

Summary

- This study calculates proportions served on the total sentence length and proportions on the total prison length of female EMD offenders released in FY16 by the New Mexico Corrections Department.
- Female Serious Violent Offenders served 90.9% of their prison sentence and 93.2% of their total sentence in FY16.
- Female offenders earning 30 days credit for 30 days served, served 52.8% of their prison sentence in FY16 and 66.4% of their total sentence in FY16.
- In FY16, 85.0% of those women released were offenders earning 30 days credit for 30 days served.
- The most common offense was Public Order (58.4%). Public Order offenses include Probation Violations, Parole Violations, Driving While Intoxicated, and Judicial Interference.
- The 2nd Judicial District contributed the greatest number of offenders and releases under the EMD policy. The 2nd, 5th, 3rd and 12th Judicial Districts accounted for 73.1% of the offenders.

Time Served in New Mexico Prisons, FY 2016: *Analysis of the Impact of Earned Meritorious Deductions*

This report provides calculations of the average proportion of time served by female inmates released in fiscal year 2016 (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016) who earned deductions to their sentences under the Earned Meritorious Deductions (EMD) statutory policy.

For background information on the EMD policy and its effects, see the two baseline studies completed on releases prior to the implementation of the EMD policy (Working Papers #16 and #30) and the reports on time served from fiscal year 2004 through fiscal year 2015 (Time Served in New Mexico Prisons: *Analysis of the Impact of Earned Meritorious Deductions*—fiscal years 2004 - 2015). It should be noted the New Mexico Corrections Department (NMCD) information system was not designed with this study in mind. This report and other research reports by the NMSC are available on our web site: <http://nmsc.unm.edu/reportsindex/>

Methodology

In this report (FY16) we are reporting on female inmates only. Each fiscal year we rotate the study between male and female inmates.

In July 2016 NMSC staff obtained a list of all inmates released who had committed their crimes on or after July 1, 1999 making them subject to the EMD statutory policy. These inmates had prison release dates between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016. From this list, we extracted all female inmates which was 534 offenders.

The list provided by the NMCD included (1) offenders with offense, arrest, sentence, or admission dates after July 1, 1999 and (2) offenders who were not subject to early release, such as diagnostic evaluations or court-ordered releases. We attempted to collect the information for all women released who were subject to the EMD statutory policy in FY16. We ultimately ended up with a sample of 76.6% of women released under the EMD statutory policy for a total of 409 offenders.

The study reports the average proportion of time served for our sample of valid releases during FY16. This represents 409 offenders and 494 releases, indicating that a number of offenders had multiple releases during the reporting period. From the analyses that report the proportions of the total time served and prison time served, a number of records were eliminated based on dates that resulted in suspicious estimates.

Information About Releases

Female offenders in the study do not represent a random sample of all FY16 female releases because FY16 releases also include offenders serving time under an older good time policy. Therefore, the characteristics reported here may be unusual, especially compared to the prison population as a whole. We do not have information on all offenders released during the time period so it is not possible to report any differences.

Offender Demographics

Table 1 shows that of the 409 women who were included in this study, their ages ranged from 20 to 64 years with the average age at admission being 34.4 years.

Table 1. AGE AT PRISON ADMISSION

Age	Frequency	Percentage
21 & under	6	1.5%
22-25	47	11.5%
26-30	90	22.0%
31-35	114	27.9%
36-40	65	15.9%
41-45	40	9.8%
46-50	31	7.6%
51+	16	3.9%
Total	409	100.0%

Table 2 illustrates that the largest number and percentage of releases were from the Second Judicial District (Bernalillo County), 135 offenders or 33.0% of released offenders. Next, the Fifth Judicial District (Chaves, Eddy, and Lea County) accounted for 15.2% of released offenders, followed by the Third (Dona Ana) and Twelfth Judicial Districts accounting for 12.7% and 12.2% of released offenders respectively. All together, these four judicial districts accounted for 73.1% of the offenders.

