



# Corrections and Community Supervision

## **The Comprehensive Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment Program 2020**

## CASAT PROGRAM

The New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (NYSDOCCS) Comprehensive Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment (CASAT) program was a creation of the 1989 Prison Omnibus Legislation.<sup>1</sup> This legislation called for the establishment of six 200-bed alcohol and substance abuse treatment annexes at specified locations. Persons successfully completing the six-month long annex phase of treatment (Phase I) would be transferred to a work release facility or an appropriate community based program (Phase II). The law also provided for an aftercare component upon release from the Department while under the supervision of the Division of Parole (Phase III). Appendix A diagrams the movement of the inmate through the CASAT program phases.

After briefly summarizing the CASAT program's history since 1990, this report focuses on recent program trends from 2006-2019. For an in-depth description of the CASAT program, please see *"The Comprehensive Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment Program: 2008"*.<sup>2</sup>

## PROGRAM GOALS

The CASAT program, with its mandate to provide a continuum of treatment services, is designed to achieve the following goals:

- To focus facility resources on the needs of incarcerated individuals with a history of alcohol and substance abuse.
- To better prepare participants for return to their families and communities upon release.
- To reduce drug and alcohol relapse rates and recidivism rates for program participants.
- To ensure appropriate aftercare services in the community.
- To increase coordination among the pertinent state and local agencies, service providers, and community organizations.

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<sup>1</sup> The New York State Department of Correctional Services and the New York State Division of Parole were merged through Legislative action on April 1, 2011. The resulting agency is the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision.

<sup>2</sup> "The Comprehensive Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment Program: 2008," New York State Department of Correctional Services, Albany, New York 12226 (2009).

## **CURRENT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY**

- Documented history of alcohol and/or drug abuse.
- Minimum of 9 months to earliest release at the time of review to allow for sufficient program time, but no more than 24 months to merit eligibility (if, merit eligible) or earliest release date. One exception to this is that drug offenders may enter Phase I at 30 months to earliest release.
- Classified as medium or minimum security.
- Temporary release approvable except for some drug offenders sentenced by judges to CASAT treatment (court-mandated CASAT). Court-mandated CASAT offenders not meeting all CASAT program requirements, particularly temporary release eligibility, are permitted to enter Phase I but are not allowed to transition to Phase II. This group is referred to as Phase I-only participants. This program modification, implemented in May 2006, permits a larger pool of offenders to receive intensive, residential drug treatment. Court-mandated offenders who meet all established CASAT requirements are eligible to enter Phase II upon completion of Phase I.

The review for CASAT eligibility is conducted via an automated screening and the incarcerated individual's interest in participating in a treatment program is conducted during Reception processing or later at a general confinement facility during an interview between the incarcerated individual and their Offender Rehabilitation Coordinator. Following this facility level review, information is forwarded to Temporary Release in Central Office for a final review of appropriateness for work release upon completion of CASAT Phase I. Those individuals found to be acceptable for temporary release represent the pool of potential participants for traditional CASAT Phase I and II programs.

## **PHASE I PARTICIPANT POPULATION: 1990-2005**

- New commitments to NYSDOCCS increased from 4,250 (including 470 drug commitments) in 1970 to a high of 25,155 in 1992 (including 11,225 drug commitments) (see Appendix B). The CASAT program expanded in the early 1990s to meet the substance abuse treatment needs of these individuals (see Table 1.1 and Figure 1.1).
- Executive Order #5, issued in 1995, significantly impacted the CASAT program by precluding the participation of violent felony offenders in the Department's Temporary Release program. Further diminishing the eligibility pool was the Sentencing Reform Act (SRA) of 1995, which created the Willard Drug Treatment Campus, designed to divert second felony offenders with substance abuse problems from NYSDOCCS incarceration. As a result of these two legal mandates, the CASAT Phase I program experienced an overall decline in participation from 2,369 on June 30, 1994 to 1,696 participants on June 30, 1996.

