



WISCONSIN PRISON POINT-IN-TIME POPULATIONS: 2000-2019

The point-in-time population numbers presented below are “snapshots” of the prison population taken two times each year and include individuals who were physically present in Wisconsin adult prisons or contracted facilities from 2000 to 2019. Point-in-time population counts exclude individuals who were in a prison or contracted facility for a temporary hold.

The prison population grew from 20,365 to 23,692 persons in our care between 2000 and 2019, a 16.3% increase. The population peaked in 2007 at 23,183 individuals, and then decreased until 2011 when it began to increase again.

Highlights:

Gender. Males have consistently made up the majority (between 93% and 95%) of the prison population.

Race. Since 2000, White persons in our care have made up the largest proportion of the prison population at every point-in-time. At the end of 2019, White persons in our care made up 52.4% of the population while Black persons in our care made up 42.0%.

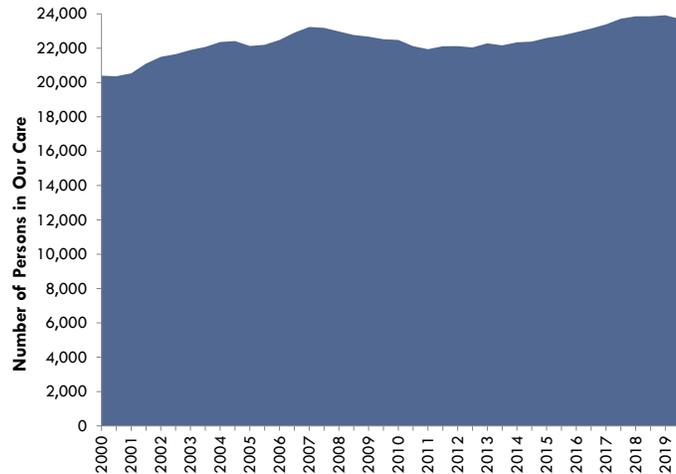
Age. From December of 2000 to 2019, the proportion of persons in our care aged 45 or older increased by 129.7% (from 12.8% to 29.4%). During that same time, the proportion of those in our care aged 24 or younger decreased by 57.5% (from 25.4% to 10.8%).

Most Serious Offense. Individuals in our care whose most serious offense was a violent offense have consistently made up the majority of the prison population. In 2019, those with a violent offense represented 67.8% of the prison population, followed by those with a drug offense (11.9%), property offense (11.8%), and a public order offense (8.5%) as their most serious offense.

Any Drug, Sex, or OWI Offense. The percentage of persons in our care with a drug offense has remained around 20% from 2000 to 2019, reaching a low of 17.6% in 2012 and climbing to 23.2% in 2019. In that same timeframe, the percentage of persons in our care with a sex offense has increased from 20.1% to 24.8%, and the percentage of persons in our care with an OWI offense has increased from 3.2% to 8.6%.

Time Left to Serve. Between 2000 and 2019, the proportion of those in our care with less than five years left to serve decreased by 8.1%, whereas the proportion of those in our care with five or more years left to serve increased by 22.6%.

Individuals Serving Life Sentences. The number of persons in our care serving a life sentence has increased from 917 individuals in December 2000 to 1,184 individuals in December 2019.



For more details, see the full Prison Point-in-Time Populations report on the WI DOC website: [Prison Point-in-Time Populations: 2000-2019](#)

Inquiries regarding this report may be directed to the Data and Research Inquiries mailbox: WIDOCDataandResearchInquiries@wisconsin.gov