

Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

State of Rhode Island

Profile of Drug Indicators

January 2008



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Rhode Island

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking and enforcement statistics.

Demographics

- Population (2006 American Community Survey) 1,067,610¹
- Race/Ethnicity (2006 American Community Survey): 82.6% white, 5.1% black/African American, 0.4% American Indian/Alaska Native, 2.8% Asian, 0.0% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, 6.9% other, 2.2% two or more races, 11.0% Hispanic/Latino origin (of any race)²

Politics

- Governor: Donald Carcieri³
- Lieutenant Governor: Elizabeth Roberts⁴
- Attorney General: Patrick Lynch⁵
- Secretary of State: A. Ralph Mollis⁶
- U.S. Senate: Sheldon Whitehouse (D); Jack Reed (D)⁷
- U.S. House of Representatives: Patrick J. Kennedy (D); James Langevin (D)⁸
- Capital: Providence⁹

Programs/Initiatives

- High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)¹⁰
Designated in 1999, the New England HIDTA is responsible for areas in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire and Providence County in Rhode Island.
- Substance Abuse Treatment Services (SATS)¹¹
SATS develops, supports and advocates for high quality, accessible, comprehensive and clinically appropriate substance abuse treatment services in order to decrease the negative effects of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use in Rhode Island.

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- During 2006, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) reported making 154 arrests for drug violations in Rhode Island.¹²

Number of DEA Drug Arrests, Rhode Island, 2002-2006

Year	Arrests
2002	26
2003	42
2004	123
2005	78
2006	154

- There were 3,688 total arrests for drug abuse violations in Rhode Island during 2006.¹³

Select Offenses Known to Police, Rhode Island, 2006

Offense	Under 18	Total All Ages
Homicide	1	13
Forcible rape	7	48
Robbery	37	144
Aggravated assault	99	492
Burglary	180	587
Larceny-Theft	638	2,035
Motor vehicle theft	48	146
Arson	35	48
Drug abuse violations	465	3,688
DUI	32	2,118
Liquor laws	113	766

Drugs

- Cocaine¹⁴
Cocaine is the primary drug of choice in Rhode Island and continues to be readily available throughout the state. High quality cocaine is available in Rhode Island and is generally 60% - 90% pure.
- Heroin¹⁵
Heroin is widely available in Rhode Island and can be purchased in nearly every town and city. High purity heroin is reported to be available in the state and most of the heroin in Rhode Island is Colombian in origin. Rhode Island has seen an increase in heroin overdoses because some heroin distributors are mixing fentanyl with heroin, making it much more potent.
- Marijuana¹⁶
The trend in Rhode Island supports a widespread and readily available market of fairly large amounts of marijuana. Prices of marijuana will vary seasonally as the supply fluctuates. The marijuana available in Rhode Island is mostly Mexican, however it is supplemented by limited amounts of other foreign based and domestic marijuana.
- Methamphetamine¹⁷
Methamphetamine is rarely seen in Rhode Island. The methamphetamine that is seen in Rhode Island is “crystal meth” and is typically encountered in gay communities.
- Club Drugs¹⁸
MDMA (ecstasy) and GHB continue to be encountered in Rhode Island. Almost all local police departments in Rhode Island have reported and increase in Ecstasy, GHB and Ketamine.
- Diverted Pharmaceuticals¹⁹
The most popular pharmaceutical substance abused in Rhode Island is OxyContin, which is being sold for approximately \$1.00 per milligram.

- According to 2004-2005 data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), approximately 97,000 (11%) of Rhode Island citizens (ages 12 or older) reported past month use of an illicit drug.²⁰

Citizens (Ages 12 or Older) Reporting Drug Use, Rhode Island, 2004-2005 Data

Drug Type and Use	Number*	Percent
Past month illicit drug use	97	10.67%
Past year marijuana use	133	14.67
Past month marijuana use	81	8.92
Past month use of illicit drug other than marijuana	37	4.12
Past year cocaine use	28	3.04
Past year non-medical pain reliever use	53	5.87

* The number of users is in thousands

- Approximately 320,000 (35.41%) Rhode Island citizens reported that using marijuana occasionally (once a month) was a “great risk”.²¹
- Additional 2004-2005 NSDUH results indicate that 32,000 (3.58%) Rhode Island citizens reported illicit drug dependence or abuse within the past year. Approximately 22,000 (2.48%) reported past year illicit drug dependence.²²

Juveniles

- More than 40% (42.6%) of Rhode Island high school students surveyed in 2005 reported using marijuana at least once during their lifetimes.²³

