

CHICAGO METROPOLIS 2020
2006 CRIME AND JUSTICE INDEX



OCTOBER 2006

This is the fourth Metropolis Index report published by Chicago Metropolis 2020. The purpose of the report series is to present information about the forces that shape the Chicago metropolitan region and the public policies designed to respond to those forces. Our intent is to provide residents of the region with the data and the information they can use to better understand how the region works and to influence the short and long term direction of public policy based on that information.

This Metropolis Index is about crime—an issue which has shaped elections and politics for several decades. The Index catalogues crime costs to the region and the various public mechanisms (the police, the courts, the jails and the prisons) that are designed to control crime and mete out justice. These criminal justice systems, as our Advisory Council has pointed out to us, are part of a much larger social and political context. The criminal justice systems—which deal with the victims of crime and the people who are arrested, tried and imprisoned for crime—are greatly influenced by housing patterns, the quality of schools, the economic vitality of communities, and many other factors. These interrelated issues and the policies that shape them have been the subject of our other Index reports and continue to be the focus of Metropolis' work. In this report, we focus on the criminal justice systems themselves and do not address the larger questions of why crime is part of our social fabric.

This Index presents data on crime trends and justice patterns in the region over time. It also explores specific policy issues and some promising practices intended to address seemingly intractable problems in the criminal justice systems.

A premise of this Index is that the people of this region, as they vote and engage in civic activities, impact the course of criminal justice policy and systems. It is hoped that the information contained here will contribute to more informed and effective participation of the region's residents in creating a safe region, with a strong labor force—including those who have served time and reentered society—and an intelligent use of our tax dollars.

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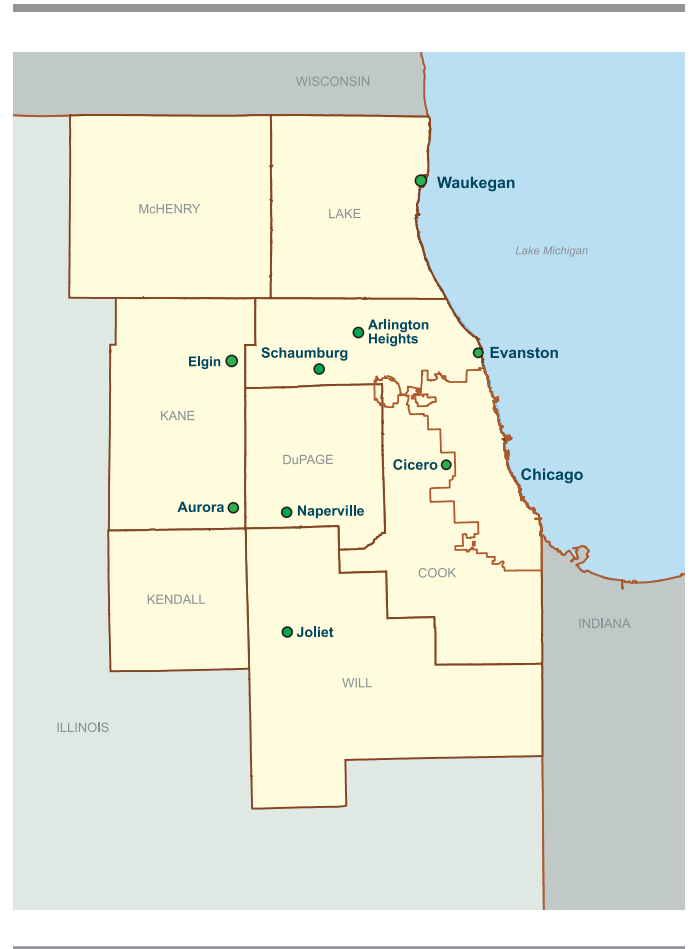
Senior Executive, Chicago Metropolis 2020



IT IS IN JUSTICE THAT THE ORDERING OF SOCIETY IS CENTERED.
ARISTOTLE

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"TOUGH ON CRIME" POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

1971: Illinois Controlled Substances Act and Cannabis Control Act creating systems for control of production, distribution and possession of illegal drugs.

1978: Class X and determinate sentencing in Illinois adding a new felony class for serious crimes and defining by statute sentence lengths for certain crimes rather than permitting judicial discretion. Also in 1978, Illinois ended discretionary parole, making it difficult for prisoners to receive sentence reductions.

1984: Federal Sentencing Reform Act imposing mandatory sentences for specific crimes.

1985: Illinois Safe Zones legislation providing for the automatic transfer to adult court for 15- and 16-year-olds charged with delivery of a controlled substance within 1,000 feet of a school. Later legislation added public housing buildings. Adult violators in safe zones get mandatory prison time with no chance for parole.

1986: Federal Anti-Drug Abuse Act setting minimum sentences for drug offenses as part of the "war on drugs."

1988: Illinois reductions in "threshold amounts" for drug felonies establishing mandatory minimum sentences and extending maximum sentences for drug offenses.

1992: Chicago's Gang Congregation Ordinance restricting loitering by groups of people who are suspected of gang activity. This was later ruled unconstitutional.

1994: Habitual Criminal law implementing a "three strikes and you're out" system in Illinois, mandating life sentences for repeat violent criminals.

1995: Truth-In-Sentencing enacted in Illinois requiring those convicted of first-degree murder or terrorism to serve 100% of their sentence; other serious offenses, including those involving great bodily harm to the victim, require 85% of the sentence served. This law was repealed in 1998 and reenacted the same year.

1999: Illinois' "15-20-Life" law increasing sentences by 15 years for the first offense, 20 for the second and requiring life sentences for criminals who use guns during the commission of a felony.

2002: Enhanced parole conditions in Illinois adding restrictions for parolees that increase possible technical violations and reincarceration.

2005: Illinois' Methamphetamine Control and Community Protection Act increasing penalties for manufacture, distribution and possession of methamphetamine.



INTRODUCTION

Over the past 35 years, the criminal justice systems and public policies that define them have changed dramatically in the Chicago region and around the country. Starting in the 1970s, a "tough on crime" approach gained popularity as people turned away from rehabilitation as a means of dealing with criminals. New laws were passed that increased enforcement efforts and penalties for numerous offenses. The most significant policy change was an expanding reliance on incarceration to punish criminals and remove them from their communities to deter future crime.

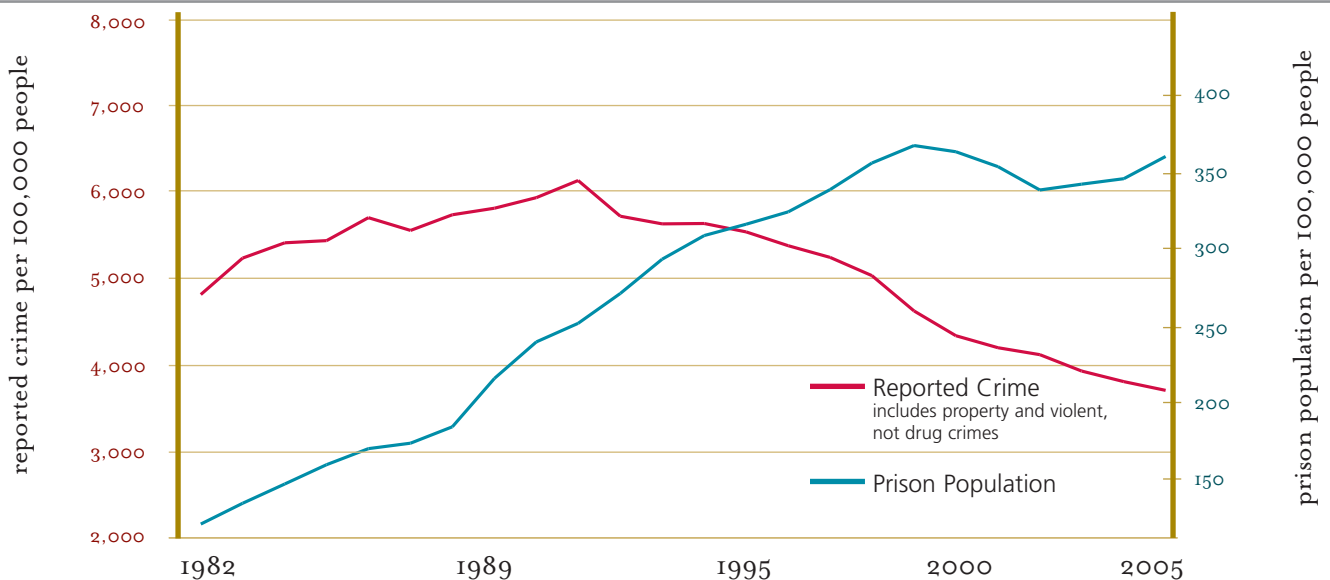
Since that time, there have been important shifts in both crime trends and people's attitudes. Crime rates in Illinois have declined since the early 1990s while the prison population has continued to grow. There are many theories about why crime is going down, including a better economy, an aging population, overall decline in alcohol and drug abuse, and the effectiveness of "tough on crime" policies. Experts agree that no one theory can explain what is happening with crime.

The increase in the prison population is due to longer sentences for violent and repeat criminals, an increase in the number of people who are sent back to prison for parole violations, and harsher penalties for those convicted of non-violent drug offenses. Crime statistics, however, do not reflect the latter two categories. While drug arrests are not traditionally included in the tabulation of crime, the people who are incarcerated for these acts are filling Illinois prisons.



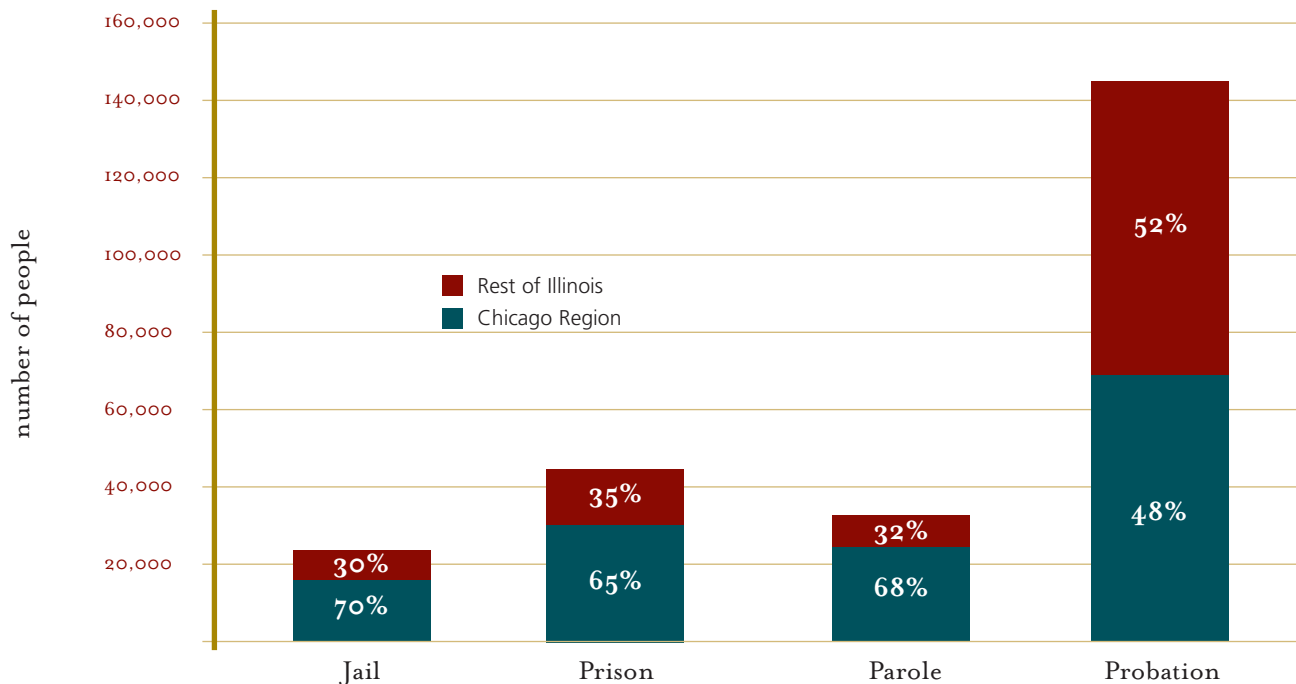
Crime rates do not include non-violent drug offenses, but the increasing incarceration rates do.

ILLINOIS CRIME RATE VS. ILLINOIS PRISON POPULATION, 1982-2005



Source: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Illinois Department of Corrections, U.S. Census Bureau

ILLINOIS CORRECTIONAL POPULATION, 2005



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts; Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Illinois Department of Corrections



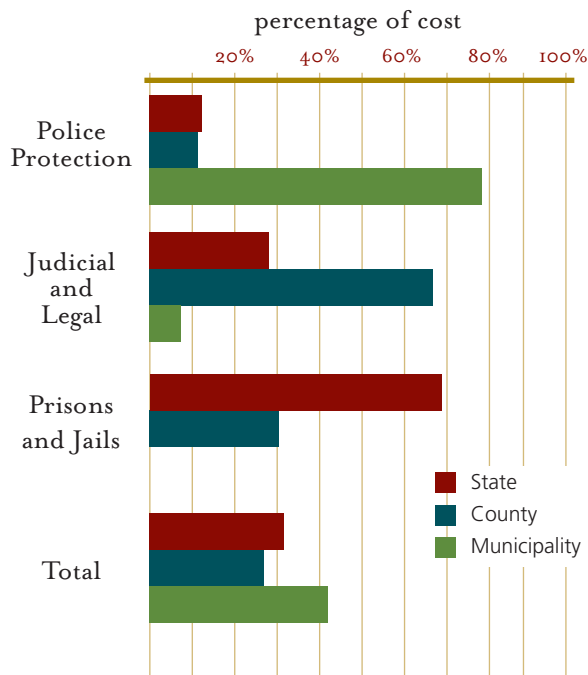
The 245,000 people under correctional supervision in Illinois would constitute the second largest city in the state.

In 2006, Illinois will imprison nearly 40,000 people and release about 40,000 prisoners. Most of these former prisoners return to communities ill-equipped to help them in their transition back to society. More than half of them will likely end up back in prison within three years if present trends continue.

Today, the number of people in Illinois under the supervision of the criminal justice systems—many on probation—stands around 245,000, which if it were a city would be the second largest in the state. Over 55 percent of those under correctional supervision are from the Chicago region. In comparison, the Chicago region comprises two-thirds of the overall population.

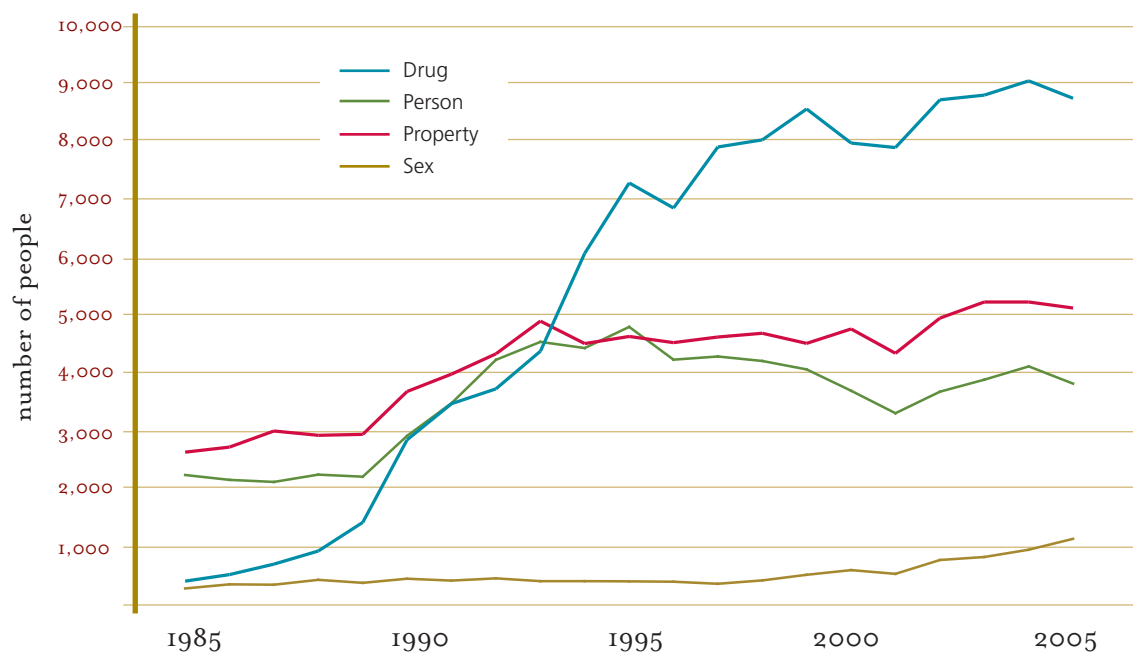
The State of Illinois, its counties and municipalities spend nearly \$7 billion a year on the multi-level criminal justice systems that protect public safety. Tax dollars are used to put police on the streets, employ judges and legal staff to run the courts, and maintain the jails and prisons. Municipal governments are responsible for the largest share of these costs.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SPENDING BY GOVERNMENT LEVEL IN ILLINOIS, 2002



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

PRISONERS FROM THE CHICAGO REGION BY OFFENSE TYPE, 1985–2005



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections



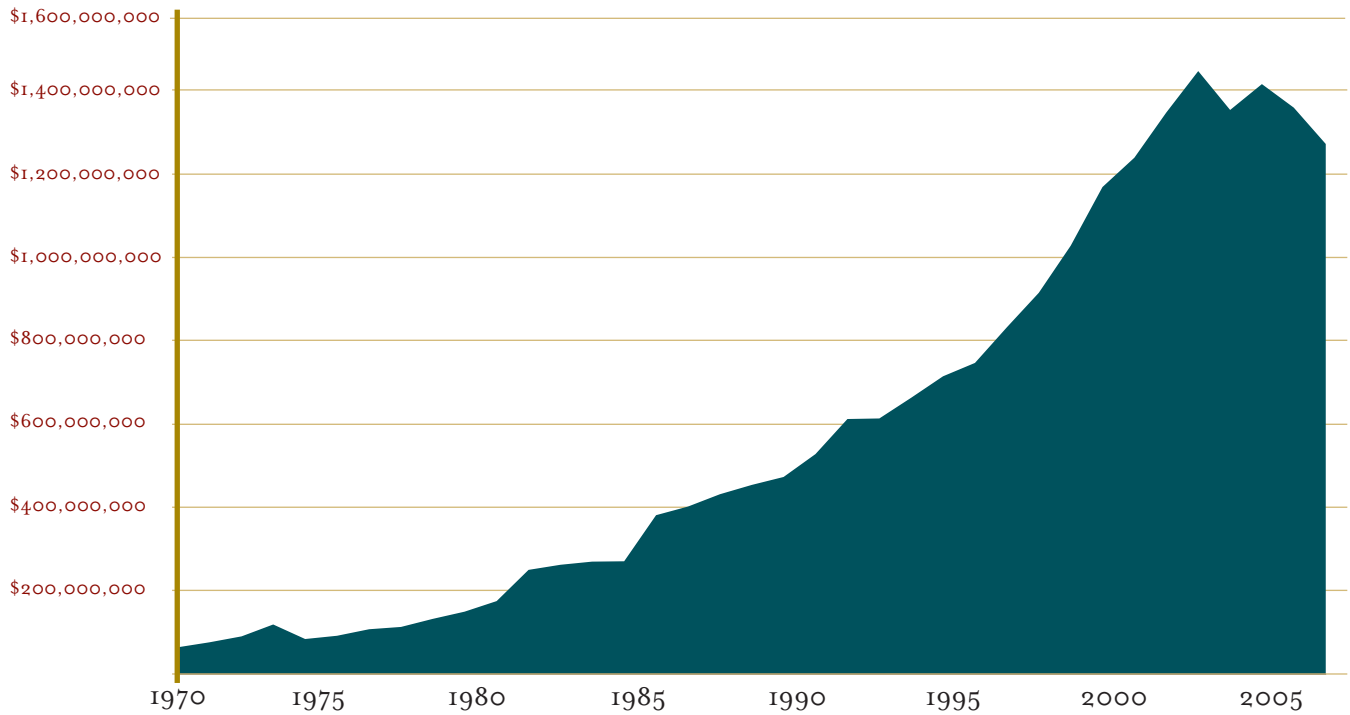
In 2005, 40 percent of all prison admissions in Illinois were for drug-related crimes, up from 8 percent in 1985.

