

Aroostook County Jail Advisory Committee Agenda

July 15, 2025

10:00 AM

Caribou Courthouse – Administrative Hearing Room and via Zoom

Zoom Meeting ID: 832 8273 4837 Passcode: 944589

AGENDA

1. Call to order and introductions.
2. Discuss Jail Advisory Committee purpose and goals.
3. Review of Jail Study Commission member list.
4. Review of the 2024 NIC Jail Needs Assessment & 2025 Justice Planners Jail Needs Assessment.
5. Overview of Zencity engagement platform.
6. Scheduling of jail tour and discuss next steps.
7. Adjournment.

Jail Study Commission Members

Donald Guimond – Committee Chair, Retired Town Manager, Fort Kent

Commissioner William Dobbins, District 1

Sheriff Peter Johnson, Aroostook County

Lt. Brian Harris, Troop F, Maine State Police

Chief Matthew Cummings, Fort Fairfield Police Department

Carroll Theriault – Town Councilor, Fort Kent

Penny Thompson, City Manager, Caribou

Janet Bradbury, Town Manager, Blaine

Kai Libby, Retired Customs & Border Patrol

Todd Collins, District Attorney, Aroostook County

Heidi Rackliffe, Program Director, ACAP



Jail and Justice System Assessment

A National Institute of Corrections Technical Assistance
Report for Aroostook County, ME Sheriff's Office

Technical Resource Providers:

Karen Albert
Roger Lichtman

July 23, 2024

Final

Jail and Justice System Assessment



DISCLAIMER

This technical assistance activity was funded by the Jails Division of the National Institute of Corrections. The Institute is a federal agency established to provide assistance to strengthen state and local correctional agencies by creating more effective, humane, safe, and just correctional services. The resource persons who provided the on-site technical assistance did so through a contract, at the request of the requesting agency, and through the coordination of the National Institute of Corrections. The direct on-site assistance and the subsequent report are intended to assist the agency in addressing issues outlined in the original request and in efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the agency. The contents of this document reflect the views of technical resource providers. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the National Institute of Corrections.



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Jail and Justice System Assessment

Section 1. Background

Request for Technical Assistance

County Administrator Ryan Pelletier and former Sheriff Shawn Gillen submitted a request for a Jail and Justice System Assessment (JJSA) from the National Institute of Corrections (NIC). Karen Albert and Roger Lichtman were contracted by NIC to deliver the on-site technical assistance on June 18-20, 2024. Mr. Lichtman and Ms. Albert coordinated arrangements for the visit and technical assistance activities with the County Administrator Ryan Pelletier.

Jail and Justice System Assessment (JJSA)

JJSA Purpose and Goals

Jurisdictions frequently request the JJSA because the jail is “crowded,” and, as such, under some scrutiny. It is important to note, that jail officials are rarely able to control the flow of inmates in and out of the jail. Policy and practice in the individual justice system components (i.e., law enforcement, prosecution, courts) are the primary drivers of the inmate population. Moreover, although the jail possesses a wealth of information about how the rest of the system is operating, jail staff are often unaware that the information they have in the data they routinely collect will reflect the impact of those system policies and practices. In the meantime, the rest of the criminal justice system is sure it is managing their role in the system the best it can, and often feels taxed to the limit. Oftentimes, key criminal justice partners work well as individuals to respond to the growing crowding issues without fully understanding the potential impacts on the other system components, including changing their policies to implement measures that may negatively impact crowding.

National Institute of Corrections



The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) is a small federal agency within the Department of Justice, Bureau of Prisons. NIC was established in the 1970's to be the primary federal source of assistance to state and local correctional agencies. The Jails Division of NIC helps local jails across the country by providing training, technical assistance, and information services.

Jail and Justice System Assessment



The purpose of the JJSA is to determine the need for improvements to the existing jail and its operations (including the potential need for new construction, expansion, and/or renovation), and to determine the need for improvements to enhance the effectiveness of the overall justice system. This is accomplished through an assessment of the jail against professional standards and accepted management practices, and an examination of the major components of the justice system including law enforcement, courts, prosecution, defense counsel, and community sanctioning options.

The JJSA demonstrates to the stakeholders that beyond their common purpose, they can impact the overall criminal justice system by implementing measures to reduce the jail population. The jail benefits by better population management; the other components benefit by sharing information and minimizing redundancy; and all will be working smarter, not just harder.

The JJSA helps to assess how well the system is handling the demands it faces; determine if the existing services and programs are meeting their needs and are consistent with public safety (the community's) concerns; and make sure those programs are having the desired impact on the system, and more specifically, the jail population.

The ultimate goal of the JJSA is to provide the jurisdiction with a solid, unbiased assessment of the condition of the jail and what opportunities could exist in the long term, and what can be done in the interim period that will assist in making the jail safer and possibly a more efficient operation.

JJSA Activities

The JJSA process includes a brief assessment of the jail, a review of selected jail and system data, interviews with key criminal justice officials, and a community meeting -- all of which occur over a three-day period when the NIC technical resource providers (TRP) are present in the community. The community meeting provides an opportunity to:

- Educate the participants about the role of justice system policies and practices on the use of the jail and the size of the jail population;
- Provide participants with the technical resource providers' preliminary findings based on the jail assessment and interviews;
- Provide participants with some preliminary options to address jail and other criminal justice system needs; and
- Provide a forum for participants to share their concerns and ideas about the issues raised and initiate discussions about planning for change.



Preparations for the On-Site Visit

Prior to the on-site visit, Karen Albert contacted Jail Administrator Ryan Pelletier to get further detail on the County's expectations and desired outcomes for the JJSA. Administrator Pelletier advised that the request for the JJSA was prompted by a need to address a fluctuating inmate population in the Aroostook County Detention Center (jail), lack of appropriate types of housing for inmates – especially females, and more violent and special needs inmates, and the need for strategies to educate the community to gain their support in addressing gaps in services and for potential funding to address these issues. Past initiatives to increase bed capacity have failed, due in part to the lack of community involvement in the program. The JJSA was requested as a way to continue the community discussion about these issues.

These discussions resulted in the following scope of work for the Jail and Justice System Assessment:

- Make necessary preparations for the onsite visit;
- Conduct an entrance meeting with key staff to gather additional background information, review the desired outcomes for the JJSA, and confirm the agenda for the three-day site visit;
- Conduct a brief tour of the Aroostook County Detention Center to get an overall perspective of issues and conditions;
- Interview key justice system officials including at a minimum the sheriff, prosecutor, public defender, judges, police, and probation;
- Facilitate a town hall meeting to present information about the local jail and the impact of system policies and practices on its use; present preliminary assessment findings, review jail and system data; present information about the facility development process, and discuss community readiness for planning;
- Conduct an exit meeting with key stakeholders to review the site visit activities and discuss next steps; and
- Prepare a technical assistance report outlining the findings and recommendations developed pursuant to the JJSA.

To prepare for the onsite visit the technical resource providers:

- Outlined the necessary on-site preparations for the local point of contact, including a draft of an onsite agenda and list of persons to be interviewed;
- Developed and forwarded structured interview questions for those justice officials scheduled for interviews;
- Requested selected jail trend and snapshot data;
- Reviewed the pre-JJSA survey completed or coordinated by Sheriff Johnson;
- Reviewed and conducted preliminary analysis of jail data provided by the sheriff's office;
- Prepared an agenda (Appendix A) and slides for the community meeting;
- Gathered available statistics on county population, arrests, and court filings; and
- Finalized and confirmed the overall agenda for the JJSA with the local point of contact.

Jail and Justice System Assessment



The following documents were reviewed during this activity:

- JJSA technical resource materials;
- County jail population data;
- Various documents and reports providing information about criminal justice activity within Aroostook County.

The following persons completed a questionnaire or were interviewed during the on-site visit:

- Ryan Pelletier, County Administrator
- Pete Johnson, Sheriff
- Matthew Cummings, Chief, Town of Fort Fairfield Police
- Michael DeLena, Chief, Fort Kent Police Department
- Chris Hayes, Chief, Presque Isle Police Department
- Adam Pinette, Adult Probation and Parole Officer, Region III
- Brandy Fuller, Aroostook County Community Correction Program, Supervisor
- Billie-Jo Caron, Aroostook County Community Corrections Program, Case Manager
- Craig Clossey, Commander, Sheriff's Office
- Shanna Morrison, Sergeant, Sheriff's Office Support
- Todd Collins, District Attorney
- Toby Jandreau, Public Defender
- Bryan Jandreau, Facilities and IT Director
- Heidi Rackliffe-Aroostook County Action Program, Director of Programs
- Jail Study Commission members
- Julia Macek, Aroostook Mental Health Services, Program Director
- Melissa Caminiti, Groups Partnership Director
- Various other Aroostook County Detention Center staff
- Various inmates.

Several of the above-named, along with other officials, attended the Town Hall Meeting as well. A list of the planning meeting participants is included in Appendix B.

The TRPs met via video conferencing with the Jail Commission team on December 7th, 2023 and conducted the onsite visit June 18-20, 2024.

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to document:

- The technical resource providers' (TRPs) impressions regarding the jail facilities and operations;
- The TRPs assessment of local criminal justice system practices and use of alternatives;
- A summary of the interviews conducted with key criminal justice officials;
- A summary of the Town Hall Meeting held during the JJSA in Aroostook County; and



- The technical resource providers' recommendations regarding the planning process and the steps that should occur to develop a long range plan to meet the County's correctional needs.

Section 2. Community Profile

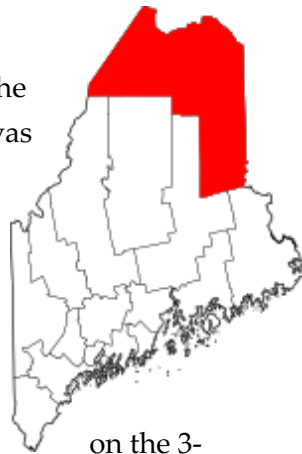
Developing a Community Profile should include a review of county census information and projections, including population by age, income levels, level of education attainment, employment data and recent increases or decreases in the population. Data affecting population stability; i.e. number of people moving into/out of the county per year, employment rates, family ties to the area should also be reviewed.

Community resources such as health and social services, schools, employment services, etc. should also be surveyed and documented. These are services and resources that may assist the jail and related inmate programs in addressing needs and reducing recidivism.

Following is a brief presentation of the types of information that is representative of what might be included in a Community Profile.

Overview of Aroostook County

Aroostook County is in northern Maine along the Canada-United State Border. The population was 67,105 in 2020.¹ The county seat is in Houlton, yet the largest city is Presque Isle, ME. The county is 6,800 square miles of land making it the largest county in Maine and the largest in the United States east of the Mississippi river.



The establishment and adoption of policy falls on the 3-member Board of County Commissioners, and the execution of

Community Profile



In order to accurately assess the historical growth in the inmate population, as well as to project that growth into the future, it is necessary to assess the factors external to the criminal justice system that impact the jail population. These include general population changes, economy, crime and other social factors, and changes in laws and/or enforcement priorities. For example, increases in the number of people in the population at-risk (younger, less affluent, less educated people, more transient) are assumed to adversely affect the jail population.

¹ "Census - Geography Profile: Aroostook County, Maine". United States Census Bureau. Retrieved November 21, 2021.



policy is the responsibility of the County Administrator who is appointed solely based on executive and administrative qualifications.

The Treasurer, Sheriff, Registers of Deeds, District Attorney, Judge of Probate and the Register of Probate, are elected pursuant to the Constitution and laws of the State of Maine. All actions relating to personnel, fiscal matters and general administration of the County shall be accomplished in cooperation with the County Administrator.

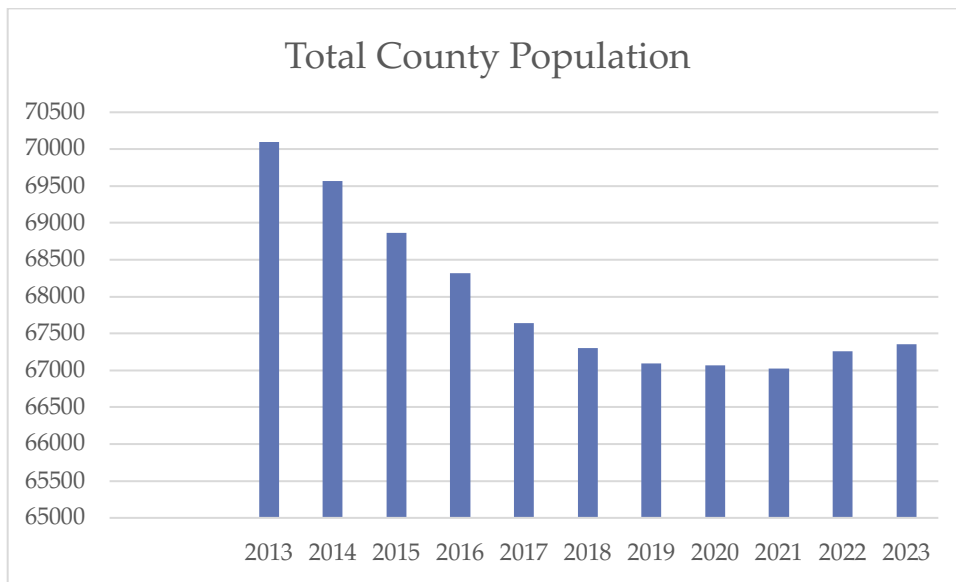
County Board serves as the taxing authority, the contracting body, and the chief administrators of public funds. Among other duties, the County Board enacts laws, ensures compliance of laws, and secures professional services for the county.

Population Profile

Historical Population Trends and Projections

The county population according to the 2010 U.S. Census was 71,870. The population has been relatively stable over the past four years.

Aroostook County Historical Population Trends



Components of Change

From 2013 to 2021 the Aroostook population decreased by approximately 3,000 residents, although there was a slight increase in 2022. It is useful to understand the components of population change because it offers insight into the causes of growth or decline, and it helps highlight important areas of inquiry. For example, are people drawn by the geographic location, services available in the community, work opportunities, etc.?



Demographics²

The following table provides a breakdown of the Aroostook County population by race in 2020.

<i>Race</i>	<i>Percent</i>
White	94.5%
American Indian	2%
Black	1.1%

The county population is predominately White (94.5%) according to U.S. Census Bureau 2020 population estimates. Individuals of American Indian ethnicity represent the next largest group at 2% of the county population. These figures are consistent with the total population in Maine. The county female population, at 50.1%, is comparable to the 50.7% rate for Maine, and 50.4% rate for the U.S.

The percentage of the county population 65 or older is 25.9% compared to Maine at 22.5% and the US at 17.3 percent. The demographics of the community are important to understand to identify the numbers and trends of at-risk age groups which are typically in their 20s and low 30s. The apparent aging of the Aroostook population may signal a trend in younger populations moving to larger cities, as reported by stakeholders interviewed, or there may be a correlation between the aging population represents the decline in the overall population.

Socioeconomic Profile³

Several indicators determine the economic health of a jurisdiction. No single indicator should be considered by itself. Rather, a range of indicators should be analyzed together to get a comprehensive view of the economy. Several indicators for Aroostook County, which are representative of the types of data essential to review when developing a Community Profile for Aroostook County, are presented below.

Income and Poverty

Aroostook County lags the state and U.S. in persons employed and has a higher poverty rate. The table that follows compares the county to the state and national statistics. The county poverty rate was 4.6% higher than the state rate.

Income and Poverty (2020)			
	<i>Aroostook County</i>	<i>Maine</i>	<i>U.S.</i>
Employed	53.8%	62%	63%
Poverty Rate	15.4%	10.8%	11.5%
No health Insurance	9%	8.4%	11.5%

² United States Census Bureau: American FactFinder. Retrieved from <http://factfinder.census.gov>

³ Ibid



Employment data can be an indicator of how well a county is faring in the current economic climate and how stressed individuals and families may be due to their economic condition. It would be helpful to understand the correlation between crime and the economy as it impacts both bed space needs for the jail and the ability of a county to pay the costs of incarceration and other public safety services. It is helpful to look at the rates over time to see if they are increasing or decreasing. Further investigation might provide insight into what may be driving the rates in either direction.

Education

Education is yet another factor that contributes to the overall community profile. Aroostook County compares favorably with the rest of Maine in its residents’ high school graduation rates

	Aroostook	Maine	US
High school graduate	90.6%	94.10%	89.1
Bachelor’s degree	21.4%	34.10%	34.3
Household w/ computer	87.5%	92.90%	98
Households w/ Internet subscription	77.4%	87.30%	88.3

County residents appear to lag behind the state and national average in attaining bachelor’s and advanced degrees. Households with a computer and Internet subscriptions significantly lag behind the state and nation, but this is consistent with other rural counties such as Washington and Piscataquis. Moreover, as Tony Gauvin, writes in “A Story of Five Counties”⁴ even the universities in Aroostook are “preparing rural students for urban jobs.” Despite this assertion, the county staff interviewed disagreed with Gauvin’s assessment.

Senate bill 3565 would allow the continuation of the Affordable Connectivity Program to extend funding which provides a monthly benefit that allows eligible low-income households to receive discounted Internet service. Affordable connectivity correlates positively with increased employment rates and earnings for low-income households.⁵ Lower educational attainment, along with economic stressors, are community risk factors that can impact public safety demands.

Community Resources

All communities have programs and services that serve at-risk and justice-involved individuals. Some may be used extensively by the justice system, while others exist as hidden resources waiting to be discovered.

⁴ Gauvin, T. *Rural Decline in Maine: A Story of Five Counties*. <https://internal.umfk.edu>

⁵ Michell, T. 2024. The End of the ACP: How MVNOs can navigate the changing funding landscape. Gigs.

Jail and Justice System Assessment



There was a general perception among the criminal justice stakeholders that there is not sufficient substance use disorder and mental health resources in the county to address the criminal justice need. This perception is described further throughout this report. The existing services, which are touted as effective by those interviewed, do not provide sufficient capacity to accommodate the populations in need. A particular need is residential treatment, and without such options, law enforcement is forced to disregard persons in need or choose jail bed space for the safety of the potential arrestee and the community. Lack of sufficient residential placements is further exacerbated by the distance local law enforcement officers must travel to obtain such services.

A community profile should include an inventory of community assets and resources that could serve justice-involved persons both in the jail and in community alternatives. An example of a format for gathering information about the programs and services that may be available in the community is presented on the following page.

Jail and Justice System Assessment



Criminal Justice System Program/Services Inventory									
Program	Operator	Purpose(s) Offered	Eligibility Criteria	Exclusionary Criteria	Referral Sources	Functional Capacity	Length of Stay	Ave. Per Diem Cost	Funding Source
Example: Domestic Violence Program	County	To decrease the prevalence and incidents of domestic violence, to educate and provide awareness of Domestic violence, emergency shelter and services as available	Victim of Domestic Violence or Sexual Assault	None	Application/self-referral, referrals from other domestic violence programs	Emergency shelter holds up to 3 families at a time, other services are open	Up to 90 days with follow up as needed	N/A	Federal and State



Section 3. Criminal Justice System Profile

In developing the criminal justice system profile, information describing current criminal justice agency staffing, resources, and workload is gathered and reviewed. Historical law enforcement data, including information on reported crime, crime rates, offense types, and law enforcement policies and practices is collected and analyzed.

Historical court data including information on court structure and schedules, misdemeanor and felony filings, etc. is also collected and analyzed.

Key criminal justice policymakers including the judges, probation, prosecuting attorney, public defender, the sheriff, jail administrator, and other local law enforcement agency representatives are typically interviewed to get their input and perspective on the needs of the criminal justice system and the jail.

The results of this review are used to develop the Criminal Justice System Profile.

Overview of Aroostook County Criminal Justice Agencies

Law Enforcement

The primary local law enforcement agencies in Aroostook County include the Aroostook County Sheriff's Office (Sheriff's Office), and the local police departments of Houlton, Presque Isle, Fort Fairfield, Fort Kent, Caribou, and Ashland. The Maine State Police, Maine Warden Service, Forestry Service, Border Patrol, and Customs and Border Protection also provide law enforcement in the County.

Each law enforcement agency asked to complete the questionnaire responded quickly. There is general agreement that there is a significant and growing population of persons with mental illness and/or substance abuse (i.e., opioids/heroin). Resources for

Criminal Justice System Profile



A justice system needs assessment should include a review of the overall functions and resources of the existing county criminal justice system with the intent of answering the following questions:

- How well is the current system working?
- Are existing services and programs used to their fullest extent and effectiveness?
- Are there apparent gaps in services and programs?
- Are cases processed through the system in a timely and efficient manner?
- How can the criminal justice system do a better job?

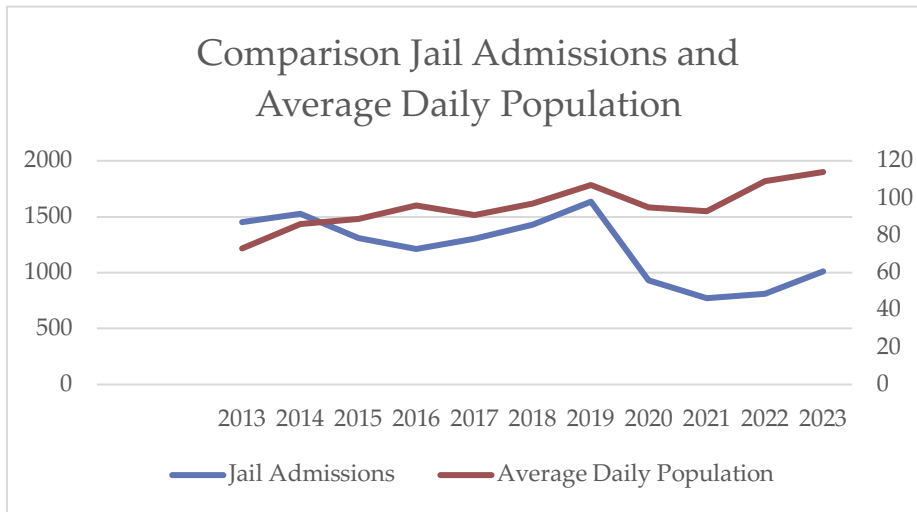
The results of this review are used to develop the Criminal Justice System Profile.



persons with mental health issues are reportedly limited for pre-adjudicated arrestees.

There was general agreement that law enforcement practices (e.g., number of arrests) are not influenced by jail crowding. However, the availability of resources such as detox centers or 24-hour local access to mental health care could potentially reduce the number of arrests.

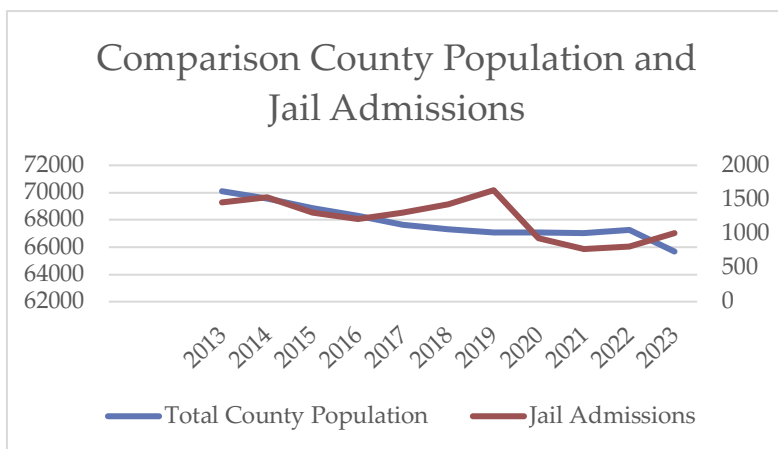
The figure below highlights the trend in arrests in Aroostook County as compared to the average daily jail population during the ten-year period of 2013 through 2023.



The number of arrests realized a steady increase from 2016 until 2020 - likely a result of COVID-19, and then a similar steady increase from 2021 to today. The average daily population has been somewhat consistent with the jail admission until 2020 when the jail admission dropped significantly, but the average daily population

decreased only slightly during this same time period. Since 2021, the average daily population has continued to increase at a high rate. Identifying the reason(s) for this increase can assist decision-makers in determining future bed needs.

The relationship between the county population and jail admission can also be telling. Judging from the table that follows there doesn't appear to be a correlation between the overall county population and the number of jail admissions. Despite the steady decrease in the overall population, jail admissions have increase over time except during COVID-19.



It is interesting that the county population and jail admissions were trending consistently from 2014 to 2016, and then from 2017 to 2019 there was a significant increase in jail population that did not trend with the county population. The jail admissions decreased significantly during the COVID-19 period because of the jail effectively being "closed" for new

admissions. However, since 2021, the jail admissions have increase at a trajectory comparable to 2017 –



2019. Determining the reason for the increase in the jail admissions during that period could signal a trend that should be monitored on an ongoing basis.

Courts

The role of the courts in managing the county criminal justice system cannot be overstated. Case processing, judicial decisions, and an understanding of the role of the jail can influence the number of inmates housed in the county jail.

Court managed pretrial programming, other than the Sheriff's Office's Aroostook County Community Corrections Program (ACCCP), has not been explored in the County, although many of the criminal justice partners (i.e., judges, district attorney, probation staff, etc.) appear to be amenable to exploring the benefits of such programs. The Sheriff's Office program affords otherwise incarcerated individuals an opportunity to participate in supervised release. The ACCCP is funded through the jail fund and includes four case managers including a supervisor. The program focuses on monitoring rather than treatment unless ordered by the court or desired by the client. Staff acknowledge the need for more substance use and mental health programs. There is a flat \$25 fee to participant in the program. Program violations are reported to the district attorney to determine if a motion to revoke will be issued. There are reportedly approximately 135 program participants in the program for 1-2 years depending on the charges.

