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## Research and Program Evaluation in Illinois: The Extent and Nature of Drug and Violent Crime in Illinois' Counties



## A Profile of the Hardin County Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems

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## FOREWORD

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority 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. The Authority 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 Authority are delineated in the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Act (Illinois Compiled Statutes, Ch. 20, Sec. 393/7). Two of the Authority's many responsibilities are 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 to document the extent and nature of drug and violent crime in Illinois and the criminal justice system's response to these offenses. As a result of these efforts, the Authority has 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, the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit has developed profiles of the criminal justice system for each county in Illinois. In 1994, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority produced a series of reports detailing criminal justice system activity levels for each of Illinois' 102 counties. As a result of the positive response by local criminal justice officials, in 1996 the Authority updated and expanded the scope of these reports to reflect current criminal and juvenile justice activity. It is hoped that these 2004 updated reports will be as valuable, if not more, than the original versions. In addition to providing policymakers with an overview of activities across the components of the justice system in their county (law enforcement, courts and corrections), the profiles also provide perspective by including trends experienced in counties with similar population sizes.

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 profile has been provided to the Authority by a number of state agencies, specifically: 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 and their staffs have helped make this report an informative and timely source of information on the activities of the criminal justice system in Illinois.



The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority's  
Web-based clearinghouse of criminal justice data available at:

<http://www.icjia.state.il.us>

## I. Introduction

Hardin County, located in southern Illinois, covers an area of 178 square miles and had a 2003 population of 4,711, according to estimates by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census. Using these figures, Hardin County was the 2<sup>nd</sup> smallest county in Illinois geographically, and 2<sup>nd</sup> smallest in terms of population. Combining these two measures, Hardin County also had the 14<sup>th</sup> lowest population density per square mile among Illinois' 102 counties.

As with the previous reports, information specific to Hardin County is presented in comparison with similar counties. To provide more useful comparisons, counties have been separated into four types; 1) Cook County, 2) Collar counties, 3) urban counties (outside of Cook and the Collar counties), and 4) rural counties. Because of its size, Cook County is compared to the rest of the state. The Collar counties are the five that border Cook County (DuPage, Lake, Kane, McHenry, and Will). Urban and rural counties are defined by whether or not they lay within a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (Appendix 1, page 24). Based on these definitions, there are 36 counties in Illinois that are part of a MSA (Cook, Collar, and urban counties) and 66 counties that are not part of a MSA (in other words, rural).

Recent changes to the standard definitions of MSAs have affected the classification of several Illinois counties. The United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB) defines metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas according to published standards that are applied to Census Bureau data. The general concept of a metropolitan or micropolitan statistical area is that of a core area containing a substantial population nucleus, together with adjacent communities having a high degree of economic and social integration with that core. Currently defined metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas are based on the application of 2000 standards to 2000 decennial census data and were announced by OMB on June 6, 2003.

Standard definitions of metropolitan areas have changed over time. The term "metropolitan area" (MA) was adopted in 1990 and referred collectively to metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), consolidated metropolitan statistical areas (CMSAs), and primary metropolitan statistical areas (PMSAs). More recently, the term "core based statistical area" (CBSA) became effective in 2000 and refers collectively to metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas.

The 2000 standards require that each CBSA must contain at least one urban area of 10,000 or more population. Each metropolitan statistical area must have at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more inhabitants. Each micropolitan statistical area must have at least one urban cluster of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population.

Under the standards, the county (or counties) in which at least 50 percent of the population resides within urban areas of 10,000 or more population, or that contain at least 5,000 people residing within a single urban area of 10,000 or more population, is identified as a "central county" (counties). Additional "outlying counties" are included in the CBSA if they meet specified requirements regarding residents commuting to or from the central counties.

Changes in the definitions of these statistical areas since the 1950 census have consisted chiefly of: 1) the recognition of new areas as they reached the minimum required city or urbanized area

population, and 2) the addition of counties to existing areas due to new decennial census data. In some instances, formerly separate areas have been merged, components of an area have been transferred from one area to another, or components have been dropped from an area. The large majority of changes have taken place on the basis of decennial census data.

Because of these historical changes in geographic definitions, users must be cautious in comparing data for these statistical areas from different dates. For more information, contact the Population Distribution Branch at (301) 763-2419 (U. S. Census Bureau).

Based on these characteristics, Hardin County is one of Illinois' 66 rural counties. Throughout this report, the criminal justice activity trends experienced in Hardin County will be compared to those trends experienced in the other rural counties. This comparison will be realized through the calculation of rates for the activities being analyzed, with the number per 100,000 population the format for all the rates.

## II. Law Enforcement Activities in Hardin County

One of the most commonly used indicators of the level of crime in a particular jurisdiction is the number of *Index offenses* reported to the police. There are eight separate offenses, that constitute the Crime Index, including murder, criminal sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault (violent Index offenses), burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson (property Index offenses). Although these eight offenses do not account for all crimes reported to the police, they are considered to be the most serious, frequent, pervasive, and consistently defined by different law enforcement agencies.

An indicator of the workload that law enforcement agencies place on other components of the justice system is the number of arrests made by police, including those for violent and property Index offenses and drug offenses. Unlike offenses, which are what police must respond to, arrests represent those offenders who may eventually be processed through other components of the justice system, including the courts, county jails, and state and local correctional programs.

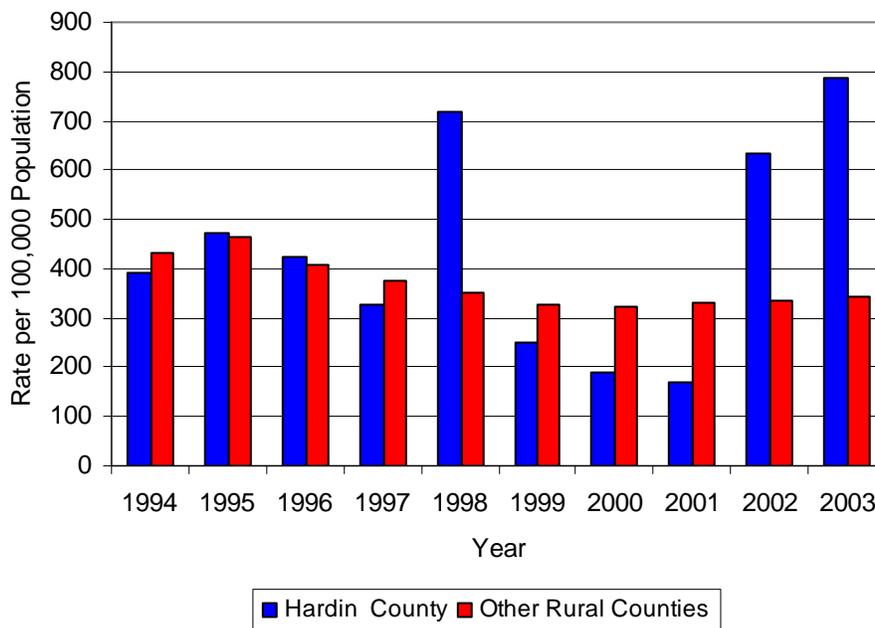
### *Violent Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Hardin County*

