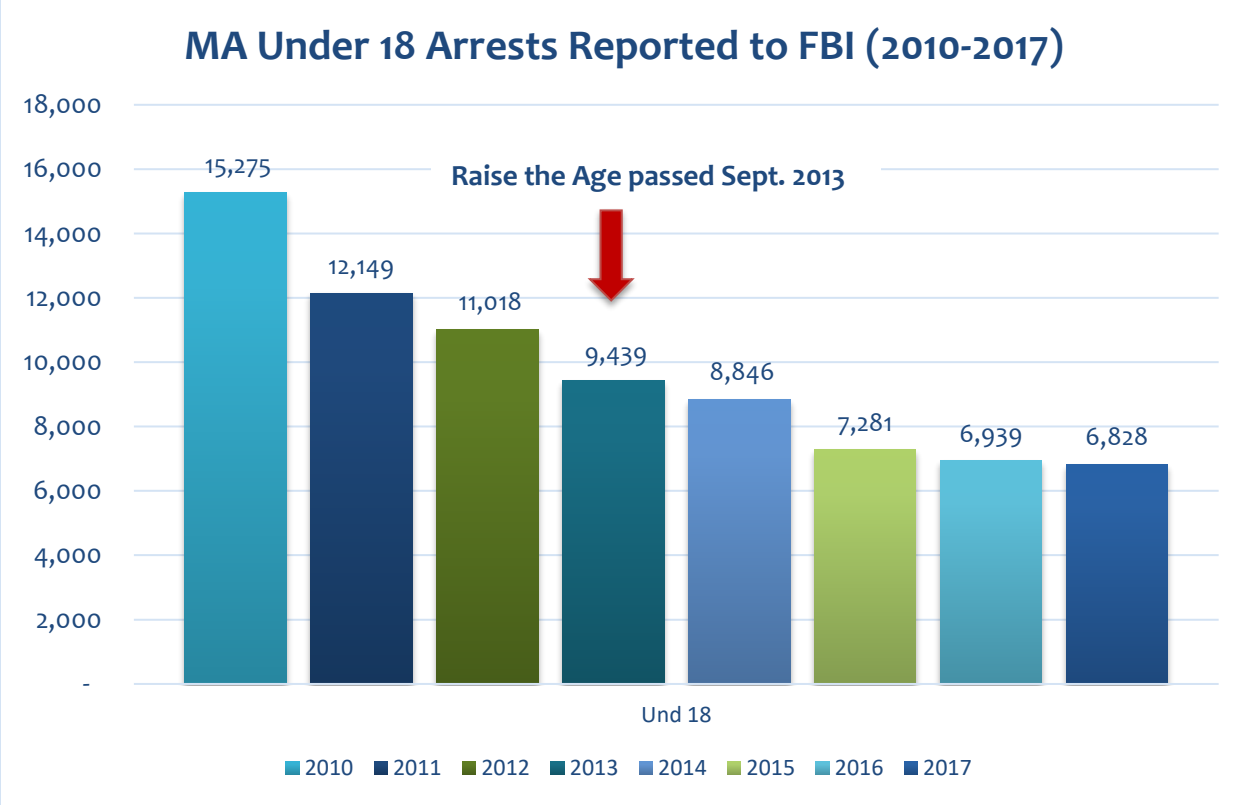
Summary of Key System Trends of Justice Involved Youth and Young Adults in Massachusetts

