

## **Crime in New York City during the Covid19 Pandemic**

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In March of 2020 the Covid-19 virus had rapidly spread throughout the world with hundreds of thousands new cases emerging daily and many of them losing their lives. Governments proceeded to shut down unnecessary businesses and putting on temporary hold non-essential operations as well as workers.

While by the last quarter of 2018 there was an upward trend in reported violent crimes which continued all throughout 2019 without having a serious impact on New Yorker's daily lives, then 2020 arrived and the percentages skyrocketed with violent crimes leading the way.

Citizens have been putting the blame on the City and State officials like Governor Cuomo and City's Mayor DeBlasio since in 2020 the murder rate alone rose by 47% from the previous year with a total 468 people killed, while on the second quarter of 2021 it's up already by a 17% from the previous year (2020). During a pandemic in which people don't have a reason to be outside of their houses past a certain time or with lockdowns in full effect one might theorize that crime would be reduced, but on the other hand a city in which unemployment is steadily rising reaching almost half a million in summers of 2020 and 2021 (589,227 and 407,282) in addition with strict government control has taken a toll on the psychology of people and criminals have found the opportunity to use it as their advantage.

One major reason of these extremely high crime numbers is the fact that due to the pandemic the New York Department of Corrections decided to free criminals from incarceration in an effort towards protecting the rest of the inmates as well as their staff from contracting and spreading the virus.

As of October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the DCCS is reporting: 6101 confirmed cases of covid-19 on their staff population, 6868 confirmed cases on their incarcerated population and 449 confirmed cases on their parolees, out of these cases 6759 are now fully recovered and out of medical isolation.

Unfortunately, their staff population had 13 confirmed deaths, their incarcerated population 35 and their parolees 9.

Amid to these scares the Department of Corrections under Governor Cuomo's and Mayor DeBlasio's authorities have been releasing inmates from prisons that serve the broader New York City area and its boroughs as well as not allowing the police departments to process arrests for some crimes. Most of the prisoners already released for covid-related issues have been arrested for more serious crimes in the following days, weeks and months following their release, which shows a continuous pattern of delinquency, opportunism and endangerment of the city's civilians.

During 2020 and early 2021 of course there was the issue of multiple daily protests for George Floyd's death which led to multiple arrests by the NYPD since often charges would include: attack to an officer, distraction of public property, looting and more. Adding up to a never previously observed and extreme 97% increase in shootings from the previous year and a 45% addition to murders with most occurring from mid-May to end of September, clearly there is something more to be said and another factor to be examined other than covid related restrictions.

Based on the statistics and analysis of the previously mentioned crime reports it is obvious that during the years of 2020 and 2021 in which the Covid Pandemic started

and is still ongoing the crime in New York City has skyrocketed to very high levels over a very short period with local Law Enforcement not being able to control or decrease the numbers of violent crimes in their respected jurisdictions, all while the state's leaders are trying to cut down on law enforcement budget, state orders for releasing prisoners, state orders for not processing petty crimes arrests, police officers objecting local mandates and others being forced to early retirement or seeking better positions in different state organizations.

As the Covid-19 pandemic is evolving new laws and regulations are starting to appear and take effect which would be interesting to see the effects it will have on the city and its boroughs crime statistics as well as the New York City residents in the long term.

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