Although one of the courts is collocated with the jail, video technology for conducting arraignments is being used since COVID-19. The use of video technology reduces the number of escorts into the courtroom, thereby improving overall courthouse security, and avoiding movement from the jail to the courthouse. While defense attorneys often question the merit of video technology due to inability to meet with clients, the attorneys interviewed indicated that the jail staff are exceptionally responsive to meeting their needs. Deference to attorneys was supported by program leaders who report that their visits are suspended upon arrival of attorneys.

Aside from commitment to either prison or jail, sentencing options are limited. The judiciary declined to visit with the technical resource providers, so the information provided relies on newspaper articles and interviews with other stakeholders. Moreover, there is an interest in exploring residential treatment programming.

Prosecutor

Maine district attorneys are the elected representatives of the state in all criminal and some juvenile matters. The primary responsibility of the district attorney, with his or her assistants, is to prosecute all criminal cases filed in the superior and district courts. Each district has at least four full-time assistant district attorneys. The district attorney and the assistant district attorneys are paid by the state and are not allowed to have their own private practice of law.



The Prosecutor's Office serving Aroostook County is part of region 8. In addition to the district attorney, there is one deputy, five assistants, five legal assistants, three victim-witness assistants, and one staff supervisor. District attorneys are responsible for prosecuting criminal cases in Region 8.

Public Defender

Recently, there has been concerns about the lack of attorneys to provide legal services to low-income people to provide for their constitutional right to counsel. Referred to as a "constitutional crisis,"⁶ The Maine Legislature unanimously passed legislation to create ten new public defenders, of which two will cover Aroostook, Piscataquis, and Penobscot counties.

While these attorneys will provide counsel during arraignment, the need for an assigned attorney post arraignment could continue to be an issue. The TRPs met with one defense attorney who commutes from the Portland area to Aroostook County to provide counsel to a defendant. The prosecutors confirm that many if not most cases are plea bargained. The data suggest that these agreements are made after the justice involved person has been incarcerated for several months.

Ongoing analysis of the case processing data must continue to determine which factors are barriers to inmates receiving defense counsel and trial in an expedient manner.

Parole and Probation

Maine Department of Corrections Community Corrections, i.e., Probation and Parole is a state agency responsible to supervise and case manage post-conviction clients who are either on probation or are still under supervision after being release from a county jail or state correction facility. Region 3 offices in Aroostook County are in Caribou, Houlton, Presque Isle. There is no county-level probation equivalent in the County.

As a general practice, pre-sentence investigations are not conducted. However, upon request of the court, probation officers are responsible for completing pre-sentence investigations, which are typically conducted within six weeks of a felony conviction, for use in a sentencing hearing.

Approximately 33% of the incarcerated persons are committed on a form of motion to revoke probation or probation revocations, of which many of the charges are drug related.

Community Corrections has a range of options available to manage persons in their charge. The range includes a "do nothing" approach to short jail stays. These options can potentially contribute to crowded conditions in the jail.

⁶ Abrahamson, R., 2024. More than 100 Mainers are in jail awaiting lawyers. The fix remains elusive. Morning Sentinel 2/25/2024.

Jail and Justice System Assessment



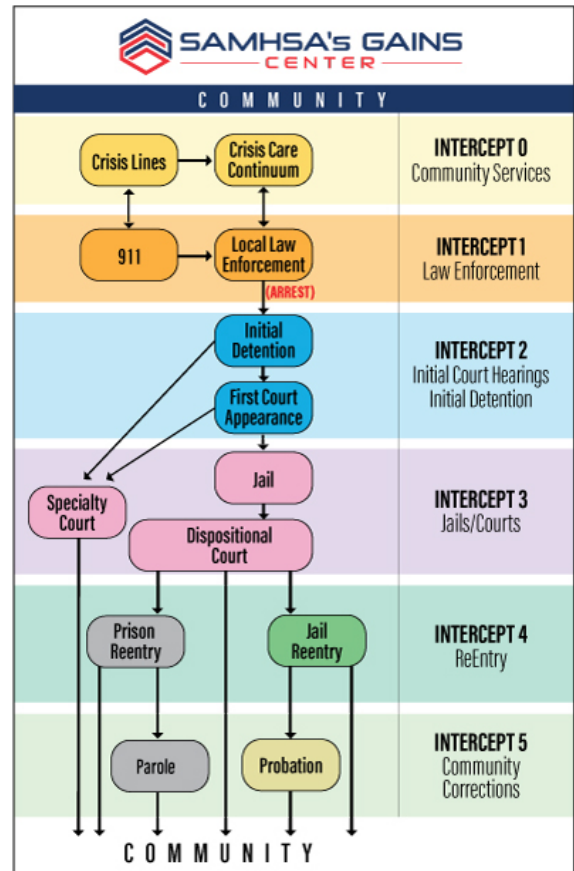
Transportation outside of the major cities is difficult in part due to limited times transportation is available. Transportation is not reportedly an issue for Community Corrections meetings, many of which are conducted via video. Services are not typically fee-based

Probation staff reported reasonable access to their probationers in the jail; however, meeting space is severely lacking. Staff most often meet with their clients in a small multipurpose/interview room.

Case Flow Mapping

Although it is beyond the scope of the JJSA, a criminal justice profile should include an assessment of the process by which cases move through the justice system. Case flow maps describe each of the steps and key decision points in the justice process and include such information as the policies and practices of agencies/officials involved at each stage, workload, policy and program options that may be available at each stage, average timelines, and any gaps or inefficiencies in the process.

Recommendations resulting from this case flow review may include changes in policies and practices, improvements in communication and coordination, and implementation of alternative programs and/or services. The goal is to identify opportunities for maximizing the efficiency and overall effectiveness of the justice system. See Appendix C for more information about the key decision points in the case flow process and the program and process options that may improve the functioning of the justice system and potentially reduce crowding in the jail. Alternatively, the Sequential Intercept Model provides a range of options or points where mental health and substance use interventions can be used to identify treatment needs.





Section 4. Jail Population Profile

Inmate Profile

The technical resource providers requested select jail data prior to the on-site visit. This section of the report provides a summary of the technical resource providers' preliminary analysis of the data provided. The data included a sampling of a one-day snapshot.

Below are several figures highlighting some of the key characteristics of the inmate population drawn from the data provided. The figures are representative of the types of profile information which should be collected and analyzed, but the analysis provided herein is based on a very limited amount of data.

Inmate Profile - Gender

The female population in the 2024 sample accounted for 14% of the total held – consistent with the national average of 13.4% for females in jail in 2021.⁷

Inmate Profile - Age

The inmate population in 2015 ranged from 19 to 84 years of age, with the average age of 37.

One-Day Snapshot – Residence

Most of the inmates in the one-day sample were County residents (84%). It is suspected that most of the out-of-county inmates are in surrounding counties. Given that information, it is likely that justice involved persons will return to the county.

One-Day Snapshot – Custody Status

Unlike contrarians in other communities, it appears after numerous discussions, that all stakeholders want to do what is right in terms of the jail and the justice system as a whole. According to our understanding, 95% of the jail detainees are non-adjudicated felons, and many have prior arrests. The jail population

Jail Population Profile



Data on the current jail population is collected and analyzed to develop a profile of its criminal, adjudication, behavioral, social, and demographic characteristics.

The profile is useful in several ways:

- Developing forecasts of space needs and specifications for detention and alternative programs;
- Identifying classifications of inmates based upon risk and offenses;
- Determining specific programs and services required to address inmate needs; and
- Developing strategies for managing inmates through a continuum of community sanctions and programs.

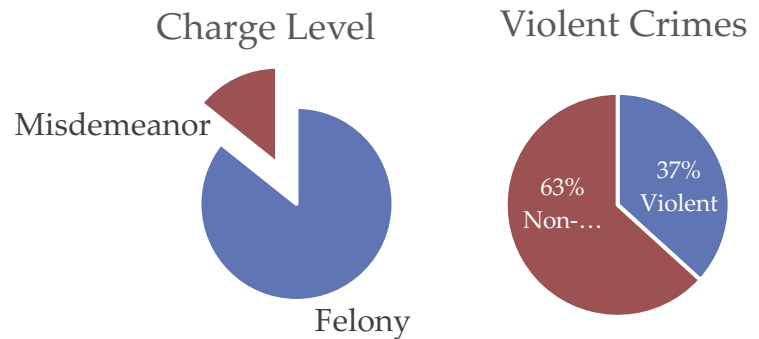
⁷ Jail Inmates in 2021 – Statistical Tables, Bureau of Justice Statistics. December 2022, NCJ 304 on Women Offenders-2015. Correctional Population in the United States, 2013-Bureau of Justice Statistics published December 19, 2014.



on the day of our visit was ~95, although the current ADP has been as high as 114 with a maximum design capacity of 117, and a functional capacity of 94.

One-Day Snapshot – Charge Type

An important consideration in managing the inmate population is determining whether the inmates are charged with violent or nonviolent crimes. Clearly managing a population of alleged violent inmates will be different than a population of nonviolent inmates. This data also informs the criminal justice partners of the potential to determine the types of beds necessary to manage the population as well as determining if some nonviolent inmates could be managed successfully in the community. The data collected for the one-day snapshot indicates that while more than 86% of the inmates are charged with a felony, only approximately one-third of the inmates are incarcerated for a violent crime. In many cases, the felonies are based on motions to revoke probation and/or drug related charges.



Implications for Planning

Inmate profile data provides a picture of who is in jail and their characteristics. This information is helpful in providing a breakdown of future housing needs by size, classification, and custody level. It also provides information about the types of risks and needs inmates present that the facility must be prepared to address.

Historical Trends

There appears to be a potential correlation between the average length of stay and the daily jail population. The average length of stay drivers, e.g., time to process cases, sentence length, time held pretrial should be monitored. This is a common occurrence with jail populations.

A responsive criminal justice system is fluid in its decision making to maximize sustainable jail population management. One of the difficulties with such a responsive approach is the outcome impacts of these decisions. A formal risk assessment is not conducted as part of the bond decision; however, a criminal history is conducted and provided to the judge at first appearance. Bond decisions

Jail and Justice System Assessment



are typically made based on (a) the likelihood the individual will appear in court, and (b) safety of the community.⁸ Data regarding bond amounts, appearance rates, and new arrests can help inform the criminal justice partners to avoid incarcerating people who merely do not have the ability to pay, and to confine those who present a risk to the community. A validated risk and needs assessment can support bail and bond decisions in Aroostook County.

⁸ It is assumed that community safety includes preventing the arrestee from influencing or intimidating witnesses.



Section 5. Facility Assessment

The Aroostook County Detention Center was opened originally in 1889. The facility resides in a building adjacent to the courthouse and across the street to the office of the Sheriff, who is responsible for operating the jail. The jail was expanded in 1985 to allow for a rated capacity of 85. The expansion was accommodated by relocating functions in the basement level to other areas and expanding further into the basement.

The jail is located in the southernmost of three population centers in the county. Located in the county seat of Houlton, the jail is approximately a one-hour drive from the largest population center, Presque Isle and an additional 20 minutes from Caribou. The jail, originally built in 1889, is well beyond its useful lifespan. Any non-detention building such as an office or school being utilized approximately eight to 10 hours per day has a useful lifespan of approximately 30 years based on allowable depreciation schedules. Obviously, with routine maintenance, buildings last well beyond that. A jail being utilized 24/7 may have an expected life span of one of a typical office or school building. However, with proper maintenance, jails can effectively function considerably longer periods. However, to expect a jail in a rural community with a harsh environment to function for 50 years, let alone 135 years is unrealistic.

The average daily population for 2022 was reportedly 85 inmates, but there has been an ongoing increase since COVID-19 such that the population averages 119 inmates. Space limitations existing in the facility hinder the ability to separate females based on their classification and custody levels and some separations of male inmates as needed due to classification or keep separates. The table that follows illustrates the total number of beds in relation to the functional capacity of 94 when considering peaking and classification factors.⁹ The trajectory of the population suggests

⁹ Average daily population is based on averages. Peaking factors represent 10% increase in the population accounting for times when the population exceeds the averages. The classification factor includes a 10% increase

Jail Assessment



A primary goal of a Jail Assessment is to compare and evaluate the performance of existing facilities with current and future needs. Building soundness and adaptability, living conditions and sanitation levels, fire and life safety, safety and security, programs and services, inmate classification and housing, compliance with standards, layout, and capacity are all considerations in conducting an assessment.

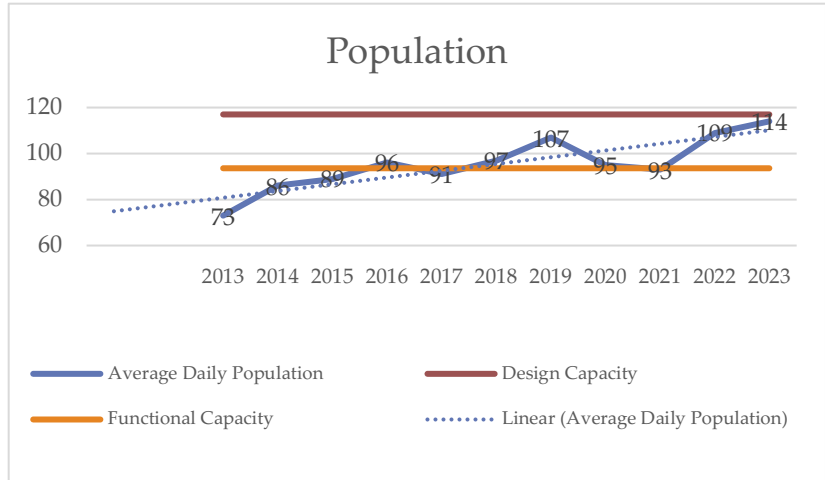
The assessment provides information for the jurisdiction to determine the need for facility improvements or the development of new facilities.



that the number of incarcerated persons will increase both in terms of jail admissions and average length of stay.

Access to the facility for new arrests is via a single-car vehicle sallyport. If there are multiple arrests during one incident, law enforcement may have to stage their vehicle outside of the sallyport until space is available.

Once inside the facility, the arrestee undergoes intake processing. The booking area includes open spaces



for computer booking, fingerprint and photo equipment and body scanner. There is no holding area in intake processing, so inmates must be moved following intake processing to housing. Staff use an Initial Housing Assignment Flowchart to determine appropriate housing.

Law enforcement officers report there is sufficient space to conduct intake process although this space was observed by the TRP as woefully insufficient due to the cramped space and lack of separation of the arrestee to the workstations.

Once booked, the inmate will typically be placed in the intake holding cell. Due to lack of appropriate housing, these spaces are also used for special needs and special management inmates (i.e., suicide watch, administrative segregation, medical, etc.)

Generally, housing is open dormitory with bunk beds. Housing is located on floors of the facility with access via stairs and one elevator resulting in inefficient staffing and limiting supervision of incarcerated persons. The single cell housing adjacent to booking provides for limited observation. Since suicidal and special management inmates occupy this space, these cells are camera monitored – along with numerous other monitors. While dormitory style housing is prevalent throughout the facility, visibility into the units is typically limited to the dayroom and not the multi-occupancy sleeping areas. This, in effect, linear design significantly restricts the ability for staff to effectively observe and actively supervise inmates.

Despite the crowded conditions, jail staff reports minimal incidents. It should be noted that the inmates observed and interviewed during the site visit were compliant, respectful, and answered

recognizing appropriate separations of males and females, high risk from low risk, and other separation factors. While a needs assessment would calculate the true peaking and classification factors, an industry “placeholder” of 20% is used to illustrate the need bed capacity to reflect population ebb and flows.



questions candidly and honestly – a credit to the jail staff who informed the inmates of the activities that were to occur during the onsite tours. All inmates interviewed indicated that they felt safe in their housing unit.

It is important to note that jail operations must meet the requirements of most other institutions and businesses, including environmental codes, fire codes, safety codes, building codes, clean air and smoke free requirements, accessibility requirements (ADA), food service sanitation codes, employee rights, laws and rules, and worker training and certification. In addition, however, jails are also responsible for complying with inmate rights, including the provisions of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA).¹⁰

Building Soundness and Adaptability

Given the age of the building, the technical resource providers noted that the physical plant has been well maintained and noted no significant structural problems. There are occasions of plumbing backups, and regular maintenance issues. Despite the advanced age of the building, the staff manages to keep it clean and functioning. Also, it is our understanding that as of late, staffing is at authorized levels. Further, the attitude of the staff is excellent, realizing they are fighting the physical plant daily and making the most of a bad situation.

Living Condition and Sanitation Levels

Generally, the facility is clean and orderly. The HVAC system seemed to be functioning properly. The facility was basically clean due in part to the conscientiousness of the staff. One workforce inmate is assigned to facility housekeeping functions. The lack of appropriate storage is a concern – both in terms of volume of storage and the types of items stored together. It is very difficult to keep vermin at bay when there is insufficient storage capacity in appropriate locations.

There is no outer drying area to the shower; inmates must exit the shower, obtain their towel and clothing, and dress in their cell, thereby raising potential privacy and PREA issues. Neither the showers nor the toilet areas have access to grab bars for persons who require these ADA compliant measures.

¹⁰ The Prison Rape Elimination Act, 42 U. S. C. 15602-15609 (2003) provides for standards for the prevention, detection, response and monitoring of sexual abuse in adult prisons and jails. Retrieved from http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=108_cong_public_laws&docid=f:publ079.108.pdf



Fire and Life Safety

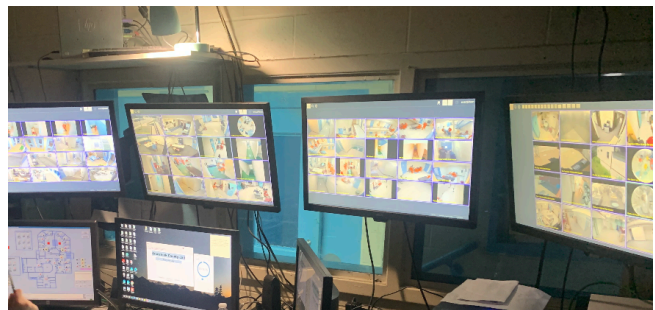
There are numerous fire and life safety issues that simply cannot be addressed or make little sense to address in a building of this vintage. Despite a smoke detection system being installed, there is no suppression system or smoke evacuation, nor adequate windows for smoke dissipation. There is a lack of physical and electronic security, although the camera system helped. Along with the security, the ability to address PREA also presents some concerns. Evacuation of the facility requires inmates to exit the building, into the outdoor recreation area that is secured by tall fencing that does little to prevent the introduction of contraband or protection from visibility from public areas.

There is limited monitoring of the property inmates maintain due to in part to staff deployment that is not sufficient to provide more than ongoing security rounds.

Storage is sufficient but located throughout the facility in vacated areas with limited preplanning. This is not to say the spaces are disorganized, the storage exists in pockets of spaces rather than a more central location.

Safety and Security

The jail staff are responsible for monitoring cameras at the jail, conducting security rounds, and managing the inmate population. Officers view the single-cell housing cell fronts from the control room with camera monitors significantly blocking the view to the cell fronts.



Programs and Services

Any jail is merely a tool that will either enhance or impede the operations of the staff. This jail building is clearly an impediment to good staff operations and makes it nearly impossible to run successfully. As an example, there are numerous programs and counselling opportunities that can be afforded to detainees, but there is only one room in the jail suitable to house those programs and there is competition for time with other programs and attorney visits which take precedence. Recreation, education, religion, substance use, mental health services, and others are provided but limited due to the lack of appropriate space for programs. There is no formal reentry programming from the jail back into the community. Current programs are mostly limited to providing the inmates with leisure reading materials and television. Non-contact visit spaces and corridors may be used for one-to-one visits.

Jail and Justice System Assessment



Indoor recreation is limited to dayroom activities with medicine balls and sandbags. Outdoor recreation is sufficiently sized, but equipment recently purchased requires a reinforced foundation and leveling of the asphalt play area. Moreover, the fenced area has visibility from public area and allows for passing contraband, and provides for marginal security, at best. Access to the outdoor recreation area is not ADA compliant resulting in staff having to escort inmates outside of the secure

perimeter to access the area.

Food is prepared in a kitchen arguably sufficiently sized to accommodate the current population. A contract provider oversees the preparation with the assistance of inmate workers. Staff serve meals to the inmates who eat in their housing units. On occasions when the one facility elevator is inoperable, staff must carry trays to the appropriate housing floor.

Visits are most often conducted via handheld tablet devices. Two non-contact visiting booths are available; these are most often used for professional visits. The visiting areas are cramped and as reflected in the adjacent photograph, the visiting booths are small and do not provide for private conversations without the addition of the cardboard covers applied during confidential visits, which renders inadequate observation of the area in the event of an emergency. Moreover, neither the inmate side of visitation nor the visitor side are ADA accessible.



Alternative Correctional Healthcare (ACH) is a contract health care provider serving northern Maine. ACH is reported to take a holistic approach to health care including medical, mental health, and substance use disorders. ACH distributes medication and triages inmate health care concerns. Community resources are accessed as needed. There is limited and inappropriate space for addressing health care needs. The exam room displayed to the left is woefully too small, and during the site visit water backup was coming from the drain. Other spaces are merely for storing medication carts. Often triage is conducted at the housing unit entrance.

Inmates' personal laundry is washed and dried in bulk by a workforce inmate using a commercial washer and dryer.



Inmate programs coordinated by Sgt. Morrison are impressive and robust given the lack of program space. Programs offered include Thinking for a Change, Knitting, Career Center, ServSafe Certification, and Diploma & Adult Ed. Some programs are conducted via video conferencing.

Inmate Classification and Housing

Inmate classification assessment tools allow jail operations to assess and then appropriately house incoming inmates. Typically, the booking officer makes an initial assessment as to whether the condition of the inmate is suitable for acceptance into the jail. Once the booking process is completed, booking officers would then determine if the inmate can be housed in intake housing or whether specialized housing (e.g., medical, mental health, special management, etc.) is necessary. Once assigned to intake housing, a case manager/programs coordinator would complete a more formal classification whereby the inmate is assessed in terms of risk to the facility or any needs that must be addressed while in the facility.

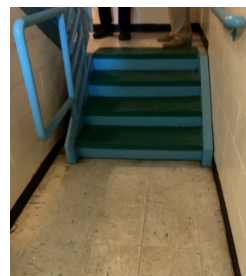
The classification system is generated through the jail records management system; it is not known if the system is validated. The current crowding situation in the facility limits the ability of the jail staff to separate inmates according to the most appropriate classification. In some cases, inmates are housed in areas more secure than appropriate for their classification and vice versa.

Compliance with Standards

Although this assessment was not an audit of compliance with applicable jail standards, the consultants did observe operations, interview staff and inmates, and observed virtually all areas of the facility. There were numerous hurdles to meet ADA compliance as noted in the adjacent photos.

There was no indication of significant standards-compliance issues outside the physical limitations of the facility noted in this report. The Department of Corrections inspection, conducted biennially, indicated 100% compliance with the minimum standards for county detention facilities in December 2022. This is not atypical when establishing minimum standards and working with agencies to find operational means to overcome physical plant deficiencies.

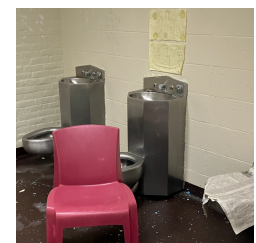
Beyond the issues of staffs' inability to actively supervise inmates, the existing physical plant is a significant deterrent in meeting PREA standards. Gang toilets and showers limit privacy during personal activities leaving inmates having to fashion their own privacy as noted in the adjacent photograph by bring a chair to the toilet area.



Access to Outdoor Recreation



Typical Shower





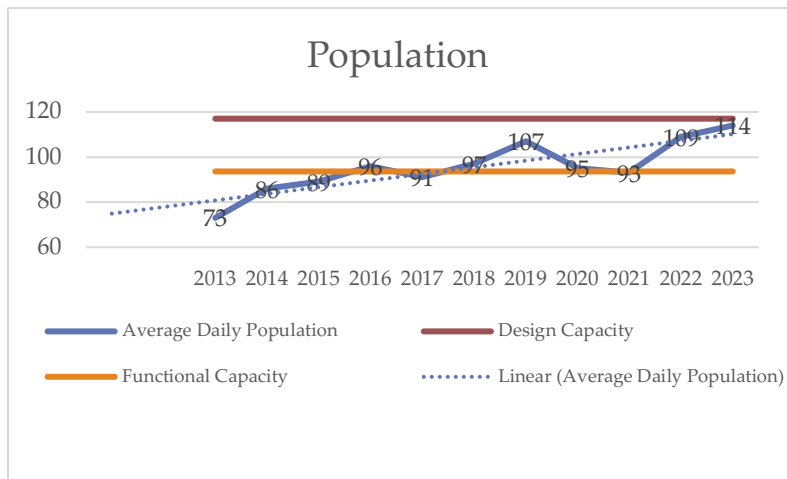
Layout

The facility is a compact layout with a linear design. The compact layout allows staff to make rounds in the jail every thirty minutes, but the linear design limits the ability for staff to truly monitor inmate activities in the cellblocks.

Capacity

Prior to 2020 the population often exceeded the design capacity and always exceeded the operational capacity.

Functional or operational capacity accounts for peaking and classification factors (allowing space for inmates to be housed according to their classification – gender, security, special needs). Operational capacity is expressed as a percentage of design capacity – commonly 80% of the design capacity.¹¹ This percentage, which accommodates the peaking and classification factors, will vary from one facility to another, based on factors such as the types of inmates held, housing unit design, and proximity of staff.



The adjacent figure compares the average daily population using a 20% peaking and classification factor (80% operational capacity – the true bed availability to meet need) and the design capacity. The jail has not met bed needs for many years except during the COVID-19 pandemic when virtually no new arrestees were committed to jail.

