



# VIOLENT CRIME IN ILLINOIS 2015: MURDER



# **VIOLENT CRIME IN ILLINOIS 2015**

## **Murder**

**2017**

*Prepared by:*

Erin Sheridan, Research Analyst  
Liam Hanninen, Research Intern

This research project was supported by Grant # 2015-BJ-CX-K032 awarded to the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions contained within this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the Authority or the U.S. Department of Justice.

Suggested citation: Sheridan, E. & Hanninen, L. (2017). *Violent crime in Illinois 2015: Murder*. Chicago, IL: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority  
300 West Adams, Suite 200  
Chicago, Illinois 60606  
Phone: 312.793.8550  
Fax: 312.793.8422  
[www.icjia.state.il.us](http://www.icjia.state.il.us)

---

# MURDER

---

## Definition

Rates

Arrestees

Convictions

Sentences

Conclusion

---

## Definition

In Illinois, criminal homicide is charged as first degree murder, second degree murder, involuntary manslaughter or reckless homicide. First degree murder is defined as killing another person through an act which is intended to kill them, is likely to kill them, or while committing a forcible felony, such as a robbery or rape.

*Source: 720 ILCS 5/9-1*

Second degree murder is defined as killing another person while acting under sudden intense passion resulting from the serious provocation by the person killed, or where the offender believes his or her actions to be justified and the belief is determined later by the criminal justice system not to be reasonable.

*Source: 720 ILCS 5/9-2*

Involuntary manslaughter is defined as the unintentional killing of another person without justification, usually through an accident or reckless act; reckless homicide is the term applied to circumstances where the cause of death involved the driving of a motor vehicle.

*Source: 720 ILCS 7/9-3*

First and second degree murder data are available via the Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting (I-UCR) program. Here, murder is defined as the willful killing of one human being by another (first degree murder) *or* the killing of another person through gross negligence (second degree murder). Any death caused by injuries received in a fight, argument, quarrel, battery, or commission of a crime must be reported as a criminal homicide.

