

# **Victims of Crime Act Victim Compensation Formula Grant Program**

## **FISCAL YEAR 2018 DATA ANALYSIS REPORT**

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# INTRODUCTION

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Compensation program provides supplemental funding to state compensation programs across the United States and its territories. State compensation programs offer financial compensation to individuals for expenses they incurred as a result of a crime. Compensation funding may be used for a range of expenses, such as medical and dental care, funeral and burial costs, mental health treatment, and loss of income. Compensation funds may also be used for child care, relocation, and replacement of some personal items.

Data in this report includes all state compensation claims, regardless of the funding source. The percentage of VOCA funding provided to the states is set by statute. The annual grant amount is based on 60 percent of each state’s compensation payments from 2 years prior to the grant year. In fiscal year (FY) 2018, 53 states and territories received VOCA Victim Compensation grants.<sup>1</sup> Together, these grantees provided \$407,854,151 (an 11 percent increase over FY 2017) in compensation funding to 243,281 claims.<sup>2,3</sup>

# APPLICANT POPULATION

In FY 2018, there were 278,973 people who applied for compensation benefits. Of those, 81 percent were primary victims of crime whose victimization was the basis for the application. The other 19 percent were secondary victims of crime. Primary victims are individuals who suffered harm as a direct result of the crime. Secondary victims are individuals who experienced an indirect consequence of the crime, often including relatives.



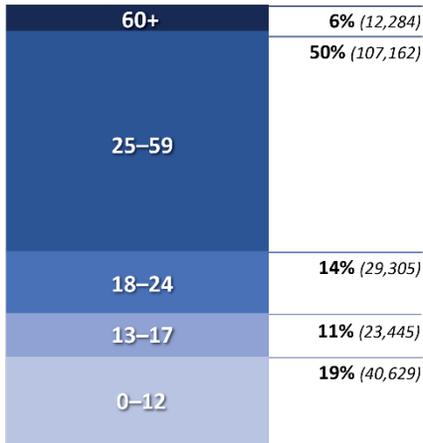
<sup>1</sup> The 53 states and territories are 49 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Illinois, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands did not receive VOCA Victim Compensation grants in FY 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Illinois did not receive an FY 2018 award but is included in the current report analysis, as they are still reporting on grant funding from previous fiscal years. One other grantee did not report data into the Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) and is excluded from analysis.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to the VOCA Victim Compensation award, Massachusetts was awarded an additional compensation award in FY 2016 for the New England Compounding Center victims. Funds were administered in accordance with VOCA program guidelines and metrics were captured in the PMT on a quarterly basis. Data reported in the PMT from this grant is included in the information presented in this report.

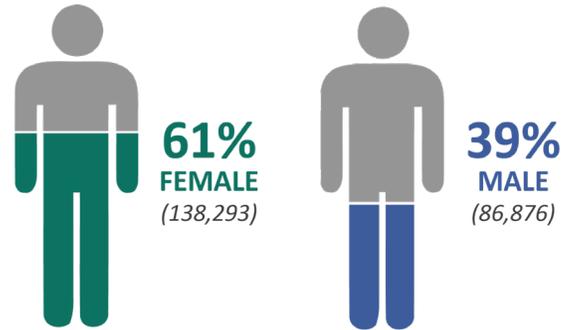
## Age

Age was self-reported by 82 percent of primary victims who applied for compensation.



