

# ARE POLICE LEADERS HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR PERFORMANCE?

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- Affects quality of life, personal freedoms, trust in government

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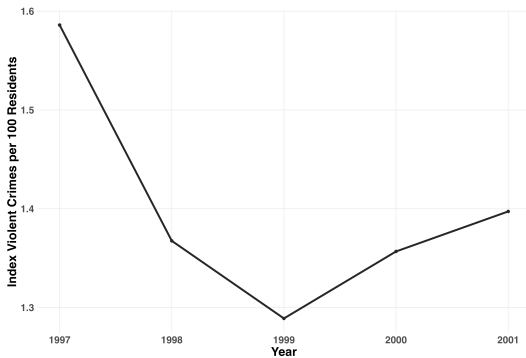
- Affects quality of life, personal freedoms, trust in government

Public informs policing through chain of agency relationships

- Public elects mayor, council  $\Rightarrow$  elected officials appoint/fire police chief
- Standard view: election-motivated mayors fire underperforming chiefs



**Bernard Parks**  
Los Angeles Police Chief  
1997 - 2002





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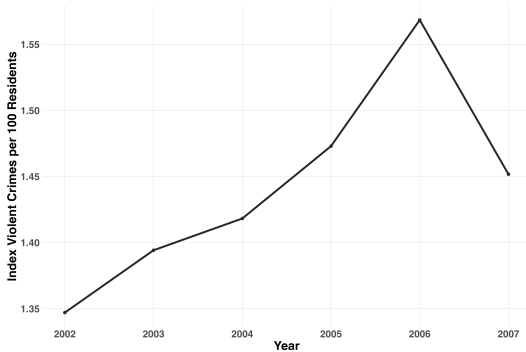
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Three potential weaknesses

- friction in finding better replacement
- mismatch between what matters and what is measured
- replacing chief may bring attention to mayor's failure



**Sylvester Johnson**  
Philadelphia Police Commissioner  
2002 - 2008



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Goal: Describe relationship between police performance and turnover

Approach:

- New data on tenures of police chiefs in over 1,200 cities from 2000 to 2022
- Link to FBI crime data
- Compare turnover when crime is higher vs lower using panel analyses
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Results:

- Chiefs no more likely to leave when crime is high
- Yet, turnover is higher following DOJ punishment

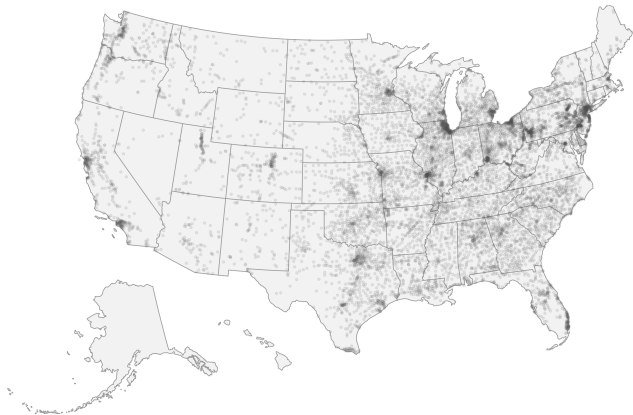
# NEW DATA ON POLICE CHIEF ACCOUNTABILITY

- Digitized police chief directories, 1990 to 2022, 47k chiefs in 12k municipalities

