

EMPOWER MISSISSIPPI



WHEN CRIME GOES UNSOLVED

What the Data Reveals About Mississippi's
Public Safety Challenge

SEPTEMBER 2026

Prepared by:



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The Empower Policy & Innovation Center (EPIC) is the research arm of Empower Mississippi. EPIC identifies Mississippi's biggest challenges and produces the research to develop innovative public policy solutions.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mississippians should feel safe where they live, work, worship, and raise their families. Public safety is fundamental to the health and prosperity of the state because crime harms victims and families, disrupts neighborhoods, imposes costs on taxpayers, and can discourage investment and opportunity. Safety also has a perceptual dimension: residents should be able to go about their lives without fear, and the available evidence should support that confidence.

In 2022, Empower Mississippi examined an increase in violent crime and homicide and found that Mississippi's overall violent crime rate remained below the national average even as homicide presented a more serious concern. Four years later, several indicators are encouraging. Mississippi's reported violent crime rate has fallen 17.6% since 2021 and remains

well below the national rate. The state's reported property crime rate is also below the national rate, and reported property crimes have declined more than 16% since 2021.

The most serious measures, however, show that substantial challenges remain. Mississippi's homicide mortality rate was 18.5 deaths per 100,000 residents in 2023, nearly three times the national rate. In 2024, law enforcement agencies reported clearing 56.0% of homicides, 35.1% of aggravated assaults, 28.1% of robberies, and 17.5% of rapes; the preliminary 2025 homicide clearance rate declined to 50.8%. **These figures underscore a central public-safety principle: accountability depends on the likelihood that a person who commits a serious offense will be identified, apprehended, and appropriately punished. When serious crimes remain unsolved, victims are denied justice, dangerous offenders may remain in the community, and public confidence can erode.**

Accountability depends on an interconnected system. Investigators, forensic specialists, prosecutors, public defenders, judges, corrections officials, supervision officers, treatment providers, community partners, victims, and families all affect whether cases are solved and whether people leaving custody successfully return to the community. Mississippi's MDOC custody population remains close to where it stood a decade ago, and among people released from Mississippi Department of Corrections custody in FY 2021, 39.1% returned to custody within 36 months. At the same time, the Mississippi Forensics Laboratory reported 6,507 pending cases in March 2026, concentrated primarily in drug

analysis and firearms. These measures reinforce the importance of capacity, coordination, rehabilitation, treatment, and reentry alongside appropriate incarceration for people who present a genuine danger to others.

The report also identifies a challenge that affects every other finding: Mississippi needs more complete, consistent, timely, and accessible public-safety data. Changes in federal crime-reporting systems, differences in agency participation, missing or noncomparable local data, incomplete youth-court coverage, and inconsistent measures across the justice system make it difficult to develop a complete picture of crime and system performance. These limitations are not evidence that agencies are failing; they identify opportunities to give

policymakers and public-safety professionals better tools to understand workloads, identify resource needs, recognize progress, and target limited resources.

Taken together, the findings point toward a practical agenda: strengthen the certainty of accountability for serious crime, improve capacity and coordination across the public-safety system, support effective rehabilitation and reentry, and build the information infrastructure needed to measure results. This report is intended to provide policymakers, public-safety professionals, and community partners with a common baseline for setting priorities and tracking progress—not to assign blame or offer a final verdict on Mississippi’s justice system.





ABOUT THE DATA

This section explains how to read the measures used in the report. The analysis draws from multiple public data systems, and each visual is paired with a supporting table so readers can trace the underlying values, definitions, time periods, and sources. Because the most recent comparable data are not available for every measure in the same year, endpoint years differ by source.

Crime measures. FBI-reported violent crime and property crime reflect offenses reported to law enforcement, while CDC homicide mortality is based on death-certificate records. Most city rates in CP-3 use FBI UCR/CDE data; Gulfport is an exception because city officials advised EPIC that the FBI Crime Data Explorer figures attributed to Gulfport do not accurately reflect local records. The Gulfport series therefore uses corrected annual violent-crime totals from Gulfport Police Department records. These systems measure related but different events and should not be treated as interchangeable. The report also separates FBI data before and after the 2021 transition from the Summary Reporting System to the National Incident-Based Reporting System where comparability may be affected.

Youth court measures. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention series measures delinquency cases disposed in 79 of Mississippi's 82 counties, while the statewide Division of Youth Services/Mississippi Youth Court Information Delivery System series measures referrals. A case and a referral are different units of analysis; neither is an unduplicated count of individual youth, and the two series should not be combined into a single trend. For the OJJDP series, the population figures shown represent youth ages 10-17 in the 79 reporting counties, not Mississippi's total youth population.

Clearance. Clearance rates show the share of reported offenses that law enforcement reports as cleared. A clearance most often reflects an arrest, but FBI rules also permit exceptional clearance when the offender has been identified, sufficient evidence exists, the offender's location is known, and a circumstance outside law enforcement's control prevents arrest, charging, or prosecution. Examples include the offender's death, a victim's refusal to cooperate after the offender has been identified, or denial of extradition. A clearance therefore does not mean a conviction occurred.

Corrections and forensic measures. MDOC custody-population figures are point-in-time snapshots, prison admissions are annual flow counts, and the 36-month return-to-custody measure records returns to MDOC custody rather than new-crime convictions. The Mississippi Forensics Laboratory backlog measure counts cases not yet administratively reviewed and released to the submitting agency.

Data coverage and timing. The report uses the most recent comparable public data available, so endpoint years vary across measures. Preliminary or early-release values are identified where applicable. Reporting transitions, incomplete jurisdictional coverage, missing or noncomparable observations, and other measure-specific limitations are noted with the relevant data and discussed more fully in the Methodology & Limitations section.

Data Limitations Statement: EPIC makes every reasonable effort to ensure the accuracy of the data and information presented in its research. Reports reflect the best available information at the time of analysis and publication. Source data may contain errors or omissions and may be revised, updated, or supplemented after publication. If material errors or updated information are identified, EPIC will review the information and revise its analysis as appropriate.

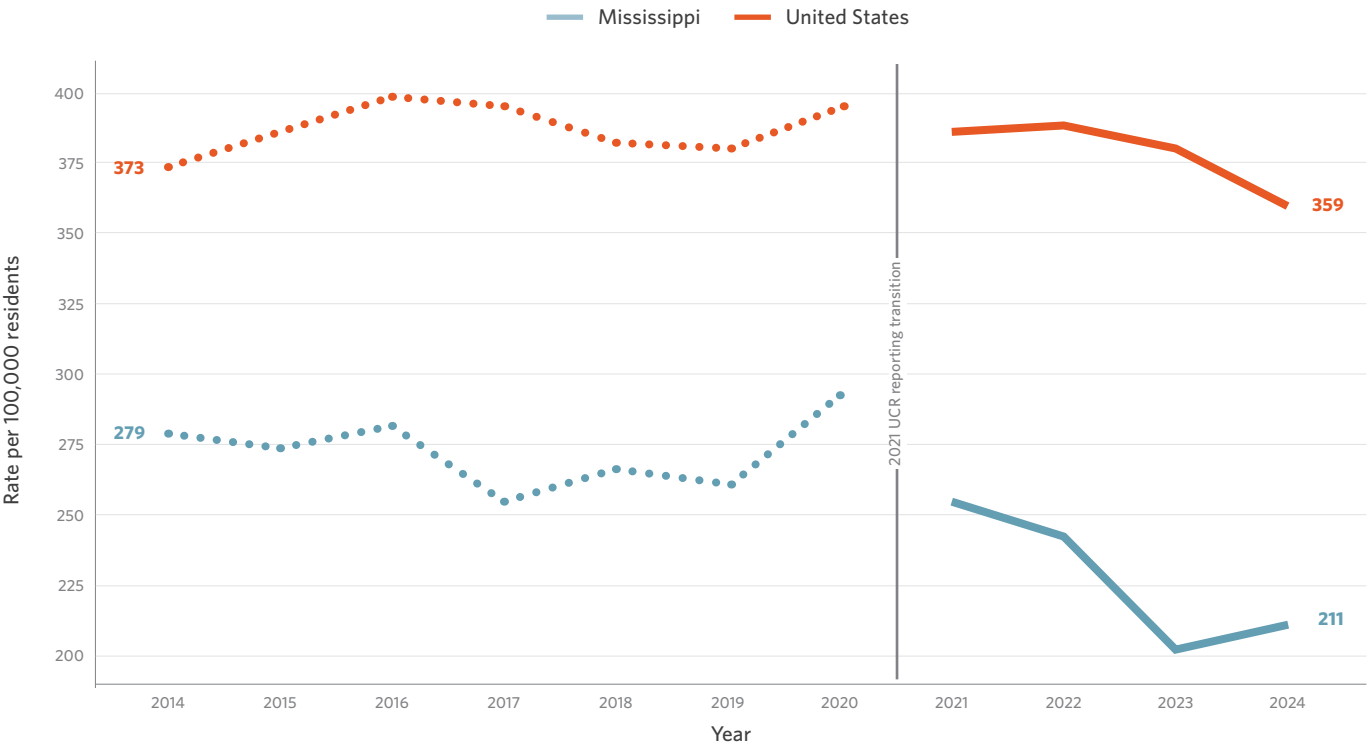
ACRONYMS

The following acronyms and abbreviations are used throughout this report.

ACRONYM	MEANING
CDC	U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDE	Crime Data Explorer
CHINS	Child in Need of Supervision
CP	Core Public Safety Indicator
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
DYS	Division of Youth Services (MDHS)
EPIC	Empower Policy and Innovation Center
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FY	Fiscal Year
MDOC	Mississippi Department of Corrections
MDHS	Mississippi Department of Human Services
MSFL	Mississippi Forensics Laboratory (commonly referred to as the State Crime Lab)
MYCIDS	Mississippi Youth Court Information Delivery System
NCHS	National Center for Health Statistics
NIBRS	National Incident-Based Reporting System
OJJDP	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (U.S. Department of Justice)
RRP	Recidivism Reduction Program
SRS	Summary Reporting System
UCR	Uniform Crime Reporting
WISQARS	Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System

CRIME IN MISSISSIPPI · VIOLENT CRIME

CP-1. Reported violent crime rate, Mississippi vs. United States, 2014–2024



What this measure shows: The reported violent crime rate counts violent offenses reported to law enforcement for every 100,000 residents. It generally includes murder or non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

