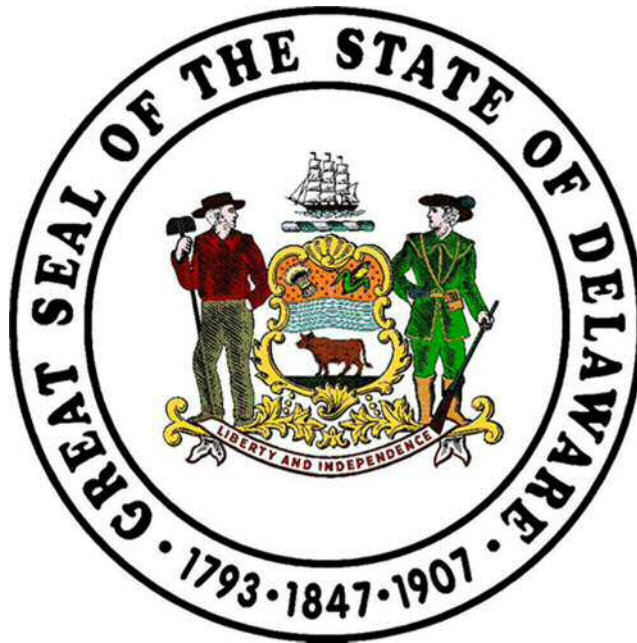


Crime in Delaware: 2009 – 2013 Executive Brief



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Crime in Delaware: 2009 – 2013

Executive Brief

An Analysis of Serious Crime in Delaware

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Crime in Delaware 2009 – 2013

Executive Brief

This executive brief provides an overview of the findings presented in the full report, *Crime in Delaware 2009 – 2013*. *Crime in Delaware* is the official report of serious crime known to Delaware law enforcement agencies. This report covers data about serious crimes reported to state, county, and local police agencies for the years 2009 through 2013.

Crime in Delaware provides information about 22 Violent, Serious Property, Drug/Narcotic and Other Property and Social offenses reported in Delaware's implementation of the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) operated by the State Bureau of Investigation of the Delaware State Police. Final data for the years 2009 through 2012 and preliminary data for 2013 are included in this report. Additional years of data are included in the graphs to illustrate long term trends.

The full *Crime in Delaware 2009 – 2013* report contains extensive data and is available on the Statistical Analysis Center's website (<http://cjc.delaware.gov/sac/publications/crime.shtml>).

Note to the reader

Crime in Delaware 2009-2013 continues the changes made in the previous report to the statistical methodology and to the design of the report to make information easier to find, understand, and use. **Two changes were made for the most recent report:** 1) the time period covered by the trend graphs was expanded to include the years 2002 through 2008; and 2) a '2002-2012 Average' line for offenses is included in most trend graphs. These changes are intended to provide the reader with more, easy to understand information about crime trends.

A statistical note: Data for a calendar year are not considered final for the purposes of the *Crime in Delaware* report until offense counts become sufficiently stable, usually 12-15 months after the end of that year. Therefore, final data are provided for the 2009-2012 period and preliminary data for 2013.

In calculating differences between 2013 and previous years, preliminary data were used for all years to remove distortion that makes such differences appear larger or smaller than they actually are if final and preliminary data are mixed. Final data are used for comparisons between the years 2009 through 2012. Graphic figures that plot final and preliminary counts are included as appropriate to illustrate trends in the data as these are both useful and much less susceptible to distortion.

Key Findings/Trends

The full *Crime in Delaware 2009-2013* report contains extensive data and statistics on serious offenses, clearances, adult and juvenile arrests, and crimes against law enforcement officers. The report includes a summary of this data at the state and county levels, followed by a detailed breakdown based on five major topic areas: 1) Violent Offenses, 2) Serious Property Offenses, 3) Drug/Narcotic Offenses, 4) Other Property and Social Offenses, and 5) crimes against law enforcement officers. The data for each topic area are organized by state and county.

Below are key findings from this extensive set of Delaware crime data.

Serious Offenses

Overall, the occurrence of serious crime has decreased notably since 2009. The number of serious criminal offenses known to police in 2009 was 98,059 compared with 93,756 in 2012, a decrease of 4.4% (see Table E-1 and Figure E-1). Preliminary data for 2013 suggest that pattern is continuing, with the number of offenses at just over 88,000, a decline of about 10,000 offenses (around 9%) compared to 2009.

