



Census of Publicly Funded Forensic Crime Laboratories

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Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)

BJS collects, analyzes, and disseminates information on crime, criminal offenders, crime victims, and the operation of justice systems at all levels of government.

BJS Forensics Portfolio

- National Survey of DNA Crime Laboratories: 1998 & 2001
- Census of Medical Examiners and Coroners' Offices: 2004
- Census of Publicly Funded Forensic Crime Laboratories: 2002, 2005, & 2009

2009 Census of Crime Labs

Response rates

Type of jurisdiction	Labs surveyed	Labs that responded	Response rate
All labs	411	397	97%
State	217	211	97%
County	90	88	98%
Municipal	66	63	95%
Federal	38	35	92%

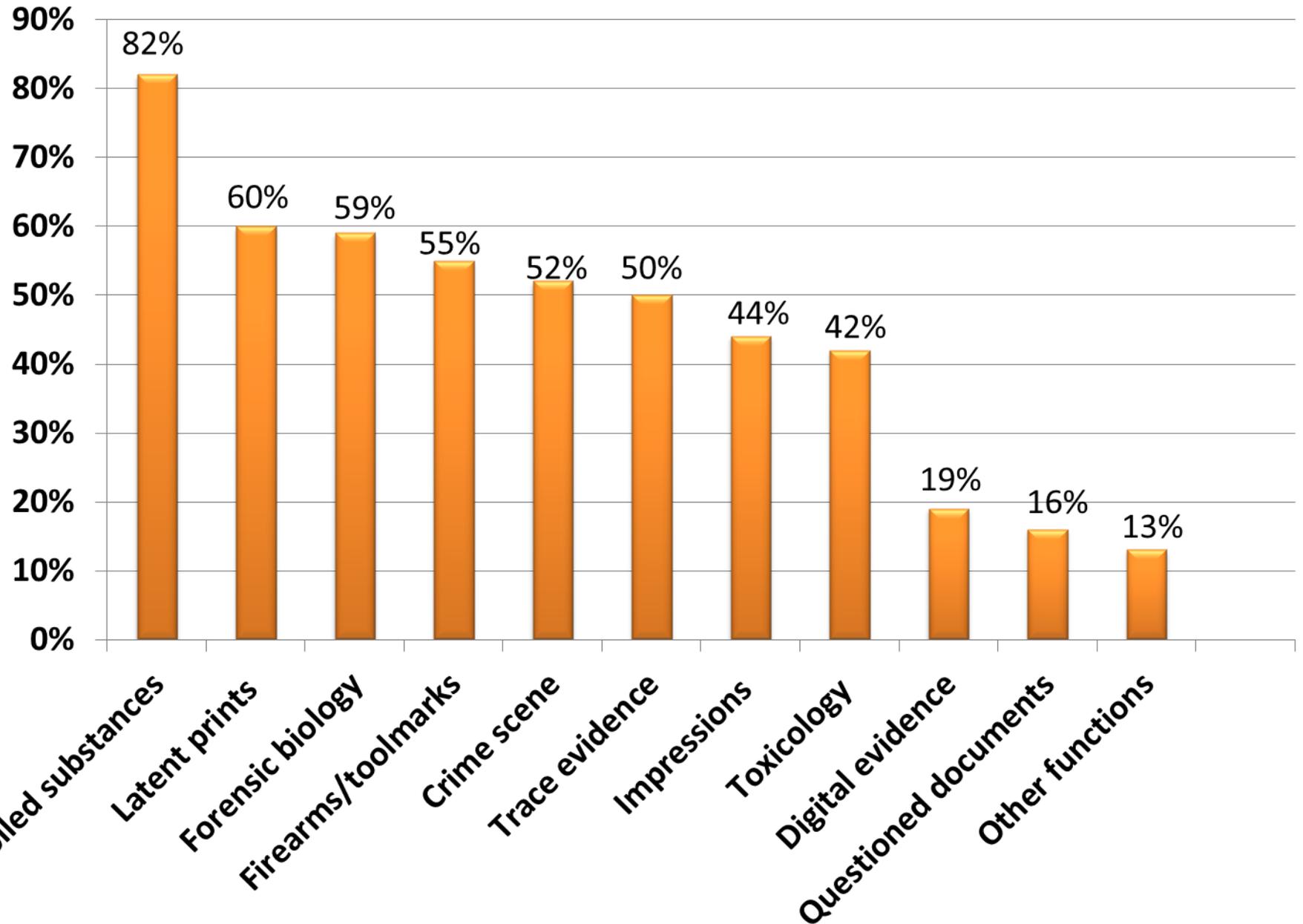
- 2002 census: 87% of 351 labs.
- 2005 census: 90% of 389 labs.

