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# Safety in Custody Statistics, England and Wales: Deaths in Prison Custody to June 2025 Self-harm and Assaults to March 2025

## Main Points

<b>Number of deaths increased from the previous 12-month period</b>	In the 12 months to June 2025, there were 401 deaths in prison custody, an <b>increase</b> of 30% from 308 deaths in the previous 12 months. Of these, 86 deaths were self-inflicted, a <b>decrease</b> of 8% from the 93 self-inflicted deaths in the previous 12 months.
<b>The rate of self-harm increased in both male and female establishments from the previous 12-month period</b>	In the 12 months to March 2025, the rate of self-harm was 899 incidents per 1,000 prisoners (77,898 incidents), <b>up</b> 6% from the 12 months to March 2024 to a new peak, comprising of a 5% <b>increase</b> in male establishments and a 6% <b>increase</b> in female establishments, both also to new peaks. In the most recent quarter, self-harm incidents were <b>down</b> 4.4% to 18,256, and the rate was <b>down</b> 3.9% (with a 7% decrease in the rate in male establishments and a 6% increase in female establishments).
<b>The rate of individuals who self-harmed increased from the previous 12-month period</b>	In the 12 months to March 2025, the rate of individuals who self-harmed was 160 individuals per 1,000 prisoners (13,824 individuals), <b>up</b> 3.5% from a rate of 154 in the previous 12 months. The number of self-harm incidents per individual <b>increased</b> slightly from 5.5 in the 12 months to March 2024 to 5.6 in the 12 months to March 2025.
<b>The rate of assaults increased from the previous 12-month period</b>	In the 12 months to March 2025, the rate of assaults was 356 assaults per 1,000 prisoners (30,846 assaults), <b>up</b> 9% from the 12 months to March 2024. In the most recent quarter, assaults <b>remained unchanged</b> (a less than 0.1% increase) at 7,712 incidents and the assault rate <b>remained unchanged</b> (up 0.6%) at 90 assaults per 1,000 prisoners.
<b>The rate of assaults on staff increased from the previous 12-month period</b>	In the 12 months to March 2025, the rate of assaults on staff was 122 assaults per 1,000 prisoners (10,568 assaults on staff), <b>up</b> 7% from the 12 months to March 2024 to a new peak. In the latest quarter the number of assaults on staff was <b>down</b> 2.5% to 2,565 incidents.
<b>The rate of serious assaults increased</b>	In the 12 months to March 2025, the rate of serious assaults was 39 serious assaults per 1,000 prisoners (3,402 incidents), <b>up</b> 6% from the previous 12 months. The rate of serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults was <b>up</b> 8% to 29 per 1,000 prisoners (2,509 incidents), and

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**11% of all assaults  
were serious**

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the rate of serious assaults on staff was **down** 2.0% to 11 per 1,000 prisoners (928 incidents) in the 12 months to March 2025.

If you are a journalist covering a suicide-related issue, please follow the Samaritans' [Media Guidelines for Reporting Suicide](#) because of the potentially damaging consequences of irresponsible reporting.

If you are struggling to cope, please call Samaritans for free on 116 123 (UK and the Republic of Ireland) or contact other sources of support, such as those listed on the NHS help for suicidal thoughts webpage. Support is available around the clock, every day of the year, providing a safe place for you, whoever you are and however you are feeling.

## Statistician's comment

In the 12 months to June 2025, we have seen an increase in the number of deaths (30% increase). In the 12 months to March 2025, we have seen a 6% increase in the number of self-harm incidents and a 9% rise in the number of assault incidents compared with the previous year. The number of incidents of self-harm and assaults have increased in both male and female establishments over the past 12 months, with the number of assaults in female establishments and self-harm incidents in both male and female establishments reaching their highest level in the time series<sup>1</sup>.

The number of deaths has increased from 308 to 401 in the 12 months to June 2025, with the rate of deaths increasing from 3.5 deaths per 1,000 prisoners to 4.6 deaths per 1,000 prisoners over the same time period. This was mainly driven by rises in deaths from natural causes and deaths awaiting further information. There were 86 self-inflicted deaths<sup>2,3</sup> in the latest year, a decrease from 93 in the previous year. The rate of self-inflicted deaths has remained broadly stable at around 1.0 deaths per 1,000 prisoners since the 12 months to June 2018. There were 7 homicides in the 12 months to June 2025, an increase from no homicides in the previous 12 months.

There was a 6% increase in the rate<sup>4,5</sup> of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners in the 12 months to March 2025, with the rate now peaking at 899 incidents per 1,000 prisoners. There was an increase in the rate of self-harm incidents to a new peak in both male establishments (up 5% to 684 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) and female establishments (up 6% to 5,906 per 1,000 prisoners). The rate is more than eight times higher in female establishments than male establishments. The rise in female establishments was driven by an increase in the average number of incidents among those who self-harmed in female establishments, from 16.4 to 18.1, offsetting a decrease in the rate of females self-harming (down 4.1% to 326 self-harming individuals per 1,000 prisoners). For males, there was an increase in the rate of individuals self-harming (up 4.2% to 152 self-harming individuals per 1,000 prisoners), while the average number of incidents among those who self-harmed remained unchanged at 4.5.

The rate of assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners increased 9% to 356 incidents per 1,000 prisoners in the 12 months to March 2025, and the rate of serious assaults increased 6% to 39 incidents per 1,000 prisoners over the same period. The rate of assaults was 65% higher in female establishments than in male establishments. In female establishments the rate increased by 5% to a peak of 573 per 1,000 prisoners, compared to an increase of 9% in male establishments (to 347 per 1,000 prisoners). The proportion of assaults in female establishments that were serious remains lower, at 8% compared with 11% in male establishments, despite the rate of serious assaults being higher in female establishments (up 23% to a rate of 47 per 1,000 prisoners) than male establishments (up 5% to a rate of 39 per 1,000 prisoners).