*Source: Illinois State Police Uniform Crime Report*

# MURDER

Definition

**Rates**

Arrestees

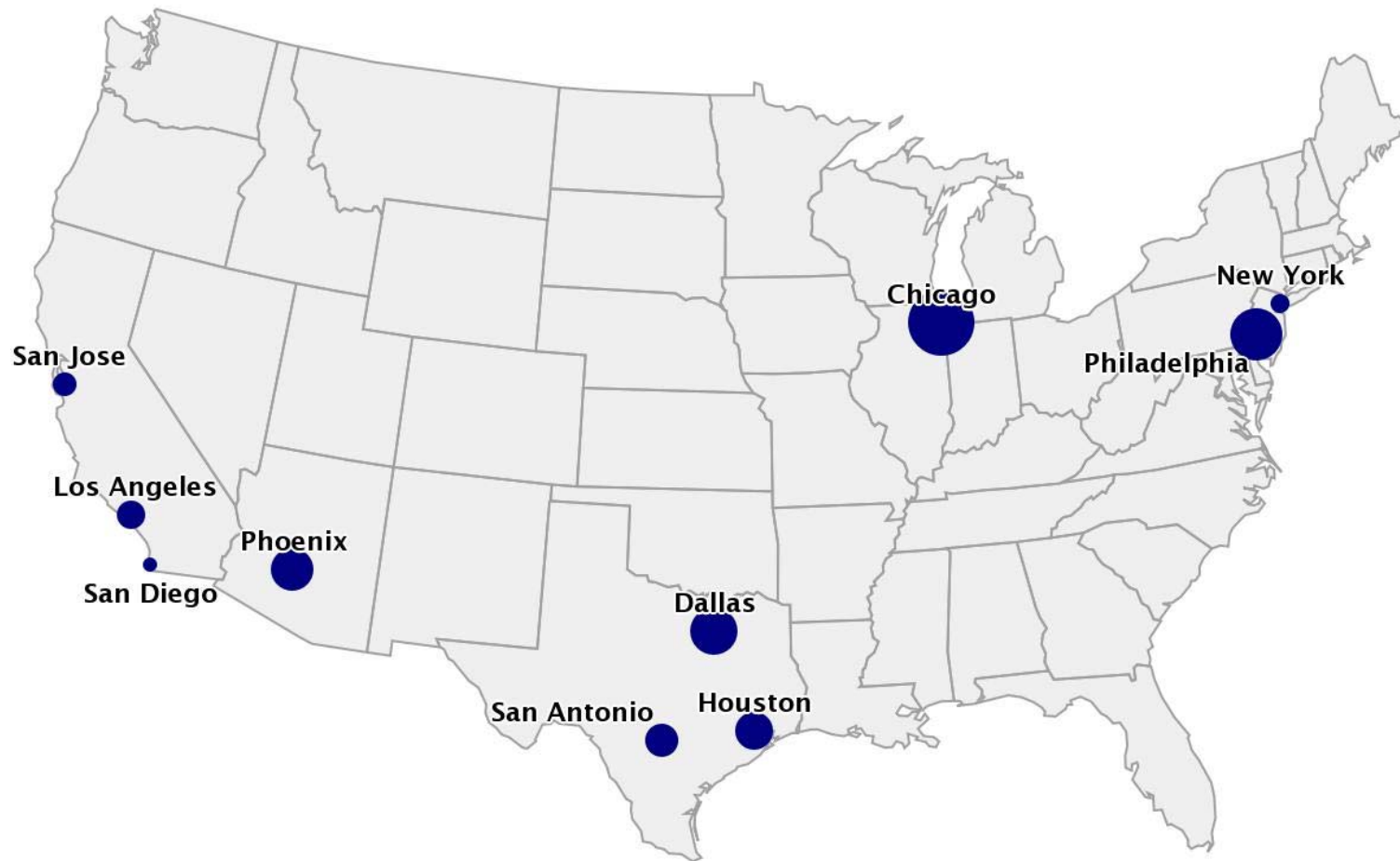
Convictions

Sentences

Conclusion

## Rates

### Murder Rates per 100,000 in America's 10 Largest Cities, January-June 2016

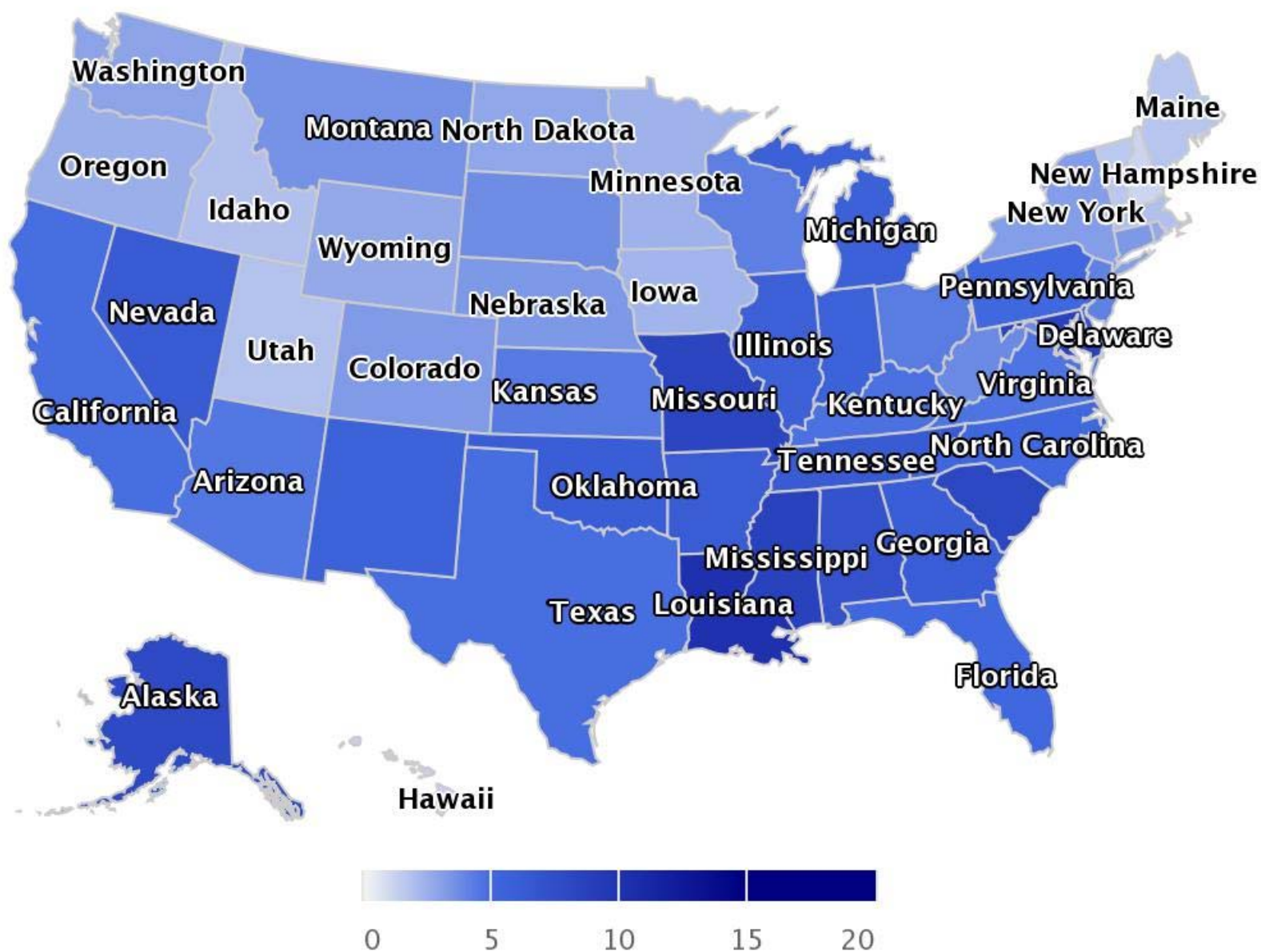


Highcharts.com © Natural Earth

<b>Rank</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Rate</b>
1	Chicago	11.62
2	Philadelphia	7.78
3	Houston	6.88
4	Dallas	6.38
5	Phoenix	4.99
6	San Antonio	4.76
7	Los Angeles	3.37
8	San Jose	2.43
9	New York	1.88
10	San Diego	1.72

*Sources: Major Cities Chiefs Association Violent Crime-Survey; Houston Police Department Data; U.S. Census Bureau population estimates, 2015*

## Murder Rates per 100,000 by State, 2015



Highcharts.com © Natural Earth

Source: ICJIA Analysis of 2015 FBI Uniform Crime Report (UCR) Data

Illinois ranked 16<sup>th</sup> across the country in 2015, with a murder rate of 5.8 per 100,000 population.

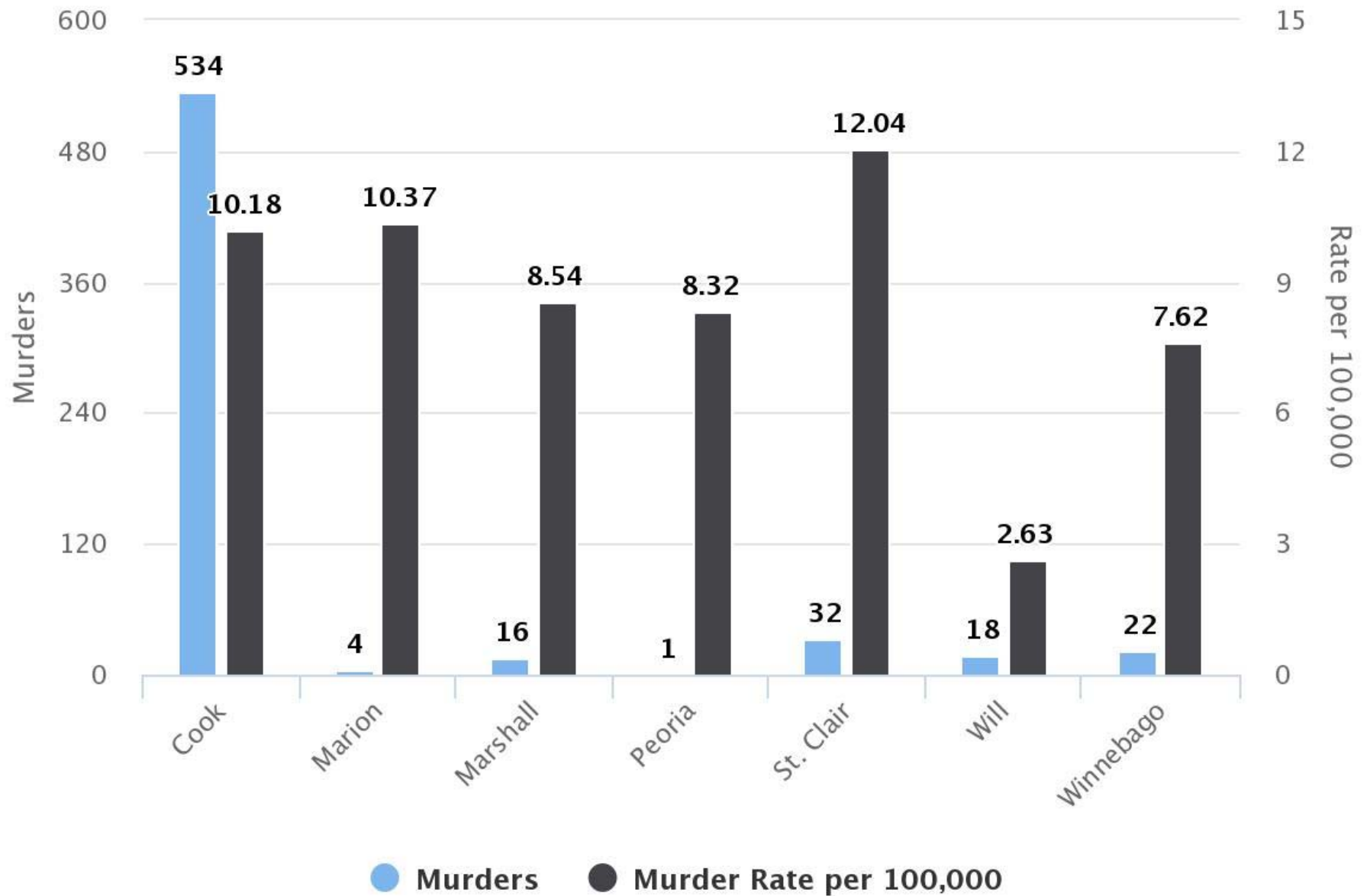
# Prevalence by County

In 2015, 724 murders were reported by law enforcement agencies to the I-UCR program. Murders were reported in 37 of Illinois' 102 counties, and of them, 15 reported only a single murder. The counties of Calhoun and Pope did not report crime data to the I-UCR program.

Without calculating the murder rates per county population, the raw numbers of occurrences provide only partial information. The chart below depicts the number of murders and rate of murders from the same counties to illustrate this difference (the counties with the highest five numbers and highest five rates were chosen; Cook, St. Clair, and Peoria were in the top five for both numbers and rates). As can be seen, when the smaller population of St. Clair County is taken into account, it has a higher murder rate per population than Cook County, although Cook County reported a much higher number of murders.



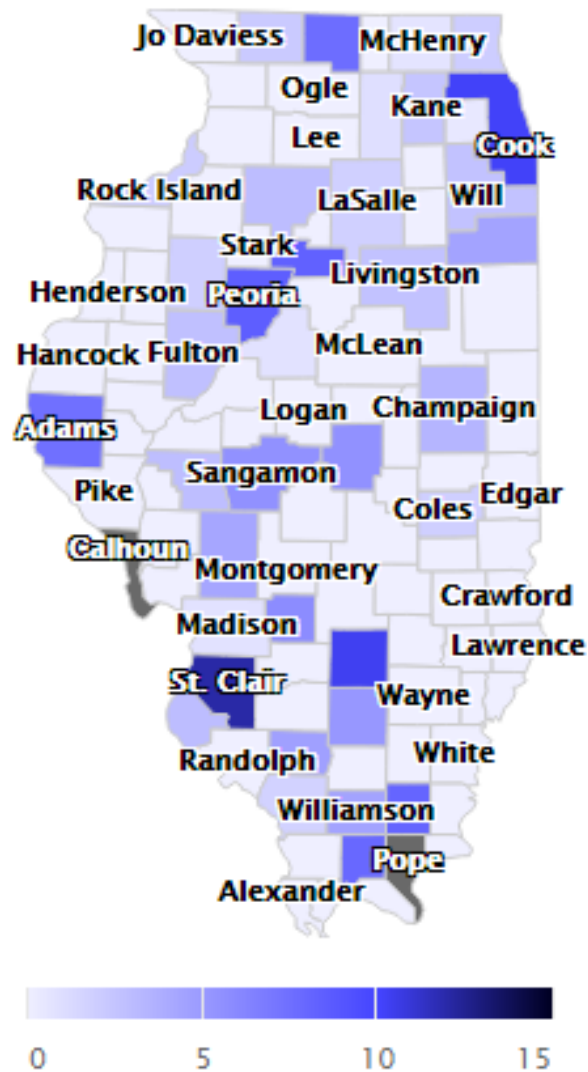
## Number and Rate of Murders per 100,000, 2015



Source: ICJIA Analysis of 2015 Illinois State Police Uniform Crime Report Data



## Murder Rates per 100,000 by County, 2015



*Source: ICJIA Analysis of 2015 Illinois State Police Uniform Crime Report Data*

The overall murder rate in Illinois in 2015 was 5.8 murders per 100,000 residents.

