

# **MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION**

## **Quarterly Report on Admissions and Releases in the Massachusetts Department of Correction**

### **Fourth Quarter 2019**





## **Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

Charles D. Baker, Governor

### **Executive Office of Public Safety and Security**

Thomas A. Turco III, Secretary

### **Massachusetts Department of Correction**

Carol A. Mici, Commissioner  
Jennifer A. Gaffney, Deputy Commissioner

Rhiana Kohl, Ph.D., Executive Director of Strategic Planning & Research

For questions regarding this report, please contact the Research & Planning Division:

Research & Planning Division  
MCI-Concord/SFU Building  
P.O. Box 9125  
Concord, MA 01742  
Phone: (978) 405-6677  
Fax: (978) 405-6680

[Research@massmail.state.ma.us](mailto:Research@massmail.state.ma.us)

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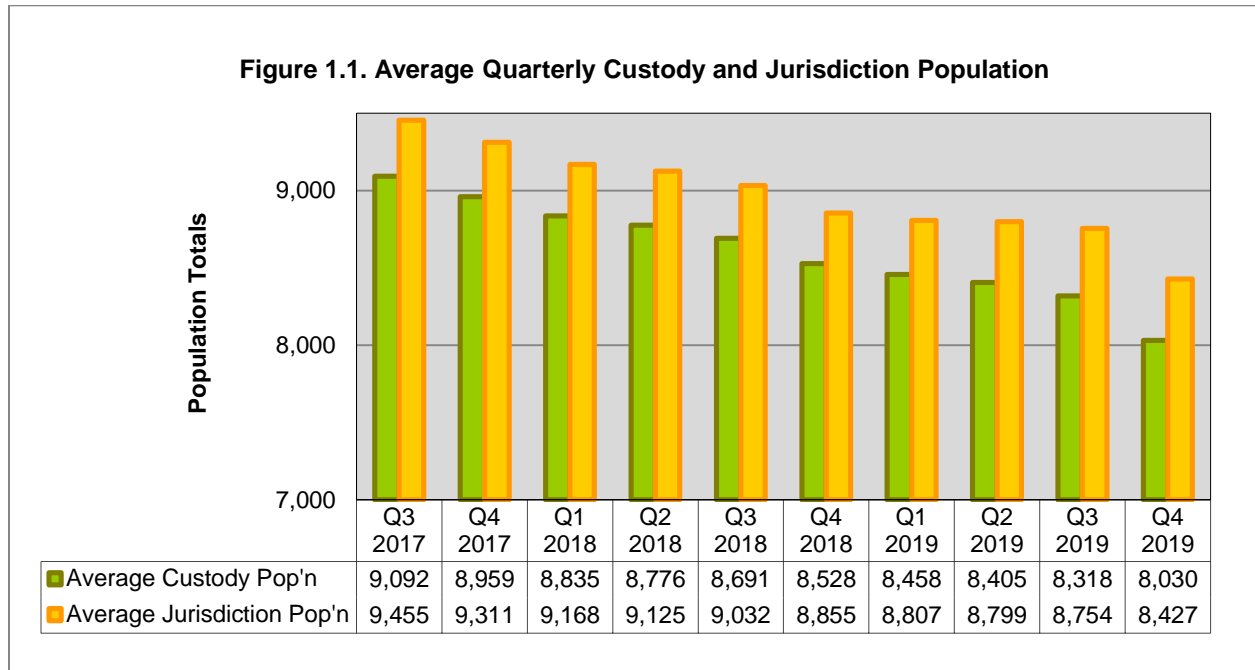
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The MA DOC custody population averaged 8,030 inmates, and the jurisdiction population averaged 8,427 inmates in the fourth quarter of 2019. All three pre-trial, criminal and civil populations were lower than the previous quarter. Notably, the pre-trial population is less than half of what it was in the third quarter.
- Admissions and releases made their cyclical turns and are both down this quarter. Admissions were exceptionally low at 1,284, 32 percent fewer than Q3 admissions. At the beginning of the trend period – the third quarter of 2017 – both admissions and releases were over 2,000. At this point, they appear unlikely to reach these levels again.
- Criminally sentenced admissions (455) were once again fewer than releases (706) in the fourth quarter of 2019, this time by a considerable margin. These patterns were reflected in both males and females.
- After a large decrease last quarter, criminally sentenced new court commitments from Massachusetts court fell just slightly again. Primarily from Essex, Suffolk, Bristol, and Middlesex counties, 340 new court commitments came in between October and December of 2019.
- Releases from civil commitment were higher than admissions this quarter; admissions fell by 27 percent. The remarkable drop in admissions occurred for both males and females and follows cyclical yearly trends in this population. Still, in 2019 there were 111 more admissions than releases of civil commitments.
- The pre-trial population experienced major decline this quarter. While both admissions and releases plunged, pre-trial admissions did so by 52 percent. This change was primarily found in females, who typically make up the majority of pre-trial detainees. When broken out by county, females from Middlesex were more than half of DOC pre-trial detainees. Essex and Plymouth county females dropped off drastically.
- Overall, the year 2019 played out as another one of decline for the MA DOC population, even as admissions and releases both fall.

## CURRENT POPULATION AND OVERALL TRENDS

The MA DOC **custody** population averaged 8,030 inmates in the fourth quarter of 2019. This population decreased by three percent from the previous quarter. From the third quarter of 2017 through the fourth quarter of 2019, there was a decrease of 1,062 inmates, or just shy of 12 percent, from the custody population.

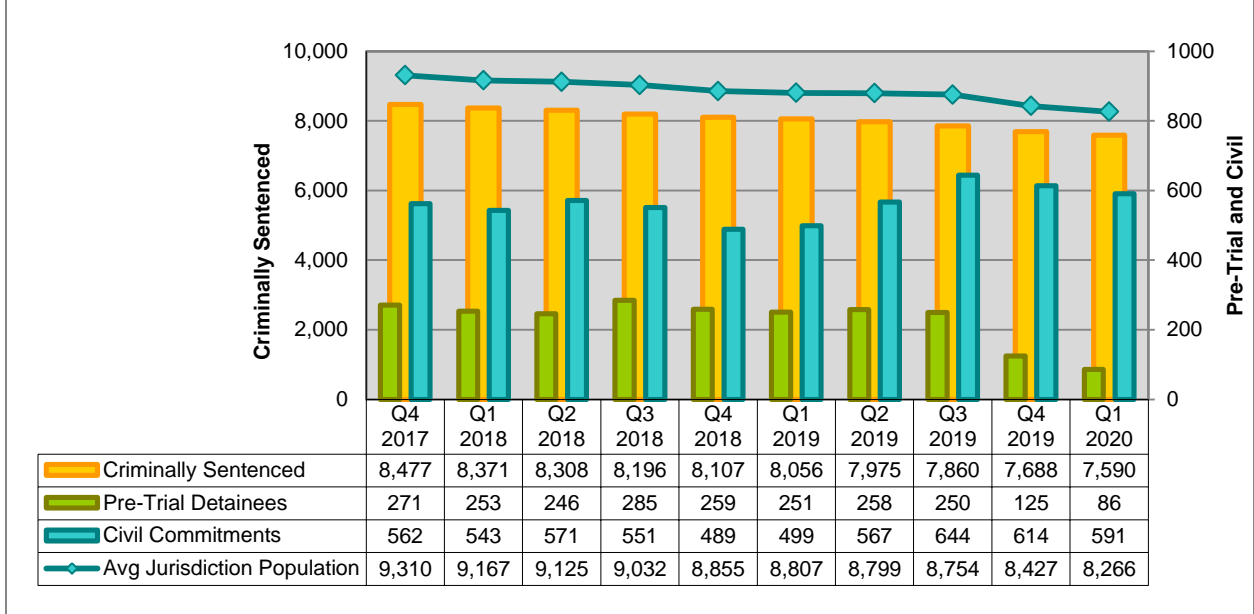
The **jurisdiction** population averaged 8,427 inmates in the fourth quarter of 2019, dropping four percent the previous quarter. Over the ten-quarter trend period, the **jurisdiction** population is down 1,028 inmates or 11 percent. The decline continues for both the MA DOC custody and jurisdiction population. See Figure 1.1 below.



The criminally sentenced population dropped two percent from last quarter and 10 percent since the beginning of the trend period. Civil commitment population dropped this quarter but remains over 600. The MA DOC pre-trial population saw the biggest change this quarter, shrinking by half from the previous quarter. See Figure 1.2 below.

