

CRIME

IN

CALIFORNIA

2004



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The role of the Criminal Justice Statistics Center is to:

- *Collect, analyze, and report statistical data which provide valid measures of crime and the criminal justice process.*
- *Examine these data on an ongoing basis to better describe crime and the criminal justice system.*
- *Promote the responsible presentation and use of crime statistics.*

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S MESSAGE

In 2004, the violent crime rate in California continued to decline, reaching a level not seen since 1972. This rate dropped as a result of decreases in all four violent crime offenses. This is welcome news and shows that the law enforcement community is taking strong and effective steps to combat violent crime. Only one of the seven major crimes, motor vehicle theft, increased, causing the property crime rate to inch up slightly.

The violent crime rate decreased 5.2 percent from 2003 to 2004:

- Homicide (1.2 percent of violent crimes) decreased 3.0 percent.
- Forcible rape (4.9 percent of violent crimes) decreased 5.1 percent.
- Robbery (31.2 percent of violent crimes) decreased 4.9 percent.
- Aggravated assault (62.7 percent of violent crimes) decreased 5.5 percent.

The property crime rate increased 0.9 percent from 2003 to 2004:

- Burglary (34.4 percent of property crimes) decreased 0.1 percent.
- Motor vehicle theft (35.3 percent of property crimes) increased 2.7 percent.
- Larceny-theft over \$400 (30.3 percent of property crimes) remained the same.

I am pleased to see decreases in violent crimes, which can often affect an entire community. The tireless efforts of law enforcement officials and community leaders have contributed to the decline in this area. Nevertheless, I will continue to work with the criminal justice community to ensure that the safety of our citizens remains a priority.

It has been argued that crimes do not occur by chance and the same holds true for crime prevention. By using strategies that are currently in place and taking advantage of the latest crime-fighting technologies, we remain proactive in our quest to maintain the low levels of crime seen over the past few years. I am confident that all members of the criminal justice community, including police, sheriff, prosecution, probation and corrections, will do their part in ensuring these goals are met. With that in mind, I resolve to provide officials at all levels the tools needed to combat and prevent crime.

The people of our state have chosen to make California their home for many reasons, and quality of life stands tall among them. Feeling secure in their homes is just one of the ways this standard can be met. As Attorney General, it is my duty to ensure, at the very least, that Californians are safe, secure, and able to enjoy all that this golden state has to offer.

BILL LOCKYER
Attorney General

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HIGHLIGHTS

CRIMES (See pages 2-23.)

- The violent crime rate increased from 153.1 in 1952 to its peak of 1,103.9 in 1992. The rate has since dropped to 539.6 crimes reported per 100,000 population in 2004. (Source: Table 1.)
- In 2004, the violent crime rate declined 5.2 percent, reaching its lowest level since 1972. (Source: Tables 1 and 2.)
- The decline in the violent crime rate was driven by decreases in all four violent offense categories. (Source: Table 1.)
- In 2004, the property crime rate increased 0.9 percent due to a 2.7 percent increase in the motor vehicle theft rate. (Source: Table 2.)

ARRESTS (See pages 26-63.)

- The 2004 total arrest rate of 5,286.4 per 100,000 population at risk is just slightly lower than the 2003 arrest rate of 5,288.7. (Source: Table 16.)
- Since 1999, the rate of juvenile felony arrests decreased 24.3 percent and the rate of juvenile misdemeanor arrests decreased 24.8 percent. The rate of status offense arrests (truancy, incorrigibility, running away, and curfew violations) decreased 37.7 percent since 1999. (Source: Table 17.)
- From 1999 to 2004, the forcible rape arrest rate decreased 29.5 percent. The rate of juvenile arrests for forcible rape offenses decreased 32.0 percent since 1999; however, the juvenile arrest rate increased 4.5 percent from 2003 to 2004. (Source: Table 22.)
- Since 1999, the narcotics, marijuana, and "other" drug arrest rates decreased 19.7, 16.2, and 57.6 percent, respectively, while the arrest rate for dangerous drugs increased 35.5 percent. (Source: Table 22.)

DISPOSITIONS (See pages 66-75.)

- In 2004, 69.8 percent of adult felony arrests resulted in a conviction. (Source: Table 37.)
- Probation with jail continues to be the most frequent sentence given for adult felony arrests. (Source: Table 41.)
- Since 1999, the percentage of individuals convicted of drug offenses and sentenced to state institutions (prison, California Rehabilitation Center, and California Youth Authority) has declined from 27.7 to 18.7 percent. (Source: Table 41.)

ADULT CORRECTIONS (See pages 78-85.)

- Since 1999, the rate of adults under state supervision has decreased 8.9 percent and the rate of adults under local supervision decreased 6.3 percent. (Source: Table 44.)
- In 2004, there was a 1.9 percent decrease in the rate of adults under state supervision and a 0.9 percent increase in the rate of adults under local supervision from 2003. (Source: Table 44.)