



Controlled Substance and Methamphetamine System Trends

November 21, 2025



Overview

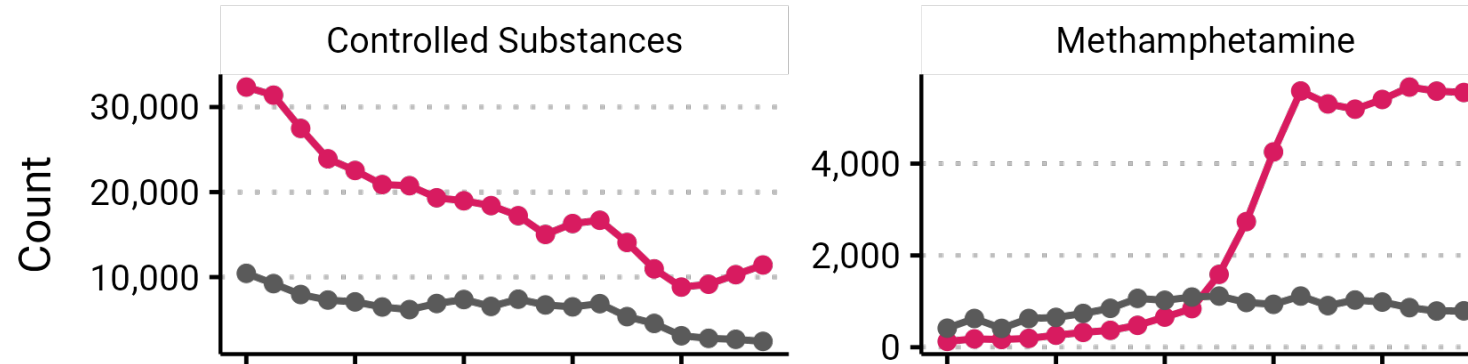
- Presentation today covers trends in system from arrests to sentencing and recidivism
 - Focus is on controlled substance and methamphetamine (**drug type**), and possession and manufacture/delivery/trafficking (**drug activity**)
 - Cannabis excluded entirely due to sealing and expungement
- Controlled substance arrests, guilty dispositions, and prison admissions/population are near lowest levels in 20 years
- Methamphetamine possession arrests, guilty dispositions, and prison admissions/population at near highest level in 20 years
- Methamphetamine manufacture/delivery peaked in mid-2010s
- Reconviction rates declined for controlled substances, but Methamphetamine flat or increased slightly

Data Sources

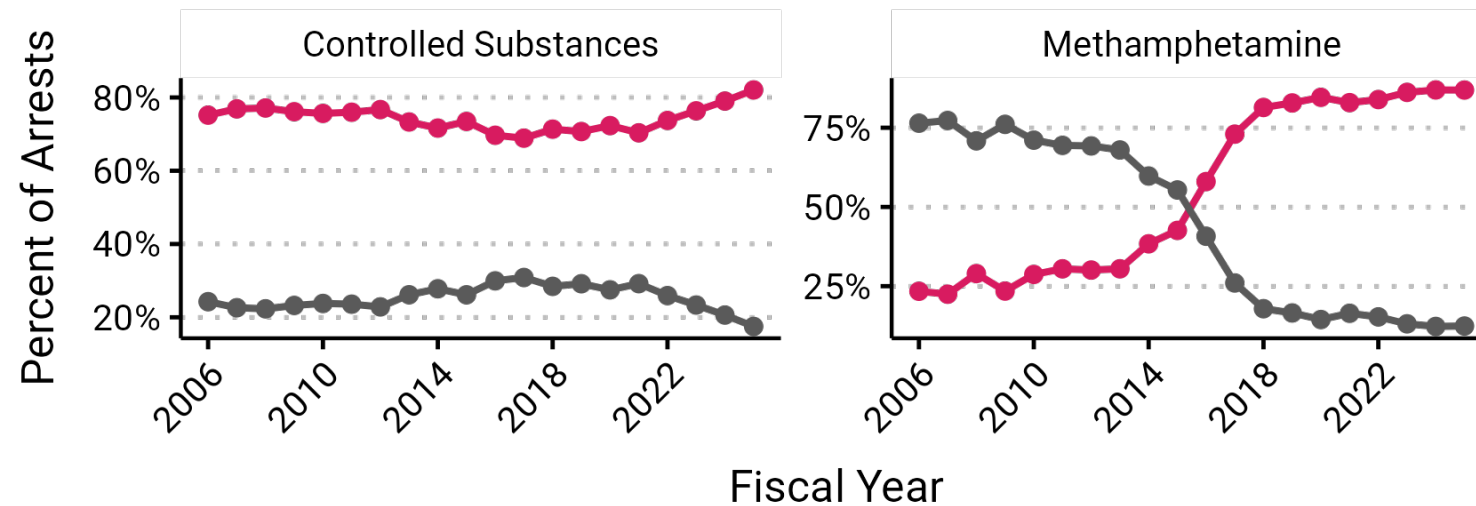
- CHRI data on arrests, guilty dispositions, and community corrections sentences
 - Each incident categorized by most severe drug charge at arrest and guilty disposition
 - Missing cases and/or data makes the dispositions and sentences an undercount
- IDOC data on prison admissions and population
 - Based on the most severe sentence (holding sentence)
 - Missing data not much of a problem
- National Survey on Drug Use and Health
 - Longitudinal survey with indicators on drug usage and disorders
- National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) 2024 data
- CDC WONDER (Wide-ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research)
 - Provides U.S. population estimates that can be used for rates
 - Annual population estimates by year, state, county, age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin

Arrest Rates – Methamphetamine Possession Trends Increase

Arrests by Drug Type and Activity



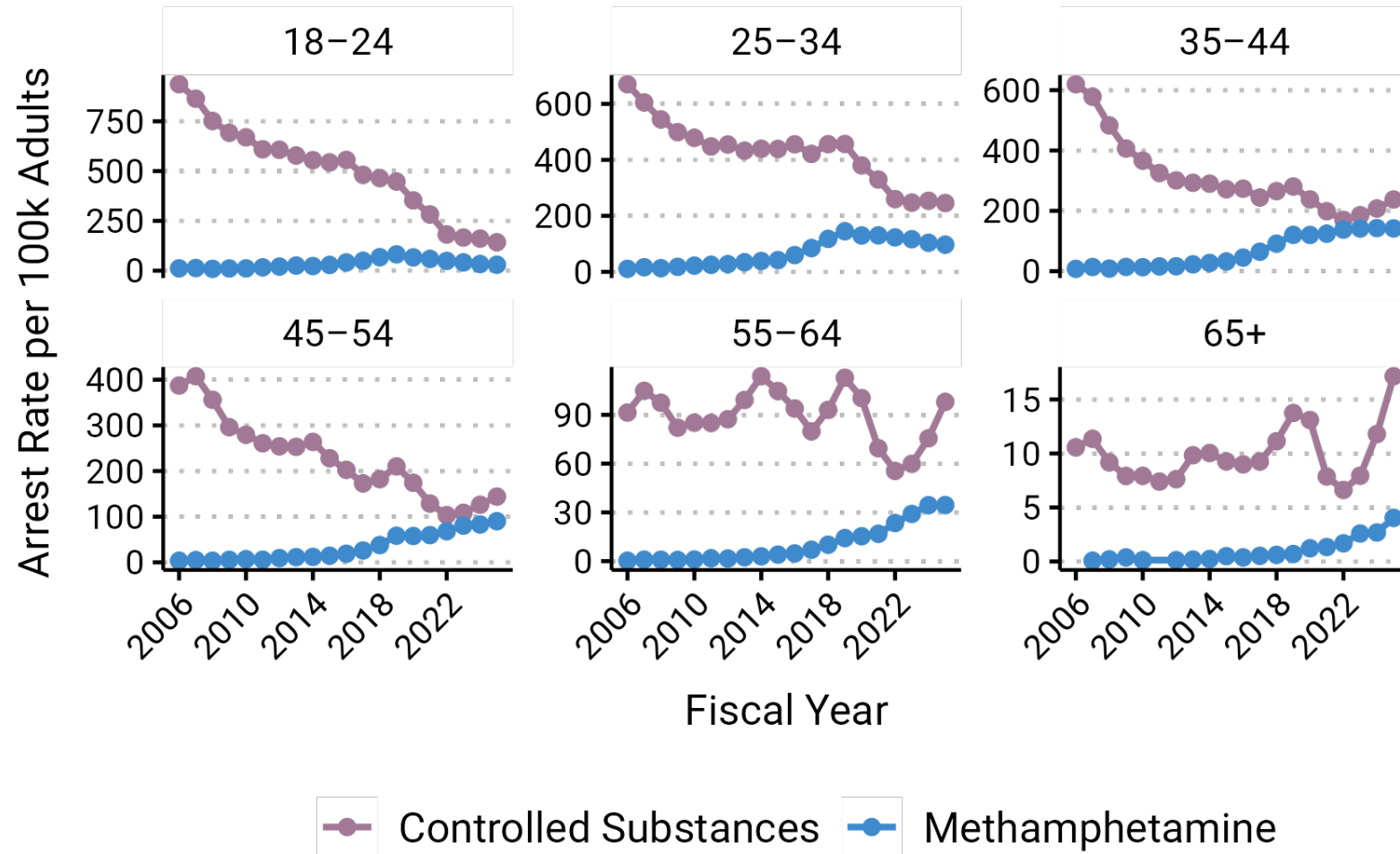
Percent of Arrests by Drug Type and Activity



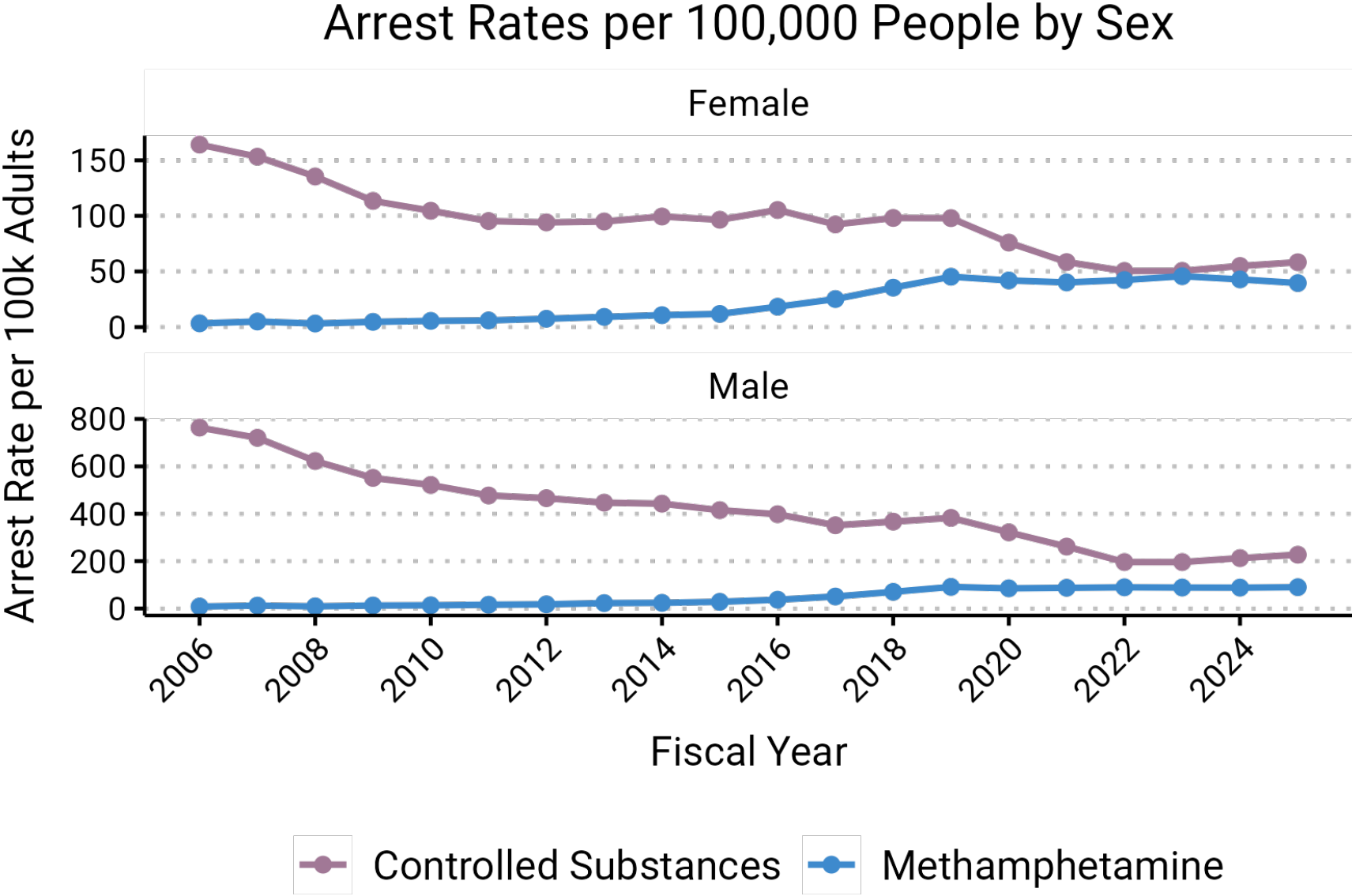
—●— Possession —●— Manufacture/Delivery/Trafficking

