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Commissioner

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STATE OF ALASKA



Department of
Public Safety

Anchorage, Alaska

PRESS RELEASE

Annual Crime in Alaska Report Shows 18.5% Decrease in Crime

September 20, 2021 (Anchorage, AK) – The Department of Public Safety has published the [2020 Crime in Alaska report](#), the annual report on instances of crime in Alaska reported a decrease in Alaska's overall crime rate by 18.5%. This also reflects the lowest total number of reported offenses since 1975 and continues the downward trend in Alaska crime that started in 2018. While Alaska's reported violent crime rate decreased by 3.7% last year, the crime rate for rape increased slightly from 2019 to 2020. Alaska's property crime rate decreased 22.9% in 2020, and the total number of reported property offenses were at their lowest level since 1974.

The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program is a nationwide effort by federal, state, city, county, and tribal law enforcement agencies to report data on crimes reported in their jurisdiction. The report is a resource for measuring the trend and distribution of crime in Alaska. Under Alaska law, law enforcement agencies in Alaska are required to submit UCR data to the State of Alaska. In 2020, 32 agencies reported crime data to DPS. These agencies represent 99.5% of the state's population.

"The overall decrease in Alaska's crime rate is encouraging and shows real progress in our efforts to make Alaska a safe place to live and raise a family. However, we must continue to double-down on our efforts to eliminate the scourge of sexual assault and domestic violence in our state and invest in meaningful public safety in rural Alaska," **said Alaska Department of Public Safety Commissioner James Cockrell**. "Every Alaskan, regardless of their address, gender, or race, deserves a life that is free of crime, and the Department of Public Safety is committed to doing our part to meet that goal."

Caution should be exercised when comparing data from year to year and making conclusions as the report does not account for when an incident occurred; it accounts for when it was reported. For example, burglary or theft occurring in November of one year may not have been discovered and reported until February of the next year. The incident is not retroactively applied to a previous year's data; it is counted in the year it was reported. Rape offenses are counted by victim, and each separation of time and place a rape occurs will also be counted. Sexual assaults spanning years will result in numerous counts of rape offenses being reported for a single victim.

The [2020 Crime in Alaska report](#) was authored by the Alaska Department of Public Safety's Division of Statewide Services. The Division of Statewide Services provides technical and specialized services to the Department of Public Safety and law enforcement agencies across the state. Past Crime in Alaska Reports and Felony-Level Sex Offenses reports can be found [online here](#).

The UCR and Crime in Alaska reports are based on the Federal Bureau of Investigation UCR Program definitions of crimes to ensure consistency and uniformity in reported offenses on a national level. The definitions do not always echo state definitions; therefore, federal publications cannot accurately be

compared to reports that use the state definitions for crimes as these are unique to each state. Additionally, the population counts for Crime in Alaska come from the US Census.

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