



# Using Court Data as a Proxy for Arrest Data in Bernalillo County: Arrest Patterns Between 2017 - 2024

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## Introduction

Crime is disproportionately concentrated among small subsets of offenders, victims, targets, and places. The theory of crime concentration (Farrell, 2015) suggests that criminal activity tends to cluster around specific individuals, locations, and time periods, with numerous studies confirming its concentration among a limited group of offenders (Martinez et al., 2017). These individuals—termed high-rate, recidivist, or prolific offenders—are increasingly recognized as high-frequency utilizers who repeatedly cycle through the criminal justice system while consuming disproportionate system resources (Bonfine et al., 2020; Sugie & Turney, 2020).

These offenders present multifaceted challenges to the criminal justice system. First, many exhibit underlying mental health and substance use disorders that resist intervention due to service engagement difficulties and resource limitations. These complex behavioral health needs create substantial operational and fiscal burdens for justice agencies and local governments. Second, as short-term, high-rate offenders, they raise questions about equitable treatment within the system and may necessitate specialized policy approaches (Piquero, Sullivan, and Farrington, 2010)—distinguishing them from one-time offenders and long-term, low-rate offenders.

Third, constitutional and legal considerations complicate the management of repeat offenders, often revealing ideological differences in public safety approaches that span the continuum from punishment to rehabilitation. Fourth, debates persist regarding offender specialization patterns (DeLisi et al., 2019), with a more comprehensive understanding potentially enabling more targeted interventions and strategies.

In 2015, we partnered with the City of Albuquerque and Virginia Tech's Social Data Analytics Lab (SDAL), with funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies. Together, we combined arrest data from three law enforcement agencies—the Albuquerque Police Department (APD), Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office (BCSO), and New Mexico State Police (NMSP)—along with booking records from the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC). While this effort produced valuable results, the work was time-consuming because the different systems lacked common identifiers for individuals. To overcome this challenge, we used statistical techniques and fuzzy matching methods to link records across these separate databases.

The current report examines crime trends in Bernalillo County, using court case filings as a proxy for arrests. In this report, an arrest includes individuals taken into custody and taken to jail and individuals who are issued a citation in lieu of arrest (NM Stat § 31-1-6 (2024)). In New Mexico, a law enforcement officer who arrests a person without a warrant for a petty misdemeanor and some misdemeanors may issue a citation in lieu of arrest. We also include individuals who are issued a criminal summons notifying them of a pending criminal charge for which there is no arrest. If the person fails to appear in court, an arrest warrant is sometimes issued that may lead to an arrest. This method follows the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR)

program, which counts one arrest for each separate instance in which a person is arrested, cited, or summoned for an offense.

The use of court data is a practical approach facilitated by New Mexico's unified court system. This consolidated structure, with centralized management, electronic information systems, and state financing, ensures all criminal citations generate court case filings within a single dataset, eliminating cross-agency data matching requirements<sup>1</sup>. Building on our initial study (Bloomberg, 2017), we analyze criminal activity patterns from 2017 to 2024, focusing on individuals with multiple court cases.

Specifically, this study extends previous research by reviewing the use of New Mexico Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) court case filings as a new data source for arrests. By examining court records as a proxy for arrest, we analyze trends among frequent offenders, evaluate the concentration of criminal activity across offender groups, and assess temporal changes in charging patterns.

Understanding these patterns requires consideration of the multiple factors that influence repeat offending and recidivism. Research has consistently identified several key determinants, including demographic characteristics (e.g., age at first offense, criminal history patterns, gender), social factors (e.g., employment status, educational attainment, social networks), and behavioral health issues (e.g., mental health conditions and substance use disorders). By analyzing court data from Bernalillo County, we can begin to explore how these factors contribute to local patterns of offending and inform more targeted interventions.

Specifically, the findings from our analysis and subsequent explorations can guide the development of evidence-based strategies to reduce offending, including mental health and substance abuse treatment programs, comprehensive reentry services, and enhanced community supervision approaches such as specialized probation and pretrial services. Moreover, this data may highlight opportunities to improve the efficiency of the criminal justice system, particularly in court case processing.

