



**Justice  
Reinvestment  
Initiative**  
Iowa



**Justice Center**  
THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

# Iowa's Justice Reinvestment Initiative

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First Presentation to the Oversight Committee  
February 25, 2022



# Overview

- 1 Introduction
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- 3 Iowa Criminal Justice System Trends
- 4 Current Progress and Next Steps

# Introduction

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# CSG Justice Center Staff Introductions





# Justice Center

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

We are a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that combines the power of a membership association, serving state officials in all three branches of government, with policy and research expertise to develop strategies that increase public safety and strengthen communities.

## How We Work

- We bring people together.
- We drive the criminal justice field forward with original research.
- We build momentum for policy change.
- We provide expert assistance.

## Our Goals

- Break the cycle of incarceration.
- Advance health, opportunity, and equity.
- Use data to improve safety and justice.

# The CSG Justice Center assists state and local jurisdictions on a wide range of public safety topics.



Stepping Up is a national initiative calling on counties across the country to reduce the prevalence of people with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance addictions being held in county jails.

## The Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCP)

JMHCP facilitates collaboration among the criminal justice, juvenile justice, and mental health and substance use treatment systems to better serve people with mental illnesses and to increase public safety.



IOYouth helps states align their policies, practices, and resource allocation with what research shows works to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes for youth while enhancing public safety.



# Justice Reinvestment Initiative

A data-driven approach to improve public safety, reduce corrections and related criminal justice spending, and reinvest savings in strategies that can decrease crime and reduce recidivism

The Justice Reinvestment Initiative is supported and funded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and The Pew Charitable Trusts.

# The Justice Reinvestment Initiative is a tailored approach to help states use data to address their public safety needs.

## Bipartisan and interbranch



Bipartisan leaders from all three branches of government

## Stakeholder engagement



Meetings with hundreds of criminal justice practitioners, policymakers, treatment providers, victim advocates, and formerly incarcerated people

## Independent analyses



Agency-spanning analyses of up to millions of individual case records from across the criminal justice system



# Increasing public safety is the focus of Justice Reinvestment.

**Reduce Recidivism:** People who commit crimes are held accountable, receive the intervention needed to change their behavior, and do not reoffend.

**Repair Harm:** Victims are safe, have access to help, understand how the criminal justice system works, see accountability, and heal.

**Prevent Crime:** A state utilizes policing strategies and public safety approaches to decrease crime and violence, not just reported incidents of crime.

**Build Trust:** Communities heavily impacted by crime and incarceration are supported, and any underlying conditions of distrust are directly addressed.



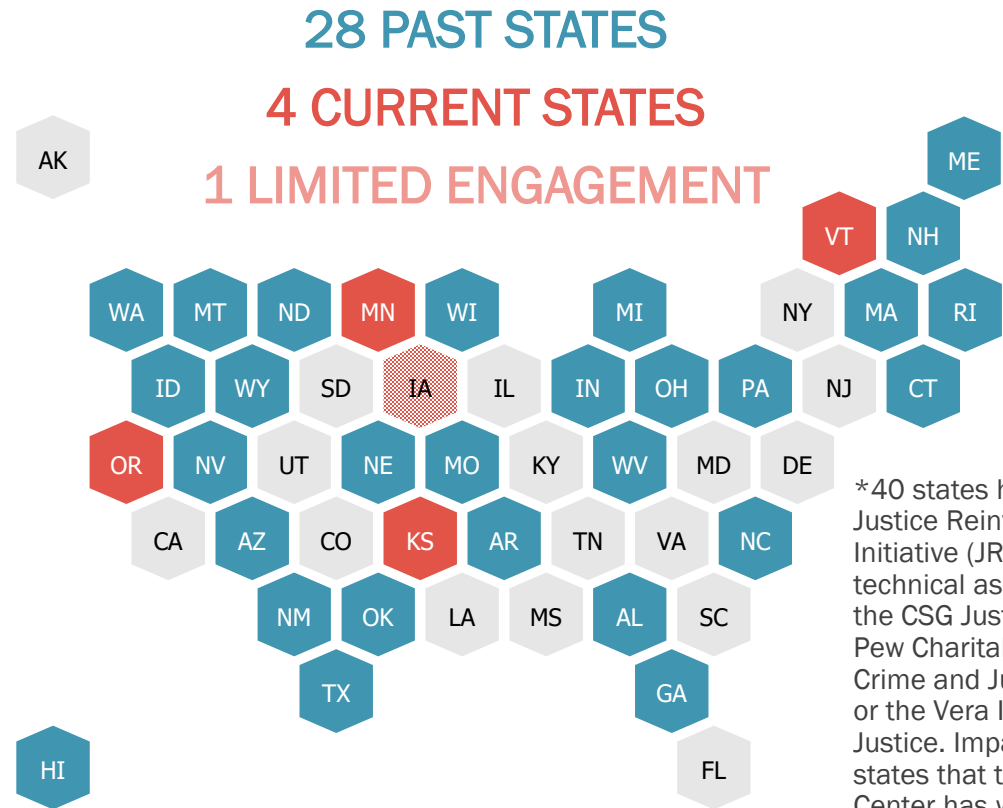
Over the past 15 years, the CSG Justice Center has helped 33 states control corrections spending and reinvest in strategies to increase public safety.

**\$3.2 billion** estimated saved or averted

Reinvested more than **\$650 million**

Averted prison population growth by over **82,000 people**

States that Have Used a Justice Reinvestment Initiative Approach with Assistance from The Council of State Governments Justice Center\*



\*40 states have pursued a Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI) approach with technical assistance from the CSG Justice Center, The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Crime and Justice Institute, or the Vera Institute of Justice. Impacts relate to states that the CSG Justice Center has worked with on JRI.

# Georgia is one of many states that used the Justice Reinvestment Initiative multiple times to address different challenges in its criminal justice system.

## 2012: Prison Population



After Georgia's prison population more than doubled between 1990 and 2011, the state enacted legislation changing sentencing practices, strengthening supervision, and improving quality and accountability of the justice system.



The prison population declined **6 percent** between 2012 and 2015, averting approximately **\$264M**.



Georgia reinvested more than **\$232M** between 2013 and 2019 in accountability courts, vocational and on-the-job training programs, Georgia Prisoner Reentry Initiative, and substance use treatment.

## 2017: Effectiveness of Probation



After Georgia's Council on Criminal Justice Reform focused on the effectiveness of probation, the state enacted legislation that includes policies to reduce lengthy probation terms and probation officer caseloads and improve responses to supervision violations.



The active felony probation population declined **12 percent** between 2016 and 2020.



Caseload sizes **declined** from 138 cases to approximately 93 cases per supervising officer from 2016 to 2020.

# Justice Reinvestment Initiative in Iowa

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# Iowa leaders are seeking answers to a critical criminal justice question.

*What were the impacts of the state's public health decisions on its criminal justice system and public safety over the past year?*

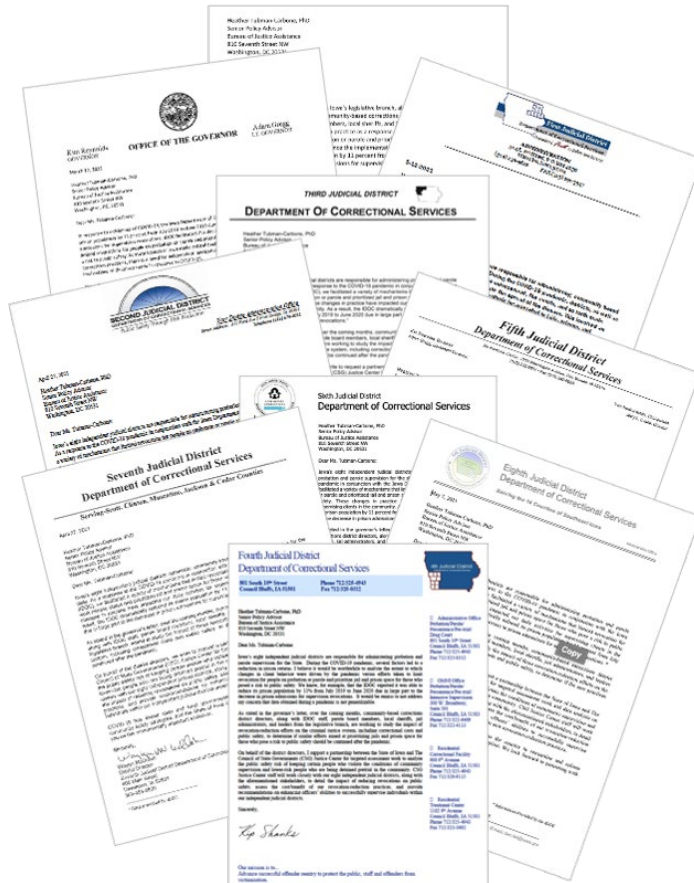


Iowa is one of the first states in the country to approach this question swiftly and comprehensively.

# Since March 2020, Iowa criminal justice stakeholders have implemented changes to maintain public health and safety.

- Increased use of telehealth
- Increased use of technology
  - Virtual contacts with clients on community-based corrections (CBC)
  - Virtual programming
  - Virtual court hearings
- Decreased rates of drug testing
- Emphasized practice of exhausting community resources before recommending revocations
- Expanded practice of reviewing recommendations for revocations

# In the spring of 2021, state leaders requested support from the BJA and Pew to utilize the Justice Reinvestment Initiative approach.



This initiative is supported by all three branches of government to study the impact of criminal justice responses on public safety during the pandemic.

- Governor Kim Reynolds
- Senator Dan Dawson
- Senator Todd Taylor
- Representative Gary Worthan
- All Eight Judicial District Directors

**As part of their request for the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, state leaders outlined specific areas of analysis to be explored through the process.**

## **Scope of Work**

- Guide a bipartisan, multi-branch oversight committee to conduct agency-spanning data analysis, review data findings and assessment results, and develop potential recommendations for improvement.
- Connect with criminal justice stakeholders to better understand larger criminal justice responses and changes implemented due to COVID-19.
- Quantify the impact on public safety of keeping clients in the community.
- Estimate the impact of reducing revocations on community supervision operations.
- Identify whether any additional resources or recommendations are needed to enhance officers' ability to successfully supervise individuals in the community.



**State and local stakeholders are participating in several engagement activities as part of the Iowa Justice Reinvestment Initiative.**

### **Data Analysis**

Examining data on supervised populations from the Iowa Department of Corrections and charges and convictions from the State Court Administrator's Office

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

Managing process and communications, ensuring inclusion of voices

### **Supervision Assessment**

Interviewing CBC staff and people on supervision

### **Criminal Justice Stakeholder Assessment**

Interviewing chiefs, sheriffs, county attorneys, judges, and victim advocates to get an understanding of larger criminal justice changes and perspectives on practices implemented by CBC

# Justice Reinvestment Initiative Oversight Committee



With the assistance of CSG Justice Center staff, the oversight committee

- Establishes a shared vision for system improvement;
- Reviews summaries of quantitative and qualitative findings; and
- Develops either administrative policy changes or policy proposals to present to the state legislature based on the project findings.

# Iowa's Justice Reinvestment Initiative Oversight Committee

- **Nick Davis**, Deputy Legal Counsel, Office of the Governor of Iowa
- **Dan Dawson**, Senator, Iowa Senate
- **Todd Taylor**, Senator, Iowa Senate
- **Gary Worthan**, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives
- **Mary Lynn Wolfe**, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives
- **Beth Skinner**, Director, Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC)
- **Sally Kreamer**, Deputy Director, IDOC
- **Sarah Fineran**, Research Director, IDOC
- **Katrina Carter**, Reentry and Treatment Services Director, IDOC
- **Jerome Greenfield**, Health Services Administrator, IDOC
- **Mary Roche**, Victim Services Director, IDOC
- **Sandi Tibbetts Murphy**, Director, Crime Victim Assistance Division, Iowa Attorney General's Office
- **Kenneth Kolthoff**, District Director, First Judicial District
- **Maureen Hansen**, District Director, Third Judicial District
- **Kip Shanks**, District Director, Fourth Judicial District
- **Waylyn McCulloh**, District Director, Seventh Judicial District
- **Steven Clarke**, Administrative Law Judge, Iowa Board of Parole
- **Christine Louis**, Administrative Law Judge, Iowa Board of Parole
- **Robert Gast**, State Court Administrator, Iowa Judicial Branch
- **Tony Thompson**, President, Iowa State Sheriffs' & Deputies' Association

# Iowa's Justice Reinvestment Oversight Committee (cont.)

- **Janet Lyness**, County Attorney, Johnson County
- **Darren Driscoll**, County Attorney, Webster County
- **Mike Wolf**, County Attorney, Clinton County
- **Jeff Wright**, State Public Defender, Iowa Office of the State Public Defender
- **Robert Rigg**, President, Iowa Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
- **Rob Burdess**, President, Iowa Police Chiefs Association
- **Jessie Goodwin**, Co-founder, Kingdom Living
- **Deb Theeler**, Executive Director, Freedom Houses Des Moines
- **Jamie Hagemeier**, Executive Director, Youth Law Center
- **DeAnn Decker**, Bureau Chief of Substance Use, Iowa Department of Public Health
- **Marissa Eyanson**, Division Administrator, Community Mental Health and Disability Services, Iowa Department of Human Services
- **Annie Uetz**, Program Planner, Polk County Health Services
- **Terri Rosonke**, Housing Programs Manager, Iowa Finance Authority
- **Peggy Huppert**, Executive Director, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Iowa
- **Leslie Carpenter**, Teacher, Trainer, Volunteer Lobbyist, NAMI Iowa
- **Betty Andrews**, President, Iowa-Nebraska National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) State Area Conferences of Branches
- **Victoria Henderson Weber**, President, NAACP Des Moines
- **Pete McRoberts**, Policy Director, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Iowa



# What are we hoping to answer?

- Did recent changes that were implemented in response to the pandemic have a positive, negative, or neutral impact on public safety and CBC operations?
- Should IDOC and CBC continue and/or enhance these new procedures to increase officers' ability to successfully supervise individuals in the community?
- Do IDOC and CBC need any specific resources or better procedures (training, technology, treatment services, etc.) to successfully supervise individuals in the community?
- To maximize potential benefits and resources, what data-driven recommendations (administrative or legislative) may be needed to improve success for clients in the community?

