

# Covid-19 and Reducing the Jail Population: Who Might Be Released Under Board of Correction Recommendations?

In order to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in the city's jails, the city's Board of Correction urged the de Blasio Administration to release certain groups of people currently in Department of Correction custody. On March 17, the board recommended the correction department begin releasing people this week, prioritizing people over 50; people who have underlying health conditions, including lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, or a weakened immune system; people detained due to [alleged technical parole violations](#); and people serving city sentences of one year or less.

Although we do not have access to data regarding potentially qualifying health conditions of those in custody, we can look at age and inmate status to get a point-in-time estimate of the very broadest interpretation of what releasing people in custody could look like under the board's recommendations. Here is a snapshot of the Riker's population on March 16, 2020, the day before the Board of Correction's announcement.

Share of Inmates by Age and Status				
Inmate Status	Under Age 50	Age 50 And Above	Total	Inmate Status as Share of Daily Population
City Sentenced	473	79	552	10%
Pretrial Detainee	3,497	621	4,118	75%
Technical Parole Violator	467	184	651	12%
Other State	116	24	140	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,553</b>	<b>908</b>	<b>5,461</b>	<b>100%</b>
Age Status as Percent of Daily Population	83%	17%	100%	
NOTE: The total population in custody for this day was 5,471; 10 records were removed from the analysis due to missing information.				
New York City Independent Budget Office				

- Overall, about a third of the jail population (1,800 individuals) would be eligible to be considered for release based on either their age and/or their inmate status.
- There were slightly over 900 people age 50 or older, or about 17 percent of the total daily population, who would all be eligible for consideration under the Board of Correction's suggestion.
- The average age among all inmates under 50 was 32 years of age; the average age among inmates 50 and above was roughly 57 years of age.
- City sentenced inmates made up about 10 percent of the total daily population, or about 550 people. Of these, 473 were under age 50, but still eligible for consideration based on their status.
- Those in custody for technical parole violations made up about 12 percent (651 people) of the population. The average age among them was 41, older than the overall jail-wide average, which was roughly 36. Among technical parole violators, 467 were under age 50, but based on their status were also eligible for release under the proposal.