



# Impact of COVID-19 on State and Federal Prisons, March 2020–February 2021

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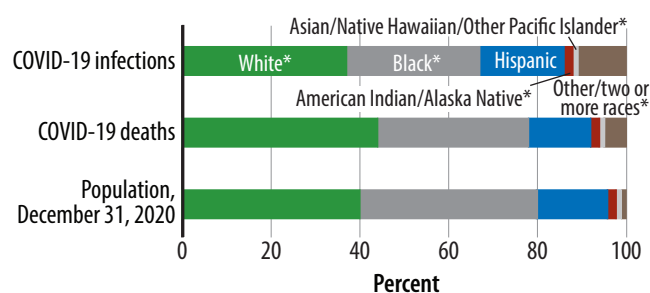
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State and federal correctional facilities performed 4,816,400 viral tests for COVID-19 on persons in prison from the beginning of March 2020 to the end of February 2021. Of these tests, 396,300 (8.2%) were positive for COVID-19, representing 374,400 unique infected persons in state and federal prisons. The infection rate in prisons during this period was 219 per 1,000 state prisoners at risk of exposure to COVID-19 and 298 per 1,000 federal prisoners at risk of exposure.<sup>1</sup> Staff in state correctional facilities had an infection rate of 269 per 1,000 staff, while those working in Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) facilities had a rate of 188 per 1,000.

Almost 2,500 state and federal prisoners died of COVID-19-related causes during the 12 months from March 2020 to February 2021. White prisoners accounted for 44% of COVID-19-related deaths in prisons, while black prisoners accounted for 34% (figure 1). Eighty-three percent of COVID-19-related deaths in state and federal prisons occurred in persons age 55 or older.

<sup>1</sup>Total prisoners at risk of exposure to COVID-19 is equal to the number of persons in state or federal prison custody at the end of February 2020 plus those admitted in the following 12 months.

**FIGURE 1**  
Percent of COVID-19 infections and deaths and 2020 yearend population of persons in the custody of state and federal prisons, by race or ethnicity, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021



Note: Includes positive results of viral (polymerase chain reaction) COVID-19 tests and COVID-19-related deaths among persons held for state or federal correctional authorities in government-operated and privately operated prisons, regardless of sentence status or length. See *Methodology*. Race or ethnicity was missing for almost 10% of COVID-19-infected prisoners and 3% of COVID-19-related deaths. See tables 8 and 10 for percentages. Race and ethnicity data are derived from administrative records and will differ from other published distributions of race and ethnicity in the state and federal prison systems. For the U.S. prison population counts of race and ethnicity, please see *Prisoners in 2020 - Statistical Tables* (NCJ 302776, BJS, December 2021), appendix table 2.

\*Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- BJS’s survey to measure the impact of COVID-19 on U.S. prisons from the end of February 2020 to the end of February 2021 found that the number of persons in the custody of state, federal, or privately operated prisons under state or federal contract decreased more than 16%.
- The prison population declined by 157,500 persons during the first 6 months of the COVID-19 study period through the end of August 2020, and by 58,300 in the 6 months through the end of February 2021.
- Twenty-four states released a total of 37,700 persons from prison on an expedited basis (earlier than scheduled) during the COVID-19 study period.
- State and federal prisons had a crude mortality rate (unadjusted for sex, race or ethnicity, or age) of 1.5 COVID-19-related deaths per 1,000 prisoners from the end of February 2020 to the end of February 2021.
- From the end of February 2020 to the end of February 2021, a total of 196 correctional staff in state and federal prisons died as a result of COVID-19.

Findings in this report are based on the Bureau of Justice Statistics' (BJS) National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey (NPS-CPan), conducted from April to June of 2021. Respondents in state departments of corrections (DOCs) and the BOP were asked for details on their monthly populations of prisoners in custody, admissions, and releases from January 2020 to February 2021. BJS also requested counts and demographic distributions of prisoners who tested positive for or died as a result of COVID-19. This 14-month survey period enabled BJS to track monthly trends in admissions and custody populations occurring just prior to widespread COVID-19 infection in the United States. The NPS-CPan also covered state and BOP policies and practices to mitigate transmission

of the virus, to expedite release of prisoners, and to determine a process for vaccinating staff and prisoners in early 2021.

BJS augmented these data with prisoner information from the annual NPS and National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP) data collections. Unless otherwise noted, statistics in this report are based on the number of persons in the custody of prison facilities operated by states, the BOP, and private companies under contract with state or federal governments. The statistics presented in this report will differ from previously published statistics on U.S. prison populations based on the count of prisoners under jurisdiction, or legal authority of state and federal governments.

## Terms and definitions

**COVID-19**—Coronavirus disease and the virus causing the disease, i.e., severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

**COVID-19 test**—A viral or polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test for COVID-19. Respondents were asked to exclude antibody or serology tests from their counts of COVID-19 tests and positive tests.

**Crude mortality rate**—The number of deaths per 1,000 U.S. residents, unadjusted for differences in sex, race or ethnicity, or age. (See *Methodology* for the Bureau of Justice Statistics' (BJS) calculation of crude mortality rate.)

**Custody**—The physical holding of a person in a prison operated by a state or the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), regardless of sentence length or which authority has jurisdiction over the prisoner.

**Custody plus privates**—The physical holding of a person in a prison operated by a state, the BOP, or a private company under state or federal contract, regardless of sentence length or which authority has jurisdiction over the prisoner.

**Expedited release**—The release of a prisoner from the jurisdiction of a state department of corrections or the BOP at least 1 day before their scheduled or expected release date or post-custody community supervision eligibility date, to limit prisoner risk and exposure to COVID-19 or due to COVID-19-related understaffing, court orders, or legislative mandates.

**Federal prison system**—The system in which adult prisoners are held in the custody of the BOP in secure federal prison facilities, nonsecure community correctional facilities, and privately operated facilities. Persons convicted of a felony in the District of Columbia serve their sentence in federal prison.

**Home confinement**—When prisoners are in BOP custody but living in their residence or the residence of a designated family member.

**Infection rate**—The number of persons who tested positive for COVID-19 per 1,000 persons at risk of exposure to COVID-19. (See *Methodology* for BJS's calculation of infection rate.)

**Prison/prison facility**—A long-term confinement facility that is operated by a state or federal government or private company under state or federal contract. It includes prisons, penitentiaries, and correctional institutions; boot camps; prison farms; reception, diagnostic, and classification centers; release centers, halfway houses, and road camps; forestry and conservation camps; vocational training facilities; prison hospitals; and drug and alcohol treatment facilities. Prisons typically hold persons convicted of a felony, or those with a sentence of more than 1 year imposed by a state or federal court. Sentence length may vary by state. Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Rhode Island, and Vermont each operate an integrated system that combines prisons and jails, so their counts include prison and jail populations.

**Prisoner**—A person confined in a state or federal prison or privately operated prison under state or federal contract. Counts of prisoners exclude persons held in local jails under the legal authority of a state or federal correctional authority.

**Test positivity rate**—The number of COVID-19 tests with a positive result per 1,000 tests performed in a correctional jurisdiction. (See *Methodology* for BJS's calculation of test positivity rate.)

## The number of prisoners in custody declined in all states during the study period

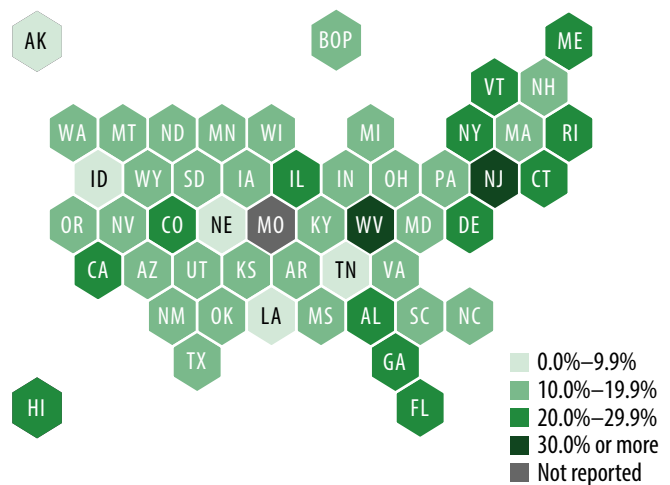
State DOCs held 197,300 fewer prisoners (a 17% decline) at the end of February 2021 than they did one year earlier (**table 1**). The number of persons in BOP custody decreased by 18,500 (almost 12%) during this period. Every state, with the exception of Louisiana (down 9%), Tennessee (down 7%), Alaska (down 5%), Nebraska (down 5%), and Idaho (down 4%), had at least a 10% decline in its prison population (**map 1**). States with the largest prison populations (Texas, California, and Florida) and the BOP experienced a combined decrease of 84,100 prisoners. This accounted for 39% of the total decline of 215,800 prisoners across the United States from the end of February 2020 to the end of February 2021.

The majority of the decrease in the number of prisoners occurred between the beginning of February and the end of August, 2020 (12% in state DOCs and 10% in the BOP). (See table 1.) During these 6 months, the prison populations of all states and the BOP declined at least 4%.

Between August 2020 and February 2021, nine states had an increase in prisoners. Of the 40 states with decreases to their prison populations during this time, New Jersey and Oregon experienced greater declines from the end of August 2020 to February 2021 than from February 2020 through the end of August 2020.

### MAP 1

Percent decline in persons in the custody of state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, February 29, 2020–February 28, 2021



Note: Includes persons held for state or federal correctional authorities in government-operated and privately operated prisons, regardless of sentence status or length. Estimates will differ from previously published statistics. Persons convicted of a felony in the District of Columbia were in the custody of the BOP. Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Rhode Island, and Vermont each operate an integrated system that combines prisons and jails, so their percentages include prison and jail populations. Excludes prisoners held in local jails on behalf of state or federal correctional authorities. Counts for the Federal Bureau of Prisons include only persons in the custody of BOP-operated facilities. See table 1 for percentages.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

**TABLE 1**

Persons in the custody of state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, February 29, 2020, August 31, 2020, and February 28, 2021

Jurisdiction	Feb 29, 2020	Aug 31, 2020	Feb 28, 2021	Change, Feb 29, 2020–Feb 28, 2021	Percent change, Feb 29, 2020–Feb 28, 2021	Percent change, Feb 29, 2020–Aug 31, 2020	Percent change, Aug 31, 2020–Feb 28, 2021
<b>U.S. total<sup>a</sup></b>	1,308,754	1,151,223	1,092,936	-215,818	-16.5%	-12.0%	-5.1%
<b>Federal<sup>b</sup></b>	157,218	141,520	138,744	-18,474	-11.8%	-10.0%	-2.0%
<b>State<sup>a</sup></b>	1,151,536	1,009,703	954,192	-197,344	-17.1%	-12.3%	-5.5%
Alabama	22,004	19,328	17,553	-4,451	-20.2	-12.2	-9.2
Alaska <sup>c</sup>	4,769	4,413	4,517	-252	-5.3	-7.5	2.4
Arizona	42,282	39,153	36,975	-5,307	-12.6	-7.4	-5.6
Arkansas	17,620	15,232	14,686	-2,934	-16.7	-13.6	-3.6
California	124,749	102,982	96,161	-28,588	-22.9	-17.4	-6.6
Colorado	18,880	15,807	14,385	-4,495	-23.8	-16.3	-9.0
Connecticut <sup>c</sup>	12,409	9,534	9,043	-3,366	-27.1	-23.2	-5.1
Delaware <sup>c</sup>	5,105	4,219	4,360	-745	-14.6	-17.4	3.3
Florida	93,867	84,602	79,425	-14,442	-15.4	-9.9	-6.1
Georgia	53,424	47,863	44,285	-9,139	-17.1	-10.4	-7.5
Hawaii <sup>c</sup>	3,699	2,984	3,090	-609	-16.5	-19.3	3.6
Idaho	7,815	6,818	7,531	-284	-3.6	-12.8	10.5
Illinois	37,731	31,178	28,277	-9,454	-25.1	-17.4	-9.3

*Continued on next page*

**TABLE 1 (continued)**

**Persons in the custody of state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, February 29, 2020, August 31, 2020, and February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	Feb 29, 2020	Aug 31, 2020	Feb 28, 2021	Change, Feb 29, 2020– Feb 28, 2021	Percent change, Feb 29, 2020– Feb 28, 2021	Percent change, Feb 29, 2020– Aug 31, 2020	Percent change, Aug 31, 2020– Feb 28, 2021
Indiana	26,871	24,508	23,707	-3,164	-11.8	-8.8	-3.3
Iowa	9,180	7,795	8,138	-1,042	-11.4	-15.1	4.4
Kansas	9,799	8,580	8,714	-1,085	-11.1	-12.4	1.6
Kentucky	23,188	19,533	18,627	-4,561	-19.7	-15.8	-4.6
Louisiana	14,841	14,107	13,560	-1,281	-8.6	-4.9	-3.9
Maine	2,164	1,790	1,672	-492	-22.7	-17.3	-6.6
Maryland	20,589	18,419	17,610	-2,979	-14.5	-10.5	-4.4
Massachusetts	7,940	6,969	6,452	-1,488	-18.7	-12.2	-7.4
Michigan	37,946	34,741	33,215	-4,731	-12.5	-8.4	-4.4
Minnesota	8,929	7,575	7,250	-1,679	-18.8	-15.2	-4.3
Mississippi	13,270	11,654	11,050	-2,220	-16.7	-12.2	-5.2
Missouri	/	/	/	:	:	:	:
Montana	4,527	3,923	3,838	-689	-15.2	-13.3	-2.2
Nebraska	5,562	5,220	5,282	-280	-5.0	-6.1	1.2
Nevada	12,371	11,505	10,891	-1,480	-12.0	-7.0	-5.3
New Hampshire	2,472	2,228	2,107	-365	-14.8	-9.9	-5.4
New Jersey	18,098	15,270	11,745	-6,353	-35.1	-15.6	-23.1
New Mexico	6,843	6,271	5,942	-901	-13.2	-8.4	-5.2
New York	43,786	37,016	32,376	-11,410	-26.1	-15.5	-12.5
North Carolina	35,176	31,830	29,484	-5,692	-16.2	-9.5	-7.4
North Dakota	1,750	1,279	1,458	-292	-16.7	-26.9	14.0
Ohio	48,765	44,564	43,246	-5,519	-11.3	-8.6	-3.0
Oklahoma	24,979	21,985	21,676	-3,303	-13.2	-12.0	-1.4
Oregon	14,435	13,848	12,404	-2,031	-14.1	-4.1	-10.4
Pennsylvania	45,636	41,148	38,545	-7,091	-15.5	-9.8	-6.3
Rhode Island <sup>c</sup>	2,690	2,211	2,150	-540	-20.1	-17.8	-2.8
South Carolina	18,047	16,224	15,670	-2,377	-13.2	-10.1	-3.4
South Dakota	3,859	3,381	3,262	-597	-15.5	-12.4	-3.5
Tennessee	18,519	16,443	17,261	-1,258	-6.8	-11.2	5.0
Texas	140,419	121,128	117,843	-22,576	-16.1	-13.7	-2.7
Utah	5,037	4,204	4,099	-938	-18.6	-16.5	-2.5
Vermont <sup>c</sup>	1,394	1,194	1,090	-304	-21.8	-14.3	-8.7
Virginia	29,232	25,919	23,486	-5,746	-19.7	-11.3	-9.4
Washington	17,311	15,446	14,518	-2,793	-16.1	-10.8	-6.0
West Virginia	5,927	4,381	3,970	-1,957	-33.0	-26.1	-9.4
Wisconsin	23,313	21,167	19,521	-3,792	-16.3	-9.2	-7.8
Wyoming	2,317	2,134	2,045	-272	-11.7	-7.9	-4.2

Note: Includes persons held for state or federal correctional authorities in government-operated and privately operated prisons, regardless of sentence status or length. Excludes prisoners held in local jails on behalf of state or federal correctional authorities. Estimates will differ from previously published statistics.

:Not calculated.

/Not reported.

<sup>a</sup>Totals exclude Missouri, which did not submit data to the National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey.

<sup>b</sup>The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) did not report data for privately operated prisons under federal contract, so BOP counts include only persons in the custody of BOP-operated facilities. Persons convicted of a felony in the District of Columbia were in the custody of the BOP.

<sup>c</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include both prison and jail populations.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

## Admissions to prison decreased 66% during the pandemic from March 2020 to April 2020

State DOCs and the BOP had 438,400 admissions to state and federal prisons from January 2020 through February 2021 (table 2). The largest number of admissions per month during that 14-month period occurred in January 2020 (54,200). Admissions decreased during February 2020 (down almost 10% from January) and March 2020 (down almost 16% from February). About 14,100 admissions to prison occurred in April 2020 (down 66% from March 2020).

During April 2020, the BOP had 37 admissions, and California, Georgia, North Dakota, and Oklahoma each had 10 or fewer prison admissions.