Percent of High School Students Reporting Drug Use, by Gender, Rhode Island, 2005

Drug Type and Use	Female	Male	Total
Lifetime marijuana use	41.6%	43.4%	42.6%
Current marijuana use	23.4	26.4	25.0
Lifetime cocaine use	5.8	9.3	7.7
Current cocaine use	2.0	4.7	3.4
Lifetime inhalant use	10.7	9.8	10.3
Lifetime heroin use	2.1	5.2	3.7
Lifetime methamphetamine use	4.9	6.8	6.0
Lifetime illegal steroid use	2.8	4.5	3.7
Lifetime injecting illegal drug use	1.6	3.8	2.8
Lifetime ecstasy use	5.6	6.4	6.0
Tried marijuana before age 13	6.9	12.2	9.6

- Approximately 59% of Rhode Island 12th graders surveyed in 2005 reported using marijuana at least once during their lifetime.²⁴

Percent of High School Students Reporting Drug Use, by Grade, Rhode Island, 2005

Drug Type and Use	9th	10th	11th	12th
Lifetime marijuana use	30.4%	36.4%	48.6%	58.6%
Current marijuana use	18.3	21.8	27.4	34.3
Lifetime cocaine use	6.9	6.2	7.2	10.4

Current cocaine use	2.8	2.3	3.4	5.0
Lifetime inhalant use	12.3	9.0	10.0	9.4
Lifetime heroin use	3.7	3.6	4.0	3.5
Lifetime methamphetamine use	4.9	6.0	6.5	6.4
Lifetime ecstasy use	4.5	5.9	6.5	7.3
Lifetime illegal steroid use	3.4	4.6	4.1	2.7
Lifetime injecting illegal drug use	2.7	3.0	3.3	1.9
Tried marijuana before age 13	11.4	8.8	7.1	10.4

- According to 2004-2005 NSDUH data, approximately 13% of Rhode Island 12-17 year olds reported past month use of an illicit drug.²⁵

Youth (12-17 Year Olds) Reporting Drug Use, Rhode Island, 2004-2005 Data

Drug Type and Use	Number*	Percent
Past month illicit drug use	12	13.32%
Past year marijuana use	17	19.51
Past month marijuana use	10	10.82
Past month use of illicit drug other than marijuana	5	5.44
Past year cocaine use	2	1.85
Past year non-medical pain reliever use	7	7.55

* The number of users is in thousands

Enforcement

- As of October 31, 2006, there were 3,223 full-time law enforcement employees in Rhode Island (2,561 officers and 662 civilians).²⁶
- Narcotics and Organized Crime Unit²⁷
The Narcotics and Organized Crime Unit of the Rhode Island Department of the Attorney General is responsible for the investigative management of narcotics, organized crime and asset forfeiture cases.

Trafficking and Seizures

- Rhode Island is utilized as a transshipment point for drugs distributed throughout New England.²⁸
- The majority of the cocaine purchased in Rhode Island is transported by local suppliers who travel to New York and return to distribute the product. Much of the powder cocaine is converted into crack cocaine for sale at the retail level. Cocaine is distributed primarily by Colombian and Dominican traffickers.²⁹
- During 2006, Federal agencies seized 19.5 kilograms of cocaine in Rhode Island.³⁰

Federal Drug Seizures, Rhode Island, 2006

Drug	Amount Seized
Cocaine	19.5 kilograms
Marijuana	0.0 kilograms
Methamphetamine	0.0 kilograms
Heroin	3.5 kilograms
MDMA	0.0 kilograms

- DEA and state and local authorities reported 2 methamphetamine laboratory incidents during 2006.³¹

Methamphetamine Laboratory Incidents, RI, 2002-2006

Year	Laboratory Incidents
2002	3
2003	1
2004	0
2005	0
2006	2

Courts

- Drug Courts³²
As of April 2007, there were 7 drug courts in Rhode Island that had been in existence for at least two years. There were no drug courts that had recently been implemented or were being planned in Rhode Island at that time.
- During FY 2006 38.1% of the Federally sentenced defendants in Rhode Island had committed drug offenses. Approximately 48% of these drug offenses involved crack cocaine.³³

Federal Sentencing Statistics, Drug Offenses, Rhode Island, FY 2006

Drug Type	Offenses	% of Total
Powder cocaine	20	41.7%
Crack cocaine	23	47.9
Heroin	4	8.3
Other drug	1	2.1

Corrections

- There was an average of 3,825 inmates under correctional supervision in Rhode Island during June 2007.³⁴
- There were 6,042 drug offenders on parole or probation residing in Rhode Island communities during FY 2007.³⁵

