Crime Trends in U.S. Cities:Year-End 2024 Update

January 2025

Ernesto Lopez
Senior Research Specialist, Council on Criminal Justice

Bobby Boxerman
Graduate Research Assistant, University of Missouri-St. Louis

Note: A more up-to-date version of our crime trends report is now available. See the latest crime trends reports here.

Key Takeaways

This study updates and supplements previous U.S. crime trends reports by the Council on Criminal Justice (CCJ) with data through December 2024. It examines yearly and monthly rates of reported crime for 13 violent, property, and drug offenses in 40 American cities that have consistently reported monthly data over the past six years. The 40 cities are not necessarily representative of all jurisdictions in the United States. Not all cities published data for each offense (see the Appendix for which cities reported which offenses); trends in offenses with fewer reporting cities should be viewed with caution. Not all crimes are reported to law enforcement. In addition, the data collected for this report are subject to revision by local jurisdictions.

- Reported levels of 12 of the 13 offenses covered in this report were lower in 2024 than in 2023; shoplifting was the only offense higher in 2024 compared to 2023.

- Looking at changes in violent offenses from 2023 to 2024, the number of homicides in the 29 study cities providing data for that crime was 16% lower, representing 631 fewer

homicides. There were 4% fewer reported aggravated assaults, 15% fewer gun assaults, 6% fewer sexual assaults, and 4% fewer domestic violence incidents last year than in 2023. Robbery fell by 10% while carjackings (a type of robbery) decreased by 32%.

-

Motor vehicle theft had been on the rise from the summer of 2020 through 2023, but that trend reversed last year; there were 24% fewer motor vehicle thefts in 2024 than in 2023.

- Reports of residential burglaries (-13%), nonresidential burglaries (-6%), larcenies (-5%), and drug offenses (-3%) all decreased in 2024 compared to 2023. But rates of reported shoplifting, a crime that has received extensive attention from the media and policymakers, increased by 14% over the same period.
-

Examining trends over a longer timeframe, most violent crimes are at or below levels seen in 2019, the year prior to the onset of the COVID pandemic and racial justice protests of 2020. There were 6% fewer homicides in the study cities in 2024 than in 2019. Similarly, sexual assault (-26%), domestic violence (-11%), and robbery (-19%) were lower in 2024 than in 2019. In contrast, aggravated assaults (+4%), gun assaults (+5%), and carjackings (+25%) were higher in 2024 than in 2019.

- Homicide rates in some high-homicide cities, including Baltimore, Detroit, and St. Louis, have dropped even further, returning to the levels of 2014, when national homicide rates were at historic lows. Rates in other cities have largely returned to pre-pandemic levels.

- Property crime trends have been mixed over the last five years. There were fewer residential burglaries (-38%) and larcenies (-12%) in 2024 than in 2019, but more

nonresidential burglaries (+12%) and shoplifting (+1%). Motor vehicle thefts were higher by half (+53%) during the timeframe. Drug offenses in 2024 were 28% below 2019 levels.

- While these crime reductions are promising, the United States still experiences high levels of homicide compared to other industrialized nations, and progress should not slow local, state, federal, and community efforts to adopt comprehensive, evidence-based strategies to reduce violence. Furthermore, researchers should redouble their efforts to identify how broad behavioral shifts and other societal dynamics may affect trends.

Figure 1. Percent Change in Violent Offenses, 2019 – 2024

Figure 2. Percent Change in Property Offenses, 2019 – 2024

Press Release
explore city trends
previous crime trends reports

Introduction

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 December 2024. The 40 cities included in this study were selected based on the availability of data at the time of data collection in early January 2025 (see the Appendix for the full list). They range from Syracuse, NY, the smallest, with about 142,000 residents, to New York, the largest, with around 8.3 million residents. The mean population of the cities for which crime data were available is approximately 801,000, while the median population is roughly 500,000.

The report assesses changes between 2018 and 2024 for 13 crimes: homicide, aggravated assault, gun assault, sexual assault/rape, domestic violence, robbery, carjacking, residential burglary, nonresidential burglary, larceny, shoplifting, motor vehicle theft, and drug offenses. Trends in sexual assault are new to this report.[1] As in previous reports, special attention is given to the trend in homicides. Long-term trends for many of these offenses are available

here.

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 December 2024. Offense counts were converted to monthly crime rates per 100,000 city residents for analysis of monthly, half-year, and annual 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 36 for larceny to a low of nine for carjacking. Trends in offenses with fewer reporting cities should be viewed with 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 end of the year.[2] As a result, these figures may-and often do-differ from data subsequently published by individual police departments. The findings also may differ from other counts released later by the FBI as part of its national crime reporting program, or findings published in reports 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. Finally, 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.

Better Crime Data, Better Crime Policy

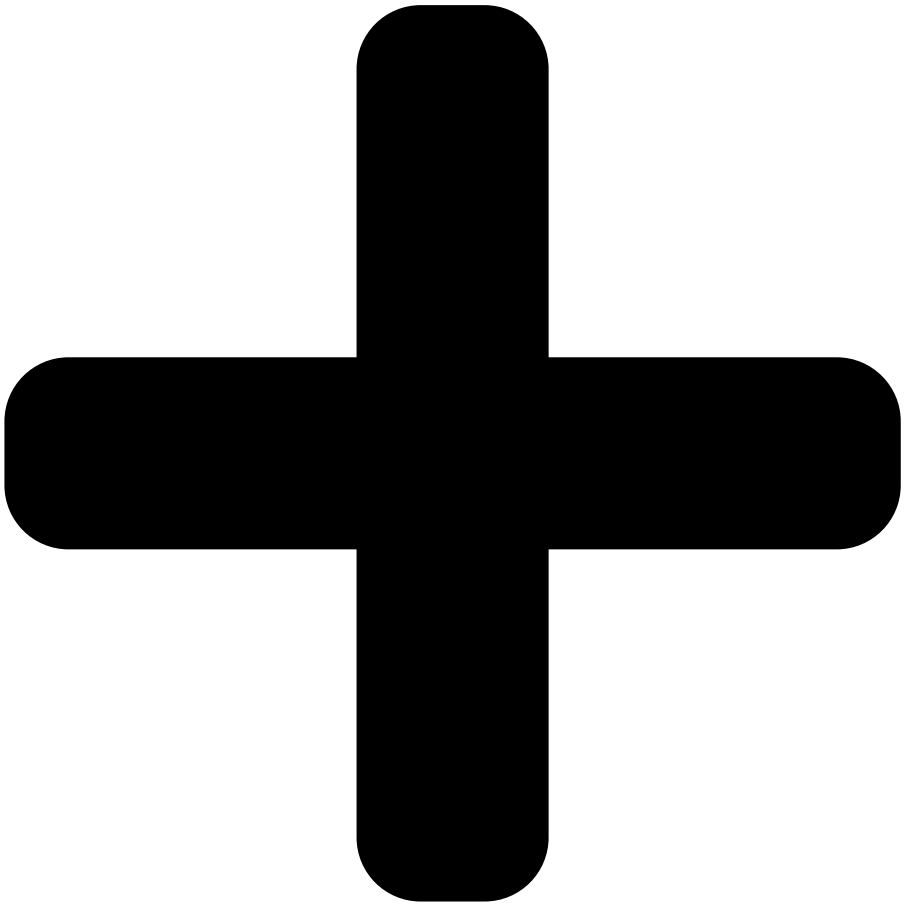
Timely, accurate, complete, and usable crime trends data are critical to guiding efforts to control and prevent crime in the U.S. But despite recent improvements, national crime data still fall short of what are needed to sufficiently inform policy, practice, and political dialogue. At stake are billions in government spending on public safety and criminal justice, the viability of businesses and urban centers, and the extent to which Americans are safe, and feel safe, in their homes and communities.

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.

