NEW MEXICO PRISON POPULATION FORECAST:
FY 2024—FY 2034

Prepared by NMSC Staff

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In New Mexico and in the nation, prison populations began to decline several years ago. The COVID-19 pandemic prompted a more significant if short-term decline in total population from 2020 through 2023. As the courts catch up on adjudications that had been delayed during the pandemic, prison populations are expected to rise for the next several years for both men and women, eventually leveling off or declining slightly without reaching their pre-pandemic populations.

New Mexico Trends

Males: Until recently high counts for male prison populations had been sharply decreasing since August 2018, the high point in the FY2019 population (6,634 individuals). In FY2023, the high count for the New Mexico male inmate population was 5,166 individuals. That trend seems to be reversing. The high count for FY2024 is 5,304.

The high counts for males in the past 5 years are:

FY2023 high count: 5,166 male inmates.
FY2022 high count: 5,314 male inmates;
FY2021 high count: 5,708 male inmates;
FY2020 high count: 6,331 male inmates;
FY2019 high count: 6,634 male inmates.

Females: As of June 2024, female inmates comprise approximately 9% of the total prison population in New Mexico, unchanged from recent years. Following several years of steady growth, the state's female inmate population, similar to males, declined from the end of 2018 (788 individuals) through the beginning of 2023 a trend that seems to be reversing. In FY2023, the high count for the female population was 523 individuals, and the high count for FY2024 is 560.

The high counts for females in the past 5 years are:

FY2023 high count: 523 female inmates;
FY2022 high count: 538 female inmates;
FY2021 high count: 607 female inmates;

FY2020 high count: 742 female inmates;
FY2019 high count: 794 female inmates.

Short-Term Forecast

Males:
- In FY 2025, the projected high count for the male inmate population is 5,307.
- In FY 2026, the projected high count for the male inmate population is 5,488.

Females:
- In FY 2025, the projected high count for the female inmate population is 573.
- In FY 2026, the projected high count for the female inmate population is 607.

National Trends

- The total U.S. sentenced prison population (state and federal) totaled 1,185,648 at the end of 2022. Since 2020, the total U.S. sentenced prison population has been relatively stable, following a 14% drop in the 2020 census compared to 2019.
- In 2022, the number of sentenced prisoners under federal jurisdiction rose 1% to 146,108 individuals; the number of sentenced prisoners under state jurisdiction rose 2% to 1,039,540 individuals.
- At the end of the calendar year 2022, nationwide there were 311 incarcerated individuals per 100,000 residents sentenced under state jurisdiction, an increase from 307 the year before (but not as high as 2020's rate of 315). However, New Mexico's incarceration continued its recent downward trend from 258 in 2020, 240 in 2021, to 231 per 100,000 residents in the state in 2022. Given the rise in prison population in New Mexico, we expect a higher rate for 2023.
- At the national level, in 2022 Hispanic and Asian incarceration rates continued a decades-long decline that had applied to all groups. Rates for Whites, Blacks and Native Americans began to increase. Overall, the incarceration rate for both males and females increased.

INTRODUCTION

This prison population forecast was prepared by the New Mexico Sentencing Commission (NMSC) and the Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER). The forecast is designed to assist the New Mexico Corrections Department (NMCD) in assessing immediate and future inmate populations and includes information that will be of particular interest to policy makers who are involved with the correctional system. The Sentencing Commission has produced this report annually for most years in the past decade, as population trends have changed enough to necessitate repeated study.

This report applies historical observations of prison population data to generate the figures included in the forecasts. The Sentencing Commission maintains a dataset of daily totals for male and female prisoners in New Mexico. From these data, monthly high counts are used to create a time series of population estimates spanning January 2001 to June 2024.

Many factors drive prison populations, including demographic trends, arrest rates, the number of criminal cases filed in district courts, conviction rates, the availability of diversion programs, sentence lengths, the availability of earned meritorious deductions, and inmates' readiness for release to parole. As external forces (such as the COVID-19 pandemic) as well as changes in laws and policy may significantly affect the prison population, NMSC will continue updating data and examining trends to reflect those changes as needed.
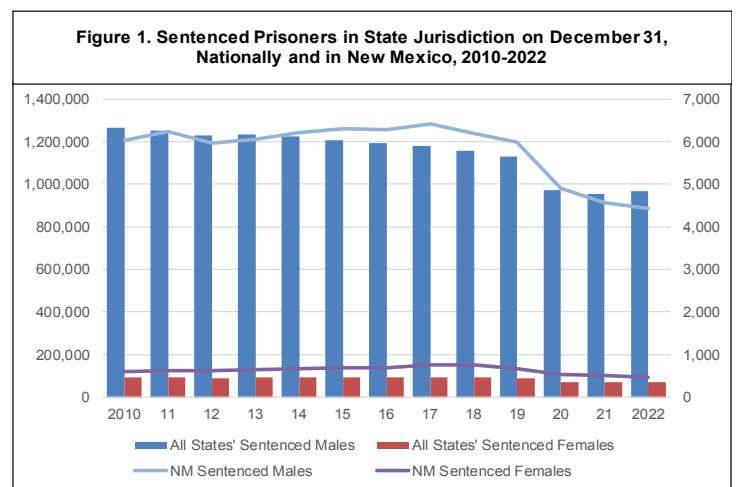
Time series forecasting examines historical prison population data by testing various model specifications and identifying the ones that fit existing data most closely. We perform diagnostic checks to ensure that the selected models adequately explain trends in population estimates. We also understand trends through conversations with New Mexico Department of Corrections leadership and staff. These individuals check that projections align with their experience on the ground, and they help interpret trends with their knowledge, for example the Department's practices regarding earned meritorious deductions or assessing and preparing inmates for release.

In May 2024, new forecast models were created. For the 24-month period between July 2022 and June 2024, the model's estimated high populations for females differ from actual monthly high counts by an average of about 2.5% and rising as high as 4.8%. This period was volatile, with monthly high counts ranging from 500 to 560 individuals. A reversal from a declining to a rising population occured (see Table 1). Estimated high populations differed from actual month counts by more than 3% seven times. Our current model for females predicts that the prison population will rise to about 670 individuals within five years, then gradually decrease in the early 2030s.

