



# **SAC Notes:**

**Information on Crime and Criminal Justice**  
**A publication from the**  
**Florida Statistical Analysis Center**

## **Firearm Crime in Florida, 1996 - 2007**

This report represents a summary of firearm-related crime committed in Florida from 1996-2007. Data analyzed for this publication were obtained from the 2007 Uniform Crime Report (UCR) Program, Crime in Florida Report. The report describes data compiled from voluntary submissions by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement of known offenses and arrested persons. Approximately 98% of Florida law enforcement agencies submit data for the UCR Program.

As defined by the UCR Program, violent crime includes those offenses which involve force or threat of force and is comprised of four categories: murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible sex offenses, robbery, and aggravated assault. For the purposes of this report, only these Part 1 Index Offenses are analyzed and discussed. The UCR Program does not provide specific information such as locations of crimes, demographics of criminals or victims, or specific gun use during firearm-related incidents. Due to these factors, analyses based on the UCR Program are an estimation of firearm crime in Florida.

The majority of the index offense information described in this report are from calendar years 1996 – 2007. Additional comparisons of data from 2006 and 2007 are specifically noted. More detailed Florida UCR Program information may be obtained here: <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/FSAC>. Copies of this report or information regarding this publication can be obtained by calling, writing or sending electronic mail requests to the following:

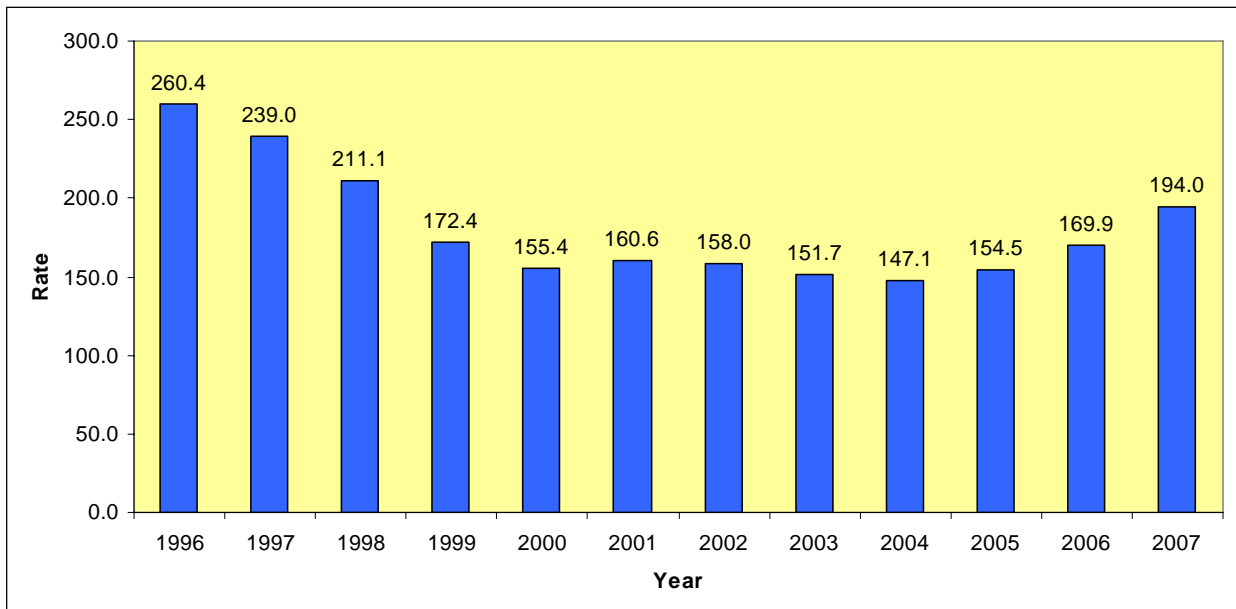
**Florida Department of Law Enforcement**  
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**P.O. Box 1489**  
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**[FSAC@fdle.state.fl.us](mailto:FSAC@fdle.state.fl.us)**  
**(850) 410-7140**



**Florida Firearm-Related Crime Rates**

The figure below demonstrates the trend in firearm-related crime rates from 1996-2007. The crime rate demonstrates the number of firearm-related index crimes per 100,000 inhabitants. By controlling for population size, this measure permits meaningful comparisons over time, as the population in Florida has steadily increased since 1996. During this twelve year period, crime rates have generally decreased, excepting slight increases in 2005, 2006 and 2007. The rate of firearm-involved offenses started with a peak in 1996 with 260.4 incidents per 100,000 inhabitants.

