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## Research and Program Evaluation in Illinois: The Extent and Nature of Drug and Violent Crime in Illinois' Counties



## A Profile of the Alexander County Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems

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## FOREWORD

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority is a state agency created in 1983 to promote community safety by providing public policymakers, criminal justice professionals and others with information, tools and technology needed to make effective decisions that improve the quality of criminal justice in Illinois. The Authority provides an objective system-wide forum for identifying critical problems in criminal justice, developing coordinated and cost-effective strategies, and implementing and evaluating solutions to those problems. The specific powers and duties of the Authority are delineated in the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Act (Illinois Compiled Statutes, Ch. 20, Sec. 393/7). Two of the Authority's many responsibilities are serving as a clearinghouse of information and research on criminal justice and undertaking research studies to improve the administration of criminal justice.

Since 1989, the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit has received funds under the federal Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 to document the extent and nature of drug and violent crime in Illinois and the criminal justice system's response to these offenses. As a result of these efforts, the Authority has amassed a large amount of data measuring the extent and nature of drug and violent crime in Illinois and the impact these crimes have had on the criminal justice system. To put this information into the hands of Illinois' criminal justice policymakers in a useful summary format, the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit has developed profiles of the criminal justice system for each county in Illinois. In 1994, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority produced a series of reports detailing criminal justice system activity levels for each of Illinois' 102 counties. As a result of the positive response by local criminal justice officials, in 1996 the Authority updated and expanded the scope of these reports to reflect current criminal and juvenile justice activity. It is hoped that these 2004 updated reports will be as valuable, if not more, than the original versions. In addition to providing policymakers with an overview of activities across the components of the justice system in their county (law enforcement, courts and corrections), the profiles also provide perspective by including trends experienced in counties with similar population sizes.

While the data presented in this report are by no means inclusive of all indicators, they do provide a general overview of crime and the criminal justice system's response. In addition, these data are readily available and consistently defined through existing statewide data collection mechanisms.

The information presented in this profile has been provided to the Authority by a number of state agencies, specifically: the Illinois State Police, the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, the Illinois Department of Corrections, and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. The support and cooperation of these agencies and their staffs have helped make this report an informative and timely source of information on the activities of the criminal justice system in Illinois.



The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority's  
Web-based clearinghouse of criminal justice data available at:

<http://www.icjia.state.il.us>.

## I. Introduction

Alexander County, located in southern Illinois, covers an area of 236 square miles and had a 2003 population of 9,327, according to estimates by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census. Using these figures, Alexander County was the 6<sup>th</sup> smallest county in Illinois geographically, but 14<sup>th</sup> smallest in terms of population. Combining these two measures, Alexander County had the 64<sup>th</sup> highest population density per square mile among Illinois' 102 counties.

As with the previous reports, information specific to Alexander County is presented in comparison with similar counties. To provide more useful comparisons, counties have been separated into four types; 1) Cook County, 2) Collar counties, 3) urban counties (outside of Cook and the Collar counties), and 4) rural counties. Because of its size, Cook County is compared to the rest of the state. The Collar counties are the five that border Cook County (DuPage, Lake, Kane, McHenry, and Will). Urban and rural counties are defined by whether or not they lie within a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (Appendix 1, page 25). Based on these definitions, there are 36 counties in Illinois that are part of a MSA (Cook, Collar, and urban counties) and 66 counties that are not part of a MSA (in other words, rural).

Recent changes to the standard definitions of MSAs have affected the classification of several Illinois counties. The United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB) defines metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas according to published standards that are applied to Census Bureau data. The general concept of a metropolitan or micropolitan statistical area is that of a core area containing a substantial population nucleus, together with adjacent communities having a high degree of economic and social integration with that core. Currently defined metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas are based on the application of 2000 standards to 2000 decennial census data and were announced by OMB on June 6, 2003.

Standard definitions of metropolitan areas have changed over time. The term "metropolitan area" (MA) was adopted in 1990 and referred collectively to metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), consolidated metropolitan statistical areas (CMSAs), and primary metropolitan statistical areas (PMSAs). More recently, the term "core based statistical area" (CBSA) became effective in 2000 and refers collectively to metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas.

The 2000 standards require that each CBSA must contain at least one urban area of 10,000 or more population. Each metropolitan statistical area must have at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more inhabitants. Each micropolitan statistical area must have at least one urban cluster of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population.

Under these standards, the county (or counties) in which at least 50 percent of the population resides within urban areas of 10,000 or more population, or that contain at least 5,000 people residing within a single urban area of 10,000 or more population, is identified as a "central county" (counties). Additional "outlying counties" are included in the CBSA if they meet specified requirements regarding residents commuting to or from the central counties.

Changes in the definitions of these statistical areas since the 1950 census have consisted chiefly of: 1) the recognition of new areas as they reached the minimum required city or urbanized area population, and 2) the addition of counties to existing areas due to new decennial census data. In some instances, formerly separate areas have been merged, components of an area have been transferred from one area to another, or components have been dropped from an area. The large majority of changes have taken place on the basis of decennial census data.

Because of these historical changes in geographic definitions, users must be cautious in comparing data for these statistical areas from different dates. For more information, contact the Population Distribution Branch at (301) 763-2419 (U. S. Census Bureau).

Based on these characteristics, Alexander County is one of Illinois' 66 rural counties. Throughout this report, the criminal justice activity trends experienced in Alexander County will be compared to those trends experienced in the other rural counties. This comparison will be realized through the calculation of rates for the activities being analyzed, with the number per 100,000 population the format for all the rates.

## II. Law Enforcement Activities in Alexander County

One of the most commonly used indicators of the level of crime in a particular jurisdiction is the number of *Index offenses* reported to the police. There are eight separate offenses, which constitute the Crime Index, including murder, criminal sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault (violent Index offenses), burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson (property Index offenses). Although these eight offenses do not account for all crimes reported to the police, they are considered to be the most serious, frequent, pervasive, and consistently defined by different law enforcement agencies.

An indicator of the workload that law enforcement agencies place on other components of the justice system is the number of arrests made by police, including those for violent and property Index offenses and drug offenses. Unlike offenses, which are what police must respond to, arrests represent those offenders who may eventually be processed through other components of the justice system, including the courts, county jails, and state and local correctional programs.

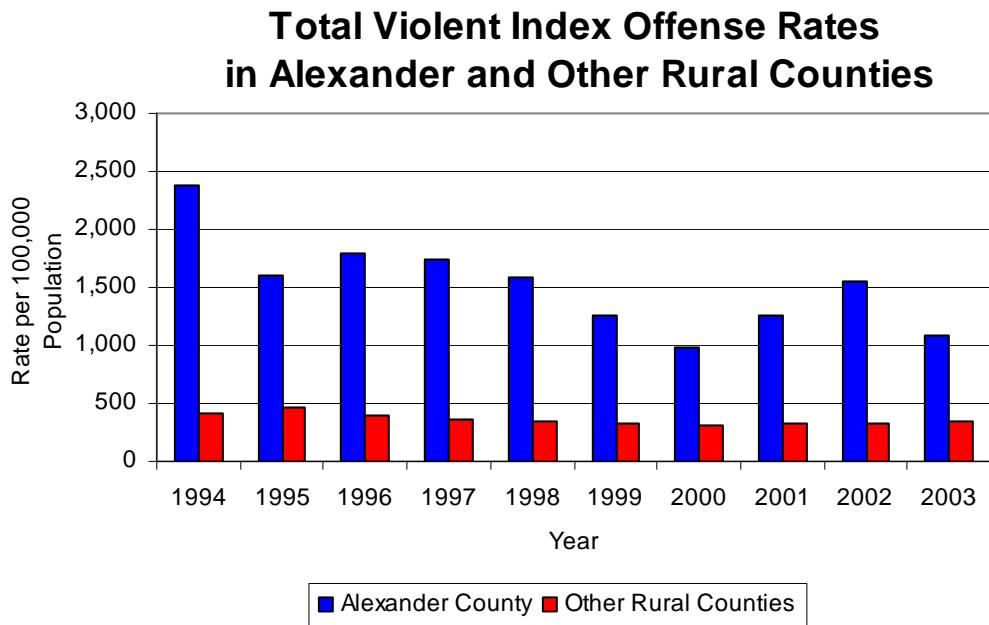


*Violent Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Alexander County*

The number of violent Index offenses reported to the police decreased 58 percent in Alexander County between 1994 and 2003, from 240 to 101. As in previous years and in most other counties, aggravated assault offenses accounted for the majority (nearly 80 percent) of violent Index offenses reported in Alexander County in 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the violent Index offense rate in Alexander County decreased 55 percent, from 2,387 to 1,083 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 1). Similarly, during that same period, the violent Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 19 percent, from 421 to 342 offenses per 100,000 population. The 2003 violent Index offense rate in Alexander County was more than three times higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 1**



