

CRIMINALIZATION VS. CARE

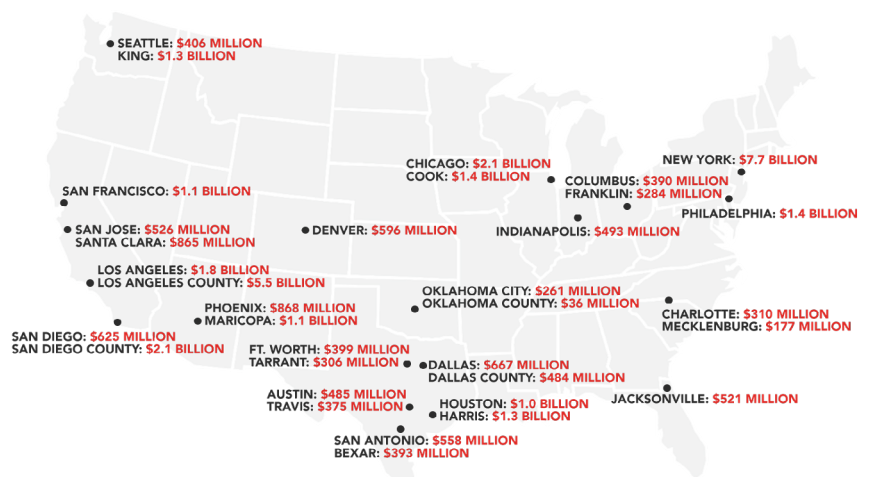
AN IN DEPTH LOOK AT HOW CHICAGO SPENDS PUBLIC FUNDS

Over the past four decades, cities and counties across the country have prioritize policies and practices that have led the US to having both the largest incarcerated population and the highest incarceration rate in the world.ⁱ In this report, we examine the 2022 budgets of the 20 largest US cities and their respective counties (if applicable) to determine whether their investments prioritize the Mass Criminalization System (including the police, prosecutors, and the courts), or Systems of Community Care (mental and behavioral healthcare, affordable housing, parks and recreation, wraparound services for youth and families, and efforts to address climate change). We analyze the size of these public investments, the ratio between them, the cost to local residents, how that translates into the city personnel that residents encounter on a daily basis, and how these dynamics have shifted over time.

Key findings include spending in the billions on the criminal legal system among many of the top 20 cities in the U.S and counties spending in the, with New York City the largest at \$7.7 billion in 2022. In total, these cities and their counties are spending a total of \$37.9 billion on the Mass Criminalization System in 2022 (see Figure 1). 16 out of the 20 cities invest more on the Mass Criminalization System than they do on Systems of Community Care. In some cities, it is as much as 11 times more. In many cities and counties, there are more than 10 times as many criminal legal system employees as there are community care workers.

FIGURE 1
2022 Total Investment into Mass Criminalization System for 20 Largest US Cities and Their Associated Counties (if Applicable)

Source: Local Budgets



TOTAL INVESTMENT INTO SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION FOR THE 20 LARGEST CITIES AND THEIR COUNTIES: \$37.9 BILLION

Sustaining the Mass Criminalization System is extremely costly for local taxpayers. For example, in each of the cities, the amount of local dollars being spent in 2022 on the criminal legal system is between \$902 and \$2,826 per household. Average local spending on the criminal legal system at the county level is another \$115 to \$1,442 per household. The following section is an analysis of the vast funding disparities between systems of criminalization vs systems of community care in the city of Chicago.

ⁱ *World Prison Brief*, accessed August 29, 2022, <https://www.prisonstudies.org/highest-to-lowest/prison-population-total>.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

CRIMINALIZATION / CARE RATIO:

7.1 : 1



OUT OF EVERY **\$100** IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON EITHER A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION** OR A **SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY CARE** IN 2022, **\$88** WENT TO A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION**.

SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

\$1.9 BILLION

\$1,745

14,481

CATEGORY

LOCAL INVESTMENT: 2022

LOCAL INVESTMENT PER CITY HOUSEHOLD: 2022

TOTAL EMPLOYEES: 2022

SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

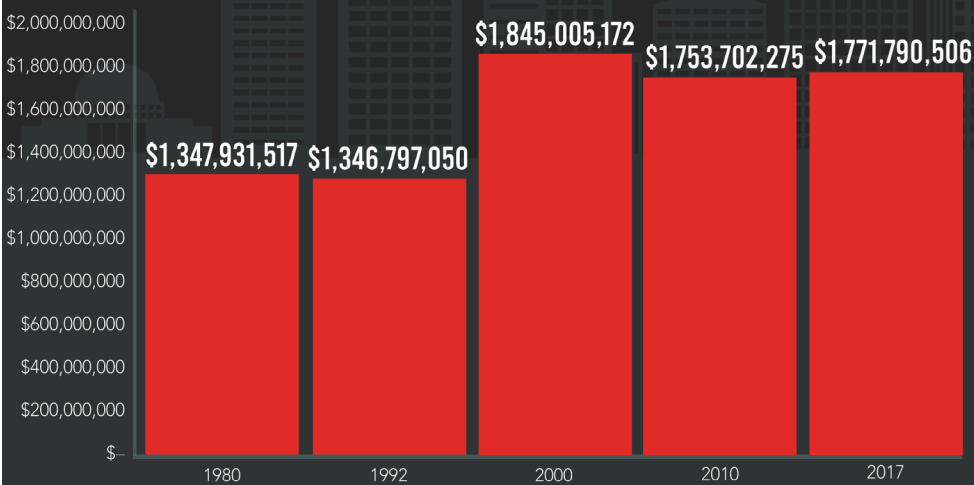
\$265 MILLION

\$245

1,474

CHICAGO CRIMINAL LEGAL SPENDING: 1980-2017

(ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION, IN 2022 DOLLARS)



EVEN AFTER ADJUSTING FOR INFLATION, **SPENDING** ON THE **CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM** IN **CHICAGO** HAS **INCREASED BY 31% SINCE 1980**.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION?

