



# Department of Corrections

DOC 101

# VISION

We create safety and equity by seeing potential, supporting change, and serving communities.

# MISSION

We lead through innovation

We advance restorative justice practices

We support staff wellness

We cultivate meaningful partnerships

We create rewarding career opportunities

We provide justice-involved individuals with opportunities for self-improvement

We ensure our facilities and field offices are safe, secure, and healthy



# VALUES

**Accountability**  
We, individually and collectively, act in accordance with our mission and values in service to our vision.

**Collaboration**  
We succeed when we have diverse and equitable partnerships that include our communities and the people in our care and custody.

**Compassion**  
We treat everyone with respect and dignity and respond empathetically to people's lived experience.

**Equity**  
We address systemic barriers that hinder opportunity and use fair and impartial decision-making.

**Innovation**  
We use evolving research from diverse communities to identify, develop, and implement effective practices.

**Integrity**  
We practice our values in an honest and transparent way.

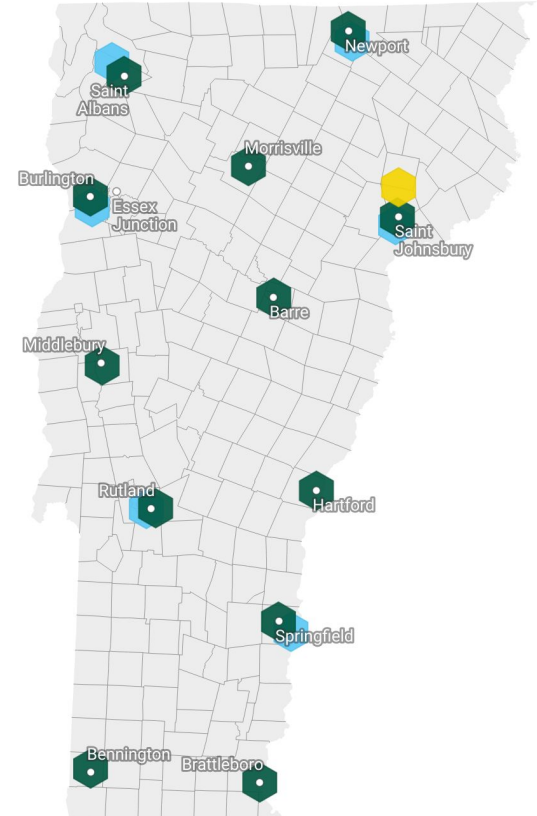
**Safety**  
We create an equitable culture of physical, emotional, and material wholeness.

# Overview

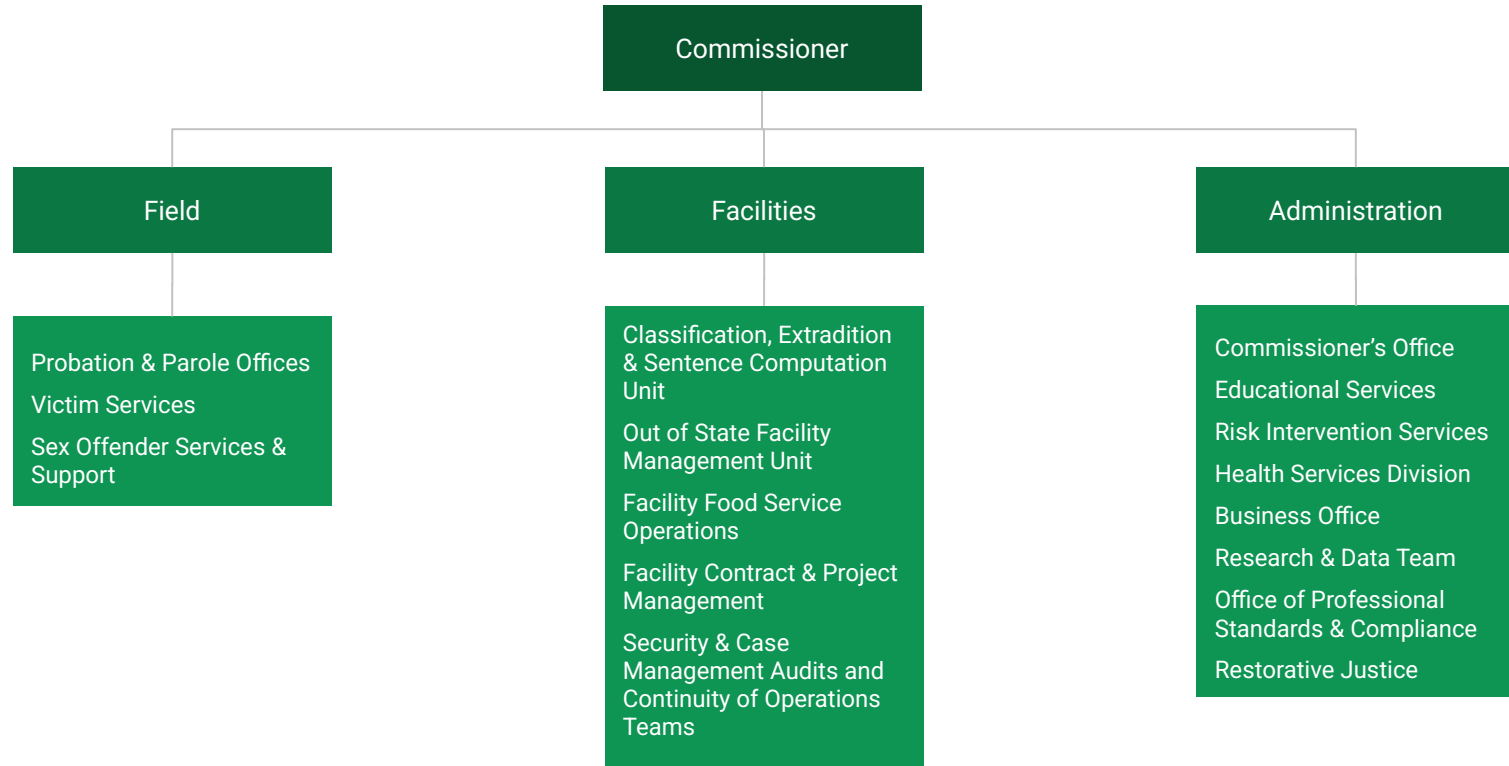
- Housed within Vermont **Agency of Human Services**
- **Unified System**
  - Pretrial supervision → detained → sentenced → community supervision
- **Facilities:**
  - 6 in-state facilities
    - 5 men's facilities
    - 1 women's facility
  - 1 out-of-state men's facility
- **Probation & Parole:**
  - 12 district offices
- Training: **Vermont Correctional Academy**
- Budget: ~**\$200M** (98% General Fund)
- Staff: **1,124**

## Vermont DOC Sites

Correctional Facility   District Office   Correctional Academy



# DOC Organization



# DOC Strategic Plan





## Vermont Department of Corrections

Roadmap to 2030: Mission-focused, values-driven



### STAFF AND STAFFING

Build a sustainable correctional workforce that invests in professional growth and staff wellbeing.



### HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Achieve a holistic health and wellness system to improve outcomes for incarcerated and supervised individuals.



### DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION FOR A JUST SYSTEM

Advance diverse, equitable, and inclusive practices into all that we do to achieve a just corrections system.




### MODERNIZATION

Modernize systems, structures, technologies, and processes to achieve the nation's leading model of corrections.

## Strategic Plan Goals

### STAFF AND STAFFING

Build a sustainable correctional workforce that invests in professional growth and staff wellbeing.



**GOAL 1:** Staff are empowered by a workplace cultivated to embrace and support the full spectrum of individual experience and identity.

**GOAL 2:** By 2030, staffing levels and staff retention are optimal and sustainable.


**GOAL 3:** Roles and processes are optimized to enhance staff engagement and operational efficiency.

**GOAL 4:** Opportunities for professional development and career growth are offered through a fair and transparent system.

**GOAL 5:** The Department provides opportunities and an environment that promotes staff health and wellness.

### HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Achieve a holistic health and wellness system to improve outcomes for incarcerated and supervised individuals.



**GOAL 1:** The Department prioritizes health and wellness as a fundamental obligation.


**GOAL 2:** The Department engages Vermont's community members to support health and wellness outcomes for the population we serve.

**GOAL 3:** Health and wellness systems and processes operate efficiently and effectively.

**GOAL 4:** The Department supports and fosters holistic wellness for those in its care and custody.

### DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION FOR A JUST SYSTEM

Advance diverse, equitable, and inclusive practices into all that we do to achieve a just corrections system.



**GOAL 1:** Staff recognize and appreciate the daily impact of identity and why JEDI is vital to our success.


**GOAL 2:** The Department's systems, structural environment, policies and procedures are informed by trauma-informed practices, JEDI principles, and individuals with lived experience within the criminal justice system.

**GOAL 3:** Supervision, programs, and intervention services reflect the diverse needs of the people we serve.

**GOAL 4:** JEDI-responsive principles are embedded into all Department processes and retention efforts to equitably serve every staff member.

### MODERNIZATION

Modernize systems, structures, technologies, and processes to achieve the nation's leading model of corrections.



**GOAL 1:** Vermont's correctional system employs modernized systems, structures, technologies, and processes.

**GOAL 2:** The Department cultivates meaningful partnerships to advance community engagement and restorative practices.

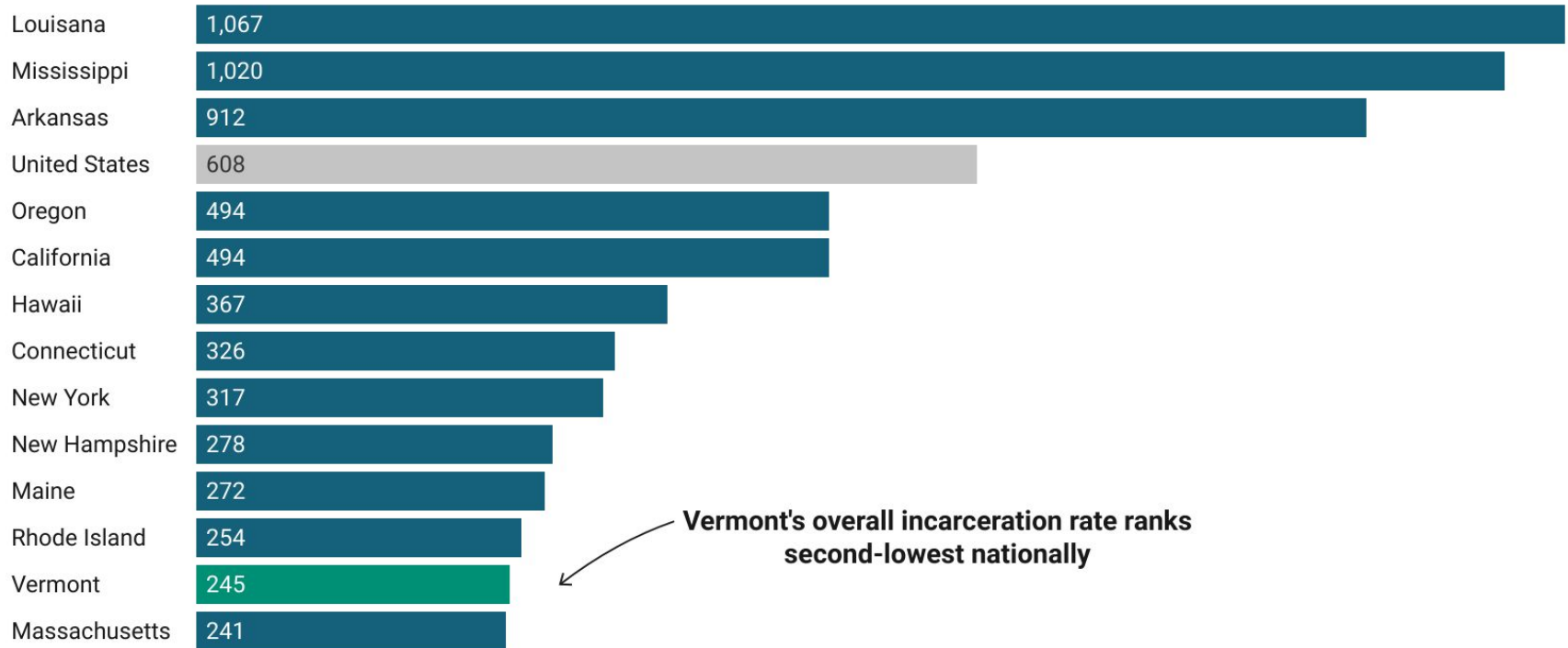
**GOAL 3:** Modernization is embedded within each strategic initiative and advances innovative, efficient, evidence-based, and data-driven solutions Department-wide.



# Vermont's Incarcerated Population

# Incarceration Rates by State - 2024

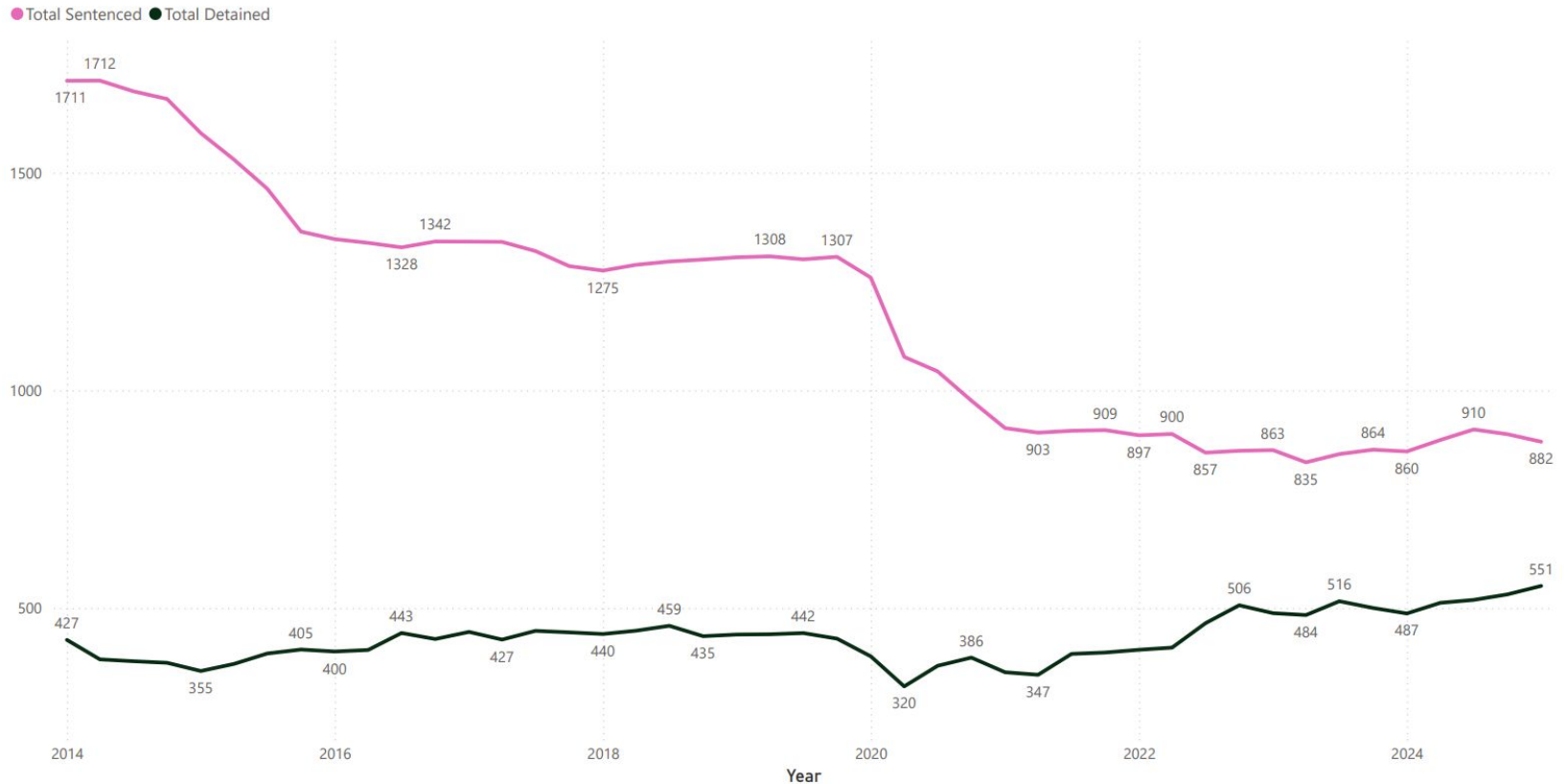
Rate per 100,000



*Includes those held in state prisons, local jails, federal prisons, USMS detainees, Indian Country jails, juvenile facilities, and involuntarily commitments*

Source: Prison Policy Initiative • Created with Datawrapper

# Quarterly Sentenced Individuals & Detainee Averages: 2014-2025

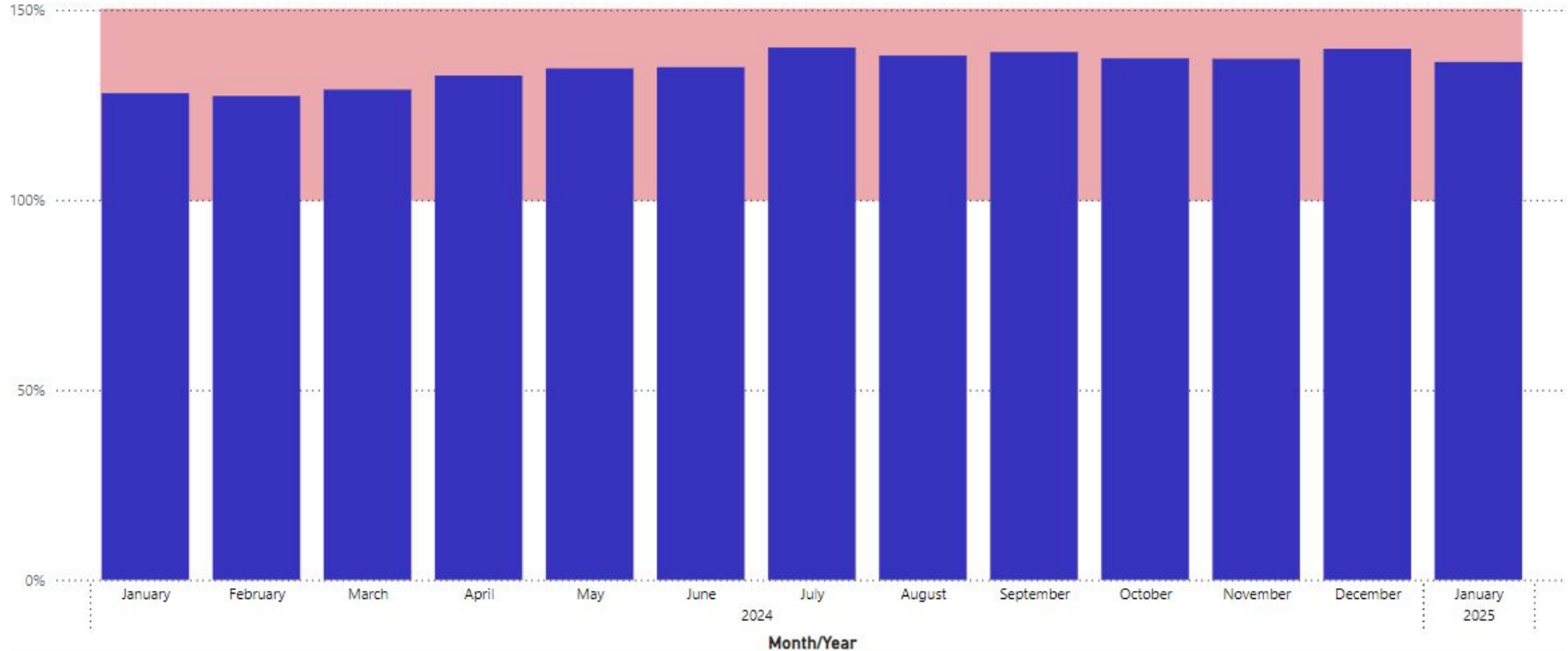


**Total Sentenced** = all individuals incarcerated by VTDOC who were sentenced for crime(s); **Total Detained** = all individuals incarcerated by VTDOC who are detained for crime(s).



## Male Correctional Facility Bed Capacity: Last 12 Months

Vermont DOC facilities remain oversubscribed, with an average of **135%** of male general population beds in use statewide over the last year. The American Correctional Association recommends a census of no higher than 85%.

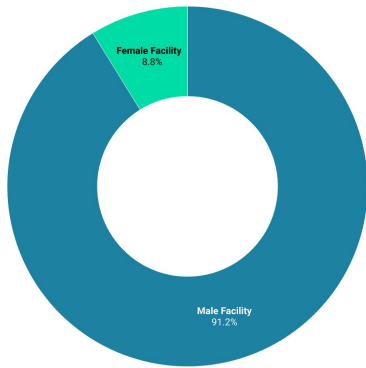


# Vermont Incarcerated Population

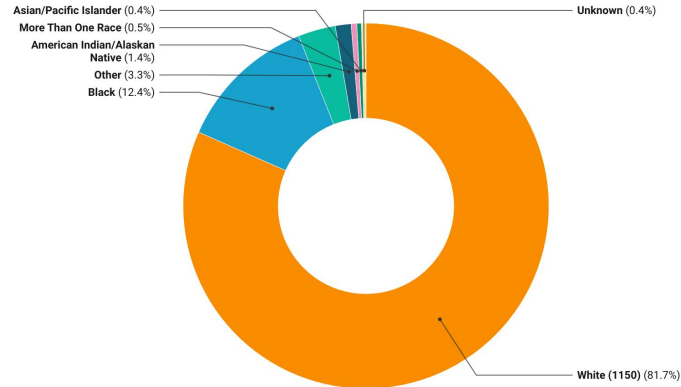


### Facility Housing by Gender

Male Facility Female Facility

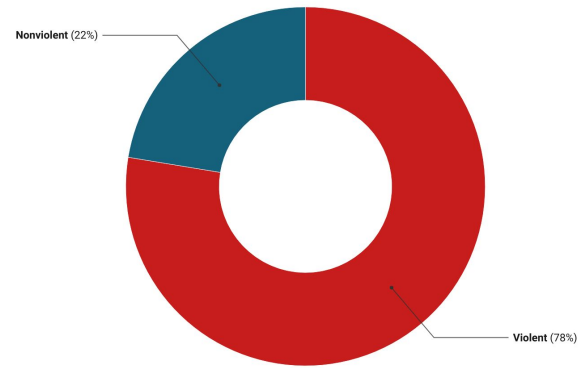


### DOC Population by Race



### Crime Type

Sentenced Vermont Population



Note: More detailed demographic data available on the DOC dashboard at: [link](#)

# DOC Population Statistics: Health



## Medication Trends

- Population receiving medication: **96%**
- Receiving psychotropic medications: **59%**
- Average number of medications: **5.5**
- Receiving Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD): **Two-thirds**

## Health Trends

- **~1,000** individuals w/ diagnosed chronic illness
  - **88%** of the average daily incarcerated population
  - **47% increase** from 2015 to 2022
- Total ED visits by incarcerated individuals in 2024: **650**



# Key Context

## Out of sight...

Americans held in:  
Per 100,000 adults



Source: B.E. Harcourt, "An Institutionalisation Effect"

# National Context

## Chronically understaffed [redacted] prisons set stage for prison bus escape and massacre of family

Investigative reviews by the [redacted] and independent consultants found the severely short-staffed prison routinely bypassed crucial security checks, leading to a convicted murderer's escape.

BY JOLIE MCCULLOUGH · DEC 9, 2022 · 3 PM CENTRAL

SHARE · REPUBLISH

## Independent jail monitor says staffing crisis at root of [redacted] escape

"This is a statewide and a national issue," said [redacted].



## [redacted] corrections secretary anxious burnout

## exacerbating uniformed-officer shortages

State prison system struggles to fill 380 officer vacancies

BY: TIM CARPENTER · JANUARY 20, 2023 · 10:40 AM

CRIMINAL JUSTICE · WORK & THE ECONOMY

## As prison populations rise, states face a stubborn staffing crisis

*the situation is as prisoners languish and remaining employees struggle.*

## Prisons struggle with high attrition and burnout among staff

State prisons struggle with staff vacancy rates as high as 40%

## Violence, suicides mount in [redacted]'s woefully understaffed prisons

## 'Dangerous place.' Attorneys and family seek answers after man's death in [redacted] prison

BY KATIE MOORE

UPDATED DECEMBER 20, 2023 3:21 PM

JUSTICE, NEWS

## 10 guards, 900 inmates: [redacted] prisons see dire results of ignored warnings

An extreme shortage of guards at [redacted] prisons slowed basic operations to a crawl. Inmates escaped, prisons locked down and conditions deteriorated.

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BY MARIO KORAN OF THE NEW YORK TIMES AND

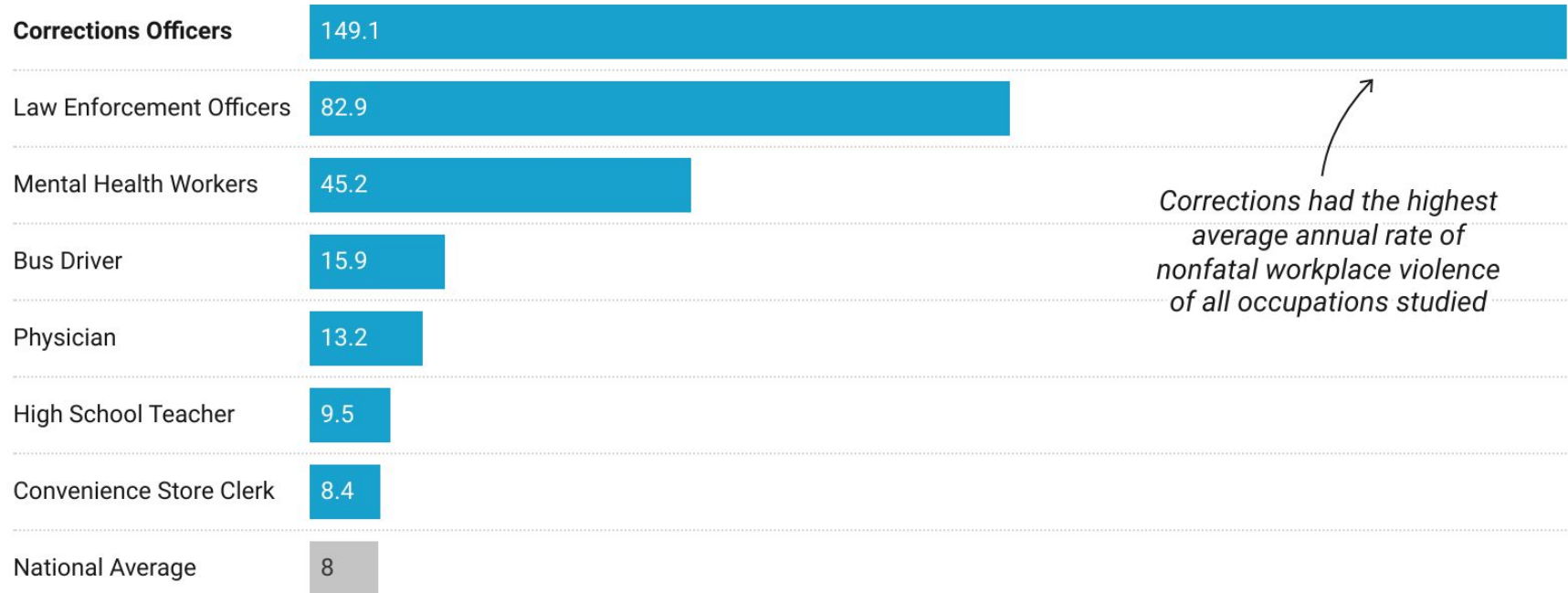
WATCH AND JUSTIN MAYO OF BIG LOCAL NEWS · FEBRUARY 2, 2024

# National Context

- Correctional systems nationwide face high vacancy rates:
  - Federal Bureau of Prisons: **24%**
  - Texas: **25%**
  - Michigan: **17.4%**
  - New Hampshire: **25%**
- A DOJ interstate workgroup found correctional systems, including Vermont, make up **50% of all state overtime costs**
- The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a **7% decline** in correctional officer workforce over the next 10 years

# Average Annual Rate of Nonfatal Workplace Violence

Incidents per 1,000 workers aged 16+



Source: BJS Special Report: Indicators of Workplace Violence , 2019 (2022); National Crime Victimization Survey • Created with Datawrapper



*The New York Times*

# *Vermont May Be the Face of a Long-Term U.S. Labor Shortage*

Employers are pulling out all the stops to attract workers as the state's population grows older, offering a likely glimpse of the country's future.

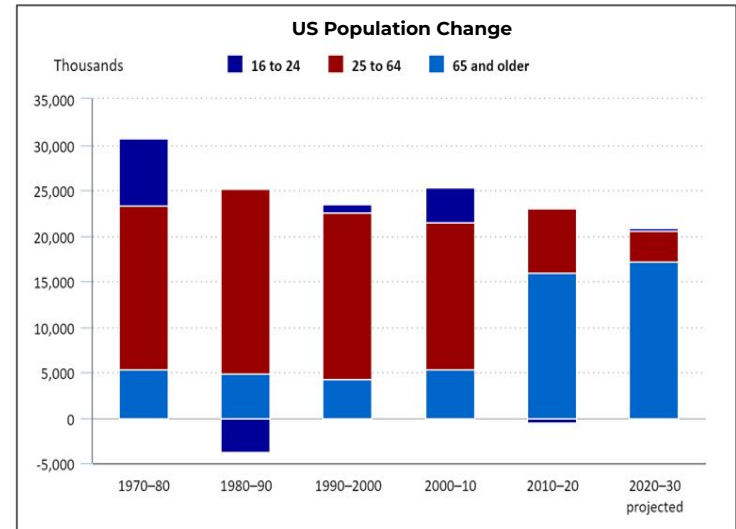
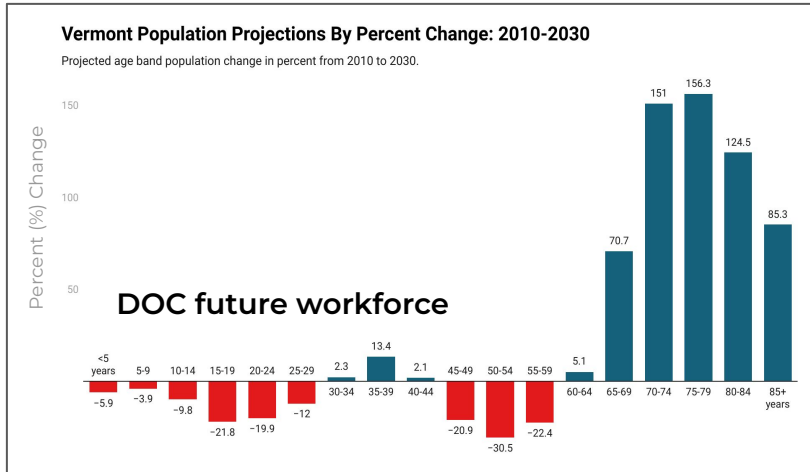
Nov. 12, 2023



# Future of Vermont's Workforce

A disproportionate share of Vermonters are **at or near retirement age**: more than a fifth are 65+, and more than 35% are 54+, the age at which Americans typically begin to exit the workforce.

**No state has a *smaller share* of residents in prime working years.**



# System Challenges



## Staffing

- Vacancies, retention, state workforce demographics, overtime costs, physical workplace environment

## Health & Wellness

- Serving physical/mental health needs of incarcerated individuals, particularly those detained awaiting trial
  - Lack of access/poor connection to medical care prior to justice-involvement
  - Sequelae of heavy substance use

## DEI & Justice

- Remote hearings and court backlogs
- Lack of coordinated community reentry services and geographic disparities
- Paucity of community service providers, particularly for male-identifying individuals

## Modernization

- Lack of WiFi and access to basic technology
- Lack of transitional housing stock/availability
- Deteriorating physical infrastructure
- Antiquated and highly manual data systems (OMS)



# Key Correctional Reforms

# Recruiting & Retaining Staff



## Key Context:

- **Fundamental system changes are needed** to achieve sustainable staffing levels

## Ongoing Efforts:

- **DOC redesigning the role of the correctional officer** and staff experience to recruit and retain all levels of today's workforce
  - **Invested over \$30M** to increase compensation for correctional staff in FY24-25
  - Redesigned shift schedules to create more work/life balance
  - Created Central Operations Specialist team to **reduce staffing pressures** on field and facilities

Efforts **reduced vacancies by 50%** since July 2022



# Recruiting & Retaining Staff



## Next Steps:

- Piloting **remote correctional academy** to increase accessibility for new recruits
- Implementing **strategic plan** with key focus on staffing
  - Removing paper-based processes and automating tasks to reduce workload
  - Investing in supervisory training to improve staff experience
  - Increasing opportunities for mentorship and professional development
- Using **data-driven** approach for informed decision-making

DOC Facility Staff Vacancies: January 2019 to January 2025



# 1115 Waiver: Medicaid Reentry Project

## Key Context

- 1965 Social Security Act **explicitly prohibits incarcerated individuals from receiving Medicaid** except in rare cases
- Vermont received **approval from Biden administration** in 2024 to pursue 1115 waiver
- Initiative driven by **AHS interdisciplinary team**

## Implementation

- Beginning January 1, 2026, Medicaid restarts **90 days prior** to sentenced individual's release
- All savings to be reinvested into health services
- Federal capacity building funds to **modernize** MMIS (DVHA claims processing system)



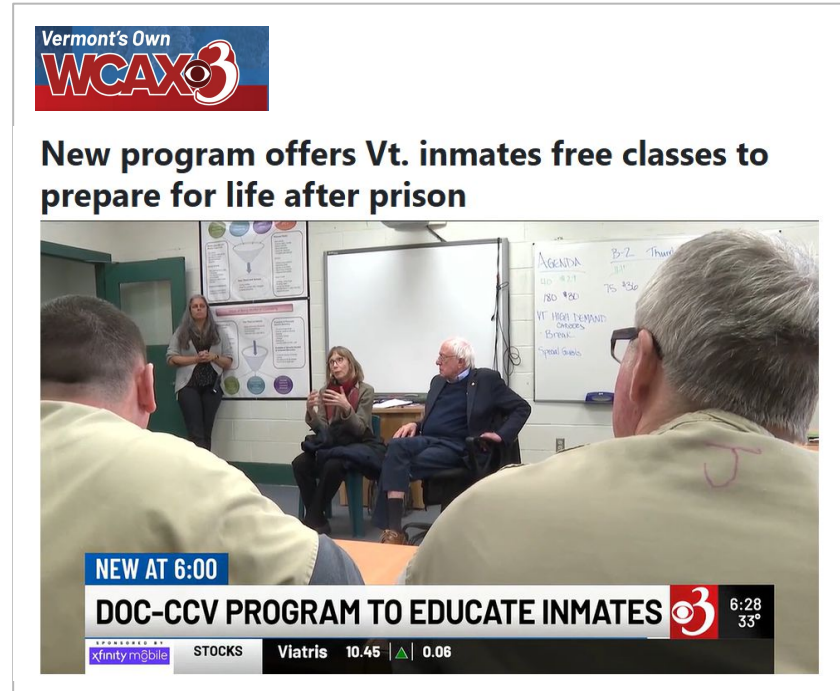
# DOC & Community College of Vermont

## Key Context

- [Free community college](#) for incarcerated individuals and DOC staff
- Supported by **\$4.5M CDS** from Sen. Sanders via DOJ
- Classes available at **all major DOC sites** (exploring expansion to St. J and Rutland via expanded tech)
- **Expanded course offerings** for incarcerated individuals and eligibility for family members of correctional staff

## Next Steps

- **Secure WiFi** to offer increased diversity of courses and different teaching modalities
  - Continued Pell funding dependent on WiFi
- Continue to resolve operational hurdles (space, facility scheduling, CCV staff schedules, technology)
- Offer **vocational training** modules





# Community Recovery Partnerships

## Key Context

- Overdose is the [leading cause of death](#) for people recently released from incarceration nationwide (up to 129x risk)
- Increased community-based substance use treatment is [associated with decreases in both jail admissions and overdose deaths](#)
- Substance use and associated criminal behavior among the **leading causes of incarceration in Vermont**
- Every Vermont community with a correctional facility **already hosts an accredited recovery center**

## Statewide Peer Coaching via Recovery Partners of Vermont Sites

- Scaling [Rutland pilot](#) statewide: Peer coaching in **5 of 6 facilities**
- In-reach peer recovery coaching **bridges prison/community divide**
- Recovery center challenges: staffing and new, complex caseload
- Funding: BAA (\$500,000), Opioid Settlement (\$1M), Senator Welch CDS (\$1.88M)

**‘They’re helping me save the rest of my life’: Rutland organization helps incarcerated people find sobriety and rebuild their lives**

By Tiffany Tan  
May 18, 2023, 7:04 am



Mike St. Pierre at the Turning Point Center of Rutland in March. Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

**RUTLAND** — In 2018, Mike St. Pierre was a year into his most recent incarceration at Rutland’s Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility when he felt drawn to attend a presentation by the local substance use recovery center. After listening to the visiting peer counselors talk about their paths to recovery, he decided to sign up for their prison programs.

# Replacement Women's Facility

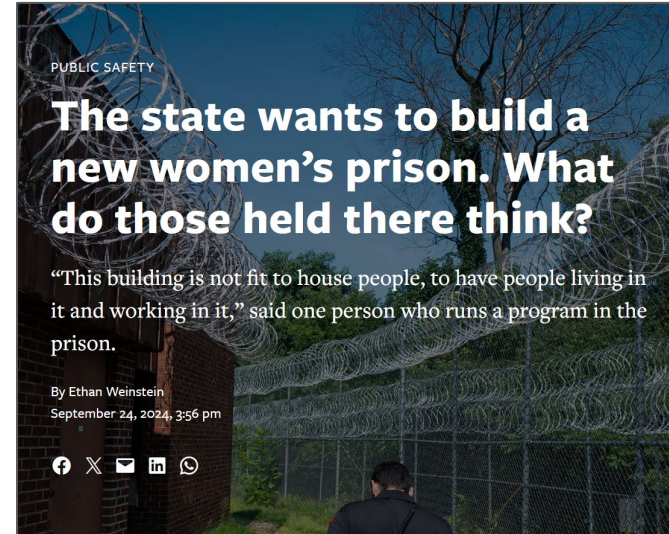


## Key Context

- Vermont's sole women's facility, Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility (CRCF), was **originally built as a short-term detention center for men**
  - Lacks adequate space for programming, vocational training, specialized needs

## Next Steps

- Identified two potential sites in Essex to **maintain proximity to current service providers/staff** in the Chittenden County area
  - Submitted zoning proposal to remove corrections overlay
  - Ongoing conversations with Town of Essex
- New, Scandinavian-style facility to offer more **humane and dignified living and working environment**



# DOC Community Investments

This year, DOC allocated more than **\$11,000,000** in community-based services, programs, and alternatives to incarceration, including:

- **\$6,364,748** for transitional housing (Pathways, Burlington Housing Authority)
- **\$3,706,338** to Community Justice Centers across Vermont
- **\$1,060,000** for community recovery centers (Turning Points) for in-reach recovery coaching at all correctional facilities and probation and parole
- **\$714,516** granted to CRCF providers (Vermont Network DIVAS program, Vermont Works for Women, Lund Kids-A-Part, Mercy Connections) for trauma-informed counseling, mentoring, child visitation, vocational training
- **\$240,952** for Jenna's Promise reentry support, housing-first recovery model, and vocational training



# Questions?

# Contact



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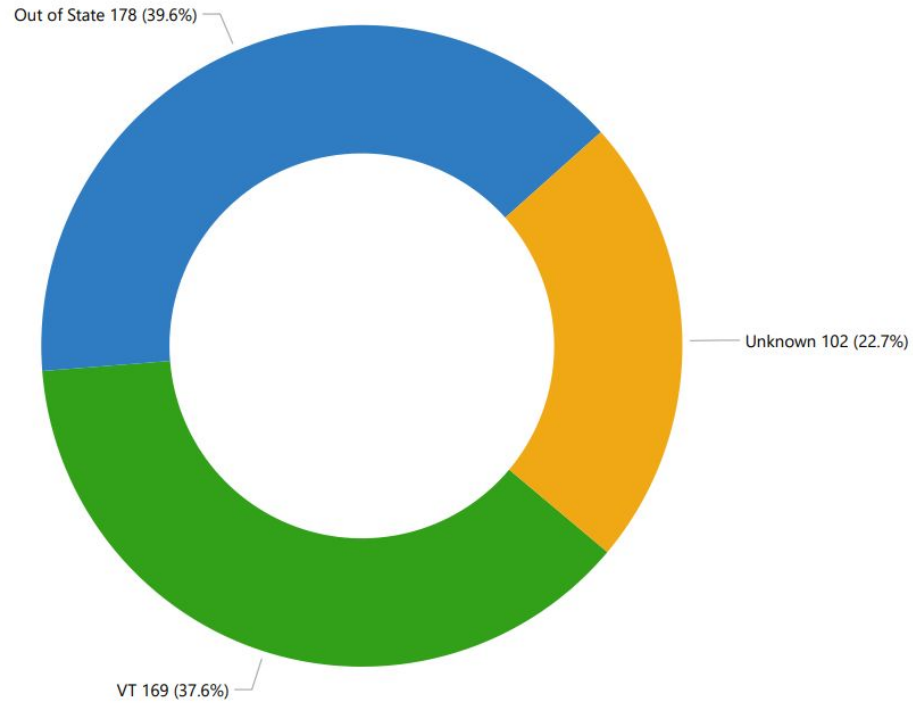
**Constituent Services**

**[ahs.doconstituentmanagement@vermont.gov](mailto:ahs.doconstituentmanagement@vermont.gov)**



# Appendix

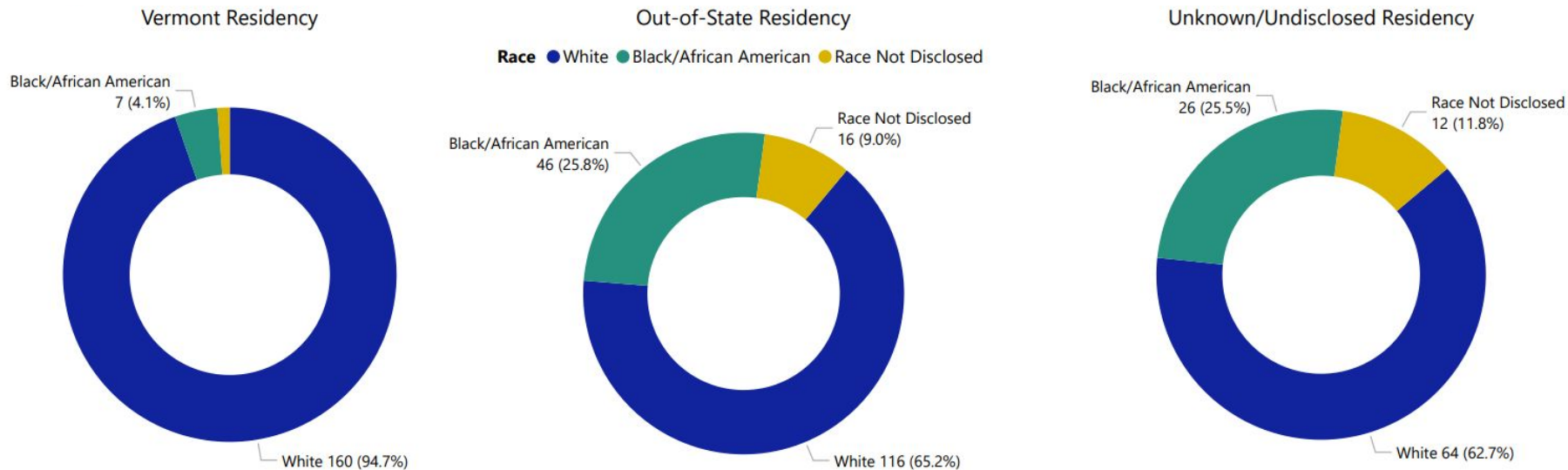
# Detainee State of Residency Status



*Note: Data as of December 31, 2024*

# Detainee Population by Race & State of Residency

State of residency for those detained awaiting trial in Vermont.



Note: Data as of December 31, 2024



# DOC Facility Staff Vacancies: January 2019 to January 2025