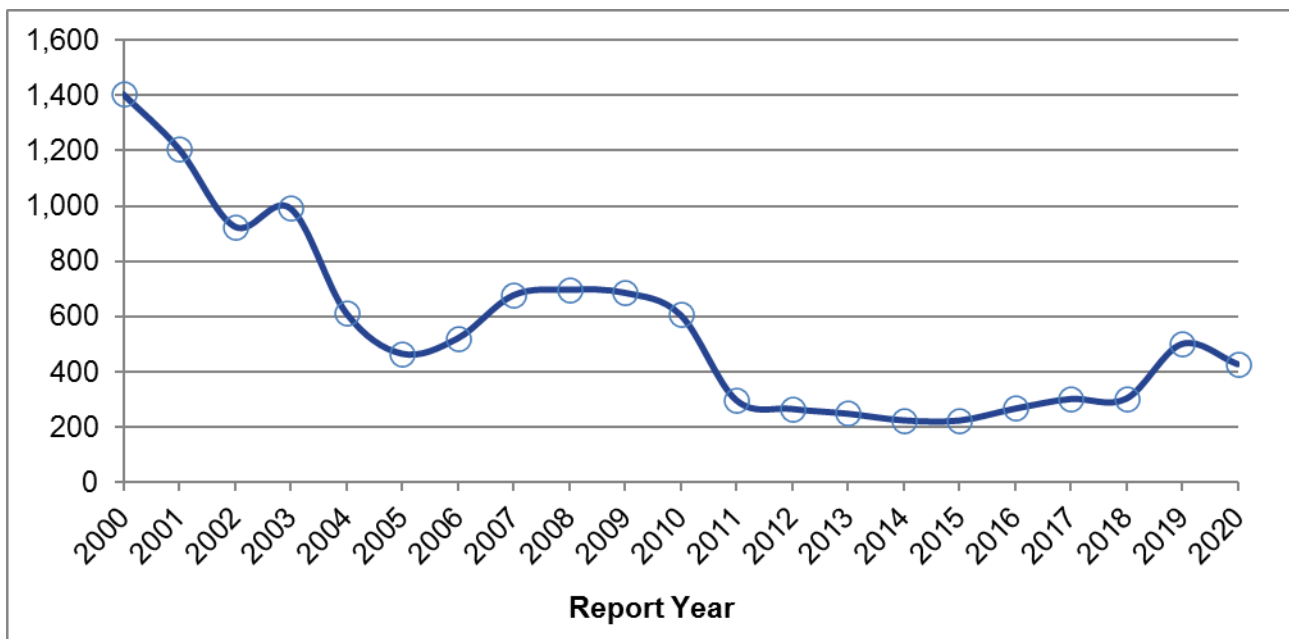
## PHASE I PARTICIPANT POPULATION: 2006-2020

- Further declines in CASAT Phase I participation continued until 2006 when the first impact of permitting temporary release ineligible, court-mandated individuals in the CASAT program was observed. The program increased from 467 on June 30, 2005 to 522 participants on June 30, 2006 (see Table 1.1).
- After the introduction of the court-mandated, temporary release ineligible participants in 2006, Phase I participation rose until the first half of 2010 before declining. As a response to the steep decline in Phase I participation during the second half of 2010 and 2011, the Department closed Wyoming Alcohol and Substance Abuse Correctional Treatment Center (ASACTC) (120 beds) in March 2011 and reduced the program capacity of Taconic ASACTC to 44 treatment beds (from 136 beds) in May 2011 (see Table 1.1). Remaining Wyoming CASAT participants were transferred to Arthur Kill and Hale Creek to complete Phase I.
- Over a ten-year period, 2002-2011, the NYSDOCCS experienced a significant reduction in its under custody population. As a result, during 2011 and 2012, seven medium and minimum-security facilities were closed, including Arthur Kill. CASAT participants not nearing program completion were transferred to a new 60-bed program at Marcy Correctional Facility that opened in October 2011 (see Table 1.2).
- In December 2012, the program for female CASAT participants was moved from Taconic ASACTC to Albion Correctional Facility. The program capacity at Albion ASACTC increased from 40 beds to 60 beds in August 2018.
- On July 1, 2020, there were 429 Phase I participants, 73 less than the 502 on July 1, 2019. This was a decrease of 15% in Phase I participants.
- Meanwhile, the number of court-mandated and temporary release ineligible participants has decreased significantly over the past decade. On June 25, 2010, 317 (or 52%) of total Phase I participants were court mandated and temporary release ineligible compared with 11 (or 3%) of the total Phase I population on July 1, 2020. This continues the downward trend compared to the previous year when 5% of the participants were court-mandated and temporary release ineligible. Subsequently, a greater number of participants who complete Phase I are eligible to participate in Phase II, which requires temporary release. (see Table 1.2).

