

County and city jails held 745,200 inmates at midyear 2017, down from 780,200 at midyear 2007. About two-thirds (482,000) of the inmates were unconvicted and awaiting court action on a charge, while the rest (263,200) were convicted and serving a sentence or awaiting sentencing. In 2017, jails reported 10.6 million admissions, a 19% decline from 2007.

Jail incarceration rates

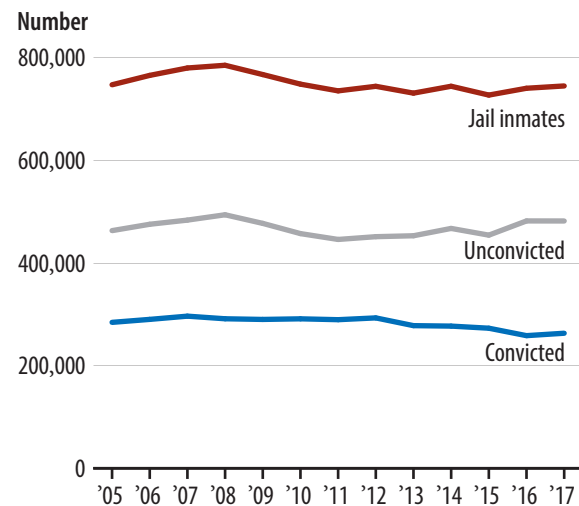
The jail incarceration rate declined from 259 inmates per 100,000 U.S. residents at midyear 2007 to 229 per 100,000 at midyear 2017, a 12% decrease. In 2017, the male incarceration rate (394 per 100,000 male U.S. residents) was nearly six times that of the female rate (69 per 100,000 female U.S. residents).

From 2005 to 2017, the jail incarceration rate for whites increased 12%, while the rate for blacks decreased 23%. In 2017, the incarceration rate for blacks was more than 3 times the rate for whites and Hispanics and more than 20 times the rate for Asians. The Asian incarceration rate was 89% lower than the overall rate.

Jail population

The demographic characteristics of the jail population changed from 2005 to 2017. In 2005, the number of whites in local jails (331,000) exceeded blacks (290,500) by 14%. By 2017, whites (370,100) outnumbered blacks (250,100) by almost 50%. From 2005 to 2017, the percentage of the jail population that was white increased from 44% to 50%, while the percentage that was black decreased from 39% to 34%. Hispanics accounted for 15% of all jail inmates in 2017, the same as in 2005. Asians accounted for less than 1% of inmates in both years.

Inmates confined in local jails at midyear, by conviction status, 2005–2017



Note: Based on the number of inmates held on the last weekday in June. Results may differ from previous reports in the series due to data updates from jails. In 2015 and 2016, the Annual Survey of Jails collected counts of convicted and unconvicted inmates at year-end. Jails typically hold fewer inmates at year-end than at midyear. The 2015 and 2016 inmate populations were adjusted for seasonal variation and represent estimated midyear counts.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Annual Survey of Jails, 2006–2017, and Census of Jail Inmates, 2005.

Jail time, capacity, and staffing

The overall weekly inmate turnover was 54% in 2017, while the estimated average time in jail before release was 26 days. At midyear 2017, one in five jails were operating at or above 100% of their rated capacity, which is the number of beds or inmates that a rating official has assigned to a facility. The total rated capacity of county and city jails was 915,100 beds at midyear 2017. An estimated 81% of jail beds were occupied in 2017, down from 95% in 2005. Jails employed 225,700 full-time staff at midyear 2017. The inmate-to-correctional-officer ratio was 4.2 to 1.

The full report (*Jail Inmates in 2017*, NCJ 251774), related documents, and additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics can be found at www.bjs.gov.