

Tracking State's Attorney's Proposed Procedural Changes

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Executive Summary

Context

The newly elected Cook County State's Attorney, Eileen O'Neill Burke, was sworn into office on December 2, 2024, proposing procedural changes to be effective immediately upon taking office. These changes include more petitions for detention than the previous administration and lowering the felony threshold for retail theft crimes back to \$300 from Kim Foxx's previous increase of \$1000. The State's Attorney's Office (SAO) has stated that they will now be seeking pre-trial detention on additional charges, including all cases involving domestic violence, stalking, illegally modified firearms, sex offenses where a weapon was used, child pornography cases, and sex offenses involving victims under the age of 13.

Purpose

With this analysis, our goal is to use jail data to track the SAO's recent detention policy proposals on targeted charges and their implications on the Cook County Department of Corrections (CCDOC)'s population. This report will analyze overall admissions into the jail by charge type, highlighting whether changes in admissions are or are not tied to these specified charges. Due to how charges are reported, this analysis will track the charge types that we can confidently identify, including retail theft, sex-related crimes including those under 13, child pornography charges, and domestic battery-related cases. Charges like "illegally modified firearms" can only be identified in our data if cases are reviewed individually and therefore are not highlighted in this report.

Methods & Results

This analysis will track bookings and admissions into CCDOC since June 1, 2024, with a specific focus on changes occurring following State's Attorney O'Neill Burke's first day in office on December 2, 2024. This report will provide a quantitative summary of admission trends by detention status including overall average daily populations, as well as highlighting trends of the specific charges that the SAO intends to seek higher rates of pre-trial detention. Data is pulled from JMS and cleaned, audited, and tracked by the Research Department.

As of February 28, 2025, increases in admissions of the proposed targeted charges can be demonstrated in the first three months of O'Neill Burke's term. Of the charge types that the SAO has specifically said her office will target (and that we are able to filter for), admissions for domestic battery and retail theft have seen the largest increase - a 24% and 24% increase respectively when comparing November 2024 to the current month. However, due to the infancy of this new administration, overall

trends of CCDOC will continue to be tracked monthly through this report to be able to infer more confident conclusions on exact impacts of these policy adjustments on CCDOC's population.

Glossary

-Bookings: Describes an individual who has been processed within CCDOC following an arrest who either: 1) will be admitted into CCDOC custody if ordered detained (Booked - Detained) or 2) will be released back into the community pre-trial following the booking process due to no orders of detention (Booked - No Detention).

-Admissions: Describes an individual who was booked into CCDOC and ordered detained, resulting in an admission.

-Releases: Describes an individual who has been released from CCDOC custody back into the community at some point after the booking process at CCDOC.

