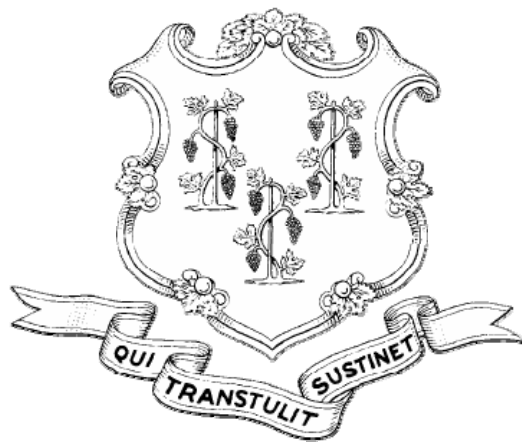


# 2011 *Annual* Correctional Population Forecast Report



State of Connecticut  
Office of Policy and Management  
Criminal Justice Policy and Planning  
Division  
February 15, 2011

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# Introduction

Each February 15 the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division of the Office of Policy and Management issues two criminal justice reports:

- Annual Recidivism Report
- Correctional Population Forecast Report

These reports provide policy makers and front-line professionals with the information they need to continue the progress our state has experienced in recent years. Governor Dannel P. Malloy has set two goals for our state's criminal justice system: reduce crime and maximize efficiency. Recidivism and correctional population are two important indicators of progress in this regard.

Please feel free to share your ideas about how we can best accomplish these goals going forward. With your help, I am confident that our state can continue to achieve better outcomes with offenders on parole and probation supervision. As the prison population continues to decline, it is my hope that some of the budgetary savings will be reinvested in the supervision and treatment programs that have demonstrated success.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. Please visit our website for more information on current trends in Connecticut's criminal justice system.

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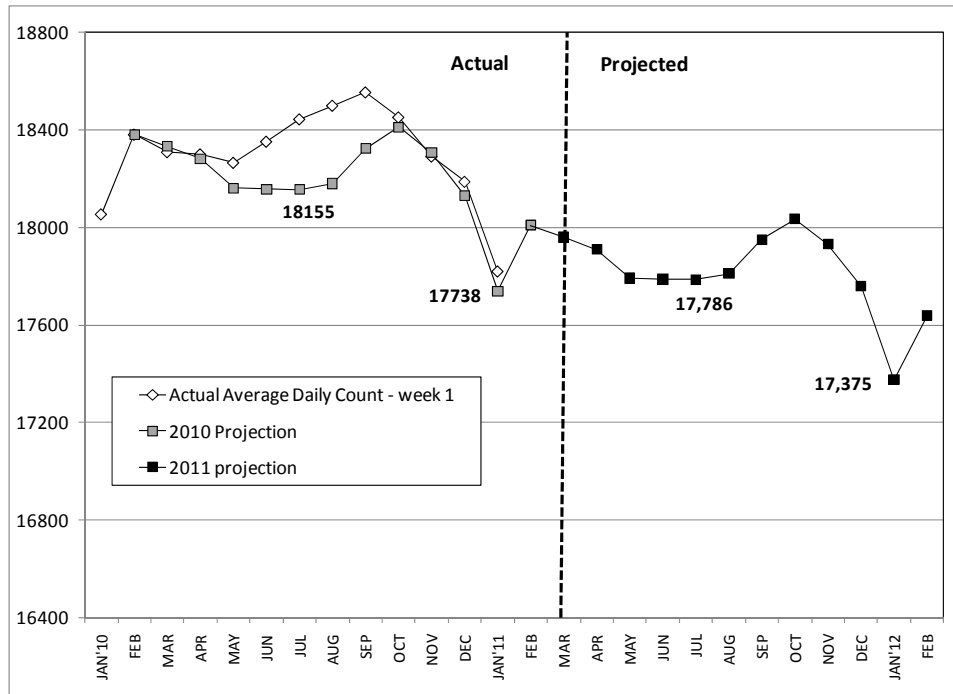
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# Total Facility Population Forecast

OPM estimates that the Connecticut Department of Correction's (DOC) total facility population will decline moderately, over the coming year, from 2010 levels. The total facility population between March 1, 2011 and February 1, 2012 should remain below 18,000 for most of the year.

