

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

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

Fourth Quarter 2020





Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

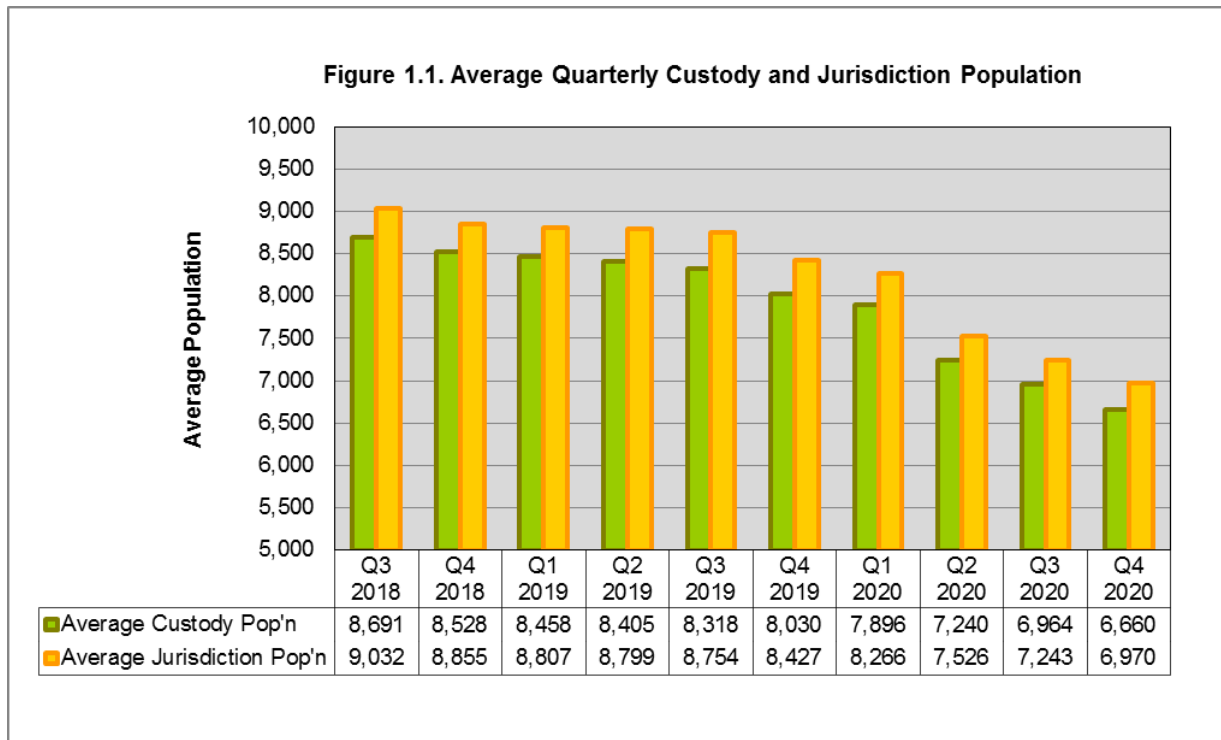
- Between the third and fourth quarters of 2020, the MA DOC custody population saw a 4.4 percent decline. During the trend period from July 2018 to December 2020, the average custody population has decreased 23.4 percent. The jurisdiction population is also down 3.8 percent from the previous quarter, and 22.8 percent since the third quarter of 2018.
- Admissions to the DOC dropped to 766 from the previous 874 in the fourth quarter of 2020 while releases increased from 1,037 to 1,093. These changes resulted in a larger admission-to-release deficit of 327 inmates, twice as big as the admission-to-release deficit of the previous quarter.
- Both male and female admissions were down, and both male and female releases were up in the fourth quarter of 2020. Total male admissions dropped 12.6 percent from the previous 799 to 698, and there were 309 more male releases than admissions. Female admissions declined 9.3 percent from the previous 75 to 68, and 18 more female inmates were released than admitted in the fourth quarter.
- Criminal admissions and releases in the fourth quarter of 2020 stayed largely intact from the previous quarter with 235 admissions and 505 releases. The MA DOC released 270 more inmates than admitted in the fourth quarter, slightly more than 266 of the previous quarter.
- New court commitments were the prevailing admission type for male admissions (74.9 percent), followed by parole violators (21.0 percent) in the fourth quarter of 2020. They were also the predominant admission types for female admissions with 68.8 percent and 18.8 percent respectively. The order was reversed only once in the second quarter of 2020 during the ten-quarter period in which parole violators took the lead. Such changes suggest that criminal admissions edged towards the pre-pandemic norms.
- Expiration of sentence was more common than paroles to the community as the primary type of releases for both male and female inmates. In the fourth quarter of 2020, 44.5% of male releases fell in the category of expiration of sentence and 39.5 in the category of paroles to the community. For female releases, they were at 51.5 percent and 30.3 percent respectively. These figures are also closer to the pre-pandemic numbers.
- Criminally sentenced new court commitments from Massachusetts court jurisdictions increased slightly to 175 in the fourth quarter from the previous 161. Essex, Suffolk and Middlesex counties are the largest contributors. Together, they accounted for one-half of new court commitments.
- Male civil admissions and releases returned to the pre-pandemic level with 452 admissions and 511 releases. Female civil commitment activity remained low in the fourth quarter of 2020 with only 4 admissions and 3 releases.
- Pre-trial admissions (75) and releases (74) remained low in the fourth quarter of 2020 compared with the pre-pandemic numbers. Females, which normally accounted for over 90% of total pre-trial admissions and releases, appeared to be the primary reason for the low activities. While male admissions and releases recovered to more than 50 percent of its pre-pandemic level, female admissions and releases were still at about 10 percent level compared with the average numbers of admissions and releases of the six quarters prior to Q1 2020, and 20 percent level of the much reduced numbers in Q4, 2019.

NOTE: Beginning in March of 2020, the number of individuals being admitted to and/or released from Massachusetts Department of Correction facilities has been significantly affected as a result of the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic on the criminal justice system in Massachusetts.

CURRENT POPULATION AND OVERALL TRENDS

The MA DOC **custody** population averaged 6,660 inmates in the fourth quarter of 2020. This population decreased by 4.4 percent from the previous quarter. From the third quarter of 2018 through the fourth quarter of 2020, there was a decrease of 2,031 inmates, or 23.4 percent, from the custody population.

