

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION  
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**July 1, 2024**

**Compiled by the Research and Planning Division**

**How many inmates are incarcerated by the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC)?**

On July 1, 2024 there were 5,765 criminally sentenced inmates in the jurisdiction of the DOC. There were 426 individuals housed as civil commitments and 56 pre-trial detainees in the DOC. The total jurisdiction population was 6,247.

**How many Massachusetts inmates are incarcerated in other jurisdictions' facilities?**

On July 1, 2024 there were 73 DOC inmates housed in other state or federal correctional facilities, 78 DOC inmates housed in county correctional facilities, and nine (9) on DOC Electronic Monitoring.

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

On July 1, 2024, the Department had 13 institutions and 4 security levels: Maximum, Medium, Minimum and Pre-Release.

**What is the average cost to house an inmate per year?**

**MA DOC Institutional Per Capita Costs (FY 2023)**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Security Level</b>	<b>Annual Cost Per Inmate</b>
Boston Pre Release	Min/Pre	\$193,183.63
Bridgewater State Hospital	Med	\$340,276.33
Cedar Junction	Max/Med	\$330,351.56
MCI-Concord	Med	\$147,297.83
MCI-Framingham	Med	\$198,921.95
MCI-Norfolk	Med	\$78,230.92
<i>MCI-Shirley</i>		
MCI-Shirley Medium	Med	\$96,372.36
MASAC @ Plymouth	Min/Pre	\$467,582.26
Massachusetts Treatment Center	Med	\$104,334.18
NCCI Gardner	Med/Min	\$89,499.07
Northeastern Correctional Center	Min/Pre	\$81,440.08
<i>Old Colony Correctional Center</i>		
Old Colony Correctional Center Medium	Med	\$136,495.92
Old Colony Correctional Center Minimum	Min	\$124,538.24
Pondville Correctional Center	Min/Pre	\$111,807.44
Shattuck Hospital	Med	\$572,423.95
Souza-Baranowski Correctional Center	Max	\$119,310.37

\*MCI-Cedar Junction was shuttered in June 2023.

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**Criminally Sentenced Inmates**

**What is the gender breakdown of the inmate population?**

Of the 5,765 criminally sentenced inmates in DOC jurisdiction July 1, 2024, 183 (3%) were female and 5,582 (97%) were male.

**What is the racial/Hispanic ethnicity composition of the inmate population?**

Inmates serving criminal sentences on July 1, 2024, reported the following race/ethnicity: White – 2,100 (36%), Black or African American – 1,768 (31%), Hispanic – 1,726 (30%), Asian or Pacific Islander – 103 (2%), Unknown - 32 (1%), and American Indian or Native Alaskan – 36 (<-1%).

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

On July 1, 2024, there were 1,774 inmates serving a governing life sentence. Of the 1,774, there were 971 inmates serving a first-degree life sentence and 772 serving a second-degree life sentence. The remaining 31 were serving an out of state life sentence including first degree (18) and second-degree life sentences (13).

**How many people are committed to the DOC in a year?**

During FY 2023, there were 1,429 new criminal court commitments to the DOC; 1,347 males and 82 females.

**How many people are released from the DOC in a year?**

During FY 2023, there were 1,557 criminally sentenced inmates released from both DOC facilities, as well as facilities in other jurisdictions. Of the 1,557 inmates released, 1,469 were male and 88 were female. Of these releases, 1,244 (80%) were released to the community: 730 via parole, 495 through expiration of sentence and 19 court release/crime lab.

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**What is the average time served?**

The estimated time served for state criminally sentenced males, including all inmates released to the community from a sentence at the DOC due to expiration of sentence, parole, court release, or payment of fines in 2023, was about 3.5 years. For females, the average time served for **state** criminally sentenced releases to the community was about 3.0 years; and 180 days (5.9 months) for **county** criminally sentenced releases to the community. Inmates with life sentences were not included in the above noted numbers due to significantly longer stays and differences in sentence structure.

Time served is calculated by adding together an inmate's jail credits and their length of stay<sup>1</sup>. To clarify, each is defined as:

**Jail credits** are days of credit for time served awaiting trial. The DOC does not award or take away jail credits; pre-trial confinement is determined by the courts.

**Length of stay** is the total number of days an inmate is incarcerated on the same DOC commitment number within the DOC jurisdiction population; the total number of days may include time from multiple admission and releases on that same commitment number.

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

**What is the recidivism rate?**

A 3-year recidivism study of 2,006 criminally sentenced inmates released from DOC institutions in 2018<sup>2</sup> yielded the following results: within the first-year post-release 318 (16%) of the 2,006 released inmates recidivated, an additional 168 (8%) recidivated in the second-year post-release, and another 88 (4%) recidivated within the third-year post-release. The overall recidivism rate for inmates released in 2018 over the span of 3 years was 29%.

The Massachusetts Department of Correction (MADOC) defines a recidivist as any criminally sentenced inmate released to the community from MADOC 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.

*Date last updated: July 2024*

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<sup>1</sup> All measures of **inmate time served** were done using the **median**, which is preferred to the average when examining time served due to the skewed nature of the variable; the average tends to produce greatly inflated values.

<sup>2</sup> Starting in 2008, the cohort includes MA DOC inmates released from county, federal and out of state facilities.