Crimes and Clearances

Data Set Overview and History

The Department of Justice (DOJ) Criminal Justice Statistics Center (CJSC) collects information on Crime and Clearances as reported by law enforcement agencies (LEA) throughout the state. The data are reported as part of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI), Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR) and includes the number of actual offenses as well as the number of clearances as per the UCR guidelines. Supplemental data are also collected on the nature of some of the crime types and the value of property stolen and recovered. The information is used to provide statistical data on the offenses of: criminal homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

Statutory Authority

The CA DOJ has statutory authority to collect Crimes and Arson data pursuant to Penal Code Sections 13010-13012 and 13020-13023.

Data Characteristics and Known Limitations

CAUTION:
A number of factors can influence crime counts in particular jurisdictions. The following should be considered when using statistics for comparative purposes: variations in composition of population; population density and size of the locality; stability of population with respect to residents' mobility and commuting patterns; modes of transportation; economic conditions; cultural conditions; effective strength of law enforcement agencies; policies of law enforcement and other components of the criminal justice system (i.e., prosecutorial, judicial, correctional); and citizen attitudes.

The following limitations should be considered when analyzing, interpreting, and using crime and clearance data:

1. A crime is an act specifically prohibited by law, or failure to perform an act specifically required by law, for which punishment is prescribed (California Penal Code section 15).

2. The eight crime offenses collected as part of the UCR Program were chosen because of their seriousness, frequency of occurrence, and likelihood of being reported to law enforcement. These offenses include criminal homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, larceny-theft, and arson.

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3. In 2011, California law raised the lower limit of felony theft from $400 to $950. As a result, the property crime category now includes all reported or "total" larceny-theft rather than only those valued at over $400. The 2002 - 2010 property crime totals and crime rates have been adjusted to reflect this change. Therefore, the data tables included on this website may appear inconsistent with previously reported data. Larceny-theft dollar amounts are estimated values of property stolen.

4. In 2013, the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program revised the definition of "forcible rape" (the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will) to "rape" and is defined as "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." The California DOJ implemented this definition change in January 2014, leading to an increase in reported rapes. (Note: During 2014, agencies were encouraged to report using the new definition, but were allowed to report under the historical definition while transitioning their reporting systems. All rape data submitted in 2014 – whether collected under the revised definition or the historical definition – are presented in this dataset.)

5. The increase in the Arson value of property damage in 2020 is due to the damages reported in the Lightning Complex Fire that occurred in Solano County.

6. 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. Arson is counted along with the other most serious offense.

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

8. A clearance rate describes the percentage of clearances reported to the number of crimes reported. A clearance rate is calculated by dividing the number of clearances by the number of crimes reported. The result is multiplied by 100. For example, in 2018 there were 1,116 clearances for homicide crimes and 1,739 homicides reported. This equals a homicide clearance rate of 64.2 percent.

9. Beginning in 2021, larceny theft value categories are based on standardized IBR to SRS data conversion which eliminates the $200-$400 category.

10. In 2016, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Director informed all state Statistical Analysis Centers that the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program would be transitioning to a National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) only data collection by January 1, 2021. The California DOJ embarked on a five year effort to develop and implement a new state repository, the California Incident-Based Reporting System (CIBRS), to house the new FBI statistical reporting format. The CIBRS repository is a combination of the federal NIBRS requirements with additional California specific data elements. The California DOJ began collecting data in CIBRS in 2021. However, not all California law enforcement agencies (LEAs) have transitioned.

    The data, starting in 2021, are a combination of both the summary and incident-based reporting (IBR) formats. There is an established method for converting IBR data into summary data for comparison and trending purposes. In order to present the most comprehensive and complete picture of crime, the summary and IBR data were combined and are presented in the summary format.

11. Definitional differences exist between summary and IBR reporting. The IBR collection has built-in validations that prohibit the reporting of rape offenses where the victim and offenders' sex is the same.

Definitions of Crimes and Clearances Terms

Adult – a person 18 years of age or older (UCR definition).

Aggravated Assault – an unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. This type of assault usually is accompanied by the use of a weapon or by means likely to produce death or great bodily harm (UCR definition).

Arson – any willful or malicious burning or attempt to burn, with or without intent to defraud, a dwelling house, public building, motor vehicle or aircraft, personal property of another, etc. (UCR definition).

