

# THE TRAUMA DESERT

Mapping Gun Violence Burden Against Trauma System Capacity in Philadelphia

17,383

Shootings  
(2015-2025)

18

Trauma Desert  
Tracts

99.6%

Within 20 min  
of Level I

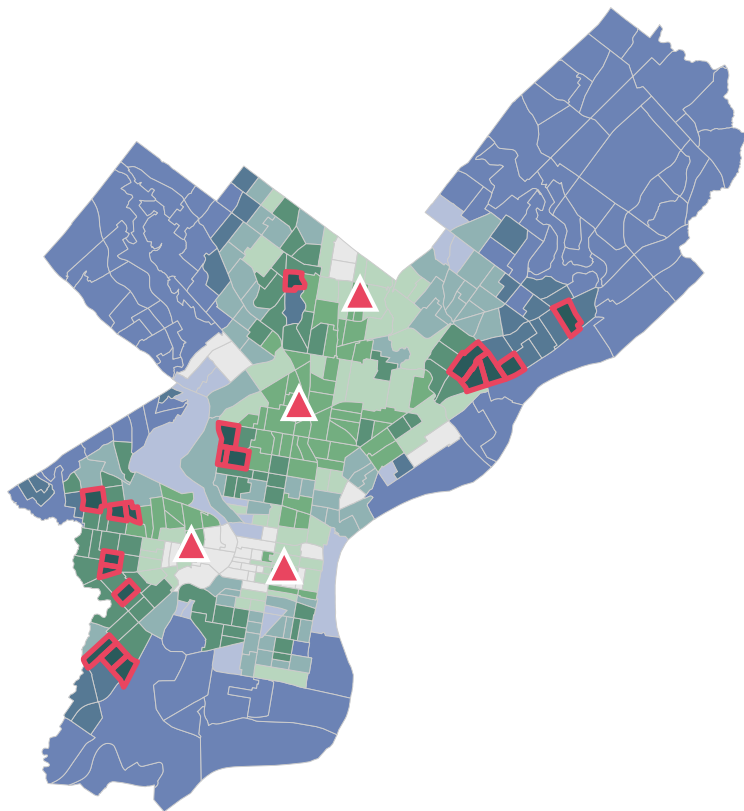
54.9%

Handled by  
Trauma Hospital

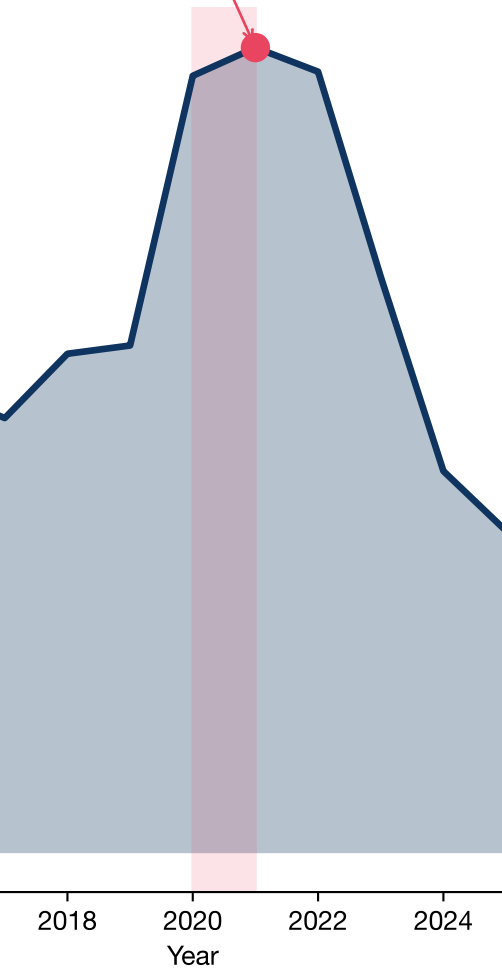
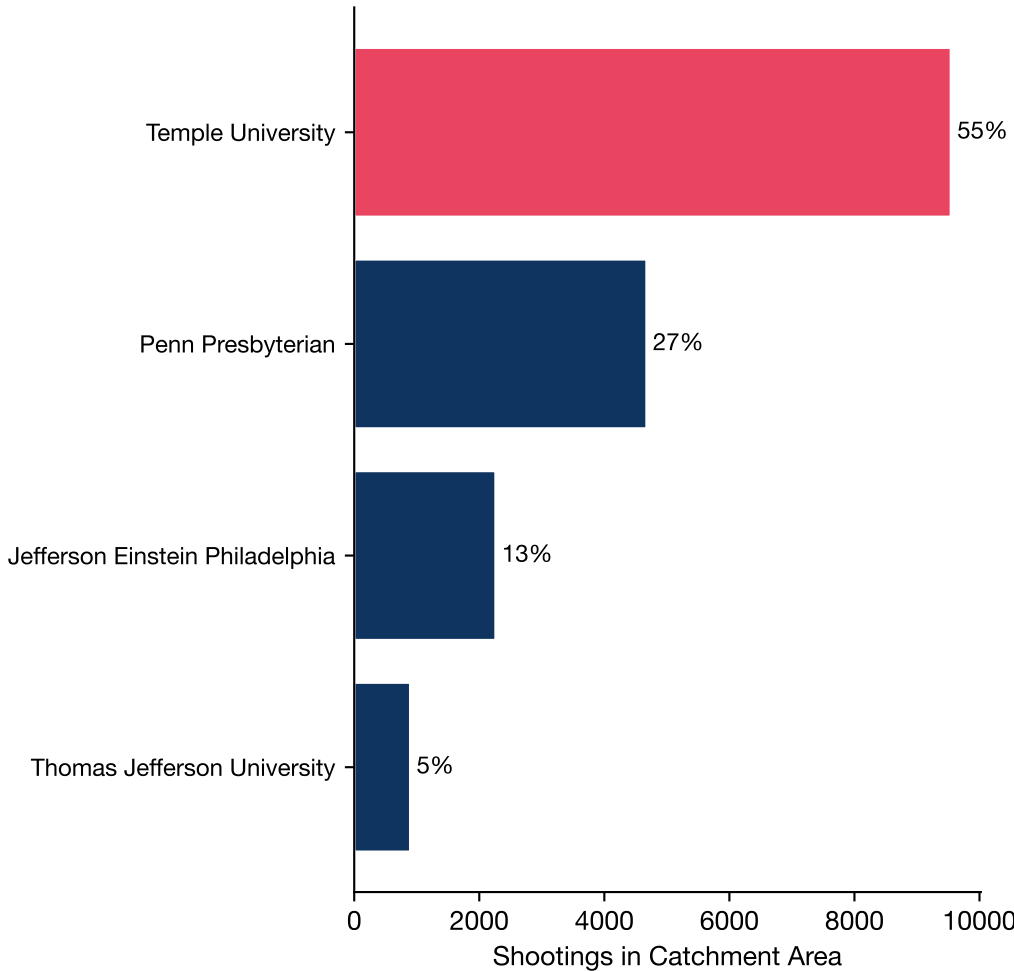
68.5%

