

Massachusetts Department of Correction
Luis S. Spencer, Commissioner

ANALYSIS OF 17-24 YEAR OLD CRIMINALLY SENTENCED POPULATION

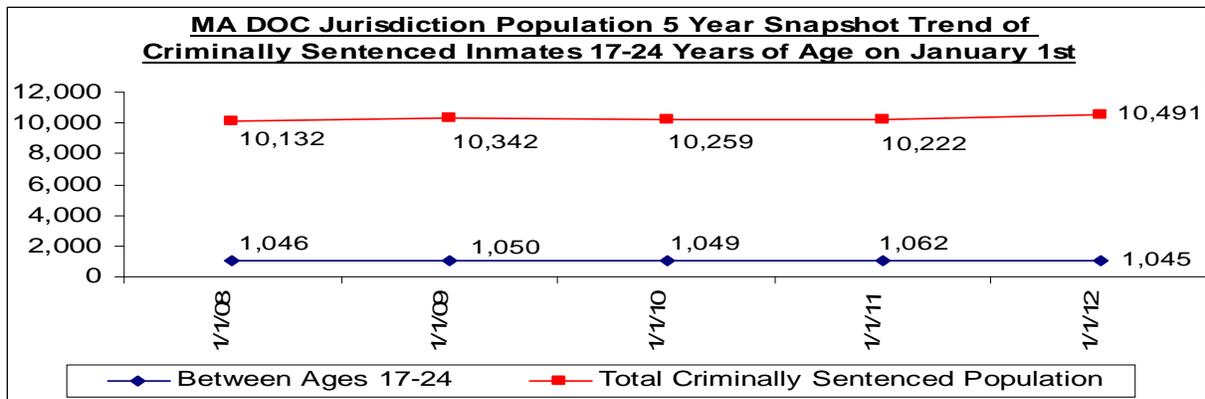
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Introduction

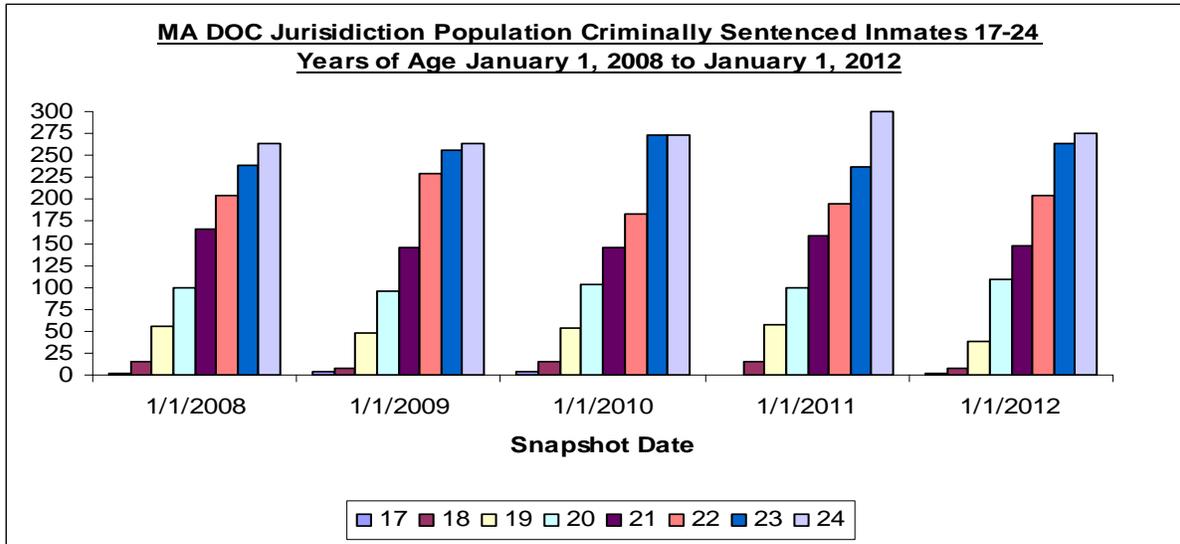
As of January 1, 2012, the Massachusetts Department Correction (MA DOC) criminally sentenced jurisdiction population ranged in age from 17 to 88 with 10% (n=1,045) of MA DOC's criminally sentenced inmate population between the ages of 17 to 24.¹ Identifying this young inmate population and its characteristics is essential for providing critical services and programs geared towards reducing recidivism. This brief will discuss this young inmate population over the course of a five year trend period (2008-2012) through their demographics and offense information. This will also focus on the fluctuation of admissions and releases among inmates within this age range from 2007 to 2011.