**Table 1.1  
CASAT Phase I Participants Snapshots as of June 30  
In Annual CASAT Legislative Reports  
By Report Year: 2000 to 2020**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Albion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	30	28	37	37	38	56	37
Arthurkill	216	153	117	127	35	17	31	39	41	49	43	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Butler	183	176	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cape Vincent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chateauguay	101	99	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hale Creek	325	259	264	416	266	156	362	424	451	448	388	222	195	185	153	168	190	216	219	391	350
Livingston	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marcy	200	192	197	192	143	178	0	0	0	0	0	0	49	37	43	29	41	50	47	55	42
Wyoming	101	99	82	90	95	58	60	125	124	126	127	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taconic	278	228	161	167	75	58	69	90	82	64	49	28	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,404</b>	<b>1,206</b>	<b>926</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>429</b>

**Figure 1.1  
CASAT Phase I Participant Snapshot as of June 30: 2000 to 2020**



**Table 1.2  
Capacity and Offender Population CASAT Programs – As of 7/1/2020\***

Annex	Program Start Date	Capacity	CASAT Participants		Traditional CASAT Participants	Work Release Ineligibles
			Total	% of Program Capacity		
Hale Creek	November 1990	412	350	85%	343	7
Marcy	October 2011	60	42	70%	41	1
Albion	December 2012	60	37	62%	34	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>532</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>11</b>

Source: DOCCS UC File

\*Some program beds at CASAT facilities are occupied by offenders either waiting to begin Phase I or Phase I completers awaiting transfer to work release or general confinement facilities. These offenders are not included in these figures.

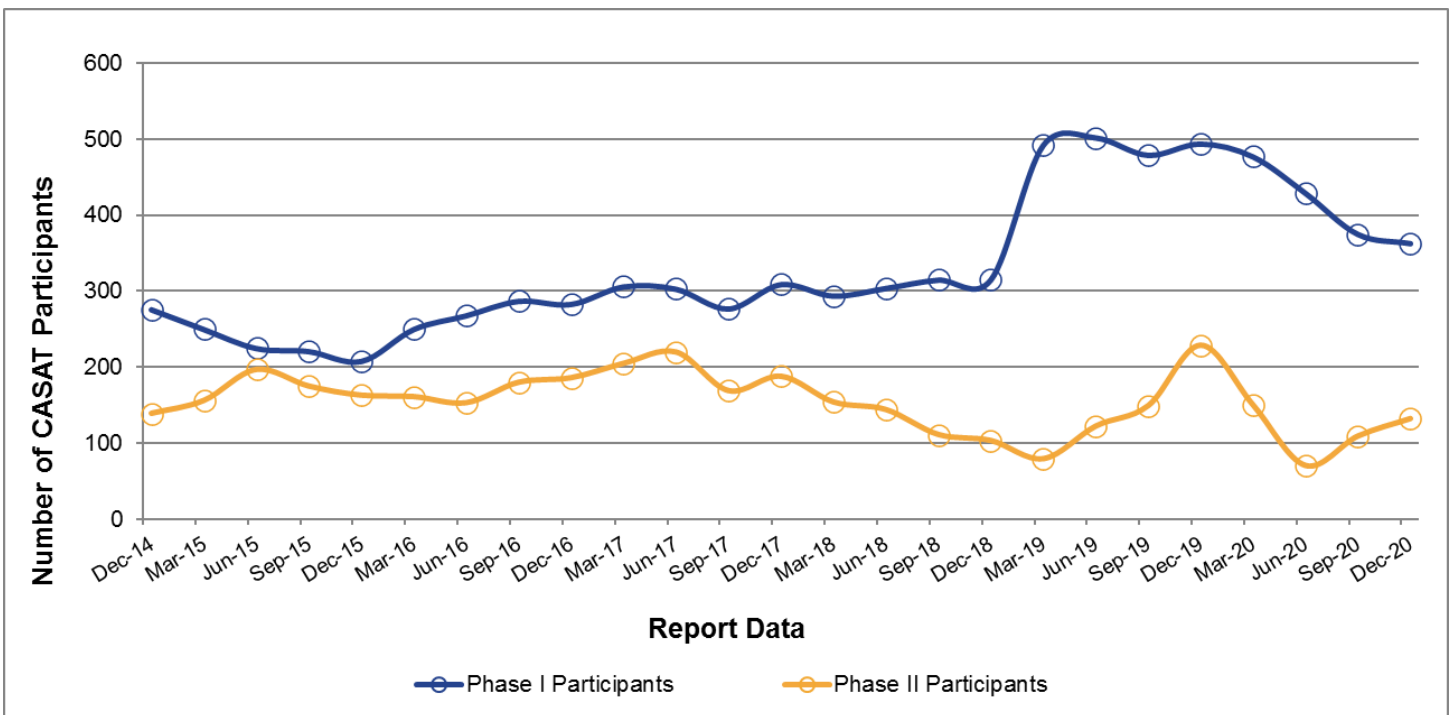
- As of July 1, 2020, 81% of all CASAT program beds were filled with participants. Albion was operating at 62% capacity, Marcy was at 70% capacity, while Hale Creek was at 85% capacity (see Table 1.2).

