

Fatal Force

948 people have been
shot and killed by police
in the past year

Updated **April 14, 2020**

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In 2015, The Washington Post began to log [every fatal shooting](#) by an on-duty police officer in the United States. In that time there have been [nearly 5,000 such](#)

[shootings](#) recorded by The Post.

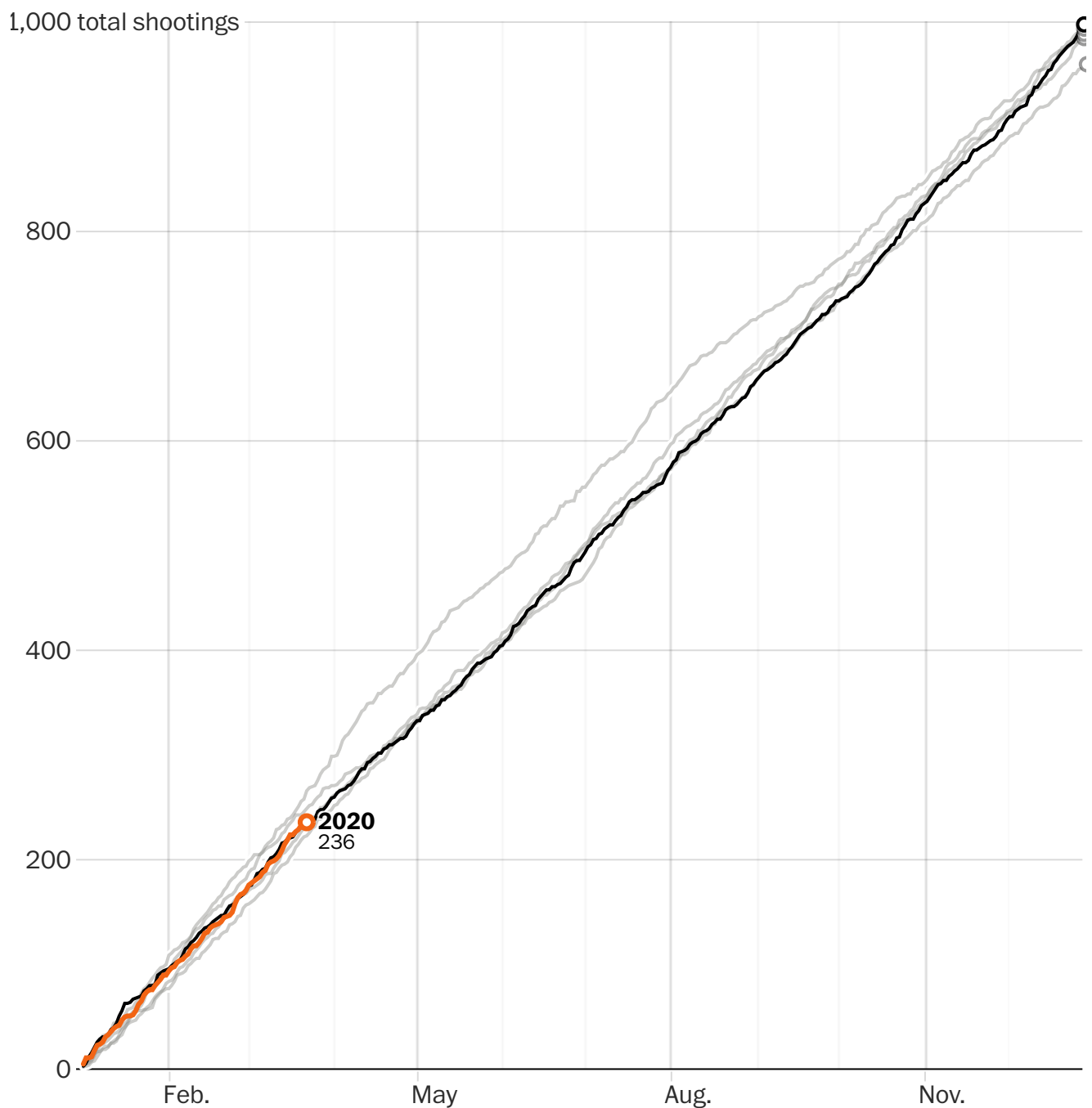
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After [Michael Brown, an unarmed black man, was killed](#) in 2014 by police in Ferguson, Mo., a Post investigation found that the [FBI undercounted fatal police shootings](#) by more than half. This is because reporting by police departments is voluntary and many departments fail to do so.

