

## Motor Vehicle Theft Arrests Reported in Alaska, 1985–2016

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This fact sheet presents data on motor vehicle theft arrests reported by Alaska law enforcement agencies, and obtained from the Alaska Department of Public Safety's annual report *Crime in Alaska* for the years 1985 through 2016. *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 31-year trend of motor vehicle theft arrests in Alaska.

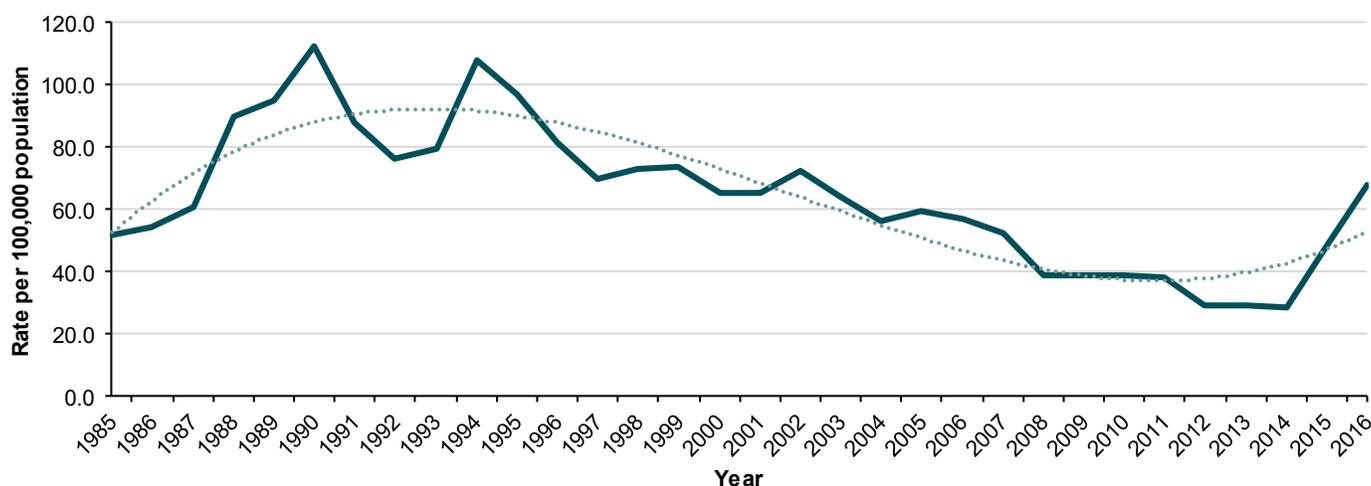
**Motor vehicle theft arrests.** We looked at the number of motor vehicle theft arrests over a 31-year period, from 1985–2016. Motor vehicle theft arrest rates were calculated per 100,000 residents. The motor vehicle theft rates reported here were calculated using population data retrieved from the Alaska Department of Labor and

Workforce Development's Research and Analysis Division.

**Overall motor vehicle theft arrest rates.** Figure 1 shows motor vehicle theft arrest rates for Alaska from 1985 to 2016. Overall, despite a sharp increase in arrest rates in 2015 and 2016, the 31-year trend reveals that the motor vehicle theft **arrest rates in Alaska decreased** over the period. In 1985 the arrest rate was 51.7 per 100,000 residents. It then rose to its highest arrest rate which was recorded in 1990 (112.5 per 100,000 residents). After peaking again in 1994 (108.2 per 100,000 residents), Alaska motor vehicle theft arrest rates declined steadily to the lowest rate observed in the time series in 2014 (28.8 per 100,000 residents). In 2016 the motor vehicle theft arrest rate was 68.3 per 100,000 residents. The average arrest rate over the period was 64.6 per 100,000 residents.

**Figure 1.**

Motor vehicle theft arrest rates in Alaska, 1985–2016: All arrests



**Source of data:** Alaska Department of Public Safety, *Crime in Alaska* (1985–2016)

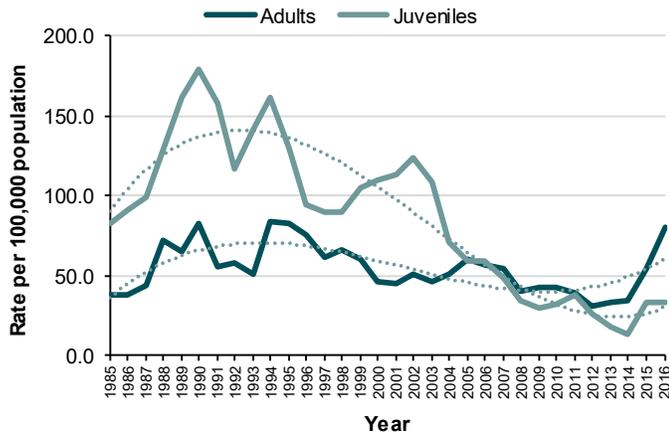
**Arrest rates by age.** Figure 2 contrasts the motor vehicle arrest rates for adults and juveniles. Adults are categorized as anyone 18 years of age or older. Juveniles are categorized as anyone under the age of 18.

The 31-year trend shows that the motor vehicle theft **arrest rates for adults in Alaska were relatively unchanging** with a sharp increase in 2015 and 2016. The highest arrest rate recorded was in 1994 (83.6 per 100,000 adults). The lowest arrest rate recorded was in 2012 (30.8 per 100,000 adults). In 2016, the adult motor vehicle theft arrest rate was 80.5 per 100,000 adults.