In New Castle County, the number of offenses decreased since 2009 by about 8,000 (around 13%) from 57,592 to about 49,000. For Kent County, the number of total offenses compared to 2009 decreased about 4%, with offenses declining from 19,210 to about 18,000. In Sussex County, offenses decreased slightly since 2009 from 21,257 to around 20,000 (a roughly 2% decrease). Offense trends by county are presented at the end of this report (Figures E4-E6).

Violent crime is lower in the State. The number of Violent Offenses reported decreased more than 15% from 2009 to 2013. This decrease reflects a marked decline in reported Violent Offenses in 2013, following a gradual decline over the past four years (see Table E-1 and Figure E-1).

In New Castle County, Violent Offenses were about 17% lower as compared to 2009, while Kent and Sussex Counties saw decreases of roughly 9% and 13% respectively.

The number of Homicides in 2013 (44) was comparable to the 2009 total (43), but markedly lower than 2010, 2011, and 2012 (43, 49, and 58 respectively). There were 33 Homicides in New Castle County in 2013, equal to the number in 2009 and lower than the three years preceding 2013. Kent County had eight Homicides in 2013, two more than 2008 and a higher amount than in three of the four years prior to 2013. Sussex County experienced three Homicides in 2013, one less than 2009 and the lowest amount than any of the four years prior to 2013.

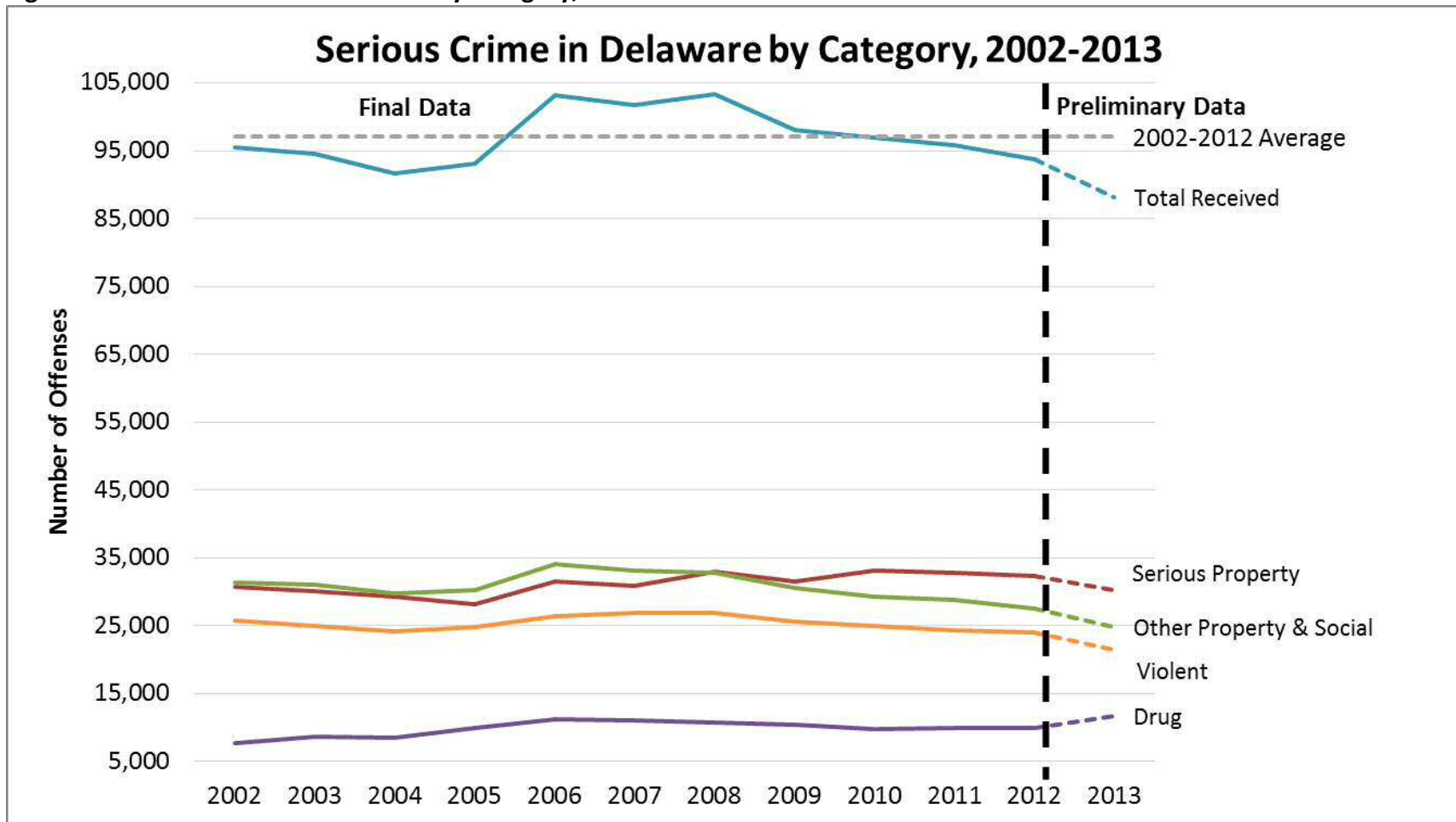
Table E-1: Delaware Statewide Serious Crime Summary 2009 – 2013

Serious Offenses Received 2009 – 2013¹						
	Final Counts				Preliminary Count	
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Violent Offenses	25,588	24,907	24,312	24,035	21,486	
Serious Property Offenses	31,479	33,036	32,823	32,337	30,292	
Drug Offenses	10,403	9,749	9,967	9,956	11,591	
Other Property, Social Offenses	30,589	29,232	28,770	27,428	24,745	
Total Offenses Received	98,059	96,924	95,872	93,756	88,114	
Percentage Difference in Serious Offenses Received						
	Final Differences			Preliminary Differences²		
	09 - 10	10 - 11	11 - 12	12-13	09 - 13	Average 09-12 -13
Violent Offenses	-2.66%	-2.39%	-1.14%	-10.14%	-15.12%	-12.44%
Serious Property Offenses	4.95%	-0.64%	-1.48%	-6.02%	-3.31%	-6.30%
Drug Offenses	-6.29%	2.24%	-0.11%	17.79%	12.14%	16.58%
Other Property, Social Offenses	-4.44%	-1.58%	-4.66%	-9.15%	-18.15%	-13.93%
Total Offenses Received	-1.16%	-1.09%	-2.21%	-5.48%	-9.36%	-7.79%

¹ Final data are provided for the 2009-2012 period and preliminary data for 2013.

² Preliminary data were used when making comparisons with 2013. For the other 3 sets of comparisons (2009-10, 2010-11, and 2011-12) final data were used.

Figure E-1: Serious Crime in Delaware by Category, 2002-2013



Serious Property crime changed little between 2009 and 2013. Motor vehicle-related theft offenses and Burglary offenses, however, decreased around 29% and 10%, while Shoplifting and Theft from a Building offenses increased by about 14% and 15% respectively (see Table E-1 and Figure E-1).

In New Castle County, the number of Serious Property Offenses in 2013 was about 6% lower compared to 2009. Sussex County experienced a slight increase (about 3%), while Kent County saw little change (about a 1% increase) during this period.

In New Castle County, theft of motor vehicles was about 32% lower compared to 2009 and theft of motor vehicle parts and accessories was down around 29%. Burglary offenses were 13% lower. Theft From a Building and Shoplifting offenses were each about 9% higher compared to 2009. For Kent County, theft of motor vehicles was about 24% lower since 2009, while theft of motor vehicle parts and accessories was down around 54%. Burglary offenses were about 28% lower. The number of Theft From a Building and Shoplifting offenses each increased about 28% compared to 2009. In Sussex County, theft of motor vehicles was approximately 20% lower, with a roughly 38% decrease in the theft of motor vehicle parts and accessories. Burglary, Theft From a Building and Shoplifting offenses were around 4%, 18%, and 11% higher, respectively, compared to 2009.

Drug/Narcotic Offenses were lower in 2012, but higher in 2013. Between 2009 and 2012, these offenses showed a gradual decrease, followed by a substantial increase in 2013 (about 12% compared to 2009). (see Table E-1 and Figure E-1).

In New Castle and Kent Counties, the number of Drug/Narcotic Offenses decreased about 9% and 17% respectively between 2009 and 2013, following the same pattern noted above. Sussex County experienced an increase of roughly 13% during this period, but reflected a gradual increase since 2010.

Substantially fewer Other Property and Social Offenses were reported in 2013. From 2009 to 2013, there was around an 18% decrease in these offenses, with a roughly 9% decrease between 2012 and 2013. There has been a steady decline in this offense category over the past five years (see Table E-1 and Figure E-1).

Between 2009 and 2013, New Castle and Kent Counties experienced decreases in Other Property and Social Offenses of approximately 23% and 12% respectively. The number of these offenses in Sussex County showed a smaller decline (about 5%) during this period.