<b>BOLTON 01740</b> Vincent Alfano Chief 637 Main St Worcester County 978/779-2276 Fax 978/779-6079 Ofcr: 9 Pop: 4,500	<b>BROOKLINE 02445</b> Daniel C O'Leary Chief 350 Washington St Berkshire County 413/743-1501 Fax 413/743-1944 Ofcr: 140 Pop: 3,500	<b>CHESHIRE 01225</b> Tim Garner Chief 90 Church St Berkshire County 413/743-1501 Fax 413/743-1944 Ofcr: 10 Pop: 3,500	Ofcr: 64 Pop: 35,000 <b>DEDHAM 02026</b> Michael Weir Chief 600 High St Norfolk County 781/751-9300 Fax 781/751-9330 Ofcr: 74 Pop: 24,000
<b>BOSTON 02120</b> Ed Davis Commissioner 1 Schroeder Plz Suffolk County 617/943-4200 Fax 617/943-5003 Ofcr: 2,050 Pop: 604,000	<b>BUCKLAND</b> James T Hicks Chief 69 1/2 Conway St Shelburne Falls 01370 Franklin County 413/625-8200 Fax 413/625-6199 Ofcr: 10 Pop: 2,000	<b>CHESTER 01011</b> Ronald T Minor Chief 15 Middlefield Rd Hampden County 413/54-7822 Fax 413/354-0619 Ofcr: 7 Pop: 1,500	<b>DEERFIELD 01373</b> Michael J Wozniakewicz Chief 8 Conway St Franklin County 413/665-2606 Fax 413/665-2269 Ofcr: 14 Pop: 4,900
<b>BOURNE 02532</b> Earl Baldwin Chief 175 Main St Barnstable County 508/759-4420 Fax 508/759-0603 Ofcr: 30 Pop: 16,408	<b>BURLINGTON 01803</b> Francis Hart Chief 45 Center St Middlesex County 781/270-1914 Fax 781/270-1920 Ofcr: 62 Pop: 23,000	<b>CHICOPEE 01020</b> John R Ferraro Jr Chief 110 Church St Hampden County 413/552-6341 Fax 413/594-1725 Ofcr: 127 Pop: 57,000	<b>DENNIS</b> Michael Whalen Chief 90 Bob Crowell Rd S Dennis 02660 Barnstable County 508/394-1315 Fax 508/394-5750 Ofcr: 35 Pop: 13,994
<b>BOXBOROUGH 01719</b> Richard Vance Jr Chief 320 Mass Ave Middlesex County 978/263-2628 Fax 978/635-0116 Ofcr: 8 Pop: 5,000	<b>CAMBRIDGE 02139</b> Robert Haas Commissioner 5 Western Ave Middlesex County 617/349-3300 Fax 617/349-3007 Ofcr: 254 Pop: 100,000	<b>CHILMARK 02535</b> Timothy S Rich Chief 15 State Rd Dukes County 508/645-3310 Fax 508/645-3101	<b>DIGHTON 02715</b> Robert L MacDonald Chief 1551 Somerset Ave Bristol County 508/669-6711 Fax 508/669-6740 Ofcr: 9 Pop: 6,516
<b>BOXFORD 01921</b> Gordon A Russell Chief 285 Ipswich Rd Essex County 978/687-8135 Fax 978/687-8138 Ofcr: 12 Pop: 7,650	<b>CANTON 02021</b> Kenneth Berkowitz Chief 1492 Washington St Norfolk County 781/821-5090 Fax 781/821-2549 Ofcr: 50 Pop: 20,000	<b>CLINTON 01510</b> Mark Laverdus Chief 176 Chestnut St Worcester County 978/365-4111 Fax 978/365-4105 Ofcr: 26 Pop: 13,000	<b>DOUGLAS 01516</b> Patricia T Foley Chief 29 Depot St Worcester County 508/476-3333 Fax 508/476-3210 Ofcr: 15 Pop: 8,500
<b>BOYLSTON 01505</b> Anthony Sahagian Chief 215 Main St Worcester County 508/669-2453 Fax 508/669-2360 Ofcr: 10 Pop: 4,200	<b>CARLISLE 01741</b> John Sullivan Chief 41 Lowell St Middlesex County 978/369-1153 Fax 978/369-1819	<b>COHASSET 02025</b> James M Hussey Chief 62 Elm St Norfolk County 781/383-1212 Fax 781/383-1213 Ofcr: 18 Pop: 7,700	<b>DOVER 02030</b> Joseph Griffin Chief 3 Walpole St Norfolk County 508/785-1130 Fax 508/785-0683 Ofcr: 16 Pop: 5,200
<b>BRAINTREE 02104</b> Paul H Frazier Chief 282 Union St Norfolk County 781/794-8551 Fax 781/794-8698 Ofcr: 100 Pop: 35,232	<b>CARVER 02330</b> Arthur Parker Chief 1128 Main St Plymouth County 508/866-2000 Fax 508/866-4538 Ofcr: 15 Pop: 12,000	<b>COLRAIN 01340</b> Carl Herzig Chief 55 Main Rd Franklin County 413/625-8200 Fax 413/624-3024	

