

# The Death Lottery:

*How Race and Geography Determine Who Goes to Ohio's Death Row*

Can the color of skin and the location of a crime determine your fate in Ohio's criminal justice system? *The Death Lottery* is a groundbreaking report that answers this question and others, revealing glaring problems in Ohio's death penalty system. See for yourself below.

## Key Facts From *The Death Lottery*

read the full report: [otse.org/deathlottery](http://otse.org/deathlottery)

### Franklin County

More than 95% of death penalty indictments from Franklin County fail to reach a death sentence. See the full report for data on all 88 counties.

**95.77%**  
Failure Rate

### Cuyahoga County

11.09%



36.60%



Cuyahoga County represents 11.09% of Ohio's population, but produces 36.6% of the state's capital indictments.

### Hamilton County

6.95%



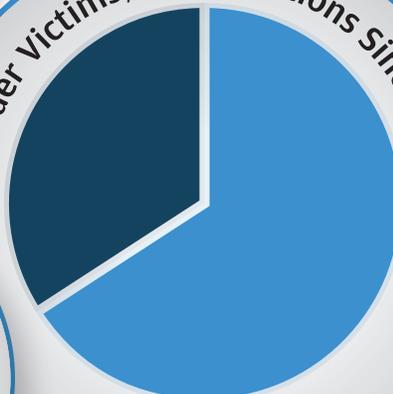
19.06%



Hamilton County represents 6.95% of Ohio's population but produces 19.06% of the state's death sentences.

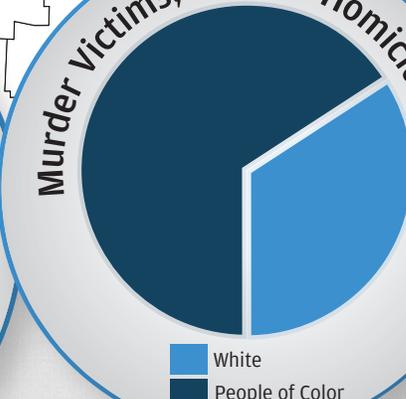
Judges and juries are not permitted to consider the victim's race in death penalty cases; however, the data indicate that the race of the victim does matter in Ohio's death penalty system.

### Murder Victims, OH Executions Since 1981



White  
People of Color

### Murder Victims, All Ohio Homicides (2012)



White  
People of Color

full report: [otse.org/deathlottery](http://otse.org/deathlottery)

# Ohio Death Penalty Factsheet: The Study, The Taskforce, The Reforms

2007



The American Bar Association (ABA) found that Ohio failed to meet 93% of ABA recommended guidelines to ensure a “fair and accurate” death penalty system.

2011



In response, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Ohio and the President of the Ohio State Bar Association formed a Task Force of experts to examine the death penalty. The Task Force was barred from any discussion about whether or not the death penalty should be repealed.

2014



The Task Force released a report with 56 recommendations that attempt to address Ohio’s failure to meet the ABA guidelines.

Ohioans to Stop Executions is firmly committed to repealing the death penalty.

Mistakes will happen. That’s human nature. If mistakes are a certainty, the death penalty must be repealed to ensure innocent people aren’t executed.

Unfairness will happen. That’s human nature. If unfairness is a certainty, the death penalty must be repealed to ensure people aren’t sentenced to death based on their race or where they live.

Until the death penalty is ultimately repealed, Ohioans to Stop Executions will make sure that key recommendations are legislated in the coming years. These measures are crucial to reduce unfairness, and the possibility of executing an innocent person and address the needs of victim’s family members.

## Key Recommendations

1. Enact legislation to exclude from eligibility from the death penalty defendants who suffer from “serious mental illness,” at the time of execution and at the time of the crime.
2. Enact legislation to narrow the number of factors that qualify a crime as felony murder.
3. Enact legislation to create a Death Penalty Charging Committee at the Attorney General’s Office.
4. Enact legislation to adopt a Racial Justice Act allowing for free-standing racial disparity claims in Ohio courts.
5. The legislature should study how to best support families of murder/homicide victims in the short and long term.



**TAKE ACTION!**

## WRITE



Tell your legislator about this report and how important these recommendations are to our criminal justice system. Want tips on how writing to your legislator? Head to [otse.org/tips](http://otse.org/tips).

## VOLUNTEER



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## GIVE



The next couple of years will be critical to set the stage for repeal. Make sure that you can say you were a part of this historic moment. Visit [otse.org/give](http://otse.org/give) or send an e-mail to [info@otse.org](mailto:info@otse.org).