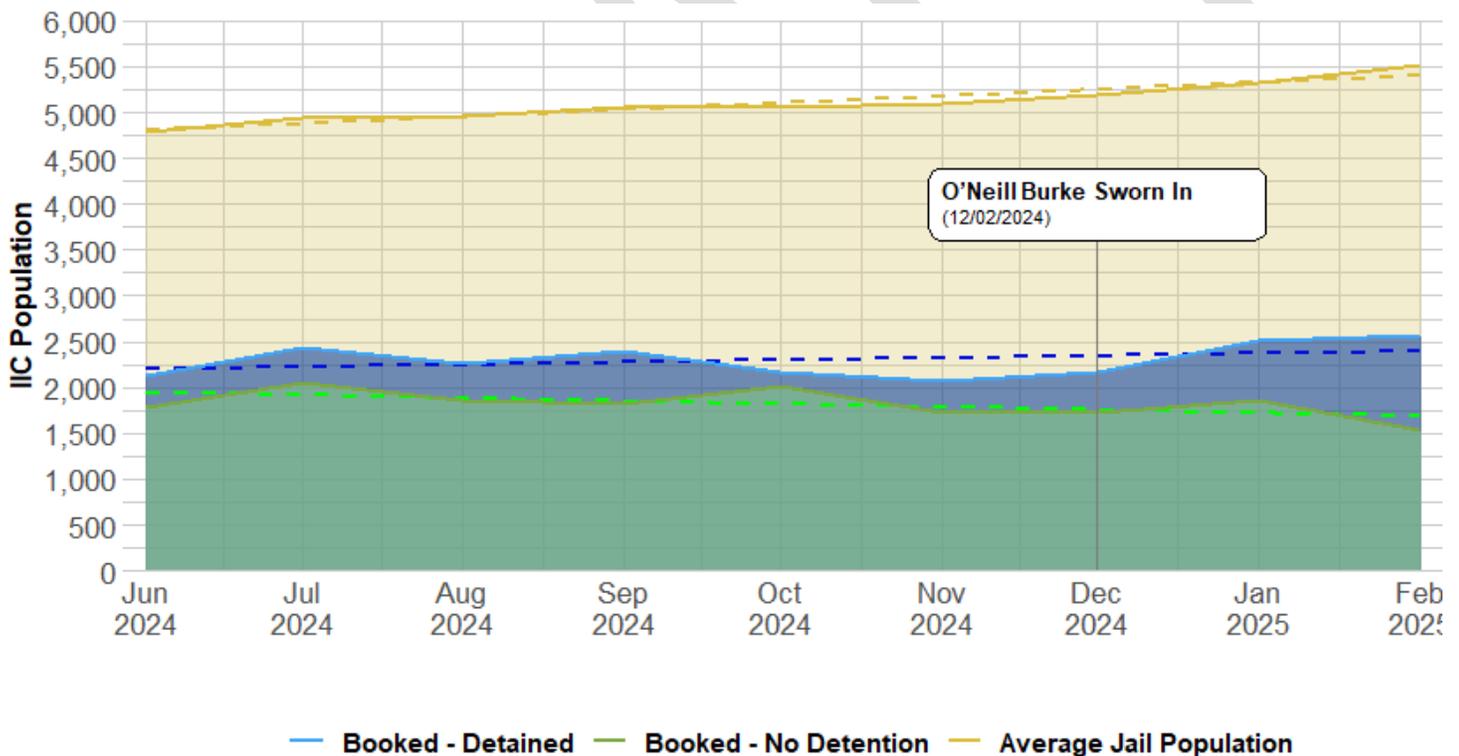
Report

CCDOC Trends in Admissions & Pre-Trial Releases

How have admissions and pre-trial release trends changed since the new SAO was sworn in?

As of February 28, 2025, monthly admissions (people ordered detained) have increased 24% compared to the admissions into jail custody the month prior to the start of O'Neill Burke's term. Additionally, the average daily population of CCDOC has been consistently rising during the focus period and, as of February 28, 2025, is the highest it's been over the last seven months. Between November 1, 2024 and February 28, 2025, the average daily population at CCDOC has increased by 8%. The below figure illustrates the trends in overall bookings separated by whether the individual was ordered detained or was released pre-trial (no detention), as well as the average daily population of CCDOC across this period.

