

Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

New Orleans, Louisiana

Profile of Drug Indicators

August 2004



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.

New Orleans, Louisiana

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

Demographics

- Population: 456,155 (2002 American Community Survey)¹; 484,674 (2000 Census)²
- Race/Ethnicity (2002 American Community Survey): 26.1% white; 66.4% African American/black; 0.2% American Indian/Alaska Native; 2.5% Asian; 0% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander; 0.7% other; 1.0% two or more races; 3.1% Hispanic/Latino origin (of any race)³
- New Orleans is located in Orleans Parish.

Politics

- Mayor: C. Ray Nagin⁴
- City Council Members (District): Eddie Sapir (President); Oliver Thomas, Jr.; John Batt, Jr. (A); Renee Gill Pratt (B); Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson (C; Vice President); Marlin N. Gusman (D); Cynthia Willard-Lewis (E)⁵
- New Orleans Superintendent of Police: Edwin P. Compass III⁶
- Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff: William Hunter⁷

Programs/Initiatives

- High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)⁸
Designated in 1996, the Gulf Coast HIDTA is responsible for counties and parishes in Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi, including Orleans Parish.
- Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (CADA) for Greater New Orleans⁹
CADA is a non-profit community health agency that provides substance abuse prevention, education, and assessment services to individuals and families of the greater New Orleans area. CADA's services are offered in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. Tammany, and Plaquemines Parishes.

Federal Funding

- Drug-Free Communities Support Program grantees in New Orleans (the dollar amount is the total received by the coalition since the original award year):¹⁰
 - Original award year 2003: no grantees
 - Original award year 2002: no grantees
 - Original award year 2001: no grantees
 - Original award year 2000: \$375,000 to Substance Abuse Services Alliance Prevention Coalition
 - Original award year 1999: no grantees
- Community Capacity Development Office¹¹
There are no Weed and Seed sites in New Orleans.
- FY 2003 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Discretionary Grant funds received in New Orleans:¹²
 - Center for Mental Health Services: \$439,874

- Center for Substance Abuse Prevention: \$49,675
- Center for Substance Abuse Treatment: \$1,798,145
- Office of Justice Program Drug Court Discretionary Grant:
 - FY 2003: no New Orleans grantees¹³
 - FY 2002: no New Orleans grantees¹⁴
- Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Methamphetamine Grant:
 - FY 2003: no New Orleans grantees¹⁵
 - FY 2002: no New Orleans grantees¹⁶
- FY 2003 Office of Justice Programs and Community Oriented Policing Services grant amounts received in New Orleans:¹⁷
 - Communities (discretionary): 2 awards valued at a total of \$550,000
 - Counter-Terrorism (discretionary): 4 awards valued at \$44,170,861
 - Juvenile Justice:
 - discretionary: 1 award valued at \$75,000
 - formula: 0 awards
 - Law Enforcement:
 - discretionary: 15 awards valued at \$10,155,399
 - formula: 3 awards valued at \$1,058,904
 - Substance Abuse: 0 awards
 - Victims:
 - discretionary: 1 award valued at \$300,000
 - formula: 0 awards
- FY 2001 Housing and Urban Development Low Income Housing Drug Elimination Grant amount received in New Orleans: \$125,000 to Gordon Plaza Senior Complex¹⁸

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- From January to March 2004, there were 55 murders known to the New Orleans Police Department.¹⁹

Number of Index Offenses Known to Police, New Orleans, 2000-March 2004

Offense	Full Year 2000	Full Year 2001	Full Year 2002	Full Year 2003	Jan-March 2004
Murder	203	212	257	274	55
Rape	225	209	162	213	53
Armed robbery	1,810	2,139	1,517	1,534	324
Simple robbery	611	639	477	537	87
Assault	2,304	2,677	2,142	2,037	458
Burglary	5,230	5,261	4,759	4,879	1,223
Theft	15,575	16,178	14,325	12,726	3,124
Auto theft	7,866	8,751	7,566	6,872	1,724
Total index offenses	33,824	36,075	31,205	29,072	7,048

- Data collected from New Orleans adult arrestees in 2003 indicate that 78.4% of adult male and 59.8% of adult female arrestees tested positive for one of the following drugs at arrest: cocaine, heroin, marijuana, methamphetamine, or PCP.²⁰

Percent of Adult Arrestees Testing Positive for Drugs, New Orleans, 2003

Drug Type	Males	Females
Cocaine	47.6%	37.3%
Heroin	14.0	13.3
Marijuana	50.8	30.3
Methamphetamine	2.6	0.8
Any of the above drugs	78.4	59.8
Multiple drugs	29.4	17.8

