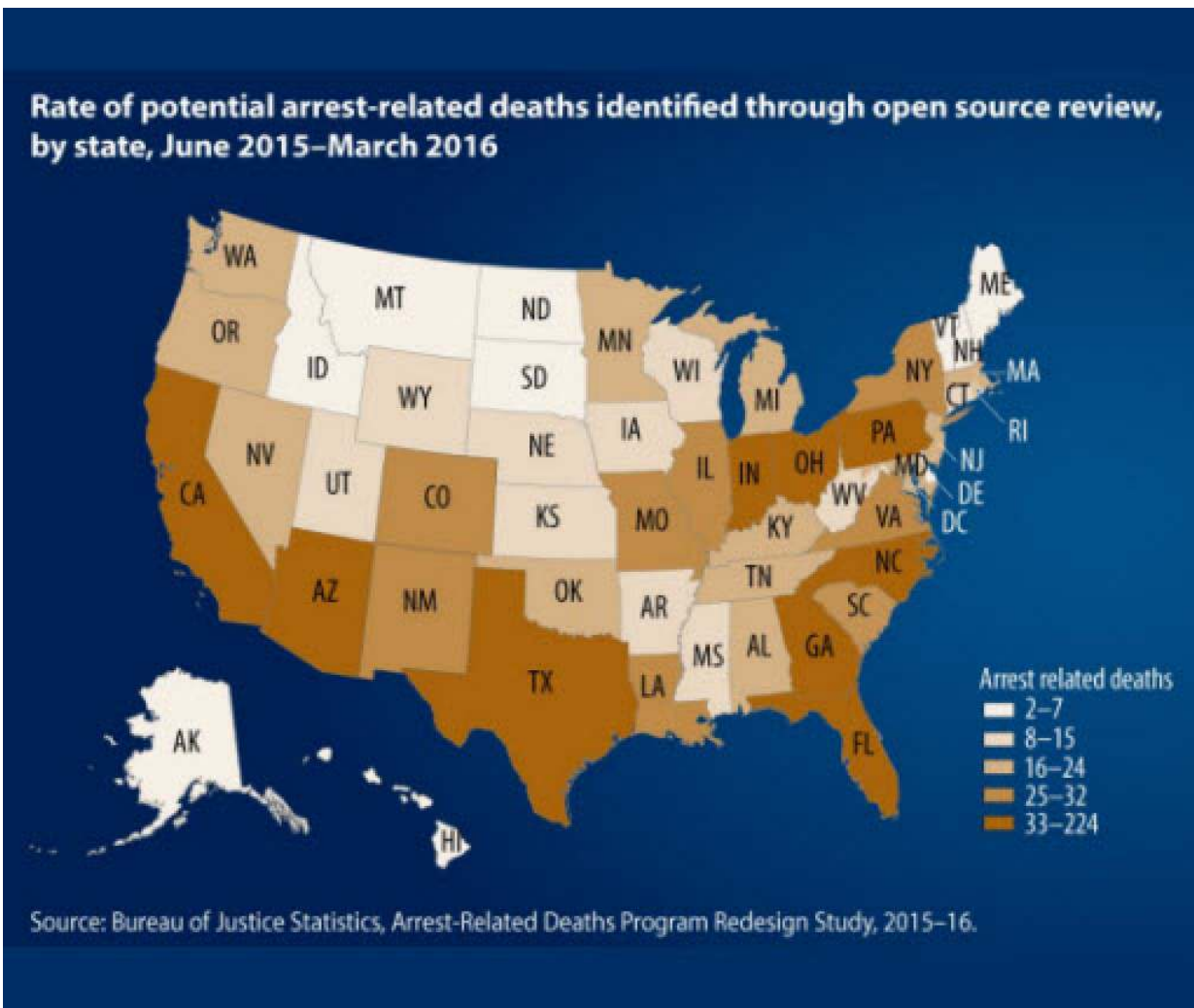


Study estimates 1,900 arrest-related deaths occurred in US between June 2015-May 2016

December 16 2016



Credit: RTI International

An estimated 1,900 people died in the United States during arrest or while in police custody June 2015 through May 2016, according to a new report by the Bureau of Justice Statistics and RTI International.

The [report, led by researchers at RTI](#), provides preliminary results of the BJS's redesign of the Arrest-Related Deaths component of the Deaths in Custody Reporting Program, which was established in response to the Death in Custody Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-297) (reauthorized in 2014).

The arrest-related deaths report represents a national accounting of persons who died during the process of arrest, including justifiable homicides by law enforcement personnel and deaths attributed to suicide, accidental injury, and natural causes. The arrest-related [death](#) program redesign relies on a hybrid, two-step process to identify, confirm, and collect information about arrest-related deaths.

"The redesigned arrest-related deaths program combines information from media sources, [law enforcement agencies](#), medical examiners, and coroner's offices to both identify and confirm arrest-related deaths," said Duren Banks, Ph.D., senior research criminologist at RTI and lead author of the report. "This mixed method approach results in a more complete picture of the scope of arrest-related deaths in the U.S."

To identify potential arrest-related deaths, the researchers conducted a standardized review of media articles. The review identified 1,348 potential arrest-related deaths in the United States from June 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016, an average of 135 deaths per month.

Researchers found that potential arrest-related deaths occurred in all 50 states during that period, with the largest number occurring in California (224).

Washington, DC, Wyoming and New Mexico had the highest rate of

potential arrest-related deaths per million residents. New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island had the lowest rate of potential arrest-related deaths per million residents compared to other states.

Following the media review, researchers conducted a survey of [law enforcement](#) agencies and medical examiner/coroners' offices for official reports and information about the 379 arrest-related deaths identified in June, July and August 2015.

The survey findings indicated 425 arrest-related deaths occurred during that time period, an additional 12 percent or 45 than reported in the media. Of these 425 deaths, 64 percent were classified as homicide, 18 percent as suicide, and 11 as accidents.

Based on the information from the media sources collected from June 2015 through May 2016 and assuming another 12 percent identified directly from agencies, researchers estimated 1,900 arrest-related deaths occurred in the United States annually during the study period.

Provided by RTI International

Citation: Study estimates 1,900 arrest-related deaths occurred in US between June 2015-May 2016 (2016, December 16) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-12-arrest-related-deaths-june-may.html>

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