\* Each quarter's population is the average of the last day of the month's count for the three months within that quarter.

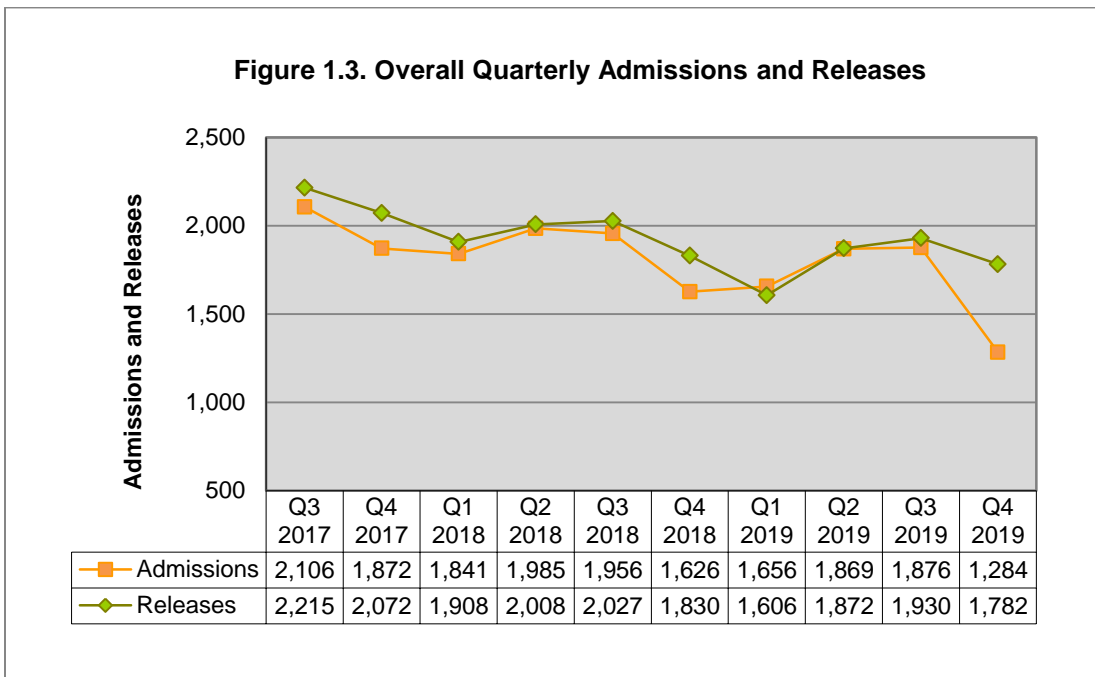
**Figure 1.2. Average Quarterly Jurisdiction Population by Commitment Type**

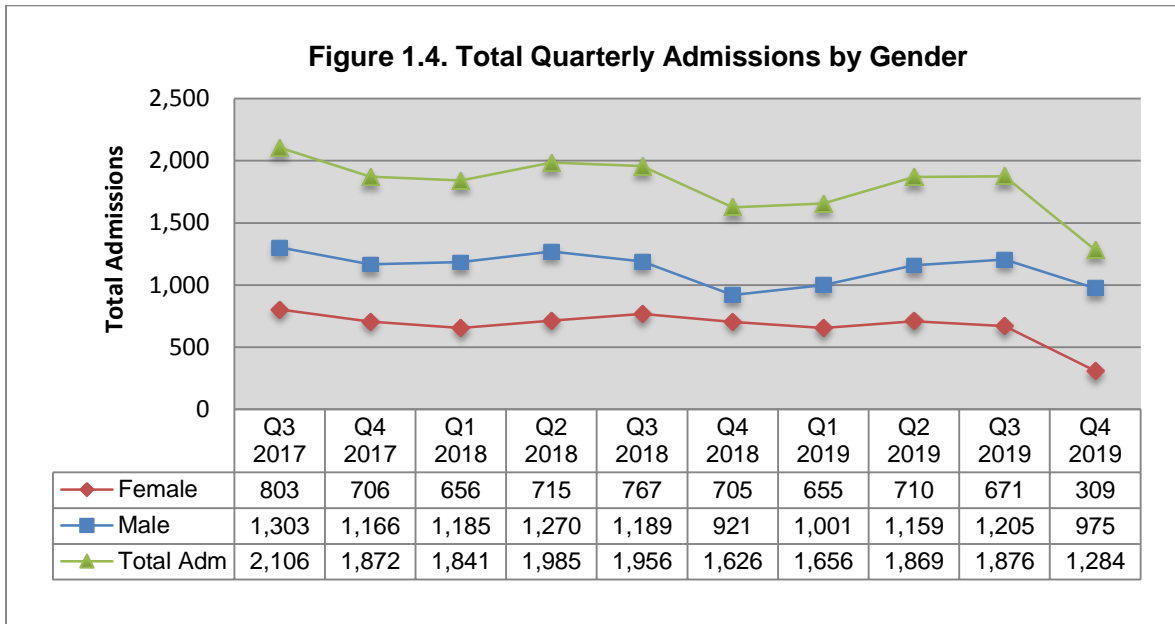


**OVERALL ADMISSIONS AND RELEASES**

Both admissions and releases fell between Q3 and Q4 of 2019. This change conforms to a cyclical trend, although admissions saw a dramatic decrease of 32 percent. Between Q3 2017 and Q4 2019, the MA DOC released 1,179 more inmates than it has admitted. See Figure 1.3 below.

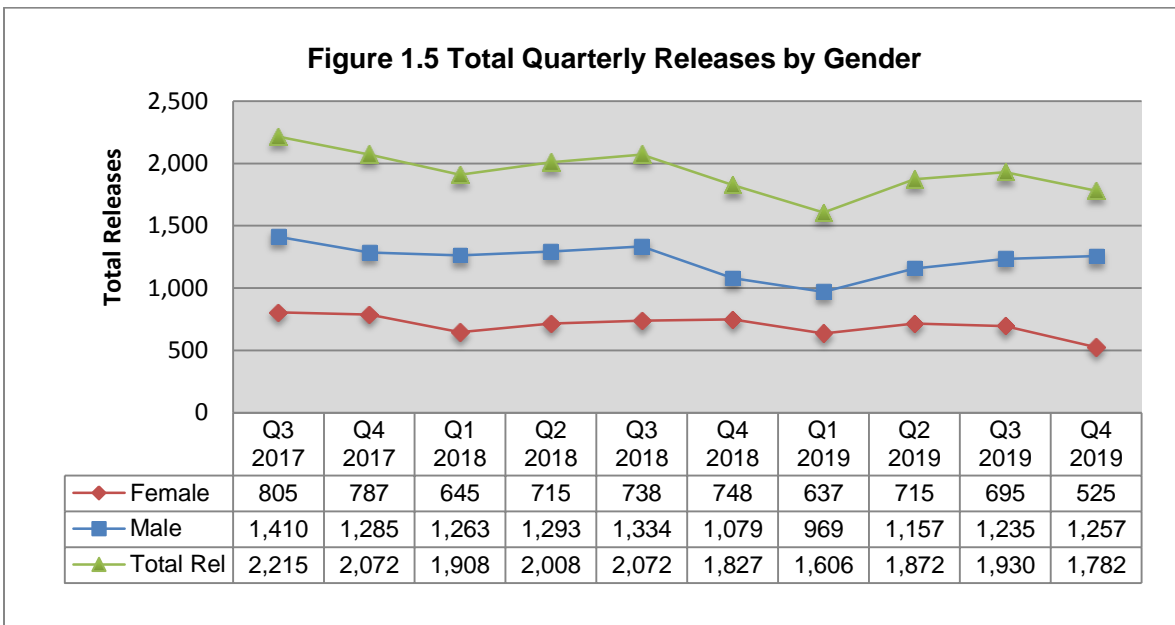
**Figure 1.3. Overall Quarterly Admissions and Releases**