2009 Census of Crime Labs

Types of forensic services provided by labs

- Controlled substances
- Toxicology
- Trace evidence
- Firearms/toolmarks
- Forensic biology
 - Criminal casework
 - Convicted offender samples
 - Arrestee samples
- Latent prints
- Digital evidence
- Questioned documents
- Impressions
- Crime scene
- Other functions

Forensic analyses performed by crime labs in 2009



2009 Census of Crime Labs

Measuring workload

Number of requests for forensic services

- 1) Backlogged requests at yearend 2008
- 2) New requests received in 2009
- 3) Requests completed in 2009
- 4) Backlogged requests at yearend 2009

Request - Submission of physical evidence from a criminal case. A case can involve multiple requests for different types of services.

Backlogged request – A pending request not completed for 30 days or more.

More than 4 million forensic requests received in 2009

Type of request	Requests in 2009	Type of request	Requests in 2009
Forensic biology	1,389,000	Firearms/toolmarks	147,000
Offender/arrestee samples	1,045,000	Trace evidence	56,000
Casework	343,000	Digital evidence	31,000
Controlled substances	1,356,000	Questioned documents	13,000
Toxicology	613,000	Impressions	11,000
Latent prints	271,000	Other forensic requests	42,000
Crime scene	190,000		

Note: Totals do not include requests outsourced to private labs.

Workload

- Of the 4.1 million forensic requests in 2009
 - 2.4 million to state labs
 - 820,000 to county labs
 - 650,000 to municipal labs
 - 280,000 to federal labs
- An estimated 3.9 million forensic requests completed in 2009.

Note: Some requests were canceled by submitting agency before completion because the service was no longer needed.

About 1.2 million requests backlogged at yearend 2008 and 2009

Type of request	Yearend 2008	Yearend 2009
Forensic biology	887,400	905,200
Offender/arrestee samples	522,100	498,500
Casework	365,200	406,700
Controlled substances	142,100	137,700
Latent prints	53,100	49,500
Firearms/toolmarks	46,700	48,700
Toxicology	30,400	28,600
Trace evidence	14,700	13,200
Impressions	5,500	5,700
Questioned documents	2,100	2,400
Digital evidence	1,300	1,300
Other forensic requests	1,100	1,500

Percent of labs outsourcing forensic requests

Type of jurisdiction	2002	2005	2009
All labs	41%	51%	28%
State	31%	43%	23%
County	62%	71%	40%
Municipal	63%	54%	31%
Federal	11%	--	21%

--Not presented due to low response rate.

Laboratory resources

- Budgets and expenditures
- Forensic analysts and support staff
- Technologies and procedures to complete casework
- Uses and capabilities of Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS)

Estimated annual operating budget for crime labs nationwide

Type of jurisdiction	2002	2005	2009
All labs	\$1,036,000,000	\$1,155,000,000	\$1,562,000,000
State	\$454,000,000	\$529,000,000	\$680,000,000
County	\$172,000,000	\$236,000,000	\$314,000,000
Municipal	\$112,000,000	\$130,000,000	\$219,000,000
Federal	\$299,000,000	--	\$348,000,000

--Not presented due to low response rate.

Budgets and expenditures

- Of total crime lab expenditures in 2009
 - 73% personnel costs
 - 13% supplies
 - 9% equipment
 - Other costs included travel, training, construction, etc.
- About 3 in 10 crime labs charged fees for services in 2009.
- About 7 in 10 labs received funding from grants in 2009.

Estimated number of full-time employees in the Nation's crime labs

Type of jurisdiction	2002	2005	2009
All labs	11,000	11,900	13,100
State	5,200	5,600	6,100
County	1,900	2,200	2,500
Municipal	1,900	1,900	2,200
Federal	2,000	2,100	2,300

- Average staff size in 2009 was 32 employees.

Types of employees

- Of the 13,100 crime lab employees in 2009
 - 60% forensic analysts/examiners
 - 9% technical support
 - 14% managers
 - 9% clerical support
 - 6% crime scene technicians
 - 3% other positions

Quality assurances

- Lab accreditations
- Proficiency testing
- Resources dedicated to research
- External certifications possessed by analysts
- Written standards for performance expectations

Percent of labs accredited by a professional forensic science organization

Type of jurisdiction	2002	2005	2009
All labs	71%	82%	83%
State	80%	91%	92%
County	66%	67%	75%
Municipal	45%	62%	62%
Federal	67%	--	79%

Note: Percentages include ASCLD/LAB, FQSI, A2LA, and other accreditation programs.

