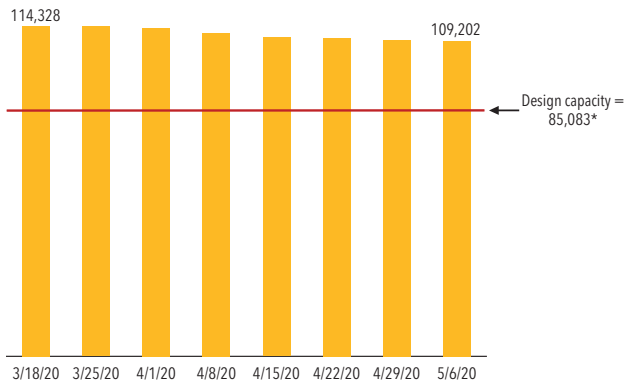




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## California's Prisons Remain Severely Overcrowded During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Number of People Incarcerated in California's 34 State-Owned Prisons



\* Design capacity generally refers to the number of people who could be housed in prisons if the state allowed only one adult per cell and did not double-bunk in dormitories.  
Source: California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and Legislative Analyst's Office

● California has taken steps to slow the spread of COVID-19 in state prisons, including reducing the number of people being held. As a result, the prison population dropped from 114,328 in mid-March to 109,202 on May 6, a decline of 4.5%.

● However, California's prisons remain severely overcrowded. On May 6, prisons statewide were operating at 128% of their combined capacity, and more than a dozen exceeded this level, including Valley State Prison in Madera County (150% of capacity) and Ironwood State Prison in Riverside County (145% of capacity).

● State policymakers can better protect the health of incarcerated adults – over 70% of whom are Black or Latinx – and of prison staff by further reducing overcrowding. Options include accelerating safe releases and reforming state sentencing laws. Downsizing California's costly prison infrastructure would free up state funding for reentry assistance and services that are proven to create safer communities.