Two of the most frequently reported crimes – Assault offenses and Destruction, Damage, and Vandalism of Property – showed distinct downward trends from 2009 to 2013. The number of Drug/Narcotic and Fraud offenses Burglary offenses trended upward, while Larceny and Burglary offense occurred at variable rates since 2009 (see Figure E-2).

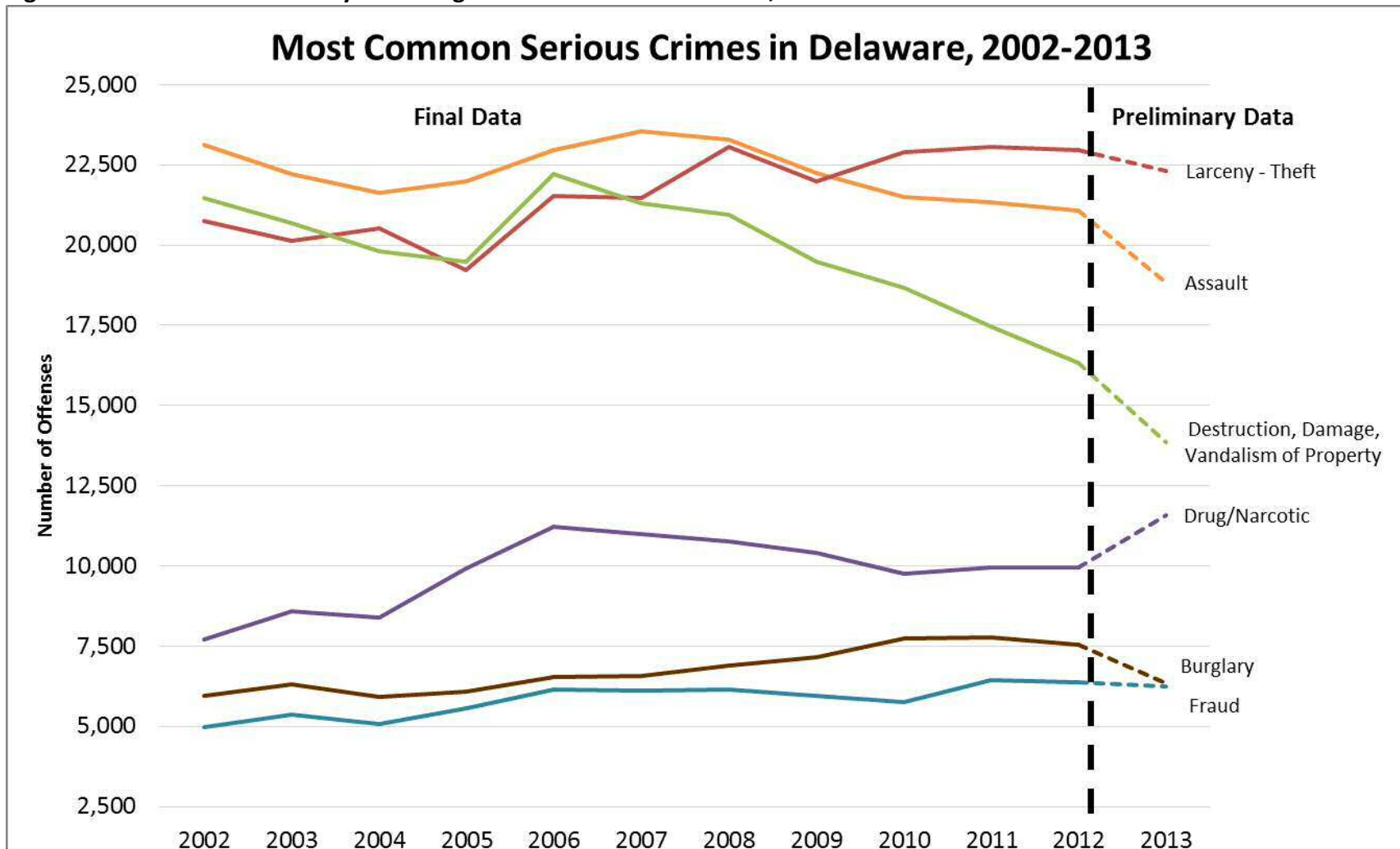
In New Castle County, Assault and Destruction/Damage/Vandalism offenses showed distinct downward trends. Burglary offenses were down in 2013 after trending upward the previous four years. The opposite pattern occurred for Drug/Narcotic offenses which were higher in 2013. Larceny and Fraud offenses occurred at levels similar to 2009. In Kent County, Destruction/Damage/Vandalism offenses showed a distinct downward trend from 2009. Drug/Narcotic offenses were higher while the remaining most common offenses showed more mixed patterns since 2009. In Sussex County, Assault and Destruction/Damage/Vandalism showed distinct downward trends from 2009. The number of Drug/Narcotic and Fraud offenses trended upward during this period, while Burglary and Larceny offenses showed mixed trends.

