

New CCJ analysis of 2024 crime trends also shows year-over-year decreases in 12 of 13 offenses, with only reported shoplifting continuing its recent rise

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Homicide and most other violent crimes have dropped below levels seen before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and nationwide social justice protests of 2020, according to [a new study](#) of crime trends in 40 American cities released today by the [Council on Criminal Justice](#) (CCJ). Progress on property crime has been more mixed, and two offenses that have captured widespread attention from the public and policymakers—shoplifting and motor vehicle theft—remain elevated compared to 2019 levels.

Examining trends for 13 crime types in cities that have consistently published monthly law enforcement data over the past six years, the study also found that levels of 12 of those offenses were lower in 2024 than in 2023, with reported shoplifting (+14%) the lone exception. The number of homicides in 2024 fell by 16% compared to 2023, representing 631 fewer murders in the 29 cities providing data for that crime. If that decrease holds once a larger number of jurisdictions report 2024 data to the FBI later this year, it would rank among the biggest single-year homicide drops since at least 1960, the start of modern record keeping.

Among the CCJ study cities, 22 saw homicide levels fall last year, with Chandler, AZ, (-50%) and Little Rock, AR, (-43%) recording the largest decreases. Six cities experienced increases, led by a 56% jump in Colorado Springs.

In other year-over-year findings, reported incidents of aggravated assault (-4%), gun assault (-15%), sexual assault (-6%), and domestic violence (-4%) all fell from 2023 to 2024 in the study cities. Robbery reports also declined (-10%), and carjacking (a type of robbery) dropped 32%. Motor vehicle theft, a crime that had risen sharply since the summer of 2020, reversed course last year, falling 24%.

In addition to analyzing changes from 2023, the CCJ report compares 2024 crime levels with those seen before the onset of the coronavirus pandemic and the police killing of George Floyd, which ignited widespread demonstrations. There were 6% fewer homicides in the study sample in 2024 than in 2019, a decline largely driven by cities with traditionally high homicide levels. These include Baltimore (-40%) and St. Louis (-33%), which experienced the largest drops in homicide rates among the study cities.

The analysis also found that homicide rates in some of the cities—Baltimore, Detroit, and St. Louis—have receded to the levels of 2014, when national homicide rates were at historic lows. In other cities, murder rates have largely returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Similarly, reported sexual assault (-26%), domestic violence (-11%), and robbery (-19%) all were lower in 2024 than in 2019. But aggravated assaults (+4%), gun assaults (+5%), and carjackings (+25%) remained elevated in 2024 compared to five years earlier. Property crime trends have been mixed. There were fewer reported residential burglaries (-38%) and larcenies (-12%) in 2024 than in 2019, but more nonresidential burglaries (+12%). Motor vehicle thefts were higher by half (+53%) during the timeframe, while drug offenses in 2024 were 28% below 2019 levels.

Shoplifting has received widespread attention from the retail industry, policymakers, and the media amid “smash-and-grab” episodes that have gone viral on social media. Reported shoplifting incidents fell during lockdowns at the onset of the COVID pandemic but began rising in 2022 and continued to climb last year. The 2024 level was 1% above 2019 levels in 25 of the study cities.

“The reductions we’re seeing across a large number of crime types are promising, but the United States still experiences high levels of homicide compared to other industrialized nations,” said CCJ Senior Research Specialist Ernesto Lopez, co-author of the report. “We must continue to identify and adopt evidence-based strategies that effectively prevent violence and save lives. Researchers should also redouble their efforts to understand how broad behavioral shifts and other societal dynamics may be influencing crime trends today.”

CCJ’s [Crime Trends Working Group](#) last year released a [roadmap to improve the nation’s crime data infrastructure](#) to equip policymakers with more timely, accurate, complete, and usable crime information. CCJ’s [Violent Crime Working Group](#) identified 10 essential actions to reduce violence, which served as the foundation of the [Violent Crime Reduction Roadmap](#) published in December 2023 by the Department of Justice’s Office of Justice Programs.

Other CCJ reports provide more detailed analyses of crime trends and crime types, such as

[homicide](#), [motor vehicle theft](#), and [shoplifting](#).

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About the Report and Data

Co-authored by Lopez and Doctoral Candidate Bobby Boxerman, the new analysis 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, including Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, New York, Philadelphia, Seattle, and Washington. The smallest city in the sample was Syracuse, NY, with about 142,000 residents; the largest was New York City, with about 8.3 million residents. The study cities are not necessarily representative of all jurisdictions in the U.S., and not all cities reported data for each offense.

About the Council on Criminal Justice

The Council on Criminal Justice (CCJ) is a nonpartisan think tank and invitational membership organization that advances understanding of the criminal justice policy challenges facing the nation and builds consensus for solutions based on facts, evidence, and fundamental principles of justice.