The Post's data relies primarily on news accounts, social media postings and police reports. Analysis of more than five years of data reveals that the number and circumstances of fatal shootings and the overall demographics of the victims have remained relatively constant.

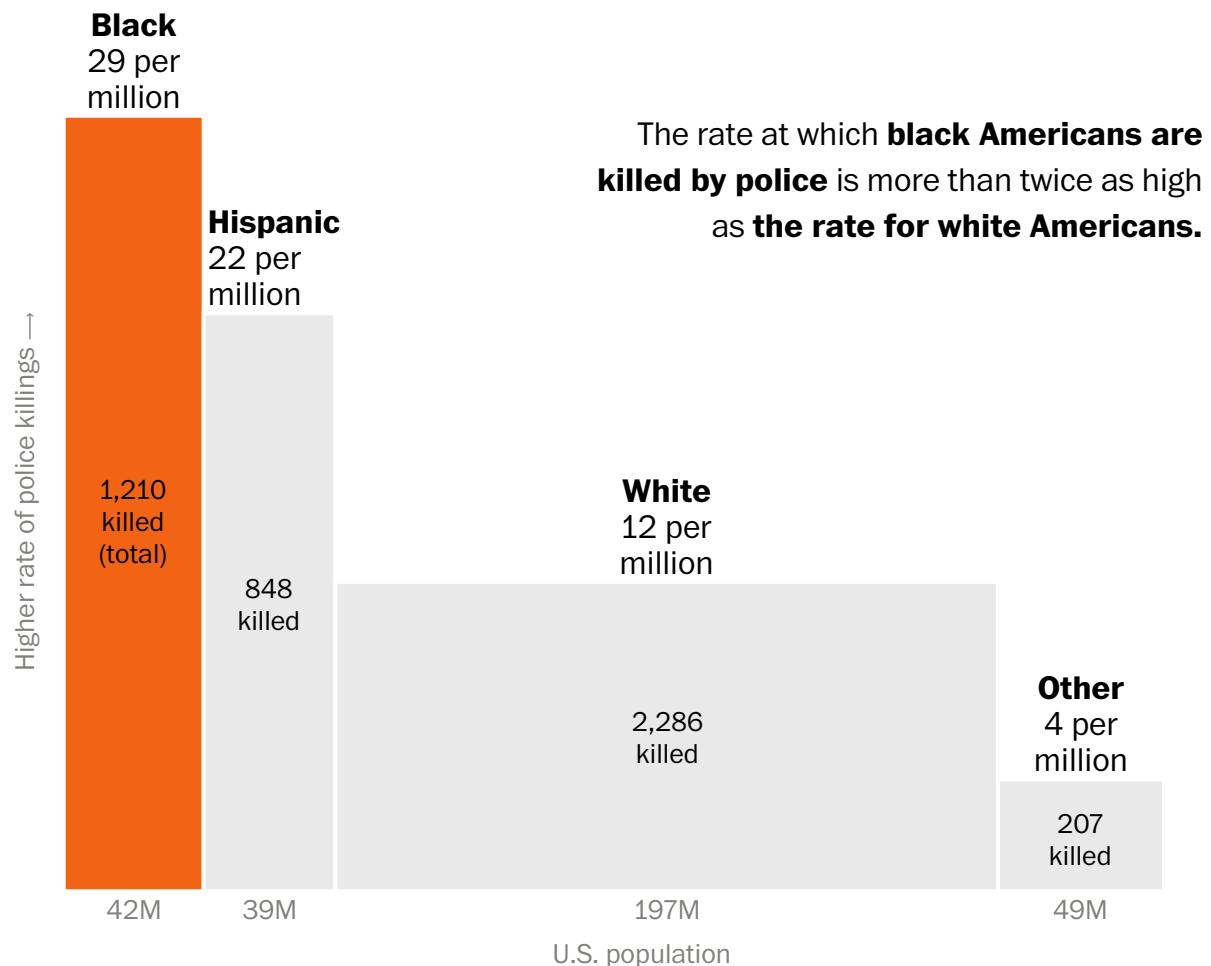
Rate of shootings remains steady

Despite the unpredictable events that lead to fatal shootings, police nationwide have shot and killed [almost the same number of people](#) annually — nearly 1,000 — since The Post began its project. Probability theory may offer an explanation. It holds that the quantity of rare events in huge populations tends to remain stable absent major societal changes, such as a fundamental shift in police culture or extreme restrictions on gun ownership.



