

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
**Recidivism Study**  
Annual Report

**March 1, 2007**



**OFFICE OF POLICY & MANAGEMENT**  
Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division

**CONNECTICUT STATISTICAL  
ANALYSIS CENTER**  
Central Connecticut State University

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### DESCRIPTION OF THE CONNECTICUT STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTER

The Connecticut Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) is a Bureau of Justice Statistics funded collaborative venture between the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division at the Office of Policy and Management and the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Central Connecticut State University. The SAC functions as a clearinghouse for justice related information, serves as a liaison in assisting the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and the Justice Research Statistical Association (JRSA) in gathering state data, and conducting policy and evaluation research.

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**MESSAGE FROM THE OPM UNDER SECRETARY**

The 2007 State of Connecticut Recidivism Study was developed in response to the statutory requirements outlined in Public Act 05-249, An Act Concerning Criminal Justice Planning and Eligibility for Crime Victim Compensation. This legislation created the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division within the Office of Policy and Management effective July 1, 2006, and tasked the Division with issuing an annual report on the recidivism of offenders released from the custody of the Department of Correction and from probation. The inaugural edition of this report assesses the recidivism rates of offenders released during the 2000 calendar year.

The 2007 State of Connecticut Recidivism Study was prepared by the Connecticut Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) in conjunction with the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division of OPM. The Connecticut SAC is a collaborative venture between OPM and the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU). The activities of Connecticut's SAC are directed by Dr. Stephen Cox, Chair of the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at CCSU. It is located within The Institute for the Study of Crime and Justice at CCSU. OPM serves as the primary funding source for the SAC through the procurement of federal Department of Justice funds from the State Justice Statistics Program for SACs grant. This is the first of what is hoped to be many fruitful and productive collaborations on current criminal justice policy and planning issues facing the State of Connecticut.

In addition, many other colleagues and staff members within OPM and the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division have contributed to this work. I am grateful for the hard work of all involved in this report.

Brian Austin, Jr., Esq.  
Under Secretary  
Criminal Justice Policy and Planning  
Office of Policy and Management  
March 1, 2007

## STUDY DESCRIPTION AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Study Purpose: The Connecticut Statistical Analysis Center assessed the recidivism rates of 8,221 inmates released from prison during the 2000 calendar year.<sup>1</sup>**

In 2000, the Connecticut Department of Correction released 9,501 inmates who had been convicted of a crime and sentenced to serve time in prison. These inmates were released because they had either completed their court-ordered prison sentence or were placed in a community-based program while remaining under the supervision of the Department of Correction or Board of Parole. Of the 9,501 inmates, we were able to obtain court records for 8,221 (an 87% match rate) of them. While this match rate is not perfect, it is acceptable for the purposes of this study.

For the purpose of this study, reconviction and resented to prison were used as the measures of recidivism. These were selected because they were believed to be the most accurate information available. While arrest data is commonly used as a measure of recidivism, it may not always be accurate. For example, if a person is arrested and the charge receives a *nolle*<sup>2</sup>, the record of this arrest will be erased after thirteen months.

This study followed six different groups of ex-inmates. These groups were created based on their (1) type of prison release (end of sentence or community-based program) and (2) type of community supervision received prior to or immediately following prison release (parole, transitional supervision, DOC community-based program).<sup>3</sup>

Study Group <sup>4</sup>	Description of Type of Prison Release
End of Sentence Prison Release	
(1) Release from Prison	Released from prison after completing court sentence without receiving any community supervision
(2) Release from Parole	Released from DOC custody after serving time in prison and completing court sentence in the community under parole supervision
(3) Release From Transitional Supervision	Released from DOC custody after serving time in prison and completing court sentence in the community under transitional supervision
Prison Release with DOC Supervision	
(4) Release to Parole	Released from prison with parole supervision
(5) Release to Transitional Supervision	Released from prison under transitional supervision program
(6) Release to Comm. Program	Released from prison to a DOC community program (halfway house or re-entry furlough)

<sup>1</sup> See the Technical Appendix for a more detailed description of the study's method and sample.

<sup>2</sup> A nolle is a charge that a State's Attorney (i.e., prosecutor) decides not to take action on. State's Attorneys have thirteen months to move forward on charges that are nollied.

<sup>3</sup> See the Technical Appendix for a description of the community programs.