For males, estimates differ from monthly high counts on average 1.7% in the period from July 2022 to June 2024. This period also seems to be characterized by a reversal from a decline to a rising population, but at a more gradual pace compared to females. The estimate differed from the actual monthly high by more than 3% only once. Our current model for males predicts that the prison population will gradually rise by the early 2030s to about 6,373 individuals before leveling off or dropping. (See Table 1.)

NATIONAL TRENDS

The United States Department of Justice publishes the *Prisoner series* annually. This report details trends in the U.S. prison population based on snapshot prisoner counts collected each December pursuant to the National Prisoner Statistics Program. Most information in the report refers to 'sentenced prisoners,' or 'Persons sentenced to more than one year under state or federal correctional authorities, usually those convicted of a felony' (Carson, 2023, p.2). The most recent report, *Prisoners in 2022*, indicates that there were 1,039,540 sentenced prisoners in state jurisdiction at the end of 2022, a 2% increase from 1,021,288[1] in 2021. By gender, the number of male sentenced prisoners in state jurisdiction had declined steadily from a peak in 2009 through 2021, rising slightly in 2022, to about 967,000 as seen in Figure 1.[2] The number of female sentenced prisoners in state jurisdiction has followed the same pattern, rising slightly in 2022 to about 72,000 after dropping precipitously from 2016 through 2021.

Figure 1. Sentenced Prisoners in State Jurisdiction on December 31, Nationally and in New Mexico, 2010-2022

NEW MEXICO TRENDS

Figure 1 also shows the number of sentenced prisoners each year in New Mexico in state jurisdiction, with similar declines over time. In New Mexico, however, the decline in the number of sentenced prisoners began later than in the nation as a whole. The recent peak for male sentenced prisoners was about 6,400 in 2017; that figure dropped to 4,421 in 2022. Female sentenced prisoners also peaked in 2017 at almost 770, dropping to 472 by 2022. For both genders combined, in 2022 the New Mexico imprisonment rate was 231 sentenced state prisoners per 100,000 population, compared to 311 nationally (Carson, 2022). In the nation overall, the number of sentenced prisoners as well as the incarceration rate rose in 2022. We expect to see the same trend in New Mexico in 2023.

Looking at New Mexico prison populations in a time series, Table 1 reports male and female prison populations (including those in both state and federal jurisdiction) at the highest level within each fiscal year since 2014.[3] As in Figure 1, we see a drop in prison population for both males and females especially in FY2021 and FY2022. Table 1 also shows our projections through FY2034. We expect the female prison population to maintain growth for the next several years, plateauing to about 670 by FY2031. For males, we predict the prison population will rise for most of the next decade to about 6,373. We do not expect either prison population to approach the highs we saw between FY2015 and FY2019 (about 6,700 for males, 790 for females).

Figures 2 and 3 show these data by monthly high counts for the truncated period between July 2019 and July 2025.

Table 1. Actual and Projected Prisoner Population High Counts in New Mexico, FY2014 to FY2034				
Fiscal Year	**Males**		**Females**	
	High Count	**Change**	**High Count**	**Change**
2014	6,344	2.5%	704	6.7%
2015	6,558	3.4%	782	11.1%
2016	6,727	2.6%	791	1.2%
2017	6,639	-1.3%	764	-3.4%
2018	6,616	-0.3%	797	4.3%
2019	6,634	0.3%	794	0.3%
2020	6,331	-4.6%	742	-6.5%
2021	5,708	-9.8%	607	-18.2%
2022	5,314	-6.9%	538	-11.4%
2023	5,166	-2.8%	523	-2.8%
2024	5,304	2.7%	560	7.1%
2025	5,307	0.1%	573	2.3%
2026	5,488	3.4%	607	5.9%
2027	5,706	4.0%	637	4.9%
2028	5,927	3.9%	658	3.3%
2029	6,123	3.3%	669	1.7%
2030	6,275	2.5%	671	0.3%
2031	6,354	1.3%	670	-0.1%
2032	6,373	0.3%	662	-1.2%
2033	6,369	-0.1%	651	-1.7%
2034	6,323	-0.7%	638	-2.0%

Note: Projections begin in FY2025.

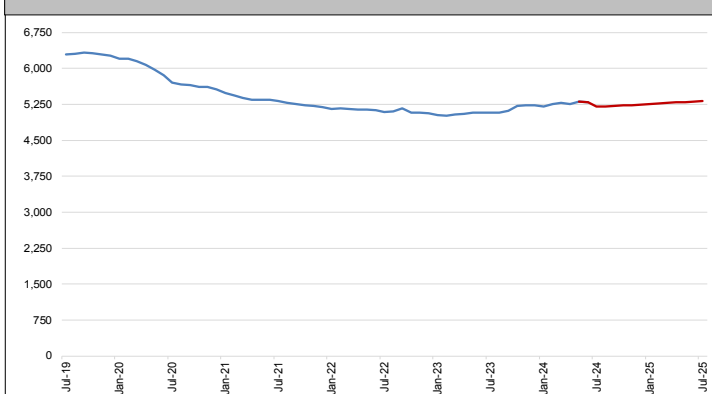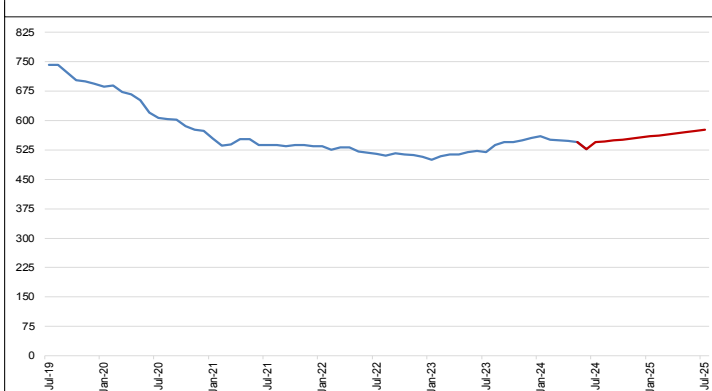Figure 2. Actual Male Prison Population and Forecast: July 2019 to July 2025

Figure 3. Actual Female Prison Population and Forecast: July 2019 to July 2025

Male:

Figure 2 indicates a downward trend in the count of imprisoned males between July 2019 and July 2023, covering the COVID-19 pandemic, a drop of about 21%. The high count for imprisoned males in FY2024 occurred in May 2024 with 5,304 inmates, representing a rise. Male inmate high counts are projected to rise slightly over the next year.