Monthly admissions to state and federal prisons increased each month, from 14,100 in April 2020 to 37,700 in October 2020, and decreased to between 28,000 and 32,000 per month through February 2021. While the BOP had more admissions in February 2021 (4,100) than in February 2020 (3,000), states had about 60% fewer admissions (27,700 in February 2021 and 46,000 in February 2020).

**TABLE 2**

**Admissions to the custody of state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, January 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	2020												2021		Total admissions, Jan 2020–Feb 2021
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	
<b>U.S. total<sup>a</sup></b>	54,167	48,964	41,225	14,099	17,569	21,027	23,777	28,323	32,471	37,724	28,823	30,100	28,329	31,822	438,420
<b>Federal<sup>b</sup></b>	3,670	2,976	2,969	37	1,135	287	1,399	1,884	2,937	2,753	1,683	2,351	2,503	4,144	30,728
<b>State<sup>a</sup></b>	50,497	45,988	38,256	14,062	16,434	20,740	22,378	26,439	29,534	34,971	27,140	27,749	25,826	27,678	407,692
Alabama	794	645	443	123	121	222	127	^^	201	37	123	215	^	137	3,225
Alaska <sup>c</sup>	2,430	2,313	2,179	1,547	1,880	1,992	2,177	2,259	2,195	2,102	1,851	2,098	2,094	1,901	29,018
Arizona	1,438	1,201	1,182	938	1,065	635	557	1,117	996	975	892	959	886	864	13,705
Arkansas	879	668	1,062	631	594	489	139	233	364	378	609	568	86	607	7,307
California	2,781	2,429	2,269	^	37	194	^	104	536	1,560	1,748	^	593	1,743	14,003
Colorado	763	730	626	429	363	451	435	433	468	438	340	408	412	408	6,704
Connecticut <sup>c</sup>	1,753	1,516	1,042	368	609	600	744	735	844	970	833	834	902	832	12,582
Delaware <sup>c</sup>	1,235	1,035	712	349	508	550	678	696	724	866	671	590	691	613	9,918
Florida	2,342	2,196	1,467	552	438	864	518	1,059	623	1,361	826	916	1,797	1,993	16,952
Georgia	1,451	1,373	962	^	1,364	520	449	621	741	788	70	1,968	^^	791	11,140
Hawaii <sup>c</sup>	1,027	939	1,156	939	499	613	721	925	447	479	415	467	474	464	9,565
Idaho	589	486	426	249	531	499	288	340	379	395	389	454	372	423	5,820
Illinois	1,886	1,494	1,306	144	386	483	633	1,102	1,275	1,266	817	843	855	970	13,460
Indiana	868	754	744	321	271	450	485	444	527	544	479	483	489	504	7,363
Iowa	530	478	425	217	98	289	214	310	310	270	224	308	231	265	4,169
Kansas	440	449	414	149	110	160	147	172	235	317	282	407	376	317	3,975
Kentucky	1,668	1,587	1,223	659	744	893	900	938	1,091	1,041	975	835	1,001	950	14,505
Louisiana	380	388	266	145	95	61	98	89	535	700	103	87	74	92	3,113
Maine	89	86	59	12	^	^	67	87	56	61	^^	67	39	52	712
Maryland	1,625	1,525	110	580	822	678	880	1,008	1,041	1,154	923	900	865	775	12,886
Massachusetts	458	437	254	96	140	172	315	270	289	320	241	205	214	245	3,656
Michigan	905	816	783	83	297	417	371	488	461	549	409	457	485	427	6,948
Minnesota	548	457	453	212	235	272	288	263	347	350	239	322	233	308	4,527
Mississippi	592	560	454	168	239	456	447	479	526	566	491	492	418	442	6,330
Missouri	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	:
Montana	760	732	590	101	471	575	432	523	377	264	312	411	515	522	6,585
Nebraska	243	253	221	158	174	199	183	205	217	206	213	197	204	226	2,899
Nevada	467	490	448	372	301	319	320	341	363	333	281	328	326	324	5,013
New Hampshire	103	118	90	67	34	48	75	81	74	80	79	58	65	54	1,026
New Jersey	678	522	284	147	186	159	250	251	309	325	219	265	291	228	4,114
New Mexico	184	184	188	175	110	76	181	160	153	165	169	172	147	185	2,249
New York	1,643	1,587	920	78	51	323	607	735	851	746	505	356	56	41	8,499
North Carolina	2,077	1,849	2,003	567	287	1,940	1,577	1,362	854	1,111	1,280	1,360	1,056	1,261	18,584

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**TABLE 2 (continued)****Admissions to the custody of state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, January 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	2020												2021		Total admissions, Jan 2020–Feb 2021
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	
North Dakota	125	115	61	^	^^	83	96	45	105	57	114	112	123	131	1,190
Ohio	1,775	1,632	1,731	517	566	918	1,013	1,061	1,407	1,243	954	1,205	1,146	1,158	16,326
Oklahoma	700	632	332	^	^	322	284	668	236	547	578	613	456	486	5,865
Oregon	432	391	429	285	208	236	278	227	274	291	258	333	269	236	4,147
Pennsylvania	1,385	1,309	1,101	413	484	554	804	846	711	891	938	788	796	830	11,850
Rhode Island <sup>c</sup>	1,065	1,084	707	279	478	626	736	716	756	830	673	612	769	734	10,065
South Carolina	530	595	506	101	265	285	35	33	665	414	361	367	206	244	4,607
South Dakota	424	376	391	249	210	291	281	297	285	231	209	283	286	290	4,103
Tennessee	1,778	1,718	732	71	^^	206	^^	1,280	912	1,948	1,238	792	999	813	12,531
Texas	4,724	4,468	4,954	625	41	100	1,565	1,659	3,835	5,713	3,416	3,099	2,587	2,068	38,854
Utah	363	301	312	182	189	200	265	217	247	249	96	324	237	292	3,474
Vermont <sup>c</sup>	618	435	283	162	168	232	237	227	209	183	141	142	139	115	3,291
Virginia	743	613	314	22	20	^^	59	^^	95	95	106	^^	253	205	2,591
Washington	626	600	602	293	293	264	314	337	383	497	398	236	411	341	5,595
West Virginia	362	361	206	113	146	225	146	143	226	284	224	242	305	255	3,238
Wisconsin	1,131	988	764	132	202	532	897	730	678	715	392	447	460	464	8,532
Wyoming	90	73	70	^^	49	50	45	59	101	66	^	94	95	52	881

Note: Includes persons admitted to government-operated or privately operated state and federal prisons, regardless of sentence status or length. Excludes persons admitted to local jails on behalf of state or federal correctional authorities. Estimates will differ from previously published statistics.

:Not calculated.

/Not reported.

^10 or fewer admissions.

^^Estimate suppressed to protect confidentiality.

<sup>a</sup>Totals exclude Missouri, which did not submit data to the National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey.

<sup>b</sup>The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) did not report data for privately operated prisons under federal contract, so BOP counts include only persons in the custody of BOP-operated facilities. Persons convicted of a felony in the District of Columbia were in the custody of the BOP.

<sup>c</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include both prison and jail populations.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

## Fewer than 10% of releases from prison during the COVID-19 study period were earlier than originally scheduled

From the beginning of January 2020 to the end of February 2021, state DOCs and the BOP made 648,400 releases from prison, of which about 37,700 (6%) were classified as expedited releases (table 3). While 25 states and the BOP reported no expedited releases (i.e., persons released prior to their scheduled or expected release date or date of eligibility for post-custody supervision in the community), some jurisdictions

took steps to ensure prompt release from prison or to other forms of supervision. The BOP released almost 27,000 prisoners to home confinement during the NPS-CPan study period. These were not expedited releases because the prisoners were still under BOP authority, although the releases did reduce crowding in federal prisons.<sup>2</sup> Some states empowered judges or parole boards to decide whether to release prisoners before their scheduled release date, but state DOCs were not always informed whether the COVID-19 pandemic was a factor in the release.

<sup>2</sup>See pages 46–47 at <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-21-502.pdf>.

**TABLE 3**

**Releases from the custody of state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, January 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	Total releases	Expedited releases		Jurisdiction	Total releases	Expedited releases	
		Number	Percent of total			Number	Percent of total
U.S. total <sup>a</sup>	648,415	37,684	5.8%	Missouri	/	/	:
Federal <sup>b,c</sup>	46,993	0	0.0%	Montana	6,757	24	0.4
State <sup>a</sup>	601,422	37,684	6.3%	Nebraska	3,203	0	0.0
Alabama	7,160	0	0.0	Nevada	6,621	0	0.0
Alaska <sup>d</sup>	29,164	0	0.0	New Hampshire	1,383	0	0.0
Arizona	19,169	0	0.0	New Jersey	10,287	3,732	36.3
Arkansas	10,409	1,803	17.3	New Mexico	3,585	408	11.4
California	42,742	11,584	27.1	New York	20,400	2,106	10.3
Colorado	10,643	611	5.7	North Carolina	24,287	3,500	14.4
Connecticut <sup>d</sup>	13,978	0	0.0	North Dakota	1,393	191	13.7
Delaware <sup>d</sup>	10,693	0	0.0	Ohio	23,208	/	:
Florida	32,797	0	0.0	Oklahoma	9,815	0	0.0
Georgia	20,895	918	4.4	Oregon	6,004	0	0.0
Hawaii <sup>d</sup>	9,614	430	4.5	Pennsylvania	18,820	146	0.8
Idaho	6,034	293	4.9	Rhode Island <sup>d</sup>	10,408	52	0.5
Illinois	23,223	0	0.0	South Carolina	7,157	0	0.0
Indiana	11,294	0	0.0	South Dakota	4,654	0	0.0
Iowa	5,272	4,700	89.2	Tennessee	14,382	0	0.0
Kansas	5,278	/	:	Texas	61,515	0	0.0
Kentucky	18,414	1,717	9.3	Utah	4,603	1,420	30.8
Louisiana	4,515	68	1.5	Vermont <sup>d</sup>	3,276	/	:
Maine	1,297	0	0.0	Virginia	7,933	1,597	20.1
Maryland	13,271	1,365	10.3	Washington	8,405	422	5.0
Massachusetts	4,266	73	1.7	West Virginia	3,550	158	4.5
Michigan	11,649	0	0.0	Wisconsin	12,264	0	0.0
Minnesota	6,150	366	6.0	Wyoming	1,336	0	0.0
Mississippi	8,249	0	0.0				

Note: Includes persons released from government-operated and privately operated state and federal prisons, regardless of sentence status or length. Excludes prisoners released from local jails on behalf of state or federal correctional authorities. Expedited release is the release of a person at least 1 day before their scheduled or expected release date or post-custody community supervision eligibility date, to limit prisoner risk and exposure to COVID-19 or due to COVID-19-related understaffing, court orders, or legislative mandates. Estimates will differ from previously published statistics.

:Not calculated.

/Not reported.

<sup>a</sup>Totals exclude Missouri, which did not submit data to the National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey.

<sup>b</sup>The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) did not report data for privately operated prisons under federal contract, so BOP counts include only persons in the custody of BOP-operated facilities. Persons convicted of a felony in the District of Columbia were in the custody of the BOP.

<sup>c</sup>The BOP had no expedited releases but moved almost 27,000 prisoners to home confinement in 2020. Prisoners on home confinement are still in BOP custody but living in their own residence or the residence of a designated family member.

<sup>d</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include both prison and jail populations.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

A number of states used expedited procedures to release a large number of prisoners during the 14 months between January 2020 and February 2021. Of the 5,300 releases from Iowa state prisons during this period, 4,700 (89%) were expedited. Thirty-six percent of New Jersey's 10,300 releases were completed ahead of schedule, as were 31% of the 4,600 releases by Utah. California accounted for almost 31% of expedited releases nationwide during this period. The state expedited the release of 11,600 of its prisoners, or 27% of all its prison releases.

State DOCs reported a range of criteria used to evaluate whether prisoners would be granted expedited release due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Twenty-five states reported that the time left on a prisoner's sentence contributed to the expedited release decision (table 4). The amount of remaining prison time that the states would consider ranged from 30 days to anything less than a life sentence, though about half (12) of the states restricted expedited release eligibility to prisoners with 6 to 12 months left to serve. (See appendix table 2.)

Nineteen states reported that they considered only persons currently sentenced for nonviolent offenses as candidates for expedited release, and 10 of these states further required the prisoners to have no history of being sentenced for a violent crime. Four states (Illinois, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Vermont) established expedited release policies but ultimately did not release anyone before their scheduled or anticipated release date.

Seventeen states considered a prisoner's health status when deciding whether to release them early, and 16 required proof of post-prison housing in the community before approving expedited release. Twelve states set a minimum eligibility age for expedited release or accounted for age in the release decision. Five states set a minimum age of 55 or 65, two specified that prisoners age 18 or older could be considered for expedited release. The remaining five states used age as one factor in the decision but did not specify a minimum age.

**TABLE 4**  
**Number of jurisdictions that adopted criteria for expedited release due to the COVID-19 pandemic, January 2020–February 2021**

Criterion	Number of jurisdictions
No policy for expedited release	22
Time left on sentence	25
Nonviolent offenders only	19
Health status	17
Verified post-prison housing in community	16
Risk assessment score	14
Age	12
Only nonviolent offenders with no violent prior convictions	10
Positive viral test for COVID-19	3
Prisoner was unsentenced	1

Note: Expedited release is the release of a person at least 1 day before their scheduled or expected release date, or post-custody community supervision eligibility date, to limit prisoner risk and exposure to COVID-19 or due to COVID-19-related understaffing, court orders, or legislative mandates. Jurisdictions could adopt criteria for expedited release at any time from January 2020 and February 2021. See appendix table 2 for jurisdiction-level data.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.



## Trends in state prison custody populations, admissions, and releases by offense type before and during BJS's COVID-19 prison study period

Using BJS's National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP) data from 37 states, prepandemic trends in monthly counts of admissions, releases, and month-end prison populations were compared to monthly counts after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. This was done through an interrupted time-series analysis, which distinguished between persons sentenced for violent and nonviolent offenses. (See *Methodology* for a discussion of the analysis and data used.)

### Admissions

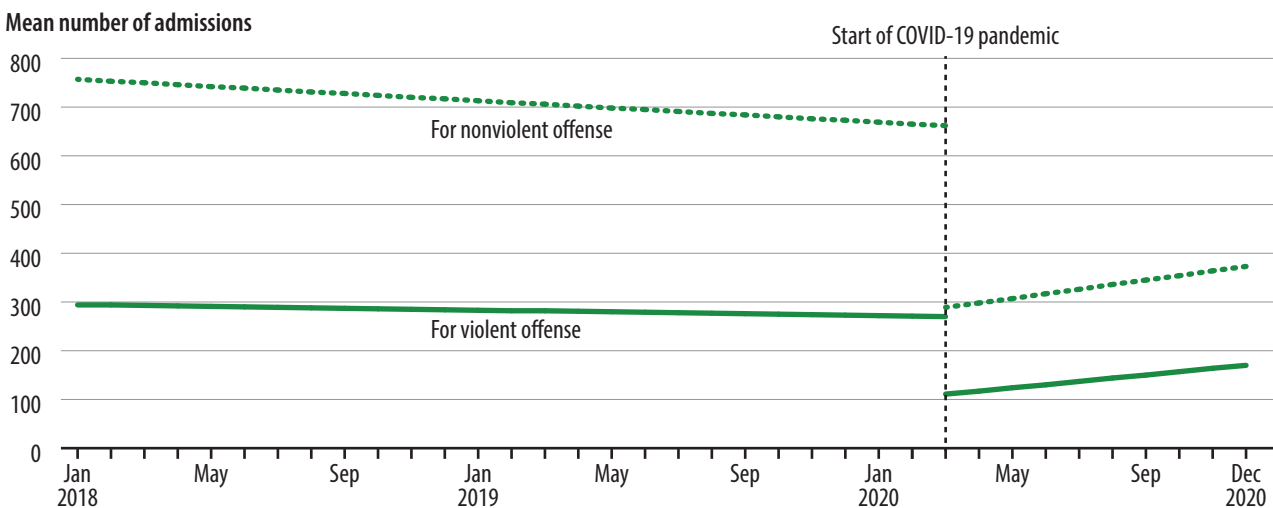
In January 2018, the 37 states for which data were available admitted an average of 294 persons sentenced for violent offenses and 757 persons sentenced for nonviolent offenses (**figure 2**). From January 2018 to February 2020, the average number of admissions of persons convicted of violent offenses was relatively flat, while the average number of admissions of persons sentenced for nonviolent offenses declined by 3.7 per month. In the first month of the pandemic, the average number of admissions involving nonviolent offenses decreased to 289, and the average number of admissions involving violent offenses dropped to 111. In the 10 months following the pandemic's onset, there were no significant increases in admissions involving violent or nonviolent offenses.

