

**Multnomah County Sheriff's Office**

**Review of Women Arrested and in Jail:  
2003 to 2007**

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## **Introduction**

This report examines arrests, bookings and jail usage among female offenders in Multnomah County from 2003 through 2007. The purpose is to better understand the crimes committed by women and to help understand their impact to the jail system.

Specific questions to be addressed include:

- How many women are arrested each year?
- How many female arrestees are repeat offenders?
- What crimes are women commonly arrested for?
- Are there demographic differences, such as race/ethnicity and age, in the characteristics of female arrestees?
- How many women are booked into jail each year?
- How much jail time do women typically serve?
- How many jail beds are used by women?
- Are there housing and classification issues specific to women?
- Do differences exist in programs offered to female and male inmates?
- Are female inmates at an increased risk of abuse and harassment?
- Do women have increased association with domestic violence, alcohol, or drugs?
- How many women commit property crimes each year?

## **Literature Review and Background**

Two reports were reviewed related to this report.

The National Institute of Corrections report “Women in Jail: Legal Issues” was published in December 1996 (Collins and Collins 1996). Legal issues addressed in this report include differences that exist in housing, privileges, and programming provided to male and female inmates, medical issues that are unique to women, and sexual harassment and abuse of women that can occur in jail.

The report overview of the female inmate population found that:

- Most had a poor educational background
- The majority were unemployed
- 44% reported having been physically or sexually abused before entering jail
- Two thirds of women in prison had children under 18 years of age
- 40% reported committing their offense under the influence of drugs
- As a small minority of the total jail population, female inmates may be given less attention and resources
- This group causes fewer management and security problems
- Women are rarely allowed to participate in program or activities with male inmates
- Health services specific to women are often poor or absent
- Although sentences received by male and female offenders may be the same, male offenders may be released earlier than women due to issues of overcrowding and the availability of work programs for early release

The National Institute of Corrections report “Women in Jail: Classification Issues” was published in March 1997 (Brennan and Austin 1997). The report examines the need for an objective classification system for women, as they may have different behaviors and risk factors than men.

The report focus on classification found that:

- Gender-neutral classification systems tend to “overclassify” female inmates. Scoring does not take into account two qualifying factors: females involved in serious violent offenses tend to be accessories (not instigators) and a large percentage of female violence occurs in long-term relationships, not generalizable to the public at large.
- Overclassification can lead to higher security than warranted, which can result in ineligibility for programs and work
- Female inmates tend to have fewer housing options which can lead to inappropriate co-mingling (serious, with less serious, mental health, etc)
- The bond with children and family is difficult for inmates to maintain in a high security environment. This can lead to stress and anxiety among female inmates as the visitation environment is often not appropriate for bonding with children.

## **Methodology**

The analysis that follows examines arrests and bookings that occurred between January 1, 2003 and December 31, 2007. Data for the analysis were extracted from DSSJ via a series of custom queries through Cognos, a relational database system developed by the Public Safety Coordinating Council of Multnomah County. Arrest data are for persons taken into custody by the Portland Police Bureau and the Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO) who were 18 or older at the time of arrest. Booking data are for Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office adult jail facilities. Some analyses are based on “snapshot” data (jail bed counts per day), for a one year period from January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007. A few records may also be missing from DSSJ or have minor errors, especially in earlier years of data.

