

Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

Savannah, Georgia

Profile of Drug Indicators

March 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.

Savannah, Georgia

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

Demographics¹

- Population: 291,362 (2002 American Community Survey)
- Race/Ethnicity (2002 American Community Survey): 61.26% white; 34.25% black/African American; 0% American Indian/Alaska Native; 1.83% Asian; 0% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander; 0% other; 0.69% two or more races; 1.98% Hispanic/Latino (of any race)
- Savannah is located in Chatham County.

Politics

- Mayor: Otis S. Johnson²
- City Council Members (District): Van R. Johnson, II (1); Mary Osborne (2); Ellis Cook (3); Kenneth Sadler (4); Clifton Jones (5); Tony Thomas (6); Edna Branch Jackson (At Large Post 1); Jeff Felser (At Large Post 2)³
- City Manager: Michael Brown⁴
- Chief of Police: Dan Flynn⁵
- Chatham County Sheriff: Al St. Lawrence⁶

Programs/Initiatives

- Community Service Specialists⁷
Established in 2001 by the Savannah Police Department, the Community Service Specialists (CSS) respond to calls for service that do not require the presence of a sworn officer (stolen tags, thefts from vehicle, shoplifting, animal complaints, etc.). In 2002, CSS responded to more than 6,200 calls for service.

Federal Funding

- Drug-Free Communities Support Program⁸
Since FY 1999, only one coalition in Savannah has received funding through the Drug-Free Communities Support Program. In FY 2002, \$100,000 was awarded to Partners for Community Health.
- Executive Office for Weed and Seed⁹
Savannah has received funding and been officially recognized as a Weed and Seed site.
- There were no Savannah recipients of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) FY 2002 Discretionary Funds.¹⁰
- Savannah did not receive any funding through the FY 2003 Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Grant Program.¹¹
- There were no Savannah recipients of the FY 2003 Office of Community Oriented Policing Services Methamphetamine Grant.¹²
- There were no Savannah recipients of the FY 2001 Housing and Urban Development Drug Elimination Grant.¹³

- FY 2002 Office of Justice Programs and Community Oriented Policing Services grant amounts received by Savannah recipients:¹⁴
 - Community Based (discretionary): 1 award valued at \$225,000
 - Counter-Terrorism (discretionary): 0 awards
 - Juvenile Justice
 - discretionary: 1 award valued at \$100,000
 - formula: 0 awards
 - Law Enforcement
 - discretionary: 3 awards valued at \$412,572
 - formula: 3 awards valued at \$428,311
 - Substance Abuse: 0 awards
 - Victims: 0 awards

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- Violent crimes in Savannah decreased 3.4% from 1,300 in 2001 to 1,256 in 2002. The number of property crimes decreased 2.3% from 10,633 in 2001 to 10,391 in 2002.¹⁵
- During 2002, the Savannah Police Department's Narcotics Eradication Team made 404 arrests.¹⁶
- During 2001, there were 2,080 burglary offenses known to police in Savannah.¹⁷ This number decreased to 1,985 during 2002.¹⁸ According to preliminary data for 2003, there were 964 burglary offenses in Savannah from January to June 2003.¹⁹

Number of Offenses Known to Police, Savannah, 2001-June 2003

Type of Offense	2001	2002	2003
Murder	26	32	8
Forcible rape	70	58	20
Robbery	840	650	249
Aggravated assault	602	449	198
Burglary	2,080	1,985	964
Larceny-theft	7,400	6,884	2,764
Motor vehicle theft	1,440	1,537	599
Arson	53	27	--

- There were 40 murder offenses reported by law enforcement in Chatham County during 2002.²⁰

Number of Offenses Known to Police, Chatham County, 1998-2002

Offense	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Murder	36	45	34	37	40
Rape	91	107	99	91	79
Robbery	646	752	804	884	838
Assault	826	989	852	937	899
Burglary	2,721	2,956	2,422	2,745	3,116
Larceny	10,553	10,335	8,253	9,688	9,821
Vehicle theft	1,541	1,671	2,073	1,668	1,972

Drugs

- Heroin
South American heroin is widely available in Savannah. Heroin is popular in Savannah nightclubs, where it is typically snorted and often is used in combination with other drugs such as MDMA and cocaine.²¹
- Club Drugs
The availability and abuse of MDMA is increasing in Savannah.²²

Juveniles

- Results from the 2001 Chatham County/Savannah Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Report indicate that:²³
 - 29% of students surveyed reported trying marijuana at some point in their lives; 18% reported being current users of marijuana (used in past 30 days);
 - 4% reported lifetime cocaine use; 3% reported current cocaine use;
 - 12% have sniffed glue to get high;
 - 5% have taken steroids without a doctor's prescription;
 - 2% have used a needle to inject illegal drugs into their bodies.

