

GEORGIA CRIMINAL JUSTICE DATA LANDSCAPE INSIGHTS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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The *Georgia Criminal Justice Data Landscape Insights: A Closer Look at Incarcerated Women, Probation, Crimes, and Arrests* is a continuation of the [Georgia Criminal Justice Data Landscape Report](#) published in 2021. These reports are intended to be a service to the public and to policy makers interested in Georgia’s adult criminal and youth justice systems. This report offers deeper insights into data resources and specific criminal justice topics, such as arrests and felony probation, introduced in the 2021 report. This report also includes new data that were not included in the 2021 report, such as misdemeanor probation.

Stakeholder input informed this *Insights* report in order to provide a wholistic view of the major criminal justice issues in Georgia. Stakeholders included nonprofits involved in the criminal justice space throughout Georgia as well as state government criminal justice agencies. One insight from the stakeholders was the desire to see and compare data by judicial circuit. Therefore, many of the data contained in this report are presented in that manner.

The data contained in the 2021 *Landscape Report* covered the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time of its publication, minimal data were available from 2020. What was available for 2020 reflected the impact of court closures and minimal operations. Many of the data in this *Insights* report cover the period just before and during the pandemic, as well as its aftermath as the emergency judicial orders were lifted¹ and court operations returned to normal. A significant backlog still remains in many jurisdictions.

Highlights from the *Insights* report include:

- **The data reflects the impact of and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.** With many government functions restricted during 2020 and 2021, fewer people were arrested and processed through the courts with resulting sentences of incarceration or probation. However, as COVID restrictions eased and court operations returned to normal, numbers began to rise across the system.
- **The number of arrests fell from 2019 to 2020 as the pandemic shuttered homes and businesses but then rose through 2021.** While the number of arrests fell 10.5% from 2019 to 2020, the number then rose far faster—34.9%—through 2021. Similarly, the arrest rate per 100,000 population ages 13 and older fell 11.5% from 2019 to 2020 and then increased 33.6% through 2021.
- **Both the number of people on misdemeanor probation and the number of misdemeanor probation cases fell from 2019 to 2021 but then rose through 2022.** From

¹ The first emergency judicial order was issued on March 14, 2020, and subsequently extended 14 times. The final judicial emergency order expired on June 30, 2021.



2019 to 2021, the number of people reported to be on misdemeanor probation decreased 38.0%, and the total quarterly number of misdemeanor probation cases fell 32.3%. As COVID restrictions eased in 2022 and court operations returned to normal, the number of people reported to be on misdemeanor probation rose 30.3%, and the number of cases rose 28.4%.

- **The Georgia felony probation rate remained higher than the national rate between 2017 and 2021.** Between 2017 and 2021, Georgia’s rate declined 20.6% while the national rate declined 17.6%. The number of felony and misdemeanor probation revocations filed in state and superior courts declined 45.6% from 2019 to 2020 but then rose just 1.2% through 2021.
- **In contrast to other trends, the crime rates in both Georgia and the US increased from 2020 to 2021, but Georgia’s rate rose more slowly than the US rate.** Georgia’s crime rate rose nearly 20% from 2020 to 2021, while the crime rate across the US rose 23.8% during the same time period.
- **The percentage of women admitted to Georgia prisons who were mothers declined from 67.8% in 2018 to 41.8% in 2022.** This trend is informed by an overall decline in the state birth rate, which fell from 37.9 per 1,000 women ages 10–55 in 2018 to 36.7 in 2021 in Georgia.
- **The percentage of women admitted to Georgia prisons for drug crimes was nearly twice as many as men.** Between 2018 and 2022, an average of 33.5% of the women admitted to Georgia prisons were convicted of drug crimes, whereas an average of 17.5% of men were admitted for drug crimes.
- **Women admitted to Georgia prisons are less well-off socioeconomically than men admitted to Georgia prisons, but they are more well-educated.** Women admitted to Georgia prisons between 2018 and 2022 were more likely than men to have been unemployed, never worked, or incapable of work. However, women were more likely to have finished high school, have attended some college or technical school, or to have a bachelor’s degree than men.

This *Insights* report explores pre-pandemic trends, the impacts of the pandemic on different aspects of the criminal justice system, and ultimately what the beginnings of a post-pandemic recovery look like. Generally, the data covering the first two years of the pandemic (2020 and 2021) were available. In some cases, data were available for 2022, which reflect the beginning of the recovery, but these data do not necessarily signify a future trend. Further research is needed as the impacts of the pandemic are felt for years to come.