<sup>4</sup> While the Department of Correction does release end of sentence inmates from community programs, we were unable to distinguish them from those release from parole or transitional supervision.

### RECIDIVISM RATES FOR INMATES RELEASED IN 2000

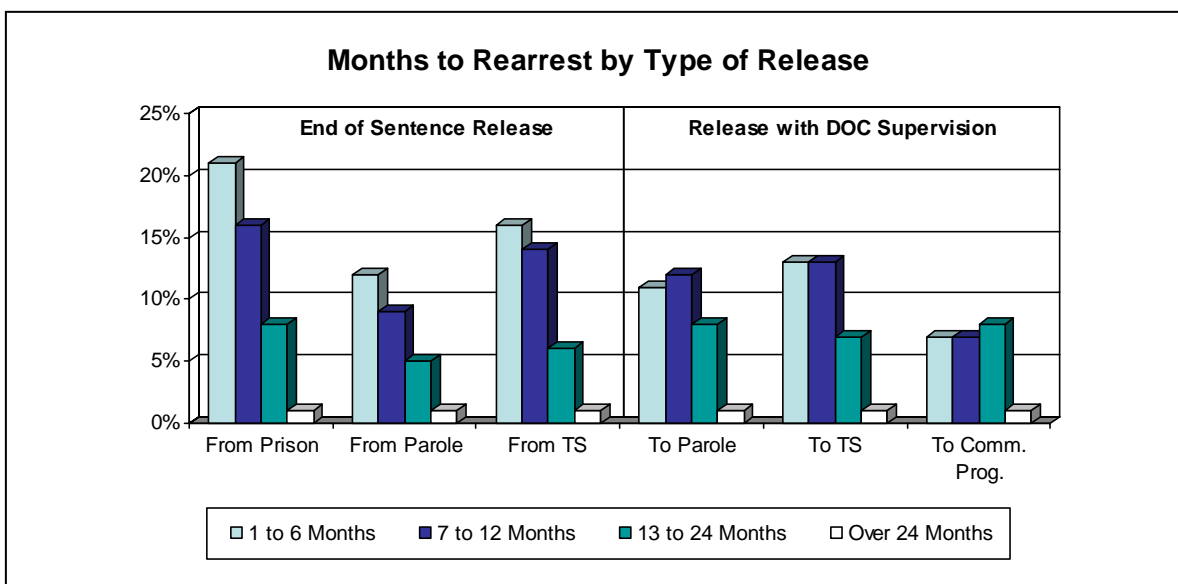
**Conclusion: Inmates released from prison with no community supervision were most likely to be reconvicted and resented to prison for a new offense.**

The overall reconviction rate was 39% and the overall reincarceration rate was 22%. Inmates released from prison without community supervision before or after their release had the highest reconviction and reincarceration rates (47% and 26%) while inmates released to a DOC community program (most commonly a halfway house or re-entry furlough) had the lowest reconviction rate (24%) and inmates released from DOC custody after completing their sentence while on parole had the lowest reincarceration rate (12%).

The average days in the community prior to rearrest (that led to a new conviction) was 255. Inmates released to DOC community program were out of prison the longest (343 days) and inmates released from prison with no community supervision averaged the shortest (238 days) amount of time prior to rearrest.

Reconviction Rates by Type of Prison Release

	Number in Study Group <sup>5</sup>	Reconviction Rate	Days to Rearrest	Resentenced to Prison	Resentenced Prison Days
<b>End of Sentence Release</b>					
Release from Prison	3,996	47%	238	26%	1,071
Release from Parole	514	27%	242	12%	1,209
Release From Trans. Sup.	734	37%	255	16%	1,229
<b>Release with DOC Supervision</b>					
Release to Parole	1,233	31%	293	19%	1,243
Release to Trans. Sup.	643	35%	273	21%	945
Release to Comm. Program	768	24%	343	16%	783
<b>Overall Averages</b>		<b>39%</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>1,027</b>