**Figure 1: Florida Firearm-Related Crime Rates from 1996 - 2007**

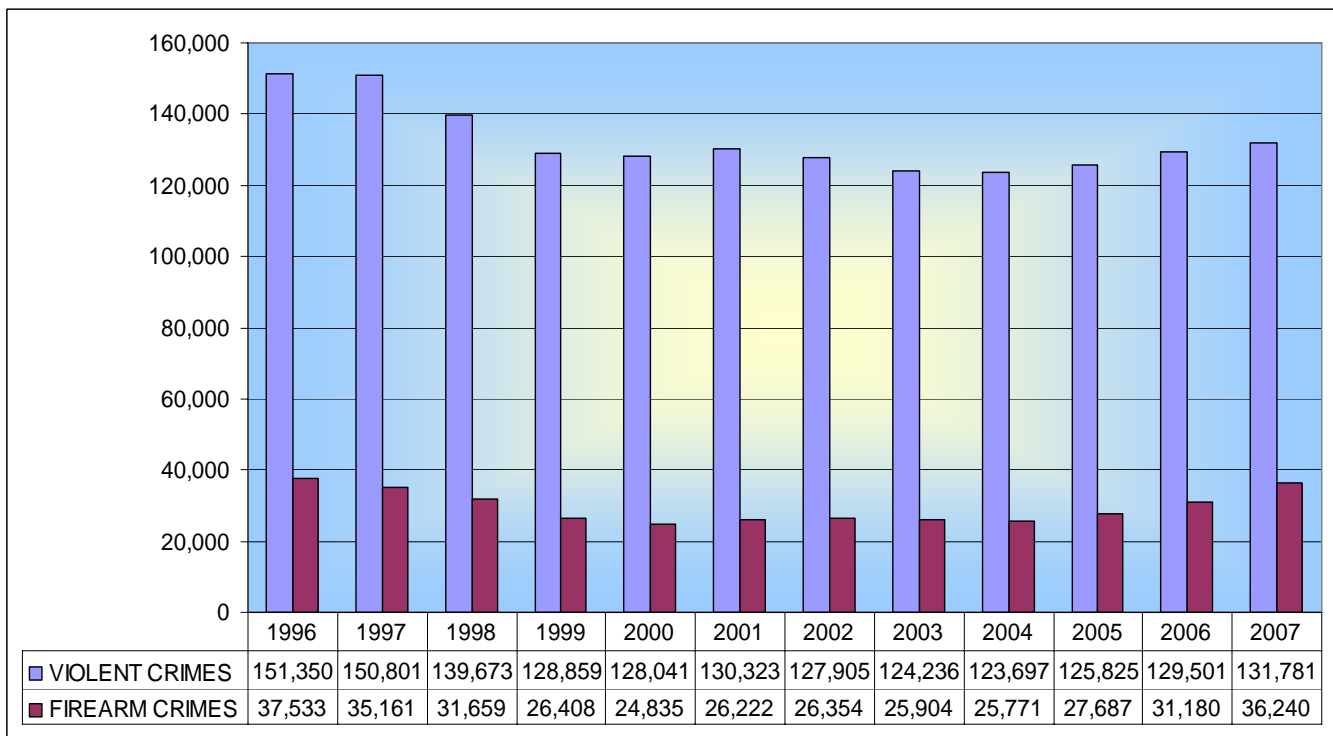




**Comparisons with Violent Crime**

The figure below compares the total number of violent crime incidents with those offenses that involved a firearm. In 1996, the highest number of violent crimes was reported (151,350). Similarly, during this time 37,533 firearm-related offenses were reported, which was the highest number reported during the twelve year period. Both reports of violent crimes and those violent crimes involving firearms generally decreased since 1996, with noted increases in 2005, 2006 and 2007.

