

## In Brief: Idaho

According to the [Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset](#) (ACLED) Idaho has recorded at least 183 demonstrations from January 01, 2020 to April 16, 2021 - ranking 38th in the United States in overall demonstrations and 15th in terms of demonstrations per capita. Ada County saw more demonstrations than any other county in Idaho, with 65 demonstrations, or 35.5% of the total. Other counties with significant numbers of demonstrations include Latah County, Kootenai County, Nez Perce County, Madison County, and Blaine County. All together, these top 6 counties saw 145 demonstrations, accounting for 79.2% of the state's total.

During this time, 43.2% of demonstrations (79) were related to COVID-19, 24% of demonstrations (44) were related to the Black Lives Matter movement, and 8 demonstrations (4.4%) were related to the Back the Blue, or Blue Lives Matter, movement. As a percentage of all demonstrations, Idaho has seen more demonstrations related to the COVID-19 pandemic than any other state.

Of the 183 demonstrations, 4.4% (or 8 events) were contentious. This is less than the national rate of 6.9% of contentious events over this time period. Contention includes any peaceful demonstration met by state (police, other law enforcement) or non-state (active counter-protesters, citizens) intervention, as well as any demonstrations with violence by, against or associated with demonstrators. This small number of events may be potential flashpoints for further contention.

### Political violence and other risk factors

3.8% of all demonstrations were met with state intervention, and 10.9% were met by counter protesters. 12.5% of contentious events involved the use of tear gas, pepper spray, or rubber bullets by police to disperse or control crowds.

Idaho has seen 13 police-involved killings in 21 counties since March 2019.<sup>1</sup> Police shootings have not only been salient flashpoints for large-scale protests but may also undermine community trust in and cooperation with police, further impeding the state and community ability to respond to contentious events.

Idaho has experienced two anti-Semitic events and 33 occurrences of white supremacist propaganda over the past year, primarily concentrated in Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene.<sup>2</sup>

### Select Counties with State & National Comparison

[January 1, 2020 - April 16, 2021]

County	Militia Recorded at Demo or Other Event	Total Demonstrations	% Contentious (Protesters, State, or External)	% With State Intervention	% Met with Counter-Protesters
Ada	Yes	65	11%	9%	17%
Latah	No	29	-	-	7%
Kootenai	Yes	24	4%	4%	8%
Nez Perce	No	10	-	-	30%
Madison	No	9	-	-	11%
Idaho	-	183	4%	4%	11%
National	-	27,118	7%	6%	5%

Total demonstrations include all peaceful and contentious protests. Demonstrations with state intervention are police force intervention. Source: [ACLED \(2020-2021\)](#)

### Actors of concern

The Southern Poverty Law Center mapped 7 [hate groups in Idaho](#) in 2020, across roughly two ideologies: white nationalist,<sup>3</sup> and general hate.

Idaho is home to [far-right unlawful paramilitary groups](#), including the Idaho Light Foot Militia, active chapters of the III Percenters and Oath Keepers, and Ammon Bundy's People's Rights. Armed militia members have appeared at Black Lives Matter protests in Idaho, ostensibly to provide security,

<sup>1</sup> Includes all events from March 31, 2019, to March 31, 2021 from the [Mapping Police Violence data](#)

<sup>2</sup> Includes all events from 1 January, 2020, to January 21, 2021 from the [ADL HEAT Map](#)

<sup>3</sup> including neo-Nazi, neo-Volkisch, racist skinhead, Ku Klux Klan, anti-immigrant, and anti-Muslim organizations.



though no documented confrontations have turned violent. Northern Idaho's remoteness [attracts far-right militias](#), contributing toward the relatively high militia presence in the state.

## Incidents and trends of note

Relative to the rest of the United States, Idaho's demonstrations have seen less contention and state intervention, but more counter-protests. Of the 20 demonstrations in Idaho with recorded counter-protests, 12 (60%) related to the Black Lives Matter movement, despite Black Lives Matter demonstrations' making up only 24% of all demonstrations in the same period.

Only one counter-protest resulted in contention of any kind. On September 12, 2020, around two dozen pro-Trump and anti-mask protesters were [confronted](#) by counter-protesters supporting Black Lives Matter and the mask mandate, leading to a skirmish involving pepper spray used by an unknown participant.

Idaho has seen the highest percentage of demonstrations related to the COVID-19 pandemic of any state, and all 8 of Idaho's contentious demonstrations were, at least in part, protests over pandemic-related restrictions.

Ammon Bundy and followers, especially the People's Rights militia, have appeared at at least 10 protests over coronavirus-related restrictions in Idaho, all in Boise or nearby Payette and Meridian. These demonstrations have focused on the Idaho State Capitol and on the private residences of government officials.

On August 25, 2020, Bundy [led dozens of unmasked demonstrators](#), many armed and many of them members of People's Rights, into the Idaho State Capitol, forcing their way past state troopers and disrupting the ongoing legislative session. Bundy was arrested once for refusing to leave the House of Representatives gallery, and [again](#) for returning the next day.

In Moscow, on September 23, 2020, an anti-mask mandate protest organizer [was arrested](#) for violating the ordinance. A video of the arrest was later shared on Twitter by President Donald Trump. On September 26, a [physical altercation](#) broke out between an anti-mask demonstrator and a counter-protester.

On December 8, 2020, hundreds of demonstrators, many organized by People's Rights, [protested coronavirus-related restrictions](#) while the Central District Health board conducted an online meeting. Demonstrators appeared at CDH offices and at the homes of 3 board members. At the home of one board member, demonstrators knocked on her door and blew air horns while her young children were at home, causing the board meeting to end early due to safety concerns. One demonstrator was arrested after trespassing in the CDH office.

On April 3, 2021, [upwards of 50 people](#), including members of People's Rights and Patriot Prayer, [gathered outside Magistrate Judge David Manweiler's home](#) in Boise to protest Ammon Bundy's [trespassing and failure to appear charges](#). Joey Gibson, founder of Patriot Prayer, reportedly promoted the event by [sharing the Judge's home address online](#).

Total & Contentious Demonstrations in Idaho (counts per week)