Arrest Rates by Age Group – Broad Increase in Meth

Drug Arrest Rates per 100,000 people by Age Group

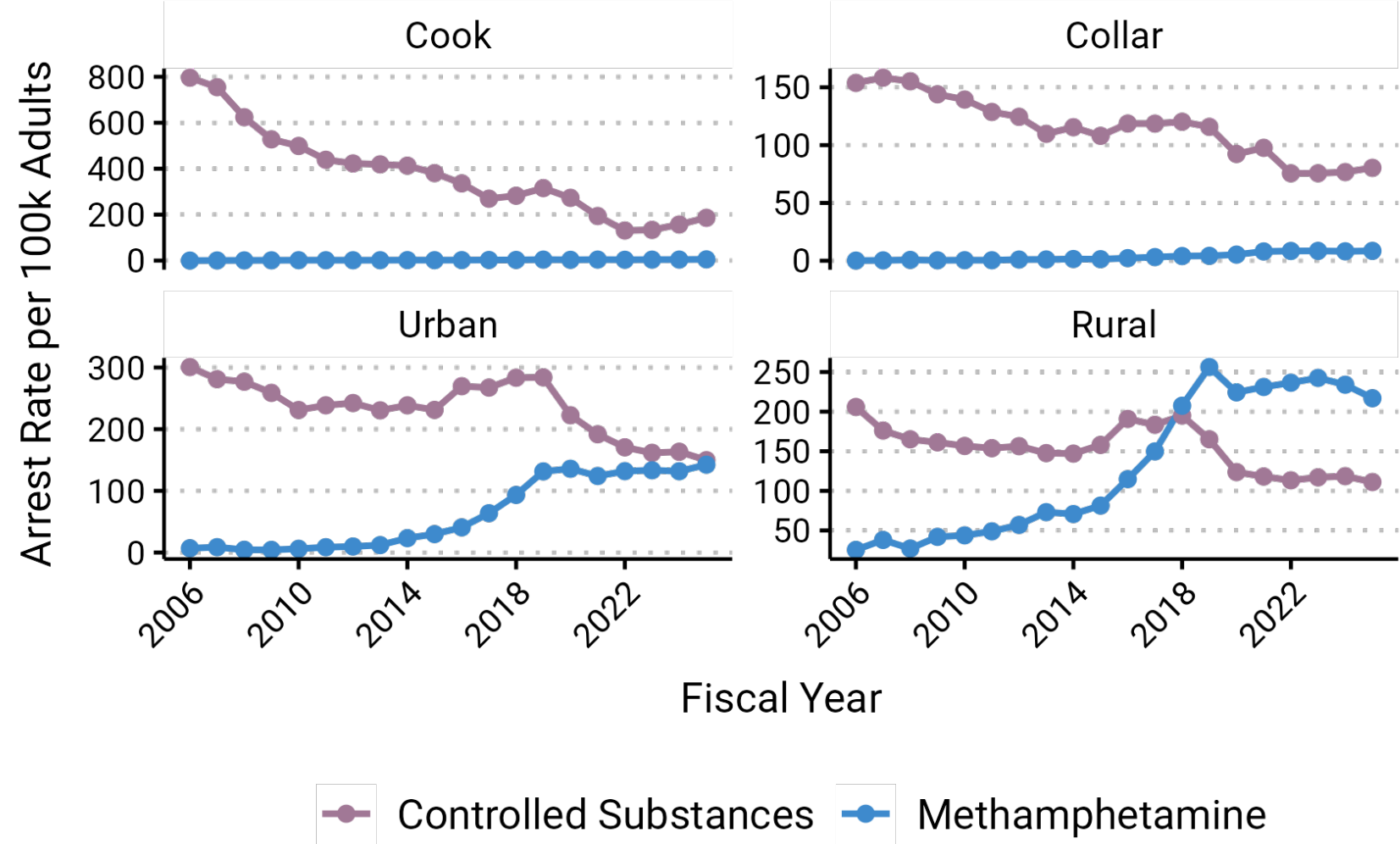


Controlled Substance and Methamphetamine Arrest Rates Converging



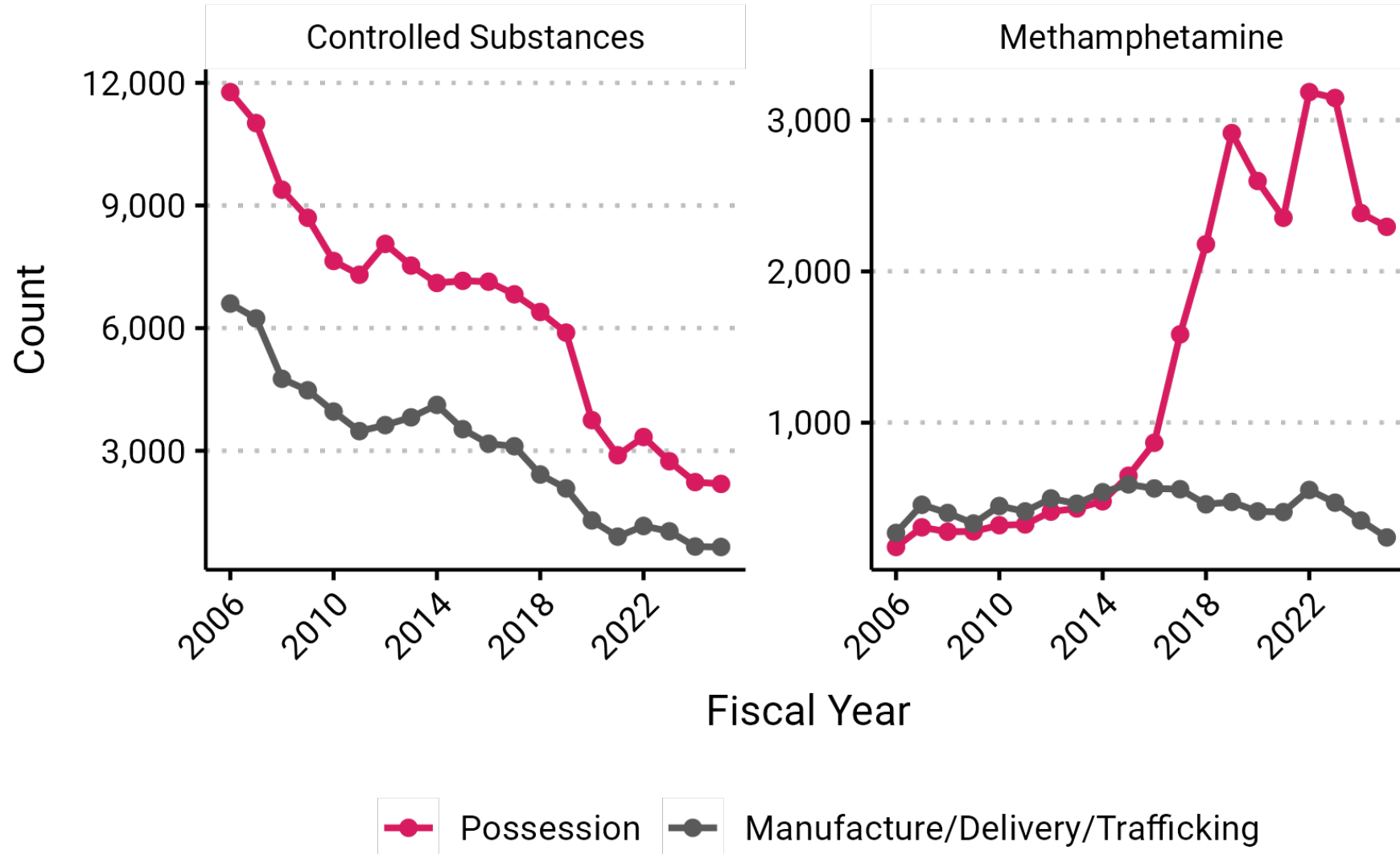
Meth Arrest Rates Increased in Rural Counties and Urban Counties in Central and Southern Illinois