Updated April 2019

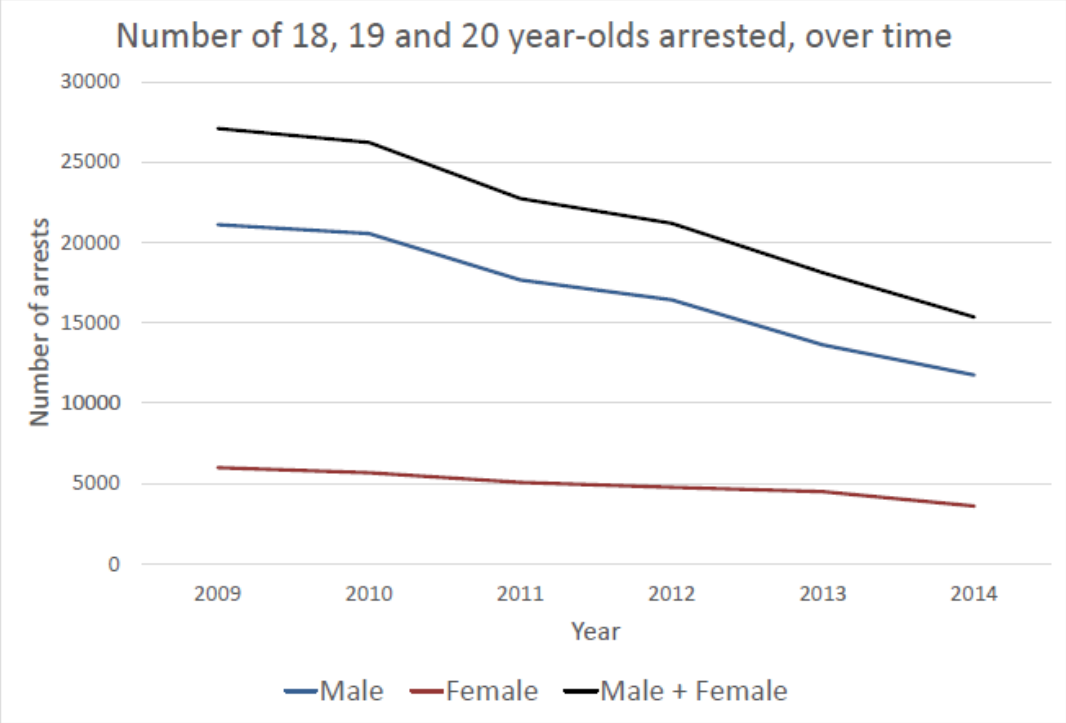
These data trends illustrate the declines in rates of crime among youth and young adults in Massachusetts over the past decade, and includes initial caseload impact estimates if 18, 19, and 20-year-olds are brought into the juvenile justice system.

Since raising the age in September of 2013, Massachusetts has seen a 38% decrease in juvenile crime:



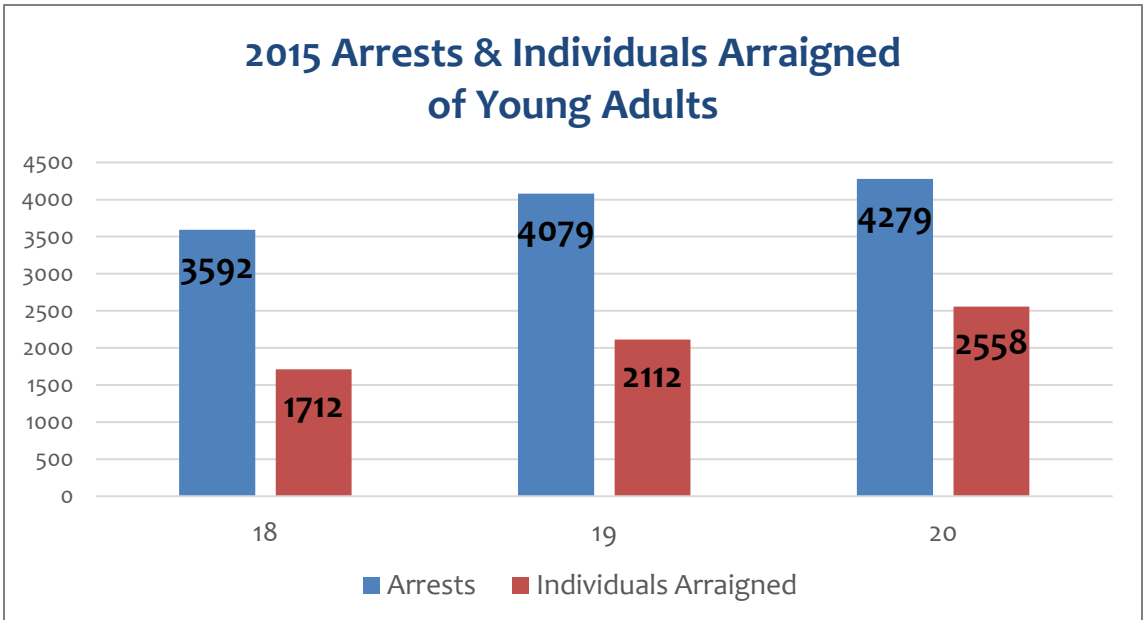
Source: Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) arrest data received by CfJJ from the FBI.

