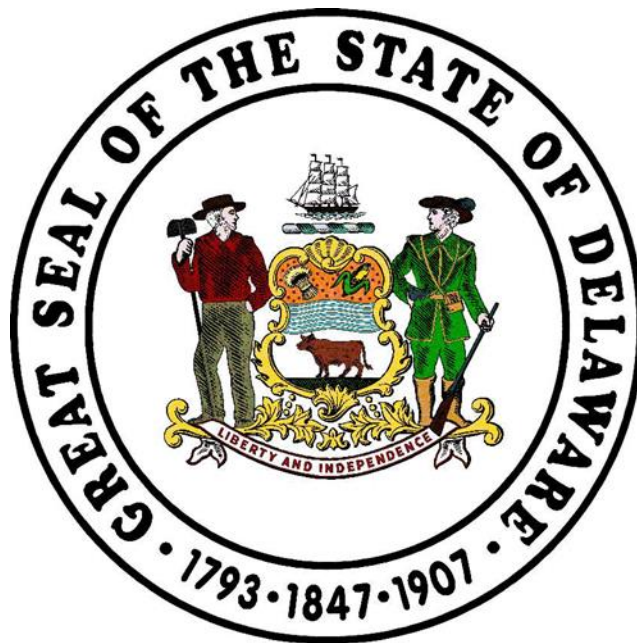


Crime in Delaware 2018 – 2022 Executive Brief



January 2024

Prepared by the
Statistical Analysis Center
Delaware Criminal Justice Council
In Conjunction with the
State Bureau of Identification

Crime in Delaware: 2018 – 2022

Executive Brief

An Analysis of Serious Crime in Delaware

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State of Delaware Document number 100703-24-01-02

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Crime in Delaware 2018 – 2022

Executive Brief

This executive brief provides an overview of the findings presented in the full report, *Crime in Delaware 2018 – 2022*. *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 2018 through 2022. Serious crimes for the purpose of this report are those the Federal Bureau of Investigation identifies as “Group A Offenses” in the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). The “Group A Offenses” are those more serious/significant crimes such as Murder, Rape, Robbery, Theft, etc. Other “Group B” Offenses, which are not covered in this report, tend to be more minor in nature, such as Curfew/Vagrancy violations, Disorderly Conduct, and “Other” minor offenses.

Crime in Delaware provides information for 24 Violent, Serious Property, Drug/Narcotic, and Other Property and Social Offenses reported in Delaware’s implementation of NIBRS operated by the State Bureau of Identification of the Delaware State Police. Additional years of data are included in specific graphs to illustrate long term trends.

The full *Crime in Delaware 2018 – 2022* report contains extensive data and is available on the Statistical Analysis Center’s website (<http://sac.delaware.gov/>).

Detailed jurisdiction-level offense data can be viewed and downloaded from the Delaware Open Data Portal.

<https://data.delaware.gov/Public-Safety/State-of-Delaware-NIBRS-Crime-Report-Totals-by-Jur/8njr-fz7r>

Caution should be used when comparing criminal offense trends involving 2020/2021 totals. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent State of Emergency declarations, court closings, and travel restrictions within the State of Delaware, it is not possible to discern if, or how much, those events impacted year-to-year changes in offense totals.

Additionally, use caution when interpreting data for the Fraud offenses of Identity Theft and Hacking/Computer Invasion. Issues with coding in the downloaded data for Identity Theft and Hacking/Computer Invasion accounts for the drastic swing in the totals for these two crimes.

Key Findings/Trends

The full *Crime in Delaware 2018 – 2022* report contains extensive data and statistics on serious offenses, clearances, adult and juvenile arrests, and crimes against law enforcement officers. This report includes a summary of this data at the state and county levels, followed by a more 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 is organized by state and county. Below are key findings from this extensive set of Delaware crime data.

Serious Offenses

- **Overall, across the state, reported serious crime has decreased 9% since 2018.** The number of serious criminal offenses known to police in 2018 was 75,484 compared with 68,461 in 2022 (see Table E-1 and Figure E-1). Compared to 2021, Serious Property Offense and Drug Offenses experienced modest increases, while Other Property and Social Offenses decreased substantially. Offense trends by County are presented later in this brief (Figures E4-E6).
 - In New Castle County, the number of total offenses decreased by 12% from 2018 to 2022. New Castle County accounted for 54% of the overall statewide reported offenses in 2022.
 - For Kent County, the number total offenses in 2022 compared to 2018 was essentially unchanged (-0.3%). Kent County accounted for 22% of the overall statewide reported offenses.
 - In Sussex County, total offenses in 2022 compared to 2018 decreased 10%. Sussex County accounts for 24% of the overall statewide reported offenses.
- **Statewide violent crime is lower overall.** The number of Violent Offenses reported decreased 8% from 2018 to 2022 (see Table E-1 and Figure E-1).
 - In New Castle County, Violent Offenses were 15% lower in 2022 when compared to 2018 while Sussex County saw a 3% decline.
 - Kent County saw a 6% increase in Violent Offenses from 2018 to 2022.
- **There were 71 statewide homicides in 2022—49 Murder/Non-Negligent Manslaughter, 19 Vehicular Homicide, 3 other Negligent Manslaughter—down from 2021’s record high of 107 (95 Murder/Non-Negligent Manslaughter, 11 Vehicular Homicide, and 1 other Negligent Manslaughter).¹**

