

Inside the Portland, ME Holdroom: Volume, Transfers, and Shift in Maine's Detention Landscape

October 2022 – August 5, 2026

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Report Overview:

Currently, the only Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) facility in Maine is the “Portland, Maine Holdroom” (the Holdroom) — an [“administrative building”](#) for routine immigration check-ins and same day transfer-point for ICE, located at 40 Manson Libby Rd, Scarborough, ME. The building has three small, short-term holding cells; the facility itself is not designed for long-term holding.

Historically, those detained by ICE in Maine were held in Maine jails, most notably Cumberland County Jail (CCJ). In January 2026, the federal government abruptly stopped partnering with Cumberland County Jail to hold detainees after the Cumberland County Sheriff [publicly rebuked](#) the detention of his corrections officer recruit. Since then, ICE has detained [4 more corrections officers](#) from Cumberland County Jail.

Since the abrupt end of collaboration with CCJ, the Holdroom has continued to see an increase in detainee volume. While detainees are generally processed out of the Holdroom within 6 hours, some detainees have been held overnight.

After leaving the Holdroom, detainees are increasingly moved out of Maine and across the country, with frequent “transfers” between detention sites. Out-of-state transfer data in Figures 4 and 5 showcase how the Holdroom is part of a national detention system that moves people apprehended in Maine away from their state of residence and social support systems. As New Mainers are more quickly moved across the country — frequently to the American South — immigrant community members have reported a harder time coordinating legal representation and commissary support.

Looking ahead, ICE plans [“a lot more enforcement in Maine”](#) as well as a new facility in [Newport, Maine](#). These changes will likely impact how detainees are moved and held in Maine.

Methodology and Counting:

Source: Government data provided by ICE in response to a FOIA request to the Deportation Data Project and analyzed by the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition. The primary data set was ICE ERO/LESA-STU detention stint file, covering book-ins through August 5, 2026. Rows ICE's file flags as likely duplicates are excluded throughout.

This dataset presents data on detention stays and detention stints. An individual may have multiple detention stints as part of a detention stay, and multiple unique detention stays. There are 423 stays in the file that include a Portland Holdroom stint, 293 of them with a Holdroom book-in in 2026. Each is followed from the Holdroom onward and dated by the Holdroom book-in. In 6 stays, the person had been held somewhere else before the Holdroom; those earlier stops are not counted.

2026 is a partial year, and many stays have not yet ended: 79 of the 293 were still open on August 5, 2026. Where that biases a comparison, the caption says so. When stint data is evaluated, only completed stints are used.

Locations are the city and state in ICE records for each facility. Map positions are town centres, and mileage is a straight line from Scarborough, not driving distance.

These figures follow the detention stays of any individual who completed a detention stint in the Holdroom located in Scarborough, ME. They are not the same group as a count of people apprehended in Maine, which includes people who never passed through the Holdroom and leaves out people arrested elsewhere who did. The exception is the line in Figure 1, which shows the number of people apprehended in Maine by ICE and detained each month, from the Deportation Data Project's table linking arrests to detention stays. It is included for comparison with Holdroom use.

How To Read These Figures

Key Terms

- **Holdroom** — A short-term ICE processing room, not a detention facility. The Portland Holdroom is recorded in Scarborough under facility code POMHOLD.
 - **Stay** — One continuous period in ICE custody, from first book-in to final release, removal, or the end of the data.
 - **Stint / stop** — One detention period at one facility. A stay is made up of one or more stints; this document calls them stops, numbered from a holdroom.
 - **Transfer** — A move from one facility to the next within the same stay.
 - **First stop** — The facility a person was moved to directly from a holdroom.
 - **Still in custody** — A stay with no recorded final book-out as of August 5, 2026.
 - **Night Hold** - A detention stint occurring at part in whole between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. local time.
 - **Gulf South** - The geographic region containing Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Georgia, and Florida.
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Section 1: Holdroom Use Change Over Time

The section below uses ICE data from the Deportation Data Project to specifically look at usage of the Portland, ME Holdroom located in Scarborough, ME, particularly on: usage rate, stint duration, and overnight stays. Together, this data highlights how the Holdroom fits into Mainers' detention experiences – increasingly as a brief first stop on a detention journey across the United States (US).

Figure 1 • Holdroom Stints by Month • Oct 2022 – July 2026

Since February 2026, “People apprehended in Maine” and “Holdroom Stints” tightly align, suggesting most immigrants apprehended in Maine start their detention at the Portland Holdroom.

