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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 LaSalle 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

LaSalle County, located in north central Illinois, covers an area of 1,135 square miles and had a 2003 population of 112,037, according to estimates by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census. Using these figures, LaSalle County was the 101<sup>st</sup> largest county in Illinois geographically, but 16<sup>th</sup> largest in terms of population. Combining these two measures, LaSalle County had the 24<sup>th</sup> highest population density per square mile among Illinois' 102 counties.

As with the previous reports, information specific to LaSalle 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, LaSalle County is one of Illinois' 66 rural counties. Throughout this report, the criminal justice activity trends experienced in LaSalle 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 LaSalle 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.

In addition to local law enforcement agencies, the Zone 3 / LaSalle Task Force (Z3/ LTF) also serves LaSalle County. Throughout most of the period analyzed, there were 21 Metropolitan Enforcement Groups (MEGs) and task forces operating in Illinois. A county is considered to be served by a MEG or task force if at least one law enforcement agency within that county participated in that MEG or task force either by providing personnel or financial resources.

To learn more about the drug enforcement activities of the Zone 3 / LaSalle Task Force and Illinois' other MEGs and task forces, profiles of each of the units were developed by the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit and are available through the Authority's Criminal Justice Information Clearinghouse or can be downloaded from the Authority's Website at [www.icjia.state.il.us](http://www.icjia.state.il.us).

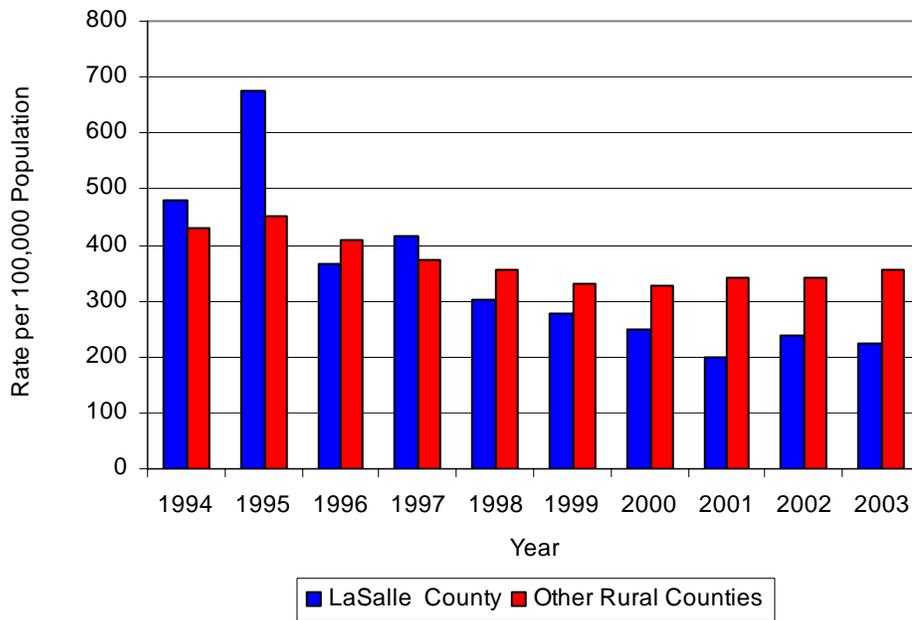
### *Violent Index Offenses Reported to the Police in LaSalle County*

The number of violent Index offenses reported to the police decreased 52 percent in LaSalle County between 1994 and 2003, from 524 to 252. As in previous years and in most other counties, aggravated assault offenses accounted for the majority (71 percent) of violent Index offenses reported in LaSalle County in 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the violent Index offense rate in LaSalle County decreased 53 percent, from 479 to 225 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 1). During that same period, the violent Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 18 percent, from 430 to 354 offenses per 100,000 population. The 2003 violent Index offense rate in LaSalle County was 37 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 1**

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



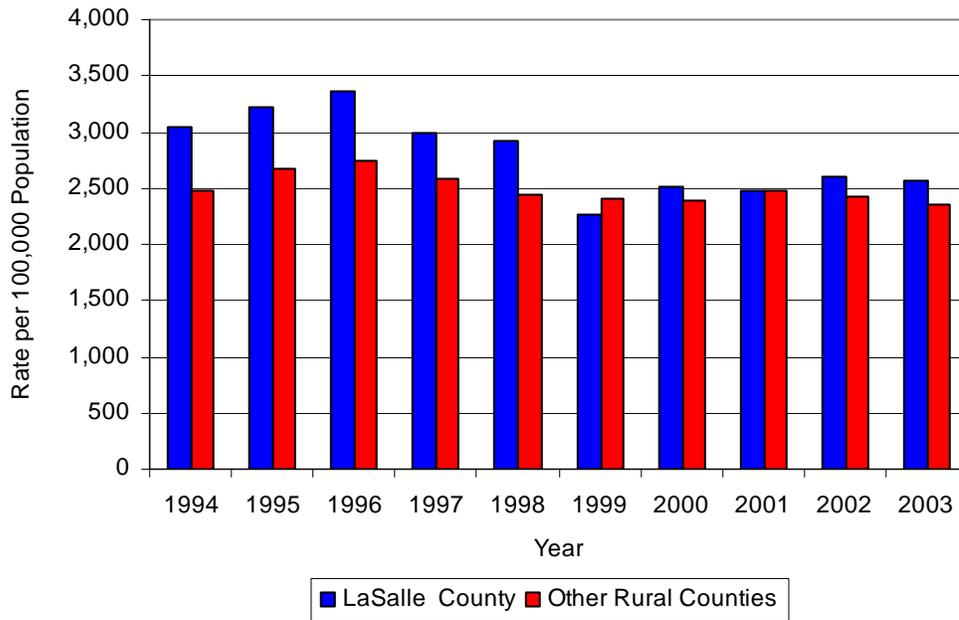
Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

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

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of property Index offenses reported to the police in LaSalle County decreased 13 percent, from 3,334 to 2,884. Thefts accounted for 72 percent of all property Index offenses reported in LaSalle County during 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the property Index offense rate in LaSalle County decreased 15 percent, from 3,046 to 2,574 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 2). During the same period, the property Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 6 percent, from 2,486 to 2,347 offenses per 100,000 population. LaSalle County's 2003 property Index offense rate was 10 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 2**  
**Total Property Index Offense Rates in LaSalle and Other Rural Counties**



