

120 S. Riverside Plaza,  
Suite 1016  
Chicago, Illinois 60606

Tel: (312) 793-8550  
Fax: (312) 793-8422  
TDD: (312) 793-4170

[www.icjia.state.il.us](http://www.icjia.state.il.us)

*Prepared by*

**The Research and  
Analysis Unit**

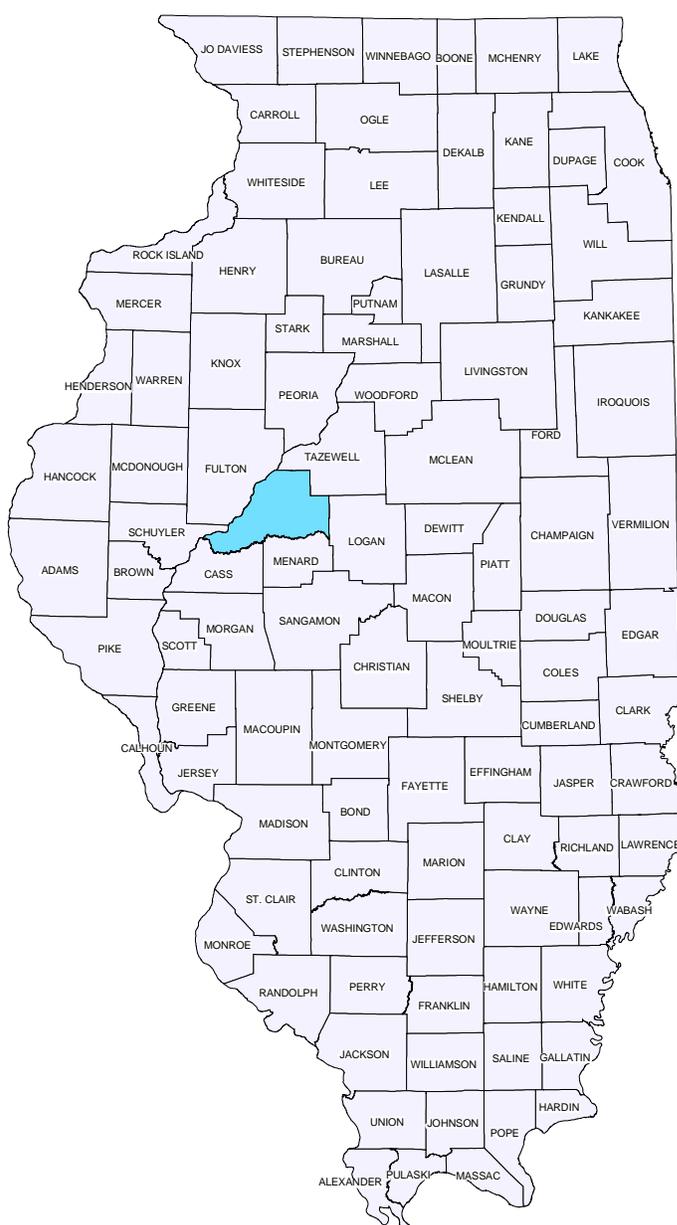
Rod R. Blagojevich  
Governor

Sheldon Sorosky  
Chairman

Lori G. Levin  
Executive Director

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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 Mason County Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems



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Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority  
120 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 1016  
Chicago, Illinois 60606-3997  
Telephone (312) 793-8550  
Telefax (312) 793-8422  
World Wide Website <http://www.icjia.state.il.us>

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This document was put together by the following Research and Analysis Unit staff:

*Sharyn Adams*  
*Jessica Ashley*  
*Robert Bauer*  
*Christopher Humble*  
*Christine Martin*  
*Adriana Perez*  
*Idetta Phillips*  
*Michelle Repp*

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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

Mason County, located in central Illinois, covers an area of 539 square miles and had a 2003 population of 15,884, according to estimates by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census. Using these figures, Mason County was the 48<sup>th</sup> largest county in Illinois geographically, but 29<sup>th</sup> smallest in terms of population. Combining these two measures, Mason County had the 18<sup>th</sup> lowest population density per square mile among Illinois' 102 counties.

As with the previous reports, information specific to Mason 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, Mason County is one of Illinois' 66 rural counties. Throughout this report, the criminal justice activity trends experienced in Mason 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 Mason 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 which 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 Central Illinois Enforcement Group (CIEG) also serves Mason 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 Central Illinois Enforcement Group 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).

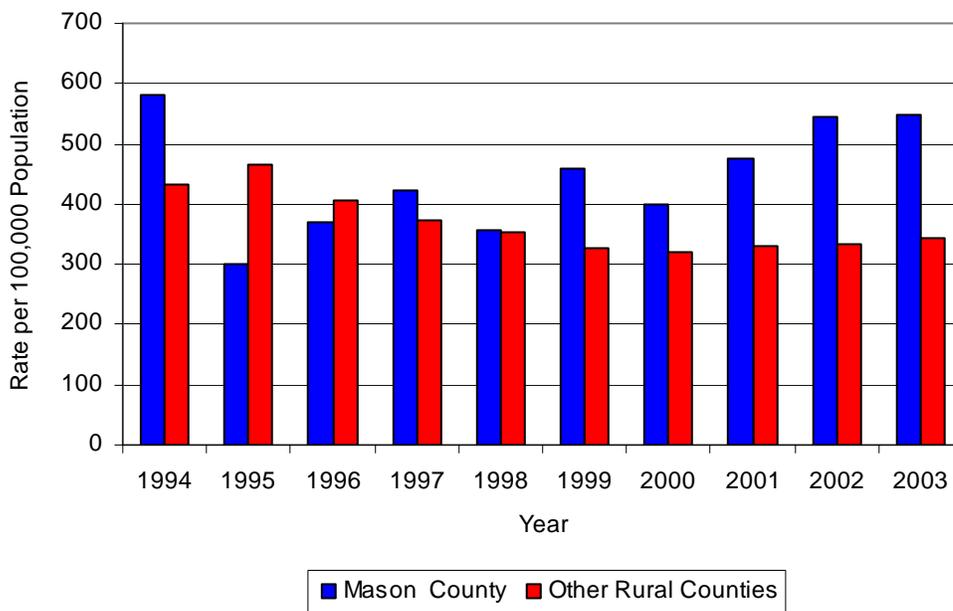
### *Violent Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Mason County*

The number of violent Index offenses reported to the police decreased in Mason County between 1994 and 2003, from 95 to 87, an 8 percent decrease. As in previous years and in most other counties, aggravated assault offenses accounted for the majority (83 percent) of violent Index offenses reported in Mason County in 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the violent Index offense rate in Mason County decreased 6 percent, from 580 to 548 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 1). During that same period, the violent Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 20 percent, from 432 to 344 offenses per 100,000 population. The 2003 violent Index offense rate in Mason County was 59 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 1**

