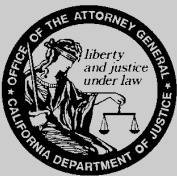
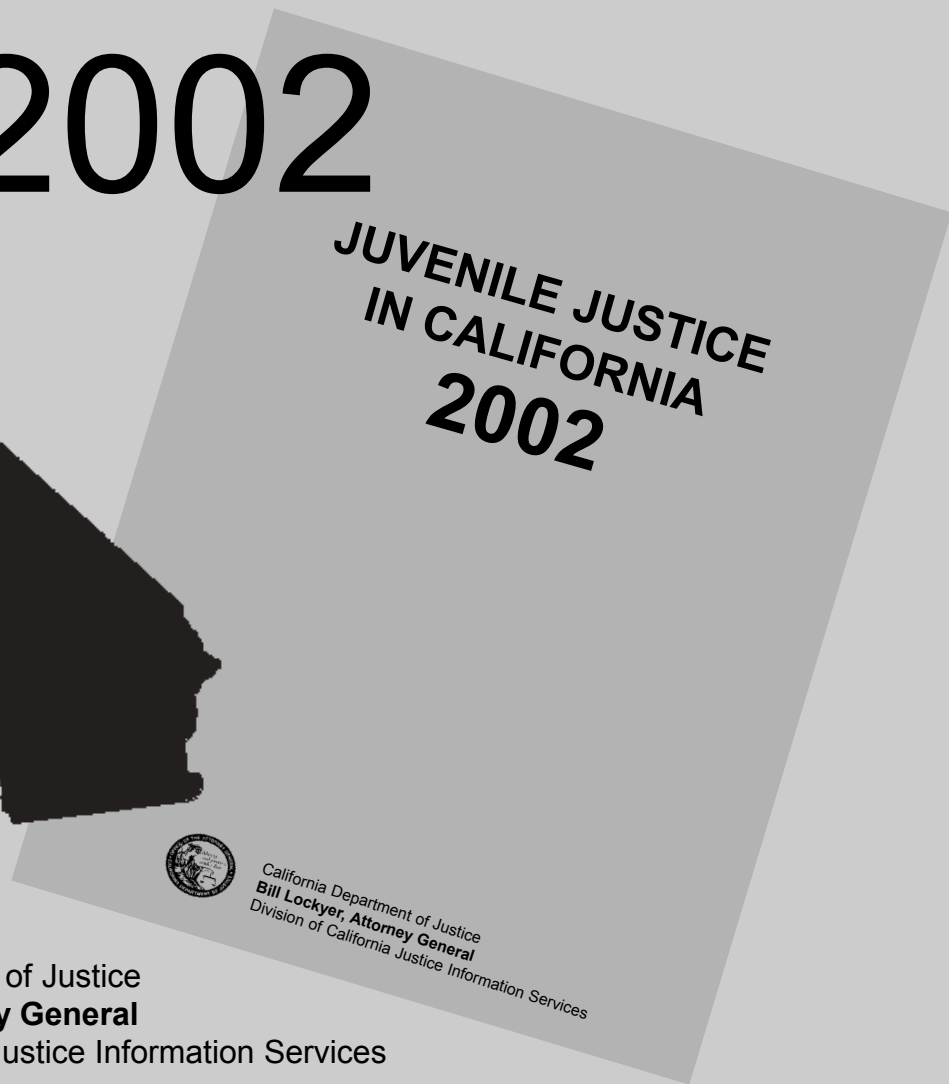


JUVENILE JUSTICE IN CALIFORNIA

2002



California Department of Justice
Bill Lockyer, Attorney General
Division of California Justice Information Services

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Message From the Attorney General

In March of 2002, California voters approved Proposition 21 and significantly reformed the administration of juvenile justice in California. Advocates for the initiative argued that the reforms would address a disturbing increase in juvenile crime. Others suggested that the state should explore a variety of alternative reforms to improve public safety.

One thing everyone agreed on was that expanded collection of comprehensive and detailed juvenile justice data in California would help inform the debate. We know that the majority of crimes are committed by juveniles and young adults, but our data does not look much further behind this basic fact. While the Department of Justice has reported statistical data on juvenile justice provided by local law enforcement agencies for decades, we believe that an improved data collection system would provide important information about how the state criminal justice system handles youthful offenders.