Arrest Rates per 100,000 people by County Type

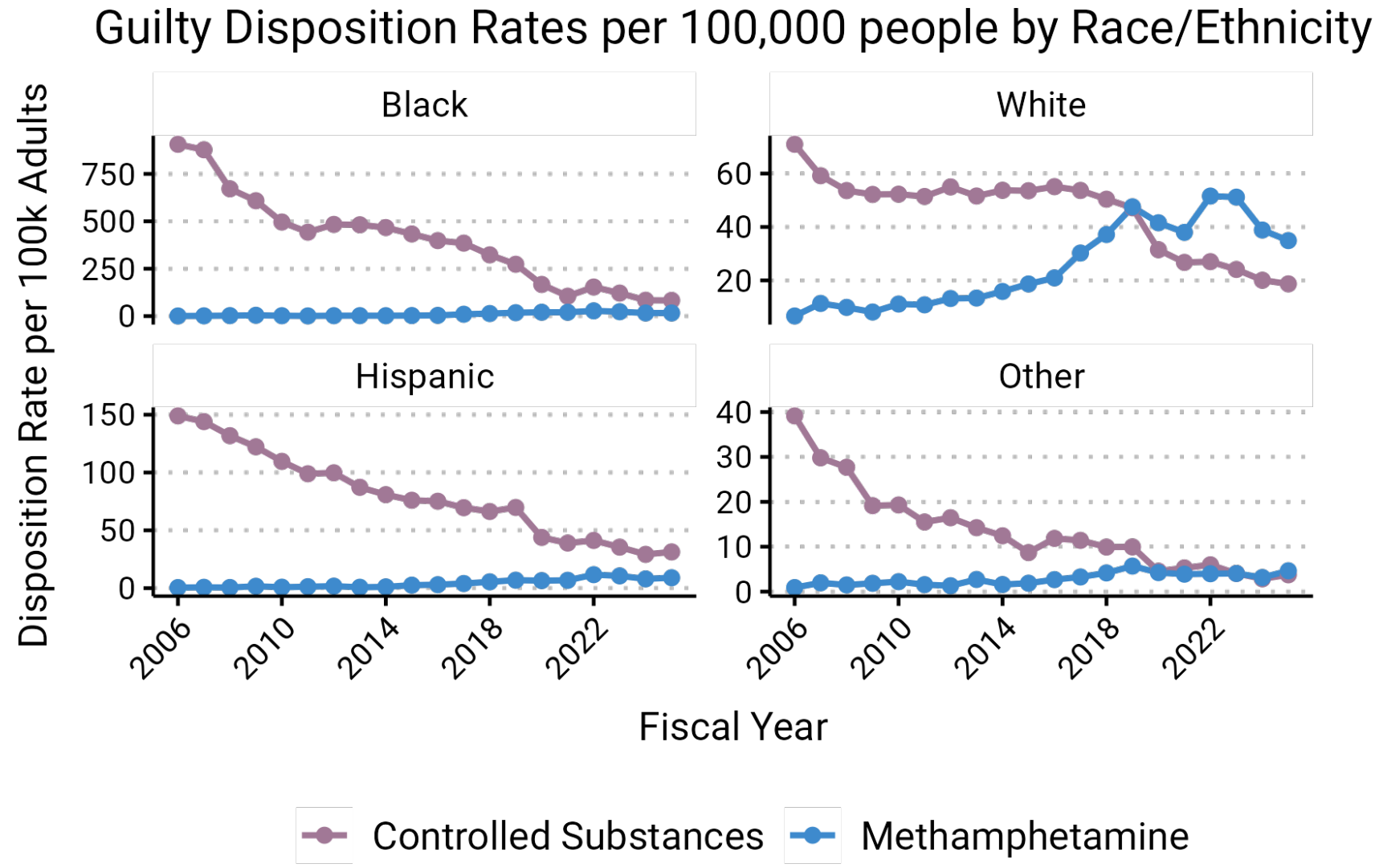


Guilty Dispositions Trends similar to Arrest Trends

Guilty Dispositions by Drug Type and Activity

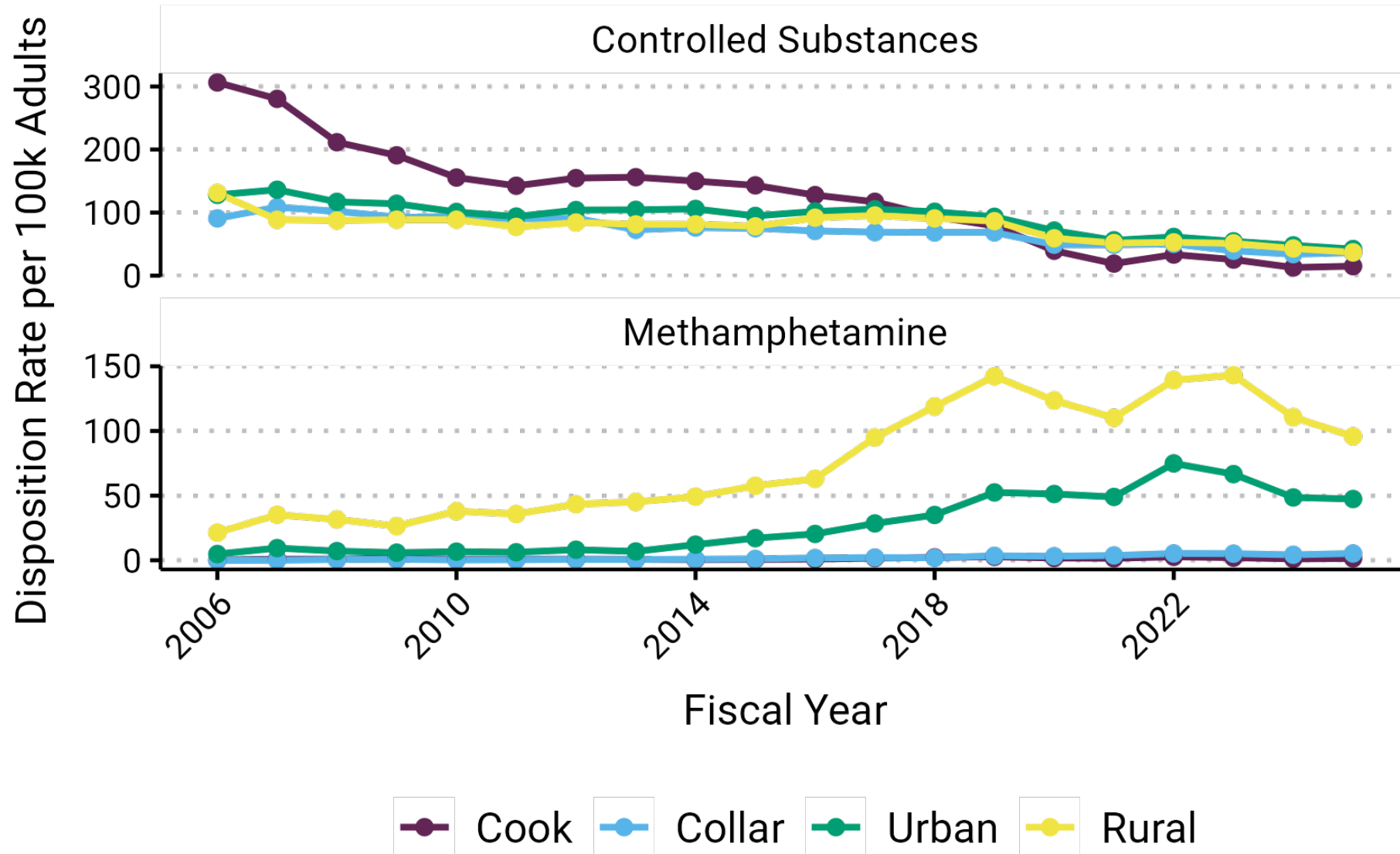


Guilty Disposition Rate for White Population now nearly 2:1 Meth

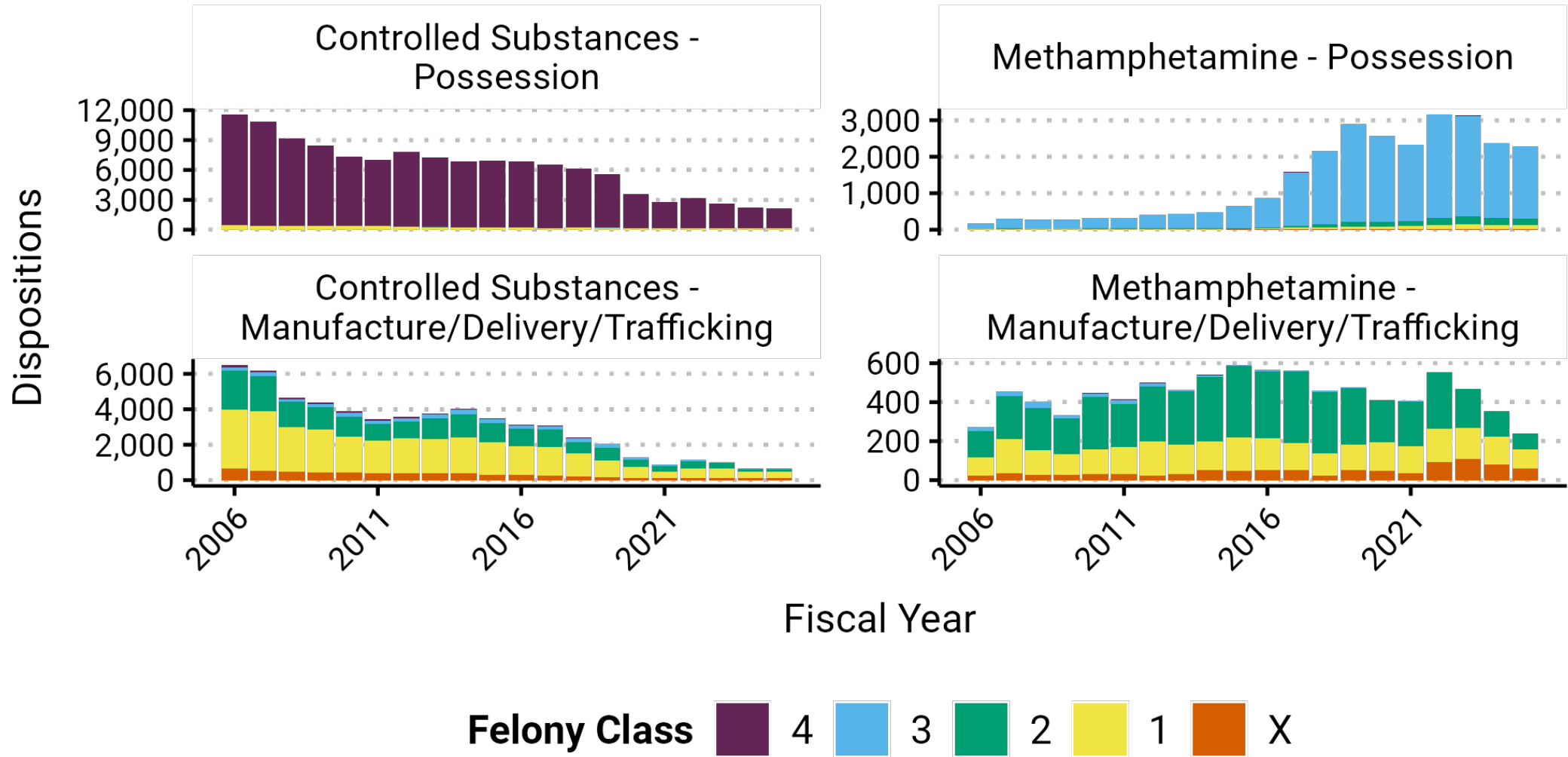


Urban Counties' Meth Guilty Disposition Rate Increased

Guilty Disposition Rates per 100,000 people by County Type

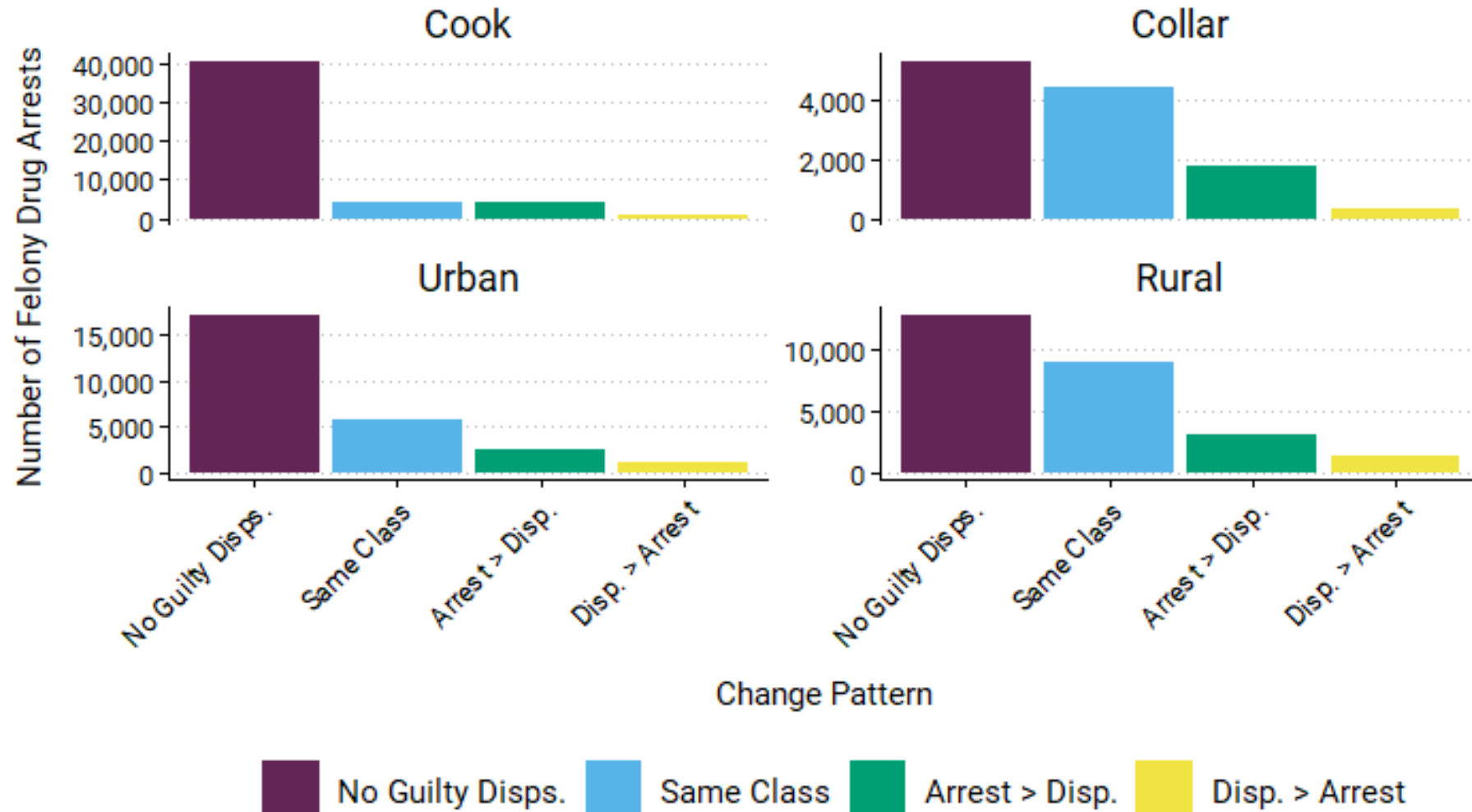


