

Petitions

In the juvenile justice system, a case may be handled informally by the probation department or formally by the juvenile court. If the case is going to proceed for formal processing, the District Attorney files a petition with the juvenile court to initiate the court action.

This section examines petitions by gender, age, offense, and disposition.

The age groupings used throughout this report represent the most active age groups for the area being discussed.

The data used were compiled from petitions reported, via the JCPSS, to the DOJ by county probation departments in the 47 JCPSS certified counties.

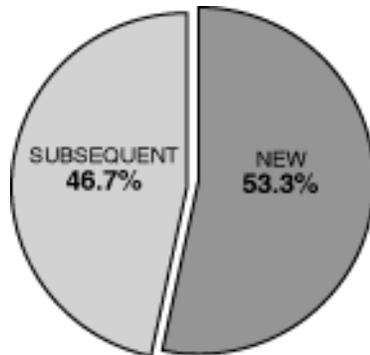
The offenses presented in this report were "selected" based on the seriousness of the arrest offense and comparability to the national Uniform Crime Reporting System. The use of these offenses is intended to provide a valid and comparable measure of crimes and the juvenile justice process. The felony offenses are homicide (includes non-vehicular manslaughter), forcible rape, robbery, assault, burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, and drug violations (includes narcotics, marijuana, dangerous drugs, and other drug violations). The misdemeanor offenses are assault and battery, petty theft, vandalism, disturbing the peace, alcohol-related offenses (includes drunk and liquor laws), and drug violations (includes marijuana and other drugs). The status offenses are curfew violations, truancy, running away, and incorrigibility.

Petitions filed in juvenile court consist of two types: new and subsequent. The term "new petition" refers to a juvenile who is not being supervised by the probation department and is typically a first-time offender. The term "subsequent petition" refers to a juvenile who is currently being supervised by the probation department and generally follows a new arrest.

More 

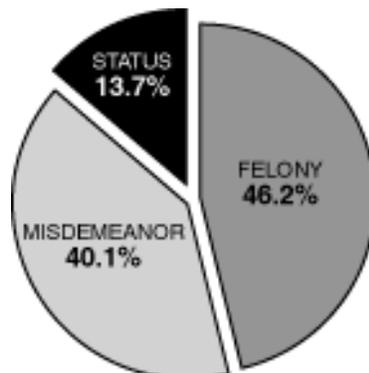
Type of Petition

Petitions Filed, 2002 By Type



Source: Tables 4 and 8.

Petitions Filed, 2002 By Level of Offense



Source: Tables 5 and 9.

Of the 65,151 reported petitions filed in juvenile court in 2002:

- 53.3 percent (34,710) were new petitions.
- 46.7 percent (30,441) were subsequent petitions.

Level of Offense

Of the 65,151 reported petitions filed in juvenile court in 2002:

- 46.2 percent (30,070) were for felonies.
- 40.1 percent (26,146) were for misdemeanors.
- 13.7 percent (8,935) were for status offenses.

Over 53 percent of petitions filed for formal juvenile court action were for first-time offenders.

Petitions by Gender

Of the 65,151 reported petitions filed in juvenile court in 2002:

- 80.8 percent (52,647) were male.
- 19.2 percent (12,504) were female.

Of the 34,710 new petitions filed in 2002:

- 79.4 percent (27,567) were male.
- 20.6 percent (7,143) were female.

Of the 30,441 subsequent referrals reported in 2002:

- 82.4 percent (25,080) were male.
- 17.6 percent (5,361) were female.