Black Americans are killed at a much higher rate than white Americans

Although half of the people shot and killed by police are white, [black Americans are shot at a disproportionate rate](#). They account for less than 13 percent of the U.S. population, but are killed by police at more than twice the rate of white Americans. Hispanic Americans are also killed by police at a disproportionate rate.



Shootings happen across the country

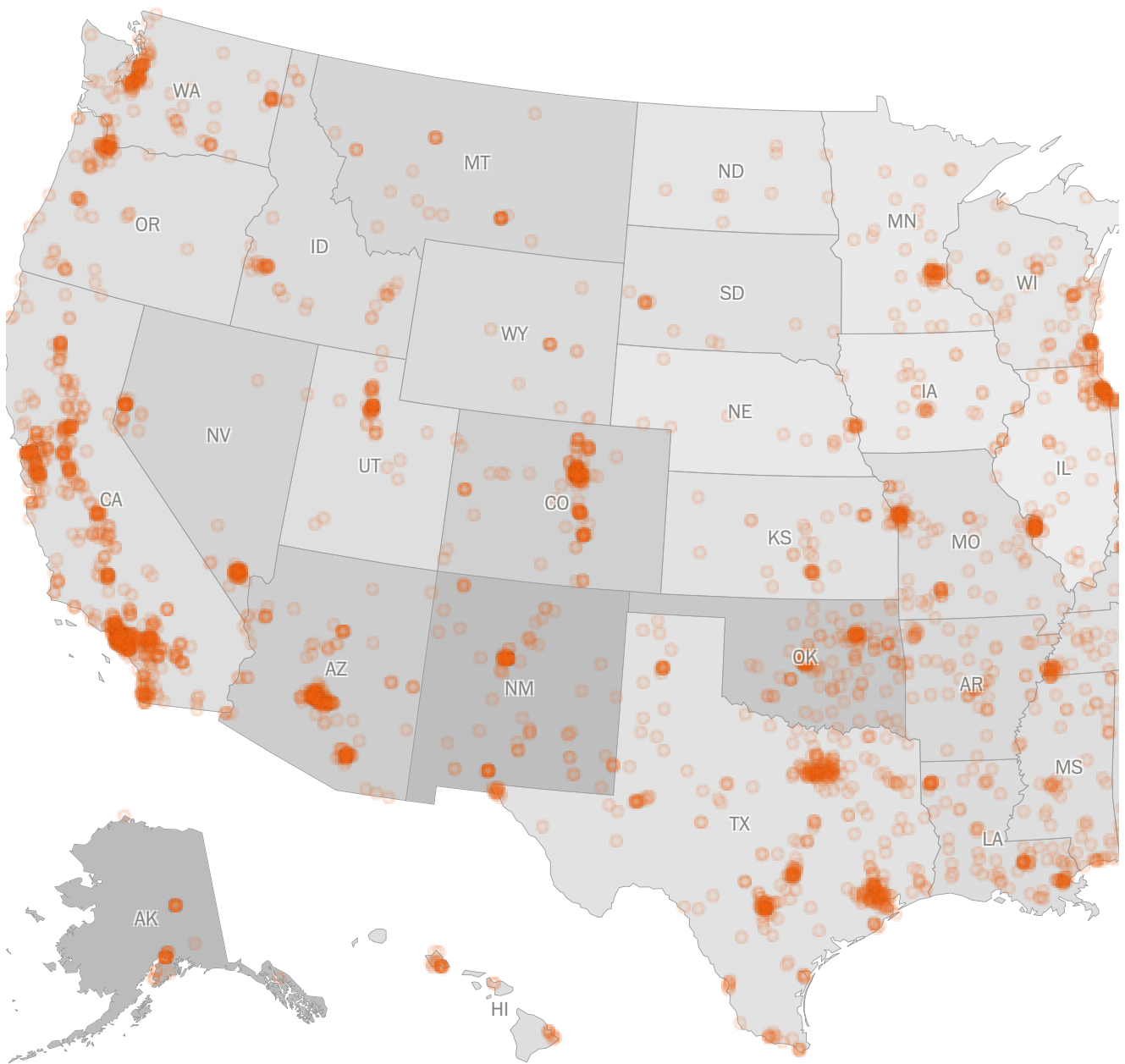
Police shootings have taken place in every state and have occurred more frequently in cities where populations are concentrated. States with the highest rates of shootings are New Mexico, Alaska and Oklahoma.