**Figure 2: Total Violent Offenses and Firearm Involved Offenses from 1996 - 2007**





**Firearm Use in Specific Violent Crimes**

The total number of violent offenses involving a firearm, by offense type, is displayed in Table 1. The total number of firearm-related crimes was highest in 1996, with 37,533 reported offenses and a 260.4 firearm-related offense rate. From 1997 through 2000 there was a steady decrease in reported offenses that involved firearms, followed by a slight increase in reported offenses in 2001 and 2002. In 2005, the total number of violent offenses involving firearms increased by 7.4%, followed by larger increases in both 2006 and 2007 (12.6% and 16.2% respectively). Similarly, the reported rate per 100,000 inhabitants, which controls for population size, follows the same fluctuation pattern.

**Table 1: Firearm-related Total Violent Offenses and Firearm Involved Offenses from 1996 to 2007**

Year	Murder	Forcible Sex Offenses	Robbery	Aggravated Assault	Manslaughter	Total firearm Crimes	Total Percent Change	Rate Per 100,000
1996	668	351	16,385	20,109	20	37,533	--	260.4
1997	634	371	15,707	18,436	13	35,161	-6.3%	239.0
1998	589	292	13,937	16,825	16	31,659	-9.9%	211.1
1999	460	264	12,111	13,566	7	26,480	-16.3%	172.4
2000	499	273	11,692	12,359	12	24,835	-6.2%	155.4
2001	502	257	12,804	12,651	8	26,222	5.5%	160.6
2002	552	243	12,656	12,895	8	26,354	0.5%	158.0
2003	586	212	12,288	12,814	4	25,904	-1.7%	151.7
2004	555	189	11,504	13,508	15	25,771	-0.5%	147.1
2005	521	182	11,945	15,028	11	27,687	7.4%	154.5
2006	740	162	14,362	15,905	11	31,180	12.6%	169.9
2007	825	202	17,926	17,271	16	36,240	16.2%	194.0

The total number of firearm-related offenses for 2006 and 2007 are presented in Table 2. Overall there was a 16.2 percent increase in total firearm-related crime from 2006 to 2007, with all reported offense categories experiencing an increase in reported firearm-related crime. Of particular note, there was a 24.8 percent increase in firearm-related robberies from 2006 to 2007. Moreover, firearms were involved in 47% of all reported offenses and 27.5% of all reported offenses in 2007. Nearly 69% of all reported murders were firearm-related, followed by 21.3% of all aggravated assaults, nearly 9% of all reported manslaughter incidents, and approximately two percent of reported forcible sex offenses.