Recent declines in the number of incarcerated individuals eligible for the CASAT program were a consequence of the sweeping Drug Law Reform Act of 2009. Elements of this law encouraged the expansion of Drug Courts and community-based substance abuse treatment in order to divert drug offenders from NYSDOCCS incarceration. Since the Sentencing Reform Act (SRA) of 1995, approximately **70% to 80%** of CASAT participants have been drug offenders; therefore, any decrease in drug offender commitments to NYSDOCCS would reasonably be expected to impact the availability of potential participants for the program. The number of drug offenders committed to DOCCS in 2020 (872) was the lowest recorded since the CASAT program started in 1990 and the lowest since 1978. This was a 65% (-1,648) decrease from 2019 and is attributed to similar decrease in new commitments in 2020 due, in part, to pandemic-related court processes and alternative sentencing (see Appendix B).

## CASAT PHASE I and PHASE II QUARTERLY TRENDS: 2015-2020

- Focusing on the most recent years of the CASAT program (2015 - 2020), Table 1.3 and Figure 1.2 present quarterly Phase I and Phase II trends.
- Since 2015, the total number of Phase I participants has generally increased, from 276 at the end of 2014 to 363 at the end of 2020 (+32%).
- The proportion of females in Phase I was approximately 10% at the beginning of 2015 and increased to a high of 20% in October 2015. Females represented 13% of Phase I participants at the end of 2020.
- Between 2015 and 2020, the number of CASAT Phase 2 participants has varied. It ranged from a high of 229 participants at the end of 2019 to a low of 70 in July 2020. On January 1, 2021, there were 132 Phase 2 participants. (Table 1.3).
- Lincoln Correctional Facility closed on September 1, 2019, and Phase II participants were transferred to a new program at Queensboro. An additional Phase II program began at Collins Correctional Facility in October 2019.

**Figure 1.2**  
**CASAT Participants 2015-2020**



**Table 1.3  
CASAT Phase I and Phase II Population: Calendar Years 2015-2020**

REPORT DATE	TOTAL PHASE I PARTICIPANTS				PHASE II PARTICIPANTS	
	Male	%	Female	%	Total	Total
12/26/2014	249	90.2%	27	9.8%	276	139
4/3/2015	220	88.0%	30	12.0%	250	156
7/6/2015	196	87.1%	29	12.9%	225	197
10/7/2015	176	79.6%	45	20.4%	221	175
1/1/2016	178	85.6%	30	14.4%	208	163
4/2/2016	213	85.2%	37	14.8%	250	161
7/2/2016	231	86.2%	37	13.8%	268	153
10/1/2016	250	87.1%	37	12.9%	287	180
1/1/2017	244	86.2%	39	13.8%	283	186
4/2/2016	213	85.2%	37	14.8%	250	161
7/2/2016	231	86.2%	37	13.8%	268	153
10/1/2016	250	87.1%	37	12.9%	287	180
1/1/2017	244	86.2%	39	13.8%	283	186
4/1/2017	267	87.3%	39	12.7%	306	205
7/1/2017	266	87.8%	37	12.2%	303	220
10/1/2017	237	85.6%	40	14.4%	277	169
1/1/2018	269	87.1%	40	12.9%	309	188
4/1/2018	256	87.1%	38	12.9%	294	154
7/1/2018	266	87.5%	38	12.5%	304	144
10/1/2018	259	82.2%	56	17.8%	315	111
1/1/2019	259	82.2%	56	17.8%	315	103
4/1/2019	443	90.0%	49	10.0%	492	79
7/1/2019	446	88.8%	56	11.2%	502	122
10/1/2019	430	89.8%	46	9.6%	479	149
1/1/2020	437	88.5%	57	11.5%	494	229
4/1/2020	429	89.9%	48	10.1%	477	150
7/1/2020	292	68.1%	37	8.6%	429	70
10/1/2020	330	88.0%	45	12.0%	375	109
1/1/2021	316	87.1%	47	12.9%	363	132

