



**elements of change**

Highlighting Trends and Issues in the Criminal Justice System



**OFFICE OF RESEARCH & STATISTICS**

Division of Criminal Justice

Colorado Department of Public Safety

# Trends in Prison Sentencing: Who Goes to Prison?

Researchers from the Division of Criminal Justice, Office of Research and Statistics (ORS) annually collect data on criminal filings to describe statewide trends. These data make up the ORS Criminal Justice Database.\* Data from the 1998 Criminal Justice Database were used here to describe offender characteristics.

Whether or not an offender receives a prison sentence, is related to a complex interaction of factors. In 1998 in Colorado, males, non-white, and offenders who were unemployed or not steadily employed at the time of arrest were more likely to receive a prison sentence. Analysis also showed that a history of criminal activity increased the likelihood of receiving a prison sentence. More detailed information on who was sentenced to prison in Colorado in 1998 is provided below.

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Correctional Populations  
as of December 2000; and  
State Ranking of  
Prison Populations**

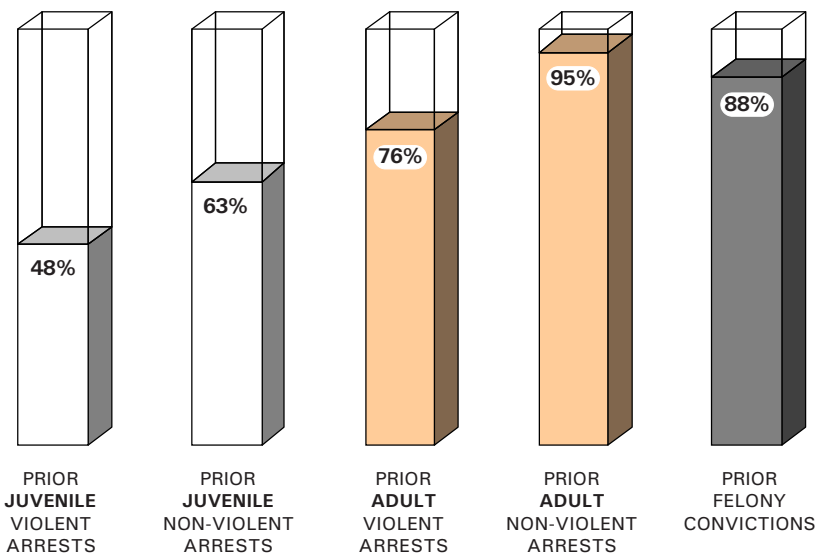
~ P.10 ~

**JUVENILE Detention,  
Commitment, and Parole  
Population PROJECTIONS**

## Criminal History Profile of Prison Placements, 1998

*A history of criminal activity increased the likelihood of an offender going to prison. Most offenders sentenced to prison in Colorado in 1998 had at least **one prior felony conviction**. **Three out of four** had an adult arrest for a violent offense, and **one in two** had a violent arrest in his/her juvenile history.*

*Source: Colorado Division of Criminal Justice, Office of Research & Statistics Criminal Justice Database, 1998.*

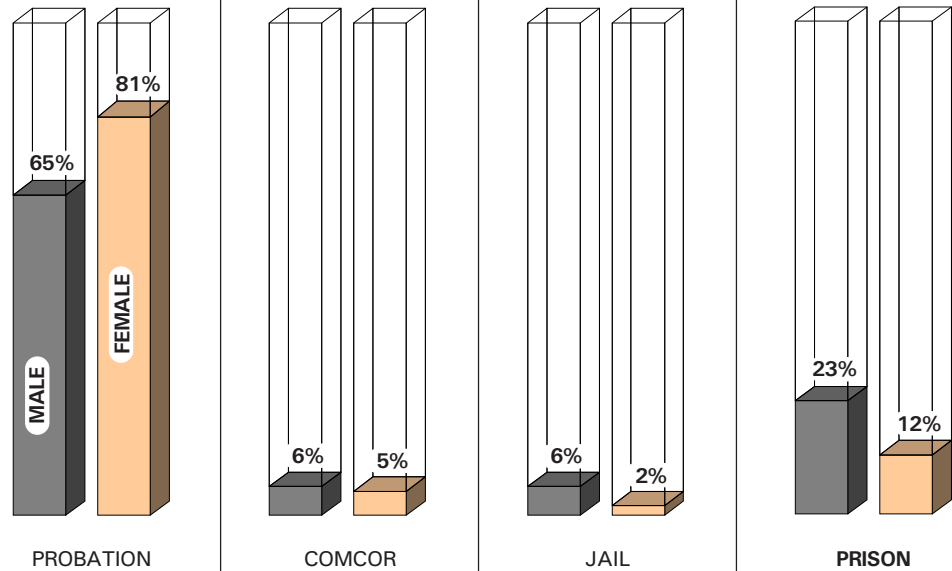


\* Please see page 3 for description of Criminal Justice Database.

