



ARRESTS IN THE SAN DIEGO REGION

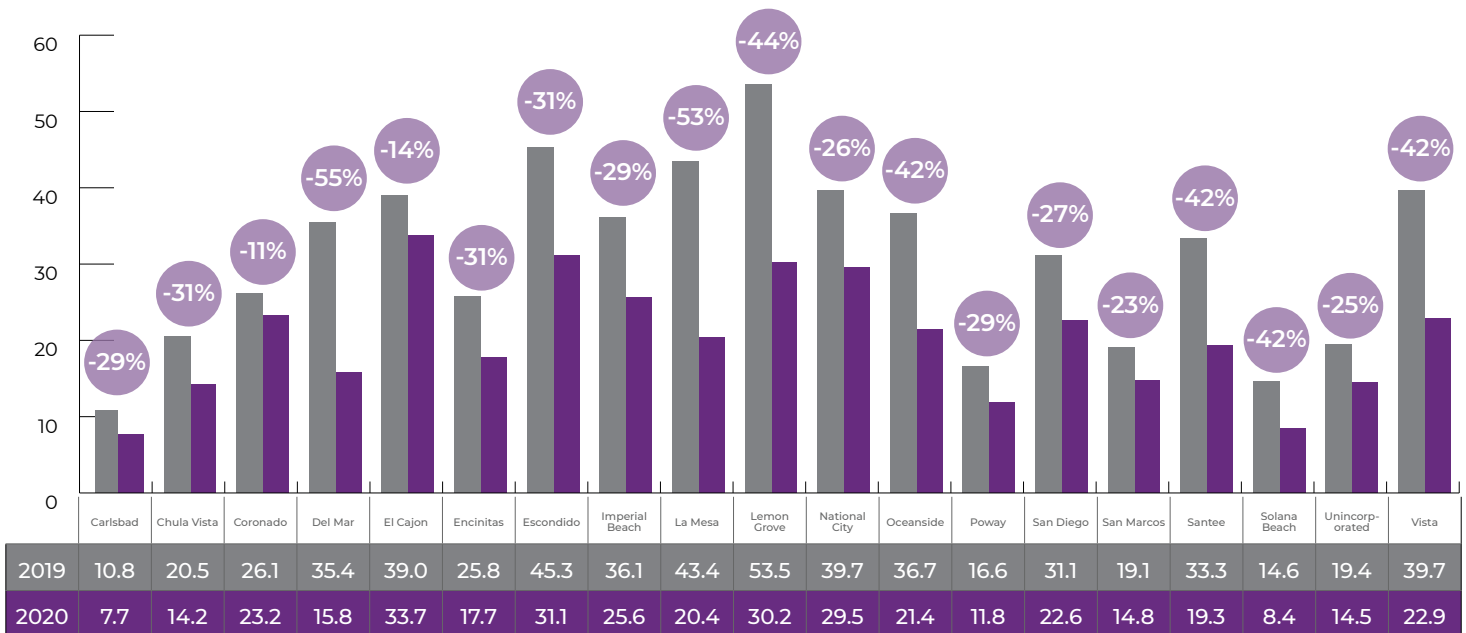
On an annual basis, the SANDAG Criminal Justice Clearinghouse produces a report that summarizes arrests made by local law enforcement in the San Diego region. While the Clearinghouse crime reports focus on crimes reported to law enforcement, these arrest reports describe law enforcement’s response in terms of who was arrested and for what type of crimes. With the recent release of arrest statistics for 2019 and 2020,¹ this CJ Flash highlights how many and what types of arrests were made in the San Diego region in 2020, differences across jurisdictions, and how arrest numbers varied from 2019 to 2020 during the pandemic.

Highlight 1: How did arrest rates change in 2020 across the jurisdictions?

Each of the jurisdictions in San Diego County had lower arrest rates in 2020, compared to 2019, but the size of the decreases varied considerably, from -11% in Coronado to -55% in Del Mar. The jurisdictions with the lowest arrest rates in 2020 were Carlsbad (7.7) and Solana Beach (8.4) and those with the highest were Escondido (31.1) and El Cajon (33.7) (Figure 1).

