

The three strikes law in California pertains to the law meting a punishment of at least 25 years to a person who has committed a crime three times. The law was enacted in 1994 in California. The idea behind this law is to preempt future crimes. A person prone to commit crimes must be put behind bars to deter him from committing more crimes. Since the person obviously has not learned anything from committing the first crime then he should be meted a severe punishment the next time he committed another felony. Not all crimes, however, require the use of three strike law. The three strike law is only applicable to serious offenses.

California was the first state that passed this law. An overwhelming 72 percent of the voters in the state voted in favor of the passing of the law. Before the law was enacted in 1994, California has seen a rising rate of crimes. In 1993, violent crimes reported reached 336,381 cases. The first six years after the law was passed saw a marked decrease in crime by up to 41 percent. In 2000, the crime rate dropped to 210,531 or a 37 percent drop. This marked reduction in violent crime cases is attributed to the enactment of the three strike law. The law was later enacted in 25 other states.

The three strike law in California became the basis for the statutes passed in the other 23 states. The law in California however has some unique features not found in the other states. One such feature is if the person committed a serious crime the second time around, the person will be meted twice the amount of time that a first time offender would get. An example of this would be, if a person gets 5 years for rape, he would get 10 years for the next rape offense. The third crime does not need to be a rape case; it can be any serious offense. If the person commits a third serious crime, he will be meted twenty five years to life for the crime.

Crimes that are considered serious that can qualify for the third strike law includes rape, murder, child abuse, abduction and other crimes that require life sentence. The law is only applicable if the person commits the grave crime in the same state. An [Orange County attorney](#) is knowledgeable about the intricacies behind the three strike law. For people affected by this rule, an Orange County attorney has an in-depth understanding of the law.