Felony Guilty Dispositions by Class, Drug Type, and Drug Activity



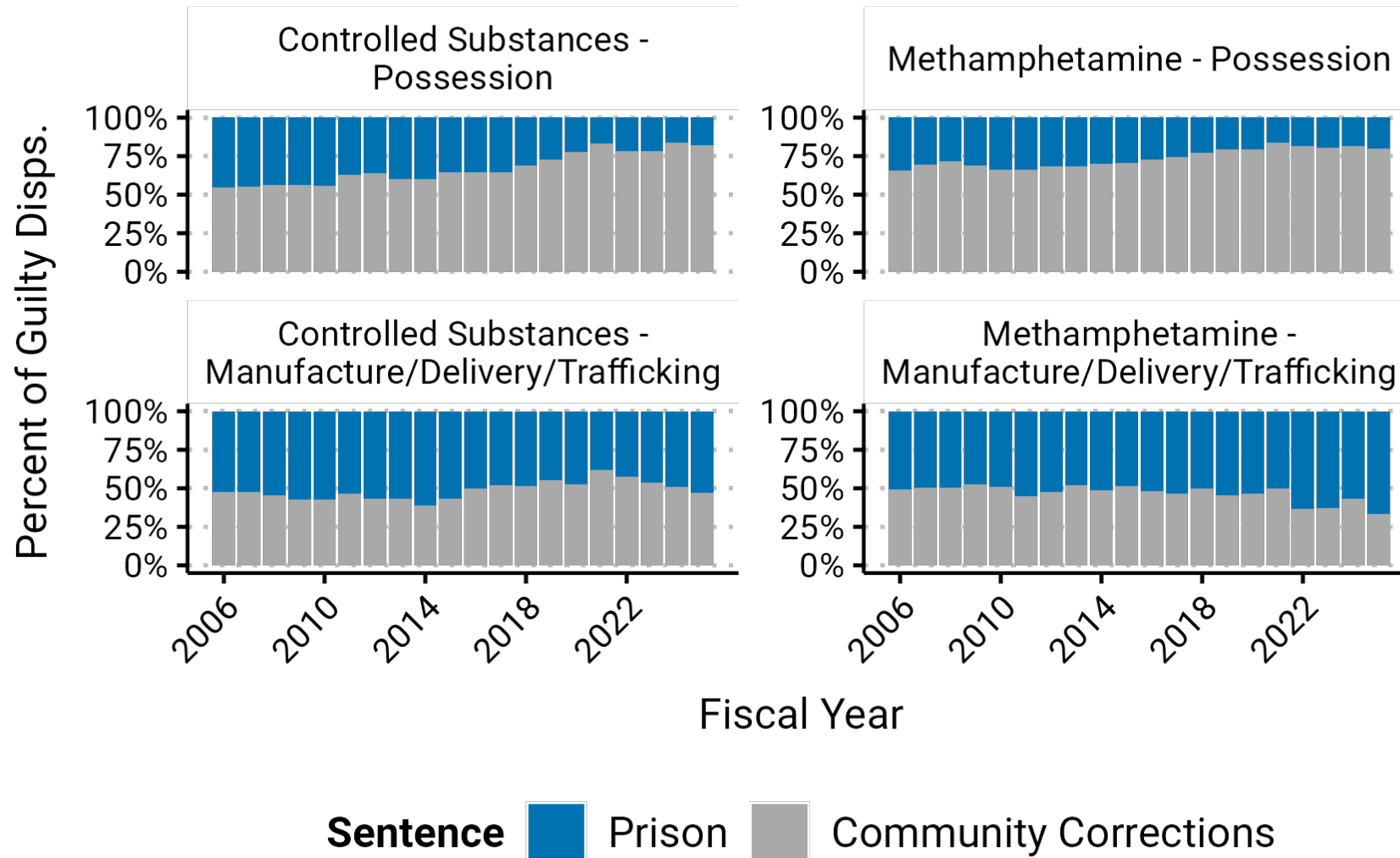
How did Drug Arrests Progress through Disposition?

Felony Arrests to Guilty Disposition - Class Change
FY2018 - FY2022



Sentences – Decrease in Prison Usage for Possession

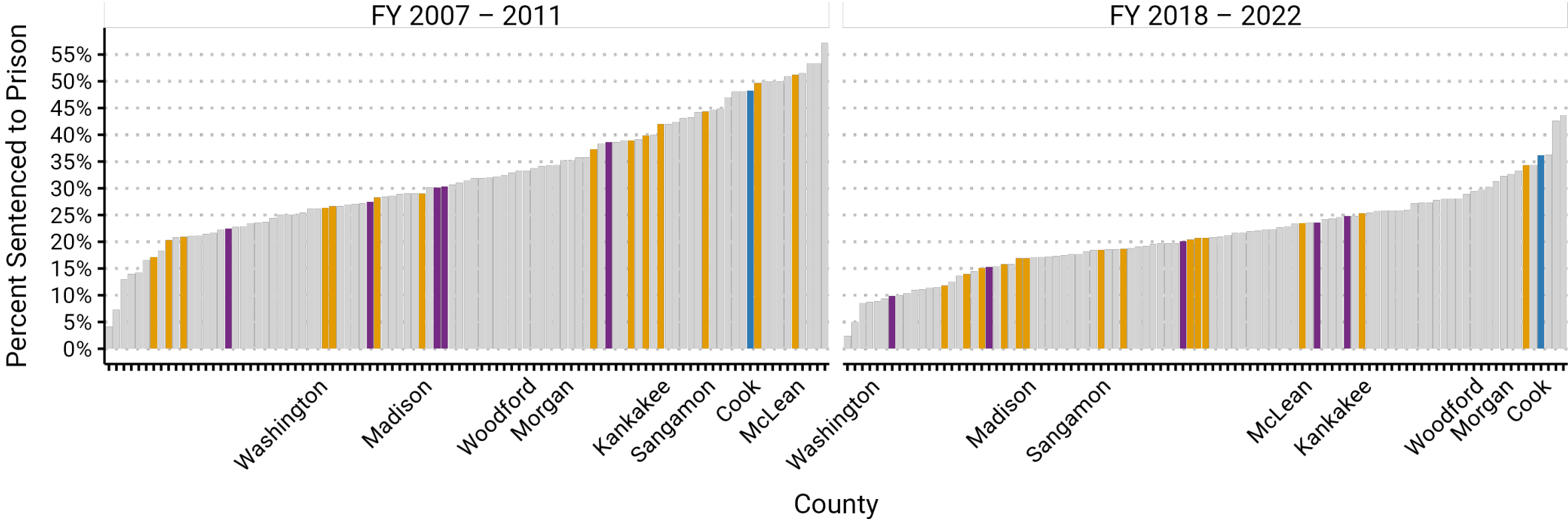
Felony Sentences by Act, and Type



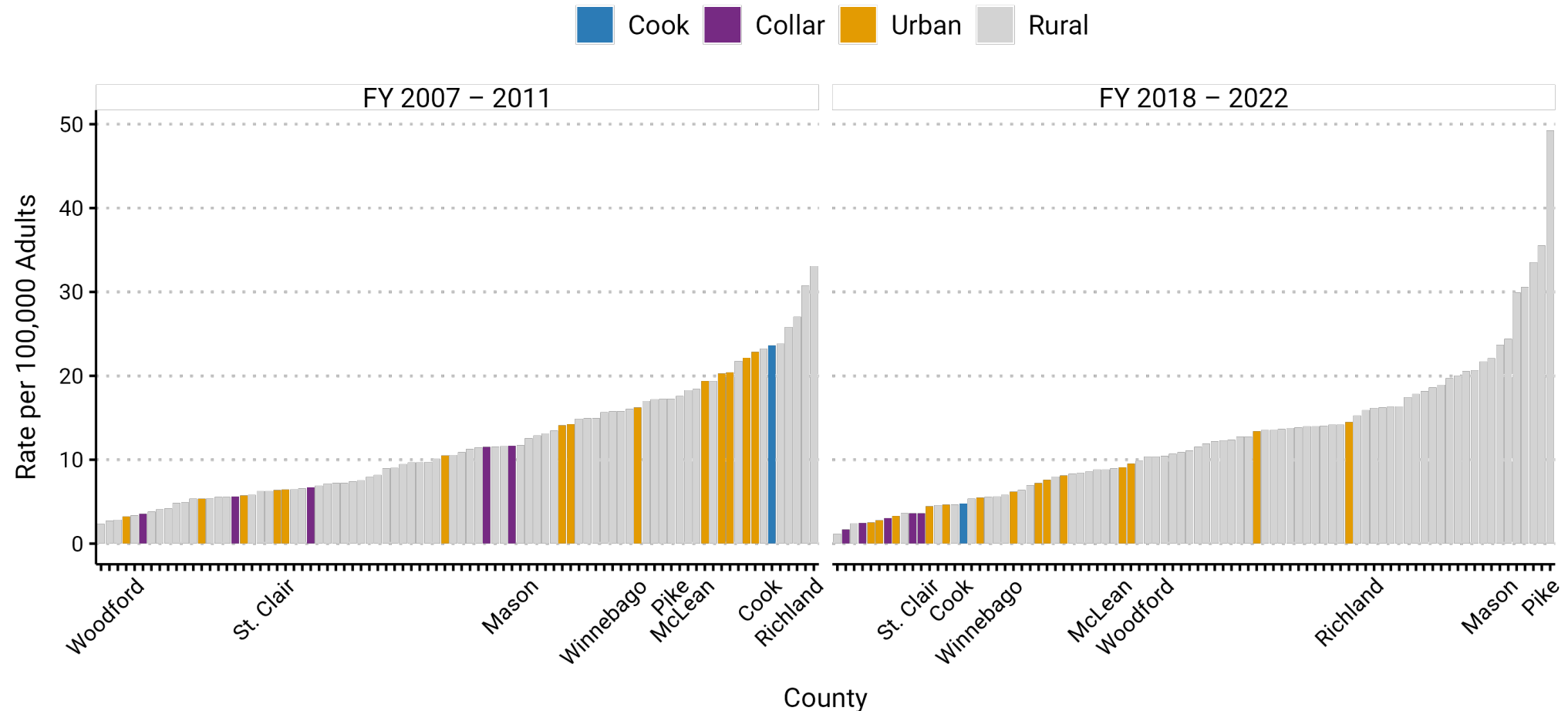
Community Corrections includes probation, conditional discharge, supervision, home confinement, and electronic monitoring.

