

FACT SHEET



Arrests for Drug Offenses in Alaska: 2000–2011

Khristy Parker, MPA, Research Professional

This fact sheet presents data on drug-related arrests made by Alaska police agencies for the period 2000 through 2011. The data presented were extracted from the Alaska Department of Public Safety’s annual publication, *Crime in Alaska* (<http://www.dps.state.ak.us/statewide/ucr.aspx>).

Number of arrests. Figure 1 presents information on the total number of all arrests in Alaska for the period 2000–2011. Over the period, the total **number** of all arrests in Alaska increased 8.6% from 37,166 in 2000 to 40,353 in 2011. The total number of adult arrests in Alaska increased 17.8% from 31,227 in 2000 to 36,770

in 2011. The total number of juvenile¹ arrests in Alaska declined 39.7% during the 2000–2011 period from 5,939 juvenile arrests in 2000 to 3,583 in 2011.

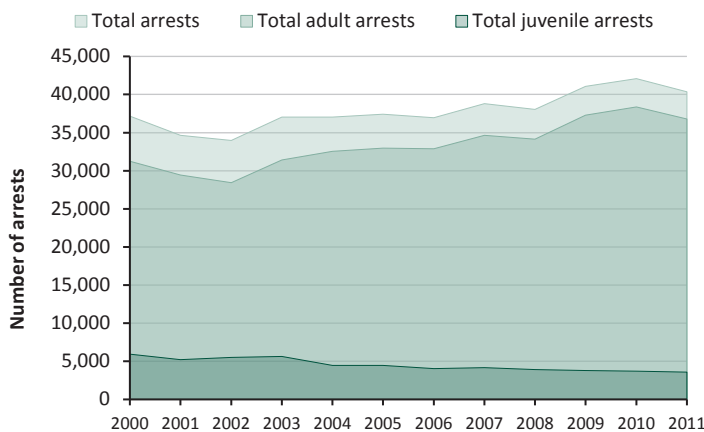
On average, adult arrests accounted for 87.9% of all arrests in Alaska for the period. Juvenile arrests accounted for 12.1% of all Alaska arrests, on average. In 2011, adult arrests accounted for 91.1% of all Alaska arrests and juvenile arrests accounted for 8.9% of all Alaska arrests.

Figure 2 shows the number of arrests for drug offenses for both adults and juveniles from 2000–2011. Over the period, the total **number** of drug arrests in Alaska increased 22.2%. The number of adult arrests for drug

1. Juveniles are defined as children 10–17 years of age. Data were adjusted to exclude arrests for children under 10 years of age.

FIGURE 1

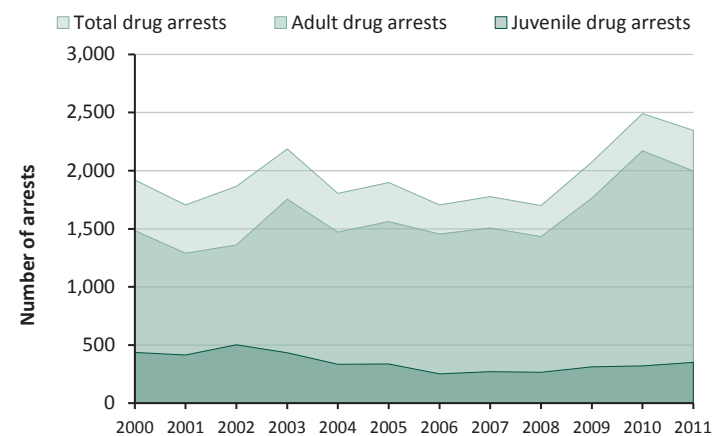
Arrests in Alaska: All, adults, and juveniles, 2000–2011



Source of data: Alaska Department of Public Safety, Criminal Records & Identification Bureau (2001–2012). *Crime in Alaska*. Juneau, AK.