In 2005, 40 percent of all prison admissions in Illinois were for drug-related crimes, up from 8 percent in 1985. From the Chicago region alone, the number of those sent to prison for drug crimes increased almost 2,000 percent in 20 years, from 469 in 1985 to 8,755 in 2005.

Not all drug offenses are non-violent, especially if linked to gang activity or if they represent a plea bargain from a more serious charge. However, more than half of Illinois drug prison sentences are for simple possession of small amounts of drugs. The average length of stay for these non-violent drug offenders is less than a year, and much of the incarceration cost is related to their processing in and out of the system. Holding those convicted of non-violent drug offenses in prison costs Illinois taxpayers an estimated \$240 million a year.

IMPRISONING THOSE
CONVICTED OF
NON-VIOLENT DRUG
OFFENSES COSTS
ILLINOIS TAXPAYERS
AN ESTIMATED
\$240 MILLION A YEAR.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS BUDGET, 1970-2005



Source: State of Illinois Budget



From 1990 to 2004, Illinois spending on corrections increased four times faster than spending on higher education.

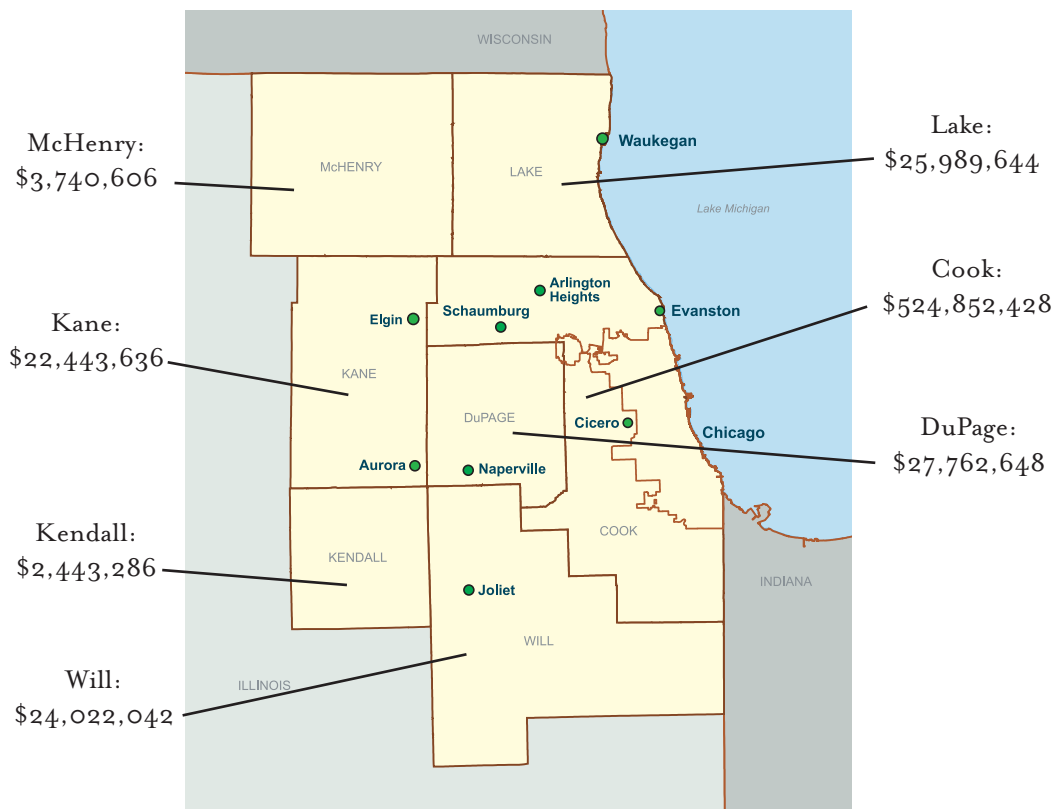
The significant increase in the prison population has led to a massive growth in state corrections costs. Since 1970, the Illinois corrections budget has grown by a factor of 20—from \$65 million to \$1.3 billion in 2006. The increased costs for corrections have occurred while services for prisoners, both in prison and when released, have decreased.

A policy issue which other states are addressing is whether the money spent locking people up could be better spent on the front end in community development and family support that might help prevent crime. Justice reinvestment explores this trade-off by looking at ways that communities could allocate criminal justice systems' dollars to enhance public safety by reducing risk and increasing opportunities in communities at the front-end. The stakes in this debate are high when the amount of money spent annually to incarcerate people is viewed alternatively as potential investment dollars on a community level.

ONE OUT OF EVERY \$20
FROM THE ILLINOIS
GENERAL REVENUE FUND
GOES TO THE DEPARTMENT
OF CORRECTIONS.

Justice reinvestment: Explores ways that communities could reallocate criminal justice systems' dollars to enhance public safety by creating opportunities and reducing risk in communities.

STATE COSTS TO IMPRISON RESIDENTS OF THE CHICAGO REGION, 2005



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

There has been a marked impact on residents' attitudes as crime has dropped. In Chicago, fear is down regardless of race, age, gender, or income level, according to recent surveys. With the decline in fear have come shifts in the way that people view the government's response to crime. The public is more interested in the reasons why a person commits a crime and is increasingly supportive of rehabilitative programs and preventive policies.

Declining crime trends and lower public fear present a unique opportunity to explore the trade-offs between the costs and benefits of present criminal justice policies.

This Crime and Justice Index begins with a snapshot of the state of crime in the region and describes the steps from when a crime is reported to the police through arrest, trial, conviction, sentencing, punishment, and release of the offender. It looks at various policies and their results by reviewing how the criminal justice systems operate, how many tax dollars are devoted to them, how the money is spent, who goes into the systems, how long they stay, who comes out, and what happens to them when they come out.

75 PERCENT OF AMERICANS FAVOR REDUCING SPENDING ON PRISON AND INSTEAD SPENDING THE MONEY ON PUBLIC SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

Source: Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc. (2002)

NATIONWIDE, THE DIRECT TANGIBLE COSTS TO CRIME VICTIMS ANNUALLY ARE ESTIMATED TO BE \$105 BILLION IN MEDICAL EXPENSES, LOST EARNINGS AND PUBLIC PROGRAM COSTS RELATED TO VICTIM ASSISTANCE. PAIN, SUFFERING AND REDUCED QUALITY OF LIFE INCREASE THE COST TO \$450 BILLION ANNUALLY.





CHAPTER ONE

CRIME TRENDS IN THE REGION

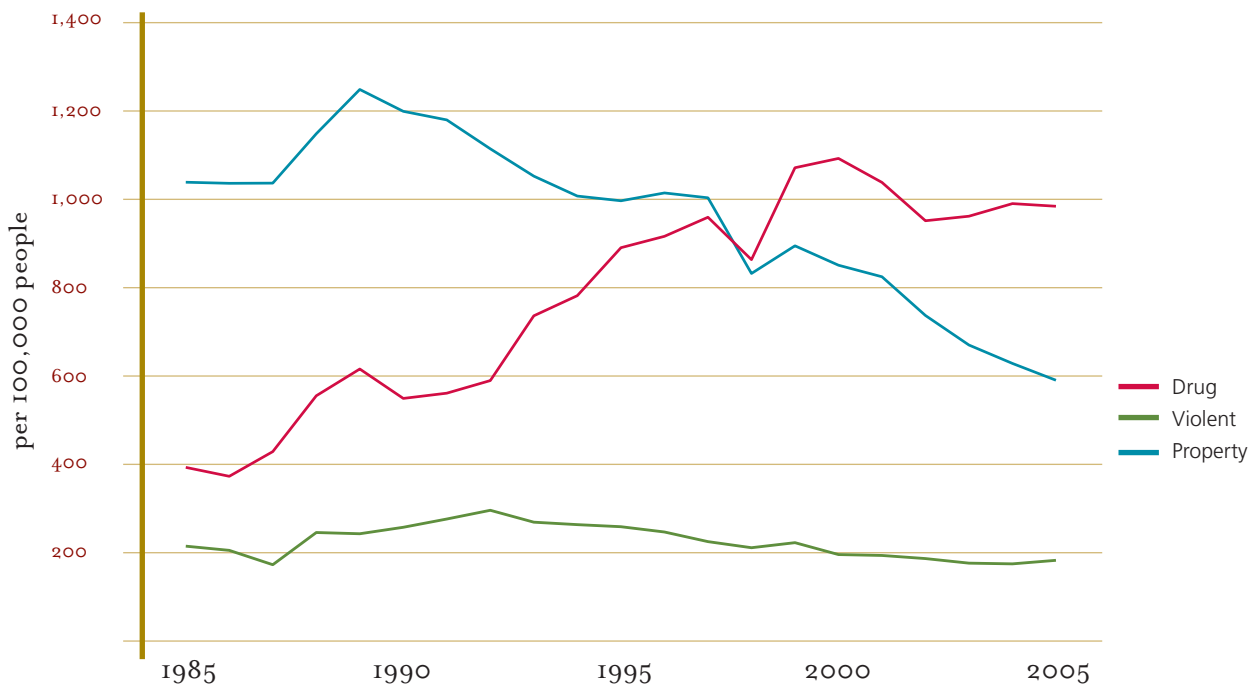
Crime affects everyone in the region, either directly as victim or offender or indirectly as community member and taxpayer. Perceptions about crime and public safety also impact community life, but these do not always coincide with actual crime trends. While murder and other violent crimes grab the headlines, these have been on the decline. Those charged with drug-related and non-violent crimes increasingly fill the criminal justice systems at every level.

Arrests for drug crimes have risen sharply at the same time that the incidences of property and violent crime in our region have dropped. Much of this is the result of policies enacted in the 1980s as part of the war on drugs, which increased the criminalization of and penalties for drug use. Vast law enforcement resources were deployed to prosecute those violating drug laws. As a result, from 1985 to 2005, the drug arrest rate in the Chicago region nearly tripled.



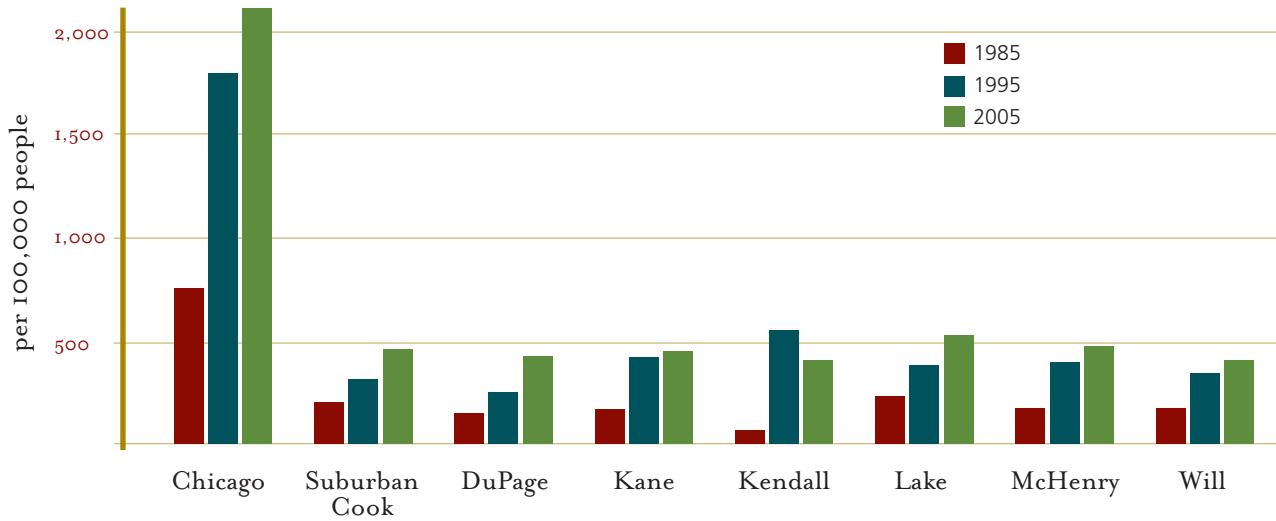
The drug arrest rate has nearly tripled in the Chicago region over the past 20 years.

DRUG, PROPERTY AND VIOLENT CRIME ARRESTS FOR THE CHICAGO REGION, 1985–2005



Sources: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Illinois State Police, U.S. Census Bureau

DRUG ARREST RATES, 1985–2005

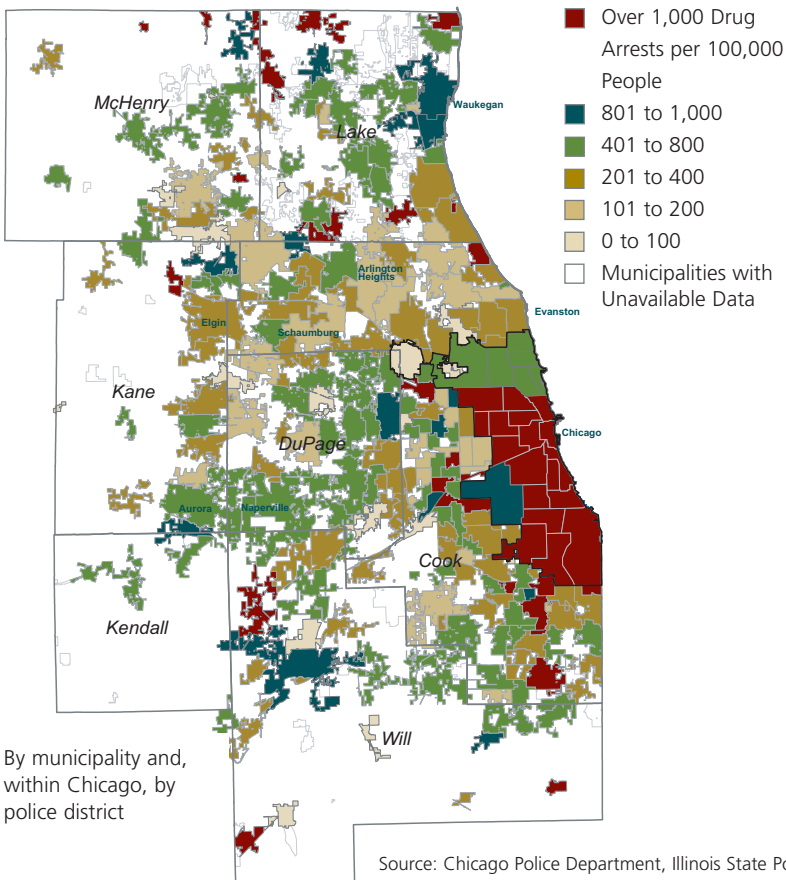


Sources: Illinois State Police, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, U.S. Census Bureau



Drug crime is not confined to the central cities; people in suburban and rural areas are struggling to address drug problems in their communities.

DRUG ARREST RATES, 2004



Drug arrests have been on the rise in every county of the Chicago region. Cook, DuPage, and Kane counties had drug arrest rates double in the past two decades; and arrests in Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties more than tripled. The problem of drug crime is not confined to the cities; people in suburban and rural areas are struggling to find ways to address drug problems in their communities.

The war on drugs has often been a war on gangs due to their involvement in the distribution of illegal drugs. Chicago-based street gangs are responsible for most of the retail sales of cocaine (both powder and crack), heroin and marijuana in the state. The violence that results at the intersection of gangs, guns and drugs is increasingly being felt in areas outside of the city as gang members move to the suburbs to avoid arrest and expand their drug trade.

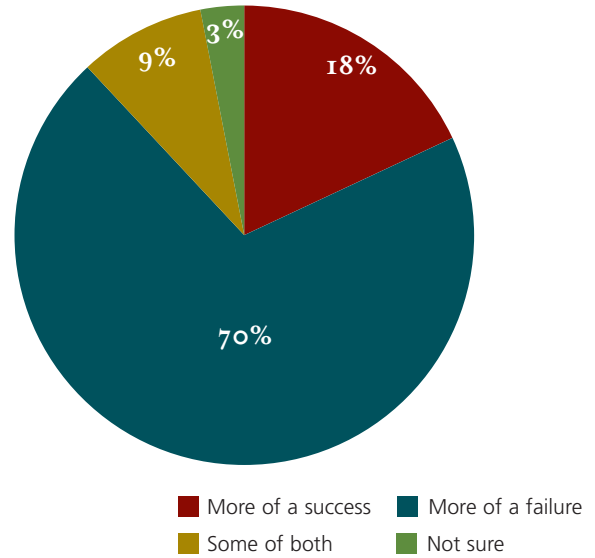
WAR ON DRUGS

Since the 1980s, legislation has increased penalties for illicit drug use by lowering threshold amounts which establish a drug crime as a serious felony. Threshold amounts are in grams (for reference, one gram is approximately equal to one packet of artificial sweetener).

In cases of drug possession, the reduced threshold amounts in the table below result in more people subject to serving 4-15 years on probation or in prison vs. 1-3 years.

Drug type	Before 1980s	Today
Cocaine (powder or crack)	30 grams	15 grams
Heroin	30 grams	15 grams
Meth	200 grams	15 grams

70 percent of Americans believe the war on drugs is failing.