Firearm-related offenses decreased substantially between 2009 and 2013. Weapons Law Violations (2,349 in 2013), Robberies with a Firearm (672 offenses in 2013), and Assaults with a Firearm (852 in 2013) decreased about 10%, 34%, and 12% respectively between 2009 and 2013, with the latter two offenses experiencing substantial decreases compared to 2012.

In New Castle County, Weapons Law Violations were about 12% lower compared to 2009. Robbery and Assault with a Firearm offenses were down roughly 36% and 24%, with substantial decreases compared to 2012. In Kent County, Weapons Law Violations and Robbery with a Firearm offenses appear to be unchanged compared to 2009. Assault with a Firearm offenses, however, experienced an increase of roughly 48%. The number of Weapons Law Violations in Sussex County was about 15% lower. Robbery and Assault with a Firearm offenses experienced decreases of roughly 54% and 19% respectively since 2009, with substantial decreases compared to 2012.

The Crime Rate is lower. The Statewide Crime Rate moved from 110.8 offenses per 1,000 persons in 2009 to about 95.2 in 2013, a difference of around 14%. This change in the Crime Rate reflects a roughly 9% decrease in the number of offenses and a 5% increase in Delaware's population.

Figure E-2: The Most Commonly Occurring Serious Crimes in Delaware, 2002-2013



Clearances

For crime reporting and analysis purposes, an offense is considered 'cleared' or solved when a suspect is either arrested and subsequently referred for prosecution or cannot be arrested but is otherwise clearly identifiable.

Based on 2013 preliminary data, ***offenses in all crime categories were cleared at rates comparable to or better than the rates from 2009 through 2012*** (see Figure E-3). Drug and Violent Offenses continue to be cleared at high rates (96.1% and 76.9% respectively). Serious Property Offenses and Other Property and Social Offenses were cleared at rates of 29.5% and 41.6% respectively. Overall, just over half of the offenses (53.2%) in 2013 were cleared by the end of the calendar year.

In New Castle County, 48% of all 2013 offenses were cleared, with the highest rates for Drug/Narcotic Offenses (96%) and Violent Offenses (71%). In Kent County, 62% of 2013 offenses were cleared, with Drug/Narcotic Offenses (96%) and Violent Offenses (84%) being cleared at the highest rates. In Sussex County, about 58% of all 2013 offenses were cleared, with Drug/Narcotic Offenses (96%) and Violent Offenses (85%) having the highest rates. In each county, all four categories of offenses were cleared at rates comparable to the previous four years. Clearance trends by county are presented at the end of this report (Figures E4-E6).

Arrests

In general, the number of all arrests followed the trends seen in offenses (see Table E-2 and Figure E-3). The exception was for Serious Property Offenses, which showed a small increase in arrests from 2009 to 2013 while offenses decreased about 3%. Juvenile arrests showed a sharp downward trend across all four crime categories (a 34% decrease overall), while the total number of adult arrests was virtually unchanged, with much variation across the four crime categories. Arrest trends by county are presented at the end of this report (Figures E4-E6).

In New Castle County, arrests followed the downward trend seen in offenses. Overall, juvenile arrests were about 33% lower in 2013, while adult arrests were around 3% lower with much variation among the four main offense categories.