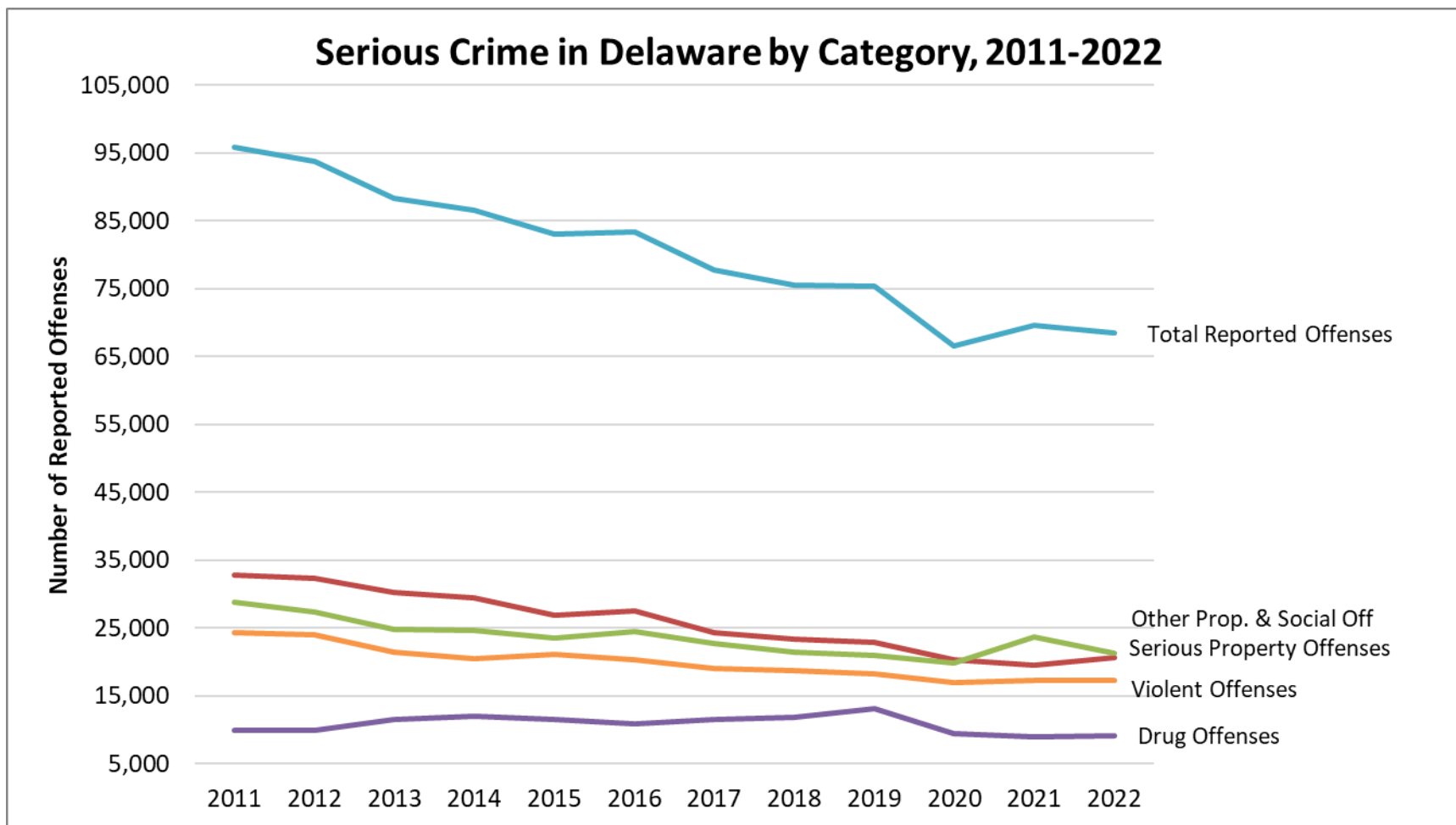
¹ In 2019, the FBI began including Vehicular Homicides under the Criminally Negligent Manslaughter category. Starting with this report, the SAC is reporting offenses for this crime separately from other Negligent Manslaughter offenses to allow for better insights regarding Criminal Homicide.

