

FRESNO COUNTY SHOWS FAVORABLE CRIME TRENDS IN THE JUSTICE REFORM ERA (2010-2017)



Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice
Mike Males, Senior Research Fellow

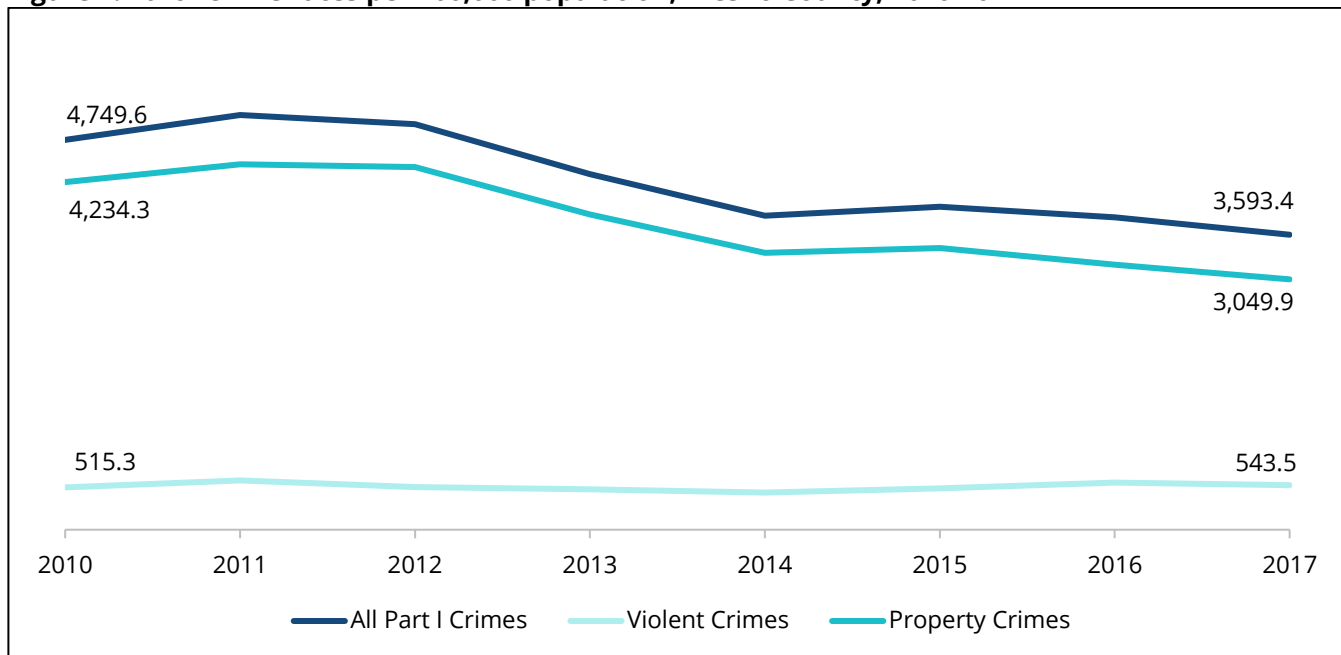
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Fact Sheet

California has adopted a broad spectrum of criminal justice reform policies since 2011 in response to overcrowding within the state prison system deemed unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court (*Brown v. Plata*, 2011). In 2011, Governor Jerry Brown signed Public Safety Realignment, requiring counties to assume greater responsibility for individuals convicted on non-violent, non-serious, non-sexual offenses who would have otherwise gone to the state prison system (AB 109, 2011). In 2014, California voters approved Proposition 47, which changed certain specified offenses from felonies to misdemeanors (Prop 47, 2014). In 2016, California adopted Proposition 57, which expanded parole opportunities for individuals sentenced to state prison for non-violent offenses (Prop 57, 2016).

Amid these reforms, Fresno County and the City of Fresno have seen generally positive crime trends. Between 2010 and 2017, Fresno County's total Part I crime rate fell approximately 24 percent, while the City of Fresno experienced a 23 percent drop (Figure 1, Table 2).