Future research using this court data could extend our analysis to include court case dispositions and detailed case processing information, providing valuable insights that could further improve system responses to high-frequency offenders. We discuss ways of extending these findings in the *Conclusion* section of the report.

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<sup>1</sup> While we use court case data as a proxy for arrests, it is important to note a minor limitation to this approach. Court case data slightly overstates actual arrest numbers because a small percentage of defendants are not physically arrested but instead receive summonses to appear in court. This discrepancy is most prevalent in petty misdemeanor cases, where law enforcement may issue citations rather than make physical arrests. Despite this limitation, court case data remains a reliable indicator of law enforcement activity, as most criminal cases do involve physical arrests, particularly for more serious offenses.

## Methods

### Study Design and Population

We analyzed 161,459 court cases spanning January 1, 2017, through December 31, 2024, representing the court cases and arrests of 77,226 unique individuals in Bernalillo County, New Mexico. Court records provided by the New Mexico Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) serve as our primary data source, offering a comprehensive view of criminal activity comparable to the arrest records used in our 2017 study.

## Results

### Arrests Over Time

Figure 1 presents the distribution of court case filings from January 2017 through December 2024. The data reveals a significant disruption coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic, with filings exhibiting a marked decline beginning in early 2020. Beginning in January 2023, filings progressively increased until approximating pre-pandemic levels by mid-2024. The period following early 2023 exhibits a sustained positive trend in filing frequency.