CHART 1: CT Prison Population, Actual and Projected One-Year Forecast, Feb. 2011



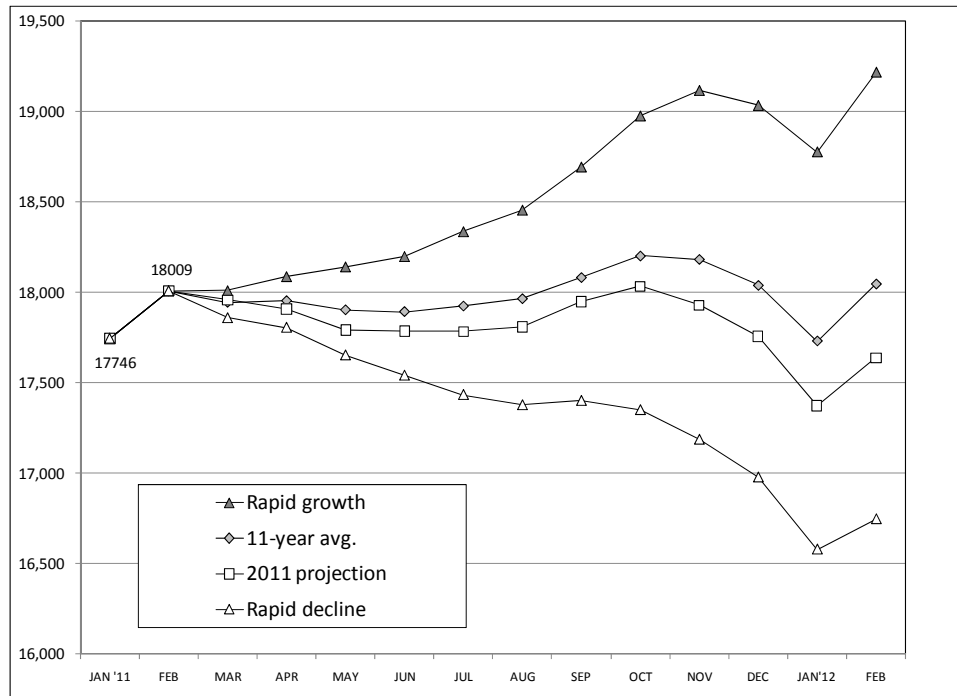
PROJECTED PRISON POPULATION THROUGH FEBRUARY 2012											
2011										2012	
MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN'11	FEB
17,960	17,910	17,792	17,787	17,786	17,810	17,950	18,035	17,931	17,758	17,375	17,640

- Barring unforeseen events or changes in policy affecting incarceration in the state, the prison population should decline by approximately 2% over the coming year. OPM based this year's forecast on the same set of assumptions that it applied to last year's forecast.
- The prison population is expected to fluctuate during the year, following historic seasonal patterns. OPM currently anticipates that the prison population should hover in a band between 17,650 and 18,000 for most of the year.

## Forecasting Scenarios: Modeling the Prison Population

Eleven years of historical prison population data for Connecticut, 2000-2010, was used to generate trend lines that reflected a range of assumptions that result in various trajectories that the state's prison population could follow over the coming year.

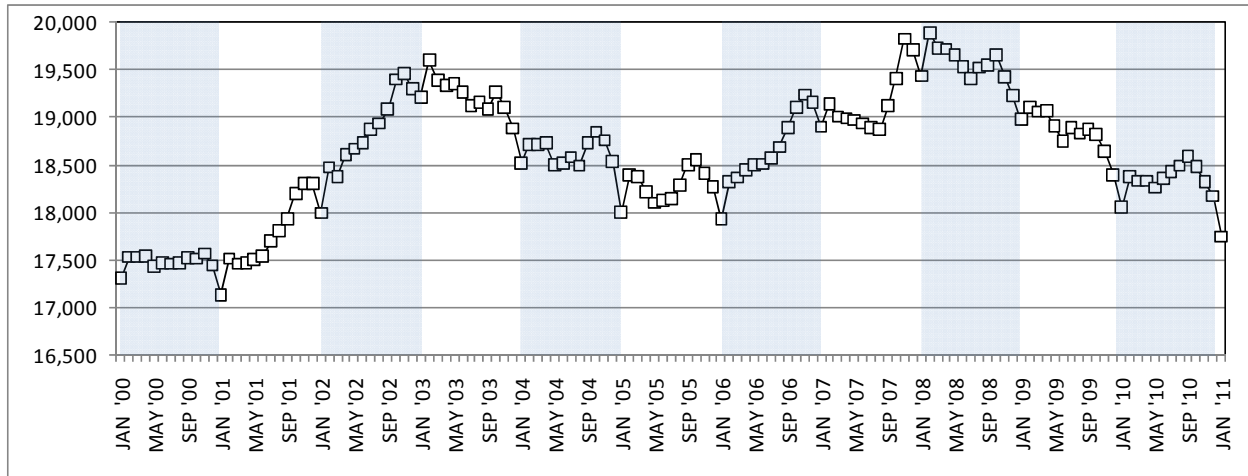
CHART 2: State Prison Population Forecast Scenarios  
January 2011 to February 2012



- The rapid growth scenario is generally based on the population expansions that occurred during 2001, 2002 and 2006.
- The 11-Year Average reflects the average of rises and falls in the prison population between 2000 and 2010.
- The 2011 Forecast could be described as a moderate decline scenario. The assumptions that underpin this forecast remain largely unchanged from 2010.
- Slow Decline Scenario is generally based on years in which the state's prison population experience considerable decline like 2003, 2004 2008 and 2009.