<sup>1</sup> The time series for assault incidents starts in 2000, and self-harm incidents starts in 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Apparent cause is based on the HMPPS classification of deaths in prison custody. Self-inflicted deaths are any death of a person who has apparently taken his or her own life irrespective of intent. This not only includes suicides but also accidental deaths as a result of the person's own actions. This classification is used because it is not always known whether a person intended to die by suicide.

<sup>3</sup> Any death of a person who has voluntarily taken their own life - a verdict determined at inquest. As inquests will not have occurred at the time HMPPS publishes deaths statistics, HMPPS makes no attempt to attribute intent (which is the responsibility of the coroner/inquest). HMPPS does not produce official statistics on suicides but does monitor inquest verdicts to ensure that classifications of deaths are consistent.

<sup>4</sup> Rates reflect the changes in the number of incidents, as well as the changes in prison population over time. More information can be found in the accompanying guide. Data on population statistics are published in the Offender Management Statistics Quarterly publication <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>.

<sup>5</sup> See *Guide to Safety in Custody Statistics* for a summary of how rates are calculated.

The rate of assaults on staff increased 7% in the 12 months to March 2025. Compared to the previous 12 months, the rate increased by 8% in male establishments to 115 per 1,000 prisoners, but decreased by 2.2% in female establishments to 280 per 1,000 prisoners.

## Background

Safety in custody statistics cover deaths, self-harm and assaults in prison custody in England and Wales, with figures in the summary tables in the quarterly publications presented on a 12-month rolling basis over an 11-year time series<sup>6</sup>. This release provides statistics on deaths of prisoners to the end of June 2025, and statistics on assaults and self-harm up to the end of March 2025.

The total prison population has remained steady in the latest year<sup>7</sup> following a large increase in the prison population since 2021, particularly for certain population groups such as remand<sup>8</sup>. As at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 the prison population was around 390 (0.4%) lower than at the end of June 2024. The prison population as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 remains around 9,500 or 12% higher than at the end of April 2021. The male population has increased by 12% and the female population has increased by 13% from the end of April 2021.

These changes in population should be borne in mind when interpreting changes in the numbers of incidents over time. In the context of substantial population change, rates per 1,000 prisoners more accurately describe changes in the likelihood of incidents occurring<sup>9</sup>. Data on deaths, self-harm and assaults are routinely presented as rates of incidents per 1,000 prisoners (as well as numbers) for all prisoners and for the male and female estates.

The comparability of statistics between 2020 and 2022 with other time periods is affected by the differing levels of restrictions implemented within prisons to limit and control the spread of the Covid-19 virus through the National Framework. These restrictions included the implementation of effective isolation of prisoners to reduce the spread of Covid-19, reverse cohorting of new prisoners into custody, and shielding of vulnerable prisoners.

Between November 2022 and November 2024, in order to make the best use of capacity across the estate in the light of recent increases in the prison population, young people have routinely been retained in the Youth Custody Service (YCS) estate until their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday (rather than transferring to an adult prison on or soon after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, as previously occurred in most cases).

This means the age demographic in the young people's estate, but also in adult prisons, is slightly different compared to previous years.

Supplementary annual tables, providing more in-depth statistics on a calendar year basis, underlying data files with pivot tables providing lower-level granularity, and a technical guidance document are also available alongside this bulletin, at [www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics).

<sup>6</sup> Data on deaths is published three months ahead of self-harm and assaults. Therefore, the deaths annual publication and tables are published alongside the Safety in Custody quarterly update to September publication.

<sup>7</sup> The prison population decreased throughout 2024 due to factors including "End of Custody Supervised License" and earlier release from certain determinate sentences ("SDS40").

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>. Quarterly population data to December 2024 is published in Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin, England and Wales Quarterly.

<sup>9</sup> The comparability over the year of other measures that are based on self-harming individuals (such as the number of incidents per self-harming individual, or the proportion of incidents requiring hospital attendance) are not affected by changes in population size.

# 1 Deaths: 12 months ending June 2025

## Number of deaths increased from the previous 12-month period

In the 12 months to June 2025, there were 401 deaths in prison custody, an **increase** of 30% from 308 deaths in the previous 12 months.

