Tracking Enforcement Rates in the City of St. Louis, 2002 – 2017

A Report of the Research Network on Misdemeanor Justice

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JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Tracking Enforcement Rates in the City of St. Louis, 2002 – 2017

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was produced as part of the City of St. Louis's participation in the Research Network on Misdemeanor Justice (RNMJ). The RNMJ, which is led by researchers at John Jay College of Criminal Justice and is funded by the Laura and John Arnold Foundation, is composed of eight cities dedicated to 1) documenting responses to low-level offenses and violations; 2) providing information that can be used to enhance public safety, target scarce resources, and improve relationships between criminal justice system actors and the community; and 3) generating discussions about the best ways to enforce and respond to low-level offenses. This report is a partial replication and extension of research conducted in New York City by the Misdemeanor Justice Project.

The current report presents trends in enforcement actions in the City of St. Louis from 2002 through 2017. The work is designed to understand the actions that bring the public into contact with law enforcement. Five types of enforcement actions are examined, including felony, misdemeanor, and municipal arrests, arrests for bench warrants, and summonses-in-lieu of arrest. The report describes trends in the overall enforcement rates, and data trends are presented separately by race, sex, and age. In addition, trends in the most common types of charges are displayed for felony, misdemeanor, and municipal arrests, and trends in the ratio of felony arrests to felony crimes are presented.

The long-term goal of the collaborative project is to provide assistance to local policymakers by providing information on the operations of the criminal justice system in the City of St. Louis. In this report, we do not make causal inferences or provide policy recommendations, but rather describe the context of policing in St. Louis and highlight important changes in the nature of law enforcement, criminal statutes, and technology that should be considered when interpreting the findings. This contextual information also provides insight on the potential limitations of the data.

Several important findings emerge from this work.

1. Total enforcement rates have declined steadily over the past sixteen years. In 2017, there were 26,540 fewer enforcement actions than in 2002, and the enforcement rate declined 55% over the study period, from 17,474 to 7,862 per 100,000 residents of the City of St. Louis. The greatest one-year decline (20%) occurred between 2013 and 2014.

2. Arrests for felonies and bench warrants were the most common law enforcement actions over most of the study period; however, the bench warrant arrest rate declined steeply after 2013. Arrests for municipal violations were generally the least common type of law enforcement action.

3. There was substantial variation over the study period, but all types of enforcement fell from 2002 to 2017. Declines were greatest for municipal (66%), misdemeanor (76%), and bench warrant arrests (68%). Arrests for felonies and summonses declined by approximately one third over the study period.

4. Males had higher rates of enforcement than females for all types of enforcement actions over the study period. Both male and female enforcement rates declined from 2002 to 2017, but the decline for males (58%) was greater than that for females (46%). Sex differences in the rate of enforcement declined over the study period. In 2002, there were approximately 5 enforcement actions taken against a male for every action initiated against a female, but by 2017 this ratio was approximately four-to-one.

5. Blacks were consistently subject to higher rates of enforcement relative to Whites. Black males had the highest enforcement rates, Black females and White males had comparable trends for much of the study period, and White females had the lowest rates of enforcement. There was a decline in race differences in the enforcement rates over the study period. In 2002, for every one enforcement action taken against a person who was White, there were almost five enforcement actions taken against Blacks. This ratio declined to just over 2-to-1 in 2017. This drop was accelerated in the post-2013 period.

6. The likelihood of contact with law enforcement varied by age. Individuals aged 17 to 20 and 21 to 24 were the most likely to have contact with the police for most of the study period, and individuals aged 35 and older had enforcement rates that were consistently lower than those observed for the city as a whole. The rates of enforcement for the 17 to 20 year-old age group declined 77% from 2002 to 2017. Other age groups experienced drops in the combined enforcement rate, but the relative decline was smaller.

7. Trends in felony, misdemeanor, and municipal arrests were driven by a small number of crime types. Disorderly conduct was the most prevalent type of municipal arrest, simple assault was the most common misdemeanor arrest, and felony arrests were driven largely by drug crimes.

8. From 2002 through 2017, the ratio of felony violent arrests to felony violent crimes remained relatively stable.

INTRODUCTION

Missouri has been featured prominently in recent discussions of criminal justice reform following the events in Ferguson in 2014 and the resulting Department of Justice investigation.[1] Despite this attention, much remains to be learned about enforcement activity in the City of St. Louis and the region. Often policy decisions are made without data or a strong empirical understanding of criminal justice trends.

With the support of the Laura and John Arnold Foundation, John Jay College of Criminal Justice formed the Research Network on Misdemeanor Justice (RNMJ) with the express purpose of informing discussions on law enforcement practices by providing empirical data on enforcement activity.[2] The RNMJ consists of eight cities dedicated to documenting trends in enforcement actions for their respective cities and engaging in collaborative cross-site comparisons.[3]

The goal of this report is to detail trends in citizen contact with law enforcement in the City of St. Louis from 2002 to 2017. Five types of enforcement actions are examined, including felony, misdemeanor, and municipal arrests, arrests for bench warrants, and summonses-in-lieu of arrest. The specific aims of the report are to: 1) document trends in five types of enforcement actions in the City of St. Louis from 2002 to 2017; 2) examine trends in enforcement actions by race, age, and sex; and 3) detail changes in the most common charge types that resulted in arrest. While we do not make casual inferences or provide policy recommendations, our hope is that the findings will stimulate conversations on these topics among policymakers and practitioners.

The following discussion describes the data used in the report as well as the law enforcement context in the City of St. Louis.

DEFINITIONS AND DATA ON ENFORCEMENT

In this report, enforcement is defined as an action that involves a member of the public and a law enforcement official that includes one of the following: issuance of a criminal summons; a custodial arrest for a felony, misdemeanor, or municipal violation; or an arrest for a bench warrant.

Much of the enforcement data included in this report are maintained by the Regional Justice Information Service (REJIS), an entity that provides information technology services to criminal justice and government agencies throughout Missouri. The data were provided to us by the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department (SLMPD). Additional data were obtained from the Missouri Attorney General Vehicle Stops Report, an annual report that summarizes vehicle stop

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[1] The Depart of Justice report can be found at https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/press-releases/attachments/2015/03/04/ferguson_police_department_report.pdf.

[2] More information on the RNMJ can be found at http://misdemeanorjustice.org/project/research-network-on-misdemeanor-justice/.

[3] In addition to the City of St. Louis, the following cities are part of the RNMJ: Durham, North Carolina; Los Angeles, California; Louisville, Kentucky; Meridian, Mississippi; New York City, New York; Prince George's County, Maryland; and Seattle, Washington.

data from all law enforcement agencies operating in Missouri. We also draw upon data from the United States Census to compute rates of enforcement activity. A brief description of the data and each type of enforcement action are provided below.

Custodial Arrests for Felonies, Misdemeanors, and Municipal Violations—Custodial arrests are arrests in which the police have taken a citizen into custody for formal processing. These data are maintained by REJIS and were provided by the SLMPD for the years 2002 through 2017. The custodial arrest data include the race, age, sex, and home address of the arrestee, the location of the arrest, the charge type (i.e., felony, misdemeanor, or municipal), and the specific charge. Custodial arrests are broken into three types based on the type of charge. When an arrest involved multiple charge types, only the most serious charge was counted. Felony charges are considered the most serious, followed by misdemeanors, then municipal violations. As an example, if a person was arrested for a felony and misdemeanor, the arrest is coded as a felony. Probation and parole violations and bench warrants are not included in these counts.

Custodial Arrests for Bench Warrants—Information on bench warrants is maintained by REJIS and was provided by SLMPD for the years 2002 through 2017. Bench warrants were identified based upon the charging document, and include only those warrants issued by the City of St. Louis Municipal Court. Arrests for fugitive warrants (i.e., warrants that have been issued by municipalities outside the City of St. Louis) are excluded from these counts, although they are briefly discussed below. Arrests in which the bench warrant was accompanied by a felony, misdemeanor, or municipal charge are included in the counts for new charges. Therefore, if a person was arrested for a municipal violation and a bench warrant, the arrest was classified as a municipal arrest. Information on the race, age, and sex of the person arrested was provided as well as the location of the arrest and the residence of the arrestee.

Summonses-in-Lieu of Arrest–REJIS warehouses these data and SLMPD provided data for the years 2002 through 2017. Summons data provide information on encounters in which a citizen was mandated to appear in court rather than taken into custody by the police. The dataset only includes criminal summonses and not citations issued for traffic violations. These data include information on the race, age, and sex of the citizen receiving the summons.[4]

Citations for Traffic Violations – The Missouri Attorney General's Annual Report on Vehicle Stops provides information on the number of vehicle stops in which citations were issued for each law enforcement agency in the state.[5] These data are available beginning in the year 2000, when a state statute was enacted that requires specific information—including the driver's race—to be recorded for each vehicle stop. Traffic stop citations can be disaggregated by race, but not sex or age. It is important to note that in the past five years, additional checks have been put in place by SLMPD to improve the accuracy and completeness of these data.

Population Estimates – Population estimates for the City of St. Louis disaggregated by race, age, and sex were provided by the Research Network on Misdemeanor Justice at John Jay College of

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[4] We provide information on the number of summonses that were issued by SLMPD, not the number of events in which a summons was issued. For example, if a person was issued five summonses at one time, all five summonses will be included in the summons count. This differs from arrests for which only the most serious charge is counted.
[5] The reports can be accessed at https://ago.mo.gov/home/vehicle-stops-report.

Criminal Justice. The estimates were generated using data from the 2000 and 2010 United States Census, and linear interpolation was used to calculate population counts for years between 2000 and 2010. Although the 1-year estimates available from American Community Survey (ACS) provide more accurate estimates for each individual year, they are not available at the census tract level. For this reason, we used 2016 5-year estimates as these estimates are at the census tract level and allow for more detailed demographic breakdowns. These estimates were obtained from the American Community Survey on the American Factfinder website.

Throughout the report, counts and rates of enforcement activity per 100,000 persons are reported. Counts provide a sense of broad trends in law enforcement actions, while rates are presented to provide a picture of how enforcement has changed over time taking into account variation in the number of people who live in the city, as well as the demographic makeup of the population. All rates are population specific. For example, the enforcement rates for 17 to 20 year-olds are based on the number of 17 to 20 year-olds living in the City of St. Louis in a specific year.

Using Census data to calculate rates of enforcement activity is not without limitations. First, rates are based only on the number of people residing in the city and do not take into account individuals who commute into the city or travel through the area. For this reason, an estimate of the arrest rates based only on city residents who have been arrested (i.e., the "indigenous" arrest rate) is provided. Second, the Census systematically undercounts certain demographic groups, including Blacks.[6] Third, individuals may have multiple enforcement interactions in a given year, which potentially could result in an overestimation of the enforcement rate. For example, an individual could initially be given a summons and then arrested on a bench warrant if they failed to appear in court. This would count as two separate enforcement actions in the trends. Furthermore, multiple summonses can be issued to a person during the same stop. Despite these limitations, rates provide valuable information on enforcement activity over time, account for population changes, and allow for comparisons across demographic subgroups.

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[6] Rodney L. Terry, Laurie Schwede, Ryan King, Mandi Martinez, and Jennifer Hunter Childs Exploring Inconsistent Counts of Racial/Ethnic Minorities in a 2010 Census Ethnographic Evaluation *Bulletin of Sociological Methodology/Bulletin de Méthodologie Sociologique* Vol 135, Issue 1, pp. 32 - 49

POLICING CONTEXT

In order to understand the overall trends in enforcement activity, it is important to consider the context of policing in St. Louis. The city is part of the largest metropolitan area in the state of Missouri; however, the population has been declining over time. In 2017, the City of St. Louis had a residential population of 308,626, according to the United States Census. This is more than a 60% decline from 1950, when the population was at its peak of 856,796.

According to the Census, more than a quarter (27%) of the population lived below the poverty level in 2017 (versus 15% for the state of Missouri), and the city had an unemployment rate of 11%. St. Louis is racially diverse, with Blacks making up 48% of the population and Whites 46%. Like many U.S. cities, dimensions of race and economic inequality are intertwined with spatial segregation. Figure 1 illustrates the extent to which race and poverty coincide within the city.

Figure 1: Race and Poverty in the City of St. Louis, 2014
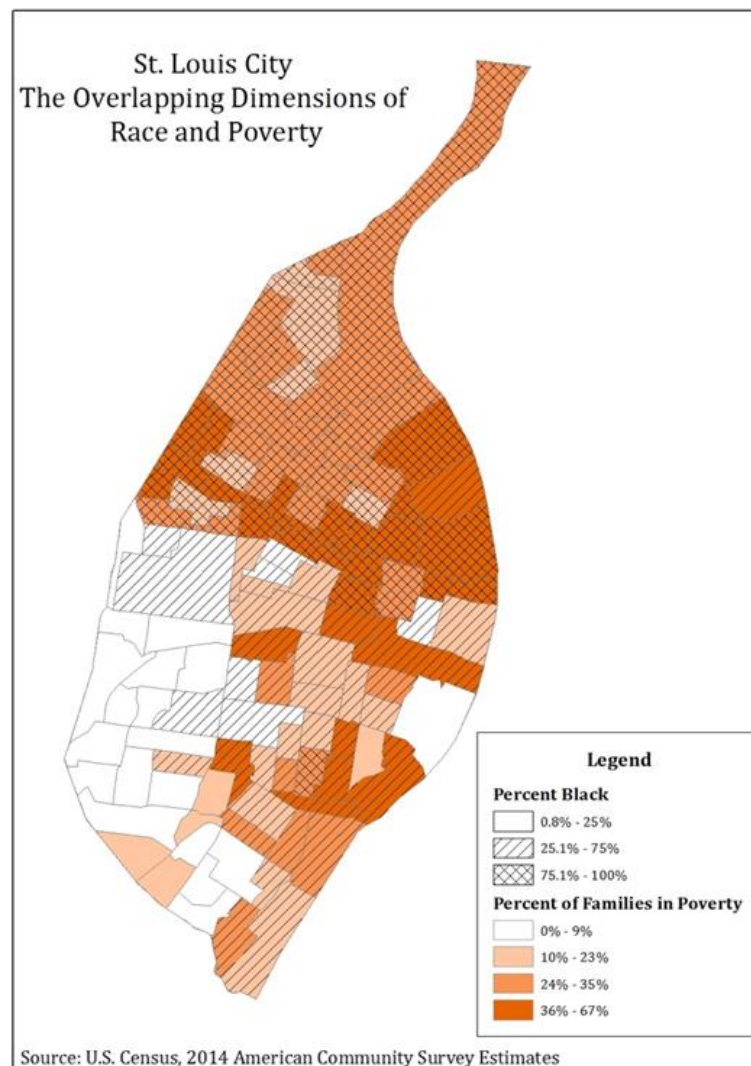
In addition to the demographic makeup of the City of St. Louis, other factors are critical for understanding enforcement practices in the area and their changes over time. Of particular importance are changes in the number of crimes in the city, organizational shifts in the SLMPD, the geographic and political context of the city, and changes to local and state statutes.

Changes in Crimes Known to the Police

Like most cities in the United States, St. Louis experienced a decline in serious non-violent crime during the period covered by this report (see Figure 2).[7] Serious non-violent crimes are defined here as burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft. From 2002 to 2017, serious non-violent crimes decreased by half from 12,161 per 100,000 residents to 6,132 per 100,000. In absolute numbers, serious non-violent crimes declined from 42,930 in 2002 to 19,095 in 2017.

Figure 2: Non-Violent and Violent Crime Rates for the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Source: FBI's Uniform Crime Report.
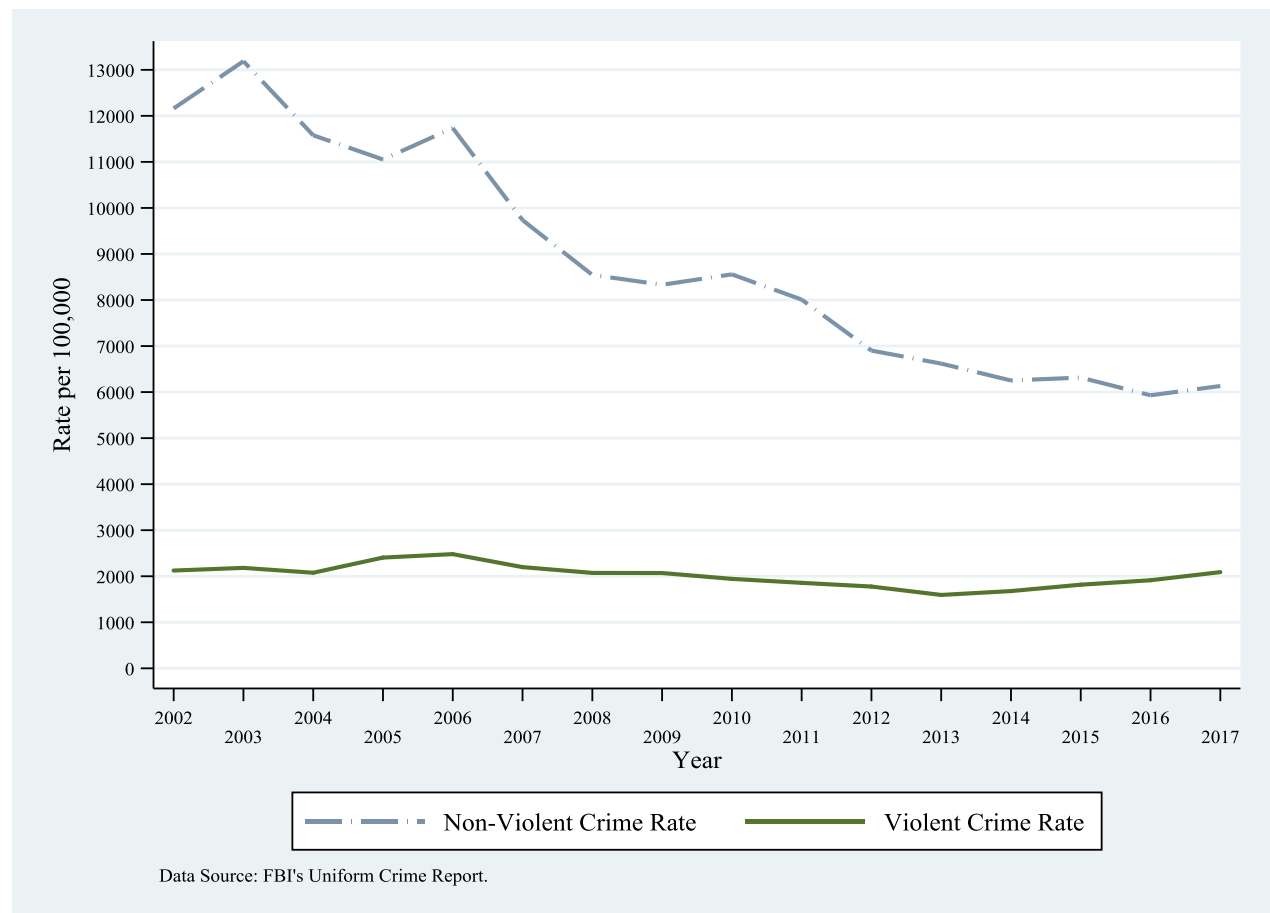
This crime drop was observed for all serious non-violent crimes (see Figure 3). Larceny, which was the most prevalent non-violent crime, declined from 7,376 crimes per 100,000 residents in

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[7] These crimes, also known as Part I Crimes or Index Crimes, are the crimes traditionally indexed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation because they are serious, relatively common, and likely to be reported to the police.

2002 to 4,166 in 2017, a decrease of 44%. During this time, the burglary rate declined 49% from 2,000 per 100,000 to 1,030. The largest percentage decrease in non-violent crime was observed for motor vehicle theft, which declined 66%, a drop from 2,786 crimes per 100,000 in 2002 to 936 in 2017.

Figure 3: Non-Violent Crime Rates by Crime Type for the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Source: FBI's Uniform Crime Report.
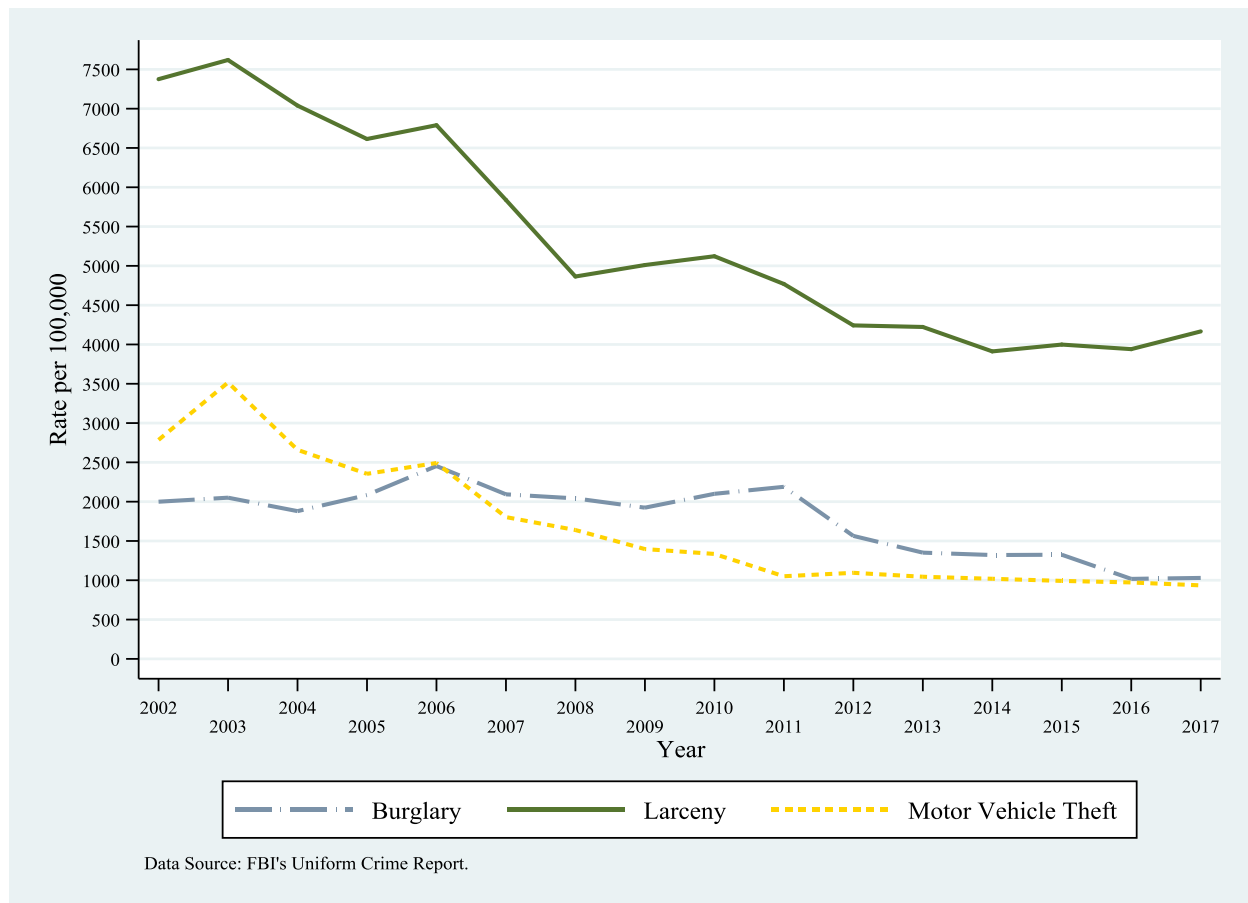
In comparison to non-violent crimes, the drop in serious violent crimes—which is composed of homicide, robbery, and aggravated assault—was 2%, declining from 2,124 crimes per 100,000 residents in 2002 to 2,090 in 2017 (see Figure 2).[8] The peak in violent crimes for this period was 2,481 crimes per 100,000 in 2006, while the low of 1,594 per 100,000 was observed in 2013. In absolute numbers, from 2002 to 2017, violent crime decreased from 7,499 to 6,509. Not all types of serious violent crimes declined, however (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Violent Crime Rates by Crime Type for the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Source: FBI's Uniform Crime Report.
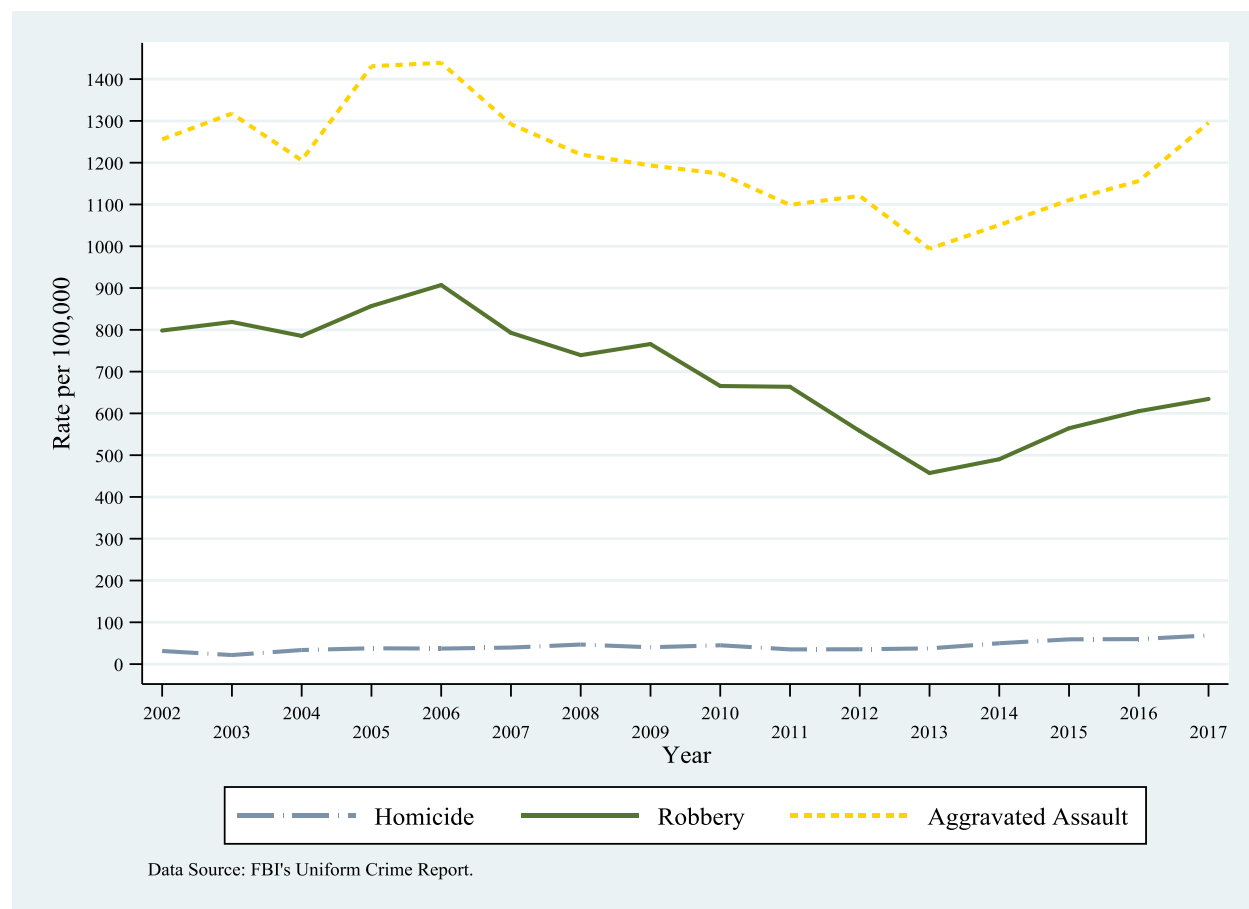
The overall decline in violence during this period was driven by a 20% decrease in robbery rates. Following the overall trend for violent crime, robbery increased from 798 per 100,000 in 2002 to 907 in 2006, then dropped to a low of 457 in 2013, before once again trending upward to 635 per 100,000 in 2017. The other two violent crimes experienced a decline early in the study period, but by 2017, had exceeded the rates observed in 2002. Aggravated assault, the most prevalent violent crime, increased 3% from 1,256 per 100,000 in 2002 to 1,296 in 2017. The homicide rate almost doubled from 2002 to 2017, increasing from 31 to 60 per 100,000, a 94% increase.

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[8] Rape is excluded from violent crime because the definition of this crime changed during the study period. In addition, the reliability of rape reports by SLMPD also fluctuated.

SLMPD Institutional and Personnel Changes

SLMPD underwent a number of changes during the study period. While it is beyond the scope of the report to detail them all, several developments and institutional changes are worth noting. Additional examples of these types of changes are detailed in Appendix A.

First, SLMPD staffing levels decreased, particularly at the rank of police officer. Figure 5 displays the number of sworn law enforcement officers at the ranks of lieutenant, sergeant, and officer for the study period. In 2002, there were 1,103 officers employed in SLMPD, but by 2017, this number had declined 17% to 910. Staffing at the supervisory ranks of lieutenant and sergeant, however, remained relatively steady. The number of sergeants declined from 214 to 201, while the number of lieutenants remained virtually unchanged, increasing slightly from 58 in 2002 to 60 in 2017. [9]

Figure 5: Trends in SLMPD Staffing Levels, 2002—2017

Data Source: SLMPD.
Note: Graph depicts staffing levels at January 1 of each year for ranks with more than 50 personnel.