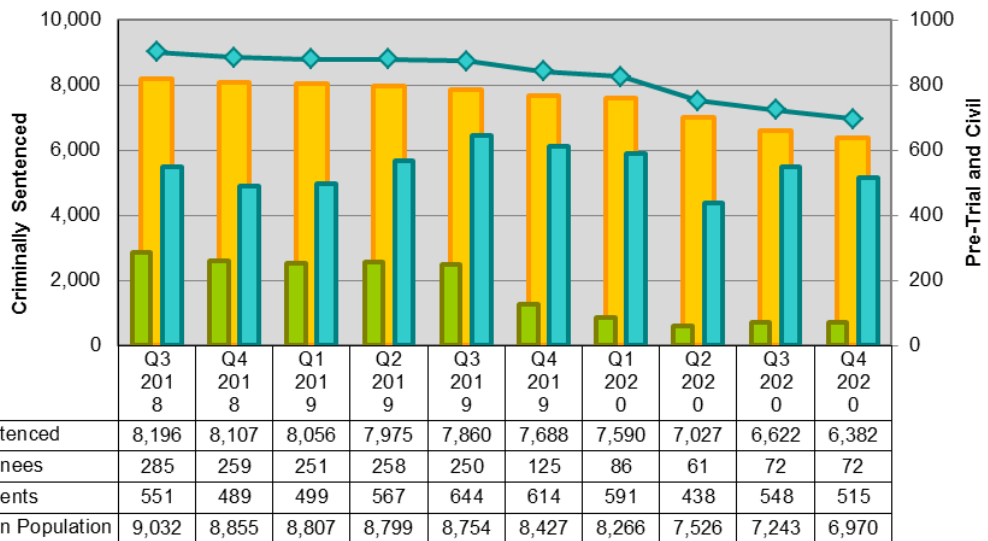
The **jurisdiction** population averaged 6,970 inmates in the fourth quarter of 2020, dropping 3.8 percent from the previous quarter. Over the ten-quarter trend period, the **jurisdiction** population is down 2,062 inmates or 22.8 percent. See Figure 1.1 below.*



The criminally sentenced population dropped 3.6 percent from the last quarter and 22.1 percent since the beginning of the trend period. The civil commitment population decreased 6.0 percent from the previous quarter and fluctuated around a flat line of 546 inmates during the ten-quarter trend period. The MA DOC pre-trial population stayed the same this quarter as the previous quarter, and averaged 72 detainees. See Figure 1.2.

* 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

Overall quarterly admissions to the DOC declined to 766 from the previous quarter, a drop of 12.4 percent. Releases increased 5.4 percent to 1,093. This resulted in a larger admission-to-release deficit in the fourth quarter than the third quarter, 2020. See Figure 1.3 below.

Figure 1.3. Overall Quarterly Admissions and Releases

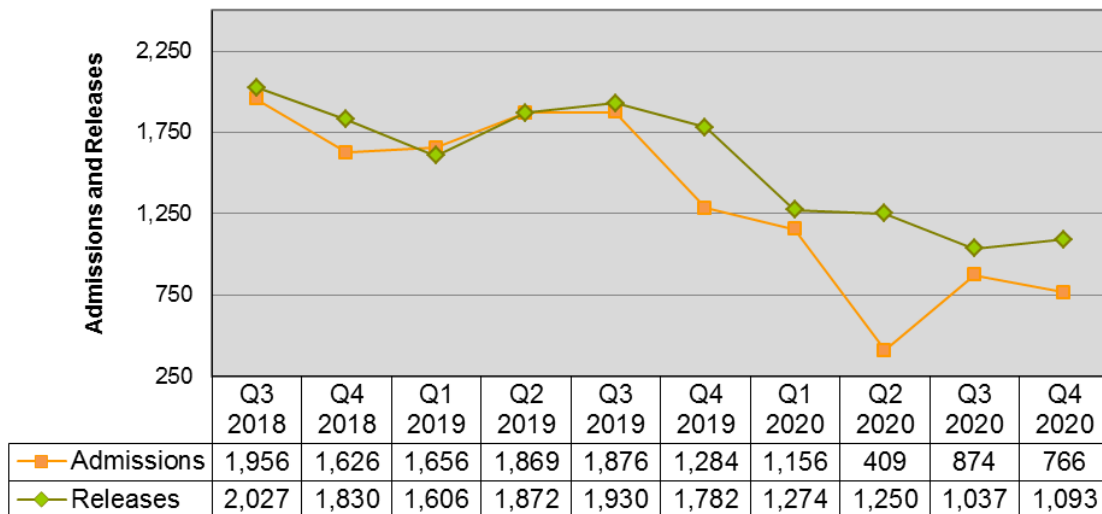
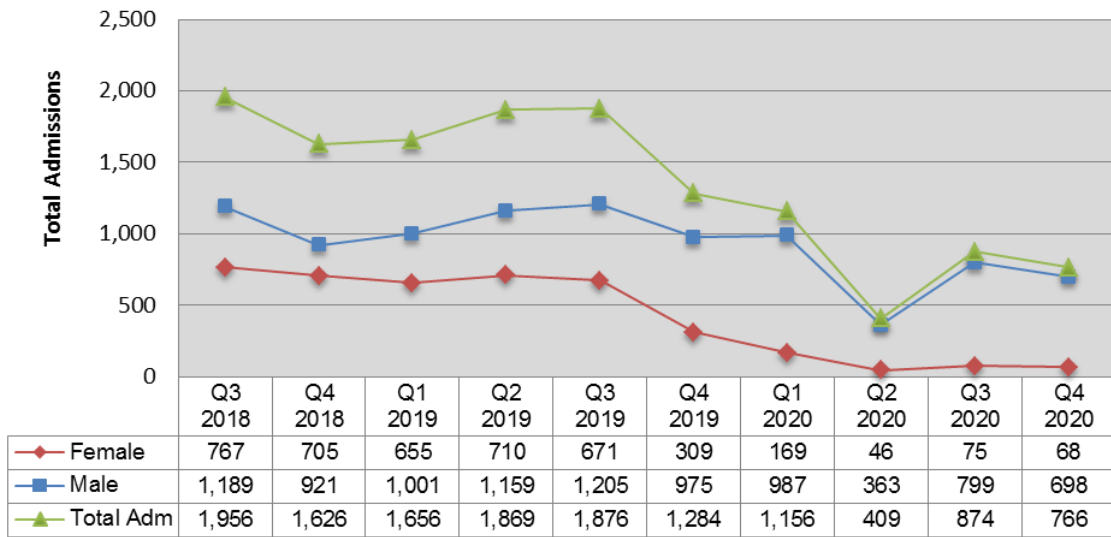
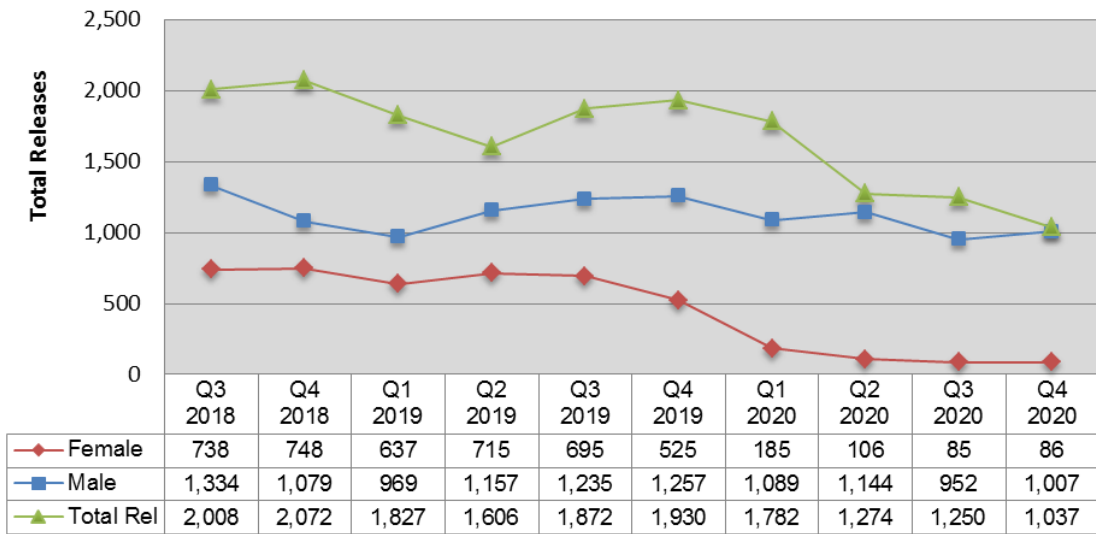