FIGURE 2

Arrests for drug offenses in Alaska: All, adults, and juveniles, 2000–2011



Source of data: Alaska Department of Public Safety, Criminal Records & Identification Bureau (2001–2012). *Crime in Alaska*. Juneau, AK.

offenses increased 34.3% in the period, from 1,486 in 2000 to 1,996 in 2011. The number of juvenile arrests attributable to drug offenses decreased 19.1% from 435 drug arrests in 2000 to 352 drug arrests in 2011.

Of all drug-related arrests in Alaska, adult drug arrests accounted for 81.8% on average for the period — an increase of 9.8% from 2000–2011 (data not shown). As a **proportion** of all adult arrests in Alaska, adult drug arrests accounted for 4.8% on average for the period. In 2011, 5.4% of all adult arrests were attributable to drug offenses. In 2011, 85.0% of all drug arrests were attributable to adult offenders.

Of all drug-related arrests in Alaska, juvenile drug arrests accounted for 18.2% on average for the period — a decrease of 33.6% from 2000–2011 (data not shown). As a proportion of all juvenile arrests in Alaska, juvenile drug arrests accounted for 7.8% of all juvenile arrests from 2000–2011. In 2011, 15.0% of all drug arrests were attributable to juvenile offenders.

Importantly, the arrest data reported by Alaska police agencies reflect official agency actions once police are made aware of criminal offenses. Readers are cautioned against inferring that decreases or increases in the percentages of arrests attributable to drug offenses are due to decreases or increases in underlying criminal activity (i.e., possession, sale/manufacture, or use of illicit drugs).

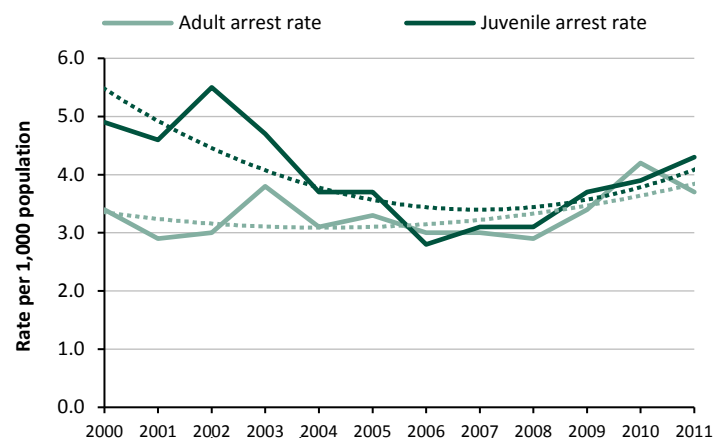
Drug offense arrest rates. Figure 3 presents the drug offense arrest rate for both Alaskan adults and juveniles for the period 2000 through 2011. The rates presented in Figure 3 represent the number of arrests per 1,000 members of the adult and juvenile populations² respectively for each year, from 2000 to 2011. The dotted lines overlaid on each of these lines represent what is called a “best fit” trend line — that is, a line that depicts the overall shape of the data trend.

2. Population adjusted to exclude children under the age of 10 years. Children under the age of 10 were arrested for drug offenses six times over the time period studied, representing one-tenth of one percent of the number of juvenile drug arrests.

With the exception of 2006 and 2010, the drug offense arrest rate for adults was consistently lower than that for juveniles for the entire 2000–2011 period, averaging 3.3 per 1,000 population. On average, during the period, the juvenile drug offense arrest rate was 4.0 per 1,000 — 1.2 times higher than the adult drug offense arrest rate.

In 2000, adult Alaskans were arrested for drug offenses at a rate of 3.4 arrests per 1,000 Alaska adults, while juveniles were arrested for drug offenses at a rate of 4.9 arrests per 1,000 Alaska juveniles (10–17 years of age). Based on these rates, juveniles were approximately 1.4 times more likely to be arrested for a drug offense than adults. By 2011, the drug offense arrest rates for adults and juveniles were 3.7 per 1,000 and 4.3 per 1,000, respectively, making juveniles 1.2 times more likely to be arrested for drug offenses than adults. After reaching a high of 4.2 drug arrests per 1,000 adults in 2010, the drug offense arrest rate for adults decreased in 2011. From 2006 to 2011, the drug arrest rate for juveniles increased 53.6% from 2.8 per 1,000 in 2006 to 4.3 per 1,000 in 2011. The drug arrest rate increased 2.7% from 2000–2011, averaging 3.4 drug arrests per 1,000 population. For the period 2000–2011, the drug offense arrest rate increased 8.8% for adults and decreased 12.2% for juveniles.

