The Texas Criminal Justice Coalition seeks the implementation of realistic criminal justice strategies that safely reduce the State’s costly over-reliance on incarceration – creating stronger families, less taxpayer waste, and safer communities.

Below, we have provided comprehensive information about Denton County’s adult population at various stages of criminal justice system involvement. We have also provided the associated costs at each stage to highlight the significant expense to incarcerate or supervise these populations.

### Total County Population

- **Denton County Population:** \(^1\) 780,612

### STAGE 1: Pretrial Jail Detention

Of all the people incarcerated in Texas’ county jails, more than half (on average) have not been convicted of the crime for which they are accused. They are in pretrial detention, awaiting trial.\(^2\) Many men and women cannot afford the bond that would allow them to return to the community prior to trial; others are not given that option by judges, despite presenting little flight risk or posing no danger to public safety. This leads to unnecessary and costly jail overcrowding.

- **Denton County Jail Population:** \(^3\) 1,119
- **Denton County Jail Pretrial Population:** \(^4\) 874 (78%)
  - **Number of Pretrial Defendants with Misdemeanor Charges:** 153
  - **Number of Pretrial Defendants with State Jail Charges:** 2
  - **Number of Pretrial Defendants with Felony Charges:** 563

- **Statewide Average Cost to County Taxpayers to Incarcerate One Individual in County Jail, Per Day (Pretrial or Post-Conviction):** \(^5\) $59.00

- **Average Cost to Denton County Taxpayers to Incarcerate the Entire Denton County Jail Pretrial Population, Per Day:** $51,566.00
  - **Average Cost to Incarcerate Pretrial Defendants with Misdemeanor Charges:** $9,027.00
  - **Average Cost to Incarcerate Pretrial Defendants with State Jail Charges:** $118.00
  - **Average Cost to Incarcerate Pretrial Defendants with Felony Charges:** $33,217.00
Any indigent individual in Texas charged with a Class B misdemeanor or higher is entitled to court-appointed representation. However, counties pay for 81% of indigent defense costs, statewide. The state pays only 19%. As such, counties with already strained budgets may struggle to provide legal representation for all defendants who request an attorney.

- **Number of Individuals (Adult and Juveniles) in Denton County Receiving Constitutionally Guaranteed Representation (Court-Appointed Counsel):** 6,294
  - Number of Adults with Misdemeanor Charges: 3,518
  - Number of Adults with Felony Charges: 2,274
  - Number of Juveniles with Cases: 490
  - Number of Individuals with Appeals Cases: 12
  - Number of Individuals with Capital Cases: 0

- **Total Indigent Defense Expenditures Paid by Denton County in FY 2015:** $3,433,075.73

- **State Formula-Based Grant Amount Received by Denton County to Provide Indigent Defense Services:** $499,216.00 (15%)

Judges have the option of sentencing certain individuals to probation instead of prison or jail. Not only is probation over 30 times cheaper than prison or jail, it is more effective than incarceration at lowering rates of re-offending, especially when paired with rehabilitative programming. As such, investments in probation help boost public safety in the long term and reduce the likelihood of victims.

- **Number of Individuals in Denton County on Community Supervision (Probation):** 5,015
  - Number of Individuals on Misdemeanor Probation: 2,961
  - Number of Individuals on Felony Probation: 2,054

- **Statewide Average Cost to the State to Have One Individual on Probation, Per Day:** $1.63

- **Average Cost to the State for the Entire Denton County Probation Population, Per Day:** $8,174.45
Texas has various types of correctional facilities to house individuals with misdemeanor or felony convictions. Our 246 county jails house individuals with both misdemeanor and felony offenses (including state jail felonies and felonies of various degrees); they also temporarily house parole violators and individuals awaiting transfer to another type of correctional facility.15 Texas’ 20 state jails16 house individuals with offenses of various levels.17 Our 57 prisons18 house individuals with felony or capital offenses. Our 5 Substance Abuse Felony Punishment Facilities (SAFPFs)19 house individuals with felony offenses who have been placed in this structured treatment regimen.20

**Correctional Facilities in Denton County**

- Denton County Jail

**Misdemeanor Offenses**

- Number of Individuals Sentenced to Denton County Jail:21 178
- Statewide Average Cost to County Taxpayers Incarcerate One Individual in County Jail, Per Day:22 $59.00
- Average Cost to Denton County Taxpayers to Incarcerate the Entire Population of Individuals Sentenced to Denton County Jail, Per Day: $10,502.00

