

# Robbery Arrests in Washington

*Robbery poses a risk to the safety of Washington residents. This report focuses on rape arrests from the [Washington State Patrol \(WSP\)](#) and aims to explore the demographics of those being arrested for robbery.*

## Data Parameters

The WSP maintains a database of Washington criminal history information, or background checks, consisting of fingerprint-based records and disposition information from law enforcement agencies and courts throughout the state. Data is retrieved from the [Washington State Identification System \(WASIS\)](#) for criminal history information and the [Washington Crime Information Center \(WACIC\)](#) for non-fingerprint hot file information. In conjunction with the [WSP's Automated Biometric Identification System \(ABIS\)](#), this database connects all arrests based on fingerprints, not merely by name. The following parameters were used for this brief:

- Robbery is defined by [RCW 9A.56.190](#), and in terms of the present data, involves having "robbery" noted on the arresting offense record, designating a crime involving a robbery. The most common robbery-related arrests in the present data include robbery in the first degree ([RCW 9A.56.200](#)), and robbery in the second degree ([RCW 9A.56.210](#)).
- Only individuals who were 18 years or older at the time of arrest were included.
- Due to conflicting records associated to one arrest, any arrests with multiple demographics (i.e., race, sex, birth dates) were excluded to avoid any potential incorrect assumptions and to maintain data integrity. As such, data might be underreported.
- The data is provided as arrest based, not individual based, therefore, an individual would be represented as many times as they were arrested from 1995 to 2024.

## Demographics

Between January 1, 1995, to December 31, 2024, there were 25,228 robbery-related arrests. The average age of an arrestee was 29 years old ( $M = 29.1$ ,  $SD = 10.0$ ). Robbery-related arrests were more likely to be associated with males as compared to females (Table 1). Robbery-related arrests were more likely to be associated with white arrestees than the rest of race categories. In terms of age category, those about same age as the average age or younger were more likely to be associated to robbery-related arrests.

Washington's population is almost evenly distributed in terms of sex, and the majority of the population were white (81.0%), while the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color community) presented slightly less than one-fifth of the Washington population.

## Limitations

This brief identifies a few major limitations that could impact any work that utilizes this data. These limitations include but are not limited to:

- Analyses are descriptive and non-generalizable. Any inferences and implications are limited, and results are modest. Further analyses must be completed for causal relationships to be determined.
- Administrative data and the lack of detail or richness significantly limits any conclusions yielded from this work.
- In terms of demographic assessment, these results must be interpreted cautiously. Race data can be misclassified, which impacts any analysis of race across criminal justice decision points. 0.6% of arrests were excluded in the demographic analysis due to race data being unknown whereas less than 0.1% of the sex data was excluded. Race data provided by WSP are defined by NCIC and are required to be utilized by all agencies reporting CHRI to the FBI.
- Any longitudinal analyses must be carefully evaluated due to potential policy changes in robbery laws that could impact trends and interpretations.
- Due to the impacts of COVID-19, trends might be skewed and underreported.
- There are many factors that contribute to the reluctance of a victim reporting, and the data might not accurately represent the true picture of robbery-related arrests.

**Table 1. Rape-related arrests demographics**

	N	%
<b>Sex</b>		
Female	4,401	17.4
Male	20,826	82.6
<b>Race</b>		
American Indian or Alaskan Native	472	1.9
Asian or Pacific Islander	700	2.8
Black	6,078	24.2
White	17,815	71.1
<b>Age Category</b>		
18 to 25	11,421	45.3
26 to 35	7,579	30.0
36 to 45	4,065	16.1
> = 46	2,163	8.6

**Notes:** Percentages are based on column totals. Due to rounding, totals may not equal 100%. Due to unknown values demographic totals may not be equal.

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Outcomes

Most felony robbery-related arrests were classified as a Class A felony (45.7%) (Figure 1). Class A felony is the most severe classification. Class B felony accounted for about a third of the felonies and Class C felony accounted for only 1.2%. It is important to note that not all felony arrests were classified, leading to an unspecified felony arrest (18.6%); there are many reasons for non-classification, including the potential of a fast-paced environment during the arrests. Among all robbery-related arrests, 100% were classified as felony offenses, meaning no robbery-related arrests were associated with a less severe classification: gross misdemeanor and misdemeanor.

Across all demographic breakdowns, Class C felony was the least prevalent. (Table 2). Class B felony, which is less severe than Class A but more severe than Class C accounted for the majority of classifications of robbery-related arrests for females by only 0.5%, otherwise Class A was the most prevalent across all demographic breakdowns. Additionally, there was mixed results across the other demographic breakdowns between Class B and non-classified felonies. Note that these classifications reflect the charge at time of arrest, which may be modified by the court prior to disposition.

On average, there were about 841 robbery-related arrests annually from 1995 to 2024. The years 2001 and 2003–18 were all above average. Additionally, Figure 2 shows the number of arrests with a firearm enhancement from 2010 to 2024. From the peak in 2018, there was a 62% decrease to the low point in 2021, which likely reflects reductions in arrests during the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, there was a general decrease in robbery-related arrests over time.