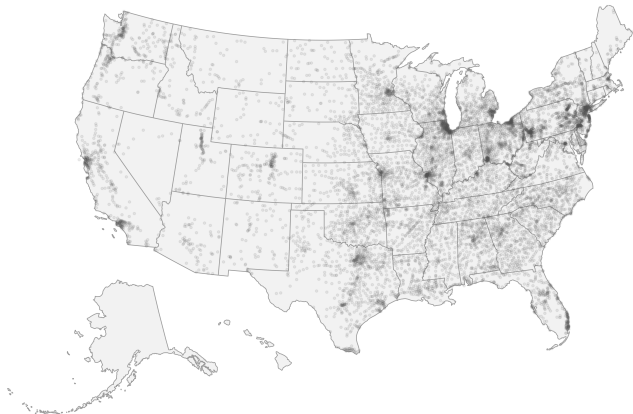
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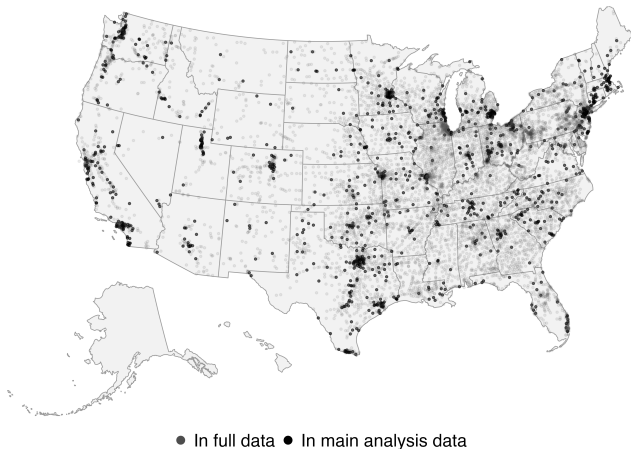
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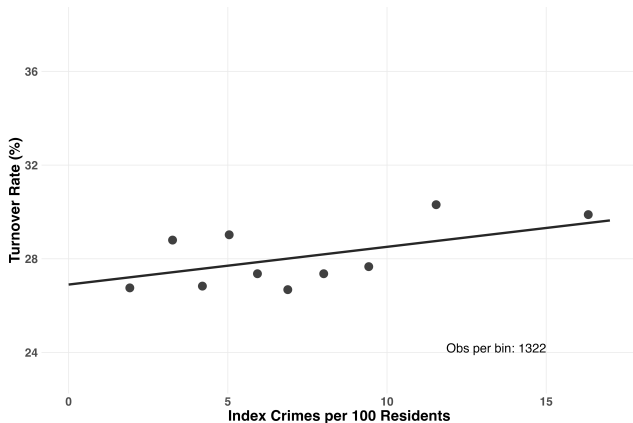
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- Link to FBI crime data
- Limit to 2000 on and balanced panel  $\Rightarrow$  4.5k chiefs in 1.2k municipalities





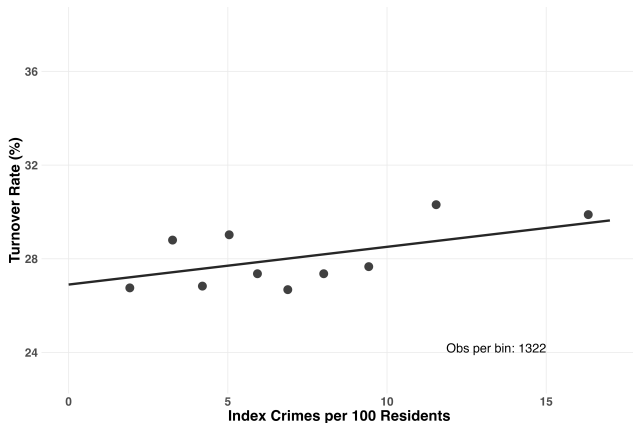
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- Similar turnover in low- and high-crime cities (27% vs. 30%)



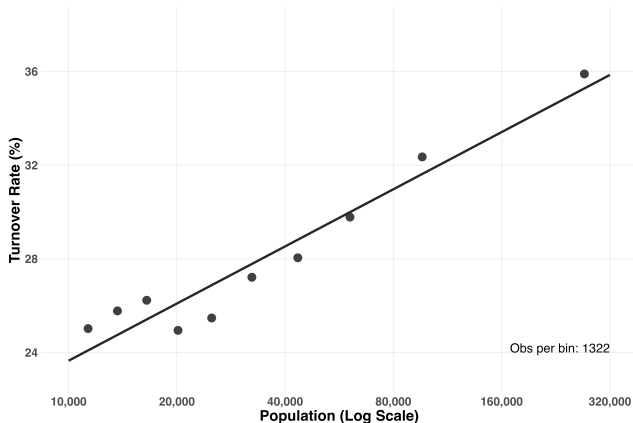
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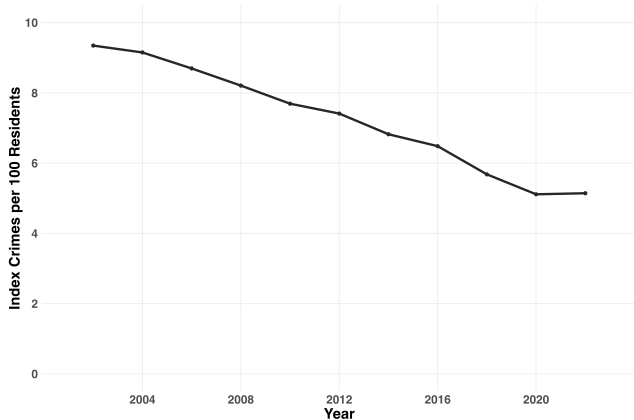
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- Crime 8 $\times$  higher in high-crime cities
- Turnover noticeably higher in largest cities (25% vs 36%)



