

Kentucky earns a D- for its civil forfeiture laws:

- Low bar to forfeit most property: In general, prosecutors' standard is akin to probable cause ("slight evidence of traceability" to a crime), and the owner must prove by clear and convincing evidence that property is not connected to a crime. For real property, prosecutors' standard is clear and convincing evidence.
- Limited protections for the innocent: Third-party owners must prove their own innocence to recover seized property, unless real property is at stake.
- Large profit incentive: 100% of forfeiture proceeds go to law enforcement (85% to the seizing agencies and 15% to the Office of the Attorney General or the Prosecutors Advisory Council).

Recent Reforms

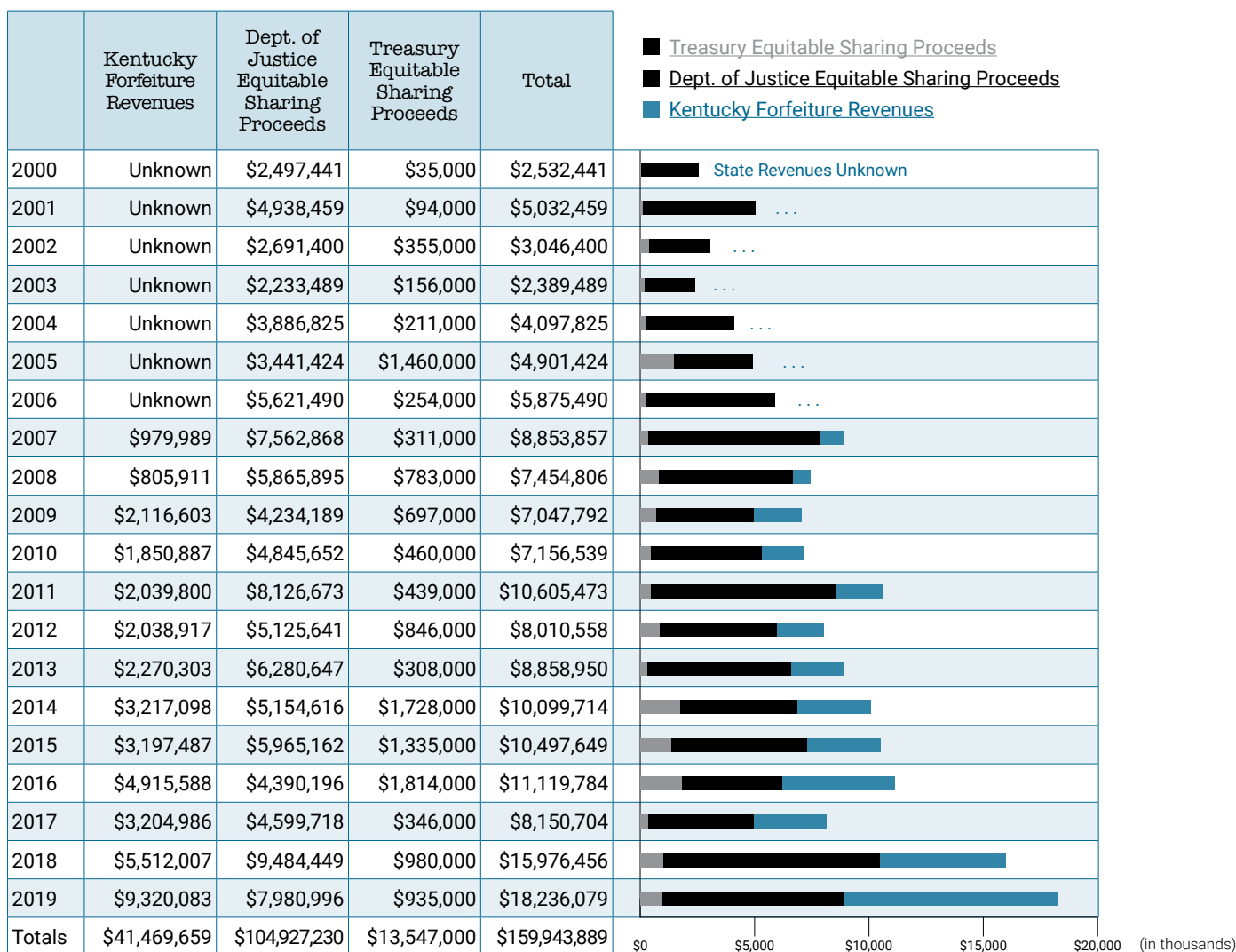
- None.

State and Federal Forfeiture Revenues, 2000–2019

Between 2007 and 2019, Kentucky law enforcement agencies forfeited more than \$41 million under state law. Between 2000 and 2019, they generated an additional \$118 million from federal equitable sharing, for a total of at least \$159 million in forfeiture revenue. Kentucky ranks 35th 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 \$159 million
in state and federal
forfeiture revenue**

2000–2019



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

Kentucky's Forfeiture Transparency and Accountability Report Card

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

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

Forfeitures Under Kentucky Law: Key Facts

Median Value



Kentucky does not report property-level data necessary to calculate median forfeiture value.

Property Types

UNKNOWN

Kentucky does not report the types of property forfeited.

Civil vs. Criminal

UNKNOWN

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

Expenditures

UNKNOWN

Kentucky does not report how forfeiture funds are spent.

Data Notes

Agency-level forfeiture proceeds data were obtained via public records requests to the Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy. Historically, only a handful of agencies regularly submitted required reports to ODCP. Between 2014 and 2018, the number of reporting agencies more than doubled. Increased compliance with reporting requirements likely accounts for the large jump in forfeiture proceeds in recent years. 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.