

Checkpoint 1 Findings

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10/5/2020

Introduction

Our project is titled, *Safe at home? Examining the impact of police-led home invasions in Chicago and predicting the effect of policy change involving “no-knock” warrants and officer-led illegal searches*. In the aftermath of the killing of Breonna Taylor, renewed attention has been brought to the presence of “no-knock” warrants, or warrants that permit officers to enter a residence. “No-knock” warrants are legal in many states, including Illinois. Illinois also has a Stand-Your-Ground law, so the legal conflict that created the circumstances surrounding Breonna Taylor’s death also exists in Illinois. We investigate the impact of “no-knock” warrants, as well as home searches conducted *without* a warrant, in Chicago. To accomplish this, we query the CPDB database for information surrounding “Search Of Premise Without Warrant” allegations.

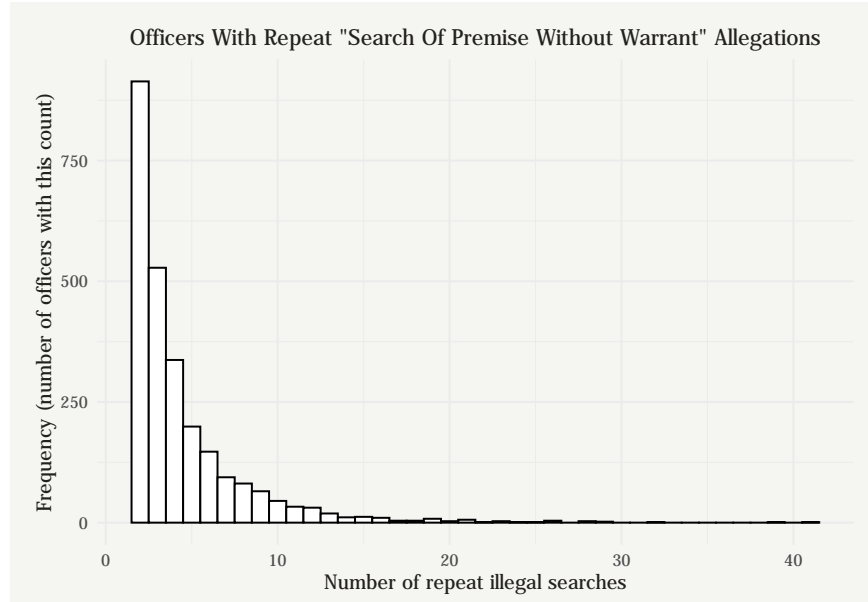
Findings

1a: How many officers who were involved in a “Search Of Premise Without Warrant” are still on the force today, and what proportion of all officers involved in these illegal searches do they constitute?

Understanding the retention rate of the officers who commit these illegal searches is vital for developing the narrative of how consequential these searches are and will remain to be. Of the officers who were involved in a “Search Of Premise Without Warrant,” 4,525 are still active on the force (501 unknown and 3,473 not active). This represents 52.93% of the officers who were involved in these illegal searches. This query could be further explored by examining how many of the inactive officers are not active as a result of resignation, retirement, or death, versus being asked to leave the force. This is still a difficult question to answer, as resignation can be prompted by the threat of being fired. Nonetheless, a majority of officers with these illegal search allegations filed against them remain on the force today. Over four-thousand active officers have, in the past, conducted an illegal search at a location in the absence of a warrant, and they might do so again.

1b: Are there any officers who’ve been involved in more than one home invasion?

This leads to the next sub-question regarding repeat illegal searches. 2,569 officers have had multiple ‘Search Of Premise Without Warrant’ allegations filed against them. The officer with the most repeat illegal searches tallies in at 41. It would be fascinating to create a profile of that particular officer. Is he or she still on the force? Does he or she have a high number of allegations filed against them for some other category? More broadly speaking, an interesting combination of q1_a and q1_b would be to look at the intersection of the most frequent repeaters and whether or not they are still on the force. The figure below demonstrates that most repeaters have a single-digit number of these illegal searches, though there are officers who have conducted upwards of 40 illegal searches of a premise in the absence of a warrant.



