

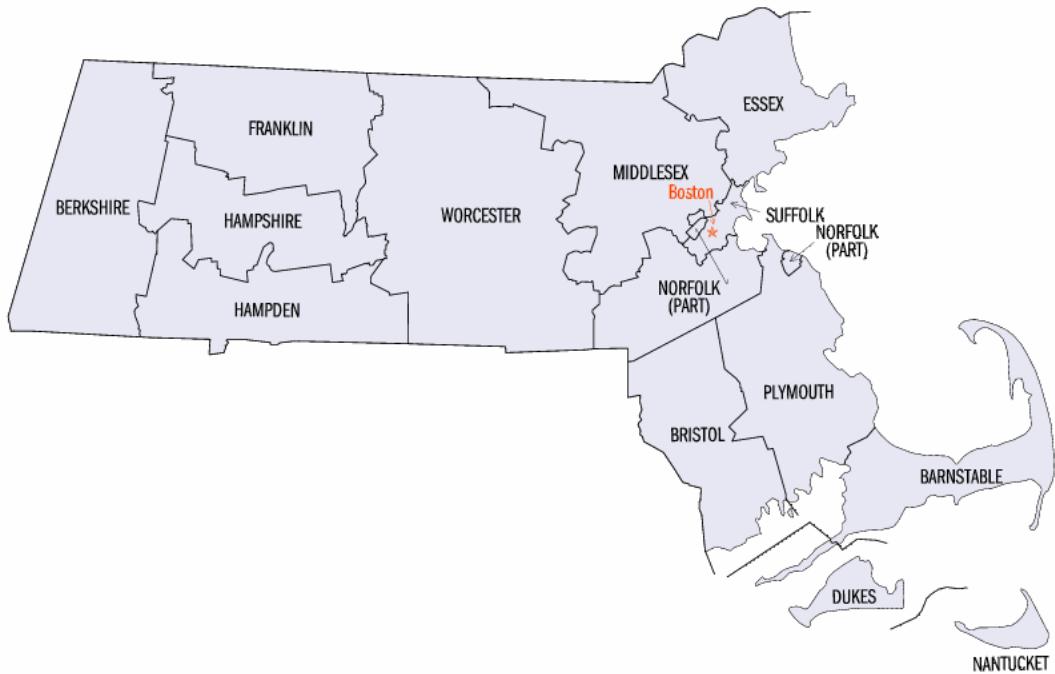
Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

Boston, Massachusetts

Profile of Drug Indicators

January 2007



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Boston, Massachusetts

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

Demographics

- Population (2005 American Community Survey): 520,702¹
- Race/Ethnicity (2005 American Community Survey): 55.3% white; 24.6% black/African American; 0.4% American Indian/Alaska Native; 8.7% Asian; 0.0% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander; 9.0% other race; 2.0% two or more races; 14.7% Hispanic/Latino origin (of any race)²
- Boston is located in Suffolk County.³

Politics

- Mayor: Thomas M. Menino⁴
- City Council (Districts 1-9, respectively): Sal LaMattina (1); James Kelly (2); Maureen Feeney (3); Charles Yancey (4); Rob Consalvo (5); Josh Tobin (6); Chuck Turner (7); Michael Ross (8); Jerry McDermott (9); Feliz Arroyo (At-large); Sam Yoon (At-large); Stephen Murphy (At-large); Michael Flaherty (At-large, President)⁵
- Boston Police Commissioner: Edward F. Davis⁶
- Suffolk County Sheriff: Andrea Cabral⁷

Programs/Initiatives

- High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)⁸
Designated in 1999, the New England HIDTA is responsible for Suffolk and other counties in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, Maine, and New Hampshire.
- Painfully Obvious⁹
In November 2003, the City of Boston announced a partnership with Purdue Pharma called Painfully Obvious. This initiative serves as a citywide education program aimed at teen abuse of prescription drugs.
- Join Together¹⁰
A project of the Boston University School of Public Health, Join Together supports community-based efforts to reduce, prevent, and treat substance abuse across the nation.
- Safe Harbor¹¹
The Safe Harbor program serves homeless men and women who are HIV positive and are recovering from substance abuse.