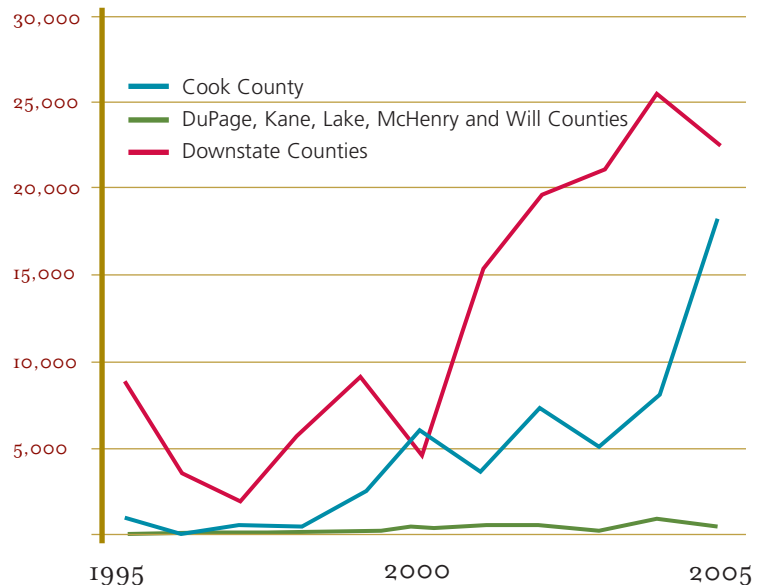
Source: Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc. (2002)

METHAMPHETAMINE IN ILLINOIS

While not as prevalent as cocaine, many worry that methamphetamine (meth) will be the next drug epidemic. Like crack cocaine in the 1980s, meth use is increasing because it is highly addictive and relatively cheap to access. Meth can be manufactured domestically with common household substances. Over-the-counter purchases of its main ingredient—pseudoephedrine—are now restricted by federal and state law, affecting access to this popular cold remedy.

Unlike crack, meth had been considered a rural drug, although this seems to be changing. There are indications that meth is moving into suburban and urban areas because of a growing international trade. Meth usage is encroaching upon the Chicago region via street gangs.

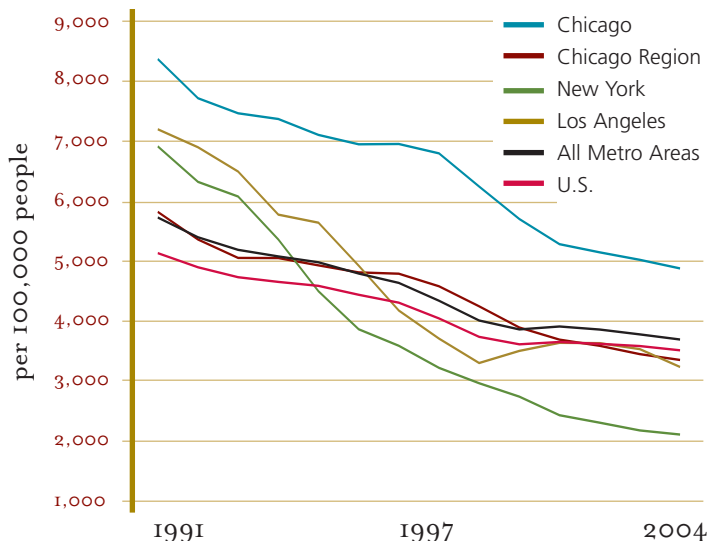
METH SEIZURES IN ILLINOIS, 1995–2005



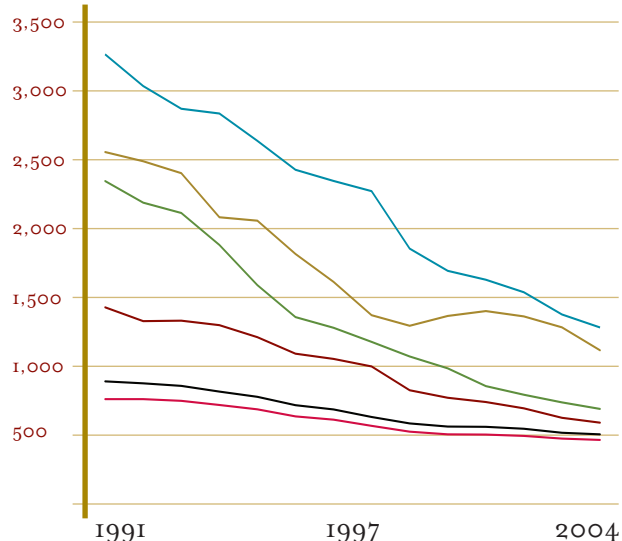
Source: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

NATIONAL PROPERTY AND VIOLENT CRIME RATES

PROPERTY CRIME RATES
IN THE U.S., 1991-2004



VIOLENT CRIME RATES
IN THE U.S., 1991-2004

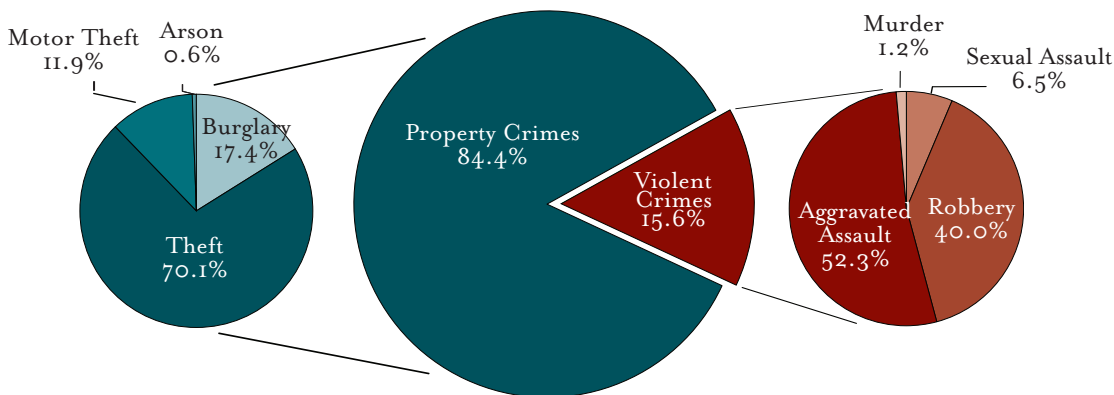


Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Illinois State Police, U.S. Census Bureau



In the Chicago region, almost 85 percent of reported crime is property and the majority of that is theft.

REPORTED PROPERTY AND VIOLENT CRIMES FOR THE CHICAGO REGION, 2005

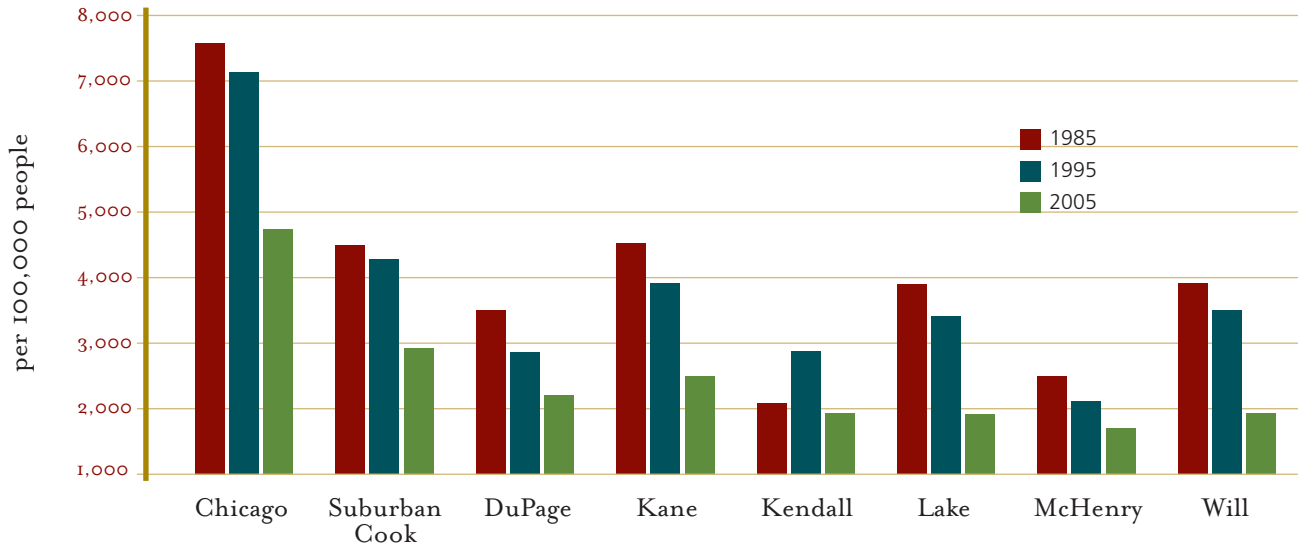


UNDERSTANDING CRIME REPORTING


Violent and property crimes are recorded separately from drug-related crimes. Violent and property crimes are measured in terms of offenses reported to the police and in terms of arrests, while drug-related crimes are recorded as arrests.

Source: Illinois State Police

PROPERTY CRIME RATES, 1985–2005

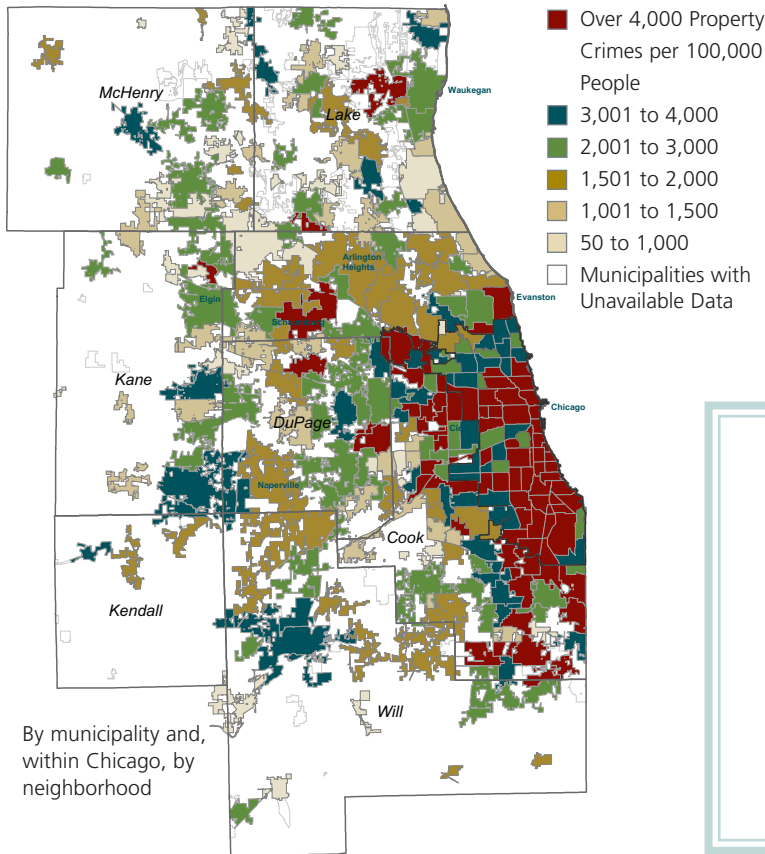


Sources: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Illinois State Police, U.S. Census Bureau



Property crime rates in Kane, Lake and Will counties have dropped by almost 50 percent since 1985.

PROPERTY CRIME RATES, 2004



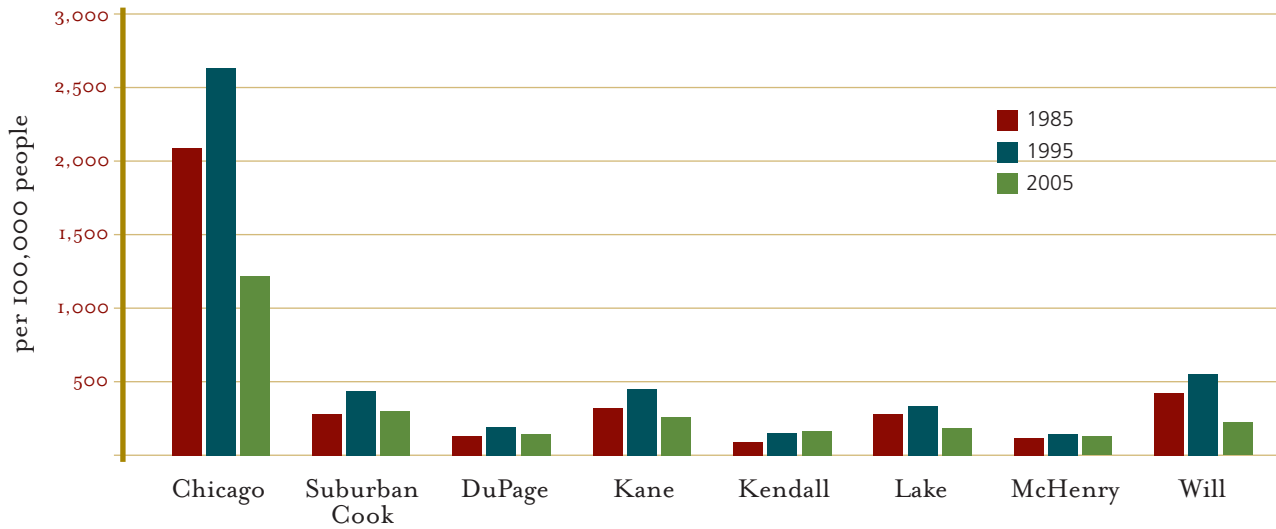
As in other parts of the country, the Chicago region has experienced steady declines in both property and violent crime since the 1990s.

From their highs in 1991, property crime has gone down by 37 percent, and violent crime, decreasing at a faster rate, has dropped 52 percent. Property crime is more dispersed throughout the region while violent crime is primarily concentrated in urban areas. Some of these dynamics, especially with respect to murder, are shifting.

CRIME TRENDS HAVE NOT BEEN UNIFORMLY ON THE DECLINE. FROM 1983 TO 2003, THERE WAS AN 84 PERCENT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF REPORTED ELDER ABUSE CASES, WHICH INCLUDES FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION, NEGLECT AND PHYSICAL, SEXUAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE.

Source: Chicago Police Department, Illinois State Police, Metro Chicago Information Center, U.S. Census Bureau

VIOLENT CRIME RATES, 1985–2005

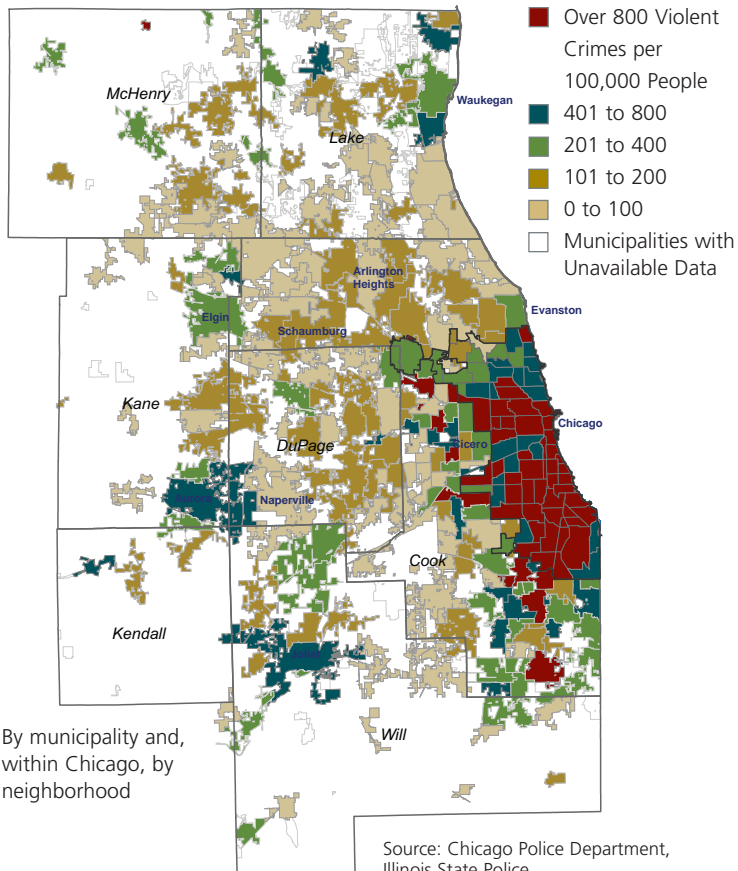


Sources: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Illinois State Police, U.S. Census Bureau



Violent crime has decreased by 52 percent in the Chicago region since its peak in 1991.

VIOLENT CRIME RATES, 2004



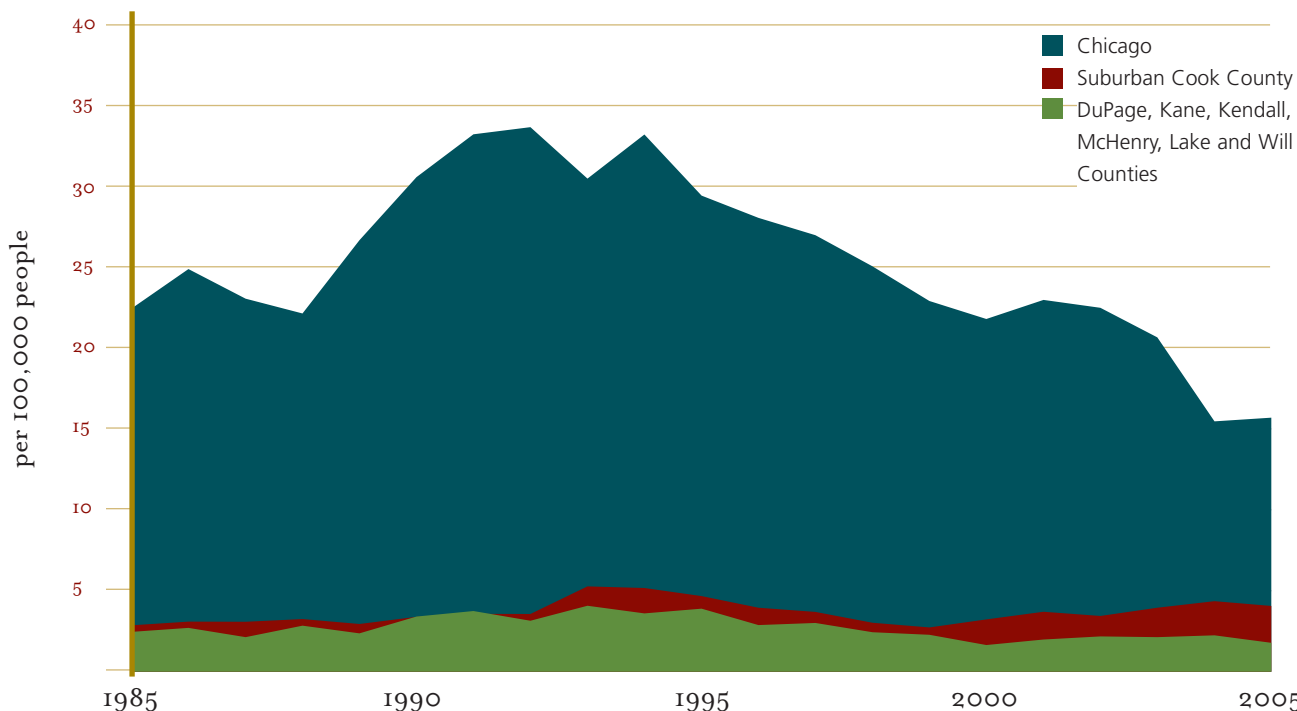
Source: Chicago Police Department, Illinois State Police, Metro Chicago Information Center, U.S. Census Bureau

While a 2005 rise in violent crime was recently reported for the Midwest, the Chicago area is an exception and has continued to see violent crime decline.

