

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
Population Projections
Spring 1996

Table 1 summarizes the Spring 1996 Bureau of Research population estimates for males, females, and total population. The new projections estimate a July 1, 1996, prison population of 44,896, a July 1, 1997, population of 45,633, a July 1, 1998, population of 47,985 and a July 1, 2006, population of 63,061. These projections are slightly lower than the last projections published (the initial impact estimates of SB 2 published in July 1995). The difference in estimates is due largely to revised intake projections.

Several issues must be discussed:

CY 1995 reversed two years of decline in intake, reflecting a long-term upward pattern in new incarcerations. Despite this increase, intake in the first quarter of 1996 is down 8.3%. The bulk of that drop, however, is attributable to uncharacteristically low intake in March 1996. As a result, we expect positive, but modest, growth in intake for CY 1996. Below, we elaborate on the discussion of intake.

Relatively low parole rates should continue to exert inflationary pressure on population size. After a steady decline in parole rates over the past several years, the monthly rate appears to have stabilized at roughly 20%. While in recent months the rate has dropped slightly below this, the overall rate of release in CY 1995 was 20.5%. Incorporating these more recent trends results in higher population projections. It should be noted that should parole rates drop further, these projections would be low. Correspondingly, if parole rates later increase, these projections would be too high.

These projections have been greatly affected by Senate Bill 2, the sentencing code changes effective July 1, 1996. These changes should shift some less serious, nonviolent offenders with limited criminal histories to community punishments. Offenders admitted under the new codes will serve generally longer periods of incarceration. The impact on projections is to slow population increases during 1996-1999 and to slightly accelerate increases in subsequent years.

Intake Projections

Table 2 shows projected court intake for Fiscal Years 1996-2006. These estimates reflect the phase-in of SB 2 admissions. Baseline projections were made using linear estimation and demographically disaggregated techniques. We then modified the estimates based on recent intake data, broad criminal justice trends, and the expected impact of SB 2. These factors are summarized as follows:

Actual intake for CY 1995 was roughly 350 below projections from last year. Consequently, the average estimate of our preliminary statistical models suggests that FY 1996 intake will be about 500 below previous projections. Although intake growth in the first three months of 1995 was 7.6% higher than in 1994, court admissions in the first quarter of 1996 were also down below expectations from last year.

The proportion of offenders entering Ohio's prisons with prior imprisonment is down one percentage point from last year, suggesting that the increasingly large pool of repeat offenders is stabilizing. In addition, recent decline in Ohio's crime rate appears to have continued in 1995. On the other hand, HB1, the youth bind-over bill, should result in approximately 100 additional admissions per year.

Since SB 2 is expected to shift more offenders into community-based punishments, we are projecting a moderate drop-off in intake in FY 1997. Without the effect of SB 2 diversions, we would have expected an increase of slightly over one percent. We have further adjusted our intake projections to control for the time lag affecting those inmates admitted after July 1, 1996, but whose offense was committed prior to that. This produced a slightly higher intake estimate for FY 1997 under the same set of SB 2 diversion assumptions.

Given the above factors, we are estimating an 8.4% decline in intake for FY 1997, increases of two and four percent for Fiscal Years 1998 and 1999, respectively, a three percent increase for both Fiscal Years 2000 and 2001, and a two percent annual increase through the end of the period.

Technical Notes

These projections do not include furloughees. In subtracting out the furloughee population, we assume the same number of male and female furloughees as reported in the most recently available population counts in the month preceding the projections. In addition, projections for males and females are estimated using the same proportions available from the April 1, 1996, population counts.

It is important to note that the pre-SB 2 and SB 2 intake populations are modeled separately and then combined to produce these projections.

One potentially confounding problem of disaggregating the pre-SB 2 and SB 2 populations involves the admission lag problem mentioned above. Last summer our projections were based on the assumption that all persons entering prison after June 30, 1996, would serve a SB 2 sentence. That is not true. Those committing crimes before July 1, 1996, will serve a sentence under the earlier version of the revised code. Since admission for many of these offenders will occur after July 1, 1996, old-code offenders will be entering the prison system for some time to come. After estimating the proportion of admissions affected, we include that portion as part of the pre-SB 2 simulation. Likewise, these admissions are subtracted out of the SB 2 intake populations.

Table 1

Official Population Projections of the Ohio Department of
Rehabilitation and Correction
July 1 Population 1996-2006, Male and Female

Population	Male	Female	Total
1-Apr-96 *	41,614	2,779	44,393
1-Jul-96	42,086	2,810	44,896
1-Jul-97	42,776	2,857	45,633
1-Jul-98	44,981	3,004	47,985
1-Jul-99	47,346	3,162	50,508
1-Jul-00	49,971	3,337	53,308
1-Jul-01	52,068	3,477	55,545
1-Jul-02	54,087	3,612	57,699
1-Jul-03	55,776	3,725	59,501
1-Jul-04	57,273	3,825	61,098
1-Jul-05	58,412	3,901	62,313
1-Jul-06	59,113	3,948	63,061

* Actual

Table 2

Official Intake Projections of the Ohio Department of
Rehabilitation and Correction
Fiscal Year New Court Admissions, 1996-2006
Male and Female

Year	Male	Female	Total
FY 1996	17,484	2,539	20,023
FY 1997	16,011	2,325	18,336
FY 1998	16,345	2,373	18,718
FY 1999	16,999	2,468	19,467
FY 2000	17,509	2,542	20,051
FY 2001	18,033	2,619	20,652
FY 2002	18,394	2,671	21,065
FY 2003	18,762	2,725	21,487
FY 2004	19,137	2,779	21,916
FY 2005	19,520	2,835	22,355
FY 2006	19,911	2,891	22,802