[All numbers remain outdated] By January 5, 329,298 imprisoned people had been infected by Covid-19 and, more than 2,020 had died. That means that one in every five state and federal prisoners in the United States had tested positive for Covid-19. That is more than four times as high as in the general population. Twenty-four state prison systems have had even higher rates. In some states, more than half of those imprisoned have been infected.

Nearly every prison system in the country has had infection rates significantly higher than the communities around them. In federal Bureau of Prisons facilities, one in every five prisoners has had coronavirus. There are 24 state prison systems with even higher rates.

The number of people in prisons and jails has led to more Covid-19 cases among those working or confined in them and, in addition, among those who simply live near them. The number of new Covid-19 infections over the summer of 2020 was greater in counties and multicounty areas with larger and more concentrated incarcerated populations. It has been estimated that mass incarceration led to 560,000 additional Covid-19 cases nationwide in just three months. With nearly 1,589 cases per 100,000 residents, the United States reported one of the highest infection rates in the world; only Qatar's and Chile's rates were higher.

At the county level, as the concentration of incarcerated people increases, so does the severity of the Covid-19 outbreak in nonmetro counties. Marion County Ohio is an example of such a non metro county with many incarcerated: almost 12 per square mile. There were an estimated additional 402 cases of Covid-19 per 100,000 county residents between May 1 and August 1, 2020 that were linked to mass incarceration with the county.

Early January figures follow for total cases and the rate per 10,000 imprisoned:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Total Cases</th>
<th>Per 10,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>42,066</td>
<td>2,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>41,562</td>
<td>3,533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>30,115</td>
<td>2,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>22,629</td>
<td>5,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>17,560</td>
<td>1,972</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Florida has a total of 95,000 prisoners.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Total Deaths</th>
<th>Per 10,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first reported cases were in Massachusetts and Georgia in late March. Hawaii was the last system to report cases and did so in August.

Among prison staff, 84,291 cases have been reported and 139 deaths. In several states, prison employees began to get sick before those imprisoned. In Pennsylvania, 3,078 cases have been reported among staff and three deaths. No staff figures were available from Alaska, Hawaii, Kentucky, Maryland, Montana or Utah.

South Dakota, Arkansas, and Kansas are the states with the highest Covid-19 rates in the country. Half the prisoners in Kansas, 5,100, have been infected with Covid-19. This is eight times the rate among the state's overall population.

In Arkansas, more than 9,700 prisoners have tested positive and 50 have died. Four out of every seven have had Covid-19.

Nationally, one five prison staff have gotten Covid-19. In North Dakota, it's four of every five staff.

The great disparity of racial representation in prisons compounds the disproportionate toll the pandemic has taken on people of color. Black people in the U.S. are incarcerated at five times the rate of "whites."

Resource: The Marshall Project
156 W. 56th St, Suite 701
New York NY 10019
212-803-5200

* * * BLACK LIVES MATTER * * *
JANUARY 2021 FEDERAL EXECUTIONS

January 13  Lisa Montgomery
January 14  Corey Johnson
January 16  Dustin Higgs

We mourn their loss.

There were 13 federal executions during the last president’s four years in office. That is more than in the previous 56 years.

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THE LEAST READ PART OF THE NEWSLETTER:
To receive the CP Newsletter by postal mail monthly, send us a self-addressed, stamped envelope for every month’s issue you are requesting, up to 12 at one time. Put the CPR return address in the upper left-hand corner of each envelope you send.
Continue to send us address changes to help us keep our annual calendar mailing list as accurate as possible.

NONE OF US ARE LAWYERS OR LEGAL WORKERS.
Letters to us marked “Legal Mail” can hurt our access to the prison they come from.

Many, many thanks to the Real Cost of Prisons project, which posts our Newsletter on-line monthly for free downloading and distribution. All issues since 2009 are at: realcostofprisons.org — a great site!
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Servicio de Inmigración de EE.UU. no proporcionó protecciones básicas contra el coronavirus a reclusos migrantes que temían represalias si presentaban síntomas por “Democracy Now”!

En más noticias sobre inmigración en Estados Unidos, un informe de la organización sin fines de lucro Physicians for Human Rights y de la Escuela de Medicina de la Universidad de Harvard sobre el Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas no implementó ni siguió los métodos higiénicos más básicos para prevenir la propagación del coronavirus dentro de las cárceles para inmigrantes.

El informe indica que los reclusos no tenían acceso a jabón para lavarse las manos y no podían mantener el distanciamiento social en las precarias cárceles. Si los reclusos llegaban a plantear preocupaciones de seguridad, se tomaban represalias contra ellos, según el informe. Los investigadores hablaron con 50 inmigrantes que habían estado encarcelados. Un hombre de 33 años, que estuvo detenido en el centro de detención de Otay Mesa en el estado de California, dijo: “Creo que tuve la Covid-19 porque tenía dolor en el cuerpo y me faltaba aire. Pero nunca dije nada a nadie porque temía que me fueran a castigar por eso.”

Follow the Leaders

The total U.S. prison population declined 11% from 2009 to 2019. The systems which declined included the federal and all but four states. The declines were the greatest in the following nine states:

- Alaska by 43%
- New Jersey by 41%
- New York by 40%
- Connecticut by 39%
- Alabama by 34%
- Rhode Island by 34%
- Vermont by 34%
- Hawaii by 31%
- California by 30%

For 25 states, the reduction in imprisonment was less than 10%. These four states had their highest ever prison populations in 2019: Idaho, Kansas, Montana and Nebraska.

From 1972 to 2009, the U.S. prison population increased nearly 700%. At this rate of decline, it will take 57 years (until 2078) to cut the prison population in half.

from Amanda Gorman’s poem read at Biden’s inauguration:

“The Hill We Climb”

....We braved the belly of the beast
We’ve learned that quiet isn’t always peace
And the norms and notions
of what just is
Isn’t always just-ice.
And yet the dawn is ours
before we knew it
Somehow we do it
Somehow we weathered and witnessed
a nation that isn’t broken
but simply unfinished....
While democracy can be periodically delayed,
it can never be permanently defeated....
We will not march back to what was
but move to what shall be....
If we merge mercy with might,
and might with right,
then love becomes our legacy
and change our children’s birthright.
So let us leave behind a country
better than the one we were left with....
The new dawn blooms as we free it.
For there is always light,
If only we’re brave enough to see it.
If only we’re brave enough to be it....
The new dawn blooms as we free it.