The Costs of Crime to Victims

By Patsy A. Klaus, BJS Statistician

Crime victims in 1992 lost $17.6 billion in direct costs, according to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). These costs included losses from property theft or damage, cash losses, medical expenses, and amount of pay lost because of injury or activities related to the crime. The crimes included in this figure are rape, robbery, assault, personal and household theft, burglary, and motor vehicle theft. Crimes include attempts as well as completed offenses.

- Economic loss of some kind occurred in 71% of all personal crimes. These crimes included rape, robbery, assault, and personal theft. For crimes of violence (rape, robbery, assault) economic loss occurred in 23% of victimizations. Household crimes of burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft involved economic loss in 91% of all victimizations.

- In 1992, a total of 33,649,340 victimizations occurred. Twenty-three percent of all U.S. households were victimized in 1992; the total number of households experiencing one or more victimizations was 22,093,000.

- Economic loss occurred in 13,371,400 personal crimes and 13,515,140 household crimes—a total of 26,886,550* victimizations. In 4.4% of these victimizations, the loss was of no monetary value but involved the loss of something that the victim regarded as having value.

- Among crimes that involved loss—
  - About 12% of personal crimes and 24% of household crimes involved economic losses of $500 or more.
  - For personal crimes, 11% of whites and 15% of blacks lost $500 or more. For household crimes, 23% of whites and 25% of blacks had such losses.
  - In robberies at least $250 or more was taken from the victim in about a fourth (26%) of all victimizations. Black victims lost this amount in 41% of the victimizations, and white robbery victims, in 19%.
  - Lost property was not recovered in 89% of personal crimes (90% for whites; 89% for blacks) and 85% of household crimes in 1992 (85% for whites; 82% for blacks).

The average loss per crime increased 1975-92

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mean loss (1974-92)</th>
<th>Average annual dollar loss per crime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>$600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>$430</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: During the 1975-92 period, according to the Current Population Survey, household money income adjusted for inflation remained relatively unchanged. Data are interpolated for 1976-79 and 1982-83.

Median loss for crimes of theft, 1992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Median Loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All crimes</td>
<td>$26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes involving loss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>$89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor vehicle</td>
<td>3,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Data include only direct property losses and do not include medical expenses or other costs.
Victims receiving medical care, by type of crime and where care was received, 1992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of crime</th>
<th>Number of victims receiving medical care</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>At the scene</th>
<th>At the victim's, neighbor's, or friend's house</th>
<th>Health unit or first-aid station</th>
<th>Doctor's office or clinic</th>
<th>Emergency room at hospital or clinic</th>
<th>Hospital</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crimes of violence</td>
<td>1,419,940</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>2.3%*</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>66,070</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>.0%</td>
<td>.0%</td>
<td>.0%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>47.7%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>355,570</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>1.0%*</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>996,280</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>2.9%*</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding. Respondents may have received medical attention at more than one location; however, percent distribution is based on locations of medical care.

*Estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases.

- About 31% of all victims of crimes of violence (robbery and assault) in 1992 sustained some physical injury. Thirty percent of whites and 32% of blacks sustained injury.

- For crimes of violence involving injuries in which medical expenses were known, 65% involved costs of $250 or more. These findings were similar for whites (65%) and blacks (66%).

- In 1992, 69% of the victims who were injured had health insurance or were eligible for public medical services. Seventy percent of all whites and 66% of all blacks had insurance coverage or eligibility for public medical services.

- About 8% of all victims lost time from work in 1992 as a result of a crime of violence and 6% as a result of a household crime.

- About the same percentages of blacks and whites lost time from work for personal crimes (whites, 5%; blacks, 6%). However, when time was lost, 67% of blacks lost 1-5 days, compared with 43% of whites. For personal crimes of theft, 77% of blacks lost 1-5 days, compared with 31% of whites.

The economic costs to victims reported in this crime data brief include only those that had occurred before the interview, which was 6 months or less after the crime. Medical costs may continue to accumulate for months or years after a victimization; these are not included. The victim is not specifically asked about psychological counseling, although some victims may have included this as a medical cost. Increases to insurance premiums as a result of filing claims, decreased productivity at work, moving costs incurred when moving as a result of victimization, intangible costs of pain and suffering, and other similar costs are also not included.

February 1994, NCJ-145865
Please put me on the mailing list for:

☐ Law enforcement reports — National data on State and local police and sheriffs' departments: operations, equipment, personnel, salaries, spending, policies, and programs

☐ Federal statistics — Federal case processing: investigation through prosecution, adjudication, sentencing, incarceration

☐ Drugs and crime — Sentencing and time served by drug offenders, drug use at time of crime by jail inmates and State prisoners, and other quality data on drugs, crime, and law enforcement

☐ Justice expenditure and employment — Spending and staffing by Federal/State/local governments and by function (police, courts, corrections, etc.)

☐ Privacy and security of criminal history information and information policy — New State legislation; maintaining and releasing intelligence and investigative records; data quality

☐ BJS bulletins & special reports — Timely reports of the most current justice data

☐ State felony courts — Defendant demographics and criminal history; pretrial release, prosecution, adjudication, and sentencing; State felony laws; indigent defense

☐ Corrections reports — Results of sample surveys and censuses of jails, prisons, parole, probation, and other corrections data

☐ National Crime Victimization Survey reports — The only ongoing national survey of crime victims

☐ Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics (annual) — Broad-based data from 150+ sources (400+ tables, 100+ figures, subject index, annotated bibliography, addresses of sources)

☐ Send me a signup form for the NIJ Catalog (free 6 times a year), which abstracts both private and government criminal justice publications and lists upcoming conferences and training sessions in the field.

To be added to any BJS mailing list, please fill in this page and fax to (410) 792-4358 or fold, stamp, and mail to:

BJS Clearinghouse
P.O. Box 179, Dept. BJS-236
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701-0179

You will receive an annual renewal card. If you do not return it, we must drop you from the mailing list.

To order copies of recent BJS reports, attach a list of the titles and NCJ numbers of the reports you desire.

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Bureau of Justice Statistics

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use $300

Washington, D.C. 20531

Crime Data Brief