Human Trafficking Data Collection Activities, 2021

The Combat Human Trafficking Act of 2015 (CHTA) (34 U.S.C. § 20709(e)) requires the director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) to prepare an annual report on human trafficking. The report must include information on the following:

■ arrests for human-trafficking offenses by state law enforcement officers

■ prosecutions of individuals in state courts for human-trafficking offenses

■ convictions of individuals in state courts for human-trafficking offenses

■ sentences imposed on individuals convicted in state courts for human-trafficking offenses.

BJS examined options to modify its existing data collections and implement new approaches to collect the data required by CHTA. In addition, BJS assessed the availability of data on human trafficking among criminal justice agencies at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels.

DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES DURING 2020 AND 2021

Victimization

The **National Survey of Victim Service Providers (NSVSP)**, conducted in 2019, was administered to a nationally representative sample of Victim Service Providers (VSPs). This inaugural effort gathered data from a broad array of VSPs, a relatively understudied source of information on victims of crime and the services available to assist them. Based on the practices and experiences of their organizations during the previous year, VSPs were asked to provide information on—

■ organizational resources required to provide services to crime victims

■ types of services provided to crime victims

■ characteristics of victims who received services

■ characteristics and background of staff who provided services to victims

■ organizational policies and practices of VSPs.

In addition, VSPs provided data on how many sex trafficking and labor trafficking victims received services and on the demographic characteristics (sex, race, Hispanic origin, and age) of the trafficking victims served.

VSPs are a primary source of data on how victims are referred for services (i.e., from the police, a hospital, or other sources), the services victims sought and received, the cost of those services, and the source that funded service delivery. Collecting information on the staffing, funding, and resource allocation of VSPs is essential to describing the types and level of support available for crime victims. Administrative data from VSPs also provide characteristics of hard-to-reach victim populations (e.g., victims of hate crimes or human trafficking), such as the type of services requested and received by those victim groups and the number of victims receiving services.

The NSVSP sample was selected using a single-stage stratified design to produce national estimates, state-level estimates for the states with the largest number of VSPs, and subnational estimates based on geographical U.S. Census Bureau regions. The sampling frame was constructed from an initial list of VSPs from the National Census of Victim Service Providers (NCVSP).[1] Using data from NCVSP, VSPs were classified into five major types: government-based; nonprofit or faith-based; hospital, medical, or emergency; campus or educational; and tribal. In October 2021, BJS published the findings

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[1]For more information on the NCVSP, see https://bjs.ojp.gov/data-collection/ncvsp.

from the NSVSP in *Services for Crime Victims, 2019* (NCJ 300741, BJS, October 2021). A forthcoming dataset at the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data will include information on services for victims of human trafficking.

Law enforcement

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is required to collect human-trafficking data under the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008. As a result, the FBI established the **Human Trafficking (UCR-HT)** data collection as part of its Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program in 2013.

The program collects data on human trafficking based on the following definitions:

- **Commercial sex acts**—which is inducing a person by force, fraud, or coercion to participate in commercial sex acts, or in which the person induced to perform such act(s) has not attained 18 years of age.

- **Involuntary servitude**—which is obtaining of a person(s) through recruitment, harboring, transportation, or provision, and subjecting such persons by force, fraud, or coercion into involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery (not to include commercial sex acts).

State UCR programs and local law enforcement agencies that participate in this collection provide counts of offenses, case clearances, and arrests for

human trafficking for the purpose of commercial sex acts or involuntary servitude. Law enforcement agencies document these human-trafficking offenses in their record management systems (RMS). Participating agencies then report that information to their state UCR programs, which aggregate the data submitted by participating agencies in the state, then send those data to the FBI.

Some state UCR programs and local law enforcement agencies are unable to collect data on human trafficking through their RMS. Data collected by the FBI represent only human-trafficking offenses and arrests submitted by states and agencies with the ability to record and report them. Consequently, the information available through the UCR-HT understates the full scope of human-trafficking offenses known to local law enforcement.

Over the past several years, participation in the UCR-HT has grown, with the number of reporting states increasing from 37 in 2015 to 47 in 2020 **(figure 1)**. In 2020, 42 states reported at least one human-trafficking offense related to commercial sex acts to UCR-HT, and 35 states reported at least one human-trafficking offense related to involuntary servitude.

