



# Department of Justice



## Office of Justice Programs

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BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS  
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### **JAIL INCARCERATION RATE DECREASED** **BY 12% FROM 2008 TO 2018**

WASHINGTON — The jail incarceration rate in county and city jails across the United States dropped 12% over a decade, from an estimated 258 jail inmates per 100,000 U.S. residents in 2008 to 226 per 100,000 in 2018, the Bureau of Justice Statistics announced today.

From 2008 to 2018, the jail incarceration rate rose by 12% for whites and fell by about 30% for blacks (down 28%) and Hispanics (down 33%). The rate rose from 167 to 187 inmates per 100,000 white residents, fell from 825 to 592 per 100,000 black residents and fell from 274 to 182 per 100,000 Hispanic residents. In 2018, the jail incarceration rate for black residents fell below 600 per 100,000 for the first time since 1990.

County and city jails held 738,400 inmates nationwide at midyear 2018, a decline of 6% from 785,500 inmates held in 2008. The number of juvenile jail inmates fell 56% during this period, from 7,700 to 3,400.

At midyear 2018, males accounted for 84% of jail inmates and females accounted for 16%. Fifty percent of the jail population was white, 33% was black and 15% was Hispanic.

More than two-thirds (68%) of jail inmates in 2018 were held for felony charges. About one-third (34%) of jail inmates were sentenced or awaiting sentencing on a conviction, while about two-thirds (66%) were awaiting court action on a current charge or were held for other reasons.

In 2018, jails reported 10.7 million admissions, a 21% decline from 2008. Jail inmates spent an estimated average of 25 days in jail. An estimated 81% of jail beds were occupied at midyear 2018, down from 95% at midyear 2008.

The report, [\*Jail Inmates in 2018\*](#) (NCJ 253044) was written by BJS statistician Zhen Zeng, Ph.D. The report, related documents and additional information about BJS's statistical publications and programs are available on the BJS website at [www.bjs.gov](http://www.bjs.gov).

The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice is the principal federal agency responsible for collecting, analyzing and disseminating reliable statistics on crime and criminal justice in the United States. Jeffrey H. Anderson is the director.

The Office of Justice Programs, directed by Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Katharine T. Sullivan, provides federal leadership, grants and resources to improve the nation's capacity to prevent and reduce crime, assist victims and enhance the rule of law by strengthening the criminal justice system. More information about OJP and its components can be found at [www.ojp.gov](http://www.ojp.gov).

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