

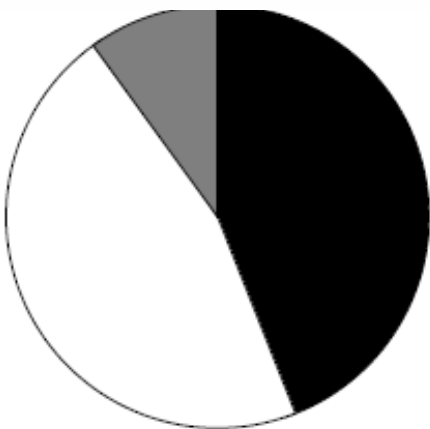


Racial Disparity in the Charles County Justice System 2016-2020

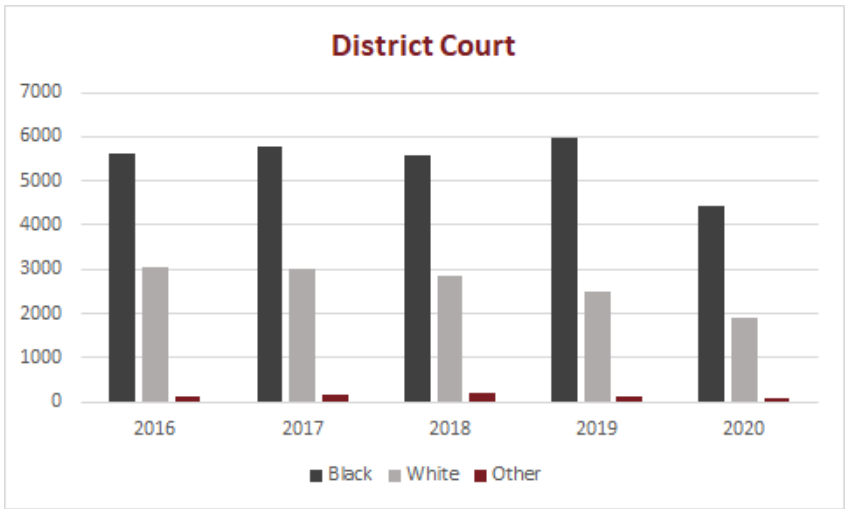
Demographic Information

44.4%
Black or African American

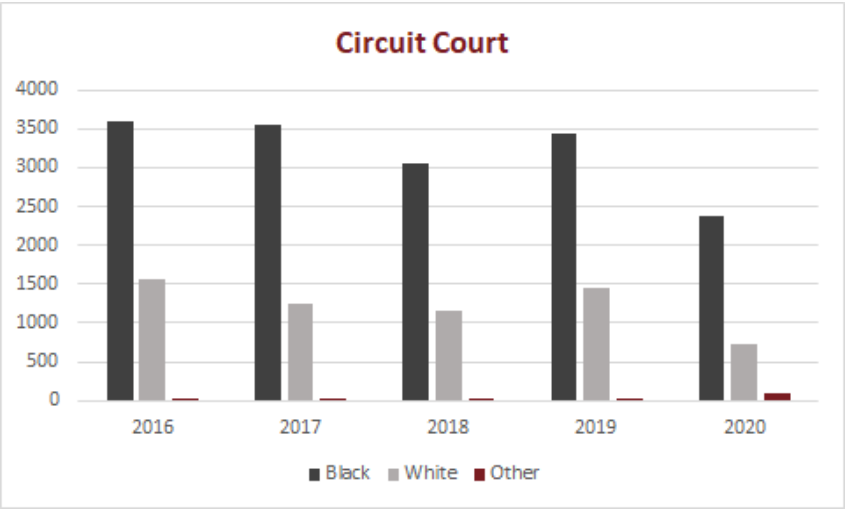
45.8%
White



Total Charges by Court, Year, and Race



Nearly half of Charles County is white. Yet since 2016, a significantly higher number of charges have been brought against Black defendants. Between 2016 and 2020 charges brought against black people accounted for 66.2% of all charges.

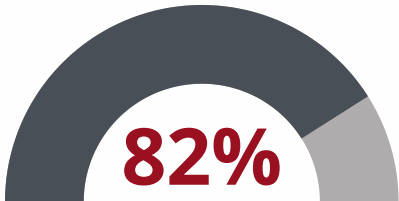


The Circuit court has less cases, but **the number of charges brought against Black people** (16,021 or 71.8% of all charges brought in the circuit court) **is more than twice the amount of charges brought against white people in the circuit court** (6,123 or 27.4%).

