Adult Female Prison Population
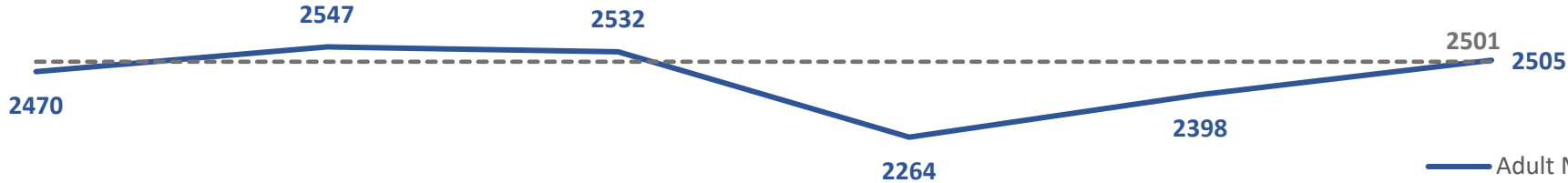## Growth Review
January 5, 2024

Montana Adult Male and Female Prison Population Growth Compared to State Population Growth, From FY2018-FY2023
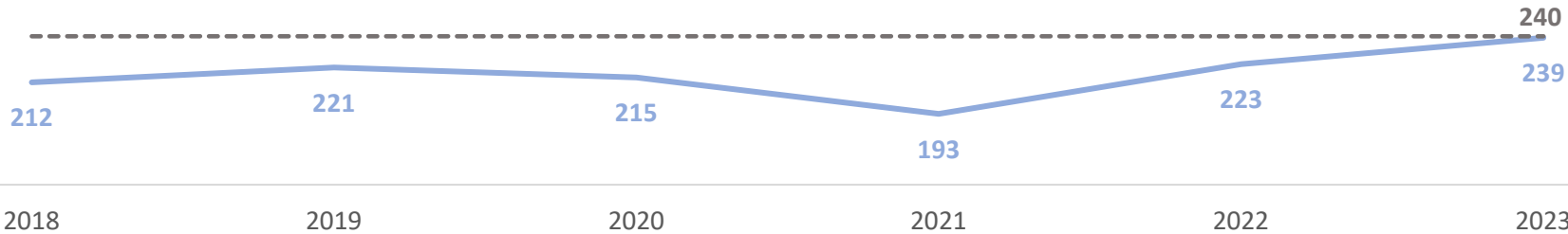
Montana State Population

1,061,818   1,070,123   1,087,075   1,106,227   1,122,867

Montana's general population growth for 2022 was 1.5% (yoy)[1], with an average yearly growth of 1.2% for the previous five years.

The average yearly adult male prison population growth between FY2018 and FY2023[2] was about 3.1%, and **5.2% for the adult female prison population**.

Adult Male Prison Population

2470   2547   2532   2264   2398   2501   2505

— Adult Male Actual ADP

--- Adult Prison Operational Capacity

— Adult Female Actual ADP

Adult Female Prison Population

212   221   215   193   223   240   239

2018   2019   2020   2021   2022   2023

[1]yoy= Year over year, calculation for the percent difference, or growth, in the population between two years.

[2]Average yearly prison population growth was calculated using data from FY2018-FY2020 and FY2022-FY2023. FY2021 yoy growth was excluded from the calculation because of the extreme yoy percentage, due to the effects of COVID.