There was substantial state-to-state variation in the pandemic's impact on state prison admissions involving violent and nonviolent offenses (**figures 3a–e**). Five states illustrate the range of variation observed among the 37 states that submitted 2020 NCRP data. At the start of the pandemic, all five states experienced a significant drop in the number of persons admitted for violent and nonviolent offenses. However, state admission practices diverged in the 10 months that followed. In State 1, the number of persons admitted for nonviolent offenses decreased on average by 4.7 persons each month before March 2020. The state then accelerated its decrease in nonviolent offense admissions to a monthly average of 25.9 fewer admissions. Admissions in State 1 showed an average decline of 3.9 persons sentenced for violent offenses prior to the pandemic's onset. This trend reversed after March 2020, when admissions for violent offenses increased by 8.7 each month. State 5 had a similar pattern of admissions for violent offenses before and after the pandemic's onset, but it showed an average monthly increase of 13 prisoners sentenced for nonviolent offenses after the onset of the pandemic.

*Continued on next page*

**FIGURE 2**

**Mean number of persons admitted to state prisons in 37 states, by offense type, January 2018–December 2020**



Note: Data are based on the 37 states that submitted National Corrections Reporting Program data from 2018 to 2020. For March 2020, data are shown for the beginning and the end of the month. See *Methodology* for discussion of analysis and offense types. See appendix table 3 for estimates.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Corrections Reporting Program, 2018–2020.

# Trends in state prison custody populations, admissions, and releases by offense type before and during BJS's COVID-19 prison study period (continued)

## Prisoners in custody

Prior to the pandemic's onset, there were average declines in the number of state prisoners in custody at

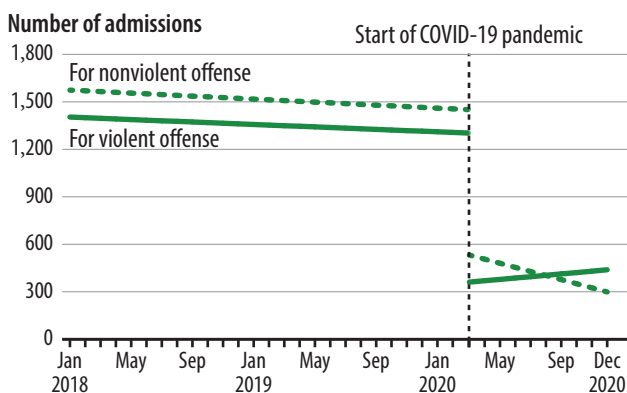
the end of each month for violent (down 12 persons per month) and nonviolent (down 43 persons per month)

*Continued on next page*

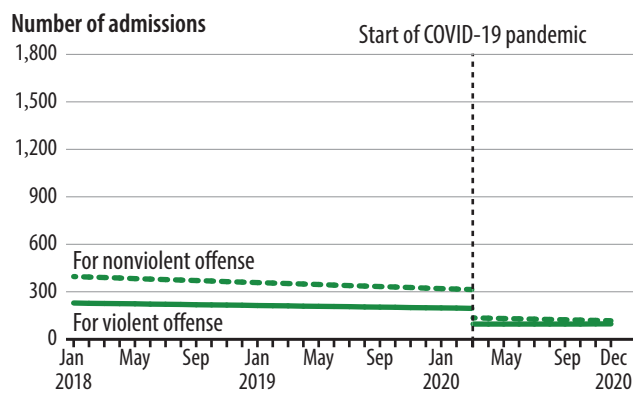
## FIGURES 3A–E

### Number of persons admitted to state prisons in five states, by offense type, January 2018–December 2020

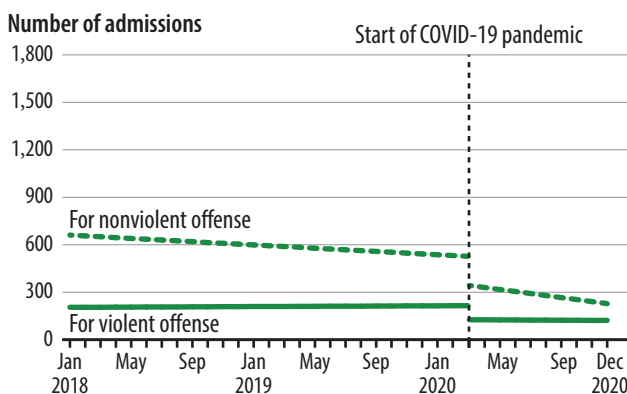
#### State 1



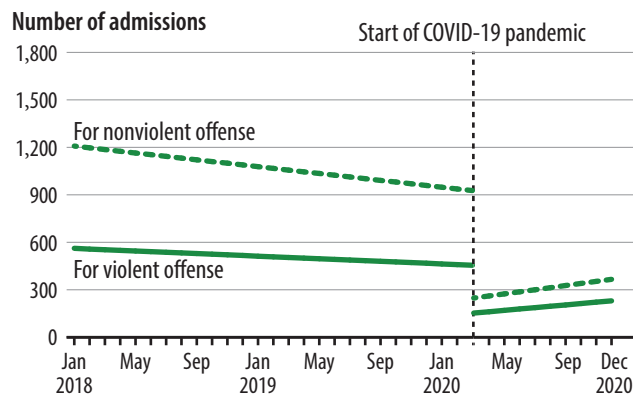
#### State 4



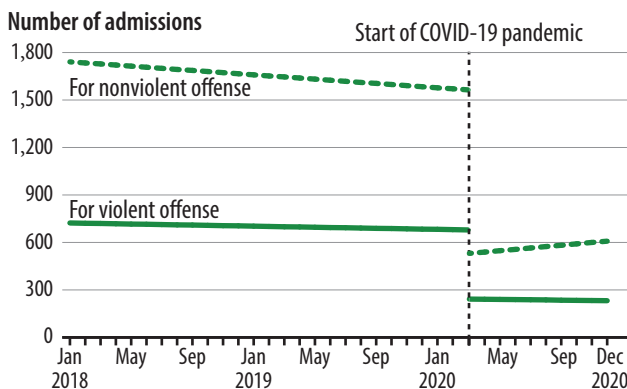
#### State 2



#### State 5



#### State 3



Note: Data are based on 5 of the 37 states that submitted National Corrections Reporting Program data from 2018 to 2020. For March 2020, data are shown for the beginning and the end of the month. See *Methodology* for discussion of analysis and offense types. See appendix table 4 for estimates.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Corrections Reporting Program, 2018–2020.

## Trends in state prison custody populations, admissions, and releases by offense type before and during BJS's COVID-19 prison study period (continued)

offenses (**figure 4**). State prison populations declined after the onset of the pandemic, from an average of 15,390 persons in custody for violent offenses at the end of March 2020 to an average of 14,091 at the end of December 2020. The average number of persons in state prison for nonviolent offenses decreased from 10,432 on March 31, 2020 to 7,872 on December 31, 2020.

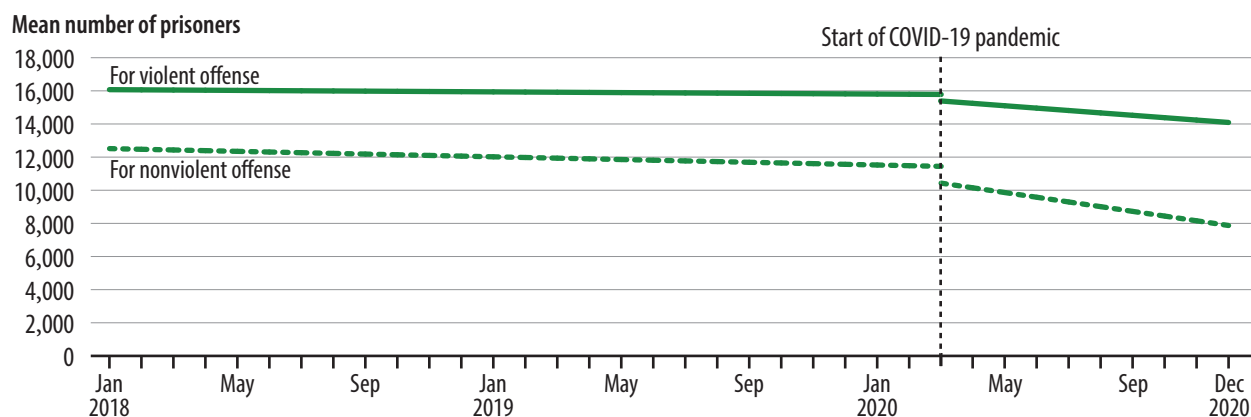
### Releases

During the 26 months prior to the onset of the pandemic, the number of persons released from state prison after serving time for a violent or nonviolent

offense did not change significantly (**figure 5**). After the onset of the pandemic, releases decreased more among persons who served time for nonviolent offenses than violent offenses. After March 2020, the mean number of persons released after serving time for violent offenses decreased by about 3 persons per month. Meanwhile, the mean number of persons released after serving time for nonviolent offenses declined by 27 persons per month. This pattern of admissions and releases indicates that post-COVID-19 declines in the number of persons in state prison for violent and nonviolent offenses were attributable to decreases in admissions.

**FIGURE 4**

**Mean number of persons in the custody of state prisons in 37 states, by offense type, month-end January 2018–December 2020**

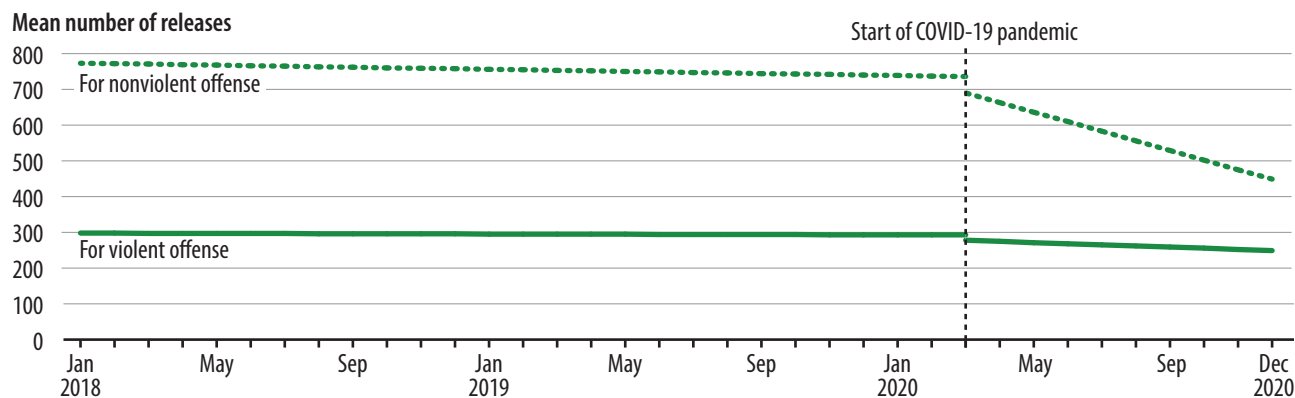


Note: Data are based on the 37 states that submitted National Corrections Reporting Program data from 2018 to 2020. For March 2020, data are shown for the beginning and the end of the month. See *Methodology* for discussion of analysis and offense types. See appendix table 5 for estimates.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Corrections Reporting Program, 2018–2020.

**FIGURE 5**

**Mean number of persons released from state prisons in 37 states, by offense type, January 2018–December 2020**



Note: Data are based on the 37 states that submitted National Corrections Reporting Program data from 2018 to 2020. For March 2020, data are shown for the beginning and the end of the month. See *Methodology* for discussion of analysis and offense types. See appendix table 6 for estimates.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Corrections Reporting Program, 2018–2020.

## State and federal prisons administered 4.8 million viral COVID-19 tests to prisoners over the study period

State DOC and BOP policies for testing prisoners for COVID-19 infection varied across jurisdictions and over time within jurisdictions. Some states chose to limit testing to prisoners who were symptomatic, while other states tested all prisoners in custody and captured both symptomatic and asymptomatic cases.

The NPS-CPan asked state DOCs and the BOP to report the total number of COVID-19 tests performed on prisoners in the 12 months from March 2020 to February 2021. BJS also requested the number of tests performed during that time period that showed a positive result for COVID-19, and because a person could have multiple positive tests, the number of unique persons who tested positive for COVID-19 while in custody. States and the BOP were asked to exclude results of antibody or serology tests, which measure antibodies produced in response to the

COVID-19 virus and are considered less reliable than polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests for detection of the disease.

During the 12 months from March 2020 to February 2021, state DOCs and the BOP administered 4,816,400 COVID-19 tests to persons in their custody or held in privately operated prisons (**table 5**). California performed 1,116,800 tests on prisoners during that period, or 23% of all tests of prisoners. Michigan performed 563,200, accounting for 12% of all COVID-19 tests of prisoners. The BOP conducted 400,900 tests on the federal prison population.

State DOCs and the BOP reported a total of 396,300 positive tests from the beginning of March 2020 to the end of February 2021, a test positivity rate of 8.2 per 100 tests (persons could test positive more than once). The three jurisdictions with the largest prison populations also had the most positive tests: California (58,900), the BOP (47,900), and Texas (30,100).

**TABLE 5**

**Number of COVID-19 tests and test positivity rate among persons in the custody of state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	Number of tests of prisoners, Mar 1, 2020–Feb 28, 2021 <sup>a</sup>	Number of positive tests, Mar 1, 2020–Feb 28, 2021 <sup>a</sup>	Test positivity rate per 100 tests	Number of unique prisoners with a positive test, Mar 1, 2020–Feb 28, 2021
U.S. total <sup>b</sup>	4,816,411	396,320	8.2	374,437
Federal <sup>c,d</sup>	400,883	47,873	:	54,029
State <sup>b</sup>	4,415,528	348,447	7.9	320,408
Alabama <sup>e</sup>	15,129	1,527	10.1	1,527
Alaska <sup>f</sup>	27,197	2,650	9.7	2,330
Arizona <sup>g</sup>	70,112	12,058	17.2	12,058
Arkansas	57,706	11,436	19.8	11,428
California	1,116,763	58,857	5.3	49,325
Colorado	174,029	8,998	5.2	8,657
Connecticut <sup>f</sup>	100,619	6,795	6.8	4,106
Delaware <sup>f,h</sup>	13,004	2,015	15.5	2,015
Florida <sup>e</sup>	87,694	17,334	19.8	17,208
Georgia	35,240	3,625	10.3	3,610
Hawaii <sup>f,i</sup>	12,143	1,272	10.5	1,272
Idaho	25,510	4,198	16.5	3,961
Illinois <sup>j</sup>	326,538	10,714	3.3	10,700
Indiana <sup>e</sup>	16,639	3,289	19.8	3,289
Iowa	41,247	4,879	11.8	4,743
Kansas	41,166	6,403	15.6	5,774
Kentucky <sup>i</sup>	32,171	7,145	22.2	7,145
Louisiana	22,140	3,376	15.2	3,168
Maine	7,216	284	3.9	156
Maryland	57,927	4,327	7.5	4,194
Massachusetts	29,822	2,814	9.4	2,558

*Continued on next page*

**TABLE 5 (continued)****Number of COVID-19 tests and test positivity rate among persons in the custody of state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	Number of tests of prisoners, Mar 1, 2020–Feb 28, 2021 <sup>a</sup>	Number of positive tests, Mar 1, 2020–Feb 28, 2021 <sup>a</sup>	Test positivity rate per 100 tests	Number of unique prisoners with a positive test, Mar 1, 2020–Feb 28, 2021
Michigan	563,241	29,049	5.2	25,018
Minnesota	97,874	4,122	4.2	3,852
Mississippi	3,861	1,399	36.2	1,358
Missouri	/	/	:	/
Montana	10,071	1,460	14.5	1,445
Nebraska	6,719	1,510	22.5	584
Nevada <sup>e</sup>	30,681	4,510	14.7	4,510
New Hampshire <sup>i</sup>	1,485	449	30.2	449
New Jersey	252,052	4,340	1.7	3,055
New Mexico	37,683	3,760	10.0	2,868
New York	74,209	5,994	8.1	5,885
North Carolina	109,974	10,508	9.6	9,691
North Dakota	27,062	608	2.2	608
Ohio	61,858	9,565	15.5	9,526
Oklahoma	28,884	7,173	24.8	7,168
Oregon <sup>i</sup>	24,814	3,542	14.3	3,542
Pennsylvania	90,181	13,116	14.5	10,251
Rhode Island <sup>f</sup>	/	/	:	1,147
South Carolina	32,282	4,568	14.2	3,161
South Dakota <sup>e</sup>	7,488	2,339	31.2	2,336
Tennessee	38,659	6,587	17.0	6,113
Texas	308,194	30,128	9.8	29,367
Utah	22,416	1,100	4.9	1,047
Vermont <sup>f</sup>	14,871	196	1.3	114
Virginia <sup>i</sup>	92,976	8,988	9.7	8,988
Washington	49,632	6,241	12.6	6,175
West Virginia <sup>i</sup>	9,661	1,553	16.1	1,553
Wisconsin	91,915	10,860	11.8	10,597
Wyoming	16,773	786	4.7	776

Note: Includes viral (polymerase chain reaction) COVID-19 tests among persons held for state or federal correctional authorities in government-operated and privately operated prisons, regardless of sentence status or length. Excludes antibody or serology tests and tests of prisoners held in local jails on behalf of state or federal correctional authorities. Individual prisoners could be tested more than once. Test positivity rates are per 100 tests administered and should not be compared between jurisdictions due to wide variation in testing practices. Jurisdictions that performed tests on most or all prisoners could identify asymptomatic and negative COVID-19 cases, while jurisdictions that tested persons only after the onset of symptoms could not.

