



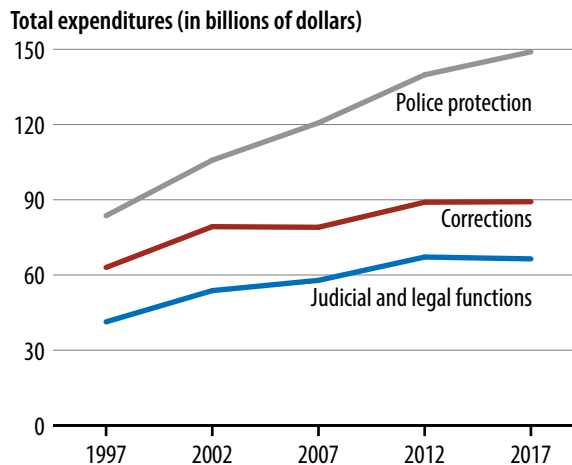
# Justice Expenditures and Employment in the United States, 2017

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In 2017, real (inflation-adjusted) justice system expenditures by federal, state, and local governments were the highest they had been in 21 years (\$305 billion, up from \$188 billion in 1997). From 1997 to 2017, real expenditures on police protection grew the most (78%), rising from \$84 billion to \$149 billion (figure 1). Real judicial and legal functions expenditures increased from \$41 billion in 1997 to \$67 billion in 2012, then decreased slightly to \$66 billion in 2017. Real corrections expenditures increased by 42%, from \$63 billion in 1997 to \$89 billion in 2017.

Findings in this report are based on the Bureau of Justice Statistics' (BJS) Justice Expenditure and Employment Extracts series, which is based on data from the Finance and Employment components of the U.S. Census Bureau's Census of Governments. They include information on federal, state, and local government expenditures and employment for three justice functions: police protection, judicial and legal functions, and corrections. Extract tables from this series are accessible on the BJS website.

**FIGURE 1**  
Real (inflation-adjusted) total expenditures on justice system functions in federal, state, and local governments, 1997–2017



Note: Expenditures for each year are presented in billions of 2017 dollars using a nonseasonally adjusted gross domestic product (GDP) price deflator. See appendix table 1 for estimates and total justice system expenditures.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Governments, 1997–2017; and Office of Management and Budget, Budget of the United States Government, 1997–2017.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2017, county and municipal governments spent nearly \$100 billion on police protection and nearly \$30 billion on corrections.
- Real (inflation-adjusted) justice system expenditures increased 62% from \$188 billion in 1997 to \$305 billion in 2017.
- State governments made nearly \$50 billion in direct expenditures for corrections activities, 88% of which were for correctional institutions.
- Numbers of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees in state and local justice systems grew 16% from 1997 to 2007, then fell 1% from 2007 to 2017.
- In 2017, state and local governments employed 708,079 sworn police protection FTE employees, an increase of 19,572 from 2012.
- Per capita police protection expenditures in 2017 were highest in the District of Columbia (\$911) and New York (\$530) and lowest in Kentucky (\$171).
- In 2017, per capita corrections expenditures ranged from a low of \$139 in Iowa to a high of \$436 in Alaska.

## Terms and definitions

**Corrections**—The government function involving the confinement and rehabilitation of adults and juveniles convicted of offenses against the law; and the confinement of persons suspected of a crime and awaiting adjudication. Correctional institutions include any facility used for the confinement and correction of convicted adults; the confinement and correction of juveniles adjudicated delinquent or in need of supervision; and the detention of adults and juveniles accused of a crime and awaiting trial or a hearing. Data for temporary lockups and holding tanks that hold prisoners for less than 48 hours are categorized under police protection.

Corrections expenditures include direct and intergovernmental expenditures on institutional activities at prisons and penitentiaries; reformatories; jails; houses of correction; other named correctional institutions, such as correctional farms, workhouses, industrial schools, and training schools; facilities exclusively for the confinement of the criminally insane; facilities for the examination, evaluation, classification, and assignment of inmates; and facilities for the confinement, treatment, and rehabilitation of persons with drug or alcohol use disorders (if the institution is administered by a correctional agency).

Within the Bureau of Justice Statistics' Justice Expenditures and Employment Extracts series, corrections expenditures are further subdivided into types of institutions and "other corrections," which include noninstitutional correctional activities. Corrections expenditures classified as "other corrections" include amounts paid for parole boards and programs; pardon boards; nonresidential resettlement or halfway houses; probation activities and programs (even if administered by a court); correctional administration not directly connected to institutions; payments to another government for boarding prisoners; and other miscellaneous items with no discernable direct link to institutional care.

**Total expenditures**—Includes all amounts of money paid out by a government during its fiscal year—net of recoveries and other adjustments—other than for retirement of debt, purchase of investment securities, extension of loans, and agency or private trust transactions. Expenditures include a government's external payments and exclude amounts transferred to funds or agencies of the same government.

**Direct expenditures**—All expenditures excluding intergovernmental expenditures.

**Direct current expenditures**—Expenditures related to salaries, wages, fees, commissions, and the purchase of supplies, materials, and contractual services.

**Capital outlays**—Expenditures for construction (production or replacement of, and the making of additions or major structural alterations to, fixed works), equipment, and purchase of land and existing structures.

**Intergovernmental expenditures**—Amounts paid to other governments for the performance of specific functions or for general financial support. These include grants, shared taxes, contingent loans and advances, and any significant and identifiable amounts or reimbursements paid to other governments for the performance of general government services or activities (e.g., payments by one government to another for boarding prisoners). Excludes amounts paid to other governments for the purchase of commodities, property, or utility services; and for any tax levied as such on government facilities (e.g., local government payments to state-operated retirement systems on behalf of their employees, and contributions to the federal government for old age and survivors benefits, and disability and health insurance).

**Full-time equivalent (FTE) employees**—The number of full-time employees, plus the number of paid part-time hours divided by the standard hours for full-time employees in a government. Data are as of March 2017. Office of Personnel Management records do not include the number of hours worked by part-time employees to calculate FTE employees for the federal government.

**Judicial and legal functions**—Includes all civil and criminal activities associated with courts, including prosecution and public defense.

