A stylized graphic of a door is positioned on the left side of the slide. The door is a solid blue color with a small blue circular handle. The door frame is a light yellow-green color. The background of the slide is a solid blue color.

What's behind the jail population increase?

December 2020

OVERVIEW

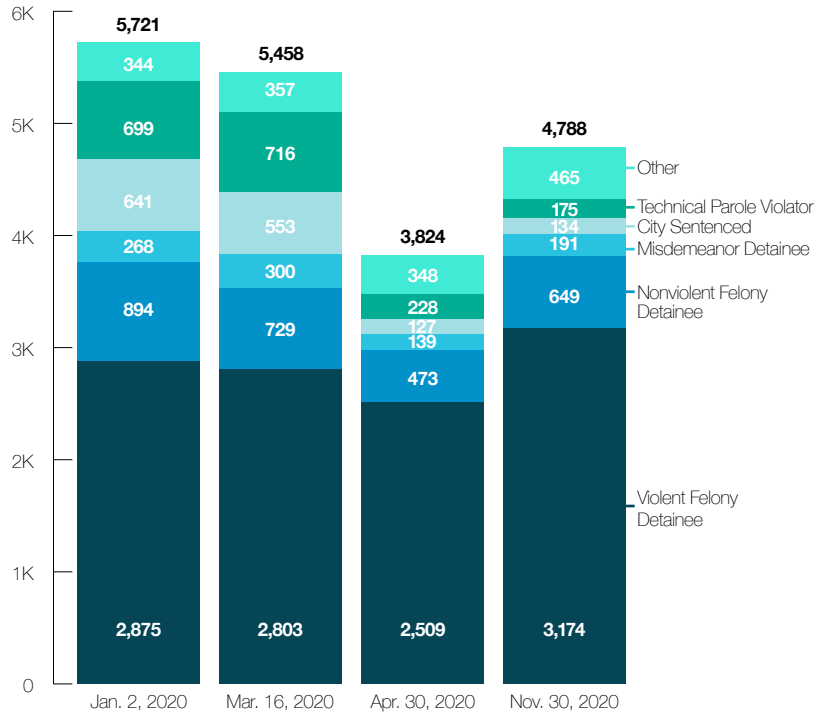
What is behind the increase in the jail population?

- 1** Jail admissions for violent felony offenses—often linked to gun-related charges—have grown faster than nonviolent felony offenses and misdemeanors.
- 2** Courts have slowed their use of alternatives to bail, namely Supervised Release, while applying bail to more eligible cases, at higher levels than the pre-COVID-19 period.
- 3** Lingering and unavoidable COVID-19 slowdowns in the court and jail systems are resulting in more people being held for longer periods of time.

How we got here

When COVID-19 hit New York City in March, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice engaged partners about the need to safely and quickly reduce the jail population.

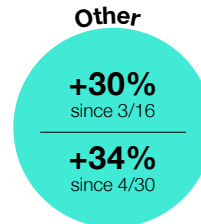
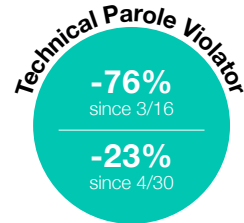
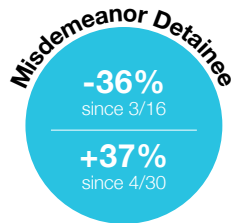
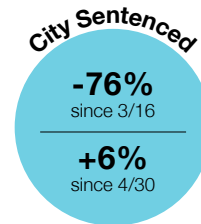
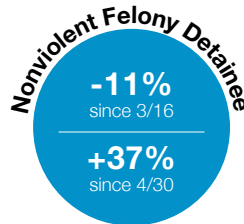
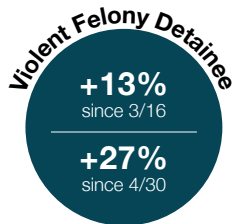
By the end of April 2020, the number of people in City custody and care was below 3,900 — a level not seen since World War II.



