

ALASKA

The Alaska Department of Corrections (ADOC) currently operates twelve correctional facilities across the State and is one of only six states with a unified correctional system. Consequently, ADOC is responsible for housing and supervising nearly the entire population of misdemeanants, felons, pretrial defendants, and supervision violators in the State of Alaska across these twelve facilities.¹

As of Dec. 31, 2016, more than 6.6 million individuals in the United States were either in custody in prison or jail or under some form of community supervision. By 2017, more than 1 in 38 adults in the United States was under a form of correctional supervision.² As of July 1, 2018, ADOC was holding in-custody or supervising a total of 8,270 individuals.³ The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) estimated the population of Alaska to have been 736,239 people in 2018, indicating an estimated 1.1% of the State's entire population was under a form ADOC custody or supervision. When limiting data to reflect only the adult population 18 years or older, the resulting statistic indicates that 1.5% of the entire adult population in Alaska (549,139) was in-custody or under a form of ADOC supervision, or about 1 in 65 adults in Alaska.⁴

According to the ADOC 2018 Offender Profile report, as of July 1, 2018, a total of 8,270 adults were either being housed in an in-state correctional facility, and out-of-state correctional facility, or under some form of ADOC community supervision. A total of 4,294 individuals were housed inside an in-state correctional facility, 17 were housed in out-of-state correctional facilities, 251 were housed at a community residential center, 202 individuals were released to electronic monitoring, and 3,506 individuals were on parole or probation. Nearly 90% of ADOC inmates were males, and they primarily identified as Caucasian/White (43%), Alaskan Native (37%), or Black/African American (10%).³

The ADOC defines recidivism as a conviction and return to incarceration for any reason, for any person convicted of a felony within three years from release. It was reported in early 2019 the most recent cohort of offenders dating to CY 2015 demonstrated a recidivism rate of 61%, which was a modest decline from the previous rates that hovered near 66%.⁵ At the national level, 3-year recidivism rates among state prisoners are mostly comparable at 68%.⁶

Data estimates demonstrate that based on total volume, only five other states have a smaller number of individuals in custody or under a form of community supervision compared to Alaska. However, only 19 other states have a higher rate of adults under some form of correctional supervision.² In other words, the total number of individuals in custody or under state corrections supervision is relatively low in Alaska; however, compared to other states, Alaska incarcerates or supervises a relatively high proportion of its residents. Nationally, incarceration rates have been declining for more than a decade and recent data suggests that Alaska's recidivism rates may also be dropping.⁷

ANCHORAGE

Of the twelve ADOC facilities located around the State, one is located in the Municipality of Anchorage while six institutions are situated within relative proximity to Anchorage and in the vicinities of Eagle River, Wasilla, Palmer, Seward, and Kenai. According to ADOC data, a total of 6,988 unique individuals were released from ADOC custody in CY2018. Of all those individuals, 45% (3,163) were released to Anchorage even though the DOLWD estimated that only about 40% (295,365) of the State's population was located within the Municipality of Anchorage in 2018.^{4,8}



Comparatively, 10% (727) of releases were to the Mat-Su Valley, 9% (628) were to Fairbanks, and 3% (215) were to Juneau. Individuals releasing from ADOC to Anchorage tend to be male; they are White, Alaskan Native, or African American; and they generally between 20-44 years old.⁸

In CY2018 there was a total of 3,917 releases from ADOC to the Anchorage community (reflecting the number of each instance there was a release from custody). In terms of the proportion of misdemeanor and felon releases to Anchorage, 55% (2,155) of ADOC releases were for misdemeanor crimes while 44% (1,733) were for felonies. Nearly 84% (3,300) of all releases to Anchorage were for non-violent offenses while about 16% (617) were for violent offenses.⁸

The ADOC administers the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R), a validated and reliable tool that is used to measure recidivism risk and inform supervision and delivery of services and treatment. An LSI-R score is a composite measure that considers various factors, including criminal history, attitudes, alcohol and drug use, family and marital status, and other relevant factors.⁹ LSI-R scores were made available based on the categorization of scores: minimum, medium, maximum. Among all ADOC releases back to the community across the entire state during CY2018, almost 56% (694) of all releases that corresponded to a “maximum” LSI-R score were released to Anchorage.⁸

Most recently available ADOC data demonstrates that there continues to be a high proportion of ADOC releases to Anchorage, most of whom are White, Alaskan Native or African American males, many are non-violent offenders, and a great proportion demonstrate a high risk for recidivism and high need for supervision, treatment, services, and/or support. This data validates the need for continued investments in a comprehensive range of resources and services for the relatively high number of former ADOC inmates being released to the Anchorage community, including culturally responsive services and services that are responsive to individuals that are at higher risk for returning to ADOC custody.

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Note: The preceding analysis does not include criminally-involved youth, nor does it include data for individuals from Alaska that are in Federal custody or under Federal supervision.

Data Sources:

1. Personal Correspondence with ADOC representative; October 2018.
2. Correctional Populations in the United States, 2016, U.S. Dept. of Justice (Accessed: www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpus16.pdf).
3. 2018 Offender Profile, Alaska Dept. of Corrections (Accessed: www.correct.state.ak.us/admin/docs/2018Profile.pdf).
4. Alaska Population by Age and Sex, 2010 to 2018, Alaska Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development (Accessed: live.laborstats.alaska.gov/pop/index.cfm).
5. Alaska Recidivism & Reentry Presentation, Alaska Legislature Meeting on February 5, 2019 (Accessed: www.akleg.gov/basis/get_documents.asp?session=31&docid=10465).
6. 2018 Update on Prisoner Recidivism: A 9-Year Follow-up Period (2005-2014), Bureau of Justice Statistics (Accessed: www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/18upr9yfup0514.pdf).
7. Prisoner in 2017, U.S. Department of Justice (Accessed: <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/p17.pdf>).
8. Personal Correspondence with ADOC representative; May and June 2018.
9. MHS Assessments: LSI-R Website (Accessed: www.mhs.com/MHS-PublicSafety?prodname=lsi-r).