Figure 1. Distribution of ranked felony classifications for robbery-related arrests

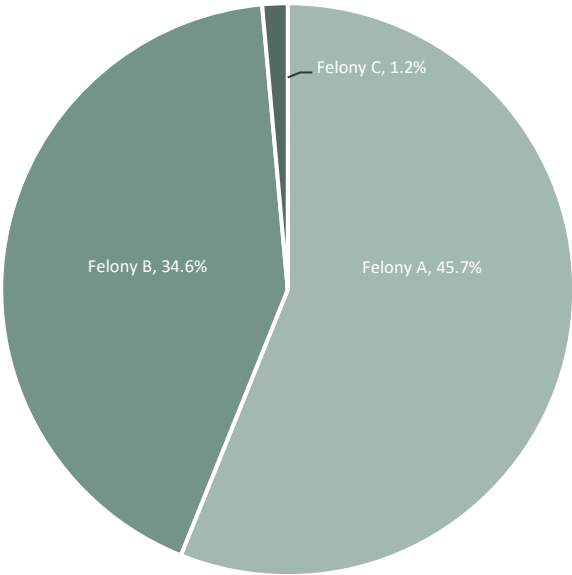
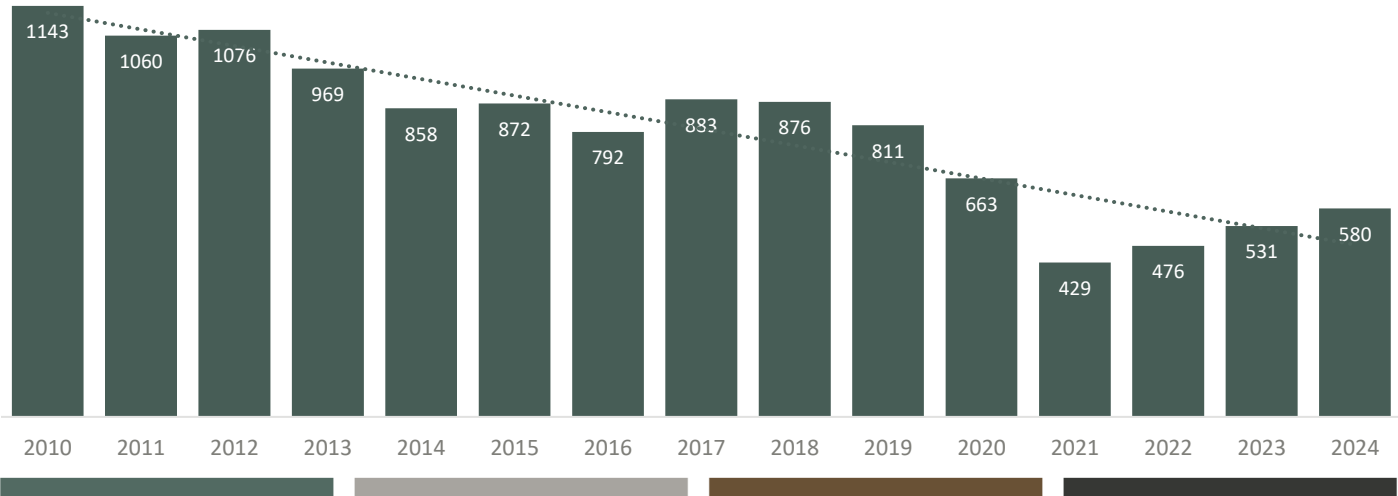


Table 2. Distribution of offense classification by demographics for robbery-related arrests

	Classification N (%)			
	Felony	Felony A	Felony B	Felony C
Sex				
Female	690 (15.7)	1,822 (41.4)	1,845 (41.9)	44 (1.0)
Male	3,993 (19.2)	9,701 (46.6)	6,883 (33.1)	249 (1.2)
Race				
American Indian or Alaskan Native	--	221 (46.8)	180 (38.1)	--
Asian or Pacific Islander	231 (33.0)	294 (42.0)	--	--
Black	1,752 (28.8)	2,462 (40.5)	1,781 (29.3)	83 (1.4)
White	2,588 (14.5)	8,467 (47.5)	6,565 (36.9)	195 (1.1)
Age Category				
18 to 25	2,111 (18.5)	5,482 (48.0)	3,703 (32.4)	125 (1.1)
26 to 35	1,322 (17.4)	3,436 (45.3)	2,736 (36.1)	85 (1.1)
36 to 45	783 (19.3)	1,715 (42.2)	1,513 (37.2)	54 (1.3)
>= 46	467 (21.6)	890 (41.1)	777 (35.9)	29 (1.3)

Notes: Percentages are based on row totals. Due to rounding and exclusion of low N's totals may not equal 100%.

Figure 2. Frequency of robbery-related arrests by year



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