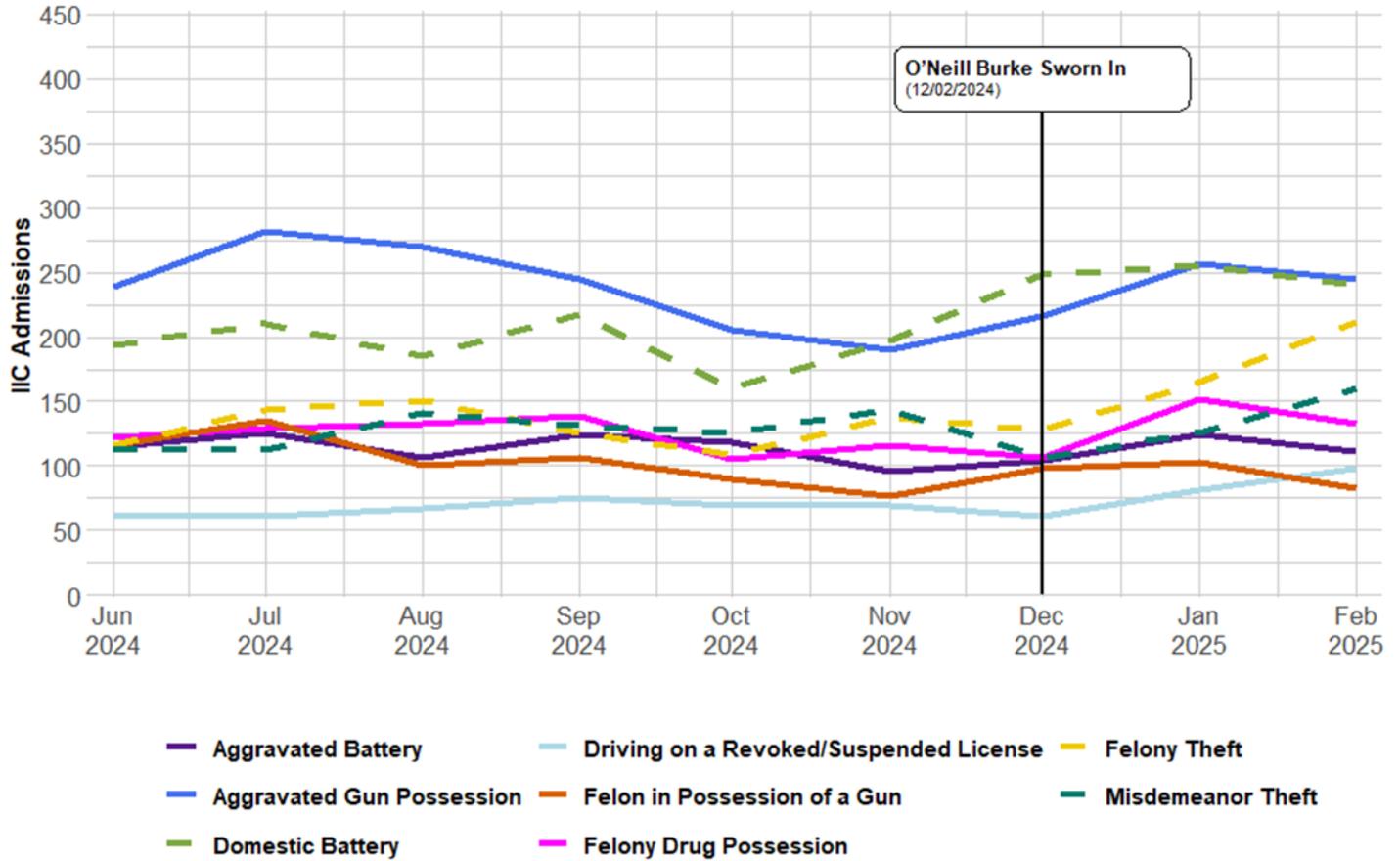
CCDOC Bookings by Admissions/Pre-Trial Detention vs. No Pre-Trial Detention, & Average Daily Population (06/01/2024 – 02/28/2025)



Data Source: JMS

The below figure illustrates trends in admissions for the most common lead charges. The dashed lines identify charges that the SAO has specifically said that they will seek pre-trial detention for.

CCDOC Admissions by Lead Charge Type (06/01/2024 – 02/28/2025)