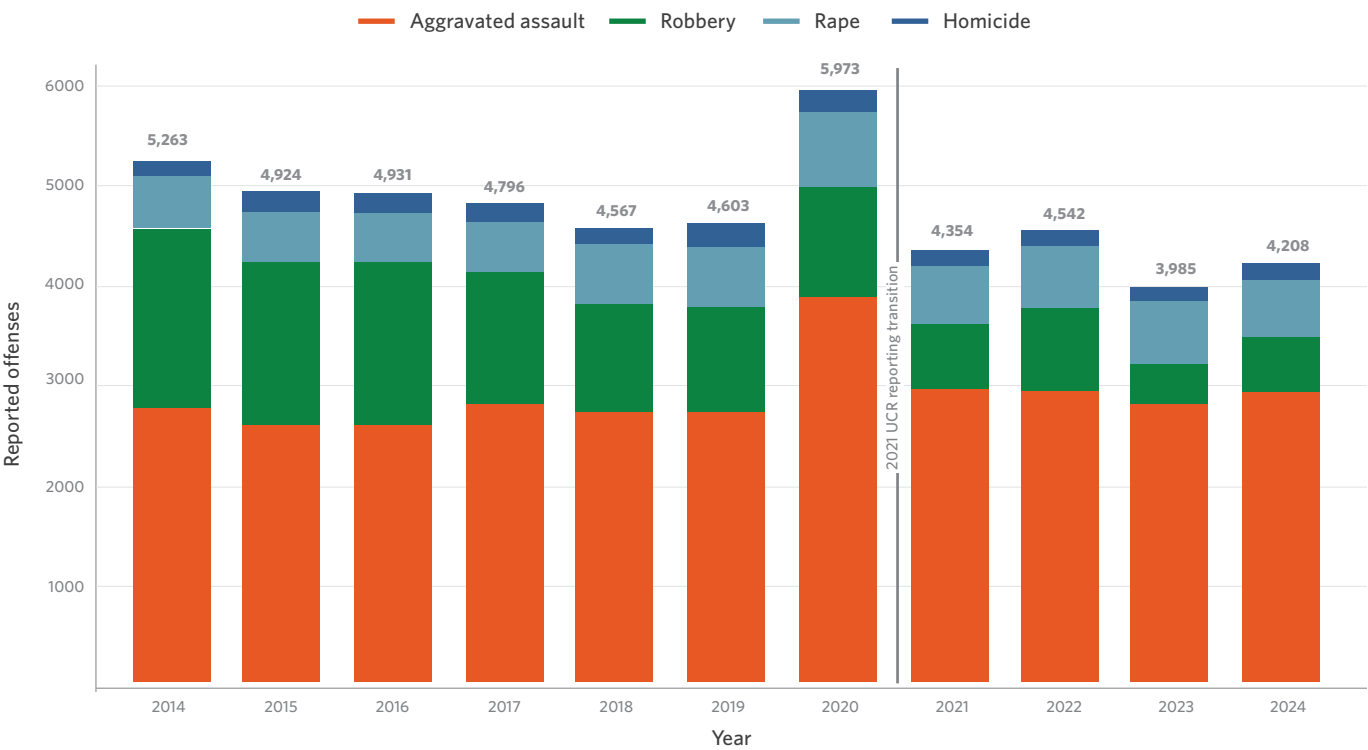
Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program / Crime Data Explorer; USAFacts FBI-based crime-rate tables, 2014–2024. Rates per 100,000 residents. Data retrieved August 2026.

YEAR	MS VIOLENT CRIME RATE	U.S. VIOLENT CRIME RATE
2014	279	373
2015	274	385
2016	281	398
2017	256	395
2018	266	383
2019	261	381
2020	292	396
2021 UCR reporting transition		
2021	256	387
2022	244	388
2023	202	380
2024	211	359

Comparability: The 2021 transition row marks the UCR reporting transition; values across the transition should be compared cautiously.

Source: FBI UCR/CDE and USAFacts FBI-based crime-rate tables, 2014–2024. Rates per 100,000 residents. Data retrieved August 2026.

CP-2. Reported violent offenses by type, Mississippi, 2014-2024



What this measure shows: This figure shows reported violent offenses in Mississippi by offense type. Categories include homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Counts reflect offenses reported to the FBI and are not adjusted for population.

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reporting Program / Crime Data Explorer, Mississippi reported offense counts, 2014-2024. Data retrieved August 2026.

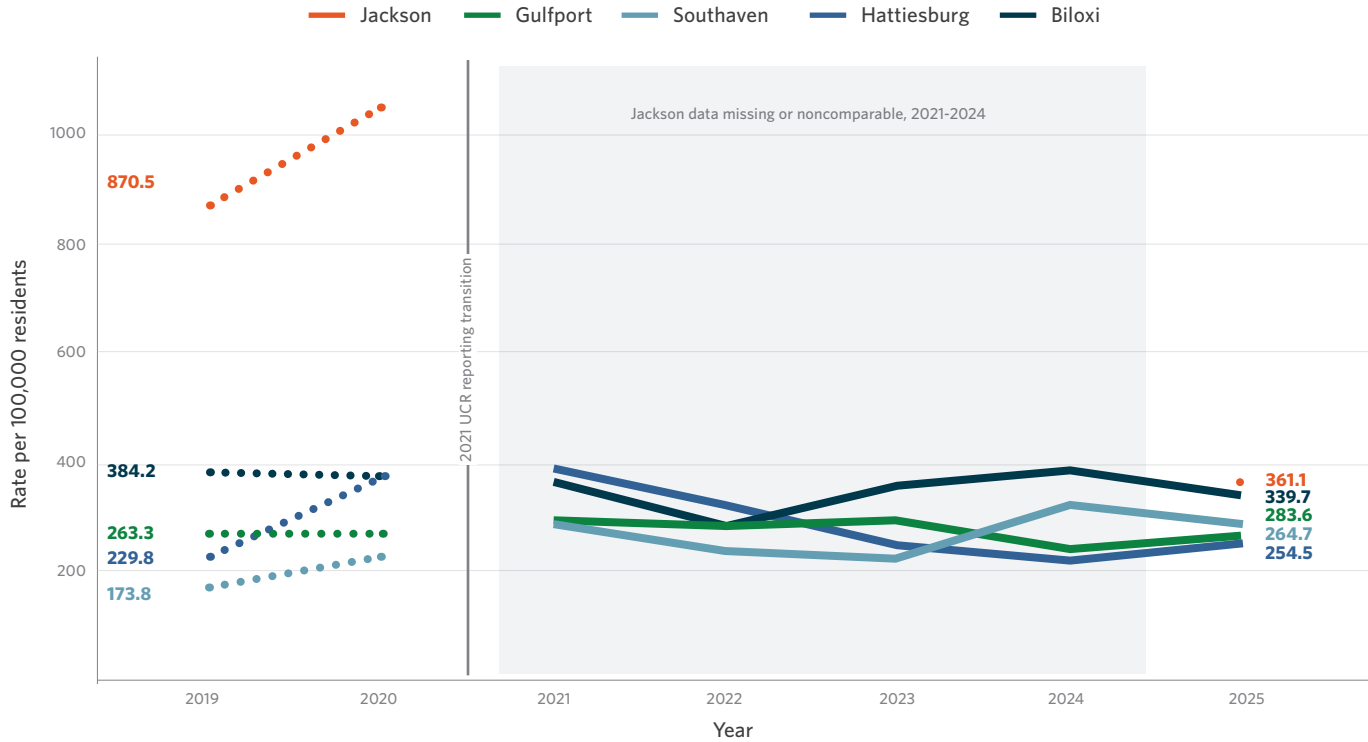
Year	Aggravated assault	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Total violent offenses
2014	2,792	174	528	1,769	5,263
2015	2,584	161	530	1,649	4,924
2016	2,584	157	530	1,660	4,931
2017	2,809	158	497	1,332	4,796
2018	2,733	150	595	1,089	4,567
2019	2,725	194	595	1,089	4,603
2020	3,879	260	717	1,117	5,973
2021 UCR reporting transition					
2021	2,969	160	723	502	4,354
2022	3,281	145	640	476	4,542
2023	2,796	138	632	419	3,985
2024	3,115	125	594	374	4,208

Comparability: The 2021 transition row marks the UCR reporting transition; changes in agency participation, coverage, and methodology may affect comparisons across the transition.

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reporting Program / Crime Data Explorer, Mississippi reported offense counts, 2014-2024. Data retrieved August 2026.

CRIME IN MISSISSIPPI · VIOLENT CRIME

CP-3. Selected Mississippi city violent crime rates, 2019–2025



What this measure shows: City violent crime rates measure reported violent offenses for every 100,000 residents in selected Mississippi cities. The figure shows how rates changed over time while keeping Jackson's missing or noncomparable years visually distinct.

Plain-language definition: The five cities shown are Mississippi's five most populous cities based on the 2020 U.S. Census: Jackson, Gulfport, Southaven, Biloxi, and Hattiesburg.

Data note – Gulfport: Gulfport officials advised EPIC that the FBI Crime Data Explorer figures attributed to the city do not accurately reflect local records. For Gulfport, CP-3 therefore uses corrected annual violent-crime totals from Gulfport Police Department records. Rates are calculated using the same 2020 Census population denominator used for the Gulfport series throughout the report.

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program / Crime Data Explorer for Jackson, Southaven, Hattiesburg, and Biloxi, 2019–2025; corrected Gulfport Police Department local offense records for Gulfport, 2019–2025; U.S. Census Bureau 2020 Census / QuickFacts population counts used as denominators. Corrected Gulfport local data provided to EPIC in September 2026; other city data verified August 2026.

CITY	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Jackson	870.5	1,050.1	*	*	*	*	361.1
Gulfport	263.3	275.6	296.2	283.8	296.2	238.6	264.7
Southaven	173.8	226.9	292.8	236.1	225.1	323.9	283.6
Hattiesburg	229.8	375.5	394.0	326.3	252.4	219.6	254.5
Biloxi	384.2	376.1	366.0	287.2 [†]	353.9	382.2	339.7

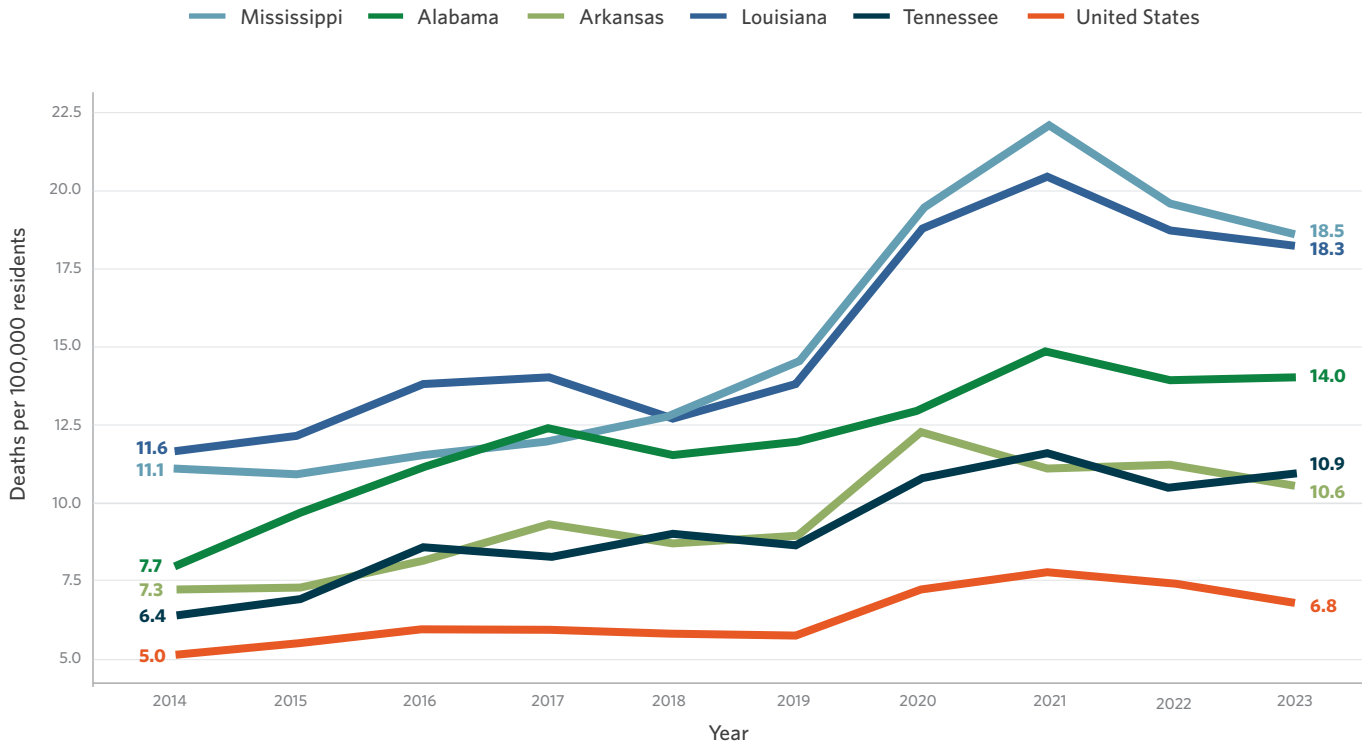
Comparability: The 2021 UCR transition applies to the FBI-based city series; values across the transition should be compared cautiously.

