

Here's what's changed since George Floyd's murder three years ago

by [Cheyanne M. Daniels](#) - 05/25/23 1:57 PM ET

FILE – Protesters hold signs as they march during a protest over the death of George Floyd in Chicago, May 30, 2020. Candid, a leading philanthropy research group, is leading a coalition of funders and grantees that want to standardize the collection of demographic information to help target donations to minority-led groups. Corporations and foundations pledged billions for racial equity after the police killing of Floyd in 2020. But statistics show that philanthropic money flows unequally to white-led and minority-led organizations. (AP Photo/Nam Y. Huh, File)

Three years after George Floyd was murdered by police in Minneapolis at the age of 46, Black Americans are still more than twice as likely to be killed by police as white Americans.

Much has changed since Floyd's killing, but that startling statistic from the database [Mapping Police Violence](#) underscores how much hasn't changed all the same.

Floyd's death led to mass protests across the country and the world, and it awakened much of the country to how much change is necessary to take real strides toward racial equality and justice.

Lawmakers who have pushed for change note that despite all that attention, violence is carried out against Black people by police on a regular basis.

“Regardless of the heightened scrutiny and spotlight on state-sanctioned violence onto Black bodies, it still continues to happen at the same rate, if not higher,” Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.), whose district includes Minneapolis, [said in an interview](#) recently.

Here's a look at what has happened in the past three years.

Police accountability

Perhaps the biggest shift since Floyd's death has come in efforts to hold police more accountable when people are killed in their custody or as a result of their actions.

Police have repeatedly been able to avoid jail time for the killings or beatings of Black Americans, from Rodney King to the more recent examples of Trayvon Martin, Stephon Clark, Freddie Gray, Philando Castille and Alton Sterling.

Those involved in Floyd's case, however, were charged and convicted.

Officer Derek Chauvin, who knelt on Floyd's neck for more than nine minutes before his death, was fired from the Minneapolis Police Department and charged with second-degree murder days after the killing.

In May 2021, Chauvin and the other officers on the scene, J. Alexander Kueng, Thomas Lane and Tou Thao, were indicted by a federal grand jury.

After a three-week trial and 10 hours of deliberation, a jury sentenced Chauvin to 22 1/2 years in prison in April 2021. In December, he pleaded guilty to federal charges for violating Floyd's civil rights and was sentenced to an additional 21 years.

Kueng was sentenced to three years in prison and Thao to 3 1/2 for violating Floyd's civil rights. Lane was sentenced to two years in prison.

Officers have also been charged in other killings.

In 2021, Minneapolis police Chief Tim Gannon and officer Kim Potter resigned for their involvement in the death of 20-year-old Daunte Wright. Potter was convicted of manslaughter.

In Memphis, the five officers involved in the [beating of Tyre Nichols](#) have been fired and charged for his death.

Defunding and reforming police departments

More than 30 states have passed 140 oversight and reform laws on local police since Floyd's killing, according to the New York Times.

Some of these laws restricted tactics such as no-knock warrants, which led to the death of Breonna Taylor in Louisville — another touchstone event from 2020. Others ban the use of neck restraints — like what Chauvin used against Floyd — and mandated the use of body cameras.

Calls to “defund the police” also echoed around the country in summer 2020. In many cases, those calls were to redirect funds for police to other services. Some cities have taken steps to do this.

The slogan of “defund the police” has led to a backlash for some Democratic politicians as crime rose after the pandemic.

But polls show many Americans support reforming policies to make police more accountable.

More than 80 percent want police officers to face legal action for abuse of power or unnecessary harm while 78 percent support community-based alternatives to police, such as violence intervention programs, according to a 2022 [Gallup poll](#).

A smaller portion, however, supports the idea of defunding the police. Thirty-five percent of Americans want to reduce the budget of police departments to fund social programs instead, the Gallup poll found.

Minneapolis voted to shift nearly \$8 million from police funding to services like violence prevention and mental health crisis response teams.

In June 2020, Boston [reallocated \\$12 million](#) of its police overtime budget — about 20 percent — to instead invest in community programs such as trauma and counseling services.

And in 2021, Los Angeles approved Measure J, which allocates 10 percent of the county's revenue to community investment and alternatives to incarceration.

Restitution and reparations

Some states are taking steps to reconcile with residents following the years of protests.

At least 19 cities will reportedly pay protesters who sustained injuries as a result of law enforcement action as they protested police brutality, [according to The Guardian](#).

The California Reparations Task Force this month voted on a series of proposals [for reparations](#) for Black Americans, and one of the areas for restitution includes mass incarceration of Black Americans and over-policing in Black communities.

The task force recommended providing \$115,260 per person in 2020 dollars — or \$2,352 for each year of residency in the state since 1971, which was the first year of the war on drugs, a program that specifically targeted Black Americans.

George Floyd Justice in Policing Act

Federal efforts on police reform have stalled.

In 2021, a House then controlled by Democrats approved the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act. But the legislation went nowhere in the Senate and appears to be on hold with a GOP majority House.

The key area of disagreement is over ending qualified immunity, a set of rules that protects government officials — including police officers — from individual liability for violating personal and constitutional rights.

Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.), who announced his presidential run this week, introduced a counterproposal to shift the burden of responsibility from individual police officers to police departments, but the compromise hasn't set well with more progressive legislators.

Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-Mass.) and Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) offered bills this year to [end qualified immunity](#).

While the White House has made it clear it would back police reform, it has also sought to take executive actions.

President Biden last year signed an executive order for federal law enforcement agencies that bans the use of chokeholds, restricts no-knock warrants and requires anti-bias training and body-worn cameras.

Yet that order only goes so far because it does not apply to state and local police.

“I urge Congress to enact meaningful police reform and send it to my desk. I will sign it,” Biden said Thursday in marking the anniversary of Floyd’s death. “I will continue to do everything in my power to fight for police accountability in Congress, and I remain willing to work with Republicans and Democrats alike on genuine solutions.”