

CRIME AND MURDER IN 2018: A Preliminary Analysis (Updated)

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This analysis updates the Brennan Center's September 20, 2018, report, [Crime in 2018: A Preliminary Analysis](#), with new data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation.¹

That report compared Brennan Center final estimates of crime in 2017 to preliminary estimates of crime in 2018 in the nation's 30 largest cities. This update now incorporates official 2017 crime data released through the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR) on September 24, allowing for more precise comparisons.²

Because the Brennan Center's 2017 estimate [closely matched final FBI data](#), changes in this update are minor.³ This analysis continues to find that in the 30 largest cities where data is available, the murder and overall crime rates are projected to decline in 2018, continuing decreases found in 2017. For more, please see updated Tables I and II.*

- *Murder:* The 2018 murder rate in these cities is projected to be 7.3 percent lower than last year. This estimate is based on data from 29 of the nation's 30 largest cities. This murder rate is expected to be approximately equal to 2015's rate, near the bottom of the historic post-1990 decline.⁴ Especially sharp declines appear in San Francisco (-34.9 percent), Chicago (-23.0 percent), and Baltimore (-20.7 percent). These estimates are based on preliminary data, but if they hold, the number of murders in Chicago could fall by year's end to the lowest since 2015. In Baltimore, homicides could drop to the lowest since 2014. While Baltimore's murder rate remains high, this would mark a significant reversal of the past two years' increases.
- While the overall murder rate is estimated to decline this year in Chicago and Baltimore, a few cities are projected to experience increases. For example, the murder rate in Washington, D.C., is expected to rise 34.8 percent. Several cities with relatively low murder rates are also seeing increases, such as Austin (rising by roughly 30 percent). Since the city has relatively few murders, any increase may appear large in percentage terms.
- *Overall Crime:* At the time of publication, full crime data — covering all Part I index crimes tracked by the FBI — were only available from 19 of the 30 largest cities. (Past Brennan Center reports included, on average, data from 21 cities.) In these cities, the overall crime rate for 2018 is projected to decrease by 2.5 percent, essentially holding stable. If this estimate holds, this group of cities will experience the lowest crime rate this year since at least 1990. These findings will be updated with new data when available.

This report does not include violent crime data because the authors could not collect sufficient data for 2018 by the time of publication. While the estimates in this report are based on early data, previous Brennan Center reports have correctly estimated the direction and magnitude of changes in major-city crime rates.⁵

* This report collected data on six Part I index crimes tracked by the FBI in the Uniform Crime Reports: murder, robbery, and aggravated assault (collectively, "violent crime"), and burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft (collectively, "property crime"). "Overall crime" includes all six offenses.

Year-end 2018 estimates are based on year-to-date crime data projected over the full year to simulate past years' month-to-month variation for each city. As noted in Tables 1 and 2, the authors were unable to secure data from some cities.

I. DATA TABLES

Table 1: Crime in the 30 Largest Cities (2017-2018 Est.)