**CASAT PHASE II ----CONTINUING SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT**

- After participating in an intensive, residential, therapeutic community-based substance abuse treatment component in Phase I, CASAT participants eligible to enter Phase II (work release) continue in substance abuse treatment. Males assigned to New York City work release facilities receive treatment services at their facility. Female work release participants from the downstate area are now assigned to Edgecombe Correctional Facility with outpatient treatment services provided by the Center for Community Alternatives.
- Starting in March 2007, incarcerated individuals entering CASAT Phase II in upstate work release facilities began receiving treatment services from community outpatient treatment providers. This program is federally funded under a collaborative project with the New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS). At the end of 2020, there were 47 participants attending weekly individual and/or group counseling sessions (see Table 1.4).



**Table 1.4  
Outpatient Substance Abuse Service Providers  
Upstate CASAT Phase II Participants  
December 31, 2020**

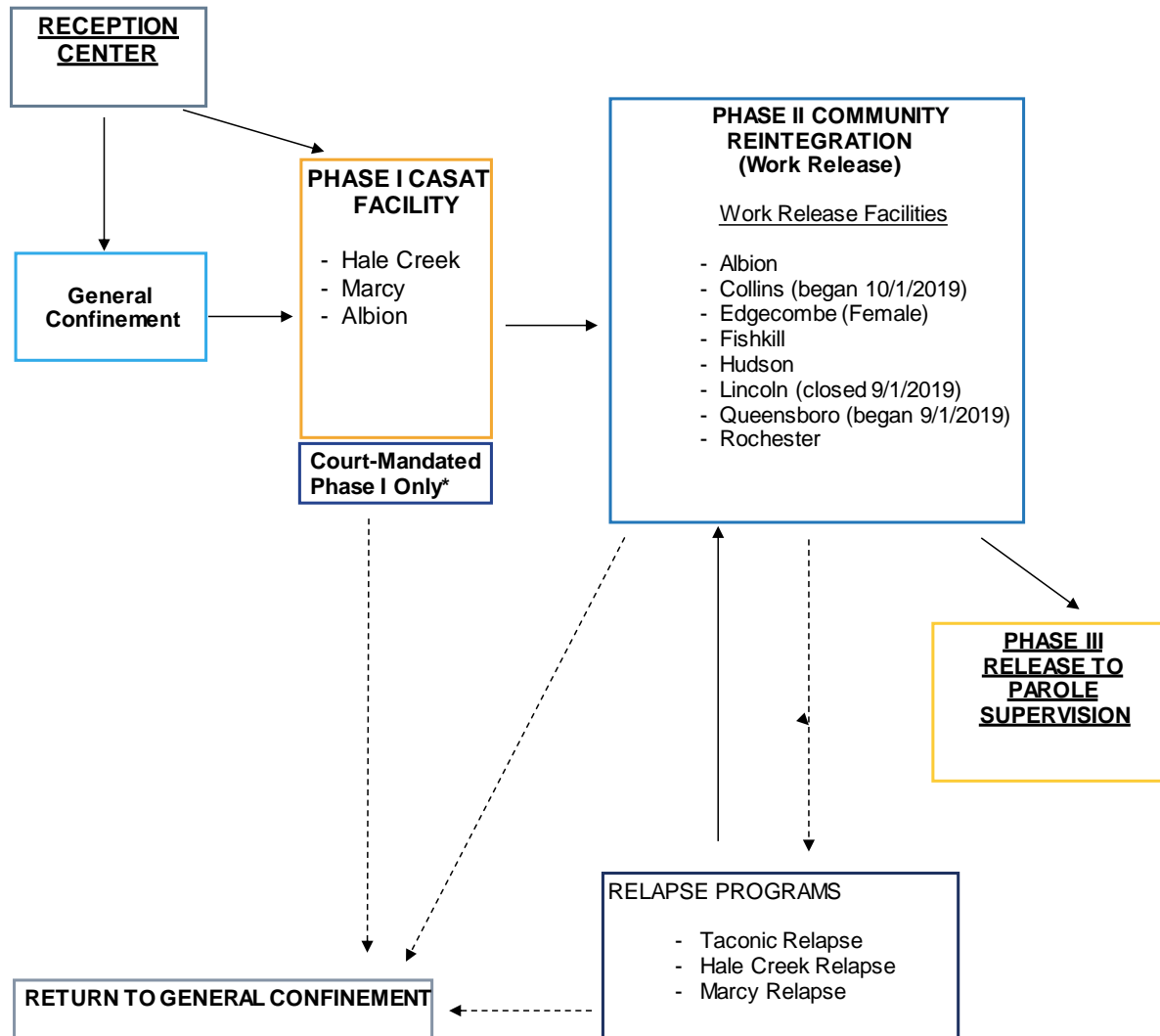
<b>Service Providers</b>	<b>Assigned Facility</b>	<b>Caseload</b>
<b>Albany Area</b>		
Conifer Park	Hudson	4
Twin County Recovery Services	Hudson	7
<b>Buffalo/Rochester Area</b>		
BestSelf	Rochester, Albion, & Collins	11
Genesee Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (GCASA)	Rochester & Albion	0
Spectrum	Rochester, Albion, & Collins	2
Strong Recovery	Rochester & Albion	11
<b>Utica/Syracuse Area</b>		
Insight House	Albion, Hudson & Rochester	0
Syracuse Behavioral	Albion, Hudson, Rochester & Collins	8
<b>Hudson Valley Area</b>		
Bridge Back	Fishkill	0
Catholic Charities	Fishkill	3
St. Johns Riverside	Fishkill	0
Turning Point	Fishkill	0
<b>New York City</b>		
Center for Community Alternatives	Edgecombe Female	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>47</b>