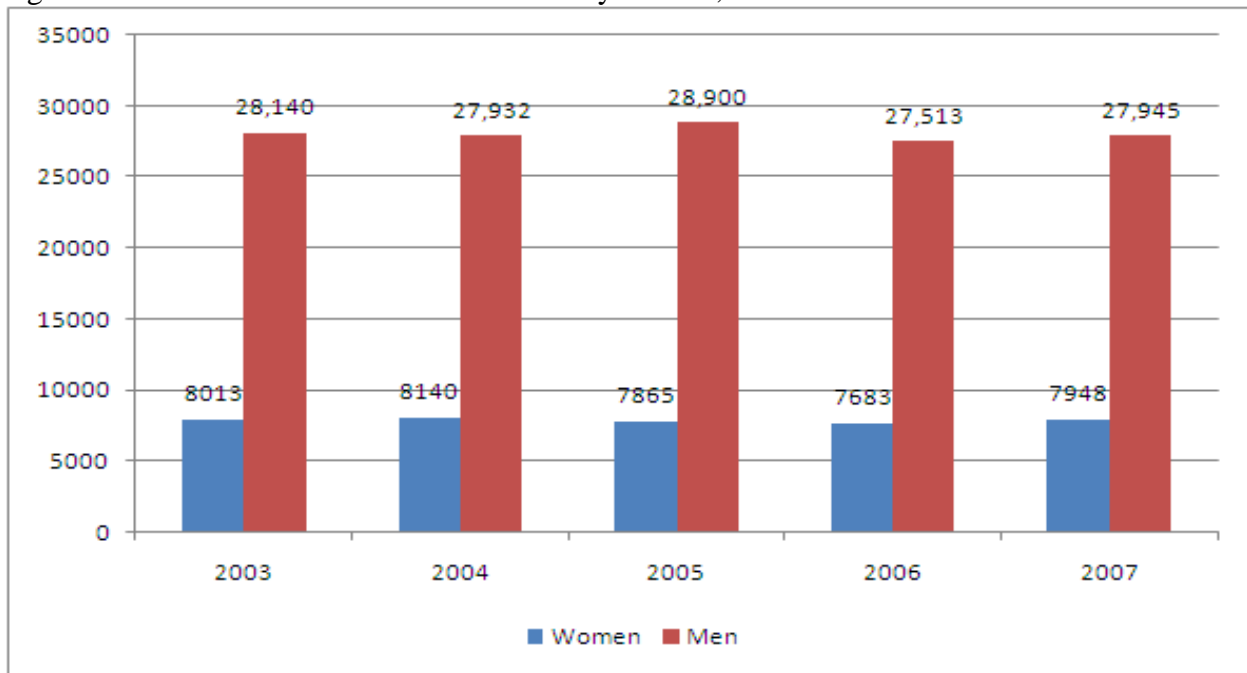
## **Findings**

### How many women are arrested each year?

During the 5 years from 2003 to 2007, Portland Police and the Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office made over 180,000 arrests of people over 18 years of age. Of these arrests, 22%, or 39,649, were of women. This averages 7930 arrests per year of women. The number of women arrested has been relatively consistent over the past five years (see figure 1).

The 180,079 total arrests represent 73,580 individuals, as 39% were arrested more than once. All individuals arrested averaged approximately 2.45 arrests from 2003 to 2007. Women averaged 2.26 arrests and men averaged 2.51 arrests during that time period. Of the individual *persons* arrested from 2003 to 2007, 24% were women and 76% were men. Women had a lower rate of re-arrest than men.

Figure 1. Portland Police and MCSO Arrests by Gender, 2003-2007



How many female arrestees are repeat offenders?

Of the 17,539 individual women arrested from 2003 to 2007, 65% or 11,383 were arrested only once during that time period, while 35% were arrested more than once (see Figure 2). Of men arrested during that same time period, 60% were arrested only once and 40% were arrested more than once (see Figure 3).

Individuals may have been arrested *before* or *after* the time period examined in this report.

Figure 2: Frequency of Arrest, Women

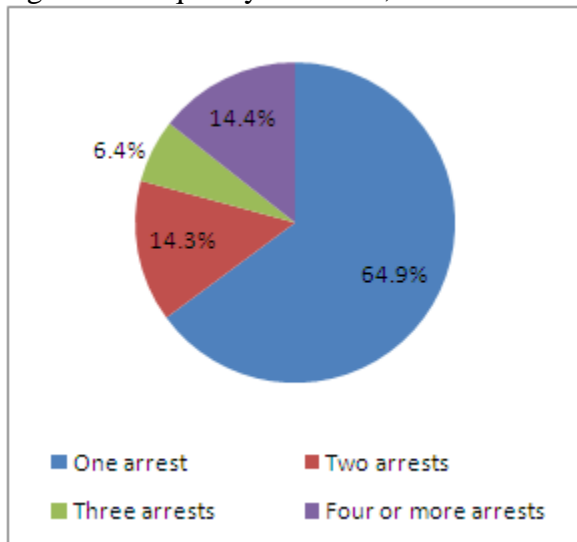
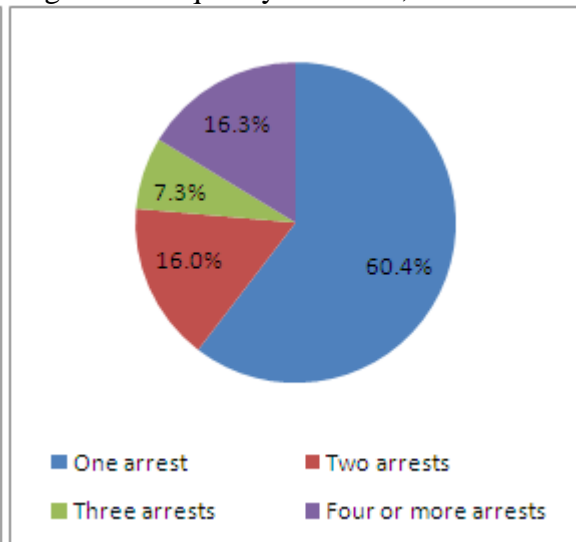


Figure 3: Frequency of Arrest, Men



What crimes are women commonly arrested for?