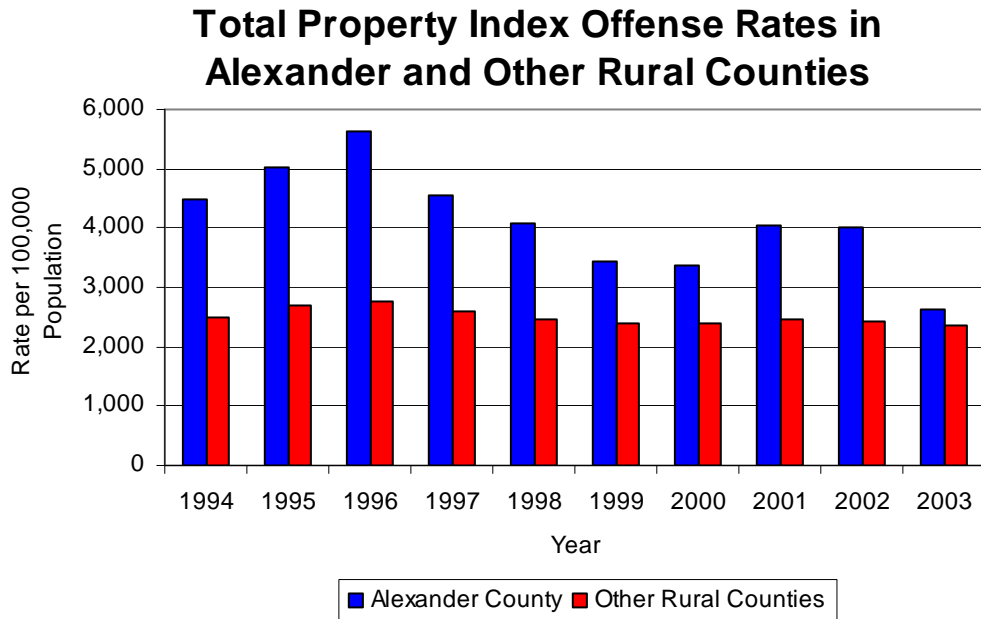
Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

*Property Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Alexander County*

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of property Index offenses reported to the police in Alexander County decreased 46 percent, from 450 to 244. Thefts accounted for 68 percent of all property Index offenses reported in Alexander County during 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the property Index offense rate in Alexander County decreased 42 percent, from 4,476 to 2,616 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 2). Between 1994 and 2003, the property Index offense rate has remained relatively stable in the other rural counties. The property Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 6 percent, from 2,510 to 2,361 offenses per 100,000 population. Alexander County's 2003 property Index offense rate was 11 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 2**



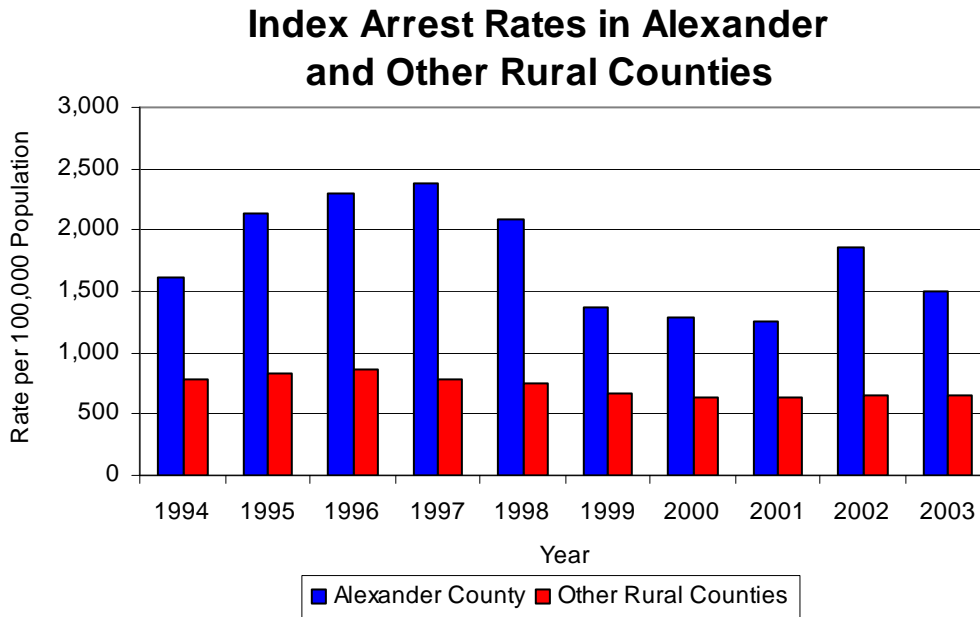
Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

*Index Arrests by Alexander County Law Enforcement Agencies*

Between 1994 and 2003, arrests for total Index offenses by law enforcement agencies in Alexander County decreased 14 percent, from 163 to 140. The majority of Index arrests was for violent Index offenses. Of the 140 Index arrests made in Alexander County during 2003, 51 percent were for violent Index crimes and 49 percent were for property Index crimes. Arrests for theft and aggravated assault accounted for the majority of property and violent Index arrests in Alexander County during 2003. Of all violent Index arrests, 86 percent were arrests for aggravated assault, while thefts accounted for 58 percent of all property Index arrests.

Between 1994 and 2003, the Index arrest rate in Alexander County decreased 7 percent, from 1,621 to 1,501 arrests per 100,000 population (Figure 3). During the same period, the Index arrest rate in the other rural counties decreased 16 percent, from 777 to 652 arrests per 100,000 population. In 2003, Alexander County's Index arrest rate was more than twice the Index arrest rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 3**



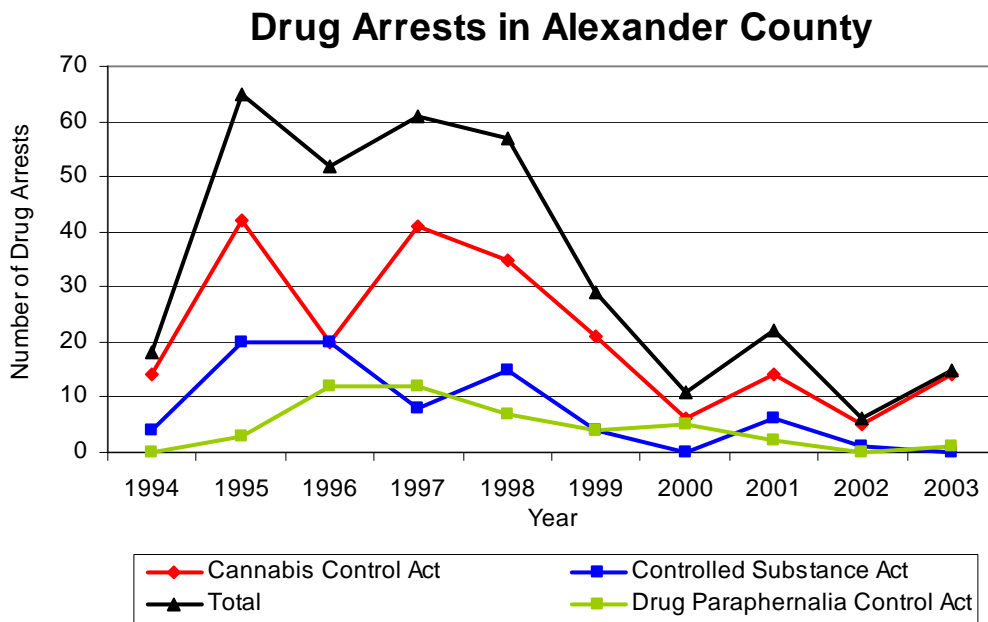
Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

*Drug Offense Arrests in Alexander County*

Between 1994 and 2003, arrests for total drug offenses (including violations of Illinois' Cannabis Control Act, Controlled Substances Act, Drug Paraphernalia Control Act, and the Hypodermic Syringes and Needles Act) decreased 16 percent in Alexander County, from 18 to 15 (Figure 4). Arrests for Cannabis Control Act violations accounted for the majority of total drug arrests, jumping from 14 to 42 between 1994 and 1995, but dramatically decreased after 1998. Arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act decreased from four to zero between 1994 and 2003, while reaching period highs of 20 arrests in both 1995 and 1996. Arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act decreased from four to zero between 1994 and 2003, while reaching period highs of 20 arrests in both 1995 and 1996.