An important consideration for prison population is operational or rated capacity, the total number of inmates the New Mexico Department of Corrections can reasonably maintain given limitations such as staffing and maintenance. Currently, the operational capacity for male inmates is 7,031,[4] well above the FY2024 highest count of 5,304. The projected high counts for the coming fiscal years show a moderate increase to 5,307 for FY2025 and 5,488 for FY2026.

Over the next ten years, we expect the male prison population to peak in FY2032, with a projected high count of 6,373, or 91% of New Mexico's current operational capacity for men.

Female:

As seen in Table 1 and Figure 3, the female prison population trended downward between July 2019 and January 2023. The high count for FY2024 was 560 female inmates in January 2024. This is significantly lower than the recent maximum of 742 (in July 2019) but is higher than the maximum values in FY2021 and FY2022. Even with the recent uptick, between FY2019 and FY2024, female inmate high counts decreased 25%.

The operational capacity for female inmates is currently 651,[5] above the FY2024 high count of 560 and the expected high counts in FY2025 (573) and FY2026 (607). Looking at the next ten years, the peak projection for incarcerated females is in FY2030 at 671 incarcerated females, or 103% of the current operational capacity.[6]

PRISON POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

Age

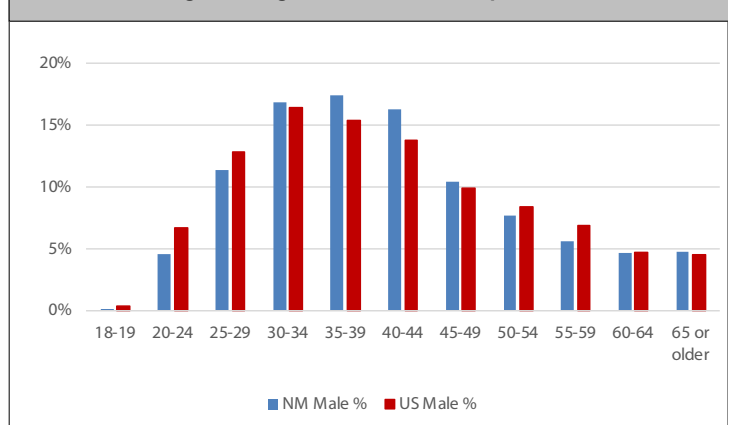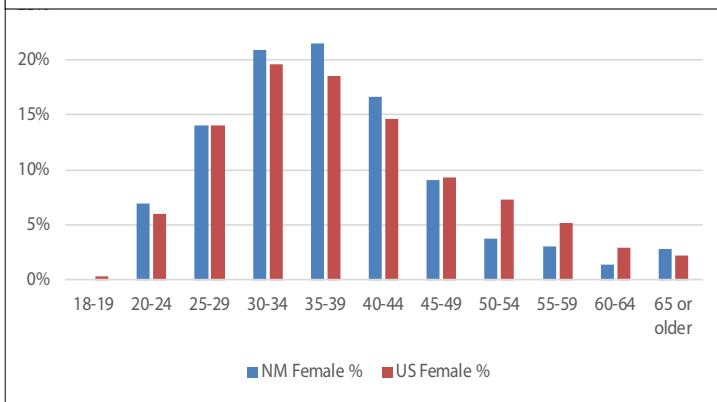Figure 4. Age of Male Prison Population

■ NM Male % ■ US Male %

Figure 5. Age of Female Prison Population

Figures 4 and 5 compare the national prisoner age demographics against those for individuals in New Mexico (Carson, 2023).[7] The distributions are similar with minor differences. The proportion of the male prison population that is aged 18–29 is smaller in New Mexico, comprising about 16% compared to 20% nationally. Conversely, 61% of the male prison population in New Mexico falls between the 30-49 age range, compared to 56% nationwide.

Through the age of 29, the proportion of New Mexicans female prison population is similar to the national average, about 20%. Above that, New Mexico's female prison population skews younger. The state's female prison population has a higher concentration of inmates aged 30-44 (59%) compared to the national average (53%). Conversely, 25% of the national female prison population is 45-64, compared to 17% in New Mexico.

Race and Ethnicity

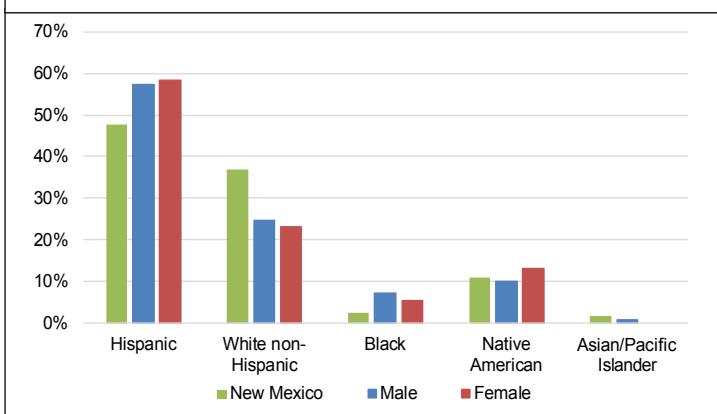**Figure 6. New Admissions in FY2023 by Race/Ethnicity**

Figure 6 shows the percentage of new prison admissions in New Mexico in FY2023[8] by race and ethnicity. We use the categories Hispanic, White non-Hispanic, Black, Native American, and Asian/Pacific Islander. Since we began collecting data on race and ethnicity for new admissions in FY2019, we have observed consistent trends. Across genders, the percentages of Hispanic and Black inmates are higher than in their respective proportions in the state, while

the percentages of White non-Hispanic detainees are lower. Additionally, the percentage of Native American female inmates has consistently exceeded their proportion in the state, whereas the percentage of Native American male inmates has been lower. New Mexicans that are of Asian or Pacific Islander descent make up less than 2% of the state population and less than 1% of prison inmates.