**Figure 1.** Court Case Filings 2017–2024

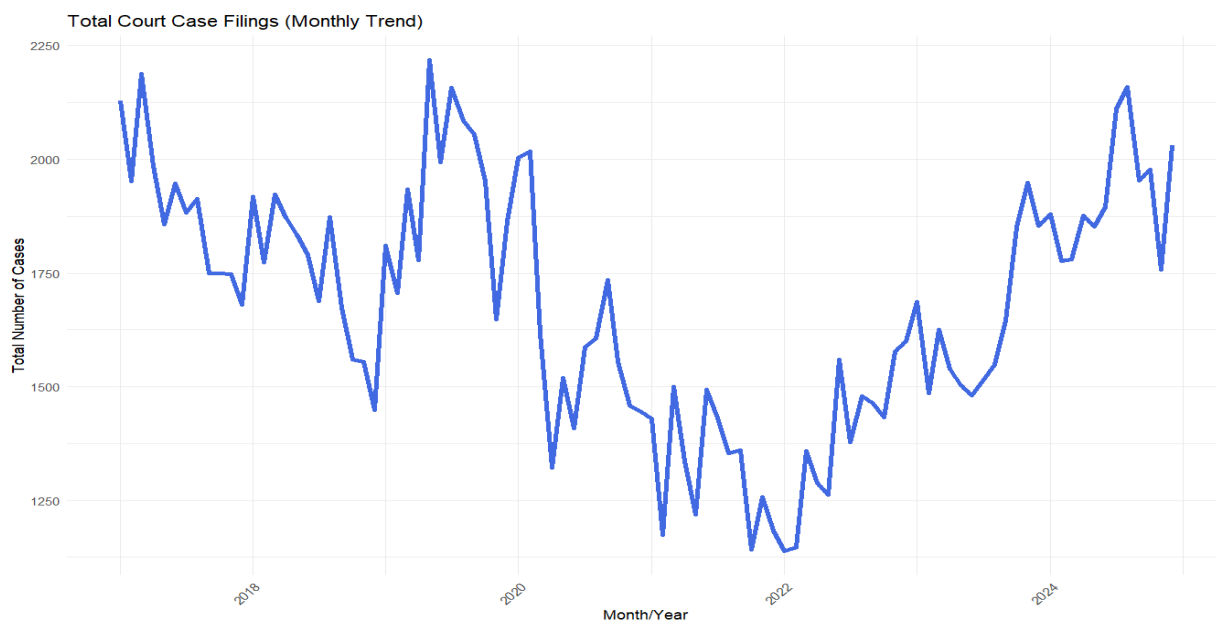
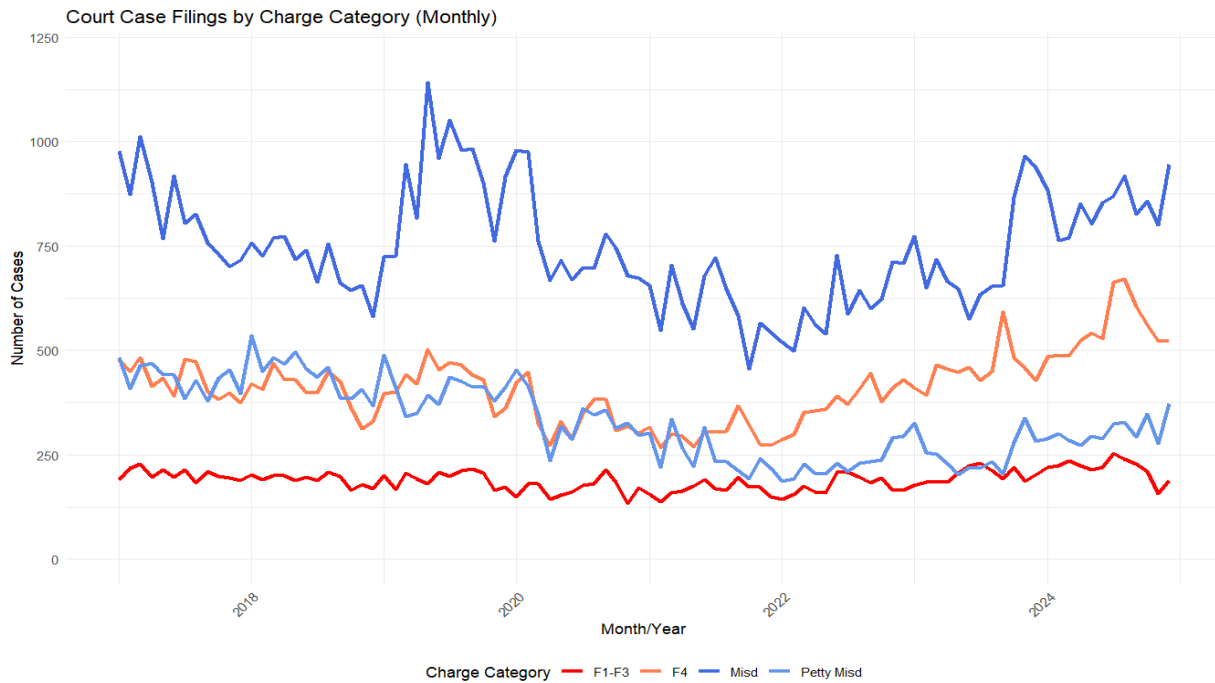


Figure 2 presents a stratified analysis of the aggregate data in Figure 1, categorizing filings by offense severity. The analysis categorizes charges as petty misdemeanors, misdemeanors, 4th-degree felonies, and higher-level offenses category (3rd-, 2nd-, and 1st-degree felonies). On balance, petty misdemeanor filings have declined since baseline levels in 2017, with minimal recovery observed after the pandemic peak,

maintaining volumes consistently below pre-pandemic metrics. The most serious felony classifications (F1- F3) exhibit modest but progressive increases since mid-2022, although their cumulative case volume remains lower than that of petty misdemeanor filings. Fourth-degree felony filings have displayed consistent upward momentum since late 2021.

**Figure 2. Court Case Filings by Charge Severity 2017-2024**



### Arrestee Characteristics

Table 1 reveals a distinct pattern in the distribution of criminal court case filings across individuals in Bernalillo County from 2017 to 2024. Examining offender categories, 64% were one-time offenders ( $n = 49,207$ ), while 36% were repeat offenders ( $n = 28,019$ ). The mean number of arrests was 2.1, and the median number of arrests was 1.