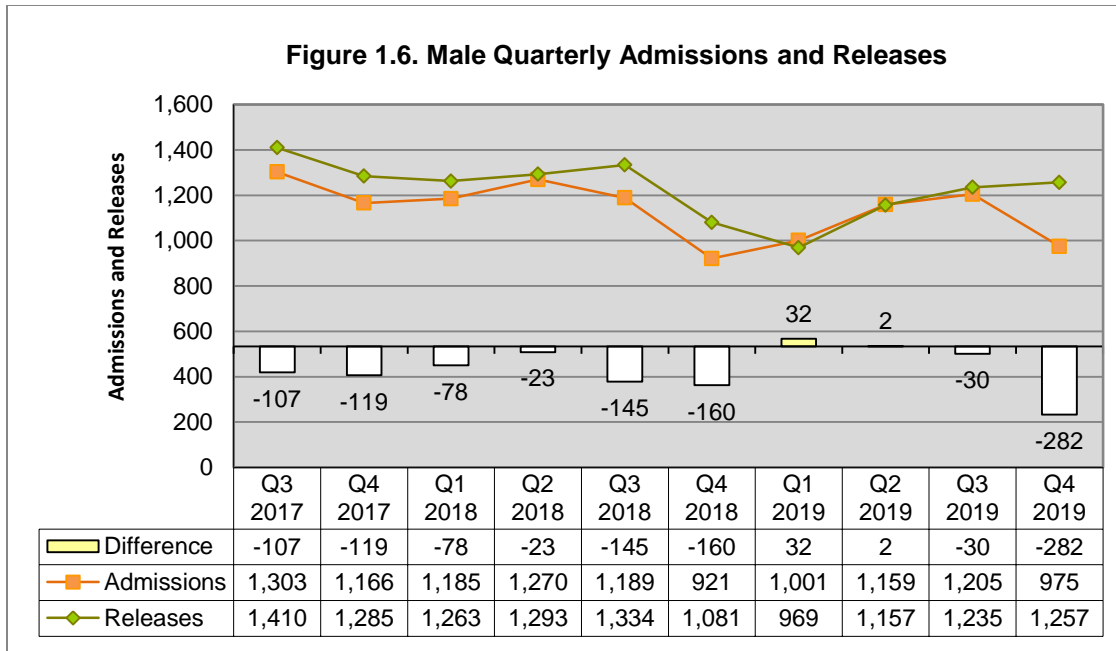




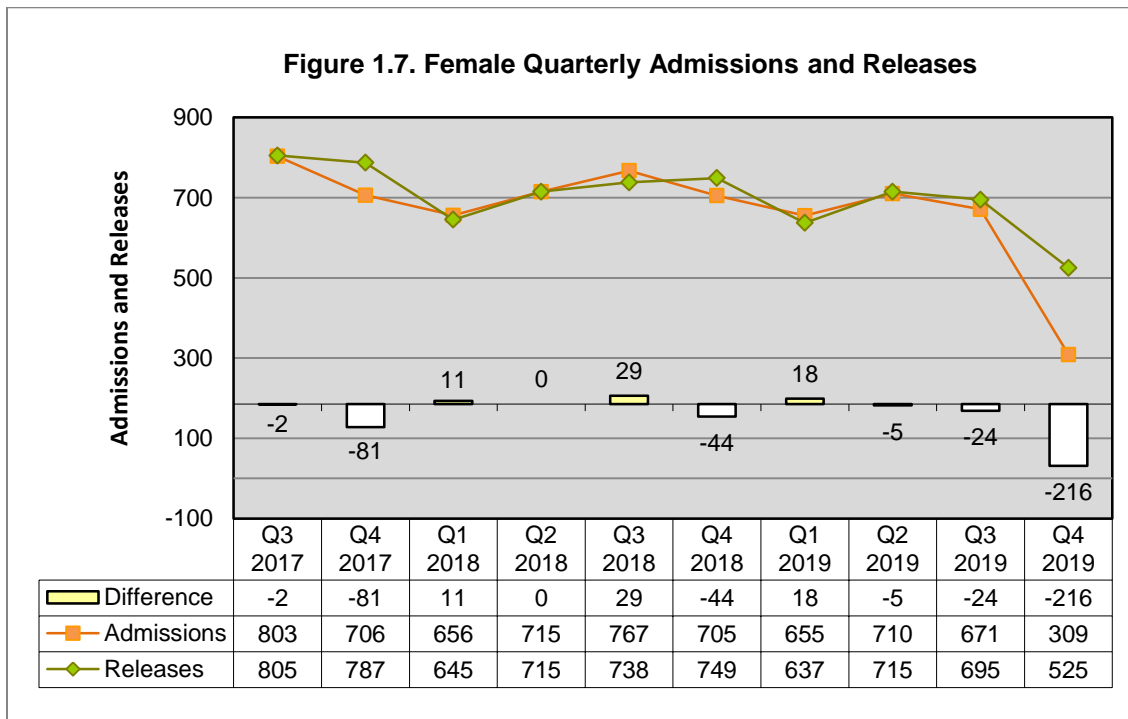
The decline in **admissions** came from both males and females, but in females the change was more pronounced with a 54 percent reduction from Q3 2019. See Figure 1.4 above.

All **releases** for the trend period are shown in Figure 1.5 below. This quarter, male releases rose for the third time in a row (by 2 percent). Female releases reached a historical low of 525 for the quarter.

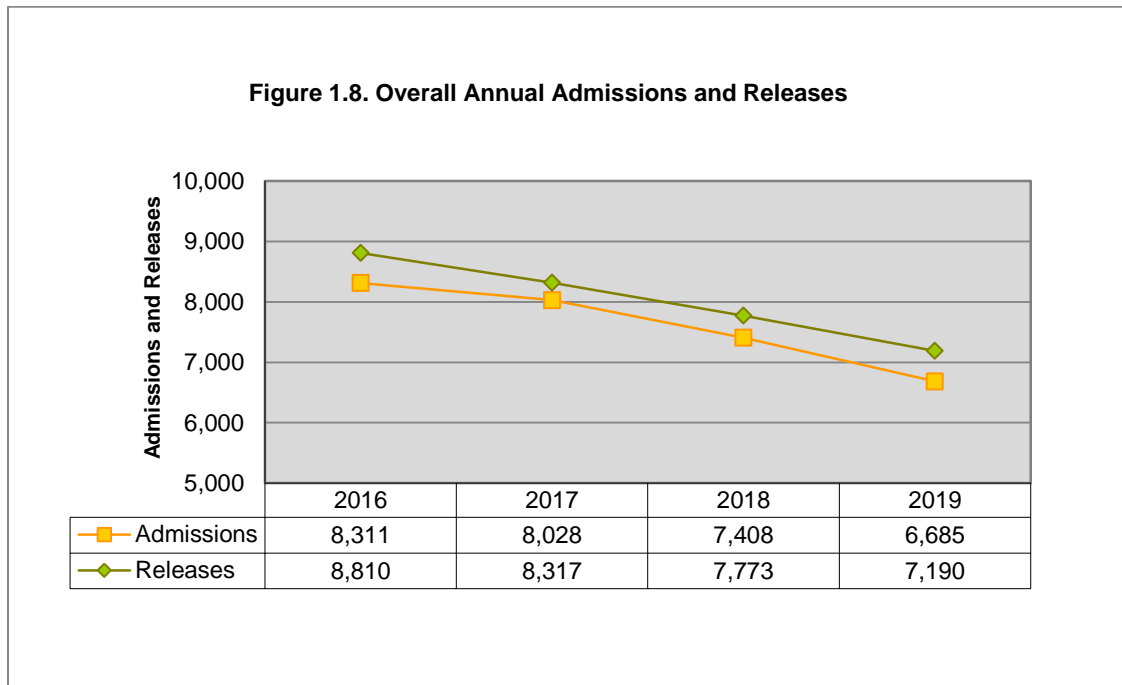




The difference between male admissions and releases in Q4 2019 is wider than usual, where 29 percent more males were released than admitted (see Figure 1.6 above). Female admissions and releases showed a similar gap, though both fell from the previous quarter.