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



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

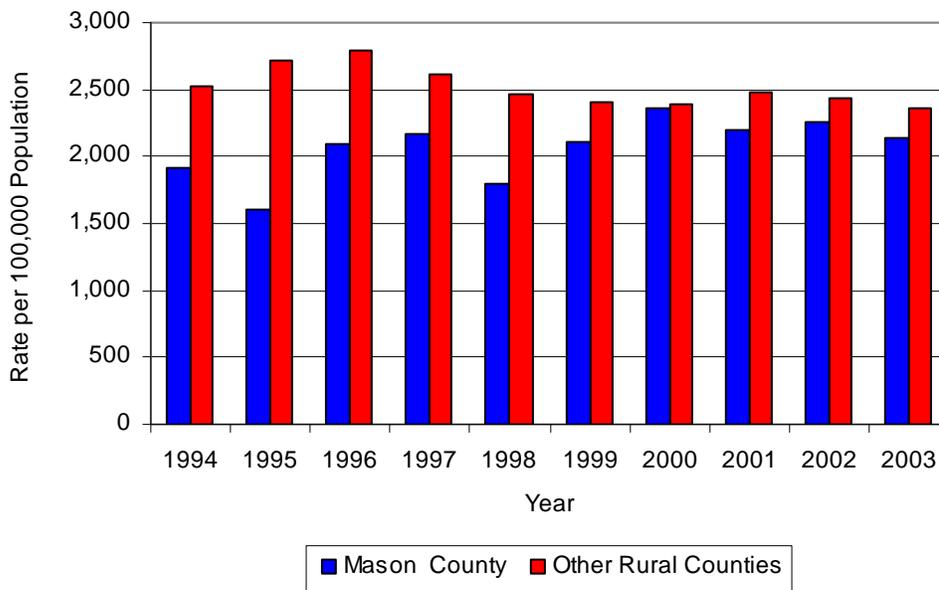
*Property Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Mason County*

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of property Index offenses reported to the police in Mason County increased 8 percent, from 314 to 339. Thefts accounted for 73 percent of all property Index offenses reported in Mason County during 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the property Index offense rate in Mason County increased 11 percent, from 1,918 to 2,134 (Figure 2). The property Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 6 percent, from 2,528 to 2,364 offenses per 100,000 population. Mason County's 2003 property Index offense rate was 10 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 2**

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



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

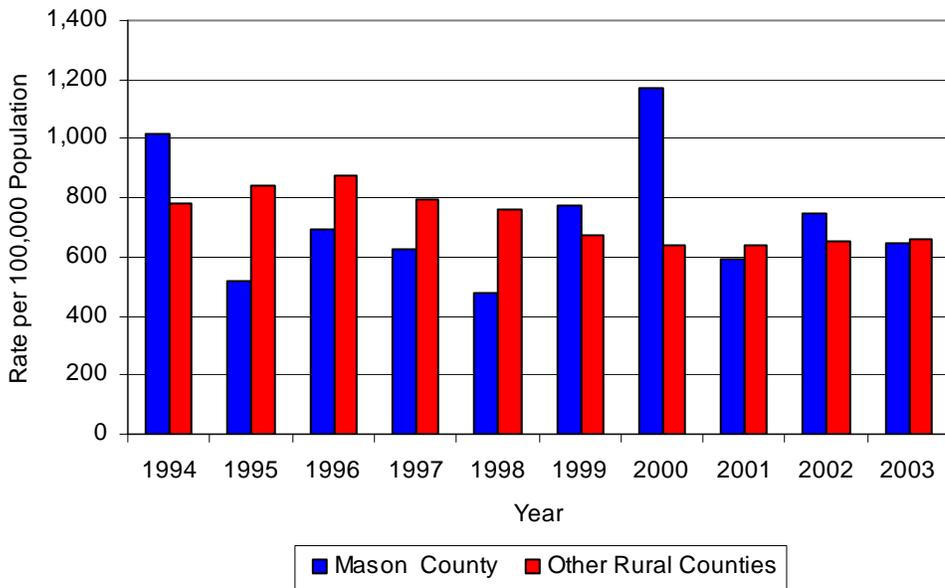
*Index Arrests by Mason County Law Enforcement Agencies*

Between 1994 and 2003, arrests for total Index offenses by law enforcement agencies in Mason County decreased 38 percent, from 166 to 103. The majority of Index arrests were for property Index offenses. Of the 103 Index arrests made in Mason County during 2003, 41 percent were for violent Index crimes and 59 percent were for property Index crimes. Arrests for theft and aggravated assault accounted for the majority of property and violent Index arrests in Mason County during 2003. Thefts accounted for 80 percent of all property Index arrests, while aggravated assaults accounted for 88 percent of all violent Index arrests in Mason County in 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the Index arrest rate in Mason County decreased 36 percent, from 1,014 to 648 arrests per 100,000 population (Figure 3). During the same period, the Index arrest rate in the other rural counties decreased 16 percent, from 780 to 657 arrests per 100,000 population. In 2003, Mason County's Index arrest rate was 1 percent lower than the Index arrest rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 3**

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



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

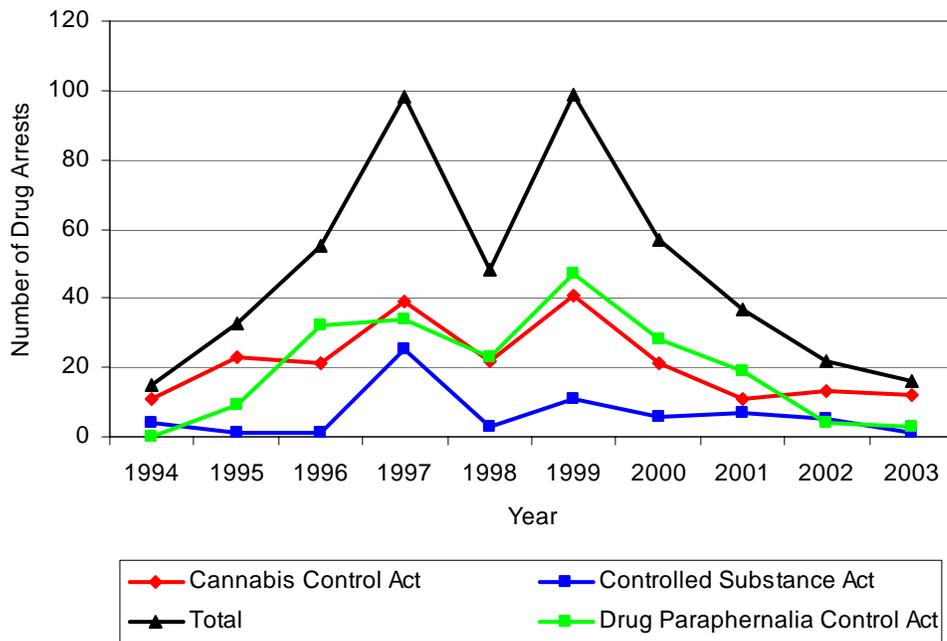
*Drug Offense Arrests in Mason County*

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) increased slightly in Mason County, from 15 to 16 (Figure 4). Similar to other counties, total drug arrests in Mason County remained relatively stable between 1983 and 1993, before increasing nearly every year thereafter to a period high of 99 arrests in 1999, then decreasing every year after that.

