

MARCH 2022

# GREENE COUNTY, GA JAIL TRENDS

**RURAL JAILS  
RESEARCH HUB**  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

The University of Georgia, in partnership with the Greene County Sheriff's Office, examined data on jail bookings between January 2019 and June 2020 to understand the jail trends in Greene County, including why numbers have grown in recent years. The results from this partnership are below. This fact sheet presents information related to the charges for people entering jail in Greene County and the length of their stays. It can be used to learn more about local jail incarceration and talk about potential options for changes in policy and the community.

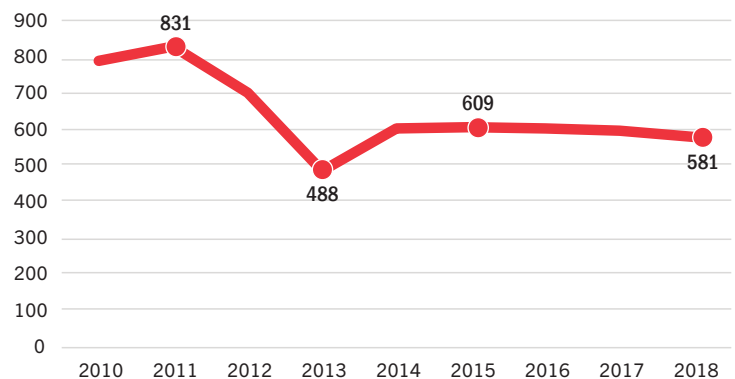
## TOP FINDINGS

- ✓ Nearly 40% of people booked into the Greene County Jail between January 2019 and June 2020 were charged with traffic or motor vehicle-related charges. Many of these bookings were not for dangerous driving, but rather for license suspensions that stemmed from unpaid fines.
- ✓ Overall, most booking charges fell into three broad categories: traffic or motor vehicle-related (38%), drug-related (16%), and probation or parole violations (8%). The three most frequent specific charges were DUI (11%), probation violations (9%), and driving with a suspended license (7%). Most of these charges are nonviolent.
- ✓ African Americans were over-represented in the Greene County Jail bookings at more than double their percentage in the county population.

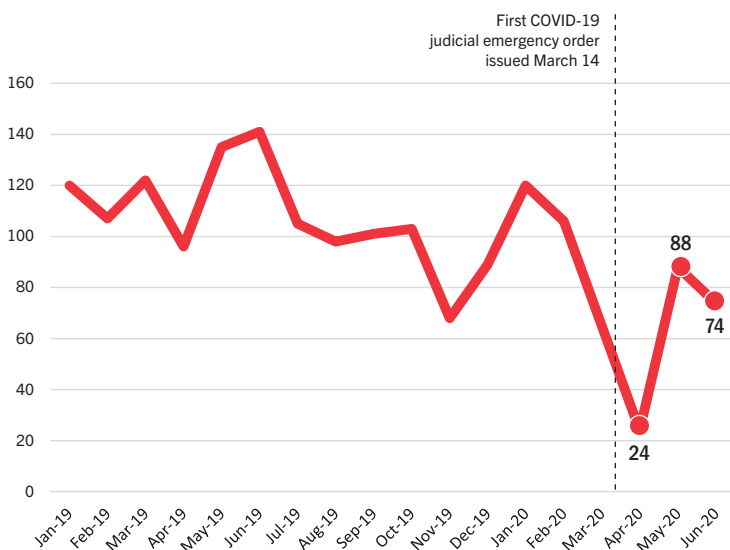
## THE INCARCERATION RATE HAS INCREASED SINCE 2013.

From 1970 to 2010, the jail incarceration rate in Greene County increased by 669% from 103 per 100,000 people to 800 per 100,000 people (not shown). After a drop between 2011 and 2013, the jail incarceration rate increased again and has remained steady. The 2018 rate was 581 per 100,000 people, which is 1.4 times higher than the Georgia rate of 422.

**JAIL INCARCERATION RATE PER 100,000: 2010-2018**



**MONTHLY BOOKINGS**



## JAIL BOOKINGS DECREASED BY 25% AT THE BEGINNING OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC BUT INCREASED IN MID-2020.