Changes in Violent Offenses

Homicide



Homicide is the unlawful killing of one person by another. Figure 3 displays the average yearly and six-month homicide rates in the 29 cities for which homicide incident data were available at year-end 2024 (see Appendix). From 2018 to 2019 the average homicide rate increased by 10%, then increased another 26% from 2019 to 2020. The rate continued to increase into 2021 (+7%), dropped in 2022 (-7%), and continued to drop in 2023 (-11%). That downward trend continued in 2024. **The average reported homicide rate last year was 16% lower than in 2023—representing 631 fewer homicides in the cities that reported data. Across the sample cities, the 2024 average homicide rate was about 6% lower than in 2019.** Comparing the most recent six-month trends, the homicide rate during the first half of 2024 was 15% lower, on average, than during the same period in 2023, and 17% lower during the second half of the year.

Figure 3. Homicide Rates in 29 Cities, 2018 – 2024

Figure 4 shows the percentage change in homicide, by city, from 2023 to 2024 and from 2019 to 2024, along with the rate difference from 2019 to 2024. Twenty-two of the 29 cities experienced a homicide decrease from 2023 to 2024; Chandler, AZ, and Little Rock, AR, saw the largest decreases of 50% and 43%, respectively. Six of the sample cities experienced increases from 2023 to 2024, with Colorado Springs seeing the largest jump (+56%), followed by Charlotte, NC, (+13%). For the most up-to-date information on a specific city, please visit its website.

Figure 4. Percent Change in Homicides in 29 Cities, 2019 – 2024

There is more variation in longer-term homicide trends than short-term trends. Compared to 2019 homicide rates, 16 of 29 study cities had higher homicide rates in 2024. As noted in CCJ's prior crime trends report, the average sample decline in homicide from 2019 to 2024 appears to have been mainly driven by cities with traditionally high homicide levels. These include Baltimore (-40%) and St. Louis (-33%), which experienced the largest drops in homicide rates across the city sample. As an illustration, Chattanooga, TN, experienced a large 30% decline in homicide, falling from a rate of 19.1 homicides per 100,000 people in 2019 to a rate of 13.4 in 2024, corresponding to a 5.7 homicide rate drop. In contrast, St. Louis, had a percentage reduction in homicide rates (-33%) similar to Chattanooga's, but went from a homicide rate of 72.1 in 2019 to a rate of 48.6 in 2024, a rate drop of 23.5 homicides per 100,000 people. In other words, the percentage change in homicide between St. Louis and Chattanooga is about the same, yet the homicide rate drop in St. Louis was about four times greater than in Chattanooga.

While the large drops in murder for some of the highest homicide cities in the U.S. is a promising trend, it is possible that 2018 and 2019 were aberrations and thus may not be reliable years to use for comparisons. Given that, additional analysis for this report extends the comparative period back further. Figure 5 shows homicide trends for Baltimore, Detroit, St. Louis, Chicago, and New York from 2013 to 2024. Baltimore, Detroit, and St. Louis were selected because they traditionally have the highest homicide rates in the city sample and in the U.S. Chicago and New York are included because they are the two largest cities in the study sample and have had different homicide rates than the other cities in this figure. Since many large U.S. cities experienced a homicide increase in 2015, and homicide rates across the country were at historic lows in 2014, 2013 was selected as the starting year.

Although Baltimore, Detroit, and St. Louis experienced different homicide patterns from 2013 to 2024, the 2024 rates in these three cities were at or below their homicide rates of 2013 and 2014. In 2024, Baltimore's homicide rate of 35.2 per 100,000 people was between its 2013 rate (37.5) and 2014 rate (33.9). Detroit's 2024 homicide rate (37.0) was the lowest the city experienced since 2013. The 2024 homicide rate in St. Louis (48.6) was slightly below the 2014 rate of 50.1. A look at the FBI's Uniform Crime Report data shows that while the 2024 homicide rates for these three cities have returned to recent lows of 2013 and 2014, these rates were common in the 2000s for Detroit and St. Louis.[3] For Baltimore, however, the 2014 rate was the second lowest homicide rate since 1989; 2011 had the lowest rate, 31.4.

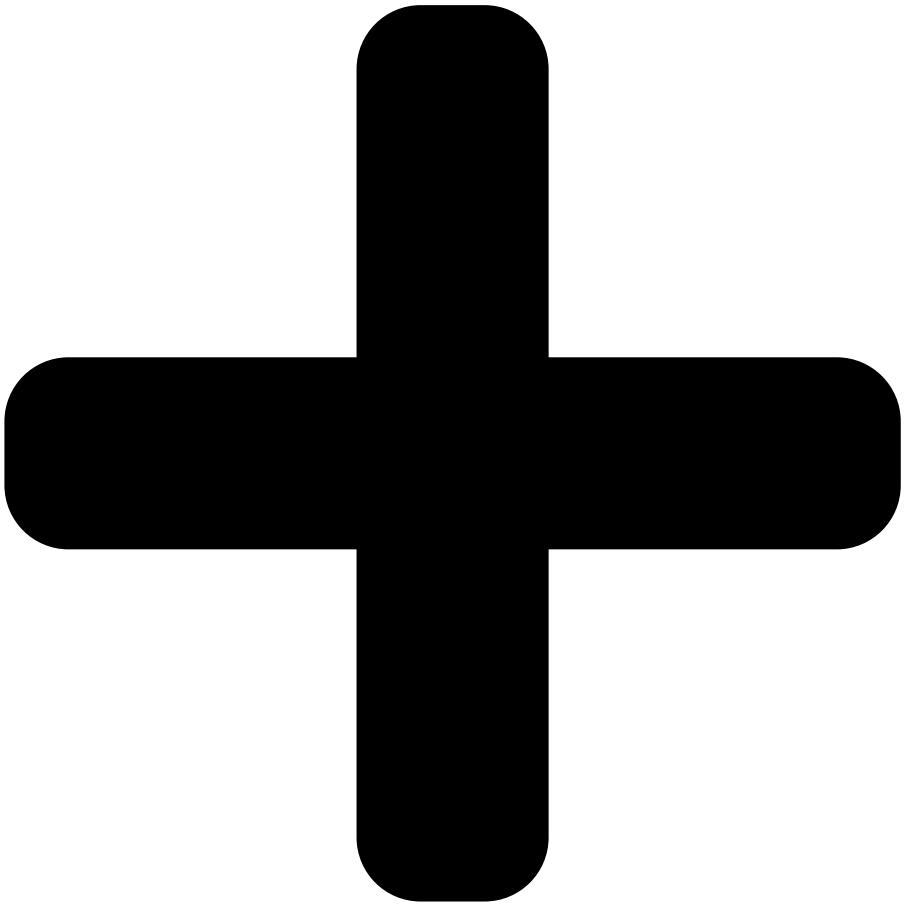
The homicide trends are different in Chicago and New York. Although homicides in Chicago have declined since 2021, they are still above the 2013 to 2015 rates and the 2019 rate. While 2024 New York homicides are on par with 2013 rates (both were 3.8), the 2024 rate is still above the recent 2017 low (3.2) and the 2018 (3.6) and 2019 (3.6) rates.

Figure 5. Homicide Trends in Five Cities, 2013 – 2024

Multiple developments could explain the rise and subsequent fall of homicide rates, but identifying decisive factors with certainty is challenging, largely because much of the research published on crime during this period has described trends but has not directly measured or tested possible contributing factors. Nevertheless, pandemic-related changes in people's daily activities and emotional and economic stress levels, changes in police practices, a rupture of public trust in law enforcement, and the suspension or reduction of social supports and programs are among the theories offered by crime scholars. For more information, please see this summary of possible explanations from members of CCJ's Crime Trends Working Group.

