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# Population Dynamics and the Characteristics of Inmates in the Cook County Jail

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# Cook County Sheriff's Reentry Council Research Bulletin

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## HIGHLIGHTS

- The average daily population of the Cook County Jail in 2011 was 8,896, but ranged from an average of 8,514 during March to 9,199 in November (page 2).
- Despite a 25.9% decrease in admissions between 2007 and 2011 (page 3), as a result of lengths of stay in the Cook County Jail increasing 13.0% (page 7), the jail's average daily population fell by only 9.5% from 2007 to 2011.
- The characteristics of those admitted to the Cook County Jail in 2011 continued to consist primarily of African-American (66.9%) males (86.5%) between the ages of 21 and 30 (36%), from Chicago's south and west sides (page 4).
- The current charges against those admitted to the Cook County Jail were distributed across all general crime categories, with violent crimes accounting for 28.7% of all admissions, followed by drug-law violations (26.9%), property offenses (17.9%), driving-related offenses, including DUI (15.4%), and other offenses. Almost one out of every 7 inmates (12.7%) admitted to the jail were charged with domestic battery (page 5).
- The majority of those admitted to the Cook County Jail are pre-trial detainees, which are admitted with either an amount of bail necessary for their release or an order of "no bond," meaning they cannot be released on bail. Among those admitted in 2011, 20% had bail amounts of \$6,000 or less, with 77% of these detainees being able to post the necessarily bail. The remaining 23% stayed in jail until their case was disposed of (page 6).

## Population Dynamics and the Characteristics of Inmates in the Cook County Jail

### Introduction

The Cook County Department of Corrections (i.e., the Cook County Jail) is operated by the Cook County Sheriff's Office, led by Sheriff Thomas Dart. In county fiscal year 2011, the Cook County Department of Corrections operating budget was \$226 million, with roughly 85 percent of the budget going towards the salaries of more than 3,600 staff who work within the jail. This research bulletin provides a detailed examination of admissions to, and exits from, the jail, along with the characteristics of those admitted to the jail in 2011, and also describes the dynamics of the population flow over the past few years that impact the jail's average daily population (ADP).

Situated on 96 acres on Chicago's south-west side, the Cook County Jail is one of the largest *single site* county jails in the United States based on both its daily population as well as its rated capacity. Based on 2010 data collected by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics, the Cook County Jail housed a total of 9,777 inmates on June 30, 2010, second behind the 10,264 inmates detained in the largest single site facility in the country, the Harris County Jail in Houston, TX, and more than the 7,549 inmates housed in the Maricopa County Jail in Phoenix, AZ (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011). Although the jail systems in New York and Los Angeles have many more inmates—12,745 and 16,862 on June 30, 2010, respectively—the jail systems in these two jurisdictions are in *multiple sites* across their respective jurisdictions. The Cook County Jail has been accredited by the American Correctional Association since 1988, annually passes inspections by the Illinois Department of Corrections' Jail and

Detention Standards Unit, and is monitored by the John Howard Association in Chicago.

Although crowding at the Cook County Jail resulted in a federal consent decree in 1974, the problem of crowding at the jail site has existed since the Chicago House of Corrections opened in 1871. When the House of Corrections opened, approximately 419 inmates each day were housed at the facility, and by the 1920's, the average daily population had tripled to 1,200, more than double the intended capacity. This severe crowding led to the construction of the County Jail in 1928. The County Jail and the Chicago House of Correction were run as separate facilities until 1969, when the Cook County Department of Corrections was created within the Sheriff's Office and combined these two facilities. However, even with the new addition, and additional housing units added to the facility during the rest of the decade, the jail still experienced crowding, culminating in the issuance of a federal consent decree in 1974.