:Not calculated.

/Not reported.

<sup>a</sup>Counts do not represent the number of unique prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19, unless otherwise noted. Prisoners could have multiple tests or multiple positive tests.

<sup>b</sup>Totals exclude Missouri, which did not submit data to the National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey.

<sup>c</sup>Excludes counts from privately operated prisons under federal contract.

<sup>d</sup>Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) counts for total tests administered and total positive tests exclude results from laboratories not under federal contract. The count of unique prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19 includes results from laboratories under and not under federal contract. The positivity rate was not calculated for the BOP due to the differences in populations for the numerator and denominator.

<sup>e</sup>State department of corrections (DOC) confirmed that prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19 were tested only once.

<sup>f</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include both prison and jail populations.

<sup>g</sup>State could not report the total number of positive tests. Number of unique prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19 was allocated as the total number of positive tests.

<sup>h</sup>Counts represent COVID-19 tests performed from April 1, 2020 to April 1, 2021. The state DOC confirmed that prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19 were tested only once.

<sup>i</sup>State could not report the number of unique prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19. Total number of positive tests was allocated as the number of unique prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19.

<sup>j</sup>State could not report the number of unique prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19. Data were taken from the February 28, 2021 entry in the University of North Carolina Health and Justice Research Lab's COVID Prison Project database, which scraped data posted on DOC websites and is archived at <https://github.com/healthandjustice/covid-prison-project>.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.



The test positivity rate indicates differences in testing policies across jurisdictions. A larger denominator would be used for rates in states that repeatedly tested all of their prisoners, while a smaller denominator would be used to calculate rates in states that tested a subset of prisoners, such as those showing symptoms of COVID-19. Seven of the 10 states with the highest test positivity rates performed fewer tests than the number of persons in custody during some part of the COVID-19 study period (indicated that not all prisoners in custody received a COVID-19 test): Mississippi, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Kentucky, Indiana, and Florida. Three additional states (Alabama, Alaska, and Georgia) performed fewer tests than the total number of persons in their custody during the COVID-19 study period, but each had a lower test positivity rate of about 10 per 100 tests.

In comparison, most states that performed more tests than the number of prisoners in their custody (indicating most or all of their prisoners were tested at least once) had lower positivity rates. Vermont, which

conducted 14,900 tests on the 3,600 prisoners in its custody during the COVID-19 study period, had the lowest test positivity rate of all states (1.3 per 100), followed by New Jersey (1.7 per 100), which performed 252,100 tests on the 21,000 persons in its custody.

The 396,300 positive tests in the state DOCs and the BOP represented 374,400 unique prisoners, indicating that in most jurisdictions, a single positive test result was used to determine who had COVID-19. The BOP had the most unique persons in custody testing positive (54,000) during the COVID-19 study period. California had the largest number of unique persons testing positive while in the custody of state prisons or private prisons under state contract (49,300 persons), followed by Texas (29,400) and Michigan (25,000).

## The majority of states suspended prisoners' family visitation and educational programming at some point in the COVID-19 study period to mitigate transmission

To mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in state and federal prisons, state DOCs and the BOP introduced new policies in their facilities and in private facilities contracted to the jurisdiction. Respondents to the NPS-CPan survey indicated whether certain policies were implemented in all, some (at least one), or none of the government-operated and privately operated prisons at any time between March 2020 and February 2021.

All responding jurisdictions isolated or quarantined prisoners with COVID-19 symptoms in every facility, and 25 states imposed lockdowns of prisoners in their cells in all facilities at some point from March 2020 to February 2021 (table 6). Forty-two states and the

BOP suspended all transfers of persons between their prisons and local jails, and 39 states and the BOP automatically quarantined new admissions to all facilities. (See appendix tables 7 and 8 for jurisdiction-level data.)

In-person family visitation was suspended at all facilities in 48 states and the BOP in response to the pandemic, and in-person legal visits were stopped at all facilities in 34 states and the BOP. Correctional staff had their temperatures checked before each shift at all facilities in 48 states and the BOP. All jurisdictions provided staff who worked in each facility with face masks or gloves. Forty-eight states and the BOP also provided face masks to prisoners in all facilities at some point between the beginning of March 2020 and the end of February 2021. Prior to release, prisoners from all facilities in 31 states and the BOP were given a COVID-19 test.

**TABLE 6**  
**Number of jurisdictions that adopted tactics to mitigate COVID-19 transmission in state and federal prisons, by tactic, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Mitigation tactic	Number of jurisdictions that implemented tactic—			
	In all facilities	In some facilities	In no facilities	Not applicable/ known/reported
All new prisoners tested at admission	39	6	4	2
Automatic quarantine of newly admitted prisoners	40	9	0	2
Lockdown of prisoners in cells	25	16	7	3
Daily temperature checks of prisoners	26	11	9	5
Staff temperature checks at start of shift	49	1	0	1
Isolation/quarantine of symptomatic prisoners	50	0	0	1
Enforced sick/administrative leave of symptomatic staff	48	0	0	3
Provision of hand sanitizer to prisoners	41	3	4	3
Provision of face masks to prisoners	49	0	0	2
Provision of face masks/gloves to staff	50	0	0	1
Viral testing of prisoners before release	32	7	9	3
Antibody/serology testing of staff	8	5	29	9
Antibody/serology testing of prisoners	13	7	22	9
Complete suspension of—				
Transfers between prison and local jails	43	6	0	2
Educational programs	38	7	4	2
Drug/alcohol treatment programs	31	9	6	5
Prison labor programs	39	9	1	2
In-person family visitation	49	1	0	1
Legal visitation	35	6	8	2
Ministry/religious service programs	37	6	5	3

Note: Tactics were adopted at any time from March 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021 in none, some (at least one), or all government-operated and privately operated prisons in each jurisdiction. See appendix tables 7 and 8 for jurisdiction-level data.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

## COVID-19 infection and mortality rate calculations

Throughout the pandemic, researchers and the media published a range of estimated COVID-19 infection rates for persons in prison, using the mean monthly prison population or the largest single-day population count in 2020 as the denominators. This report presents two alternative estimates for infection rates and crude mortality rates in state and federal prisons that represent improved measures of the prison population and accurately reflect the flow of persons in and out of prison. The first method uses as its denominator the number of persons in custody on February 29, 2020 plus those admitted from March 2020 to February 2021. This captures the total number of persons who were at risk of exposure to COVID-19 in state and federal prisons from the end of February 2020 to the end of February 2021. This method reflects the prison population turnover caused by new admissions, particularly in states with combined prison-jail systems where time served in prison is often measured in days or weeks instead of months or years.

The second method uses the exact number of days that persons were at risk of exposure to COVID-19 in prison as the denominator. This method was used for the 36 states that reported 2020 National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP) data that aligned with the monthly population, admission, and release counts in the National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey (NPS-CPan). This denominator incorporates both population size and time served during the pandemic and enables the rate to be expressed per 100 prison-days of COVID-19

exposure risk. This method represents the incidence of COVID-19 infection during the NPS-CPan survey period.

The 36 states for which the prison-days rate could be estimated represent about 81% of the persons in custody in state-operated and privately operated correctional facilities on December 31, 2020, as reported to the National Prisoner Statistics program.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, NCRP data consist of individual-level records of every person convicted and sentenced to serve time in state prison who were admitted and released during a given calendar year and persons in custody on December 31 of each year. Therefore, the exact length of potential exposure for each prisoner in days can be calculated and summed to obtain the total time of exposure risk to COVID-19 for prisoners in each state. (See *Methodology* for a detailed description of the prison-days denominator and appendix table 9 for the denominators used for rates in this report.)

The rates presented in this report assume that the risk of contracting COVID-19 was equal across all months and states. Among U.S. residents not in prison, COVID-19 infections increased and decreased in waves across the country that could be documented by epidemiologists, but the pattern of infections in prison populations was less clear, particularly given the various mitigation tactics employed at different times by the state departments of corrections and the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

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<sup>3</sup>See *Prisoners in 2020 – Statistical Tables* (NCJ 302776, BJS, December 2021) at <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/p20st.pdf>.

## The infection rate for state prisoners was 219 per 1,000 prisoners at risk of exposure to COVID-19

Nationally, the rate of COVID-19 infection in state and federal prison through the end of February 2021 was 228 per 1,000 prisoners at risk of exposure while in custody (table 7). Across all states, the infection rate was 219 per 1,000 prisoners at risk of exposure while in the custody of state correctional authorities. Based on the total number of persons at risk, jurisdiction-specific infection rates ranged from 31 per 1,000 prisoners in Vermont to 579 per 1,000 in Michigan. The BOP had an infection rate of 298 per 1,000

prisoners at risk of exposure to COVID-19 while in federal custody.

Because state DOCs and the BOP implemented a variety of testing strategies, infection rates should not be compared across jurisdictions. Prison systems that tested all persons in custody would have higher infection rates than jurisdictions that tested only persons showing symptoms, because mass testing would also capture asymptomatic cases of COVID-19. Differential access to COVID-19 tests, particularly in the first few months of the pandemic, also preclude comparisons of jurisdictions. Infection rates of the imprisoned

**TABLE 7**

**COVID-19 infection rate among persons in the custody of state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	Number of unique prisoners who tested positive	Rate of prisoners who tested positive per 1,000 prisoners at risk of exposure <sup>a</sup>	Rate of prisoners who tested positive per 100 prison-days of exposure risk <sup>b</sup>
U.S. total <sup>c</sup>	374,437	227.8	:
Federal <sup>d</sup>	54,029	298.0	:
State <sup>c,e</sup>	320,408	219.0	0.08
Alabama	1,527	64.2	:
Alaska <sup>f</sup>	2,330	80.2	:
Arizona	12,058	226.0	:
Arkansas	11,428	488.8	0.21
California	49,325	369.4	0.13
Colorado	8,657	359.3	0.16
Connecticut <sup>f</sup>	4,106	189.0	:
Delaware <sup>f,g</sup>	2,015	158.0	:
Florida	17,208	161.9	0.06
Georgia	3,610	58.5	0.02
Hawaii <sup>f,h</sup>	1,272	112.6	:
Idaho	3,961	315.4	0.15
Illinois <sup>i</sup>	10,700	223.8	0.09
Indiana	3,289	100.9	0.04
Iowa	4,743	384.3	0.17
Kansas	5,774	448.1	0.18
Kentucky <sup>h</sup>	7,145	207.5	0.10
Louisiana	3,168	184.3	:
Maine	156	57.8	0.03
Maryland	4,194	138.3	:
Massachusetts	2,558	239.0	0.09
Michigan	25,018	579.5	:
Minnesota	3,852	309.4	0.14
Mississippi	1,358	73.6	0.03
Missouri	/	:	:
Montana	1,445	150.2	:
Nebraska	584	73.3	0.03
Nevada	4,510	274.5	0.13
New Hampshire <sup>h</sup>	449	137.0	0.06
New Jersey	3,055	145.4	:
New Mexico	2,868	328.7	:
New York	5,885	120.0	0.04

*Continued on next page*

**TABLE 7 (continued)****COVID-19 infection rate among persons in the custody of state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	Number of unique prisoners who tested positive	Rate of prisoners who tested positive per 1,000 prisoners at risk of exposure <sup>a</sup>	Rate of prisoners who tested positive per 100 prison-days of exposure risk <sup>b</sup>
North Carolina	9,691	194.5	0.08
North Dakota	608	225.2	0.13
Ohio	9,526	154.4	0.06
Oklahoma	7,168	242.9	0.09
Oregon	3,542	199.4	0.07
Pennsylvania	10,251	187.1	0.07
Rhode Island <sup>f</sup>	1,147	108.1	:
South Carolina	3,161	146.8	0.06
South Dakota	2,336	326.2	0.15
Tennessee	6,113	221.9	0.09
Texas	29,367	172.7	0.07
Utah	1,047	133.4	0.07
Vermont <sup>f</sup>	114	31.4	0.02
Virginia <sup>h</sup>	8,988	295.0	0.11
Washington	6,175	284.8	0.11
West Virginia <sup>h</sup>	1,553	184.0	0.11
Wisconsin	10,597	356.5	0.13
Wyoming	776	255.7	0.13

Note: Includes positive results of viral (polymerase chain reaction) COVID-19 tests among persons held for state or federal correctional authorities in government-operated and privately operated prisons, regardless of sentence status or length. Excludes results of antibody or serology tests and tests of prisoners held in local jails on behalf of state or federal correctional authorities. See appendix table 9 for denominator data.

:Not calculated.

/Not reported.

<sup>a</sup>Denominator is the total number of persons in the custody of government-operated and privately operated prisons at any time from February 29, 2020 to February 28, 2021 (i.e., the sum of persons in custody on February 29, 2020 and persons admitted each month from March 2020 to February 2021).

<sup>b</sup>Rate is per 100 days in prison custody. Denominator is the sum of the number of days of exposure risk for all persons in the custody of government-operated and privately operated prisons from their date of admission or from the date of the first documented positive COVID-19 test among prisoners in each jurisdiction (whichever is later), through their release date or through February 28, 2021 (whichever is earlier). Excludes states that either did not submit 2020 National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP) data, or submitted 2020 NCRP admission and release data that were inconsistent with the aggregate counts provided by the same state in the National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey (NPS-CPan). A total of 256,205 unique prisoners tested positive for COVID-19 among the 36 states that submitted comparable NCRP and NPS-CPan data. See *Methodology* for details on the calculation of prison-days.

<sup>c</sup>Totals exclude Missouri, which did not submit data to the NPS-CPan.

<sup>d</sup>Excludes counts from privately operated prisons under federal contract.

<sup>e</sup>Total for prison-days rates includes only the 36 states that submitted comparable 2020 NCRP and NPS-CPan data.

<sup>f</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include both prison and jail populations.

<sup>g</sup>Counts represent tests performed from April 1, 2020 to April 1, 2021.

<sup>h</sup>State could not report the number of unique prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19. Total number of positive tests was imputed as the number of unique prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19.

<sup>i</sup>State could not report the number of unique prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19. Data were taken from the February 28, 2021 entry in the COVID Prison Project database (<https://github.com/healthandjustice/covid-prison-project>).

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Corrections Reporting Program, 2020; and National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.



and unimprisoned populations in the United States also should not be compared due to differences in distributions by sex, race or ethnicity, and age distributions.

Among the 36 states for which a denominator of prison-days of exposure risk could be calculated, infection rates were much lower than rates based on the number of prisoners who were at risk of exposure to COVID-19, due to the larger denominator. (See appendix table 9 for denominators.) From the beginning of March 2020 to the end of February 2021, there were 256,205 COVID-19 cases and 301,478,295 days of exposure risk among prisoners in the 36 states. Their combined infection rate was 0.08 cases per 100 prison-days, or 1 infection for every 1,177 days in custody of state prisons.

Generally, the 36 states' infection-rate rankings were consistent between the two calculations (see text box on page 15). For example, all infection rates in Vermont state prisons were among the lowest of the 36 states, regardless of the denominator. Likewise, Arkansas had the highest infection rate using both the total number of prisoners at risk of exposure and the prison-days denominators.

There were some exceptions. Because California had one of the largest prison populations among the 36 states and ranked third in the mean number of days in custody per prisoner, the prison-days denominator was larger than in other states and resulted in a relatively lower infection rate. Three states had higher infection rates than California based on the total number of prisoners at risk of exposure, and this increased to nine states when using the prison-days denominator. Similarly, Utah's population of approximately 8,700 and its mean number of days served per prisoner were lower than for most of the other 35 states. This resulted in a rate of 0.07 infections per 100 prison-days, which was higher than the rate that excluded time in custody. Twenty-eight states had higher rates of infection per number of prisoners who were at risk of exposure than Utah, while 21 had higher infection rates per 100 prison-days in custody.

## White and black prisoners accounted for two-thirds of all COVID-19 infections

Survey respondents were asked to report the number of unique prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19 while in custody by sex and race or ethnicity. Eight states (representing 33,700 infected prisoners or 9% of the total) could not do so by sex, and nine states (with 37,500 or 10% of infected prisoners) could not do so by race or ethnicity.