Data note: Gulfport uses corrected local police records because city officials reported discrepancies with FBI CDE data. Gulfport rates are calculated from corrected annual violent-crime totals using the 2020 Census population of 72,926. Jackson data are missing or noncomparable for 2021–2024; Biloxi April 2022 data are missing; 2025 FBI values are early-release and may be revised.

Source: FBI UCR/CDE for Jackson, Southaven, Hattiesburg, and Biloxi; corrected Gulfport Police Department records for Gulfport; 2020 Census/QuickFacts population denominators.

CRIME IN MISSISSIPPI • HOMICIDE

CP-4. Homicide mortality rates, Mississippi vs. regional and national comparators, 2014–2023



What this measure shows: Homicide mortality counts deaths classified as homicide/assault in death-certificate data for every 100,000 residents. It is a mortality measure rather than a police-reported crime measure.

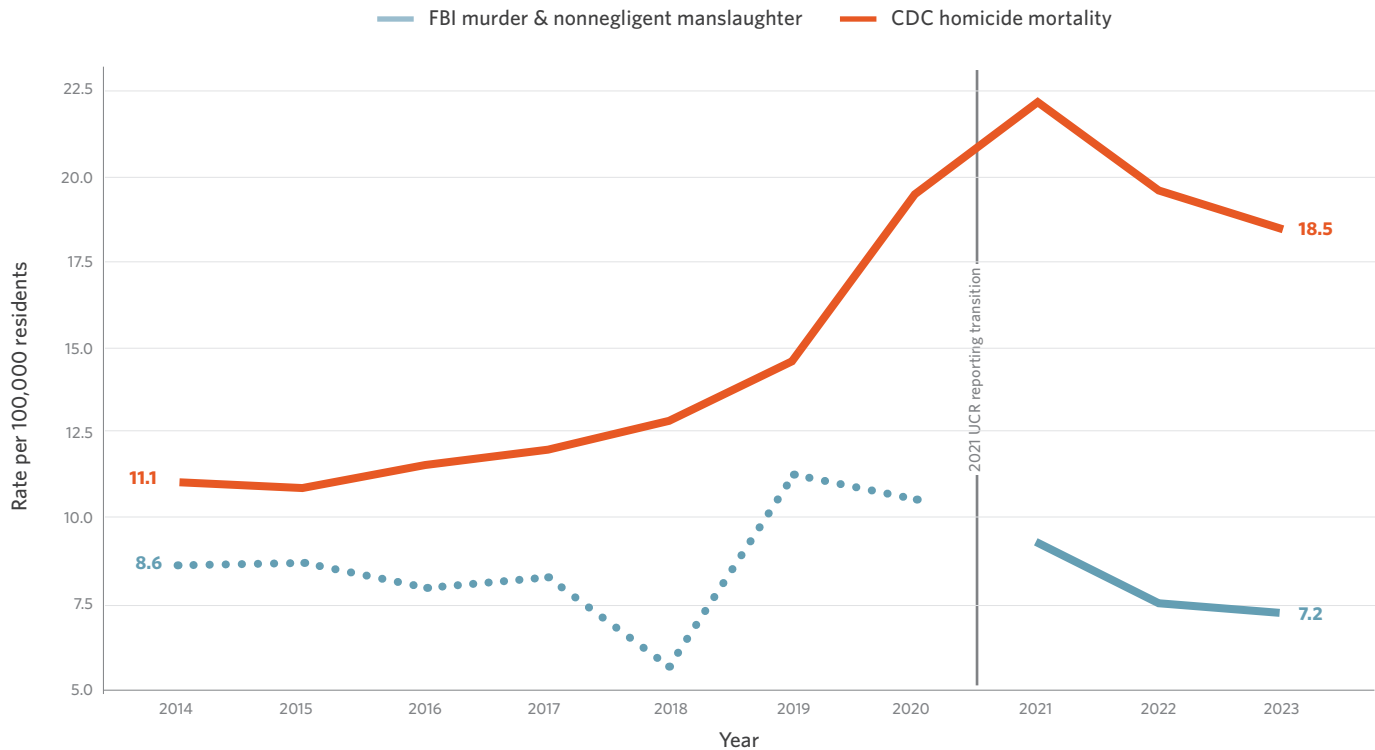
Source: CDC WISQARS Fatal Injury Reports; National Center for Health Statistics / National Vital Statistics System mortality data, homicide/assault deaths, 2014–2023.

YEAR	MS	AL	AR	LA	TN	U.S.
2014	11.1	7.7	7.3	11.6	6.4	5.0
2015	10.9	9.7	7.3	12.2	7.0	5.5
2016	11.5	11.2	8.3	13.9	8.5	6.0
2017	12.0	12.4	9.3	14.0	8.3	6.0
2018	12.8	11.6	8.8	12.8	8.9	5.8
2019	14.6	12.0	8.9	13.9	8.7	5.8
2020	19.5	13.0	12.3	18.8	10.9	7.4
2021	22.2	14.8	11.1	20.4	11.6	7.8
2022	19.6	13.9	11.3	18.8	10.5	7.5
2023	18.5	14.0	10.6	18.3	10.9	6.8

Source: CDC WISQARS Fatal Injury Reports, National Center for Health Statistics / National Vital Statistics System mortality data, homicide/assault deaths, 2014–2023. Rates are deaths per 100,000 residents.

CRIME IN MISSISSIPPI · HOMICIDE

CP-5. Police-reported homicide and homicide mortality rates, Mississippi, 2014–2023



What this measure shows: This figure compares two Mississippi homicide measures expressed as rates per 100,000 residents: the FBI murder and nonnegligent manslaughter rate and the CDC homicide/assault mortality rate. They measure related but different events.

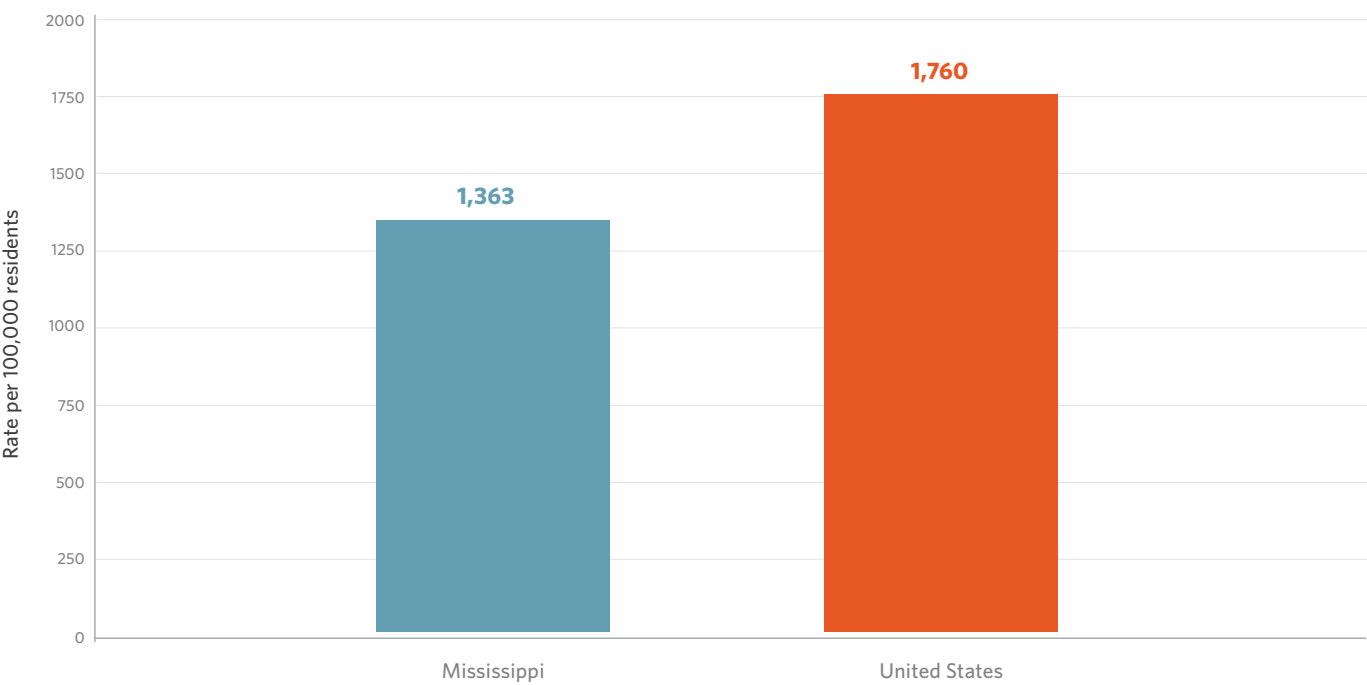
Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program annual state tables/releases, 2014–2023; CDC WISQARS / NCHS / NVSS homicide/assault mortality, 2014–2023. FBI values verified against Crime Data Explorer data in August 2026.

YEAR	FBI MURDER & NONNEGLIGENT MANSLAUGHTER RATE	CDC HOMICIDE MORTALITY RATE
2014	8.6	11.1
2015	8.7	10.9
2016	8.0	11.5
2017	8.2	12.0
2018	5.7	12.8
2019	11.2	14.6
2020	10.6	19.5
	2021 UCR reporting transition	
2021	9.3	22.2
2022	7.6	19.6
2023	7.2	18.5

Comparability: The 2021 UCR reporting transition applies only to the FBI series. The CDC series is a death-certificate mortality measure and is not affected by the UCR transition. The two measures are related but not interchangeable.

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program annual state tables/releases, 2014–2023; CDC WISQARS / NCHS / NVSS homicide/assault mortality, 2014–2023.

CP-6. Reported property crime rate, Mississippi vs. United States, 2024



What this measure shows: This figure compares the reported property crime rate in Mississippi with the U.S. rate for 2024. The FBI property crime measure includes burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.

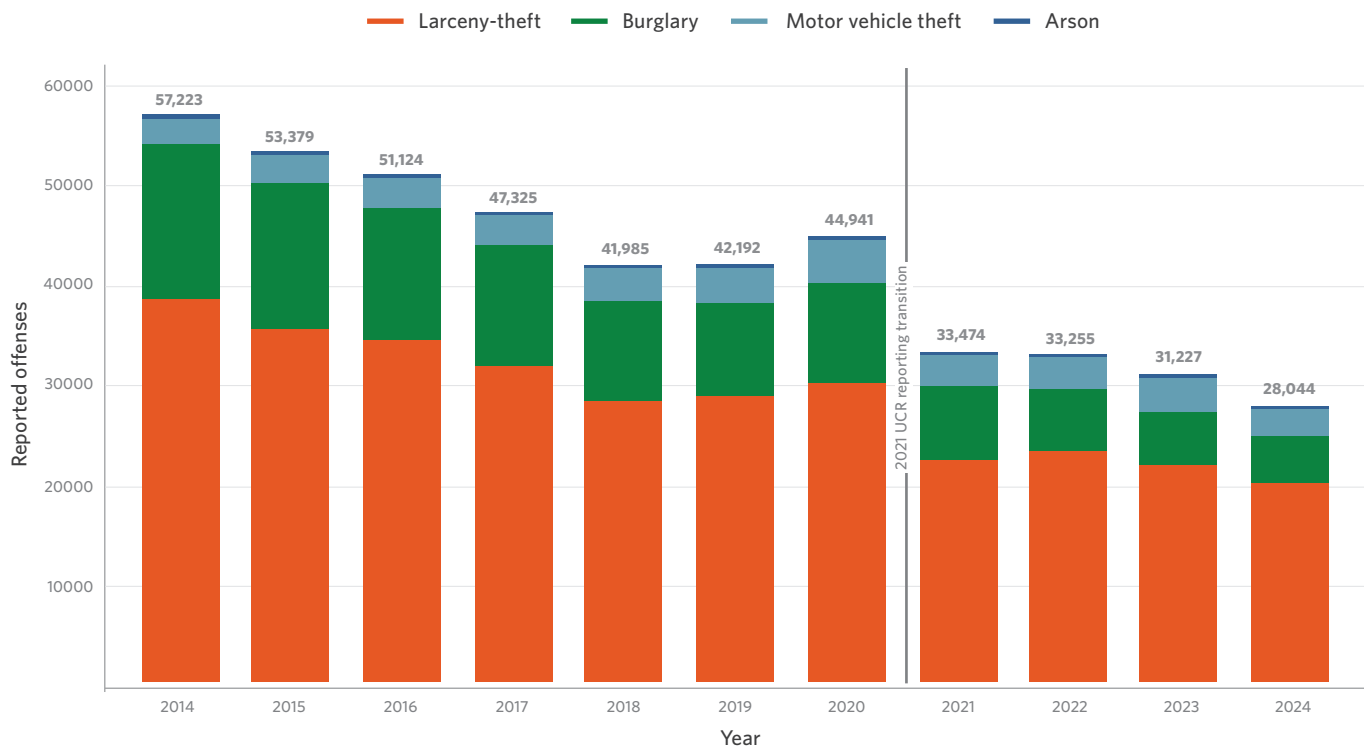
Source: USAFacts FBI-based crime-rate tables, using Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reporting Program data, 2024. Rates are reported offenses per 100,000 residents. Data retrieved August 2026.