2: How many instances of a “Search Of Premise Without Warrant” occurred at someone’s home (Apartment, Other Private Premise, Private Residence, Residence)?

While we have thus far examined the “Search Of Premise Without Warrant” category of allegations, our theme surrounds the issues of home invasions and no-knock warrants. Therefore, it was important that our group found a subset of the allegation dataset that is focused on those types of incidents. After finding the distinct options for the ‘location’ attribute of an allegation, the relevant locations to our theme are as follows: Residence, Apartment, Private Residence, or Other Private Premise. Of all “Search Of Premise Without Warrant” allegations, 2,840 of these occurred at the aforementioned locations. This subset will be highly useful as a supplement to the about two hundred settlement cases that involved a home invasion.

3: What outcomes have resulted for victims from lawsuits involving a “Home Invasion”?

While outcomes for victims are not recorded in the database for allegations, we can look at victim outcomes for lawsuits including a “Home Invasion”, of which there are 269 total. We grouped these into major categories, and show both the total number of instances in which an outcome category occurred, as well as in what percentage that category occurred out of all lawsuits related to “Home Invasion.” Note that these numbers and percentages are not exclusive, and a lawsuit could include multiple outcomes.

Of those outcomes, 15.61% included a victim being hospitalized, and 2.23% included a victim dying, showing the frequency with which these cases result in collateral damage.

It is also interesting to note that less than half of the cases resulted in a victim being charged with a crime, while ~44% of incidents didn’t include any outcome at all. Although this is only looking at lawsuits that have come from these home searches, it does show the prevalence of cases where a home was searched without any positive result for law enforcement.

4a: What illegal searches have involved officers searching a property at the wrong address?

There have been four allegations with the name “Wrong Address” under the “Illegal Search” category. One occasion involved 11 officers, one 3 officers, one 2 officers, and 1 a single officer. No officer was implicated twice, thus there were 17 total officers implicated.

4b: How many Wrong Address allegations led to settlements?

At least one allegation has resulted in a settlement. The Labon and Green case matches with the officers and incident date of an allegation. The case summary is as follows:

Labon and Green were in the apartment they share, settling in for the evening, when there was a loud knock at the door announcing a police search. Labon went to get the door when officers used a battering ram to burst into the apartment less than three seconds later. Labon and Green both had assault rifles pointed at them. After the officers realized their mistake, most proceeded to head to the right apartment, but the officers who remained handcuffed Labon and Green instead of letting them go. The two asked why they were being held without reason and were denied their wish to see the search warrant. The two were held against their will in their kitchen for about half an hour while different police officers walked in and out of their apartment to deal with the situation next door. The officers eventually left and neither Labon or Green was charged with any crimes.

4c: Are officers involved in Wrong Address allegations linked to related settlements?

Other cases involving the officers implicated in part a) also involve illegal searches of the wrong address. Two such summaries follow:

Spearman was at her North Lawndale home with her children, C.T. and D.R., when Sergeant Elizondo and several police officers broke down the door and entered her home with their guns drawn. Spearman was handcuffed, and the officers told her they had a warrant for her home. After illegally searching Spearman's home, the officers confessed they did not have a search warrant, and broke down the door to another apartment. In that apartment they found drugs, paraphernalia and thousands of dollars in cash. Elizondo gave Spearman \$1,000 in cash for "her troubles" and left.

Ali, 54, and Rivas, 20, were in their second-floor apartment in the Avondale neighborhood when officers forced their way in, saying they were there to execute a search warrant. However, the warrant was to search for marijuana in a first-floor apartment and identified the person involved as a white male named "Tommy." The officers searched Rivas' bedroom and found nothing illegal. No charges were filed.

5: What outcomes have resulted for officers named in "Search Of Premise Without Warrant" allegations?

Of the 24,697 officer allegations relating to illegal searches of premises in which the outcome for the officer was known, there was no penalty for the officer(s) involved in the incident in the overwhelming majority of cases. In fact, there was no penalty in 99.58% of cases. In total, only 104 penalties were given out for those incidents. This is noticeably less than the 269 known settlements relating to "Home Invasions", indicating that the Chicago Police Department is more likely to settle these kinds of cases than to give out any penalty to the officers involved.