# Crime Trends in U.S. Cities

# Mid-Year 2026 Update

**July 2026**

**By Ernesto Lopez, Council on Criminal Justice, and**
**Bobby Boxerman, PhD, Regional Justice Information Service**

The Council on Criminal Justice (CCJ) began producing periodic crime trends reports in July 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic and nationwide protests that followed the police killing of George Floyd. Since then, the reports have documented a sharp rise, and subsequent fall, in crime across a sample of U.S. cities.

Following the historic 30% increase in homicide from 2019 to 2020, CCJ's last report estimated that the 2025 national homicide rate will likely be at its lowest level since at least 1900. Trends through the first half of 2026 show that the decline, which began in the second half of 2022, has continued, advancing well beyond the "return to normal" phase seen after the spike in 2020. There is no single or easy explanation for these historic lows. Researchers and practitioners have pointed to a range of possible influences, including changes in criminal justice operations and strategies, technological advances, and broad shifts in society and culture.

This report updates CCJ's previous analyses, examining yearly and monthly rates of 13 violent, property, and drug offenses reported to police from 2018 through June 2026. The analysis is based on data from a sample of 36 large American cities that have consistently published monthly crime figures over the past nine years and make those data available shortly after each month ends.

As in previous reports, special attention is given to homicide. Longer-term trends for many offenses are available here, while national historical trends in crime and victimization are collected in The Footprint: Tracking the Size of America's Criminal Justice System. This report is not evidence of the success or failure of any policy or practice; it simply documents recent

crime trends from a sample of large U.S. cities.

## Key Takeaways

- **Reported levels of nine of the 13 offenses were lower in the first half of 2026 than in the first half of 2025**, with reported carjacking incidents seeing the largest drop (-47%) and drug offenses seeing the largest rise (+12%).
- CCJ's last crime trends report predicted that the year-end 2025 homicide rate would likely be the lowest since 1900 (once final FBI numbers are released). The new mid-year data suggest that **the 2026 homicide rate will likely dip further, again reaching a new historic low**. The rate of reported homicides was 18% lower in the first half of 2026 than in the first half of 2025 in the 30 study cities providing data for that crime, representing 215 fewer homicides.
- **The reported rates of four offenses have dropped by 50% or more from their peaks over the past nine years**: homicide (51% lower in the first half of 2026 than the first half of 2022), carjacking (-73% vs. 2023), residential burglary (-56% vs. 2018), and motor vehicle theft (-51% vs. 2023).
- Looking at changes in violent crime in the first half of 2026 compared to the same period in 2025, there were 2% fewer reported aggravated assaults, 6% fewer gun assaults, 8% more domestic violence incidents, and 3% more sexual assaults. Robbery fell by 17%, while carjackings (a type of robbery) decreased by 47%. **Lethality, the share of serious violent crime that is fatal, declined 23% in a sample of 17 cities**.
- Examining changes in property crimes, **there were 20% fewer motor vehicle thefts reported in the first half of 2026 than during the same period in 2025**. Reports of residential burglaries (-13%), nonresidential burglaries (-10%), and larcenies (-6%) decreased during this period. Reported shoplifting was 4% higher.
- Assessing trends over a longer period, **violent crime overall in the first half of 2026 was at or below levels in the first half of 2019**, the year prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and social justice protests of 2020. There were 31% fewer homicides in the study cities across this period. Aggravated assault (-3%), gun assault (-17%), sexual assault (-13%), domestic violence (-7%), robbery (-41%), and carjacking (-51%) were also lower in the first half of 2026 than in the first half of 2019. Lethality fell 20%.

- **Non-violent crime during the first half of this year was also generally below levels seen in the first six months of 2019**. There were fewer reported residential burglaries (-50%), non-residential burglaries (-1%), larcenies (-21%), and motor vehicle thefts (-3%), but more reports of shoplifting (+5%). Drug offenses in the first half of 2026 were 15% below levels seen in the first half of 2019.

