

CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY ADVISORY COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 2025
9:00AM – 11:00 AM

OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT
CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY AND PLANNING DIVISION

Today's Agenda

I. **Welcome, Attendance and Introductions**

Daniel Karpowitz, Undersecretary,
OPM Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division (CJPPD)

II. **The Historical Origins and Statutory Purpose of the Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission (CJPAC)**

Andrew Clark, Director, Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy, UConn

III. **Connecticut Criminal Justice Trends: Past, Present, and Near Future**

Kevin Neary, Research Unit Director, OPM CJPPD

IV. **Reviving the Commission's Focus on Re-entry**

Undersecretary Karpowitz

V. **Brief Update on Federal Grants**

Valina Carpenter, Grants Unit Director, OPM CJPPD

VI. **Member Updates**

II. THE HISTORICAL ORIGINS AND STATUTORY PURPOSE OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY ADVISORY COMMISSION (CJPAC)

Presented by:
Andrew Clark, *Director*
Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy
University of Connecticut

MARCH 2025

Timeline

- **1978–2005 Lead up to CJPPD**
- **2005 Creation of CJPPD**
- **2006 CJPAC begins**

2013 CJPAC Meetings Agenda & Minutes

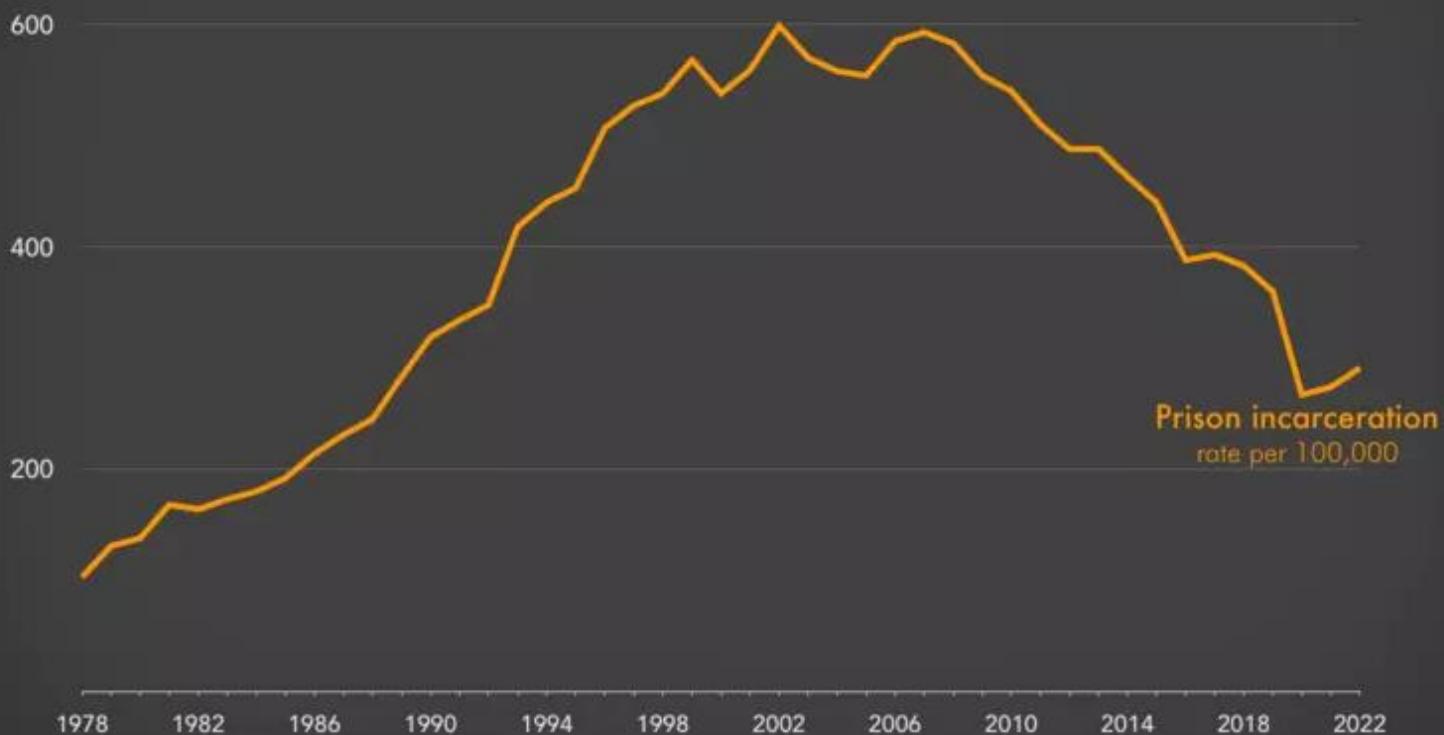
Meeting Date	Agenda, Minutes and Presentation Documents
Dec 12, 2013	Meeting Video Agenda  <i>Bill Carbone, Executive Director, Court Support Services Division, State of Connecticut Judicial Branch; Presentation  re: The Connecticut Criminal Justice System: A Historical Perspective and Future Directions (December 12, 2013)</i>

<https://portal.ct.gov/opp/cj-about/cjpac/cjpac/cjpac-2013>

https://imrp-dpp.media.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3351/2023/04/CJPAC_CSSD-Update.pdf

Connecticut's prison incarceration rate

Number of people incarcerated in state prisons per 100,000 state residents, 1978-2022



Connecticut has a combined prison and jail system and does not report jail data to the Bureau of Justice Statistics.
For full sourcing see: https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2024/04/15/jails_update

Timeline

- **Prison and Jail Overcrowding Task Force 1980**
- **Prison and Jail Overcrowding Commission 1981**
- **A new strategy:**
 - **PA 04-234 AAC Prison Overcrowding (AKA Justice Reinvestment Act)**
 - **PA 05-249 CJPPD begins**
- **Establishment of CJPPD – HB 6976**
 - “The file copy seeks to establish really, for the first time in the long time, a centralized ability here in our State government to provide both planning and policy guidance to our State’s criminal justice agencies.*
 - I point out, Mr. Speaker, that many states have the equivalent of a political justice czar-type position, usually a key advisor to the Governor.*
 - And it is our hope over time, with the establishment of this office, that Connecticut, too, would have one central person who has the overarching responsibility for coordinating our criminal justice functions.”*

Rep. Lawlor (99th District) House Transcript 6-7-2005

Timeline

- **Genesis of CJPAC**
- **2006 Report: PA 04-234**

Compliance Monitoring Project

Public Act 04-234 contained many initiatives to provide a comprehensive means to control the state's persistent prison overcrowding problem. Its centerpiece requires a collaborative effort by a variety of agencies to develop and implement an offender re-entry strategy as a new approach to addressing the prison overcrowding problem by promoting the successful transition of offenders back into society, thereby also enhancing public safety and supporting the rights of victims of crime. 2006 LPRIC/OFA report

Possible Action: The responsibility and authority to develop, oversee implementation, and report on the success of the offender re-entry strategy and the justice reinvestment initiative should be transferred to the Division of Criminal Justice Policy and Planning (CJPP), within the Office of Policy and Management.

Possible Action: The current Prison and Jail Overcrowding Commission statutes should be amended to require the commission to function as an advisory committee to the undersecretary of the Division of Criminal Justice Policy and Planning. The name of the PJOC should be changed to the Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission (CJPAC) to better reflect its restructured role and mission.

Timeline

- **From recommendations to legislation:**
 - **PA 06-193 CJPAC and Sentencing Task Force**

- **Establishment of CJPAC – HB 5781**

In addition to creating a Sentencing Task Force, the act accomplished two major changes relative to CJPPD:

- 1) It changes the responsibilities and reporting requirements of the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division within the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), including transferring to the division responsibility for developing and implementing the reentry strategy for offenders returning to the community. It also changes the content requirements for the reentry strategy.
- 2) The act renames the Commission on Prison and Jail Overcrowding the Criminal Justice Policy and Advisory Commission, adds four members to the commission, and requires it to advise and assist the division.