Decline in County-Level Percent of Class 1-4 Guilty Dispositions Sentenced to Prison

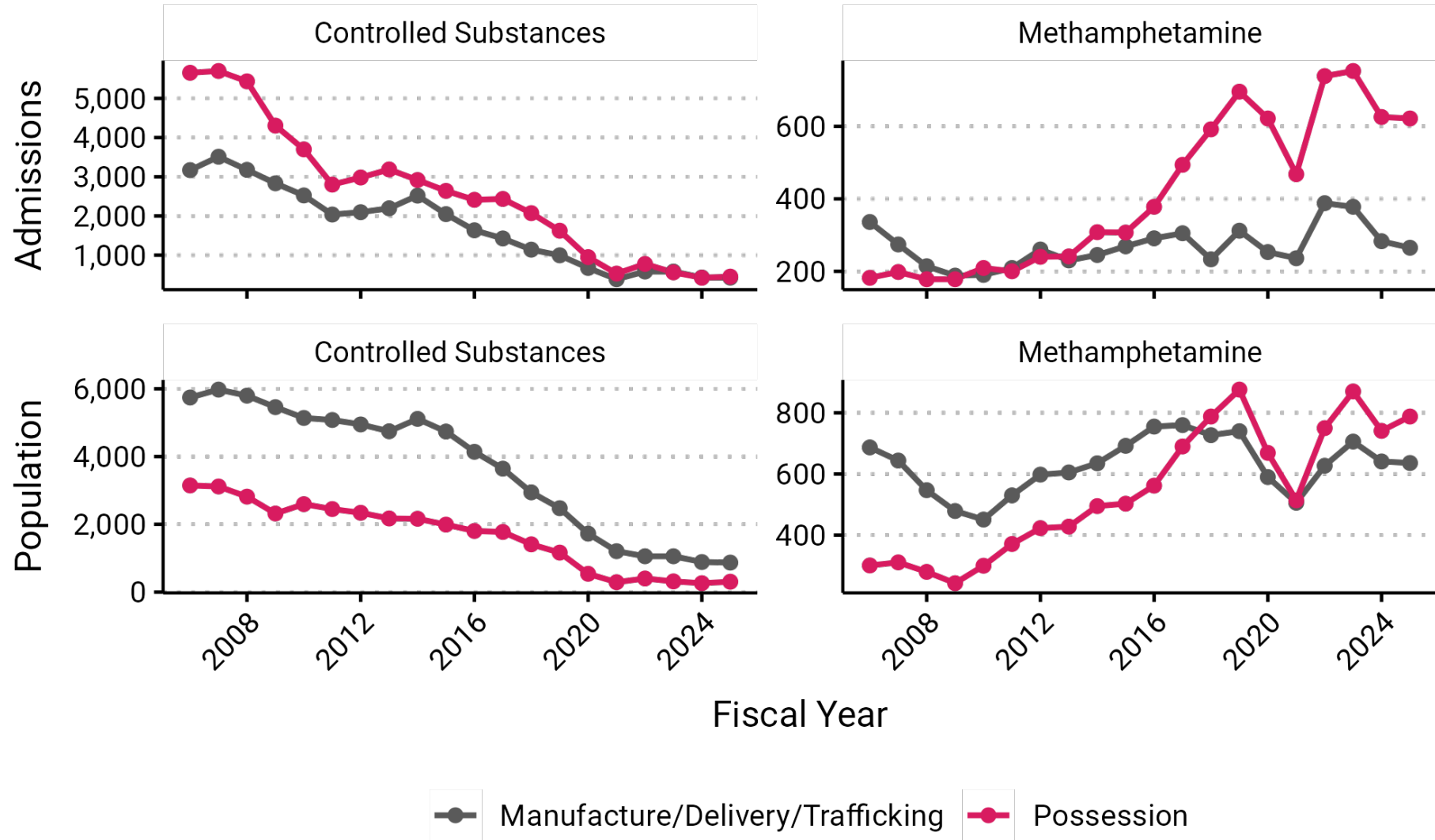
Cook Collar Urban Rural



Drug Admissions Rates Shifted to Almost All Rural Counties Having the Highest Admission Rates

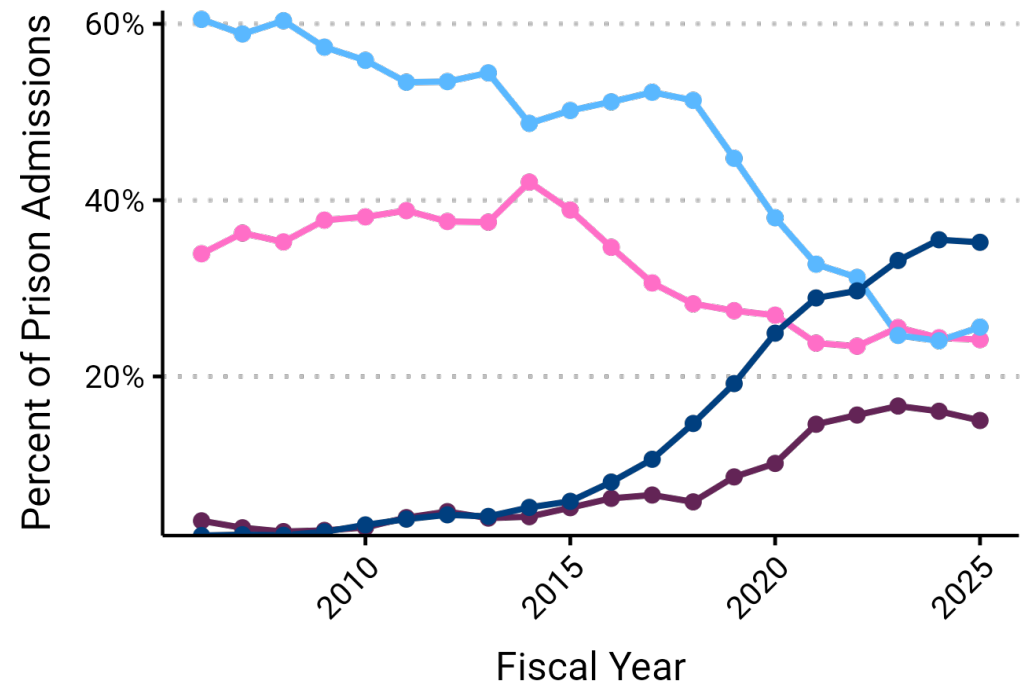
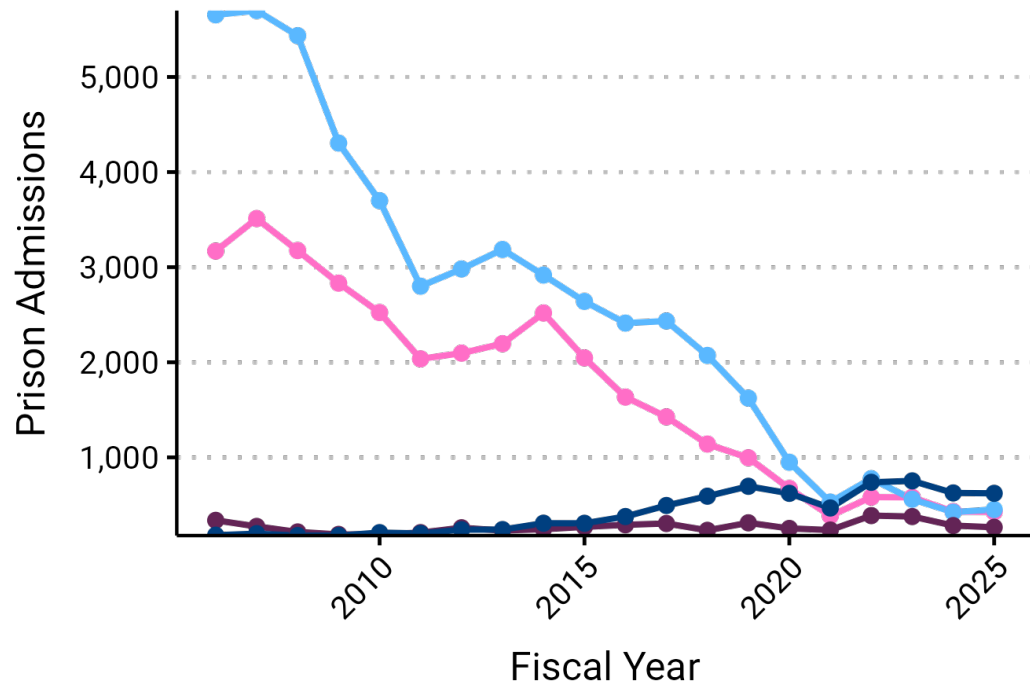


