

Recent notable riots sparked by police actions

1991 – Rodney King riots.

On March 3, 1991, King was caught on tape being beaten by Los Angeles Police Department officers during an arrest on Interstate 210 in Los Angeles.

No charges were filed against the 25-year-old King. On his release he spoke to reporters from his wheelchair, with his injuries evident; a broken right leg in a cast, his face badly cut and swollen, bruises on his body and a burn area to his chest from injuries sustained by a 50,000-volt Taser.

Four officers were eventually tried on charges of use of police brutality.

Three were acquitted, and the jury failed to reach a verdict on one charge for the fourth. Within hours of the acquittals, the 1992 Los Angeles riots started, sparked by outrage among Black Americans and Latinos over the trial's verdict and related, longstanding social issues.

The rioting lasted six days and killed 63 people with almost 2,400 more injured.

2009 – Riots against BART Police shooting of Oscar Grant.

Oscar Grant III, a 22-year-old Black man was fatally shot in the early morning hours of New Year's Day by BART Police Officer Johannes Mehserle in Oakland, Calif.

Mehserle's trial began on June 10, 2010. On July 8, 2010, he was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter and not guilty of the murder and voluntary manslaughter charges.

Though initial protests on July 8, 2010, against the jury verdict were peaceful, after dark there were incidents of looting, arson, destruction of property, and small riots. Reports set the number of arrested at nearly 80 to more than 150 people.

2012 – Anaheim police shooting and subsequent protests.

Violence erupted after the fatal police shooting of Manuel Diaz, 22, who was reportedly unarmed during an alleged drug deal. More than 20 people were arrested during the protests.

2013 – Flatbush, Brooklyn, N.Y. riots.

Following the death of Kimani Gray who was shot and killed by New York Police Department officers.

2014 – Ferguson riots, St. Louis, Mo.

Following the shooting death of Michael Brown by a Ferguson police officer, protests erupt in the streets. Police respond with riot gear, tear gas, sound canons, police dogs, concussion grenades, rubber bullets, pepper balls, wooden bullets, beanbag rounds, Tasers, pepper spray and armored vehicles.

Unrest occurred continuously for weeks in August, and sporadically through December, with nearly daily protests throughout the period and rioting following the non-indictment announcement on Nov 24. Unrest again occurred on the one year anniversary in August 2015, with dozens of arrests.

2014 – St. Louis, Mo. – October, police vehicle windows broken as rage at the killing of Vonderrit Myers Jr. Protests continued for days afterward, during the nearby and ongoing Ferguson unrest.

2014 – New York and Berkeley, Calif. – After prosecutors and a grand jury refused to indict a police officer in the death of Eric Garner, protests erupted in New York City and other cities.

2014 Oakland, Calif. riots.

A series of riots and civil disturbances took place in Oakland and the surrounding area in reaction to the events involving the shooting of Michael Brown and later the death of Eric Garner.

2014 – Berkeley, Mo. Antonio Martin was shot to death by police in a St. Louis suburb nearby to Ferguson, leading to violent conflict with police and looting.

2015 – Baltimore, Md., riots.

Days of protests broke out following the death of Freddie Gray while in police custody. Nearly 35 people were arrested and 15 officers were injured after rioting and looting.

Following Gray's funeral on April 27 further protests and looting occurred.

2015 – St. Louis, Mo., riots.

Conflict with police following fatal shooting by St. Louis police officers of black teenager Mansur Ball-Bey that led to the deployment of tear gas and resulted in burned cars, buildings and looting. Protests continue for several days.

2016 – Multiple city riots.

Widespread protests erupt in response to two deaths of black men at the hands of police. The shooting of Alton Sterling, 37, in Baton Rouge and the shooting of Philando Castile, 32, in a suburb of St. Paul, Minn. that touched off widespread riots.

At least 261 people were arrested in protests in New York City, Chicago, St. Paul, Baton Rouge and other cities.

There were local and national protests, and five months after the death of Castile, The Hispanic police officer was charged with second-degree manslaughter and two counts of dangerous discharge of a firearm.

After five days of deliberation, he was acquitted of all charges on June 16, 2017 in a jury trial.

2016 – Milwaukee riots, Sherman Park, Wis.

Riots erupted by the fatal police shooting of 23-year-old Sylville Smith.

2016 – Charlotte, N.C., riots.

Protests and riots break out in response to the shooting of Keith Lamont Scott by a Charlotte police officer.

2017 – St. Louis, Mo., riots.

Beginning September 15, large protests occurred when police officer Jason Stockley was found not guilty of murder in the shooting death of Anthony Lamar Smith on Dec. 20, 2011.

Windows were broken at Mayor Lyda Krewson's house and in the central west end business district on the first night, many windows were broken in the Delmar Loop. A few windows were broken in downtown before police swept through with teargas and cleared what was considered at the time a largely peaceful march.

Protests and sporadic unrest continued daily for weeks.

2019 – Memphis, Tenn., riots, following the fatal shooting of Brandon Webber by U.S. Marshals.

2020 – Louisville, Ky.

Police Department officers barged into Breonna Taylor's home in the middle of the night during a "no knock warrant" searching for drugs killing the 26-year-old EMT. Officers fired at least 20 rounds striking Taylor eight times. No drugs were found.

Although widespread riots did not occur from Taylor's death the actions of the police did receive condemnation; however, this event has been cited as an accelerant to the most recent civil unrest from the death of George Floyd.

2020 – Nationwide riots.

George Floyd protests, started on May 27 in Minneapolis, Minnesota after the killing of George Floyd. He was allegedly killed in Minneapolis by a police officer. The officer was fired four days later and is facing murder charges. The riots nevertheless has spread across the nation.

To date thousands have been arrested and many injured.

Hundreds of millions of dollars of property have been destroyed or looted with some police stations abandoned and burned by the rioters. National Guard units have been activated in certain states along with the U.S. military despite pushback from several governors and their attorney generals.

Currently, riots continue to occur across the country despite in some cases thousands of protestors breaking more than 25 local curfews in major metropolitan areas.

Sources: U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, www.dw.com., and various national and local news outlets in the affected cities.