

Death in Custody Reporting Act (DCRA) Implementation Plan for the State of Ohio

Data Collection Infrastructure

The Policy and Research section of the Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) is responsible for the state's DCRA data collection and reporting. OCJS is housed within the Ohio Department of Public Safety and is the lead criminal justice planning and assistance agency for Ohio. Ohio does not have any state statutory requirements for law enforcement agencies to report in-custody deaths. However, county, and municipal jail deaths are mandated to be reported to the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) per Rule 5120:1-7-01 of the Ohio Administrative Code. The ODRC sends OCJS quarterly reports of jail, community-based correctional facilities, half-way houses, and prison deaths for federal reporting to be completed. The Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS) provides a quarterly report of in-custody deaths as well.

In the state of Ohio, there are:

- 965 Law Enforcement Agencies
- 28 State Prisons (including 3 private prisons)
 - One of the three private prisons holds both federal and state inmates.
- 86 Full-Service Jails
 - 81 County
 - 5 Municipal
- 4 Minimum Security Jails (all are county operations)
- 43 Twelve-Day Jails (all are municipal operations)
- 9 Twelve-Hour Jails (all are municipal operations)
- 19 Community-Based Correctional Facilities
- 3 Juvenile Correctional Facilities (ODYS)
- 3 Juvenile Alternative Community-Based Facilities (ODYS)

Law enforcement agencies do not actively participate in data collection unless OCJS specifically reaches out for information related to deaths in custody. Given this, the following resources are being developed or enhanced to encourage reporting:

- OCJS' [website](#) contains a dedicated DCRA webpage where information is available, including:
 - An overview of DCRA, the importance of reporting, and the reporting requirements.
 - A downloadable, fillable PDF form that can be used to fill out death-in-custody information and submit via email to OCJS.
 - A pre-recorded webinar that covers DCRA, reporting requirements, and submission information (coming soon).
 - Annual Deaths in Custody reports and a data dashboard highlighting arrest-related deaths in Ohio from 2013-2021.
- Two live Q&A sessions will be scheduled for 2023 and 2024 where agencies can ask questions regarding DCRA and reporting. These will be distributed via OCJS email listservs, including the Ohio Collaborative listserv and the Ohio Incident-Based Reporting System listserv, that reach

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- nearly all law enforcement agencies. Agencies will be directed to our dedicated DCRA website and provided with pertinent information around DCRA reporting requirements.
- The monthly OCJS Bulletin provides periodic information on DCRA.

OCJS will provide training and technical assistance to state and local agencies through the information listed on the website, the pre-recorded webinar, and the Q&A sessions.

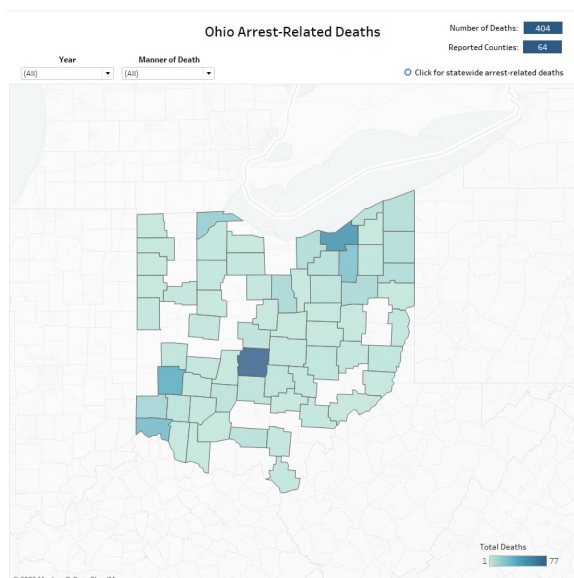
Training and Technical Assistance from BJA is beneficial to OCJS when questions arise about what incidents are/are not reportable to the DCRA program.

Data Collection Methods

Kaitlyn Rines and Anjolie Harland, both social science research specialists, are responsible for DCRA data collection for OCJS.

The data collection cycle begins January 1st and ends December 31st. Researchers at OCJS rely on multiple sources to collect DCRA data; however, media reports are often used for initial identification for arrest-related deaths. Social media and other websites that collect gun violence reports are also utilized to identify deaths in custody. Official autopsy reports are then requested via fax from the appropriate county coroner or medical examiner. Once these reports are received, final incident reports are completed. When necessary, OCJS researchers may also submit a request for an investigative summary from the appropriate law enforcement agency for additional details surrounding the arrest-related death incident. The methods for obtaining death information from local jails and state correctional institutions are different than those for law enforcement agencies. ODRC provides OCJS with quarterly death in custody reports from all correctional institutions (local jails and state prisons) in the state. The Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS) provides a quarterly report as well. These reports contain all the necessary information that DCRA requires for reporting.

The DCRA database that OCJS researchers update is an Access database that mirrors the death in custody reporting requirements, as well as additional information that was previously required by BJS to provide a broader background on ARD incidents. This information is used for Ohio's annual reports and [data dashboard](#). The data dashboard, created via Tableau, is available on the OCJS website and accessible to the public. Incidents are presented at the county level, along with basic demographic information about the subject and details leading up to the death.



Return to select county

Number of Deaths: 404

All Incident Detail for All

Sex of subject	Race/Ethnicity of Subject	Subject use of weapon	Law enforcement force type	Manner of death	
Female	Black or African American	Discharged firearm	Firearm discharge	Homicide	1
		None	None	Homicide	1
		Unknown	Firearm discharge	Homicide	1
		Used other weapon	Firearm discharge	Homicide	1

Reason for Initial Contact

Manner of death	Civilian request for response to criminal/suspicious activity	Civilian request for medical, mental health or welfare assistance	Routine patrol/serve view (other than traffic stop)	Traffic/vehicle stop	Warrant services	Other
Natural	1		1			
Accident	9	1	3	7	4	2
Suicide	72	10	7	11	16	10
Homicide	149	15	19	28	22	14
Could not be determined	2					

Did Subject Attempt to Injure Others?

Law enforcement force type	Yes	No	Unknown
Firearm discharge	120	85	19
Non-lethal bean bag gun		1	
Conducted energy device (taser) contact	4	3	
Pepper/OC spray, mace dispersion		2	
Deployed stop sticks	2	3	1
Tear gas	4	3	

One of the biggest challenges that Ohio faces in collecting and reporting DCRA data is that there is no mandated death in custody reporting for law enforcement agencies. An additional challenge is law enforcement agencies' lack of awareness of DCRA reporting requirements. Our office is in the process of creating materials to support outreach and education on the DCRA program and the DCRA reporting requirements to agencies throughout the state.

Data Reporting Methods

OCJS uses the data import feature in the Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) to upload spreadsheets that contain all necessary reporting measures to report data to BJA. OCJS reviews all incidents that have been collected, verifies all the information via coroner's reports, and cleans the data so that it can be imported successfully using the data import feature.

The following guidelines were created for tracking and updating open and pending investigations.

Guidelines for open/pending investigations:

- All death in custody incidents are entered into OCJS' internal spreadsheet as soon as the office is made aware of the incident. The incident stays open/pending until the final coroner/autopsy report is received and missing information is updated.
- Every 3 months, all open/pending investigations are checked by following up with the coroner's office and media reports to see if there are any status updates.
- Once the final reports from the coroner are received (i.e., demographic and manner of death) for these investigations, the internal database and the PMT are updated accordingly.