



Rhode Island Department of Corrections

Director Ashbel T. Wall, II

2009 Recidivism Study: Two Year Follow Up

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Introduction

This report explores the recidivism rates for prisoners released from the Rhode Island Department of Corrections (RIDOC) during calendar year 2009. Data is compared against previously reported recidivism data for a 2004 release group.

Definition of a Recidivist:

- An offender who was released from sentence at RIDOC, and
- Who was returned to RIDOC as a sentenced inmate (unless otherwise noted).

The Release Cohort

There were 3,387 offenders released in CY09, accounting for 3,699 distinct release events. The majority of offenders released were white (54%), male (90%), and average 34 years of age at the time of release.

Table 1. Race of Release Cohort

Race	% of Total
Black	27%
White	54%
Asian	<1%
Hispanic	17%
American Indian	<1%
Other/Unknown	<1%

Nearly two-thirds of those released had served time for a nonviolent (38%) or drug-related crime (24%).

Table 2. Offense Category of Releasees

Offense Category	% Total
Violent	29%
Sex	3%
B&E	6%
Drug	24%
Nonviolent	38%
Pending	<1%

Summary of Findings

- Of the 3,699 offenders released in 2009 from RIDOC, 31% returned under sentence within 1 year of release. By 24 months post-release, 42% had returned under sentence. This constitutes a 4% decrease in 2-year post release rates from the 2004 cohort.
- Offenders who were released from Home Confinement had lower recidivism rates than those released from secure facilities. This was true for the 2004 cohort as well.
- Forty-one percent (41%) of prison offenders and 43% of jail offenders recidivated within 2 years of release.
- For pretrial readmissions, 1 in 2 offenders returned as awaiting trial detainees within 24 months post release for a two year recidivism rate of 50%. This is an 8% decline for two year rates from the 2004 cohort.
- Only 4% of pretrial 2-year recidivists were female. This is a significant decrease from the 2004 cohort where 12% of awaiting trial recidivists were female.

The median length of stay for a released offenders was 4.7 months. As a result of the relatively short sentences, the most common manner of release was expiration of sentence (80%). Offenders were released from all facilities as well as Home Confinement. Minimum Security alone accounted for almost one third of releases (32%).

Sentenced Readmissions

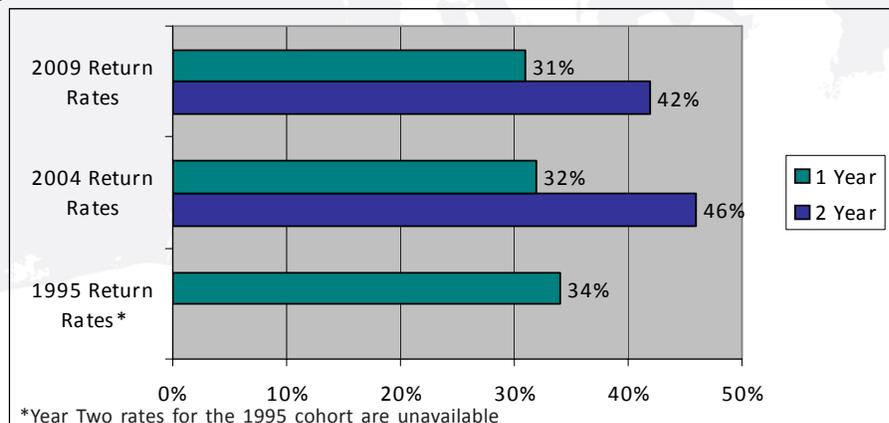
At 1-year post release, 1 in 3 offenders of the release cohort, or 31%, had returned to RIDOC with a new sentence. An additional eleven percent (11%) were readmitted to sentence status between 13 and 24 months, for a 2-year return rate of 42%.

As shown in Table 3 below there has been a 4% decrease in 2-year post release rates from the 2004 release cohort. The gradual reduction of rates since 1995 is clearly illustrated.