Most individuals (63.8%;  $n = 49,207$ ) had a single court case during this period. Another 15.7% ( $n = 12,085$ ) had two cases. However, a substantial minority demonstrated patterns of repeat involvement: 13.8% ( $n = 10,626$ ) had 3-5 cases, 5.2% ( $n = 4,031$ ) had 6-10 cases, and a small but notable group, 1.7% ( $n = 1,277$ ), had 11 or more arrests. This concentration aligns with the theory of crime concentration discussed earlier, where a relatively small subset of individuals (i.e., 6.9%, with six or more arrests) accounts for a disproportionate share of interactions within the criminal justice system.

**Table 1.** Distribution of Criminal Court Cases per Individual in Bernalillo County, 2017-2024 (*n* = 77,226)

Number of Cases	Count of Individuals	Percent of Individuals	Count of Arrests	Percent of Arrests
1	49,207	63.8%	49,207	30.5%
2	12,085	15.7%	24,170	15.0%
3-5	10,626	13.8%	39,114	24.2%
6-10	4,031	5.2%	29,766	18.4%
11+	1,277	1.7%	19,202	11.9%

Table 2 presents the characteristics of arrestees (*n* = 77,226) and their charges (*n* = 161,459). The demographic composition shows that 64% of arrestees were male (*n* = 48,566). Regarding race and ethnicity, 31% of arrestees were Hispanic (*n* = 23,784), while 3% were Black (*n* = 2,079). The average age of arrestees was 35 years.

**Table 2.** Demographic Characteristics at First Arrest (*n* = 77,226)

Variable	Count	Percent
Age		
18-20	6,804	4.3%
20-29	47,870	30.2%
30-39	53,858	33.4%
40-49	28,884	17.9%
50-59	14,694	9.3%
60+	6,374	4.0%
Sex		
Male	48,566	63.5%
Female	21,388	27.7%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic	23,784	30.8%
Non-Hispanic	8,409	10.9%
Unknown	45,033	58.3%
Race		
White	20,480	26.5%
Hispanic	14,446	18.7%
Black	2,079	2.7%
Unknown	40,221	52.1%

Table 3 presents a comprehensive view of charge types across all arrests in the dataset (*n* = 161,459). Violent offenses represent the largest category, accounting for nearly one-third (32.9%, *n* = 53,051) of all arrests. Property crimes constitute 23.3% (*n* = 37,642) of arrests, followed by public order violations at 20.6% (*n* = 33,209). Drug offenses make up 13.1% (*n* = 21,130) of all arrests, while DWI offenses account for 10.2% (*n* = 16,426).

**Table 3. Charge Type Across All Arrests (n = 161,459)**

Category	Count	Percent
Violent	53,051	32.9%
Public Order	33,209	20.6%
DWI	16,426	10.2%
Property	37,642	23.3%
Drug	21,130	13.1%

To better understand patterns of arrests and how they may differ between individuals with varying levels of system involvement, we divided our analysis to compare one-time offenders (individuals with a single arrest) versus frequent offenders (those with 11 or more arrests). This comparison enables us to investigate whether specific offense types are more closely associated with isolated incidents or persistent criminal behavior.

Table 4 examines charge types among one-time offenders (n = 49,207), revealing distinctive patterns of criminal behavior among those with minimal system contact. Violent offenses are most prevalent in this group, representing 35.2% (n = 17,343) of one-time arrests. Public order violations follow at 24.5% (n = 12,066), with DWI offenses notably high at 20.6% (n = 10,123). Property crimes account for 12.7% (n = 6,243), while drug offenses represent just 7.0% (n = 3,431) of one-time arrests. The high proportion of violent and DWI offenses suggests that many one-time offenders enter the system through serious but potentially isolated incidents rather than ongoing criminal activity.

