

# Bernalillo County Metropolitan Detention Center:

## Analysis of the Jail Population, June 30, 2025

### Prepared By:

Elise M. Ferguson, M.A.  
Daniel Goldberg, M.S.

### Prepared For:

Bernalillo County Criminal Justice  
Coordinating Council (CJCC)

August 2025

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	2
Population and Capacity .....	2
Incarceration Rate .....	3
Turnover .....	4
Demographics .....	4
Gender .....	4
Race/Ethnicity .....	4
Age Group .....	5
Highest Charge and Sentencing Status .....	5
Highest Charge .....	5
Sentenced and Unsented Inmates .....	6
Confined Length of Stay .....	8
Unsented Inmates and Jail Bloating .....	8
Public Safety Assessment Recommendations .....	9
Preventive Detention Holds .....	10
Conclusion .....	11
References .....	12

## Introduction

Understanding and monitoring local jail populations has become increasingly important for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers seeking to promote both public safety and the efficiency of the justice system. Unlike prisons, which house individuals serving longer sentences after conviction, jails function as complex intake and holding facilities where individuals await trial, serve short sentences, or transition between different points in the criminal justice system (Subramanian et al., 2020). Previous studies suggest that jail populations are influenced by a complex interplay of factors that extend beyond simple crime rates, including prosecutorial charging decisions, judicial bail-setting practices, the availability and use of pretrial services, court processing speeds, and the prevalence of mental health and substance use issues among the arrested population (Dobbie et al., 2018; Stevenson, 2018). Additionally, broader policy changes such as bail reform initiatives, the expansion of diversion programs, and legislative modifications to sentencing structures can produce substantial shifts in who enters jails and how long they remain detained (Sawyer & Wagner, 2022). These influences, in turn, drive the composition of the jail population by their joint impact on two higher-order factors: the volume and composition of bookings, as well as the length of stay (LOS). For these reasons, it is important to conduct periodic point-in-time “snapshot” studies of jail populations to identify trends over time, see whether policy changes relate to changes in jail composition or LOS, and to validate that detention practices align with both public safety goals and constitutional protections against excessive pretrial detention.

The Center for Applied Research and Analysis (CARA) at the University of New Mexico analyzes the population of the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC) twice a year, at mid-year and year-end, using a combination of jail and court data. Among other things, these reports aim to provide snapshots of the jail population at a specific point-in-time, including demographic information, sentencing status, and charges. The data reported also includes changes in volume and composition of bookings, releases, LOS, the Public Safety Assessment (PSA), and preventive detention (PTD) holds.

In what follows, we first examine trends in the MDC’s population and capacity, including comparisons to national benchmarks for jail occupancy rates. We then explore demographic shifts in the jail population across multiple years, focusing on differences in the distribution of the jail population by gender, race/ethnicity, and age. We proceed to examine changes in the composition of charges and sentencing status, with a particular focus on the increasing proportion of felony cases compared to lower-level offenses. We explore length-of-stay patterns using confined LOS measures and assess potential indicators of jail crowding among unsentenced populations. Following this, we present findings on PSA risk assessment release recommendations and their distribution across the felony population. Finally, we examine trends in preventive detention holds and their contribution to the overall detained population.

## Population and Capacity

The MDC population has decreased since the peak of 2,628 in FY13. The population decrease occurred, in part, because of a series of policy changes and criminal justice initiatives that were implemented in Bernalillo County over the year. Additionally, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the governor of New Mexico issued a Stay-At-Home Order on March 24, 2020, and later a Shelter in Place Order beginning November 16, 2020. These orders, along with procedural and policy changes by criminal justice agencies, led to a significant decrease in the jail population during 2020 and 2021, followed by an increase in the average population by fiscal year over the past three years.

The current rated capacity<sup>1</sup> of the MDC is 2,190 beds. Operating below capacity, at about 90% or less of the rated capacity, is vital for the safe operation of a jail. During FY25, 79.3% of the rated capacity at the MDC was occupied on average, 10.7% below unsafe operation levels (see

Table 1). According to the latest report on jail inmates by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the national percentage occupied capacity for jail jurisdictions of a comparable size to the MDC at midyear 2023 was 77.0% (Zheng, 2025).

The Average Daily Population (ADP) for FY25 was 1,736, an increase of 17.9% or 264 inmates from FY24. During that same year, there were 23,061 admissions, an increase of 21.1%, or 4,013 inmates from FY24. There was also a similar increase in releases. In FY25 there were 22,905 releases, an increase of 21.2%, or 4,014 releases from FY24. The total number of both bookings and releases in FY25 was the highest it had been since FY19.

**Table 1.** *Average Daily Population, Capacity, Admissions, and Releases*

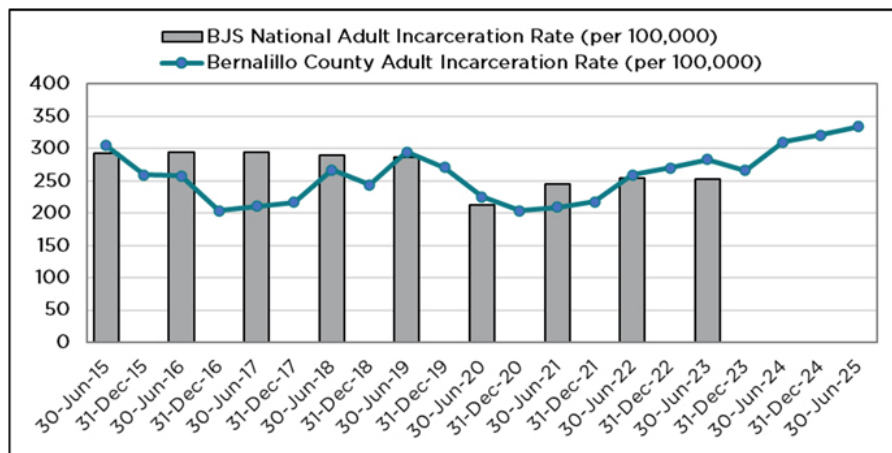
Fiscal Year	Average Daily Population <sup>1</sup>	% Capacity Occupied	Annual Admissions	Annual Releases
FY15	1,808	82.6%	26,101	26,934
FY16	1,440	65.8%	24,782	25,057
FY17	1,251	57.1%	24,481	24,745
FY18	1,207	55.1%	25,286	24,995
FY19	1,385	63.2%	24,668	24,468
FY20	1,392	63.6%	21,664	22,104
FY21	1,153	52.6%	15,737	15,863
FY22	1,221	55.8%	14,492	14,181
FY23	1,449	66.2%	16,580	16,458
FY24	1,472	67.2%	19,048	18,891
FY25	1,736	79.3%	23,061	22,905

<sup>1</sup> The Average Daily Population is the sum of all inmates in jail each day for 1 year, divided by the number of days in the year. These figures are updated to reflect corrections as needed.

## Incarceration Rate

Figure 1 shows the adult incarceration rate per 100,000 adults in Bernalillo County. The incarceration rate in Bernalillo County<sup>2</sup> at the end of the year 2025 was approximately 334 per 100,000 adults (see Figure 3). The most recent BJS National Adult Incarceration Rate was 253 per 100,000 was in 2023 (Zeng, 2025) and was 10.6% lower than the Bernalillo County rate of 283 per 100,000. At mid-year 2023, the incarceration rate was slightly higher (3.3%) in Bernalillo County than the national incarceration rate.

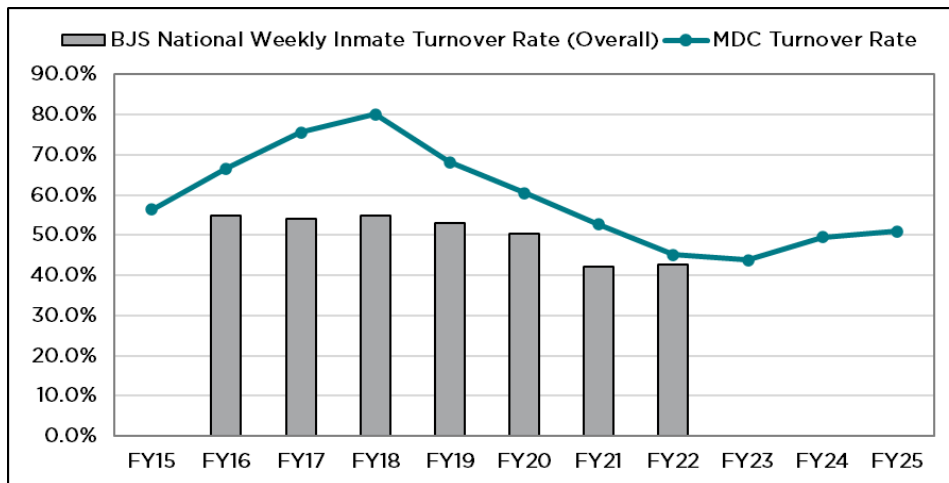
**Figure 1.** *Incarceration Rates (Adults Only, per 100,000)*



## Turnover

The jail turnover rate was calculated using admissions, releases, and the average daily population using the same formula as the Bureau of Justice Statistics. The turnover rate at the MDC has consistently exceeded the national rate, though in FY22 the rates were similar (42.6% nationally and 45.2% at the MDC) (see Figure 2). The turnover rate does not differentiate between first-time arrivals and repeat offenders and is not a measure of recidivism. The national turnover rates after FY22 have not been released.