Violent crime grabs the headlines but accounts for less than 15 percent of the total reported crime. Murder, for example, accounts for 1.2 percent of violent crime and only .2 percent of reported crime in the region. After spiking in the early 1990s, violent crime rates have been declining in nearly every county.

A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF MURDERS AFFECTING WOMEN ARE COMMITTED IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SITUATIONS. WOMEN ARE SIX TIMES MORE LIKELY THAN MEN TO BE MURDER VICTIMS OF AN INTIMATE PARTNER.

MURDER RATES, 1985-2005



Sources: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Illinois State Police, U.S. Census Bureau

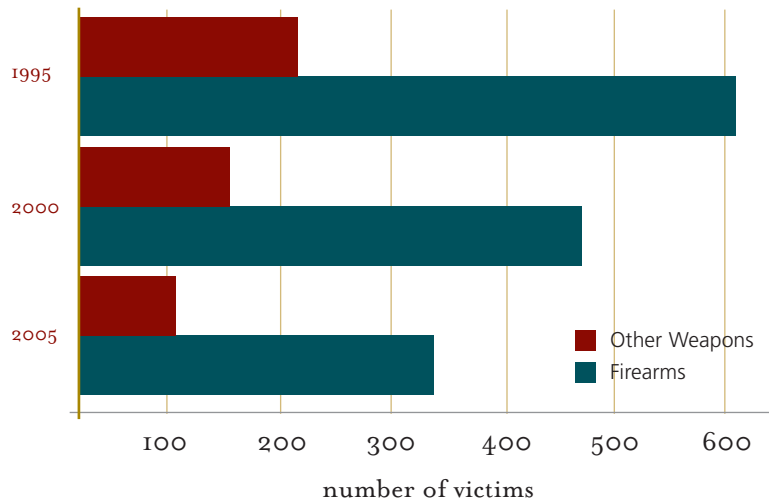


Chicago's murder rate has been dropping dramatically, but other parts of the region have seen slight increases in their murder rates.

There have been significant changes in the region's murder rates. The number of murders in Chicago has been on a steady and rapid decline, dropping from a high of 943 in 1992 to 447 in 2005. Many Chicago murders are the result of street gang activities. In suburban Cook County, there was an increase in the murder rate from 2000 to 2004; it declined again in 2005.

NATIONALLY, MORE THAN 63 PERCENT OF WOMEN AND 47 PERCENT OF MEN ARE MURDERED BY SOMEONE THEY KNOW.

CHICAGO MURDER OFFENSES BY WEAPON TYPE, 1995-2005



Source: Chicago Police Department



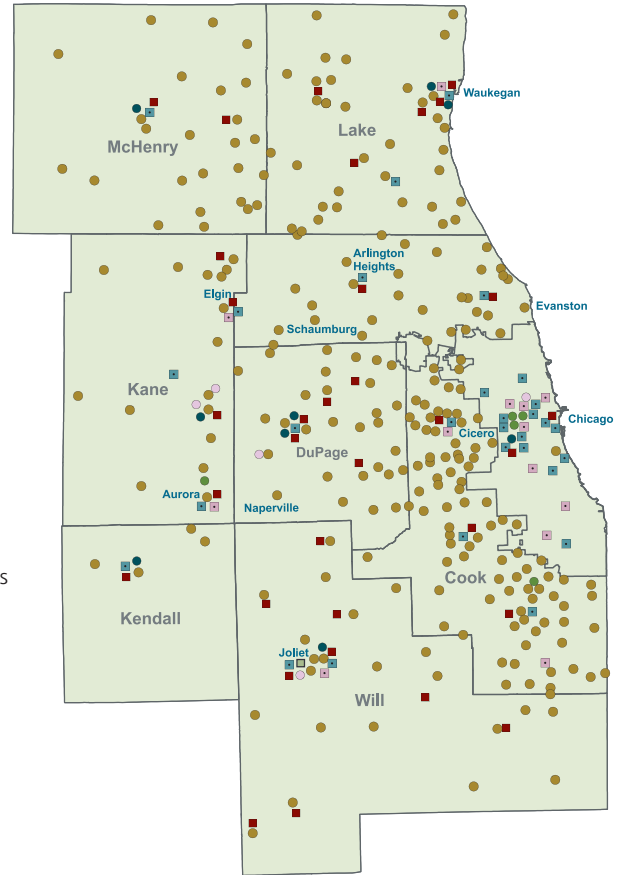
In Illinois, guns are used in over 70 percent of all reported homicides.

THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS OF THE CHICAGO REGION

The Chicago region is home to one of the world's oldest organized police forces and one of the largest in the U.S. (the Chicago Police Department), one of the largest unified court systems (the Circuit Court of Cook County), the largest single-site county pre-trial detention facility in the country (the Cook County Department of Corrections, popularly known as Cook County Jail), and the world's first juvenile court. The region has been at the forefront of innovative criminal justice approaches, such as community policing and alternatives to juvenile detention.

- Adult Transition Centers
- County Jails
- Courthouse
- Illinois Youth Centers
- Parole Offices
- Police Departments
- Probation Offices
- Illinois Prison

Map symbols are approximate to site locations



Source: American Correctional Association, County web sites, Illinois Department of Corrections, Illinois Probation and Court Services Association, Inc., USACOPS.com





CHAPTER TWO

THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS

POLICE

Most people’s first encounter with the criminal justice systems is through the police, either to report a crime or because they come under suspicion of committing one. Nearly 38,000 officers are employed by the 252 municipal police departments and seven county sheriffs’ departments in the region. Law enforcement personnel numbers have kept pace with general population growth. Following initiatives in the early-1990s to expand local police forces, the number of officers per 1,000 residents has not changed significantly over the past 10 years. Advances in technology, such as on-board computers, mapping software and photo radar devices, have added to local police operating costs and provide substantial benefits in terms of crime control.

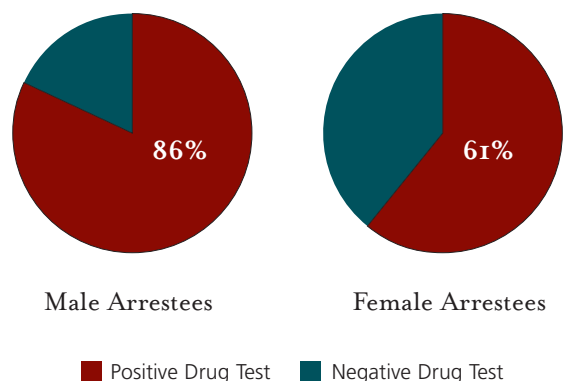
The law enforcement level is often where racial inequity in the criminal justice systems first presents itself. New laws require police to record the race of those detained in traffic stops in order to test for racial bias. Early results from the 2004 Racial Profiling Law show that in Illinois minority drivers are pulled over at a disproportionately high rate and are more likely than white drivers to receive tickets (vs. be let off with a warning). Minority drivers are nearly three times more likely than white drivers to have their cars searched during a traffic stop.

Police are on the front lines in the war on drugs, which is often waged in densely-populated urban areas where drug activity occurs in the open. In the Chicago region, more drug arrests and seizures are made in poor, minority neighborhoods where the enforcement of drug laws is easier and more productive.

PROMISING TREND: Community Policing

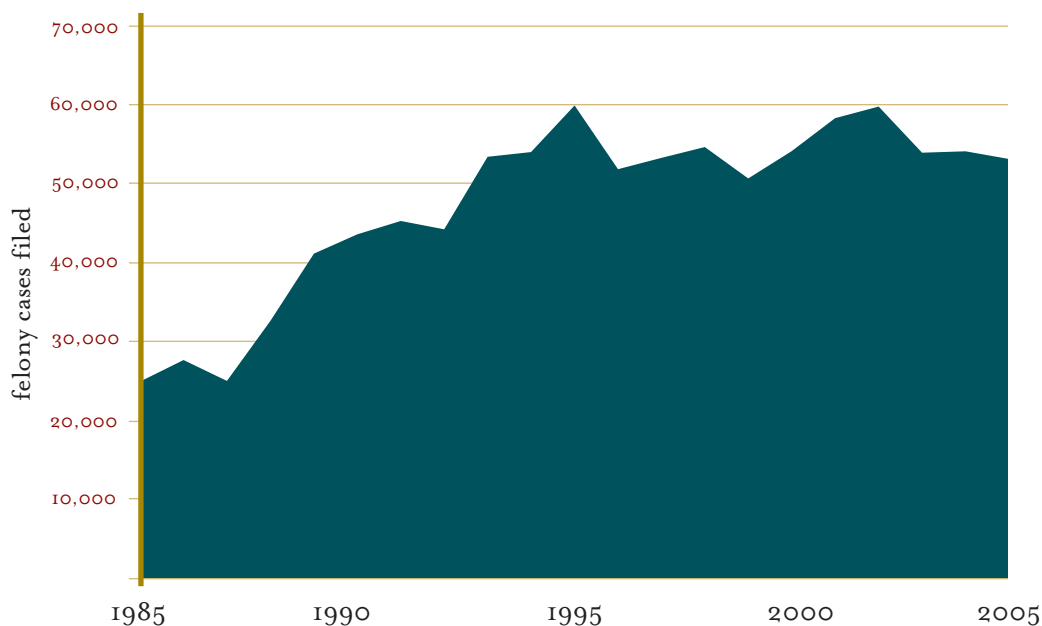
Efforts to reduce crime and improve relations between community residents and the police have led to the development of community policing programs throughout the region. Community policing programs emphasize prevention, decentralized decision-making and community involvement. “Beat meetings” provide an opportunity for residents to talk with officers to report crime and discuss concerns with neighborhood police services. More than two-thirds of all local police departments in the U.S. have some sort of community policing program.

In Chicago, 86 percent of all male arrestees and 61 percent of all female arrestees in 2003 tested positive for at least one illegal drug at the time of arrest.



Source: Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Program, 2003

FELONY CASES FILED IN THE CHICAGO REGION, 1985–2005



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority



Felony cases have doubled over the past 20 years
placing a burden on the courts.

COURTS

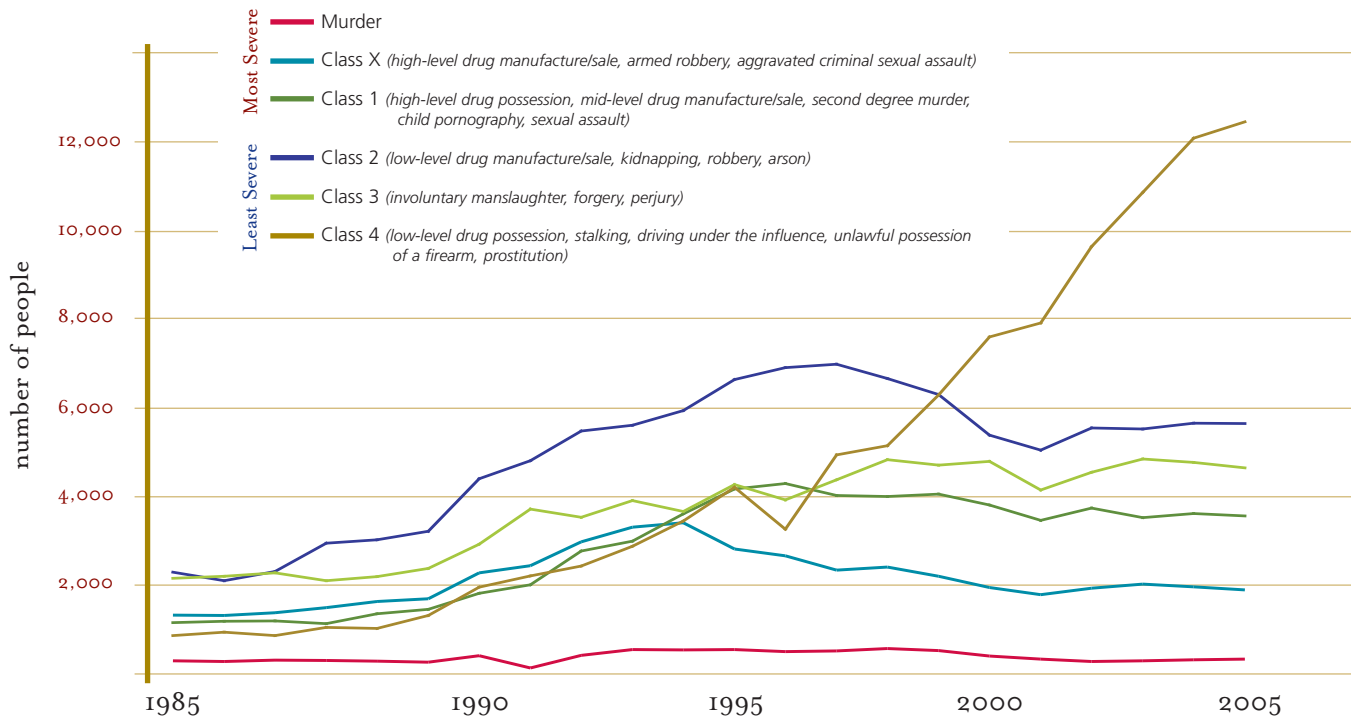
The Chicago region is served by five circuit courts, which handle over 350,000 criminal cases every year. Over the past 20 years, the number of cases of felony crimes has doubled. This is largely the result of the enforcement of tougher drug laws, which upgraded drug offenses from misdemeanors to felonies.

REPORTED CRIME IS DOWN,
BUT FELONY CASES HAVE
INCREASED BECAUSE MORE
DRUG-RELATED CRIMES HAVE
BEEN UPGRADED TO FELONIES
FROM MISDEMEANORS.

Felony: Includes violent crimes, sex offenses and many types of drug and property violations. A felony typically carries a punishment of a year or more served in prison.

Misdemeanor: Includes crimes such as assault and battery, petty theft and some public order violations. Considered a less serious offense, a misdemeanor may carry sentences of probation, a fine, or a stay in jail of less than a year.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE SENT TO PRISON BY OFFENSE CLASS, 1985–2005



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections



Those convicted of Class 4 Possession of Controlled Substance were the largest number of people sentenced to Illinois prisons in 2005.

To balance the demands of public safety and fiscal responsibility, many states are reviewing sentencing policies and practices to produce guidelines that may increase the length and severity of sentences for violent offenders but offer alternatives to expensive incarceration for non-violent offenders, for example, home confinement or community-based supervision and treatment programs.

In Illinois, people convicted of Class 4 offenses—which are the least serious type of felony and include possession of small amounts of drugs, driving under the influence, prostitution, fraud, and retail theft—are increasingly filling our prisons.

PROMISING TREND: Drug Treatment

In recent years, Arizona and California voters have enacted propositions that mandate drug treatment rather than jail time for low-level, non-violent drug offenders. In the first four years of the California law, more than 140,000 people entered drug treatment, reducing incarceration levels for those serving time for simple drug possession by 32 percent and saving hundreds of millions of corrections dollars at the state and county levels. Concerns that those diverted to drug treatment would engage in violent crime have not been realized. The violent crime rate in California has continued to decline since enactment.

PROMISING TREND: Drug Courts

Drug courts generally involve pre-trial diversion of non-violent drug offenders to a drug treatment program, under judicial supervision, instead of incarceration.

Illinois has nearly 30 drug courts (both adult and juvenile), of which ten are in the Chicago region. Two courts dedicated to methamphetamine cases are located in downstate Illinois.

Once enrolled, drug court participants must agree to enter a community-based treatment program, but there are not enough of these programs available to meet demand.

Not all drug offenders are eligible to enter the drug courts. A defendant must:

- *Be a United States citizen or legal resident*
- *Age 17 or older*
- *Be assessed as an addict*
- *Sign consent to participate*
- *Have felony charges pending (no misdemeanors)*

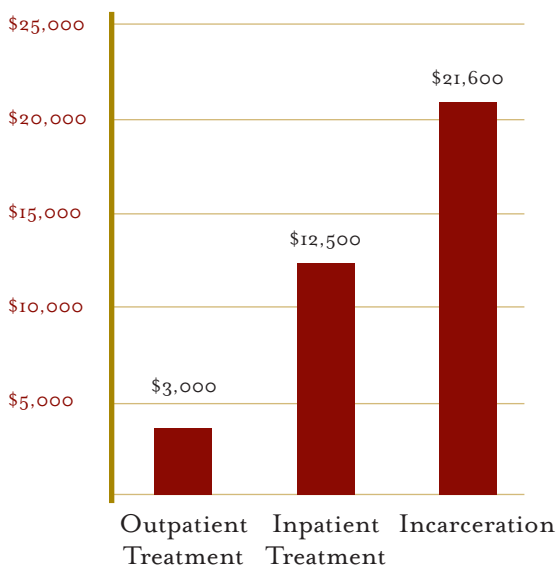
Excluding factors are:

- *Violent crime or history of violent crime*
- *Mental or physical illness that impairs participation*
- *Prior completion or discharge from a drug court*



For every \$1 spent on drug treatment, \$7 is saved in costs ranging from healthcare to mental health services to crime- and prison-related costs to lost earnings.

COMPARATIVE COSTS OF INCARCERATION AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT



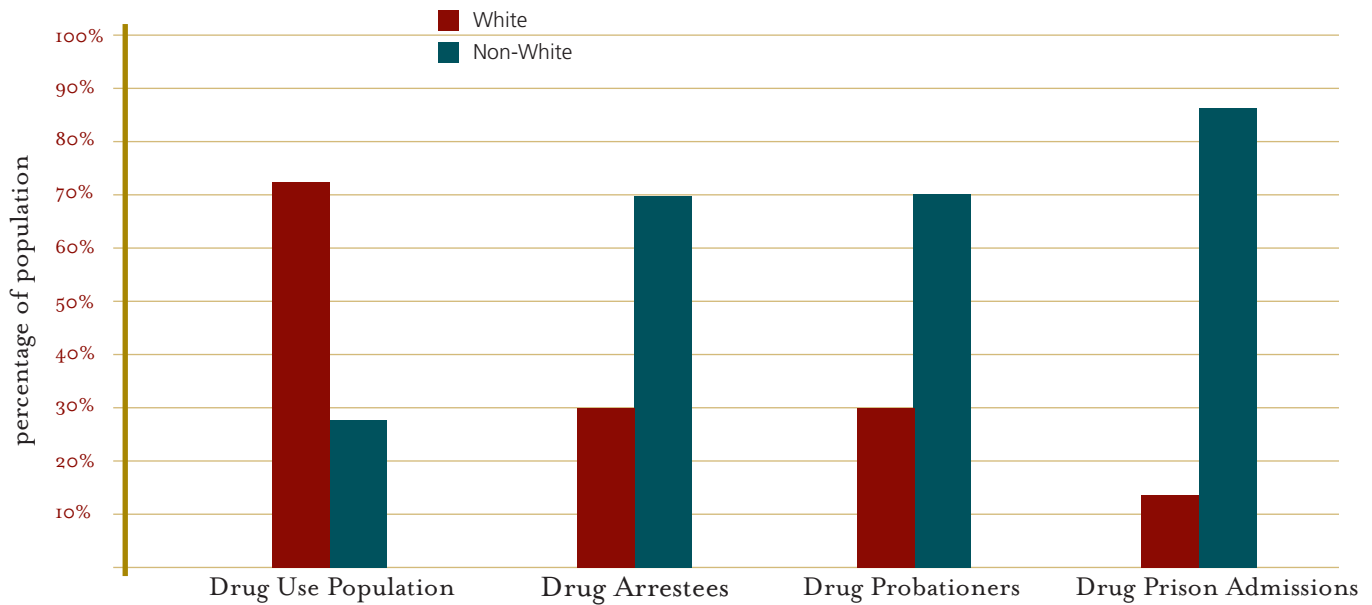
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections, Institute of Medicine

The increase in felony cases, particularly for drug offenses, has placed a burden on the courts, increasing judicial caseloads and the length of time between arrest and conviction. In response, local governments have created specialized courts to deal with the volume of cases in a more efficient and effective manner.