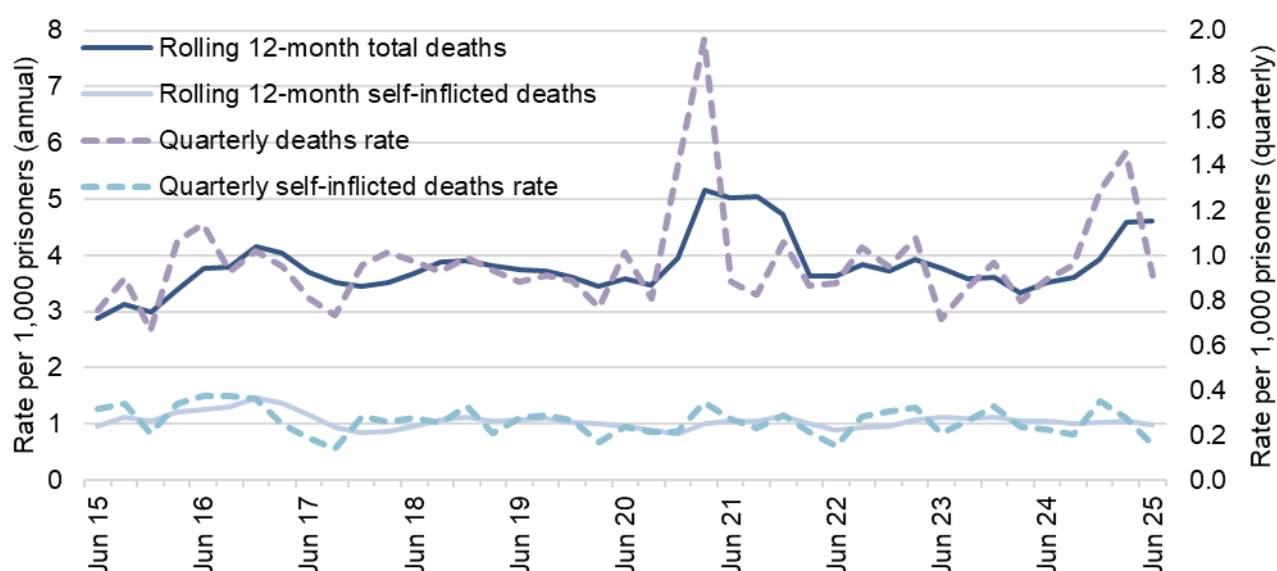
In the most recent quarter there were 80 deaths, a 37% **decrease** from 127 deaths in the previous quarter.

## Number of self-inflicted deaths decreased from the previous 12-month period

In the 12 months to June 2025, there were 86 self-inflicted deaths, an 8% decrease from 93 in the previous 12 months.

There were 14 self-inflicted deaths in the most recent quarter, a 42% **decrease** from 24 in the previous quarter.

**Figure 1: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of deaths per 1,000 prisoners, 12 months ending June 2015 to 12 months ending June 2025, with quarterly rates**



In the 12 months to June 2025, there were 401 deaths in prison custody (a rate of 4.6 per 1,000 prisoners), a 30% increase from 308 deaths in the previous 12 months (a rate of 3.5 per 1,000 prisoners). Long-term trends and more detail are presented in the annual tables<sup>10</sup>.

Over the same period, there were 221 deaths due to natural causes (a rate of 2.5 per 1,000 prisoners), a 18% increase from 188 deaths by natural causes in the previous 12 months (a rate of 2.1 per 1,000 prisoners). This is the second highest level of deaths due to natural causes in the time series, lower only than the 12 months ending June 2021 (during COVID).

There were 86 apparent self-inflicted deaths in the 12 months to June 2025 (a rate of 1.0 per 1,000 prisoners), a decrease of 8% from 93 self-inflicted deaths in the previous 12 months (a rate of 1.1

<sup>10</sup> Data on deaths are published three months ahead of assaults and self-harm, therefore, the annual publication Deaths in prison custody for 1978 to 2024 is published in the Safety in Custody quarterly update to September 2024

per 1,000 prisoners). The rate of self-inflicted deaths has remained broadly stable at around 1.0 per 1,000 prisoners since the 12 months to June 2018.

There were 7 homicides in the 12 months to June 2025, an increase from no homicides in the previous 12 months. In most calendar years there are usually between 0 and 3 total homicides.

There were 87 deaths recorded as 'Other' in the 12 months to June 2025, an increase from 27 in the previous 12 months. Of those 87 deaths, 69 are 'awaiting further information' prior to being classified. In some cases, the results of the toxicology and post-mortem tests are inconclusive, meaning classification cannot be arrived at until Coroner's inquest takes place (which can be a considerable time after the death). As a result, the number and rate of deaths in the individual categories are not directly comparable with earlier years: it is likely that numbers in some categories will be revised upwards once classifications have been finalised.

In the most recent quarter there were 80 deaths, a 37% decrease from 127 deaths in the previous quarter. There were 14 self-inflicted deaths in the latest quarter, a 42% decrease from 24 in the previous quarter. However, quarterly death figures should be considered with caution due to greater volatility and the potential for seasonal effects<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Seasonal effects refer to variation in time series data that occur at regular intervals (typically intervals shorter than a year e.g. monthly or quarterly).

