



POLICY SNAPSHOT: Policing in Boulder 2022

Violent and Property Crimes

Boulder’s rate of violent crimes has generally increased year-over-year from 2013 – 2021 while the rate of property crime has also trended upward from 2015 – 2021. Of particular concern is that these rates are trending upward relative to the national rates and, in the case of property crimes, also relative to state rates.

Other Crimes

The most common charges in Boulder from 2020 to 2021 were trespass and theft charges. Other problematic crimes were burglaries and charged suspects failing to appear in court. The city’s public dashboard describes the type and location of all [criminal offenses](#) reported in Boulder since 2020. Similar online information is available on [unhoused encampments](#), [calls for service](#), [stolen bicycles](#), [jail records](#), and [code issues at properties](#).

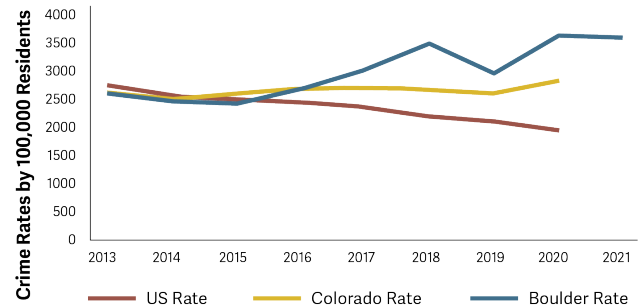
Decreasing Number of BPD Employees

The police department was nearly fully staffed at 287 employees in January 2020 but was down to only 245 by December 2021; a 14.6% decrease. Currently, there are approximately 25 vacancies among sworn personnel that [BPD is attempting to fill](#).

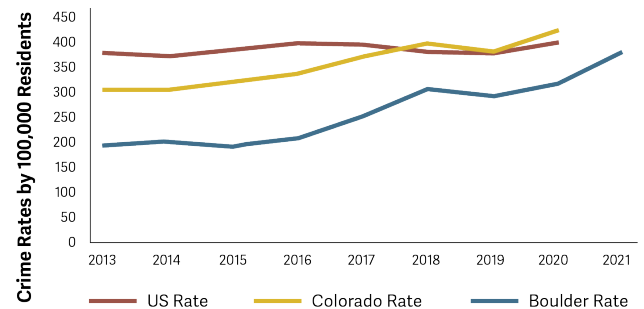
Use of Force Incidents on the Decline

Boulder police use force in less than 0.3% of encounters with civilians and draw their weapons to gain compliance about 15 times a month, on average. These incidents have decreased since the Boulder Police Department implemented use-of-force training known as “ICAT” in late 2020. Since then, instead of firearm display to gain compliance, officers are more likely to display Tasers when dangerous circumstances require immediate de-escalation.

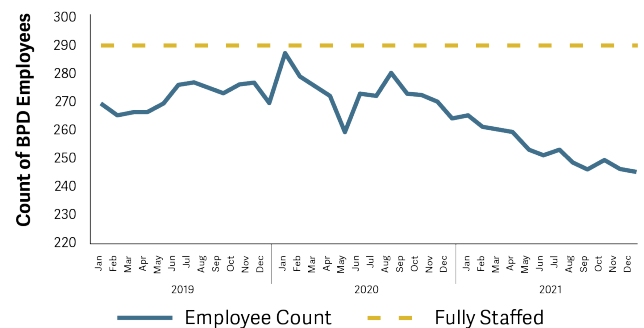
Crime Rate: Property Crime



Crime Rate: Violent Crime



BPD Staffing from 2019-2021



Use of Force Incident Numbers

	Pre ICAT (2020)	Post ICAT (2021)	Change (%)
Firearm display to gain compliance	140	93	- 34% ↓
Taser display to gain compliance	71	94	+ 32% ↑
TASER Discharge (Drive stun or probe launch)	13	19	+ 46% ↑
Leg Restraint Device	27	10	- 63% ↓
Takedowns	83	66	- 21% ↓
Total Use of Force Incidents	286	238	- 17% ↓

Continuous Improvement

As part of the city's effort to continually improve, it is implementing several action items pertaining to policing, including:

- **Reforming the police department** and hiring Chief Herold, an advocate for evidence-based policing and data driven evaluations.
- Applying **crime science** for crime reduction and harm prevention.
- Facilitating community transparency by creating or providing input for the **public crime and calls-for-service dashboards**, the **stolen bikes dashboard**, and the **Safe Management of Public Spaces Data Dashboard**.
- **Reimagine Policing Project**, a collaborative planning effort with the community to create a master plan to guide the Boulder Police Department's goals and services for the next 5 to 10 years.
- Implementing **ICAT police training** to diffuse critical incidents with proven de-escalation tactics that teach officers to avoid reaching the point where their lives or the lives of others become endangered, and where officers would have no choice but to use lethal force.
- Recruiting highly qualified and **diverse employees**.
- Implementing the **CIRT program**, which allows licensed behavioral health clinicians and BPD officers to respond jointly to calls involving a behavioral health crisis to help de-escalate situations and connect those in need to available services. The city is also currently exploring alternative responses to non-criminal calls that would not require any police officer response.
- Creating the **Office of the Independent Police Monitor** within the City Manager's Office to review all internal investigations, make recommendations for additional investigation as well as disposition and disciplinary recommendations at the conclusion of the investigation.
- Establishing a **Police Oversight Panel** which provides civilian oversight of the police disciplinary process as well as policy and training recommendations to the department. The panel also works to ensure considerations are being given toward equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Participating in city-wide Bias & Micro-aggression awareness training.
- Working with **the city and National Policing Institute** to understand community perceptions of safety and police response.

OVERSIGHT – The **2021 Annual Report** on Police Oversight found that 58 complaints were filed involving 88 separate allegations. 56 complaints were classified as Misconduct, and two complaints were classified as Serious Misconduct. Of the 88 allegations, 16 were Sustained. This represents a sustain rate of 18%. The civilian Police Oversight Panel and the Chief of Police concurred on all but one case disposition.

APPRECIATION – In 2021 there were 92 commendations from the community thanking BPD for exceptional service, professionalism, and for exceeding expectations. Among these are thanks for life-saving measures to reverse fatal overdoses, and successful crisis negotiations with suicidal or violent individuals. Altogether, 16 commendations thanked the entire department, and the remaining thanked 151 separate employees.

For more information visit the Boulder Police Department's **City of Boulder website**, or follow on social media.