Since 1996, the annual average daily population of the Cook County Jail has been between 8,000 and 10,000 inmates (Figure 1), with an annual average daily population of 8,896 in 2011. Figure 1 also reveals that between 1985 and 2004, the jail's average daily population did experience some short-term decreases, usually driven by the implementation of specific programs or policy changes with the Sheriff's Office or drops in criminal court case filings. For example, in 1992 and then again in 1995 the jail's average daily population fell, attributable to the implementation and expansion of an Electronic Monitoring (EM) program for pre-trial detainees and a Day Reporting Center (DRC) for pre-trial detainees. During

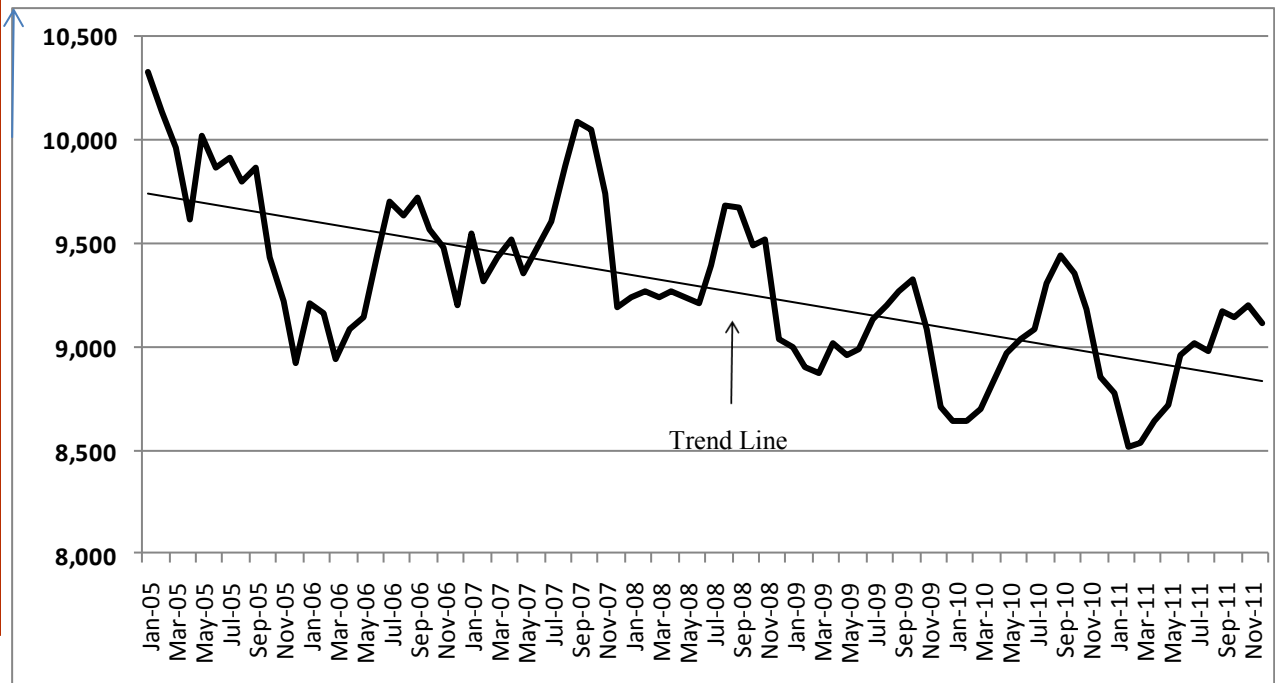
**Figure 1: Cook County Jail Average Daily Population**