Summary

Summarizing the findings can be described in terms of what works well, what doesn't work well, and what is a significant concern. The evaluation of the operations as affected by the physical plant and the physical plant itself, for the purposes of the town hall presentation has been divided into three sections borrowed from an old Clint Eastwood movie, "The Good, The Bad and The Ugly".

¹¹ Sources: Martin, M. D., & Rosazza, T. A. (2004). *Resource Guide for Jail Administrators*. Washington, DC (320 First St., NW, Washington 20534): U.S. Dept. of Justice, National Institute of Corrections; *Beyond the Myths* (U.S. Justice Department) retrieved from June 3, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XylgTmdur9M>

Jail and Justice System Assessment



The existing jail facility has a number of issues that include:

- Lack of sufficient operational capacity;
- Inefficient layout and design – the facility design and staffing levels limit staff observation of areas without physically entering housing units;
- Inadequate support services space, including medical exam areas, video arraignment, visiting, program space, and indoor and outdoor recreation;
- Inadequate meeting spaces for law enforcement, probation and parole, and other official visitors;
- Inadequate storage space;
- Inadequate space in intake and booking

The technical resource providers noted that the facility staff demonstrated commitment to providing a safe and secure facility, and the facility was noted as clean, well-maintained for its age, and orderly. The TRP's were able to enter each of the cellblocks and interact with the inmates in the units. While the facility has limitations due to age, capacity, and layout, the jail staff appears to be using sound correctional principles to manage the incarcerated population.



Section 6. Town Hall Meeting

Introductions and Expectations

The town hall meeting was opened with a welcome and introductions of the technical resource providers and the attendees. A list of participants attending the meeting is provided in Appendix B. The following expectations for the meeting were offered by attendees:

- Avoid using the jail for substance abuse disorders and persons with mental health issues
- Provision of direction to move forward
- Understand community perspectives
- Provide better information; understand more
- Address the jail location
- To have the TRPs share their experience regarding jails
- Hear from others, and obtain information from others
- Identify relationship to other communities
- Incorporate services and increase partnerships
- Identify issues, what the jail needs, and share observations
- Support the process
- Recognition that “something new” is needed

Overview of the National Institute of Corrections

The technical resource providers provided a brief overview of the National Institute of Corrections.

The National Institute of Corrections is an agency within the U.S. Department of Justice that was established to provide leadership, training, and technical assistance to the field of corrections. NIC provides technical assistance to individual jurisdictions. The technical assistance is usually an on-site evaluation of a specific problem the agency is trying to solve. It is followed up with a written report that contains recommendations for addressing the issue.

The NIC Information Center, based in Aurora, CO, is a clearinghouse for a variety of corrections-related information. The Information Center contains videotapes, publications, sample manuals, training plans, etc. on a variety of jail topics. Some of the materials are provided at no charge, others may be borrowed, and still others may be viewed at the Information Center.

NIC has a website that is an excellent resource for everyone in corrections. Visitors can download a variety of documents from the publications section. The website also includes descriptions of



programs and services, training schedules, and links to other useful websites. NIC also supports several online communities for correctional professionals.

Jail and Justice System Assessment Purpose and Process

The technical resource providers briefly described the JJSA purpose and process.

The purpose of the JJSA is to assist communities in beginning the process of determining the need for improvements to the existing jail and its operations (including the potential need for new construction and/or renovation) and/or the need for improvements to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the overall justice system.

The process typically includes four main steps:

1. Jail assessment. The technical resource providers conduct a brief assessment of the jail including the physical plant and operations, to identify potential life, health, safety, and liability issues that may be important for the community to address both in the short term and in the long term.
2. Review jail and justice system data. This includes inmate profile data (typically one-day snapshot) to describe who is in jail, inmates profile characteristics, and the levels of risk and need they may present in the community. It may also include trend data on jail use that show the use of the jail over time and includes such indicators as number of admissions, average daily population, average length of stay, and rate of release. It may also include other justice system data that may indicate the impact of the system on the use of the jail. Such data typically includes arrests, court filings, dispositions, etc. Historic and projected population changes are also key data to review.
3. Interviews with key justice system officials. Discussions with justice system officials help bring a common understanding of the policies and practices of the agencies that comprise the local justice system. This helps the County understand how the system works and why it is important to provide an opportunity to address inefficiencies and/or incongruence in policy and practices that adversely affect the jail. The interviews also provide an opportunity to get the impressions of key policy makers on the "jail issue" and the role they can play in helping solve problems.
4. Town hall meeting. The JJSA typically culminates with a town hall meeting which brings together justice system officials with funding authority representatives and community members. The purposes of the community meeting are to:
 - Educate the participants about the influence of justice system policies and practices on the use of the jail and the size of the jail population.

Jail and Justice System Assessment



- Provide participants with the technical resource providers' preliminary findings based on the jail assessment and interviews.
- Provide participants with some preliminary options to address detention and other criminal justice system needs.
- Provide a forum for participants to share their concerns and ideas about the issues raised and initiate discussions about planning for change.

Issues Prompting the Request for the JJSA

Former sheriff Shawn Gillen and County Administrator Ryan Pellitier requested technical assistance from NIC to provide the county with resources and education as to how to go about planning for, and meeting, its current and future incarceration needs. The jail is an aged facility and has exceeded its operational capacity. Technical assistance from NIC in the form of a Jail and Justice System Assessment was requested as a step to finding a solution to the crowding issue.



Preliminary Assessment Findings

The technical resource providers reviewed their preliminary assessment findings with the participants.

Current Jail Conditions and Concerns

- Lack of sufficient operational capacity;
- Inefficient layout and design – the facility design and staffing levels limit staff observation of areas without physically entering housing units;
- Inadequate support services space, including medical exam areas, video arraignment, visiting, program space, and indoor and outdoor recreation;
- Inadequate meeting spaces for law enforcement, probation and parole, and other official visitors;
- Inadequate storage space;
- Inadequate space in intake and booking

Local Justice System Policy and Practice Issues

The TRPs noted the degree to which most of the criminal justice partners demonstrated effective communication with and deference for the other partners. While this suggests that the criminal justice system is working well, there are also results of this collaboration and cooperation that do not result in the preferred outcomes of community safety and ensuring defendants appear in court and are held accountable for their actions.

The technical resource providers identified the following justice system policy and practice issues based on interviews with justice system officials:

- Lack of alternatives to incarceration; especially residential;
- Lack of sufficient access to alternatives to incarceration, including day reporting whereby persons under court supervision would be required to participate in programs, seek employment, and/or improve their education while being supervised;
- Insufficient mental health and substance use disorder services in the jail and community generally;
- Need for better understanding the drivers of the average length of stay;
- Continued and enhanced involvement of all criminal justice stakeholders.

Facility Development Process

The technical resource providers provided a brief overview of the facility development process.



The facility planning process starts with determining if building a new jail is the best and most appropriate option to consider. It is likely to result in system-wide improvements that enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the justice system and may, or may not, result in the construction of facilities.

- Phase 1: Project recognition - This phase includes a problem definition, an assessment of the current facilities, programs, liabilities, and resources. This is the point where the justice agencies need to work together to identify the key issues they are facing, develop work groups to focus on specific processes, and consider how to proceed.
- Phase 2: Needs Assessment - Phase 2 includes information gathering, identifying options (facility, alternatives, and policy changes), and continuing the evaluation of facilities, operations, and programs. This phase is discussed in greater detail later.
- Phase 3: Pre-architectural Program Development - This next phase includes activities that take place when there is a decision to build. These activities include functional and space programming, scenarios, planning for future operations, and operational efficiencies that may be realized. Projected staffing must also be addressed.
- Phase 4: Project Definition and Implementation Plan - Phase 4 includes an analysis of all options to meet the program, economic feasibility, life cycle evaluation of the options, and conceptual design drawings. In addition, the jurisdiction should be developing support for the preferred and alternative options and working to move to the next stage in planning.

In this phase, the burning questions about a new jail project are addressed. These include:

1. Who would be in the jail? (*Are there more alternatives available that will keep offenders out of jail, classifications, types of beds?*)
2. How big would the jail be? (*Directly related to decisions about alternatives, arrest and sentencing practices, number of beds.*)
3. How would it operate? (*Type of inmate supervision, centralized or decentralized services, visiting method, etc.*)
4. What would it look like? (*Not actual design, but instead a study of the stacking and organization of the building: 1 story, 2 story, how the building positions on the site.*)
5. What site may be selected and where is it? (*Evaluation of potential sites, test fitting the program and parking requirements on the site, environmental studies, etc.*)



6. When will it be ready to use? (*Schedule for funding, design, construction, transition, and opening of new facility.*)
 7. How much does it cost? (*Preliminary cost estimates*)
 8. What happens to the old jail? (*Demolish, refurbish for another purpose, etc.*)
- Phase 5: Design Phases - Phase 5 includes schematic design where the building layout and appearance begin to take shape, design development where the drawings are refined and systems and materials are selected, and construction documents that are final and used for bidding the project.
 - Phase 6: Bidding - The bidding phase includes advertising the bid, determining bidder qualifications, selection of the successful bidder, and contract negotiations.
 - Phase 7: Construction - This phase includes permitting, construction monitoring and supervision, contract administration, and materials testing. Construction completion also includes punch listing the building, commissioning, testing the systems, warranties, as-built drawings, etc. The facility transition planning process should begin at this phase.
 - Phase 8: Occupancy - Phase 8 includes all of the activities needed to accept the building and get it ready for occupancy. This includes activities such as installation of owner supplied furnishings and equipment, opening ceremonies/activities, begin the maintenance cycle, occupancy permits, and moving in.
 - Phase 9: Post-Occupancy - Phase 9 includes fine-tuning the facility, policies and procedures. After 6 months, conducting a post-occupancy evaluation of how the facility works—both operationally and the physical plant.

Several of these phases may overlap during the facility development process, but none should be omitted unless there is a determination to suspend the process.

Needs Assessment

Phase I - project recognition – was initiated during the JJSA process. The criminal justice partners have determined the need for some action to be taken with respect to the jail crowding.



After project recognition, the next step is to conduct a thorough needs assessment – Phase 2. The technical resource providers reviewed the needs assessment process, providing feedback on their initial impressions of facility needs and data provided by the jail.

The components of a good, thorough needs assessment include:

1. Interviews with/information collection from all Criminal Justice System (CJS) partners, including:
 - a. What are the current policies/practices for each CJS component?
 - b. What issues (e.g., booking fees; workloads; changes in laws) must be considered?
 - c. Are the policies/practices mandated or elective?
2. Design a data collection instrument to quantify system processing (courts, sentencing options, etc.) of accused and convicted offenders, collect and analyze the data. This data collection is broader than a jail data collection. This type of data would be collected when assessing the justice system as a whole. Data collected must include:
 - a. Volume/type of contacts/arrests;
 - b. Decisions - street (to arrest, summons, etc.) and jail;
 - c. Types of releases and lengths of stay.
3. Describe current policies, issues considered, and the workloads being experienced.
4. Design a data collection instrument to take a snapshot of who is in jail, collect and analyze the data. The data collected must include a element, including but not limited to:
 - a. Gender
 - b. Race
 - c. Ethnicity
 - d. Residence
 - e. Charge Status
 - f. Charge Type
 - g. Date and time booked into jail and date and time of release
 - h. Release type
5. Evaluate alternatives to incarceration.
 - a. Inventory the available alternatives;



- b. Determine level of alternatives usage and coordination; and
 - c. Discuss possible additional alternatives and/or different/expanded use of existing programs.
6. Population Projections and Capacity Recommendations
- a. Examine jail data (admissions, length of stay, average daily population), and
 - b. Correlate the CJS data collected above and develop different forecast scenarios.
7. Conduct an evaluation of the facilities used to hold individuals who are sent for diversion, alternatives, and jail. The evaluation should include an assessment of the facility conditions, compliance with building codes and operational standards (i.e., determine the standards they are accountable to). It should also include an analysis of the current facility location and whether or not the location continues to be effective (e.g., is public transportation available to the site).
8. Jails have a tendency to become crowded before the population growth is identified if it is not continually monitored, so it is important to effectively and regularly monitor the jail population. A series of recommendations should result from a complete needs assessment and should include alternatives to incarceration, changes to the justice system and/or case processing, and, if supported by data, construction of new facilities (jail or alternatives).



Community Readiness

Throughout the systems planning process, a determination of readiness must be assessed. Local officials must ensure that the planning process will provide the maximum benefit. Planning takes time, coordination, expertise, objectivity and preparation. By making sure that justice system officials and community leaders are ready to invest these resources in the process, it is more likely the planning effort will have a positive outcome. Additionally, if justice system officials are not ready to plan, strategies can be developed to get their “buy-in” before proceeding with the planning process.

Assessing readiness can help identify:

1. Issues/obstacles that may impede the process;
2. Opportunities for strengthening the process; and
3. Potential allies or supporters who will help move the planning process forward.

Some tips for assessing readiness to proceed with the system planning process are:

1. Identify criminal justice system partners and/or stakeholders who will drive the overall project. These are people who are well respected and committed to seeing the project to its conclusion. They have the enthusiasm to motivate participants and are committed to being inclusive.

Criminal justice stakeholders have already been identified and are currently serving on the Jail Commission. This group is charged with exploring options and determining a cost effective approach to manage the criminal justice system

2. Find out what the needs are of those who are slow to come on board and use those needs as a “jump-start” for their involvement. The process should be of benefit to individual agencies (e.g., human services, etc.) as well as the system as a whole.
3. Develop a work plan to structure the process and help planning team members understand their role, responsibilities, and time commitments.

There are a number of challenges to effective systems planning. As the planning process begins, some of the challenges not addressed by the previous suggestions may include:

1. Lack of understanding of the purpose and benefits of planning;
2. Lack of leadership “buy-in” to the process;
3. Lack of participation -- “It’s not my job;”



4. Lack of commitment – “It’s OK if someone else is willing to do it;”
5. Denial – “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it;”
6. Competing demands for time;
7. Failure to commit adequate resources to the process;
8. Getting the right players to the table;
9. Getting the right consultants/advisors/architects.

It will be important to consider each of these challenges and develop a way to address them as the planning process begins.

Next Steps

The technical resource providers and attendees discussed the following next steps (in the next 3-6 months) necessary to continue moving forward to addressing the jail issue.

- Expand the existing Jail Commission to a formal Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) to provide a forum to address system issues impacting the jail and to improve functioning of the system.
- Reach out to NIC Jails Division to determine if technical assistance can be provided to facilitate the implementation of the CJCC and presenting the JJSA information to the county commissioners.
- Initiate a comprehensive systems planning process to determine gaps in systems services and strategies to address the gaps.
- Begin to identify issues and prepare for a needs assessment for which funding has already been designated.

NIC Resources

NIC jail planning training programs and technical assistance are available at each phase of planning:

Planning of New Institutions (PONI): Appropriate when entering or just beginning needs assessment. The team should be comprised of the operating agency CEO (sheriff, director of corrections), the jail administrator, a commissioner, and a fourth team member who may be another commissioner, the finance manager, a judge, etc. All team members must be policy-level decision-



makers. This training is held National Academy of Corrections in Aurora, CO and all travel, lodging, and meal costs are reimbursed by NIC.

Managing Jail Design and Construction (MJDC): Appropriate when the needs assessment is complete or nearly complete and a decision to proceed has been made. This training is provided on-site as technical assistance. The team must include the project manager, the jail administrator, staff selected to work on the project. Because this is taught on-site, more team members are encouraged to attend so there is an overall understanding of the design and construction processes. Others who may attend include commissioners, operating agency staff, etc.

How to Open a New Institution (HONI): This should be requested at least 18 months in advance of opening. It is recommended that the transition team be formed earlier than this and receive the training during design. This helps them to be more effective during both design and construction. This is an on-site program for the transition team.



Section 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The correlation between the county population and jail population should continue to be monitored. The driver of the inmate population appears to be the increase in the number of days inmates are held in the jail. The average daily population and the average length of stay indicate a correlation, more than any other population driver – county population, admissions. Any increases in the average length of stay should be explored further to determine the cause – case processing time, sentence length, time spent pretrial. The judiciary must be consulted through this process if not for input, certainly awareness.
2. The sheriff has employed alternatives to crowding in the jail by housing inmates out-of-county or seeking approval from the courts for participation in the Community Corrections Program.
3. The design limits opportunities for active supervision of the inmate population. The housing units are relatively small for adaptation to direct supervision without substantial increases in staffing or modification to units to allow staff to manage more than one unit at a time.
4. There is no program space that supports addressing inmate criminogenic needs (e.g., substance use disorders, mental health, education, etc.) necessary for successful community reentry.
5. There is limited recreation space for inmates to exercise. Outdoor recreation, indoor recreation and even space in the dayrooms for recreation activities is essential to effective behavior management and sustained good physical health.

Recommendations

The technical resource providers offer the following action steps to move forward in assessing and addressing jail needs and in developing systemic strategies to better manage the use of the jail.

1. Establish a criminal justice coordinating council to provide a forum to address criminal justice system issues. Many of the key criminal justice stakeholders are already involved in the Jail Commission, but the other stakeholders, such as human services (i.e., veterans, mental health, judiciary, etc.) and education, must also be included.
2. Support continued development of community supervision and sanctioning options through probation and pretrial programming.
3. Key officials of the justice system and County government should continue discussions to determine the need for new jail construction and/or repurposing the existing facility to address current and future incarceration needs.
4. The criminal justice coordinating council should consider opportunities to streamline and

Jail and Justice System Assessment



combine service delivery to: (a) community residents, (b) the population in the criminal justice system (e.g., probation and parole), and (c) persons who are incarcerated in the Aroostook County Detention Center.

5. At a point when construction of a new jail facility appears necessary, a county commissioner, the sheriff, jail administrator, and other criminal justice stakeholder should attend the NIC PONI Program and take advantage of any follow-up assistance which might be available.
6. Visit other new facilities to get a sense of what is required in contemporary jail facilities and operations.
7. Conduct a staffing analysis of the existing jail with a focus on increasing active supervision of the inmate population.

The action steps outlined above are excellent first steps. They should place Aroostook County in a good position to determine their jail needs and make needed improvements to the overall justice system.

The technical resource providers wish to commend County Administrator Ryan Pelletier, Sheriff Peter Johnson, Jail Commander Craig Clossey, and in particular Tammy Pelletier who coordinated interviews, town hall meeting location and supplies, and support for the process, and local county officials for their hard work and time in preparing for the JJSA and supporting the technical resource providers while on-site. Their efforts were instrumental to a successful effort



Appendix A - Aroostook County Jail and Justice System Assessment 3-Day Agenda

Day 1 – June 18

Caribou Courthouse – Law Library, 144 Sweden St, Caribou

9 – 10am Ryan Pelletier (County Administrator), Peter Johnson (Sheriff), Craig Clossey (Jail Administrator)

10-11am Todd Collins, District Attorney

11-12am Heidi Rackliffe, Director of Programs, Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP)

12-1pm LUNCH

1-1:30pm Monthly County Commissioners' Meeting – Administrative Hearing Room

JJSA is included near the beginning of the regular meeting to provide a brief update on activities/processes.

1:30-2:30pm

2:30-3:30pm Toby Jandreau, ESQ Lead Public Defender

3:30-4:30pm Phone meeting Julia Macek, LCSW, Program Director, Aroostook Mental Health Services (AMHC)

Day Two – June 19

8:15 AM - 5:00 PM Jail Tour / Meeting with Sheriff Johnson and Jail Administrator Clossey

Day Three – June 20

9:00 AM – 12:30 AM Community Meeting

1230 AM – 1pm Closeout meeting and discussion of next steps



JJSA Community Meeting Agenda

June 20, 2024 – 09:00 AM – 1:00 pm

Presque Isle City Council Chambers – 12 Second St, Presque Isle

9:00 AM – 12:30 AM

Zoom Meeting ID: 860 2572 3256 Passcode: 612673

- I. Welcome and introductions; JJSA overview
 - What is NIC?
 - NIC Resources and Services
 - Attendee introductions and expectations
 - What is a JJSA?
- II. Presentation of jail observations and impressions, jail data indications
- III. Review of the inventory of existing and potential alternatives or processes that could impact jail population
- IV. Facility development process overview with special emphasis on Needs Assessment as a starting point in the planning process
- V. Readiness assessment planning
- VI. Next steps
- VII. Adjourn



Appendix B – List of Town Hall Attendees

Penny Thompson, City of Caribou
Joseph Underwood, Presque Isle Representative
Ryan Pelletier, Aroostook County Administrator
Paul Underwood, Aroostook County Commissioner
Craig Clossey, Aroostook County Sheriff's Office, Jail Administrator
Bryan Jandreau, Facilities and IT Director, Aroostook County
Heidi Rackliffe, ACAP, Director of Programs
Norman L. Fournier, Aroostook County Commissioner
Donald Guimond, Jail Commission Member
Carroll Theriault, Jail Commission Member
Matthew Cummings, Chief of Police, Fort Fairfield, Jail Commission Member
Kai Libby Committee, Cary, Jail Commission Member
Paula Brewer, Bangor Daily News, Presque Isle
Kevin Freeman, City Council Chair, City of Presque Isle, Jail Commission Member
Tom Powers, Presque Isle Industrial Council
Tim Goff, Town of Fort Fairfield, Town Manager
Erica Pelletier, Aroostook County Sheriff's Office, Chief Deputy
Lt. Brian L. Harris, Maine State Police, Jail Commission Member
Tammy Pelletier, Operations Assistant, Aroostook County Commissioners' Office

Participating via video conferencing:

David D. Cyr, Town Manager, Frenchville
Todd Collins, District Attorney
Tyler Brown, City Manager, Presque Isle
Julia Macek, Aroostook Mental Health, Program Director

NIC technical resource providers Karen Albert and Roger Lichtman



Appendix C - A Comprehensive Approach to Addressing Jail Overcrowding and Use of Alternatives

This appendix includes information for the local jurisdiction to consider in developing a systemic approach to addressing jail overcrowding.¹² It expands on the discussion of decision points in the criminal justice case flow process presented in the Town Hall Meeting.

In developing a comprehensive approach, it is helpful to integrate policies, practices and programs within the context of the case flow process for the jurisdiction. Case processing is basically a series of stages or decision points that occur as the case of a person accused of a crime moves from arrest through final disposition. Day-to-day decisions and agency policies of key criminal justice system policy-makers impact outcomes and use of limited resources. Functions overlap and there is interdependence among all justice system components -- changes in one area may have positive or negative impact on other areas. Policies and practices can be modified at each stage to achieve optimal use of the jail and other alternative programs available to the system. There is joint responsibility among key actors for management and use of resources and for achieving desired results.

The types of improvements that can be made to improve the efficiency of the system to manage jail overcrowding include both process and policy changes:

Process changes include changes in practice or policy intended to improve efficiency of the case handling process. Results of process changes may include:

- Reduce delays in case processing;
- Reduce need for costly programs;
- Reduce length of confinement in detention.

Program changes involve implementation of interventions for specific offender populations intended to improve effectiveness of system. They may be designed to:

- Address a specific social problem;
- Improve offender competencies and skills to reduce recidivism;
- Help hold offenders accountable;
- Provide less restrictive and less costly options.

¹² The content in this section is excerpted from the "Project Guide – Alternatives to Incarceration for Offenders", a publication authored by Mark Martin for the DOJ Native American and Alaskan Technical Assistance Project (2005).



A number of policy, practice and program options appropriate to each key decision point are outlined below.

DECISION POINT #1 – Decision to Arrest

Following a report or observation of an offense, law enforcement has several options in dealing with the alleged perpetrator. The officer may elect to:

- Warn and release;
- Issue a citation;
- Divert or refer the alleged perpetrator to other services; or
- Arrest and transport to jail

The system goals at this point are to stop the offending behavior, report the behavior to the prosecutor for the possible filing of charges, and to assure the alleged perpetrator's appearance in court. Many situations can be resolved informally at this stage by law enforcement officers possessing good problem assessment and resolution skills and discretion to divert alleged perpetrators to alternative services. Policy and practice options that should be in place at this stage include:

- Agency policy authorizing citation in lieu of arrest for specified offenses;
- Agency policy authorizing diversion in lieu of arrest for specified offenses;
- Court policy authorizing summons in lieu of arrest for persons with active warrants; and
- Mental health crisis intervention training for law enforcement officers.

Alternative programs and strategies to consider for use at this stage of the process include:

- Detoxification services;
- Emergency mental health services;
- Mobile crisis intervention services; and
- Law enforcement diversion programs.

DECISION POINT # 2 –Decision to Detain Pretrial

Once the alleged perpetrator is taken into custody, a decision regarding the need for pretrial detention is made. This decision is typically based upon the severity of the charges, the alleged offender's level of stability in the community, and his or her behavior at the time of arrest. The availability of resources in the community to mitigate the risk of further offending is also often a factor. The judge may delegate release authority to the jail or other criminal justice officials for certain offenses based upon some preset criteria. Some jurisdictions have established pretrial release programs to conduct pretrial release screening and supervision. Pretrial screening programs are able to conduct more in-depth background assessments and often use risk assessment instruments to measure and predict risk of re-offending of offenders who may be released. Pretrial programs may also screen individuals who may be appropriate for diversion from formal processing.



The goals of the system at this stage are to prevent further offending and to assure availability of the accused for appearance in court. Policy and practice options that improve decision-making and outcomes at this stage include:

- Court delegated release authority;
- Court established bail schedule and procedures;
- Use of validated risk instruments;
- Pretrial release and diversion screening.

Alternative programs and strategies to consider at this stage include:

- Pretrial services program with release conditions;
- Community supervision;
- Electronic monitoring;
- Day reporting;
- House arrest;
- Urinalysis;
- Access to mental health and substance abuse services.

