

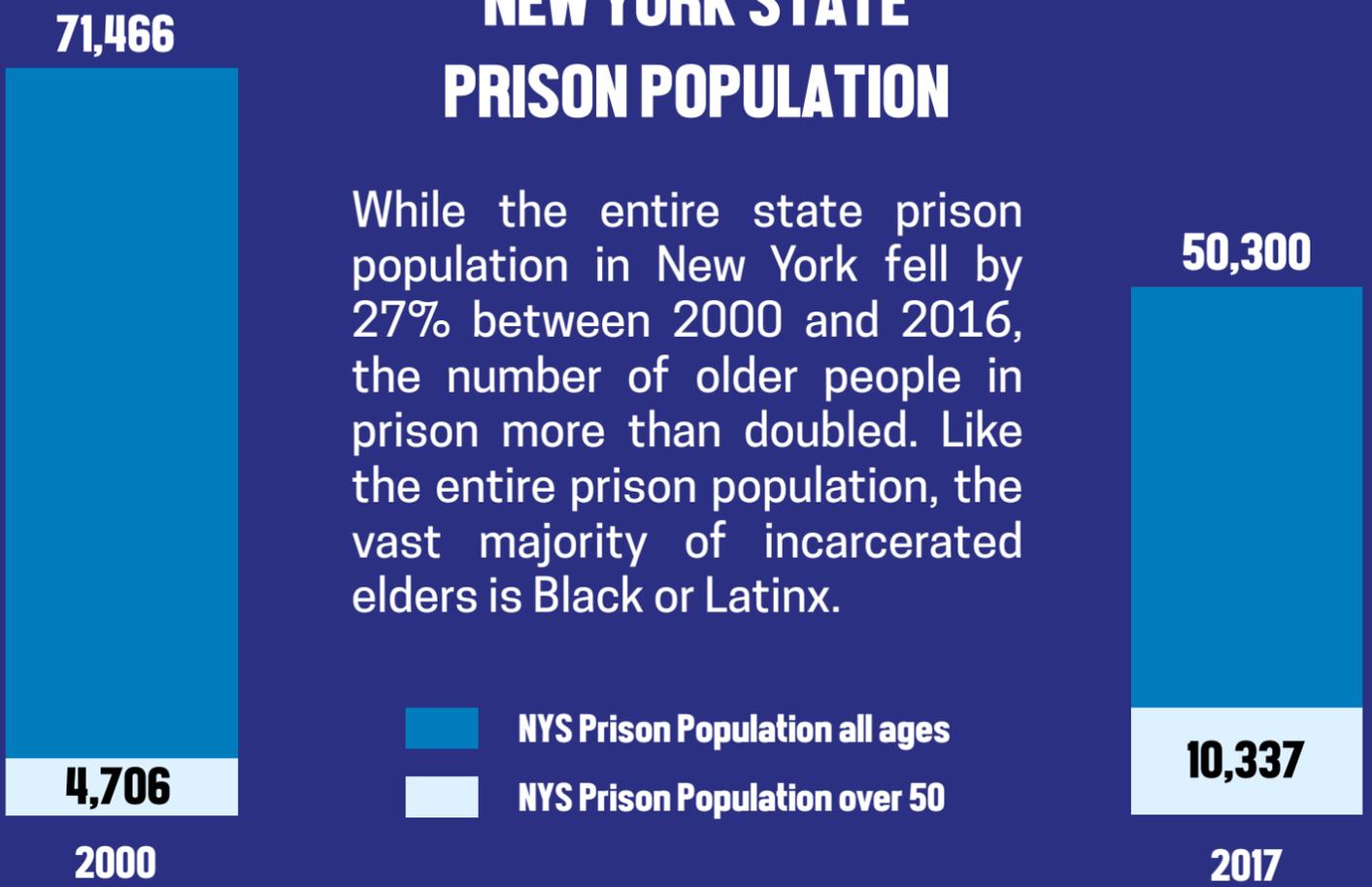
# NEW YORK STATE'S MASS INCARCERATION OF OLDER PEOPLE



In the Empire State, 1 in 5 people in state prison are aged 50 or older

## NEW YORK STATE PRISON POPULATION

While the entire state prison population in New York fell by 27% between 2000 and 2016, the number of older people in prison more than doubled. Like the entire prison population, the vast majority of incarcerated elders is Black or Latinx.



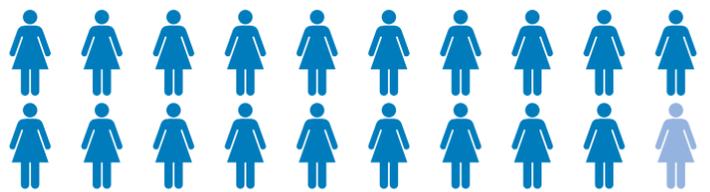
## WHY ARE NYS PRISONS GRAYING?

### LONGER SENTENCES

- In 2000, the average minimum sentence of people in NYS prisons was 87 months. By 2016, it was 124 months.
- **9,500 currently incarcerated people (18% of the prison population) have a sentence of life (either with or without the possibility of parole), and more than 3,000 people have already served at least 20 consecutive years in prison.**
- After serving their minimum sentence, many older people face decades more time because the State Board of Parole, which should release them, refuses to do so.

### PAROLE DENIALS

- The Board interviews upwards of 100 people per day, 11,000 people per year, mostly via video conference in 5 to 30 minute hearings.
- The Board **denies roughly 80% of parole applicants**, most often based on one unchangeable factor: the nature of their crime. Despite older people's low, if any, risk to public safety, they are denied as often—and even more often—as everyone else.



Older adults have the lowest recidivism rates. Just 5% aged 50 and older are newly committed to prison.

**THE COMBINATION OF LONG SENTENCES & FREQUENT PAROLE DENIALS LEADS TO THE PROLONGED IMPRISONMENT OF OUR ELDERS & THE EXPANSION OF MASS INCARCERATION**

### DEATH

Between 2009 and 2012, the vast majority of the 501 incarcerated people who died while in confinement in a NYS prison were aging or elderly, a number representing more than double the 184 people who were capitally punished nationwide during the same four year period.

### THE IMPACT

Longterm incarceration places major strains on families and often means that incarcerated people outlive their loved ones while in confinement. In 2016, 60% of incarcerated people indicated being a parent at the time of their conviction.

### FAMILIES



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