In order to address this problem we, in cooperation with the Chief Probation Officers of California, reestablished the Juvenile Court and Probation Statistical System. This system gives us the ability to collect and analyze data that will give policymakers at all levels valid measures of the juvenile justice process. Although only 47 counties have provided data for this report, those counties represent 84 percent of the state's population. We believe these counties provide an accurate representation of the juvenile delinquency problem and the justice system's response in California.

More than one-third of California's population is made up of young people under the age of 25. Fostering good citizenship and deterring criminal behavior by juveniles in California is important not only to improve public safety today, but also for the future well-being of the state. It is my hope that this report and its yearly updates will provide law enforcement and policymakers with valuable information they can use to achieve these goals.

BILL LOCKYER
Attorney General

JUVENILE JUSTICE IN CALIFORNIA, 2002

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Department would like to thank the Chief Probation Officers of California for their support in our efforts to restore the Juvenile Court and Probation Statistical System (JCPSS). Special thanks to the representatives on the JCPSS Advisory Committee, who tirelessly worked to develop a system that will provide uniform reporting and quality information to users. Past and present members of the JCPSS Advisory Committee include: Bill Davidson, Chief Probation Officer, Merced County; DeLisa Pearson, Colusa County Probation; Marcia Barton, El Dorado County Probation; Doreen Klimovich, El Dorado County Probation; Richard Duroy, Stanislaus County Probation; Tammy May, Stanislaus County Probation; Sally Rockholdt, Kern County Probation; Jeanie Lopez, Kern County Probation; Trudy Logan, Los Angeles County Probation; Bob Beech, Riverside County Probation; Lou Moore, Orange County Probation; and Sandra Hilger, Orange County Probation. Without their help, we would not have been able to produce this report.

The role of the Criminal Justice Statistics Center is to:

- *Collect, analyze, and report statistical data which provide valid measures of crime and the criminal justice process.*
- *Examine these data on an ongoing basis to better describe crime and the criminal justice system.*
- *Promote the responsible presentation and use of crime statistics.*

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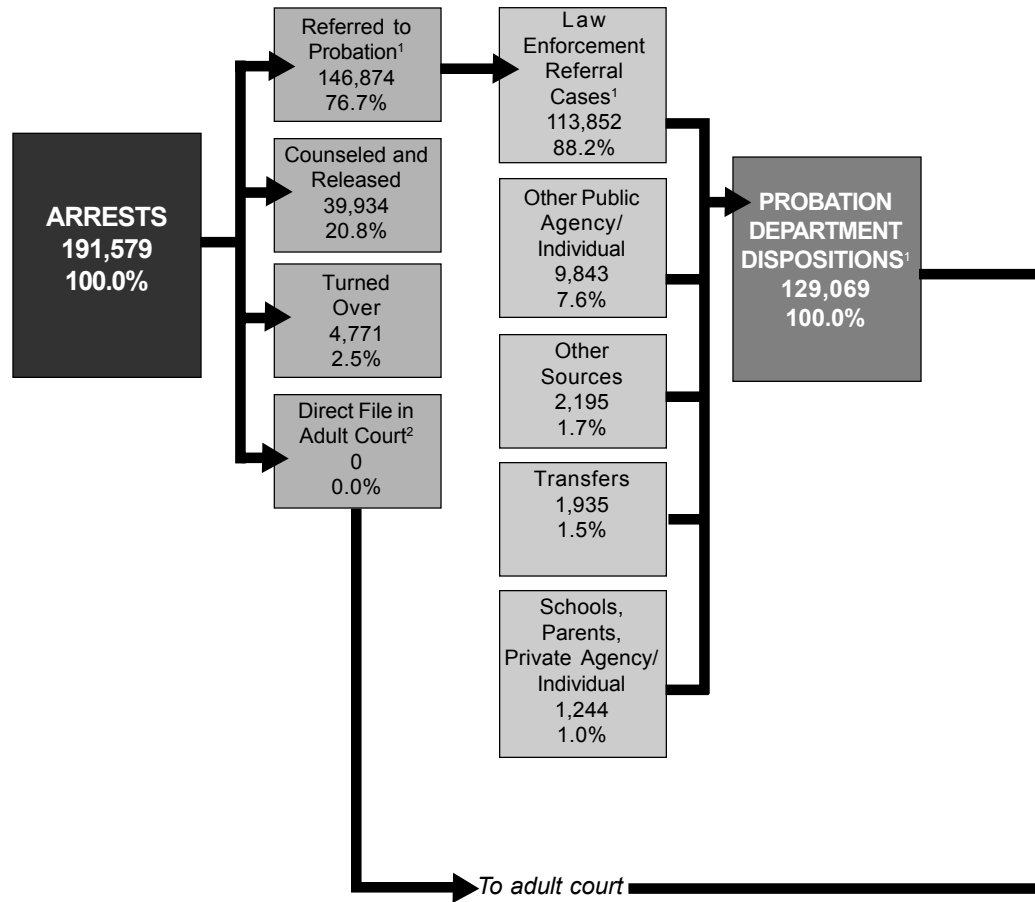
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The juvenile justice system in California differs from the adult system in the type of offenders received and the manner in which they are processed. The juvenile system primarily deals with persons under 18 years of age who have either violated criminal statutes or have committed "status offenses." Status offenses are acts which are offenses only when committed by a juvenile, such as incorrigibility, truancy, running away from home, and curfew violations.