Trends in Prison Admissions and Population depend on Drug Type



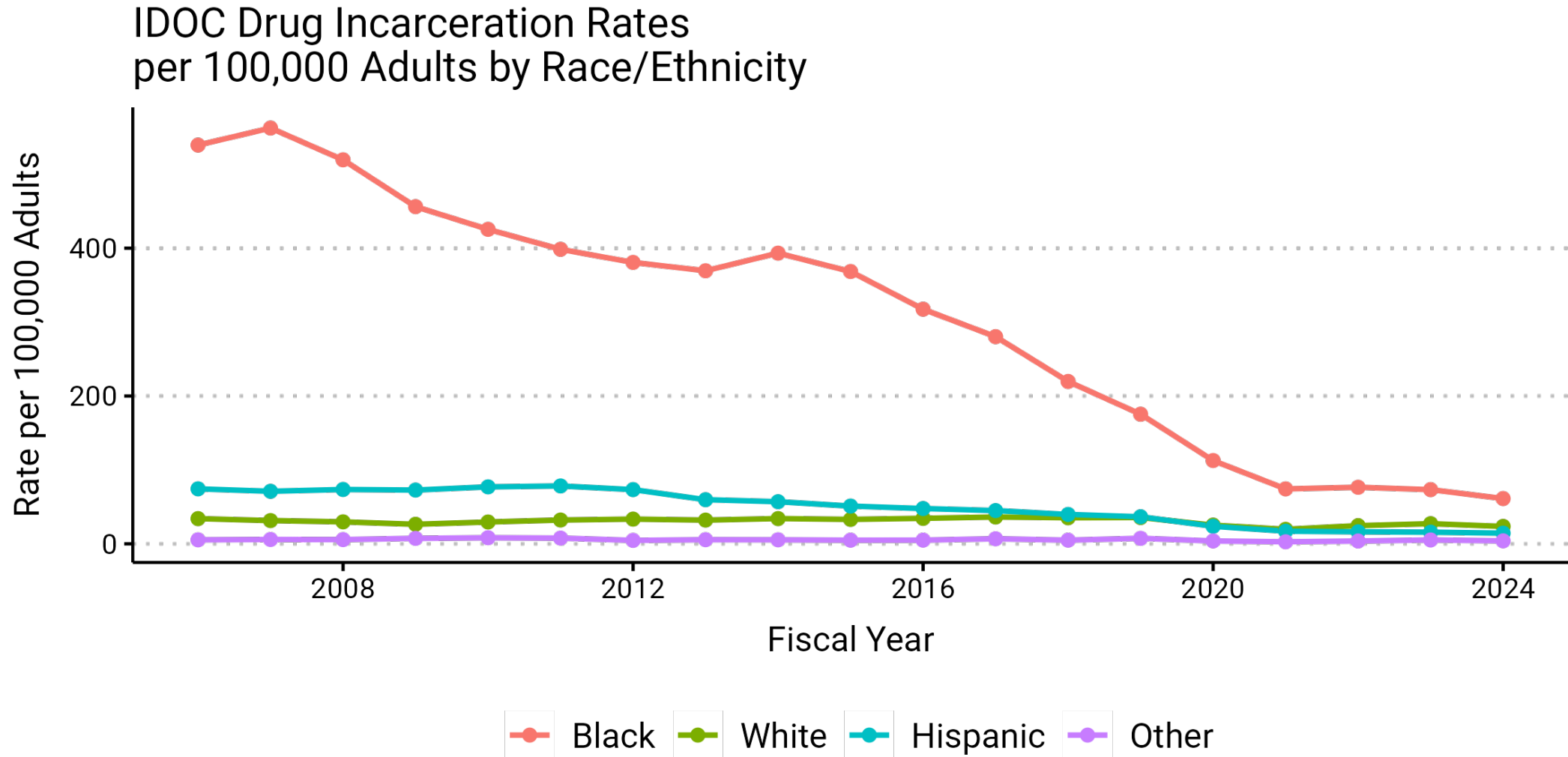
Admissions exclude technical violators.

Rapid Change in Admissions Composition by Drug Type and Activity

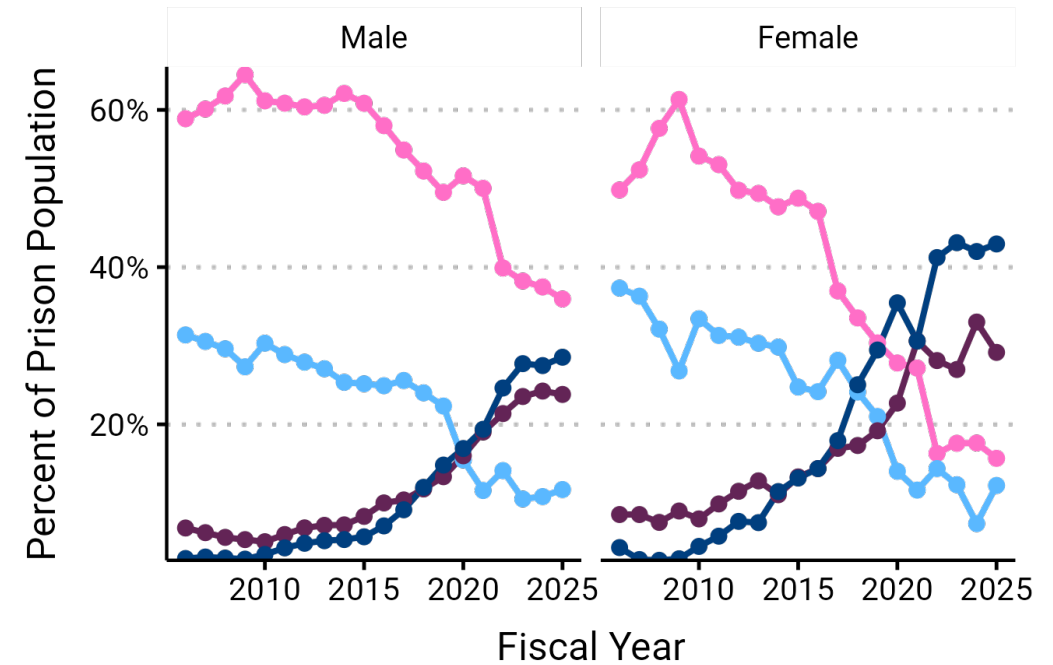
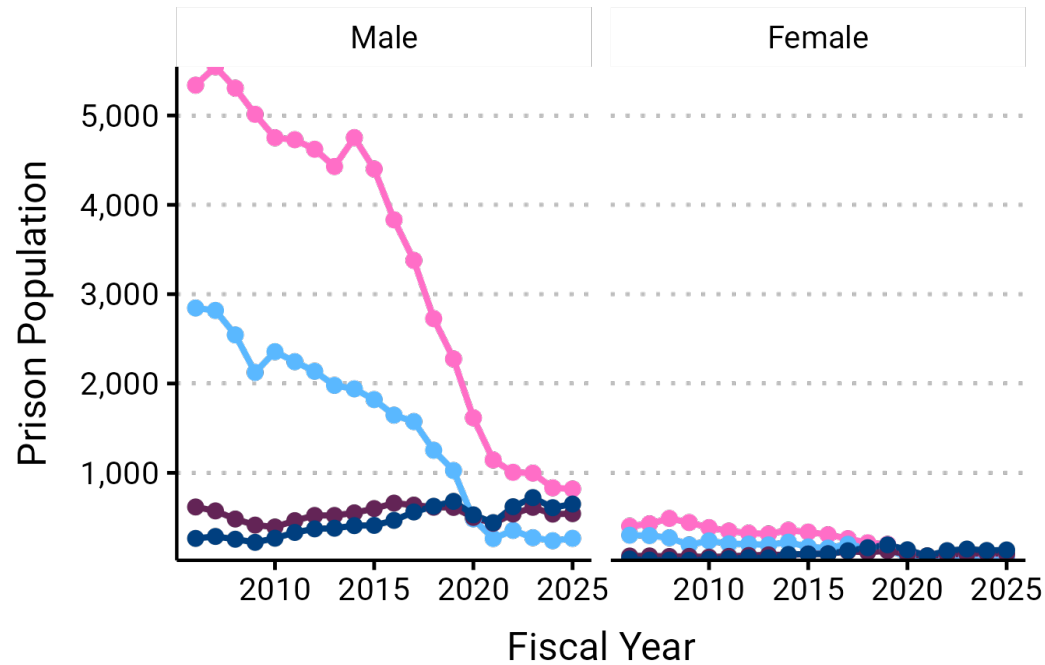


Admissions exclude technical violators.

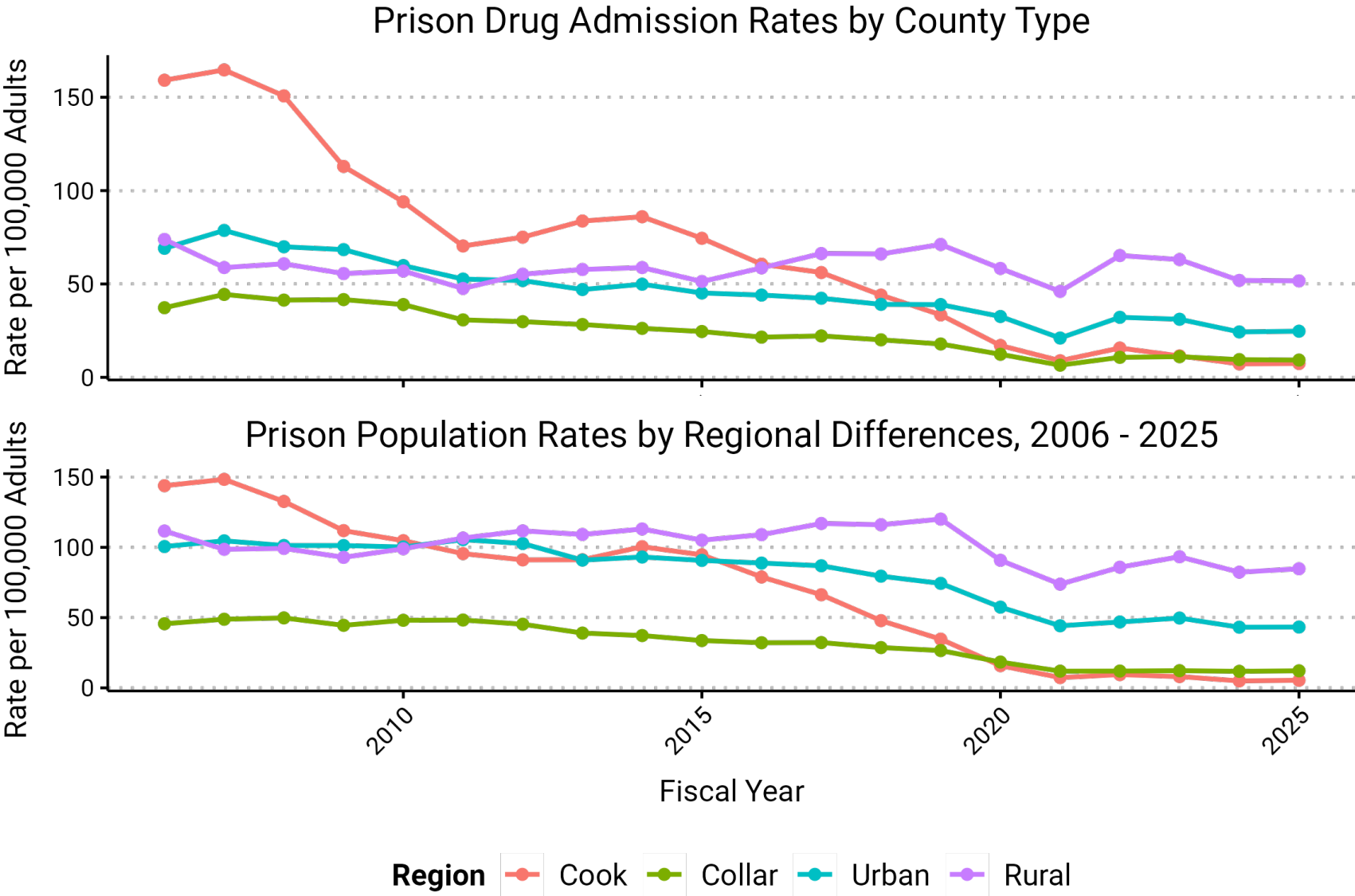
Drug Offense Prison Incarceration Rate For Black Population Declined by about 90%



