

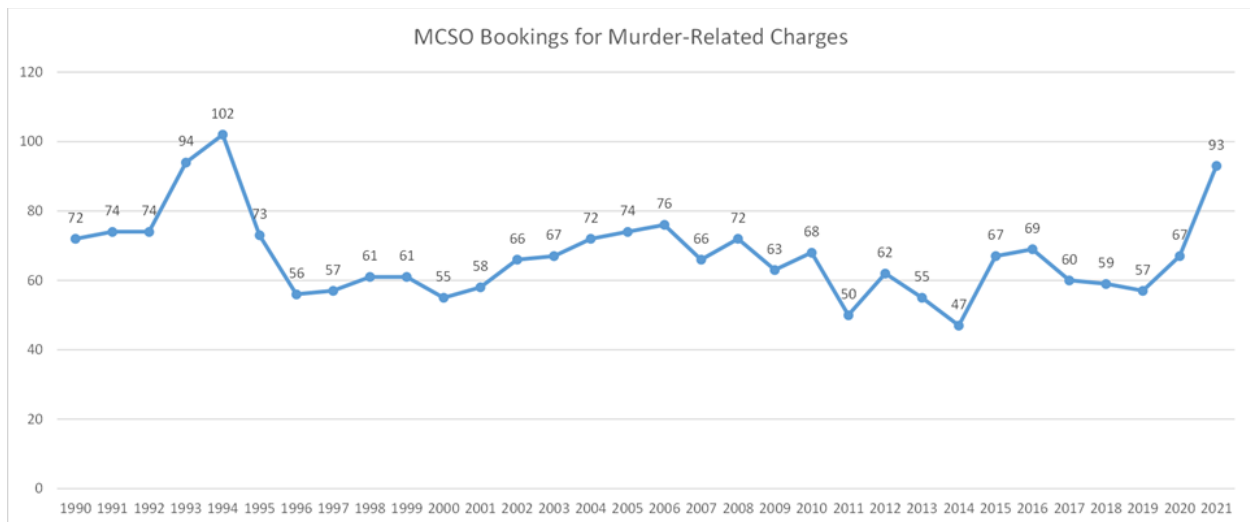
Open letter to the community from Sheriff Mike Reese on violent crime, jail booking data

As Multnomah County Sheriff, and as a resident of Portland, I continue to be deeply concerned about current trends in community violence.

At the start of April, there were 102 people in our county jails currently held on murder-related charges. This includes murder, aggravated murder, attempted murder, and murder-domestic violence. The last time numbers were this high was in 1994, when Portland's homicide rate reached historic highs.

The dramatic rise in murder-related bookings began in 2020 with a marked increase in 2021. Calendar year 2021 was the highest single year-to-year increase seen in the county since 2015 and 1994 (see figure 1). So far in 2022, there have been 28 bookings for these types of crimes. At the current rate, Multnomah County is on pace to tie, if not surpass the mark in 2021.

Figure 1:



Over the same period, the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) has seen a steady increase in the number of individuals charged with at least one Ballot Measure 11 crime (see figures 2 and 3). This means our jail system is quickly filling up with people who are accused of the most serious offenses. As of this past Wednesday, approximately half the county jail population is comprised of pre-adjudicated individuals held on Ballot Measure 11 crimes.

Figure 2:

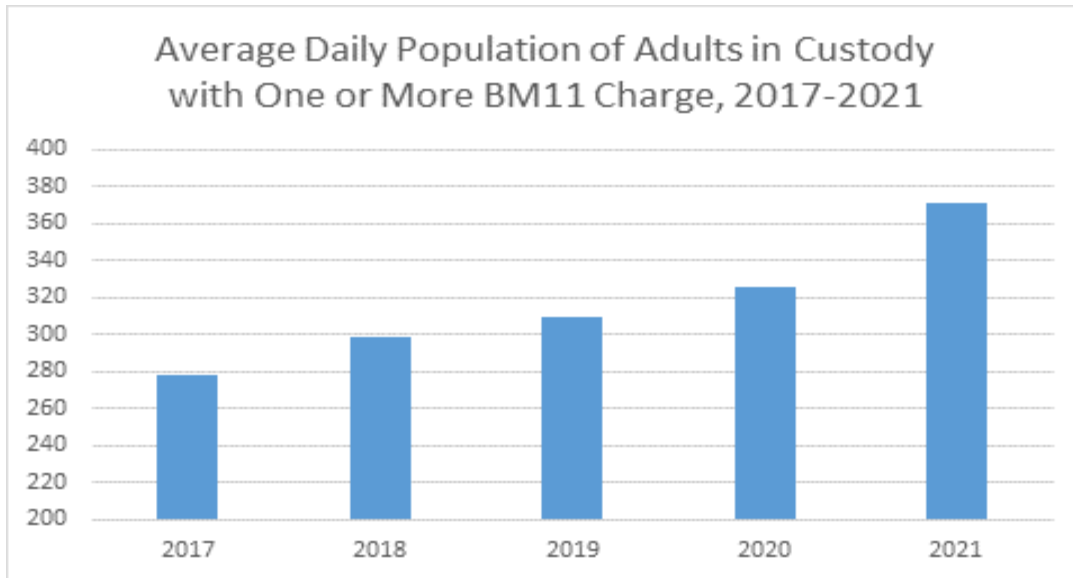


Figure 3:

Year	Annual BM11 Average Daily Population
2017	278
2018	299
2019	309
2020	326
2021	371

Sadly, the data reflects the rising violence we are experiencing in our communities, including gun violence. This is not the only serious threat to public safety, however. Record-high levels of traffic fatalities and overdose deaths are jeopardizing personal safety and devastating families and social support networks.

We have a collective responsibility to do something. Solutions will necessarily include a wide umbrella of programs and services from across the community. My focus is public safety. In addition to the many steps taken already, I believe there are several actions we could take to change the trajectory on gun violence, traffic fatalities, neighborhood livability and overdose deaths.

- Increase gun dispossession efforts and remove firearms from individuals prohibited by law from possessing them.
- Engage in focused traffic enforcement in high-crash corridors to reduce reckless and impaired driving. Base the deployment strategy on time-of-day and day-of-

the-week when traffic fatalities and gun violence are most likely to occur and overlap.

- Create and fully staff multi-disciplinary teams of responders using our successful Homeless Outreach & Programs Engagement (HOPE) team model to address livability concerns.
- Increase accessibility to funding for neighborhood and community groups helping to reduce justice-involvement among youth and communities of color.
- Increase resources for specialty teams, similar to MCSO's Special Investigations Unit, focused on investigating criminal organizations– that are flooding the community with illegal firearms, methamphetamine, heroin and fentanyl.

We need to act with a sense of urgency. Summer is approaching, a time when we typically experience increased violence in our community. Violent crime, traffic fatalities and overdose deaths are already at historic high rates. Without action, we can expect worse to come.

Mike Reese

Multnomah County Sheriff