Court-related categories include civil and criminal functions of courts at all levels of legal jurisdiction; and limited jurisdiction activities associated with courts, such as law libraries, grand juries, petit juries, medical and social service activities (except probation, which is classified as corrections where separately identifiable), court reporters, judicial councils, bailiffs, registers of wills and similar probate functions, and (civil) court activities of sheriffs' offices in some jurisdictions.

Prosecution activities and employees in this category include attorneys general, district attorneys, state's attorneys, and their named equivalents; corporation counsels, solicitors, and legal departments with different names, including those providing legal advice to chief executives and subordinate departmental officers, representation of the government in lawsuits, and criminal prosecutions; and investigative agencies having full arrest powers and attached to offices of attorneys general, district attorneys, or their named equivalents.

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## Terms and definitions (continued)

Public defense activities include court-paid fees to individually retained counsel and court-appointed counsel; government contributions to private legal aid societies and bar association-sponsored programs; and expenditures on activities of an established public defender office or program.

**March payrolls**—Includes gross salaries, wages, fees, commissions, bonuses, and awards paid to employees during the 1-month (31-day) pay period that includes March 12. A reported payroll is converted to a payroll amount that would have been paid during a 31-day month by multiplying the reported payroll by an appropriate factor. For example, a 2-week payroll is multiplied by the ratio of 31/14; a 1-week payroll is multiplied by 31/7; and a twice-a-month payroll is multiplied by 2.

**Police protection**—The function of enforcing the law, preserving order and traffic safety, and apprehending persons who violate the law. These activities can be performed by a police department, a sheriff's department,

or a special police force maintained by an agency that is not primarily responsible for law enforcement but has a police force to perform police protection activities in its specialized area (geographic or functional).

Police protection expenditures include direct and intergovernmental expenditures on regular police services; police patrols and communications; crime prevention activities; temporary lockups and holding tanks; traffic safety and engineering (but not highway planning and engineering); vehicular inspection and licensing; buildings used exclusively for police purposes and their maintenance; medical examiners and coroners; law enforcement activities of sheriff's offices; and (if employed by a police agency) nonsworn school crossing guards, parking meter readers, and animal wardens. Police protection employees can be classified as either sworn (having arrest powers) or nonsworn (all others). Tables in this report present counts of total and sworn employees working in police protection.

In 2017, federal, state, and local governments collectively spent \$305 billion on police protection, judicial and legal functions, and corrections (**table 1**). At \$149 billion, police protection accounted for the largest portion of justice system expenditures.<sup>1</sup> Local governments, which include counties and municipalities or townships, spent nearly three times as much on police protection as the federal government and nearly six times as much as state governments.

Twenty-nine percent (\$89 billion) of total justice system expenditures were on corrections. Local governments accounted for most expenditures on police protection (66%), while state governments accounted for most on corrections (58%) (not shown in table).

The \$66 billion spent on judicial and legal functions in 2017 represented the smallest portion of total justice-related expenditures across all levels of government. State governments and local governments had similar judicial and legal functions expenditures at about \$25 billion each.

Among the three levels of government, the federal government had the highest intergovernmental expenditures on police protection (\$3.5 billion) and judicial and legal (\$1.8 billion) functions in 2017. However, state governments had the highest intergovernmental expenditures on corrections (\$2.2 billion).

<sup>1</sup>See *Terms and definitions* for more information on types of expenditures.

**TABLE 1**  
**Expenditures (in thousands of dollars) on justice system functions in federal, state, and local governments, 2017**

Type of expenditure	All governments <sup>a</sup>	Federal <sup>b</sup>	State	Local <sup>c</sup>
<b>Total justice system</b>				
Total expenditure	\$304,659,644	\$57,944,000	\$93,110,557	\$153,605,087
Direct expenditure	\$292,580,095	\$51,900,000	\$87,841,785	\$152,838,310
Intergovernmental expenditure	:	\$6,044,000	\$5,268,772	\$766,777
<b>Police protection</b>				
Total expenditure	\$149,004,209	\$33,290,447	\$16,621,322	\$99,092,440
Direct expenditure	\$143,868,866	\$29,818,000	\$14,973,037	\$99,077,829
Intergovernmental expenditure	:	\$3,472,447	\$1,648,285	\$14,611
<b>Judicial and legal functions</b>				
Total expenditure	\$66,429,520	\$16,864,049	\$25,012,645	\$24,552,826
Direct expenditure	\$62,580,570	\$15,105,000	\$23,597,577	\$23,877,993
Intergovernmental expenditure	:	\$1,759,049	\$1,415,068	\$674,833
<b>Corrections</b>				
Total expenditure	\$89,225,916	\$7,789,505	\$51,476,590	\$29,959,821
Direct expenditure	\$86,130,659	\$6,977,000	\$49,271,171	\$29,882,488
Intergovernmental expenditure	:	\$812,505	\$2,205,419	\$77,333

Note: Expenditures are in thousands of dollars.

<sup>a</sup>Not calculated to avoid double counting. See footnote a.

<sup>b</sup>Total expenditures exclude duplicative intergovernmental expenditures (payments to other governments that both the paying government and receiving governments report as spent) to avoid artificially inflating the values. See *Terms and definitions*.

<sup>c</sup>Expenditures are for the fiscal period from October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017.

<sup>d</sup>Includes counties, municipalities, townships, and the District of Columbia.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Governments, 2017; and Office of Management and Budget, Budget of the United States Government, 2017.

**Direct current expenditures accounted for more than 95% of state and local criminal justice expenditures in 2017**

Most criminal justice spending by state and local governments were direct current expenditures. These accounted for between 95% (not shown in table) and 98% of total direct expenditures in 2017 (table 2). State and local governments made nearly \$46 billion in direct current expenditures on judicial and legal functions, with states accounting for half of the spending (\$23 billion).

Municipal governments (\$61 billion) spent about twice as much as county governments (\$30 billion) and over four times as much as state governments (\$14 billion) on police protection via direct current expenditures.

State governments' capital outlays totaled \$717 million for police protection, \$834 million for judicial and legal functions, and nearly \$1.4 billion for corrections. Counties and municipalities spent more on capital outlays related to police protection than on judicial and legal functions or corrections.

