

Colorado Division of Criminal Justice Interim Prison Population and Parole Caseload Forecast June 2025

Pursuant to 24-33.5-503(1)(m), C.R.S.

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Background

The Colorado Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ), pursuant to 24-33.5-503(m), C.R.S., is mandated to prepare correctional population projections for the Legislative Council and the General Assembly. These reports are generated two times each year: each winter there is a comprehensive report of the adult prison population forecast and each summer there is an interim report to reflect recent trends in admissions and releases, new legislation, and policy changes. This interim report presents the midyear update of forecasts for the Colorado adult prison and parole populations across the upcoming seven fiscal years.

Summary

Growth in the inmate population has been stronger in the second half of FY 2025 than expected at the time of the development of the DCJ December 2024 prison population forecast.¹ While some growth had been expected between January and June 2025, the actual growth rate was almost triple that expected in December 2024. As of June 16, 2025, the total population exceeded the end-of-year forecast by 267 inmates. If the pattern of growth seen since mid-May continues, the degree of error is expected to reach 1.5% by the end of FY 2025.

This growth has been limited to the male inmate population, as there has not been an unexpectedly large increase in the size of the female inmate population. Thus, the error rate for the female population is much smaller, at 0.6%.

The overall increase is due to a rise in new court commitments in recent months, with a concurrent stabilization in parole releases. In late 2024, total releases were increasing, mainly on the part of discretionary parole releases. Admissions, on the other hand, remained very stable. With the number of releases approaching or exceeding the number of admissions, the inmate population declined very slightly (from 17,489 to 17,485).

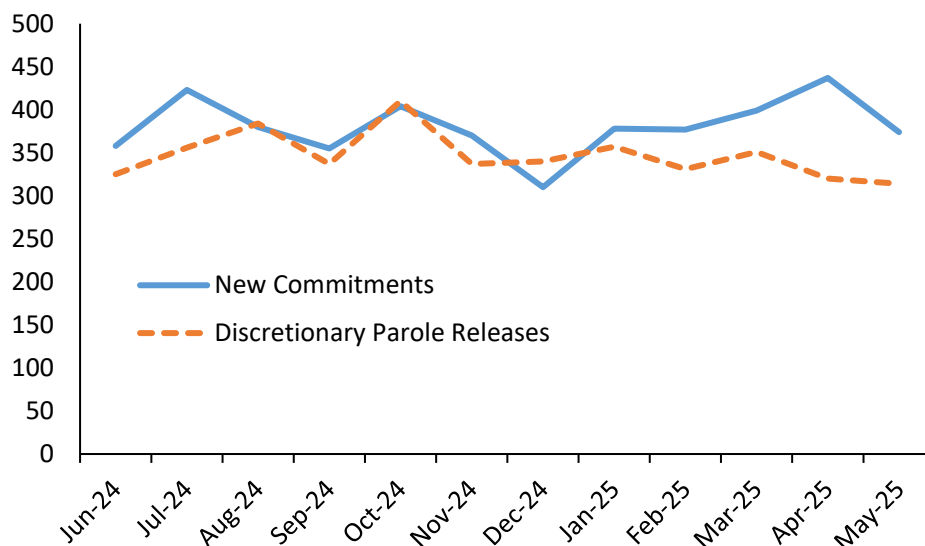
However, immediately following the release of the December 2024 forecast, new court commitments began to climb while discretionary parole releases began to decline, as shown in Figure 1 below. This pattern is reflected in the total numbers of admissions and releases. This widening of the differential between the numbers of admissions and discharges has accelerated the growth in the size of the inmate population, which is expected to continue in upcoming years.

Current Inmate Population Forecast

If the growth pattern observed in early June continues, the prison population is predicted to reach approximately 17,968 by the end of FY 2025, realizing an annual growth rate of 2.7%. The female prison population has grown more slowly to date in FY 2025 and is expected to increase 1.5%, reaching 1,527 by the end of the fiscal year.

¹ Colorado Division of Criminal Justice. (2024). Adult and Juvenile Correctional Populations Forecasts, March 2025. Available at: <https://dcj.colorado.gov/dcj-offices/ors/dashb-ics-ppp>



Figure 1. Monthly Numbers of New Court Commitments to Prison and Discretionary Parole Releases, June 2024 through May 2025

Overall, the inmate population is expected to increase 12.0% from FY 2024 through FY 2031, reaching 19,583 inmates. The male prison population is expected to reach 17,902, a 12.0% increase, while the number of women in prison is expected to increase 11.7%, reaching 1,681.

The projected total and gender-specific annual growth in the prison population for FY 2024 through FY 2031 is displayed in Table 1. Projected quarterly growth is displayed in Table 2. The projected numbers of annual prison admissions for fiscal years 2025 through 2031 are displayed in Table 3, while the current projected prison release figures are presented in Table 4.

While the gap between admissions and releases is expected to shrink over time, it is projected that the number of people coming into DOC will continue to outpace the number leaving, ensuring continued growth in the population.

Table 1. DCJ June 2025 Interim Annual Prison Population Forecast

Fiscal Year	Total Population	Annual Growth	Male	Annual Growth	Female	Annual Growth
2024*	17,489	2.6%	15,984	6.3%	1,505	4.8%
2025	17,968	2.7%	16,441	2.9%	1,527	1.5%
2026	18,288	1.8%	16,732	1.8%	1,555	1.8%
2027	18,514	1.2%	16,938	1.2%	1,577	1.4%
2028	18,772	1.4%	17,172	1.4%	1,599	1.4%
2029	19,054	1.5%	17,428	1.5%	1,625	1.6%
2030	19,327	1.4%	17,673	1.4%	1,654	1.7%
2031	19,583	1.3%	17,902	1.3%	1,681	1.7%

Note: the annual growth reflects the degree of increase or decrease from the end of the prior fiscal year

* Actual inmate population figures. Data source: [Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports](#).



