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**Lethal Force and Chicago Police Department**

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### **Lethal Force and Chicago Police Department**

The Chicago police officers are known for the habit of using deadly means, according to a report produced by the department of justice in 2017 (Berman & Zapotosky, 2017). Chicago police officers use force to violate the legitimate rights of Chicago citizens, especially Latinos and African Americans (Travers, 2020). For that reason, the Department of Justice (DOJ), while launching a 164-page finding, spotlights the Chicago city that is already struggling with increasing cases of gun violence. Literature aims to discuss the use of deadly force by the Chicago police officers, what happens after such incidents, and how the department reacts to concerns regarding deadly force.

Chicago police officers have been accused of chasing individuals who had little motivation to consider engaging in crime. Furthermore, in most instances, such cases have resulted in fatal shootings (Berman & Zapotosky, 2017). In one instance, officers ran after a man who was said to have jiggled his wrist band. In this case, the Chicago police officers fired 45 bullets at the victim, killing him instantly. Furthermore, despite earlier reports, no gun was found on his body. However, the gun that was retrieved from a nearby block was loaded and unworkable. The actions of the Chicago police are not limited to the fatal shootings alone. In another case, a 16-year-old was struck with a club and dazed with a Taser gun for failing to leave a learning institution when found in possession of a mobile phone, contrary to school regulations. In addition to that, Chicago police officers are also guilty of taking young individuals to different neighborhoods of rival gangs and leaving them there to display them to their rivals, hence endangering their lives by portraying them as informants of the police. In the end, rival gangs have murdered some of these youths in the process, aided by the actions of the Chicago police department (Berman & Zapotosky, 2017). Such cases clearly show a trend about the Chicago

police department regarding the extent to which they resort to deadly force. The trend has been increasing rapidly over the years, hence Americans' overhaul of the entire police recruitment and training process.

In most cases, when the Chicago police officers are involved in the use of deadly force, an internal investigation unit takes over the matter. However, it is very difficult for the department to police its officers in such instances, hence the call for reforms, because certain problems within the police department can only be fixed via the help of an outside entity (Travers, 2020). Furthermore, when investigations are done to ascertain what happened in fatality cases, officers lie to the investigative agencies. Additionally, some police officers cover up for their colleagues instead of telling investigators what happened in cases of fatal shootings. Sometimes investigations fail to determine the true chronology of events, especially where police officers cannot offer information. Nonetheless, the department is always ready to investigate and inform the public of the outcome of their investigations. Where an officer is found culpable, criminal proceedings commence.

The Chicago police division has reacted to concerns about using deadly means by suspending the officers involved. In addition, as much as it is painful to admit, the Chicago police department has previously acknowledged that there is a problem within the department regarding the use of deadly force and measures are being taken to retrain the officers on the use of lethal force (Berman & Zapotosky, 2017). One of the measures is forming a task force to evaluate the department's handling of culpability, oversight, and training. Besides, the department has also made it mandatory for its officers to have their body cameras switched on when responding to any situation. Some officers switch off their body cameras when on duty.

Moreover, the Chicago police department has vowed to pursue reforms and increase transparency.

### References

- Berman, M., & Zapotosky, M. (2017, January 13). *Chicago Police Officers Have a Pattern Of Using Excessive Force, Scathing Justice Dept. Report Says*. The Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2017/01/13/justice-dept-to-announce-results-of-investigation-into-chicago-police/>
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