

WOMEN IN PRISON PROJECT

Correctional Association of New York

2090 Adam Clayton Powell Blvd., Suite 200

New York, NY 10027

Tel 212-254-5700 Fax 212-473-2807

Women in Prison Fact Sheet

United States

- As of June 2006, 203,100 women were in state or federal prisons or local jails, just under 10% of the total U.S. prison and jail population (more than 2 million).¹
- Nearly 112,500 women were in state or federal prisons alone, 7.2% of the total U.S. prison population of 1.57 million.²
- At yearend 2006, there were more than 1.3 million women inmates, parolees and probationers in the U.S.³ – about 18% of the total number in the U.S. (more than 7.2 million).⁴
- From 1995 to 2006, the number of women inmates in state and federal prisons nationwide increased by 64%.⁵ The growth rate for women in state and federal prisons in 2006 (4.5%) was higher the average annual rate of growth in each of the previous five years (2.9%).⁶
- About 47% of women in state or federal prisons or local jails are white, almost 34% are African-American, and just under 16% are Latina.⁷ White women, however, have significantly lower incarceration rates among their own racial group than African-American women (3.8 times the rate for white women) and Latina women (1.6 times the rate for white women).⁸
- As of 2000, more than 70% of women inmates were incarcerated for non-violent drug, property or public order offenses.⁹
- Nearly one in three women in state prisons reported committing their offense to support a drug addiction.¹⁰
- Nationally, more than 65% of women in state prisons and 55% of men in state prisons report being parents of children under 18. About 64% of mothers in state prisons lived with their children before prison, compared to 44% of men.¹¹
- Female inmates are more likely than male inmates to have histories of serious physical or sexual abuse.¹²
- A 2004 government study found that 73% of women in state prisons nationwide either had symptoms or a clinical diagnosis of mental illness and/or were receiving treatment from a mental health professional in the past year, compared to 55% of men.¹³
- About 40% of women in state prisons were employed full-time prior to their arrest, compared with 60% of men.¹⁴
- Nearly 30% were receiving public assistance before arrest, compared to 8% of men. About 37% had incomes of less than \$600 per month prior to arrest, compared to 28% of men.¹⁵

New York State

- As of January 2008, 2,821 women were incarcerated in New York's prisons¹⁶ – about 4.5% of the state's total prison population of 62,577.¹⁷
- An additional 26,800 women were on parole (about 3,100)¹⁸ and probation (almost 23,700).¹⁹
- From 1973 to 2008, the number of women in New York's prisons increased by almost 635%.²⁰
- Since 1997, the state's female prison population has decreased by about 25%²¹ and the male population has decreased by about 10%.²² As of mid-January 2008, women's facilities in New York State had over 580 empty beds.²³