In contrast, the 31-year trend reveals a **dramatic decrease in motor vehicle theft arrest rates for juveniles in Alaska.** The highest arrest rate recorded was in 1990 (178.7 per 100,000 juveniles). The lowest arrest rate recorded was in 2014 (13.2 per 100,000 juveniles). In 2016, the juvenile motor vehicle theft arrest rate was 32.7 per 100,000 juveniles, less than a fifth of the highest rate recorded in 1990.

**Figure 2.**

Motor vehicle theft arrest rates in Alaska, 1985–2016:  
Adults & juveniles



**Source of data:** Alaska Department of Public Safety,  
*Crime in Alaska* (1985–2016)

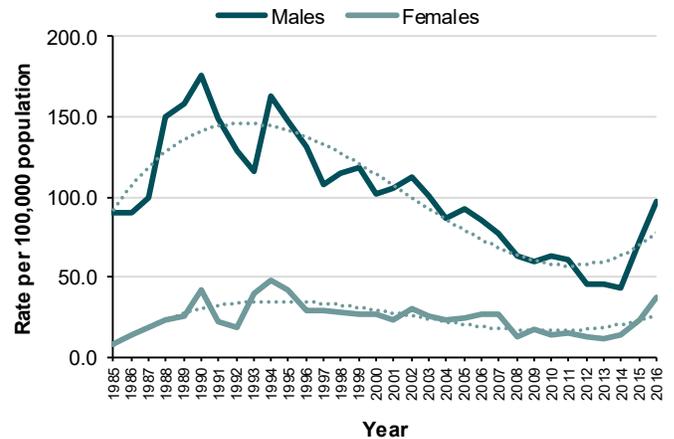
**Arrest rates by gender.** Figure 3 contrasts the motor vehicle theft arrest rates for males and females from 1985 to 2016.

Overall, the motor vehicle theft **arrest rates for males in Alaska have been decreasing** over the 31-year period with a jump in 2015 and 2016. The highest arrest rate recorded was in 1990 (175.6 per 100,000 males). The lowest arrest rate recorded was in 2014 (43.3 per 100,000 males). In 2016, the male motor vehicle theft arrest rate was 77.1 per 100,000 males.

In contrast, the motor vehicle theft **arrest rates for females in Alaska have been relatively constant with low variation.** The highest arrest rate recorded was in 1994 (48 per 100,000 females). The lowest arrest rate recorded was in 1985 (8.2 per 100,000 females). In 2016, the female motor vehicle theft arrest rate was 37.5 per 100,000 females.

**Figure 3.**

Motor vehicle theft arrest rates in Alaska, 1985–2016:  
Males & females



**Source of data:** Alaska Department of Public Safety,  
*Crime in Alaska* (1985–2016)

## SUMMARY

This fact sheet presents data on motor vehicle theft arrests reported in Alaska from 1985 to 2016 as reported in the Department of Public Safety publication, *Crime in Alaska*.

Overall, the motor vehicle arrest rate consistently declined between 1990 and 2014 when it reached the lowest level in the 1985–2016 period. The motor vehicle arrest rate rebounded in 2015 and 2016.

Increases in Alaska motor vehicle arrest rates in 2015 and 2016 were particularly pronounced among adults (Figure 2) and males (Figure 3), while motor vehicle arrest rates for juveniles and females remained minimal in comparison.

On average adults accounted for 62.6% and juveniles 37.4% of all arrests for motor vehicle thefts reported in Alaska from 1985 to 2016. Males accounted for 81.8% of all motor vehicle theft arrests, females 18.2%.

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## Notes

### CALCULATING RATES

Rates per 100,000 populations 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 motor vehicle theft arrest rates in Alaska for 2016, we take the total number of founded motor vehicle theft arrest cases reported in Alaska for 2016 (505), divide it by the total estimated state population for 2016 (739,828), and multiply the quotient by 100,000 to reach the motor vehicle theft arrest rate of 68.3 per 100,000 populations  $[(505 \div 739,828) * 100,000 = 68.3]$ . Because Alaska has a small population, small changes in the number of reported motor vehicle theft arrests 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> (1960 to present).

*Crime in Alaska* is available online at: <http://dps.alaska.gov/Statewide/UCR.aspx> (2000–2016) and <https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/ajic/ucr.cshtml> (1976–1999).

### MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT DEFINITION

In the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, property crime includes the offenses of burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. The object of the theft-type offenses is the taking of money or property, but there is no force or threat of force against the victims.

**Motor vehicle theft** — In the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, motor vehicle theft is defined as the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle. A motor vehicle is defined in the UCR Program as a self-propelled vehicle that runs on land surfaces and not on rails. Examples of motor vehicles include sport utility vehicles, automobiles, trucks, buses, motorcycles, motor scooters, all-terrain vehicles, and snowmobiles. Motor vehicle theft does not include farm equipment, bulldozers, airplanes, construction equipment, or water craft such as motorboats, sailboats, houseboats, or jet skis. The taking of a motor vehicle for temporary use by persons having lawful access is excluded from this definition.

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# Alaska Justice Information Center



## ABOUT

The Alaska Justice Information Center (AJiC) was established in 2015, with a mission to compile, analyze, and report on criminal justice topics to policymakers, and practitioners in order to improve public safety, to increase criminal justice system accountability, and to reduce recidivism. In 2017, AJiC merged with the Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center (AJSAC), which was designated as Alaska's statistical analysis center in 1986 by Governor William Sheffield. The fact sheet series was previously published under the AJSAC masthead.

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 Information Center (AJiC) 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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## ON THE WEB

To learn more about AJiC research, please visit our website at <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/ajic>.

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