When looking at the highest charge during an arrest (i.e. the charge with the lowest arrest code, indicating the most serious charge), from 2003 to 2007, the most frequent charges for women arrestees is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Arrests by Charge of Women Compared to Men, 2003-2007

Highest Charge	Women	Men	% Women	% Men	Difference	Likelihood
Larceny	7529	15,271	19%	11%	8%	1.75
Fugitives	7148	23,792	18%	17%	1%	1.06
Drug Laws	4768	17,857	12%	13%	-1%	0.95
Simple Assault	3558	14,894	9%	11%	-2%	0.85
Other_Part II	2595	9550	7%	7%	0%	0.96
DUII	2401	8818	6%	6%	0%	0.96
Liquor Laws	1783	9854	4%	7%	-3%	0.64
Traffic Crime	1753	10,014	4%	7%	-3%	0.62
Prostitution	1296	940	3%	1%	3%	4.88
Warrants	1049	3262	3%	2%	0%	1.14
Forgery/Counterfeit	896	1604	2%	1%	1%	1.98
Disorderly Conduct	882	4205	2%	3%	-1%	0.74
MV Theft	817	3251	2%	2%	0%	0.89
Fraud	614	1347	2%	1%	1%	1.61
All Other	2560	15,771	6%	11%	-5%	0.57
Total Arrests	39,649	140,430	100%	100%	0%	1.00

For comparison, Table 1 also shows the number of arrests for men. The “likelihood” indicates the differences in the arrest rates of women and men. For example, 19% of arrests of women had “Larceny” as their highest charge, while 11% of arrested men had this charge. Thus, women were 1.75 times more likely to be arrested for larceny than men. The data indicate that men are nearly twice as likely as women to be arrested for a traffic crime (.62 likelihood) and that women are more prone to being arrested for forgery/counterfeit and fraud than men.

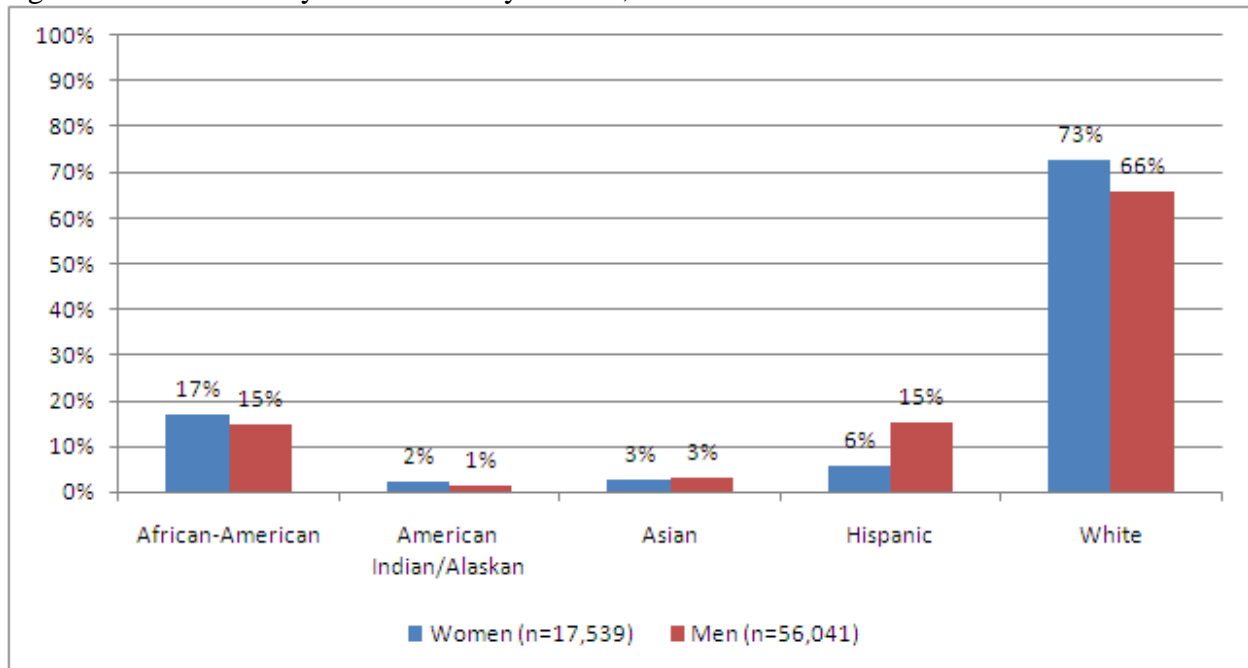
For the major person crimes of homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, women comprised 14% of the arrests. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of the arrests for the major property crimes of burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson were of women.

Are there demographic differences, such as race/ethnicity and age, in the characteristics of female arrestees?

There are slight differences in the race/ethnicity percentages of female and male individuals arrested (see Figure 4). A higher percentage of women arrested are White (73%) compared to arrested White men (66%). Six percent (6%) of the women arrested were Hispanic while 15% of the arrested men were Hispanic.