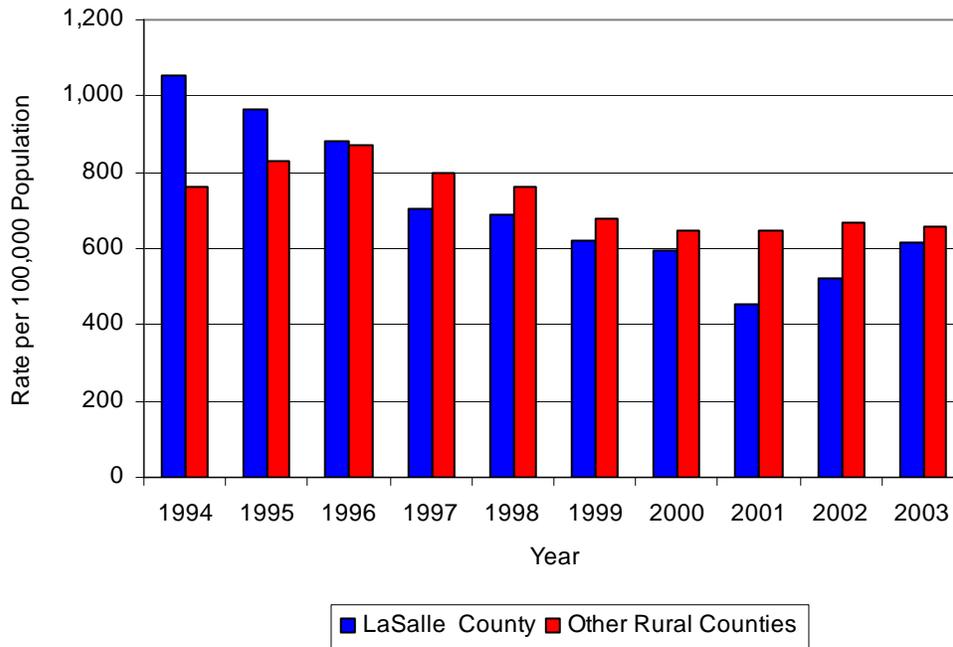
Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

*Index Arrests by LaSalle County Law Enforcement Agencies*

Between 1994 and 2003, arrests for total Index offenses by law enforcement agencies in LaSalle County decreased 40 percent, from 1,153 to 689. The majority of Index arrests were for property Index offenses. Of the 689 Index arrests made in LaSalle County during 2003, 18 percent were for violent Index crimes and 82 percent were for property Index crimes. Arrests for theft and aggravated assault accounted for the majority of property and violent Index arrests in LaSalle County during 2003. Of all violent Index arrests, 83 percent were arrests for aggravated assault, while thefts accounted for 72 percent of all property Index arrests.

Between 1994 and 2003, the Index arrest rate in LaSalle County decreased 42 percent, from 1,053 to 615 arrests per 100,000 population (Figure 3). During the same period, the Index arrest rate in the other rural counties decreased 14 percent, from 764 to 659 arrests per 100,000 population. In 2003, LaSalle County's Index arrest rate was 7 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 3**  
**Index Arrest Rates in LaSalle and Other Rural Counties**



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

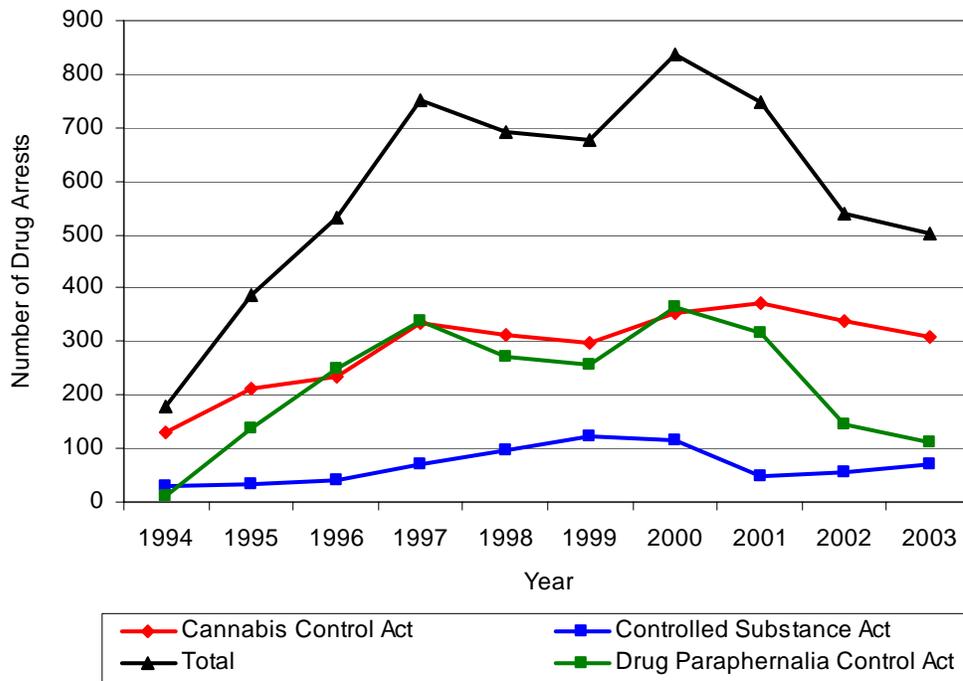
*Drug Offense Arrests in LaSalle County*

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 Syringe and Needles Act) increased nearly tripled in LaSalle County, from 177 to 502 (Figure 4). Total drug arrests in LaSalle County remained relatively stable between 1983 and 1992, before increasing nearly every year thereafter reaching a period high of 838 drug arrests in 2000. Drug Paraphernalia Control Act violations accounted for the majority of the increase in total drug arrests, increasing more than eight-fold from 12 arrests in 1994 to 113 in 2003, or in other words, 23 percent of all drugs arrests in 2003.

During the period analyzed, arrests for violations of Illinois' Cannabis Control Act (which prohibits the possession, sale and cultivation of cannabis) in LaSalle County have consistently out-numbered 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 LaSalle County more than doubled, from 132 to 310. Arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act also more than doubled during the same period, from 29 to 70 (Figure 4).