# Justice Reinvestment in Iowa can complement other relevant efforts in the state.

As in many states, the policy and practice landscape in Iowa is constantly evolving. Discussions with Iowa leaders and stakeholders have highlighted a number of efforts that, like Justice Reinvestment, aim to improve the criminal justice system. Some of these projects include:

- The Robina Institute Parole Conditions Project
- Justice Systems Partners Probation Conditions Pilot Project
- Iowa Restitution and Compensation Projects

# Iowa Criminal Justice System Trends

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# Criminal justice trends and data analysis activities focus on the period between July 2018 and September 2021.

Iowa's Fiscal Year (FY) Calendar – Jul. 1 to Jun. 30

- FY2019: Jul. 1, 2018–Jun. 30, 2019
- FY2020: Jul. 1, 2019–Jun. 30, 2020
- FY2021: Jul. 1, 2020–Jun. 30, 2021
- FY2022: Jul. 1, 2021–Jun. 30, 2022

Current CSG Justice Center Analysis  
focuses on FY2019 Q3–FY2021 Q4

Publicly available data up to FY2022 Q2

Iowa's Fiscal Year Quarters

- Q1: Jul. to Sep.
- Q2: Oct. to Dec.
- Q3: Jan. to Mar.
- Q4: Apr. to Jun.



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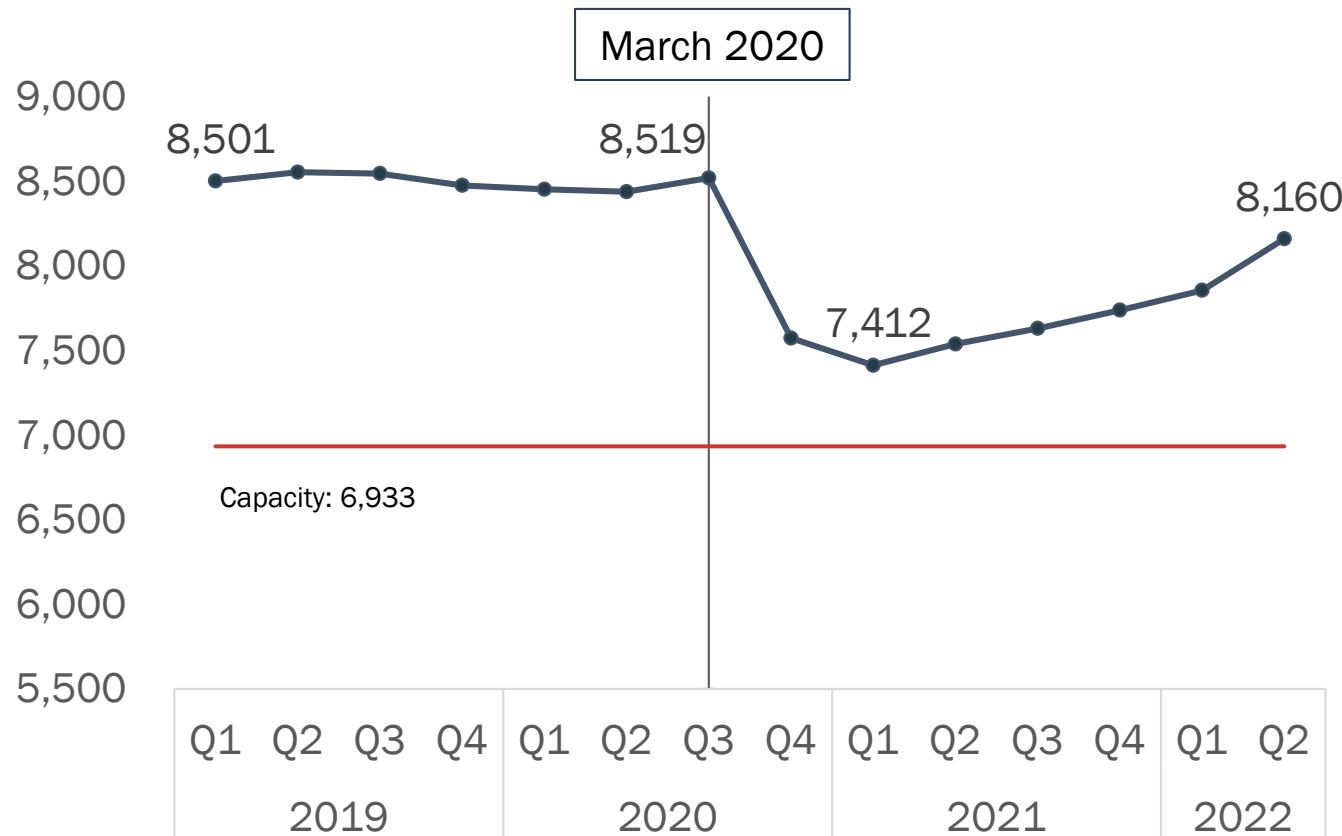
# Iowa's Prison Population

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Based on publicly available data FY2019–FY2022 Q2 (Jul. 2018–Dec. 2021)

# Efforts implemented by criminal justice stakeholders to maintain public health resulted in an initial decrease of the prison population.

## Quarterly Prison Population, FY2019-Q1–FY2022-Q2

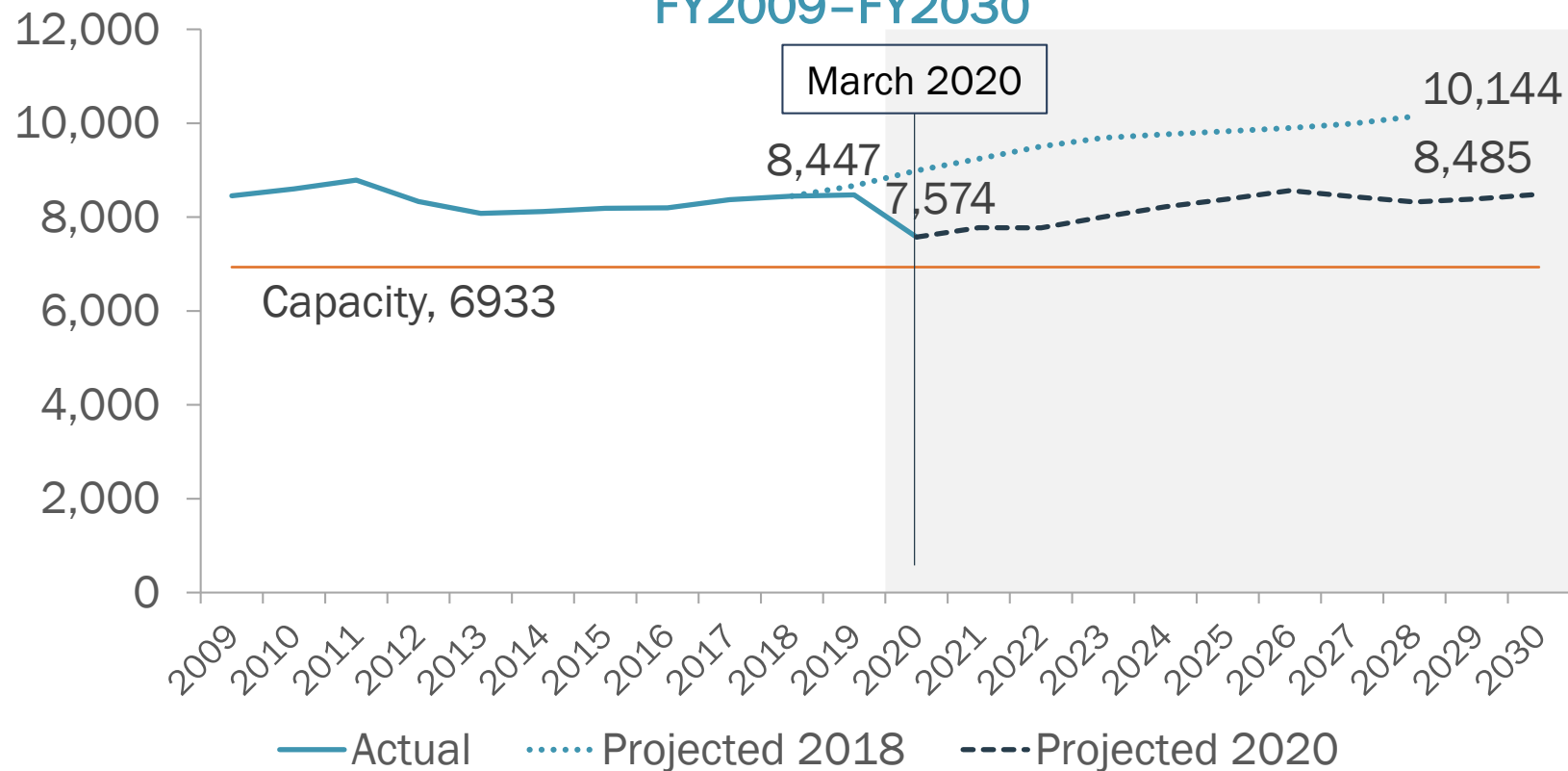


In the first 6 months after March 2020, the prison population decreased by 13 percent.

Recent prison population data show that facilities are slowly rebounding to early 2020 levels.

# Iowa prisons remain overcapacity, but criminal justice responses implemented after March 2020 lowered projected operating costs.

Iowa Actual and Projected End-of-Year Prison Population,  
FY2009–FY2030

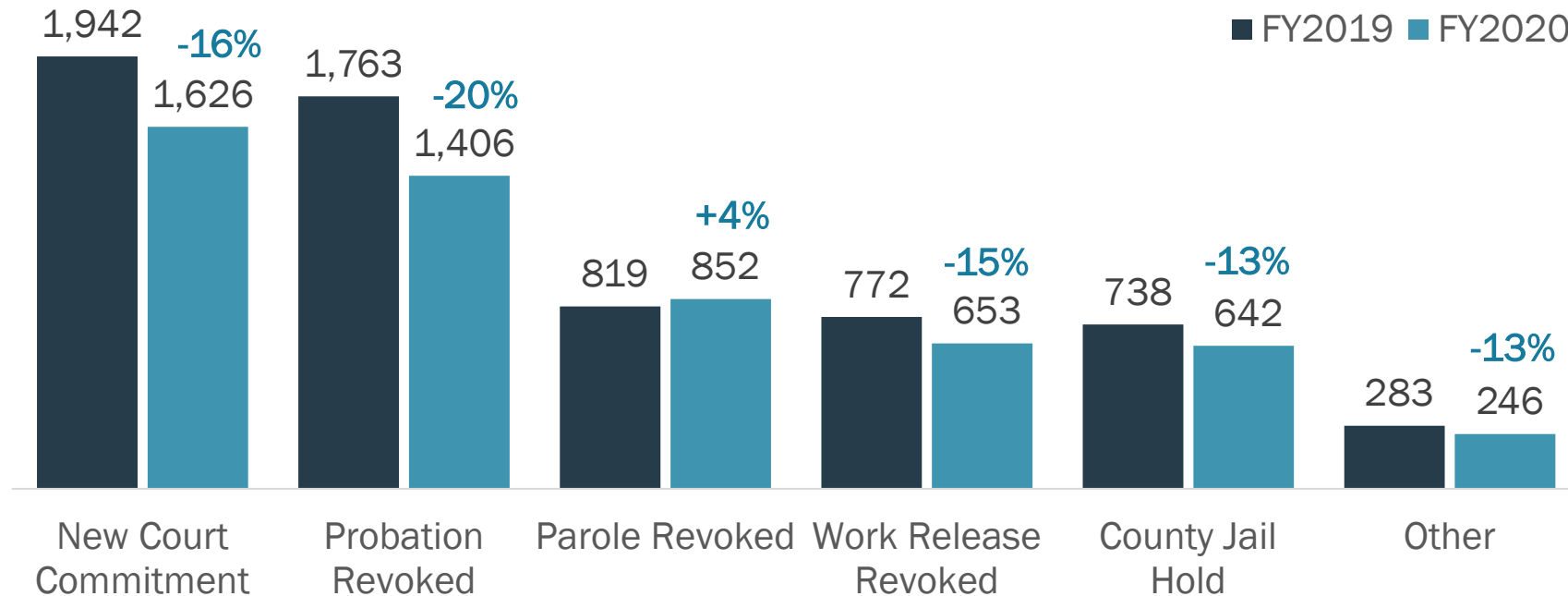


2018 population projections required a **\$370 million** increase in operating costs.

