

CRIME & CRASHES

Crime

New Hampshire was safer than any other state in the nation. The Granite State’s total crime index – the number of criminal offenses per 100,000 population – was lower than any other state in the U.S. in both 2017 and 2018.

The crime index includes two main categories: violent crime and property crime. The violent crime index measures murder and non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. The property crime index measures burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft. New Hampshire’s total violent crime index was third lowest of any state from 2017 to 2018. The Granite State’s total property crime index again was lower than any other state during the same period.

The total rate of crime declined steadily in New Hampshire from 2014 to 2018, mirroring a trend in both New England and the nation. A notable exception to the trend occurred from 2017 to 2018, when the number of Granite State murder and non-negligent manslaughter offenses jumped from 13 to 21.

Juvenile Arrests

The number of juvenile arrests in New Hampshire decreased substantially over the last five years, going from 4,199 in 2014 to 3,283 in 2018. Likewise, adolescent drug abuse violations declined significantly from 607 to 344.

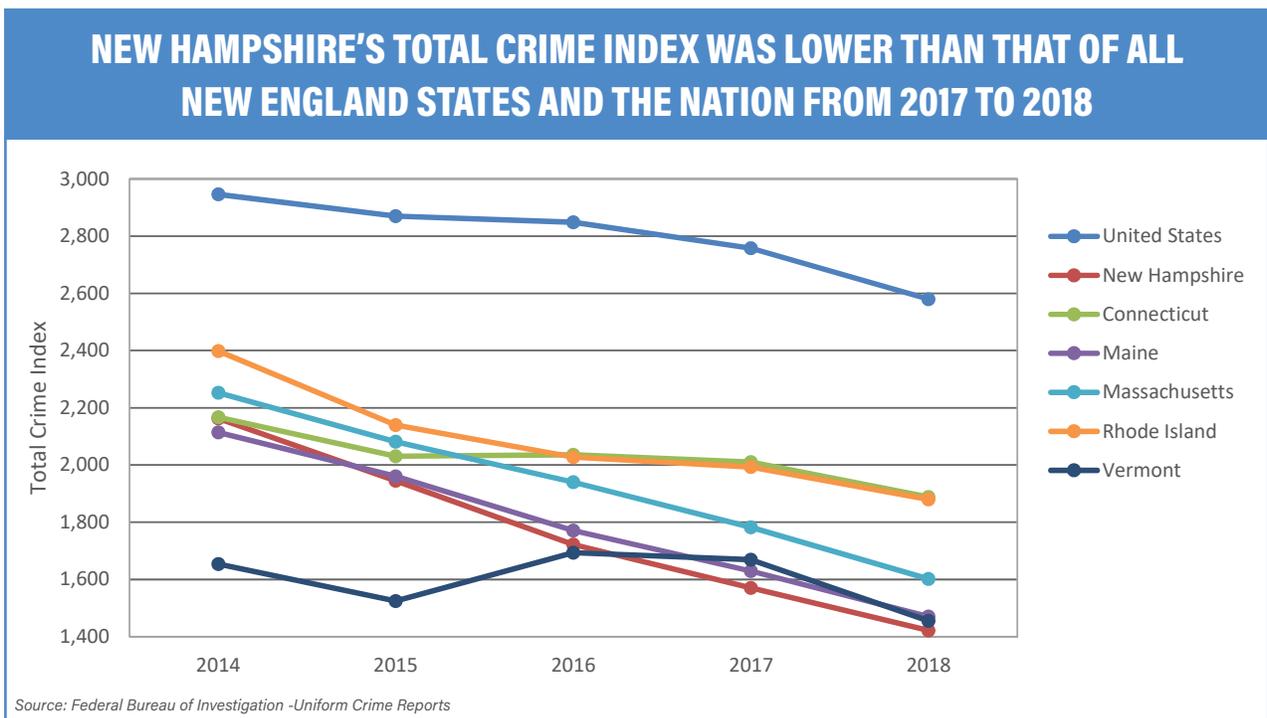
The difference between the juvenile and total arrest trends during this time was striking. While the number of *juvenile* arrests decreased, the *total* number of arrests – of persons of all ages – in the Granite State slightly *increased*, from 46,180 to 46,413.

The decrease in juvenile arrests followed a long-term nationwide trend. The reason for the reduction was a topic of continued study, both locally and nationally.¹

State Prison Population

The number of prisoners in New Hampshire state and federal prisons declined steadily from 2014 to 2017. The decrease coincided with a trend nationwide.

