

Nebraska Center for Justice Research

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# **Trends in Young Adult Male Incarceration Admissions in Nebraska, 2000-2013**

**Final Report – December, 2014**

**Jonathan R. Brauer, Ph.D.**







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# **TRENDS IN YOUNG ADULT MALE INCARCERATION ADMISSIONS IN NEBRASKA, 2000-2013**

**Jonathan R. Brauer, Ph.D.**

## **NOTES**

Unless otherwise specified, the figures in this report are derived from correctional admissions data for males sentenced to incarceration in Nebraska from years 2000 through 2013. These data are publicly available at the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services website:

[www.corrections.nebraska.gov](http://www.corrections.nebraska.gov).

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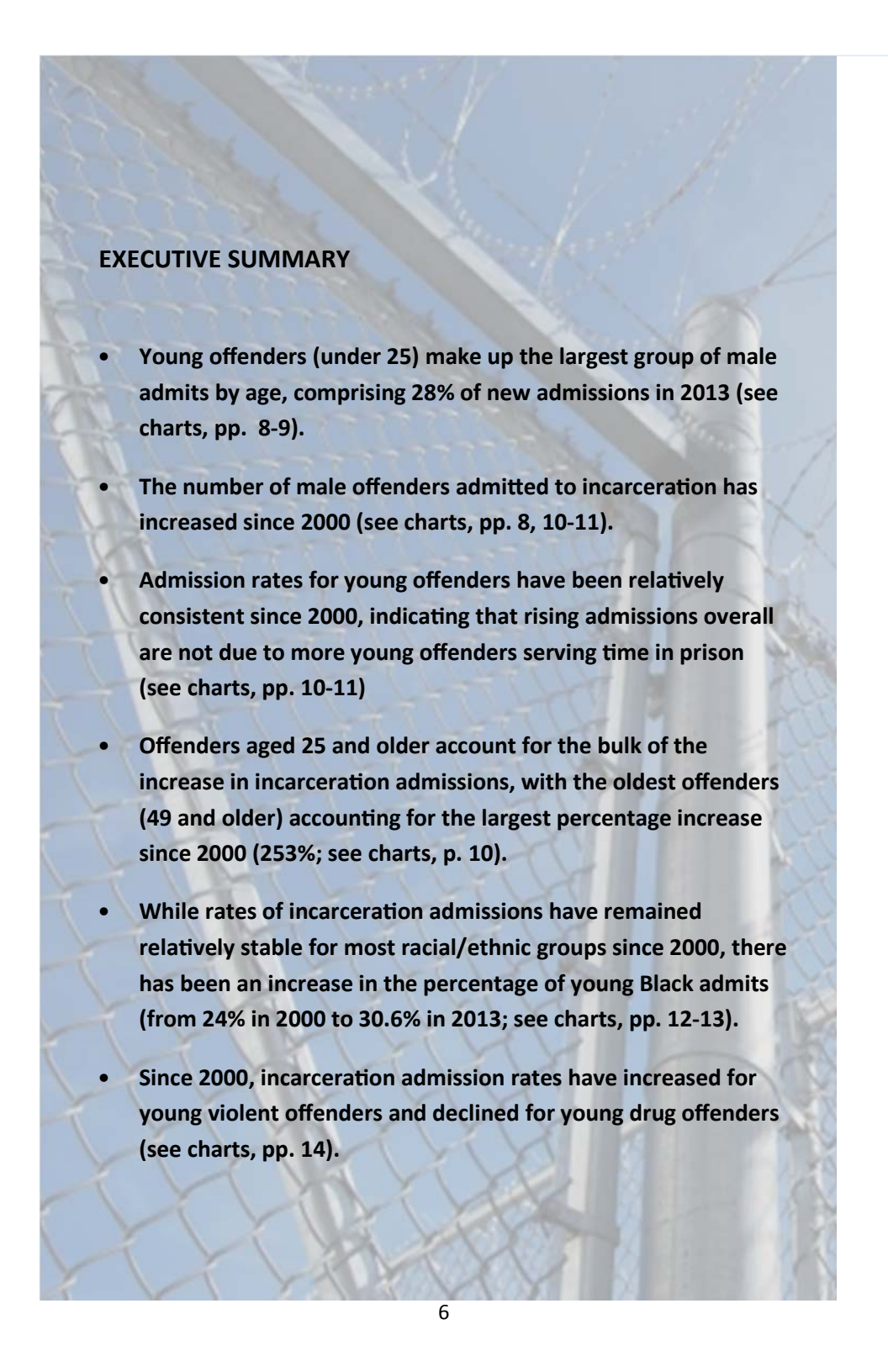
## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This research was supported by The Nebraska Center for Justice Research (NCJR). A special thanks is also owed to Dr. Abby Vandenberg of the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services for her assistance with data used in this report.