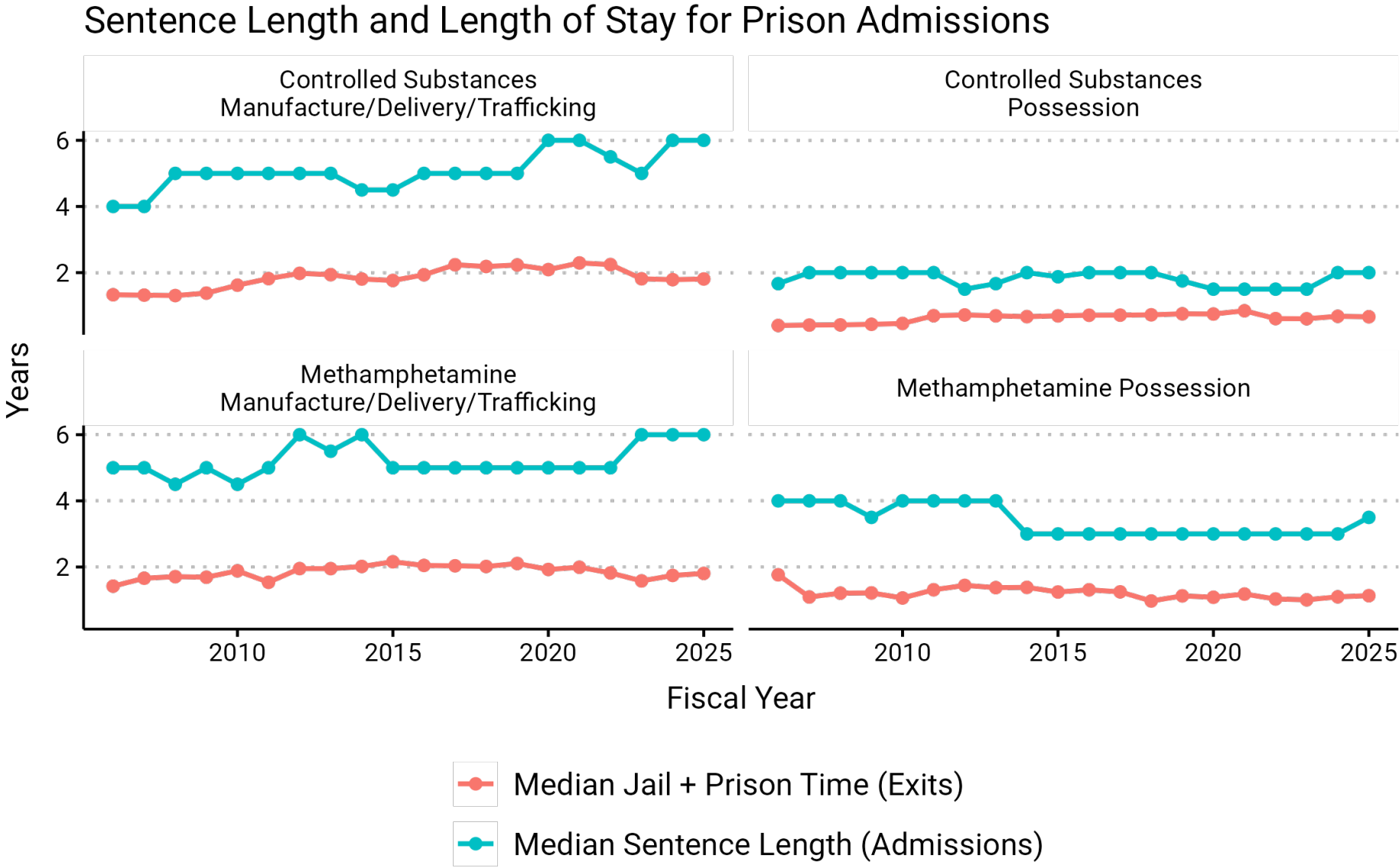
Female Drug-Sentenced Prison Population now Over 70% Meth



Rural Admission and Incarcerations Rates now Highest While Cook County is Lowest

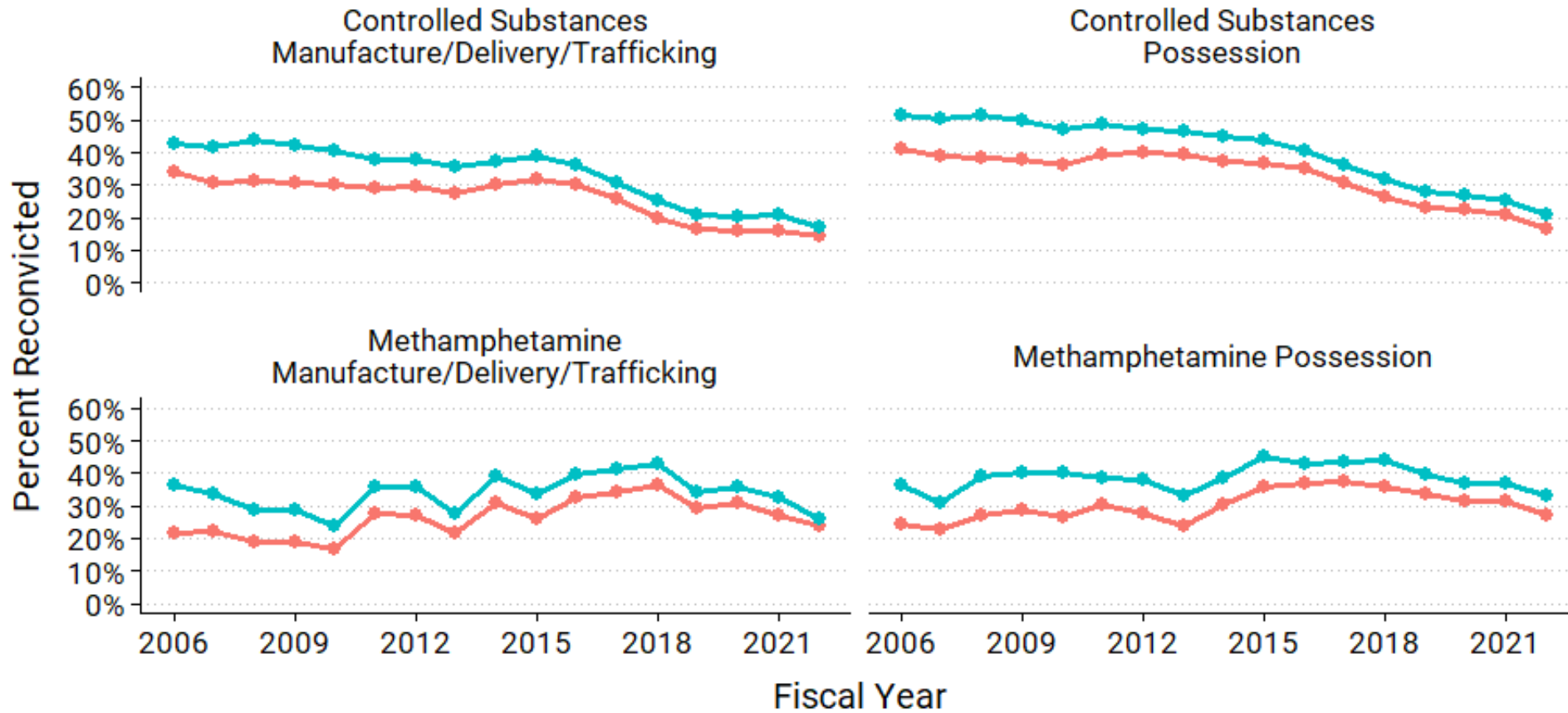


Sentence Length and Length of Stay



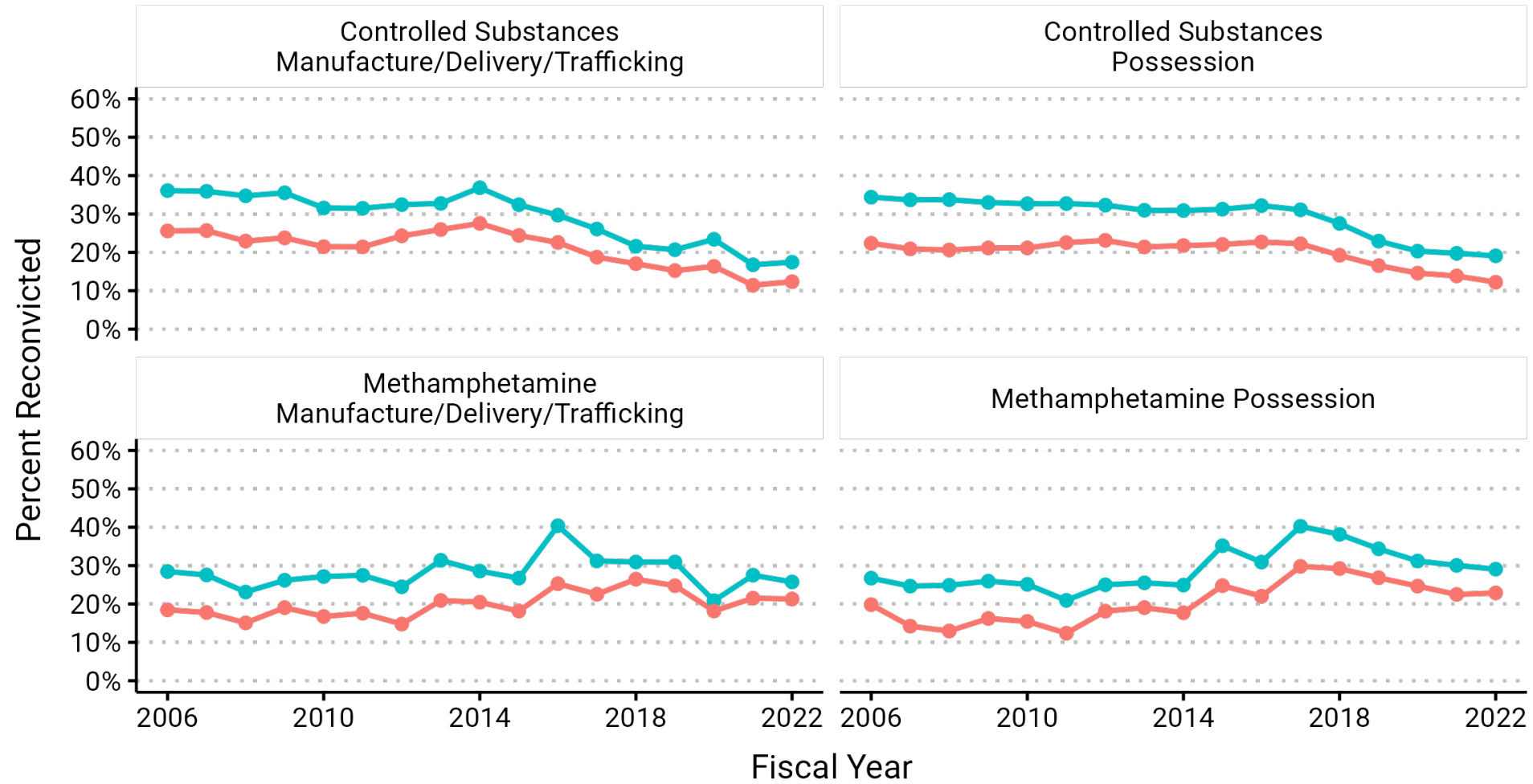
Prison Exits Recidivism Rates Declined for Controlled Substances but Flat or Increased for Meth