ADMISSIONS AND RELEASES

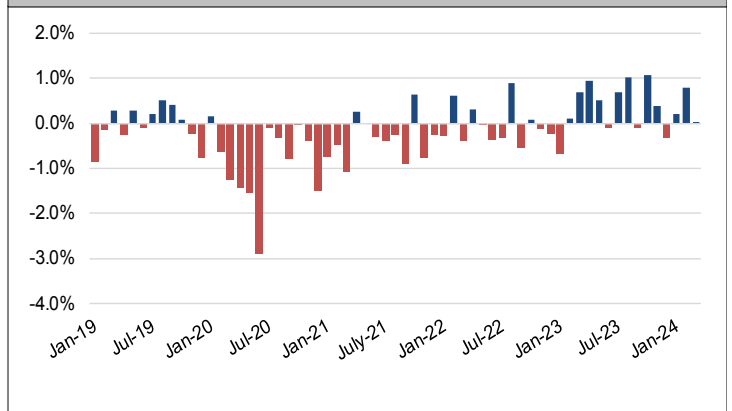**Figure 7. Monthly Male Net Change (Admissions-Releases)**
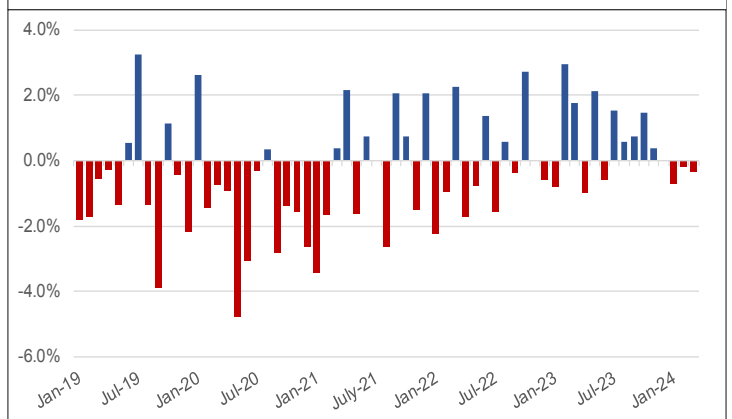

Figure 8. Monthly Female Net Change (Admissions-Releases)
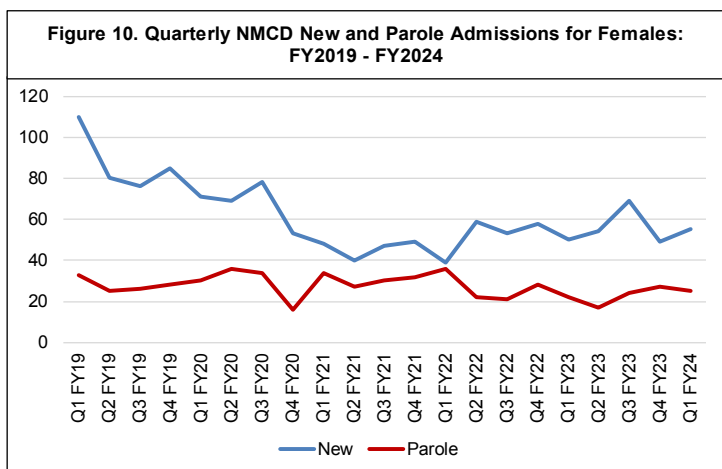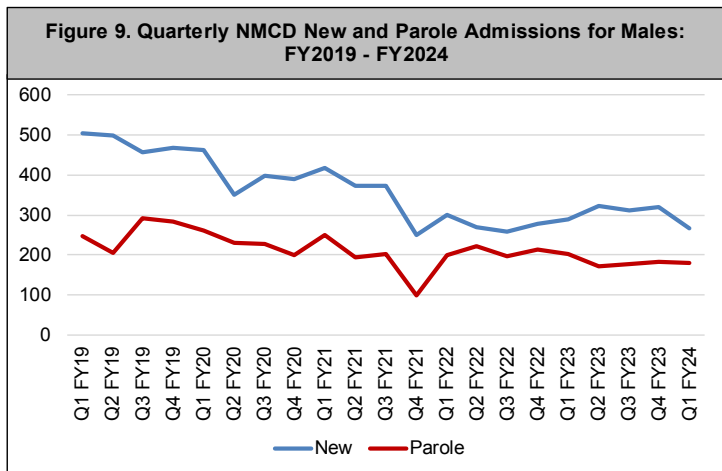

Figures 7 and 8 show the relationship between admissions and releases in New Mexico for male and female inmates relative to the monthly high population for each month from January 2019 to March 2024. Positive percentages, represented in blue and above the centerline, indicate that there were more admissions than releases during the month. Negative percentages, in red and below the centerline, indicate that releases outpaced admissions during the month.

In Figure 7, we see that male admissions in the period start with relatively small fluctuations in 2019. Corresponding with the COVID-19 pandemic, from 2020 through 2022 net releases outnumbered net admissions nearly every month, although the margin decreases over time. Since then, there has been a net gain of male prisoners most months.

