

# Jail Bookings & Restriction Effects



**SALT LAKE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Chief Mike Brown

475 South 300 East | PO Box 145497

Salt Lake City, UT 84114

801.799.3100



## Table of Contents

About the Data .....	2
Introduction .....	2
Operation Diversion .....	2
Jail Restriction Implementation.....	2
Jail Bookings: Five Years 2012-2016 .....	3
Figure 1: Year-to-Year .....	3
Yearly & Monthly Trends.....	3
Figure 2: Month-to-Month Trends – 2015 to 2016.....	3
Figure 3: Forecasting Arrest Trends 2015 & 2016.....	4
Seasonal Trends.....	4
Figure 4: 2015 & 2016 Summer vs. Winter .....	5
Crime Rates.....	5
Part I Offenses .....	5
Quality of Life Crimes .....	6
Table A: Quality of Life Offenses by Year .....	6
Population & Per Capita .....	7
Figure 5: Quality of Life Crimes Per Capita .....	7
Jail Restriction Tracking .....	8
Table B: Pre & Post Jail Restriction Bookings .....	8
Summary.....	8

Any figures contained herein represent preliminary counts of original police incidents, calls for service, and/or arrests. Due to the statute-driven, changing nature of crime classification and area boundaries over time, the figures contained may not fully coincide with data shown in other areas of SLCPD’s crime statistics page. Differences are reflective of the departmental procedures or policies that were in place at the time the events occurred and the date the data was compiled. Data may also be approximate in relation to indicated areas. Results are generally classified by primary offense categories as defined by the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) system. However, data is not subjected to any other standards set forth under UCR and may not be distinguished as “attempted” or “completed”. Although every reasonable verification effort is made, the accuracy of any data is subject to the constraints of the report generation process as well as the manner, format, and point in time of any query. The SLCPD accepts no liability for decisions made—or not made—based on information contained herein.



# SALT LAKE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

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## About the Data

- Time Period:** The data included in this publication is for January 1 to December 31 of each listed year and includes jail bookings and crime/offense data.
- Jurisdiction:** All arrests made and crime/offense data reported occurred within the jurisdiction of the Salt Lake City Police Department and/or handled by a sworn Law Enforcement Officer of the Salt Lake City Police Department.
- Offenses & Reporting:** As a National Incident Based Reporting Agency (NIBRS), all numbers contained herein are representative of NIBRS incident-based numbers; which means that each offense is counted separately, even if the offenses occur on one incident. This provides for a broader and more complete illustration of what crime is really occurring in the area.

## Introduction

The Salt Lake City Police Department has increased our efforts through diversion, targeted enforcement, directed patrol, and community outreach throughout Salt Lake City, with specific emphasis on the Rio Grande area. These efforts aim to improve the quality of life for business owners, tourists, the homeless population, residents, other citizens of Salt Lake City, and anyone else visiting our city. While these efforts have proven to be successful *to a degree*, the department has reached a plateau in the progress of crime reduction due to the inability of officers to utilize the Salt Lake County Jail, at their professional discretion, to book offenders into jail, due to current jail restrictions.

## Operation Diversion

In the fall of 2016, as one of the efforts to curb criminal activity without the use of the jail system, the Salt Lake City Police Department – in coordination with the Unified Police Department and drug treatment centers – conducted three operations over a period of nine days, aiming to redirect offenders into treatment, rather than incarceration.

The initial operation resulted in 52% choosing treatment, 33% going to jail, and the remainder receiving citations, being released to family members, or being transported to hospitals. As part of the ongoing operation, a total of 210 people overall have been involved. As of January 9<sup>th</sup>, 68 remain in treatment, 79 left treatment, 52 returned to the street, and 1 successfully completed residential treatment.