2020 population projections now require a **\$227 million** increase in operating costs.

Between FY2019 and FY2020, most admissions to prison decreased; however, admissions for parole revocations slightly increased.

### Prison Admissions by Type, FY2019–FY2020

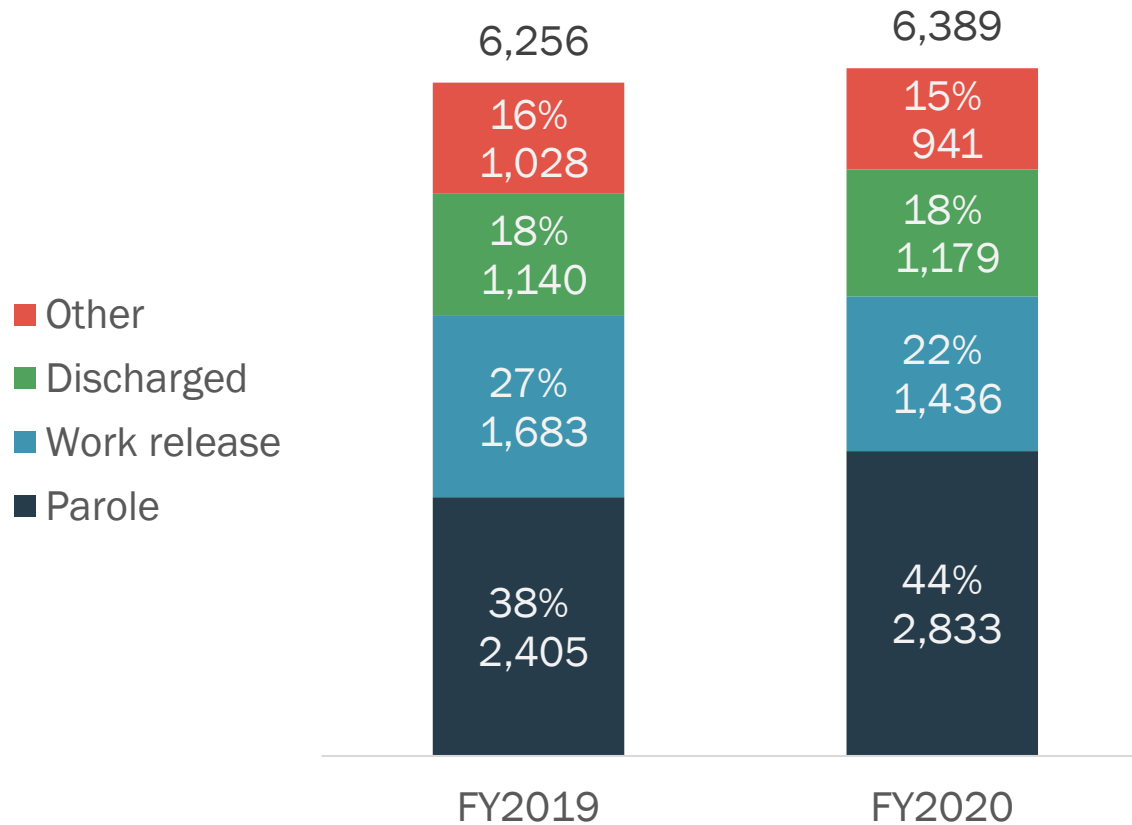


The “Other” admissions type includes other, special sentence revoked, & OWI Continuum Revoked.

Iowa Department of Corrections, *FY2019 Annual Report* (Des Moines, IA: Iowa Department of Corrections, 2019); Iowa Department of Corrections, *FY2020 Annual Report* (Des Moines, IA: Iowa Department of Corrections, 2020).

The overall number of prison releases remained steady during that time, but the number of releases to parole increased.

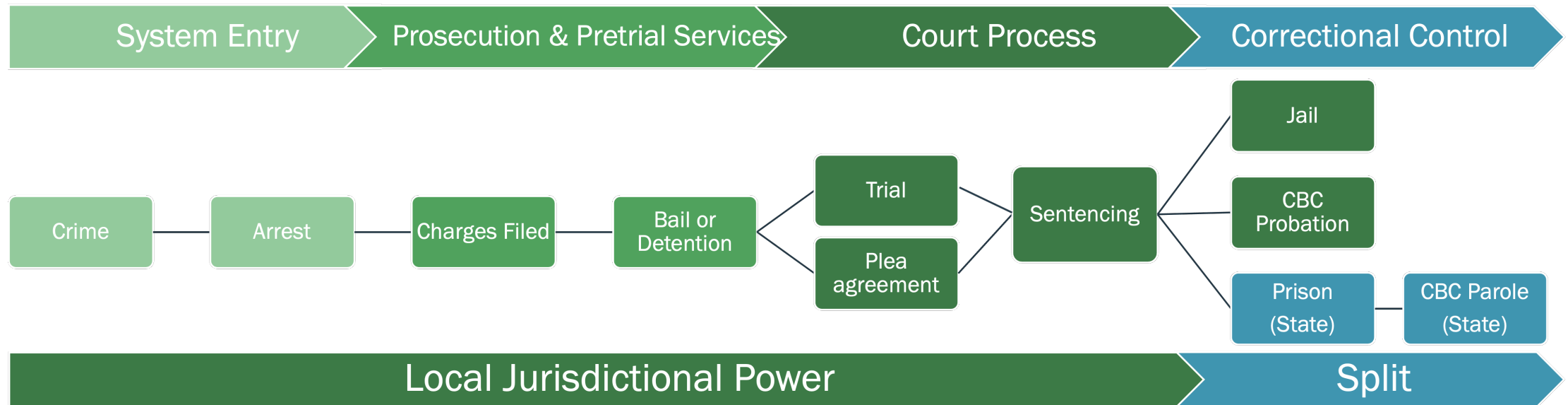
### Prison Releases, FY2019 & FY2020



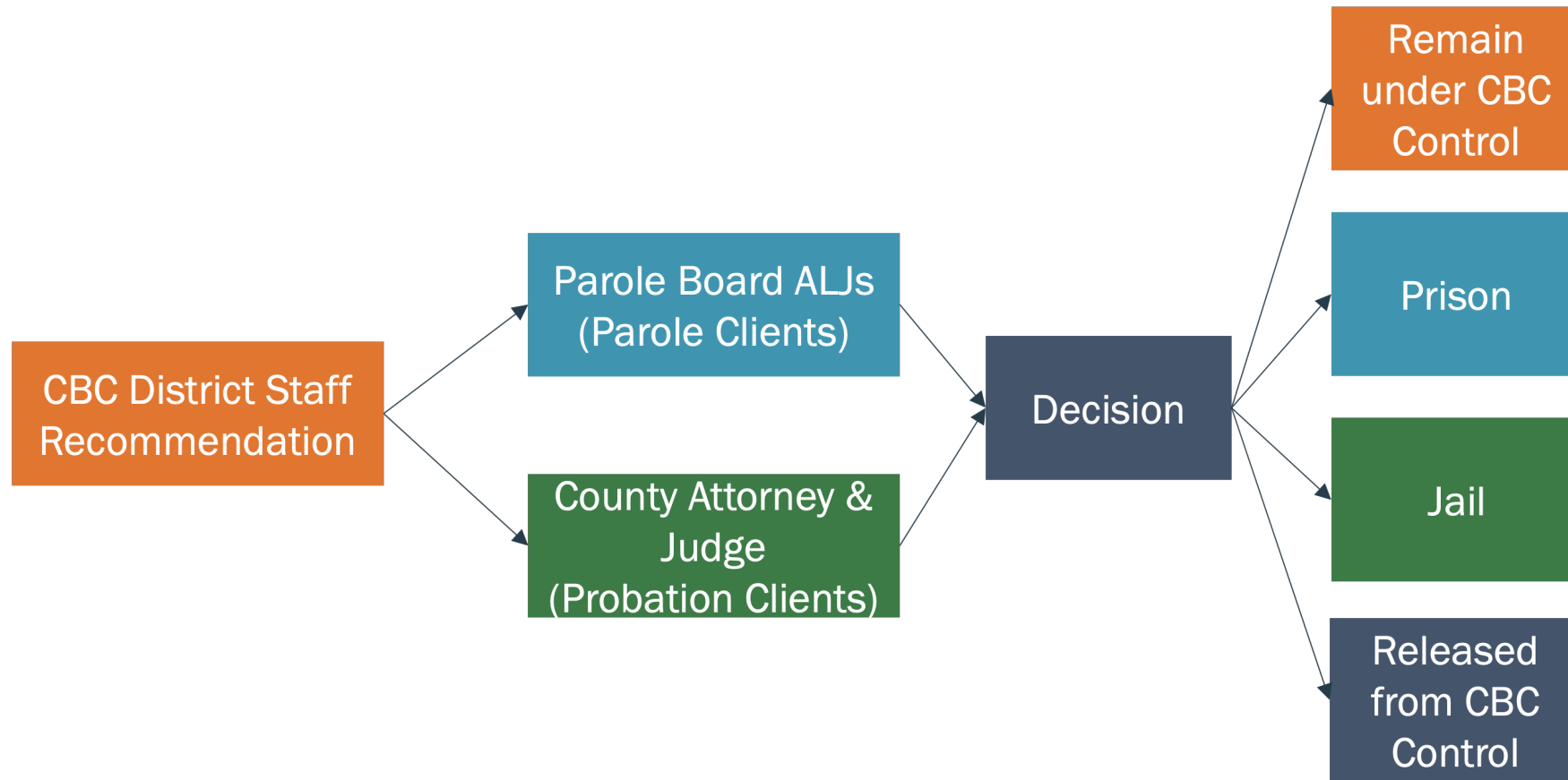
Releases to parole **increased by 18 percent** in FY2020, while releases to work release **decreased by 15 percent.**

“Other” includes county jail hold, other, special sentence, OWI continuum.

When clients enter the criminal justice system in Iowa, jurisdictional power in decision-making at the correctional level is split between the state and local criminal justice stakeholders.



**CBC districts have individual autonomy, but they are required to report to both the state and local jurisdictions when making recommendations for clients.**



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# Community-Based Corrections (CBC)

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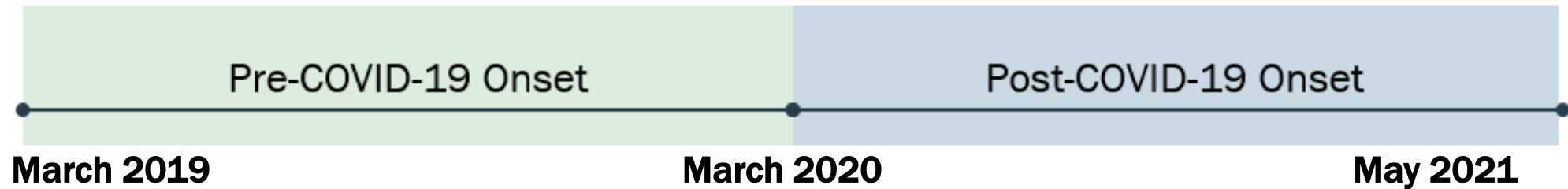
Based on publicly available data FY2019–FY2022 Q2 (Jul. 2018–Dec. 2021) and CSG Justice Center analysis of data FY2019 Q3–FY2021 (Mar. 2019–May 2021)



## CSG Justice Center staff began data analysis and assessment activities in September 2021.

- CSG Justice Center staff received case-level data from IDOC to create a study cohort of individuals on supervision or in prison between 2018 and mid-2021.
- CSG Justice Center staff have been working with IDOC research staff to
  - Clean, sort, combine, and map the data;
  - Produce preliminary, exploratory descriptive analyses;
  - Observe variation in violation and revocation rates between geographic areas prior to and during COVID-19; and
  - Discuss the creation of meaningful comparison groups for data analysis.
- This community-based corrections section includes visuals of publicly available data from IDOC and CSG Justice Center analysis of case-level data.

