OFFICE OF POLICY & MANAGEMENT

Criminal Justice Policy & Planning Division

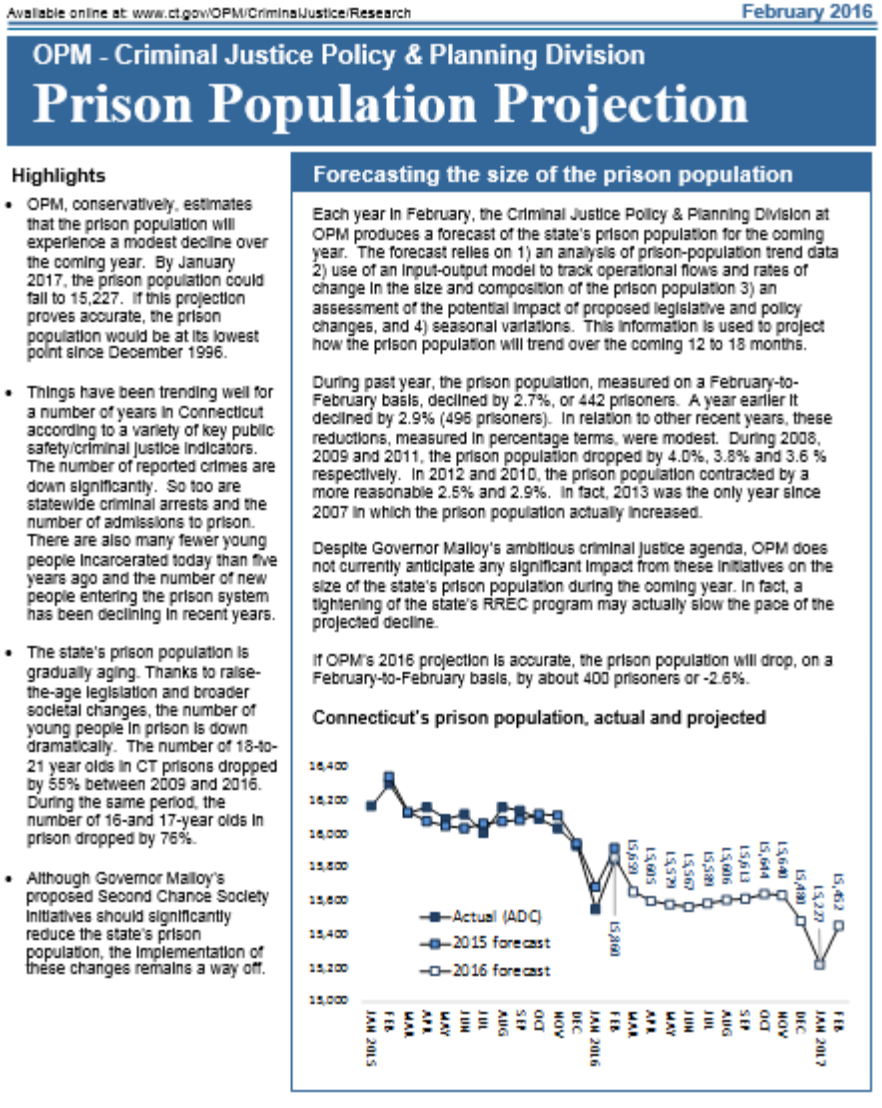
OPM Criminal Justice Update

The 2016 Prison Population Forecast
Decriminalization and Incarceration
Impact of Heroin and Opioid Use and the Prison System
RREC Report pursuant to PA 15-216

Presented

February 2016

The 2016 Prison Population Forecast



Available online at: www.ct.gov/OPM/CriminalJustice/Research February 2016

OPM - Criminal Justice Policy & Planning Division

Prison Population Projection

Highlights

- OPM, conservatively, estimates that the prison population will experience a modest decline over the coming year. By January 2017, the prison population could fall to 15,227. If this projection proves accurate, the prison population would be at its lowest point since December 1996.
- Things have been trending well for a number of years in Connecticut according to a variety of key public safety/criminal justice indicators. The number of reported crimes are down significantly. So too are statewide criminal arrests and the number of admissions to prison. There are also many fewer young people incarcerated today than five years ago and the number of new people entering the prison system has been declining in recent years.
- The state's prison population is gradually aging. Thanks to raise-the-age legislation and broader societal changes, the number of young people in prison is down dramatically. The number of 18-to-21 year olds in CT prisons dropped by 55% between 2009 and 2016. During the same period, the number of 16-and 17-year olds in prison dropped by 76%.
- Although Governor Malloy's proposed Second Chance Society initiatives should significantly reduce the state's prison population, the implementation of these changes remains a way off.

Forecasting the size of the prison population

Each year in February, the Criminal Justice Policy & Planning Division at OPM produces a forecast of the state's prison population for the coming year. The forecast relies on 1) an analysis of prison-population trend data 2) use of an input-output model to track operational flows and rates of change in the size and composition of the prison population 3) an assessment of the potential impact of proposed legislative and policy changes, and 4) seasonal variations. This information is used to project how the prison population will trend over the coming 12 to 18 months.