The number of arrests reported for human trafficking involving involuntary servitude increased from 66 in 2015 to 146 in 2019 before declining to 92 in 2020 **(figure 2)**. Reported arrests for human trafficking involving commercial sex acts increased from 684 in 2015 to 880 in 2016 before declining to 301 in 2020.

FIGURE 1
Number of states reporting to Uniform Crime Reporting-Human Trafficking (UCR-HT), by offense type, 2015-2020
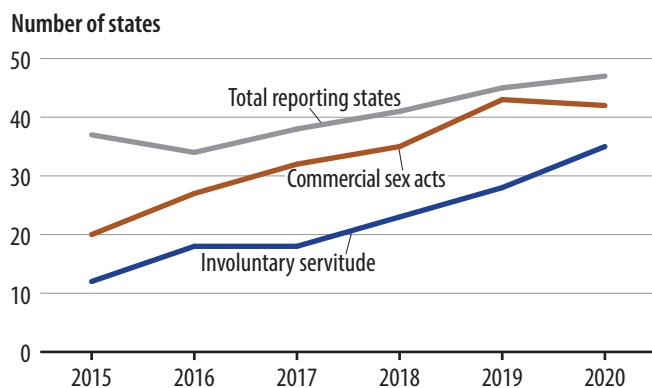
Number of states

Note: Excludes submissions from territories and from states in which data were submitted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs only. Counts for commercial sex acts and involuntary servitude indicate the number of states reporting at least one of those offenses in the applicable year.
Source: Adapted from Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reporting-Human Trafficking, table 1, 2015-2020.

FIGURE 2
Arrests for human trafficking, by offense type, 2015-2020
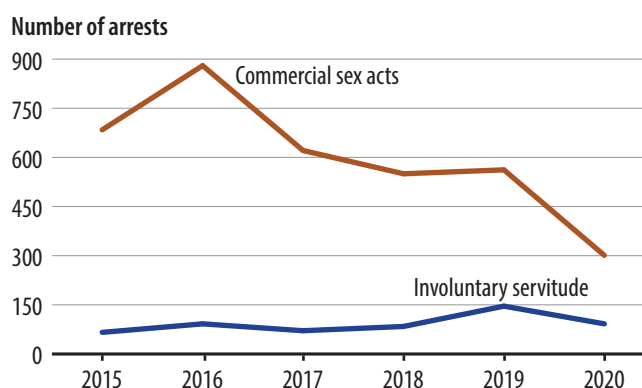
Number of arrests

Note: Excludes submissions from territories and from states in which data were submitted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs only.
Source: Adapted from Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reporting-Human Trafficking, table 2, 2015-2020.

Of the 47 states that participated in the UCR-HT in 2020, 31 states reported at least one human-trafficking arrest **(map 1)**. Nineteen states had between 1 and 10 arrests for human trafficking involving commercial sex acts in 2020. Two states (Texas and Georgia) reported more than 25 arrests for human trafficking involving commercial sex acts that year.

Ten states reported 1 or 2 arrests for human trafficking involving involuntary servitude **(map 2)**. Five states reported between 3 and 25 arrests for this offense in 2020, while one state (Texas) reported 26 or more.
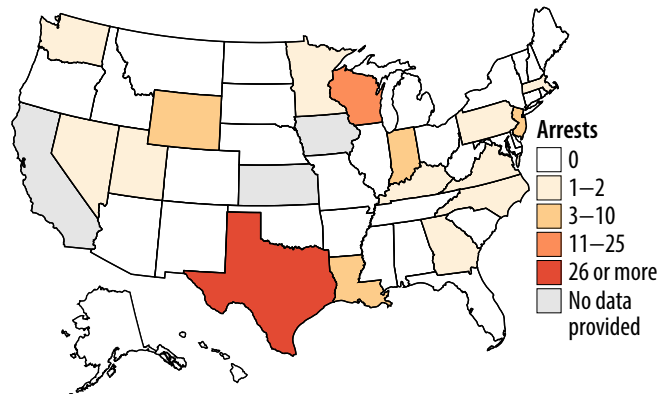
Among the local law enforcement agencies participating in the UCR-HT in 2020, 412 reported at least one human-trafficking offense involving a commercial sex act **(map 3)**. Additionally, 155 agencies reported between 2 and 10 human-trafficking offenses involving commercial sex acts in 2020. Twenty-seven agencies reported between 11 and 100 human-trafficking offenses involving commercial sex acts, while 2 agencies reported 101 or more of these offenses.

