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2013
Maine Adult
Recidivism Report

2013 MAINE ADULT RECIDIVISM REPORT

ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
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STUDY OVERVIEW

This report measures the Maine Department of Corrections' (MDOC) impact on probationers by examining two rates of recidivism. The primary definition of recidivism for the purposes of this report is drawn from the definition used in Kubrin and Stewart's study (2006) as the arrest of a probationer for a new crime (felony or misdemeanor) within one year of entering probation. As Kubrin and Stewart point out, using arrests instead of new convictions circumvents judicial and correctional system data issues. Because policy changes can have an impact on outcomes, this report also examines a subset of probationers rearrested for a new crime, who are revoked (i.e. an arrest and imprisonment) for a new criminal offense while on probation within one year.

STUDY POPULATION

This report describes eight cohorts of adults who entered Maine's probation system between 2004 and 2011. It tracks the adult for up to three years from the date of entering probation to determine whether they recidivate.¹

MEASURES/ VARIABLES

The analysis provides recidivism outcomes and compares them with demographic characteristics of probationers, cohort (year entering probation), and LSI-R risk level upon entering probation.

The Level of Service Inventory – Revised (LSI-R) is used to assess the level of risk of recidivism of an offender and has been used by MDOC since 2004. The LSI-R score is comprised of 10 categories or domains: Criminal History, Education/ Employment, Finances, Family/Marital, Accommodations, Leisure/Recreation, Companions, Alcohol/Drug, Emotional/Personal, and Attitude/Orientation. The total LSI-R score can range from 0 to 54, with lower numbers indicating less likelihood of recidivating than higher numbers. The predictive validity of the LSI-R had been demonstrated within several different correctional settings (Andrews, 1982; Andrews & Robinson, 1984; Bonta & Andrews, 1993; Bonta & Motiuk, 1985; Gendreau, Goggin, & Smith, 2002), and has predictive validity for various subgroups of the offender population such as female offenders, and African-American offenders (Coulson, Ilacqua, Nutbrown, Giulekas, & Cudjoe, 1996; Lowenkamp, Holsinger, & Latessa, 2001; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2002). Many LSI-R domains address dynamic risk factors (can be changed) and are important for case planning and case management, as probation officers and treatment providers work with a probationer to effect positive behavior changes. Others, such as Criminal History, are static and cannot be changed.

¹ Two-year and three-year recidivism rates are found in the appendix of this report



METHODOLOGY

Researchers conducted three levels of analysis: (1) basic descriptive statistics, which provide an overview of the population; (2) bivariate analysis, to determine the characteristics of one-year recidivists and non-recidivists; and (3) binary logistic regression, to determine the characteristics that influence probationers' likelihood of violating probation, recidivating within three years.

LIMITATIONS

As with any research using secondary data sources, completeness and accuracy of the data is an issue. A portion of each cohort lacked the LSI-R scores used to determine risk levels. Policy and practice changes from 2004 to 2011 also impacted the probation system, which likely had different effects on cohorts, depending upon timing of the change. For example, in late 2004, new law and policy changes restricted probation to felonies and a limited number of misdemeanors. In 2006, the re-calibration of Maine's probationer risk levels, intended to better identify the higher risk probationers for case management and probation supervision, also made direct comparisons of cohorts more difficult.

In addition, although probation officers are trained to administer the LSI-R, there may be a degree of inconsistency in scoring. For example, scoring individual domains differently may lead to inconsistent findings for that domain and for the overall LSI-R score.

Findings may not necessarily be applied to probationers in other states, or those entering probation during another period of time, since probation systems across the county have unique characteristics and local policy practices that can affect recidivism outcomes. Finally, this report follows adults only while they on probation for up to three years, because data limitations do not allow researchers to examine criminal history records after individuals exit probation.²

DATA SOURCES

The Maine Correctional Information System (CORIS) is the primary data source for the report. CORIS is a comprehensive, multi-purpose, information system that captures information on adults involved in Maine's correctional system.