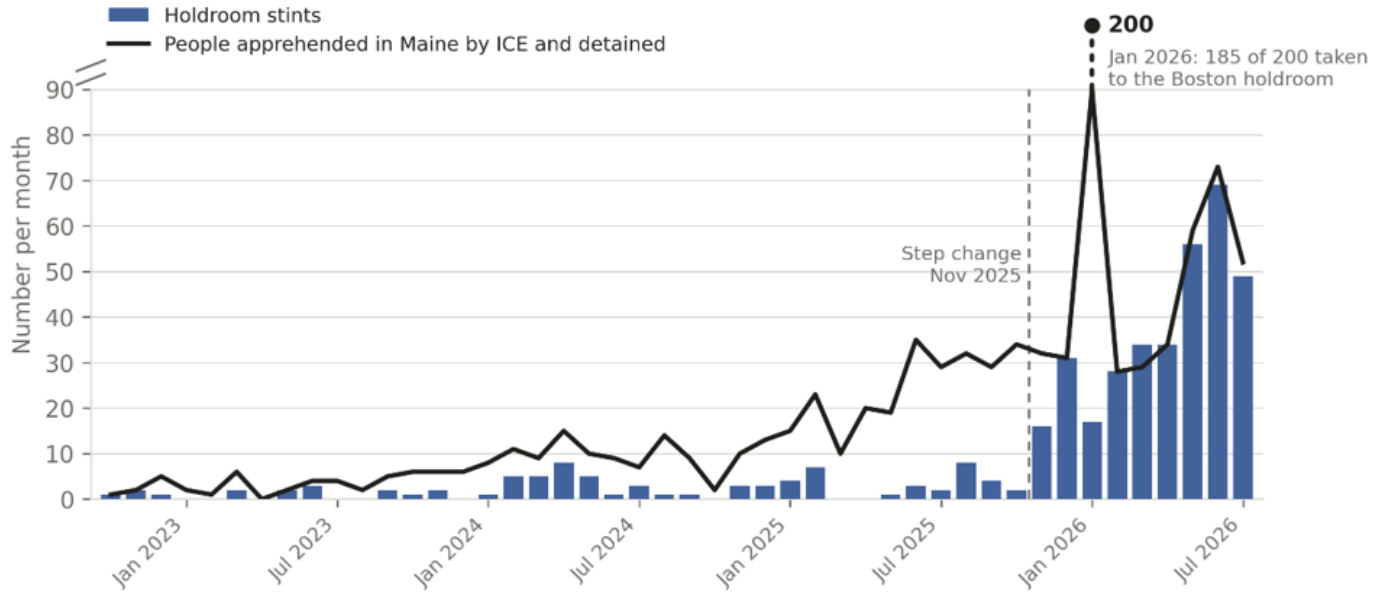
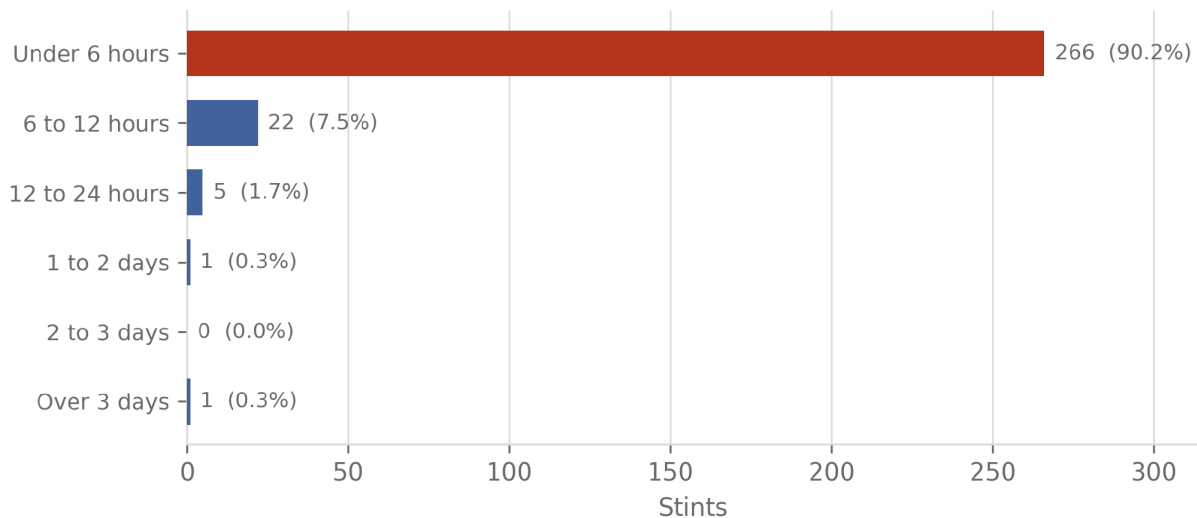