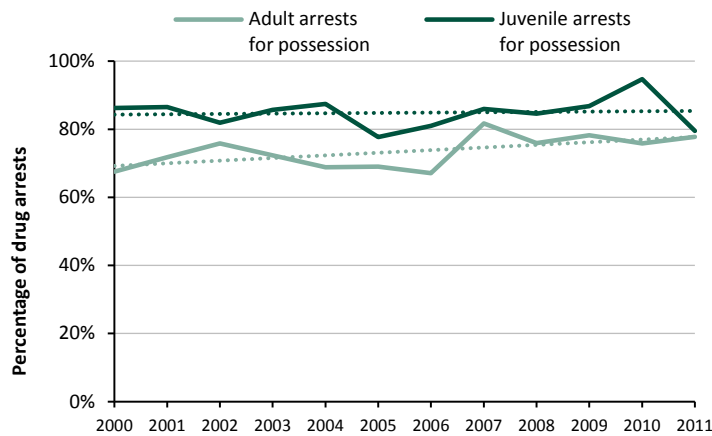
FIGURE 3
Drug Offense Arrest Rate per 1,000 Population: Adults and Juveniles in Alaska, 2000–2011



Source of data: Alaska Department of Public Safety, Criminal Records & Identification Bureau (2001–2012). *Crime in Alaska*. Juneau, AK.

FIGURE 4

Percentage of drug arrests for possession: Adults and juveniles in Alaska, 2000–2011



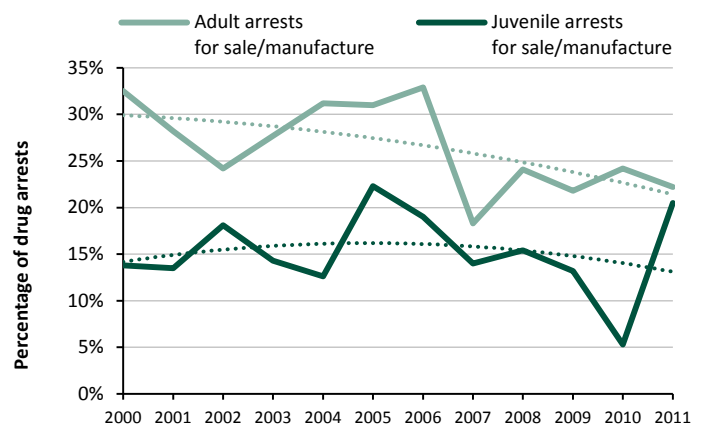
Source of data: Alaska Department of Public Safety, Criminal Records & Identification Bureau (2001–2012). *Crime in Alaska*. Juneau, AK.

Drug offense arrests, by offense type. Figures 4 and 5 present data on adult and juvenile drug offense arrests according to the type of offense committed: possession of a controlled substance, and sale/manufacture of a controlled substance. Figure 4 shows data for both adults and juveniles for possession offenses; Figure 5 shows data for both adults and juveniles for sale/manufacture offenses.

For both adults and juveniles, a large majority of all drug offense arrests during the 2000–2011 time period were for the possession of a controlled substance. On average, 73.5% of all adult drug offense arrests between 2000 and 2011 were for illegal possession of a controlled substance. For juveniles, this figure was 84.8%. The peak for adults was in 2007, when 81.7% of all drug offense arrests were for possession. For juveniles, the highest level was in 2010, when 94.7% of all drug offense arrests were for possession. Overall, the proportion of drug offense arrests for possession increased for adults during the 2000–2011 period, from 67.5% in 2000 to 77.8% in 2011 (a percentage increase of 15.3%). In contrast, the percentage of drug arrests for juveniles that were classified as possession offenses declined during the same time period, from 86.2% in 2000 to 79.5% in 2011 (a percentage decline of 7.8%).

