

## Incarceration in Local Jails and State Prisons

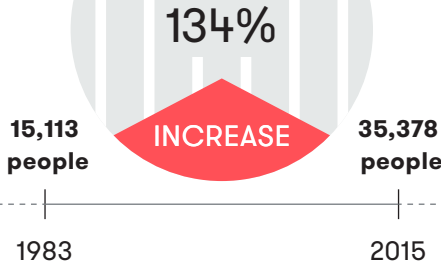


### REGIONAL RANK

**4** of 5 in total incarceration

Total people...

...locked up in New Jersey

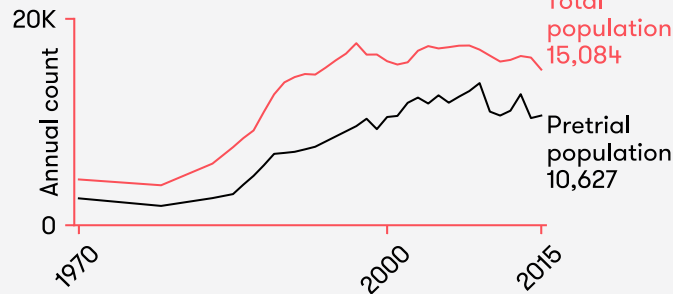


Since 1970, the rate of incarceration in America has expanded more than fourfold, and the United States leads the world in locking people up. Many places in America have begun to reduce their use of prisons and jails, but progress has been uneven. Although the number of people sent to state prisons and county jails from urban areas has decreased, that number has continued to rise in many rural places. Racial disparities in incarceration remain strikingly wide. Women constitute a rising number of those behind bars.

This fact sheet provides at-a-glance information about how many people are locked up in both state prisons and county jails and shows where the state stands on a variety of metrics, so that policymakers and the public can better determine where to target reforms.

## STATE TOTALS

### JAILS

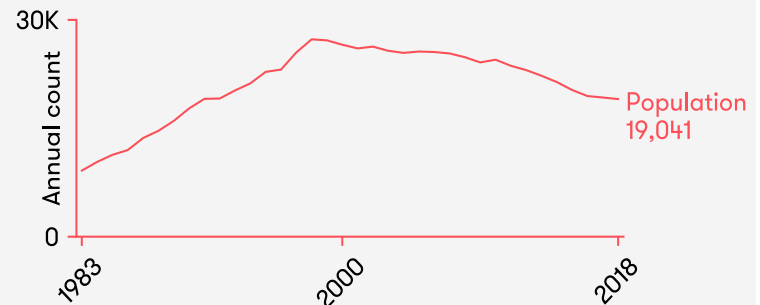


#### % change in jail population

SINCE 1970	SINCE 2000
240% ↑	-5% ↓

Since 1970, the total jail population has increased 240%. In 2015, pretrial detainees constituted 70% of the total jail population in New Jersey.

### PRISONS



#### % change in prison population

SINCE 1983	SINCE 2000
108% ↑	-28% ↓

Since 1983, the prison custody population has increased 108%. In 2018, there were 19,041 people in the New Jersey prison system.

## RACE

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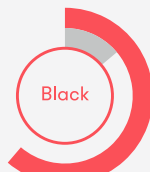
### JAILS 2015

14% of state pop. | 42% of jail pop.



### PRISONS 2017

14% of state pop. | 61% of prison pop.



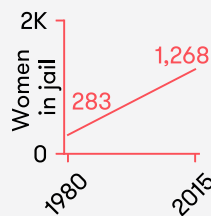
In New Jersey, Black people constituted 14% of state residents, but 42% of people in jail and 61% of people in prison.

## GENDER

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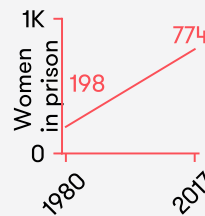
### JAILS

348% ↑



### PRISONS

291% ↑



Since 1980, the number of women in jail has increased 348%, and the number of women in prison has increased 291%.