## Connecticut's Prison Population: 10 Year Trend

CHART 3: Connecticut's Prison Population, January 2000 to January 2011

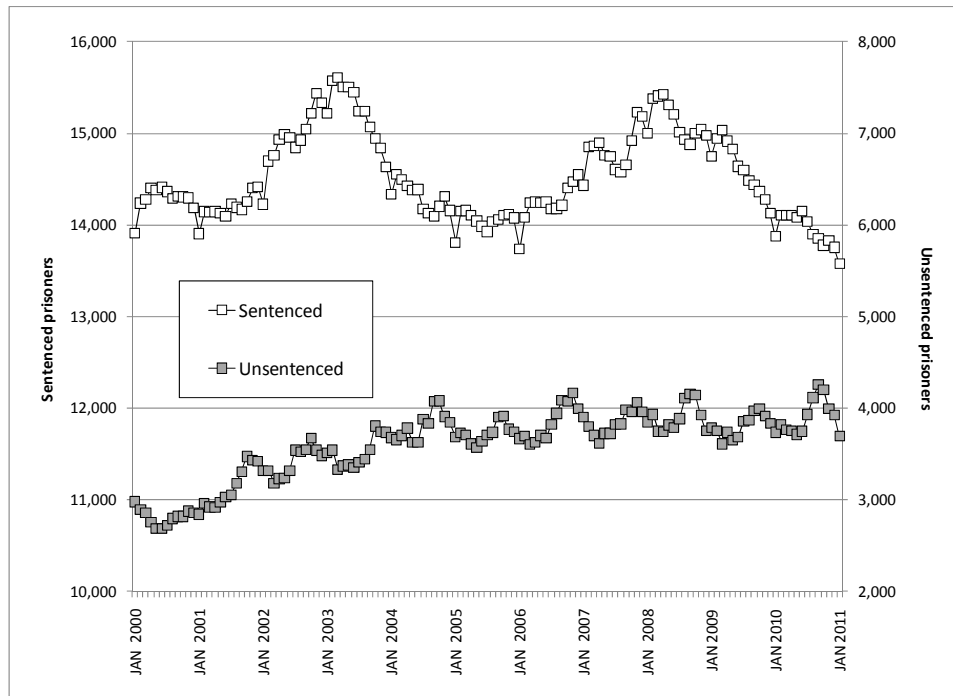


- Between February 2008 and February 2011, Connecticut's prison population declined by almost 2,000 prisoners. On January 1, 2011, the prison population fell to its lowest point since July 1, 2001.
- Given the state's fiscal crisis and the high costs associated with incarceration, it would be reasonable to assume that state policy makers will investigate new ways to reduce the state's prison population even further.
- OPM expects that the prison population will continue to trend downward over the coming year even without major changes to the system. Efforts to redirect some accused prisoners away from prison, or the reintroduction some type of earned-time credit would reduce the prison system even more.

## Two components of the state's prison population

Connecticut is one of six states with unified prison system. Most other states rely on county jails to house their unsentenced offenders and prisoners serving short prison sentences.

**CHART 4: Connecticut's Prison Population, January 2006 to January 2011**



	Population on July 1										
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Sentenced prisoners	14,364	14,230	14,845	15,243	14,173	13,930	14,173	14,605	15,016	14,598	14,035
Percent change from July 1, 2000	0.0%	-0.9%	3.3%	6.1%	-1.3%	-3.0%	-1.3%	1.7%	4.5%	1.6%	-2.3%
Unsentenced prisoners	2,722	3,051	3,542	3,410	3,877	3,710	3,827	3,821	3,885	3,858	3,931
Percent change from July 1, 2000	0.0%	12.1%	30.1%	25.3%	42.4%	36.3%	40.6%	40.4%	42.7%	41.7%	44.4%

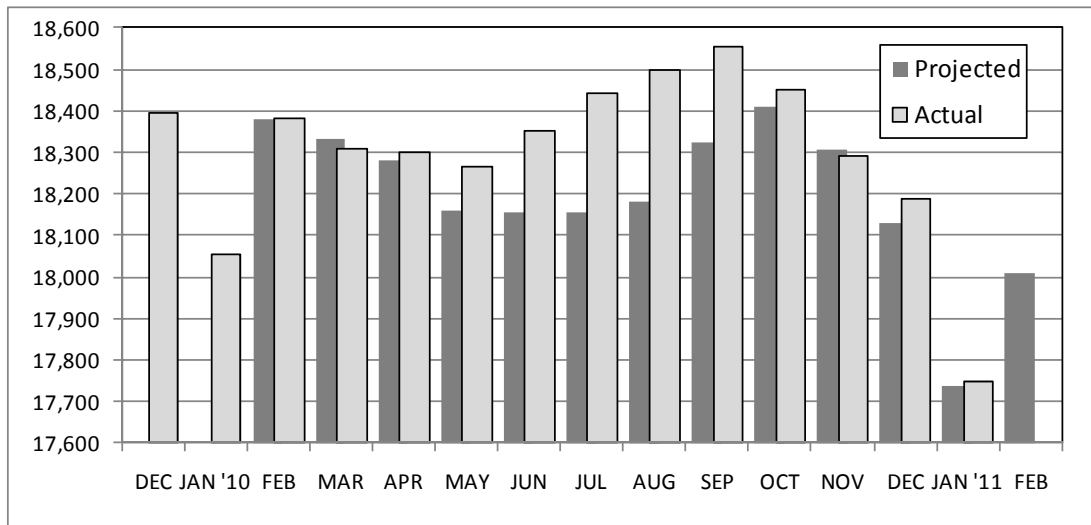
- Over the last decade, the sentenced population has risen and fallen several times often within the course of a single year. Between July 1, 2003 and July 1, 2004, for example, the sentenced prison population fell by 7%. Between July 2007 and March 2008 the sentenced population grew by 800 prisoners.
- In contrast to the sentenced population, the unsentenced prison population has risen in almost every year since 2000. On July 1, 2010, the unsentenced prison population was 44% higher than on July 1, 2000.