Figure 2. *Turnover Rates*



## Demographics

### Gender

The proportion of the jail population comprised of males has historically been far greater than that of the female population (see Table 2). At mid-year 2015, males accounted for 79.7% of the MDC population, with the female population accounting for 20.3%. At the end of FY25, male inmates comprised approximately 81.3% of the MDC population, and female inmates comprised approximately 18.8% of the MDC population<sup>3</sup>. The percentage of male inmates in the MDC is slightly lower than the national jail average in 2023, which was 86.0% (Zeng, 2025).

### Race/Ethnicity

Across all snapshot dates from mid-2015 to mid-2025, approximately half of the inmate population (48.6% to 53.9%) was Hispanic (see Table 2)<sup>4</sup>. White inmates accounted for between 26.0% to 31.2% of the MDC population. Native American inmates accounted for between 6.6% and 10.0% of the MDC population, and Black inmates accounted for between 7.9% and 10.5% of the MDC population.

At mid-year 2025, Hispanic inmates accounted for 49.2% of the inmate population, the lowest percentage it has been at during the last decade. White inmates accounted for 26.0% of the population and Black inmates accounted for 9.3% of the population. Native American inmates accounted for 7.5%, Black inmates accounted for 9.3%, and Other/Unknown was 8.1% of the population, respectively. The most notable change in category from FY24 to FY25 is in the Other/Unknown racial category, where there was a 90.7% increase in the proportion of MDC inmates with other or unknown racial identification. Over a ten-year period, the Other/Unknown racial category has increased 346.9%. This may be due to changes in data collection at the jail, a shift in categories that would count as Other/Unknown, or a combination of these and other factors.

## Age Group

Table 2 reports the age of inmates in custody at the MDC. The composition of inmates has shifted over the last nine years, with a decrease in younger inmates in custody, particularly 18- to 24-year-olds, with a decrease of 37.8% since FY15. Increases over the last ten years in every other age category, most notably in the 35- to 40-year-olds (77.0%), 55- to 64-year-olds (29.0%), and inmates 65 and older (40.0%).

**Table 2. Demographics at End of Fiscal Year**

Demographic Characteristic	FY15	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Percent Change FY15 - FY25	Percent Change FY24 - FY25
<b>Total</b>	1,584	1,192	1,102	1,386	1,511	1,666	1,776	12.1%	6.6%
<b>Sex</b>									
Male	1,262	1,011	939	1,148	1,276	1,362	1,443	14.3%	5.9%
Female	322	181	163	238	235	304	333	3.4%	9.5%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>									
Hispanic	812	635	584	718	756	865	873	7.5%	0.9%
White	458	349	307	399	447	468	461	0.7%	-1.5%
Native American	141	85	93	106	102	119	134	-5.0%	12.6%
Black	141	103	102	132	158	139	165	17.0%	18.7%
Other/Unknown	32	20	16	31	48	75	143	346.9%	90.7%
<b>Age</b>									
18 to 24	336	193	167	205	202	210	209	-37.8%	-0.5%
25 to 34	607	481	473	570	572	628	627	3.3%	-0.2%
35 to 44	339	338	296	401	485	512	600	77.0%	17.2%
45 to 54	225	123	116	139	165	216	239	6.2%	10.6%
55 to 64	62	46	42	60	73	75	80	29.0%	6.7%
65+	15	11	8	11	14	25	21	40.0%	-16.0%

## Highest Charge and Sentencing Status

### Highest Charge

Of the 1,178 inmates with at least one felony charge at the end of FY25, 25.7% had a fourth-degree felony<sup>5</sup> as the highest charge. There were 17.4% of inmates who had a third-degree felony as the highest charge (see Table 4). An additional 11.8% of inmates had a second-degree felony as the highest charge and 21.5% of inmates had a first-degree felony. Felonies have decreased slightly as a percentage of total charges, as well as an increase in the total number of bookings by highest charge in each felony degree level, except for third-degree felonies. This is another indication of the shift in the jail population, with a larger share of inmates with higher level charges compared to lower-level charges (e.g., misdemeanor, petty misdemeanor, probation violation, etc.) as a general trend. Third-degree felonies had the largest increase year over year as a percentage change, whereas second-degree felonies had the largest decrease year over year. As a total number of arrests, third-degree felonies also had the largest increase, with an 18.4% increase year over year. Over a ten-year period, third-degree felonies have nearly doubled (94.3%). The largest drop in both the total number of offenses and the largest decrease in percentage change occurred in the second-degree felony category.