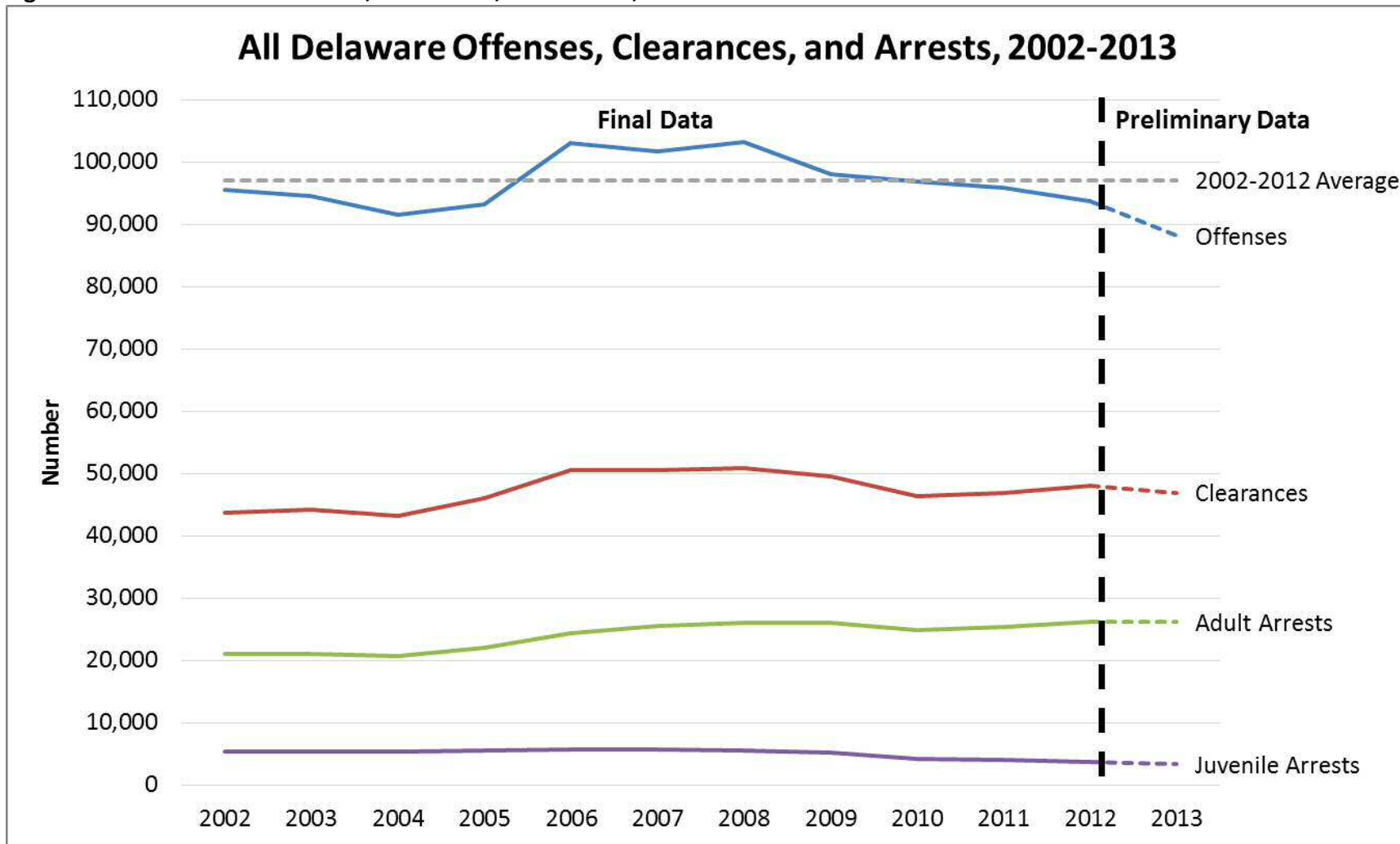
The pattern of arrests in Kent County, compared to offense trends, was quite variable. Arrests for Violent and Drug Offenses moved in the same direction as their corresponding offense categories (lower for the former, higher for the latter), but at different rates. Arrests for the other two offense categories declined while the corresponding number of offenses increased. Overall, juvenile arrests were about 35% lower than in 2009, adult arrests around 6% higher.

In Sussex County, arrests were slightly lower (about 3%), with the trends in arrests matching those seen for offenses in each of the four categories. Overall, juvenile arrests were about 39% lower than in 2009. The number of total adult arrests was up 4%.

Table E-2: Statewide Arrests for Serious Offenses

Statewide Arrests for Serious Offenses					
	Final Counts				Preliminary Counts
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total Arrests	31,120	29,032	29,389	29,947	29,469
Violent Offenses	12,067	11,127	10,971	11,029	10,138
Serious Property Offenses	7,555	7,320	7,799	8,119	7,703
Drug Offenses	6,640	6,208	6,139	6,440	7,369
Other Property and Social Offenses	4,858	4,377	4,480	4,359	4,259
Total Adult Arrests	26,013	24,795	25,344	26,226	26,130
Violent Offenses	10,017	9,452	9,226	9,439	8,635
Serious Property Offenses	5,889	5,934	6,535	6,960	6,771
Drug Offenses	5,921	5,575	5,581	5,880	6,836
Other Property and Social Offenses	4,186	3,834	4,002	3,947	3,888
Total Juvenile Arrests	5,107	4,237	4,045	3,721	3,339
Violent Offenses	2,050	1,675	1,745	1,590	1,503
Serious Property Offenses	1,666	1,386	1,264	1,159	932
Drug Offenses	719	633	558	560	533
Other Property and Social Offenses	672	543	478	412	371