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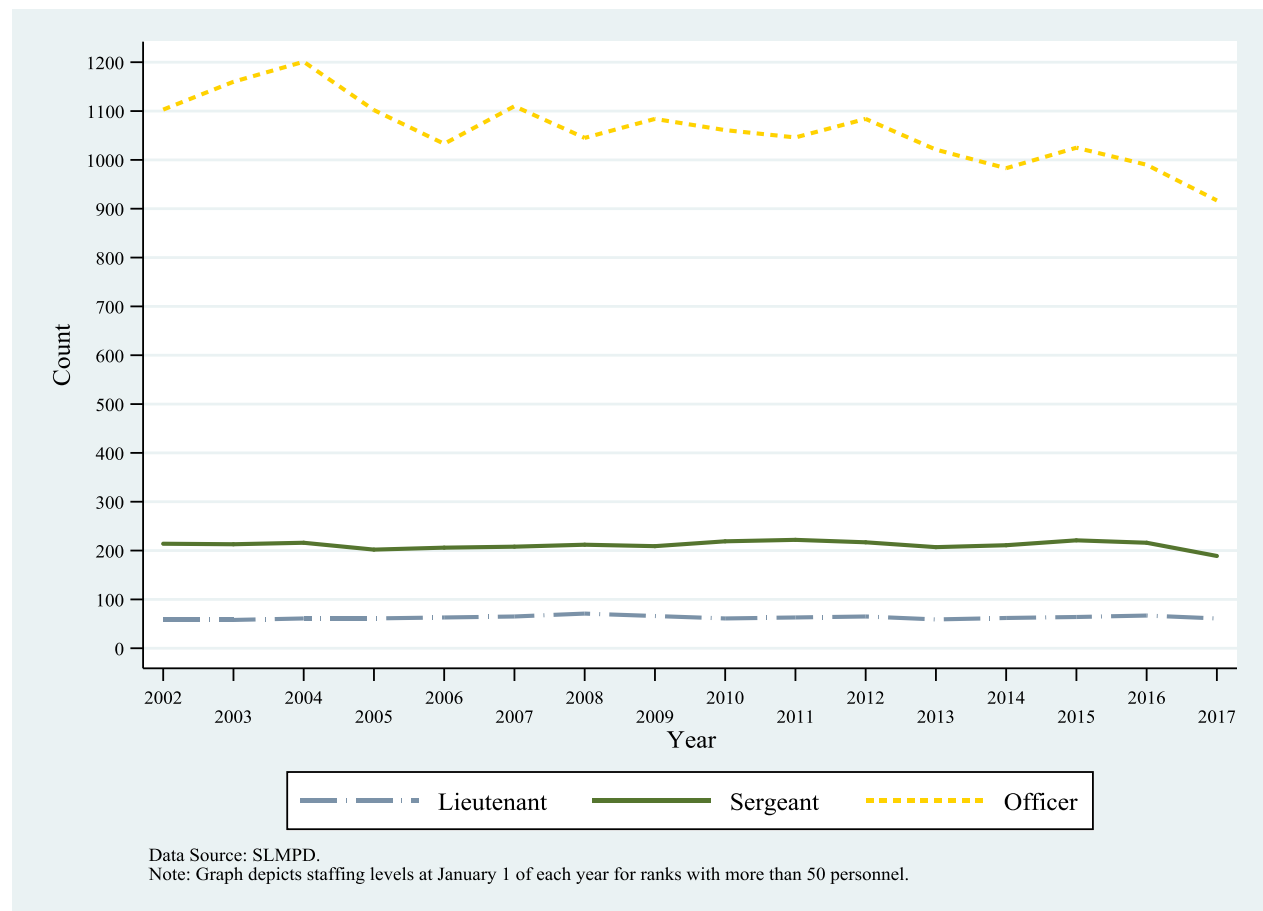
[9] The number of personnel in upper level positions is driven in part by internal promotions and the age-structure of the department.

Second, SLMPD underwent a number of organizational changes during the report period. For example, SLMPD was under state control for much of its existence, but control of the police department was shifted to the City of St. Louis in 2013, leading to a number of administrative and structural changes. In addition, in January 2014, SLMPD reduced the number of police districts from nine to six. Priorities and practices are also influenced by leadership, and four different police chiefs led the department between 2002 and 2017. Another organizational change that may have had an impact on enforcement is the initiation of weekly Compstat meetings in 2006. Compstat meetings bring together members of SLMPD leadership to review weekly crime trends and to develop a coordinated and data-driven strategy for enhancing safety. Finally, technological developments also can have an impact on enforcement trends. Examples of these types of changes can be found in Appendix A.

Geographic and Political Organization of the Community

The geography of the St. Louis region is a third and critical factor that must be considered when interpreting enforcement trends. The City of St. Louis is bordered on the north, west, and south by St. Louis County and on the east by the Mississippi River. Illinois is located just across the river. Although there is some level of coordination between the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County, they are two distinct political entities, and the city is not located within the county. The fragmentation caused by this divide has several implications for enforcement in the City of St. Louis. First, as in many urban areas, residents of outlying areas often enter the city for work, recreation, or as a byway to other locales. A non-trivial number of the people arrested in the City of St. Louis reside outside of the city, many of them in St. Louis County or in bordering Illinois municipalities. These non-residents are not included in the denominator of the enforcement and crime rates presented in this report.

Figure 6 shows the percentage of arrests for municipal violations, misdemeanors, felonies, and bench warrants in which the arrestee lived within the City of St. Louis at the time of the arrest. Over the study period, the percentage of arrests in which the arrestee lived in the city declined. In 2002, 72% of municipal and misdemeanor arrests, 74% of felony arrests, and 70% of bench warrant arrests made by SLMPD were of residents of the City of St. Louis. In 2017, city residents accounted for 66% of arrests for municipal violations, 64% of arrests for misdemeanors, 62% of arrests for felonies, and 60% of arrests for bench warrants.

Figure 6: Percentage of Arrests in which the Arrestee Resides in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Source: SLMPD for Enforcement Data.
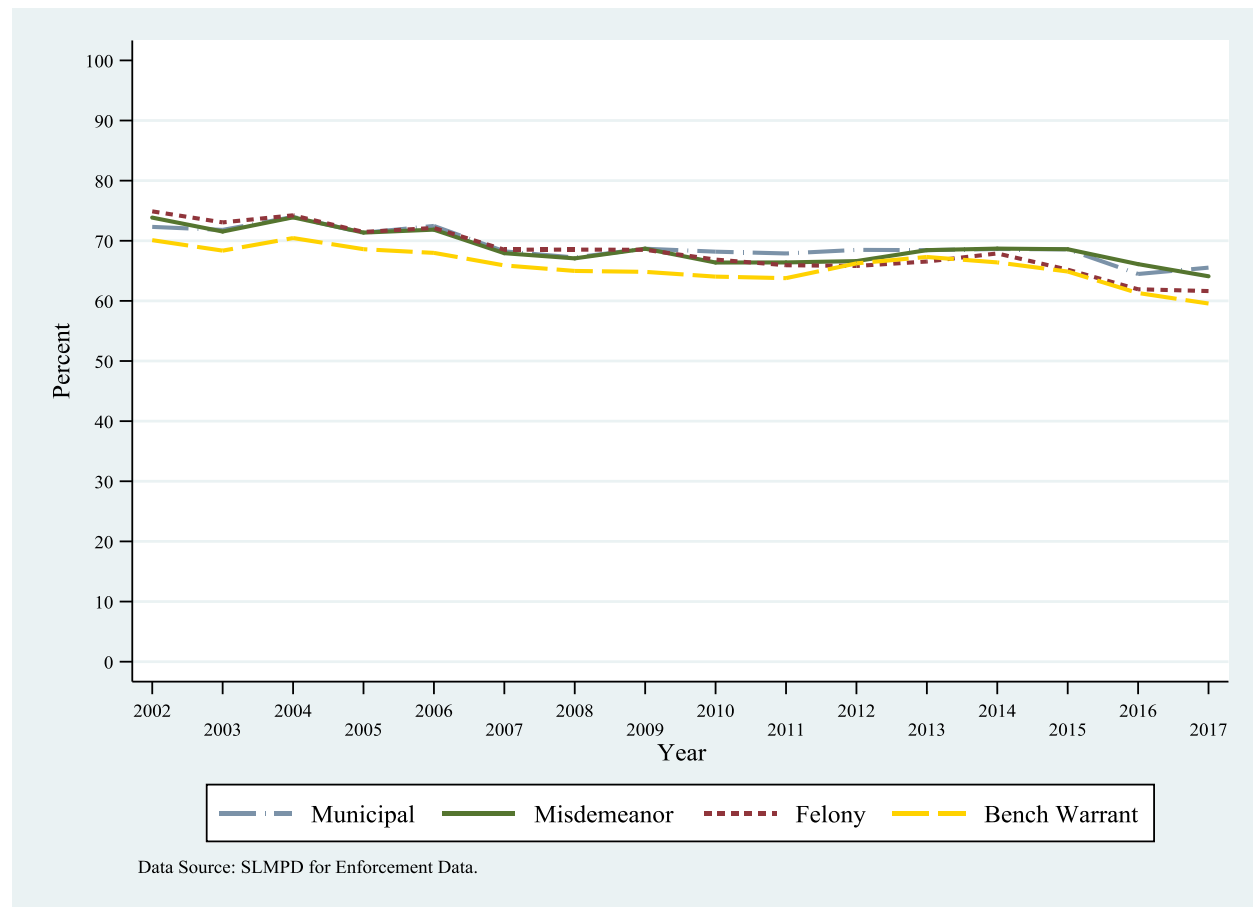
Because a large proportion of arrestees reside outside of the city and this proportion has changed over time, caution should be taken when comparing enforcement rates over time and across cities. For this reason, trends in numbers of enforcement actions are denoted in the text of the report. In addition, as a point of comparison, after presenting overall enforcement rates in St. Louis, we present the indigenous rate of arrests, which are based only on arrests of people who reside in the city (see Figure 10).

A second implication of the City-County divide is that the unique law enforcement environment of the county affects policing in the City of St. Louis. St. Louis County includes 88 distinct municipalities, many of which maintain an independent police force. The St. Louis County Police Department is responsible for unincorporated areas and has cooperative agreements with several municipalities. Many municipalities maintain a municipal court, which has the power to issue bench warrants for people who fail to appear in court. Further, per Missouri Revised Statute 575.180, police officers may face legal penalties if they fail to execute an arrest warrant. Therefore, an officer who discovers an outstanding warrant from any jurisdiction is required to arrest and detain the litigant until they can be picked up by the issuing municipality. This law has two important implications. First, many arrestees in the City of St. Louis have outstanding warrants in other municipalities. In 2002, this was true in 25% (10,571/42,698) of arrests, but by 2017 this percentage had increased to 35% (6,606/18,923). In addition, some arrests are triggered only by the existence of outstanding warrants in other municipalities. For example, in 2017, 12% (2,329/18,923) of arrests involved fugitive warrants and were not associated with any new charges or a city bench warrant. This was true for 6% (2,599/42,698) of all arrests in 2002. Second, many people with outstanding bench warrants in the city are picked up by neighboring law enforcement agencies. In these cases, the arrest itself occurs in another municipality and often is not accompanied by a new city charge. Trends in arrests for which there are no new charges and the arrestee is picked up solely on the basis of a bench warrant are referred to as bench warrant arrests in the report and are presented separately from those arrests containing at least one new charge.

Figure 7 shows the number of arrests made in the City of St. Louis in which the arrestee had an outstanding warrant in a different municipality. The top line depicts the number of arrests in which at least one charging document was a fugitive warrant, while the lower line represents the number of arrests in which the only reason for the arrest was a fugitive warrant.

Figure 7: Number of Arrests with Fugitive Warrants in the City of St. Louis, 2002 – 2017

Data Source: SLMPD
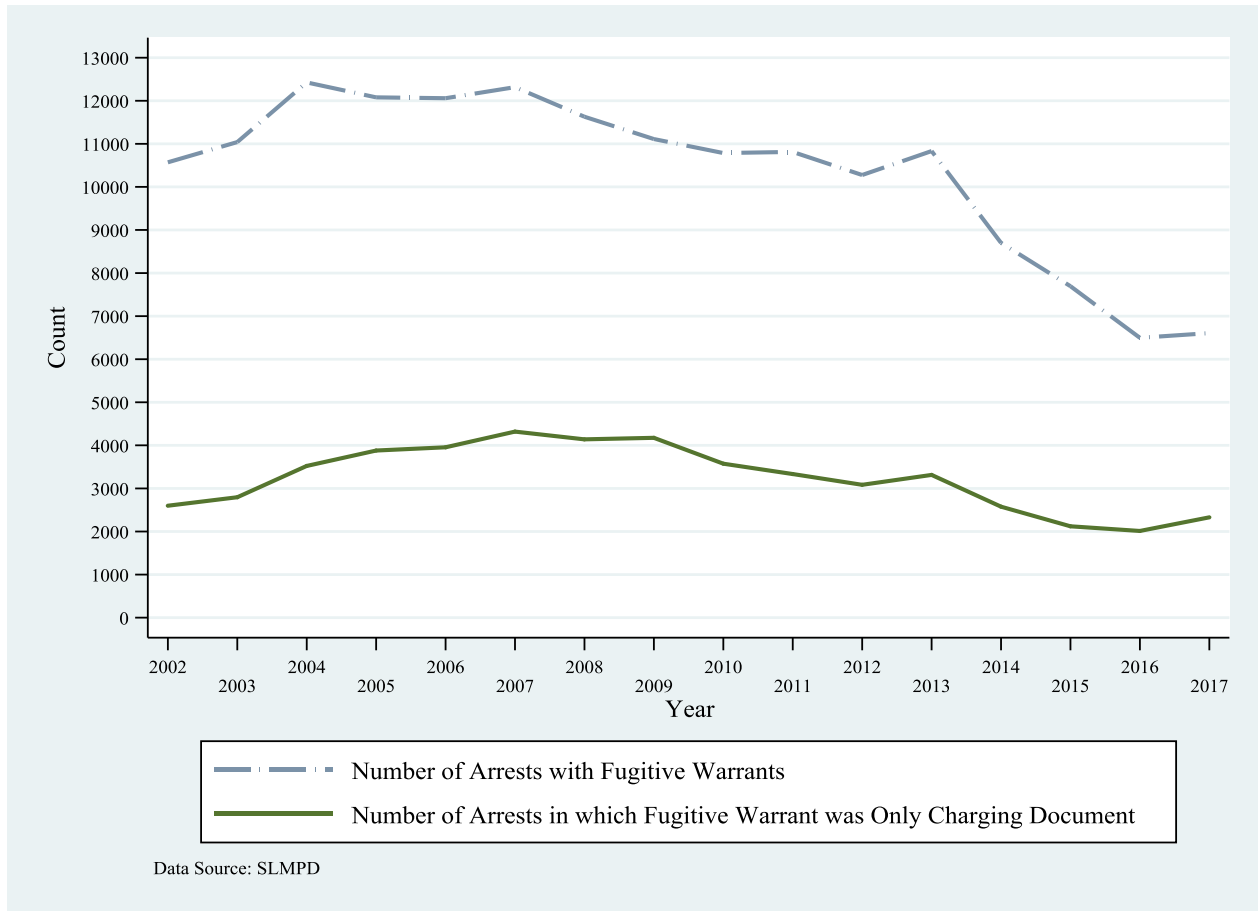
The number of arrests that involved at least one fugitive warrant was 10,571 at the beginning of the study period, peaked at 12,426 in 2004, and remained at this approximate level through 2007, after which it began a gradual decline. The number of arrests with a fugitive warrant increased slightly from 2012 to 2013, and then declined to 6,497 in 2016. In the final year of the study, 6,606 arrests involved at least one fugitive warrant.

There were fewer arrests in which a fugitive warrant was the only charging document. These arrests started the reporting period at 2,599, increased to a peak of 4,320 in 2007, and then, with the exception of 2013, gradually declined to a low of 2,013 in 2016. The number of arrests in which a fugitive warrant was the only charge increased in 2017 to 2,329.

Legal Changes

Missouri has been featured prominently in recent discussions of criminal justice reform following the August 9, 2014 police shooting death of Michael Brown, a young Black male resident of Ferguson, Missouri located in St. Louis County. The shooting sparked protests for months throughout the region and nation. The city of Ferguson was subject to a Department of Justice investigation that documented racial bias in municipal court and police practices in the region. The Ferguson Commission was also established in the wake of the event, with the goals of investigating problematic practices in the community as described by community members and providing a blueprint for reforms. The Department of Justice Report and the Report of the Ferguson Commission document the aggressive law enforcement practices of several communities in St. Louis County.[10] The report also describes the use of arrest warrants for missed court appearances for non-serious violations and notes that Blacks were disproportionately stopped and given citations for various traffic and ordinance offenses.

Several legislative changes were made in the wake of Ferguson. The most prominent of these changes was the passage of Senate Bill 5 (SB5), which was enacted and signed by Governor Nixon in July 2015. SB5 introduced a number of revisions to statutes. For example, it required the adoption of improved data systems in the municipal courts and enhanced training for police agencies and it limited the percentage of municipal revenue that can be derived from moving violations. The legislature also imposed limits to the total fines that can be levied for minor traffic violations ($225) and prohibited confinement for these violations or for failure to pay fines (RSMO 479.353). Individuals who do not appear for a court date can still be arrested, but an additional "failure to appear" charge cannot be added as an offense. Under the provisions of SB5, individuals still face the prospect of jail time within multiple municipalities for minor offenses.

Other legal changes also have taken place during the study period that are likely to have an impact on arrest and summons rates. While it is not possible to describe all these changes here or to assess their effect on enforcement activity, several revisions to the law worth noting are documented in Appendix A.

Summary

Law enforcement actions are shaped by the context in which the police operate. In this section of the report, we highlighted several factors related to the structure and organization of SLMPD and the broader policing environment in the City of St. Louis that should be considered when interpreting trends in enforcement actions. These include changes in crime rates, city demographic characteristics, declines in the number of officers employed by SLMPD as well as organizational shifts within the agency, the City-County Divide, and statutory changes following the killing of Michael Brown.

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[10] The Depart of Justice report can be found at https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/press-releases/attachments/2015/03/04/ferguson_police_department_report.pdf and the report written by the Ferguson Commission is available at https://forwardthroughferguson.org/report/executive-summary/.

The remainder of the report presents trends in the number of enforcement actions and enforcement rates from 2002 to 2017. Overall enforcement rates are followed by the rates for summonses and custodial arrests for municipal violations, misdemeanors, felonies, and bench warrants. Trends are presented for the total population, and then separately by race, gender, and age. Next, trends are separated by specific charge group. Finally, trends in felony enforcement by the number of felony crimes are shown.

NUMBERS AND RATES FOR ENFORCEMENT: OVERALL

Figure 8 shows the combined number of enforcement actions in the City of St. Louis. This figure documents trends in the number of criminal summonses and custodial arrests for municipal violations, misdemeanors, felonies, and bench warrants. It also includes information on traffic citations, which are excluded from the rest of the report because information on sex and age are not available.

Figure 8: Number of Enforcement Actions in the City of St. Louis Including Traffic Citations, 2002 – 2017

Data Sources: SLMPD and Missouri Attorney General Vehicle Stop Report for Traffic Stop Citations
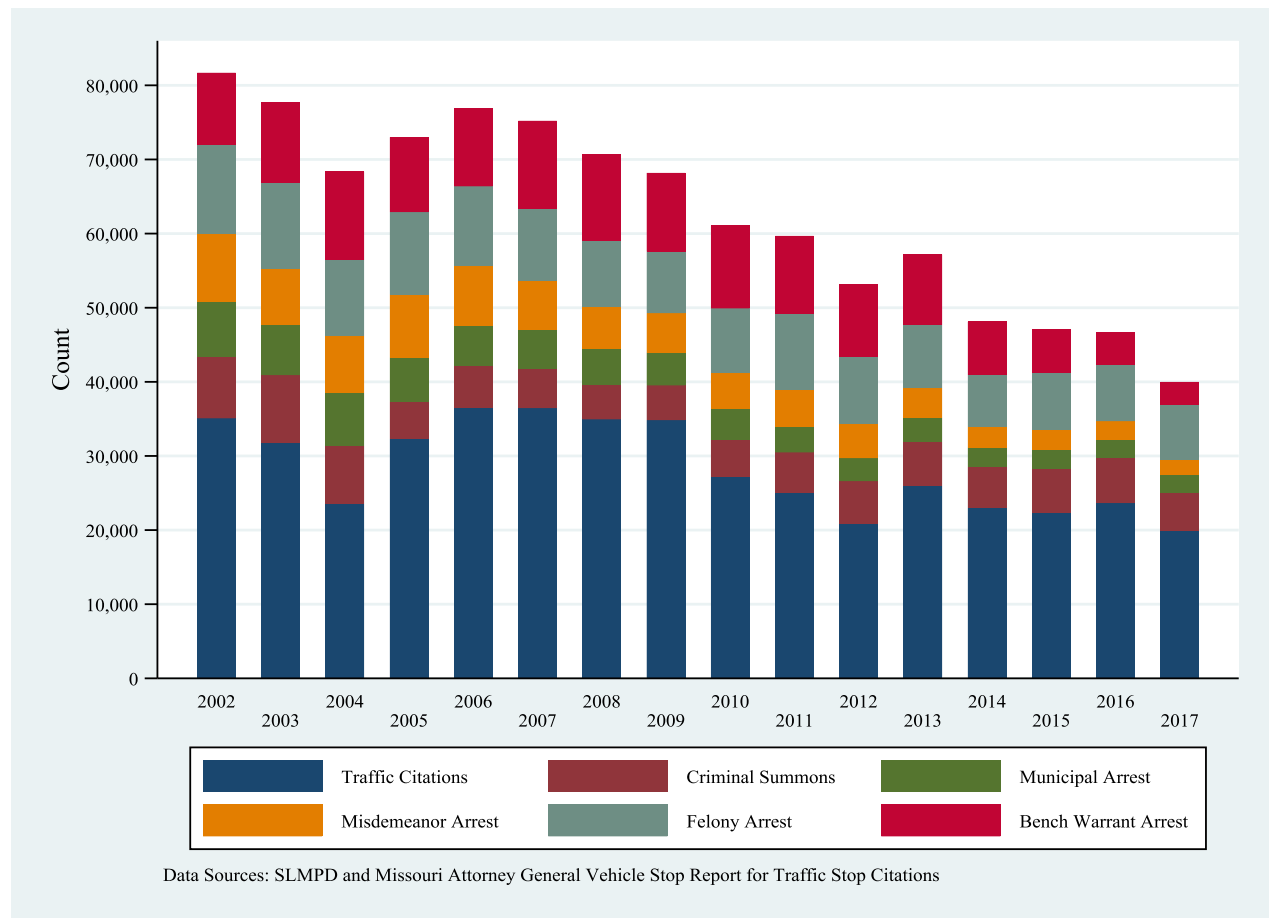
The combined number of enforcement actions was highest in 2002 with 81,691 violations. Enforcement actions declined until reaching 68,346 in 2004, and then increased for the next two years, reaching a second, lower peak in 2006 of 76,862. After 2006, the general trend was one of decline, with the exception of a small increase in 2013. By the end of the study period, combined enforcement actions were at their lowest level, 39,987. In 2017, there were 41,704 fewer cumulative enforcement actions than in 2002, a reduction of just over 50%.

Figure 8 also provides information on the number and relative contribution of summonses, arrests, and traffic citations to the combined number of enforcement actions. Traffic citations accounted for the greatest percentage of enforcement actions during the study period, ranging from a low of 34% of the combined number of enforcement actions in 2004 to a high of 51% in 2009 and 2016. The number of traffic citations at the beginning of the study period was 35,085, dropped to 23,548 in 2004, and then reached its peak of 36,527 in 2006. Traffic citations then declined and reached a low of 19,921 in 2017.

More detailed information is provided about summonses and custodial arrests in Figure 9. Here we only describe their relative contribution to the combined number of enforcement actions.

Municipal arrests accounted for between 6% and 10% of the combined enforcement actions during the study period, with the percentage generally declining over time. Misdemeanor arrests followed a similar trend, but had a larger range, dropping from a high of 12% in 2005 to a low of 5% in 2016 and 2017.

Felony arrests accounted for their greatest percentage of enforcement actions at the beginning and end of the study period, comprising 15% of enforcement actions in 2002, declining to 12% in 2009, then ending the study period at a high of 19%.

Bench warrant arrests fluctuated from year-to-year, but were most prevalent from 2010 through 2012, when they made up 18% of enforcement actions. After this period, arrests for bench warrants dropped sharply, and they accounted for 7% of enforcement actions in 2017.

Criminal summonses were relatively prevalent at the beginning of the study period, accounting for between 10% and 12% of all enforcement actions during the first three years of the study. In 2005, summonses dropped to 7% of the combined enforcement actions and remained at this level through 2009, before climbing to 13% in 2015. After 2015, the percentage of enforcement actions that were summonses stayed relatively steady through the end of the study period.

Figure 9 displays the combined enforcement rate for St. Louis as well as the rates of enforcement by type. The combined enforcement rate was computed by summing the number criminal summonses and all four types of custodial arrests. Because vehicle stop data are not available by gender and age, they are not included in the combined enforcement rate and are not described in the remainder of the report.

Figure 9: Enforcement Rates in St. Louis City, 2002 – 2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
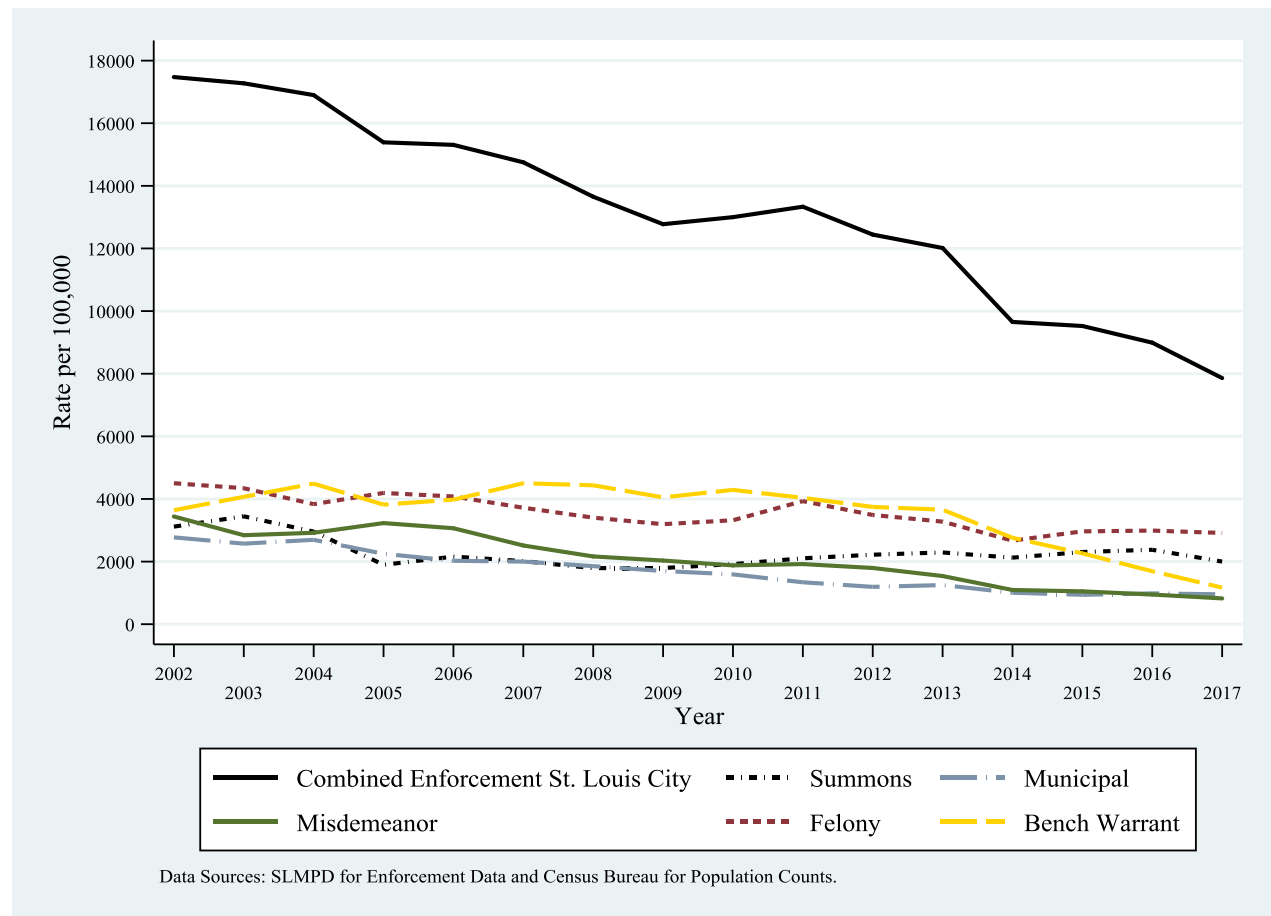
The combined enforcement rate began the study period at a high of 17,474 enforcement actions per 100,000 persons and ended the study period at a low of 7,862. This 55% decrease in the enforcement rate represents a decline in the absolute number of arrests from 46,606 to 20,066. For the most part, the rate declined or remained relatively steady from year-to-year. The greatest one-year decline was from 2013 to 2014 when the enforcement rate dropped 20% from 12,015 to 9,654 arrests per 100,000.

For much of the study period, arrests rates were highest for felonies and bench warrants; however, in 2013 bench warrant arrests began a sharp decline that extended through 2017. Trends in the other three types of enforcement overlap, although for most of the study period,

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municipal violations had the lowest rate of arrest. Notably, all types of enforcement action fell from 2002 to 2017.

From 2002 to 2017, the custodial arrest rate for municipal violations decreased by approximately two-thirds. The highest rate of municipal arrests was observed in 2002, when there were 2,773 arrests per 100,000 persons. The rate then declined to 2,573 in 2003 per 100,000, before increasing slightly to 2,695 in 2004. After 2004, there was a steady drop in arrests for municipal violations until arrest rates reached their low of 940 per 100,000 in 2014. Municipal arrests then plateaued, ending the study period at 955 arrests per 100,000. In absolute numbers, there were 4,960 fewer arrests for municipal violations in 2017 as compared to 2002 (2,437 vs. 7397).

The overall decline for misdemeanors was even more pronounced, dropping from 3,441 per 100,000 in 2002 to 824 per 100,000 in 2017, a decrease of 76%. During this same period, the number of misdemeanor arrests fell from 9,178 to 2,103. Declines were not observed for every year, however. For example, after an initial decrease from 2002 to 2003, misdemeanor arrests increased in 2004 and then again in 2005. It was only after 2005 that misdemeanor arrests maintained a relatively steady decline.

The felony arrest rate decreased by 35% from 2002 to 2017, but the trend was more variable than was observed for municipal or misdemeanor violations. The maximum rate of felony arrests—4,502 arrests per 100,000, which corresponds to 12,007 arrests—was observed in 2002. Felony arrests declined to 3,834 per 100,000 in 2004, before increasing to 4,192 per 100,000 in 2005. Arrests for felonies then dropped to 3,195 per 100,000 in 2009, after which they climbed to 3,932 per 100,000 in 2011. Subsequently, felony arrests dropped again, reaching a low point in 2014 at 2,669 per 100,000 persons. After increasing to 2,966 per 100,000 in 2015, felony arrests remained relatively steady until ending the reporting period at 2,914 per 100,000, or, in absolute numbers, 7,437 arrests.

The trend for bench warrants also was highly variable between 2002 and 2010, with peaks in 2004, 2007, and 2010. In 2007, the arrest rate for bench warrants reached a maximum of 4,503 per 100,000 persons. After 2010, the rate declined gradually until 2013, when the rate dropped more sharply, reaching a low of 1,170 arrests per 100,000 in 2017. Notably, bench warrant arrests were the most common type of enforcement activity for most of the study period; however, between 2002 and 2017, they declined by 68%, ending the study period at levels comparable to those observed for misdemeanors and municipal violations. In absolute numbers, there were 9,711 arrests for bench warrants in 2002 and 2,985 in 2017, an overall decrease of 6,726 arrests.

In 2002, criminal summonses were issued at a rate of 3,117 per 100,000 persons; this represents 8,313 citations issued. The issuance rate then increased to its peak of 3,446 in 2003 (9,163 citations), before declining sharply to a rate of 1,897 per 100,000 in 2005. The summons rate remained relatively steady from 2005 to 2010, and then began a gradual and steady upward trend until 2016 when it reached 2,378 per 100,000 persons. From 2016 to 2017, the summons rate declined, and at the end of the study period there were 2,000 per 100,000 persons (5,102 citations were issued). Overall, the criminal summons rate declined 36% during the study period.