During the majority of the period analyzed, arrests for violations of Illinois' Cannabis Control Act (which prohibits the possession, sale, and cultivation of cannabis) in Alexander County have out-numbered arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act (which prohibits the possession, sale, distribution, or manufacture of all other illegal drugs such as cocaine and opiates). However, in 2003, the number of arrests for each type of drug violation declined to levels not seen since 1994. The number of arrests for violations of the Cannabis Control Act in Alexander County remained the same between 1994 and 2003, while the number of arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act decreased from four in 1994 to zero in 2003 (Figure 4).

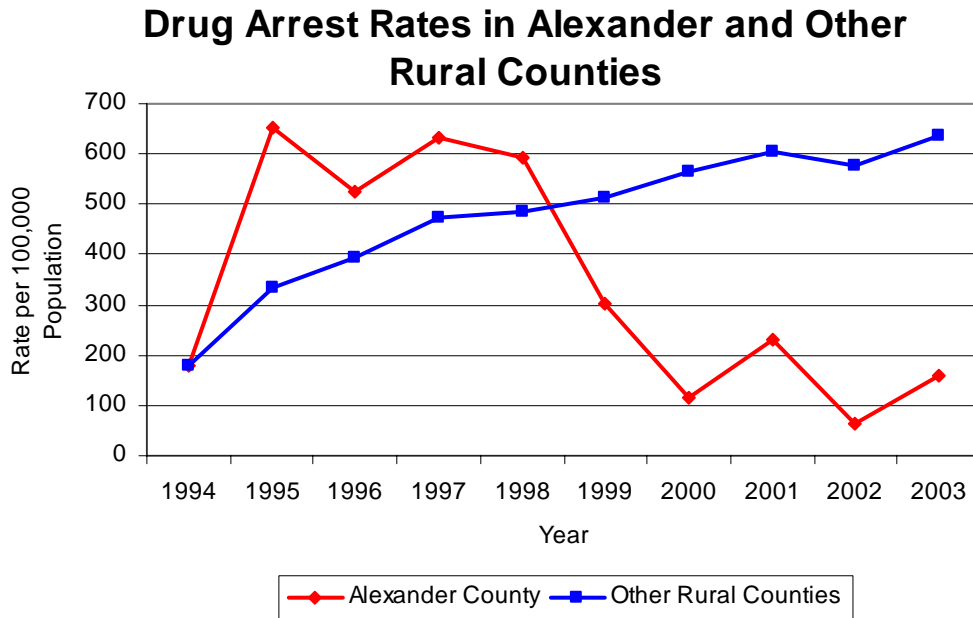
**Figure 4**



Source: Illinois State Police

Between 1994 and 2003, the arrest rate for all drug law violations in Alexander County decreased by 10 percent, from 179 to 161 per 100,000 population (Figure 5). Conversely, the total drug arrest rate in the other rural counties more than tripled between 1994 and 2003, from 181 to 635 per 100,000 population. In 2003, the drug arrest rate in Alexander County was 75 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 5**



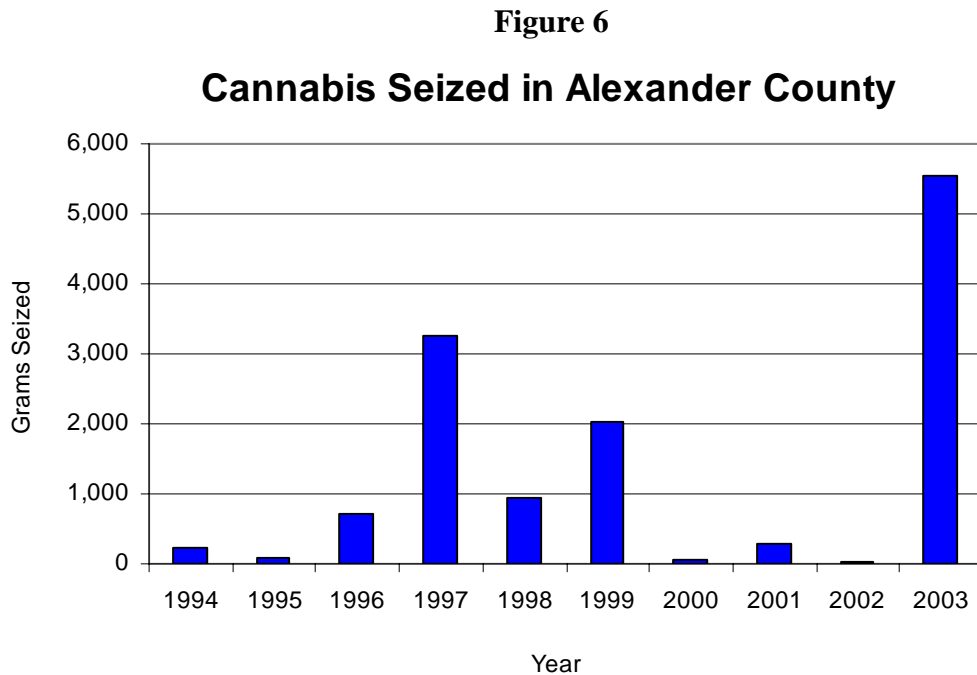
Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

### **Drugs Seized in Alexander County**

Drugs seized by law enforcement agencies are another indicator of the extent and nature of the illegal drug trade in a jurisdiction. When illegal drugs are seized by law enforcement agencies in Illinois, they are submitted to a crime lab for analysis. Most agencies submit drugs to one of the Illinois State Police crime labs. These labs record the quantity of drugs submitted from each county. This section discusses the quantities of illegal drugs seized and submitted to the Illinois State Police from law enforcement agencies in Alexander County.

### *Cannabis Seized in Alexander County*

Cannabis accounts for the majority of drugs seized in Alexander County and in most Illinois jurisdictions. Although there were large variations in the number of grams of cannabis seized between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in Alexander County increased dramatically, from 240 grams to a period high of 5,541 grams (Figure 6).



Source: Illinois State Police

During the period between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in the other rural counties decreased 56 percent, from 607,909 grams to 267,102 grams. In 2003, Alexander County's cannabis seizure rate of 59,404 grams per 100,000 population was more than three times the rate of 15,886 grams per 100,000 population in the other rural counties.

