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Traffic Stops by CPD Rose 35% in 2022, Despite Being Racially Disparate and Ineffective

CHICAGO— Newly released data shows that in 2022 Chicago Police Department escalated its racially disparate, excessive, and ineffective practice of traffic stops.

A report released today by Impact for Equity and the Free2Move Coalition found that, from 2021 to 2022, Chicago Police Department traffic stops increased by 35% to over 511,000 traffic stops in 2022. This means, on average, CPD made more than 1,400 traffic stops each day of 2022. The stops are increasingly being made for minor violations having to do with licensing and registration, which accounted for 38% of all stops last year. Fewer stops are for potentially more dangerous driving behavior like speeding, which accounted for less than 1% of stops in 2022. Despite the increase in stops, only 0.43% resulted in recovery of contraband like weapons or drugs, 3.4% resulted in a citation, and 1.1% resulted in a search.

People of color experienced the brunt of this increased practice in 2022. Although Black people are only 29% of Chicago's population, they were the driver in 57% of the traffic stops made in 2022. Black and Latine people were also subjected to 97% of the uses of force during traffic stops.

The analysis also sheds more light on why stops are happening. Newly obtained emails from CPD leadership from a snapshot in 2020 confirm that traffic stops are not meant to improve roadway safety but rather are a widespread attempt to fish for criminal activity. During the time period of the emails, CPD leadership repeatedly encouraged aggressive use of traffic stops. Units were regularly ranked by the number of traffic stops they performed, and units that increased their use of traffic stops were praised and those that fell behind were criticized.

The newly released data updates a March 2023 report, [*A New Vehicle for "Stop and Frisk": the Scope, Impact, and Inequities of Traffic Stops in Chicago*](#). That report showed that from 2015-2021 Chicago police made hundreds of thousands of unnecessary traffic stops – the most common interaction that most Americans have with the police – that targeted and harmed Black and Latine motorists and did not keep Chicago's roads or communities safe.

"This new data provides further evidence of the ineffectiveness of traffic stops and the disparate weight borne by Black and Latine communities in Chicago," explains Cara Hendrickson, Impact for Equity Executive Director. "CPD allocates countless resources to the strategy of widespread traffic stops as a crime-fighting strategy – using the justification of minor traffic infractions to fish for criminal activity in the form of 'pretextual' stops. This data shows yet again that this approach is not only ineffective at addressing traffic or public safety but also harmful to Chicago's Black and Latine communities."

Impact for Equity, formerly known as BPI, is a public interest law and policy center that has worked at the front lines of racial, economic, and social justice in the Chicago region and Illinois for over 50 years. Impact for Equity uses organizing and convening to work towards transformational change.



Free2Move Coalition is an alliance of community and advocacy organizations working to create a safer, more racially equitable system of traffic safety in Chicago. The work of the Coalition began in 2021 when a few community and advocacy organizations rallied around alarming issues with Chicago's current traffic safety system. The Coalition's work centers around crafting a system of traffic safety that works for everyone but especially those who have been most impacted by discriminatory police enforcement.

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