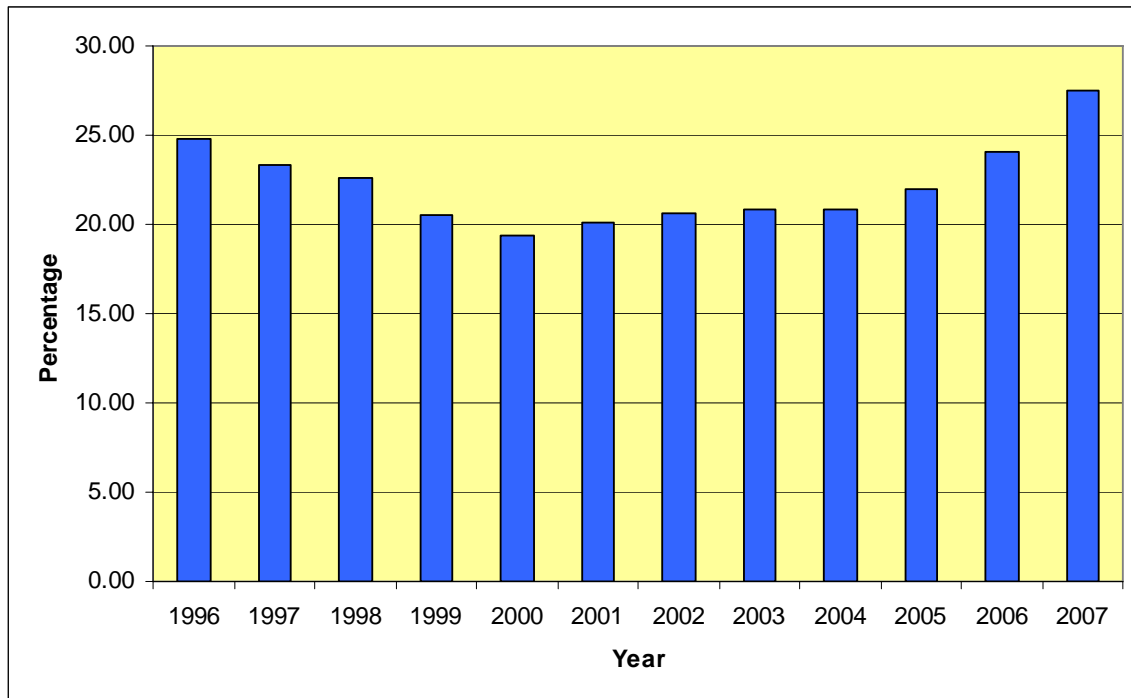


**Table 2: Firearm-Related Violent Offenses for Calendar Year 2006 and 2007**

Reported Crime	2006	2007	% Change 2006-2007
Firearm-related Murder	740	825	11.5
Forcible Sex Offenses	162	202	24.7
Robbery	14,362	17,926	24.8
Aggravated Assault	15,905	17,271	8.6
Manslaughter	11	16	45.5 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Total Firearm Crime</b>	<b>31,169</b>	<b>36,244</b>	<b>16.3</b>

The annual percentages of violent crimes that are firearm-related are shown in Figure 3. In 2007, 27.46% of all violent offenses were firearm-related, which was the highest percentage during the twelve year period. The percentages of violent offenses involving a gun have continually increased since 2004. Prior to 2004, the percentages had generally declined since 1996 in which 24.8% of all violent crimes were firearm-related.

**Figure 3: Percentage of Violent Offenses Involving Firearms from 1996 to 2007**



<sup>1</sup> Caution: small changes in small numbers can result in large percent change increases.



### Murder and Non-Negligent Manslaughter

According to the UCR Program, murder and non-negligent manslaughter are defined as the willful killing of one human being by another. The classification of this offense is based solely on police investigation as opposed to the determination of a court, medical examiner, coroner, jury, or other judicial body. Not included under this classification are deaths caused by accident, suicide, negligence, or justifiable homicides.<sup>2</sup>

According to figures compiled by the UCR program, 61% of all murders committed in Florida, from 1996 through 2007, involved a firearm (see Figure 4). During this time period, there were 11,658 murders committed in Florida. As illustrated in Figure 4, the patterning of firearm-related murders is parallel to that of all murders. Figure 5 displays non-negligent manslaughter firearm trend. From 1996-2007, 1,505 non-negligent manslaughters were reported in Florida. Approximately nine percent of those reported involved a gun. Although the reported number of non-negligent manslaughters has annually increased since 2002, the number of incidents that were firearm-related has remained relatively stable; no more than 20 incidents have been reported during this time frame.

