

Crime in Washington: An In-Depth Look at the State's Growing Challenges

A Series Exploring Crime Trends, Policy Impacts, and Solutions

If you haven't considered crime a major issue in Washington State, this series may alarm you. Over the past decade, Washington has been trending in the wrong direction, with significant increases in both property and violent crimes—a stark contrast to the national trend of declining crime rates. For many years, Washington's crime rates were well below the national average, but [this is no longer the case](#).

There is a notable contrast in the approaches of candidates running for office across the state, particularly in the upcoming governor's race. One candidate, a tough-on-crime sheriff, advocates for stricter enforcement, while the other, a pro-reform attorney general, but does not list crime among his top 12 issues for the state. These differing perspectives highlight the broader debate about how best to address crime in Washington.

At Western Washington Moderates, we are launching this series to keep you informed about the crime issues facing our state. Over the coming weeks, we will provide detailed crime data, analyze trends, and offer insights into the policies and proposals being put forward by various candidates. Our goal is to equip you with the knowledge you need to understand the complexities of this issue and make informed decisions.

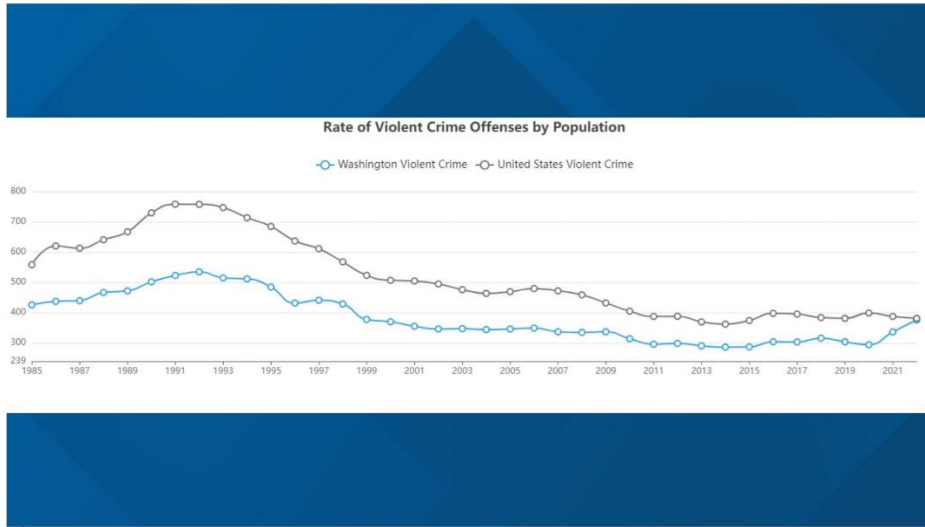
In this first article, we will explore the data and trends that tell the story of Washington's rising crime rates. The [statistics speak for themselves](#), revealing the pressing need for effective solutions to ensure the safety and well-being of all Washingtonians.

As we delve deeper into the various aspects of crime in Washington, this overview will explore the impact on individuals and communities, trends in property and violent crimes, the effectiveness of reforms, and the broader economic and social implications of these trends.

Trends for Washington Crime Rates Compared to Other States

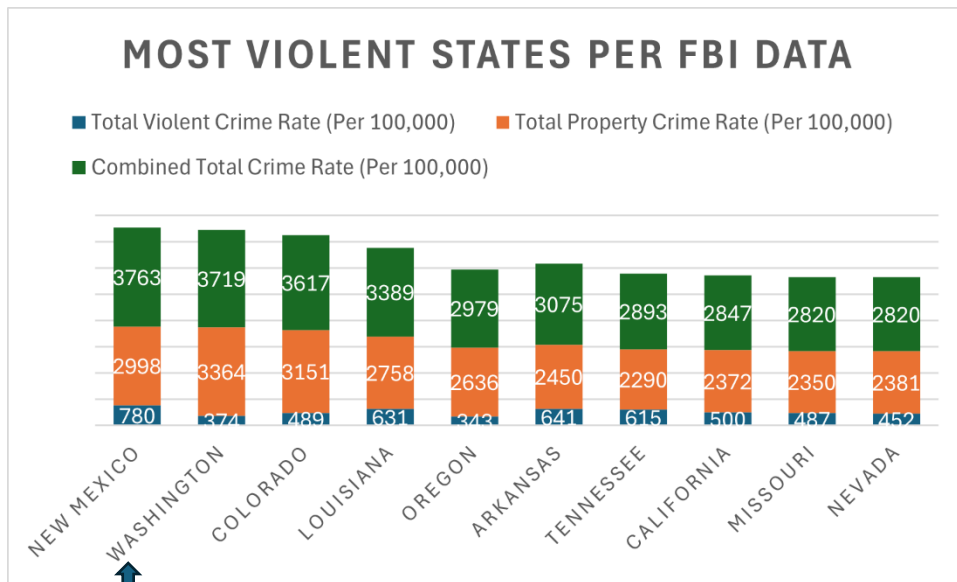
According to data from the FBI, while the national violent crime rate decreased to 380.7 per 100,000 people in 2022, Washington's rate has risen to 375.6 per 100,000. This marks a notable jump from the state's 2020 rate of 293.7 per 100,000, which was always significantly lower than the national average.