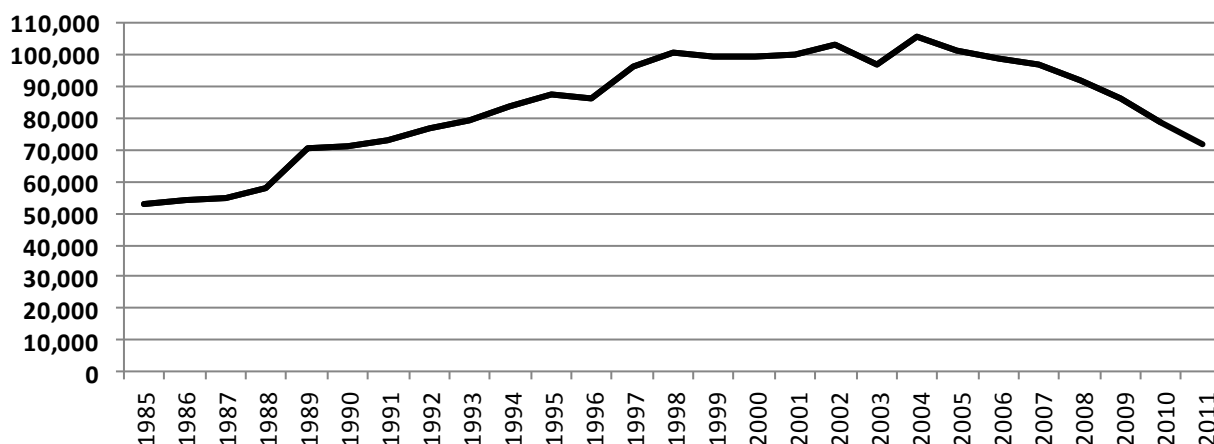
these years there were also some decreases in felony or misdemeanor case filings. However, since 2004, much larger and more sustained decreases in felony and misdemeanor case filings have not translated into as large of a decrease in the jail's average daily population. For example, between 2007 and 2010 (the most recent publically available court data), felony filings in Cook County decreased 16% and misdemeanor case filings fell 25% (Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, 2007 and 2010), but the jail's average daily population only decreased 7%.

Figure 2 reveals how the jail's average daily population can fluctuate widely on a month-to-month basis, and also reveals a pattern of seasonality correlated with arrest patterns in Cook County. Generally, the jail's average daily population reaches an annual peak during the August to October period, and the lowest average daily populations are seen during the February to March period. In 2011, there was an 8% difference between the average daily population in February (8,514) and November (9,199). The rated capacity of the Cook County Jail was 10,607 as of

**Figure 2: Average Daily Population of Cook County Jail, by Month**



### Figure 3: Annual Admissions to the Cook County Jail



2010, making it the third largest county jail in the nation (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011) in terms of *capacity*. Combining the average daily population and the rated capacity, over the past few years the jail has operated at 90% to 98% of its rated capacity.

In addition to the Cook County Jail, there are a number of other programs through which both pre-trial and sentenced individuals are under the custody of the Cook County Sheriff. Included among these programs is an Electronic Monitoring (EM) program that began in 1989, which had an average daily population of 636 individuals in 2011, a Day Reporting Center (DRC), which opened in 1993 and had an average daily population in 2011 of 227, and a Pre-Release Center (PRC) that provides substance abuse treatment to pre-trial and sentenced detainees in Division 14 of the jail, which had an average daily population of 444 in 2011. Since 1997 the Sheriff has also operated the Cook County Boot Camp, a sentencing alternative to traditional prison for adult males who meet the age and conviction offense eligibility criteria, and had an average daily population of 199 inmates during 2011. Finally, the Sheriff's Women's Justice Program also provides an array of services and operates a number of programs for females under the custody of the Sheriff's Office, including a residential treatment program within the jail, the Sheriff's Female Furlough Program, and a program for pregnant detainees.

All told, the average daily population of adults under the custody of the Cook County Sheriff's Office in 2011 totaled 11,603, of which 8,897, or 77%, were physically incarcerated in the Cook County Jail.

#### Volume & Characteristics of Admissions to the Cook County Jail

In 2011, the Cook County Jail recorded a total of 71,663 admissions (Figure 3), 62,500 (87.2%) of which were male detainees and 9,161 (12.8%) accounted for by female detainees (Table 1). The number of admissions *per day* to the Cook County Jail in 2011 averaged 196, with an average of 171 men and 25 women admitted each day. This total number of admissions during 2011 was 6,871 fewer than the total admissions in 2010 (a 9% drop), and more than 14,000 fewer than in 2009 (a 17% drop) (Figure 3). Out of these total admissions in 2011, many were accounted for by individuals who had been admitted multiple times during the year. Specifically, during 2011, there were 51,137 unique individual males and 7,952 unique individual females admitted to the jail. Thus, while the majority of individuals, 82.5% of males and almost 88% of females, entered the jail only once during 2011, 13.9% of males and 10.2% of females entered the jail *twice*, and 3.6% and 2.2% respectively, entered *three or more times* during 2011 (Table 1). Or, looked at another way, there were more than 8,500 individual males, and nearly 1,000 females, admitted to the jail multiple times during 2011 (Table 1).