The number of violent Index offenses reported to the police increased 85 percent in Hardin County between 1994 and 2003, from 20 to 37. As in previous years and in most other counties, aggravated assault offenses accounted for the majority (92 percent) of violent Index offenses reported in Hardin County in 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the violent Index offense rate in Hardin County more than doubled, from 392 to a period high of 785 offenses per 100,000 population. During that same period, the violent Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 20 percent, from 433 to 345 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 1). The 2003 violent Index offense rate in Hardin County was more than double the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 1**

### **Total Violent Index Offense Rates in Hardin and Other Rural Counties**



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

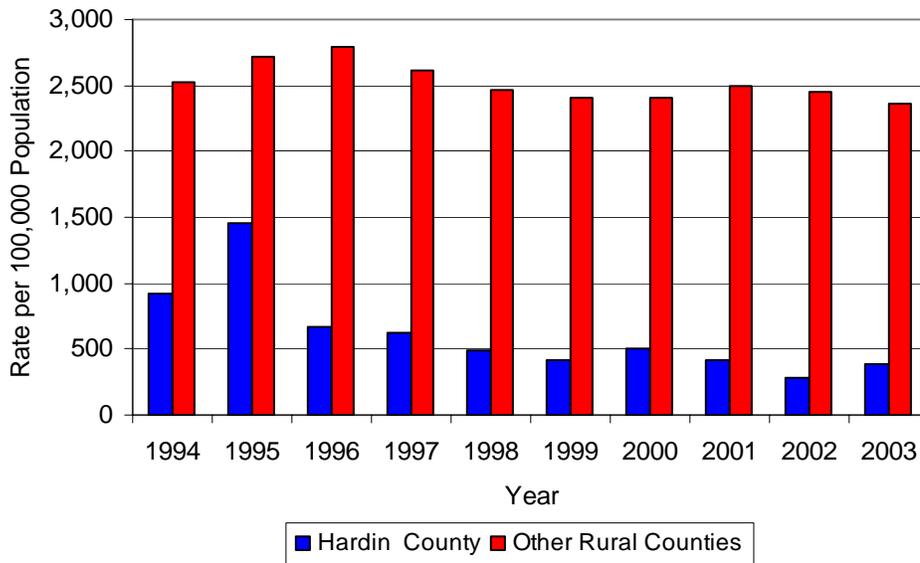
*Property Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Hardin County*

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of property Index offenses reported to the police in Hardin County decreased 62 percent, from 47 to 18. Thefts accounted for 61 percent of all property Index offenses reported in Hardin County during 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the property Index offense rate in Hardin County decreased 58 percent, from 920 to 382. The property Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 6 percent, from 2,527 to 2,367 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 2). Hardin County's 2003 property Index offense rate was 84 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 2**

**Total Property Index Offense Rates in Hardin and Other Rural Counties**



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

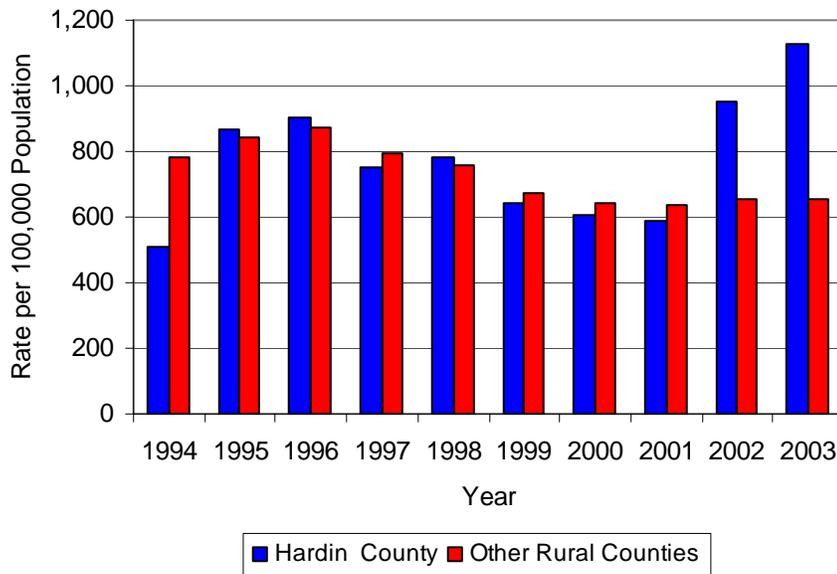
*Index Arrests by Hardin County Law Enforcement Agencies*

Between 1994 and 2003, arrests for total Index offenses by law enforcement agencies in Hardin County more than doubled, from 26 to 53. Unlike most other counties, the majority of Index arrests in Hardin County were for violent Index offenses. Of the 53 Index arrests made in Hardin County during 2003, 70 percent were for violent Index crimes and 30 percent were for property Index crimes. Arrests for theft and aggravated assault accounted for the majority of property and violent Index arrests in Hardin County during 2003. Of all violent Index arrests, 92 percent were arrests for aggravated assault, while thefts also accounted for 69 percent of all property Index arrests.

Between 1994 and 2003, the Index arrest rate in Hardin County more than doubled, from 509 to 1,125 arrests per 100,000 population. During the same period, the Index arrest rate in the other rural counties decreased 15 percent, from 783 to 655 arrests per 100,000 population (Figure 3). In 2003, Hardin County's Index arrest rate was 72 percent higher than the Index arrest rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 3**

**Index Arrest Rates in Hardin and Other Rural Counties**



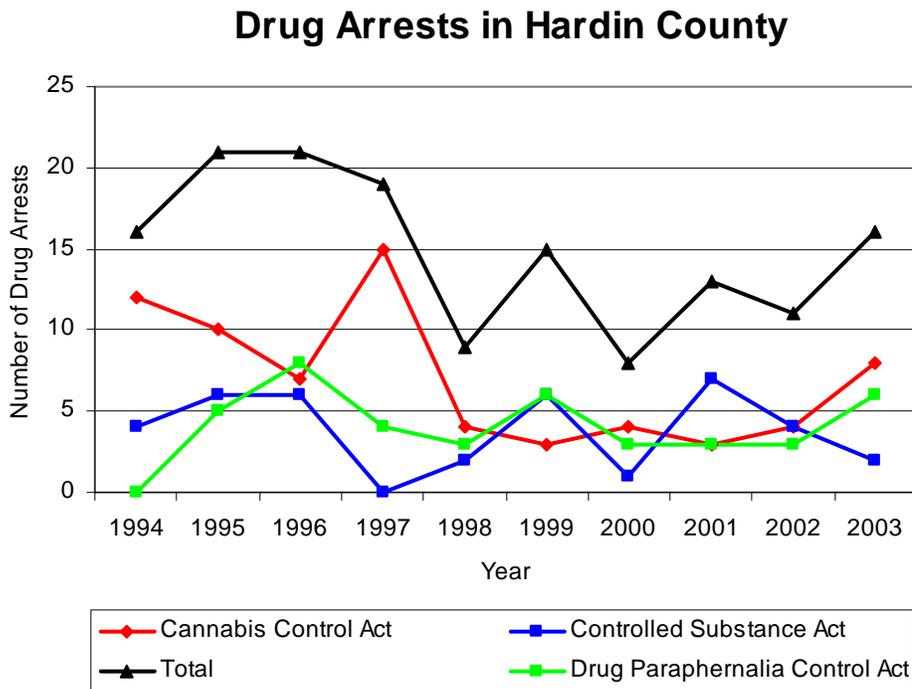
Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