## **ABOUT THE NCJR**

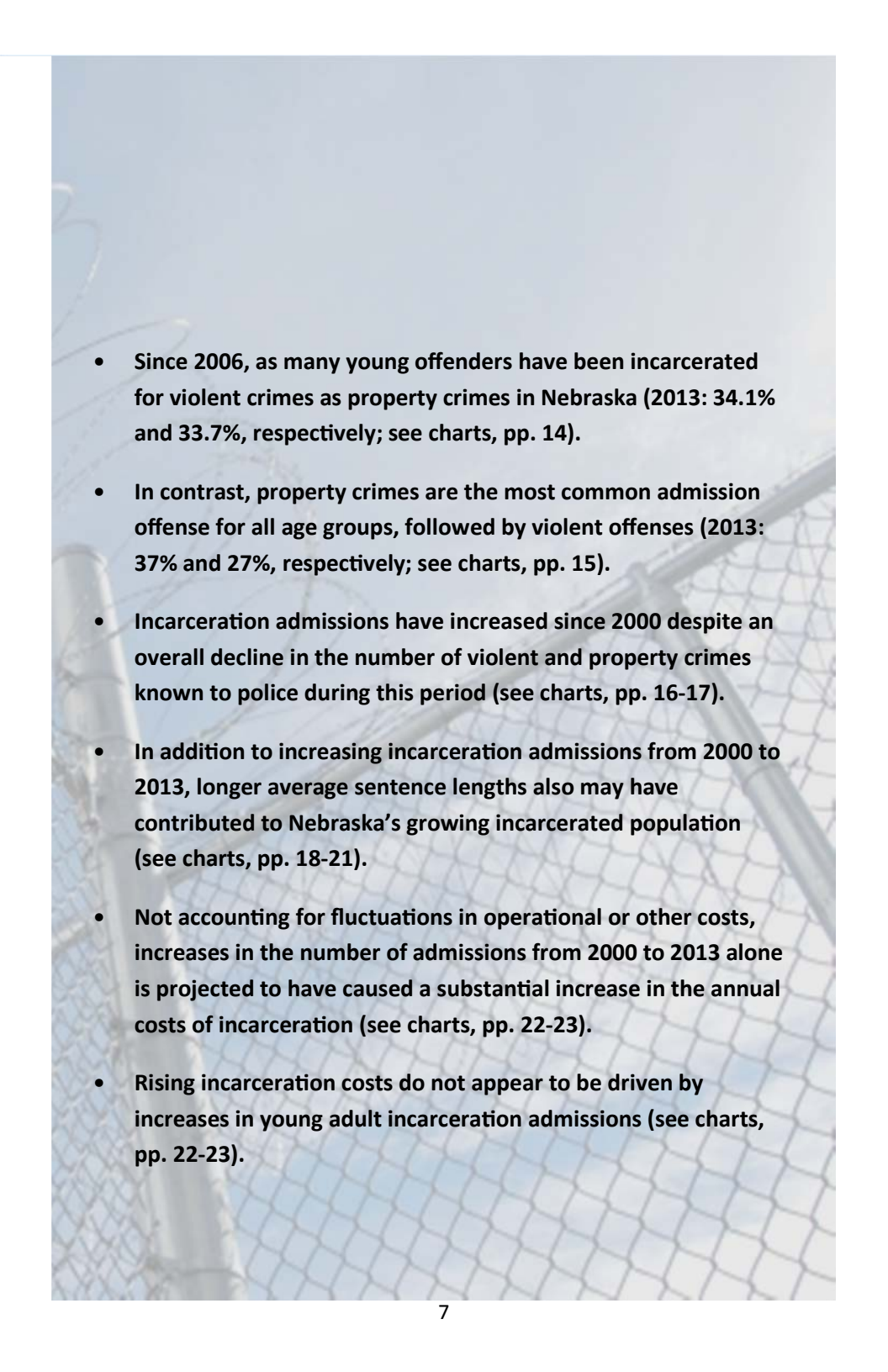
The NCJR was established in 2014 by LB 907. The Center's mission is to develop and sustain research capacity internal to the State of Nebraska, assist the Legislature in research, evaluation, and policymaking to reduce recidivism, promote the use of evidence-based practices in corrections, and improve public safety. Questions regarding the NCJR should be directed to Dr. Ryan Spohn, Director, Nebraska Center for Justice Research, University of Nebraska, Omaha, 6001 Dodge Street, Omaha, NE 68182-0310. Phone: 402-554-3794; e-mail: [rspohn@unomaha.edu](mailto:rspohn@unomaha.edu).





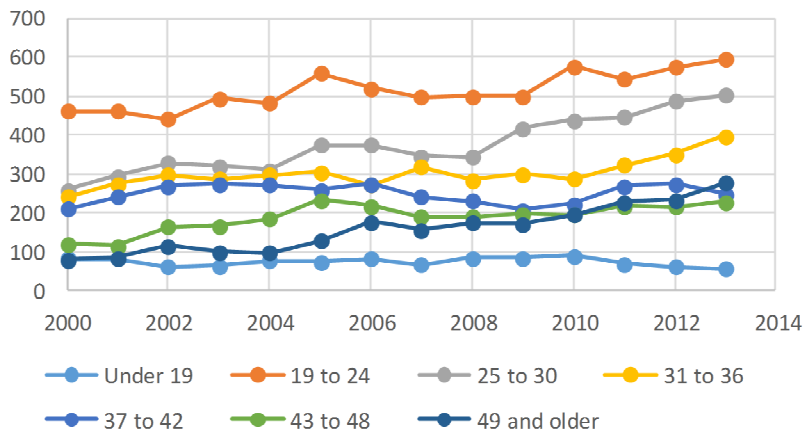
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Young offenders (under 25) make up the largest group of male admits by age, comprising 28% of new admissions in 2013 (see charts, pp. 8-9).
- The number of male offenders admitted to incarceration has increased since 2000 (see charts, pp. 8, 10-11).
- Admission rates for young offenders have been relatively consistent since 2000, indicating that rising admissions overall are not due to more young offenders serving time in prison (see charts, pp. 10-11)
- Offenders aged 25 and older account for the bulk of the increase in incarceration admissions, with the oldest offenders (49 and older) accounting for the largest percentage increase since 2000 (253%; see charts, p. 10).
- While rates of incarceration admissions have remained relatively stable for most racial/ethnic groups since 2000, there has been an increase in the percentage of young Black admits (from 24% in 2000 to 30.6% in 2013; see charts, pp. 12-13).
- Since 2000, incarceration admission rates have increased for young violent offenders and declined for young drug offenders (see charts, pp. 14).