MAP 1
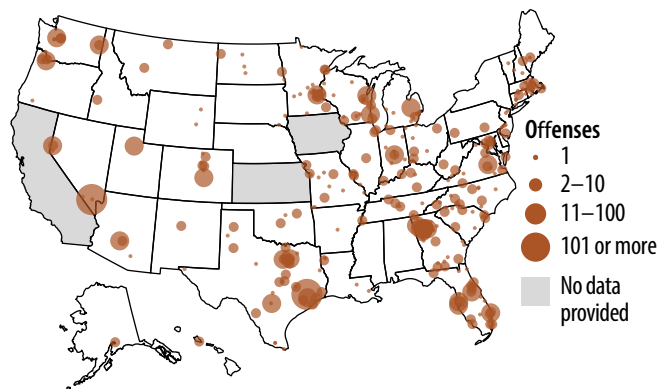**Arrests for human trafficking involving commercial sex acts, 2020**
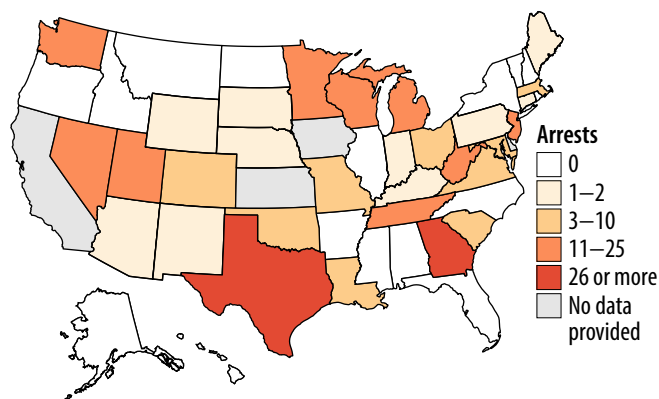
Note: California, Iowa, and Kansas did not provide data from local law enforcement agencies to the 2020 UCR-HT.
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reporting-Human Trafficking, 2020, table 2.

MAP 2
Arrests for human trafficking involving involuntary servitude, 2020

Note: California, Iowa, and Kansas did not provide data from local law enforcement agencies to the 2020 UCR-HT.
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reporting-Human Trafficking, 2020, table 2.

MAP 3
Human-trafficking offenses involving commercial sex acts by reporting agency, 2020

Note: Map includes local law enforcement agencies reporting at least one offense to the UCR-HT in 2020. The agency's location is according to the ZIP code identified on the 2016 BJS Law Enforcement Agency Roster. Three agencies had an unidentified location and are not shown. California, Iowa, and Kansas did not provide data from local law enforcement agencies to the 2020 UCR-HT.
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reporting-Human Trafficking, 2020. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Law Enforcement Agency Roster, 2016.

Among the agencies participating in the UCR-HT, 145 agencies reported at least one human-trafficking offense involving involuntary servitude in 2020 (map 4). Forty-one agencies reported between 2 and 10 human-trafficking offenses involving involuntary servitude in 2020, while four agencies reported between 11 and 40 and one agency reported 41 or more.

In 2021, the FBI UCR Program transitioned from a summary-based system of offense counts to an incident-based system. Agencies now report crime data, including data on human-trafficking offenses, to the FBI's **National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)**. NIBRS collects more information on both types of human-trafficking offenses than the summary-based UCR-HT.

For each incident, NIBRS collects the demographic characteristics of the victims, the number of associated victims and offenders, the location and time of the incident, and whether a weapon was present. NIBRS also provides information on whether the incident was cleared by an arrest.

The **National Crime Statistics Exchange (NCS-X) Initiative** is a collaboration between BJS and the FBI to increase the number of law enforcement agencies reporting detailed crime data to NIBRS. NCS-X seeks to recruit a scientifically selected sample of agencies to report to NIBRS, including all of the largest agencies in the United States. Data from sampled agencies that transitioned to NIBRS will be combined with the more than 8,000 current NIBRS-reporting agencies. Once that occurs, the Department of Justice will be able to produce national estimates of crime based on detailed crime information from law enforcement agencies that serve an estimated two-thirds of the U.S. population, including those living and working in the largest cities in the U.S. When NCS-X is fully implemented, national estimates of both types of human-trafficking offenses will be available.

To support the NIBRS transition effort, BJS and the FBI have obligated more than $140 million for NCS-X activities. The majority of the funds have directly funded and supported state crime-reporting programs and local law enforcement agencies. Funds have also supported training and technical assistance, as well as the development of statistical estimation procedures.