## Jail Restriction Implementation

Salt Lake County Jail implemented a new policy at the Salt Lake County Jail that restricted the booking of certain classes of offenses, dependent upon current jail population levels<sup>1</sup>. Excluding arrests for domestic violence, protective orders, DUI-related arrests, child abuse, negligent vehicular homicide, and any charge or warrant that, if convicted, would qualify the arrestee to register as a sex/kidnapping offender, the following restrictions were put into place on March 1, 2016:

- Females: Phase 3 / Step 9 (OCR and booking restrictions for MA, MB, MC)  
Males: Phase 4 / Step 10 (OCR and booking restrictions for MA, MB, MC, and OCR F3)

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<sup>1</sup> Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office Special Order #16-001, Issued 2/24/2016

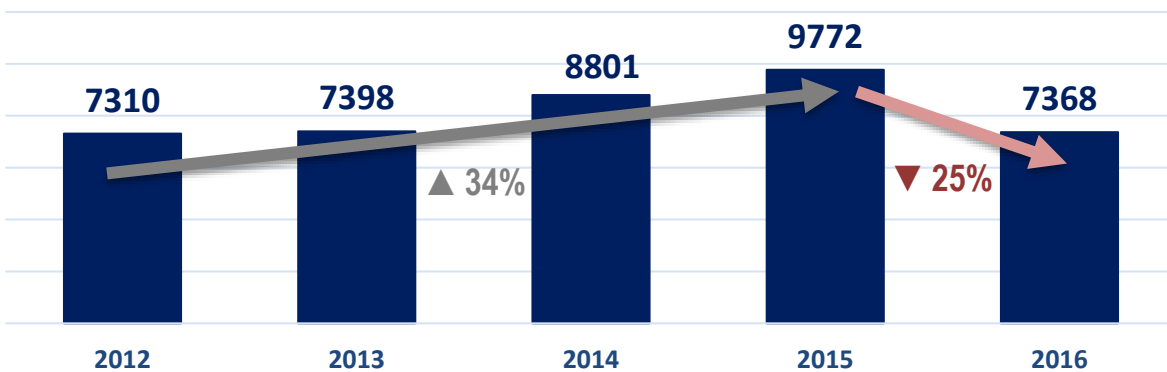


## Jail Bookings: Five Years 2012-2016

From 2012 to 2016, arrest bookings were steadily increasing. From 7,310 arrests in 2012 to 9,772 arrests in 2015, arrests rose 34% total, for an average of 10% over those four years. In 2016, arrests dipped to a four year low of 7,368.

While arrests in the year 2011 were lower than this (7,216 – not pictured), there has not been this significant of a drop in a one year period in at least the last ten years. The decrease between 2015 and 2016 hit a ten-year low of -25% while all other decreases in the past decade from year-to-year were no greater than -10%.