As shown in Figure 8, the picture of the female prison population is similar. Even before the pandemic, most

months in 2019 were characterized by sizable net releases, a trend that continued through 2020 and the first half of 2021. From the second half of 2021 through the first half of 2023, there were moderate gains and losses in about equal numbers. Thereafter, there have been net gains most months.[9]

New Admissions and Parole Admissions

Figure 9. Quarterly NMCD New and Parole Admissions for Males: FY2019 - FY2024

Figure 10. Quarterly NMCD New and Parole Admissions for Females: FY2019 - FY2024

Figures 9 and 10 identify trends for new and parole-related admissions (not overall population) for male and female inmates quarterly from FY2019 to the first quarter of FY2024. Admissions for new offenses outpace parole admissions throughout the time period for both genders.

While the COVID-19 pandemic likely influenced the decrease in both types of admissions from FY2019 through FY2021, the decline in new admissions was more pronounced. Admissions of both types appear to be stabilizing at a level that is below pre-pandemic admissions. Yet because admissions have usually outnumbered realeases in the past year, overall populations of male and female inmates are increasing.
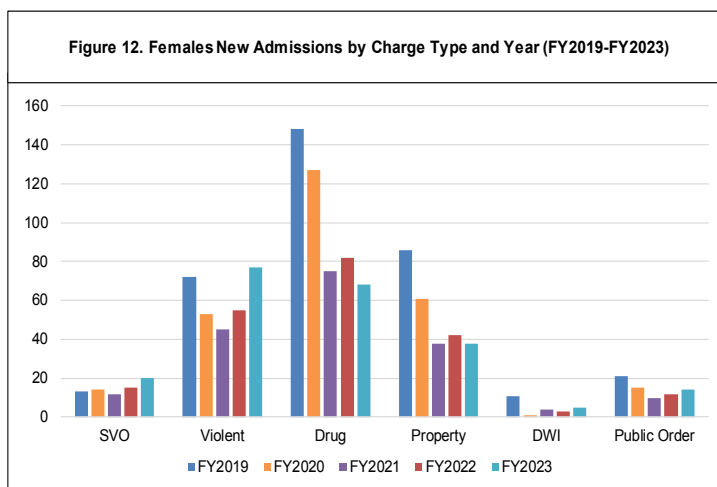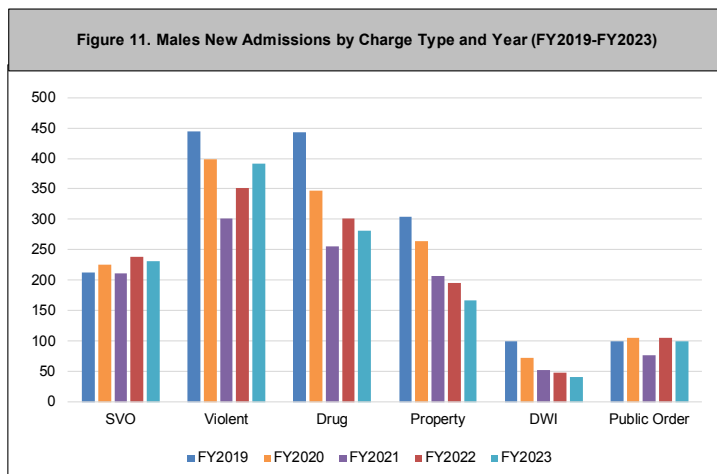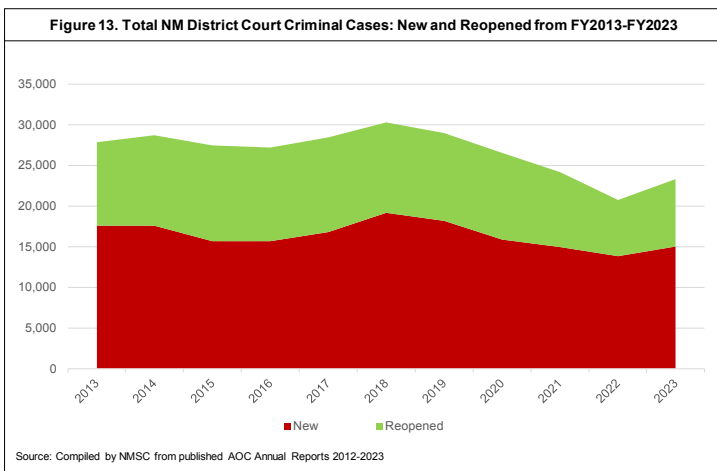
New Admissions by Charge Type

Figure 11. Males New Admissions by Charge Type and Year (FY2019-FY2023)

Figure 12. Females New Admissions by Charge Type and Year (FY2019-FY2023)

Figure 11 illustrates the number of new male admissions by charge type for FY2019 through FY2023.[10] Admissions for serious violent offender (SVO) and public order offenses have remained relatively stable since FY2019, with a dip probably attributable to COVID-19 in FY2021. Admissions for property crime and DWIs have uniformly decreased. Admissions for both violent and drug crime fell, then rose in the period, neither approaching the high number of admissions in FY2019.

Figure 12 shows female admissions for FY2019 through FY2023. Trends for females differ from males. Both SVO and violent crimes were higher in FY2023 than any of the previous four years. Drugs and property crimes fell sharply in FY2021 and have remained at the lower level. Among females, admissions for DWI and public order crimes are consistently low.[11]

FACTORS INFLUENCING PRISON POPULATION

The small upward trend from 2021 to 2022 in male and female prison populations nationally was mirrored in the high annual population counts in New Mexico from FY2023 to FY2024. There are several possible factors in New Mexico that might be contributing to our state's recent increase in prison population. First, looking at Table 2, new district

Figure 13. Total NM District Court Criminal Cases: New and Reopened from FY2013-FY2023

Source: Compiled by NMSC from published AOC Annual Reports 2012-2023

Table 2. New Mexico District Court Criminal Cases, FY 2013 to FY 2023			
Fiscal Year	New	Reopened	Total New and Reopened
2013	17,572	10,285	27,857
2014	17,591	11,140	28,731
2015	15,701	11,749	27,450
2016	15,665	11,519	27,184
2017	16,813	11,614	28,427
2018	19,152	11,125	30,277
2019	18,215	10,761	28,976
2020	15,859	10,667	26,526
2021	14,961	9,219	24,180
2022	13,837	6,903	20,740
2023	15,005	8,294	23,299

court cases increased 8.4% in FY2023, a trend we expect will continue as courts catch up from suspended activity during the COVID-19 pandemic.[12]