Figure E-3: All Delaware Offenses, Clearances, and Arrests, 2002-2013



Violent Crime Against Law Enforcement Officers

In 2013, 470 assault-related offenses were committed against law enforcement officers, about 6% lower when compared to 2009, but about 6% higher compared to last year. The preliminary 2013 figure is notably lower than three of the previous four years (see Table E-3). ***Almost all offenses (96%) were cleared before the end of 2013.*** Assaults against officers continue to be cleared at rates above 95%.

In New Castle County, there were 255 assault offenses against officers in 2013, up about 6% from 2009. In Kent County, this number (98) was around 11% lower and in Sussex County (117), roughly 24% lower. Clearance rates for all three counties were above 90%.

No officers were killed in 2013, although about 15% of assault-related offenses resulted in injuries. Two officers were killed in the line of duty during the 2009 through 2013 period. The percentage of assault-related offenses in 2013 that resulted in injury is consistent with the rates for the four prior years.

In New Castle County, 16% of assault offenses against officers in 2013 resulted in injury. In Kent County, about 15% resulted in injuries (higher than the three previous years), while in Sussex County, 19% led to an injury. For all counties, injury rates were generally comparable to those for the previous four years.

Most assault-related offenses occurred while responding to disturbances, attempting an arrest, and handling prisoners, and most often involved single-officer vehicles. Responding to a disturbance, attempting an arrest, and handling prisoners accounted for about two-thirds of assaults against officers during the 2009 through 2013 period. Three out of every four assaults against officers involved the use of hands, fists, or feet as a weapon. One in 20 assaults during this period involved the use of a firearm or a cutting instrument.

Table E-3: Violent Offenses Committed Against Delaware Law Enforcement Officers, 2009-13

Violent Offenses Against Delaware Law Enforcement Officers 2009-2013					
	Final Data				Preliminary Data
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Officers Assaulted	504	529	517	444	470
Officers Killed	1	0	1	0	0
Attempted Homicides on Officers	0	5	6	3	1
Assaults Resulting in Officer Injury	17.3%	15.5%	14.7%	15.5%	17.0%
Assault-related Offenses Cleared	96.2%	95.8%	96.3%	97.3%	96.2%