In an average month in 2019, 107 people were booked into the Greene County Jail. During the first six months of 2020, at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, bookings dropped by 25%, to 80 bookings on average per month.

In April 2020, there were only 24 total bookings, of which 14 were for misdemeanors and eight were for felonies. There were no bookings for probation or parole violations in April 2020. Bookings increased again in May (88) and June (74) of 2020.

# BOOKING TRENDS



**JANUARY 2019–JUNE 2020**

## NUMBER OF CHARGES PER BOOKING

One Charge

**57%**

Two Charges

**20%**

Three Charges

**11%**

Four or More Charges

**12%**

## JAIL BOOKINGS FOR MINOR INFRACTIONS SAW LONGER AVERAGE LENGTHS OF STAY.

About 41% of people booked stayed less than one day, and 78% of all those booked stayed seven days or fewer in jail. On average, people charged with DUI stayed two days, while those charged with driving with a suspended license stayed four days.\* For failure to appear, people stayed 15 days on average, though the median length of stay was three days. People held for other agencies stayed for 14 days on average. The average length of stay for probation or parole violations was 11 days.\*\*

*\* Georgia law requires a mandatory minimum two-day jail sentence for a first charge of driving with a suspended license and a 10-day mandatory minimum for second and subsequent charges.*

*\*\* In Georgia, jail stays due to probation or parole violations are influenced by set periods of time as a consequence for violations and by barriers to complying with conditions of probation or parole, such as fees imposed on people on probation.*



## TOP 5 BOOKING CHARGES



**#1**

**Traffic or Motor  
Vehicle-Related**



**#2**

**Drug-Related**



**#3**

**Probation or  
Parole Violations**



**#4**

**Assault/  
Battery**



**#5**

**Theft**

## MOST JAIL BOOKINGS WERE FOR NONVIOLENT CHARGES.

The most common charge categories were traffic or motor vehicle-related (38%),\* drug-related (16%),\*\* and probation or parole violations (8%). This is in line with the most frequent charge categories across all seven counties included in the Rural Jails Research Hub.

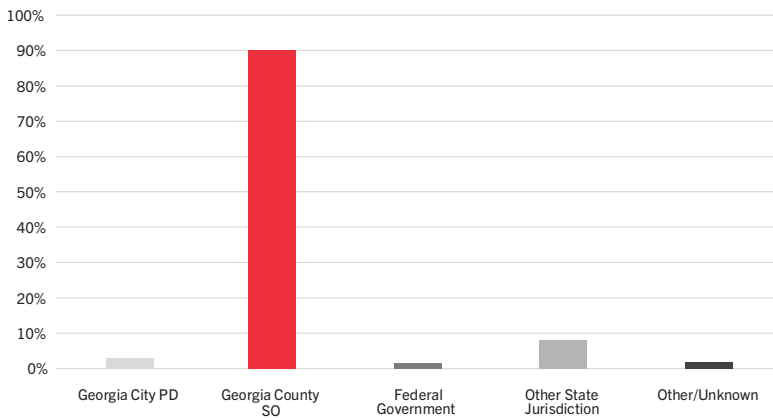
The most frequent top (most serious) charges were DUI (11%), probation violations (9%), driving with a suspended license (7%), and failure to appear (6%).

The most common top drug-related charge was possession of marijuana — less than one ounce (2%). With some exceptions, these are nonviolent charges.