Looking at prison admissions for males and females, different pattern emerge. Male prison admissions increased 7.2% from FY2023 to FY2024. Increases occurred in all admissions categories (new, parole and other). Looking at new admissions, 1,299 males were admitted for a new offense in FY2024 compared to 1,212 males in FY2023. Breaking admission down by District Attorney District, most districts were flat or decreased slightly in their relative proportion of admissions from FY2023 – FY2024. The11th Judicial District Attorney Division II, representing McKinley County, saw an increase of 1.4% and the 2nd Judicial District Attorney, representing Bernalillo County, had an increase of 6.9%.

Female prison admissions saw a 2.1% increase from FY2022 to FY2023, however decreased 8.5% from FY2023 to

FY2024. Decreases were seen in new and parole admissions. Looking at new admissions, 196 females were admitted for a new offense in FY2024 compared to 222 in FY2023. Breaking admission down by District Attorney District, most districts were flat or experienced decreases in their relative proportion of admissions from FY2023 – FY2024. The 2nd Judicial District Attorney was the only district with a sizeable increase of 8.4%, up from 31 in FY2023 to 44 in FY2024.

The average length of stay from admission date to release date for males admitted on a new charge increased 26.5% from FY2020 to FY2024 while it increased 27.7% for females during the same time period.

DEPARTMENT INITIATIVES

In FY02024, the three-year recidivism rate for offenders released from NMCD's custody increased for the first time in four years. NMCD continues efforts that may impact recivism rates in the future.

NMCD has improved High School Equivalency (HSE) completion. In FY24, the department had 236 people attain their HSE, which is well above the department's performance measure target of 145.

In FY2024, NMCD embarked on a unique partnership with UNM – Valencia, introducing an Integrative Studies/Automotive Program at the Central New Mexico Correctional Facility. This innovative program engages students in college-level Mathematics, English, and Natural Sciences courses in the morning, and Automotive Technology in the afternoon. The comprehensive thirty-six (36) credit hour Automotive Program leads to a certification in Automotive Technology upon completion, and an associate of Integrative Studies upon mastering all subjects.

NMCD has also made significant strides by joining a select group of correctional agencies as a Prison Education Program (PEP) agency. The PEP opens doors for colleges and universities to partner with Department of Corrections agencies nationwide, enabling incarcerated individuals to pursue post-secondary education funded by the U.S. Department of Education/Pell Grant Program once approved by the Department of Education. NMCD has given the green light for UNM – Valencia to kickstart the application process and is actively seeking to expand this opportunity to other colleges and universities across New Mexico.

NMCD has also partnered with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in New Mexico to establish comprehensive Career Technical Education/Vocational Programs in three prison facilities, with plans to initiate additional programs in three more. These programs, which include Heavy Equipment Operator, Commercial Driver's License, Culinary Program, HVAC and Crane Operator are designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary for immediate employment upon release. WIOA's role in tracking student employment ensures a smooth transition to the workforce, underscoring the thorough preparation of students for their future careers.

New Mexico Sentencing Commission

APPENDIX A

Appendix A contains tables and figures to supplement the Prison Population Forecast, as follows:

Table 3a. High Counts: Actuals, Forecasts, and Discrepancies for FY2024 (Old Forecast)

Month/Year	Males			Females		
	Actuals	Forecasts	Discrepancy	Actuals	Forecasts	Discrepancy
July-23	5,082	4,957	-2.5%	520	509	-2.0%
August-23	5,082	4,943	-2.7%	537	510	-5.1%
September-23	5,121	4,930	-3.7%	545	510	-6.5%
October-23	5,216	4,917	-5.7%	545	510	-6.4%
November-23	5,229	4,904	-6.2%	549	510	-7.1%
December-23	5,230	4,892	-6.5%	555	510	-8.1%
January-24	5,208	4,880	-6.3%	560	511	-8.8%
February-24	5,260	4,868	-7.4%	551	511	-7.3%
March-24	5,283	4,857	-8.1%	550	511	-7.1%
April-24	5,252	4,846	-7.7%	548	511	-6.7%
May-24	5,304	4,835	-8.8%	545	511	-6.2%
June-23	5,300	4,825	-9.0%	527	512	-2.9%

Table 3b. High Counts: Actuals, Forecasts, and Discrepancies for FY2024 (New Forecast)

Month/Year	Males			Females		
	Actuals	Forecasts	Discrepancy	Actuals	Forecasts	Discrepancy
July-23	5,082	5,159	1.5%	520	526	1.1%
August-23	5,082	5,166	1.7%	537	527	-1.9%
September-23	5,121	5,166	0.9%	545	528	-3.2%
October-23	5,216	5,171	-0.9%	545	528	-3.1%
November-23	5,229	5,169	-1.1%	549	530	-3.5%
December-23	5,230	5,167	-1.2%	555	531	-4.3%
January-24	5,208	5,168	-0.8%	560	533	-4.8%
February-24	5,260	5,175	-1.6%	551	535	-2.9%
March-24	5,283	5,181	-1.9%	550	537	-2.4%
April-24	5,252	5,189	-1.2%	548	538	-1.9%
May-24	5,304	5,191	-2.1%	545	540	-0.9%
June-23	5,300	5,194	-2.0%	527	542	2.9%