The average age of arrested women is 33.41 years, 1.35 years younger than arrested men (average 34.76 years). For this report, the minimum age examined was 18 years. From 2003 to 2007, the maximum arrest age for a woman was 88 years and for a man was 92 years. The standard deviation in ages was smaller for women than for men at 10.5 years versus 11.3 years. This indicates that the time span for men being arrested is longer than for women.

Figure 4: Race/Ethnicity of Arrestees by Gender, 2003-2007



Note: there were 8 women and 25 men with unknown race/ethnicity. These comprise less than 0.1% of arrestees.

When examining specific charges, differences in race/ethnicity can be seen among women arrested. From 2003-2007:

- 52% of the 1337 women arrested for Possession of Cocaine were African-American, 41% were White and 7% were all other races combined.
- Of the 2390 women arrested for DUII, 84% were White, 8% were African-American, and 7% were all other races.
- 83% of the 446 women arrested for identity theft (includes Credit Card Fraud, Identity Theft, and Mail Theft) White, 14% were African-American, and 3% were all other races.
- 1136 women were arrested for Open Container Alcohol and of these, 12% African-American, 63% were White, and 24% were all other races.

How many women are booked into jail each year?

From 2003 to 2007, the average number of bookings per year of women was 8562. Across the five years, women have represented 20% of the total bookings.

There are differences in the percent of women and men booked when examined by booking type. Table 2 shows booking types by gender. Of the Cite and ID bookings, women comprised 25% of these bookings, while men comprised 75%. For Standard bookings, women made up 20% while men were 80%.

Table 2. Percent of Booking Types by Gender, 2003-2007

	Cite and ID (n=25,056)	In Transit (n=6681)	Standard (n=160,935)	Turn Self In (n=16,577)	Total (n=209,249)
Women	25%	15%	20%	22%	20%
Men	75%	85%	80%	78%	80%

Women are 1.26 times more likely to be Cite and ID booked and slightly less likely to be Standard booked than men. (See Table 3)

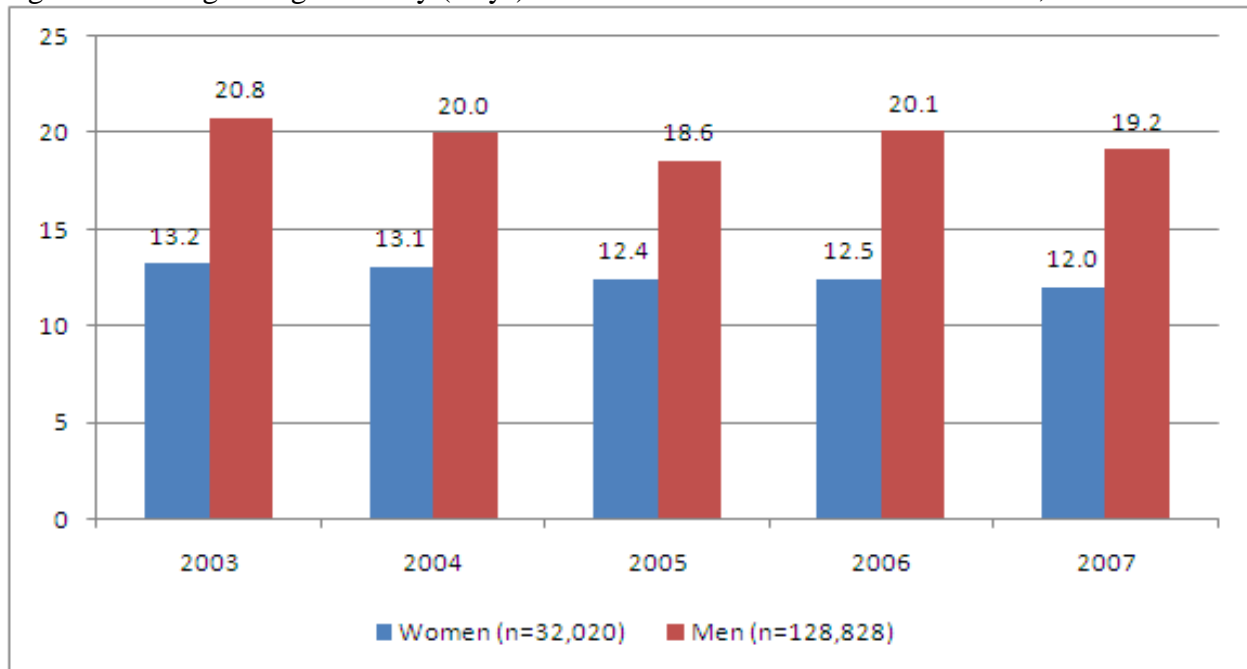
Table 3. Booking Types by Gender, 2003-2007

	Women (n=42,811)	Men (n=166,435)	Difference	Likelihood
Cite and ID	14%	11%	3%	1.26
In Transit	2%	3%	-1%	.67
Standard	75%	77%	-3%	.97
Turn Self In	9%	8%	1%	1.10
Total	100%	100%	0%	1.00

How much jail time do women typically serve?