Where we are today

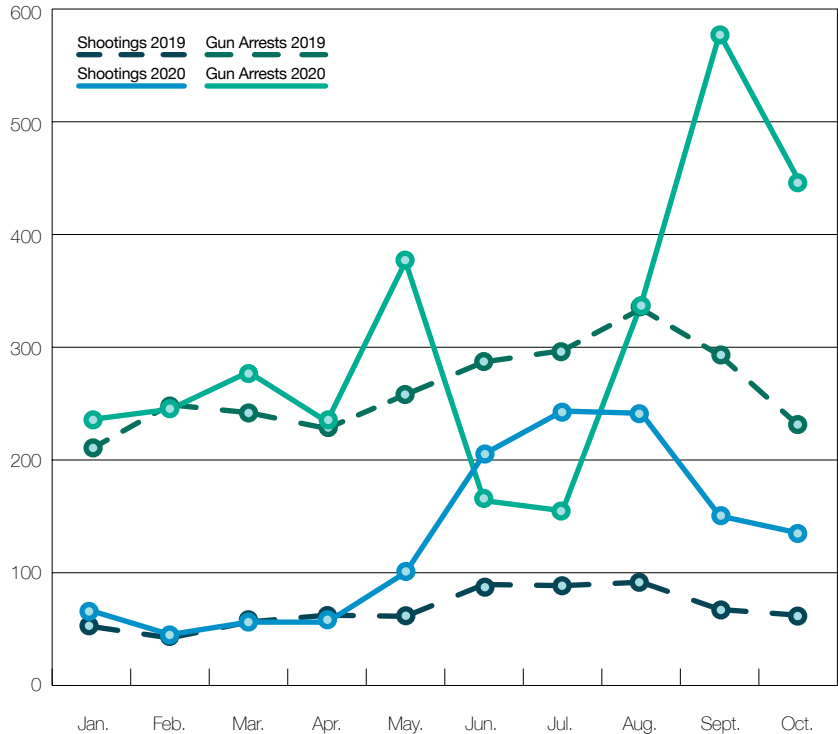
In recent weeks, the jail population has steadily risen. Some of this can be attributed to the reopening of parts of the justice system during the summer, which reflected pre-COVID-19 activity.

Even so, statistics show a number of unique circumstances driving the increase, which, by mid-November, saw a jail population over 4,700. This was still significantly below the pre-COVID-19 jail population of about 5,500.



Shootings and murders have increased since last year, while other crime is down

Shooting incidents and murders are up in 2020 by 96% and 38% respectively, even as overall violent index crime is down by 5% through October, as compared to 2019. Since August, gun arrests have increased by 59% compared to the same period last year.

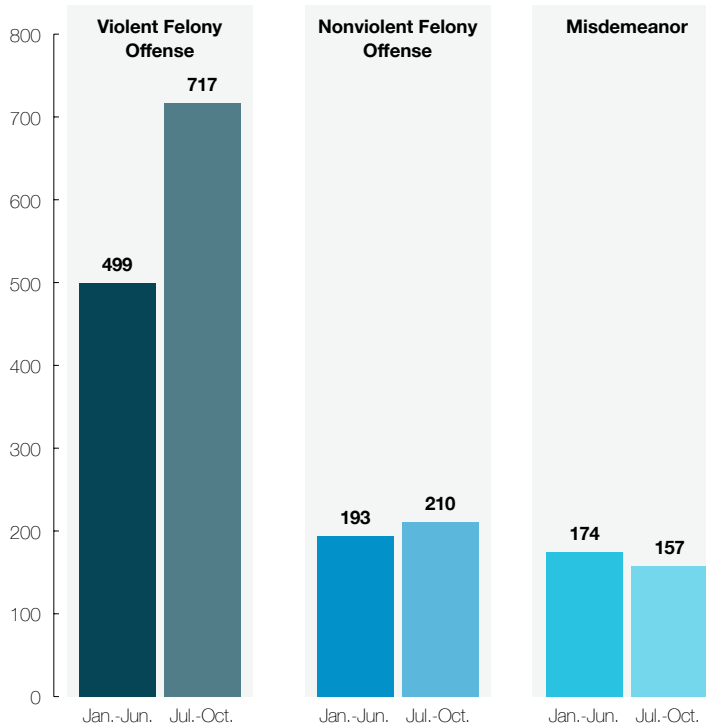


Recent changes to the bail law have not resulted in significant increases in the misdemeanor and nonviolent felony jail populations

In January 2020, New York State reforms to the bail law went into effect, making bail no longer an option for most misdemeanor and many nonviolent felony charges.

In July 2020, a number of nonviolent felony and misdemeanor charges were made bail eligible again. These charges have not resulted in substantial increases in jail admissions.

Average Monthly Pretrial Admissions by Charge Level



Courts have slowed their use of alternatives to bail while applying bail to more eligible cases

The courts have been setting bail more often in violent felony offense cases, both when compared to other bail-eligible cases and to pre-COVID 19 levels.

The courts have also been setting bail at higher levels than pre-COVID. Accordingly, Supervised Release and release on recognizance are being used less frequently.



*Summary arrests continued at arraignment; Excludes cases missing arraignment outcomes and those remanded to DOC custody.

COVID-19 slowdowns are resulting in more people being held for longer periods of time

Despite the rise in bail set in violent felony cases, more people are making bail than they were pre-pandemic. In October, 40% of people left custody after paying bail, while $\frac{2}{3}$ of those leaving jail had been there less than a month.

However, those who do not make bail are finding themselves spending longer periods of time in custody than before COVID-19.

Average time in custody (days) for people in DOC facilities

