

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.

Pandemic Era Impacts on the Federal Supervision Populations

Substantial pandemic era declines in federal supervision populations were experienced by men, women and across regions.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of two fiscal years, marked by the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced a substantial decline (-1,392 or 10.1 %) in the federal in-custody population from 13,720 at year-end in 2019-20 to **12,328** in 2021-22. Similarly, there was also a sizable decline (-903 or 9.6%) in the community supervision population from 9,382 at year-end in 2019-20 to **8,479** in 2021-22.

What we did

Historical federal institutional and community supervision counts are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized (CRS-M). Data were extracted (April 14, 2022) to establish a three-year trend (2019-20 to 2021-22) of the in-custody and community supervision counts for federally sentenced (two years or more) men, women and across the five different administrative regions of CSC: Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies and Pacific.

What we found

Overall, official counts of the federal in-custody population dropped significantly during the pandemic era. In-custody men¹ declined by 1,295 inmates or 10% from 13,035 in 2019-20 to 11,740 in 2021-22. In-custody women declined by 97 inmates or 14% from 685 in 2019-20 to 588 in 2021-22.

As reflected in Table 1, when unpacking the custodial decline by region, it is notable that there is wide variation from a high of 18.9% in the Pacific region to a low of 2.8% in the Quebec region.

Table 1: Federal In-custody

	Atl.	Que.	Ont.	Pra.	Pac.	Total
19-20	1,274	2,684	3,823	3,945	1,994	13,720
20-21	1,110	2,454	3,293	3,812	1,730	12,399
21-22	1,057	2,608	3,285	3,761	1,617	12,328
Net	-217	-76	-538	-184	-377	-1,392
Change	17.0%	2.8%	14.1%	4.7%	18.9%	10.1%

Source: CRS-M.

As well, the official counts of the federal community supervision fell significantly during the pandemic era. Men² under community supervision men declined by 815 inmates or 9.4% from 8,651 in 2019-20 to 7,836 in 2021-22. Community supervision women declined by 88 offenders or 12% from 731 in 2019-20 to 643 in 2021-22.

In Table 2, for those under community supervision the Quebec region had the greatest decline of 19.4% whereas the Ontario region actually experienced a slight increase.

Table 2: Federal Community Supervision

	Atl.	Que.	Ont.	Pra.	Pac.	Total
19-20	887	2,257	2,583	2,255	1,400	9,382
20-21	861	2,104	2,673	2,130	1,345	9,113
21-22	822	1,830	2,593	1,937	1,297	8,479
Net	-65	-437	+10	-318	-103	-903
Change	7.3%	19.4%	0.4%	5.1%	7.4%	9.6%

Source: CRS-M

Notes:

¹ Men in-custody was adjusted by 3 due to category other.

² Men community supervision was adjusted by 1 due to category other.

What it means

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic period, it is clear that there had been a sustained downward trend in the federal supervision population. It appears that with co-occurring reductions in federal admissions and returns, ongoing and targeted efforts at case preparation for safe release, and effective case management in the community when taken together resulted in a pronounced reduction in the number of federal inmates during the pandemic period. Moreover, this effect has translated over time into more successful expiration of sentences for those conditionally released and therefore under community supervision.

For more information

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

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk

