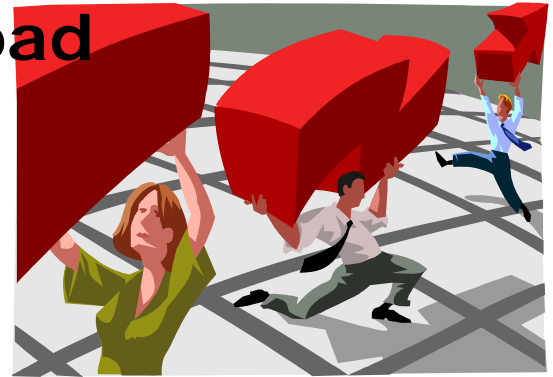


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Data Download

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A startlingly new development has occurred over the past year: The number of offenders residing in Iowa's correctional institutions has actually *dropped*. An ever increasing prison population – in 1990 the prison count stood at 3,842 offenders – reached an all-time high of 8,940 offenders on October 3, 2007, an increase of 233% over 17 years. A significant cause for the increase has been longer stays in prison, due in part to the long-term effect of restrictions on parole eligibility. Over the past nine months, however, the prison population has been declining – to 8,573 on July 15, 2008 (not including 129 jail prisoners temporarily housed at ASP and IMCC due to the flooding). This represents a decrease of 367 offenders – or 4.1% - from the October 3, 2007 high.

There are several reasons for this decline. New court commitments fell by 162 in FY 2008 compared to the previous year, and offenders expiring their sentences rose by 166 over that same time frame, a development over which DOC has had little influence. However, there were also 43 fewer probation revocations, 53 fewer parole revocations, 97 fewer work release returns, and 117 fewer violator program placements – all indications that DOC efforts, both in the institutions and districts, are having an impact on reducing recidivism and returns to prison. The reduction in probation revocations is all the more noteworthy, given the fact that the number of offenders on probation has actually *increased* over the past five years.

	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	% Change
Probation Total At-Risk	35,721	37,914	38,608	38,396	38,112	6.7%
Revoked to Prison	1,509	1,599	1,616	1,478	1,434	-5.0%
Percent Imprisoned	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	3.8%	3.8%	
Parole Total At-Risk	5,595	6,007	6,289	6,339	6,205	10.9%
Returned to Prison	791	770	882	888	835	5.6%
Percent Returned to Prison	14.1%	12.8%	14.0%	14.0%	13.5%	

The Department – districts, institutions and central office – has been working hard over the past several years to improve the quality and effectiveness of the programming it provides for offenders, utilizing evidence based practices and quality assurance as our guides. In the long-term, the prison population is expected to grow due to the accumulation of offenders serving life and "near-life" terms. Continued expansion of offender reentry efforts will play an ever-increasing role in assisting to keep prison costs down by reserving a larger portion of prison capacity for the long-term inmate.