This line chart below shows the change in trends for Washington violent crime rate compared to the rest of the country.



Credit: FBI

Probably the most [sobering news](#) that came out July of 2024, that Washington **scored second most dangerous States to raise a family.**



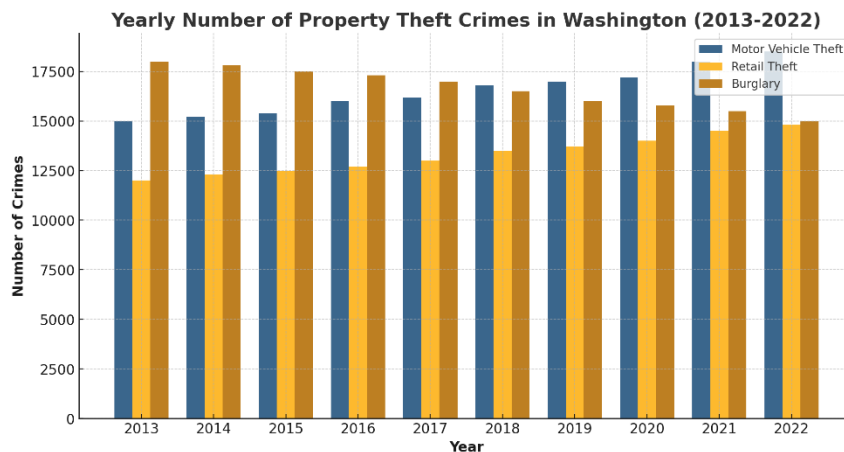
Most Dangerous States to Raise a Family. SOURCE: [Federal Bureau of Investigation \(FBI\) Crime Data Explorer](#)

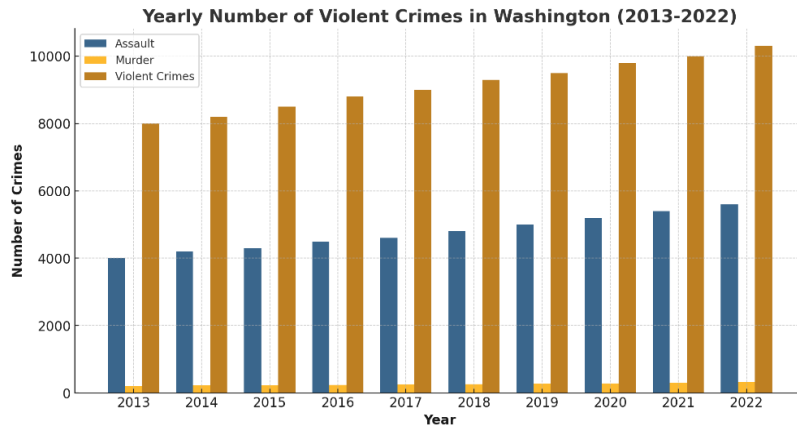
Washington ranks among the top for various crime categories among U.S. states. Here's a detailed summary of its standings:

1. **Property Crimes:** Washington **first** among all states in property crimes, which includes significant levels of motor vehicle theft and burglary. The state's property crime rate is 3364 per 100,000 people.
2. **Violent Crimes:** Washington has a substantial violent crime rate, ranking **ninth** among U.S. states with a rate of 375.6 per 100,000 people. This high ranking is due to factors such as increased aggravated assaults and homicides.
3. **Overall Crime Rate:** When combining both violent and property crime rates, Washington is regarded as the **second** most dangerous states in the U.S., with a combined total crime rate of 3,719 per 100,000 people. This ranking reflects the ongoing challenges in crime prevention and law enforcement strategies faced by the state.

Decade Long Surges in Almost Every Category of Crime

Besides murder, other crimes, such as aggravated assaults and vehicle thefts, have similarly seen sharp increases, contributing to Washington's declining position in national crime rankings.





Sources for Charts

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program - This is a primary source for crime data in the United States, including detailed statistics on violent crimes and property crimes.

Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) - They compile annual reports on crime statistics specific to Washington State, which include data on different types of crimes.

Washington's high crime rates, particularly in property and violent crimes, highlight significant challenges in ensuring public safety. The state's top ranking in property crimes and its place in the top ten for violent crimes underscore the urgency for targeted crime prevention efforts and stronger law enforcement strategies. Addressing these issues is crucial for improving the quality of life for Washington's residents and fostering a safer community environment across the state.

You can read more about candidates for the 2024 general election at the many links below or read Western Washington Moderate comparison of the two candidates records on crime for governor in the candidate section.

Dave Reichert

Voting record

- [here](#)

Police Reform Work as Congressman

- [Politico](#)

Campaign website and articles

- [Reichert](#) campaign issues.
- [Chronoline](#)
- [Reichert](#) campaign article

Videos

- [C-span](#)
- [Instagram](#)

Bob Ferguson

Click here to read more about Ferguson's record and position on crime

Campaign website

- Crime is not listed as an issue [on the website](#)

Articles Record on Crime as AG.

- [My Northwest](#)
- [My Northwest](#)
- [Seattle Times](#)
- [KNKX](#)

Articles on Police/Jail Reform

- [King](#)