Figure 1

2020 Arrest Rates per 1,000 Population by Jurisdiction and One-Year Decreases in Arrest Rates 2019-2020



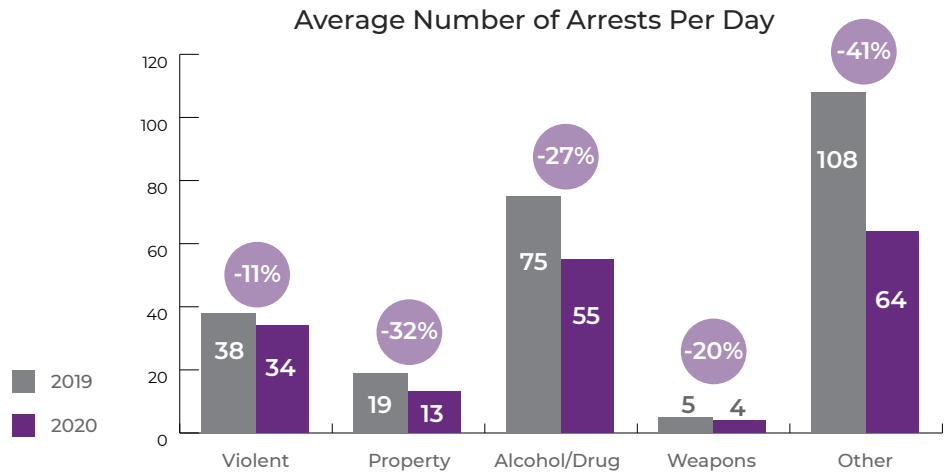
¹Because arrest data could not be obtained from the state in either 2019 or 2020, an alternate data source (ARJIS) was used for this report. As a result, and because of differences between the two sources, any comparisons to previous SANDAG arrest reports should not be made.



Highlight 2: How many arrests are made daily by type on average in the San Diego region?

As Figure 2 shows, in 2020 there were an average of 64 “other” types of arrests across the region every day, 55 arrests for alcohol/drug offenses, 34 for violent offenses, 13 for property offenses, and 4 for weapons offenses. Compared to 2019, these daily averages decreased in each of the five categories, but arrests for violent offenses decreased the least.

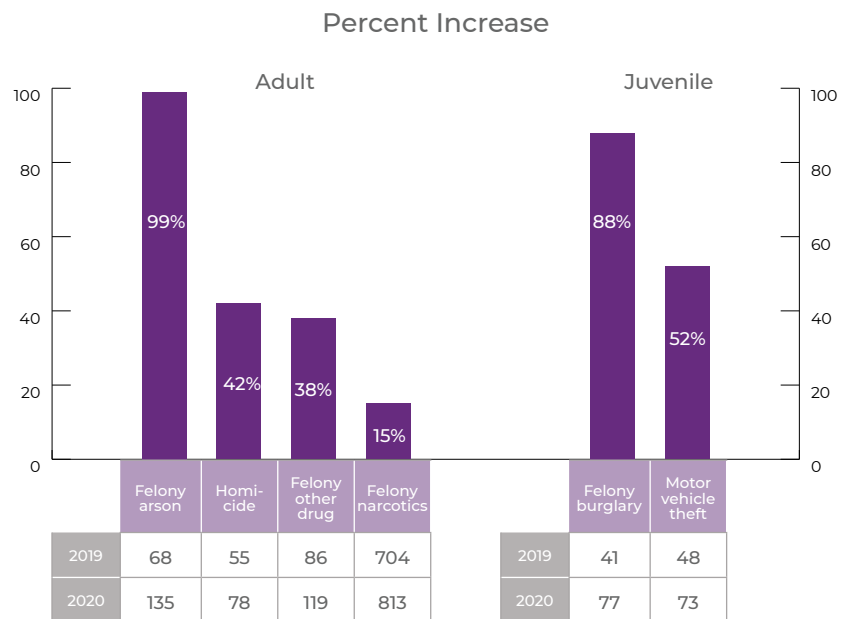
Figure 2
Daily Average Number of Arrests by Type in the San Diego Region, 2019 and 2020



Highlight 3: Did any arrest types increase in number from 2019 to 2020?

While arrest numbers were predominately down in 2020, compared to 2019, there were double-digit increases for four adult arrest types (felony arson, homicide, felony other drug, and felony narcotics) and two juvenile arrest types (felony burglary and motor vehicle theft), as shown in Figure 3. Because the number of crimes are relatively low for some of the categories, the actual number of arrests are presented, as well as the size of the percentage change.

Figure 3
Adult and Juvenile Arrest Categories that had Double-Digit Percent Increases 2019-2020





Highlight 4: How have felony and misdemeanor arrest rates changed across the San Diego region since the passage of Proposition (Prop) 47 and Prop 64?

While the one-year change from 2019 to 2020 and the effect of the pandemic is important to understand, other trends began earlier and are related to voter initiatives. These initiatives include Prop 47, which reduced certain property and drug-related offenses from felonies to misdemeanors in 2014 and Prop 64, which legalized marijuana for recreational use for individuals 21 years of age and older in 2016. Immediately after Prop 47 was passed, the felony arrest rate per 1,000 population in the region dropped, and stayed fairly stable until this past year. In contrast, the misdemeanor arrest rate increased, but then steadily decreased, which could be related to crimes committed or reported, and/or the system's response to them (Figure 4). For marijuana-related arrests, the number of felony arrests in this category decreased 98% from 2016 to 2020 (315 to 6) and the number of misdemeanor arrests decreased 88% (from 529 to 61)(not shown).

Figure 4
Felony and Misdemeanor Arrest Rates in the San Diego Region, 2014-2020