Table 2. JUDICIAL DISTRICTS

District	Frequency	Percentage
1	8	2.0%
2	135	33.0%
3	52	12.7%
4	8	2.0%
5	62	15.2%
6	15	3.7%
7	14	3.4%
8	8	2.0%
9	22	5.4%
10	5	1.2%
11	20	4.9%
12	50	12.2%
13	10	2.4%
Total	409	100.0%

Analysis of Time Served

Offense types are described in Table 3. The most common offense type was Public Order (58.4%). Public Order offenses include Probation Violations, Parole Violations, Driving While Intoxicated, and Judicial Interference. Almost ten and a half percent (10.5%) of offenders were convicted of a Violent offense.

Table 3. OFFENSE TYPES

Offense	Frequency	Percentage
Violent	43	10.5%
Homicide	5	1.2%
Sexual Offenses	0	0.0%
Armed Robbery	1	0.2%
Other Homicide	1	0.2%
Other Sexual Offenses	0	0.0%
Kidnapping	0	0.0%
Robbery	7	1.7%
Battery	10	2.4%
Assault	2	0.5%
Other Violent Offenses	17	4.2%
Property	48	11.7%
Burglary	11	2.7%
Larceny - Theft	11	2.7%
Motor Vehicle Theft	6	1.5%
Arson	1	0.2%
Fraud	19	4.6%
Stolen Property	0	0.0%
Other Property	0	0.0%
Drug	79	19.3%
Drug Trafficking	50	12.2%
Drug Possession	29	7.1%
Public Order	239	58.4%
Weapons	0	0.0%
Driving While Intoxicated	8	2.0%
Judicial Interference	10	2.4%
Probation Violation / Parole Violation	219	53.5%
Other Public Order	2	0.5%
Other Offenses	0	0.0%
Total	409	100.0%

In this report we distinguish between two types of sentence length:

- *Total Sentence Length*: the total number of years in prison set by the court at sentencing – this includes time served in jail before sentencing and/or after sentencing and before transfer to prison.
- *Prison Facility Sentence Length*: the total sentence length (defined above) minus any credits for time served outside the prison facility (usually in a local jail) – this is the time served in prison, from the day the offender enters prison to the expected full time release date.

Type	Frequency	Percentage
30/30	420	85.0%
4/30	60	12.1%
8/30	14	2.8%
Total	494	100.0%

Source: NMCD GTFS data based upon the number of releases.

Table 4 shows the sample included 420 offenders earning 30 days credit for 30 days served, 60 4/30 releases, and 14 parole violator 8/30 releases. Table 5 shows that the majority (72.7%) of those released in the sample had a parole term to serve and a minority (27.3%) were discharged from prison with no parole term. *Discharge* are offenders who either served their complete parole term in prison or were revoked back to prison to complete their parole term in a prison facility.

Type	Frequency	Percentage
Parole	359	72.7%
Discharge	135	27.3%
Total	494	100.0%

Source: NMCD GTFS data based upon the number of releases.

Table 6 breaks out releases by type of admission and shows that 35.8% of the releases were offenders admitted on a basic sentence while a total of 41.3% were probation or parole violators.

Type	Frequency	Percentage
Basic Sentence	177	35.8%
Probation Violator	123	24.9%
Parole Violator	81	16.4%
Release Eligible Inmates	113	22.9%
Total	494	100.0%

Source: NMCD GTFS data based upon the number of releases.

Table 7 reports the proportion of the total sentence served and the proportion of prison sentence served for EMD categories. Probation Violation/Release Eligible (4/30) represent offenders who are a probation violation or release eligible inmate who's underlying charge is an SVO. Parole violators are split into 3 categories. Parole violators (4/30) represent offenders who either abscond or have an alleged commission of a new felony offense. Parole violators (8/30) represent offenders who are revoked for violations such as failing to pass a drug test administered as a condition of parole. Parole violators (30/30) represent offenders who violated their parole and were convicted of a nonviolent offense. Parole violators (30/30) were the most common type of parole offender and served 85.0% of their total sentence and 70.8% of their prison sentence. Offenders serving sentences on a new conviction (Basic Sentence/Release Eligible Inmates 30/30) on a nonviolent charge served 66.4% of their total sentence and 52.8% of their prison sentence.

