

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Law Enforcement
Administration Assistance
National Criminal Justice
Information and Statistics Service

PRISONERS in State and Federal Institutions NCJRS on December 31, 1976

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Advance Report

A record number of prisoners were held on December 31, 1976, in State and Federal correctional institutions or housed in local jails in lieu of State facilities as a direct result of overcrowding. According to preliminary National Prisoner Statistics (NPS)¹ data, 283,145 prisoners were in custody on the last day of 1976, compared with 253,816 a year earlier. The 1976 total included 265,674 prisoners with maximum sentences of more than a year, also an all-time high, and 17,471 others.²

Federal institutions held 28,184 inmates on December 31, 1976, an increase of 4,053, or 17 percent, over the number reported 12 months earlier. For State institutions as a whole, the prisoner population rose from 229,685 to 254,961 during 1976, or by 11 percent. The increase was 13 percent in the South, 11 percent in the North Central Region, 9 percent in the West, and 7 percent in the Northeast.³

California had more inmates (21,088) on December 31, 1976, than any other jurisdiction. Texas was second, with 20,717, followed by Florida (18,093), New York (17,749), North Carolina (13,261), Ohio (12,625), Michigan (12,462), and Georgia (12,106). In Texas, Florida, New York, Ohio, and Michigan, virtually all of the prisoners had maximum sentences of more than a year, whereas in Cali-

fornia, North Carolina, and Georgia between 5 percent and 15 percent had shorter sentences or were unsentenced.

Only four States--Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, and North Dakota--had fewer inmates at the end of 1976 than a year earlier.⁴ At the other extreme, Florida added 2,778 prisoners to its institutional rolls; Virginia, 1,713; New York, 1,675; Texas, 1,664; and Michigan, 1,610. The rate of growth in the inmate population during 1976 exceeded 25 percent in four jurisdictions--Louisiana, Montana, South Dakota, and Virginia.

Louisiana and Virginia were among the 10 States that housed inmates in local jails to alleviate overcrowding in State facilities. A reported total of 7,738 prisoners were so housed at the end of 1976, all but 200 of them in Southern States. Alabama had more prisoners in local jails than any other jurisdiction (2,160), followed by Louisiana (1,756) and Maryland (1,081). Some of the States housing inmates in local jails because of overcrowding in their correctional institutions consider these prisoners to be in the custody of the State correctional system, and others do not.

Additional details from the 1976 count of inmates in State and Federal correctional facilities will be contained in a final report to be published later this year.

¹Data for the NPS program are collected for the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

²The 17,471 "others" included prisoners with sentences of a year or less, as well as unsentenced persons. Examples of the latter are persons held for safekeeping, those undergoing court-ordered evaluation, civil narcotics addicts, and, in States operating an integrated jail-prison system, those held awaiting trial or sentencing.

³For States included in each region, see accompanying table.

⁴The apparent decrease in the inmate population of the District of Columbia in 1976 was the result of a change in reporting practices to conform with NPS definitions. In 1976, for the first time, unsentenced and short-term inmates in the D.C. jail and in the District's detention centers were properly excluded from the year-end count.

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Prisoners in custody on December 31, 1975, and December 31, 1976, by region and State

Region and State	Total prisoner population			Prisoners with a sentence of more than a year			Other prisoners ⁴		
	1976	1975	Percent change	1976	1975	Percent change	1976	1975	Percent change
United States, Total	283,145	253,816	+12	265,674	238,858	+11	17,471	14,958	+17
Federal institutions, Total	28,184	24,131	+17	24,812	22,080	+12	3,372	2,051	+64
State institutions, Total	254,961	229,685	+11	240,862	216,778	+11	14,099	12,907	+9
Northeast	39,414	36,806	+7	36,520	33,518	+9	2,894	3,288	-12
Maine	615	643	-4	610	643	-5	5	0	Y
New Hampshire	254	252	+1	248	250	-1	6	2	+200
Vermont	419	394	+6	312	244	+28	107	150	-29
Massachusetts	2,695	2,443	+10	2,651	2,416	+10	44	27	+63
Rhode Island ¹	652	594	+10	492	381	+29	160	213	-25
Connecticut ¹	3,239	3,079	+5	1,923	1,849	+4	1,316	1,230	+7
New York	17,749	16,074	+10	17,746	16,071	+10	3	3	0
New Jersey ²	6,201	6,164	+1	5,882	5,682	+4	319	482	-34
Pennsylvania	7,590	7,163	+6	6,656	5,982	+11	934	1,181	-21
North Central	55,447	49,894	+11	54,350	48,731	+12	1,097	1,163	-6
Ohio	12,625	11,421	+11	12,625	11,421	+11	0	0	...
Indiana	4,593	4,547	+1	4,043	3,897	+4	550	650	-15
Illinois	9,643	8,501	+13	9,249	8,209	+13	394	292	+35
Michigan	12,462	10,852	+15	12,462	10,852	+15	0	0	...
Wisconsin	3,268	2,992	+9	3,268	2,992	+9	0	0	...
Minnesota	1,624	1,675	-3	1,624	1,675	-3	0	0	...
Iowa	1,941	1,868	+4	1,898	1,819	+4	43	49	-12
Missouri	5,005	4,371	+15	5,005	4,371	+15	0	0	...
North Dakota	205	209	-2	188	173	+9	17	36	-53
South Dakota	523	403	+30	480	338	+42	43	65	-34
Nebraska	1,474	1,301	+13	1,435	1,246	+15	39	55	-29
Kansas	2,084	1,754	+19	2,073	1,738	+19	11	16	-31
South	121,436	107,392	+13	114,991	102,307	+12	6,445	5,085	+27
Delaware ¹	953	897	+6	684	582	+18	269	315	-15
Maryland ³	7,912	6,965	+14	7,438	6,547	+14	474	418	+13
District of Columbia ¹	3,086	3,327	1	2,299	2,302	1	787	1,025	1
Virginia ²	7,805	6,092	+28	6,947	5,497	+26	858	595	+44
West Virginia	1,299	1,176	+10	1,299	1,176	+10	0	0	...
North Carolina	13,261	12,374	+7	11,320	11,449	-1	1,941	925	+110
South Carolina ³	6,972	6,100	+14	6,059	5,600	+8	913	500	+83
Georgia ²	12,106	10,746	+13	11,524	10,102	+14	582	644	-10
Florida ²	18,093	15,315	+18	18,093	15,315	+18	0	0	...
Kentucky	3,662	3,393	+8	3,662	3,393	+8	0	0	...
Tennessee	4,837	4,575	+6	4,817	4,561	+6	20	14	+43
Alabama ²	5,256	4,420	+19	5,235	4,420	+18	21	0	Y
Mississippi ²	2,237	2,422	-8	2,015	2,180	-8	222	242	-8

Prisoners in custody on December 31, 1975, and December 31, 1976, by region and State continued

Region and State	Total prisoner population			Prisoners with a sentence of more than a year			Other prisoners ⁴		
	1976	1975	Percent change	1976	1975	Percent change	1976	1975	Percent change
South (continued)									
Arkansas ³	2,664	2,254	+18	2,592	2,162	+20	72	92	-22
Louisiana ²	6,347	4,835	+31	6,347	4,835	+31	0	0	...
Oklahoma	4,229	3,448	+23	3,943	3,133	+26	286	315	-9
Texas	20,717	19,053	+9	20,717	19,053	+9	0	0	...
West	38,664	35,593	+9	35,001	32,222	+9	3,663	3,371	+9
Montana	485	376	+29	478	375	+27	7	1	+600
Idaho	695	580	+20	682	580	+18	13	0	Y
Wyoming	340	307	+11	340	307	+11	0	0	...
Colorado	2,249	2,047	+10	2,244	2,039	+10	5	8	-38
New Mexico	1,353	1,118	+21	1,221	999	+22	132	119	+11
Arizona	2,850	2,647	+8	2,850	2,647	+8	0	0	...
Utah	810	723	+12	738	657	+12	72	66	+9
Nevada	951	827	+15	951	814	+17	0	13	-100
Washington	3,887	3,467	+12	3,865	3,452	+12	22	15	+47
Oregon	2,859	2,484	+15	2,859	2,480	+15	0	4	-100
California	21,088	20,028	+5	18,115	17,296	+5	2,973	2,732	+9
Alaska	528	480	+10	260	209	+24	268	271	-1
Hawaii	569	509	+12	398	367	+8	171	142	+20

NOTE: Distribution of December 31, 1975, and December 31, 1976, inmate populations in Maryland and Mississippi between prisoners with a maximum sentence of more than a year and those with shorter or no sentences was estimated on the basis of information provided by the jurisdiction. Distribution of the December 31, 1975, inmate population in Pennsylvania was similarly estimated.

Y Not definable.

... Not applicable.

¹Both 1975 and 1976 figures include jail and prison inmates, as jails and prisons in these jurisdictions form an integrated system. For the District of Columbia, figures for 1976 exclude, but those for 1975 include, inmates held in D.C. jail and detention center who had a maximum sentence of less than a year and a day or no sentence.

²Figures for December 31, 1976 include inmates held in local jails because of overcrowding in State institutions, although such inmates are not considered by these jurisdictions to be in the custody of the State correctional system. The number held in local jails as of December 31, 1976 was as follows: New Jersey (200); Virginia (790); Georgia (550); Florida (300); Alabama (2,160); Mississippi (102); and Louisiana (1,756).

³Figures for December 31, 1976 include inmates held in local jails because of overcrowding in State institutions. Such inmates are considered by these jurisdictions to be in the custody of the State correctional system. The number of inmates held in local jails as of December 31, 1976 was as follows: Maryland (1,081); South Carolina (786); and Arkansas (13).

⁴Includes prisoners with sentences of a year or less, as well as unsentenced persons. The latter include, among others, those held for safekeeping, those undergoing court-ordered evaluation, civil narcotics addicts, and, in States operating an integrated jail-prison system, those held awaiting trial or sentencing.

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