## 2 Self-harm: 12 months to March 2025

**The rate of self-harm incidents increased in both the male and female estate from the previous 12-month period**

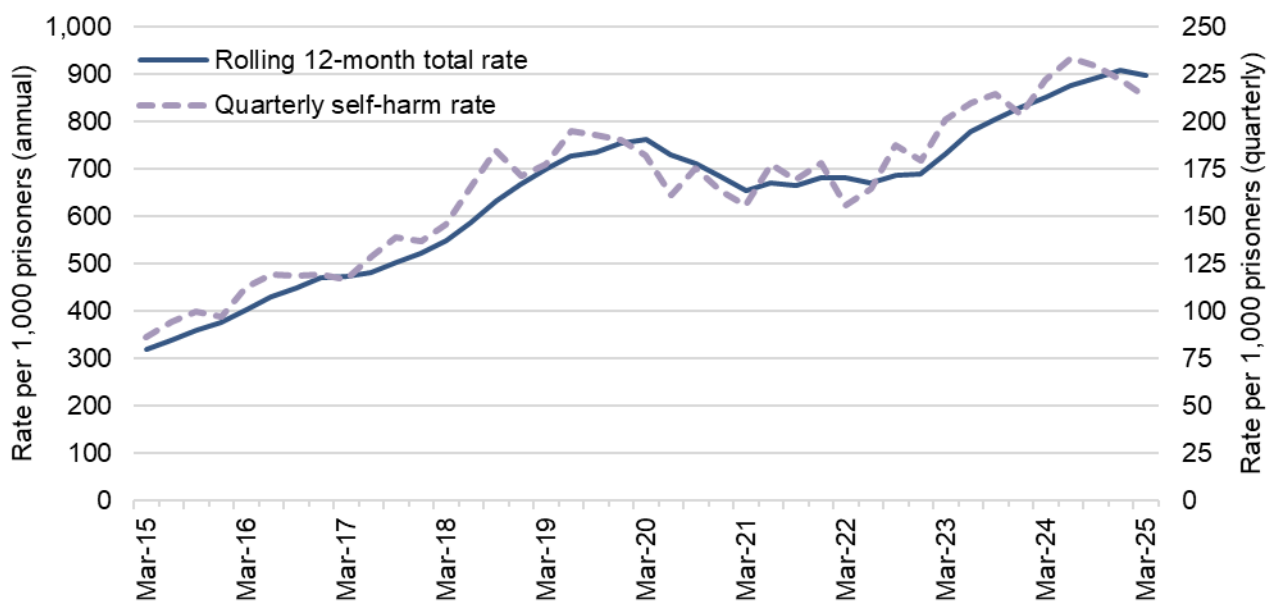
There were 77,898 self-harm incidents in the 12 months to March 2025, a 6% **increase** from the previous 12 months (a 5% **increase** in male establishments and a 7% **increase** in female establishments). Over the same period the rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners **increased** by 5% in male establishments and **increased** by 6% in female establishments.

In the most recent quarter, there were 18,256 self-harm incidents, **down** 4.4% on the previous quarter (a 7% **decrease** in male establishments and a 4.1% **increase** in female establishments). Over the same period the rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners **decreased** 7% in male establishments and **increased** 6% in female establishments.

**The number of individuals who self-harmed increased by 3.6% in the latest year**

There were 13,824 individuals who self-harmed in the 12 months to March 2025, a 3.6% **increase** from 13,346 in the previous 12 months. The number of self-harm incidents per self-harming individual **increased** slightly from 5.5 in the 12 months to March 2024 to 5.6 in the 12 months to March 2025.

**Figure 2: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners, 12 months ending March 2015 to 12 months ending March 2025, with quarterly rates**



In the 12 months to March 2025, there were 77,898 reported incidents of self-harm (a rate of 899 per 1,000 prisoners), an increase of 6% from 73,804 in the previous 12 months. The rate of incidents in the latest 12 months increased 6% from the previous 12 months, and both the number and rate of self-harm incidents are now at their highest level in the time series<sup>12</sup>.

On a quarterly basis, the number of incidents in the three months to March 2025 decreased by 4.4% from the previous quarter, decreasing from 19,090 to 18,256 incidents. Additionally, the rate of incidents of self-harm in the three months to March 2025 decreased by 3.9% from the previous quarter, decreasing from 222 to 214 incidents per 1,000 prisoners.

<sup>12</sup> The time series for assault incidents starts in 2000, and self-harm incidents starts in 2004.



The number of individuals who self-harmed increased by 3.6% to 13,824 in the latest 12 months (a rate of 160 individuals per 1,000 prisoners), from 13,346 in the previous 12 months, the highest number of individuals within the time series. The rate, or proportion, of prisoners self-harming in the latest 12 months was 3.5% higher than in the previous 12 months, also reaching a new peak. The number of incidents per self-harming individual in the latest 12 months also peaked at 5.6, a slight increase from 5.5 in the previous year. A small number of individuals who repeatedly self-harm have a disproportionate impact on this figure: just over a half (54%) of prisoners who self-harmed in 2024 did so more than once.

The number of self-harm incidents requiring hospital attendance<sup>13</sup> decreased by 2.7% (to 3,350) in the 12 months to March 2025 and decreased by 9% in the latest quarter (to 706 incidents). The proportion of incidents that required hospital attendance decreased from 4.7% in the 12 months to March 2024 to 4.3% in the 12 months to March 2025.

Self-harm levels differ considerably by gender. Although the number of incidents in the female estate is smaller than in the male estate, the rate of self-harm per 1,000 prisoners is much higher. In the 12 months to March 2025, there were 56,858 incidents in the male estate compared with 21,040 in the female estate, representing a 5% increase in male establishments and a 7% increase in female establishments compared to the previous year. However, the rate of self-harm in the female estate (5,906 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) was more than eight times higher than in the male estate (684 incidents per 1,000 prisoners). The number of incidents and rate of self-harm are now at the highest level in the time series in both the male and female estates.