During past year, the prison population, measured on a February-to-February basis, declined by 2.7%, or 442 prisoners. A year earlier it declined by 2.9% (496 prisoners). In relation to other recent years, these reductions, measured in percentage terms, were modest. During 2008, 2009 and 2011, the prison population dropped by 4.0%, 3.8% and 3.6 % respectively. In 2012 and 2010, the prison population contracted by a more reasonable 2.5% and 2.9%. In fact, 2013 was the only year since 2007 in which the prison population actually increased.

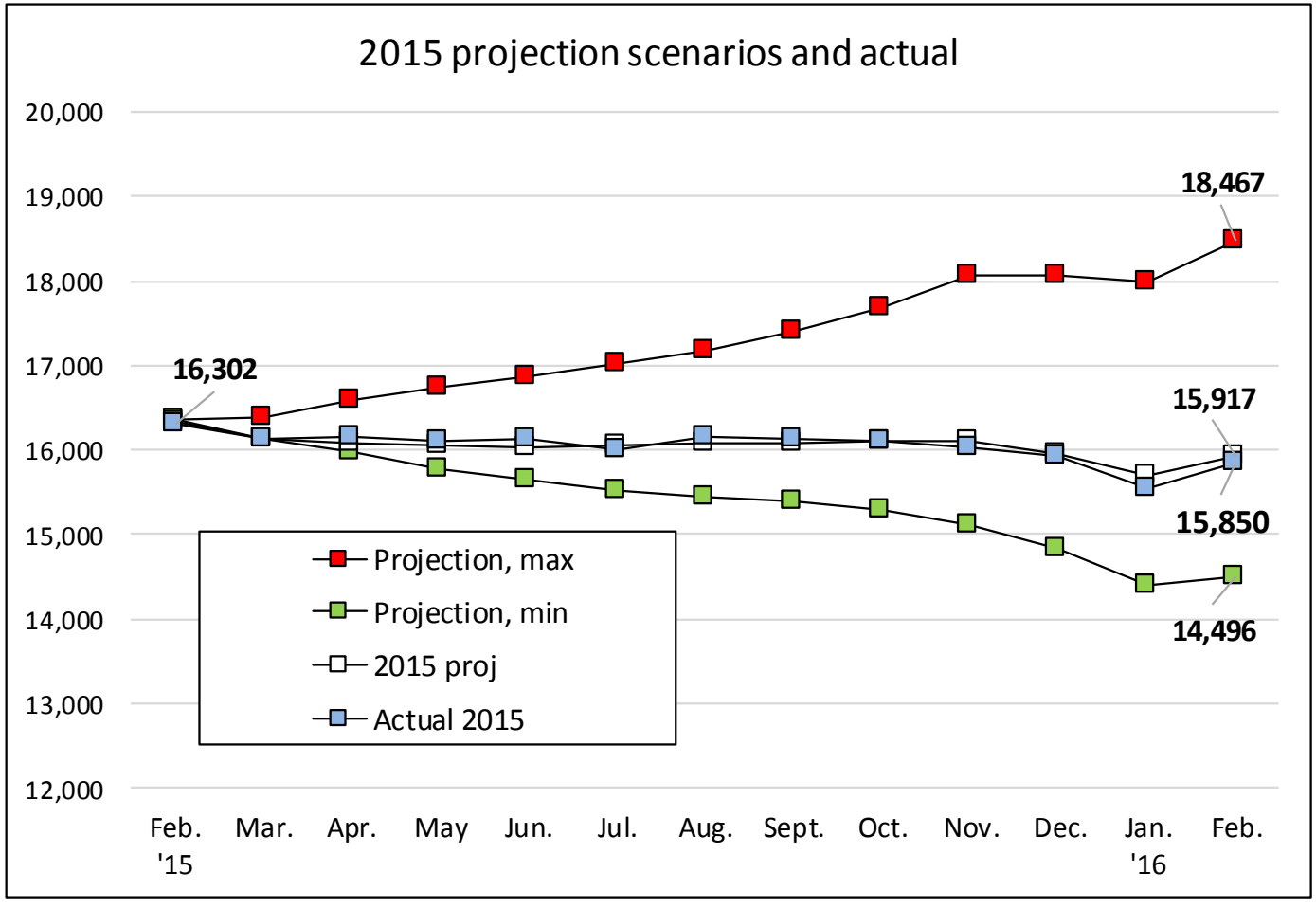
Despite Governor Malloy's ambitious criminal justice agenda, OPM does not currently anticipate any significant impact from these initiatives on the size of the state's prison population during the coming year. In fact, a tightening of the state's RREC program may actually slow the pace of the projected decline.

If OPM's 2016 projection is accurate, the prison population will drop, on a February-to-February basis, by about 400 prisoners or -2.6%.