To better understand our study cohort and compare changes, our analysis focuses on the following periods before and after the implementation of criminal justice responses to the pandemic.



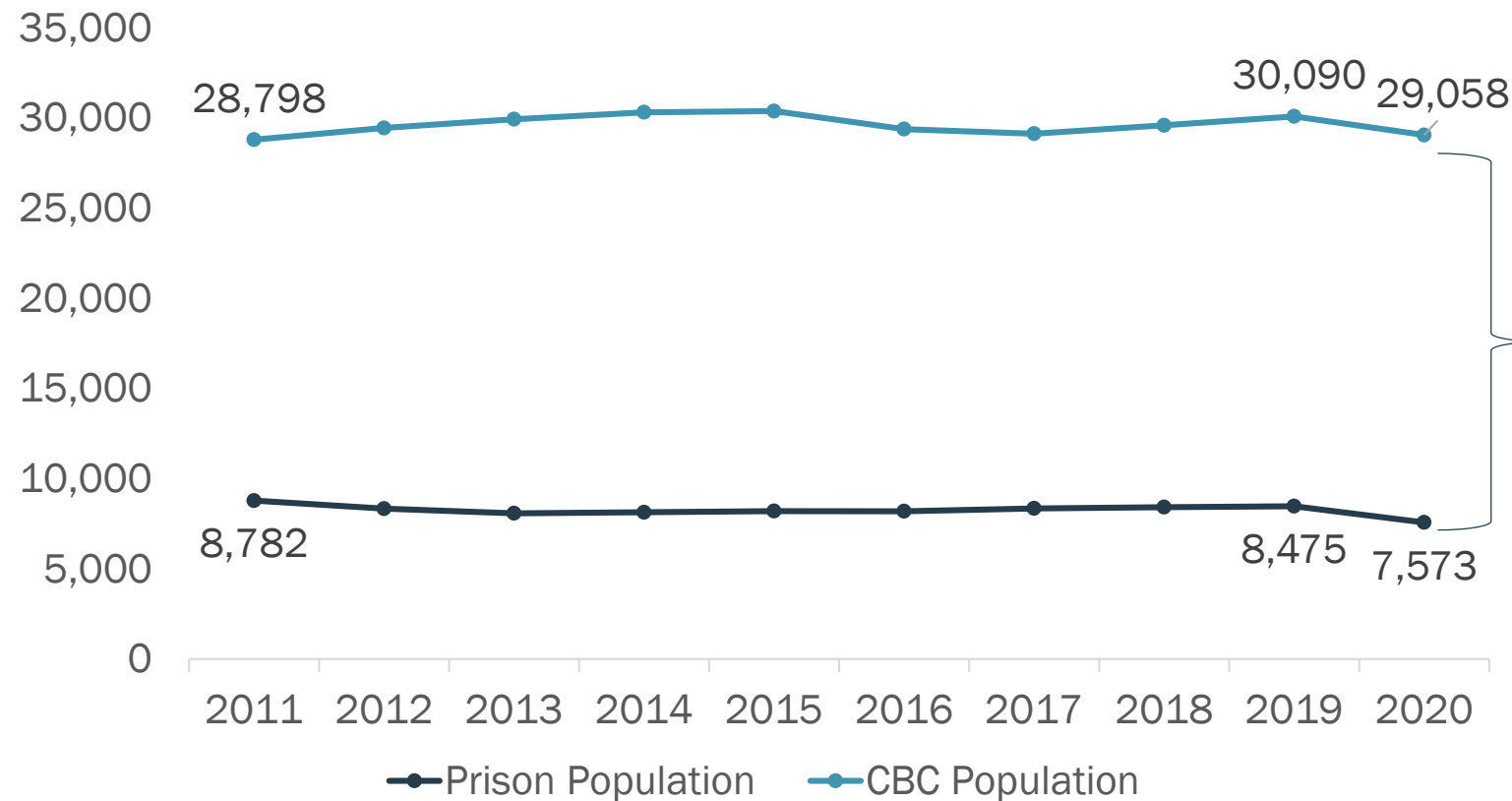
# This is how we define the average number of revocations per month vs. the revocation rate per month.

**Average revocations per month:** Average of the monthly number of revocations during observation period (for example: 100 revocations in July and 50 revocations in August would result in an average of 75 revocations for July and August). Unless otherwise noted, these revocations include supervision cases revoked to prison as well as those revoked to jail.

**Revocation rate per month:** For each month, the revocation rate is the number of revocations divided by the supervision caseload (*probation, parole, and work release supervisions that did not end*). This rate can then be averaged across multiple months within the study period (for example: if there were 15 revocations in September and 100 supervision cases in September, the revocation rate would be  $15/100$  or 15 percent). This helps us compare geographies of varying population and supervision caseload sizes.

# Historically, Iowa's CBC agencies oversee the majority of people under correctional control in Iowa.

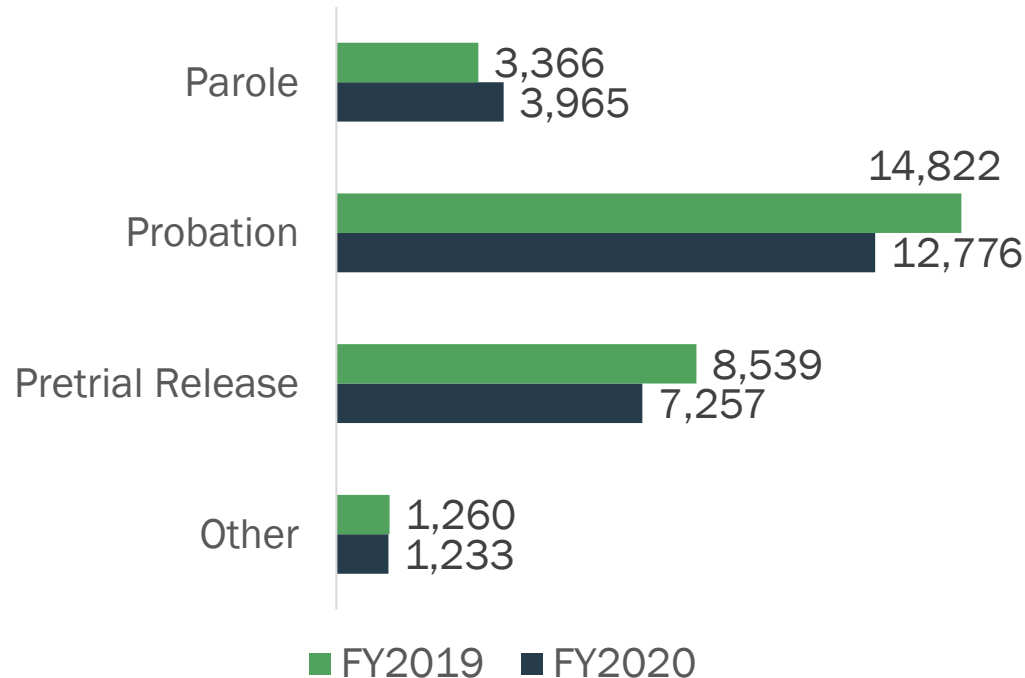
## Prison and CBC Populations, FY2011–FY2020



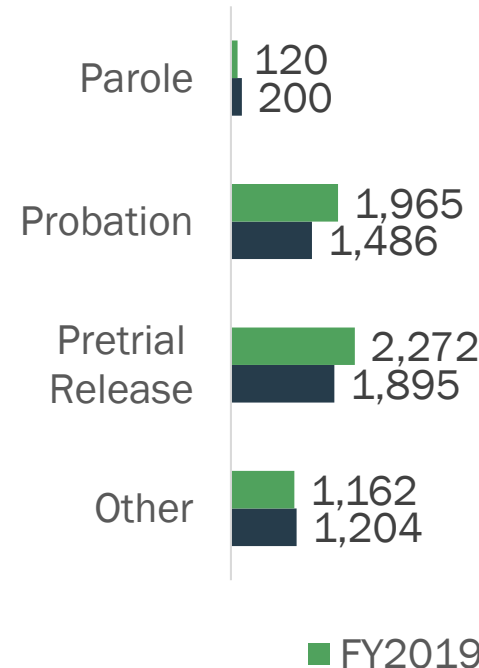
Over the past decade, the CBC population has remained **3 to 4 times the size** of the prison population.

# CBC field and residential services saw an increase in the number of new admissions to their parole population between FY2019 and FY2020.

## New Admits Field Services, FY2019–FY2020



## New Admits Residential Services, FY2019–FY2020



New admissions to both field and residential services **decreased** across most admission types.

Iowa Department of Corrections, *FY2019 Annual Report* (Des Moines, IA: Iowa Department of Corrections, 2019).

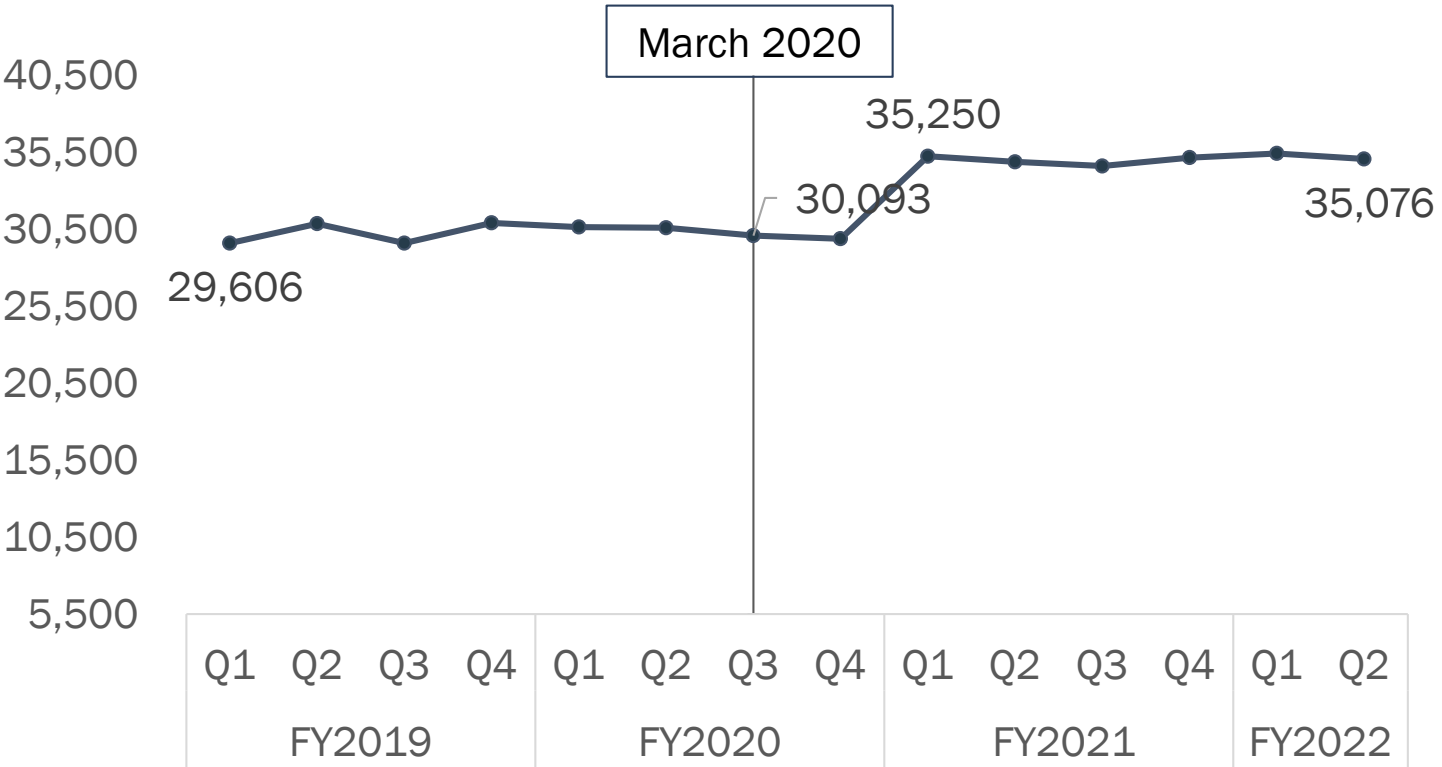
\*Updated 2019 new admits for residential services was provided by IDOC. The numbers reported in the IDOC FY2019 Annual Report are not accurate.

