

An estimated 721,300 inmates were confined in county and city jails on an average day in 2015, down from the peak of 776,600 inmates on an average day in 2008. In 2015, these local jails admitted 10.9 million persons. From 2008 to 2015, the volume of admissions to jails steadily declined. The number of persons admitted to jail in 2015 was nearly 15 times the size of the average daily population (ADP) in 2015.

The jail incarceration rate in 2015 (230 inmates per 100,000 U.S. residents) decreased from a peak of 260 inmates per 100,000 in 2006 through 2008. This was the lowest rate since midyear 2000 (220 per 100,000). The adult incarceration rate for persons age 18 or older also declined from a peak of 340 per 100,000 in 2006 through 2008 to about 300 per 100,000 each year since 2013.

About jail inmates

Males have accounted for at least 85% of the jail population every year since 2000. The female jail population grew from 11% of the total jail population in 2000 to 14% in 2013 and 2014. During that period, the female jail incarceration rate increased from about 50 per 100,000 in 2000 to nearly 70 per 100,000 in 2014, while the male incarceration rate (400 per 100,000) remained relatively stable.

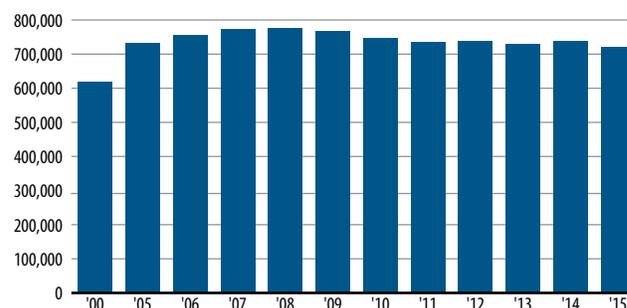
In 2015, less than 4,000 juveniles (those age 17 or younger) were held in jail custody, down from a peak of about 7,600 in 2010. Since 2000, at least 80% of jailed juveniles were on trial or awaiting trial in adult court.

Since 2013, 47% of jail inmates were white, which was an increase from 42% in 2000. Conversely, the percentage of black inmates declined from about 40% in 2005 to 35% in 2015. The percentage of Hispanics (about 15%) in local jails was unchanged between 2000 and 2014. American Indian and Alaska Native inmates represented a small proportion (about 1%) of the jail population, but their number nearly doubled since 2000.

Since 2005, more than 60% of all jail inmates were awaiting court action on a current charge, and the rest were sentenced offenders or convicted offenders awaiting sentencing. Regardless of conviction status, about two-thirds (68%) of jail inmates in 2015 were held for a felony offense. About a third (32%) of inmates were held for either misdemeanor (27%) or other offenses (5%).

Average daily population of inmates confined in local jails, 2000 and 2005–2015

Average daily population

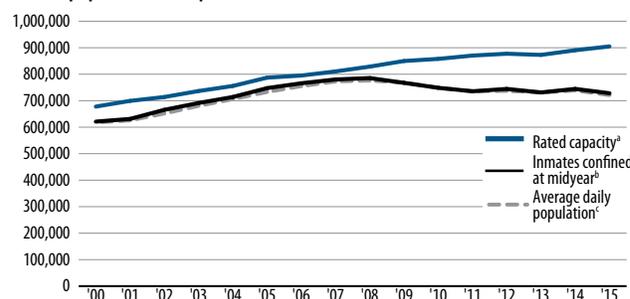


Note: Average daily population is the sum of all inmates in jail each day for a year, divided by the number of days in the year.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Annual Survey of Jails, 2000 and 2005–2015; and Census of Jail Inmates, 2005.

Midyear custody population, average daily population, and rated capacity in local jails, 2000–2015

Inmate population/bed space



^aMaximum number of beds or inmates assigned by a rating official to a facility, excluding separate temporary holding areas.

^bNumber of inmates held on the last weekday in June.

^cSum of all inmates in jail each day for a year, divided by the number of days in the year.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Annual Survey of Jails, 2000–2004 and 2006–2015; and Census of Jail Inmates, midyear 2005.

Local jail capacity

The rated capacity in jails reached 904,900 beds at yearend 2015. From 2008 to 2015, the rated capacity increased by 9% while the ADP declined by 7%. Since peaking in 2007 at 95%, the percentage of occupied capacity on an average day declined to 80% by yearend 2015.

The full report (*Jail Inmates in 2015*, NCJ 250394), related documents, and additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics can be found at www.bjs.gov.

