JOURNALIST FACT SHEET

Financial Fraud in America 2026

Publication-ready facts from FinanceFirst's source-linked analysis of the FBI 2025 IC3 Annual Report and Census data.

$20.877B	1,008,597	+45.8%	+52.3%
2025 IC3 reported loss	complaint reports	Credit Card/Check reports YoY	Investment reports YoY

Use this language

Say reported complaint reports, reported losses, complaints per 100,000 residents, or activity reported to IC3. Do not say total U.S. fraud, unique victims, prevalence, offender location, or credit-card-only when citing the FBI's Credit Card/Check category.

National findings

FBI IC3 recorded 1,008,597 complaint reports and $20.877 billion in reported loss during 2025. The FBI described reported loss as 26% higher than in 2024 and reported an average loss of $20,699.

Credit Card/Check Fraud reports increased from 12,876 in 2024 to 18,774 in 2025, a FinanceFirst-calculated increase of 45.8%. Reported loss increased from $199.9 million to $282.7 million, up 41.4%. This combined FBI category is broader than credit-card-only fraud.

Investment reports increased from 47,919 in 2024 to 72,984 in 2025, up 52.3%. Reported investment loss increased from $6.571 billion to $8.649 billion, up 31.6%.

The FBI recorded 181,565 complaints with a cryptocurrency nexus and $11.367 billion in associated reported loss. Cryptocurrency is an overlapping descriptor, so it must not be added to Investment or other crime-type totals.

State bookends

Measure	Top five states	D.C. comparison
Complaint reports per 100,000	Alaska (434.3), Nevada (407.2), Arizona (378.7), Massachusetts (320.6), Washington (320.2)	448.8
Reported loss per 100,000	California ($9.3M), Nevada ($9.2M), Arizona ($8.3M), Hawaii ($7.4M), New Jersey ($6.9M)	$14.0M

Washington, D.C. is a federal district and is not included in the 50-state ranks. California led the 50 states in both raw reported loss and reported loss per 100,000 residents. Alaska led the 50 states in complaint reports per 100,000 residents.

Income finding

Across the 50 states, the relationship between 2024 median household income and 2025 reported loss per 100,000 residents was Pearson r = 0.634 and Spearman rho = 0.745. The Spearman 95% bootstrap interval was 0.577 to 0.849; leave-one-state-out Pearson estimates ranged from 0.609 to 0.688. This is descriptive, not causal or individual-level evidence. Income is not wealth.

Age finding

People age 60 and older had 201,266 complaint reports and $7.748 billion in reported loss, the highest reported loss among the age groups displayed by the FBI. Some complaints omitted age, and the FBI's age-group loss labels are rounded. Age alone does not explain the losses.

What the data cannot answer

The public data do not measure every fraud incident, unique victims, household net worth, offender location, or the causal effect of income or age. They do not provide a credit-card-only state ranking. They do not support adding FBI and FTC totals, or cryptocurrency and investment totals.

Critical source warning

The FBI's published Oregon cryptocurrency-descriptor loss ($545,938,510) exceeds its published Oregon overall reported loss ($193,196,479). FinanceFirst preserves both figures, flags the inconsistency, and does not calculate a crypto share of state loss.

Consumer actions from official guidance

Contact the financial institution or platform through a verified channel; ask whether a transfer can be stopped, recalled, or frozen; and preserve transaction details and messages. Use IdentityTheft.gov for identity theft, complaint.ic3.gov for internet-enabled crime, ReportFraud.ftc.gov for general scams, the CFPB complaint portal for covered financial-company problems, and the USA.gov state Attorney General directory for state contacts. Reporting does not guarantee recovery or investigation. Beware of anyone requesting another payment to recover prior losses.

Sources

FBI 2025 IC3 Annual Report
Census Vintage 2025 population estimates
Census 2024 state household-income brief
FTC Consumer Sentinel Data Book 2024
CFPB Consumer Complaint Database
FinCEN SAR Filings by Industry

Review status

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