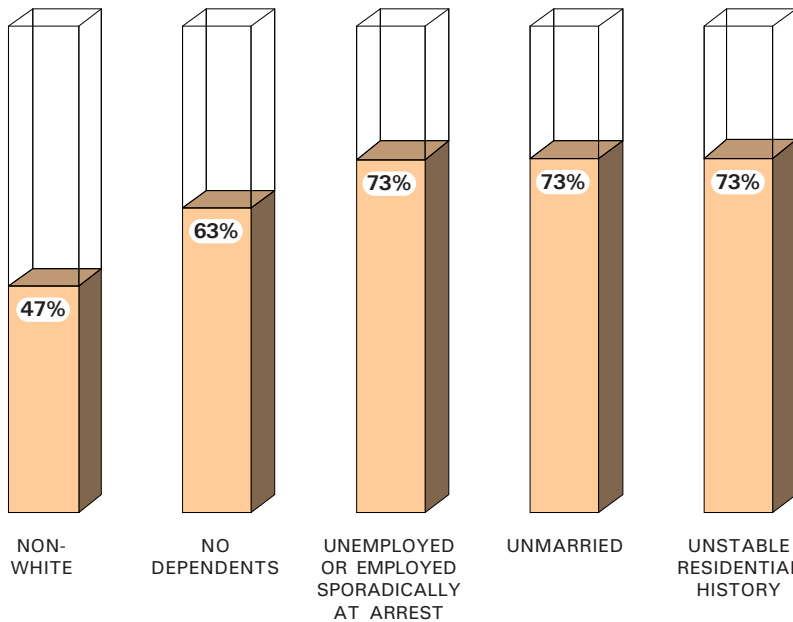
*Trends in Prison Sentencing: Who Goes to Prison?*

### Criminal Justice Placement by Gender, 1998

According to the Office of Research and Statistics Criminal Justice Database, nearly **one in four** (23%) male offenders sentenced to a criminal justice placement were sent to prison in 1998, compared with slightly more than **one in ten** (12%) females.



### Demographic Profile of Prison Placements, 1998



Offenders sentenced to prison in Colorado in 1998 were **more likely** than those sentenced to community placements to be **without dependents, unemployed or employed sporadically, unmarried, and have a history of residential movement.**

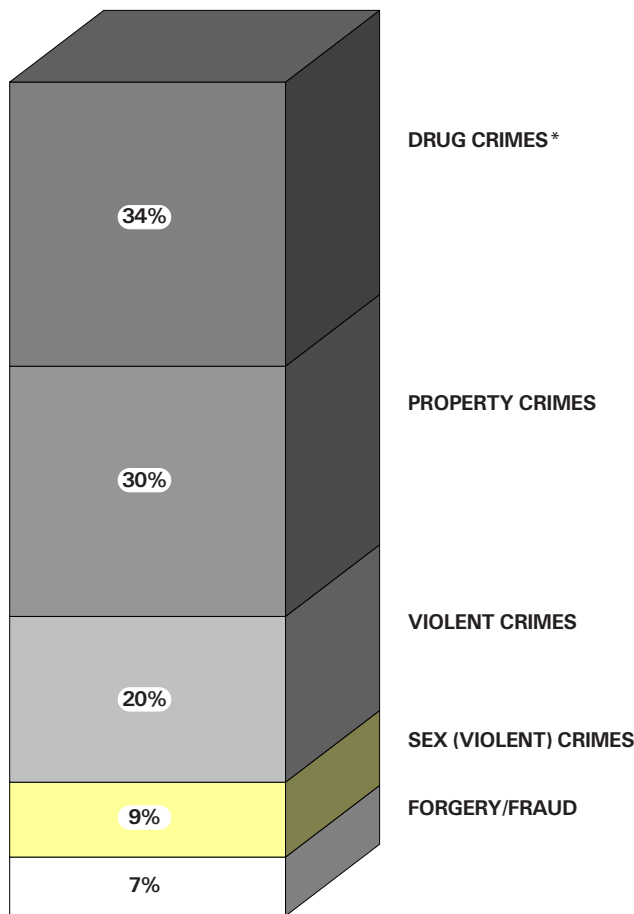
*Notes: Unmarried includes single, divorced/separated, and widows (but does not include common law marriages). Unemployed or employed sporadically includes persons receiving AFDC or SSI, disabled, students, and retired people. Offenders with a continual residence within the last two years were considered stable.*

Source all this page: Colorado Division of Criminal Justice, Office of Research & Statistics Criminal Justice Database, 1998.

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## Prison Placements by Offense Type, 1998 (Categories total 100%)

Of the offenders who went to prison in 1998, **71 percent** were convicted of nonviolent offenses (drug, property, forgery/fraud). Ninety percent (90%) of this (nonviolent) group had at least one prior felony conviction or adjudication on their record. Also, nonviolent offenders sentenced to prison were significantly more likely than violent offenders to have a community corrections revocation in their criminal history.

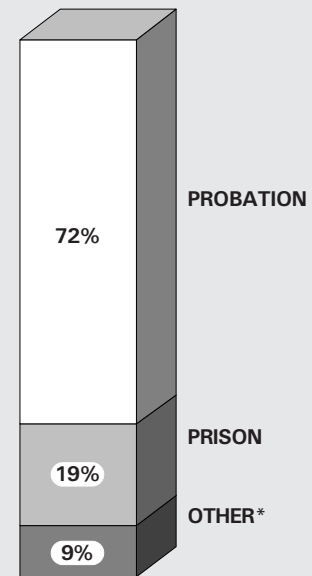


\* Nearly half of drug offenders were convicted of crimes related to cocaine or methamphetamine.