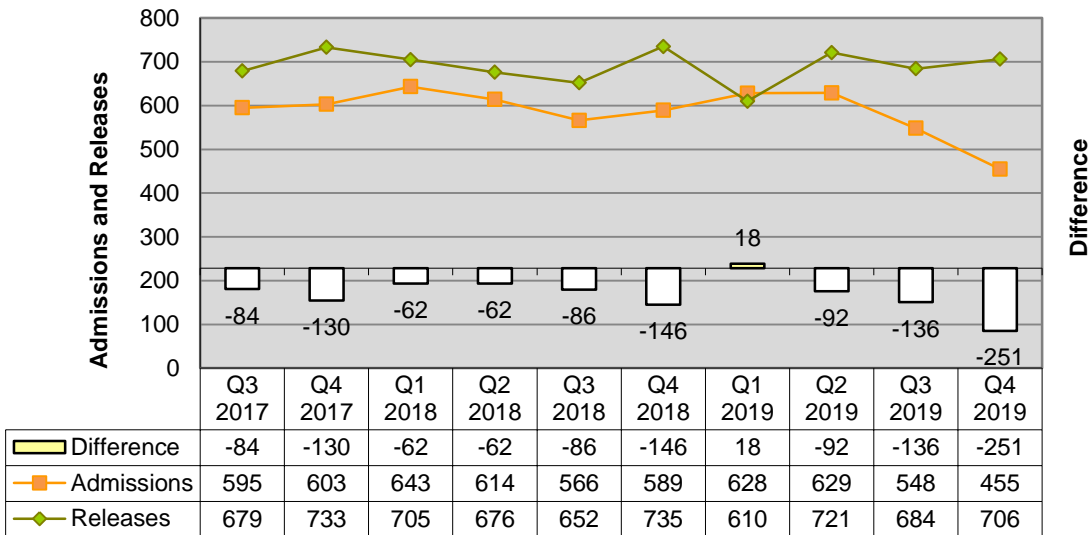


A look at overall yearly admissions and releases since 2016 reveals that both groups are experiencing declines. Releases are gaining slightly on admissions, which aligns with the shrinking active DOC population. See Figure 1.8 above.

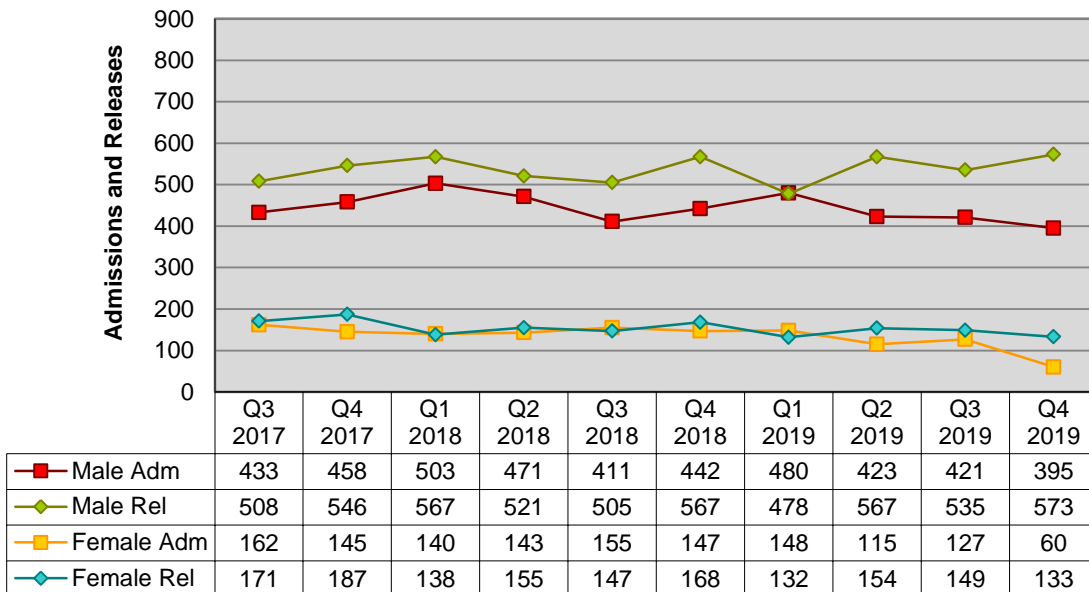
### **CRIMINALLY SENTENCED ADMISSIONS AND RELEASES**

Criminal releases were greater than criminal admissions during Q4 2019 (Figure 2.1). There were 251 more criminal releases than admissions, the largest gap observed for the ten-quarter trend period. When broken out by gender, both male and female criminal releases outnumbered their corresponding admissions (see Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2.1. Overall Quarterly Criminal Admissions and Releases**



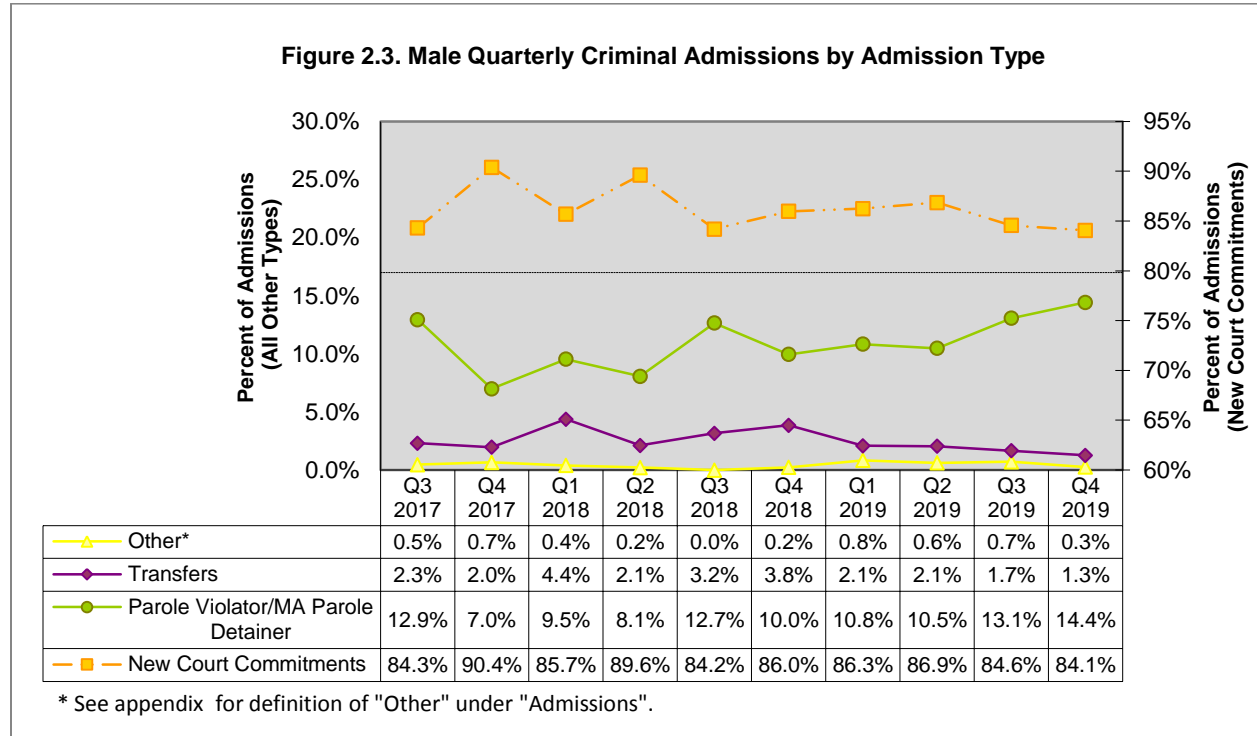
**Figure 2.2. Criminally Sentenced Admissions and Releases by Gender**



### Criminal Admissions

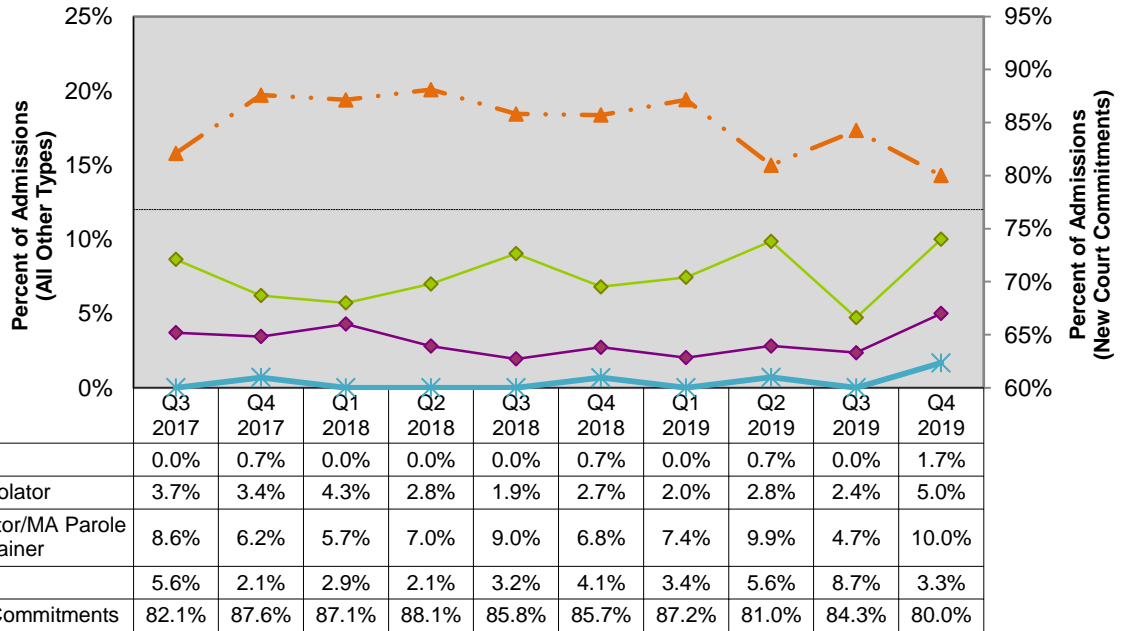
Male admissions have dipped below the 400 mark, the lowest level in recent history. Likewise, female admissions have dipped below the 100 mark and are down over 50 percent from the previous quarter (see Figure 2.2 above).