During the period analyzed, arrests for violations of Illinois' Cannabis Control Act (which prohibits the possession, sale, and cultivation of cannabis) in Mason 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 Mason County increased from 11 to 12, while arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act decreased from four to one in Mason County, during the same period (Figure 4).

**Figure 4**

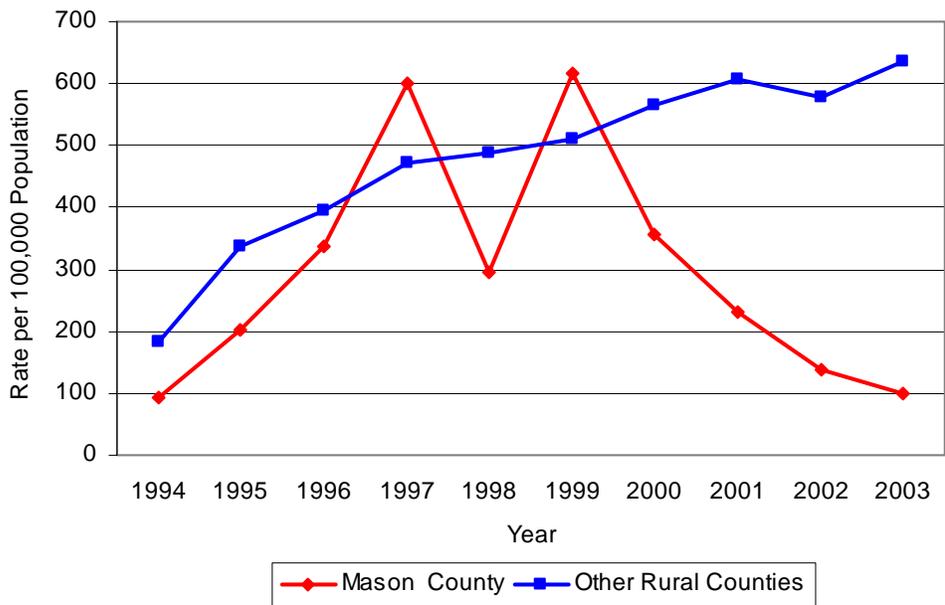
**Drug Arrests in Mason County**



Source: Illinois State Police

Between 1994 and 2003, the arrest rate for all drug law violations in Mason County increased 10 percent, from 92 to 101 per 100,000 population (Figure 5). The total drug arrest rate in the other rural counties more than tripled between 1994 and 2003, from 182 to 637 per 100,000 population. In 2003, the drug arrest rate in Mason County was 84 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

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



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

### Drugs Seized in Mason County

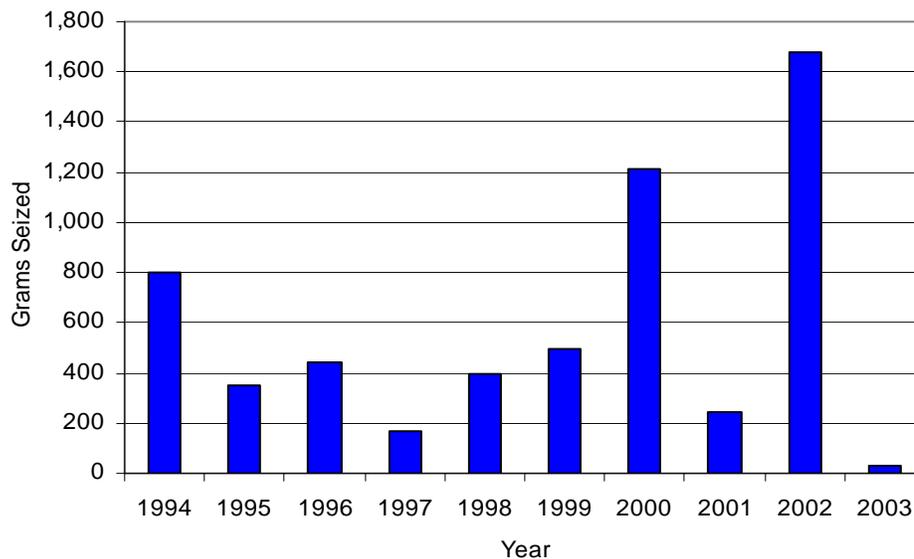
Drugs seized by law enforcement agencies are another indicator of the extent and nature of the illegal drug trade in a jurisdiction. When illegal drugs are seized by law enforcement agencies in Illinois, they are submitted to a crime lab for analysis. Most agencies submit drugs to one of the Illinois 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 Mason County.

### *Cannabis Seized in Mason County*

Cannabis accounts for the majority of drugs seized in Mason County and in most Illinois jurisdictions. Between 1994 and 2003, there were large variations in the number of grams of cannabis seized in Mason County. Between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in Mason County decreased 96 percent, from 798 grams to 31 grams (Figure 6).

**Figure 6**

### **Cannabis Seized in Mason County**



Source: Illinois State Police

During the period between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in the other rural counties decreased 55 percent, from 607,351 grams to 272,612 grams. In 2003, Mason County had a cannabis seizure rate of 193 grams per 100,000 population, compared to the rate of 16,277 grams per 100,000 population in the other rural counties.

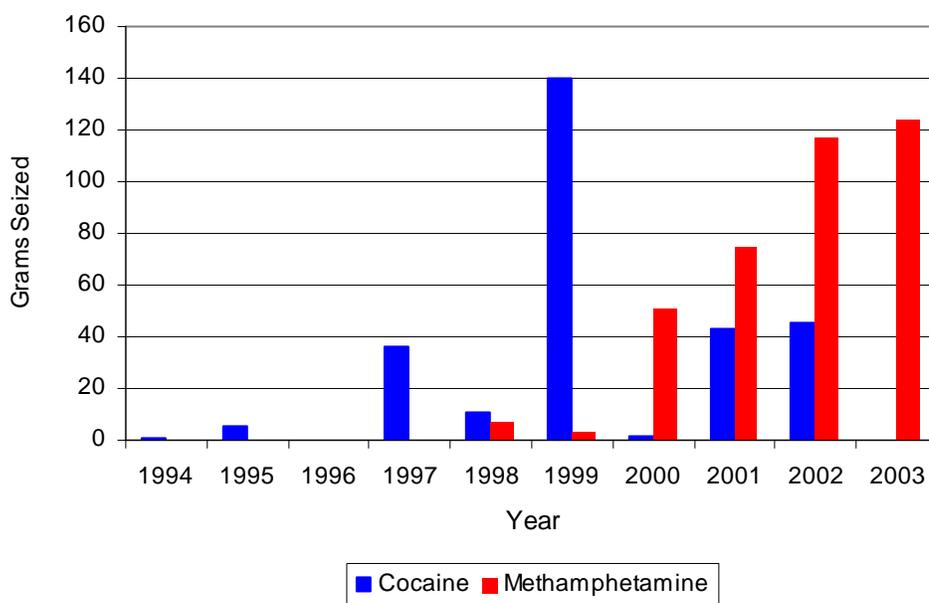
### *Cocaine and Methamphetamine Seized in Mason County*

During the past decade it is clear that methamphetamine “activity” in the state has increased dramatically and has become a significant drug problem in many jurisdictions. Further, the extent to 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.