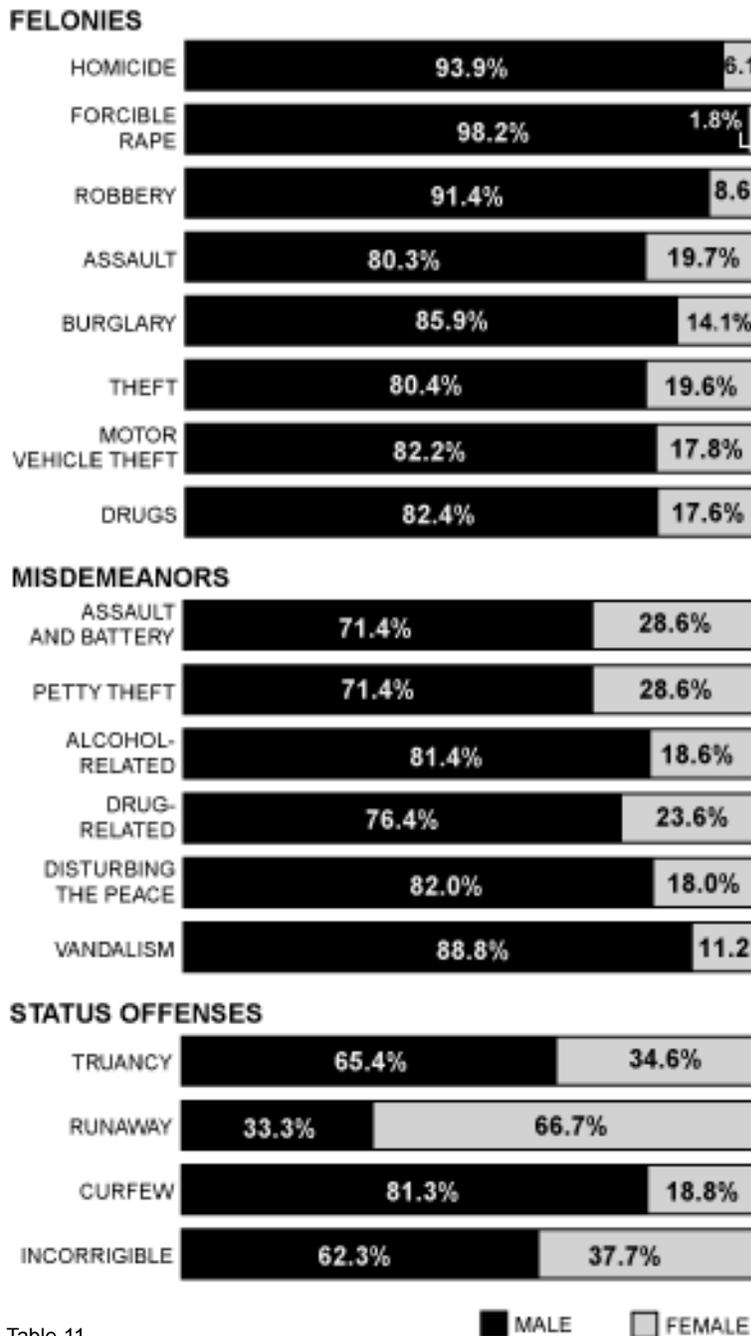
Type of Petitions, 2002 By Gender



Source: Tables 4, 8, and 11a.

Selected Petitions by Gender

Selected Petitions, 2002 By Gender



Source: Table 11.

Of the 8 selected felonies:

- Males accounted for 85.9 percent of the burglary petitions filed in juvenile court.
- Females accounted for 19.7 percent of the assault petitions filed in juvenile court.

Of the 6 selected misdemeanors:

- Females accounted for 28.6 percent of the assault and petty theft petitions filed in juvenile court.

Of the 4 selected status offenses:

- Males accounted for 65.4 percent of the truancy petitions filed in juvenile court.
- Females accounted for 66.7 percent of the runaway petitions filed in juvenile court.

Males accounted for 88.8 percent of the vandalism petitions filed in juvenile court.

Petitions by Age Group

Of the 65,151 reported petitions filed in 2002:

- 18.3 percent (11,901) were for juveniles aged 12-14.
- 69.5 percent (45,297) were for juveniles aged 15-17.
- 12.2 percent (7,953) were for all other age groups.