**Figure 4**

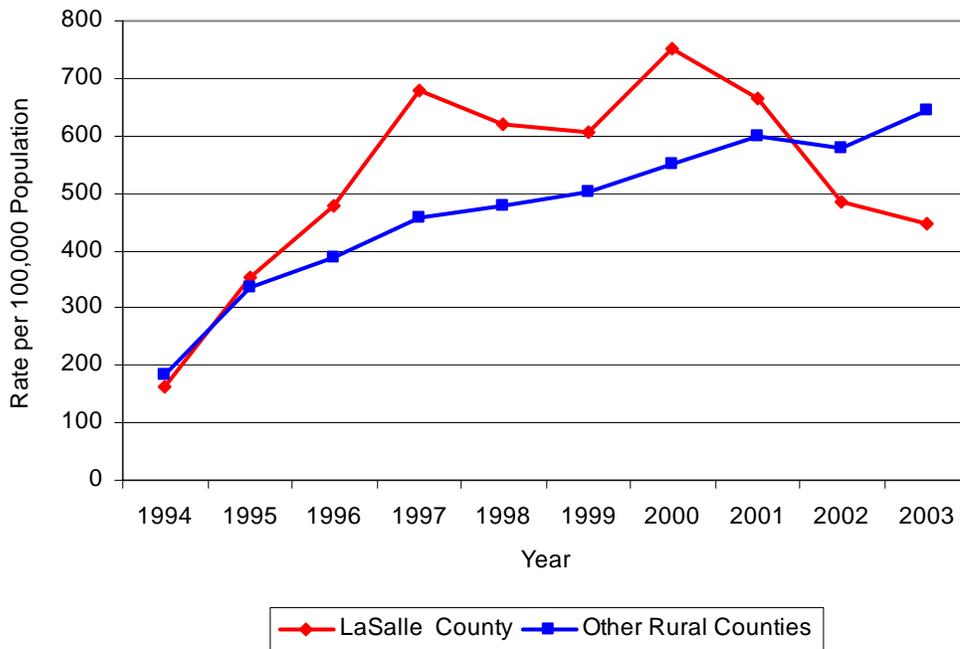
**Drug Arrests in LaSalle County**



Source: Illinois State Police

Between 1994 and 2003, the arrest rate for all drug law violations in LaSalle County also nearly tripled, from 162 to 448 per 100,000 population (Figure 5). The total drug arrest rate in the other rural counties increased more than tripled between 1994 and 2003, from 182 to 646 per 100,000 population. In 2003, the drug arrest rate in LaSalle County was 31 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 5**  
**Drug Arrest Rates in LaSalle**  
**and Other Rural Counties**



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

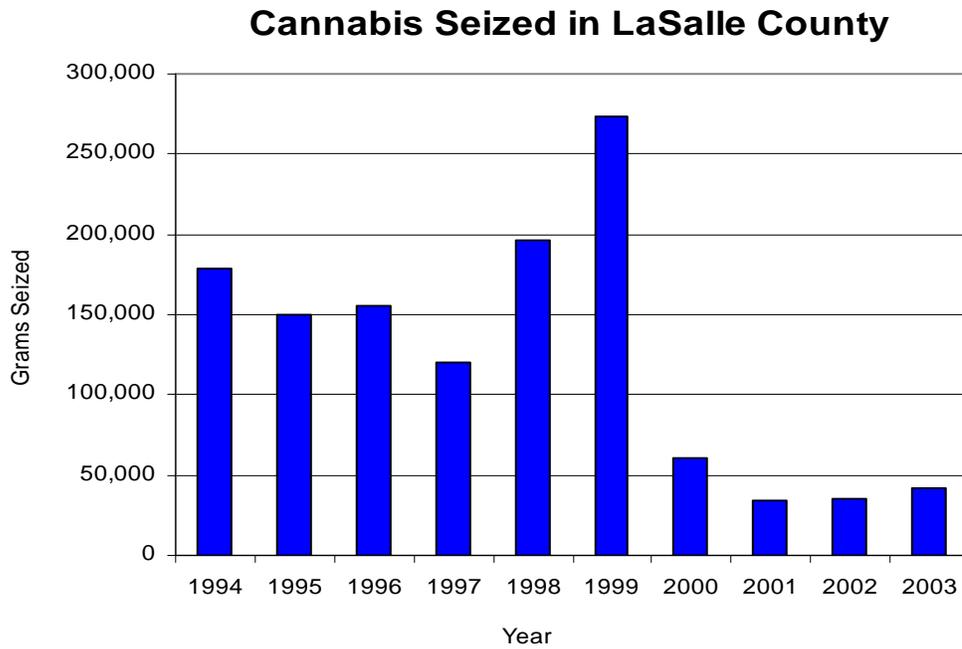
### Drugs Seized in LaSalle County

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 LaSalle County.

*Cannabis Seized in LaSalle County*

Cannabis accounts for the majority of drugs seized in LaSalle County and in most Illinois jurisdictions. Between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in LaSalle County decreased 76 percent, from 178,653 grams to 42,418 grams (Figure 6).

**Figure 6**



Source: Illinois State Police

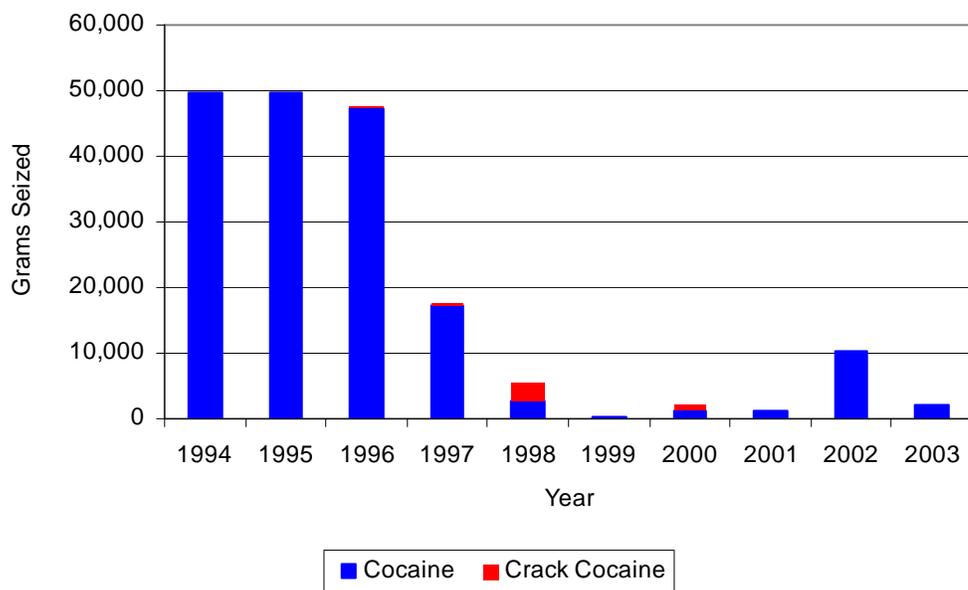
During the period between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in the other rural counties decreased 46 percent, from 429,496 grams to 230,225 grams. In 2003, LaSalle County had a cannabis seizure rate of 37,861 grams per 100,000 population, compared to a rate of 14,583 grams per 100,000 population in the other rural counties.

### *Cocaine and Crack Cocaine Seized in LaSalle County*

The quantity of powder and crack cocaine seized in LaSalle County decreased between 1994 and 2003 (Figure 7). The quantity of powder cocaine seized in LaSalle County decreased 96 percent, from 49,823 grams in 1994 to 1,984 grams in 2003. Similar to most other counties, crack cocaine accounted for a small portion of all cocaine seized in LaSalle County between 1994 and 2003. The quantity of crack cocaine seized in LaSalle County decreased from one gram in 1994 to zero grams in 2003 (Figure 7).

**Figure 7**

### **Cocaine and Crack Cocaine Seized in LaSalle County**



Source: Illinois State Police

The amount of powder cocaine seized in other rural counties decreased during the period analyzed, while the amount of crack cocaine seized increased. Between 1994 and 2003, the amount of powder cocaine seized decreased 45 percent in the other rural counties, from 20,279 grams to 11,081 grams, while the quantity of crack cocaine seized increased from 1,175 grams to 2,106 grams. In 2003, 1,770 grams of powder cocaine per 100,000 population were seized in LaSalle County, nearly triple the 702 grams of powder cocaine per 100,000 population seized in the other rural counties.

### **III. Adult and Juvenile Court Activity in LaSalle 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 LaSalle County and the other rural counties.