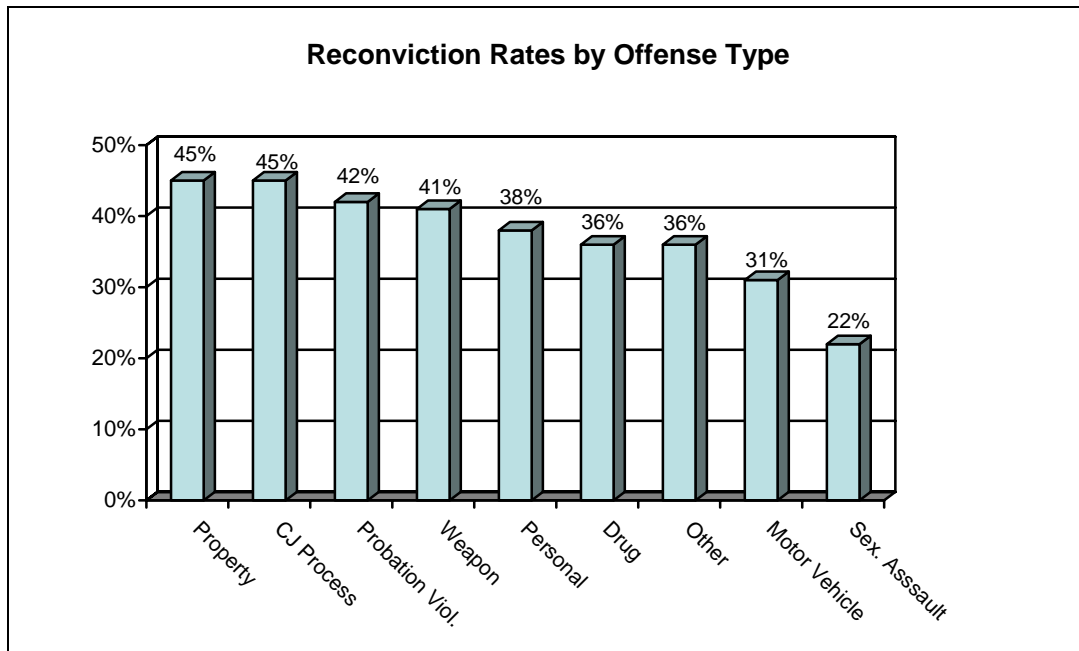


<sup>5</sup> This total does not equal 8,221. A small number of inmates were released for other reasons (115) or were transferred to the custody of a different correctional jurisdiction (218).

**COMPARISON OF TYPE OF OFFENSE AND RECONVICTION**

**Conclusion: Property offenders and those offenders incarcerated for criminal justice process offenses have the highest reconviction rates.**

Property offenders and those offenders incarcerated for criminal justice process offenses have the highest reconviction rates (45%).<sup>6</sup> These were followed by violation of probation (42%), weapon offenses (41%), personal offenses (38%), and drug offenses (36%). The offense types with the lowest reconviction rates were motor vehicle offenses (31%) and sexual offenses (22%).



**Reconviction Rates for Individual Offenses**  
(based on highest number of offenders within each offense type)

Offense	Total Offenders Released	Percentage Reconvicted	Offense	Total Offenders Released	Percentage Reconvicted
Property			Drug		
Larceny	600	43%	Poss. of Narcotics	757	41%
Burglary	529	43%	Sale of Hallucinogen	1,610	34%
CJ Process			Other		
Failure to Appear	170	42%	Conspiracy	232	32%
Escape	107	54%	Criminal Attempt	155	30%
Weapons			Motor Vehicle		
Carrying weapons	100	46%	Oper. under the influence	82	24%
Carrying or sale of dangerous weapon	26	46%	Driving while license susp.	20	20%
Personal			Probation Violation	1,404	42%
Assault	433	40%	Sexual Assault	147	22%
Robbery	396	39%			

<sup>6</sup> See the Technical Appendix for the list of individual offenses within each category.

## THE INFLUENCE OF PROBATION SUPERVISION FOLLOWING PRISON

**Conclusion: Inmates with probation supervision after completing their prison sentence have lower conviction rates than inmates leaving prison without community supervision.**

It is common practice in Connecticut for judges to sentence convicted offenders to serve a prison term and once this prison term is completed, the offender is sentenced to serve a term of probation. This practice is commonly referred to as a split-sentence and guarantees that these offenders will have some type of community supervision following their release from prison.

The final analysis looked at the effect of split sentence probation on reconviction rates. For this analysis, only inmates who had completed their sentence were included because they were the only group being supervised by probation officers following their release from prison (parolees and transitional supervision inmates were excluded). Over one-third of all inmates released at the end of their sentence had to serve a term of probation to follow (36%).