**Figure 1. Percent Change in Violent Offenses, January 2019 – June 2026**

**Figure 2. Percent Change in Non-Violent Offenses, January 2019 – June 2026**

Press Release
explore city trends
previous crime trends reports

# Methodology

This report updates CCJ's previous studies of crime changes in larger American cities that began during the early months of the coronavirus pandemic, extending the analyses with data through June 2026. The 36 cities included in this study were selected based on the availability of crime numbers at the time of data collection in early July 2026 (see the Appendix for the full list). The cities range from Rochester, NY, the smallest in the sample, with about 200,000 residents, to New York, the largest, with roughly 8.5 million residents. The mean population of the cities for which crime data were available is approximately 986,000, while the median population is roughly 606,000.

Crime data for the report were obtained from online portals of city police departments that provided monthly incident-level data for the period between January 2018 and June 2026.[1] Offense counts were converted to monthly crime rates per 100,000 city residents for analysis of monthly and half-year trends. Offense classifications varied somewhat across the cities, and not all cities reported data for each crime. The number of cities reporting crime data ranged from a high of 32 for motor vehicle theft to a low of seven for carjacking. Trends in offenses with fewer reporting cities should be viewed with additional caution. (See the Appendix for a list of which offenses are included for which cities.)

The crime incident data for this report were obtained within days of the end of the study period to provide a timely snapshot of crime across the nation at the midpoint of the year.[2]

As a result, these figures may, and often do, differ from data subsequently published by individual police departments.

The transition of national law enforcement data to the National Incident-Based Reporting System[3] also may have affected preliminary incident data for some jurisdictions, and the CCJ findings may differ from other counts released later by the FBI as part of its national crime reporting program, or data reported by other nongovernmental organizations. In addition, the figures may differ from those in previous CCJ reports because they are based on a different number and mix of cities. CCJ excludes some offenses from its analysis if there is a significant difference between the incident data collected and other published numbers. As such, the data in this report should be viewed as preliminary.

The city sample used for this report is not necessarily representative of every large American city or the nation as a whole. Finally, it is also important to recognize that many offenses are not reported to law enforcement, so law enforcement data understate the total volume of crime.[4] Data collected for this report are subject to revision by local jurisdictions. Final totals should be obtained from individual police agencies.

**Better Crime Data, Better Crime Policy**

In June 2024, the Council on Criminal Justice Crime Trends Working Group released a set of findings and recommendations to improve the country's crime data infrastructure and reporting. The group's proposals create a roadmap for action at the federal, state, and local levels to accelerate progress toward a national crime trends monitoring system that generates the timely, accurate, complete, and usable data critical to improving crime control and prevention strategies.

Since the publication of the Working Group's findings, the FBI has implemented two major changes to national crime data, consistent with the group's recommendations. First, the FBI now releases monthly crime data. Second, the FBI has expanded its crime data collection to include non-fatal shootings. In addition, the FBI has emphasized that the reported crime statistics reflect only incidents reported to law enforcement, an important clarification that acknowledges the gap between crime occurrence and crime reporting and moves the field toward a more complete understanding of crime trends.

Other pending proposals from the Working Group include sufficiently funding the federal Bureau of Justice Statistics; joint publication by federal agencies of a comprehensive annual compendium of crime in the U.S. that simultaneously reports law enforcement and

victimization survey data and includes cybercrime, hate crime, securities fraud, and other important types of crime; and establishment of a National Justice Data Analysis Center that would define national best practices for law enforcement agencies to visualize and share data, provide training and technical assistance to help agencies deploy data to improve crime analysis and prevention, and enhance crime trends data science.