	1990 Crime Rate (per 100,000)	2017 Crime Rate (per 100,000)	2018 Crime Rate Est. (per 100,000)	Percent Change in Crime Rate Est.* (2017-2018)
New York ⁶	9,656.4	1959.9	1,937.1	-1.2%
Los Angeles ⁷	9,167.4	3,236.0	3,124.7	-3.4%
Chicago ⁸	11,062.3	4,297.5	4,159.3	-3.2%
Houston ^{9†}	11,255.9	5165.2	Unavailable	Unavailable
Philadelphia ¹⁰	7,145.5	3,936.0	3,963.4	0.7%
Las Vegas ¹¹	7,070.7	Unavailable	Unavailable	Unavailable
Phoenix ¹²	10,704.4	4,362.2	Unavailable	Unavailable
San Antonio ¹³	12,430.8	5,468.8	6,346.6	16.1%
San Diego ¹⁴	9,105.9	2,170.3	1,643.3	-24.3%
Dallas ^{15‡}	15,386.5	3,897.6	Unavailable	Unavailable
San Jose ¹⁶	4,816.1	2,789.9	2,900.8	4.0%
Austin ¹⁷	11,653.9	3,518.6	3,362.2	-4.4%
Charlotte ¹⁸	12,496.5	4,478.6	Unavailable	Unavailable
Jacksonville ¹⁹	10,352.8	Unavailable	Unavailable	Unavailable
San Francisco ²⁰	9,604.3	6,841.4	6,030.9	-11.8%
Indianapolis ²¹	6,637.2	Unavailable	Unavailable	Unavailable
Columbus ²²	9,804.9	Unavailable	Unavailable	Unavailable
Fort Worth ²³	14,880.5	3,710.4	3,378.8	-8.9%
El Paso ²⁴	11,189.7	Unavailable	Unavailable	Unavailable
Seattle ²⁵	12,507.7	5,854.5	5,993.7	2.4%
Denver ²⁶	7,676.1	4,243.7	3,964.6	-6.6%
Louisville ²⁷	Unavailable	4,743.7	4,396.6	-7.3%
Detroit ²⁸	12,030.3	6,493.4	6,115.8	-5.8%
Washington, D.C. ²⁹	10,724.3	5,041.1	4,867.8	-3.4%
Boston ³⁰	11,756.9	2,715.8	2,591.9	-4.6%
Nashville ³¹	7,768.2	4,883.2	4,915.9	0.7%
Memphis ³²	9,736.3	Unavailable	Unavailable	Unavailable
Oklahoma City ³³	10,516.3	4,466.7	Unavailable	Unavailable
Baltimore ³⁴	10,502.8	6,892.8	5,707.5	-17.2%
Portland ³⁵	11,003.6	6,125.3	6,274.7	2.4%
TOTAL				-2.5%

Source: Police department and city reports. See endnotes for specific sources. Data from 1990 are from the UCR Data Tool.³⁶ The authors were unable to obtain complete data from cities marked "Unavailable." Cities are ordered by estimated 2017 population size.³⁷

* Rates of change in Tables I and II are calculated based on raw, unrounded estimates, whereas estimates for rates are presented as rounded in the Tables. For example, in Table II, San Jose's murder rate appears the same in 2017 and 2018 but unrounded numbers yield a slight percent change.

† Houston is currently updating its crime data reporting system and had not finished by the time of publication. Accordingly, crime data could not be obtained for the city, though homicide data were obtained from other sources.

‡ The authors initially collected crime data from the Dallas Police Department, but the site was inaccessible during the final round of fact-checking and the data could not be verified. The authors obtained murder data from other sources.

Table 2: Murder in the 30 Largest Cities (2017-2018 Est.)

	2017 Total Murders	2018 Total Murders	Percent Change in Murder	1990 Murder Rate (per 100,000)	2017 Murder Rate (per 100,000)	2018 Murder Rate Est. (per 100,000)	Percent Change in Murder Rate Est. (2017-18)
New York	292	307	5.1%	30.7	3.4	3.5	4.5%
Los Angeles	281	266	-5.3%	28.2	7.0	6.6	-6.1%
Chicago	653	501	-23.2%	30.5	24.1	18.6	-23.0%
Houston	269	304	13.0%	34.8	11.5	12.8	11.1%
Philadelphia	316	319	0.9%	31.7	20.1	20.2	0.6%
Las Vegas*	205	149	-27.4%	12.8	12.6	9.0	-28.8%
Phoenix	157	190	20.8%	13.0	9.5	11.3	18.0%
San Antonio	124	136	9.8%	22.2	8.2	8.8	7.6%
San Diego	35	26	-25.0%	12.2	2.5	1.8	-26.0%
Dallas	167	183	9.6%	44.4	12.5	13.4	7.8%
San Jose	32	32	0.0%	4.5	3.1	3.1	-0.9%
Austin	25	33	33.3%	9.9	2.6	3.3	30.1%
Charlotte	86	48	-44.7%	23.5	9.4	5.1	-45.9%
Jacksonville	109	Unavail.	Unavail.	27.6	13.4	Unavail.	Unavail.
San Francisco	56	37	-34.1%	14.0	6.4	4.1	-34.9%
Indianapolis	156	198	26.8%	12.0	17.9	22.6	26.2%
Columbus	142	128	-9.8%	14.1	14.0	12.4	-11.5%
Fort Worth	70	57	-17.9%	29.0	8.0	6.4	-20.1%
El Paso	19	20	7.7%	6.6	2.8	3.0	7.3%
Seattle	27	33	23.1%	10.3	3.7	4.5	19.7%
Denver	59	67	12.8%	14.3	8.3	9.2	10.6%
Louisville	109	81	-26.1%	Unavail.	15.9	11.7	-26.3%
Detroit	267	247	-7.6%	56.6	39.8	37.0	-7.0%
Washington, D.C.	116	159	37.2%	77.8	16.7	22.5	34.8%
Boston	57	59	3.0%	24.9	8.3	8.5	1.6%
Nashville	110	80	-27.5%	13.4	16.3	11.6	-28.5%
Memphis	181	170	-6.0%	31.9	27.7	26.1	-5.9%
Oklahoma City	81	49	-40.0%	15.3	12.5	7.4	-40.9%
Baltimore	342	270	-21.2%	41.4	55.8	44.2	-20.7%
Portland	24	26	9.1%	7.5	3.7	4.2	13.2%
TOTAL							-7.3%