- There were 37 homicides in New Castle County in 2022—27 Murder/Non-Negligent Manslaughter, 8 Vehicular Homicide, and 2 other Negligent Manslaughter—a substantial decrease from 2021’s record high of 76 (71 of which were Murder/Non-Negligent Manslaughter offenses).
- Kent County had 18 homicides in 2022—13 Murder/Non-Negligent Manslaughter, 5 Vehicular Homicide, and zero other Negligent Manslaughter—a slight decrease from 2021’s record high of 19 (16 of which were Murder/Non-Negligent Manslaughter offenses).
- Sussex County experienced 16 homicides in 2022—9 Murder/Non-Negligent Manslaughter, 6 Vehicular Homicide, and 1 other Negligent Manslaughter—a record high.

Table E-1: Delaware Statewide Serious Crime Summary, 2018 – 2022

Serious Offenses Reported, 2018 – 2022					
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Violent Offenses	18,684	18,306	16,936	17,333	17,278
Serious Property Offenses	23,420	22,872	20,315	19,607	20,678
Drug Offenses	11,940	13,195	9,476	8,942	9,220
Other Property, Social Offenses	21,440	20,975	19,840	23,713	21,285
Total Offenses Reported	75,484	75,348	66,567	69,595	68,461
Percent Difference in Serious Offenses Reported					
	21 - 22	18 - 22	Average 18-21 vs 22		
Violent Offenses	-0.3%	-7.5%	-3.0%		
Serious Property Offenses	5.5%	-11.7%	-4.1%		
Drug Offenses	3.1%	-22.8%	-15.3%		
Other Property, Social Offenses	-10.2%	-0.7%	-1.0%		
Total Offenses Reported	-1.6%	-9.3%	-4.6%		

Figure E-1: Serious Crime in Delaware by Category, 2011 – 2022



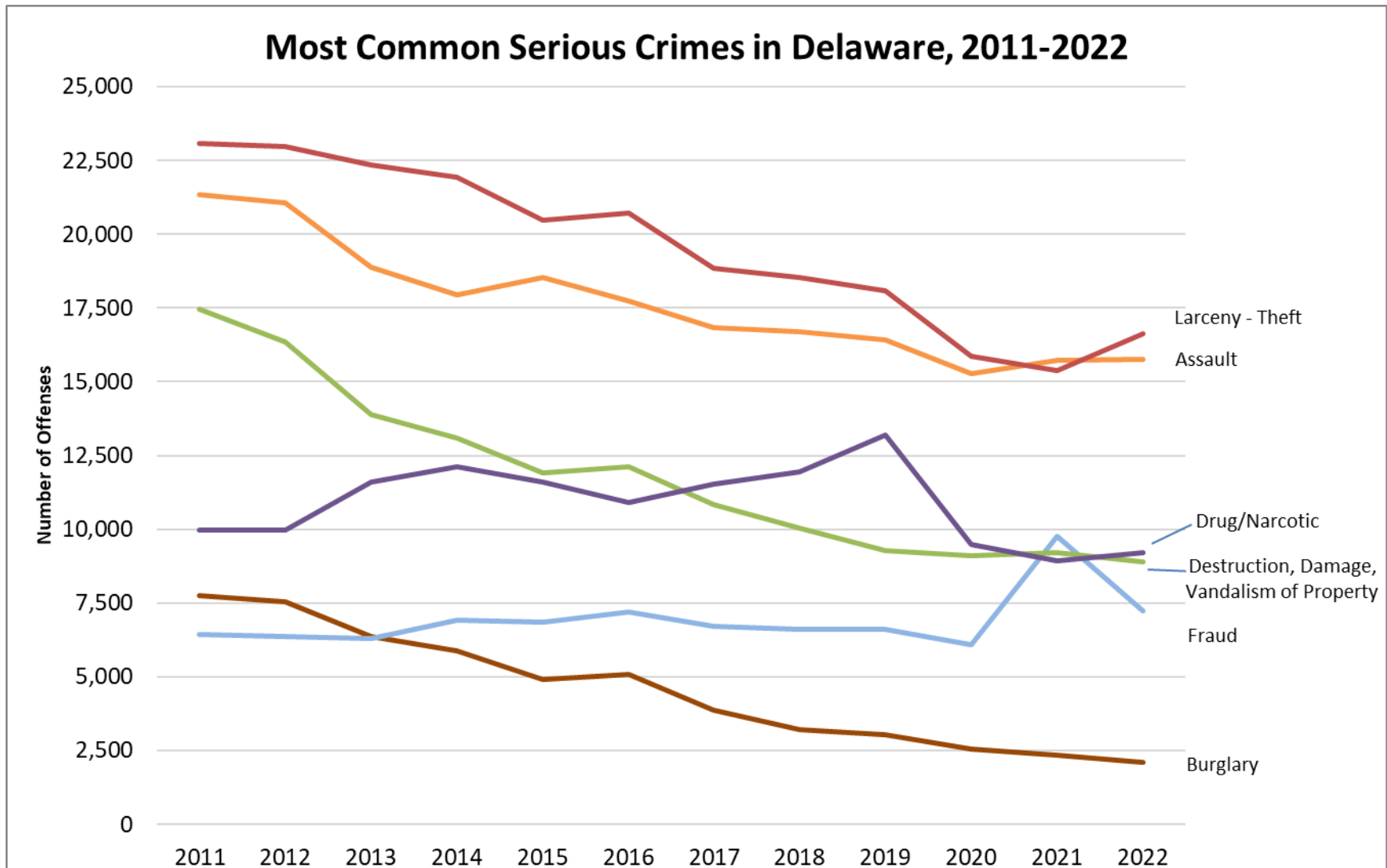
- **The crime rate is lower.** The statewide crime rate decreased from 77.5 offenses per 1,000 persons in 2018 to 68.0 in 2022. This change in the crime rate reflects just over a 9% decrease in the number of offenses and a 3.4% increase in Delaware’s population.
- **Serious Property crime is down.** The number of reported Serious Property Offenses decreased 12% from 2018 to 2022. Burglary offenses decreased 35% from 2018 to 2022 (see Table E-1 and Figure E-1).
 - In New Castle County, the number of Serious Property Offenses in 2022 was almost 12% lower compared to 2018. Burglary decreased 31% from 2018, with Larceny decreasing 10%.
 - Kent County saw a 4% decrease from 2018 to 2022. Burglary decreased 29% since 2018 which mirrors the overall state trend. Larceny offenses decreased over 5% over the same period, while Motor Vehicle Theft Offenses increased 72%.
 - Sussex County saw a 19% decrease from 2018 to 2022. Burglary decreased 44% since 2018, Larceny by 15%. However, Motor Vehicle Theft Offenses increased 38%.
- **Overall Drug/Narcotic Offenses decreased 23% from 2018.²** Drug/Narcotic Possession Offenses have decreased 28% over this period, while Drug Equipment Offenses decreased 8% (see Table E-1 and Figure E-1).
 - In New Castle County, from 2018 to 2022 Possession Offenses decreased 38% and Drug Equipment offenses decreased 24%.
 - In Kent County, there was a 17% decrease in Possession Offenses from 2018 to 2022, while Drug Equipment Offenses increased 2%.
 - Sussex County Possession Offenses were 18% lower compared to 2018, Drug Equipment Offenses 5% lower.