Burglary – the unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or a theft. Attempted burglary is included (UCR definition).

Cleared by Arrest – an offense is considered cleared when at least one person involved in the commission of the offense has been (1) arrested, (2) charged, and (3) turned over to the court for prosecution (UCR definition).

Cleared by Exceptional Means – a clearance in which some element beyond law enforcement control prevents filing of formal charges against the offender. Agencies can clear an offense exceptionally if they can answer all of the following in the affirmative. (1) Has the investigation definitely established the identity of the offender? (2) Is there enough information to support an arrest, charge, and turning over to the court for prosecution? (3) Is the exact location of the offender known so that the subject could be taken into custody now? (4) Is there some reason outside law enforcement control that precludes arresting, charging, and prosecuting the offender (for example, suicide, deathbed confession, double murder, etc.)? (UCR definition)

Forcible Rape (***OLD DEFINITION PRIOR TO 2014***-*please reference Data Characteristics section above for more information*) – the carnal knowledge of a female forcible and against her will. Carnal knowledge is defined as the act of a man having sexual bodily connections with a woman; sexual intercourse. The slightest penetration of the sexual organ of the female (vagina) by the sexual organ of the male (penis) (UCR definition).

Hierarchy Rule – when more than one Part I offense is classified, the law enforcement agency must locate the offense that is the highest on the hierarchy list and score that offense and no other offense in the multiple-offense situation. There is a significance to the order in which the Part I offenses are presented, with murder being the highest in the hierarchy and arson being the lowest. The offenses of justifiable homicide, motor vehicle theft, and arson are exceptions to the Hierarchy Rule (UCR definition).

Homicide – the willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another. Murder and non-negligent manslaughter are included (UCR definition).

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Jurisdiction – the territory, subject matter, or person over which lawful authority may be exercised.

Juvenile – a person under the age of 18 (UCR definition).

Larceny-Theft – the unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession or constructive possession of another. Attempted larcenies are included. Embezzlement, confidence games, forgery, check fraud, etc., are excluded (UCR definition).

Motor Vehicle Theft – the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle. A motor vehicle is self-propelled and runs on land surface and not on rails. Motorboats, construction equipment, airplanes, and farming equipment are specifically excluded from this category (UCR definition).

Not Aggravated Simple Assault – assaults and attempted assaults where no weapon is used and which do not result in serious or aggravated injury to the victim (UCR definition).

Property Crimes – crimes against property. This category includes burglary, motor vehicle theft, and larceny-theft.

Rape (*CURRENT DEFINITION*) – 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 (UCR definition, revised 2013, implemented 2014).

Robbery – 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 (UCR definition).

Summary Data System – a data collection method based on the sum of the number of events or counts that occur in a specified period of time (e.g., Crime and Clearance file)

Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) – a federal reporting system that provides crime data based on summary statistics submitted by law enforcement agencies throughout the nation. The DOJ administers and forwards the data for California to the federal program.

Violent Crimes – crimes committed against people. This category includes homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

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Data Elements and Values Defined

Cell Location	Data Element	Description/Definition	Value
A	Year	The Year the data was reported for	Four digit numeric Year (YYYY)
B	County	County of reporting agency	Alpha; California County names
C	NCICCode	Reporting Agency Name	Alpha
Crimes Reported			
D	Violent_sum	Number of Violent Crimes *Violent crime is the sum of homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault*	Numeric count
E	Homicide_sum	Number of Homicides	Numeric count
F	ForRape_sum	Number of Rapes ('Forcible Rape' prior to 2014)	Numeric count
G	Robbery_sum	Number of Robberies	Numeric count
H	AggAssault_sum	Number of Aggravated Assaults	Numeric count
I	Property_sum	Number of Property Crimes *Property crime is the sum of burglary, motor vehicle theft, and larceny-theft*	Numeric count
J	Burglary_sum	Number of Burglaries	Numeric count
K	VehicleTheft_sum	Number of Motor Vehicle Thefts	Numeric count
L	LTtotal_sum	Number of Larceny-Thefts	Numeric count
Clearances Reported			
M	ViolentClr_sum	Number of Violent Crimes Cleared *Violent crimes cleared is the sum of homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault clearances*	Numeric count
N	HomicideClr_sum	Number of Homicides Cleared	Numeric count
O	ForRapeClr_sum	Number of Rapes Cleared ('Forcible Rape' prior to 2014)	Numeric count
P	RobberyClr_sum	Number of Robberies Cleared	Numeric count
Q	AggAssaultClr_sum	Number of Aggravated Assaults Cleared	Numeric count