Based on available data from March 2020 to February 2021, about 86% of the 374,400 infected prisoners were male (321,300) and slightly more than 5% were female (19,500) (table 8). Thirty-seven percent of persons in prison who tested positive were white, 30% were black,

**TABLE 8**  
**COVID-19 infections among persons in the custody of state and federal prisons, by demographic characteristics, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Demographic characteristic	Infections	
	Number	Percent
<b>Sex</b>	374,437	100%
Male	321,315	85.8
Female	19,471	5.2
Not reported	33,651	9.0
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	374,437	100%
White*	137,757	36.8
Black*	113,603	30.3
Hispanic	69,754	18.6
American Indian/Alaska Native*	8,823	2.4
Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander*	3,575	1.0
Two or more races*	316	0.1
Other race*	3,104	0.8
Not reported	37,505	10.0

Note: Includes positive results of viral (polymerase chain reaction) COVID-19 tests among persons held for state or federal correctional authorities in government-operated and privately operated prisons, regardless of sentence status or length. Excludes results of antibody or serology tests and tests of prisoners held in local jails on behalf of state or federal correctional authorities. Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, New Hampshire, Oregon, West Virginia, and Virginia could not report sex for prisoners who tested positive. Those eight states and Alabama could not report race or ethnicity for prisoners who tested positive.

\*Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., "white" refers to non-Hispanic white persons and "black" refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

and nearly 19% were Hispanic. American Indians and Alaska Natives accounted for more than 2% of persons in prison infected with COVID-19, while Asians, Native Hawaiians, and Other Pacific Islanders accounted for 1%.

## The crude mortality rate for COVID-19 was 1.5 deaths per 1,000 prisoners

State DOCs and the BOP reported almost 2,500 deaths of prisoners from the beginning of March 2020 to the end of February 2021 where COVID-19 was suspected or confirmed as the cause or a significant contributing factor (table 9). Jurisdictions with the largest prison

**TABLE 9**

**Number of COVID-19-related deaths and crude mortality rate among persons in the custody of state and federal prisons, by sex and jurisdiction, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	Total	Male	Female	Crude mortality rate per 1,000 prisoners <sup>a,b</sup>	Jurisdiction	Total	Male	Female	Crude mortality rate per 1,000 prisoners <sup>a,b</sup>
U.S. total <sup>c</sup>	2,490	2,420	58	1.5	Missouri	/	/	/	:
Federal <sup>d</sup>	212	205	7	1.2	Montana	5	5	0	0.5
State <sup>c</sup>	2,278	2,215	51	1.6	Nebraska	6	6	0	0.8
Alabama	61	^^	^^	2.6	Nevada	49	49	0	3.0
Alaska <sup>e</sup>	5	5	0	0.2	New Hampshire	^	^	^	0.6
Arizona	48	48	0	0.9	New Jersey	52	^^	^^	2.5
Arkansas	52	^^	^^	2.2	New Mexico	28	28	0	3.2
California	219	^^	^^	1.6	New York	33	^^	^^	0.7
Colorado	29	29	0	1.2	North Carolina	53	48	5	1.1
Connecticut <sup>e</sup>	19	19	0	0.9	North Dakota	^	^	^	0.4
Delaware <sup>e</sup>	13	13	0	1.0	Ohio	134	134	0	2.2
Florida	213	206	7	2.0	Oklahoma	48	^^	^^	1.6
Georgia	90	^^	^^	1.5	Oregon	42	/	/	2.4
Hawaii <sup>e</sup>	7	7	0	0.6	Pennsylvania	125	^^	^^	2.3
Idaho	5	5	0	0.4	Rhode Island <sup>e</sup>	^	^	^	:
Illinois	88	^^	^^	1.8	South Carolina	40	40	0	1.9
Indiana	30	30	0	0.9	South Dakota	7	7	0	1.0
Iowa	19	19	0	1.5	Tennessee	42	^^	^^	1.5
Kansas	15	15	0	1.2	Texas	255	245	10	1.5
Kentucky	48	48	0	1.4	Utah	18	18	0	2.3
Louisiana	35	^^	^^	2.0	Vermont <sup>e</sup>	0	0	0	0.0
Maine	^	^	^	:	Virginia	55	^^	^^	1.8
Maryland	28	28	0	0.9	Washington	13	13	0	0.6
Massachusetts	20	20	0	1.9	West Virginia	18	18	0	2.1
Michigan	136	132	4	3.2	Wisconsin	32	^^	^^	1.1
Minnesota	11	11	0	0.9	Wyoming	^	^	^	:
Mississippi	23	^^	^^	1.2					

Note: Includes COVID-19-related deaths of persons held for state or federal correctional authorities in government-operated and privately operated prisons, regardless of sentence status or length. Excludes prisoners held in local jails on behalf of state or federal correctional authorities. Includes all deaths where COVID-19 was suspected or confirmed as the cause or a significant contributing factor. Estimates will differ from previously published statistics. Not all jurisdictions could report the sex of persons who died in their custody as a result of COVID-19.

:Not calculated.

/Not reported.

^Three or fewer deaths.

^^One of the sex-specific estimates includes three or fewer deaths. Both estimates were suppressed to protect confidentiality.

<sup>a</sup>Per 1,000 prisoners at risk of exposure to COVID-19 from March 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021 while in custody.

<sup>b</sup>Denominator is the total number of persons in the custody of government-operated and privately operated prisons at any time from February 29, 2020 to February 28, 2021 (i.e., the sum of persons in custody on February 29, 2020 and persons admitted each month from March 2020 to February 2021).

<sup>c</sup>Totals exclude Missouri, which did not submit data to the National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey.

<sup>d</sup>Excludes counts from privately operated prisons under federal contract.

<sup>e</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include both prison and jail populations.

Sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Corrections Reporting Program, 2020; and National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

populations had the largest number of such deaths. Texas had the most COVID-19-related deaths (255), followed by California (219), Florida (213), and the BOP (212). Texas also had the largest number of COVID-19-related deaths among female prisoners (10).

Nationally, the crude mortality rate was 1.5 COVID-19-related deaths per 1,000 state and federal prisoners, based on the total number of prisoners at risk of exposure to COVID-19 during the 12-month period between March 2020 and February 2021. Michigan and New Mexico had the highest mortality rates (3.2 deaths per 1,000 prisoners), followed by Nevada (3.0 per 1,000) and Alabama (2.6 per 1,000).

### Less than 10% of COVID-19-related deaths occurred in prisoners less than 44 years of age

Males accounted for 97% of COVID-19-related deaths in prisons (table 10). Forty-four percent of those who died as a result of COVID-19 in state or federal prison were white, 34% were black, 14% were Hispanic, and 2% were American Indian or Alaska Native. Eighty-three percent of persons who died in state or federal prison as a result of COVID-19 were age 55 or older, and 16% were age 75 or older. Persons ages 45 to 54 accounted for about 11% of COVID-19-related deaths in prison, and those ages 35 to 44 accounted for 4%.

**TABLE 10**  
**COVID-19-related deaths of persons in the custody of state and federal prisons, by demographic characteristics, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Demographic characteristic	Deaths	
	Number	Percent
<b>Sex</b>	2,490	100%
Male	2,420	97.2
Female	58	2.3
Not reported	12	0.5
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	2,490	100%
White*	1,095	44.0
Black*	840	33.7
Hispanic	349	14.0
American Indian/Alaska Native*	53	2.1
Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander*	19	0.8
Two or more races*	0	0.0
Other race*	17	0.7
Not reported	117	4.7
<b>Age at death</b>	2,490	100%
24 or younger	^	:
25–34	20	0.8
35–44	104	4.2
45–54	268	10.8
55–64	815	32.7
65–74	857	34.4
75 or older	406	16.3
Not reported	^^	:

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding. Includes COVID-19-related deaths of persons held for state or federal correctional authorities in government-operated and privately operated prisons, regardless of sentence status or length. Excludes prisoners held in local jails on behalf of state or federal correctional authorities. Includes all deaths where COVID-19 was suspected or confirmed as the cause or a significant contributing factor. Estimates will differ from previously published statistics. Missouri and Oregon did not report the sex, race or ethnicity, or age distribution of persons who died in their custody as a result of COVID-19. In addition, Hawaii did not report their decedents' race or ethnicity or age, and Alabama did not report decedents' race or ethnicity.

:Not calculated.

^10 or fewer deaths.

^^Estimate suppressed to protect confidentiality.

\*Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., "white" refers to non-Hispanic white persons and "black" refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

## Jurisdictions vaccinated 119,000 staff and 126,000 prisoners from December 2020 to February 2021

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first COVID-19 vaccine for emergency use on December 11, 2020. Five state DOCs (Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, and South Carolina) did not receive COVID-19 vaccines before the NPS-CPan survey ended at the end of February 2021 (table 11). Other states' DOCs and the BOP had access to vaccines for staff and prisoners for 6 to 74 days

before the survey ended, with a median of 51 days. By the end of February 2021, state DOCs and the BOP had given at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine to 126,300 prisoners and 119,200 staff in correctional facilities.

Six state DOCs that had access to vaccines before the end of February 2021 had administered them to correctional staff but not to prisoners by that date (Arizona, Arkansas, Indiana, Maine, Tennessee, and West Virginia). Five states (Alaska, Michigan,

**TABLE 11**

**COVID-19 vaccine availability and administration to staff and persons in the custody of state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, through February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	Number of days vaccine was available <sup>a</sup>	Number of staff vaccinated <sup>b</sup>	Number of prisoners vaccinated <sup>b</sup>	Jurisdiction	Number of days vaccine was available <sup>a</sup>	Number of staff vaccinated <sup>b</sup>	Number of prisoners vaccinated <sup>b</sup>
U.S. total <sup>c</sup>	~	119,217	126,299	Missouri <sup>g</sup>	/	/	/
Federal <sup>d</sup>	74	17,131	18,795	Montana	54	203	570
State <sup>c</sup>	~	102,086	107,504	Nebraska	51	428	291
Alabama <sup>e</sup>	0	~	~	Nevada	53	1,030	^
Alaska <sup>f</sup>	72	0	1,436	New Hampshire	67	468	385
Arizona	43	2,610	0	New Jersey	62	2,985	3,545
Arkansas	54	207	0	New Mexico	74	1,527	601
California	67	26,270	39,476	New York	23	7,439	822
Colorado	68	639	2,661	North Carolina	39	7,172	3,005
Connecticut <sup>f</sup>	51	2,476	1,031	North Dakota	6	450	979
Delaware <sup>f</sup>	54	1,056	137	Ohio	60	5,922	8,910
Florida <sup>e</sup>	0	~	~	Oklahoma	51	0	11
Georgia	44	680	14	Oregon	62	/	/
Hawaii <sup>f</sup>	67	743	284	Pennsylvania	12	609	1,300
Idaho	26	297	103	Rhode Island <sup>f</sup>	64	909	1,408
Illinois	11	1,145	5,292	South Carolina <sup>e</sup>	0	~	~
Indiana	10	2,036	/	South Dakota	26	0	1,736
Iowa	52	1,208	206	Tennessee	33	1,546	0
Kansas	19	2,324	2,407	Texas	61	7,570	707
Kentucky <sup>e</sup>	0	~	~	Utah	34	750	2,687
Louisiana	54	676	621	Vermont <sup>f</sup>	32	~	17
Maine	39	578	0	Virginia	53	5,667	14,680
Maryland	53	4,011	751	Washington	62	2,947	506
Massachusetts	41	2,885	4,379	West Virginia	69	1,830	0
Michigan	32	0	4,801	Wisconsin	46	2,235	599
Minnesota	59	384	836	Wyoming	53	174	300
Mississippi <sup>e</sup>	0	~	~				

Note: Includes persons held for state or federal correctional authorities in government-operated or privately operated prisons, regardless of sentence status or length, and staff working in those facilities. Excludes prisoners held in local jails on behalf of state or federal correctional authorities, and staff working in those facilities.

~Not applicable.

/Not reported.

^10 or fewer persons vaccinated.

<sup>a</sup>Difference between the date a COVID-19 vaccine was made available to the state department of corrections (DOC) and February 28, 2021.

<sup>b</sup>Number of unique persons who received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine by February 28, 2021.

<sup>c</sup>Totals exclude Missouri, which did not submit data to the National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey.

<sup>d</sup>Excludes counts from privately operated prisons under federal contract.

<sup>e</sup>State DOC did not receive the COVID-19 vaccine by February 28, 2021.

<sup>f</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include both prison and jail populations.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Vermont) vaccinated some prisoners but no staff by the end of the NPS-CPan survey period. The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation gave at least one dose of the vaccine to 65,700 prisoners and correctional staff after being issued vaccines starting on December 23, 2020. California accounted for almost 27% of all vaccinations in prison settings through the end of February 2021. Other jurisdictions that administered more than 10,000 vaccinations to prisoners and staff were the BOP (35,900), Virginia (20,300), Ohio (14,800), and North Carolina (10,200).

Seven states adopted a policy to vaccinate correctional staff before prisoners, although not all of these states appeared to follow this policy (table 12). (See appendix table 10 for jurisdiction-level data.) No jurisdiction required staff or prisoners to get the vaccine, but 15 states offered prisoners incentives to do so, such as additional family visits, free phone calls, or money added to their canteen account. In 40 states and the BOP, vaccination policies prioritized older prisoners over younger ones and prisoners with infectious or chronic conditions over those who did not have these risk factors. Four states had a policy to prioritize vaccination for soon-to-be released prisoners, and four emphasized vaccinations of newly admitted prisoners.

**TABLE 12**  
**Number of jurisdictions that adopted COVID-19 vaccine distribution policies, through February 28, 2021**

Vaccine distribution policy	Number of jurisdictions that adopted policy	Number of jurisdictions that did not adopt policy	Number of jurisdictions for which policy was not applicable/reported
All staff vaccinated before prisoners	7	42	2
All prisoners required to get vaccine	0	49	2
Prisoners allowed to opt out of vaccination	49	0	2
All staff required to get vaccine	0	50	1
Staff allowed to opt out of vaccination	47	0	4
Older prisoners prioritized over younger prisoners	41	9	1
Prisoners with chronic/other infectious diseases prioritized over healthy prisoners	41	9	1
Prisoners soon to be released prioritized for vaccination	4	42	5
Newly admitted prisoners prioritized for vaccination	4	43	4
Prisoners offered incentives to get vaccine	15	32	4

Note: Includes COVID-19 vaccine distribution policies adopted by state and federal correctional authorities in government-operated and privately operated prisons. See appendix table 10 for jurisdiction-level data.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.



## Almost 200 prison staff died as a result of COVID-19 over the study period

At the end of February 2021, state DOCs employed 325,300 correctional staff in state-operated prison facilities (table 13). The BOP employed 35,000 staff in federally operated prison facilities. The NPS-CPan survey asked respondents to report COVID-19 infections and COVID-19-related deaths of correctional staff regardless of where they may have contracted the virus. More than 94,100 staff tested positive for COVID-19 at least once from March 2020 to February 2021, a rate of 261 per 1,000 correctional staff in state-operated and federally operated prisons. New Mexico reported the highest infection rate among correctional staff, with almost two-thirds (647 per 1,000) testing positive at least once during the study period. Other

states with infection rates exceeding 400 per 1,000 were Utah (475 per 1,000 staff), Delaware (449 per 1,000), and North Dakota (440 per 1,000). The states with the lowest infection rates were Kansas (8 per 1,000 staff) and Maine (58 per 1,000).

Nationally, 196 correctional employees in state-operated or federally operated facilities died from the beginning of March 2020 to the end of February 2021 as a result of COVID-19, a crude mortality rate of 0.5 deaths per 1,000 staff. The Texas Department of Criminal Justice reported 41 COVID-19-related staff deaths during that period, and California reported 26. Four staff at BOP-operated facilities died as a result of COVID-19, resulting in a crude mortality rate of 0.1 per 1,000.