85 PERCENT OF ILLINOIS VOTERS BELIEVE THAT ADDICTION IS A PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM BETTER HANDLED BY PREVENTION AND TREATMENT PROGRAMS THAN BY THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.

Source: Fako & Associates (2003)

ILLINOIS ADULT DRUG USE AND PROSECUTION, 1999



Source: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority



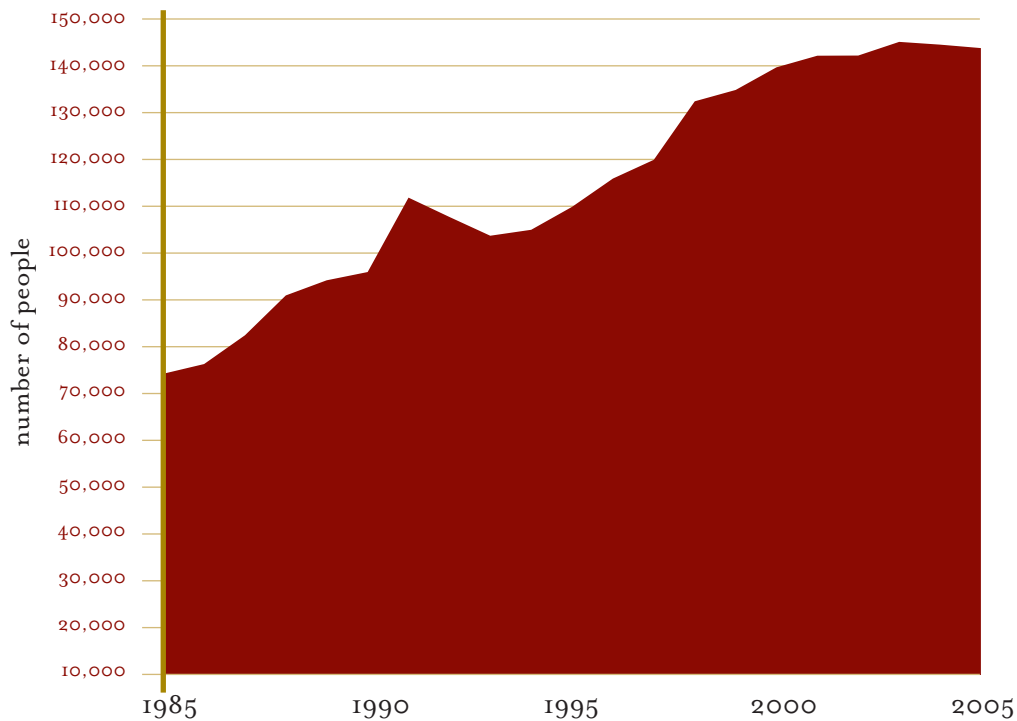
Whites make up 70 percent of those using illegal drugs, but 80 percent of those imprisoned for drug crimes are non-whites.

There is a mismatch between those who are in the drug-using population and those who are arrested, convicted and imprisoned for drug offenses. Drug use is widespread across races, but the enforcement and prosecution of drug laws have disproportionately affected minorities, most notably African-American males.

Problem-solving Courts: Judicial approaches that address the offender's behavior as a problem requiring non-traditional sanctions and/or social services in addition to traditional punitive sanctions. Examples include drug courts, mental health courts, domestic violence courts, driving under the influence (DUI) courts, family-treatment courts, homeless courts, youth courts, and reentry courts.

IN 2000, ILLINOIS WAS SINGLED OUT BY HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH FOR HAVING THE HIGHEST INCARCERATION RATE OF BLACK MALE DRUG OFFENDERS OF ANY STATE.

NUMBER OF ADULTS ON PROBATION IN ILLINOIS, 1985-2005



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, Bureau of Justice Statistics



There are three times more adults on probation than in prison.

PROBATION

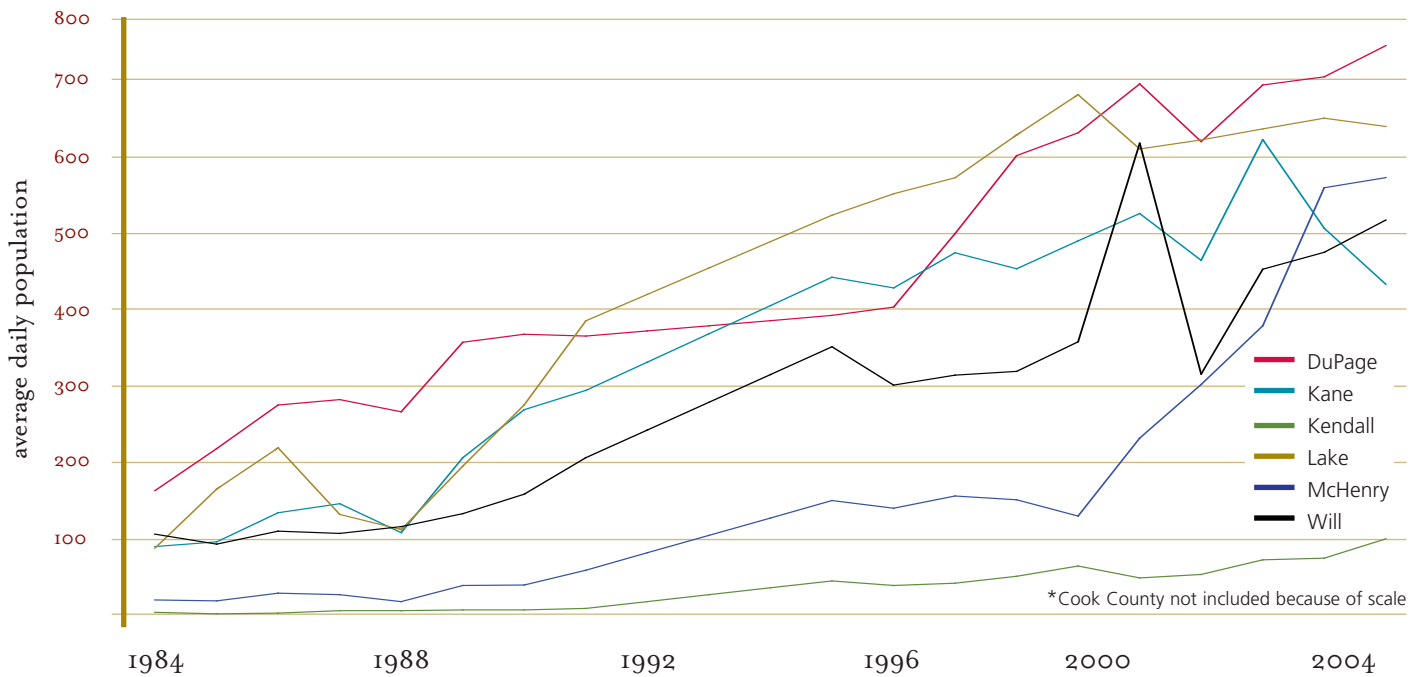
Probation is a period of time spent under community supervision that is granted in lieu of a prison sentence. Probationers may be required to undergo treatment, pay fines, make restitution to their victims and/or perform community service.

Probation is the most common sentence handed down by the courts and is considered a more cost-effective form of punishment than incarceration for non-violent offenders. The more than 140,000 adults on probation in Illinois are supervised through 70 offices around the state. It costs approximately \$1,500 per year to monitor someone on probation compared to \$21,622 to incarcerate an offender in prison.

IT COSTS APPROXIMATELY
\$1,500 PER YEAR TO
MONITOR SOMEONE ON
PROBATION COMPARED TO
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OFFENDER IN PRISON.

Probation: A period of community supervision that is a suspended prison sentence granted by the court. Probationers who violate their conditions of probation supervision may have their probation revoked and then be sent to prison. Probation departments are administered locally but are paid for and supervised by the courts.

AVERAGE DAILY JAIL POPULATION BY COUNTY*, 1984-2004



Source: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority



Jail populations have tripled over the past 20 years, straining local capacity and posing public safety problems. DuPage, Kane, Lake and McHenry counties have responded by expanding their jails.

JAILS

County governments operate jails in conjunction with their sheriffs' departments. Jails are often regarded as "mini prisons," but in fact they are meant for only temporary confinement and offer few services for inmates. Nonetheless, as the initial holding area for those involved in crimes, jails must deal with an array of mental and physical health challenges.

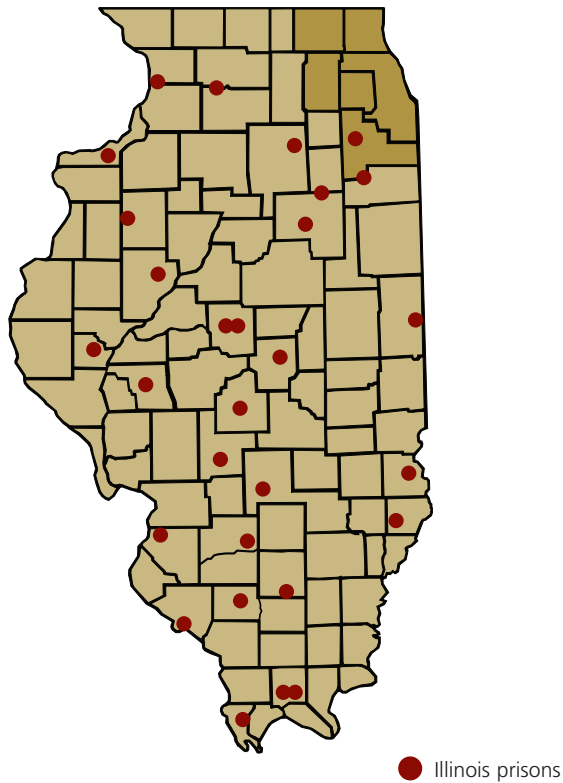
More than two-thirds of all the people in jail meet the criteria for substance dependence or abuse. Jails also hold the seriously mentally-ill, many of whom are homeless. To meet the needs of detainees, the Cook County Jail has on-site health care services and substance abuse treatment.

Various jail diversion programs, including home confinement using electronic monitoring devices, day reporting centers, and outpatient treatment for mental health or substance abuse issues often represent substantial cost savings. One local non-profit agency in Chicago runs a successful off-site mental health treatment program for non-violent jail inmates, providing case management and home visits at a cost of \$26 per day (vs. \$60 per day in jail). Such programs meet only a fraction of the demand.

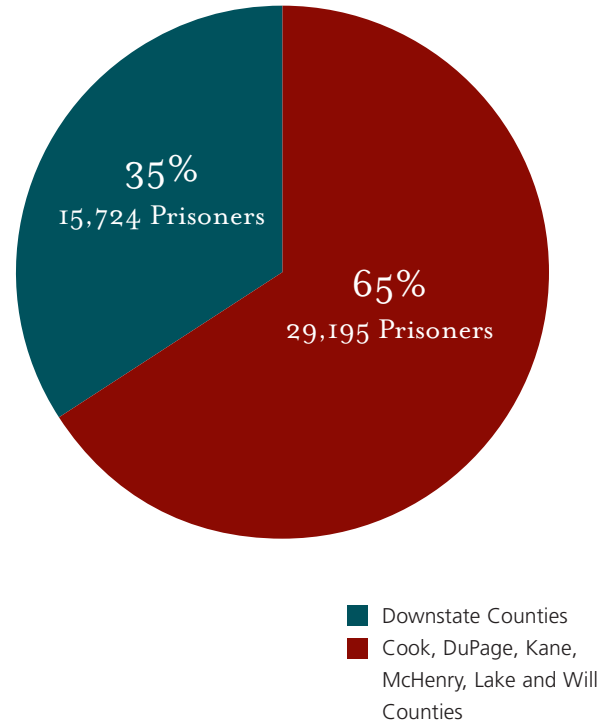
COOK COUNTY JAIL IS ONE OF THE LARGEST PROVIDERS OF PSYCHIATRIC CARE IN THE COUNTRY.

Jails: Correctional facilities operated by local governments that house people who are serving sentences of less than a year, defendants in pre-trial status or people awaiting transfer to prison.


PRISON LOCATIONS IN ILLINOIS



PRISONER ORIGINS IN ILLINOIS, 2005



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections



Two-thirds of those committed to the Illinois Department of Corrections are from the Chicago region, yet most prisons are located downstate.

PRISON

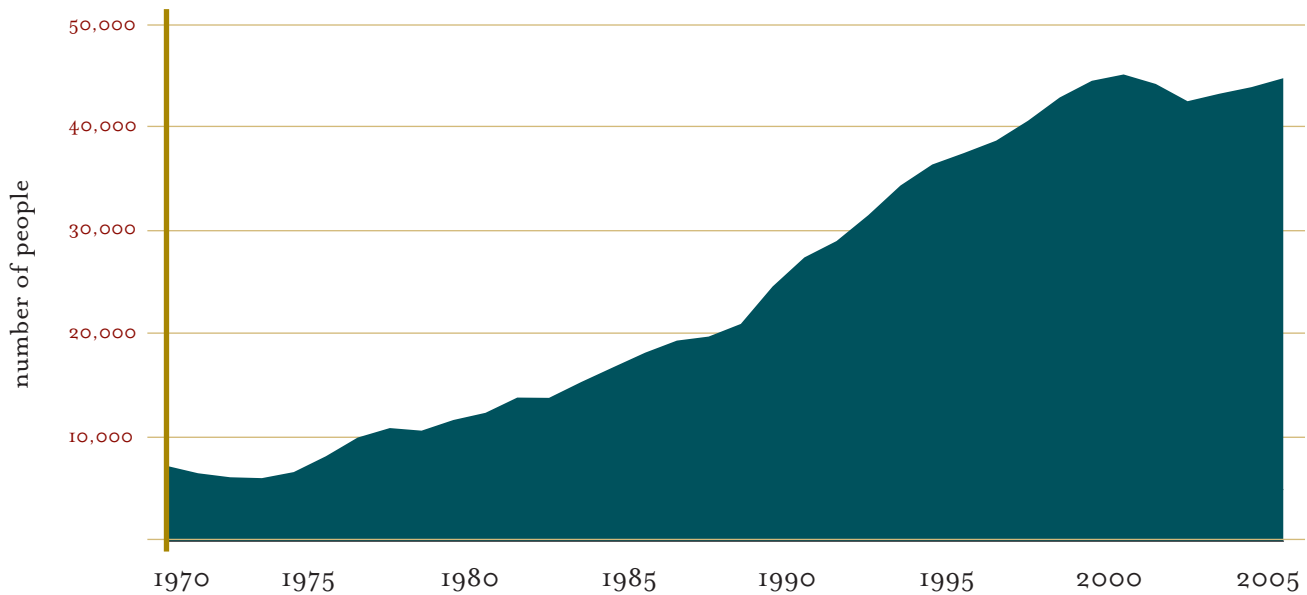
When offenders are convicted and sentenced to at least a year of confinement, they are usually transferred from local jails to a state prison. In Illinois, the prison system is run by the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC), which oversees 27 correctional centers (plus two not in operation) and seven work camps, as well as two boot camps, eight Adult Transition Centers (ATCs) for released prisoners, and 23 parole offices.

The more than 200 miles separating prisoners from their families and communities have an impact on the relationships that can determine how well prisoners cope with incarceration and how well they do upon release.

PRISONS BRING STATE JOBS AND ACCESS TO STATE AND FEDERAL TAX DOLLARS BECAUSE PRISONERS ARE COUNTED IN THE CENSUS OF THE PRISON TOWNS AND NOT THEIR HOME COMMUNITIES.

Prisons: Correctional facilities operated by the state that usually house felons serving sentences longer than one year.

ILLINOIS ADULT PRISON POPULATION, 1970–2005



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections



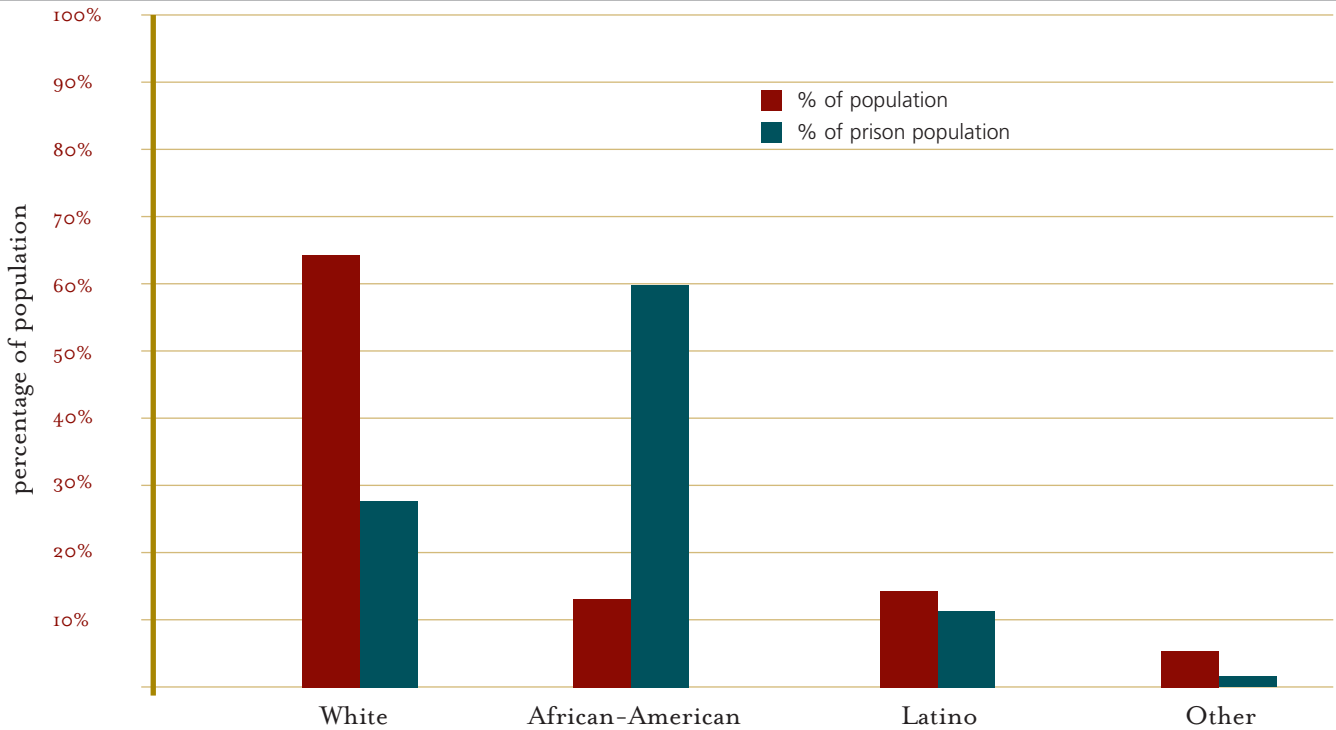
Illinois' prison population has increased by more than 500 percent over the last 35 years.

