

CALIFORNIA'S 2019 CRIME RATE IS THE LOWEST IN RECORDED STATE HISTORY



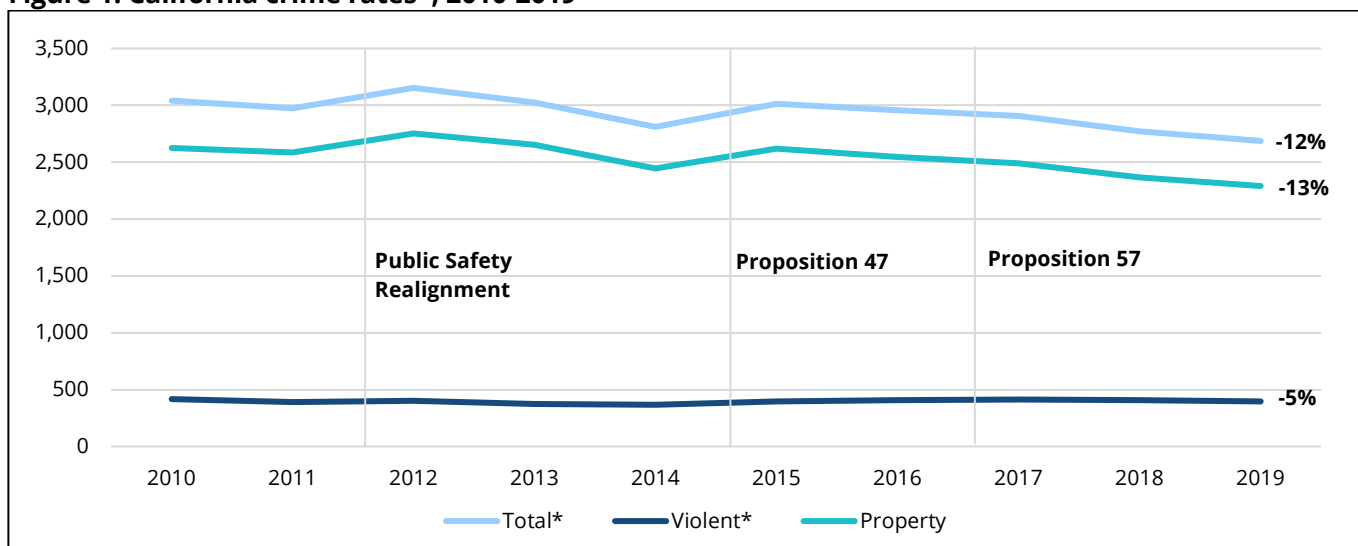
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Fact Sheet

California's crime rate, as measured by Part I violent and property offenses reported to law enforcement agencies, fell to its lowest level in 2019 of any year since comparable statewide crime statistics first were compiled in 1969 (DOJ, 2020a). Over the past decade, crime rates have declined steadily amid transformative criminal justice reforms that reduced prison and jail populations and lessened penalties for low-level offenses.

Figure 1. California crime rates*, 2010-2019



Sources: DOJ (2020); DOF (2020). *Total and violent offense rates exclude rape because the definition was broadened in 2014, hindering comparisons across this period.

- **Crime rates fell by 12 percent from 2010 to 2019, including a 3 percent decline since 2018**

Overall, crime rates fell by 12 percent from 2010 to 2019, including a 5 percent decrease in violent crimes and a 13 percent decline in property crimes (Figure 1). All forms of Part I crime, including homicide, robbery, and motor vehicle theft, declined except assault. Compared to 2018, all forms of crime declined in 2019, with an overall decrease in the crime rate of 3 percent (Table 1).