EMD Type	Number	Total Sentence	Number	Prison Sentence
SVO (4/30)	12	93.2%	12	90.9%
Parole Violation (4/30)	35	97.2%	35	87.3%
Probation Violation/Release Eligible (4/30)	13	89.4%	13	83.1%
Parole Violation (8/30)	14	91.0%	14	83.7%
Parole Violation (30/30)	32	85.0%	32	70.8%
Other Offenders (30/30)	388	66.4%	388	52.8%
Overall Average	494	71.2%	494	58.5%

EARNED MERITORIOUS DEDUCTIONS STATUTORY POLICY

Offenders who committed their crimes on or after July 1, 1999 or violated their parole on a crime committed on or after July 1, 1999, are subject to the Earned Meritorious Deductions statutory policy. Under this policy, offenders convicted of the following "serious violent crimes" as defined by New Mexico statute will only receive up to 4 days of credit for 30 days served (4/30):

- second degree murder (first degree murder is not subject to any meritorious deductions)
- voluntary manslaughter
- third degree aggravated battery
- first degree kidnapping
- first and second degree criminal sexual penetration
- second and third degree criminal sexual contact of a minor
- first and second degree robbery
- second degree aggravated arson
- shooting at a dwelling or occupied building
- shooting at or from a motor vehicle
- aggravated battery upon a peace officer
- aggravated assault upon a peace officer
- assault with intent to commit a violent felony upon a peace officer

The following list of violent offenses are also considered to be "serious violent offenses" when the nature of the offense and the resulting harm are such that the court judges the crime to be so, and are also subject to 4 days of credit for 30 days served (4/30):

- involuntary manslaughter
- fourth degree aggravated assault
- third degree assault with intent to commit a violent felony

- third and fourth degree aggravated stalking
- second degree kidnapping
- second degree abandonment of a child
- first, second, and third degree abuse of a child
- third degree dangerous use of explosives
- third and fourth degree criminal sexual penetration
- fourth degree criminal sexual contact of a minor
- third degree robbery
- third degree homicide by vehicle or great bodily injury by vehicle
- battery upon a peace officer

Parole violators convicted under this statutory policy would also be subject to reduced credit eligibility. Parole violators who are convicted of new crimes or are found to be absconders may receive up to 4 days of credit for 30 days served. Parole violators revoked for violations may receive up to 8 days of credit for 30 days served (8/30). All other types of offenders would continue to receive up to 30 days credit for 30 days served (30/30).

Note that under the EMD policy, non-violent inmates may receive credits during their first 60 days in prison. Prisoners confined in federal, out-of-state, and in private facilities are eligible for EMD. EMD can be forfeited for misconduct or restored for exemplary conduct or work performance. Prisoners are kept informed of their EMD status on a quarterly basis.

Additionally, the policy allows the opportunity for an offender to earn "lump sum awards" for activities such as successfully completing an approved vocational, substance abuse or mental health program, or for earning various educational degrees.

About This Study

The EMD policy was part of the Sentencing Standards Package proposed by the NMSC to the New Mexico State Legislature in 1999. NMSC is statutorily mandated to provide an analysis of the average reduction in the sentence of imprisonment due to meritorious deductions earned by prisoners (NMSA 31-18-15G). This report is the fulfillment of that mandate for FY16.

Acknowledgment

This study would not be possible without the help of the New Mexico Corrections Department.

About The Commission

The New Mexico Sentencing Commission (NMSC) serves as a criminal and juvenile justice policy resource to the three branches of state government and interested citizens. Its mission is to provide impartial information, analysis, recommendations, and assistance from a coordinated cross-agency perspective with an emphasis on maintaining public safety and making the best use of our criminal and juvenile justice resources. The Commission is made up of members of the criminal justice system, including members of the Executive and Judicial branches, representatives of lawmakers, law enforcement officials, criminal defense attorneys, and citizens.