Figure 2 • Time Spent in Holdroom • Jan 1 – Aug 5, 2026

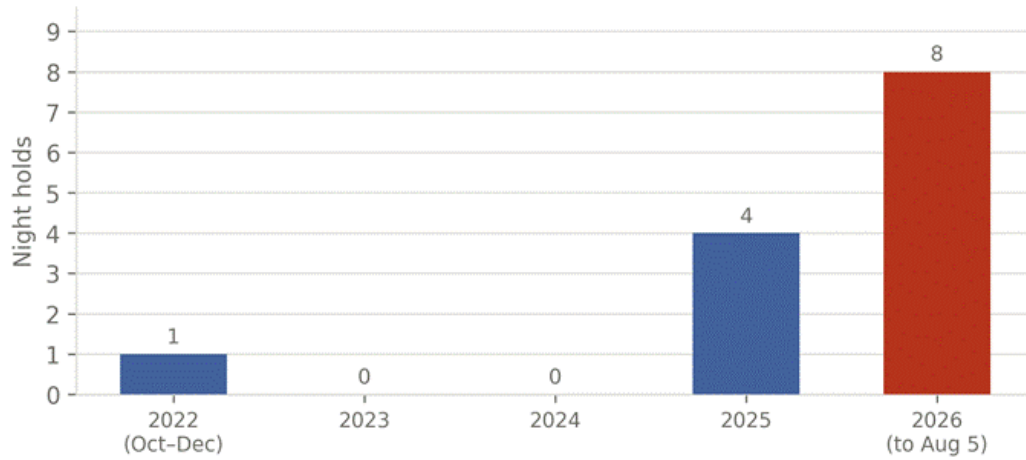
90% of individuals detained in the Holdroom are moved within six hours.



Time at the facility is calculated as book-out minus book-in.

Figure 3 • Night Holds by Year • 2022 – 2026

So far in 2026, ICE has held more people at the Holdroom between 10 PM and 6 AM than in all previous years combined.



Section 2: Detainee Experiences During Detention After Leaving the Holdroom

The section below uses ICE data from the Deportation Data Project to look at where people go after they are processed by ICE out of the Portland, ME Holdroom. This data examines the “Next Location” where Mainers go after the Holdroom, “All Locations” where Mainers go after the Holdroom, and the length of time spent at each facility.

Figure 4a • Transfer Locations Post Holdroom Stint • 2024 – 2026

While detainees from the Holdroom used to stay in Maine, they now predominantly go to Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

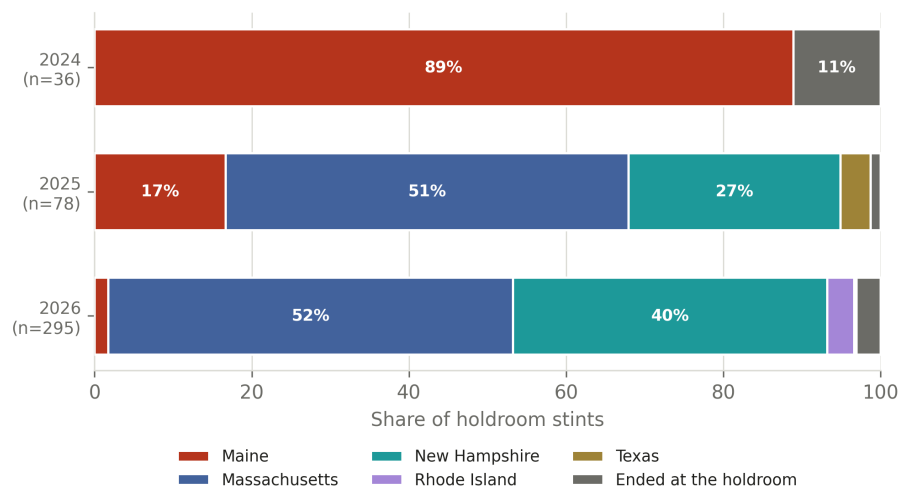
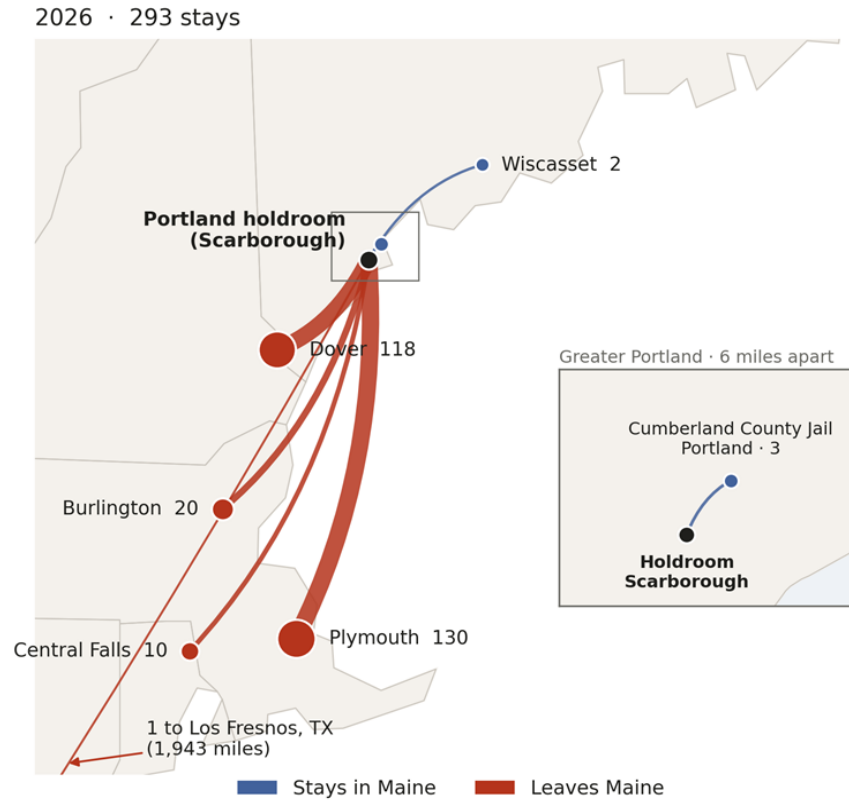


