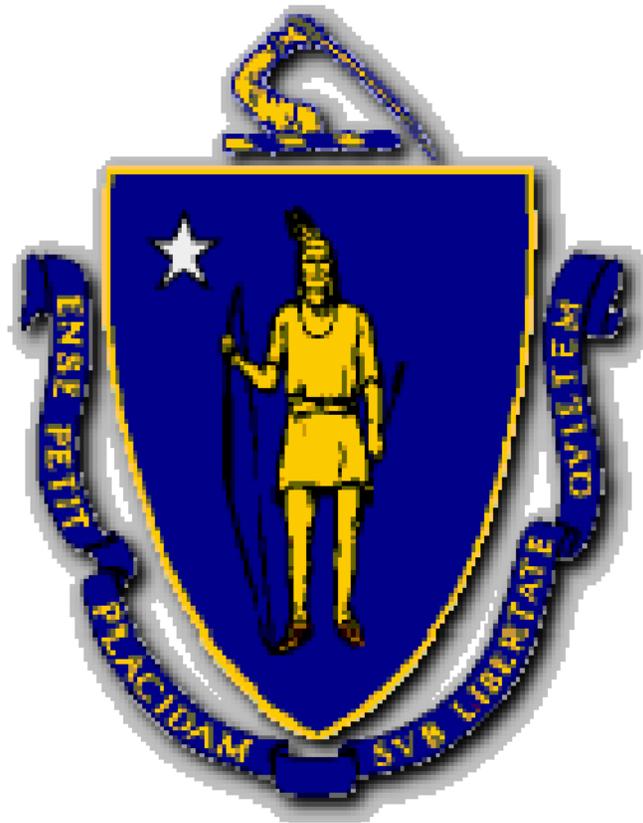


**MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION**

**2008 New Court Commitments to Massachusetts  
County Correctional Facilities**





## **Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

Deval L. Patrick, Governor

Timothy P. Murray, Lieutenant Governor

## **Executive Office of Public Safety and Security**

Kevin M. Burke, Secretary

Mary Beth Heffernan, Undersecretary of Criminal Justice

## **Massachusetts Department of Correction**

Harold W. Clarke, Commissioner

Ronald T. Duval, Deputy Commissioner of Administration

Rhiana Kohl, Ph.D., Executive Director of Strategic Planning & Research

Paul Heroux, Director of Research & Planning

Lisa Sampson, Deputy Director of Research & Planning



Author:  
Research and Planning Division

Prepared By:  
**Emily Parsons, Research Analyst**

## **Acknowledgements**

The publication of this report would not be possible without the assistance of the Research Analyst Pam McLaughlin, Research Assistant Jessica Biedron, Research Assistant Emily Testwuide and Massachusetts Sheriffs and their staff. The County Houses of Correction Records and Administration staff submit monthly data thus providing the Department of Correction the necessary information to produce this report.

The review of earlier drafts of this report, particularly by DOC Research and Planning staff and managers is much appreciated.

This report is accessible on the DOC website at <http://www.mass.gov/doc> and is also available at the following libraries: Massachusetts State Library; Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; Boston Library; University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Springfield City Library; and Worcester Public Library.

For questions regarding this report, please contact the Research and Planning Division:

Research & Planning Division  
MCI-Concord/SFU Building  
PO BOX 9125  
Concord, MA 01742  
(978) 405-6600  
[Research@doc.state.ma.us](mailto:Research@doc.state.ma.us)

**This and other Massachusetts Department of Correction publications can be accessed on the internet under the Research & Statistics tab at:**

**<http://www.mass.gov/doc>**

## 2008 New Court Commitments to Massachusetts County Correctional Facilities Brief: Introduction

- This brief provides a statistical description of offenders committed to Massachusetts county facilities (houses of correction) during 2008.
- All new court commitments and those individuals who began serving a new criminal sentence during the year are included in this brief. If an individual was committed more than once during 2008, each commitment for that individual is counted separately. Information for offenders committed to the Massachusetts Department of Correction (state facilities) is not included in this brief.
- It is important to note that not all county facilities house females. Some females serving a county sentence are transferred or committed directly to the Massachusetts State Correctional Institution – Framingham. Females at state facilities are not included in this brief.
- The statistical tables were derived from information submitted by each county facility to the Research and Planning Division of the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC).