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¹ Matt Smith, "NCJJ Report Shows Juvenile Crime Keeps Falling, But Reasons Elusive," Juvenile Justice Information Exchange, February 26, 2015. <https://jjie.org/2015/02/26/ncjj-report-shows-juvenile-crime-keeps-falling-but-reasons-elusive/>

Within the Granite State, the decrease also corresponded with three events that occurred from 2014 to 2016: The number of sentenced prisoners admitted decreased, the number of prisoners released increased, and the number of adults on probation and parole increased. The trend suggests a movement from prison to probation and parole.

Traffic Crashes

The number of total crashes reported in New Hampshire soared 26.9% from 2016 to 2017. During that same period, the number of fatal motor vehicle crashes fell substantially, from 130 to 98. The number of fatal motor vehicle crashes as a share of the total fell accordingly from 0.44% to 0.27%. The number of total crashes fell again in 2018, but was still well above the number in 2016. Fatal motor vehicle crashes in the Granite State soared from 103 in 2015 to 130 in 2016. In more than half of the crashes, excessive speed was a factor.²

In response, the State of New Hampshire Office of Highway Safety's Highway Safety Plan for FY 2017 included focusing "enforcement efforts... in the two counties that represent the highest speed-related fatalities."³ The effort seemed to help. From 2016 to 2017, the number of fatal motor vehicle crashes dropped to 98, consistent with 2014 and 2015 levels.

However, the number of fatal crashes increased again in 2018, to 134 crashes. The number of crashes caused by speed and/or alcohol impairment increased significantly over 2017.

Randolph, New Hampshire Crash

Although New Hampshire is overall "safe", a crash killed seven motorcyclists in Randolph on June 21, 2019. On October 21, 2019, the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office announced an indictment of a motorist on charges relating to the crash. Five separate indictments included seven counts of manslaughter, seven counts of negligent homicide – DUI, seven counts of negligent homicide, one count of aggravated driving while intoxicated, and one count of reckless conduct.⁴ The motorist had been arrested for allegedly operating under the influence in Connecticut in May 2019. His commercial driver's license was not suspended in Massachusetts immediately after the incident, contrary to state policy. The failure of this suspension to happen in a timely manner led to a review of procedures for processing out-of-state traffic violations in both Massachusetts and in New Hampshire.

- Bruce Olinsky

² State of New Hampshire Office of Highway Safety, "Highway Safety Plan 2018," https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/documents/new_hampshire_fy2018_hsp.pdf

³ Ibid

⁴ New Hampshire Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, "Volodymyr Zhukovskyy Indicted on Charges Related to the June 21, 2019 Crash in Randolph, New Hampshire," October 21, 2019, <https://www.doj.nh.gov/news/2019/20191021-zhukovskyy-indicted.htm>

Crime Offenses	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Source
Total crime offenses	28,723	25,881	22,991	21,192	19,284	UCR
Annual percent change	-10.9%	-9.9%	-11.2%	-7.8%	-9.0%	UCR/NHES
Violent crime offenses	2,625	2,652	2,668	2,642	2,349	UCR
Annual percent change	-11.1%	1.0%	0.6%	-1.0%	-11.1%	UCR/NHES
Property crime offenses	26,098	23,229	20,323	18,550	16,935	UCR
Annual percent change	-10.9%	-11.0%	-12.5%	-8.7%	-8.7%	UCR/NHES

Total Crime Index (Rate per 100,000 population)

United States	2,946.1	2,870.2	2,849.1	2,757.8	2,580.1	UCR
New Hampshire	2,162.9	1,945.0	1,722.1	1,570.0	1,421.7	UCR
Connecticut	2,167.0	2,030.5	2,036.0	2,010.1	1,888.4	UCR
Maine	2,114.2	1,960.1	1,770.9	1,629.3	1,469.9	UCR
Massachusetts	2,252.7	2,081.6	1,940.4	1,781.9	1,601.4	UCR
Rhode Island	2,398.5	2,140.0	2,027.2	1,993.3	1,880.0	UCR
Vermont	1,653.6	1,524.6	1,693.4	1,668.7	1,455.1	UCR

Violent Crime Index (Rate per 100,000 population)

United States	372.0	383.2	397.5	394.9	380.6	UCR
New Hampshire	197.7	199.3	199.8	195.7	173.2	UCR
Connecticut	238.5	218.5	227.7	229.2	207.4	UCR
Maine	127.6	130.1	124.0	120.6	112.1	UCR
Massachusetts	395.1	390.9	380.7	354.3	338.1	UCR
Rhode Island	219.9	242.5	239.1	234.2	219.1	UCR
Vermont	102.6	118.0	136.5	173.3	172.0	UCR

Property Crime Index (Rate per 100,000 population)

