

Homicide Homicide Homicide Homicide
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Homicide in California, 2002

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COMPUTATIONAL FORMULAS

ARREST RATE - An arrest rate describes the number of arrests made by law enforcement agencies per 100,000 total population or per 100,000 population considered to be at risk for arrest. Regardless of the population used, both rates are calculated in the same manner. An arrest rate is calculated by dividing the number of reported arrests by the respective population; the result is multiplied by 100,000. For example, in 2002 there were 1,864 homicide arrests. The total population was 35,301,000 and the total population at risk (10-69 years of age) was 27,302,433.

$$\frac{1,864}{35,301,000} = 0.000052803 \times 100,000 = 5.3 \text{ per } 100,000 \text{ population}$$

$$\frac{1,864}{27,302,433} = 0.000068272 \times 100,000 = 6.8 \text{ per } 100,000 \text{ population at risk}$$

CLEARANCE RATE - A clearance rate is the percentage of crimes reported that have been cleared. A clearance rate is calculated by dividing the number of crimes cleared by the number of crimes reported; the result is multiplied by 100. For example, in 2002 there were 1,362 homicides cleared and 2,392 homicides reported. This equals a homicide clearance rate of 56.9 percent.

$$\frac{1,362}{2,392} = 0.569397993 \times 100 = 56.9 \text{ percent}$$

CRIME RATE - A crime rate describes the number of crimes reported to law enforcement agencies per 100,000 total population. A crime rate is calculated by dividing the number of reported crimes by the total population; the result is multiplied by 100,000. For example, in 2002 there were 2,392 homicides in California and the population was 35,301,000. This equals a homicide crime rate of 6.8 per 100,000 general population.

$$\frac{2,392}{35,301,000} = 0.00006776 \times 100,000 = 6.8 \text{ per } 100,000 \text{ population}$$

PERCENT CHANGE - A percent change describes a change in number or rate from one year to another. A percent change is calculated by subtracting base-year data from current-year data; the result is divided by base-year data and multiplied by 100. For example, in 2002 the homicide crime rate was 6.8. In 1993 the homicide crime rate was 12.9. The percent change in rate from 1993 to 2002 is a 47.3 percent decrease.

$$\frac{6.8 - 12.9}{12.9} = -0.4728682 \times 100 = -47.3 \text{ percent}$$

POPULATION AT RISK - Arrest section data tables include three comparison populations: total (10-69 years of age), adult (18-69 years of age), and juvenile (10-17 years of age).

When a series of rates are calculated using different populations, the rate calculated for the total will not be equal to the sum of the rates calculated for each subtotal. For example, the total arrest rate (calculated using the *total* at-risk population) will not equal the sum of the adult arrest rate (calculated using the *adult* at-risk population) and the juvenile arrest rate (calculated using the *juvenile* at-risk population).

Note: Calculating rates for counties of less than 100,000 will generate an inflated rate when compared to counties with populations of 100,000 or more; therefore, rates are not calculated for counties with populations of less than 100,000.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE GLOSSARY

ACQUITTAL: a judgment of a court, based either on the verdict of a jury or a judicial officer, that the defendant is not guilty of the offense(s) for which he/she was tried.

ADULT: a person 18 years of age or older.

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT: an unlawful attack or attempted 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).

APPEAL: a petition initiated by a defendant for a rehearing in an appellate court regarding a previous sentence or motion.

ARREST: ". . . taking a person into custody, in a case and in the manner authorized by law. An arrest may be made by a peace officer or by a private person" (834 PC).

ARREST RATE: the number of arrests per 100,000 population. See "Computational Formulas" preceding this glossary for further explanation.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF THE YOUTH AUTHORITY (CYA): the state agency which has jurisdiction over and maintains institutions as correctional schools for the reception of wards of the juvenile court and other persons committed from trial courts.

CLEARANCE: an offense is "cleared by arrest" or solved, for crime reporting purposes, when at least one person is arrested, charged with the commission of an offense, and turned over to a court for prosecution. Although no physical arrest is made, a clearance by arrest can be claimed when an offender is a person under 18 years of age and is cited to appear in juvenile court or before other juvenile authorities. An offense can also be "cleared exceptionally" for crime reporting purposes when an investigation has definitely established the identity of an offender; there is enough information to support an arrest; and the exact location of an offender is known but, for some reason, law enforcement cannot take the offender into custody.

CLEARANCE RATE: the percentage of crimes reported that have been cleared.

COMBINED CASES: cases rejected by the prosecutor in favor of other counts/cases.

COMPLAINT: a verified written accusation, filed by a prosecuting attorney with a local criminal court, which charges one or more persons with the commission of one or more offenses.