Public Act Summary - CGA

Timeline

- **C.G.S Sec 18-87k**
- **Powers and duties of CJPAC**

- (1) Develop and recommend policies for preventing prison and jail overcrowding;
- (2) Examine the impact of statutory provisions and current administrative policies on prison and jail overcrowding and recommend legislation to the Governor and the General Assembly
- (3) Research and gather relevant statistical data and other information concerning the impact of efforts to prevent prison and jail overcrowding
- (4) Advise the undersecretary of the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division on policies and procedures to promote more effective and cohesive state criminal justice and juvenile justice systems and to develop and implement the offender reentry strategy
- (5) monitor developments throughout the state's criminal justice system
- (6) identify specific needs for reentry services in geographic areas throughout the state
- (7) identify institution-based and community-based programs and services that effectively address offender needs and reduce recidivism
- (8) assist the undersecretary of the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division in developing the recommendations included in the "criminal justice trends" report

III. CONNECTICUT CRIMINAL JUSTICE TRENDS: PAST, PRESENT, & NEAR FUTURE

Presented by:
Kevin Neary, *Research Unit Director*
Office of Policy and Management
Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division

MARCH 2025

Today's presentation discusses select trends across Connecticut's criminal justice system, in three parts:

- **Part I: A long look back**
- **Part II: Projecting the near future**
- **Part III: A puzzle of trends**

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Select Justice System Measures: 30 year look back

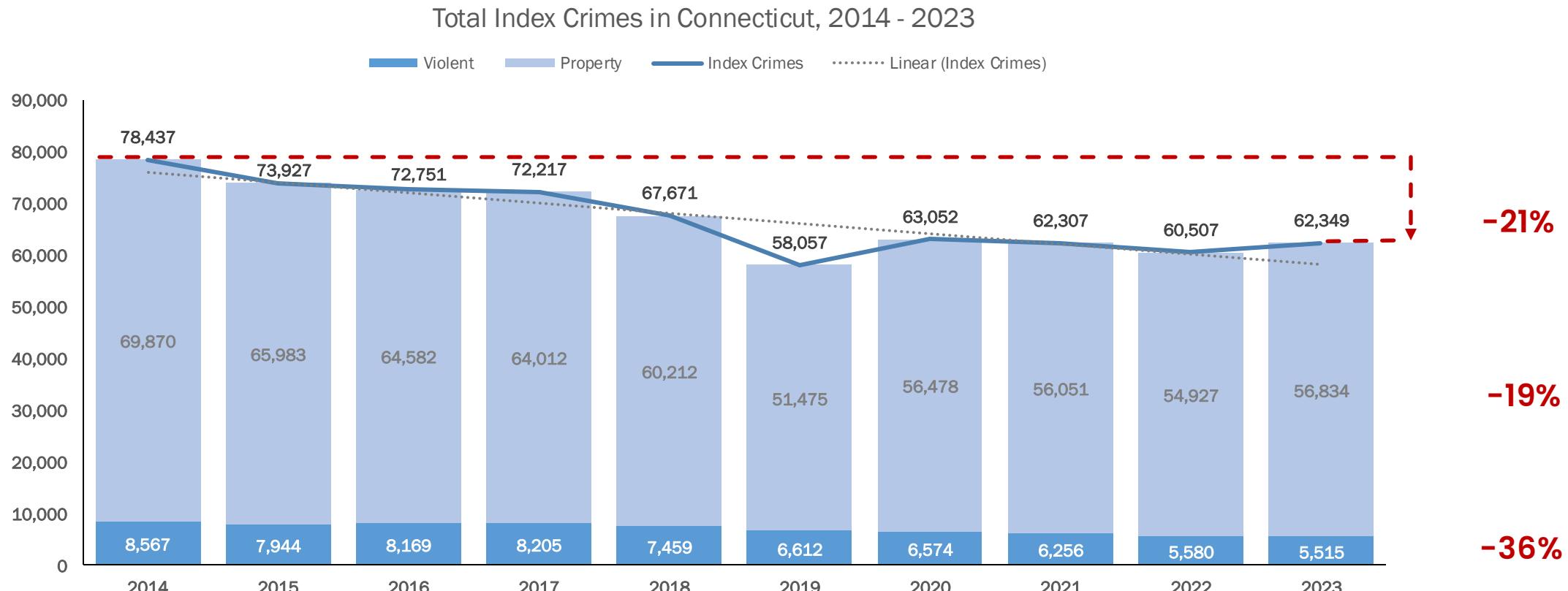
Measure	Years compared	Numbers		Change
		Historic	Recent	%
Reported violent crime	1994, 2023	14,916	5,515	-63%
Violent crime rate per 100K	1994, 2023	455.5	149.7	-67%
Reported property crime	1994, 2023	134,030	56,834	-58%
Property crime rate per 100K	1994, 2023	4,092.5	1,550.8	-62%
Arrests	1995, 2023	186,902	73,009	-61%
Arrest rate per 100K	1995, 2023	6,796.4	2003.0	-71%
Arrests Under 18	1995, 2023	33,259	4,960	-85%
Correction July 1 Population	1994, 2024	14,125	10,584	-25%
DOC Pretrial July 1 Population	1994, 2024	2,466	3,570	+45%
Correction Community Supervision July 1 population	1994, 2024	2,588	3,027	+17%

State Population notes:

- Connecticut's estimated population in the mid-1990s was approximately **3,275,000**.
- As of the 2020 Census, Connecticut's population was **3,605,944**.
- Connecticut's 2023 population was estimated to be **3,617,176** per Connecticut Department of Public Health estimates.

*Note: For historic purposes, crime statistics are presented using the Uniform Crime Reporting Summary Reporting System statistics.
Sources: FBI Crime in the United States 1995, DESPP Crime in Connecticut 2023, Department of Correction via CT Open Data*

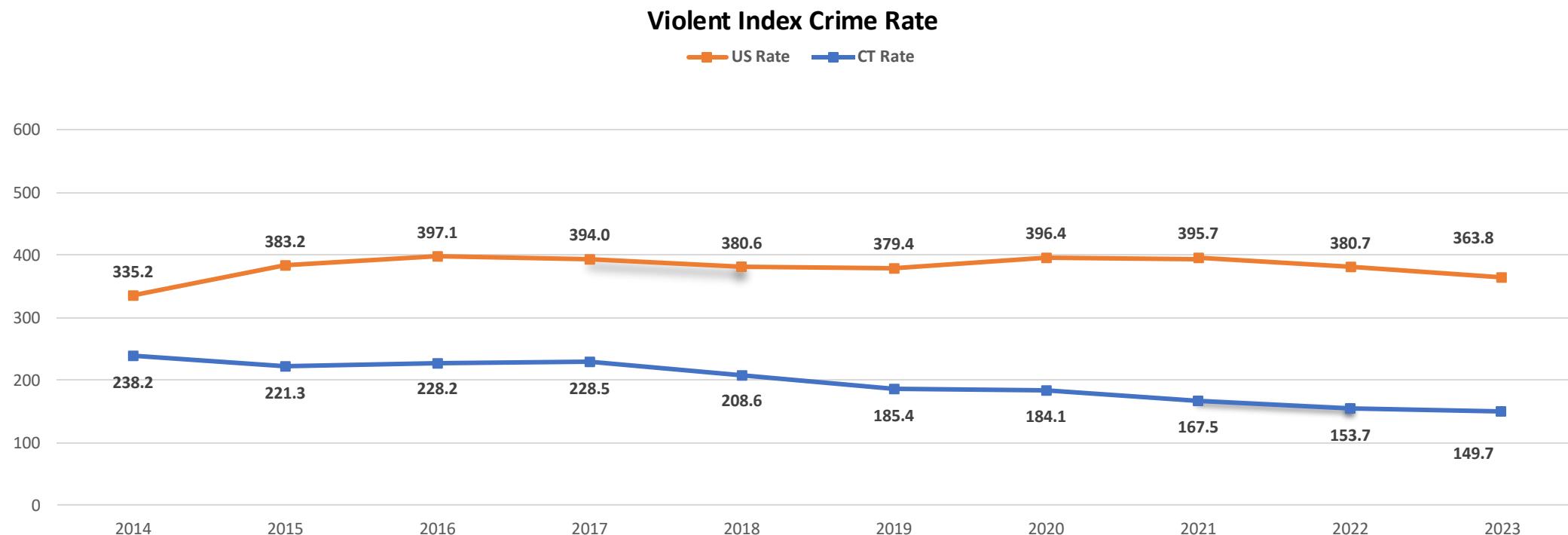
Comparing SRS index crimes, reported crime has fallen 21% from ten years ago, with violent crime incidents down 36%.



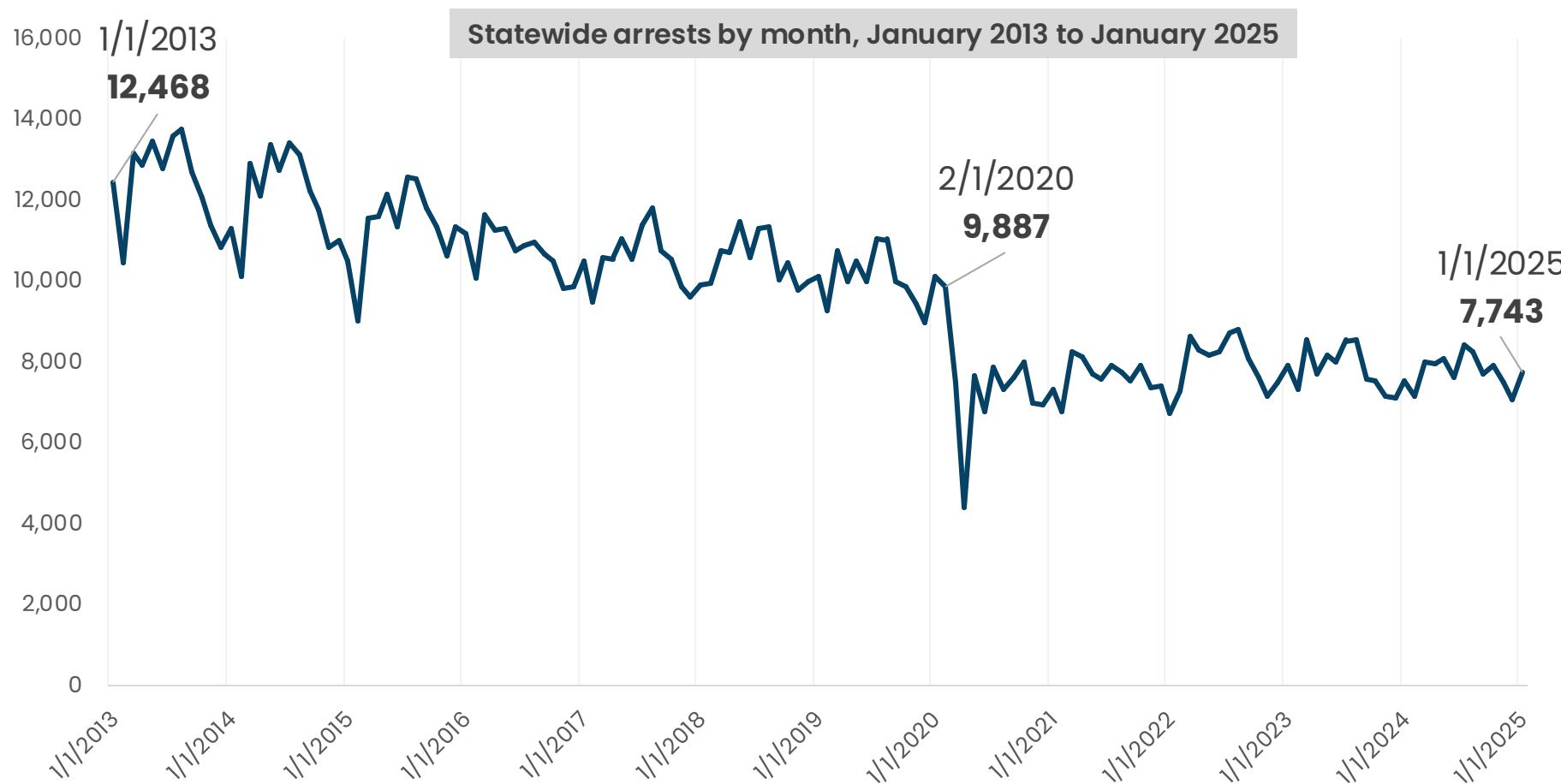
Note: Index crimes are a subset of crimes reportable to law enforcement, consisting of murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault (Violent Index crimes); burglary, larceny/theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson (Property Index crimes).

In 2023, Connecticut's estimated violent crime rate was less than half the estimated U.S. rate.

- Connecticut's violent crime rate has declined notably over the past 10 years.



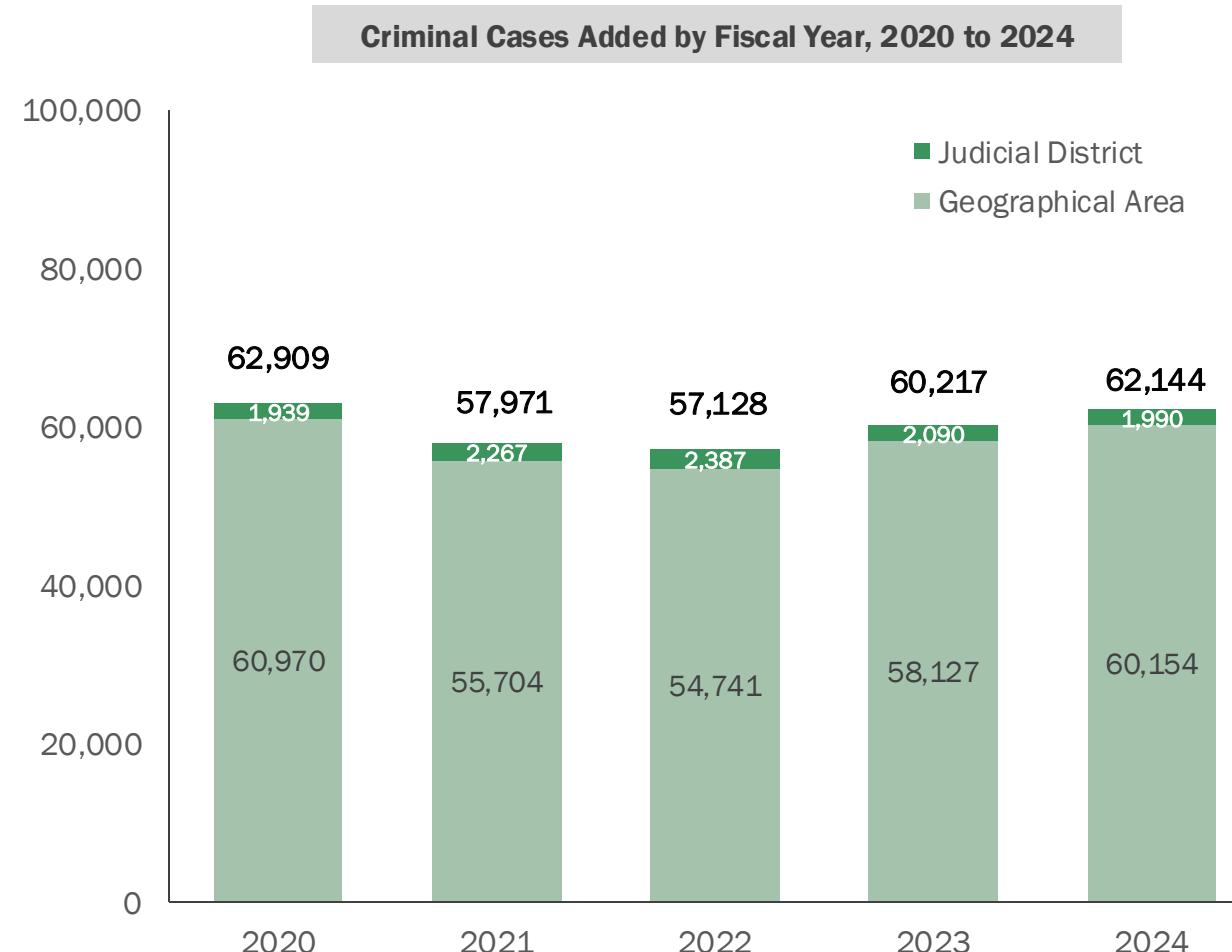
Statewide arrests have declined notably over the past decade, even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Source: CJIS, Monthly Criminal and Motor Vehicle Arrest Statistics provided to OPM.

- Connecticut's January 2025 arrest volume was **38%** lower than the January 2013 amount.
- Though monthly arrests amounts vary, there have been two distinct trends during this period:
 - Between 2013 and 2020, Arrests trending downward.
 - After the start of the pandemic in 2020, arrests rebounded and have remained mostly flat aside from monthly fluctuations.

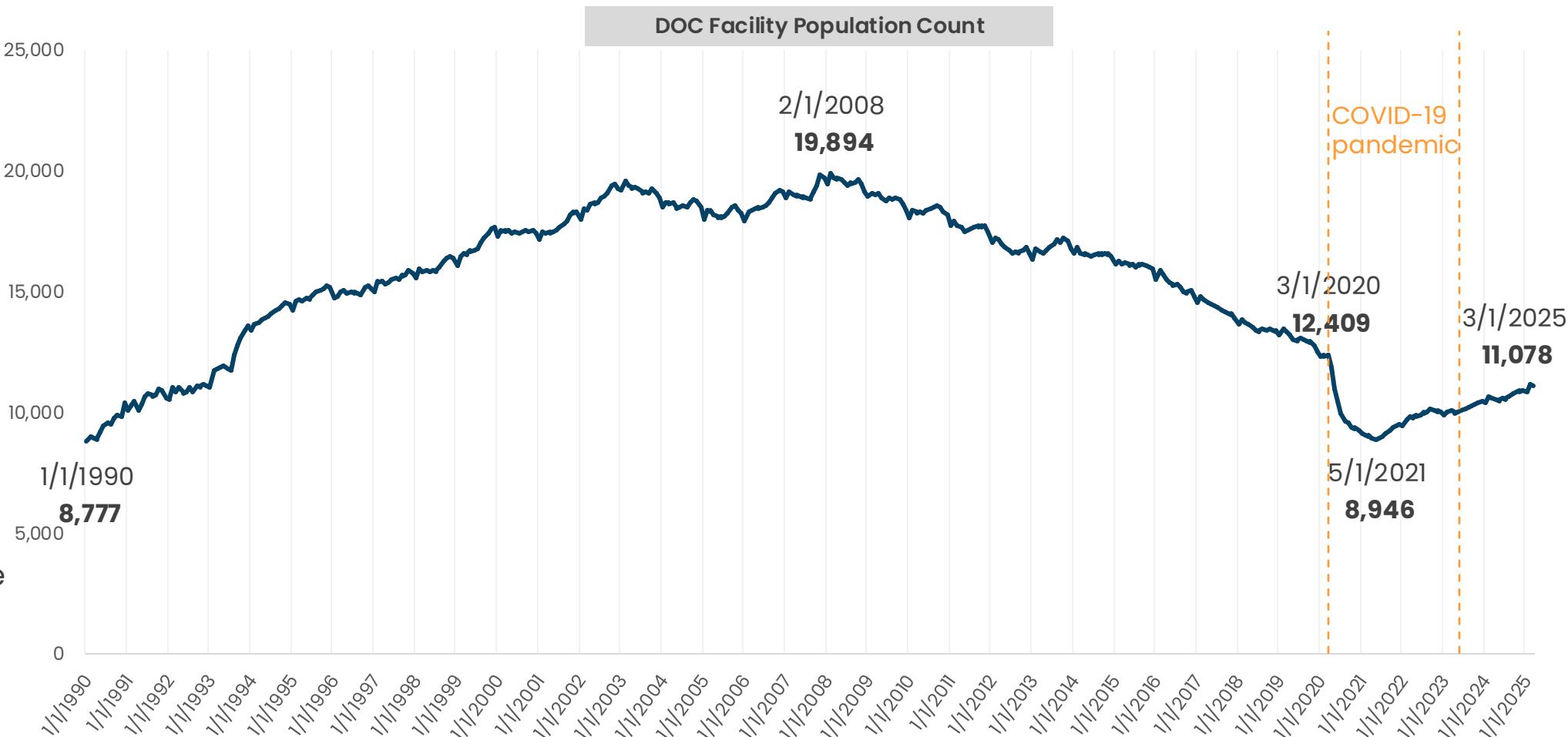
In FY2024, the number of criminal cases added approached the number added to the courts in FY2020.



- 3.5% more criminal cases were added to the Geographical Area (GA) courts in FY2024 than FY2023.
 - GA courts receive between 96 to 97% of all criminal cases added each year.
- The number of cases added to the Judicial District (JD) courts, which typically handle more serious criminal cases, were in line with FY2020 volumes, but down 100 cases from the prior FY.

In the past 30 years, Connecticut's correctional population first expanded, then contracted significantly.

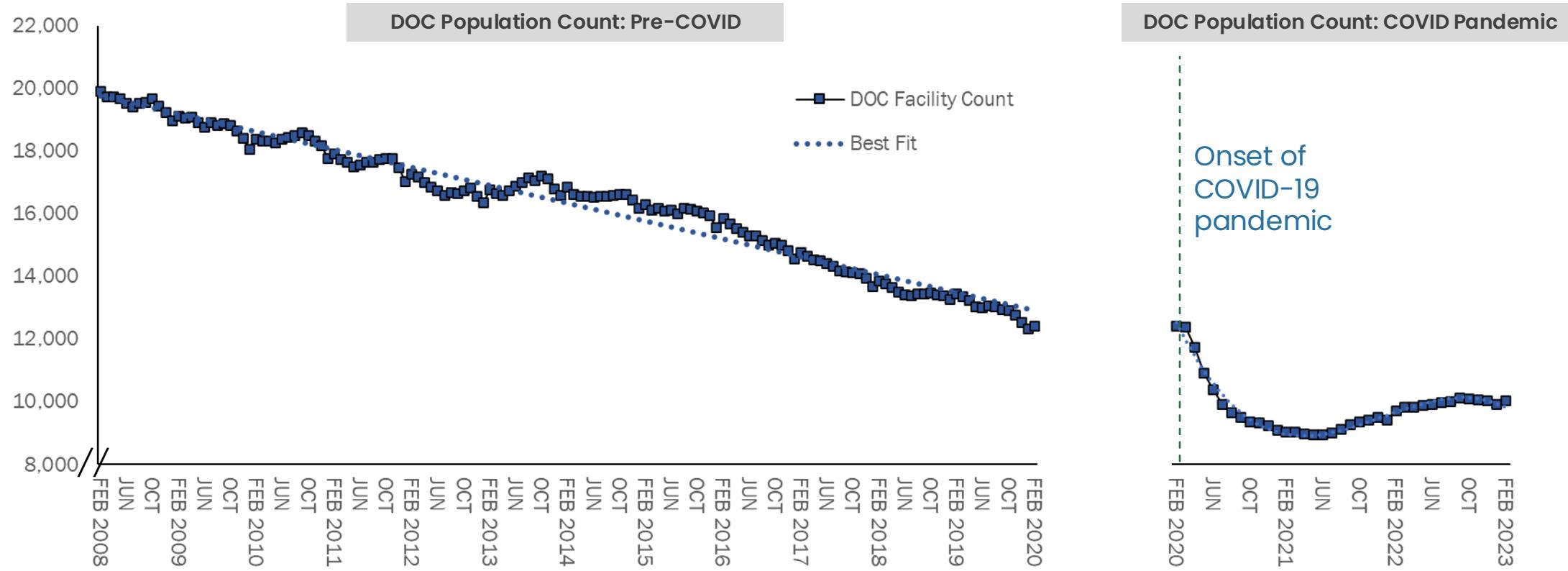
- The March 1, 2025 facility population is **24% larger** than in March 1990.
- Compared with the 2008 peak, there were **44% fewer** people held in DOC facilities as of March 2025.
- The March 1, 2025 count is **89%** of the March 1, 2020 count at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.



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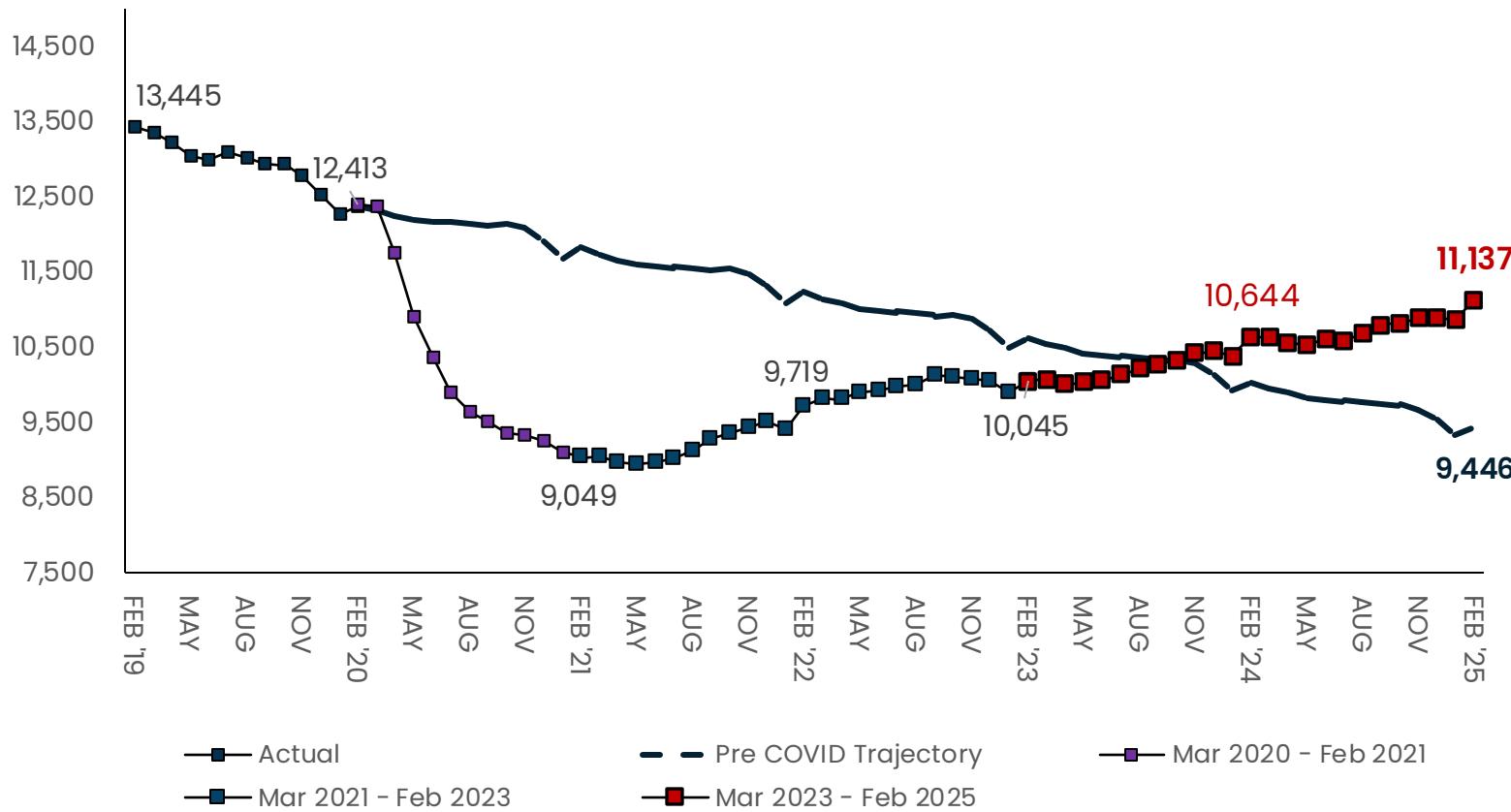
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COVID-19 pandemic's impacts on DOC population trends: 2008–2023



- Between February 2008 DOC population peak and February 2020, the DOC population followed a downward trend with seasonal variation. The pandemic's onset in March 2020 hastened the population reduction before growing in 2022 towards the pre-pandemic trend.
- In developing previous *Annual Forecasts*, OPM CJPPD needed to anticipate whether and how quickly the correctional population might return to the historic, long-term trend.

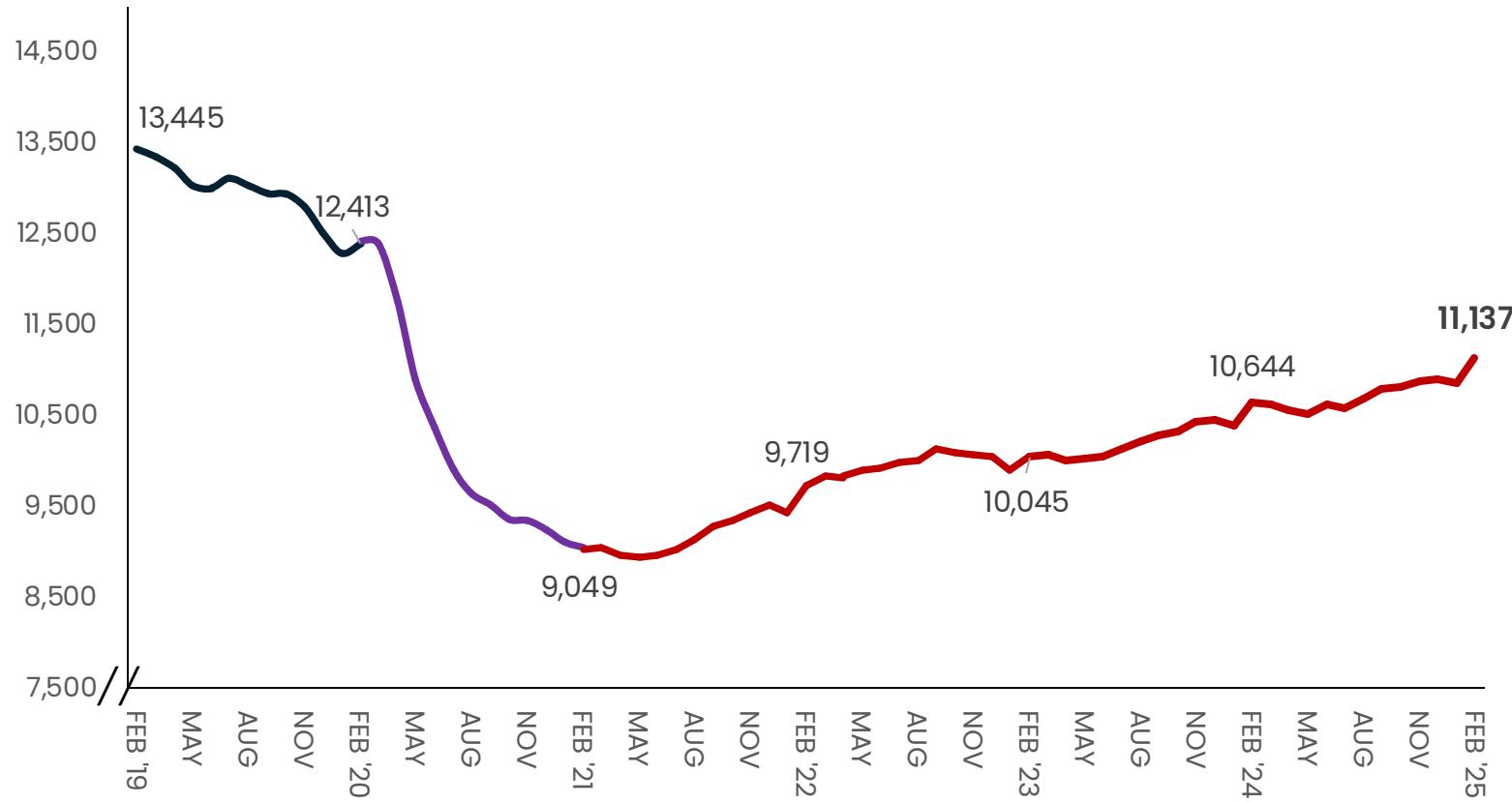
Comparing actual DOC population changes to pre-pandemic trend through February 2025



Following the pandemic decline, the DOC population count began an upward trend beginning June 2022 before leveling off in February 2023, signaling that the facility count could rejoin its pre-COVID trajectory by 2024.

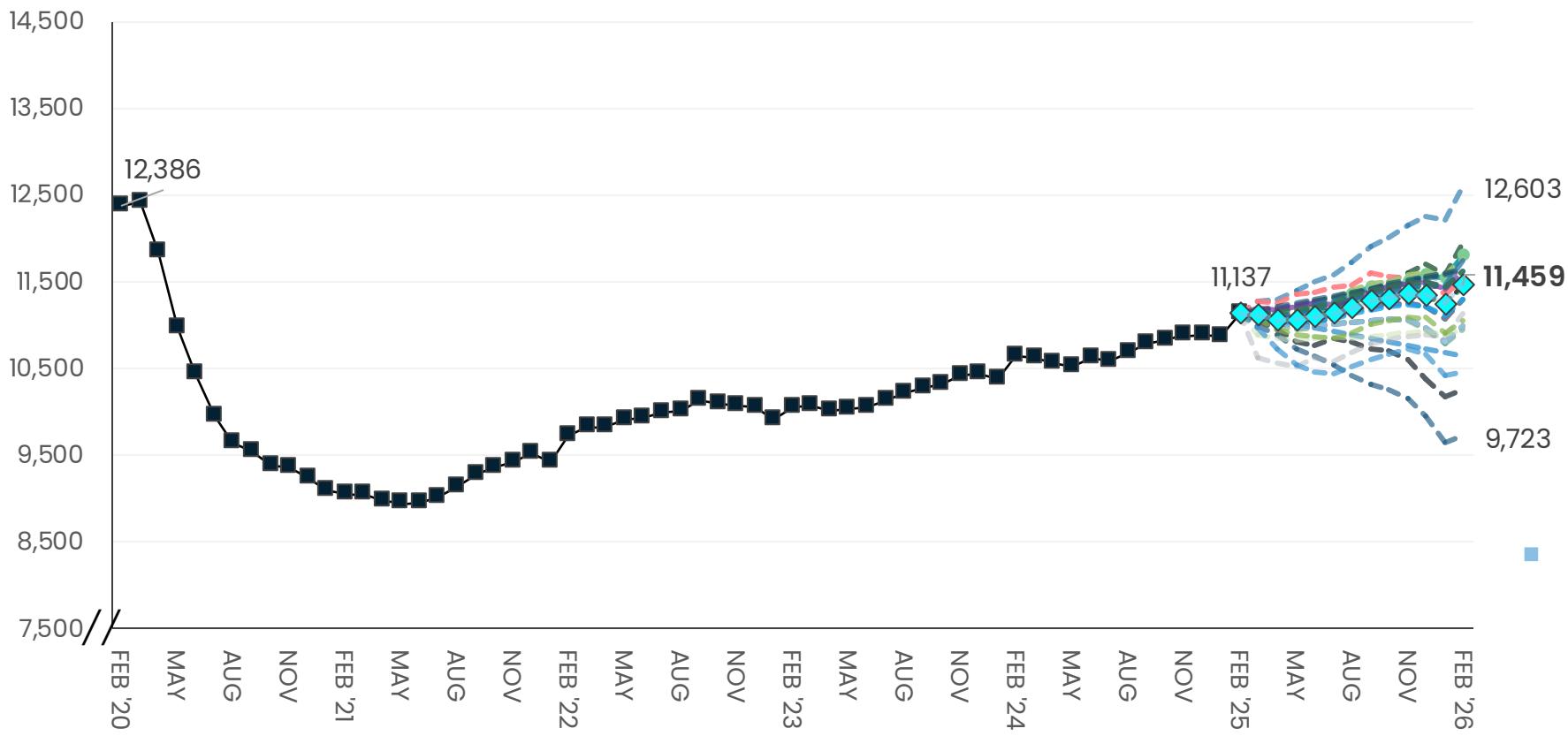
But in Fall 2023, the DOC count reached the long-term trend, then continued upward.

Key insights for developing OPM's 2025-2026 forecast



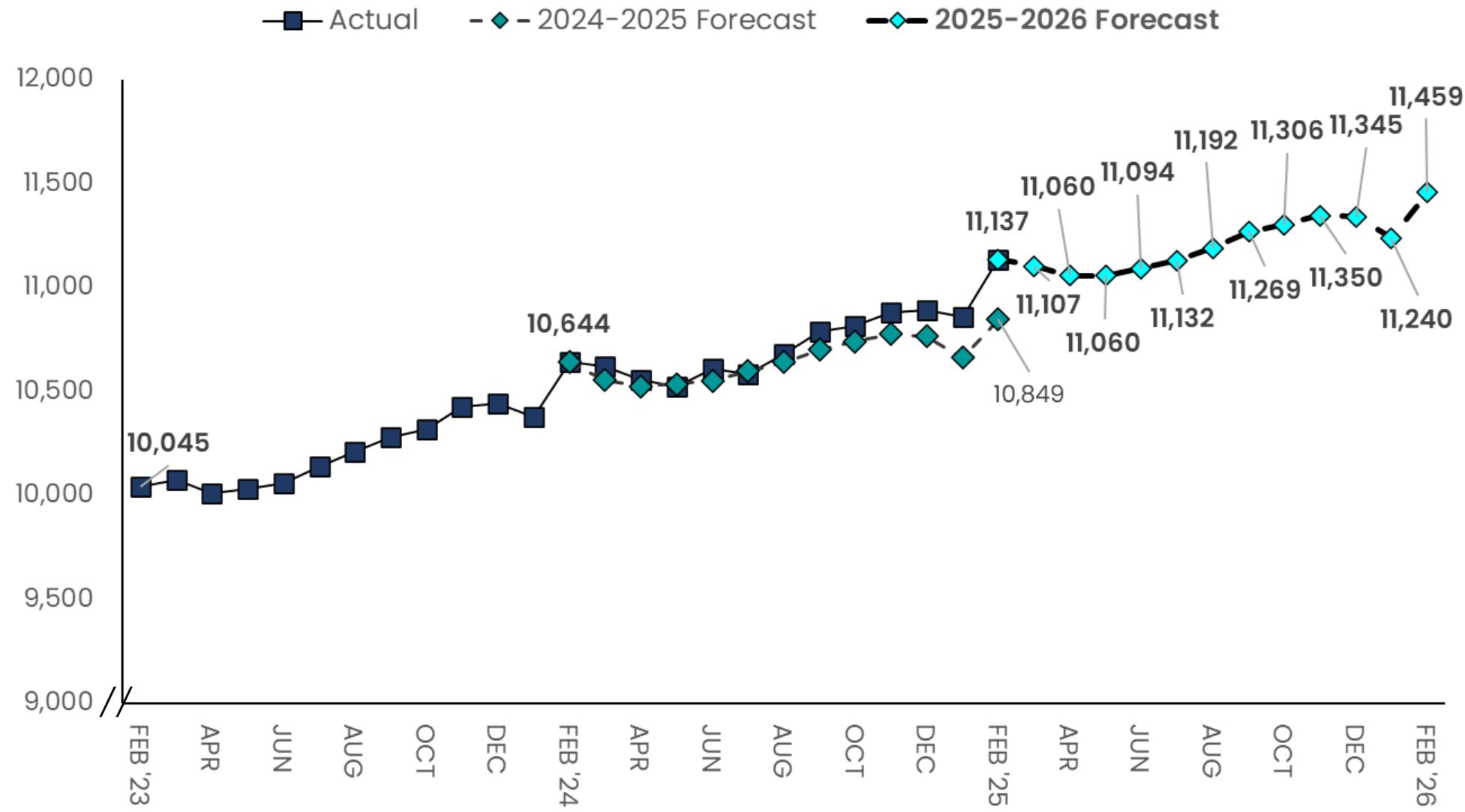
- Instead of return to the long-term trend, the DOC population increases since June 2022 suggest a sustained trend upward.
- The Pre-COVID trajectory of the DOC population no longer guides OPM's long-term system outlook.
- With numerous years with a historic downward trend feeding OPM's forecast models, forecast approaches emphasizing recent trends should be prioritized in OPM's forecast development.

Resulting range of 2025-26 forecast point estimates



- For 2024's forecast, OPM CJPPD again utilized a mix of 20 different forecasts representing a variety of methods and approaches, including:
 - Benchmark methods
 - OPM's input-output methodology
 - ARIMA
 - ETS
- Resulting composite forecast created using a weighted average across these methods that factors in historic forecast performance.

OPM CJPPD's 2025-2026 Forecast of the Correction Population



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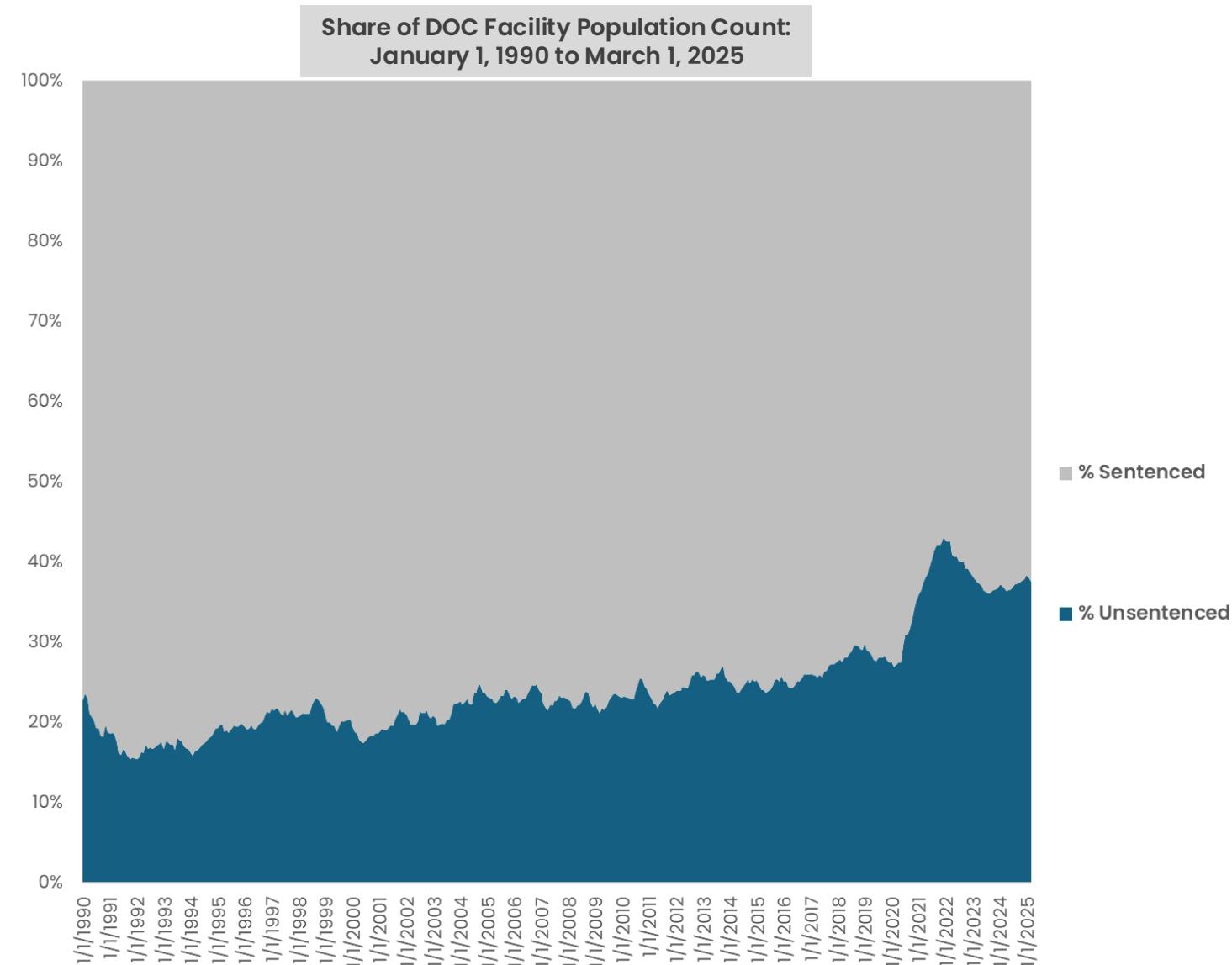
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A Puzzle of Trends

- **The trends:**
 - As shown at the start, reported crimes and statewide arrests have fallen by nearly 60 percent compared to thirty years ago.
 - Yet, over this same time, Connecticut's correction system has only 25% fewer people than in March 1994, and over 2,000 more than in March 1990.
 - Connecticut's correction population has been steadily rising in recent years.
- **The Puzzle:**
 - Why, with these front-end system *inputs* lower post-pandemic, does Connecticut's correction population seem likely to continue growing in the year ahead? And what can we do?

One contributing factor: Growth in the DOC pretrial population

- As a share of the total facility population, the *unsentenced* population, largely held pretrial in DOC, is at historically elevated levels.
- As of March 1, 2020, the *unsentenced* population comprised **38%** of the total facility population.
- The *unsentenced* population averaged **22%** of the total population between January 1990 and March 2020, peaking at 30% in that thirty-year period.