**Felony Offenses**

- Number of Individuals from Denton County Sentenced to State-Level Confinement: 1,682
  - Number of Such Individuals Sentenced to State Jail:23 43 (3%)
    - Average Cost to the State to Incarcerate One Individual in State Jail, Per Day:24 $47.30
    - Average Cost to the State to Incarcerate the Entire Population of Individuals from Denton County Sentenced to State Jail, Per Day: $2,033.90
  - Number of Such Individuals Sentenced to Prison:25 1,627 (97%)
    - Average Cost to the State to Incarcerate One Individual in Prison, Per Day:26 $50.91
    - Average Cost to the State to Incarcerate the Entire Population of Individuals from Denton County Sentenced to Prison, Per Day: $82,830.57
  - Number of Such Individuals Placed in a SAFPF:27 12 (1%)
    - Average Cost to the State to Place One Individual in a SAFPF, Per Day:28 $62.68
    - Average Cost to the State to House and Treat the Entire Population of Individuals from Denton County Placed in a SAFPF, Per Day: $752.16
STAGE 4: Community-Based Supervision After Release From Prison (Parole or Community Supervision)

The vast majority of people who are incarcerated in state-level corrections facilities are ultimately released back into the community. Upon leaving state jail, most individuals are left unsupervised. Upon leaving prison, however, individuals are either supervised on parole, supervised on community supervision (e.g., shock probation), or released on “flat discharge” (unsupervised).

- **Total Number of Individuals Released from State-Level Confinement to Denton County:** 29,859
  - **Number of Individuals Released to Community Supervision:** 30,15 (2%)
    - Statewide Average Cost to the State to Have One Individual on Probation, Per Day: $1.63
    - Average Cost to the State for the Entire Denton County Post-Release Probation Population, Per Day: $24.45
  - **Number of Individuals Released to Parole Supervision:** 618 (70%)
    - Statewide Average Cost to the State to Have One Individual on Parole, Per Day: $4.04
    - Average Cost to the State for the Entire Denton County Parole Population, Per Day: $4,294.52
  - **Number of Individuals Released on Flat Discharge:** 242 (27%)

Return to Prison

- **Number of Individuals in Denton County who Returned to Prison:** 95
programs and others awaiting a slot in special drug therapy prisons.

Another 13,530 were regular convicts, some enrolled in treatment programs. 25,458 of the approximately 152,000 convicts in state prison without jeopardizing public safety. Regarding rehabilitative programming: According to the National Institute of Corrections at the U.S. Department of Justice, p. 3. While on probation, individuals can serve their sentence while taking part in rehabilitative programs, maintaining family relationships, and remaining a participant in the community – critical to reducing the flow to prison without jeopardizing public safety. Regarding rehabilitative programming: According to the National Institute of Corrections at the U.S. Department of Justice, punishment increases an individual’s inclination towards criminal activity by .07%; treatment decreases an individual’s inclination towards criminal activity by 15%; and cognitive skills programs decrease an individual’s inclination towards criminal activity by 29%, making them most effective at decreasing criminal behavior. See: Judge Marion F. Edwards, “Reduce Recidivism in DUI Offenders: Add a Cognitive-Behavioral Program Component,” 2006, p. 3.

Community Justice Assistance Division (CJAD), FY 2014 Offenders Under Direct Supervision by CSCD, provided to the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition on March 27, 2015. Data available upon request.

LBB, Criminal and Juvenile Justice Uniform Cost Report, p. 6. Figure reflects FY 2014 state cost of community supervision.


Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), Unit Directory; available at http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/unit_directory/index.html.

Mike Ward, “State jails struggle with lack of treatment, rehab programs,” Austin American-Statesman, December 30, 2012; “John Hurt, a spokesman for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice [...] said that state jails housed 25,458 of the approximately 152,000 convicts in state-run lockups at the end of October. Of those, just 11,802 were serving time for state jail offenses. Another 13,530 were regular convicts, some enrolled in treatment programs and others awaiting a slot in special drug therapy prisons.”

TDCJ, Unit Directory.

Ibid.
A SAFPF is an intensive six-month therapeutic and education program (or nine-month program for prisoners with special needs), typically assigned as a condition of community supervision or a modification of parole/community supervision.


LBB, *Criminal and Juvenile Justice Uniform Cost Report*, p. 6. Figure reflects FY 2014 state cost of community supervision.


Individuals could return to prison after being revoked while on parole, Discretionary Mandatory Supervision (DMS), or Mandatory Supervision (MS).

**DMS**: In 1995, the Texas Legislature gave the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP) the authority to review eligible individuals whose offenses were committed on or after September 1, 1996, for possible release to Discretionary Mandatory Supervision. The BPP must review eligible prisoners on or before their discretionary mandatory eligibility date, and it has the discretion to deny release.

**MS**: This is a type of release from prison provided by law for restricted categories of returning individuals. Eligible individuals are released on MS when their served calendar time plus their good time credit equals the length of their prison sentence. Under previous law (effective until August 31, 1996), release to MS was automatic, with no requirement for release approval from the BPP.

For Denton County revocation total, see TDCJ, *Statistical Report: Fiscal Year 2015*, p. 32.