The quantity of cocaine seized in Mason County remained stable between 1994 and 2003, while the quantity of methamphetamine seized increased. The quantity of cocaine seized in Mason County decreased from slightly less than 1 gram (0.8) in 1994 to zero grams in 2003. Between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of methamphetamine seized in Mason County increased from zero grams to nearly 124 grams (Figure 7).

**Figure 7**

### **Cocaine\* and Methamphetamine Seized in Mason County**



Source: Illinois State Police

\*Cocaine totals include both powder and crack cocaine

The quantity of cocaine seized decreased, while methamphetamine increased in the other rural counties, during the period analyzed. Between 1994 and 2003, the amount of cocaine seized decreased 79 percent in the other rural counties, from 71,278 grams to 15,170 grams, while the quantity of methamphetamine seized increased from 2,619 grams to 13,094 grams. In 2003, 906 grams of powder cocaine per 100,000 population were seized in the other rural counties. In 2003, 778 grams of methamphetamine per 100,000 population were seized in Mason County, while 782 grams of methamphetamine per 100,000 population were seized in the other rural counties.

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

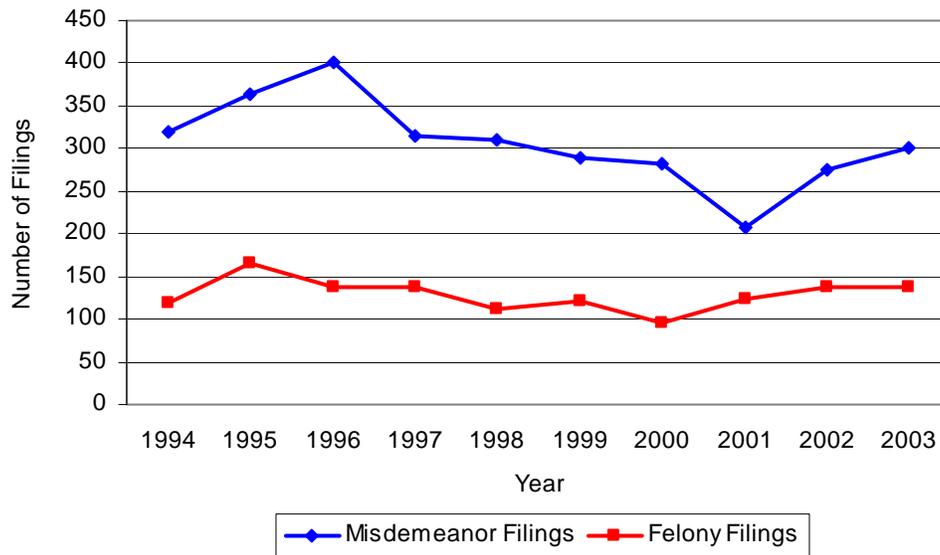
#### *Misdemeanor and Felony Filings in Mason County*

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 11 percent of all filings in Mason County's courts (civil, traffic, family, and other). Between 1994 and 2003, the number of misdemeanor filings in Mason County decreased 6 percent, from 320 to 300 (Figure 8). During the same period, felony filings increased 16 percent, from 118 in 1994 to 138 in 2003. In 2003, misdemeanor filings out-numbered felony filings more than two to one.

**Figure 8**

**Felony and Misdemeanor Filings  
in Mason County**

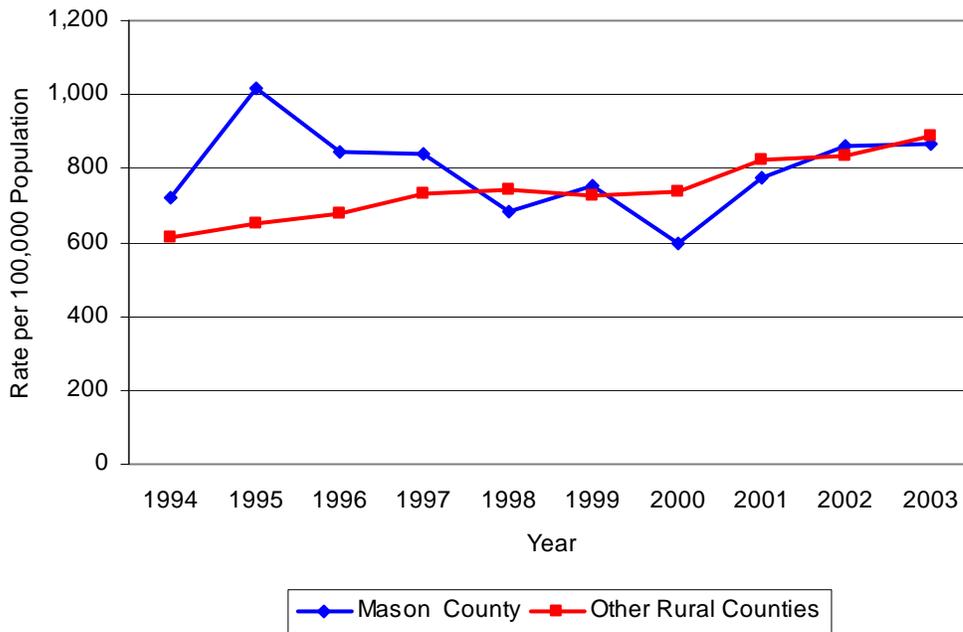


Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Between 1994 and 2003, the felony-filing rate in Mason County increased 21 percent, from 721 to 869 cases per 100,000 population (Figure 9). The felony-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 45 percent during this period, from 613 to 889 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the felony-filing rate in Mason County was 2 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 9**