Figure E4: All New Castle County Offenses, Clearances, and Arrests, 2002-2013

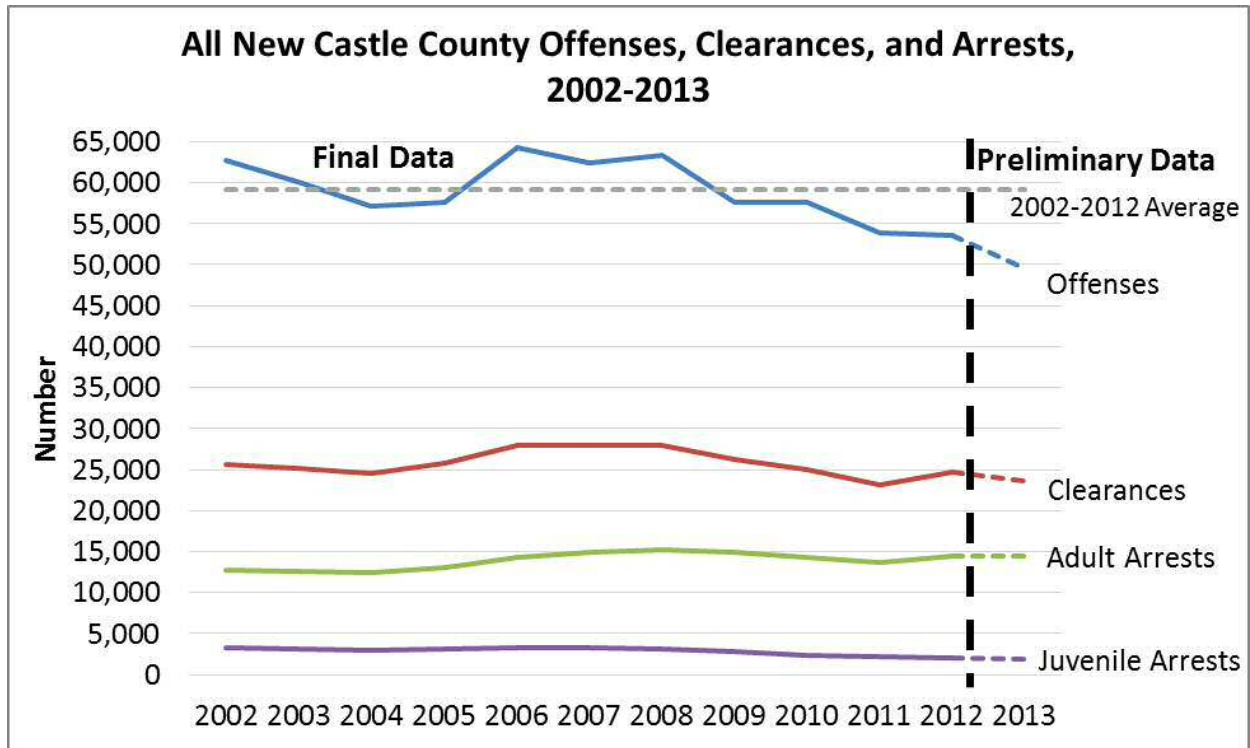


Figure E5: All Kent County Offenses, Clearances, and Arrests, 2002-2013

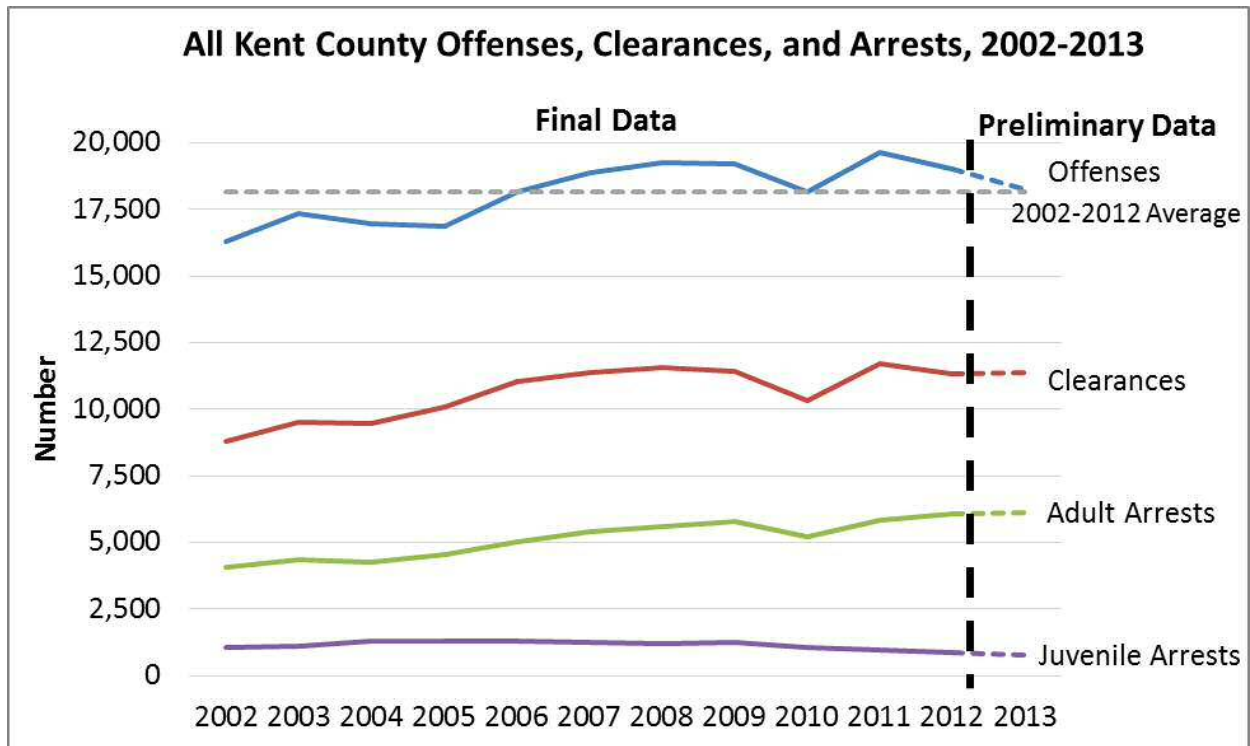


Figure E6: All Sussex County Offenses, Clearances, and Arrests, 2002-2013