**Table 4. Charge Type Across One-Time Offenders (n = 49,207)**

Category	Count	Percent
Violent	17,343	35.2%
Public Order	12,066	24.5%
DWI	10,123	20.6%
Property	6,243	12.7%
Drug	3,431	7.0%

Table 5 provides insights into charge patterns among frequent offenders with 11 or more arrests (n = 19,202), revealing markedly different criminal profiles compared to one-time offenders. Property crimes dominate this category at 42.9% (n = 8,210), significantly higher than their representation among one-time offenders. Violent offenses account for 25.7% (n = 4,930), followed by drug offenses at 16.9% (n = 3,244), and public order violations at 14.1% (n = 2,702). Notably, DWI offenses represent a mere 0.6% (n = 116) among frequent offenders, in stark contrast to their prevalence among one-time offenders.

**Table 5. Charge Type Across Frequent (11+) Offenders (n = 19,202)**

Category	Count	Percent
Violent	4,930	25.7%
Public Order	2,702	14.1%
DWI	116	0.6%
Property	8,210	42.8%
Drug	3,244	16.9%

The most striking difference between one-time and frequent offenders appears in their charge distributions. Property crimes exhibit the most dramatic shift, increasing from 12.7% (n = 6,243) among one-time offenders to a dominant 42.9% (n = 8,210) among frequent offenders, suggesting that property offenses may be more closely associated with habitual criminal behavior. Conversely, DWI offenses decrease from 20.6% (n = 10,123) among one-time offenders to 0.6% (n = 116) among frequent offenders, indicating that these violations rarely lead to persistent system involvement. Drug offenses more than doubled in proportion from 7.0% (n = 3,431) to

16.9% (n = 3,244), potentially reflecting the cyclical nature of addiction-related criminality.

Table 6 presents the distribution of charge severity across all arrests in the dataset (n = 161,459). Misdemeanors constitute the largest category, accounting for 44.5% (n = 71,876) of all arrests, followed by fourth-degree felonies at 24.4% (n = 39,490). Petty Misdemeanors account for 19.8% (n = 31,893) of arrests. More serious charges occur less frequently, with third-degree felonies representing 7.4% (n = 11,957), Second-degree felonies at 3.2% (n = 5,110), and first-degree felonies comprising just 0.7% (n = 1,192) of all arrests. This distribution shows that the majority of arrests (64.3%) involve lower-level offenses, including petty misdemeanors and misdemeanors, while the most serious felony charges (F1 and F2) account for a small proportion of all offenses.

**Table 6. Charge Severity Across All Arrests (n = 161,459)**

Severity	Count	Percent
Petty Misdemeanor (PM)	31,893	19.8%
Misdemeanor (MD)	71,876	44.5%
Fourth-Degree Felony (F4)	39,430	24.4%
Third-Degree Felony (F3)	11,957	7.4%
Second-Degree Felony (F2)	5,110	3.2%
First-Degree Felony (F1)	1,192	0.7%

Comparing the severity of charges between one-time offenders and frequent offenders provides valuable insights into how criminal behaviors may escalate or change with increased involvement in the system. This analysis helps illuminate whether frequent offenders tend to commit more serious crimes than one-time offenders or whether they accumulate arrests primarily through repeated low-level offenses.

Table 7 examines charge severity among one-time offenders (n = 49,207), revealing that these individuals predominantly enter the system through lower-level offenses. Nearly half of one-time offenders are charged with petty misdemeanors (49.8%, n = 24,491), followed by misdemeanors at 26.7% (n = 13,132). Together, these lower-level offenses account for 76.5% of all charges among one-time offenders. Fourth-degree felonies represent 14.3% (n = 7,051) of charges, while more serious felonies are considerably less common: third-degree at 6.0% (n = 2,953), second-degree at 2.3% (n = 1,127), and first-degree at just 0.9% (n = 453). This pattern suggests that most individuals who have single contact with the criminal justice system are charged with relatively minor offenses.