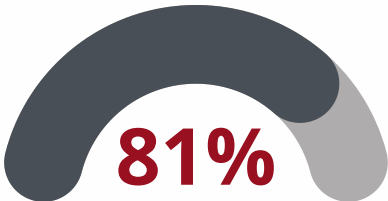
Black people in Charles County are charged far more often than white people.

Top Charges in Charles County

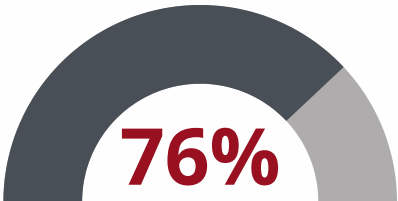
As depicted by the graphs above, Black citizens are charged at a noticeably higher rate than White citizens. Charges for Second Degree Assault, First Degree Assault, and Disorderly Conduct present the most racially disparate results.



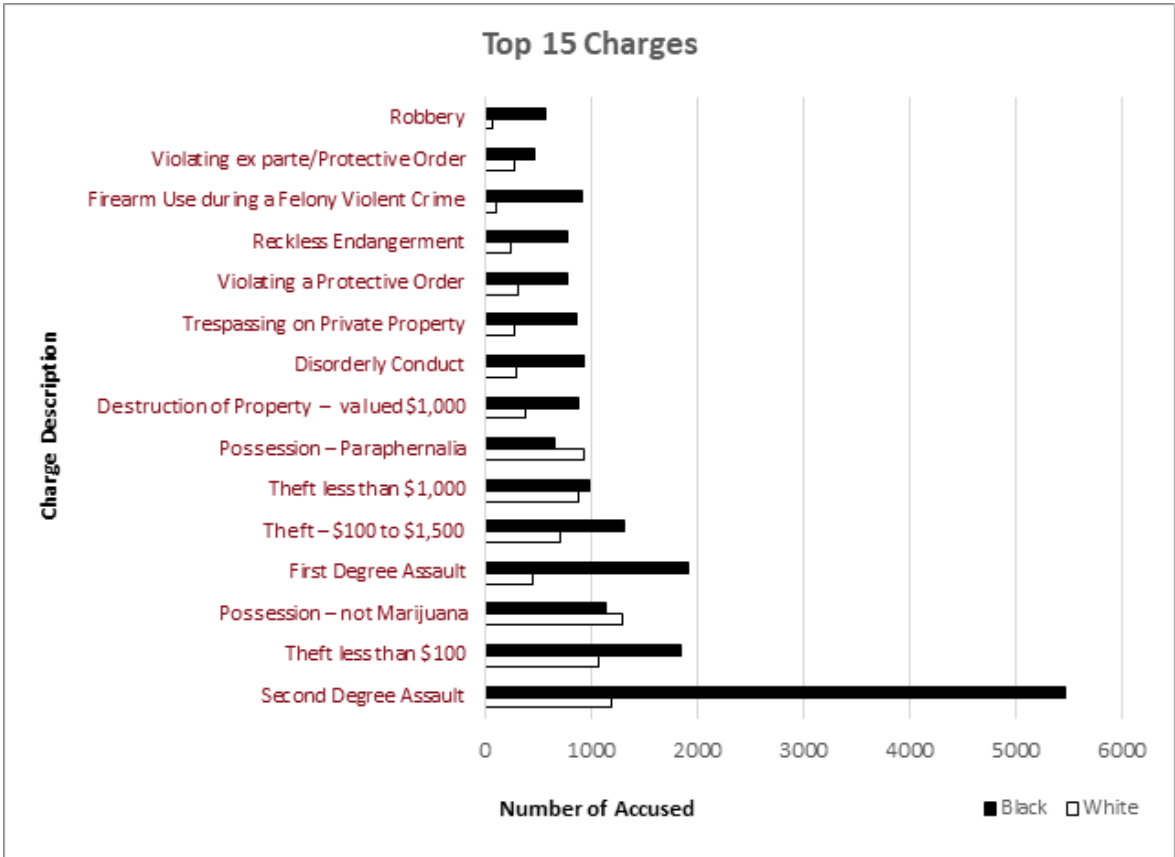
Second Degree Assault



First Degree Assault



Disorderly Conduct



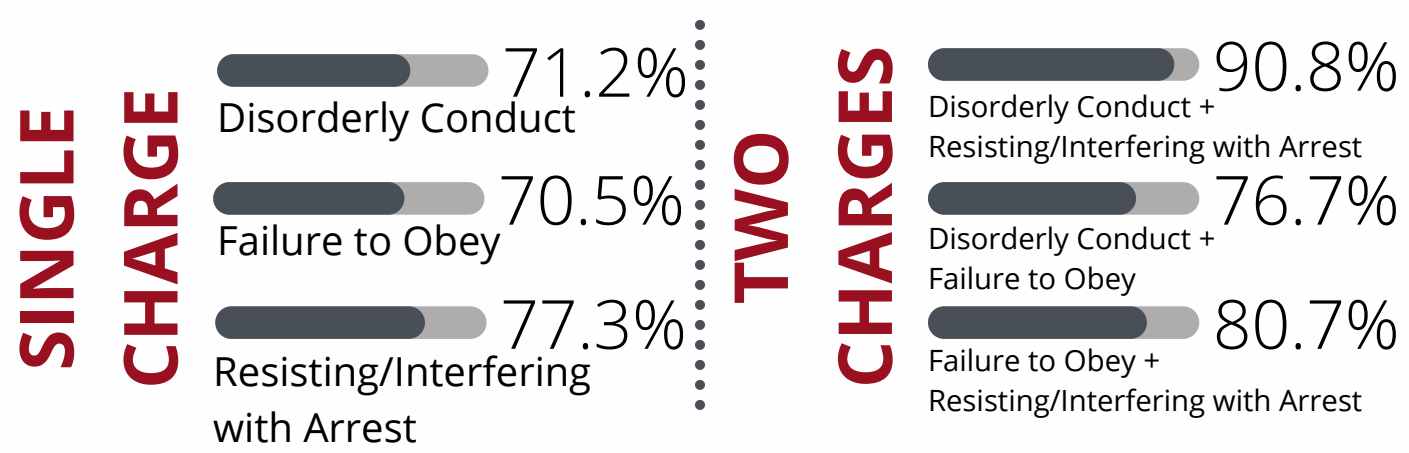
Demographic information comes from <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/charles-county-md#demographics>
We chose to use 2018 demographic information because it falls in the middle of the time frame studied (2016-2020).

Case Study: Disorderly Conduct, Resisting Arrest, and Failure to Obey

Hypothesis:

Structural Racism exists in the Charles County Justice System

Police officers in Charles County are using different definitions when addressing different races. Disorderly conduct is vaguely defined and is applied differently depending on the assailant's race. Considering the similarity between all three charges, and the frequency that they are charged in combination, this hypothesis also likely applies to resisting arrest and disobeying a police officer.



THREE CHARGES

Disorderly Conduct + Resisting/Interfering with Arrest + Failure to Obey

90%