### **Five Illinois Counties with Highest Murder Rates, 2015**

<b>County</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Murder Rate Per 100,000</b>
St. Clair	265,729	12.04
Marion	38,571	10.37
Cook	5,246,456	10.18
Peoria	187,319	8.54
Marshall	12,014	8.32
<b>Illinois</b>	<b>12,859,995</b>	<b>5.8</b>

*Source: ICJIA Analysis of 2015 Illinois State Police Uniform Report Data*

### **Murder Rates for the Five Largest Illinois Counties by Population, 2015**

<b>County</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Murder Rate Per 100,000</b>
Cook	5,246,456	10.18
Kane	527,306	2.47
Will	685,419	2.63
Lake	705,186	1.99
DuPage	932,708	0.43
<b>Illinois</b>	<b>12,859,995</b>	<b>5.8</b>

*Source: ICJIA Analysis of 2015 Illinois State Police Uniform Report Data*

## **Prevalence by Municipality**

Murders tend to be concentrated in urban centers within a county. The population size of cities and towns will affect the calculated rate of occurrence. For example, in Cook County, Chicago did not rank first in murder rates in the county, even though more murders occurred there than in any other town. The three municipalities in Cook County with higher murder rates than Chicago in 2015 were Maywood, Rosemont, and Harvey.

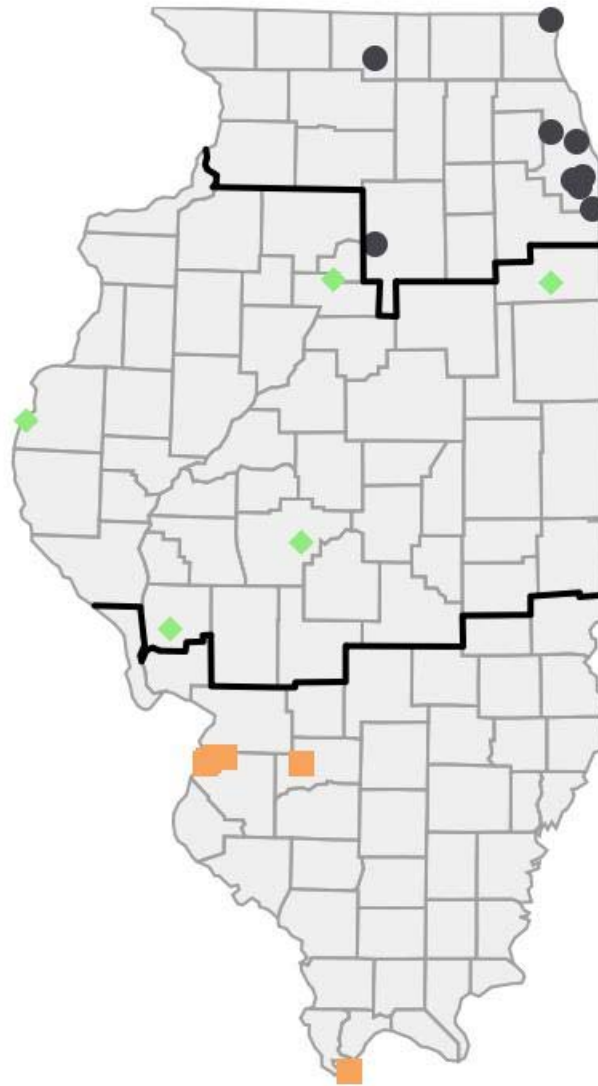
### Municipalities with the Highest Murder Rates in Cook County, 2015

Rank	City	Total Population	Number of Murders	Murder Rate Per 100,000
1	Maywood	24,141	13	53.85
2	Rosemont	4,231	1	23.64
3	Harvey	25,361	5	19.72
4	Chicago	2,728,695	478	17.52
5	Midlothian	14,932	2	13.39
<b>Cook County</b>		<b>5,246,456</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>5.8</b>

*Source: ICJIA Analysis of 2015 Illinois State Police Uniform Report Data*

The graph and table below show the cities in Illinois whose average three-year (2013-2015) murder rate was significantly greater than the entire state of Illinois' average three-year murder rate.

## Cities in Illinois with Highest Murder Rates per 100,000, 2015



● Northern    ◆ Central    ■ Southern

*Source: ICJIA Analysis of 2015 Illinois State Police Uniform Report Data*

City	County	Average Murders 2013-2015	Average Population 2013-2015	Rate 2013-2015 Per 100,000	SDs from the Mean
Sauget	St. Clair	0.3	153.7	219.30	21.12
East St. Louis	St. Clair	23.7	26,585.0	89.04	8.46
Breese	Clinton	3.3	4,525.7	73.45	6.94
Cairo	Alexander	1.7	2,569.0	64.32	6.06
Washington Park	St. Clair	2.3	4,048.0	57.56	5.40
Maywood	Cook	9.0	24,166.3	37.25	3.43
Harvey	Cook	7.3	25,382.0	28.89	2.61
Caseyville	St. Clair	1.0	4,108.0	24.63	2.20
Warsaw	Hancock	0.3	1,556.7	21.51	1.90
Sauk Village (MCA)	Cook	2.0	10,562.0	18.93	1.65
Oglesby	LaSalle	0.7	3,694.7	18.06	1.56
Rochester	Sangamon	0.7	3,786.7	17.61	1.52
Posen	Cook	1.0	6,031.3	16.58	1.42
Kankakee	Kankakee	4.3	27,002.3	16.03	1.36
Chicago	Cook	435.0	2,724,456.7	15.97	1.36
Riverdale	Cook	2.0	13,626.7	14.67	1.23
Henry	Marshall	0.3	2,341.0	14.01	1.17
Carrollton	Greene	0.3	2,408.7	13.84	1.15
Zion	Lake	3.0	24,297.7	12.34	1.01
Rockford	Winnebago	18.3	149,322.3	12.28	1.00