## Sidebar:

### Type of Criminal Justice Placement for Nonviolent Offenders, 1998

Offenders convicted of a non-violent crime were primarily granted probation in 1998. **Seventy-two percent (72%)** of nonviolent cases received probation sentences, and **19 percent** went to prison.



\* Other=community corrections, jail.

**Criminal Justice Database sample description:** The sampling technique for the 1998 Annual Criminal Justice Data Collection differed from that of previous years. Samples in previous years consisted of 20 percent of felony cases filed in nine of the state's twenty-two judicial districts (1st, Jefferson; 2nd, Denver; 4th, El Paso; 8th, Larimer; 10th, Pueblo; 17th, Adams; 18th, Arapahoe; 19th, Weld; and 21st, Mesa). The 1998 collection was a 10 percent random sample of ten districts, adding Boulder (20th). The total 1998 sample size was 2789.

Source all this page: Colorado Division of Criminal Justice, Office of Research & Statistics Criminal Justice Database, 1998.

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**A D U L T** Prison and Parole Population **P R O J E C T I O N S**

█ Nationally, Colorado ranked **fourth** in prison population growth between 1998 and 1999.

█ Nationally, Colorado experienced the **tenth** highest growth rate in average prison population between 1990 and 1999. *(First two bullets: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 1999, August 2000)*

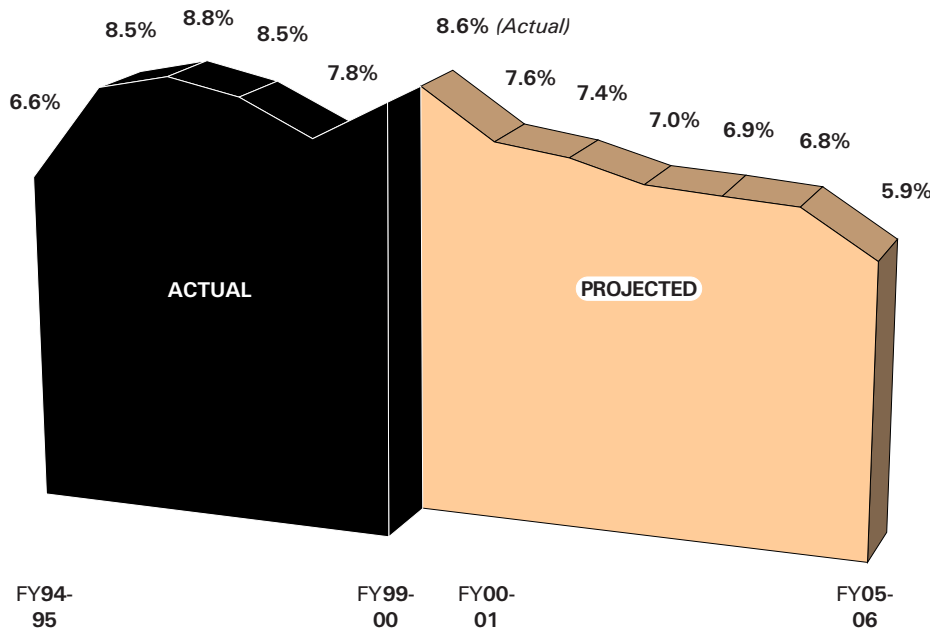
█ **Admissions outpaced releases in Colorado in the last ten years.** Admissions nearly doubled (92.4 percent) since 1991, while releases increased 77.6 percent. In the last year, admissions increased 3.7 percent while releases decreased .59 percent. *(CO Department of Corrections)*

**ADULT PRISON POPULATION PROJECTIONS**

*The Colorado adult prison population is expected to grow 48% between January 2001 and January 2007.*

	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
JAN 2001	15,269	1,315	16,611
JAN 2002	16,428	1,402	17,830
JAN 2003	17,637	1,481	19,118
JAN 2004	18,897	1,549	20,446
JAN 2005	20,242	1,603	21,845
JAN 2006	21,579	1,650	23,229
JAN 2007	22,857	1,696	24,553
<b>PROJECTED GROWTH BETWEEN 2001 &amp; 2007</b>	<b>49%</b> (MEN)	<b>29%</b> (WOMEN)	<b>48%</b> (TOTAL)

**YEARLY PRISON POPULATION GROWTH, Actual vs. Projected**



*Prison population growth is expected to slow.\* The average annual prison population growth rate is projected to be 6.9 percent between FY00-01 and FY05-06. The actual average annual growth rate was 8.1 percent between FY94-95 and FY99-00.*

*\* NOTE!!!: Even though the yearly growth rate is projected to slow, the prison population is still projected to increase (48% between 2001 and 2007).*

Colorado Division of Criminal Justice Fall 2000

# A D U L T Prison and Parole Population P R O J E C T I O N S

■ **Technical violations are expected to double between January 2001 and January 2007.** The number of males in prison for technical violations will more than double between January 2001 and January 2007. The number of incarcerated females in prison due to technical violations will grow by 50 percent.

