



## STATISTICAL BRIEF

April 2025

NCJ 309981

# Maternal Healthcare and Pregnancy Prevalence and Outcomes in Prisons, 2023

Laura M. Maruschak, *BJS Statistician*

This statistical brief presents findings on maternal healthcare and pregnancy prevalence and outcomes for persons in the custody of state or federal correctional authorities in the United States. It reports statistics on (1) pregnancy testing and positive tests among female admissions; (2) pregnancy prevalence and outcomes by type; (3) pregnancy-related training for staff, emergency transportation protocols, and medical services provided to pregnant and postpartum women; (4) accommodations and support services for pregnant and postpartum women; and (5) provision of and participation in nursery or residential programs in which mothers reside with their children.

Findings in this report are based on data from the maternal health supplement to the Bureau of Justice Statistics' annual National Prisoner Statistics collection (NPS-MatHealth).<sup>1</sup> The NPS-MatHealth was administered

<sup>1</sup>See *Methodology* for more information on NPS-MatHealth.

for the first time in 2024 and collected 2023 data on maternal health in correctional settings from the departments of corrections of the 50 states and the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP). For information on the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations directive and the feasibility study that led to and informed the NPS-MatHealth, see *Data on Maternal Health and Pregnancy Outcomes from Prisons and Jails: Results from a Feasibility Study* (NCJ 307326, BJS, January 2024).

### Pregnancy testing and positive tests among female admissions

- In the 47 jurisdictions that reported pregnancy testing data, 88% of female admissions were tested for pregnancy during 2023 ([table 1](#)).
- Among female admissions tested in the 46 jurisdictions that reported the number of admissions who tested positive, 2% tested positive.

**TABLE 1**  
**Number and percent of female admissions to state and federal prison tested for pregnancy, female admissions with positive pregnancy tests, and pregnant women in the custody of state and federal correctional authorities, 2023**

Jurisdiction	January 1–December 31, 2023				December 31, 2023	
	Female admissions tested for pregnancy		Female admissions with positive pregnancy tests		Pregnant women in custody	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total <sup>a</sup>	58,381	87.9%	1,157	2.0%	328	0.5%
Federal	6,301	93.1	156	2.5	23	0.3
State <sup>b</sup>	52,080	87.4	1,001	1.9	305	0.5

Note: Counts for admissions do not represent unique persons who were tested or who tested positive for pregnancy. An individual may have been admitted more than once in the year and have been tested at each admission. Includes all admissions, regardless of sentence status or length. Three prison systems noted that testing data were not available for those admitted under the jurisdiction of the state but not in its custody. Two prison systems reported the total number of tests conducted, not the number of admissions that were tested (in these jurisdictions, a single admission may have been tested more than once).

<sup>a</sup>Counts are based on 47 reporting jurisdictions for female admissions tested for pregnancy, 46 for female admissions with positive pregnancy tests, and 49 for pregnant women in custody.

<sup>b</sup>Counts are based on 46 reporting jurisdictions for female admissions tested for pregnancy, 45 for female admissions with positive pregnancy tests, and 48 for pregnant women in custody.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Maternal Health Supplemental Survey, 2023.

## Pregnancy prevalence in custody and outcomes of pregnancies by type

- On December 31, 2023, 49 jurisdictions reported housing a total of 328 pregnant women, accounting for 0.5% of all the women in the custody of those jurisdictions.
- Sixty percent of pregnant women in the custody of state and federal correctional authorities were white, 20% were black, 9% were Hispanic, 4% were American Indian or Alaska Native, and 2% were Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Other Pacific Islander (table 2).
- Between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023, 727 pregnancy outcomes—including live births, miscarriages, and abortions—were reported in 49 jurisdictions (table 3).
- Live births (665) accounted for 91% of the pregnancy outcomes reported, miscarriages (47) accounted for 6%, and abortions (15) accounted for 2%.

**TABLE 2**  
Number and percent of pregnant women in custody of state and federal correctional authorities, by race or Hispanic origin, December 31, 2023

Race/Hispanic origin	Total <sup>a</sup>		Federal		State <sup>b</sup>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	328	100%	23	100%	305	100%
White <sup>c</sup>	197	60.1	18	78.3	179	58.7
Black <sup>c</sup>	65	19.8	5	21.7	60	19.7
Hispanic	31	9.5	0	0.0	31	10.2
American Indian/Alaska Native <sup>c</sup>	14	4.3	0	0.0	14	4.6
Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander <sup>c</sup>	8	2.4	0	0.0	8	2.6
Unknown/not reported	13	4.0	0	0.0	13	4.3

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding.