- It costs almost \$37,000 to incarcerate a person in a New York State prison for one year.²⁴
- Roughly 67% of the state's female inmates are women of color: about 46% are African American, just over 21% are Latina, and nearly 31% are white.²⁵ New York's general public is 30% women of color and almost 69% white.²⁶
- About 84% of women sent to New York's prisons in 2007 were convicted of non-violent offenses.²⁷
- More than 85% of women sent to prison for violent felony offenses in 2007 were first time felony offenders.²⁸
- As of January 2008, nearly 33% of women in New York's prisons were incarcerated for a drug offense.²⁹ Almost 78% of women under custody for a drug offense are women of color.³⁰
- More than 88% of women incarcerated in New York State prisons report having an alcohol or substance abuse problem prior to their arrest.³¹
- An estimated 82% of women at New York's Bedford Hills Correctional Facility have experienced severe abuse as children and over 90% have endured physical or sexual violence in their lifetimes.³²
- As of January 2007, more than 42% of women in New York's prisons have been diagnosed with a serious mental illness, compared to nearly 12% of male inmates. Almost 40% of women inmates have been diagnosed with a major mood disorder (which includes depression, psychotic depression, and bipolar disorder), and 15% have been diagnosed with schizophrenia or another psychotic disorder.³³
- About 55% of women under state custody are from New York City and its suburbs.³⁴ Just under 41% are incarcerated at Albion Correctional Facility, about eight hours away from Manhattan.³⁵
- The median minimum sentence for women inmates in New York State is 36 months.³⁶
- More than 72% of New York's women inmates report being parents, compared to more than 58% of men.³⁷
- At least 80,813 children have a parent incarcerated in New York's prisons; more than 5,180 have a mother incarcerated in a New York State prison.³⁸
- Nearly 55% of women prisoners lack a high school diploma. Just under 37% read at an 8th grade level or below.³⁹
- More than one-third of New York's female inmates have either never been arrested or convicted of any crime prior to their current offense.⁴⁰ More than 63% are first felony offenders.⁴¹
- Approximately 12% of women in New York's prisons are HIV positive, a rate of infection double the rate for male inmates⁴² and 80 times higher than the rate in the general public (.15%).⁴³
- More than 22% of women in New York State prisons have Hepatitis C, a rate nearly double that for male inmates (just under 13%)⁴⁴ and more than 14 times higher than the HCV infection rate in the general public (1.6%).⁴⁵