Figure 2.3 below shows little change in the relative proportions of male admission types, although male parole violator admissions grew to over 14 percent of male criminal admissions. Male transfers hit a new record low of 1.3 percent of male criminal admissions for the quarter.



Female new court commitments have dropped to 80 percent of female criminal admissions for the quarter (see Figure 2.4 below). Other admission types have increased in their share, especially parole and probation violators. Transfers from county authorities came back down to 3 percent. The vastly smaller than usual number of female admissions suggests that these changes may not hold.

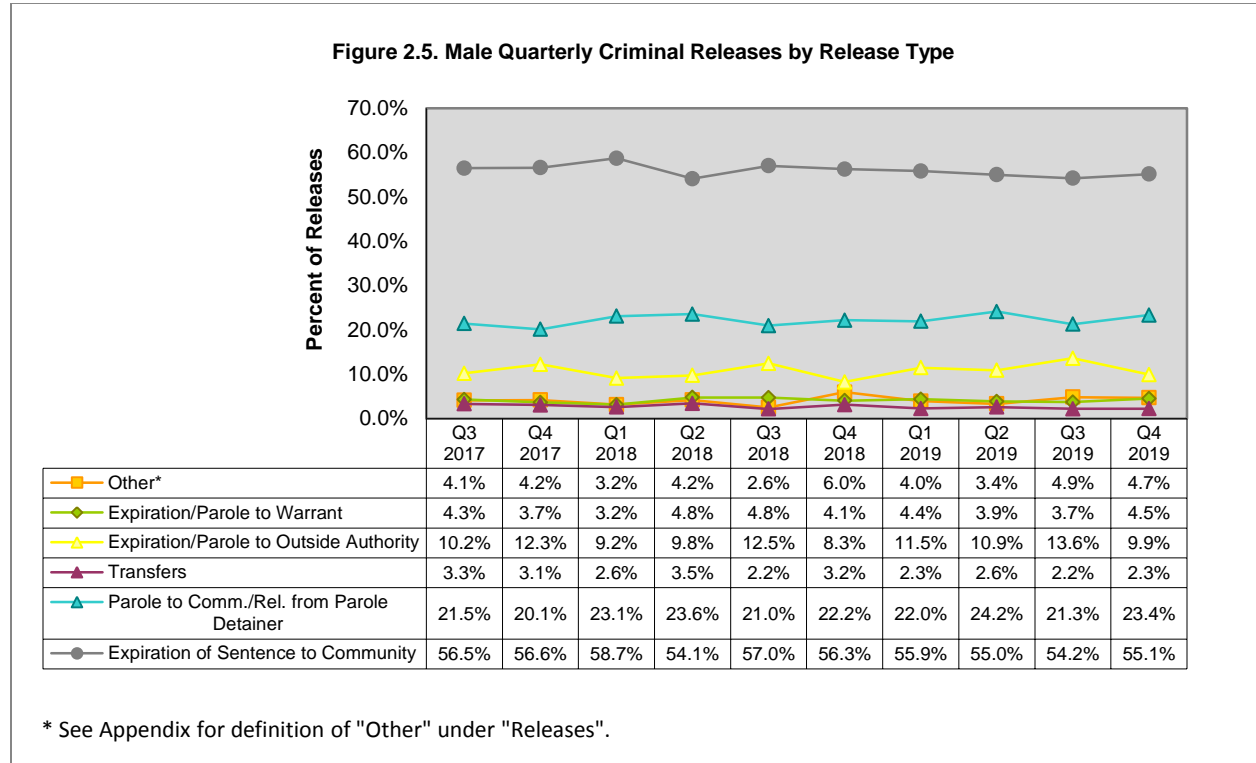
**Figure 2.4. Female Quarterly Criminal Admissions by Admission Type**



\* See appendix for definition of "Other" under "Admissions".

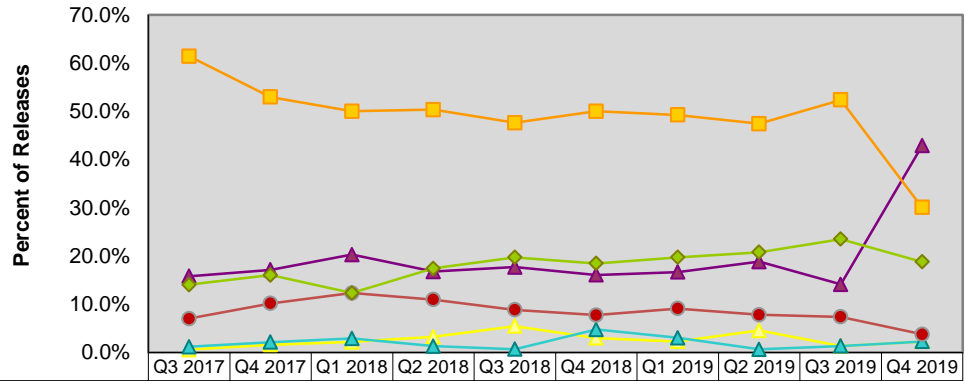
### Criminal Releases

Release trends held steady for the most part during the fourth quarter of 2019. Males returning to the community via parole or expiration of sentence rose in proportion to other release types (see Figure 2.5 below).



As for female criminal releases in Q4 2019, an interesting switch has occurred where a higher proportion of women left the DOC via transfer than via expiration of sentence (see Figure 2.6 below). This observation is likely to reverse again when female criminal releases return to higher levels.

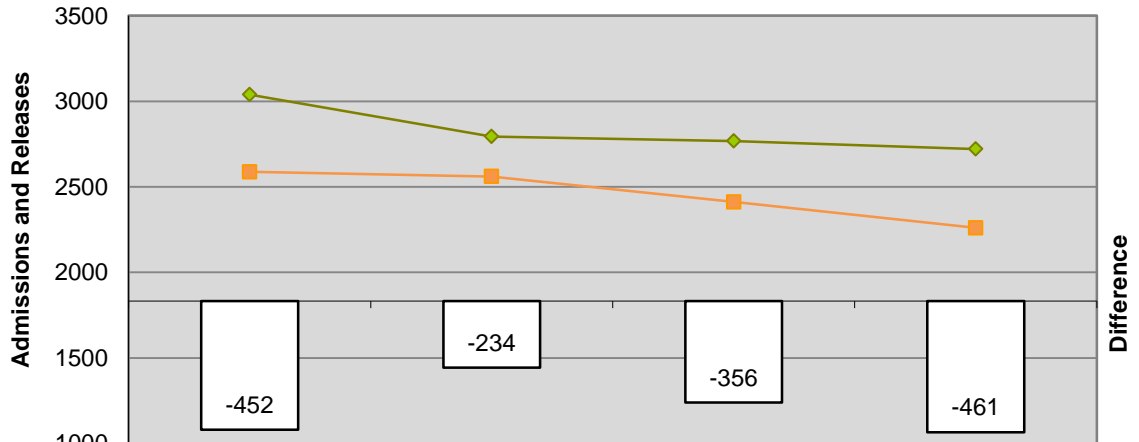
Figure 2.6. Female Quarterly Criminal Releases by Release Type



	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019
Expiration/Parole to Outside Authority	0.6%	1.6%	2.2%	3.2%	5.4%	3.0%	2.3%	4.5%	1.3%	2.3%
Other*	1.2%	2.1%	2.9%	1.3%	0.7%	4.8%	3.0%	0.6%	1.3%	2.3%
Expiration/Parole to Warrant	7.0%	10.2%	12.3%	11.0%	8.8%	7.7%	9.1%	7.8%	7.4%	3.8%
Transfers	15.8%	17.1%	20.3%	16.8%	17.7%	16.1%	16.7%	18.8%	14.1%	42.9%
Parole to Comm./Rel. from Parole Detainer	14.0%	16.0%	12.3%	17.4%	19.7%	18.5%	19.7%	20.8%	23.5%	18.8%
Expiration of Sentence to Community	61.4%	52.9%	50.0%	50.3%	47.6%	50.0%	49.2%	47.4%	52.3%	30.1%

\* See Appendix for definition of "Other" under "Releases".

Figure 2.7. Overall Annual Criminal Admissions and Releases



	2016	2017	2018	2019
Difference	-452	-234	-356	-461
Admissions	2587	2560	2412	2,260
Releases	3039	2794	2768	2,721

The criminally sentenced inmate population, which makes up the core of the MA DOC, is undeniably shrinking.

**New Court Commitments by Court Jurisdiction**

Criminally sentenced new court commitments from Massachusetts court jurisdictions were down 7 percent this quarter and reached a trend period low of 340 inmates. Most counties sent fewer inmates this quarter compared to last quarter, while Bristol, Plymouth and Middlesex counties sent slightly more new state sentenced inmates in the fourth quarter.

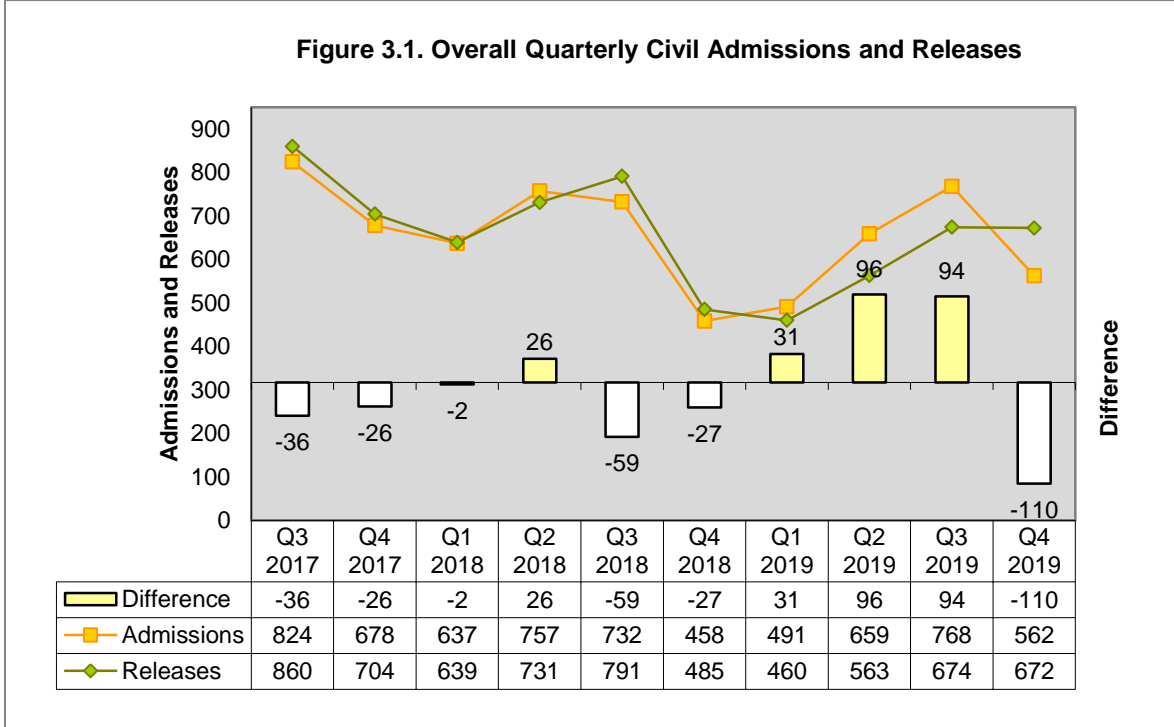
**Table 2.8. State\* Criminally Sentenced New Court Commitments by Court Jurisdiction**

County	Q2 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019
ESSEX	73	53	76	64	60	73	78	77	92	61	64
SUFFOLK	83	61	77	83	84	72	76	70	90	64	48
BRISTOL	43	39	49	47	76	28	44	77	56	37	46
MIDDLESEX	55	61	55	56	48	55	53	53	45	37	42
PLYMOUTH	28	18	30	25	23	14	28	26	29	28	40
WORCESTER	43	35	35	43	43	38	21	38	34	49	34
HAMPDEN	60	48	60	63	43	30	37	42	46	32	27
BARNSTABLE	11	20	11	15	11	8	6	10	8	16	15
NORFOLK	22	20	20	21	22	24	22	19	19	17	11
BERKSHIRE	8	10	8	8	6	6	4	7	5	13	8
FRANKLIN	7	3	1	4	8	6	8	6	4	5	3
HAMPSHIRE	3	2	3	8	8	5	7	6	4	5	2
NANTUCKET	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DUKES	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total	440	372	426	437	433	359	384	431	433	364	340

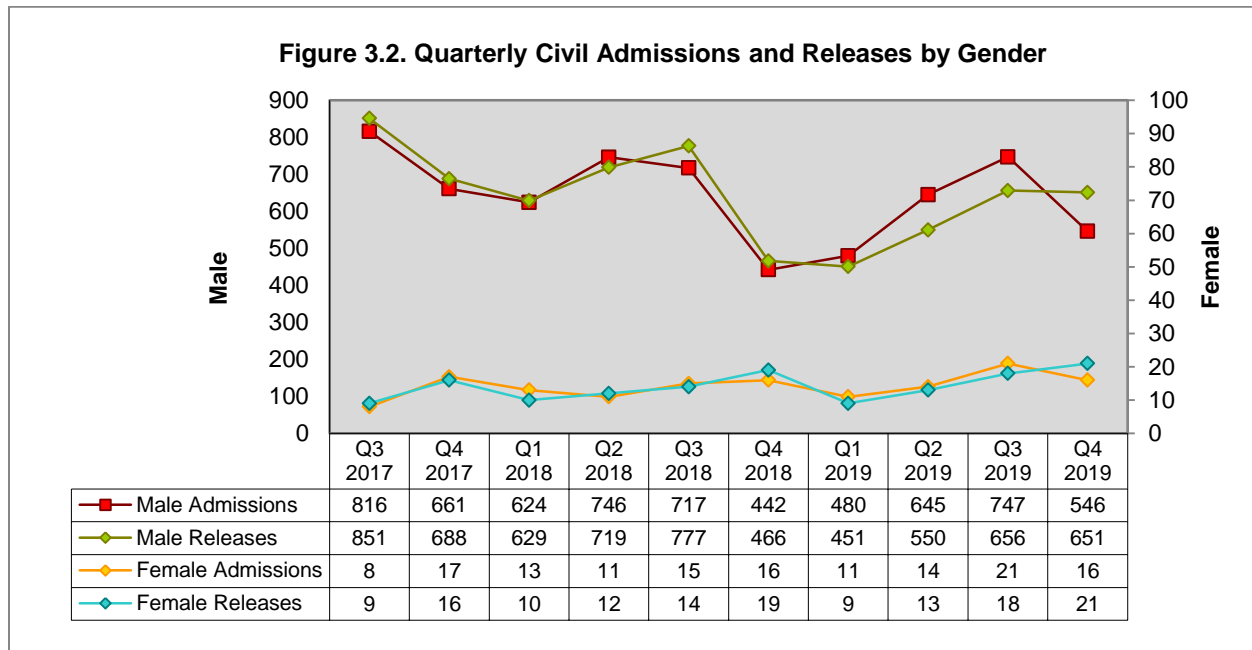
\*Excludes county, federal, and out-of-state inmates.