**Table 7. Charge Severity Across One-Time Offenders (n = 49,207)**

Severity	Count	Percent
Petty Misdemeanor (PM)	24,491	49.8%
Misdemeanor (MD)	13,132	26.7%
Fourth-Degree Felony (F4)	7,051	14.3%
Third-Degree Felony (F3)	2,953	6.0%
Second-Degree Felony (F2)	1,127	2.3%
First-Degree Felony (F1)	452	0.9%

Table 8 reveals a markedly different pattern of charge severity among frequent offenders with 11 or more arrests (n = 19,202). Misdemeanors represent the largest category, accounting for 43.3% (n = 8,317) of charges, followed by fourth-degree felonies at 31.1% (n = 5,968). Petty misdemeanors account for a significantly smaller proportion, at 17.3% (n = 3,323), compared to one-time offenders. Third-degree felonies represent 6.0% (n = 1,149), second-degree felonies account for 2.1% (n = 412), and first-degree felonies make up just 0.2% (n = 39) of charges.

**Table 8. Charge Severity Across Frequent (11+) Offenders (n = 19,202)**

Severity	Count	Percent
Petty Misdemeanor (PM)	3,323	17.3%
Misdemeanor (MD)	8,317	43.3%
Fourth Degree Felony (F4)	5,968	31.1%
Third Degree Felony (F3)	1,149	6.0%
Second Degree Felony (F2)	412	2.1%
First Degree Felony (F1)	33	0.2%

Table 9 presents a crosstabulation of charge type and severity across all arrests (n = 161,459), revealing distinctive patterns in how offense categories intersect with severity levels. Violent offenses span the entire severity spectrum, with the largest concentration in misdemeanors (46.6%; n = 24,702) and fourth-degree felonies (16.0%; n = 8,475), though they also account for nearly all first-degree felonies (93.8%; n = 1,118 of 1,192 total). Property crimes are predominantly charged as fourth-degree felonies (31.6%; n = 11,883) and misdemeanors (37.3%; n = 14,033). Drug offenses similarly cluster in fourth-degree felonies (70.4%; n = 14,874) and misdemeanors (14.6%; n = 3,080) while being relatively absent from the highest severity levels. DWI

offenses are overwhelmingly classified as misdemeanors (73.3%; n = 12,038), demonstrating the typical charging practice for these violations. Public Order offenses follow a similar pattern, with most charged as misdemeanors (54.3%; n = 18,033) or petty misdemeanors (30.5%; n = 10,124).

**Table 9.** Crosstabulation of Charge Type and Severity for All Arrests (n = 161,459)<sup>2</sup>

Category	F1	F2	F3	F4	Misd	Petty Misd	Total
Violent	1,118	2,120	8,204	8,475	24,702	8,432	53,051
Drug	74	2,361	352	14,874	3,080	389	21,130
Property	0	548	2,251	11,883	14,033	8,927	37,642
DWI	0	10	46	321	12,028	4,021	16,426
Public Order	0	71	1,104	3,877	18,033	10,124	33,209
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,192</b>	<b>5,110</b>	<b>11,957</b>	<b>39,430</b>	<b>71,876</b>	<b>31,893</b>	<b>161,459</b>

Table 10 examines the intersection of charge type and severity among one-time offenders (n = 49,207), highlighting distinctive offense patterns for individuals with minimal system contact. Among one-time offenders, violent charges are most frequently misdemeanors (50.7%; n = 8,785) or petty misdemeanors (18.6%; n = 3,232), although they also represent most of the more serious felony charges in this group. Property offenses for one-time offenders are predominantly Misdemeanors (37.0%; n = 2,311) or fourth-degree felonies (30.1%; n = 1,881), suggesting that many one-time property offenders are involved in less severe thefts. DWI charges are overwhelmingly misdemeanors (72.8%; n = 7,366), with minor representation in other severity categories. Drug offenses among one-time offenders cluster in fourth-degree felonies (58.9%; n = 2,022). Public Order violations are primarily charged as misdemeanors (44.1%; n = 5,320) or petty misdemeanors (44.1%; n = 5,317). This distribution reveals that one-time offenders generally face less severe charges across most offense categories.

<sup>2</sup> Our analysis revealed a high prevalence of violent misdemeanor charges. Specifically, 83.9% (n = 27,789) of all misdemeanor or petty misdemeanor cases in our sample involved simple battery charges, which are classified as violent offenses despite their lower severity level. These cases primarily fall under New Mexico Statutes §30-3-4 (Battery) and §30-3-15 (Battery against a household member), which categorize certain forms of violent physical contact as misdemeanor offenses.