Since 1970, the Illinois state prison population has increased by more than 500 percent. The growth is primarily the result of longer sentences for violent and habitual criminals but also includes the effects of harsher penalties for those convicted of drug offenses and revocation to prison of more parole violators.

Violent and repeat criminals are required to serve the majority of their sentences, with no time off for good conduct. This has resulted in a rise in the average age of prisoners. Those convicted of non-violent offenses churn through prison gates, often spending less than a year behind bars.

THE AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY FOR NON-VIOLENT DRUG OFFENDERS IS LESS THAN A YEAR, AND MUCH OF THE INCARCERATION COST IS RELATED TO THEIR PROCESSING IN AND OUT OF THE SYSTEM.

PERCENTAGE OF MINORITIES IN THE ILLINOIS PRISON POPULATION VS. THE OVERALL POPULATION IN ILLINOIS, 2005



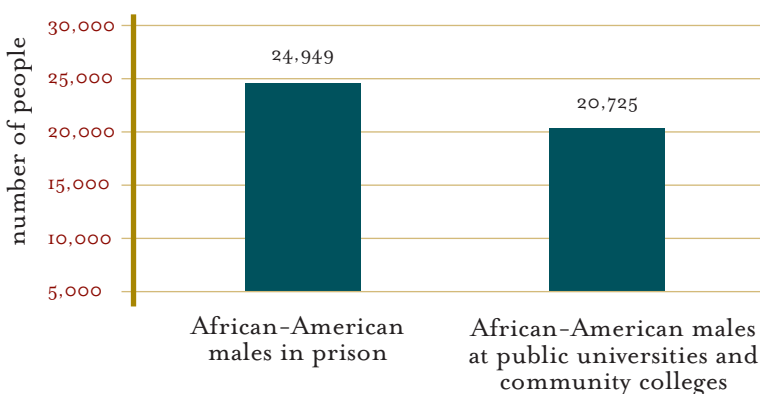
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections, U.S. Census Bureau



Latinos are twice as likely as whites to go to prison. African-Americans are 10 times more likely than whites to be incarcerated.

The prison population in Illinois looks quite different from the general population. In prison, minorities are the majority, represented at rates much higher than their presence in the overall population. Minorities are more likely than whites to be incarcerated—twice as likely for Latinos, and ten times more likely for African-Americans.

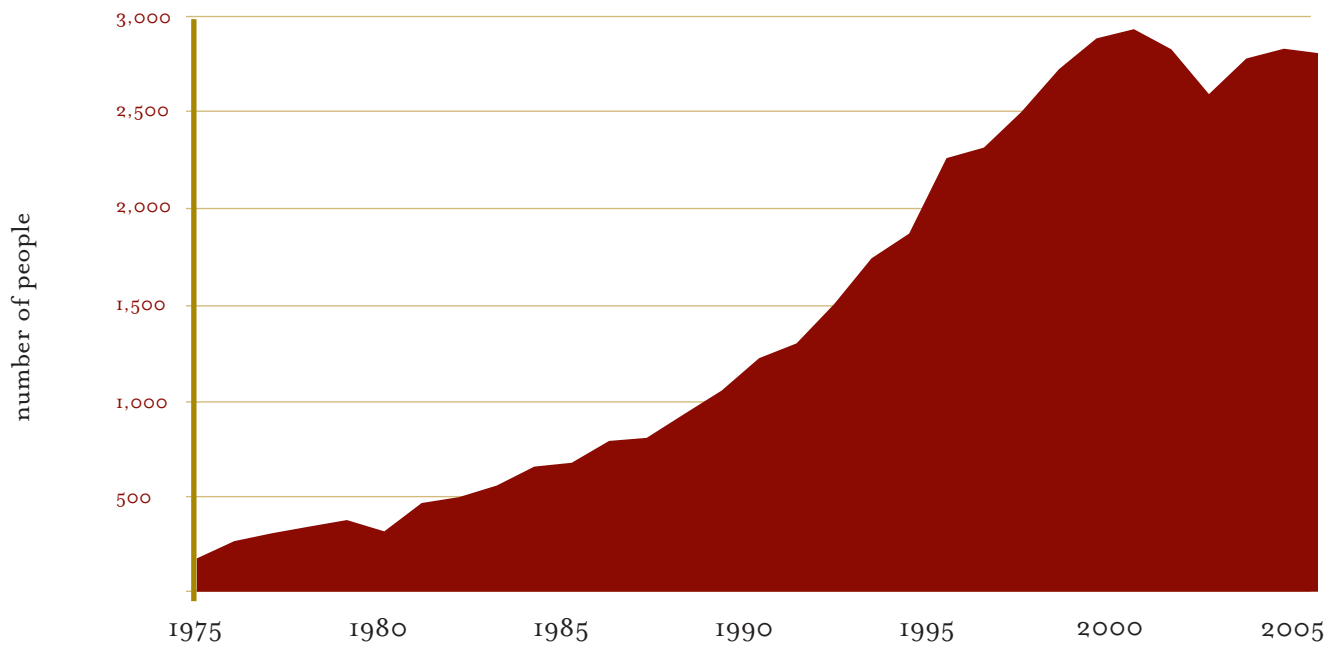
AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN PRISON VS. HIGHER EDUCATION IN ILLINOIS, 2004



Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Department of Corrections

AT CURRENT RATES, THE PROSPECT OF SERVING A PRISON SENTENCE IS AS LIKELY FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN ILLINOIS AS IS GOING TO COLLEGE.

FEMALES IN THE ILLINOIS PRISON POPULATION, 1975–2005



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections



The rate of imprisonment for females has been increasing at twice the rate as for males.

There are still comparatively few women in prison—in 2005, women were six percent of the Illinois prison population—but the number of women in Illinois prisons has more than doubled over the past 15 years.

The increase in the number of women inmates has important implications in terms of programming needs inside as well as outside of prison. Female prisoners are more likely than male prisoners to be battling drug addiction or suffering from chronic mental illness. They are also more likely to have been victims of domestic and sexual abuse. In addition, over 80 percent of female prisoners are mothers, often of dependent children, and their incarceration has a ripple effect on the foster care system.

THE GROWING FEMALE PRISON POPULATION HAS A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM.

PRISON PROGRAMS

People in prison have higher incidences of mental and physical illness, addiction and illiteracy than the rest of the population. Prison programs provide opportunities to begin to address these problems, but they are often the first programs to be cut when there are tight budgets.

Healthcare

Prison is sometimes the first place that individuals have regular access to healthcare. Because of the lack of health care in many communities, chronic physical and mental conditions may go undetected and untreated. The reduction since the 1980s in the number of public mental health treatment facilities also narrows options for many. Serious mental health disorders such as schizophrenia, major depression, bipolar disorder, and post-traumatic stress are two to four times more prevalent in jail and prison populations than they are in the general population. In addition to mental health issues, many prisoners are dealing with physical health concerns related to years of neglect and substance abuse. Prisoners exhibit high rates of tuberculosis, hepatitis C and HIV/AIDS.

Over 60 percent of offenders entering Illinois prisons meet the diagnostic criteria for chemical dependency. The Illinois Department of Corrections has approximately 4,000 substance abuse treatment slots for the more than 21,000 prisoners who may need treatment.

SCHIZOPHRENIA,
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PROMISING TREND: Sheridan Model Drug Prison and Reentry Program

The Sheridan prison was re-opened in 2004 as the nation's first comprehensive drug treatment prison and reentry program. The goal is to treat inmates' addictions and prevent their return to prison.

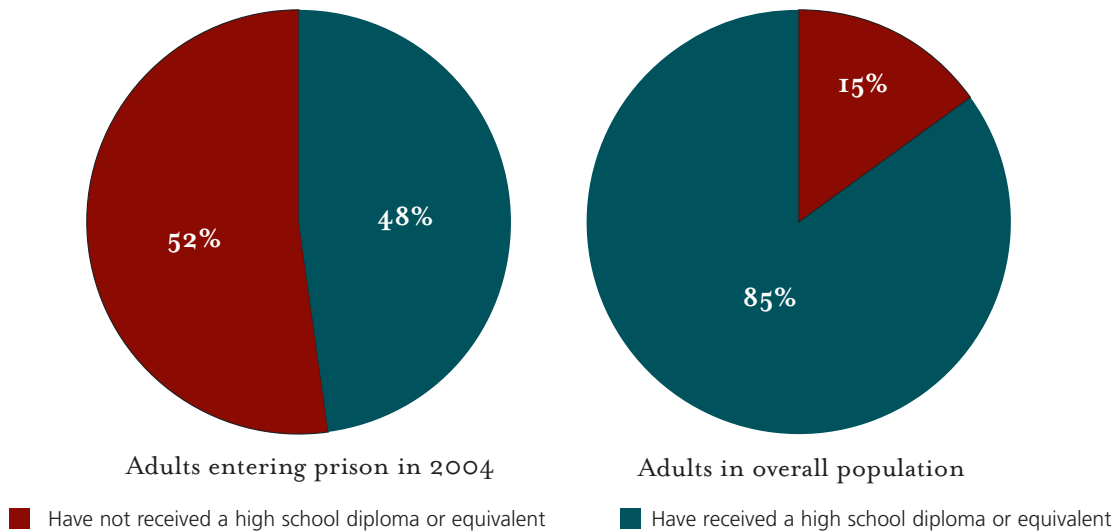
Working with a variety of community-based groups, Sheridan provides substance abuse treatment and educational and vocational programs in a strong therapeutic environment. Inmates begin thinking about their release from the day they enter and are required to develop—with a counselor—a comprehensive post-release plan for themselves. Upon discharge, they receive community referrals and ongoing support to ease their reintegration into society.

The cost of care per Sheridan inmate is higher than the average cost per adult inmate. Savings in terms of reduced recidivism are expected to exceed the higher cost of the program.

Early evaluations show positive results. A report at Year 2 of the Sheridan model found that Sheridan graduates were 21% less likely to be rearrested and 44% less likely to be reincarcerated than those in a comparison group. Additionally, 56% of Sheridan graduates were employed as of December 31, 2005 compared to 44% among the comparison group.

In addition to the Sheridan program, which is scheduled for expansion, there are plans to develop a national model meth prison and reentry program, with meth units at Sheridan and at Southwestern Illinois Correctional Center.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES IN PRISON VS. OVERALL POPULATION IN ILLINOIS



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections, U.S. Census Bureau



Over half of those entering Illinois prisons in 2004 had not received a high school diploma or its equivalent, compared to 15 percent in Illinois' population overall.

Education and Vocational Training

Educational and employment needs are also prevalent in the prison population. In Illinois, each prisoner is administered a Test of Basic Adult Education (TABE). Those who test below the sixth grade level are required to take the 90-day Adult Basic Education (ABE) class. In 2005, 42 percent of adult inmates were eligible for the mandatory classes, but only about 5 percent received their ABE certificates.

General Educational Development (GED) classes are also offered on a voluntary basis. A recent mandate to increase GED participation has resulted in an expansion of classes that has all but eliminated waiting lists. However, with short prison stays—the average stay is one year—and because prisoners are moved around to maintain security and decrease gang influence, many prisoners are not in one place long enough to begin or complete their classes.

Historically, prisons have provided vocational programs to keep inmates occupied in constructive activities and train them for careers outside of prison. There is strong evidence that vocational training has meaningful, positive effects on prisoners, reducing recidivism rates by up to 60 percent. However, vocational training and college classes are expensive to provide, and only about one-quarter of inmates participate and less than 10 percent receive their certification.

THE MAJORITY OF AMERICANS FEEL THAT JOB TRAINING, DRUG TREATMENT, MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, FAMILY SUPPORT, MENTORING, AND HOUSING ARE ALL IMPORTANT SERVICES THAT SHOULD BE OFFERED TO PRISONERS.

Source: Zogby International (2006)



STUDIES DEMONSTRATE THAT YOUNG PEOPLE'S COGNITIVE FUNCTIONING CONTINUES TO DEVELOP INTO THEIR 20s; THEREFORE, THEY ARE MORE LIKELY THAN ADULTS TO BE REHABILITATED AND TO GO ON TO LEAD PRODUCTIVE, LAW-ABIDING LIVES.

PROMISING TREND: Juvenile Justice Reform

The Models for Change (MfC) initiative is an effort to create successful and replicable models of juvenile justice reform through targeted investments in key states and is funded by the Chicago-based John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. With long-term funding and support, Models for Change seeks to accelerate movement toward a more effective, fair and developmentally sound juvenile justice system that holds young people accountable for their actions, provides for their rehabilitation, protects them from harm, increases their life chances, and manages the risk they pose to themselves and to the public. The initiative is currently operating in Illinois, Pennsylvania, Louisiana, and Washington.



CHAPTER THREE

THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

In the more than 100 years since the first juvenile court was established in Cook County, the pendulum has swung away from the original policy that juveniles are different from adults because of their more limited capacity to understand and be held responsible for their crimes. Juvenile practices that used to focus on rehabilitation became “adultified” and more punishment-oriented. Today, however, the pendulum appears to be swinging back.

To return the focus to rehabilitation, Illinois created a new Department of Juvenile Justice on July 1, 2006 by moving responsibilities like the administration of the institutions and parole (which is known as aftercare for juveniles) from the Illinois Department of Corrections. The new department’s mission is to “provide treatment and services through a comprehensive continuum of individualized education, vocational, social, emotional, and basic life skills.”

The trend toward rehabilitation is also evident in a new program that was created in 2004 called Redeploy Illinois. This program provides financial incentives to counties and local communities to rehabilitate their own juvenile delinquents with the goal of reducing the number of youth sent away to state prisons. In addition, Illinois is considering legislation to include those up to their 18th birthday within the definition of youth eligible for the services of the new Department of Juvenile Justice. Currently, Illinois is one of only 13 states that do not use the legal age of 18 as the dividing point between juvenile and adult court jurisdictions, even though 18 is used for most other legal definitions, including voting.

The move back to rehabilitation is occurring at a time when there has been an overall decline in youth crime and a drop in the juvenile prison population. At the same time, the recidivism rate for those in the system is skyrocketing along with the amount of funds that are being spent per youth. As evidence of the failure of juvenile punishment builds, there is a growing body of research on young people’s brain development and its impact on behavior and decision-making that is informing changes in the juvenile justice system.

JUVENILE PRISON SYSTEM IN ILLINOIS

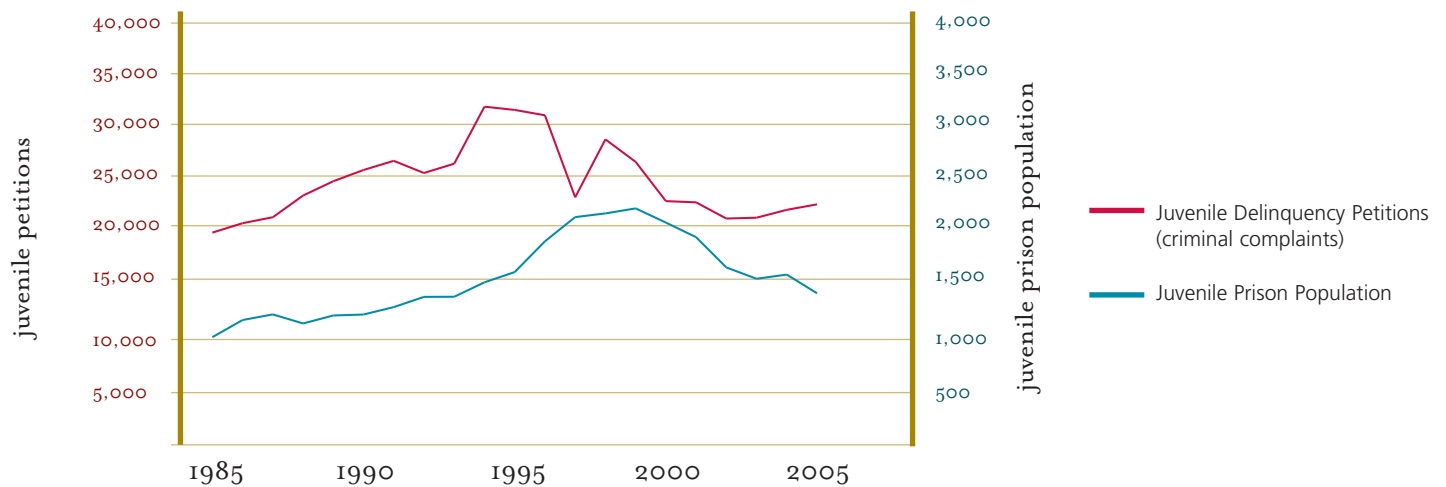
	1999	2005	change
Incarceration cost per juvenile	\$36,031	\$70,827	+97%
Population	2,199	1,434	-35%
Recidivism rate	32.7%	48%	+47%

The amount the state spends to incarcerate youth is more than seven times the amount budgeted per pupil in K-12 education in Illinois (\$9,841 in FY05).

Source: Illinois Department of Corrections, Illinois State Board of Education

Juvenile Justice System: Juvenile offenders, defined in most states as persons between the ages of 10 and 17, are processed in a separate system from adult offenders. The system usually consists of juvenile courts, detention centers, state correctional facilities and juvenile probation departments operated at the local level.

JUVENILE CRIME IN ILLINOIS VS. ILLINOIS JUVENILE PRISON POPULATION, 1985–2005



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Illinois Department of Corrections



There has been a steady decline in the juvenile crime rate and the juvenile prison population since the mid-1990s.

JUVENILE CRIME TRENDS

Juveniles enter the system as delinquents (for committing criminal acts) or as “status offenders” (for engaging in activities, such as violating curfew or running away, which are crimes due to the offender’s age).