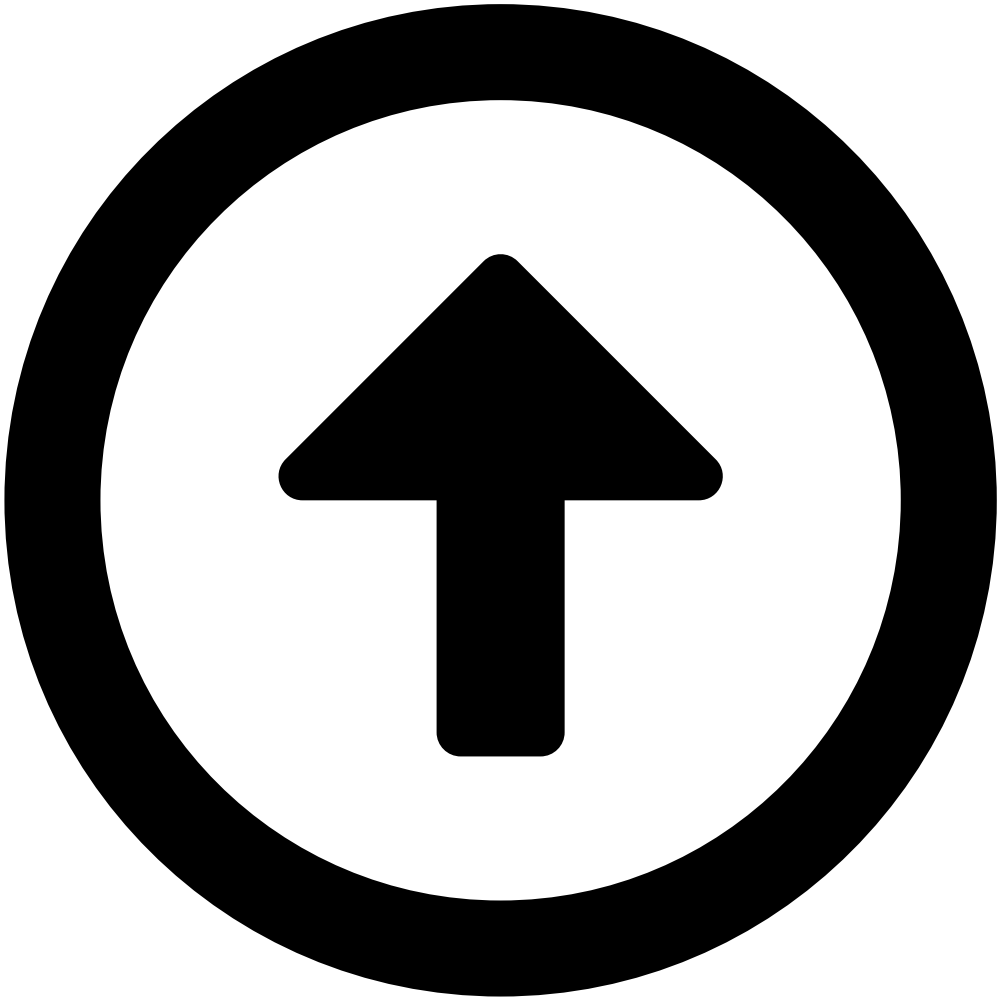
# Table of Contents


## Violent Offenses

Homicide
Lethality
Aggravated Assault
Gun Assault
Sexual Assault
Domestic Violence
Robbery
Carjacking

## Non-Violent Offenses

Residential burglary
Nonresidential burglary
Larceny
Shoplifting
Motor Vehicle Theft
Drug Offenses



# Changes in Violent Offenses

## Homicide

Homicide is the unlawful killing of one person by another and is classified as murder or non-negligent manslaughter. Figure 3 displays the average six-month and monthly (2025-2026) homicide rates in the 30 cities for which incident data on the crime were available through June 2026 (see Appendix).

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average reported homicide rate in the first half of 2026 was 18% lower than during the same period in 2025, representing 215

fewer homicides in the cities that reported data.

- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average homicide rate was about 31% lower than in 2019.
- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, the highest average homicide rate was in 2022. The 2026 rate was 51% lower than the 2022 rate.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** The monthly homicide rates for 2026 are all below 2025 levels. June has the smallest gap between months, with 2026 rates 9% lower than the prior June.

**Figure 3. Homicide Rates in 30 Cities, January 2018– June 2026**

Figure 4 shows the percentage change in homicide, by city, from the first half of 2025 to the first half of 2026 and from the first half of 2019 to the first half of 2026.

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** Homicides fell in 21 of the 30 sampled cities from the first half of 2025 to the first half of 2026. Lincoln, NE, Rochester, NY, and Little Rock, AR, saw the largest decreases, with drops of 100%, 76%, and 61%, respectively. Norfolk, VA, experienced the largest increase (64%).
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** In 26 of the 30 cities, homicide rates were lower in the first half 2026 than in the first half of 2019, with Lincoln, NE, experiencing the largest drop (100%). Four cities had January-June 2026 homicide rates above 2019 levels: Austin, TX, Minneapolis, MN, Norfolk, VA, and Pittsburgh, PA. Austin had the largest increase (74%).

**Figure 4. Percent Change in Homicide in 30 Cities, 2019–2026**

## Lethality

Figure 5 shows average lethality trends for a sample of 17 U.S. cities. Lethality is the number of homicides per 1,000 aggravated assaults and robberies. The lethality analysis is based only on cities with homicide, aggravated assault, and robbery data that are included in this report. An increase in lethality means that homicides made up a larger share of violent incidents, even if the overall homicide rate was stable. If assaults and robberies drop while

homicides remain flat, for example, then lethality will rise.

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average lethality rate in the first half of 2026 was 23% lower than during the same period in 2025.
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average lethality rate was about 20% lower than in 2019.
- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, the highest average lethality rate was in 2021. The 2026 rate was 45% lower than the 2021 rate.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** The monthly lethality rates for 2026 are all below 2025 levels. June has the smallest gap between months, with 2026 rates 4% lower than the prior June.

For additional information on national lethality trends from 1994 to 2020, please see CCJ's report. For a city-specific analysis, please visit this report.

**Figure 5. Lethality Trends for 17 Cities, January 2018– June 2026**

## Aggravated Assault

Aggravated assaults are assaults committed with a deadly weapon or those that result in or threaten serious bodily injury to the victim. Figure 6 displays the average six-month and monthly (2025-2026) aggravated assault rates in the 21 cities for which incident data on the crime were available through June 2026 (see Appendix).

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average reported aggravated assault rate in the first half of 2026 was 2% lower than during the same period in 2025.
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average aggravated assault rate was about 3% lower than in 2019.
- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, the highest average aggravated assault rate was in 2022. The 2026 rate was 15% lower than the 2022 rate.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** The monthly aggravated assault rates for 2026 are similar to 2025, with the largest difference occurring in June 2026 when the aggravated assault rate was 8% lower than in 2025.

For a more detailed look at trends in aggravated assault and other assaults, please see CCJ's fact sheet on the offense.

**Figure 6. Aggravated Assault Rates in 21 Cities, January 2018 – June 2026**

## Gun Assault

Gun assaults are aggravated assaults committed with a firearm. Figure 7 displays the average six-month and monthly (2025-2026) gun assault rates in the nine cities for which incident data on the crime were available through June 2026 (see Appendix).

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average reported gun assault rate in the first half of 2026 was 6% lower than during the same period in 2025.
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average gun assault rate was about 17% lower than in 2019.
- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, the highest average gun assault rate was in 2022. The 2026 rate was 45% lower than the 2022 rate.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** In 2026, the monthly gun assault rates were notably lower (around 13%) in January, February, and June than they were during those months in 2025.

For a more detailed look at trends in gun assault and other assaults, please see CCJ's fact sheet on the offense. For more information on gun thefts, please see CCJ's report.