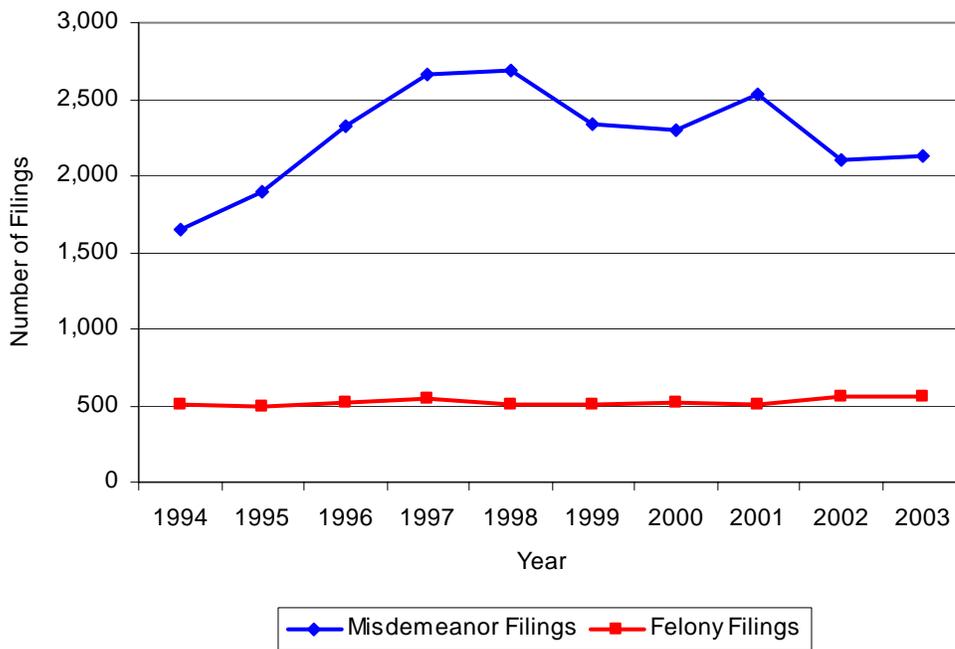
#### *Misdemeanor and Felony Filings in LaSalle County*

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 nearly 7 percent of all filings in LaSalle County’s courts (civil, traffic, family, and other). Between 1994 and 2003, the number of felony filings in LaSalle County increased 11 percent, from 439 to 559 (Figure 8). During the same period, misdemeanor filings increased 30 percent, from 1,780 in 1994 to 2,134 in 2003. In 2003, misdemeanor filings have out-numbered felony filings by nearly four to one.

**Figure 8**

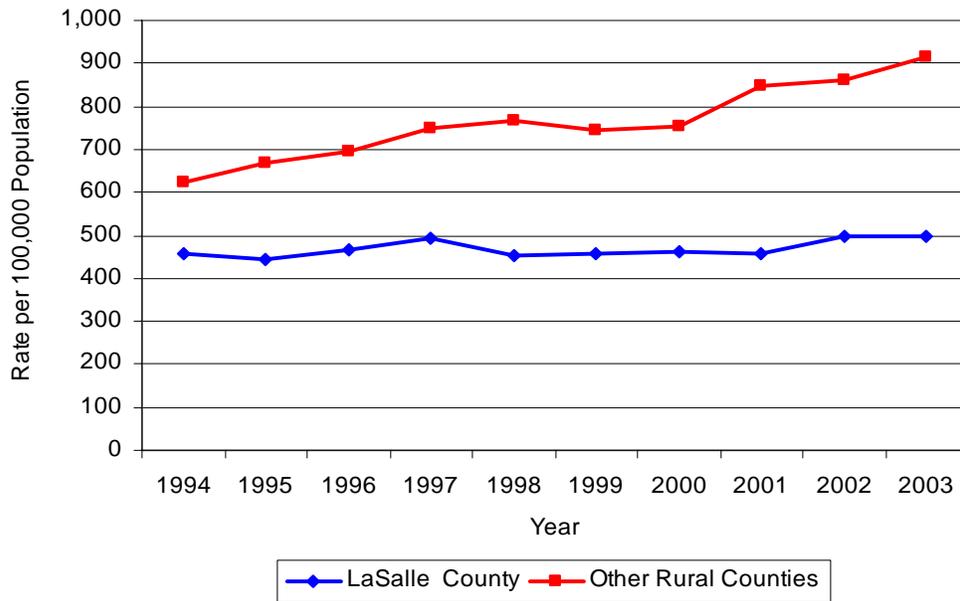
**Felony and Misdemeanor Filings in LaSalle County**



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Between 1994 and 2003, the felony-filing rate in LaSalle County increased 9 percent, from 402 to 499 cases per 100,000 population (Figure 9). The felony-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 47 percent during this period, from 598 to 917 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the felony-filing rate in LaSalle County was 46 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 9**  
**Felony Filing Rates in LaSalle and Other Rural Counties**

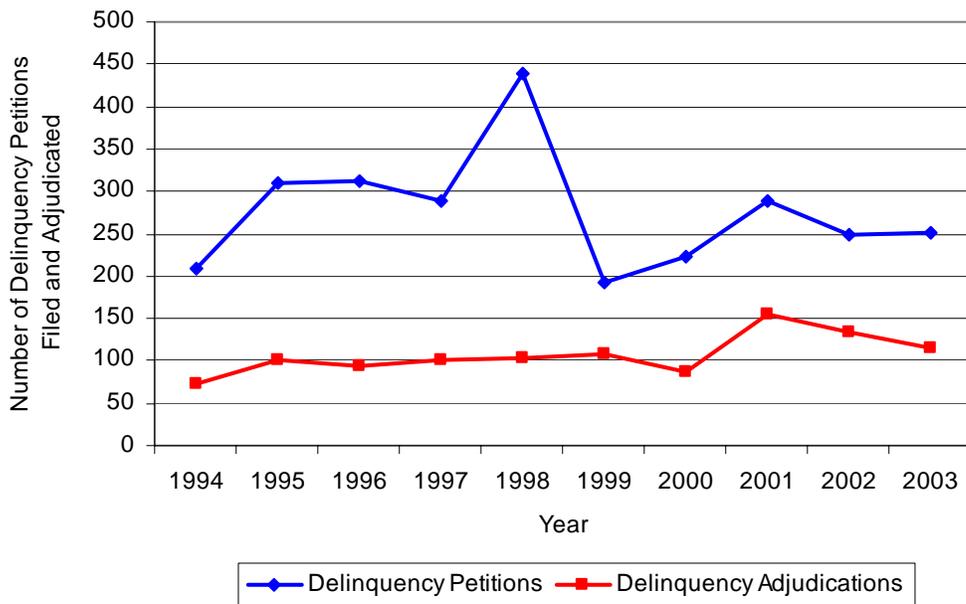


Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts and U.S. Census Bureau data

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.

The number of juvenile delinquency petitions filed and delinquency adjudications increased between 1994 and 2003. The number of juvenile delinquency petitions filed in LaSalle County increased 21 percent from 208 to 251, while delinquency adjudications increased 58 percent from 72 to 114 (Figure 10). In 2003, 45 percent of the juveniles named in delinquency petitions were adjudicated delinquent, compared to 35 percent in 1994.

