

Summary

- This study calculates proportions served on the total sentence length and proportions on the total prison length of male EMD offenders released in FY15 by the New Mexico Corrections Department.
- Male Serious Violent Offenders served 86.0% of their prison sentence and 89.5% of their total sentence in FY15.
- Male offenders earning 30 days credit for 30 days served, served 55.6% of their prison sentence in FY15 and 65.1% of their total sentence in FY15.
- In FY15, 75.7% of those men released were offenders earning 30 days credit for 30 days served.
- The most common offense was Public Order (43.3%). 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, 3rd, 5th and 11th Judicial Districts accounted for 69.9% of the offenders.

Time Served in New Mexico Prisons, FY 2015: *Analysis of the Impact of Earned Meritorious Deductions*

This report provides calculations of the average proportion of time served by male inmates released in fiscal year 2015 (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015) 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 2014 (Time Served in New Mexico Prisons: *Analysis of the Impact of Earned Meritorious Deductions*—fiscal years 2004 - 2014). 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 (FY15) we are reporting on male inmates only. Each fiscal year we rotate the study between male and female inmates.

In September 2015 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, 2014 and June

30, 2015. From this list, we extracted all male inmates which was 3,083 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 a sample of men released who were subject to the EMD statutory policy in FY15. We ultimately ended up with a sample of 15.1% of men released under the EMD statutory policy for a total of 466 offenders.

The study reports the average proportion of time served for our sample of valid releases during FY15. This represents 466 offenders and 542 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

Male offenders in the study do not represent a random sample of all FY15 male releases because FY15 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 466 men who were included in this study, their ages ranged from 19 to 74 years with the

Age	Frequency	Percentage
19-21	22	4.7
22-25	61	13.1
26-30	102	21.9
31-35	94	20.2
36-40	55	11.8
41-45	46	9.9
46-50	42	9.0
51+	44	9.4
Total	466	100.0

average age at admission being 35.0 years.

Table 2 illustrates that the largest number and percentage of releases were from the Second Judicial District (Bernalillo County), 165 offenders or 35.4% of released offenders. Next, the Third Judicial District (Dona Ana County) accounted for 13.1% of releases followed by the Fifth Judicial District (Chaves, Eddy, and Lea Counties) with 10.9%, and the Eleventh Judicial District (San Juan and McKinley Counties) with 10.5%. All together, these four judicial districts accounted for 69.9% of the

District	Frequency	Percentage
1	20	4.3
2	165	35.4
3	61	13.1
4	7	1.5
5	51	10.9
6	18	3.9
7	15	3.2
8	10	2.1
9	18	3.9
10	5	1.1
11	49	10.5
12	27	5.8
13	20	4.3
Total	466	100.0

offenders.

Analysis of Time Served

Offense types are described in Table 3. The most common offense type was Public Order (43.3%). Public Order offenses include Probation Violations, Parole Violations, Driving While Intoxicated, and Judicial Interference. There were 29.2% percent of

Offense	Frequency	Percentage
Violent	136	29.2
Homicide	10	2.1
Sexual Offenses	9	1.9
Armed Robbery	2	0.4
Other Homicide	2	0.4
Other Sexual Offenses	12	2.6
Kidnapping	8	1.7
Robbery	14	3.0
Battery	50	10.7
Assault	8	1.7
Other Violent Offenses	21	4.5
Property	64	13.7
Burglary	32	6.9
Larceny - Theft	6	1.3
Motor Vehicle Theft	7	1.5
Arson	0	0.0
Fraud	10	2.1
Stolen Property	3	0.6
Other Property	6	1.3
Drug	64	13.7
Drug Trafficking	36	7.7
Drug Possession	28	6.0
Public Order	202	43.3
Weapons	3	0.6
Driving While Intoxicated	25	5.4
Judicial Interference	1	0.2
Probation Violation / Technical Parole Violation	167	35.8
Other Public Order	0	0
Other Offenses	6	1.3
Total	466	100.0

offenders who were convicted of a Violent offense.

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.

Table 4 shows the sample included 410 offenders earning 30 days credit for 30 days served, 108 4/30

Type	Frequency	Percentage
30/30	410	75.7
4/30	108	19.9
8/30	24	4.4
Total	542	100.0

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

releases, and 24 parole violator 8/30 releases. Table 5 shows that the majority (62.7%) of those released in the sample had a parole term to serve and a minority (37.3%) 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

Type	Frequency	Percentage
Parole	340	62.7
Discharge	202	37.3
Total	542	100.0

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

facility.

Table 6 breaks out releases by type of admission and shows that nearly 40% of the releases were offenders admitted on a basic sentence (39.7%) while a total of 43.3% were probation or parole violators.

Table 7 reports the proportion of the total sentence served and the proportion of prison sentence served for

Type	Frequency	Percentage
Basic Sentence	215	39.7
Probation Violation	95	17.5
Parole Violator	140	25.8
Release Eligible Inmates	92	17.0
Total	542	100.0

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

EMD

categories. 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 technical 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 71.4% of their total sentence and 65.5% of their prison sentence. Offenders serving sentences on a new conviction (Basic Sentence/Release Eligible Inmates 30/30) on a nonviolent charge served 65.1% of their

EMD Type	Number	Total Sentence	Number	Prison Sentence
SVO (4/30)	71	89.5%	71	86.0%
Parole Violation (4/30)	37	88.7%	37	83.6%
Parole Violation (8/30)	24	81.1%	24	76.2%
Parole Violation (30/30)	78	71.4%	78	65.5%
Other Offenders	331	65.1%	331	55.6%
Overall Average		71.6%		63.9%

total sentence and 55.6% of their prison sentence.

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 technical 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 FY15.

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.