**Disclaimer – Data reported within this brief is reported by the Massachusetts County Correctional facilities and is subsequently provided to the MADOC for reporting purposes. This data is not audited by the MADOC.**

## Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
New Commitments by Committing Institution.....	1
2008 Commitments: Institutions by Gender .....	1
New Commitments by Gender .....	2
2008 Commitments: Age at Commitment by Gender .....	2
2008 Commitments: Race/Ethnicity by Gender .....	3
2008 Commitments: Place of Birth .....	3
2008 Commitments: Marital Status .....	3
2008 Commitments: Last Grade Completed by Gender.....	3
2008 Commitments: Top Ten Massachusetts City/Town Last Known Address by Gender .....	4
2008 Commitments: Sentence Length .....	5
2008 Commitments: Sentence Length by Gender .....	5
2008 Commitments: Offense Category by Gender.....	6
2008 Commitments: Violent vs. Non-Violent Offenses by Gender .....	6
2008 Commitments: Top Ten Offenses by Gender .....	7
Definitions .....	8

<b>New Commitments by Committing Institution: 2004 to 2008</b>											
	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		% Chng 07 vs. 08
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	%
Barnstable	603	4%	524	3%	361	2%	332	2%	653	4%	97%
Berkshire	719	4%	670	4%	620	3%	725	4%	648	4%	-11%
Bristol	1,828	11%	1,827	11%	1,911	11%	1,637	10%	1,872	12%	14%
Dukes	34	0%	39	0%	33	0%	35	0%	36	0%	3%
Essex	1,349	8%	1,402	8%	2,157	12%	2,076	13%	1,737	11%	-16%
Franklin	249	2%	253	2%	251	1%	295	2%	276	2%	-6%
Hampden	2,203	13%	2,477	15%	2,615	15%	2,320	14%	1,932	12%	-17%
Hampshire	403	2%	434	3%	434	2%	381	2%	366	2%	-4%
Middlesex	1,773	11%	1,903	11%	1,836	10%	1,692	10%	1,747	11%	3%
Norfolk	1,020	6%	1,011	6%	1,013	6%	912	6%	878	5%	-4%
Plymouth	1,224	7%	1,246	7%	1,332	8%	1,198	7%	1,085	7%	-9%
Suffolk	2,817	17%	2,627	16%	2,805	16%	2,544	15%	2,560	16%	1%
WMRWCC*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	58	0	265	2%	n/a
Worcester	2,365	14%	2,236	13%	2,354	13%	2,299	14%	2,094	13%	-9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,587</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16,649</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>17,722</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16,504</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16,149</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>-2%</b>

\*Western Massachusetts Regional Women’s Correctional Center (WMRWCC) opened October 1, 2007.

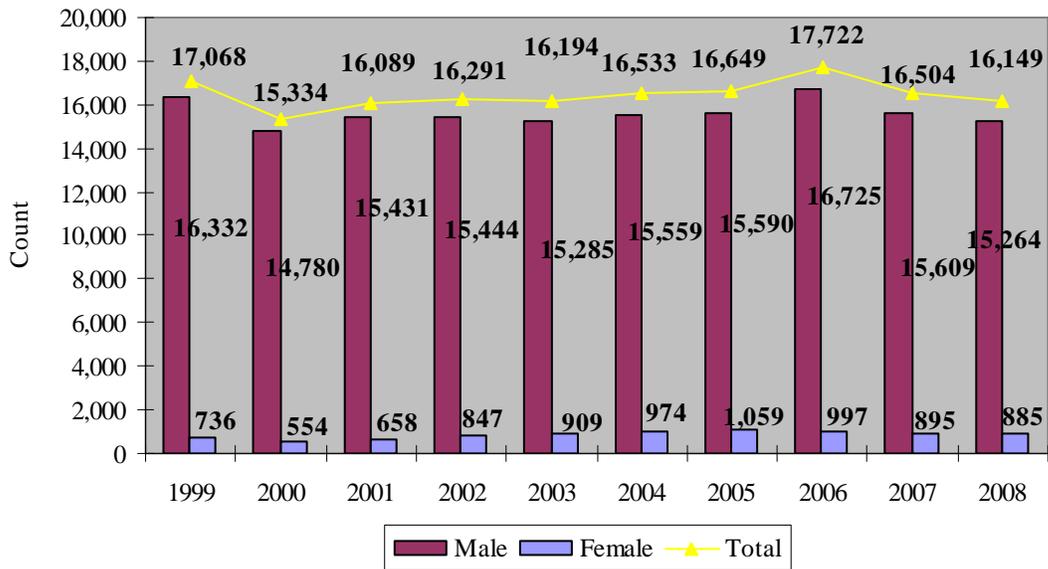
During 2008, there were 16,149 new court commitments to county Houses of Correction (HOC), a decrease of 2% (355 commitments) from 2007. As seen in the table above, 2008 had the fewest commitments in the five year period from 2004 to 2008. Commitments have been relatively stable over the trend period with the exception of the peak in 2006 of 17,722 commitments.