*Drug Offense Arrests in Hardin County*

Between 1994 and 2003, arrests for total drug offenses (including violations of Illinois' Cannabis Control Act, Controlled Substances Act, Drug Paraphernalia Control Act, and the Hypodermic Syringes and Needles Act) in Hardin County varied but remained unchanged at 16 arrests in both 1994 and 2003.

During most of the period analyzed, arrests for violations of Illinois' Cannabis Control Act (which prohibits the possession, sale, and cultivation of cannabis) in Hardin County have outnumbered arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act (which prohibits the possession, sale, distribution, or manufacture of all other illegal drugs such as cocaine and opiates). Between 1994 and 2003, the number of arrests for violations of the Cannabis Control Act in Hardin County decreased 33 percent, from 12 to eight, while arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act decreased from four to two, during the same period. Drug Paraphernalia Control Act violations increased from zero arrests in 1994 to six arrests in 2003, or in other words, 38 percent of all drugs arrests in 2003 (Figure 4).

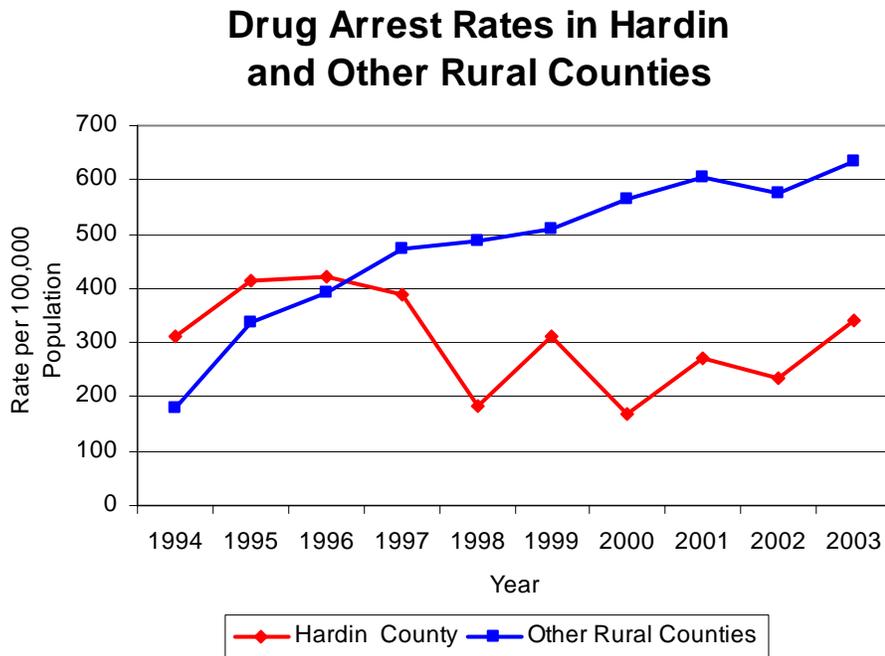
**Figure 4**



Source: Illinois State Police

Between 1994 and 2003, the arrest rate for all drug law violations in Hardin County increased 8 percent, from 313 to 340 per 100,000 population. The total drug arrest rate in the other rural counties more than tripled between 1994 and 2003, from 180 to 633 per 100,000 population (Figure 5). In 2003, the drug arrest rate in Hardin County was 42 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 5**



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

### **Drugs Seized in Hardin County**

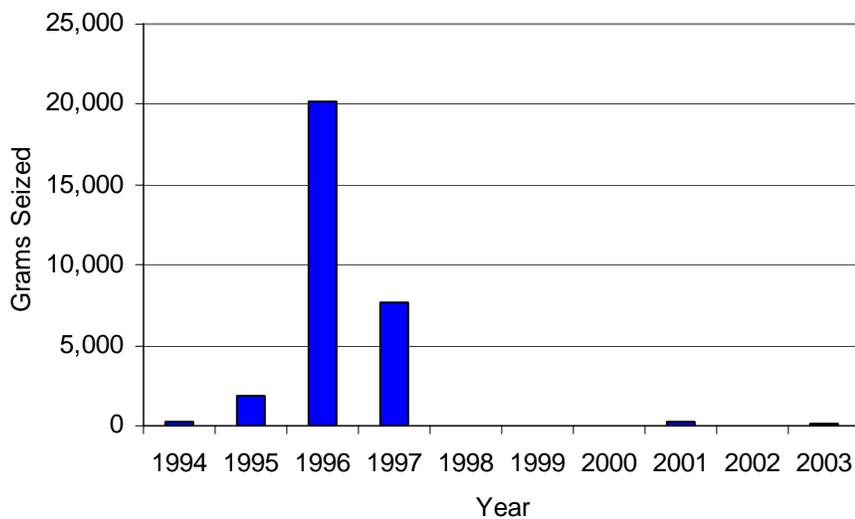
Drugs seized by law enforcement agencies are another indicator of the extent and nature of the illegal drug trade in a jurisdiction. When illegal drugs are seized by law enforcement agencies in Illinois, they are submitted to a crime lab for analysis. Most agencies submit drugs to one of the Illinois State Police crime labs. These labs record the quantity of drugs submitted from each county. This section discusses the quantities of illegal drugs seized and submitted to the Illinois State Police from law enforcement agencies in Hardin County.

### *Cannabis Seized in Hardin County*

Cannabis accounts for the majority of drugs seized in Hardin County and in most Illinois jurisdictions. Although there were large variations in the number of grams of cannabis seized between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in Hardin County decreased 60 percent, from 302 grams to 121 grams (Figure 6). Between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in the other rural counties decreased 55 percent, from 607,847 grams to 272,522 grams.