**Figure 7. Gun Assault Rates in 9 Cities, January 2018 – June 2026**

## Sexual Assault

In this report, the term sexual assault refers to aggregated counts and rates of the following offenses: forcible rape, statutory rape, and other forms of sexual assault. Cities included in the CCJ sample may have kept these individual offenses separate, combined them, or excluded one or more of the crimes from their data.

Figure 8 displays the average six-month and monthly (2025-2026) sexual assault rates in the 22 cities for which incident data on the crime were available through June 2026 (see Appendix).

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average reported sexual assault rate in the first half of 2026 was 3% higher than during the same period in 2025.
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average sexual assault rate was about 13% lower than in 2019.
- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, the highest average sexual assault rate was in 2019. The 2026 rate was 13% lower than the 2019 rate.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** The monthly sexual assault rates in 2026 varied compared to 2025. April rates were 18% higher in 2026, yet June rates were 9% lower than during the same month in 2025.

For a more detailed look at trends in sexual assault and other assaults, please see CCJ's fact sheet on the offenses.

**Figure 8. Sexual Assault Rates in 22 Cities, January 2018 – June 2026**

## Domestic Violence

Domestic violence consists primarily of aggravated and so-called simple assaults committed against domestic partners or family members. Figure 9 displays the average six-month and monthly (2025-2026) domestic violence rates in the eight cities for which incident data on the crime were available through June 2026 (see Appendix).

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average reported domestic violence rate in the first half of 2026 was 8% higher than during the same period in 2025.
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average domestic violence rate was about 7% lower than in 2019.
- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, the highest average domestic violence rate was in 2018; the 2026 rate was 14% lower than the 2018 rate.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** The domestic violence rate

was higher in every month except for February, when it was 1% lower in 2026 than in 2025.

**Figure 9. Domestic Violence Rates in 8 Cities, January 2018 – June 2026**

For more information on data related to this crime, please see CCJ's report on improving aggravated domestic violence estimates at the local level. Additional details about trends in domestic and other assaults can be found in CCJ's fact sheet on the offenses. CCJ also conducted a systematic review of domestic violence during the initial period of the coronavirus pandemic and related lockdowns.

## Robbery

Robberies are thefts committed with force or the threat of force. Figure 10 displays the average six-month and monthly (2025-2026) robbery rates in the 31 cities for which incident data on the crime were available through June 2026 (see Appendix).

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average reported robbery rate in the first half of 2026 was 17% lower than during the same period in 2025.
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average robbery rate was about 41% lower than in 2019.
- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, the highest average robbery rate was in 2018. The 2026 rate was 44% lower than the 2018 rate.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** The monthly robbery rate for 2026 was generally much lower than in 2025, with the smallest difference occurring in April (8% lower than in 2025).

For a more detailed look at robbery trends, please see CCJ's fact sheet on the offense.

**Figure 10. Robbery Rates in 31 Cities, January 2018 – June 2026**

### Carjacking

Carjacking (a type of robbery) is theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle by force or threat. Figure 11 displays the average six-month and monthly (2025-2026) carjacking rates in the seven cities for which incident data on the crime were available through June 2026 (see Appendix).

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average reported carjacking rate in the first half of 2026 was 47% lower than during the same period in 2025.
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average carjacking rate was about 51% lower than in 2019.
- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, the highest average carjacking rate was in 2023. The 2026 rate was 73% lower than the 2023 rate.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** The monthly carjacking rate was significantly lower in every month of 2026 than in comparable months during 2025, except for March, when the rates were equal.

For a more detailed look at carjacking trends, including offense characteristics, please see CCJ's report on the crime.

**Figure 11. Carjacking Rates in 7 Cities, January 2018 – June 2026**

## Changes in Non-Violent Offenses

### Residential Burglary

Burglaries involve breaking and entering a residential or commercial premises for the purpose of committing a crime. Figure 12 displays the average six-month and monthly (2025-2026) residential burglary rates in the 15 cities for which incident data on the crime were available through June 2026 (see Appendix).