Data Sources: Adult Average Daily Population for FY 2022 and FY2023, calculated from the Montana Department of Corrections' Offender Management Information System (OMIS), 9/8/2023.
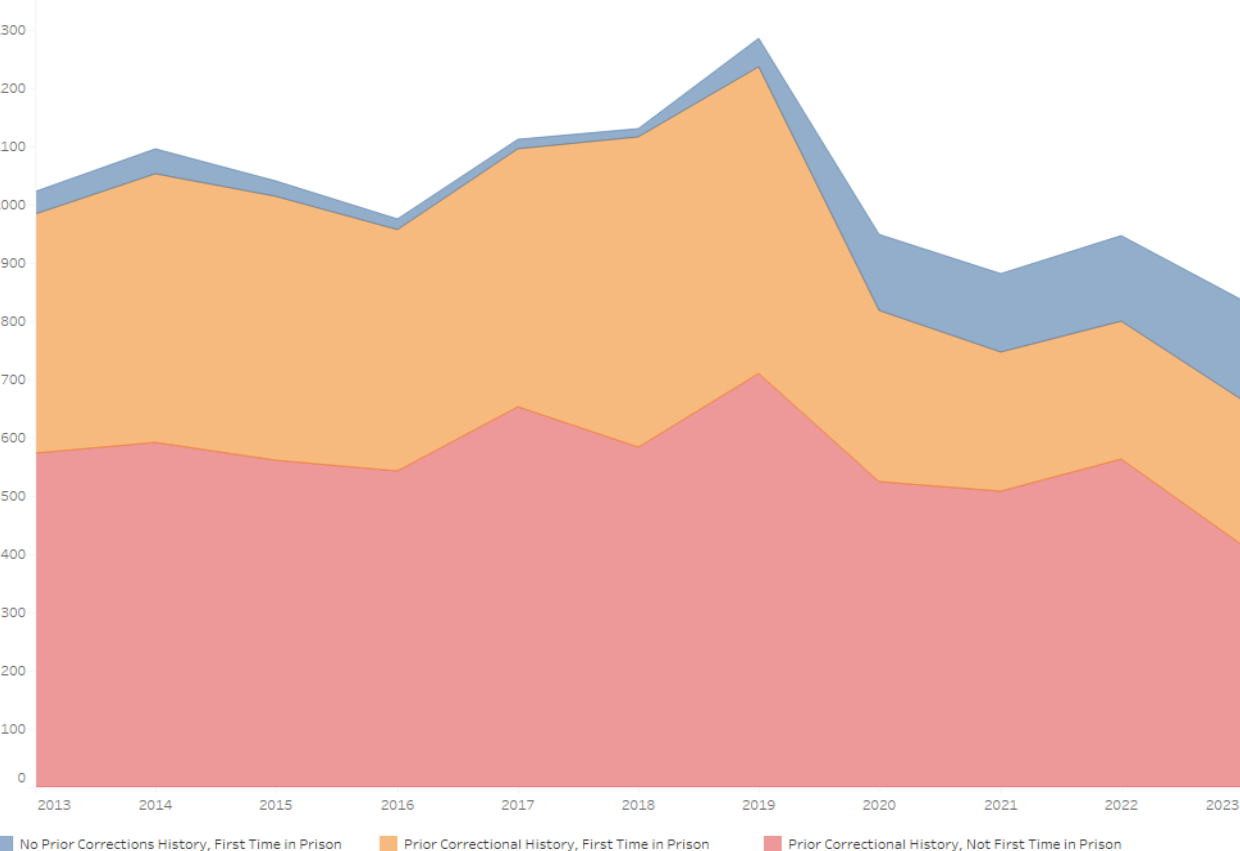
Population total and intercensal tables, Population and Housing Unit Estimates Program, U.S. Census Bureau. Year over year (yoy) represents numeric and percent differences between current year and prior year population. Data accessed from Montana Department of Commerce, Census and Economic Information Center at https://dataportal.mt.gov/t/DOC/views/CEIC_PEP_POPULATION_SFE/Table?%3Aorigin=card_share_link&%3Aembed=y, on 1/4/2024.