FIGURE 5

Percentage of drug arrests for sale/manufacture: Adults and juveniles in Alaska, 2000–2011



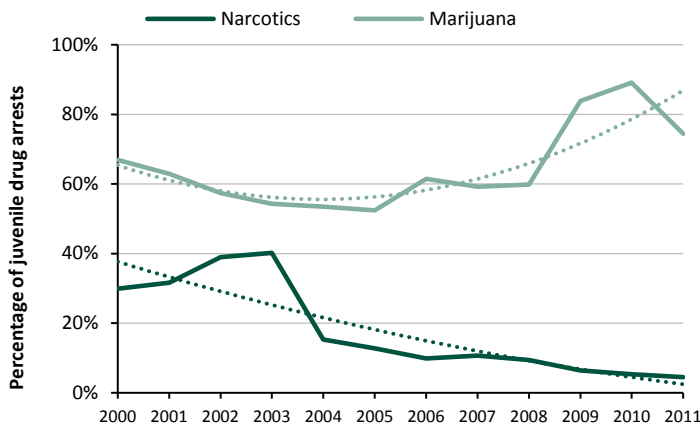
Source of data: Alaska Department of Public Safety, Criminal Records & Identification Bureau (2001–2012). *Crime in Alaska*. Juneau, AK.

Figure 5 presents the percentage of all drug offense arrests that were classified by police as sale/manufacture offenses, for both adult and juvenile offenders. Overall, the proportion of all adult drug arrests attributed to drug sale/manufacture declined 31.7% from 2000 to 2011. In contrast, the proportion of juvenile drug arrests attributable to drug sale/manufacture increased 48.6% during the same period. For both adults and juveniles, illegal drug sale/manufacture arrests comprised only a minority of all drug offense arrests between 2000 and 2011. On average, 26.5% of all adult drug arrests and 15.2% of all juvenile drug arrests were classified by police as sale/manufacture arrests from 2000–2011.

Drug offense arrests, by type of drug. Figures 6 and 7 present data on the percentage of drug offense arrests according to the type of drug. Figure 6 presents the information for juveniles; Figure 7 presents the information for adults. In both figures, data are presented for the percentage of drug arrests for two drug types: marijuana and narcotics. On average, marijuana and narcotics comprised 82.5% of all juvenile drug offense arrests, and 85.1% of adult drug offense arrests. Additional drug types reported by Department of Public Safety in their *Crime in Alaska* publication, but which are not reported in this fact sheet, include synthetic narcotics and other (not specified).

FIGURE 6

Percentage of juvenile drug arrests for marijuana and narcotics in Alaska, 2000–2011



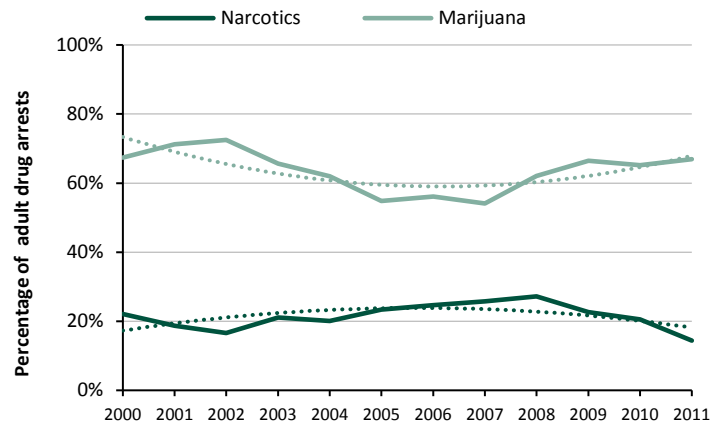
Source of data: Alaska Department of Public Safety, Criminal Records & Identification Bureau (2001–2012). *Crime in Alaska*. Juneau, AK.

