



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

### ***Cross Tracking Dashboard FAQs***

#### **Q: What is cross tracking?**

**A:** Cross tracking is the Commonwealth's new statewide data initiative to standardize criminal justice information. Conceived as part of the Criminal Justice Reform law signed by Governor Charlie Baker, the fully integrated data framework is designed to enhance transparency, improve access to criminal justice data, and facilitate high-level analysis for the public, stakeholders, and researchers to inform public policy and improve public safety.

In August 2022, the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) debuted the first phase of this project. The system provides access to population data from the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC) and the Sheriffs' Offices. The inaugural dataset integrates 9.4 million records dating back to January 2017 into annual snapshots for the public to study changes and patterns year-over-year. The data also includes historical demographic information.

#### **Q: Why create this platform, and what impact will it have on justice involved individuals?**

**A:** Criminal Justice Reform required EOPSS, in consultation with the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security (EOTSS), to create a data collection and cross tracking system for criminal justice agencies and the Trial Court.

The Cross Tracking System was designed to provide a streamlined, 360-degree view of an individual's engagement with the criminal justice system following them from the point of arrest to entry into a custodial institution and eventual release to parole supervision.

The integrated data system has six primary goals:

- Drive operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- Connect individual records across the criminal justice system.
- Increase criminal justice data availability, quality, and public trust.
- Empower data-driven decision making and monitoring.
- Analyze disparities and evaluate effectiveness of reform programs.
- Enable internal and independent studies of recidivism and other criminal justice research.

#### **Q: What steps has EOPSS taken thus far to develop the Cross Tracking System?**

**A:** EOPSS approached this complex process knowing that it required technological expertise and consensus among public safety partners. The integrated Cross Tracking System required state leaders to develop uniform data collection and reporting standards across a broad range of agencies and independent constitutional offices.

To implement these standards, EOPSS [promulgated regulations which established consistent data definitions, defined the governance framework, outlined integration requirements, and developed operational and implementation procedures](#). Additionally, EOPSS supported upgrades across each of the Sheriff's Office Offender Management System (OMS) to allow for the collection of the consistent data elements in accordance with the Criminal Justice Reform law. EOPSS further coordinated with various Sheriff's Offices to secure LiveScan devices which provide more fingerprinting capabilities during the booking procedure. Last, EOPSS secured a Data Use License Agreement from each phase one criminal justice partner agency which allows for seamless data sharing and participation with the Cross Tracking System while also ensuring the proper security protocols for data management.

Together, the partners strategized how to standardize data for presentation, moved data securely from agencies to the system, and developed the public-facing dashboard.

**Q: What are the counties referred to in the graphs?**

**A:** In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, there are 14 counties: Barnstable, Berkshire, Bristol, Dukes, Essex, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, Middlesex, Nantucket, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester. Each county sheriff's office operates a jail and house of correction, except for Nantucket where individuals in their custody are immediately transferred to the care of the Barnstable County Sheriff's Office. For this reason, Nantucket does not have custodial population data.

**Q: What is a house of correction, jail, state facility, and prison?**

**A:** There are several kinds of correctional facilities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

As mentioned above, each County Sheriff's Office except Nantucket operates a Jail and House of Correction.

A Jail is a pretrial holding facility where individuals awaiting trial or sentencing are housed at the discretion of a judge.

A House of Correction assumes custody of an individual convicted of one or more crimes punishable by a sentence of no more than 2.5 years per offense.

DOC operates state facilities (also referred to as prisons) for those sentenced for crimes more than 2.5 years by a judge. Depending on their security and programming needs, individuals entrusted to DOC's care live in a minimum, medium, or maximum-security facility.

**Q: How does the platform determine and display the age of individuals?**

**A:** Age is calculated at the time of the January 1 snapshot and are grouped (e.g., 18 to 24, 25 to 29, etc.) for the purpose of recognizing trends.

**Q: Will the platform allow members of the public to access information about a specific person?**

**A:** No, due to Criminal Offender Record Information laws (CORI) which prohibit the dissemination of justice-involved individual's personally identifiable information to the public, the

Cross Tracking Dashboard does not include any personally identifiable information. While criminal justice agencies can access person-specific information to develop effective, personalized rehabilitation plans, the Cross Tracking Dashboard should be used to understand trends across the larger system.

For more information about a specific individual, [you may request access through the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services \(DCJIS\)](#).

**Q: Were any data exclusions made?**

**A:** These population counts include only pre-trial and sentenced individuals. Excluded from these counts are:

- Individuals who have been civilly committed to the care of a Massachusetts correctional facility.
- Juveniles in the custody of a Massachusetts correctional facility.
- Individuals living within a Massachusetts correctional facility who are incarcerated [under the jurisdiction of the federal government, or another state's jurisdiction through the interstate compact](#).
- Individuals sentenced in Massachusetts and serving custody in another jurisdiction via interstate compact.
- Individuals in DOC's electronic monitoring program.
- Individuals booked by another criminal justice agency and temporarily detained at a Jail or House of Correction under a "safe keep" agreement for pre-arraignment or detention purposes.

**Q: Will additional data become available in the future?**

**A:** Yes, the system will expand to include up-to-date information (rather than snapshots) and statutory data fields about governing offenses (i.e., date, time, location, admission/release dates, etc.). When fully achieved, the Cross Tracking System will provide quality, standardized data to all agencies improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice system. Equally important, the Cross Tracking Dashboard will provide anonymized and comprehensive data on the criminal justice populations to the public and any interested party.