Table 2. DCJ June 2025 Interim Quarterly Prison Population Forecast

Fiscal Year	End of month:	Total Population	Quarterly Change	Male Inmates	Quarterly Change	Female Inmates	Quarterly Change
2024	June 2024*	17,489	-0.1%	15,984	-0.5%	1,505	4.5%
2025	September 2024*	17,507	0.1%	16,016	0.2%	1,491	-0.9%
	December 2024*	17,485	-0.1%	15,982	-0.2%	1,503	0.8%
	March 2025*	17,687	1.2%	16,166	1.1%	1,521	1.2%
	June 2025	17,968	1.6%	16,441	1.7%	1,527	0.4%
2026	September 2025	18,021	0.3%	16,488	0.3%	1,533	0.4%
	December 2025	18,108	0.5%	16,568	0.5%	1,540	0.5%
	March 2026	18,219	0.6%	16,669	0.6%	1,550	0.6%
	June 2026	18,288	0.4%	16,732	0.4%	1,555	0.4%
2027	September 2026	18,346	0.3%	16,785	0.3%	1,560	0.3%
	December 2026	18,385	0.2%	16,821	0.2%	1,564	0.2%
	March 2027	18,464	0.4%	16,894	0.4%	1,570	0.4%
	June 2027	18,514	0.3%	16,938	0.3%	1,577	0.4%
2028	September 2027	18,577	0.3%	16,995	0.3%	1,582	0.3%
	December 2027	18,631	0.3%	17,044	0.3%	1,587	0.3%
	March 2028	18,718	0.5%	17,124	0.5%	1,594	0.5%
	June 2028	18,772	0.3%	17,172	0.3%	1,599	0.3%
2029	September 2028	18,847	0.4%	17,241	0.4%	1,606	0.4%
	December 2028	18,928	0.4%	17,315	0.4%	1,613	0.4%
	March 2029	19,010	0.4%	17,390	0.4%	1,620	0.4%
	June 2029	19,054	0.2%	17,428	0.2%	1,625	0.3%
2030	September 2029	19,134	0.4%	17,502	0.4%	1,632	0.4%
	December 2029	19,191	0.3%	17,552	0.3%	1,639	0.4%
	March 2030	19,251	0.3%	17,605	0.3%	1,645	0.4%
	June 2030	19,327	0.4%	17,673	0.4%	1,654	0.5%
2031	September 2030	19,412	0.4%	17,750	0.4%	1,662	0.5%
	December 2030	19,484	0.4%	17,815	0.4%	1,669	0.4%
	March 2031	19,537	0.3%	17,861	0.3%	1,675	0.4%
	June 2031	19,583	0.2%	17,902	0.2%	1,681	0.4%

Note: Figures reflect the end-of-quarter population. The percent change reflects the degree of increase or decrease from the end of the prior quarter.

* Actual inmate population figures. Data source: [Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports](#).



Table 3. DCJ June 2025 Interim Prison Population Forecast: Prison Admissions by Type

Fiscal Year	New Court Commitments	Technical Violation Returns	Parole Returns with a New Crime		Total Admissions
			Other		
2024*	4,748	1,090	820	15	6,663
2025	4,604	1,326	718	18	6,667
2026	4,719	1,341	699	19	6,778
2027	4,788	1,356	711	21	6,876
2028	4,844	1,396	754	20	7,015
2029	4,902	1,419	766	23	7,110
2030	4,955	1,434	774	24	7,188
2031	5,015	1,452	784	24	7,276

*Actual prison admission figures. Data source: [Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports](#).

Table 4. DCJ June 2025 Interim Prison Population Forecast: Prison Releases by Type

Fiscal Year	Mandatory Parole	Discretionary Parole	Total Parole Releases	Sentence Discharge	Other ²	Total Discharges
2024*	1,272	4,108	5,380	741	94	6,215
2025	1,005	4,173	5,178	942	71	6,191
2026	1,024	4,375	5,399	972	87	6,458
2027	1,063	4,530	5,593	967	89	6,649
2028	1,084	4,614	5,698	969	91	6,758
2029	1,096	4,664	5,760	977	92	6,828
2030	1,115	4,739	5,854	968	93	6,915
2031	1,134	4,818	5,952	974	94	7,020

*Actual prison discharge figures. Data source: [Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports](#).

¹This category includes death, releases on appeal, bond release, and court-ordered discharges.

Parole Caseload

The December 2024 domestic parole caseload forecast indicated that the caseload would remain very stable between fiscal years 2024 and 2025. However, the caseload declined 2.9% in the first 11 months of FY 2025. This is in large part due to the leveling and decline in discretionary parole releases observed between December 2024 and May 2025 (see Figure 1, above).

The domestic caseload is expected to continue to decrease, falling from 7,311 to 7,067 by the end of FY 2025, a 3.3% decline. However, a return to growth is expected across the following six years with the caseload reaching 8,225 by the end of FY 2031, a 16.4% increase.

The current parole caseload forecast is displayed in Table 5, below.



Table 5. DCJ June 2025 Interim Domestic Parole Caseload Projection

Fiscal Year	Domestic Parole Caseload	Annual Change
2024*	7,311	0.2%
2025	7,067	-3.3%
2026	7,242	2.5%
2027	7,406	2.3%
2028	7,621	2.9%
2029	7,812	2.5%
2030	8,001	2.4%
2031	8,225	2.8%

* Actual parole caseload figures. Data source: [Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports](#).

