Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center
FACT SHEET
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Violent Crime Reported in Alaska, 1986-2015

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This fact sheet presents data on violent crimes reported in Alaska from the Alaska Department of Public Safety's annual report *Crime in Alaska* for the years 1986 through 2015. *Crime in Alaska* represents the State of Alaska's contribution to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's national Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. The UCR program collects data from law enforcement agencies across the United States. This fact sheet explores the thirty-year trends of violent crime rates in Alaska.

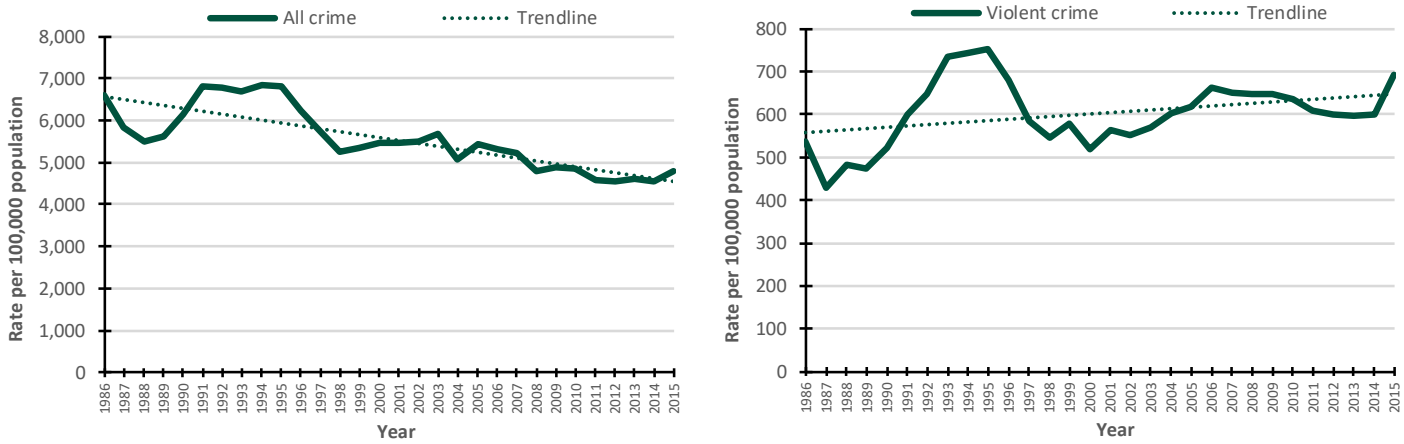
Violent crime rates. We looked at data including reports of violent crime over a thirty-year period, from 1986 to 2015. "Violent crime" is an aggregate category that includes homicide (murder and non-negligent manslaughter), rape, robbery, and aggravated assault offenses reported to police. Violent crime rates were calculated for Alaska per 100,000 residents. The violent crime rates reported here were calculated using population data retrieved from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Research and Analysis Division. These violent crime rates are presented in Figure 1.

Overall violent crime rate. Figure 1 shows the overall crime rate as well as the violent crime rate for Alaska from 1986 to 2015. Overall, the thirty-year trend reveals that the violent crime rate in Alaska **increased** over the period despite decreases in the overall crime rate. In 1986, the Alaska violent crime rate was 536.4 per 100,000 Alaska residents. In 2015, the Alaska violent crime rate was 692.4 per 100,000 Alaska residents. Over the period, the highest Alaska violent crime rate was recorded in 1995 (753.2 per 100,000 Alaska residents), and the lowest Alaska violent crime rate was recorded in 1987 (430.3 per 100,000 Alaska residents). On average, violent crime accounted for 11.0% of all crime reported in Alaska from 1986 to 2015.

Homicide crime rate. Figure 2 shows the reported homicide rates for Alaska from 1986 to 2015. Overall, the thirty-year trend reveals that the homicide rate in Alaska **decreased** over the period despite increases in the violent crime rate. In 1986, the Alaska homicide rate was 8.9 per 100,000 Alaska residents. In 2015, the Alaska homicide rate was 8.0 per 100,000 Alaska residents. Over the period, the highest Alaska homicide rate was 9.4 in 1987, and the lowest Alaska

Figure 1.

Crime rates per 100,000 population in Alaska, 1986-2015: All crime and violent crime



Source of data: Alaska Department of Public Safety, Criminal Records & Identification Bureau (1987-2016). *Crime in Alaska,* Juneau, AK.

homicide rate was 3.0 per 100,000 Alaska residents in 2009. On average, homicides accounted for 1.1% of all violent crime reported in Alaska from 1986 to 2015.

Rape crime rate. Figure 2 also shows the reported rape rates for Alaska from 1986 to 2015. Overall, the thirty-year trend reveals that the rape rate in Alaska **increased** over the period. In 1986, the rape rate in Alaska was 66.5 per 100,000 Alaska residents. In 2015, the rape rate in Alaska was 85.7 per 100,000 Alaska residents. Over the period, the highest Alaska rape rate was 96.5 in 1992, and the lowest Alaska rape rate was 51.4 per 100,000 Alaska residents in 1989. On average, rape accounted for 12.5% of all violent crime reported in Alaska from 1986 to 2015.

Robbery crime rate. Figure 2 also shows the reported robbery rates for Alaska from 1986 to 2015. Overall, the thirty-year trend reveals that the robbery rate in Alaska **decreased** over the period despite increases in the violent crime rate. In 1986, the Alaska robbery rate was 82.8 per 100,000 Alaska residents. In 2015, the Alaska robbery rate was 103.0 per 100,000 Alaska residents. Over the period, the highest Alaska robbery rate was 152.6 in 1995, and the lowest Alaska robbery rate was 65.3 per 100,000 Alaska residents in 1989 and 2004. On average, robberies accounted for 14.8% of all violent crime reported in Alaska from 1986 to 2015.