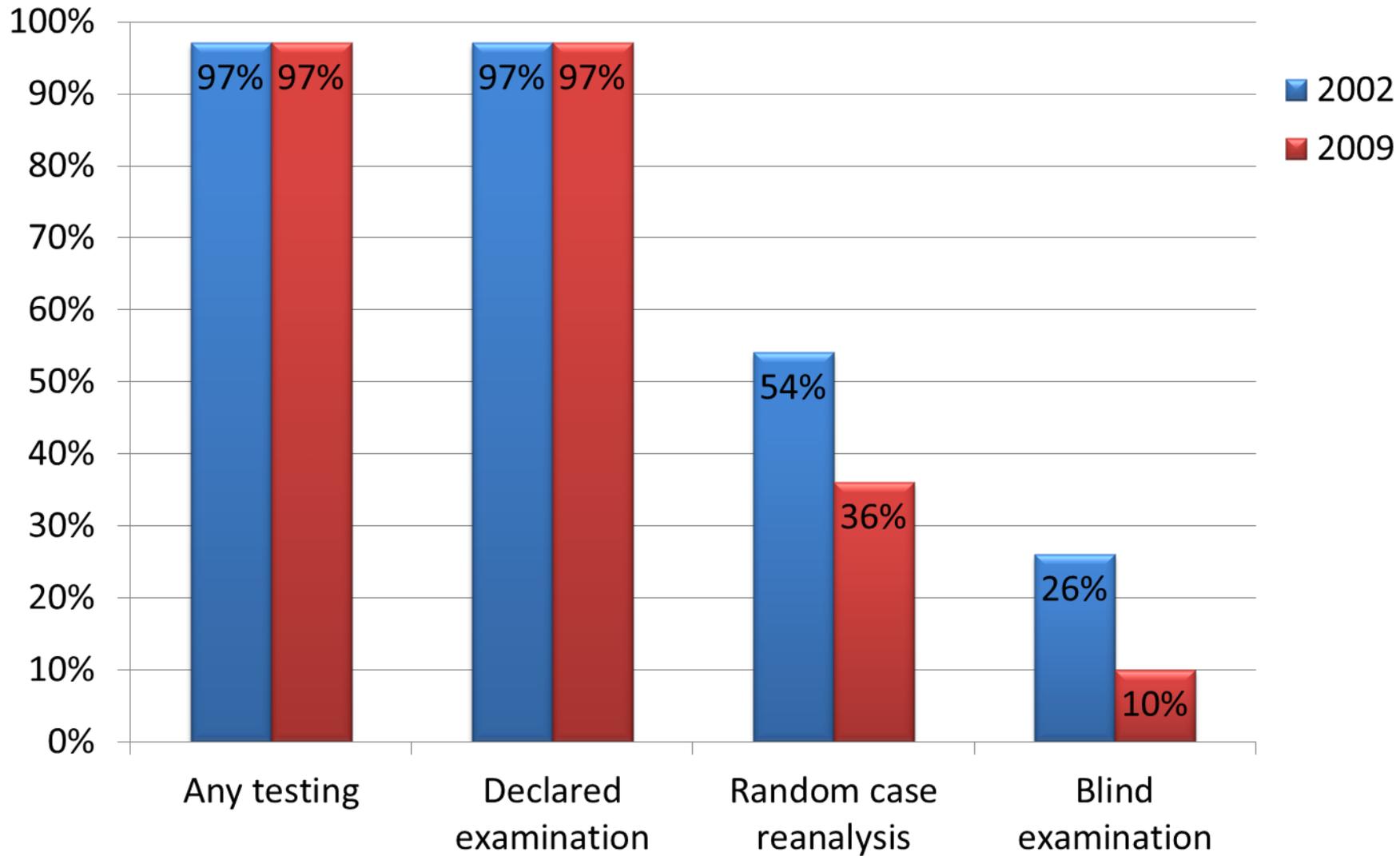
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Types of lab accreditations in 2009

Type of jurisdiction	Any accreditation	ASCLD/LAB, Legacy	ASCLD/LAB, International	FQS-I	Other
All labs	83%	55%	19%	8%	9%
State	92%	65%	21%	11%	5%
County	75%	54%	17%	1%	10%
Municipal	62%	46%	8%	12%	8%
Federal	79%	15%	35%	3%	30%

Note: Detail does not sum to total because a lab could be accredited by more than one organization.

Percent of crime labs that conducted proficiency testing



Percent of crime labs with resources dedicated to research

	2002	2009
All labs	12%	7%
Type of jurisdiction		
State	8%	6%
County	11%	5%
Municipal	10%	2%
Federal	53%	29%
Number of full-time employees		
Fewer than 10	8%	2%
10 to 24	6%	4%
25 to 49	13%	2%
50 to 99	32%	20%

Contact Information

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