## Review of OPM's 2010 Projection

In February 2010, OPM projected that the state's prison population would decline over the course of the year, compared to 2009 levels, and remain within a range of 18,000 to 18,500 inmates.

CHART 5: 2010 Prison Population Projection Review



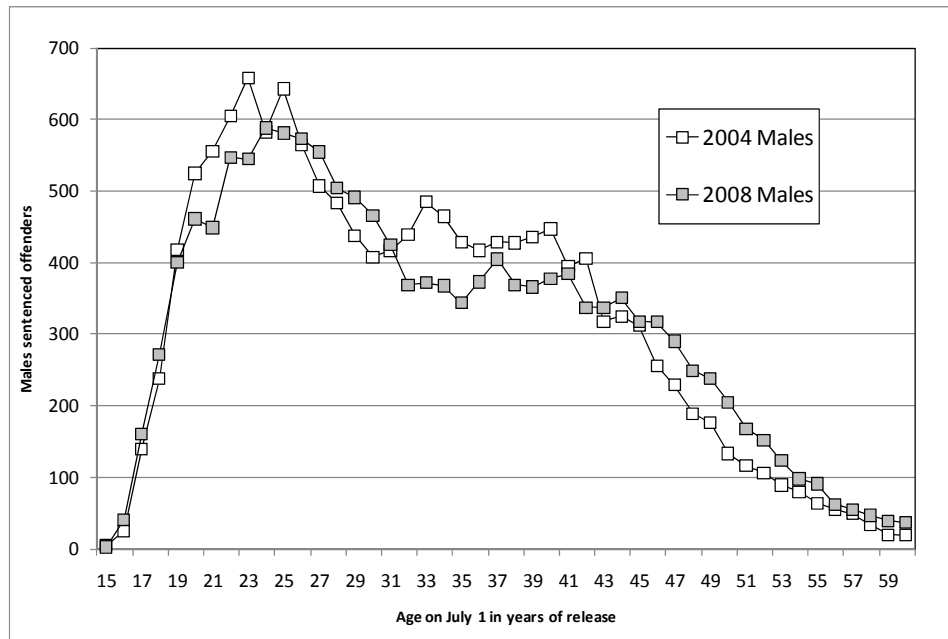
	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN '11	FEB
<b>Actual</b>	18,381	18,309	18,300	18,265	18,352	18,444	18,500	18,555	18,452	18,291	18,187	17,746	-
<b>Projected</b>	-	18,332	18,281	18,161	18,156	18,155	18,180	18,323	18,411	18,305	18,129	17,738	18,009
<b>Difference</b>	-	-23	19	104	196	289	320	232	41	-14	58	8	-
<b>Diff, %</b>	-	0.1%	-0.1%	-0.6%	-1.1%	-1.6%	-1.7%	-1.2%	-0.2%	0.1%	-0.3%	0.0%	-

- During most of 2010 prison population remained within the band projected by OPM in its February forecast. On January 1, 2011, 17,746 people were incarcerated in Connecticut prisons. Eleven months earlier, OPM had projected a January 1<sup>st</sup> prison population of 17,738.
- In May 2010, the actual prison count and the OPM projected count began to diverge. By August, that gap had grown to 320 inmates. Although the unsentenced population typically swells during the summer, OPM determined that the volume of statewide arrests and the number of prison admittances were normal bounds. After further analysis, it was determined that the jail reinterview program (JRIP) – a mechanism used to ease overcrowding among unsentenced offenders, had been impacted by the loss of several staff positions during the spring. As a result, the average-lengths-of-stay for some unsentenced offenders appears to have been marginally increased. The cumulative effect, over the course of the summer, was an unanticipated increase in the prison population by several hundred prisoners. Once the problem was identified, the prison population quickly returned to expected levels.

## An Aging Prison Population

Connecticut’s population is aging. Consider the following: in 2000, for every 100 state residents under the age of 25, there were 113 residents aged 45 or older. By 2009, for every 100 people under the age 25, there were 129 state residents over aged 45 or older.

**CHART 6: Ages of sentenced males, 2004 and 2008**



- Not surprisingly, the state’s prison population is also aging. Data comparing the ages of sentenced male offenders who were released from prison in 2004 and in 2008 reveals a measurable change in the mean age of sentenced prisoners in just 4 years. The chart below shows that the peak age for male prisoners in 2004 was 23. By 2008, the peak age had shifted to 24. A similar shift is evident across almost the entire age spectrum.

<b>Sentenced prisoners, aged 50 or over, by release year</b>					
	1997	2004	2005	2006	2008
50 and over	552	986	1,097	1,182	1,395
All offenders	13,188	16,578	16,339	16,392	16,339
50 or over, %	4%	6%	7%	7%	9%

- An aging prison population should exert a downward impact on the prison population moving forward since older offenders tend to recidivate at lower rates than younger offenders.

