



Police Use of Force Policy Reform, What do we know about the impact of these reforms?

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In response to the police killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, and in the midst of demonstrations in cities around the country, police use of force policies have again come under intense scrutiny. Prescriptions vary widely for how to reduce reliance on force among police departments, particularly force that is disproportionately directed against people of color. There is new momentum behind efforts to reduce police department budgets and reassign their responsibilities to providers of other social services, including mental health, mediation, and supportive housing. Less far-reaching proposals include banning chokehold and campaigns such as Campaign Zero's #8cantwait, which focuses on eight specific use of force policy changes advocates compiled through deliberative and collaborative processes pulling from the 21st Century Task Force Recommendations on Police Use of Force, PERF Guiding Principles, and academic research and overall public demands. Advocates argue that these policies could prevent injuries and deaths and hold officers accountable for unnecessary and excessive force.

With these reforms under active consideration and discussion, it is critical that we consider: what do we actually know about use of force policies and the effectiveness of increasing restrictions?