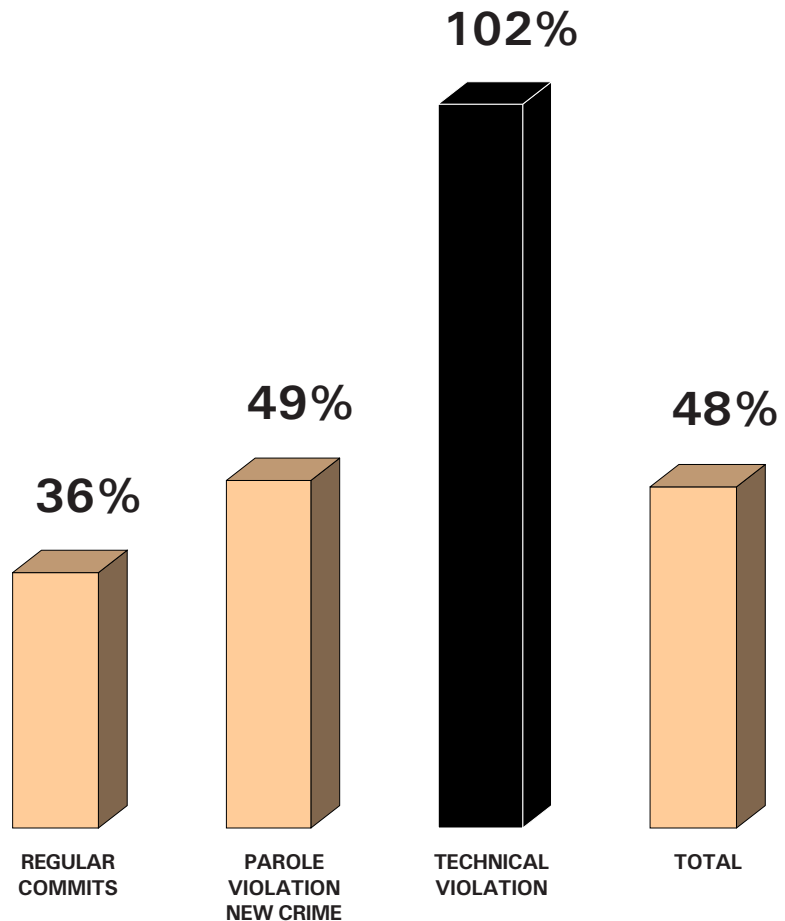
■ **The projected growth in technical violations reflects steep increases in commitments for technical parole violations in each of the last two years.** Technical violation commitments increased 28.9 percent between 1998 and 1999 and 22.5 percent between 1999 and 2000.

■ **In fact, the increase in commitments in the last year was due to technical parole violations.** When technical violations were removed, commitments decreased between 1999 and 2000, from 4,833 to 4,683.

■ **The average annual growth rate for technical parole violations is projected to be 13.4 percent from the current fiscal year (July 2000) to July 2006.** Mandatory parole policies increase the number of individuals who are supervised after prison. When more individuals are supervised, violations are more likely to be found -- resulting in increased returns to prison.

## PRISON POPULATION PROJECTIONS BY INCARCERATION TYPE, PROJECTED GROWTH BETWEEN 2001 AND 2007

	REGULAR COMMITTS	PAROLE VIOLATION NEW CRIME	TECHNICAL VIOLATION	TOTAL
JAN 2001	12,423	1,540	2,649	16,612
JAN 2007	16,894	2,294	5,364	24,552



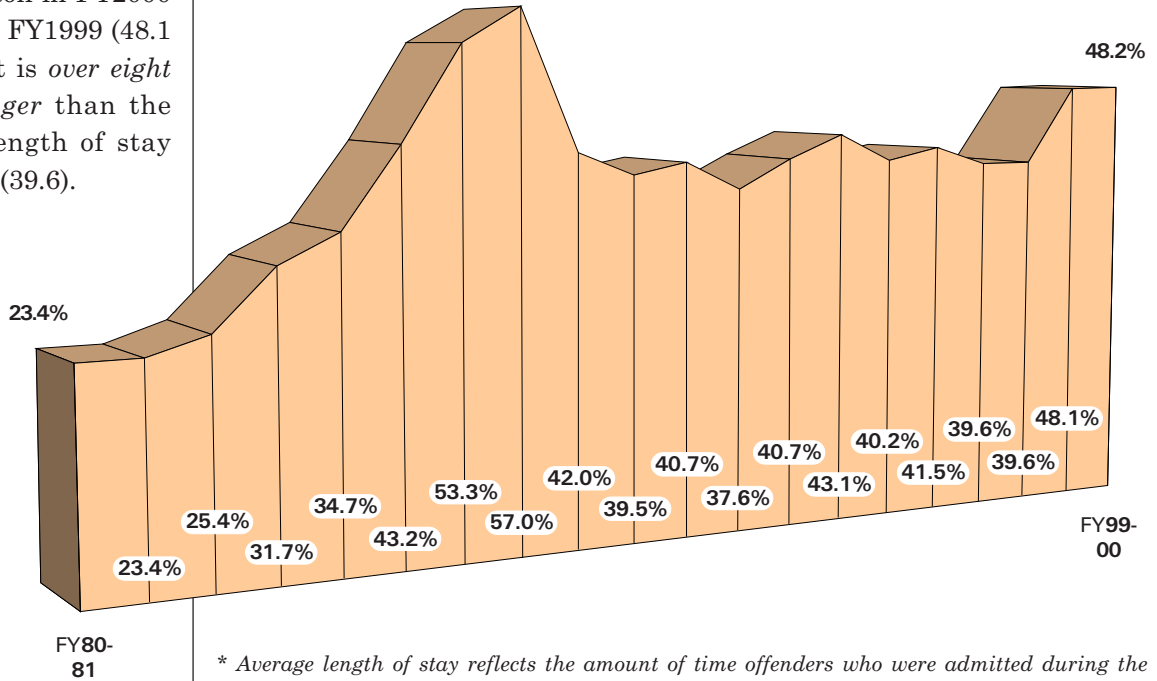
*Source these pages (unless otherwise noted): Colorado Division of Criminal Justice Fall 2000 Adult Prison and Parole Population Projections and Juvenile Detention, Commitment, and Parole Population Projections.*

