

DATA CHARACTERISTICS AND KNOWN LIMITATIONS

CRIMES

A crime is an act specifically prohibited by law, or failure to perform an act specifically required by law, for which punishment is prescribed (15 PC).

If multiple crimes occur during the same event, only the most serious (based on hierarchy) is counted. Arson is the exception to this rule because arson frequently occurs in conjunction with other crimes. Therefore, it is felt that valuable information could be lost using the hierarchy rule and arson is counted along with the other most serious offense.

The number of reported homicide, forcible rape, and aggravated assault crimes represents known victims, while for robbery, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson, the number represents known incidents of property.

Beginning in 2003, larceny-theft of property valued over \$400 was included in the property crime category to give a more representative depiction of crime in California.

The Agnews Developmental Center did not report data for 2006 due to staffing shortages.

In 2005, the Ceres Police Department became aware of a reporting problem regarding their number of motor vehicle theft crime clearances. A clearance was reported for each motor vehicle recovered. This resulted in an inflated number of motor vehicle theft crime clearances. Beginning in 2006, the number of motor vehicle theft crime clearances is consistent with the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) definition of a crime clearance.

The Citrus Heights Police Department began reporting separately from the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department on July 1, 2006. They reported one homicide for November 2006 but were unable to submit other data for July through December 2006 due to problems associated with the implementation of a new records management system.

The Elk Grove Police Department became a new reporting agency on July 1, 2006.

The Los Alamitos Police Department did not report data for November and December 2006 due to staffing shortages.

In 2004, the Legislature amended Section 11093 of the Government Code to require any state agency or department that develops and maintains data and statistics on the municipal level to report a separate breakdown for the San Fernando Valley portion of the City of Los Angeles.

Data for the San Francisco County Sheriff's Department are reported by the San Francisco Police Department.

The UC Merced became a new reporting agency on January 1, 2006.

The Ventura Community College became a new reporting agency on January 1, 2006.

In 2006, the Visalia Police Department indicated that many of their simple assault crimes had been incorrectly reported as aggravated assault crimes. In addition, theft of property from vehicles had been incorrectly reported as burglaries. Data for these categories are not comparable to previously reported data.

Motor vehicle thefts are reported by the California Highway Patrol for the Calaveras, Contra Costa, El Dorado, Santa Cruz, Trinity, and Tulare Sheriff's Departments. The only motor vehicle thefts reported by the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department are those in which motor vehicles were stolen during the commission of a burglary.

ARRESTS

Monthly Arrest and Citation Register (MACR)

An arrest occurs when a person is taken into custody because an officer has reason to believe they have violated the law. Not all arrests result in persons being jailed. Arrestees may be released by the arresting agency, post bail, or released on their own recognizance to appear in court at a later date. Some are issued citations, much like traffic tickets, which direct them to appear in court at a later date.

Arrests are divided into two major groups: felony arrests and misdemeanor arrests. A felony arrest can result in a sentence to state prison if the offender is convicted as an adult. A misdemeanor arrest can result in a sentence of up to one year in county jail, a fine, probation, restitution, or any combination of these sentences.

Juveniles may also be arrested for truancy, incorrigibility, running away, and curfew violations. These are referred to as "status offenses" because agency intervention is based solely on the juvenile's status as a minor. Status offenses are acts that would not be "crimes" if committed by adults.

If a person is arrested for multiple offenses, the MACR selects only the most serious offense based on the severity of possible punishment.

DATA CHARACTERISTICS AND KNOWN LIMITATIONS (continued)

Felony arrest counts may include some misdemeanor warrants for felony offenses.

The subjectivity of the classification and labeling process must be considered in the analysis of race/ethnic group data.

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ADULT FELONY ARREST DISPOSITIONS Offender-Based Transaction Statistics (OBTS)

The OBTS system is a statistical system designed to track the processing of adult felony arrestees through California's criminal justice system. The OBTS data are extracted from the Automated Criminal History System (ACHS).

The OBTS tracks the processing of adults arrested for felony offenses through final disposition. "Final disposition" refers to the last legal action taken after an adult has been arrested for a felony offense. Final disposition can occur at the law enforcement, prosecutorial, or court levels.

OBTS data are displayed by the year of final disposition regardless of the year in which an arrest occurred.

It is estimated that approximately 65 to 75 percent of adult felony arrest dispositions are reported annually. This data represents statewide felony arrest dispositions but may or may not represent countywide felony arrest dispositions.

Only the final disposition for an arrest event is selected for statistical purposes. "Intermediate" dispositions (i.e., diversion programs, suspended proceedings, reopening, retrials, or subsequent actions) are not included in OBTS data.

If a person is arrested for multiple offenses, the OBTS system selects only the most serious offense based on the severity of possible punishment. If there are multiple court dispositions, the OBTS system selects the most serious court disposition and the associated offense.

The OBTS file includes information about persons under 18 years of age at the time of arrest. These minors were processed as adults and received final disposition in adult court under provisions of the Welfare and Institutions Code sections 602, 707(a), 707(b), 707(c), and 707.1(a).

