

New Hampshire had the Lowest Crime Rate in the Nation for 2001

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, the Granite State's crime index decreased almost five percent in 2001, dropping to 2,321.6 per 100,000 residents. New Hampshire had the lowest crime rate in the nation, an improvement from having the third lowest in the nation in 2000. Nationally the total crime index increased 0.9 percent, while New England gained 0.2 percent from 2000.

There are two types of severe crimes: violent and property. Violent crimes are crimes where force is used or the threat of force is present. These crimes include murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Property crimes involve the taking of money or property and include burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft and arson. Only a limited number of agencies report arson, so these numbers are not part of the index.

The state's property crime index dipped nearly five percent from 2000. All areas of property crime decreased, from 5.2 percent in larceny-theft to 2.2 in motor vehicle theft. Nationally the property crime index grew one percent in 2001, while New England had minimal growth of 0.1 percent from 2000.

Violent crime in New Hampshire decreased to 170.3 per 100,000 residents, nearly a three percent dip. This was an area that New England did not do as

well as the nation, increasing by over one percent, while the nation dropped less than one percent.

Annually the UCR program compiles crime data submitted by Law Enforcement agencies. The more serious crimes get reported in their *Crime in the United States* publication. The UCR program use an index of crime offenses per 100,000 residents to measure fluctuations and changes in the types of crimes, allowing for comparability among the states.

The number of serious crime offenses reported in New Hampshire dropped nearly three percent, to 29,233 in 2001. Only five states reported having a lower number of occurrences than the Granite State. Each of these states had a smaller population than New Hampshire. Once again, North Dakota had the fewest severe crime occurrences in the nation. Nationally crime occurrences saw an increase of over two percent from 2000, while New England recorded an over-the-year growth of almost one percent. Within New England, Vermont had the lowest occurrences of crime, 16,978, followed by New Hampshire, and Maine, 34,588. Vermont, Connecticut, and New Hampshire all reported declines in total crime offences from 2000.

In New Hampshire there were 79.9 daily occurrences of crime, a drop of 2.3 occurrences from 2000. The number of daily violent crimes remained unchanged over-the-year at 5.9 occurrences. Property crimes saw a daily decrease of 2.2 from 2000 to 74.0. The highest daily occurrence of crime was larceny-theft, with 54.8 occurrences, a drop of 1.9 occurrences. This information should not be taken to imply a regularity of crime. The information is only to show a frequency of crime as a ratio to a fixed time interval.

Gail Houston

Top Ten States with the Lowest Crime Indexes in the Nation

States	Population	Offenses	Indexes
New Hampshire	1,259,181	29,233	2,321.6
South Dakota	756,600	17,644	2,332.0
North Dakota	634,448	15,339	2,417.7
West Virginia	1,801,916	46,120	2,559.5
Maine	1,286,670	34,588	2,688.2
Vermont	613,090	16,978	2,769.3
New York	19,011,378	556,106	2,925.1
Kentucky	4,065,556	119,449	2,938.1
Pennsylvania	12,287,150	363,840	2,961.1
Massachusetts	6,379,304	197,666	3,098.6

Index is the number of offenses per 100,000 population

Source: "Crime in the United States 2001." Uniform Crime Reports. October 28, 2002. U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation. Accessed October 29, 2002. <www.fbi.gov/ucr/01cius.htm>

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