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



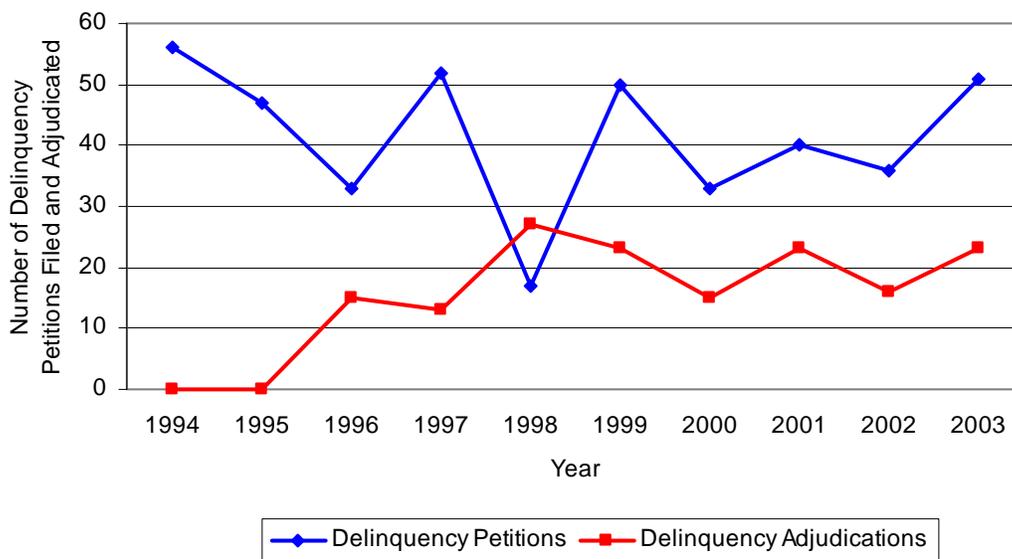
Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts and U.S. Census Bureau data

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 Mason County decreased 9 percent, from 56 in 1994 to 51 in 2003 (Figure 10). During the same period, delinquency adjudications increased from zero to 23. The majority of cases not resulting in an adjudication were continued under supervision.

**Figure 10**

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



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

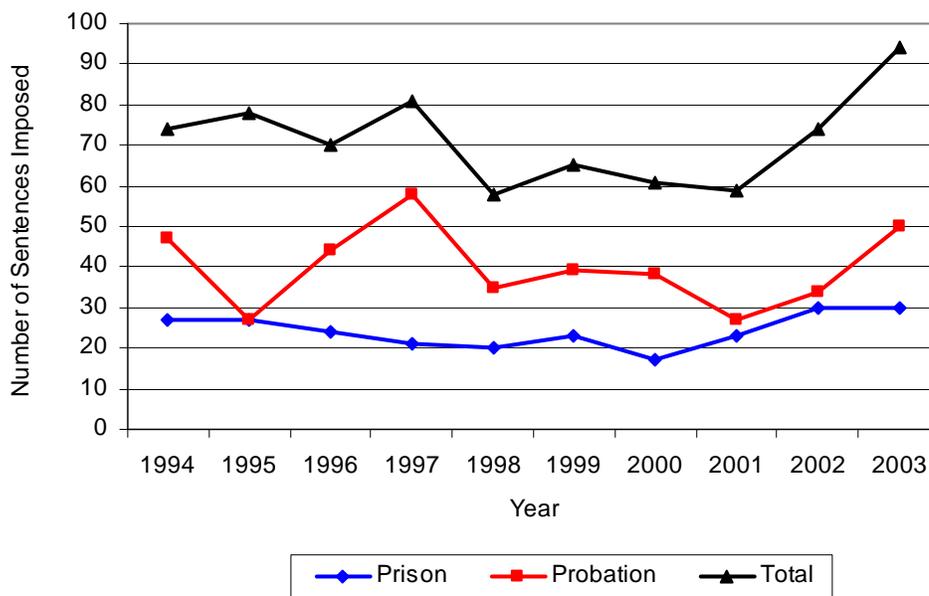
Between 1994 and 2003, the delinquency petition-filing rate in Mason County increased 2 percent, from 3,058 to 3,108 per 100,000 juveniles. During the same period, the delinquency petition-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 13 percent, from 2,000 to 2,258 petitions per 100,000 juveniles. In 2003, the delinquency petition rate in Mason County was 38 percent higher 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 Mason County increased 27 percent, from 74 to 94 (Figure 11). The number of convicted felons sentenced to either prison or probation each increased during the period, from 27 to 30 and 47 to 50, respectively. As a result, felony probation sentences decreased as a proportion of total sentences, decreasing from 64 percent in 1994 to 53 percent in 2003, while the proportion of felons sentenced to prison decreased slightly, from 36 percent in 1994 to 32 percent in 2003. In 2003, 15 percent of convicted felons in Mason County were sentenced to something other than prison or probation.

**Figure 11**

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



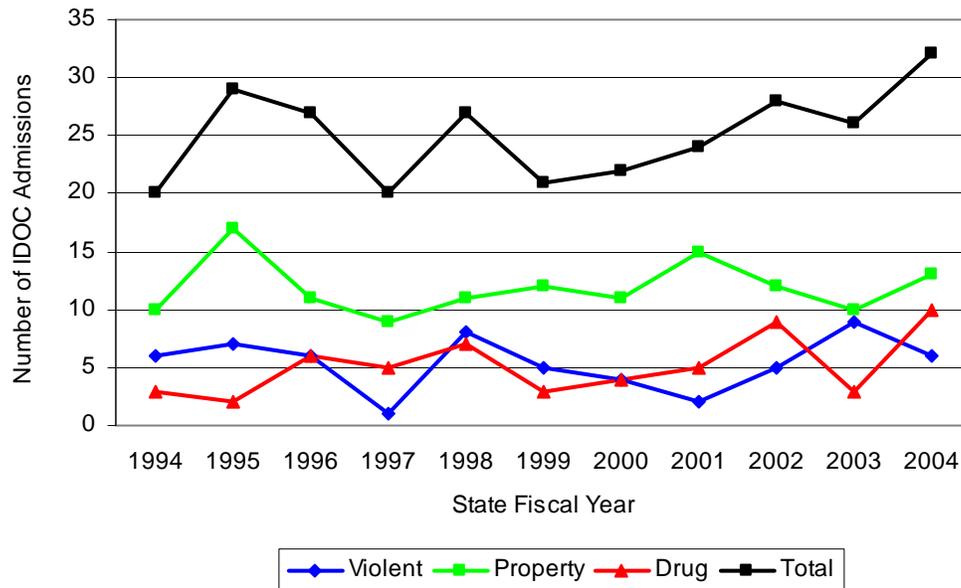
Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

## Adult Prison Admissions from Mason County

Between State Fiscal Years (SFYs) 1994 and 2004, the number of admissions to the Illinois Department of Corrections' Adult Division from Mason County increased 60 percent from 20 to 32 (Figure 12). During this period, the number of admissions remained stable for violent offenses, while property and drug offender admissions increased. The number of violent offender admissions remained unchanged at six in SFYS 1994 and 2004. During the same period, the number of property offender admissions increased from ten to 13 and admissions for drug offenses increased from three to ten.