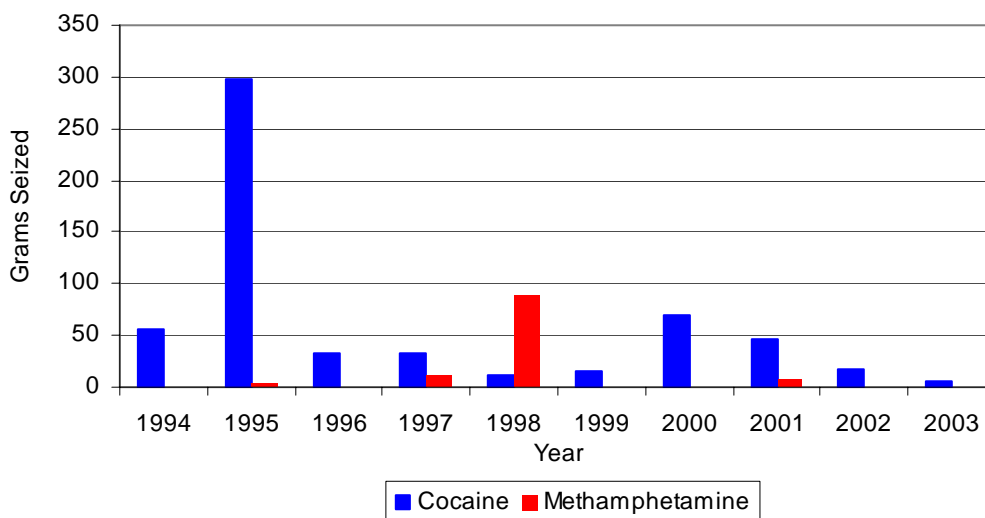
### *Cocaine and Methamphetamine Seized in Alexander County*

During the past decade, it is clear that methamphetamine “activity” in the state has increased dramatically and had become a significant drug problem in many jurisdictions. Further, the extent to which law enforcement agencies are encountering methamphetamine has also dispersed across a large area of the state, with most of this being fueled by activities taking place in Illinois’ rural jurisdictions. In Alexander County, the quantity of methamphetamine seized between 1994 and 2003 remained relatively low, with 112 grams seized during the entire period analyzed and where a period high of 89 grams were seized in 1998 (Figure 7).

Unlike most other counties, crack cocaine accounted for the majority of cocaine seized in Alexander County, accounting for 94 percent of all cocaine seized between 1994 and 2003. The quantity of powdered and crack cocaine seized in Alexander County decreased between 1994 and 2003. The quantity of powder cocaine seized in Alexander County decreased from 193 grams in 1994 to zero grams in 2003. The quantity of crack cocaine seized in Alexander County decreased 83 percent, from 36 grams to six grams during the same period, while reaching a period high of 297 grams in 1995.

**Figure 7**

### **Cocaine\* and Methamphetamine Seized in Alexander County**



Source: Illinois State Police

\*Cocaine includes both crack and powder cocaine

The quantity of powder cocaine seized in the other rural counties decreased dramatically during the period analyzed. Between 1994 and 2003, the amount of powder cocaine seized decreased 81 percent in the other rural counties, from 70,083 grams to 13,064 grams, while the quantity of

crack cocaine seized increased 84 percent from 1,140 grams to 2,099 grams. Although there were no powder cocaine seizures in Alexander County in 2003, there were 777 grams of powder cocaine seized per 100,000 population in the other rural counties. During the period analyzed, the rate of crack cocaine seized in Alexander County decreased 82 percent, from 361 grams to 65 grams per 100,000 population. Conversely, the crack cocaine seizure rate in the other rural counties increased 86 percent during the same period, from 67 grams per 100,000 population to 125 grams per 100,000 population. In 2003, Alexander County had a crack cocaine seizure rate 48 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.



### III. Adult and Juvenile Court Activity in Alexander County

Although Illinois has one of the best court reporting systems in the country, the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts only collects information regarding the aggregate number of court filings, dispositions, and probation caseloads. Currently, there are no statewide data available on court filings, dispositions, and convictions by offense type. However, detailed offense data are available from the Illinois Department of Corrections for those convicted felons sentenced to prison.

Trends in the number of delinquency petitions filed and adjudicated in juvenile court are also presented. Illinois statutes define delinquency offenses as those committed by someone younger than 17 years old that would be considered crimes if committed by someone 17 years of age or older.

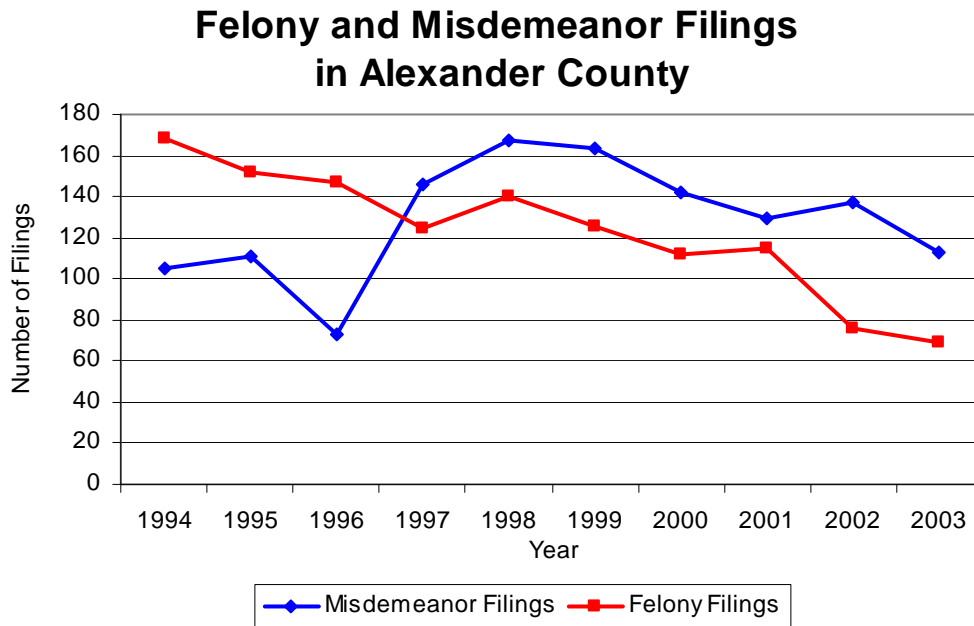
In Illinois, county probation departments are overseen by the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts' Probation Division. This section also presents data on active misdemeanor and felony adult caseloads and the number of juveniles under the supervision of the probation departments in Alexander County and the other rural counties.

#### *Misdemeanor and Felony Filings in Alexander County*

The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts reports data on criminal court cases in two categories: misdemeanors and felonies. After screening a case and deciding it warrants further action, the state's attorney must file formal charges in court. Misdemeanor cases are less serious than felonies and can be punished by a probation sentence of one year or less and less than one year of incarceration. Felony cases, on the other hand, are more serious and can be punished by a probation term up to four years and incarceration for more than one year. When comparing the number of filings across time and across counties, it should be noted that differences in reporting practices exist. For example, when two or more defendants are involved in a single case, some state's attorneys file a single case charging all defendants, while others file a separate case for each suspect.

In 2003, felony and misdemeanor court filings accounted for 5 percent of all filings in Alexander County's courts (civil, traffic, family, and other). Between 1994 and 2003, the number of felony filings in Alexander County decreased 59 percent, from 168 to 69 (Figure 8). During the same period, misdemeanor filings increased 8 percent, from 105 in 1994 to 113 in 2003. Since 1997, misdemeanor filings have out-numbered felony filings.

Figure 8

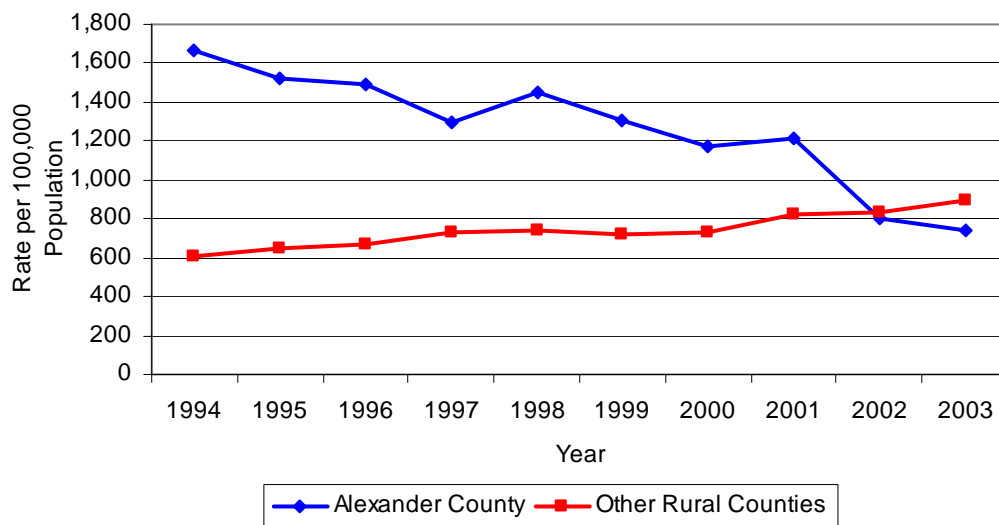


Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Between 1994 and 2003, the felony-filing rate in Alexander County decreased 56 percent, from 1,671 to 740 cases per 100,000 population (Figure 9). The felony-filing rate in the other rural counties, on the other hand, increased 46 percent during this period, from 608 to 890 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the felony-filing rate in Alexander County was 16 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 9**