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average reported residential burglary

rate in the first half of 2026 was 13% lower than during the same period in 2025.

- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average residential burglary rate was about 50% lower than in 2019.
- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, the highest average residential burglary rate was in 2018. The 2026 rate was 56% lower than the 2018 rate.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** The monthly residential burglary rates were lower for all months in 2026 compared to 2025; the largest difference (-21%) was in June.

For a more detailed look at burglary trends, please see CCJ's fact sheet on the offense.

**Figure 12. Residential Burglary Rates in 15 Cities, January 2018 – June 2026**

## Nonresidential Burglary

Figure 13 displays the average six-month and monthly (2025-2026) nonresidential burglary rates in the 15 cities for which incident data on the crime were available through June 2026 (see Appendix).

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average reported nonresidential burglary rate in the first half of 2026 was 10% lower than during the same period in 2025.
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average nonresidential burglary rate was about 1% lower than in 2019.
- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, the highest average nonresidential burglary rate was in 2020. The 2026 rate was 35% lower than the 2020 rate.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** The monthly nonresidential burglary rate showed some variation in 2026, relative to 2025 rates. March rates were 1% higher in 2026 than in 2025, while June rates were 22% lower.

For a more detailed look at burglary trends, please see CCJ's fact sheet on the offense.

**Figure 13. Nonresidential Burglary Rates in 15 Cities, January 2018 – June 2026**

## Larceny

Larcenies are thefts unaccompanied by force or breaking and entering. Shoplifting and thefts of property from motor vehicles are the two most common forms of larceny. Figure 14 displays the average six-month and monthly (2025-2026) larceny rates in the 31 cities for which incident data on the crime were available through June 2026 (see Appendix).

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average reported larceny rate in the first half of 2026 was 6% lower than during the same period in 2025.
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average larceny rate was about 21% lower than in 2019.
- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, the highest average larceny rate was in 2022. The 2026 rate was 22% lower than the 2022 rate.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** The monthly larceny rates for 2026 were lower for all months relative to 2025, with June showing the largest difference (-10%).

For a more detailed look at larceny trends, please see CCJ's fact sheet on the offense.

**Figure 14. Larceny Rates in 31 Cities, January 2018 – June 2026**

## Shoplifting

Shoplifting is a theft by someone other than an employee of the victim of an item displayed for sale. Figure 15 displays the average six-month and monthly (2025-2026) shoplifting rates in the 18 cities for which incident data on the crime were available through June 2026 (see Appendix).

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average reported shoplifting rate in the first half of 2026 was 4% higher than during the same period in 2025.
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average

shoplifting rate was about 5% higher than in 2019.

- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, 2026 was the peak year for reported shoplifting incidents. The second highest average shoplifting rate was 1% lower than the peak and recorded in 2024.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** The monthly shoplifting rates were not much different in 2026 than in 2025 except in February and April, when the 2026 rates were 9% and 12% higher, respectively.

Because these data rely on incidents reported to police, and because reporting practices vary across the retail industry, they almost certainly undercount total shoplifting by a significant amount.[5]

**Figure 15. Shoplifting Rates in 18 Cities, January 2018 – June 2026**

Shoplifting and retail theft have received widespread attention from the retail industry, policymakers, and the media in the last several years. A CCJ analysis found that the median value of stolen goods per incident increased from 2019 to 2021 and that the overwhelming majority of reported shoplifting incidents involved one or two people, rather than the large groups seen in videos of "smash-and-grab" episodes that go viral on social media.

CCJ also took a closer look at shoplifting patterns in Chicago and Los Angeles neighborhoods. For a more detailed look at larceny and shoplifting trends, please see CCJ's fact sheet on the offense.

## Motor Vehicle Theft

Figure 16 displays the average six-month and monthly (2025-2026) motor vehicle theft rates in the 32 cities for which incident data on the crime were available through June 2026 (see Appendix).