The average length of stay for women inmates who are standard booked was 12 days during 2003 through 2007. This was approximately one week less than the average length of stay for men (20 days).

Figure 5. Average Length of Stay (Days) of Women and Men Standard Booked\*, 2003-2007



\*Data do not include durations of less than .001 days.

As seen in Figure 5, the average length of stay for both men and women has been declined between 2003 and 2007, with women down 9.2% and men down 7.9%.

When examined by charge level, women also have a lower average length of stay than men. The differences average 10 days for felony level crimes and almost 4 days for misdemeanor level crimes. (see Table 4)

Table 4. Average Length of Stay (Days) by Gender and Charge Level, 2003-2007\*

	Felony (n=68,016)	Misdemeanor (n=53,539)	Ord/Infra/Viol (n=2271)	Holds (n=37,015)	Total (n=160,848)
Women	19.6	6.3	1.4	11.9	12.7
Men	29.6	9.9	1.4	16.2	19.7
All	27.7	9.1	1.4	15.4	18.3

\*Does not include 7 records where there was no entry for the charge level. Also, 84 bookings did not have a duration jail calculation and there were 3 releases before .001 days were spent in jail.

From 2003 to 2007, the most common release reason for women who were standard booked was released on recog. Women were 1.4 times more likely to be released on recog than men. Men most frequently were released due to serving time on their sentence. This release reason had a slightly higher likelihood for men than for women.

Table 5: Release Reasons of Women and Men, 2003-2007

Release Reason	Women	Men	% Women	% Men	Difference	Likelihood
Released on own Recog	8129	23,216	25%	18%	7%	1.41
Time Served on a Sentence	6753	28,837	21%	22%	-1%	0.94
Court Ordered Release	4090	14,877	13%	12%	1%	1.11
Pre-trial Supervision Program	1863	5990	6%	5%	1%	1.25
Bail	1733	7431	5%	6%	0%	0.94
Matrix Release	1387	9175	4%	7%	-3%	0.61
Transfer to Washington Co.	1308	4313	4%	3%	1%	1.22
Court Release on Recog	1295	3912	4%	3%	1%	1.33
Transfer to Clackamas Co.	1229	4567	4%	4%	0%	1.08
All Other	4242	26,588	13%	21%	-7%	0.64
Total	32,029	128,906	100%	100%	0%	1.00

How many jail beds are used by women?

In 2007, women used an average of 200 beds per day in the Multnomah County adult jail system. Approximately 62% of the beds used by women were for un-sentenced inmates and 38% were sentenced. Men used an average of 1390 beds per day during that year, with 70% being un-sentenced inmates and 30% being sentenced.

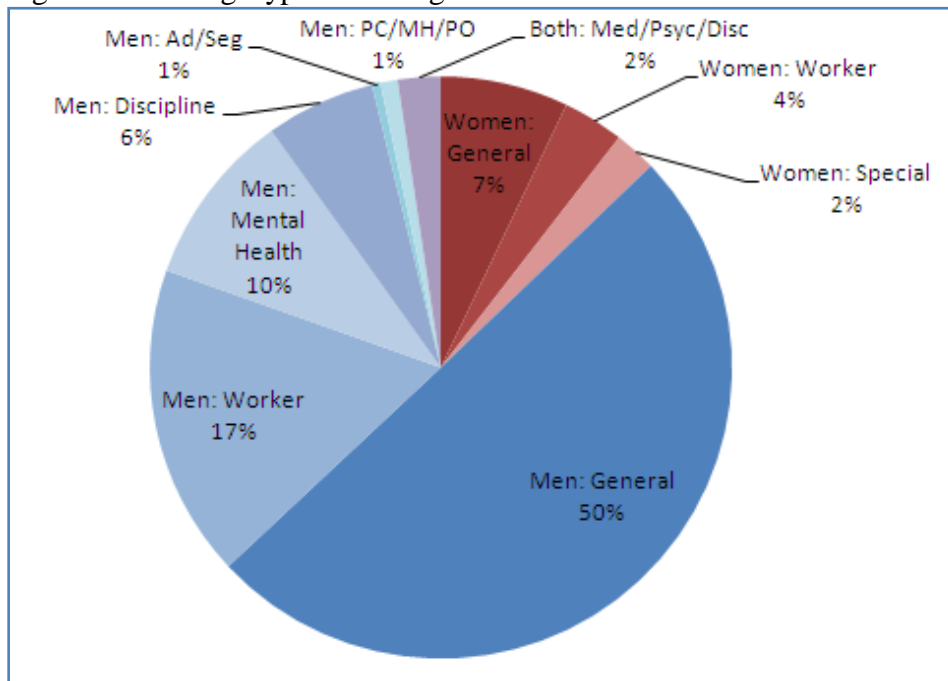
Are there housing and classification issues specific to women?