Table 1. California crime rates* and changes, 2010-2019

	Offenses reported to law enforcement per 100,000 population										2019 rate vs.	
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2018	2010
Total*	3,043.2	2,974.6	3,153.6	3,026.6	2,810.1	3,015.3	2,957.1	2,906.2	2,768.5	2,687.0	-3%	-12%
Violent*	416.5	391.3	401.0	375.4	366.6	393.8	409.6	413.8	405.3	396.6	-2%	-5%
Homicide	4.8	4.8	4.9	4.5	4.4	4.8	4.9	4.6	4.4	4.2	-4%	-13%
Robbery	155.5	144.1	148.3	139.6	125.6	135.2	139.3	143.0	136.4	130.3	-5%	-16%
Assault	256.2	242.5	247.8	231.2	236.6	253.9	265.4	266.2	264.5	262.2	-1%	2%
Property	2,626.7	2,583.3	2,752.6	2,651.2	2,443.5	2,621.5	2,547.5	2,492.4	2,363.3	2,290.3	-3%	-13%
Burglary	612.0	610.5	644.6	603.8	522.8	504.9	478.7	446.2	413.2	379.4	-8%	-38%
MV Theft	408.1	389.7	442.3	430.1	391.8	437.3	449.5	425.2	389.7	352.2	-10%	-14%
Larceny/ theft	1,606.6	1,583.1	1,665.7	1,617.3	1,528.9	1,679.3	1,619.3	1,621.1	1,560.3	1,558.8	0%	-3%

Sources: DOJ (2020); DOF (2020). *Total and violent offense rates exclude rape because the definition was broadened in 2014, hindering comparisons across this period.

- **Crime declines accompanied large-scale criminal justice reforms.**

California's recent crime declines have accompanied a period of large-scale law and policy changes known as the "justice reform era." This era began in 2011 with the passage of Public Safety Realignment, which transferred responsibility for individuals with nonviolent, non-sexual, and non-serious offenses from state prisons to local custody and supervision (AB 109, 2011). In 2014, California voters passed Proposition 47, which reclassified several drug and property offenses from potential felonies to misdemeanors, resulting in the release and resentencing of thousands of individuals (Prop 47, 2014). In 2016, Proposition 57 offered early parole opportunities for people in state prison who participated in rehabilitative programming and education (Prop 57, 2016). In addition, marijuana was decriminalized in 2011 and legalized with regulations in 2016, reducing marijuana arrests by 93 percent between 2010 and 2019 (DOJ, 2020a; Prop 64, 2016; SB 1449, 2010).

- **Seventy percent of counties showed declines in crime from 2010 to 2019.**

As is nearly always the case, county crime rates and trends varied widely (see Appendix). Forty-one counties showed decreased crime rates from 2010 to 2019, while 17 showed increases. Of the ten counties with 2019 populations of more than one million, Alameda, Contra Costa, Sacramento, and Santa Clara showed increases, while Fresno, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego showed declines.

California's record-low 2019 crime rates cap a period of substantial change in the criminal justice system. Despite initial concerns that reform would erode public safety, most communities were safer in 2019 than at the start of the decade. The variation that exists across California's counties and cities indicates that recent crime trends likely reflect local practices and conditions far more than state policies (CJCJ, 2016; 2017; 2018; 2019; 2020).

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Appendix. California county crime rates* and changes, 2010, 2018, and 2019