Aggravated Assault

[redacted]



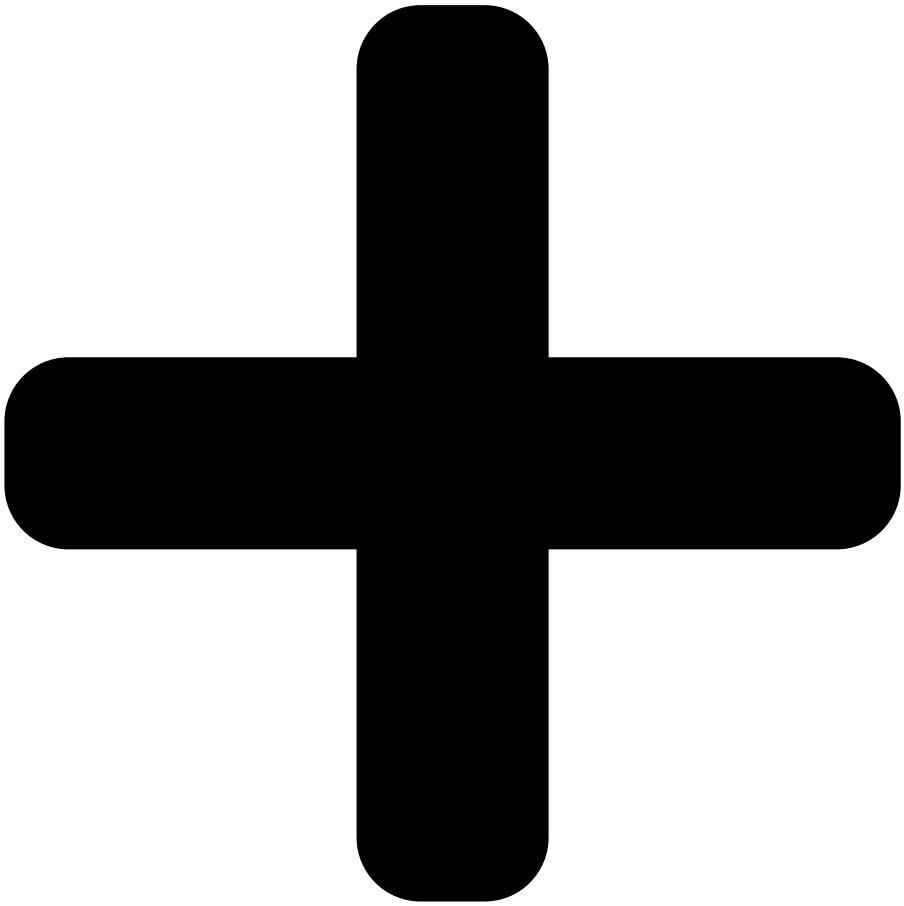
Aggravated assaults are assaults committed with a deadly weapon or those that result in or threaten serious bodily injury to the victim. Figure 6 displays the average yearly and six-month aggravated assault rates in the 24 cities for which data were available at year-end 2024 (see Appendix). From 2018 to 2019 the average aggravated assault rate increased by 3%, and then increased another 14% from 2019 to 2020. The rate continued to rise into 2021 (+2%), dropped in 2022 (-4%), and continued to drop in 2023 (-3%). **The average reported aggravated assault rate in 2024 was 4% lower than in 2023. Across the sample cities, the 2024 average aggravated assault rate was about 4% higher than in 2019.** Comparing the most recent six-month trends, the aggravated assault rate during the first half of 2024 was 2% lower, on average, than during the same period in 2023 and 2% lower during the second half.

For a more detailed look at trends in aggravated assault and other assaults, please see

CCJ's **fact sheet.**

Figure 6. Aggravated Assault Rates in 24 Cities, 2018 – 2024

Gun Assault

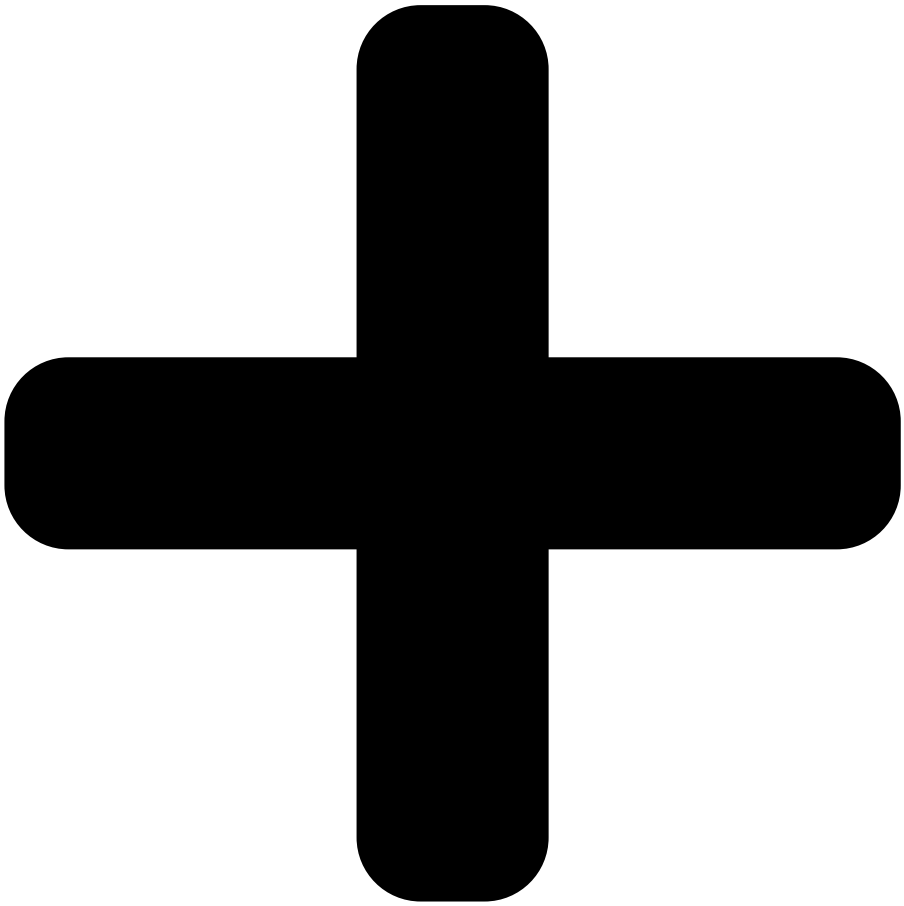


Gun assaults are aggravated assaults committed with a firearm. Figure 7 displays the average yearly and six-month gun assault rates in the 10 cities for which data were available at year-end 2024 (see Appendix). From 2018 to 2019 the average gun assault rate increased by 7%, and then increased another 38% from 2019 to 2020. The rate continued to rise into 2021 (+9%), dropped in 2022 (-10%), and continued to decline in 2023 (-8%). **The average reported gun assault rate in 2024 was 15% lower than in 2023. Across the sample cities, the 2024 gun assault rate was about 5% higher than in 2019.** Comparing the most recent six-month trends, the gun assault rate during the first half of 2024 was 10% lower, on average, than during the same period in 2023 and 11% lower during the second half.

For a more detailed look at trends in gun assault and other assaults, please see CCJ's **fact sheet.**