The National Institute of Correction report “Women in Jail: Classification Issues” highlighted the need for an objective classification system for women and the potential for women to be “over-classified.” Also per the report, women in jail tend to have fewer housing options due to resource limitations.

The MCSO Classification Unit works continuously to ensure the inmate population is balanced within existing beds, including reviewing for over-classification.

MCSO jail facilities are comprised of modules or dorms which can open and close and change in their housing designation to match the needs of the population. On July 1, 2007, MCSO had 39 modules in use and an operating capacity of 1633 beds. There were five female modules, which comprised 13% of the system capacity and 29 male modules, which comprised 85% of capacity. In addition, five smaller special modules (2% of capacity) were designated for both men and women. The housing type percentages are shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Housing Type Percentages for MCSO Jail Facilities



Special housing includes discipline, administrative segregation, mental health, protective custody and population overflow. Worker dorms may also house some general population inmates.

Due to limited resources, women with special housing classifications tend to be mixed in a dorm, while men with special housing classifications generally have separate dorms based on the *specific* classification (see Figure 6.). All inmate classification is carefully administered by the Classification Unit.

Do differences exist in programs offered to female and male inmates?

The National Institute of Corrections report, “Women in Jail: Legal Issues” states that “because of limited resources allocated to female inmates, there tend to be fewer programs and services available to women in jail.”

MCSO offers a wide array of programs for all inmates. There is no co-mingling of female and male inmates and there are many classes and groups available, including several that respond to gender-specific issues.

Programs available at MCSO facilities include:

- Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous
- Anger Management (Men)
- Domestic Violence Awareness (Women)
- Domestic Violence Intervention (Men)
- GED/ABE/ESL
- Hepatitis/HIV/AIDS Education
- High School Completion
- Mental Health Awareness
- Parenting
- Pregnancy Group (Women)
- Relapse Prevention
- Thinking for a Change (Men)
- Treatment Readiness
- Leyendo Para Triunfar / “Reading to Prevail” (Women)
- Transition Services

MCSO program staff indicate that female inmates have access to programs at the same level as male inmates. Staff have noted that male inmates have more of a commitment to the completion of programs and that this may be partially due to female inmates having a higher turnover rate and being held pre-sentence more commonly.

Due to resource constraints and the relatively low female inmate population, MCIJ is lacking a mental health dorm specifically for women. Although this results in a lack of mental health-related group services, inmates do have access to one-on-one mental health services. Also, various classifications of female inmates may reside in the same dorm. Inmates in these mixed classification dorms are carefully considered by the Classification Unit. Those inmates that would present harm to others are isolated.

Although there are limited dorms assigned for female work crews at MCSO facilities, female inmates have ample “work time” and have more work positions available per capita than male inmates.

Special care is taken to understand and address the needs of female inmates in MCSO jail facilities. Program staff realize that female inmates often have a history of victimization. Female inmates often suffer from PTSD from childhood and sexual abuse. Some are forced into crime under threat of violence from a domestic partner. And female inmates have great concern

over their children, suffering a huge sense of loss from being separated from family, and worry over the State Department of Human Services taking custody of their children.

MCSO program staff counsel inmates over their concerns and issues, working with them one-on-one and in classes. Staff also support inmates upon being released from jail. Program staff connect inmates with community providers of transitional services, who assist with housing, clothing, and other basic needs. Often there is minimal waiting for an inpatient or treatment bed for transitioning female inmates.

While in MCSO jail facilities, pregnant inmates have access to parenting education groups and there is a health department nurse who meets each of them. The childbirth support group discusses pregnancy, birth, infant care, and childrearing and provides an opportunity to have a “Doula,” women trained to provide support during labor, birth and the immediate postpartum period, at no charge.

#### Are female inmates at an increased risk of abuse and harassment while in jail?

The Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA) applies to all institutions that house adult or juvenile offenders and requires the tracking of all reported incidents of inmate-on-inmate sexual violence and staff sexual misconduct and harassment. Provisions of PREA include specific definitions of which incidents would qualify as a reportable event as part of the annual PREA survey.

For the 2007 survey, MCSO had one substantiated PREA event. This incident involved a female inmate and the misconduct of a male staff member. In addition to this single, substantiated, incident, there were 4 additional female complainants/subjects whose incidents were found to be either unfounded or unsubstantiated. Of these, two were inmate-on-inmate and two were staff-on-inmate.

There were 22 male complainants/subjects. Of those, 10 were inmate-on-inmate and 12 were staff-on-inmate. All of these reported incidents were unfounded or unsubstantiated.

The MCSO PREA section commander, who is responsible for tracking reported incidents in MCSO jail facilities, indicated that there does not appear to be an overt increased risk of abuse or harassment to female inmates at MCSO. In addition to the cases reported by the PREA commander, three cases were reported to the MCSO Internal Affairs Unit for investigation. These three cases were found to be unsubstantiated.

#### Do women have increased association with domestic violence, alcohol, or drugs?

Without data on the background of MCSO female arrestees and inmates, it is difficult to determine whether they have an increased association with domestic violence, alcohol, or drugs. Charges at the time of arrest may provide some insight with respect to crime and this association, but arrest data do not describe a person’s experiences. Currently, MCSO program staff are developing a research tool for inmate assessments. Information from this tool will be valuable in providing information on inmate history.

From 2003 to 2007, women were 19% of the arrests resulting from a domestic incident. Men comprised the remaining 81% of those arrests. Over 65% of *reported* domestic incidents do not result in an associated arrest.

An association with alcohol may be indicated by DUII and alcohol law violation arrests. For the primary charge of driving under the influence of intoxicants (DUII), women were 21% of the arrests and men were 79%. For both women and men, DUII arrests were 6% of their total arrests. Fifteen percent of alcohol law arrests, which include furnishing to a minor, open container, and alcohol in a park, were of women (85% were men). For women arrests, alcohol laws were 4% of their total arrests, while for men, 7% of their arrests were for alcohol laws.

Women were arrested in 21% of the drug arrests and men comprised 79%.

The Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program, conducted by the National Institute of Justice, was implemented in 2000. Through interviews and testing, this program presents information about arrestees' drug use. MCSO had one facility participate in this national study.

Comparisons of ADAM data of adult female arrestees with adult male arrestees should be interpreted cautiously because the number of women arrestees is relatively small and samples were not drawn randomly nor were they probability-based. Thus, the female arrestee data cannot be generalized to a larger population. In 2000, ADAM data were collected from a Multnomah County jail facility from a total of 239 women and 779 men.

Of the 239 female arrestees in the study, 69.2% tested positive for any NIDA-5 drug (cocaine, marijuana, opiates, methamphetamine, PCP). Of male arrestees, 64.3% tested positive for any NIDA-5 drug. Table 6 shows the percentages by drug type.

Table 6. ADAM Positive Test Results: Gender by Drug Type

Arrestees	Cocaine	Opiates	Marijuana	Methamphetamine	PCP	Multiple NIDA-5 drugs
Female	29.9%	22.2%	26.2%	23.5%	0.0%	28.1%
Male	21.9%	35.6%	14.1%	21.4%	0.3%	24.6%

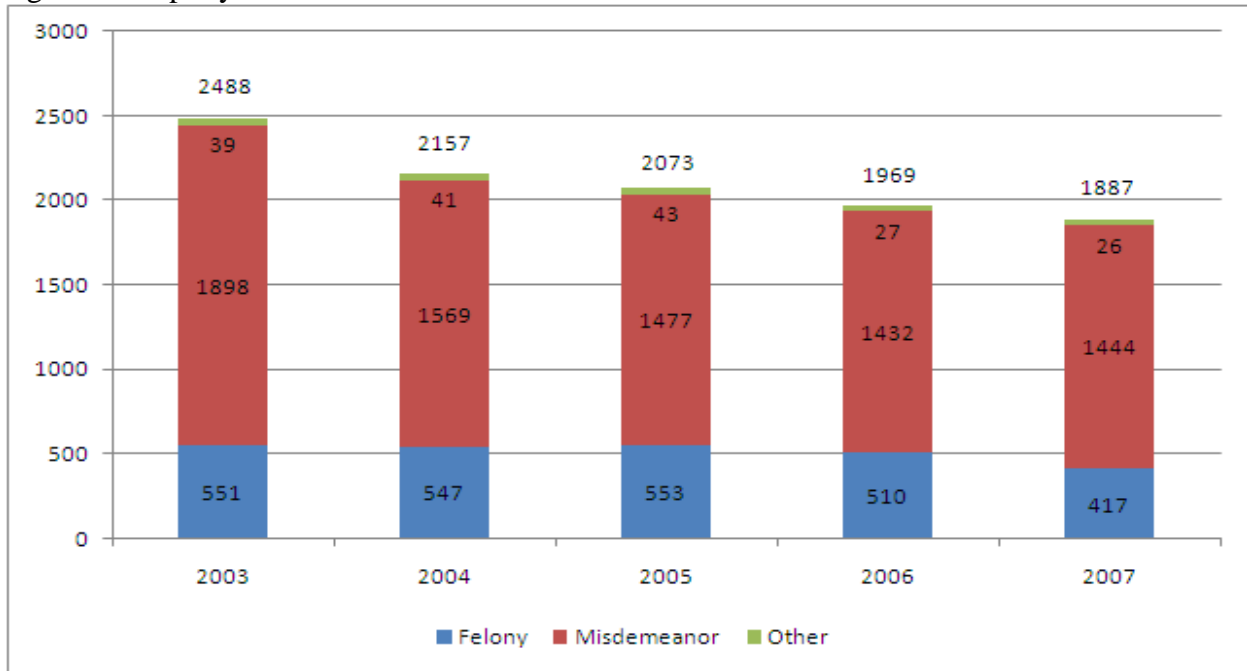
How many women commit property crimes each year?