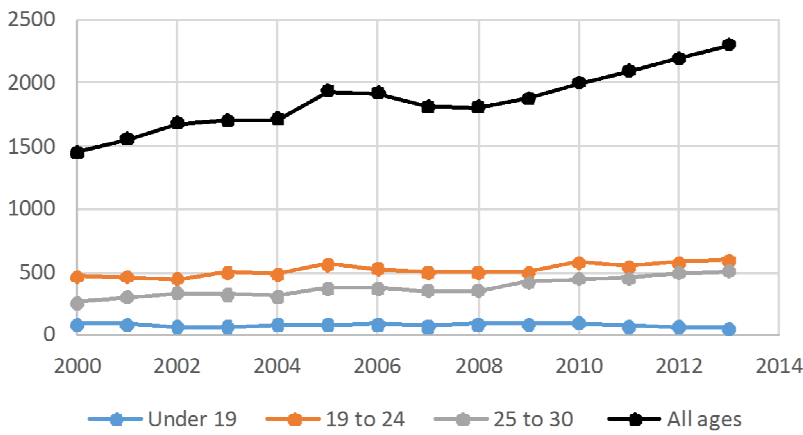
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- Since 2006, as many young offenders have been incarcerated for violent crimes as property crimes in Nebraska (2013: 34.1% and 33.7%, respectively; see charts, pp. 14).
  - In contrast, property crimes are the most common admission offense for all age groups, followed by violent offenses (2013: 37% and 27%, respectively; see charts, pp. 15).
  - Incarceration admissions have increased since 2000 despite an overall decline in the number of violent and property crimes known to police during this period (see charts, pp. 16-17).
  - In addition to increasing incarceration admissions from 2000 to 2013, longer average sentence lengths also may have contributed to Nebraska's growing incarcerated population (see charts, pp. 18-21).
  - Not accounting for fluctuations in operational or other costs, increases in the number of admissions from 2000 to 2013 alone is projected to have caused a substantial increase in the annual costs of incarceration (see charts, pp. 22-23).
  - Rising incarceration costs do not appear to be driven by increases in young adult incarceration admissions (see charts, pp. 22-23).

# GENERAL ADMISSION TRENDS

## Number of Admissions by Age Group

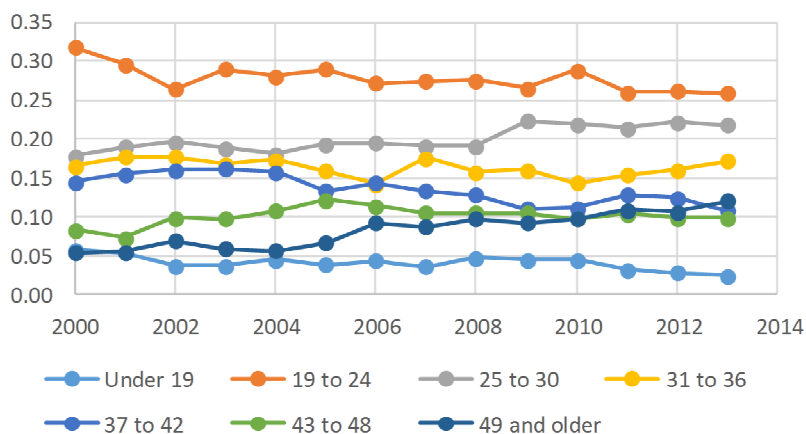


## Number of Admissions (Young & All Ages)

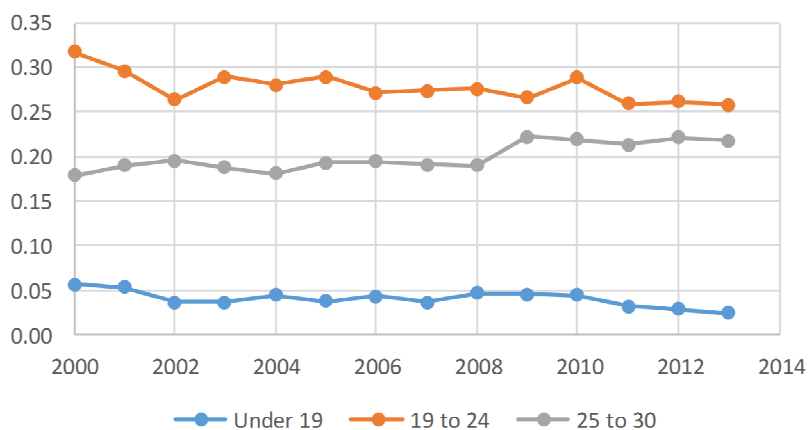




### Percent of Total Admissions by Age Group

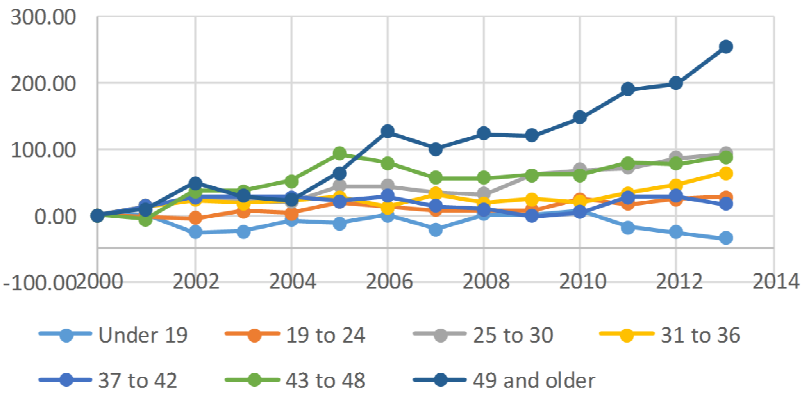


### Percent of Total Admissions (Young Ages)

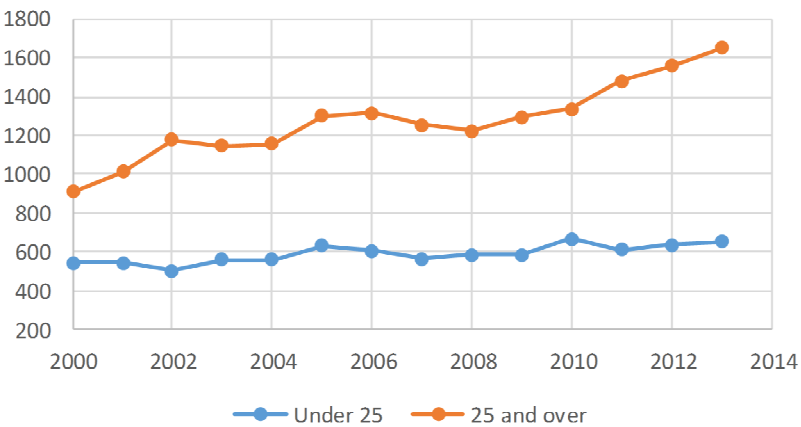


GENERAL ADMISSION TRENDS

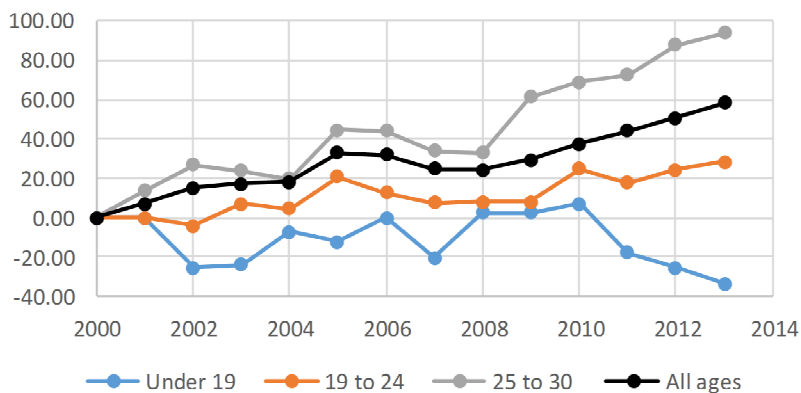
Percent Change in Admissions from 2000  
by Age Group



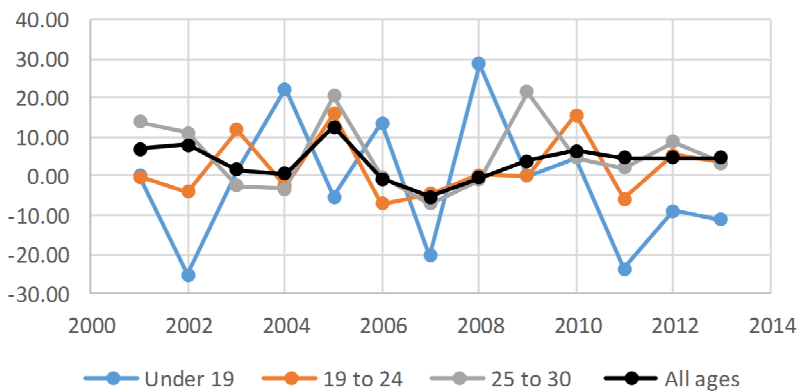
Number of Admissions (Young & Older Ages)



### Percent Change in Admissions from 2000 (Young & All Ages)

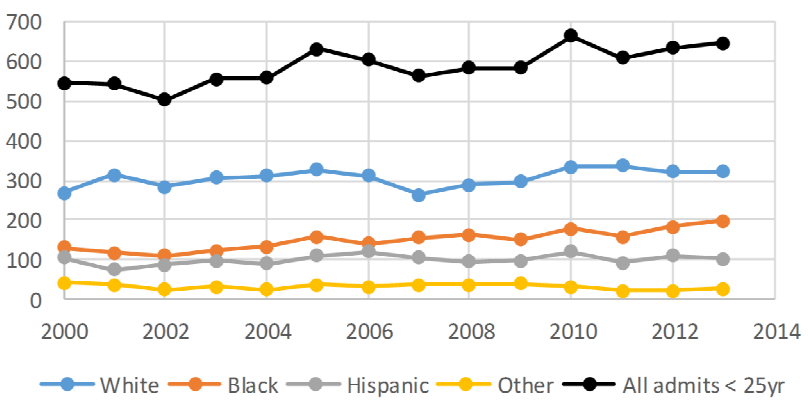


### Percent Change in Admissions from Previous Year (Young & All Ages)

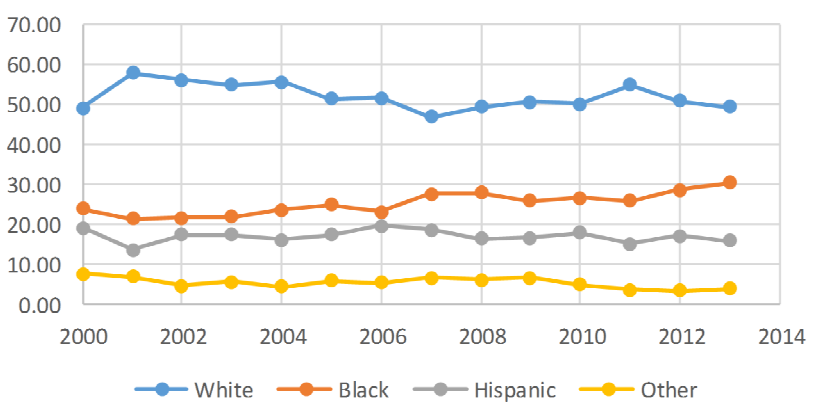


ADMISSIONS BY RACE/ETHNICITY

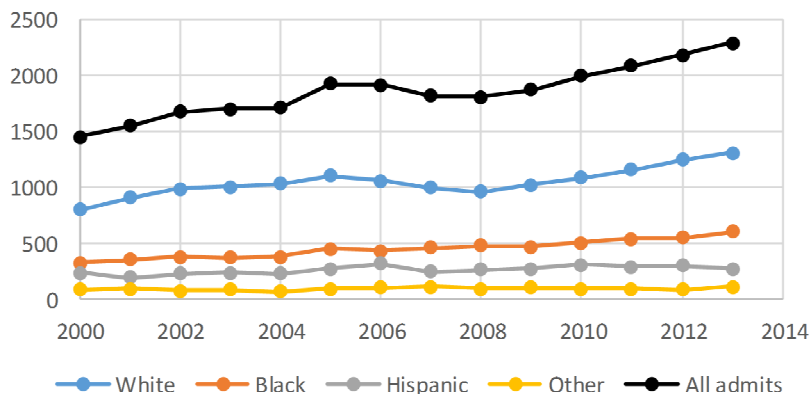
Number of Admissions by Race/Ethnicity  
(Under 25 Years Old)



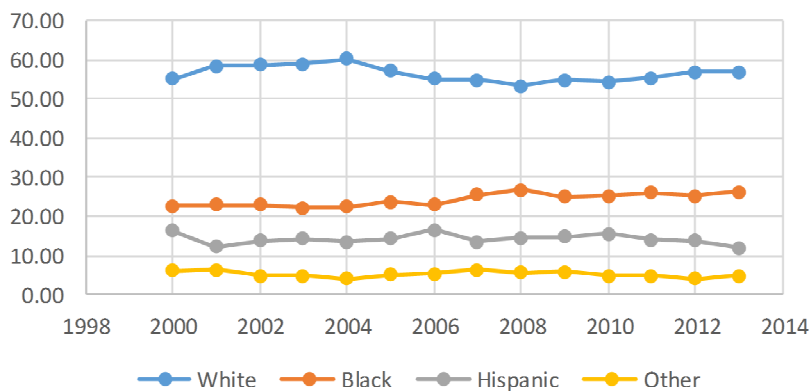
Percent of Admissions by Race/Ethnicity  
(Under 25 Years Old)



### Number of Admissions by Race/Ethnicity (All Ages)



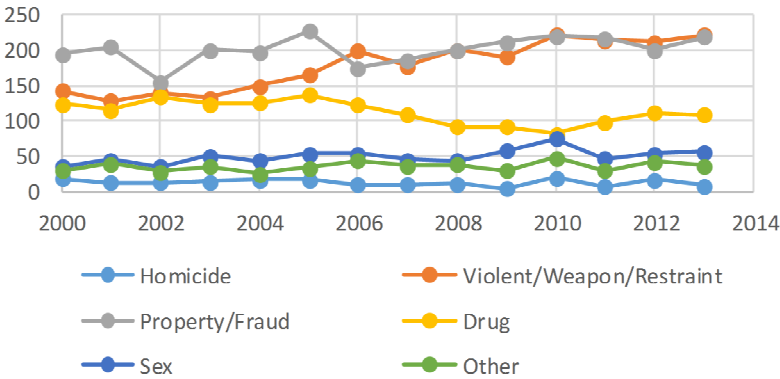
### Percent of Admissions by Race/Ethnicity (All Ages)



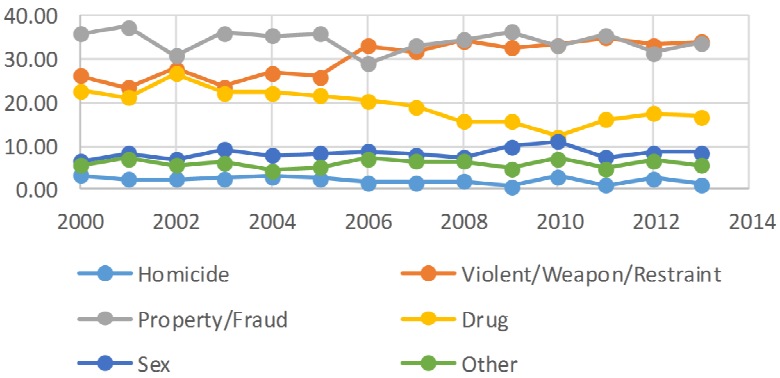


# ADMISSIONS BY OFFENSE TYPE

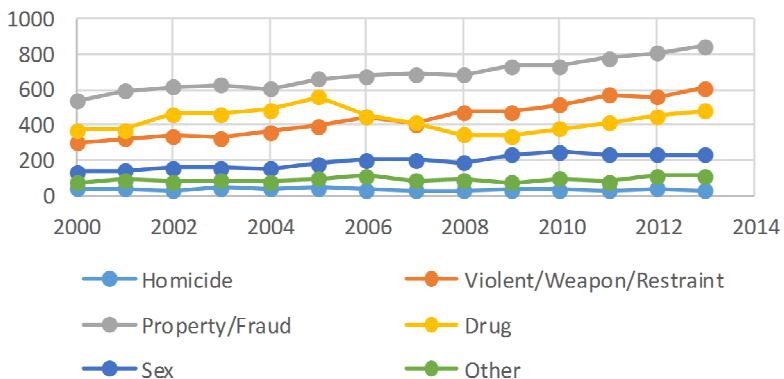
**Number of Admissions by Most Serious Offense  
(Under 25 Years Old)**



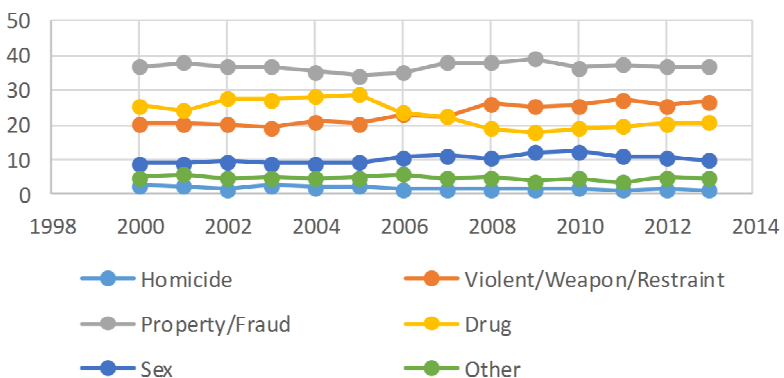
**Percent of Admissions by Most Serious Offense  
(Under 25 Years)**