INDIGENOUS ARREST RATES

Figure 10 presents the arrest trends for municipal violations, misdemeanors, felonies, and bench warrants when only arrests of people who reside in the city are used to compute the rates.

Figure 10: Indigenous Arrest Rates by Type in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
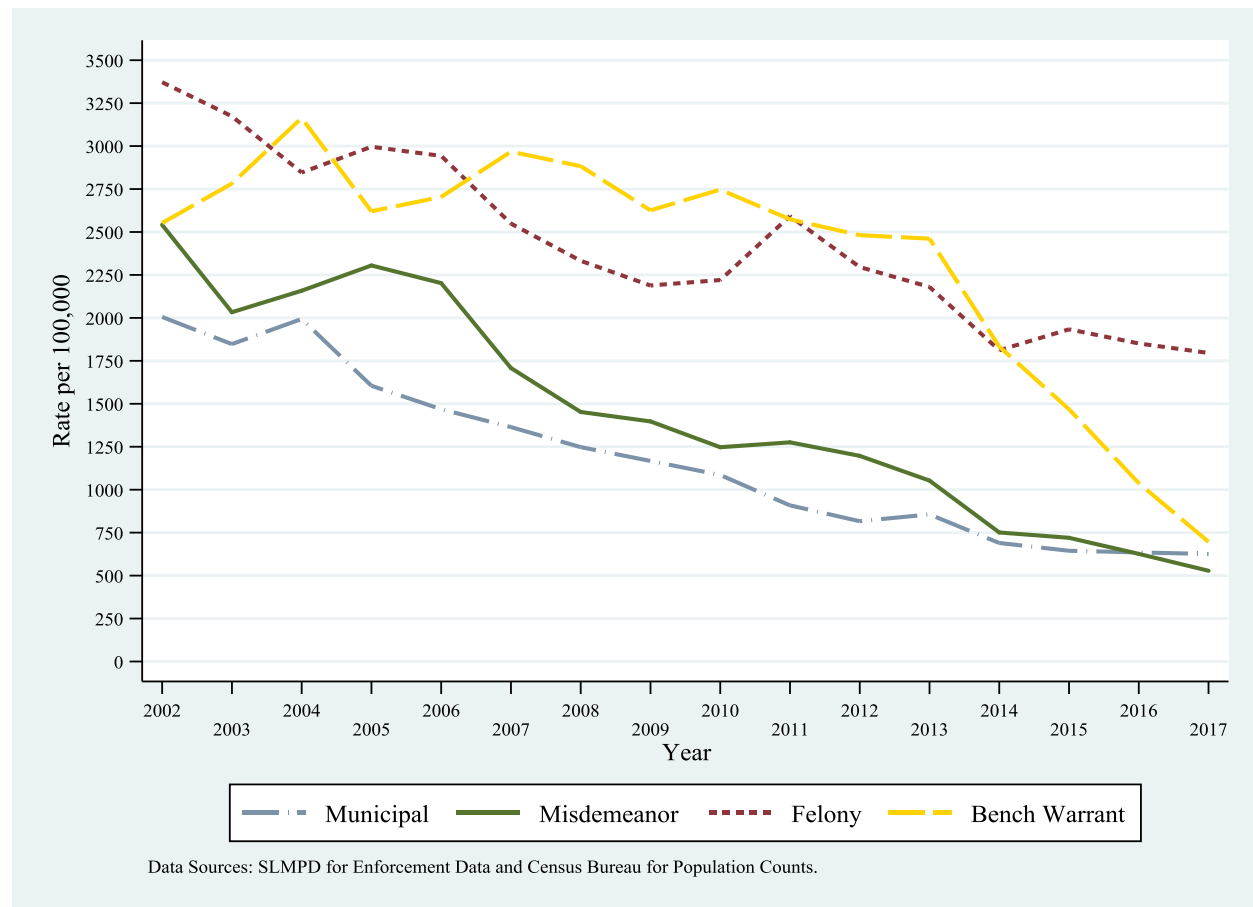
While the directions of the trends generally mirror those that include all arrests (see Figure 9), the rates of arrest were lower when only arrests of St. Louis City residents were included. These numbers highlight the extent to which enforcement rates may be inflated when non-residents are included and the extent to which this inflation is higher in more recent years.

In 2002, when the rate of arrests for municipal violations was at its peak, there were 2,006 arrests of St. Louis City residents per 100,000 persons. The comparable rate when non-city residents were included was 38% higher at 2,773 municipal arrests per 100,000. In 2017, the total municipal arrest rate (955 per 100,000) was 53% higher than the indigenous municipal arrest rate (626 per 100,000).

A similar picture emerges for misdemeanors. In 2002, there were 2,541 misdemeanor arrests of city residents per 100,000 and 3,441 per 100,000 when non-city residents were included, a difference of 35%. In 2017, the misdemeanor arrest rate is 56% higher when comparing the total rate (824 per 100,000) to the indigenous rate (528 per 100,000).

The difference for felony arrests in 2002 was similar, with an indigenous rate of 3,372 per 100,000 versus a total arrest rate of 4,502 per 100,000 (a 34% difference). In 2017, the felony arrest rate excluding non-city residents was 1,796 per 100,000, while the rate including arrests of those who live outside the city was 62% higher at 2,914.

In 2002, there were 2,553 bench warrant arrests of city residents per 100,000 persons versus 3,641 when non-city residents were included in the rate. This is a difference of 43%. The data for 2017 indicate that city residents were arrested for bench warrants at a rate of 697 per 100,000 persons. The bench warrant arrest rate was 68% higher (1,170 per 100,000) when non-city residents were included.

ENFORCEMENT TRENDS BY SEX

The figures in this section present the trends in enforcement by sex. Combined enforcement rates are first presented to facilitate comparisons in the levels of enforcement rates between males and females. Trends in enforcement rates by type of action are then displayed separately for males and females to highlight changes in enforcement rates over time. Finally, the ratios of male-to-female enforcement rates are depicted to illustrate sex differences in the rates of specific types of enforcement actions.

Combined Enforcement Rates by Sex

Figure 11 shows the combined enforcement rate for the City of St. Louis and the combined rate disaggregated by sex.

Figure 11: Combined Enforcement Rates by Sex in the City of St. Louis, 2002 – 2017
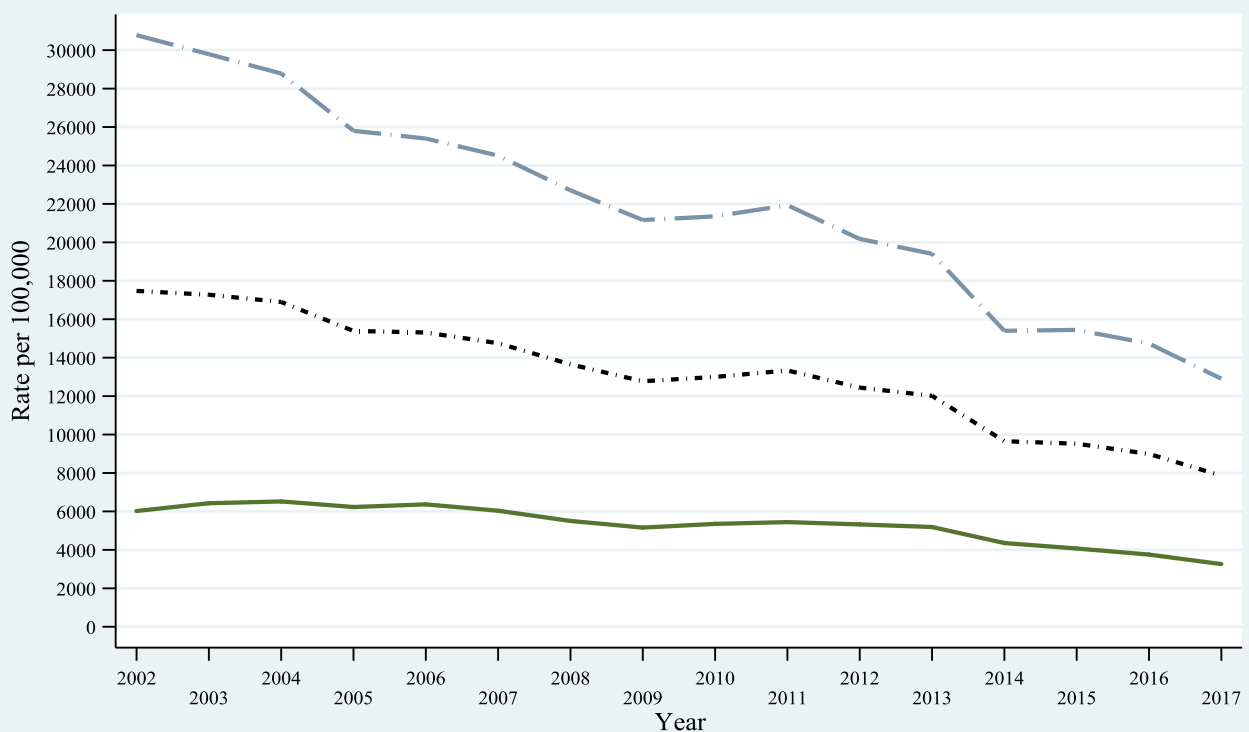
Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.

Figure 11 shows that throughout the study period, the male enforcement rate was higher than the combined enforcement rate for St. Louis while the female rate was lower. Rates of enforcement for both groups declined from 2002 to 2017. For males, the enforcement rate declined from 30,782 per 100,000 in 2002 to 12,908 in 2017. In comparison, the female enforcement rate dropped from 6,023 per 100,000 in 2002 to 3,262 in 2017. The percentage drop for males (58%) was slightly higher than that observed for the city population as a whole (55%), while a more modest decline was observed for females (46%). Although there were still significant differences in the rates of enforcement by sex in 2017, these differences were smaller than those observed in 2002. Specifically, in 2002, there were approximately 5 enforcement actions levied against males for every one action taken against a female, but by 2017, this ratio had decreased to 4 to 1. When considered in absolute terms, the number of enforcement actions for males declined from 37,971 in 2002 to 15,706 in 2017. The corresponding drop for females was from 8,635 to 4,356.

In Figures 12 and 13, rates for criminal summonses and custodial arrests are displayed separately for females and males. These graphs do not share a common metric on the vertical axis, and instead are scaled to better display changes over time in different types of enforcement actions.

Male Enforcement Rates

Figure 12: Enforcement Rates by Type for Males in the City of St. Louis, 2002 – 2017
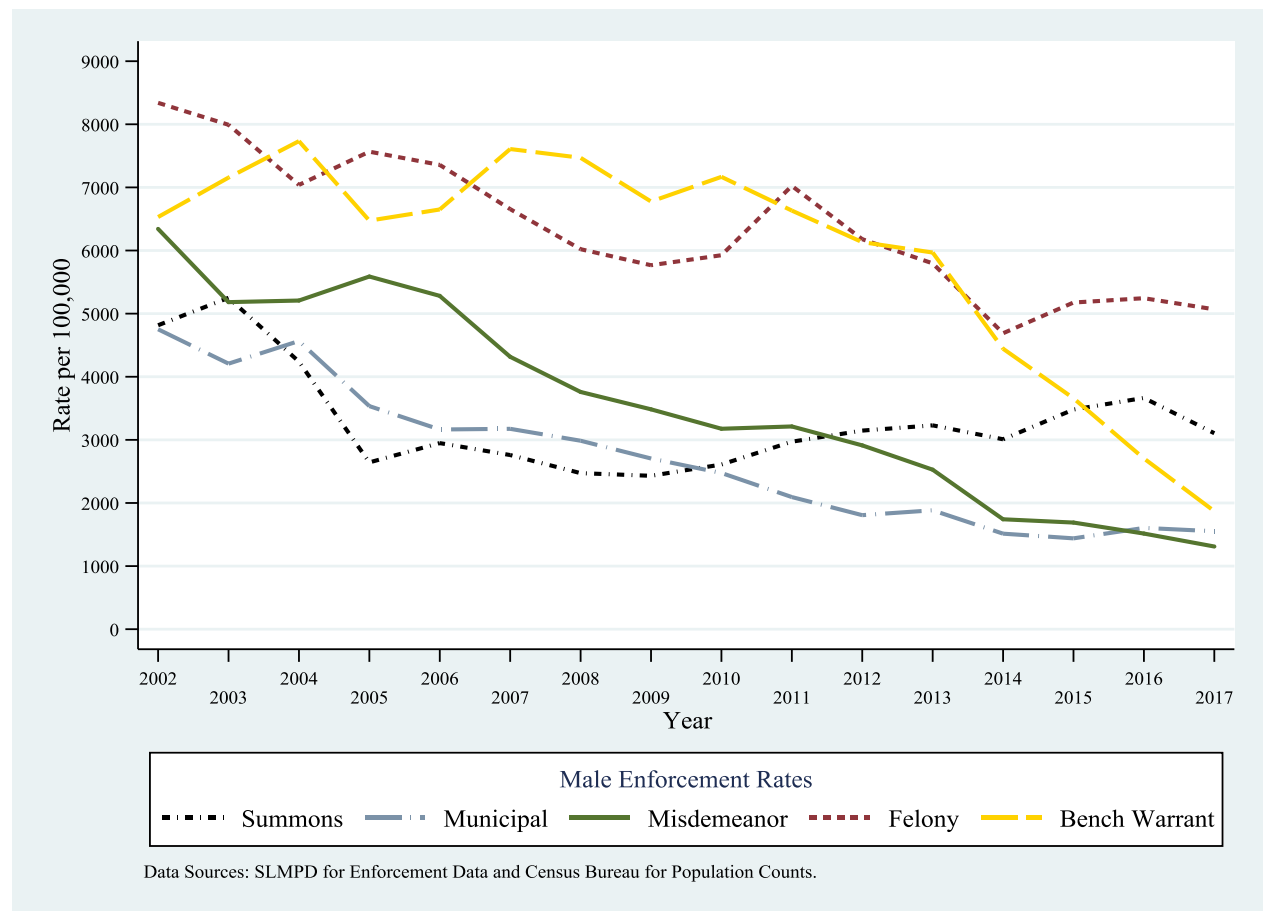
As depicted in Figure 12, all five types of enforcement actions decreased over the study period for males. In 2002, males were arrested at a rate of 4,752 per 100,000 for municipal violations. This rate declined to 4,208 per 100,000 in the following year before again climbing to 4,566 per 100,000 in 2004. After 2004, the rate at which males were arrested for municipal violations generally declined, reaching a low of 1,440 per 100,000 in 2015. From 2015 to 2016, the male arrest rate for this type of offense increased slightly to 1,605 per 100,000, before declining again to 1,553 per 100,000 in 2017. From 2002 to 2017, the male arrest rate for municipal violations declined 67% and the absolute number of arrests decreased from 5,862 to 1,890.

The decline in the male misdemeanor arrest rate was even larger. From 2002 to 2017, the misdemeanor arrest rate for males dropped by 79%, and the number of misdemeanor arrests decreased from 7,824 to 1,595. The misdemeanor arrest rate for males began the period at 6,343 per 100,000 in 2002, before declining to 5,182 in 2003. The rates again increased, reaching 5,588 per 100,000 in 2005, and then fell to 3,176 per 100,000 in 2010. After a slight increase to 3,213 per 100,000 in 2011, the male misdemeanor arrest rate continued to decline, reaching a low of 1,311 per 100,000 in 2017.

Felony arrest rates also declined for males, falling by 39% from 2002 to 2017. From 2002 to 2004, the male felony arrest rate dropped from a high of 8,340 per 100,000 to 7,040. After briefly increasing to 7,566 per 100,000 in 2005, male felony arrests again began to decline until they hit 5,768 per 100,000 in 2009. Male arrest rates for felonies then rose until 2011, when they reached a rate of 7,024 arrests per 100,000. Subsequently, felony arrests declined to an overall low for the study period of 4,690 per 100,000 in 2014. From there, the male felony arrest rate increased once again, climbing to 5,245 per 100,000 in 2016, before ending the study period at 5,069 per 100,000 in 2017. When viewed in absolute terms, the number of felony arrests of males decreased by 4,120 from 2002 to 2017 (from 10,288 in 2002 to 6,168 in 2017).

Male rates of arrest for bench warrants fluctuated at a relatively high level from 2002 to 2010, ranging from a high of 7,733 arrests per 100,000 in 2004 to a low of 6,474 in 2005. From 2010 to 2013, the male bench warrant arrest rate declined gradually, and then underwent a sharp and sustained decrease until the end of the study period, when it reached a low of 1,870 arrests per 100,000 in 2017. From 2002 to 2017, the rate at which males were arrested for bench warrants declined 71%, with most of the decline occurring after 2010. The number of bench warrant arrests for males declined from 8,056 arrests in 2002 to 2,276 in 2017, a reduction of 5,780 arrests.

Summonses were issued to males at a rate of 4,816 per 100,000 in 2002, increased to a peak of 5,251 in 2003, and then declined sharply to 2,643 per 100,000 in 2005. From 2005 to 2011, summons rates for males were relatively steady fluctuating between 2,430 and 2,971 per 100,000. In 2009, summons activity began a gradual climb, reaching 3,664 per 100,000 in 2016. There was then a slight decline in the rate at which summonses were issued to males to 3,104 per 100,000 in 2017. From 2002 to 2017, the male summons rate declined 36% and the number of summonses issued to males decreased from 5,941 in 2002 to 3,779 in 2017, a decrease of 2,162.

As illustrated in Figure 13, the arrest rates for females were lower than those of males for all types of enforcement actions for all years. Bench warrants arrests and criminal summonses were the two most prevalent forms of enforcement action taken against females. This differs from males for whom felonies, not criminal summonses, were among the most common forms of enforcement. Similar to males, arrests for municipal violations and misdemeanors were the least common types of enforcement activity. For females, all types of enforcement actions declined over the study period.

Figure 13: Enforcement Rates by Type for Females in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Female Enforcement Rates

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
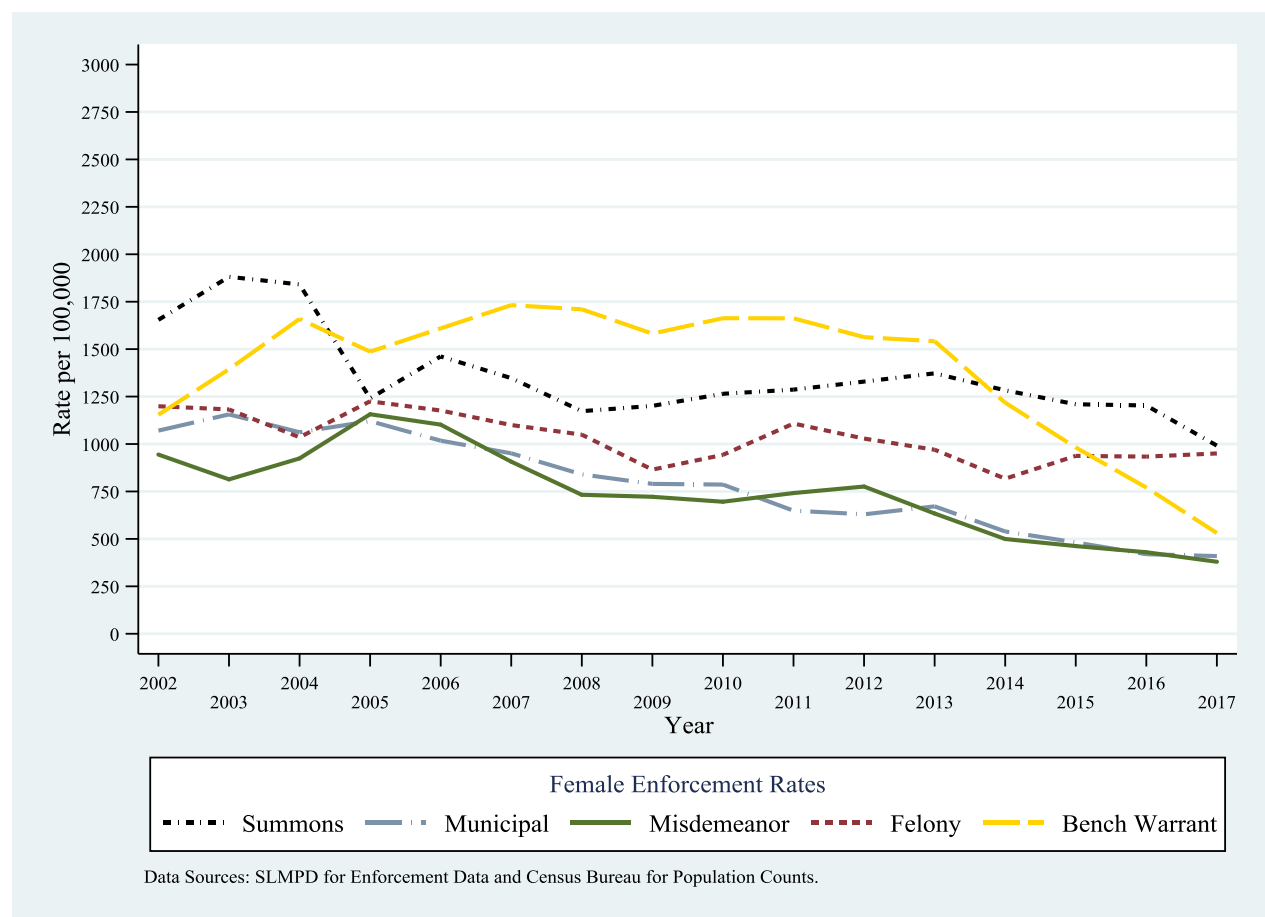
As displayed in Figure 13, the female arrest rate for municipal violations began at 1,071 per 100,000 in 2002, increased slightly to reach a high in 2003 of 1,156 per 100,000, and then declined to a low of 410 per 100,000 in 2017. The rate of municipal arrests for women fell 62% between 2002 and 2017, and the number of arrests decreased from 1,535 to 547.

The female arrest rate for misdemeanors declined 60% from 2002 to 2017, although the trend varied, with rates increasing slightly in some years. The female arrest rate for misdemeanors

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began the study period at 944 per 100,000, decreased to 814 per 100,000 the following year, and then increased until 2005, hitting its peak of 1,157 per 100,000. The rate then fell to 732 per 100,000 in 2008, and it remained relatively steady until 2012, when it again began to decline, reaching a low of 380 per 100,000 in 2017. Over the study period, the number of females arrested for misdemeanor violations dropped by 847 arrests, from 1,354 to 507.

The percent decline in the felony arrest rate for females—21%—was not as large as that observed for less serious offenses. The female felony arrest rate fell from 1,199 per 100,000 in 2002 to 1,036 per 100,000 in 2004, and then increased, peaking in 2005 at a rate of 1,225 arrests per 100,000. Declines were then observed until 2009, when the female arrest rate for felonies dropped to 865 per 100,000. From there, the arrest rate once again climbed, reaching 1,108 per 100,000 in 2011, before bottoming out at 817 per 100,000 in 2014. Between 2015 and 2017, the female felony arrest rate remained relatively steady and fluctuated between 934 per 100,000 and 950. In terms of absolute numbers, felony arrests of females declined from 1,719 in 2002 to 1,269 in 2017.

The rate at which females were arrested for bench warrants began the study period relatively low at 1,154 per 100,000. The rate then increased, reaching 1,659 per 100,000 in 2004, and from 2004 to 2013, it fluctuated between 1,732 and 1,487 arrests per 100,000. After 2013, bench warrant arrests declined substantially until reaching a low of 531 per 100,000 in 2017. From 2002 to 2017, the rate at which females were arrested for bench warrants declined by 54%. The number of arrests of females for bench warrants was 1,655 in 2002, peaked in 2007 at 2,404, and ended in 2017 at a low of 709 arrests.

From 2002 to 2004, summonses were the highest volume enforcement action for females. The rate of summonses issued to females in 2002 was 1,655 per 100,000; it peaked at 1,881 in 2003, and then declined slightly to 1,841 in 2004. As was the case for males, the summons rate for females fell sharply in 2005 to 1,241 per 100,000. It then increased to 1,462 per 100,000 in 2006. The rate at which summonses were issued to females declined again until 2008, when it began a slow and steady climb to a third, but lower, peak of 1,372 in 2013. From this point forward, the female summons rate generally declined, reaching a low of 992 in 2017, a 40% decrease from 2002. The number of summonses issued to females dropped from 2,372 to 1,324 during the study period.

Ratio of Male-to-Female Enforcement Rates by Type

To facilitate cross-sex comparisons in specific types of enforcement actions, in Figure 14 we present the ratio of the male-to-female enforcement rates for each type of action.

Figure 14: Ratio of Male-to-Female Enforcement Rates in the City of St. Louis, 2002 – 2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
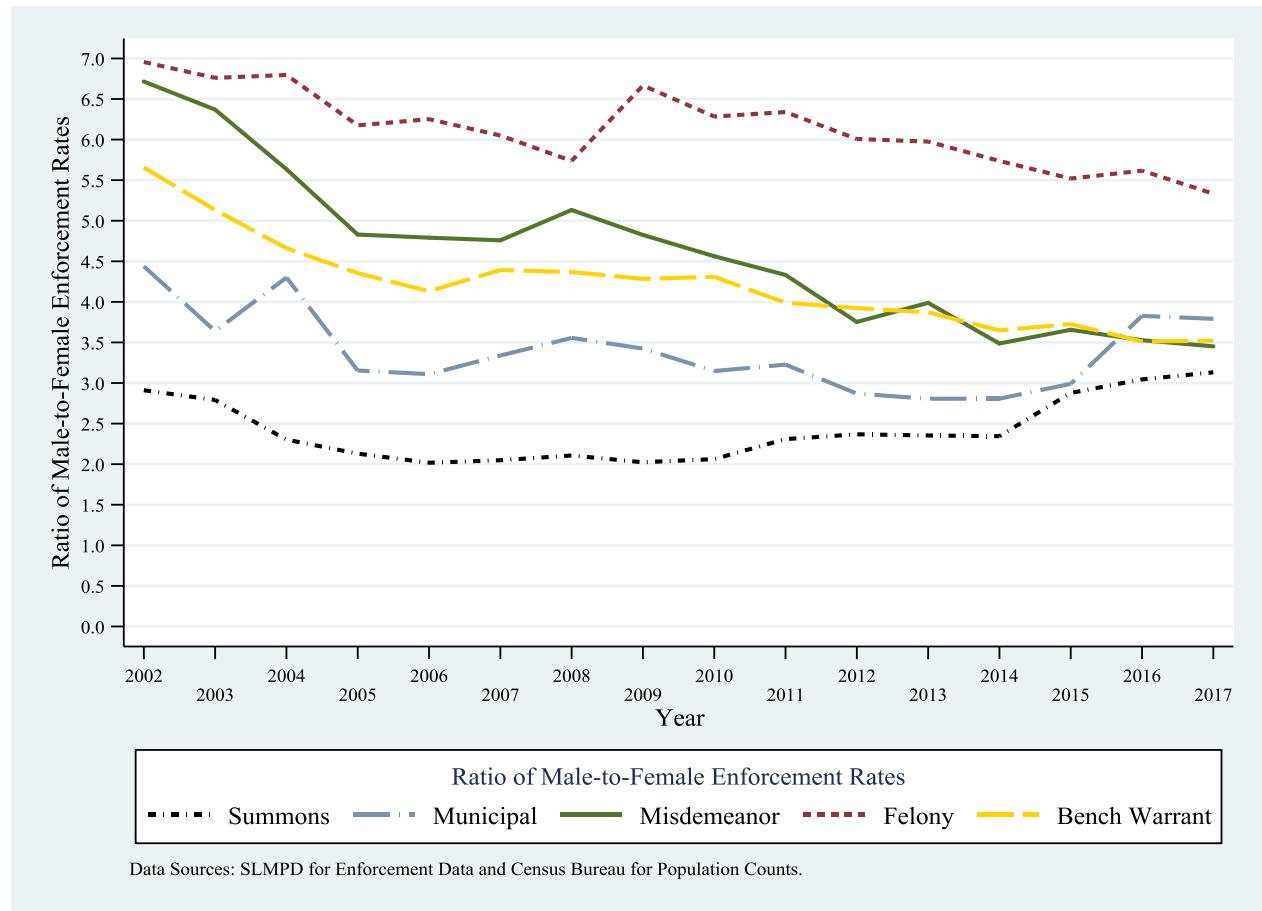
A few notable patterns emerge in Figure 14 when examining the ratio of male-to-female arrest rates. The male-to-female enforcement ratio was always above 1, which indicates males had higher arrest rates for all enforcement actions; however, for all enforcement types, the ratio declined over the study period except for summonses, which increased from 2.9:1 to 3.1:1. Throughout the study period, the ratio of male-to-female enforcement rates was lowest for summonses and highest for felonies, for which it ranges from 7.0:1 in 2002 to 5.3:1 in 2017. Third, while there is a relatively large amount of variability in the ratios in 2002, with the exception of felonies, the ratios for the different types of enforcement action tended to converge over time. For example, the ratio for misdemeanors declined from 6.7:1 to 3.5:1, while the corresponding ratios for bench warrants were 5.7:1 and 3.5:1. Although, the male-to-female arrest ratio for municipal violations follows a more variable trend than misdemeanors and bench warrants, it also declined over time from its peak of 4.4:1 in 2002 to 3.8:1 in 2017.

ENFORCEMENT TRENDS BY RACE

Figures 15 through 18 depict race differences in enforcement rates. Figure 15 displays the combined enforcement rate for the City of St. Louis and the combined rate disaggregated by race. The Black and White enforcement rates by enforcement type are shown in Figures 16 and 17, respectively. Finally, Figure 18 presents the ratio of Black-to-White enforcement actions by type to allow for cross-race comparisons.

Combined Enforcement Rates by Race

The combined enforcement rates for Blacks and Whites, as well as the combined rate for the City of St. Louis, are displayed in Figure 15. Throughout the study period, the White enforcement rate was lower than the combined enforcement rate, while the Black rate was higher.

