

MAINE CRIME AND JUSTICE BRIEF SERIES: II

ARRESTS IN MAINE

This brief examines the 2004 arrest rates in Maine, which are the most recent data available from the Maine Department of Public Safety. One arrest is counted for each separate occasion in which an individual is arrested, cited, or summoned for a criminal act. Examining arrest rates offers a chance to understand who is being arrested and the types of crimes individuals are committing in Maine.

Over the last decade, arrests for drug abuse violations have increased 65 percent in Maine. From 1995 to 2004, there was a 8.7 percent increase in total arrests. Crimes with the highest increase of arrests between 1995 and 2004 were drug offenses, up 64.6 percent, and liquor law violations, which grew 44.7 percent.

	Percent change of drug arrests between 1995-2004		
	Sale	Possession	Total
Opium, cocaine and derivatives	113%	307%	188%
Marijuana	12%	33%	29%
Synthetic narcotics	169%	216%	197%
Other dangerous non-narcotics	274%	240%	248%
Total	63%	65%	65%

While marijuana remains the primary drug of abuse in Maine, the use and availability of cocaine, heroin, and diverted pharmaceuticals continue to increase. Since 1995, arrests for other dangerous non-narcotics violations, which include ecstasy and methamphetamine, have increased 248 percent as well.

In 2004, arrests for drug abuse violations increased 10.3 percent over the previous year. Of all drug arrests, more than three quarters (77 percent) involved possession violations, while 23.0 percent were for sale or the manufacturing of drugs. Nearly two thirds (63.2 percent) of the drug arrests were for marijuana sales or possession. Marijuana possession accounted for 53.0 percent of all drug arrests at 2,986 in 2004, and represented 69.0 percent of drug possession cases. Marijuana sale and/or manufacturing accounted for 43.9 percent of all sales/manufacturing cases. Taken with driving under the influence (DUI), drug abuse violations and DUI accounted for 29.6 percent of all arrests.

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Maine Crime & Justice Brief Series

Produced by the Maine Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center (SAC), the series charts changes in crime, arrests and incarceration to present a portrait of crime and justice indicators in the state for the year 2004. The briefs include the most recent comprehensive Department of Public Safety and Department of Corrections data sets available for Maine. The series also uses 2005 data where available. The Maine Crime and Justice Brief Series is on the SAC website at:

muskie.usm.maine.edu/justiceresearch

Maine Statistical Analysis Center

The SAC serves as a clearinghouse for data collection and statistical analysis for the Maine criminal justice system, promotes a research-based approach and conducts research that support its identified priorities and objectives.



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE

The number of violent crime arrests in 2004 increased by 5.3 percent. The increase in violent crime arrests is attributable to the 29.2 percent increase in robbery arrests and the 16.7 percent increase in rape arrests in 2004. Overall, law enforcement agencies in Maine cleared (identified and arrested the offender) 62.9 percent of the violent offenses in 2004, which include murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Maine's clearance rate was far higher than the national average of 46.3 percent.

For the 10th consecutive year, more females were arrested. In 2004, 10,748 adult women were arrested for a crime in Maine. The number of women arrested has climbed steadily, increasing 50.2 percent over the last 10 years. The percentage increase of adult female offenders was four times greater than adult male offenders, which grew 12.2 percent since 1995. In 2004, females represented 22.9 percent of all arrests in Maine, the highest percentage recorded.

Juveniles account for the lowest share of all arrests in the last ten years. As the chart below shows, the share of all arrests that are juveniles peaked in the mid-1990s before falling to its lowest level in 2004 (15.4 percent). The state trends mirror juvenile crime trends across the United States. Over the last ten years, the number of total arrests for juveniles declined 26.5 percent, with the number of violent crime arrests falling 33.8 percent between 1995 and 2004. In 2004 alone, total juvenile arrests declined over the past year by 8.2 percent.

Juvenile arrests for drug and alcohol violations have more than doubled in the last ten years. Between 1995 and 2004, the number of juvenile arrests for violent crime dropped 33.8 percent, from 219 to 145. Non-violent offenses also declined for the following: burglary (51.8 percent), larceny (47.3 percent), and auto theft (48.6 percent). The only major categories of juvenile arrests that grew between 1995 and 2004 were related to drug and alcohol offenses. Drug offense arrests climbed 43.1 percent between 1995 and 2004, while those for liquor law violations climbed 53.8 percent over the ten-year period.

The majority (70.3%) of juvenile arrests for property crimes were for larceny/theft. Arrest rates by type and age of offender reveal that juveniles are more likely to be linked to property crimes than violent crimes. Sixty one percent of those arrested on arson charges were juveniles. Juveniles accounted for one-third of total property crime arrests in Maine, compared with 17 percent of the violent crime arrests.

IMPLICATIONS

The increase in both adult and juvenile drug arrests in the state suggests that Maine is confronting a growing crisis more and more focused on prescription drugs and other dangerous non-narcotics drugs such as ecstasy and methamphetamines. Females continue to be arrested at higher rates in Maine, suggesting the state will have to determine whether facilities and programs adequately address their needs.