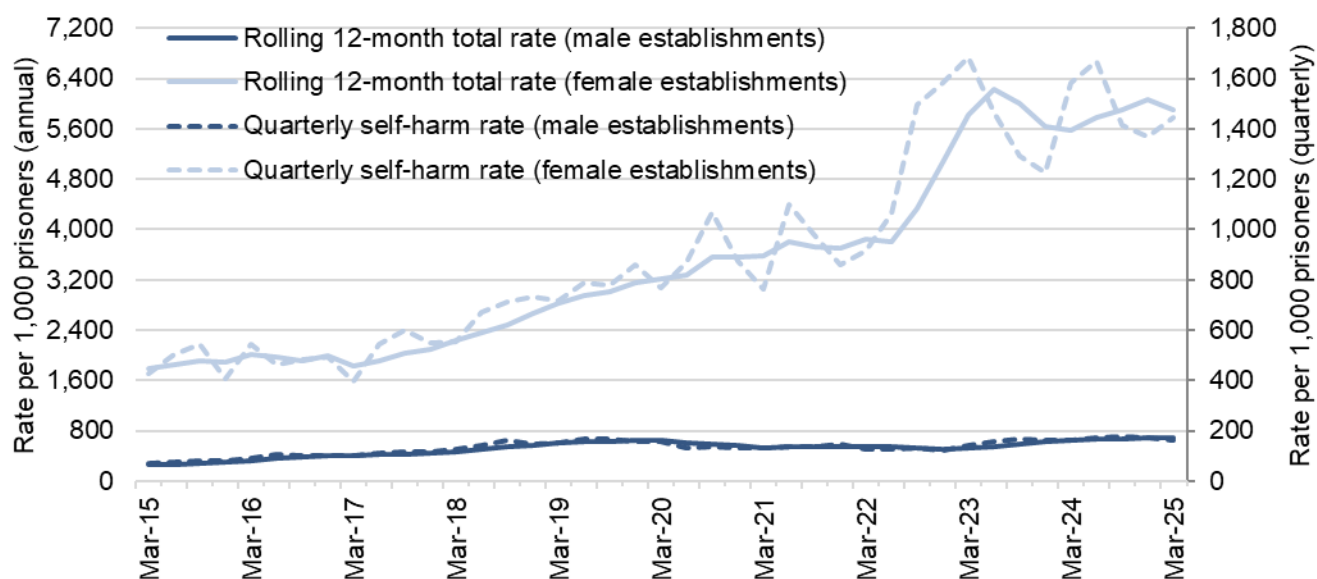
On a quarterly basis, the number of incidents in the three months to March 2025 decreased by 7% in male establishments and increased by 4.1% in female establishments compared with the previous three months. For male establishments, this was the second quarter in a row where incidents decreased, following a peak of 15,073 incidents in the third quarter of 2024. For female establishments, the increase in the latest quarter followed two previous decreases, following a peak of 6,096 incidents in the second quarter of 2024. The rate decreased by 7% in male establishments and increased by 6% in female establishments in the latest quarter.

The number of incidents per individual who self-harmed in female establishments was four times that in male establishments. In the 12 months to March 2025 there was 18.1 incidents of self-harm per self-harming female, an increase from 16.4 in the previous 12 months, compared with 4.5 incidents per self-harming male, unchanged from the previous 12 months.

The proportion of females self-harming in the latest 12 months was 326 individuals per 1,000 prisoners, a decrease of 4.1% from 340 individuals per 1,000 prisoners in the previous 12 months. The increase in the rate of self-harm in the female estate occurred despite the decrease in the proportion of females self-harming, as a result of the increase in incidents per individual. In contrast, the increase in the rate of self-harm in the male estate is mainly driven by an increase in the proportion of males self-harming (4.2% increase to a peak of 152 individuals per 1,000 prisoners).

**Figure 3: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners by gender of establishment, 12 months ending March 2015 to 12 months ending March 2025**

<sup>13</sup> An incident of self-harm requiring hospitalisation does not only reflect the seriousness of the incident. This also depends on the healthcare facilities at the establishment, which vary across the estate.



Self-harm incidents requiring hospital attendance decreased in male establishments by 1.8%, to 2,995 in the 12 months to March 2025, and the proportion of incidents requiring hospital attendance decreased from 5.6% in the previous 12 months to 5.3% in the latest 12 months<sup>14</sup>. In the female estate 355 self-harm incidents required hospital attendance, a 10% decrease from 394 incidents the previous year, and the proportion of incidents in the female estate requiring hospital attendance decreased from 2.0% in the previous 12 months to 1.7% in the latest 12 months.

As Figure 3 shows, over the last decade there has been more variation in the quarterly rate of self-harm in the female estate than in the male estate. This may in part reflect the impact of the small number of individuals who repeatedly self-harm being greater in the female estate. Fluctuations in the quarterly rates of self-harm in the female estate have been wider since the start of the pandemic.

<sup>14</sup> An incident of self-harm requiring hospitalisation does not only reflect the seriousness of the incident. This also depends on the healthcare facilities at the establishment, which vary across the estate.

### 3 Assaults: 12 months to March 2025

#### Assaults and serious assaults increased from the previous 12-month period

In the 12 months to March 2025, there were 30,846 assault incidents, a 9% **increase** from the previous 12 months. Of these, 3,402 were serious assaults, **up** 6%. Rates of assault **increased** by 9% to 356 incidents per 1,000 prisoners, and the rate of serious assaults **increased** by 6% to 39 per 1,000 prisoners in the latest 12 months.

Assaults **remained unchanged** (less than 0.1% increase) in the latest quarter at 7,712 incidents while the number of serious assaults **decreased** by 4.4% to 851 incidents.