Figure 15: Combined Enforcement Rates by Race in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
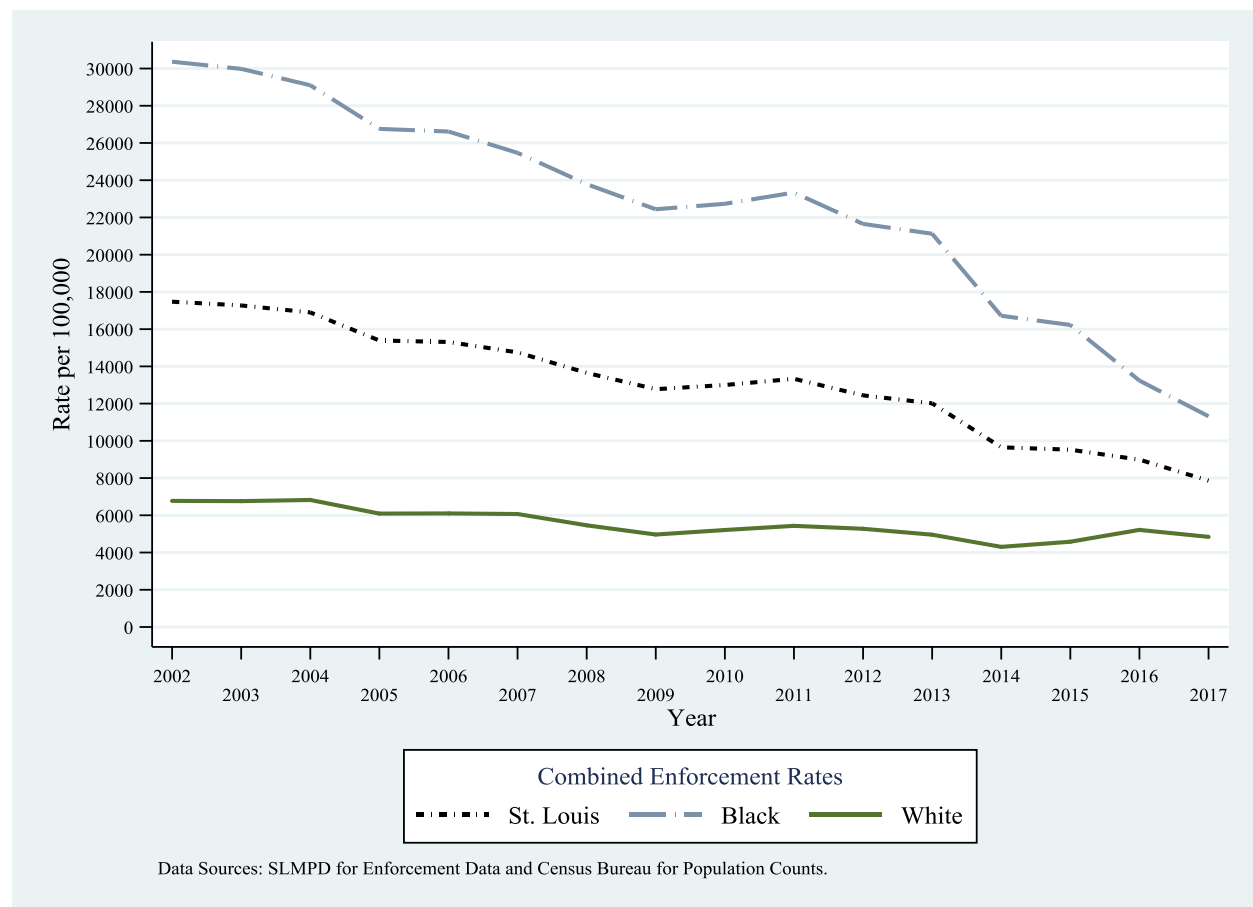
As displayed in Figure 15, the combined enforcement rate for Blacks began the study period at its peak of 30,366 per 100,000 and ended at its lowest point of 11,318 in 2017. This corresponds

to a decrease from 37,746 to 14,492 enforcement actions. During this period, the enforcement rate declined from year-to-year with the exception of 2009 to 2011, when it increased slightly.

The combined enforcement rate for Whites exhibited more year-to-year variability, but still declined from 6,775 per 100,000 in 2002 (8,743 arrests) to 4,842 per 100,000 in 2017 (5,482 arrests). The peak enforcement rate for this group (6,824 per 100,000) occurred in 2004, while the lowest rate was observed in 2014 (4,303 per 100,000).

Although both Black and White combined enforcement rates declined over the study period, this decline was greater for Blacks (63%) as compared to Whites (29%). As a result, the ratio of Black-to-White enforcement actions decreased almost by half from 4.5:1 in 2002 to 2.4:1 in 2017. Notably, the combined enforcement rate for both groups exhibited steep declines from 2013 to 2014, but this decrease was larger for Blacks (21%) than for Whites (13%). While the combined enforcement rate continued to drop for Blacks after 2014, the rate for Whites increased slightly.

Enforcement Rates for Blacks and Whites by Type of Action

Figures 16 and 17 display enforcement rates for Blacks and Whites by type of action.

Black Enforcement Rates

Figure 16: Enforcement Rates by Type for Blacks in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
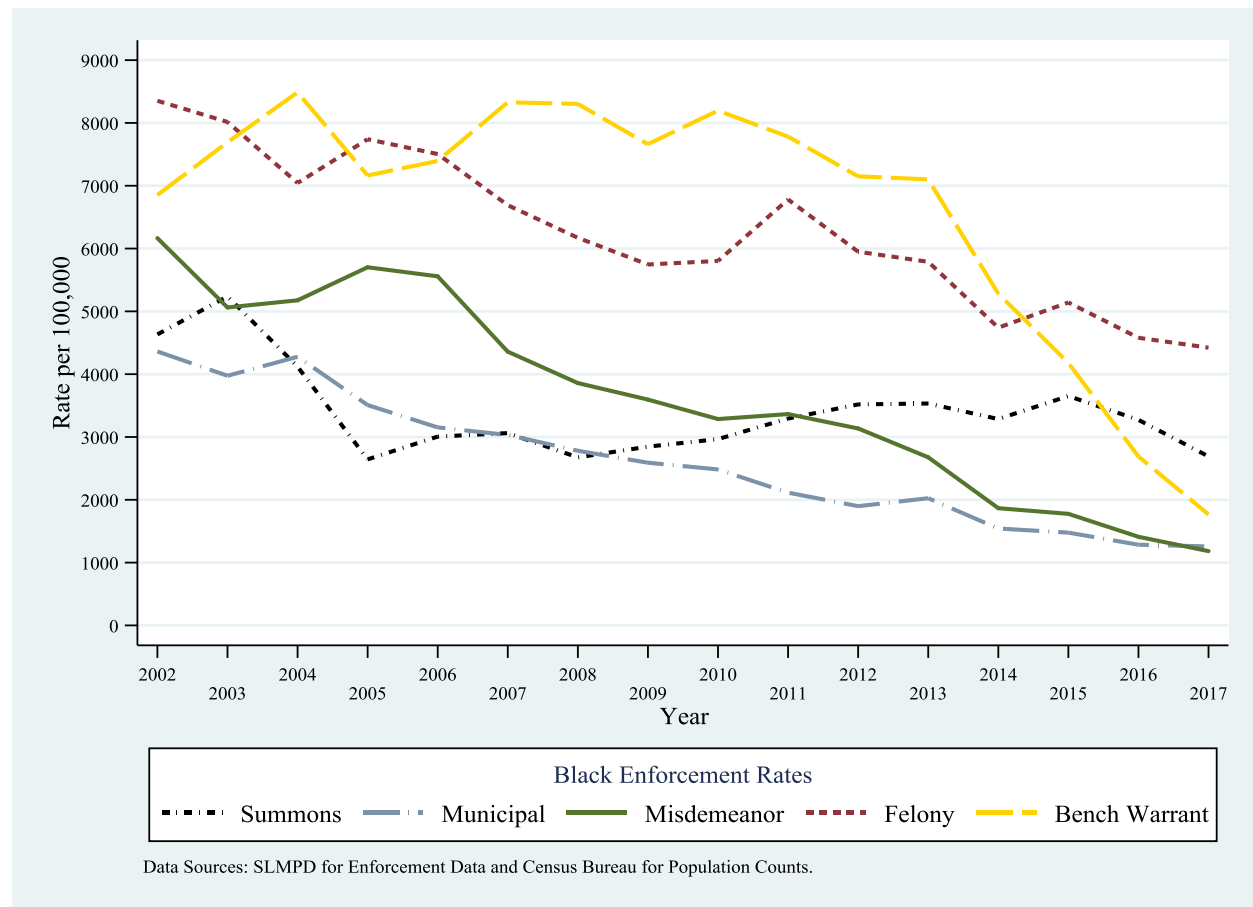
As depicted in Figure 16, all five enforcement actions decreased for Blacks over the study period. The rate of custodial arrests for municipal violations started the study period at a high of 4,362 arrests per 100,000, declined slightly to 3,975 in the following year, and then increased to 4,277 per 100,000 in 2004. After 2004, the municipal violation arrest rate for Blacks began a period of steep and steadily decline until 2012, when the arrest rate reached 1,898 per 100,000. Arrests then increased slightly the following year to 2,025 per 100,000, before declining to a low of 1,258 per 100,000 in 2017. From 2002 to 2017, the arrest rate of Blacks for municipal violations dropped 71%, and the number of Blacks arrested for municipal violations decreased from 5,422 to 1,610.

The misdemeanor arrest rate for Blacks started the study period at its high of 6,166 per 100,000, which corresponds to 7,664 arrests. It then dropped sharply to 5,062 per 100,000 in 2003, before increasing to 5,702 per 100,000 in 2005. From 2005 to 2017, the Black arrest rate for misdemeanors declined each year with the exception of a slight increase from 2010 to 2011. By 2017, the misdemeanor arrest rate had declined by 81% from 2002, reaching a low of 1,183 per 100,000 (or 1,514 arrests).

For Blacks, the arrest rate for felonies followed a general pattern of decline, decreasing 47% over the study period. This represented a decrease from 10,383 to 5,662 felony arrests. The felony arrest rate for Blacks was at its peak in 2002 at 8,353 arrests per 100,000. The rate dropped to 7,044 per 100,000 in 2004, increased to 7,741 per 100,000 in 2005, and declined again until 2009. From 2009 to 2011, the felony arrest rate for blacks increased from 5,746 per 100,000 to 6,782, before declining slowly and ending at 4,423 per 100,000, the low for the study period.

In 2002, the rate of arrests for bench warrants for Blacks was 6,853 per 100,000. It then increased to a peak of 8,487 in 2004, and remained high and variable through 2013. Post-2013, the rate at which Blacks were arrested solely on the basis of a bench warrant declined steeply, reaching a low of 1,767 per 100,000 in 2017. The bench warrant arrest rate for blacks declined 74% during the study period and almost 80% from the peak in 2004. When viewed in terms of absolute numbers, 8,518 Blacks were arrested for bench warrants in 2002, 10,447 at the peak in 2004, and 2,262 at the end of the study period.

From 2002 to 2017, the summons rate for Blacks declined 42%. It began the study period high—4,633 per 100,000 persons or 5,759 actual summonses—and increased to its peak of 5,238 per 100,000 in 2003. A sharp decline was observed from 2003 until 2005, when the summons rate reached a low for the study period at 2,644 summonses per 100,000. From 2005 to 2015, the trend for this type of enforcement action can be characterized as generally increasing. After 2015, the summons rate began to decline, ending the study period at its second lowest point at 2,689 per 100,000, which corresponds to 3,444 summonses.

White Enforcement Rates

Figure 17 displays the enforcement rates for custodial arrests and summonses for Whites. Note that the vertical axis differs from the previous figure to more clearly display changes across time in enforcement actions against Whites.

Figure 17: Enforcement Rates by Type for Whites in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
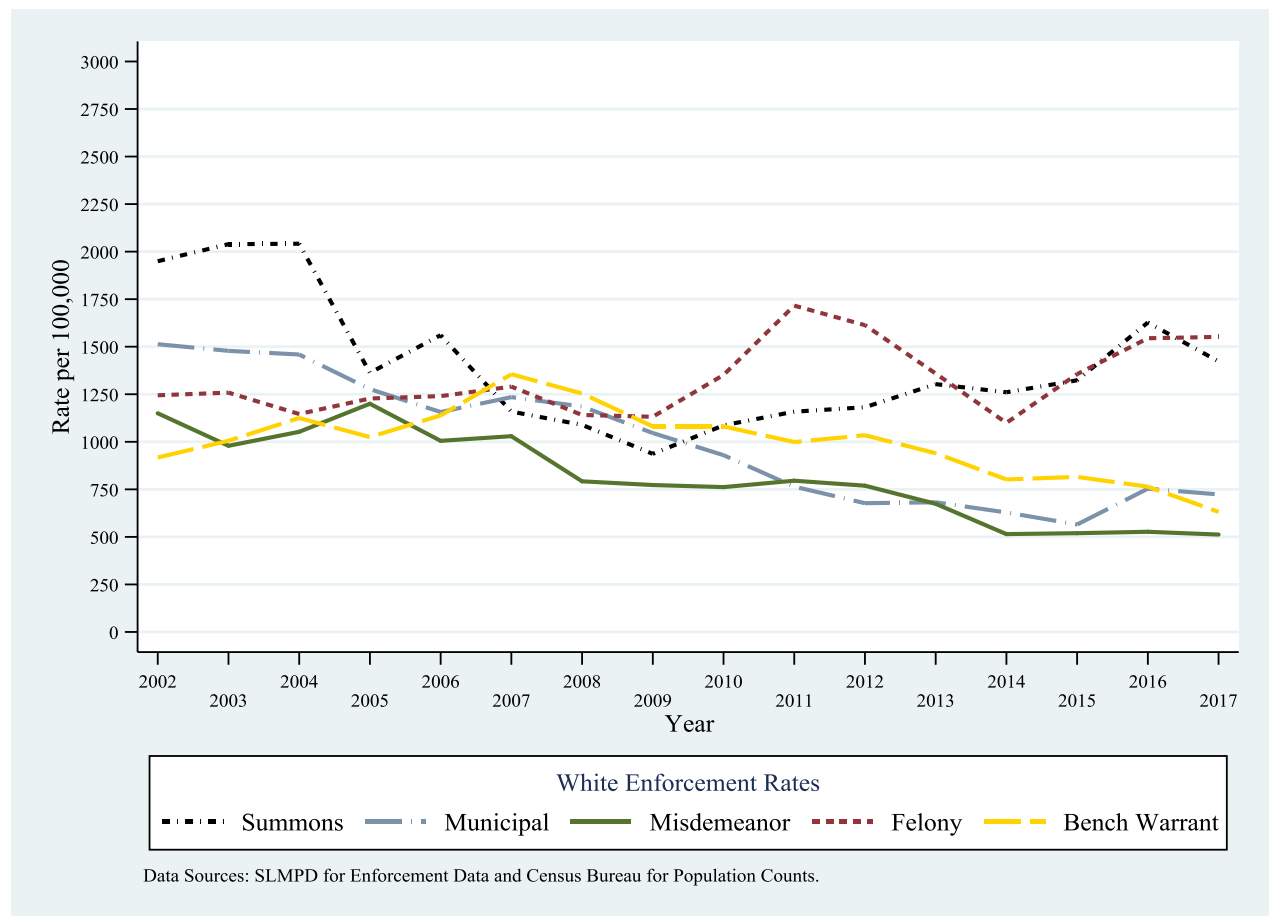
Similar to Blacks, Whites experienced a decrease in all enforcement activity over the course of the study period. For Whites, the trend in arrest rates for municipal violations declined 52%, which is less than that observed for Blacks. The municipal violation arrest rate for Whites started at 1,513 arrests per 100,000 in 2002 and continued a downward trend until reaching a low of 565 per 100,000 in 2015. The arrest rate for this type of violation then climbed to 753 per 100,000 in 2016, and then declined slightly, ending the study period at 723 per 100,000. This relatively substantial increase in the municipal arrest rate near the end of the study period was not observed for Blacks. In terms of numbers of arrests, 1,953 Whites were taken into custody for municipal violations in 2002 as compared to 819 in 2017.

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The rate at which Whites were arrested for misdemeanors also decreased from 2002 to 2017 (56%). The number of misdemeanor arrests of Whites declined from 1,484 to 580 during this time frame. The misdemeanor arrest rate for Whites was 1,150 per 100,000 in 2002, dropped to 979 per 100,000 in 2003, and then increased to its maximum of 1,200 per 100,000 in 2005. Subsequently, the trend declined to 773 per 100,000 in 2009 and then fluctuated between 762 per and 795 per 100,000 until 2012, when it again began to decrease, reaching a low of 512 misdemeanor arrests per 100,000 in 2017. Notably, for most years, misdemeanor arrests were the least prevalent type of enforcement action taken against Whites.

The rate of felony arrests for Whites in 2002 was 1,245 per 100,000, and it remained relatively unchanged through to 2009. This rate then began to climb, reaching the high point for the study period in 2011 at 1,716 per 100,000. From there, the White felony arrest rate declined until reaching a low of 1,100 in 2014, after which it increased, ending the study period at 1,552 per 100,000. In contrast to Blacks, White felony arrest rates increased by 25% between 2002 and 2017. At the beginning of the study period, there were 1,606 felony arrests of Whites. This number peaked at 2,151 in 2011 and then declined to 1,757 in 2017.

Similar to Blacks, the White arrest rate for bench warrants remained relatively steady through the first part of the study period; however, the post-2013 decline was much more modest than that observed for Blacks, as was the overall decline from 2002 to 2017 (32%). In 2002, the White arrest rate for bench warrants was 917 per 100,000. Although there were year-to-year fluctuations, this rate trended upward until it reached a peak of 1,355 per 100,000 in 2007. The bench warrant arrest rate for Whites then gradually declined to a low of 631 per 100,000 in 2017. For Whites, the number of arrests for bench warrants began the study period at 1,184, peaked at 1,710 in 2007, and then fell to 715 in 2017.

The summons rate for Whites was relatively high in 2002 (1,950 per 100,000 or 2,516 summonses issued) and increased slightly to 2,042 per 100,000 in 2004, before beginning a sharp decline to 1,363 per 100,000 in 2005. There was a secondary lower peak in 2006 of 1,561 per 100,000, after which the summons rate decreased until it reached a low of 937 per 100,000 in 2009. The rate at which summonses were issued to Whites then increased until reaching a third peak in 2016 of 1,627 per 100,000. Although the summons rate declined from 2016 to 2017, it ended the study period at a relatively high level of 1,423 per 100,000 (1,611 arrests). As was the case with other types of enforcement actions, the percentage decline in the summons rate was more modest for Whites compared to Blacks, 27% versus 42%, respectively.

Ratio of Black-to-White Enforcement Rates by Type

To better explore the relative decline in enforcement actions by race, Figure 18 presents the ratio of the rate of Black-to-White enforcement actions by type. Several important findings emerge. First, consistent with the other trends presented in the report, the ratio of Black-to-White arrests was greater than 1 for all enforcement types for all years of the study, indicating that Blacks were consistently subject to higher rates of enforcement relative to Whites. These ratios, however, declined for all types of actions over time.

Figure 18: Ratio of Black-to-White Enforcement Rates in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
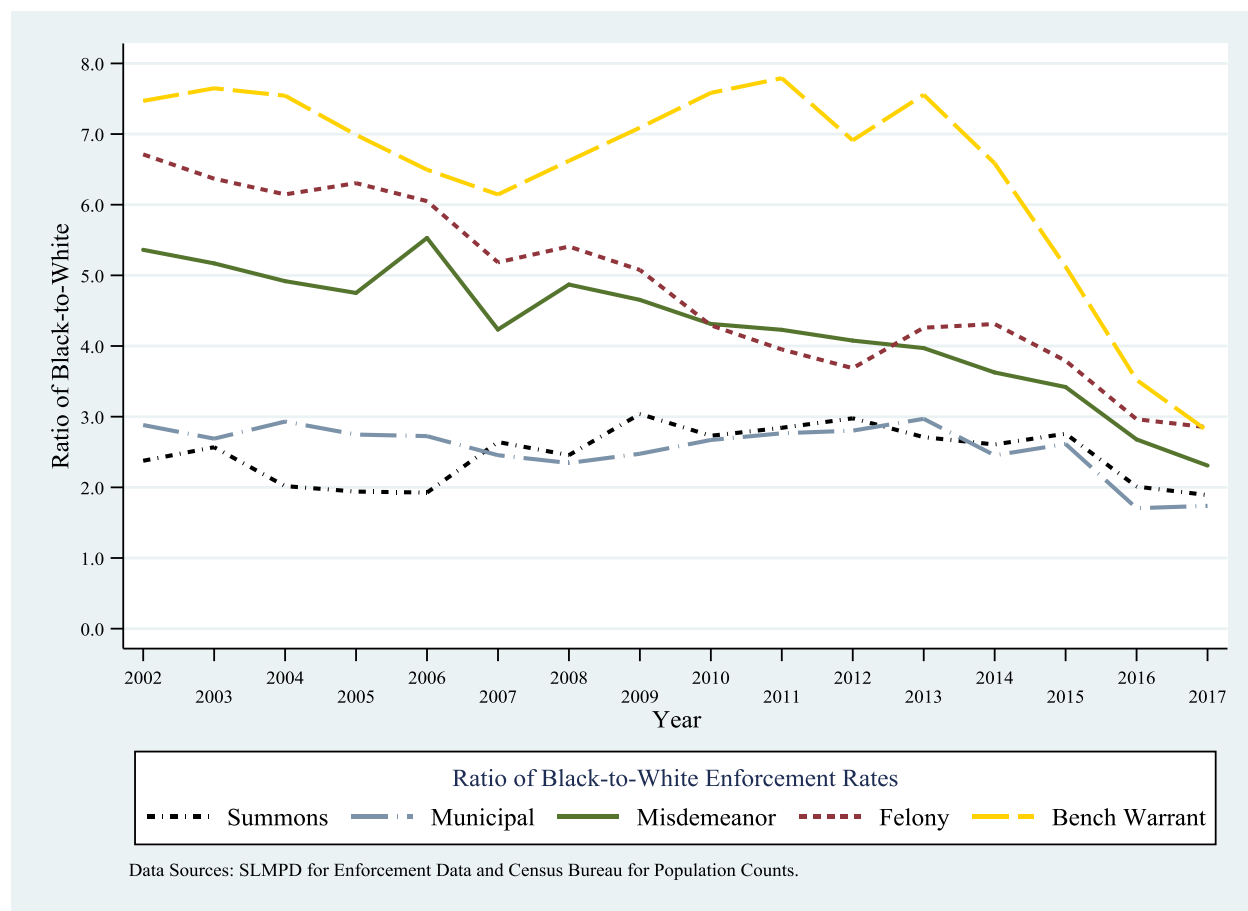
Second, throughout the study period, the Black-to-White arrest rate ratio was highest for bench warrants, but after 2013 it dropped sharply and converged with the trends for other types of enforcement actions. In 2002, the Black-to-White arrest rate ratio for bench warrants was 7.5:1, fluctuated between 6.1:1 and 7.6:1 through 2013, and then fell rapidly to 2.8:1 in 2017. Third, with the exception of bench warrants, the Black-to-White ratio was lower for the least serious types of actions and higher for the more serious forms of enforcement activity. Summonses and municipal violations had the lowest Black-to-White ratios and both remained relatively steady throughout the study period. The ratio for municipal violations was 2.9:1 in 2002 and declined to

1.7 in 2017, never falling below 1.7:1 or increasing above 3.0:1. A similar pattern was observed for summonses, although relative to municipal violations, the ratio was slightly lower in 2002 (2.4:1) and slightly higher in 2017 (1.9:1), and there was less year-to-year variability. In contrast, the Black-to-White arrest rate ratios for misdemeanors and felonies were higher and generally followed a downward trend, declining from 6.7:1 to 2.8:1 for felonies and from 5.4:1 to 2.3:1 for misdemeanors. Notably, in 2006, there was a sharp peak in the misdemeanor arrest rate ratio (5.5:1), which was not observed for the other types of enforcement activity. Finally, there was a great deal of variability in the ratio of Black-to-White enforcement actions across enforcement types at the beginning of the study, but the trends converge over time, primarily due to the larger decline in the Black-to-White ratio for bench warrants, felony, and misdemeanor arrests.

ENFORCEMENT TRENDS BY RACE AND SEX

To facilitate cross-race and -sex comparisons, Figure 19 presents combined enforcement rates separately for Black females and males and White females and males. Figures 20 through 24 display rates of arrests disaggregated by race and sex for each type of enforcement action.

Combined Enforcement Rates by Race and Sex

As depicted in Figure 19, the combined enforcement rate for Black males is substantially larger than that of the other groups in 2002, when it is at its peak of 57,541 per 100,000. Although it declined for most of the study period, this drop was accelerated in the post-2013 period. From 2002 to 2013, the enforcement rate fell by 36%, while it declined by 45% between 2013 and 2017. The enforcement rate for Black males reached its low of 20,151 per 100,000 in 2017. Over the entire study period, the combined enforcement rate for Black males fell by 65%, and the number of enforcement actions decreased by 19,429, from 31,076 to 11,647.

Figure 19: Combined Enforcement Rates for Blacks and Whites by Sex in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
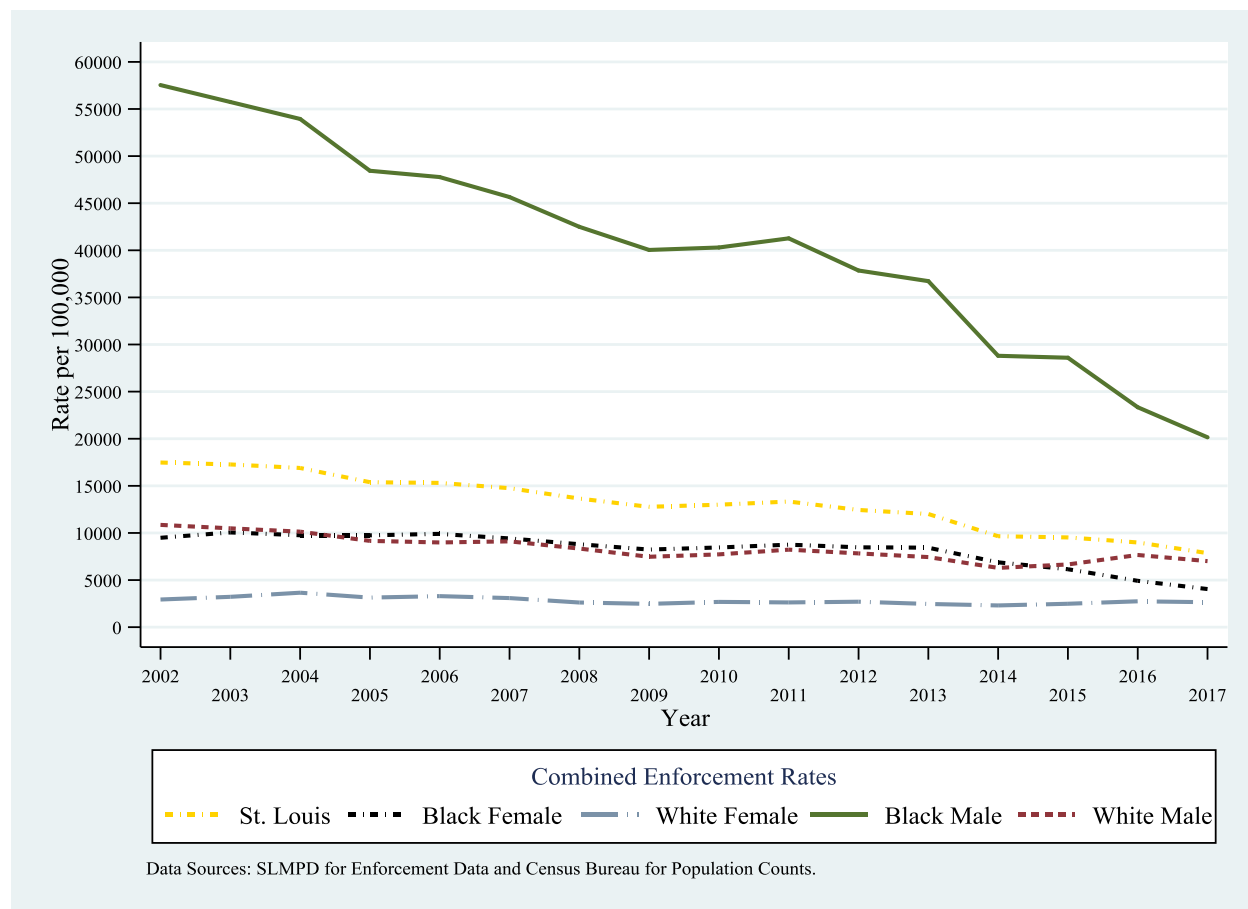
The combined enforcement rate for Black females and White males was comparable for much of the study period, only diverging after 2015, when the rate increased for White males and decreased for Black females. The lowest enforcement rate for White males (6,288 per 100,000) was observed in 2014, while the lowest rate for Black females occurred in 2017. In 2002, the enforcement rate for Black females was 9,488 per 100,000 (6,670 arrests), while that of White males was slightly higher at 10,857 (6,792 arrests). Black females and White males ended the study period with enforcements rates of 4,049 and 7,009 per 100,000 (or 2,844 vs. 3,986 arrests), respectively. This represented a 57% decline in the enforcement rates from 2002 for Black females and a 35% decline for White males.

The group with the lowest rate of combined enforcement actions for every year of the study was White females. The rate of enforcement actions declined for this group from 2,934 per 100,000 in 2002 to 2,653 in 2017, an overall decrease of 10%. In terms of the number of arrests, the corresponding drop during this period was from 1,951 to 1,495. Similar to White males, but differing from Black males and females, the combined enforcement rate increased for White females in the final years of the study period after reaching a low of 2,304 per 100,000 in 2014.

The racial differences in the combined enforcement rate for males decreased significantly over the study period but still remained high in 2017. In 2002, there were 5.3 enforcement actions directed at Black males for every action directed at a White male, while in 2017 the comparable ratio was 2.9:1. A decline in the ratio of Black to White enforcement actions also was observed for females; this ratio decreased from 3.2:1 in 2002 to 1.5:1 in 2017.

Figure 20 displays the rates at which Black males, White males, Black females, and White females are taken into police custody when the highest charge is a municipal violation.