**Figure 6**

### **Cannabis Seized in Hardin County**



Source: Illinois State Police

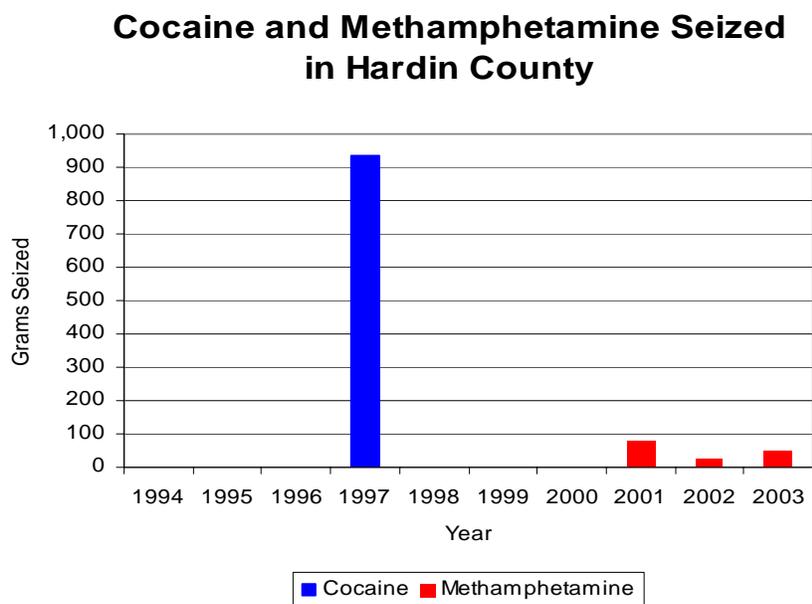
Between 1994 and 2003, the cannabis seizure rate in Hardin County decreased 56 percent, from 5,908 grams per 100,000 population in 1994 to 2,577 grams in 2003. The cannabis seizure rate in the other rural counties decreased 55 percent, from 35,754 grams per 100,000 population in 1994 to 16,164 grams in 2003. In 2003, Hardin County had a cannabis seizure rate of 2,577 grams per 100,000 population, 84 percent lower than the rate of 16,164 grams in the other rural counties.

### *Cocaine and Methamphetamine Seized in Hardin County*

During the past decade, it is clear that methamphetamine “activity” in the state has increased drastically and has become a significant drug problem in many jurisdictions. Further, the extent of which law enforcement agencies are encountering methamphetamine has also dispersed across a large area of the state, with most of this being fueled by activities taking place in Illinois’ rural jurisdictions.

During the period analyzed, 153 grams of methamphetamine were seized in Hardin County. Methamphetamine seizures were reported between 2001 and 2003, where the quantity of methamphetamine seized decreased from 81 grams to 49 grams. The only year cocaine (cocaine includes both power cocaine and crack cocaine) was seized in Hardin County was 1997 when 937 grams were seized (Figure 7).

**Figure 7**



Source: Illinois State Police

The quantity of methamphetamine seized in the other rural counties increased dramatically during the period analyzed. Between 1994 and 2003, the amount of methamphetamine seized increased from 2,619 grams to 13,168 grams. In 2003, 1,049 grams of methamphetamine per 100,000 population were seized in Hardin County, 34 percent higher than the 781 grams of methamphetamine per 100,000 population seized in the other rural counties. The quantity of cocaine seized in the other rural counties decreased dramatically during the period analyzed. Between 1994 and 2003, the amount of cocaine seized decreased 79 percent, from 4,193 grams to 890 grams. In 2003, 900 grams of cocaine per 100,000 population were seized in the other rural counties.

### **III. Adult and Juvenile Court Activity in Hardin County**

Although Illinois has one of the best court reporting systems in the country, the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts only collects information regarding the aggregate number of court filings, dispositions, and probation caseloads. Currently, there are no statewide data available on court filings, dispositions, and convictions by offense type. However, detailed offense data are available from the Illinois Department of Corrections for those convicted felons sentenced to prison.

Trends in the number of delinquency petitions filed and adjudicated in juvenile court are also presented. Illinois statutes define delinquency offenses as those committed by someone younger than 17 years old that would be considered crimes if committed by someone 17 years of age or older.

In Illinois, county probation departments are overseen by the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts' Probation Division. This section also presents data on active misdemeanor and felony adult caseloads and the number of juveniles under the supervision of the probation departments in Hardin County and the other rural counties.

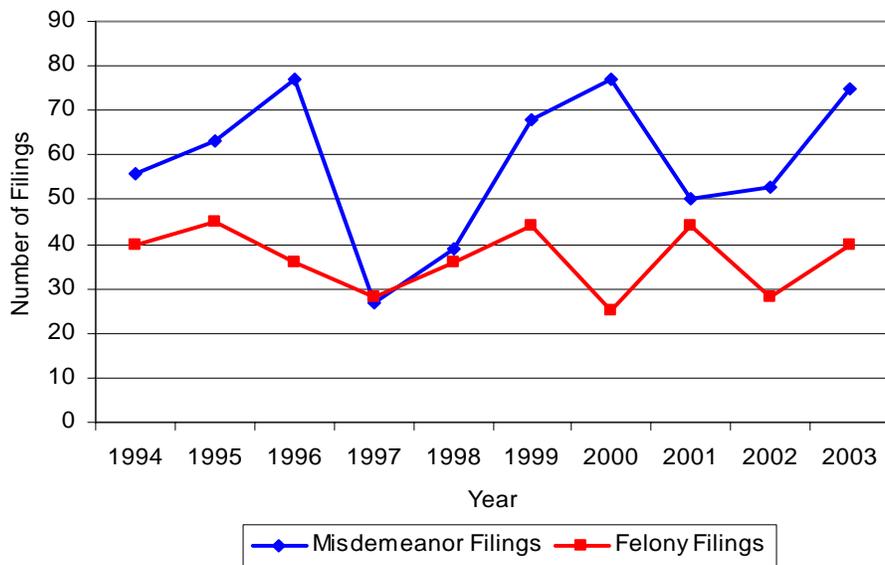
#### *Misdemeanor and Felony Filings in Hardin County*

The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts reports data on criminal court cases in two categories: misdemeanors and felonies. After screening a case and deciding it warrants further action, the state's attorney must file formal charges in court. Misdemeanor cases are less serious than felonies and can be punished by a probation sentence of one year or less and less than one year of incarceration. Felony cases, on the other hand, are more serious and can be punished by a probation term up to four years and incarceration for more than one year. When comparing the number of filings across time and across counties, it should be noted that differences in reporting practices exist. For example, when two or more defendants are involved in a single case, some state's attorneys file a single case charging all defendants, while others file a separate case for each suspect.