- Over 60% of adult male arrestees reported using marijuana in the past year. Among the male arrestees who reported past year use of marijuana, the average number of days the substance was used in the past month was 11.0 days.²¹

Past Drug Use, Adult Male Arrestees, New Orleans, 2003

Use	Crack Cocaine	Powder Cocaine	Marijuana	Meth-amphet.	Heroin
Past 7 days	22.1%	8.3%	51.7%	0.0%	10.8%
Past 30 days	23.4%	9.8%	57.1%	0.6%	10.9%
Past year	24.3%	12.7%	60.8%	0.8%	12.7%
Avg. # of days used in month	12.0	6.1	11.0	3.0	14.0

- Nearly 41% of adult female arrestees reported using marijuana in the past year.²²

Past Drug Use, Adult Female Arrestees, New Orleans, 2003

Use	Crack Cocaine	Powder Cocaine	Marijuana	Meth-amphet.	Heroin
Past 7 days	23.3%	8.7%	32.0%	0.0%	9.9%
Past 30 days	26.0%	9.5%	36.0%	0.0%	10.3%
Past year	27.5%	11.3%	40.8%	0.8%	11.7%
Avg. # of days used in month	13.1	8.0	9.7	3.5	17.5

- According to the New Orleans Police Department, there were 5,959 arrests for marijuana possession in Orleans Parish during 2002.²³

Number of Drug Arrests, Orleans Parish, 2001-2002

	2001	2002
Cocaine – possession	2,176	3,649
Cocaine – distribution	1,031	1,434
Heroin – possession	274	301
Heroin – distribution	544	196
Marijuana – possession	5,500	5,959
Marijuana – distribution	1,299	981
Other drugs	374	539
Drug paraphernalia	2,050	2,640

Drugs

➤ Cocaine/Crack

The abuse of cocaine, especially crack cocaine, continues to be a major drug problem in New Orleans. In 2002, powder cocaine sold for \$80-\$150/gram, \$800-\$1,200/ounce, and \$20,000/kilogram. Crack cocaine sold for \$8,000/ounce, \$15/rock, and \$20,000-\$28,000/kilogram.²⁴

➤ Heroin

Heroin is becoming more available and more affordable in the New Orleans area.²⁵ It has become an easily obtainable substitute to OxyContin.²⁶ Despite the increase in heroin snorting, injection remains the predominant route of administration. Some younger users are lacing marijuana cigarettes with heroin.²⁷ In 2002, heroin purity in New Orleans was 36.18% and heroin sold for \$300-\$600/gram, \$4,000-\$9,000/ounce, and \$80,000-\$100,000/kilogram.²⁸

➤ Marijuana

Marijuana continues to be the drug of choice among young people in New Orleans.²⁹ Locally produced commercial grade marijuana is the most common variety found in New Orleans, followed by Mexican commercial grade marijuana. Marijuana is predominantly smoked in joints, but blunts are occasionally reported, mostly among people visiting the city.³⁰ In 2002, marijuana sold for \$2/joint, \$100/gram, \$125-\$160/ounce, \$750-\$1,000/pound, and \$2,000/kilogram in New Orleans.³¹

➤ Methamphetamine

According to *Pulse Check* treatment sources, the number of novice methamphetamine users (those who have used methamphetamine for less than one year before entering treatment) has increased in New Orleans.³² In 2002, methamphetamine sold for \$100-\$150/gram, \$900-\$1,500/ounce, and \$12,000-\$16,000/pound in New Orleans.³³

➤ Club Drugs

The use of club drugs is reported in clubs and bars in the French Quarter area of the city.³⁴ The average price of an MDMA tablet in New Orleans was \$15.25 in 2001. GHB and GBL prices were \$5/capsule or \$10/ounce.³⁵

➤ Diverted Pharmaceuticals

OxyContin has replaced hydromorphone as the most popular opiate of abuse in the New Orleans area.³⁶ OxyContin pills usually cost \$100 per 40 milligrams. The most frequently mentioned OxyContin diversion method in New Orleans is forging prescriptions. Some patients also fill legal and legitimate prescriptions and sell some of the pills. OxyContin injection remains a popular form of administration in New Orleans.³⁷

Juveniles

- Among New Orleans high school students surveyed in 2003, approximately 29.5% of female students and 40% of male students reported using marijuana at least once during their lifetime.³⁸

Percent of High School Students Reporting Drug Use, by Sex, New Orleans, 2003

	Female	Male	Total
Lifetime marijuana use	29.5%	40.0%	34.5%
Current marijuana use	13.3	23.0	17.9
Lifetime cocaine use	1.5	5.5	3.4
Current cocaine use	1.5	3.4	2.4
Lifetime inhalant use	6.2	9.5	7.8
Current inhalant use	3.3	4.6	3.9
Lifetime heroin use	2.5	5.9	4.1
Lifetime methamphetamine use	3.5	8.4	5.8
Lifetime MDMA use	3.9	10.7	7.2
Lifetime illegal steroid use	3.1	7.2	5.0
Lifetime injecting illegal drug use	1.5	5.6	3.4

