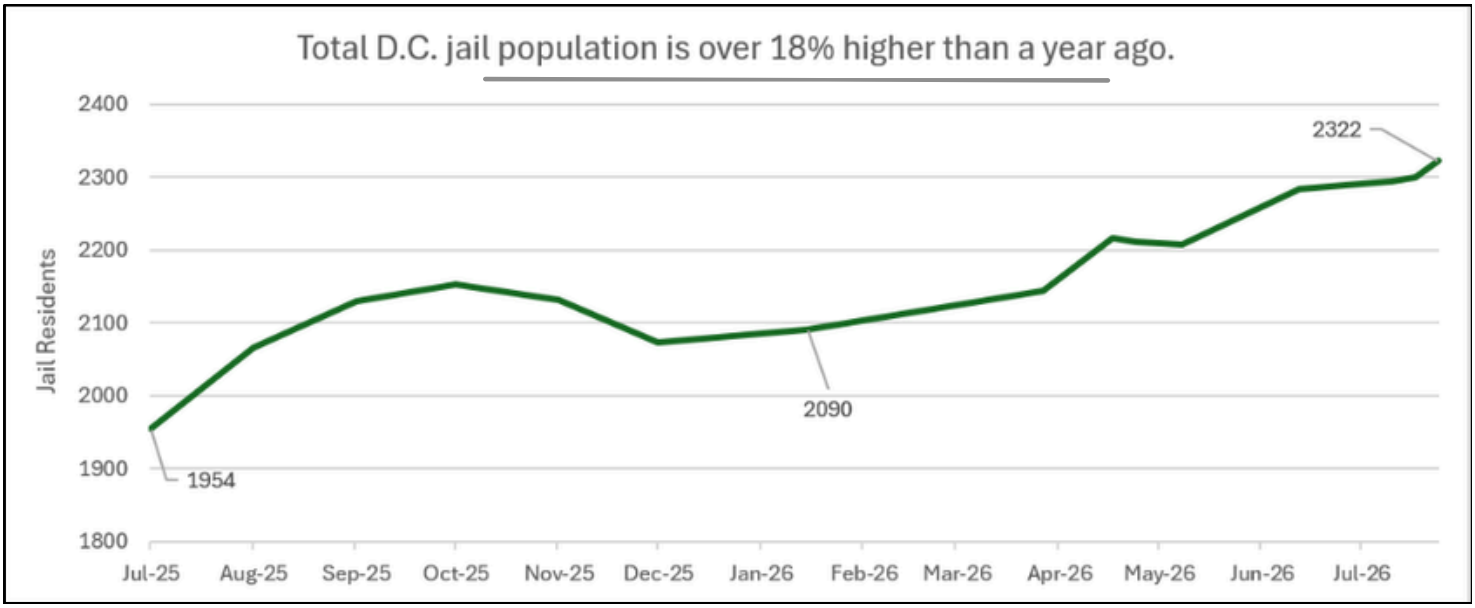
Data Snapshot: Summer 2026 D.C. Jail Population Climbs to Highest Level in Recent Years

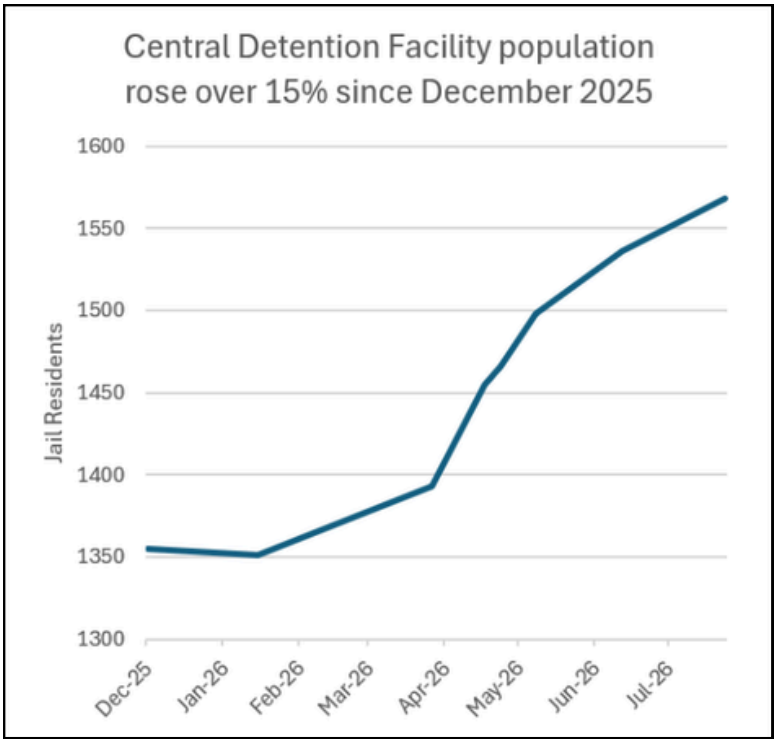
The jail population is over 18% higher than a year ago and has grown by nearly 1,000 people compared to summer 2023. A growing population, driven by longer case processing times, increased prosecutions, and a growing court backlog, increases costs, strains staff, and compromises safety at the jail.

1. The population of the D.C. jail continues to grow throughout 2026.

As CCE reported in May, the number of people in the jail rose rapidly during the federal law enforcement surge in the summer and fall of 2025. After a small decline in late 2025, the population rose again, according to weekly data published by the D.C. Department of Corrections (DOC). The weekly average daily population (ADP) of people in DOC custody rose to 2,322 people for the week ending July 24, 2026, which is over 18% higher than a year ago.



