

**ORLEANS PARISH**  
***MARCH-APRIL 2020 COVID-19 ARREST AND INMATE***  
***POPULATION TRENDS***

**Metropolitan Crime Commission**  
**April 23, 2020**



# New Orleans making fewer arrests and holding fewer inmates since COVID-19 crisis

## Arrests

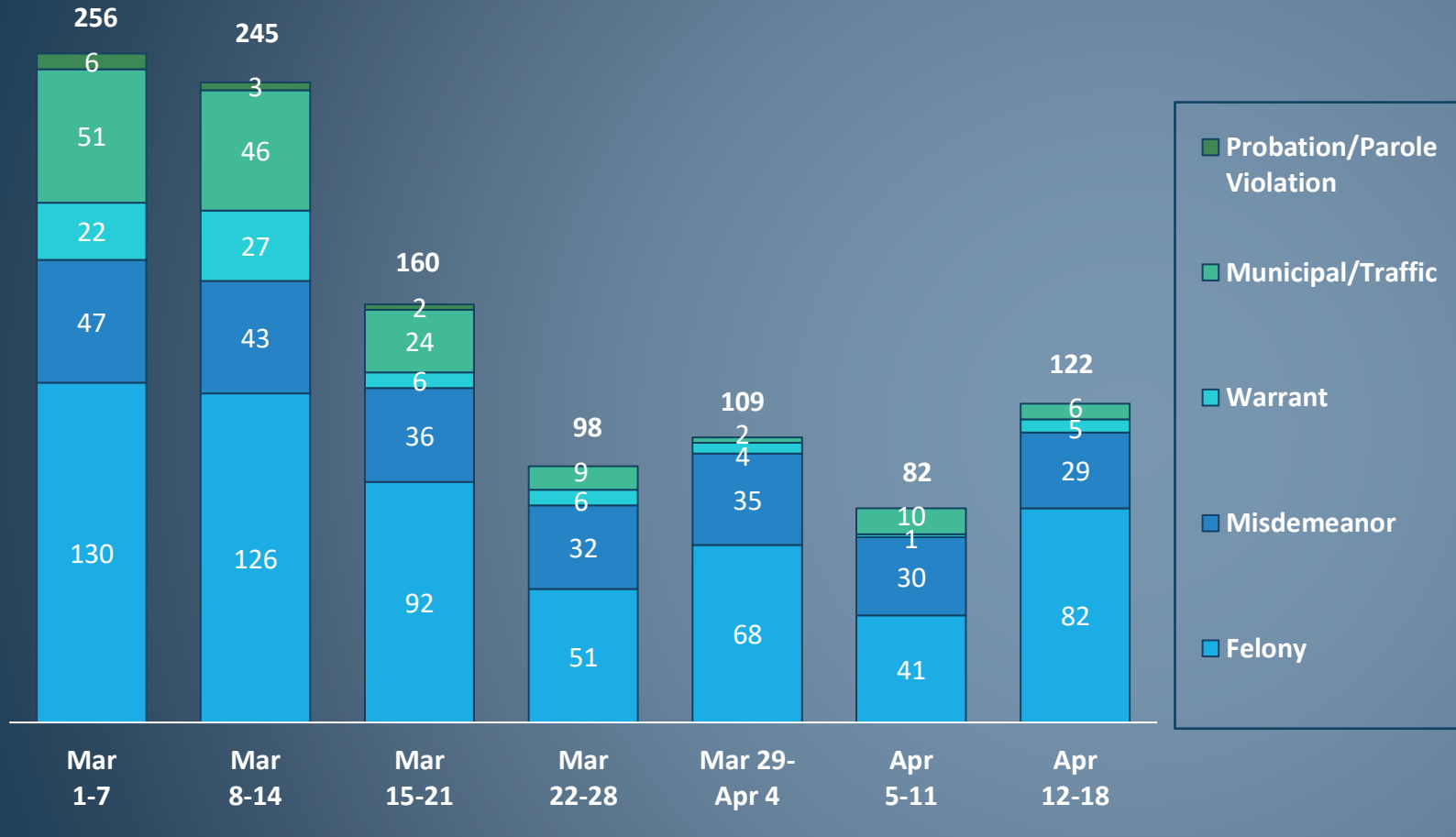
- 35% decline since first week of March (see **Exhibit 1**)
- Few municipal, traffic, or warrant arrests and no probation/parole violation arrests since the citywide stay-at-home order (**Exhibit 1**)
- Violent felonies are most common arrest type since stay-at-home order (**Exhibit 2**)
- 78% decline in drug felony arrests since stay-at-home order (**Exhibit 2**)
- 68% of misdemeanor arrests are for violent charges (**Exhibit 3**)
  - Many of which are domestic violence charges that legally require an arrest to be made