Dispositions of adult felony arrests in state correctional institutions are included in statewide totals but are excluded from county-level totals. State institutional commitment data may be inconsistent with data reported by other state agencies due to differences in collection methods.

Caution should be used when comparing conviction and non conviction dispositions. Budget constraints necessitated the processing of conviction dispositions on a priority basis. Therefore, it should also be noted that fluctuations from year to year may not necessarily be the result of actual occurrences in the criminal justice system, but may reflect the degree to which reports of dispositions were reported and processed.

DATA CHARACTERISTICS AND KNOWN LIMITATIONS (continued)

ADULT PROBATION

Adult probation data are limited to original grants of probation and does not include subsequent grants of probation to those already under supervised probation in the same county. Probationers are counted for each jurisdiction in which they are on probation. However, probationers with cases in multiple jurisdictions are counted more than one time in statewide totals.

Due to reporting problems, Los Angeles County Probation Department submitted data corrections for 1997 and 1998. These corrections resulted in Los Angeles County's caseload counts to decrease in 1997 and increase in 1998. Therefore, data for this county may not be consistent with previously published data.

For 2002, Marin County Probation Department implemented a new computer system. Due to complications associated with the new system, they were unable to extract data for November and December.

For 2000, Mariposa County Probation Department reported a negative caseload count for misdemeanor offenses. This was due to more probationers being removed from probation at the beginning of the year than were added throughout the year.

Beginning in March 2002, Placer County Probation Department caseload increased due to the combination of the Tahoe City and Auburn offices. Previously, the Tahoe City office did not submit reports.

As the result of a computer change and audit, in August 2002, Sacramento County Probation Department combined their felony and misdemeanor offense counts.

San Bernardino County Probation Department data are incomplete for 2001 due to a loss of personnel.

San Francisco County Probation Department reported incomplete data for 2000. Also, they were unable to report for 2001 through 2005 due to computer program issues and budget cuts.

In 2002, San Joaquin County Probation Department reported a negative caseload count for felony offenses. This was due to more probationers being removed from probation at the beginning of the year than were added throughout the year.

Sierra County Probation Department did not report data for 1998.

For 1998, Solano County Probation Department reported estimates for the number of placements. Also, they did not report data for 1999.

Ventura County Probation Department made adjustments to their 2003-2005 data. Therefore, data for Ventura County and statewide will not match previously published data.

Yolo County Probation Department experienced programming problems and was unable to report data for 2000, and only partially reported data for 2001 (April through December).

Contra Costa, Merced, Sacramento, Siskiyou, Tulare, and Yolo County probation departments did not report separate misdemeanor offense counts.

JAIL PROFILE SURVEY

Type I facility: a local detention facility for detainment of persons for not more than 96 hours after booking, excluding holidays. Type I facilities may also detain persons on a court order, for either their own safekeeping, or sentence persons to a city jail as an inmate worker. This facility may also house inmate workers sentenced to the county jail, provided such placement in the facility is made voluntarily by the inmate. This section defines an inmate worker as a person assigned to do designed tasks outside his/her cell or dormitory, pursuant to the written policy of the facility, for a minimum of four hours each day on a five-day scheduled work week.

Type II facility: a local detention facility for the detention of persons pending an arraignment, during a trial, or a sentence of commitment.

Type III facility: a local detention facility used only for persons convicted and sentenced.

Type IV facility: a local detention facility, or portion of one, designated for the housing of inmates eligible under Penal Code section 1208 for work/education furlough and/or other programs involving inmate access into the community.

DATA CHARACTERISTICS AND KNOWN LIMITATIONS (continued)

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic Violence-Related Calls for Assistance

Domestic violence is defined as "...abuse committed against an adult or a fully emancipated minor who is a spouse, former spouse, cohabitant, former cohabitant, or person with whom the suspect has had a child or is having or has had a dating or engagement relationship." [13700(b) PC]

Abuse is defined as "...intentionally or recklessly causing or attempting to cause bodily injury, or placing another person in reasonable apprehension of imminent serious bodily injury to himself or herself, or another." [13700(a) PC]

The definition of "domestic violence" is subject to varying interpretations by law enforcement agencies. As a result, different types of domestic violence relationships may be included in the database.

This Profile includes data for instances in which the responding law enforcement agency drafted a report. Data, therefore, include both cases where the responding law enforcement agency made an arrest and those where circumstances did not warrant an arrest.

Domestic violence-related calls for assistance involving the use, or threat to use, a firearm, knife or cutting instrument, or other dangerous weapon are reported according to the type of weapon used regardless of the outcome or injury.

In 2002, law enforcement agencies were given clarification about reporting personal weapons. This corresponds to a notable decrease in the number of personal weapons reported. The use of a personal weapon, such as hands, fists, or feet, was reported as a weapon only if the assault was considered an aggravated assault under Uniform Crime Reporting guidelines.

An aggravated assault is an unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury, e.g., broken bones, internal injuries, or required stitches.

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