### CIVILLY COMMITTED ADMISSIONS AND RELEASES

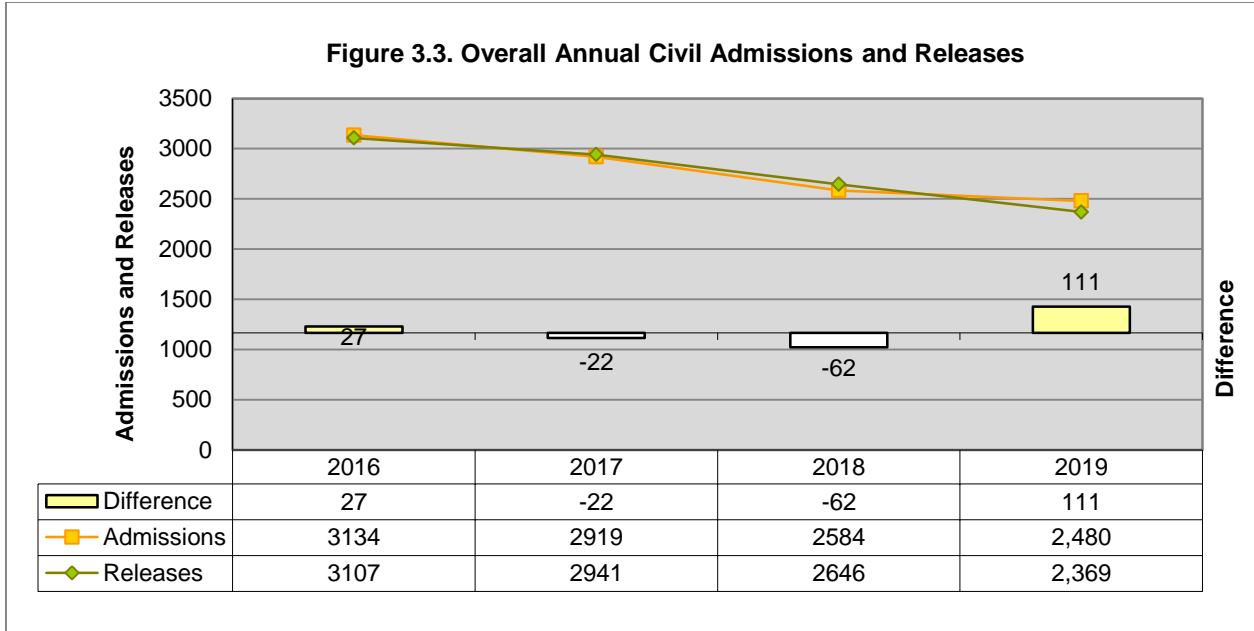
For the first time in 2019, civil releases were higher than admissions by a remarkable 27 percent. For the ten-quarter trend period, the MA DOC has released 13 more civil commitments than it has admitted. See Figure 3.1.



Both male and female civil commitment releases outpaced admissions in Q4 2019. Admissions seem to adhere to cyclical trends.



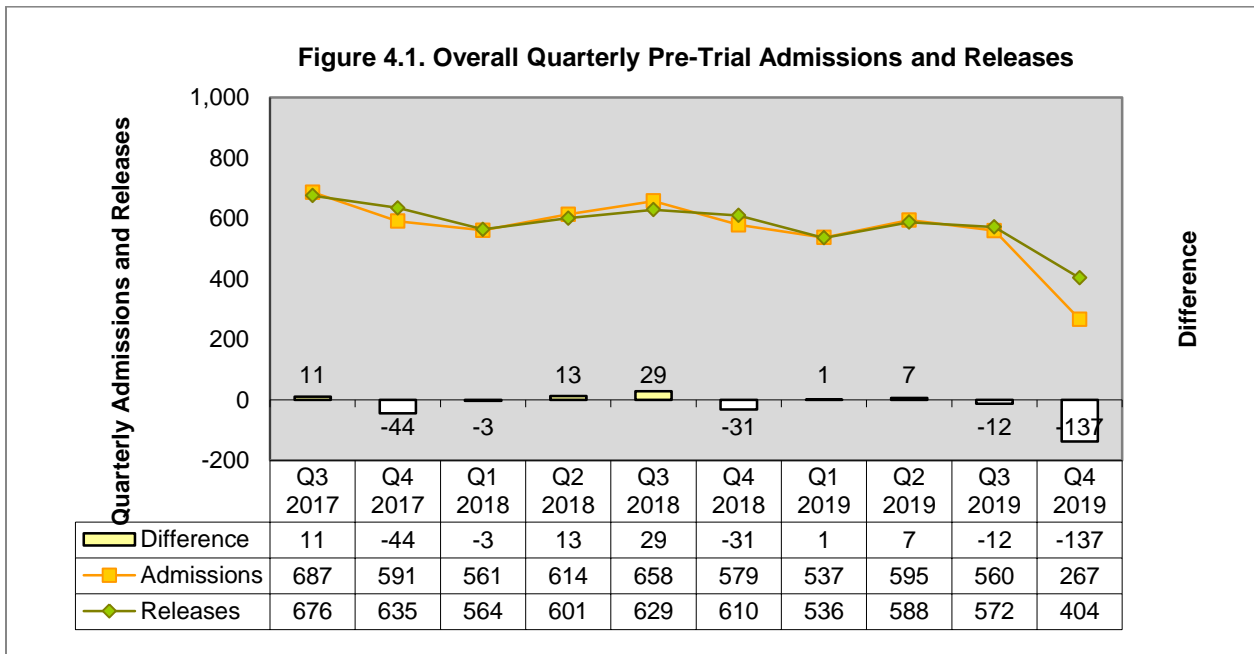




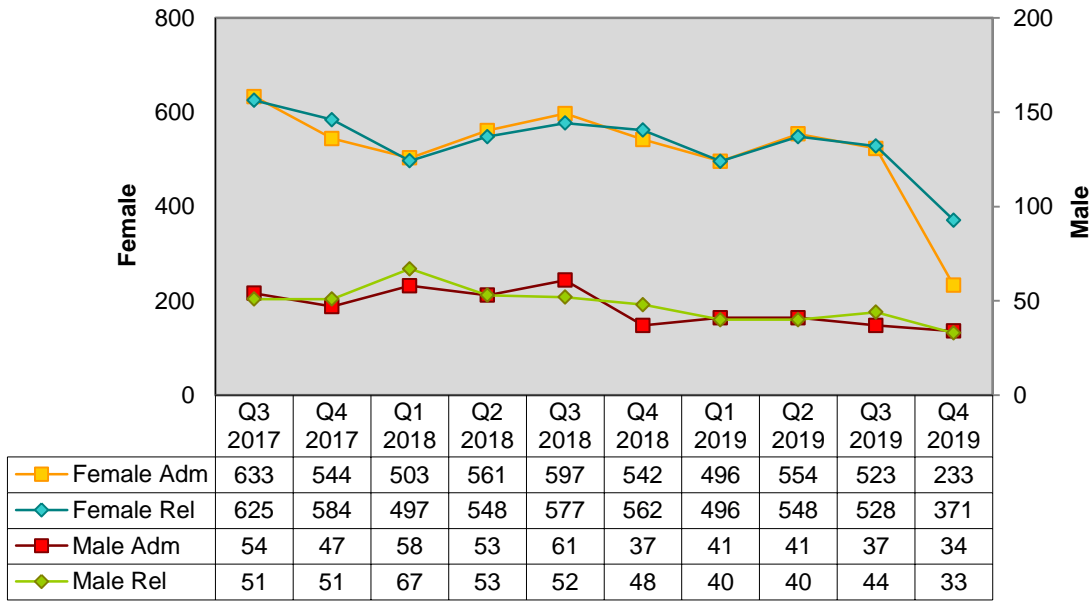
In a given year, civil admissions and releases tend to track closely. Despite the fall in admissions this quarter, in 2019 overall, the DOC admitted 111 more civil commitments than it released.