## Factors Affecting the Forecast

- Public policy changes that redirect offenders who are mentally ill or have drug and alcohol abuse issues into more appropriate treatment settings could impact the total facility population.
- Policy changes that reduce the flow of accused offenders into the prison system could add significantly to reducing the prison population.
- Pending changes to the manner in which juvenile offenders are managed in the state could have an impact towards a small reduction in the prison population. The potential impact of these changes on the prison population has not been calculated and has not been considered in this analysis.
- Making systemic changes to the criminal justice system to improve operating efficiencies may result in improved case processing and reductions in the total facility population.
- The reintroduction of some type of “good-time” credit would reduce the prison population. The size of the reduction would depend on the extent of the credits that were applied and the size of the offender pool that would be eligible.
- The jail re-interview program, a collaborative effort between the CT DOC and CSSD, has been critical in reducing the size of the unsentenced prison population in recent years. Reductions or expansions to that program would impact the prison population.
- The contraction of community release programs, or the implementation of more stringent guidelines or limitations on eligibility requirements, will increase the total facility population.
- Alternative incapacitation schemes for certain categories of non-violent offenders could help to reduce the prison population.

## Forecasting Perspective

### The Forecast Process

- The goal of the correctional population forecasting process is to improve the ability to estimate the impacts of proposed practice, policy, and legislative changes and to provide stakeholders and decision-makers with information pertaining to the short-term and long-term consequences of any such changes.
- There are four general criteria for assessing the validity and reliability of a forecasting model: (1) short-term accuracy; (2) long term accuracy; (3) value for proactive policy analysis and planning; and (4) the extent to which the methodology provides insights into the underlying processes<sup>2</sup>.
- Most importantly, the forecasting process should not be judged by its predictive accuracy, but by the ability of the forecasters to explain disagreements between the forecast model and the actual results.
- The Monthly Correctional Population Indicator Report stands as a check and balance mechanism to monitor the validity of the forecasted population and the actual results on a regular basis.

### Forecast Assumptions

- Current policy, practice, and levels of service delivery in place at the time the forecast projection is made will not change throughout the forecast period.
- Operational data used to support the forecast are accurate and reliable.

### Factors Affecting the Forecast Process

- Statistical techniques/results may be tempered by applying anecdotal information, institutional knowledge, and the collective judgment of those criminal justice professionals working directly with the data.
- The age and architecture of current criminal justice databases makes obtaining research oriented information and producing forecasts challenging.

## Appendix 1: Forecast Methodology

The 2011 prison population forecast is based on several assumptions drawn from an understanding of the objective conditions that drive the State's inmate population, input from criminal justice administrators and practitioners, and historic trend data on prison population growth going back through the 1980s.

Historical data, particularly since 2000, was used to develop a series of models to be used as the basis for this year's projection. Each month, quarter, and year were characterized and grouped to capture system performance and operational levels during periods of growth, decline, or relative stability. OPM asked administrators and practitioners to determine operational constraints or factors that would impact future prison admittance or discharge rates. These discussions and the data-derived models that OPM had produced were combined to produce this year's prison population forecast.

The decline in the State's prison population since 2008 can be explained by recognizing a series of smaller, incremental factors coming into alignment over time. These factors included:

- a gradual increase in the number of offenders released each month into community supervision programs;
- a steady reduction of the offender backlog (that began in 2007) through discharges and releases into community programs;
- fewer-than anticipated monthly admittances of unsentenced offenders;
- increased efficiency in pre-trial diversion programs;
- optimized population management;
- greater accountability and improved operational efficiency;
- and expanded collaboration between various criminal justice agencies including the Board of Pardons and Paroles, CSSD, and DOC.

Barring major reforms to the system, OPM anticipates that the prison population will continue to trend downward, although at a slower rate than in years past.

OPM believes the capacity exists for the State to safely supervise more offenders in the community. Since the inmate and community supervision population are so closely intertwined, expanded use of community supervision programs, particularly parole, should exert further downward pressure on the prison population.

On February 1, 2011, the prison population in Connecticut was 17,915. According to OPM's current forecast, the prison population on February 1, 2012 will be 17,640, with an annual rate of decline of 1.5%.

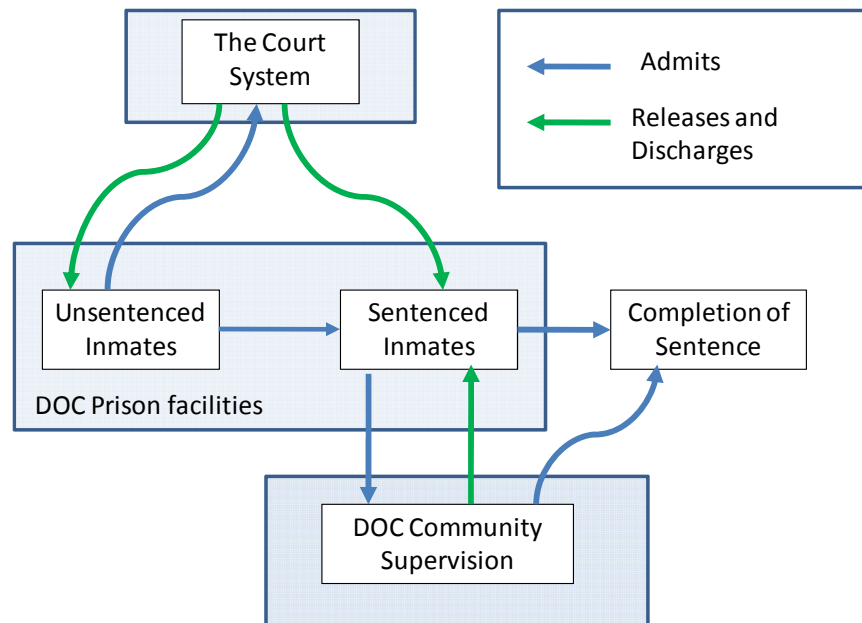
## Appendix 2: Community Supervision Types