Utilizing the data that was used to provide information to the legislative interim committees in December 2023, the DOC took a deeper into that relative to prison admissions for females. As a recap, information was pulled for everyone who admitted to a secure status over the last 10 years, by year, and then separated into cohort groups. The first group were those who had never been in the Montana Department of Corrections' (MT DOC) system before (no probation, no prison, etc.) but were admitted to prison (in blue). The second group were those who had previous history with MT DOC (had been on probation or in an alt-secure status), but their admission to secure status was their first time in prison with the MT DOC (in orange). The third group were those who had a prior history of being in a secure status (prison) with MT DOC at least once before (in red).
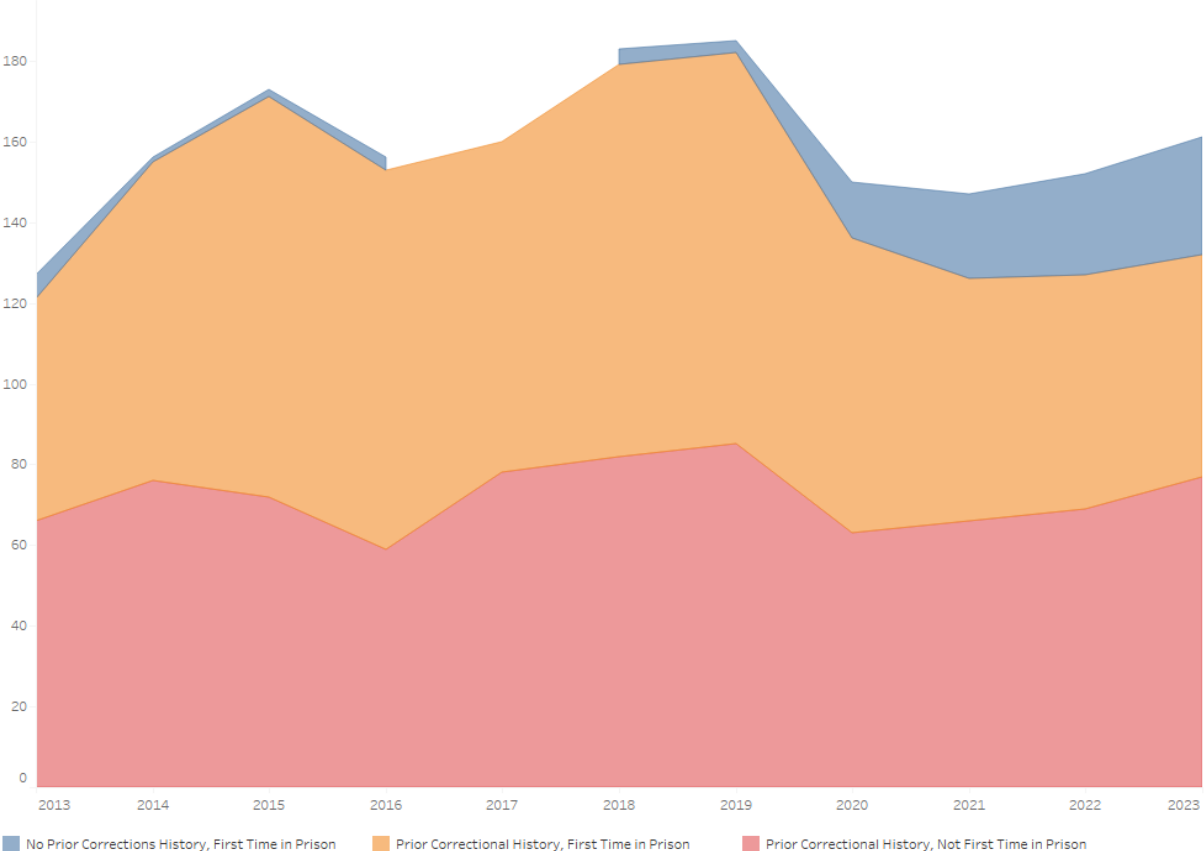
The graphs below show the breakdown of the total secure status admissions by year, by the three cohorts described above, for males and females. For both sexes, the largest proportion of individuals admitted to prison had prior prison history, while those who had no prior MT DOC history and were admitted to prison for the first time made up the smallest proportion of those admitted. The number of admissions for those who had previous experience with MT DOC, but it was their first time in prison has been decreasing since FY2020 for both sexes, but the number admitted to prison with no prior MT DOC history has been increasing since then. Additionally, overall, male admissions to prison appear to be decreasing, **while female admissions are increasing**.

Those with no prior MT DOC history but were admitted to prison for the first time; and those who had prior MT DOC history but were admitted to prison for the first time are the two cohorts examined closer in the following pages.