Snapshot Population 5 Year Trend (2008-2012)

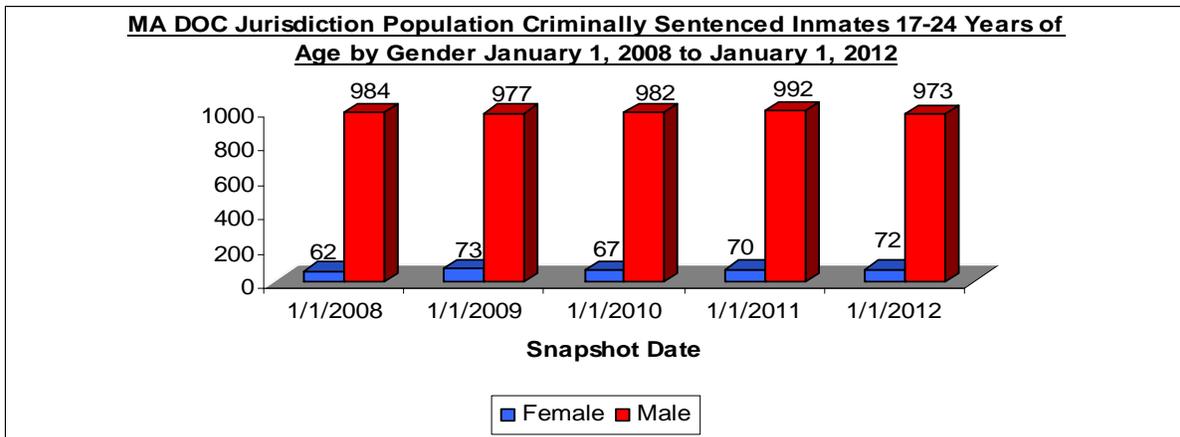


Over the course of the five year trend period, January 1, 2008 to January 1, 2012, the MA DOC criminally sentenced jurisdiction population between the ages of 17 and 24 experienced no population growth; ranging from a high of 1,062 in 2011 to a low of 1,045 in 2012.

¹ Individuals under the age of 17 years are not housed in MA DOC facilities. When sentenced to the MA DOC younger than 17 years, individuals are housed in the custody of the Department of Youth Services until their seventeenth birthday, at which point they are transferred to the MA DOC.

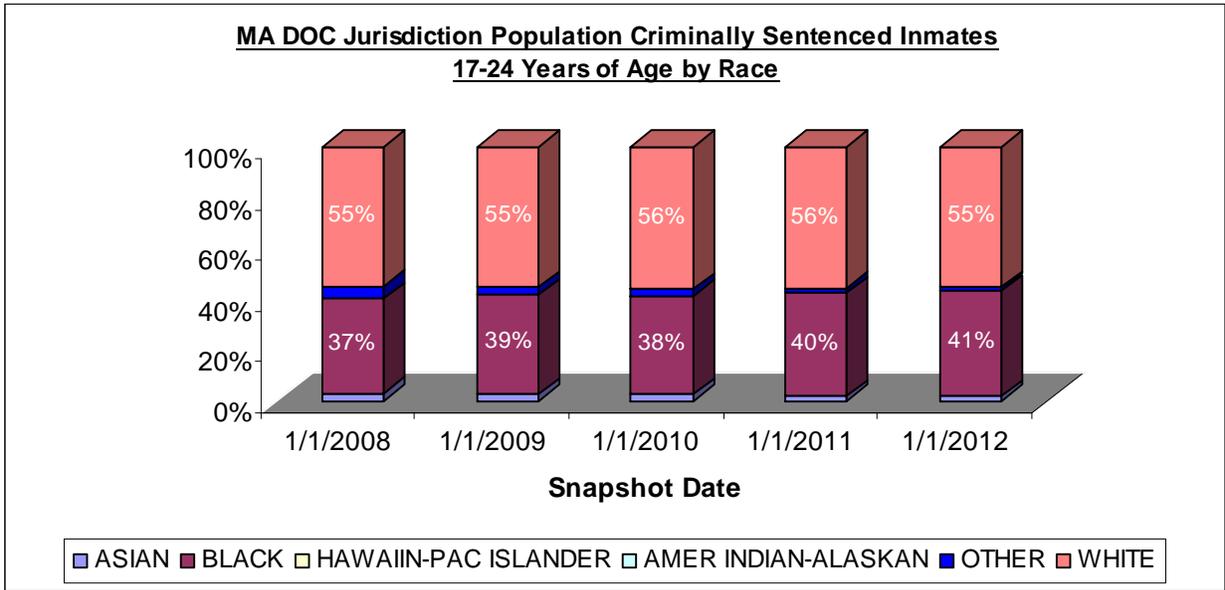


- On January 1, 2012, 47 inmates were under the age of twenty.
- The number of 17 year old inmates ranged from a low of one in 2008 and 2012, and a high of 3 in 2009 and 2010.
- Also, the number of inmates 18 years of age ranged from eight in 2012 to 16 in 2010.