Arrest rates for 18, 19, and 20-year-olds have been decreasing over time:



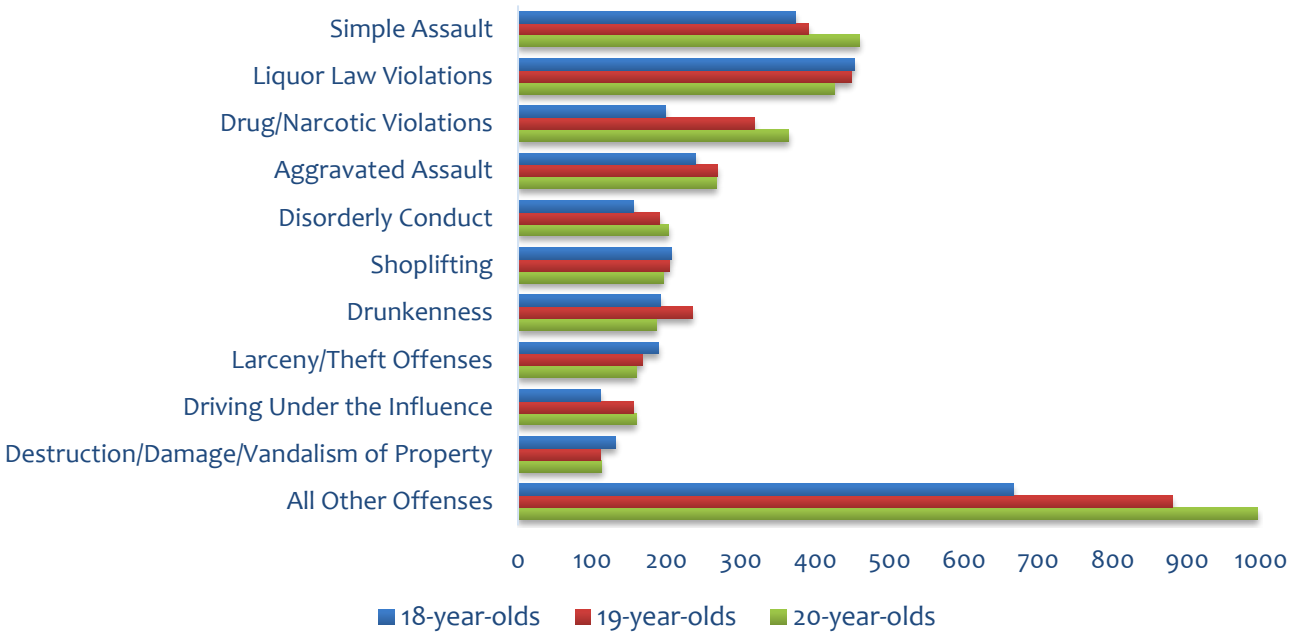
Source: Unified Crime Reports (UCR).

Far fewer individuals are arraigned than arrested:



Source: The 2015 arrest data includes NIBRS reporting jurisdictions, Boston, but does not include Lawrence (which does not currently report their data to EOPPS or the FBI) or additional smaller municipalities that have yet to convert to NIBRS.