**TABLE 2**  
**Detailed expenditures (in thousands of dollars) on justice system functions in state and local governments, 2017**

Type of expenditure	All state/local governments <sup>a</sup>	State	All local <sup>b</sup>	County	Municipal <sup>c</sup>
<b>Police protection</b>					
Total expenditure	\$115,713,762	\$16,621,322	\$99,092,440	\$31,359,947	\$63,959,912
Direct expenditure	\$114,050,866	\$14,973,037	\$99,077,829	\$31,284,815	\$62,900,286
Direct current expenditure	\$110,037,907	\$14,255,413	\$95,782,494	\$29,971,547	\$61,072,781
Capital outlay	\$4,012,959	\$717,624	\$3,295,335	\$1,313,268	\$1,827,505
Intergovernmental expenditure	:	\$1,648,285	\$14,611	\$75,132	\$1,059,626
<b>Judicial and legal functions</b>					
Total expenditure	\$49,565,471	\$25,012,645	\$24,552,826	\$18,718,371	\$5,532,095
Direct expenditure	\$47,475,570	\$23,597,577	\$23,877,993	\$18,037,977	\$5,471,284
Direct current expenditure	\$45,944,973	\$22,763,639	\$23,181,334	\$17,469,683	\$5,343,898
Capital outlay	\$1,530,597	\$833,938	\$696,659	\$568,294	\$127,386
Intergovernmental expenditure	:	\$1,415,068	\$674,833	\$680,394	\$60,811
<b>Corrections</b>					
Total expenditure	\$81,436,411	\$51,476,590	\$29,959,821	\$25,161,392	\$4,575,371
Direct expenditure	\$79,153,659	\$49,271,171	\$29,882,488	\$25,041,958	\$4,362,408
Direct current expenditure	\$76,916,107	\$47,915,595	\$29,000,512	\$24,338,834	\$4,195,092
Capital outlay	\$2,237,552	\$1,355,576	\$881,976	\$703,124	\$167,316
Intergovernmental expenditure	:	\$2,205,419	\$77,333	\$119,434	\$212,963

Note: Expenditures are in thousands of dollars.

<sup>a</sup>:Not calculated to avoid double counting. See footnote a.

<sup>a</sup>Total expenditures exclude duplicative intergovernmental expenditures (payments to other governments that both the paying government and receiving governments report as spent) to avoid artificially inflating the values. See *Terms and definitions*.

<sup>b</sup>Intergovernmental expenditures include only payments by local governments (counties, municipalities, townships, and the District of Columbia) to state governments.

<sup>c</sup>Includes municipalities, townships, and the District of Columbia.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Governments, 2017.

## States made almost \$50 billion in direct expenditures on corrections in 2017

States' direct expenditures on corrections totaled \$49.3 billion in 2017 (table 3). About 88% of states' corrections-related direct expenditures were for correctional institutions and their activities. In 2017, state governments spent \$873 million on construction-related capital outlays for correctional institutions, with California facilities accounting for more than half of that amount. States spent a median of \$2.3 million each on

such construction-related expenditures, with seven states reporting none.

State governments also made \$6 billion in direct expenditures for "other corrections" activities in 2017. This spending ranged from 0.2% to 38% of each state's total direct expenditures on corrections (not shown in table). Overall, about 3% of institutional and 1% of "other corrections" direct expenditures by states went to capital outlays (not shown in table).

**TABLE 3**  
Direct expenditures (in thousands of dollars) on corrections in state governments, by type of correctional activity and state, 2017

State	Total direct expenditures on corrections	Direct current expenditure	Correctional institutions <sup>a</sup>			Institutions as percent of total direct expenditures on corrections	Other corrections <sup>b</sup>		
			Total	Capital outlay			Direct current expenditure	Capital outlay	Other corrections as percent of total direct expenditures on corrections
				Construction	Other				
U.S. total	\$49,271,171	\$41,956,108	\$1,282,434	\$872,532	\$409,902	87.8%	\$5,959,487	\$73,142	12.2%
Alabama	\$515,323	\$439,585	\$16,602	\$2,540	\$14,062	88.5	\$53,752	\$5,384	11.5
Alaska	\$316,195	\$286,088	\$2,670	\$2,027	\$643	91.3	\$27,437	\$0	8.7
Arizona	\$1,040,692	\$988,847	\$11,942	\$333	\$11,609	96.2	\$39,874	\$29	3.8
Arkansas	\$334,026	\$266,011	\$0	\$0	\$0	79.6	\$68,015	\$0	20.4
California	\$8,376,080	\$6,879,803	\$446,017	\$445,127	\$890	87.5	\$1,050,260	\$0	12.5
Colorado	\$891,691	\$730,132	\$23,135	\$7,268	\$15,867	84.5	\$136,582	\$1,842	15.5
Connecticut	\$622,023	\$610,592	\$2,675	\$425	\$2,250	98.6	\$8,756	\$0	1.4
Delaware	\$327,693	\$274,332	\$2,246	\$1,498	\$748	84.4	\$50,814	\$301	15.6
Florida	\$2,592,648	\$2,204,645	\$18,378	\$1,830	\$16,548	85.7	\$366,238	\$3,387	14.3
Georgia	\$1,289,551	\$894,494	\$30,452	\$29,205	\$1,247	71.7	\$351,695	\$12,910	28.3
Hawaii	\$228,646	\$221,117	\$3,371	\$0	\$3,371	98.2	\$4,109	\$49	1.8
Idaho	\$272,790	\$256,063	\$6,591	\$445	\$6,146	96.3	\$8,908	\$1,228	3.7
Illinois	\$1,380,385	\$1,336,307	\$13,888	\$11,684	\$2,204	97.8	\$29,518	\$672	2.2
Indiana	\$632,122	\$608,913	\$10,287	\$1,482	\$8,805	98.0	\$12,771	\$151	2.0
Iowa	\$287,238	\$269,932	\$1,006	\$372	\$634	94.3	\$16,284	\$16	5.7
Kansas	\$309,314	\$277,236	\$6,524	\$3,335	\$3,189	91.7	\$25,263	\$291	8.3
Kentucky	\$579,124	\$528,958	\$1,206	\$170	\$1,036	91.5	\$48,918	\$42	8.5
Louisiana	\$505,650	\$373,101	\$13,298	\$10,045	\$3,253	76.4	\$118,777	\$474	23.6
Maine	\$162,568	\$140,104	\$7,668	\$0	\$7,668	90.9	\$14,796	\$0	9.1
Maryland	\$1,497,876	\$1,182,741	\$39,807	\$28,280	\$11,527	81.6	\$262,780	\$12,548	18.4
Massachusetts	\$1,452,153	\$1,233,172	\$48,690	\$32,280	\$16,410	88.3	\$167,961	\$2,330	11.7
Michigan	\$1,866,187	\$1,560,789	\$2,517	\$109	\$2,408	83.8	\$302,662	\$219	16.2
Minnesota	\$508,747	\$430,896	\$4,806	\$913	\$3,893	85.6	\$72,119	\$926	14.4
Mississippi	\$330,761	\$325,220	\$4,752	\$346	\$4,406	99.8	\$789	\$0	0.2
Missouri	\$732,737	\$625,809	\$8,087	\$504	\$7,583	86.5	\$98,081	\$760	13.5
Montana	\$212,280	\$128,317	\$2,264	\$0	\$2,264	61.5	\$80,436	\$1,263	38.5
Nebraska	\$349,865	\$226,355	\$3,509	\$1,938	\$1,571	65.7	\$119,656	\$345	34.3
Nevada	\$305,278	\$225,743	\$17,621	\$13,941	\$3,680	79.7	\$60,379	\$1,535	20.3
New Hampshire	\$145,827	\$107,316	\$28,519	\$27,440	\$1,079	93.1	\$9,896	\$96	6.9
New Jersey	\$1,431,990	\$1,072,052	\$32,046	\$25,924	\$6,122	77.1	\$326,411	\$1,481	22.9
New Mexico	\$481,475	\$344,167	\$0	\$0	\$0	71.5	\$137,308	\$0	28.5
New York	\$3,120,396	\$2,870,661	\$68,677	\$53,775	\$14,902	94.2	\$180,320	\$738	5.8
North Carolina	\$1,388,080	\$1,188,252	\$15,603	\$6,523	\$9,080	86.7	\$183,115	\$1,110	13.3
North Dakota	\$102,678	\$100,839	\$866	\$166	\$700	99.1	\$969	\$4	0.9