In 2003, felony and misdemeanor court filings accounted for 15 percent of all filings in Hardin County's courts (civil, traffic, family, and other). Between 1994 and 2003, the number of felony filings in Hardin County remained unchanged at 40. During the same period, misdemeanor filings increased 34 percent, from 56 in 1994 to 75 in 2003 (Figure 8). In 2003, felony filings accounted for 5 percent of total filings in Hardin County. Additionally, misdemeanor filings outnumbered felony filings by nearly two to one in 2003

**Figure 8**

**Felony and Misdemeanor Filings  
in Hardin County**

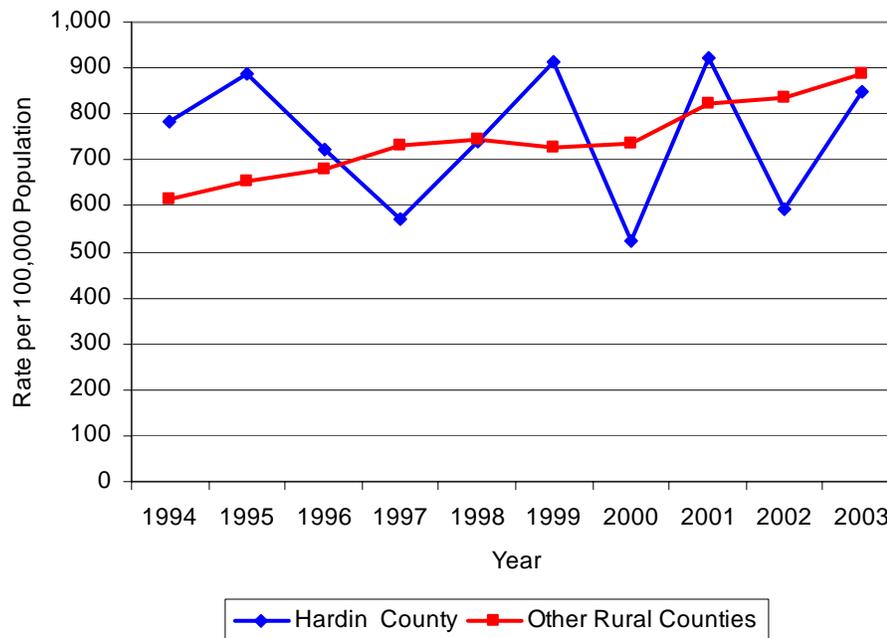


Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Between 1994 and 2003, the felony-filing rate in Hardin County increased 8 percent, from 783 to 849 cases per 100,000 population. The felony-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 45 percent during this period, from 614 to 889 cases per 100,000 population (Figure 9). In 2003, the felony-filing rate in Hardin County was 4 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 9**

**Felony Filing Rates in Hardin and Other Rural Counties**



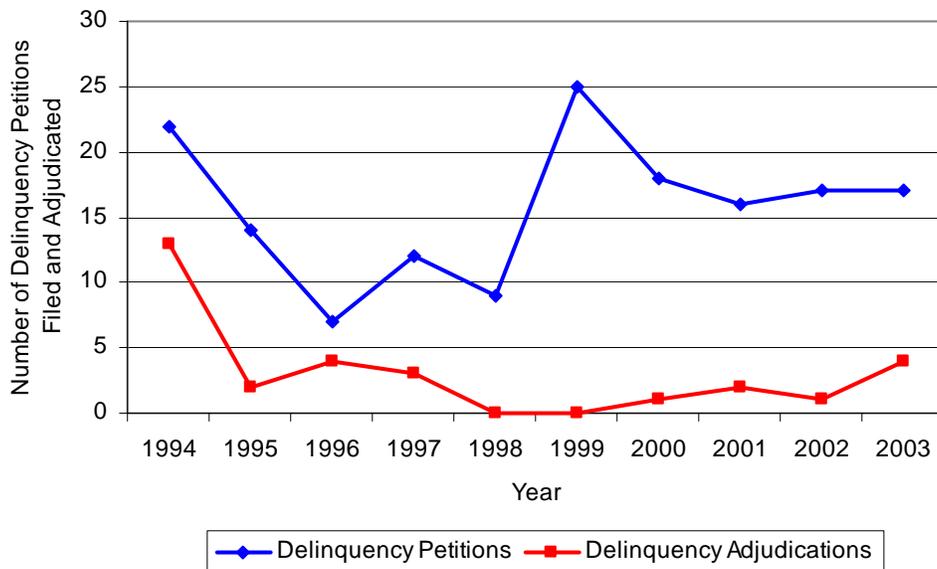
Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts and U.S. Census Bureau data

Illinois’ juvenile court system differs in several key aspects from the adult criminal court system. One aspect revolves around the difference in treatment between juveniles and adults: the juvenile court process is somewhat less formal and adversarial; authorities are given much more latitude in determining the proper response to each case. Traditionally, the terminology used to describe juvenile proceedings has been less harsh than that used for the adult criminal process. For example, Illinois’ juvenile courts accept “petitions of delinquency” rather than misdemeanor or felony criminal complaints. However, pursuant to the Juvenile Court Reform Act of 1998, criminal court terms, such as “trial” and “sentencing,” have replaced the less harsh “adjudicatory hearing” and “dispositional hearing” terms.

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of juvenile delinquency petitions filed in Hardin County decreased 23 percent, from 22 to 17 (Figure 10). In 2003, 24 percent of the juveniles named in delinquency petitions were adjudicated delinquent. Between 1994 and 2003, delinquency adjudications decreased 69 percent, from 13 to four. The majority of cases not resulting in adjudication were continued under supervision.

**Figure 10**

**Juvenile Delinquency Petitions Filed and Adjudicated in Hardin County**



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

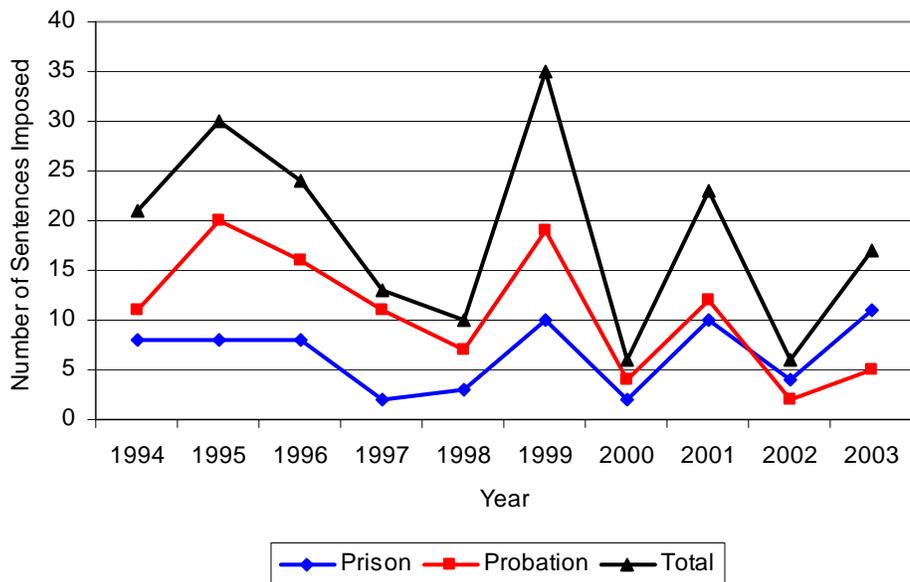
Between 1994 and 2003, the delinquency petition-filing rate in Hardin County increased 4 percent, from 4,264 to 4,427 per 100,000 juveniles. During the same period, the delinquency petition-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 13 percent, from 2,005 to 2,261 petitions per 100,000 juveniles. In 2003, the delinquency petition-filing rate in Hardin County was nearly double the rate in the other rural counties.