## GEOGRAPHY

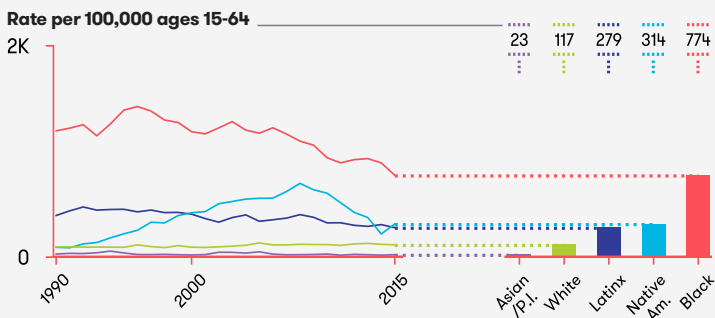
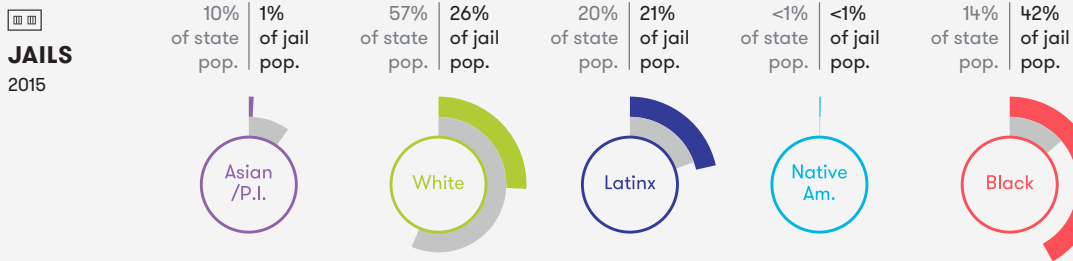
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### Top admission rates, 2015 (rate per 100K)

COUNTY	JAILS	COUNTY	PRISONS
Salem	17,031	Cape May	656
Cumberland	5,807	Camden	369
Cape May	5,023	Salem	323
Camden	3,930	Cumberland	299
Essex	3,159	Atlantic	291

Incarceration is not only an urban phenomenon. In fact, on a per capita basis, the most rural places in the state often lock up the most people in jail and send the most people to prison.

## RACE AND ETHNICITY



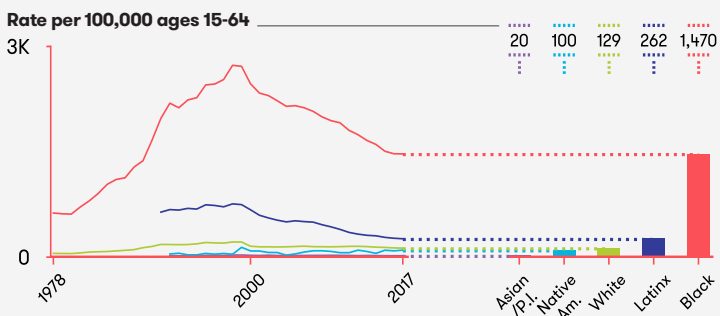
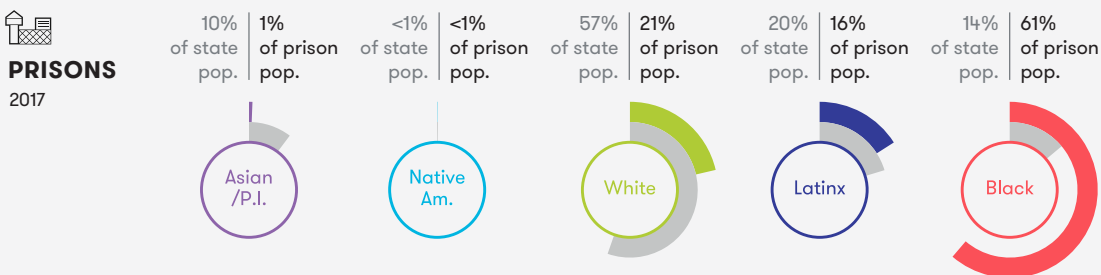
Since 1990, the Black incarceration rate has decreased 35 percent. In 2015, Black people were incarcerated at 6.6 times the rate of white people, and Native American people were incarcerated at 2.7 times the rate of white people.

## NATIONAL CONTEXT

The overrepresentation of Black Americans in the justice system is well documented. Black men constitute about 13 percent of the male population, but about 35 percent of those incarcerated. One in five Black people born in 2001 is likely to be incarcerated in their lifetime, compared to one in 10 Latinx people and one in 29 white people.

Discriminatory criminal justice policies and practices at all stages of the justice process have unjustifiably disadvantaged Black people, including through disparity in the enforcement of seemingly race-neutral laws. Studies have found that Black people are more likely to be stopped by the police, detained pretrial, charged with more serious crimes, and sentenced more harshly than white people—even when controlling for things like offense severity.

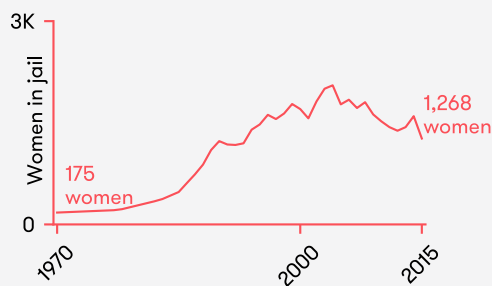
Nationally, Latinx people are also overrepresented in prisons and jails, yet common data misclassification leads to distorted, lower estimates of Latinx incarceration rates and distorted, higher estimates of white incarceration rates. Smaller and inconsistent data reporting make it difficult to measure the effects of racism for incarcerated people of other racial groups.