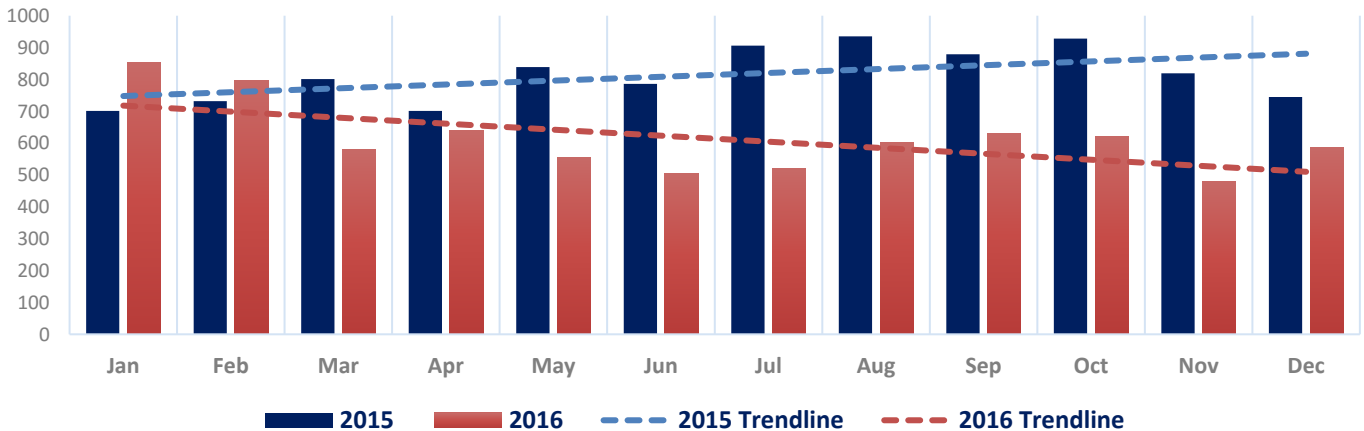
Figure 1: Year-to-Year



## Yearly & Monthly Trends

With the steady increase in arrests from 2012 to 2015, and before the jail restrictions, it was probable that the rise would continue and the monthly trends for these years was evidence of that. However, once the jail restrictions were put into place, the trend reversed itself. As illustrated below, 2015 shows a steady upward trend, characteristic of the past four years, while 2016 shows a drastic downward trend.

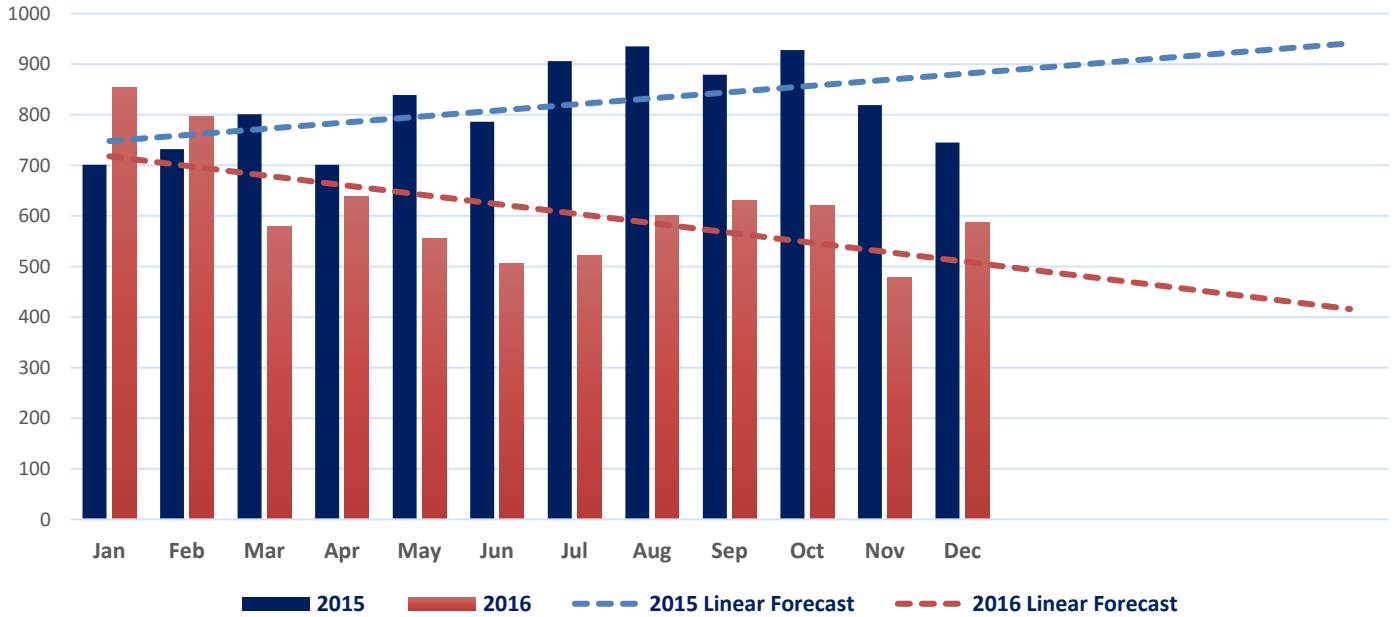
Figure 2: Month-to-Month Trends – 2015 to 2016





Going a step further, historical data can be used to forecast future trends. Comparing the trends and forecasts for 2015 and 2016 displays the distinct point in time when jail restrictions were implemented (March 1, 2016), leading to the downward linear forecast and providing a dark look into the future of declining arrests.