Anyone convicted of a felony in Illinois can be sentenced either to prison or probation, or receive a conditional discharge. A number of factors influence the type and length of sentence imposed on convicted felons, including the severity of the crime, the offender’s criminal and social history, safety of the community, and legislation affecting certain types of offenses. For some types of convictions a sentence to prison is required by state statute.

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of offenders convicted of a felony and sentenced in Hardin County decreased 19 percent, from 21 to 17 (Figure 11). The number of convicted felons sentenced to probation during this period decreased 55 percent, from 11 to five, while the number of felony prison sentences increased 38 percent, from eight in 1994 to 11 in 2003. As a result, felony probation sentences decreased as a proportion of total sentences, decreasing from 52 percent in 1994 to 29 percent in 2003. Between 1994 and 2003, the proportion of felons sentenced to prison increased from 38 percent in 1994 to 65 percent in 2003.

**Figure 11**

### Sentences Imposed on Felons Convicted in Hardin County



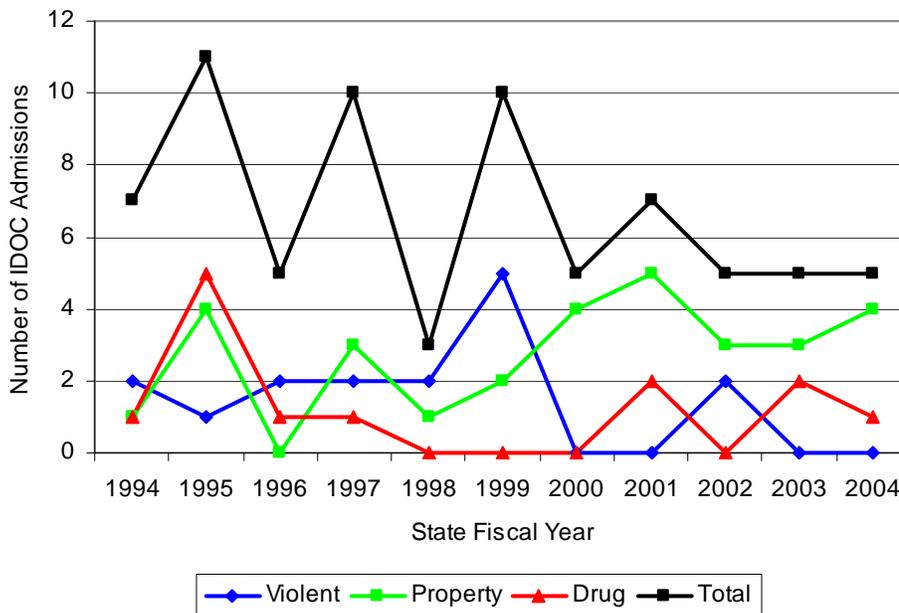
Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

## Adult Prison Admissions from Hardin County

Between State Fiscal Years (SFY) 1994 and 2004, the number of admissions to the Illinois Department of Corrections' Adult Division from Hardin County decreased from seven to five (Figure 12). During this period, the number of violent offender admissions decreased, while the number of property offender admissions increased and the number of drug offender admissions remained unchanged. Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of violent offender admissions decreased from two to zero, while the number of property offender admissions increased from one to four and the number of drug offender admissions remained unchanged at one. In SFY 2004, property offenders accounted for 80 percent of all admissions from Hardin County, while drug offenders accounted for 20 percent.

Figure 12

### IDOC New Court Commitments from Hardin County, by Offense Type



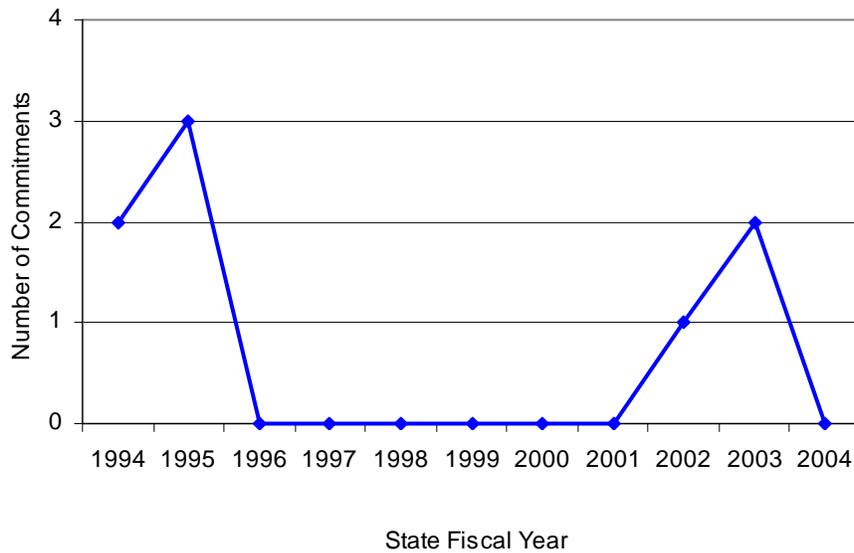
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

## Juvenile Court Commitments to the Illinois Department of Corrections

The Illinois Department of Corrections' Juvenile Division provides long-term custody for youths, 13 to 17 years old, who have been found delinquent by the juvenile court and committed to the IDOC. Youths may remain in an IDOC juvenile facility until they are 21. Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of court commitments to the IDOC's Juvenile Division from Hardin County decreased from two to zero (Figure 12).