DECISION POINT #3 – Decision to Prosecute

When a case is presented for prosecution, the prosecutor reviews the arrest report or citation and decides how to proceed. The prosecutor may proceed with the original charge, amend the charge based upon the facts of the case, or decline prosecution. The prosecutor may also elect to defer prosecution while providing the accused the option of participating in a diversion program if such is available.

The prosecutor is the gatekeeper of the system. He or she or she decides what cases get filed and at what level of charges. The prosecutor also influences how quickly cases get processed through the system. A number of policy and program options are appropriate at this stage to improve the efficiency of the system and assure appropriate use of program resources. Policy and practice options include:

- Early case screening;
- Accelerated calendar for jail cases;
- Use of diversion.

Alternative programs and strategies to consider at this stage include:

- Diversion programs;
- Dispute resolution and mediation programs;
- Access to mental health and substance abuse services;
- Community service and competency development programs.



DECISION POINT #4 – Decision to Release from Pretrial Detention

If an individual is initially detained upon arrest, he or she has the right to a detention hearing before a judge. The judge may elect to release the accused from detention with or without conditions. The goal of the system at this stage is to provide the level of supervision and structure necessary to prevent further offending and to assure the availability of the accused for court. Information about the alleged crime, the individual's background and home situation, and risk of re-offending are helpful to the judge in making the pretrial release decision.

Policy and practice options that improve decision-making and outcomes at this stage include:

- Prompt bail settings;
- Realistic bail schedules;
- Timely bond review hearings;
- Range of non-bail release options:
 - Release on Recognizance (ROR) (unsupervised)
 - ROR (supervised)
 - Third party release
 - Conditional release
- Range of bail release options:
 - Unsecured bail
 - Deposit bail
 - Property bail
 - Surety bail
 - Full cash bail
- Access to counsel or advocate at initial hearing.

Alternative programs and strategies to consider at this stage include:

- Pretrial release screening programs;
- Community supervision;
- Electronic monitoring;
- Day reporting;
- House arrest;
- Urinalysis;
- Access to treatment and support services as needed.



DECISION POINT # 5 -- Decision of Guilt or Innocence

As the case proceeds, there may be several hearings including a preliminary hearing, arraignment, trial, etc. The goal of the system is to make a determination of guilt or innocence. The timeliness and efficiency of the trial process has a significant impact on use of the jail and other resources.

There are a number of policy and program options that serve to reduce the amount of time accused offenders spend in jail awaiting the outcome of their case. Policy and practice options include:

- Effective calendaring of cases;
- Docket priority for in-custody cases;
- Adoption of case progression standards;
- Periodic bond review by jail staff, prosecutor, public defender and court administrator.

Alternative programs and strategies that support efficient functioning of the system at this stage include:

- Expediter program;
- Community supervision;
- Electronic monitoring;
- Day reporting;
- House arrest;
- Urinalysis;
- Access to services.

DECISION POINT # 6 –Sentencing Decision

If the offender has been found guilty at trial, the court has several options. It may order a pre-sentence investigation, impose a sanction immediately, or defer sentencing pending successful completion of specified conditions. The timeliness and efficiency of the pre-sentence investigation process is a factor at this stage. Time delays between the finding of guilt and imposition of sentence impact detention usage. Having a range of sentencing options available at this stage provides the court the flexibility to impose sanctions and conditions that may be more effective in addressing the offending behavior.

The goals of the system at this stage are to protect the community, hold the offender accountable, and to prevent future offending through rehabilitative programming. Policy and practice options that may improve decision-making and outcomes at this stage include:

- Timely preparation of Pre-Sentence Investigations;
- Enhanced case advocacy at sentencing;
- Criteria for use of alternative sanctions;
- Use of risk assessment tools to decide level of supervision.



Alternative programs and strategies to be considered to provide a range of sanctioning options include:

- Fines and restitution;
- Community service;
- Day fines;
- Community supervision and case management;
- Intensive community supervision;
- Electronic monitoring;
- Day reporting;
- Drug testing;
- Alternative education programs;
- Job training and placement services;
- Mediation and Victim reconciliation programs;
- Counseling;
- Substance abuse treatment;
- Family Support Services;
- Work programs;
- Residential programs (halfway houses, residential treatment).

DECISION POINT #7 – Sentence Modification Decision

After conviction, the sentences offenders receive may be modified under certain circumstances. For some, good behavior and compliance with the provisions of their sentences can lead to early release or discharge. More often, sentence modifications occur as a result of a violation of a condition of probation or parole. When a probation or parole violation is alleged, the offender is often placed into jail pending a hearing on the matter. When limited options are available to respond to such violations, revocation often results in additional jail time for offenders. Many communities discover a sizable portion of their jail population to be comprised of probation and parole violators. A number of policy and program options may be considered to manage the use of detention for this population while holding them accountable for their behavior on community supervision. Policy and practice options to consider include the following:

- Use of graduated sanctions in lieu of detention for probation and parole violations;
- Time sensitive policies regarding detainers and revocations;
- Use of good time;
- Use of incentives including early release for good behavior and program progress and completion.

Program options include many of those listed in the previous decision point as sanctioning options. The goal is to think strategically in the use of these sanctions in level of intensity and in combinations that allow a “ratcheting up” in response to misbehavior and a “ratcheting down” as offenders demonstrate positive behavior and compliance with conditions of community supervision.



Structured Decision-making

A comprehensive justice system model utilizing an array of alternative programs and strategies requires policies and tools that structure decision-making within the case process. That is, decision-makers use objective criteria and risk assessment instruments to match offenders with the appropriate levels of supervision and programs based upon an assessment of their risks and needs. *Risk instruments*¹³ are typically used within the criminal justice system to guide pretrial release decisions and placement decisions after disposition. These instruments generally measure the probability that an offender will re-offend within a particular time frame if placed in community supervision.

Before developing or adapting an existing risk instrument, the justice system needs to decide what it wants to accomplish with the risk instrument. In a pretrial context, it may be to decrease failure to appear rates and further criminal actions by defendants awaiting trial, while releasing the maximum number of defendants under the least restrictive conditions. Research into different risk instrument models helps to answer questions about what characteristics to measure, how this is accomplished, what interventions are most effective, what client populations are most positively impacted, and how community safety can be taken into consideration.

Summary

The development of an effective system of local alternatives and sanctions is largely dependent upon the ability of the jurisdiction to bring key criminal justice decision makers together as a “policy team” or “criminal justice coordinating committee”. Typically no single agency or person has the authority, or ability, to bring about changes in “system” policies that impact every agency that has a stake in how the local criminal justice system functions. If the highest authority sanctions a policy team, effective leadership is established and the membership represents all major system players, and is charged with a definitive mission with clear goals and objectives, the opportunity to implement lasting, effective and efficient change is substantial. In order for alternatives to traditional detention placement to have lasting system wide impact, the effort must be well organized, with thoughtful input, consistent participation and on-going support.

¹³ It is important to note that a pretrial risk assessment looks at factors in terms of public safety and likelihood of court appearance. Separate and different risk assessment instruments are also used to determine how inmates should be managed while in the jail.

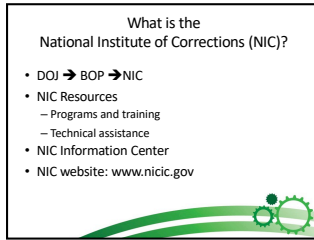


Appendix D – Town Hall Meeting Slides

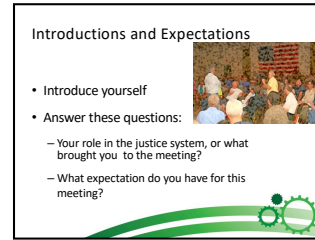
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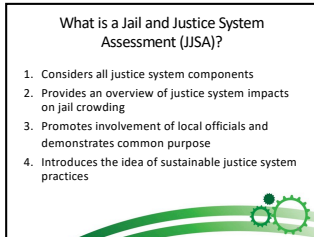
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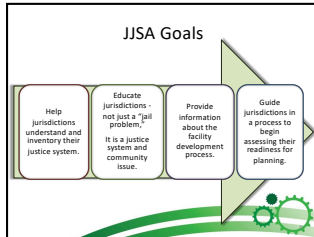
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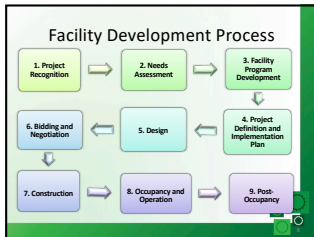
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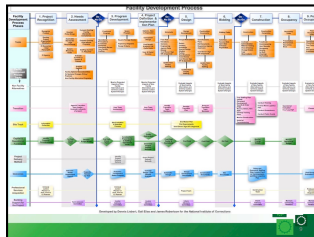
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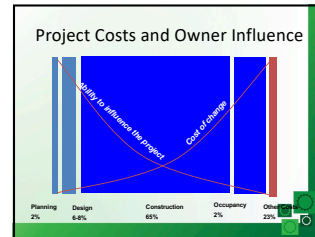
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Facility Development Process
Phase 1 - Project Recognition

- Problem definition
- Assess current facilities, programs, liabilities, and resources
- Justice partners work together to:
 - Identify key issues
 - Develop work groups
 - Consider how to proceed

11

Facility Development Process
Phase 2 - Needs Assessment

12

Facility Development Process
Phase 3 - Pre-Architectural Program

- Functional program, scenarios, and a space program
 - Includes planning for future operations
 - Plan for operational efficiencies
- Preliminary staffing plan

13

Facility Development Process
Phase 4 - Project Definition and Implementation Plan

14

Facility Development Process
Phase 5 - Design

8-12 months to complete

Design Types:

- Schematic
- Design Development
- Construction Documents

15

Facility Development Process
Phase 6 - Bidding and Negotiation

2-4 months to complete

Tasks include:

- Advertise for bids
- Bidder qualifications
- Selection
- Contract negotiations

16

Facility Development Process
Phase 7 - Construction

<p>Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permits • Construction monitoring and supervision • Contract administration • Materials testing 	<p>Construction Completion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Punch list • Commission • Systems test • Warranties • As-built drawings
---	---

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Facility Development Process
Phase 8 - Occupancy and Operation

2-4 months to complete

Tasks include

- Building acceptance, prepare for occupancy (permits, cleaning, etc.)
- Install owner-purchased furnishings
- Public events
- Move-in

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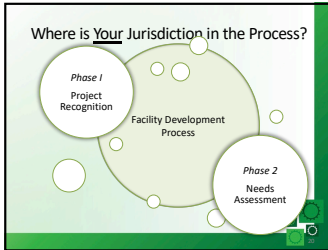
Facility Development Process
Phase 9 - Post Occupancy

6-9 months to complete

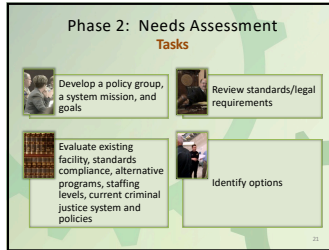
Tasks include

- Fine tune policies and procedures
- Assess operations
- Post occupancy evaluation

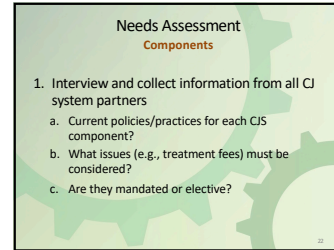
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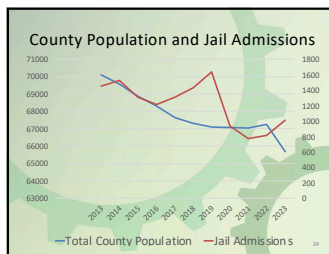
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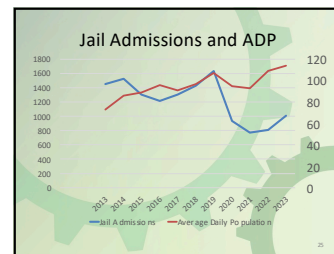
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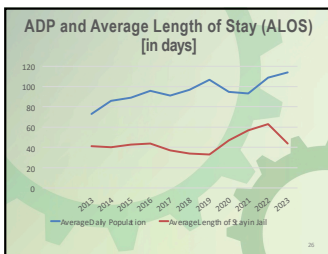
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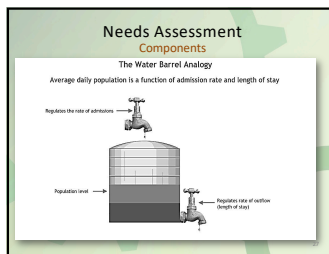
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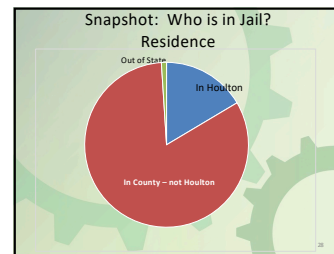
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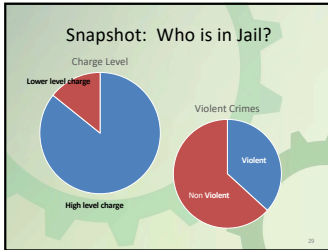
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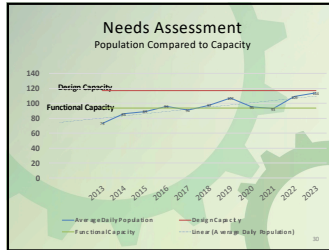
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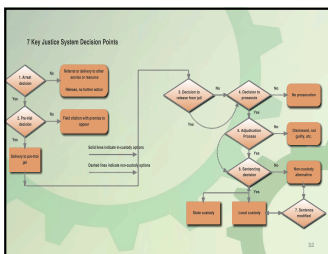
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- Needs Assessment**
Components
- Evaluate alternatives to incarceration
 - Inventory alternatives
 - Consider 7 key justice system decision points
 - Determine level of usage and coordination
 - Compile and discuss alternatives

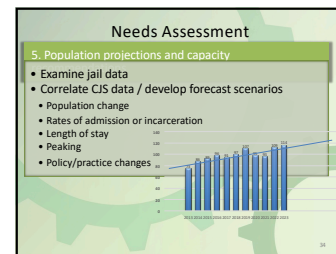
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32

- Observations and Impressions of Alternatives**
- Probation
 - Post-conviction
 - ACCCP
 - No Risk and Needs Assessment
 - Judiciary
 - Drug Court
- There is support for use of alternatives*

33



34

- Needs Assessment**
Components
- 6. Evaluate facilities (diversion / alternatives / jail)**
- Assess facility conditions, compliance with building codes and operational standards.
 - Analyze location effectiveness
 - Consider legislative modifications

35

- The Good**
- Skilled and Compassionate Staff
 - Cleanliness is Next to Godliness
 - Adequate Staffing Levels (Recent)
 - Staff makes the Most of a Bad Situation
 - Availability of Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Programs
 - All Stakeholders committed to Doing What is Right
 - 95% Non-Adjudicated Felons

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- The Bad**
- Physical Facility Condition-Mechanical and Plumbing System's Deficiencies
 - Physical Facility Floor Plan
 - Sight Lines
 - Physical Location of the Facility
 - Lack of Facilities to Meet Codes and Standards Including ADA
 - Communication Between Service Providers Could Use Improvement
 - Case Worker Load of 75
 - Adequacy of Staff and Communication for Offices of DA, PD and Judges

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Application of Standards to Jails

OTHER INSTITUTIONS AND BUSINESSES	JAILS
• Environmental codes	• Same
• Fire codes	• Same
• Safety codes (OSHA)	• Same
• Building codes	• Same
• Clean air/smoke free requirements	• Same
• Accessibility requirements (ADA)	• Same
• Food service sanitation codes	• Same
• Employee rights laws and rules	• Same
• Worker training and certification	• Same

Plus... Inmates' Rights, & PREA

Jail standards - DOC


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Models of Inmate Management

- Physical containment model.
 - Barriers
 - Separate Staff from Inmates
- Effective inmate management model.
 - Situation normal adult behavior -
 - 90-95% will assimilate to appropriate adult behavior
 - Six Elements
- Our framework for observations and findings.

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Physical Condition



135 Years Old

Equivalent to **567 Years Old**

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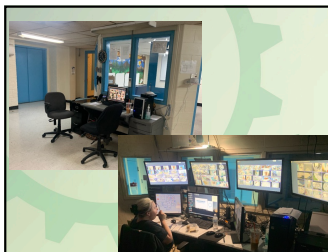
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ADA Accessibility

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Conveying Expectations

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The Ugly

- Fire and Life Safety Issues
- Physical and Electronic Security
- Total Lack of Program Space (One Room)
- PREA Concerns
- On-Going Maintenance- Doing Nothing is Not an Option
- Crowding – Impediment to Effective Classification
- 95% Recidivism Rate
- Effective Connections to Aftercare Services
- Data versus perception

46



47



48



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Cost – Benefit Analysis

- Do nothing
 - Extreme liability exposure
 - Federal intervention
 - Potential fire casualty consequences
- Bring facility into compliance
 - Major renovation
 - Facility may not meet operational needs
 - Temporary housing during renovation phasing
- Build new
 - “Form follows function”

50

Needs Assessment Components

7. Recommendations

- Justice system and/or case processing opportunities
- Consideration of site alternatives
 - Transition to site alternatives

51

Readiness Assessment Planning

Jail and Justice System Assessment

52

Systems Planning Process

Requires....

- ✓ A certain degree of readiness
- ✓ Local officials prepared to ensure the maximum benefit
- ✓ Resource commitment
- ✓ Time, coordination, expertise, objectivity, and preparation
- Strategies to develop “buy-in”

53

What Next?

- Create Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
 - Identify key stakeholders
 - Broader perspective
 - Improve communication
 - Resources available through NIC
 - Site visits to other facilities

54

NIC Jail Planning Programs and Technical Assistance

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    graph LR
      PONI[Planning of New Institutions (PONI)] --> MIDC[Managing Jail Design and Construction (MIDC)]
      MIDC --> HONI[How to Open a New Institution (HONI)]
    
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Aroostook County Jail Needs Assessment Report

June 2025



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INTRODUCTION

The Aroostook County Jail is operated by the Aroostook County Sheriff's Office in Houlton, Maine. The building itself opened in the 1880s and is out of date in many respects. In addition, there are concerns regarding the current location of the jail in the county seat, which is now removed from where the population is centered in the county. The County seeks guidance regarding appropriate options for consideration regarding the facility.

Goal

The primary goal of the Aroostook County Jail Needs Assessment is to determine the projected bed need for the jail facility through the year 2050 to support public policy decision-making regarding a future direction for the jail. Our main statistical analysis is based on a series of large data extracts covering intakes, the previous population of the jail, the anticipated size of the overall Aroostook County population, time in custody, and other relevant variables. The research effort culminates in a forecast of the future size of the jail's population, reflecting both a continuation of current policies and practices as well as the impact of potential changes to the Aroostook County criminal justice system.

Methodology

Three main tasks were taken to execute this study.

First, our team held multiple in-depth conversations with stakeholders from across the Aroostook County criminal justice system during an onsite visit in April 2025.

Second, we acquired multiple comprehensive data extracts from the Aroostook County Jail which included key information about every single individual charged with an offense between January 2019 and March 31, 2025.

Third, the results of the statistical analyses were combined into multiple time series forecasts using Autoregressive Integrated Moving Average (ARIMA) methods.

Interviews and Meetings

During the April onsite visit, the consultants participated in multiple in-person conversations with a wide variety of stakeholders in the Aroostook County criminal justice system. Interviews were conducted with the following stakeholder offices and organizations:

- Aroostook County Manager's Office
- Aroostook County Commissioners
- Aroostook County Sheriff's Office
- Aroostook County District Attorney's Office
- Aroostook County Public Defender's Office
- Aroostook County Action Program
- Aroostook County Facilities and IT Director
- Aroostook County Finance Director
- Aroostook Mental Health Center
- Alternative Community Corrections Programs
- Caribou City Manager
- Caribou Police Department
- Fort Fairfield Police Department
- Port Kent Police Department
- Various Town Managers and Elected Officials

Some comments received during these interviews are listed below.

Detention Operations

The jail in Holton, has been in continuous operations for approximately 140 years. It was found to be exceptionally clean and well-maintained, surpassing many facilities that are only five or six years old. The staff was noted as highly professional, contributing to the jail's sustained operation.

The current facility, while effectively used, is overcrowded and "grandfathered" into standards that would not be acceptable for a new facility (e.g., there is insufficient square footage per applicable standards, there are narrow doorways with limited handicap accessibility, etc.).

The largest proportion of individuals held are violent felons, aligning with public safety objectives. However, the number held for Violation of Conditional Release (VCR) or probation violations is unusually high compared to other jurisdictions.

The capacity of the jail was increased without adding physical space, which does not improve safety or management.

While the facility meets the state-required standards, the building's physical shortcomings are a concern for future planning.

The current jail's location in the southern part of the county is an artifact of an 1800s statute that required jails to be in the county seat, which was then the population center. After 150 years, population shifts have made the 1869 jail's location less than ideal. Moving the jail further north (e.g., to the Caribou-Presque Isle area) may increase bookings from northern police departments due to reduced travel times, which could potentially increase the size of the inmate population. Staffing would be a critical concern as a central location might attract more new hires but could also lead to the loss of experienced senior staff from Holton.

Probation / Programs

Pretrial screening usually occurs in the crowded booking area which is often affected by court sessions and medication passes.

Overcrowding in this area can cause delays and confidentiality issues during screenings.

Educational and rehabilitative offerings include mental health counseling, life skills classes, domestic violence advocacy, religious services, and law library access. Space limitations often result in cancellations or rescheduling, especially when rooms are used for court or emergency housing.

Facility limitations and space constraints include overcrowded booking area and insufficient space for mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) groups, which impact treatment and engagement. Detainees in withdrawal remain in the booking area due to lack of dedicated medical spaces.

High numbers of mentally ill and substance-abusing individuals are held in jail, often for extended periods awaiting trial. The use of Title 15 for competency assessments leads to prolonged jail stays, even for non-violent offenders, raising humanitarian and legal concerns.

There is a lack of alternative placements or community-based diversion programs for low-risk defendants, resulting in overreliance on detention.

There is a recognized need for alternative strategies to address systemic issues rather than simply

expanding jail capacity.

District Attorney's Office

The district attorney's office operates from three county locations: Caribou, Presque Isle, and Holton. The office handles approximately 3,500 individual docket numbers annually, which may include overlaps with different defendants typically comprising about 15% felony and 85% misdemeanor cases.

The Alternative Community Corrections Program (ACCCP) has expanded significantly over the last 5-10 years, with caseloads rising from 30 to 80-90. These individuals, who would otherwise be in jail, are managed in the community under specific conditions due to their heightened risk factors.

Decisions regarding violations of conditions of release (VCRs) involve both ADAs and ACCCP, depending on the specific circumstances. New criminal offenses prompt immediate action.

Maine operates under a unified criminal docket, meaning all misdemeanors and felonies are processed in a single criminal court with identical procedures and timelines. This contrasts with most other states, which typically employ bifurcated systems where lower-level misdemeanors are resolved more quickly in district or municipal courts. In Maine, a Class E offense like criminal speed or shoplifting is treated with the same timelines and discovery processes as a Class A robbery or murder.

Public Defender's Office

There has been a recent transition from a contract-counsel model to a salaried public defender system. A hybrid system now exists which means that contract counsel retains their roles while the new office handles cases based on capacity.

The public defender's office focuses on high-need cases (e.g., sexual assaults, aggravated offenses) that contract counsel often decline. The backlog of unrepresented defendants, once over 100, has dropped significantly, but case assignment challenges persist due to limited resources.

Multiple courthouses serve regions such as Holt, Fort Kent, Caribou, Prescott, and Mattawaska, each with unique schedules and capacities. Some jails (e.g., Holton) are remote from main court locations, affecting logistical efficiency and timely hearings. Defendants are sometimes held in remote jails while awaiting trial or bail hearings, which can create operational issues.

Seven-day reviews exist for defendants who do not post bail or lack counsel, but these reviews offer no real remedy for Sixth Amendment violations, and non-validated risk assessment tools, including score-based forms, are criticized for misaligning with justice and contributing to high bail amounts.

There is a statewide shortage of defense attorneys, especially in rural areas compared to urban centers like Portland. Case limits and quality standards have been implemented, but many attorneys decline new assignments once limits are reached, increasing strain. Defense practices have evolved to include more Zoom plea negotiations, which, while efficient, limit client interaction and access to evidence (e.g., in-person video review).

Local Law Enforcement

Law enforcement agencies now primarily process arrests by transporting individuals directly from the point of arrest to the county jail. Alternatives are used only during specific, rare circumstances (e.g., major snowstorms or road closures, where local holding facilities might temporarily detain individuals until transportation is possible).

If the jail were more centrally located, some law enforcement agencies anticipate transporting roughly double the current number of individuals.

Local holding facilities, such as Caribou PD, are no longer regularly utilized for temporary holding prior to county jail transport due to cost, but they do maintain in-house holding capabilities and may assist other agencies in special, short-term circumstances.

Special transport arrangements, such as the use of designated reserve officers, are employed by some agencies to reduce overtime costs and road time associated with long-distance transports.

Law enforcement officers apply consistent criteria in deciding whether to transport individuals directly to jail or use alternatives like issuing summons or bailing them out. Influencing factors include the severity of the offense, the operational cost and time sensitivity, as lengthy transport times to the distant facility incur significant overtime and road time, and situational considerations such as the offender's history, mental health, and substance abuse status.

Jail Tour

Despite being in continuous operation for approximately 140 years, the jail was remarkably clean. This is a testament to the staff. However, there are many areas that do not function efficiently due to a lack of proper space. The booking area, pictured below, is where new arrestees are processed into the facility. They are screened for acceptance, body scanned, administered and intoxylizer if needed, fingerprinted, photographed, dressed-in, classified for housing and medical/ mental health issues among other tasks. There is no barrier between the arrestee and the jail staff, creating potentially dangerous situations for the staff.