FINDINGS

Study findings establish a baseline probation recidivism rate and a trend line useful for state policy makers. The study should appeal to state and national audiences interested in community corrections performance measurement in an environment characterized by policy and practice changes incorporating evidence-based practices.

² Adults may be found in multiple cohorts (i.e. if an adult entered probation in 2006, that adult could appear in a later cohort if they received a new probation sentence).



Overall Demographics

Researchers examined 28,884 offenders who entered probation between January 2004 and December 2011. More than four-fifths (81.7%) were male, and whites accounted for 91.9% of the sample. The majority (60.5%) were single, with 22.4% divorced, separated, or widowed, and 17.1% married. Male probationers (62.5%) were more likely to be single than females (51.3%). The mean age of probationers in the sample was 33, with a median age of 31. The mean age of probationers at first arrest was 21, and the median age was age 18. At the time of first arrest, the women in the sample (mean age of 24) were slightly older than the men (mean age of 20 at first arrest).

Those with some college or more accounted for only 6.6% of the sample, while nearly half (45.8%) had completed high school or a GED. Nearly half of the sample (47.6%) had less than a HS diploma.



TABLE 1 - CHARACTERISTICS OF MAINE PROBATIONER SAMPLE, 2004-2011

	Men		Women		Total	
Gender					N	%
Male					23,612	81.7%
Female					5,264	18.2%
Cohort	N	%	N	%	N	%
2004	3,999		855		4,854	16.8%
2005	2,995		641		3,637	12.6%
2006	2,861		596		3,457	12.0%
2007	2,837		671		3,508	12.1%
2008	2,784		624		3,408	11.8%
2009	2,789		643		3,432	11.9%
2010	2,745		648		3,393	11.7%
2011	2,602		586		3,188	11.0%
Race	N	%	N	%	N	%
White	21,593	91.4%	4,948	94.0%	26,541	91.9%
Non-White	2,019	8.6%	316	6.0%	2,335	8.1%
Marital Status	N	%	N	%	N	%
Single	13,256	62.5%	2,356	51.3%	15,612	60.5%
Married	3,527	16.6%	883	19.2%	4,410	17.1%
Divorced/separated widowed	4,428	20.9%	1,358	29.5%	5,786	22.4%
Age Group	N	%	N	%	N	%
18-24	6,386	27.1%	1,354	25.8%	7,741	26.8%
25-34	7,664	32.5%	1,727	32.8%	9,391	32.5%
35-44	5,322	22.6%	1,336	25.4%	6,658	23.1%
45-54	3,090	13.1%	672	12.8%	3,762	13.0%
55-64	897	3.8%	150	2.9%	1,047	3.6%
65+	241	1.0%	19	0.4%	260	0.9%
Age						
Mean		33.4		33.1		33.3
Median		31		31		31
Highest Grade Completed	N	%	N	%	N	%
Up to 11th grade	8,396	48.8%	1,450	41.6%	9,846	47.6%
12th grade / GED	7,815	45.4%	1,672	48.0%	9,487	45.8%
Some college or more	1,005	5.8%	360	10.3%	1,365	6.6%
Age at First Arrest						
Mean		20.4		24.5		21.1
Median		18		21		18

**AGE BY COHORT YEAR**

A closer examination of the age of the offender entering probation by year shows a majority of probationers under the age of 35. Between 2004 and 2011, the share of the population younger than 35 ranged from a low of 57.1% (2005) to a high of 61.4% (2007). Across the eight year analysis period, the share of probationers over the age of 45 increased from 15.4% in 2004 to 20.2% in 2011. From a community corrections perspective, the increase in older probationers may suggest that these new entrants have longer criminal history records, and/or have longer term needs that have to be met by MDOC.