**Figure 10**  
**Juvenile Delinquency Petitions Filed and Adjudicated in LaSalle County**



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

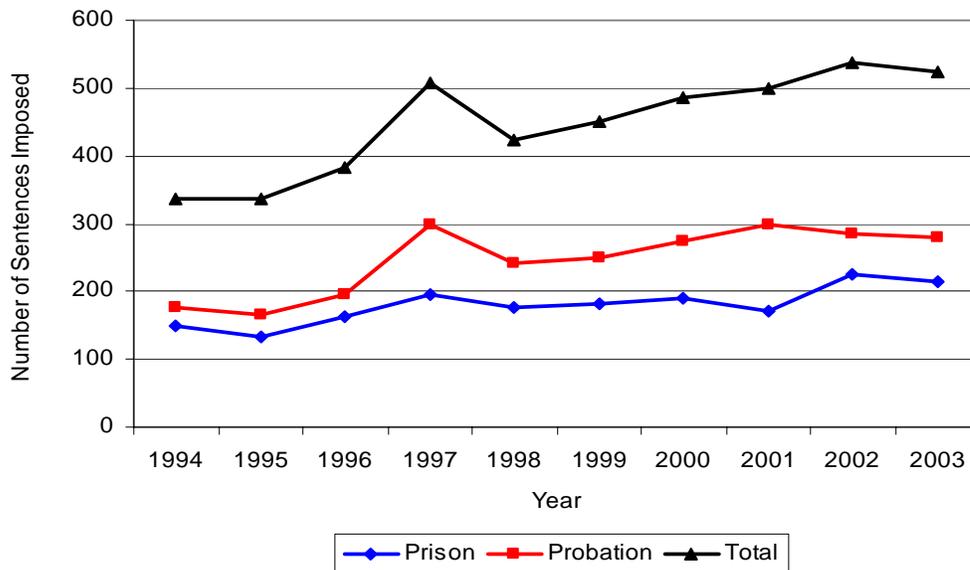
Between 1994 and 2003, the delinquency petition-filing rate in LaSalle County increased 15 percent from 1,881 to 2,155 per 100,000 juveniles. During the same period, the delinquency petition-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 13 percent, from 2,021 to 2,275 petitions per 100,000 juveniles. In 2003, the delinquency petition-filing rate in LaSalle County was 5 percent lower than 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 LaSalle County increased 55 percent, from 337 to 523 (Figure 11). The number of convicted felons sentenced to either prison or probation increased during this period. The number of convicted felons sentenced to prison increased 45 percent, from 148 to 215, while the number of convicted felons sentenced to probation increased 58 percent, from 177 to 241. Felony probation sentences as a proportion of total sentences remained the same at 53 percent from 1994 to 2003. The proportion of felons sentenced to prison decreased slightly, from 44 percent in 1994 to 41 percent in 2003. As a result, since 1994, more convicted felons in LaSalle County have been sentenced to probation rather than being sentenced to prison. In 2003, 6 percent of convicted felons were sentenced to something other than prison or probation.

**Figure 11**

**Sentences Imposed on Felons Convicted in LaSalle County**

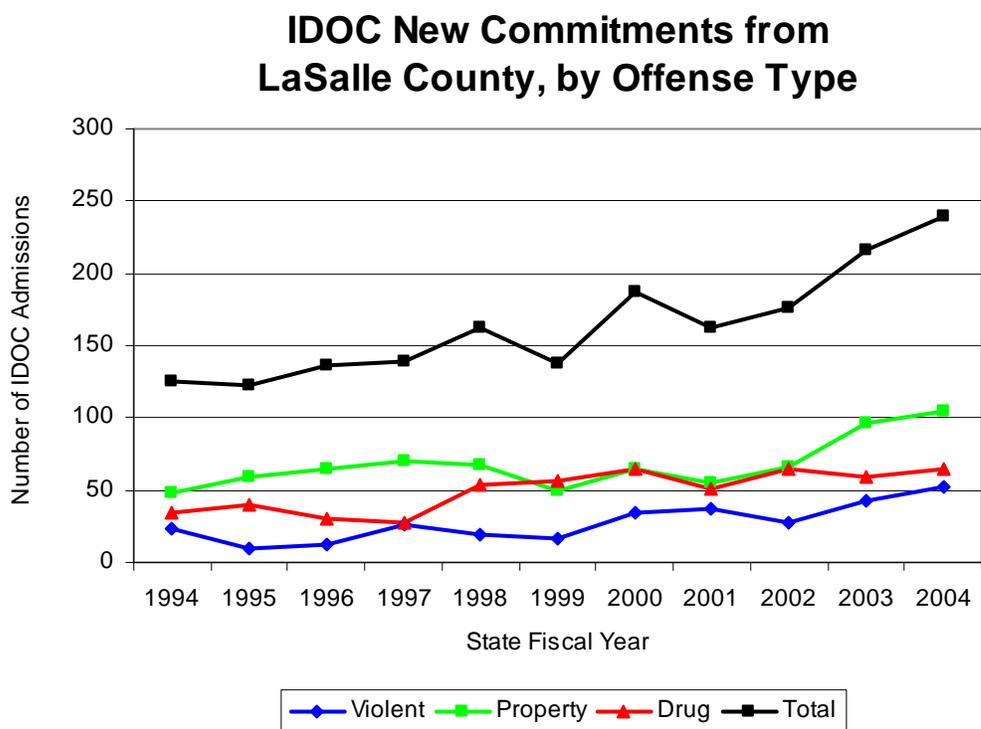


Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

## Adult Prison Admissions from LaSalle County

Between State Fiscal Years (SFYs) 1994 and 2004, the number of admissions to the Illinois Department of Corrections' Adult Division from LaSalle County nearly doubled, from 125 to 240 (Figure 12). During this period, the number of admissions increased for drug, property, and violent offender admissions. The number of drug offender admissions increased 88 percent between SFYs 1994 and 2004, from 34 to 64, while the number of violent offenders admitted more than doubled, from 24 to 52 and the number of property offender admissions more than doubled, from 48 in SFY 1994 to 104 in SFY 2004.

