

NEW ORLEANS CRIME COALITION

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Media Contact:

Anna Corin Koehl, BMF

akoehl@bmfcomms.com

o: 504-524-3342 | c: 504-491-7224

New Orleans Crime Coalition Releases Annual NOPD Citizen Perception Study

Citywide survey finds that growing majorities of New Orleans residents do not feel the city is safe, but most remain satisfied overall with the New Orleans Police Department

New Orleans, LA (June 29, 2021) – Seventy-four percent of New Orleans residents believe the crime problem in the city has gotten worse over the last year, according to the latest annual survey conducted by the New Orleans Crime Coalition (NOCC). The survey, conducted by Fauchaux Strategies, LLC from June 11-17 was designed to measure public perception of the performance of the New Orleans Police Department and resident opinions and concerns regarding crime in the City.

Designed to track trends over time in how New Orleans residents view the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD), the study is based on a representative sample of 800 adult residents of New Orleans with a margin of error of +/- 3 percent. The survey was conducted by live telephone interviewers via cell and landlines.

KEY FINDINGS:

- **Satisfaction rating:**
 - Satisfaction with the NOPD is down five points at 52 percent since 2020; as in past years, black residents (51%) and white residents (52%) expressed similar views.
 - As in the 2020 survey, there is a noticeable generational divide with only 37 percent of residents 18-44 years of age satisfied with the NOPD as opposed to 58 percent of those 45 years and older.
 - 63 percent of residents say they are satisfied with the NOPD's work in their own neighborhood. Neighborhood satisfaction is highest in the Lakeview/Mid-City area (79%) and lowest in the New Orleans East and Gentilly/Lower 9 areas (55%).
- **Majorities say city is not safe:**
 - Only 35% of survey respondents say that citywide, New Orleans is safe. That percentage represents a steep 22-point drop since the 2020 survey.
 - Since the 2020 survey, the perception that "your own neighborhood" is safe also declined 7 points from 81 percent to 74 percent.
 - 74 percent of residents believe the crime problem in New Orleans has gotten worse over the past year.
- **NOPD task performance ratings:**
 - Since the 2020 survey the excellent + good ratings for "responding to emergency calls" and "patrolling neighborhoods" each dropped a substantial nine points (34% to 25% for the former, 29% to 20% for the latter).

- While positive ratings in other categories, such as car thefts and break-ins, declined only slightly since the 2020 survey, current ratings remain low. For example, only 11% of city residents rate positively the NOPD's performance investigating and solving car thefts and break-ins and 85% rate it negatively.
- **Police brutality and misconduct:**
 - While more New Orleans residents think police brutality and misconduct has decreased than increased over the past few years (29% vs. 14%), most residents think it has remained the same at 47 percent.
 - More Blacks than Whites think it has increased (18% vs. 9%).

Based on the survey findings, the dip in overall citizen satisfaction with the NOPD since the 2020 survey has been modest, even though public concerns with crime and safety have dramatically increased. The NOPD satisfaction rating has ranged from 51 percent in 2017 to 57 percent in 2020 compared to 52 percent in 2021.

Interestingly, 24 percent of the citizens who say the city is not safe also say they are satisfied with the NOPD. A random sampling of 20 in-depth interviews concluded respondents do not believe the NOPD is solely responsible for making the city safe and do not blame the department for the rise in crime.

“We are at a crossroads and in order to turn the corner, the city must take specific actions such as increasing the NOPD’s budget for officer retention and recruitment and enhancing crime-fighting technologies, to stop violent crimes and protect the public,” said Loyola University’s Dr. Michael Cowan, chairman of the Crime Coalition. The NOPD has not seen a budget increase since 2018.

“While crime is an issue nationally, every locale is different,” said Cowan. “This independent scientific study was designed as a tool for the NOPD, city leadership, and the public to come together to make our city safer. There is no stronger call to action than the genuine sentiments of Orleans Parish residents, as revealed in their opinions in this survey. Violent crime is surging in New Orleans; political, business, civic, and religious leaders, must step up together and show our men and women behind the shield that we stand with them.”

THE REPORT

Since 2009, NOCC has conducted an independent analysis of citizens’ perceptions of the NOPD with the strong conviction that a regular public spotlight on how citizens perceive the police department will help identify areas of concern and inspire positive changes within NOPD that will build trust between citizens and the police department, and ultimately make New Orleans streets safer.

The Greater New Orleans Foundation and GNO, Inc. donated funding for the 2021 NOCC study.

Interviews were conducted by live, professionally trained telephone interviewers. Fauchaux Strategies, an independent and nonpartisan survey firm based in New Orleans and headed by Ron Fauchaux, who served for 12 years as president of Clarus Research Group, a polling company located in Washington, D.C., conducted the survey. Neither firm works for New Orleans city government or the NOPD.

To download NOCC’s 2021 NOPD Citizen Satisfaction Survey analysis, visit www.neworleanscrimecoalition.org. Additional questions related to policymaking and issue priorities

were asked at the end of the survey. Those results will be published on July 7th at www.neworleanscrimecoalition.org.

About the New Orleans Crime Coalition

Since its founding in 2007, the organizations of the NOCC have communicated and coordinated in obtaining addition federal funding local criminal justice agencies; monitoring the expenditure of those funds; seeking improved cooperation between the District Attorney's office and NOPD; supporting the creation of an independent NOPD monitor; obtaining city funding for the Orleans Public Defenders Office for the first time; promoting the practice of community policing; influencing the public debate on the proper size of the Orleans Parish Prison; and creating one integrated computer-based information management system for the local criminal justice system.

Members of the New Orleans Crime Coalition include The Business Council of New Orleans and the River Region, Common Good, Citizens for 1 Greater New Orleans, Urban League of Greater New Orleans, Crimestoppers, Metropolitan Crime Commission, New Orleans Police and Justice Foundation, Court Watch NOLA, Young Leadership Council, Bridge House, New Orleans & Company, Youth Empowerment Project and the New Orleans Family Justice Center.

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