Incarceration in Tennessee

STATE INCARCERATION

The TN Dept. of Correction incarcerated 30,240 people convicted of state felonies in 2018 — a rate of 447 state prisoners for every 100,000 Tennesseans. State prisoner population growth is outpacing total population growth.

+68% Increase in State Incarceration Rate (1991-2018)

+129% Increase in # of State Prisoners (1991-2018)

PRIMARY OFFENSES

Violent crimes accounted for the largest share of Tennessee state prisoners in 2018.

Property crimes accounted for the most entries to state incarceration.

Entries to state incarceration peaked between 2008-2012 for all felony offense types.

Entries by Primary Offense (2003-2018)

Sentences & Time Served

Avg. Sentences and Time Served grew from 2003 to 2018 — particularly for drug offenses, which make up a growing share of state prisoner entries.

Local Jails

Share of state prisoners housed in local jails. (2018)

27%

4,700 Backup inmates are waiting for space in a state facility.

3,400 Locally sentenced inmates serve their entire time in a local jail.

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February 2019
**DEMOGRAPHICS**

Tennessee’s state prisoner population is disproportionately black.

**STATE INCARCERATION IN CONTEXT**

State prisoners accounted for 51% of all Tennesseans incarcerated in state, local, and federal facilities in 2018.

**# of Incarcerated Tennesseans by Facility and Offense Type**

(FY 2018)

- **TN State Prisons**: 22,100
- **Local TN Jails**: 30,200
- **Federal Prisons (Nationwide)**: 8,100

**BUDGET FACTS**

Funded almost entirely by state revenues, the TN Dept. of Correction is consistently among the six largest state revenue expenses.

**TN Dept. of Correction**

$926 Million

(FY 2017)

- **State Revenues**: 98%
- **Other**: 2%

**Expenditures**

- **Community Services**: 10%
- **Admin**: 6%
- **Incarceration**: 84%

**TDOC’s Daily Cost to House a State Prisoner**

(FY 2019)

- **$77** avg. cost across all state facilities
- **$39** per diem reimbursement to most local jails

(FY 1995 – FY 2019 trend)

- **$80** state facility avg.
- **+63%**
- **$39** local jail per diem
- **+11%**

**White women** were the fastest growing segment of state prisoners from 2003-2018.

**Trend in # of State Prisoners by Sex & Race (2003-2018)**

- +117% White Women
- +29% White Men
- -3% Black Men
- -3% Black Women

Tennessee’s state prisoner population is aging.

**State Prisoners by Age (2003-2018)**

- 30% Age 40+
- 32% Age 30-39
- 37% Age 18-29

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