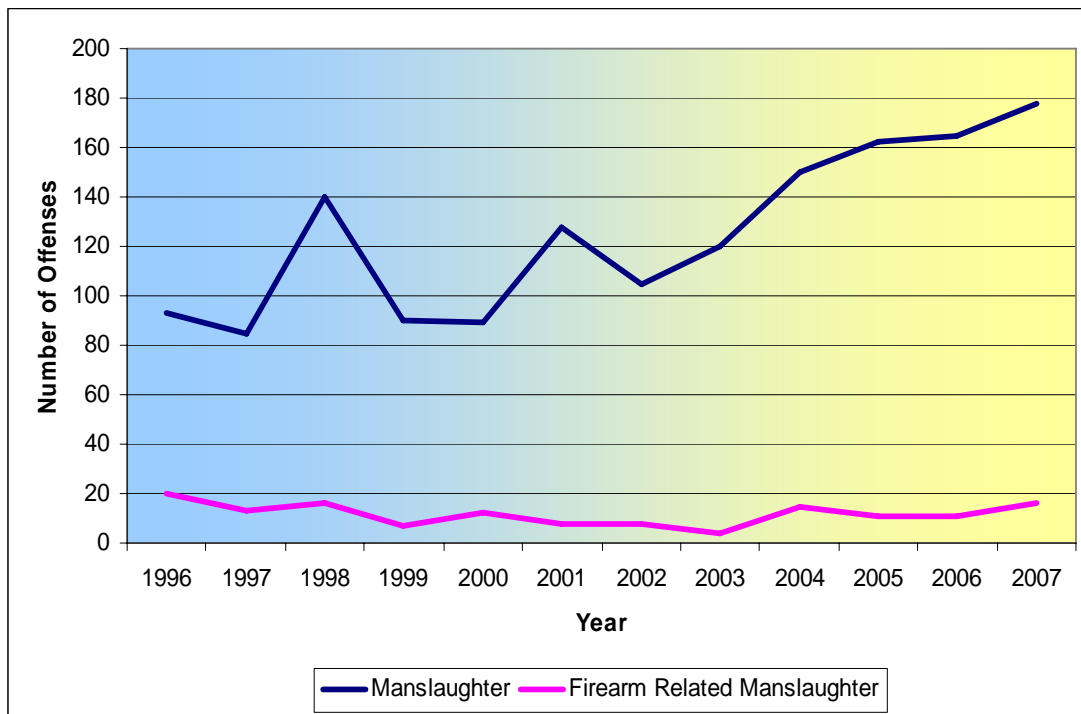
**Figure 4: Murder Trends from 1996 to 2007**



<sup>2</sup> SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2007). Crime in the United States, 2006.



Figure 5: Non-Negligent Manslaughter Trends from 1996 to 2007



### Sex Offenses

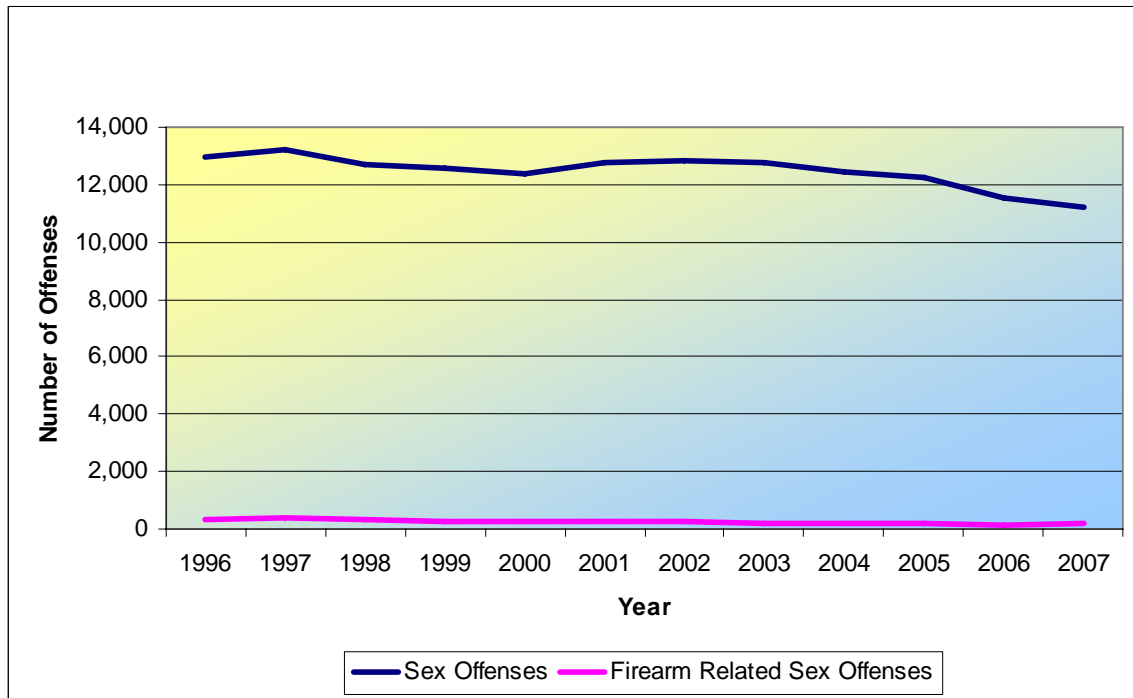
The UCR Program defines forcible rape as the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will. Additionally, assaults and attempts to commit rape by force or threat of force are also included. Excluded from this category are statutory rape offenses, and sexual offenses that do not involve force or threat of force.<sup>3</sup>