Figure 12

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



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

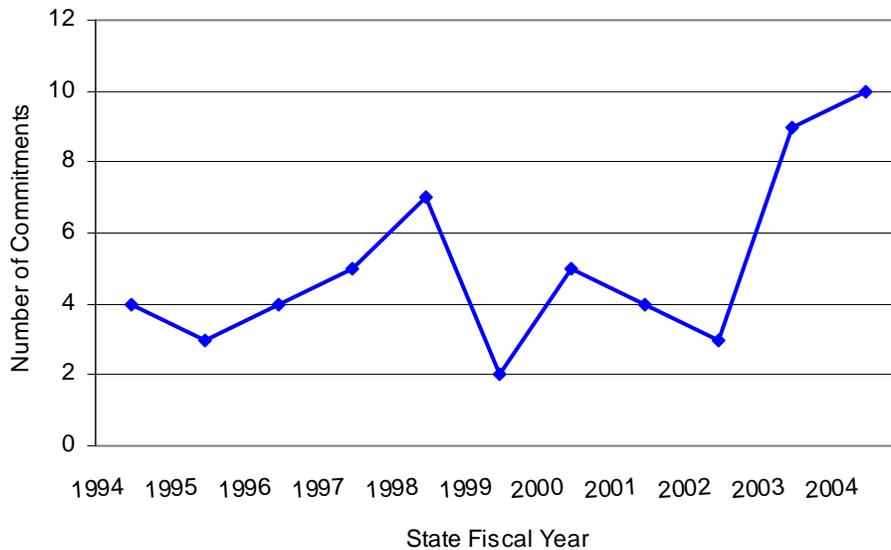
In SFY 2004, violent offenders accounted for 19 percent of all admissions from Mason County, compared to 30 percent in SFY 1994. The proportion of admissions accounted for by property offenders decreased from 50 percent in SFY 1994 to 41 percent in SFY 2004, while drug offenders increased from 15 percent to 31 percent.

## 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 juveniles committed to the IDOC's Juvenile Division from Mason County more than doubled, from four to ten (Figure 13).

Figure 13

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



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

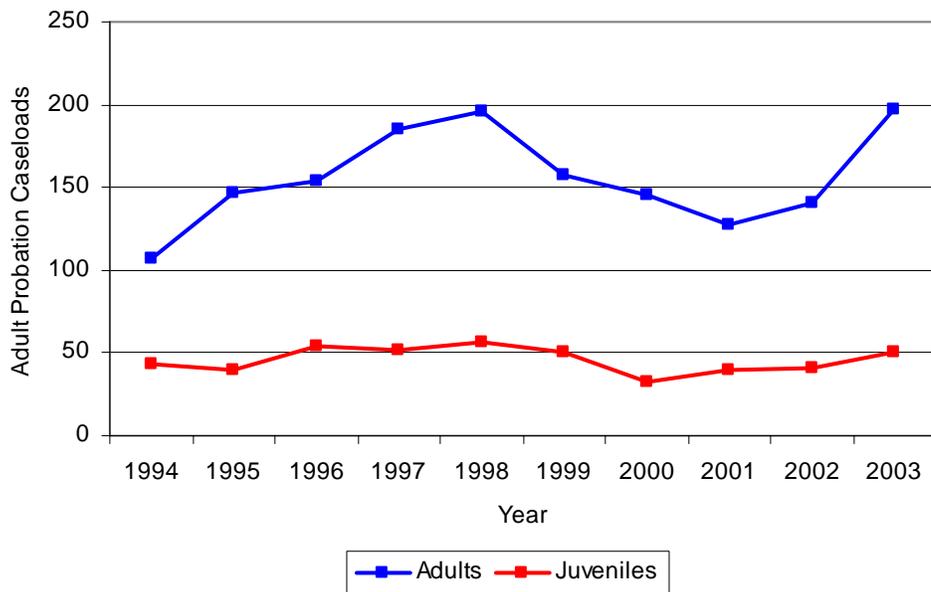
In SFY 2004, the rate 599 commitments per 100,000 juveniles to the IDOC's Juvenile Division from Mason County was more than double the rate of 225 commitments per 100,000 juveniles from the other rural counties.

## Adult and Juvenile Probation Caseloads in Mason County

Between December 31, 1994 and December 31, 2003, the number of active adult probation cases in Mason County increased 84 percent, from 107 to 197 (Figure 14). In 2003, felony offenders accounted for 40 percent of Mason County's active adult probation caseload. Between 1994 and 2003, the number of juveniles supervised by the Mason County Juvenile Probation Department increased 19 percent, from 43 in 1994 to 51 in 2003. 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 remained stable.

Figure 14

### Total Adult and Juvenile Active Probation Cases in Mason County



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

The active adult probation caseload rate per 100,000 population in Mason County increased 90 percent between 1994 and 2003, from 653 to 1,240 cases per 100,000 population. During that same period, the active adult probation caseload rate increased 40 percent in the other rural counties, from 745 to 1,042 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the active adult probation caseload rate in Mason County was 19 percent higher than in the other rural counties.

#### IV. Jail Populations in Mason County

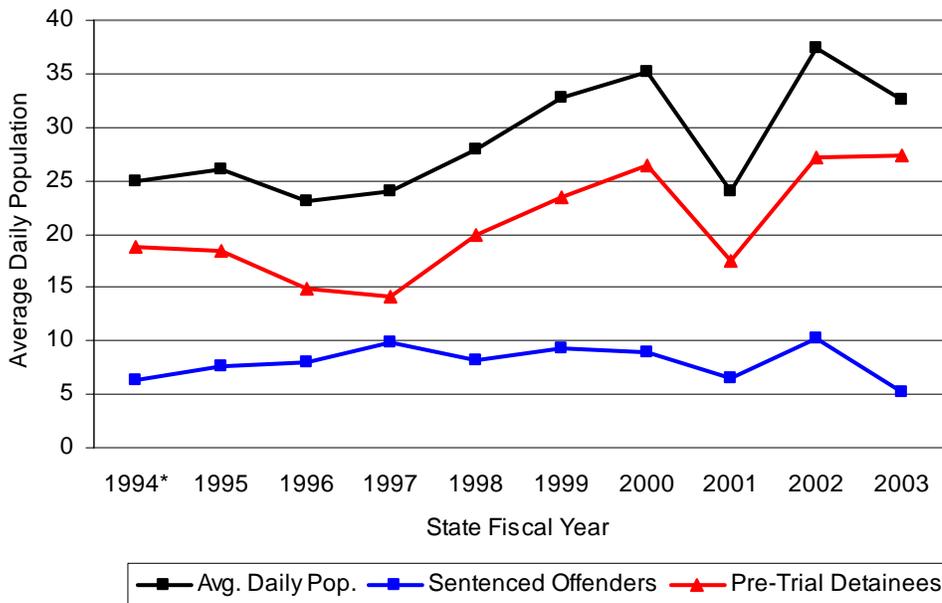
Jail data in Illinois are collected by the Illinois Department of Corrections' Bureau of Inspections and Audits. As with court data, data are not available detailing the specific offenses for which offenders were held in county jails. In addition, between SFYS 1992 and 1994, the IDOC did not collect 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 Mason County Jail*

The Mason 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 SFYs 1994 and 2003, the average daily population of the Mason County Jail increased 30 percent, from 25 to 33 inmates (Figure 15). During this period, pretrial detainees (those individuals who have been arrested for a crime and are awaiting trial) have accounted for an increased percentage of the average daily population, increasing from 75 percent in SFY 1994 to 84 percent in SFY 2003. Sentenced offenders (those offenders who have been convicted and sentenced to the county jail) accounted for a decreased percentage, decreasing from 25 percent in SFY 1994 to 16 percent in SFY 2003.