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**A D U L T** Prison and Parole Population **P R O J E C T I O N S**

■ The 48.2 month estimated average length of stay for adult admissions to prison in FY2000 is similar to FY1999 (48.1 months) but is *over eight months longer* than the projected length of stay for FY1998 (39.6).

**PROJECTED AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY FOR NEW ADMISSIONS TO PRISON, FY1981 TO FY2000 (Months) \***



\* Average length of stay reflects the amount of time offenders who were admitted during the representative year were **expected** to serve (projected, not actual, numbers).

**PROJECTED ADULT PAROLE POPULATION, GROWTH BETWEEN 2001 AND 2007**

As described on the previous page, the Division of Criminal Justice's projections indicate that a large number of new admissions are technical parole violators, and many of these offenders will return to parole supervision within two years. Thus, the **parole population is projected to increase 57% between 2001 and 2007** (6%, 13%, and then 14% in the first three years of the projection period). If the current trend of increases in admissions for technical parole violators continues, DOC facilities will include a larger proportion of inmates with relatively shorter (post-parole violation) length of stays.

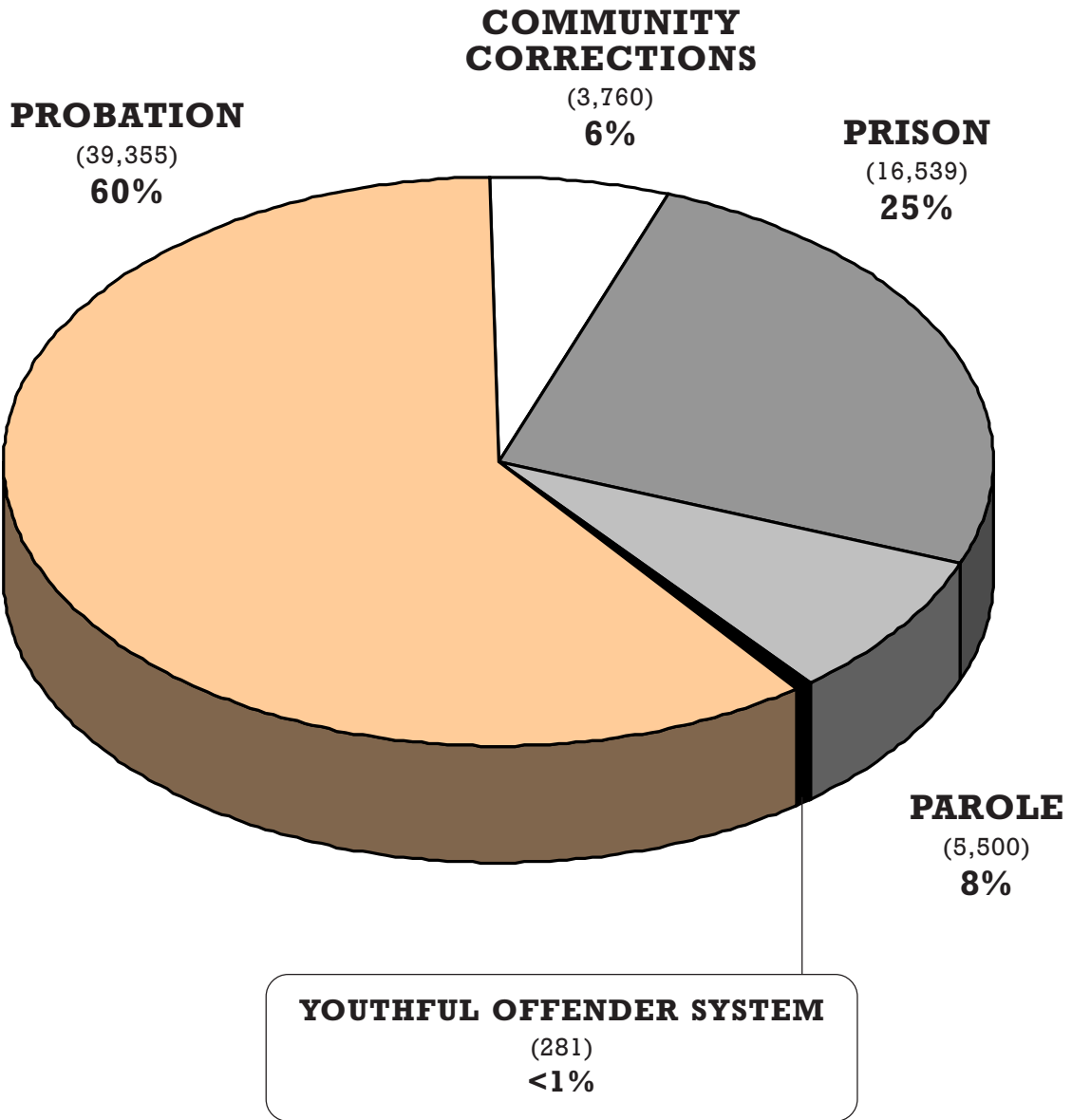
	JAN 2001	JAN 2002	JAN 2003	JAN 2004	JAN 2005	JAN 2006	JAN 2007
PAROLE POPULATION	5,398	5,734	6,464	7,397	7,944	8,210	8,481
% YEARLY INCREASE	~ ~ ~	6%	13%	14%	7%	3%	3%
% TOTAL INCREASE	~ ~ ~	~ ~ ~	~ ~ ~	~ ~ ~	~ ~ ~	~ ~ ~	<b>57%</b>