- Nearly 40% of New Orleans 12th graders surveyed in 2003 reported lifetime marijuana use.³⁹

Percent of High School Students Reporting Drug Use, by Grade, New Orleans, 2003

	9th	10th	11th	12th
Lifetime marijuana use	27.6%	31.2%	40.2%	39.9%
Current marijuana use	16.2	16.5	19.2	19.8
Lifetime cocaine use	3.7	3.0	1.9	5.0
Current cocaine use	3.4	1.9	1.0	3.3
Lifetime inhalant use	6.3	6.9	8.0	10.1
Current inhalant use	3.8	3.5	3.4	4.6
Lifetime heroin use	4.3	3.2	2.3	6.4
Lifetime methamphetamine use	6.5	3.9	4.1	8.7
Lifetime MDMA use	6.0	5.6	7.1	10.0
Lifetime steroid use	5.0	4.1	4.2	6.7
Lifetime injection of illegal drug	3.3	2.8	1.9	5.6

- Approximately 14% of Orleans Parish high school seniors surveyed in 2002 reported being current users of marijuana.⁴⁰

Students Reporting Current Drug Use, Orleans Parish, 2001-2002

	Grade 6		Grade 8		Grade 10		Grade 12	
	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002
Alcohol	13.3%	7.8%	22.5%	18.6%	53.2%	28.7%	87.8%	31.2%
Cigarettes	4.7	2.0	12.0	8.4	22.1	4.9	31.7	10.8
Marijuana	2.1	0.5	8.5	7.8	0.0	9.0	4.9	14.1
Inhalants	5.0	3.3	7.7	4.5	0.0	1.0	9.8	1.3
Hallucinogens	4.3	0.4	5.2	0.9	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0
Cocaine	1.4	0.2	4.3	1.3	0.0	1.0	2.4	1.3
Methamphet.	1.5	0.7	3.8	0.3	0.0	2.4	0.0	0.9

- Eight percent of Orleans Parish 6th grade students surveyed in 2002 reported lifetime use of inhalants.⁴¹

Students Reporting Lifetime Drug Use, Orleans Parish, 2001-2002

	<u>Grade 6</u>		<u>Grade 8</u>		<u>Grade 10</u>		<u>Grade 12</u>	
	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002
Alcohol	21.8%	18.4%	42.9%	39.1%	81.6%	52.2%	92.7%	60.0%
Cigarettes	18.8	10.0	32.9	26.6	33.8	29.3	68.3	37.8
Marijuana	3.6	2.5	15.7	13.6	5.2	21.4	31.7	31.5
Inhalants	7.1	8.0	11.3	9.0	3.9	4.8	17.1	3.4
Hallucinogens	3.6	0.7	5.8	1.5	1.3	2.8	14.6	1.3
Cocaine	2.1	0.7	5.9	1.8	0.0	2.1	5.0	1.3
Methamphet.	2.2	1.2	5.7	1.2	1.3	3.1	10.3	0.9

- Approximately 9% of Orleans Parish 12th graders surveyed in 2002 reported that they had sold illegal drugs within the past year.⁴²

Percent of Students Reporting Antisocial Behavior in Past Year, Orleans Parish, 2002

Behavior	Grade 6	Grade 8	Grade 10	Grade 12
Suspended from school	28.3%	43.1%	22.7%	36.2%
Drunk or high at school	2.4	7.6	9.8	14.0
Sold illegal drugs	1.7	4.3	8.0	8.9
Stole a vehicle	1.9	4.2	1.8	3.0
Been arrested	4.9	13.5	7.7	12.0
Attacked to harm	12.0	19.5	16.1	19.7
Carried a handgun	3.6	6.1	7.3	6.8
Brought handgun to school	1.2	1.8	1.0	1.7

Enforcement

- As of October 31, 2002, there were 2,000 full time law enforcement employees in New Orleans (1,613 officers and 387 civilians).⁴³

Trafficking and Seizures

- Most of the cocaine trafficking in the New Orleans area is handled by Colombia- and Mexico-based organizations that operate out of California and Texas.⁴⁴
- The Gulf Coast HIDTA’s geographic location between the southwest border and the eastern seaboard serves as a strategic corridor for traffickers transporting drugs and money to and from the eastern and northern parts of the country.⁴⁵
- The area’s waterways, deepwater ports, railway and highway systems, and airports are used extensively by drug trafficking and smuggling operations.⁴⁶
- The Port of New Orleans is a transportation hub and distribution center for licit and illicit commodities. It is also a popular embarkation point and destination for the Caribbean cruise ship circuit, providing an opportunity for American and foreign passengers to smuggle drugs.⁴⁷