Figure 3: Forecasting Arrest Trends 2015 & 2016



## Seasonal Trends

The Bureau of Justice Statistics states that “with the exception of robbery, violent and household property crimes exhibit a pattern of recurrent seasonal fluctuations in their trends”<sup>2</sup>. It is logical, then, to expect that arrests would follow the same seasonality. Arrests and overall crime typically follow these seasonal fluctuations according to temperature.

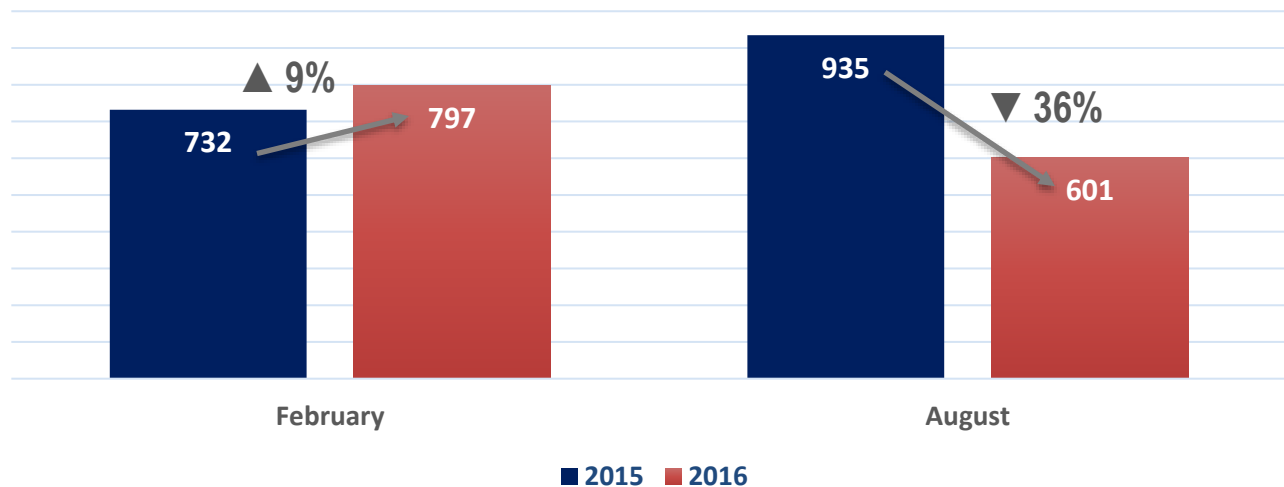
Using the ICMA Center for Public Safety Management’s <sup>3</sup> standard use of February as an illustration of a winter month and August as an illustration of a summer month (both are months with weather that is typical of the seasons and neither have any major holidays), the seasonal changes are displayed.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics; Seasonal Patterns in Criminal Victimization Trends, June 2014

<sup>3</sup> International City/County Management Association, *An Analysis of Police Department Staffing*.



Figure 4: 2015 & 2016 Summer vs. Winter



February shows an increase of 9% between 2015 and 2016, which was right on track with the linear forecast shown previously. However, once jail restrictions were implemented, August showed a drop of 36%, highly uncharacteristic for that season and month.

## Crime Rates

While unable to book individuals into jail who have broken the law due to jail restrictions, the Salt Lake City Police Department has managed to bring the citywide crime rate down by a staggering 7% overall in the year 2016 for Part I Offenses. This marked decrease in crime is due to a variety of different tactics and strategies utilized by the department in order to maintain order and improve the quality of life. Left without the option of incarceration, the department has used directed patrol, multiple special operations, community outreach, targeted enforcement, an increase of patrol officers, additional foot patrols, and social workers.

## Part I Offenses

While Part I Offenses may show a successful decrease of 7% in 2016, even with jail bookings dropping by 25%, the correlation between the crime rate and the bookings can be deceiving without delving further into the details.