Iowa Department of Corrections, *FY2020 Annual Report* (Des Moines, IA: Iowa Department of Corrections, 2020).

The "Other" category includes federal, interstate compact, OWI continuum, special sentence, work release.

# The CBC population increased and is currently higher than March 2020 levels.

Quarterly CBC Population, FY2019-Q1–FY2022-Q2

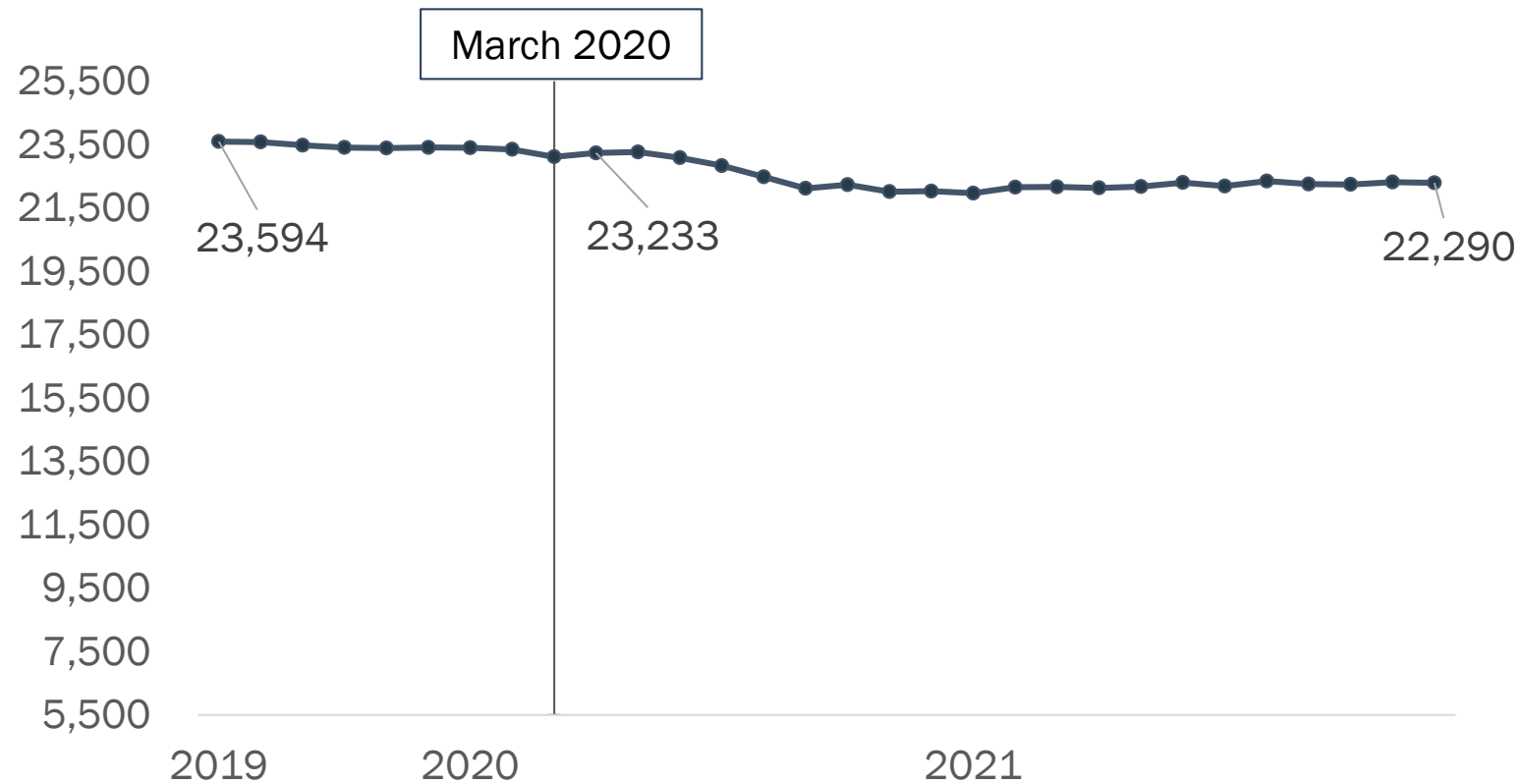


The CBC population increased by nearly **20 percent** and has remained **steady** since the notable increase.

Note: Prior to FY2021, CBC total populations included in-person, virtual, and virtual tracking (i.e., absconders). Starting in FY2021, virtual tacking cases were dropped from the total CBC population count.

# Looking only at clients serving sentences with more serious charges, however, the CBC population did not substantially change with pandemic responses

## Monthly CBC Population, 2019-2021

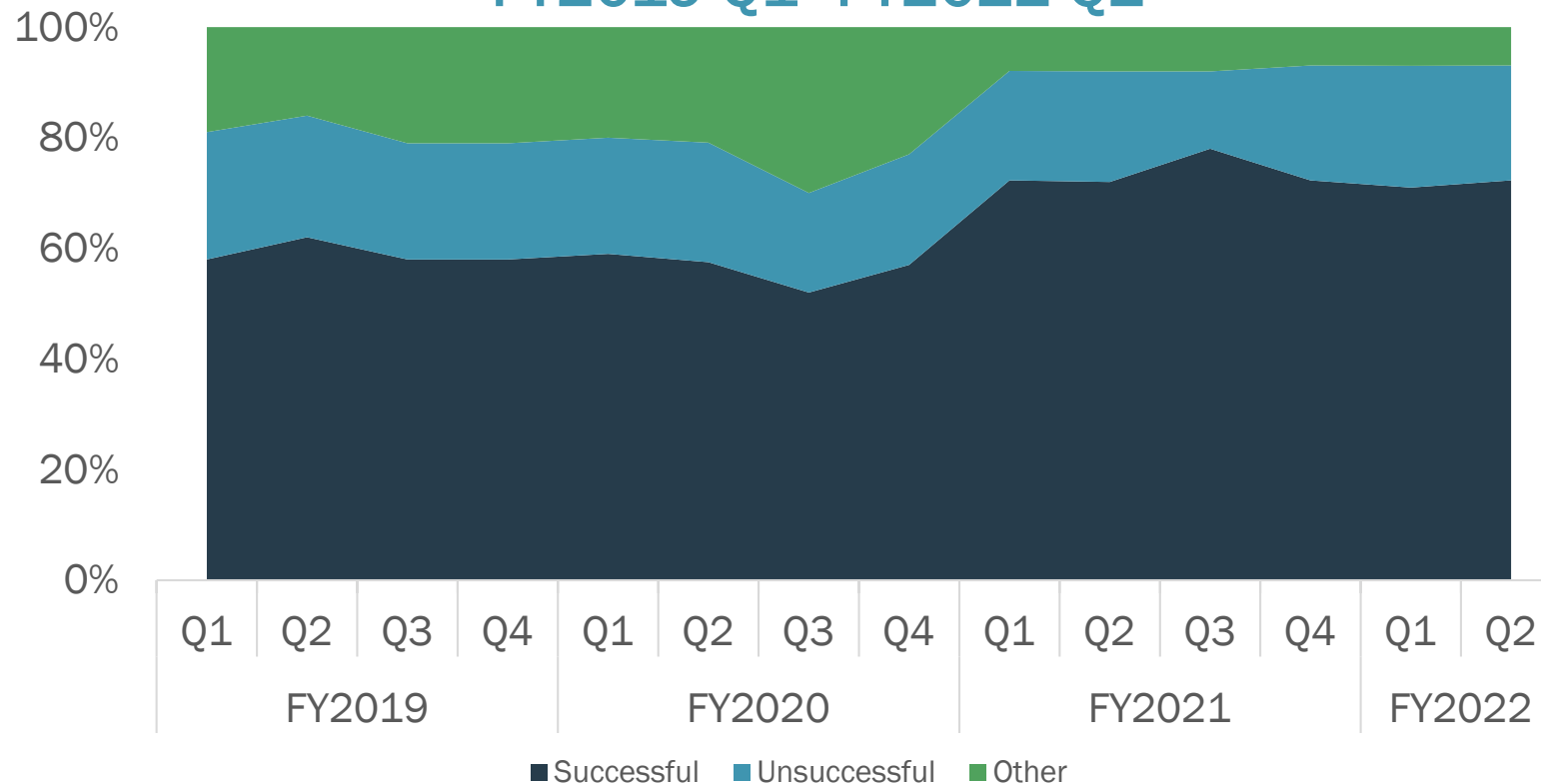


This CBC population, including only those with an aggravated misdemeanor charge and above, has mostly remained **steady** from 2019 to 2021, decreasing by **4%** between the pre- and post-March 2020 periods shown here

Note: These counts of clients on parole and probation exclude those on self-supervision as well as clients with charges less serious than aggravated misdemeanor

Over the past few years, more than half of CBC cases were closed successfully, proving that procedures have been working to achieve intended results.

### Quarterly CBC Closure Outcomes, FY2019-Q1–FY2022-Q2



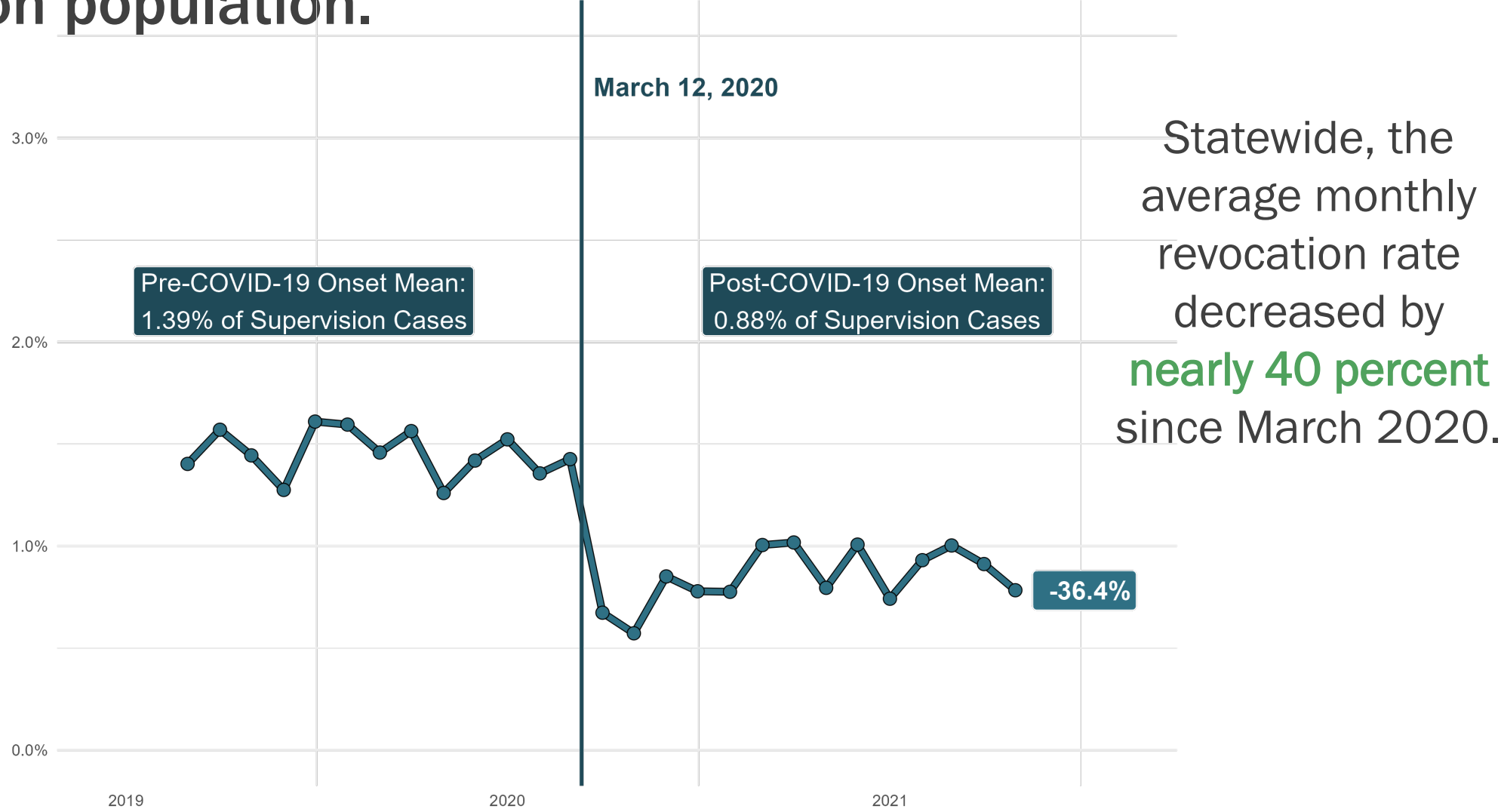
“Other” includes administrative and intermediate sanctions.