### Number of Admissions by Most Serious Offense (All Ages)

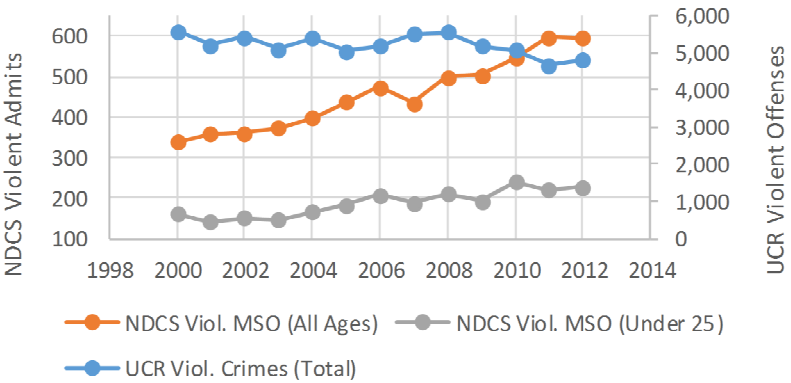


### Percent of Admissions by Most Serious Offense (All Ages)

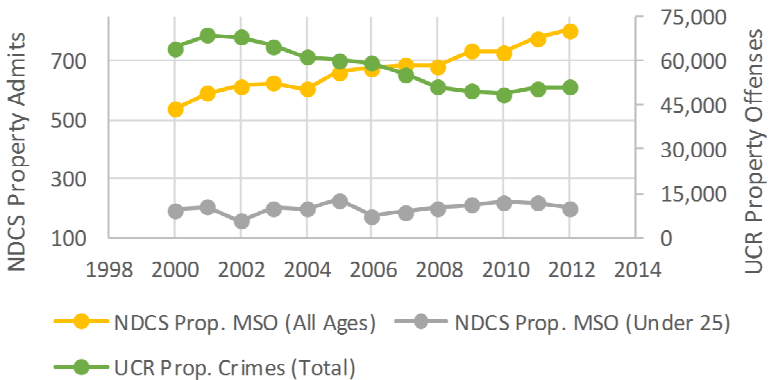


## ADMISSIONS BY OFFENSE TYPE

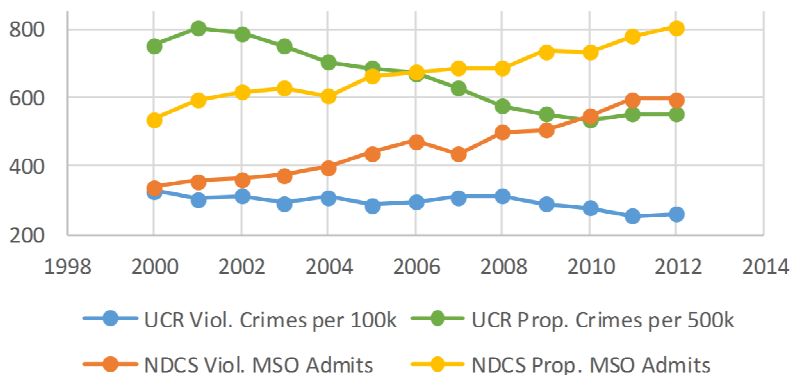
**Number of Violent Crime Offenses (UCR) and Incarcerations (NDCS, Young & All Ages)**



**Number of Property Crime Offenses (UCR) and Incarcerations (NDCS, Young & All Ages)**



### Violent and Property Crime Rates (UCR) and Incarceration Admissions (NDCS, All Ages)



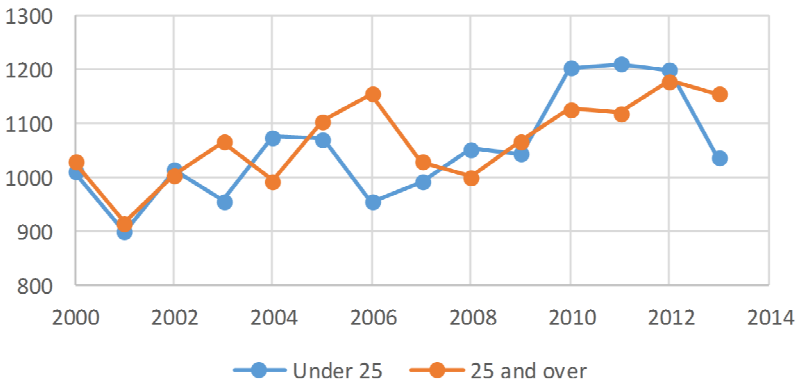
**Since 2000, incarceration admissions have increased as violent and property crimes known to police have declined.**

**NOTES:** MSO refers to “most serious offense.” Uniform Crime Report (UCR) figures are based on data from all reporting agencies and estimates for unreported areas in Nebraska.

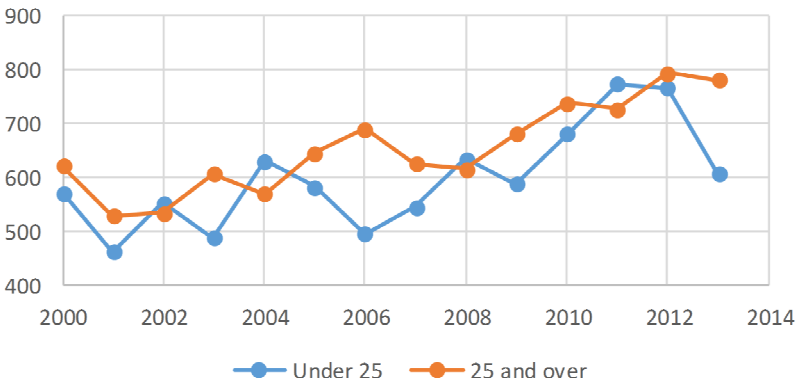
**SOURCE (UCR):** FBI, Uniform Crime Reports as prepared by the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data. UCR data are publicly available at the following website: [www.ucrdatatool.gov](http://www.ucrdatatool.gov).

## AVERAGE SENTENCE LENGTHS

**Mean Days from Sentence Begin Date to Earliest Possible Release Date**

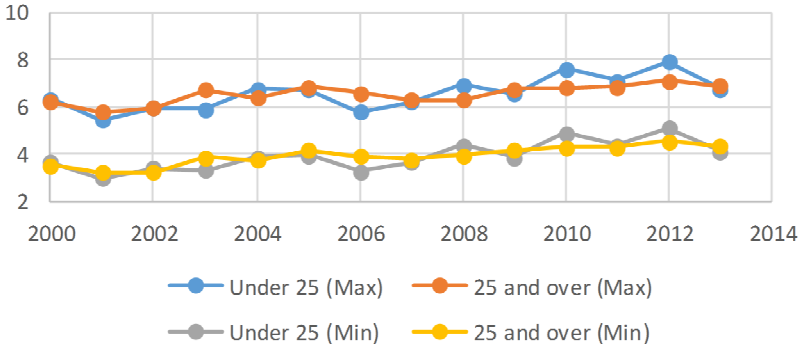


**Mean Days from Sentence Begin Date to Parole Eligibility Date**





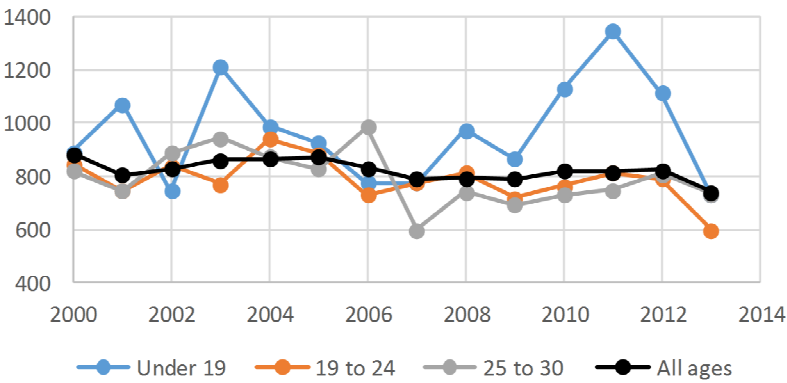
### Mean Minimum and Maximum Sentence Terms (in Years, Capped at 75, Excludes Death)



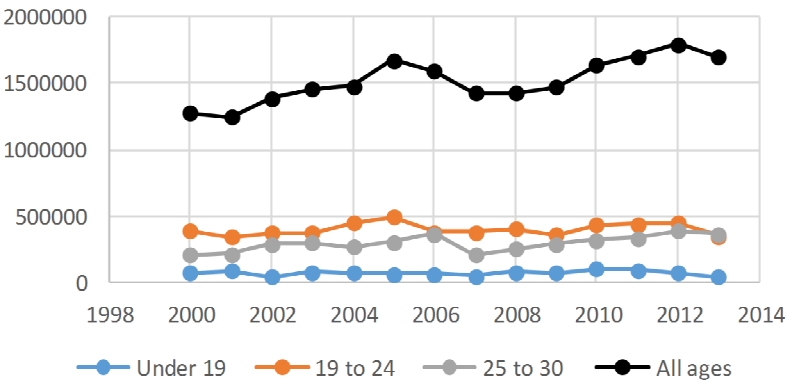
**NOTES:** *Parole eligibility date* refers to the earliest date that an inmate can be discretionarily released to community supervision (parole) and essentially reflects an inmate's potential minimum time served. *Earliest possible release date* refers to the earliest date that an inmate can be mandatorily released from incarceration with good time and essentially reflects an inmate's potential maximum time served.

AVERAGE SENTENCE LENGTHS

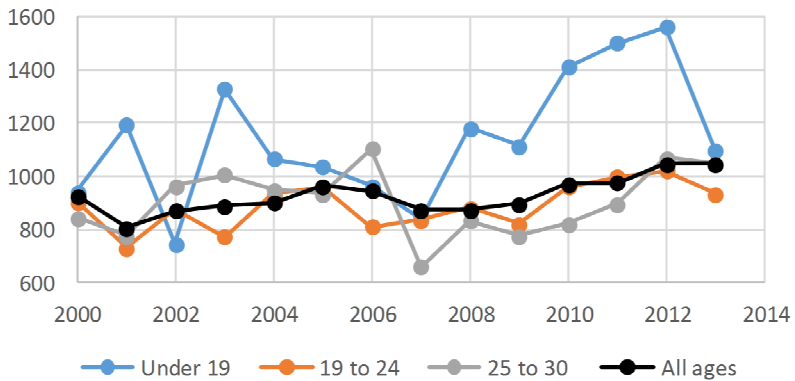
Average Days Sentenced per Admit (Sentence Start to Release Date or Parole Eligibility)



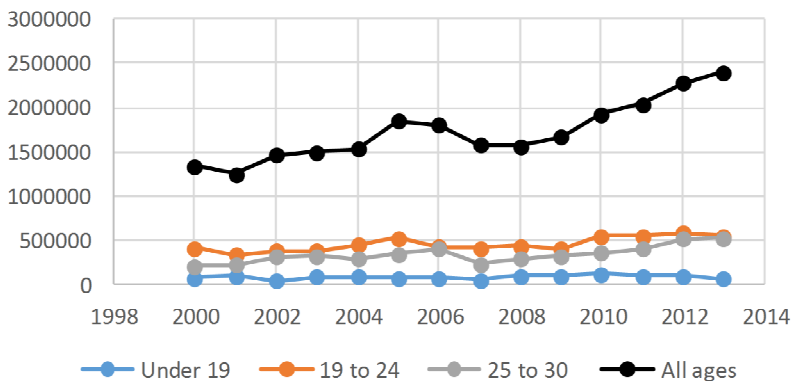
Total Days Sentenced for All Admits (Sentence Start to Release Date or Parole Eligibility)



**Average Days Sentenced per Admit (Sentence Start to Release Date or Earliest Release)**

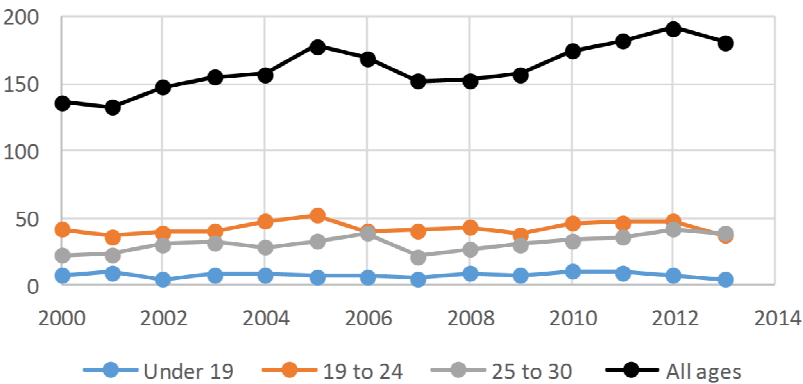


**Total Days Sentenced for All Admits (Sentence Start to Release Date or Earliest Release)**

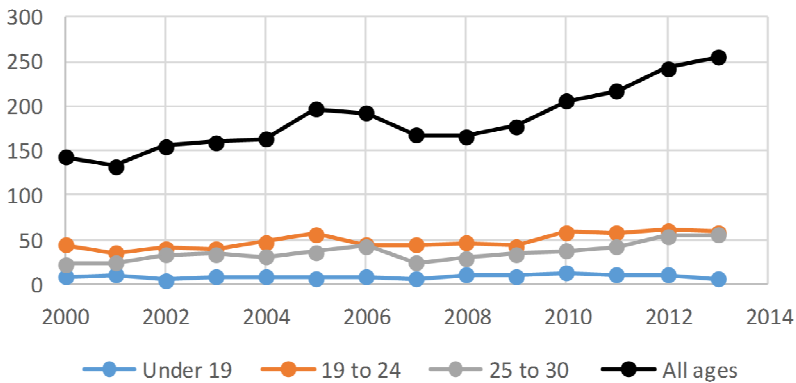


# ESTIMATED INCARCERATION COSTS

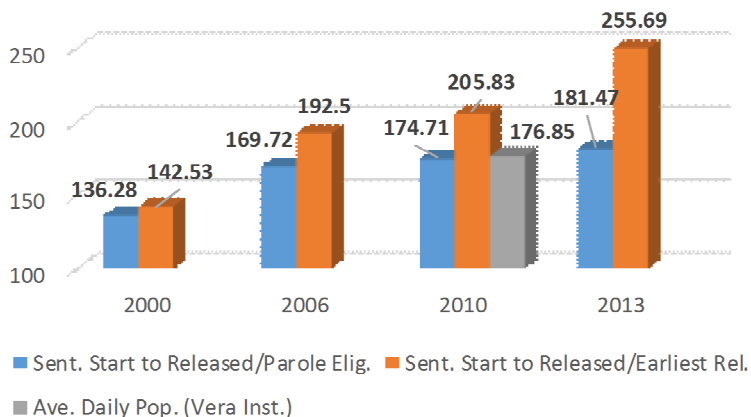
Estimated Costs in Millions USD (Sentence Start to Release Date or Parole Eligibility)



Estimated Costs in Millions USD (Sentence Start to Release Date or Earliest Release)



## Estimated Incarceration Costs in Millions USD



**NOTES:** Estimated costs calculated using \$106.66 average daily cost per inmate multiplied by the total projected number of institutional days served for all admits in a given year.<sup>1</sup> Daily cost per inmate estimate is derived from Vera Institute's 2010 "The Price of Prisons in Nebraska" report, adjusted for inflation to 2014 dollars. Vera Institute's report is available at the following website: [www.vera.org/files/price-of-prisons-nebraska-fact-sheet.pdf](http://www.vera.org/files/price-of-prisons-nebraska-fact-sheet.pdf)

<sup>1</sup>*Sentence start to release date* is used as a proxy for projected institutional days served. *Release date* allows for the calculation of the actual time served under NDCS supervision (including both institutional and community time) between the inmate's admission date and most recent institutional release date. Although *release date* is an imperfect proxy for "institutional time served" (e.g., it overestimates for released inmates who spent a portion of their time on prior parole terms and underestimates for currently incarcerated inmates with prior parole terms that were revoked), it provides a more realistic estimate of institutional time served than available alternatives that measure potential minimum and maximum institutional time served. Cost estimate trends using these alternative measures produce similar conclusions. For inmates without a release date (e.g., those not yet discharged or paroled for the current sentence), *earliest possible release date* and *parole eligibility date* are used to estimate the projected time served for currently incarcerated admits. *Parole eligibility date* refers to the earliest date that an inmate can be discretionarily released to community supervision (parole) and essentially reflects an inmate's potential minimum time served. *Earliest possible release date* refers to the earliest date that an inmate can be mandatorily released from incarceration with good time and essentially reflects an inmate's potential maximum time served.