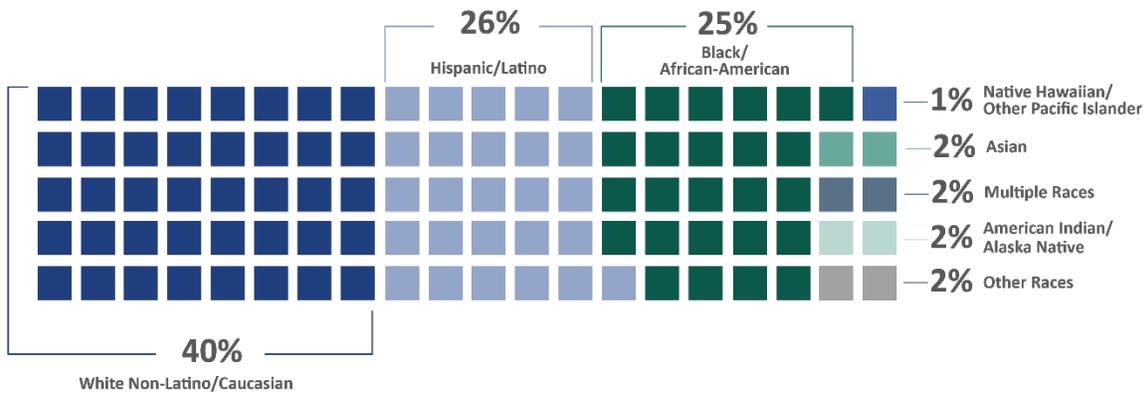
## Gender

Gender was self-reported by 99 percent of primary victims who applied for compensation.



## Race/Ethnicity

Race/ethnicity was self-reported by 95 percent of primary victims who applied for compensation.

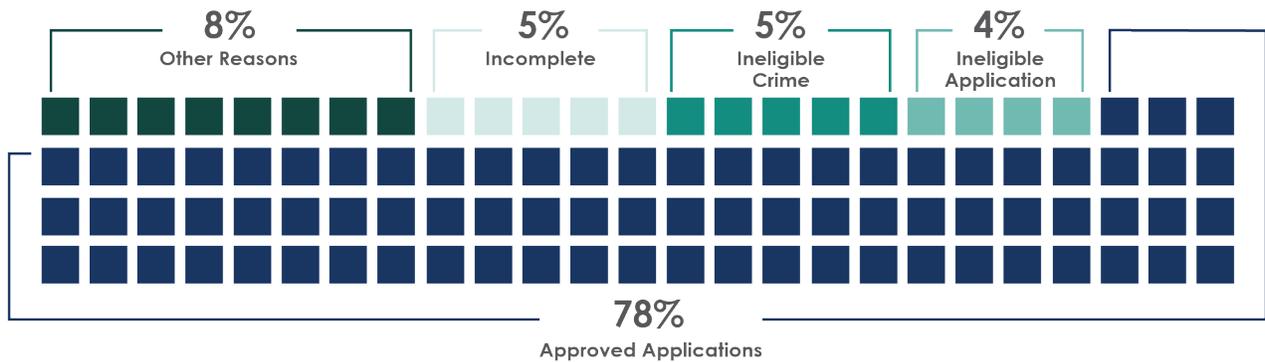


In FY 2018, 40 percent of individuals who applied for benefits were White Non-Latino/Caucasian, 26 percent were Hispanic/Latino, and 25 percent were Black/African-American. This demographic breakdown is similar to the self-reported race/ethnicities in FY 2017.

# PAYMENT STATISTICS

## *Application Information*

In FY 2018, grantees received 238,134 applications for compensation, as well as 75,222 applications for sexual assault forensic exams (among grantees who maintained a separate application process for forensic exams), for a total of 313,356 applications.<sup>4</sup> Grantees approved 186,470 applications and denied or closed 54,299 applications during the year.<sup>5</sup>



The most common reason cited by grantees that a compensation application was closed or denied was due to incomplete information (24 percent), followed by ineligible crime (20 percent) and ineligible application (19 percent).

Grantees engaged in numerous outreach efforts to improve awareness about their respective compensation programs. Most grantees conducted trainings, delivered presentations, and hosted informational booths at conferences, community events, and victim services meetings. States also distributed brochures and flyers and posted information on social media outlets.