TABLE 2 – AGE GROUP BY YEAR ENTERING PROBATION

Age Group	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Overall
18-24	31.2%	26.3%	28.8%	27.5%	25.9%	24.3%	25.0%	23.7%	26.8%
25-34	29.0%	30.8%	32.0%	33.9%	32.4%	34.3%	34.6%	35.0%	32.5%
35-44	24.3%	26.0%	22.9%	22.8%	23.4%	22.0%	21.2%	21.1%	23.1%
45-54	11.5%	12.7%	12.4%	12.3%	13.3%	14.7%	14.2%	14.1%	13.0%
55-64	3.1%	3.5%	3.2%	2.7%	4.1%	3.8%	4.1%	4.8%	3.6%
65+	0.8%	0.8%	0.6%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	1.3%	0.9%

Risk Levels

Due to policy changes in late 2004 restricting probation to felonies and selected statutorily-defined misdemeanors, the lowest risk level, categorized as “administrative” with a score ranging from 0-13 on the LSI-R, category has decreased steadily from nearly one in three probationers (30.3%) in the 2004 cohort to 16.0% in the 2011 cohort.

Through 2005, Moderate probationers’ LSI-R scores ranged from 14 to 31, when the category was reclassified into three cohorts: “Low” (14-20) “Moderate” (21-25) and “High Risk (26-31).

Over the eight year period, probationers scoring between 14 and 20 points on the LSI-R are nearly one third of all entrants, representing the largest share of probationers. In 2011, low risk probationers were 35.6% of the cohort, the largest share over the last eight years. Taken together the percentage of low and administrative risk probationers has declined from 64.0% in 2004 to 51.6% in 2011.

Examining probationers who scored in the “Moderate” range on the LSI-R shows a significant increase from 17.8% in the 2004 cohort to nearly a third (31.4%) in the 2011 cohort. The share of high risk level offenders (26-31) has remained steady over the last seven years ranging between 10-15% of each annual cohort. Finally, the maximum risk level category (32-54) has remained at roughly five percent of the total cohort ranging from a high of 7.0% in 2006 to a low of 4.3% in 2009. The decline in administrative cases and the rise of moderate risk level probationers has increased the average LSI-R score from 17.96 in 2004, to 19.75 in 2011.

**TABLE 3 – RISK LEVEL BY YEAR ENTERING PROBATION**

Risk Level (risk score)	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Administrative (0-13)	30.3%	26.3%	21.6%	19.9%	20.0%	18.8%	16.6%	16.0%
Low (14-20)	33.7%	32.2%	33.8%	35.4%	35.4%	35.2%	35.5%	35.6%
Moderate (21-25)	17.8%	21.5%	22.5%	26.7%	29.1%	31.2%	31.4%	31.4%
High (26-31)	12.5%	13.5%	15.1%	11.7%	10.3%	10.5%	11.8%	12.0%
Maximum (32+)	5.6%	6.6%	7.0%	6.3%	5.2%	4.3%	4.7%	5.0%
Average Score	17.96	18.91	19.67	19.44	19.27	19.43	19.71	19.75

One-Year Recidivism and Revocation Rates

To avoid distortion in comparison of recidivism rates due to different lengths of time spent on probation, researchers compared 1-year recidivism rates for each cohort.

TABLE 4 – ONE-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY RISK CATEGORY AND COHORT

Risk Level	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*	Change 2004-2011
Administrative	12.9%	11.5%	10.8%	10.6%	11.6%	10.3%	7.2%	8.3%	-35.7%
Low	19.8%	19.5%	19.7%	20.1%	20.4%	18.8%	17.0%	18.2%	-8.1%
Moderate	25.6%	29.5%	31.6%	33.3%	31.4%	28.0%	27.4%	28.2%	10.2%
High	32.4%	37.3%	42.4%	41.1%	39.6%	36.5%	36.1%	39.6%	22.2%
Maximum	45.8%	45.0%	45.5%	49.0%	50.3%	43.7%	9.0%	47.1%	2.8%
Total	21.8%	23.7%	25.7%	26.0%	25.5%	23.0%	22.4%	23.7%	8.7%

*=2011 recidivism rates include only clients entering probation prior to 6/26/2011.

The one-year recidivism rate rose slightly each year, from 21.8% of the 2004 cohort to 23.7% of the 2011 cohort. Administrative risk probationers experienced a decline of 35.7%, while Low risk probationers experienced an 8.1% decline in one-year recidivism. Moderate, High and Maximum risk probationers experienced increases in one-year recidivism of 10.2%, 22.2% and 2.8%, respectively.