Figure 7. Gun Assault Rates in 10 Cities, 2018 – 2024

Sexual Assault

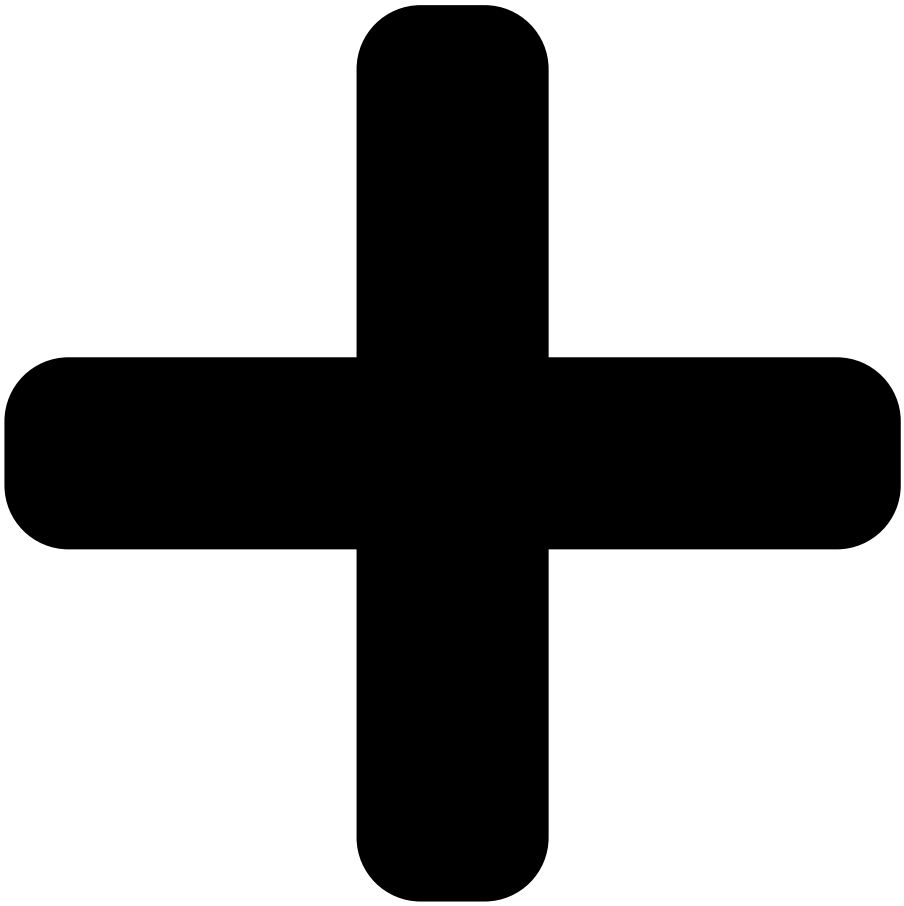


In this report, the term sexual assault refers to aggregated counts and rates of the following offenses: forcible rape, statutory rape, and other forms of sexual assault. Cities included in the CCJ sample may have kept these individual offenses separate, combined them, or did not include all three offenses in its data. Figure 8 displays the average yearly and six-month sexual assault rates in the 27 cities for which data were available at year-end 2024 (see Appendix). From 2018 to 2019 the average sexual assault rate decreased by 4%, then fell another 19% from 2019 to 2020. The rate increased in 2021 (+12%), dropped in 2022 (-12%), and declined just slightly in 2023 (0.04%). **The average reported sexual assault rate in 2024 was 6% lower than in 2023. Across the sample cities, the 2024 sexual assault rate was about 26% lower than in 2019.** Comparing the most recent six-month trends, the sexual assault rate during the first half of 2024 was 4% lower, on average, than during the same period in 2023, and 0.4% lower during the second half.

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

Figure 8. Sexual Assault Rates in 27 Cities, 2018 – 2024

Domestic Violence

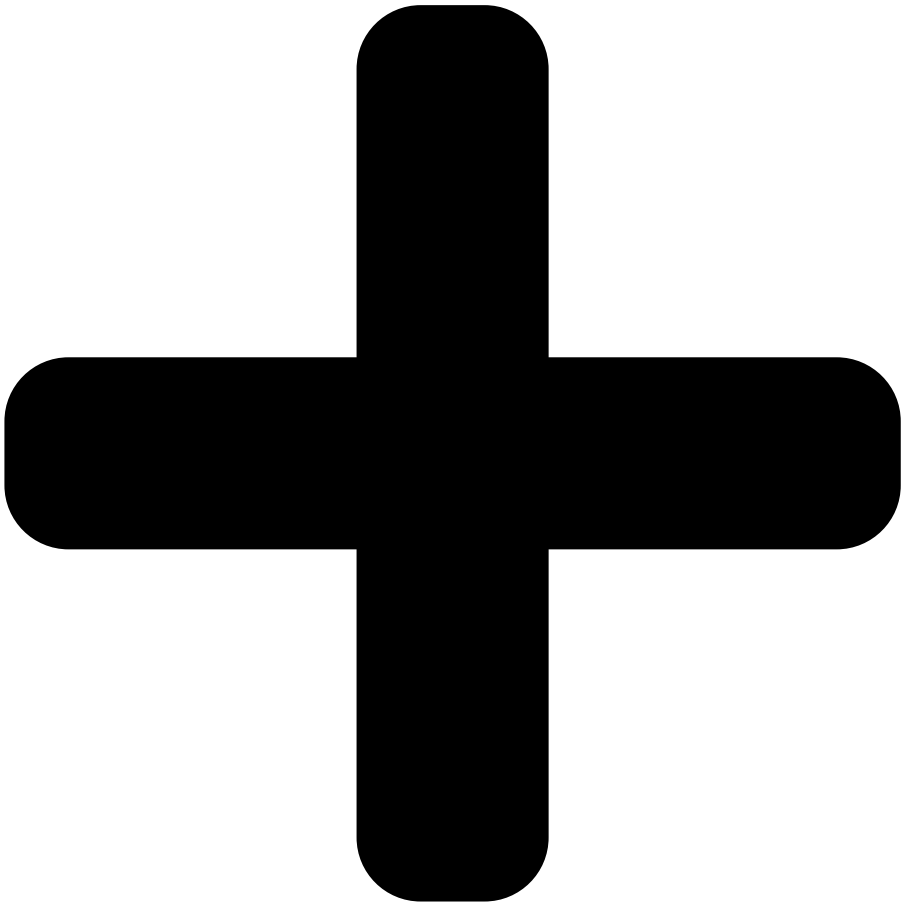


Domestic violence consists primarily of aggravated and so-called simple assaults committed against domestic partners or family members. Figure 9 displays the average yearly and six-month domestic assault rates in the 10 cities for which data were available at year-end 2024 (see Appendix). From 2018 to 2019 the average domestic assault rate decreased by 12%, then dropped another 1% from 2019 to 2020. The rate continued to decrease into 2021 (-3%), fell further in 2022 (-4%), and slightly increased in 2023 (+1%). **The average reported domestic assault rate in 2024 was 4% lower than in 2023. Across the sample cities, the 2024 domestic assault rate was about 11% lower than in 2019.** Comparing the most recent six-month trends, the domestic assault rate during the first half of 2024 was 1% higher, on average, than during the same period in 2023, and 3% lower during the second half.

Figure 9. Domestic Assault Rates in 10 Cities, 2018 – 2024

Please see CCJ's report on improving aggravated domestic violence estimates at the local level. For a more detailed look at trends in domestic and other assaults, please see CCJ's fact sheet. Additional information can be found in CCJ's systematic review of domestic violence during the initial period of the pandemic and related lockdowns.