Source this page: Colorado Division of Criminal Justice Fall 2000 Adult Prison and Parole Population Projections and Juvenile Detention, Commitment, and Parole Population Projections.

# Snapshot

## Colorado Correctional Populations

for Quarter Ending 12/31/2000



Source: Colorado Correctional Populations Quarterly Report, February 2001, compiled by the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice, Office of Research and Statistics.

# SnapShot

## Prison Populations: State Rankings

### PRISON POPULATIONS, 1999

*High*

Texas	163,190
California	163,067
FEDERAL	135,246
New York	73,233
Florida	69,596
Ohio	46,842
Michigan	46,617
Illinois	44,660
Georgia	42,091
Pennsylvania	36,525
Louisiana	34,066
Virginia	32,453
New Jersey	31,493
North Carolina	31,086
Missouri	26,155
Arizona	25,986
Alabama	24,658
Maryland	23,095
Tennessee	22,502
Oklahoma	22,393
South Carolina	22,008
Wisconsin	20,417
Indiana	19,309
Connecticut	18,639
Mississippi	18,247

**COLORADO 15,670 (26th)**

Kentucky	15,317
Washington	14,590
Arkansas	11,415
Massachusetts	11,356
Oregon	9,810
Nevada	9,494
Dist. of Columbia	8,652
Kansas	8,567
Iowa	7,232
Delaware	6,983
Minnesota	5,969
Utah	5,426
New Mexico	5,124
Hawaii	4,903
Idaho	4,842
Alaska	3,949
Nebraska	3,688
West Virginia	3,532
Rhode Island	3,003
Montana	2,954
South Dakota	2,506
New Hampshire	2,257
Maine	1,716
Wyoming	1,713
Vermont	1,536
North Dakota	943

*Low*

### INCARCERATION RATES, 1999 \*

*High*

Dist. of Columbia	1,314
Louisiana	776
Texas	762
Oklahoma	662
Mississippi	626
Alabama	549
South Carolina	543
Georgia	532
Nevada	509
Arizona	495
Delaware	493
California	481
Missouri	477
Michigan	472
Florida	456
Virginia	447
Arkansas	443
Maryland	427
Ohio	417
Tennessee	408
New York	400
Connecticut	397
Idaho	385
Kentucky	385
New Jersey	384

**COLORADO 383 (26th)**

Wisconsin	375
Alaska	374
Illinois	368
Wyoming	355
North Carolina	345
South Dakota	339
Montana	335
Indiana	324
Kansas	321
Hawaii	320
Pennsylvania	305
Oregon	293
New Mexico	270
Massachusetts	266
Iowa	252
Washington	251
Utah	245
Nebraska	217
Vermont	198
West Virginia	196
Rhode Island	193
New Hampshire	187
North Dakota	137
Maine	133
Minnesota	125
FEDERAL	42

*Low*

\* Rate per 100,000 state residents.



# SnapShot

## Prison Populations: State Rankings

**10 HIGHEST AND  
10 LOWEST:  
1-YEAR GROWTH IN  
PRISON POPULATIONS,  
1998-1999**

*High*

**10 HIGHEST:**

Idaho	12.9%
Wisconsin	10.9%
FEDERAL	9.9%

**COLORADO 9.5% (4th)**

Mississippi	9.4%
Oregon	9.2%
Wyoming	9.0%
Alabama	8.7%
Montana	8.0%
Arkansas	7.3%

**10 LOWEST:**

Nebraska	0.3%
Hawaii	-0.4%
Nevada	-1.6%
Iowa	-2.2%
North Carolina	-2.7%
Ohio	-3.3%
Alaska	-3.6%
Massachusetts	-3.8%
Dist. of Columbia	-12.0%
Rhode Island	-12.8%