Part I Offenses include homicide, aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, motor vehicle theft, larceny, forcible sex abuse, and arson, all offenses exempt from the jail restrictions. While admittedly serious offenses, these are not the types of crimes that occur most frequently in our neighborhoods, downgrading the quality of life of our communities.



# SALT LAKE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Quality of Life Crimes

The crimes most commonly responsible for bringing down property values, driving customers away from local businesses, decreasing the feeling of safe neighborhoods, and causing general discontent in the community are ones that fly ‘under the radar’ in regards to crime statistics and reporting. They’re neither tracked by State and Federal agencies, nor are they used as official crime statistics for any agency across the country.

Defined by the Salt Lake City Police Department as “Quality of Life” offenses, these crimes include:

- Illegal Drug Violations
- Drunkenness
- Forgery
- Private Property Damage
- Prostitution/Commercial Sex
- Retail Theft/Shoptlift
- Simple Assault
- Trespassing

All of these are offenses that fall under the jail restrictions, preventing officers from booking offenders into jail for committing these crimes.

**The inability to incarcerate offenders for these crimes creates an atmosphere of indifference, fosters an appearance of lawlessness, and destroys the community’s trust in law enforcement and pride in their neighborhoods.**

Table A: Quality of Life Offenses by Year

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Drug Abuse</b>	3750	3697	3625	3368	3759	3807	5633	6570	8049
<b>Drunkenness</b>	1960	2192	1905	2010	2158	1774	1797	1437	1678
<b>Forgery</b>	570	495	525	439	390	452	604	569	713
<b>Private Property Damage</b>	1013	970	1082	958	991	971	968	1044	1051
<b>Prostitution</b>	406	492	377	460	45	92	163	166	186
<b>Retail Theft</b>	2570	2423	2434	2173	2827	3295	3760	3792	3903
<b>Simple Assaults</b>	4493	4404	4301	3986	4250	4069	4052	4371	4429
<b>Trespass</b>	2362	2264	2038	2112	3877	3398	3425	3372	3311
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17124</b>	<b>16937</b>	<b>16287</b>	<b>15506</b>	<b>18297</b>	<b>17858</b>	<b>20402</b>	<b>21321</b>	<b>23320</b>
<b>PER CAPITA</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>120</b>



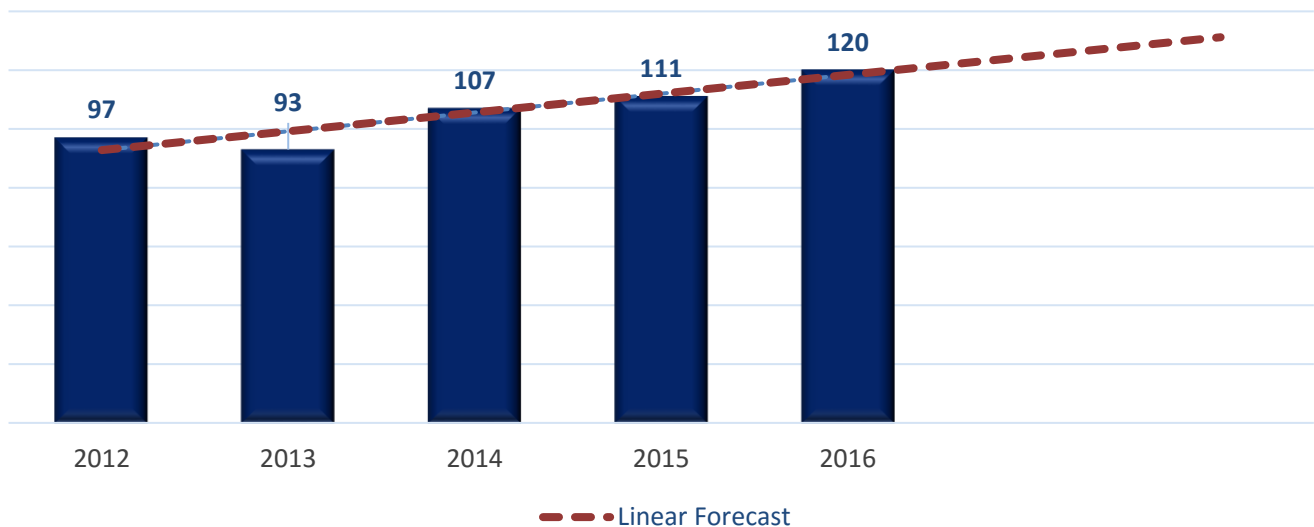
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Nearly all offenses above show increases over the years. These are the types of crimes that bring repeat offenders back to the area time and time again; presumably because they know that they are not at risk for going to jail. With officers doing their best to enforce these laws without use of the jail system by issuing citations, even when multiple citations pile up in the court system for repeat offenders, these offenders also know they run no risk of being booked when those citations turn to warrants either.