Note: Prior to FY2021, CBC total populations included in-person, virtual, and virtual tracking (i.e., absconders). Starting in FY2021, virtual tracking cases were dropped from the total CBC population count.

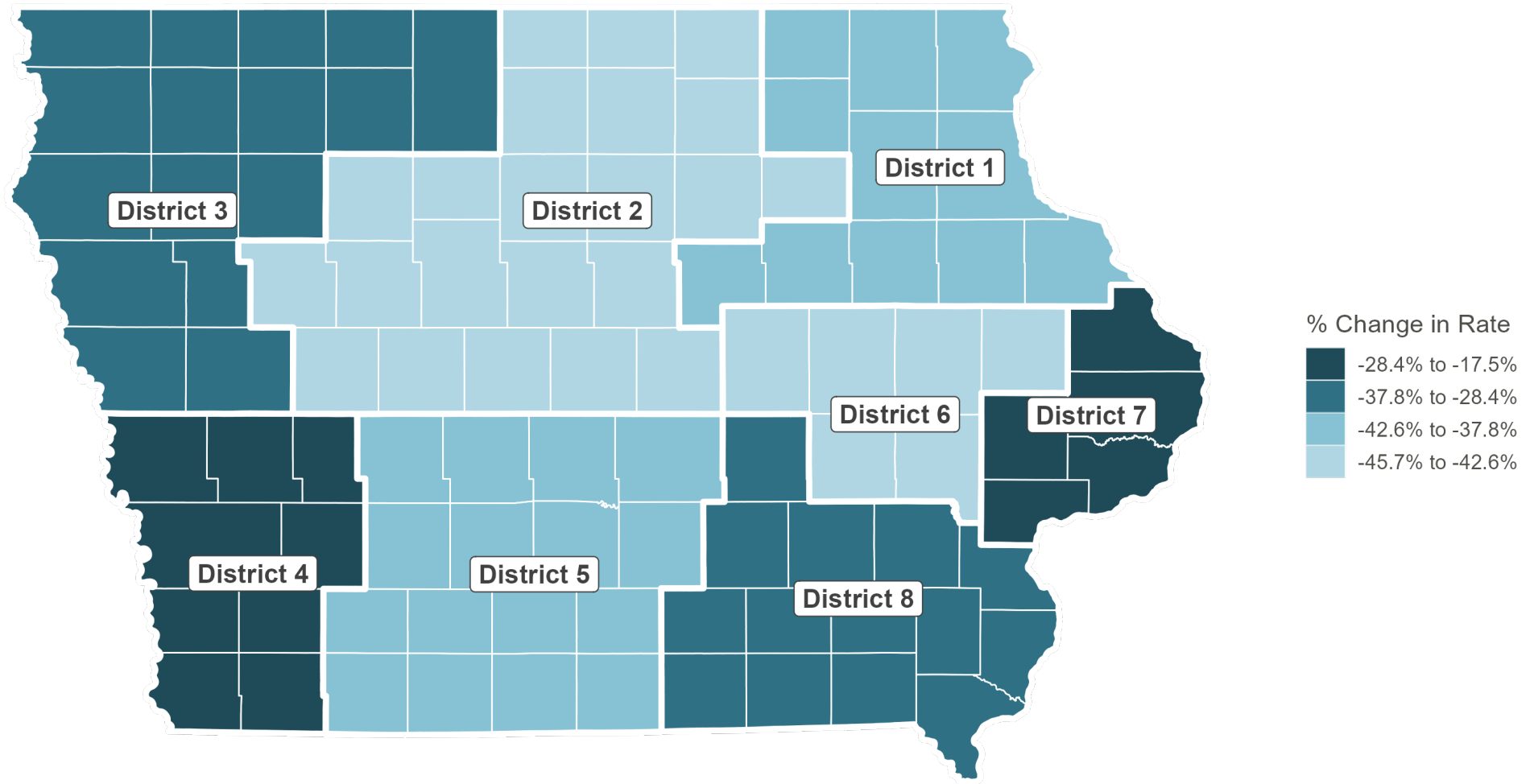
“Quarterly Quick Facts, September 30, 2021,” Iowa Department of Corrections, accessed October 31, 2021, <https://doc.iowa.gov/quick-facts>.



In fact, between March 2019 and May 2021, supervision revocations accounted for less than 2 percent of the total supervision population.



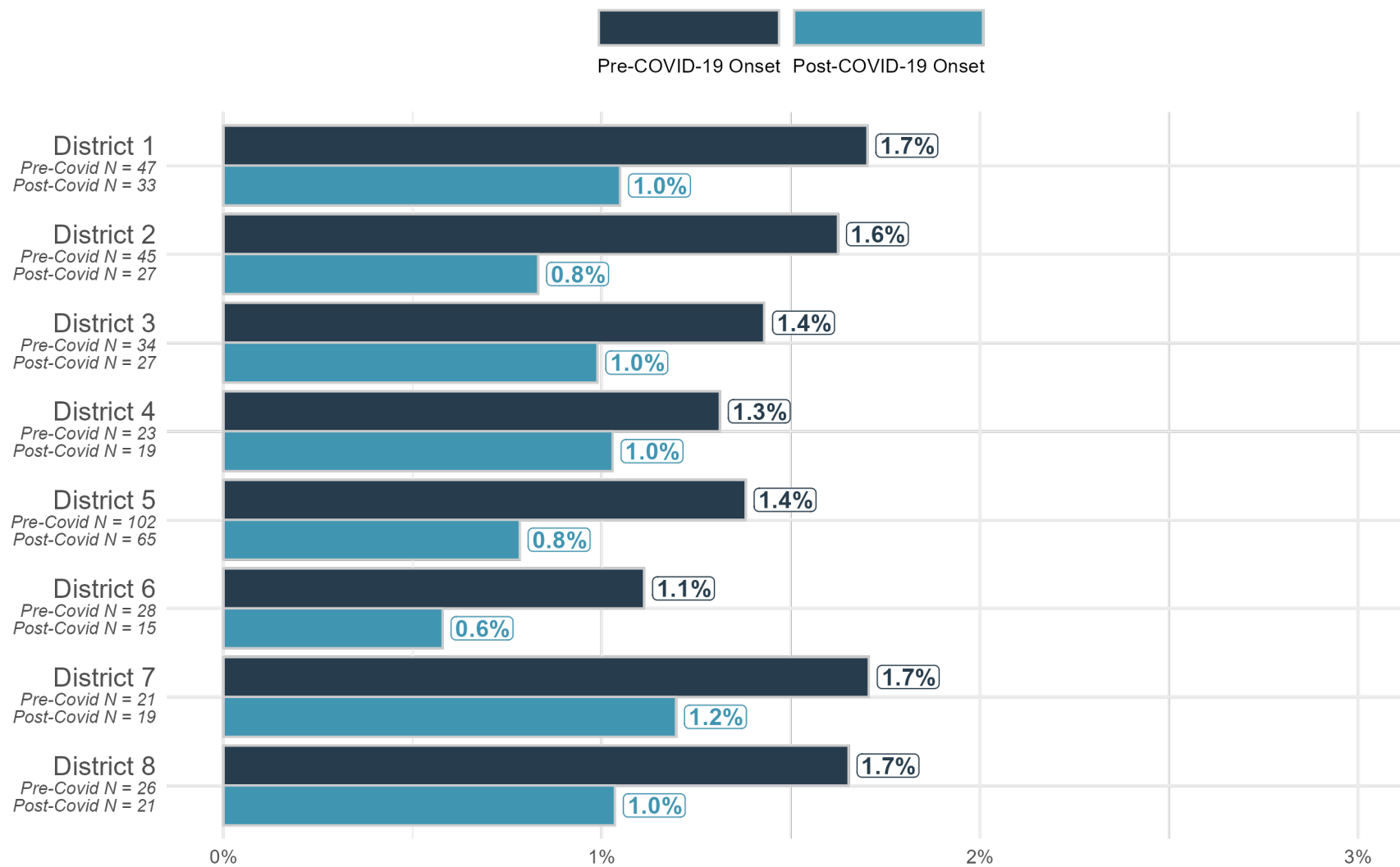
When comparing the pre- and post-procedural change periods, revocation rates decreased and achieved the intended results in each judicial district.



Note: Pre-COVID-19 Onset is March 2019 to February 2020 while Post-COVID-19 Onset is March 2020 to May 2021

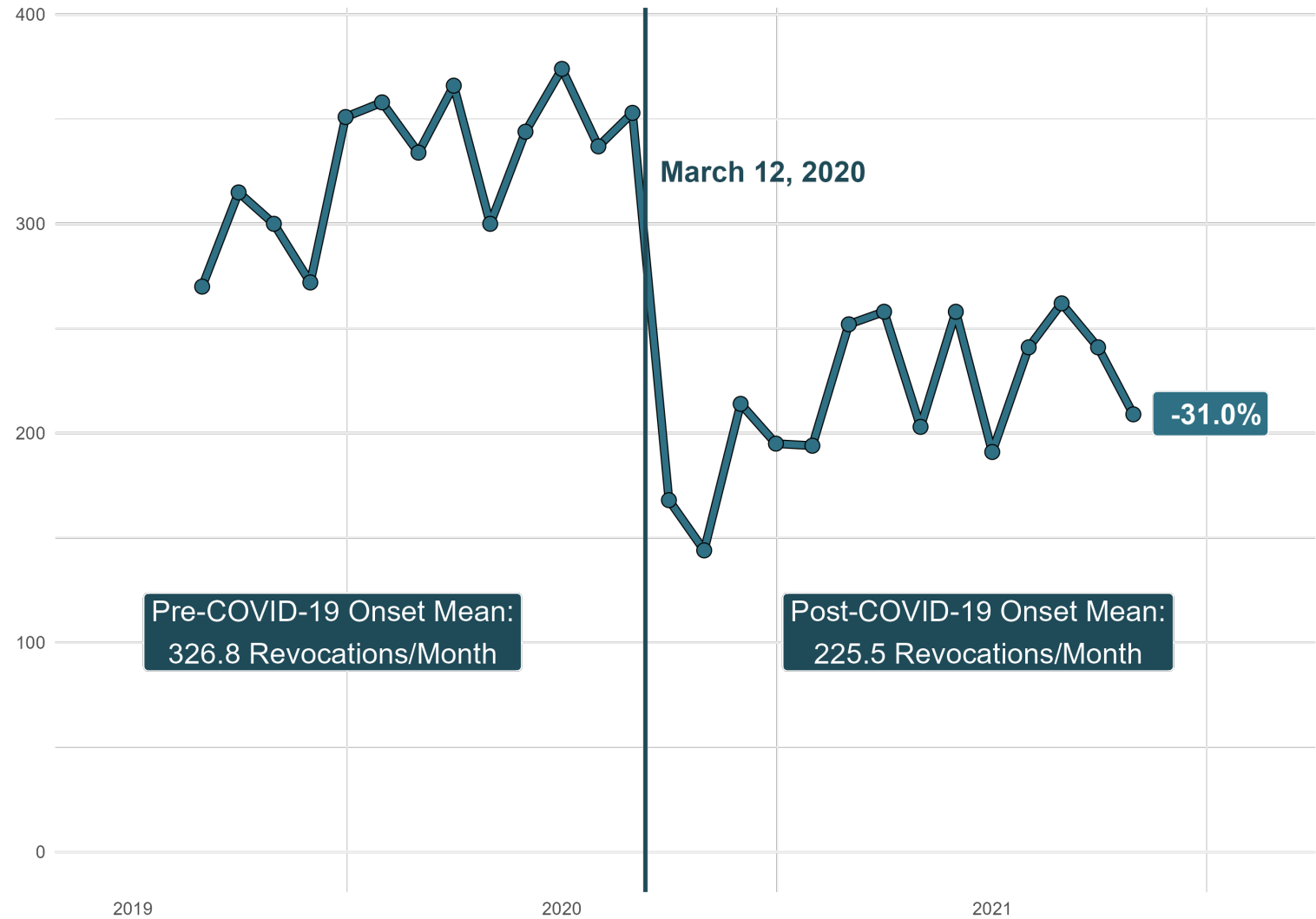
Additionally,  
average monthly  
revocation rates  
decreased across all  
judicial districts.

