

BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

THE COST

OF GUN VIOLENCE

THE DIRECT COST TO TAXPAYERS



The Capital of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, is the state's second most populous city, with 227,470 residents. Located along the Mississippi River north of the Gulf of Mexico, Baton Rouge is home to Louisiana State University and one of the largest oil refineries in the nation.

Following the energy crisis of the 1970s, decreased national demand for oil led to a serious crude surplus that deeply impacted the city's economy. This downturn coincided with a 1981 federal court mandate that forced busing to desegregate the city's public schools, resulting in a mass migration of largely middle-class White residents out of the public school system and out of the city. In 1981 alone, 7,000 White students transferred into private schools.

Baton Rouge's population is now approximately 51% Black, 37% White, 5% Asian, 4% Latino, and 5% two or more races. More than 30%

of Black residents have incomes below the federal poverty threshold, compared to 6% of White residents.

In 1953, Black Baton Rouge residents organized the nation's first large-scale boycott of a segregated bus system. This eight-day boycott would serve as a model for the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott. In 1967, activists marched from Bogalusa to Baton Rouge to raise awareness of violence against Black Americans, covering 105 miles in the longest march of the Civil Rights movement. More recently, in 2016, the death of Alton Sterling at the hands of Baton Rouge police led to mass protests that received national attention and resulted in the arrest of roughly 200 protesters.

Consistent with national trends, Baton Rouge saw sharp increases in gun violence following the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the FBI's 2020 Uniform Crime Report, in 2020, Baton Rouge

ranked as the ninth deadliest city in the US, with a homicide rate of 46.5 per 100,000 residents, compared to a national rate of 6.5 per 100,000 residents.

In response, Mayor-President of the City of Baton Rouge and East Baton Rouge Parish Sharon Weston Broome founded the Baton Rouge Community Street Team (BRCST) in 2021 as part of her comprehensive violence reduction program, Safe Hopeful Healthy BR. Currently being piloted in two zip codes, the BRCST consists of High-Risk Interventionist teams that respond to violent incidents with conflict-mediation tactics to prevent future incidents from occurring; a Community Navigators team charged with connecting those engaged in violence to services and supports in order to restore peace and avoid arrest and incarceration; and a Community Public Safety Round Table designed to engage the community in the public safety process.

When someone is shot in Baton Rouge, there is an immediate, multifaceted, and very expensive response from an array of government agencies. The Fire Department dispatches Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), government-contracted ambulances respond, and several Baton Rouge Police Department (BRPD) units descend on the scene. Investigators from the East Baton Rouge District Attorney's Office also often arrive, and if the victim is declared dead on the scene, the Coroner is called. All of this is only for the shooting scene itself. For a surviving victim, there is also typically a hospitalization, which is frequently paid for by tax dollars. Rehabilitation follows in the case of serious injury, and victim compensation is generally provided. There is also often a lengthy investigation by the Baton Rouge Police Department and the East Baton Rouge District Attorney's Office, who are sometimes joined by the US Attorney. With the BRPD homicide clearance rate at 56% in 2020, a trial and a long incarceration period frequently follow. When there are multiple victims and/or suspects, these efforts and costs multiply for a single shooting incident. These are just some of costs of each injury shooting in Baton Rouge.

The National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) conducted this detailed analysis that documents the government expenses accompanying every injury shooting or homicide in Baton Rouge. In tracking the direct costs per shooting incident, NICJR has deliberately used the low end of the range for each expense. This study does not include the loss-of-production costs when the victim or suspect were working at the time of the incident. Nationally, those costs have been estimated at an additional \$1-2 million for each

shooting incident. This means that the calculated cost of \$1,456,982 for a homicide in Baton Rouge is a conservative estimate; the real cost is likely even higher.

In the past three years, Baton Rouge has averaged approximately 275 combined injury shootings and homicides annually, which cost taxpayers almost \$135 million per year. If Baton Rouge could reduce its gun violence rate by just 20%, that could result in government savings of about \$27 million every year.

The City of Baton Rouge should consider greater upfront investment in violence reduction. As the city experienced, a relatively small investment in effective gun violence intervention strategies can yield significant reductions in shootings, save lives, and produce massive savings.

