

# AB 392: California Act to Save Lives

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**What you should know:** AB 392 will save lives, advance racial justice, and prevent tragedies. The bill will:

- ✔ **Restrict when police can use deadly force.**
- ✔ **Require de-escalation whenever possible.**
- ✔ **Hold officers accountable for using deadly force that is not necessary.**

## PROBLEM

For decades, California families and communities have been shattered by police violence.

We can all agree that police should never take a human life when they have alternatives. While this seems like a common-sense standard, it isn't the current practice in California. Right now, police officers can use deadly force even when they have other options. Police are far more likely to kill people who are Black and Latino than they are people who are white.

## SOLUTION

When police use tactics to slow down situations and de-escalate tensions – it saves community lives, and also increases safety for officers.

The California Act to Save Lives provides a clear definition for when officers deadly use of force can be used. The bill makes sure that police only use deadly force if it is necessary to prevent an immediate threat of death or serious bodily injury. In other words, police officers can only use deadly force when there was no reasonable alternative, including warnings, verbal persuasion, or other nonlethal methods to resolve or de-escalate a situation.

If AB 392 becomes law, police departments can discipline or fire officers who use deadly force that is unnecessary, and in some situations, local District Attorneys could file criminal charges.

The bill incorporates best practices to better preserve life. Under President Obama, for example, the US Department of Justice helped many cities adopt similar policies, including San Francisco and Seattle. Seattle's federal monitor determined that Seattle Police Department's use of force policy change resulted in a decline in serious uses of force without any negative impact on officer or public safety.

This year, as part of its investigation into the police killing of Stephon Clark, the California Department of Justice recommended that the Sacramento Police Department also adopt similar policies to AB 392, specifically recommending that they more clearly define when force is authorized and require that its officers use de-escalation tactics and exhaust all reasonably available alternatives before using deadly force.

## Use of Force By The Numbers

In 2017, officers killed **172 people** in California, half of whom didn't have guns. Police kill more people in California than in any other state.

Of the unarmed people California police killed in 2017, **three out of four** were people of color.

Of the 172 people killed in 2017, nearly **50% were Latino**.

In 2017, Black people in California were **3.2 times more likely** to be killed by police than white people.

California police killed people at a rate **37% higher** than the national average per capita.

A 2015 report found that police in Kern County **killed more people per capita** than in any other U.S. county.

Nationwide, almost **half of people** killed by police have a disability or mental illness.

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**JOIN THE CAMPAIGN TO PASS AB 392. E-mail [JRojas@ACLUsoCal.org](mailto:JRojas@ACLUsoCal.org).**