- Drug trafficking organizations use commercial and charter flights at the New Orleans International Airport to smuggle cocaine and heroin from Central America and Mexico. The New Orleans International Airport is the only airport in the Gulf Coast region that receives international flights from Central America.⁴⁸
- Most of the methamphetamine available in New Orleans originates in Mexico and California and is transported through Texas.⁴⁹
- According to the DEA, approximately 71.75 kilograms of cocaine were seized in New Orleans during the 1st quarter of FY 2003. This is up from 13.05 kilograms seized in the 4th quarter of FY 2002.⁵⁰

Courts

- Drug Courts⁵¹
As of May 2004, there were 2 drug courts that had been operating for over 2 years in New Orleans. There were no additional drug courts in existence or being planned.

Corrections

- On July 1, 2002, approximately 11% (11.4%) of the adults on probation in Louisiana were from Orleans Parish. 8.8% of those on parole and 14% of those on good-time parole supervision were also from Orleans Parish.⁵²
- 19.3% of the adults in Louisiana correctional facilities on July 1, 2002 were from Orleans Parish. 28.1% of youthful offenders in the state correctional system were from Orleans Parish. The youthful offender population is made up of inmates who were 14, 15, or 16 at the time of admission and who were convicted in criminal court and sentenced to the custody of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections.⁵³

Consequences of Use

- During 2002, there were 4,566 drug-related emergency department (ED) episodes in New Orleans. Cocaine was mentioned 1,674 times in the ED episodes.⁵⁴

Number of ED Drug Mentions, Selected Drugs, New Orleans, 1998-2002

Drug Type	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Alcohol-in-combination	1,919	1,916	1,948	1,181	1,430
Cocaine	2,395	2,139	1,998	1,422	1,674
Heroin	510	649	982	530	617
Marijuana	1,196	1,044	1,068	814	832
Amphetamines	55	41	103	118	128
Methamphetamine	25	23	27	--	53
MDMA (Ecstasy)	42	51	44	34	79
Ketamine	5	9	4	2	3
LSD	77	76	35	18	4
PCP	9	16	16	8	9
Misc. hallucinogens	4	--	5	4	0
GHB	35	78	69	72	34
Inhalants	6	0	0	0	4
Total ED drug episodes	5,088	4,459	4,664	3,729	4,566
Total ED drug mentions	9,647	8,905	9,172	7,037	8,455

- During 2002, the Orleans Parish Coroner's Office reported 269 homicides. This is up from 215 homicides in 2001. Drug-related homicides increased from 50% in 2001 to 80% in 2002.⁵⁵
- During 2002, Orleans Parish medical examiners (ME) reported 82 drug abuse deaths. Cocaine was mentioned in 43 of the deaths.⁵⁶

Number of Drug Mentions Reported by ME, Orleans Parish, 1998-2002

Drug Type	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Alcohol-in-combination	25	41	44	35	34
Cocaine	36	50	60	45	43
Heroin/morphine	28	37	45	25	2
Marijuana	21	21	23	12	13
Amphetamines	--	--	--	--	1
Methamphetamine	--	--	--	--	2
Club drugs	1	4	2	6	3
Hallucinogens	--	1	--	--	--
Inhalants	--	--	--	--	--
Narcotic analgesics	21	52	25	44	50
Other analgesics	7	3	6	5	4
Benzodiazepines	14	6	13	6	12
Antidepressants	2	12	7	9	7
All other substances	12	41	25	62	98
Total drug deaths	76	98	103	84	82
Total drug mentions	167	268	250	249	269

Treatment

- Approximately 14% of the New Orleans adult male arrestees interviewed during 2003 reported receiving inpatient or residential treatment at some point in their lives.⁵⁷

Percent of Adult Arrestees Reporting Past Treatment, New Orleans, 2003

Type of Treatment	Male	Female
Outpatient – ever	7.9%	5.4%
Outpatient – past year	1.8	2.5
Inpatient/residential – ever	13.5	10.7
Inpatient/residential – past year	4.6	3.7

- During 2002, 34.5% of the treatment admissions in Orleans Parish were for cocaine.⁵⁸

Admissions to Treatment, by Drug Type, Orleans Parish, 1998-2002

Drug Type	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Cocaine	38.1%	35.5%	34.4%	32.5%	34.5%
Heroin	8.4	12.2	11.2	14.8	11.8
Marijuana	30.2	33.0	29.2	30.5	29.8
Alcohol	21.4	17.8	20.5	18.6	19.3

Sources

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