



Electronic Monitoring IN LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

BACKGROUND

Jurisdiction: Jefferson County | Population: 777,874

Louisville Metro Corrections has used electronic monitoring for many years. They moved from radio frequency to mainly GPS in 2013. Unlike most jurisdictions, the Louisville Metro authorities produce an annual fact sheet which includes EM numbers and the average length of stay for a person on EM. Surprisingly, their EM numbers have remained fairly consistent between 2013 and the present. However, their stats do not differentiate between people who are on pretrial EM and those who are serving a sentence on EM¹.

They also fail to provide a racial breakdown of that population or any data on people returned to jail for EM rule violations².

Their EM provider is SCRAM which specializes in alcohol monitors but also has the standard devices.

1 State statute allows the use of EM in place of a sentence. The statute says a police commissioner can decide to place a person on home incarceration instead of a jail or prison sentence if the person has less than nine months to serve, has not been convicted of a violent felony or sex offense as defined in statute KRS 17.500 and has voluntarily taken part in "a discharge planning process" to address any educational, medical, employment or housing needs.

2 Note that in Kentucky the term "home incarceration" is commonly used instead of the more typical electronic monitoring, house arrest or home confinement.

MAIN ISSUES

The most crucial issue to emerge concerning EM in Louisville has been **the death of 46 people** who have been on home incarceration since 2017. 28 have died since 2020, all but four from drug overdoses. **Investigative reporter Jared Bennett of the Center for Investigative Journalism concluded that most of these people died from Fentanyl overdoses.**¹

Major Darrell Goodlett of the Louisville Metro Police said in a 2022 [interview](#) that people were mostly sent back to their previous residence when released on home incarceration. Typically, this means 24/7 house arrest except for work, medical appointments, court and emergencies. The participants' [agreement](#) for home incarceration says a person must stay "inside" and "inside means no decks, patios, porches, taking out the trash, etc. The only exception is an emergency requiring immediate action to protect life or property."

In many of the cases where people have died while on EM, people have been sent back into the houses where they were staying and were previously involved in substance use. Despite the deaths, when a police official was interviewed about EM in early 2022, he commented that EM saved money for the city and that it offered individuals access to medical and substance abuse treatment.

He didn't mention the deaths.

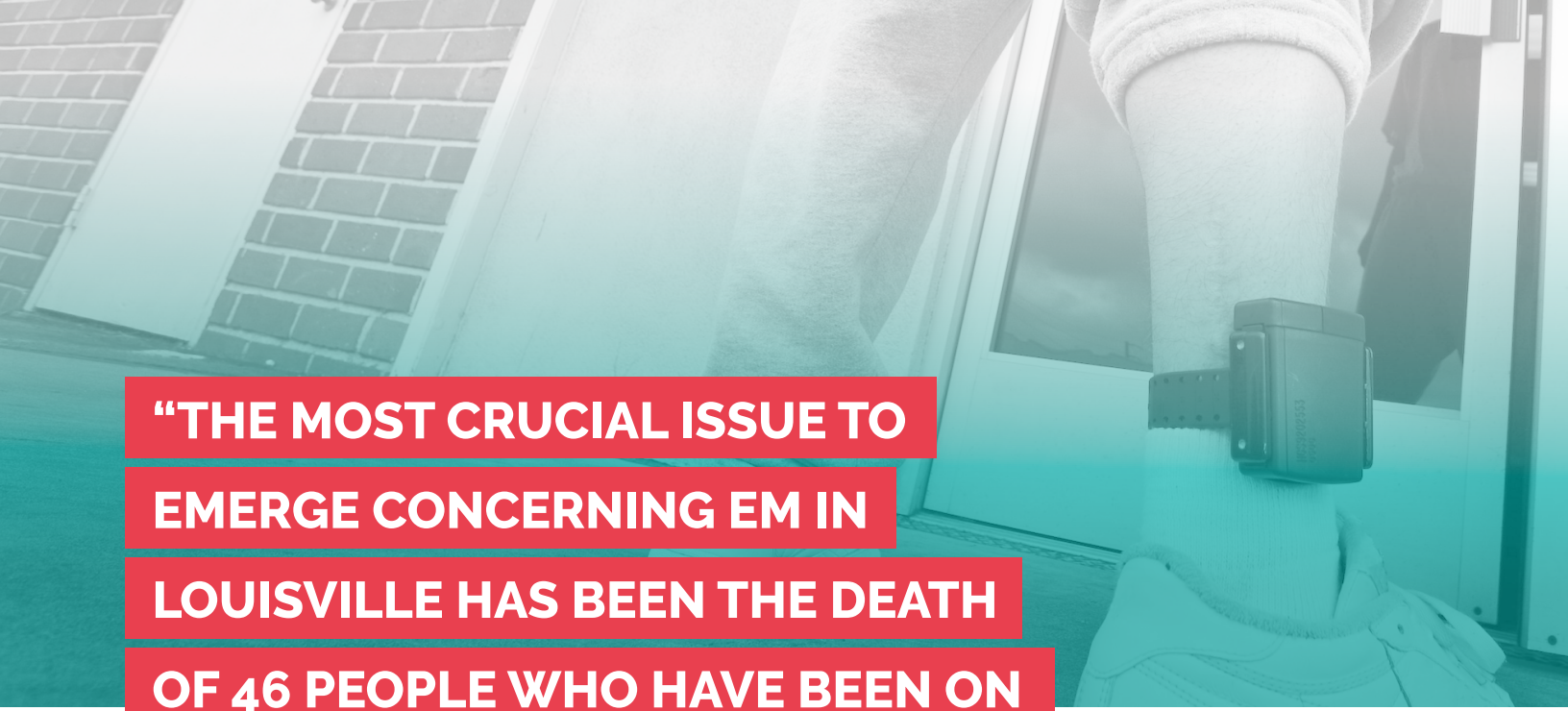
COVID

During the period of home confinement and quarantine in 2020, the Louisville Department of Public Health and Wellness [issued](#) an order of isolation which gave the Metro Department of Corrections the power to place COVID rule violators on home confinement with electronic monitors. This measure created controversy in terms of whether it violated an individual's right and whether such a rule violation should be classified as a civil or criminal matter.

¹ Conversation with James Kilgore of MediaJustice, May 9, 2022.

Year	Home Incarceration Number (on fixed date)	Average Length of Stay (days)
2013	615	61
2014	646	35
2015	657	35
2016	657	35
2017	670	42
2018	647	42
2019	535	42
2020	525	42
2021	571	65

(data from annual reports by Louisville Metro Police)



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RELATED ISSUES

- Louisville has had an extensive social media monitoring program since 2014. Their tech can [monitor](#) up to 9.5 million social media postings. **This has no guiding policy and “little oversight.**
- Kentucky has been plagued by serious problems in EM beyond Louisville. **In Letcher County a contracted employee was [fired](#) for waiving a client’s EM fees in exchange for sex.**
- In Federal District 42, which includes counties in southwestern Kentucky, federal authorities wrote a 254-page [report](#) in 2022 on Judge James Jameson, alleging that **he had exercised “Improper influence” over EM contracts including supporting a particular vendor in an open bidding process.**

KEY LINKS

[Annual reports from Metro Police](#) | [Jared Bennett on deaths on EM](#)