Judicial-Level Revocation Rate, Pre- and Post-COVID-19 Onset  
Average monthly revocation counts (N) are listed below each district



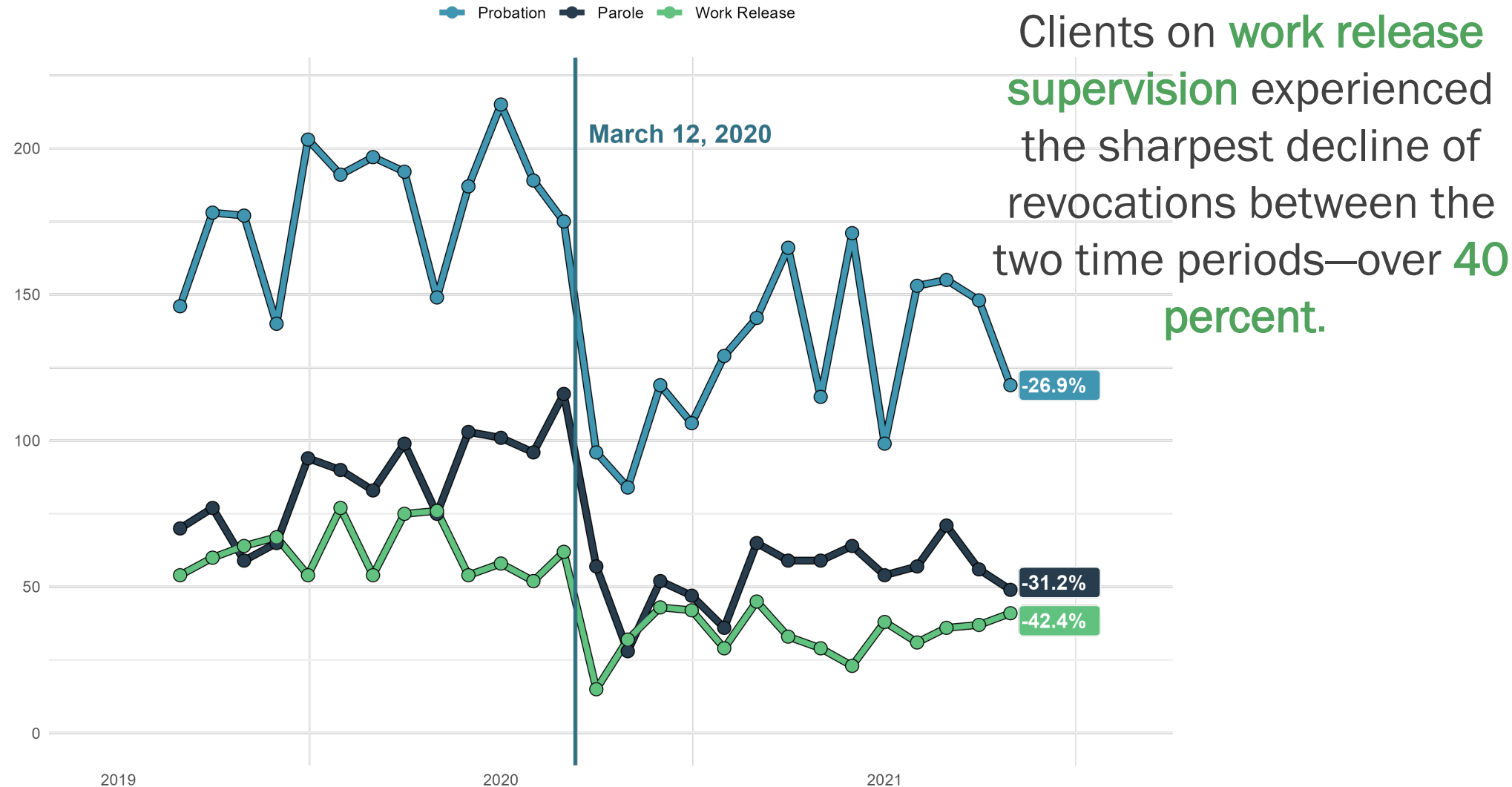
Note: Pre-COVID-19 Onset is March 2019 to February 2020 while Post-COVID-19 Onset is March 2020 to May 2021.  
Statewide, the rate declined from 1.4% to 0.9%

# The average number of revocations per month decreased statewide.



Note: Pre-COVID-19 Onset is March 2019 to February 2020 while Post-COVID-19 Onset is March 2020 to May 2021

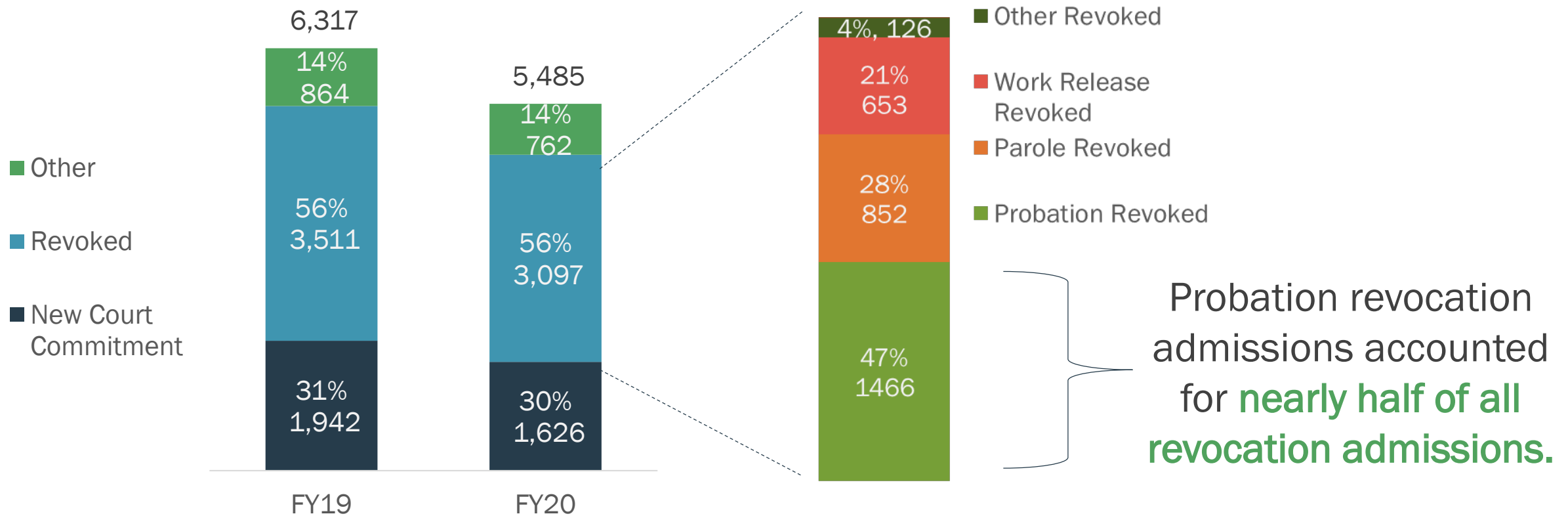
# The average statewide number of revocations per month decreased across supervision types after changes were implemented in March 2020.



Note: Pre-COVID-19 Onset is March 2019 to February 2020 while Post-COVID-19 Onset is March 2020 to May 2021

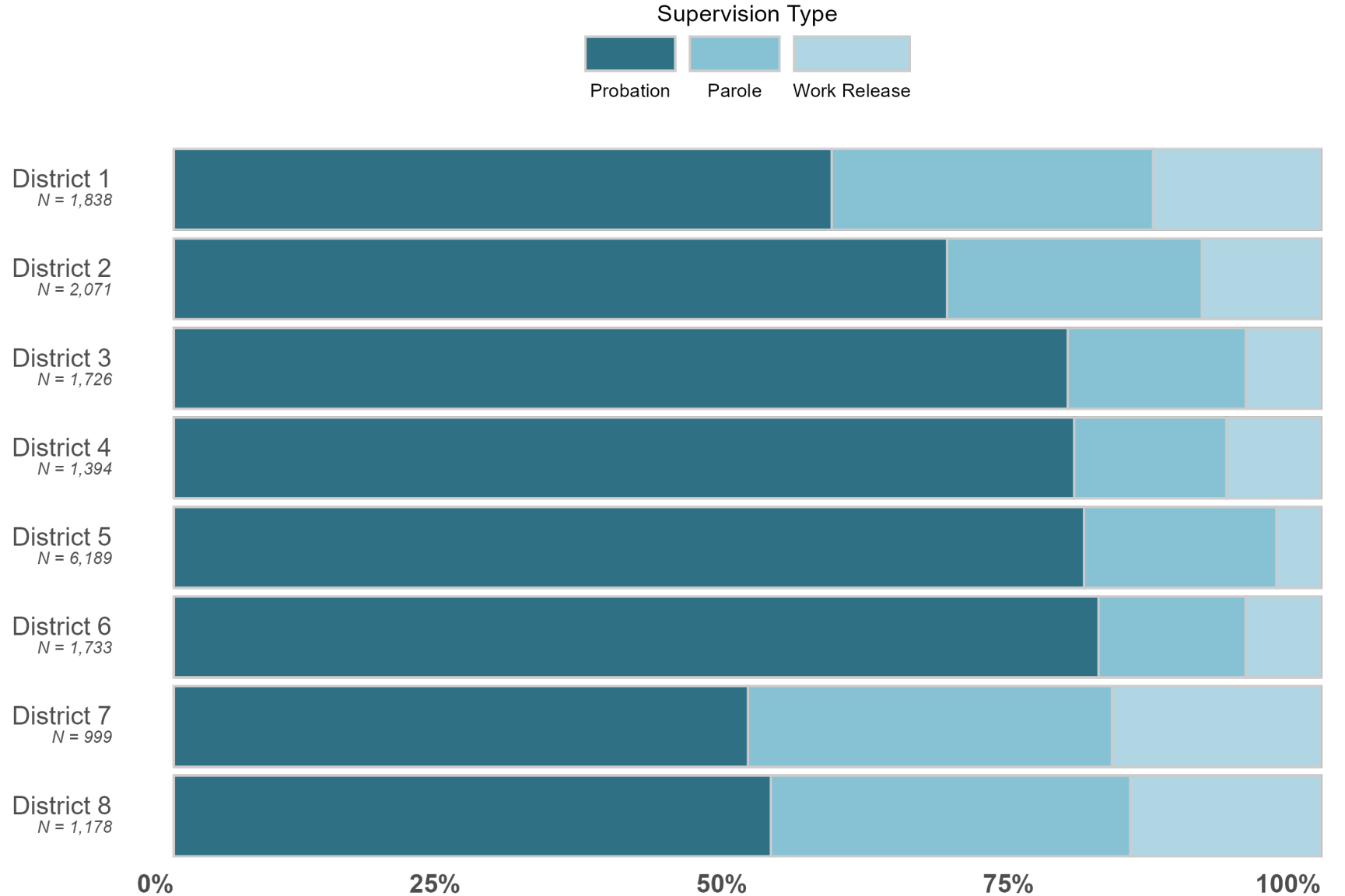
Although revocation rates are low and have decreased in FY2020, they still comprise more than half of all prison admissions.

### Prison Admissions by Type, FY2019–FY2020



Of the supervision cases starting in 2020, the majority were probation cases.

