



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

### ***Cross-Tracking Programs 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 2018 Criminal Justice Reform Act, 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.

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

**A:** Criminal Justice Reform required the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (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 system was designed to provide a streamlined, 360-degree view of an offender's engagement with the criminal justice system following them from the point of arrest to entry into a custodial institution and eventual release.

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. EOPSS promulgated regulations to this end which established consistent data definitions, defined the governance framework, outlined integration requirements, and developed operational and implementation procedures. EOPSS supported the Sheriffs' Office Offender Management System upgrade to allow for the collection of the consistent data elements. EOPSS further coordinated with various Sheriffs' Offices in securing LiveScan devices to provide more fingerprinting capabilities during the booking procedure. EOPSS also secured a Data Use License Agreement from each phase one criminal justice partner agency.

Together, the partners strategized how to standardize data for presentation, moved data securely from agencies to the dashboard, and developed the public-facing visualization designs. This is the third

dashboard that EOPSS has created for Cross-Tracking and the first of its kind for the Commonwealth. EOPSS is excited for users to engage with this dashboard, review data trends, and provide feedback to EOPSS. As the first of its kind, EOPSS anticipates improvements throughout the development of Cross-Tracking.

**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. With the exception of Nantucket, each County Sheriff's Office holds offenders. Offenders convicted and/or arrested on Nantucket are transferred to the Barnstable County Sheriff's Office.

**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.

Each County Sheriff's Office, excluding Nantucket, oversees a Jail. A Jail is a pretrial holding facility where offenders awaiting trial or sentencing are housed at the discretion of a judge.

The Sheriffs oversee Houses of Correction. An offender who receives a sentence up to 2.5 years will serve that county sentence at a House of Correction. If an offender with a state prison sentence is participating in the Step-Down Initiative, they may be transferred from the DOC to a House of Correction and subsequently released back to either a DOC institution or to the community. The Step-Down Initiative allows the DOC and respective counties to review and transfer appropriate candidates in a collaborative effort to effectively transition offenders with a state sentence to their home community for reentry.

DOC operates state correctional facilities (also referred to as prisons) housing various offenders. Depending on their security and programming needs, offenders entrusted to DOC's care live in a pre-release, minimum, medium, or maximum-security facility.

**Q: Will the dashboard 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 individuals to the public, the public facing information does not include any personally identifiable information. While criminal justice agencies can access person-specific information to develop effective, personalized rehabilitation plans, the public facing 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 program enrollment counts include pretrial and sentenced offenders registered for a program while in custody. Excluded from these counts are:

- Civilly Committed Individuals;
- Juveniles;
- Individuals under the jurisdiction of the federal government, or another state's jurisdiction through an Interstate Compact Agreement;
- Any individual sentenced in Massachusetts and serving custody in another jurisdiction via interstate compact;

- Any individual who was previously booked by another criminal justice agency and then transported to a Jail or House of Correction to be held for pre-arraignment or detention purposes. This is known as a “Safe Keep.” (not pretrial or convicted); and
- Any individual who is originally booked by or at a Jail or House of Correction and where that original booking is performed on behalf of a separate criminal justice agency. This is known as a “Regional Booking.” (not pretrial or convicted)

**Q: How does the dashboard display data that predates Criminal Justice Reform (CJR)?**

**A:** Given that data submitted by the participating criminal justice agencies predates the CJR data reporting standards outlined in the new governing regulations, EOPSS has taken great care to review and match the records from the various agencies to consolidate the data seen in the dashboard. In doing so, some of the older data, known as legacy data, was not able to meet these matching criteria and therefore, is not shown in the dashboard. EOPSS will continue to work through the legacy data with its stakeholders to ensure accuracy to be able to display it on the dashboard.

**Q: Is participation in programs mandatory?**

**A:** Although voluntary, participation is encouraged for all offenders. Programming is assessment-driven and individualized treatment plans target specific risks and needs for each offender. The structure of program offerings is tailored to the needs of all offender populations. Accordingly, programming opportunities include classes focused on education, vocation, substance use disorder, anger management and self-help, among others.

**Q: Is an offender able to participate in any program?**

**A:** No, for many programs there are established eligibility guidelines. For example, educational programs such as Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, or Adult Post-Secondary Education all have established thresholds for participation. Other programs such as substance use programming or Sex Offender programming have established eligibility criteria prior to participation.

**Q: Why does the reason for program exits differ for pre-trial and sentenced offenders?**

**A:** While program opportunities are available for all offenders whether pre-trial or sentenced, it is important to note that program completions and outcomes for pre-trial offenders are likely to vary significantly from sentenced offenders due to the nature of a pre-trial status (e.g., shorter times in custody, inconsistent attendance due to pre-trial hearings).

**Q: What offender programs are included in the dashboard?**

**A:** In developing the data collection and reporting standards, 501 CMR 18 requires custodial agencies to report on offender participation and the outcome of that participation in evidence-based programs, which includes all educational and rehabilitative programs offered by the custodial agency. By including all educational and rehabilitative programs, 501 CMR 18 reflects the breadth of programming offered to offenders in Massachusetts. Further, supplemental to the required evidence-based programs, custodial agencies have included data on additional programs listed on the correctional spending matrix, distinguished by PSI program type as defined below.

