

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.

Explaining the Decline in the Federal Custody Population

Declines in the federal custody population are a result of efficient preparation for safe release and effective case management

Why we are doing this study

Over the past five years, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has seen a noteworthy decline (-1,257 or 8.7%) in the federal in-custody population from 15,224 at year-end in 2012-13 to **13,967** in 2017-18. On the other hand, there has been a substantial rise (+1,539 or 20.2%) in the conditional release supervision population from 7,628 at year-end in 2012-13 to **9,167** in 2017-18. Understanding why changes in custodial trend lines have occurred can facilitate the allocation of operational resources.

What we did

Historical year-end federal institutional and community supervision counts are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized (CRS-M). Similarly, historical counts of federal admissions and releases are also recorded in CRS-M.

Data was extracted from CRS-M (April 15, 2018) to establish a five-year trend (2012-13 to 2017-18) of the flows into and out of federal custody. Then, a closer examination of the nature of the turnover (admissions/releases) in the population was undertaken.

What we found

Overall, admissions to federal custody have dropped from **8,069** in 2012-13 to **6,960** in 2017-18; a substantial difference of **-1,109** (or -13.7%). When unpacking this decline by type of federal admission it is notable that returns to federal custody through conditional release revocations have dropped substantially from **2,893** in 2012-13 to **2,125** in 2017-18, a difference of **-768** (or -26.5%). The decline in conditional release revocations accounts for 69% of the drop in total federal admissions.

On the other hand, total releases from federal custody appear to have declined from **7,845** in 2012-13 to **7,511** in 2017-18. Again, unpacking total releases by type it is noteworthy that there has been a steady rise in day parole releases from **1,828** in 2012-13 to **2,621** in 2017-18; a difference of **+793** (or +43.4%). This is in marked contrast

to the decline in statutory releases from **5,588** in 2012-13 to **4,429** in 2017-18; a difference of **-1,159** (or -20.7%). While it may appear that there has been a decrease in the number of conditional releases, there has been a substantial increase in earlier releases on day parole resulting in less days spent incarcerated for a considerable portion of the federal offender population.

National Population Flows: 2012-2013 to 2017-18

Fiscal Year	Total Admissions	Admissions (Revocation)	Total Releases	Releases (Day Parole)
2012-13	8,069	2,893	7,845	1,828
2013-14	7,900	2,715	7,995	1,882
2014-15	7,397	2,503	7,827	1,975
2015-16	7,449	2,476	7,919	2,130
2016-17	7,154	2,146	7,837	2,527
2017-18	6,960	2,125	7,511	2,621

What it means

Notwithstanding the fact that more federal offenders have been released earlier in their sentence and managed safely in the community, it is the combined efforts at efficient preparation for safe release and effective case management that has resulted in a significant decline in the federal in-custody population.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#) or contact us by phone at (613) 995-3975.

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

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