Table 4. Male Population Projections, July 2024 to December 2034											
Month	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
January	-	5251	5407	5612	5835	6046	6215	6331	6372	6352	6284
February	-	5264	5424	5632	5856	6064	6230	6335	6370	6345	6274
March	-	5277	5442	5652	5876	6082	6243	6343	6373	6343	6269
April	-	5289	5460	5673	5895	6098	6255	6345	6369	6336	6259
May	-	5298	5474	5690	5913	6112	6268	6352	6371	6333	6254
June	-	5307	5488	5706	5927	6123	6275	6354	6368	6326	6243
July	5200	5321	5505	5724	5944	6136	6283	6360	6369	6323	6238
August	5211	5339	5528	5747	5966	6155	6289	6360	6364	6314	6227
September	5219	5354	5547	5767	5986	6171	6300	6366	6364	6311	6222
October	5228	5367	5564	5785	6002	6184	6308	6365	6359	6302	6210
November	5236	5380	5578	5800	6015	6193	6318	6370	6359	6298	6205
December	5243	5393	5594	5816	6029	6202	6322	6368	6353	6288	6193

Table 5. Female Population Projections, July 2024 to December 2034											
Month	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
January	-	559	593	625	651	666	671	667	657	645	633
February	-	562	596	628	653	667	671	666	656	644	632
March	-	565	599	630	654	668	671	665	655	643	631
April	-	567	601	632	655	668	670	665	654	642	630
May	-	570	604	635	657	668	670	664	653	641	629
June	-	573	607	637	658	669	670	663	652	640	628
July	545	576	610	639	660	670	670	662	651	638	628
August	547	579	613	641	661	670	670	662	650	637	627
September	549	582	615	643	662	671	669	661	649	637	626
October	551	584	618	645	663	670	668	660	648	636	625
November	554	587	620	647	664	671	668	659	647	635	625
December	557	590	623	649	665	671	667	658	646	634	624

Table 6. Male New Prison Admissions by District Attorney Districts, FY2020-FY2024					
DA District	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
1	5.2%	4.3%	3.9%	5.0%	3.3%
2	22.9%	20.9%	16.7%	20.0%	26.9%
3	10.5%	5.3%	7.3%	5.9%	5.2%
4	1.7%	2.1%	3.3%	3.6%	3.8%
5	12.9%	13.0%	13.0%	14.4%	11.9%
6	4.3%	5.2%	5.0%	5.1%	4.8%
7	3.7%	2.7%	2.9%	1.8%	2.4%
8	3.3%	3.8%	2.0%	2.5%	2.7%
9	7.8%	11.9%	11.1%	7.2%	6.7%
10	1.8%	2.8%	2.3%	2.5%	2.6%
11 Division I	7.5%	8.9%	12.2%	13.6%	12.3%
11 Division II	1.6%	1.3%	1.4%	1.1%	2.5%
12	11.0%	11.0%	13.2%	9.8%	8.4%
13	5.8%	6.7%	5.8%	7.5%	6.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 7. Female New Prison Admissions by District Attorney Districts, FY2020-FY2024					
DA District	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
1	4.1%	3.8%	3.8%	2.7%	3.1%
2	19.6%	9.2%	12.4%	14.0%	22.4%
3	10.7%	10.3%	7.2%	4.5%	2.0%
4	0.7%	1.1%	2.4%	7.2%	3.6%
5	12.2%	12.5%	13.9%	13.1%	13.8%
6	3.0%	3.8%	4.8%	9.5%	7.1%
7	5.9%	6.5%	4.8%	3.2%	2.6%
8	1.8%	5.4%	1.4%	0.9%	2.0%
9	9.2%	12.5%	11.0%	9.0%	9.2%
10	2.2%	1.6%	1.4%	4.1%	3.6%
11 Division I	5.5%	10.9%	9.6%	12.2%	11.7%
11 Division II	0.7%	0.0%	2.4%	0.9%	2.6%
12	17.7%	15.2%	17.2%	13.5%	9.7%
13	6.6%	7.1%	7.7%	5.4%	6.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 8. Male Admissions Over Time, Fiscal Years 2020-2024					
	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Violent Crimes					
SVO	225	211	224	231	267
Sex Crime	51	36	26	32	22
Assault and Battery	179	130	167	179	184
Other Violent*	169	136	171	181	225
Property Crimes					
Burglary	96	78	71	63	61
Other Property*	168	129	125	104	95
Drug Crimes					
Drug Trafficking	110	99	130	127	115
Drug Possession	237	156	171	154	159
Public Order Crimes					
DWI	73	53	48	41	61
Other Public Order*	105	77	102	100	110
Other					
Parole	745	831	735	639	678
Other Admissions*	157	93	100	139	156
Total	2,315	2,029	2,070	1,990	2,133

*These categories include, but are not limited to the following:
Other Violent: kidnapping, robbery, and child abuse
Other Property: larceny, arson, and fraud
Other Public Order: possession of weapon by felon, bribery of witness, and escape from custody
Other Admission Types: probation, diagnostic

Table 9. Female Admissions Over Time, Fiscal Years 2020-2024					
	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Violent Crimes					
SVO	14	12	12	20	16
Sex Crime	1	-	-	-	1
Assault and Battery	14	11	22	27	15
Other Violent*	38	34	36	50	50
Property Crimes					
Burglary	19	10	8	13	8
Other Property*	42	28	34	25	20
Drug Crimes					
Drug Trafficking	46	26	34	31	25
Drug Possession	81	49	48	37	39
Public Order Crimes					
DWI	1	4	3	5	9
Other Public Order*	14	10	12	14	13
Other					
Parole	116	123	107	90	81
Other Admissions*	35	19	17	28	34
Total	421	523	333	340	311

*These categories include, but are not limited to the following:
Other Violent: kidnapping, robbery, and child abuse
Other Property: larceny, arson, and fraud
Other Public Order: possession of weapon by felon, bribery of witness, and escape from custody
Other Admission Types: probation, diagnostic

APPENDIX B: METHODOLOGY

Prisoner Population Forecast: FY25–FY2034

While previous forecasts have involved only ARIMA modeling, the model in the present analysis employs a linear transfer function (LTF) methodology, wherein additional variables are introduced into ARIMA forecasting. LTF methods examine the relationship between dependent and independent variables prior to the introduction of ARIMA processes. Here, the relationship between prisoner populations of either gender is first evaluated against total New Mexico employment; remaining variations are then explained (to the extent possible) via ARIMA terms.