-
- ¹ The total U.S. prison and jail population was 2,042,100. William J. Sabol, Todd D. Minton and Paige M. Harrison, *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2006*, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice (June 2007, Revised 6/27/07), at 9 (hereinafter *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2006*). At yearend 2006, there were a total of 2,385,213 inmates in correctional institutions in the U.S., including in “Federal and State prisons, territorial prisons, local jails, facilities operated by or exclusively for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), military facilities, jails in Indian country, and youth in juvenile facilities.” William J. Sabol, Heather Couture and Paige M. Harrison, *Prisoners in 2006*, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice (December 2007), at 3 (hereinafter *Prisoners in 2006*).
- ² The total female prison population was 112,498 and the total for men and women was 1,570,861. *Prisoners in 2006*, at 3.
- ³ The total number of inmates, parolees and probationers in the U.S. was about 1,313,012. There were 112,498 women in U.S. federal or state prisons at yearend 2006 (compared to 1,458,363 men). *Prisoners in 2006*, at 3. There were 98,577 women in local jails in the U.S. as of June 2006 (compared to 661,329 men). *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2006*, at 5. At yearend 2006, there were about 85,051 women on parole in the U.S. (compared to about 623,713 men) and about 1,016,886 women on probation (compared to about 3,220,137 men). Statistics derived from Lauren E. Glaze and Thomas P. Bonczar, *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2006*, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice (December 2007), at 2, 4, and 6 (hereinafter *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2006*).
- ⁴ At yearend 2006, there were 7,211,400 men and women in state or federal prisons, in local jails, or on probation or parole in the U.S. *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2006*, at 2.
- ⁵ In 1995, there were 68,544 women in state or federal prisons or in local jails. Darrell K. Gilliard and Allen J. Beck, *Prison and Jail Inmates, 1995*, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice (August 1996), at 5.
- ⁶ *Prisoners in 2006*, at 3. From 2005 to 2006, the number of women in state and federal prisons rose by 4.5%, compared to an increase of 2.6% during the previous year. The number of male inmates rose by 2.7% from 2005 to 2006, compared to 1.9% the previous year. *Prisoners in 2006*, at 3 and *Prisoners in 2005*, at 4 and 5.
- ⁷ About 35% of men in state or federal prisons or local jails are white, almost 41% are African-American, and just under 21% are Latino. *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2006*, at 9.
- ⁸ *Id.*
- ⁹ Lawrence A. Greenfield and Tracy L. Snell, *Women Offenders*, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice (December 1999, rev. 10/3/00), (hereinafter *Women Offenders*), at 6.
- ¹⁰ *Id.*, at 9.
- ¹¹ Christopher J. Mumola, *Incarcerated Parents and Their Children*, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice (August 2000), at 2 and 4.
- ¹² See *Prior Abuse Reported by Inmates and Probationers*, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice (April 1999), at 1. See Tracy L. Snell and Danielle C. Morton, *Women in Prison, Survey of State Inmates, 1991*, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice (1991), at 5. See *Women Offenders*, at 8.
- ¹³ Doris J. James and Lauren E. Glaze, *Mental Health Problems of Prison and Jail Inmates*, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice (September 2006), revised on 12/14/06, at 4.
- ¹⁴ *Women Offenders*, at 8.
- ¹⁵ *Id.*
- ¹⁶ *Table 1. Age & Minimum Sentence and Table 2. Number of Female Offenders Undercustody at Willard, Statistics on Female Offenders*, prepared by New York State Department of Correctional Services on 1/25/08 (hereinafter *Table 1. Statistics on Female Offenders*).
- ¹⁷ As of January 2008, there were 59,823 men in New York State prisons. *Table 4A: Crime by Predicate Felony Status by Gender; Under Custody Population NY DOCS Jan 1 2008*, New York State Department of Correctional Services, prepared February 14, 2008 (hereinafter *Table 4A: Crime by Predicate Felony Status by Gender*). New York has the seventh largest population of incarcerated women in the U.S., exceeded by Texas, California, Florida, Ohio, Georgia, and Arizona. *Prisoners in 2006*, at 15 and 16. As of Jan 2006, the total number of people incarcerated in state or federal prisons or local jails, or on probation or parole in New York State was 125,314. *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2006*, at 3.
- ¹⁸ As of January 2007, 3,114 women were on parole in New York State. Data received from New York State Division of Parole, Department of Operations, February 2007.
- ¹⁹ As of January 2008, 23,682 women were on probation in New York State. New York State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, *Female Probationers Supervised Statewide 1/1/2008*, SNYS DPCA Integrated Probation Registrant System (IPRS) as of 1/13/2008. As of January 2008, there were 98,406 men on probation in New York State. New York State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, *Male Probationers Supervised Statewide 1/1/2008*, SNYS DPCA Integrated Probation Registrant System (IPRS) as of 1/13/2008.
- ²⁰ *Table 1. Statistics on Female Offenders*, and Letter from DOCS Director of Public Information, May 15, 2001.
- ²¹ *Table 1. Statistics on Female Offenders and Female Admissions to and Releases From Facilities of the Department of Correctional Services, 1/8/07*, New York State Department of Correctional Services.
- ²² New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) Data Sheet 01/03/97, revised 02/18/97. *Table 4A: Crime by Predicate Felony Status by Gender*.
- ²³ *Daily Capacity Population Report 1/17/08*, State of New York Department of Correctional Services.
- ²⁴ James J. Stephan, *State Prison Expenditures, 2001*, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice (June 2000), at 3.
- ²⁵ Figures derived from *Table 4B: (Under Custody Whites Only) Crime by Predicate Felony Status by Gender by Ethnic Status; Under Custody Population NYDOCS Jan 1 2008; Table 4C: (Under Custody African American Only) Crime by Predicate Felony Status by Gender by Ethnic Status; Under Custody Population NYDOCS Jan 1 2008; and Table 4D: (Under Custody Hispanic Offenders Only) Crime by Predicate Felony Status by Gender by Ethnic Status; Under Custody Population NYDOCS Jan 1 2008*, New York State Department of Correctional Services, prepared on February 14, 2008 (hereinafter *Table 4B, 4C & 4D*).