Suffolk County House of Correction received the majority (15%) of the 15,264 male new court commitments in 2008. Six Massachusetts county facilities received female county sentenced new court commitments; Barnstable, Berkshire, Bristol, Hampden, and Suffolk County Houses of Correction and Western Massachusetts Regional Women’s Correctional Center (WMRWCC).

<b>2008 Commitments: Institution by Gender</b>						
	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Suffolk	221	25%	2,339	15%	2,560	16%
Worcester	11	1%	2,083	14%	2,094	13%
Hampden	10	1%	1,922	13%	1,932	12%
Bristol	221	25%	1,651	11%	1,872	12%
Middlesex	6	1%	1,741	11%	1,747	11%
Essex	14	2%	1,723	11%	1,737	11%
Plymouth	1	0%	1,084	7%	1,085	7%
Norfolk	0	0%	878	6%	878	5%
Barnstable	45	5%	608	4%	653	4%
Berkshire	83	9%	565	4%	648	4%
Hampshire	1	0%	365	2%	366	2%
Franklin	14	2%	262	2%	276	2%
WMRWCC	258	29%	7	0%	265	2%
Dukes	0	0%	36	0%	36	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15,264</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16,149</b>	<b>100%</b>

WMRWCC which serves Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire counties, received 29% of the 885 female new court commitments to a county facility. Female new court commitments can be temporarily held at other Houses of Correction while awaiting transfer to a correctional facility that houses this population.

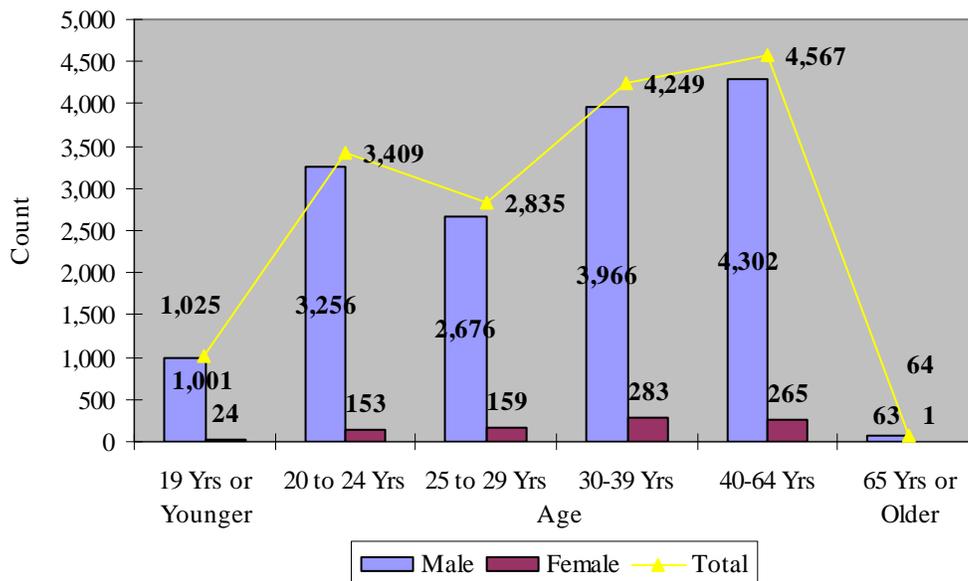
### New Commitments by Gender



Forty-five percent of the 2008 new court commitments were less than 30 years of age at time of commitment; 45% of males and 38% of females were in the less than 30 age category. Twenty-eight percent of commitments were 40 to 64 years old and 26% were 30 to 39 years old.