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**TABLE 3 (continued)****Direct expenditures (in thousands of dollars) on corrections in state governments, by type of correctional activity and state, 2017**

State	Total direct expenditures on corrections	Direct current expenditure	Correctional institutions <sup>a</sup>			Institutions as percent of total direct expenditures on corrections	Other corrections <sup>b</sup>		
			Total	Capital outlay			Direct current expenditure	Capital outlay	Other corrections as percent of total direct expenditures on corrections
				Construction	Other				
Ohio	\$1,520,489	\$1,293,676	\$76,509	\$60,719	\$15,790	90.1	\$146,371	\$3,933	9.9
Oklahoma	\$593,201	\$497,539	\$6,182	\$294	\$5,888	84.9	\$89,426	\$54	15.1
Oregon	\$766,260	\$718,991	\$41,614	\$4,640	\$36,974	99.3	\$5,649	\$6	0.7
Pennsylvania	\$2,170,523	\$2,007,815	\$28,196	\$12,977	\$15,219	93.8	\$133,090	\$1,422	6.2
Rhode Island	\$210,109	\$170,689	\$4,641	\$3,956	\$685	83.4	\$34,549	\$230	16.6
South Carolina	\$470,254	\$422,494	\$5,638	\$5,130	\$508	91.0	\$42,122	\$0	9.0
South Dakota	\$124,688	\$115,556	\$1,845	\$285	\$1,560	94.2	\$7,283	\$4	5.8
Tennessee	\$657,021	\$558,486	\$6,717	\$3,754	\$2,963	86.0	\$90,643	\$1,175	14.0
Texas	\$3,813,532	\$3,577,891	\$69,527	\$7,192	\$62,335	95.6	\$165,935	\$179	4.4
Utah	\$372,616	\$226,505	\$42,449	\$0	\$42,449	72.2	\$98,642	\$5,020	27.8
Vermont	\$140,867	\$92,188	\$258	\$0	\$258	65.6	\$47,549	\$872	34.4
Virginia	\$1,430,595	\$1,124,182	\$35,650	\$21,575	\$14,075	81.1	\$262,876	\$7,887	18.9
Washington	\$998,607	\$734,142	\$41,135	\$22,187	\$18,948	77.6	\$221,263	\$2,067	22.4
West Virginia	\$301,041	\$278,055	\$9,953	\$6,644	\$3,309	95.7	\$12,872	\$161	4.3
Wisconsin	\$981,162	\$826,300	\$16,273	\$13,174	\$3,099	85.9	\$138,588	\$1	14.1
Wyoming	\$130,117	\$103,010	\$127	\$80	\$47	79.3	\$26,980	\$0	20.7

Note: Expenditures are in thousands of dollars.

<sup>a</sup>Includes expenditures on correctional facilities that confine individuals and on facilities' activities. See *Terms and definitions*.<sup>b</sup>Includes expenditures on correctional activities other than confinement, such as parole boards and probation programs. See *Terms and definitions*.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Governments, 2017.

## Nearly 2.5 million government employees worked in criminal justice functions in 2017

In 2017, there were 2,446,891 justice system employees in federal, state, and local governments (table 4). Twelve percent of the employees worked for the federal government, 68% of whom worked in police protection. Almost 58% of all justice system workers were employed by local governments, 62% of whom worked in police protection. In addition, 30% of all justice system

employees worked for states, 14% of whom were in police protection. About 63% of state and 75% of local police protection employees had arrest powers.

Local governments employed similar numbers of employees in corrections and in judicial and legal functions. However, states employed about 2.5 times as many employees in corrections as in judicial and legal functions.

**TABLE 4**

**Full-time equivalent employees and March payrolls (in thousands of dollars) for justice system functions in federal, state, and local governments, 2017**

Type of employee	All governments	Federal	State	Local <sup>a</sup>
<b>Total justice system</b>				
Total employees	2,446,891	302,499	732,409	1,411,983
FTE employees	:	:	722,534	1,332,449
March payrolls	\$13,704,779	\$2,407,596	\$3,757,630	\$7,539,553
<b>Police protection<sup>b</sup></b>				
Total				
Total employees	1,191,694	206,737	104,527	880,430
FTE employees	:	:	102,775	826,016
March payrolls	\$7,138,316	\$1,519,546	\$651,184	\$4,967,586
Sworn only				
Total employees	:	:	65,792	662,798
FTE employees	:	:	65,326	642,753
March payrolls	:	:	\$479,326	\$4,147,492
<b>Judicial and legal functions</b>				
Total employees	496,752	56,623	180,089	260,040
FTE employees	:	:	175,701	241,589
March payrolls	\$2,984,894	\$674,651	\$1,023,196	\$1,287,047
<b>Corrections</b>				
Total employees	758,445	39,139	447,793	271,513
FTE employees	:	:	444,058	264,844
March payrolls	\$3,581,569	\$213,399	\$2,083,250	\$1,284,920

Note: Full-time equivalent (FTE) is the number of full-time employees, plus the number of paid part-time hours divided by the standard hours for full-time employees in a government. Payrolls are in thousands of dollars. Payrolls include all salaries, wages, fees, commissions, bonuses, and awards paid to employees during the 1-month (31-day) pay period that includes March 12. See *Terms and definitions*.

:Not calculated. Office of Personnel Management records lacked the information required to calculate FTE employees for the federal government.

<sup>a</sup>Includes counties, municipalities, townships, and the District of Columbia.

<sup>b</sup>Police protection employees can be classified as either sworn (having arrest powers) or nonsworn (all others).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Governments, 2017; USA Spending.gov, "spending by object class" dataset, 2017; and Office of Personnel Management, FedScope dataset, 2017.



In 2017, there were 2,054,983 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees of state and local governments working in the justice system (table 5). In counties, the justice system employed approximately one-quarter of all public employees. Sixteen percent of all state government FTE employees worked in the justice system, and 61% of those who worked in the justice system were employed in corrections. Ten percent of all FTE public employees in any government function at the state level

were employed in corrections. Nine percent of FTE government employees at the county level and 1% of FTE employees employed by municipalities worked in corrections. Judicial and legal employees represented the smallest portion of state and local FTE employees, accounting for 20% of FTE justice system employees and 3% of all government FTE employees at those levels of government.

**TABLE 5**  
**Full-time equivalent employees in all government and justice system functions in state and local governments, 2017**

Type of function	All state/local governments	State	All local <sup>a</sup>	County	Municipal <sup>b</sup>
<b>All government functions</b>					
Total FTE	16,598,394	4,399,978	12,198,416	2,622,621	2,531,205
<b>Total justice system</b>					
Total FTE	2,054,983	722,534	1,332,449	667,265	593,827
Percent of all government functions	12.4%	16.4%	10.9%	25.4%	23.5%
<b>Police protection<sup>c</sup></b>					
Total					
Total FTE	928,791	102,775	826,016	258,854	511,397
Percent of all government functions	5.6%	2.3%	6.8%	9.9%	20.2%
Percent of total justice system	45.2	14.2	62.0	38.8	86.1
Sworn only					
Total FTE	708,079	65,326	642,753	185,146	411,885
Percent of all government functions	4.3%	1.5%	5.3%	7.1%	16.3%
Percent of total justice system	34.5	9.0	48.2	27.7	69.4
<b>Judicial and legal functions</b>					
Total FTE	417,290	175,701	241,589	185,234	49,446
Percent of all government functions	2.5%	4.0%	2.0%	7.1%	2.0%
Percent of total justice system	20.3	24.3	18.1	27.8	8.3
<b>Corrections</b>					
Total FTE	708,902	444,058	264,844	223,177	32,984
Percent of all government functions	4.3%	10.1%	2.2%	8.5%	1.3%
Percent of total justice system	34.5	61.5	19.9	33.4	5.6

Note: Full-time equivalent (FTE) is the number of full-time employees, plus the number of paid part-time hours divided by the standard hours for full-time employees in a government.

<sup>a</sup>Includes counties, municipalities, townships, and the District of Columbia.

<sup>b</sup>Includes municipalities, townships, and the District of Columbia.

<sup>c</sup>Police protection employees can be classified as either sworn (having arrest powers) or nonsworn (all others).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Governments, 2017.

## The number of state and local FTE employees in justice system functions rose 16% from 1997 to 2017

From 1997 to 2017, the number of state and local FTE employees increased 16% in total police protection, 17% in sworn only police protection, 21% in judicial and legal functions, and 9% in corrections (figure 2; percentages not shown). Employment in all justice system functions in state and local governments rose 16% between 1997 and 2007, then stabilized at about 2 million FTE employees through 2017.<sup>2</sup> In state and local governments, police protection, judicial and legal functions, and corrections FTE employees reached their highest numbers in 2007, declined in 2012, then rose again in 2017. Both the numbers of police protection and judicial and legal FTE employees increased 2% from 2012 to 2017, and corrections FTE employees increased 1% over this period. These justice-related FTE employment patterns (increases from 1997 to 2007, a decrease from 2007 to 2012, and another increase from 2012 to 2017) were consistent with changes in FTE employment for all state and local government functions during the 21-year period.

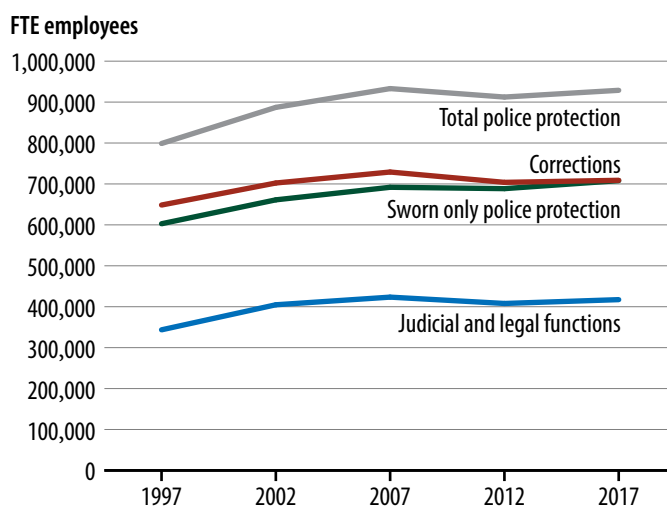
## Justice system March payrolls for state and local governments totaled more than \$11 billion

Public employment agencies use March as the reference month for reporting payroll data. (See *Terms and definitions*.) State and local governments spent more than \$11 billion on March payrolls for justice system functions in 2017 (table 6). This made up 14% of March payrolls for all government functions. About 28% of total March payrolls in counties (\$3.5 billion) and 26% in municipalities (\$3.6 billion) were for justice system functions.