**Illinois Average Murder Rate = 2.00**

MCA = Multi-County Agency

SD = Standard Deviation

---

## MURDER

---

Definition

Rates

**Arrestees**

Convictions

Sentences

Conclusion

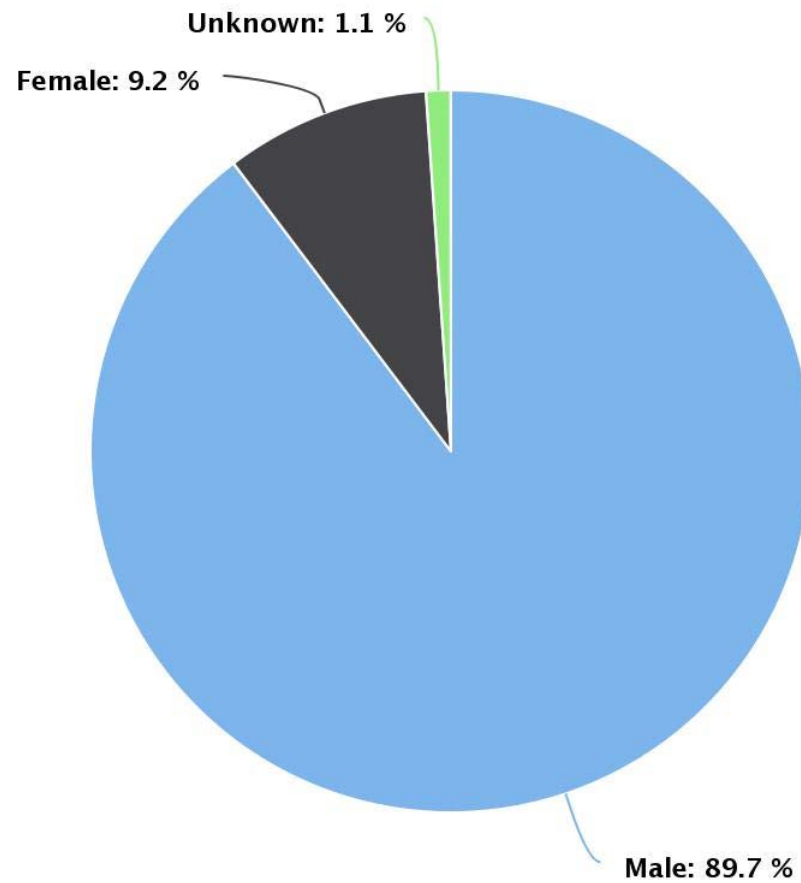
---

# Characteristics of Murder Victims and Reported Offenders

Characteristics of murder victims and the characteristics of those thought to be responsible for the murder are accessible through the national FBI Supplemental Homicide Reporting program. In Illinois, only Chicago and Rockford participated in this data collection program in 2015. Beginning in 2016, all Illinois law enforcement agencies were mandated to report this detailed information on murders. Not all reported alleged offenders are actually arrested for the murder, as the alleged offender must be apprehended with enough evidence to make an arrest.

The most current program information available dates back to 2014 and includes characteristics of 773 murder victims and 370 reported offenders from Chicago and Rockford.

## Gender of Offenders in Chicago and Rockford, 2015 (n=773)

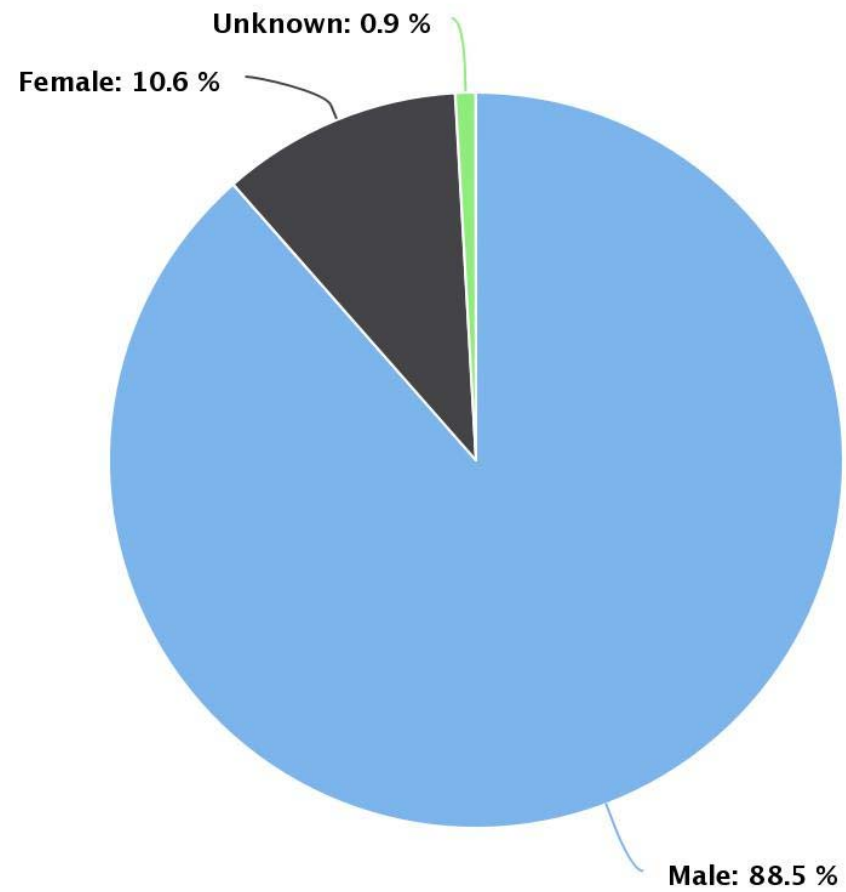


*Source: FBI Supplemental Homicide Reports, 2014*

Highcharts.com



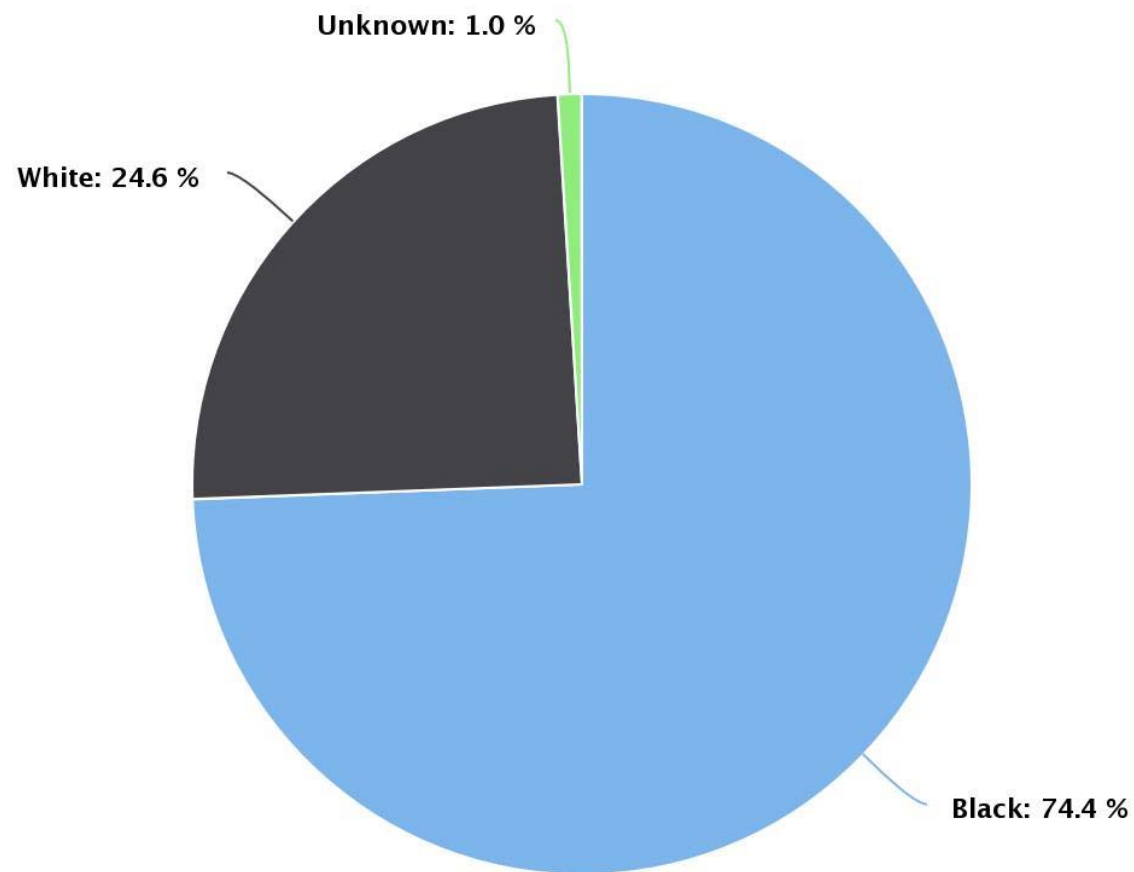
## Gender of Victims in Chicago and Rockford, 2015 (n=773)



