

DOC COVID-19 RELEASE FACTS

1. Is the Department of Correction releasing inmates as part of their COVID-19 response?

Yes, in addition to discharging offenders that have served their court imposed sentence, the Department of Correction continues to review and release eligible and suitable low risk offenders with a verified housing plan before their end of sentence.

2. Is the Department releasing more inmates than they normally would have?

Yes, the Department of Correction witnessed a 72% increase in discretionary releases (early release) at the onset of COVID-19 in March 2020 when compared to February 2020. The 522 discretionary releases in March 2020 was more than every previous month dating back one full year. April 2020 data revealed another historical month with 43 more discretionary releases than March for a total of 545.

3. What about the argument that the offenders being released were at their end of sentence and would be released anyway?

The 522 released offenders in March 2020 does not include the population being discharged at the end of their sentence. The number of end of sentence discharges was 237 which brings the total number of releases to 759 for the month of March 2020.

The 545 released offenders in April 2020 does not include the population being discharged at the end of their sentence. The number of end of sentence discharges was 149 which brings the total number of releases to 694 for the month of April 2020.

4. When looking at the total number of people leaving prion for the month of March 2020, how does that number (759) compare to previous months?

This is the largest number of releases within a one month's period in the last nine months.

5. What is the total reduction in the offender population?

The population has dropped by 1,455 people between 3/1/2020 and 5/1/2020

6. How does the reduction in intakes contribute to this reduction?

The pre-trial population dropped by 10% between March 1st and April 29th.

Pre-trial population on 3/1/2020: 3049

Pre-trail population on 4/29/2020: 2753

7. Has the Department of Correction considered releasing people with underlying medical issues as part of their COVID-19 response?

Eligible offenders under the Commissioner's release authority are prioritized by reviewing those over the age of 50 with a high medical score.

8. Is the Commissioner considering releasing offenders on Medical Parole or Compassionate Parole?

Medical and Compassionate Parole decisions are made by the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BOPP). Cases are forwarded to the BOPP for consideration. <https://portal.ct.gov/BOPP/resources/Agency-Landing-Page/Most-Popular-Page/Medical-and-Compassionate-Parole-Info>

9. Is the Department of Correction considering using furlough authority?

The Department of Correction is authorizing furloughs (up to 45 days) for Transitional Supervision eligible offenders that have served 40% of their sentence. Eligible offenders are sentenced to two years or less.

10. Is the Department of Correction able to transition offenders from a halfway house bed to a residence in order to create more space for others to transition out of prison and into a halfway house?

Yes, the Department of Correction has transitioned 540 offenders from a halfway house to their homes between 3/1/2020 and 5/1/2020.

11. How many halfway houses are there?

There are 29 contracted halfway house programs across the state and approximately 1,000 beds.

12. Can the Department move up parole eligibility dates?

Discretionary parole decisions are made by the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BOPP). The timing of parole eligibility is dictated by stature. <https://portal.ct.gov/BOPP>

13. How many total people are being supervised in the community by the Department of Correction?

As of 5/1/2020, the DOC Parole and Community Services Division was supervising 4825 people. This is the largest number of people under community supervision since 2011.

14. Has the Department of Correction made any adjustments to their community supervision practices?

The Department of Correction's Parole and Community Services Division has revised its protocols to limit face-to-face interactions and support social distancing.

15. How does an incarcerated individual find out if they are eligible for discretionary release? Do they need to ask?

The Department of Correction has an objective computerized system that automatically identifies eligible offenders for review. All review decisions for discretionary release under the Department of Correction's authority are made by the agency's Community Release Unit (CRU) which was established in 2015. Decisions regarding release on parole are made by the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BOPP). Offenders may see their unit counselor with questions.

16. What happens if someone in a halfway house is positive COVID-19?

The Department of Correction has centralized positive COVID-19 patients to the Cohegan House (Uncasville CT with onsite nursing) where they will be temporarily placed on medical isolation until recovered and returned to their original program location.