**Felony Filing Rates in Alexander and Other Rural Counties**

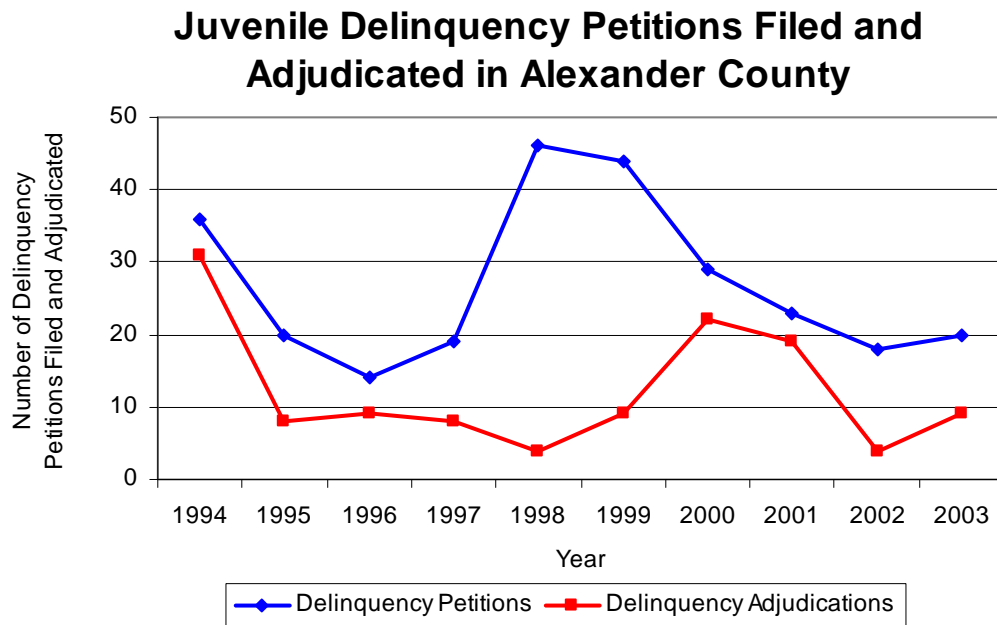


Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts and U.S. Census Bureau data

Illinois’ juvenile court system differs in several key aspects from the adult criminal court system. One aspect revolves around the difference in treatment between juveniles and adults: the juvenile court process is somewhat less formal and adversarial; authorities are given much more latitude in determining the proper response to each case. Traditionally, the terminology used to describe juvenile proceedings has been less harsh than that used for the adult criminal process. For example, Illinois’ juvenile courts accept “petitions of delinquency” rather than misdemeanor or felony criminal complaints. However, pursuant to the Juvenile Court Reform Act of 1998, criminal court terms, such as “trial” and “sentencing,” have replaced the less harsh “adjudicatory hearing” and “dispositional hearing” terms.

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of juvenile delinquency petitions filed in Alexander County decreased 44 percent, from 36 to 20 (Figure 10). In 2003, 45 percent of the juveniles named in delinquency petitions were adjudicated delinquent. Between 1994 and 2003, delinquency adjudications decreased 71 percent, from 31 to nine.

**Figure 10**



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

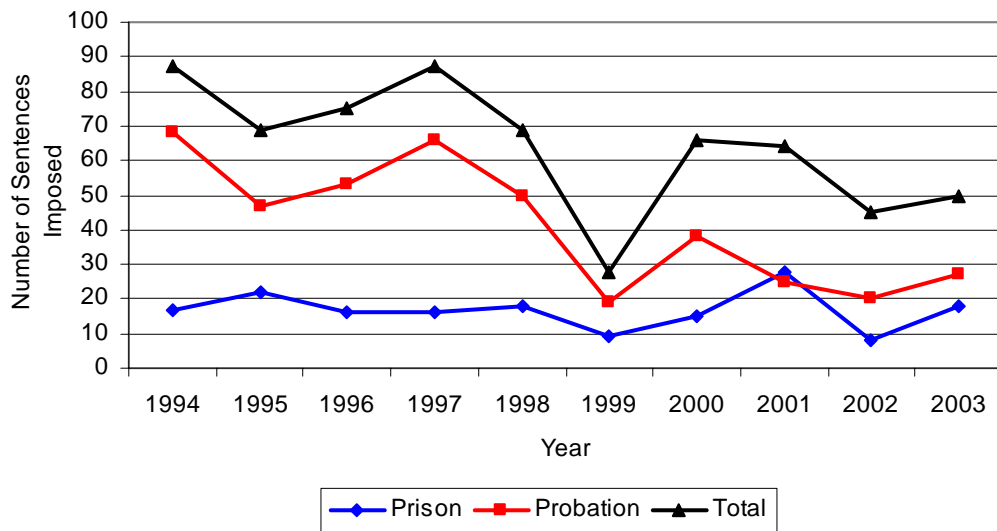
Between 1994 and 2003, the delinquency petition-filing rate in Alexander County decreased 40 percent, from 3,172 to 1,897 per 100,000 juveniles. During the same period, the delinquency petition-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 13 percent, from 2,004 to 2,268 petitions per 100,000 juveniles. In 2003, the delinquency petition-filing rate in Alexander County was 16 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

Anyone convicted of a felony in Illinois can be sentenced either to prison or probation, or receive a conditional discharge. A number of factors influence the type and length of sentence imposed on convicted felons, including the severity of the crime, the offender’s criminal and social history, safety of the community, and legislation affecting certain types of offenses. For some types of convictions a sentence to prison is required by state statute.

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of offenders convicted of a felony and sentenced in Alexander County decreased from 87 to 50 (Figure 11). While the number of convicted felons sentenced to probation during this period decreased 60 percent, from 68 to 27, felony probation sentences decreased as a proportion of total sentences. In 1994, 78 percent of all convicted felons were sentenced to probation, compared to 54 percent in 2003. Between 1994 and 2003, the proportion of felons sentenced to prison increased, from 20 percent in 1994 to 36 percent in 2003.

**Figure 11**

**Sentences Imposed on Felons Convicted in Alexander County**

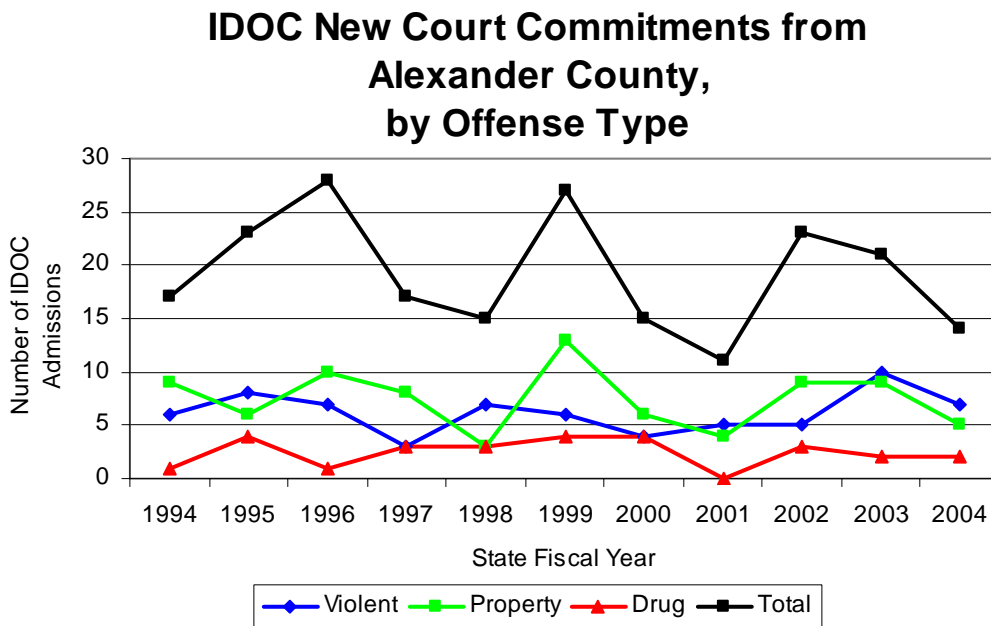


Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

## Adult Prison Admissions from Alexander County

Between State Fiscal Years (SFY) 1994 and 2004, the number of admissions to the Illinois Department of Corrections' Adult Division from Alexander County decreased 18 percent, from 17 to 14 (Figure 12). During this period, the number of violent offender admissions increased from six to seven, while the number of drug admissions increased from one to two. Conversely, the number of property offender admissions decreased from nine to five during the period analyzed.

