

TEXAS COMMISSION ON JAIL STANDARDS

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March 18, 2026

The Honorable Daryl Melton
Sabine County Judge
201 Main Street - PO Box 716
Hemphill, TX 75948

and

Sheriff George Griffith
Sabine County Sheriff
PO Box 848
Hemphill, TX 75948

Dear Judge Melton and Sheriff Griffith,

Reference your request for a facility needs analysis. Attached are our findings in report form. This analysis is not a directive, but a tool in guiding you as you plan for a new facility. Local community standards should be applied to these findings to determine the final scope of your construction project.

Please contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Ricky Armstrong
Interim Executive Director

Sheriff Kelly Rowe, Chair
Dr. Esmail Porsa, M.D., Vice-Chair
Judge Joseph "Joe" Fauth, III, Plantersville

Sheriff Richard Kirkpatrick, Kingsville
Ross Reyes, Melissa
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"The Commission on Jail Standards welcomes all suggestions and will promptly respond to all complaints directed against the agency or any facilities under its purview"
To empower local government to provide safe, secure and suitable local jail facilities through proper rules and procedures while promoting innovative programs and ideas

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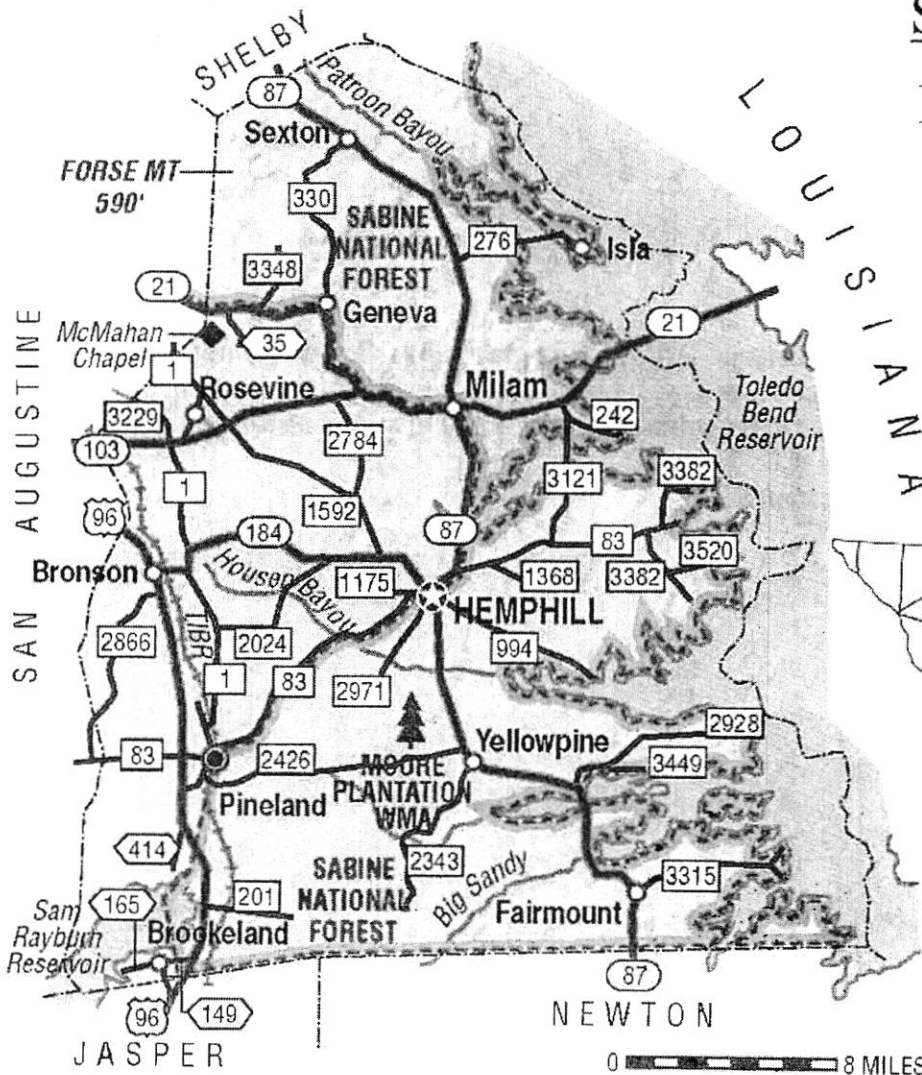


FACILITY NEEDS ANALYSIS

TEXAS COMMISSION ON
JAIL STANDARDS

SABINE COUNTY
HEMPHILL, TEXAS

MARCH 18, 2026



Sabine County © Texas Almanac

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to evaluate future county jail capacity needs for Sabine County. Information maintained by the Commission and data provided by the Texas Demographic Center, the U. S. Census Bureau and the Sabine County Sheriff's Office are utilized in this report. In addition, historical jail population trends are presented and assist in predicting future needs.