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



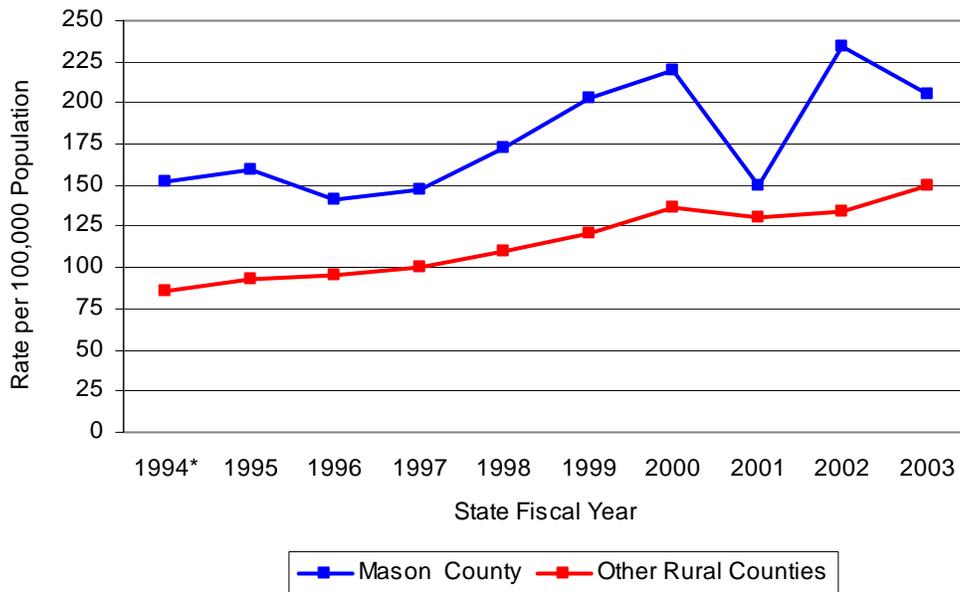
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

\* Information estimated by ICJIA

Between State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2003, the average daily jail population rate in Mason County increased 34 percent, from 153 to 205 per 100,000 population (Figure 16). During this same period, the average daily jail population rate in the other rural counties increased 75 percent, from 86 to 150 per 100,000 population. In SFY 2003, the Mason County Jail had an average daily jail population rate 37 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 16**

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



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois Department of Corrections  
 \* Information estimated by ICJIA and U.S. Census Bureau data

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

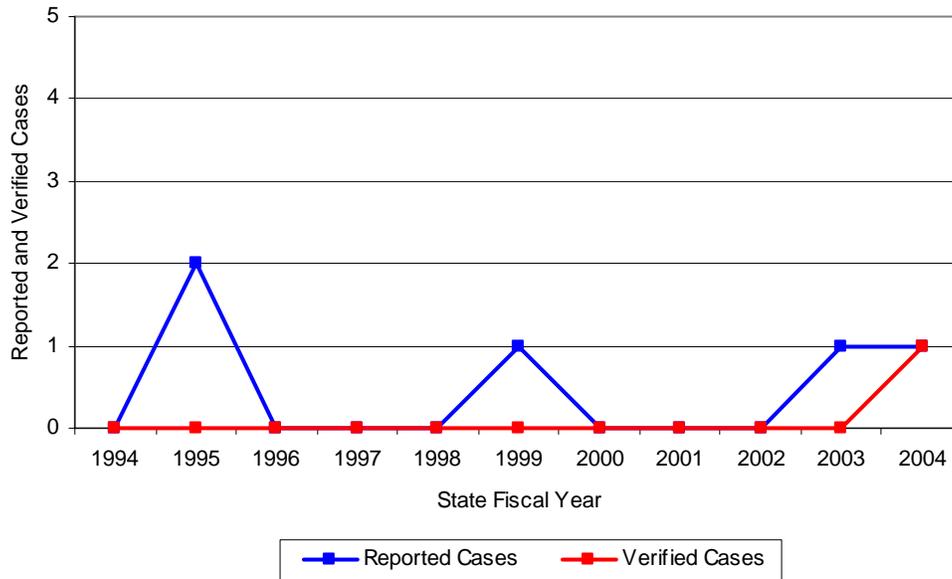
### Substance-Exposed Infants in Mason County

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 five cases of substance-exposed infants reported in Mason County, one of which was verified. During the same period, the number of reported cases of substance-exposed infants in the other rural counties increased 22 percent, from 83 to 101, while the number of verified cases of substance-exposed infants increased 41 percent, from 44 to 62.

Figure 17

### Substance-Exposed Infants, Reported and Verified Cases in Mason County



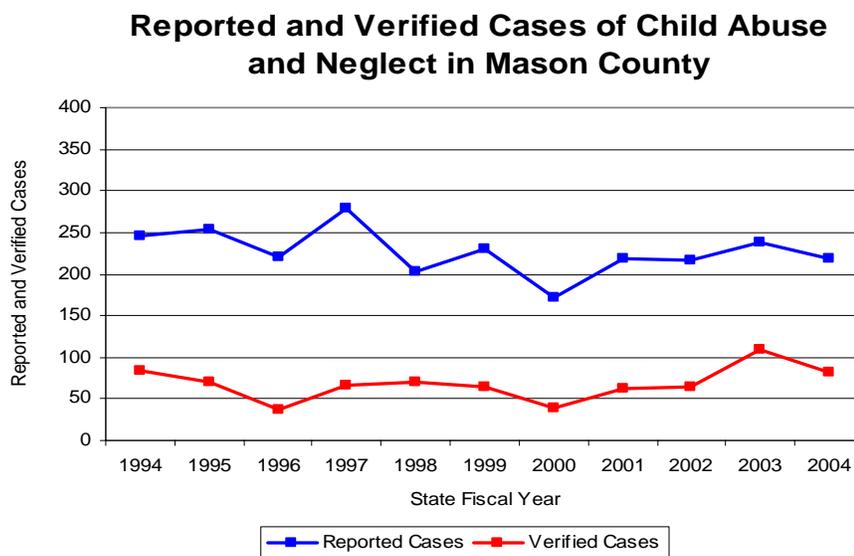
Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

## Child Abuse and Neglect Cases Reported and Verified in Mason 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 Mason County decreased 11 percent, from 246 to 219 (Figure 17). During that same period, 750 cases, or 30 percent of all cases reported, were verified by a DCFS investigation. Verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Mason County decreased slightly between SFYs 1994 and 2004, from 83 to 81.

**Figure 18**



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.