Figure 20: Municipal Arrest Rates for Blacks and Whites by Sex in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
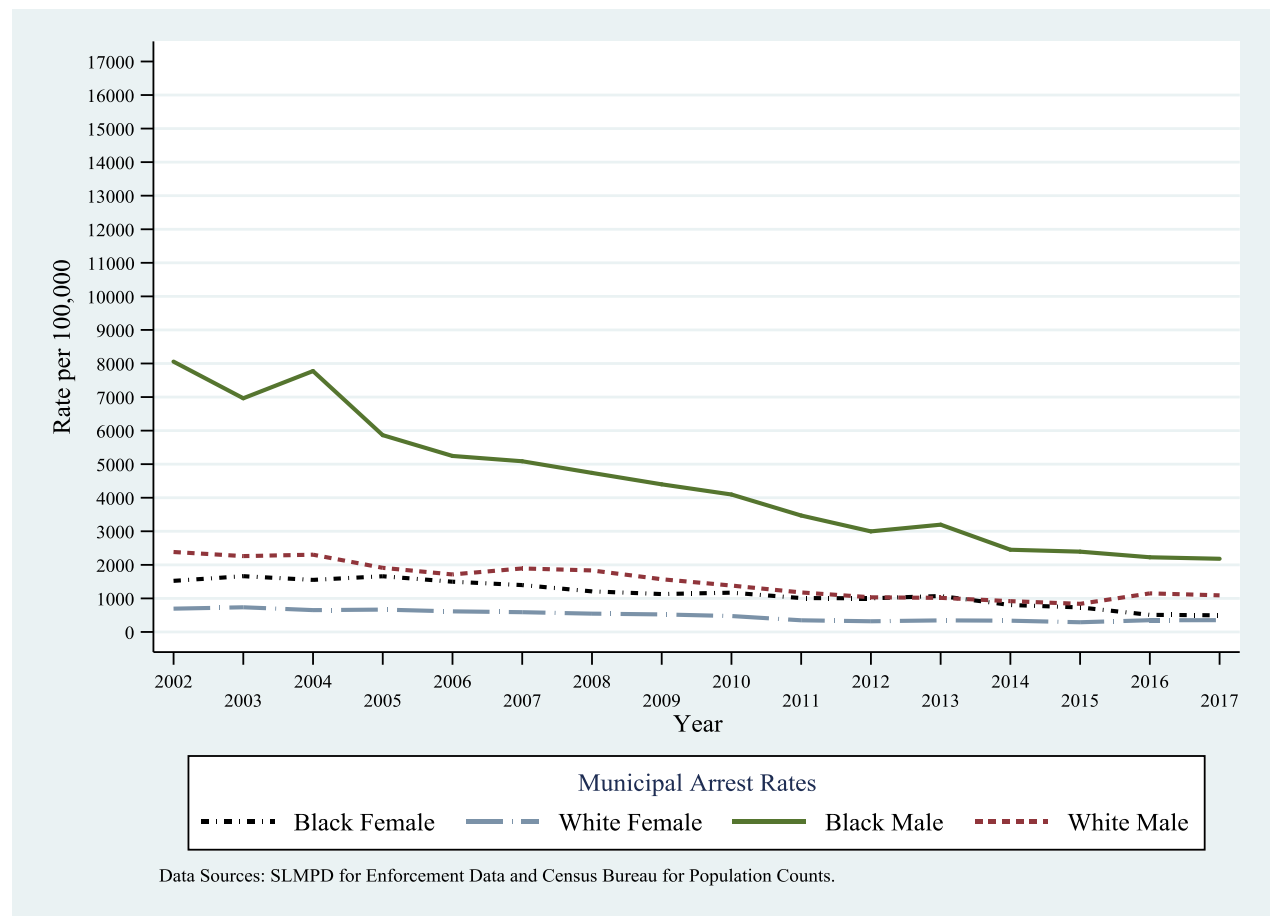
As depicted in Figure 20, Black males had the highest rates of arrests for municipal violations throughout the study period, but they also experienced the greatest decline relative to the other sex-race groups. Municipal arrests for Black males fell from a high of 8,056 per 100,000 in 2002 to 2,182 in 2017, a 73% drop. In terms of the number of arrests, this represents a decline from 4,351 in 2002 to 1,261 in 2017. These decreases were sustained over the study period with one notable exception; municipal arrest rates increased from 6,964 per 100,000 in 2003 to 7,775 in 2004.

White males had the second highest rate of arrests for municipal violations during the study period, although these rates were significantly lower than those observed for their Black counterparts. The municipal arrest rate for White males began the observation period at its

highest levels—2,383 per 100,000—and then generally declined, reaching a low of 839 per 100,000 in 2015. The rate then climbed to 1,150 per 100,000 in 2016, dropping slightly to end the study period at 1,092 per 100,000. Over the 16-year period, the White male municipal arrest rate declined by 54%.

Black females had the second largest percentage decrease in arrests for municipal violations over the study period at 67%. The municipal arrest rate for this group was significantly lower than for Black males. The rate was at its highest in the first five years of the observation period when it fluctuated between 1,498 and 1,663 arrests per 100,000. After 2006, the Black female municipal arrest rate declined steadily until 2017, when it reached a low of 497 arrests per 100,000. When viewed in terms of absolute numbers, municipal arrests for Black females declined from 1,071 in 2002, peaked at 1,074 in 2004, and ended the study period at a low of 349 in 2017.

White females had the lowest municipal arrest rates for all groups and for all years. The municipal arrest rate for White females declined over the study period from 695 per 100,000 in 2002 to 351 per 100,000 in 2017. In absolute numbers, this represents a decrease from 462 in 2002 to 198 in 2017. Like the trend for White males, the lowest municipal arrest rate was observed in 2015 (289 per 100,000). Notably, due to the sharper drop in the rate of municipal arrests for Black females relative to White females over the study period (67% versus 49%, respectively), the municipal arrest rate for Black females nearly converged with the arrest rate for White females by 2017.

Figure 21 depicts the misdemeanor arrest rate per 100,000 for Black males, Black females, White males, and White females.

Figure 21: Misdemeanor Arrest Rates for Blacks and Whites by Sex in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
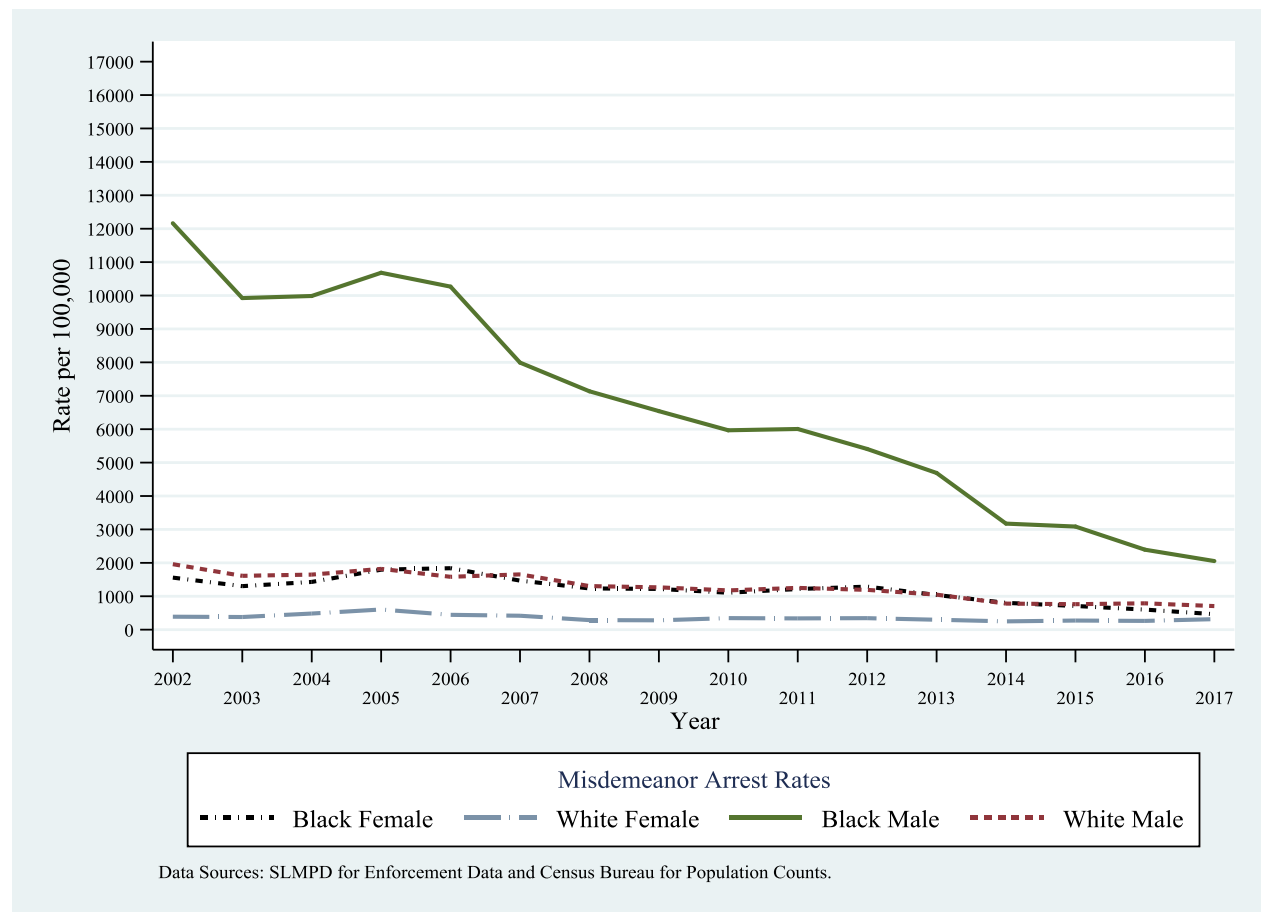
The highest rates of misdemeanor arrests were observed for Black males. The rate of misdemeanor arrests for Black males began the study period at a high of 12,163 per 100,000 (6,569 arrests) in 2002, then declined rapidly to a rate of 9,924 per 100,000 in the following year. After a gradual increase to a rate of 10,682 per 100,000 (5,751 arrests) in 2005, the misdemeanor arrest rate for Black males fell for the remainder of the study period, and reached its lowest rate of 2,054 per 100,000 (1,187 arrests) in 2017. Compared to the other race-sex groups, Black males experienced the greatest decline in misdemeanor arrests over the period of study at 83%.

The misdemeanor arrest rate for Black females followed a general pattern of decline, decreasing 71% during the study period. The rate of misdemeanor arrests for Black females began at 1,558 per 100,000 (1,095 arrests) in 2002. After an initial slight decline to a rate of 1,302 per 100,000 (908 arrests) in 2003, the rate of misdemeanor arrests for Black females climbed to 1,840 per 100,000 (1,253 arrests) in 2006, the highest rate for this group over the study period. From there,

the arrest rate of Black females for misdemeanors continued to decline for the rest of the study period, ending at its lowest rate of 464 per 100,000 (326 arrests) in 2017.

The trend in arrest rates of White males for misdemeanors was one of a decline from 2002 to 2017. The drop for White males (64%) was less pronounced than the decline observed for Black males (83%). The misdemeanor arrest rate for White males began at a high of 1,960 per 100,000 in 2002, and declined to 707 per 100,000 in 2017, the lowest rate during the study period for this group. The number of misdemeanor arrests for White males declined from 1,226 to 402 between 2002 and 2017.

Throughout the study period, White females had the lowest rates of misdemeanor arrests compared to the other groups, and this rate decreased by 19% from 2002 to 2017. The rate of arrests for misdemeanors for White females began the study period at 388 per 100,000 (258 arrests) in 2002. Subsequently, this rate increased slightly, and peaked in 2005 at 445 per 100,000 (391 arrests). The misdemeanor arrest rate for White females then declined, reaching a low of 248 per 100,000 in 2014, before it increased and ended the study period at a rate of 316 per 100,000 (178 arrests) in 2017.

Figure 22 shows the rates of arrests for felonies, disaggregated by sex and race.

Figure 22: Felony Arrest Rates for Blacks and Whites by Sex in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
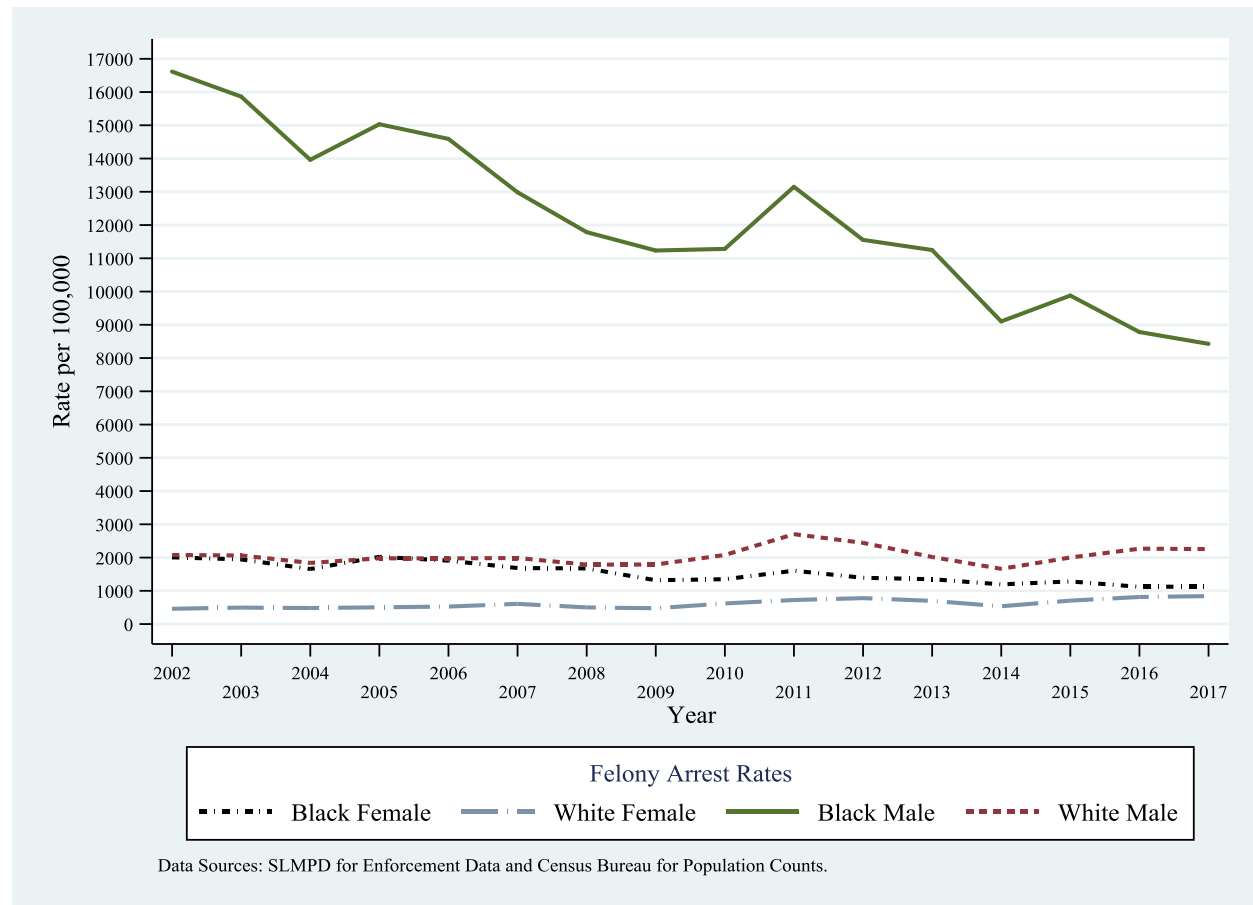
Figure 22 indicates that Black males had the highest rates of felony arrests across the study period; this group also experienced the greatest decline in felony arrest rates. The felony arrest rate for Black males was highest in 2002 (16,615 per 100,000) and, with a few exceptions, declined steadily over the study period to its lowest rate in 2017 (8,427 per 100,000). In terms of raw numbers, there were 8,973 arrests of black males at the peak in 2002 and 4,870 arrests in 2017. The rate of new felony arrests for Black men declined by nearly half (49%) over the study period; however, the arrest rate for this group remained nearly four times higher than the rates observed for White males and Black and White females.

While White males had the second highest rate of felony arrests over the study period, the rates exhibited little meaningful variation over time. The rate of felony arrests for White males rose slightly from 2002 (2,078 per 100,000) to 2017 (2,256 per 100,000), a 9% increase. The peak felony arrest rate for White males was observed in 2011 (2,703 per 100,000), after which the rate declined until the end of the study period. When viewed in terms of arrest numbers, there were

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1,300 felony arrests of White males in 2002, 1,698 at its peak in 2011, and 1,283 at the end of the study period, a level similar to which it began.

Black females experienced a decline in felony arrests over the study period. The felony arrest rate for Black females started the study period at 2,006 per 100,000, reached its peak rate in 2005 (2,022 per 100,000), and then dropped to 1,128 per 100,000 in 2017. At 44%, the percentage decline in the felony arrest rate for Black females from 2002 to 2017 was similar to that observed for Black males. The number of felony arrests of black females fell from 1,410 to 792 during the study period.

In contrast, the rates of felony arrests increased for White females over the study period, growing by 83% from 2002 to 2017. The lowest rate of arrests for White females occurred at the beginning of the study period (460 per 100,000). Although some variation occurred, the rate slowly increased over time, reaching 841 per 100,000 in 2017. This represents an overall increase in the number of felony arrests of white females from 306 to 474.

Trends displaying year-to-year variation in the rates at which Black males, Black females, White males, and White females were arrested for bench warrants are presented in Figure 23.

Figure 23: Bench Warrant Arrest Rates for Blacks and Whites by Sex in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
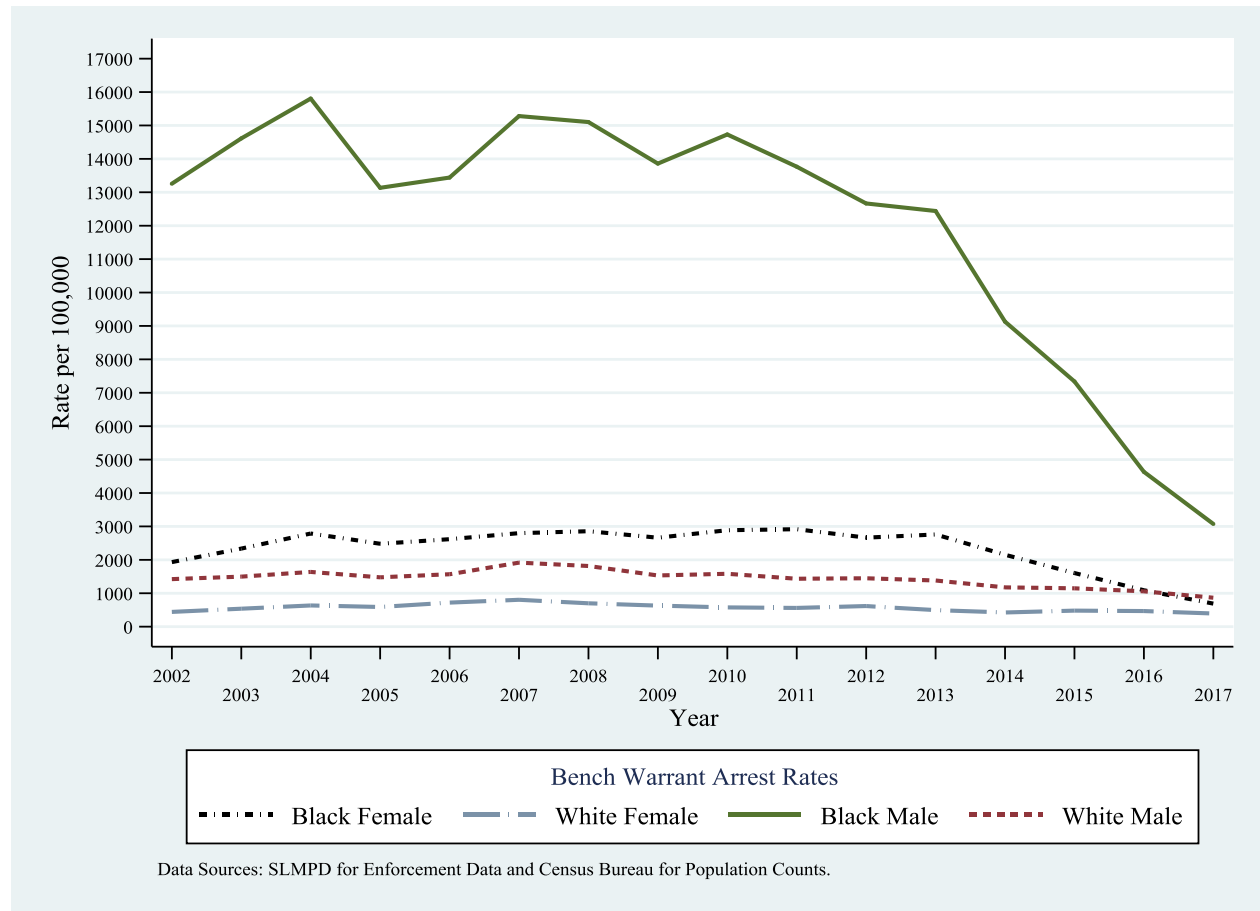
As displayed in Figure 23, Black males had the highest rate of bench warrant arrests throughout the study period, although this rate declined by 77% from 2002 to 2017. The rate at which Black males were arrested for bench warrants began at 13,258 per 100,000 (7,160 arrests), then peaked at 15,805 per 100,000 in 2004 (8,518 arrests). After falling to 13,134 per 100,000 persons in 2005, the rate of bench warrant arrests again climbed, reaching a second, lower peak in 2007 of 15,282 per 100,000. With the exception of 2010, the arrest rate exhibited year-to-year declines after 2007, although these declines were relatively modest until 2013, after which they began to drop more steeply. For example, from 2007 to 2013, the bench warrant arrest rate declined 19%, while the corresponding percentage for 2013 to 2017 was 75%. At the end of the study period in 2017, the bench warrant arrest rate for Black males was 3,075 per 100,000.

For most of the study period, Black females had the second highest rate of bench warrant arrests, although it was substantially lower than that observed for Black males. Similar to Black males,

the bench warrant arrest rate declined over time, but the decline was smaller at 64%. In 2002, the Black female arrest rate for bench warrants was 1,932 per 100,000 (1,358 arrests) and, although the direction of the trend fluctuated from year-to-year, it generally increased during the first half of the study period. Bench warrant arrests for Black females peaked in 2011 at 2,917 per 100,000, but other lower peaks occurred in 2004 (2,788 per 100,000) and 2008 (2,857 per 100,000). The Black female arrest rate for bench warrants declined sharply after 2013, when it decreased from 2,760 to 691 arrests per 100,000 (485 arrests).

From 2002 to 2017, the rate at which White males were arrested for bench warrants declined 39% from 1,423 to 867 per 100,000, which corresponds to a drop in the number of arrests from 890 to 493. The bench warrant arrest rate for this group fluctuated in the first portion of the study period, but after reaching its peak of 1,918 per 100,000 in 2007, the bench warrant arrest rate for White males generally declined. After 2013, the decline in the rate of bench warrant arrests accelerated, and in 2017, the trend for White males and Black females crossed. In this year, the bench warrant arrest for White males (867 per 100,000) was lower than that for Black females.

White females had the lowest rate of arrests for bench warrants over the study period, and the arrest rate for this group declined by 11% from 2002 to 2017. White females were arrested for bench warrants at a rate of 442 per 100,000 (294 arrests) in 2002, and the arrest rates of this group increased until 2007, when they reached their peak of 805 per 100,000. With the exception of 2012, the arrest rate then decreased through 2014, when the bench warrant arrest rate for White females was 426 per 100,000. After this time, the arrest rate rose slightly to 481 per 100,000 in 2015, before declining slightly in 2016 and 2017. The bench warrant arrest rate for White females ended the study period at 394 per 100,000, which corresponds to 222 arrests. Notably, White females were the only group that did not exhibit a sharp drop in bench warrant arrests after 2013.

Information on the rates at which criminal summonses were issued, presented by race and sex, are displayed for 2002 to 2017 in Figure 24. Throughout the study period, the summons issuance rate was highest for Black males and lowest for White females. Black females and White males had similar summons issuance rates, which fell between those of White females and Black males.

Figure 24: Criminal Summons Rates for Blacks and Whites by Sex in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
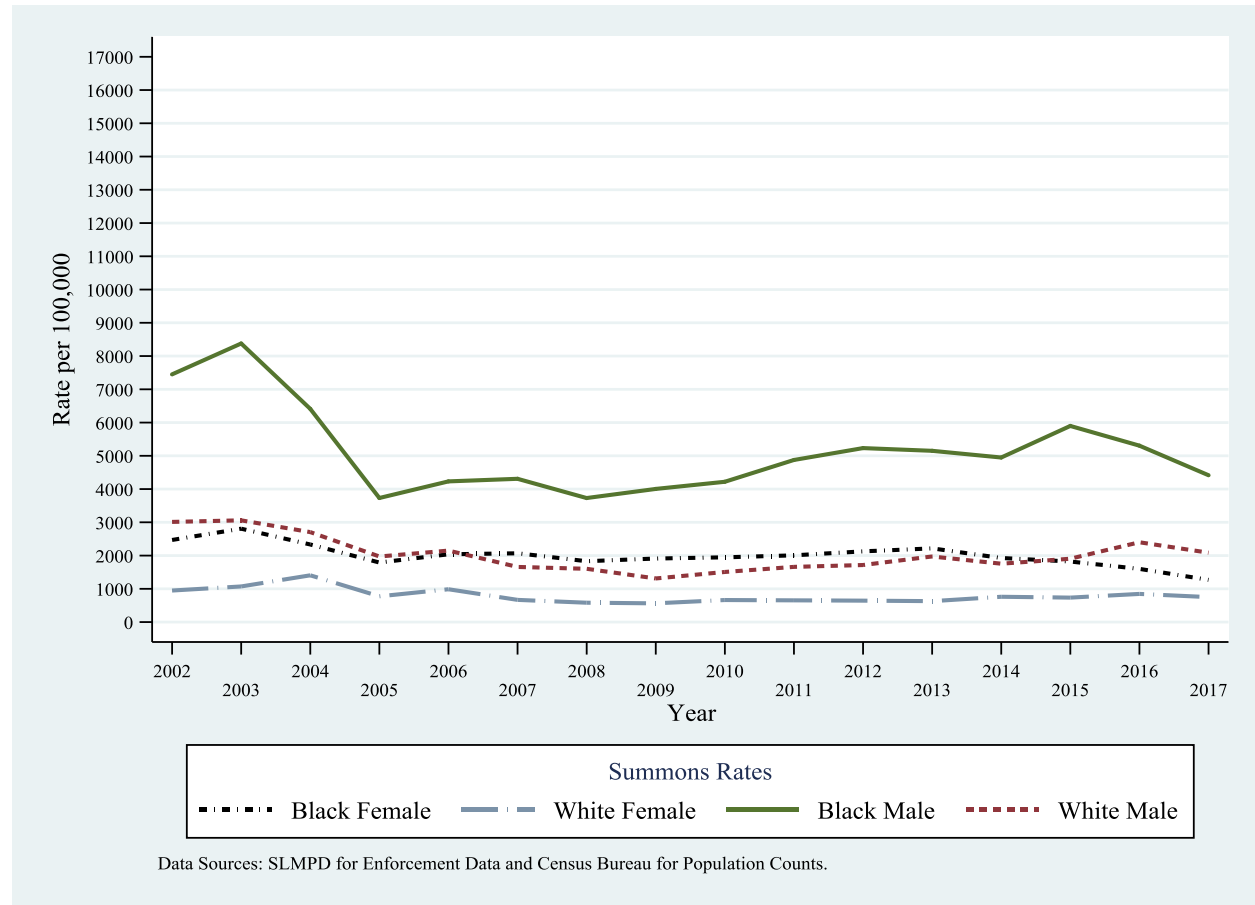
In 2002, the criminal summons rate for Black males was 7,449 per 100,000, which corresponds to 4,023 summonses. The summons rate for Black males increased to a high of 8,378 per 100,000 in 2003. It then declined sharply over the following two years, reaching 3,732 per 100,000 in 2005. The rate rose again until 2007, before declining and reaching its low of 3,730 per 100,000 in 2008. Although there were annual fluctuations, after 2008 the summons rate for Black males followed an upward trend, reaching a second, but lower peak of 5,898 per 100,000 in 2015. The summons rate for Black males then declined, ending the study period at 4,413 per 100,000 (2,552 summonses issued). Over the study period, the rate at which summonses were issued to Black males fell by 41%, with much of the decline occurring between 2003 and 2005.

The summons rate for White males began relatively high (3,013 per 100,000), peaked in 2003 (3,059 per 100,000), and then declined to its lowest point of the study period in 2009 at 1,312 summonses per 100,000. Summonses issued to White males then followed an upward trend, reaching a lower peak in 2016 at 2,390 per 100,000, after which they dropped to end the study period at 2,087 per 100,000. Overall the rate of summonses decreased by 31% for White males from 2002 to 2017, and the number of summonses issued declined from 1,885 to 1,187.

The summons rate for Black females began relatively high (2,740 per 100,000), peaked in 2003 at 2,809 per 100,000, and then declined sharply until 2005, when it reached 1,790 per 100,000. The trend fluctuated over the next several years, reaching a second peak in 2013. After 2013, the summons rate for Black females steadily fell, reaching its overall low in 2017 at 1,270 per 100,000. Black females had the largest percentage decline in the summons rate of the four groups, decreasing by 49% from 2002 to 2017, while the number of summonses issued to Black females decreased from 1,736 to 892.

White females had the smallest percentage decrease in the summons rate at 21%. The summons rate for this group started the study period at 949 summonses per 100,000 (631 summonses) and peaked at 1,407 per 100,000 in 2004, a year later than the other groups. With the exception of 2006, the summons rate for White females declined until reaching a low of 563 per 100,000 in 2009. The rate then increased slightly and fluctuated between 629 and 663 per 100,000 from 2010 through 2013, before climbing slightly to reach a lower peak in 2016 of 843 per 100,000. The summons rate for White females then fell again, ending the study period at 751 per 100,000 (423 summonses).

ENFORCEMENT TRENDS BY AGE

Figures 25 through 34 depict differences in enforcement rates for the City of St. Louis by age group (17 to 20, 21 to 24, 25 to 34, and 35 and older). These age ranges were chosen based primarily on policy (e.g., the age of criminal responsibility in Missouri and the legal drinking age) and research on age-related criminal offending (e.g., individuals over the age of 35 typically "age out" of anti-social behavior). [11] Figure 25 displays the combined enforcement rate for the City of St. Louis and the combined rate for each of the four age groups. Enforcement rates by age and type are shown in Figures 26 through 29. Finally, to allow for comparisons across age groups for specific enforcement actions, Figures 30 through 34 present the ratio of enforcement rates for each age group relative to the 35 and older group separately for each type of enforcement action.

Combined Enforcement Rates by Age

Figure 25 displays the combined enforcement rate for the city as whole and separately for each of the age groups.

Figure 25: Combined Enforcement Rates by Age in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.