**TABLE 13**

**Number of COVID-19 infections, test positivity rate, number of COVID-19-related deaths, and crude mortality rate among correctional staff in state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	Total staff, Feb 28, 2021	Number of staff who tested positive, Mar 1, 2020–Feb 28, 2021 <sup>a</sup>	Test positivity rate per 1,000 staff	Number of staff deaths <sup>b</sup>	Crude mortality rate per 1,000 staff <sup>b</sup>
U.S. total <sup>c</sup>	360,314	94,122	261.2	196	0.5
Federal	34,979	6,574	187.9	4	0.1
State <sup>c</sup>	325,335	87,548	269.1	192	0.6
Alabama	3,179	..	:	^	0.9
Alaska <sup>d</sup>	1,543	/	:	/	:
Arizona	8,000	2,535	316.9	6	0.8
Arkansas	5,215	952	182.6	4	0.8
California	55,207	14,977	271.3	26	0.5
Colorado	5,810	1,402	241.3	0	0.0
Connecticut <sup>d</sup>	6,010	1,541	256.4	0	0.0
Delaware <sup>d</sup>	1,705	765	448.7	^	0.6
Florida	17,597	5,167	293.6	6	0.3
Georgia	6,654	1,471	221.1	4	0.6
Hawaii <sup>d</sup>	1,269	208	163.9	0	0.0
Idaho	1,355	379	279.7	0	0.0
Illinois	11,398	4,130	362.3	^	0.1
Indiana	5,846	1,622	277.5	4	0.7
Iowa	2,435	698	286.7	^	0.8
Kansas	3,276	26	7.9	5	1.5
Kentucky	3,138	1,034	329.5	5	1.6
Louisiana	4,719	1,104	233.9	6	1.3
Maine	981	57	58.1	0	0.0
Maryland	6,191	1,769	285.7	4	0.6
Massachusetts	3,726	1,030	276.4	0	0.0
Michigan	9,120	3,298	361.6	5	0.5
Minnesota	3,657	1,077	294.5	0	0.0
Mississippi	995	205	206.0	^	2.0
Missouri <sup>e</sup>	/	2,188	:	6	:
Montana	898	232	258.4	0	0.0
Nebraska	1,829	538	294.1	0	0.0

*Continued on next page*

**TABLE 13 (continued)**

**Number of COVID-19 infections, test positivity rate, number of COVID-19-related deaths, and crude mortality rate among correctional staff in state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	Total staff, Feb 28, 2021	Number of staff who tested positive, Mar 1, 2020–Feb 28, 2021 <sup>a</sup>	Test positivity rate per 1,000 staff	Number of staff deaths <sup>b</sup>	Crude mortality rate per 1,000 staff <sup>b</sup>
Nevada	2,571	969	376.9	^	1.2
New Hampshire	613	173	282.2	0	0.0
New Jersey	6,933	2,438	351.7	/	0.0
New Mexico	1,434	928	647.1	^	1.4
New York	24,241	4,455	183.8	8	0.3
North Carolina	13,783	3,405	247.0	13	0.9
North Dakota	713	314	440.4	^	1.4
Ohio	13,799	4,917	356.3	10	0.7
Oklahoma	3,213	/	:	/	:
Oregon	4,500	830	184.4	^	0.4
Pennsylvania	13,840	3,399	245.6	6	0.4
Rhode Island <sup>d</sup>	1,048	324	309.2	^	1.0
South Carolina	3,558	1,048	294.5	^	0.6
South Dakota	812	186	229.1	0	0.0
Tennessee	6,042	1,858	307.5	10	1.7
Texas	27,183	9,375	344.9	41	1.5
Utah	840	399	475.0	0	0.0
Vermont <sup>d</sup>	591	62	104.9	0	0.0
Virginia	8,636	2,268	262.6	5	0.6
Washington	8,774	1,124	128.1	^	0.2
West Virginia	2,964	454	153.2	^	0.7
Wisconsin	6,647	2,104	316.5	0	0.0
Wyoming	847	301	355.4	0	0.0

Note: Includes correctional officers, health care workers, janitorial staff, and any other paid personnel who had contact with prisoners or worked inside a state-operated or federally operated correctional facility. Excludes staff employed in private prisons under state or federal contract and staff in state departments of corrections who did not enter a correctional facility as part of their employment. Estimates will differ from previously published statistics.

..Not known.

:Not calculated.

/Not reported.

^Three or fewer deaths.

<sup>a</sup>Includes staff who tested positive for COVID-19 through a viral (polymerase chain reaction) test at any point from March 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021, regardless of where the infection or testing occurred.

<sup>b</sup>Includes all deaths of staff where COVID-19 was suspected or confirmed as the cause or a significant contributing factor, regardless of where the infection or death occurred.

<sup>c</sup>Totals exclude Missouri, which did not submit data to the National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey.

<sup>d</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include both prison and jail populations.

<sup>e</sup>Data on the total number of COVID-19-related deaths were taken from the March 1, 2021 entry in the COVID Prison Project database (<https://github.com/healthandjustice/covid-prison-project>).

Sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

# Methodology

## Data sources

### ***National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplement***

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) initiated data collection for the National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplement (NPS-CPan) on April 5, 2021 with a requested response date of June 14, 2021. Forty-eight states and the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) submitted data. (See *Nonresponding states*.)

NPS-CPan respondents were asked to report on persons held in the custody of prisons operated by states, the BOP, or private companies under state or federal contract, but to exclude persons held in local jails because their COVID-19 test and infection counts were collected in BJS's Annual Survey of Jails and Census of Jails. In the NPS-CPan survey, prison facilities included prisons, penitentiaries, and correctional institutions; boot camps; prison farms; reception, diagnostic, and classification centers; release centers, halfway houses, and road camps; forestry and conservation camps; vocational training facilities; prison hospitals; and drug and alcohol treatment facilities.

NPS-CPan survey questions about COVID-19 tests were limited to viral or polymerase chain reaction (PCR) nasal swab tests given to prisoners or staff to measure viral load. Respondents were asked to exclude antibody or serology tests from their counts because these were considered less accurate. Due to the general scarcity of viral tests at the beginning of the pandemic, there was wide variation in testing practices among state departments of corrections (DOCs), both across jurisdictions and over time.

### **Nonresponding states**

The Missouri DOC did not participate in the NPS-CPan survey. The Oregon DOC attempted to participate but could not release its data due to ongoing litigation surrounding the state response to COVID-19 in prisons. Data for Oregon were obtained from its DOC website (<https://prod.oregon.gov/doc/covid19/Pages/default.aspx>), and BJS verified that the website's custody population, staff, testing, and mortality data matched the NPS-CPan definitions and could be included in state and national totals. Oregon's 2020 monthly admissions and releases were obtained from the state's report to

the National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP). For January and February 2021, Oregon admissions were imputed based on the previous monthly custody population, minus the average of the releases in January or February 2020 and in September, October, and November 2020.

The BOP was unable to provide monthly counts of admissions and the total count of releases during the NPS-CPan survey period that met the survey's definitions. In addition, the BOP could not report on the testing, infection, deaths, or policies in private facilities under federal contract. BJS calculated monthly admissions for the BOP by using monthly BOP population counts from the NPS-CPan and monthly release data on BOP-operated facilities from the BOP website ([https://www.bop.gov/about/statistics/statistics\\_inmate\\_releases.jsp](https://www.bop.gov/about/statistics/statistics_inmate_releases.jsp)). Illinois could not report the unique number of prisoners testing positive in the NPS-CPan, and Missouri could not report the number of COVID-19-related staff deaths. Since both DOC websites showed only updated counts for these statistics and did not make historical data available, BJS used data scraped from state DOC websites at the time they were initially posted by the University of North Carolina Health and Justice Research Lab's COVID Prison Project, which is archived at: <https://github.com/healthandjustice/covid-prison-project>.

### ***National Corrections Reporting Program***

The BJS NCRP is a voluntary data collection of administrative records on individual prisoners that are submitted annually by state DOCs. Since its inception in 1983, the NCRP has collected records for each prison admission, prison release, and exit from post-custody community supervision programs from a varying number of states each year. Starting in 1999, BJS requested that states submit an additional file that included the administrative records of all persons in state custody on December 31 of each year. NCRP data include sex; race or ethnicity; date of birth; sentence length; up to three offenses for which the person was sentenced; and dates of prison admission, scheduled or expected prison release, and actual release (if applicable).

BJS used the 2020 NCRP data to calculate infection and crude mortality rates based on the total number of days that persons in state prison custody were at risk of exposure to COVID-19. These estimates are available only for states that provided NCRP prison release and yearend custody population records for 2020. In total,

46 states submitted such records. Arizona, Michigan, New Jersey, and New Mexico did not submit NCRP data for 2020. Prison-days rate calculations excluded 10 states whose NCRP data significantly differed from their NPS-CPan release counts and December 31, 2020 custody populations: Alabama, Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, and Rhode Island.

BJS's data collection agent for both the NPS-CPan survey and NCRP used the 2018–2020 NCRP data from 37 states to perform an interrupted time-series analysis (ITSA).<sup>4</sup> ITSA was used to compare month-end prison population, admission, and release counts. All data in the figures and tables are linear estimates produced by the ITSA procedure. NCRP data were divided into pre- and post-intervention periods, with the pandemic's March 2020 onset used as the intervention. The pre-intervention period was the 26 months prior to March 2020, and the post-intervention period was the 10 months from March 2020 to December 2020.

The ITSA procedure in this analysis produced four key coefficient estimates: the starting level of the variable (intercept), the linear trend of the variable in the pre-intervention period (slope coefficient pre-intervention), the change in the outcome level in the month that the pandemic started (change in intercept, positive or negative), and the change in the linear trend coefficient from pre- to post-intervention (change in intercept, positive or negative). All states in this analysis experienced a change in at least one of the coefficients for one of the outcomes after the pandemic's onset.

Time series data typically include autocorrelated data. For example, the preceding months of admissions were correlated with admissions in the following months. The Stata ITSA routine adjusted for autocorrelation, and the trend coefficients were linear estimates. Because the NCRP pre- and post-intervention periods were relatively short, even if there were nonlinear trends in the time series, the linear coefficients would have captured a significant portion of their trajectory. Inspection of the data showed that a linear trend captured a significant component of the time series variability in this study. The change in intercepts and the trend lines shown in the figures are based on the coefficients produced by the ITSA routine.

<sup>4</sup>See Linden, A. (2015). Conducting interrupted time-series analysis for single- and multiple-group comparisons, *The Stata Journal*, 15(2), 480–500. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1536867X1501500208>. See also McDowall, D., McCleary, R., Meidinger, E. E., & Hay, R. A. (1980). *Interrupted time series analysis*. Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412984607>

Offense-specific group analyses were performed on the outcome data. In each case, ITSA was applied to each subgroup to estimate the four key coefficients. Violent offenses for which state prisoners were sentenced included murder, manslaughter, rape or sexual assault, robbery, and simple or aggravated assault. All property, drug, public order, and other offenses were classified as nonviolent offenses.

## Calculated statistics

*Test positivity rate*—This is calculated by dividing the number of positive COVID-19 tests by the total number of tests given. The rate is per 1,000 tests administered. This measure does not correspond to the unique number of prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19 because prisoners could have multiple positive tests. This measure also does not indicate the severity of the outbreak in a particular jurisdiction because state DOCs that tested all or large subsets of their prison populations likely identified multiple infected individuals with no external symptoms of COVID-19. Jurisdictions that tested only symptomatic prisoners or staff would miss asymptomatic individuals and therefore have a higher test positivity rate.

*Infection rate*—Infection rates among imprisoned and unimprisoned populations in the United States should not be compared because their demographic distributions differ significantly. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has documented differences in infection rates by sex, race or ethnicity, and age.

The infection rate is calculated as the number of unique prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19 from March 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021, divided by the total prison population. BJS employed two methods of calculating the infection rate to provide comparisons to other calculated rates and to present rates using the same numerator with denominators of differing precision:

- *Total prisoners at risk of exposure to COVID-19*—Assuming the risk for COVID-19 was equal across all months, this method used as its denominator the sum of persons in custody on February 29, 2020, plus all persons admitted from March 2020 to February 2021. The rate is per 1,000 persons in prison. This method improves on rates that use the mean and maximum monthly population denominators by including persons newly admitted after the pandemic began in the prison setting.



However, as with all rates that use as a denominator a count of prisoners, this method does not incorporate length of risk exposure.

This method assumes that all persons (those already in custody on February 29, 2020 and those admitted later in 2020 and in early 2021) were at risk of exposure for a full 12 months.

- *Prison-days*—This second method refines the first (total prisoners at risk of exposure) by accounting for the length of prisoners' COVID-19 exposure risk. By taking time at risk of exposure into account, the prison-days denominator does not make the same assumption as rates based on counts of prisoners. While some persons were imprisoned for the entire year from March 2020 to February 2021, others were admitted after March 2020 or released prior to February 2021 and therefore had fewer days of potential exposure to COVID-19 in prison. Using data from 36 states that had reported 2020 yearend custody population and release data to the NCRP, BJS calculated potential exposure and actual time served in days for prisoners in 2020 as follows:
  - The date of first documented infection in the state correctional system was determined by searching the state DOC website and local media for an announcement that a prisoner had tested positive for COVID-19.
  - The date of first documented infection in a state prisoner was calculated as the positive test date minus 6 days, because the CDC and most state health departments have estimated that COVID-19 exposure occurs 5 to 7 days before a positive test.
  - The time at risk of exposure to COVID-19 was determined for state prisoners whose NCRP records contained admission and actual, projected, or scheduled release dates. The potential exposure was calculated as the period from the prisoner's admission or first documented infection (whichever was later) to the prisoner's release or February 28, 2021 (whichever was earlier).

- For prisoners in custody on December 31, 2020 with an admission date, the expected or scheduled release date was imputed as the actual release date (i.e., the end of the exposure risk period) if it was prior to February 28, 2021. Otherwise, prisoners were assumed to be in custody on and have an ending exposure date of February 28, 2021 (the end of the BJS study period).
- Prisoners in custody on December 31, 2020 with an admission date but no actual, expected, or scheduled release date were assumed to be in custody on and have an ending date of risk exposure of February 28, 2021.
- For prisoners with no admission date, the beginning risk exposure date was a random integer between 0 and the number of days from the state's first documented infection, and the ending exposure date was the actual, expected, or scheduled release date or February 28, 2021 (whichever was earlier).

More than 90% of NCRP records in this analysis had documented admission and release dates. Another 9% of the records had an admission date but no release date. These incomplete records were removed from analysis to ensure they did not affect the infection rate results. A comparison of this test output to the full sample showed no change in the pattern of the rates, but did show a decrease in the rates due to the smaller denominator used in the test output.

Prison-days rates were expressed per 100 days in the custody of state correctional facilities. The 256,205 infections in the 36 states over 301,478,295 days of persons in custody resulted in a rate of 0.08 infections per 100 days, or 1 infection for every 1,177 days of custody.

*Crude mortality rate*—This is calculated as the number of deaths from March 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021 where COVID-19 was either suspected or confirmed as the cause of death or a significant contributing factor, divided by the prison population. The rate is per 1,000 persons in prison. Crude mortality rates cannot be compared between U.S. imprisoned and unimprisoned populations due to their demographic differences.



## Jurisdiction notes

**Alabama**—The state department of corrections (DOC) confirmed that no prisoner tested positive for COVID-19 more than once.

**Alaska**—Alaska runs an integrated prison-and-jail system for sentenced and unsentenced persons, with many entering and exiting each day. As such, there may be discrepancies in the flow of entries and exits calculated. Staff vaccinations were performed but not tracked, and the state DOC had no data on staff infections or deaths.

**Arizona**—The state DOC could not report on the number of positive COVID-19 tests, only the unique number of positive prisoners. Due to multiple sources for test data, the DOC used its local database systems to record strictly unique positive cases per prisoner. This was due to the mass testing the DOC initiated at the beginning of the pandemic with a different lab from the one normally used by its Health Services contractor.

**Arkansas**—No notes were reported.

**California**—Population counts included prisoners who had been temporarily absent for more than 30 days. California began its expedited release process in April 2020.

**Colorado**—There was a slight discrepancy between the February 29, 2020 prison population count and the sum of the January 31, 2020 prison population and all admissions minus all releases. Reported counts for the number of unique prisoners who tested positive and for staff who tested positive or died may differ slightly from those reported on other public websites.

**Connecticut**—If the deceased prisoner did not have an autopsy, the attending physician at the time of death pronounced the cause of death.

**Delaware**—Data on COVID-19 tests covered April 1, 2020 to April 1, 2021. The state DOC tracked the number of positive prisoners instead of the number of positive tests but confirmed that fewer than five prisoners tested positive more than once.

**Federal Bureau of Prisons**—All responses to the National Prisoner Statistics – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey (NPS-CPan) covered facilities managed by the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP). Counts of admissions included prison-to-prison transfers and represented admissions rather than

unique persons admitted. The total count of releases reflected the number of persons released at least once, including prison-to-prison transfers. The BOP did not report any expedited releases because sentencing is the purview of the courts. While some prisoners did receive a reduction in sentence during the NPS-CPan survey period, the reasons for court actions were not always provided and do not appear in the BOP's data systems.

**Florida**—Prisoners who tested positive for COVID-19 were rarely retested, so the number of positive tests and unique prisoners who tested positive were similar. Seven prisoners who tested positive had faulty identification information, so their sex and race or ethnicity data were not provided.

**Georgia**—Population counts reported to the NPS-CPan survey reflected persons who had a physical bed in a Georgia correctional facility, which differs from counts reported to the National Prisoner Statistics program (NPS-1B) collection. The state DOC could not access information on the number of prisoner deaths due to COVID-19 as determined by a medical examiner or coroner.

**Hawaii**—Counts of COVID-19 deaths excluded the coroner-evaluated deaths of two Native Hawaiian males (one in the 55–64 age group and the other 75 or older) that occurred at the private Saguaro Correctional Center in Arizona, which is contracted to multiple jurisdictions besides Hawaii. Staff vaccination counts were based on self-reports and excluded the 42 vaccinated staff at the Saguaro facility, where vaccinations began on March 9, 2021.

**Idaho**—No notes were reported.

**Illinois**—The state DOC tested prisoners frequently, resulting in a large number of reported tests. The DOC could not report the number of unique prisoners who tested positive. See the Methodology for how BJS obtained this count.