Number of **Male Admissions** to a Secure Status by Level of Corrections History, by Fiscal Year
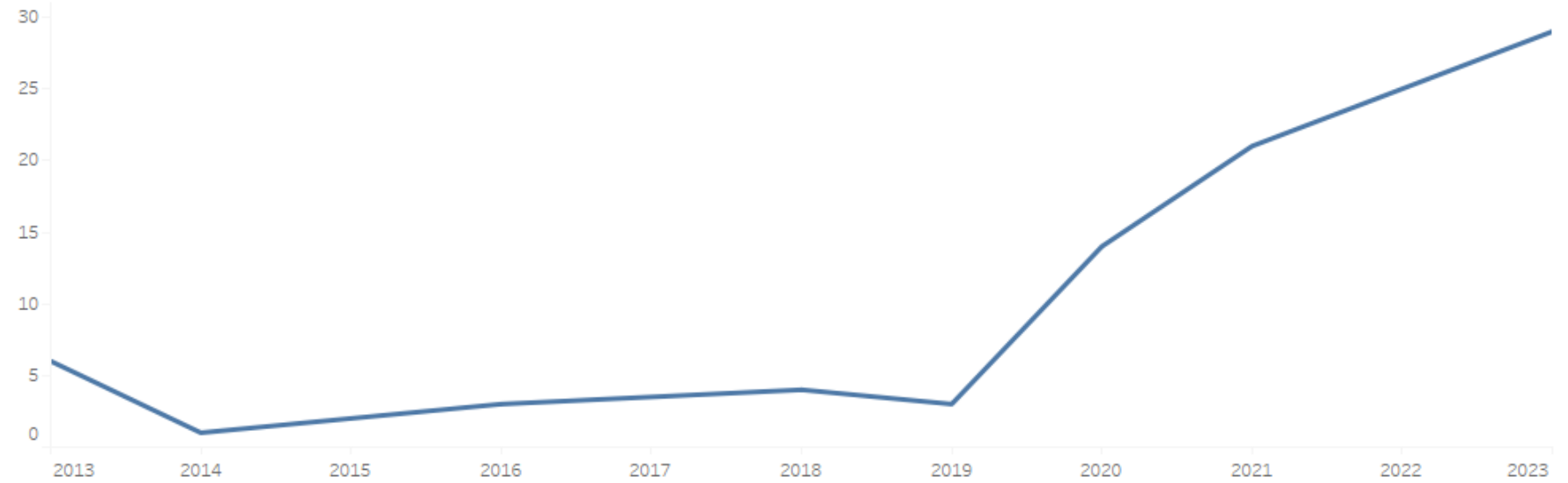
Number of **Female Admissions** to a Secure Status by Level of Corrections History, by Fiscal Year

Legend:
- No Prior Corrections History, First Time in Prison
- Prior Correctional History, First Time in Prison
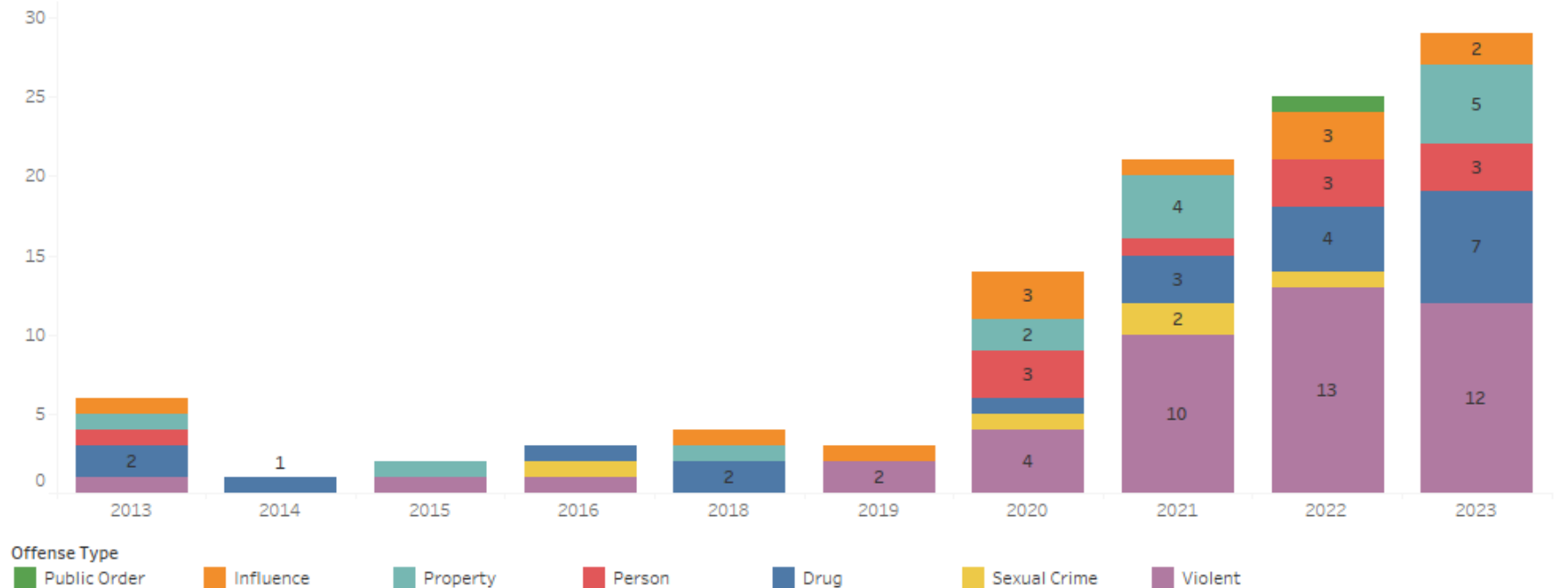- Prior Correctional History, Not First Time in Prison