**Table 3.** *In Custody by Highest Felony Charge at End of Fiscal Year*

Collapsed Charge	FY15	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Percent Change FY15 - FY25	Percent Change FY24 - FY25
F1	149	89	113	161	192	175	203	36.2%	16.0%
F2	156	159	144	211	214	233	210	34.6%	-9.9%
F3	159	219	232	294	252	261	309	94.3%	18.4%
F4	274	355	303	389	461	491	456	66.4%	-7.1%
% F1	9.4%	7.5%	10.3%	11.6%	12.7%	10.5%	11.4%	21.5%	8.8%
% F2	9.8%	13.3%	13.1%	15.2%	14.2%	14.0%	11.8%	20.1%	-15.5%
% F3	10.0%	18.4%	21.1%	21.2%	16.7%	15.7%	17.4%	73.3%	11.1%
% F4	17.3%	29.8%	27.5%	28.1%	30.5%	29.5%	25.7%	48.4%	-12.9%

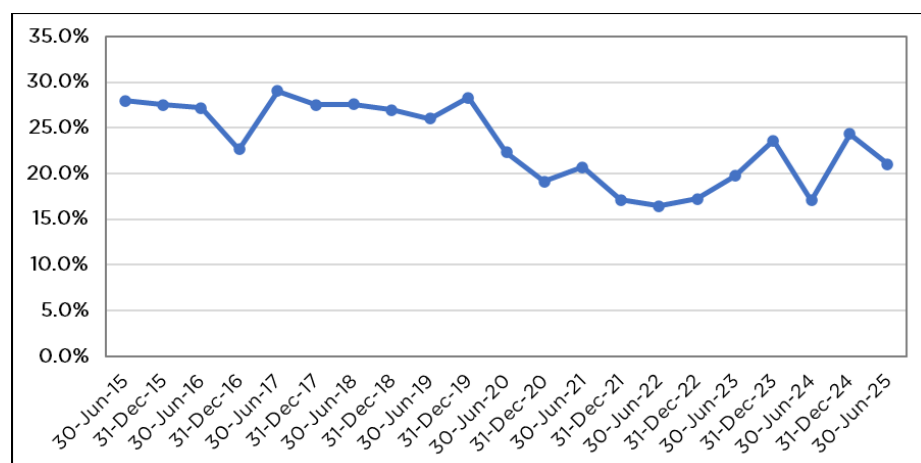
For the inmates in custody at MDC on the snapshot dates, we assigned the highest charge based on charges for which the individual was in custody. Over time, the composition of the jail by highest charge has shifted, with larger proportions of inmates in custody on felony charges and a decrease in misdemeanors, petty misdemeanors, and felony probation violations (see Table 4). As of June 30, 2025, 66.3% of the 1,776 inmates in custody had at least one felony charge, a slight increase (1.6%) from FY24 and a significant increase from FY15 (59.6%). Misdemeanor and petty misdemeanor offenses increased during FY24 (to 6.2%) and FY25 (to 7.2%), although there was an overall decrease of 56.5% in the last decade. The number of inmates with a felony PV as the highest charge increased 3.5% from FY25 but decreased 20.3% since FY15. The jail is increasingly comprised of more serious offenders.

**Table 4.** *Collapsed Charge Level at End of Fiscal Year*

Collapsed Charge	FY15	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Percent Change FY15 - FY25	Percent Change FY24 - FY25
Total Felonies	738	822	792	1,055	1,119	1,160	1,178	59.6%	1.6%
Misdemeanor or Petty Misdemeanor	292	65	65	74	59	104	127	-56.5%	22.1%
Felony Probation Violation	483	243	178	215	284	372	385	-20.3%	3.5%
Other Charges	71	62	67	42	49	30	86	21.1%	186.7%
% Total Felonies	46.6%	69.0%	71.9%	76.1%	74.1%	69.6%	66.3%	42.4%	-4.7%
% Misdemeanor or Petty Misdemeanor	18.4%	5.5%	5.9%	5.3%	3.9%	6.2%	7.2%	-61.2%	14.6%
% Felony Probation Violation	30.5%	20.4%	16.2%	15.5%	18.8%	22.3%	21.7%	-28.9%	-2.9%
% Other Charges	4.5%	5.2%	6.1%	3.0%	3.2%	1.8%	4.8%	8.0%	168.9%

### Sentenced and Unsented Inmates

Sentencing information was collected for all cases for which inmates were in custody on the snapshot dates<sup>6</sup>. Inmates were considered partially sentenced if they were sentenced on at least one case. As of June 30, 2025, approximately 373 (21.0%) of the 1,776 inmates in custody had been sentenced on one or more cases (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3.** *Percent of Inmates Serving a Sentence on One or More Cases*

The three largest charge groups that typically make up the MDC population were inmates with a felony, a felony probation violation, and/or misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors. The percentage of unsentenced felony bookings remained stable over time, fluctuating between 82.0% and 89.6% (see Table 5). The percentage of unsentenced felony bookings from June 30, 2024, to June 30, 2025, remained the same, with 1,035 inmates in both years. As a percentage of the total population, unsentenced felony bookings decreased slightly by 1.5%. While unsentenced misdemeanor and petty misdemeanor bookings decreased slightly (1.5%) from mid-year 2024 to mid-year 2025, the portion of inmates in this category is comparable to previous dates. There was a 20.2% increase in unsentenced misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors from FY24 to FY25. While this may seem high, this change still represents a 52.7% change from FY15 to FY25. As a percentage of total bookings, unsentenced felony probation violations decreased 19.5%.