<sup>2</sup>See also appendix table 2 and tables 4 and 5 for more details on findings discussed on this page.

In all state and local governments, half of total justice system March payrolls went toward police protection (17% in state governments and 66% in local governments). Thirty percent of March payrolls went toward corrections (55% in state governments and 17% in local governments). Among all levels of government in 2017, the federal government accounted for a larger share of justice system payrolls (19%) than justice system employees (12%). This pattern was similar for judicial and legal functions (23% of payrolls and 11% of employees) and corrections (13% of payrolls and 5% of employees).

**FIGURE 2**  
Full-time equivalent employees in justice system functions in state and local governments, 1997–2017



Note: Full-time equivalent (FTE) is the number of full-time employees, plus the number of paid part-time hours divided by the standard hours for full-time employees in a government. Police protection employees can be classified as either sworn (having arrest powers) or nonsworn (all others). See appendix table 2 for estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Governments, 1997–2017.

**TABLE 6**  
March payrolls (in thousands of dollars) for all state and local government and justice system functions, 2017

Type of government	All state/local government functions Total March payrolls	Total justice system		Police protection		Judicial and legal functions		Corrections	
		March payrolls	Percent of total March payrolls	March payrolls	Percent of total justice system March payrolls	March payrolls	Percent of total justice system March payrolls	March payrolls	Percent of total justice system March payrolls
All state/local	\$80,419,556	\$11,297,185	14.0%	\$5,618,771	49.7%	\$2,310,243	20.4%	\$3,368,171	29.8%
State	\$23,023,836	\$3,757,630	16.3%	\$651,184	17.3%	\$1,023,196	27.2%	\$2,083,250	55.4%
All local	\$57,395,720	\$7,539,553	13.1%	\$4,967,586	65.9%	\$1,287,047	17.1%	\$1,284,920	17.0%
County	\$12,440,349	\$3,480,303	28.0%	\$1,433,660	41.2%	\$984,024	28.3%	\$1,062,619	30.5%
Municipal*	\$13,762,829	\$3,624,388	26.3%	\$3,168,861	87.4%	\$267,514	7.4%	\$188,013	5.2%

Note: Payrolls are in thousands of dollars. Includes all salaries, wages, fees, commissions, bonuses, and awards paid to employees during the 1-month (31 days) pay period that includes March 12. See *Terms and definitions*.

\*Includes municipalities, townships, and the District of Columbia.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Governments, 2017.

At the municipal government level, 86% of FTE justice system employees worked in police protection; nearly 70% of local justice system FTE employees were sworn police. One in five public FTE employees in municipal governments worked in police protection. In 2017, municipal governments spent nearly \$3.2 billion (87%) of their justice system March payrolls on police protection. In comparison, counties spent less than half as much on police protection: \$1.4 billion (41%) of their justice system payrolls.

Counties spent about 31% (\$1.1 billion) of their justice-related payrolls on corrections, while states spent about 55% (\$2.1 billion). In comparison, municipalities spent a small portion (5%, or \$188 million) of their justice system payrolls to corrections.

### Justice system spending exceeded \$500 per capita in 90% of states

Six states (Alaska, California, Delaware, Maryland, New York, and Wyoming) and the District of Columbia had total justice system expenditures of more than \$900 per resident in 2017 (table 7). About 9 in 10 jurisdictions had per capita justice expenditures of more than \$500.

The District of Columbia (\$911) and New York (\$530) had the highest per capita expenditures on police protection in 2017, while Kentucky had the lowest (\$171). The median per capita expenditure on police protection across jurisdictions was \$312.

Among all types of justice system expenditures, judicial and legal functions expenditures were the lowest per capita. These expenditures ranged from \$75 per capita in Alabama to \$326 in Alaska, with a median of \$138.

Corrections expenditures ranged from a low of \$139 per capita in Iowa to a high of \$436 in Alaska. The median per capita corrections expenditure was \$214.

**TABLE 7**  
**Per capita expenditures on all government and justice system functions, by jurisdiction, 2017**

Jurisdiction	2017 population	All government functions	Total justice system	Police protection	Judicial and legal functions	Corrections
U.S. total	324,985,539	\$11,259	\$741	\$351	\$146	\$244
Median	:	\$10,504	\$684	\$312	\$138	\$214
Alabama	4,874,486	\$9,989	\$486	\$261	\$75	\$150
Alaska	739,700	\$20,181	\$1,256	\$494	\$326	\$436
Arizona	7,044,008	\$8,310	\$740	\$355	\$150	\$235
Arkansas	3,001,345	\$9,234	\$469	\$224	\$75	\$170
California	39,358,497	\$14,327	\$1,087	\$487	\$229	\$371
Colorado	5,611,885	\$10,839	\$726	\$330	\$154	\$242
Connecticut	3,573,297	\$11,467	\$693	\$330	\$190	\$174
Delaware	956,823	\$12,557	\$949	\$396	\$210	\$342
District of Columbia	694,906	\$46,675	\$1,351	\$911	\$213	\$226
Florida	20,963,613	\$8,446	\$742	\$406	\$119	\$217
Georgia	10,410,330	\$8,178	\$599	\$262	\$133	\$204
Hawaii	1,424,393	\$11,782	\$725	\$338	\$227	\$161
Idaho	1,717,715	\$7,669	\$628	\$264	\$122	\$242
Illinois	12,778,828	\$11,491	\$696	\$413	\$118	\$165
Indiana	6,658,078	\$8,809	\$451	\$200	\$92	\$159
Iowa	3,141,550	\$11,188	\$512	\$259	\$114	\$139
Kansas	2,908,718	\$10,504	\$595	\$296	\$112	\$186
Kentucky	4,452,268	\$10,198	\$495	\$171	\$125	\$198
Louisiana	4,670,560	\$10,487	\$711	\$352	\$147	\$211
Maine	1,334,612	\$9,611	\$512	\$233	\$84	\$195
Maryland	6,023,868	\$11,561	\$925	\$443	\$160	\$321
Massachusetts	6,859,789	\$13,528	\$691	\$326	\$154	\$212
Michigan	9,973,114	\$9,906	\$626	\$255	\$121	\$249
Minnesota	5,566,230	\$12,276	\$684	\$356	\$138	\$190