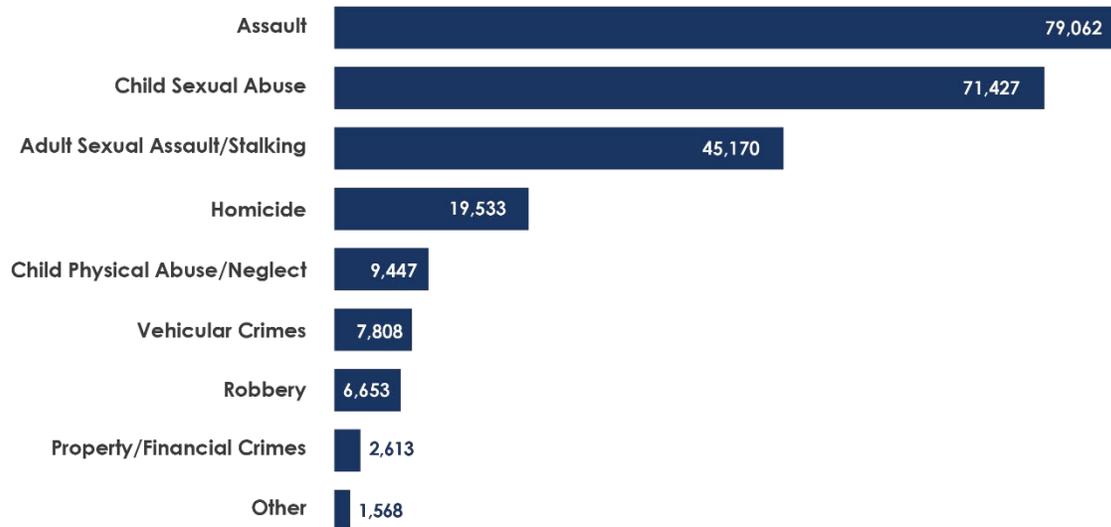
In FY 2018, 17 grantees reported an increase in the number of compensation applications received. Among these grantees, the most common reasons for the increase in applications were increased training and awareness about the compensation program, expanded eligibility due to state policy changes, and an increased amount of VOCA Victim Assistance grant funding received. An increase in the amount of VOCA Victim Assistance grant funds received by states resulted in increased awareness and availability of victim services. This then led to increased knowledge of state compensation programs, which caused a greater number of individuals to apply for compensatory funding. Victim service organizations who received VOCA assistance funding reported an increase of 62 percent in the number of individuals who received help completing a compensation application in FY 2018 over FY 2017.

<sup>4</sup> The process for filing compensation applications differs among grantees. In FY 2018, 23 grantees reported that one application is filed per crime (including both primary and secondary victims) and 30 grantees reported that separate applications are filed for primary and secondary victims. Additionally, 35 grantees reported that there is a separate application process for sexual assault forensic exams.

<sup>5</sup> The number of applications determined may include applications received during and prior to FY 2018.

## Claims Paid

In FY 2018, there were 243,281 claims paid. Thirty-three percent of the claims paid were for assault victimizations, followed by child sexual abuse (29 percent), sexual assault (19 percent), and homicide (8 percent). This breakdown of the top four crime types by number of claims paid has remained consistent since FY 2015. Although the number of claims paid has decreased from the number paid in FY 2017 (250,583) and FY 2016 (259,125), the total amount paid has increased.



## Types of Victimizations Related to Crime Type

Grantees could report on five types of victimizations that were related to a crime type, if applicable. For example, a compensation claim for the crime of assault or child sexual abuse could relate to a victimization type of domestic and family violence. In FY 2018, there were 51,680 claims paid that were related to specific victimization types.

| VICTIMIZATION TYPE                                   | TOP RELATED CRIME TYPES  |
|--|--|
| <b>Domestic and Family Violence</b><br>46,233 claims | <b>Assault</b> (32,853 claims)<br><b>Child Sexual Abuse</b> (5,017 claims) |
| <b>Mass Violence</b><br>2,925 claims                 | <b>Assault</b> (2,543 claims)<br><b>Homicide</b> (234 claims)              |
| <b>Elder Abuse/Neglect</b><br>1,269 claims           | <b>Assault</b> (499 claims)<br><b>Fraud/Financial Crimes</b> (399 claims)  |
| <b>Bullying</b><br>850 claims                        | <b>Assault</b> (720 claims)<br><b>Child Sexual Abuse</b> (65 claims)       |
| <b>Hate Crime</b><br>403 claims                      | <b>Assault</b> (366 claims)<br><b>Homicide</b> (10 claims)                 |