## Population & Per Capita

With a metropolitan statistical area growing at the fourth-fastest rate among the 100 largest metro areas in America<sup>4</sup>, Salt Lake City’s per capita crime rate shows a minimal, yet steady, increase of quality of life offenses, as noted in Table A and illustrated below.

Figure 5: Quality of Life Crimes Per Capita



\*Per Capita = Per 1,000 Residents

While it is expected to see the crime rate rise parallel to the population<sup>5</sup> growth, you can see from the linear forecast above that the rate of quality of life crime is rising at a more rapid pace than the population. This, while only counting the resident population and not the daytime commuter population, which adds to the city by 72% each day<sup>6</sup>, and would only prove to show a more drastic upward trend.

In 2014, the quality of life crime rate had risen 12% over the previous year. In response to this rise, the Salt Lake City Police Department, in 2015, booked the highest number of arrestees into jail in the last ten years, bringing the quality of

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.forbes.com/sites/erincarlyle/2016/03/08/americas-fastest-growing-cities-2016/#755d6bc47056>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.biggestuscities.com/city/salt-lake-city-utah>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.westernplanner.org/transportation-articles/2016/10/30/salt-lake-city-by-foot-bike-and-transit>





life crime rate down 8%. However, with the recent implementation of jail restrictions, this rate has again begun to steadily increase.

## Jail Restriction Tracking

In the seven months after jail restrictions were implemented, the Salt Lake City Police Department began to track and analyze the effects of the restrictions on the crime rate and recognized a need for tracking the number of offenders that could not be booked into jail due to the restrictions. In September 2016, the code was activated in the department's Computer Aided Dispatch system (CAD) which allowed for officers to note when they were unable to take a subject to jail, specifically because of the restrictions. Four months into the study, the numbers have been telling.

Table B: Pre & Post Jail Restriction Bookings

<b>Pre-Jail Restriction Monthly Average (Sep-Jan 2014-2015)</b>	656
<b>Post-Jail Restriction Monthly Average (Sep-Jan 2015-2016)</b>	469
<b>Average % Difference</b>	▼ 29%
<b>Average Monthly Jail Restrictions</b>	234

The number of jail restrictions entered by officers, shows that on average each month, 234 people who have committed crimes and have been located and stopped by officers, are unable to be booked into jail because of the restrictions. This means that out of all of the subjects who should be booked into jail, only approximately 67% of them can actually be booked, leaving 33% of criminals on the street, free to continue to commit their crimes. These numbers do not account for those subjects with warrants and who are known offenders of open criminal cases who are not stopped by officers, even when officers see them, simply because there is nothing the officers can do. While not documented, had those numbers been added in, the illustrated effect would prove to be even worse.

## Summary

The Salt Lake City Police Department wholeheartedly believes that diversion, rehabilitation, community outreach, and public education are generally much better options than incarceration, but only when they are relevant and applicable. Without the capability to book offenders into jail – specifically for the aforementioned quality of life crimes – officers are left without any means of authoritative presence, which in turn breeds disorder and an attitude of wanton disregard for the law and the community by repeat and known offenders who are in no danger of legal repercussions. This chain reaction produces a widespread distrust of the police department, city personnel, and elected officials resulting in a disenchanting community as a whole due to the perception that laws can be broken without punishment.