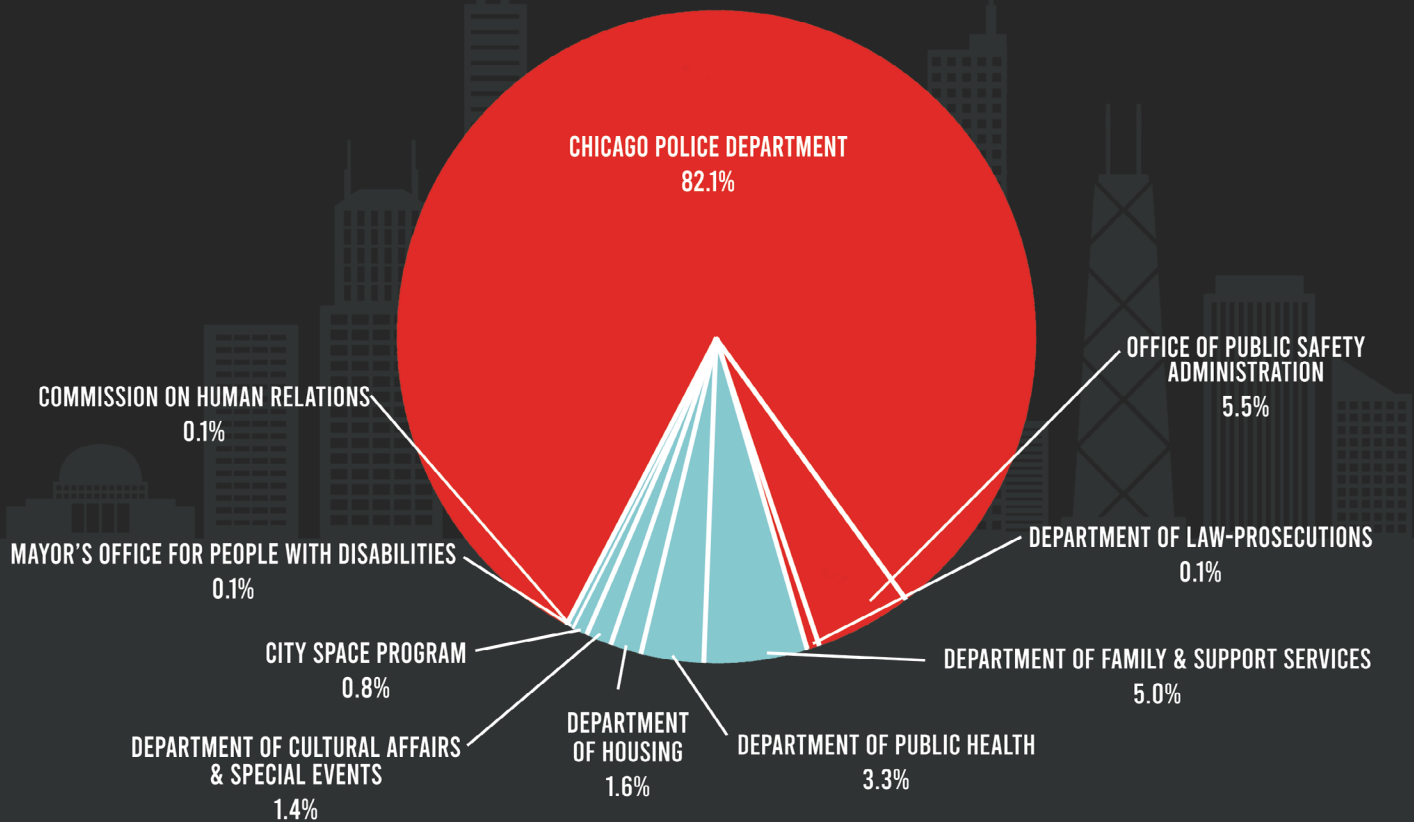
ALL ASPECTS OF THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM, INCLUDING:

- Police and sheriff's departments
- Prosecutor's departments
- Correctional departments
- Court systems
- Probation departments
- Youth probation and detention
- Other criminalization-centered departments

WHAT ARE THE 8 ESSENTIAL SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE?

- Mental, behavioral, and community health and well-being
- Wraparound supports for youth and families
- Affordable housing and community empowerment
- Environmental sustainability
- Parks and recreation
- Arts and culture
- Equity-focused systems
- Community-based alternatives to criminalization and incarceration

CHICAGO 2022 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION AND SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE



INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Chicago Police Department	\$1.8 billion	\$1.9 billion	14,102
Office of Public Safety Administration	\$117.3 million	\$172.9 million	354
Department of Law-Prosecutions	\$2.6 million	\$2.6 million	25
TOTAL	\$1.9 BILLION	\$2.1 BILLION	14,481

INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Department of Family & Support Services	\$108.1 million	\$910.6 million	414
Department of Public Health	\$71.9 million	\$1.0 billion	835
Department of Housing	\$34.1 million	\$380.1 million	92
Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events	\$29.2 million	\$71.2 million	78
City Space Program	\$17.6 million	\$19.2 million	0
Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities	\$2.5 million	\$7.9 million	36
Commission on Human Relations	\$1.2 million	\$2.9 million	19
TOTAL	\$265 MILLION	\$2.4 BILLION	1,474

Scan the QR code to read the full report:



For more information, please contact Jessica Estrada at Jessica@communitiesunited.org

