

Massachusetts Department of Correction

Frequently Asked Questions

January 1, 2026

Compiled by the Research and Planning Division

How many incarcerated individuals are housed by the Massachusetts Department of Correction (MA DOC)?

On January 1, 2026, there were 5,843 criminally sentenced individuals in the jurisdiction of the MA DOC. There were 353 individuals housed as civil commitments and 44 pre-trial detainees in the MA DOC. The total jurisdiction population was 6,240.

How many Massachusetts incarcerated individuals are housed in other jurisdictions' facilities?

On January 1, 2026, there were 67 MA DOC incarcerated individuals housed in other state or federal correctional facilities, 90 MA DOC incarcerated individuals housed in a Massachusetts county correctional facility, and one (1) on DOC Electronic Monitoring.

How many institutions do you have and how many security levels are there?

On January 1, 2026, the MA DOC had 13 institutions and 4 security levels: Maximum (Max), Medium (Med), Minimum (Min) and Pre-Release (Pre).

What is the average cost to house an incarcerated individual per year?

MA DOC Institutional Per Capita Costs (FY 2025)

Facility	Security Level	Annual Cost Per Person
Boston Pre Release	Min/Pre	\$154,096.92
Bridgewater State Hospital	Med	\$367,007.14
MCI-Concord*	Med	Not Applicable
MCI-Framingham	Med	\$256,220.10
MCI-Norfolk	Med	\$96,794.17
MCI-Shirley	Med	\$107,475.70
MASAC @ Plymouth	Min/Pre	\$606,442.70
Massachusetts Treatment Center	Med	\$150,598.32
NCCI Gardner	Min/Pre	\$101,867.36
Northeastern Correctional Center	Med/Min	\$102,717.75
Old Colony Correctional Center Medium	Med	\$170,800.75
Old Colony Correctional Center Minimum	Min	Not Applicable
Pondville Correctional Center	Min/Pre	\$91,673.24
Shattuck Hospital	Med	\$823,080.83
Souza-Baranowski Correctional Center	Max	\$130,239.55

*MCI-Concord was shuttered in June 2024.

Criminally Sentenced Commitments

What is the assigned sex breakdown of the incarcerated population?

Of the 5,843 criminally sentenced commitments in the MA DOC jurisdiction on January 1, 2026, 213 (4%) were female and 5,630 (96%) were male.

What is the racial/Hispanic ethnicity composition of the incarcerated population?

Incarcerated individuals serving criminal sentences on January 1, 2026, reported the following race/ethnicity: White 2,035– (35%), Black or African American – 1,764 (30%), Hispanic – 1,858 (32%), Asian or Pacific Islander – 119 (2%), Unknown - 26 (<1%), and American Indian or Native Alaskan – 42 (<1%).

How many "lifers" are incarcerated in Massachusetts DOC facilities?

On January 1, 2026, there were 1,697 incarcerated individuals serving a governing life sentence. Of the 1,697, there were 870 incarcerated individuals serving a first-degree life sentence and 780 serving a second-degree life sentence. The remaining 34 were serving an out of state life sentence including first degree (26) and second-degree life sentences (8).

How many individuals are committed to the DOC in a year?

During FY 2025, there were 1,404 criminal new court commitments to the DOC; 1,300 males and 104 females.

How many individuals are released from the DOC in a year?

During FY 2025, there were 1,582 total criminally sentenced individuals released from both MA DOC facilities, as well as facilities in other jurisdictions. Of the 1,582 total releases, 1,488 were male and 94 were female. Of these 1,582 releases, 1,240 (78%) were released to the community: 775 via parole, 442 through expiration of sentence and 23 court release/crime lab.

What is the average time served?

For the purpose of this section, Length of Stay (LOS) and time served were calculated based on the criminally sentenced population who had their first release to the community from the MA DOC jurisdiction in 2025.

Expiration of Sentence

The average time served for males released to the community due to expiration of sentence was 4.6 years. For females released due to expiration of sentence, the average time served was 2.2 years.

Parole to the Community

The average time served for males who have been paroled to the community was 7.8 years. The average time served for females paroled to the community was 4.7 years.

Length of stay is defined as the number of days an individual is incarcerated under MA DOC jurisdiction between date of admission and date of release.

Time Served is defined as the sum of an individual's total length of stay on the same commitment number within the MA DOC jurisdiction population including jail credit days.

What is the Recidivism Rate?

A 3-year recidivism study of 1,868 criminally sentenced individuals released from MA DOC institutions in 2020¹ yielded the following results: within the first-year post-release 117 (6%) of the 1,868 released individuals recidivated, an additional 147 (8%) recidivated in the second-year post-release, and another 104 (6%) recidivated within the third-year post-release. The overall recidivism rate for incarcerated individuals released in 2020 over the span of 3 years was 27%.

The MA DOC defines a recidivist as any criminally sentenced individual released to the community from MA DOC jurisdiction who is re-incarcerated in a Massachusetts state or county facility or to a federal facility for a criminal sentence within three years of their release to the community.

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