Based on data between 2016 and 2020, **174** people were charged with **disorderly conduct, resisting arrest, and failure to obey (The "Trifecta")**. **Black** defendants account for **157 (90%)** of those cases. **White** defendants account for **17 (10%)**. **1** White person was charged with the trifecta, for every **9** Black people.



CONCLUSION

There is disparity among black and white assailants being charged with Disorderly Conduct, Failure to Obey, or Resisting Arrest or a combination thereof.

The data supports the hypothesis that Charles County suffers from structural racism in its policing.

As a reminder, **nearly half** of the population is **white**, but for Disorderly Conduct, Resisting Arrest, or Failure to obey, **Black** citizens make up around 70% of nearly **all charges**, and 90% of those being charged with **all three** are Black.

Furthermore, the data shows that **Black defendants** are **more likely** to face multiple charges than **white defendants**.

The data supports disparity in the front end of the system: Charles County police officers are likely to approach white people with more leniency than Black people. It does not support the finding of bias in the court system as a whole.

This analysis is based on over 63,000 charges and 22,000 cases between 2016 and 2020 that are available on Open Justice Baltimore's Case Harvester. See <https://github.com/dismantl/CaseHarvester>

Data was analyzed by Kenbrielle Ard, Gregory Kim, and Cameron Stang, student attorneys for the Legal Data and Design Clinic of the University of Baltimore School of Law