Figure 12



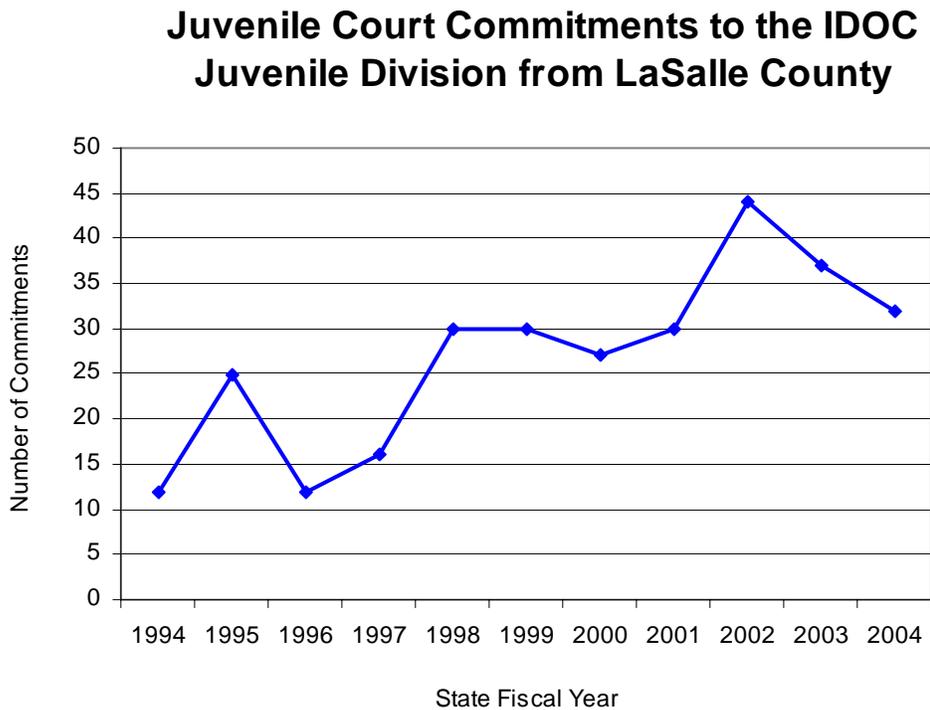
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, violent and property offenders accounted for an increased proportion of all admissions from LaSalle County. In SFY 1994, violent offenders accounted for 19 percent of all admissions from LaSalle County, compared to 22 percent in SFY 2004, while the proportion accounted for by property offenders increased from 38 percent to 43 percent between SFYs 1994 and 2004. Drug offender admissions as a proportion of total admissions from LaSalle County remained the same at 27 percent in SFYs 1994 and 2004.

## 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 State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2004, the number of court commitments to the IDOC's Juvenile Division from LaSalle County nearly tripled, from 12 to 32 (Figure 13).

Figure 13



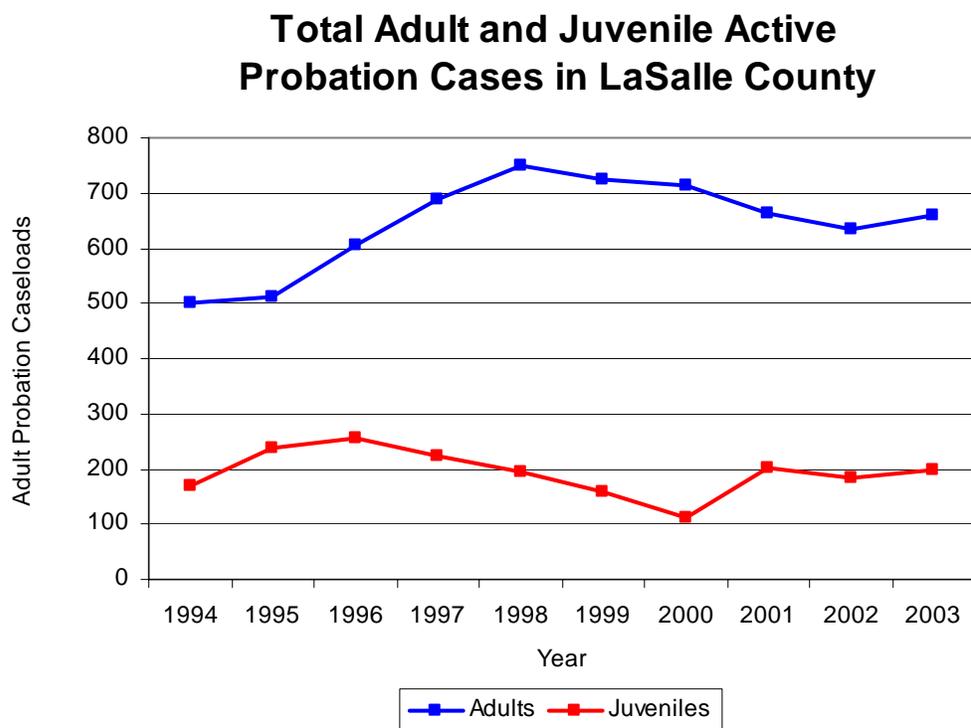
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

In SFY 2004, LaSalle County's rate of commitments to the IDOC's Juvenile Division of 330 commitments per 100,000 juveniles was 48 percent higher than the 223 commitments per 100,000 juveniles from the other rural counties.

## Adult and Juvenile Probation Caseloads in LaSalle County

Between December 31, 1994 and December 31, 2003, the number of active adult probation cases in LaSalle County increased 32 percent, from 500 to 659 (Figure 14). In 2003, felony offenders accounted for 72 percent of LaSalle County's active adult probation caseload. Between 1994 and 2003, the number of juveniles supervised by the LaSalle County Juvenile Probation Department increased 17 percent, from 169 to 197. 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 only 1 percent.

Figure 14



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

The active adult probation caseload rate per 100,000 population in LaSalle County increased 29 percent between 1994 and 2003, from 457 to 588 cases per 100,000 population. During that same period, the active adult probation caseload rate increased 41 percent in the other rural counties, from 764 to 1,076 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the active adult probation caseload rate in LaSalle County was 45 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

#### IV. Jail Populations in LaSalle 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.

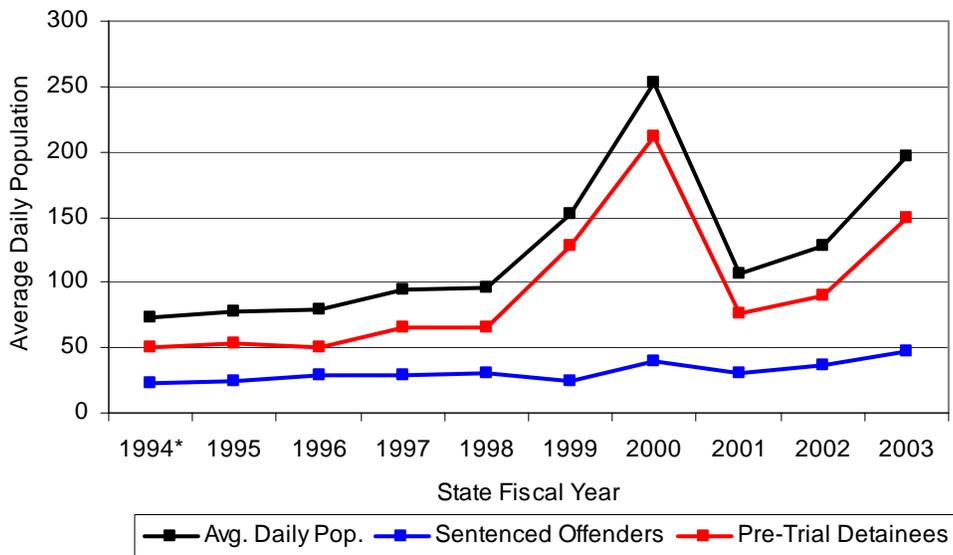
##### *Average Daily Population of the LaSalle County Jail*

The LaSalle County Jail was one of 91 county jails in operation in Illinois during state fiscal year 1998. 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 SFYs 1994 and 2003, the average daily population of the LaSalle County Jail almost tripled, from 74 to 196 inmates (Figure 15). During this period, pretrial detainees (those individuals who have been arrested for a crime and are awaiting trial) accounted for an increased percentage of the average daily jail population in LaSalle County; from 69 percent in SFY 1994 to 76 percent in SFY 2003. On the other hand, sentenced offenders (those offenders who have been convicted and sentenced to the county jail) accounted for a decreased percentage; 31 percent in SFY 1994 compared to 24 percent in SFY 2003.