These initial trends reflect policy changes by MDOC to implement various aspects of evidence-based practice over the study period.

For example, in 2006, MDOC began to supervise Administrative and Low risk probationers far less intensively than in the past³ in order to increase contacts with higher risk probationers.

³ Contact with the probation officer is minimal and occasional "reporting in" is all that is required.



As a result of another policy change in 2006, probationers in the Moderate, High and Maximum categories were required to have a case plan that addressed the risk factors that could lead to a re-arrest for a new crime. Previous work with MDOC suggests that case plans have not always been reviewed to ensure the probation officers are targeting the top three or four criminogenic needs (dynamic risk factors). Holding staff accountable for using motivational interviewing techniques is also handled very informally across the state. Although probation officers are familiar with MI techniques and are encouraged to engage offenders using MI strategies, they are only occasionally observed. These challenges may explain why recidivism rates have not fallen for higher risk probationers in subsequent cohorts.

TABLE 5– ONE-YEAR REVOCATION RATES BY RISK CATEGORY AND COHORT

Risk Level	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*	Change 2004-2011
Administrative	11.0%	9.9%	9.1%	9.1%	9.4%	8.6%	5.8%	6.1%	-44.6%
Low	16.6%	17.4%	17.7%	16.8%	17.8%	16.3%	14.7%	13.1%	-21.1%
Moderate	22.8%	25.9%	28.4%	29.4%	28.1%	24.2%	24.4%	24.1%	5.6%
High	29.1%	35.4%	37.8%	36.8%	35.5%	31.9%	32.0%	29.0%	-0.4%
Maximum	41.1%	41.1%	43.7%	43.6%	48.4%	38.5%	43.4%	42.6%	3.8%
Total	19.0%	21.2%	23.1%	22.7%	22.5%	19.9%	19.7%	18.7%	-1.1%

A revocation of probation occurs when a court orders an offender to serve the remainder of his/her sentence in prison or jail, due to new criminal conduct. The court may order some or all of the remainder to be served. One year revocation rates follow a similar pattern to recidivism rates. Revocations slightly rose slightly between 2004 and 2007 and then began to decline. In 2011, the revocation rate was lower than any other previous cohort over the past eight years. Revocation rates for Administrative and Low risk probationers declined dramatically over the analysis period by 44.6% and 21.1%. For higher risk probationers (Moderate, High and Maximum risk level probationers), revocation rates increased slightly over the period (except for high risk probationers), although since 2008, those rates have declined.

The decline in revocations for new criminal conduct can be attributed in part to an increased use of alternative sanctions over the last eight years. Alternative sanctions refer to a punishment other than a revocation, including a verbal warning, a graduated sanction¹, amended conditions, etc.

¹“Graduated sanction” means any of a wide range of non-prison offender accountability measures and programs, including, but not limited to, electronic supervision tools; drug and alcohol testing or monitoring; day or evening reporting centers; restitution centers; forfeiture of earned compliance credits; rehabilitative interventions such as substance abuse or mental health treatment; reporting requirements to supervision officers; community service or work crews; secure or unsecure residential treatment facilities or halfway houses; and short-term or intermittent incarceration.



Previous research in 2007 by the Muskie School for MDOC showed probation officers using a graduated sanction, or giving a warning to the probationer when the first violation is technical in nature far more often than in previous years. Although there are few mandated revocation guidelines, there is an effort to limit the use of incarceration for lower risk offenders. Officers have a great deal of discretion to determine the array of sanctions to apply to individual cases. Recently, a graduated sanctions grid has been implemented by MDOC to provide officers with a list of graduated sanctions responses that can be applied based upon their discretion.

One-Year Recidivism and Revocation Rates by County

There were some differences in the one-year recidivism rates by county, ranging from a high of 28.9 percent in Somerset County to a low of 18.5 percent in Washington County. Many factors may influence county rates. These include employment levels, substance abuse, and the general crime rate. Courts, probation, prosecution and law enforcement practices should also be considered in variation of revocation rates by county. Lower recidivism rates may reflect successful officer practices working with probationers, such as using motivational interviewing techniques and more detailed case planning processes.