Greater Community Cost of Gun Violence

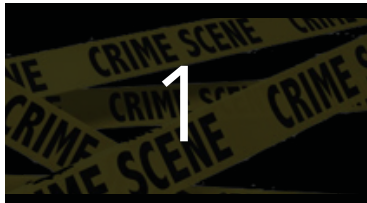
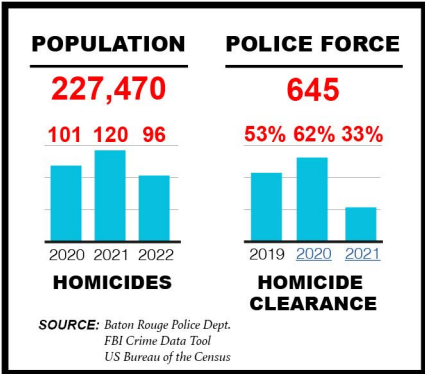
There are significant community costs of gun violence beyond the direct costs included in NICJR's calculations. In addition to the direct financial burden borne by taxpayers, areas with high rates of gun violence experience the loss of community resources and decreases in property values. Businesses, community events, and other vital resources often flee from violent neighborhoods. Further, a recent study by the Controller for the City of Philadelphia examining the economic impact of gun violence on property values found that "a single homicide lowers sale prices by 2.3% in the immediate neighborhood (within 0.75 miles of the homicide)."

Community members in neighborhoods where rates of violence are highest also bear the burden of community tension and trauma. The normalization, or even expectation of violence can lead to high rates of gun possession, tension, and the resolving of minor disputes with gun violence. The public health approach to violence shows that, like disease, violence is a contagion that can breed in areas of social dysfunction. In "The Contagious Spread of Violence Among US Adolescents Through Social Networks," the National Institutes of Health found that "Contagious diseases and violence tend to cluster in similar ways.... There are geographic "hot spots" for contagious diseases, such as the 2015 measles outbreak linked to Disneyland in California involving clusters of unvaccinated children. Likewise, there are geographic hot spots for violent crime on specific streets and in specific neighborhoods."

Finally, children are especially impacted by violence around them. Experiencing violence, witnessing violence, and having close friends or family members victimized by violence produces trauma and vicarious trauma. In the 1990s, the groundbreaking Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) study by the Centers for Disease Control and Kaiser Permanente revealed that children who have traumatic experiences when they are young have significantly higher rates of poor health outcomes as they age. Additional studies have proven that the experience of trauma negatively impacts the brain function of young people and can cause depression, behavioral challenges, academic disruption, and delinquency.



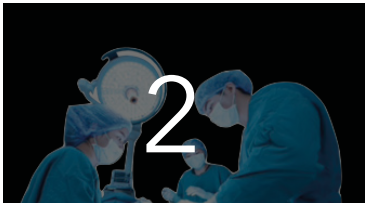
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA COST BREAKDOWN



1

CRIME SCENE RESPONSE

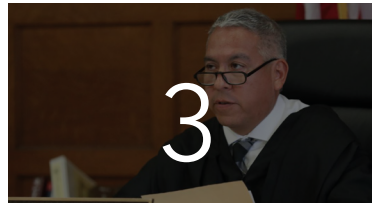
The crime scene response to a severe injury shooting or homicide typically includes a heavy police presence, fire/EMT staff, and medical transport staff. Based on national averages, the Baton Rouge Police Department could deploy up to 15 officers, including patrol, homicide unit personnel, and other supervisory-level officers, to respond to a typical homicide shooting.



2

HOSPITAL & REHABILITATION

Once a victim has been transported to the hospital, the costs of treatment in a trauma unit, surgery, inpatient stay, and rehabilitation are exorbitant. Average costs can range from \$88,000 to \$144,000 per incident. With a little more than 40% of gunshot victims either uninsured or on Medicaid, these costs represent a tremendous strain on Baton Rouge's hospital network.



3

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Justice system costs include police investigation, prosecution and defense attorneys, court personnel and judges, and the use of court facilities. Due to the consequences of a homicide conviction, these cases go to trial more often than other types of cases. Sometimes these cases involve multiple suspects with multiple court dates and separate trials. From the time of arrest, court proceedings in an injury shooting or homicide case average about two years.



4

INCARCERATION

Incarceration accounts for a large portion of the costs once a suspect is arrested. A stay in the East Baton Rouge Parish Jail system costs an average of \$179,580 for the pre-trial incarceration period. Following a trial, an inmate is incarcerated within the Louisiana state prison system at a cost of \$353,392 for those convicted of attempted murder and \$1 million for those convicted of homicide.



5

VICTIM SUPPORT

Many victim support costs are covered by the Louisiana Crime Victim Reparations Board. The surviving victims of homicides get, on average, \$1,393 in compensation to cover costs such as burial expenses, medical expenses, and counseling. Including costs such as autopsies and Social Security benefits increases the total cost for victim support to \$22,493.