Robbery

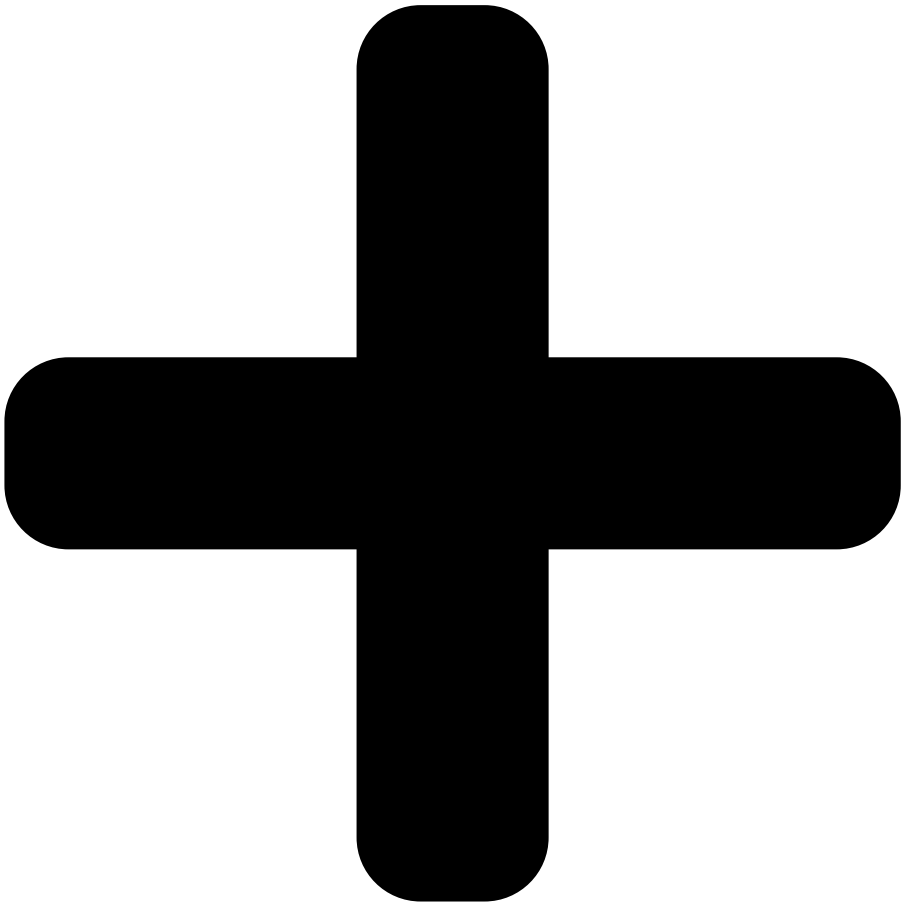


Robberies are thefts committed with force or the threat of force. Figure 10 displays the average yearly and six-month robbery rates in the 34 cities for which data were available at year-end 2024 (see Appendix). From 2018 to 2019 the average robbery rate decreased by 4%, then dropped another 8% from 2019 to 2020. The rate continued to decline into 2021 (-2%), then stayed about the same in 2022 (+1%) and in 2023 (+0.01%). **The average reported robbery rate in 2024 was 10% lower than in 2023. Across the sample cities, the 2024 robbery rate was about 19% lower than in 2019.** Comparing the most recent six-month trends, the robbery rate during the first half of 2024 was 5% lower, on average, than during the same period in 2023, and 16% lower during the second half.

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

Figure 10. Robbery Rates in 34 Cities, 2018 – 2024

Carjacking



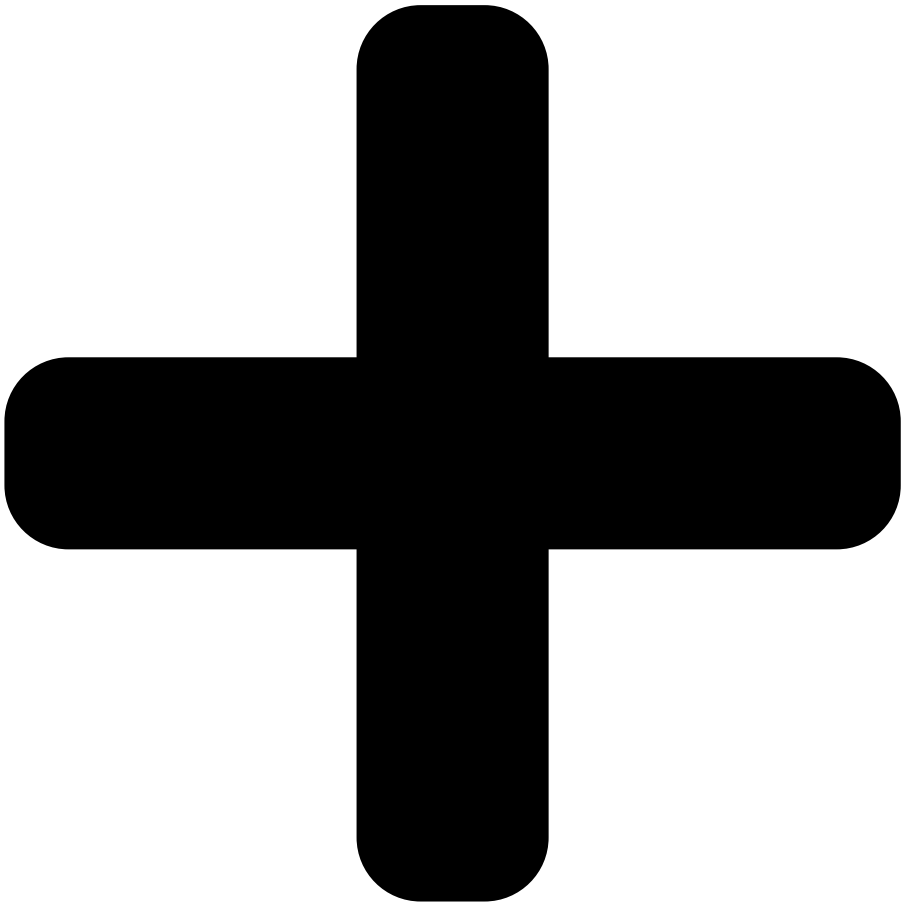
Carjacking is theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle by force or threat. Figure 11 displays the average yearly and six-month carjacking rates in the nine cities for which data were available at year-end 2024 (see Appendix). From 2018 to 2019 the average carjacking rate showed no change, and then jumped up 30% from 2019 to 2020. The rate continued to increase into 2021 (+22%), then rose again in 2022 (+12%) and 2023 (+3%). **The average reported carjacking rate in 2024 was 32% lower than in 2023. Across the sample cities, the 2024 carjacking rate was about 25% higher than in 2019.** Comparing the most recent six-month trends, the carjacking rate during the first half of 2024 was 26% lower, on average, than during the same period in 2023, and 34% lower during the second half. While reported carjackings are still elevated, this offense, though alarming and the subject of considerable media attention, is relatively uncommon (2,517 incidents in nine study cities in 2024) and comprises less than 10% of total robberies.

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

Figure 11. Carjacking Rates in 9 Cities, 2018 – 2024

Changes in Property and Drug Offenses

Residential Burglary



Burglaries involve breaking and entering a residential or commercial premise for the purpose of committing a crime. Figure 12 displays the average yearly and six-month residential burglary rates in the 19 cities for which data were available at year-end 2024 (see Appendix). From 2018 to 2019 the average residential burglary rate decreased by 10%, then dropped another 16% from 2019 to 2020. The rate continued to fall into 2021 (-6%), then decreased again in 2022 (-5%) and in 2023 (-4%). **The average reported residential burglary rate in 2024 was 13% lower than in 2023. Across the sample cities, the 2024 residential burglary rate was about 38% lower than in 2019.** Comparing the most recent six-month trends, the residential burglary rate during the first half of 2024 was 10% lower, on average, than during the same period in 2023, and 12% lower during the second half.