Each circle on the map below marks the location of a deadly shooting.

Shootings per million people

0

53



There are 224 shootings with unverified locations that are not shown on the map.

Search the database

This database contains records of every fatal shooting in the United States by a police officer in the line of duty since Jan. 1, 2015. It is updated regularly as fatal shootings are reported and as facts emerge about individual cases.

+ State + Gender + Race + Age + Mental illness + Weapon

+ Body camera + Fleeing the scene + Year

Carlos Delgado,

a 46-year-old man armed with a pick-axe, was shot on March 23, 2020, in San Antonio, Tex.

No/unknown mental illness

No body cam recording

Not fleeing

Sources: [KSAT](#) • [WOAI](#)

1 of 5,174

The Post's reporting on fatal police shootings

[Months after a fatal police shooting, a young officer turns his gun on himself](#)
Dec. 19, 2018

[Fatal police shootings of unarmed people have significantly declined, experts say](#) May 7, 2018

[Nationwide, police shot and killed nearly 1,000 people in 2017](#) Jan. 6, 2018

[In two years, police killed 86 people brandishing guns that look real — but aren't](#) Dec. 18, 2016

[In fatal shootings by police, 1 in 5 officers' names go undisclosed](#) April 1, 2016

About this story

The Washington Post's database contains records of every fatal shooting in the United States by a police officer in the line of duty since Jan. 1, 2015.

In 2015, The Post began tracking more than a dozen details about each killing — including the race of the deceased, the circumstances of the shooting, whether the person was armed and whether the person was experiencing a mental-health crisis —

by culling local news reports, law enforcement websites and social media, and by monitoring independent databases such as Killed by Police and Fatal Encounters. The Post conducted additional reporting in many cases.

The Post is documenting only those shootings in which a police officer, in the line of duty, shoots and kills a civilian — the circumstances that most closely parallel the 2014 killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., which began the protest movement culminating in Black Lives Matter and an increased focus on police accountability nationwide. The Post is not tracking deaths of people in police custody, fatal shootings by off-duty officers or non-shooting deaths.

The FBI and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention log fatal shootings by police, but officials acknowledge that their data is incomplete. Since 2015, The Post has documented more than twice as many fatal shootings by police as recorded on average annually.

The Post's database is updated regularly as fatal shootings are reported and as facts emerge about individual cases. The Post seeks to make the database as comprehensive as possible. To provide information about fatal police shootings since Jan. 1, 2015, send us an email at policeshootingsfeedback@washpost.com.

Credits

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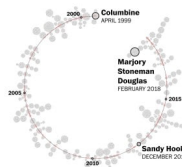


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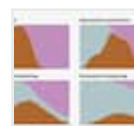
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