#### The rate of assault per 1,000 prisoners remained higher in female than male establishments

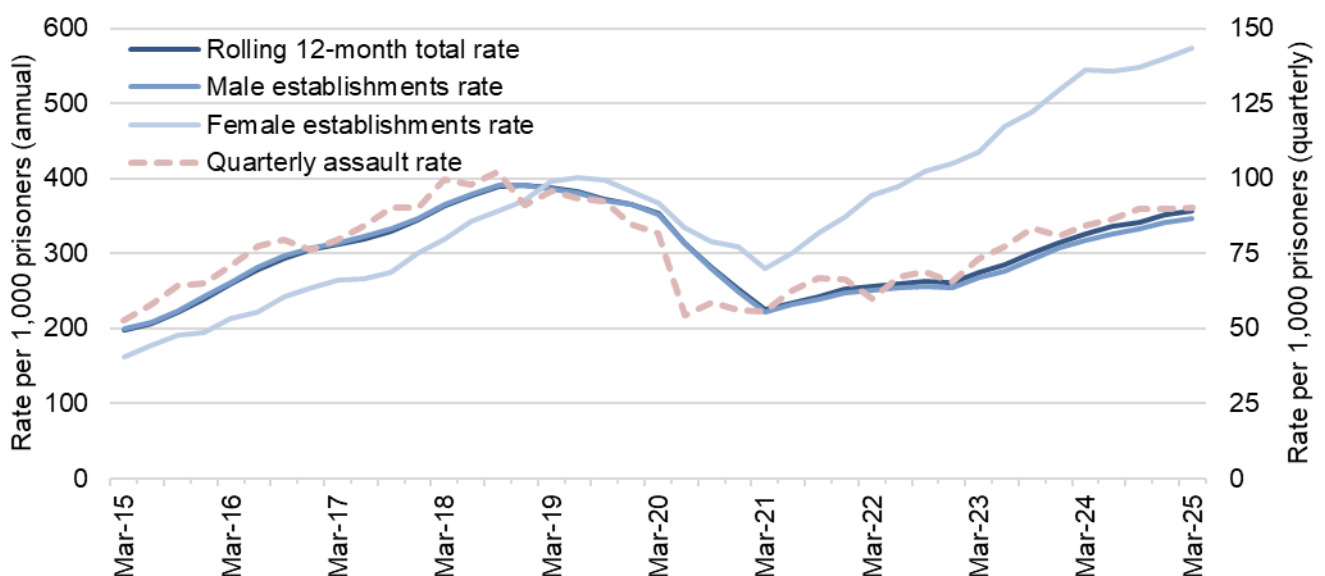
The rate of assault in male establishments **increased** by 9% from the previous 12 months, while the rate in female establishments **increased** by 5%. Assault rates for the 12 months to March 2025 remained higher in female establishments (573 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) than in male establishments (347 incidents per 1,000 prisoners). Both the number of incidents and the rate reached a new peak in female establishments in the latest 12 months.

#### Assaults on staff increased from the previous 12-month period

There were 10,568 assaults on staff in the 12 months to March 2025, a 7% **increase** from the previous 12 months and a new peak. In the latest quarter the number of assaults on staff **decreased** by 2.5% to 2,565 incidents.

In the latest 12 months, the rate of assaults on staff per 1,000 prisoners **increased** by 7% to 122 incidents per 1,000 prisoners, also a new peak. During this period, the rate in male establishments **increased** by 8% to 115 assaults per 1,000 prisoners but **decreased** by 2.2% to 280 assaults per 1,000 prisoners in female establishments.

**Figure 4: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of total assaults by gender of establishment, 12 months ending March 2015 to 12 months ending March 2025, with quarterly rates**



In the 12 months to March 2025, assault incidents increased by 9% to 30,846 (a rate of 356 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) from 28,290 in the previous 12 months. The rate of assaults in the latest 12 months was 9% higher than in the previous 12 months. The number of assault incidents

was now higher than in the 12 months to March 2020 (prior to the pandemic), but still lower than the peak in the 12 months to March 2019. The rate of assault incidents matched levels immediately pre-pandemic, with the rate of assault incidents in the latest year being 0.2% higher than the rate of assaults in the 12 months to March 2020, but remained 9% lower than the peak in the 12 months to March 2019.

In the latest quarter there were 7,712 assaults, staying the same as the previous quarter (down by less than 0.1%). The number of assaults and the quarterly rate remain lower than their peak in the July to September 2018 quarter.

The number of incidents in male establishments increased by 9% to 28,805 in the 12 months to March 2025 (a rate of 347 per 1,000 prisoners), from 26,373 in the previous 12 months. The rate of assaults in male establishments in the latest 12 months was 9% higher than in the previous 12 months.

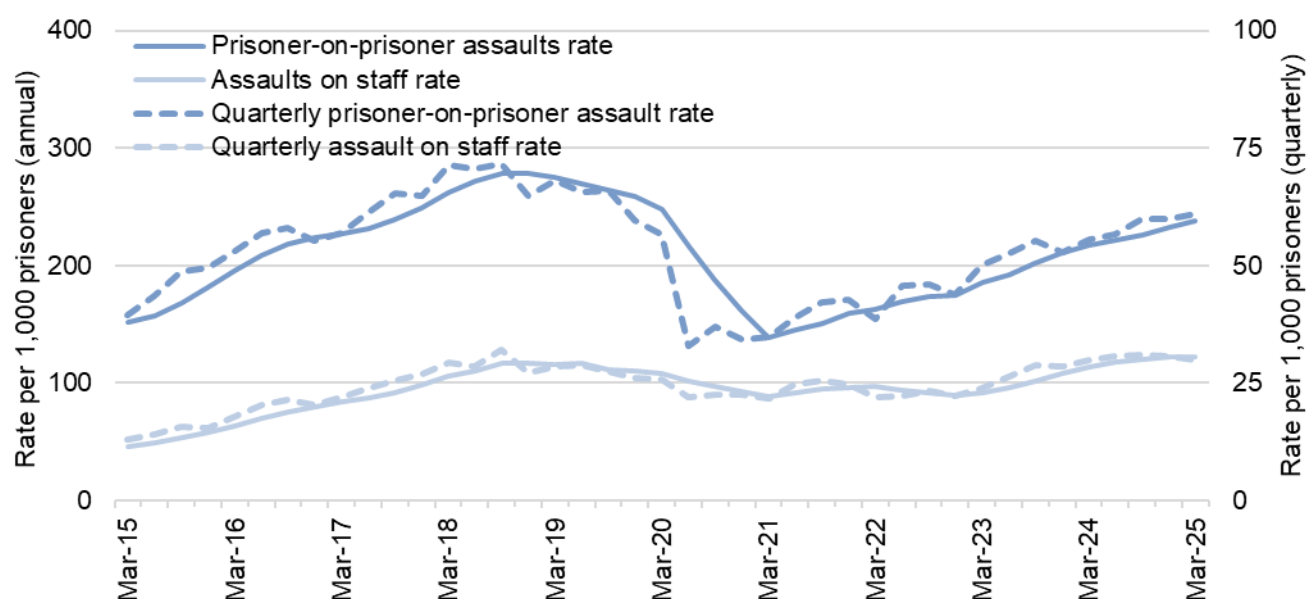
The number of incidents in female establishments increased by 6% to 2,041 incidents in the 12 months to March 2025 (a rate of 573 per 1,000 prisoners), from 1,917 in the previous 12 months. The rate of assaults in female establishments in the latest 12 months was 5% higher than in the previous 12 months. The rate and number of incidents in the female estate are now at their highest level in the time series<sup>15</sup>.