In 2019, BJS administered the 2019 **Census of Tribal Law Enforcement Agencies (CTLEA)**, the first BJS data collection focused solely on tribal law enforcement agencies. The CTLEA collected data from all known tribally operated law enforcement agencies; police agencies operated by the Bureau of Indian

Offenses
. 1
● 2–10
● 11–40
● 41 or more
☐ No data provided
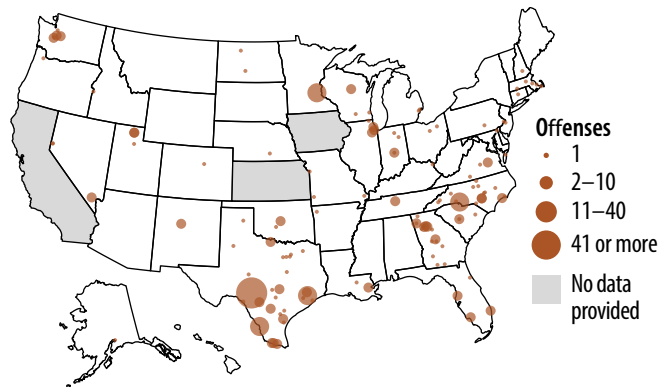
Note: Map includes local law enforcement agencies reporting at least one offense to the UCR-HT in 2020. The agency's location is according to the ZIP code identified on the 2016 BJS Law Enforcement Agency Roster. Two agencies had an unidentified location and are not shown. California, Iowa, and Kansas did not provide data from local law enforcement agencies to the 2020 UCR-HT.
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reporting-Human Trafficking, 2020. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Law Enforcement Agency Roster, 2016.

Affairs; and the Alaska State Police, which reported for the Village Public Safety Officers, who provide services to Alaska Native villages that are under the jurisdiction of the Alaska State Police. The CTLEA captured information on the policies and practices of tribal law enforcement agencies, including—

- whether the agency has jurisdiction over criminal cases

- staffing, officer training, and sources of funding

- officer workload and number of arrests

- whether the agency has access to and participates in regional and national justice database systems, including domestic violence and protection-order registries

- whether the agency is responsible for monitoring sex offenders on tribal lands pursuant to the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act.

CTLEA-responding agencies were also asked to indicate whether they had made any arrests for sex trafficking or labor trafficking during the previous year, reporting that information separately for both types of human-trafficking arrests.

Data collection occurred between August and December of 2019 and resulted in a 92% response rate among all tribal law enforcement agencies and a 100% response rate among federal and state police programs. Data and analyses from the CTLEA are forthcoming.

Prosecution and adjudication

The 2018 **Survey of State Attorneys General Offices, Human Trafficking (SSAGO-HT)** is BJS's first data collection on the role of state attorneys general in combatting human trafficking. BJS conducted the SSAGO-HT from January to July of 2019. The survey received responses from attorneys general offices in 43 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Marianas Islands, for an overall response rate of 84%.

The 2018 SSAGO-HT asked state attorneys general to provide information on—

- charging practices for sex- and labor-trafficking cases

- characteristics of offenders and victims of human trafficking

- how cases are referred to state attorneys general for review and possible prosecution

- case outcomes for cases prosecuted by state attorneys general.

Attorneys general offices reported receiving referrals of human-trafficking cases from a variety of sources. More cases were referred by local police and state police than by any other source. Of the 47 offices responding to the survey, 3 reported closing at least one case of labor trafficking with a guilty defendant, while 16 reported closing at least one case of sex trafficking with a guilty defendant.

Attorneys general were asked about the resources they had available to investigate and prosecute cases of human trafficking. Among the respondents, 31 offices had access to crime analysts, and 37 had access to computer forensics experts who could provide specialized case support as either staff or consultants.

Of the 47 responding offices, 44 indicated that they participated in at least one federal, regional, or state task force combatting human trafficking. In addition, most attorneys general offices had victim advocates (41) and victim service providers (VSPs) (35) to support victims, including victims of sex or labor trafficking.[2]

The **Criminal Cases in State Courts (CCSC)** collection gathers data on the number and attributes of cases closed in state trial courts of general jurisdiction.

The CCSC is a new effort for BJS, aimed at collecting case information from electronic court records. BJS will use this collection to produce national estimates of activities in state courts and to provide an understanding of case characteristics and outcomes.

Through the CCSC, BJS requests case-level data extracts from case management systems maintained by state courts. These case-level data contain detailed information about the matter before the court, including defendant demographic information, the type of legal representation of the defendant, the court charges at the time of both case filing and disposition, information about the adjudication status of the case, and the sentence imposed (when applicable). The detailed data can be used to answer a variety of questions about the work of state courts and the administration of justice in those institutions.

After the initial collection, BJS will be able to assess the extent to which the CCSC can provide information on prosecutions, convictions, and sentences imposed by state courts for human-trafficking offenses. BJS will also examine the feasibility of identifying the non-trafficking criminal charges most commonly associated with human-trafficking cases.

This collection is ongoing, and data and analyses from this effort are forthcoming.

The **Federal Justice Statistics Program (FJSP)** compiles statistical information on defendants charged with a human-trafficking offense across stages of the federal criminal justice system. Under the FJSP, administrative data are received from the U.S. Marshals Service, Drug Enforcement Administration, the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, U.S. Sentencing Commission, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons each year and are standardized, maintained, linked, analyzed, and archived.[3] Human-trafficking offenses are defined according to the three categories of federal statutes: Peonage, slavery, and trafficking in persons, 18 U.S.C. §§1581-1595; Production of child pornography, 18 U.S.C. §§2251-2251A; and Transportation for illegal sexual activity and related crimes, 18 U.S.C. §§2422-2423.[4]

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[2]For more information on the 2018 SSAGO-HT, see *Human-Trafficking Offenses Handled by State Attorneys General Offices, 2018* (NCJ 254803, BJS, March 2021), available at https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/htohsago18.pdf.

[3]For more information on the FJSP, see *Federal Justice Statistics, 2019* (NCJ 301158, BJS, October 2021), available at https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/fjs19.pdf.

[4]For more information on human-trafficking offenses, see *Federal Prosecution of Human-Trafficking Cases, 2015* (NCJ 251390, BJS, June 2018), available at https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/fphtc15.pdf.

The Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys provides federal prosecution data, including the title and section of the U.S. criminal code (used to identify human trafficking by statute) and whether U.S. attorneys decided to prosecute the suspect. BJS also collects data from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, including the number of defendants convicted and sentenced for a human-trafficking offense and the length of the imposed prison term.

The number of persons investigated and prosecuted for a human-trafficking offense increased from 2011 to 2019. A total of 2,091 persons were referred to U.S. Attorneys for human-trafficking offenses in fiscal year 2019 (table 1), a 54% increase from the 1,360 persons referred in 2011 (figure 3). The number of persons prosecuted for human trafficking increased from 729 in 2011 to 1,235 in 2019, a 69% increase.

More than 9 of 10 persons adjudicated in U.S. district courts in 2019 with a human-trafficking offense were convicted. Human trafficking was the most serious offense at case termination for 837 defendants convicted. The increase in human-trafficking cases from 2011 to 2019 was greater for each of the stages following prosecution (adjudication, conviction, and sentences to prison). The number of defendants charged with human trafficking in cases terminated in U.S. district courts increased by 79%, while the number of defendants convicted increased by 80%, and the number sentenced to prison increased by 82%.

FIGURE 3
Human-trafficking suspects referred to and prosecuted by U.S. attorneys and human-trafficking defendants convicted, 2011–2019

Number of suspects and defendants
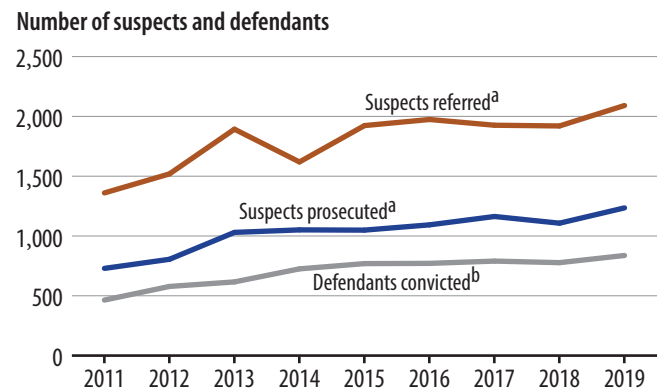
Note: See table 1 for counts.
[a]Includes suspects in matters whose lead charge was a human-trafficking crime under a substantive federal statute or program category. The lead charge is the primary basis for referring the matter to a U.S. attorney and is usually, but not always, the charge with the greatest possible sentence.
[b]Includes defendants in cases where the most serious charge was a human-trafficking crime under a substantive federal statute. Includes felony defendants, Class A misdemeanants in cases handled by U.S. district judges or U.S. magistrates, and other misdemeanants in cases handled by U.S. district judges. The most serious offense is the one with the greatest statutory-maximum sentence at case termination, as determined by court personnel. Defendants in more than one case are counted separately.
Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, based on data from the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, National Legal Information Office Network System and Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, Criminal Master File, fiscal years 2011-2019.