6

LOST TAX REVENUE

Louisiana has state income tax of \$950 for people who make \$30,000/year and a sales and use tax of 9.95%. When an injury shooting or homicide occurs, the City loses the ability to collect both income and sales tax from the incarcerated individual(s) and homicide victim(s). Each incident can represent lost tax revenue from a minimum of two individuals for 10 to 25 years.

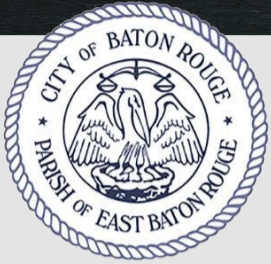


The Cost Per Shooting

The governmental cost of gun violence to the City, County, and State.



BATON ROUGE
LOUISIANA



Homicide Cost

Injury Shooting Cost

CRIME SCENE

\$7,815

\$3,099 Police Response

\$4,000 Scene Cleanup

\$716 Fire/EMT



CRIME SCENE

\$6,732

\$2,016 Police Response

\$4,000 Scene Cleanup

\$716 Fire/EMT

HOSPITAL

\$88,525

\$1,428 ER/Trauma Center

\$87,097 Gunshot Surgery



HOSPITAL

\$144,617

\$1,428 ER/Trauma Center

\$87,097 Gunshot Surgery

\$56,092 Rehabilitation

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

\$45,317

\$7,756 Police Investigation

\$22,773 DA & Public Defender

\$14,788 Court Process



CRIMINAL JUSTICE

\$7,356

\$2,260 Police Investigation

\$4,182 DA & Public Defender

\$914 Court Process

INCARCERATION

\$1,195,582

\$179,580 Pre-Trial Incarceration

\$1,016,002 Prison Placement



INCARCERATION

\$532,972

\$179,580 Pre-Trial Incarceration

\$353,392 Prison Placement

VICTIM SUPPORT

\$22,493

\$2,500 Coroner's Office

\$1,393 Victims of Crime

\$18,600 Social Service Benefits
(one year support for two families)



VICTIM SUPPORT

\$10,693

\$1,393 Victims of Crime

\$9,300 Social Service Benefits
(one year support for one family)

LOST REVENUE

\$97,250

\$97,250 Tax Revenue
(both suspect & murder victim)