MEASURE	MISSISSIPPI	U.S.
Property crime rate	1,363	1,760

Source: USAFacts FBI-based crime-rate tables, using Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reporting Program data, 2024. Rates are reported offenses per 100,000 residents. Data retrieved August 2026.

CRIME IN MISSISSIPPI · PROPERTY CRIME

CP-7. Reported property-related offenses by type, Mississippi, 2014-2024



What this measure shows: This figure shows reported property-related offenses in Mississippi by offense type. Categories include burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. Counts are not adjusted for population.

Plain-language definition: Burglary generally involves unlawful entry into a structure to commit a felony or theft. Larceny-theft generally involves taking property from another person's possession; motor vehicle theft is a separate category.

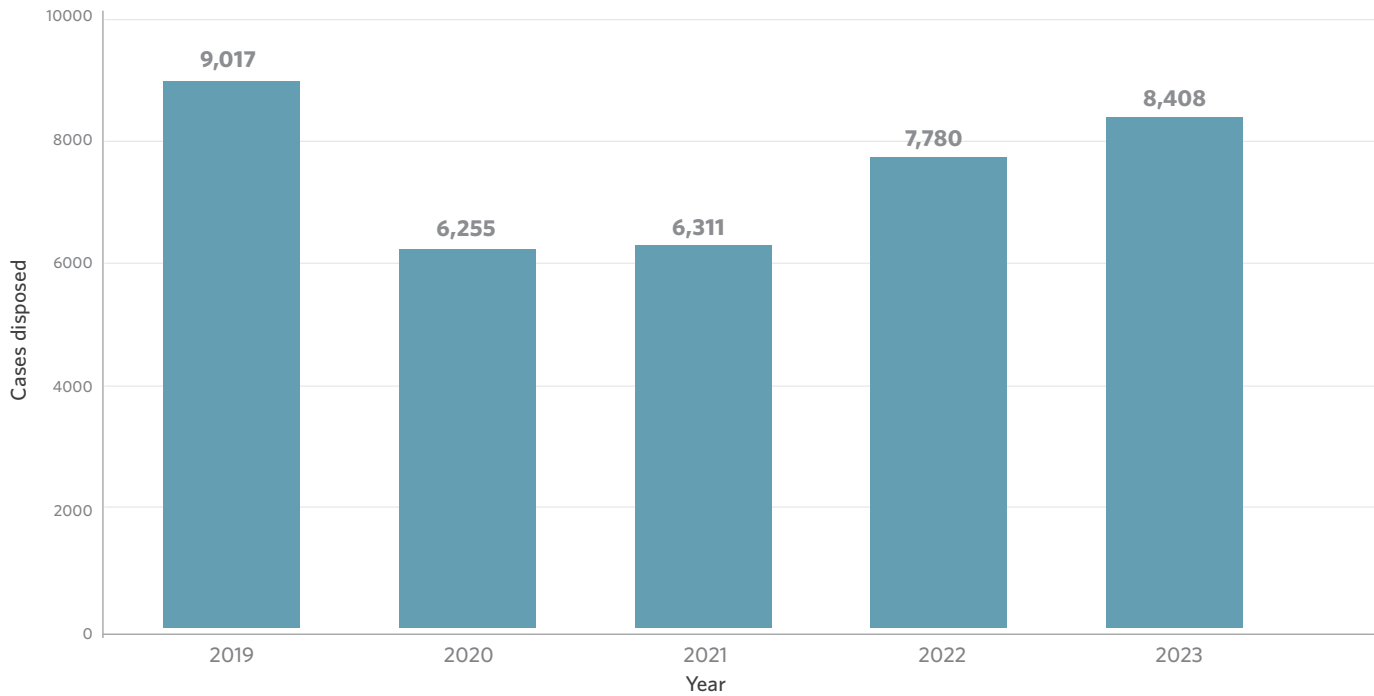
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reporting Program / Crime Data Explorer, Mississippi reported offense counts for burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson, 2014-2024. Data retrieved August 2026.

Year	Arson	Burglary	Larceny-theft	Motor vehicle theft	FBI-style property total*	Property-related total incl. arson
2014	499	14,889	38,671	3,164	56,724	57,223
2015	269	14,335	35,734	3,041	53,110	53,379
2016	327	13,181	34,670	2,946	50,797	51,124
2017	215	12,052	32,095	2,963	47,110	47,325
2018	202	9,872	28,576	3,335	41,783	41,985
2019	219	9,174	29,154	3,645	41,973	42,192
2020	280	9,939	30,310	4,412	44,661	44,941
2021 UCR reporting transition						
2021	193	7,028	22,866	3,387	33,281	33,474
2022	192	6,204	23,578	3,281	33,063	33,255
2023	175	5,467	22,114	3,471	31,052	31,227
2024	172	4,574	20,486	2,812	27,872	28,044

Data note: The FBI-style property total is burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft; arson is shown separately and only in the broader property-related total.

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program / Crime Data Explorer, Mississippi reported offense counts, 2014-2024. Data retrieved August 2026.

CP-8. Youth court delinquency case counts, Mississippi, 2019–2023



What this measure shows: This measure counts delinquency cases disposed by Mississippi youth courts in reporting counties. A case represents a youth processed on a new referral and is not a count of individual offenses or an unduplicated count of youth.

Plain-language definition: A delinquent act is conduct by a youth that would be criminal if committed by an adult. Petitioned cases are formally handled after a petition is filed; nonpetitioned cases are handled informally at intake.

Source: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Easy Access to State and County Juvenile Court Case Counts, Mississippi, 2019–2023. Data and coverage documentation verified August 2026.

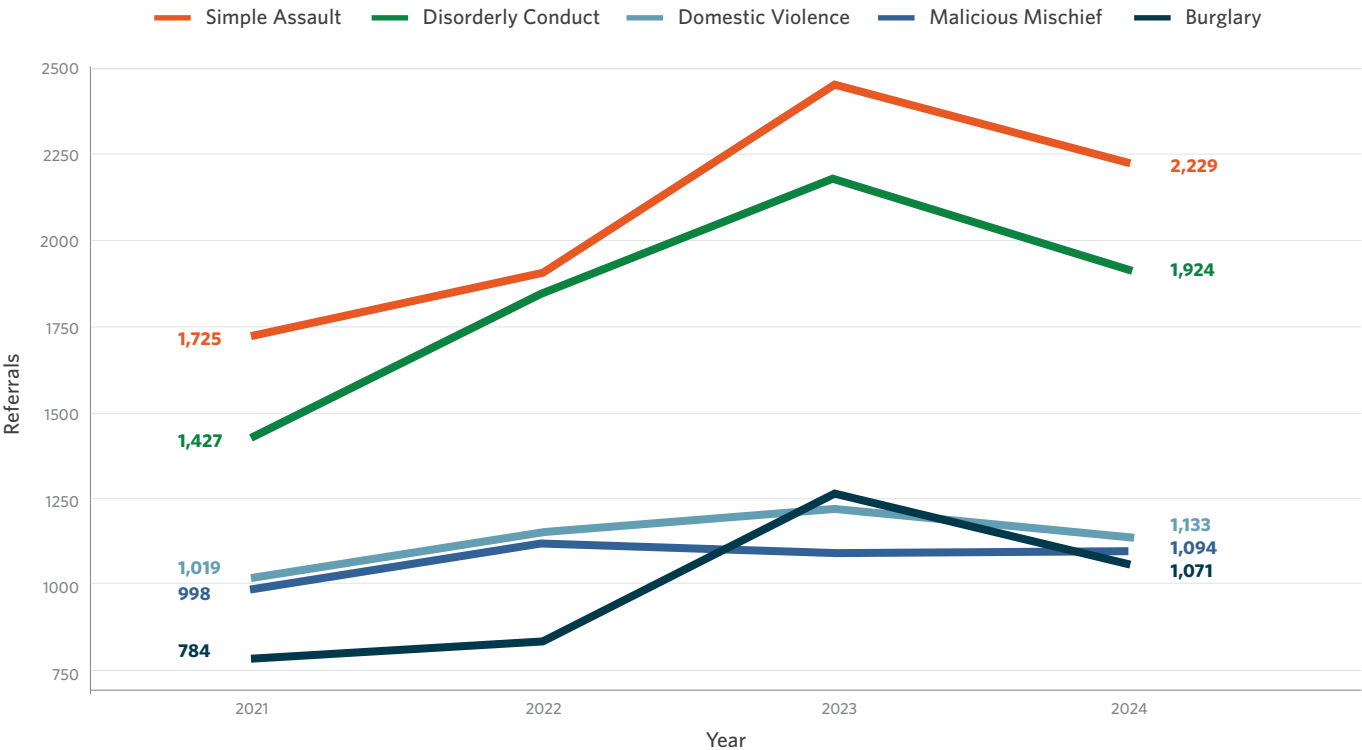
YEAR	DELINQUENCY PETITION	DELINQUENCY NON-PETITION	TOTAL DELINQUENCY CASES	REPORTING COUNTIES	POPULATION AGES 10-17 IN REPORTING COUNTIES
2019	4,901	4,116	9,017	79 of 82	324,300
2020	3,498	2,757	6,255	79 of 82	322,400
2021	3,657	2,654	6,311	79 of 82	322,400
2022	4,565	3,215	7,780	79 of 82	321,000
2023	5,031	3,377	8,408	79 of 82	321,500

Population note: OJJDP uses the population ages 10 through the upper age of original juvenile court jurisdiction as the population base for delinquency measures. For Mississippi, this corresponds to ages 10–17. The population values shown therefore represent youth ages 10–17 in the 79 reporting counties, not the state’s total youth population.

Data note: Each year reflects 79 of Mississippi’s 82 counties in the OJJDP case-count series. A delinquency case represents a youth processed on a new referral and is not an unduplicated youth count.

Source: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Easy Access to State and County Juvenile Court Case Counts, Mississippi, 2019–2023. Data and coverage documentation verified August 2026.

CP-9. Youth court referrals by selected DYS offense category, Mississippi, 2021-2024



What this measure shows: This figure tracks five offense categories reported consistently in statewide DYS/MYCIDS annual tables from 2021 through 2024. Counts are referrals rather than an unduplicated count of individual youth.