² In December 2015, Delaware passed legislation that decriminalized certain Marijuana Possession Offenses. Depending on various circumstances, these offenses are civil offenses. Due to the Federal Government still recording these offenses as criminal in 2022, they are part of the Drug Offense totals in this report.

- ***Slightly fewer Other Property and Social Offenses were reported from 2018 to 2022.*** From 2018 to 2022, there was a 1% decrease in these offenses (see Table E-1 and Figure E-1). However, Weapon Law Violations saw a 23% increase, while Destruction, Damage, or Vandalism of Property Offenses were 12% lower.
 - Between 2018 and 2022, New Castle and Sussex Counties experienced decreases in Other Property and Social Offenses of 1% and 5%, respectively. Kent County increased 5%.
 - Property Destruction/Vandalism Offenses decreased 14% in New Castle, 5% in Kent, and 10% in Sussex, while Weapon Law Violations increased 18%, 35%, and 24%, respectively.
 - Statewide, Fraud experienced a 10% increase from 2018 to 2022.

- ***The trends for firearm-related offenses from 2018 to 2022 were mixed.*** Weapons Law Violations were 23% higher compared to 2018. Robberies with a Firearm decreased 39% from 2018, though there was a 3% increase from 2021 to 2022. Assaults with a Firearm increased 31% since 2018 but did decline 16% from 2021 to 2022.
 - In New Castle County, Robbery with a Firearm offenses decreased 39% since 2018. Assault with a Firearm offenses increased 26% overall for the same period but declined 23% from 2021 to 2022.
 - In Kent County, Robbery with a Firearm offenses declined 60% from 2018. Assault with a Firearm offenses increased 22% from the 2018 total but did decline 3% from 2021 to 2022.
 - In Sussex County, Robbery with a Firearm offenses decreased 6% compared with 2018 totals but rose 7% from 2021 to 2022. Assault with a Firearm offenses increased 70% since 2018 but declined 7% from 2021 to 2022.

