

## 2006 Queens County Crime Rates Remain At Historic Low

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced that, according to preliminary statistics compiled by the New York City Police Department, crime in Queens County continued to drop in 2006. The downturn includes a 10.6 percent drop in homicides, from 94 in 2005 to 84 last year--the lowest since 1967. Queens County is the only borough to note a decrease in homicides last year.

Brown added, "Auto theft has long been a benchmark in measuring our effectiveness in combating crime. In 1991, when I first took office, there were some 52,000 cars stolen in Queens County. Last year we were less than 5,000--a decrease of over 90 percent."

Brown continued, "Queens County has witnessed a tremendous overall drop in serious crime for more than a decade. The reduction in the level of violence in the county has been so significant--a drop of 74 percent since 1993--that some have questioned whether it could be maintained. The 2006 figures--showing that the levels have remained near or below their historic lows--offer clear and compelling evidence that our law enforcement initiatives continue to have a profound impact in making Queens County one of the safest counties in the nation."

The District Attorney added that while serious crime continued to drop dramatically across the county, the total number of prosecutions, which includes non-violent and quality of life offenses, increased in 2006. "For the first time in Queens County history, criminal prosecutions last year exceeded the 70,000 mark," Brown said. "In addition, Queens continues to lead the city in the quality of its prosecutions. For example, while felony arrests in Queens County made up 18.5 percent of the citywide total, Queens was responsible for 21.9 percent of the city's felony convictions. This disproportionate arrest and conviction pattern was even more noticeable when compared to violent felony arrests. For such cases, while Queens County handled a fifth of all citywide arrests, it was responsible for nearly a quarter of the city's convictions and prison sentences."

Brown additionally noted that his office's felony conviction rate remains the best citywide -- 94.6 percent -- and that its dismissal rate of felony complaints and indictments was the lowest. "Despite budget cuts, our prosecutors are continuing to make major cases against drug traffickers, organized crime mobsters and criminals involved in auto theft, auto insurance fraud, crime at our airports, gun trafficking, credit card fraud, identity theft, money laundering and all sorts of other types of criminal activity," he said.

According to Police Department statistics, there were 84 homicides last year in Queens County. This is the lowest number of murders in the borough since 1967, during which the county also recorded 84 violent deaths. The 108th Precinct in Long Island City recorded the greatest decrease among the 16 police precincts in Queens County, with a drop of 71 percent, followed by the 106th Precinct in Ozone Park with a drop of 63 percent and the 113th Precinct in South Jamaica with a drop of 54 percent.

Violent crimes such as rape, robbery and



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felony assault also declined in Queens during 2006, dropping 2.5 percent over the previous year. Overall, the major crime categories have seen a reduction of 26 percent over the past five years and 74 percent since 1993. As its chief law enforcement officer, District Attorney Brown leads the fight against crime in Queens County by prosecuting criminals and protecting the rights of crime victims. In addition to investigating and prosecuting criminal activity, Brown has established cutting-edge intervention and prevention programs to reduce crime throughout Queens County. These initiatives reflect his belief that community mobilization and involvement are critical to reducing crime and revitalizing the community.

Among those initiatives are the Queens Drug Treatment Alternative to Prison (DTAP) and the Queens Treatment Court (QTC). Both carefully select non-violent, drug addicted defendants into community-based residential and outpatient treatment programs as an alternative to incarceration. Defendants selected into DTAP are required to plead guilty with the condition that they enter and successfully complete a rigorous, long-term, 15- to 24-month residential treatment program. Since 1993, Queens County has among the highest, if not the highest, retention and successful completion rates in New York state of defendants who complete DTAP, 75 percent and 70 percent, respectively. QTC selects first-time, non-violent, drug addicted felony offenders and gives them the opportunity to defeat addiction by participating in a highly structured court part with dedicated court staff and a philosophy which incorporates systems of graduated sanctions and rewards. To date, Queens Treatment Court has placed more than 1,300 defendants with a retention rate of 75 percent and a successful completion rate of 71 percent--rates among the best in the country.

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