

Iowa earns a D- for its civil forfeiture laws:

- Higher bar to forfeit in limited cases: Weak conviction provision falls short of criminal forfeiture (see page 41). It applies only if an owner contests forfeiture, putting the burden on owners to engage in a costly legal battle and making it easy for the government to forfeit without conviction. It does not require conviction of the owner, only of any person, and does not apply to property valued above \$5,000. Once the conviction provision is satisfied, property must be linked to the crime by clear and convincing evidence.
- Stronger protections for the innocent: The government must prove third-party owners knew about criminal activity connected to their property.
- Large profit incentive: 100% of forfeiture proceeds go to law enforcement.

Recent Reforms

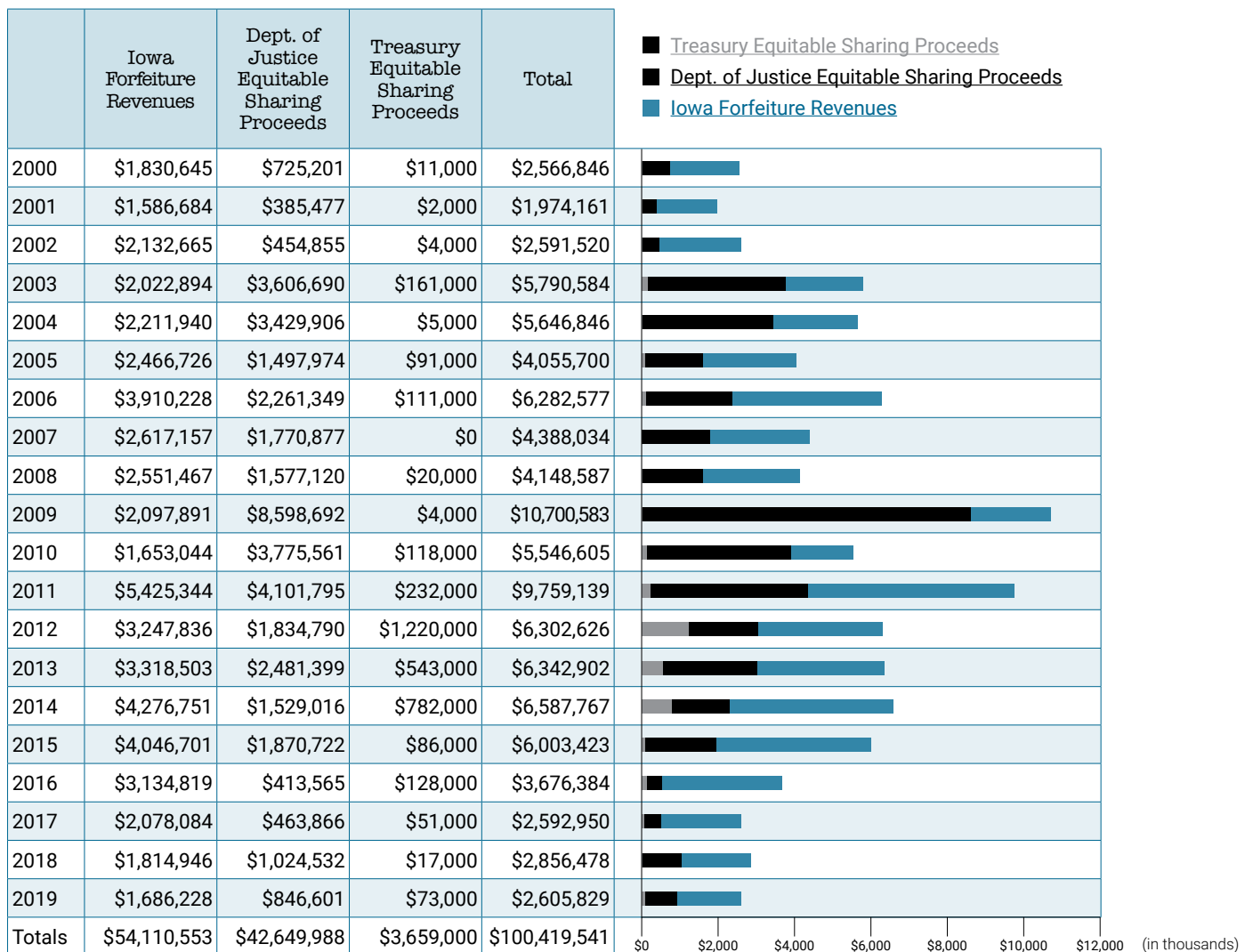
- (2017) SF 446: Raised standard of proof; created weak conviction provision; shifted burden of proof from innocent owners to government; adopted new transparency requirements.

State and Federal Forfeiture Revenues, 2000–2019

Between 2000 and 2019, Iowa law enforcement agencies forfeited more than \$54 million under state law and generated an additional \$46 million from federal equitable sharing, for a total of at least \$100 million in forfeiture revenue—averaging more than \$5 million a year. Iowa ranks 8th for its participation in the Department of Justice’s equitable sharing program. The state does not prevent state and local agencies from using equitable sharing to circumvent state forfeiture law.

**At least \$100 million
in state and federal
forfeiture revenue**

2000–2019



All revenue figures include both civil and criminal forfeitures. Revenues are not adjusted for inflation.

Iowa's Forfeiture Transparency and Accountability Report Card

Tracking Seized Property	C	Accessibility of Forfeiture Records	B
Accounting for Forfeiture Fund Spending	A	Penalties for Failure to File a Report	F
Statewide Forfeiture Reports	F	Financial Audits of Forfeiture Accounts	F

For full transparency and accountability grades, visit www.ij.org/TransparencyReportCards.

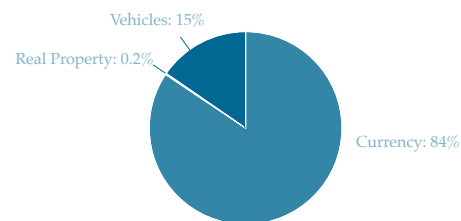
Forfeitures Under Iowa Law: Key Facts

Median Value



From 2015 to 2019, half of Iowa's currency forfeitures were worth less than \$900.

Property Types



From 2000 to 2019, more than eight out of every 10 forfeitures in Iowa were of currency.

Civil vs. Criminal

UNKNOWN

Iowa does not report whether forfeitures are processed under civil or criminal forfeiture law.

Expenditures

UNKNOWN

Iowa expenditure data were not used for this report.

Data Notes

Property-level forfeiture proceeds data were obtained from the state of Iowa's data portal and via public records request to the Iowa Attorney General. Proceeds are in fiscal years and represent only forfeited money and sales of real property. The AG does not track other property. Equitable sharing data are from DOJ's and Treasury's annual forfeiture reports. Due to differences in reporting and accounting practices, state figures may not match aggregate numbers produced by the state or cover the same 12-month period as the federal data.