**Table 5.** *Percent of Bookings by Highest Charge at End of Fiscal Year*

Collapsed Charge	FY15	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Percent Change FY15 - FY25	Percent Change FY24 - FY25
Unsentenced Felony Bookings	635	689	671	945	974	1,035	1,035	63.0%	0.0%
Unsentenced Misdemeanor and Petty Misdemeanor Bookings	226	48	45	56	42	89	107	-52.7%	20.2%
Unsentenced Felony Probation Violation Bookings	218	136	108	121	159	234	195	-10.6%	-16.7%
% Unsentenced Felony Bookings	86.0%	83.8%	84.7%	89.6%	87.0%	89.2%	87.9%	2.1%	-1.5%
% Unsentenced Misdemeanor and Petty Misdemeanor Bookings	77.4%	73.8%	69.2%	75.7%	71.2%	85.6%	84.3%	8.9%	-1.5%
% Unsentenced Felony Probation Violation Bookings	45.1%	56.0%	60.7%	56.3%	56.0%	62.9%	50.6%	12.2%	-19.5%



### Confined Length of Stay

Confined Length of Stay (CLOS) represents a point-in-time measure that captures how long inmates housed at the MDC were in custody at the end of the last day of the fiscal year. This is a useful measure of how long the inmates were in custody on a specific date. We calculate this metric by determining the number of days between each inmate's admission date and the census date, which differs from other LOS measures that track the total duration from admission to release. This approach provides a cross-sectional view of detention durations for the existing population rather than tracking complete stays from intake to discharge. The confined LOS metric tends to over-represent longer stays because inmates with extended detentions are more likely to remain in custody at the time of the annual census, while those with brief stays may have already been released. This measurement offers valuable insight into the composition of the facility's population at a given moment, though it may not fully reflect the experiences of all individuals who pass through the facility during the year.

Per Table 6, the largest category for most fiscal years was 11-30 days. The 11 to 30-day category had the largest decrease from FY15 to FY25, dropping 20.9% in ten fiscal years. The smallest category was less than one day. From FY24 to FY25, there was a 131.0% increase in inmates in custody less than one day.

**Table 6.** *Confined LOS at End of Fiscal Year*

Collapsed Charge	FY15	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Percent Change FY15 - FY25	Percent Change FY24 - FY25
Total	1,584	1,192	1,102	1,386	1,511	1,666	1,776	12.1%	6.6%
Less Than 1 Day	59	22	38	47	40	29	67	13.6%	131.0%
1 to 3 Days	122	55	58	85	96	148	125	2.5%	-15.5%
4 to 10 Days	210	86	93	106	121	190	182	-13.3%	-4.2%
11 to 30 Days	358	183	146	190	224	274	283	-20.9%	3.3%
31 to 60 Days	270	174	129	170	194	221	250	-7.4%	13.1%
61 to 120 Days	251	176	151	217	239	296	318	26.7%	7.4%
121 to 180 Days	108	164	104	128	174	178	177	63.9%	-0.6%
181 to 364 Days	113	247	234	270	202	187	224	98.2%	19.8%
365+ Days	93	85	149	173	221	143	150	61.3%	4.9%
% Less Than 1 Day	3.7%	1.8%	3.4%	3.4%	2.6%	1.7%	3.8%	1.3%	116.7%
% 1 to 3 Days	7.7%	4.6%	5.3%	6.1%	6.4%	8.9%	7.0%	-8.6%	-20.8%
% 4 to 10 Days	13.3%	7.2%	8.4%	7.6%	8.0%	11.4%	10.2%	-22.7%	-10.1%
% 11 to 30 Days	22.6%	15.4%	13.2%	13.7%	14.8%	16.4%	15.9%	-29.5%	-3.1%
% 31 to 60 Days	17.0%	14.6%	11.7%	12.3%	12.8%	13.3%	14.1%	-17.4%	6.1%
% 61 to 120 Days	15.8%	14.8%	13.7%	15.7%	15.8%	17.8%	17.9%	13.0%	0.8%
% 121 to 180 Days	6.8%	13.8%	9.4%	9.2%	11.5%	10.7%	10.0%	46.2%	-6.7%
% 181 to 364 Days	7.1%	20.7%	21.2%	19.5%	13.4%	11.2%	12.6%	76.8%	12.4%
% 365+ Days	5.9%	7.1%	13.5%	12.5%	14.6%	8.6%	8.4%	43.9%	-1.6%

### Unsentenced Inmates and Jail Bloating

While the MDC population has decreased significantly in recent years, the proportion of unsentenced inmates is a potential indicator of a condition called jail bloating. Allen Beck (2001) describes jail bloating as a condition that increases the jail population via causes other than crime and sentencing laws (p. 1). This can be caused in part by inefficiencies in the local criminal justice system (Beck, 2001, p. 1). During 2020 and 2021, inefficiencies were likely due at least in part to adjustments made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as courts adjusting court hearing procedures or jails having to adjust how inmates are transported. These delays, in addition to other inefficiencies, can contribute to an inflated jail population.

Beginning February 2, 2015, a new CMO<sup>7</sup> was instituted in Bernalillo County, which provided rules and time limits on criminal cases in the Bernalillo County Second Judicial District Court. Depending on the complexity of the case, one of three tracks were assigned, each with a different timeline for the commencement of trial from a triggering event, such as the arraignment, with a timeline of 180 days, 270 days, or 365 days. The CMO timelines were suspended for a time during the COVID-19 pandemic and were reinstated as of September 12, 2022.

Table 6 shows the confined LOS by the highest charge. As expected, the time spent in custody as of June 30, 2025, increased with the severity of the charge. At the end of FY25, inmates with a fourth-degree felony were in custody for an average of 72.9 days, and those with a third-degree felony were in custody for 147.0 days. Inmates with a second-degree felony were in custody for 208.6 days, and those with a first-degree felony were in custody on average for nearly a year (334.2 days). Inmates with a misdemeanor or petty misdemeanor were in custody for approximately a month by the end of FY25 (24.5 days and 30.6 days, respectively). Felony PV inmates were incarcerated for an average of 81.3 days, whereas misdemeanor PV inmates stayed for 44.8 days on average.

Table 6 also shows the number of inmates who were unsentenced and had a felony and were in custody for over 180 days. The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) has proposed a model time standard for case processing times, which suggests that 90% of felony cases should be resolved in 180 days (Duizend et al., 2011). Of the 1,178 inmates with a felony, 1,035 were unsentenced and 254 (24.5%) were unsentenced and in custody longer than 180 days. While there is no recommended case processing time for probation violations, if these inmates were sentenced, it would help to reduce the jail population and decrease jail bloating. There were 195 inmates with a felony probation violation that were unsentenced, and 34 of the unsentenced inmates were in custody for longer than 60 days.

**Table 7. Confined LOS Categories and Highest Charge**

	Confined LOS (All Bookings)	N	Unsentenced LOS >180 Days	Unsentenced LOS >60 Days
F1	334.2	203	111	-
F2	208.6	210	66	-
F3	147.0	309	48	-
F4	72.9	456	29	-
Misdemeanor	24.5	99	-	-
Petty Misdemeanor	30.6	28	-	-
Parole Violation	8.7	16	-	-
Felony Probation Violation	81.3	385	-	34
Misdemeanor Probation Violation	44.8	23	-	-
All Bookings	127.7	1,776	254	34

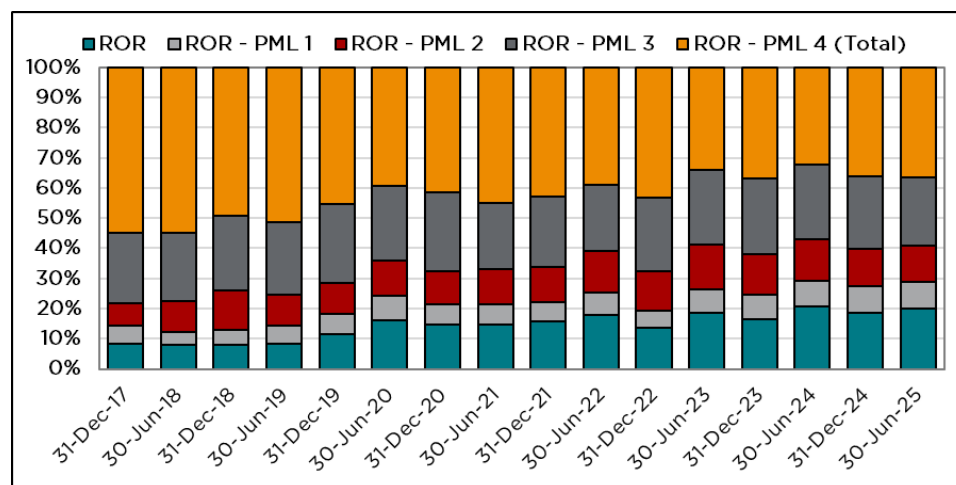
## Public Safety Assessment Recommendations

The Public Safety Assessment (PSA) was implemented in Bernalillo County in June 2017<sup>8</sup>. The PSA is a judicial decision-making tool for judges to help gauge the risk a defendant poses if they were released during pretrial, and it does not replace judicial discretion. The PSA is administered in felony cases and is primarily used for release decision-making at the Felony First Appearance (FFA) in the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court (BCMC) and at the Felony Arraignment (FA) in the Second Judicial District Court (SJDC)<sup>9</sup>. The recommended conditions of release on the PSA consist of a release on own recognizance (ROR) at the lowest risk levels or, as the risk increases, ROR with increasingly strict pretrial management levels (PML). The category of ROR - PML 4 is divided into two separate sections, one of which formerly recommended to detain if constitutional requirements were met (meaning a detention order

that must be filed by the Bernalillo County District Attorney's office) or release with maximum conditions (which was ROR - PML 4). The category was updated in April 2023 and converted to ROR - PML 4, so there are currently five total recommendation categories<sup>10</sup>.