*Continued on next page*

**TABLE 7 (continued)****Per capita expenditures on all government and justice system functions, by jurisdiction, 2017**

Jurisdiction	2017 population	All government functions	Total justice system	Police protection	Judicial and legal functions	Corrections
Mississippi	2,988,510	\$10,050	\$522	\$257	\$92	\$173
Missouri	6,106,670	\$9,085	\$538	\$292	\$92	\$155
Montana	1,052,482	\$10,280	\$750	\$316	\$189	\$245
Nebraska	1,915,947	\$12,055	\$615	\$260	\$98	\$257
Nevada	2,969,905	\$8,787	\$854	\$427	\$167	\$260
New Hampshire	1,348,787	\$9,379	\$598	\$312	\$119	\$168
New Jersey	8,885,525	\$12,459	\$810	\$401	\$169	\$241
New Mexico	2,091,784	\$11,769	\$835	\$338	\$154	\$343
New York	19,589,572	\$17,758	\$1,080	\$530	\$217	\$333
North Carolina	10,268,233	\$8,985	\$583	\$313	\$81	\$190
North Dakota	754,942	\$14,361	\$757	\$307	\$154	\$297
Ohio	11,659,650	\$11,113	\$657	\$327	\$156	\$174
Oklahoma	3,931,316	\$8,806	\$549	\$266	\$93	\$190
Oregon	4,143,625	\$12,909	\$837	\$331	\$190	\$316
Pennsylvania	12,787,641	\$11,819	\$738	\$303	\$143	\$293
Rhode Island	1,055,673	\$12,147	\$780	\$430	\$151	\$199
South Carolina	5,021,268	\$10,041	\$486	\$261	\$78	\$146
South Dakota	872,868	\$9,196	\$564	\$241	\$109	\$214
Tennessee	6,708,799	\$8,849	\$584	\$295	\$125	\$163
Texas	28,295,273	\$9,322	\$628	\$290	\$113	\$226
Utah	3,101,042	\$9,785	\$540	\$240	\$120	\$180
Vermont	624,344	\$12,861	\$677	\$310	\$141	\$226
Virginia	8,463,587	\$9,931	\$728	\$298	\$120	\$310
Washington	7,423,362	\$12,358	\$674	\$277	\$164	\$233
West Virginia	1,817,004	\$10,158	\$559	\$217	\$148	\$195
Wisconsin	5,790,186	\$10,764	\$700	\$322	\$115	\$263
Wyoming	578,931	\$17,451	\$945	\$386	\$213	\$346

Note: Includes direct expenditures by state and local governments within each jurisdiction. Direct expenditures are per resident in that jurisdiction or per U.S. resident (for U.S. total).

:Not calculated.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Governments, 2017.

**There were 63 FTE justice system employees per 10,000 U.S. residents**

In 2017, the District of Columbia had the most FTE employees working in the justice system (120) and police protection (69) per 10,000 residents (table 8). About 3 in 5 jurisdictions (61%) had from 20 to 30 sworn police protection FTE employees per 10,000 residents, with a median of 21 per 10,000.

North Carolina and Maine had the fewest judicial and legal FTE employees per 10,000 residents (8), while the District of Columbia had the most (29). More than

4 in 5 jurisdictions (84%) had from 10 to 20 judicial and legal employees per 10,000 residents, with a median of 12 per 10,000.

In 2017, the median number of corrections FTE employees per 10,000 residents was 19. Corrections FTE employees per 10,000 residents ranged from 13 in New Hampshire to 32 in Wyoming. At 14 per 10,000, Iowa had the second-lowest rate of corrections FTE employees. This was consistent with Iowa having spent the least per capita on corrections in 2017 (\$139).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>See also table 7.

**TABLE 8**  
**Full-time equivalent employees in all government and justice system functions per 10,000 residents, by jurisdiction, 2017**

Jurisdiction	2017 population	All government functions	Total justice system	Police protection*		Judicial and legal functions	Corrections
				Total	Sworn only		
U.S. total	324,985,539	511	63	29	22	13	22
Median	:	531	61	28	21	12	19
Alabama	4,874,486	579	55	30	23	9	16
Alaska	739,700	705	77	27	17	19	30
Arizona	7,044,008	399	65	28	21	15	21
Arkansas	3,001,345	559	68	29	22	11	27
California	39,358,497	473	61	26	18	11	23
Colorado	5,611,885	531	64	29	20	14	21
Connecticut	3,573,297	521	59	28	22	16	16
Delaware	956,823	520	78	29	22	20	30
District of Columbia	694,906	729	120	69	61	29	23
Florida	20,963,613	425	64	29	19	15	19
Georgia	10,410,330	500	65	27	22	14	25
Hawaii	1,424,393	538	71	28	22	26	17
Idaho	1,717,715	494	61	24	16	13	24
Illinois	12,778,828	486	61	32	26	10	18
Indiana	6,658,078	501	53	23	18	11	19
Iowa	3,141,550	594	46	23	17	10	14
Kansas	2,908,718	692	66	31	22	13	22
Kentucky	4,452,268	546	56	23	17	15	18
Louisiana	4,670,560	547	79	38	28	15	26
Maine	1,334,612	521	45	23	18	8	15
Maryland	6,023,868	507	69	30	23	14	25
Massachusetts	6,859,789	488	61	30	24	14	17
Michigan	9,973,114	436	49	21	17	11	18
Minnesota	5,566,230	530	53	23	17	12	18
Mississippi	2,988,510	632	57	32	24	9	16
Missouri	6,106,670	523	68	31	23	13	24
Montana	1,052,482	542	60	25	18	16	18
Nebraska	1,915,947	635	59	26	20	11	22
Nevada	2,969,905	388	61	27	17	14	19
New Hampshire	1,348,787	528	51	29	22	9	13
New Jersey	8,885,525	537	77	39	30	22	17
New Mexico	2,091,784	590	76	29	23	17	30
New York	19,589,572	611	90	44	39	16	29