Aggravated assault crime rate. Finally, Figure 2 shows the reported aggravated assault rates for Alaska from 1986 to 2015. Overall, the thirty-year trend reveals that the aggravated assault rate in Alaska **increased** along with the violent crime rate. In 1986, the Alaska aggravated assault rate was 378.2 per 100,000 Alaska residents. In 2015, the Alaska aggravated assault rate was 495.7 per 100,000 Alaska residents. Over the period, the highest Alaska aggravated assault rate was 524.8 in 1994, and the lowest Alaska aggravated assault rate was 289.9 per 100,000 Alaska residents in 1987. On average, aggravated assaults accounted for 71.7% of all violent crime reported in Alaska from 1986 to 2015.

SUMMARY

This fact sheet presents data on violent crimes reported in Alaska from 1986 to 2015 as reported in the Department of Public Safety publication, *Crime in Alaska*.

From 1986 to 2015, violent crime rates increased in Alaska although the overall crime rate decreased. Homicide and robbery rates declined over the period while rape and aggravated assault rates increased from 1986 to 2015 – with aggravated assault acting as the main driver of increases in the violent crime rate over the period.

On average, violent crime accounted for 11% of all crime reported in Alaska from 1986 to 2015 — aggravated assault accounted for nearly three-quarters of all violent crime, robbery accounted for nearly 15%, rape accounted for nearly 13%, and homicide accounted for just over 1% of all violent crime reported in Alaska over the period.

Figure 2.

Reported violent crime rates in Alaska, 1986-2015: By crime type

Source of data: Alaska Department of Public Safety, Criminal Records & Identification Bureau (1987-2016). *Crime in Alaska,* Juneau, AK.

NOTES

CALCULATING RATES

Rates per 100,000 population are calculated by dividing the number of specified events by the total population of the focus area and then multiplying the total by 100,000. For example, to determine the violent crime rate in Alaska for 2015, we take the total number of founded violent crimes reported in Alaska for 2015 (5,104), divide it by the total estimated state population for 2015 (737,183), and multiply the quotient by 100,000 to reach the violent crime rate of 692.4 per 100,000 population [(5,104÷737,183)*100,000=692.4]. Because Alaska has a small population, small changes in the number of reported violent crimes can lead to substantial fluctuations in rates.
All population estimates were retrieved from the State of Alaska, Department of Labor and Workforce Development at: http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/pop/index.cfm
Crime in Alaska is available online at: http://dps.alaska.gov/Statewide/UCR.aspx (2000—2015) and https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/ajsac/ucr.cshtml (1976–1999)

VIOLENT CRIME DEFINITIONS

In the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, violent crime is composed of four offenses: homicide (murder and nonnegligent manslaughter), rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Violent crimes are defined in the UCR Program as those offenses that involve force or threat of force.

Homicide (murder and nonnegligent manslaughter) - The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program defines murder and nonnegligent manslaughter as the willful (nonnegligent) killing of one human being by another. The classification of this offense is based solely on police investigation as opposed to the determination of a court, medical examiner, coroner, jury, or other judicial body. The UCR Program does not include the following situations in this offense classification: deaths caused by negligence, suicide, or accident; justifiable homicides; and attempts to murder or assaults to murder, which are classified as aggravated assaults.

Rape - In 2013, the FBI UCR Program began collecting rape data under a revised definition within the Summary Reporting System. Previously, offense data for forcible rape were collected under the legacy UCR definition: the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will. Beginning with the 2013 data year, the term "forcible" was removed from the offense title, and the definition was changed. The revised UCR definition of rape is: penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim. Attempts or assaults to commit rape are also included in the statistics presented here; however, statutory rape and incest are excluded.

All rape data submitted in 2013, 2014, and 2015—have been collected under the revised definition, the data presented here discusses only legacy definition rape data. *Rape numbers were adjusted for this Fact Sheet to legacy estimates, as per FBI estimates.*

Aggravated Assault - The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program defines aggravated assault as an unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. The UCR Program further specifies that this type of assault is usually accompanied by the use of a weapon or by other means likely to produce death or great bodily harm. Attempted aggravated assault that involves the display of—or threat to use—a gun, knife, or other weapon is included in this crime category because serious personal injury would likely result if the assault were completed. When aggravated assault and larceny-theft occur together, the offense falls under the category of robbery.

Robbery - The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program defines robbery as the taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.

Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center

About

The Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center (AJSAC) was established by Administrative Order No. 89, signed by Governor William Sheffield on July 2, 1986. Since that time the AJSAC has been housed within the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center. The AJSAC assists Alaska criminal justice agencies, as well as state and local governments and officials, with the development, implementation, and evaluation of criminal justice programs and policies through the collection, analysis, and reporting of crime and justice statistics.

Since 1972, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and its predecessor agency, the National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service, has provided support to state and territorial governments to establish and operate Statistical Analysis Centers (SACs) to collect, analyze, and report statistics on crime and justice to federal, state, and local levels of government, and to share state-level information nationally. There are currently 53 SACs located in the United States and its Territories. The AJSAC is a member of the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA), a national nonprofit organization comprised of SAC directors, researchers, and practitioners dedicated to policy-oriented research and analysis.

Contact Information

Location

The Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center (AJSAC) is housed in the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center, which is located on the second floor of the UAA/APU Consortium Library, Suite 213.

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To learn more about the AJSAC research, please visit our website at http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/ajsac.

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