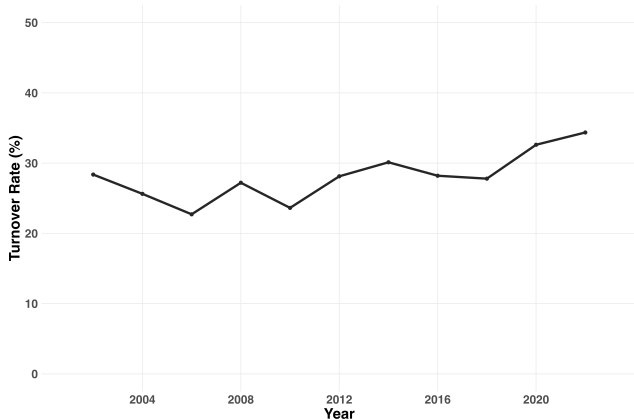
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- Turnover rates have very modestly increased

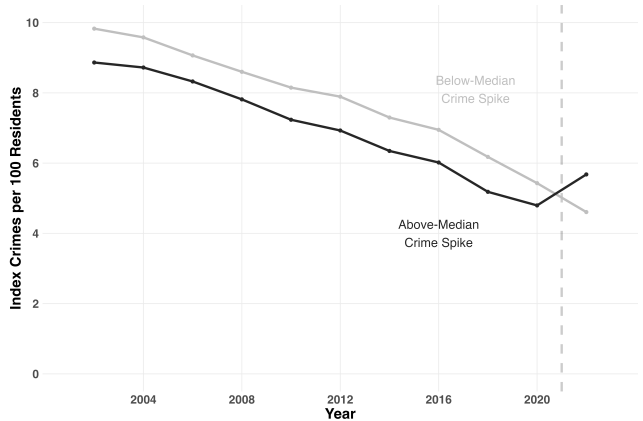


	Turnover	
	(1)	(2)
Crime per Capita	-0.10 (0.25)	-0.10 (0.39)
Lagged Crime per Capita		0.24 (0.39)
Num Municipalities	1,202	1,202
Num Years	11	10
Num Observations	13,222	12,020
Municipality FEs	Yes	Yes
Year FEs	Yes	Yes

Robust errors clustered by municipality reported in parentheses. Data is a balanced panel of municipalities in even years.

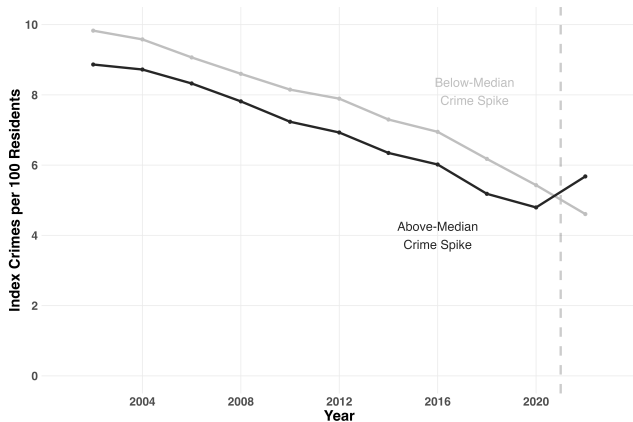
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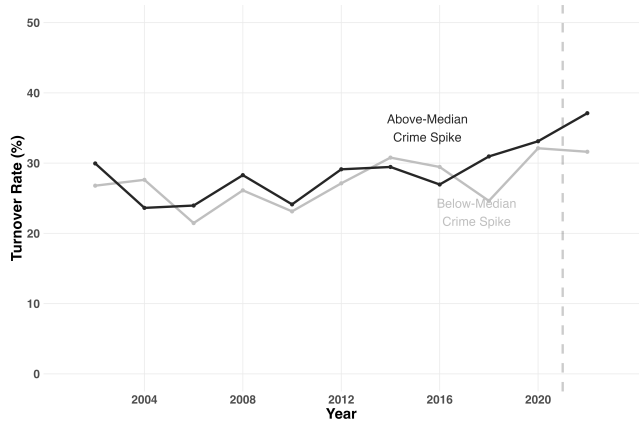
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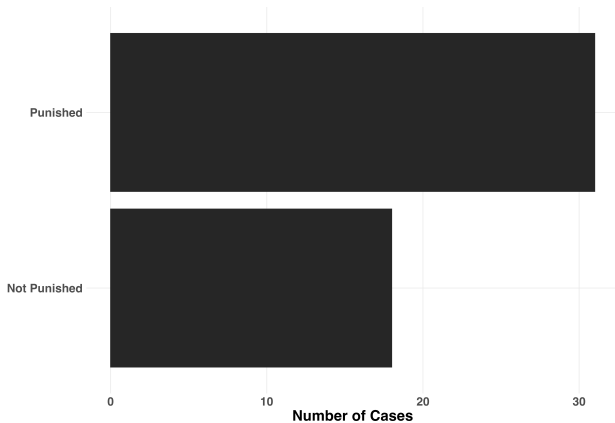
## COVID CRIME SPIKE DID NOT DRAMATICALLY INCREASE TURNOVER

