

Conversation Guide

Public safety and the police

Chicago is known as one of the most violent cities in America. As of April 7, 2019, 72 had been shot, according to the Chicago Tribune's weekly homicide tracker. Yet, data also show that gun violence in our city is at a record low since 2017. Still, the feeling that gun violence is rampant and the controversies over police-involved shootings of recent years have led many Chicagoans to have a complicated perspective on law enforcement.



Chicago's complex relationship with law enforcement

In selecting this topic, your Table will discuss the current state of public safety and our level of trust in the Chicago Police Department. Keep these points in mind:

- As of March 2019, the number of people murdered is down 20 percent compared to last year, from 520 in 2017 to 418 in 2018, according the Chicago Police Department. There's been an 18 percent drop in the number of shooting victims, from 2,217 in 2017 to 1,843 in 2018.

- Between 2010 and 2015, Chicago had 16.4 murders per 100,000 residents.
- The Chicago Plan Commission recently approved \$95 million for a new police and fire training academy.
- Chicago spent more than \$113 million on police misconduct lawsuits in 2018.

Here are some *resources* to assist you as you prepare to discuss public safety and violence prevention in the Chicago area.

- [Infographic analyzing Chicago's national ranking as one of America's most dangerous cities](#)
- [Chicago Police Department's Consent Decree](#)
- [Chicago Police Department's 2019 Strategic Plan](#)

Here are some *suggested questions* for your Table discussion:

1. Do you feel safe in your neighborhood?
2. Do you think the recent CPD Consent Decree will affect real change in the ways the police do their job?
3. What are your main concerns regarding public safety?
4. Talk about your relationship with and trust of police officers, the police department and/or police leadership.
5. Why do you think Chicago has a low-closure (or solving) rate for homicide cases?
6. Have you had a personal experience with a Chicago police officer that you can share with the table?