California Counties	2019 rate vs.		Offenses per 100,000 population		
	2010	2018	2010	2018	2019
Alameda	11%	14%	3,974.5	4,087.9	4,525.6
Alpine	11%	-47%	7,148.9	3,439.2	3,812.1
Amador	9%	-19%	2,489.3	1,845.5	2,019.7
Butte	-6%	-5%	2,999.4	3,028.8	2,841.9
Calaveras	-7%	7%	1,991.6	2,310.9	2,137.7
Colusa	-7%	-32%	2,542.0	1,855.3	1,734.6
Contra Costa	3%	-15%	3,307.7	2,716.6	2,807.5
Del Norte	26%	12%	2,925.7	2,589.4	3,270.3
El Dorado	-14%	-17%	1,783.2	1,720.5	1,476.4
Fresno	-17%	-43%	4,735.4	3,250.0	2,707.1
Glenn	-11%	-14%	2,401.8	2,333.5	2,072.1
Humboldt	1%	-6%	3,539.8	3,285.8	3,325.2
Imperial	-18%	-41%	3,628.2	2,592.2	2,124.5
Inyo	-7%	52%	1,671.4	2,721.1	2,540.4
Kern	-2%	-10%	4,187.9	3,877.9	3,784.3
Kings	-8%	-10%	2,270.2	2,220.2	2,040.8
Lake	-7%	-28%	3,263.7	2,536.1	2,361.0
Lassen	-10%	28%	1,772.5	2,525.6	2,269.1
Los Angeles	-5%	-6%	2,856.6	2,842.2	2,694.3
Madera	-9%	-17%	2,611.6	2,394.2	2,173.8
Marin	15%	1%	2,241.9	1,966.3	2,260.9
Mariposa	-6%	-25%	1,890.9	1,513.6	1,416.6
Mendocino	2%	-22%	2,236.7	1,704.6	1,745.1
Merced	0%	-21%	3,746.4	2,947.0	2,941.3
Modoc	-42%	-22%	1,424.4	1,897.3	1,106.9
Mono	42%	-32%	2,501.8	1,200.5	1,700.2
Monterey	-15%	-32%	2,971.0	2,382.2	2,022.0
Napa	8%	-20%	2,523.0	1,872.3	2,017.0
Nevada	-7%	-19%	1,760.7	1,538.1	1,432.9
Orange	-4%	-9%	2,230.8	2,114.1	2,020.8
Placer	-5%	-30%	2,419.7	1,779.7	1,682.4
Plumas	-6%	0%	2,303.0	2,443.6	2,296.1
Riverside	-4%	-10%	2,969.0	2,773.0	2,660.2
Sacramento	1%	-34%	4,133.7	2,725.5	2,741.5
San Benito	-27%	-64%	2,632.9	1,300.5	950.9
San Bernardino	-6%	-14%	3,115.8	2,832.1	2,673.1
San Diego	-2%	-23%	2,538.9	1,994.8	1,952.0
San Francisco	-1%	31%	4,796.7	6,348.6	6,271.3
San Joaquin	-4%	-28%	4,888.5	3,654.4	3,506.5
San Luis Obispo	-9%	-20%	2,529.2	2,217.2	2,027.2
San Mateo	11%	-2%	2,336.0	2,057.3	2,291.4
Santa Barbara	-3%	-23%	2,455.1	1,964.2	1,897.6
Santa Clara	4%	8%	2,497.7	2,592.6	2,705.0
Santa Cruz	-5%	-20%	3,619.4	3,058.5	2,904.4
Shasta	-52%	-52%	3,449.7	3,454.4	1,670.0

California Counties	2019 rate vs.		Offenses per 100,000 population		
	2010	2018	2010	2018	2019
Sierra	24%	-49%	2,010.5	829.1	1,025.3
Siskiyou	-2%	-16%	2,178.1	1,858.2	1,824.8
Solano	9%	-1%	3,425.0	3,128.6	3,395.0
Sonoma	-3%	-22%	2,185.3	1,766.2	1,705.0
Stanislaus	-8%	-32%	4,512.7	3,294.2	3,046.6
Sutter	-4%	-11%	2,955.8	2,743.3	2,638.5
Tehama	-2%	-8%	3,056.1	2,851.5	2,801.6
Trinity	-11%	81%	1,188.6	2,428.1	2,151.7
Tulare	-8%	-37%	4,007.1	2,746.6	2,526.0
Tuolumne	8%	-4%	2,378.7	2,123.3	2,284.7
Ventura	-13%	-22%	2,141.6	1,922.5	1,667.0
Yolo	12%	3%	3,141.1	2,880.4	3,227.9
Yuba	-2%	2%	2,659.2	2,787.2	2,719.3
California	-3%	-12%	3,043.2	2,768.5	2,687.0

Sources: DOJ (2020); DOF (2020). *Total and violent offense rates exclude rape because the definition was broadened in 2013, hindering comparisons across this period.

Please note: Jurisdictions submit their data to the official statewide or national databases maintained by appointed governmental bodies. While every effort is made to review data for accuracy and to correct information upon revision, CJCJ cannot be responsible for data reporting errors made at the county, state, or national level.

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