The top graph shows the number of admissions of females who had no prior history with MT DOC, but were admitted to secure status, by fiscal year. The number of individuals who were admitted to prison stayed steady at under five per fiscal year, until FY2020 when the number almost tripled. Since FY2020, the number admitted has been steadily increasing, unlike the years before FY2019.

The second graph looks at the most serious offense category that individuals were sentenced for. Not only have the number of first time female offenders who were admitted directly to prison increased since FY2019, but and even greater proportion of them have been sentenced with a violent crime.

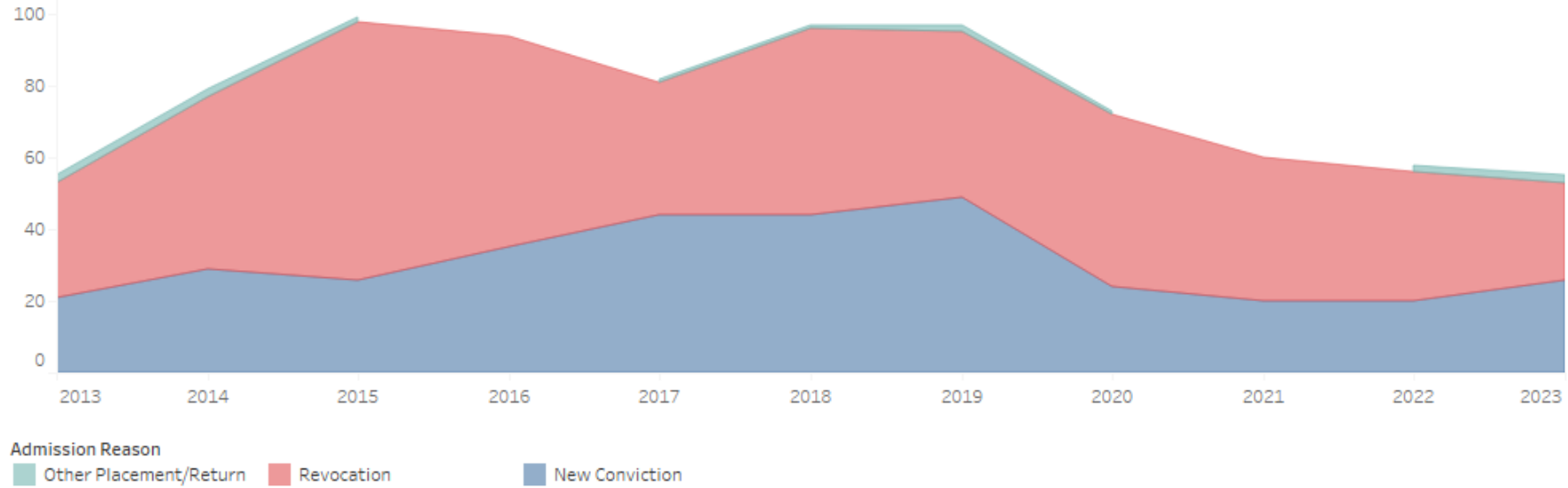Number of First Time Female Offenders Admitted to Prison by Fiscal Year

Number of First Time Female Offenders Admitted to Prison by Most Serious Offense Category, by Fiscal Year