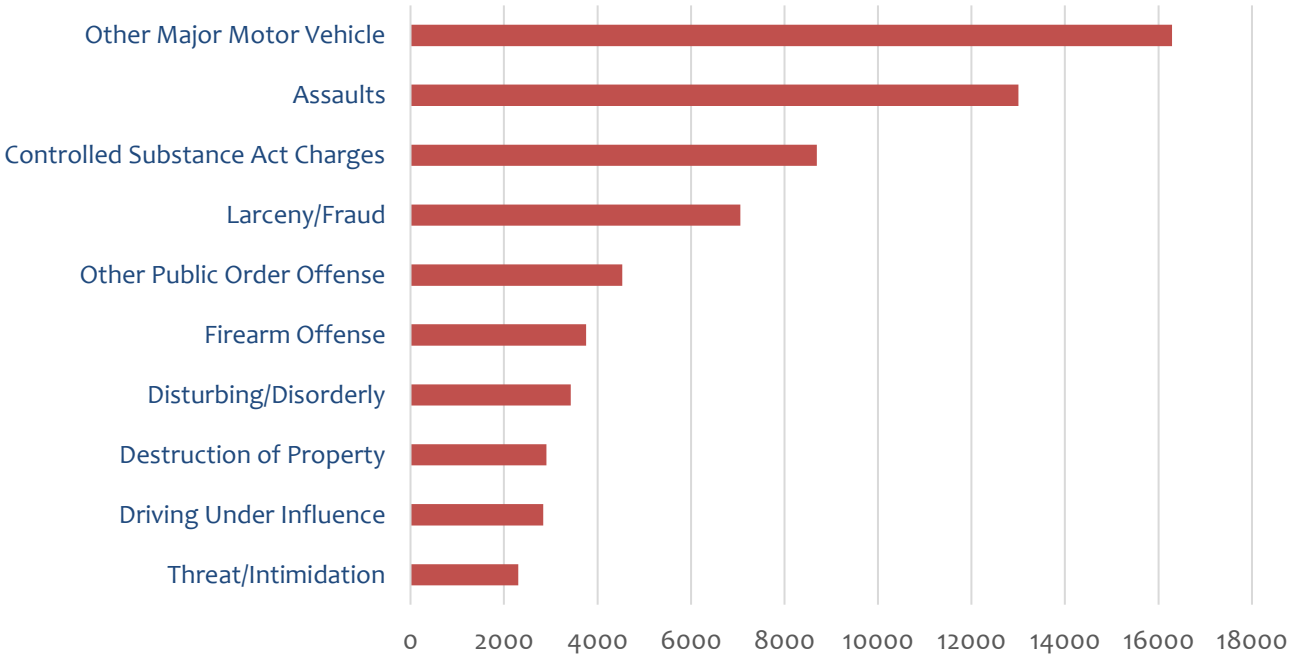
Arrest Profile of MA Youth 18-20 (CY2015)



Source: The 2015 arrest data includes NIBRS reporting jurisdictions, Boston, but does not include Lawrence (which does not currently report their data to EOPPS or the FBI) or additional smaller municipalities that have yet to convert to NIBRS.