There were 845 inmates with a PSA administered during their stay at the MDC. At the end of FY25, ROR - PML 4 accounted for 36.6% (309) of felons. ROR - PML 3 recommendations accounted for 22.6% (191) of felons and ROR - PML 2 accounted for an additional 12.0% (101) of felons. While ROR - PML 1 was the smallest category (8.9% or 75), ROR recommendations accounted for one in five felons (20.0% or 169). These proportions have been consistent for years, though during the initial implementation of the PSA there were fewer ROR recommendations and more ROR - PML 4.

**Figure 4.** *Percent PSA Recommendations for Felons by Date*

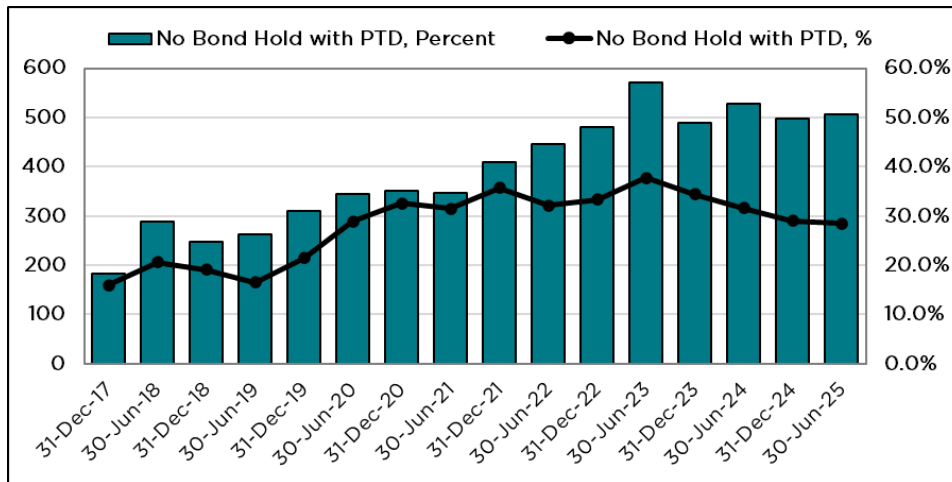


## Preventive Detention Holds

Bernalillo County implemented preventive detention in January 2017, which allows the District Attorney's Office to file a motion for preventive detention during the inmate's pretrial period. Case data was reviewed to determine the number of unsentenced inmates with a motion for preventive detention (PTD) that was either granted or pending, as well as those with a no-bond hold, while excluding inmates serving a sentence.

The percentage of the MDC population with a no-bond hold and a pending or granted PTD motion has ranged from 16.0% to 33.4% of the population (see Figure 5). As of June 30, 2025, there were 506 individuals with a no-bond hold in PTD, accounting for 28.5% of the total MDC population. This represents a decrease in both the number and the percentage of inmates in this category from FY23.

Figure 5. *Preventive Detention Motions and No Bond Holds by Date*



## Conclusion

The MDC has consistently operated below capacity for over ten years, though the population has been increasing in the last several years. While there were significant decreases in bookings and releases in 2020 and 2021, due in part to circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, both bookings and releases have increased over the last three years. Recidivism has increased slightly, which is likely due at least in part to policy changes related to booking low-level offenders. There have been minor changes in the composition of the population by gender, race, and age.

The percentage of inmates serving a sentence on one or more cases decreased from 83.0% on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, by 4.0% to 79.0%. The composition of the population by charge has also changed over the last seven years, with a notable increase in the proportion of the population with a felony, a decrease in the proportion of inmates with a misdemeanor or petty misdemeanor, and a decrease in the proportion of inmates with a felony probation violation. At the end of FY25, the MDC population was comprised primarily of felons (66.3%), a small proportion of misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors (7.2%), and felony probation violators (21.7%).

The change in the composition of MDC inmates can affect the ALOS and may also indicate changes in the types of inmates being booked as well as shifts in how release decision-making occurs. Part of this may be due to the implementation of the PSA as well as the implementation of preventive detention. The MDC population has decreased, and continued population management strategies have helped adjust the facility's population to operate more safely and within capacity, housing more serious offenders than in years past. The facility continues to operate well below its rated capacity.

## References

Beck, A. R. (2001). Jail bloating: A common but unnecessary cause of jail overcrowding. Justice Concepts Incorporated.