Plain-language definition: A referral begins when an agency or individual submits a complaint or petition to youth-court intake. The same youth may be represented more than once if referred more than once.

Source: Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Services Annual Reports, statewide MYCIDS offense tables, 2021-2024. Data verified August 2026.

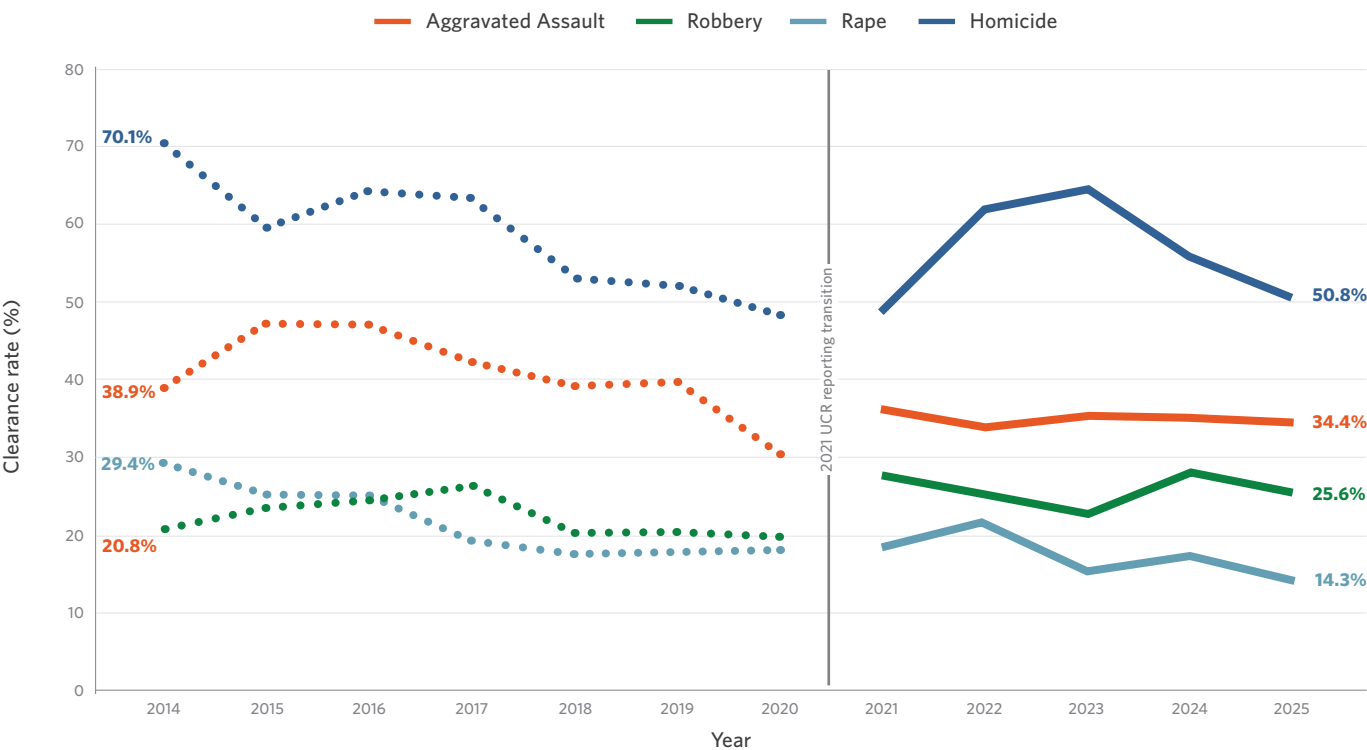
SELECTED DYS OFFENSE CATEGORY	2021	2022	2023	2024
Simple Assault	1,725	1,905	2,467	2,229
Disorderly Conduct	1,427	1,857	2,187	1,924
Domestic Violence	1,019	1,147	1,231	1,133
Malicious Mischief	998	1,128	1,090	1,094
Burglary	784	840	1,250	1,071
Total referrals (all categories)	12,275	13,893	16,151	14,722

Population note: Counts are referrals rather than an unduplicated count of individual youth. The total-referrals row includes all categories; CHINS (Child in Need of Supervision)/Run Away is not included among the five selected offense categories, because those are not delinquent acts. A delinquent act is one committed by a youth that would be criminal if committed by an adult.

Source: Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Services Annual Reports, statewide MYCIDS offense tables, 2021-2024. Data verified August 2026.

CLEARANCE

CP-10. Mississippi clearance rates by violent offense type, 2014-2025



What this measure shows: Clearance rates show the percentage of reported violent offenses that law enforcement reports as cleared by arrest or by exceptional means. The figure separates homicide, aggravated assault, robbery, and rape.

Plain-language definition: An exceptional clearance requires an identified offender, sufficient evidence, a known location, and a circumstance outside law enforcement’s control that prevents arrest, charging, or prosecution. Examples include the offender’s death, a victim’s refusal to cooperate after the offender has been identified, or denial of extradition.

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program / Crime Data Explorer, Mississippi violent-offense and clearance data, 2014–2025. Rates equal clearances divided by reported offenses; 2025 is preliminary.

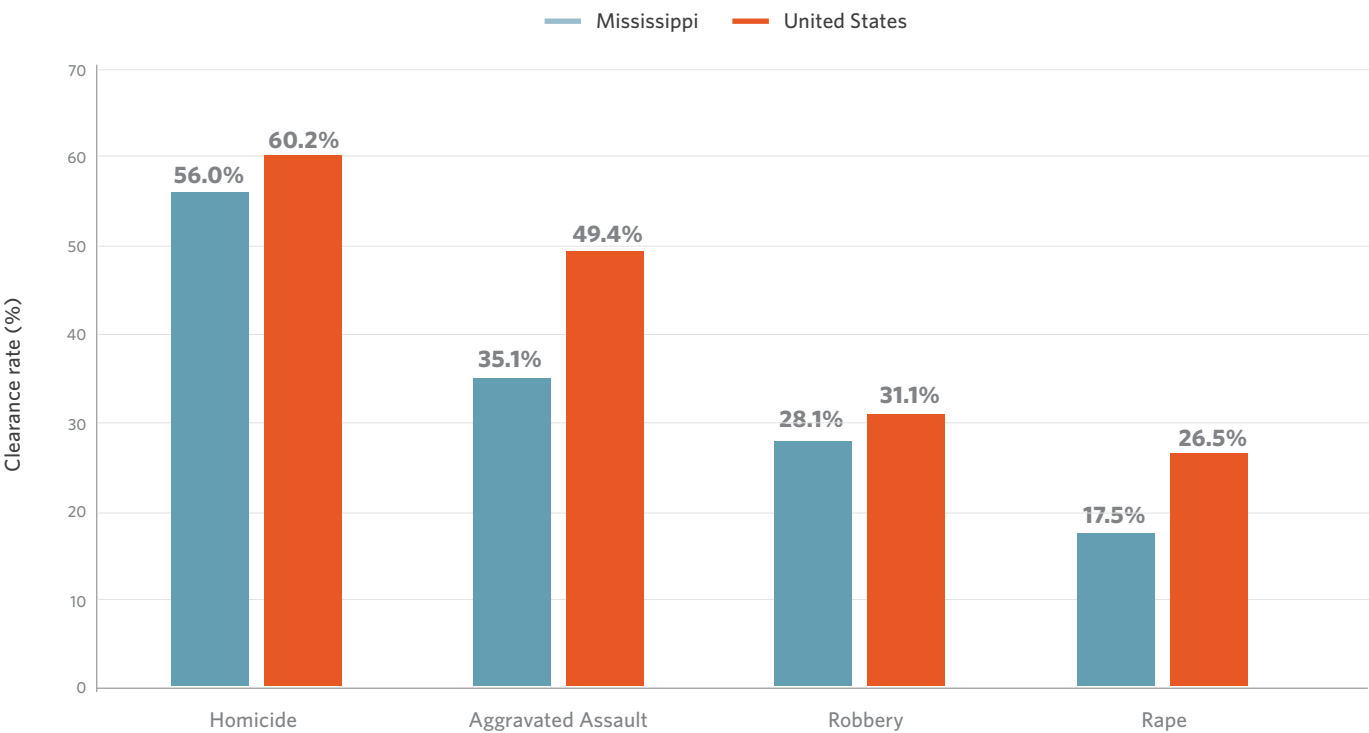
YEAR	HOMICIDE	AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	ROBBERY	RAPE
2014	70.1%	38.9%	20.8%	29.4%
2015	59.6%	47.3%	23.6%	25.3%
2016	64.3%	47.3%	24.9%	25.3%
2017	63.3%	42.5%	26.5%	19.5%
2018	53.3%	39.7%	20.6%	17.6%
2019	52.1%	40.0%	20.6%	17.7%
2020	48.5%	30.6%	19.9%	18.3%
2021 UCR reporting transition				
2021	48.8%	36.3%	27.9%	18.7%
2022	62.1%	34.1%	25.4%	21.9%
2023	64.5%	35.4%	22.9%	15.4%
2024	56.0%	35.1%	28.1%	17.5%
2025	50.8%	34.4%	25.6%	14.3%

Comparability: The 2021 transition row marks the UCR reporting transition; values across the transition should be compared cautiously.

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program / Crime Data Explorer, Mississippi violent-offense and clearance data, 2014–2025. Rates equal clearances divided by reported offenses; 2025 is preliminary.

CLEARANCE

CP-11. Mississippi vs. U.S. clearance rates by offense, 2024



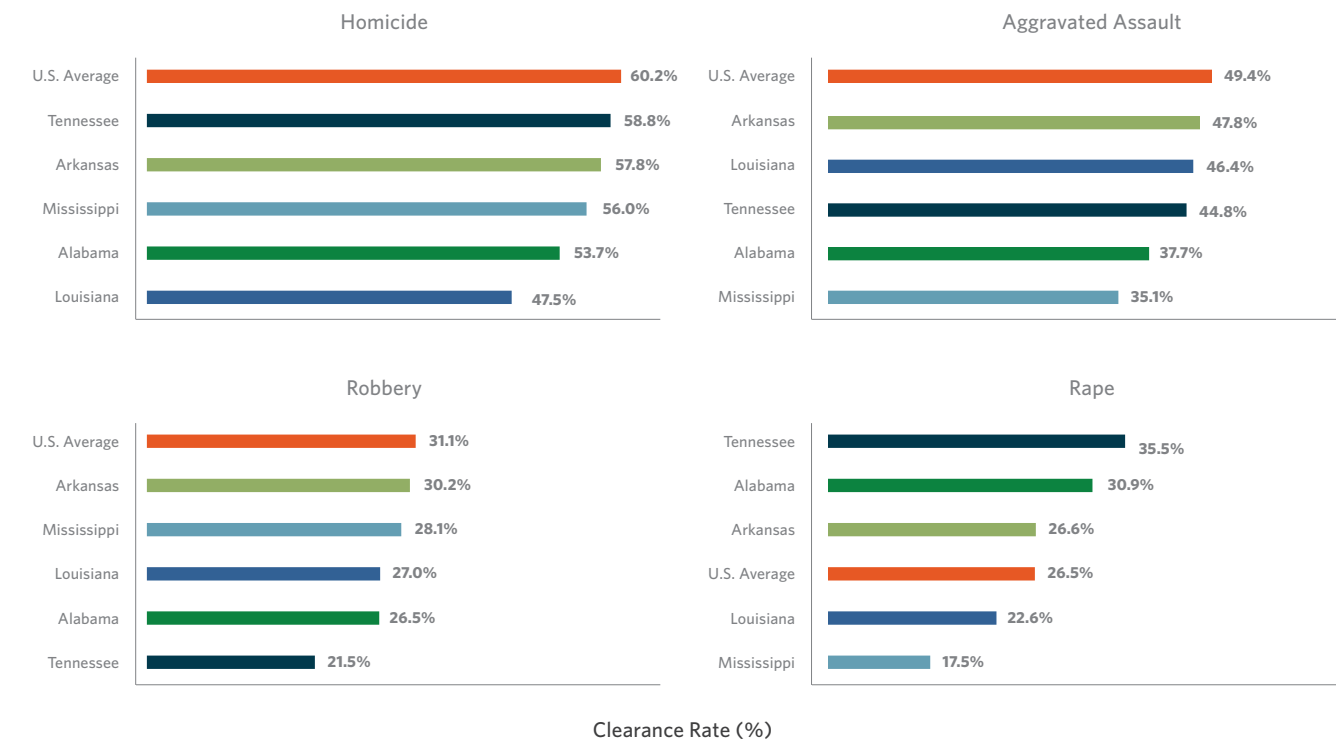
What this measure shows: Clearance rates show the share of reported violent offenses that law enforcement reports as cleared by arrest or exceptional means. This figure compares Mississippi with the U.S. average for the same violent-offense categories.