Figure E-2: Most Common Serious Crimes in Delaware, 2011 – 2022



Clearances

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

- **Based on 2022 data, offenses in all crime categories were cleared at rates comparable to prior reporting periods** (see Figure E-3). Overall, all crime categories had clearance rates at or near those of previous years, with half of the total number offenses (50.1%) in 2022 cleared by the end of the calendar year. Drug and Violent Offenses continue to be cleared at high rates (95.6% and 75.2%, respectively). Serious Property Offenses and Other Property and Social Offenses were cleared at rates of 24.6% and 34.8%, respectively.
 - In New Castle County, 41.3% of all 2022 offenses were cleared, with the highest clearance rates for Drug/Narcotic Offenses (92.3%) and Violent Offenses (69.6%).
 - In Kent County, 59.2% of 2022 offenses were cleared, with Drug/Narcotic Offenses (97.5%) and Violent Offenses (78.5%) being cleared at the highest rates.
 - In Sussex County, 61.5% of all 2022 offenses were cleared, with Drug/Narcotic Offenses (97.9%) and Violent Offenses (82.3%) having the highest clearance rates.

Arrests

- The number of arrests in 2022 decreased 14% compared to 2018, where there was a 9% decrease in the number of reported offenses over the same period. Declines occurred across all main offense categories (see Table E-2 and Figure E-3). The most notable decreases were for Serious Property Offenses (32% since 2018) and Violent Offenses (11%). Juvenile Arrests were lower across all but one crime category during this period (a 27% decrease overall). Total Adult Arrests were 12% lower with three of four categories showing decreases. Arrest trends by county are located at the end of this report (Figures E4-E6).
 - In New Castle County, total arrests were 16% lower in 2022 compared to 2018. Overall, Juvenile Arrests were 29% lower in 2022, with decreases in arrests for all but one category. Juvenile Arrests for Serious Property Offenses were almost 55% lower. Total Adult Arrests were 14% lower with all categories decreasing.
 - In Kent County, the number of total arrests was 8% lower, with decreases in half of the four categories. Overall, Juvenile Arrests were 26% lower than in 2018, with decreases in all but one category. Adult Arrests were 5% lower, with decreases in half of the categories.
 - In Sussex County, arrests were 15% lower than in 2018 with decreases in three of the four categories. Overall, Juvenile Arrests were 21% lower than in 2018, with decreases in three of the four categories. The number of total Adult Arrests was down 14%, with decreases in all but one category.

Table E-2: Statewide Arrests for Serious Offenses, 2018 – 2022

Statewide Arrests for Serious Offenses					
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total Arrests	21,695	22,456	18,715	18,641	18,756
Violent Offenses	8,493	8,699	7,616	7,706	7,581
Serious Property Offenses	5,338	5,508	4,235	3,588	3,639
Drug Offenses	4,513	4,807	4,141	4,437	4,473
Other Property and Social Offenses	3,351	3,442	2,723	2,910	3,063
Total Adult Arrests	19,416	20,078	17,206	17,262	17,086
Violent Offenses	7,364	7,502	6,911	6,969	6,734
Serious Property Offenses	4,793	4,945	3,840	3,329	3,335
Drug Offenses	4,225	4,541	4,039	4,318	4,317
Other Property and Social Offenses	3,034	3,090	2,416	2,646	2,700
Total Juvenile Arrests	2,279	2,378	1,509	1,379	1,670
Violent Offenses	1,129	1,197	705	737	847
Serious Property Offenses	545	563	395	259	304
Drug Offenses	288	266	102	119	156
Other Property and Social Offenses	317	352	307	264	363