R	PropertyClr_sum	Number of Property Crimes Cleared *Property crimes cleared is the sum of burglary, motor vehicle theft, and larceny-theft clearances*	Numeric count
S	BurglaryClr_sum	Number of Burglaries Cleared	Numeric count
T	VehicleTheftClr_sum	Number of Motor Vehicle Thefts Cleared	Numeric count
U	LTtotalClr_sum	Number of Larceny-Thefts Cleared	Numeric count
Arson Crimes and Clearances Reported			
V	TotalStructural_sum	Arson: Number of Structural Properties	Numeric count
W	TotalMobile_sum	Arson: Number of Mobile Properties	Numeric count
X	TotalOther_sum	Arson: Number of Other Properties	Numeric count
Y	GrandTotal_sum	Number of Arsons	Numeric count
Z	GrandTotClr_sum	Number of Arsons Cleared	Numeric count
Supplemental Crime Information Reported			
AA	RAPact_sum	Rape by Force - Actual Offenses	Numeric count
AB	ARAPact_sum	Attempted Rape - Actual Offenses	Numeric count
AC	FROBact_sum	Robbery: Firearm - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AD	KROBact_sum	Robbery: Knife or Cutting Instrument - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AE	OROBact_sum	Robbery: Other Weapon - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AF	SROBact_sum	Robbery: Strong-Arm - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AG	HROBnao_sum	Robbery: Highway - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AH	CHROBnao_sum	Robbery: Commercial House - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AI	GROBnao_sum	Robbery: Gas Station - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AJ	CROBnao_sum	Robbery: Convenience Store - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AK	RROBnao_sum	Robbery: Residence - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AL	BROBnao_sum	Robbery: Bank - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AM	MROBnao_sum	Robbery: Miscellaneous - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AN	FASSact_sum	Assault: Firearm - Actual offenses	Numeric count

AO	KASSact_sum	Assault: Knife or Cutting Instrument - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AP	OASSact_sum	Assault: Other Weapon - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AQ	HASSact_sum	Assault: Hands, Fist, Feet - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AR	FEBURact_Sum	Burglary: Forcible Entry - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AS	UBURact_sum	Burglary: No Force - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AT	RESDBUR_sum	Burglary: Residence - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AU	RNBURnao_sum	Burglary: Residence Night - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AV	RDBURnao_sum	Burglary: Residence Day - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AW	RUBURnao_sum	Burglary: Residence Unknown - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AX	NRESBUR_sum	Burglary: Non-Residence - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AY	NNBURnao_sum	Burglary: Non-Residence Night - Actual offenses	Numeric count
AZ	NDBURnao_sum	Burglary: Non-Residence Day - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BA	NUBURnao_sum	Burglary: Non-Residence Unknown - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BB	MVTact_sum	Automobiles Theft – Autos - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BC	TMVTact_sum	Automobiles Theft: Trucks - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BD	OMVTact_sum	Automobiles Theft: Other - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BE	PPLARnao_sum	Larceny: Pocket-Picking - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BF	PSLARnao_sum	Larceny: Purse-Snatching - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BG	SLLARnao_sum	Larceny: Shoplifting - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BH	MVLARnao_sum	Larceny: From Motor Vehicle - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BI	MVPLARnao_sum	Larceny: Motor Vehicle Accessories - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BJ	BILARnao_sum	Larceny: Bicycles - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BK	FBLARnao_sum	Larceny: From Building - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BL	COMLARnao_sum	Larceny: Coin Operated Machines - Actual offenses	Numeric count

BM	AOLARnao_sum	Larceny: All Others - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BN	LT400nao_sum	Larceny-Theft: Over $400 - Actual offenses (1985-2020)	Numeric count
BO	LT200400nao_sum	Larceny-Theft: $200 to $400 - Actual offenses (1985-2020)	Numeric count
BP	LT200nao_sum	Larceny-Theft: Over $200 – Actual offenses (2021-)	Numeric count
BQ	LT50200nao_sum	Larceny-Theft: $50 to $199 - Actual offenses	Numeric count
BR	LT50nao_sum	Larceny-Theft: Under $50 - Actual offenses	Numeric count