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PRESS RELEASE

Number of Persons in Indian Country Jails Increases for Second Year

WASHINGTON – The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is announcing the release of *Jails in Indian Country, 2022*. A total of 2,250 persons were held in 80 Indian country jails at midyear 2022, a 3% increase from the 2,180 persons held in 80 facilities at midyear 2021. This marks the second consecutive annual increase in the midyear jail population since it peaked in 2019 (at 2,890 persons) and declined rapidly in 2020 (to 2,020 persons) due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Indian country jails admitted 5,570 persons during June 2022, which was a 4% decline from 5,780 admissions in June 2021. Over the 10-year period from 2012 to 2022, the number of admissions dropped 55%, from 12,500 admissions in 2012.

“It is noteworthy that the number of admissions is sizably smaller in 2022 compared to 2012. Yet, the percentage of persons held for violent offenses has increased by over a third during the same period,” said Dr. Alexis Piquero, Director of BJS.

During the 10-year period from 2012 to 2022, the number of persons held for violent offenses increased 34%, from 710 to 950 inmates. The largest absolute growth was among persons held for aggravated or simple assault, from 200 inmates at midyear 2012 to 330 at midyear 2022. The percentage held for domestic violence increased from 14% at midyear 2012 to 18% at midyear 2022.

Overall, about 58% of all persons in Indian country jails at midyear 2022 were held for a nonviolent offense, down from 70% at midyear 2012. From 2012 to 2022, the share of inmates held for a drug offense increased from 5% to 11%.

Four persons died (3 by suicide) and 46 attempted suicide while being held in Indian country jails during the 12 months ending on June 30, 2022. Indian country jails reported a total of 24 deaths (9 by suicide) and 375 attempted suicides in custody from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2022.

“BJS remains one of the few agencies to report on crime and justice data in Indian Country, helping to bring attention to an important but often overlooked segment of justice data,” continued Dr. Piquero.

[Jails in Indian Country, 2022](#), written by BJS Statistician Todd D. Minton; related documents; and additional information about BJS’s statistical publications and programs are available on the BJS website at bjs.ojp.gov. Findings in this report are based on the Annual Survey of Jails in Indian Country.

About the Bureau of Justice Statistics

The Bureau of Justice Statistics, a division of the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Justice Programs, is the principal federal agency responsible for collecting, analyzing and disseminating reliable statistics on crime and criminal justice in the United States. Alexis R. Piquero, PhD, is the director. More information about BJS and criminal justice statistics can be found at bjs.ojp.gov.

About the Office of Justice Programs

The Office of Justice Programs provides federal leadership, grants, training, technical assistance and other resources to improve the nation's capacity to prevent and reduce crime, advance racial equity in the administration of justice, assist victims and enhance the rule of law. More information about OJP and its components can be found at www.ojp.gov.

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