Given that data submitted by the criminal justice agencies date back to 2017 and predate the promulgation of 501 CMR 18 in late 2021, efforts have been taken to standardize values in accordance with the governing regulations. Additionally, due to the variations in programs, not all programs are designed to be “completed” by a participant. Therefore, the participant’s outcome is captured under one of the listed “exit reasons” as specified within the operational definitions.

**Q: What are Programs, Services, and Interventions (PSI) Program Types?**

**A:** Section 101 of Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2019 created the [Commission on Correctional Funding](#). As part of their work, the Commission published a comprehensive correctional spending matrix submitted by both the [Massachusetts Department of Correction](#) and [Massachusetts Sheriffs Association](#).

Within this matrix, programs are assigned to one of the following program types:

- Behavioral Health / Mental Health / Substance Use
- Support / Mentorship
- Educational and Vocational
- Religious / Spiritual
- Community Reinvestments
- Work Assignment
- Treatment-Based

This comprehensive listing of programming is available on the [Massachusetts Sheriff's Association website](#) and the Cross-Tracking Program Dashboard host page is linked to this resource.

**Q: What does "Program Group" mean?**

**A:** Program group refers to programs with similar objectives that are classified into a single program group. For example, the program group category of "Computer Skills" might include program names such as "Technology Literacy", "Typing", or "Computer Lab."

**Q: What does "Program Name" mean?**

**A:** Program name refers to the specific program. If the same program is offered at different times or places (e.g., Coping Skills – Pod 1, Coping Skills – Pod 2) each iteration of the particular program is included under the same program name.

**Q: What is a "completable" program?**

**A:** The dashboard allows users to filter by whether the program is able to be completed by an offender, either by an established start and end date, or through the issuance of a tangible result such as a certification if applicable to the program. For example, substance use disorder programming such as Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA) has established periods of participation. Other substance use disorder programming such as Alcoholics Anonymous has no established completion date. The Program Completion Flag is descriptive of the program structure only, is not indicative of the actual completion of a program by an offender.

**Q: What is the difference between "Total Enrollments" and "Unique Enrollments"?**

**A:** The total number of enrollments represents a count of the number of records with a program registration date within the time parameters and any other filters in the visualization. In other words, total enrollments capture the number of registrations to a program which may include multiple registrations by one individual.

The total number of unique enrollments represents the number of unique offenders with one or more program registration date within the time parameters and any other filters in the visualization. Unique offenders are identified by checking unique source IDs (agency level identifiers which are associated with an individual at time of booking). For example, if an offender is participating in a program while in pre-trial status under one booking number and later participates in the same program while in sentenced

status under a different booking number, this would be counted as two enrollments for the purpose of total enrollments and unique enrollments.

**Q: What is the difference between “Total Exits” and “Unique Exits”?**

**A:** The total number of exits represents a count of the number of records with a program registration date within the time parameters and any other filters in the visualization where the offender has exited the program. The date that the program ended, or when the offender ceased participation is not utilized in the current dashboard. In other words, total exits capture the number of registrations to a program which may include multiple registrations by one individual, but the offender has exited the program.

The total number of unique exits represents the number of unique offenders with one or more program registration date within the time parameters and any other filters in the visualization. Unique offenders are identified by checking unique source IDs (agency level identifiers which are associated with an individual at time of booking). For example, if an offender is participating in a program while in pre-trial status under one booking number and later participates in the same program while in sentenced status under a different booking number, this would be counted as two unique exits for the purpose of total exits and unique exits.

**Q: What are the values for “Exit Reason”?**

**A:** Offenders have a variety of conditions that lead to a program exit, including the completion of a program. They can complete the programs through their scheduled program end dates, but they may also be released, transferred, have a change of security classification, or withdraw from classes. All program exit reasons were grouped into the following categories:

- ADMINISTRATIVE REMOVAL – Non disciplinary reason
- COMPLETED – Includes participation through the program’s scheduled end date, or the issuance of a tangible result such as a certification if applicable to the program (i.e., ServSafe, OSHA, HiSet/GED, etc).
- CURRENTLY ENROLLED
- DISCIPLINARY – Includes Awaiting Action on discipline
- DROPPED – Includes removal from class for non-participation and disciplinary reasons related to class
- FAILURE – Failing grade in class at conclusion
- HOUSING / CLASSIFICATION CHANGE – Includes change of status from Pre-trial to Sentenced – Housing move to a different security level / area where the currently enrolled class is not within the scope of that area
- OTHER – Any reason not included in the other types
- PARTICIPATED – Includes program registrations that do not have an associated exit reason
- REQUEST – Offender requested to be dropped from program / stopped attending / withdrew – non disciplinary
- RELEASED – Includes all “released from custody” types including transfer

**Q: How is the age of the offender determined?**

**A:** Age is defined as the age of the offender at program registration date (for new enrollments), or the age of the offender at program exit date (for program exits). Ages will be assigned to the following groups consistent with the existing public dashboard:

- 18 to 24
- 25 to 29

- 30 to 39
- 40 to 49
- 50 to 59
- 60 and above