

ALABAMA'S PRISON CRISIS WILL WORSEN IN 2020



PHOTO: ACLU OF ALABAMA

THE SUMMARY

The Campaign for Smart Justice with ACLU of Alabama projects that Alabama prisons face a grave future.

Since September 2019, Alabama's parole board has denied release to 92 percent of people with scheduled parole hearings.

In addition, the board is considering far fewer prisoners for parole. Approximately 150 hearings are scheduled in January 2020, compared to over 600 per month in 2018.

The combination of reduced

POPULATION PROJECTED TO SKYROCKET BY OVER 3700 DUE TO DRAMATIC DROP IN PAROLES

QUICK STATS

What happens in 2020?

- Alabama's custody population is projected to increase by 3,772 people
- 84% (3,186) will be due to decline in paroles
- 16% (586) will be due to increased admissions

Custody & Paroles Trends

(2015 - 2019 statistics; projected 2020)

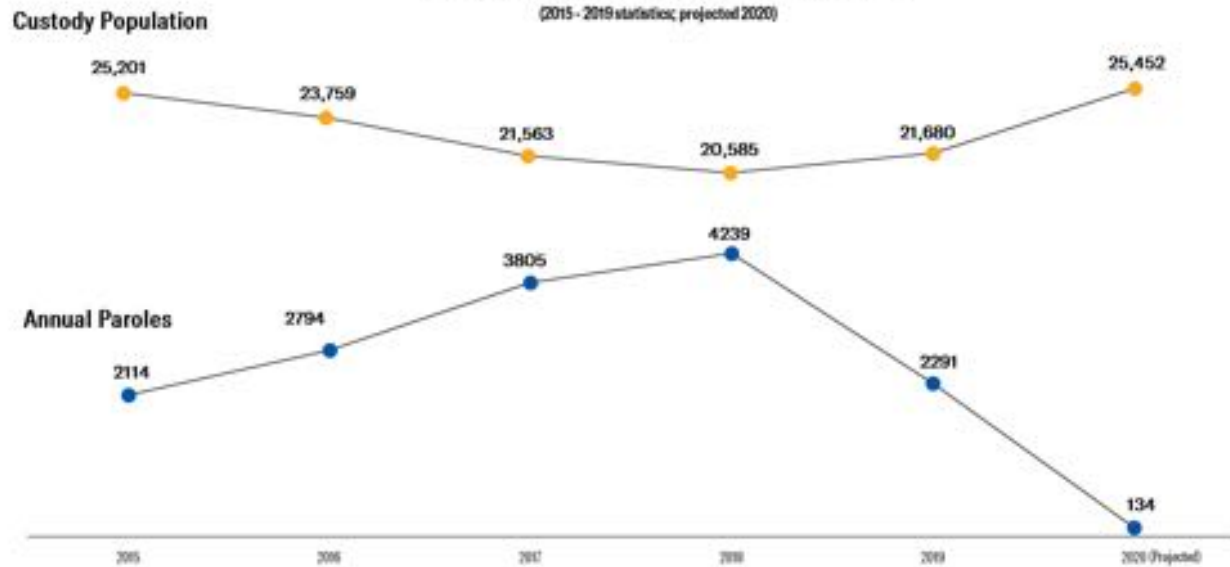


Figure 1

Data Source: ADOC Annual Reports FY 2014-2018 and ADOC Monthly Statistical Report, September, 2019.

hearings and an extremely low grant rate means only a trickle of prisoners are being released on parole.

Of the 200 people considered in November and December of 2019, the board granted parole to only 17 people.

If this trend continues, Alabama's already overcrowded prison population will explode by approximately 3,772 in 2020.

In FY 2018, 4,239 people were

released from Alabama prisons on parole. In FY 2019, the number of people released on parole dropped 46 percent to 2,291. In FY 2020, only 134 prisoners are projected to be released on parole based on current parole grant rates.

This will increase Alabama's prison population by 3,772, driving the prison custody population over 25,000 people for the first time in 5 years.

This alarming projection comes as ADOC is already failing to

Results of Recent Parole Hearings

(November 2019 and December 2019 statistics)

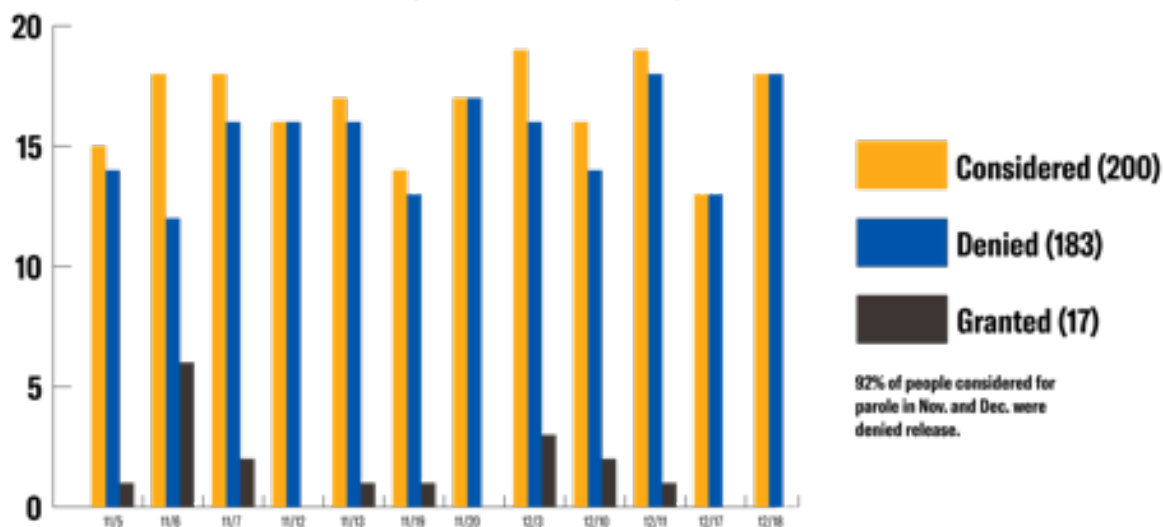


Figure 2

Data Source: ADOC Annual Reports FY 2014-2018 and ADOC Monthly Statistical Report, September, 2019.

prevent runaway violence in prisons that are 168 percent over capacity with staffing levels hovering at 37 percent.

In 2019, at least 28 people died in ADOC custody due to homicide, suicide or overdose.

In April, the Department of Justice (DOJ) put state leaders on notice after finding ADOC likely violates the constitutional rights of prisoners due to “a high level of violence that is too common, cruel, of an

unusual nature, and pervasive.”

The Campaign for Smart Justice calls on the DOJ, Governor Kay Ivey and Alabama lawmakers to address this impending catastrophe.

Unless there is a dramatic change with parole in Alabama, the prison system will reach an untenable level of overcrowding, which will lead to even more violence against Alabama’s incarcerated population and ADOC correctional officers.

Year-To-Year Changes in Alabama's Custody Population

(* indicates that the figure is projected)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*
Total Custody Population	25,201	23,759	21,563	20,585	21,680	25,452*
Custody Admissions	7,478	7,531	8,297	9,436	9,822	10,408*
Paroles	2,114	2,794	3,805	4,239	2,291	134*
Change From Previous Year	-805	-1,442	-2,196	-978	+1,095	+3,772*

Figure 3

Data Source: ADOC Annual Reports FY 2014-2018 and ADOC Monthly Statistical Report, September, 2019.