Source: Police department and city reports. See Table 1 endnotes for specific sources. Data from 1990 are from the UCR Data Tool.³⁸ Cities are ordered by estimated 2017 population size.

* Las Vegas's 2017 homicide count includes deaths due to the October 1, 2017 mass shooting outside of the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino. Because this shooting was an isolated, tragic, and unanticipated occurrence, 2018 projections were calculated using 2017's baseline homicides excluding the 58 mass shooting deaths.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Ames Grawert, Adureh Onyekwere, and Cameron Kimble, *Crime and Murder in 2018: A Preliminary Analysis*, Brennan Center for Justice, 2018, <https://www.brennancenter.org/crime-murder-2018>.
- ² United States Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2017* (Washington, D.C., 2018), <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2017/crime-in-the-u.s.-2017>.
- ³ “FBI Crime Numbers for 2017 Show Declines Across the Board,” Brennan Center for Justice, Sep. 24, 2018, <https://www.brennancenter.org/press-release/fbi-crime-numbers-2017-show-declines-across-board>.
- ⁴ For information on the decline in crime and murder rates since 1990, see Matthew Friedman, Ames Grawert, and James Cullen, *Crime Trends: 1990-2016*, Brennan Center for Justice, 2017, <https://www.brennancenter.org/publication/crime-trends1990-2016>.
- ⁵ Ames Grawert, James Cullen, Inimai M. Chettiar, “Five Things to Know About the Brennan Center’s Analyses of Crime Data,” Brennan Center for Justice, Oct. 9, 2017, <https://www.brennancenter.org/blog/five-things-know-about-brennan-centers-analyses-crime-data>.
- ⁶ “NYPD CompStat 2.0,” New York City Police Department, last accessed Sep. 11, 2018, http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/nypd/downloads/pdf/crime_statistics/cs-en-us-city.pdf
- ⁷ “COMPSTAT Citywide Profile, 6/17/18 – 07/14/18,” Los Angeles Police Department, last updated July 16, 2018, <http://assets.lapdonline.org/assets/pdf/cityprof.pdf>.
- ⁸ “City of Chicago, Crimes – 2001 to Present (2018),” Chicago Data Portal, last modified Sep. 4, 2018, last accessed Sep. 11, 2018, <https://data.cityofchicago.org/view/5cd6-ry5g>. For cities where data was collected from a data portal, the authors build in a three-month “lag time” to ensure the portals were fully updated. Therefore, for this city, the authors compiled their estimates by comparing June 2017 year-to-date figures to June 2018 year-to-date figures.
- ⁹ The authors were not able to obtain complete, reliable data from this city. However, the authors were able to obtain homicide data from other sources. See “American Violence,” AmericanViolence.org, Marron Institute of Urban Management, New York University, updated September 2018, <http://www.americanviolence.org>. From the main page, the authors selected a custom time interval, from January 2017 through June 2018, and compared year-to-date figures from January to June 2017 to the same period in 2018.
- ¹⁰ “Major Crimes as Reported to P.P.D. — Citywide — Week 36,” Philadelphia Police Department, last updated Sep. 9, 2018, last accessed Sep. 12, 2018, https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vb9uu5K6priz-oBhfVQNhI_M8PJEOMQP.
- ¹¹ Email from Public Information Office, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, to author (Aug. 22, 2018, 13:42 EST). Lacking 2017 year-end data, the authors cannot estimate 2018’s year-end crime rate.
- ¹² The authors were not able to obtain complete, reliable data from this city. However, the authors were able to obtain homicide data from other sources. See “American Violence,” AmericanViolence.org, Marron Institute of Urban Management, New York University, updated September 2018, <http://www.americanviolence.org>. From the main page, the authors selected a custom time interval, from January 2017 through June 2018, and compared year-to-date figures from January to June 2017 to the same period in 2018.
- ¹³ “Uniform Crime Reports,” San Antonio Police Department, last updated Sep. 12, 2018, last accessed Sep. 12, 2018, <https://www.sanantonio.gov/SAPD/Uniform-Crime-Reports#30263041-2018>.
- ¹⁴ “Crime and Statistics,” Automated Regional Justice Information System, last accessed Sep. 11, 2018, <http://crimestats.arjis.org/default.aspx> (from the drop-down boxes, select “Jan / 2017” for “Begin Date,” “Aug / 2017” for “End Date,” and “San Diego” for “Agency”; then repeat for 2018).
- ¹⁵ The authors were not able to obtain complete, reliable data from this city. However, the authors were able to obtain homicide data from other sources. See “American Violence,” AmericanViolence.org, Marron Institute of Urban Management, New York University, updated September 2018, <http://www.americanviolence.org>. From the main page, the authors selected a custom time interval, from January 2017 through June 2018, and compared year-to-date figures from January to June 2017 to the same period in 2018.
- ¹⁶ “UCR — Part One Crimes Reported,” San Jose Police Department, last updated July 16, 2018, last accessed Sep. 12, 2018, http://www.sjpd.org/crimestats/updates/part_one_crimes_reported_ytd.pdf?cacheID=20161205.
- ¹⁷ “Chief’s Monthly Report, Citywide” Austin Police Department, last accessed Sep. 12, 2018, http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/APD_ChiefMonthlyReport_july_2018.xls.