**Table 10.** Crosstabulation of Charge Type and Severity Across One-Time Offenders (n = 49,207)

Category	F1	F2	F3	F4	Misd	Petty Misd	Total
Violent	439	492	2,381	2,014	8,785	3,232	17,343
Drug	13	512	67	2,022	709	108	3,431
Property	0	107	305	1,661	2,311	1,859	6,243
DWI	0	4	18	119	7,366	2,616	10,123
Public Order / Other	0	12	182	1,235	5,320	5,317	12,066
<b>Total</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>1,127</b>	<b>2,953</b>	<b>7,051</b>	<b>24,491</b>	<b>13,132</b>	<b>49,207</b>

Table 11 reveals the distinctive patterns of charge type and severity among frequent offenders with 11 or more arrests (n = 19,202 charges across 1,277 individuals). Property offenses are the most common among frequent offenders, primarily as misdemeanors (46.4%; n = 3,813) and fourth-degree felonies (25.0%; n = 2,050). Violent offenses among frequent offenders are predominantly misdemeanors (39.7%; n = 1,955) and fourth-degree felonies (26.1%; n = 1,288), with less representation in the highest severity categories compared to the overall population. Drug charges are heavily concentrated in fourth-degree felonies (74.1%; n = 2,405). Notable is the virtual absence of DWI offenses across all severity levels (only 116 total), indicating that DWI is rarely a recurring offense pattern. Public Order violations remain concentrated in the misdemeanor category (69.8%; n = 1,887). This distribution indicates that frequent offenders typically accumulate charges primarily through repeated mid-level offenses rather than escalating to the most severe charge categories.

**Table 11.** Crosstabulation of Charge Type and Severity Across Frequent (11+) Offenders (n = 19,202)

Category	F1	F2	F3	F4	Misd	Petty Misd	Total
Violent	30	192	645	1,286	1,955	822	4,930
Drug	3	152	30	2,405	586	68	3,244
Property	0	60	377	2,050	3,813	1,910	8,210
DWI	0	0	1	6	76	33	116
Public Order / Other	0	8	96	221	1,887	490	2,702
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>1,149</b>	<b>5,968</b>	<b>8,317</b>	<b>3,323</b>	<b>19,202</b>

Table 12 illustrates the disproportionate impact of repeat offenders on the criminal justice system in Bernalillo County. Consistent with crime concentration theory, a small subset of individuals accounts for a substantial portion of overall criminal activity. While those with 11 or more arrests represent a minute fraction of the county's population (0.3%, n = 1,277) and account for just 1.7% of all arrestees, they are responsible for a disproportionate 11.9% of all arrests, with each averaging 15 arrests. Similarly, individuals with 6-10 arrests (0.8% of the county population, n = 4,031) account for 5.2% of arrestees but generate 18.4% of all arrests, averaging 7.38 arrests each. Those with 3-5 arrests (2.1% of the county population, n = 10,626) represent 13.8% of arrestees but are responsible for 24.2% of all arrests. In contrast, one-time offenders constitute the largest share of arrestees (63.7%, n = 49,207) and account for 9.7% of the county population, yet they represent just 30.5% of total arrests. This distribution demonstrates that criminal justice resources are disproportionately consumed by a relatively small group of chronic offenders who cycle repeatedly through the system.

**Table 12.** Disproportionate Impact of Chronic Offenders on Criminal Justice System Activity

Arrest Count	# of People	Mean Arrest Count	% of all Arrests	% of County Population	% of All Arrestees
1	49,207	1.00	30.5%	9.7%	63.7%
2	12,085	2.00	15.0%	2.4%	15.6%
3-5	10,626	3.68	24.2%	2.1%	13.8%
6-10	4,031	7.38	18.4%	0.8%	5.2%
11+	1,277	15.04	11.9%	0.3%	1.7%

**Note:** The comparison is benchmarked to 2020 Census data from Bernalillo County for the 18+ year old population (i.e., n = 505,445).