*Source: FBI Supplemental Homicide Reports, 2014*

Highcharts.com

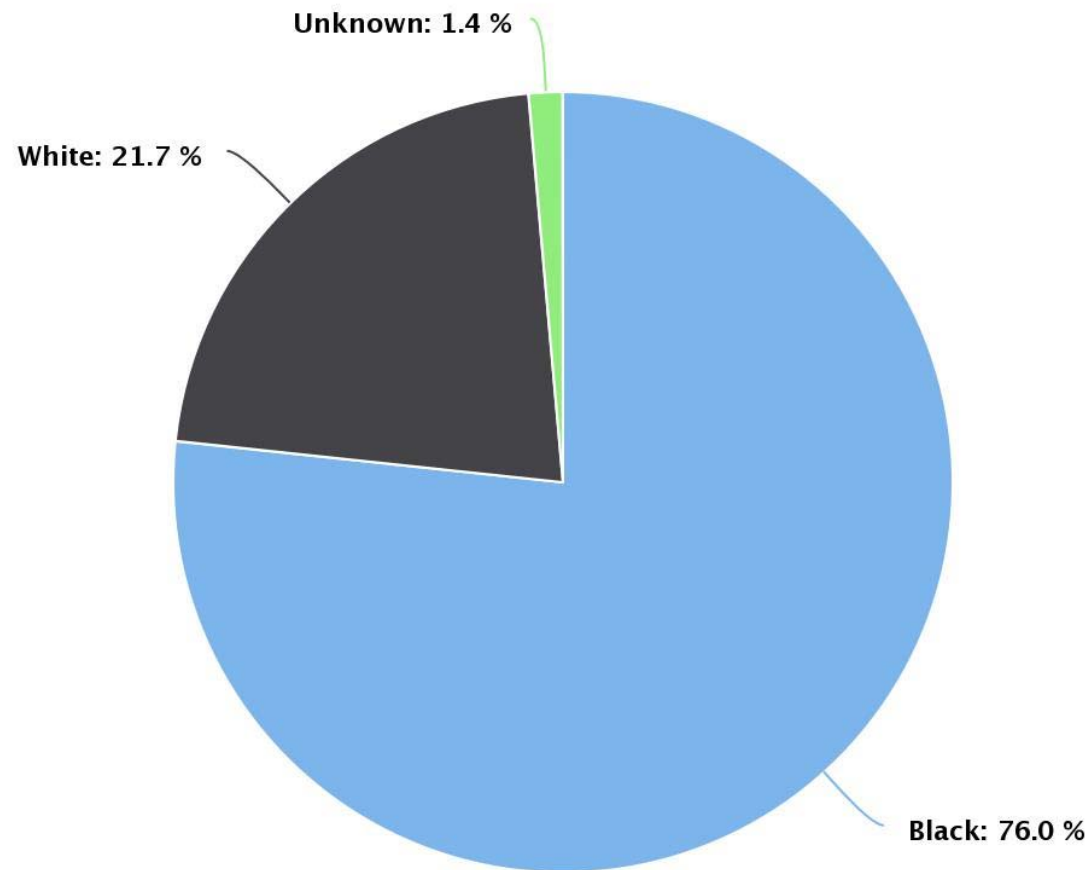
## Race of Offenders in Chicago and Rockford, 2015 (n=773)



Highcharts.com

*Note: Hispanic is not an option when reporting race into the FBI Supplemental Homicide Report program.*  
*Source: FBI Supplemental Homicide Reports, 2014*

## Race of Victims in Chicago and Rockford, 2015 (n=773)



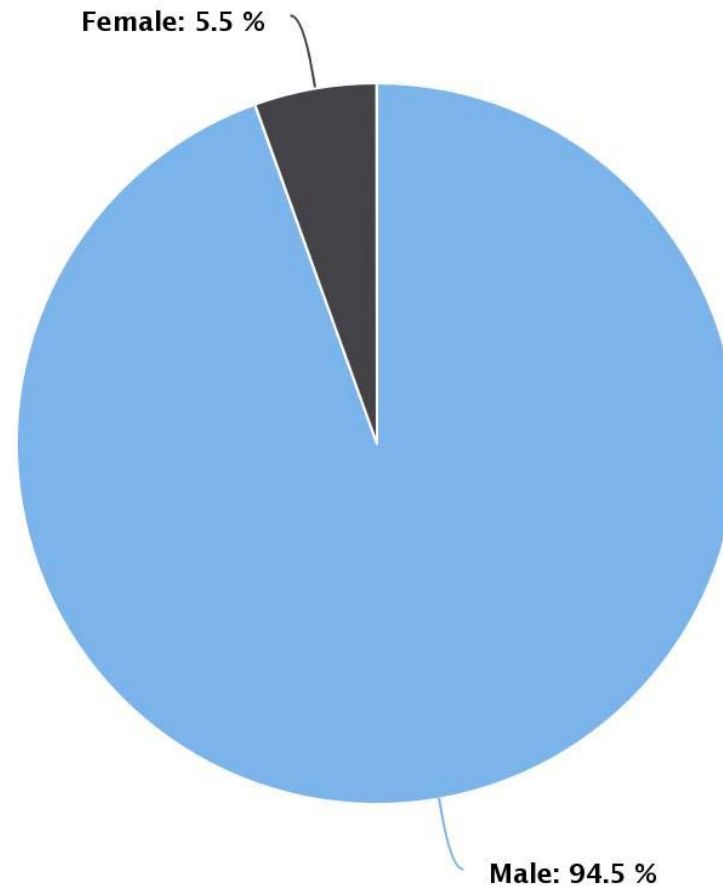
Highcharts.com

*Note: Hispanic is not an option when reporting race into the FBI Supplemental Homicide Report program.*  
*Source: FBI Supplemental Homicide Reports, 2014*

# Characteristics of Persons Arrested for Murder in Illinois

According to the Illinois State Police Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) System, of the 287,629 persons arrested in Illinois in 2015, 541 were arrested for murder; murder arrests accounted for just 0.14 percent of all arrests. No statute of limitations exists on arrests for murder and the crimes for which the arrests were made may not have occurred in 2015.

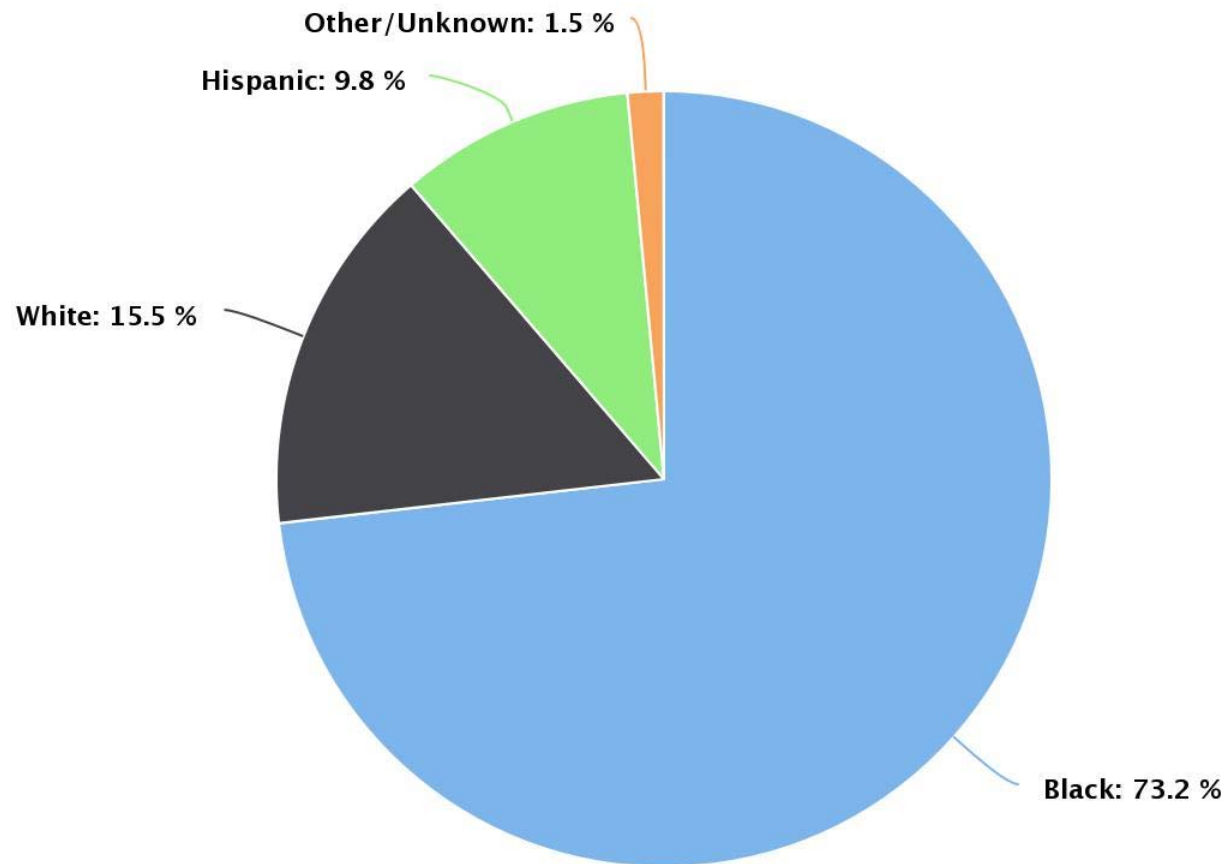
## Gender of Persons Arrested for Murder, 2015 (N=541)