There has been recent concern over the need for additional jail beds for female inmates. A brief review of women arrested from 2003 to 2007, indicate that women comprised 29% of the property crime arrests versus 18% of the person crimes and 21% of the behavioral crimes.

Between 2003 and 2007, property crime arrests of women have decreased by 24%. See Figure 7.

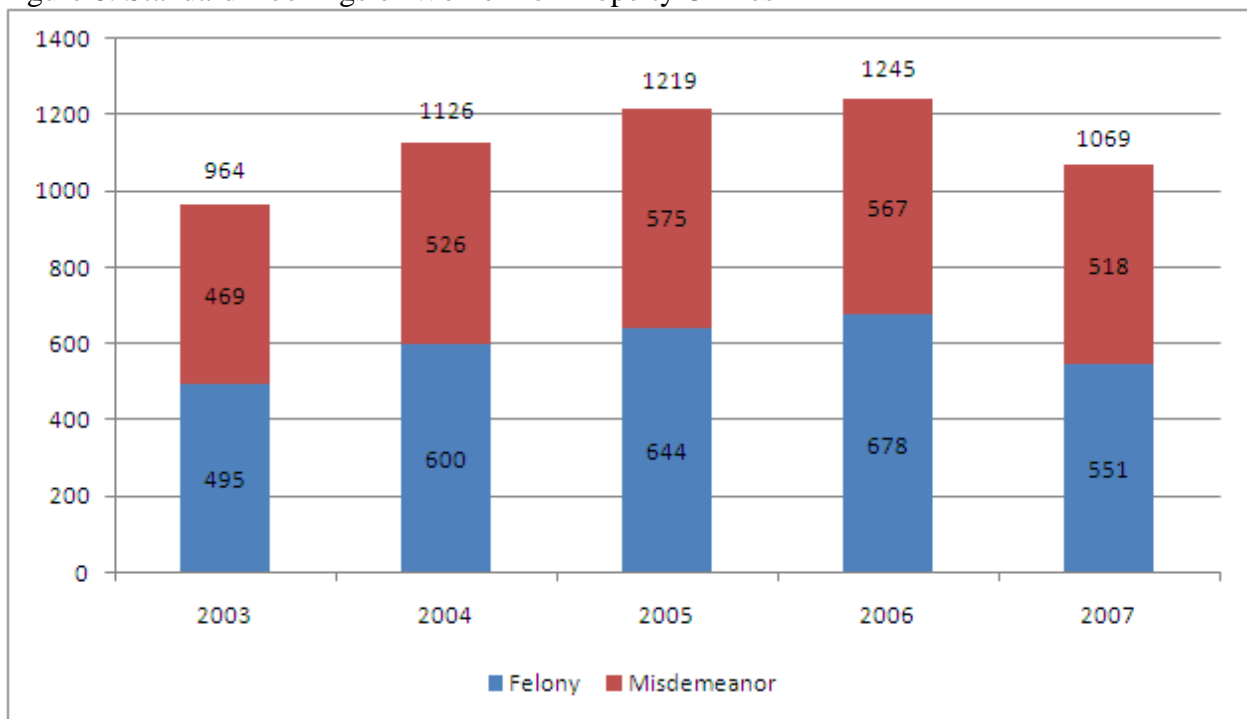
Looking at the specific property crime of identity theft, almost 40% of those arrested for credit card fraud, identity theft, and mail theft were women. Credit card fraud and identity theft are both felony level crimes. Mail theft is a Class A misdemeanor.

Figure 7. Property Crime Arrests: Female Arrestees



Although arrests of women committing property crimes decreased from 2003 to 2007, standard bookings increased 11% for women charged with property crimes (Figure 8). Booking policy, release criteria, and conditions have a large impact on jail bed need.

Figure 8. Standard Bookings of Women for Property Crimes



## **Conclusion**

This report provides information about women who were arrested and incarcerated in Multnomah County and discusses the differences between women and men with respect to crimes committed and experiences in jail.

Key findings of the report include:

- Women comprise 22% of total arrests and have a lower re-arrest rate than men
- Based on age, the time span for men being arrested is longer than for women
- Women are 1.97 times more likely to be arrested for Forgery/Counterfeit than men and 1.61 times more likely to be arrested for Fraud
- 20% of the total bookings were of women
- Even when taking charge level into account, women average fewer days in jail than men
- Compared to men, women are 1.4 times more likely to be released on recog
- Women comprise 13% of the jail capacity
- Women and men both have access to programs while in jail, with women often having more opportunities per capita
- According to the ADAM data, 69.2% of women arrestees tested positive for any NIDA-5 drug (cocaine, marijuana, opiates, methamphetamine, PCP). Of men arrested, 64.5% tested positive.

Further research should explore the background characteristics of women who are arrested and booked into jail to examine risks and additional data on potential release criteria changes would assist in anticipating jail bed needs.

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