Figure E-3: All Delaware Offenses, Clearances, and Arrests, 2011 – 2022

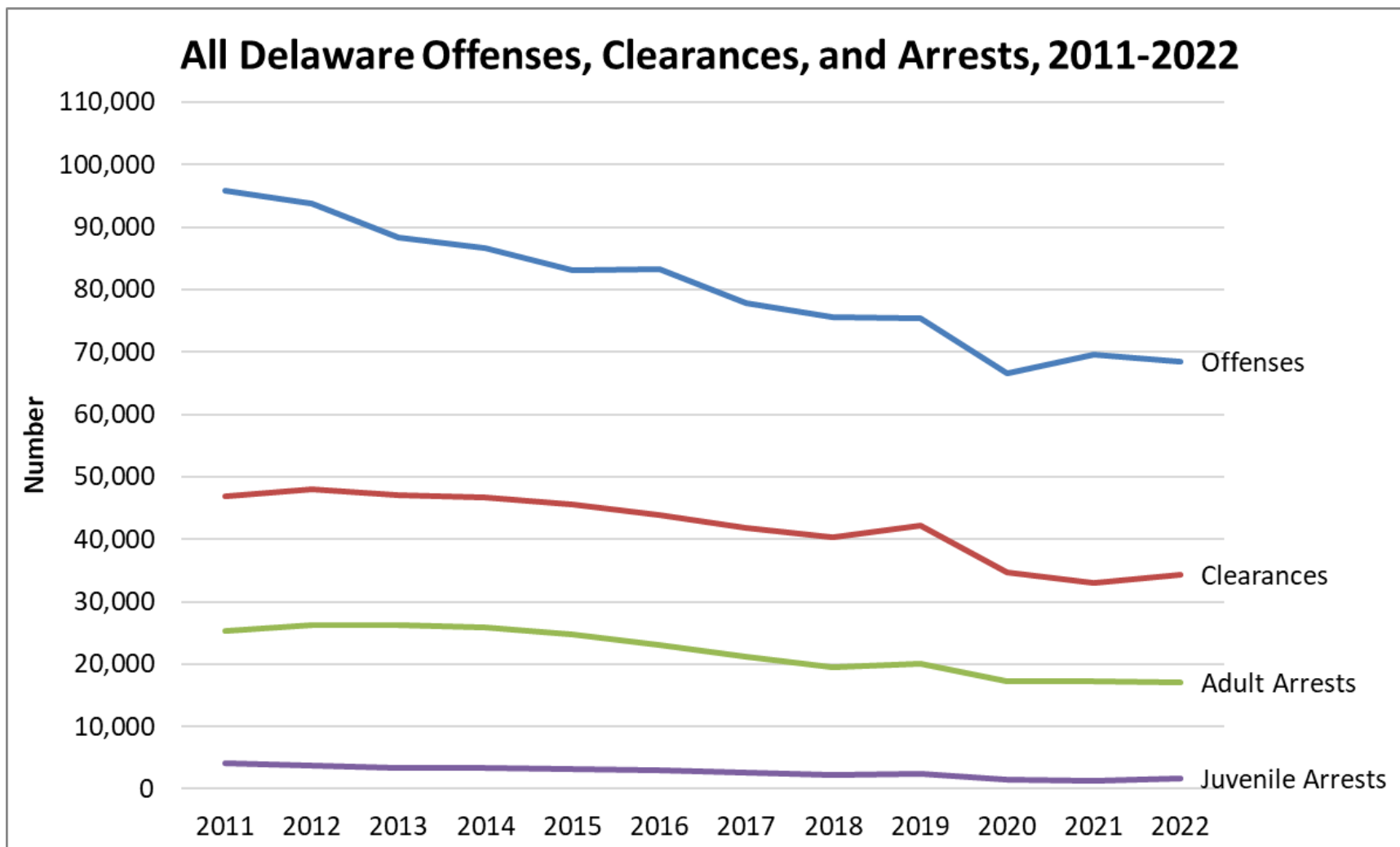


Figure E4: All New Castle County Offenses, Clearances, and Arrests, 2011 -2022

