

FRESNO COUNTY: ADULT ARRESTS AND INCARCERATION



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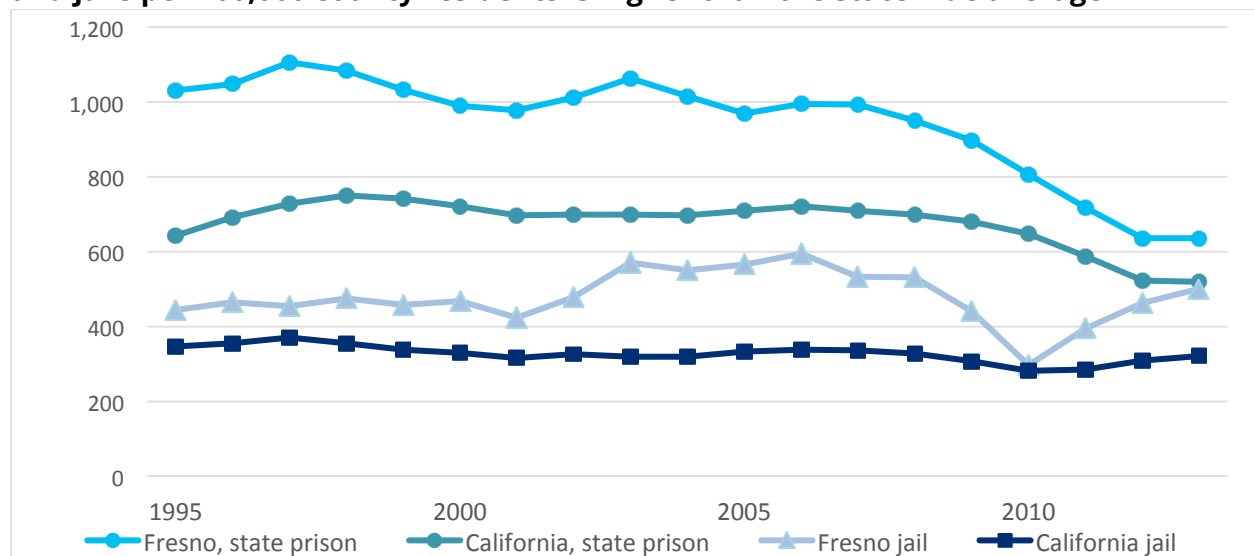
Fact Sheet

Fresno County, situated in California’s Central Valley, has an estimated 2014 population of 972,724 (Demographic Research Unit, 2014). Fresno is the largest city in the county with an estimated 2014 population of 515,609. The county has considerably higher rates of poverty, reported crime, adult felony arrests, and adult incarceration in state prisons and local jails than the state average (see Figure 1).

This analysis utilizes official statewide data sources to examine Fresno County’s state and local incarceration trends in comparison to the statewide average. The data demonstrate a significant reduction in the county’s utilization of state prison beds; however, the county continues to detain high numbers of individuals arrested for nonviolent offenses within the local jail system.

In the post-Realignment era, Fresno County has submitted an SB 1022 application for \$79,194,000 to build a new West Annex Jail facility. The three-story facility will house 300 medium and high security individuals and include treatment facilities and programming space. The South Annex Jail (SAJ) will subsequently be closed, resulting in a net loss of 199 beds. The full county proposal was granted conditional award on March 13, 2014.

Figure 1. Fresno County’s rate of average daily population incarcerated in prisons and jails per 100,000 county residents is higher than the statewide average



Sources: California Department of Corrections (2014); Board of State and Community Corrections (2014); Criminal Justice Statistics Center (2014); Demographic Research Unit (2014). Rates are for December of each year 1995-2012, and September 2013.

Key Findings

- **Fresno County's adult felony arrest rate is more than double that of the state average.** The county's violent crime arrest rates are 59% higher, drug felony arrest rates 69% higher, property felony rates 48% higher, and all other felony rates nearly three times higher than the state average. All races are arrested at much higher rates than their counterparts statewide.
- **Reported crime in Fresno County declined at rates similar to statewide trends, but remain substantially higher than the statewide average.** In 2012,¹ the county's rate of reported Part I offenses² remained 55% above the statewide average. Property crime rates are 59% higher than the statewide average, while violent felony rates are 27% higher.
- **Fresno County's incarceration rate has fallen significantly faster than the state's over the last seven years (see Figure 1).** While the county's incarceration rate is higher than expected for its population, it is lower than expected for its felony arrest rate, which is twice the state average.
- **Fresno County's jail incarceration rate is increasing.** The incarceration rate was 6% above the state average in 2010, 39% above the state average in 2011, 50% above the state average in 2012, and 56% above the state average in 2013. The extent to which local jail numbers are driven by incarceration for nonviolent offenses requires further investigation.
- **The proportion of Fresno's jail population that is unsentenced has risen sharply in recent decades.** In 2013, 69% of the jail population was unsentenced, above the state average of 63%.

Sources

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Criminal Justice Statistics Center (2014). Criminal Justice Profiles. Arrests, crimes and clearances. California Department of Justice. At: <https://oag.ca.gov/crime/cjsc/criminal-justice-profiles>

Demographic Research Unit (2014). Demographic Research. California Department of Finance. At: <http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/>

U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). *Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010*. At: <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

Please note: Each year, every county submits their data to the official statewide 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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¹ 2012 is the most recent year for which data is available.

² Part I is a specific set of 8 offenses designated by the FBI as index crime and are murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson.