

# Bond Factors for CT Pretrial Detainees

15 November 2018


## Overview

In 2016, the state of Connecticut housed a monthly average of 3,800 pretrial detainees. This includes those arrested for non-violent misdemeanors, and many of those housed were unable to meet financial conditions (bail) to await trial at home. Connecticut intended “An Act Concerning Pretrial Justice Reform” to reform these financial conditions for some non-violent misdemeanors. If those who couldn’t meet these financial requirements can reasonably be assumed to be of lower economic status, did Connecticut’s pre-Act bail requirements also show bias involving immutable characteristics? Additionally, are Connecticut Bail Fund’s concerns about “An Act Concerning Pretrial Justice Reform” valid? Are Connecticut residents still being held by the state without a trial because they can’t afford bail?

My analysis will strive to address these questions on behalf of the Connecticut Bail Fund. I’ll be checking for biases and testing the post-bill versus the pre-bill data to provide some insight into the effectiveness of the bill, primarily by showing whether a discernible change in the bond amounts or lengths of stay for misdemeanor charges exists.

## Initial Analysis

I will examine relationships between immutable characteristics (race, gender, age), bond amount, and complaint for the time before “An Act Concerning Pretrial Justice Reform” went into effect on 1 July 2017 and see how these relationships then factor into the later data. Prior entrance into the CT corrections system information may also be used to determine changes in the length of stay.



## Data

Connecticut has published an anonymized daily listing of pretrial detainees since June 2016. This listing includes a randomized identifier, latest admission data, race, gender, age, bond amount, offense, facility, and any special detainer for each of the state's pretrial detainees. In 80% of the rows, the offense includes a classifier for felony or misdemeanor.

The data I will be using is available directly from the state of Connecticut at <https://data.ct.gov/Public-Safety/Accused-Pre-Trial-Inmates-in-Correctional-Facility/b674-jy6w>. The downloaded dataset I will be working from begins on 15 June 2016 and concludes on 11 November 2018. The time period between 15 June 2016 and 30 June 2017 comprises the "before" period.

GitHub has a 100MB limit on the size of data files, and the downloaded dataset is around 250MB. The full dataset will not be uploaded. Those who wish to test the data are welcome to use the smaller data samples on GitHub or download more from the Connecticut website.

## Models

Using the information gathered above, examine bail amounts for periods before and after enactment of "An Act Concerning Pretrial Justice Reform" for both felonies and misdemeanors. Then, use this information to fit a linear regression model to predict lengths of stay and bail amounts under the law in effect in 2016 for felonies and misdemeanors and see how data collected after the act compares to this model.

## Deliverables

Deliverables for this project will include commented, public code and a short paper that will summarize the findings.