**CONCLUSION**

In view of the fact that approximately **70% to 80%** of the CASAT participants have been drug offenders since the Sentencing Reform Act (SRA) of 1995, the decline in the number of such offenders committed annually to NYSDOCCS in recent years has reduced the pool of incarcerated individuals eligible for the CASAT program. CASAT participation in 2020 decreased slightly compared to 2019. More former Phase I participants were eligible to participate in Phase II, and Hale Creek substantially increased utilization of their Phase I capacity.

## Appendix A

### NYSDOCCS Comprehensive Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment Program Diagram of Incarcerated Individuals Movement as of December 31, 2020



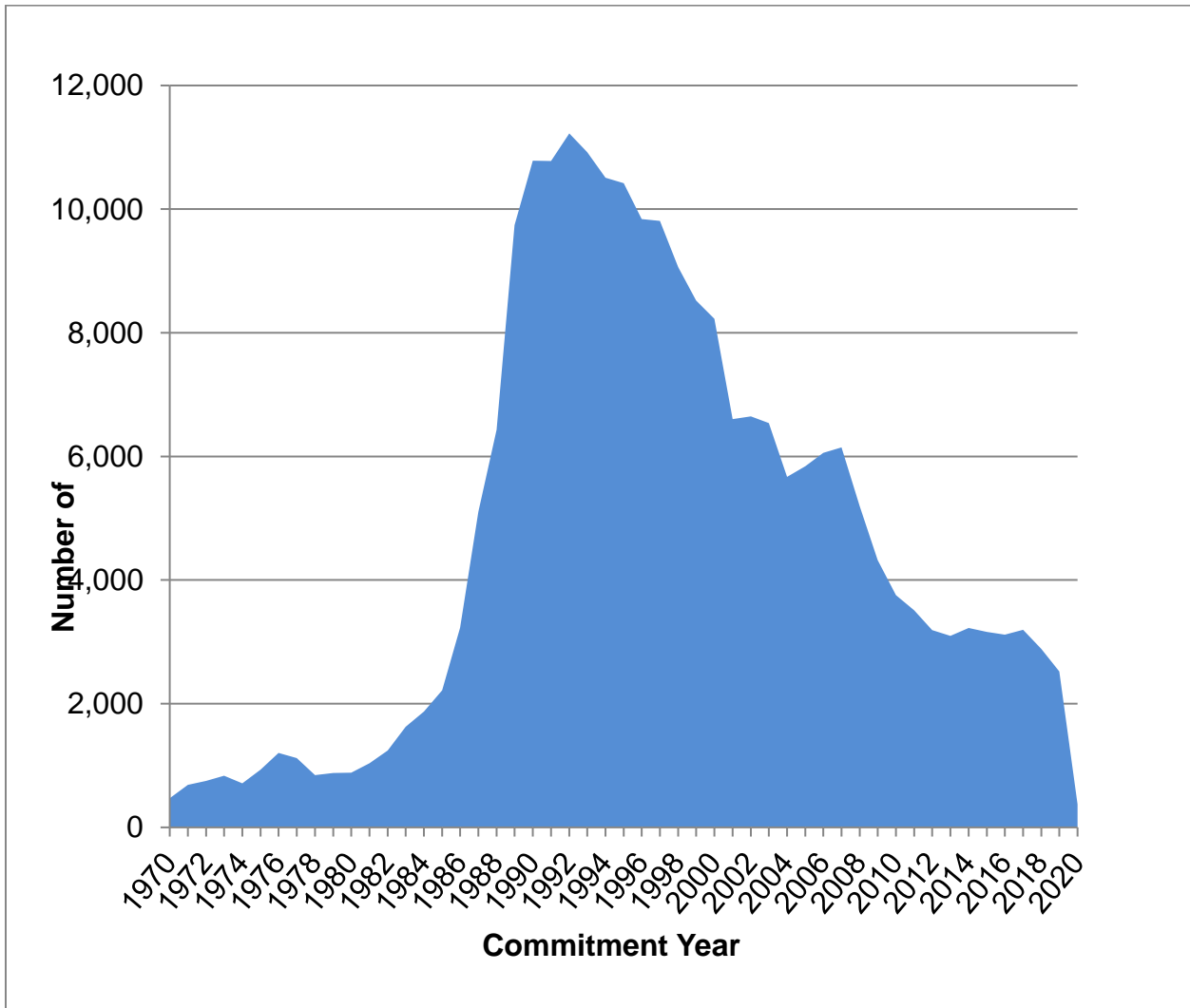
\*Successful court-mandated Phase I-only participants are either paroled from the CASAT facility or are returned to general confinement.