Based on the UCR Program, 149,000 forcible sex offenses were reported in Florida from 1996 through 2007. Approximately two percent of these forcible sex offenses were firearm-related (or 2,998 incidents). Figure 6 outlines the trends in both forcible sex offenses and firearm-related sex offenses from 1996 through 2007. The reporting patterns for all offenses and only those involving firearms have remained consistent over the twelve year period.

<sup>3</sup> SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2007). Crime in the United States, 2006.



Figure 6: Forcible Sex Offense Trends from 1996 to 2007



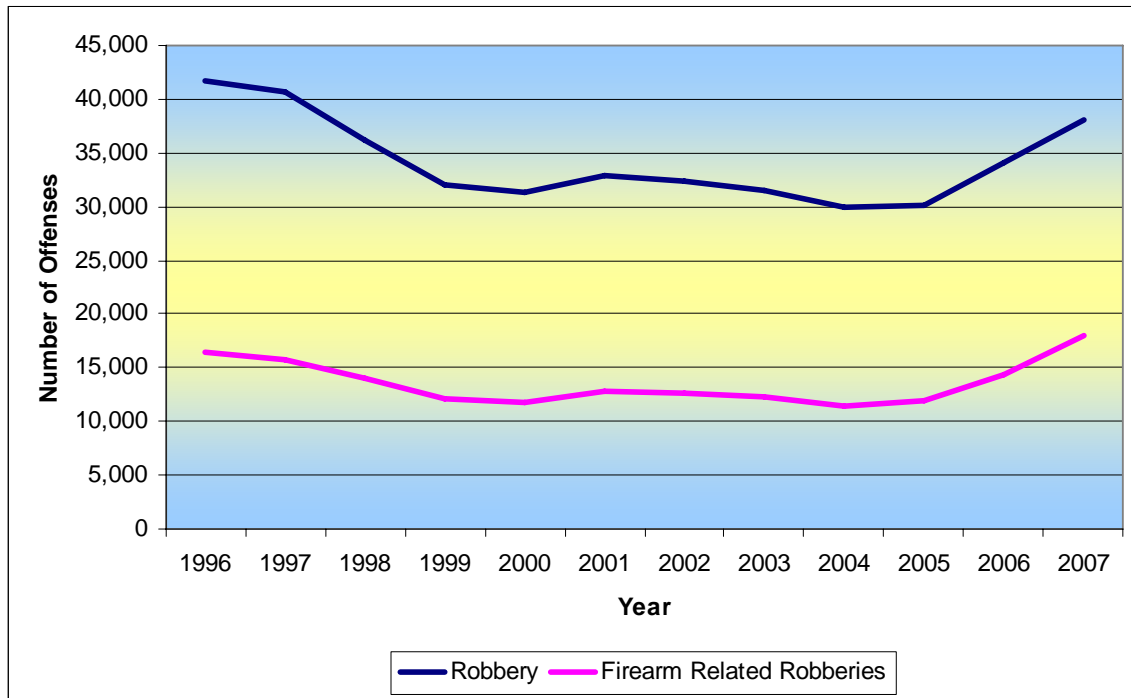
## Robbery

Robbery is classified by the UCR program as the taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.<sup>4</sup> During this twelve year period, there were 410,908 robberies reported in Florida. Based on data compiled by the UCR Program, nearly forty percent of all robberies from 1996 through 2007 involved a firearm. Figure 7 demonstrates that patterning of firearm-related robberies is parallel to that of all robberies, with an increase in reported robberies and firearm-related robberies since 2004. In 2007, 17,926 firearm-related robberies were reported, which was the highest amount in the twelve year time frame.

<sup>4</sup> SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2007). Crime in the United States, 2006.