Arrests of law violators and status offenders are received from law enforcement agencies throughout California. The law enforcement agency may refer the juvenile to the probation department, counsel and release, or turn the juvenile over to another law enforcement jurisdiction. The District Attorney, given the severity of the crime, may also file the case in adult court.

Referrals of law violators and status offenders to probation departments are from law enforcement,¹ other public agencies or individuals, other sources, transfers from other counties or states, or from schools, parents, or private agencies or individuals.

JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM, 2002 FALLOUT CHART

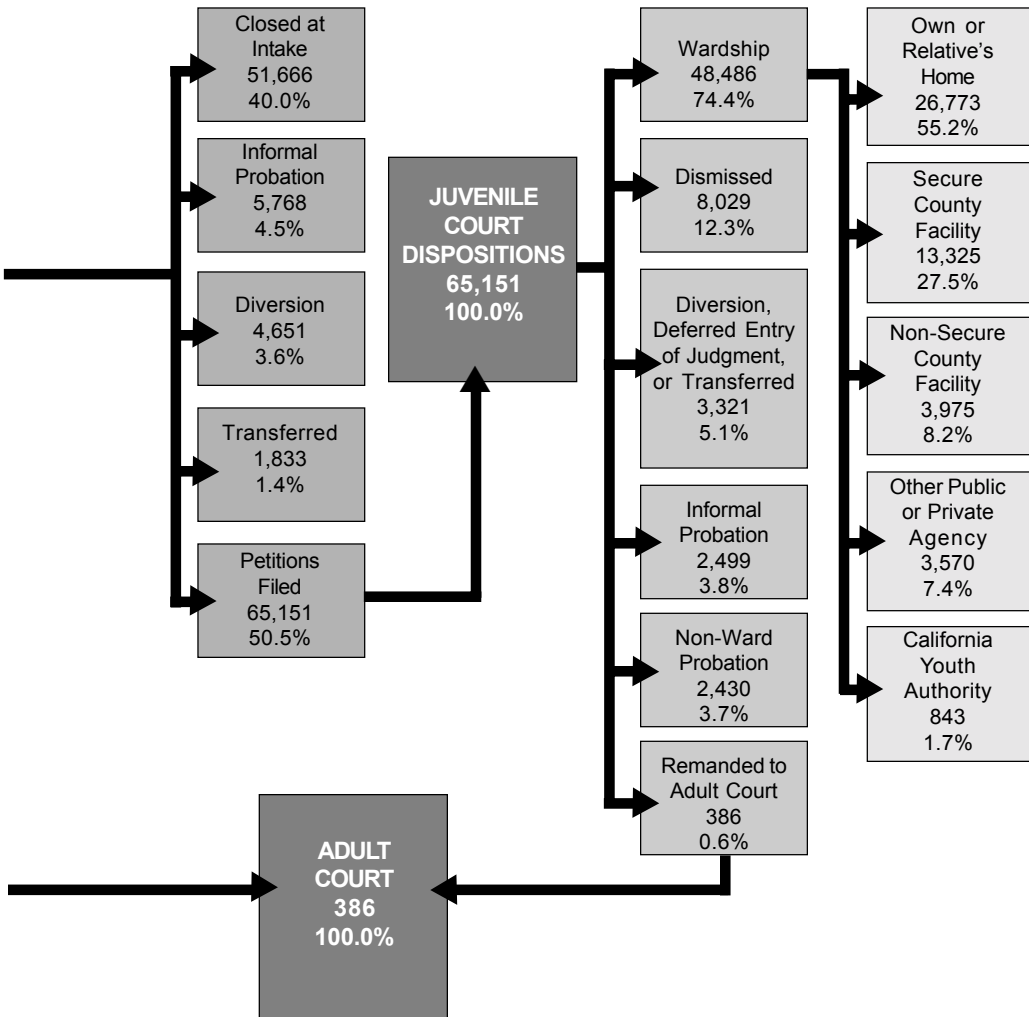


¹The arrest data are reported by law enforcement agencies, whereas law enforcement referral data are reported by probation departments. Comparisons between arrest data and referral data should not be made because of differences in the units of count between the two sources. See Appendix III, page 71, for more detail.