Dotted Lines (----) Indicate failure to complete program.

**Appendix B**  
**NYSDOCCS Annual Felony Drug Commitments and Total Commitments**  
**Calendar Years: 1970-2020**

<u>Year of Commitment</u>	<u>Drug Commitments</u>		<u>Total New Court Commitments</u>
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>
1970	470	11.1%	4,250
1971	690	13.5%	5,130
1972	751	13.2%	5,709
1973	834	12.9%	6,477
1974	713	10.7%	6,691
1975	933	12.6%	7,424
1976	1,203	14.9%	8,063
1977	1,122	13.3%	8,436
1978	844	11.7%	7,232
1979	880	11.6%	7,559
1980	886	11.1%	7,960
1981	1,036	10.1%	10,303
1982	1,243	11.9%	10,406
1983	1,625	13.0%	12,537
1984	1,874	15.3%	12,248
1985	2,218	17.9%	12,420
1986	3,228	21.7%	14,901
1987	5,106	32.6%	15,654
1988	6,432	37.2%	17,308
1989	9,742	45.3%	21,518
1990	10,784	46.7%	23,115
1991	10,778	44.7%	24,116
1992	11,225	44.6%	25,155
1993	10,920	43.9%	24,897
1994	10,508	45.4%	23,153
1995	10,418	45.3%	22,981
1996	9,841	46.4%	21,192
1997	9,810	47.2%	20,804
1998	9,063	46.6%	19,453
1999	8,520	44.5%	19,157
2000	8,225	44.3%	18,561
2001	6,606	40.0%	16,497
2002	6,647	39.1%	16,999
2003	6,540	37.7%	17,336
2004	5,667	34.6%	16,388
2005	5,839	35.7%	16,363
2006	6,060	35.9%	16,867
2007	6,147	35.6%	17,248
2008	5,190	32.8%	15,812
2009	4,324	28.2%	15,322
2010	3,756	25.5%	14,754
2011	3,510	24.2%	14,496
2012	3,189	22.7%	14,089
2013	3,096	22.6%	13,694
2014	3,225	24.3%	13,271
2015	3,165	25.0%	12,663
2016	3,117	24.2%	12,872
2017	3,118	24.3%	12,806
2018	2,893	24.9%	11,608
2019	2,520	24.2%	10,409
2020	872	22.1%	3,945
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>234,011</b>	<b>32.8%</b>	<b>713,895</b>

Appendix C  
Figure 2  
NYSDOCCS Felony Drug Commitments  
Calendar Years: 1970-2020



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