Figure 1.4. Total Quarterly Admissions by Gender



The decrease in **admissions** in the fourth quarter is seen in both males and females; see Figure 1.4 above. All **releases** for the trend period are shown in Figure 1.5 below. Similarly, both female and male releases were up though very marginally for females.

Figure 1.5 Total Quarterly Releases by Gender



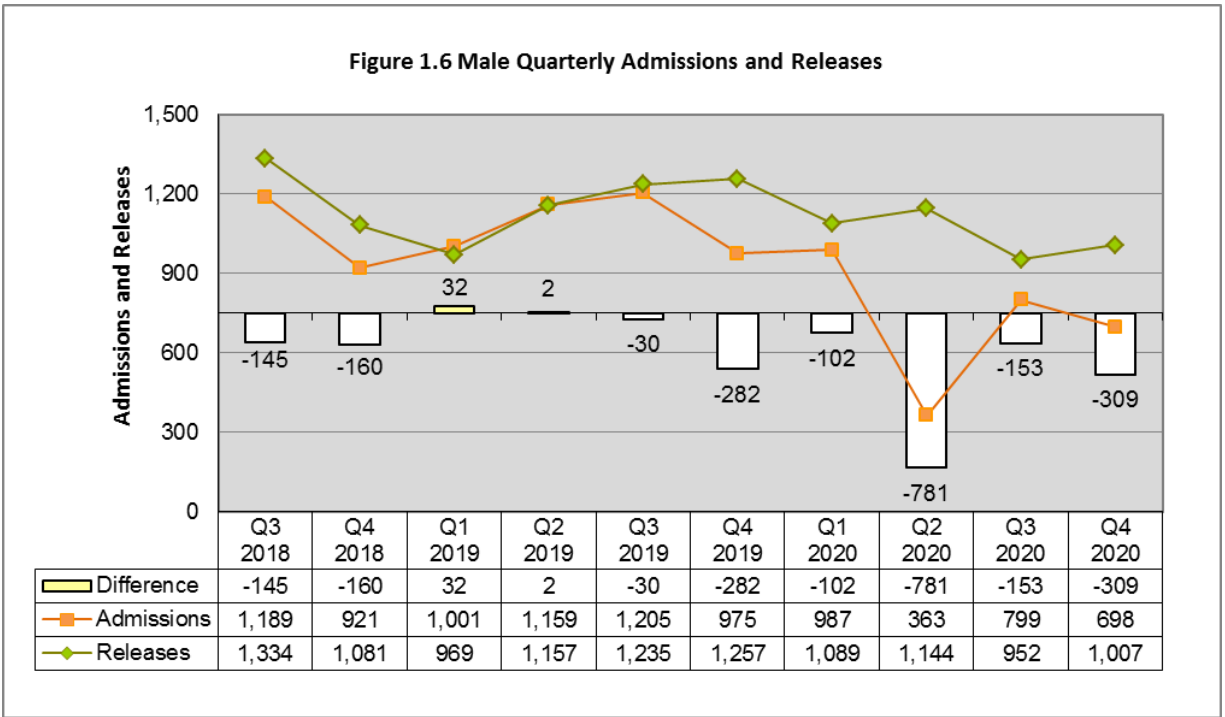
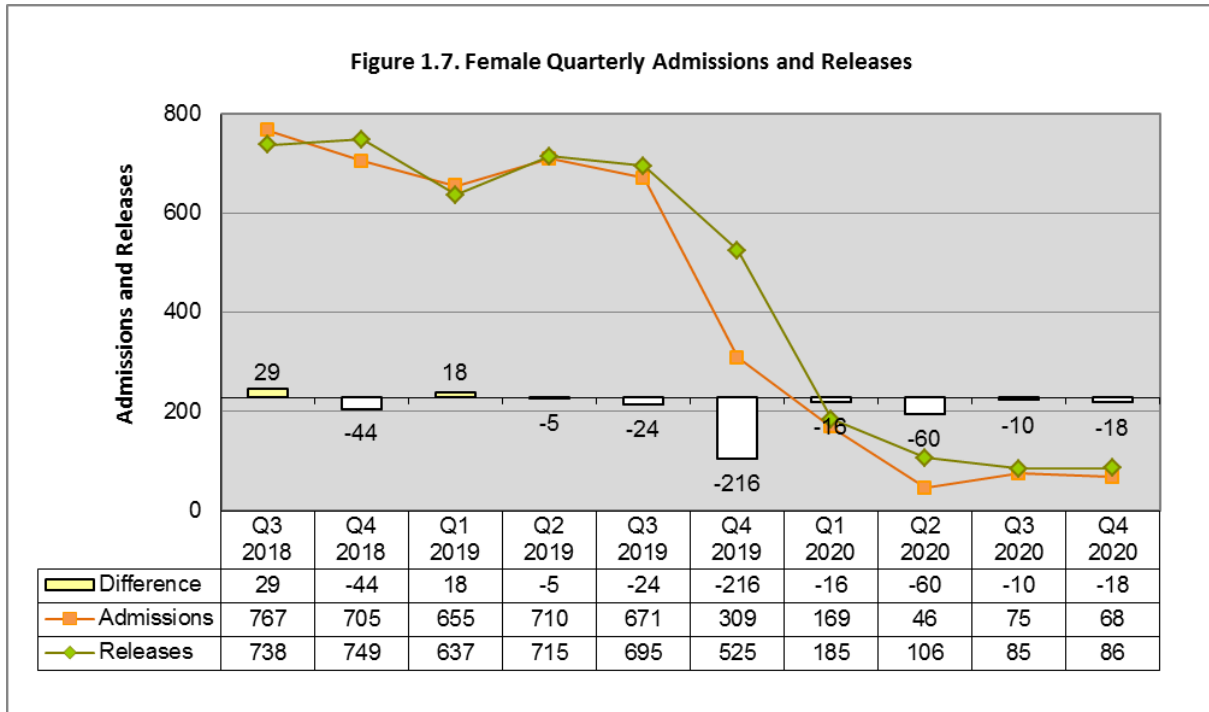
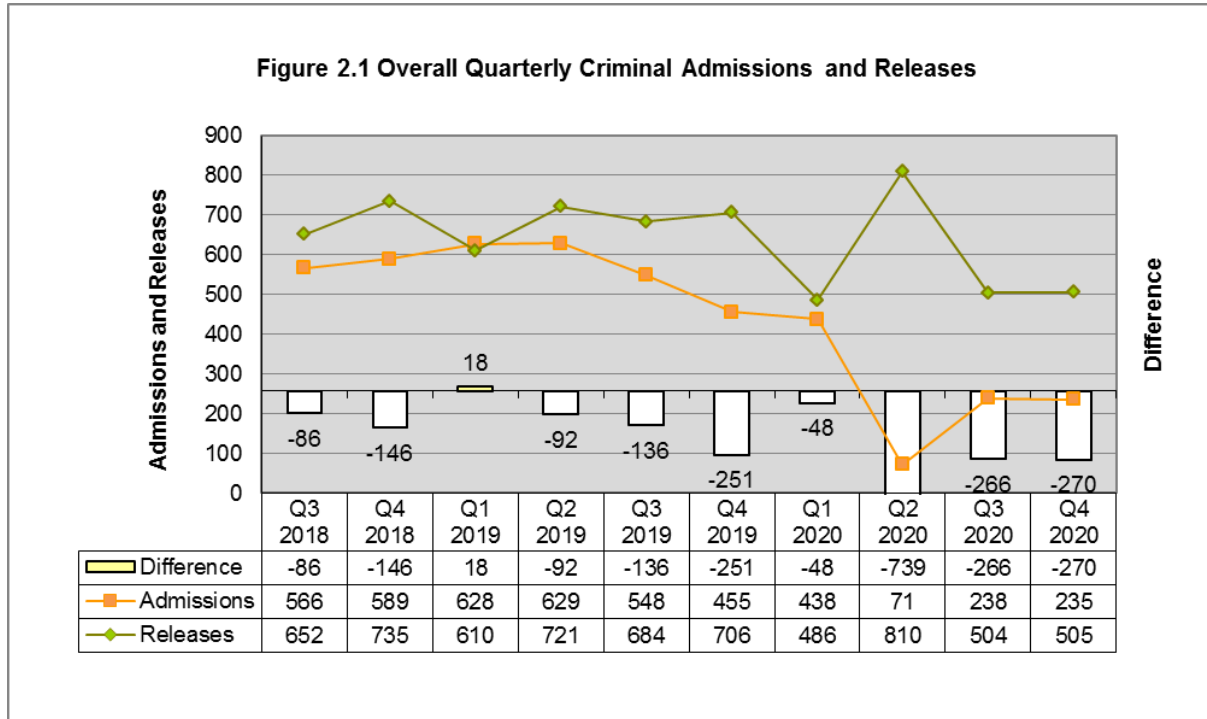


Figure 1.6 above shows that male admissions in the fourth quarter of 2020 decreased while male releases increased, resulting in a larger admission-to-release gap than the previous quarter. There were 309 more releases than admissions among males. Below, Figure 1.7 shows a similar movement in female admissions and releases, giving rise to a larger admission-to-release deficit in the fourth quarter (-18) than the third quarter (-10).



CRIMINALLY SENTENCED ADMISSIONS AND RELEASES

Criminal admissions and releases during the fourth quarter of 2020 continued to follow the pattern of the previous quarters in which releases remained larger than admissions, contributing to the shrinking of the overall DOC population for yet another quarter. Overall, the DOC released 2,016 more inmates than admitted during the ten-quarter trend period. The three quarters after the outbreak of the COVID-19 contributed 63 percent of them. (Figure 2.1)



In the fourth quarter of 2020, male criminal admissions and releases went down slightly from the previous quarter, and meanwhile female criminal admissions and releases went up slightly, making the admission-to-release deficit about the same from the previous quarter, 253 for males and 17 for females. (Figure 2.2)

Figure 2.2. Criminally Sentenced Admissions and Releases by Gender

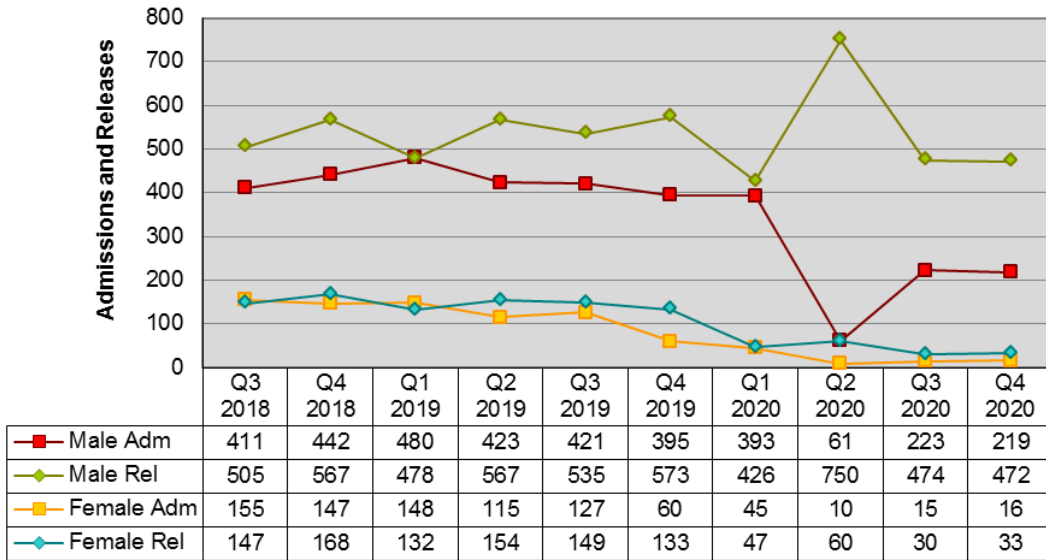
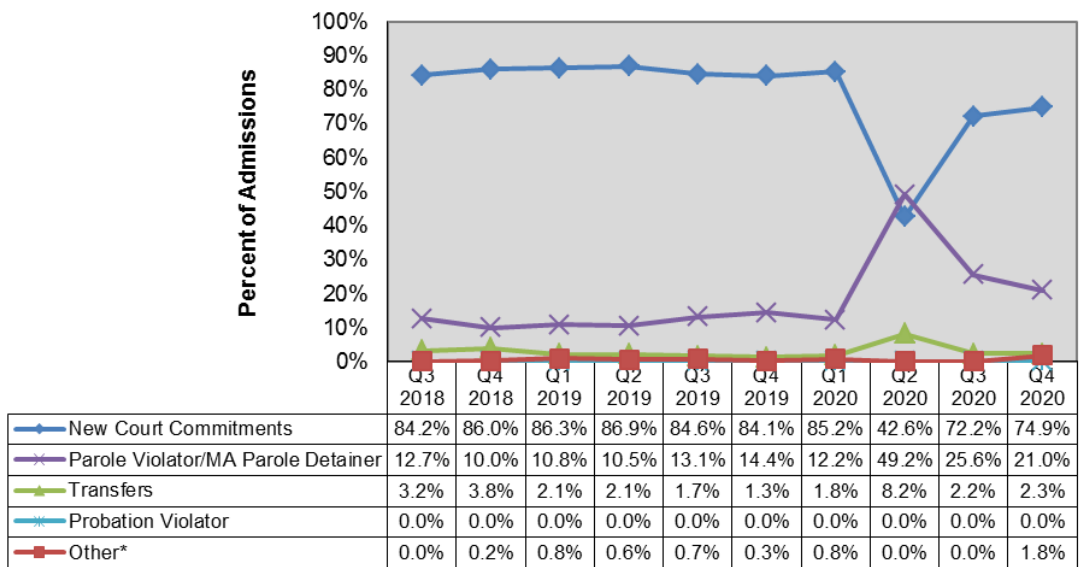


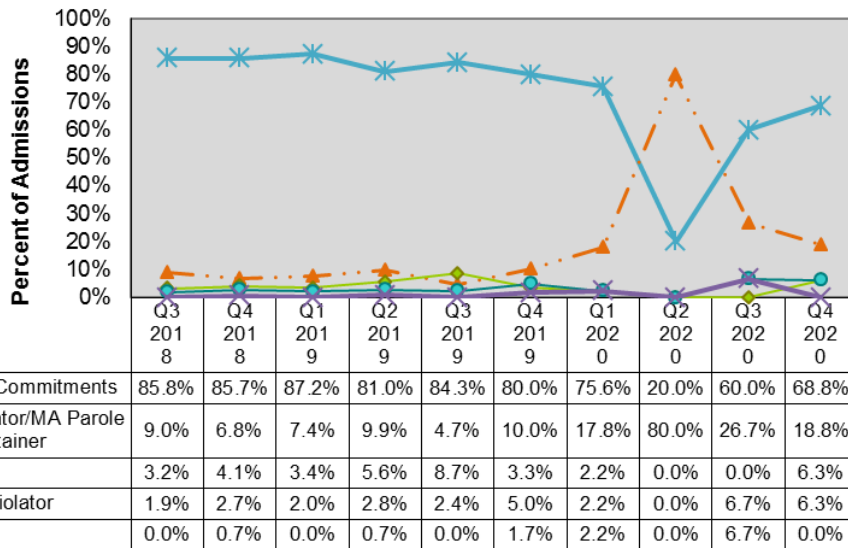
Figure 2.3 below shows that new court commitments continued to be the leading male criminal admission type followed by parole violators. Male criminal admissions in the fourth quarter look more similar to the quarters prior to the COVID-19 pandemic because of the greater gap between the two admission types. The same is true with female criminal admissions as well. New court commitments and parole violators dominated the list, making the fourth quarter female criminal admissions one step closer to the pre-pandemic norm. (Figure 2.4)

Figure 2.3. Male Quarterly Criminal Admissions by Admission Type



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

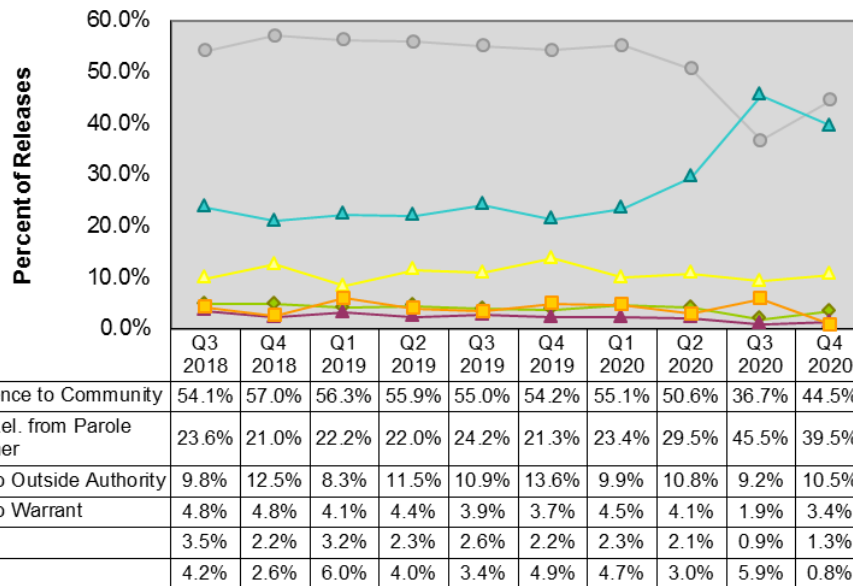
Figure 2.4. Female Quarterly Criminal Admissions by Admission Type



