

Washington Rural Jails Network

A Community-Engaged Research Network



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Grant County Spotlight

Washington Rural Jails Network is a community-engaged project at Washington State University led by the Department of Sociology

Key Facts

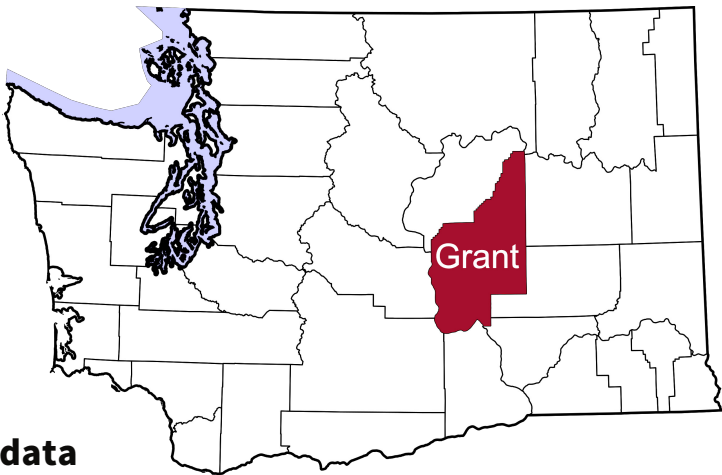
- 1. Failure to Appear was the dominant driver of pretrial incarceration and jail re-entry.
- 2. Assault was a common mechanism for jail entry.
- 3. Some 6 percent of jail admissions were drug-related.

In 2019, the Vera Institute of Justice awarded WSU a grant, funded by Arnold Ventures, to document and understand trends in rural incarceration. Since 2022, National Institute of Justice has funded this work.

The project had several goals:

- Gather and analyze administrative jail data from select rural counties in Washington.
- Build knowledge of specific factors affecting jail population trends.
- Gain perspective of justice-involved people and justice staff via interviews
- Share lessons from research and data analysis with local representatives and stakeholders.

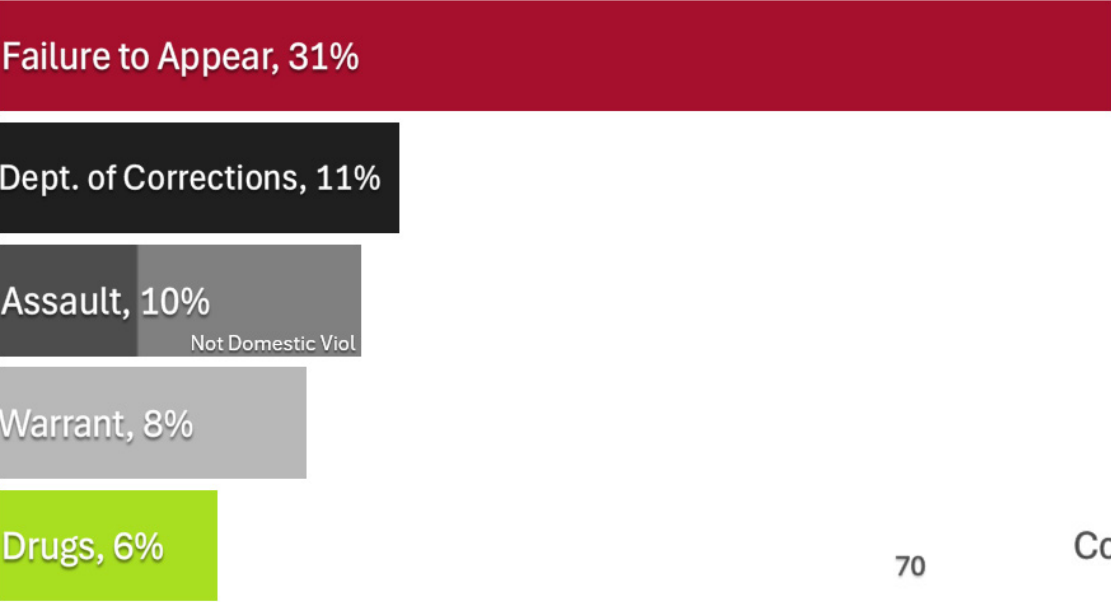
Sheriff’s offices in **Ferry, Grant, Kittitas, Okanogan,** and **Whitman** counties shared jail data for January 2015 to June 2020.