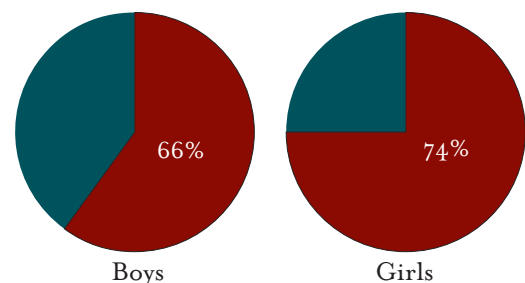
In the 1980s and early-1990s, public fears about violent juvenile “super predators” surfaced. Harsh measures were instituted around the country meant to “scare youth straight” and give “adult time for adult crime.” In Illinois, there was an increase in the use of court evaluations to send youth to correctional facilities far from home and an expansion of automatic transfers of youth to adult courts for certain crimes.

Expectations of a juvenile crime wave led to a planned expansion in the number of prison beds for youth. Contrary to these projections, however, juvenile crime has been declining steadily since the mid-1990s. As crime has dropped, the juvenile prison population has also declined. This trend is opposite from that of the adult system.

Mental Illness and Substance Abuse

Mental health and substance abuse problems are evident throughout the juvenile justice system, particularly in the juvenile detention and prison populations. Sixty-five to 70 percent of youth in correctional facilities have mental health issues. Mentally ill youth are sometimes placed in the juvenile justice system because community-based care is unavailable or inaccessible. Moreover, 68 percent of juveniles entering Illinois correctional facilities in 2000 were found to be in need of treatment for alcohol and drug abuse/dependence, especially among Latino and white youth.

Youth in Cook County juvenile detention with at least one psychiatric or substance abuse disorder, November 1995–June 1998



Source: Northwestern Juvenile Project

DIVERSION AND DETENTION

Juveniles have a separate court system where they have many of the same rights as adults do, but with important differences as well. Different terminology is often used, there is greater judicial discretion and more emphasis placed on diversion. The majority of less serious juvenile cases are diverted from the system through various avenues to avoid establishing a formal criminal record for youth. Some diversion programs stress accountability, requiring youths to appear in front of youth courts (also known as peer juries) or victim impact panels.

If not successfully diverted, young offenders aged 10 and up are held in temporary detention centers while they are awaiting the disposition of their cases in juvenile court. There are 17 juvenile detention centers around Illinois. While youth detention centers are designed to be very different from adult jails, with less emphasis on security and more on structure and support programs, this is not always the case in practice. Allegations of abuse and poor living conditions have plagued the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center for years. The Center is currently under court order to improve conditions and is subject to outside monitoring. On the other hand, the DuPage County Juvenile Detention Center is considered a national model for its education and diversion programs and its focus on balanced and restorative justice.

Juvenile Diversion Programs: Community-based alternatives to detention for youth charged with non-violent crimes. Conditions of diversion programs may include peer juries, victim impact panels, or community service work.

EFFECTS OF CHILDHOOD EXPOSURE TO TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE

Childhood exposure to trauma and violence (CETV)—defined as suffering direct abuse, witnessing domestic violence in the home and/or witnessing violence in the community—affects children’s cognitive and behavioral development. Children with CETV are not only ill-prepared to learn as they get to school, but also are at great risk of experiencing long-lasting psychological trauma, increased susceptibility to violent behavior and substance abuse, and an overall disadvantage in life.

Exposure to violence and trauma changes physical brain development and causes mental problems similar to post-traumatic stress disorder. Youth who have been exposed to gun violence have been found to be twice as likely as others to commit violent acts.

Youth who have been exposed to gun violence are twice as likely as others to be violent.

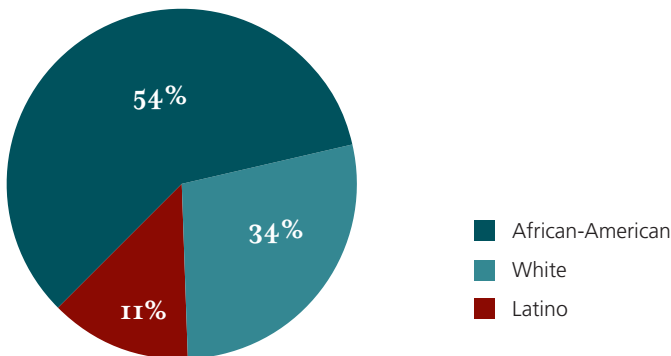
One in four children studied in Chicago south side neighborhoods had witnessed a shooting and one in three had witnessed a stabbing.

PROMISING TREND: Redeploy Illinois Community Rehabilitation for Juveniles in Illinois

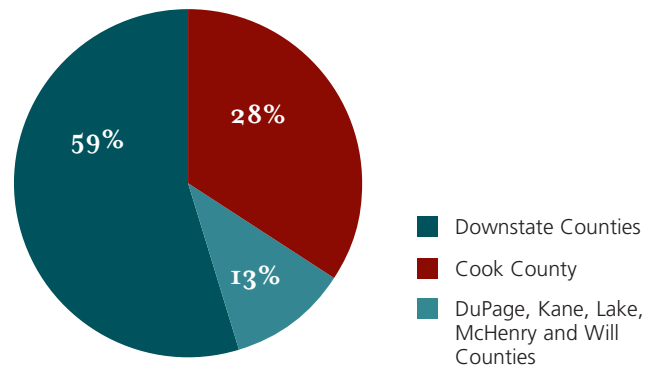
In 2004, Illinois passed legislation creating Redeploy Illinois, a statewide initiative to provide financial incentives to counties and local communities to rehabilitate their own juvenile delinquents, and financial penalties if they do not meet the goal of reducing the number of youth sent to state prisons.

Since starting in mid-2004, Redeploy pilot sites include the 2nd Judicial District (containing 12 rural counties) and St. Clair, Peoria, and Macon counties. Preliminary projections suggest the four pilot sites will have a **33 percent reduction in commitments to the Illinois Department of Corrections** by the end of the first year, resulting in **\$2 million in potential savings in youth incarceration costs annually**. Other states are developing similar programs for their youth based on Redeploy Illinois and Reclaim Ohio.

JUVENILE PRISON POPULATION IN ILLINOIS, 2005



Race and Ethnicity of Juveniles



Committing County of Juveniles

Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

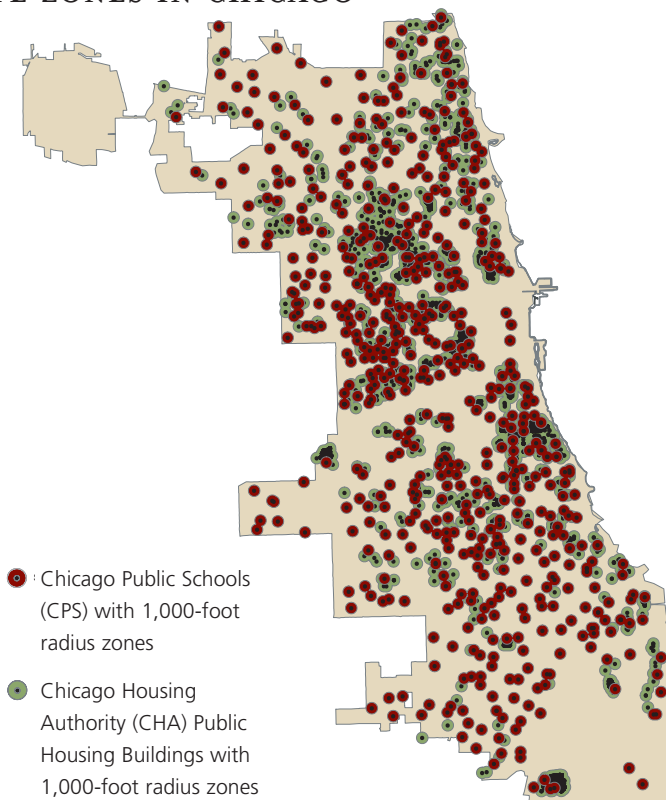


In Illinois, minorities make up approximately one-third of the juvenile population, but account for two-thirds of the youth held in juvenile prisons.



Unlike in the adult system, the majority of juvenile inmates comes from downstate. Half of the eight juvenile prisons are located in the Chicago region and half are located downstate.

SAFE ZONES IN CHICAGO



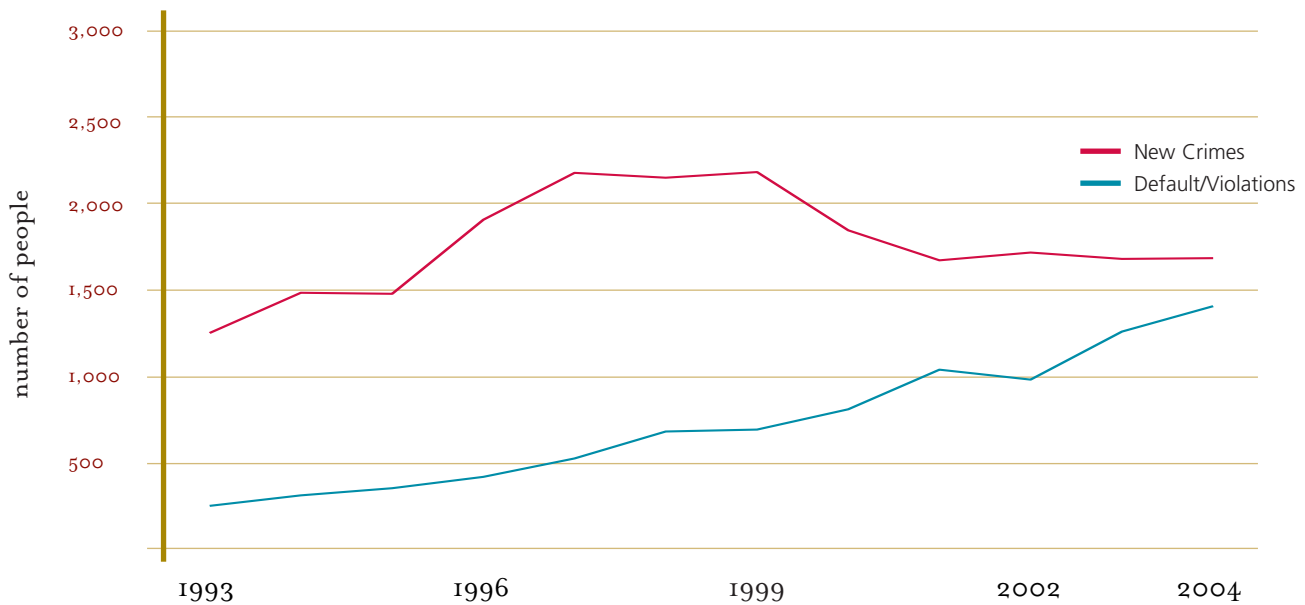
Source: Chicago Public Schools, Metro Chicago Information Center

In the juvenile justice system, Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) is evaluated to see whether and to what extent racial bias distorts intended justice outcomes for youth of color. The DMC debate prompted recent changes in state safe zones legislation, which provided for the automatic transfer to adult court of 15- and 16-year-olds charged with drug crimes committed within 1,000 feet of schools or public housing buildings (safe zones). These laws affected minorities living in densely-populated Chicago neighborhoods most severely. Safe zones legislation has been reformed to allow judicial discretion in such transfers and also requires ongoing monitoring to see if DMC continues.

JUVENILE RECIDIVISM

A large percentage of those charged as juvenile delinquents are able to straighten out their lives. For others, it is the start of an escalating cycle of violence and crime. Juveniles treated as criminals and exposed to older, repeat offenders and gang members in prison are likely to return to the system. After they are discharged, they commit new crimes and, increasingly, default on the conditions of their probation or parole.

JUVENILE ADMISSIONS TO PRISON IN ILLINOIS, 1993–2004

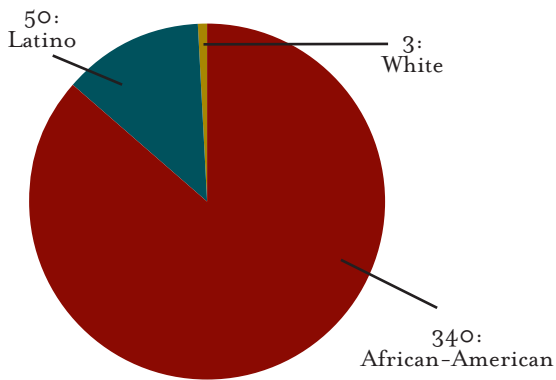


Source: Illinois Department of Corrections



Nearly one out of every two youth released from prison is rearrested and returned to custody within three years.

JUVENILES CHARGED AS ADULTS IN COOK COUNTY, OCTOBER 1999–SEPTEMBER 2000



Source: Cook County Public Defender's Office

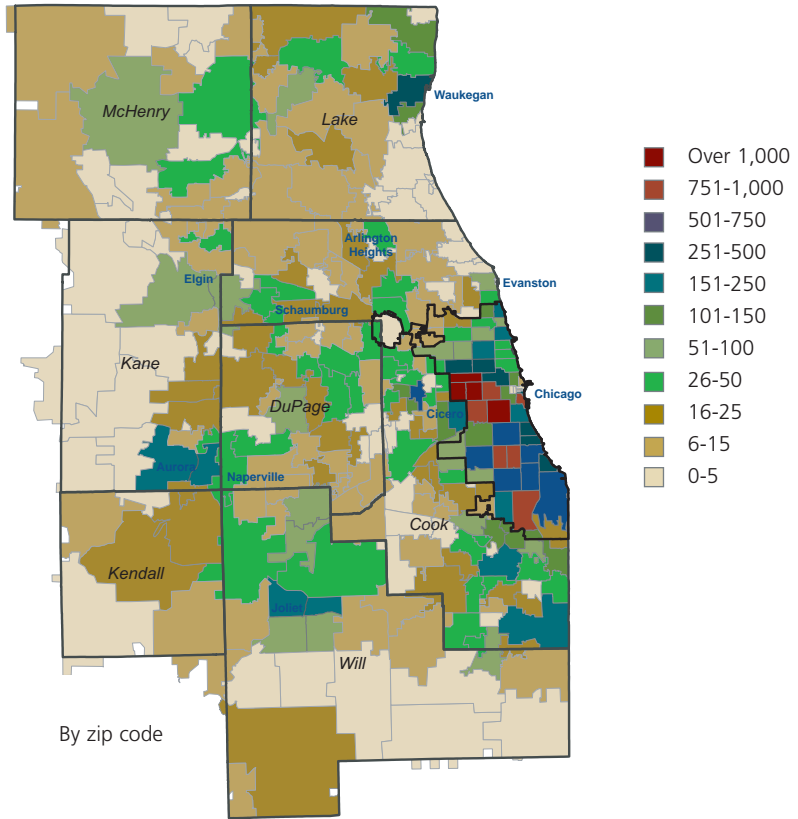
PROMISING TREND: Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ)

In Illinois, BARJ principles were formally adopted as part of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1998. The three main goals of BARJ are: (1) accountability, (2) community safety, and (3) competency development, or building on youth's strengths to encourage pro-social behavior.

Under BARJ, the needs of the victim, offender and the affected community are taken into account, and efforts are directed at repairing the harm that was caused by the crime. Young offenders may be required to apologize to those victimized by their crime as well as pay fines or perform community service. In 2002, Illinois youth performed 274,625 hours of community service work in BARJ-related programs.

In one example, a youth who painted graffiti on a truck worked with the truck owner to remove it and later became a friend and helper of the owner and is aspiring to be a truck driver himself one day.

PRISONER REENTRY POPULATION FOR THE
CHICAGO REGION, 2005



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections





CHAPTER FOUR


REENTRY AFTER PRISON

When people are released from Illinois prisons, they are given as little as \$10 in “gate money” and a bus ticket to anywhere in the United States. Most return to the Chicago area, bringing few resources and bearing the stigma of their prison record.

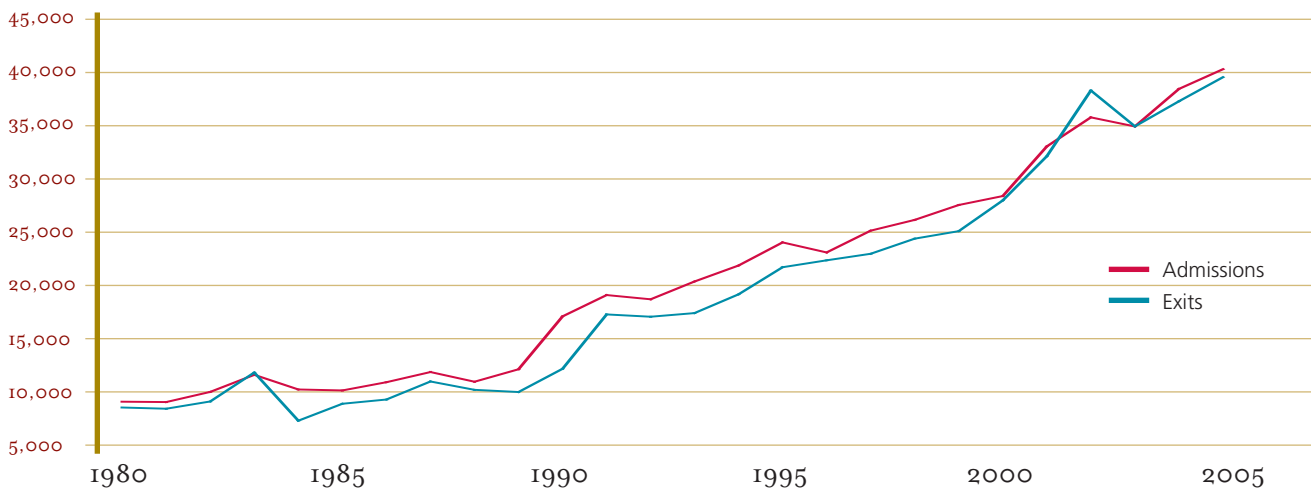
In 2005, the Illinois Department of Corrections released 39,031 people. Of those, 66 percent returned to the Chicago region at a rate of nearly 500 every week. Most former prisoners must make their own living arrangements upon discharge. They usually return to the communities where they had previously gotten involved in criminal activity. Some prisoners meeting stringent eligibility criteria can stay temporarily at Adult Transition Centers (ATCs), which are located in the community. There they have access to services and programs designed to ease their reentry.

66 PERCENT OF PRISONERS RETURN TO THE CHICAGO REGION.

Reentry: The period in which people transition from incarceration to freedom, including release from jails, state prisons, federal institutions, and juvenile facilities.