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

Figure 12. Residential Burglary Rates in 19 Cities, 2018 – 2024

Nonresidential Burglary

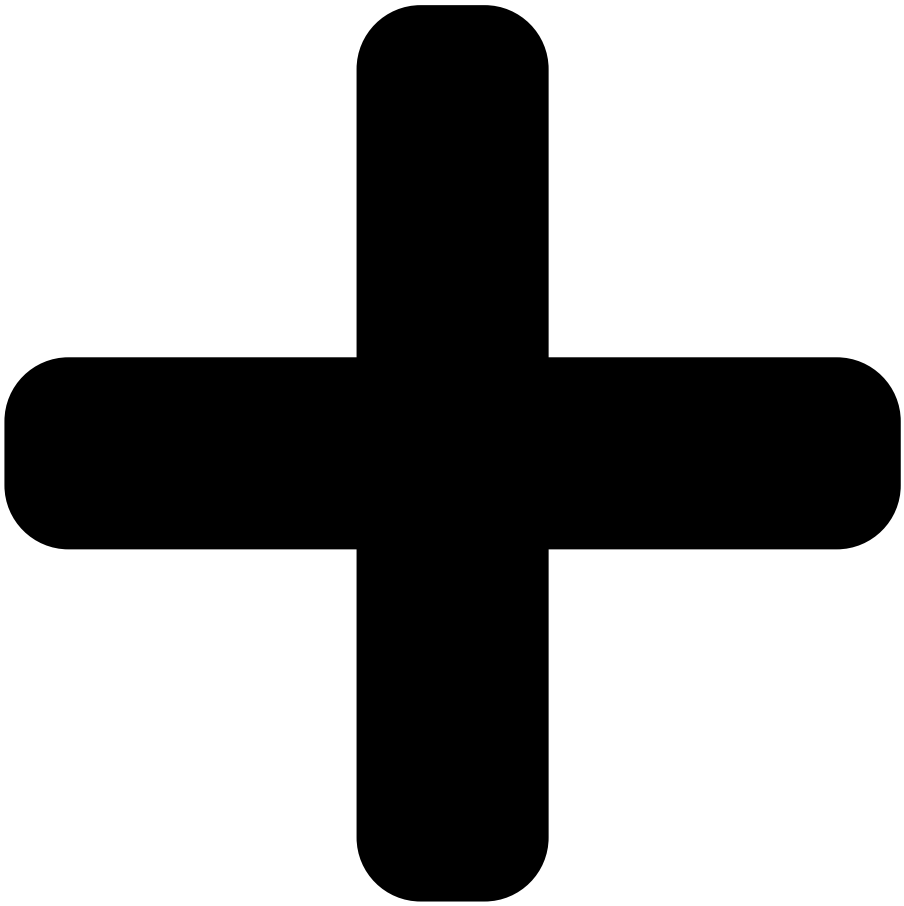
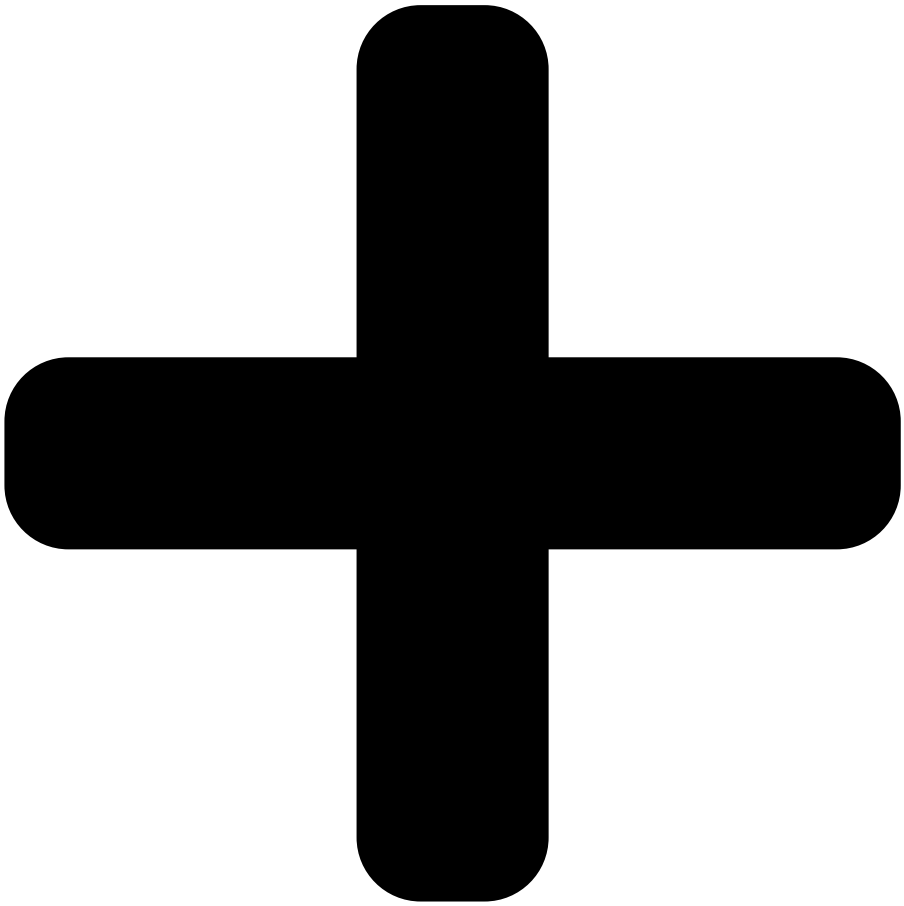


Figure 13 displays the average yearly and six-month nonresidential burglary rates in the 19 cities for which data were available at year-end 2024 (see Appendix). From 2018 to 2019 the average nonresidential burglary rate decreased by 1%, and then increased 36% from 2019 to 2020. The large increase in non-residential burglaries coincided with the widespread protests that followed the murder of George Floyd by police in May 2020 (see Figure A1). The rate decreased in 2021 (-14%), then increased in 2022 (+5%) and fell in 2023 (-2%). **The average reported nonresidential burglary rate in 2024 was 6% lower than in 2023. Across the sample cities, the 2024 nonresidential burglary rate was about 12% higher than in 2019.** Comparing the most recent six-month trends, the nonresidential burglary rate during the first half of 2024 was 9% lower, on average, than during the same period in 2023, and 1% higher during the second half.

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

Figure 13. Nonresidential Burglary Rates in 19 Cities, 2018 – 2024

Larceny

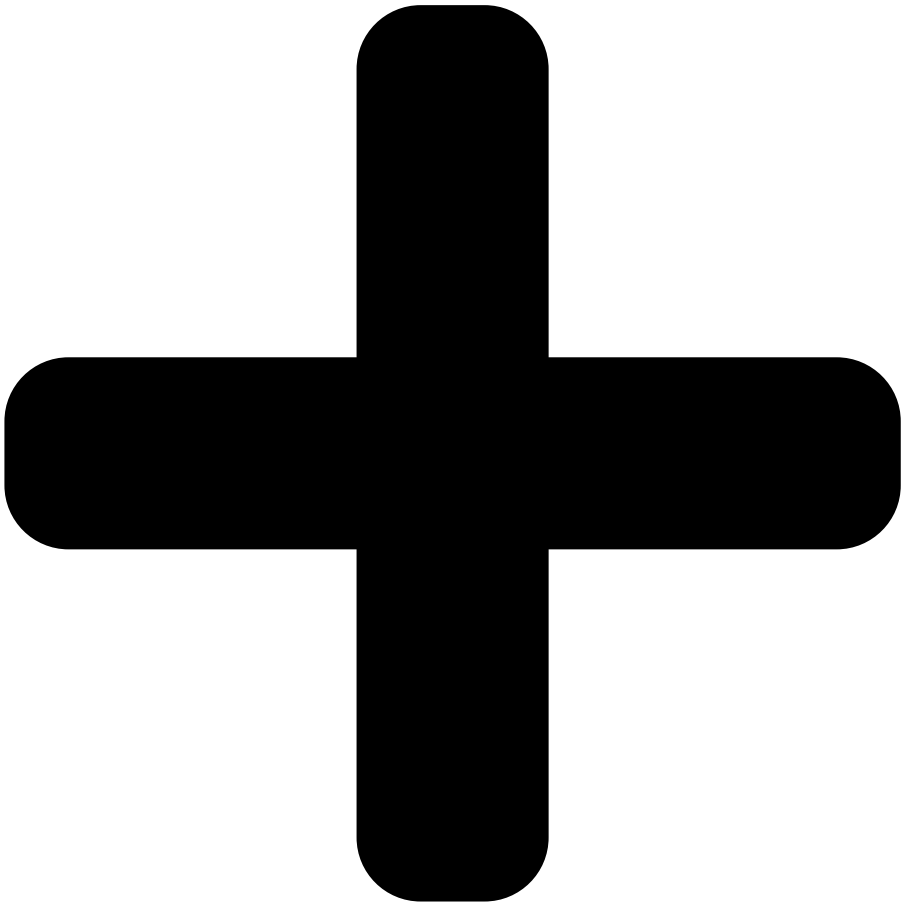


Larcenies are thefts unaccompanied by force or breaking and entering. Shoplifting and thefts of property from motor vehicles are the two most common forms of larceny. Figure 14 displays the average yearly and six-month larceny rates in the 36 cities for which data were available at year-end 2024 (see Appendix). From 2018 to 2019 the average larceny rate stayed flat, and then dropped 11% from 2019 to 2020. The rate increased in 2021 (+2%) and 2022 (+7%), and then fell in 2023 (-4%). **The average reported larceny rate in 2024 was 5% lower than in 2023. Across the sample cities, the 2024 larceny rate was about 12% lower than in 2019.** Comparing the most recent six-month trends, the larceny rate during the first half of 2024 was 5% lower, on average, than during the same period in 2023, and 5% lower during the second half.