Figure 7: Robbery Trends from 1996 to 2007



### Aggravated Assault

Aggravated assault is defined by the UCR Program as an unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, this type of assault typically includes the use of a weapon or other means likely to produce death or great bodily harm. This category of violent crime also includes attempted aggravated assault that involves the display or use of a weapon because serious personal injury would likely result if the assault were completed.<sup>6</sup>

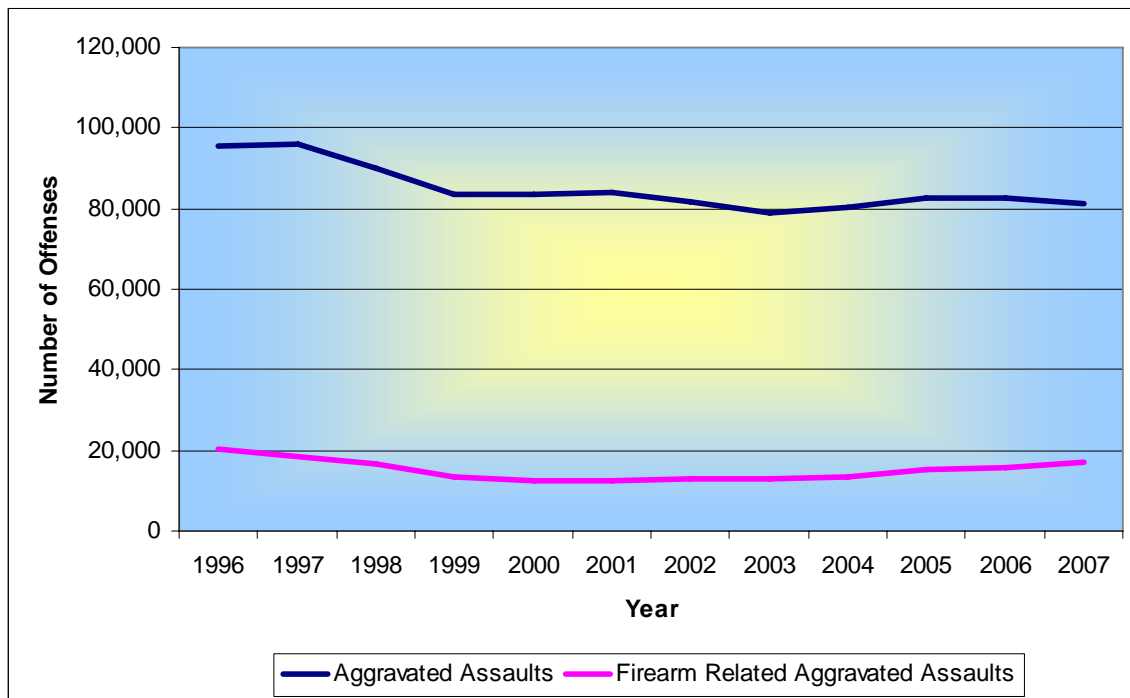
The patterns in reporting of aggravated assault and firearm-related aggravated assault are illustrated in Figure 8. From 1996 through 2007 there were 1,019,825 reports of aggravated assault in Florida. Based on the UCR Program data, 17.8% of these incidents involved a gun.

<sup>5</sup> Note: When aggravated assault and larceny-theft occur together, the offense falls under the category of robbery.

<sup>6</sup> SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2007). Crime in the United States, 2006.



Figure 8: Aggravated Assault Trends from 1996 to 2007



### Summary

A review of firearm-related data compiled by the UCR Program for the state of Florida illustrates a distinct pattern for violent offenses from 1996-2007. In 1996, both the total number of offenses involving guns (37,533), and the firearm-related crime rate per 100,000 inhabitants (260.4) was at its highest during the twelve year review period. The subsequent years experienced a comparative decrease in firearm crime. However, in 2007, the violent crime rate was at its highest (194.0) since 1998. Moreover, over 25% of all violent Part 1 index offenses involved a gun, with a 16.2% increase in total firearm-related offenses from 2006.

An examination of specific firearm-related offenses (murder, forcible sex-offenses, robbery, aggravated assault and manslaughter), yields similar trends. All violent offenses experienced a percentage increase since 2005. Moreover, in 2007, there were the highest number of firearm-related robberies (17,926) and murder (825) in the twelve year period.