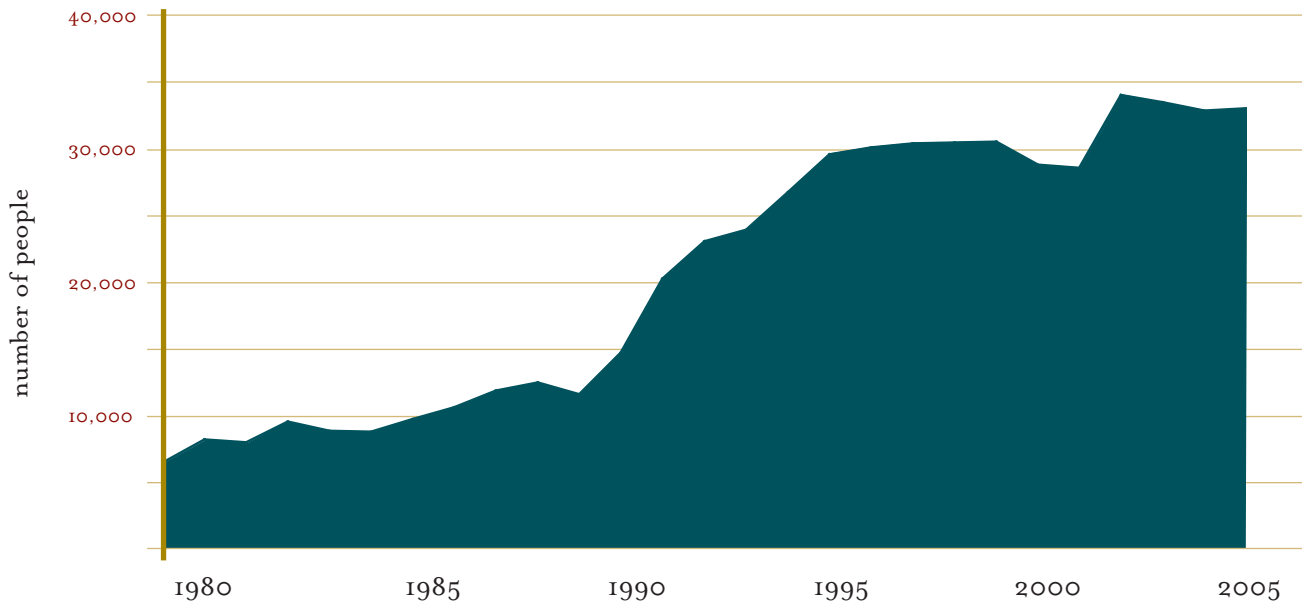
 Prisoners are being released at nearly the same rate as they are being locked up.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE ENTERING AND EXITING PRISONS IN ILLINOIS, 1980–2005



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

ADULT PAROLE POPULATION IN ILLINOIS, 1980–2005



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections



The number of adults on parole increased nearly four-fold from 1980 to 2005.

PAROLE

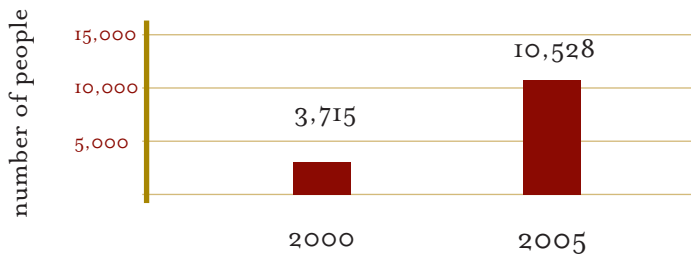
Over 80 percent of prisoners are released onto parole, a period of mandatory supervised release. Periods of parole can last from a matter of days to life; most are between one and three years.

The number of people on parole in Illinois has trended upward in the same way incarceration levels have grown. There was a four-fold increase in the number of adults under state parole supervision from 1980 to 2005.

Parole is designed both to monitor behavior and to connect the formerly incarcerated to needed services in the community. Over the years, the surveillance element—aided by better technology—has taken on a greater role than the social service element of parole. Parole agents in Illinois typically supervise caseloads of 70 to 100 parolees, even though best practices recommend caseloads of no more than 55 per agent, or 20 to 30 per agent for specialized caseloads (juveniles or adults convicted of sex offenses).

Parole: A period of community supervision that follows prison time and usually runs for the remainder of the length of the sentence. Parole systems are usually administered by a state correctional agency. Persons are under the supervision of parole agents, and they can be revoked to prison for violating their conditions of parole.

PAROLEES SENT BACK TO PRISON ON TECHNICAL VIOLATIONS IN ILLINOIS



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections



A growing number of people entering prisons results from parole violations.

**PROMISING TREND:
Operation Spotlight**

Operation Spotlight is an effort to reduce the number of parolees returning to prison. It was launched in 2003 to double the number of parole agents in Illinois from 370 to 740 over the long term and substantially reduce caseloads. In addition to more parole agents, Operation Spotlight provides for enhanced case management training so that parole agents will be better able to control risk factors that might cause parolees to be sent back to prison.

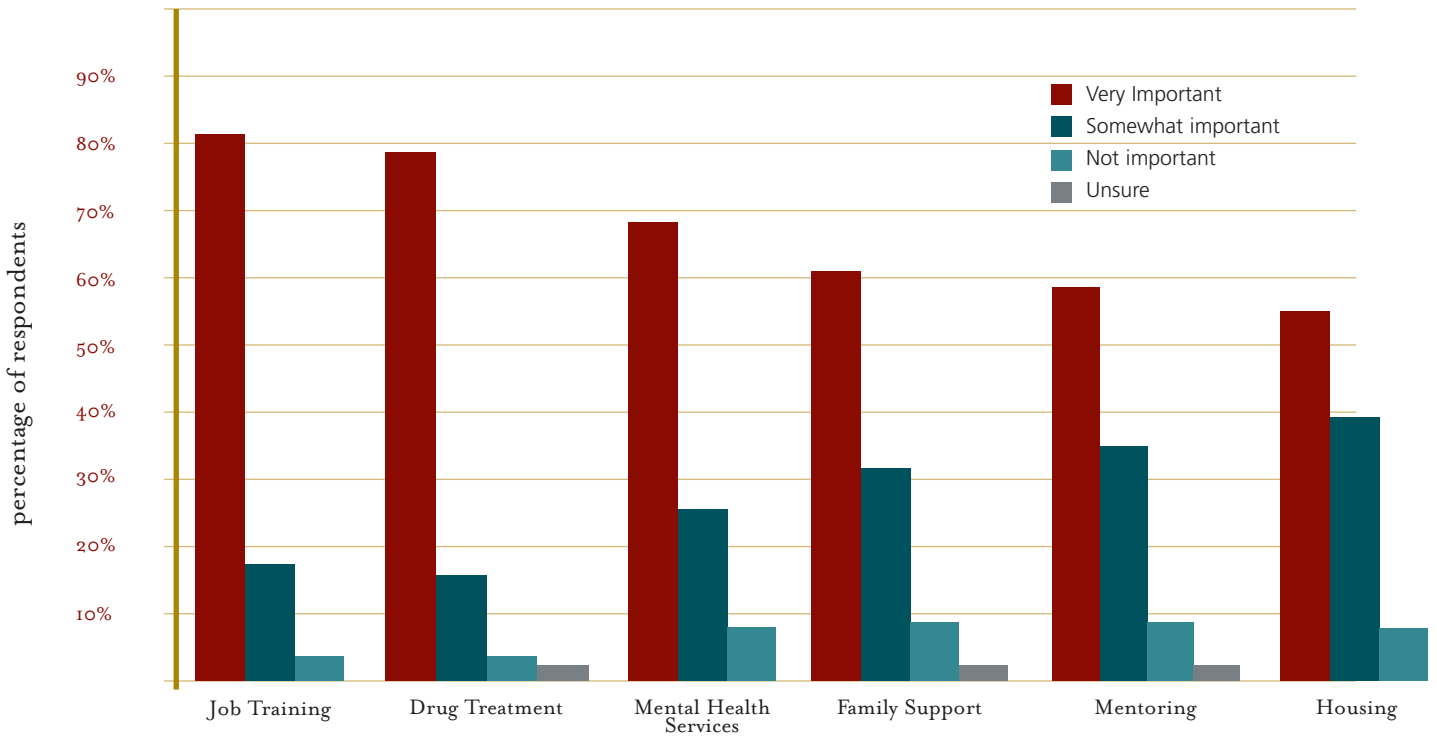
Past increases in parole staff resulted in steep rises in the number of technical violators sent back to prison, further burdening the system. Through Operation Spotlight, parole agents are encouraged to adopt methods to increase public safety other than sending people back to prison, such as halfway-back houses.

About half of the people released onto parole successfully meet the conditions of their supervision, which include regular meetings with an assigned parole agent, periodic drug testing, and no association with other parolees. In densely populated urban neighborhoods where there may be numerous parolees, this last condition can be almost impossible not to violate.

Parole violations may be technical in nature (failing the conditions of parole but not involving any serious criminal activity) or they may be the result of new crimes. Parole violations can lead to reincarceration and, in fact, have been responsible for a growing number of people entering Illinois prisons each year.

THE PAROLE CONDITION OF NO ASSOCIATION WITH OTHER PAROLEES IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO VIOLATE IN CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOODS LIKE GARFIELD PARK, WHERE NEARLY 6,000 PAROLEES RESIDE WITHIN THE 60624 ZIP CODE.

U.S. ATTITUDES TOWARD PRISONER REENTRY SERVICES



Source: Zogby International (2006)



With more people cycling in and out of prison, reentry services are of growing importance.

REENTRY CHALLENGES

The success or failure of former prisoners depends on whether the problems that existed before, during and after confinement are addressed. These problems include lack of access to healthcare, family and community support and employment.

Healthcare

When people leave prison, it may take months to reinstate their Medicaid or other health insurance benefits, and many are at risk of suffering lapses in their care. If not addressed, their illnesses potentially pose major public health threats and remain in some cases, such as substance abuse, the underlying cause of new criminal activity.

Even if prisoners are able to receive substance abuse treatment while incarcerated, it is difficult and expensive to ensure ongoing treatment and support once they leave. Part of a parole agent's job is to help former prisoners find the services within their community that they need; however, if the services are scarce or there are no resources, treatment can be interrupted.

AT CURRENT RATES, ONE OUT OF EVERY 15 AMERICANS BORN IN 2001 WILL SPEND TIME IN PRISON DURING HIS OR HER LIFETIME.

Family and Community Support

The process of prisoner reentry strains community and family resources. Many former prisoners return to a handful of communities in Chicago—Austin, Humboldt Park, North Lawndale, West Englewood, East Garfield Park, Roseland, and Auburn Gresham—that are already struggling with high poverty and unemployment.

These communities do not have enough social services to meet the needs of those returning from prison, particularly given the host of legal and other barriers that make their reintegration into society difficult.

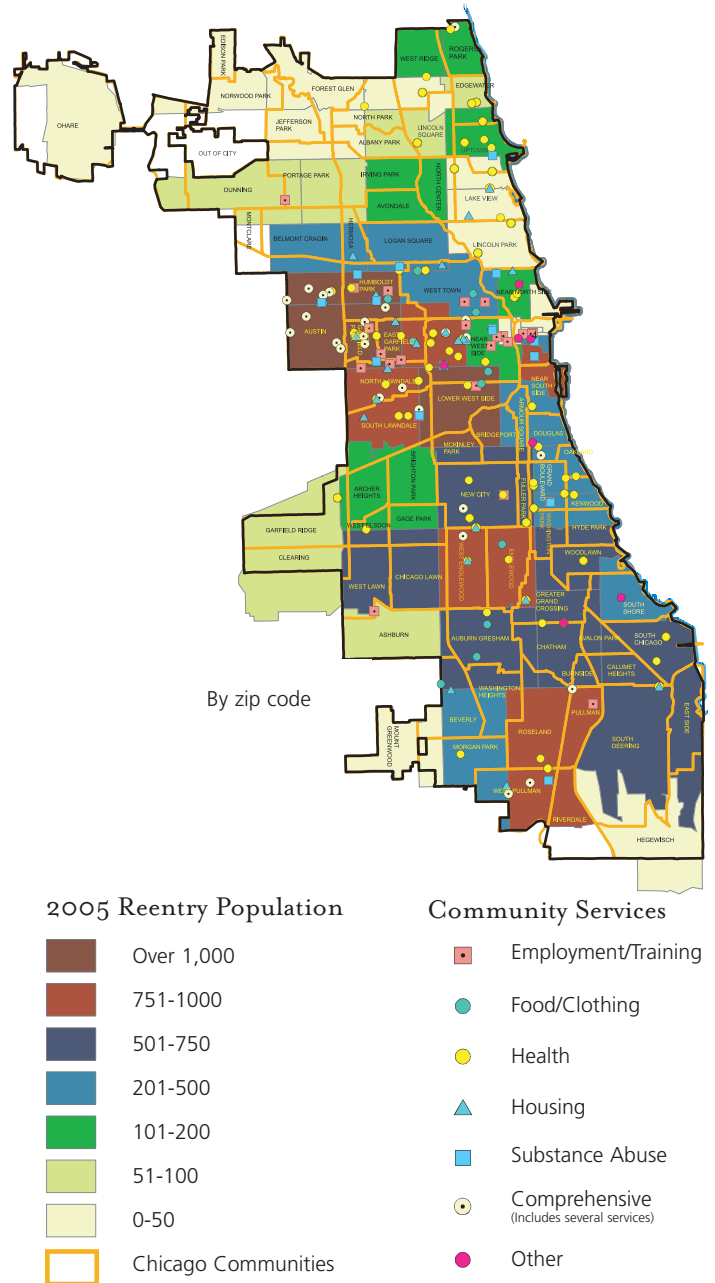
More than 70 percent of released prisoners in Chicago report that family support is an important factor in helping them avoid prison. This support is most critical in the first hours, days and weeks after release. Families often provide food and shelter, contacts for employment opportunities, and other material support. If family relationships have become too tenuous or no longer exist, exiting prisoners are more susceptible to reestablishing gang and other criminal ties. In the short-term, gangs provide social support and employment; but, in the long run, those who revert to gangs have swifter and surer returns to prison. Failure to address successful reentry strengthens gangs and other criminal systems.

Communities that lose large segments of their population to prisons deal with acute economic loss as well as a chronic weakening of family and community ties. When the community structure is compromised, the level of social control, which acts as an informal justice system, is reduced. If mass incarceration destabilizes a community to this point, it may actually contribute to higher crime rather than serve to control it.

At the family level, children whose parents are imprisoned suffer economic and emotional stresses that affect their development and socialization. It has been shown that children of incarcerated parents are six times more likely to be incarcerated at some point than other children.

CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS ARE SIX TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE INCARCERATED AT SOME POINT THAN OTHER CHILDREN.

CHICAGO COMMUNITY SERVICES AND THE REENTRY POPULATION



Source: Citizens Activated to Change Healthcare, Community Resource Network, Illinois Department of Corrections, Urban Institute

Employment

Employment is perhaps the most fundamental challenge upon reentry. Many employers are reluctant to hire former prisoners because of their past criminal behavior, the gap in their work history and their lack of education and marketable skills.

Often, people leaving prison have trouble securing employment because more than three-quarters of them do not have valid identification. The personal documents they may have had at the time of arrest have been confiscated as part of standard intake procedures. There are in-prison programs designed to help prisoners apply for identification prior to their release; however, the majority of prisoners do not participate.

In recent years in the Chicago region, transitional job programs have been developed. These offer immediate work and a paycheck for public sector or community jobs. Such programs have proved to be an effective way to incorporate former prisoners into the workforce permanently.

BY AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY (82 PERCENT) AMERICANS FEEL THAT A LACK OF JOB TRAINING IS A VERY SIGNIFICANT BARRIER TO RELEASED PRISONERS AVOIDING SUBSEQUENT CRIME.

Source: Zogby International (2006)

LEGAL BARRIERS FOR THOSE WITH CRIMINAL RECORDS IN ILLINOIS

Public assistance – Individuals convicted of the most serious felonies under the Illinois Controlled Substances Act or Cannabis Control Act are not eligible for cash assistance but may receive food stamps. Those convicted of other felonies are eligible for food stamps but are barred from receiving cash assistance for two years.

Public housing – A felony conviction bars a person for five years from public housing in Illinois. Some exceptions are currently being implemented.

Employment – There are certain restrictions in occupational licensing for those with criminal records. Public

and private employers are prohibited from accessing criminal records that have been sealed or expunged but may ask about criminal histories.

Drivers' license – Illinois can revoke drivers' licenses for a year if a person is convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs or of other drug-related offenses.

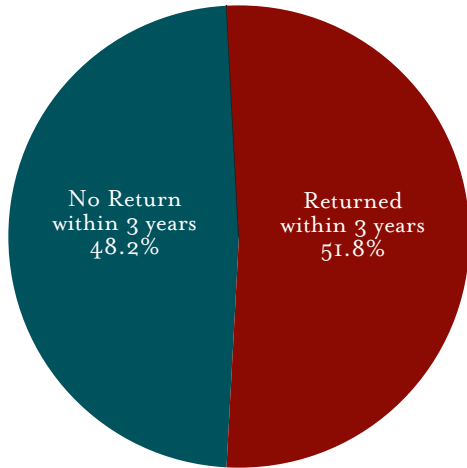
Education grants – Federal law bans student loans and other assistance for people with drug convictions. This law cannot be altered by the states. Other offenses do not automatically result in denial of student aid.

Voting – In Illinois, incarcerated individuals cannot vote, but voting rights are restored to those completing their sentence or on probation or parole.

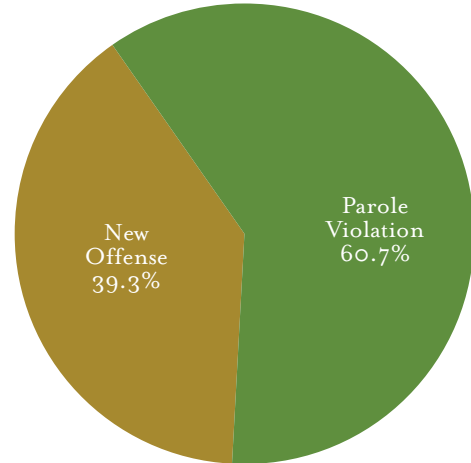
Adoption/foster care – Foster or adoptive parent licensure is permanently barred for convictions for violent or sexual offenses. Licensure is barred for 10 years for drug-related, property, person, or public decency convictions.

MORE THAN 60 PERCENT OF EMPLOYERS REPORT THAT THEY WOULD NOT KNOWINGLY HIRE SOMEONE WITH A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND.

RECIDIVISM RATE IN ILLINOIS, 2005



TYPES OF RECIDIVISM, 2005
(FOR THOSE RELEASED IN 2002)



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections



Illinois' recidivism rate was at an all-time high of 54.6 percent in 2004. In 2005, it dropped to 51.8 percent.

RECIDIVISM

Former prisoners often relapse, or recidivate, by either committing a new crime or violating the conditions of parole. Approximately two-thirds of those released from state prisons are rearrested within three years, and over half are returned to prison. Most people who recidivate are rearrested within the first year of release.

The high costs associated with this “revolving prison door” phenomenon have prompted exploration into the reasons why people commit crimes in the first place and continue to break the law even after serving a prison sentence. Such exploration is essential to breaking this cycle of increasing incarceration and recidivism.

MOST FORMER PRISONERS WHO RELAPSE INTO CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR DO SO WITHIN THE FIRST YEAR OF RELEASE.

Recidivism: A relapse of criminal behavior after a period of punishment or rehabilitation for a previous crime or crimes. Recidivism can be measured in terms of a rearrest or a reconviction during a specified period after release. In the Illinois correctional system, recidivism is measured in terms of reincarceration within three years of release from prison.

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