

Ten thousand people have been arrested across the US as protests against police violence continue to expand

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More than 10,000 people have been arrested in the US during the protests against police violence as of Thursday, the tenth day of demonstrations in a row since George Floyd was murdered by Minneapolis police on Memorial Day.

In a tally taken of recorded arrests across the country, the Associated Press reported that the number of protesters arrested has grown by the hundreds each day. The news agency reported that one quarter of the arrests have been made in Los Angeles followed by New York City, which has 2,000 arrests, Dallas, and Philadelphia.

The AP analysis also showed that the majority of the arrests are for “low-level offenses such as curfew violations and failure to disperse.” Exposing as false the claims by President Donald Trump and Democratic politicians such as Minnesota Governor Tim Walz that the majority of the protesters are outside agitators, AP reported that, during a 24-hour period over the weekend in Minneapolis, “41 of the 52 people cited with protest-related arrests had Minnesota driver’s licenses.”

Additionally, in the US capital, AP reported, “86 percent of the more than 400 people arrested as of Wednesday afternoon were from Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia.”

The actual number of those detained by law enforcement is unknown. “The protesters are often placed in zip-ties and hauled away from the scene in buses,” the report said, “at a time when many of the nation’s jails are dealing with coronavirus outbreaks.”

New York County Supreme Court Justice James Burke ruled on Thursday against a writ filed by New York’s Legal Aid Society and refused to release anyone held longer than 24 hours between arrest and arraignment. While New York courts stipulate that those in custody over 24 hours are entitled to release, Judge Burke ruled that the pandemic and mass protests were a “crisis within a crisis” and the New York City Police Department had thereby provided justification for the delays.

The historically unprecedented protests—in the face of arrests and ongoing police assaults with tear gas, rubber bullets, flash grenades and other “non-lethal crowd control munitions”—continued to expand across the country on Thursday. According to a summary published by *USA Today*, protests have been reported by local news media in 584 cities and towns across all 50 states, and as well as the territories of Puerto Rico and Guam.

In **New York City**, thousands of protesters marched from a memorial service for George Floyd in Brooklyn—which featured the first public appearance of George’s brother Terrance Floyd—across the Brooklyn Bridge into Manhattan. The assembled crowd expressed hostility by turning their back on Democratic Mayor Bill de Blasio, drowning him out and forcing him to cut his remarks to 90 seconds at the memorial, as they chanted, “I can’t breathe,” “resign” and “defund the police.”

Protesters were particularly angry about the baton assault by police on Wednesday night against those who remained on the street past the 8:00 p.m. curfew. On Thursday morning, both de Blasio and Democratic Governor Andrew Cuomo defended the violent actions of the police, which had been captured on video and seen widely across social media. Amid the melee, two police officers were shot and one was stabbed in the neck in Brooklyn.

Unlike the night before at the Manhattan Bridge, New York City police did not attempt to block demonstrators from entering the bridge, as the crowd swarmed both the northern land side and the pedestrian walkway. According to a report in the *New York Times*, “Drivers in the opposite lane honked horns and raised fists in shows of support.”

Protests in **Washington, DC** continued on Thursday near Lafayette Square and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, while many rallied near the DC/Maryland border. Earlier in the day, Washington, DC’s Democratic Mayor Muriel Bowser lifted the 11:00 p.m. curfew, citing the fact that there had been no arrests the previous day. Bowser has adapted

herself to the stationing of federal troops in the city, merely demanding that non-DC troops leave.

Meanwhile, military vehicles and police expanded the perimeter around the White House on Thursday, erecting tall metal fencing and putting in concrete barricades in preparation for what is expected to be a mass protest on Saturday.

According to a statement by the US Secret Service, “The areas, including the entire Ellipse and its side panels, roadways and sidewalks, E Street and its sidewalks between 15th and 17th streets, First Division Monument and State Place, Sherman Park and Hamilton Place, Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th streets, and all of Lafayette Park, will remain closed until June 10.”

Demonstrations took place in multiple locations in the **Chicago** area on Thursday, including several hundred protesters who marched from Lincoln Park High School to Whitney Young High School three miles away on the north side of the city. Other protests took place in the northern suburbs of Evanston, Grayslake and Zurich Lake.

Chicago Democratic Mayor Lori Lightfoot declined to answer questions at a press conference regarding a high-speed police chase on Wednesday evening that resulted in the death of a female motorist as well as two other incidents of police violence. One was at Brickyard Mall parking lot, where officers were caught on video pulling two women out of their vehicle and brutalizing them, with an officer kneeling on the neck of one of the two while she was on the ground. In another video, an officer is seen chasing down and punching a protester in Uptown on Monday night.

Tensions were high in **New Orleans** on Thursday evening, following the events of the previous night in which the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) used tear gas to disperse a large group of protesters who marched onto the interstate from downtown New Orleans and headed for the Crescent City Connection bridge to cross over into the West Bank, Jefferson Parish. The Jefferson Parish police are notorious for their brutality and cruelty, known to be openly racist and blatantly abusive.

NOPD Superintendent Shaun Ferguson defended the repressive actions at a press conference on Thursday morning, showing social media videos of the confrontation and claiming that rubber bullets were not used on the crowd, although this was disputed by protesters. When asked about plans for Thursday evening, Ferguson said, “We don’t know what they’re planning to do tonight.”

Despite rain, protesters gathered in **Orlando, Florida** for a fifth night in a row on Thursday. They assembled downtown near City Hall and prepared to march to the headquarters of the Orlando Police Department, where a dozen officers wearing helmets and carrying shields were reportedly

waiting. On Wednesday night, tear gas was used after a crowd at City Hall of approximately 2,000 people began moving through downtown and violated a previously announced 8:00pm curfew.

Protests continue to grow in size and scope throughout the **San Diego** area, with many held Thursday in smaller cities and suburbs in addition to the downtown protests, which included over 2,000 people. Cities such as Chula Vista, Oceanside, Julian, North Park, Carlsbad, Encinitas, La Mesa and Santee held protests in the hundreds.

In the growing downtown protests, police and national guardsmen kettled in protesters and shot rubber bullets and tear gas indiscriminately into crowds. Just the day before, at least 200 armed National Guardsmen arrived in San Diego following a request from San Diego Sheriff Gore. After Wednesday’s protests, the San Diego police chief announced a ban on chokeholds.

San Diego County is home to the largest military and naval base in the US. Stoked up by Trump and the brutality of the state’s response, some right-wing and white nationalist groups have been organizing in cities such as Santee and Carlsbad to join police and engage in violence against protesters. These small groups, however, represent a tiny fraction compared to the thousands who continue to take to the streets throughout the county.

In an example of the spread of protests across the US, hundreds of people demonstrated at the downtown parking garage in **Grand Forks, North Dakota**, 80 miles north of Fargo, and marched through the downtown area, as organizer Kollin King shouted over a bullhorn, “What’s his name?” and the crowd yelling back, “George Floyd.” The demonstration stopped briefly near the Red River and then continued on past its previously agreed-on route.



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