Figure 12



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

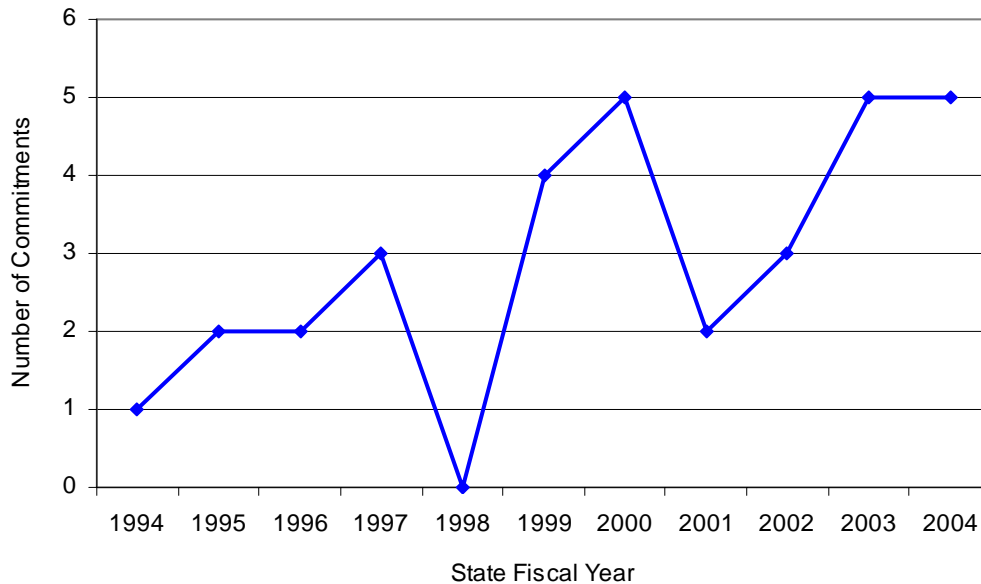
In SFY 2004, violent offenders accounted for 50 percent of all admissions from Alexander County, while property offenders accounted for 36 percent. Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, drug offenders increased from 6 percent to 14 percent of all admissions from Alexander County.

## Juvenile Court Commitments to the Illinois Department of Corrections

The Illinois Department of Corrections' Juvenile Division provides long-term custody for youths, 13 to 17 years old, who have been found delinquent by the juvenile court and committed to the IDOC. Youths may remain in an IDOC juvenile facility until they are 21. Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of court commitments to the IDOC's Juvenile Division from Alexander County increased from one to five (Figure 13).

Figure 13

### Juvenile Court Commitments to the IDOC Juvenile Division from Alexander County



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

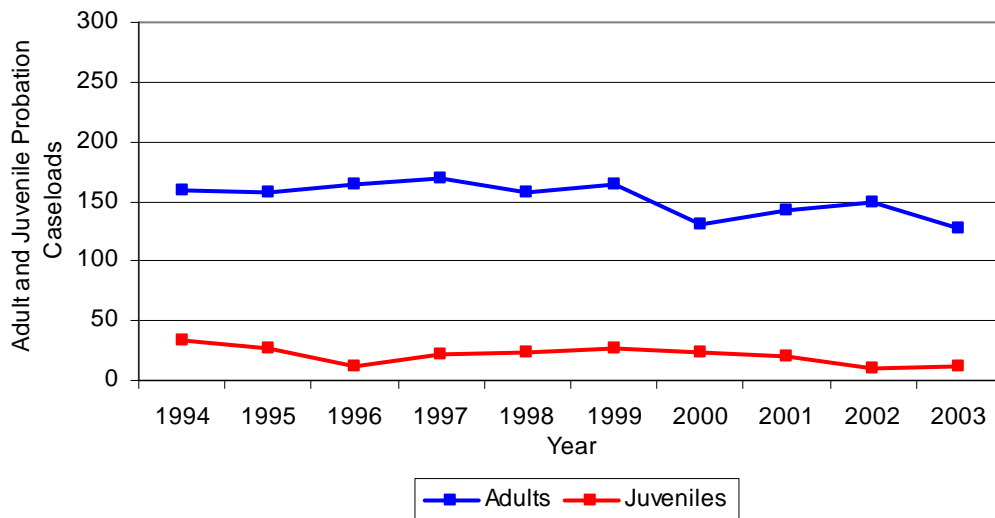
In SFY 2004, Alexander County's rate of commitments to the IDOC's Juvenile Division of 482 commitments per 100,000 juveniles was more than twice the rate of 228 commitments per 100,000 juveniles from the other rural counties.

## Adult and Juvenile Probation Caseloads in Alexander County

Between December 31, 1994 and December 31, 2003, the number of active adult probation cases in Alexander County decreased 20 percent, from 159 to 128 (Figure 14). In 2003, felony offenders accounted for 48 percent of Alexander County's active adult probation caseload. Between 1994 and 2003, the number of juveniles supervised by the Alexander County Juvenile Probation Department decreased 64 percent, from 33 to 12. By comparison, the number of active adult probation cases in the other rural counties increased 40 percent between 1994 and 2003, while the juvenile probation caseloads increased less than 1 percent.

Figure 14

### Total Adult and Juvenile Active Probation Cases in Alexander County



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

The active adult probation caseload rate per 100,000 population in Alexander County decreased 13 percent between 1994 and 2003, from 1,582 to 1,372 cases per 100,000 population. During that same period, the active adult probation caseload rate increased 41 percent in the other rural counties, from 739 to 1,042 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the active adult probation caseload rate in Alexander County was 32 percent higher than in the other rural counties.



#### IV. Jail Populations in Alexander County

Jail data in Illinois are collected by the Illinois Department of Corrections' Bureau of Inspections and Audits. As with court data, data are not available detailing the specific offenses for which offenders were held in county jails. Between SFYs 1992 and 1994, the IDOC did not collect Illinois jail population data. Data presented for SFY 1994 were estimated by the Authority using the reported SFYs 1991 and 1995 data.