Assault was the most common crime type related to victimizations, as 36,961 assault claims were related to at least one victimization type. Assault was one of the top two crime types related to each victimization type. The largest increase among victimization types was mass violence. In FY 2018, there were 2,925 compensation claims

related to mass violence—a seven-fold increase. This increase was likely driven by the large number of victims resulting from the 2017 mass violence incident in Las Vegas.<sup>6</sup>

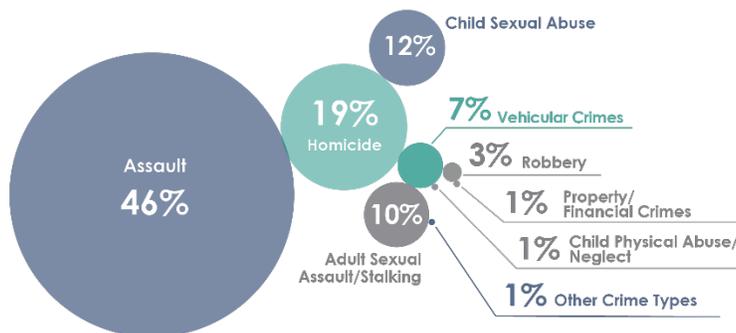
### *Notable Trends, Issues, and Policy Changes*

Grantees reported notable trends, emerging issues, and policy changes that affected their state compensation programs. The most commonly reported topics included:

- A decrease in the amount and frequency of court cost collections (e.g., fines, penalties, criminal assessments) resulting in less state compensation funding available.
- An increase in victim awareness of the state compensation program due to the increase in the amount of VOCA Victim Assistance grant funds received by states. Some states anticipate a continual increase in compensation applications, as more victims become aware of the compensation program. As previously mentioned, more individuals received help from a victim service provider to complete a compensation application.
- The increase or removal of state compensation caps for various expenses allows some states to make larger awards for certain expenses, such as economic support for lost wages, mental health counseling, funeral/burial expenses, and transportation costs.
- Expanded definitions of qualifying crime types and relatives (e.g., aunt, uncle), increasing individuals’ eligibility to receive compensation benefits.
- Allowing relatives of homicide victims to receive compensation for funeral and burial costs even when there is evidence of contributory conduct on the part of the deceased individual.

### *Total Amount Paid by Crime Type*

In FY 2018, 46 percent of compensation funds paid were for assault victimizations, followed by homicide (19 percent), child sexual abuse (12 percent), and adult sexual assault/stalking (10 percent).<sup>7</sup> This distribution is similar to how compensation funds were distributed across crime types in FY 2017.



<sup>6</sup> OVC’s Antiterrorism and Emergency Assistance Program also provides funding and resources to jurisdictions that have experienced incidents of mass violence and terrorism that significantly increased the burden of victim assistance and compensation for the responding jurisdiction.

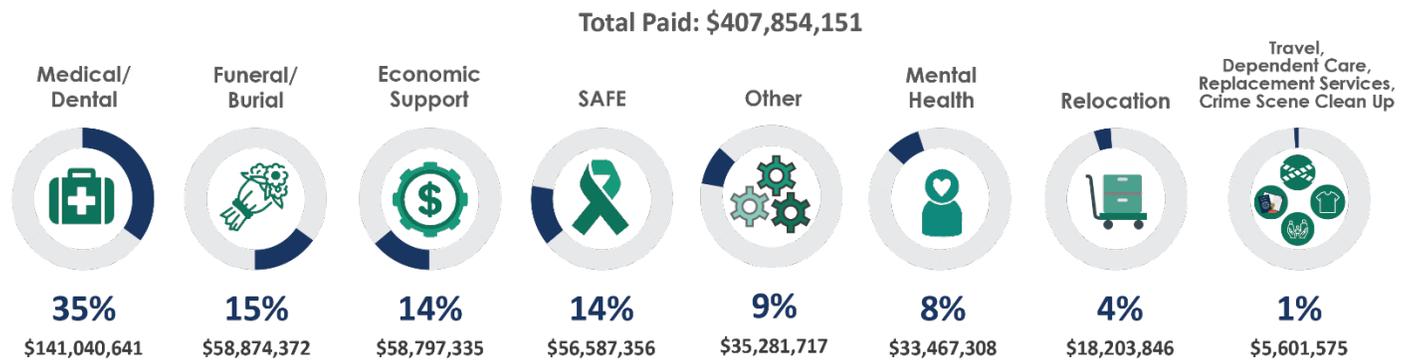
<sup>7</sup> See appendix A for crime type categorizations.