Review of the statewide adult incarceration system provides perspective for determining the needs of counties. The availability of beds in the state prison system directly affects populations in county jails and has in previous years created a higher county jail population.

The estimated capacity recommended in this report is not a directive as to what capacity a facility must be designed. Local community standards should be applied to these findings as well as your jail and prison movement status to determine the final scope of your construction project.

CURRENT JAIL CONDITIONS

Sabine County currently operates one jail facility, Sabine County Jail, which is located at 310 Main St, Hemphill, TX 75948. The jail, originally constructed in 1983 with a design capacity of 17 beds.

The Sabine County Jail has a total capacity of 21 beds, consisting of 18 beds across four multiple-occupancy cells and three individual separation cells. The jail also maintains one holding cell and one detoxification cell, each accommodating up to three individuals for intake and processing. Additionally, the county currently holds a variance from allowing for four supplemental bunks to be used for up to 48 hours at a time; this temporary arrangement is scheduled for review at the May 2026 Commission meeting.

Of the 21 total beds, three are designated for female inmates. As of January 2026, the Sabine County Jail reported an average daily inmate population of 30 with an average of 15 inmates that are currently housed outside the county.

Sabine County Jail also provides support to various local, state, and federal agencies. These include but are not limited to: Sabine County Sheriff's Office; Hemphill Police Department; Pineland Police Department; Texas Department of Public Safety; Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; Sabine County Constable Precinct 1 and Sabine County Constable Precinct 2; U.S. Forest Service; Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission; Pineland Independent School District; and Hemphill Independent School District.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

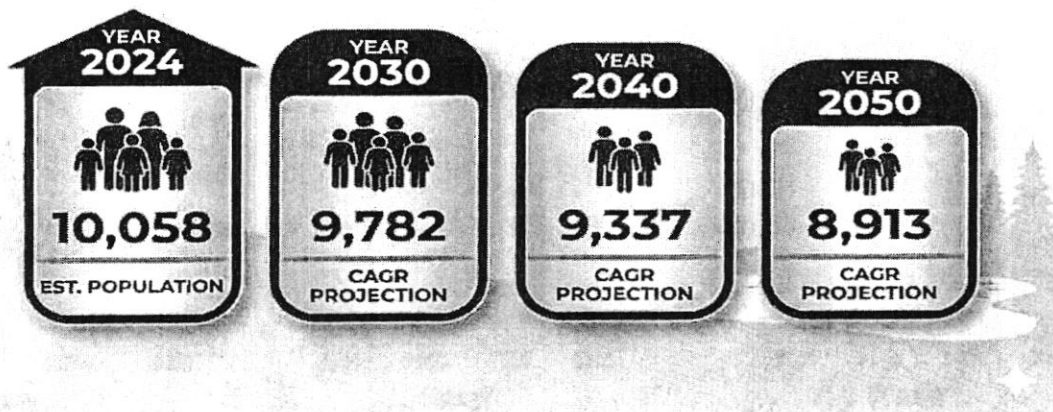
Information provided in this section relates to population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Texas Demographic Center (TDC) and an analysis of this data by the Texas Commission on Jail Standards. According to the 2020 census data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, Sabine County was home to approximately 9,894 residents, which represents a -1.09% decrease from the 2010 population of 10,834. The estimate from 2020 to 2024 shows a 1.7% increase, with the 2024 U.S. Census Bureau estimating Sabine County's population at 10,058 residents.

The Texas Demographic Center (TDC) estimated Sabine County's population at 9,894 in 2020. According to 2025 estimates, the population has since grown to 9,984 marking a 1.00% increase. Looking forward, TDC projections indicate the county will decrease to 9,644 residents by 2030, 8,923 by 2040 and 8,194 by 2050. This trajectory represents a total projected growth of -22.9% over the (2020–2060) period.

To assist with forecasting future needs at the county's request, TCJS developed and applied a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) tool using U.S. Census Bureau data. While not commonly used in this context, CAGR offers a more accurate and consistent method for projecting Sabine County's population growth to support long-term planning. Based on population data from 2010 to 2026, the analysis determined a CAGR of -0.46%. If this trend continues, the county's population is projected to reach approximately 9,782 by 2030 and 9,337 by 2040.

The table below shows a scenario that utilizes the Sabine County's population and the projected growth until the year 2050 utilizing The U.S. Census Bureau 2020 data and Texas Commission on Jail Standards projection. The Commission uses a CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) formula in this scenario, which better accurately reflects the growth rate of the population over time, providing a reliable basis for forecasting future population trends.