At their commitment, the average (mean) age for all offenders was 33 years old. Specifically, male offenders on average were 33 years old; the average (mean) age for females at commitment was 34 years old. Male ages ranged from 17 to 84, and female ages ranged from 17 to 66.

### 2008 Commitments: Age at Commitment by Gender



<b>2008 Commitments: Race/Ethnicity (self-reported) by Gender</b>						
	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
White	564	64%	8,469	55%	9,033	56%
Black	180	20%	3,373	22%	3,553	22%
Hispanic	99	11%	2,744	18%	2,843	18%
Unknown	27	3%	378	2%	405	3%
Other	7	1%	183	1%	190	1%
Asian	4	0%	90	1%	94	1%
Native American	4	0%	27	0%	31	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15,264</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16,149</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: Some Houses of Correction do not report Hispanic ethnicity. Because of this, the number of Hispanics indicated in the table above may be underreported.

- The majority of the HOC new court commitments self-reported a race/ethnicity of white (56%), followed by Black (22%) and Hispanic (18%).
- Approximately 70% (n = 11,191) of HOC new court commitments had a self-reported place of birth in Massachusetts. Seventeen percent reported a place of birth in other U.S. states (n = 2,689), with an additional 9% (n = 1,411) reporting a U.S. territory. Five percent (n = 858) reported being foreign born.
- The majority of new court commitments reported a marital status of single (63%, n = 10,169). Fewer than 10% reported statuses of married (9%, n = 1,452), divorced (8%, n = 1,232) and separated (2%, n = 385). It should be noted however, that 18% (n = 2,859) of new court commitments did not report a marital status.

**2008 Commitments: Last Grade Completed (Self-Reported) by Gender**

	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
3rd Grade or Less	4	0%	88	1%	92	1%
4th Grade	2	0%	26	0%	28	0%
5th Grade	1	0%	50	0%	51	0%
6th Grade	4	0%	79	1%	83	1%
7th Grade	12	1%	190	1%	202	1%
8th Grade	32	4%	458	3%	490	3%
9th Grade	84	9%	1,171	8%	1,255	8%
10th Grade	81	9%	1,712	11%	1,793	11%
11th Grade	122	14%	2,170	14%	2,292	14%
12th Grade	270	31%	6,776	44%	7,046	44%
Some College	118	13%	1,110	7%	1,228	8%
College Graduate	14	2%	303	2%	317	2%
Graduate School	4	0%	49	0%	53	0%
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>14,182</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>14,930</b>	<b>92%</b>
Unknown	137	15%	1,082	7%	1,219	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15,264</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16,149</b>	<b>100%</b>

Excluding the 8% (n = 1,219) of HOC new court commitments where a last grade completed was not reported, 58% (n = 8,644) reported having a twelfth grade education or higher. Forty-two percent (n = 6,286) reported having a last grade completed of eleventh grade or less.