TABLE 1
Human-trafficking suspects referred to and prosecuted by U.S. attorneys and human-trafficking defendants convicted and sentenced to prison, 2011–2019

Fiscal year	Suspects in matters referred[a]	Suspects in matters prosecuted[a]	Defendants in cases terminated[b]	Defendants convicted[b]	Defendants sentenced to prison[b]
2011	1,360	729	497	464	452
2012	1,519	805	632	578	570
2013	1,893	1,030	668	616	604
2014	1,619	1,051	809	725	722
2015	1,923	1,049	825	769	759
2016	1,974	1,093	837	771	756
2017	1,926	1,163	836	790	780
2018	1,920	1,107	829	777	767
2019	2,091	1,235	888	837	823
Percent change, 2011-2019	53.8%	69.4%	78.7%	80.4%	82.1%
Percent change, 2018-2019	8.9%	11.6%	7.1%	7.7%	7.3%

[a]Includes suspects in matters whose lead charge was a human-trafficking crime under a substantive federal statute or program category. The lead charge is the primary basis for referring the matter to a U.S. attorney and is usually, but not always, the charge with the greatest possible sentence.
[b]Includes defendants in cases where the most serious charge was a human-trafficking crime under a substantive federal statute. Includes felony defendants, Class A misdemeanants in cases handled by U.S. district judges or U.S. magistrates, and other misdemeanants in cases handled by U.S. district judges. The most serious offense is the one with the greatest statutory-maximum sentence at case termination, as determined by court personnel. Defendants in more than one case are counted separately.
Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, based on data from the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, National Legal Information Office Network System and Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, Criminal Master File, fiscal years 2011-2019.

Corrections

The **National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP)** collects offender-level administrative data annually on state prison admissions and releases, year-end custody populations, and parole entries and discharges in participating jurisdictions. The NCRP has updated its standardized set of state offense codes to reflect a new code for human trafficking (code 181 in the updated database). This change was made to improve measurement of the number of individuals incarcerated in state prisons for a human-trafficking offense.

BJS analyzed the state offense codes across all years of the NCRP and determined that—

- 46 states reported at least one offense code related to human trafficking
- 266 state codes would be recoded to human trafficking
- most states had fewer than 10 state offense codes that could be recoded as human trafficking
- the number of offense codes related to human trafficking per state ranged from 1 to 28
- most state offense codes included the crimes of human-sex trafficking or transport, child prostitution, forced-labor trafficking, or human trafficking.

Based on the most recent NCRP data available, collected in 2019, BJS found that—

- 32 states reported at least one offense code related to human trafficking
- 614 state prison admissions were for a human-trafficking offense
- 421 persons were released from state prison after serving a sentence for a human-trafficking offense
- 1,675 persons were in the custody of a state prison serving a sentence for a human-trafficking offense
- 165 persons who had been imprisoned for a human-trafficking offense began a term of post-custody community supervision
- 129 persons who had been imprisoned for a human-trafficking offense exited their term of post-custody community supervision. Exits occur after successful completion of supervision, to receive treatment, to serve a period of incarceration, or for other reasons.

The updated set of state offense codes are available starting in the 2018 NCRP file at the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data and has been applied to NCRP data back to 1999.

REPORTS RELEASED IN 2021

- *Human-Trafficking Offenses Handled by State Attorneys General Offices, 2018,* NCJ 254803, March 2021

PREVIOUSLY RELEASED REPORTS

- *Federal Prosecution of Human-Trafficking Cases, 2015,* NCJ 251390, June 2018
- *Federal Prosecution of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Cases, 2004-2013,* NCJ 250746, October 2017
- *Characteristics of Suspected Human Trafficking Incidents, 2008-2010,* NCJ 233732, April 2011
- *Characteristics of Suspected Human Trafficking Incidents, 2007-08,* NCJ 224526, January 2009
- *Federal Prosecution of Child Sex Exploitation Offenders, 2006,* NCJ 219412, December 2007
- *Federal Prosecution of Human Trafficking, 2001-2005,* NCJ 215248, October 2006

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