<sup>a</sup>Based on 49 reporting jurisdictions.

<sup>b</sup>Based on 48 reporting jurisdictions.

<sup>c</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Maternal Health Supplemental Survey, 2023.

**TABLE 3**  
Number and percent of pregnancy outcomes among women in custody of state and federal correctional authorities, by type, January 1–December 31, 2023

Pregnancy outcome	Total <sup>a</sup>		Federal		State <sup>b</sup>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	727	100%	76	100%	651	100%
Live birth	665	91.5	64	84.2	601	92.3
Miscarriage	47	6.5	8	10.5	39	6.0
Abortion	15	2.1	4	5.3	11	1.7

Note: Excludes stillbirth and ectopic pregnancy (N=4) due to small cell sizes. Details may not sum to totals due to rounding.

<sup>a</sup>Based on 49 reporting jurisdictions for live births and miscarriages and 48 for abortions.

<sup>b</sup>Based on 48 reporting jurisdictions for live births and miscarriages and 47 for abortions.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Maternal Health Supplemental Survey, 2023.

### Pregnancy-related training for staff, emergency transportation protocols, and medical services

- In 2023, 88% of jurisdictions (45) reported training staff on how to care for pregnant women (table 4).
- All but one jurisdiction (98%) identified pregnancies through testing at intake.
- All 51 jurisdictions reported having the infrastructure to care for pregnant women either by means of an on-site infirmary or 24/7 or on-call care, and all had a transportation plan in the event of a pregnancy emergency or labor. (See appendix table 1.)
- All 51 jurisdictions reported providing medical appointments to pregnant women in the custody of state and federal correctional authorities routinely throughout the pregnancy.
- Ninety-six percent of jurisdictions (49) reported medical appointments within 2 weeks of a known pregnancy and within 3 weeks after delivery.
- Forty-seven jurisdictions (92%) provided depression screening during pregnancy and postpartum.

**TABLE 4**  
**Number and percent of jurisdictions with protocols, infrastructure, and medical services to care for pregnant and postpartum women in custody of state and federal correctional authorities, 2023**

	Number of jurisdictions	Percent of jurisdictions
<b>Preparedness protocol to care for pregnant women</b>		
Train staff on care for pregnant women	45	88.2%
Emergency transportation plan	51	100
Intake pregnancy testing	50	98.0
<b>Infrastructure for care</b>		
On-site infirmary	49	96.1%
24/7 or on-call care	50	98.0
<b>Medical services</b>		
Medical appointments		
Within 2 weeks of known pregnancy	49	96.1%
Routinely throughout pregnancy	51	100
Within 3 weeks after delivery	49	96.1
Depression screening		
During pregnancy	47	92.2%
Postpartum	47	92.2

Note: Percentages are based on 51 reporting jurisdictions. See appendix table 1 for data by jurisdiction.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Maternal Health Supplemental Survey, 2023.

## Accommodations and support services for pregnant and postpartum women in custody

- In 2023, all 51 jurisdictions reported providing a lower bunk assignment and prenatal vitamins to women in the custody of state and federal correctional authorities during pregnancy (table 5).
- Eighty-six percent of jurisdictions (44) reported providing a special diet and 69% (35) reported providing extra pillows during pregnancy.
- Accommodations for pumping breastmilk were provided to postpartum women in 78% of jurisdictions (40).
- Thirty of the 50 reporting jurisdictions (60%) provided special diets to postpartum women.
- Ninety-two percent of jurisdictions (47) reported providing social workers to assist pregnant women throughout pregnancy, and 88% (45) provided psychologists.
- Thirty-five percent of jurisdictions (18) provided doulas to pregnant women.

**TABLE 5**  
Number and percent of jurisdictions that provided accommodations and support services for pregnant and postpartum women in custody of state and federal correctional authorities, 2023

	Number of jurisdictions	Percent of jurisdictions
<b>Accommodations/nutrition</b>		
During pregnancy		
Lower bunk assignment	51	100%
Extra pillows	35	68.6
Special diet	44	86.3
Prenatal vitamins	51	100
Postpartum		
Pump breastmilk	40	78.4%
Special diet	30	60.0
<b>Support services</b>		
Social workers	47	92.2%
Psychologists	45	88.2
Doulas	18	35.3

Note: Percentages are based on 51 reporting jurisdictions, except for special diet among postpartum women, which is based on 50. See appendix table 2 for data by jurisdiction.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Maternal Health Supplemental Survey, 2023.