Who decides if released to community?	Types of Release	Defintion
<b>Department of Corrections (DOC)</b>  <i>Supervised by DOC Parole Officers</i>	<b>Transitional Supervision (TS)</b>	Inmates with sentences of two years or less are eligible to be released on TS after serving 50% of their sentence. The DOC provides supervision and case management through its Parole and Community Services Unit for offenders on TS status.
	<b>Halfway House (HWH)</b>	Inmates can become eligible to live in a halfway house if they have been voted to parole or are within 18 months of their release date. Halfway houses provide offenders with structured programs and supervision to help them obtain employment, housing, education, or residential substance abuse treatment.
	<b>Furlough</b>	Section 35 of PA 09-07, September special session, reinstated reentry furloughs for a period of up to 45 days for any compelling reason consistent with rehabilitation.
	<b>Transitional Placement</b>	After a successful term in a halfway house, inmates can be transferred to an approved community placement or private residence.
<b>Board of Pardons and Parole (BOPP)</b>  <i>Supervised by DOC Parole Officers</i>	<b>Parole</b>	Inmates serving sentences greater than two years may be eligible for parole. Offenders convicted of non-violent crimes can become eligible after serving 50% of their sentences and offenders convicted of violent crimes can become eligible after serving 85% of their sentences. The parolee must comply with the imposed conditions of parole; violators may be remanded to prison.
	<b>Transfer Parole</b>	An offender can be released to transfer parole 18 months prior to his or her voted to parole date. Offenders on transfer parole are placed under the same or, in some cases, stricter supervision conditions than offenders on parole.
	<b>Special Parole</b>	Special parole is a mandatory, court-imposed period of parole following the completion of a sentence. If an inmate violates special parole, he or she may be remanded to prison for the remainder of the sentence. In general, special parole is reserved for high-risk offenders.
<b>Judicial Branch's Court Support Services Division (CSSD) / Courts</b>  <i>Supervised by CSSD Probation Officers</i>	<b>Probation</b>	Probation is a mandatory, court-imposed period of supervision that allows a defendant to forego incarceration. Instead, the offender is subject to specific conditions of supervision (paying a fine, doing community service, attending a drug treatment program, etc.).
	<b>Split Sentence Probation</b>	A mandatory, court-imposed period of supervision following DOC sentence completion. If an offender violates split sentence probation, he or she may be remanded to court.

## Appendix 3: Simple Model of the Prison System

The number of inmates incarcerated in Connecticut prisons each day can be computed from the prison population from the previous day and the net loss or gain achieved when releases and discharges are subtracted from admittances. DOC administrators have a limited ability to influence the size of the prison population through community supervision programs, the jail re-interview process, and remand policies. In other areas, like criminal arrests or bail and sentencing policy, DOC administrators must respond to external factors that drive the prison population.

CHART 4: A Basic Model of Connecticut's Prison System

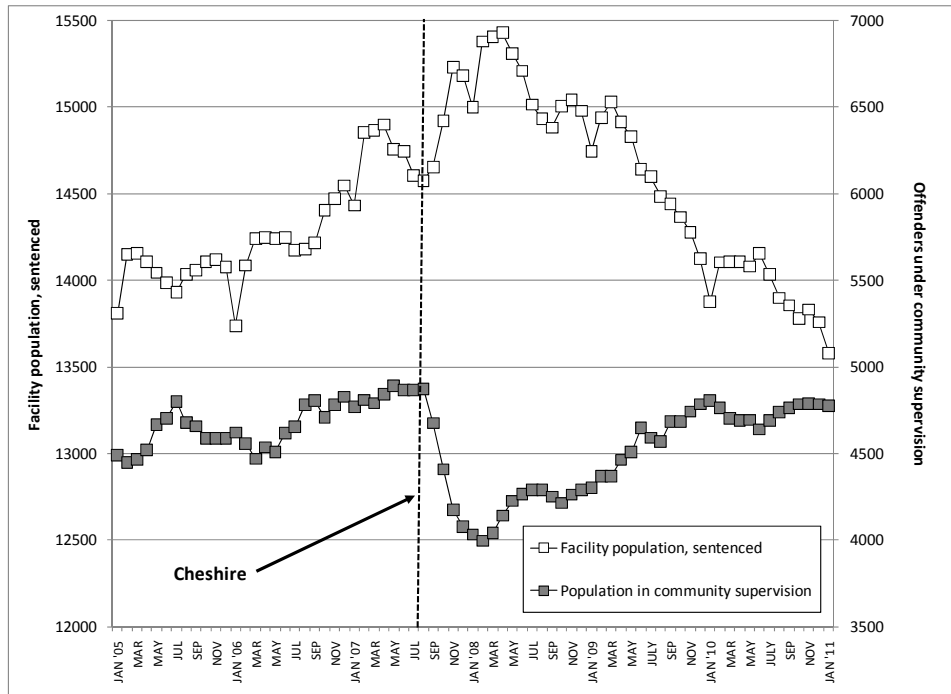


- The prison population and the number of offenders in DOC's Community Supervision Programs are closely related. Any sudden contraction in the number of offenders released to community-based programs will, inevitably, drive the prison population upwards. Similarly, any expansion in releases to community-based programs will push the prison population downwards.
- The prison population has a strong seasonal component. When the prison population rises during the summer and fall, it reflects the increase in the unsentenced offender population that is unable to post bail and is incarcerated awaiting case disposition.