LOST REVENUE

\$21,395

\$21,395 Tax Revenue

\$1,456,982

Homicide
Shooting

assuming one suspect

\$723,765

Injury
Shooting

assuming one suspect

Data Sources



BATON ROUGE
LOUISIANA

	Subject:	Police Response	Fire/EMT Transport	Scene Clean Up
CRIME SCENE	Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NICJR National Cost of Gun Violence Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Baton Rouge Parish Fire / EMT Budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fixr Hazmat Cleanup
	Notes	Initial police response to a homicide scene typically includes 6 Patrol, 1 Lieutenant, 2 Sergeants, and 6 Detectives. They remain on scene for 2-6 hours. Initial police response to an injury shooting scene typically includes 6 Patrol, 1 sergeant, and 2 Detectives. They remain on scene for 2-6 hours.	Fire & EMT budget: \$43,452,370 Total responses: 60,664 average Cost per response = \$716	Average cost among competitive vendors to clean up crime scenes involving blood: \$4,000
HOSPITAL	Subject:	Emergency Room/Surgery for Gunshot Victim		
	Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2020 National Trends and Cost Burden of Surgically Treated Gunshot Wounds in the US 2021 Firearm Injuries: Health Care Service Needs and Costs 		
	Notes	Average cost of gunshot victims treated and released the same day: \$1,428 (ER base cost) Average cost of gunshot victims requiring surgery and hospital stay: \$87,097 (surgery cost) + \$56,092 (hospital stay and care) Average cost of gunshot victims requiring surgery, hospital stay, and release to outpatient care: \$144,667 (ER, surgery, rehabilitation) Formula: base cost + surgery cost - 20% of surgery cost = \$70,820 per shooting victim requiring surgery and rehabilitation		
CRIMINAL JUSTICE	Subject:	Police Investigation	District Attorney & Public Defender	Court Process
	Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time estimates from NICJR National Cost of Gun Violence Report East Baton Rouge Parish Employees Salary Schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time estimates from NICJR National Cost of Gun Violence Report East Baton Rouge Parish District Attorney Budget Public Defender Board Employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time estimates from NICJR National Cost of Gun Violence Report Louisiana Legislature
	Notes	The cost of the police investigation is calculated by multiplying the average salary and benefits for officers assigned to the Criminal Investigation division in Baton Rouge by the average amount of time spent investigating homicides and non-lethal shootings. \$27.90/hour X 278 hours = \$7,756 for a homicide \$27.90/hour X 81 hours = \$2,260 for a non-fatal shooting	The cost of prosecution and defense is calculated by multiplying the average amount of time spent by attorneys and support staff by hourly salaries. DA: \$57/hour X 84.1 hours for a homicide = \$4,794 plus support staff costs of \$4,504 = \$9,298 Public Defender: \$49/hour X 236.1 hours for a homicide = \$11,569 plus support staff costs of \$1,906 = \$13,475 DA: \$57/hour X 7.3 hours for a non-fatal shooting = \$416 plus support staff costs of \$271 = \$687 Public Defender: \$49/hour X 60.1 hours for a non-fatal shooting = \$2,945 plus support staff costs of \$550 = \$3,495	The cost to the court system is calculated by multiplying the average amount of time spent by judges and court staff by hourly salaries. Hourly rate for judge, \$81/hour X 48.8 hours for a homicide = \$3,953 Combined hourly rate for court staff, \$55/hour X 197 hours for a homicide = \$10,835 Hourly rate for a judge, \$81/hour X 3 hours for a non-fatal shooting = \$243 Combined hourly rate for court staff, \$55/hour X 12.2 hours for a non-fatal shooting = \$671
INCARCERATION	Subject:	Pre-Trial Incarceration	State Prison: Attempted Murder Case	State Prison: Murder Case
	Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff Financial Report Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Data Dashboard Clearance rate from NICJR National Cost of Gun Violence Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Louisiana State Legislature Corrections Budget FY 21-22 Louisiana Dept. of Corrections Data Dashboard Clearance and conviction rates from NICJR National Cost of Gun Violence Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Louisiana State Legislature Corrections Budget FY 21-22 Louisiana Dept. of Corrections Data Clearance and conviction rates from NICJR National Cost of Gun Violence Report
	Notes	East Baton Rouge Department of Corrections budget: \$108,483,431 Average daily population: 1,210 Average daily cost per inmate: \$245 Average period of pre-trial incarceration: 2 years \$245/day x 2 years = \$179,580	Louisiana Dept. of Corrections annual cost to house an adult: \$44,174 Injury shooting conviction sentence: 10 years, subtracting pretrial time served \$44,174 x (10 years - 2 years) = \$353,392	Louisiana Dept. of Corrections annual cost to house an adult: \$44,174 Murder conviction sentence: 25 years, minus time served \$44,174 x (25 years - 2 years) = \$1,016,002
VICTIM SUPPORT	Subject:	Victims of Crime Act	Social Service Assistance	Medical Examiner's Office
	Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Louisiana Crime Victims Reparation Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USDA SNAP Louisiana TANF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Baton Rouge Coroner's Office East Baton Rouge Coroner Budget NICJR National Cost of Gun Violence Report
	Notes	Homicide Victim: \$10,000 for expenses including burial costs, lost wages, and crime scene cleanup The average award for victims of crime in East Baton Rouge Parish is \$1,393.	A severely injured shooting victim often cannot return to work immediately. Since the victim and perpetrator may be major financial contributors to their households, many families may need to apply for social services support. USDA SNAP = \$535 for family of 3 Louisiana TANF = \$240 for family of 3 This study estimates 1 year of assistance. \$775/month x 12 months x 2 families = \$18,600	East Baton Rouge FY20 Coroner's budget: \$3,302,455 FY20 autopsies conducted: 253 Cost per autopsy = \$2,500 According to NICJR's research, the average national cost for a post-homicide autopsy is \$2,500.
LOST REVENUE	Subject:	Lost Tax Revenue: One Person Incarcerated	Lost Tax Revenue: Murder (Loss of Revenue for Two People)	
	Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2021 Income and Sales Tax 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2021 Income and Sales Tax 	
	Notes	State income tax: 2% for the first \$12,500; 4% for the next \$37,500 Total annual income tax at \$30,000/year: \$950 Sales and use tax (parish and state): 9.95% Total annual sales tax for person earning \$30,000/year and spending 1/3 of income: \$995 Total annual combined tax: \$1,945 Lost tax revenue for a 10-year sentence for attempted murder (\$1,945 x 10 years): \$19,450 If shooting victim does not work for one year, an additional \$1,945 of revenue is lost. Total Lost Tax Revenue = \$21,395	State income tax: 2% for the first \$12,500; 4% for the next \$37,500 Total annual income tax at \$30,000/year: \$950 Sales and use tax: 9.95% Total annual sales tax for person earning \$30,000/year and spending 1/3 of income: \$995 Total annual combined tax: \$1,945 Lost tax revenue for a 25-year sentence for attempted murder (\$1,945 x 25 years): \$48,625 If shooting victim loses their life, then an additional \$48,625 of revenue is lost. Total Lost Tax Revenue = \$97,250	