²Due to delays in system completion and incomplete data submissions, data on direct filings, or dispositions for juveniles tried as adults, are not available in 2002.

Source: Tables 1, 2, and 4.

JUVENILE JUSTICE IN CALIFORNIA, 2002



The accompanying fallout chart depicts the path of a juvenile through the juvenile justice system in California from arrest to final disposition.

- Typically, referrals are made to the probation department in the juvenile's county of residence. Nearly all come from police and sheriff's departments (88.2 percent in 2002), with the remainder coming from other sources.
- Probation departments decide how to process referred cases. A case may be closed or transferred, a juvenile may be placed on informal probation or in a diversion program, or a petition may be sought for a court hearing.
- Most formal hearings resulted in the juvenile being made a ward of the court. Most wards (55.2 percent in 2002) were allowed to go home under the supervision of the probation department.

Highlights

ARRESTS

In 2002, misdemeanor arrests exceeded felony arrests by more than 2 to 1 (57.3 vs. 26.3 percent) and status offense arrests by more than 3 to 1 (57.3 vs. 16.4 percent). (Source: Table 1.)

In 2002, running away was the only offense not dominated by males. (Source: Table 1.)

In 2002, juveniles aged 15-17 represented more than two-thirds of the total juvenile arrests. (Source: Table 1.)

In 2002, over 20 percent of the juveniles arrested were "counseled and released" by law enforcement and 76.7 percent were referred to county probation departments for further action. (Source: Table 1.)

REFERRALS

In 2002, one-fourth of the new referrals to probation were female offenders (25.2 percent). (Source: Table 10a.)

More than one-fourth of the assault and burglary referrals to probation were for offenders aged 12-14 (25.4 and 25.8 percent, respectively). (Source: Table 3.)

Over 80 percent of referrals handled by probation departments were "closed at intake." (Source: Table 2.)

PETITIONS

Over 53 percent of petitions filed for formal juvenile court action were for first-time offenders. (Source: Tables 4 and 8.)

Males accounted for 88.8 percent of the vandalism petitions filed in juvenile court. (Source: Table 11.)

Juveniles aged 15-17 represented over 72 percent of the subsequent petitions filed in juvenile court. (Source: Table 4.)

The majority (55.2 percent) of juveniles made a ward of the court were allowed to go home. (Source: Tables 4 and 8.)

GROUPS

Hispanic and white juveniles combined accounted for more than three-fourths of all reported juvenile arrests. (Source: Table 1.)

When compared to their statewide race/ethnic group population, whether being "detained" or "not detained," Hispanic and black juveniles were over-represented. (Source: Tables 6 and 12.)

When compared to their statewide race/ethnic group population, whether being "represented" or "not represented," Hispanic and black juveniles were over-represented. (Source: Tables 8 and 12.)

When compared to their statewide race/ethnic group population, for Youth Authority commitments, Hispanics and blacks were over-represented. (Source: Tables 8 and 12.)

To provide perspective throughout this report, it will be helpful for the reader to know the racial and ethnic composition of California's overall juvenile population.

Hispanic	41.2%
White	38.9%
Black	7.2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	12.1%
American Indian	0.5%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100.0 because of rounding.
Source: Table 12.

The race/ethnic groups presented in the Group Representation section include Hispanic, white, Asian/Pacific Islander, black, and American Indian. These groupings comport with the federal Disproportionate Minority Confinement Initiative.

The age groupings used throughout this report represent the most active age groups for the area being discussed.

Introduction

This 2002 edition of *Juvenile Justice in California*, the first report following the restoration of the Juvenile Court and Probation Statistical System, is organized to provide the reader with factual information about the personal and social characteristics of delinquents, and the administrative actions taken by law enforcement, prosecutorial, judicial, penal, and correctional agencies or institutions in the juvenile justice system. This report contains specific information on juvenile population, race/ethnic groups, gender, numbers of arrests, referrals to probation departments, petitions, juvenile court dispositions, and offenses.