For the three types of end of sentence inmates, the reconviction rates were significantly lower for split sentence probationers than inmates leaving prison without a probation sentence to follow. Overall, the reconviction rate was 14% higher for inmates who were released from prison following the completion of their sentence who did not have a term of probation to follow (46% to 32%).

Reconviction Rates for Split Sentenced Probationers by Type of Prison Release

	Number	Release from Prison	Release from Parole	Release from Transitional Supervision	Overall Averages
Post-Prison Probation	1,878	37%	21%	29%	32%
No Probation after leaving DOC custody	3,366	52%	32%	43%	46%
Overall Averages		47%	27%	37%	42%

## PRIOR RESEARCH FINDINGS OF INMATE RECIDIVISM RESEARCH

***Conclusion: The recidivism rates found in this study are comparable to the 2001 Connecticut Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee report and to national studies of recidivism.***

National research on recidivism rates of prisoners is somewhat dated, but provides useful information. For instance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2002)<sup>7</sup> studied four measures of recidivism (rearrest, reconviction, reincarceration with a new sentence, and reincarceration without a new sentence) across 15 states (Arizona, California, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, and Virginia). They found that within three years of release: 68% were rearrested for a new offense, 47% were reconvicted of a new crime, 25% were resentenced to prison for a new crime, and 52% were reincarcerated.

In Connecticut, there have been two inmate recidivism studies released in the past five years. First, the Connecticut General Assembly's Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee (2001) analyzed the rate of recidivism for two different cohorts of offenders (probationers and inmates) who were placed on probation or released from prison in 1997<sup>8</sup>. The probationer cohort group consisted of 10,402 adults who were convicted of a felony and sentenced to probation or other sanctions that did not involve incarceration. In the inmate group, rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration data were collected for 4,006 inmates who were discharged from prison after:

- serving the maximum prison term imposed by the court and upon release were no longer under the custody or supervision of a criminal justice agency (end of sentence offenders);
- serving the maximum prison term imposed by the court and upon release began a period of probation under the supervision of the Connecticut Judicial Branch (split sentenced offenders);
- serving at least 50% of the court-imposed prison term and were paroled by the Board of Parole;
- serving at least 50% of the court-imposed prison term and granted early release to a Connecticut Department of Correction community-based program (e.g., transitional supervision, halfway house, community supervision, or re-entry furlough).

Three measures of recidivism (rearrest for a new felony or misdemeanor offense, reconviction on new charges, and reincarceration) were used in this study and both groups were tracked three years following their probation sentence or prison release. The recidivism rates for the inmate group were: 69% were rearrested, 46% were reconvicted, and 22% were reincarcerated (18% received a nonprison sentence of probation, an alternative sanction, or fine).

Second, Cox, Bantley, and Roscoe (2004)<sup>9</sup> studied inmate recidivism as part of their evaluation of the Probation Transition Program and Technical Violation Unit (two programs

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<sup>7</sup> Langan, P.A., & Levin, D.J. (2002). *Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1994*. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice.

<sup>8</sup> Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee. (2001). *Recidivism in Connecticut*. Hartford, CT: Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee, Connecticut General Assembly.

<sup>9</sup> Cox, S.M., Bantley, K.B., & Roscoe, T. (2004). *Evaluation Of The Court Support Services*



implemented by the Court Support Services Division of Connecticut's Judicial Branch). They specifically looked at split sentenced felony offenders from five Connecticut cities (Bridgeport, New Haven, Hartford, New London, and Waterbury).<sup>10</sup> They found that this group has a rearrest rate of 55%, a reconviction rate of 30%, and a reincarceration rate of 13%.

The reconviction rates were similar for the Program Review study (46%) and the national BJS study (47%). It was not surprising that the reconviction rate of the Cox et al., (2006) study (30%) was close to the Program Review study of felony probationers (32%). The Program Review study did assess reconviction rates by the type of prison release. It found that DOC releasees participating in community-based programs (re-entry furloughs, halfway house placement, community supervision) had the highest reconviction rates (48%), followed by inmates who were released at the end of their sentence with no supervision (45%)

Prior Studies of Reconviction Rates				
Study	Year of Sample	Sample	Reconviction Rate	Reincarceration Rate
Program Review and Investigations	1997	Felony Probationers	32%	11%
		Felony Inmates	46%	22%
		<i>End of Sentence</i>	45%	22%
		<i>Parole</i>	42%	22%
		<i>Trans. Supervision</i>	41%	20%
		<i>DOC Release</i>	48%	21%
Cox, Bantley, and Roscoe	2004	Split Sentenced Probationers	30%	Unavailable
Bureau of Justice Statistics	1994	Inmates	47%	

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Division's Probation Transition Program And Technical Violation Unit. Wethersfield, CT: Court Support Services Division, Connecticut Judicial Branch.