Enforcement

- The Savannah Police Department Canine Unit became fully operational in March 2002 with 4 dogs.²⁴
- Narcotics Eradication Team (NET)²⁵
Created in 2002, the Savannah Police Department's NET Unit attacks street level drug activity in targeted neighborhoods. The 3 initial target neighborhoods involved in NET activities included Cuyler-Brownsville, East Victorian District, and the Augusta Avenue corridor in West Savannah.
- One of the three Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) Drug Enforcement Investigative Division's Regional Drug Enforcement Offices is in Savannah. This office is responsible for investigating major drug cases such as trafficking, smuggling, clandestine labs and major drug distribution organizations.²⁶
- As of October 31, 2002, there were 524 full-time law enforcement employees in Savannah (419 officers and 105 civilians).²⁷

Trafficking and Seizures

- One of Georgia's two international airports is in Savannah, as is one of the State's two deepwater ports.²⁸
- The Port of Savannah, located near Interstates 16 and 95, received the most containerized cargo in the State. Drugs are transported to Georgia on maritime vessels arriving in this Port.²⁹
- The Port of Savannah is a target for Colombian cocaine traffickers.³⁰
- Train and bus carriers connect Savannah with cities used as wholesale drug distribution centers, such as Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, and New York.³¹

Courts

➤ Drug Courts³²

As of November 7, 2003, there was one drug court that had been in existence for over 2 years in Savannah. No other drug courts were recently implemented or being planned.

➤ Savannah-Chatham County Drug Court³³

The Savannah-Chatham County drug court deals with adult criminal offenders on probation for a felony drug offense or a non-violent felony offense. Graduation from this program requires that participants have completed all 5 phases of treatment, earned a high school diploma or G.E.D., be gainfully employed, performed 80 hours of community service, paid a \$1,000.00 drug court fee, and have maintained at least 12 months of sobriety.

Corrections

➤ On February 3, 2004, approximately 5% (2,322 inmates) of the Georgia Department of Corrections inmate population (excluding jails) were convicted in Chatham County.³⁴

➤ On February 3, 2004, there were 188 individuals in the Savannah Men's Therapeutic Community (TC) facility and 1 individual in the Savannah Women's TC.³⁵

Sources

¹ U.S. Census Bureau Web site, American Community Survey: 2002 Data Profiles: <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Products/Profiles/Single/2002/ACS/index.htm>

² Savannah Web site: <http://www.ci.savannah.ga.us/cityweb/webdatabase.nsf>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Savannah Metropolitan Police Department, 2003 Annual Report:

<http://www.savannahpd.org/cityweb/webdatabase.nsf/spd>

⁶ Chatham County Sheriff's K9 Team Web site: <http://www.chathamsok9.org/>

⁷ Savannah Metropolitan Police Department, 2002 Annual Report

⁸ Drug-Free Communities Support Program Web site, Georgia section:

<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/dfcs/states/ga.html>

⁹ Executive Office for Weed and Seed Data Center Web site, Georgia section:

<http://www.weedandseeddatacenter.org/georgia.html>

¹⁰ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, FY 2002 Discretionary Funds, Georgia section: <http://www.samhsa.gov/funding/content/states/ga.htm>

¹¹ Bureau of Justice Assistance Web site, FY 2003 Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Grants:

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/grant/03DrugCtAwd.pdf>

¹² Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, FY 2003 COPS Methamphetamine Grant::

<http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/mime/open.pdf?Item=951>

¹³ Department of Housing and Urban Development, FY 2001 Federally Assisted Low Income Housing Drug Elimination Grants: Detailed Congressional Report:

<http://www.hud.gov/content/releases/drugelimination.pdf>

¹⁴ Office of Justice Programs, Georgia FY 2002 Office of Justice Programs and Community Oriented Policing Services Grants: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fy2002grants/map/gasubj.htm>

¹⁵ Savannah Police Department, 2002 Annual Report

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2001*, October 2002:

<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/01cius.htm>

-
- ¹⁸ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2002*, October 2003:
<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/02cius.htm>
- ¹⁹ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, January – June 2003*, December 15, 2003:
<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/2003/03semimaps.pdf>
- ²⁰ Georgia Bureau of Investigation Web site, Crime Statistics section:
<http://www.ganet.org/gbi/gbistat1.html>
- ²¹ National Drug Intelligence Center and Drug Enforcement Administration, *Georgia Drug Threat Assessment*, April 2003: <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs3/3669/3669p.pdf>
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ Chatham County Department of Health, Health Statistics:
<http://www.easthealthdistrict.com/statistics.shtml>
- ²⁴ Savannah Police Department, *2002 Annual Report*
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Investigative Division:
<http://www.ganet.org/gbi/idenforce.html>
- ²⁷ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2002*, October 2003:
<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/02cius.htm>
- ²⁸ National Drug Intelligence Center and Drug Enforcement Administration, *Georgia Drug Threat Assessment*, April 2003: <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs3/3669/3669p.pdf>
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ Drug Enforcement Administration, Georgia State Factsheet:
<http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/pubs/states/georgia.html>
- ³¹ National Drug Intelligence Center and Drug Enforcement Administration, *Georgia Drug Threat Assessment*, April 2003: <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs3/3669/3669p.pdf>
- ³² Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Clearinghouse and Technical Assistance Project, *Summary of Drug Court Activity by State and County*, November 7, 2003:
<http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/spa/justice/publications/drgchart2k.pdf>
- ³³ Superior Court of Chatham County, *The Savannah-Chatham County Drug Court Program Description*
- ³⁴ Georgia Department of Corrections, *Inmate Profile*, January 2004:
<http://www.dcor.state.ga.us/pdf/inms04-01.pdf>
- ³⁵ Ibid.

This State Profile was prepared by the ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is funded by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and is a component of the [National Criminal Justice Reference Service](#). For further information concerning the contents of this profile or other drug policy issues contact:

The Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse
PO Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
1-800-666-3332
<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov>
ondcp@ncjrs.org