In FY 2018, there were 24 states that reported compensatory funding for other crime types not specifically listed above. Some of the other crime types that were reported included violation of a court protective order, threatening/intimidation, and disorderly conduct.<sup>8</sup>

### Total Amount Paid by Expense Type

In FY 2018, 35 percent of compensation funds were used for medical/dental expenses, followed by funeral/burial expenses (15 percent), economic support (14 percent), and sexual assault forensic exams (14 percent). The top four expense types paid and the distribution of funds among these expenses are similar to FY 2017.

The amount paid for all expense types increased in FY 2018. Other expense types received the largest increase (35 percent), followed by travel, dependent care, replacement services, and crime scene clean-up (26 percent). Although the amount per expense type increased, the distribution across expense types remained relatively consistent.



#### Medical/dental expenses

Medical/dental expenses were the largest expense type paid in FY 2018, totaling \$141,040,641 in compensation payments. Medical/dental expenses were the most common expense type reported for victims of arson, assault, burglary, driving under the influence/driving while intoxicated (DUI/DWI), kidnapping, other vehicular crimes, robbery, and terrorism.



#### Funeral/burial expenses

Funeral/burial expenses were the second largest expense paid in FY 2018, totaling \$58,874,372 in compensation payments. Homicide claims accounted for 90 percent of the funeral/burial expenses paid, and other vehicular crimes and DUI/DWI accounted for another 8 percent.



#### Economic support

Economic support provides payments to individuals who experienced monetary losses due to a crime, such as loss of income or support payments. Economic support payments totaled \$58,797,335 in FY 2018. Economic support was the most common expense types paid for fraud/financial crimes, however, compensation for economic support was paid to victims of every crime type.

<sup>8</sup> Violation of court protective order and disorderly conduct were also commonly reported as other victimization types by VOCA Victim Assistance grantees in FY 2018.



### ***Sexual Assault Forensic Exams***

Sexual assault forensic exams for victims of sexual assault and child sexual abuse were the fourth largest expense type paid in FY 2018. States paid \$30,268,602 in compensation funds for child sexual abuse claims and \$26,318,754 for sexual assault claims, totaling \$56,587,356. This represents a 15 percent increase over the amount paid for sexual assault forensic exams in FY 2017.

## ***Expenses by Crime Type***

Assault, homicide, child sexual abuse, and sexual assault received the greatest amount of compensation payments in FY 2018.

### **Assault**

Assault claims for compensation have received the highest number of applications and funding amounts over the past four years. In FY 2018, victims of assault received \$188,255,146 across 79,062 claims. This represents an increase of 11 percent over the amount paid in FY 2017. Fifty-six percent of compensation funds for victims of assault were used for medical/dental expenses, followed by economic support (16 percent), other expenses (13 percent), relocation (7 percent), and mental health (7 percent).<sup>9</sup>

### **Homicide**

Homicide claims received \$77,176,986 in compensation funding in FY 2018. This represents the second highest amount of compensation funds paid by crime type, even though the number of homicide claims paid (19,533) was less than the number of assault, child sexual abuse, and sexual assault claims paid. Most compensation funding for homicide claims was used for funeral/burial expenses (69 percent), followed by economic support (18 percent), and other expenses (5 percent). Additionally, mental health and medical/dental expenses each received 3 percent of compensation funds.<sup>10</sup>

### **Child Sexual Abuse and Sexual Assault**

In FY 2018, victims of child sexual abuse and sexual assault (CSA/SA) received \$86,271,075 in compensation funding, an increase of 16 percent over the total reported in FY 2017. Of that total, \$47,566,584 was provided to victims of child sexual abuse and \$38,704,491 to victims of sexual assault.