## Inmate Population

- 24% decline in inmates since first week of March (see **Exhibit 4**)
- As of April 18, 86% of inmates were being held on pending felony charges (**Exhibit 4**)
- Largest declines in inmates held on warrants or probation/parole violations (**Exhibit 4**)
- 47% decline among inmates held on misdemeanor charges since the first week of March (**Exhibit 4**)
- 58% of jail population as of April 18 have pending violent felony charges including 138 inmates held for murder (**Exhibit 5**)

# Weekly Arrests by Type from March 1<sup>st</sup> - April 18<sup>th</sup> 2020

Exhibit 1. Weekly Orleans Parish Arrests by Type



↑  
Statewide school closure announced; city events cancelled

↑  
Citywide stay-at-home order issued; bars/ restaurants closed

↑  
Statewide stay-at-home order issued

## Arrests Since March 1, 2020:

The steepest declines were evident following school closures and stay-at-home orders

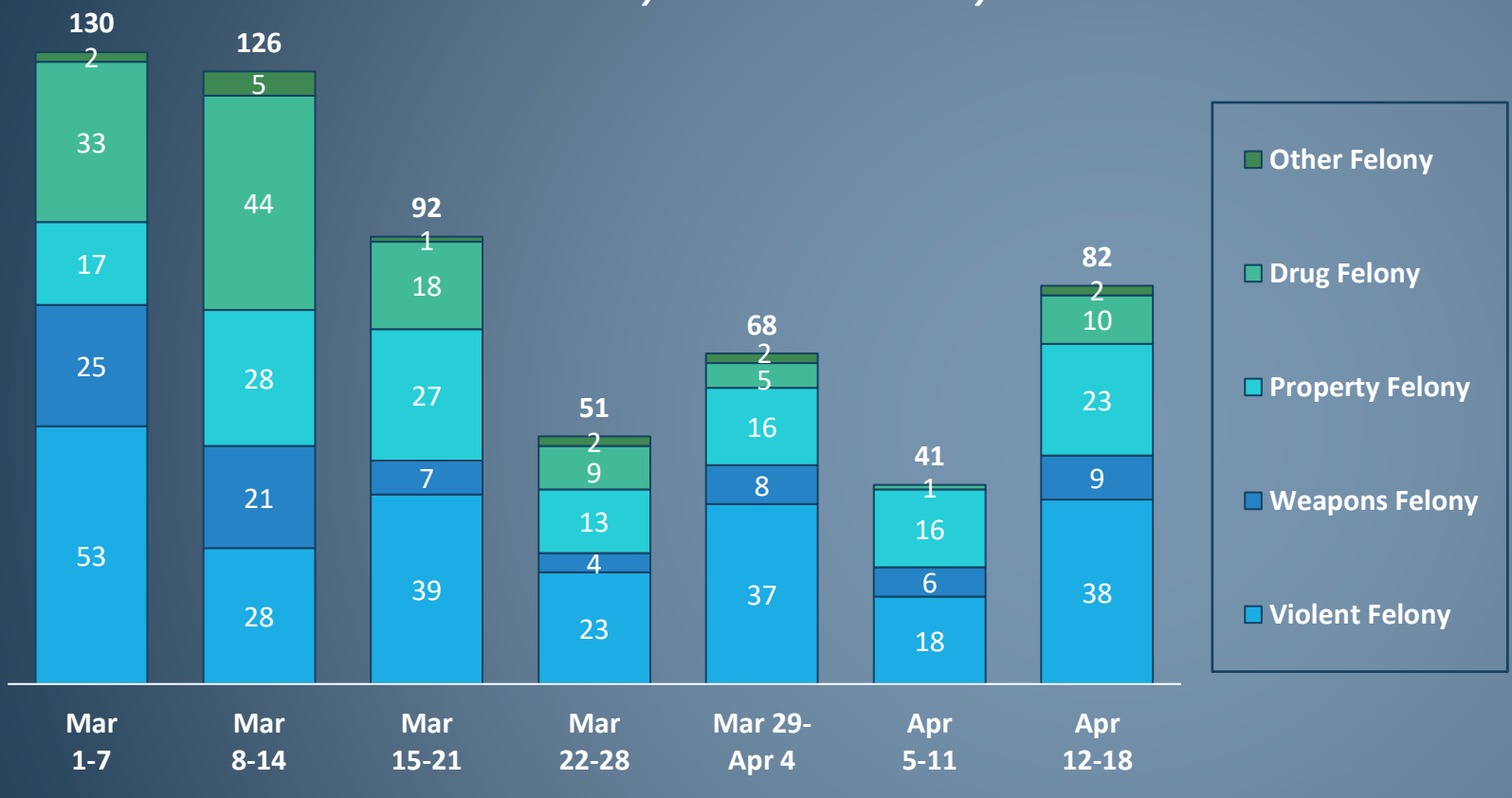
- Arrests dropped 35% from 245 the week of March 8-14 to 160 March 15-21
- Arrests fell an additional 39% to 98 the week of March 22-28