Connecticut's prison population, actual and projected

- **Each February, OPM is required to publish a prison population forecast that projects the size of the inmate population in the coming year.**
- **This year's projection is available on-line at OPM's Criminal Justice Policy & Planning Division website.**

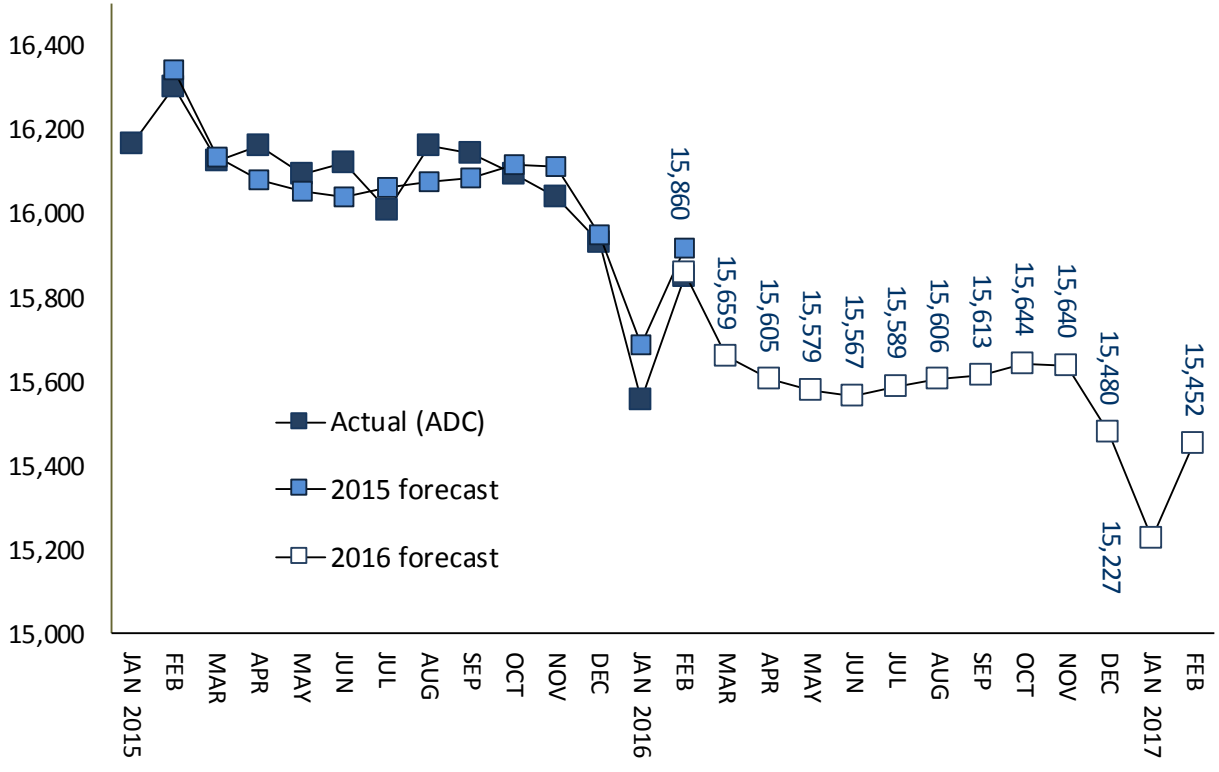
The 2016 Prison Population Forecast



Each year OPM produced a series of projections and then chooses the most reasonable outcome based on a variety of assumptions and factors.