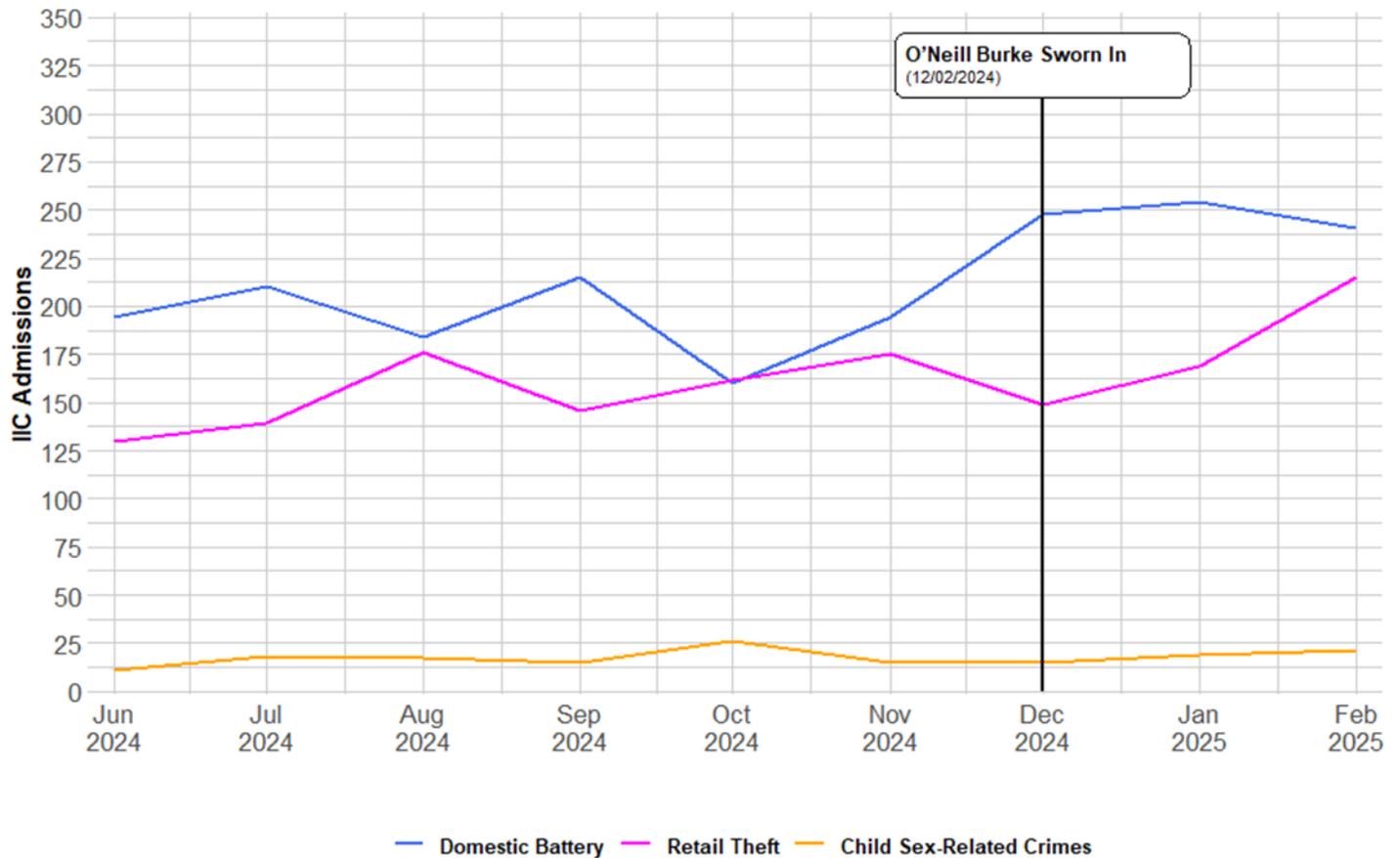


Data Source: JMS

Are the trends in admissions aligned with the policy changes proposed by the new SAO?

Increases in admissions on the charges O’Neill Burke’s office proposed pre-trial detention on have already been demonstrated in CCDOC in the first few months in her term. Specifically, admissions for domestic battery and retail theft (a subset of the felony/misdemeanor theft categories presented above) have seen the largest increases of the charges we are able to track and filter for when comparing November 2024 to February 2025 – a 24% and 24% increase respectively. The below figure tracks three categories of crime types including retail theft, domestic battery, sex crimes committed against children under 13, and all types of charges related to child pornography. The below figure encompasses individuals who have been charged with one of these crimes as their lead charge, and tracks changes in these admissions over the reporting period. Please note that all child pornography and sex crimes against children under 13 have been accounted for under the “Child Sex-Related Crimes” category.

CCDOC Admissions by SAO Detainable Lead Charge Type (06/01/2024 – 02/28/2025)



Data Source: JMS

Methodology

CCOMS booking data between June 01, 2024 and February 28, 2025 was used for this report. Data was pulled on March 19, 2025 and was cleaned and filtered using R.

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