Overall, arrests have decreased by 56% from 256 the week of March 1-7 to 122 from April 12-18

- Felony arrests dropped by 37%
- Misdemeanor arrests dropped by 38%
- Warrant arrests dropped by 77%
- Municipal and traffic arrests dropped by 88%
- There have been no standalone probation/parole violation arrests since the week of March 15-21

# Weekly Felony Arrests from March 1<sup>st</sup> - April 18<sup>th</sup> 2020

Exhibit 2. Weekly Orleans Parish Felony Arrests



↑  
Statewide school closure announced; city events cancelled

↑  
Citywide stay-at-home order issued; bars/restaurants closed

↑  
Statewide stay-at-home order issued

## Felony Arrests Since March 1, 2020:

Violent felonies increased substantially, from 18 the week of April 5-11 to 38 the week of April 12-18, accounting for 31% of all arrests

- Violent felonies April 12-18 included 2 homicides, 5 rape/sex crimes, 10 robberies, and 22 battery/assault arrests

Felony drug arrests showed steep decline since city/statewide restrictions put in place

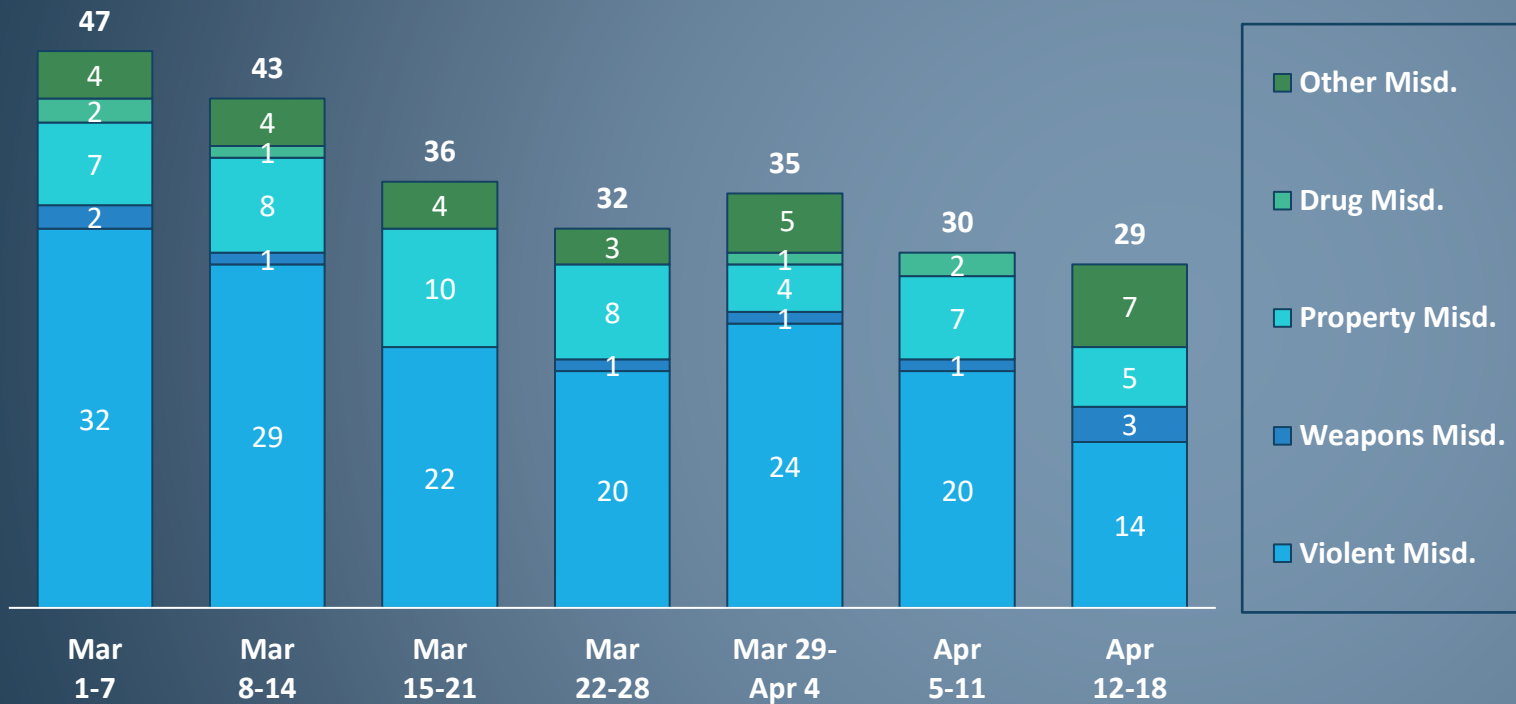
- Felony drug distribution arrests dropped 86% (from 21 March 8-14 to 3 April 12-18)
- Felony drug possession arrests dropped 76% (from 23 March 8-14 to 6 April 12-18)

