

Massachusetts Department of Correction
Luis S. Spencer, Commissioner

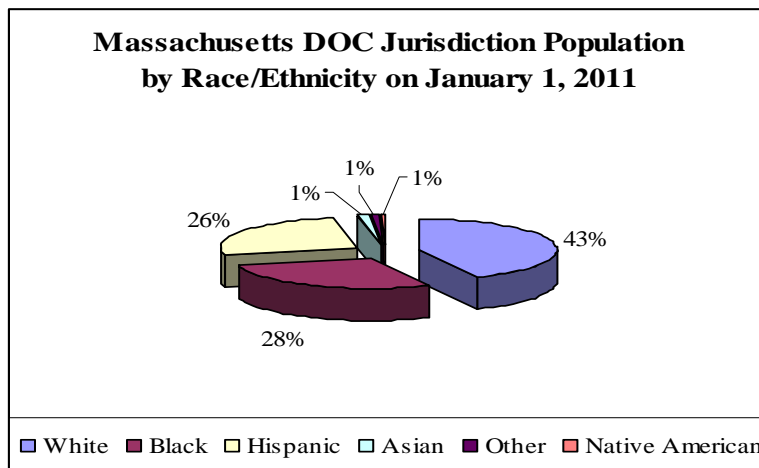
Comparing Massachusetts Census and DOC Jurisdiction Populations by Race/Ethnicity for 2010

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The Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC) jurisdiction population includes individuals who are criminally sentenced, under civil commitment, or are awaiting trial. This report compares statistical data of the jurisdiction population to the general population of Massachusetts by race/ethnicity. Data regarding the jurisdiction population is based on a data snapshot gathered on January 1, 2011, and data for the general population was gathered from the 2010 Massachusetts Census. It should be noted that race/ethnicity is self-reported per individual at the time of admission.

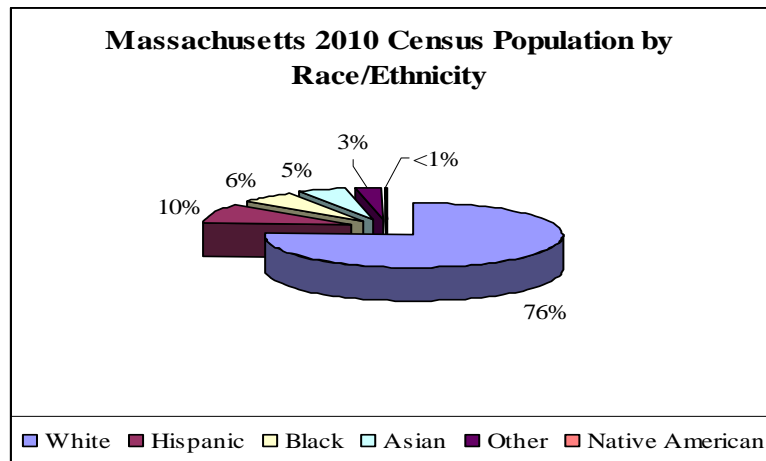
[Chart 1]



Race/Ethnicity	MA DOC population
White	4,918
Black	3,230
Hispanic	2,955
Asian	143
Other	84
Native American	79
Total	11,409

On January 1, 2011 a total of 11,409 inmates were incarcerated within the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts DOC. When reporting race/ethnicity, 43% of inmates reported as White (4,918), 28% reported as Black (3,230), 26% reported as Hispanic (2,955), 1% reported as Asian (143), 1% reported as Other (84), and the remaining 1% of inmates reported as Native American (79).

[Chart 2]



Race/Ethnicity	MA Census population
White	4,984,800
Hispanic	627,654
Black	391,693
Asian	348,962
Other	183,742
Native American	10,778
Total	6,547,629

According to the 2010 United States Census, a total of 6,547,629 individuals resided in Massachusetts. Seventy-six percent of individuals reported their race/ethnicity as White (4,984,800), 10% reported as Hispanic (627,654), 6% reported as Black (391,693), 5% reported as Asian (348,962), 3% reported as Other (183,742), and <1% reported as Native American (10,778).¹

[Table 1]

Comparison of DOC and Census Population in Massachusetts by Race/Ethnicity

Population type	Black	Native American	Hispanic	White	Other	Asian	Total
DOC Pop.	3,230	79	2,955	4,918	84	143	11409
Census Pop.	391,693	10,778	627,654	4,984,800	183,742	348,962	6,547,629
Total % incarcerated	0.82%	0.73%	0.47%	0.10%	0.05%	0.04%	0.19%
Total incarcerated per 100,000 residents	820	730	470	100	50	40	190

Although Chart 1 illustrates White offenders as the majority racial/ethnic population in the Massachusetts DOC jurisdiction, this data set can be easily misinterpreted. When compared to the general population data, there were more Black offenders incarcerated out of the total population of Black individuals (0.82%) and White offenders were one of the lowest comparatively (0.10%). At yearend 2010, 0.73% of Native American, 0.47% of Hispanic, 0.05% of Other, and 0.04% of Asian individuals were incarcerated.

¹ For the purpose of this report, the US Census racial/ethnic guidelines have been altered to simulate the guidelines of the Massachusetts DOC jurisdiction. The Asian category comprises all self-reported Asians, Pacific Islanders, and Native Hawaiians. The Native American category comprises both Native Americans and Native Alaskans. The Other category comprises any other race and two or more races.

[Table 2]

Comparison of racial/ethnic proportions between Massachusetts Census and DOC Population

Race/Ethnicity	Census Pop.	(%)	DOC Pop.	(%)
White	4,984,800	76%	4,918	43%
Black	391,693	6%	3,230	28%
Hispanic	627,654	10%	2,955	26%
Asian	348,962	5%	143	1%
Other	183,742	3%	84	1%
Native American	10,778	<1%	79	1%
Total	6,547,629	100%	11,409	100%

When comparing MA DOC jurisdiction and Massachusetts Census population data, there is disparity between racial/ethnic groups. White offenders are underrepresented in the MA DOC population compared to their representation in the general population, 43% and 76% respectively, while Black offenders are overrepresented in the MA DOC (28%) when they comprise but 6% of the Massachusetts population. Similarly, Hispanic offenders comprise 26% of the DOC population while they only comprise 10% of the general population. Thus, there is a clear over-representation of both Black and Hispanic offenders and an under-representation of White offenders within the Massachusetts DOC jurisdiction.

This brief was written and prepared by Crystal Park, Northeastern University Co-op Research Intern.
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