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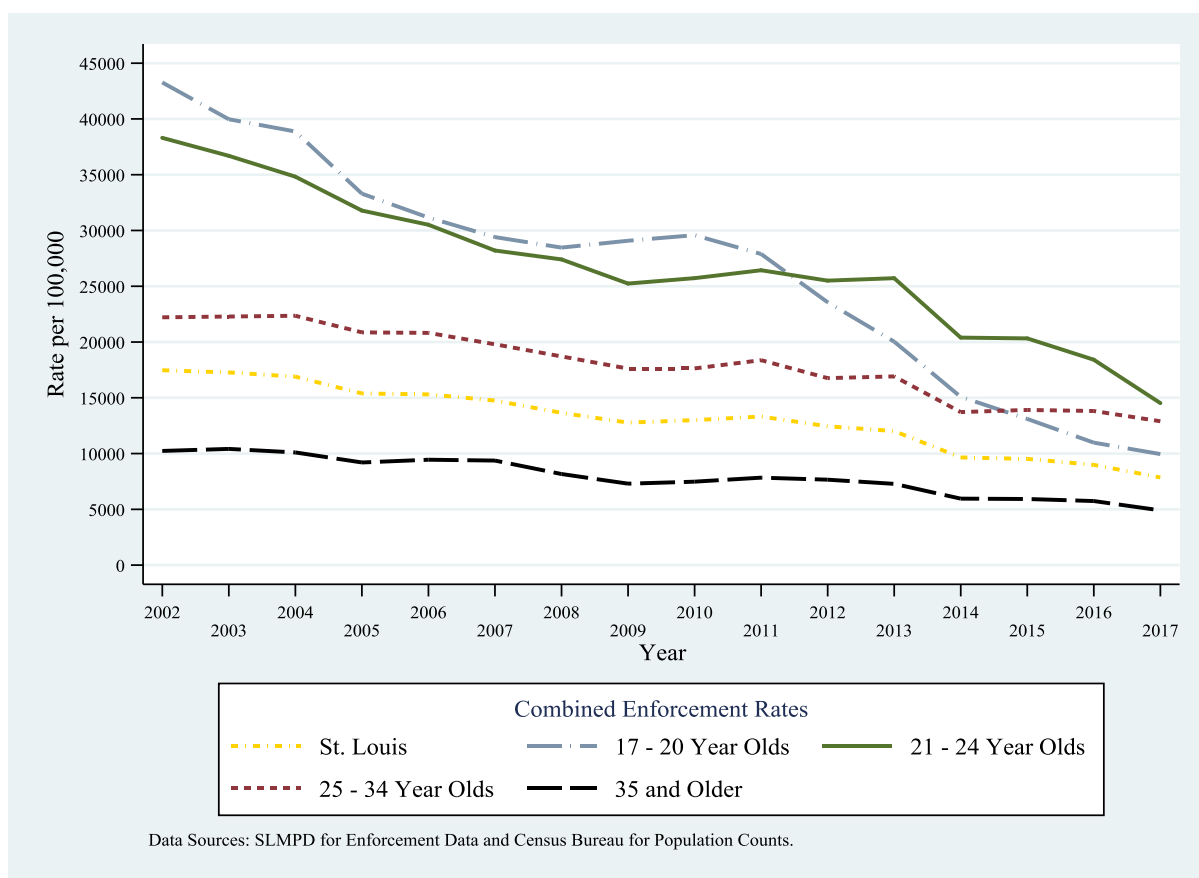
[11] Appendices B and C display trends in enforcement rates for 18 – 20 year olds in order to facilitate comparisons with cities in which the age of criminal responsibility is 18.

There are several notable patterns displayed in Figure 25. First, all age groups except the 35 and older group had combined enforcement rates that were higher than those observed for the city as a whole. Second, the combined enforcement rate for all groups declined over the study period. The downward trends for the two older age groups ran parallel to one another and the enforcement rate for the city, albeit at different levels. In comparison, enforcement rates for the two youngest age groups declined more sharply. Notably, 17 to 20 year-olds began the study period with the highest combined enforcement rate and were well above the rate for the total population, but by 2017, this group had an enforcement rate that was lower than that of all other age groups, with the exception of the 35 and older age group.

The 17 to 20 year-old group had the highest combined enforcement rate from 2002 through 2011. The enforcement rate for this group began the study period at 43,272 actions per 100,000, and then declined until 2009, when it increased slightly and leveled off. After 2011, the combined enforcement rate for 17 to 20 year-olds dropped sharply and steadily, ending the study period at 9,956 actions per 100,000, which is just above the enforcement rate for the city as a whole. From 2002 to 2017, the enforcement rate for this age group declined by 77%, and the absolute number of enforcement actions decreased from 8,585 to 1,820.

The enforcement rate for 21 to 24 year-olds also declined during the study period. In 2002, the combined enforcement rate for this group was at its highest level of 38,304 per 100,000. The rate fell steadily until 2009, when it reached 25,244 per 100,000 and leveled off. After 2013, there was a steep drop and the rate declined by 21% in one year. The enforcement rate for 21 to 24 year-olds continued to decrease after, but at a slower pace, ending the study period at 14,525 enforcement actions per 100,000. Over the entire study period, the combined enforcement rate for 21 to 24 year-olds declined by 62% and the number of enforcement actions decreased from 8,173 to 3,127. Despite this drop, the 21 to 24 year-old group had the highest combined enforcement rate in 2017.

The decline for 25 to 34 year-olds in enforcement actions was more modest (42%), decreasing from 22,215 per 100,000 in 2002 to 12,898 per 100,000 in 2017. There were 12,390 enforcement actions levied against 25 to 34 year-olds in 2002 as compared to 7,314 in 2017. Although the trend was generally downward, some years exhibited slight increases in the enforcement rate, most notably in 2011 and 2013. The single largest year-to-year drop was from 2013 to 2014, when the enforcement rate for 25 to 34 year-olds declined by 19%.

The 35 and older group followed a similar trend as the 25 to 34 year-olds, but at a lower level. There were 10,236 enforcement actions per 100,000 persons in 2002 (17,378 enforcement actions), and this rate declined by 52% to 4,910 per 100,000 in 2017 (7,794 enforcement actions). The 35 and older age group had the lowest combined enforcement rates for the entire study period.

Figures 26 through 30 denote the enforcement rates by age for municipal, misdemeanor, and felony arrests, bench warrant arrests, and criminal summonses. Again, note that in figures that illustrate enforcement rates by age and type, the metric on the vertical axis shifts to more clearly display changes across time for the different age groups.

Figure 26: Enforcement Rates by Type for 17 – 20 Year-Olds in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
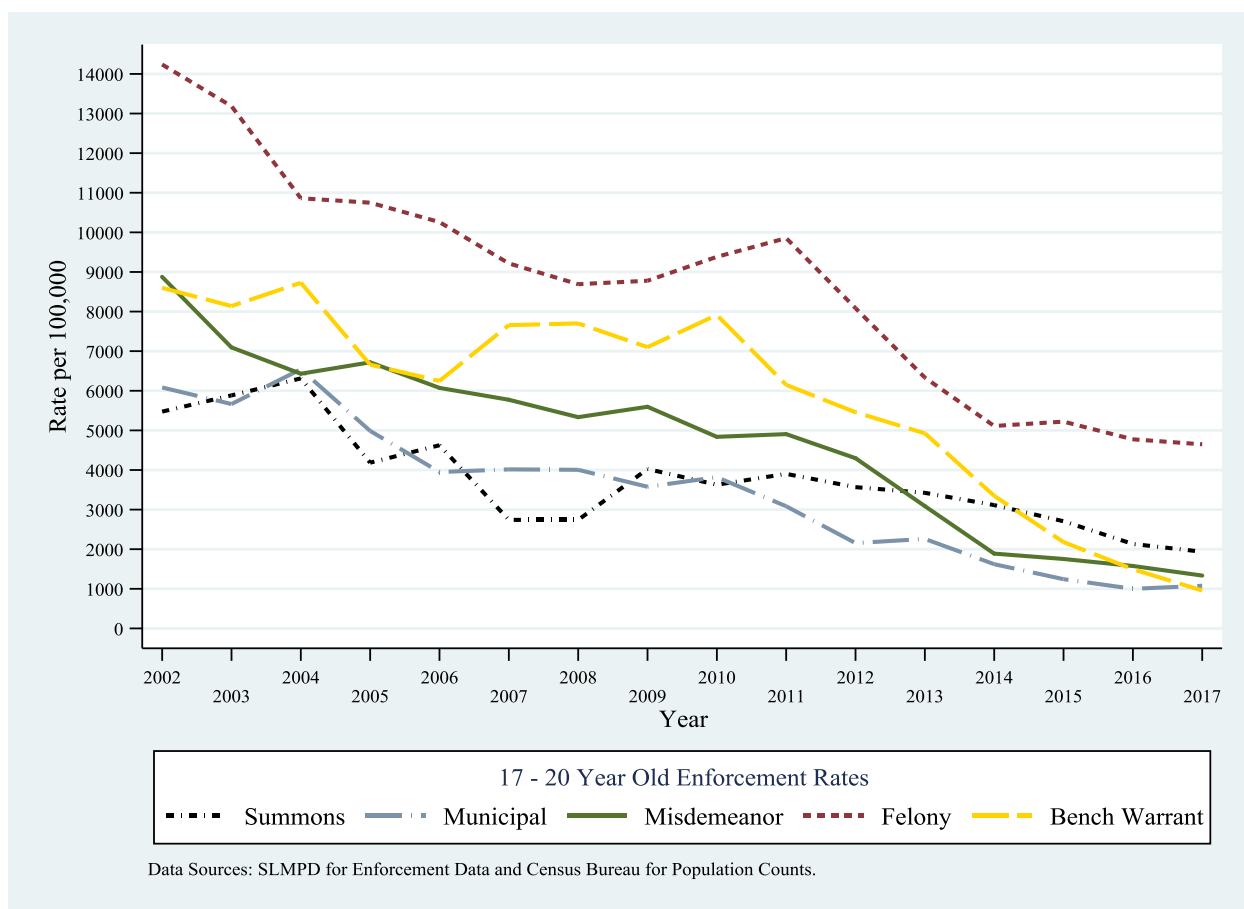
As displayed in Figure 26, arrests for municipal violations were among the least common type of arrest for 17 to 20 year-olds. From 2002 to 2017, arrests for municipal violations among the 17 to 20 age group declined by 82%, dropping from 6,084 to 1,078 per 100,000. This represents a decline in the number of municipal arrests from 1,207 arrests in 2002 to 197 arrests in 2017. It is worth noting that the municipal arrest rate for those ages 17 to 20 spiked in 2004 to 6,543 per 100,000 (1,282 arrests) before declining for the remainder of the study period.

For 17 to 20 year-olds, misdemeanor arrest rates were higher than those observed for municipal violations and exhibited a slightly steeper drop, declining 85% from 2002 to 2017. During this

period, the misdemeanor arrest rate for 17 to 20 year-olds began at 8,876 per 100,000 and ended at 1,335 per 100,000. In absolute numbers, this represents a decline from 1,761 misdemeanor arrests in 2002 to 244 arrests in 2017.

Throughout the study period, the highest rates of arrest for the 17 to 20 year-old age group were for felonies. The felony arrest rate for this group began the study period at 14,239 per 100,000 (2,825 arrests) in 2002 and ended at 4,650 per 100,000 (850 arrests) in 2017, an overall decline of 67%. While the trend in felony arrests was generally downward for most of the study period for 17 to 20 year-olds, there was an increase from 2008 through 2011.

From 2002 to 2017, the bench warrant arrest rate declined by 89% for 17 to 20 year-olds. At the beginning of the study period, 17 to 20 year-olds were arrested at a rate of 8,599 per 100,000 for bench warrants, a rate roughly equal to that observed for misdemeanors. By 2017, however, bench warrant arrests were the least common type of enforcement action with rates of 957 per 100,000. These rates correspond to 1,706 and 175 bench warrant arrests, respectively. Compared to other types of arrests, the decline in bench warrant arrests that was observed for 17 to 20 year-olds was more uneven, and it was only after 2010 that the year-to-year rates consistently dropped.

The rate at which summonses were issued to 17 to 20 year-olds decreased by 66% over the study period. The summons rate began the study period relatively high (5,474 per 100,000), and then climbed, peaking in 2004 at a rate of 6,313 per 100,000. After 2004, the rate generally declined, reaching 2,738 per 100,000 in 2008 before climbing again to a second, lower peak of 4,026 per 100,000 in 2009. The summons rate for 17 to 20 year-olds then followed a downward trend, ending the study period at a low of 1,936 per 100,000. The number of summonses issued to 17 to 20 year-olds decreased from 1,086 in 2002 to 354 in 2017. Notably, summonses were the least common type of enforcement action levied against 17 to 20 year-olds at the beginning of the study period, but were the second most common by the end, when only felony arrests occurred at a higher rate.

Figure 27 displays the enforcement rates disaggregated by type of enforcement action for the 21 to 24 year-old age group.

Figure 27: Enforcement Rates by Type for 21 – 24 Year-Olds in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017
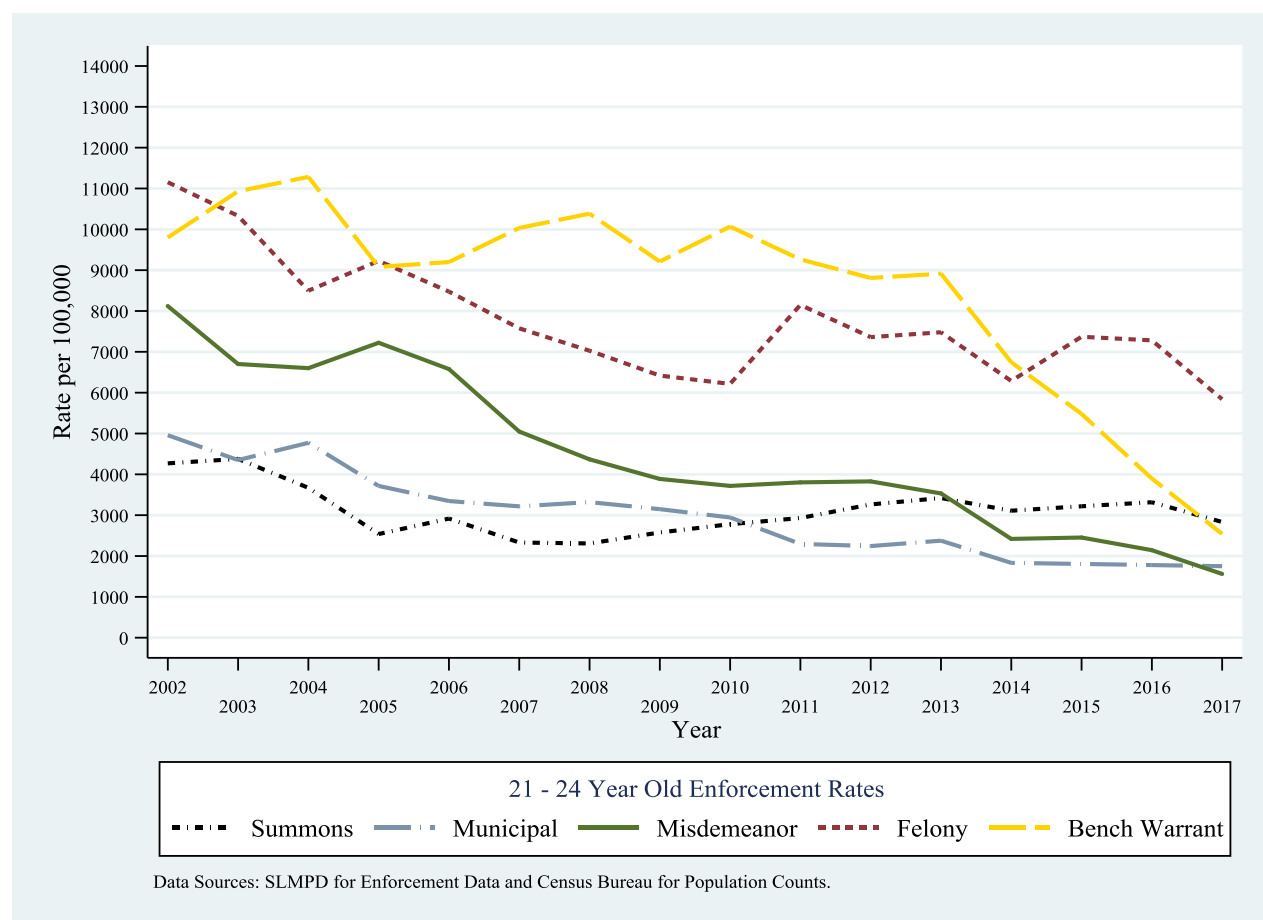
The 21 to 24 year-old age group followed a similar declining trend to the 17 to 20 year-olds for municipal arrests, beginning the study period at its peak rate of 4,959 per 100,000 (1,058 arrests) in 2002, and ending in 2017 at its lowest rate at 1,752 per 100,000 (377 arrests). This drop represents an overall decline of 65%.

At 82%, the decline in misdemeanor arrest rates for this age group was even steeper. For 21 to 24 year-olds, the arrest rate for misdemeanors in 2002 was 8,122 per 100,000, and it fell to 1,561 in 2017, when it became the least common type of enforcement action for this age group. This represents a decline in the number of misdemeanor arrests of 21 to 24 year-olds from 1,733 to 336.

Although the felony arrest rate for the 21 to 24 year-old age group declined as well, this drop (47%) was not as great as that observed for less serious arrest types. Felony arrests began the

study period at a rate of 11,154 per 100,000 (2,380 arrests) and, with the exception of 2005, declined steadily until reaching 6,216 arrests per 100,000. Post-2010, the felony arrest rate for 21 to 24 year-olds fluctuated from year-to-year, increasing in some, and falling or remaining relatively constant in others, before ending the study period at a low of 5,841 felony arrests per 100,000 (1,257 arrests).

For much of the study period, bench warrant arrests were the most common type of enforcement action for 21 to 24 year-olds. The rate of bench warrants arrests for the 21 to 24 year-old age group was 9,800 per 100,000 in 2002, increased to its peak of 11,284 in 2004, and then decreased to 9,080 per 100,000 in 2005. From 2005 until 2013, the bench warrant arrest rate fluctuated but remained relatively high and steady. After 2013, the rate for 21 to 24 year-olds declined sharply, and it ended the study period at a low of 2,542 per 100,000, which represents a 74% decline from 2002. The number of arrests of 21to 24 year-olds for bench warrants decreased from 2,380 in 2002 to 1,257 in 2017.

Summonses were the least common type of enforcement action for 21 to 24 year-olds in 2002, but by 2017 they had become the second most common, surpassed only by felony arrests. Like other forms of enforcement, the summons rate declined over the study period; however, it declined less sharply, falling by 34%. The rate at which summonses were issued to 21 to 24 year-olds was relatively high in 2002 (4,270 per 100,000), and then peaked in 2003 at 4,378 summonses per 100,000. The summons rate for 21 to 24 year-olds then followed a downward trend and reached its low for the study period at 2,308 summonses per 100,000 in 2008. The rate at which summonses were issued to 21 to 24 year-olds then increased until 2013, when it reached a second lower peak at 3,420 summonses per 100,000. It declined slightly from 2013 to 2014 before increasing until 2016. After 2016, the summons rate for 21 to 24 year-olds dropped again, ending the study period at 2,834 per 100,000. From 2002 to 2017, the number of summonses issued to 21 to 24 year-olds fell from 911 to 610.

Enforcement rates disaggregated by type of enforcement action are displayed in Figure 28 for the 25 to 34 year-old age group.

Figure 28: Enforcement Rates by Type for 25 - 34 Year-Olds in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
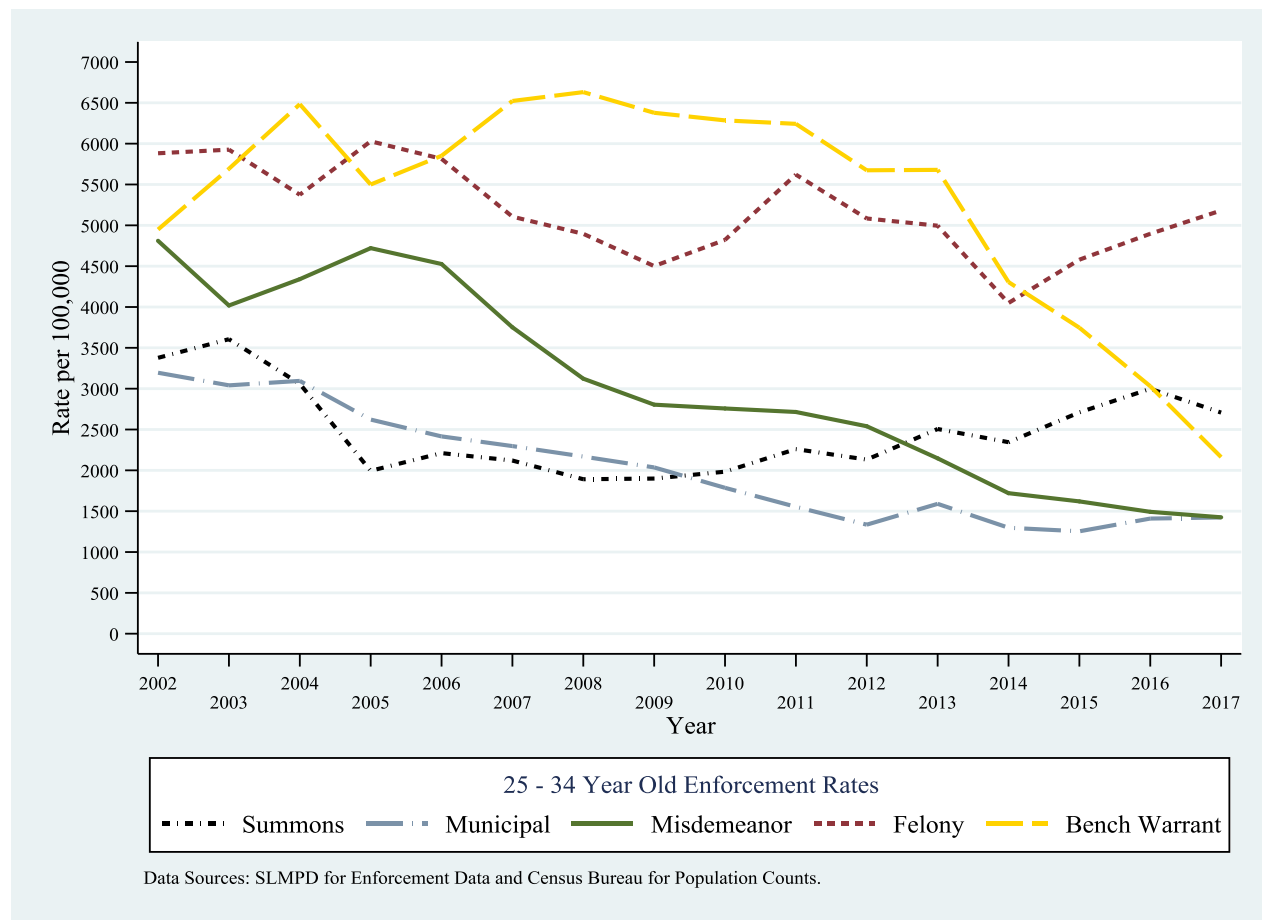
Municipal arrests were among the least frequent types of enforcement actions for 25 to 34 year-olds, as depicted in Figure 28. While there were a few slight increases during the study period, the municipal arrest rate for this group decreased by 55%, from 3,195 per 100,000 (1,782 arrests) in 2002 to 1,423 per 100,000 (807 arrests) in 2017.

In comparison, misdemeanor arrests for the 25 to 34 year-old age group showed an initial drop from 4,811 arrests per 100,000 in 2002 to 4,018 in 2003, before climbing to 4,721 arrests per 100,000 persons in 2005. After 2005, the arrest rate declined relatively steadily, reaching a low of 1,425 per 100,000 in 2017. This represents a 70% decline over the study period, or in terms of numbers misdemeanor arrests, a decline of 1,875 arrests (from a high of 2,683 arrests to a low of 808).

Felony arrests were one of the most prevalent types of enforcement actions for 25 to 34 year-olds over the study period. Relative to less serious types of arrests, felony arrest rates exhibited more fluctuations and a less consistent decline for 25 to 34 year-olds. Rates peaked in 2002 to 2003, 2005, and 2011 with 2005 having the highest rate of felony arrests (6,029 per 100,000) for 25 to 34 year-olds. The felony arrest rate was lowest for this age group in 2014 at 4,049 per 100,000. The felony arrest rate for 25 to 34 year-olds dropped by 12%, from 5,883 per 100,000 in 2002 to 5,182 per 100,000 in 2017. The change in the number of felony arrests over this period was relatively small, declining from 3,281 to 2,938 arrests.

The bench warrant arrest rate was relatively high for much of the study period for 25 to 34 year-olds. After beginning the study period at a rate of 4,949 per 100,000 (2,760 arrests), rates of bench warrant arrests increased to 6,483 in 2004, and then declined the following year to 5,500, before steadily climbing to a peak in 2008 at 6,631 arrests per 100,000. It is only after 2013 that bench warrants arrests began a consistent and sustained decline for 25 to 34 year-olds, ending the study period at 2,162 per 100,000 (1,226 arrests). From 2002 to 2017, the rate of this type of enforcement action for 25 to 34 year-olds decreased by 56%, and from its peak in 2008 to 2017, the decline was greater at 67%.

The rates at which summonses were issued to 21 to 24 year-olds began at 3,378 per 100,000 in 2002, increased to a maximum of 3,606 the following year, then declined until 2008, when it reached the low for the study period at 1,891 per 100,000 persons. The summons rate for the 25 to 34 year-old age group rose again after 2008, reaching its secondary peak (2,999 per 100,000) in 2016. The summons rate then declined to 2,707 per 100,000 by the end of the study period. Despite dropping by 20%, summonses were the second most common type of enforcement activity for 25 to 34 year-olds at the end of the study period. In absolute terms, the number of summonses that were issued to 25 to 34 year-olds decreased from 1,884 in 2002 to 1,534 in 2017.

Figure 29 displays enforcement rates by type of action for the 35 year-old and older age group.

Figure 29: Enforcement Rates by Type for 35 Years and Older Age Group in the City of St. Louis, 2002–2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
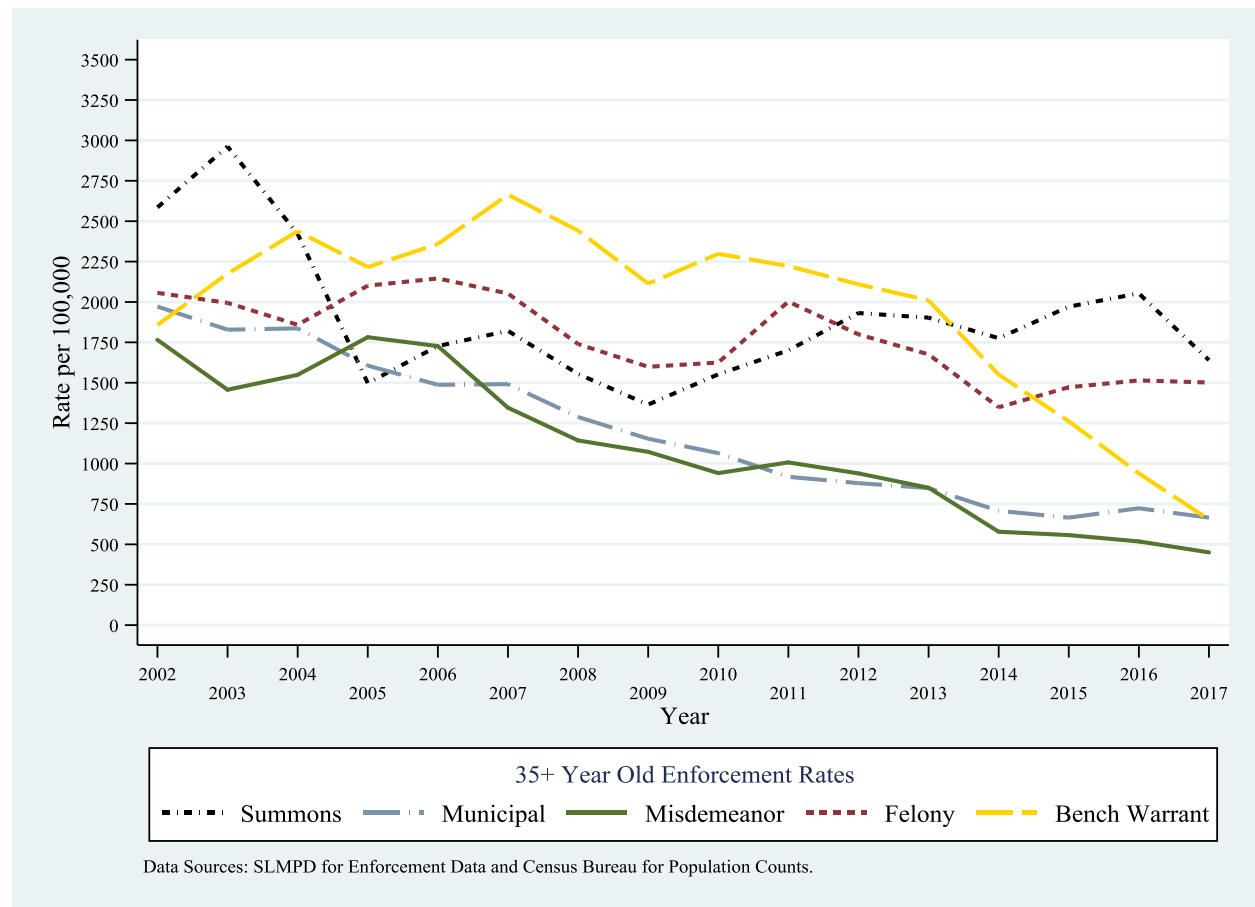
As depicted in Figure 29, rates of arrests for municipal and misdemeanor violations were roughly similar for the 35 and older age group, and were generally the least common type of enforcement action. The municipal arrest rate for this group began at 1,972 per 100,000 in 2002 and ended the study period at a rate of 665, a 66% decline. This represents a drop from 3,347 to 1,056 in the number of municipal arrests of the 35 and older age group.

Similar to municipal violations, the 35 and older misdemeanor arrest rate declined 72% over the study period, from 1,765 per 100,000 in 2002 to 450 per 100,000 in 2017. This decline corresponds to a drop from 2,997 to 715 in the number of misdemeanor arrests of those 35 and older.

Throughout the study period, felony arrests were more common for this age group than arrests for municipal violations and misdemeanors. Felony arrest rates declined 27% from 2002 to 2017, but the trend is more variable than observed for other types of offenses. The felony arrest rate for

those 35 and older began at 2,056 per 100,000 (3,491 arrests) in 2002, peaked at 2,146 per 100,000 (3,530 arrests) in 2006, and after reaching a second lower peak in 2011 of 2,002 per 100,000, ended the study period at a low of 1,501 per 100,000 (2,383 arrests).

The bench warrant arrest rate fluctuated at a relatively high level for the 35 and older age group until 2013, when, similar to other age groups, it began a steep decline. From 2002 to 2017, the bench warrant arrest rate declined 65%, from 1,858 to 653 per 100,000. When considered in terms of number of arrests, there were 3,154 bench warrant arrests for the 35 and older age group in 2002, 4,347 arrests at the peak in 2007, and 1,037 in 2017.

In contrast to the other age groups, summonses were the most common type of enforcement action levied against the 35 and older age group at both the beginning and end of the study period. There is, however, great variation in the summons rate, and summonses were less common than other types of enforcement in 2005. The summons rate began high (2,585 per 100,000) and peaked in 2003 (2,962 per 100,000 persons), before declining to a low of 1,498 per 100,000 in 2005. After 2005, the summons rate increased, but the changes were modest and the trend was variable year-to-year. At the end of the study period, summonses were issued to the 35 and older age group at a rate of 1,640 per 100,000, a decline of 37% from 2002. Between 2002 and 2017, the number of summonses that were issued to those 35 and older fell from 4,389 to 2,603.

Ratio of Enforcement Rates by Age

Figures 30 through 34 present the ratio of the rate of enforcement actions for each age group relative to the 35 and older group. These ratios are presented separately for each type of enforcement action.