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average reported motor vehicle theft rate in the first half of 2026 was 20% lower than during the same period in 2025.
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average motor vehicle theft rate was about 3% lower than in 2019.

- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, the highest average motor vehicle theft rate was in 2023. The 2026 rate was 51% lower than the 2023 rate.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** The monthly motor vehicle theft rates in 2026 were all significantly lower than in 2025, with the largest difference occurring in January (-25%).

**Figure 16. Motor Vehicle Theft Rates in 32 Cities, January 2018 – June 2026**

Figure 17 shows the percentage change in motor vehicle theft, by city, from the first half of 2025 to the first half of 2026 and from the first half of 2019 to the first half of 2026.

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** In 27 of the 32 cities reporting data, motor vehicle thefts decreased from the first half of 2025 to the first half of 2026. Washington, DC, and Colorado Springs, CO, had the largest declines—54% and 50%, respectively. Norfolk, VA, experienced the largest increase (26%).
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Half of the 32 cities had higher motor vehicle theft rates in the first six months of 2026 than during the same period in 2019, with the other half experiencing declines. New York had the largest increase (161%) and Salt Lake City, UT, had the largest decline (57%). For the most up-to-date information on a specific city, please visit its website.

**Figure 17. Percentage Change in Motor Vehicle Theft Rates in 32 Cities, 2019 – 2026**

The increase in motor vehicle theft over recent years reversed a decades-long decline. Motor vehicle theft peaked in 1991 at a nationwide rate of 659 per 100,000 people. By 2019, that rate had dropped 67%, to 221 per 100,000 people—nearly identical to the rate in 1963. By 2023, however, the motor vehicle theft rate had climbed to 321, the highest rate since 2007, when it stood at 365. In addition to its direct impacts on victims, motor vehicle theft merits concern because stolen vehicles are often used to commit other crimes, including robberies, burglaries, and drive-by shootings. Please see the Council's fact sheet on motor vehicle theft for a more detailed look at the offense.

### Drug Offenses

Drug offenses include arrests for the manufacture, sale, or possession of illicit drugs. Figure 18 displays the average six-month and monthly (2025-2026) drug offense rates in the 18 cities for which incident data on the crime were available through June 2026 (see Appendix).

- **Change 2025-2026 (January to June):** The average reported drug offense rate in the first half of 2026 was 12% higher than during the same period in 2025.
- **Change 2019-2026 (January to June):** Across the sample cities, the 2026 average drug offense rate was about 15% lower than in 2019.
- **Change from peak (January to June):** Over the past nine years, the highest average drug offense rate was in 2018. The 2026 rate was 29% lower than the 2018 rate.
- **Monthly rates from 2025 and 2026 (January to June):** The monthly drug offense rates for 2026 were higher in every month, compared to 2025. The largest difference (16%) occurred in February.

**Figure 18. Drug Offense Rates in 18 Cities, January 2018 – June 2026**

## Summary and Conclusion

This study is the 17th in a series of CCJ reports exploring crime patterns since the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic and establishment of the Council's National Commission on COVID-19 and Criminal Justice in the summer of 2020. Updating the earlier analyses, this study finds that nearly all categories of reported crime declined through June 2026 across a sample of three dozen U.S. cities. Homicide fell 18% compared to mid-2025 levels. Given that trajectory, the 2026 U.S. homicide rate will very likely continue to be below levels not seen since 1900, depending on the finalized FBI rates.

As the Council's last crime trends report emphasized, there is no single or easy explanation for the broad drop in crime. It likely reflects a combination of demographic, behavioral, and public policy changes that have affected homicide and other offenses in different ways. Although public attention has focused largely on homicide, many other offenses have also fallen below 2019 levels. Their trajectories, however, have varied considerably over the last

nine years, and most have not reached the same historic lows as homicide. Most notably, aggravated assault, an offense closely related to homicide, experienced a smaller decline relative to homicide. This difference suggests that the homicide decline may reflect dynamics that are not fully captured by broader trends in violence.