**Indiana**—Indiana did not engage in expedited releases. Any releases due to court modifications were done at the court's behest and were not specifically identified as COVID-19-related. The state DOC confirmed that the number of positive tests represented the number of unique prisoners who tested positive. The number of prisoners vaccinated as of February 28, 2021 could not be determined. Vaccinations for newly admitted prisoners were prioritized at state facilities dedicated to prisoner intake. At other facilities, prisoners were prioritized for vaccination based on risk.

**Iowa**—Expedited releases were not solely based on the decision of the governor or state DOC and required parole board approval. Considerations were made to help release individuals early during the pandemic, and 4,700 persons were released on an expedited basis but not officially as a direct result of COVID-19.

**Kansas**—The state DOC had no data on the number of persons who received expedited release.

**Kentucky**—The state DOC reported the date that vaccines were made available to prisoners.

**Louisiana**—As a criteria for expedited release, age was considered not as a specific number but as a subjective variable reflecting health status.

**Maine**—No notes were reported.

**Maryland**—Population counts included committed detainees in the Baltimore City Detention Center or the Baltimore Central Booking and Intake Center.

**Massachusetts**—The criteria for expedited release included state DOC and court policies, although the DOC was unclear how the courts used particular policies in their decisions. Counts for vaccinated DOC staff included only persons who received the first dose from the DOC, not persons who were vaccinated in the community.

**Michigan**—The state DOC did not track staff vaccinations.

**Minnesota**—No notes were reported.

**Mississippi**—No notes were reported.

**Missouri**—The state DOC did not respond to the NPS-CPan survey.

**Montana**—The state DOC had no vaccination policies specifically for staff.

**Nebraska**—No notes were reported.

**Nevada**—The state DOC confirmed that the number of positive tests was equal to the number of unique prisoners who tested positive.

**New Hampshire**—The state DOC was unable to report the number of unique prisoners who tested positive. BJS allocated the number of positive tests to this count.

**New Jersey**—Prisoners given expedited release were placed on home confinement. The state DOC did not track the number of staff who died as a result of COVID-19.

**New Mexico**—No notes were reported.

**New York**—No notes were reported.

**North Carolina**—The number of expedited releases was an estimate. Small differences may exist in the population numbers reported to the NPS-CPan and NPS-1B.

**North Dakota**—The state DOC confirmed that the number of positive tests was equal to the number of unique prisoners who tested positive. The North Dakota Parole Board considered various factors when weighing release options, moving up parole review dates, or maintaining existing parole dates or review dates. Factors included, but were not be limited to, time remaining on a sentence, case plan, risk classification scores, community placement options, release plan, medical risk factors, behavior in facility, and past community supervision instances. Counts of vaccinated prisoners and staff were estimates. The state DOC did not require staff to report their vaccination status. Staff could choose to voluntarily provide human resources with proof of vaccination.

**Ohio**—The state DOC did not report the number of expedited releases because the state used multiple legal mechanisms for early release and determined that it would be impossible to fully account for the range of judicial and agency responses that accelerated release for some prisoners in the context of the pandemic (e.g., judicial release, furlough approval, earned credit expansion, and emergency release). The DOC did not track whether COVID-19-related deaths were based on a medical examiner or coroner's report.

**Oklahoma**—The state approved criteria for expedited release but did not release anyone early due to the pandemic. The state DOC did not track staff vaccinations and was unable to report the number of COVID-19-related staff deaths. While the DOC reported the total number of employees who tested positive, it could not specify who did and did not work within a prison facility.

**Oregon**—BJS assigned data for Oregon based on its submission to the 2020 National Corrections Reporting Program and policy documents and statistics on the state DOC's website. Sex and age data were located for 30 of the 42 prisoners who died during the pandemic.

**Pennsylvania**—The state DOC did not have information on the number of COVID-19-related prisoner deaths confirmed by a medical examiner or coroner. Age was one factor for expedited release, with no minimum age limit.

**Rhode Island**—No notes were reported.

**South Carolina**—The state DOC did not track the vaccination status of staff.

**South Dakota**—Fewer than five prisoners tested positive more than once, so the number of unique prisoners who tested positive was similar to the number of positive tests. The state DOC did not track the vaccination status of staff.

**Tennessee**—No notes were reported.

**Texas**—The population and admission counts reported to the NPS-CPan and NPS-1B differ because treatment centers and halfway houses were excluded from the NPS-CPan survey.

**Utah**—No notes were reported.

**Vermont**—The state DOC did not track releases due to COVID-19. The first vaccine clinic for staff was on March 18, 2021, after the NPS-CPan survey period.

**Virginia**—The state DOC did not have any information on the demographics of prisoners who tested positive.

**Washington**—No notes were reported.

**West Virginia**—Changes to the February 28, 2021 population count that could not be explained by admissions and releases were due to increased use of regional jails by the state DOC during the pandemic. These facilities were not within the scope of the NPS-CPan survey. The DOC tracked only the number of positive tests. BJS assigned the number of unique prisoners who tested positive to represent as the total number of positive tests.

**Wisconsin**—The state DOC did not track staff deaths.

**Wyoming**—The numbers of unique prisoners and staff who tested positive for COVID-19 and COVID-19-related deaths reported by the Wyoming DOC to the NPS-CPan survey may differ from counts published by other media outlets. The state adopted a policy of repeatedly testing every new person admitted to prison during the first 10 days of confinement and 20% of staff and prisoners at least every other week. Following a positive result, 100% of staff and prisoners were tested in the following weeks until no tests returned a positive result.

**APPENDIX TABLE 1****Number of persons in the custody of and admissions to state and federal prisons, January 2020–February 2021**

Month	Persons in custody <sup>a</sup>	Admissions <sup>b</sup>
January 2020	1,310,848	54,167
February 2020	1,308,754	48,964
March 2020	1,298,255	41,225
April 2020	1,255,515	14,099
May 2020	1,224,778	17,569
June 2020	1,198,265	21,027
July 2020	1,169,822	23,777
August 2020	1,151,223	28,323
September 2020	1,138,998	32,471
October 2020	1,132,529	37,724
November 2020	1,121,226	28,823
December 2020	1,107,660	30,100
January 2021	1,097,839	28,329
February 2021	1,092,936	31,822

Note: Includes persons held for state or federal correctional authorities in government-operated or privately operated prisons, regardless of sentence status or length, and persons admitted to these prisons. Excludes prisoners held in and admitted to local jails on behalf of federal or state correctional authorities and persons held in or admitted to privately operated prisons under federal contract. Totals exclude Missouri, which did not submit data to the National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey. Estimates will differ from previously published statistics.

<sup>a</sup>Custody population on the last day of each month.

<sup>b</sup>Admissions during the entire month.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

## APPENDIX TABLE 2

### Criteria for expedited release due to the COVID-19 pandemic, by jurisdiction, January 2020–February 2021

Jurisdiction	Number of expedited releases	No policy for expedited release	Time left on sentence	Maximum time left (months)	Nonviolent offenders only	Health status	Verified post-prison housing in community	Risk assessment score	Age	Minimum age (years)	Only nonviolent offenders with no violent prior convictions	Positive viral test for COVID-19	Prisoner was unsentenced
Federal	0	■											
Alabama	0	■											
Alaska <sup>a</sup>	0	■											
Arizona	0	■											
Arkansas	1,803		■	6	■		■			~			~
California	11,584		■	12		■		■	■	18			
Colorado	611		■	12	■	■	■	■	■	55	■	■	
Connecticut <sup>a</sup>	0	■											
Delaware <sup>a</sup>	0	■											
Florida	0	■											
Georgia	918		■	6	■					~	■		
Hawaii <sup>a</sup>	430		■	18	■			■		~			
Idaho	293			~						~			
Illinois	0		■	24	■	■	■	■		~			
Indiana	0	■											
Iowa	4,700		■	12	■	■		■	■	18	■		
Kansas	0		■	1.5	■		■	■		~	■		
Kentucky	1,717		■	6	■	■	■		■	65			
Louisiana	68		■	12	■	■	■	■	■	..			~
Maine	0	■											
Maryland	1,365		■	4					■	60			
Massachusetts	73		■	..	■	■	■	■	■	..	■	■	■
Michigan	0	■											
Minnesota	366		■	Less than life	■	■	■	■		~			
Mississippi	0	■											
Missouri	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Montana	24		■	12	■	■	■	■	■	..	■		~
Nebraska	0	■											
Nevada	0	■											
New Hampshire	0	■											
New Jersey	3,732		■	12	■	■	■		■	60	■		~
New Mexico	408		■	1			■		~	~			~
New York	2,106		■	3	■		■			~			
North Carolina <sup>b</sup>	3,500		■	24		■				~			

Continued on next page

## APPENDIX TABLE 2 (continued)

### Criteria for expedited release due to the COVID-19 pandemic, by jurisdiction, January 2020–February 2021

Jurisdiction	Number of expedited releases	No policy for expedited release	Time left on sentence	Maximum time left (months)	Nonviolent offenders only	Health status	Verified post-prison housing in community	Risk assessment score	Age	Minimum age (years)	Only nonviolent offenders with no violent prior convictions	Positive viral test for COVID-19	Prisoner was unsentenced
North Dakota	191		■	..	■	■	■	■	■	..	■	■	~
Ohio	0	■											
Oklahoma	0			~		■				~			
Oregon	0	■											
Pennsylvania	146		■	12	■	■		■	■	..	■	~	
Rhode Island <sup>a</sup>	52		■	3	■		■			~			
South Carolina	0	■											
South Dakota	0	■											
Tennessee	0	■											
Texas	0	■											
Utah	1,420		■	6		■	■			~			
Vermont <sup>a</sup>	0			~		■	■	■		~			
Virginia	1,597		■	12				■		~			
Washington	422		■	1.5	■					~			
West Virginia	158		■	3	■	■			■	55	■		
Wisconsin	0	■											
Wyoming	0	■											

Note: Expedited release is the release of a person at least 1 day before their scheduled or expected release date or post-custody community supervision eligibility date, to limit prisoner risk and exposure to COVID-19 or due to COVID-19-related understaffing, court orders, or legislative mandates. Jurisdictions could adopt criteria for expedited release at any time from January 2020 to February 2021.

..Not known. Maximum time remaining on sentence or minimum age were not specified.

~Not applicable.

/Not reported.

<sup>a</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include both prison and jail populations.

<sup>b</sup>State considered persons with expected 2020 or 2021 releases eligible for expedited release.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.



**APPENDIX TABLE 3**

**Estimates for figure 2: Mean number of persons admitted to state prisons in 37 states, by offense type, January 2018–December 2020**

Month	Mean number of admissions for—	
	Violent offense	Nonviolent offense
January 2018	294	757
February 2018	294	753
March 2018	293	750
April 2018	292	746
May 2018	291	742
June 2018	290	739
July 2018	289	735
August 2018	288	731
September 2018	287	728
October 2018	286	724
November 2018	285	720
December 2018	284	717
January 2019	283	713
February 2019	282	709
March 2019	282	706
April 2019	281	702
May 2019	280	698
June 2019	279	695
July 2019	278	691
August 2019	277	687
September 2019	276	684
October 2019	275	680
November 2019	274	676
December 2019	273	673
January 2020	272	669
February 2020	271	665
March 2020 <sup>a</sup>	270	662
March 2020 <sup>b</sup>	111	289
April 2020	117	298
May 2020	124	307
June 2020	130	317
July 2020	137	326
August 2020	144	336
September 2020	150	345
October 2020	157	354
November 2020	164	364
December 2020	170	373

Note: Data are based on the 37 states that submitted National Corrections Reporting Program data from 2018 to 2020. For March 2020, data are shown for the beginning and the end of the month. See *Methodology* for discussion of analysis and offense types.

<sup>a</sup>Before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>b</sup>After the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Corrections Reporting Program, 2018–2020.

## APPENDIX TABLE 4

Estimates for figures 3a–e: Number of persons admitted to state prisons in five states, by offense type, January 2018–December 2020

Month	State 1 admissions for—		State 2 admissions for—		State 3 admissions for—		State 4 admissions for—		State 5 admissions for—	
	Violent offense	Nonviolent offense	Violent offense	Nonviolent offense	Violent offense	Nonviolent offense	Violent offense	Nonviolent offense	Violent offense	Nonviolent offense
January 2018	1,404	1,574	205	661	723	1,741	229	396	562	1,208
February 2018	1,400	1,570	205	656	721	1,734	227	393	557	1,197
March 2018	1,396	1,565	205	651	720	1,728	226	390	553	1,186
April 2018	1,392	1,560	206	645	718	1,721	225	387	549	1,175
May 2018	1,388	1,555	206	640	716	1,714	224	383	545	1,164
June 2018	1,384	1,551	207	635	715	1,707	222	380	541	1,154
July 2018	1,380	1,546	207	630	713	1,700	221	377	537	1,143
August 2018	1,377	1,541	207	625	711	1,693	220	374	533	1,132
September 2018	1,373	1,536	208	620	710	1,687	218	371	529	1,121
October 2018	1,369	1,532	208	614	708	1,680	217	368	525	1,110
November 2018	1,365	1,527	209	609	706	1,673	216	364	521	1,100
December 2018	1,361	1,522	209	604	705	1,666	215	361	517	1,089
January 2019	1,357	1,517	210	599	703	1,659	213	358	512	1,078
February 2019	1,353	1,513	210	594	701	1,652	212	355	508	1,067
March 2019	1,349	1,508	210	589	699	1,646	211	352	504	1,056
April 2019	1,346	1,503	211	584	698	1,639	209	349	500	1,045
May 2019	1,342	1,498	211	578	696	1,632	208	346	496	1,035
June 2019	1,338	1,494	212	573	694	1,625	207	342	492	1,024
July 2019	1,334	1,489	212	568	693	1,618	206	339	488	1,013
August 2019	1,330	1,484	212	563	691	1,611	204	336	484	1,002
September 2019	1,326	1,479	213	558	689	1,605	203	333	480	991
October 2019	1,322	1,475	213	553	688	1,598	202	330	476	981
November 2019	1,318	1,470	214	547	686	1,591	200	327	472	970
December 2019	1,315	1,465	214	542	684	1,584	199	323	468	959
January 2020	1,311	1,460	214	537	683	1,577	198	320	463	948
February 2020	1,307	1,456	215	532	681	1,571	197	317	459	937
March 2020 <sup>a</sup>	1,303	1,451	215	527	679	1,564	195	314	455	927
March 2020 <sup>b</sup>	361	532	126	343	242	531	96	135	153	248
April 2020	370	506	126	330	241	539	96	133	161	261
May 2020	378	480	125	317	240	548	96	131	170	274
June 2020	387	454	125	305	239	556	96	129	179	287
July 2020	395	428	124	292	238	565	96	127	187	300
August 2020	404	403	124	279	237	574	96	125	196	313
September 2020	413	377	123	266	235	582	96	123	204	327
October 2020	421	351	123	254	234	591	96	121	213	340
November 2020	430	325	122	241	233	600	97	119	222	353
December 2020	439	299	122	228	232	608	97	117	230	366

Note: Data are based on 5 of the 37 states that submitted National Corrections Reporting Program data from 2018 to 2020. For March 2020, data are shown for the beginning and the end of the month. See *Methodology* for discussion of analysis and offense types.

<sup>a</sup>Before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>b</sup>After the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Corrections Reporting Program, 2018–2020.

**APPENDIX TABLE 5**

Estimates for figure 4: Mean number of persons in the custody of state prisons in 37 states, by offense type, month-end January 2018–December 2020

Month	Mean number of prisoners in custody for—	
	Violent offense	Nonviolent offense
January 2018	16,071	12,513
February 2018	16,060	12,472
March 2018	16,049	12,431
April 2018	16,038	12,390
May 2018	16,027	12,348
June 2018	16,015	12,307
July 2018	16,004	12,266
August 2018	15,993	12,225
September 2018	15,982	12,183
October 2018	15,971	12,142
November 2018	15,960	12,101
December 2018	15,949	12,060
January 2019	15,938	12,018
February 2019	15,927	11,977
March 2019	15,916	11,936
April 2019	15,905	11,895
May 2019	15,894	11,853
June 2019	15,883	11,812
July 2019	15,872	11,771
August 2019	15,861	11,730
September 2019	15,850	11,688
October 2019	15,839	11,647
November 2019	15,828	11,606
December 2019	15,816	11,565
January 2020	15,805	11,523
February 2020	15,794	11,482
March 2020 <sup>a</sup>	15,783	11,441
March 2020 <sup>b</sup>	15,390	10,432
April 2020	15,246	10,148
May 2020	15,101	9,863
June 2020	14,957	9,579
July 2020	14,813	9,294
August 2020	14,668	9,010
September 2020	14,524	8,725
October 2020	14,380	8,441
November 2020	14,235	8,156
December 2020	14,091	7,872

Note: Data are based on the 37 states that submitted National Corrections Reporting Program data from 2018 to 2020. For March 2020, data are shown for the beginning and the end of the month. See *Methodology* for discussion of analysis and offense types.

