

Ask the Chief.....

How many people are in the Lake County jail on an average day?

Currently we average about 385 inmates in the Lake County jail per day. About 80 are women, and 305 are men. 95% of these inmates are sentenced via the courts in Lake County, or awaiting trial in a Lake County court. Historically, 70% of the prisoner population is Caucasian, 27% is African-American, and 3% are Hispanic. Since the current jail opened in 1990, the jail population has risen 350%, and the seriousness of the offenders held has continued to increase.

When the current jail opened in 1990 about 100 Lake County court inmates (15 of which were women) held in the "old" jail were brought over to the "new" jail. Since the jail was designed to hold about 350 inmates, we rented out jail beds to the United States Marshal Service (federal inmates), and to neighboring counties. The revenue generated helped pay the cost of the jail construction over the next 20 years.

By 1994 the Lake County inmate population (those charged or sentenced under the Lake County courts) rose to 203 inmates a day. By 2006, that number increased to 310 inmates per day and we were no longer renting bed space to out-of-county inmates. By 2012 the population reached 348 inmates per day, and we were no longer renting bed space to the United States Marshal Service. Given the fact that we were exceeding the number of beds originally built into the jail in 1990, we received permission by the State to double-bunk the cells, and thus increased our bed space by about 70 more beds.

Here are two things that are important to note about the jail population. First, when we opened in 1990 we had 15 female inmates. Today, that number has averages at about 80 female inmates a day, and has at time exceeded 100. Secondly, when we first opened about 2/3 of the population were misdemeanor charges, and 1/3 felons. Today the ratio has reversed and 2/3 of our inmate population are felons (more serious offenders).

We are fortunate here in our County to have a group of Corrections Officers, supervisors, medical staff, mental health staff, kitchen staff, drug and alcohol treatment staff, court officers, clerical division, and community volunteers that are the finest in the nation in handling our needs and responsibilities that come with housing the inmate population. Capt. Cynthia Brooks, the jail administrator, and her staff deserve great credit for their professionalism and dedication!

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