Figure 30: Ratio of Rates of Municipal Arrests of 17-20, 21-24, and 25-34 Year-Old Age Groups to 35 and Older Age Group, 2002-2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
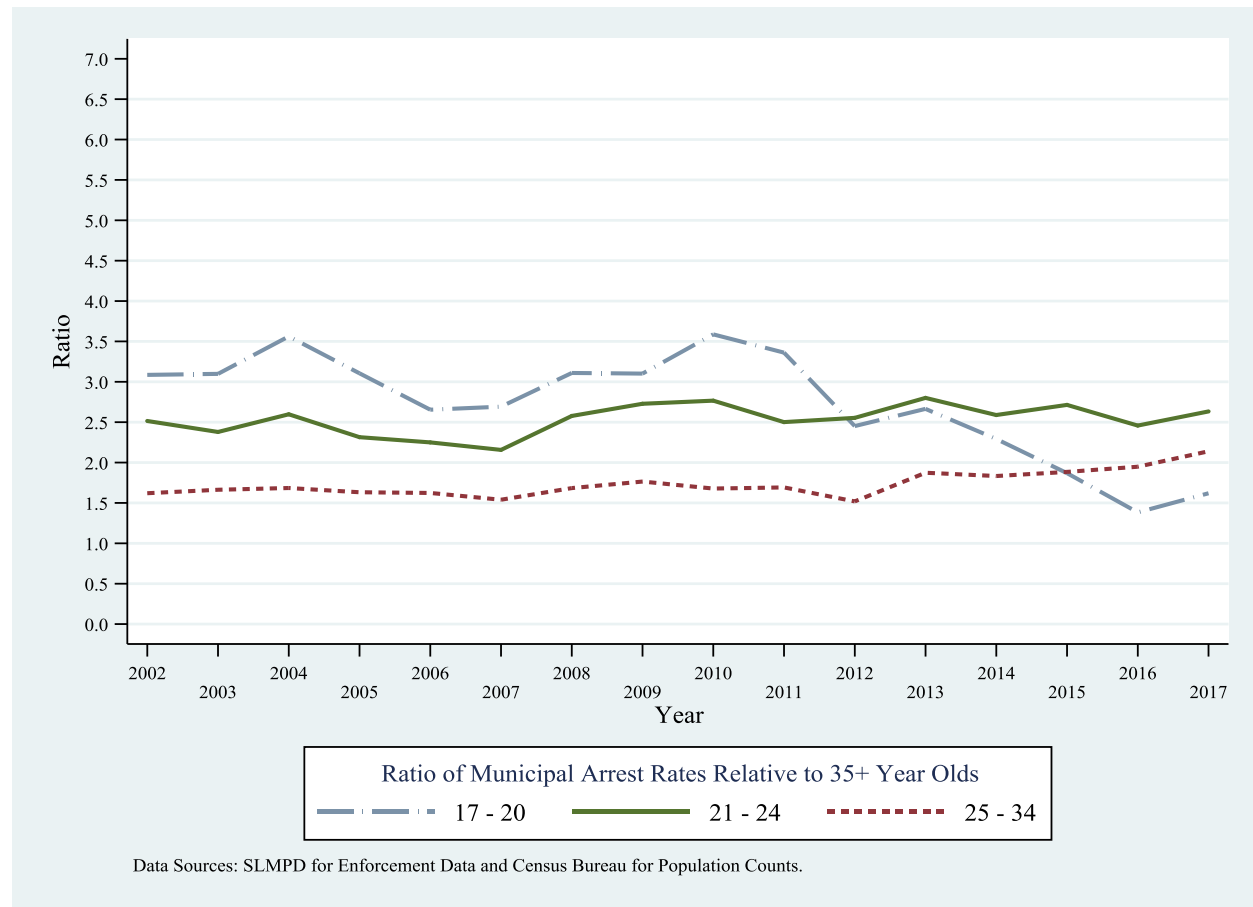
Figure 30 illustrates that, for the study period, all age groups had higher municipal arrest rates than the 35 and older age group as indicated by the fact that all the ratios are greater than 1. There is a slight increase from 2.5:1 to 2.6:1 in the ratio of the municipal violation arrest rate for 21 to 24 year-olds relative to the 35 and older age group. For 25 to 34 year-olds, the increase is slightly larger, from 1.6:1 to 2.1:1. The ratio of arrests for the youngest age group relative to the oldest age group exhibits sharp fluctuations, but declines over time, sometimes rather steeply. Notably, this ratio increases from 3.1:1 in 2002 to 3.6:1 in 2010. After 2011, the ratio declines sharply, and in 2017, there were 1.6 arrests of 17 to 20 year-olds for municipal violations for every one arrest of someone 35 and older, which is the lowest ratio of the three groups.

Figure 31 illustrates changes in the ratio of the misdemeanor arrest rate for the three younger age groups relative to the 35 and older age group.

Figure 31: Ratio of Rates of Misdemeanor Arrests of 17-20, 21-24 and 25-34 Year-Old Age Groups to 35 and Older Age Group, 2002 -2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.

As displayed in Figure 31, the ratio of arrests for misdemeanors for the three age groups relative to those 35 and older exhibited different patterns. The ratios for the 17 to 20 and 21 to 24 year-old groups started and ended at similar levels, with both declining from 2002 to 2017. For the youngest group, this decline was from 5.0:1 to 3.0:1, while for 21 to 24 year-olds it was from 4.6:1 to 3.5:1. In comparison, relative to the 35 and older group, the misdemeanor arrest rates for those who are 25 to 34 years old were relatively steady, increasing slightly from 2.7:1 to 3.2: 1 over the study period.

Figure 32: Ratio of Rates of Felony Arrests of 17-20, 21-24 and 25-34 Year-Old Age Groups to 35 and Older Age Group, 2002 -2017


Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
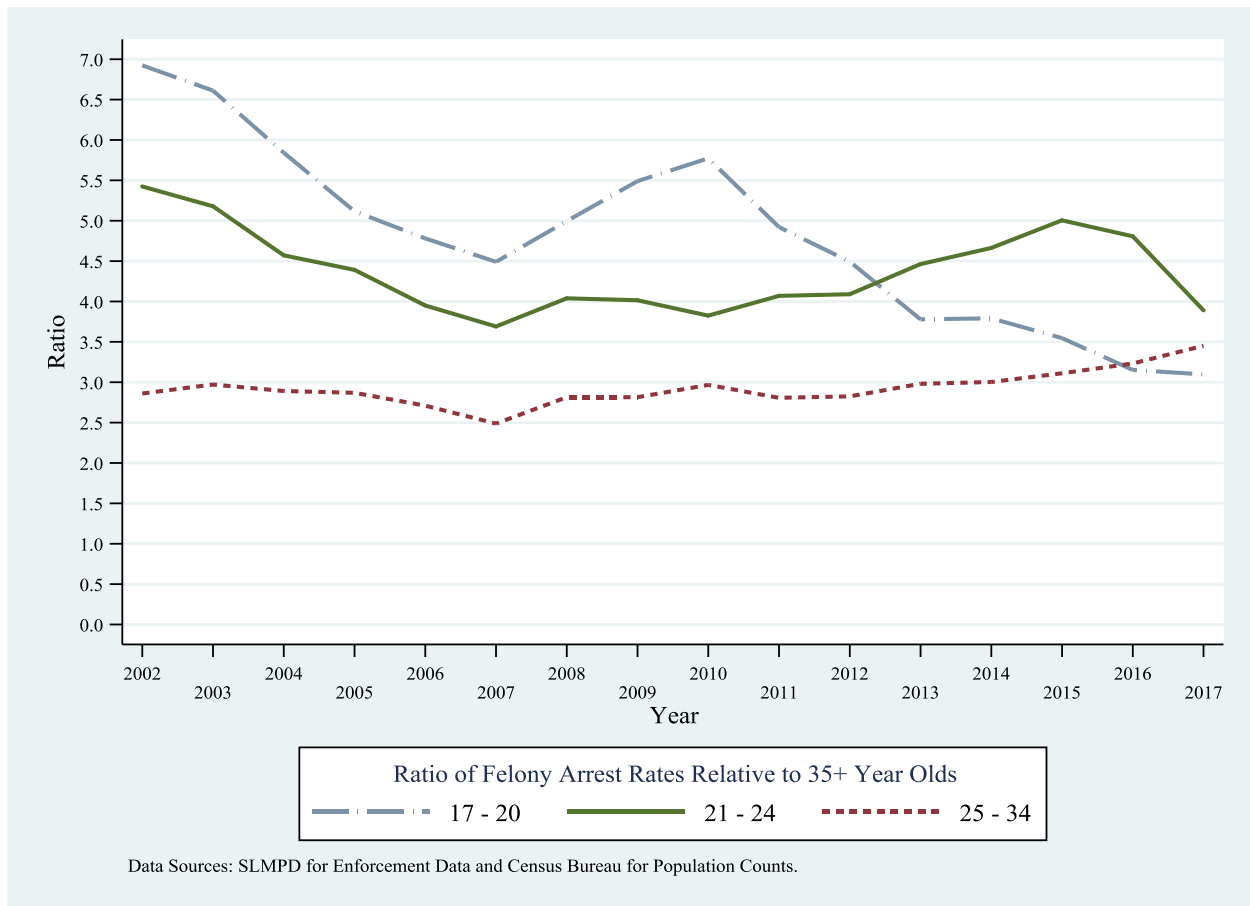
As displayed in Figure 32, the felony arrest rate ratio increased slightly for the 25 to 34 year-old group (from 2.9: 1 to 3.5:1) over the study period and decreased for the other two groups. Notably, 17 to 20 year-olds had the highest felony arrest rate relative to the 35 and older group at the start of the study (6.9:1) and the lowest at the end (3.1:1). The ratio for the 21 to 24 year-olds was 5.4:1 in 2002 and ended the study period at 3.9:1 in 2017.

The trends in the ratio of the rates of bench warrant arrests, which are presented in Figure 33, differ from those observed for the other custodial arrest groups.

Figure 33: Ratio of Rates of Bench Warrant Arrests of 17-20, 21-24 and 25-34 Year-Old Age Groups to 35 and Older Age Group, 2002-2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.

Relative to the 35 older group, 21 to 24 year-olds had the highest rate of arrests for bench warrants over the entire study period. These ratios, however, declined from 5.3:1 in 2002 to 3.9:1 in 2017. The youngest age group started the study period with the second highest ratio (4.6:1) and ended the study period at a much lower ratio than the other two groups (1.5:1). The ratio for the 25 to 34 year-olds remained relatively low, but increased over the study period. In 2002, the bench warrant arrest rate for this group was 2.7 times as high as the rate for those who are 35 or older and increased to 3.3 times as high in 2017.

Figure 34: Ratio of Rates of Criminal Summonses Issued to 17-20, 21-24 and 25-34 Year-Old Age Groups to 35 and Older Age Group, 2002-2017

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.
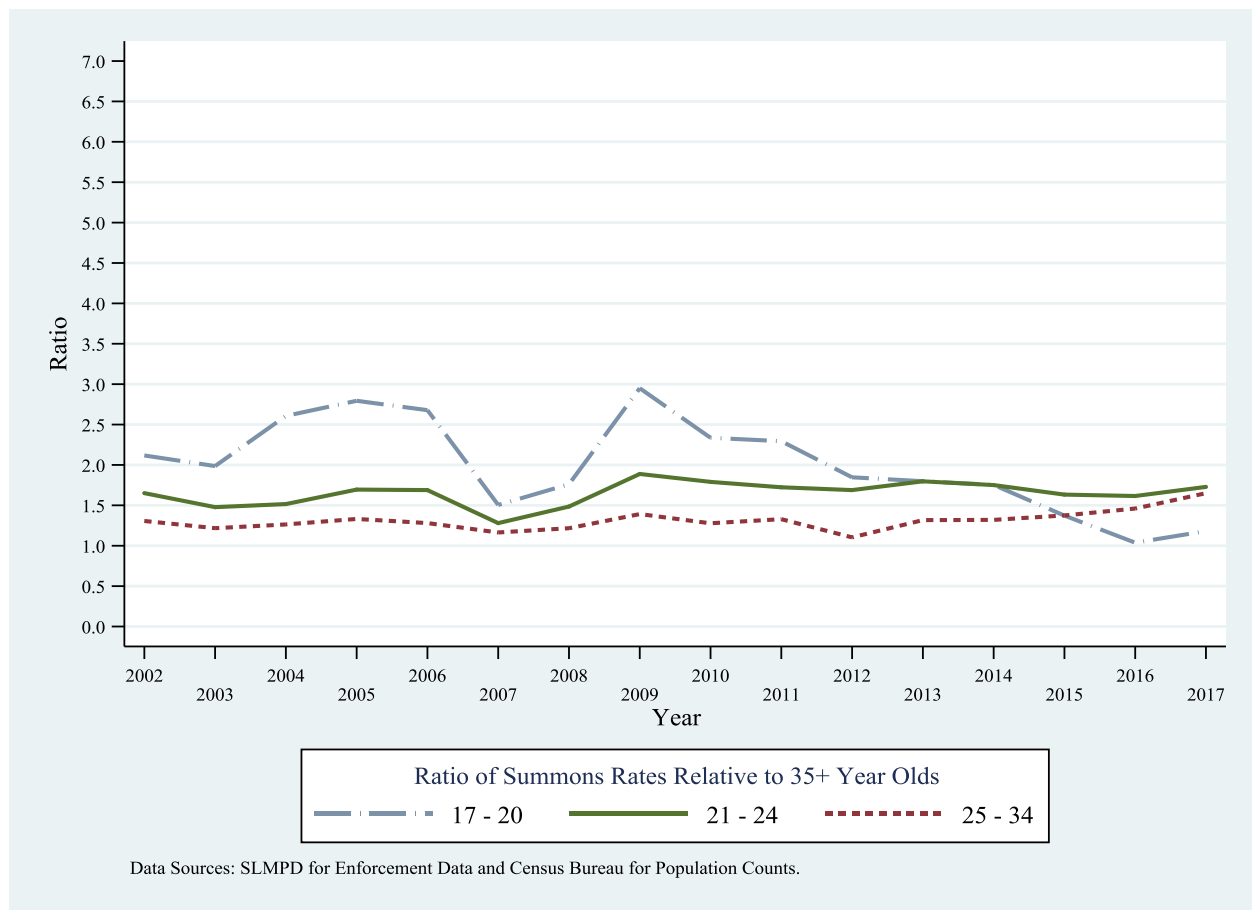
Figure 34 depicts the ratio of the rate at which summonses were issued for the three youngest age groups relative to the oldest age group. At the beginning of the study, 17 to 20 year-olds had the highest summons rate relative to the 35 and older group (2.1:1), but in 2017, they had the lowest (1.2:1), although the ratio fluctuated sharply over the study period. The 21 to 24 year-old group had summons rates that were 1.7 times those of the oldest age group at both the beginning and end of the study period. In comparison, the ratio of summonses for 25 to 34 year-olds increased slightly during the study period, from 1.3:1 to 1.7:1.

TRENDS FOR MOST COMMON CHARGE GROUPS FOR FELONY, MISDEMEANOR, AND MUNICIPAL ARRESTS

For each arrest, the most serious charge was identified using the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reporting Hierarchy Rule. The Hierarchy Rule ranks offense types from most to least serious.[12] The five most common charges top charges for the reporting period were identified separately for felonies, misdemeanors, and municipal violations. For each type of arrest (i.e., municipal, misdemeanor, and felony), the number of arrests for these five charges are displayed for 2002 to 2017. In addition, for each type of arrest, we present trends in the percent of arrests accounted for by each of the most serious charges groups for this same period.

Trends in Municipal Arrests for Most Common Charge Groups

The numbers of arrests for the five most prevalent charge groups are displayed for the years 2002 through 2017 in Figure 35. Figure 36 illustrates the percentage of municipal arrests accounted for by the five most prevalent charge groups from 2002 to 2017.

Figure 35: Number of Municipal Arrests for Most Common Charges, 2002-2017

Data Source: SLMPD for Enforcement Data.
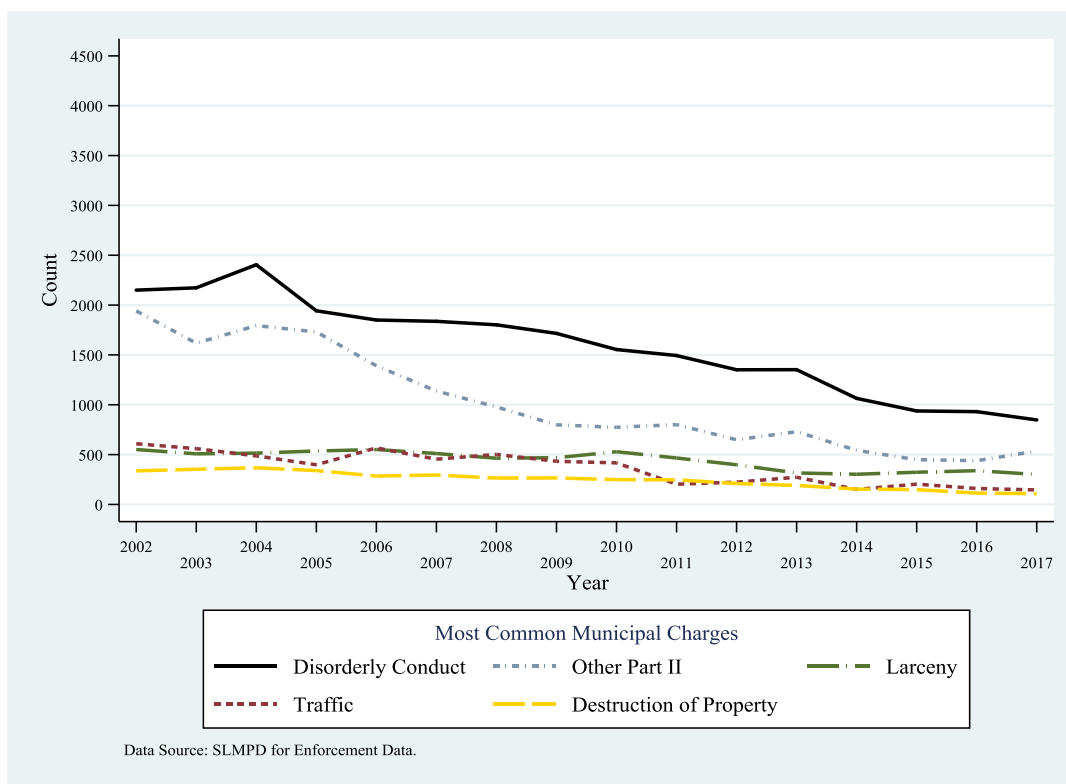
[12] The order of offense types from most to least serious is the following: 1. Criminal Homicide 2. Forcible Rape 3. Robbery 4. Aggravated Assault 5. Burglary 6. Larceny-theft (except motor vehicle theft) 7. Motor Vehicle Theft 8. Arson 9. Other Assaults 10. Forgery and Counterfeiting 11. Fraud 12. Embezzlement 13. Stolen Property: Buying, Receiving, Possessing 14. Vandalism 15. Weapons: Carrying, Possessing, etc. 16. Prostitution and Commercialized Vice 17. Sex Offenses 18. Drug Abuse Violations 19. Gambling 20. Offenses Against the Family and Children 21. Driving Under the Influence 22. Liquor Laws 23. Drunkenness 24. Disorderly Conduct 25. Vagrancy 26. All Other Offenses. SLMPD classifies traffic offenses as the least serious of the offense types.

As depicted in Figure 35, disorderly conduct was the most prevalent high charge for municipal arrests throughout the study period. The number of municipal arrests in which disorderly conduct was the most serious charge began the study high at 2,150, peaked at 2,405 in 2004, and then generally fell until reaching a minimum of 848 in 2017. From 2002 to 2017, the number of municipal arrests in which disorderly conduct was the most serious charge decreased by 61%.

Other part II offenses were the second most common charge for municipal arrests. This group of charges includes all charges that are not captured by the other categories (see footnote 12). Municipal arrests in which the most serious charge was for other part II offenses peaked in 2002 at 1,942. After a notable drop in 2003, the number of municipal arrests for other part II crimes increased in 2004, before beginning a period of relatively steady decline until reaching a low of 439 in 2016. There was slight uptick in arrests for this group of offenses in 2017, when there were 535 municipal arrests for other part II offenses. In 2002, street demonstration and trespassing on private property constituted the most common municipal charges in the other part II crimes charge group, making up 41% and 42% of other part II crimes, respectively. In 2017, the most common municipal charges for other part II offenses were trespassing on private property (44%), followed by failure to disperse for pedestrian traffic (25%), violating a neighborhood order of protection (13%), and resisting arrest (11%).

Municipal arrests for other offense groups were fewer in number, and they also ended the study period at lower numbers than they began at in 2002. For example, there were 551 municipal arrests in which larceny was the most serious charge in 2002, but only 301 in 2017. Similarly, the number of municipal arrests for traffic violations decreased from 609 to 146 during this same period, and the number of municipal arrests for destruction of property declined from 337 to 108.

Not only was disorderly conduct the most common municipal charge, but as indicated in Figure 36, arrests for this charge also made up the highest percentage of municipal arrests throughout the study period. In 2002, disorderly conduct was the most serious charge for 29% of municipal arrests. This percentage steadily increased until 2012, when they made up 44% of all municipal arrests. Post-2012, arrests for disorderly conduct comprised a declining percentage of all arrests for municipal violations, and by 2017, 35% of municipal arrests were for charges of this type.

Figure 36: Percentage of Municipal Arrests Accounted for by Most Common Charges, 2002-2017

Data Source: SLMPD for Enforcement Data.
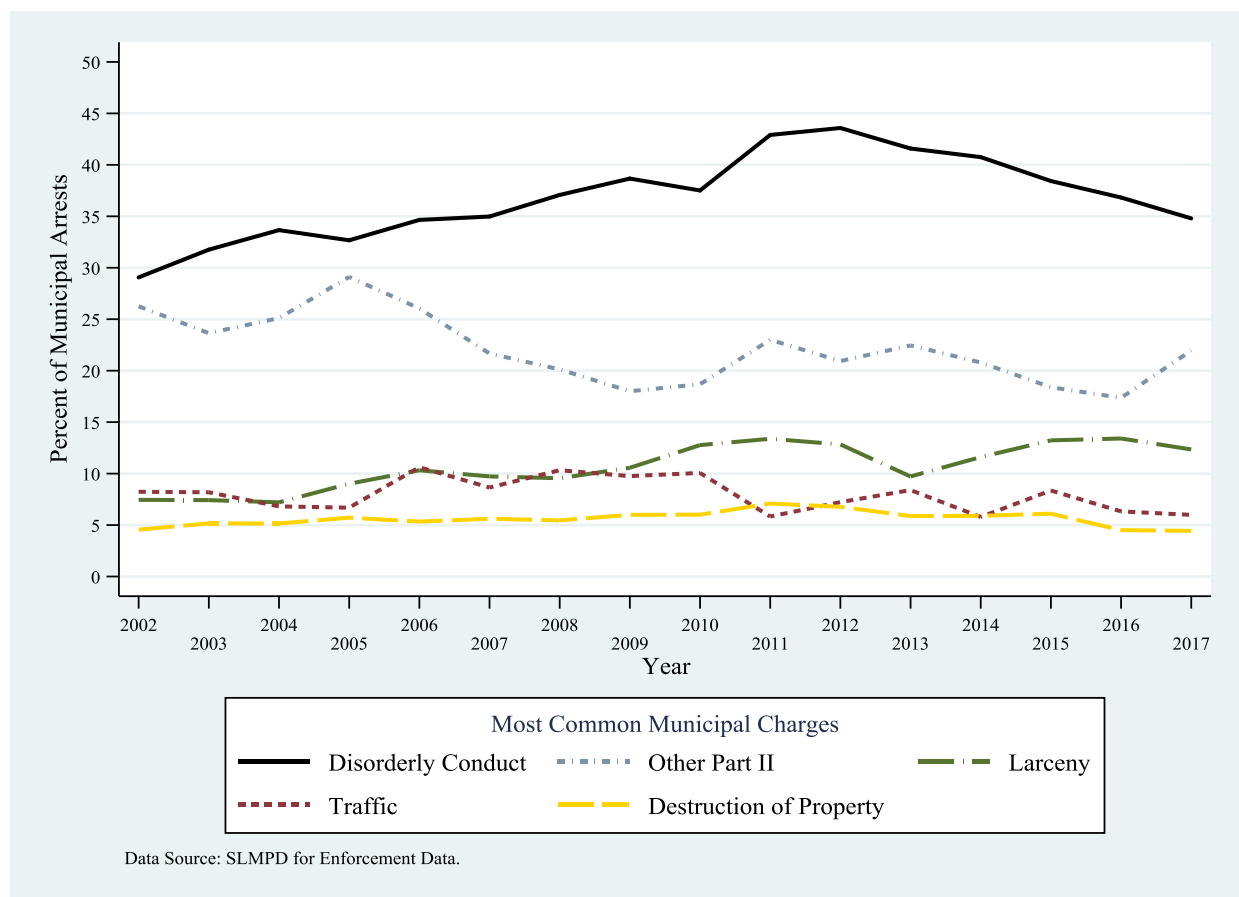
After beginning the study period at 26%, the percentage of arrests in which an other part II offense was the most serious charge peaked in 2005 at 29%. This percentage then declined until 2009, when they accounted for 18% of all municipal arrests. Subsequently, other part II offenses once again increased until reaching a lower secondary peak of 23% in 2011. The percentage of arrests accounted for by this charge group then fluctuated around this level until 2014, at which point the percent declined to a low of 17% in 2016, before increasing to 22% in 2017.

Arrests for other charge groups accounted for a much smaller percentage of municipal arrests. The relative contribution of larcenies to the municipal arrest rate generally increased over time

from 7% in 2002 to 12% in 2017. The percentage of municipal arrests in which a traffic violation was the most serious charge was relatively steady and fluctuated between 6 % and 11%, and in 2017, they accounted for a slightly smaller percentage of municipal arrests (6%) than in 2002 (8%). Similarly, there was little variability in the destruction of property trend line, which made up between 4% and 7% of all municipal arrests during the study period.

The number of misdemeanor arrests for the five most common UCR charge types are displayed in Figure 37, and Figure 38 illustrates the percentage of misdemeanor arrests accounted for by the five most prevalent charge groups for 2002 to 2017.

Figure 37: Number of Misdemeanor Arrests for Most Common Charges, 2002-2017

Data Source: SLMPD for Enforcement Data.
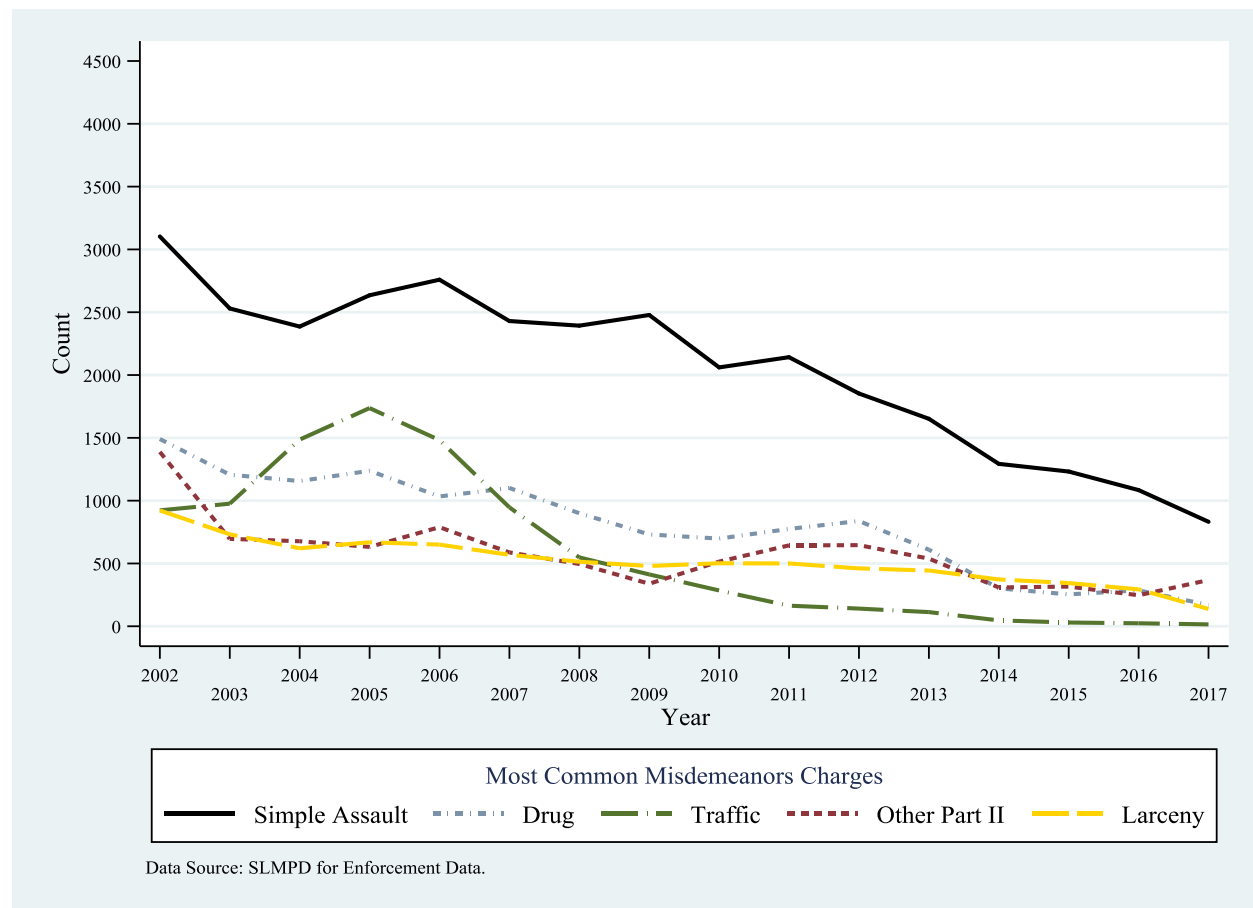
Simple assault was the most prevalent charge group for misdemeanor arrests throughout the study period, although the number of arrests in which simple assault was the most serious charge declined steeply (73%) from 3,103 in 2002 to 832 in 2017.

In 2002, drug arrests were the second most common misdemeanor arrest, and their numbers declined relatively steadily over the study period from 1,491 in 2002 to 170 in 2017, an overall decline of 89%. [13]

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[13] In 2013, Board Bill 275 decriminalized the possession of 35 grams or less of marijuana in the City of St. Louis, making possession of small amounts of marijuana an ordinance violation rather than a misdemeanor (see Appendix A).

Arrests for traffic offenses surpassed drug arrests as the second most common misdemeanor charge in 2004, before declining relatively steeply. There were 923 misdemeanor arrests for traffic violations in 2002, 1,737 arrests at the peak in 2005, and only 15 arrests at the end of the study period in 2017. The number of misdemeanor arrests for traffic violations decreased 99% from the peak in 2005 to 2017.