*Low*



**Nationally, Colorado ranked *FOURTH* in prison population growth between 1998 and 1999.**

**10 HIGHEST AND  
10 LOWEST:  
GROWTH IN PRISON  
POPULATIONS SINCE  
1990**

*High*

**10 HIGHEST:**

Texas	11.8%
Idaho	10.6%
FEDERAL	9.5%
West Virginia	9.5%
Hawaii	9.3%
Tennessee	9.0%
Mississippi	8.9%
Utah	8.8%
Montana	8.4%

**COLORADO 8.3% (10th)**

**10 LOWEST:**

Ohio	4.4%
Michigan	3.5%
New York	3.2%
Maryland	3.2%
South Carolina	3.0%
Massachusetts	3.0%
Alaska	2.6%
Rhode Island	2.1%
Maine	1.3%
Dist. of Columbia	-0.1%

*Low*



**Nationally, Colorado experienced the *TENTH* highest growth rate in average prison population between 1990 and 1999.**

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prisoners in 1999*, August 2000, document # NCJ 183476.

Colorado Division of Criminal Justice Fall 2000

**JUVENILE** Detention, Commitment, and Parole Population **PROJECTIONS**

**DETENTION**

■ The Division of Criminal Justice forecasts a **26.3 percent** growth rate of statewide detention average daily population (ADP) (with backlog) over the projection period – FY00-01 to FY06-07. This growth rate is reduced substantially from last year’s estimated growth rate of 40.7 percent over a similar time period.

■ Average annual detention growth from FY00-01 over the projection period is **4.3 percent**.

**definitions:**

**DETENTION**

The custodial status of youth who are confined after arrest or awaiting the completion of judicial proceedings. Detention facilities hold youth who are awaiting trial, serving detention sentences, or awaiting commitment placement (either institutional or community based).

**BACKLOG**

The number of sentenced youth in detention facilities who are awaiting placement in commitment facilities.

**COMMITMENT**

Dispositions of juvenile cases resulting in the transfer of legal custody to the Department of Human Services by the court as a result of an adjudicatory hearing on charges of delinquent acts committed by the youth.

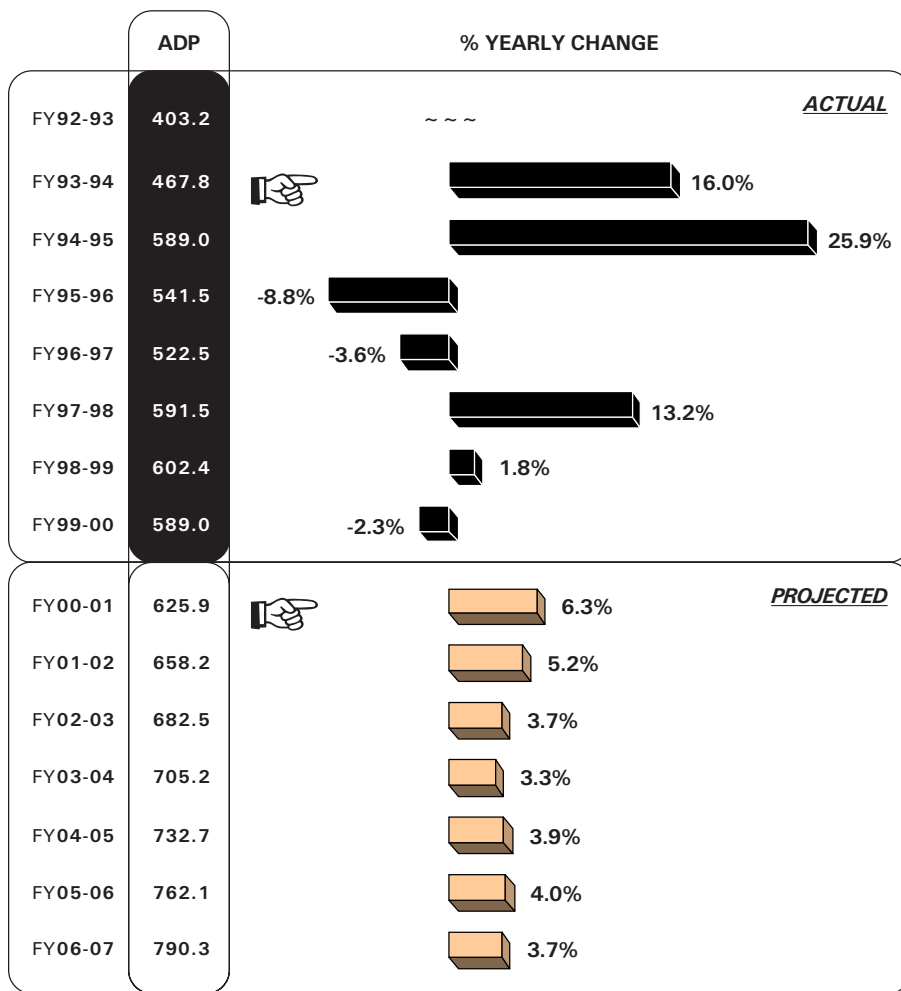
**AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION (ADP)**

The average daily number of youth present in a facility or program during the reporting period.