United States	2,574.1	2,487.0	2,451.6	2,362.9	2,199.5	UCR
New Hampshire	1,965.2	1,745.7	1,522.3	1,374.3	1,248.5	UCR
Connecticut	1,928.5	1,812.0	1,808.3	1,780.9	1,681.0	UCR
Maine	1,986.6	1,830.0	1,646.9	1,508.7	1,357.8	UCR
Massachusetts	1,857.6	1,690.7	1,559.7	1,427.6	1,263.3	UCR
Rhode Island	2,178.6	1,897.5	1,788.1	1,759.1	1,660.9	UCR
Vermont	1,551.0	1,406.6	1,556.9	1,495.4	1,283.1	UCR

Auto Insurance Claims Loss - Personal and Commercial	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Source
Total Claims (\$ millions)	\$506.1	\$519.4	\$547.6	\$595.0	\$593.9	ID
Annual percent change	6.0%	2.6%	5.4%	8.7%	0.0%	ID/NHES
Personal Claims (\$ millions)	\$447.6	\$447.4	\$481.2	\$505.6	\$518.4	ID
Annual percent change	5.3%	-0.1%	7.5%	5.1%	2.5%	ID/NHES
Percent Personal	88.4%	86.1%	87.9%	85.0%	87.3%	ID/NHES
Commercial Claims (\$ millions)	\$58.4	\$72.0	\$66.4	\$89.4	\$75.6	ID
Annual percent change	10.6%	12.3%	-0.7%	34.8%	-15.5%	ID/NHES

Criminal Arrests	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Source
Total Arrest	46,180	44,368	47,282	47,516	46,413	UCR
Annual percent change	3.6%	-3.9%	6.6%	0.5%	-2.3%	UCR/NHES
Total Drug Abuse Violations	6,224	7,371	8,346	7,656	6,522	UCR
Annual percent change	45.8%	18.4%	13.2%	-8.3%	-14.8%	UCR/NHES
Total DUI Offenses	4,528	4,746	4,874	4,805	5,053	UCR
Annual percent change	22.4%	4.8%	2.7%	-1.4%	5.2%	UCR/NHES
Juvenile Total	4,199	3,421	3,564	3,529	3,283	UCR
Annual percent change	-11.3%	-18.5%	4.2%	-1.0%	-7.0%	UCR/NHES
Total Drug Abuse Violations	607	579	637	507	344	UCR
Annual percent change	8.8%	-4.6%	10.0%	-20.4%	-32.1%	UCR/NHES
Total DUI Offenses	44	36	42	36	29	UCR
Annual percent change	22.2%	-18.2%	16.7%	-14.3%	-19.4%	UCR/NHES

State Prison Population	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Source
Number of sentenced prisoners in state and federal prisons ^a	2,963	2,897	2,818	2,750		USDJ
New Hampshire's incarceration rate	219	218	210	204		USDJ
Number of sentenced male prisoners	2,671	2,661	2,591	2,524		USDJ
Number of sentenced female prisoners	244	236	227	226		USDJ
Sentenced prisoners admitted	1,611	1,578	1,538	1,338		USDJ
Sentenced prisoners released	1,562	1,660	1,601	1,409		USDJ
Adults on Probation	3,920	3,861	3,939			USDJ
Adults on Parole	2,385	2,451	2,436			USDJ
U.S. incarceration rate (federal and state jurisdiction)	471	458	450	440		USDJ
State jurisdiction incarceration rate	411	402	397	390		USDJ
Federal jurisdiction incarceration rate	60	55	53	51		USDJ

^a Sentenced prisoners are the number of inmates on December 31st sentenced for more than one year.

Traffic Crashes	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Source
Total crashes reported ^b	28,395	29,605	29,862	36,681	34,174	DS
Annual percent change	-5.3%	4.3%	0.9%	22.8%	-6.8%	DS/NHES
Seat belt use	70.4%	69.5%	70.2%	67.6%	76.4%	NHTSA
Fatal motor vehicle crashes	89	103	130	98	134	NHTSA
Fatal motor crashes as a share of total	0.31%	0.35%	0.44%	0.27%	0.39%	NHTSA/NHES
Number of fatalities	95	114	136	102	147	NHTSA
Number of alcohol-impaired driving fatalities ^c	29	32	40	27	48	NHTSA
Percent of alcohol-impaired driving fatalities ^c	31%	28%	29%	27%	33%	NHTSA/NHES
Fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles	0.73	0.87	1.01	0.75		NHTSA

^b Reported crashes and injuries involving \$1,000 or more in property or injury damages.

^c Based on a highest driver Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of 0.8 g/dL (grams per deciliter) or higher.