Of those offenders who recidivated, 8% were female. Of all the females who were released during CY09 (376), 34% returned to RIDOC within 24 months of their release (25% in year 1 and an additional 9% in year 2). For male offenders, 43% of all males released recidivated (31% in year 1 and 12% in year 2).

The security an offender was released from had little effect on their chances of recidivating. For almost all facilities 1 in 2 offenders returned to a new

Table 3. Recidivism Rates



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sentence within 24 months of their release. Home Confinement was the exception. One in 4 offenders released from Home Confinement recidivated within 2 years post release.

For the additional 11% of offenders who returned to sentenced status between 12 and 24 months of release, the average time they spent out of the ACI was 520 days. Offenders who were released from Women's Division GM Building spent the most time in the community before reoffending at 565 days.

The racial distribution of recidivists nearly mirrors those of the release group. The vast majority (83%) are either white or black.

Of the 103 sex offenders released during 2009, 27% (28 of 103) recidivated within 24 months of release.

Over half (53%) of recidivists were resentenced for a new crime, while 31% returned as probation violators and 15% as parole violators. Compared to the 2004 study probation violator returns have been reduced by 18% (from 49% post 2 year release in 2004). Parole violation returns have risen 7% compared to 2004.

Jail vs Prison Rates

RIDOC operates a unified correctional system: both jail and prison inmates are under RIDOC's jurisdiction. In order to compare RIDOC's population to other jurisdictions, "jail" offenders are defined as those serving 1 year or less and "prisoners" are those offenders serving greater than 1 year.

Forty-three percent (43%) of "jail" offenders recidivated within 24 months of release, compared to 41% of prison offenders.

For the 1,222 "prison" offenders, 24% returned to serve another prison term of more than one year within 24 months of release while 17% returned to serve a "jail" sentence of less than one year.

How Does RI Compare to Other New England States?

Connecticut

A 2008 release cohort of 16,286 reported a 47% two-year return rate to prison.

www.ct.gov

New Hampshire

A 2004 release cohort of 1,382 reported a 44.2% three-year return rate.

www.nh.gov/nhdoc

Massachusetts

The DOC's Annual Report followed a 2007 release group of 2,536 from state facilities had a three-year recidivism rate of 43%.

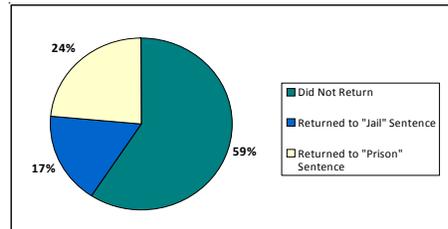
www.mass.gov

Vermont

A 2006 release cohort of 3,034 reported having a 52% three-year return rate.

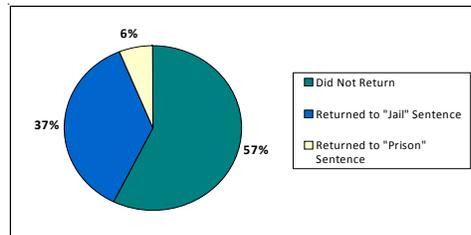
www.doc.state.us.vt

Table 4. Offenders Released from a "Prison" Sentence



For the 2,477 "jail" offenders, 37% returned to serve another term of less than one year within 24 months of release. Six percent (6%) of offenders who were released from a "jail" sentence recidivated within two years and came back to serve a prison sentence of more than one year.

Table 5. Offenders Released from a "Jail" Sentence



Pretrial Readmissions

Within 24 months post release 1 in 2 offenders returned as awaiting trial detainees for a two year recidivism rate of 50%, an additional 13% from the 1 year rate of 37%. This constitutes an 8% decline from year 2 rates for the 2004 study which was 58% respectively.

Offenders who returned to the ACI as awaiting trial detainees between 12 and 24 months of release stayed in the community an average of 527 days, about one week longer than offenders who returned to sentenced status during the same period of time.

Four percent (4%) of offenders who returned to pretrial detention were female. This is a significant decrease from 2004 statistics where 12% of awaiting trial recidivists 2 year post release were female.