Assault rates have been higher in female establishments than in male establishments since the 12 months to March 2019, after previously being higher in male establishments.

In the latest quarter, the number of assaults in male establishments stayed steady with a small increase of 0.3% to 7,191 incidents, compared to a decrease of 3.0% in female establishments to 521 assaults. During this period the rate of assaults remained unchanged at 90 assaults per 1,000 prisoners (a 0.6% increase), but this resulted from a 0.7% increase in male establishments (to 88 assaults per 1,000 prisoners) offsetting a 1.6% decrease in female establishments (to 151 assaults per 1,000 prisoners).

<sup>15</sup> The time series for assault incidents starts in 2000, and self-harm incidents starts in 2004.

**Figure 5: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults and assaults on staff, 12 months ending March 2015 to 12 months ending March 2025, with quarterly rates**



There were 20,570 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults<sup>16</sup> in the 12 months to March 2025 (a rate of 237 per 1,000 prisoners), an increase of 9% from the 18,786 assaults in the previous 12 months. The rate of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults in the latest 12 months was 9% higher than in the previous 12 months. In the latest quarter, there were 5,209 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, a 1.1% increase from 5,151 in the previous quarter.

There were 10,568 assaults on staff<sup>17</sup> in the 12 months to March 2025 (a rate of 122 per 1,000 prisoners), an increase of 7% from the 9,847 assaults in the previous 12 months and a new peak in the time series. The rate of assaults on staff in the latest 12 months was 7% higher than in the previous 12 months. Both the number of incidents and the rate reached a new peak. In the latest quarter, there were 2,565 assaults on staff, a decrease of 2.5% from 2,630 incidents in the previous quarter.

The proportion of assaults on staff<sup>18</sup> decreased to 34% of all incidents in the 12 months to March 2025 from 35% in the previous 12 months. In the 12 months to March 2025, the proportion of assaults that were on staff remained higher in female establishments (49%) than in male establishments (33%).

In male establishments, prisoner-on-prisoner assaults increased by 9% to 19,515 incidents (235 incidents per 1,000 male prisoners) in the 12 months to March 2025, and the rate also increased by 9%. Assaults on staff increased 8% to reach a new peak of 9,570 incidents, and the rate increased by 8% to a new peak of 115 incidents per 1,000 male prisoners.

In female establishments, prisoner-on-prisoner assaults increased by 14% to a new peak of 1,055 incidents (296 incidents per 1,000 female prisoners) in the 12 months to March 2025, and the rate increased by 13%, also to a new peak. Assaults on staff decreased by 1.1% to 998 incidents (280 incidents per 1,000 female prisoners) in the 12 months to March 2025, and the rate decreased by 2.2%.

<sup>16</sup> This figure includes any prisoner-on-prisoner assaults where there may also have been an assault on staff.

<sup>17</sup> There was a change in how staff assaults have been recorded from April 2017, this has simplified how incidents involving staff are identified, however it is possible this has increased the recording of incidents. Please see the Guide to Safety in Custody statistics for further information

<sup>18</sup> Some assault incidents may be recorded as both a prisoner-on-prisoner assault and an assault on staff, so the sum of the two categories may exceed the total number of assaults

## Serious assaults

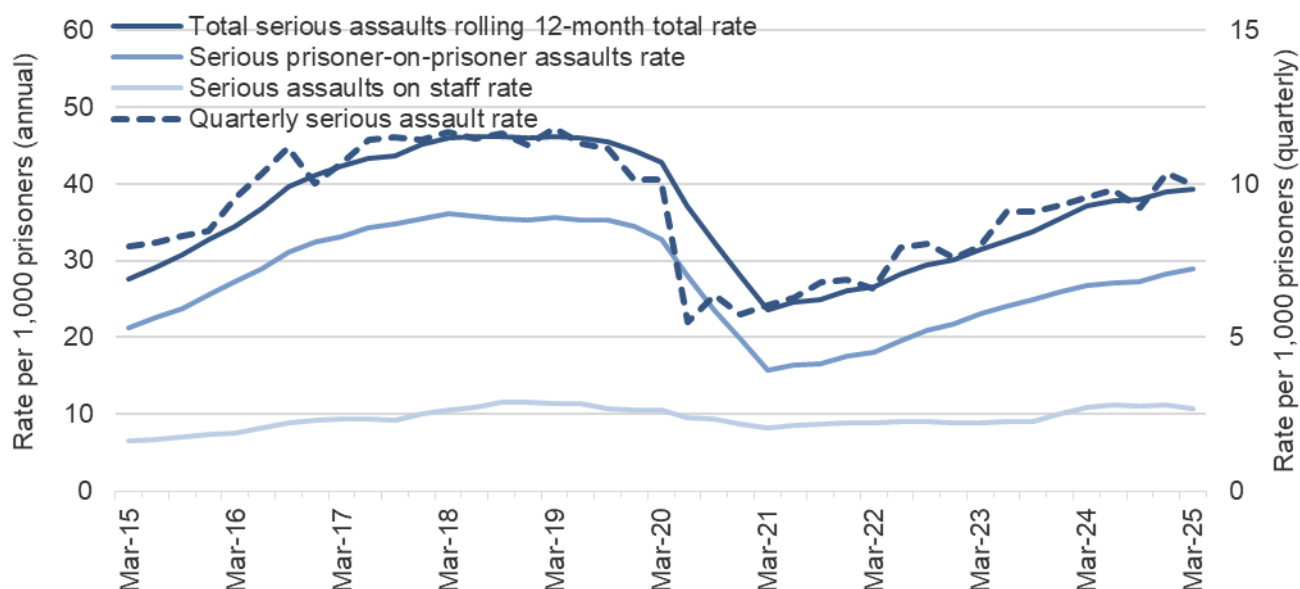
**Of the 30,846 assault incidents, 3,402 (11%) were serious**

