

INTRODUCTION

The annual Criminal Justice Profile series supplements and expands upon the data provided in the Criminal Justice Statistics Center's (CJSC) publication, *Crime in California*. California Penal Code sections 13010-13012 mandate that the Department of Justice (DOJ) collect crime data and report the results annually. Most of the data included in these publications are reported to the CJSC by state and local agencies. Other sources are noted within this publication.

The Criminal Justice Profile consists of a statewide report and individual reports for each county. Each publication consists of three sections:

- **Criminal Justice Trend Data, 1998–2007.** In this section, ten-year trend data are presented for the following categories: crimes, arrests, arrest dispositions, adult probation, jail populations, criminal justice personnel, and expenditures.
- **Current Year Data, 2007.** This section displays selected data in more detail for the current reporting year. In the statewide Criminal Justice Profile, the current data is presented for the state and for each county. Furthermore, each county publication presents data for the particular county as a whole and for each contributing jurisdiction within that county.
- **Appendices.** This section contains: (1) data characteristics and known limitations, (2) computational formulas, (3) a list of the arrest offense codes included in each felony and misdemeanor arrest offense categories, and (4) a glossary of criminal justice terms.

A number of factors can influence crime counts in particular jurisdictions. The following is a list of factors that should be considered when using crime statistics, especially for comparative purposes:

- Variations in population composition, particularly age structure.
- Population density and size of the locality and its surrounding area.
- Stability of population (i.e., residents' mobility, commuting patterns, and transient factors).
- Modes of transportation and highway system arrangement.
- Economic conditions.
- Cultural factors and educational, recreational, and religious characteristics.
- Effective strength of law enforcement agencies.
- Administrative and investigative emphases of law enforcement.
- Policies of other criminal justice system components (i.e., prosecutorial, judicial, correctional, and probational).
- Changes in laws and data collection procedures.

Using reported crimes to compile city and county crime rankings often leads to simplistic and incomplete analyses and can create misleading perceptions, which may adversely affect cities, counties, and their residents. Geographic and demographic factors specific to each jurisdiction must be considered and applied to make an accurate and complete assessment of crime in a given jurisdiction.

Crime and arrest rates are calculated using annual population estimates provided by the Demographic Research Unit, California Department of Finance.

Customized statistical reports may be requested by contacting the CJSC Special Requests Unit at cjsc@doj.ca.gov or (916) 227-3509.