<sup>10</sup> Split sentenced offenders are sentenced to a prison term and are also required to serve a probation term following their release from prison.

## CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The primary findings of the 2007 recidivism study were:

1. Inmates released from prison with no community supervision were most likely to be reconvicted and resentenced to prison for a new offense.
2. Property offenders and those offenders incarcerated for criminal justice process offenses have the highest reconviction rates.
3. Inmates with probation supervision after completing their prison sentence have lower conviction rates than inmates leaving prison without community supervision.
4. The recidivism rates found in this study are comparable to the 2001 Connecticut Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee report and to national studies of recidivism.

In addition, even though the analyses were not presented above, few factors were found that would predict which inmates would be reconvicted following their release from prison. The most significant factors were the type of release (end of sentence inmates had a higher rate of reconviction and whether the inmate had a probation term following prison).

Public Act 05-249 requires that the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division of the Office of Policy and Management publish a yearly recidivism study. The 2008 recidivism study will include:

- an analysis of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration rates for inmates released from prison in 2003;
- a three year follow-up period for inmates released in 2003;
- an assessment of reincarceration rates of inmates in parole, transitional supervision, and DOC community programs who received technical violations and were not rearrested for a new offense.

## TECHNICAL APPENDIX

### STUDY METHODOLOGY

The present study assessed reconviction rates by utilizing data collected electronically from the Department of Correction and the Connecticut Judicial Branch. Data were collected for the 9,501 inmates who were released from Department of Correction facilities and supervision between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2000. This particular year was selected because it allowed for a five year time frame to collect follow-up information.

A list of these inmates was obtained from the Department of Correction along with their inmate numbers, SPBI numbers (used by Connecticut State Police to record arrest information), demographical information (age, sex, race/ethnicity, marital status, and number of dependents), DOC needs scores (mental health, alcohol/drug use, and sex offender), offense data, and sentencing data. Court data was obtained by matching the SPBI numbers provided by the Department of Correction to court records. Of the 9,501 inmates, court records were returned for 8,221 (an 87% match rate) of them. While this match rate is not perfect, it is acceptable for the purposes of this study.<sup>11</sup>

### SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

*Demographics.* A total of 8,221 inmates were included in this study. Almost one-half of the inmates (49%) were discharged because it was the end of their prison sentence. Fifteen percent of the inmates were also discharged for end of sentence, however, 6% were discharged after completing parole and 9% were discharged after completing transitional supervision. Fifteen percent of the inmates were released to parole, 8% were released to transitional supervision, and 9% were released to furloughs or halfway house programs. Three percent were released from DOC facilities but were sent to other state or federal agencies (these cases were not included in this study).

The average age was almost the same across the type of release (approximately 30 years old). The majority of inmates were male (90%) and were unmarried (86%). Overall, 45% of the study group was African-American, 29% were white, and 26% were Hispanic.

**Demographic Information Across Study Groups**

	Number	Age	Percent Male	Percent Unmarried	Dependents	Percent African-American
<b>End of Sentence Release</b>						
Rel. from Prison	3996 (49%)	31	91%	86%	1.4	43%
Rel. from Parole	514 (6%)	29	88%	84%	1.4	47%
Rel. From TS	734 (9%)	30	82%	85%	1.3	40%
<b>Release with DOC Supervision</b>						
Parole	1233 (15%)	29	92%	84%	1.5	52%
Transitional Supervision	643 (8%)	29	85%	87%	1.3	45%
Community Programs	768 (9%)	30	87%	88%	1.4	50%
Other Discharge	115 (1%)					
Other Non-release	218 (3%)					
<b>Totals and Averages</b>	<b>8221</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>45%</b>

<sup>11</sup> The 13% missing court records was commonly attributed to data entry errors across the three agencies providing data (Department of Correction, the Division of Public Safety, and the Judicial Branch).