Highcharts.com

*Source: ICJIA Analysis of 2015 Illinois State Police CHRI Data*

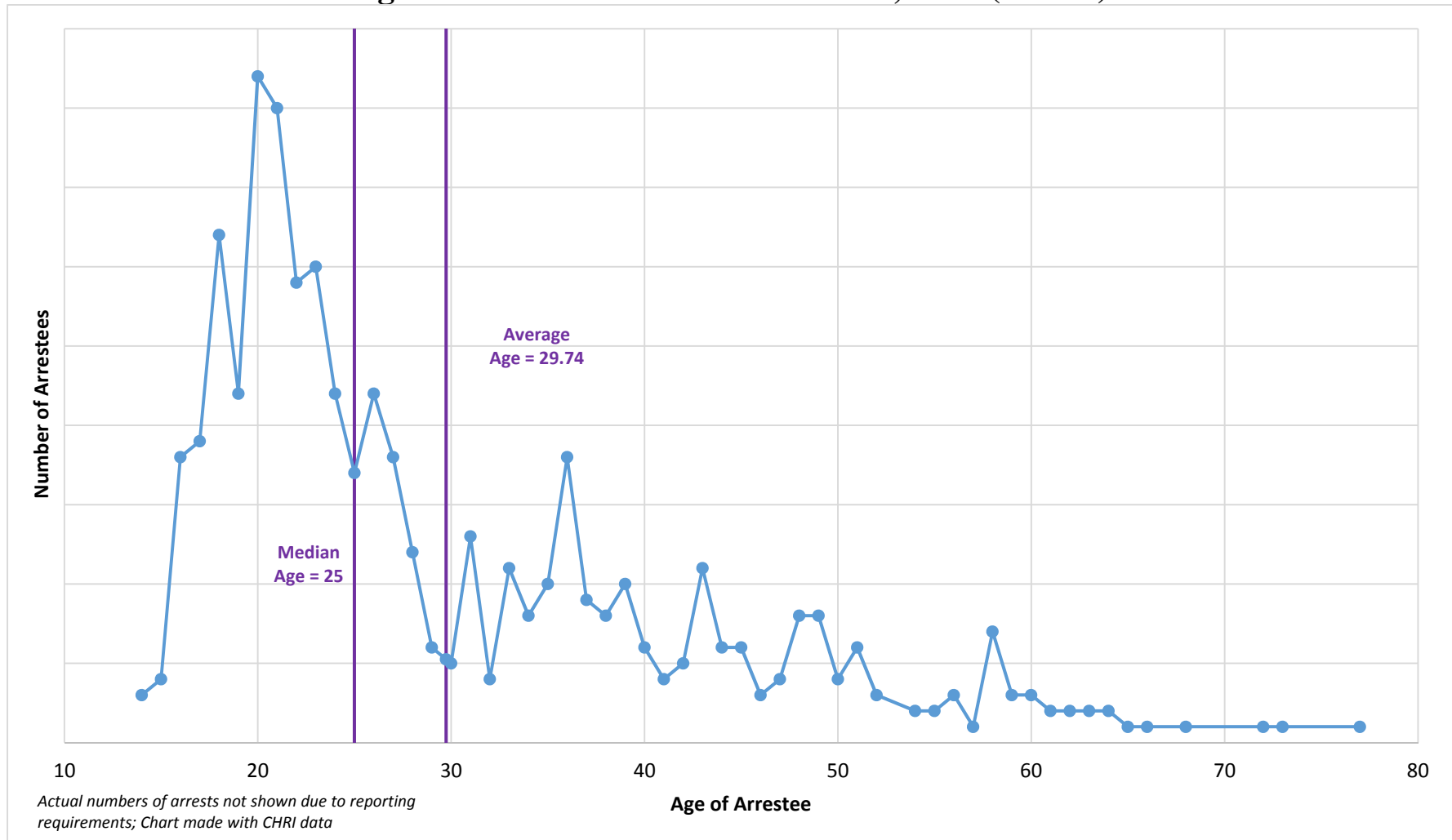
## Race of Persons Arrested for Murder, 2015 (N=541)



Highcharts.com

Source: ICJIA Analysis of 2015 Illinois State Police CHRI Data

## Age of Persons Arrested for Murder, 2015 (N=541)



Source: ICJIA Analysis of Illinois State Police CHRI Data

The median age of a person arrested for murder in Illinois in 2015 was 25.

# Criminal Histories

Of the 541 people arrested for murder in 2015, 9 percent did not have any previous arrests recorded in the CHRI System. Only arrests made in Illinois are submitted to the CHRI System.

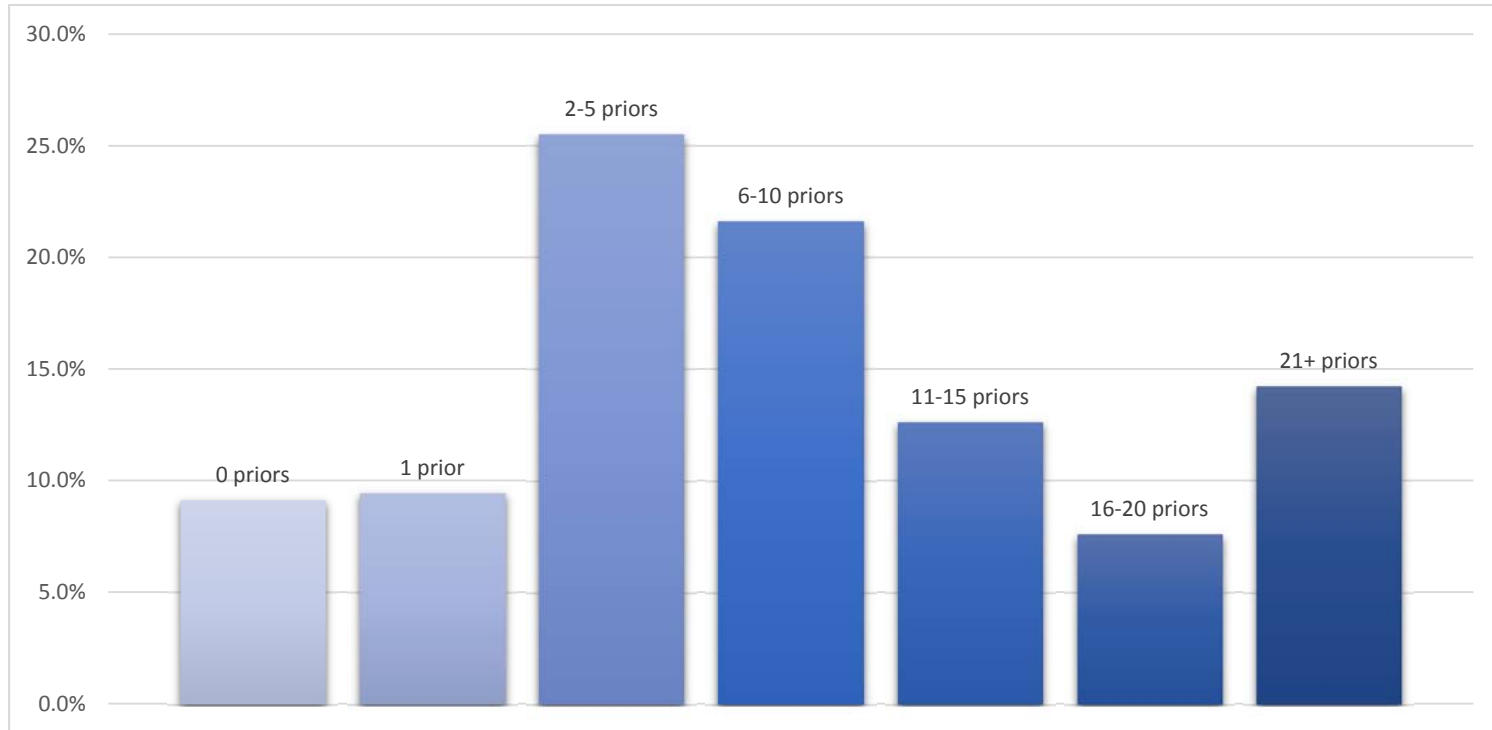
## **Most of the 541 persons arrested for murder in Illinois in 2015 had at least one prior arrest:**