SABINE COUNTY: POPULATION PROJECTIONS (2024-2050) - CAGR PROJECTION MODEL



*2024 - Date of Census

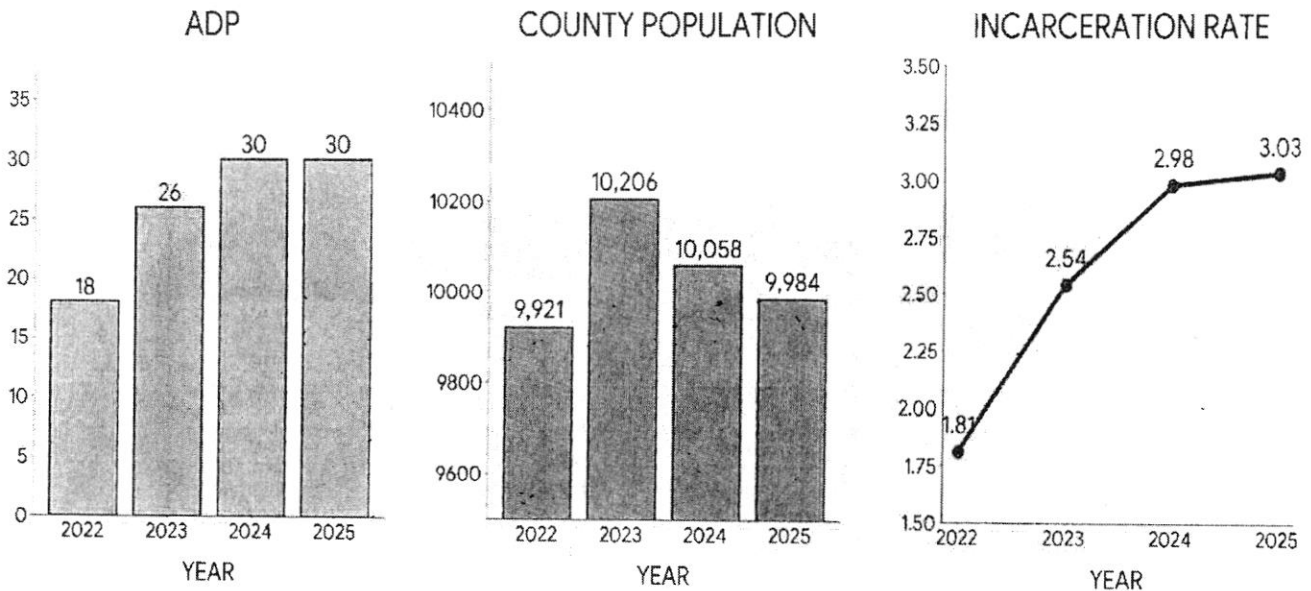
The projected population growth in Sabine County reflects increases across both male and female residents. While forecasts inherently involve uncertainties, such as changes in birth rates, death rates, immigration, and emigration, this analysis provides a solid foundation for planning future jail capacity and related county needs.

INCARCERATION RATE TRENDS

To calculate the incarceration rate, the average daily population (ADP) of the jail is divided by the total county population for the year utilizing projection the scenario (per information provided by the Sabine County Sheriff's Office). The 2022 to 2025 U.S Census Bureau population projections serve as a visual representation for your county's population trends over the last couple of years. The incarceration rate reflects the number of inmates housed per 1,000 people in the county.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>ADP</u>	<u>COUNTY POPULATION</u>	<u>INCARCERATION RATE</u>
2022	18	9,921	1.81
2023	26	10,206	2.54
2024	30	10,058	2.98
2025	30	9,984	3.03

Sabine County's incarceration rate in 2023, 2024 and 2025 was well below the statewide average of 2.22 per 1,000 residents. For this analysis, the 2025 local rate of 3.03 (0.00303) and U.S. Census Bureau projections will be used to estimate jail needs through 2050.



PEAK POPULATION FACTORS

To project future capacity needs for the jail, consideration is given to historical peak inmate populations. Peak populations represent those days in each month when the jail has the highest number of inmates. The peak population factor represents an additional percentage of beds that are needed in a jail to accommodate those days when the jail population is higher than average. To calculate the peak population factor for Sabine County, we utilize data provided by the Sheriff's Department.

The average peak population during the last twelve months was 34 while the average daily population (ADP) was 30; this represents a difference of four. To calculate the peak population factor, 34 is divided by the ADP of 30 which represents a factor of 1.13%, which will be utilized in calculating the projected capacity needs in the next section. It should be noted that the peak population of the jail during the last twelve months was 37 inmates which occurred in March of 2025, based upon Sabine County Sheriff's population report. The calculated factor demonstrates that the average daily population closely matches the average peak population, an uncommon situation for county jails.

PROJECTED CAPACITY NEEDS

Projected needs are based on the county incarceration rate, projected county population, the peak population factor, and a classification percentage.