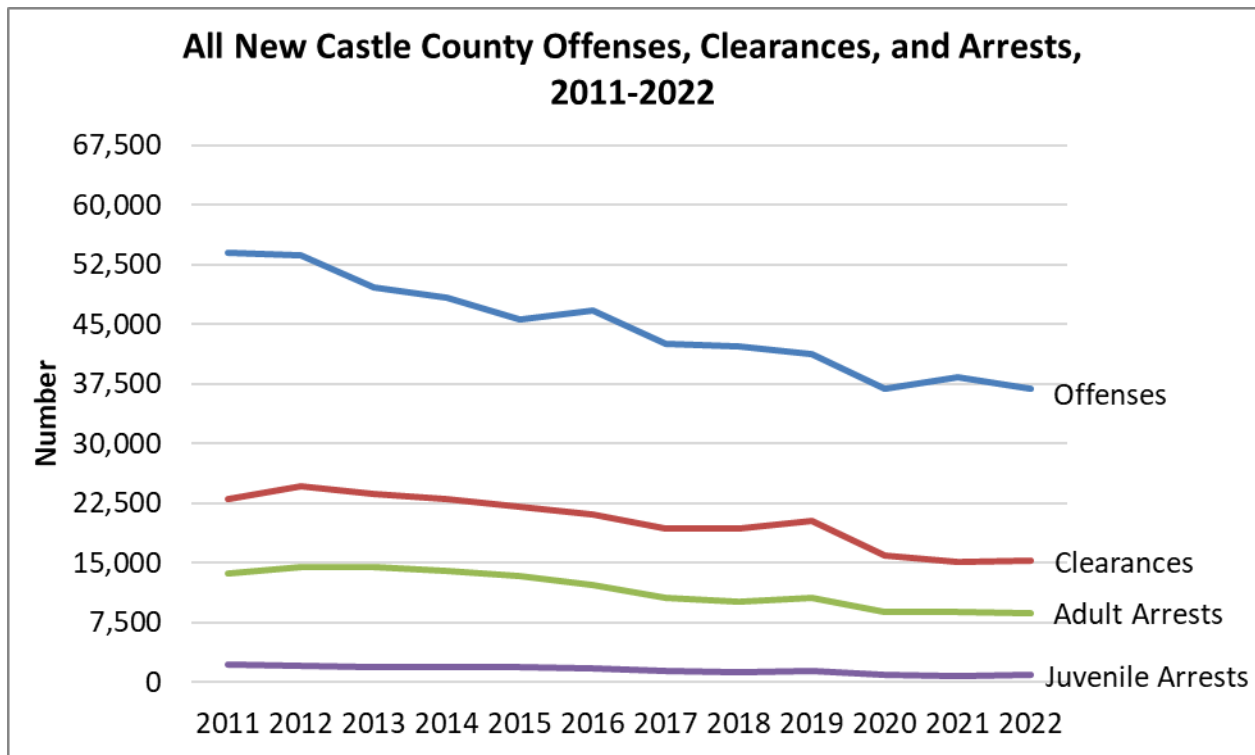


Figure E5: All Kent County Offenses, Clearances, and Arrests, 2011-2022

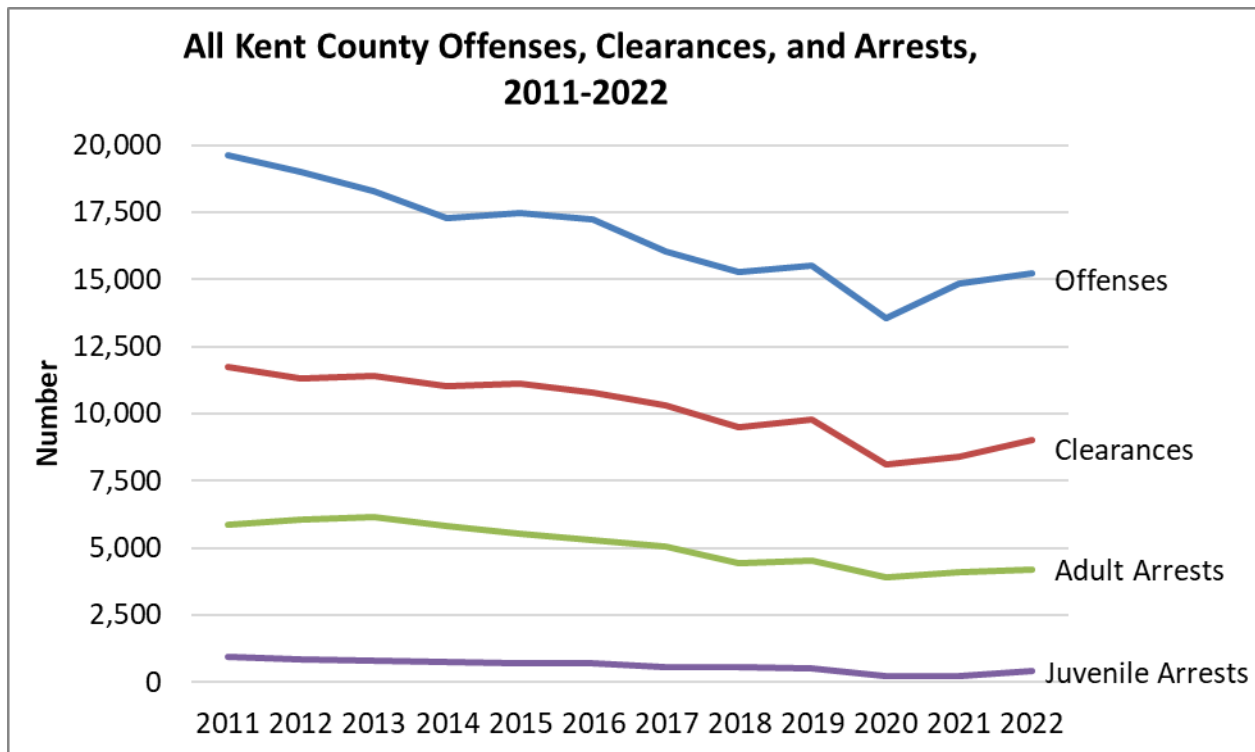
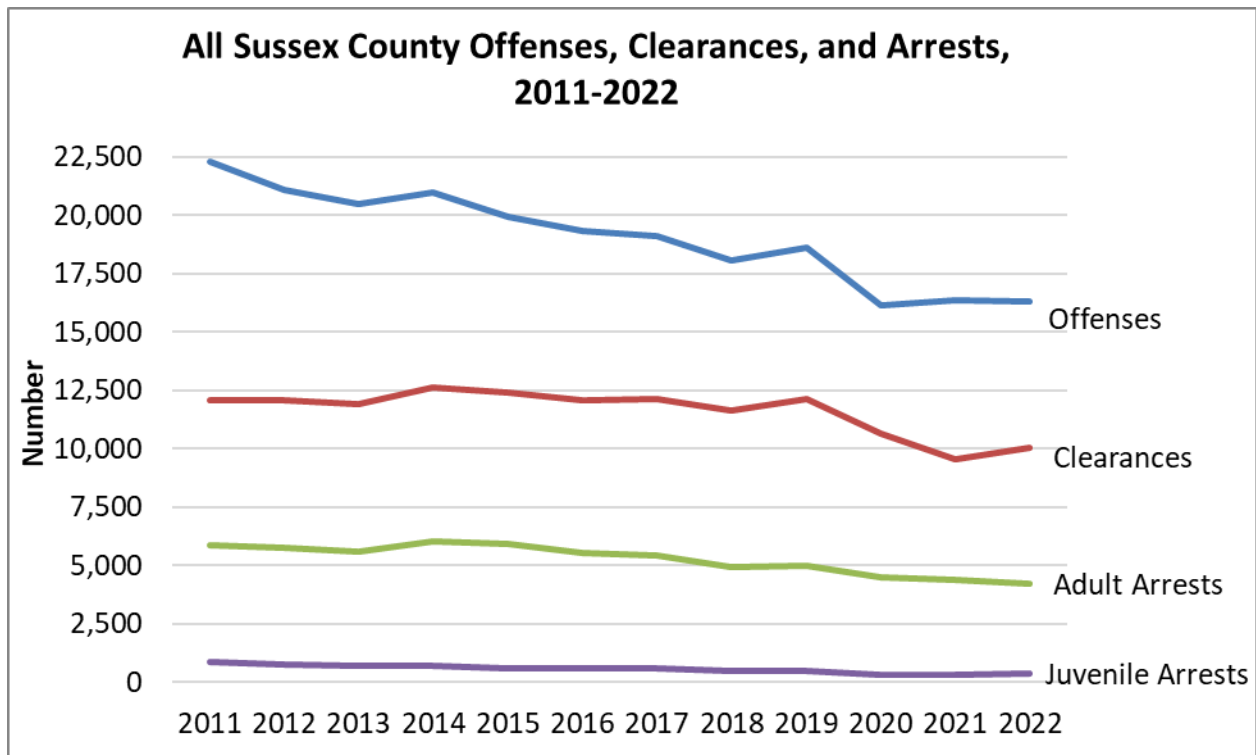