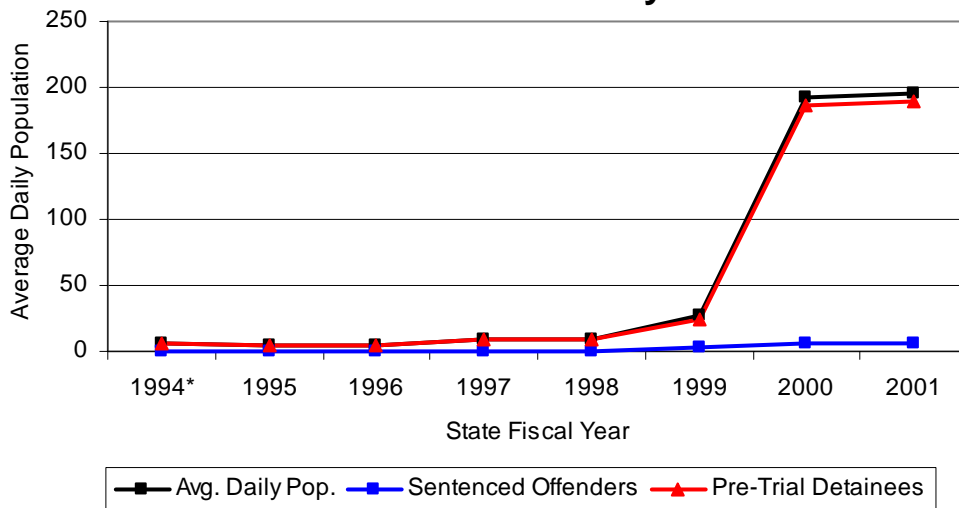
##### *Average Daily Population of the Alexander County Jail*

Since SFY 2002, Alexander County was one of 11 counties that did not operate a jail of their own. Since SFY 1999, they have relied on the Tri-County Detention Center to house their pretrial detainees and sentenced offenders at either a per-diem or contracted rate. The average daily jail population presented in this report for Alexander County is taken from Tri-County Detention Center figures, which include average daily jail population data from Pulaski and Union counties, which also send detainees to the Tri-County facility.

Between SFYs 1994 and 2001, the average daily population of the Alexander County Jail increased drastically, from six to 195 inmates (Figure 15). Between SFYs 1994 and 2001, the average daily population of pretrial detainees (those individuals who have been arrested for a crime and are awaiting trial) also increased drastically, from six to 190. Pretrial detainees continued to account for a majority of the average daily population, accounting for 97 percent of all inmates in both in SFY 1994 and SFY 2001. Sentenced offenders (those offenders who have been convicted and sentenced to the county jail) also accounted for a relatively stable but low percentage (3 percent) of the average daily population between SFYs 1994 and 2001.

**Figure 15**

#### **Average Daily Population of the Alexander County Jail**



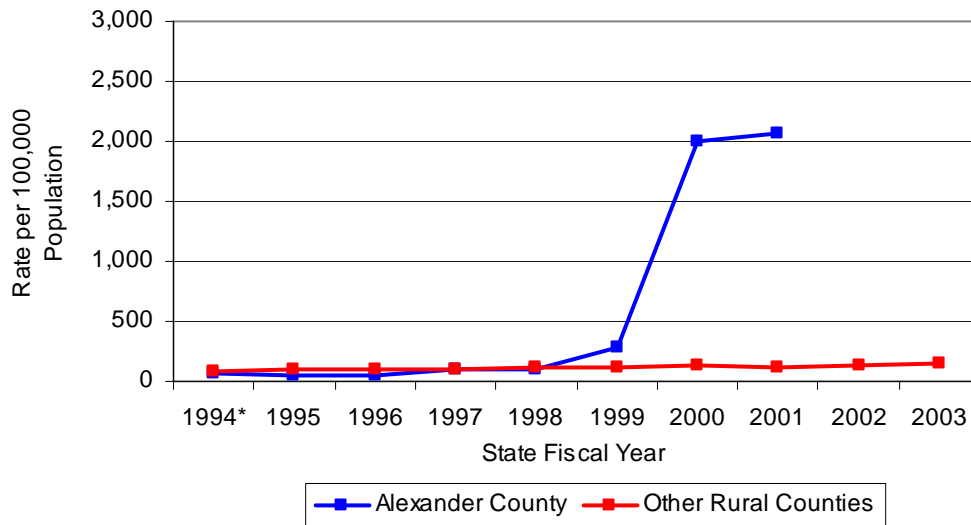
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

\* Information estimated by ICJIA

Between SFYs 1994 and 2001, the average daily jail population rate in Alexander County drastically increased, from 60 to 2,061 per 100,000 population (Figure 16). During this same period, the average daily jail population rate in the other rural counties increased 35 percent, from 88 to 119 per 100,000 population, but has increased annually to 151 inmates per 100,000 population in SFY 2003.

**Figure 16**

**Average Daily Jail Population Rates,  
Alexander and Other Rural Counties**



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois Department of Corrections and U.S. Census Bureau data

\* Information estimated by ICJIA

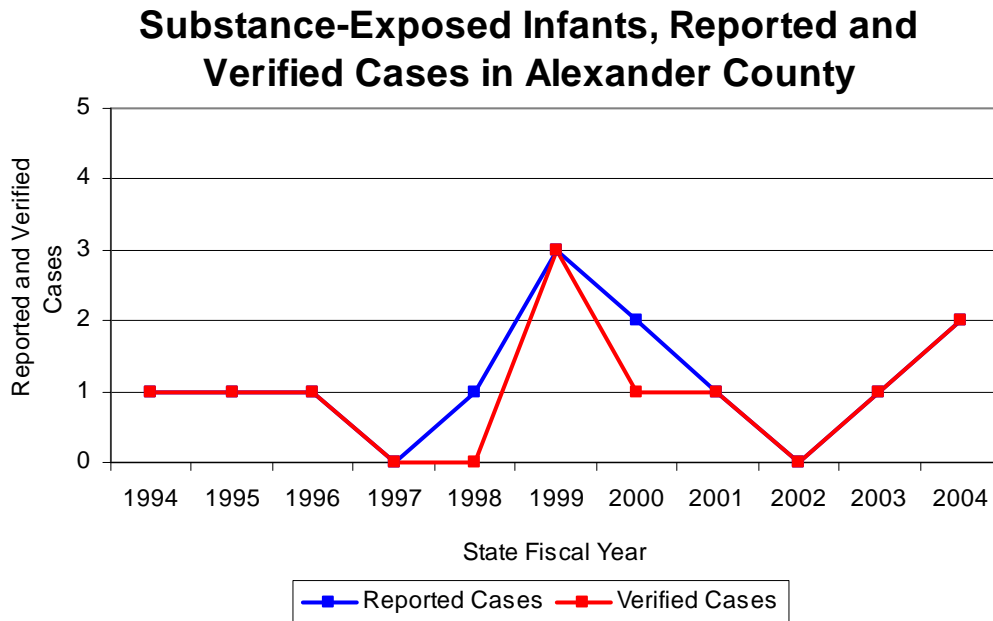
## V. Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect in Alexander County

### Substance-Exposed Infants in Alexander County

Illinois continues to experience the effects of prenatal substance abuse. In Illinois, if a baby is born and thought to have been exposed to illegal substances or alcohol, either through observation by physicians or toxicology tests, the case is reported to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). These cases are then investigated by DCFS to verify the child's prenatal exposure to either alcohol or illegal substances. Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, 96 of Illinois' 102 counties reported at least one case of a substance-exposed infant.

Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, 13 cases of substance-exposed infants were reported in Alexander County. During the same period, 11 of those cases were verified (Figure 17). Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of reported cases of substance-exposed infants in the other rural counties increased 22 percent, from 82 to 100, while the number of verified cases of substance-exposed infants increased 42 percent, from 43 to 61.

