Lowest Crime Rate in Florida in 42 Years. The Department released the 2012 Annual Uniform Crime Report, which showed Florida’s crime rate dropped 6.5 percent compared to 2011, marking the lowest rate in the 42 years the Department has collected crime statistics. The total number of crimes dropped 5.7 percent last year. The number of violent crimes (murder, forcible sex offenses, robbery and aggravated assault) was down by 4.3 percent. The report showed a 2.4 percent increase in the number of murders, a 2.7 percent decrease in forcible sex offenses, a 6.9 percent decrease in robberies and a 4.4 percent drop in aggravated assault. Non-violent crime (burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft) decreased 5.9 percent. Burglary was down 9.9 percent. The number of motor vehicle thefts decreased by 5.9 percent.

Firearm Purchase Program Processes Record Number of Background Checks. The Firearm Purchase Program (FPP) processed 928,000 background checks in FY 12-13 compared to 664,000 and 566,000 the previous two years, respectively. Based on current trends, the program will likely exceed a million background checks for the first time ever in one year in FY 13-14. FPP also experienced several record setting days this year. On November 23, 2012 (the day after Thanksgiving), the program processed 6,802 record checks, representing a 56 percent increase compared to the same day the previous year. A few weeks later, on December 21, 2012, that record was shattered as 8,730 checks were processed, a 118 percent increase compared to the Friday before Christmas in 2011.

Prescription Drug Deaths Decrease. The 2012 Interim Drugs Identified in Deceased Persons Report showed a significant decrease in the number of oxycodone deaths in Florida during the first 6 months of 2012 compared to the first half of 2011. Oxycodone death occurrences plunged 29.1 percent while all prescription drug deaths dropped by more than 100 people. The report shows that in the first six months of 2012, drugs were present or the cause of death in 4,126 people in Florida, a drop of 203 over the 2011 interim report.

In March of 2011, Governor Rick Scott and Attorney General Pam Bondi spearheaded efforts to stop prescription drug abuse across Florida by creating Statewide Drug Enforcement Strike Force teams and working with lawmakers to close loopholes allowing illegitimate doctors and pharmacies to overprescribe and dispense these dangerous drugs – often under the guise of a pain clinic. The teams are co-led by Florida’s sheriffs and police chiefs from around the state. Through the end of FY 12-13, they had arrested more than 4,100 individuals (including 75 doctors) and seized more than 850,000 pills and $10.5 million.
“Two years ago, Florida was the epicenter of prescription drug abuse; today we are a national role model for both enforcement and regulation,” said FDLE Commissioner Gerald Bailey. “We’ve made tremendous strides, but prescription drug abuse remains a significant concern.” Despite the decrease in prescription drug deaths, they continued to be found more often than illicit drugs in cause of death. The report contains data collected by Florida’s District Medical Examiners.

**Blue Alert Email Notification System Launched.** In 2011, the Florida Legislature established the Florida Blue Alert Plan which utilizes the technologies employed by the Amber Alert Plan to notify the public of critical information when a law enforcement officer is killed, has suffered serious bodily injury, or is missing while in the line of duty and the suspect, who is considered to pose an imminent threat to the public, is still at large.

Under the Blue Alert Plan, FDLE, in conjunction with the Florida Highway Patrol and the Department of Transportation, immediately broadcast information about the offender to help avert further harm or assist in the apprehension of the suspect. Alerts are disseminated to the public through the Emergency Alert System by broadcasting the alert on television, radio and dynamic message signs. Citizens can sign up to receive alerts at [http://floridabluealert.com/](http://floridabluealert.com/)

**Human Trafficking Training for Law Enforcement Officers.** The U.S. Department of State estimates 27 million people are trafficked worldwide annually. In 2011, Florida ranked third nationally in the number of calls the National Human Trafficking Resource Center’s hotline received. With the support of Attorney General Bondi’s office, FDLE developed a two-hour online “Introduction to Human Trafficking” training to further assist Florida law enforcement officers in their work to combat human trafficking. The training includes an introduction from Attorney General Pam Bondi and equips front-line officers with information to help them recognize and respond to human trafficking. The training defines human trafficking, discusses different forms of trafficking, and provides indicators to help identify potential trafficking victims and related state and federal laws.