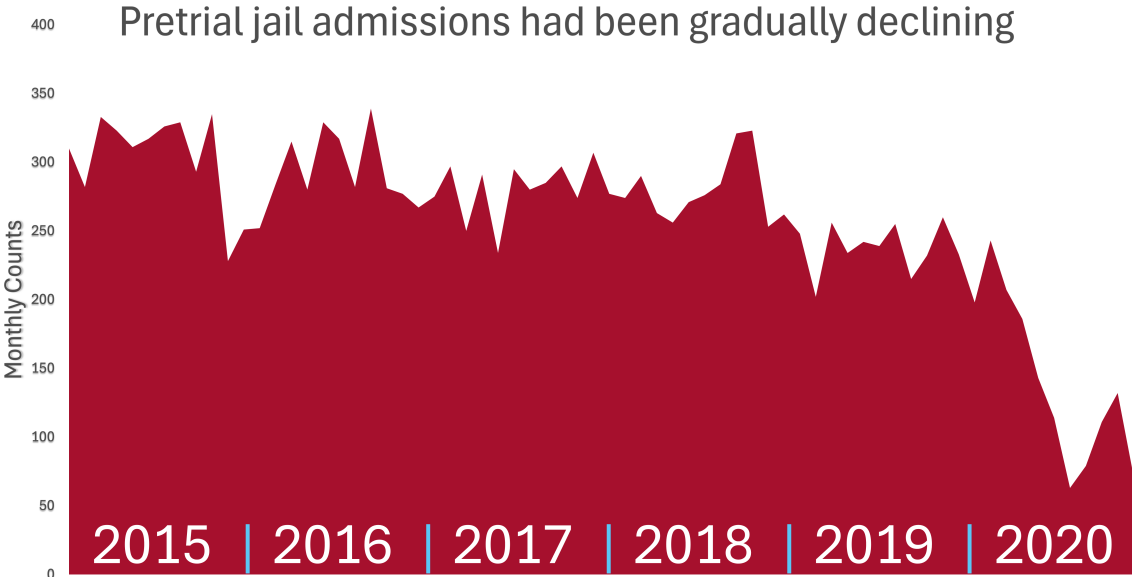
“People that go to jail ... want to have a better life. But when you get in their system deep enough, you can’t get a decent job If you can’t get a decent job, how do you pay to get your license back? If you can’t get a license back, you can’t get a decent job. It is this downward spirral effect that it is really hard to hit the brakes and it is really hard to stop.”

- 32-year-old white man

One in three people were booked into jail pretrial for “Failure to Appear”

