

Massachusetts earns an **F** for its civil forfeiture laws:

- Lowest bar to forfeit: The government must only show probable cause that property is connected to a crime.
- Poor protections for the innocent: Third-party owners must prove their own innocence to recover seized property.
- Large profit incentive: Up to 100% of forfeiture proceeds go to law enforcement.

Recent Reforms

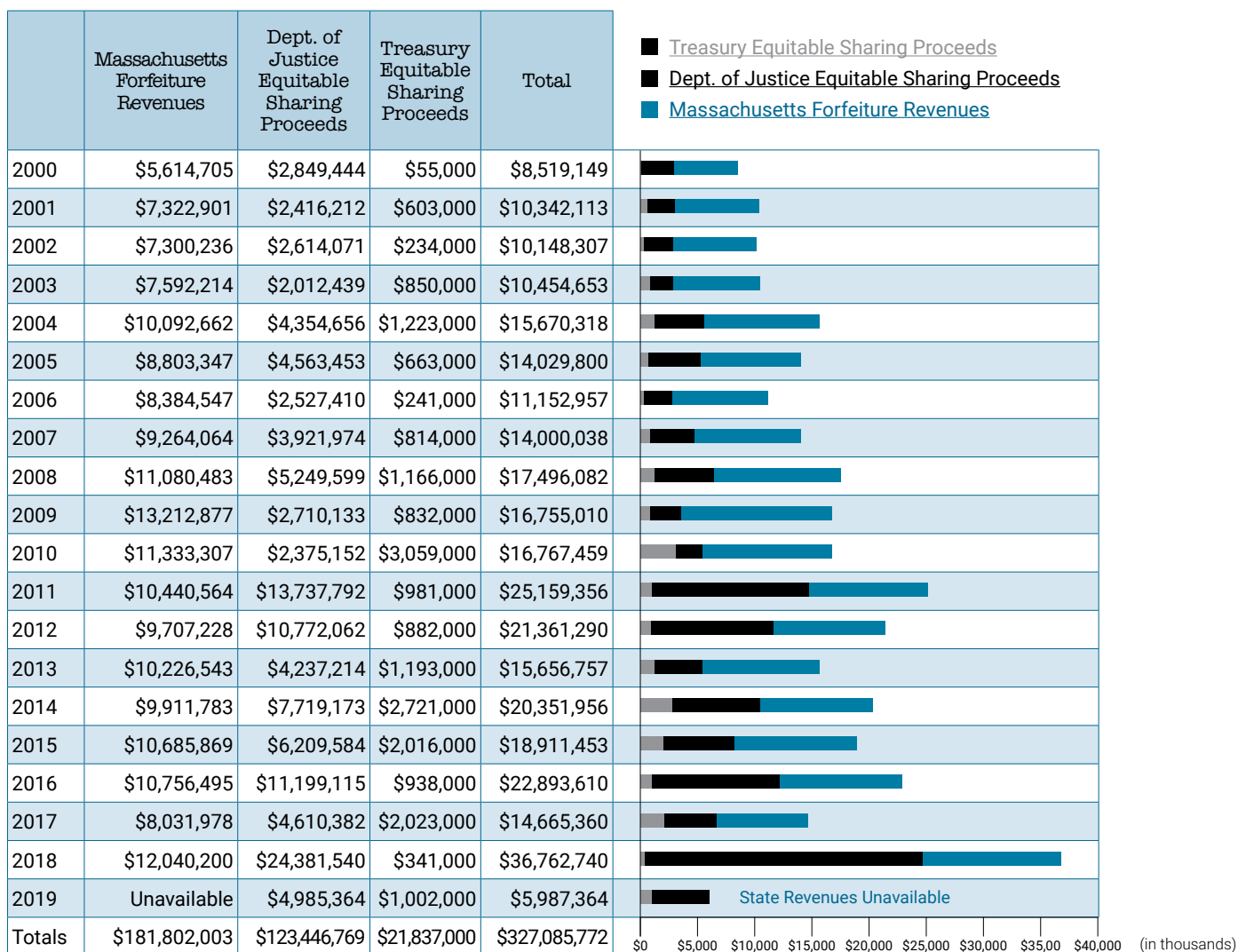
- (2018) S. 2371: Strengthened transparency requirements.

State and Federal Forfeiture Revenues, 2000–2019

Between 2000 and 2018, Massachusetts law enforcement agencies forfeited nearly \$182 million under state law. Between 2000 and 2019, they generated an additional \$145 million from federal equitable sharing, for a total of at least \$327 million in forfeiture revenue. Massachusetts ranks 48th 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 \$327 million
in state and federal
forfeiture revenue**

2000–2019



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

Massachusetts' Forfeiture Transparency and Accountability Report Card

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

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

Forfeitures Under Massachusetts Law: Key Facts

Median Value



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

Property Types

UNKNOWN

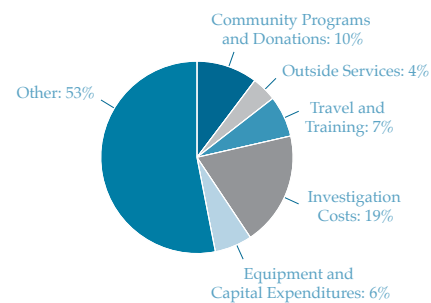
Massachusetts does not report the types of property forfeited.

Civil vs. Criminal

UNKNOWN

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

Expenditures



In 2018, the Massachusetts Attorney General and district attorneys spent \$3 million from forfeiture funds—53% on other expenses, mostly interagency transfers.

Data Notes

Forfeiture revenues were obtained from the Massachusetts Comptroller's online spending dataset and via public records request to the Comptroller. Figures presented are calculated estimates of statewide forfeiture revenues based on fiscal-year deposits to the Massachusetts AG's and each DA's special forfeiture trust fund, which, by law, receive half of all forfeiture revenues. Expenditure records for calendar-year 2018 were obtained via public records requests to the AG and each DA and represent only expenses for those offices. 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.