## Appendix 4: Prison Size and Community Supervision

The sentenced prison population and the number of offenders in DOC's Community Supervision Programs are inter-related. A sudden contraction in the number of offenders released to community supervision will drive the prison population upwards.

**CHART 7: Prison Population vs. Offenders in Community Supervision  
January 2005 to January 2011**



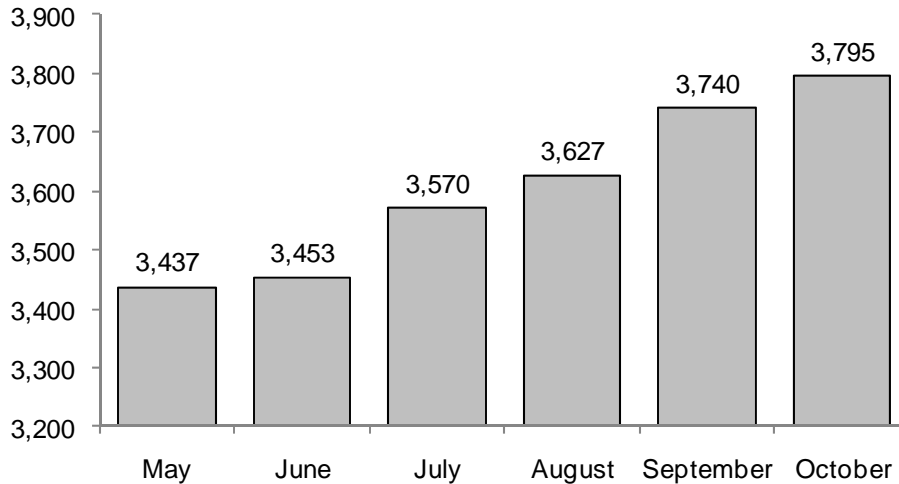
- During the months following the July 2007 crimes in Cheshire (See Appendix 8), the number of offenders who were released to community programs fell by almost 20% as the parole process came to virtually halted and remand rates increased. The impact from these changes caused the prison population to increase by almost 1,000 inmates in a three month period.
- In January 2011, 4,776 offenders were serving out their prison sentences under the supervision of DOC's Division of Parole and Community Services. On July 1, 2007, 4,869 offenders were under DOC community supervision.



## Appendix 5: Seasonal Factors: Unsentenced Inmate Population

Each year, during the summer and fall, the number of unsentenced offenders incarcerated in Connecticut rises.

**CHART 5: Average Unsentenced Inmate Population  
May to October, 2000 - 2009**



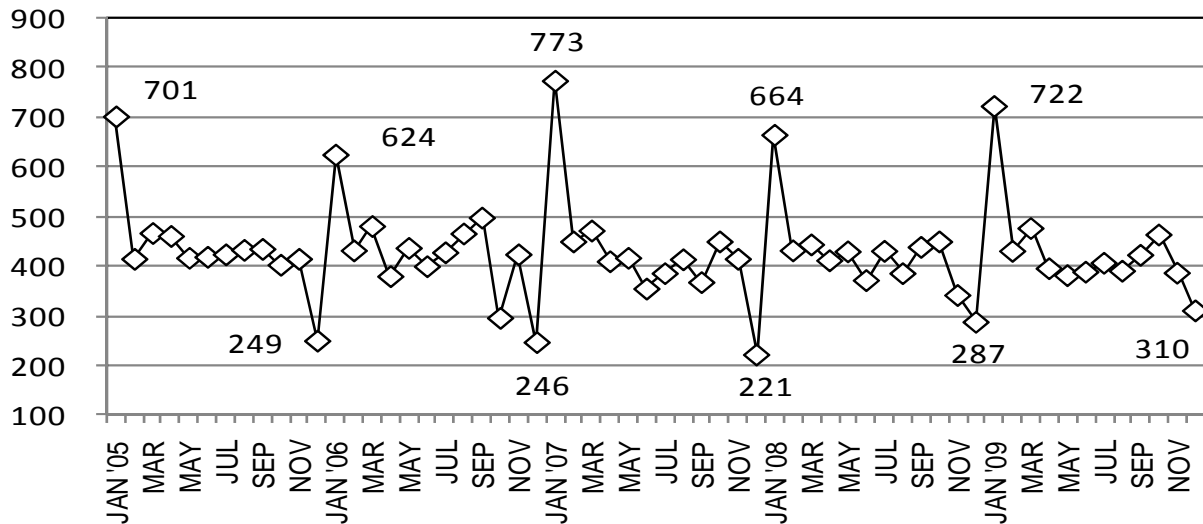
The unsentenced prison population, May through October, 2000 - 2009											
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	10-yr avg.
May	2,688	2,971	3,239	3,381	3,628	3,568	3,703	3,725	3,816	3,654	3,437
June	2,687	3,029	3,319	3,354	3,627	3,640	3,674	3,727	3,786	3,688	3,453
July	2,722	3,051	3,542	3,410	3,877	3,711	3,827	3,821	3,885	3,858	3,570
August	2,795	3,177	3,529	3,444	3,833	3,737	3,944	3,830	4,108	3,870	3,627
September	2,820	3,311	3,547	3,550	4,076	3,907	4,084	3,983	4,158	3,969	3,740
October	2,821	3,473	3,677	3,805	4,083	3,916	4,072	3,959	4,148	3,998	3,795
May-Oct, % change	5%	17%	14%	13%	13%	10%	10%	6%	9%	9%	10%

- The unsentenced prison population has increased between May and October in every year since 2000. This increase is generally driven by seasonal increase in criminal arrests that occur over the warmer months.
- In recent years, increased collaboration between DOC, CSSD, and DMHAS on mechanisms such as the jail re-interview program have helped to reduce the size of the unsentenced population.
- The unsentenced prison population generally ranges between 16% and 20% of the entire inmate population.