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

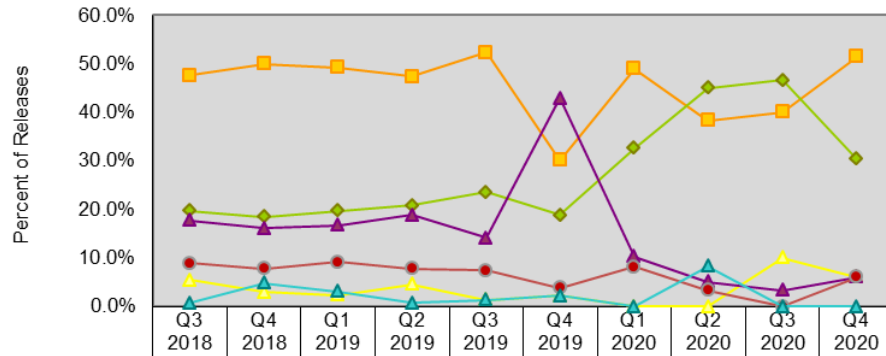
Figures 2.5 and 2.6 describe how criminally sentenced inmates were released in Q4 2020 and quarters prior. In the fourth quarter of 2020, paroles fell back to the second position of the most popular release types following sentence expirations for both male and female criminal releases. Such reverses suggest the criminal releases might be in the process of moving back to the pre-pandemic level as well.

Figure 2.5. Male Quarterly Criminal Releases by Release Type



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

Figure 2.6. Female Quarterly Criminal Releases by Release Type



Expiration of Sentence to Community	47.6%	50.0%	49.2%	47.4%	52.3%	30.1%	49.0%	38.3%	40.0%	51.5%
Parole to Comm./Rel. from Parole Detainer	19.7%	18.5%	19.7%	20.8%	23.5%	18.8%	32.7%	45.0%	46.7%	30.3%
Expiration/Parole to Outside Authority	5.4%	3.0%	2.3%	4.5%	1.3%	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	6.1%
Transfers	17.7%	16.1%	16.7%	18.8%	14.1%	42.9%	10.2%	5.0%	3.3%	6.1%
Expiration/Parole to Warrant	8.8%	7.7%	9.1%	7.8%	7.4%	3.8%	8.2%	3.3%	0.0%	6.1%
Other*	0.7%	4.8%	3.0%	0.6%	1.3%	2.3%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%

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

New Court Commitments by Court Jurisdiction

Criminally sentenced new court commitments from Massachusetts court jurisdictions are in the process of recovering from the pandemic. New court commitments increased sharply in the last two quarters from the second quarter of 2020, the first full quarter impacted by COVID-19, but still at about 50% of the pre-pandemic level. Essex County sent the most new criminal court commitments, followed by Suffolk and Middlesex counties in the fourth quarter. (Figure 2.7)

Table 2.7. State* Criminally Sentenced New Court Commitments by Court Jurisdiction

County	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
ESSEX	73	78	77	92	61	64	57	0	45	37
SUFFOLK	72	76	70	90	64	48	52	4	19	25
MIDDLESEX	55	53	53	45	37	42	38	4	17	24
BRISTOL	28	44	77	56	37	46	47	1	21	20
WORCESTER	38	21	38	34	49	34	43	1	11	19
PLYMOUTH	14	28	26	29	28	40	27	4	24	15
HAMPDEN	30	37	42	46	32	27	41	2	10	10
NORFOLK	24	22	19	19	17	11	13	2	7	10
BERKSHIRE	6	4	7	5	13	8	8	1	1	8
BARNSTABLE	8	6	10	8	16	15	10	1	5	5
FRANKLIN	6	8	6	4	5	3	5	1	0	1
HAMPSHIRE	5	7	6	4	5	2	4	0	1	1
DUKES	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	359	384	431	433	364	340	345	21	161	175