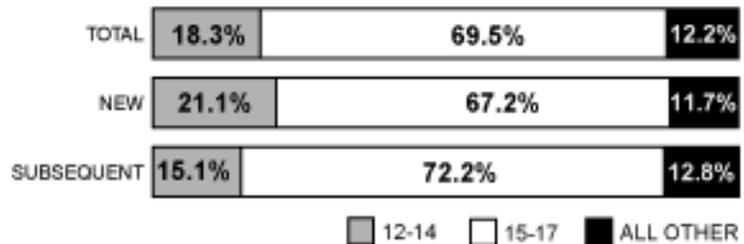
Of the 34,710 new petitions filed in 2002:

- 21.1 percent (7,319) were for juveniles aged 12-14.
- 67.2 percent (23,323) were for juveniles aged 15-17.
- 11.7 percent (4,068) were for all other age groups.

Of the 30,441 subsequent petitions filed in 2002:

- 15.1 percent (4,582) were for juveniles aged 12-14.
- 72.2 percent (21,974) were for juveniles aged 15-17.
- 12.8 percent (3,885) were for all other age groups.

Petitions, 2002 By Age Group

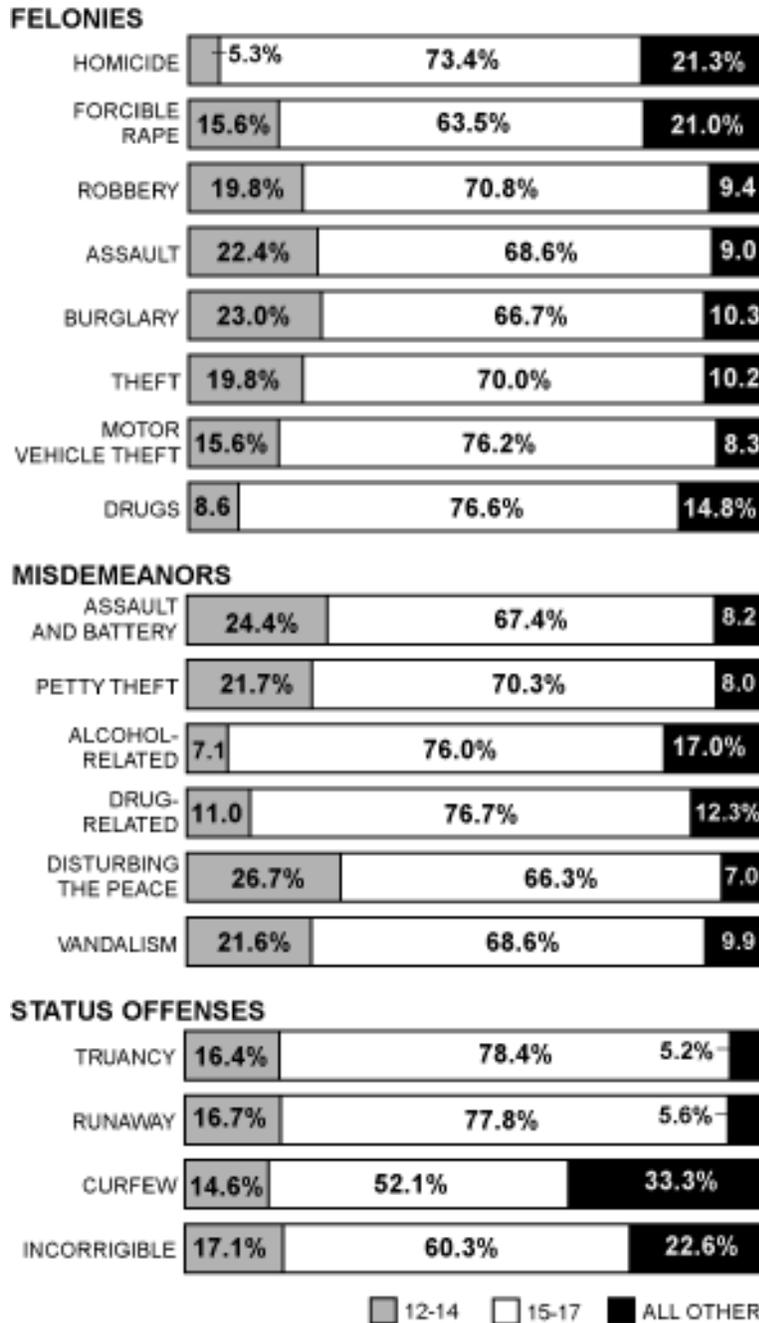


Note: Percentages may not add to 100.0 because of rounding.
Source: Table 4.