PHOTO 1. BOOKING



Files and supplies are stored wherever space can be found. Often, file cabinets are kept in utility chases. In addition to the clutter, this can also cause fire hazards and potential loss of vital records in the event of electrical or plumbing issues.

PHOTO 2. FILE STORAGE



Many of the control systems and panels are outdated. The light control panel pictured below is several decades old. When equipment breaks down in the jail, replacement parts often have to be custom-fabricated because they are no longer commercially available.

PHOTO 3. LIGHTING CONTROLS



Inmate living spaces, such as their cells and dayrooms pictured below, have exposed conduit for plumbing and radiant heat. There are also many instances of metal plates bolted to the ceilings after years of repair. These items present hazards for vandalism and contraband but are also potential ligature points which become life-safety issues.

PHOTO 4. HOUSING



PHOTO 5. DAYROOM



There is a lack of appropriate spaces for inmates with special needs that should be housed separately from the general population. This can include those with mental illness, health issues, and inmates needing protective custody. As a result, program spaces must often be used to house these individuals. This takes away the very limited program spaces from the remainder of the inmate population.

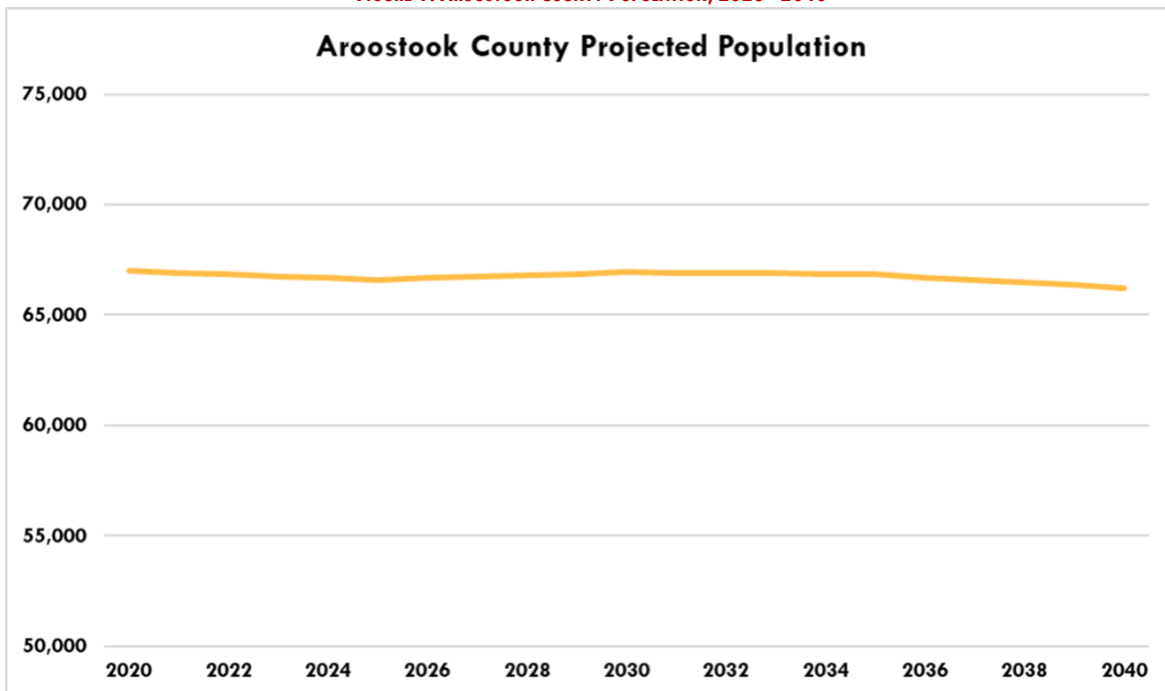
PHOTO 6. PROGRAM ROOM / TEMPORARY HOUSING



AROOSTOOK COUNTY POPULATION

To help set the context for the analysis, it is prudent to have a clear sense of the future population size of Aroostook County. To do this, the research team acquired data from the Maine Office of the State Economist¹. Generally speaking, population growth (or the opposite) has a somewhat muted impact on a given jail's population. For the most part, there is not a direct linear correlation between population growth and jail population forecasts. There simply is no set proportion of new citizens that can be calculated or translated into jail population numbers. However, in our experience, there is enough of an impact that population growth needs to be considered when building statistical forecasts of future jail population levels. Simply put, having more residents in a jurisdiction is expected to increase the number of arrests and bookings in that jurisdiction. The state data indicate that the county's population is expected to shrink by 1.1% between 2025 and 2040. It is fair to conclude that any future increase in the jail's population will not be driven by demographic factors. Figure 1 demonstrates the expected future size of the Aroostook County population.

FIGURE 1. AROOSTOOK COUNTY POPULATION, 2020 - 2040



It is prudent to reiterate that while the future population of the county is important to consider, there is not a direct relationship with the ultimate size of the jail facility. There simply is no one-to-one relationship between population growth and jail needs. While population growth does contribute to arrests and bookings, which impact the jail's future population, it is not at all the most important factor. In this case, the county population is not growing, and the evolving demography in Aroostook County is unlikely to be the culprit behind future increased arrests.

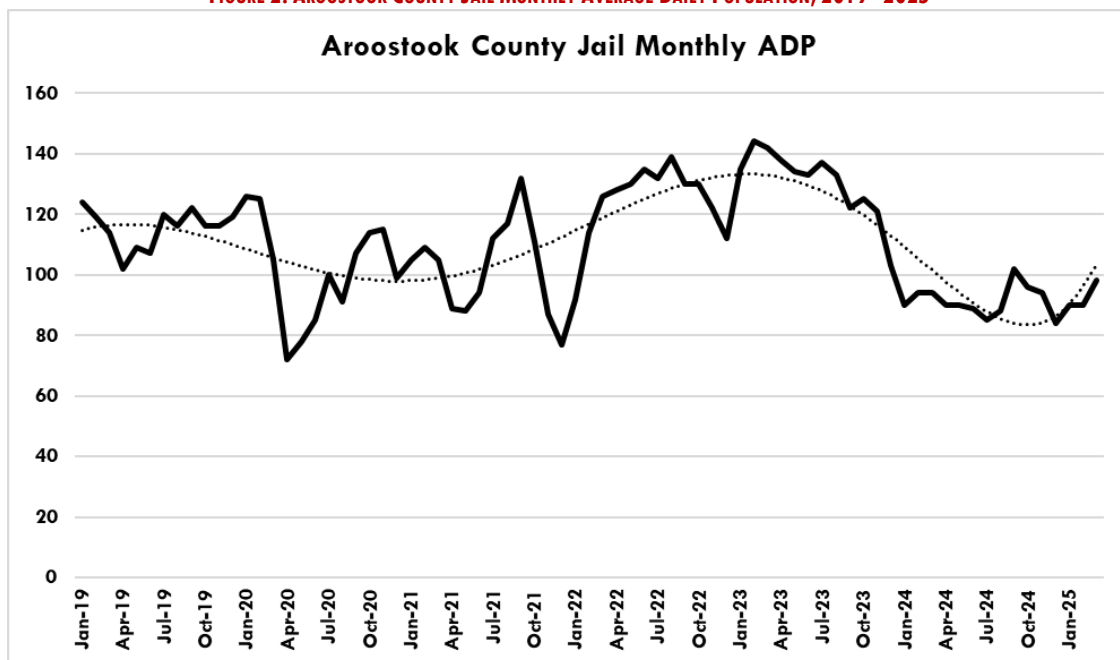
¹ <https://www.maine.gov/dafs/economist/demographic-projections>

AROOSTOOK COUNTY JAIL POPULATION ANALYSIS

The most prominent and important measures that impact the Aroostook County Jail population were employed in a comprehensive set of analyses such as bookings (the number of people booked into the facility), average daily population (ADP), average length of stay (ALOS, a measure of how long, on average, detainees stay in custody), arrest offenses, and a profile of the detainee population. To perform our jail population analysis, a significant set of data extractions from the Aroostook County Jail was obtained and analyzed. Our intention was to examine every charge for every person with a criminal matter between January 1, 2019, and March 31, 2025 along with demographic and release information.

The research team took the data provided and forensically reconstructed each day's population during the study's time frame. Figure 2 takes the daily data and rolls the time series up into months. The population is seasonal, with peaks and valleys corresponding to certain times of the year, something that is commonly seen across the country. There is a significant decrease in Spring 2020 due to the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, and a second significant decrease in late 2021/early 2022 that reflected a combination of factors, including weather. It is important to note that the population trend recovered extremely quickly from both of these decreases, which arguably reflects a shortage of beds needed for the system. Finally, in early 2024 a significant population decrease began which continues today, driven by enhanced system attention to case processing and jail population management efforts.

FIGURE 2. AROOSTOOK COUNTY JAIL MONTHLY AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION, 2019 - 2025



Commitments

All jail populations are determined by two factors: The number of people who are booked into the facility and how long those people stay (average length of stay, or ALOS). Figure 3 details the monthly number of commitments (expressed as a daily average in order to more accurately compare months of different lengths) into the jail. The number of bookings into the jail declined significantly in 2019, well ahead of the arrival of the first wave of COVID-19. After Spring 2020, the bookings trend never approaches the pre-COVID period, although it was slowly increasing until Fall 2024. The last 6 months of the data reflect a stable level of bookings that are about half of the pre-pandemic numbers and also 1 fewer person per

day booked into the jail.

FIGURE 3. MONTHLY COMMITMENTS, 2019 – 2025

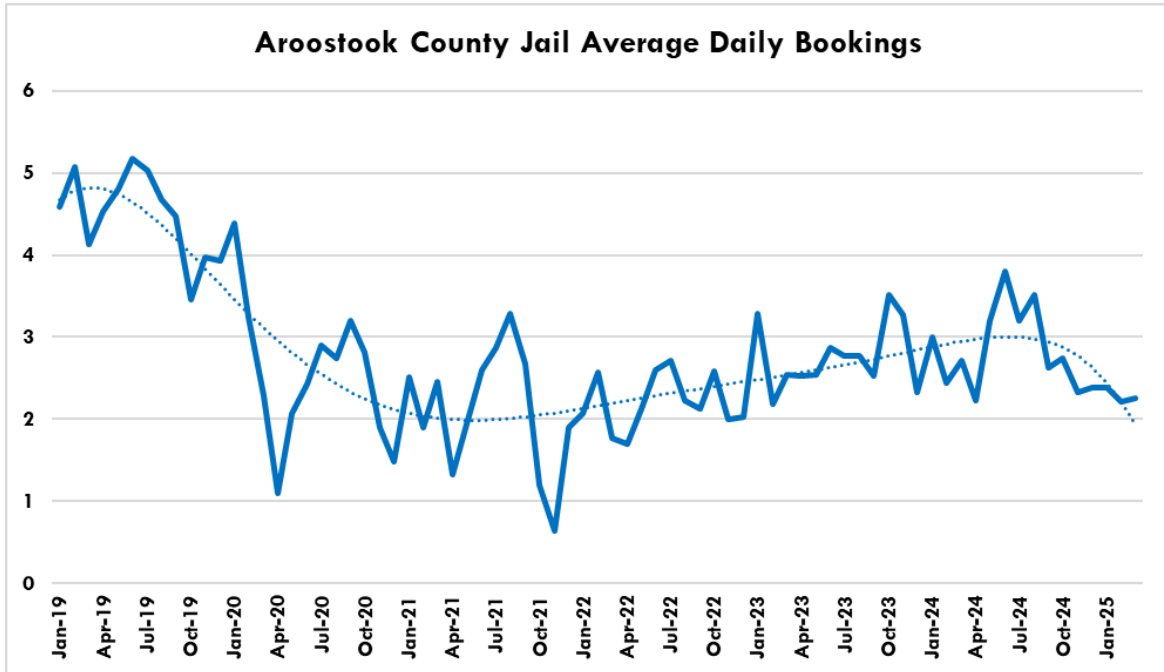


Figure 4 plots the ADP trend against the average daily booking trend. There is a moderate correlation through midyear 2023. At that point, however, the population begins to trend down while the bookings trend continues its uptick. Moreover, in midyear 2024, the trends swap their tendencies---bookings decrease a bit, while the population experiences some small gains by the end of our data in early 2025.

FIGURE 4. JAIL BOOKINGS vs. ADP, 2019 – 2025

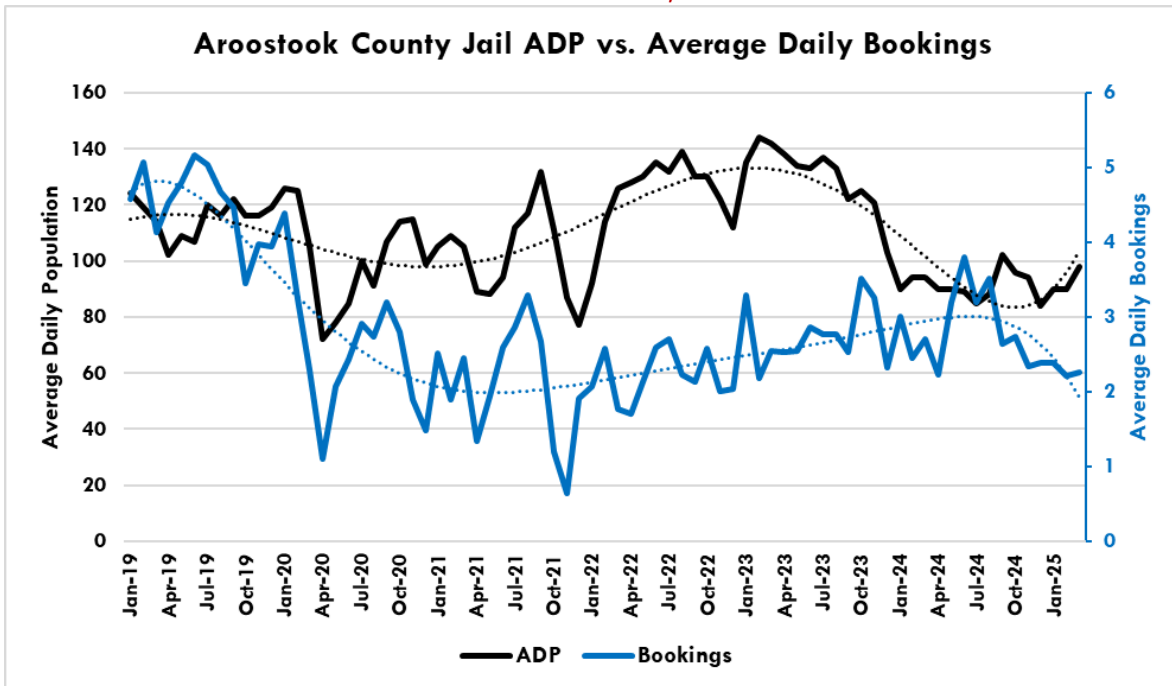
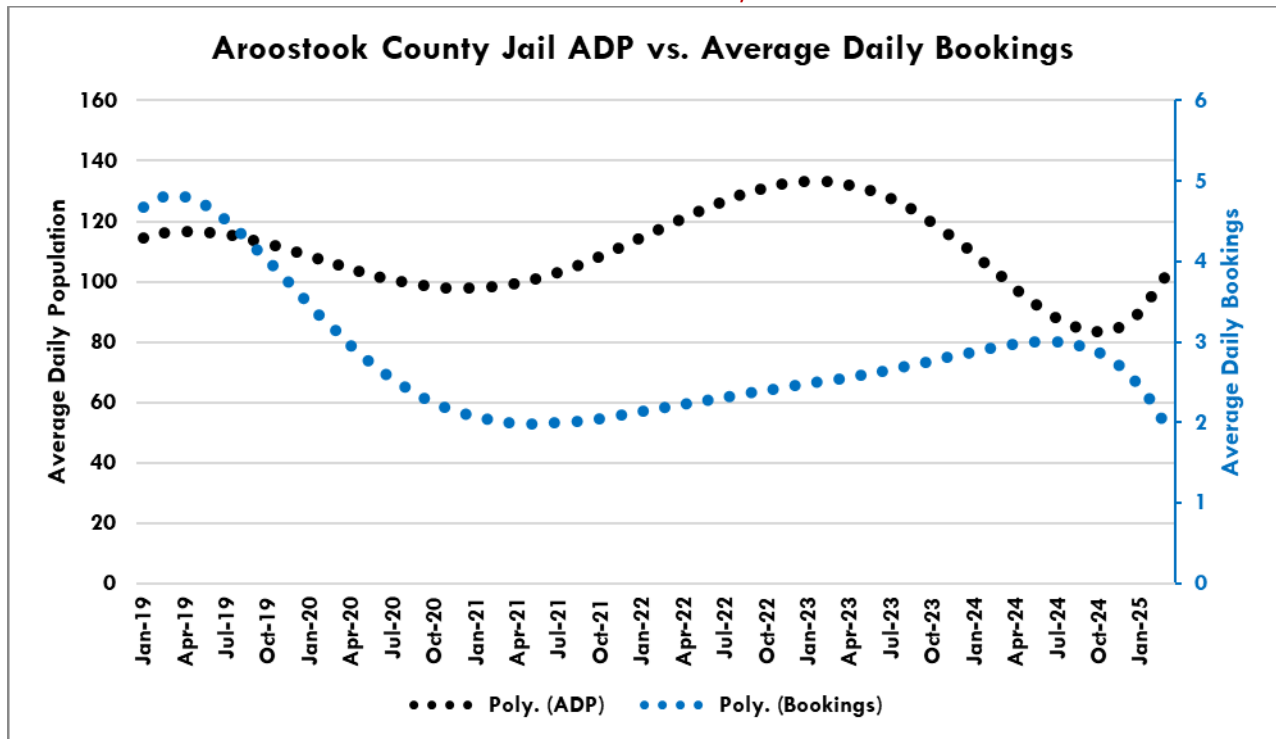


Figure 5 is the same chart, but removes the actual data from the graph, leaving only the polynomial trend

lines. By removing the noise from the graph, the relationship between bookings and the jail's ADP is much more evident. The key takeaway is that bookings alone aren't a very good predictor of the jail's population.

FIGURE 5. BOOKING TREND VS. ADP TREND, 2019 – 2025



Commitments By Charge

There are other aspects of bookings that ought to be explored. The research team also examined what the offense was that necessitated each intake during the period of our analysis. Because most people are booked with more than one offense, to make comprehending the nature of the offenses involved across the population easier, it is necessary to determine the most serious offense of each person. The data extracts produced by the Aroostook County Jail contained every single charge for every single person charged between 2019 and March 31, 2025. These extracts were analyzed, and the charge information was reclassified into multiple categories. This helped to construct a further reclassification to develop the most serious charge for each detainee. The categories used to make the final determination are (presented in order of seriousness):

- Violent
- Sex Offenses
- Offenses vs People
- Weapons
- Burglary
- Theft/Fraud
- Drugs
- Offenses Against the Administration of Government
- DUI
- Public Order
- Other
- Alcohol
- Traffic
- Supervision/Temporary Release Violation
- Hold/Writ

'Offenses vs. People' is defined as crimes such as neglect, endangerment, corruption of minors, harassment, etc.). 'Offenses Against the Administration of Government' is defined as crimes such as Failures to Appear in Court or Resisting Arrest. 'Public Order' offenses include things like Vandalism, Trespassing or Disorderly Conduct. Using the information collected from the large data extract, when a detainee has multiple charges, a primary charge category is assigned according to the priority listed above. The priority listing is premised on the most serious offense having the highest priority. For example, if an arrestee were charged with a DUI and a violent offense, the primary charge category for that person would be violent. In our algorithms, felony charges will always outweigh misdemeanor charges.

Table 1 breaks down the Aroostook County commitments by most serious charge and is sorted by their proportions of all intakes for 2025. To be clear, the numbers on the table reflect the daily number of intakes for each category such that the total at the bottom for 2025 shows an average of 2.57 intakes on a daily basis. We elected to include a comparison column between 2025 and 2022 to highlight recent post-COVID trends. Individuals with a Violation of Community Release (VCR) were the most commonly booked group, representing an 80% increase. The 'Offensive vs Government Misdemeanor' category also more than doubled in the first quarter of 2025. It is important to note that the number of individuals charged with violent felonies were cut in half, and currently constitute the lowest number in the time span of our data. The takeaway is that more people are coming to the jail due to some form of a process violation, while selected charge groups are experiencing decreases.

TABLE 1. DAILY AVERAGE BOOKINGS BY MOST SERIOUS CHARGE, 2019 – 2025

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Delta From 2022
VCR	0.36	0.16	0.16	0.17	0.27	0.28	0.31	80.2%
Offenses vs People Misd	0.49	0.39	0.34	0.37	0.41	0.32	0.30	-18.3%
Offenses vs Government Misd	0.59	0.23	0.15	0.09	0.21	0.22	0.23	158.1%
Probation Violation	0.30	0.15	0.10	0.15	0.21	0.18	0.23	52.1%
Drugs Felony	0.40	0.23	0.22	0.14	0.27	0.25	0.16	11.3%
Offenses vs Government Felony	0.20	0.10	0.13	0.12	0.18	0.19	0.16	29.0%
Violent Felony	0.22	0.16	0.16	0.25	0.19	0.17	0.12	-50.4%
DUI Misd	0.25	0.14	0.05	0.06	0.10	0.13	0.11	93.1%
Offenses vs People Felony	0.19	0.21	0.20	0.21	0.17	0.18	0.10	-51.3%
Burglary Felony	0.12	0.06	0.06	0.08	0.07	0.10	0.09	8.1%
Theft/Fraud Felony	0.18	0.10	0.14	0.14	0.16	0.18	0.09	-35.1%
Theft/Fraud Misd	0.13	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.07	0.08	0.09	116.3%
Everything Else	1.04	0.55	0.36	0.41	0.48	0.57	0.58	42.5%
Total	4.48	2.55	2.12	2.22	2.77	2.85	2.57	15.7%

Table 2 depicts the results of an analysis of people who were booked into the jail but then ended up being rebooked into the jail on a future date. To interpret the table, for 2019 there were 1,635 total bookings into the jail involving 1,061 people. During the next 3 years, 540 people returned to jail at least one time, resulting in a 3-year recidivism rate of 50.9%. The right side of the table is not bound by the 3-year limit and reflects the full timespan of our data extract. This would explain the higher 'all-time' rate for rearrests (59.4%). The analysis made no attempt to discern whether a given person was returning to the jail on a new matter or a previous matter.

TABLE 2. AROOSTOOK COUNTY REARREST ANALYSIS, 2019 – 2025

Year	Total Bookings	People Booked	People Returned Within 3 Years	3-Year Return Rate	People Returned All time	All Time Return Rate
2019	1635	1061	540	50.9%	630	59.4%
2020	934	712	348	48.9%	414	58.1%
2021	772	616	327	53.1%	366	59.4%
2022	810	677	339	50.1%	339	50.1%
2023	1010	784	---	---	363	46.3%
2024	1044	767	---	---	256	33.4%
2025	231	206	---	---	24	11.7%

In areas that have a prominent pretrial or community release process, there tends to be significant debate about the effectiveness of the process, particularly regarding reoffense/rearrest. We lacked the necessary data to evaluate the rearrest rate for all people who were placed on community release. However, we could examine the rearrest rates for people who had been booked into the jail in connection to a community release violation (VCR) charge (Table 3, below). We note higher rearrest rates on both the 3-year and all-time measures in 2019, but in no other year. We further note that people who were booked in 2019 but were not charged with a VCR have a much lower rearrest rate of 23%.

TABLE 3. AROOSTOOK COUNTY REARREST ANALYSIS FOR PEOPLE CHARGED WITH A VCR, 2019 – 2025

Year	Total Bookings	People Booked	People Returned Within 3 Years	3-Year Return Rate	People Returned All time	All Time Return Rate
2019	719	487	263	54.0%	311	63.9%
2020	429	342	162	47.4%	193	56.4%
2021	370	295	151	51.2%	166	56.3%
2022	442	378	178	47.1%	178	47.1%
2023	488	377	---	---	169	44.8%
2024	519	387	---	---	129	33.3%
2025	92	76	---	---	15	19.7%

Average Length of Stay

In addition to commitments, the other predictor of a facility’s population is average length of stay (ALOS). ALOS is calculated by taking the average (mean) of how long everyone released during a given time period actually stayed in custody. In addition, for some analyses, it may be prudent to calculate the median of the lengths of stay for all people released during that time period. Generally speaking, if a facility’s ALOS increases, this will often result in an increase in the facility’s population, unless commitments decrease to a point where the population stays the same or decreases. The reverse also holds true. A declining ALOS may result in decreases in a facility’s population, assuming that commitments don’t increase at the same time to hold the population steady.

Figure 6 below reflects the monthly mean ALOS in days for the Aroostook County Jail between 2019 and the end of March 2025. As a response to the pandemic, the criminal justice system (like many systems across the country) released as many people from custody as possible to try to reduce populations in an attempt to minimize the health risk within the facility, resulting in more dynamic behavior of the ALOS time series. The ALOS time series becomes a lot more dynamic after the pandemic. However, the big spike in

the time series occurs in November 2021, with a massive increase in ALOS. Keep in mind that our calculation is an average of all of the lengths of stays for everyone released in a given time period. In this case, there were multiple transfers to Maine State Prison on November 24, 2021 involving several long-staying inmates. This skyrocketed our ALOS measure for that month.

FIGURE 6. AROOSTOOK COUNTY JAIL ALOS (DAYS), 2019 – 2025

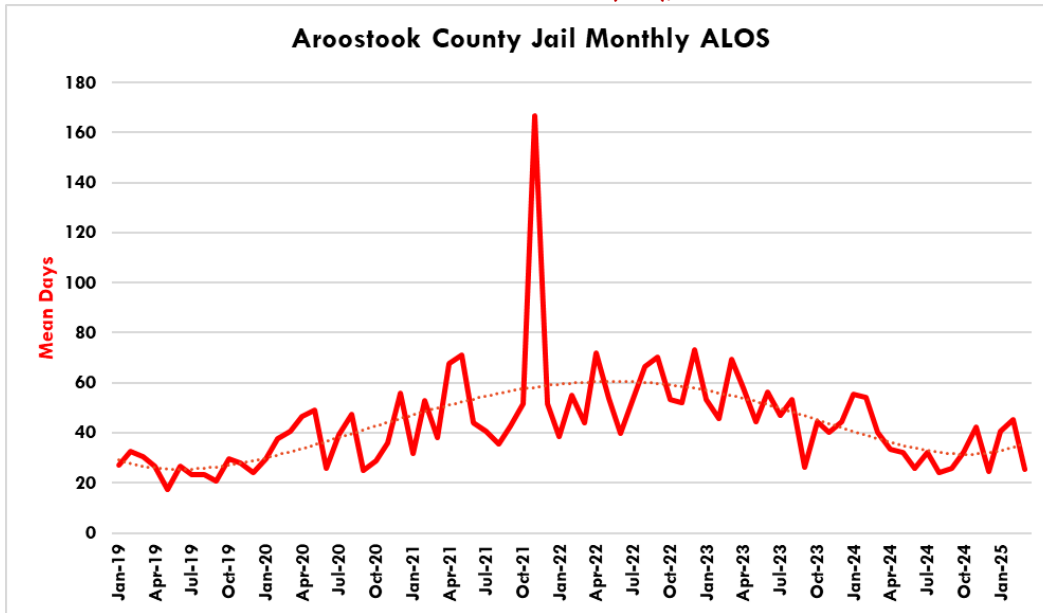
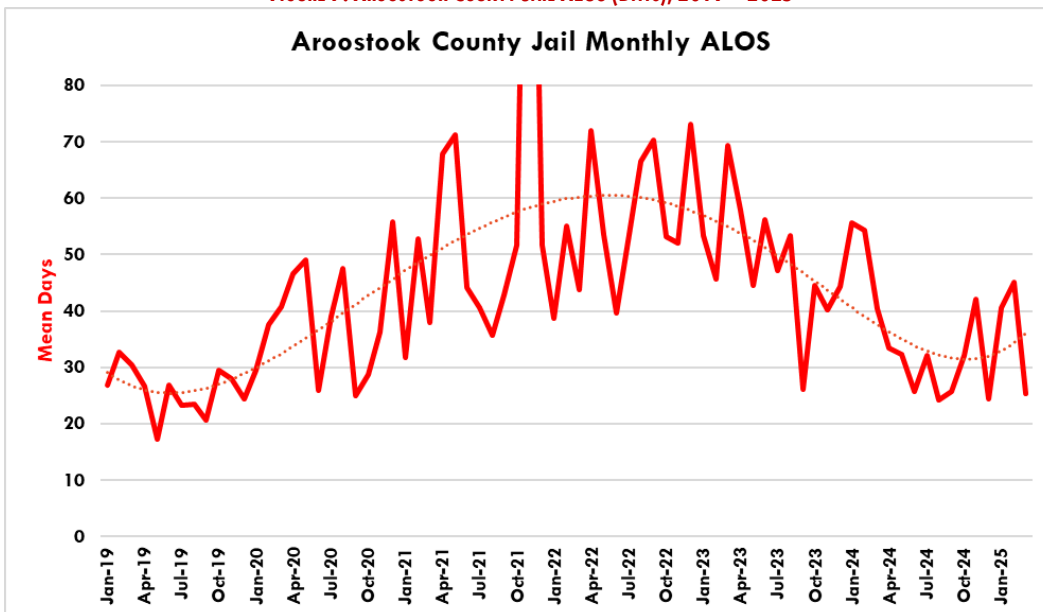


Figure 7 contains the same data series, but puts a cap on the Y-axis of 80 days. This alteration allows us to see the significant ALOS reductions in 2024 and 2025. The ALOS in 2024 represented a 26% decrease from 2023, and the 2025 YTD ALOS is only slightly higher than 2024.

FIGURE 7. AROOSTOOK COUNTY JAIL ALOS (DAYS), 2019 – 2025



Much like Figures 4 and 5, which compared ADP to bookings, Figures 8 and 9 plot the facility ADP against the mean ALOS. We do not see a significant relationship until 2021. Bookings and ALOS in combination

helped drive the jail population until, say, 2022. A reduction in ALOS that commenced in late 2022 offset the increase in bookings and ultimately translated into a later reduction of the facility's population. The statistical relationship between ADP and ALOS in the last several years is very strong.

FIGURE 8. AROOSTOOK COUNTY JAIL ADP vs. ALOS, 2019 – 2025

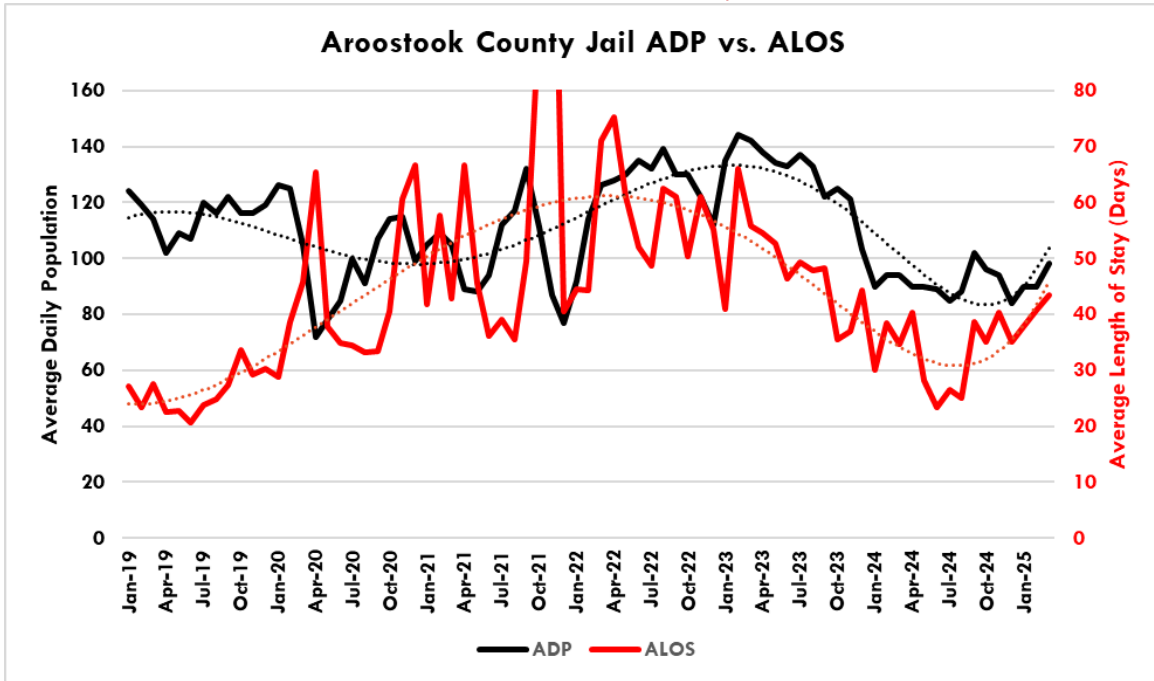


FIGURE 9. AROOSTOOK COUNTY JAIL ADP TREND vs. ALOS TREND, 2019 – 2025

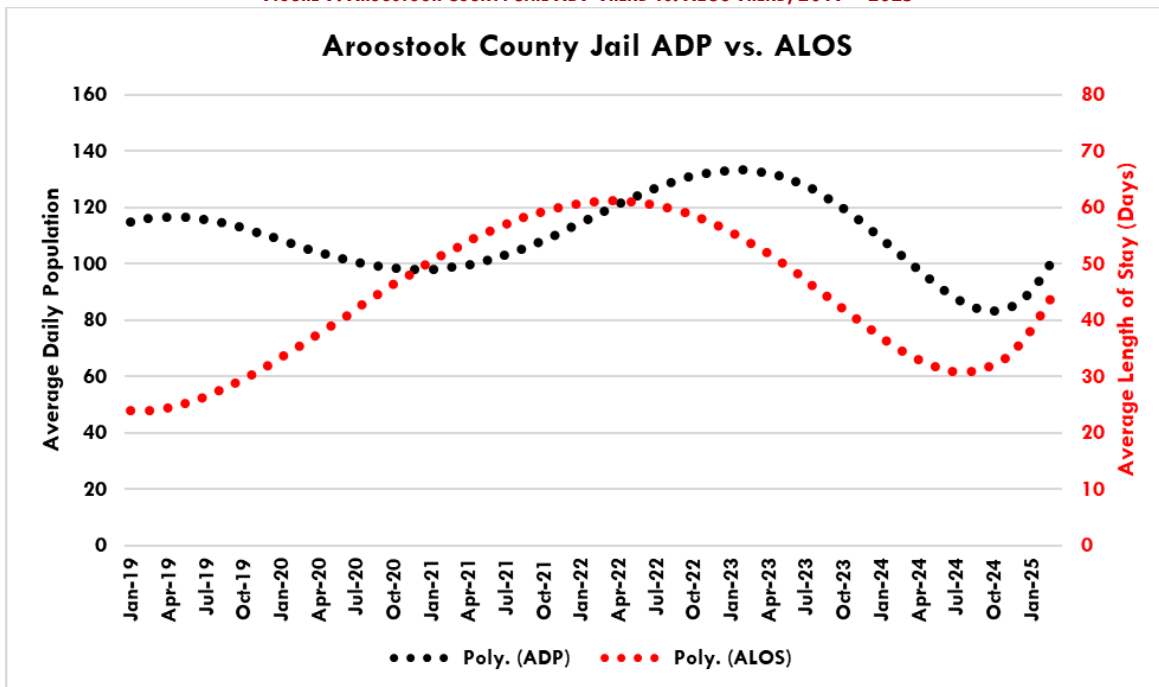


Figure 10 presents the monthly median ALOS for the Aroostook County Jail. In many instances, the median is an excellent measure of the central tendency of a jail's length of stay patterns because it can avoid the impact of outlying values. However, in this situation, the median is incredibly dynamic after 2020 (due principally to the relatively small number of releases), and the overall takeaway is that the trend roughly mirrors that of the mean. The lower level after late 2023 is somewhat stable and matches up with some of the other measures, although we see an increase in 2025 YTD that matches what is seen in the mean LOS trend.

FIGURE 10. AROOSTOOK COUNTY JAIL MEDIAN LOS (DAYS), 2019 – 2025

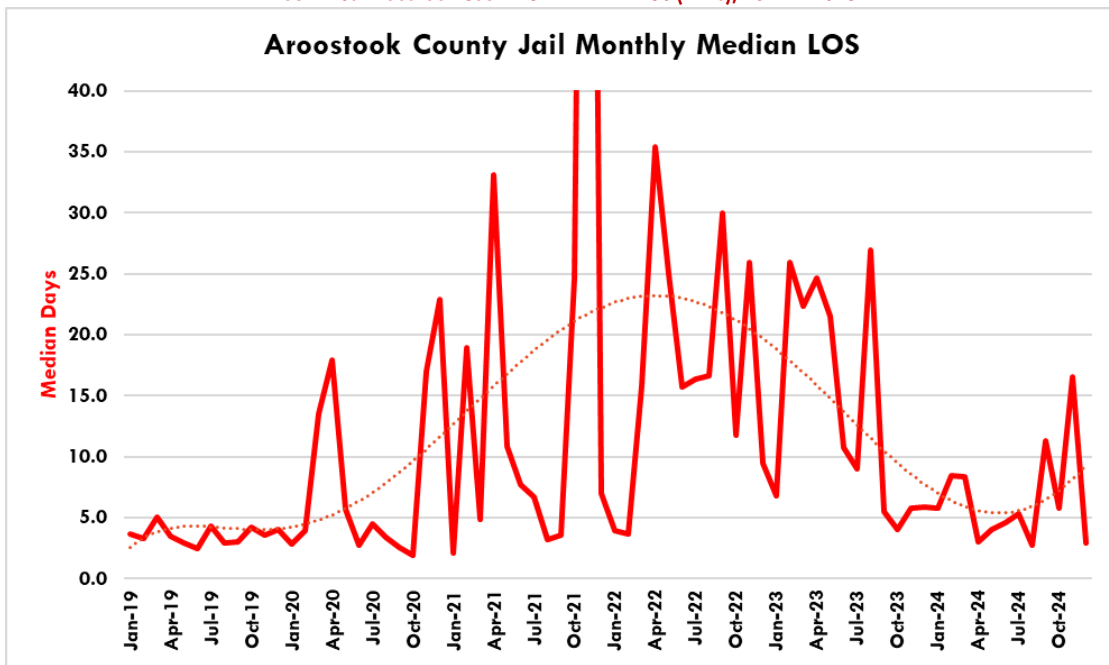


Table 4 provides the annual mean ALOS numbers for each year of the analysis by gender. As expected, female ALOS is lower than male ALOS across time and roughly experiences the same patterns of increase and decrease. The critical lesson of the table is that ALOS was significantly reduced beginning in 2023, helping hold the population in check.

TABLE 4. AROOSTOOK COUNTY ALOS IN DAYS, 2019 – 2025

Year	Female ALOS	Male ALOS	Total	% Change
2019	16.1	28.6	25.7	
2020	25.0	40.4	37.2	45%
2021	26.8	58.5	52.6	41%
2022	36.0	61.8	56.2	7%
2023	36.5	52.1	48.6	-14%
2024	24.6	37.7	34.8	-28%
2025	14.4	42.1	36.2	4%

Table 5 provides the ALOS in days by each person's most serious charge category over time. The table is sorted by the population proportions for each charge category. There are noteworthy reductions in ALOS for most of the charge categories. The second-largest decrease was a nearly 86% reduction for violent

felony cases. This may perhaps be an artifact of a lack of releases to the Maine Department of Corrections and/or it may be an impact of some of the case management work that has been undertaken by the judiciary. At any rate, the decrease in ALOS is a nearly universal phenomenon that has helped keep the jail's population in check.

TABLE 5. AROOSTOOK COUNTY ALOS (IN DAYS) BY MOST SERIOUS CHARGE, 2019 – 2025

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Delta From 2022
Violent Felony	31.0	64.5	123.4	127.4	109.9	61.4	18.4	-85.5%
VCR	14.6	31.3	38.5	53.7	27.4	27.5	53.0	-1.4%
Probation Violation	41.5	58.2	75.5	47.2	53.8	49.9	53.0	12.3%
Drugs Felony	24.7	63.0	75.7	82.6	63.4	45.9	78.4	-5.0%
Offenses vs People Misd	12.3	19.3	21.3	27.5	23.6	21.9	22.0	-20.0%
Offenses vs People Felony	23.7	46.2	72.1	59.6	86.6	47.4	11.6	-80.6%
Burglary Felony	33.0	59.3	67.2	66.8	64.7	45.4	99.7	49.3%
Theft/Fraud Felony	32.5	54.4	42.9	74.0	61.8	35.6	53.4	-27.9%
Sex Offense Felony	40.4	16.0	17.3	82.4	66.5	92.3	1.9	-97.7%
Offenses vs Government Misd	8.0	14.5	13.3	27.0	20.1	16.7	6.4	-76.2%
Weapons Felony	15.2	65.6	130.4	68.8	82.5	12.7	57.7	-16.2%
Drugs Misd	14.9	31.2	17.2	65.0	36.7	24.0	21.7	-66.6%
Total	25.7	37.2	52.6	56.2	48.6	34.8	36.2	-35.6%

Average Daily Population Characteristics

Our data reconstruction made it possible to look at the facility's ADP by a variety of demographic factors. Figures 11 and 12 below give the ADP proportion broken down by gender between 2019 and 2025. The proportion of females in the population seemingly varies from year to year without much indication of a trend. The current proportion is lower than in recent years. We are seeing growth in female populations in county jails across the country, a factor that we take into account in selected forecasts. The monthly time series presented in Figure 12 demonstrates that variations in the female population are associated with variations in the male population.

FIGURE 11. ANNUAL JAIL POPULATION BY GENDER, 2019 – 2025

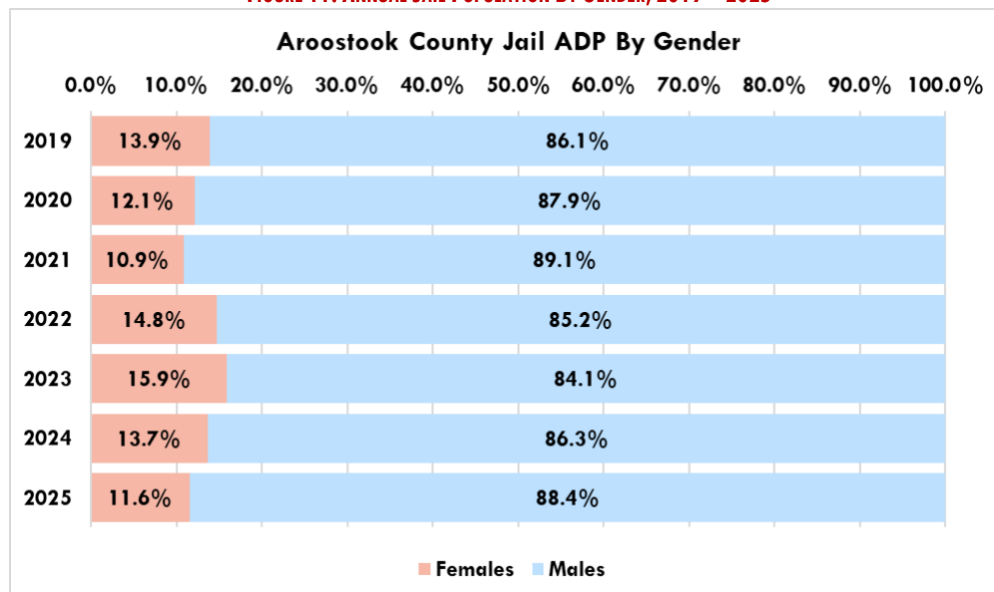


FIGURE 12. MONTHLY JAIL POPULATION BY GENDER, 2019 – 2025

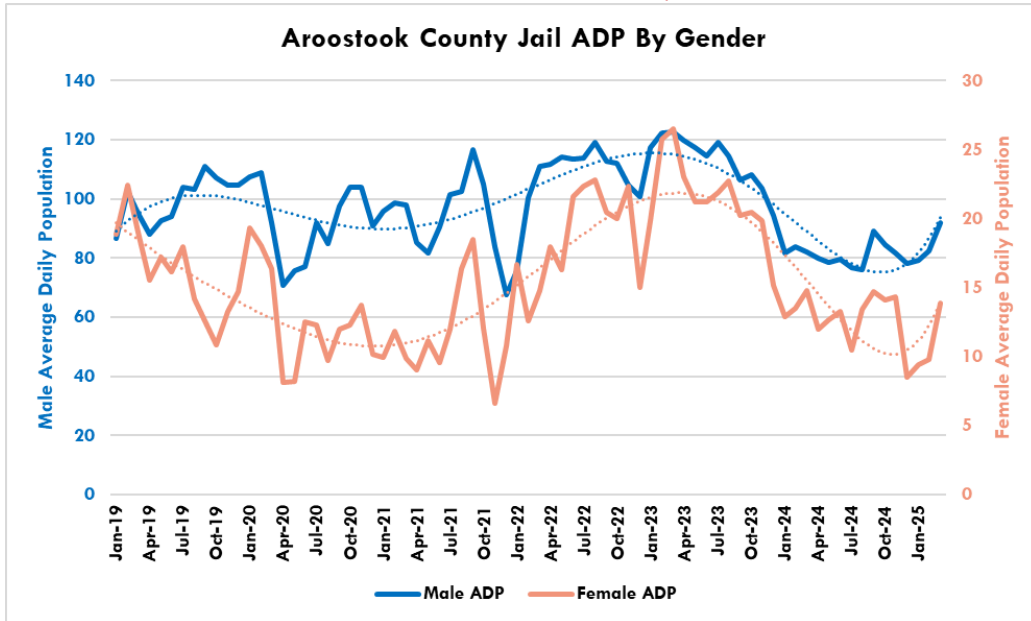


Figure 13 relates the annual ADP by age cohort. Nationwide, we are measuring relative declines in the group of detainees who are in their 20s, with increases in the proportion of detainees in their 30s and 40s. The Aroostook County trends tend to follow this pattern. As the county population itself ages, there are proportionally fewer people in their 20s and 30s than in the past. Similarly, the jail population is showing decreases in the 20s and 30s cohorts, although the decrease for the 30s cohort has some variation. The groups of inmates who are in their 40s, 50s, and above have all gained in terms of their proportion of the population.

FIGURE 13. ANNUAL JAIL POPULATION BY AGE GROUP, 2019 – 2025

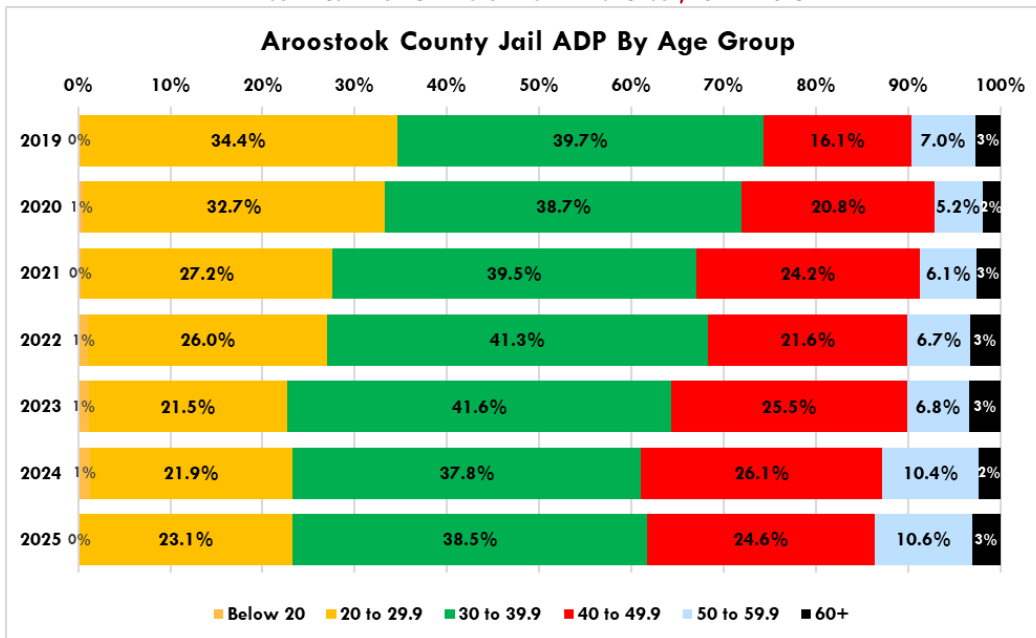


Figure 14 presents the age group data by month. Note how the 40s cohort has caught up with the 20s

cohort and, for periods, exceeds it. If current trends continue, the 40s cohort will become the largest segment of the jail's population in a few years. These age group shifts have implications for the jail's operations, as well as growth projections. If the base of people who tend to comprise the jail's population continue to shift older without replacement, in the very long-term, the jail's population may actually shrink from current levels.