*Time Served in Prison and Offense Characteristics.* The majority of inmates served two years or less prior to their release from a DOC facility. Specifically, 39% served one year or less and 32% served between one and two years. Less than 1% of the released inmates had served over ten years in prison prior to their release.

Time Served Prior to Release		
	Number	Percentage
One year or less	3206	39%
One to Two years	2593	32%
Three to Five years	2032	25%
Six to Ten years	351	4%
Over Ten years	39	.5%
Total	8221	100%

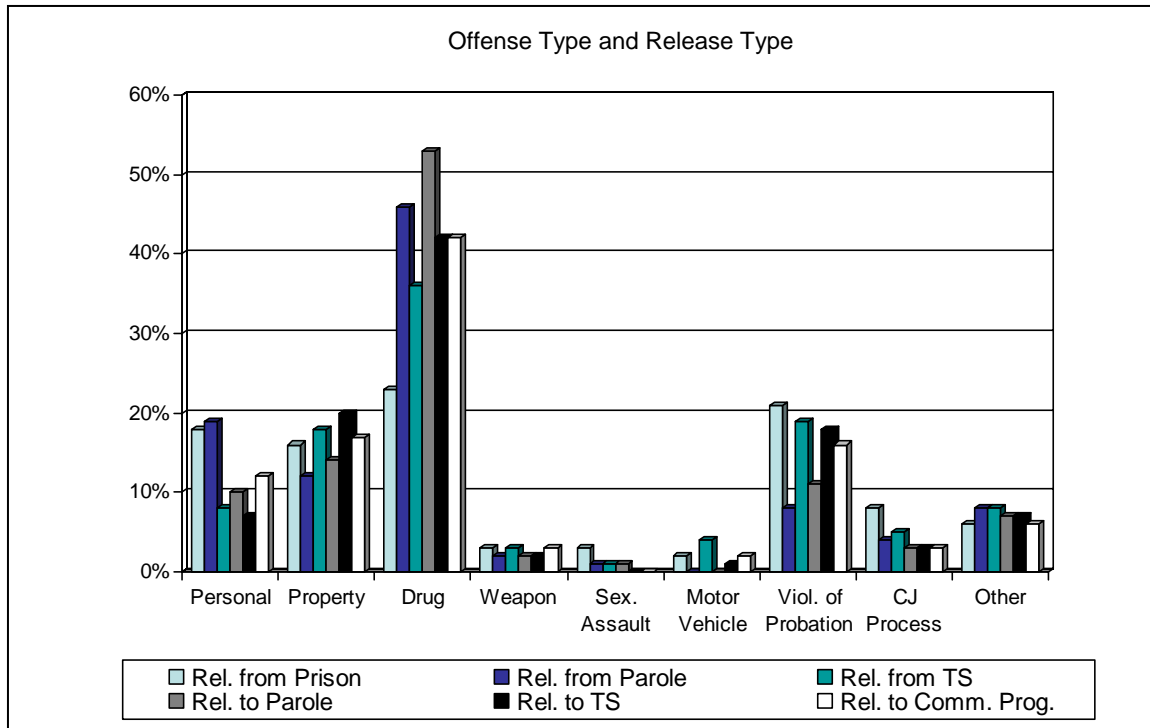
End of sentence parolees and inmates released to parole had served the most time prior to release. End of sentence parolees had served an average of 44 months prior to release and inmates released to parole had served an average of 32 months. These lengths of prison stay far exceed the other release types. For instance, end of sentence inmates released straight from prison had served the next highest time of 22 months, with the lowest being transitional supervision inmates (10 months). The large time difference between parole and transitional supervision was not unexpected given the nature of each type of post-incarceration supervision.<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, the average inmate served 68% of his/her sentence prior to their release. End of sentence transitional supervision inmates had the highest average of time served (88%) while DOC-Community had the lowest (46%).

Offense and Sentencing Data Across Study Groups				
	Sentence Length (Months)	Time Served (Months)	Offense Seriousness	Violent Instant Offense
End of Sentence Release				
Rel. from Prison	28	22	5	22%
Rel. from Parole	54	44	6	21%
Rel. From Trans. Super.	17	15	5	8%
Release with DOC Supervision				
Parole	57	32	6	11%
Transitional Supervision	20	10	5	7%
Community Programs	41	19	5	12%
Averages	34	23	5	17%

The most common offense type across the study groups were drug offenses (53% of parolees and 23% of end of sentence inmates were drug offenders). Weapon offenses, motor vehicle offenses, and sex offenses were the least common offense types.