CONVICTION: a judgment, based either on the verdict of a jury or a judicial officer or on the guilty plea of the defendant, that the defendant is guilty.

COURT: an agency of the judicial branch of government, authorized or established by statute or constitution, having one or more judicial officers on its staff. A court has the authority to decide upon controversies in law and disputed matters of fact brought before it. Because of court consolidation we no longer distinguish between lower court and superior court.

CRIME: ". . . an act committed or omitted in violation of a law forbidding or commanding it. . ." (15 PC).

CRIME RATE: the number of reported crimes per 100,000 general population. See "Computational Formulas" preceding this glossary for further explanation.

CYA: see "California Department of the Youth Authority."

DISMISSAL: a decision by a judicial officer to terminate a case without a determination of guilt or innocence.

DISPOSITION - COURT: an action taken as the result of an appearance in court by a defendant. Examples are: adults - dismissed, acquitted, or convicted; juveniles - dismissed, transferred, or remanded to adult court.

DISPOSITION - LAW ENFORCEMENT: an action taken as the result of an arrest. Examples of police dispositions are: adults - released by law enforcement, referred to another jurisdiction, or a misdemeanor or felony complaint sought; juveniles - handled within the department, referred to another agency, or referred to the probation department or juvenile court.

DISPOSITION - PROSECUTOR: an action taken as the result of a complaint requested by an arresting agency. Dispositions include granting a misdemeanor or a felony complaint or denying a complaint for reasons such as lack of sufficient evidence or complainant refuses to testify.

DIVERSION: a disposition of a criminal defendant either before adjudication or following adjudication, but prior to sentencing, in which the court directs the defendant to participate in a work, educational, or rehabilitative program.

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DIVERSION DISMISSED: the successful completion of a diversion program.

EXCEPTIONAL MEANS: an offense can also be "cleared exceptionally" for crime reporting purposes when an investigation has definitely established the identity of an offender; there is enough information to support an arrest; and the exact location of an offender is known but, for some reason, law enforcement cannot take the offender into custody.

FELON: one who has committed a felony.

FELONY: a crime which is punishable by death or by imprisonment in a state prison (17 & 18 PC).

FILING: a document filed with the court clerk or county clerk by a prosecuting attorney alleging that a person committed or attempted to commit a crime.

FORCIBLE RAPE: the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will. Assaults or attempts to commit rape by force or threat of force are included (UCR definition).

HOMICIDE: the willful (nonnegligent) killing of one human being by another. Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter are included (UCR definition).

JAIL: a county or city facility for incarceration of sentenced and unsentenced persons.

JUVENILE: a person under the age of 18.

MISDEMEANOR: a crime punishable by imprisonment in a county jail for up to one year.

MONTHLY ARREST AND CITATION REGISTER (MACR): a reporting system used to collect information on adult and juvenile arrests and citations by police and sheriffs' departments. This register contains data on arrest offenses, arrestee characteristics (age, gender, and race/ethnic group), and law enforcement dispositions.

OFFENDER-BASED TRANSACTION STATISTICS (OBTS): a system designed to collect statistical information on the various processes within the criminal justice system that occur between the point of the felony arrest of an adult and the point of final disposition.

OFFENSE: the charged offense is the crime for which the defendant was arrested or filed on by the district attorney. The convicted offense is the offense the defendant was convicted of or pled guilty to in court.

PC (PENAL CODE): the California Penal Code contains statutes that define criminal offenses and specify corresponding punishments. Criminal justice system mandates and procedures are also included.

POPULATION AT RISK: that portion of the total population who, because of like characteristics to the specific study group, are considered "at risk." For example, if one were studying juvenile arrestees, all persons between 10 and 17 years of age would constitute the at-risk population.

PRISON: a state correctional facility where persons are confined following conviction for a felony offense.

PROBATION: a judicial requirement that a person fulfill certain conditions of behavior in lieu of a sentence to confinement. See "Straight Probation."

PROBATION WITH JAIL: a type of disposition given upon conviction which imposes a jail term as a condition of probation.

RATE: a comparison of a number of events to a population.

REMAND: to send back (a case) to another court for further action.

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 creating fear in the victim (UCR definition).

SENTENCE: the penalty imposed by a court upon a convicted person.

STRAIGHT PROBATION: probation granted to adults without condition or stipulation that the defendant serve time in jail as a condition of probation.

UNIFORM CRIME REPORTING (UCR): a federal reporting system which compiles crime data based on information submitted by law enforcement agencies throughout the nation. In California, the Department of Justice administers and forwards these law enforcement data to the federal program.

VIOLENT CRIMES: crimes committed against people. This category includes homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

YOUTH AUTHORITY: see "California Department of the Youth Authority."

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