FIGURE 14. MONTHLY JAIL POPULATION BY AGE GROUP, 2019 – 2025

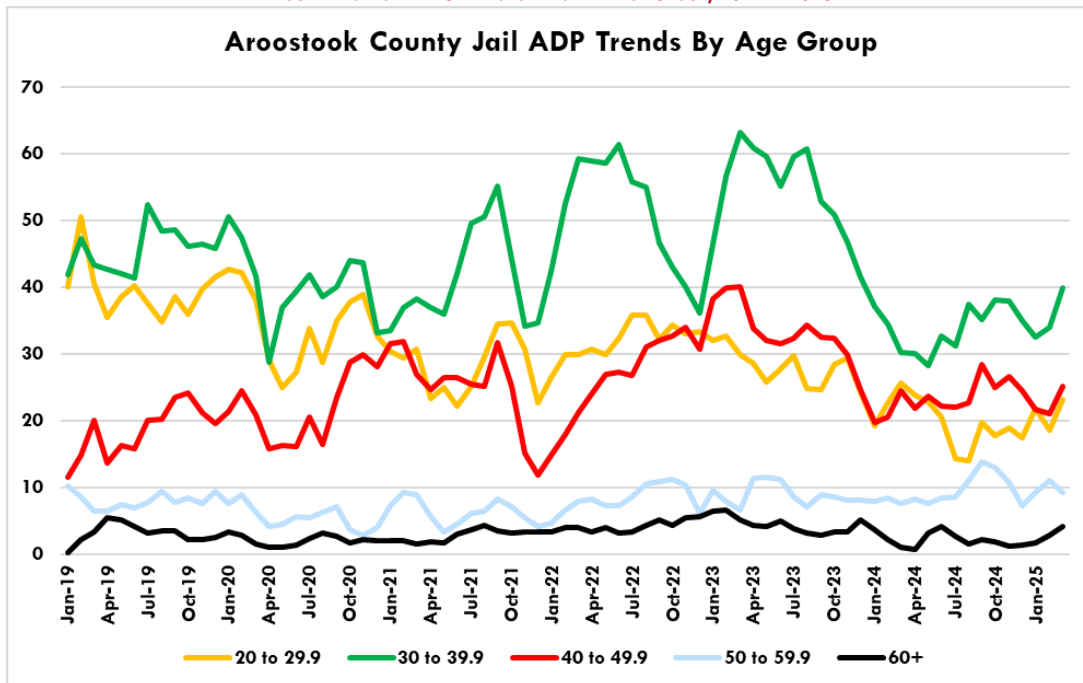
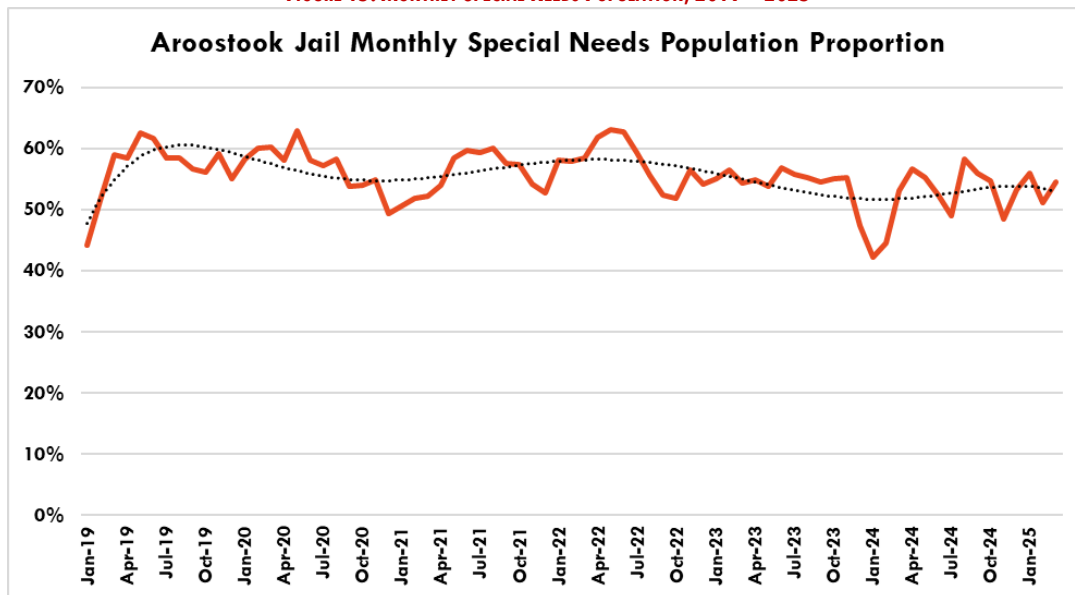


FIGURE 15. MONTHLY SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATION, 2019 – 2025



The Aroostook County Sheriff's Office provided the research team with the list of individuals who had received a special management housing assignment. We applied that information to our population reconstruction in Figure 15 above. To be clear, this is an estimate of the proportion of individuals in the

ADP who have a mental health issue, but it does not speak at all to acuity. In reality, individuals may go to special housing and then stabilize and return to the general population. The proportions presented by the chart are not a measurement of the number of individuals who have an active acute serious mental illness. At any one time, about 10% of the jail's population are assigned to the special management locations and are often exhibiting symptoms of serious mental illness. The overall proportion of people (roughly 50%) with mental health issues in our analysis is in line with what we are measuring in other jails.

The special needs population was also examined in terms of rearrest patterns. The rearrest rates for people arrested in 2021 and 2022 are a bit higher than for the overall population, which is in line with the findings of similar studies.

TABLE 6. SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATION REARREST RATES, 2019 - 2025

Year	Total Bookings	People Booked	People Returned Within 3 Years	3-Year Return Rate	People Returned All time	All Time Return Rate
2019	987	626	329	52.6%	380	60.7%
2020	556	421	212	50.4%	262	62.2%
2021	438	340	191	56.2%	207	60.9%
2022	449	359	202	56.3%	207	57.7%
2023	512	395	---	---	198	50.1%
2024	529	385	---	---	142	36.9%
2025	128	112	---	---	16	14.3%

As with bookings and ALOS, the most serious charge analysis was extended to the ADP in Table 7, sorted by the 2025 population proportion. We see a pronounced change from the most serious offense table for bookings. Violent felons constitute the largest portion of the population, followed by VCRs and probation violations. The jail is holding a fairly serious population, with felony-charged individuals composing the decided majority. Given the reductions in length of stay it is not surprising to see a slight reduction in the violent felon population in 2025 as compared to 2022. Meanwhile, we see increases during that time for the VCRs and probation violation populations, something we also note in Figure 16. These populations tend to be a bit more discretionary on the part of the system, and are an important topic for monitoring and consideration by the stakeholders as time passes.

TABLE 7. AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION BY MOST SERIOUS OFFENSE, 2019 - 2025

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Delta From 2022
Violent Felony	27.9	19.7	20.5	27.8	24.5	13.6	26.8	-3.4%
VCR	7.0	4.6	8.2	6.4	8.1	8.5	9.6	50.0%
Probation Violation	12.4	9.7	6.7	7.4	12.1	8.7	8.6	16.1%
Drugs Felony	12.1	18.2	13.6	13.5	16.9	10.4	8.4	-37.7%
Offenses vs People Misd	6.9	7.9	6.8	10.2	10.0	5.9	5.5	-45.8%
Offenses vs People Felony	7.1	9.6	13.2	14.8	12.7	8.4	4.1	-72.2%
Burglary Felony	4.6	3.3	3.9	5.8	4.2	5.0	4.1	-29.0%
Theft/Fraud Felony	6.8	5.4	6.4	10.8	9.2	6.1	3.6	-66.7%
Offenses vs Government Felony	4.9	6.1	6.5	6.8	7.8	7.2	3.5	-49.1%
Theft/Fraud Misd	2.1	1.6	0.5	1.6	2.5	0.9	3.3	108.0%
Sex Offense Felony	1.1	0.5	1.1	3.9	6.5	2.0	1.9	-52.3%
Offenses vs Government Misd	5.5	3.0	1.7	2.6	4.6	3.3	1.7	-32.7%
Weapons Felony	1.5	4.2	3.6	2.4	1.5	0.9	1.7	-29.1%
Drugs Misd	2.5	1.9	1.6	2.0	1.5	1.4	0.7	-63.9%
Everything Else	12.3	9.1	9.5	7.4	8.9	7.4	8.7	17.6%
Total	114.7	104.8	103.7	123.1	131.0	89.8	92.2	-25.1%

FIGURE 16. MONTHLY VCR/VOP POPULATION, 2019 – 2025

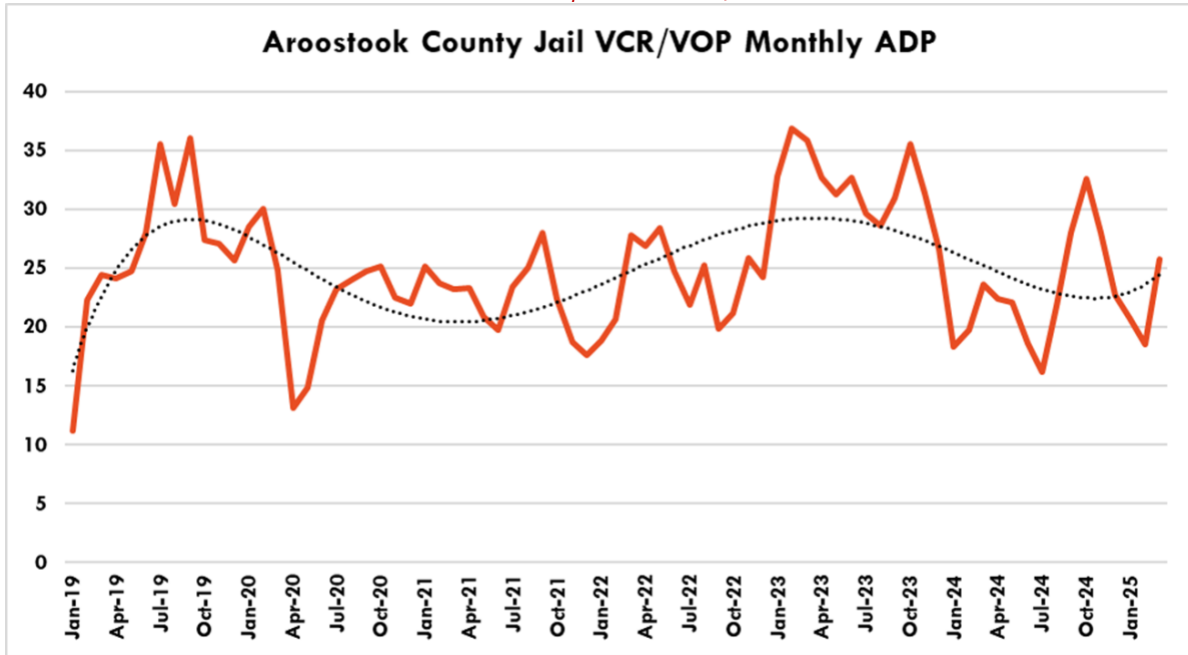
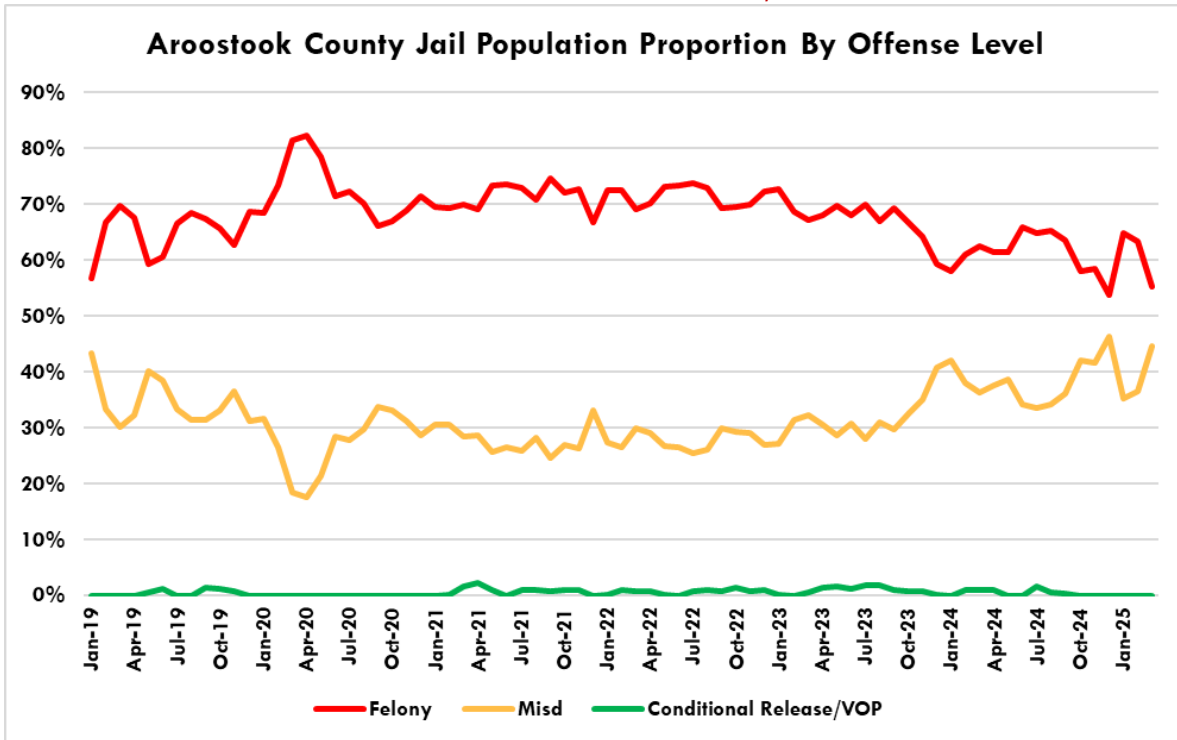


Figure 17 shows the population reconstruction by charge level. There is a small decrease in the proportion of felony-charged individuals in the last 18 months, coinciding almost exactly with the start of the case management efforts of the judiciary. The apparent reduction in case processing time for the felony cases has resulted in a decline in the proportion of the felony-charged individuals, which is also supported by what the LOS by charge numbers indicate.

FIGURE 17. MONTHLY JAIL POPULATION BY OFFENSE LEVEL, 2019 – 2025



An update of the extracts from the jail was transferred to the project team on April 2, 2025. This allowed us to assess the current population that day (Figure 18). During that date, 102 people were held. One of the key indicators that the research team looks for in terms of the efficiency of the criminal justice system is the proportion of 'long-stay' inmates (generally, people who are staying in custody for over a year). Systems which are troubled tend to have long stay inmates comprise 10% or more of their jail's population. In this case, there were only 2 people on that date who had been held over a year. The other time proportions were also positive. The conclusion that should be drawn is that, from all appearances, the system is doing an acceptable job of processing cases and people.

FIGURE 18. APRIL 2, 2025 POPULATION BY CUSTODY LENGTH

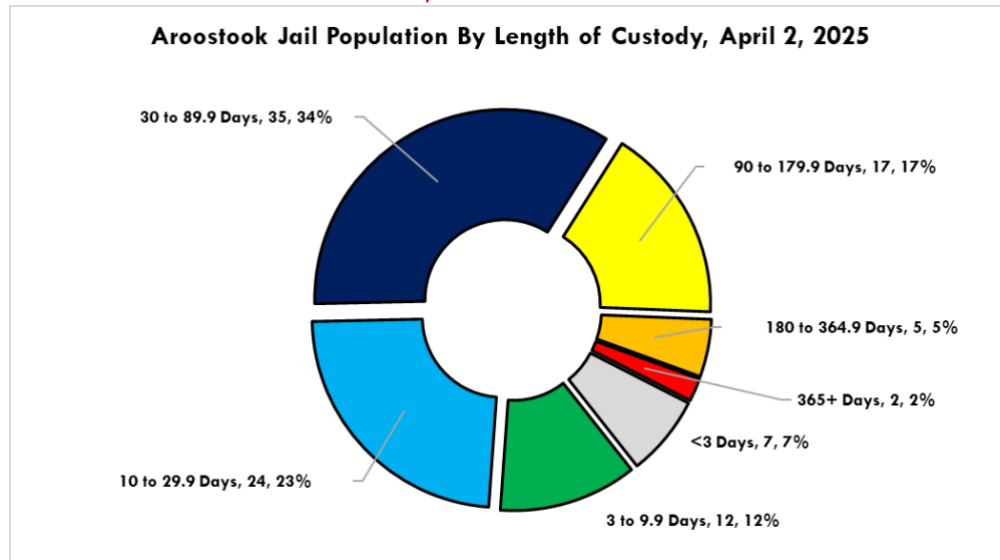


Table 8 provides an overall summary of the Aroostook County Jail ADP, bookings, and ALOS between 2019 and 2025. The population of the facility has decreased 22% since 2019, due to a 36% reduction in bookings. The booking decline is somewhat blunted by a 35% increase in ALOS since that time. A more important lesson lies in the 2024-2025 numbers. The population has declined thanks to a reduction in ALOS as well as a recent reduction in bookings. Managing ALOS in the future will be a critical mission for the Aroostook County criminal justice system.

TABLE 8. ADP, ALOS, & BOOKINGS, 2019 – 2024

Year	ADP	Average Daily Bookings	Mean ALOS	Median LOS
2019	114.7	4.3	25.7	3.5
2020	104.8	2.5	37.2	4.3
2021	103.7	2.0	52.6	8.9
2022	123.1	2.1	56.2	16.5
2023	131.0	2.7	48.6	11.7
2024	89.8	2.7	34.8	5.0
2025	92.2	2.3	36.2	4.9
Delta vs. 2019	-22%	-36%	35%	44%
Delta vs. 2024	3%	-17%	4%	-3%

Finally, Figures 19 and 20 summarize the major jail population factors in single depictions. The Aroostook County Jail population story is that both admissions and ALOS are critical factors impacting the population

level. A post-pandemic booking decrease and a consonant increase in ALOS (due to an increase in serious cases) led to significant population growth in 2022 and 2023. However, a stabilization and a reduction in bookings during 2024 and the start of 2025, coupled with a decline in ALOS starting in late 2023 have served to reduce the population to more manageable levels.

FIGURE 19. JAIL ADP, BOOKINGS, AND ALOS, 2019 - 2025

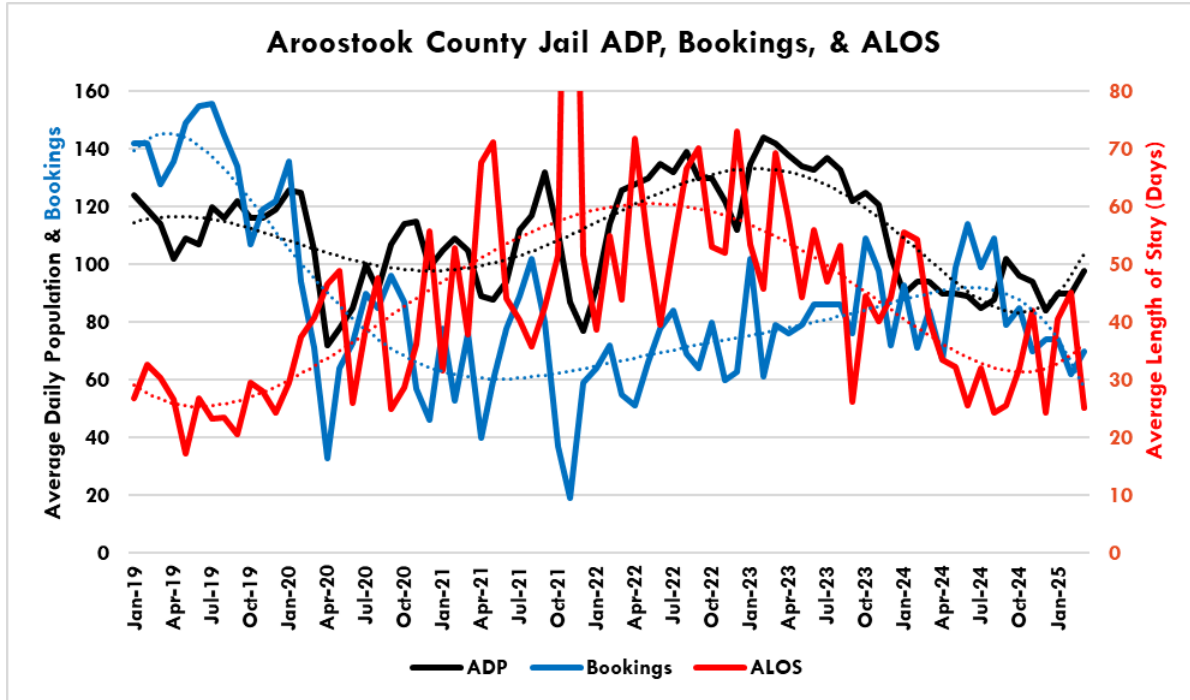
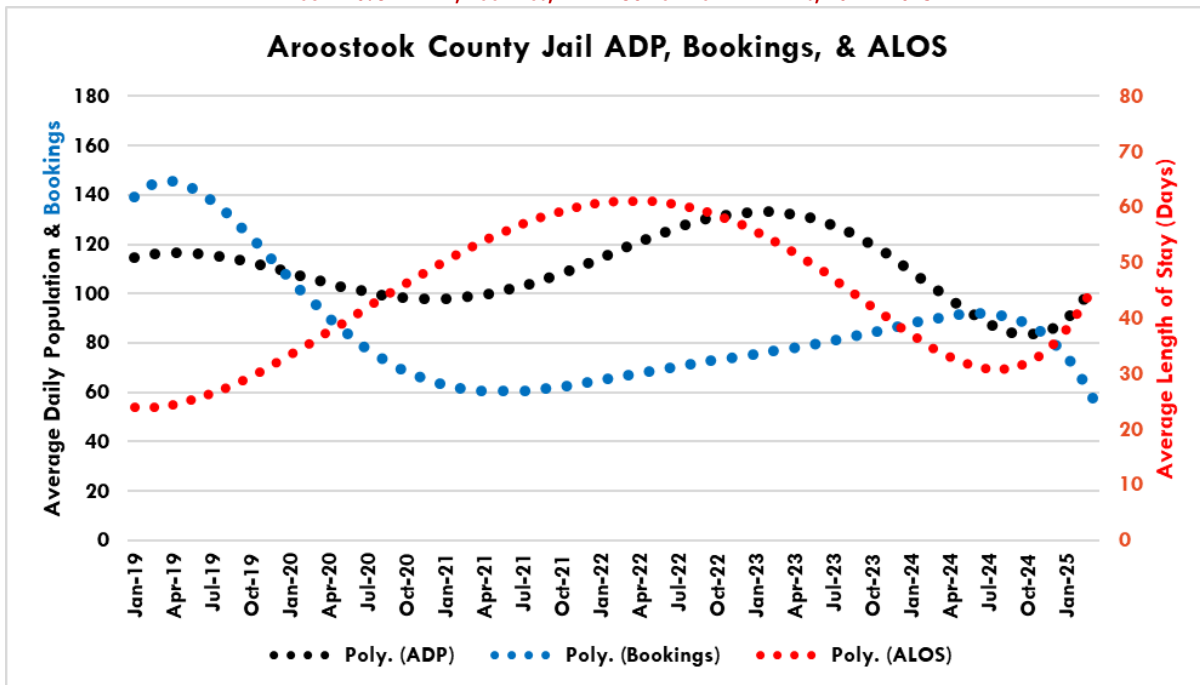


FIGURE 20. JAIL ADP, BOOKINGS, AND ALOS POLYNOMIAL TRENDS, 2019 - 2025



JAIL POTENTIAL LOCATION ANALYSIS

An important issue for Aroostook County stakeholders to consider is the location of a new jail facility, if one will indeed be built. The current location in Houlton is located well to the south side of the county's geographic population center. In our discussions with law enforcement agencies, the distance to the jail can constitute a burden, resulting in significant periods of time during which deputies are on the highway transporting arrestees to the jail. In addition, there were indications from some agencies located to the north that a number of arrests are regularly not made in an effort to reduce trips to the current jail. Justice Planners was tasked with measuring the distribution of arrests in the county. Table 9 presents the booking numbers by agency between 2021 and March 31, 2025. The local agency arrests are depicted in white cells, while the blue cells correspond to non-local arresting agencies. 'Court' represents remands at the courthouse in Houlton.

TABLE 9. BOOKINGS BY AGENCY, 2021 – 2025

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total	%
Presque Isle PD	88	122	150	230	44	634	16%
Houlton PD	143	118	138	131	27	557	14%
Aroostook Sheriff's Office	80	115	130	118	25	468	12%
Court	50	75	84	91	22	322	8%
Caribou PD	74	93	90	80	19	356	9%
Ft. Fairfield PD	13	13	36	68	10	140	4%
Madawaska PD	6	12	27	34	12	91	2%
Ft. Kent PD	17	18	16	23	3	77	2%
Ashland PD	6	10	18	3	1	38	1%
Washburn PD	21	17	12	1		51	1%
Limestone PD	11	9	1			21	1%
Maine State Police	138	97	108	123	26	492	13%
Other Counties	62	63	66	38	8	237	6%
Maine Drug Enforcement	6	4	5	13	1	29	1%
Probation and Parole	5	4	9	7	1	26	1%
Maine Warden Service	2	6	3	6		17	0%
Federal Agency	0	0	12	4	1	17	0%
Unknown	47	34	105	72	31	289	7%
Total	769	810	1010	1042	231	3862	100%

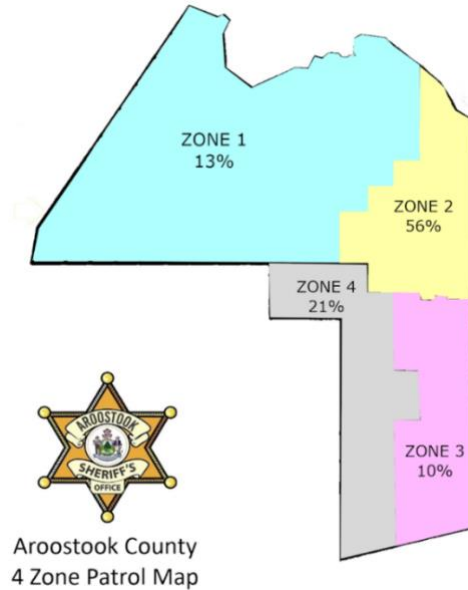
TABLE 10. AROOSTOOK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE ARRESTS BY ZONE, 2022 – 2025

ACSO Arrests (Not Necessarily Jail Bookings)	2022	2023	2024
Zone 1 (Northern Aroostook)	99	77	51
Zone 2 (Central Aroostook)	113	95	111
Zone 3 (Southeast Aroostook)	102	131	89
Zone 4 (Southwest Aroostook)	34	73	50
Unknown	14	10	8
TOTALS	362	386	309

Moreover, because the Aroostook County Sheriff's Office is a countywide entity, we needed to acquire more specific arrest location information to be able to ascertain the levels of arrests in the various regions

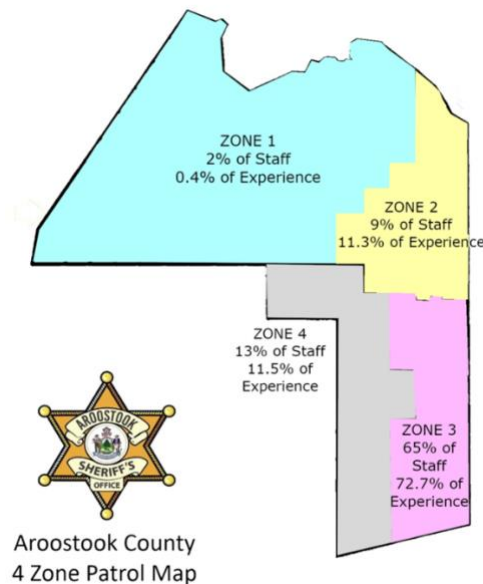
of the county as a whole. Table 10 presents the ACSO's arrest numbers for 2022 through the end of 2024. Taken together, the data from Tables 9 and 10 were used to develop Figure 21 below which shows the numerical breakdown of arrests/bookings in the county using the ACSO 4-zone map as a framework. Over two-thirds of the arrests in Aroostook County between 2022 and 2025 took place in the northern half of the county.