**Figure 15**

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



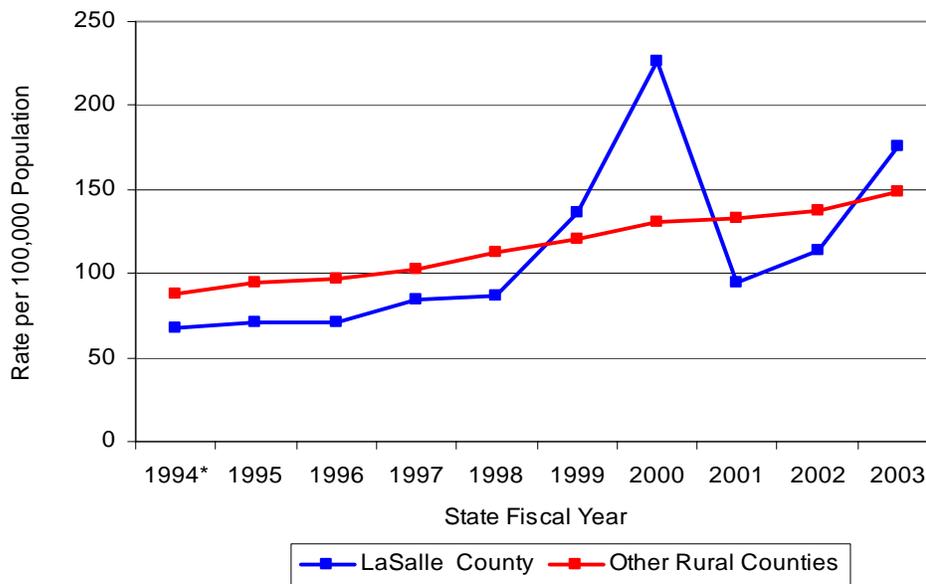
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

\* Information estimated by ICJIA

Between SFYs 1994 and 2003, the average daily jail population rate in LaSalle County also nearly tripled, from 67 to 175 per 100,000 population (Figure 16). During this same period, the average daily jail population rate in the other rural counties increased 70 percent, from 87 to 149 per 100,000 population. In SFY 2003, the LaSalle County Jail had an average daily jail population rate 18 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 16**

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



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

\* Information estimated by ICJIA

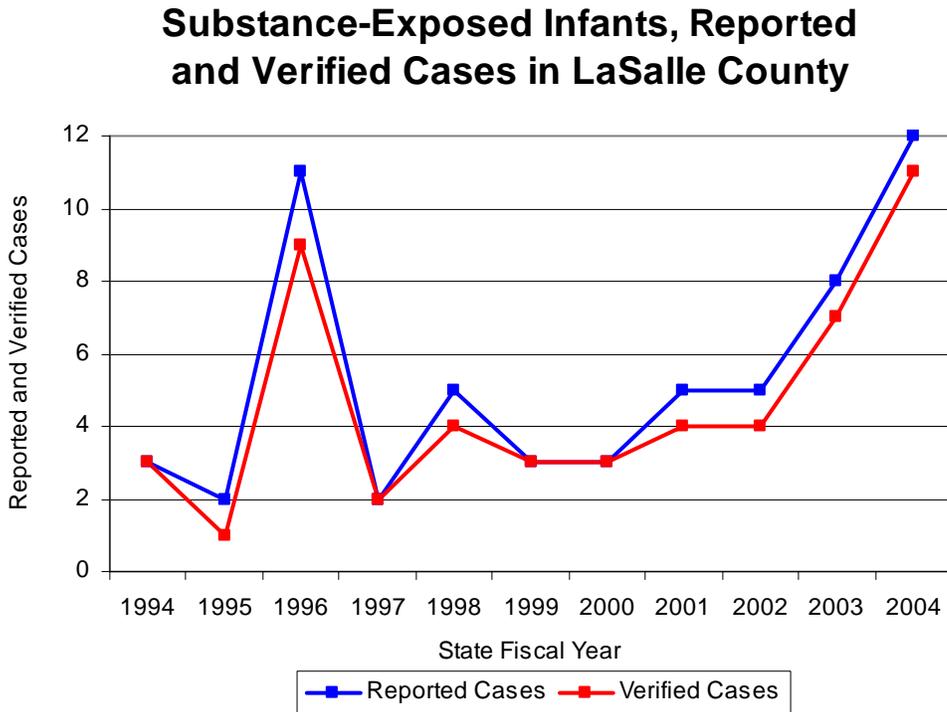
## V. Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect in LaSalle County

### *Substance-Exposed Infants in LaSalle 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 SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of cases of substance-exposed infants reported in LaSalle County increased from three to 12. During the same period, the number of verified cases increased from three to 11 (Figure 17).

**Figure 17**



Source: Department of Children and Family Services

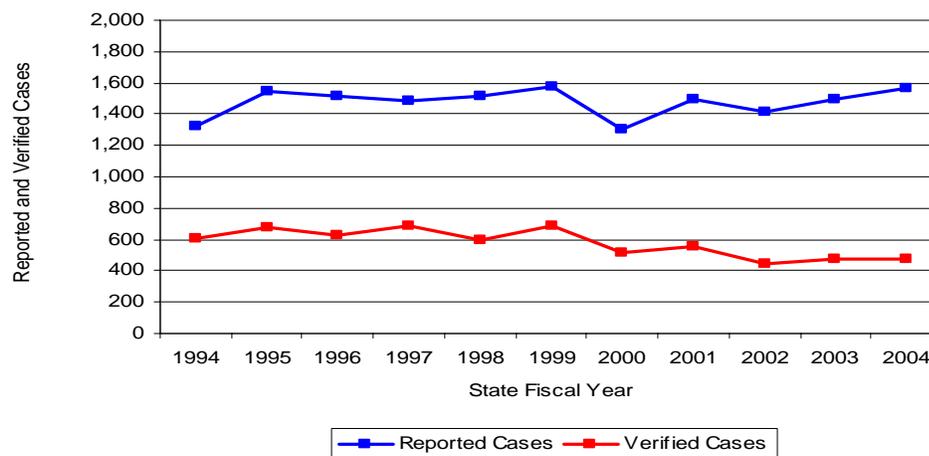
Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of reported cases of substance-exposed infants in the other rural counties increased 13 percent, from 80 to 90, while the number of verified cases of substance-exposed infants increased 27 percent, from 41 to 52.