<sup>12</sup> Inmates with prison sentences under two years are eligible for transitional supervision while inmates with prison sentences over two years are eligible for parole.



*Department of Correction Need Scores.* The Department of Correction need scores were fairly similar across study groups. That is, a small portion of released inmates had mental health problems (highest for the end of sentence prison release), alcohol and drug problems were more prevalent for inmates in all of the study groups (highest for parole and DOC-Community), and very few were sex offenders (no sex offenders were placed in to transitional supervision or DOC-Community supervision programs).

DOC Needs Scores Across Study Groups\*

	Mental Health (1 to 5 scale)	Alcohol/Drug (1 to 4 scale)	Sex Offender (1 to 5 scale)
<b>End of Sentence Release</b>			
Rel. from Prison	1.56	2.75	1.29
Rel. from Parole	1.41	2.80	1.05
Rel. From Trans. Super.	1.33	2.60	1.00
<b>Release with DOC Supervision</b>			
Parole	1.38	2.94	1.07
Transitional Supervision	1.35	2.68	1.00
Community Programs	1.44	2.94	1.00
<b>Averages</b>	<b>1.47</b>	<b>2.78</b>	<b>1.16</b>

\*The higher the need score the most serious the need

## SUMMARY OF DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

*Parole:* The Board of Pardons and Paroles has the authority to release certain inmates serving sentences of greater than two years. By statute, offenders convicted of non-violent crimes are eligible for parole after serving 50 percent of their sentence. Those offenders convicted of violent crimes must serve 85 percent of their sentence.

*Transitional Supervision (TS):* Eligible inmates must serve at least 50 percent of a sentence of two years or less. The facility Warden is the designated release authority and the Department of Correction provides supervision and case management, through its Parole and Community Services Unit for offenders on Transitional Supervision status. Transitional supervision replaced supervised home release.

*Halfway House:* Utilized to provide assistance for those offenders who require greater support and supervision in the community. Offenders who are within eighteen months of release date or have been voted to parole may participate in these Department of Correction structured programs.

*Re-Entry Furlough:* The release of an inmate by the Department of Correction to an approved residence for up to 30 days in the final portion of their sentence for the purpose of re-entry support into the community.

## LIST OF OFFENSES BY OFFENSE TYPE

### *Property*

- Arson
- Burglary
- Criminal mischief
- Criminal Trespass
- Forgery
- Larceny

### *Criminal Justice Process*

- Criminal contempt
- Criminal liability
- Conveying unauthorized item to an institution
- Escape
- Failure to appear
- Interfering with an officer
- Persistent larceny offender
- Tampering with evidence
- Tampering with witness
- Violation of protective order

### *Violation of Probation*

Sexual Assault

*Weapons*

- Carrying pistol/revolver without permit
- Carrying or sale of dangerous weapon
- Carrying weapon without a permit
- Criminal possession of a firearm
- Criminal possession of a pistol/revolver
- Possession of assault weapon prohibited
- Possession of a shotgun/silencer
- Stealing a firearm
- Unlawful discharge of a firearm

*Personal*

- Assault
- Assault of a police or fire officer
- Assault-victim over 60 years old
- Assault with a motor vehicle
- Cruelty to persons
- Kidnapping
- Manslaughter
- Misconduct with a motor vehicle
- Murder
- Reckless endangerment
- Risk of injury to minor
- Stalking
- Threatening
- Unlawful restraint

*Drugs*

- Drug paraphernalia in drug factory
- Misrepresentation of a substance as controlled
- Obtaining drugs illegally
- Possession of less than 4 ounces of marijuana or controlled substance
- Possession of more than 4 ounces of marijuana or controlled substance
- Possession of narcotics/amphetamines
- Sale of controlled substance
- Sale of hallucinogen/narcotic

*Other*

- Conspiracy
- Criminal attempt
- Criminal impersonation
- Cruelty to animals
- Disorderly conduct
- Prohibited activities
- Prostitution

*Motor Vehicle*

- Driving while license suspended
- Evading responsibility
- Operating under the influence of liquor or drugs
- Reckless driving