*\* Note that the category for traffic or motor vehicle-related is very broad and includes everything from seat belt violations to vehicular homicide.*

*\*\* Many drug-related charges are for possession, and some are for trafficking.*

### HOLDS FOR OTHER AGENCIES



PD = Police Department • SO = Sheriff's Office

### MORE THAN 10% OF JAIL BOOKINGS WERE HOLDS FOR OTHER AGENCIES.

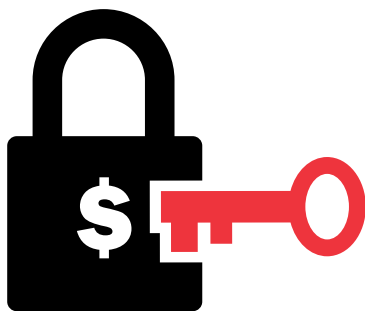
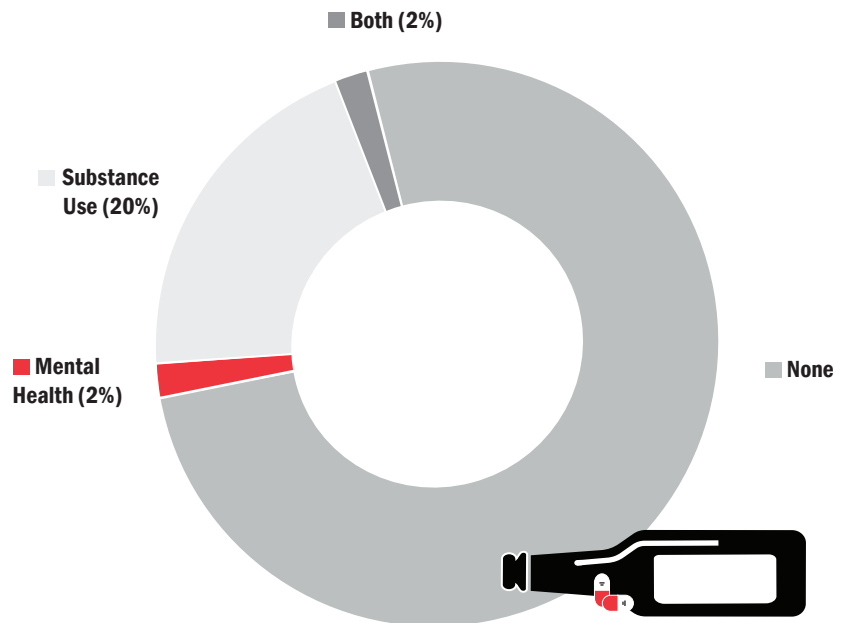
Out of 1,762 bookings, 181 were people arrested by or on behalf of other agencies. Of these holds, 90% were for sheriffs or jails in other Georgia counties, 4% were for Georgia cities, 7% were for prison agencies from other states, 2% were for federal government agencies, and 2% were for other jurisdictions.

Of those housed for other counties, the highest percentage (10%) was for Clarke County, which has its own jail.

*"Hold" refers to a person detained in a local county jail under the jurisdiction of another agency, such as another county, state corrections, or a federal agency.*

**JAIL STAFF FLAGGED ONE-FIFTH (20%) OF PEOPLE BOOKED AS HAVING A SUBSTANCE USE ISSUE, ANOTHER 2% AS HAVING A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION, AND ANOTHER 2% AS HAVING BOTH A SUBSTANCE USE ISSUE AND A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION.\***

*\* This is likely an underestimate as medical data were not available.*



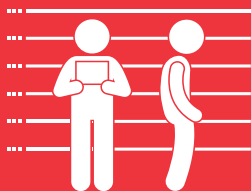
Bond amounts imposed ranged from **\$113** to **\$150,000**, with a median bond of **\$1,540**.

### 34% OF ALL PEOPLE BOOKED WERE DENIED BOND OR HAD BOND REVOKED. MEDIAN BOND AMOUNTS WERE AROUND \$1,000 FOR NONVIOLENT TOP CHARGES.

Out of all bookings, one-third (34%) were held without bond, either because they were initially denied bond or had bond revoked (for example, for failure to comply with pretrial release conditions).

Aside from probation or parole violations, people in jail without bond were most commonly held for sex offense charges (16%), drug-related charges (10%), or for charges related to navigating criminal procedural requirements (10%). Among the most common top charges for those granted bond, the median bond amount was \$1,273 for DUI, \$938 for driving with a suspended license, and \$990 for failure to appear.

# DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS



**JANUARY 2019–JUNE 2020**

## WOMEN MADE UP NEARLY ONE-FIFTH OF JAIL BOOKINGS.

19% of bookings were women. The most frequent top charges were similar for both men and women, although failure to appear was somewhat higher for women (8%) than for men (5%), while driving with a suspended license was slightly more common for men (8%) than women (6%).

Overall, the number of women in jail in Georgia increased 23-fold from 1980 to 2015. As of 2019, 15% of people in Georgia jails were women.

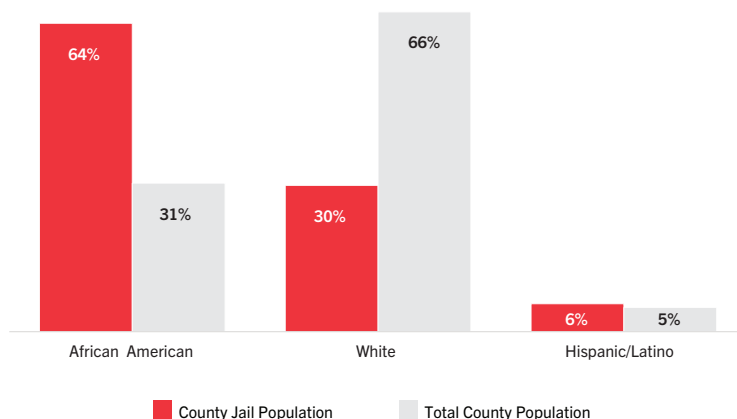


### GREENE COUNTY JAIL BOOKINGS BY SEX

	Female	Male
Number	<b>329</b>	<b>1,433</b>
Percent	<b>19%</b>	<b>81%</b>

## TWO-THIRDS OF PEOPLE BOOKED IN THE GREENE COUNTY JAIL WERE AFRICAN AMERICAN. THIS IS MORE THAN DOUBLE THE PROPORTION OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE GENERAL COUNTY POPULATION.

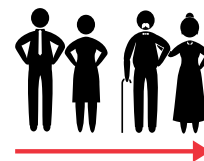
### RACIAL DEMOGRAPHICS OF GREENE COUNTY JAIL COMPARED TO TOTAL COUNTY POPULATION



African Americans were over-represented in jail bookings (64%) compared to the percentage of African Americans residing in Greene County (31%).

## THE AVERAGE AGE OF PEOPLE BOOKED WAS 34 YEARS OLD. AGES RANGED FROM 17 TO 81 YEARS OLD.

About one-quarter of all bookings were young adults between the ages of 17 and 26. The most common top charges for this age group were probation violations (10%), driving with a suspended license (7%), and DUI (5%).



Data: This fact sheet uses data provided by the Greene County Sheriff's Office for January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020 and is supplemented by historical data from the Vera Institute of Justice Incarceration Trends Dataset, available on GitHub at <https://github.com/vera-institute/incarceration-trends> and the Bureau of Justice Statistics Census of Jails, 2005-2019 Statistical Tables available at <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/census-jails-2005-2019-statistical-tables>. The UGA research team requested data from each county sheriff using a list of desired variables (including demographics, length of stay, and charges) and accepted the data that were provided.

Acknowledgments: The UGA Rural Jails Research Hub (RJRH) is a collaboration between the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government, the Franklin College of Arts & Sciences—Sociology Department, and the School of Social Work. This fact sheet was made possible by grant funding from the Vera Institute of Justice and Arnold Ventures. Analyses were performed by the RJRH faculty and graduate student collaborators: Sarah Shannon, Beverly Johnson, Orion Mowbray, Holly Lynde, Oluwayomi Paseda, and Amairini Sanchez. Many thanks to Guthrie Armstrong, Anthony Potts, and Caroline Schneider for research support. This fact sheet was created by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government Office of Communications.

Credits: Copyright University of Georgia 2022. All rights reserved. An electronic version of this report is posted on the UGA Rural Jails Research Hub website at <https://research.franklin.uga.edu/rural-jails-research/>.

For questions, contact Sarah Shannon at [sshannon@uga.edu](mailto:sshannon@uga.edu).