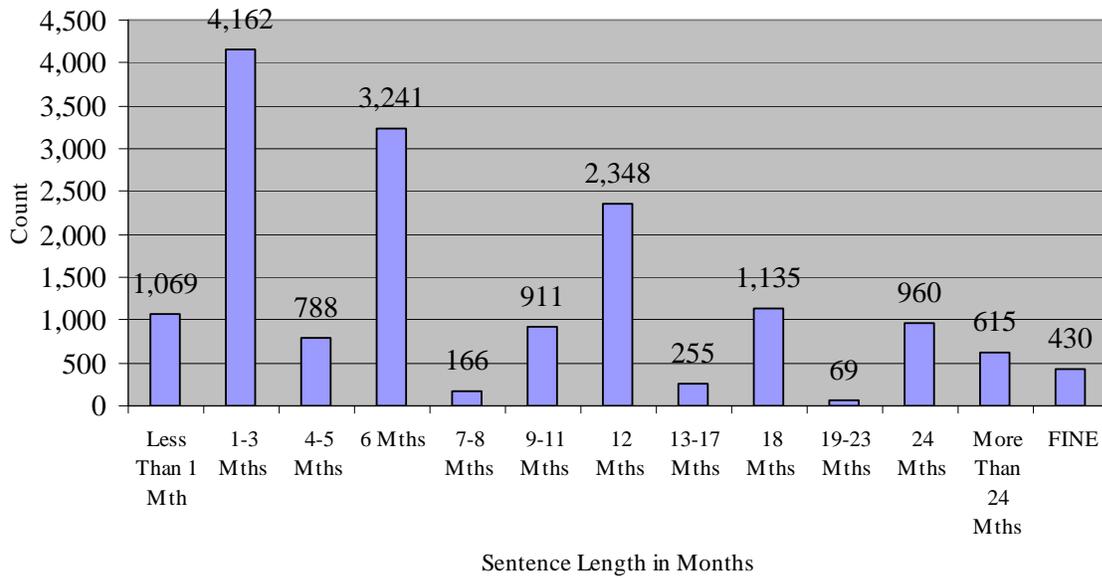
<b>2008 Commitments: Female Top 10 MA City/Town Last Known Address (Self-Reported)</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Boston	146	16%
Springfield	128	14%
Fall River	67	8%
New Bedford	45	5%
Pittsfield	34	4%
Outside MA	32	4%
Holyoke	30	3%
Chicopee	21	2%
North Adams	20	2%
Taunton	19	2%
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>61%</b>
Other MA Cities/Towns	343	39%
<b>Total</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>2008 Commitments: Male Top 10 MA City/Town Last Known Address (Self-Reported)</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Boston	2,195	14%
Springfield	1,191	8%
Worcester	865	6%
Outside MA	592	4%
Fall River	506	3%
Brockton	436	3%
New Bedford	423	3%
Lynn	398	3%
Lawrence	387	3%
Holyoke	303	2%
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>7,296</b>	<b>48%</b>
Other MA Cities/Towns	7,968	52%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,264</b>	<b>100%</b>

Excluding commitments to ‘other’ Massachusetts communities, the most common last known addresses reported by females were Boston (16%) and Springfield (14%); males reported Boston (14%), Springfield (8%) and Worcester (6%).

Not all counties house their female inmates, resulting in a disproportionate number of inmates from some Massachusetts communities.

**2008 Commitments: Sentence Length**



In 2008, 57% of male commitments had a sentence of six months or less, 21% had a sentence of seven months through one year and 19% had sentences of more than one year. In comparison, 66% of female commitments had a sentence of six months or less, 18% had sentences of seven months through one year and 12% percent had a sentence of more than one year. Four percent of females and 3% of males were committed in lieu of payment of a fine.

**2008 Commitments: Sentence Length by Gender**

	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less Than 1 Month	51	6%	1,018	7%	1,069	7%
1 to 3 Months	260	29%	3,902	26%	4,162	26%
4 to 5 Months	75	8%	713	5%	788	5%
6 Months	200	23%	3,041	20%	3,241	20%
7 to 8 Months	7	1%	159	1%	166	1%
9 to 11 Months	41	5%	870	6%	911	6%
12 Months	112	13%	2,236	15%	2,348	15%
13 to 17 Months	9	1%	246	2%	255	2%
18 Months	35	4%	1,100	7%	1,135	7%
19 to 23 Months	2	0%	67	0%	69	0%
24 Months	42	5%	918	6%	960	6%
More Than 24 Months	16	2%	599	4%	615	4%
Fine	35	4%	395	3%	430	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15,264</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16,149</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: Offense and sentence information reported in this brief represent the governing offense recorded by the county facility. The governing offense represents the offense which carries the longest sentence. For counties that report multiple sentences, the MADOC makes the determination of which sentence is the governing offense.

**2008 Commitments: Offense Category by Gender**

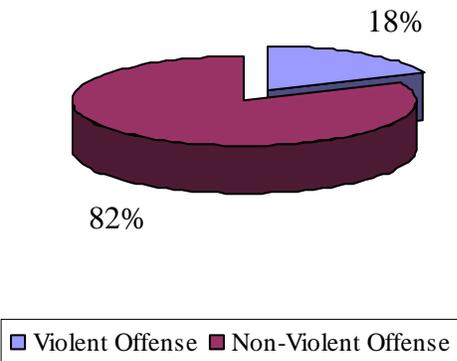
	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Person	157	18%	3,127	20%	3,284	20%
Sex	4	0%	433	3%	437	3%
Property	239	27%	3,308	22%	3,547	22%
Drug	204	23%	2,882	19%	3,086	19%
Other	281	32%	5,514	36%	5,795	36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15,264</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16,149</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: Offense and sentence information reported in this brief represent the governing offense recorded by the county facility. The governing offense represents the offense which carries the longest sentence. For counties that report multiple sentences, the MADOC makes the determination of which sentence is the governing offense.