Since 1978, the Black incarceration rate has increased 134 percent. In 2017, Black people were incarcerated at 11.4 times the rate of white people.

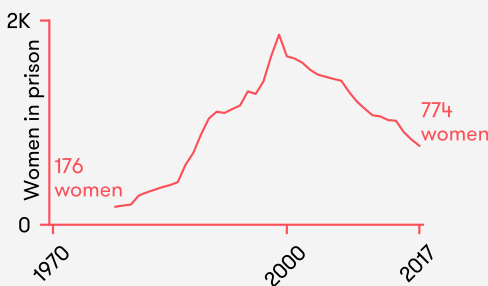
## GENDER

### JAILS



The number of women in New Jersey's jails has increased more than sevenfold, from 175 in 1970 to 1,268 in 2015.

### PRISONS

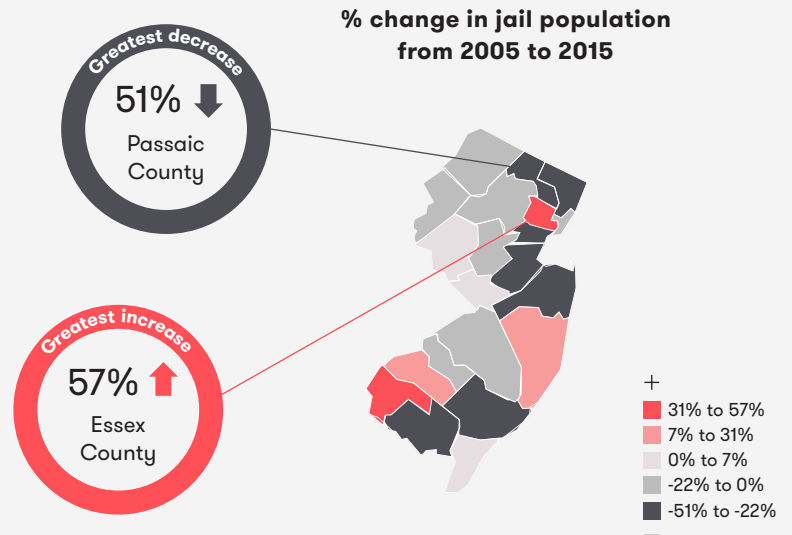


The number of women in New Jersey's prisons has increased more than fourfold, from 176 in 1978 to 774 in 2017.

## NATIONAL CONTEXT

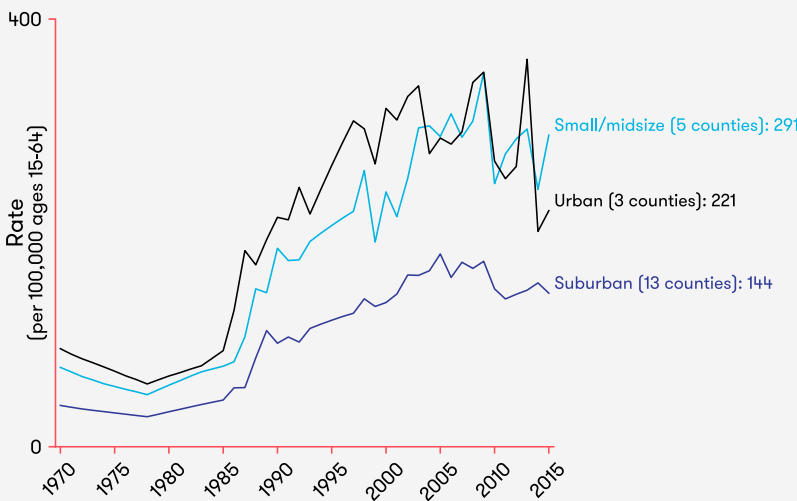
Although men's jail admissions have declined by 26 percent since 2008, women's admissions have increased both as a total number and as a proportion of all jail admissions. Women now make up almost one out of every four jail admissions, up from fewer than one in 10 in 1983. Since 1970, the number of women in U.S. jails has increased 14-fold—from fewer than 8,000 to nearly 110,000 in 2013—and women in jail now account for approximately half of all women behind bars in the country.

Statewide trends alone do not tell the whole story of incarceration: there is wide variation in the use of incarceration across the state. Today, the highest rates of prison admissions are in rural counties, and pretrial detention continues to increase in smaller counties even as it is on the decline in larger counties. It is critical to examine incarceration trends in every corner of the state, because although the largest counties may have the most people in jails—the highest rates of incarceration are in smaller cities and rural counties.



