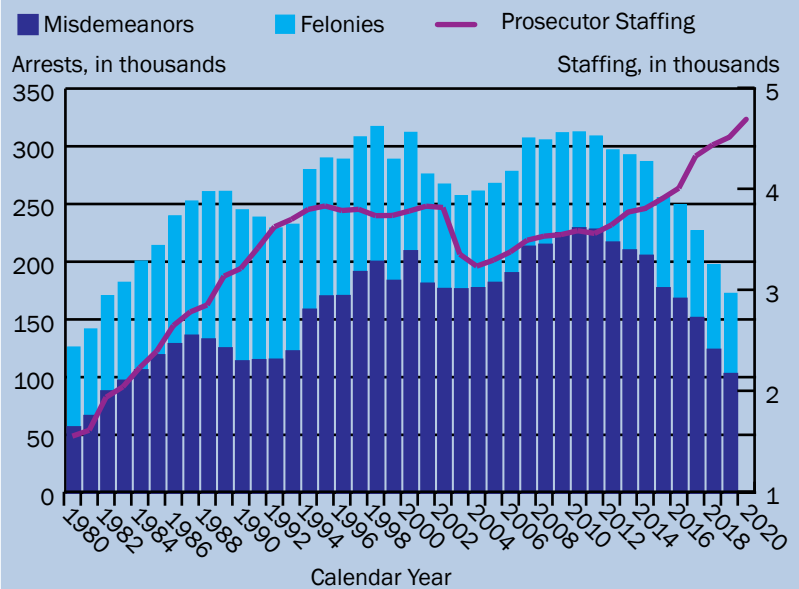


When Arrests Fell in New York City, Did Staffing of the District Attorney and Special Prosecutor Offices Also Decline?

The city's recently adopted budget for 2021 includes \$456 million to fund the work of New York City's five District Attorneys and the citywide Special Narcotics Prosecutor. City taxpayer funds account for over 97 percent of appropriations for the six prosecutorial agencies, with the balance consisting of state or federal grants. The borough-based District Attorneys and special prosecutor bring charges in cases of alleged violations of state criminal law within the city. Has staffing of these offices followed the rise and fall in arrests in the city over the past four decades?

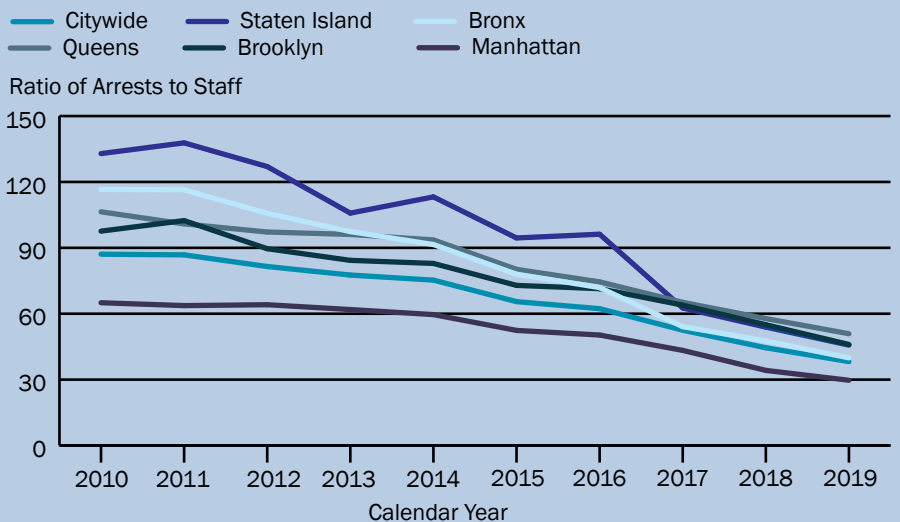
- Combined city-funded full-time staffing of the five District Attorneys and special prosecutor's office tripled in the last 40 years, from 1,551 in 1980 to almost 4,700 in May 2020. Some of that increase offset a drop in positions, from almost 500 in 1980 to less than 150 by May 2020, fully funded by state or federal grants.
- During the relatively high-crime era of the 1980s, staffing of the six prosecutorial offices increased rapidly, spurred by increases in both felony and misdemeanor arrests.
- Felony arrests peaked at 136,000 in 1989 and by 2019 they had fallen to 70,000, barely above their level in 1980. In contrast, misdemeanor arrests continued to rise, peaking at 229,000 in 2010 before dropping by more than half to 103,000 in 2019.
- Although total arrests have fallen 45 percent from their peak in 2010, prosecutorial staffing has increased by 31 percent.
- In 2020, the prosecutors received a combined \$26 million for additional staff to help comply with timeliness requirements imposed on District Attorneys under statewide criminal justice reforms that took effect this year. The reforms include a requirement that prosecutors hand over all relevant evidence to defense attorneys within about 15 days.
- In the past decade, the ratio of annual arrests to city-funded staffing in these offices has fallen by over 50 percent on a citywide basis, and has generally trended downward in each of the five District Attorneys' offices.

City-Funded Prosecutor Staffing Has Tripled Since 1980, While Arrest Levels Fell to Lowest Point In Decades



NOTES: Prosecutor staffing reflects all city-funded staffing for the five District Attorneys and the citywide Special Narcotics Prosecutor. Staffing figures reflect actual staffing as of June 30 for each year except 2020, which is as of May 31. Only includes arrests of adults age 18 and above.

Since 2010 the Ratio of Arrests to Staffing Has Generally Trended Downward for All Five Borough-Based District Attorneys



NOTE: Staffing includes all city-funded staffing as of June 30th of each year. Citywide ratio includes staffing within Special Narcotics Prosecutor's office.

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SOURCE: Financial Management System, New York State Open Data

Prepared by Bernard O'Brien
New York City Independent Budget Office