This report defines total New Mexico employment as the sum of two data series: non-military employment data (sourced from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics) and military employment (from the US Bureau of Economic Analysis). Historical employment data are available from at least January 1990 to September 2023. The models specified in the following sections employ forecasts of this series from October 2023 to December 2029, completed externally by BBER as part of quarterly economic forecast presentations. From January 2030 to June 2035, a separate forecast is completed using average rates of change in the series.

In general, the models described below are structured as follows, where mPM describes monthly prisoner maxima, EMP records New Mexico employment totals, and AR and MA represent autoregressive and moving average terms:

$$mPM_t = f(EMP_{t-i}, AR_{t-p}, MA_{t-q})$$

The following sections describe models used to forecast monthly maxima for male and female prisoners in New Mexico. While both models are derived from the above structure, each model is specified according to observations in the data for each gender/sex, independently. Differences between models are described below.

Males

Male prisoner population maxima have been trending downwards since late 2018, bottoming out in February 2023 with the lowest recorded maximum (5,010) since 2001. Following that, the population of male prisoners has increased by about 5% (with a maximum of 5,237 recorded in April 2024). To capture these fluctuations, male population maxima are modeled on a sample of 234 observations dating from January 2021 to June 2020 with the natural log of monthly maxima as the regressor. Theil inequality coefficients and associated proportions for bias, variance, and covariance further aid in developing an appropriate forecast model.

Cross-correlation functions between regressor and total New Mexico employment are used to aid in specifying lag structures for the employment regressand. Autocorrelation functions of male prisoner population and regressors are then consulted along with Akaike Information Criterion to help in specifying autoregressive and moving average terms.

For male prisoner maxima, the model is specified on employment lags of 4- and 12-months, in conjunction with an ARIMA(6,0,3)(1,1) model, which involves AR lags at 1-, 2-, 3-, 4-, 5-, and 6-months, MA terms at 1-, 2-, and 3-months, and singular seasonal autoregressive and moving average terms.

Male monthly prisoner maxima are then forecast from July 2020 to June 2035. Forecast precision is assessed against historical data ranging from July 2020 to February 2024. Forecast population totals remain within ±3% of observed figures aside from a single instance in February 2023. Given current trends, it is predicted that male prisoner population maxima will decrease slightly to 5,194 by the end of the current fiscal year. The ten-year forecast predicts an increase to 6,140 by the end of fiscal year 2034.

Females

Female prisoner population maxima see similar trends as those for male prisoners, with the highest (797) maximum occurring in February 2018 and the smallest (500) seen in January 2023. From there, maximum population totals have risen to 560 in January 2024 and 544 in February 2024—amongst the largest recorded figures since 2021.

The female prisoner population model is based on data spanning from January 2001 to February 2024. Cross-correlation functions are, again, used to establish lag structures between the employment variable and the regressor. Then, autocorrelation functions are reviewed in conjunction with Akaike Information Criterion output to assess for AR and MA terms. Forecasts are analyzed through Theil Inequality Coefficients and associated proportions. Here, the model is specified with an employment lag at 12 months, plus an ARIMA(6,0,4) model.

Data are forecast from July 2020 through June 2035 and examined for precision against observations recorded between July 2020 and February 2024. Within that time span, the forecast remains within ±5% in all but 3 instances. This model predicts that female prisoner maxima will total 542 at the end of the current fiscal year and continue a slight increase into mid-2029. After that, a gentle downward slope is expected, concluding at a female prisoner maximum of 620 in June 2035.

ENDNOTES

1. *Prisoners in 2021* (2022) had reported the number of sentenced prisoners in state jurisdiction at the end of 2020 as 1,019,217, as indicated in the previous edition of this report. We, too, revise the value in this edition.

2. Most data in theis report, beginning with Table 1, include all detainees in New Mexico prisons, including those in federal jurisdiction. The *Prisoner series* includes information about detainees in federal jurisdiction in the nation overall, but such detainees are not included in state-level counts. For the sake of comparison, then, we include only detainees in state jurisdiction in the text above and in Figure 1, which rely on information in the *Prisoner series*.

3. Fiscal years for State of New Mexico entities begin July 1 of the previous calendar year.

4. Across the facilities the operational capacities for male inmates are as follows: 1,293 beds at the Lea County Correctional Facility in Hobbs (Private); 1,246 at Central New Mexico Correctional Facility (Los Lunas); 864 at the Penitentiary of New Mexico (Santa Fe); 768 at Southern New Mexico Correctional Facility (Las Cruces); 673 at Western New Mexico Prison Facility South (Grants); 632 at Northeast New Mexico Detention Facility in Clayton; 607 at Otero County Prison Facility (Chaparral, Private); 608 at Guadalupe County Correctional Facility (Santa Rosa, Private); and 340 at the Roswell Correctional Center.

5. The operational capacities for female inmates is 353 beds at Western New Mexico Correctional Facility (Grants) and 298 in Springer Correctional Center.

6. See Tables 3-5 in Appendix A for more detailed information regarding FY2024 high counts and future projections.

7. Figures 4 and 5 represent detained individuals at a single point in time. For New Mexico, the individuals represented are prison detainees on June 30, 2023. For the United States, the individuals are prison detainees on December 31, 2022.

8. FY2023 is the most recent year for which we have race and ethnicity information. For statewide data, we drew information from the United States Census Bureau.

9. For more information regarding the geographic source of admissions throughout the period, see Tables 6 and 7 in the Appendix. Noteworthy, for both males and females, the proportion of Admissions from District 3, including Las Cruces, dropped substantially over the period, while the proportion of admissions from District 11 I, including Farmington, increased.

10. FY2023 is the most recent year for which we have charge type information.

11. To see the information presented in Figures 11 and 12 in more detail, see Tables 8 and 9 in the Appendix.

12. FY2023 is the most recent year for which we have information regarding filings.

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