## Child Abuse and Neglect Cases Reported and Verified in LaSalle 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 SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of child abuse and neglect cases reported in LaSalle County increased 18 percent, from 1,321 to 1,563 (Figure 18). During that same period, 6,346 cases, or 28 percent of all cases reported were verified by a DCFS investigation. Verified cases of child abuse and neglect in LaSalle County decreased 21 percent between SFYs 1994 and 2004, from 603 to 476.

**Figure 18**  
**Reported and Verified Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect in LaSalle County**



Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

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

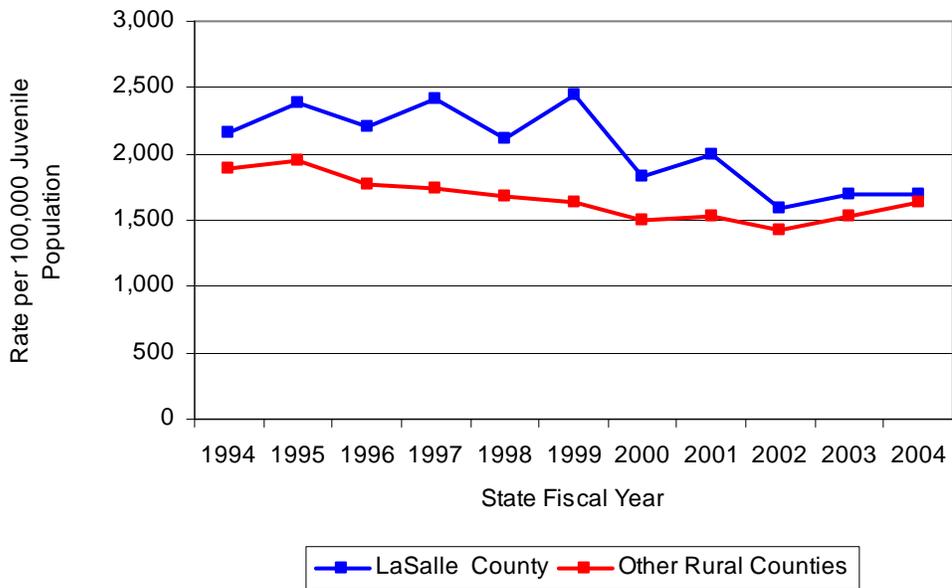
<sup>2</sup> Kelly, B., Thornberry, T. and Smith, C. 1997. "In the Wake of Childhood Maltreatment." *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

<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 SFYs 1994 and 2004, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in LaSalle County decreased from 2,155 to 1,697 per 100,000 juveniles, a 21 percent decrease (Figure 19). During the same period, the rate of verified child abuse and neglect cases decreased 14 percent in the other rural counties, from 1,892 to 1,630 per 100,000 juveniles. In SFY 2004, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in LaSalle County was 4 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 19**

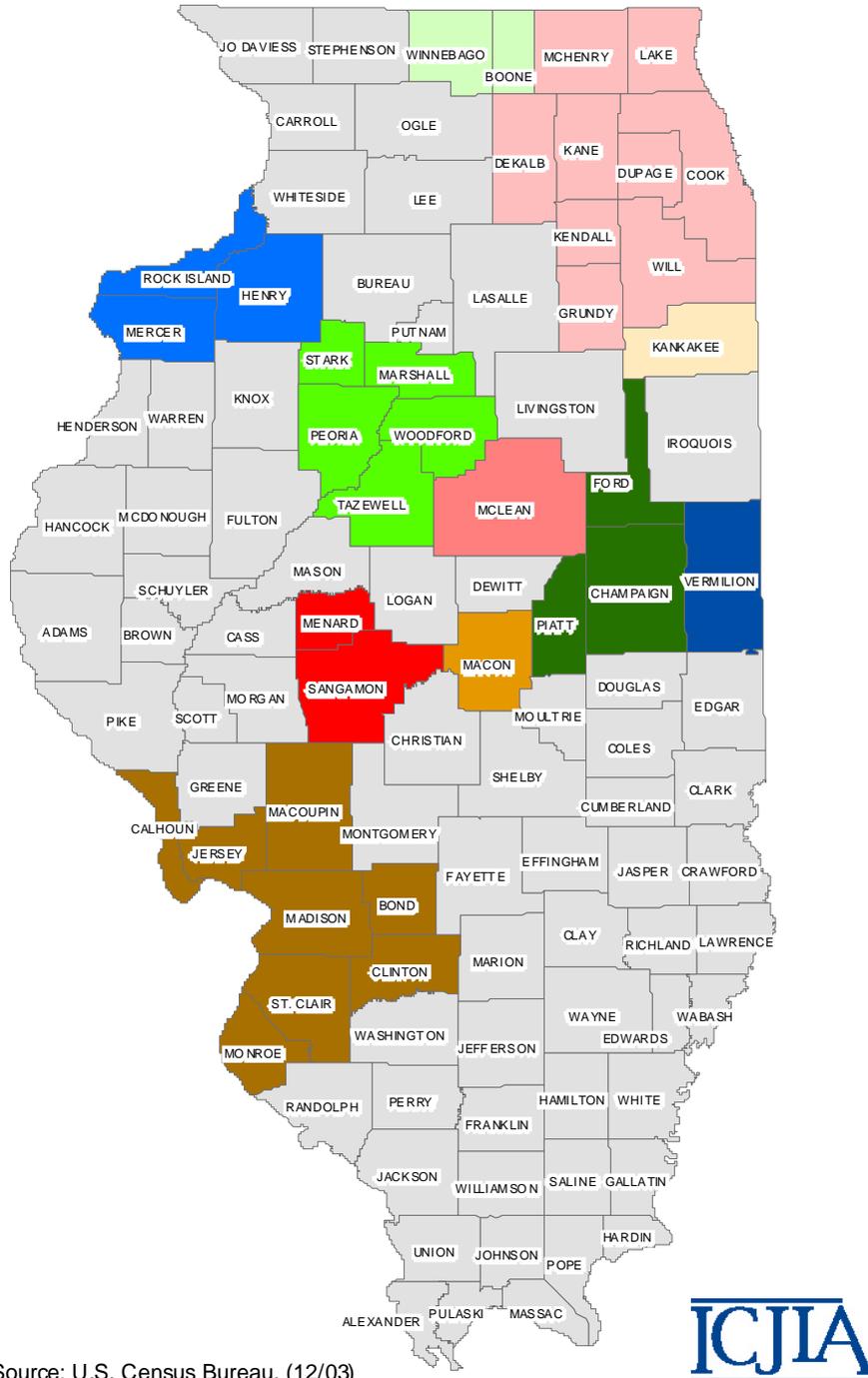
**Rate of Verified Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect, LaSalle and All Other Rural Counties**



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

**VI. Appendix I (Map of Illinois Counties within a Metropolitan Statistical Area)**

**Illinois Counties, by Metropolitan Statistical Area\***



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