

Office of Economic Analysis¹ – Prison Forecast Tracking Summary

December 2023

The latest forecast (October 1, 2023 release) for the adults-in-custody (AIC) population on December 1 was 12,163, a projected 23-bed decrease from the September 1, 2023 actual AIC population count. The actual number of AICs was 12,127, a 13-bed increase. Total prison counts were 36 beds below the forecast².

Table 1

Prison Forecast - Tracking for Latest Forecast									
	M-PERS	M-PROP	M-STAT	Males	F-PERS	F-PROP	F-STAT	Women	Total
September 1 Actual	8,801	1,580	868	11,249	554	236	101	891	12,140
December 1 Actual	8,790	1,564	888	11,242	554	233	98	885	12,127
December 1 Forecast	8,795	1,593	881	11,270	548	244	102	893	12,163
Actual Change	-11	-16	20	-7	0	-3	-3	-6	-13
Forecast Change	-6	13	13	21	-6	8	1	2	23
Forecast Error (count)	-5	-29	7	-28	6	-11	-4	-8	-36
Forecast Error (percent)	-0.1%	-1.8%	0.8%	-0.2%	1.1%	-4.3%	-3.7%	-0.9%	-0.3%
HB 3194/3078 Impact	-130	-116	-95	-341	-17	-27	-21	-65	-406

Forecast error varied by gender and the type of crime. The AIC forecast produced by OEA is broken down to Males and Females by crime type (Person, Property, and Statutory³).⁴

For Male-Person AICs, actual beds were five beds below the forecast. Male-Property AIC counts were 29 beds below the forecast. Male-Statutory beds were seven beds above the forecast. The total Male population was 28 beds below the forecast.

Female - Person AICs were six beds above the forecast. Female – Property AICs were 11 beds below the forecast. Female – Statutory AICs were four beds below the forecast. Total Female beds were eight beds below the forecast. (Note that subtotals may not match summary statistics due to rounding.)

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² Note that this brief documents changes in the prison counts, both projected and actual, between the last actual data on which the forecast was based and the latest prison counts available.

³ Includes Drug crimes, Weapon crimes, and felony DUII.

⁴ The forecast is further delineated by those AICs in on a new crime versus those in on a revocation.

The final row in the table above characterizes adjustments made to the baseline model outputs for legislative changes that have not been incorporated into the data. Currently, these adjustments are attributed to short-term transition leave, which never factor into the data and will always need to be incorporated as outside-the-model add factors.

Near term forecast error such as that characterized in this report boils down primarily to deviations from assumptions made about intakes in the months following the release of the forecast. The chart to the right presents the recent history of

prison intakes since the onset of the pandemic (blue bars), as well as the projection for intakes in the near future (pink bars). The gray bar indicates the pre-pandemic average. The drop in intakes during the first year and a half of the pandemic, for the most part, caused the 2,500-bed drop in the prison population. The October 2023 forecast assumed that prison intakes will return to pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2027.

The October 2023 forecast assumed that intakes would average 345 per month for the first few months of the forecast. Actual intakes have been somewhat fewer than that, explaining the majority of the December 1 forecast error.

Finally, point-in-time errors give an indication of how the forecast is tracking in real time. The recent history of the error rate also provides information about how the forecast is performing. The chart to the right presents the forecast errors since the publication of the forecast.

