



**State and Federal prisoners returning to the community:
Findings from the Bureau of Justice Statistics**

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- **Parole/conditional release supervision increasing slowly after decade of rapid growth:**
 - Average annual increase of 3.6% since 1990, compared to 9.2% annual increase from 1980 to 1990
 - Up 1.5% in 1998 (reaching nearly 705,000)

- **Characteristics of persons under parole/conditional release supervision changing:**
 - increasingly female (12% in 1998, up from 8% in 1990) and Hispanic (21% in 1998, up from 18%)
 - growing older (35% of entries age 35 to 54 in 1997, compared to 25% in 1990)
 - increasing percentage of drug law violators (35% of entries for drugs in 1997, up from 28% in 1990 and 12% in 1985)
 - decreasing percentage of those entering supervision were violent (24% in 1997, down from 35% in 1985)
 - longer time served in prison (27 months in 1997 up from 22 months in 1990)

- **Parole/conditional release violators linked to rise in prison admissions:**
 - represented 206,000 of the 565,000 State prison admissions in 1998
 - up 54% since 1990, compared to 7.5% among new court commitments
 - comprised of 32% drug offenders; 25% violent; 35% property; 8% public order in 1997

- **Parole/conditional release failure rates high**
 - 42% of discharges from parole/conditional release supervision returned to prison or jail
 - 62% of released State prisoners rearrested within 3 years; 41% returned to prison/jail

40% of State prisoners expected to be released in next 12 months

Remaining time to be served	Percent of inmates	
	1997	1991
<6 months	21.9 %	24.1 %
6 to 12	17.8	17.4
13 to 59	33.5	33.0
60 to 119	9.6	8.1
120 to 239	5.5	4.3
240 or more	2.7	2.0
Life	3.2	2.3
Don't know	5.8	8.8

Number of prison releases expected to rise

Year	Number of State and Federal inmates released*
1990	423,800
1995	474,300
1996	488,700
1997	514,300
1998	546,600
1999 (projected)	565,700
2000 (projected)	585,400

*Inmates with sentences of > 1 year only.

Nearly 80% of re-entering State inmates will be under conditional release supervision

	Released to supervision --			Expiration of sentence	Other
	Parole board	Mandatory release	Other conditional		
1990	39.4 %	28.8 %	15.5 %	12.7 %	3.6 %
1995	32.3	39.0	10.1	14.5	4.0
1996	30.4	38.0	10.2	16.7	4.7
1997	28.2	39.7	10.4	16.8	4.9
1998	26.0	40.4	11.2	18.7	3.7

High levels of substance abuse and mental illness among re-entering State prisoners

	Percent of re-entering inmates*
Drug/alcohol involved	73.6 %
Drug use	
In month before offense	59.2 %
At time of offense	33.7
Intravenous use in past	22.2
Alcohol abuse	
Binge drinkers	41.8 %
Alcohol dependent	25.2
At time of offense	35.7
Identified as mentally ill	14.4 %
Co-occurring disorders (substance abuse and mentally ill)	11.4 %

*State prisoners who are expected to be released within next 12 months.

Substance abuse and mental health treatment still needed for many prisoners awaiting release

	Percent of re-entering prisoners participating since admission	
	Treatment	Other programs**
Drug users		
In month before offense	18.2 %	30.3 %
At time of offense	22.2	33.5 %
Alcohol abusers		
Alcohol dependent	21.9 %	38.2 %
Use at time of offense	17.6	35.2
Mentally ill	57.2 %	--
Drug/alcohol users or mentally ill	31.2 %	--

*Of State prisoners expected to be released within next 12 months.

** Includes self-help, peer counseling and education/awareness programs.