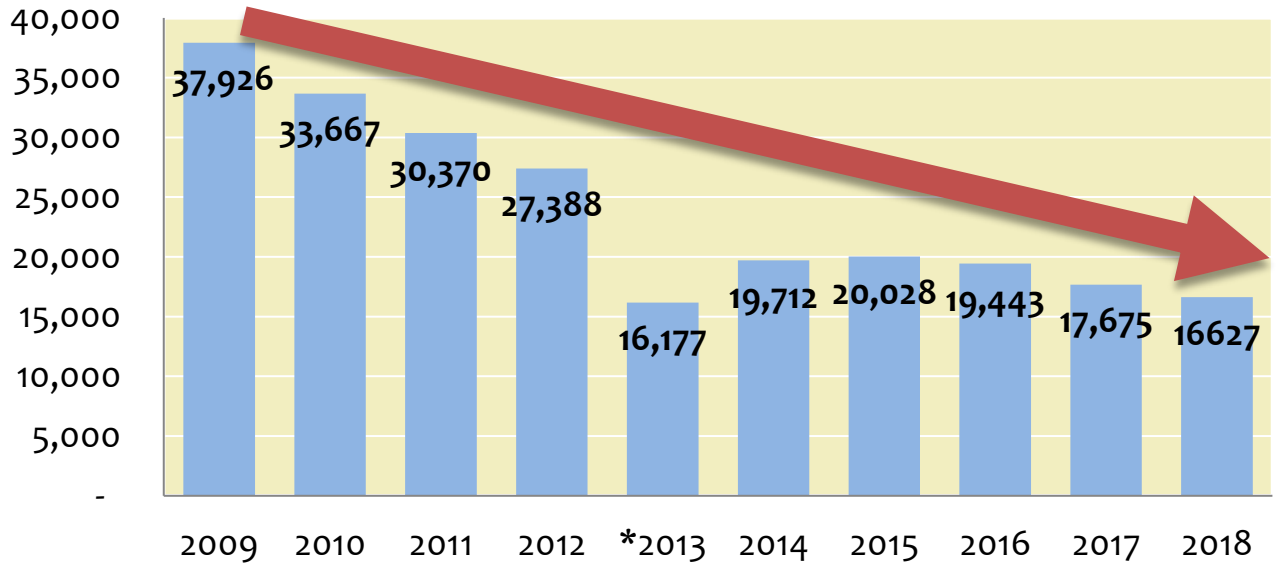
Most

Top 10 Charges in Court by Offense, All 18 - 24 (CY2015)



Source: Massachusetts Probation Service, by request

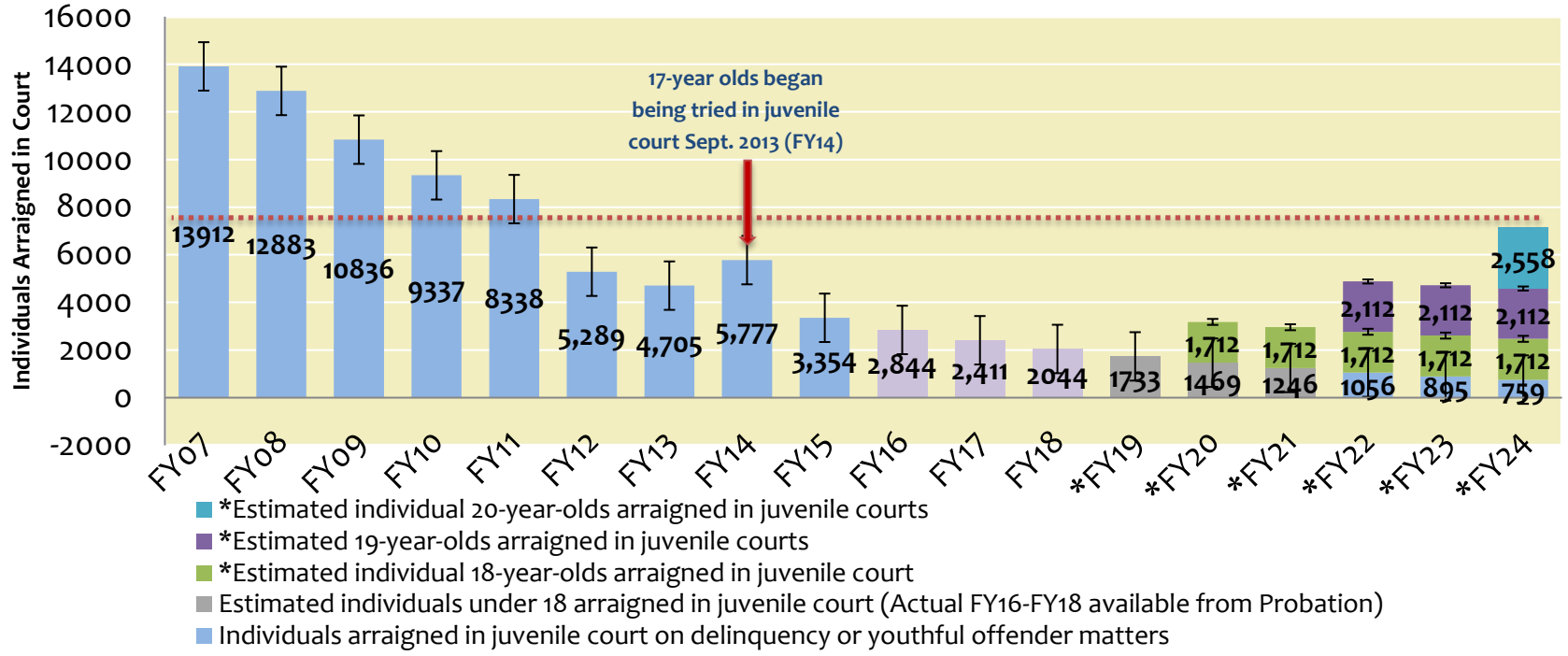
The Juvenile Court's caseloads have declined steadily over the last 10 years:



Totals include Juvenile Delinquency, Youthful Offender, CRA/CHINS Applications, and Care & Protection Petitions. The trial court uses these subtotals to summarize Juvenile Matters in their Summary of Case Filings by Type available at: http://www.mass.gov/courts/court-info/court-management/case-stats

**In FY2013, the Massachusetts Trial Courts changed the unit of reporting for juvenile delinquency and youthful offender cases was changed from charges to case filings. Source: Massachusetts Trial Courts, available at http://www.mass.gov/courts/court-info/court-management/case-stats*

There is capacity in the Juvenile Courts to Handle 18 - 20-Year-Olds:

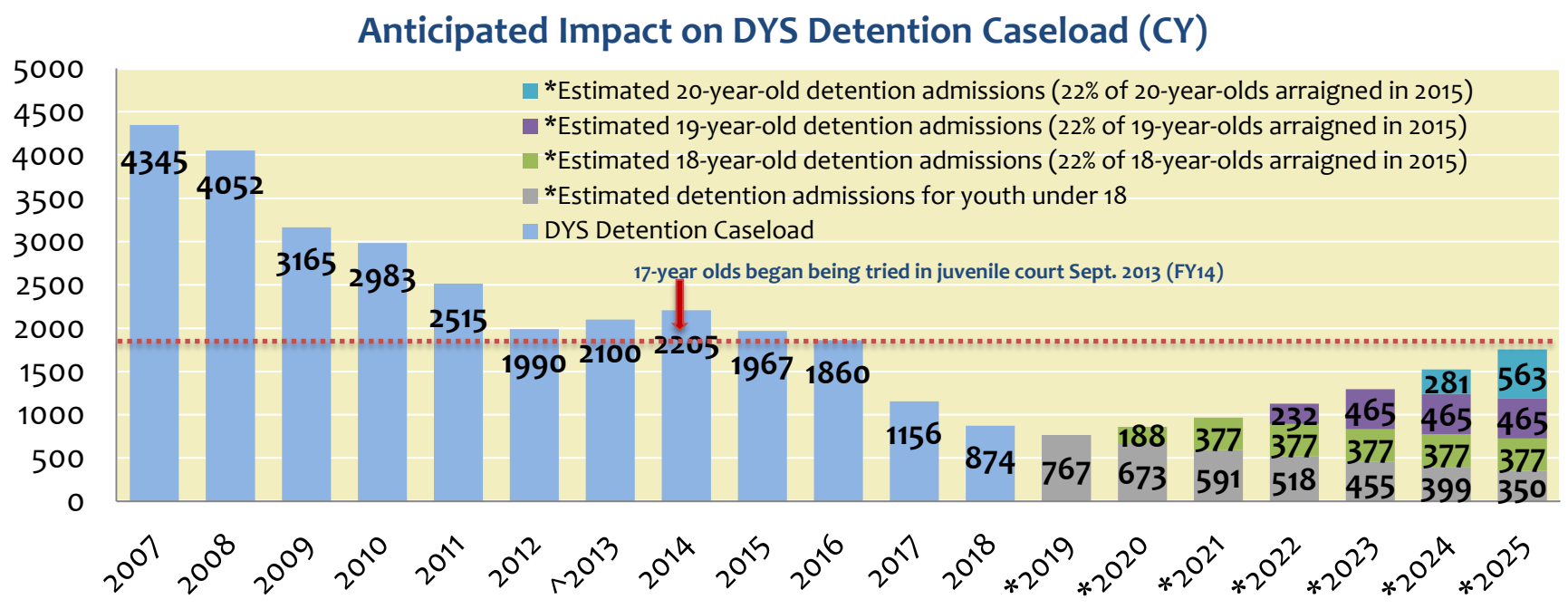


Source: Massachusetts Probation Service, by request

** Estimated values for 2016 – 2024:*

- Under 18 Estimates: calculated based on average annual reductions (15%) in juvenile arraignments since 2009. Probation should have actual (not estimated) data for FY16-18.
- In 2015, there were 1,712 18-year-olds, 2,112 19-year-olds, and 2,558 20-year-olds arraigned in MA (Source: Massachusetts Probation Service). Relying on these values likely overestimates the actual arraignment numbers, as the young adult caseload has been declining over the past decade as well.

Anticipated Impact of Including 18, 19, and 20-Year-Olds on the Department of Youth Services:



Sources:

– DYS Detention Caseload data from: 2007 - 2012 from Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, Massachusetts FFY2015 Three Year Plan, p.23, available at http://www.mass.gov/eopss/docs/ogr/justiceprev/fy2015-jjac-threeyrplan.pdf; 2013 – 2018 from DYS by request.