## Appendix 6: Seasonal Factors: Monthly Admits of Sentenced Offenders

Each year following the December-January holiday season, there is a pronounced seasonal spike in new admissions.

**CHART 6: Monthly Admits of Sentenced Offenders**  
January 2005 to December 2009

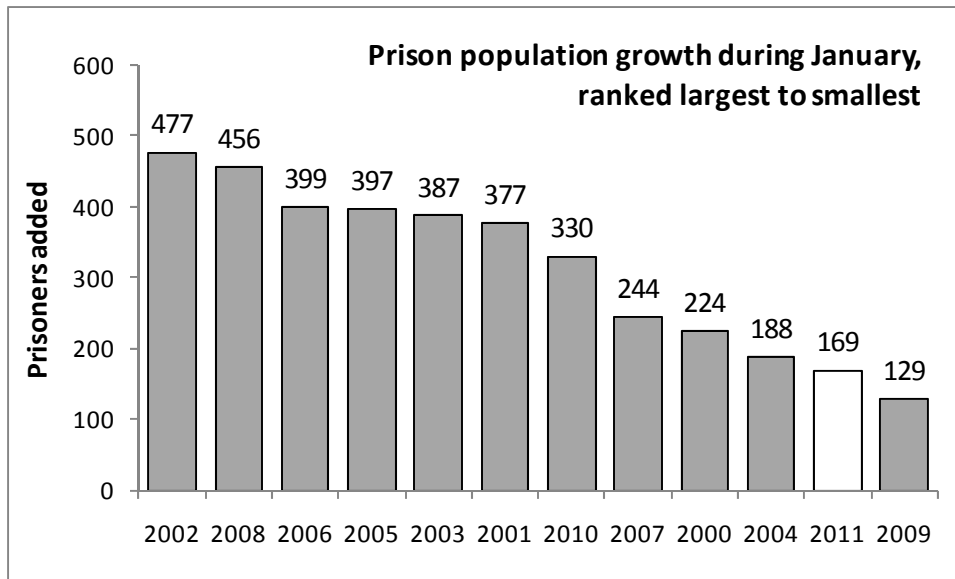


Monthly Admits of Sentenced Offenders					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Jan</b>	701	624	773	664	722
<b>Feb</b>	414	431	449	431	430
<b>Mar</b>	466	480	471	443	476
<b>Apr</b>	460	379	409	411	395
<b>May</b>	416	436	416	429	381
<b>Jun</b>	418	399	354	371	388
<b>Jul</b>	423	427	385	430	406
<b>Aug</b>	432	465	413	385	390
<b>Sep</b>	434	497	367	438	422
<b>Oct</b>	402	295	449	449	463
<b>Nov</b>	414	423	414	341	386
<b>Dec</b>	249	246	221	287	310

- Each year, the prison population regularly experiences a December-to-January drop followed by a January-to-February rebound. A significant proportion of this movement is driven by the Courts, where the processing of criminal cases slows during the holiday season. The January rebound is largely driven by an increased volume in the number of offenders sentenced to prison.

## Appendix 7: The 2011 January-to-February prison population rebound

As a rule, the prison population always increases during the month of January. Often, size of this increase is a bellwether for the prison population through the remainder of the year.



- This year between January 1<sup>st</sup> and February 1<sup>st</sup>, the prison population grew from 17,746 to 17,915, an increase of 169 prisoners. This increase was the second lowest in over a decade. In fact, over the last 12 years the prison population has typically grown by about 1.7% during January. In January 2011, the prison population increased by less than 1% (0.95%).

## Appendix 8: The Cheshire Tragedy

In the early morning hours of July 23, 2007, two men on parole from the Connecticut Department of Correction entered the Cheshire home of Dr. William A. Petit Jr. with the intent to burglarize the residence. During the commission of their crime, Dr. Petit was severely beaten, and his wife, Jennifer Hawke-Petit; and their daughters, Hayley, 17, and Michaela, 11 were killed by the two men, Steven J. Hayes and Joshua Komisarjevsky.

In October 2010, Stephen J. Hayes was convicted of six capital felony charges relating to the home invasion in Cheshire. Hayes was sentenced to death in the penalty phase of his trial in November 2010. Joshua Komisarjevsky is awaiting trial.

The tragic event in Cheshire prompted a systemic review of the criminal justice system in Connecticut, particularly as it relates to parole decisions. The crime has caused significant legislative changes to be enacted to improve and reform the criminal justice system in Connecticut.

The use of the term “Cheshire” in the document is used to denote the tragic event of July 23, 2007.