

Foreword

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) is a state agency created in 1983 to promote community safety by providing public policymakers, criminal justice professionals, and others with information, tools, and technology needed to make effective decisions that improve the quality of criminal justice in Illinois. ICJIA provides an objective system-wide forum for identifying critical problems in criminal justice, developing coordinated and cost-effective strategies, and implementing and evaluating solutions to those problems. The specific powers and duties of the agency are delineated in the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Act (Illinois Compiled Statutes, Ch. 20, Sec. 3930). ICJIA's many responsibilities include serving as a clearinghouse of information and research on criminal justice and undertaking research studies to improve the administration of criminal justice.

Since 1989, the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit has received funds under the federal Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 and the succeeding Justice Assistance Grant program to document the extent and nature of drug and violent crime in Illinois and the criminal justice system's response to these offenses. ICJIA has since amassed a large amount of data measuring the extent and nature of drug and violent crime in Illinois and the impact these crimes have had on the criminal justice system. To put this information into the hands of Illinois' criminal justice policymakers in a useful summary format, ICJIA's Research and Analysis Unit developed the *Trends and Issues* report. It is hoped that this report will be as valuable as previous versions. In addition to providing policymakers with an overview of activities across the components of the justice system in the state (law enforcement, courts, and corrections), *Trends and Issues* will also provide perspective by including trends experienced by specific regions of the state (Cook, collar, rural, and urban counties).

While the data presented in this report are by no means inclusive of all indicators, they do provide a general overview of crime and the criminal justice system's response. In addition, these data are readily available and consistently defined through existing statewide data collection mechanisms.

The information presented in this report was provided to ICJIA by the Illinois State Police, the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, the Illinois Department of Corrections, and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. The support and cooperation of these agencies have helped make this report an informative and timely source of information.



CJ DataNet, ICJIA's Web-based clearinghouse of criminal justice data,
is available at: www.icjia.state.il.us