*The juvenile projection model forecasts the Average Daily Population (ADP) for a given fiscal year rather than projecting a population figure for a specific point in time (as the adult model does). The juvenile projection model uses ADP to measure and describe its populations because viewing the population at a single point in time during a particular year may be misleading. Under- or over-representation may occur because clients, particularly in detention, may be held in a facility for very short periods of time (a few hours or even minutes).*

*Source: Colorado Division of Criminal Justice Fall 2000 Adult Prison and Parole Population Projections and Juvenile Detention, Commitment, and Parole Population Projections.*

**JUVENILE DETENTION AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION (ADP) AND PERCENT YEARLY CHANGE, Actual and Projected, with Backlog**



Colorado Division of Criminal Justice Fall 2000

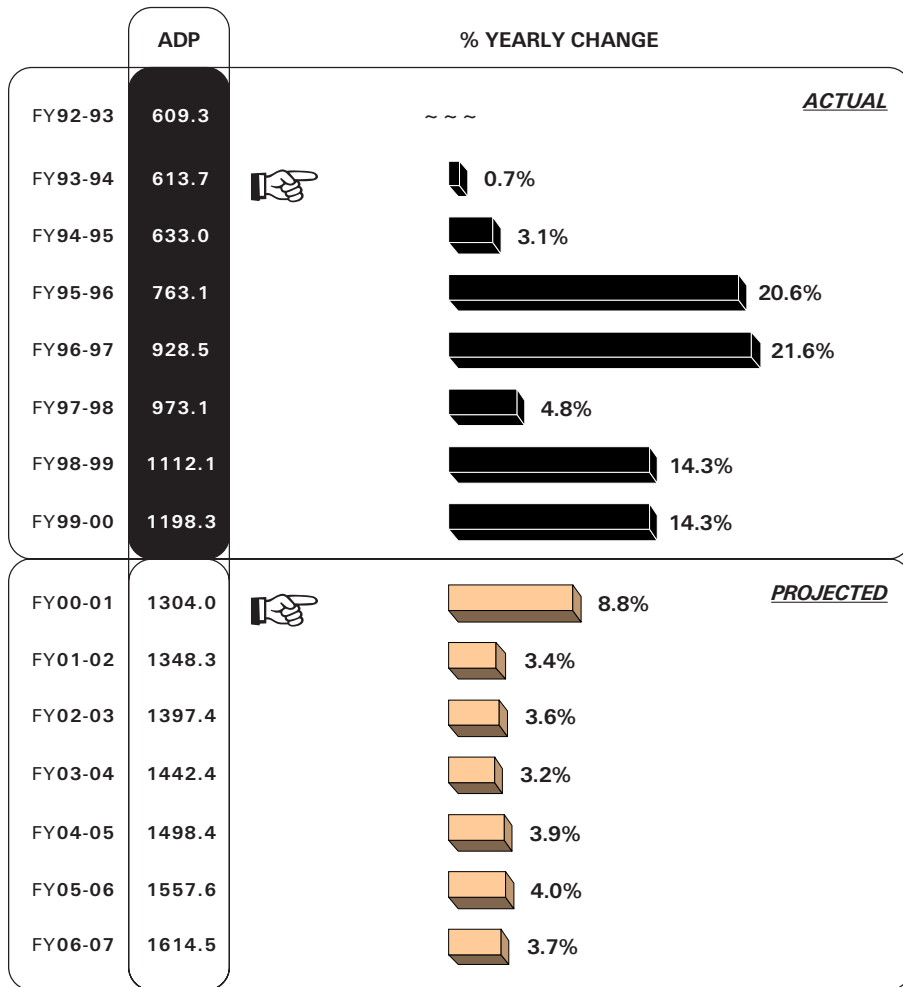
**JUVENILE** Detention, Commitment, and Parole Population **PROJECTIONS**

**COMMITMENT**

- Juvenile commitment average daily population (ADP) (without backlog) is expected to grow **23.8 percent** between FY00-01 and FY06-07.
- Average annual commitment growth from FY00-01 over the projection period is **4.4 percent**.

Please see previous page for definitions of commitment, average daily population, and backlog.

**JUVENILE COMMITMENT AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION (ADP) AND PERCENT YEARLY CHANGE, Actual and Projected, without Backlog**



**JUVENILE PAROLE**

- Juvenile parole average daily caseload (ADC) is expected to grow **26.7 percent** between FY00-01 and FY05-06.

**JUVENILE PAROLE AVERAGE DAILY CASELOAD (ADC) AND PERCENT YEARLY CHANGE**

Actual and Projected

	ADC*	% CHANGE
<b>Actual</b>		
FY98-99	352.7	~ ~ ~
FY99-00	601.7	70.6%
<b>Projected</b>		
FY00-01	712.1	18.3%
FY01-02	769.0	8.0%
FY02-03	814.5	5.9%
FY03-04	840.9	3.2%
FY04-05	870.9	3.6%
FY05-06	901.9	3.6%

\* ADC = Average Daily Caseload.

Source: Colorado Division of Criminal Justice Fall 2000 Adult Prison and Parole Population Projections and Juvenile Detention, Commitment, and Parole Population Projections.

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**Coming Next Issue:  
Community Corrections  
in Colorado**

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