**Figure 13**

### Juvenile Court Commitments to the IDOC Juvenile Division from Hardin County



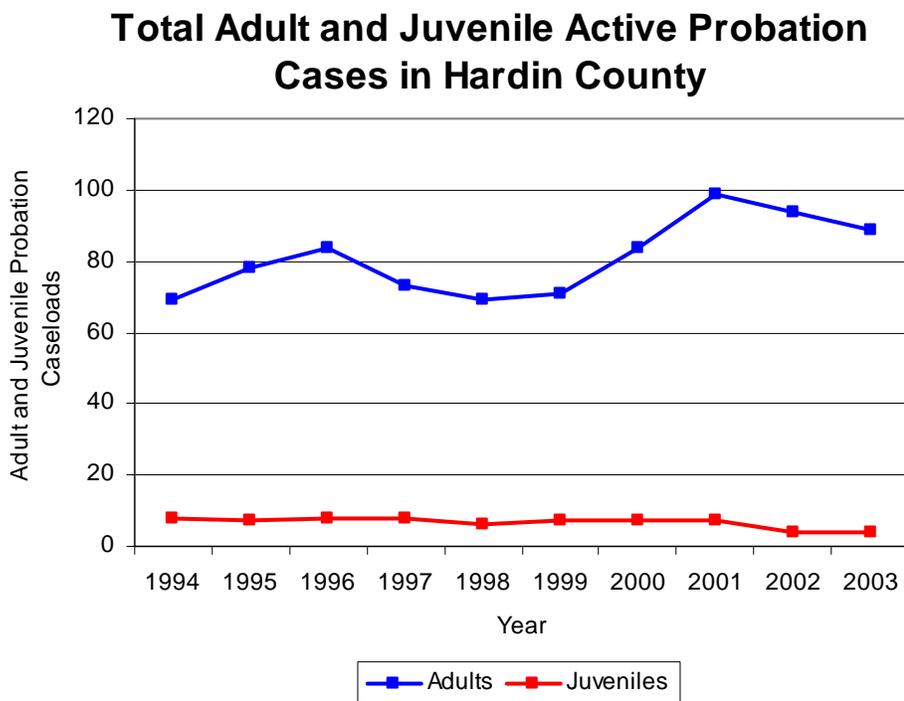
Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

In SFY 2004, the commitment rate to the IDOC's Juvenile Division from the other rural counties was 230 commitments per 100,000 juveniles.

## Adult and Juvenile Probation Caseloads in Hardin County

Between December 31, 1994 and December 31, 2003, the number of active adult probation cases in Hardin County increased 29 percent, from 69 to 89 (Figure 14). In 2003, felony offenders accounted for 24 percent of Hardin County's active adult probation caseload. Between 1994 and 2003, the number of juveniles supervised by the Hardin County Juvenile Probation Department decreased from eight to four. By comparison, the number of active adult probation cases in the other rural counties increased 39 percent between 1994 and 2003, while the juvenile probation caseloads increased less than 1 percent.

Figure 14



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

The active adult probation caseload rate per 100,000 population in Hardin County increased 40 percent between 1994 and 2003, from 1,351 to 1,889 cases per 100,000 population. During that same period, the active adult probation caseload rate increased 40 percent in the other rural counties, from 743 to 1,041 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the active adult probation caseload rate in Hardin County was 81 percent higher than in the other rural counties.

#### IV. Jail Populations in Hardin County

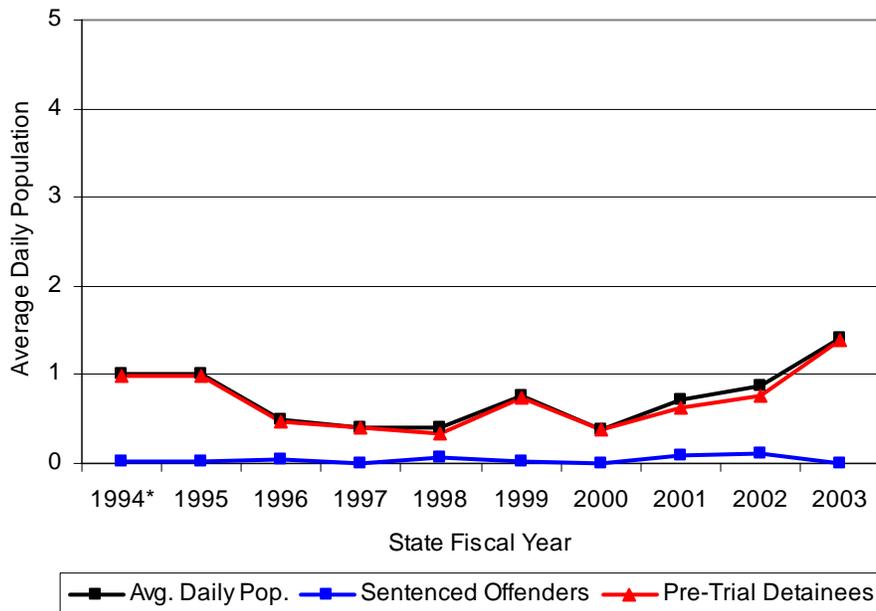
Jail data in Illinois are collected by the Illinois Department of Corrections' Bureau of Inspections and Audits. As with court data, data are not available detailing the specific offenses for which offenders were held in county jails. In addition, between SFYs 1992 and 1994, the IDOC did not collect Illinois jail population data. Data presented for SFY 1994 were estimated by the Authority using the reported SFYs 1991 and 1995 data.

##### *Average Daily Population of the Hardin County Jail*

The Hardin County Jail was one of 91 county jails in operation in Illinois during State Fiscal Year 2003. There are 11 counties that did not operate a jail of their own; they rely on other counties to house their pretrial detainees and sentenced offenders at either a per-diem or contracted rate.

Between 1994 and 2003, the average daily population of the Hardin County Jail averaged about one inmate, with pretrial detainees (those individuals who have been arrested for a crime and are awaiting trial) accounting for the majority of inmates during the period (Figure 15).

**Figure 15**  
**Average Daily Population of the Hardin County Jail**



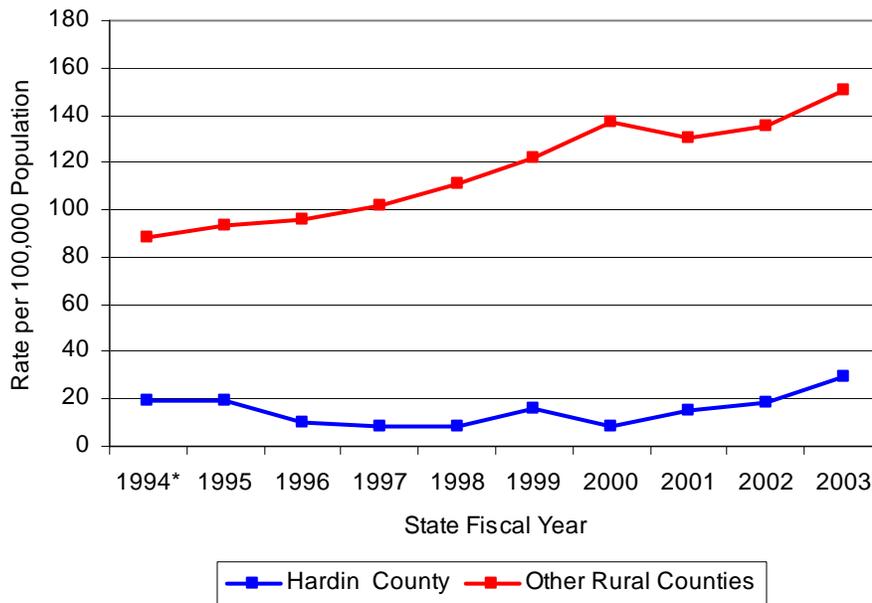
Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois Department of Corrections and U.S. Census Bureau data