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

Figure 14. Larceny Rates in 36 Cities, 2018 – 2024

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 yearly and six-month shoplifting rates in the 25 cities for which data were available at year-end 2024 (see Appendix). From 2018 to 2019 the average shoplifting rate increased by 3%, and then dropped 19% from 2019 to 2020. The rate continued to decrease in 2021 (-13%), then increased in 2022 (+8%) and in 2023 (+15%). **The average reported shoplifting rate in 2024 was 14% higher than in 2023. Across the sample cities, the 2024 shoplifting rate was about 1% higher than in 2019.** Comparing the most recent six-month trends, the shoplifting rate during the first half of 2024 was 23% higher, on average, than during the same period in 2023 and 12% higher during the second half. 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 significant quantities.[4]

Figure 15. Shoplifting Rates in 25 Cities, 2018 – 2024

Shoplifting and retail theft have received widespread attention from the retail industry, policymakers, and the media in the last three 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" incidents that go viral on social media.

In addition, while the number of assaults that occurred in a store increased from the first half of 2019 to the first half of 2023, the share of shoplifting incidents that involve an assault is small, accounting for about 1% of total incidents.

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

[redacted]

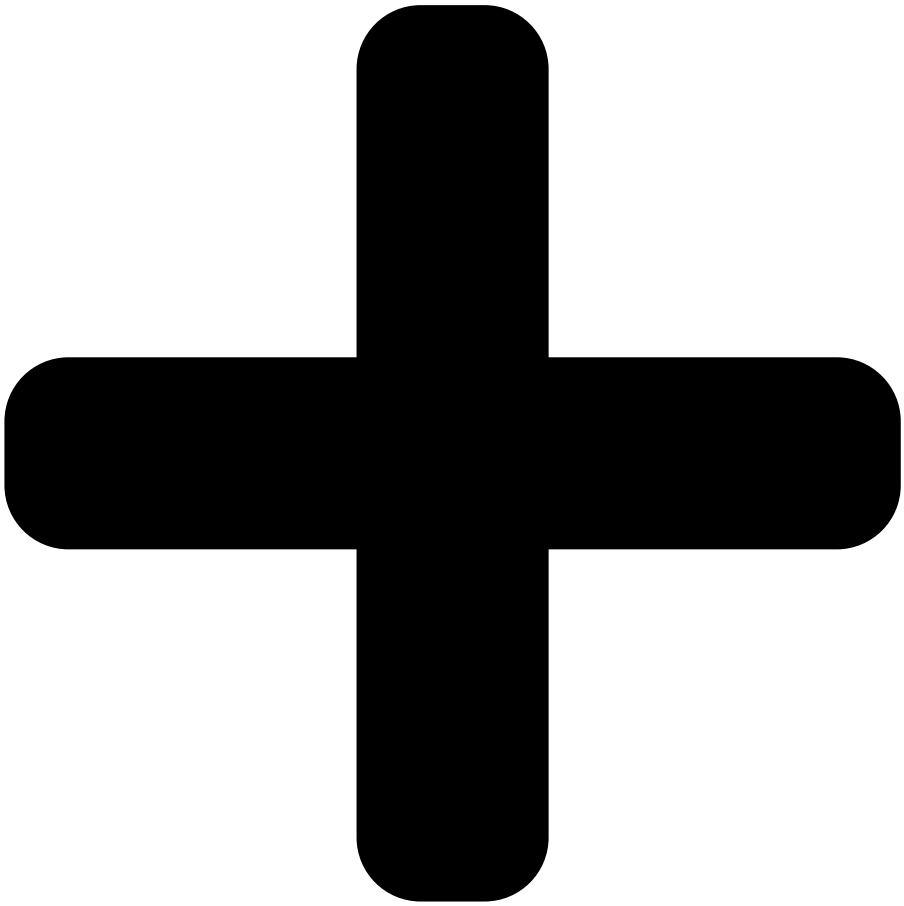


Figure 16 displays the average yearly and six-month motor vehicle theft in the 34 cities for which data were available at year-end 2024 (see Appendix). From 2018 to 2019 the average motor vehicle theft rate increased by 2%, then rose another 15% from 2019 to 2020. The rates continued to climb in 2021 (+12%), 2022 (+25%), and 2023 (+25%). That trend reversed in 2024. **The average reported motor vehicle theft rate in 2024 was 24% lower than in 2023. Still, across the sample cities, the 2024 motor vehicle theft rate was about 53% higher than in 2019.** Comparing the most recent six-month trends, the motor vehicle theft rate during the first half of 2024 was 16% lower, on average, than during the same period in 2023, and 29% lower during the second half. Figure 17 shows the percentage change in motor vehicle theft, by city, from 2023 to 2024, 2019 to 2024, and the rate difference from 2019 to 2024.

Figure 16. Vehicle Theft Rates in 34 Cities, 2018 – 2024

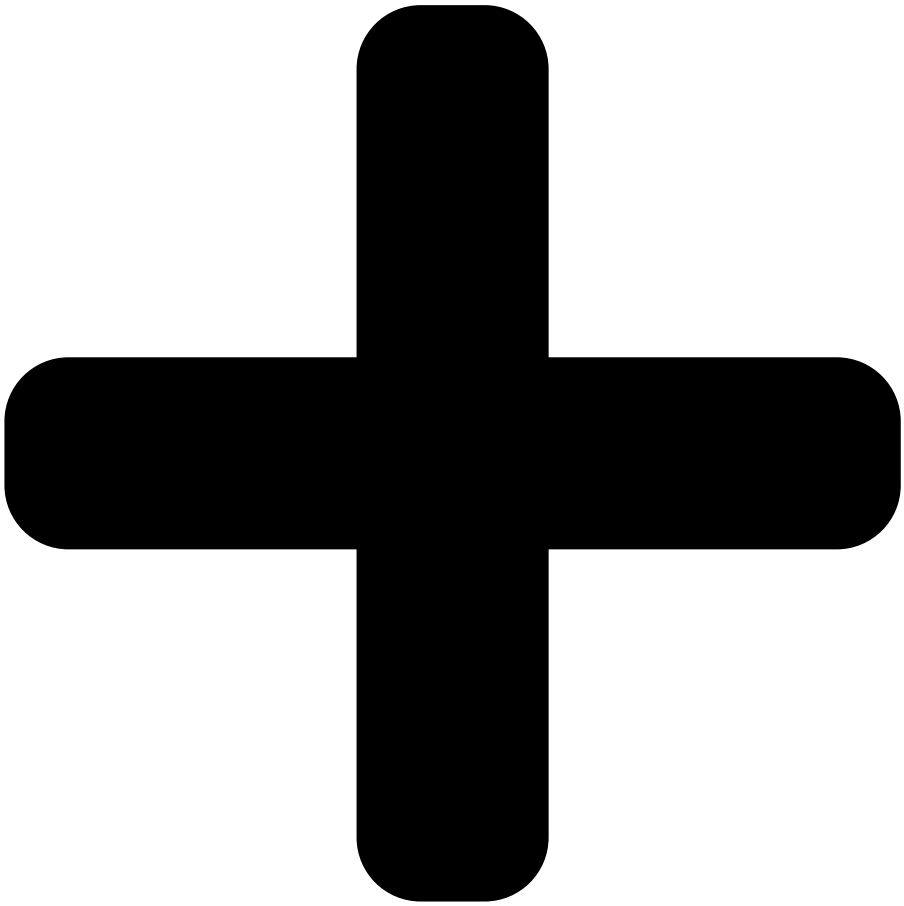
Figure 17 shows the percentage change in motor vehicle theft, by city, from 2023 to 2024 and from 2019 to 2024, as well as the rate difference from 2019 to 2024. In 2024, 28 of the 34 cities in the sample experienced a decrease compared to 2023. Looking back further, while many cities have seen recent declines in motor vehicle theft, only five in the sample had lower rates in 2024 than in 2019. In 10 of the sample cities, motor vehicle theft was twice as high (an increase of more than 100%) in 2024 as in 2019.