Offense Type
Public Order   Influence   Property   Person   Drug   Sexual Crime   Violent
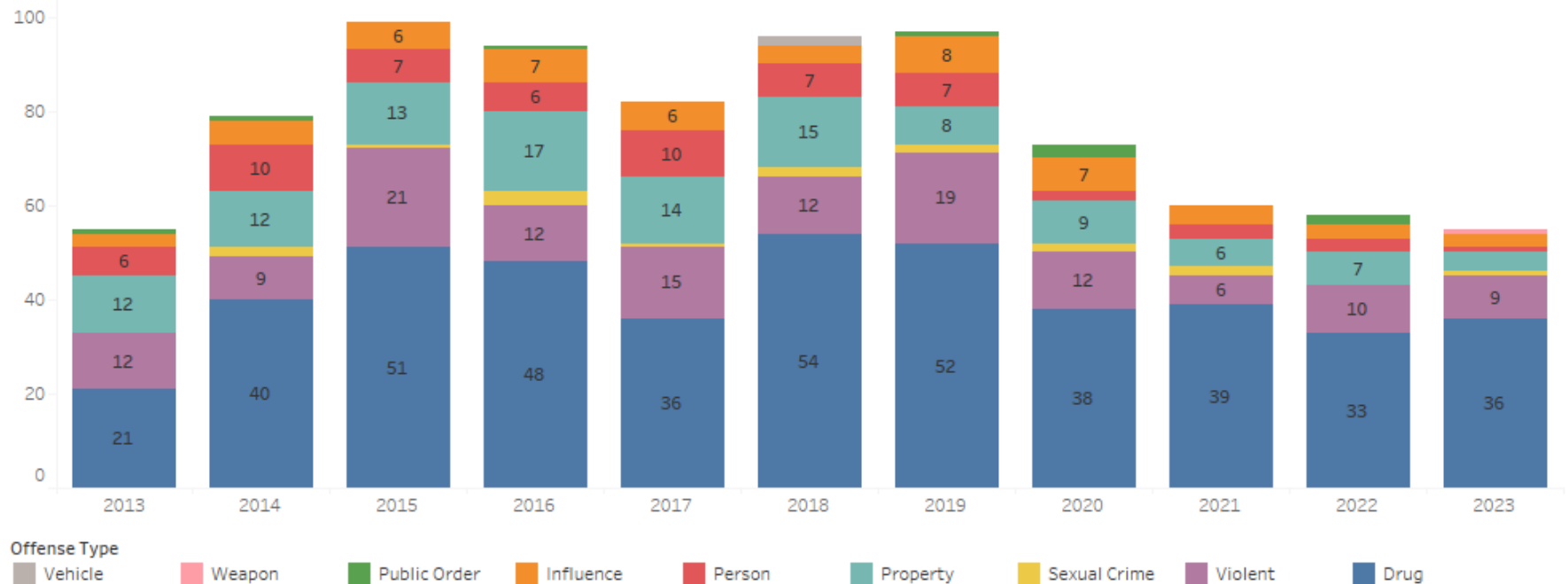
The top graph shows the number of admissions of females who had prior history with MT DOC but were admitted to secure status for the first time, by admission reason and by fiscal year. The number of individuals admitted in this cohort decreased sharply between FY2019 and FY2021 and has been stable since then. Of this cohort, the number who come in on a new conviction and the number who come in due to a revocation do not show a real trend as one reason being the driver of admissions over time. In FY 2023, almost as many were admitted to prison due to a new conviction as were admitted due to a revocation.

The second graph looks at the most serious offense category that females were sentenced for. Across all years, the greatest proportion of those in this cohort had a drug offense type as their most serious offense committed. In fact, in FY2023, over 65% of females in this cohort had a drug offense type as their most serious offense committed.