The data in Figure 6 show that most juvenile drug offense arrests involve marijuana. On average, nearly two-thirds (64.6%) of all juvenile drug offense arrests during the 2000–2011 time period were for either the possession or sale/manufacture of marijuana. In contrast, over the same period 17.9% of juvenile drug offense arrests involved narcotics. Since 2000, the percentage of juvenile marijuana drug offense arrests has increased 11.2%, while the percentage of juvenile narcotics drug offense arrests has decreased 84.9%. Juvenile marijuana drug offense arrests increased from a low of 52.4% in 2005, to a high of 89.1% in 2010. Marijuana arrests comprised 74.4% of all juvenile drug offense arrests in 2011.

Figure 7 presents the percentage of adult drug offense arrests for marijuana and narcotics. As with juvenile drug offense arrests, a majority (63.7%) of all adult drug offense arrests between 2000 and 2011 were for marijuana offenses. Overall, the frequency with which adults were arrested for marijuana offenses over the period showed a marked increase in marijuana arrests for the 2007–2011 period (54.1% in 2007, 66.9% in 2011). Adult arrests for narcotics offenses, on the other hand, declined from 22.1% of all drug offense arrests in 2000 to 14.4% of all drug offense arrests in 2011 (a percentage decrease of 34.8%). The proportion of all adult drug arrests attributed to narcotics decreased 6.1% from 2010 to 2011 (a percentage decrease of 34.8%).

FIGURE 7

Percentage of adult drug arrests for marijuana and narcotics in Alaska, 2000–2011



Source of data: Alaska Department of Public Safety, Criminal Records & Identification Bureau (2001–2012). *Crime in Alaska*. Juneau, AK.

The overall average percentage of narcotics arrests during this period was higher for adults (21.4%) than for juveniles (17.9%).

SUMMARY

This fact sheet presented drug offense arrest data compiled from the Alaska Department of Public Safety’s annual *Crime in Alaska* publication. Drug offense arrest information was presented for both adults and juveniles for the period 2000 through 2011.

Over the 2000–2011 period the total number of adult arrests (for all offenses) increased, from 31,227 in 2000 to 40,353 in 2011 (Figure 1). The total number of juvenile arrests (for all offenses) declined significantly from 5,939 in 2000 to 3,583 in 2011 (Figure 2).

Drug offenses comprise a small portion of all arrests for both adults and juveniles in the state of Alaska. On average, only 4.8% of all adult arrests were for drug-related offenses between 2000 and 2011; for juveniles, an average of 7.8% of all juvenile arrests were for drug offenses during the same period. Between 2000 and 2011 the percentage of adult arrests attributable to drug crimes increased from 4.8% to 5.4%. The percentage of juvenile arrests attributable to drug offenses increased from 7.3% of all arrests in 2000 to 9.8% of all arrests in 2011.

The adult drug offense arrest rate increased 8.8% over the 2000–2011 period, and the juvenile drug offense arrest rate declined 12.2%. Despite this, the adult drug offense arrest rate (the number of arrests per 1,000 Alaska adults) was consistently lower than the drug offense arrest rate for juveniles (the number of arrests per 1,000 Alaska juveniles) (Figure 3).

A large majority of all drug offense arrests during the 2000–2011 period were for the possession of a controlled substance (Figure 4). On average, 73.5% of all adult drug offense arrests were for illegal possession; for juveniles, this figure was 84.8% of all drug arrests. For adults, the proportion of drug offense arrests for possession increased during the 2000–2011 period; for juveniles, the percentage of drug arrests that were classified as possession offenses declined.

Adult arrests for drug sale/manufacture offenses

dropped 31.7% between 2000 and 2011, from 32.5% of all drug arrests in 2000 to 22.2% of all drug offense arrests in 2011. In contrast, the percentage of arrests for drug sale/manufacture offenses among juveniles increased 48.6% from 13.8% in 2000 to 20.5% in 2011.

Most adult and juvenile drug offense arrests involve marijuana (Figures 6 and 7). On average, 64.6% of all juvenile and 63.7% of all adult drug offense arrests during the 2000–2011 period were for either the possession or sale/manufacture of marijuana. Since 2000, the percentage of juvenile marijuana drug offense arrests has increased, while the percentage of narcotics drug offense arrests have decreased significantly. For adults, the percentage of arrests for marijuana drug offense arrests decreased between 2000 and 2011, while the percentage of adult arrests for narcotics drug offenses declined significantly.