Figure 17. Percentage Change in Motor Vehicle Theft Rates in 34 Cities, 2019 – 2024

The increase in motor vehicle theft over recent years reversed a decades-long decline. Motor vehicle theft peaked in 1991 at a 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 most recent year for which full national data are available, the motor vehicle theft rate had climbed to 319, the highest rate since 2007 (368 per 100,000). 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.

Drug Offenses

[redacted]



Drug offenses include arrests for the manufacture, sale, or possession of illicit drugs. Figure 18 displays the average yearly and six-month drug offense rates in the 24 cities for which data were available at year-end 2024 (see Appendix). From 2018 to 2019 drug offense rates decreased by 11%, then dropped another 27% from 2019 to 2020. The rate declined in 2021 (-4%), then increased in 2022 (+1) and 2023 (+3%). **The average reported drug offense rate in 2024 was 3% lower than in 2023. Across the sample cities, the 2024 drug offense rate was about 28% lower than in 2019.** Comparing the most recent six-month trends, the drug offense rate during the first half of 2024 was 3% higher, on average, than during the same period in 2023, and 1% lower during the second half.

Figure 18. Drug Offense Rates in 24 Cities, 2018 – 2024

Summary and Conclusion

This study is the fourteenth in a series of reports for CCJ exploring crime patterns since the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic and establishment of the Council's National Commission on COVID-19 and Criminal Justice. Updating the earlier analyses, this study reveals a mix of increases and decreases in crime rates across a sample of U.S. cities through December 2024.

Overall, the findings suggest that most offenses in the sample cities are near or below 2019 levels. Homicide, the most serious of the crimes, has fallen to 6% below 2019 rates across the sample, though many cities are still experiencing high rates of murder. This study shows that the homicide drop has been driven partly by cities with traditionally high homicide rates experiencing large declines and returning to levels not seen in about a decade. This trend is promising but should be viewed as preliminary, given that it is based on a sample of cities because national-level data are not yet available. Moreover, if the national homicide rate were to fall back to pre-pandemic, 2019 levels, that rate (5.2 per 100,000 U.S. residents) was 15% higher than the 2014 rate (4.5 per 100,000), which was the lowest since World War II.[5] While a 5.2 per 100,000 homicide rate is roughly half the modern peak of 9.8 recorded in 1991, this progress is of little comfort to families who lose loved ones to violence. Even with homicide dropping to levels more typical for the U.S., the nation and its individual states still have rates that are high compared to other industrialized nations.

As we welcome the decline of most crime types to 2019 levels, it's important to recognize that such progress was far from guaranteed. As noted in a prior Council report, the homicide rate was 32.5% higher in the first two months of 2020 compared to 2019, before COVID-19 restrictions and summer protests. Additionally, a recent study of gun fatalities using national public health data identified an upward shift that began in October 2019.[6] While there has been variation in city trends over time, there has also been variation in individual-level victimization. Black youth (ages 15 to 24) experienced substantial increases in fatal firearm victimization during the pandemic,[7] and Black Americans continued to experience non-fatal violent victimization through 2023, when White and Hispanic victimization was falling.

While reported rates of some crimes, such as carjacking and motor vehicle theft, have dropped significantly in the past year, they remain above 2019 levels. Reported incidents of shoplifting, a crime that has received enormous attention in state capitols, Congress, and the media, dropped abruptly early in the pandemic as stores closed during COVID lockdowns, but have now increased back to 2019 levels. By contrast, sexual assault, robbery, residential

burglary, and drug offenses in 2024 were at least 19% below 2019 levels.

The return to pre-pandemic levels seen for many offenses should not slow our nation's efforts to reduce crime. Many communities continue to suffer from disturbingly high rates of violence, and evidence-based crime reduction strategies are still urgently needed. This is also a time when investment is warranted to help us better understand the changing crime landscape and craft effective crime control approaches for the present and the future. The Council's Crime Trends Working Group identified key gaps in criminal justice data, including non-fatal gun violence, white-collar, environmental, and cybercrimes, and produced a set of actionable recommendations for policymakers to close those gaps.

Along with improvements in crime data, continuing research on crime trends is essential to accelerate progress and bring crime down to all-time lows. While the study of historical crime trends remains important, society has experienced large shifts in new directions, especially becoming increasingly digital, since the crime drop of the late 1990s.[8] Analyzing these and other changes can help us better understand the dynamics driving today's crime patterns and identify the policies and practices most likely to make our communities safer. For instance, there is a general concern that the increased use of social media by youth has contributed to an increase in youth violence.[9] Nevertheless, aggregate trends suggest that overall juvenile crime is down, and some of the decline may have been driven by reduced substance use and decreased informal socialization by juveniles (e.g., going to parties).

Crucially, understanding recent crime trends is not a purely academic exercise. Beyond crime's direct consequences for victims and survivors, its societal costs are immense, reminding us that even during periods of declining crime, efforts to reduce harm must remain a priority.

Offense Dashboard

Percent Change in Crime from 2018 and Annual Rates, 2019 – 2024

Monthly Crime Trends by Type and City, January 2018 – December 2024

Appendix

Figure A1. Average Monthly Crime Rates for City Sample, January 2018 – December 2024

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

Acknowledgements

Ernesto Lopez was the lead author of this report, with support from Olivia McLarnan and other members of the Council on Criminal Justice team.

Graduate Research Assistant Bobby Boxerman at the University of Missouri—St. Louis assisted with data collection.

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, Arnold Ventures, the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, Southern Company Foundation, and Stand Together Trust, as well the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and other CCJ general operating contributors.

Suggested Citation

Lopez, E., & Boxerman, B. (2025). *Crime trends in U.S. cities: Year-end 2024 update.* Council on Criminal Justice. https://councilonj.org/crime-trends-in-u-s-cities-year-end-2024-update/

Endnotes

[1] Sexual assault and rape were not included in CCJ's earlier crime trends reports because the initial city sample was smaller and many jurisdictions did not report rape. For this report, the authors were able to include the offense by combining rape with other forms of sexual assault, increasing the number of cities with available data.

[2] Efforts to compile crime data continued through January 10, 2025. Cities that had not posted full December 2024 crime data on their websites by that date could not be included in this report.

[3] Kaplan, J. (2025). *Jacob Kaplan's concatenated files: Uniform crime reporting program data: Offenses known and clearances by arrest (return A), 1960-2022.* Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research. https://doi.org/10.3886/E100707V20

[4] 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 by the time CCJ's data collection concluded. In addition, the city's monthly crime summaries do not include shoplifting.

[5] LaFree, G. D. (1998). *Losing legitimacy: Street crime and the decline of social institutions in America.* Westview.

[6] Degli Esposti, M., Schell, T. L., & Smart, R. (2024). The recent rise in homicide: An analysis of weekly mortality data, United States, 2018-2022. *Epidemiology*, 10-1097. https://doi.org/10.1097/EDE.0000000000001815

[7] Piquero, A. R., & Roman, J. K. (2024). Firearm homicide demographics before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. *JAMA Network Open*, *7*(5), e2412946-e2412946. https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.12946

[8] For a discussion of the broad influences on crime trends see: Baumer, E. P., Vélez, M. B., & Rosenfeld, R. (2018). Bringing crime trends back into criminology: A critical assessment of the literature and a blueprint for future inquiry. *Annual Review of Criminology*, *1*(1), 39-61. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-criminol-032317-092339

[9] Sy, S. & Staten, M. (2024, May 22). Social media's role in the rise of youth violence. *PBS News.* https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/social-medias-role-in-the-rise-of-youth-violence