- Crime increased during Covid in a subset of munis
- Split munis by median Covid spike in crime
- No strong evidence for large increase in turnover (fewer than 1 in 20 chiefs, but noisy)



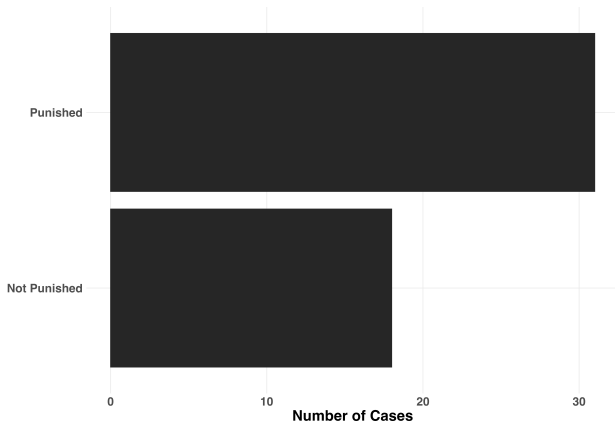
## TURNOVER HIGH ONLY AFTER FORMAL PUNISHMENT

- We reviewed 49 DOJ police dept investigations



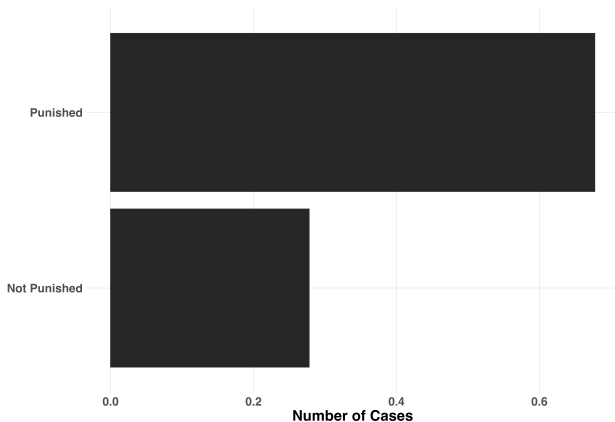
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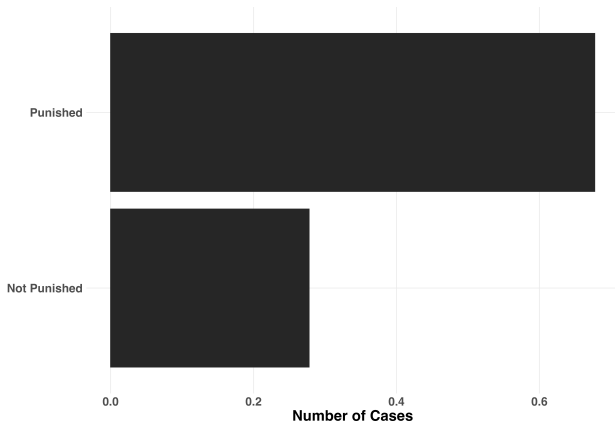
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- We reviewed 49 DOJ police dept investigations
- DOJ punished 60%
- Munis not punished have baseline turnover
- Major difference in turnover for punished cities (68% vs 28%)



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Why does low performance not dramatically increase turnover?

- friction mechanism: large vs small labor markets
- signaling mechanism: local media saturation
- others?



## ARE POLICE LEADERS HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR PERFORMANCE?

New large panel dataset of police performance and leader turnover.

Chiefs not substantially more likely to leave when crime is high vs low

Yet, turnover is higher following DOJ punishment

Suggests there may be barriers to removal

- May weaken incentive for police leaders to perform