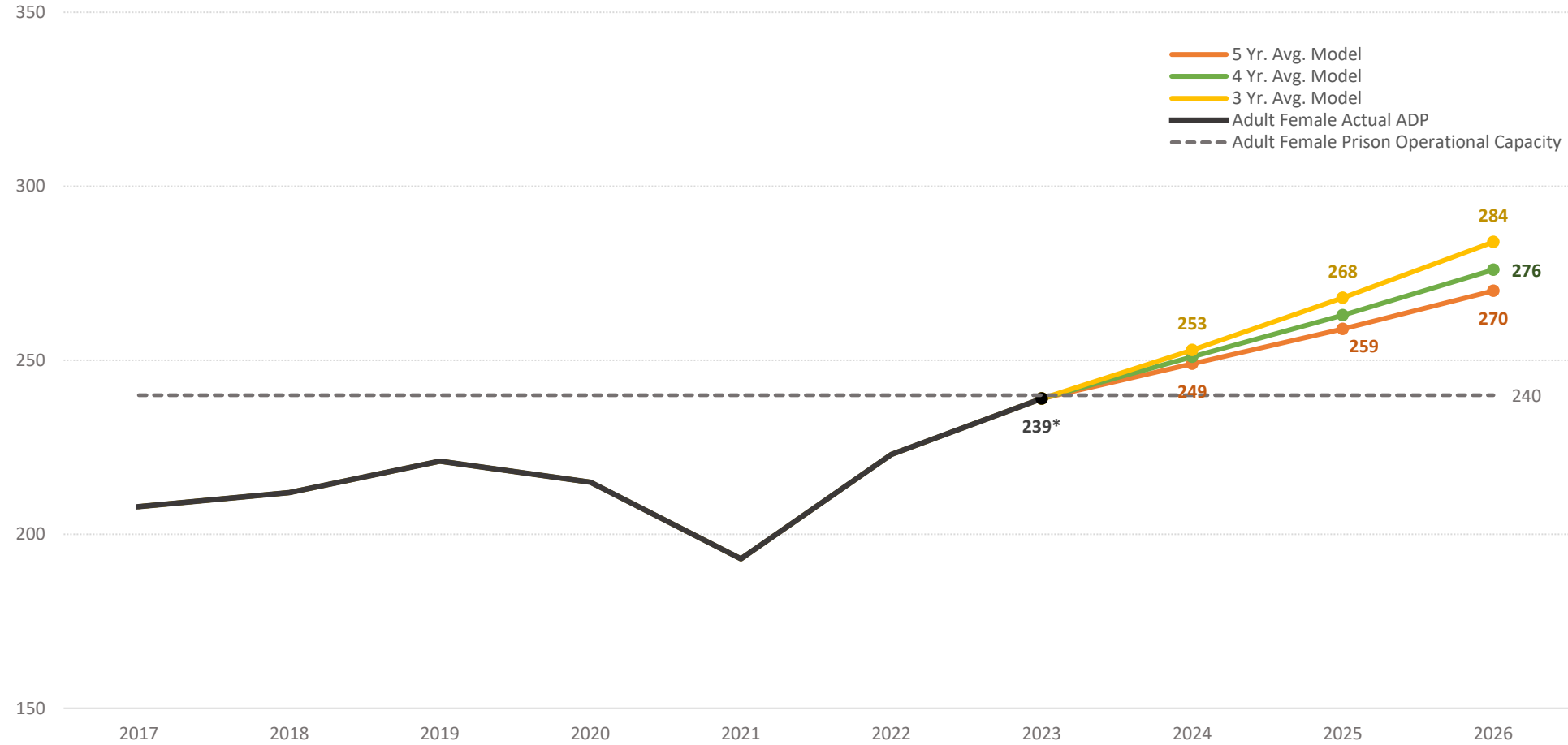Number of Previous Female Offenders Admitted to Prison for the First Time by Admission Reason, by Fiscal Year

Admission Reason
Other Placement/Return   Revocation   New Conviction

Number of Previous Female Offenders Admitted to Prison for the First Time by Most Serious Offense Committed, by Fiscal Year

Offense Type
Vehicle   Weapon   Public Order   Influence   Person   Property   Sexual Crime   Violent   Drug

As the general population of Montana grows and more females are entering the prison system (with a 5.2% growth rate), it is putting a strain on the Montana Women's Prison (MWP), the only female prison facility within the DOC. The FY2023 ADP is already at the operational capacity of 240 for MWP, and it is on track to have an ADP over capacity by the end of the current fiscal year. Most days MWP is already over capacity, as can be seen on the Department's Daily Population Report Dashboard, located here: https://cor.mt.gov/DataStatsContractsPoliciesProcedures/DataPages/Interactive-Dashboards.

Montana Department of Corrections Female Prison Population Projections for FY2024-FY2026

*Due to the extreme effects of COVID-19 on population numbers, FY 2021 data were excluded from the models. Despite this mitigation, the models are still impacted from the influences of COVID in late FY 2020 and early FY 2022 and projections may change as more data becomes available.

Data Source: Average Daily Population (ADP) from Montana Department of Corrections Adult ADP FY2022, FY2023, and FY2024 Population Reports, utilizing data from the Montana Department of Corrections' Offender Management Information System (OMIS).