will also not draw any conclusion before concrete evidence is presented; afterall, correlation does not mean causation. Thus, we will try to approach this project from many different angles and analyze the data in different ways in the hopes of finding something that is substantial. Currently, we don't have any immediate questions or uncertainties regarding our roles and missions for said project as our supervisors have addressed most of the questions that we had.