



**City of Philadelphia
Office of the City Controller**

For immediate release: Wednesday, January 19, 2022
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**Office of the City Controller Data Release: Gun Violence Clearance Rates and
Illegal Gun Case Outcomes**

Philadelphia, PA – As part of its ongoing work to address Philadelphia’s gun violence crisis, the Office of the City Controller released an analysis of gun crime trends from 2015 through 2020 specifically reviewing Philadelphia Police Department clearance rates for fatal and non-fatal shooting incidents and the District Attorney’s Office conviction rates for violations of the Uniform Firearms Act (VUFA), which addresses illegal gun possession.

“2021 was the deadliest year in Philadelphia’s recorded history – and the violence is seemingly continuing into 2022 with 32 homicide victims just 19 days into the new year. Things have to change. All Philadelphians deserve to feel safe,” said City Controller Rebecca Rhynhart. “Since 2019, my office has focused on the city’s gun violence crisis, recommending intervention work and service delivery that is key to reducing the violence. In addition to critical prevention strategies, we also must look at enforcement and what must be fixed in our criminal justice system. This data release analyzes gun crime outcomes and identifies some concerning trends over the past several years. Clearance rates, or arrest rates by Police, for fatal and non-fatal shootings have declined and are way too low. Illegal gun possession arrests are up, but conviction rates by the District Attorney’s Office for those crimes are down. We need to fix these issues to make our city safer.”

Key takeaways:

- The Philadelphia Police Department increased arrests for fatal and non-fatal shootings since 2015, however the share of cases cleared by the police declined over the same period, largely due to the increase in shootings overall.
- In 2020, the Philadelphia Police cleared 37% of fatal shootings and 19% of non-fatal shootings.
- The Police Department increased arrests for illegal gun possession by more than 100% between 2015 and 2020. However, the conviction rates for illegal gun possession cases

prosecuted by the District Attorney's Office decreased significantly, from 65% in 2015 to 42% in 2020.

- The District Attorney's Office has identified arrests stemming from vehicle stops as a potential cause for the decline in conviction rates for VUFA cases. The Controller's Office analysis shows that convictions are down across all stop types in recent years, not just vehicle stops.

[View the full data release here.](#)

In addition to the data release, an op-ed about what needs to change to create a safer city penned by Controller Rhynhart was published by the Philadelphia Tribune on Sunday. [Read the op-ed here.](#)