The reader should also know that the California Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center (CJSC) is required by statute to collect, tabulate, analyze, and interpret data that describe the administration of juvenile justice in California. To aid in the collection of data, Welfare and Institutions Code section 285 provides that ". . . all probation officers will make such periodic reports to the CJSC as required. . . ." Penal Code section 13012 subdivision (d) requires the CJSC to include the administrative actions taken by law enforcement, judicial, penal, and correctional agencies in the juvenile justice system. Penal Code section 13012.5 also requires the inclusion of fitness hearing information and outcomes, direct filings in adult criminal court, and the outcomes of those cases involving minors who are prosecuted in adult criminal courts, in the annual report to the Legislature.

This report is based on data submitted by 47 of California's 58 county probation departments. The remaining 11 counties are in the testing mode and expected to start submitting data during 2003 as county resources allow. The 47 reporting counties represent approximately 84 percent of the state's population, and the data submitted is a representative sample of the juvenile justice process in California. The report, however, due to delays in system completion and incomplete data submissions, does not contain data on fitness hearings, direct filings, or dispositions for juveniles tried as adults. These data will be available in subsequent annual reports.

The presentation of data in this report is organized to follow the juvenile justice process, with a more comprehensive analysis of race and ethnic groups in the last Data Analysis section. Each section examines the relevant data as follows:

- Arrests by gender, age, offense, and disposition.
- Referrals by gender, age, offense, and disposition.
- Petitions by gender, age, offense, and disposition.
- Group representation by arrest, offense, referral to probation, detention, petitions filed, type of defense representation, juvenile court disposition, and wardship placement.



This logo, which appears repeatedly throughout the report, will alert the reader to featured analyses or items of special interest.

Background

The Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center (formerly the Bureau of Criminal Statistics), has been compiling and publishing data describing California's juvenile justice system since 1947. In 1969, the first computerized juvenile probation caseload file system was developed to receive information on juveniles being supervised by probation departments or in detention facilities. The system was designed to track transactions that took place within the juvenile probation system and to provide information on the chain of events that depicted a juvenile's progress through the probation and court processes from the time of referral to final disposition. Individual transactions were linked together to form a comprehensive record of the court and probation activities for a single offender.

In 1979, in an effort to upgrade the first computerized data collection system, the Juvenile Court and Probation Statistical System (JCPSS) was developed as a pilot study. Ten counties participated in the initial study, and in 1980 the pilot system was made operational statewide.

From 1980 to 1989, the JCPSS collected, compiled, and reported statistical data on the administration of juvenile justice in California by collecting individualized records on delinquent juveniles referred to California probation departments. These records contained information about the youth, referral source, referral offense, pre-adjudication detention, probation and court disposition, and current supervision status, and changes in prior supervision status. During this period, transaction reports were submitted at the time a disposition was made or when supervision was terminated.

In 1990, the JCPSS was eliminated because of budget reductions.

In 1995, with the help of Assemblyman Baca and the support of the Chief Probation Officers of California, Assembly Bill 488 was passed, directing the Department of Justice (DOJ) to reestablish the JCPSS. In June 1996, representatives from 14 probation departments and the DOJ met to finalize the reporting standards and system development began. In January 1997, several probation departments began submitting JCPSS data.

In 1999, the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) recommended that the Legislature withhold 50 percent of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds from those probation departments not "certified" by the DOJ as submitting JCPSS data by March 2000. At that time, only 22 probation departments were submitting data to the JCPSS.

In 2000, the LAO again recommended that the Legislature withhold 50 percent of the TANF funds from those probation departments not certified by the DOJ as submitting JCPSS data by March 2001. In May 2000, a permanent JCPSS Advisory Committee was established to discuss improving county participation and legislative changes affecting JCPSS; no funds were withheld.

In 2001, the Legislature directed the DOJ, via Senate Bill 314, to include in its annual juvenile justice report, statistics on the administrative actions taken by law enforcement agencies regarding juveniles whose cases are transferred to or directly adjudicated in adult criminal court. This legislation also prompted discussions about replacing the existing JCPSS software, first provided to the probation departments in 1996, with a web-enabled application. In February 2002, development of the web-enabled JCPSS application began, and by October 2002, the DOJ began connecting county probation departments to the DOJ network.

More 