*Continued on next page*

**TABLE 8 (continued)****Full-time equivalent employees in all government and justice system functions per 10,000 residents, by jurisdiction, 2017**

Jurisdiction	2017 population	All government functions	Total justice system	Police protection*		Judicial and legal functions	Corrections
				Total	Sworn only		
North Carolina	10,268,233	545	59	28	23	8	24
North Dakota	754,942	628	57	25	21	12	20
Ohio	11,659,650	504	64	27	21	17	19
Oklahoma	3,931,316	537	57	29	21	10	17
Oregon	4,143,625	488	55	22	15	12	21
Pennsylvania	12,787,641	443	64	26	21	14	24
Rhode Island	1,055,673	450	54	28	22	12	14
South Carolina	5,021,268	534	61	28	23	10	22
South Dakota	872,868	538	51	23	19	11	17
Tennessee	6,708,799	487	62	32	26	12	18
Texas	28,295,273	536	62	27	20	10	25
Utah	3,101,042	497	49	21	14	10	18
Vermont	624,344	609	53	24	17	11	18
Virginia	8,463,587	532	66	26	21	11	29
Washington	7,423,362	517	49	19	14	12	18
West Virginia	1,817,004	561	57	22	18	16	19
Wisconsin	5,790,186	491	60	27	21	10	23
Wyoming	578,931	874	83	34	25	17	32

Note: Includes employees of state and local governments within each jurisdiction. Full-time equivalent (FTE) is the number of full-time employees, plus the number of paid part-time hours divided by the standard hours for full-time. Rates of FTE employees are per 10,000 residents in that jurisdiction or per 10,000 U.S. residents (for U.S. total) and are rounded to the nearest whole number.

:Not calculated.

\*Police protection employees can be classified as either sworn (having arrest powers) or nonsworn (all others).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Governments, 2017.



## Methodology

Data for the Justice Expenditure and Employment Extracts (JEEE) series come from the U.S. Census Bureau's Annual Survey of State and Local Government Finance (ASSLGF) and Annual Survey of Public Employment and Payroll (ASPEP).<sup>4</sup> Every 5 years, however, data for the JEEE come from the U.S. Census Bureau's Census of Governments, a comprehensive collection of expenditure and employment data from state and local governments. This census was last collected in 2017, and its data, along with census data from 1997, 2002, 2007, and 2012, are presented in this report.

Federal financial data included in the JEEE from 1997 to the present were taken directly from the Office of Management and Budget's Budget of the United States Government, using the budget's definitions of the administration of justice functions. Financial data for states, the District of Columbia, large counties, and cities were gathered in three ways: through mail canvass, internet collection, and central collection from state sources. Collection methods varied by jurisdiction and type of government.

For the employment data collection, 45 state governments provided data from central payroll records for most of their agencies and institutions. Data for the remaining agencies and institutions of state governments were obtained by mail canvass questionnaires. Local governments, including the District of Columbia, were also canvassed using a mail questionnaire. All

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<sup>4</sup>For more information on sampling design, see <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/gov-finances.html>.

respondents who received the mail questionnaire had the option of completing the survey through a web-based survey instrument developed for reporting data.

Starting in 2017, federal public employment and payroll data were collected using USAspending's "spending by object class" dataset and the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) FedScope dataset, as the U.S. Census Bureau's collection of these data was discontinued in 2015. Because OPM records do not include the number of hours worked by part-time employees to compute the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) federal employees, only total numbers of federal employees are presented in this report.

Data extracted from the U.S. Census Bureau's annual surveys and quinquennial Census of Governments for the purposes of producing the JEEE receive additional scrutiny by a U.S. Census Bureau reviewer. For both the finance and employment data, the reviewer examines the data, investigates potential problems, and makes revisions where necessary.

### Limitations

The differing responsibilities, functions, and structures of state and local governments may affect the comparability of expenditure and employment data. Because of these differences, data users should use caution when comparing governments. Users should also be aware that JEEE data may differ from that of the ASSLGF, ASPEP, and Census of Governments due to the JEEE's more extensive review procedures, continuing updates, refinements of data, and different definitions.

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**APPENDIX TABLE 1**

**Estimates of total justice system expenditures (in billions of dollars) and estimates for figure 1: Real (inflation-adjusted) total expenditures on justice system functions in federal, state, and local governments, 1997–2017**

Year	Total justice system	Police protection	Judicial and legal functions	Corrections
1997	\$187.94	\$83.63	\$41.31	\$63.00
2002	\$238.83	\$105.78	\$53.77	\$79.28
2007	\$257.57	\$120.67	\$57.87	\$79.03
2012	\$296.03	\$139.84	\$67.16	\$89.02
2017	\$304.66	\$149.00	\$66.43	\$89.23

Note: Expenditures for each year are presented in billions of 2017 dollars using a nonseasonally adjusted GDP price deflator.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Governments, 1997–2017; and Office of Management and Budget, Budget of the United States Government, 1997–2017.

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**APPENDIX TABLE 2**

**Estimates of employment in all government functions and the total justice system and estimates for figure 2: Full-time equivalent employees in justice system functions in state and local governments, 1997–2017**

Year	All government functions	Total justice system	Police protection*		Judicial and legal functions	Corrections
			Total	Sworn only		
1997	14,219,157	1,790,784	798,805	602,718	343,531	648,448
2002	15,698,208	1,994,120	887,087	661,137	404,741	702,292
2007	16,453,570	2,085,559	932,995	691,838	423,428	729,136
2012	16,206,683	2,024,117	912,308	688,507	407,927	703,882
2017	16,598,394	2,054,983	928,791	708,079	417,290	708,902

Note: Full-time equivalent (FTE) is the number of full-time employees, plus the number of paid part-time hours divided by the standard hours for full-time employees in a government.

\*Police protection employees can be classified as either sworn (having arrest powers) or nonsworn (all others).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Governments, 1997–2017.

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The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice is the principal federal agency responsible for measuring crime, criminal victimization, criminal offenders, victims of crime, correlates of crime, and the operation of criminal and civil justice systems at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels. BJS collects, analyzes, and disseminates reliable statistics on crime and justice systems in the United States, supports improvements to state and local criminal justice information systems, and participates with national and international organizations to develop and recommend national standards for justice statistics. Doris J. James is the acting director.

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