Source: CT OPM

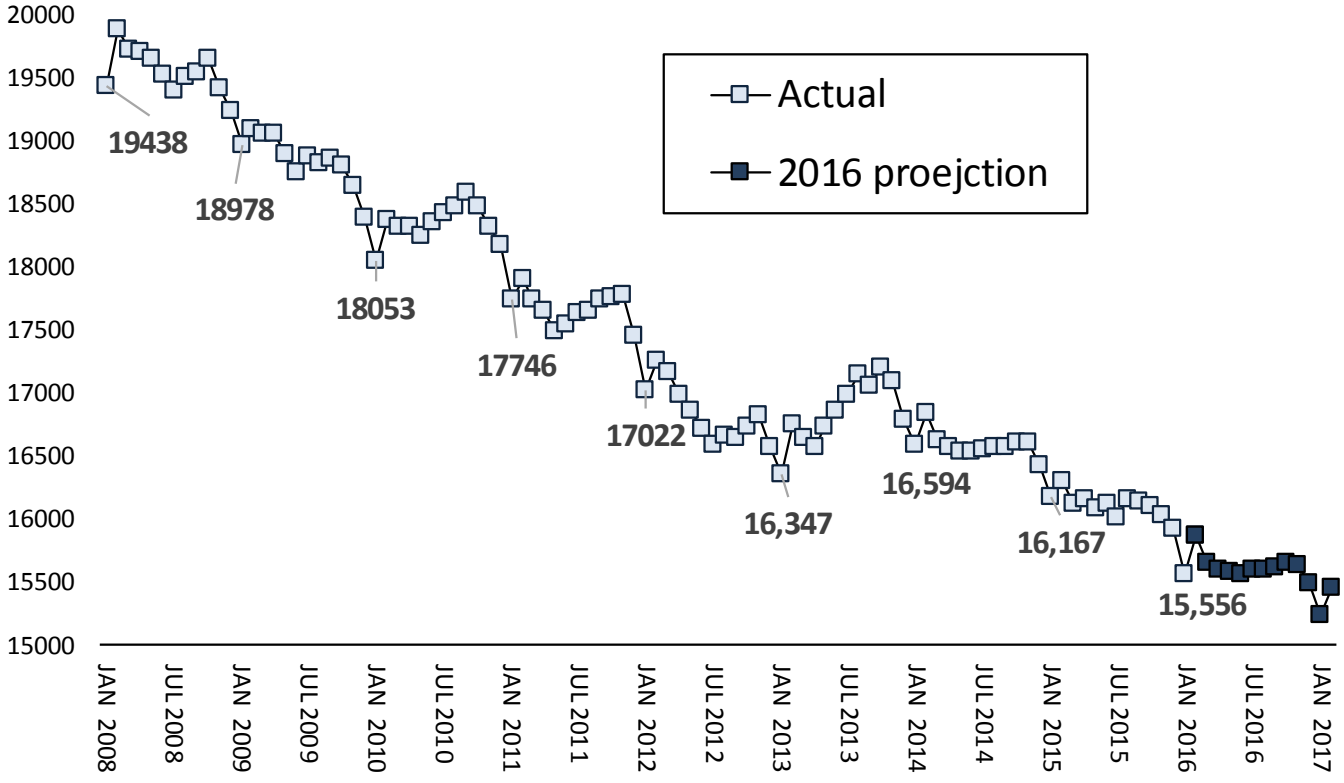
The 2016 Prison Population Forecast



OPM considers this year's forecast to be moderately conservative. By the start of next year, we could see a prison population at or below 15,200