Property-related felony arrests, particularly felony theft and burglary, fluctuated weekly, from a high of 28 March 8-14 to a low of 13 March 22-28



# Weekly Misdemeanor Arrests from March 1<sup>st</sup> - April 18<sup>th</sup> 2020

Exhibit 3. Weekly Orleans Parish Misdemeanor Arrests



↑  
Statewide school closure announced; city events cancelled

↑  
Citywide stay-at-home order issued; bars/restaurants closed

↑  
Statewide stay-at-home order issued

## Misdemeanor Arrests Since March 1, 2020:

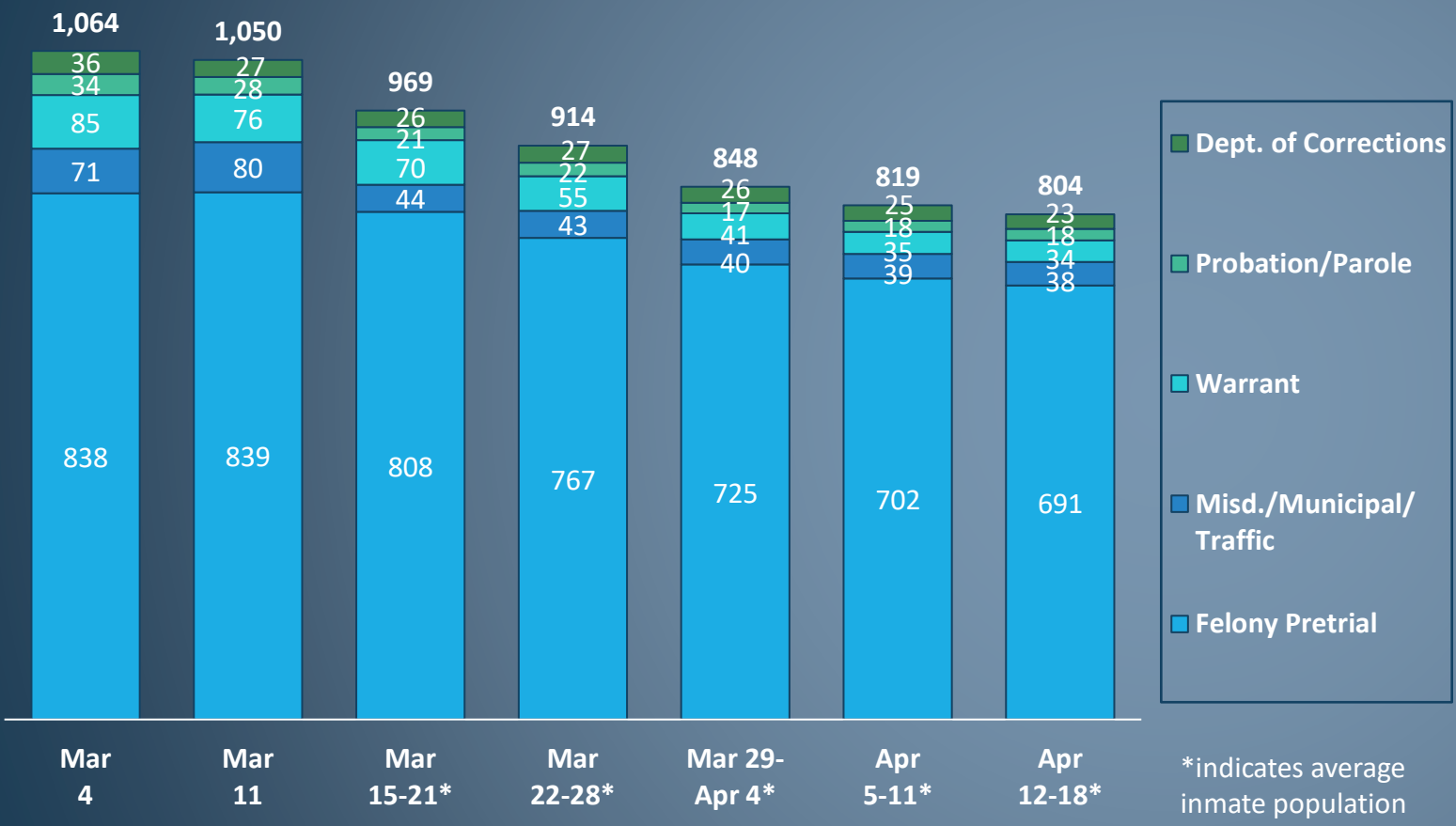
Overall, misdemeanor arrests declined 38%, from 47 the week of March 1-7 to 29 the week of April 12-18