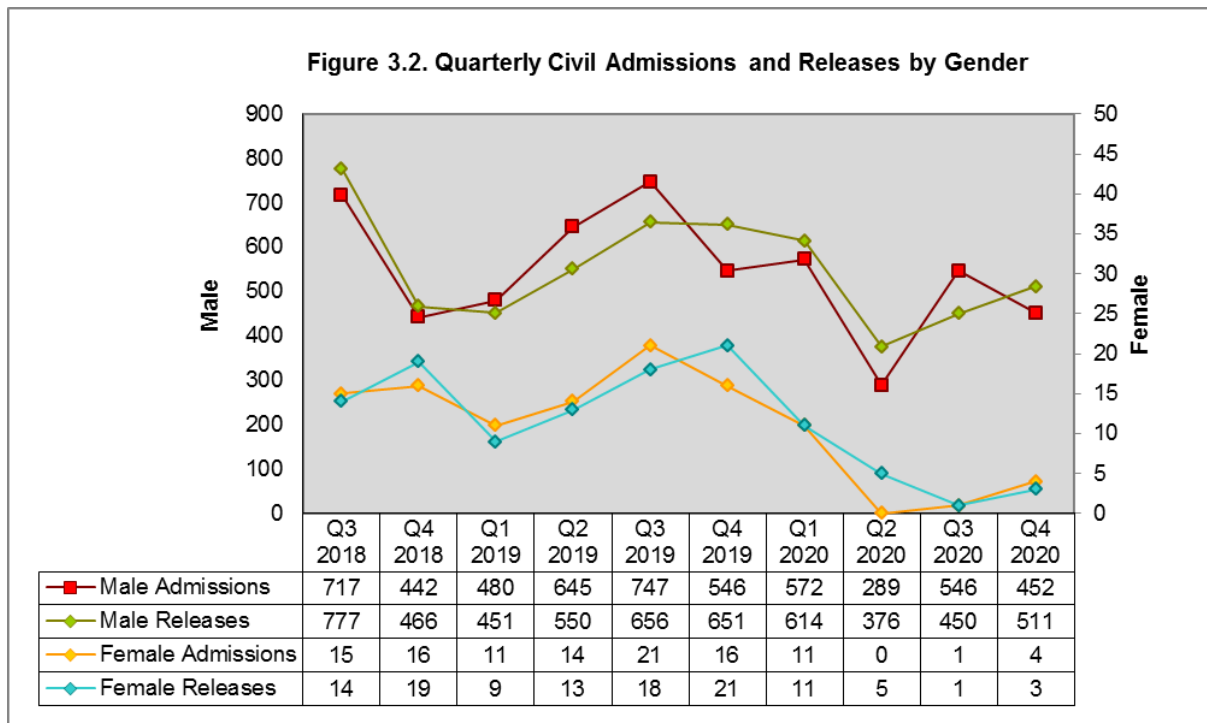
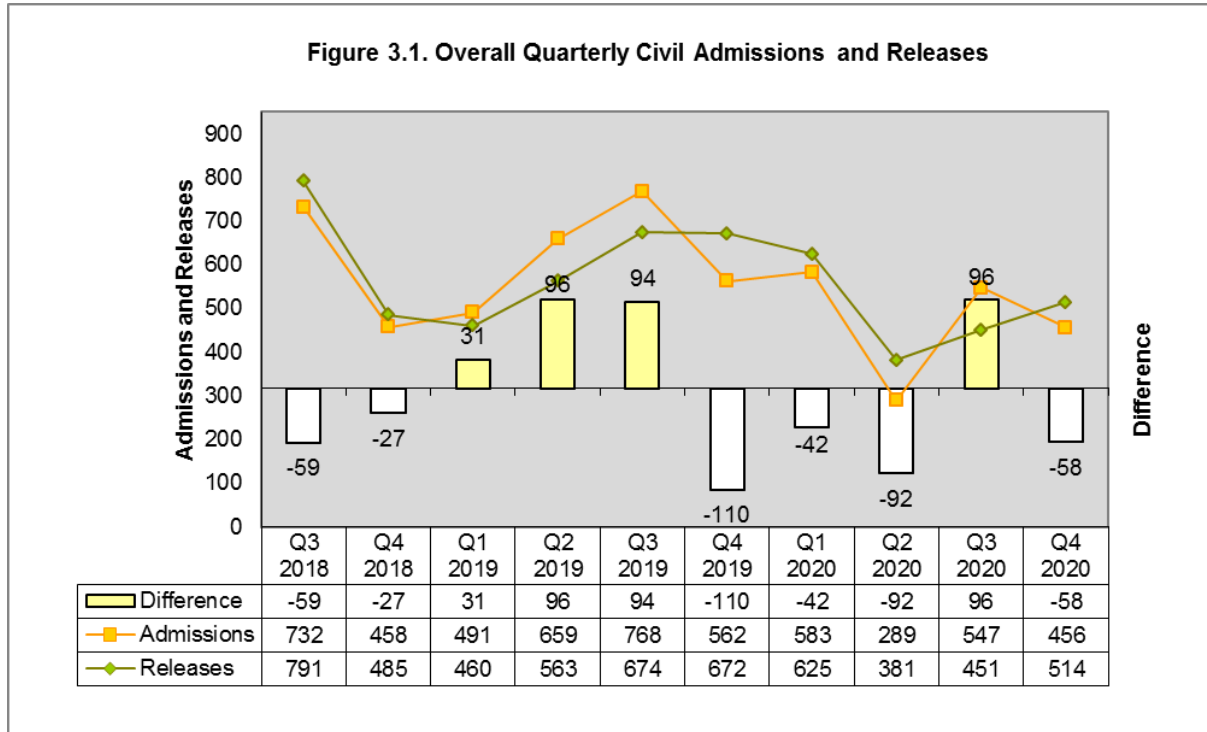
*Excludes county, federal, and out-of-state inmates.

Nantucket County had no new court commitments to the DOC in the last ten quarters.