## Discussion

This report analyzed 161,459 court case filings in Bernalillo County over an eight-year period, from January 2017 to December 2024, representing the criminal activity of 77,226 unique individuals. Using court records from the New Mexico Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) as a proxy for arrest data, we examined the distribution of criminal cases across individuals, the demographic characteristics of arrestees, patterns of charge types and severity, and the disproportionate impact of repeat offenders on the criminal justice system. Our analysis revealed that nearly two-thirds (63.7%; n = 49,207) of individuals had only a single arrest, while a small subset of frequent offenders (6.9%; n = 5,308) with six or more arrests accounted for 30.3% of all arrests during this period.

Our central finding is this pronounced concentration of criminal activity among a small subset of individuals. While those with six or more arrests represent only 6.9% of all arrestees, they account for a disproportionate 30.3% of all criminal cases processed. This concentration aligns with the theory of crime concentration (Farrell, 2015) and our previous Bloomberg study findings, highlighting the impact that relatively few individuals have on the criminal justice system, as measured by court case filings and arrests.

Future research can build on the current study to expand our understanding in several key directions:

1. *Criminal Specialization vs. Generalization:* Investigate whether repeat offenders tend to specialize in particular crime types or exhibit generalist criminal patterns (DeLisi et al., 2019). Understanding whether offenders consistently

commit similar types of offenses or a diverse range of them could inform more targeted intervention strategies.

2. *Repeat Offending Patterns*: Examine repeat offending patterns. This could focus on efforts to identify and address individuals who are persistent offenders more effectively.
3. *Data Linkage Opportunities*: For one-time offenders, an important question remains whether they truly desist from criminal activity after their initial contact with the system or whether other factors explain their apparent non-recidivism. One possibility that warrants further investigation is the role of lengthy incarceration following a first offense. Individuals who receive substantial prison sentences after their initial court case would appear as "one-time offenders" in our dataset simply because they had no opportunity to reoffend while incarcerated during our study period. By linking court data with NMCD prison records, we could determine which one-time offenders were sentenced to long periods of incarceration, effectively removing them from the at-risk population. This would help us distinguish between true desisters (i.e., those who choose not to reoffend despite having the opportunity) and those who appear as one-time offenders due to incapacitation effects. Such distinction is crucial for accurately interpreting patterns of criminal careers and developing appropriate interventions for different offender categories.
4. *Demographic Disparities*: Conduct more detailed analyses of the demographic disparities observed in our findings, particularly the overrepresentation of males and Hispanic individuals among repeat offenders, to understand potential biases in enforcement or structural factors influencing these patterns.

The policy implications of our findings are important. The concentration of criminal activity among a small group of individuals suggests that interventions focused on persistent offenders could yield benefits for public safety and system efficiency.

While Bernalillo County has implemented various intervention programs, our analysis suggests the need to examine why existing approaches may not be effectively addressing recidivism among specific groups. Further research is needed to distinguish between different profiles within the frequent offender population, specifically those involved in serious offenses versus those who cycle through with predominantly low-severity charges, to tailor responses accordingly. An examination of case processing outcomes for persistent offenders may reveal systemic issues, such as determining the proportion of cases involving frequent offenders that result in dismissals and whether the system effectively prosecutes these cases to a meaningful resolution.

For high-frequency, low-severity offenders (who constitute a substantial portion of those with 11 or more arrests), investigating the underlying factors driving their repeated system contact is important. Future analysis connecting court data with detention center records, risk assessment scores, and behavioral health information could illuminate patterns and intervention points. Understanding the relationship between charge severity, charge type, and recidivism could help refine our approach

to the core criminal justice responses—incapacitation, rehabilitation, specific deterrence, and desistance—for different offender profiles.

In summary, court data provides a valuable window into patterns of involvement in the criminal justice system in Bernalillo County and serves as a valid proxy for arrests in Bernalillo County. The concentration of criminal activity among a small subset of individuals highlights both a challenge and an opportunity. Repeat offenders represent a defined population for which a better understanding of their characteristics and involvement in the larger criminal justice system could yield reductions in offending through more coordinated responses.

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