- 68% of misdemeanor arrests were violent misdemeanor offenses, including simple and domestic battery charges
- 19% were property-related misdemeanors, such as theft or criminal damage
- 10% were “other” misdemeanors, most commonly for violation of protective orders or resisting an officer

Violent misdemeanors dropped 56%, from 47 the week of March 1-7 to 29 the week of April 12-18

# Weekly OPSO Inmate Population from March 4<sup>th</sup> - April 18<sup>th</sup> 2020

Exhibit 4. Weekly OPSO Inmate Population by Type of Inmate



↑ (March 13<sup>th</sup>) Statewide school closure announced; city events cancelled

↑ City and statewide stay-at-home orders issued; bars/restaurants closed

**The OPSO inmate population dropped 24% from 1,064 March 4 to averaging 804 April 12-18**

- 84% of the inmates on April 18 had remained in custody since at least March 4
- Most inmates are held pretrial for felony charges, which had the smallest rate of decline
- 79% were felony pretrial inmates on March 4, which rose to 86% of inmates April 12-18

There was a sharp 60% decline in inmates held for a warrant from 85 March 4 to 34 April 12-18

Inmates held for misdemeanor, municipal, or traffic offenses dropped 47% from 71 on March 4 to 38 April 12-18

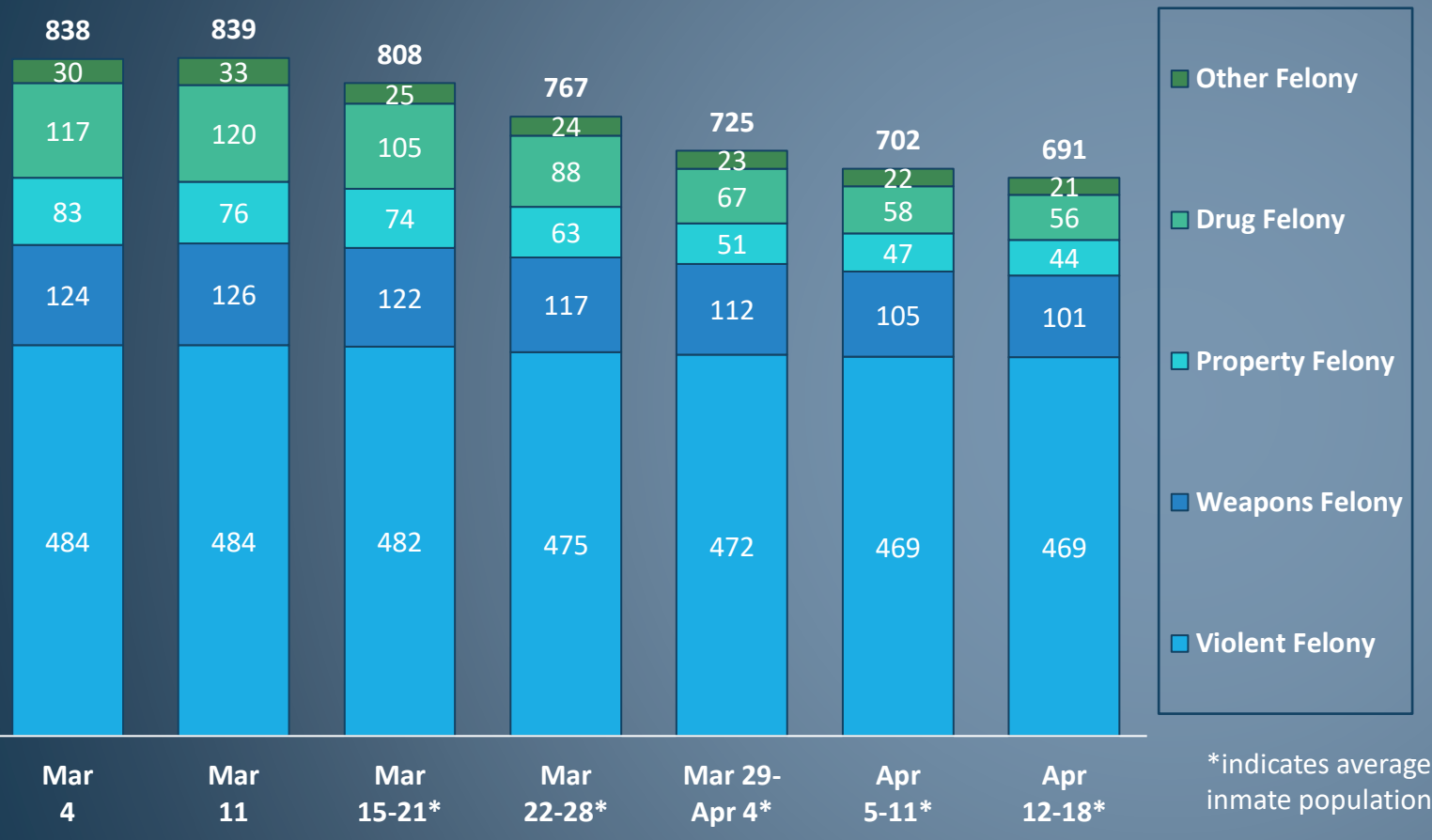
- A 67% majority of misdemeanor inmates were held for assault or battery
- On average, one or fewer inmates had only municipal or traffic charges
- An average of one offender per day was booked for a misdemeanor drug offense and shortly released