Disparity  
Ratio  
(COVID spike 2020-2021)

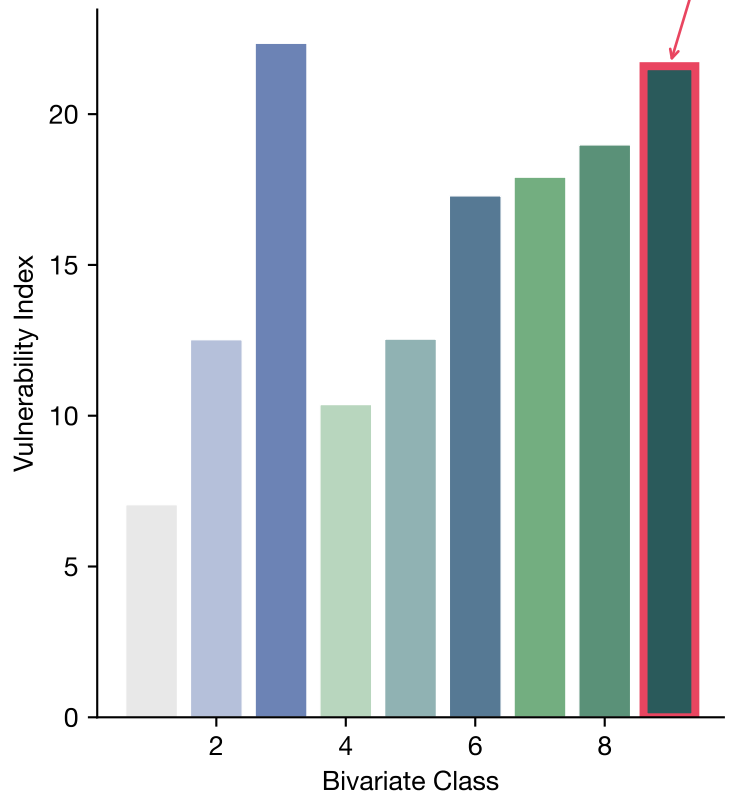
A. Bivariate Classification  
Shooting Density vs Transport Time



B. Hospital Burden Distribution  
(Temple handles 55% of all shootings)



F. Vulnerability by Classification  
(Trauma deserts have highest disadvantage)



G. Summary

## KEY FINDINGS

- THE DISPARITY IS VIOLENCE, NOT ACCESS**  
Black neighborhoods are actually 3.2 min CLOSER to trauma centers, but experience 4.4x higher shooting rates.
- TEMPLE IS THE FRONTLINE**  
Temple University Hospital handles more than half of all shooting victims in Philadelphia (54.9%).
- STRUCTURAL FACTORS DOMINATE**  
68.5% of the racial disparity in violence cannot be explained by poverty or income. Historical/systemic factors are at play.
- COVID DOUBLED VIOLENCE**  
Shootings peaked at 2,338 in 2021, nearly double pre-pandemic levels. Now declining.
- COMPOUND DISADVANTAGE**  
All 18 trauma deserts are also in the top quartile of overall neighborhood vulnerability.