\* Information estimated by ICJIA

Between State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2003, the average daily jail population rate in Hardin County increased 52 percent, from 20 to 30 per 100,000 population (Figure 16). During this same period, the average daily jail population rate in the other rural counties increased 71 percent, from 88 to 151 per 100,000 population. In 2003, the Hardin County Jail had an average daily jail population rate 80 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 16**

**Average Daily Jail Population Rates, Hardin and Other Rural Counties**



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois Department of Corrections and U.S. Census Bureau data

## **V. Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect in Hardin County**

### **Substance-Exposed Infants in Hardin County**

Illinois continues to experience the effects of prenatal substance abuse. In Illinois, if a baby is born and thought to have been exposed to illegal substances or alcohol, either through observation by physicians or toxicology tests, the case is reported to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). These cases are then investigated by DCFS to verify the child's prenatal exposure to either alcohol or illegal substances. Between State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2004, 96 of Illinois' 102 counties reported at least one case of a substance-exposed infant.

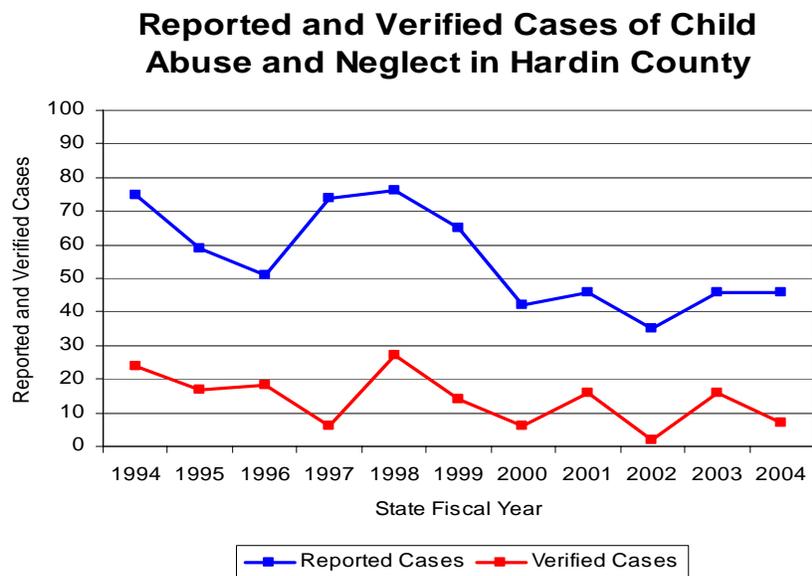
Between State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2004, there were no reported cases of substance-exposed infants in Hardin County. During the same period, the number of reported cases of substance-exposed infants in the other rural counties increased 23 percent, from 63 to 102, while the number of verified cases of substance-exposed infants increased 43 percent, from 44 to 63.

## Child Abuse and Neglect Cases Reported and Verified in Hardin County

Recent research on the relationship between maltreatment of youth and delinquency has revealed an important distinction between child maltreatment and adolescent maltreatment. Using data from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Program of Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency, researchers have found that youth that were abused during childhood (12 years of age or less) were no more likely to become delinquent than youth who were not abused, but youth who were abused during adolescence (after age 12) were significantly more likely to be delinquent.<sup>1</sup> While prior child abuse may not be linked to juvenile delinquency, studies examining prior child abuse have shown that childhood victimization may be linked to other poor outcomes in youth, including low academic achievement, teenage parenthood (particularly for females), drug use, and symptoms of mental illness.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, research examining adolescent victimization (including physical and sexual assaults) and adult outcomes has found a correlation between previous victimization and substance abuse, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder in adulthood.<sup>3</sup> In Illinois, DCFS investigates reported cases of child abuse.

Between State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2004, the number of child abuse and neglect cases reported in Hardin County decreased 39 percent, from 75 to 46 (Figure 17). During that same period, 153 cases, or 25 percent of all cases reported, were verified by a DCFS investigation. Verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Hardin County also decreased 71 percent between SFYs 1994 and 2004, from 24 to seven.

Figure 17



Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

<sup>1</sup> Thornberry, Terence P., David Huizinga and Rolf Loeber. 2004. "The Causes and Correlates Studies: Findings and Policy Implications." *Juvenile Justice Journal*. 9:1. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

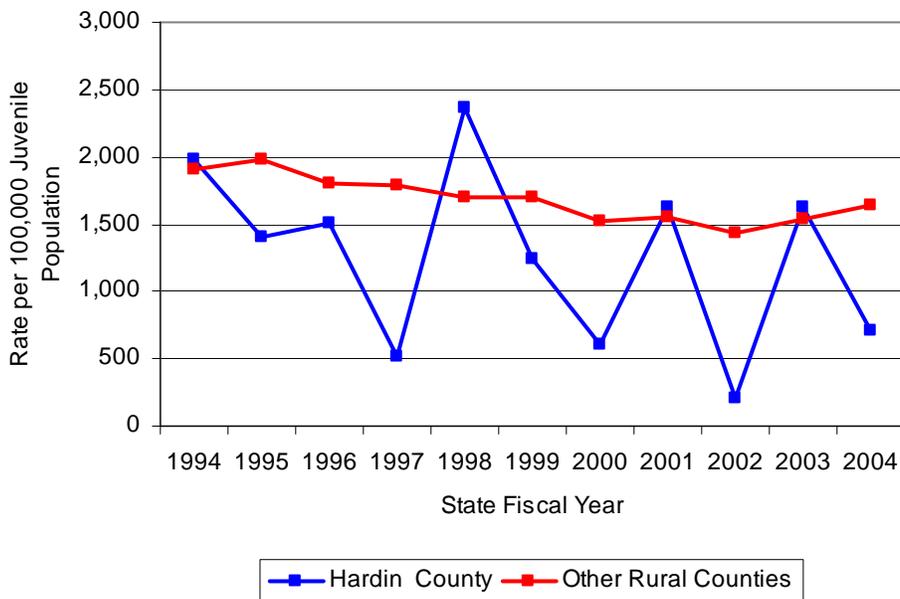
<sup>2</sup> Kelly, B., Thornberry, T. and Smith, C. 1997. "In the Wake of Childhood Maltreatment." *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

<sup>3</sup> Menard, S. 2002. "Short and Long-Term Consequences of Adolescent Victimization." *Youth Research Bulletin*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Between State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2004, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Hardin County decreased 64 percent, from 1,974 to 714 per 100,000 juveniles (Figure 18). During the same period, the rate of verified child abuse and neglect cases decreased 14 percent in the other rural counties, from 1,909 to 1,637 per 100,000 juveniles. In SFY 2004, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Hardin County was 56 percent lower than in the other rural counties.

**Figure 18**

**Rate of Verified Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect, Hardin and All Other Rural Counties**



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and U.S. Census Bureau data



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