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- During 2005, the Boston Police Department reported 73 homicides.¹²

Reported Part One Crimes, Boston, 2003-2005

Offense	2003	2004	2005
Homicide	39	61	73
Rape and attempted	263	269	268
Robbery and attempted	2,759	2,428	2,649
Aggravated assault	4,113	4,159	4,489
Burglary and attempted	4,344	4,545	4,531
Larceny and attempted	17,069	17,526	15,957
Vehicle theft and attempted	6,463	5,545	4,717

- During 2005, the Boston Police Department reported 4,313 total drug arrests.¹³

Drug Arrests, Boston, 2003-2005

Drug Type	2003		2004		2005	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Class A (mostly heroin)	939	22.5%	791	20.8%	752	17.4%
Class B (mostly cocaine)	1,736	41.6	1,650	43.3	1,821	42.2
Class D (mostly marijuana)	1,366	32.7	1,247	32.8	1,599	37.1
All others	133	3.2	119	3.1	141	3.3
Total drug arrests	4,174	100.0	3,807	100.0	4,313	100.0

Drugs

- Cocaine¹⁴
Cocaine (including crack) is one of the most heavily abused drugs in Boston. Recent cocaine/crack indicators are mostly stable at high levels of use and abuse. The DEA reports that cocaine costs \$50–\$90 per gram and that the purity is increasing in Boston. Additional data indicates that a rock of crack costs \$10–\$20.
- Heroin¹⁵
Heroin remains one of the most heavily abused drugs in Boston and its abuse remains at very high levels. However, after years of continued growth, heroin indicators are beginning to show slight decreases. The DEA reports that in Boston, street heroin costs \$6–\$20 per bag or \$0.87 per milligram pure. Samples purchased by the Domestic Monitoring Program found the average purity has decreased from 50 percent in 2002 to 28 percent in 2004. Analyzed samples were South American in origin and distributed in wax or colored glassine packets.
- Marijuana¹⁶
The most recent marijuana indicators for greater Boston report that its abuse remains at relatively high levels. The latest DEA reports indicate that one marijuana joint costs \$5 and one ounce of commercial marijuana sells for \$200–\$250.
- Methamphetamine¹⁷
Methamphetamine is available in limited quantities in greater Boston and typically costs \$250 per gram.
- Club Drugs¹⁸
MDMA indicators show stable and relatively low levels of abuse in the Boston metropolitan area. The latest DEA report indicates that one MDMA tablet costs

between \$20 and \$25. Distributed at clubs and on college campuses, MDMA has remained widely available in spite of law enforcement seizures.

➤ Other Drugs¹⁹

Ketamine is abused at legitimate nightclubs across the state, particularly in the greater Boston area.

Juveniles

- More than 20% of Boston high school students surveyed in 2005 reported being current users of marijuana.²⁰

Percent of High School Students Reporting Drug Use, Boston, 2005

	Female	Male	Total
Lifetime marijuana use	37.0%	41.7%	39.3%
Current marijuana use	18.5	24.0	21.2
Lifetime cocaine use	2.7	3.0	2.9
Lifetime heroin use	1.4	2.2	1.9
Lifetime methamphetamine use	1.1	2.3	1.8
Lifetime illegal steroid use	1.0	3.5	2.3
Lifetime injecting illegal drug use	0.7	2.1	1.5
Tired marijuana before age 13	6.4	13.0	9.6

- Nearly 45% of Boston 12th graders surveyed in 2005 reported using marijuana at least once during their lifetimes.²¹

Percent of High School Students Reporting Drug Use, by Grade, Boston, 2005

	9th	10th	11th	12th
Lifetime marijuana use	34.2%	38.9%	41.7%	44.7%
Current marijuana use	19.1	19.9	21.0	26.5
Lifetime cocaine use	3.1	1.3	2.5	5.2
Lifetime heroin use	1.9	1.5	1.3	2.8
Lifetime methamphetamine use	1.9	0.9	2.1	2.1
Lifetime steroid use	1.6	2.8	1.8	3.2
Lifetime injection of illegal drug	2.0	0.7	1.2	2.0
Tired marijuana before age 13	11.3	7.9	10.1	8.6

Enforcement

- As of October 31, 2005, there were 2,663 full-time law enforcement employees in Boston (2,075 officers and 588 civilians).²²

Trafficking and Seizures

- Drug traffickers are diverting OxyContin express mail shipments into the greater Boston area.²³
- The DEA reports that Ketamine is being diverted from legitimate sources such as veterinary clinics.²⁴

Courts

➤ Drug Courts²⁵

As of November 2006, there were two drug courts in Boston that had been operating for at least two years and one drug court that had been recently implemented. One of the drug courts is in South Boston and another is in East Boston. There were no additional drug courts in existence or being planned in Boston at that time.

