

# Intimate Partner Violence among Offenders in Federal Custody

*Women, especially Indigenous women, in custody, frequently self-report being victimized by spousal abuse.*

## Why we are doing this study

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) administers sentences and provides rehabilitative opportunities to all offenders sentenced by the courts. A substantial number of federal offenders who present histories of intimate partner violence raises a variety of case management issues. Information on the amount of spousal violence among federal offenders as perpetrators and victims can help to place the situation in context and assist in the development of differentiated approaches for managing them.

## What we did

CSC routinely collects information on offenders under federal jurisdiction (those serving sentences of two years or longer). Data were extracted from the Offender Management System in relation to having perpetrated or been victimized by spousal abuse, as reported in the Dynamic Factors Identification and Analysis – Revised component of the Offender Intake Assessment process. These 2021 in-custody and 2018-19 admission figures reflect the prevalence of these characteristics.

## What we found

In Table 1, statistics show that the number and percentage in-custody and admitted who have perpetrated spousal violence. Overall, men were more likely than women were to have perpetrated partner violence. Also noteworthy, Indigenous men and women in federal custody display higher percentages of spousal violence than their non-Indigenous counterparts do. The data indicate that the flow into federal corrections is continuing.

Table 1: Perpetrated Spousal Violence (%)

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Overall
<b>In-custody</b>	<b>1,455 / 2,863 (50.8%)</b>	<b>2,137 / 5,645 (37.9%)</b>	<b>3,592 / 8,508 (42.2%)</b>
Men	1,391 / 2,692 (51.7%)	2,089 / 5,633 (37.1%)	3,480 / 8,125 (42.8%)
Women	64 / 171 (37.4%)	48 / 212 (22.6%)	112 / 383 (29.2%)
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>1,111 / 2,215 (50.0%)</b>	<b>1,792 / 5,311 (38.0%)</b>	<b>2,903 / 7,526 (39.0%)</b>
Men	1,041 / 2,019 (50.8%)	1,736 / 5,058 (34.3%)	2,777 / 7,077 (39.2%)
Women	70 / 196 (35.7%)	56 / 253 (22.1%)	126 / 449 (28.1%)

Table 2 shows that the number and percentage of men and women who have been victims of spousal abuse. Not surprising is the observation that women are much more likely than men in-custody to have been victimized by spousal abuse. However, the very high percentage (78.6%) of Indigenous women in federal custody victimized by intimate partner violence is alarming. Again, the data indicates that there is a continual flow into federal corrections of women with this lived experience.

Table 2: Victimized by Spousal Abuse (%)

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Overall
<b>In-custody</b>	<b>660 / 2,870 (22.9%)</b>	<b>747 / 5,692 (13.1%)</b>	<b>1,407 / 8,562 (16.4%)</b>
Men	513 / 2,683 (19.1%)	601 / 5,472 (11.0%)	1,114 / 8,155 (13.7%)
Women	147 / 187 (78.6%)	146 / 220 (66.4%)	293 / 407 (72.0%)
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>588 / 2,218 (26.5%)</b>	<b>753 / 5,357 (14.1%)</b>	<b>1,341 / 7,575 (17.7%)</b>
Men	440 / 2,011 (21.9%)	576 / 5,096 (11.3%)	1,016 / 7,077 (14.4%)
Women	148 / 207 (71.4%)	117 / 261 (44.8%)	325 / 468 (69.4%)

## What it means

Clearly, there are some important differences in both the numbers and percentages of men and women offenders with respect to their experiences of intimate partner violence. The disproportionate amount of intimate partner violence faced by Indigenous women offenders is consistent with a 2018 Statistics Canada survey that indicated that 63% for Indigenous women had lived experiences of intimate partner violence. This suggests that CSC continue to develop a range of strategies that offers variation in services. Further research on this finding and its consequences is warranted.

## For more information

For questions and/or more information please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

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