## Residential units for mothers and babies

- At yearend 2023, 10 states and the FBOP reported operating residential units (i.e., nurseries) for mothers and babies (table 6).
- A total of 86 women participated in a nursery or residential program where mothers and infants co-reside.

**TABLE 6**  
Number and percent of women participating in a nursery or residential program where mothers and infants co-reside, by jurisdiction, December 31, 2023

Jurisdiction	Number of women	Percent of women <sup>a</sup>
<b>Total<sup>b</sup></b>	86	100%
<b>Federal</b>	11	12.8
<b>State<sup>c</sup></b>	75	87.2
California	7	8.1
Illinois	3	3.5
Indiana	29	33.7
Nebraska	0	0.0
New York	6	7.0
Ohio	4	4.7
South Dakota	6	7.0
Texas	5	5.8
Washington	15	17.4
West Virginia	0	0.0

Note: Eleven jurisdictions (federal and 10 states) reported operating residential units for mothers and babies.

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of women participating in the program in each jurisdiction among all women participating.

<sup>b</sup>Based on 51 reporting jurisdictions.

<sup>c</sup>Based on 50 reporting jurisdictions.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Maternal Health Supplemental Survey, 2023.

## Methodology

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) fielded a supplemental survey to its National Prisoner Statistics (NPS) program to obtain data on maternal health and pregnancy outcomes among women in prison. The maternal health supplement (NPS-MatHealth) was administered to the 50 state departments of corrections (DOCs) and the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP) in the spring of 2024 and covered a 1-year reference period (January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023).

NPS-MatHealth collected data on the provision of maternal health services and accommodations, a 1-day count (December 31, 2023) of pregnant women in prison by race or Hispanic origin, and the number of women who participated in a nursery or residential program in which the infant resides with the mother. The supplement also collected an annual count of female admissions tested for pregnancy, the number of those admissions tested that were positive, and the number of pregnancy outcomes by type.

NPS-MatHealth respondents were asked to report on persons held in custody of prisons operated by states and the FBOP but to exclude persons held in private facilities and local jails. Additionally, they were asked to report on persons admitted regardless of sentence status or length. Prisons and jails form one integrated system in Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Rhode Island, and Vermont, and both prison and jail populations from these states are included in the aggregated state and total counts.

In the NPS-MatHealth survey, prison facilities included prisons, penitentiaries, and correctional institutions; boot camps; prison farms; reception, diagnostic, and classification centers; release centers, halfway houses, and road camps; forestry and conservation camps; vocational training facilities; prison hospitals; and drug and alcohol treatment facilities. Private and contracted facilities housing persons under state or FBOP authority were excluded. For information on the NPS methodology, see *Methodology* in *Prisoners in 2023 – Statistical Tables* (forthcoming).

### Survey response rate and item nonresponse

The NPS-MatHealth was a full enumeration of state and federal correctional authorities in the United States. During data collection, BJS received forms from all 50 state DOCs and the FBOP. Data were missing on survey items for up to 10% of the 51 jurisdictions. All jurisdictions reported data on each of the medical services and accommodations except for special diet for postpartum women, for which one jurisdiction did not provide data. Four jurisdictions did not report data on admissions tested for pregnancy, five did not report on positive tests, and two did not report the number of pregnant women. Five jurisdictions did not report the number of pregnant women by race or Hispanic origin. For pregnancy outcomes, two jurisdictions did not report on live births, two did not report on miscarriages, and three did not report on abortions. Values presented in this report exclude jurisdictions that were missing data for the given item.

**APPENDIX TABLE 1**

**Jurisdictions with protocols, infrastructure, and medical services to care for pregnant and postpartum women in custody of state and federal correctional authorities, 2023**

Jurisdiction	Preparedness protocol to care for pregnant women			Infrastructure for care		Medical services				
	Train staff on care for pregnant women	Emergency transportation plan	Intake pregnancy testing	On-site infirmary	24/7 or on-call care	Medical appointments			Depression screening	
						Within 2 weeks of known pregnancy	Routinely throughout pregnancy	Within 3 weeks after delivery	During pregnancy	Postpartum
Federal	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■
State										
Alabama	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Alaska		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Arizona	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Arkansas	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
California	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Colorado	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Connecticut	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Delaware	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Florida	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Georgia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Hawaii		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Idaho	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Illinois	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Indiana	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Iowa		■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Kansas	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Kentucky	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Louisiana	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Maine		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Maryland	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Massachusetts	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Michigan	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Minnesota	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■
Mississippi	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Missouri	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Montana	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■
Nebraska	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Nevada		■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■
New Hampshire	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
New Jersey	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

*(Continued on next page)*

**APPENDIX TABLE 1 (continued)**

**Jurisdictions with protocols, infrastructure, and medical services to care for pregnant and postpartum women in custody of state and federal correctional authorities, 2023**

Jurisdiction	Preparedness protocol to care for pregnant women			Infrastructure for care		Medical services			Depression screening	
	Train staff on care for pregnant women	Emergency transportation plan	Intake pregnancy testing	On-site infirmary	24/7 or on-call care	Medical appointments		Depression screening		
						Within 2 weeks of known pregnancy	Routinely throughout pregnancy	Within 3 weeks after delivery	During pregnancy	Postpartum
New Mexico	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
New York	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
North Carolina	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
North Dakota	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Ohio	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Oklahoma	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Oregon	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Pennsylvania	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Rhode Island	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
South Carolina	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
South Dakota	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Tennessee	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Texas	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Utah	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Vermont	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Virginia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Washington	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
West Virginia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Wisconsin	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Wyoming	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Note: All 51 jurisdictions reported data.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Maternal Health Supplemental Survey, 2023.

**APPENDIX TABLE 2**

**Jurisdictions that provided accommodations and support services for pregnant and postpartum women in custody of state and federal correctional authorities, 2023**

Jurisdiction	Accommodations/nutrition						Support services		
	During pregnancy				Postpartum		Social workers	Psychologists	Douglas
	Lower bunk assignment	Extra pillows	Special diet	Prenatal vitamins	Pump breastmilk	Special diet			
Federal	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■
State									
Alabama	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Alaska	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	
Arizona	■		■	■	■		■	■	
Arkansas	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	
California	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	
Colorado	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Connecticut	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Delaware	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Florida	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	
Georgia	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■
Hawaii	■			■	■		■	■	
Idaho	■			■	■	/	■	■	
Illinois	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Indiana	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Iowa	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Kansas	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	
Kentucky	■	■	■	■			■	■	
Louisiana	■	■	■	■			■	■	
Maine	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Maryland	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Massachusetts	■	■	■	■			■	■	
Michigan	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■
Minnesota	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Mississippi	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Missouri	■	■		■	■		■	■	
Montana	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Nebraska	■	■		■	■		■	■	
Nevada	■	■		■	■		■	■	
New Hampshire	■	■	■	■			■	■	
New Jersey	■		■	■	■		■	■	
New Mexico	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
New York	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

(Continued on next page)



**APPENDIX TABLE 2 (continued)**

**Jurisdictions that provided accommodations and support services for pregnant and postpartum women in custody of state and federal correctional authorities, 2023**

Jurisdiction	Accommodations/nutrition						Support services		
	During pregnancy				Postpartum		Social workers	Psychologists	Douglas
	Lower bunk assignment	Extra pillows	Special diet	Prenatal vitamins	Pump breastmilk	Special diet			
North Carolina	■		■	■			■	■	
North Dakota	■	■		■	■		■	■	
Ohio	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	
Oklahoma	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	
Oregon	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Pennsylvania	■	■	■	■			■	■	■
Rhode Island	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
South Carolina	■		■	■	■		■	■	■
South Dakota	■	■	■	■		■	■		
Tennessee	■	■	■	■			■	■	
Texas	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Utah	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Vermont	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	
Virginia	■			■	■	■	■	■	■
Washington	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
West Virginia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Wisconsin	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Wyoming	■		■	■					

Note: All 51 jurisdictions reported data for all but special diet for postpartum women, for which 50 reported data.

/Not reported.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program – Maternal Health Supplemental Survey, 2023.



The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice is the principal federal agency responsible for measuring crime, criminal victimization, criminal offenders, victims of crime, correlates of crime, and the operation of criminal and civil justice systems at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels. BJS collects, analyzes, and disseminates reliable statistics on crime and justice systems in the United States, supports improvements to state and local criminal justice information systems, and participates with national and international organizations to develop and recommend national standards for justice statistics. Kevin M. Scott, PhD, is the acting director.

This report was written by Laura M. Maruschak. Derek Mueller, PhD, and Stephanie Mueller verified the report.

Eric Hendrixson edited the report. Jeffrey Link produced the report.

April 2025, NCJ 309981



NCJ 309981

**Office of Justice Programs**  
**Building Solutions • Supporting Communities • Advancing Justice**  
[www.ojp.gov](http://www.ojp.gov)