Texas Commission on Jail Standards Scenario

In this scenario, the county population is multiplied by the incarceration rate of 3.03 to yield expected inmate population. A peak population percentage (1.13%) is then added to the anticipated inmate population which provides a minimum capacity projection. At this time, a classification percentage of (10%) is added to ensure a sufficient number of beds are provided for objective jail classification. The following table indicates projected future incarceration needs for Sabine County:

Texas Commission on Jail Standards Scenario

Year	Projected County Pop	Incarceration Rate	Projected Inmate Pop	Peak Population	Minimum Capacity	Classification	Total Cap	Suggested size
2030	9,644	2.99	28.84	3.75	32.58	3.26	36	48
2040	8,923	3.00	26.77	3.48	30.25	3.02	33	48
2050	8,913	3.00	26.74	3.48	30.22	3.02	33	48

RECOMMENDATION

The Texas Commission on Jail Standards Scenario indicates that Sabine County would need, at a minimum, 36 jail beds by the year 2030. Based on this information, and the 1:48 staff to inmate ratio, **we would recommend that consideration be given to constructing a facility consisting of no less than 48 beds, with the capability to expand in the future**; however, due to several factors such as the number of outstanding warrants, the design professional should also consider future planning and construction needs based upon past and predicted female incarceration rates (typically 20%) and variations in inmate classification.

To state our recommendation more specifically: (1) choose a site sufficient for growth; (2) design a jail that is truly expandable; (3) provide adequate service and support space in the initial design to allow for future expansion. We recommend this as the most effective and fiscally responsible approach to your incarceration needs.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Additional information received from the Sabine County Sheriff's Office and local agencies needs to be considered as the county plans for its correctional needs. The County Jail

Jail Conditions and Population Management

Firstly, The Sabine County Jail, originally constructed in 1983, has maintained continuous operations while facing significant capacity challenges. Although a variance was granted in 2023 to add four additional beds, which is scheduled for review in May 2026, the facility still cannot accommodate the current inmate population. This shortage necessitates housing inmates out-of-county on a daily basis, as the local infrastructure remains overextended. To manage this, the county utilizes pretrial release options, including personal recognizance bonds and electronic monitoring devices ordered by the presiding judge and overseen by the probation department. Additionally, while the county offers community service programs during sentencing, these are currently located outside of Sabine County. Addressing these facility limitations is a priority, especially given the 1,238 outstanding warrants that continue to put pressure on the local justice system.

Economic and Industrial Drivers

Secondly, the Sabine County economy and daytime population are primarily driven by the timber industry, anchored by two major lumber mills located in Pineland and Hemphill. Because the county's vast wooded areas are heavily logged to support these industrial hubs, there is a consistent influx of specialized contractors, log truck drivers, and mill workers that significantly increases the daytime population. This industrial activity, while vital for economic growth, creates a robust seasonal and transient workforce that increases the demand for local services and results in higher traffic volume along the heavy-use corridors of Highways 96, 87, 21, and 103.

Transportation Infrastructure and Connectivity

Thirdly, US Highway 96 and Highway 87: These are non-interstate primary arterials. During a Gulf Coast evacuation (such as for Hurricanes Ian or Beryl), these routes can see traffic volumes increase by 500% or more in a 24-hour period. With Highway 21 and Highway 103 serving as the primary east-west links to Louisiana, they facilitate a constant flow of timber industry logistics and out-of-state anglers, leading to higher-than-average road use compared to other rural Texas counties with similar populations.

While the Pineland Municipal Airport provides a landing strip for small private planes and general aviation, it is not a major transport hub for the general public. Instead, "boating traffic" acts as a secondary transportation system that significantly impacts the county. With over 50 public and private boat ramps accessing Lake Sam Rayburn and Toledo Bend, the movement of thousands of vessels during peak season creates a unique infrastructure demand. This water-based traffic doesn't just stay on the lake; it drives a constant cycle of "land-to-water" transport where trailers and oversized boat rigs put additional stress on the local county.

Recreational Tourism and Educational Influence

Finally, Sabine County is surrounded by Lake Sam Rayburn and Lake Toledo Bend, two widely popular black bass fishing destinations that attract major tournaments and thousands of anglers year round. This fishing, combined with the 28-mile Trail Between the Lakes and the vast Sabine National Forest, causes the county population to triple and even quadruple in size during major holidays and summertime weekends. Beyond its draw for boating, hunting, and camping, the county remains a vital transit hub where US Highway 96 and Highway 87 serve as the two major south-to-north evacuation routes for the East Texas Gulf Coast.

The Texas Commission on Jail Standards, the Texas Demographic Center, and the U.S. Census Bureau provide standardized statistical models that serve as baseline references. These figures represent current estimates and projections and should not be considered the sole or exhaustive basis for all future infrastructure or facility planning.

Please contact the Commission at the address below to obtain additional copies of this document.

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Appendix