Juveniles aged 15-17 represented over 72 percent of the subsequent petitions filed in juvenile court.

Selected Petitions by Age Group

Selected Petitions, 2002 By Age Group



Of the 8 selected felonies:

- Juveniles aged 12-14 accounted for 23.0 percent of the petitions filed for burglary.
- Juveniles aged 15-17 accounted for 76.6 percent of the petitions filed for drug offenses.

Of the 6 selected misdemeanors:

- Juveniles aged 12-14 accounted for 26.7 percent of the petitions filed for disturbing the peace.
- Juveniles aged 15-17 accounted for 76.7 percent of the petitions filed for drug-related offenses.

Of the 4 selected status offenses:

- Juveniles aged 12-14 accounted for 17.1 percent of the petitions filed for incorrigibility.
- Juveniles aged 15-17 accounted for 78.4 percent of the petitions filed for truancy violations.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100.0 because of rounding.
Source: Table 5.

Court Dispositions

Of the 65,151 reported petitions filed in juvenile court in 2002:

- 74.4 percent (48,486) resulted in the juvenile being made a ward of the court.
- 12.3 percent (8,029) of the petitions were dismissed.
- 5.1 percent (3,321) were placed in a diversion, deferred entry of judgment program, or transferred to another jurisdiction.
- 3.8 percent (2,499) received informal probation.
- 3.7 percent (2,430) received non-ward probation.
- 0.6 percent (386) resulted in the juvenile being remanded to the adult court.

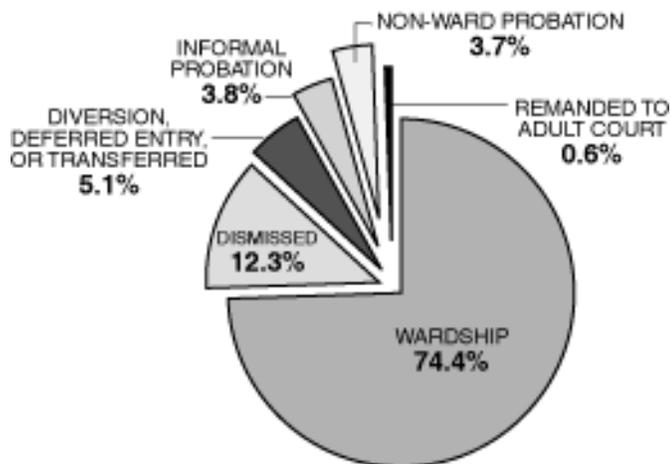
Wardship Placements

Of the 48,486 juveniles made a ward of the court in 2002:

- 55.2 percent (26,773) were allowed to go home.
- 27.5 percent (13,325) were committed to a secure county facility.
- 8.2 percent (3,975) were sent to a non-secure county facility.
- 7.4 percent (3,570) were sent to other public or private facilities.
- 1.7 percent (843) were committed to the California Youth Authority.

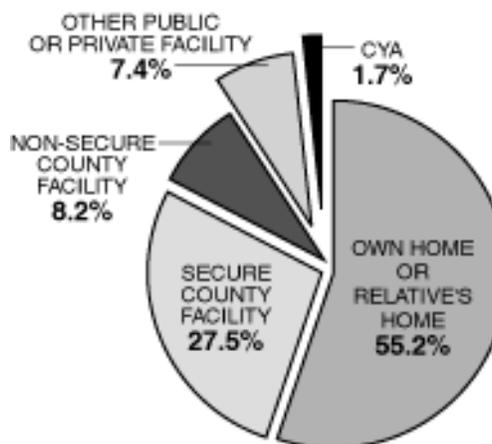
The majority (55.2 percent) of juveniles made a ward of the court were allowed to go home.

Court Dispositions, 2002 By Type



Note: Percentages may not add to 100.0 because of rounding.
Source: Tables 4 and 8.

Wardship, 2002 By Placement



Source: Tables 4 and 8.