-
- ²⁶ Figures derived from *2000 Census of Population and Housing, Age by Sex by Race and Hisp/Latino Ethnicity (Including Median Age by Sex)*, NYS Data Center, Section 3.
- ²⁷ *Table 1B: New Court Commitments to NYSDOCS by Month Received: Jan 1 to Dec 31 2007 (Women Only)*, New York State Department of Correctional Services, prepared February 14, 2008. Non-violent offenses include drug sale and possession, forgery, grand larceny, stolen property, driving while intoxicated, contempt, and burglary in the third.
- ²⁸ *Table 1C: Crime by Predicate Felony Status By Gender; 2007 New Court Commitments to NYSDOCS*, New York State Department of Correctional Services, prepared February 14, 2008. As of January 2008, just under 82% of women under custody for violent felony offenses were first felony offenders. *Table 4A: Crime by Predicate Felony Status by Gender*.
- ²⁹ *Table 4A: Crime by Predicate Felony Status by Gender*.
- ³⁰ *Table 4B, 4C & 4D*.
- ³¹ *Hub System: Profile of Inmate Population Under Custody on January 1, 2007*, New York State Department of Correctional Services (June 2007) (hereinafter *DOCS Hub Report 2007*), at 55.
- ³² Browne, Miller and Maguin, "Prevalence and Severity of Lifetime Physical and Sexual Victimization Among Incarcerated Women," *International Journal of Law & Psychiatry* 22 (3-4) (1999).
- ³³ *CNYPC Patient Demographic and Diagnostic Profile, Year 2007*, Central New York Psychiatric Center (January 29, 2007), at 5.
- ³⁴ As of January 2008, more than 44% of women in New York State prisons were from New York City and 10.5% were from downstate suburbs. *Table 5: Region and Indictment County by Sex; Under Custody Population NYDOCS Jan 1 2008*, New York State Department of Correctional Services, prepared February 14, 2008.
- ³⁵ *DOCS Hub Report 2007*, at 3.
- ³⁶ *Table 1, Statistics on Female Offenders*.
- ³⁷ Figures derived from *DOCS Hub Report 2007*, at 17.
- ³⁸ *Id.*, and *Table 3: Number of Living Children, Female Inmates Under DOCS' & Willard Custody on 1/1/08*, New York State Department of Correctional Services, prepared February 14, 2008.
- ³⁹ *DOCS Hub Report 2007*, at 47 and 51.
- ⁴⁰ *DOCS Hub Report 2007*, at 35.
- ⁴¹ *Table 4A: Crime by Predicate Felony Status by Gender*.
- ⁴² *Healthcare in New York State Prisons, 2004-2007*, Prison Visiting Project of the Correctional Association of New York, report forthcoming. See also Laura M. Maruschak, *HIV in Prisons, 2005*, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice (September 2007, revised 12/20/07), at 2.
- ⁴³ "Annual Estimates of the Population for the United States and States, and for Puerto Rico: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2005," U.S. Census Bureau (2005) and "HIV Infection and AIDS: An Overview," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) (March 2005).
- ⁴⁴ *Healthcare in New York State Prisons, 2004-2007*, Prison Visiting Project of the Correctional Association of New York, report forthcoming. See L. Smith, L. Wang, L. Wright, K. Sabin, D. Glebatis, P. Smith, *Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) Seroprevalence Among Incoming Inmates in New York State (NYS) 2000-2001*, Presented at the Infectious Disease Society of America Meeting 10/24-27/02, Chicago, IL (Poster #793). G. L. Armstrong, A. Wasley, E. P. Simard, G. M. McQuillan, W. L. Kuhnert, and M. J. Alter, *The Prevalence of Hepatitis C Virus Infection in the United States, 1999 through 2002*, *Annals of Internal Medicine*, Volume 144, Number 10705 (May 16, 2006), at 707.
- ⁴⁵ Gregory L. Armstrong, Annemarie Wasley, Edgar P. Simard, Geraldine M. McQuillan, Wendi L. Kuhnert, and Miriam J. Alter, *The Prevalence of Hepatitis C Virus Infection in the United States, 1999 through 2002*, *Annals of Internal Medicine*, Volume 144, Number 10705 (May 16, 2006), at 707. See also "Viral Hepatitis C Fact Sheet," National Center for HIV, STD & TB Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (May 24, 2005).