**In 2011, an average of 196 inmates were admitted to the Cook County Jail every day.**

The typical inmate admitted to, and discharged from, the Cook County Jail is a single, African American male from Chicago averaging 32 years-old at admission. Among those admitted to the Cook County Jail in

**Table 1**  
**Comparison of Male & Female Jail Admissions, 2011**

	Males	Females	Total
<b>Total Admissions</b>	62,500	9,161	71,663
Percent	86.5%	12.8%	100.0%
<b>Admissions per Individual During 2010</b>			
1 Admission	82.5%	87.5%	83.2%
2 Admissions	13.9%	10.2%	13.4%
3 or More Admissions	3.6%	2.2%	3.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Average Daily Admissions</b>	171.2	25.1	196.3
<b>Race</b>			
African American	66.7%	68.2%	66.9%
Caucasian	12.7%	19.5%	13.5%
Hispanic/Other	20.7%	12.3%	19.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Average Age</b>	32.5 yrs	33.8 yrs	32.7 yrs
<b>Age Distribution</b>			
17-20 years old	15.5%	10.5%	14.9%
21-25 years old	20.1%	18.4%	19.9%
26-30 years old	15.9%	16.1%	15.9%
31-35 years old	12.6%	12.0%	12.5%
36-40 years old	10.0%	12.6%	10.4%
41-49 years old	15.3%	21.3%	16.1%
50 years old or older	10.5%	9.1%	10.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Area of City</b>			
North	8.8%	7.2%	8.6%
South	33.4%	34.1%	33.5%
West	20.2%	18.4%	19.9%
Loop	0.9%	1.2%	0.9%
Outside of the City	29.1%	30.8%	29.3%
Unknown	7.7%	8.2%	7.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Single	85.3%	89.6%	85.8%
Married	14.7%	10.4%	14.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

2011, the majority (67%) were African-American, followed by Hispanics (19%) and whites (14%). Among those admitted to the Cook County Jail in 2011, the majority (85%) were single/not married, whereas only 15% were married. Large proportions of those admitted to the jail came from Chicago's south (33.5%) or west (19.9%) sides.

In recognition of the different needs of females processed through the Cook County Jail, in 1999 the Cook County Sheriff's Office created the Department of Women's Justice Services (DWJS), which provides enhanced services to women in the jail as well as those released from the jail but still under the custody of the Sheriff's Office. During 2011, the 9,161 females admitted to the Cook County Jail accounted for 12.8% (Table 1) of all admissions to the jail—a proportion of admissions that has been consistent over the past few years. Other than differences in the sheer volume of admissions into the jail, male and female admissions to the jail were only slightly different in terms of their age, race and education level (Table 1). For example, the average age of females admitted in 2011 was 34 years old, compared to an average of 33 years old for males admitted to the jail. The youngest inmates (male and female) admitted to the jail was 17 (the minimum age of an adult in Illinois' justice system), while the oldest female admitted in 2011 was 85 years old, as was the oldest male admitted. Some slight differences were evident when the race of male and female detainees was compared, with roughly two-thirds of both males and female accounted for by African-Americans, but a smaller proportion of females accounted for by Hispanics (12.3%) than male detainees (20.7%), and a larger proportion of females were accounted for by whites (19.5%) than among males (12.7%).

Although not presented in tabular form, more substantive differences were noted between female and male jail admissions when the most serious current criminal charges were compared, with males being more likely than females to be admitted for violent crimes (30.3% versus 23.5%, respectively) and traffic offenses (16.6% versus 12.2%, respectively). Roughly similar proportions of male and female jail admissions were for drug-law violations (27.9% and 24.8%, respectively). On the other hand, women were *more likely* than men to be admitted to the jail for property crimes (22.6% versus 17.7%, respectively) and sex offenses, which include prostitution, at 7.6% versus 1.5%, respectively.