Source: CT OPM

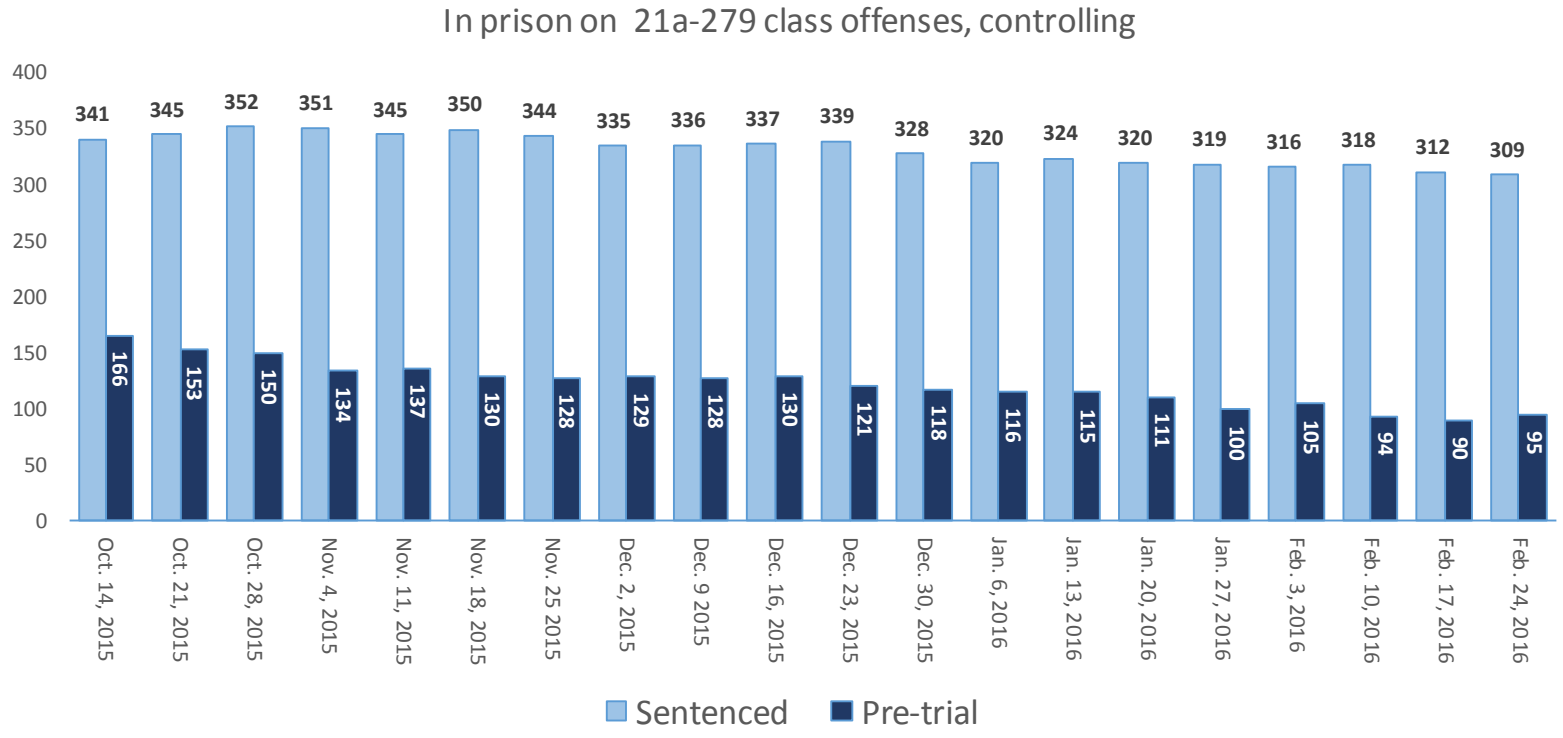
The 2016 Prison Population Forecast



- **This chart places the OPM's 2016 forecast within the context of prison population trends since their historic peak in 2008.**
- **OPM considers gradual, measured reductions in the size of the prison population to be optimal.**

Source: CT OPM

The impact of Drug Possession changes effective 10/1/2015

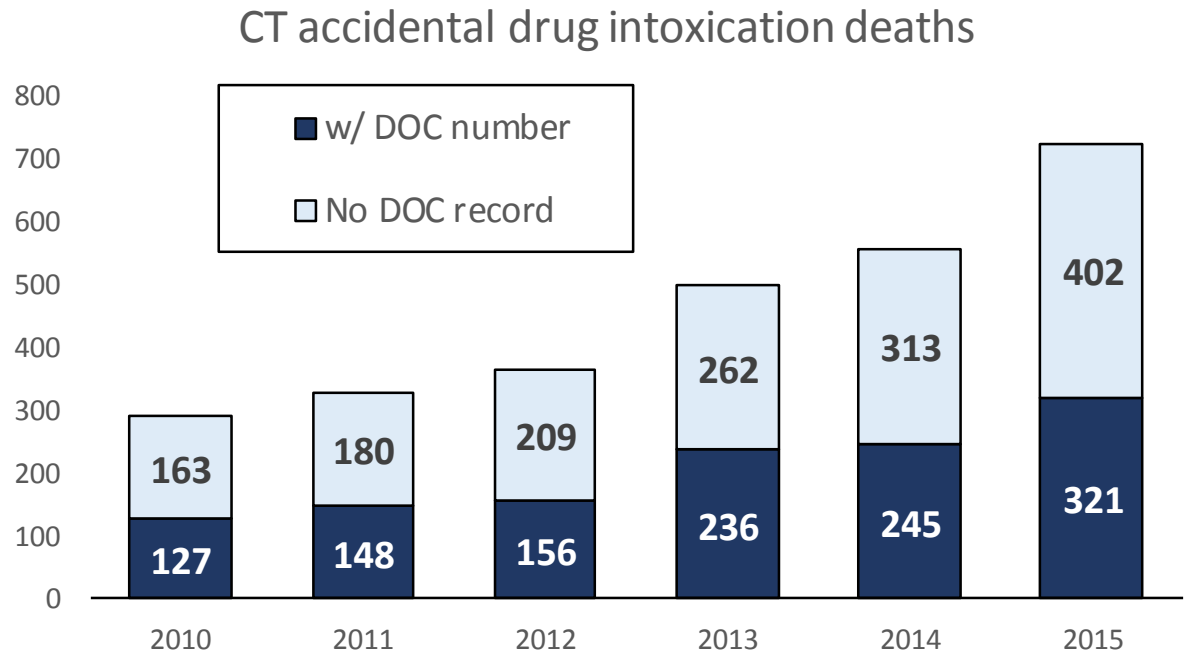


Impact of Drug Possession change from felony to misdemeanor and elimination of mandatory minimum on incarceration effective 10/1/2015

- **The total number of offenders incarcerated with a controlling offense of 21a-279, declined by 21%, from 510 to 405, between 10/14/15 and 2/24/16.**
- **During the same period, we witnessed a 43% reduction among pre-trial prisoners.**
- **Among sentenced prisoners there was a 9% drop**