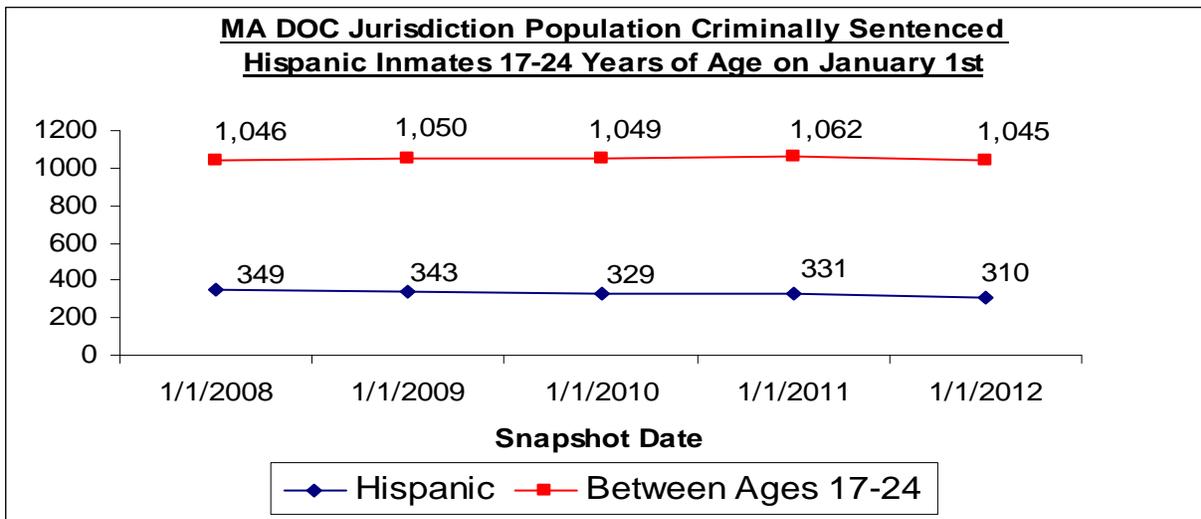


- Approximately 93% of MA DOC's criminally sentenced population between the ages of 17 and 24 were males.
- This male population ranged from 973 in 2012 to 992 in 2011 while the female inmate population ranged from 62 in 2008 to 73 in 2009.

Demographics

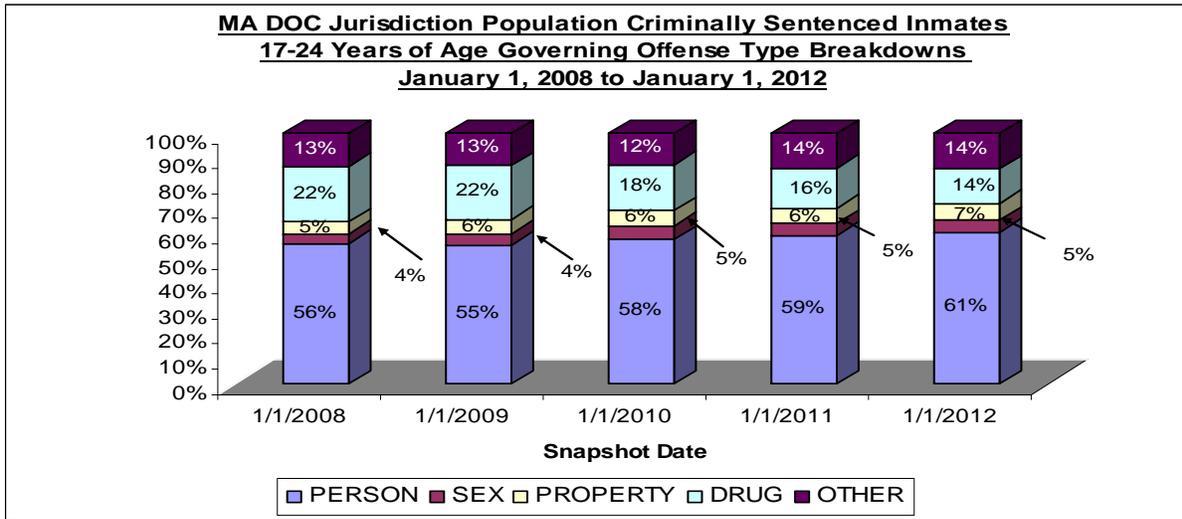


- Overall, a majority of this population was White, followed by Black, Asian, American Indian-Alaskan, and Hawaiian Pacific Islander.
- Throughout the trend period, approximately 55% of this population was White and 40% were Black.

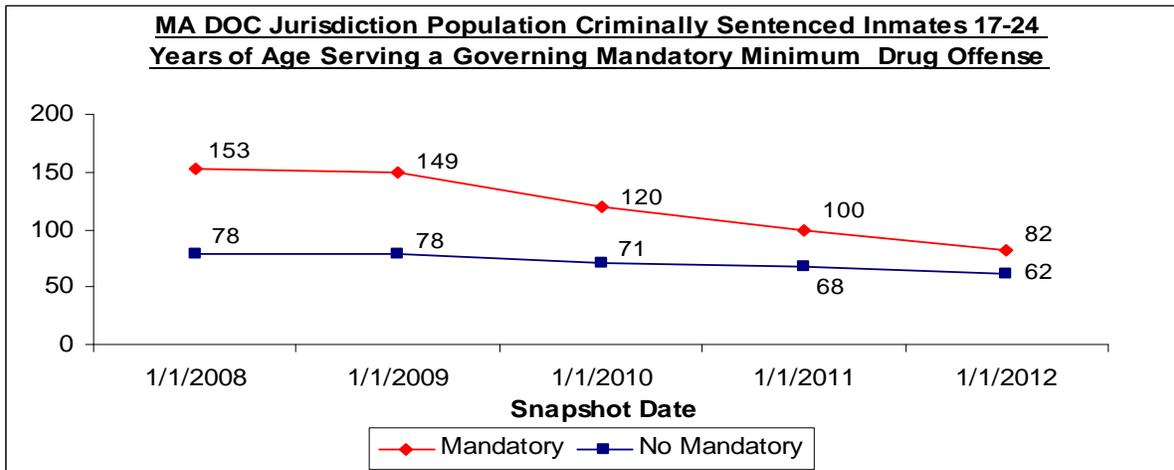


- Furthermore, the number of inmates who self-reported being Hispanic ranged from 310 in 2012 to 349 in 2008, approximately one-third of the 17-24 year old population.

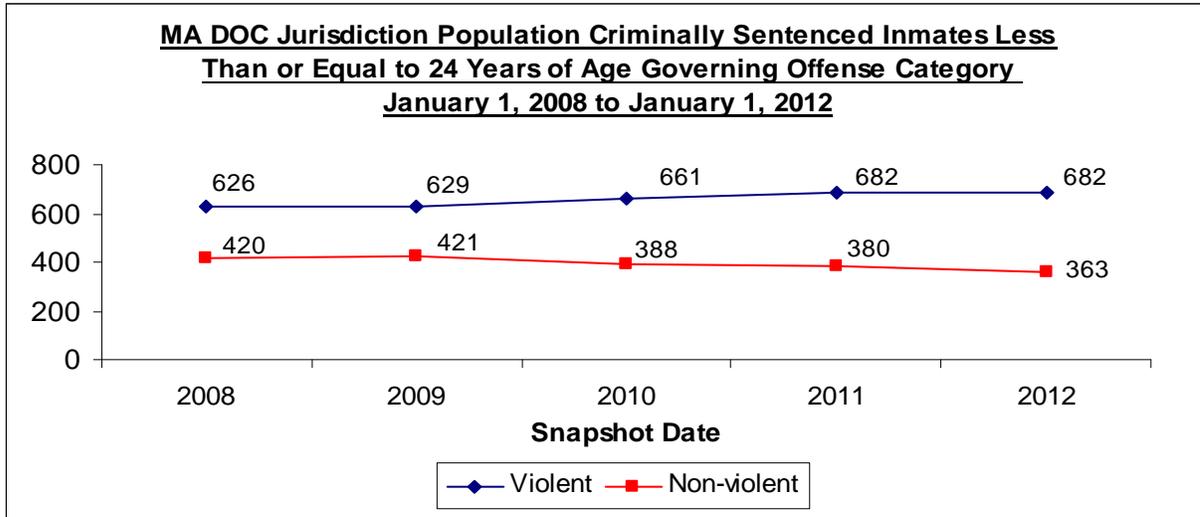
Offense Information



- Within this population, the majority were Person offenders, followed by Drug, Other, Property, and Sex offenders.
- The percentage of inmates serving a sentence for a governing Person offense ranged from 55% in 2009 to 61% in 2012.
- The percentage serving a sentence for a governing Drug offense has notably decreased from 22% in 2008 to 14% in 2012.

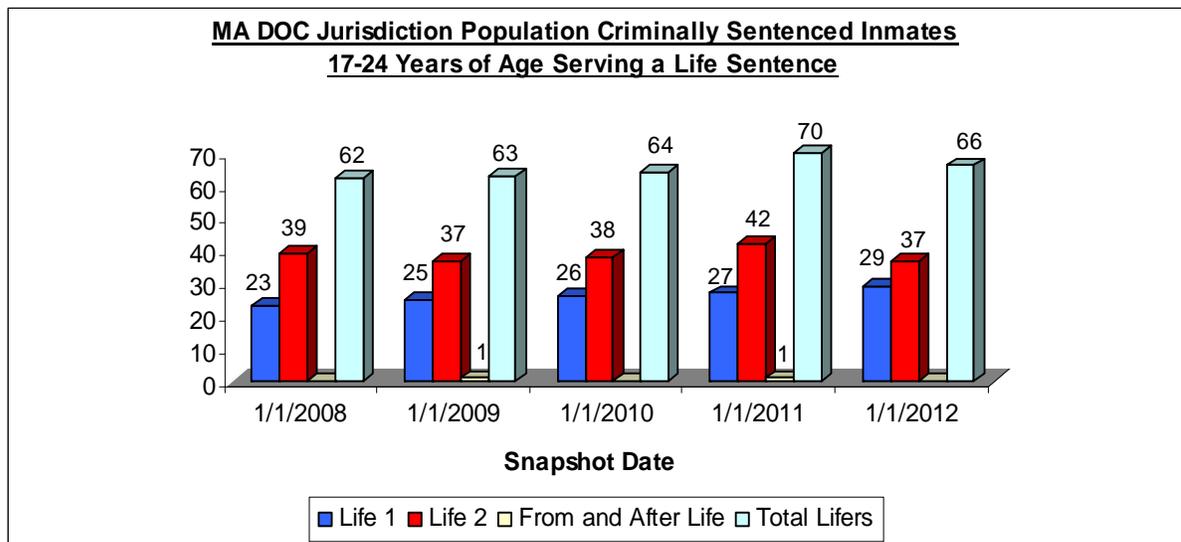


- The number of inmates serving a governing mandatory minimum sentence for a Drug offense, similar to that of drug offenses, has decreased annually from 153 inmates in 2008 to 82 inmates in 2012.
- The percentage of this population serving a governing mandatory minimum sentence for a Drug offense ranged from 57% in 2012 to 66% in 2008.



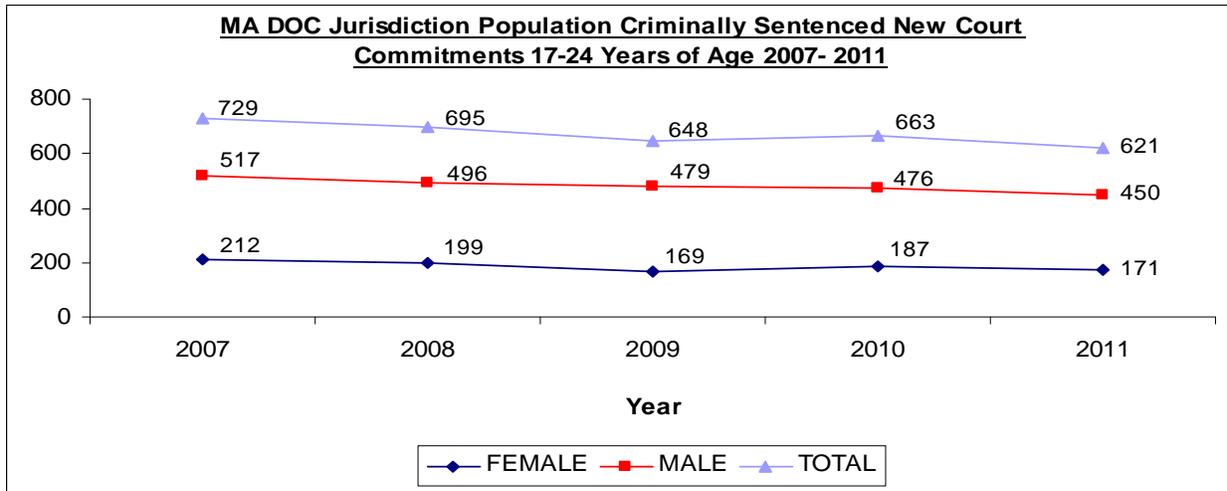
*Note: Violent offenses include all offenses that fall under the Person Offense or Sex Offense categories.

- Throughout the trend period, 60% to 65% of this population was serving a sentence for a violent governing offense, while 35% to 40% were serving a sentence for a non-violent governing offense.
- The number of inmates serving a sentence for a violent governing offense ranged from 626 in 2008 to 682 in 2012, while the number serving a non-violent governing offense ranged from 363 in 2012 to 421 in 2009.

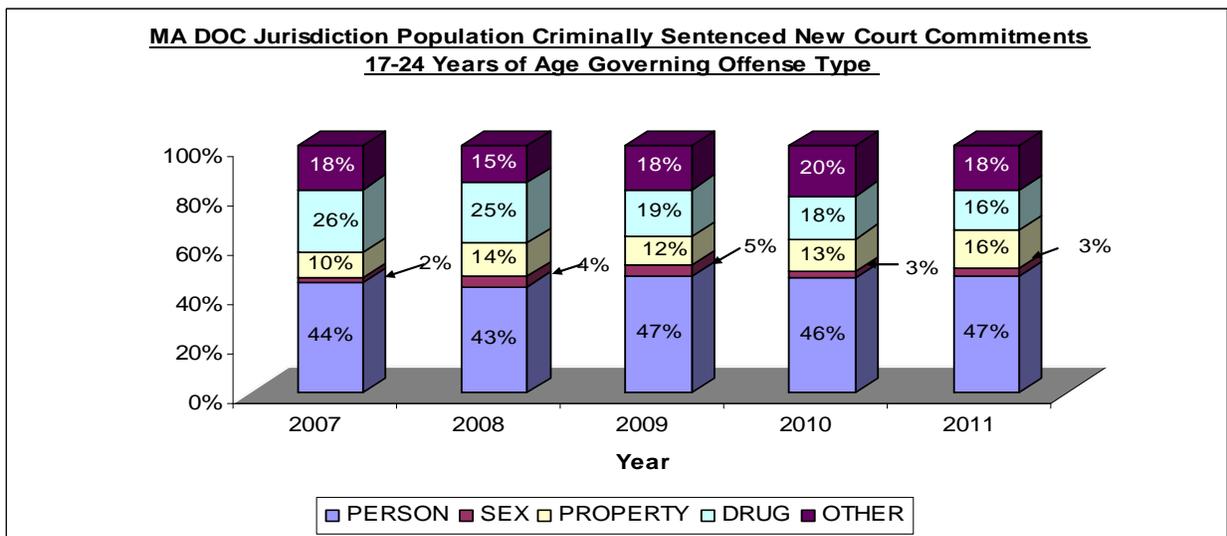


- As of January 1, 2012, there were 66 inmates less than or equal to 24 years of age who were serving a life sentence.
- The number of inmates serving a life sentence in this population ranged from 62 in 2008 to 70 in 2011.

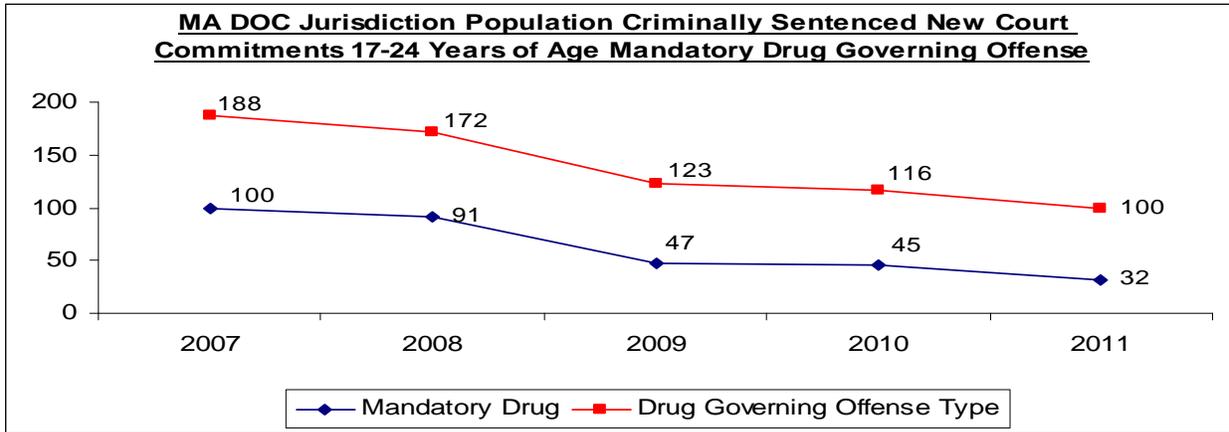
New Court Commitments



- Between 2007 and 2011, a total of 3,356 new court commitments to the MA DOC were between the ages of 17 and 24.
- Seventy-two percent of new court commitments in this population were males and 28% were female.
- The total number of new court commitments for this population ranged from 729 in 2007 to 621 in 2011, a decrease of 15%.

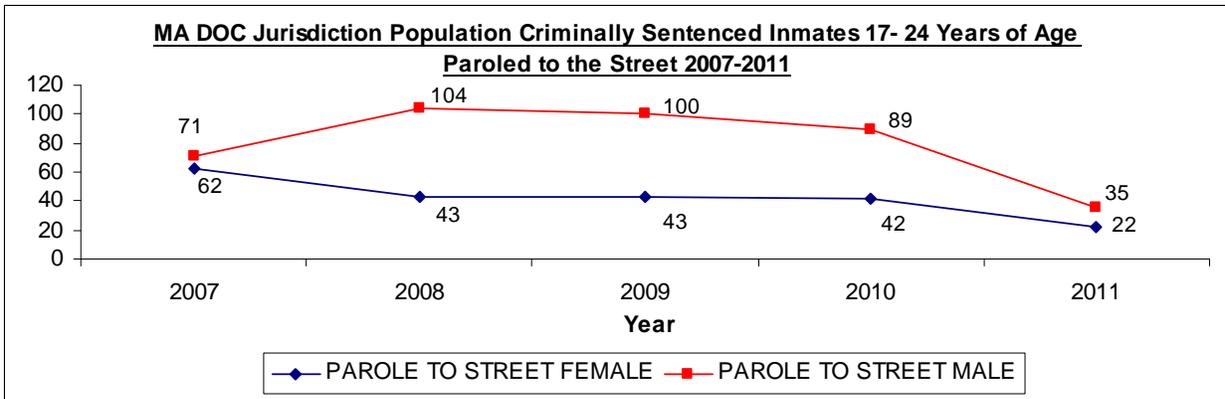


- Between 2007 and 2011, 43% to 47% of new court commitments in this age range were serving a sentence for a governing Person offense.
- The proportion of new court commitments in this age group serving a sentence for governing Drug offense has decreased between 2007 (26%) and 2011 (16%) while Property offenses increased between 2007 (10%) and 2011 (16%).

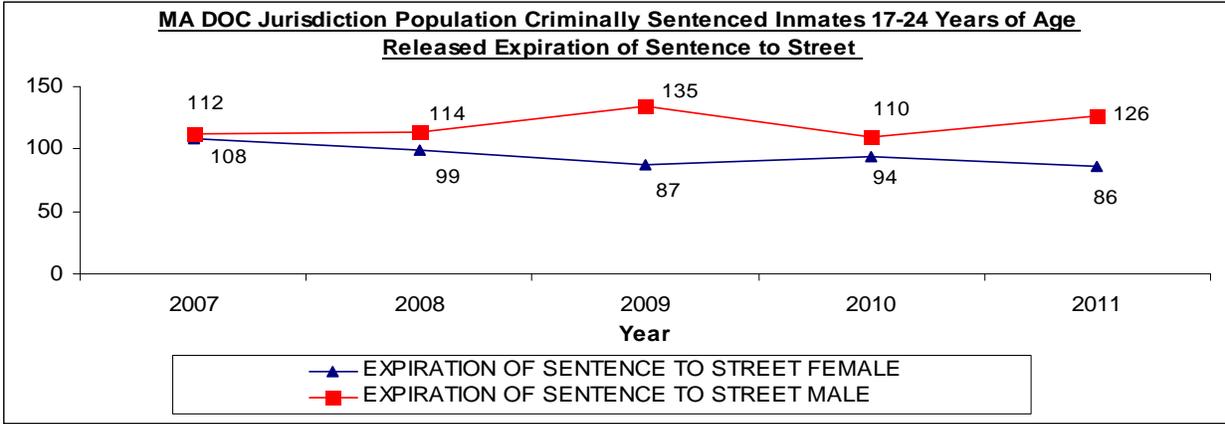


- Most noteworthy is the number of new court commitments in this age group serving a sentence for a governing drug offense as well as those serving a mandatory minimum sentence for a governing drug offense, has decreased between 2007 and 2011.
- The number of new court commitments serving a mandatory minimum sentence for a Drug offense has decreased by 68% between 2007 (n=100) and 2011 (n=32), while the number serving a governing drug offense has decreased by 47% between 2007 (n=188) and 2011 (n=100).

Releases to the Street



- During this trend period, 611 criminally sentenced inmates 24 years of age and under were paroled to the street, with 212 females and 399 males.
- The number of inmates 24 years of age or younger paroled to the street ranged from a low of 57 in 2011 to a high of 147 in 2008.



- During the trend period, 1,071 criminally sentenced inmates 24 years of age and under were released via expiration of sentence to the street, 474 females and 597 males.
- The number of inmates 24 years of age or younger released via expiration of sentence to the street ranged from a low of 204 in 2010 to a high of 222 in 2009.

| MA DOC Criminally Sentenced Releases to the Street 17-24 Years of Age Releasing MA County 2007 to 2011 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| | 2007 | | 2008 | | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | Total | |
| MA COUNTY | N | % | N | % |
| BARNSTABLE COUNTY | 6 | 2% | 4 | 1% | 8 | 2% | 4 | 1% | 2 | 1% | 24 | 1% |
| BERKSHIRE COUNTY | 10 | 3% | 7 | 2% | 2 | 1% | 4 | 1% | 5 | 2% | 28 | 2% |
| BRISTOL COUNTY | 19 | 5% | 22 | 6% | 23 | 6% | 17 | 5% | 21 | 8% | 102 | 6% |
| DUKES COUNTY | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 0% | 1 | 0% |
| ESSEX COUNTY | 29 | 8% | 44 | 12% | 42 | 12% | 59 | 18% | 30 | 11% | 204 | 12% |
| FRANKLIN COUNTY | 2 | 1% | 1 | 0% | 2 | 1% | 1 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 6 | 0% |
| HAMPDEN COUNTY | 34 | 10% | 41 | 11% | 41 | 11% | 42 | 13% | 33 | 12% | 191 | 11% |
| HAMPSHIRE COUNTY | 3 | 1% | 2 | 1% | 4 | 1% | 3 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 12 | 1% |
| MIDDLESEX COUNTY | 60 | 17% | 60 | 17% | 50 | 14% | 42 | 13% | 32 | 12% | 244 | 15% |
| NORFOLK COUNTY | 26 | 7% | 17 | 5% | 21 | 6% | 23 | 7% | 20 | 7% | 107 | 6% |
| OUTSIDE MA | 10 | 3% | 10 | 3% | 20 | 5% | 16 | 5% | 11 | 4% | 67 | 4% |
| PLYMOUTH COUNTY | 32 | 9% | 41 | 11% | 30 | 8% | 19 | 6% | 21 | 8% | 143 | 9% |
| SUFFOLK COUNTY | 69 | 20% | 56 | 16% | 59 | 16% | 60 | 18% | 57 | 21% | 301 | 18% |
| WORCESTER COUNTY | 50 | 14% | 55 | 15% | 63 | 17% | 44 | 13% | 36 | 13% | 248 | 15% |
| UNKNOWN | 3 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 4 | 0% |
| TOTAL | 353 | 100% | 360 | 100% | 365 | 100% | 335 | 100% | 269 | 100% | 1,682 | 100% |

- Seventy-one percent of criminally sentenced inmates in this age range released to one of five following counties: Suffolk (18%), and Worcester (15%), Middlesex (15%), Essex (12%), Hampden (11%).
- Over the last five years, 13% of MA DOC inmates released to the street were less than or equal to 24 years of age.

Conclusion

For the last five years, the MA DOC criminally sentenced population of inmates 24 years of age or less has accounted for approximately 10% of the DOC's criminally sentenced inmate population. An analysis of this population indicates a majority of these inmates are male, Person offenders. With there being many more Person offenders, than any other offense category, the majority of this population are violent offenders. The number of inmates in this age range serving a life sentence ranged from 62 to 70 during the five year trend period of 2008 to 2012. Additionally, the number of new court commitments in this age range at the time of incarceration has decreased 15% between 2007 and 2011; decreasing annually from 2007-2009 with a slight increase in 2010, only to decrease again in 2011. A comparison of new court commitments and releases to the street indicates a cumulative difference of an additional 1,675 inmates over the last 5 years. Monitoring this age group is important in terms of planning and programming most effectively. This age group is generally at a higher risk for recidivism and require targeted efforts by the criminal justice system and its stakeholders.

Any questions or comments can be answered by email: research@doc.state.ma.us. Copies of publications from the Office of Strategic Planning & Research can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/doc>.

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