In terms of the crime associated with admissions to the jail during 2011, the single largest category of admissions to the jail were accounted for by those

**Table 2**  
**2011 Admissions by Current Offense Type, with Top 4 in**  
**Each Category Identified**

Type of offense	N	% w/in Offense type	% of Total
<b>Violent</b>	<b>20,567</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>28.7%</b>
Domestic Battery	9,108	44.3%	12.7%
Unlawful Use of a Weapon (UUW) by Felon	1,445	7.0%	2.0%
Aggravated UUW	1,377	6.7%	1.9%
Armed Robbery	646	3.1%	0.9%
<b>Property</b>	<b>12,790</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>17.9%</b>
Retail Theft	3,484	27.2%	4.9%
Burglary	1,751	13.7%	2.4%
Theft	1,554	12.2%	2.2%
Residential Burglary	1,020	8.0%	1.4%
<b>Drug</b>	<b>19,238</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>26.9%</b>
Possession of Cont. Subs.	12,066	62.7%	16.8%
Man/Del of Cont. Subs.	3,109	16.2%	4.3%
Possession of Cannabis	2,532	13.2%	3.5%
Man/Del Cannabis	1,018	5.3%	1.4%
<b>DUI/Traffic</b>	<b>11,022</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>
Driving with Suspended license	6,555	59.5%	9.2%
Driving Under Influence	3,556	32.3%	5.0%
Agg. Driving under Influence	366	3.3%	0.5%
Agg. Fleeing an officer	222	2.0%	0.3%
<b>Sex</b>	<b>1,578</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>
Prostitution	680	43.1%	0.9%
Failure to register as a sex-offender	216	13.7%	0.3%
Agg. Criminal Sexual Assault	140	8.9%	0.2%
Failure to report change of address	119	7.5%	0.2%
<b>Other</b>	<b>4,706</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>
Interference with a public officer	652	13.8%	0.9%
Disorderly Conduct	275	5.8%	0.4%
Pedestrian soliciting rides	132	2.8%	0.2%
Obscene harassment	102	2.2%	0.1%
<b>Unknown</b>	<b>1,762</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>71,663</b>		

charged with violent crimes (28.7%) (Table 2), followed closely by drug-law violations (26.9%), property offenses (17.9%), traffic/driving under the influence of alcohol (15.4%), and other types of offenses (6.6%). Only 2.2% of admissions to the jail were for sex crimes, which include prostitution offenses as well as sexual assault and abuse cases. These crime categories are based on the most serious *current* criminal charge for the detainee, and does not take into account the prior criminal history of the individual.

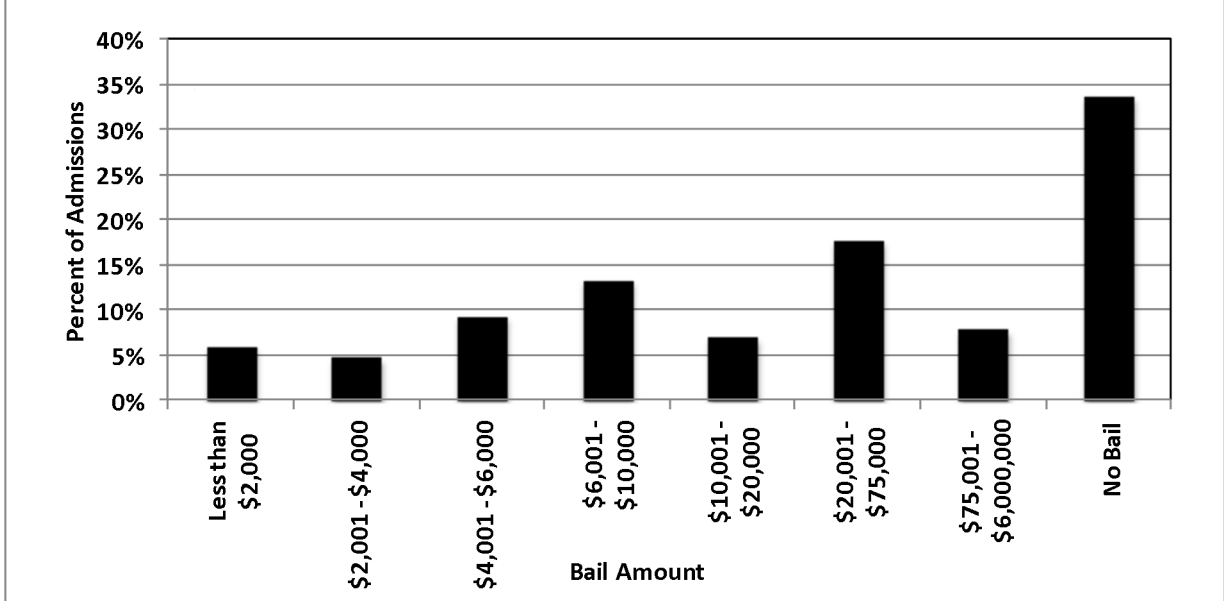
When the current criminal charges were disaggregated and looked at more closely in terms of what the criminal charges included (Table 2), it can be seen that domestic battery charges accounted for 12.7% of *all* admissions to the jail in 2011, but 44.3% of admissions involving *violent charges*. The next single largest sub-group of admissions were those charged with possession on a controlled substance, which excludes offenses involving cannabis/marijuana. In 2011, there were more than 12,000 admissions, or 16.8% of *all* admissions, for possession of a controlled substance, compared to just over 2,500 admissions involving charges of cannabis possession (3.5% of all admissions).