Source: CT DOC

CT accidental drug deaths



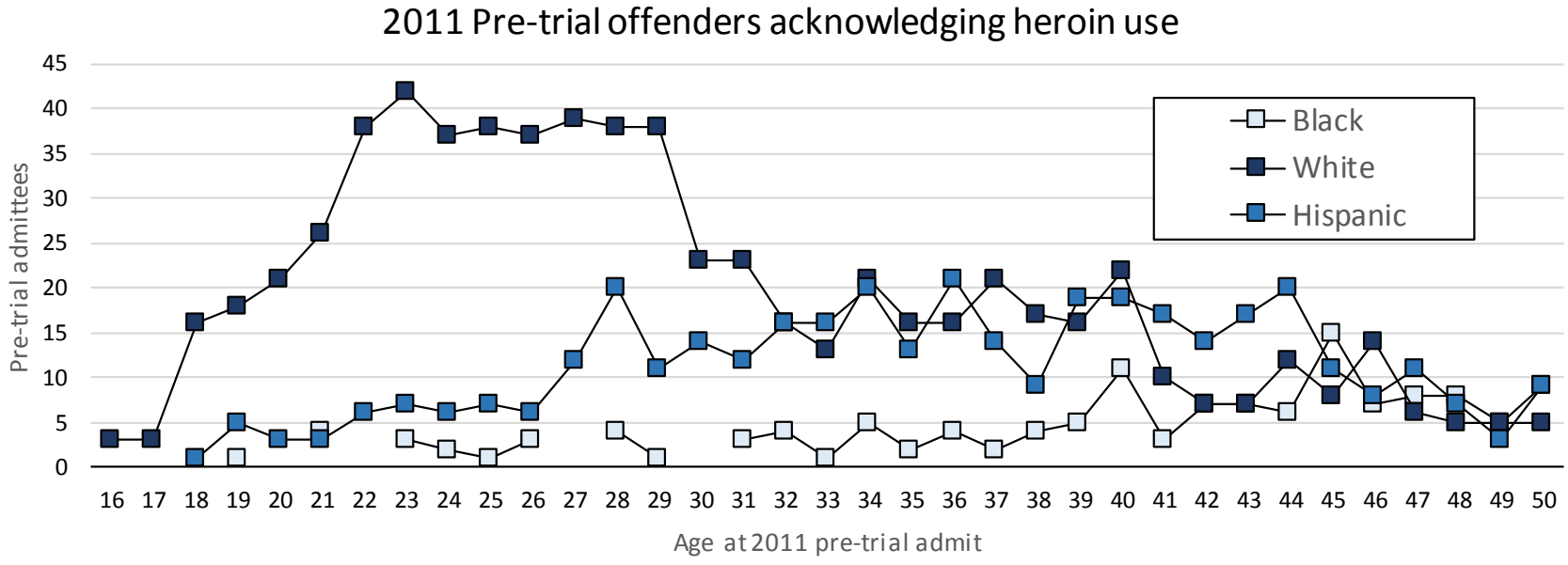
CT Accidental Drug Deaths

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total drug deaths	**290**	**328**	**365**	**498**	**558**	**723**
With a DOC number	127	148	156	236	245	321
No DOC record	163	180	209	262	313	402
% with a DOC record	44%	45%	43%	47%	44%	44%
# of heroin deaths			174	258	327	415
%, death with heroin			48%	52%	59%	57%

Percent change 2012 – 2015: All deaths: 98%, heroin deaths: 138%

Source: OCME, CT DOC

Acknowledged heroin use – pre-trial offenders, 2011

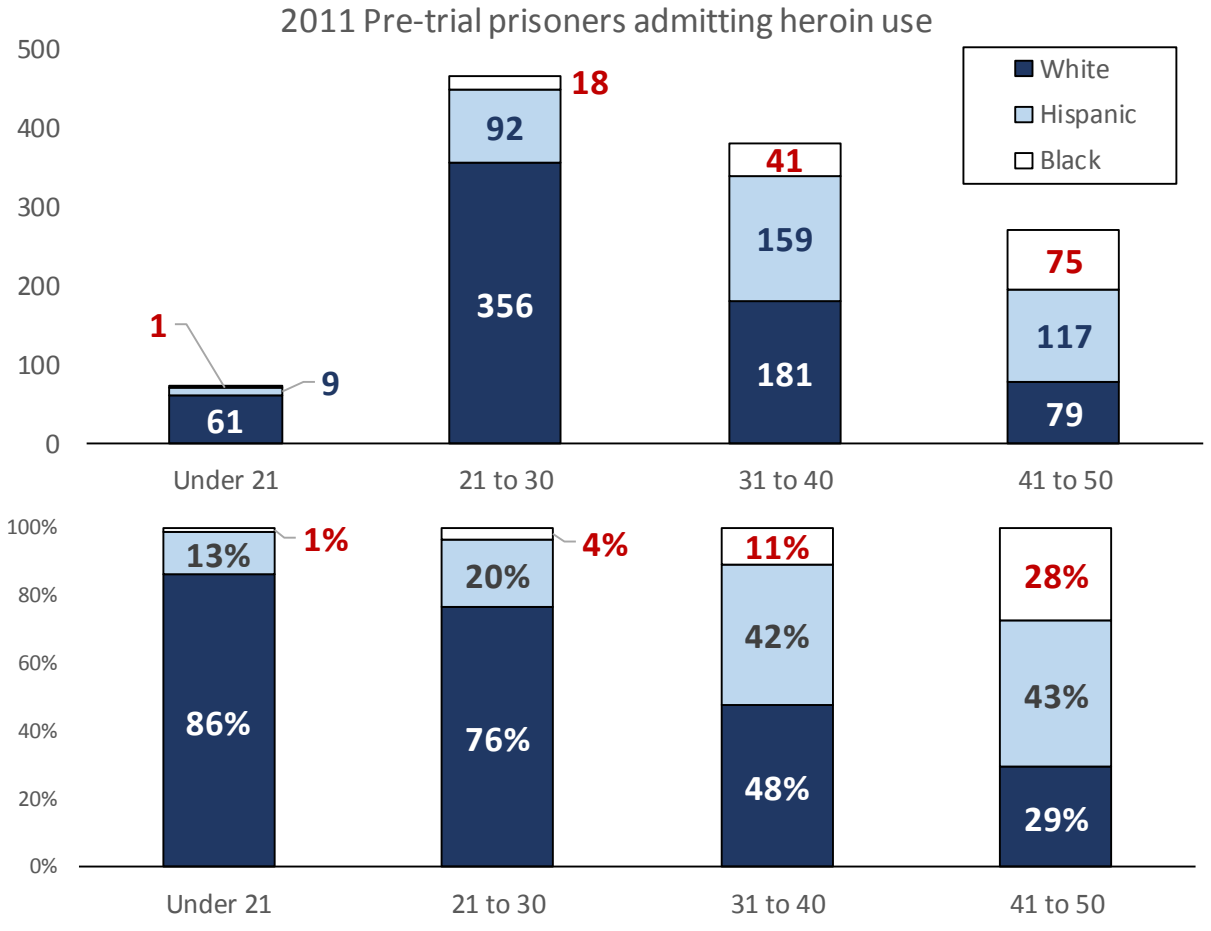


CJPPD staff have been tracking the explosion in heroin/opioid use in CT's prison system for several years. One surprising aspect of this problem was revealed to us through prisoner interviews we have been performing at Walker CI since November of 2015.

- Patterns of heroin/opioid use among prisoners in CT is completely different for among black, white and Hispanic prisoners.
- Heroin/opioid use is more correlated to suburban residents than urban residents.

Source: CSSD

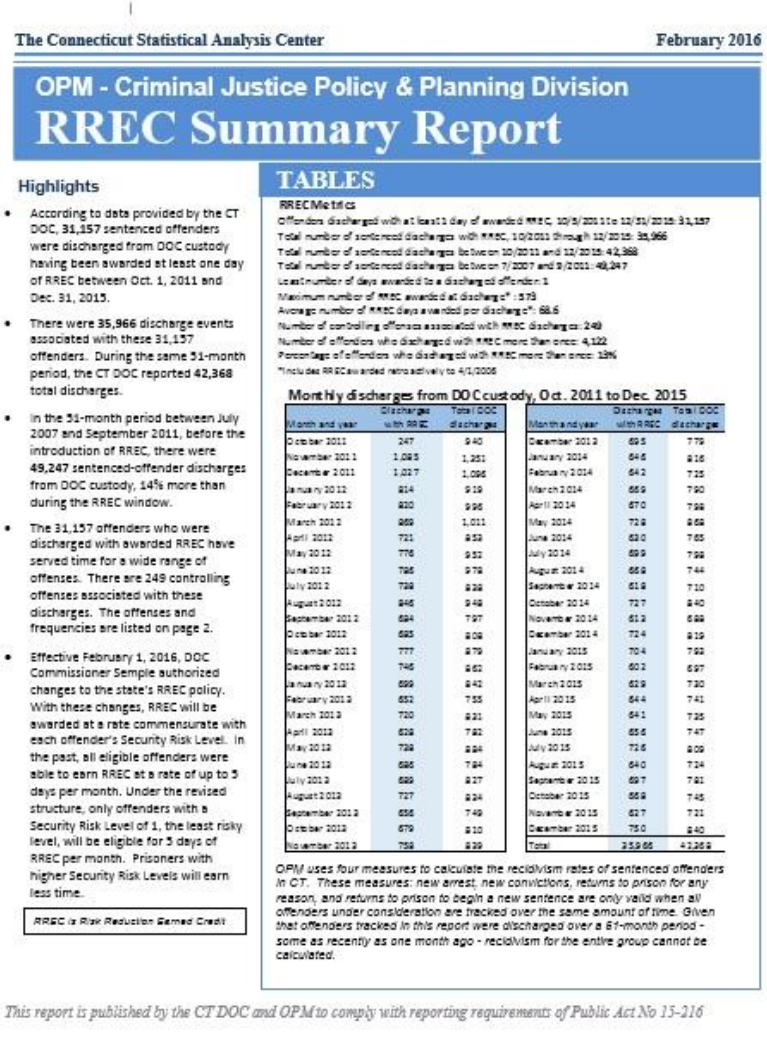
Acknowledged heroin use – pre-trial offenders, 2011



This data was collected by CSSD's Jail Re-interview Staff and shared with OPM for the study on pre-trial offenders.