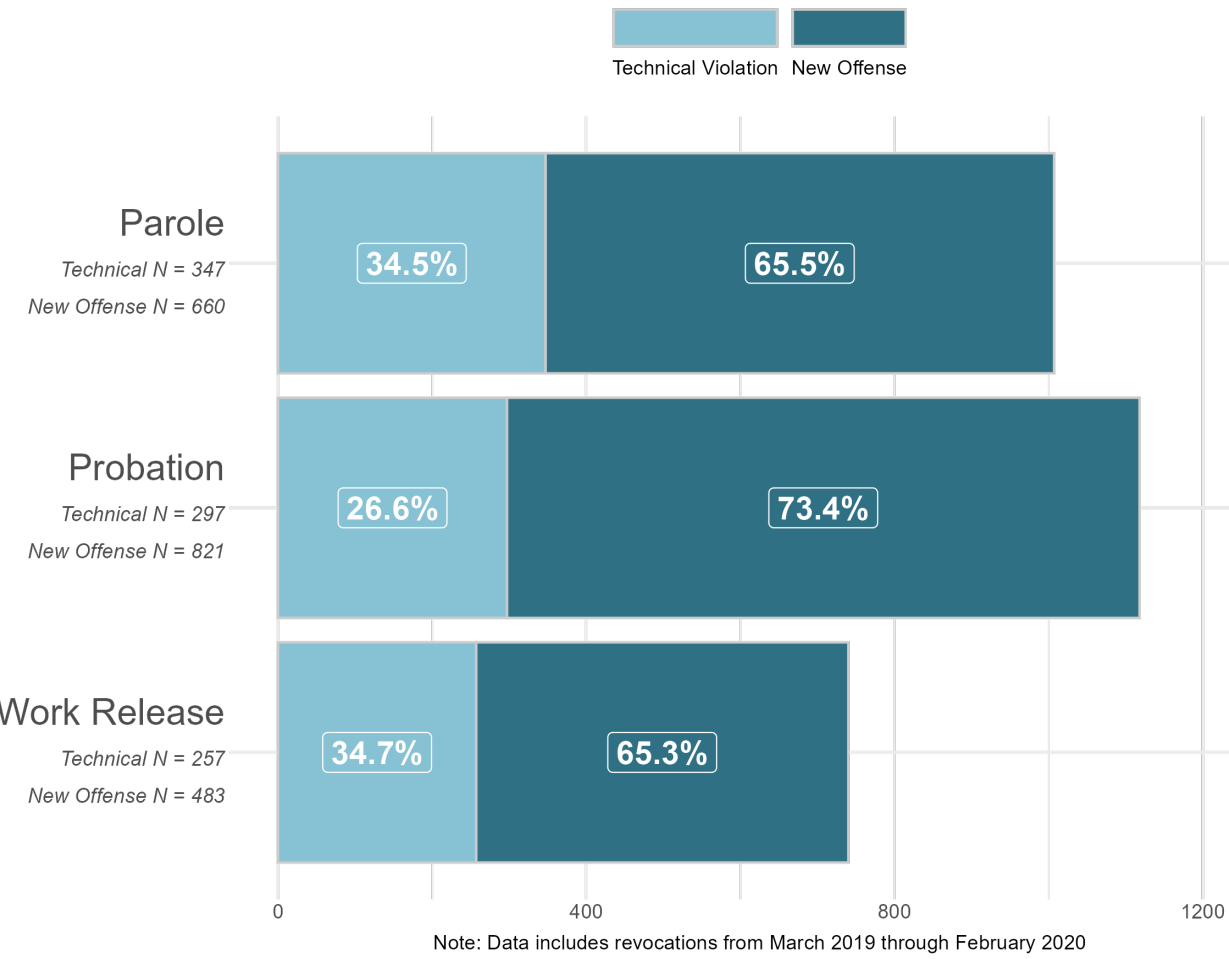
Type of Supervision by Judicial District, 2020



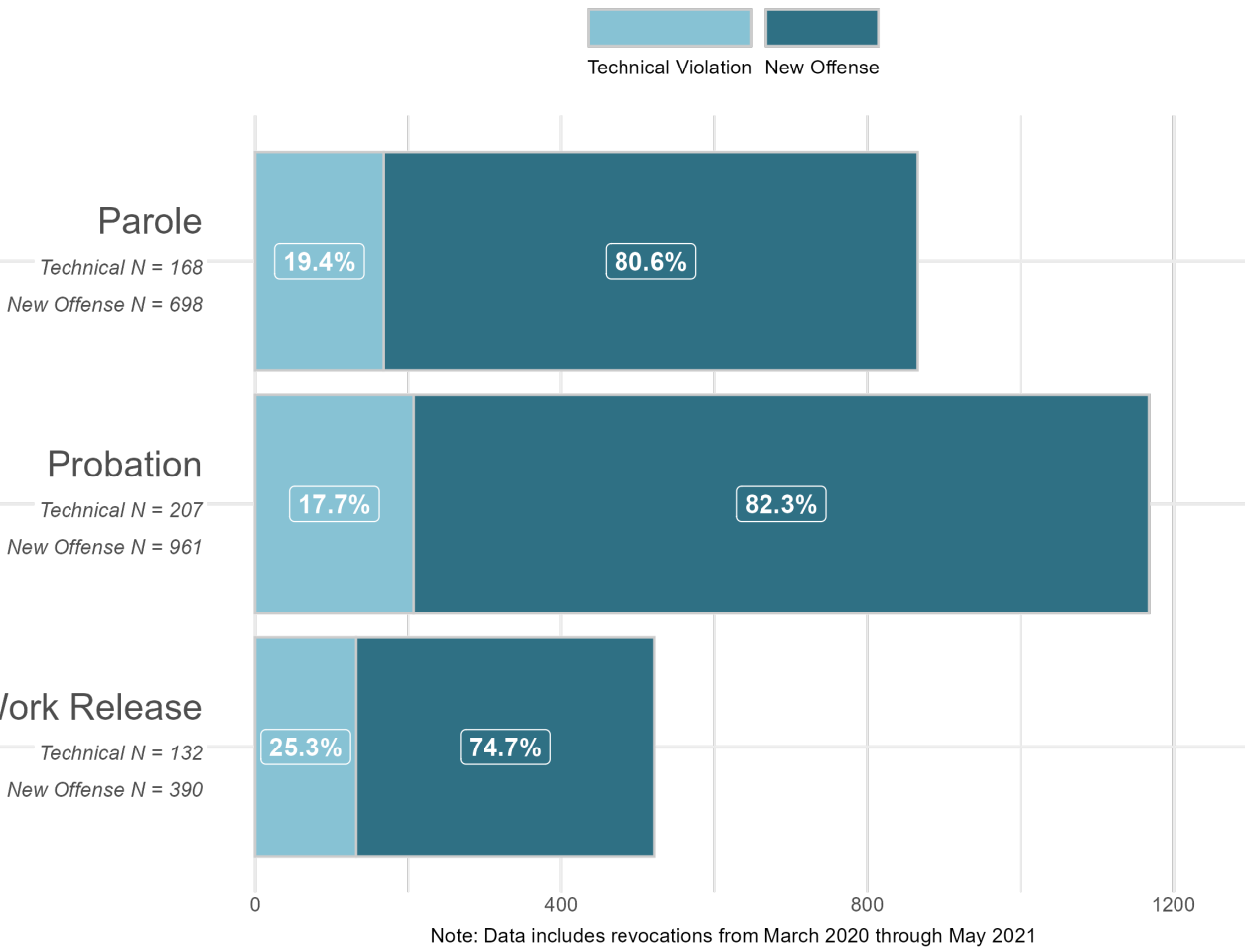
This represents all probation, parole, and work release supervisions starting in 2020

# Revocations were largely driven by new offenses before and after March 2020 but represented a higher proportion after.

March 2019–February 2020

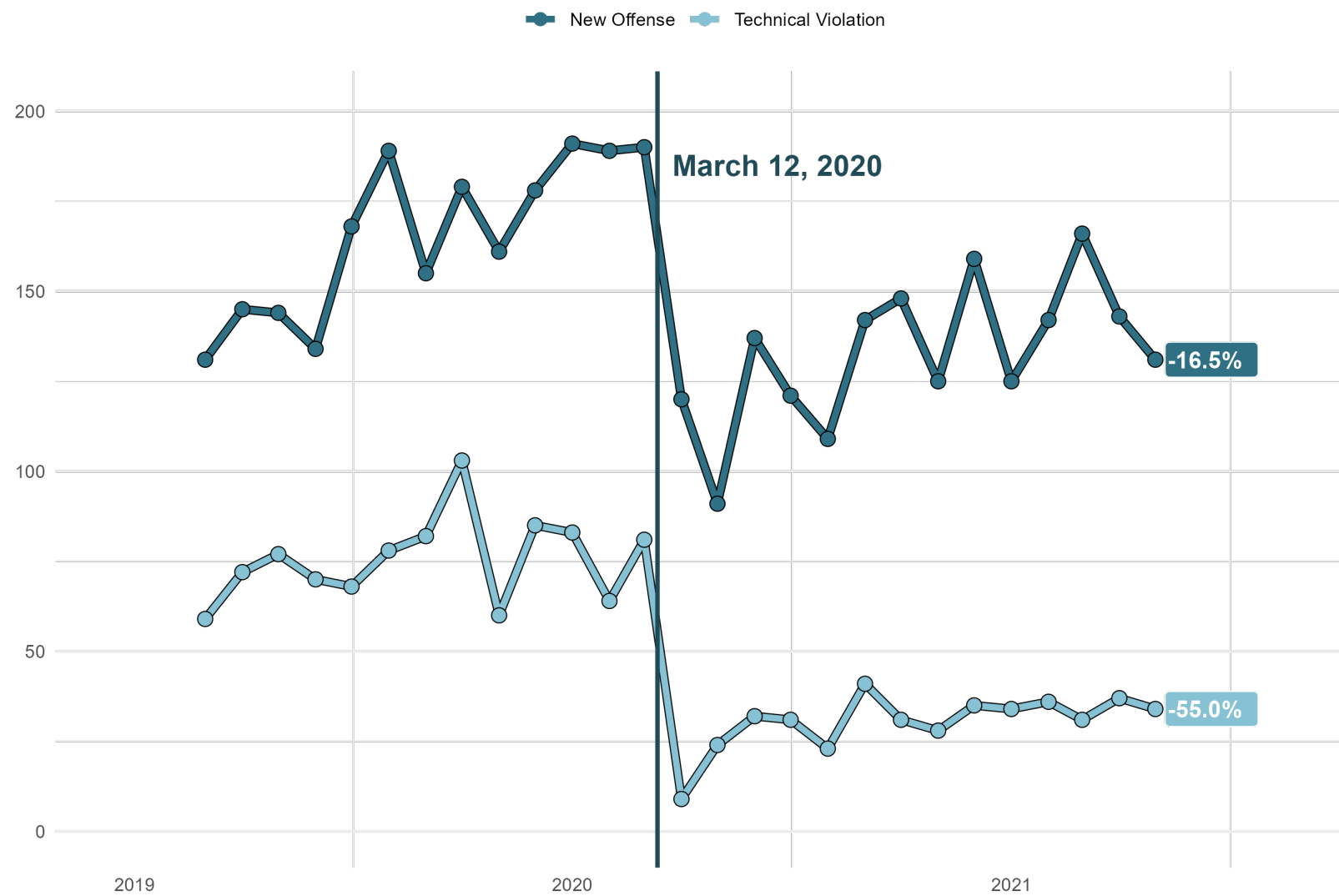


March 2020–June 2021





# Revocations due to technical violations declined at a higher rate than those due to new arrests.



Note: Pre-COVID-19 Onset is March 2019 to February 2020 while Post-COVID-19 Onset is March 2020 to May 2021.  
This analysis is restricted to supervision cases revoked to prison only

# Current Progress and Next Steps

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# Community Supervision Assessment

- CSG Justice Center staff began to engage the CBC districts via focus groups and interviews in October 2021.
- To date, CSG Justice Center staff have connected with **80** CBC staff members from **7** judicial districts, convened one focus group with individuals formerly or currently on supervision, and interviewed IDOC administrators.
- CSG Justice Center staff are continuing to engage the districts and may convene additional focus groups and interviews with CBC staff as the project continues.

# Preliminary Themes from Community Supervision Assessment

CSG Justice Center staff have convened **17 focus groups** with IDOC administration, district directors, supervisors, officers, and individuals currently or formerly on supervision.

## 1) Changes resulting from the pandemic

- Districts were quick to adapt to the pandemic's challenges and implement changes to protect the health of officers and clients. Many staff indicated these changes were necessary yet challenged their ability to appropriately supervise some clients, particularly clients for whom drug use was a challenge, as drug testing was initially restricted.
- Job opportunities for clients increased during this time, and virtual check-ins and programs made officer/client contact and participation in treatment easier.

## 2) Data tracking

- There are robust efforts in place to track many aspects of community supervision, including use of tools and recidivism. Many offices have staff who focus on quality assurance.

# Preliminary Themes from Community Supervision Assessment (cont.)

## 3) Risk and needs assessment

- Many staff reported repeated training efforts and buy-in around their use of the Iowa Risk Revised (IRR) assessment and the Dynamic Risk Assessment for Offender Re-entry (DRAOR). However, some staff believed the DRAOR can be cumbersome and time consuming to complete as frequently as directed by policy.

## 4) Resource needs

- With a continued emphasis on reducing revocations, some staff reported that constraints on resources in districts (e.g., CBC staff, community treatment programs) present challenges to successfully managing clients' needs in the community. Additional programming and treatment options and resources could provide more opportunities for officers to change client behavior short of revocation.
- Many staff reported that the use of virtual platforms for treatment programs helped reduce barriers to participation, such as transportation or childcare issues.

# Next Steps

- CSG Justice Center research staff will continue connecting with IDOC to discuss available data, descriptive findings, and ways to measure and model the relationship between revocation reductions and the potential impact on CBC operations and public safety.
- CSG Justice Center staff are planning to convene focus groups with the following stakeholder communities:
  - Iowa Parole Board and administrative law judges
  - Judges and county attorneys
  - Sheriffs
  - Chiefs of police
  - Victim's Advisory Group

# Iowa's Justice Reinvestment Initiative will continue until summer 2022.



# Thank You!

Join our distribution list to receive updates and announcements:

<https://csgjusticecenter.org/resources/newsletters/>

For more information, please contact Greg Halls at [ghalls@csg.org](mailto:ghalls@csg.org)

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