#### Bond Amounts For Jail Admissions

The majority—more than 90%—of individuals admitted to the Cook County Jail are pre-trial detainees, meaning that they are admitted to the jail following a bond hearing. Bond hearings before a judge occur in most cases involving adults charged with a felony or serious misdemeanor crime. At a bond hearing, a judge can release the defendant on an individual recognizance bond (referred to as an “I” bond), or require that the defendant post bail, a monetary deposit (a “D” bond) equal to 10% of the court ordered bond amount, before they can be released. At the bond hearing, a judge can also require the defendant be detained in the jail and *not* be allowed to post bail (i.e., given a “no-bond” order). Finally, judges can order that the defendant be supervised on electronic monitoring in lieu of a financial bail being paid. Since December 2008, the Circuit Court has operated a Pre-Trial Services Unit within the Cook County Adult Probation Department to conduct brief assessments of felony defendants at bond hearings to provide judges with more information for pre-trial release decisions. During 2010, this unit conducted 11,442 pre-trial bond investigations (Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, 2010). Based on data provided by the Cook County Clerk of the Circuit Court, during 2011, the outcomes of bond hearings in Cook County indicated that 8% of those who appeared in bond court received an “I bond,”



**Figure 4: Percent of Admissions, by Bail Amounts, 2011**



13% were ordered onto EM as their form of pre-trial release, and the remaining 79% were ordered to pay bail, or not allowed to be released pre-trial (i.e., no bail).

Figure 4 summarizes the range of bail amounts, the 10% amount that must be paid in order to be released pre-trial, among those admitted to the Cook County Jail during 2011 as pre-trial detainees. As can be seen in Figure 4, one-third of those admitted to the Cook County Jail are initially held with no bond/no bail allowed, meaning that they must remain in the jail either until their criminal case is disposed of, or until the bond/bail is reduced at a subsequent court hearing. At the other end of the continuum, roughly 20% of those admitted to the jail are required to post \$6,000 or less before they can be released by the jail. Among those admitted with a bail amount of \$6,000 or less, 77% posted bail and were released, with 62% of those posting bail doing so in 2 days or less and the remaining 38% posting bail doing so after more than 2 days. The 23% of those with bail amounts of \$6,000 or less who did not post bail remained in jail until their cases were disposed. On any given day, there are approximately 2,000 detainees in the Cook County Jail with bail amounts of \$6,000 or less.

**Discharges/Exits from the Cook County Jail**

A total of 73,369 discharges/exits from the Cook County Jail occurred in 2011, and as with admissions, many individuals exited the jail multiple times during

2011. Specifically, the 73,369 exits were accounted for by 61,845 unique individuals. Detainees are discharged from the jail for one of four general reasons: 1) they post the necessary bail ordered by a judge to obtain their release prior to trial (accounting for 32.5% of the 2011 discharges), 2) they stay in the jail until their criminal case results in their conviction and sentencing to prison, probation or supervision (accounting for 30.4% of all discharges), 3) they stay in the jail until the charges in their criminal case are dropped or they are found not guilty (15.0% of discharges), or 4) they are sentenced to the jail as a result of their conviction, and are released once the jail sentence has been served (14.7% of discharges).

