

NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services

Index, Violent, Property, and Firearm Rates by County

Overview

General Description

The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services Mission Statement:
Enhance public safety and improve criminal justice.

The Office of Justice Research and Performance (OJRP) of the NYS Division of Criminal Justice provides research, analysis and performance data to DCJS, its hosted agencies, and other governmental agencies and the public. OJRP supports various statewide criminal justice operational and statistical information systems housed at DCJS, including the State Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) system. The Uniform Crime Reporting system uses general offense categories that were developed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to standardize reporting across states. The seven Index crimes were chosen primarily on the basis of their seriousness and frequency of occurrence, and are used to gauge trends in the overall volume and rate of crime.

Data Collection Methodology

Index crime data is collected from more than 500 New York State police and sheriff's departments. Each month, participating agencies summarize their reported incident data into the federally defined offense categories of murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft. The categories of murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault are considered violent crime, while burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft are considered property crime. This reported offense data is submitted to DCJS in either a standard electronic data file or a hard copy report form. These reports are reviewed by DCJS personnel for completeness and accuracy before being added to the statewide database and submitted to the FBI.

County population data are provided every year by the FBI based on US Census information. The crime rates show the number of incidents reported per 100,000 residents. Rates take into account differences in population, allowing comparisons between counties. The formula for calculating crime rate is:

$(\text{Number of Crimes} / \text{County Population}) \times 100,000 = \text{Crime Rate per } 100,000$

Please refer to the [FBI's website for further information about population information](#).

Statistical and Analytic Issues

The file is updated on an annual basis as described on the OPEN DATA NY webpage and recent crime data may not be immediately reflected. DCJS is continuously updating data

and therefore numbers may change over time due to the collection of previously missing information.

While DCJS strongly encourages agencies to contribute to the UCR program, participation is not mandatory.

The new Penal Law charges of Strangulation 1st (PL 121.13) and 2nd (PL 121.12), enacted in November 2010, are classified as aggravated assaults for crime reporting purposes. Prior to enactment, a significant number of incidents now classified as Strangulation 2nd would have been classified within the UCR as simple assaults. The New York City Police Department estimates that 60% of the City's overall increase in aggravated assault in 2011, as compared to 2010, is due to this change in classification.

Starting in 2015, reported rape statistics conform to the [FBI's expanded definition of the crime](#). The FBI implemented this change to more accurately reflect the scope and volume of sexual assaults nationwide and in New York State. Rape statistics from 2015 and later should not be compared to rape statistics from earlier years. Please see (<http://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/crimnet/ojsa/NYSCrimeReport2015-prelim.pdf>) for additional information.

Limitations of Data Use

Although crime reports are collected from more than 500 NYS police and sheriffs' departments, this data set is limited to the crimes reported to the police agencies but not the total crimes that occurred.

Requests for additional information, missing data or actual copies of the crime reports should be directed to DCJS or the local submitting police agency.

Public access to this crime data is intended solely to allow the public convenient and immediate access to public information. While all attempts are made to provide accurate, current and reliable information, the Division of Criminal Justice Services recognizes the possibility of human and/or mechanical error and that information captured at a point in time may change over time.