NOTES

CALCULATING CRIME AND ARREST RATES

Arrest rates per 1,000 population are calculated by dividing the number of specified arrests by the total population of the focus area and then multiplying the total by 1,000. For example, to determine the drug arrest rate in Alaska for 2011, we take the total number of drug arrests reported in Alaska for 2011 (2,348), divide it by the total estimated (adjusted) state population (616,495) and multiply the quotient by 1,000 to reach the drug arrest rate of 3.8 per 1,000 population $[(2,348/616,495)*1,000=3.8]$. Because Alaska has a small population, small changes in the number of reported arrests can lead to substantial fluctuations in arrest rates.

UNIFORM CRIME REPORTS

Recognizing the need for national crime statistics, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) set the foundations in the 1920s. In June 1930, Congress designated the FBI as the agency authorized to collect, compile, and distribute crime records in an effort to measure the volume of crime in the United States. The UCR program collects monthly information from more than 18,000 city, university and college, county, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement agencies that voluntarily reporting data on crimes brought to their attention. The primary objective of the UCR program is to produce reliable data on crime for use in law enforcement administration, operation, and management. UCR data are not intended to be used to rank agencies or the jurisdictions in which they are located, and thus UCR data should not be used to designate American cities, counties, or other jurisdictions as “safe” or “dangerous” in the absence of careful consideration of the limitations of these data. The UCR records data for eight serious crimes (called Part I offenses) and more than twenty less serious offenses (called Part II offenses). Part I offenses include four violent crimes — murder and nonnegligent manslaughter (homicide), forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault — and four property crimes — burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. In 2011, UCR data was reported by law enforcement agencies representing 98.1% of the total U.S. population.

UCR IN ALASKA

Since 1982, the Alaska Department of Public Safety (DPS), Division of Statewide Services (DSS), has administered the UCR program for Alaska. The Criminal Records and Identification Bureau (CRIB), located within the DSS, collects, tabulates, reports, and publishes UCR data submitted by Alaska law enforcement agencies. As is the case nationally, submitting agencies retain responsibility for the accuracy of the data. While UCR reporting to the FBI is voluntary, AS §12.62.130 requires Alaska law enforcement agencies to submit crime data to DPS.

THE ALASKA JUSTICE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTER



ABOUT

The Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center (AJSAC) was established by Administrative Order No. 89, signed by Governor William Sheffield on July 2, 1986. Since that time the AJSAC has been housed within the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center. The AJSAC assists Alaska criminal justice agencies, as well as state and local governments and officials, with the development, implementation, and evaluation of criminal justice programs and policies through the collection, analysis, and reporting of crime and justice statistics.

Since 1972, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and its predecessor agency, the National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service, has provided support to state and territorial governments to establish and operate Statistical Analysis Centers (SACs) to collect, analyze, and report statistics on crime and justice to federal, state, and local levels of government, and to share state-level information nationally. There are currently 53 SACs located in the United States and its Territories. The AJSAC is a member of the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA), a national nonprofit organization comprised of SAC directors, researchers, and practitioners dedicated to policy-oriented research and analysis.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Location

The Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center (AJSAC) is housed in the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center, which is located on the second floor of the UAA/APU Consortium Library, Suite 213.

Mailing Address

Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center
University of Alaska Anchorage
3211 Providence Drive, LIB 213
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Phone/Email

Khristy Parker, MPA
Research Professional
(907) 786-1809
klparker@uaa.alaska.edu

Brad A. Myrstol, Ph.D.
AJSAC Director
(907) 786-1837
bamyrstol@uaa.alaska.edu

ON THE WEB

To learn more about the AJSAC research, please visit our website at: <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/ajsac/>.

PRODUCTION

Barbara Armstrong, Editor
Melissa S. Green, Publication Specialist

© Copyright 2014 Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center, Justice Center, University of Alaska Anchorage



UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE
UAA is an EEO/AA employer and educational institution.