Three Year Rearrest with Recidivism Rate



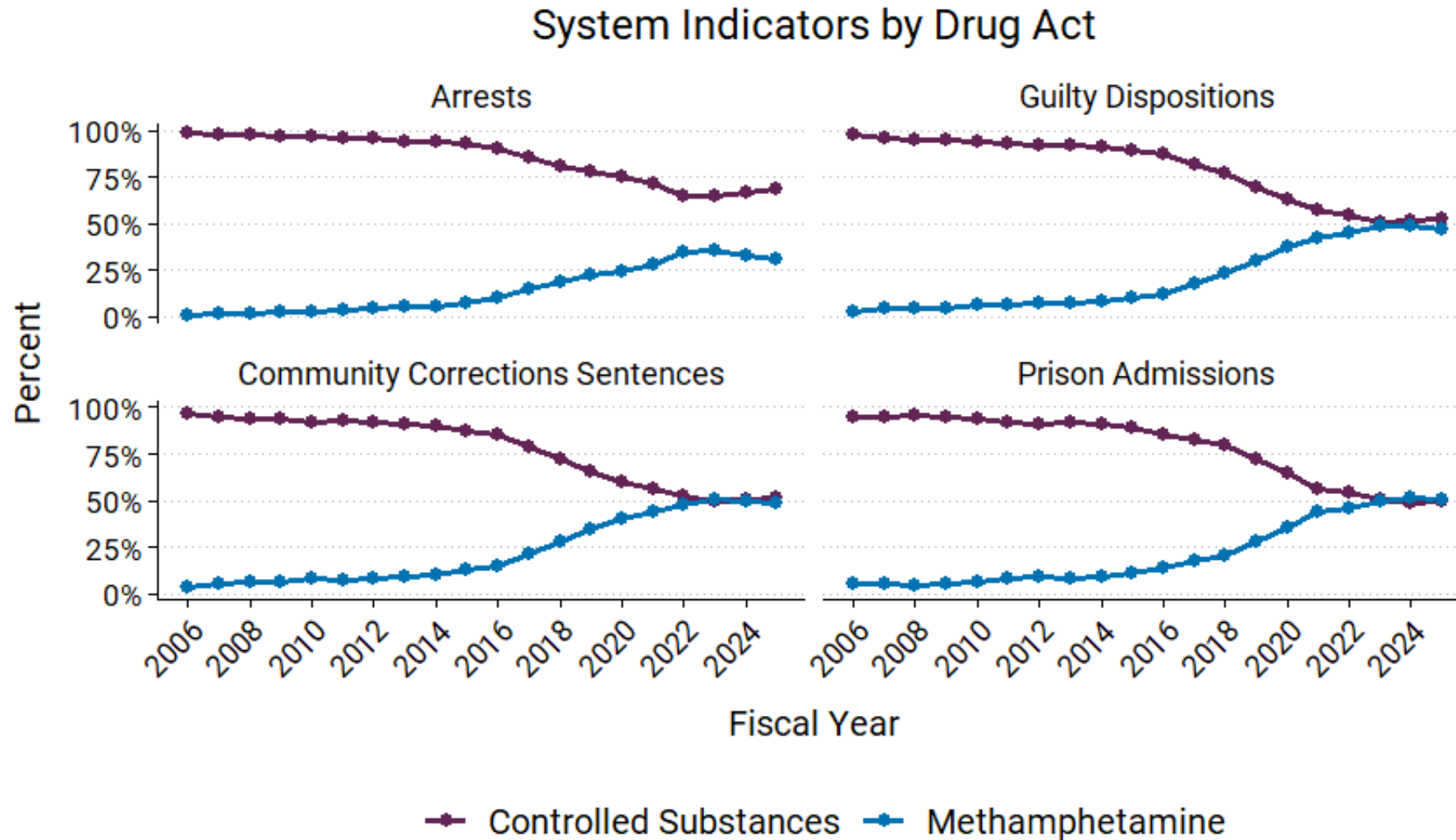
Community Corrections Reconviction showed Similar Trends

Three Year Rearrest with Reconviction Rate



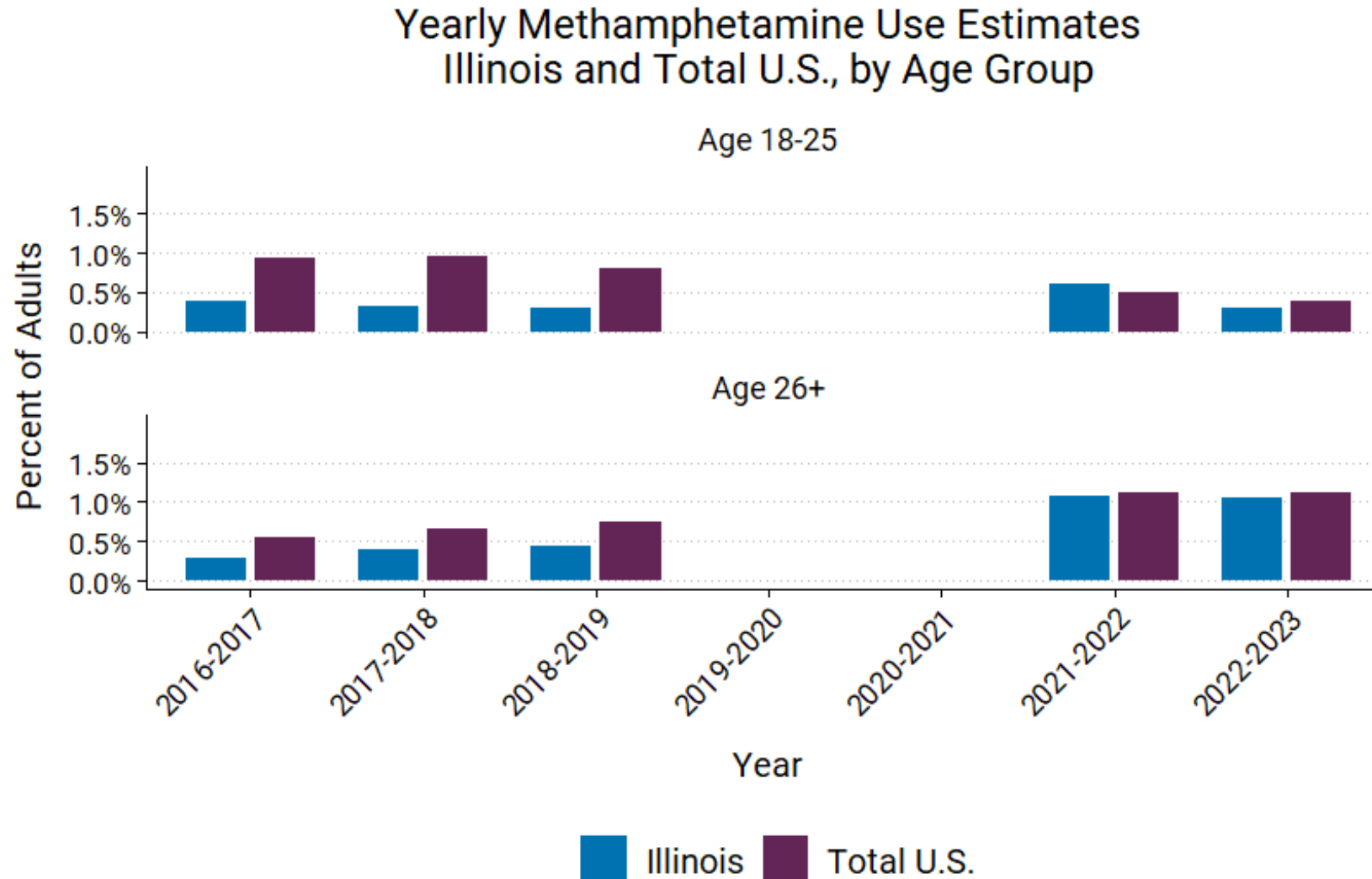
3-Year Felony Reconviction Rate 3-Year Reconviction Rate

Big Picture – Controlled Substances vs. Methamphetamine



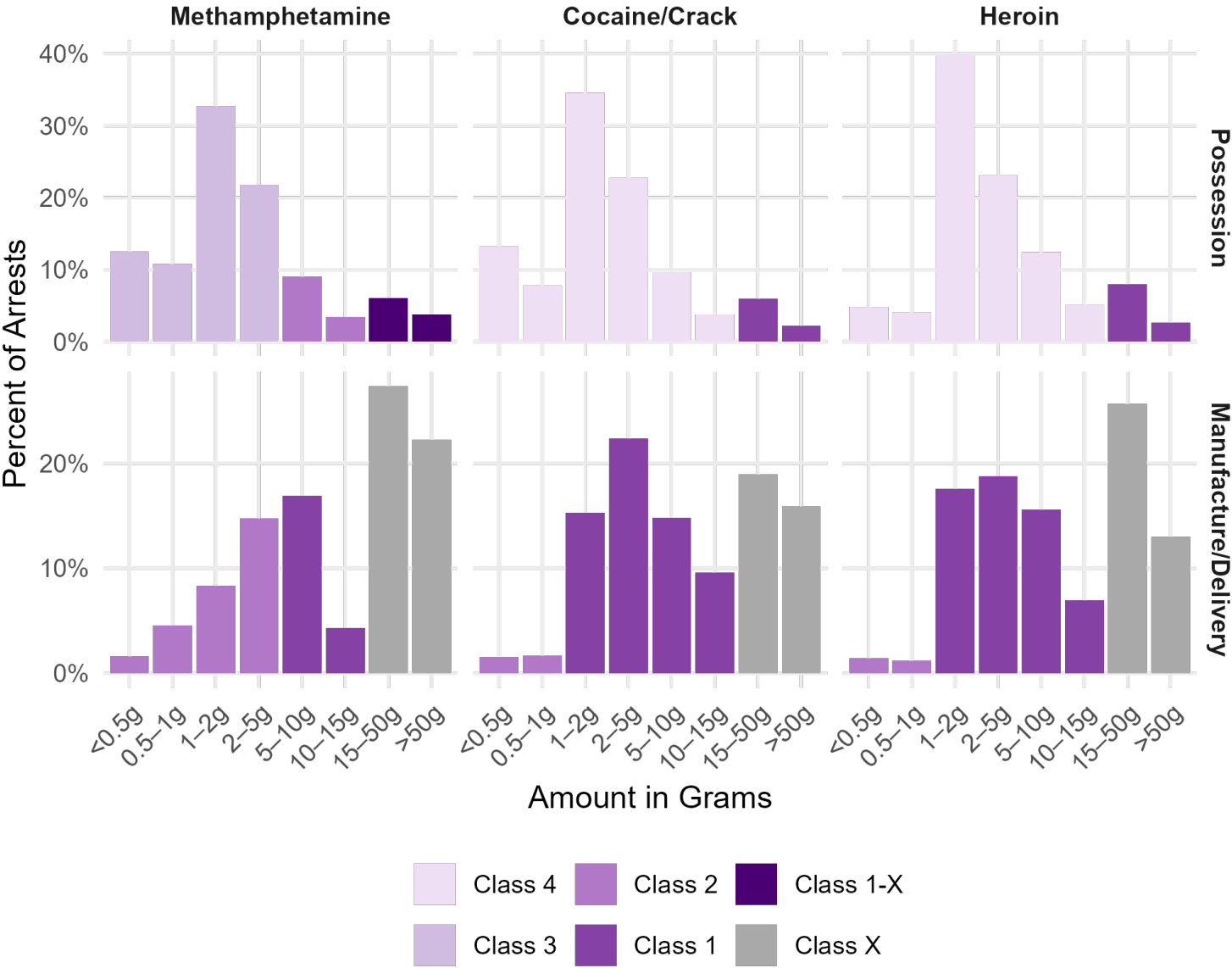
Community Corrections includes probation, conditional discharge, supervision, home confinement, and electronic monitoring.

Methodological Changes to NSDUH, but Illinois Meth Usage Estimates now Closer to National Estimates



Arrest Distribution of Weight
By Drug Type and Activity, FY2024

Possession Weights
are Mostly in the
Lowest Possible
Felony Class



Takeaways and Next Steps

- Takeaways

- Controlled Substance indicators have decreased broadly
- Disparities in Controlled Substances still exist but are much smaller
- Methamphetamine possession indicators rose in the past ten years while manufacture/delivery trafficking is flat or declining
- Rural Counties, Central Urban, and Southern Urban counties have rising Methamphetamine indicators
- Changes in Methamphetamine and Controlled Substances impact the makeup of the system in demographics and prison usage

- Next Steps

- This is a work-in-progress, aim to produce report in first half of 2026
- Multilevel regression models of sentence types and lengths, possibly with post-stratification on the sentence type for CHRI data
- Possibly breakdowns in recent years by pre-post Pretrial Fairness Act