Dobbie, W., Goldin, J., & Yang, C. S. (2018). The effects of pretrial detention on conviction, future crime, and employment: Evidence from randomly assigned judges. *American Economic Review*, 108(2), 201-240. <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.20161503>

Sawyer, W., & Wagner, P. (2022). *Mass incarceration: The whole pie 2022*. Prison Policy Initiative. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2022.html>

Stevenson, M. (2018). Distortion of justice: How the inability to pay bail affects case outcomes. *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization*, 34(4), 511-542. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ileo/ewy019>

Subramanian, R., Digard, L., Washington, M., & Sorage, S. (2020). *In the shadows: A review of the research on plea bargaining*. Vera Institute of Justice. <https://www.vera.org/publications/in-the-shadows-plea-bargaining>

Van Duizend, R., Steelman, D., and Suskin, L. (2011). Model Time Standards for State Trial Courts. <http://www.ncsc.org/Services-and-Experts/Technology-tools/-/media/Files/PDF/CourtMD/Model-Time-Standards-for-State-Trial-Courts.ashx>

Zeng, Z. (2025, April). Jail inmates in 2023: Statistical tables (NCJ No. 309965). U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/jail-inmates-2023-statistical-tables/web-report>

The UNM Center for Applied Research and Analysis (CARA), a research center within the Institute for Social Research (ISR), is a leading provider of program evaluation and policy research in New Mexico. ISR staff members and faculty affiliates possess expertise in various fields, including crime, policing, the court system, corrections, behavioral health and substance abuse treatment, poverty and homelessness, home visiting, economics, domestic violence, public health, and traffic safety.

For more information on the ISR, please visit <http://isr.unm.edu/> or call (505) 277-4257.




---

<sup>1</sup> The MDC was originally designed and built to hold 288 inmates. During the 1980s, the original structure was expanded to house 586 inmates. In 2000, County officials began planning and building the new MDC facility which was occupied in 2002 had had a capacity of 2,048 beds. In December 2006, 188 beds were added, increasing the rated capacity to 2,236. The current rated capacity is 2,190, largely due to changes in cell use from double occupancy to single occupancy.

<sup>2</sup> The incarceration rate was calculated using ACS 5 Year Population Estimates and the July 1, 2022, U.S. Census population estimates. United States Census Bureau. (2022). U.S. Census Bureau quick facts: Bernalillo County, New Mexico. Census.gov. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/bernalillocountynewmexico>

<sup>3</sup> The sum of the percentages is greater than 100% due to rounding.

<sup>4</sup> In data from the MDC, Hispanic is included as both a race and as an ethnicity. Racial categories were limited based on both categories. For example, an individual listed as White and Hispanic was categorized as Hispanic. Individuals listed as Mexican were collapsed into the Hispanic category.

<sup>5</sup> If a specific statute identified a charge as one of multiple degrees, the lowest degree charge was selected. For instance, by statute a kidnapping charge could be an F1 or F2, so an F2 was selected if the degree was not specified. For the highest charge, dual violators (those who violated both parole and probation) are categorized with the parole violation as the highest charge. In instances where there is a civil contempt warrant, this remains a warrant as it is difficult to ascertain what is holding an individual in custody and there is often not a precise charge that can be identified. For instances where the booking charges included a warrant, if the warrant was resolved by the snapshot date the underlying charge was used instead of the warrant. If the warrant was unresolved, then it was considered the highest charge for that case. For probation violations, regardless of whether the case was sentenced, the violation was considered the highest charge. In instances where the violation was due to a new charge, the charge on the new case for which they were in custody was considered the highest charge. For cases in the process of being bound over to the SJDC, the charge information from the processing case was used as the highest charge.

<sup>6</sup> A case was considered pending if it had not been resolved or if there was insufficient information to determine if there was a resolution. Sentencing status was assigned based on court data that indicated the inmate was serving a sentence or waiting for release to a facility that was part of the sentencing order.

<sup>7</sup> The Case Management Order is outlined in detail in New Mexico Rule LR2-400. [http://www.nmcompcomm.us/nmrules/NMRules/LR2-400\\_11-6-2014.pdf](http://www.nmcompcomm.us/nmrules/NMRules/LR2-400_11-6-2014.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> The PSA was developed by Arnold Ventures in partnership with leading criminal justice researchers. The PSA uses evidence-based, neutral information to predict the likelihood that an inmate will commit a new crime if released before trial, and to predict the likelihood that he/she will fail to return for a future court hearing.

<sup>9</sup> For some felony cases, there was either no PSA administered, or a PSA was administered as part of a previous booking. For cases in which the highest charge was a felony and a PSA was administered during the booking, the most restrictive PSA recommendation was selected.

<sup>10</sup> In part, this change was to address confusion over the category description. A motion for preventive detention can be filed on any felony case, regardless of risk level, so the former category essentially recommended the defendant for ROR-PML 4. Guidance from Arnold Ventures instructs that the PSA is intended to recommend conditions of release and not detention, so the change reduces potential confusion.