FIGURE 21. AROOSTOOK COUNTY ARREST PROPORTIONS BY COUNTY ZONE, 2022 – 2025



The jail facility location question is not fully defined by the location of arrests. In addition, the residential locations of the people who work in the facility were acquired and plotted on the same 4-zone patrol map (Figure 22). In this case, we see a reverse of the arrest pattern, with proportionally more staff located toward the southern end of the county

FIGURE 22. AROOSTOOK COUNTY STAFF LOCATIONS/EXPERIENCE LEVELS BY COUNTY ZONE, 2025



JAIL POPULATION FORECASTS

Strictly speaking, any jail population forecast is not a prediction of what will happen in the future. Justice Planners does not have a crystal ball that tells us the future. Rather, our primary jail forecast is a description of a possible future if nothing changes from how things are done in the present. As such, we will present the results of multiple jail population forecast models that were built to develop an array of Aroostook County Jail population outcomes through the year 2050.

Background and Methodology

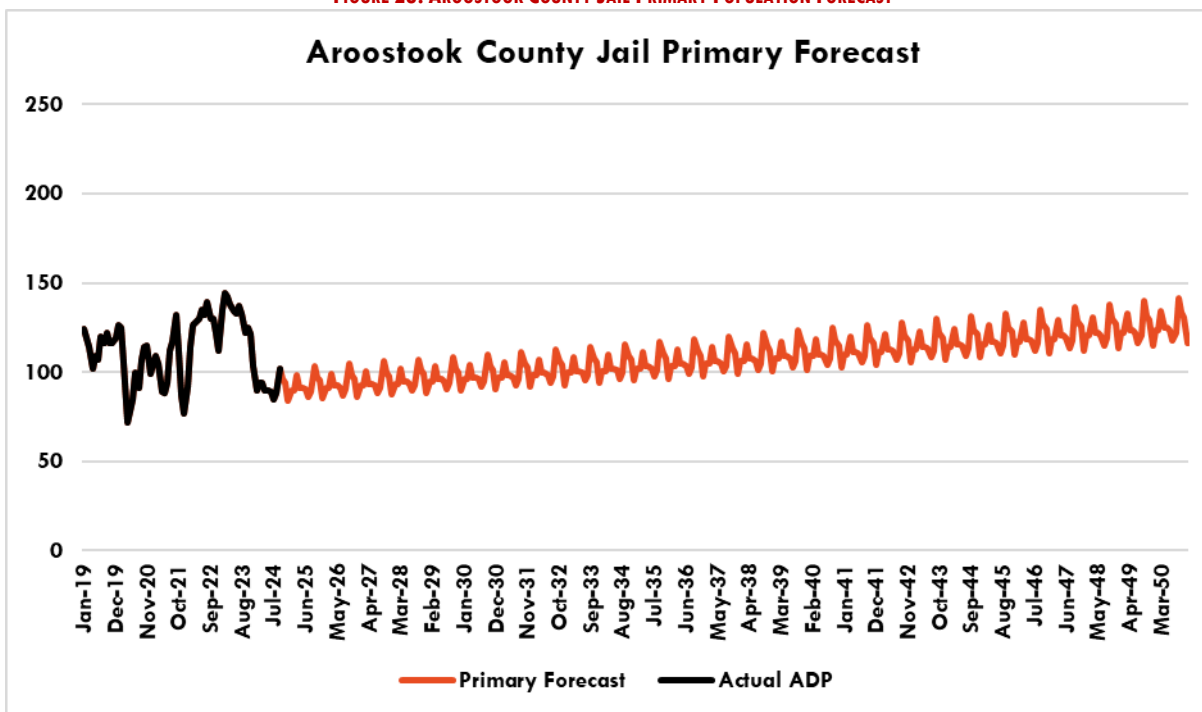
The best predictor of any trend's future levels is the history of that trend. A jail's population time series trend is no different. However, because of the existence of unforeseen circumstances, it should be noted that the precision of forecasts of all kinds diminishes the further into the future one projects. All forecasts are only as good as what was known when the forecast was produced. The long-term accuracy of correctional population forecasting is heavily impacted by changes in public policy, law enforcement strategies, socioeconomic factors, and a host of other influences. Statistically speaking, correctional population forecasts by their very nature assume that the primary at the time the forecast is produced remains in place for the duration of the forecast. The margin of error for these forecasts is essentially plus or minus 10% by the year 2050.

In terms of actual forecast development methodologies, there are multiple methods for building statistical forecasts. The forecasting technique developed from Box and Jenkins' Autoregressive Integrated Moving Averages (ARIMA) approach is one of the best options. To that extent, a series of ARIMA forecasts of jail population variables were employed in this study. ARIMA is generally used in time series forecasting situations primarily because of its ability to avoid the built-in errors of other forecasting techniques. ARIMA approaches are designed to estimate, diagnose, and control autoregression problems. In addition, because ARIMA examines the past behaviors of a given trend, this approach can forecast multiple time points into the future. Moreover, ARIMA approaches allow the statistician to account for seasonal fluctuations in data as well as smooth out random fluctuations.

Primary Average Daily Population Forecast

Many ADP forecast models were built that utilized bookings, ALOS, the Aroostook County free-world population, and the prior history of the ADP trend. The forecast model that performed the best on diagnostic measures of how well it fit the data called for an increasing seasonal trend going into the future at a level of about 126 detainees being held on average per day in 2050. Figure 23 represents the forecast. The black line depicts the actual ADP going back to 2019, while the red line constitutes the projected population trend to 2050. The forecast trend is seasonal, with distinct peaks and valleys occurring each year. It must be stated very clearly that this forecast assumes that nothing changes in the criminal justice system or in the societal/public policy landscape for Aroostook County over time. Changes in key stakeholder offices or shifts in public policy priorities could very well cause this forecast to over or underestimate the 'true' size of the population over time.

FIGURE 23. AROOSTOOK COUNTY JAIL PRIMARY POPULATION FORECAST



Conversion of Average Daily Population Forecast Into the Needed Number of Beds

The forecast effort provides a starting point for the determination of the jail's future population. However, the forecast simply reflects only an average and as such it must be increased by two factors to arrive at the number of needed beds:

1. Peaking factor - to reflect the daily and seasonal variations in jail occupancy and to accommodate the temporary closure of beds due to the need for maintenance, and,
2. Classification factor - to adjust for the requirement to separate detainees as needed based on gender, security requirements, treatment needs, etc.

For the peaking factor calculation, we took the average of the top 5% highest reconstructed population days between January 2022 and March 2025 and compared those numbers to the ADP. The jail's daily population fluctuations were such that one could expect the highest population during any day to be 18.4% greater for females and 8% larger for males than the ADP.

In addition, not all detention beds are always available for use by every detainee. For instance, a vacant bed in a female unit cannot be filled with a male detainee, a maximum-security detainee cannot be placed in a vacant bed in a minimum-security setting, etc. A classification factor is, in effect, an acknowledgement of this reality. To include this factor, we used a commonly accepted standard of 15% for our estimations.

The peaking and classification factors are added to the ADP to complete the actual number of needed beds. Table 11 shows the bed need calculations for the population. Thus, the projected ADP for 2050 of 126 requires 158 beds to operate a safe and secure facility.

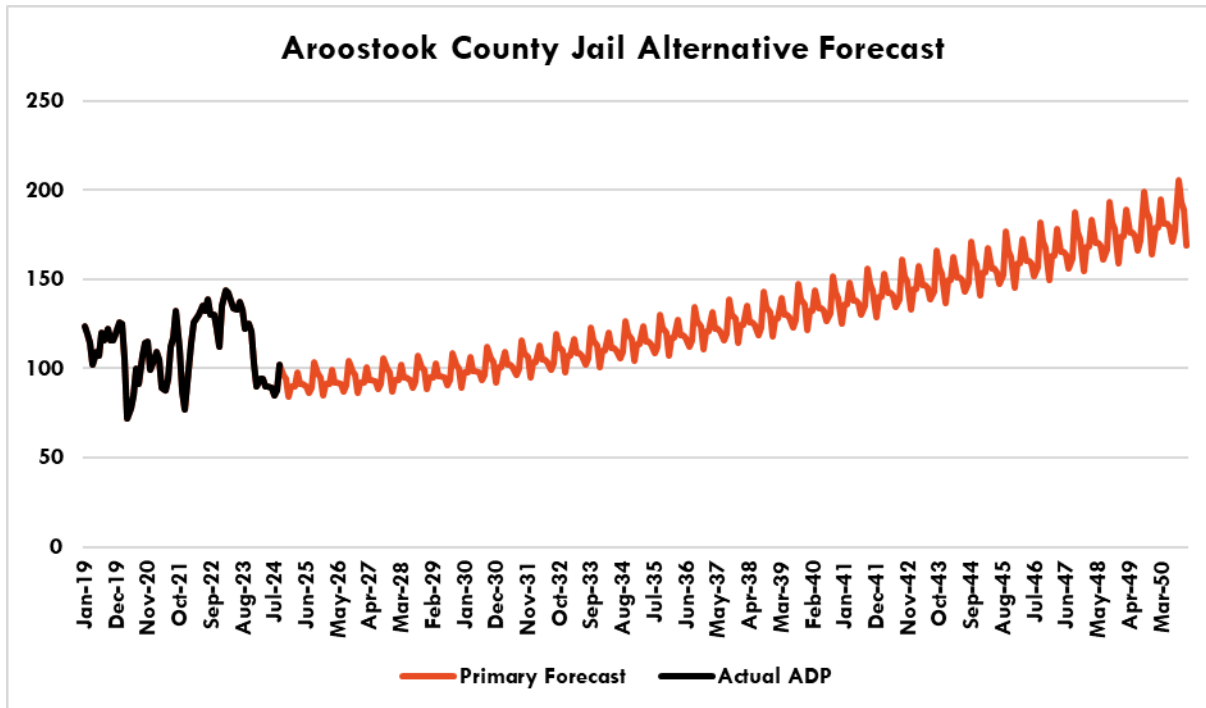
TABLE 11. PRIMARY ADP FORECAST BED NEED CALCULATION

	Females				Males				Total ADP	Total Bed Need
	ADP	Peaking (18.4%)	Classification (15%)	Bed Need	ADP	Peaking (8%)	Classification (15%)	Bed Need		
2030	13	2	2	17	86	7	13	105	98	122
2035	15	3	2	20	90	7	13	111	105	130
2040	17	3	3	23	95	8	14	116	111	139
2045	19	4	3	26	99	8	15	122	119	148
2050	22	4	3	29	104	8	16	128	126	158

Alternate Forecast

The above forecast is only one potential outcome amid a myriad of possible outcomes for Aroostook County. In addition, and of much more importance is this one simple fact: the table above represents the bed need if nothing changes in the system. It is unrealistic to pretend that nothing will change in criminal justice policy in Aroostook County during the next quarter century. Moreover, we do know from our interviews with local law enforcement that if the jail were to be located closer to the county’s population center that current arrest patterns would change. We therefore developed an estimated impact of moving the jail on bookings and produced a new forecast (Figure 24).

FIGURE 24. AROOSTOOK COUNTY JAIL PRIMARY POPULATION FORECAST



The alternative forecast assumes that relocating the jail to the north will result in a 45% increase in jail bookings. The same forecast approach was utilized as in the primary forecast. Thus, bookings are projected to be 4.4 per day rather than the current level of 2.3 per day and the forecasted level of 3 per day. The projected 2050 ADP is 183. Table 12 provides the same ADP to bed need translation. The projected 183 people would require 229 beds to maintain safety and security.

TABLE 12. ALTERNATE ADP FORECAST BED NEED CALCULATION

	Females				Males				Total ADP	Total Bed Need
	ADP	Peaking (18.4%)	Classification (15%)	Bed Need	ADP	Peaking (8%)	Classification (15%)	Bed Need		
2030	13	2	2	17	87	7	13	107	100	124
2035	16	3	2	22	100	8	15	123	116	145
2040	21	4	3	27	115	9	17	141	135	169
2045	26	5	4	34	132	11	20	162	158	196
2050	32	6	5	43	151	12	23	186	183	229

Knowing that there is significant uncertainty in how the future will play out, we wanted to demonstrate some ranges of possible population outcomes. To provide an indication of what may happen, we produced Figures 25 and 26 which explore several combinations of booking and ALOS levels. Figure 25 examines the population and bed need outcomes for 2050 if bookings were to go to 3 per day (the guidance of our primary forecast). The primary forecast has an assumption of a 42-day ALOS (slightly higher than the 2024 level of 36 days), and the resulting population and bed need columns for this forecast are outlined in light blue on the chart. Shifting ALOS higher than 42 days increases the size of the population and bed need. Meanwhile, reducing ALOS shrinks the population and bed need.

FIGURE 25. AROOSTOOK COUNTY JAIL ALTERNATE FORECAST AT 3.0 BOOKINGS PER DAY

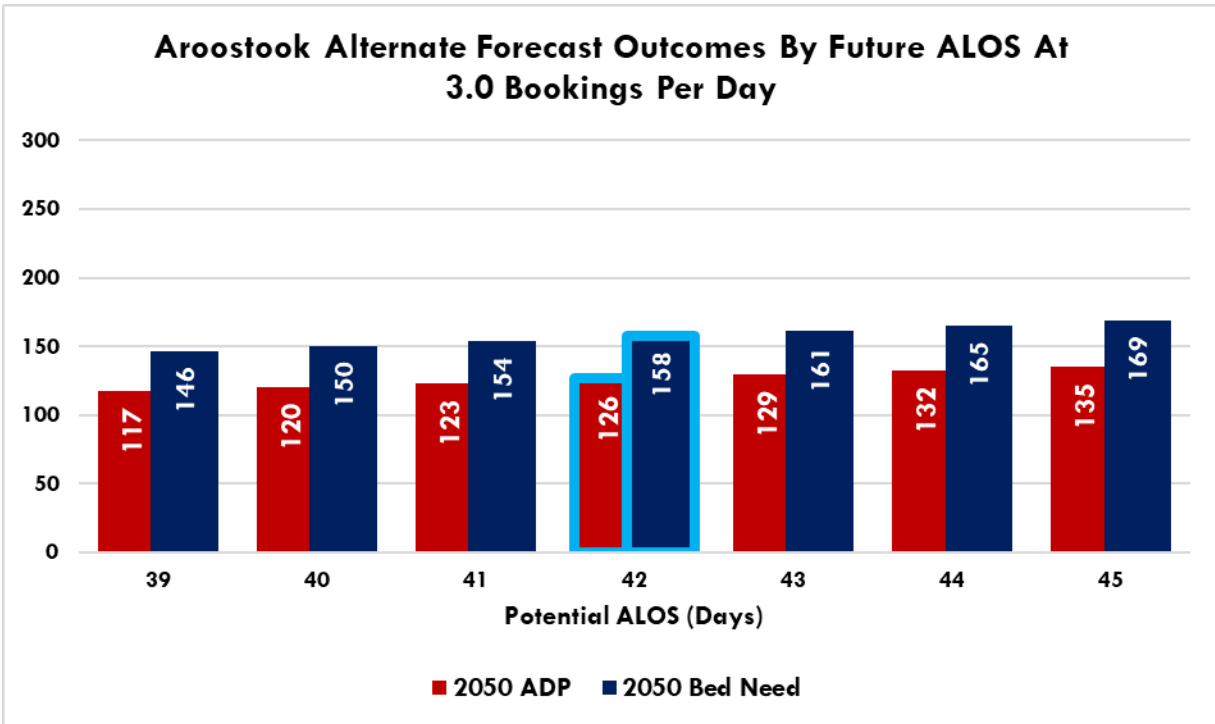
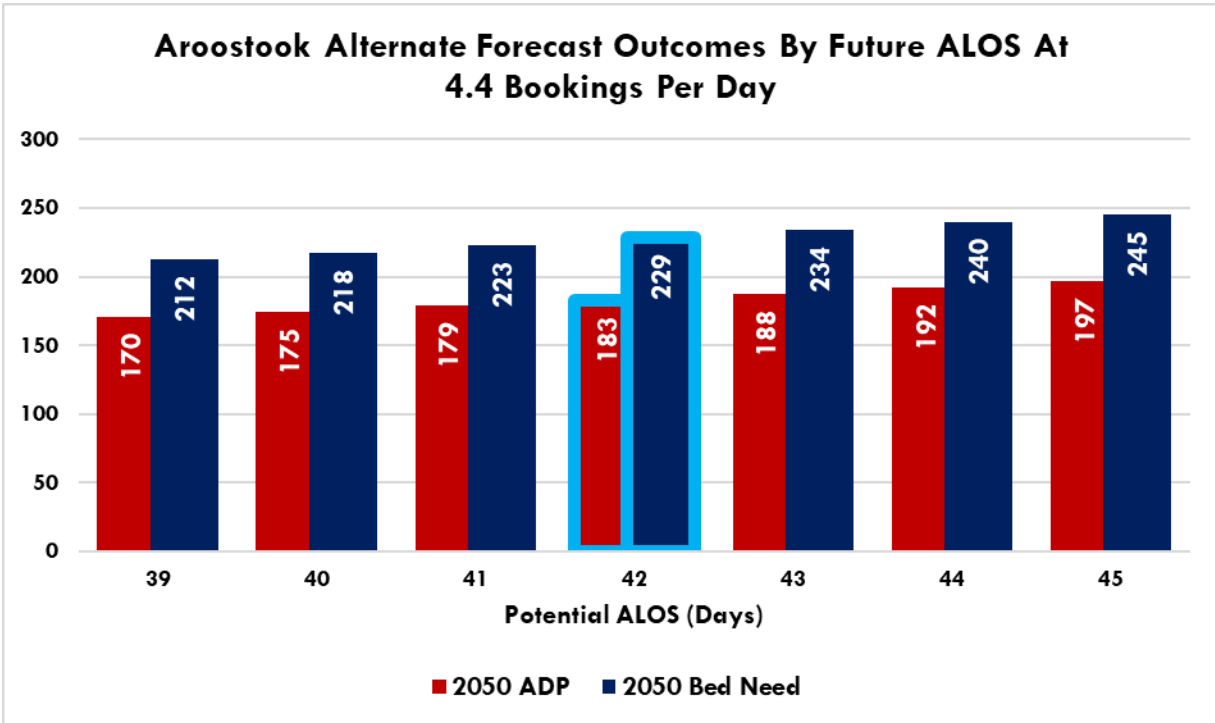


Figure 26 is structured the same way, but takes the booking level to 4.4 per day (the guidance of our alternative forecast). An ALOS increase above the projected 42 days will take the population higher. For instance, a 45-day ALOS will result in nearly 200 people being held on an average daily basis, requiring 245 beds. Naturally, a shorter ALOS drops the population and bed need requirements.

FIGURE 26. AROOSTOOK COUNTY JAIL PRIMARY POPULATION FORECAST



ESTIMATED SPACE AND STAFFING NEEDS

The construction of a new jail would afford the County the opportunity to purposely plan for the projected number of inmates, the types of inmates that would be housed and required services based upon their risks and needs, the desired operational philosophy, the desired housing unit sizes and configurations, and have program spaces that meets the cultural needs of all inmates. In short, the County can ensure that the jail reflects the values of the community. The location chosen for a new jail will have a direct impact on the size of the facility as detailed earlier in this report.

If a new jail were to be built in Houlton, the projected average daily inmate population is projected to be 126 by 2050. The total number of beds needed to properly house this population would be 158. However, if a new jail were to be built in the Presque Isle or Caribou area the projected population and bedspace need would be higher (229 beds to house an ADP of 183 inmates).

The size (square footage) and cost of a new detention center will be dependent on several factors. Some are driven by the operational philosophy of the detention center. A detention center that is focused strictly on incapacitation, just keeping bad people off the streets with little to no access to programs, will require less square footage. However, a detention center that is focused on therapeutic services, programming, and reentry will require more square footage.

Table 13 shows a preliminary estimate of the square footages that may be required for a 158-bed jail versus a 229-bed jail. These are high-level estimates for preliminary planning purposes and are not a substitute for a detailed programming effort to determine the accurate square footage needed for a new Aroostook County Jail. In both options, the core and support spaces remain the same. The only difference is in the square footage needed for housing.

TABLE 13. SQUARE FOOTAGE ESTIMATES

Aroostook County Jail Estimates	Beds	
	229	158
Public Lobby	761	761
Visitation	832	832
Administration	1,924	1,924
Staff Support	4,238	4,238
Security Administration	1,681	1,681
Admissions and Release	7,228	7,228
Health Services	4,904	4,904
Programs and Support	907	907
Food Service	6,205	6,205
Housing	67,057	47,301
Building Support	10,108	10,108
TOTAL GROSS SQUARE FEET	121,720	99,001

Similarly, the cost estimates shown in Table 14 are high-level estimates for preliminary planning purposes and are not a substitute for a detailed programming and cost estimation effort. In many parts of the United States, the costs for new jail construction are around \$800 per square foot plus soft costs.

TABLE 14. PROJECT COST ESTIMATES

Aroostook County Jail Estimates	Beds	
	229	158
Department Name		
Total Gross Square Feet	121,720	99,001
Estimated Cost per SF	\$800	\$800
Est. Construction Cost	\$97,375,974	\$79,200,730
Soft Costs (15%)	\$14,606,396	\$11,880,110
Total Estimated Cost	\$111,982,370	\$91,080,840

The estimated staffing that would be required to operate a new jail will vary depending upon the size of the facility. The difference is not big, likely by just three full time equivalent positions. This difference is due to the additional capacity, with the administrative and support staff remaining constant in either scenario. The staffing numbers estimated in Table 15 are based upon 12-hour shift. This is only a preliminary estimate, and the estimated staffing requirements should be revisited at each milestone step of the planning and design process.

TABLE 15. STAFFING ESTIMATES

Aroostook County Jail	Beds	
	229	158
Estimated Staffing Needs		
Jail Administrator	1	1
Shift Supervisor	4	4
Booking Sergeant	5	5
Correctional Officers	49	46
TOTAL SWORN STAFFING	59	56

The estimated staffing numbers shown are positions that would be needed for inmate supervision and to meet applicable jail standards. Although positions may be needed such as commissary officer, mail officer, supply/safety officer, and public lobby clerks may be needed to effectively operate a jail, they are not included in this analysis.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are several threats to the validity of our forecast assumptions, including increases in law enforcement staffing, unforeseen increases in arrests/detentions as a result of policy decisions, and further public policy efforts that restrict the availability of releases of pretrial individuals. Our study has attempted to minimize any surprise effects of such changes by providing likely outcomes with various booking and ALOS levels.

The project team was unsuccessful in its efforts to obtain even basic monthly case processing data from the courts. We sought line by line data that would have allowed us to calculate times between key events, or at least overall processing times between case filings and case dispositions. The case processing measure would have provided an additional predictor of our ALOS forecast. It also would have allowed us to provide some recommendations for perhaps speeding up the process or identifying potential roadblocks.

The research team recommends that the local criminal justice stakeholders implement rudimentary tracking of some key metrics, generally focusing on times between milestone court events. That tracking should spur action when necessary to maintain efficient processing. What gets measured gets managed—as long as the measurement is communicated to stakeholders.

The stakeholders in the Aroostook County criminal justice system are encouraged to organize a formal, intentional Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee (CJCC) to help solve problems as they arise and spur efficiency improvements as needed.

The CJCC should use the findings of this needs assessment to determine the best course of action in locating and sizing a replacement jail facility. A criminal justice planner should be retained to develop a detailed space (square footage) program that reflects the operational philosophy of the Sheriff and the community





Aroostook County New Jail Project

For over 130 years, the Aroostook County Jail has served our community, but as the oldest correctional facility in Maine, it faces critical challenges in meeting modern safety, operational, and justice system standards. Recognizing the importance of addressing these limitations, the Aroostook County Jail Study Commission—a committee of 13 dedicated appointees—has been tasked with studying the feasibility of a new county jail facility. This collaborative effort, comprised of local leaders, justice system experts, and community consultants, aims to guide county administration and commissioners as they explore solutions that best reflect the needs of our residents and our shared aspirations for public safety and fairness. The Jail Study Commission operates on the principle of ensuring transparency and fostering community-driven decision-making. From Sheriff Johnson and Commissioner Dobbins to civic-minded members like Penny Thompson and Todd Collins, this diverse team will evaluate every facet of the jail's role in Aroostook County while consulting with external specialists for critical insights. We are committed to making sure that all voices are heard, and public input is a cornerstone of this process. Together, we can shape the future of our justice system and uphold the values that define our community.



PROJECT PHASES



SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- [Jail And Justice System Assessment Final](#)
- [Aroostook Needs Assessment Report 6 20 25](#)

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Understanding the Current Jail Conditions

How familiar with the physical conditions of the Aroostook County Jail? *

Very

Some

Not at all

Other

Do you believe the current jail is overcrowded? *

Yes

No

Do you feel that the Aroostook County Jail is safe for inmates?

Yes

No

Do you feel that the Aroostook County Jail is safe for Corrections Officers? *

Yes

No

Does the Aroostook County Jail provide adequate services for inmates, such as mental health, substance abuse, medical care, education, visitation, re-entry employment assistance, etc.? *

Yes

No

Jails are for incarceration, not rehabilitaton.

Unsure

Other