¹⁸ The authors were not able to obtain complete, reliable data from this city. However, the authors were able to obtain homicide data from other sources. *See* “American Violence,” AmericanViolence.org, Marron Institute of Urban Management, New York University, updated September 2018, <http://www.americanviolence.org>. From the main page, the authors selected a custom time interval, from January 2017 through June 2018, and compared year-to-date figures from January to June 2017 to the same period in 2018.

¹⁹ The authors were not able to obtain complete, reliable data from this city or other sources.

²⁰ “Compstat: Citywide Profile,” San Francisco Police Department, last accessed Sep. 12, 2018, http://sanfranciscopolice.org/sites/default/files/Documents/PoliceDocuments/CompStat/July_CompStat_AllDistrict%281%29.pdf.

²¹ The authors were not able to obtain complete, reliable data from this city. However, the authors were able to obtain homicide data from other sources. *See* “American Violence,” AmericanViolence.org, Marron Institute of Urban Management, New York University, updated September 2018, <http://www.americanviolence.org>. From the main page, the authors selected a custom time interval, from January 2017 through June 2018, and compared year-to-date figures from January to June 2017 to the same period in 2018.

²² The authors were not able to obtain complete, reliable data from this city. However, the authors were able to obtain homicide data from other sources. *See* “American Violence,” AmericanViolence.org, Marron Institute of Urban Management, New York University, updated September 2018, <http://www.americanviolence.org>. From the main page, the authors selected a custom time interval, from January 2017 through June 2018, and compared year-to-date figures from January to June 2017 to the same period in 2018.

²³ “2nd Quarter Crime Report; April-June 2018,” Fort Worth Police Department, last accessed Sep. 12, 2018, <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/1012029/8/>.

²⁴ The authors are in the process of obtaining complete, reliable data for this city but had not finished by the time of publication. However, the authors were able to obtain homicide data from other sources. *See* “American Violence,” AmericanViolence.org, Marron Institute of Urban Management, New York University, updated September 2018, <http://www.americanviolence.org>. From the main page, the authors selected a custom time interval, from January 2017 through June 2018, and compared year-to-date figures from January to June 2017 to the same period in 2018.

²⁵ “SeaStat,” Seattle Police Department, last updated July 17, 2018, last accessed Sep. 11, 2018, https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Police/SeaStat/SEASTAT_2018JUL18_FINAL.pdf.

²⁶ “Crime in the City and County of Denver by Month Based on UCR Standards,” Denver Police Department, last accessed Sep. 12, 2018, https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/720/documents/statistics/2018/Xcitywide_Reported_Offenses_2018.pdf.

²⁷ “LMPD UCR Report, January-July 2018,” Louisville Police Department, last accessed Sep. 12, 2018, <http://www.louisville-police.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/85>.

²⁸ “DPD: All Crime Incidents, December 6, 2016 — Present,” City of Detroit, last accessed Sep. 11, 2018, <https://data.detroitmi.gov/Public-Safety/DPD-All-Crime-Incidents-December-6-2016-Present/6gdg-y3kf>. For cities where data was collected from a data portal, the authors build in a three-month “lag time” to ensure the portals were fully updated. Therefore, for this city, the authors compiled their estimates by comparing June 2017 year-to-date figures to June 2018 year-to-date figures.

²⁹ “2018 Year-to-Date Crime Comparison,” Metropolitan Police Department, DC.gov, last updated Sep. 12, 2018, last accessed Sep. 12, 2018, <https://mpdc.dc.gov/node/197622>.

³⁰ “Part One Crime Reported to the Boston Police Department,” Boston Police Department, last updated Aug. 18, 2018, last accessed Sep. 12, 2018, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5086f19ce4b0ad16ff15598d/t/5b7b29ee03ce646d8c7d17ba/1534798318199/Weekly+Crime+Overview+8-19-18+3.pdf>.

³¹ “Year-to-Date Analysis,” Nashville Metropolitan Police Department, last updated last accessed Sep. 12, 2018, http://compstat.nashville.gov/2018/20180811_CompStat_Report.pdf.

³² The authors were not able to obtain complete, reliable data from this city. However, the authors were able to obtain homicide data from other sources. *See* “American Violence,” AmericanViolence.org, Marron Institute of Urban Management, New York University, updated September 2018, <http://www.americanviolence.org>. From the main page,

the authors selected a custom time interval, from January 2017 through June 2018, and compared year-to-date figures from January to June 2017 to the same period in 2018.

³³ The authors are in the process of obtaining complete, reliable data for this city but had not finished by the time of publication. However, the authors were able to obtain homicide data from other sources. *See* “American Violence,” AmericanViolence.org, Marron Institute of Urban Management, New York University, updated September 2018, <http://www.americanviolence.org>. From the main page, the authors selected a custom time interval, from January 2017 through June 2018, and compared year-to-date figures from January to June 2017 to the same period in 2018.

³⁴ Open Baltimore, “BPD Part 1 Victim Based Crime Data,” last updated Sep. 12, 2018, last accessed Sep. 11, 2018, <https://data.baltimorecity.gov/Public-Safety/BPD-Part-1-Victim-Based-Crime-Data/wsfq-mvij> (from the raw spreadsheet, data was exported and then filtered by date to remove all years other than 2017 and 2018, and then filtered again by crime type to include only Part 1 index crimes). For cities where data was collected from a data portal, the authors build in a three-month “lag time” to ensure the portals were fully updated. Therefore, for this city, the authors compiled their estimates by comparing June 2017 year-to-date figures to June 2018 year-to-date figures.

³⁵ “Monthly Neighborhood Offense Statistics,” Strategic Services Division, Portland Police Bureau, last updated Aug. 27, 2018, last accessed Sep. 11, 2018, <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/71978>.

³⁶ “State and National Crime Estimates by Year(s),” Federal Bureau of Investigation (2018), last accessed Jan. 31, 2018, <https://www.ucrdatatool.gov/Search/Crime/State/StateCrime.cfm>. Note that elements of the Louisville greater metropolitan area reported to the UCR as separate entities before 2004; thus, data on “Louisville” are not available before that date.

³⁷ Population estimates were created using the same methodology as previous reports. For more information, and detailed explanation of how data was compiled and analyzed, please see the methodology.

³⁸ “State and National Crime Estimates by Year(s),” Federal Bureau of Investigation (2018), last accessed Jan. 31, 2018, <https://www.ucrdatatool.gov/Search/Crime/State/StateCrime.cfm>. Note that elements of the Louisville greater metropolitan area reported to the UCR as separate entities before 2004; thus, data on “Louisville” are not available before that date.