In the 12 months to March 2025, there were 3,402 serious assault incidents, a 6% **increase** from the previous 12 months. The rate of serious assaults **increased** by 6% over the period.

Serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults **increased** by 8% to 2,509, and serious assaults on staff **decreased** by 2.0% to 928 in the 12 months to March 2025.

Serious assaults are those which fall into one or more of the following categories: a sexual assault; requires detention in outside hospital as an in-patient; requires medical treatment for concussion or internal injuries; or incurs any of the following injuries: a fracture, scald or burn, stabbing, crushing, extensive or multiple bruising, black eye, broken nose, lost or broken tooth, cuts requiring suturing, bites, temporary or permanent blindness.

**Figure 6: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of total serious assaults, serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, and serious assaults on staff, 12 months ending March 2015 to 12 months ending March 2025**



In the latest 12 months, 11% of assaults were serious assaults. This is unchanged from 11% in the previous 12 months to March 2024 and has remained broadly consistent throughout the time series. The proportion of all assaults that were serious remained higher in male establishments (11%) than in female establishments (8%).

In the 12 months to March 2025, there were 3,402 serious assaults (a rate of 39 per 1,000 prisoners), a 6% increase from the previous 12 months. The rate of serious assaults in the latest 12 months was 6% higher than in the previous 12 months. Both the number and rate of serious assaults peaked in the latest 12 months in female establishments, and the rate was higher in female establishments than male establishments for the second year in a row after being higher for the first time in the previous 12 months. In the latest quarter, there were 851 serious assaults, a 4.4% decrease from the previous quarter.

There were 2,509 serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults (a rate of 29 per 1,000 prisoners) in the 12 months to March 2025, an 8% increase from 2,320 in the previous 12 months. The rate of serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults in the latest 12 months was 8% higher than in the previous 12

months. In the 12 months to March 2025, the rate of serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults increased by 33% in female establishments (to a new peak of 29 per 1,000 prisoners), while there was a 7% increase in male establishments (also to 29 per 1,000 prisoners)<sup>19</sup>. In the latest quarter, there were 642 serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, a 1.4% decrease from the previous quarter.

There were 928 serious assaults on staff (a rate of 11 per 1,000 prisoners) in the 12 months to March 2025, a 2.0% decrease from 947 in the previous 12 months. The rate of serious assaults on staff was 2.0% lower than in the previous 12 months, with the rate increasing in female establishments (a 7% increase, to a peak of 18 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) and decreasing in male establishments (a 2.7% decrease, to 10 incidents per 1,000 prisoners). In the latest quarter, the number of serious assaults on staff decreased by 9% to 225 incidents<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> The time series for assault incidents starts in 2000, and self-harm incidents starts in 2004.

<sup>20</sup> Due to a low number of incidents for serious assaults, a small increase or decrease in incidents can lead to a large percentage change.

## Further Information



### Accredited official statistics status

National Statistics are [accredited official statistics](#)<sup>21</sup> that meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's (UKSA) regulatory arm. The UKSA considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

These accredited official statistics were independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation in March 2013. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics and should be labelled 'accredited official statistics'.

It is the Ministry of Justice's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected for National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the UKSA promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

### Future publications

Our statisticians regularly review the content of publications. Development of new and improved statistical outputs is usually dependent on reallocating existing resources. As part of our continual review and prioritisation, we welcome user feedback on existing outputs including content, breadth, frequency and methodology. Please send any comments you have on this publication including suggestions for further developments or reductions in content.

### Accompanying files

As well as this bulletin, the following products are published as part of this release:

- A technical guide providing further information on how the data are collected and processed, as well as information on the revisions policy and legislation relevant to sentencing trends and background on the functioning of the criminal justice system.
- A set of summary tables for the latest quarter, and annual tables up to the latest calendar year.
- Underlying data files with pivot tables, giving lower level granularity.

<sup>21</sup> Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007.



**Contact**

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office:

Tel: 020 3334 3536

Email: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/about/media-enquiries>

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

**Prison Safety Statistics and Analysis Team**

Analysis Directorate

Ministry of Justice

102 Petty France

London

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Email: [OMSQ-SiC-publications@justice.gov.uk](mailto:OMSQ-SiC-publications@justice.gov.uk)

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to. You are welcome to contact us directly, using the details above, with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk) or via the OSR website.

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