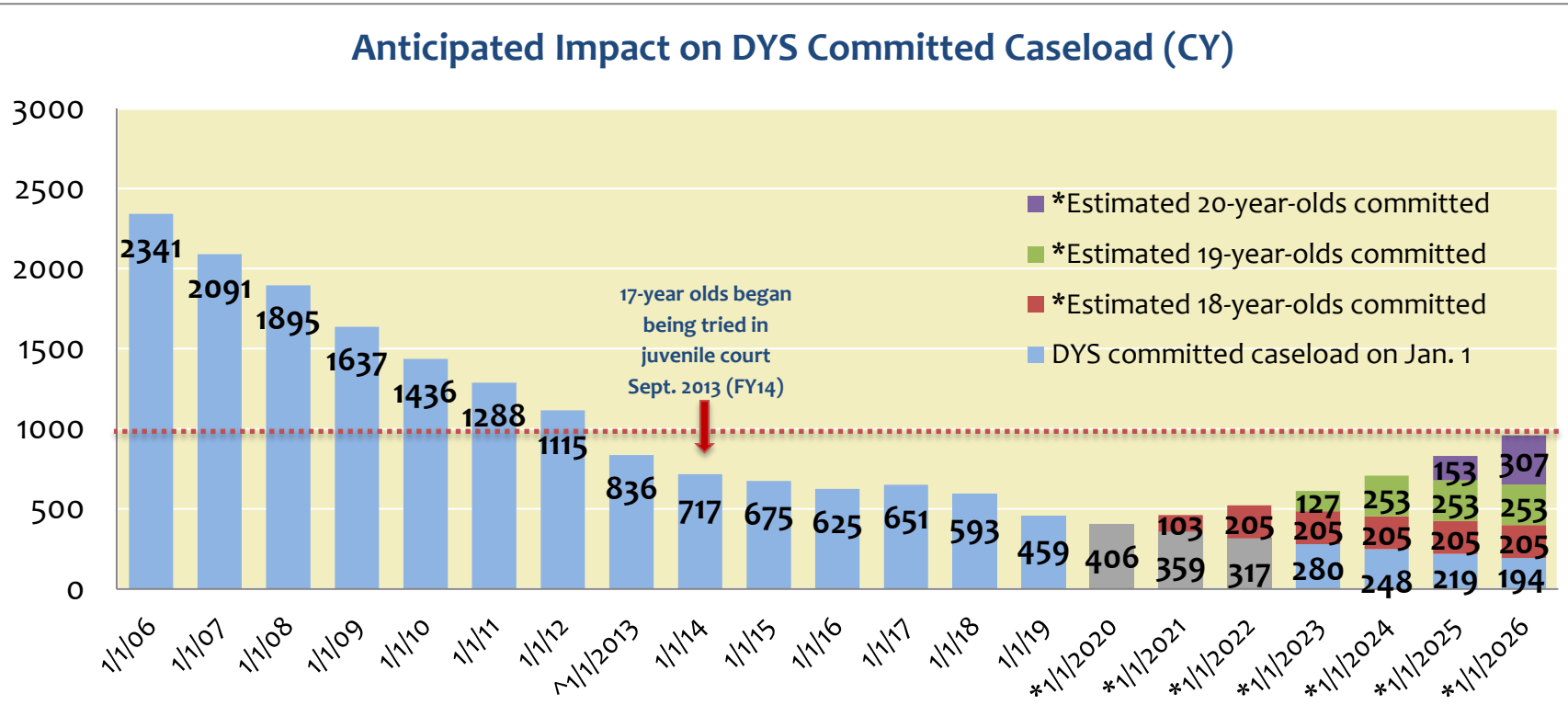
**Estimated values for 2019 – 2025:*

– Under 18: Trends based on average annual reductions in juvenile detentions since 2009 (12%).

The projections for 18, 19, and 20-year-olds shown are based on estimates if the legislation passed with a phased rollout, raising the age to include 18-year-olds on July 1, 2020, 19-year-olds on July 1, 2022, and 20-year-olds on July 1, 2024.

CfJJ used 2015 individual arraignment numbers from MA Probation Service to estimate the percentage of 18, 19, and 20-year-olds who would be detained. The projected values are based on national research by the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) which found that, on average, juvenile courts detain youth in approximately 22% of cases. *See* Juvenile Court Statistics 2014, p.34, available at http://www.ncjj.org/pdf/jcsreports/jcs2014.pdf. Massachusetts rates may differ. Unlike the adult system, the juvenile system has taken steps to decrease the inappropriate use of detention by utilizing risk-based assessments and actively exploring alternatives to detention.

Because of the phased rollout starting on July 1, 2020, the first year of implementation only includes half of the total annual caseload estimate (e.g. with 1,712 as the estimate for 18-year-olds arraigned, and 22% estimated detention rate, the 2019 projection is for the half of the projected annual caseload).