### PRE-TRIAL ADMISSIONS AND RELEASES

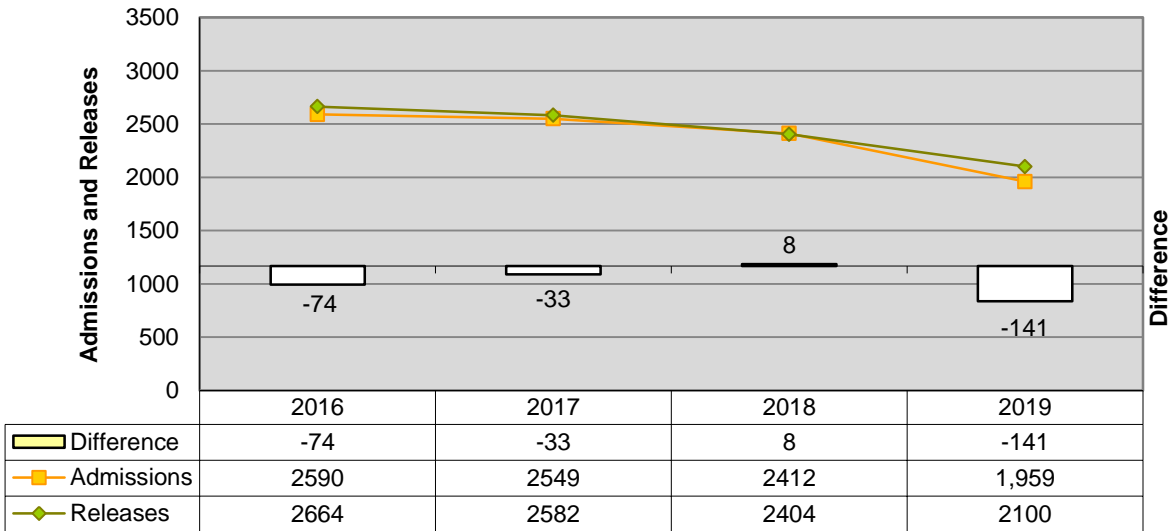
Pre-trial admissions and releases both dropped further in Q4 2019, to the lowest levels this trend period and even earlier. This drastic change occurred mostly in female pre-trial detainees, whose admissions were cut in half this quarter; additionally, female pre-trial releases went down by 30 percent, and males by 25 percent.



**Figure 4.2. Quarterly Pre-Trial Admissions and Releases by Gender**



**Figure 4.3. Overall Annual Pre-Trial Admissions and Releases**



**Pre-Trial Admissions by Court Jurisdiction**

Male pre-trial detainee admissions dropped slightly between Q3 and Q4 2019. As usual, contributions from federal and other state jurisdictions were highest (see Figure 4.4).

**Table 4.4 Male Quarterly Pre-Trial Admissions by Jurisdiction**

County	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019
Federal	13	9	28	6	23	9	12	9	10	10
Out-of-state	7	11	7	7	10	8	7	14	6	7
Middlesex	3	1	5	5	2	3	2	0	2	4
Plymouth	3	2	3	7	6	0	2	4	1	3
Suffolk	5	7	4	6	8	3	2	3	2	3
Norfolk	2	7	0	4	1	3	3	3	4	2
Worcester	9	6	5	8	4	5	7	4	4	2
Essex	5	1	0	2	3	3	3	2	5	1
Hampden	0	0	0	3	1	0	3	2	1	0
Bristol	4	2	2	2	2	3	0	0	1	2
Barnstable	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Mass Parole	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Berkshire	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Franklin	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	54	47	58	53	61	37	41	41	37	34

\*Dukes County has not reported pre-trial males in any of the previous ten quarters.

As seen earlier, female pre-trial detainees in Q4 2019 dropped dramatically. In Table 4.5, it becomes clear that this change came from multiple counties, namely Essex and Plymouth. Middlesex County sent pre-trial females to the DOC at levels similar to previous quarters.

**Table 4.5 Female Quarterly Pre-Trial Admissions by Jurisdiction**

County	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019
Middlesex	159	162	143	126	143	131	119	138	150	149
Norfolk	128	105	68	97	111	109	96	89	87	32
Essex	201	154	166	230	220	195	194	202	180	31
Plymouth	133	113	118	101	115	97	83	115	103	15
Federal	11	8	4	2	5	7	2	7	1	5
Worcester	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0
Out-of-State	0	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	0
Berkshire	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hampden	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bristol	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Suffolk	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Mass Parole	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	633	544	503	561	597	542	496	554	523	233

\*Franklin and Dukes counties have not reported pre-trial females in any of the previous ten quarters.

## **Appendix Notes and Definitions**

Note: This report examines admission and release trends over the past ten quarters for the Massachusetts Department of Correction (MA DOC). Unless otherwise stated, all trends in this report refer to the MA DOC jurisdiction population.

Numbers in this report may vary slightly from numbers in other reports due to the continuous updating of data and information in the Inmate Management System.

<b>Admissions</b>	Inmates who are admitted to a facility of the Department of Correction (DOC), pursuant to a court order, as a transfer from another DOC facility, or pursuant to the execution of a parole violation warrant. Inmates may also be re-admitted after a court release, or pursuant to the execution of an escape warrant (categorized as “Other” admissions).
<b>Civil Commitment or “Civil”</b>	A male who has been committed by a court to Bridgewater State Hospital pursuant to G.L. c. 123, section 7 and 8, 15, 16 or 18; or to the Massachusetts Alcohol and Substance Abuse Center pursuant to G.L. c. 123, § 35; or to the Massachusetts Treatment Center pursuant to G.L. c. 123A; a female who, prior to April 24, 2016, was committed to MCI-Framingham pursuant to G.L. c. 123, § 35; or a female who has been committed to MCI-Framingham, a branch of the Massachusetts Treatment Center, pursuant to G.L. c. 123A.
<b>Criminally Sentenced or “Sentenced”</b>	Individuals who have been found guilty of a criminal offense by a judge or jury and have been committed to a period of incarceration, whether directly or after a violation of probation or parole.
<b>Custody Population</b>	An inmate that is incarcerated in Massachusetts DOC facility.
<b>Expiration of Sentence (Release)</b>	An inmate is discharged from his/her sentence at the expiration of his/her term, less any statutory or earned good time. Statutory good time was eliminated for all offenses committed after June 30, 1994, due to the enactment of the “Truth in Sentencing” law.
<b>HOC</b>	House of Correction, i.e. county jail or correctional facility.
<b>Jurisdiction Population</b>	An individual is considered to be under Massachusetts DOC jurisdiction when the Commonwealth has legal authority over the individual regardless of where the inmate is being held to include those incarcerated in Massachusetts DOC facilities as well as those housed in correctional facilities outside of the Massachusetts DOC (Massachusetts Houses of Correction, other state’s correctional facilities and the Federal Bureau of Prisons).
<b>MA DOC</b>	Massachusetts Department of Correction, i.e. state prison.

**MASAC**

MASAC is a facility whose institutional focus is to provide services to males civilly committed by the court under M.G.L., Chapter 123, Section 35 for detoxification and substance abuse treatment for up to 90 days.

**New Court Commitment**

Newly sentenced and committed inmates admitted to a committing institution as prescribed by law. Individuals committed by the courts to the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC) as a result of a criminal offense. All new court commitments and those individuals who began serving new sentences (e.g., From and After Sentences) during the year are included in this category even if there was no physical release from custody upon the completion of one sentence and the commencement of another sentence. If an individual is committed to the DOC more than once during the current trend period, each court commitment for that individual is counted separately.

**Parole (Releases)**

Inmates released on parole are under the supervision of parole while in the community and may be re-incarcerated for violating the terms of their supervision. Unless otherwise specified, parole to other authority may include: "Parole to Out of State Sentence", "Parole to Federal Authority", "Parole to Immigration", "Parole to From & After HOC Sentence", "Parole to Warrant", "Parole to From & After DOC Sentence", or "Parole to Civil Commitment".

**Pre-Trial Detainee**

An individual who is detained prior to trial, but not yet convicted of a crime to include male and female county detainees, male county detainees transferred to state facilities under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 276, section 52A, and federal detainees (both male and female).

**Probation Violation**

An inmate who has been returned to resume serving a previously imposed sentence (return on a split sentence) following a revocation of his/her terms of probation. Split sentences to the state prison were eliminated for offenses committed after June 30, 1994, pursuant to the "Truth-in-Sentencing" Act of 1994.

**Releases**

A release occurs when an inmate is released from the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts DOC by way of expiration of sentence, parole, a non-DOC release to other jurisdiction, a court release or other legal release from the custody of MA DOC. "Other" releases include: "habeas to court – received forthwith sentence", "escape", "death", "court release – sentence revoked", and "release to from and after at DOC".

**Release to Community**

The release of an inmate from the custody of the Massachusetts DOC by way of parole or discharge to the community. Conditions warranting a release to community generally include: parole, expiration of sentence, expiration of fine, and court release.