- 91 percent for any type of offense
- 76 percent for violent/person<sup>1</sup> offenses, including murder
- 69 percent for property<sup>2</sup> offenses
- 56 percent for drug<sup>3</sup> offenses
- 54 percent for other<sup>4</sup> offenses
- 48 percent for public order<sup>5</sup> offenses
- 36 percent for deadly weapons<sup>6</sup> offenses
- 32 percent for motor vehicle/traffic<sup>7</sup> offenses
- 7 percent for DUI<sup>8</sup> offenses
- 3 percent for criminal sexual assault/abuse<sup>9</sup> offenses
- <2 percent for non-violent sex<sup>10</sup> offenses
- <2 percent for status<sup>11</sup> offenses
- <2 percent for endangering children<sup>12</sup> offenses

*Source: ICJIA Analysis of Illinois State Police CHRI Data*



## Prior Arrests for 2015 Murder Arrestees (N=541)



*Source: ICJIA Analysis of Illinois State Police CHRI Data*

---

## MURDER

Definition

Rates

Arrestees

**Convictions**

Sentences

Conclusion

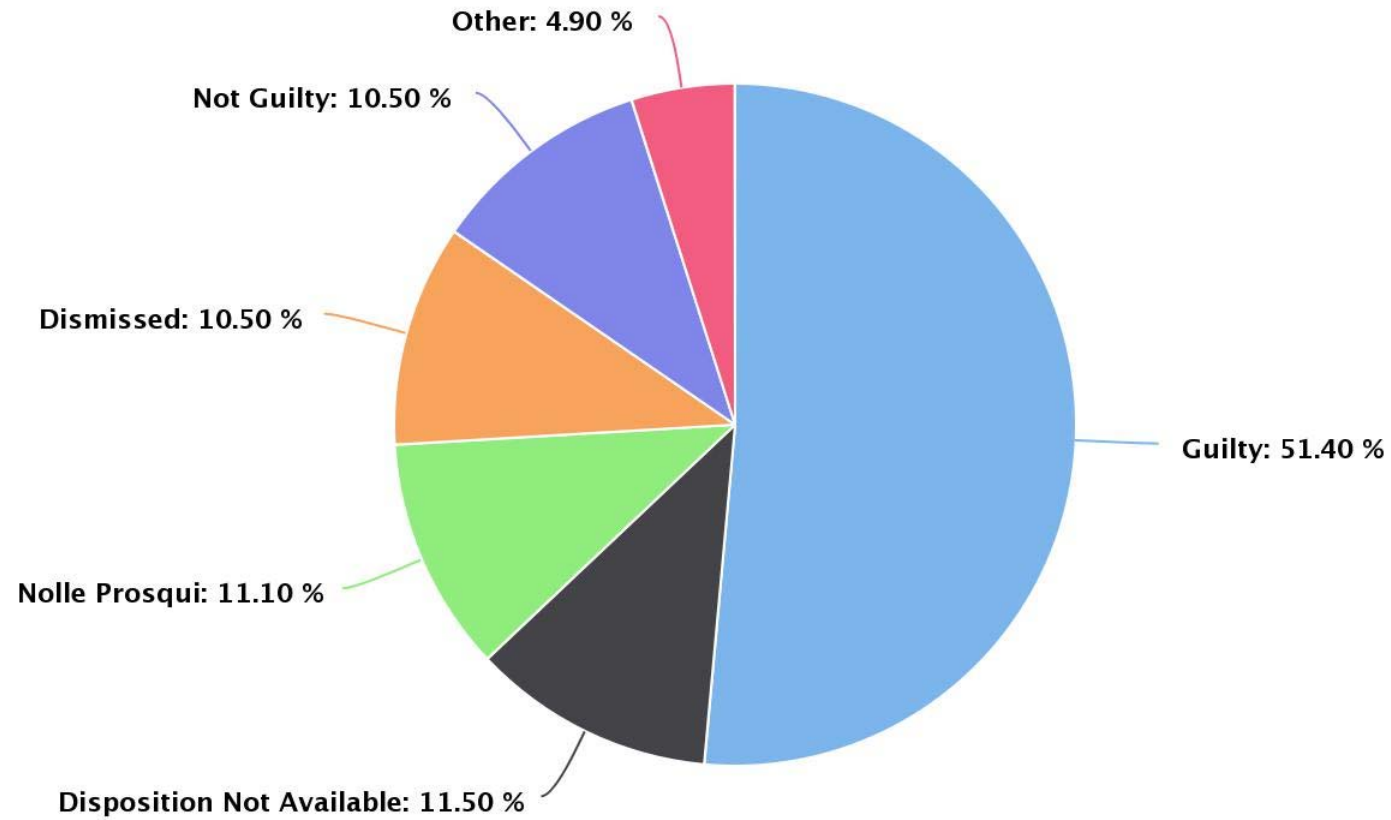
---

### Convictions

Outcome information on arrest incidents that resulted in a court case is also entered into CHRI by circuit court clerks. Since murder cases can take years to resolve, court disposition information for 2012, 2013, and 2014 were examined to provide a more complete picture of murder case outcomes.

Researchers were able to find records for 1,538 court cases for murder that were adjudicated in Illinois criminal courts between 2012 and 2014. Of those, at least half resulted in a guilty verdict.

## Court Dispositions on Murder Cases, 2012-2014 (n=1,538)



Highcharts.com 13

Source: ICJIA Analysis of Illinois State Police CHRI Data, 2012-2014

---

## MURDER

Definition

Rates

Arrestees

Convictions

**Sentences**

Conclusion

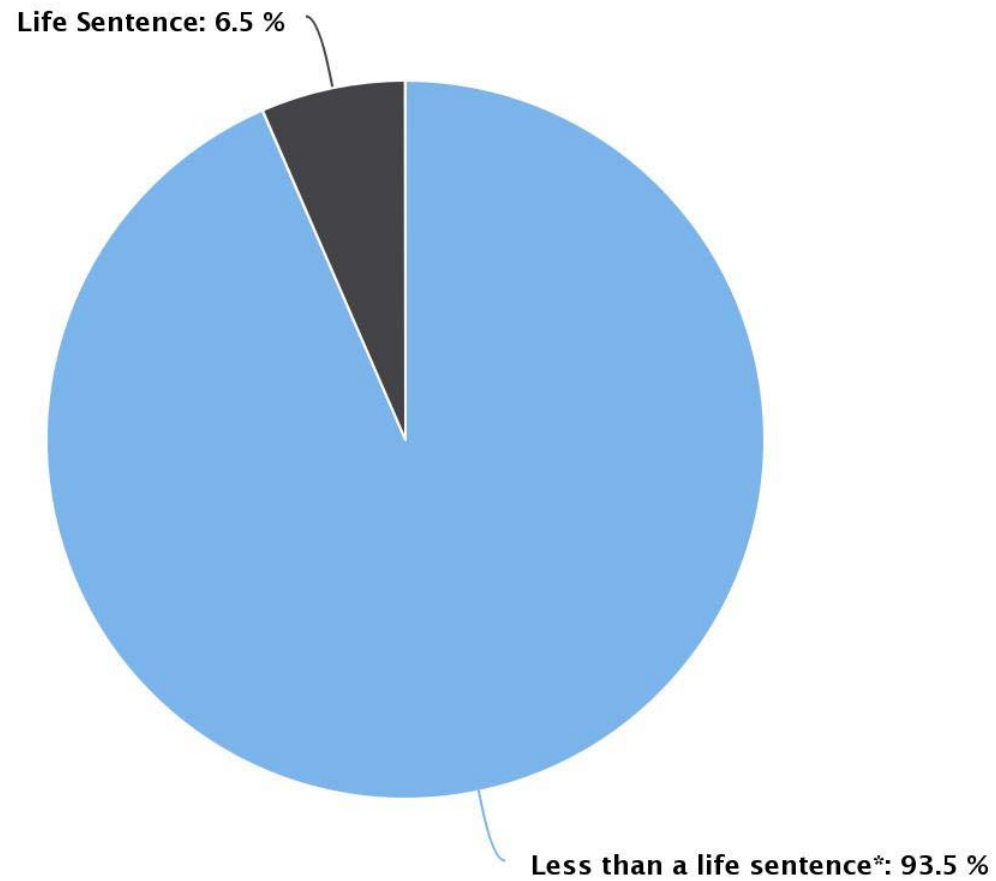
---

### Sentences

The penalty for first degree murder in Illinois is a minimum of 20 years in prison and a maximum of a life sentence. The penalty for second degree murder is between 4 and 20 years in prison. The death penalty was abolished in Illinois in 2011.