Probation and parole inmates decreased by half  
DOC inmates went down by 35% from 36 March 4 to 23 April 12-18

- An 85% majority of DOC inmates are participating in a Work Release program

# Weekly OPSO Felony Inmate Population from March 4<sup>th</sup> - April 18<sup>th</sup> 2020

Exhibit 5. Weekly OPSO Felony Pretrial Inmates



↑  
(March 13<sup>th</sup>)  
Statewide school closure announced; city events cancelled

↑  
City and statewide stay-at-home orders issued; bars/restaurants closed

Overall, there were 18% fewer felony pretrial inmates April 12-18 compared to March 4

Inmates charged with violent felonies had a narrow 3% decline from 484 March 4 to 469 April 12-18

- Violent felony inmates went from making up 45% of the inmate population March 4 to 58% April 12-18
- The number of inmates held for murder increased from 131 March 4 to 138 April 12-18

Weapons felony inmates had a lower rate of decline compared to inmates with other nonviolent charges

- Weapons felonies consistently accounted for 12%-13% of the inmate population

47% fewer inmates were held for felony property crimes April 12-18 compared to March 4

- Burglary charges accounted for a 60% majority of inmates held for property felonies

Inmates held for drug charges fell by 52%

- Inmates held for drug possession dropped 70% compared to a 39% drop in inmates held for distribution

There was a 30% decline in inmates held for "Other" crimes such as possession of child pornography and failure to register as a sex offender