<sup>a</sup>Before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>b</sup>After the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Corrections Reporting Program, 2018–2020.

**APPENDIX TABLE 6**

Estimates for figure 5: Mean number of persons released from state prisons in 37 states, by offense type, January 2018–December 2020

Month	Mean number of releases for—	
	Violent offense	Nonviolent offense
January 2018	298	773
February 2018	298	772
March 2018	297	771
April 2018	297	769
May 2018	297	768
June 2018	297	766
July 2018	297	765
August 2018	296	763
September 2018	296	762
October 2018	296	760
November 2018	296	759
December 2018	296	758
January 2019	295	756
February 2019	295	755
March 2019	295	753
April 2019	295	752
May 2019	295	750
June 2019	294	749
July 2019	294	747
August 2019	294	746
September 2019	294	744
October 2019	294	743
November 2019	293	742
December 2019	293	740
January 2020	293	739
February 2020	293	737
March 2020 <sup>a</sup>	293	736
March 2020 <sup>b</sup>	278	690
April 2020	275	663
May 2020	271	636
June 2020	268	610
July 2020	265	583
August 2020	262	556
September 2020	259	529
October 2020	256	502
November 2020	252	475
December 2020	249	449

Note: Data are based on the 37 states that submitted National Corrections Reporting Program data from 2018 to 2020. For March 2020, data are shown for the beginning and the end of the month. See *Methodology* for discussion of analysis and offense types.

<sup>a</sup>Before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>b</sup>After the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Corrections Reporting Program, 2018–2020.

## APPENDIX TABLE 7

### Tactics adopted to mitigate COVID-19 transmission in state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021

Jurisdiction	All new prisoners tested at admission	Automatic quarantine of newly admitted prisoners	Lockdown of prisoners in cells	Daily temperature checks of prisoners	Staff temperature checks at start of shift	Isolation/quarantine of symptomatic prisoners	Enforced sick/administrative leave of symptomatic staff	Provision of hand sanitizer to prisoners	Provision of face masks to prisoners	Provision of face masks/gloves to staff	Viral testing of prisoners before release	Antibody/serology testing of staff	Antibody/serology testing of prisoners
Federal <sup>a</sup>	All	All	Some	None	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None
Alabama	Some	Some	~	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	Some	Some
Alaska <sup>b</sup>	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None
Arizona	All	All	Some	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	Some
Arkansas	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
California	All	All	All	~	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None
Colorado	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None
Connecticut <sup>b</sup>	All	All	All	None	Some	All	All	None	All	All	All	All	All
Delaware <sup>b</sup>	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	Some	All	All	All	None	None
Florida	All	All	None	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None	None
Georgia	All	All	None	Some	All	All	All	None	All	All	None	None	All
Hawaii <sup>b</sup>	All	All	Some	All	All	All	All	Some	All	All	Some	None	None
Idaho	All	All	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None
Illinois	Some	Some	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None
Indiana	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	~
Iowa	All	Some	Some	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	Some	Some
Kansas	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None
Kentucky	All	All	All	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	~	~
Louisiana	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None
Maine	All	All	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	~	~
Maryland	All	All	All	~	All	All	All	..	All	All	..	None	None
Massachusetts	Some	Some	All	None	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Michigan	All	Some	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	All
Minnesota	All	All	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None	None
Mississippi	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	~	~
Missouri	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Montana	All	All	All	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	Some	None	Some
Nebraska	None	All	None	None	All	All	All	None	All	All	None	None	None
Nevada	Some	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None
New Hampshire	All	All	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	~	~
New Jersey	All	All	None	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
New Mexico	All	All	None	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
New York	None	Some	Some	None	All	All	All	All	All	All	Some	Some	Some
North Carolina	All	All	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	All	All
North Dakota	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All

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# APPENDIX TABLE 7 (continued)

## Tactics adopted to mitigate COVID-19 transmission in state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021

Jurisdiction	All new prisoners tested at admission	Automatic quarantine of newly admitted prisoners	Lockdown of prisoners in cells	Daily temperature checks of prisoners	Staff temperature checks at start of shift	Isolation/quarantine of symptomatic prisoners	Enforced sick/administrative leave of symptomatic staff	Provision of hand sanitizer to prisoners	Provision of face masks to prisoners	Provision of face masks/gloves to staff	Viral testing of prisoners before release	Antibody/serology testing of staff	Antibody/serology testing of prisoners
Ohio	All	All	None	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	Some
Oklahoma	None	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None
Oregon	..	..	~	Some	All	All	..	..	All	All	None	~	~
Pennsylvania	All	All	All	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	~	All
Rhode Island <sup>b</sup>	All	All	All	None	All	All	All	All	All	All	Some	None	None
South Carolina	All	All	All	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	Some
South Dakota	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	Some	None	None
Tennessee	Some	All	None	None	All	All	..	None	..	All	All	~	~
Texas	None	All	Some	None	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None
Utah	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	Some	All	All	None	None	All
Vermont <sup>b</sup>	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None
Virginia	All	All	Some	~	All	All	All	All	All	All	..	Some	All
Washington	All	All	Some	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	Some	Some	All
West Virginia	Some	Some	Some	Some	All	All	All	All	All	All	Some	None	None
Wisconsin	All	All	All	~	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	~	~
Wyoming	All	All	All	None	All	All	All	All	All	All	None	None	None

Note: Tactics were adopted at any time from March 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021 in none, some (at least one), or all government-operated and privately operated prisons in each jurisdiction.

..Not known.

~Not applicable.

/Not reported.

<sup>a</sup>Excludes tactics adopted in privately operated prisons under federal contract.

<sup>b</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include both prison and jail populations.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

## APPENDIX TABLE 8

Activities completely suspended to mitigate COVID-19 transmission in state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021

Jurisdiction	Transfers between prison and local facilities	Educational programs	Drug/alcohol treatment programs	Prison labor programs	In-person family visitation	Legal visitation	Ministry/religious service programs
Federal <sup>a</sup>	All	All	~	All	All	All	Some
Alabama	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Alaska <sup>b</sup>	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Arizona	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Arkansas	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
California	All	All	~	All	All	~	All
Colorado	All	All	All	All	All	Some	Some
Connecticut <sup>b</sup>	Some	All	All	All	All	None	All
Delaware <sup>b</sup>	All	All	Some	Some	All	All	All
Florida	All	All	All	All	All	None	All
Georgia	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Hawaii <sup>b</sup>	Some	Some	Some	Some	All	Some	None
Idaho	All	All	All	All	All	None	All
Illinois	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Indiana	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Iowa	All	Some	Some	All	All	All	Some
Kansas	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Kentucky	All	Some	Some	All	All	All	All
Louisiana	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Maine	All	None	Some	All	All	All	Some
Maryland	All	All	~	Some	All	None	..
Massachusetts	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Michigan	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Minnesota	Some	Some	Some	Some	Some	Some	Some
Mississippi	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Missouri	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Montana	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Nebraska	Some	None	None	None	All	None	None
Nevada	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
New Hampshire	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
New Jersey	All	All	All	Some	All	None	All
New Mexico	Some	Some	None	All	All	All	All
New York	All	All	All	Some	All	All	All
North Carolina	All	All	Some	All	All	None	All
North Dakota	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Ohio	All	None	None	Some	All	None	None
Oklahoma	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Oregon	..	..	~	..	All	All	..
Pennsylvania	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Rhode Island <sup>b</sup>	All	All	None	All	All	All	All
South Carolina	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
South Dakota	All	All	All	All	All	Some	All
Tennessee	Some	None	None	All	All	All	All
Texas	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Utah	All	Some	All	All	All	All	All
Vermont <sup>b</sup>	All	All	None	Some	All	All	All
Virginia	All	All	All	All	All	All	None

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**APPENDIX TABLE 8 (continued)**

**Activities completely suspended to mitigate COVID-19 transmission in state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	Transfers between prison and local facilities	Educational programs	Drug/alcohol treatment programs	Prison labor programs	In-person family visitation	Legal visitation	Ministry/religious service programs
Washington	All	Some	Some	Some	All	Some	None
West Virginia	All	All	Some	All	All	Some	Some
Wisconsin	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Wyoming	All	All	All	All	All	All	All

Note: Activities were suspended at any time from March 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021 in none, some (at least one), or all government-operated and privately operated prisons in each jurisdiction.

..Not known.

~Not applicable.

/Not reported.

<sup>a</sup>Excludes activities suspended in privately operated prisons under federal contract.

<sup>b</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include both prison and jail populations.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

## APPENDIX TABLE 9

### Denominators for calculation of COVID-19 infection rates in state and federal prisons, by jurisdiction, March 1, 2020–February 28, 2021

Jurisdiction	Total prisoners at risk of exposure while in custody <sup>a</sup>	Total prison-days of exposure risk <sup>b</sup>	Number of unique prisoners to calculate total prison-days of exposure risk	Jurisdiction	Total prisoners at risk of exposure while in custody <sup>a</sup>	Total prison-days of exposure risk <sup>b</sup>	Number of unique prisoners to calculate total prison-days of exposure risk
US. total <sup>c</sup>	1,644,043	~	~	Montana	9,620	~	~
Federal	181,300	~	~	Nebraska	7,965	1,713,189	8,485
State <sup>c,d</sup>	1,462,743	301,478,295	1,241,766	Nevada	16,427	3,604,184	17,512
Alabama	23,790	~	~	New Hampshire	3,277	704,320	3,490
Alaska <sup>e</sup>	29,044	~	~	New Jersey	21,012	~	~
Arizona	53,348	~	~	New Mexico	8,724	~	~
Arkansas	23,380	5,486,860	25,095	New York	49,055	13,858,283	52,776
California	133,542	37,305,053	138,903	North Carolina	49,834	11,907,531	53,771
Colorado	24,091	5,526,879	25,028	North Dakota	2,700	482,862	2,851
Connecticut <sup>e</sup>	21,722	~	~	Ohio	61,684	16,347,101	66,454
Delaware <sup>e</sup>	12,753	~	~	Oklahoma	29,512	8,054,179	31,491
Florida	106,281	29,911,455	112,222	Oregon	17,759	5,108,644	18,408
Georgia	61,740	17,286,067	65,180	Pennsylvania	54,792	14,756,984	57,365
Hawaii <sup>e</sup>	11,298	~	~	Rhode Island <sup>e</sup>	10,606	~	~
Idaho	12,560	2,568,811	13,565	South Carolina	21,529	5,472,327	22,827
Illinois	47,811	11,914,242	51,500	South Dakota	7,162	1,574,323	7,916
Indiana	32,612	8,701,952	35,001	Tennessee	27,554	6,644,312	31,643
Iowa	12,341	2,740,652	13,410	Texas	170,081	43,192,480	179,358
Kansas	12,885	3,253,924	13,992	Utah	7,847	1,410,179	8,702
Kentucky	34,438	7,092,369	37,041	Vermont <sup>e</sup>	3,632	555,311	4,366
Louisiana	17,186	~	~	Virginia	30,467	8,193,273	31,419
Maine	2,701	552,438	2,969	Washington	21,680	5,604,994	22,923
Maryland	30,325	~	~	West Virginia	8,442	1,450,903	7,520
Massachusetts	10,701	2,918,581	10,718	Wisconsin	29,726	8,006,933	31,785
Michigan	43,173	~	~	Wyoming	3,035	575,334	3,381
Minnesota	12,451	2,815,251	13,400				
Mississippi	18,448	4,186,115	19,299				
Missouri	/	~	~				

Note: Includes persons held for state or federal correctional authorities in government-operated and privately operated prisons, regardless of sentence status or length. Excludes prisoners held in local jails on behalf of state or federal correctional authorities. Estimates will differ from previously published statistics.

~Not applicable.

/Not reported.

<sup>a</sup>Total number of persons in the custody of government- and privately operated prisons at any time from February 29, 2020 to February 28, 2021 (i.e., the sum of persons in custody on February 29, 2020 and persons admitted each month from March 2020 to February 2021).

<sup>b</sup>Sum of the number of days of exposure risk for all persons in the custody of government-operated and privately operated prisons from their date of admission or from the date of the first documented positive COVID-19 test among prisoners in each jurisdiction (whichever is later), through their release date or through February 28, 2021 (whichever is earlier). See *Methodology* for details on the calculation of prison-days.

<sup>c</sup>Totals exclude Missouri, which did not submit data to the National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey (NPS-CPan).

<sup>d</sup>Total for prison-days rates includes only the 36 states that submitted comparable 2020 National Corrections Reporting Program and NPS-CPan data.

<sup>e</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include both prison and jail populations.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Corrections Reporting Program, 2020; and National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.

**APPENDIX TABLE 10**
**COVID-19 vaccine distribution policies that were adopted, by jurisdiction, through February 28, 2021**

Jurisdiction	All staff vaccinated before prisoners	All prisoners required to get vaccine	Prisoners allowed to opt out of vaccination	All staff required to get vaccine	Staff allowed to opt out of vaccination	Older prisoners prioritized over younger prisoners	Prisoners with chronic/other infectious diseases prioritized over healthy prisoners	Prisoners soon to be released prioritized for vaccination	Newly admitted prisoners prioritized for vaccination	Prisoners offered incentives to get vaccine
Federal <sup>a</sup>			■		■	■	■			
Alabama <sup>b</sup>			■		■					
Alaska <sup>c</sup>			■		■	■	■			■
Arizona			■		■	■	■	■		
Arkansas			■		■	■	■	■		■
California			■		■	■	■			
Colorado			■		■	■	■			■
Connecticut <sup>c</sup>			■		■	■	■			
Delaware <sup>c</sup>			■		■	■	■			■
Florida <sup>b</sup>			■		■	■	■			
Georgia			■		■	■	■			■
Hawaii <sup>c</sup>			■		■	■				
Idaho			■		■	■	■		■	■
Illinois			■		■					
Indiana	■		~		~	■	■	~	■	
Iowa			■		■	■	■			
Kansas	■		■		■	■	■	■		
Kentucky <sup>b</sup>	■		■		■	■				
Louisiana			■		■	■	■			■
Maine			■		■	■	■			
Maryland			■		■	■	■	~		■
Massachusetts			■		■	■	■	~	~	~
Michigan			■		■	■	■		■	
Minnesota			■		■	■	■			■
Mississippi <sup>b</sup>	■		■		■	■	■	■	~	
Missouri <sup>d</sup>	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Montana			■		~	■	■			
Nebraska			■		■	■	■			
Nevada	■		■		■	■	■			
New Hampshire	~	~	■		■	■	■	~	~	~
New Jersey			■		■	■	■			
New Mexico			■		■	■	■			
New York			■		■	■	■			

*Continued on next page*

# APPENDIX TABLE 10 (continued)

## COVID-19 vaccine distribution policies that were adopted, by jurisdiction, through February 28, 2021

Jurisdiction	All staff vaccinated before prisoners	All prisoners required to get vaccine	Prisoners allowed to opt out of vaccination	All staff required to get vaccine	Staff allowed to opt out of vaccination	Older prisoners prioritized over younger prisoners	Prisoners with chronic/other infectious diseases prioritized over healthy prisoners	Prisoners soon to be released prioritized for vaccination	Newly admitted prisoners prioritized for vaccination	Prisoners offered incentives to get vaccine
North Carolina			■		■	■	■			■
North Dakota			■		■					■
Ohio			■		■	■	■		■	■
Oklahoma	■		■		■		■			
Oregon			■		■		■			~
Pennsylvania			■		■					■
Rhode Island <sup>c</sup>			■		■	■	■			
South Carolina <sup>b</sup>			■		■	■				■
South Dakota			■		■	■	■			
Tennessee			■		■					
Texas			■		■	■	■			
Utah			■		■	■	■			
Vermont <sup>c</sup>			■		~	■	■			
Virginia			■		■					■
Washington			■		■	■	■			
West Virginia	■		■		■	■	■			
Wisconsin			■		■	■	■			
Wyoming			■		■		■			

Note: Includes COVID-19 vaccine distribution policies adopted by state and federal correctional authorities in government-operated and privately operated prisons.

~Not applicable.

/Not reported.

<sup>a</sup>Excludes policies adopted in privately operated prisons under federal contract.

<sup>b</sup>State department of corrections adopted COVID-19 vaccination distribution policies but did not receive vaccines before the end of the study reference period of February 28, 2021.

<sup>c</sup>Prisons and jails form one integrated system. Data include both prison and jail populations.

<sup>d</sup>Missouri did not submit data to the National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Coronavirus Pandemic Supplemental Survey, 2021.



The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice is the principal federal agency responsible for measuring crime, criminal victimization, criminal offenders, victims of crime, correlates of crime, and the operation of criminal and civil justice systems at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels. BJS collects, analyzes, and disseminates reliable statistics on crime and justice systems in the United States, supports improvements to state and local criminal justice information systems, and participates with national and international organizations to develop and recommend national standards for justice statistics. Alexis R. Piquero is the director.

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