Source: CSSD

RREC Report



The Connecticut Statistical Analysis Center — February 2016

OPM - Criminal Justice Policy & Planning Division

RREC Summary Report

Highlights

- According to data provided by the CT DOC, 31,157 sentenced offenders were discharged from DOC custody having been awarded at least one day of RREC between Oct. 1, 2011 and Dec. 31, 2015.
- There were 35,966 discharge events associated with these 31,157 offenders. During the same 51-month period, the CT DOC reported 42,368 total discharges.
- In the 51-month period between July 2007 and September 2011, before the introduction of RREC, there were 49,247 sentenced-offender discharges from DOC custody, 14% more than during the RREC window.
- The 31,157 offenders who were discharged with awarded RREC have served time for a wide range of offenses. There are 249 controlling offenses associated with these discharges. The offenses and frequencies are listed on page 2.
- Effective February 1, 2016, DOC Commissioner Semple authorized changes to the state's RREC policy. With these changes, RREC will be awarded at a rate commensurate with each offender's Security Risk Level. In the past, all eligible offenders were able to earn RREC at a rate of up to 5 days per month. Under the revised structure, only offenders with a Security Risk Level of 1, the least risky level, will be eligible for 5 days of RREC per month. Prisoners with higher Security Risk Levels will earn less time.

RREC is Risk Reduction Earned Credit

TABLES

RREC Metrics

Offenders discharged with at least 1 day of awarded RREC, 10/1/2011 to 12/31/2015: 31,157
Total number of sentenced discharges with RREC, 10/2011 through 12/2015: 35,966
Total number of sentenced discharges between 10/2011 and 12/2015: 42,368
Total number of sentenced discharges between 7/2007 and 9/2011: 49,247
Least number of days awarded to a discharged offender: 1
Maximum number of RREC awarded at discharge*: 379
Average number of RREC days awarded per discharge*: 68.6
Number of controlling offenses associated with RREC discharges: 249
Number of offenders who discharged with RREC more than once: 4,122
Percentage of offenders who discharged with RREC more than once: 13%
*Includes RREC awarded retroactively to 4/1/2006

Monthly discharges from DOC custody, Oct. 2011 to Dec. 2015

Month and year	Discharges with RREC	Total DOC discharges
October 2011	247	940
November 2011	1,085	1,251
December 2011	1,017	1,096
January 2012	814	919
February 2012	820	996
March 2012	969	1,011
April 2012	721	853
May 2012	776	951
June 2012	795	979
July 2012	739	838
August 2012	845	948
September 2012	694	797
October 2012	695	808
November 2012	777	879
December 2012	745	861
January 2013	699	841
February 2013	652	755
March 2013	720	831
April 2013	628	781
May 2013	728	834
June 2013	695	784
July 2013	699	827
August 2013	727	834
September 2013	656	749
October 2013	679	810
November 2013	758	839
December 2013	695	779
January 2014	646	816
February 2014	642	725
March 2014	669	790
April 2014	670	798
May 2014	728	858
June 2014	630	765
July 2014	699	798
August 2014	668	744
September 2014	618	710
October 2014	727	840
November 2014	613	698
December 2014	724	819
January 2015	704	793
February 2015	602	697
March 2015	629	730
April 2015	644	741
May 2015	641	735
June 2015	656	747
July 2015	726	809
August 2015	640	724
September 2015	697	781
October 2015	668	745
November 2015	627	721
December 2015	750	840
Total	35966	41269

OPM uses four measures to calculate the recidivism rates of sentenced offenders in CT. These measures: new arrest, new convictions, returns to prison for any reason, and returns to prison to begin a new sentence are only valid when all offenders under consideration are tracked over the same amount of time. Given that offenders tracked in this report were discharged over a 51-month period - some as recently as one month ago - recidivism for the entire group cannot be calculated.

This report is published by the CT DOC and OPM to comply with reporting requirements of Public Act No 15-216

Source: OPM

The report is produced to satisfy
Public Act No. 15-216, AN ACT CONCERNING RISK REDUCTION CREDITS, CARRY PERMITS AND PAROLE OFFICER ACCESS TO STATE FIREARMS DATABASE.

Such report shall include:

(1) The number of inmates released overall and the number of inmates released early as a result of the award of such credit

(2) the crimes for which such released inmates were convicted

(3) the amount of risk reduction credit earned by inmates released early pursuant to such credit; and

(4) any recidivism data regarding inmates who were released early pursuant to such credit, including any data such as rate of reentry into the correctional system, elapsed time between release and such reentry, and the crimes for which such inmates were convicted that resulted in such reentry.

(5) Not later than thirty days after submission of the report to the General Assembly, said commissioner shall post the report on the Department of Correction's Internet web site.

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Criminal Justice Policy & Planning Division

OPM – CJPPD
Research and Evaluation Unit
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www.ct.gov/opm/CriminalJustice/Research