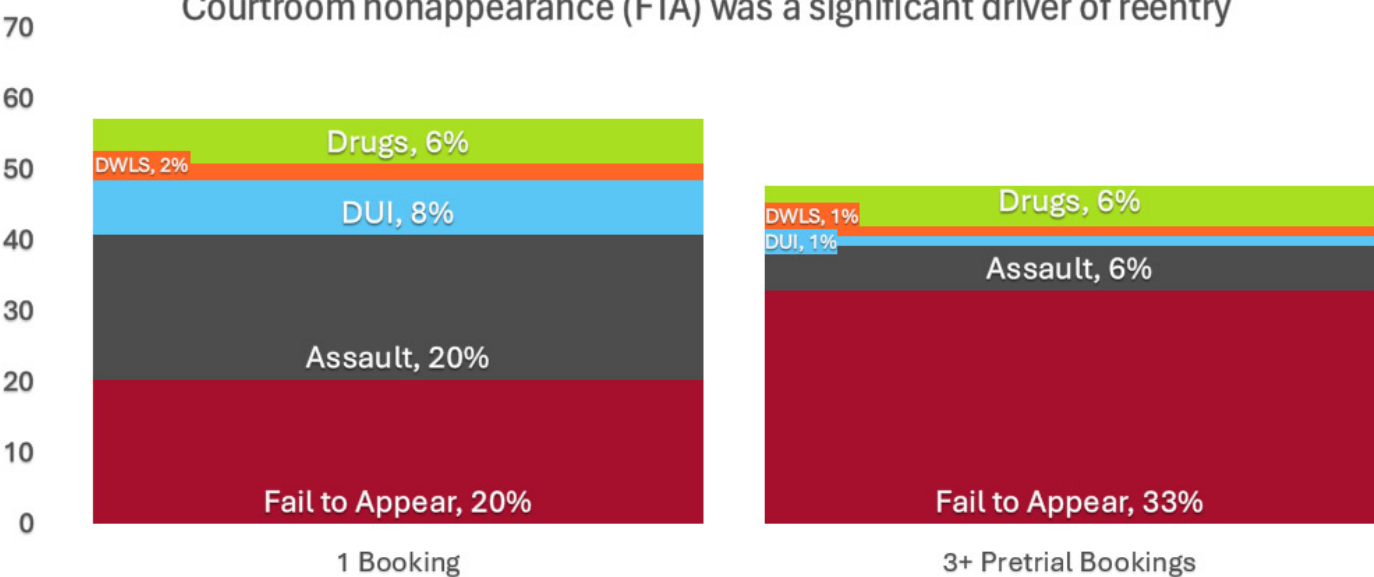


Pretrial jail admissions had been gradually declining



Courtroom nonappearance (FTA) was a significant driver of reentry

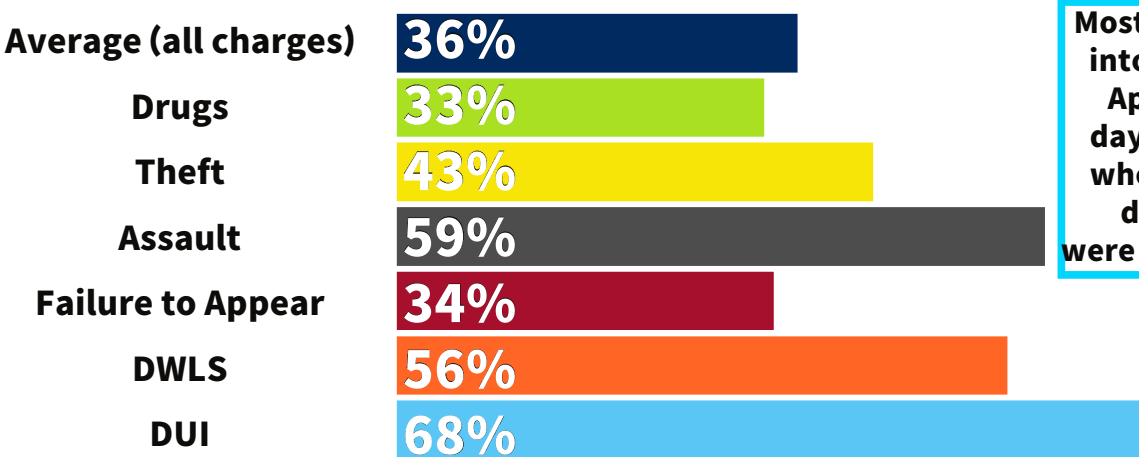
Rural Context:
Rural counties like Grant face resource constraints, staffing shortages; limited health, mental health, and substance treatment services; and scant communication, transportation, and legal infrastructure.



Average # of pretrial days spent in jail by charge



% of people who spend 24 hours or less in jail pretrial by charge



Most people who were booked into jail pretrial for Failure to Appear stayed longer than a day. In contrast, most people who were booked pretrial for driving under the influence were released within 24 hours.

