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Mortality in State and Federal Prisons, 2001–2018 – Statistical Tables

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Annotation

This report presents detailed statistical tables on mortality in state and federal prisons. It provides information on cause of death; decedent characteristics, and mortality rates of inmate populations.

Abstract

This report presents detailed statistical tables on mortality in state and federal prisons. It provides information on cause of death; decedent characteristics, such as age, gender, and race or ethnicity; and mortality rates of inmate populations, compared to the general U.S. adult population. The report is based on BJS's annual Mortality in Correctional Institutions data collection, which obtains information on persons who died while in the physical custody of state departments of corrections.

Highlights

- In 2018, the number of deaths (4,135 prisoners) and the mortality rate (344 deaths per 100,000 prisoners) in state prisons were the highest since the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) began collecting mortality data from state prisons in 2001.

- The number of state prisoners who committed suicide increased 20% from 2017 (259) to 2018 (311), marking the highest number of suicides that BJS has recorded in 18 years of collecting mortality data.
- State prisoners had a lower overall mortality rate (319 per 100,000) than did adult U.S. residents (419 per 100,000) in 2018 when the data were adjusted for differences in age, sex, and race or ethnicity between the two populations.
- State prisoners in 2018 were slightly more likely to die of cancer, liver disease, and suicide and more than twice as likely to die from homicide than the adjusted population of adult U.S. residents.

Additional Details

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