Figure 1. Part I crime rates per 100,000 population, Fresno County, 2010-2017



Sources: DOF, 2018; DOJ, 2018. * Violent crime and total Part I crime excludes rape due to a change in definition in 2014.

- **California's criminal justice reform era has seen continued historic lows in crime and localized public safety trends.**

Numerous studies by the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice have documented California's continued historically low crime trends in the criminal justice reform era (CJCJ, 2015; 2016; 2016a; 2017; 2017a; 2018). These reports also show variation in public safety outcomes across cities and counties, suggesting strong effects from local policies rather than statewide reform.

- Both the City of Fresno and the rest of Fresno County showed generally favorable crime trends during the criminal justice reform era.

Like other California counties, Fresno County saw a decline in rates of total crime between 2010 and 2017. In particular, Fresno County’s property crime rate decreased by 28 percent and its violent crime rate increased by 5 percent (Table 1). Notably, rates of all three major property crimes saw sharp decreases: burglary fell by 30 percent, larceny-theft by 23 percent, and motor vehicle theft by 42 percent.

Table 1. Crime rates per 100,000 population, Fresno County, 2010-2017

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2010 vs. 2017
All Part I Crimes*	4,749.6	5,051.6	4,938.4	4,331.1	3,825.3	3,934.1	3,803.9	3,593.4	-24%
Violent Crimes*	515.3	600.2	520.8	492.2	452.4	503.8	575.6	543.5	5%
Homicide	6.8	5.9	8.0	6.0	6.1	6.1	6.4	8.5	26%
Robbery	147.0	155.1	148.8	127.7	107.8	136.5	143.5	122.0	-17%
Aggravated Assault	361.5	439.3	363.9	358.5	338.5	361.2	425.7	413.0	14%
Property Crimes	4,234.3	4,451.4	4,417.6	3,838.9	3,372.9	3,430.3	3,228.3	3,049.9	-28%
Burglary	976.1	1,100.2	1,107.5	952.1	812.6	750.0	699.1	678.9	-30%
Larceny-Theft	2,503.7	2,571.8	2,580.8	2,223.7	2,059.2	2,189.6	2,002.6	1,930.4	-23%
Motor Vehicle Theft	754.5	779.3	729.2	663.1	501.1	490.6	526.6	440.6	-42%

Sources: DOF, 2018; DOJ, 2018. * Violent crime and total Part I crime excludes rape due to a change in definition in 2014.

- Fresno County cities reported consistent declines in property crime and divergent violent crime trends.

Crime trends varied considerably among cities within Fresno County from 2010 to 2017, particularly for violent crime, which saw a decline in the county’s largest city, Fresno, but an increase in its second largest city, Clovis (Table 2). Property crime rates of all kinds, including burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft, fell sharply in all areas of the county—urban, smaller city, and rural—during 2010-2017. It remains unclear what impact, if any, California’s criminal justice reforms have had on violent crime trends for cities within Fresno County, given these policies have largely impacted non-violent and drug offenses. This variation in crime points to differences in local policies and practices, rather than effects from any of the recent statewide criminal justice reforms.

Table 2. Crime rates per 100,000 population, by city, Fresno County, 2010 v. 2017

	All Part I Crime	Violent Crime	Property Crime
Clovis	-28%	28%	-30%
Coalinga	-15%	211%	-42%
Firebaugh	-43%	7%	-49%
Fowler	-29%	-31%	-29%
Fresno	-23%	-13%	-24%
Huron	-47%	-19%	-61%
Kerman	-52%	-25%	-54%
Kingsburg	-45%	23%	-48%
Mendota	-62%	-5%	-72%
Parlier	-45%	-36%	-47%
Reedley	-34%	-32%	-34%
Sanger	-57%	-37%	-59%
Selma	-27%	92%	-39%
All unincorporated areas	-10%	76%	-23%

Sources: DOF, 2018; DOJ, 2018. * Violent crime and total part 1 crime excludes rape due to a change in definition in 2014.

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