** Estimated values for 2018 – 2026: The projections shown are based on estimates if the legislation passed with a phased rollout, raising the age to include 18-year-olds on July 1, 2020, 19-year-olds on July 1, 2022, and 20-year-olds on July 1, 2024.*

- Under 18: Trend line calculated based on average annual reduction (12%) in juvenile commitments since 2009.
- CfJJ's estimate of the number of 18, 19, and 20 year olds who will be committed is based on historical rates of sentencing: 12% of 17- and 18-year-olds were sentenced to HOCs or to DOC in 2009. This is slightly higher than the 2015 juvenile rate of commitment of 10.3% (calculation based on % individuals juveniles arraigned in 2015 resulting in new DYS Commitments, 345/3,354 = 0.1029 or 10.3%). We opted to use the more conservative estimated rate of 12%, multiplied by 2015 data of 18-, 19-, and 20- year-old individuals arraigned to project commitment numbers for 2016 – 2018. We do not have more recent data for 2015 HOC/DOC commitments broken down by age.
- Because of the phased rollout starting on July 1, 2020, the first year of implementation only includes half of the total annual caseload estimate (e.g. with 1,712 as the estimate for 18-year-olds arraigned, and 12% estimated commitment rate, the 1/1/2020 projection is for half of the projected annual caseload).