

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Population Projections, December 2003

Introduction

In compliance with ORC section 5120.51, this report summarizes ODRC population estimates for the period July 2004-July 2012. These numbers represent the second set of population projections for Calendar Year 2003 and are based on a preliminary analysis of the impact of the Layne v APA Supreme Court decision. This report emphasizes the methodology and results of that analysis and the factors that underlie the downward revision of the September 2003 projections. The population parameters from the September projections that are unaffected by Layne are retained in making the current estimates. Those analyses are detailed in the report memo accompanying the September numbers.

Projections Summary

Table 1 summarizes the new projections for males, females and total population. The July 1, 2004 population is projected to be **44,205**. The population is then forecasted to rise roughly 1,000 per year over the next two years, to **45,234** on July 1, 2005 and **46,204** on July 1, 2006. Thereafter, population levels will gradually increase to a forecasted high of **50,366** on July 1, 2012. Although the FY 04-06 year-end numbers represent a 4.5% two-year rate of growth, they also reflect a substantial downward revision of about **1,300 per year** in forecasted levels, on average, from the September 2003 projections. This difference represents the short-term effect of the Layne decision, which is expected to gradually diminish in magnitude over the span of the forecast period.

Layne Analysis and Methodology

The current numbers are based on a systematic, but preliminary analysis of data drawn from the Parole Board's Layne tracking database, limited to only those cases for which a post-Layne hearing action had been assigned and recorded as of December 1, 2003 (about 1,650). The methods of this analysis are discussed below. The simulation models that generated these projections exclude the roughly 800 Layne-eligible cases that remained unresolved as of that date, most of which have been referred for Central Office review or rescheduled following initial screening. In order to present the full impact of the decision, however, the initial forecast results were adjusted post-hoc by extrapolating to all 800 outstanding cases the estimated parole rate (approximately 50%) among the December COBRA referrals considered to date. The adjusted forecast assumes that this additional reduction in population of roughly 400 will be realized in full by July 2004. The projected levels reported in Table 1 reflect this adjustment and should be treated as the best, currently available estimates of post-Layne population levels. Once Board actions are completed on those outstanding cases (anticipated by March 2004), a comprehensive impact analysis based on all Layne-eligible cases will be conducted.

In order to model the impact of the completed Layne hearings, the hearing outcomes and corresponding action dates for those cases were extracted from the Layne database and merged with a pre-Layne parole guidelines file used to support the last set of projections. All previous analyses of the parole-eligible stock population were then replicated using post-Layne information where applicable. This yielded a revised distribution of action outcomes (i.e., parole, projected release or continuation), sorted by felony level and violator status. Average expected lengths of stay were then computed for each felony identification group based on the revised action dates of the Layne inmates. The overall parole rate among completed Layne hearings as of December 1 was 51%, excluding technical violator cases. 39% of the cases were continued/continued to maximum expiration of sentence and 10% were assigned projected release dates. This resulted in the additional parole of nearly 800 inmates from the start of the Layne review process through the end of CY 2003 and accounts for much of the decline in population in the second half of the year. As noted above, these rates are expected to remain stable while the remaining Layne-eligible cases are reconsidered. Although the balance of Layne inmates who were not paroled received significantly shortened projected stays on average, aggregate patterns of release and continuation times remained unchanged or increased slightly among the rest of the non-Layne parole population with at least one guidelines hearing.

As in the September projections, the current model uses a lagged start date (January 2003) to validate forecasted numbers against actual institutional and supervision population levels, by month, throughout CY 2003. This procedure revealed error rates to be less than one percent, confirming the validity of the impact analysis and suggesting that the model is adequately capturing the initial effects of the Layne decision on population changes.

Intake Estimates and Other Assumptions

New admissions from court for CY 2003 are estimated to be approaching 23,100, setting a new record for ODRC intake. This represents a growth rate of three percent over last year and closely matches predicted admission levels. ODRC has now experienced positive growth in court admissions for six consecutive years, averaging 4.7% per year during this period. Although the most recently available UCR data indicate that overall violent crime is down in 2003 among big cities in Ohio, the current projections assume stable growth in intake over the next two years. This is based largely on recent increases in murder rates, high levels of criminal case filings and the strength of recent intake trends. Updated statistical extrapolation models based on past intake suggest a resurgence of growth in 2005-06 after moderating slightly in 2004. Accordingly, the current numbers are based on growth of 2.5% in CY 2004, three percent in CY 2005, followed by annual increases of 1.5% across the remainder of the forecast period.

The current forecast is also based on revised length of stay numbers for the technical parole violator population, which continue to decline amid efforts by the Board to limit post-revocation time to nine months except among the most serious cases of felony violation behavior. As in the September projections, the numbers also assume continued low rates of discretionary PRC assignment as per recent policy changes in screening criteria.

Finally, as is customary in projecting prison populations, the current forecast assumes that all other existing policies and statutory context remain unchanged, including no new significant legislation affecting prison admissions, no dramatic changes in crime rates or changes affecting the composition and/or rate of admissions, no further changes in parole/PRC release policy, and no significant changes in APA field supervision practices.

If you have any questions about these projections, please contact Brian Martin at 728-1191.

Table 1. ODRC Prison Population Projections, by Sex, for July 1, 2004 - July 1, 2012*

Date	Male	Female	Total
12/29/03*	41336	2829	44165
7/1/2004	41228	2977	44205
7/1/2005	42038	3196	45234
7/1/2006	42890	3314	46204
7/1/2007	43352	3432	46784
7/1/2008	43874	3469	47343
7/1/2009	44596	3455	48051
7/1/2010	45225	3491	48716
7/1/2011	45825	3559	49384
7/1/2012	46720	3646	50366

** Actual population from December 29, 2003 Weekly Population Count

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