

Race and Criminal Justice in Monroe County, Indiana: A Long-Range Perspective

**Reported by:
Monroe County Branch, NAACP
and the
Racial Justice Task Force, Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington**

**November 2, 2018
PDP recommendations updated November 5, 2019**

**Prepared by:
Guy Loftman, J.D., B.A. guy@loftmanlaw.com
and
Ruth Aydt, M.C.S., B.A. aydt@icloud.com**

Full report with all exhibits and appendices can be found at:
<http://UUbloomington.org/race-and-criminal-justice>

Executive Summary

Citizens have sought Monroe County incarceration data for various years from 1997 through 2017. Volunteers tracked individual cases from the 1997 and 2000 jail bookings. Public officials reported data in the aggregate for 2011, 2013, and 2017. This report gathers together the information for the five years studied to offer a long-range perspective on racial justice.

Blacks were far more likely to be incarcerated than would be expected by their population as Monroe County residents in each of the five years studied since 1997. This disparity may or may not be due to racial bias.

Incarceration Data	Blacks as % of Total	Blacks as % of County Population	Disparity = (% of Total) / (% of County Population)
2017 Jail Population	15.7%	3.6%	4.4
2017 Prison Population	27.0%	3.6%	7.5
2013 Jail Population	13.3%	3.4%	3.9
2011 Jail Population	13.1%	3.4%	3.8
2000 Jail Bookings	9.5%	3.0%	3.2
1997 Jail Bookings	10.74%	3.0%	3.6

Relative incarceration periods by race were variable in the five years examined since 1997.

Incarceration Data	Blacks	Whites
2017 Jail; Average length of stay	11 days	13 days
2017 Prison; Average sentence of those incarcerated	19 years	23 years
2013 Jail; Average length of stay	30 days	17 days
2011 Jail; Average length of stay	30 days	14 days
2000 Bookings; Average executed sentence - misdemeanors & D felonies	114 days	46 days
1997 Bookings; Average executed sentence - misdemeanors & D felonies	34 days	59 days

The detailed data gathered for 2000 and 1997 allowed some insights into possible sources of disparity. The more recent aggregate reporting provided by public officials offers few such insights. **The Monroe County Criminal Justice System, particularly the courts and prosecutor, should publish detailed data in a format that can be easily analyzed by the public.** The Summary and Recommendations section of this report makes specific data requests, such as: circumstances leading to arrests, re-arrests while charges are pending, Pretrial Diversion Program outcomes, prior charges, executed portions of sentences, and probation outcomes.

Pretrial Diversion Program (PDP) data shows disparity in filings for marijuana and theft charges, as discussed in the Summary and Recommendations section. PDP materials make participation seem dependent on ability to pay. Three policy changes should be implemented in 2019:

- **PDP must be available without respect to ability to pay and advertised as such.**
- **No misdemeanor marijuana-related charges should be pursued.**
- **Merchants should be encouraged to adopt race-neutral, randomized surveillance systems.**