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program / Crime Data Explorer, Mississippi and U.S. violent-offense clearance rates, 2024. Data retrieved August 2026.

OFFENSE	MISSISSIPPI	U.S.
Homicide	56.0%	60.2%
Aggravated assault	35.1%	49.4%
Robbery	28.1%	31.1%
Rape	17.5%	26.5%

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program / Crime Data Explorer, Mississippi and U.S. violent-offense clearance rates, 2024. Data retrieved August 2026.

CP-12. Regional clearance-rate comparison by offense, 2024



What this measure shows: Clearance rates show the share of reported violent offenses that law enforcement reports as cleared by arrest or exceptional means. This figure compares Mississippi with nearby states and the U.S. average, separated by offense type.

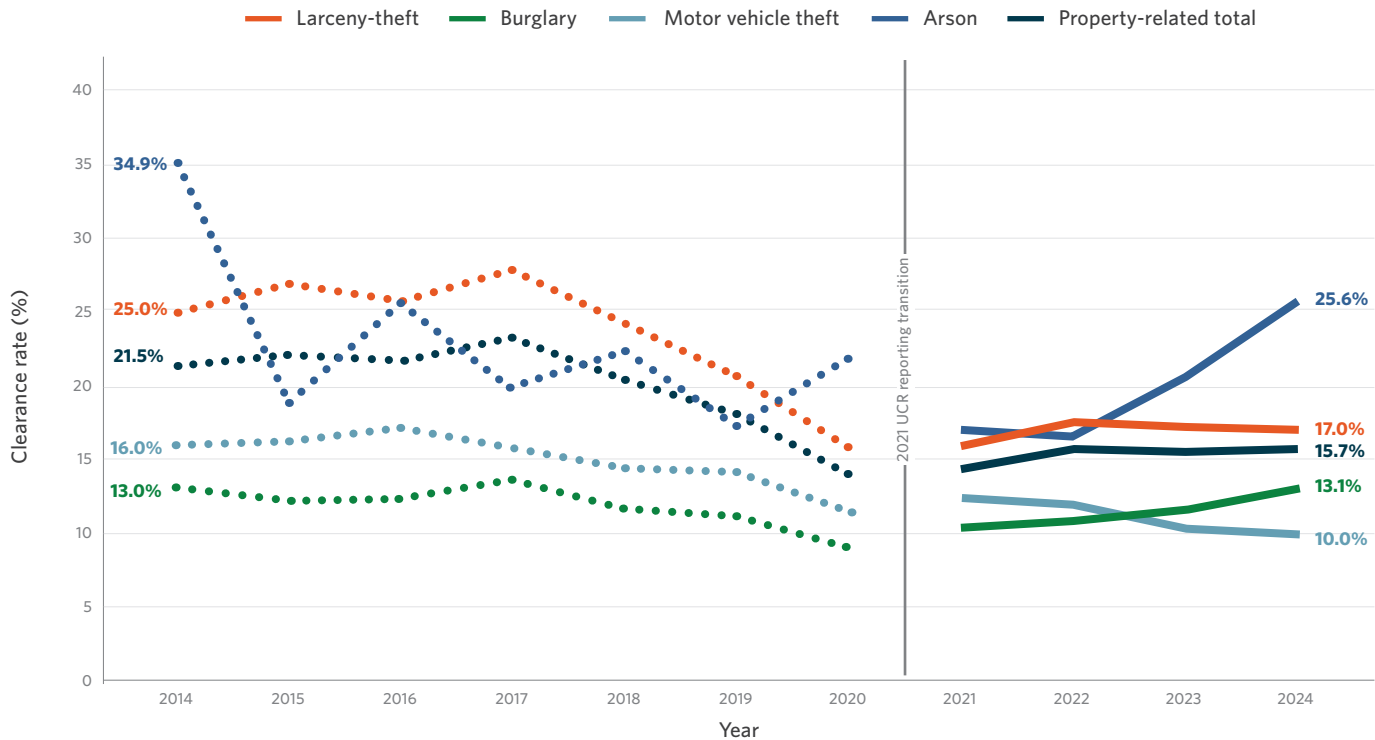
Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program / Crime Data Explorer, violent-offense clearance rates for Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and the United States, 2024. Data retrieved February 2026.

JURISDICTION	HOMICIDE	AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	ROBBERY	RAPE
Mississippi	56.0%	35.1%	28.1%	17.5%
Alabama	53.7%	37.7%	26.5%	30.9%
Arkansas	57.8%	47.8%	30.2%	26.6%
Louisiana	47.5%	46.4%	27.0%	22.6%
Tennessee	58.8%	44.8%	21.5%	35.5%
U.S. Average	60.2%	49.4%	31.1%	26.5%

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program / Crime Data Explorer, violent-offense clearance rates for Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and the United States, 2024. Data retrieved February 2026.

CLEARANCE

CP-13. Property-offense clearance rates by type, Mississippi, 2014-2024



What this measure shows: Clearance rates show the share of reported offenses that law enforcement reports as cleared by arrest or exceptional means. This figure separates property-related offense types and includes a combined property-related total.

Plain-language definition: The combined property-related total includes burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. It is not the FBI's official property crime total.

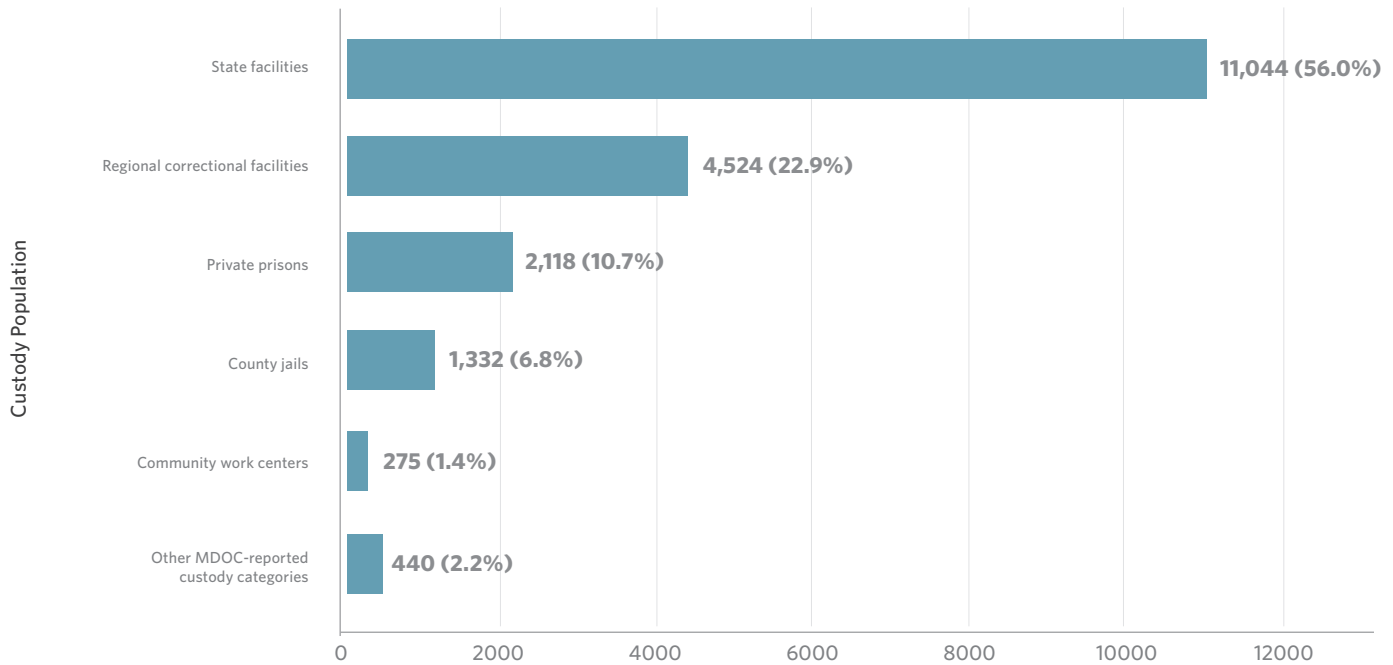
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reporting Program / Crime Data Explorer, Mississippi reported offense and clearance counts, 2014-2024. Data verified August 2026.

YEAR	ARSON	BURGLARY	LARCENY-THEFT	MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT	PROPERTY-RELATED TOTAL
2014	34.9%	13.0%	25.0%	16.0%	21.5%
2015	19.0%	12.2%	26.7%	16.4%	22.2%
2016	25.7%	12.4%	25.8%	17.1%	21.9%
2017	20.0%	13.5%	27.6%	15.7%	23.2%
2018	22.3%	11.9%	24.0%	14.5%	20.4%
2019	17.4%	11.2%	20.7%	14.4%	18.1%
2020	21.8%	9.4%	15.9%	11.6%	14.1%
2021 UCR reporting transition					
2021	17.1%	10.4%	15.9%	12.4%	14.4%
2022	16.7%	11.0%	17.5%	12.0%	15.7%
2023	20.6%	11.6%	17.3%	10.4%	15.6%
2024	25.6%	13.1%	17.0%	10.0%	15.7%

Data note: The combined property-related total includes burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson and is not the official FBI property crime total.

Source: FBI UCR/CDE, Mississippi reported offenses and clearances, 2014-2024. The combined property-related rate is calculated from summed clearances and summed reported offenses.

CP-14. MDOC custody population by reported location/status category, August 3, 2026



What this measure shows: This figure shows how MDOC's reported Custody Population was distributed across major facility/location groups and other MDOC-reported custody categories as of August 3, 2026. It is a point-in-time MDOC custody measure.

Plain-language definition: Local jail populations outside MDOC custody are not included.