Figure E6: All Sussex County Offenses, Clearances, and Arrests, 2011 – 2022



Violent Crime Against Law Enforcement Officers

- ***In 2022, 414 assault-related offenses were committed against law enforcement officers, about 3% lower when compared to 2018.*** Almost all offenses (95%) were cleared before the end of 2022. Assaults against officers continue to be cleared at rates near or above 93%.
 - In New Castle County, there were 210 Assault Offenses against officers in 2022, down 5% from 2018 and 13% from 2021. Twenty-two percent of assaults against officers in 2022 resulted in injury.
 - In Kent County, assaults on officers (88) were 15% lower than 2018. One-fourth of assaults resulted in injuries in Kent County.
 - Sussex County assaults on officers (116) were up 16% from 2018 and nearly identical to 2021, while 28% of those assaults led to an injury.

Most assault-related offenses occurred while responding to disturbances, attempting an arrest, and handling prisoners. Responding to a disturbance, attempting an arrest, and handling prisoners accounted for 63% of assaults against officers in 2022. These activities accounted for 60-70% of assaults from 2018 to 2022. Almost 80% of all assaults on an officer (79%) were from the subject using their hands, fists, or feet. Firearms were not often used to injure a law enforcement officer (4%), a rate similar to the past three years.

No officers were killed in 2022 and 24% of assault-related offenses resulted in injuries.

Overall, one officer was killed in the line of duty from 2018 to 2022. The percentage of assault-related offenses in 2022 that resulted in injury tied 2021 for the five-year high. There was one attempted homicide of an officer in 2022. (Note: In 2020, five attempted homicides resulted from one incident, three from another incident, and two from yet a third separate incident, with the others being single incidents.)

Table E-3: Violent Offenses Committed Against Delaware Law Enforcement Officers, 2018–22

Violent Offenses Against Delaware Law Enforcement Officers 2018 – 2022					
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Officers Assaulted	425	448	398	442	414
Officers Killed	0	0	0	1	0
Attempted Homicides on Officers	0	1	12	5	1
Assaults Resulting in Officer Injury	16.7%	20.5%	17.1%	24.2%	24.2%
Assault-related Offenses Cleared	93.4%	94.4%	95.7%	92.8%	94.9%