**Time Served Among Jail Exits**

The length of time inmates spend in the Cook County Jail varies widely, and is influenced primarily by the mechanism by which they are released from the jail, such as posting bail or being detained until their criminal case reaches its conclusion. If more defendants remain in jail until their case is disposed of, that will result in longer lengths of stay and contribute to the jail's average daily population. Similarly, if detainees spend longer in the jail awaiting the disposition of their case, or it takes longer for them to post bail for their release, that too will impact the jail's population. Thus, when attempting to examine and understand the length of time served among those released from the jail it is important to not only take into account the means by which they were released,

**Table 3**  
**Comparison of Time Served (Days) in the Cook County Jail Among 2007, 2010 & 2011 Discharges**

	Percent of all Discharges			Average (Mean) Number of Days in Jail			Median Number of Days in Jail			Percent of Discharges that spent 2 days or Less in jail		
	2007	2010	2011	2007	2010	2011	2007	2010	2011	2007	2010	2011
<b>Total</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	47.9	49.8	54.1	11	12	12	28.3%	23.3%	24.5%
Posted Bond	35.8%	30.6%	32.5%	9.8	11.0	12.9	1	2	2	64.4%	57.1%	57.0%
Sentenced to Prison	17.8%	18.7%	18.8%	140.3	139.0	153.3	64	56	67.5	2.8%	4.5%	5.5%
Sentenced to Probation/Supervision	11.1%	11.4%	11.6%	52.8	49.0	56.7	30	26	27	8.3%	7.5%	7.7%
Time Served	6.5%	6.8%	6.7%	60.6	60.0	58.6	9	10	12	11.3%	10.9%	12.1%
Sentence Expired	8.3%	7.5%	8.0%	27.9	31.0	32.7	12	13	13	14.4%	14.3%	15.7%
Charges Dropped	14.1%	15.9%	15.0%	26.2	23.0	25.4	18	17	17	2.9%	3.4%	3.5%
Not Convicted	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	253.7	248.0	285.4	182	192	203.5	0.3%	0.6%	0.0%

but also, due to the statistical patterns in these data, it is necessary to use multiple statistical measures of time served, such as the arithmetic average (mean), the median, and the proportion that serve relatively short or long periods of incarceration. For example, among *all* of those released from the Cook County Jail in 2011, the average length of time served was 54.1 days, whereas the median revealed that one-half of detainees spent 12 days or less in the jail, whereas one-half spent more than 12 days in the jail (Table 3). Looked at another way, 17,945 (or 24.5% of all releasees) spent 2 days or less in the jail (Table 3), while 2,362 (3.2% of all releasees) spent more than one year in the jail. Finally, since the average daily population of correctional facilities is driven by changes in admissions, exits and lengths of stay, in order to better understand why the jail's average daily population has not decreased as much as admissions between 2007 and 2011 (a 9.5% drop versus a 25.9% decrease, respectively), it is important to determine whether there have been changes in the length of stay among jail detainees that might explain these different patterns.

Overall, the average length of stay in the Cook County Jail has *increased* 13% over the past few years, climbing from an average (mean) of 47.9 days in 2007 to an average length of stay of 54.1 days in 2011, or 6.2 more days. Similarly, the *median* time spent in the jail increased from 11 to 12 days. While an increase in the average time served of 6.2 days per detainee does not seem like a dramatic change, when this

small change is multiplied by the 73,369 inmates discharged in 2011, that additional 6.2 days translates to a total of 454,888 additional jail days (6.2 X 73,369), or an addition of 1,246 inmates to the jail's average daily population (454,888 additional days of incarceration/365 days in a year). Looked at another way, if the length of stay in the Cook County Jail in 2011 was the same as it was in 2007, the average daily population of the Cook County Jail in 2011 would have been 7,650, or 28% lower than 2007, and would have been the lowest average daily population since the late 1980s.