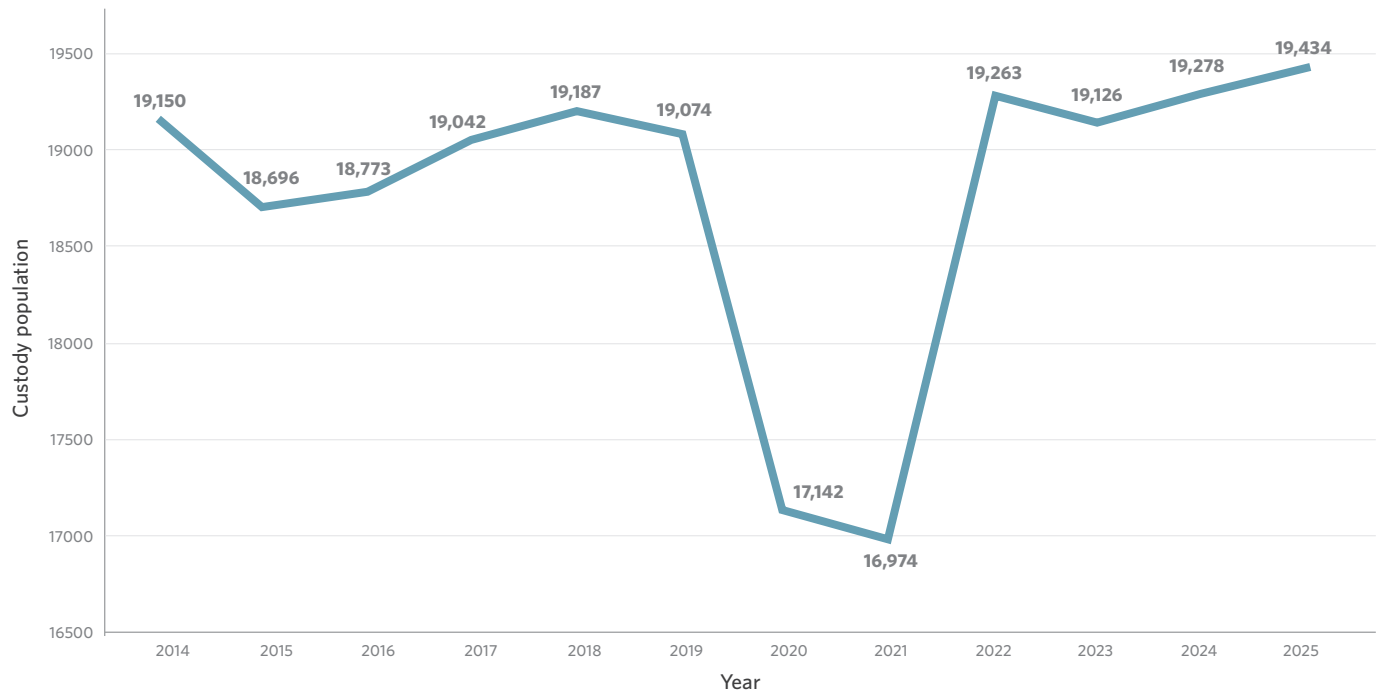
Source: Mississippi Department of Corrections, Monthly Fact Sheet, August 3, 2026. MDOC reported a Custody Population of 19,733. Data verified August 2026.

REPORTED LOCATION/STATUS CATEGORY	CUSTODY POPULATION	SHARE OF CUSTODY POPULATION
State facilities	11,044	56.0%
Regional correctional facilities	4,524	22.9%
Private prisons	2,118	10.7%
County jails	1,332	6.8%
Community work centers	275	1.4%
Other MDOC-reported custody categories	440	2.2%

Limitation: This is a point-in-time MDOC custody measure; local jail populations outside MDOC custody are not included.

Source: Mississippi Department of Corrections, Monthly Fact Sheet, August 3, 2026. The six categories sum to MDOC's reported Custody Population of 19,733. Data verified August 2026.

CP-15. MDOC custody population, December snapshots, 2014–2025



What this measure shows: MDOC custody population counts people held in Mississippi Department of Corrections custody at a point in time. This figure uses December monthly fact-sheet snapshots from 2014 through 2025.

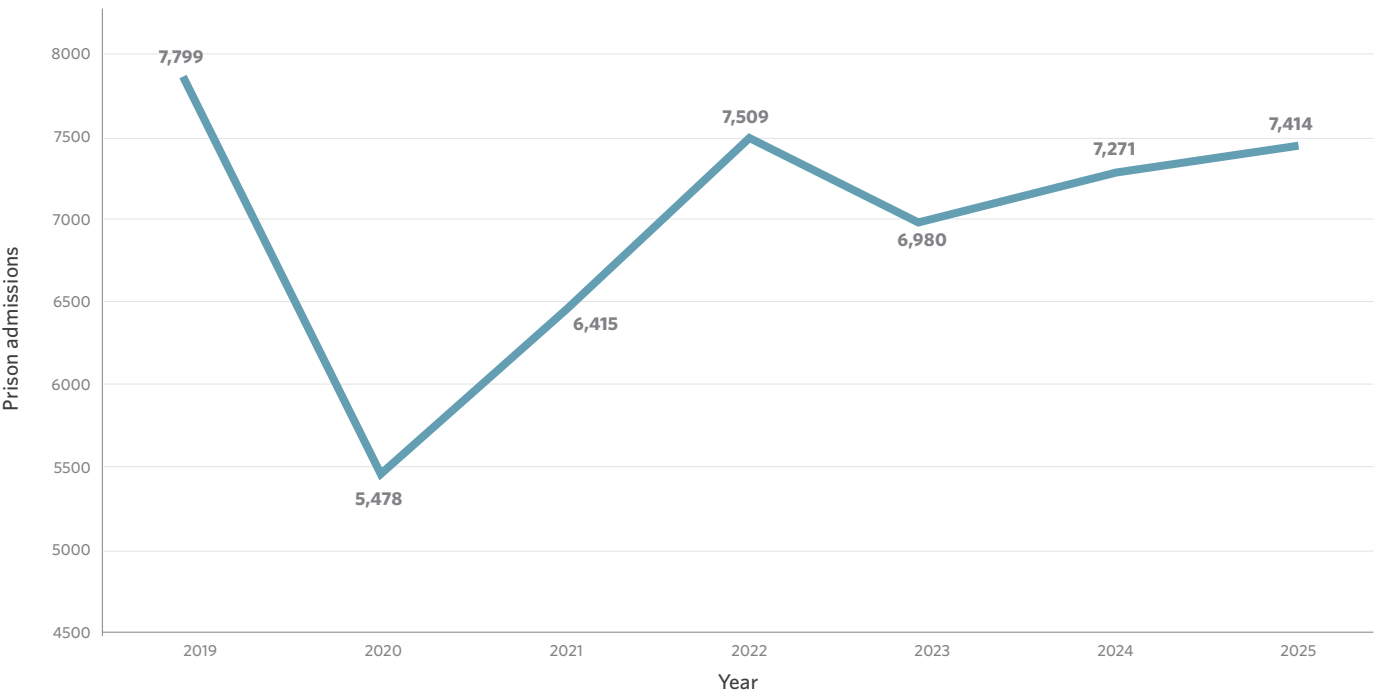
Source: Mississippi Department of Corrections Monthly Fact Sheets, December 2014 through December 2025. Values are point-in-time "Custody Population" snapshots. Data verified August 2026.

YEAR	SNAPSHOT DATE	MDOC CUSTODY POPULATION
2014	Dec. 1, 2014	19,150
2015	Dec. 1, 2015	18,696
2016	Dec. 1, 2016	18,773
2017	Dec. 4, 2017	19,042
2018	Dec. 1, 2018	19,187
2019	Dec. 2, 2019	19,074
2020	Dec. 1, 2020	17,142
2021	Dec. 15, 2021	16,974
2022	Dec. 1, 2022	19,263
2023	Dec. 1, 2023	19,126
2024	Dec. 2, 2024	19,278
2025	Dec. 1, 2025	19,434

Limitation: These snapshots do not fully measure statewide imprisonment because local jail populations outside MDOC custody are not included.

Source: Mississippi Department of Corrections Monthly Fact Sheets, December 2014 through December 2025. Values are point-in-time "Custody Population" snapshots and should not be read as annual averages.

CP-16. MDOC prison admissions, Mississippi, 2019-2025



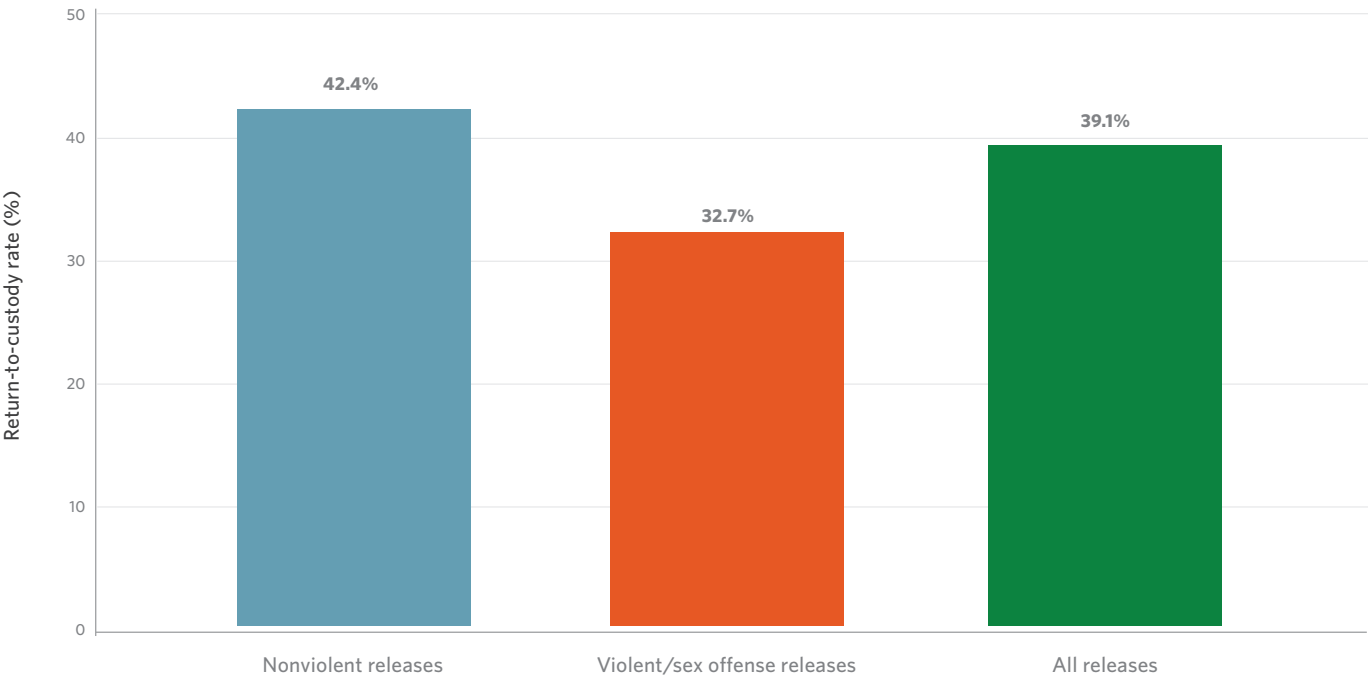
What this measure shows: Prison admissions count entries into MDOC custody during each year. Admissions are flow counts and should not be interpreted as net change in the custody population without comparable release data for the same period.

Source: Mississippi Corrections and Criminal Justice Oversight Task Force Final Reports, January 2023, January 2025, and January 2026. The 2022 value is the sum of quarterly admissions reported in the January 2025 report. Data verified August 2026.

YEAR	TOTAL PRISON ADMISSIONS	SOURCE
2019	7,799	January 2023 Task Force report
2020	5,478	January 2023 Task Force report
2021	6,415	January 2023 Task Force report
2022	7,509	Summed from quarterly admissions shown in January 2025 Task Force report
2023	6,980	January 2026 Task Force report
2024	7,271	January 2026 Task Force report
2025	7,414	January 2026 Task Force report

Data note: Admissions are flow counts into MDOC custody and should not be read as net custody population change unless paired with comparable release data for the same period.
Source: Mississippi Corrections and Criminal Justice Oversight Task Force Final Reports, January 2023, January 2025, and January 2026. The 2022 value is summed from quarterly admissions in the January 2025 report.

CP-17. MDOC 36-month return-to-custody rate, FY 2021 releases



What this measure shows: This measure shows the share of people released from MDOC custody in FY 2021 who returned to MDOC custody within 36 months. It is a return-to-custody measure rather than a measure of new-crime convictions.

Plain-language definition: The source labels this measure “36-Month Recidivism.” This report uses “return-to-custody” because returns may include new sentences, revocations, or other returns to custody.

Source: Mississippi Corrections and Criminal Justice Oversight Task Force Final Report, January 2025. Values reflect FY 2021 releases and returns to MDOC custody within 36 months.

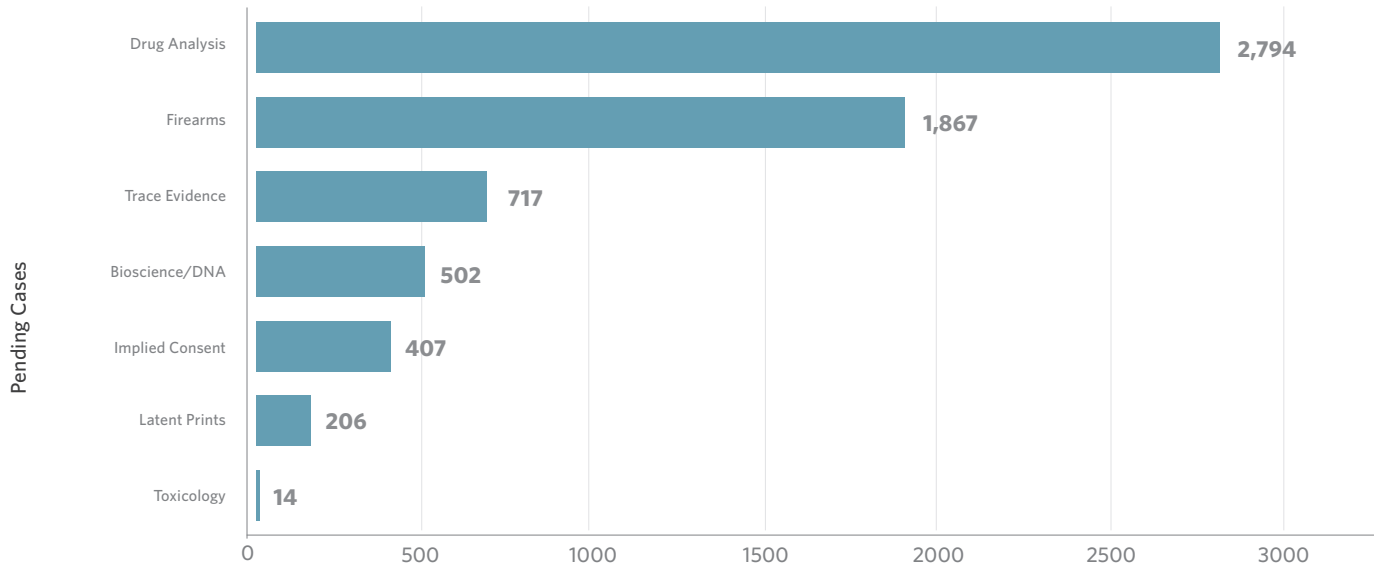
RELEASE GROUP	FY 2021 RELEASES	RETURNED TO CUSTODY WITHIN 36 MONTHS	RETURN-TO-CUSTODY RATE
Nonviolent releases	4,228	1,792	42.4%
Violent/sex offense releases	2,154	705	32.7%
All releases	6,382	2,497	39.1%

Terminology: The source labels this measure “36-Month Recidivism.” This report uses “return-to-custody” because returns may include new sentences, revocations, or other returns to custody and do not necessarily represent new-crime convictions.

Source: Mississippi Corrections and Criminal Justice Oversight Task Force Final Report, January 2025. Values reflect FY 2021 releases and returns to MDOC custody within 36 months.

FORENSIC CAPACITY

CP-18. Mississippi Forensics Laboratory backlog by discipline



What this measure shows: This measure shows pending Mississippi Forensics Laboratory cases by forensic discipline. "Backlog" refers to cases that had not yet been administratively reviewed and released to the submitting agency.

Source: Mississippi Forensics Laboratory, public records response to Empower Mississippi/EPIC, backlog by forensic discipline, March 2026.

DISCIPLINE	BACKLOGGED CASES	SHARE OF TOTAL BACKLOG
Drug Analysis	2,794	42.9%
Firearms	1,867	28.7%
Trace Evidence	717	11.0%
Bioscience/DNA	502	7.7%
Implied Consent	407	6.3%
Latent Prints	206	3.2%
Toxicology	14	0.2%
Total	6,507	100.0%

Data note: Backlog refers to cases that had not yet been administratively reviewed and released to the submitting agency as of March 9, 2026. Shares may not sum to exactly 100.0% because of rounding.

Source: Mississippi Forensics Laboratory, public records response to Empower Mississippi/EPIC, backlog by forensic discipline, March 2026.

DISCIPLINE	PRIOR-YEAR BACKLOG*	MARCH 9, 2026 BACKLOG	YOY CHANGE
Drug Analysis	8,703	2,794	-67.9%
Firearms	2,382	1,867	-21.6%
Trace Evidence	628	717	+14.2%
Bioscience/DNA	735	502	-31.7%
Implied Consent	321	407	+26.8%
Latent Prints	200	206	+3.0%
Toxicology	32	14	-56.3%
Total	13,001	6,507	-50.0%

Calculation note: Prior-year backlog counts are derived from the March 2026 backlog and source-reported year-over-year absolute changes. Year-over-year percentage change equals the difference between March 2026 and prior-year backlog divided by prior-year backlog.

Data note: Prior-year values are reconstructed comparison values rather than independently reported point-in-time counts.

Source: Mississippi Forensics Laboratory, public records response to Empower Mississippi/EPIC, March 2026 backlog by forensic discipline and source-reported year-over-year changes.



CONCLUSION

This report is intended to serve as the first in a series examining Mississippi's public-safety infrastructure and performance indicators. Certainly, Mississippi's justice system and public safety infrastructure cannot be reduced to these measures alone, but we believe the data presented here provide a solid starting point for understanding where Mississippi stands, identifying questions that deserve closer examination, and tracking progress over time.

The data show reasons for encouragement. Mississippi's reported violent and property crime rates have declined in recent years and remain below the national average. Police-reported homicide and homicide mortality have also fallen from their recent peaks. These trends represent meaningful progress and should inform any fair assessment of public safety in the state.

Yet substantial challenges remain. Mississippi's homicide mortality rate is still noticeably higher than it was a decade ago, is the highest among the regional comparators examined in this report, and far exceeds the national rate. Criminals are too often escaping accountability and justice. And individuals being released from prison are too often returning to it.

These outcomes do not necessarily reflect a lack of commitment from the professionals responsible for protecting Mississippi communities. Law enforcement agencies, forensic specialists, prosecutors, courts, corrections officials, treatment providers, and community organizations perform difficult work, often amid staffing shortages, heavy caseloads, limited resources, and fragmented information systems. The data instead point toward opportunities to strengthen the capacity and coordination of the entire public-safety system so that serious crimes are more consistently followed by swift and appropriate consequences.

Improvement begins with better information. Mississippi needs more complete, consistent, timely, and accessible data across the public-safety system. Better data can help state and local leaders understand workloads, identify resource and staffing needs, recognize effective practices, strengthen coordination, and direct limited resources where they can produce the greatest benefit. It can also provide the public with greater confidence that progress is being measured honestly and that challenges are being addressed constructively.

Mississippi can build safer communities by strengthening every part of the public-safety system, improving the information available to those who lead it, and increasing the certainty that serious crime will be met with appropriate consequences. Accountability must be accompanied by effective prevention, rehabilitation, treatment, and pathways to opportunity. Together, these efforts can produce fewer victims, stronger families, greater confidence in the justice system, and safer communities in every part of Mississippi.

METHODOLOGY & LIMITATIONS

This report uses the most recent comparable public data available to establish a baseline for Mississippi public-safety indicators. Different systems answer different questions, and endpoint years differ by source. The following limitations should be considered when interpreting the figures and supporting tables.

FBI crime reporting transition. The FBI transitioned from the Summary Reporting System (SRS) to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) in 2021. Changes in agency participation, coverage, and methodology may affect comparisons across the transition. For affected time series, 2014–2020 and 2021-forward segments are displayed separately and should not be read as a single uninterrupted series.

Police-reported crime vs. mortality. FBI murder/nonnegligent manslaughter measures and CDC homicide/assault mortality measures come from different systems, cover different events, and should not be expected to match exactly. Differences between them are not necessarily data discrepancies.

City-level rates. Selected-city rates use 2020 Census/QuickFacts population counts as denominators. For Gulfport, city officials advised EPIC that FBI Crime Data Explorer figures attributed to the city did not accurately reflect local records; CP-3 therefore uses corrected Gulfport Police Department annual violent-crime totals for 2019–2025, with rates calculated using the same 2020 Census population denominator of 72,926. Jackson data are missing or noncomparable for 2021–2024, and its 2025 value is shown as a standalone observation. Biloxi’s April 2022 data are missing in the FBI CDE violent-crime trend series, so the 2022 rate reflects incomplete annual data. The 2025 FBI city values are early-release data and may be revised.

Property measures. The FBI standard property-crime total includes burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft. Arson is reported separately. Where this report adds arson to those categories, the result is labeled “property-related,” not the official FBI property-crime total.

Youth-court coverage and units. The OJJDP delinquency-case series covers 79 of Mississippi’s 82 counties for 2019–2023. The population figures shown for this series represent youth ages 10–17 in the 79 reporting counties, not Mississippi’s total youth

population. OJJDP cautions that incomplete state figures reflect only reporting jurisdictions, and the public materials reviewed do not identify the three omitted counties. The 2024 DYS Annual Report separately states that probation and after-care services are provided in all 82 counties and presents county-level MYCIDS data for all 82 counties. The 79-of-82 issue is therefore treated as a limitation of the OJJDP series, not evidence that DYS/MYCIDS lacks statewide operational coverage.

Youth cases vs. referrals. OJJDP delinquency cases disposed and DYS/MYCIDS referrals use different units of analysis. A case represents a youth processed on a new referral; a referral begins when an agency or individual submits a complaint or petition to intake. Neither measure is an unduplicated count of individual youth, and the two series should not be combined into a single trend.

Clearance rates. A clearance most often reflects an arrest, but FBI rules also allow exceptional clearance when the offender is identified, sufficient evidence exists, the offender’s location is known, and a circumstance outside law enforcement’s control prevents arrest, charging, or prosecution. Examples include the offender’s death, a victim’s refusal to cooperate after the offender has been identified, or denial of extradition. Clearance therefore does not mean a conviction occurred.

Corrections populations. MDOC custody population figures are point-in-time snapshots of people included in MDOC custody. They do not represent the complete statewide prison-plus-jail population because local jail populations outside MDOC custody are excluded. “Approved” and “unapproved” county-jail labels are MDOC placement classifications, not EPIC judgments about facility quality or safety.

Admissions and returns to custody. Prison admissions are flow counts into MDOC custody and should not be interpreted as net population change without comparable release data. The FY 2021 36-month measure records returns to MDOC custody and does not necessarily represent a new criminal conviction; returns may include new sentences, revocations, or other returns to custody.

Forensic backlog. MSFL “backlog” refers to cases not yet administratively reviewed and released to the submitting agency. The prior-year discipline counts shown in the second table in CP-18 are derived from March 2026 backlog counts and source-reported year-over-year absolute changes rather than independently reported prior-year point-in-time counts. They should be interpreted as reconstructed comparison values.

Source timing. The report uses the most recent comparable public data available at the time of collection. Endpoint years therefore differ across FBI, CDC, youth court, corrections, and forensic measures. Preliminary or early-release values are labeled where applicable.

Use of the baseline. These limitations do not make the measures unusable. They define what each measure can and cannot establish and underscore the need for more complete, consistent, timely, and accessible public-safety data across Mississippi’s justice system.



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