There were 115,047 claims paid for CSA/SA (71,203 and 43,844, respectively). Among victims of CSA/SA who received compensation, sexual assault forensic exams were the most common expense type (66 percent), followed by mental health (14 percent), medical/dental (7 percent), and other expenses (5 percent).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The remaining 1 percent spanned the following expense types: Travel, dependent care, funeral/burial, replacement services, and crime scene clean-up.

<sup>10</sup> The remaining 3 percent spanned the following expense types: Travel, dependent care, relocation, crime scene clean-up, and replacement services.

<sup>11</sup> The remaining 8 percent spanned the following expense types: Economic support, relocation, travel, replacement services, dependent care, funeral/burial, and crime scene clean-up.

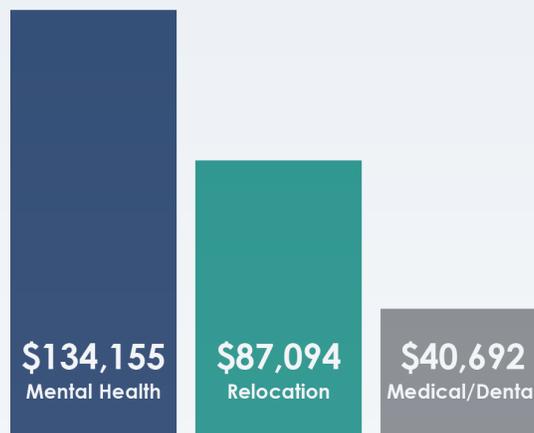


## SPOTLIGHT: HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Victims of human trafficking (including sex and labor trafficking) often encounter challenges when receiving services needed to cope with the victimization they experienced. These individuals are not always initially classified as a victim because of prior contact with the criminal justice system. As such, it may be more difficult for victims of trafficking to receive compensation funding.<sup>12</sup> Compensation allows victims and their families to cover expenses to help them emotionally, physically, and psychologically work through the devastation stemming from the crime. In FY 2018, 24 states paid 254 compensation claims that were related to human trafficking, totaling \$334,760.



Although multiple expense types are supported with compensation funds, the most common expenses associated with human trafficking have remained consistent since FY 2016. Mental health expenses were the most common expense type, followed by relocation and medical/dental expenses. These expense types differ from the most common expense types across all crime types, which may highlight a difference in the prioritization of needs for trafficking victims when compared to victims of other crime types.



<sup>12</sup> Peters, Amanda (2016) "Reconsidering Federal and State Obstacles to Human Trafficking and Entitlements Victim Status," *Utah Law Review*: Vol. 2016: No. 3, Article 3, 537-539. <https://dc.law.utah.edu/ulr/vol2016/iss3/3>.

## CONCLUSION

Crimes may have wide-reaching consequences for primary victims, their family and friends, the community, and society in general. The unexpected financial costs associated with these consequences may cause additional harm to the individuals affected. The financial assistance provided by VOCA-supported compensation programs to primary and secondary victims help alleviate some of the fiscal and emotional burden experienced as a direct result of the crime. The data reported by Victim Compensation programs across the country in FY 2018 demonstrate the valuable assistance that the program provides to victims of crime.

## APPENDIX A: CRIME TYPE CATEGORIZATIONS

Grantees reported data on claimants who received funding in 16 crime types. OVC consolidated these 16 crime types into nine larger categories. The following list outlines the types of crimes that make up each category.

1. Adult sexual assault/stalking
  - Sexual assault
  - Stalking
2. Assault
3. Child physical abuse/neglect
4. Child sexual abuse
  - Child sexual abuse
  - Child pornography
5. Homicide
6. Other crime types
  - Human trafficking
  - Kidnapping
  - Terrorism
7. Property/financial crimes
  - Arson
  - Burglary
  - Fraud/financial crimes
8. Robbery
9. Vehicular crimes
  - DUI/DWI
  - Other vehicular crimes