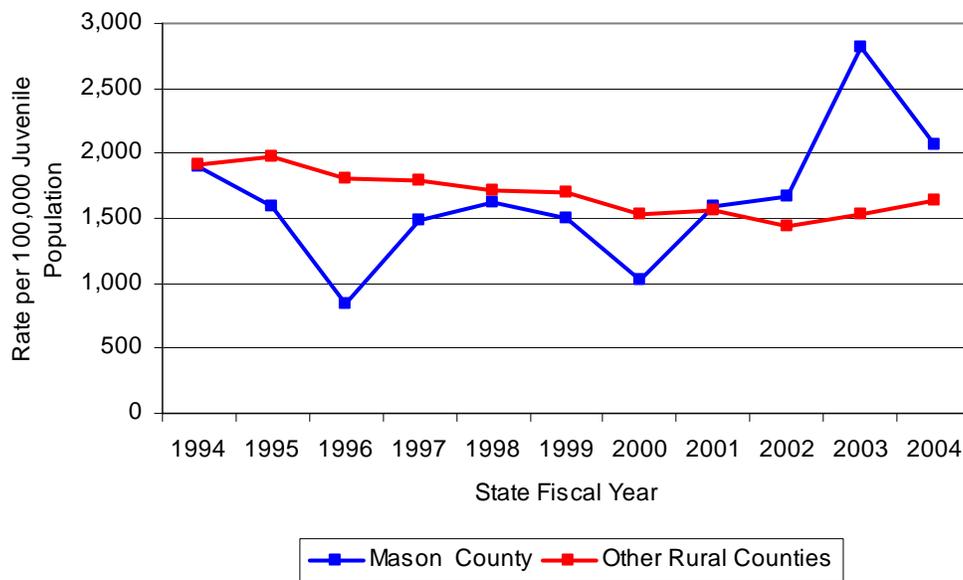
<sup>2</sup> Kelly, B., Thornberry, T. and Smith, C. 1997. “In the Wake of Childhood Maltreatment.” *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

<sup>3</sup> Menard, S. 2002. 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 Mason County increased 9 percent, from 1,892 to 2,072 per 100,000 juveniles (Figure 18). During the same period, the rate of verified child abuse and neglect cases decreased 15 percent in the other rural counties, from 1,909 to 1,631 per 100,000 juveniles. In SFY 2004, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Mason County was 27 percent higher than in the other rural counties.

**Figure 19**

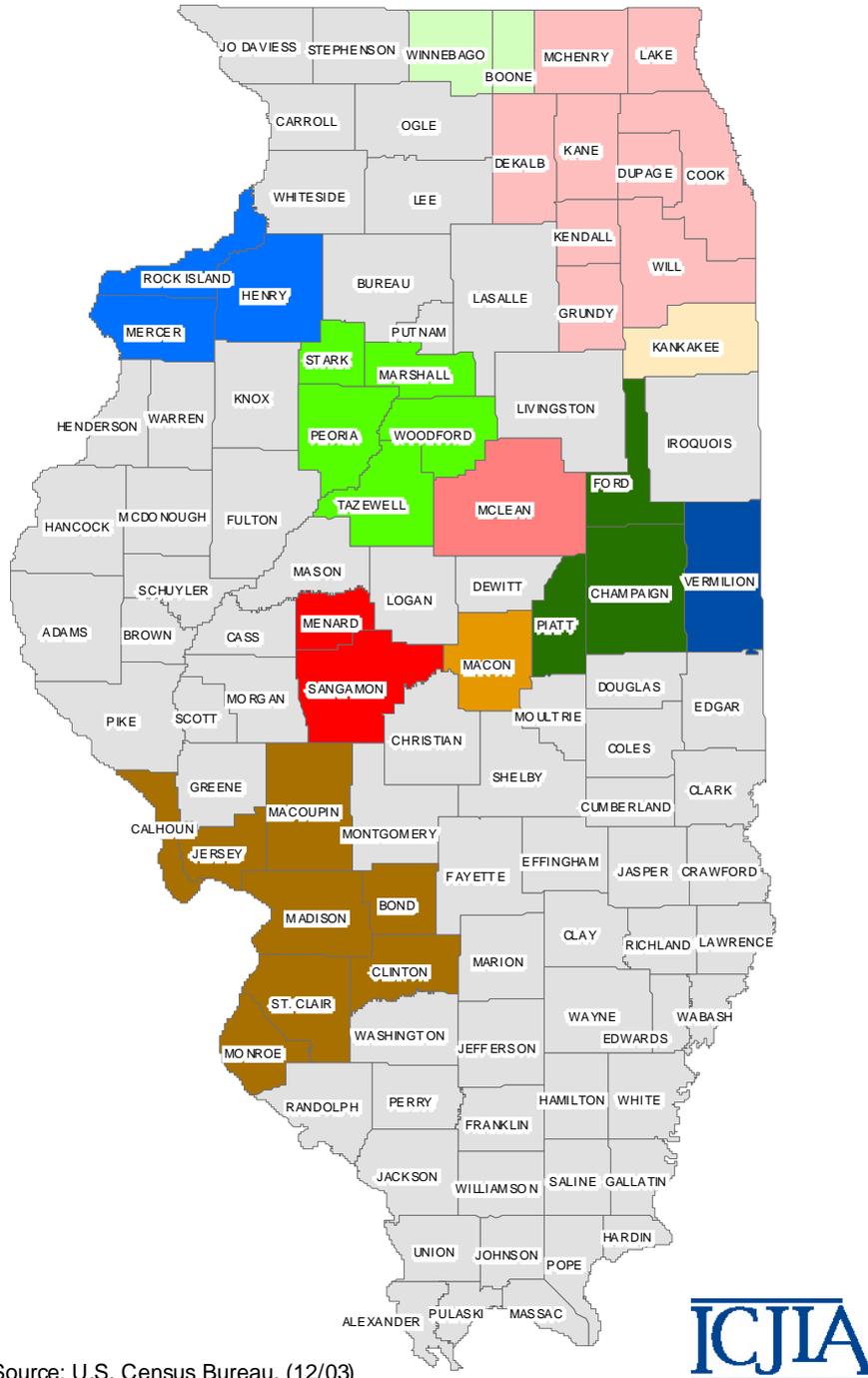
**Rate of Verified Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect, Mason and Other Rural Counties**



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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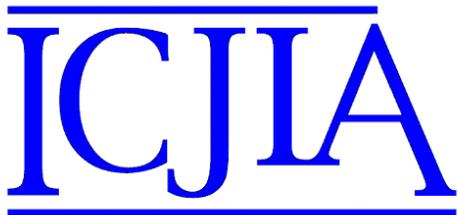
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**Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority**

120 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 1016  
Chicago, Illinois 60606  
Telephone: 312-793-8550  
TDD: 312-793-4170  
Fax: 312-793-8422  
[www.icjia.state.il.us](http://www.icjia.state.il.us)



Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor  
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