



South Carolina Law Enforcement Division

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SLED 2023 CRIME IN SC REPORT: WEAPON LAW VIOLATIONS INCREASE FOR 10 YEARS STRAIGHT

Data reported to the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) from participating law enforcement agencies across the state shows that Weapon Law Violations increased by 1.8% from 2022 to 2023. The Weapon Law Violation rate per 10,000 people increased by 11.1% from 2021 to 2022. The number of Weapon Law Violations rose 129.7% from 2014 to 2023 and has increased 624.4% in the last 30 years. 2023 marks 10 straight years of increases in the rate of weapon law violations. 90.8% of weapon law violations included firearms, and at least 75.1% of those firearms were identified as handguns.

The 2023 SLED data for Weapon Law Violation compared to 2022 is as follows*:

| | WEAPON LAW VIOLATION OFFENSES | | WEAPON LAW VIOLATIONS OFFENDERS | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|-------|
| | 2022 | 2023 | 2022 | 2023 |
| Total Reported | 11,204 | 11,410 | Adult | 7,048 |
| Cases Cleared | 8,387 | 8,459 | Juvenile | 1,008 |
| | | | | 1,964 |

*Note: The number of offenders will not match the number of crimes previously reported for this offense due to a crime potentially having multiple offenders. Additionally, any offenders with an unknown sex were not included in this analysis.

“The number of Weapon Law Violations are going up at a rapid pace,” said SLED Chief Mark Keel. “The number of these offenses has more than doubled in the last decade. Law enforcement continues to encounter offenders with guns every day, many of whom are young.”

The 2023 SLED data for Violent Crime and Property Crime compared to 2022 is as follows*:

| | VIOLENT CRIME | | PROPERTY CRIME | |
|--------------------|---------------|--------|---------------------|--------|
| | 2022 | 2023 | 2022 | 2023 |
| Murders | 517 | 495 | Burglary | 18,722 |
| Sexual Battery | 2,414 | 2,240 | Larceny | 96,184 |
| Robbery | 2,222 | 2,185 | Arson | 675 |
| Aggravated Assault | 22,381 | 21,462 | Motor Vehicle Theft | 14,462 |
| | | | | 14,754 |

Data compiled for SLED’s Crime in South Carolina Annual Report comes from state and local law enforcement agencies across the state. Of the 277 active law enforcement agencies in South Carolina, 204 (74%) reported all 12 months of 2023 data while ten agencies reported no data.

“I want to thank our law enforcement partners for sending in their data so everyone can see these trends,” said Chief Keel. “This information helps us better understand the challenges our communities face.”

The 2023 Crime Book serves as a valuable resource for all communities in South Carolina. The data included in this year’s report can provide essential context to policymakers and law enforcement partners working to help make and keep South Carolina safe.

The Crime in South Carolina 2023 Annual Report can be found on SLED’s website: www.sled.sc.gov/CrimeStatistics

*Please note that, as data is provided to SLED from law enforcement partners across the state, numbers may be updated to reflect this information.

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