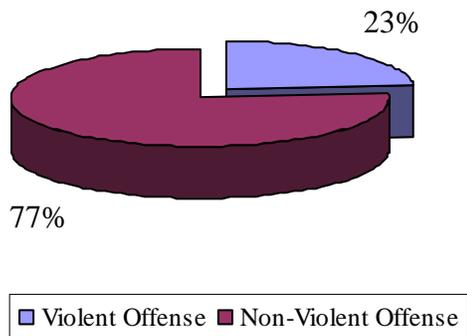
In 2008, new female commitments had higher percentages of Property and Drug offenses than their male counterparts, comprising 50% of all female commitments. New male commitments had higher percentages of Person, Sex, and Other offenses.

As seen in the charts below, the majority of both male and female new court commitments were convicted of non-violent offenses (Property, Drug and Other). Twenty-three percent (n = 3,560) males and 18% (n = 161) of females were convicted of violent offenses (Person and Sex).

**2008 Commitments: Violent vs. Non-Violent Female Offenses**



**2008 Commitments: Violent vs. Non-Violent Male Offenses**



The top ten offenses account for approximately two-thirds of the offense for which individuals are committed to the counties.

The most frequent offense for which male new court commitments were incarcerated was Assault/Assault and Battery (13%) followed by Other Motor Vehicle Offenses (10%). The most frequent offense for female new court commitments was Larceny/Stealing (11%) followed by Assault/Assault and Battery (10%).

**2008 Commitments: Female Top 10 Offenses**

	Female	
	N	%
Larceny/Stealing	99	11%
Assault/A&B	85	10%
Prostitution	72	8%
Unlawful Possession Class B	61	7%
Other Motor Vehicle Offenses	58	7%
Class B - Dist Or Possession W/Intent To Distribute	57	6%
OUI Alcohol Or Drugs, With Or Without Injury	56	6%
Assault/A&B W/ A Dangerous Weapon	42	5%
Unlawful Possession Class A	37	4%
Other Decency/Public Peace Crimes	35	4%
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>68%</b>
Other Offenses	283	32%
<b>Total</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>100%</b>

**2008 Commitments: Male Top 10 Offenses**

	Male	
	N	%
Assault/A&B	1,933	13%
Other Motor Vehicle Offenses	1,530	10%
OUI Alcohol Or Drugs, With Or Without Injury	1,190	8%
Unarmed Burglary/Breaking & Entering	964	6%
Larceny/Stealing	954	6%
Assault/A&B W/ A Dangerous Weapon	815	5%
Class B - Dist Or Possession W/Intent To Dist	776	5%
Unlawful Possession Class B	553	4%
Other Decency/Public Peace Crimes	494	3%
Unlawful Possession Class D	441	3%
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>9,650</b>	<b>63%</b>
Other Offenses	5,614	37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,264</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Definitions**

*Current Offense:* Inmates may be incarcerated for multiple offenses. The offense reported is that associated with the longest maximum sentence. Offense labels can be found in the Appendix and are listed in alphabetical order by offense category.

*Race/Ethnicity:* Other category includes a small number of cases each year where race/ethnicity is unknown. It is likely that a large number of inmates who report their race as 'other' may belong in the Hispanic category; however that category has been phased out as an option for race due to a change in federal law. Hispanic is available as an Ethnicity, but sometimes this information is not reported.

*Marital Status:* The categories "Common Law", "Cohabitant", and "Life Partner" are combined into the category labeled "Common Law" for this report.

#### **Sentence Type**

*Fine:* Offender was given a fine, but because he or she was unwilling or unable to pay the fine, is serving time in prison.

*Simple:* One sentence received for a single offense.

#### **Drug Types**

*Class A:* Heroin and morphine

*Class B:* Cocaine; opium, amphetamines, barbiturates, and PCP

*Class C:* Hallucinogens (LSD, hashish)

*Class D:* Marijuana

*Class E:* Prescription drugs

*No Class Specified:* Type of drug is not indicated by the sentence