Figure 17



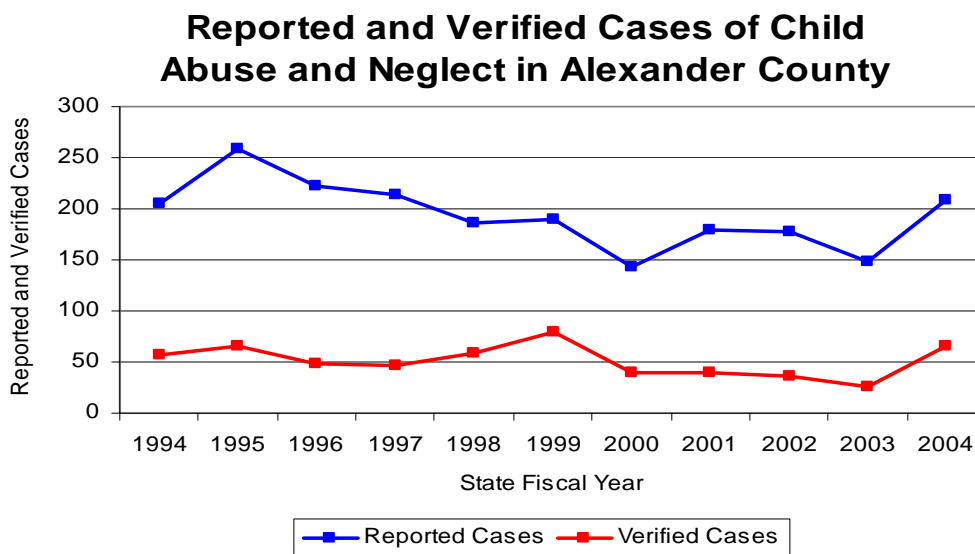
Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

## Child Abuse and Neglect Cases Reported and Verified in Alexander County

Recent research on the relationship between maltreatment of youth and delinquency has revealed an important distinction between child maltreatment and adolescent maltreatment. Using data from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention’s Program of Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency, researchers have found that youth that were abused during childhood (12 years of age or less) were no more likely to become delinquent than youth who were not abused, but youth who were abused during adolescence (after age 12) were significantly more likely to be delinquent.<sup>1</sup> While prior child abuse may not be linked to juvenile delinquency, studies examining prior child abuse have shown that childhood victimization may be linked to other poor outcomes in youth, including low academic achievement, teenage parenthood (particularly for females), drug use, and symptoms of mental illness.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, research examining adolescent victimization (including physical and sexual assaults) and adult outcomes has found a correlation between previous victimization and substance abuse, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder in adulthood.<sup>3</sup> In Illinois, DCFS investigates reported cases of child abuse.

Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of child abuse and neglect cases reported in Alexander County increased slightly, from 206 to 209 (Figure 18). During that same period, 561 cases, or 26 percent of all cases reported, were verified by a DCFS investigation. Verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Alexander County increased 14 percent between SFYs 1994 and 2004, from 57 to 65.

Figure 18



Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

<sup>1</sup> Thornberry, Terence P., David Huizinga and Rolf Loeber. 2004. “The Causes and Correlates Studies: Findings and Policy Implications.” *Juvenile Justice Journal*. 9:1. Washington, D.C. : U.S. Government Printing Office.

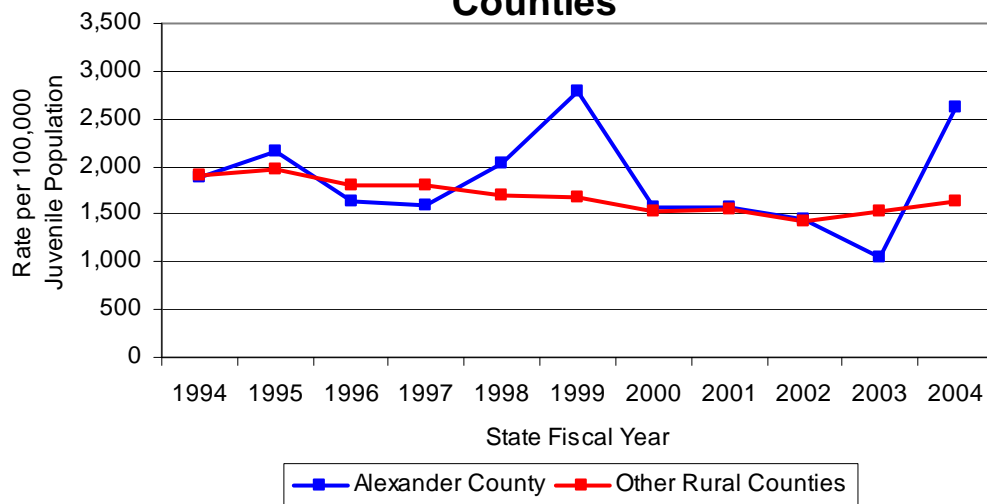
<sup>2</sup> Kelly, B., Thornberry, T. and Smith, C. 1997. “In the Wake of Childhood Maltreatment.” *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

<sup>3</sup> Menard, S. 2002. 2002. “Short and Long-Term Consequences of Adolescent Victimization.” *Youth Research Bulletin*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Alexander County increased from 1,877 to 2,625 per 100,000 juveniles, a 40 percent increase (Figure 19). During the same period, the rate of verified child abuse and neglect cases decreased 15 percent in the other rural counties, from 1,909 to 1,629 per 100,000 juveniles. In SFY 2004, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Alexander County was 61 percent higher than in the other rural counties.

**Figure 19**

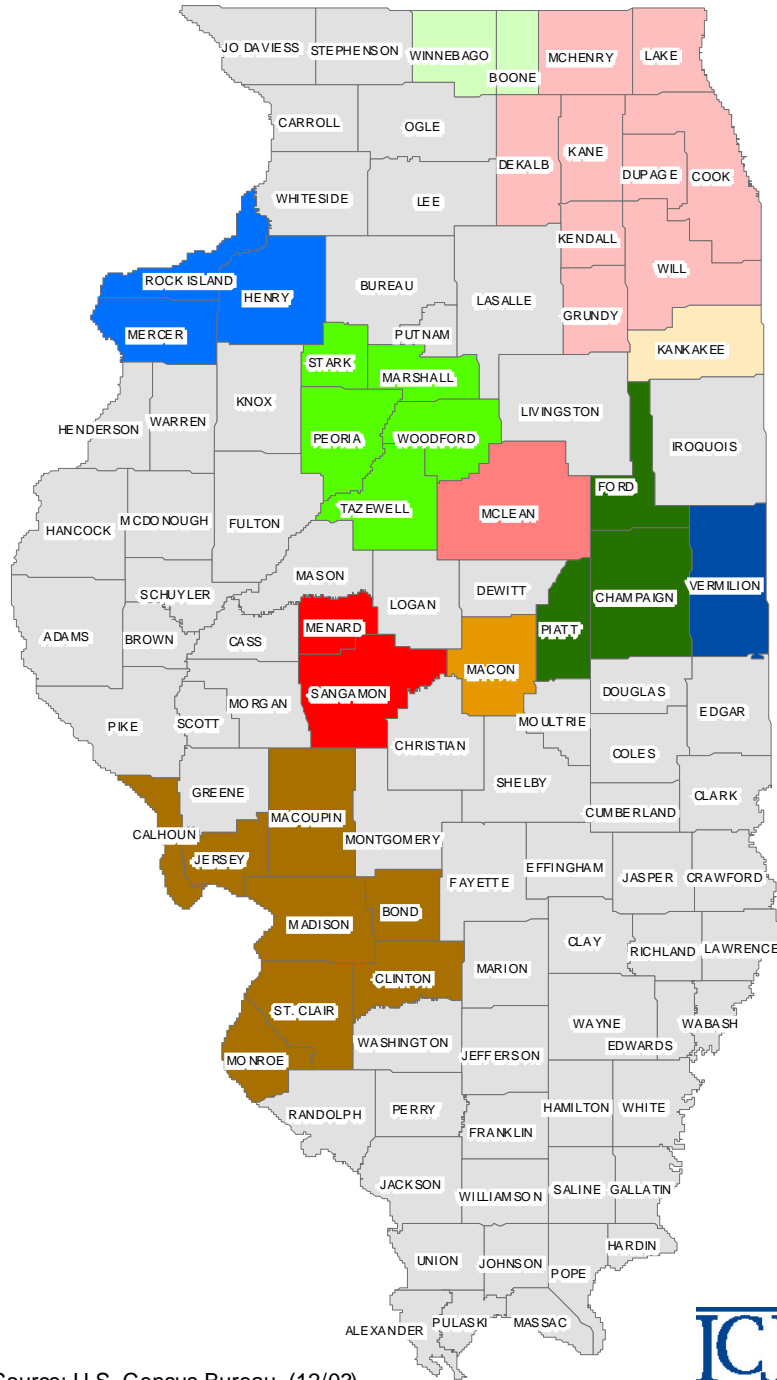
**Rate of Verified Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect, Alexander and All Other Rural Counties**



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and U.S. Census Bureau data

**VI. Appendix I (Map of Illinois Counties within a Metropolitan Statistical Area)**

**Illinois Counties, by Metropolitan Statistical Area\***



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