Number of Offenders on Parole/Probation, by Offense, RI, FY 2007

Offense Type	Number of Offenders
Violent	6,414
Sex	709
Breaking and entering	983
Drug	6,042
Nonviolent	6,220
Missing	84
Total	20,452

- During calendar year 2006, a total of 16,606 urine specimens were collected from Rhode Island inmates for drug testing.³⁶

Reasons for Collecting Inmate Urine Specimens, Rhode Island, 2006

Reason	# of Specimens
Cause	8,415
Random	2,086
Treatment	6,105
Total	16,606

- The positive rate for the inmate drug tests conducted in 2006 was 0.89%.³⁷

Number of Urinalysis Collections and Positive Rates, Rhode Island, 2002-2006

Coll. & Positives	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Collections	22,518	21,269	19,890	20,824	16,606
True positives	144	135	209	331	148
Percent positive	0.64%	0.63%	1.05%	1.59%	0.89%

- During 2006, law enforcement agencies in Rhode Island reported detaining 631 juveniles for drug offenses.³⁸

Number of Juvenile Detainees, Drug Offenses, RI, 2006

Offense Type	Number of Detainees
Possession marijuana	447
Poss. unspecified narcotics	94
Possession cocaine	52
Poss. w/int. deliver unspecified	16
Mfg./Del. cocaine	10
Mfg./Del. unspecified drug	7
Mfg./Del. marijuana	3
Possession heroin	2
Total drug offenses	631

Treatment

- During 2006, there were 12,033 admissions to drug/alcohol treatment in Rhode Island.³⁹ There were 12,487 such treatment admissions in 2005.⁴⁰ During 2004, there were 12,920 admissions to treatment in Rhode Island.⁴¹

Admissions to Treatment, Rhode Island, 2004-2006

Drug Type	2004		2005		2006	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Alcohol only	2,634	20.4%	2,655	21.3%	2,948	24.5%
Alcohol with secondary drug	1,790	13.9	1,859	14.9	1,716	14.3
Cocaine (smoked)	1,211	9.4	1,249	10.0	1,196	9.9
Cocaine (other route)	405	3.1	396	3.2	397	3.3

Marijuana	1,740	13.5	1,748	14.0	1,635	13.6
Heroin	4,136	32.0	3,474	27.8	2,881	23.9
Other opiates	870	6.7	950	7.6	1,102	9.2
PCP	4	0.0	1	0.0	n/a	n/a
Hallucinogens	29	0.2	10	0.1	3	0.0
Amphetamines	14	0.1	16	0.1	24	0.2
Other stimulants	1	0.0	2	0.0	2	0.0
Tranquilizers	60	0.5	82	0.7	83	0.7
Sedatives	11	0.1	5	0.0	4	0.0
Inhalants	n/a	n/a	4	0.0	4	0.0
Other unknown	15	0.1	36	0.3	38	0.3
Total	12,920	100.0	12,487	100.0	12,033	100.0

- According to 2004-2005 NSDUH data, approximately 29,000 (3.25%) Rhode Island citizens reported needing but not receiving treatment for illicit drug use within the past year.⁴²

Sources

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² Ibid.

³ Rhode Island Governor Web site: <http://www.governor.state.ri.us/>

⁴ Rhode Island Lt. Governor Web site: <http://www.ltgov.state.ri.us/>

⁵ Rhode Island Attorney General Web site: <http://www.riag.state.ri.us/>

⁶ Rhode Island Secretary of State Web site: <http://www.sec.state.ri.us/>

⁷ U.S. Senate Web site: <http://www.senate.gov>

⁸ U.S. House of Representatives Web site: <http://clerk.house.gov/>

⁹ Rhode Island Web site: <http://www.ri.gov/index.php>

¹⁰ Office of National Drug Control Policy, New England High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Web site: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/newengland.html>

¹¹ Substance Abuse Treatment Services Web site: <http://www.mhrh.ri.gov/SA/>

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¹⁷ Ibid.

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²⁰ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *State Estimates of Substance Use from the 2004-2005 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health*, February 2007: <http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k5/State/toc.htm>

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<http://www.doc.ri.gov/administration/planning/docs/FY07%20Population%20Report.pdf>
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[http://www.doc.ri.gov/administration/planning/docs/2006%20Urinalysis%20Report%20\(abbreviated%20version\).pdf](http://www.doc.ri.gov/administration/planning/docs/2006%20Urinalysis%20Report%20(abbreviated%20version).pdf)
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