

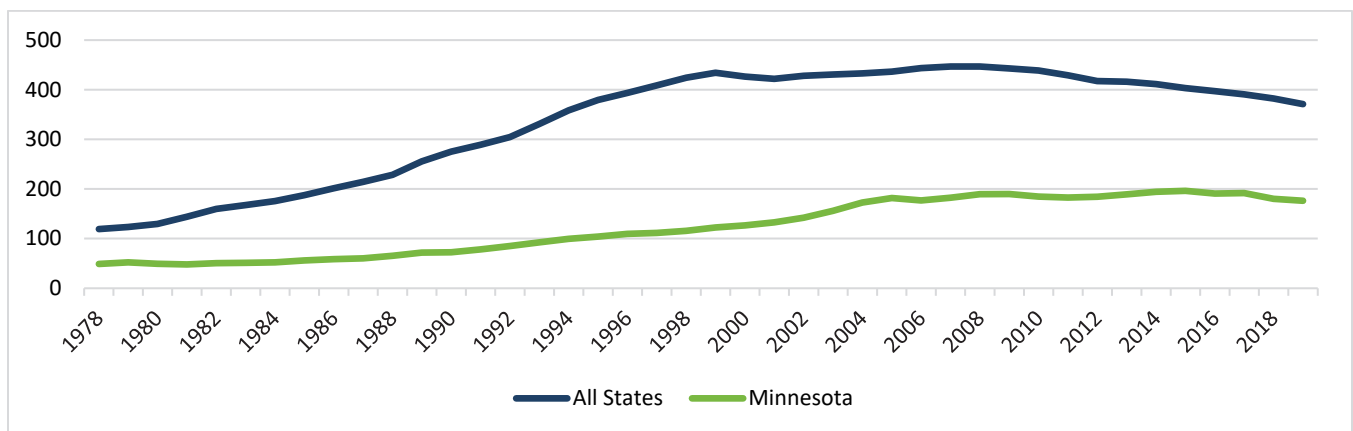
Staff Information Paper

**2019 Imprisonment Rates, Bureau of Justice Statistics**

October 22, 2020

In the first 39 years the Guidelines have been in effect—from 1980 through 2019—Minnesota has ranked nationally among the states with the lowest imprisonment rates. In 2019, Minnesota was fourth-lowest.<sup>1</sup> Minnesota’s 2019 rate—176 prisoners per 100,000 residents, down from a rate of 180 in 2018—returned Minnesota to an imprisonment rate last seen in 2004 (Figure 1).<sup>2</sup> Minnesota joined 39 other states with falling imprisonment rates from 2018 to 2019, causing the U.S. state imprisonment rate to fall by 2.7 per cent.<sup>3</sup> Minnesota’s imprisonment rate continues to be less than half the national state imprisonment rate.<sup>4</sup>

Figure 1. Imprisonment Rate per 100,000 Residents, 1978–2019



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

<sup>1</sup> Minnesota had the 5th-lowest imprisonment rate in 2017; the 4th-lowest in 2014, 2018, & 2019; and the 1st-, 2nd-, or 3rd-lowest in the other years. E. Ann Carson, “Imprisonment Rate of Sentenced Prisoners under the Jurisdiction of State or Federal Correctional Authorities per 100,000 U.S. Residents, Dec. 31, 1978–2018” (Bureau of Justice Statistics, Dec. 9, 2019) (retrieved Oct. 22, 2020, at [http://www.bjs.gov/nps/resources/documents/QT\\_imprisonment%20rate\\_total.xlsx](http://www.bjs.gov/nps/resources/documents/QT_imprisonment%20rate_total.xlsx)); E. Ann Carson, “Prisoners in 2019” (NCJ 255115) (Bureau of Justice Statistics, Oct. 2020), Table 7 (retrieved Oct. 22, 2020, at <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/p19.pdf>).

<sup>2</sup> Minnesota’s 2004 imprisonment rate was 174 per 100,000. For purposes of comparison, its 1980 rate was 49 per 100,000.

<sup>3</sup> “Prisoners in 2019,” tables 5 & 7.

<sup>4</sup> The 2019 imprisonment rate for all states was 371 prisoners per 100,000 U.S. residents. Neither rate includes inmates of federal prisons or local correctional facilities. “Prisoners in 2019,” Table 5.