IDOC data showed an average of almost 180 people per year in 2012, 2013, and 2014 were admitted to IDOC for first or second degree murder, or 1.7 percent of all persons admitted to IDOC in those years for any offense. The average sentence length for those admitted to IDOC for first or second degree murder, among those who did not receive a life sentence, was 35.89 years. At the end of June, 2015, 1,320 persons were serving a life sentence for first degree murder.

## Sentences for IDOC Murder Admissions, 2012-2014 (N=537)



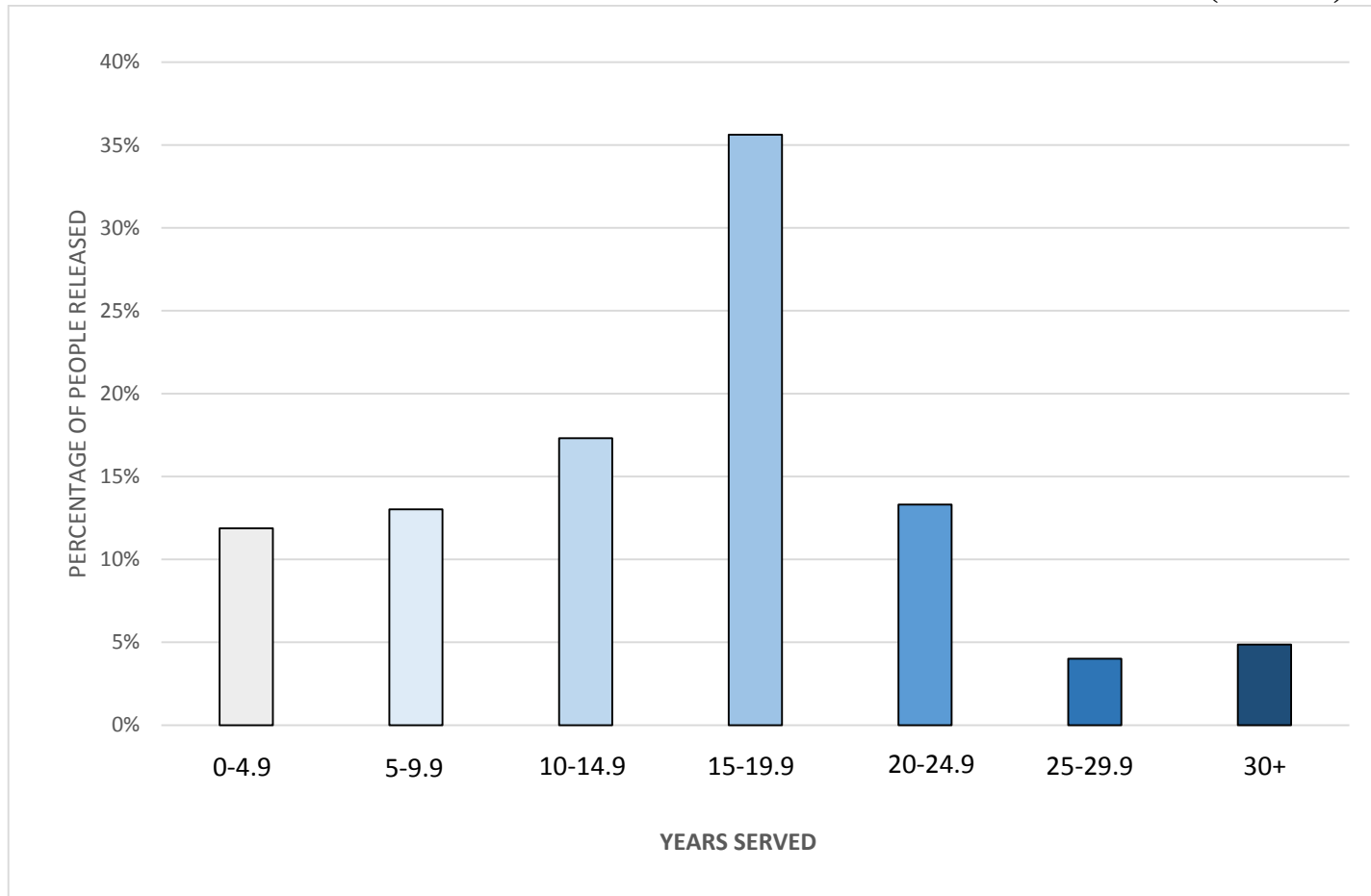
Highcharts.com 14

*\*Average sentence length = 35.89 years*  
*Source: ICJIA Analysis of IDOC Data*

# Time Served

From 2012 to 2014, an annual average of 234 people were released from an IDOC correctional facility after serving time for either first or second degree murder. The average amount of time spent in a correctional institution was 15.56 years, and the median length of stay was 16.18 years.

**Time Served in IDOC for Murder Offenders Released 2012-2014 (N=699)**



Source: ICJIA Analysis of IDOC Data

---

## MURDER

Definition

Rates

Arrestees

Convictions

Sentences

**Conclusion**

---

### Conclusion

In 2015, the City of Chicago accounted for 89 percent of all murders in Cook County and 64 percent of all murders in Illinois. Murder rates were also high in St. Clair, Marion, Marshall, Peoria, and Winnebago counties.

Data on individual characteristics of victims and offenders are limited, but the cities of Chicago and Rockford, data indicated black males were most often 1) perpetrators of murder and 2) victims of murder. More than 73 percent of all murder arrestees in Illinois were black, more than 94 percent were males, and their median age was 25 years old.

These data also indicate that because the majority of these offenders have previous criminal histories, earlier intervention is needed. Offender risk and needs assessment with resources to address the identified risks and needs could help reduce recidivism among this population and improve public safety.



---

<sup>1</sup> Homicide/Murder, Robbery, Battery, Assault, Home Invasion, Stalking, Kidnapping, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Burglary, Theft, Arson, Forgery, Fraud, Criminal Trespass, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Possession or Delivery of Cannabis, Possession or Delivery of a Controlled Substance, Sale or Possession of Hypodermic Syringes or Needles, etc.

<sup>4</sup> All other criminal offenses not included in a specific category; other offense includes Suicide and Other Public Complaints.

<sup>5</sup> Gambling, False Police Report, Looting, Perjury, Bribery, etc.

<sup>6</sup> Unlawful Use of Weapon, Unlawful Possession of a Weapon, Reckless Discharge of a Firearm, Armed Violence, etc.

<sup>7</sup> Reckless Driving, No Driver's License, No Registration, Speeding, etc.

<sup>8</sup> Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol & Driving Under the Influence of Drugs

<sup>9</sup> Criminal Sexual Assault, Criminal Sexual Abuse, Sexual Exploitation of a Child, etc.

<sup>10</sup> Prostitution, Pimping, Obscenity, Public Indecency, Bigamy, Child Pornography, etc.

<sup>11</sup> Curfew, Truancy, Runaway, Illegal Possession or Consumption of Alcohol by a Minor, etc.

<sup>12</sup> Endangering the Life or Health of a Child, Child Abandonment, Fail to Pay Child Support, Neglect of Child, etc.

<sup>13</sup> Disposition: Outcome/Decision/Ruling

Nolle Prosequi: Latin term which essentially means the prosecutor will no longer pursue the charges

Other: No Bill, Death Suggested/Cause Abated, Charge Amended/Reduced, Merged with Another Offense, Forfeit Pending, Unfit to Stand Trial, Mistrial, Warrant Issued, Warrant Quashed/Withdrawn, Modified/Trial Court, Vacated/Trial Court, Probation Terminated, Reversed/Reviewing Court, Remanded/Reviewing Court, Modified/Reviewing Court, Vacated/Reviewing Court

<sup>14</sup> 730 ILCS 5/3-6-3, known as the "Truth-In-Sentencing" Law, establishes sentencing rules in Illinois. It was originally enacted in 1998 and has been updated/added to several times since then.

It says that those persons convicted of first degree murder must serve all of their imposed sentence, while those convicted of second degree murder are eligible for day-for-day good time credit (must serve 50% of their sentence).

<sup>15</sup> This chart depicts years spent incarcerated within a state prison. Any time spent in county jail prior to conviction is not included.



**Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority**

300 W. Adams Street, Suite 200

Chicago, Illinois 60606

Phone: 312.793.8408

Fax: 312.793.8422

TDD: 312.793.4170

*Visit us online: [www.icjia.state.il.us](http://www.icjia.state.il.us)*