CIVILLY COMMITTED ADMISSIONS AND RELEASES

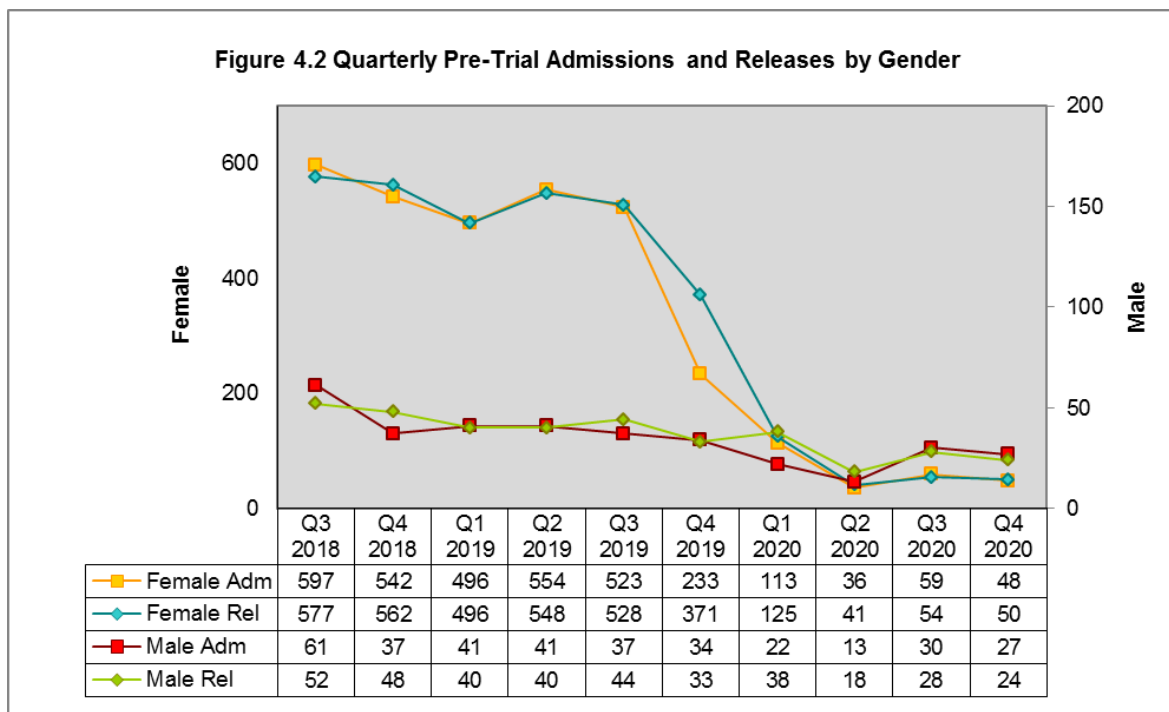
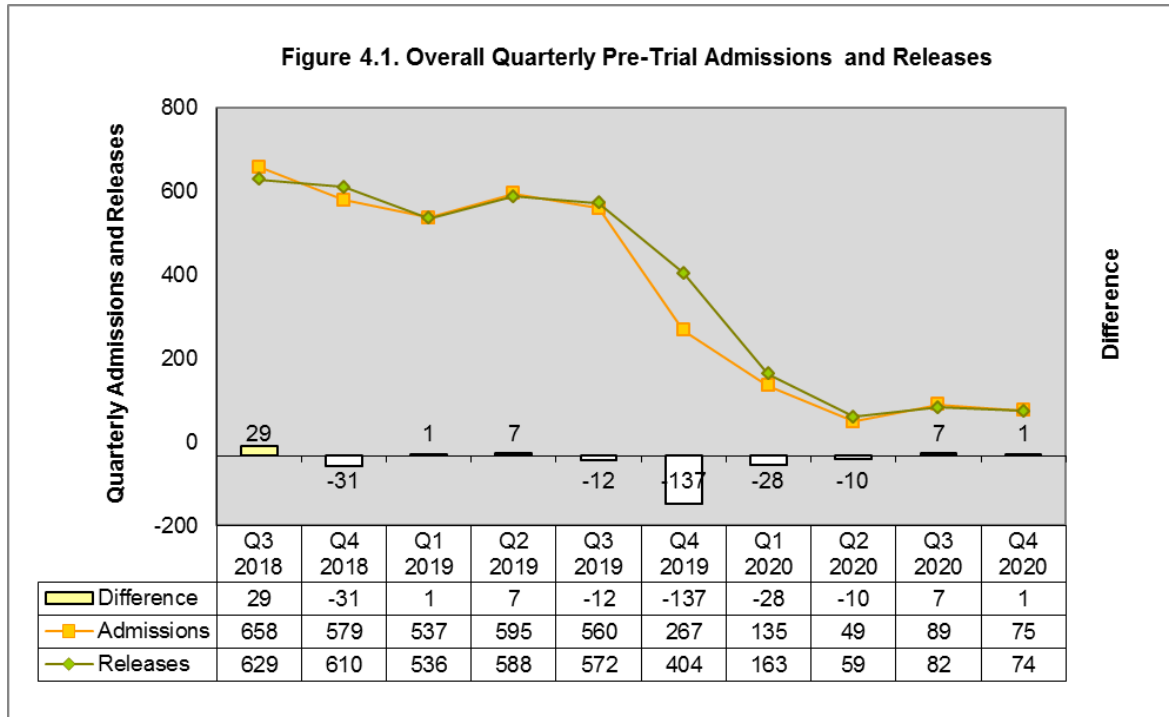
In the fourth quarter of 2020, there were 58 more civil commitment releases than admissions. For the ten-quarter trend period, the MA DOC has released 71 more civil commitments than it has admitted. See Figure 3.1.

Female civil commitment activity remained low in the fourth quarter of 2020. Male admissions and releases returned to the pre-pandemic level with 452 admissions and 511 releases. See Figure 3.2.



PRE-TRIAL ADMISSIONS AND RELEASES

Pre-trial admissions and releases went down slightly in the fourth quarter of 2020 from the previous quarter. The total number of admissions and releases were still far below the pre-pandemic level, which was already substantially reduced in Q4 2019 because female pre-trials were no longer coming to the MADOC from Essex, Norfolk, Plymouth and Suffolk Counties, suggesting that pre-trial admissions and releases were still seriously affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Females, which normally accounted for over 90% of total pre-trial admissions and releases, appeared to be affected more than males. See figures 4.1 and 4.2.



Pre-Trial Admissions by Court Jurisdiction

In the fourth quarter of 2020, two-thirds of male pre-trial detainee admissions primarily came from federal and out of state jurisdictions, the second highest percentage during the ten-quarter trend period and below the second quarter of the year. Massachusetts male pre-trial admissions to the DOC shrank to one-third of the quarterly total. Female detainees continued to arrive predominantly from Middlesex County but in far fewer numbers than the quarters prior to Q2, 2020. Other counties, such as Essex, Norfolk and Plymouth that used to send more female detainees before the pandemic dropped nearly to zero in 2020 because female pre-trials were no longer coming to the MADOC from Essex, Norfolk, Plymouth and Suffolk Counties starting in Q4, 2019. See Tables 4.3 and 4.4 below.

Table 4.3 Male Quarterly Pre-Trial Admissions by Jurisdiction

County	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
Federal	23	9	12	9	10	10	6	2	2	12
Out-of-state	10	8	7	14	6	7	12	7	10	6
Suffolk	8	3	2	3	2	3	4	0	7	3
Essex	3	3	3	2	5	1	1	1	1	2
Franklin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Plymouth	6	0	2	4	1	3	2	0	2	1
Norfolk	1	3	3	3	4	2	0	0	1	1
Middlesex	2	3	2	0	2	4	3	0	3	0
Hampden	1	0	3	2	1	0	0	1	1	0
Barnstable	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Worcester	4	5	7	4	4	2	8	1	0	0
Bristol	2	3	0	0	1	2	1	1	0	0
Mass Parole	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Berkshire	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hampshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	61	37	41	41	37	34	38	13	30	27

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

Table 4.4 Female Quarterly Pre-Trial Admissions by Jurisdiction

County	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
Middlesex	143	131	119	138	150	149	122	34	57	43
Essex	220	195	194	202	180	31	1	0	2	2
Federal	5	7	2	7	1	5	2	0	0	2
Suffolk	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Norfolk	111	109	96	89	87	32	0	1	0	0
Plymouth	115	97	83	115	103	15	0	0	0	0
Worcester	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Out-of-State	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Berkshire	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hampden	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bristol	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mass Parole	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	597	542	496	555	523	233	125	36	59	48

*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.

Admissions	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).
Civil Commitment or “Civil”	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.
Criminally Sentenced or “Sentenced”	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.
Custody Population	An inmate that is incarcerated in Massachusetts DOC facility.
Expiration of Sentence (Release)	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.
HOC	House of Correction, i.e. county jail or correctional facility.
Jurisdiction Population	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).
MA DOC	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.