

17 November 2023

C173646



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your email dated 22 September 2023 to the Department of Corrections – Ara Poutama Aotearoa, requesting information about parole and release statistics. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Corrections does not decide who is in prison and who is in the community – this is a matter for the Courts and New Zealand Parole Board. The prison population fluctuates daily due to arrivals, releases, prisoner movements and court decisions.

You requested:

For each of the last 10 years:

- 1) How many people serving long-term determinate sentences were released?*
- 2) Of those released, how many were released at the earliest opportunity (e.g. because the Parole Board directed their release at or soon after parole eligibility)*
- 3) Of those released, how many were released having served half or less of their sentence?*
- 4) Of those released, how many were released having served less than two-thirds of their sentence?*
- 5) Of those released, how many were released having served less than 80% of their sentence?*
- 6) Of those released, how many were released having served less than 95% of their sentence?*

For each of the last 10 years:

- 7) How many people serving indeterminate sentences were released?*
- 8) Of those released, how many were released at the earliest opportunity (e.g. because the Parole Board directed their release at or soon after parole eligibility)*
- 9) Of those released, how many were released within one year of parole eligibility?*
- 10) Of those released, how many were released between 1 and 3 years after parole eligibility?*
- 11) Of those released, how many were released between 3 and 5 years after parole eligibility?*
- 12) Of those released, how many were released between 5 and 10 years after parole eligibility?*

13) Of those released, how many were released 10 years or more after parole eligibility?

As at 31 December in each of the years used in the comparisons above:

14) How many people were serving long-term determinate sentences in prison?

15) How many of those people had passed their parole eligibility date without being released?

16) How many people were serving indeterminate sentences in prison?

17) How many of those people had passed their parole eligibility date without being released?

Please see the attached tables at Appendix One, Two and Three for the requested information. Please note the data in the columns cannot be combined to equal the total number of releases. The reasons for this have been noted in table notes where required.

Please note that this response may be published on Corrections' website. Typically, responses are published quarterly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. I encourage you to raise any concerns about this response with Corrections. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Ngā mihi



Leigh Marsh

National Commissioner

Appendix One: People serving long-term determinate sentences

The below table shows the number of people on long-term determinate sentences who were released in each financial year since 2012, broken down by the percentage of their sentence served prior to release.

Please note the data in the columns below is cumulative and therefore cannot be combined to equal the total number of releases.

Financial year	Total releases	Released at earliest opportunity	Released after serving up to 50%	Released after serving up to 66%	Released after serving up to 80%	Released after serving up to 95%
2012/13	1,638	188	307	637	924	1,201
2013/14	1,637	169	271	587	894	1,187
2014/15	1,666	180	278	599	889	1,187
2015/16	1,557	162	258	578	855	1,125
2016/17	1,457	125	203	493	719	999
2017/18	1,605	143	236	508	771	1,089
2018/19	2,064	184	329	730	1,108	1,518
2019/20	1,827	179	320	684	980	1,323
2020/21	1,690	149	284	577	840	1,195
2021/22	1,610	140	240	506	786	1,133
2022/23	1,085	90	167	370	505	692

Appendix Two: People serving indeterminate sentences

The below table shows the number of people on indeterminate sentences who were released in each financial year since 2012, broken down by the number of years they remained eligible for parole prior to their release.

Please note the data in the columns below cannot be combined to equal the total number of releases. The data for those released at the earliest opportunity and within one year of parole eligibility are not mutually exclusive.

Financial year	Total releases	Released at earliest opportunity	Released within one year of parole eligibility	Released between one and three years of parole eligibility	Released between three and five years of parole eligibility	Released between five and ten years of parole eligibility	Released over ten years after parole eligibility
2012/13	28	4	7	9	4	6	2
2013/14	20	0	2	3	9	4	2
2014/15	14	1	2	4	2	4	2
2015/16	25	0	1	7	5	9	3
2016/17	22	3	4	5	2	8	3
2017/18	15	0	3	3	1	6	2
2018/19	37	5	6	6	3	9	13
2019/20	26	1	4	7	1	7	7
2020/21	35	3	7	5	1	8	14
2021/22	41	0	3	8	4	13	13
2022/23	47	0	4	11	7	6	19

Appendix Three: People serving long-term determinate and indeterminate sentences, including those serving beyond their parole eligibility date (PED)

The below table shows the number of people since 2012 who were serving the types of sentence specified above, and those who had passed their parole eligibility date (PED) without being released.

Please note the data in the columns below is not mutually exclusive.

Financial year	Serving long sentence	Serving long sentence, post-PED	Serving indeterminate sentence	Serving indeterminate sentence, post-PED
2012/13	4,701	2,593	762	374
2013/14	4,772	2,727	772	384
2014/15	4,692	2,608	807	409
2015/16	4,688	2,684	826	421
2016/17	4,829	2,799	827	412
2017/18	5,230	3,039	844	431
2018/19	5,074	3,050	856	435
2019/20	4,536	2,773	854	430
2020/21	4,039	2,628	867	445
2021/22	3,432	2,144	854	432
2022/23	3,246	1,962	842	425

Table notes:

- Data is recorded in financial years.
- For long fixed term sentences a person is counted only once, in the financial year they are released. It is not possible for a person to have to multiple first releases from a long sentence in a single year so no individuals are recounted within a single year. A person may be counted in multiple years only if they are released for the first time from a subsequent, separate aggregate imprisonment sentence.
- For the parole eligible but unreleased figures a person will be counted once for each year that they are imprisoned as at the 31st of December.

- A release is someone who has been released for the first time from a sentence of imprisonment and has left a prison. People who have completed their prison sentence but remained in custody (e.g., due to being remanded on other outstanding charges or held on immigration or other matters) are not counted. People who have completed their sentence while not being in prison (e.g., in inpatient facilities) are also not considered a release. People who have been released on parole and recalled on the same sentence are counted only as a single, initial release with any re-releases not counted here. People who leave prison due to their sentence being cancelled on appeal are excluded. Some types of release (such as compassionate or deportation) other than parole are included.
- Proportion of time served is calculated as the number of days served on sentence, plus any days on remand counting towards the sentence, divided by the total number of imprisonment days imposed.
- A person is considered released at the earliest opportunity if:
 - a. They are released from their sentence within 1 month of their parole eligibility date; **OR**
 - b. The first parole board decision for the aggregate sentence is approved.