This increase in the jail population occurred over the same period as crime has remained steady or dropped in the District. Compared with the same period in 2025, property crime from January through July 2026 decreased by 29%, while violent crime increased by 2%.

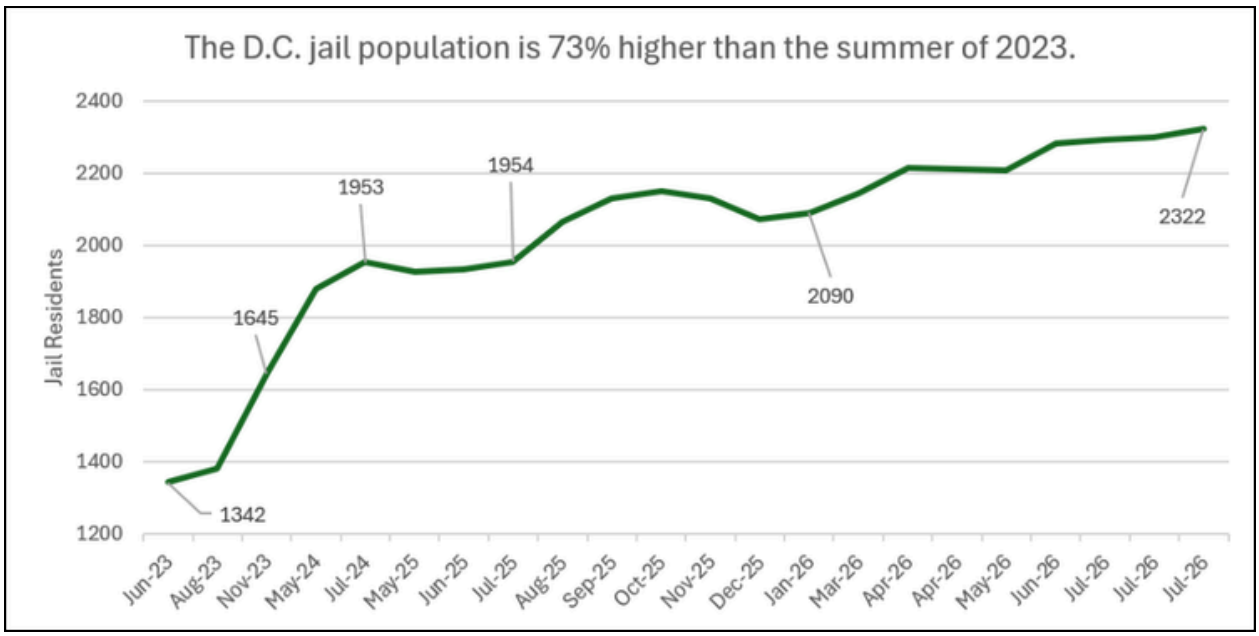


2. The population increase has been concentrated in CDF.

The D.C. jail includes two correctional buildings: the Central Detention Facility (CDF), the larger facility that houses only men and the conditions of which have deteriorated over its half century history; and the Correctional Treatment Facility (CTF), where all women and some men in specialized units are held. In CTF, the population grew sharply through October 2025, when it stood at 748. It has remained mostly in the mid 700's since. At CDF, however, the population rose over 15% so far in 2026: from an average daily population of 1,355 in December 2025 to 1,568 the week ending July 24, 2026.

3. The total population of the D.C. jail is 73% higher than it was the summer of 2023.

The average daily population has grown by 73%—about 1,000 more people housed on any given day—from the summer of 2023 to the summer of 2026. While the population of CDF has grown about 60%, as of the week ending in July 24, 2026 the population of CTF has **more than doubled**, from 362 people in the summer of 2023 to an average daily population of 741 people. Notably, the daily population of the D.C. jail jumped above 2,300 people several times in June and July, and peaked at 2,342 residents on July 21, 2026.



4. What are some impacts of the expanding jail population?

The growing population of the D.C. jail strains resources and staff and costs taxpayers more.

- **Healthcare.** When the jail population exceeds 2,200 residents, as it has since April 2026, the estimated annual cost to D.C. taxpayers of providing healthcare increases by **more than $6.6 million dollars.**



- **Heat and Safety.** Additional people in the jail strain infrastructure, including resources needed to keep staff and residents cool in warm months. With over 30 days at or above 90 degrees this summer, the jail has been hot, with an average daily indoor temperature above 78 degrees in June. Heat is an occupational and environmental hazard that can exacerbate underlying health conditions such as respiratory illnesses, cardiovascular disease, and mental health. With cooling capacity stretched by more occupied units, staff and residents often rely on fans and ice for limited relief during extreme heat.



- **Overtime.** According to a July report from the Office of the D.C. Auditor, DOC is currently understaffed, with "a two and a half to one gap between the number of staff needed to fill all 24/7 operational posts (1,762) and the number now employed (704)." A larger jail population drives the need for staff and a reliance on overtime to fill staffing gaps, and in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025, DOC spent **over $30 million** on overtime to fill required operational posts.



If D.C.'s jail population continues to grow, the District will need to spend millions of additional dollars to keep residents and staff safe and ensure constitutional standards related to food and healthcare. With a flat operating budget between FY26 and FY27, this could mean DOC has fewer resources available for programs and services. CCE and the District Task Force on Jails & Justice have made multiple recommendations on ways to safely reduce the number of jail residents.

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