Figure 4b · First Stop After the Portland Holdroom · 2026

In 2026, 279 of 284 people were moved out of state after leaving the Holdroom, generally elsewhere in New England.



Stays that ended at the Holdroom have no first stop and are not drawn (9 stays).

First stop	Miles	2026 stays
Plymouth County Correctional, Plymouth MA	116	130
Strafford County Corrections, Dover NH	38	118
Boston Holdroom, Burlington MA	87	20
Wyatt Detention Center, Central Falls RI	129	10
Cumberland County Jail, Portland ME	6	3
Two Bridges Regional Jail, Wiscasset ME	44	2
Port Isabel SPC, Los Fresnos TX	1943	1
Ended at the holdroom	0	9
Total stays		293

Figure 5 • All Stops After the Portland Holdroom • 2026

In 2026, people processed out of the Holdroom encountered 30 other facilities in 11 other states. 40% of people processed out of the Holdroom passed through the Gulf South.

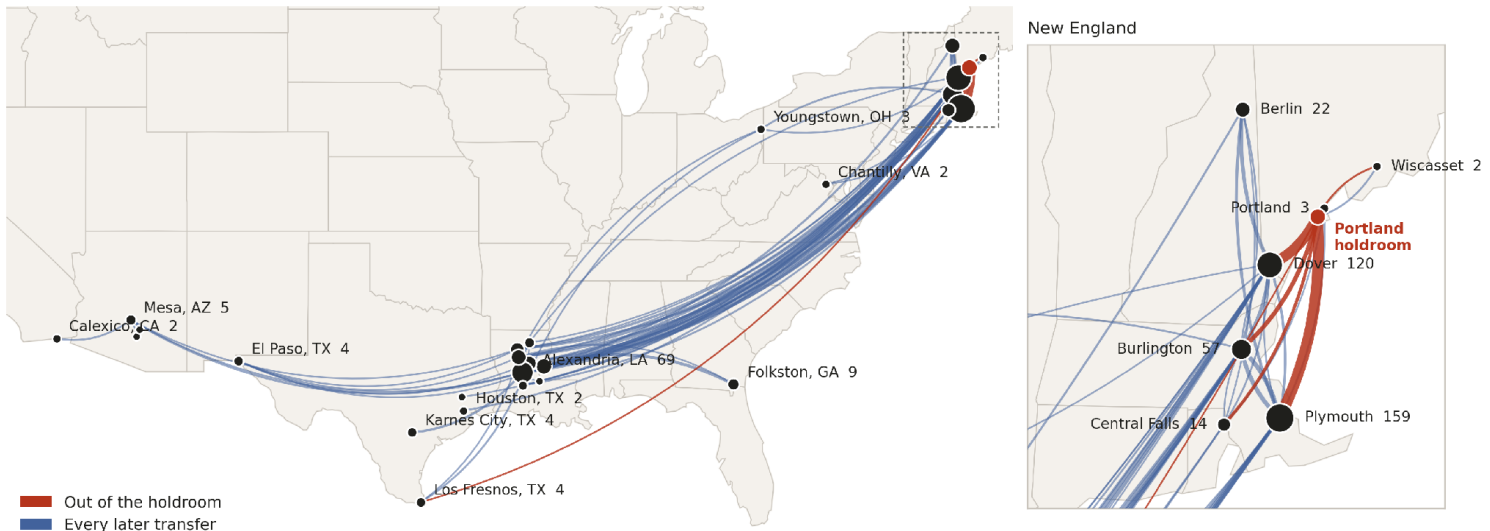
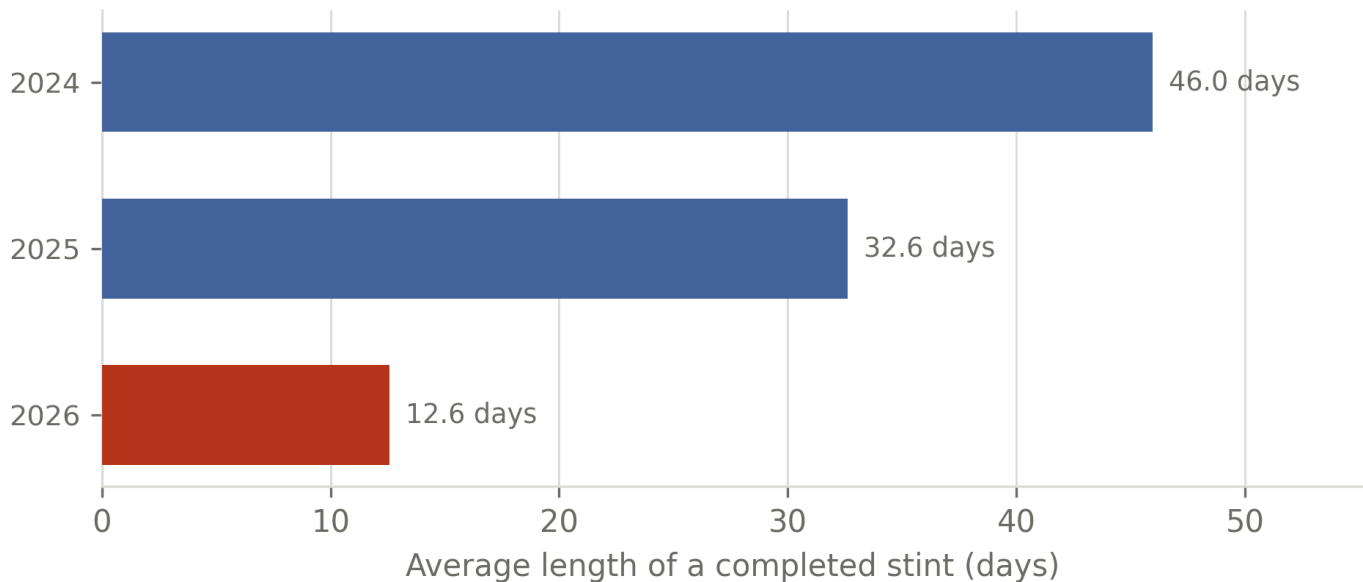


Figure 6 • Average Completed Stint Length • 2024 – 2026

As detainees move around, they spend, on average, 12.6 days in a single facility per detention stint.



Average length of completed stints following a stint at the holdroom. People are spending less time at each facility than in previous years. 2026 data includes the stints completed on or before August 5, 2026.

Conclusion:

The ICE Portland, ME Holdroom in Scarborough has shifted from its original function as a short-term administrative processing room to a central gateway within a broader national detention pipeline. Following the abrupt end of ICE's partnership with local facilities like the Cumberland County Jail in early 2026, the Holdroom has continued to experience a sharp rise in detainee volume. Although the vast majority of individuals are processed out within six hours, increased demand has led to a rise in overnight holds.

Upon leaving the Holdroom, detainees are overwhelmingly transferred out of Maine—predominantly to facilities in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and increasingly to sites across the Gulf South. Furthermore, individuals are being moved rapidly between facilities, averaging just 12.6 days per facility. This accelerated and widespread movement removes Mainers from their communities and support systems, creating severe hurdles for legal representation and family contact. With planned increases in ICE enforcement and a proposed facility in Newport, Maine, these structural dynamics and transfer patterns are likely to intensify.