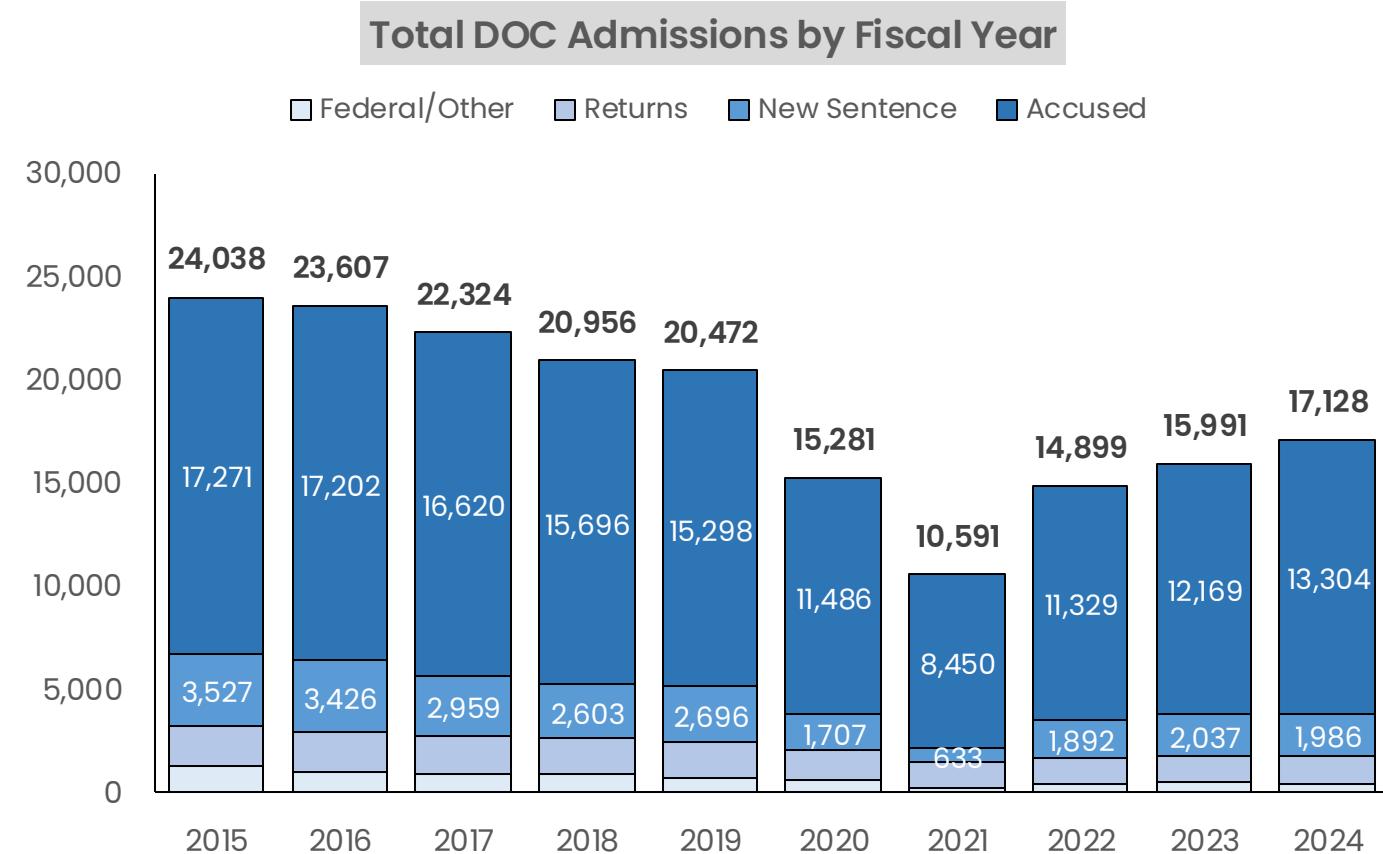
Growth in the DOC pretrial population cont.

- The *unsentenced* population's growth can also be seen in terms of raw numbers.
- A tale of three years:
 - A comparison of three days when the total DOC facility count nearly equaled the count on March 1, 2025.

Measure	DOC Counts by Date		
	Feb. 1, 1992	May 1, 2020	Mar. 1, 2025
Total Facility Population	11,065	10,973	11,078
Sentenced Population	9,331	7,962	6,915
% Change from 1992 – Sentenced	—	-15%	-26%
Unsentenced Population	1,734	3,011	4,163
% Change from 1992 – Unsentenced	—	+74%	+140%

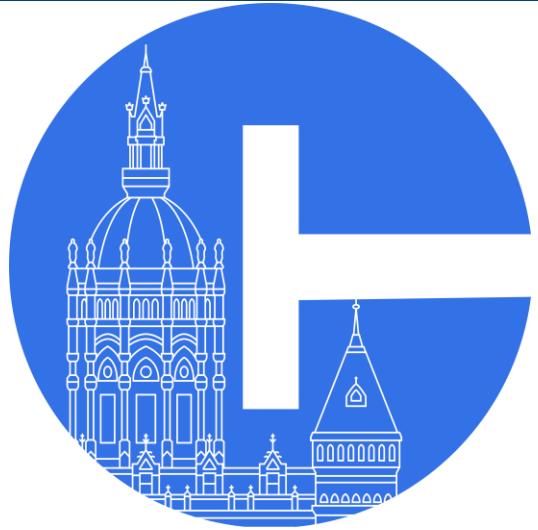
Lastly, while admissions to DOC have increased post-pandemic, admissions alone do not explain the pretrial growth.

- Overall, DOC admissions rose by **7%** in FY2024, the same increase observed in FY2023.
- While admissions to DOC facilities increased in recent FYs, they remain well below levels seen in FY2019 and before.



What we would like to look at next:

- **Continue to study the changes observed within the pretrial population.**
 - Consider shifts in pretrial length of stay and case processing.
 - Further examine pretrial population characteristics to identify what, if anything, may be changing markedly over time.
- **Extensive look into developing cohesive re-entry pathways**
 - Consideration of a re-entry strategy
 - Explore factors behind observed reductions in releases and discharges from DOC facilities.
 - Enhance our understanding of factors contributing to recidivism, and more importantly, long-term **desistance**.
 - OPM CJPPD will report on recidivism and changes observed following the pandemic at an upcoming CJPAC meeting.



DISCUSSION & THANK YOU

For more information, please visit

[HTTPS://PORTAL.CT.GOV/OPM/CJ-ABOUT/HOMEPAGE/CJPPD](https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/CJ-ABOUT/HOMEPAGE/CJPPD)

OPM CJPPD wishes to acknowledge the statistical contributions of:

Court Operations, Judicial Branch

Court Support Services Division, Judicial Branch

Crimes Analysis Unit, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection

Criminal Justice Information System

Department of Correction

As well as the support provided by OPM CJPPD Research Unit staff:

Melissa Beattie, *Lead Planning Analyst* & Justin Etheridge, *Research Analyst*

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**Office of Policy and Management
Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division**

Pursuant to *Public Act 24-81*

Needs Assessment of Higher Education in the Department of Correction

Initial report forthcoming March 2025

Public Act 24-81 Sec. 18 Requirements

The Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division within the Office of Policy and Management, in consultation with the Department of Correction, shall conduct a needs assessment of the facilities, materials and staffing required for the delivery of postsecondary education programs in correctional facilities. Such assessment shall include, but need not be limited to,

- (1) a solicitation of feedback from institutions of higher education that provide postsecondary education programs in correctional facilities to understand current needs,
- (2) an analysis of the policies of the Department of Correction concerning postsecondary education of incarcerated persons,
- (3) a determination of the level of unmet demand for postsecondary education among incarcerated persons,
- (4) an inventory of the (A) correctional facilities, including, but not limited to, classrooms, multipurpose rooms, libraries and study rooms, (B) staffing, and (C) materials, including, but not limited to, education technology and Internet access, currently available for the delivery of postsecondary education,
- (5) recommendations for and a cost analysis of the improvement of such facilities, staffing and materials to meet the unmet demand for postsecondary education,
- (6) a survey of (A) students of postsecondary education programs in correctional facilities, (B) former students of such programs, in consultation with regional reentry programs, and (C) any group or person the division deems necessary, and
- (7) a listing of any other specific barriers to the effective delivery of postsecondary education programs to incarcerated persons.

Needs Assessment Study Report

I. Statement of Purpose

II. Higher Education and Corrections in Connecticut

- Historical context of Higher Education in Connecticut's Correctional system

III. Assessing the Current Landscape: Key Considerations

- Eligibility and Enrollment
- Facilities and Learning Resources
- Program Staff and Faculty
- DOC Staff and Leadership
- Degree Pathways
- Governance and Oversight
- Sustainability

III. Initial Assessment of Unmet Demand for Higher Education

- Overview of October 2024 Facility Population
- Education Levels among the DOC population
- Potential limiting factors and impacts on the DOC population
- Estimates of Potential Student Pool
- Potential Cost/Benefits of Higher Education System Expansion

V. Recommendations and Opportunities for Further Study

Appendix:

Postsecondary Education in Prisons

Exploring Perspectives and Practices in the United States and Abroad

Authors:

Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy

- Dr. Vaughn J. Crichlow, Director of Research & Associate Research Professor
- Brittany LaMarr, Graduate Assistant
- Abraham Santiago, Research Assistant

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ADJOURN

Upcoming Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission Meetings:

- **July 10, 2025** 9:00AM
- **October 23, 2025** 9:00 AM

For more information, please visit

HTTPS://PORTAL.CT.GOV/OPM/CJ-ABOUT/CJPAC/CJPAC_HOMEPAGE_2019