Changes in the reporting of offenses to police may contribute to short-term differences, but the forces shaping these longer-term trends remain unclear. Understanding them matters: Violence causes profound harm to communities across the country, while elevated levels of property crime can increase fear and reinforce public perceptions that crime is rising—and is worse than it actually is.

Scholars should continue tackling the "why" and "what works" dimensions of this critical policy challenge. To advance that knowledge, CCJ is convening in September a two-day summit of researchers from criminology, economics, psychology, sociology, public health, and related disciplines for a structured discussion of what may be driving the homicide decline. In addition, the Council has commissioned a series of research briefs to examine more than a dozen potential contributing factors. Together, these efforts build on CCJ's prior work on violent crime and crime trends more generally.

As we continue to gain deeper understanding of the dynamics behind the nation's crime trends, communities should invest in strategies that are supported by rigorous research and producing tangible results on the ground. For families who have lost loved ones to violence, even the continuing progress of 2026 is of little comfort. Keeping that in mind will help the United States stay on track toward a future of even greater public safety.

## Offense Dashboards

### Monthly Crime Trends by Type and City, 2018 – June 2026

## Appendix

### Figure A1. Monthly Crime Rates, January 2018 – June 2026

### Table A1. List of Cities and Offenses Included in Report

**KEY**

1. Homicide
2. Aggravated Assault
3. Gun Assaults
4. Sexual Assault
5. Domestic Violence
6. Robbery
7. Carjacking
8. Residential Burglary
9. Nonresidential Burglary
10. Larceny
11. Shoplifting
12. Motor Vehicle Theft
13. Drug Offenses

## About the Authors

Ernesto Lopez is a senior research specialist with the Council on Criminal Justice. His work currently focuses on analyzing and interpreting crime and criminal justice data to understand patterns and shifts across the broader crime landscape.

Bobby Boxerman, PhD, is a research analyst with the Regional Justice Information Service. His research interests include criminal justice and public safety policy, police education and training, violent crime reduction, and firearm violence.

## Acknowledgements

Olivia McLarnan, along with other members of the Council on Criminal Justice team, provided

support on this report.

The Council is also grateful to Richard Rosenfeld, who passed away in 2024. An eminent criminologist, Rosenfeld was the original lead author of CCJ's crime trend reports, an inaugural CCJ member, and a mentor to the authors and many others.

This paper was produced with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Georgia Power Foundation, the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, and Stand Together Trust, as well as Ford Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and other CCJ general operating contributors.

## Suggested Citation

Lopez, E., & Boxerman, B. (2026). *Crime trends in U.S. cities: Mid-year 2026 update*. Council on Criminal Justice. https://councilоncj.org/crime-trends-in-u-s-cities-mid-year-2026-update

## Endnotes

[1] Beginning in March 2024, incident counts in Los Angeles declined significantly on the city's online data portal. Data from the Crime Index were used from January 2018 to April 2026; May and June 2026 incident counts were collected from the city's online data portal and weighted using the difference between the Crime Index values and those on the portal. See: Crime Index. (n.d.). https://crimeindex.org/

[2] Efforts to compile crime data continued through July 10, 2026. Cities that had not posted full June 2026 crime data on their websites by that date could not be included in this report.

[3] Federal Bureau of Investigation. (n.d.). *National incident-based reporting system* (NIBRS). https://www.fbi.gov/how-we-can-help-you/more-fbi-services-and-information/ucr/nibrs

[4] By its very nature, law enforcement data misses many incidents of victimization, mostly due to victims not reporting incidents to police. Efforts to collect data on victimization from victims should continue to ensure we have a more complete picture of crime and those it harms.

[5] Shoplifting data for New York City is not included in this report because the city's incident data was not updated through the end of the year and the city's monthly crime summaries do not include shoplifting.