Comparing the jail populations for 2005 and 2015, counties shaded dark gray had fewer people in jail and those shaded dark red had more people in jail.

## JAILS Pretrial population



Since 2000, the state's use of pretrial detention has taken different trajectories in different types of counties. The pretrial incarceration rate has increased 7% in the state's 13 suburban counties, and 22% in the state's five small/medium counties. It has decreased 30% in the state's three urban counties.

Vera's analysis of the urban-rural continuum changes the six categories defined by the National Center for Health Statistics Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties to four. A county is labeled "urban" if it is one of the core counties of a metropolitan area with 1 million or more people and is labeled "suburban" if it is within the surrounding metropolitan area. Vera turns the remaining four categories into two by combining small and medium metropolitan areas ("small and midsize metro") and micropolitan and noncore areas ("rural").

## JAIL ADMISSIONS

(TOP 10 OF 21 COUNTIES)

COUNTY	Rate (per 100K)	COUNTY	Annual count
Salem	17,031	Essex	16,960
Cumberland	5,807	Camden	13,369
Cape May	5,023	Hudson	10,334
Camden	3,930	Monmouth	8,947
Essex	3,159	Burlington	8,056
Burlington	2,677	Middlesex	7,933
Ocean	2,286	Ocean	7,806
Hudson	2,146	Bergen	7,493
Monmouth	2,145	Salem	7,118
Passaic	2,008	Passaic	6,812

## PRISON ADMISSIONS

(TOP 10 OF 21 COUNTIES)

COUNTY	Rate (per 100K)	COUNTY	Annual count
Cape May	656	Camden	1,254
Camden	369	Essex	1,068
Salem	323	Middlesex	640
Cumberland	299	Passaic	607
Atlantic	291	Union	562
Essex	199	Hudson	537
Mercer	192	Atlantic	528
Passaic	179	Monmouth	498
Union	152	Mercer	490
Monmouth	119	Bergen	402

## JAILS



## Jail admissions

Rank	State	Rate (2015)	Rate change ('05-'15)
1	Maryland	2,484	-28%
2	Pennsylvania	2,410	-16%
3	<b>New Jersey</b>	2,125	-35%
4	New York	1,693	-27%
5	Delaware	521	105%



## Jail pretrial population

Rank	State	Rate (2015)	Rate change ('05-'15)
1	Pennsylvania	267	15%
2	Delaware	202	-12%
3	<b>New Jersey</b>	180	-17%
4	Maryland	155	-27%
5	New York	133	-13%

## Jail sentenced population

Rank	State	Rate (2015)	Rate change ('05-'15)
1	Delaware	202	-0.3%
2	Pennsylvania	164	-0.1%
3	Maryland	91	-0.2%
4	<b>New Jersey</b>	75	0.0%
5	New York	60	-0.3%

## PRISONS



## Prison admissions

Rank	State	Rate (2016)	Rate change ('06-'16)
1	Pennsylvania	244	14%
2	Maryland	221	-19%
3	New York	162	-20%
4	<b>New Jersey</b>	155	-35%

## Prison population

Rank	State	Rate (2018)	Rate change ('08-'18)
1	Delaware	613	-10%
2	Pennsylvania	569	-2%
3	Maryland	444	-25%
4	New York	364	-21%
5	<b>New Jersey</b>	330	-25%

## Data

This fact sheet uses data from four U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) data series and is supplemented with data obtained directly from state governments for the more recent years for which BJS data is not yet available, when available. The Annual Survey of Jails, Census of Jails, and National Corrections Reporting Program provides data through 2016; the National Prisoner Statistics program provides data through 2017, and 2018 data is sourced from state agencies. Rates are per 100,000 residents aged 15 to 64. See *Data and Methods for Vera's State Fact Sheets*: [www.vera.org/incarceration-trends-fact-sheets-data-and-methods.pdf](http://www.vera.org/incarceration-trends-fact-sheets-data-and-methods.pdf) for complete details. County-level data is available at [trends.vera.org](http://trends.vera.org).

## Acknowledgments

This series would not be possible without the excellent work of researchers at the Bureau of Justice Statistics—E. Ann Carson, Todd Minton, and Zhen Zeng—who maintain the Annual Survey of Jails, Census of Jails, National Corrections Reporting Program, and National Prisoner Statistics program. This report was designed by Paragini Amin and created by Christian Henrichson, Eital Schattner-Elmaleh, Jacob Kang-Brown, Oliver Hinds and James Wallace-Lee. This report was made possible by the support of Arnold Ventures. The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Arnold Ventures.

## Credits

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## For more information

For more information, visit [www.vera.org](http://www.vera.org). For more information about this fact sheet, contact Jacob Kang-Brown, senior research associate, at [jkangbrown@vera.org](mailto:jkangbrown@vera.org).