Misdemeanor arrests for other part II offenses fell sharply from a high of 1,388 in 2002 to 696 in 2003. From 2004 onward, the trend fluctuated with lower peaks observed in 2006 (789 arrests) and 2012 (646 arrest). Misdemeanor arrests for other part II offenses were at a low of 247 in 2016, and ended the study period slightly higher at 368. In 2002, misdemeanor arrests for other Part II offenses were primarily for trespassing (42%) and driving with a revoked license (24%). In 2017, the most common other part 2 charges were trespassing (55%), followed by violating an order of protection for an adult (20%), and resisting/interfering with an arrest (10%).

The number of misdemeanor larceny arrests declined steadily over time from 922 in 2002 to 138 in 2017.

As displayed in Figure 38, simple assault accounted for the largest percentage of misdemeanor arrests throughout the study period. While the number of arrests for simple assault declined from 2002 to 2017, the percentage of misdemeanor arrests that were for simple assault followed the opposite trend. In 2002, simple assaults made up 34% of misdemeanor arrests, and this percentage increased to 47% in 2009, where it remained relatively high and steady throughout the rest of the study period.

Figure 38: Percentage of Misdemeanor Arrests Accounted for by Most Common Charges, 2002-2017
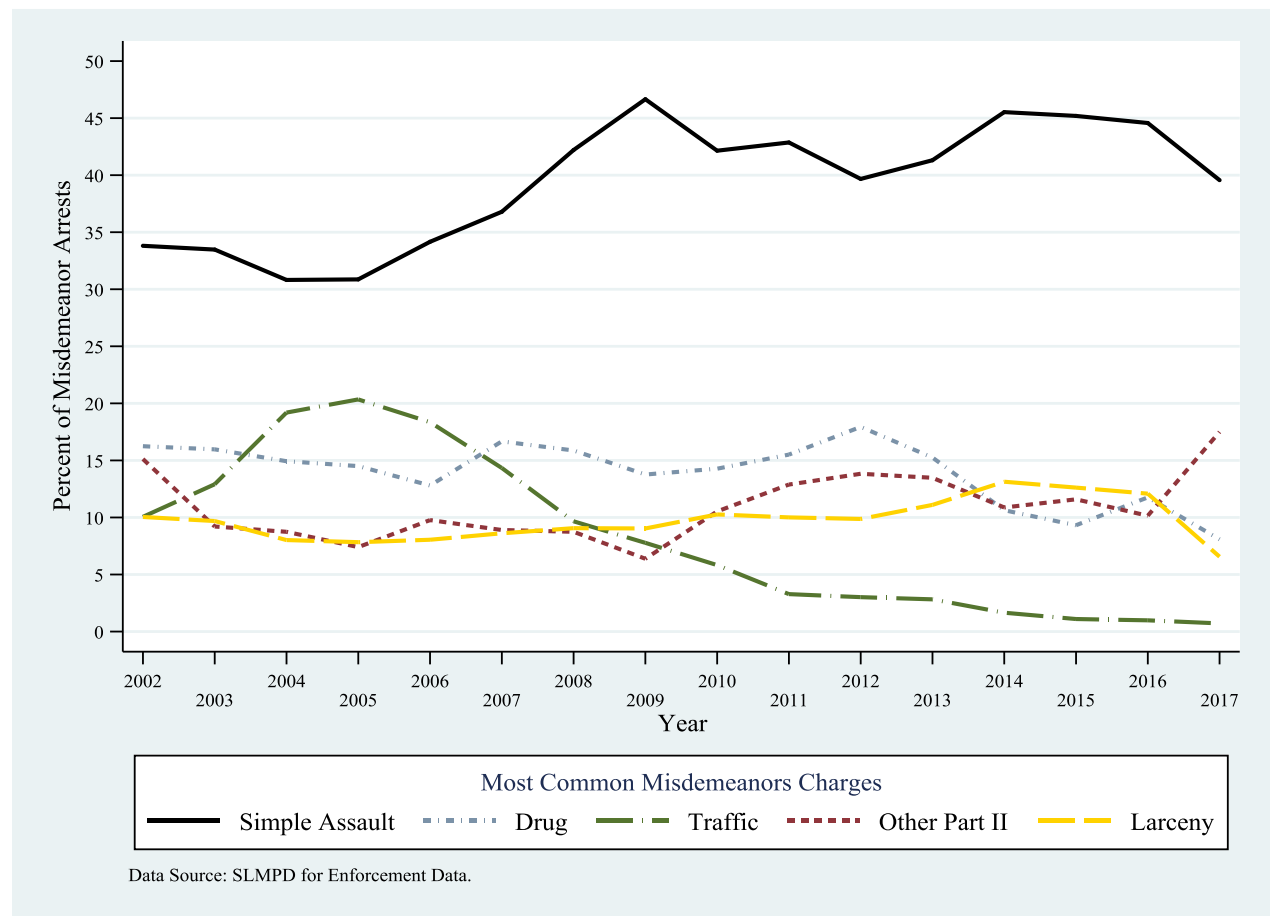
In 2002, drug arrests represented the second highest percentage of misdemeanor arrests. The percentage of misdemeanor arrests that were drug-related remained relatively steady from 2002 until 2013 (between 13% and 18%), and then decreased to a low of 8% in 2017.

Traffic offenses made up 10% of all misdemeanor arrests in 2002. This percentage increased sharply and reached a peak of 20% in 2005. It then declined steadily until 2017, when traffic offenses accounted for less than 1% of misdemeanor arrests.

Other part II offenses made up 15% of misdemeanor arrests in 2002. The percentage and raw number trends were relatively similar until 2016, when the percentage of misdemeanor arrests that were for other part II offenses rapidly increased from 10% to 17% in 2017.

In 2002, larceny arrests made up 10% of misdemeanor arrests. Larcenies accounted for their greatest percentage of misdemeanor arrests (13%) towards the end of the study period in 2014 and 2015, after which the percentage declined sharply to a low of 7% in 2017.

Trends in Felony Arrests for Most Common Charge Groups

Figure 39 displays trends in the number of felony arrests for the five most common charge groups from 2002 to 2017. The percentage of felony arrests accounted for by the five most prevalent charge groups for 2002 to 2017 are displayed in Figure 40.

Figure 39: Number of Felony Arrests for Most Common Charges, 2002-2017

Data Source: SLMPD for Enforcement Data.
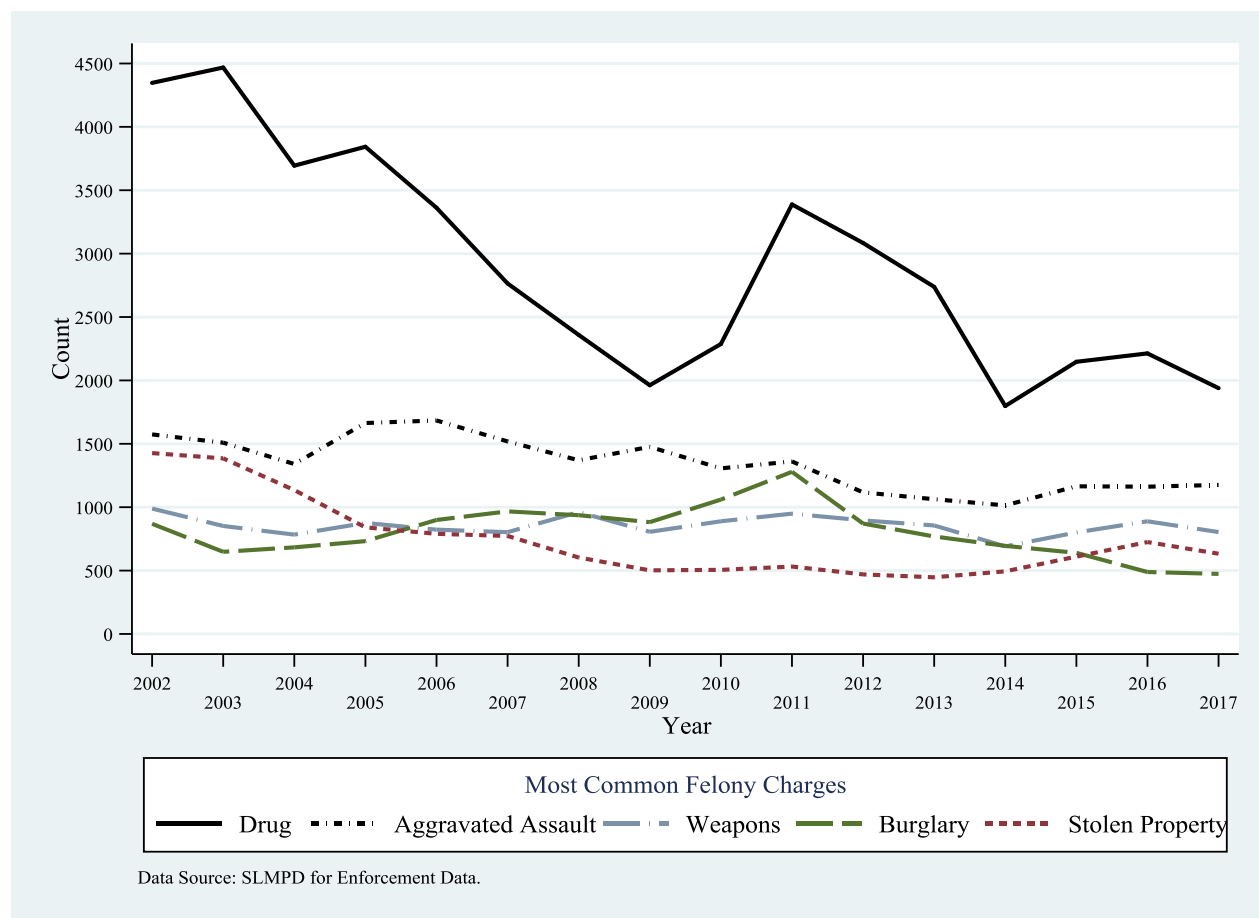
The most common charge group for felony arrests was drugs. In 2003, when felony drug arrests were at their peak, 4,468 felony arrests had a drug charge as the most serious charge. Felony drug arrests declined from 2003 to 2009, when there were 1,962 drug arrests. After 2009, felony arrests for this charge once again began to climb, reaching a second peak in 2011 of 3,388 arrests, before declining to a low of 1,798 arrests in 2014. Felony drug arrests increased slightly post-2014 and ended the study period at 1,939.

Aggravated assault was the second most common type of charge for felony arrests. The number of felony arrests for this charge varied little across years. In 2002, there were 1,574 felony aggravated assault arrests, and in 2017 there were 1,176 arrests of this type. During the study

period, the number of felony arrests for aggravated assault fluctuated between a high of 1,684, which was observed in 2006, and a low of 1,014, observed in 2014.

The number of felony burglary arrests followed a similar downward trend, declining from 869 arrests in 2002 to a low of 474 arrests in 2017. Felony arrests for burglaries peaked in 2011 at 1,279.

Felony arrests for weapons violations declined slightly over time and ranged between 989 (in 2002) and 801 (in 2015) and ended the study period at 804.

The greatest number of felony stolen property arrests for the study period occurred in 2002 at 1,427 arrests, and the fewest (447 arrests) in 2013. At the end of the study period in 2017, there were 633 felony arrests for stolen property.

As indicated in Figure 40, drug charges accounted for the highest percentage of felony arrests throughout the study period. Drug charges accounted for 36% of felony arrests in 2002, peaked the following year at 39%, and then dropped sharply to a low of 24% in 2009. After 2009, the percentage of felony arrests in which the most serious charge was for drugs increased to 34% in 2012, and then ended the study period on a general decline, accounting for 26% of all felony arrests in 2017.

Figure 40: Percentage of Felony Arrests Accounted for by Most Common Charges, 2002-2017
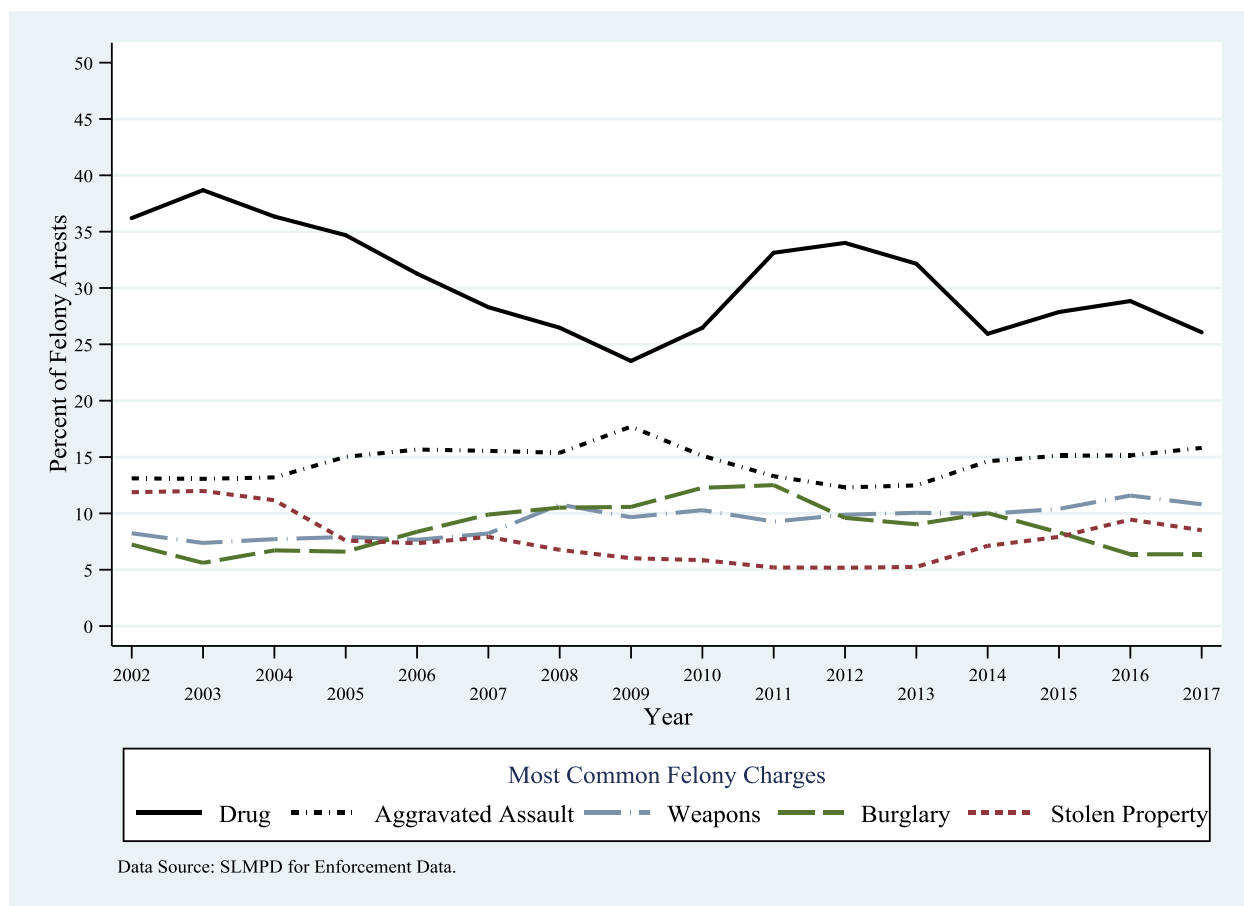
Aggravated assault arrests were the second most common type of felony arrest. Aggravated assault arrests made up about 13% of felony arrests from 2002 through 2004, before slowly increasing to a peak of 18% in 2009. After 2009, the percent of aggravated assault arrests declined to 12% in 2012, where it remained for the next year. After 2013, the percentage of felony arrests in which aggravated assault was the most serious charge increased slightly, ending the study period at 16%.

Arrests for other types of felony charges were less prevalent and fluctuated more modestly over time. For example, arrests for weapons offenses made up 8% of felony arrests in 2002, gradually increased over time to a peak of 12% in 2016, and ended the study period slightly lower at 11%.

The percentage of felony arrests in which burglary was the most serious charge gradually increased from 7% in 2002 to its peak of 13% in 2011. After 2011, burglaries accounted for a declining percentage of felony arrests, ending the study period at 6%. In comparison, the trend for stolen property arrests followed a U-shape, making up 12% of felony arrests in 2002, dipping to a low of 5% in 2011, then remaining steady until 2014, when the percentage increased and ended the study period at 9% of all felony arrests.

RATIO OF VIOLENT FELONY ARRESTS TO VIOLENT FELONY CRIMES

Examining changes in the ratio of violent felony arrests to violent felony crimes provides an opportunity to explore how arrests have changed over time taking into account fluctuations in crime. Figure 41 displays the number of violent felony arrests per 100 violent felony crimes. Violent felony arrests include arrests for which the top charge was homicide, robbery or aggravated assault. Violent felony crime counts are based on the FBI data for the same crimes.

Figure 41: Number of Violent Felony Arrests per 100 Violent Felony Crimes, 2002–2017

Data Source: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and FBI for Crime.
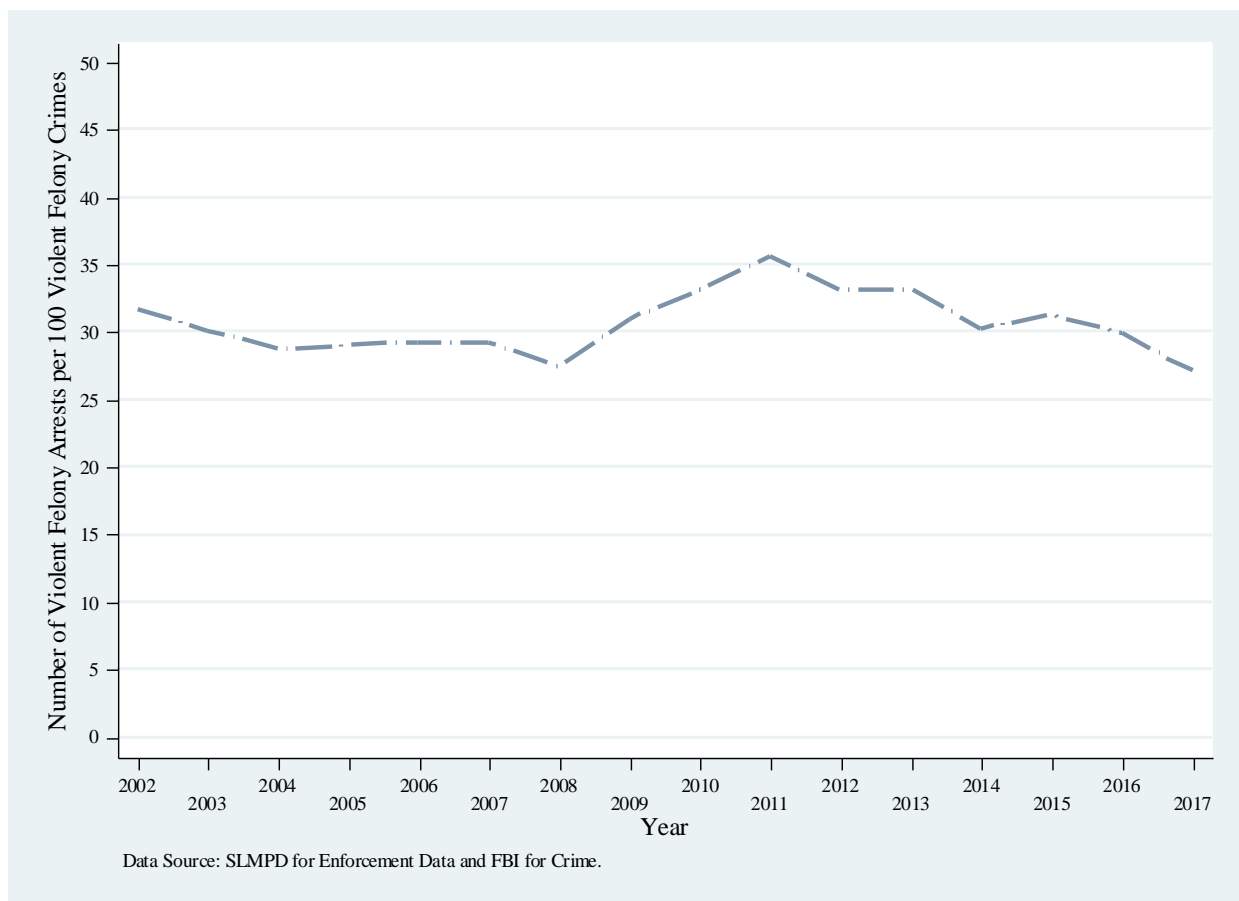
In 2002, there were 32 violent felony arrests per 100 violent felony crimes. This ratio then declined to 29 in 2004 and fluctuated between 27 and 29 from 2004 to 2008. The number of violent felony arrests for every 100 violent felony crimes then increased and reached a peak of 36 in 2011, after which it generally declined, ending the study period at 27 arrests per 100 violent felony crimes.

In summary, at least for violent crime, much of the decrease in felony arrests between 2002 and 2017 resulted from corresponding declines in felony offenses. Whether the same is true for non-violent felony arrests and arrests for misdemeanors and municipal violations is unknown.

CONCLUSION

This report describes trends in five types of enforcement actions in the City of St. Louis from 2002 through 2017. The goal of this report is to provide a comprehensive picture of law enforcement activities over a sixteen year period. The report examines trends in felony, misdemeanor, and municipal arrests, arrests for bench warrants, and summonses-in-lieu of arrest. We also present trends by citizen sex, age, and race in order to describe differences in the nature of police interactions across demographic groups. Trends in the most common charges for each type of arrest are presented to provide insight on the types of crimes that are driving changes in enforcement actions over time.

While the picture that emerges is complex, several important findings are worthy of note.

1. Total enforcement rates have declined steadily over the past sixteen years. In 2017, there were 26,540 fewer enforcement actions than in 2002, and the enforcement rate declined 55% over the study period from 17,474 to 7,862 per 100,000 residents of the City of St. Louis. The greatest one-year decline (20%) occurred between 2013 and 2014.

2. Arrests for felonies and bench warrants were the most common law enforcement actions over most of the study period; however, the bench warrant arrest rate declined steeply after 2013. Arrests for municipal violations were generally the least common type of law enforcement action.

3. There was substantial variation over the study period, but all types of enforcement fell from 2002 to 2017. Declines were greatest for municipal (66%), misdemeanor (76%), and bench warrant arrests (68%). The decline in bench warrant arrests was particularly pronounced after 2013. Arrests for felonies and summonses declined by approximately one third over the study period.

4. Males had higher rates of enforcement than females for all types of enforcement actions over the study period. Both male and female enforcement rates declined from 2002 to 2017, but the decline for males (58%) was greater than that for females (46%). Sex differences in the rate of enforcement declined over the study period. In 2002, there were approximately 5 enforcement actions taken against a male for every action initiated against a female, but by 2017, this ratio was approximately four-to-one.

5. Blacks were consistently subject to higher rates of enforcement relative to Whites. Black males had the highest enforcement rates, Black females and White males had comparable trends for much of the study period, and White females had the lowest rates of enforcement. There was a decline in race differences in the enforcement rates over the study period. In 2002, for every one enforcement action taken against a person who was White, there were almost five enforcement actions taken against Blacks. This ratio declined to just over 2-to-1 in 2017. This drop was accelerated in the post-2013 period.

6. The likelihood of contact with law enforcement varied by age. Individuals ages 17 to 20 and 21 to 24 were the most likely to have contact with the police for most of the study period, and

individuals aged 35 and older had enforcement rates that were consistently lower than those observed for the city as a whole. The rates of enforcement for the 17 to 20 year-old age group declined 77% from 2002 to 2017. Other age groups experienced drops in the combined enforcement rate, but the relative decline was smaller.

7. Trends in felony, misdemeanor, and municipal violation arrests were driven by a small number of crime types. Disorderly conduct was the most prevalent type of municipal arrest, simple assault was the most common misdemeanor arrest, and felony arrests were driven largely by drug crimes.

8. From 2002 through 2017, the ratio of felony violent arrests to felony violent crimes remained relatively stable. Therefore, at least for violence, the drop in felony arrests reflects a corresponding decrease in felony crime in addition to possible changes in enforcement patterns.

The goal of the report is to provide an empirical framework for understanding law enforcement actions in the City of St. Louis. This is the first report to explore trends in enforcement for the City of St. Louis over an extended period of time. As part of the Research Network on Misdemeanor Justice, we anticipate that this report will be one in a series of documents designed to provide local policymakers with data to inform policy decisions and to aid the community in understanding changes in the operation of the criminal justice system. The team is currently working on a series of cross-city comparisons to provide a broad picture of trends in law enforcement actions in multiple communities.
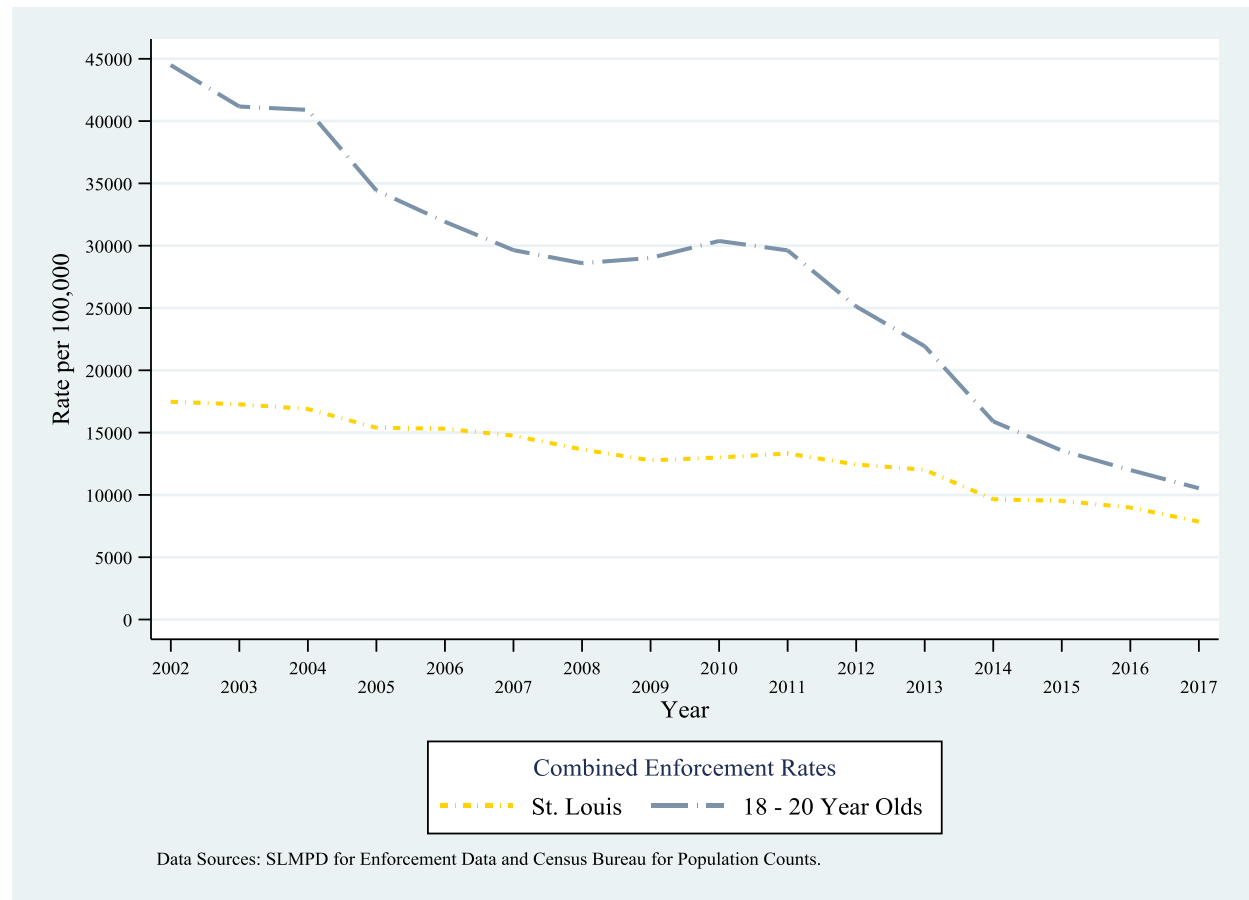
Although great care was taken in these analyses, any research document of this type should be interpreted in light of potential data limitations. First, the trends only reflect law enforcement actions of the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. Data are not reflective of the St. Louis region and are not necessarily generalizable to other communities. Second, the trends capture the number of enforcement actions, not the number of different people who were subject to these actions. It is possible that a small number of people account for a substantial proportion of the contacts with law enforcement. Finally, a sizable proportion of arrests made by SLMPD are of persons who reside outside of the city, and that proportion increased during the study period. Non-residents are not included in the denominator of the arrest rates shown in this report. For this reason, caution should be taken when interpreting rates.

In conclusion, the long term goal of the collaborative project is to provide assistance to local policymakers in developing empirical data on the operations of the criminal justice system in the City of St. Louis. It is our hope that these analyses provide information that can be used to enhance public safety, target scarce resources, and improve relationships between criminal justice system actors and the community. We hope to continue to build on this collaboration and to extend this type of data analysis to other criminal justice agencies.

Appendix A: Timeline of Changes in SLMPD and Criminal Justice Context in St. Louis

Year	Change
2002	Quality of Life Court implemented
2003	Quality of Life Court halted
2004	
2005	
2006	Weekly Compstat meetings initiated
2007	
2008	Chief Isom succeeds Chief Mokwa as Chief of Police Decentralization of specialized units from Headquarters to Districts
2009	ShotSpotter implemented
2010	House Bill 1695 - Limits municipal court jurisdiction in DWI cases by requiring that if a driver has two or more previous intoxication-related cases or alcohol-related law enforcement contacts the case must be handled in circuit (state) court
2011	
2012	Chief Dotson succeeds Chief Isom as Chief of Police SLMPD/UMSL Hotspot Experiment Number of officers employed by SLMPD reduced by 80 through attrition
2013	SLMPD changes from state to city control. Board Bill 275 decriminalized the possession of 35 grams or less of marijuana in St. Louis City, making possession of small amounts of marijuana an ordinance violation rather than a misdemeanor.
2014	Re-districting from nine to six districts Increase in Warrant "Amnesty Days"
2015	Missouri Senate Bill 5 passed ushering in court reform Body Camera Pilot
2016	Expansion of Castle Doctrine in Missouri
2017	Rewrite of Missouri State Criminal Code Change in Missouri gun laws allows carrying of a concealed firearm without a permit Commissioner Dotson retires and Lt. Col. O'Toole appointed Acting Commissioner New Circuit Attorney Kim Gardner takes office replacing Jennifer Joyce

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.

Appendix C: Enforcement Rates by Type for 18 to 20 Year-Olds

Enforcement Rates for 18 - 20 Year-Olds

· · · Summons — · — Municipal —— Misdemeanor ···· Felony — — Bench Warrant

Data Sources: SLMPD for Enforcement Data and Census Bureau for Population Counts.