## APPENDIX B: EXPENSES PAID BY CRIME TYPE

| Crime Type                   | Claims Paid    | Medical/Dental       | Funeral/Burial      | Economic Support    | SAFE                | Other               | Mental Health       | Relocation          | Travel             | Dependent Care     | Replacement Services | Crime Scene Clean Up |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Arson                        | 372            | \$129,090            | \$84,523            | \$54,002            | \$0                 | \$28,458            | \$31,011            | \$112,284           | \$753              | \$0                | \$8,229              | \$5,460              |
| Assault                      | 79,062         | \$105,381,154        | \$556,275           | \$30,070,070        | \$0                 | \$24,286,795        | \$12,410,496        | \$13,286,627        | \$932,000          | \$915,970          | \$316,679            | \$99,081             |
| Burglary                     | 1,637          | \$322,821            | \$0                 | \$213,638           | \$0                 | \$263,275           | \$196,180           | \$121,231           | \$18,853           | \$0                | \$72,785             | \$9,683              |
| Child Physical Abuse/Neglect | 9,447          | \$918,248            | \$117,873           | \$300,276           | \$0                 | \$806,251           | \$3,104,677         | \$252,281           | \$78,167           | \$25,125           | \$6,357              | \$571                |
| Child Pornography            | 224            | \$9,887              | \$0                 | \$500               | \$0                 | \$9,426             | \$104,113           | \$30,573            | \$7,135            | \$0                | \$3,615              | \$0                  |
| Child Sexual Abuse           | 71,203         | \$2,629,721          | \$2,737             | \$1,343,079         | \$30,268,602        | \$2,886,795         | \$8,581,242         | \$1,250,569         | \$473,665          | \$81,961           | \$46,073             | \$2,140              |
| DUI/DWI                      | 3,105          | \$5,873,876          | \$1,833,106         | \$3,378,162         | \$0                 | \$396,178           | \$200,025           | \$18,200            | \$124,924          | \$11,714           | \$8,320              | \$0                  |
| Fraud/Financial Crimes       | 604            | \$1,136              | \$0                 | \$672,841           | \$0                 | \$31,971            | \$3,094             | \$1,000             | \$2,681            | \$0                | \$981                | \$0                  |
| Homicide                     | 19,533         | \$2,250,109          | \$52,988,394        | \$13,621,209        | \$0                 | \$3,865,872         | \$2,473,993         | \$321,287           | \$806,115          | \$616,932          | \$20,508             | \$212,566            |
| Human Trafficking            | 254            | \$40,692             | \$7,171             | \$40,147            | \$0                 | \$19,867            | \$134,115           | \$87,094            | \$2,502            | \$1,980            | \$1,193              | \$0                  |
| Kidnapping                   | 1,138          | \$514,012            | \$84,748            | \$231,297           | \$0                 | \$80,137            | \$371,694           | \$127,967           | \$14,459           | \$3,253            | \$570                | \$1,300              |
| Other Vehicular Crimes       | 4,703          | \$9,893,299          | \$3,123,342         | \$4,568,153         | \$0                 | \$344,393           | \$263,672           | \$119,370           | \$130,450          | \$20,475           | \$10,034             | \$0                  |
| Robbery                      | 6,653          | \$9,193,763          | \$39,140            | \$2,027,619         | \$0                 | \$620,170           | \$1,332,722         | \$450,941           | \$41,425           | \$67               | \$140,365            | \$21,698             |
| Sexual Assault               | 43,844         | \$3,677,003          | \$24,490            | \$1,725,316         | \$26,318,754        | \$1,411,405         | \$3,838,155         | \$1,443,737         | \$169,875          | \$3,826            | \$90,311             | \$1,619              |
| Stalking                     | 1,326          | \$49,663             | \$0                 | \$473,095           | \$0                 | \$221,075           | \$326,674           | \$577,185           | \$23,021           | \$5,991            | \$2,760              | \$5,118              |
| Terrorism                    | 176            | \$156,166            | \$12,571            | \$77,932            | \$0                 | \$9,649             | \$95,446            | \$3,500             | \$0                | \$0                | \$239                | \$0                  |
| <b>Grand Total</b>           | <b>243,281</b> | <b>\$141,040,641</b> | <b>\$58,874,372</b> | <b>\$58,797,335</b> | <b>\$56,587,356</b> | <b>\$35,281,717</b> | <b>\$33,467,308</b> | <b>\$18,203,846</b> | <b>\$2,826,025</b> | <b>\$1,687,295</b> | <b>\$729,019</b>     | <b>\$359,236</b>     |