Consequences of Use

➤ There were more than 10,000 emergency department (ED) visits involving cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and marijuana in Boston during 2005.²⁶

Cocaine, Heroin, Methamphetamine and Marijuana ED Reports, Boston, 2005

Drug Type	# ED Reports
Cocaine	4,020
Heroin	3,380
Methamphetamine	85
Marijuana	2,169
Total	10,056

- In 2004, there were 258 adult HIV and AIDS cases diagnosed in Boston. The primary risk factor for these cases included 9 percent who were injection drug users (IDUs), 4 percent who had sex with IDUs, and 40 percent with an unknown/undetermined transmission status. As of May 1, 2006, cumulative adult AIDS cases numbered 6,203. By primary risk factor, these included 26 percent who were IDUs, 7 percent who had sex with IDUs, and 14 percent for whom the risk behavior was unknown or undetermined.²⁷
- During 2004, there were 445 drug misuse deaths in the greater Boston area. Cocaine was involved in 164 of these deaths.²⁸

Number of Drug-Misuse Deaths, Greater Boston Area, 2004

Substance present	# of deaths
Cocaine	164
Heroin	142
Other opiates	155
Marijuana	7
Benzodiazepines	40

Treatment

➤ Transitions²⁹

The Transitions program is for Boston men and women who have completed detoxification and seek placement in longer-term residential therapeutic programs, outpatient programs, or other treatment programs.

➤ Through the third quarter of FY 2006, there were 13,641 total treatment admissions to state-funded substance abuse programs in the greater Boston area. During FY 2005, there were 18,774 total treatment admissions.³⁰

% of State-Funded Treatment Admissions, Greater Boston, FY 2004-3rd Quarter 2006

Primary Drug	FY 2004	FY 2005	1 st - 3 rd Q FY 2006
Alcohol	35%	35%	35%
Heroin/other opiates	52	52	51
Cocaine/crack	7	8	9
Marijuana	4	3	3
Other*	1	2	2

*Includes barbiturates, other sedatives, tranquilizers, hallucinogens, amphetamines, and other over the counter drugs.

- During FY 2005, approximately 53% of the total treatment admissions to state-funded substance abuse programs in Boston were white, while 27% were black, 16% Hispanic and 4% some other race.³¹
- Approximately 49% of the admissions to treatment in the greater Boston area during the 1st three quarters of 2006 reported using heroin or other opiates in the month before their admission to treatment.³²

% of Admissions Reporting Past Month Drug Use, Gr. Boston, FY 2004-3rd Quarter 2006

Drug	FY 2004	FY 2005	1 st - 3 rd Q FY 2006
Alcohol	47%	47%	47%
Heroin/other opiates	49	51	49
Cocaine/crack	23	25	27
Marijuana	10	9	9

Sources

¹ U.S. Census Bureau Web site, 2005 American Community Survey:

<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>

² Ibid.

³ U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

⁴ Boston Mayor Web site: <http://www.cityofboston.gov/mayor/default.asp>

⁵ Boston City Council Web site: <http://www.cityofboston.gov/citycouncil/default.asp>

⁶ Boston Police Department Web site: <http://www.cityofboston.gov/police/>

⁷ Suffolk County Sheriff Web site: <http://www.scsdma.org/>

⁸ Office of National Drug Control Policy, New England High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Web site:

<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/newengland.html>

⁹ Boston Public Health Commission, "City of Boston Announces First-of-its-Kind Educational Program to Combat Teen Prescription Drug Abuse in Boston," November 11, 2003:

http://www.bphc.org/news/press_release_content.asp?id=254

¹⁰ Join Together Web site: <http://www.jointogether.org/>

¹¹ Boston Public Health Commission, Safe Harbor:

<http://www.bphc.org/programs/initiative.asp?b=4&d=0&p=178&i=150>

¹² Boston Police Department, Reported Part One Crime in the City of Boston, December 2005:

<http://www.cityofboston.gov/police/pdfs/Dec05.pdf>

¹³ National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Epidemiologic Trends in Drug Abuse, Volume II: Proceedings of the Community Epidemiology Work Group*, June 2006: http://www.drugabuse.gov/PDF/CEWG/Vol2_606.pdf

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- ³⁰ National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Epidemiologic Trends in Drug Abuse, Volume II: Proceedings of the Community Epidemiology Work Group*, June 2006: http://www.drugabuse.gov/PDF/CEWG/Vol2_604.pdf
- ³¹ Ibid.
- ³² Ibid.

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