**Between 2007 & 2011, the average number of days inmates spent in the Cook County Jail increased, and translated into 1,246 more inmates in the average daily population.**

As would be expected, the length of time spent in the Cook County Jail varies depending on the means by which detainees were discharged (Table 3). Those who are released because they posted the necessary bail generally stay in the jail for a much shorter period of time than did those who remained until they are convicted and sentenced to prison. However, for the most part, increases in the average number of days in jail were seen across all types of discharges from the jail, and each has different implications and possible explanations. For example, among those released from the jail because they posted bail (which accounts for about one-third of discharges





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In order to support research, evaluation and planning efforts for the Cook County Sheriff's Office, the Sheriff's Office entered into a cooperative agreement with Loyola University Chicago to support the development of an enhanced research capacity. Under the agreement, Dr. David Olson, Professor in the Criminal Justice and Criminology Department at Loyola, and Graduate Research Assistant Sema Taheri, have worked to develop datasets and protocols to support research and evaluation efforts, performed research and analyses to support program and policy development and evaluations, and establish stronger ties between the academic community interested in conducting applied research and the Cook County Sheriff's Office. Staff from the Sheriff's Office, including Daniel Brown, Assistant Executive Director of the Cook County Department of Corrections, Andrew Krok, and Officers Marie Ruzanski, Kimberly Harris, and Marissa Sanchez have provided extensive support in obtaining data needed to perform these activities and analyses.

from the jail each year), the average time served increased from 9.8 days in 2007 to 12.9 days in 2011 (Table 3). This increase could be due to it taking a longer for family members to come up with the necessary cash to post a defendant's bail, higher bond amounts, or both. Again, an average increase of 3.1 days when multiplied by the 23,869 released because they posted bond translates into an increase in the average daily population of 203 inmates specifically because of this longer time to post cash bond. Similarly, among those released from the jail because they were convicted and sentenced to the Illinois Department of Corrections, the time in the jail increased from an average of 140 days in 2007 to an average of 153 days in 2011. Overall, the average time those released from the jail because they were sentenced (combining those sentenced to prison or other sanctions, such as probation) increased from 79.8 days in 2007 to 86.4 days in 2011. This could be due to longer court processing times because of more complex cases, fewer resources available in the courtrooms to process cases, more people staying in jail before they are convicted and sentenced to prison because they could not post bond, or all these factors. Among those inmates who were released from the jail because the charges against them were dropped, which accounted for 11,021 of the 73,369 exits in 2011, the average time spent in the jail fell slightly, from 26.2 days in 2007 to 25.4 days in 2011.

Thus, despite the fact that admissions into the jail have fallen, due to fewer arrests—particularly for drug-law violations—because inmates appear to be spending more time in the jail, the average daily population has not fallen as much as would have been expected. Again, while slight changes in the length of time in the jail may not appear to be significant, when multiplied by the tens of thousands of inmates this im-

pacts, it results in substantially more bed-days in jail for inmates—enough to reduce the impact of fewer admissions on the overall population.

### Conclusions

The preceding information was intended to provide practitioners, policy makers, and taxpayers in Cook County with a detailed description of the volume and characteristics of those admitted to and discharged from the Cook County Jail during 2011. The information presented in this *Research Bulletin* illustrates a number of the challenges that face not only the Cook County Sheriff's Office, but the criminal courts in Cook County as well. First, the jail must effectively, efficiently, and safely admit and house an extremely large volume of inmates, with almost 200 inmates admitted per day, and operate a jail with an average daily population of nearly 9,000 inmates. Those admitted to the jail are very diverse in terms of the crimes which brought them into the justice system, with charges ranging from possession of cannabis to first degree murder, and often detainees charged with minor crimes with low bail amounts spend relatively long periods of time in jail before they either post bail, have their cases disposed of, or have the charges against them dropped. Because of increased lengths of time inmates are spending in the jail, the jail's *average daily population* has not seen a decrease proportionate to the decreases seen in jail *admissions* or the decreases seen in the number of felony and misdemeanor cases entering the criminal courts of Cook County.

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