TABLE 6– ONE YEAR RECIDIVISM RATE OF PROBATIONERS BY COUNTY (2004-2011)

County	Recidivism Rate
Somerset	28.9%
Aroostook	25.9%
Lincoln	25.4%
Kennebec	25.4%
Androscoggin	24.6%
Cumberland	24.3%
Statewide Average	24.0%
York	23.8%
Piscataquis	23.8%
Knox	23.5%
Penobscot	23.1%
Franklin	22.5%
Sagadahoc	21.9%
Oxford	21.5%
Hancock	20.1%
Waldo	19.7%
Washington	18.5%



Revocation patterns are similar to recidivism rates, with Somerset County reporting the highest one-year revocation rate (26.3) over the eight year period and Washington County having the lowest county rate at 15.8%. The similarity between recidivism and revocation rates is due to most re-arrests (recidivism) leading to a revocation.

All Maine counties reported between 80 and 93 percent of re-arrests leading to one type of revocation (either a partial revocation with continuation, a partial with termination or a full revocation). York County had the lowest rate of re-arrests leading to a revocation (79.9%), and Lincoln County had the highest proportion at 93.0 percent between 2004 and 2011.

TABLE 7– ONE YEAR REVOCATION RATES OF PROBATIONERS BY COUNTY (2004-2011)

County	Revocation Rate
Somerset	26.3%
Lincoln	23.7%
Aroostook	22.8%
Kennebec	22.5%
Piscataquis	21.7%
Cumberland	21.6%
Androscoggin	21.6%
Statewide Average	21.0%
Knox	20.8%
Franklin	20.3%
Penobscot	19.6%
Oxford	19.4%
York	19.1%
Sagadahoc	18.8%
Hancock	18.1%
Waldo	16.9%
Washington	15.8%

Bivariate Analysis

Using chi-square analysis, this study identifies differences among probationers. When gender and other probationer characteristics are compared in the bivariate analyses, a number of differences become evident. One substantial finding is that male probationers in the sample (24.7%) were significantly more likely than female probationers (20.8%) to recidivate within one year.⁵

⁵ Significant at the .001 level

**TABLE 8- CHARACTERISTICS OF ONE-YEAR RECIDIVISTS (2004-2011)**

	1-year Non-Recidivists		1-year Recidivists		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender	$\chi^2=37.57, 1 df, p\leq.001$					
Male	16,792	75.3%	5,513	24.7%	20,725	100.0%
Female	3,933	79.2%	1,032	20.8%	6,546	100.0%
Marital Status	$\chi^2=73.24, 1 df, p\leq.001$					
Married	3,386	80.6%	817	19.4%	4,203	100.0%
Not married	14,981	74.3%	5,179	25.7%	20,160	100.0%
Highest Grade Completed	$\chi^2=99.74, 2 df, p\leq.001$					
Up to 11th grade	6,671	71.8%	2,625	28.2%	9,296	100.0%
12th grade / GED	6,818	76.1%	2,139	23.9%	8,957	100.0%
Some college or more	1,052	83.2%	212	16.8%	1,264	100.0%
Employment	$\chi^2=67.89, 1 df, p\leq.001$					
Full-time	6,866	80.2%	1,695	19.8%	8,561	100.0%
Other	8,629	75.3%	2,834	23.7%	11,463	100.0%
Mean Age	34.2 years		30.4 years		33.2 years	
Mean Age at First Arrest	22.0 years		18.7 years		21.2 years	

Unmarried probationers (25.7%), those with less than a high school degree (28.2%), and those not employed on a full-time basis (23.7%) were significantly more likely to recidivate within one year. In all cases, Chi square tests found this difference to be significant at the .001 level.

Probationers who recidivated within one year were younger (mean age 30.4) than the rest of the sample (mean age 34.2). They were also younger at the time of first arrest (mean 18.7 years) than the rest of the sample (mean 22.0 years).

Table 9 presents recidivism rates by substance abuse and mental health conditions as specified in CORIS⁶. Data from 2005⁷ to 2011 show that probationers with these conditions were significantly more likely to recidivate. Researchers also created the new variable, “co-occurring” if the probationer had both drug/alcohol treatment and mental health counseling. The result show co-occurring probationers with a recidivism rate of 28.8%, significantly higher than probationer without both conditions (23.9%).

⁶ CORIS contains a “yes/no” variable that identifies whether the probationer has court conditions that mandate substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling.

⁷ Condition data was not available from the 2004 cohort

**TABLE 9—ONE-YEAR RECIDIVISTS BY SELECTED CONDITIONS (2005-2011)**

	1-year Non-Recidivists		1-year Recidivists		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Drug and Alcohol Treatment	$\chi^2=11.44, 1 df, p\leq.001$					
Yes	8,101	74.8%	2,729	25.2%	10,830	100.0%
No	6217	76.9%	1864	23.1%	8081	100.0%
Drug Testing Conditions	$\chi^2=41.19, 1 df, p\leq.001$					
Yes	9,818	74.4%	3,379	25.6%	13,197	100.0%
No	4,500	78.8%	1214	21.2%	5714	100.0%
Mental Health Counseling Conditions	$\chi^2=9.55, 1 df, p=.002$					
Yes	1,982	73.4%	720	26.6%	2,702	100.0%
No	12336	76.1%	3873	23.9%	16209	100.0%
Co-occurring	$\chi^2=18.04, 1 df, p\leq.001$					
Yes	1,082	71.2%	437	28.8%	1,519	100.0%
No	13,236	76.1%	4,156	23.9%	17,392	100.0%

Logistic Regression

Binary logistic regression was used to determine the strength of each variable's influence on a probationers' likelihood of recidivating within one year. As the model below shows, nine variables are significant factors explaining a probationer's recidivism: Probationer's age, the number of prior arrests, accommodations (referring to the probationer's housing situation), financial (income level), whether the offender has a substance abuse problem, gender, type of offense the probationer was convicted of, the attitudes and orientation of the offender, and whether the probationer was employed full-time.⁸

For example, Table 10 shows an increase of one year in a probationers' age leads to a four percent decrease in recidivism. Males were 25.1% more likely than females to recidivate within one year, and probationers who were not employed full-time were 24.2% more likely to recidivate. Finally, each additional point on the LSI-R score for the Attitudes and Orientation domain increased the likelihood of recidivism (rearrest) within one year by 16.0%.

⁸ Nearly three-quarters (73.6%) of cases were accurately classified by the model with respect to recidivism within one year, however the model produced a weak Cox & Snell pseudo R^2 of .068 and a weak Nagelkerke pseudo R^2 of .099. Of the variables that were found to have an influence on recidivism, age, accommodations, companions, full time employment, attitudes and orientation and prior arrests were significant at the .001 level, substance abuse, crime type, and gender at the .01 level and financial, at the .10 level.



TABLE 10 – RECIDIVISM WITHIN ONE YEAR (0 = NO, 1 = YES)

Dependent Variable	Recidivism within 1 year (0 = No, 1 = Yes)		
	B	Wald	Odds Ratio
Age (years)	-.041	175.756	.960***
Prior Arrests (n)	.051	91.768	1.052***
Accommodations LSI-R score	.126	14.305	1.135***
Financial LSI-R score	.061	2.960	1.063 ⁺
Companions LSI-R score	.117	25.746	1.124***
Alcohol/drug abuse LSI-R score	.040	11.875	1.041**
Age at first arrest (years)	.001	.044	1.001
Gender 0 = Female 1 = Male	.224	8.780	1.251**
Type of Offense 0 = Not a felony 1 = Felony	-.157	8.934	.854**
Type of Sentence 0 = Split Sentence 1 = Straight Probation	-.074	1.635	.928
Full-Time Employment 0 = No 1 = Yes	-.278	26.010	.758***
Marital Status 0 = Not married 1 = Married	.010	.020	1.011
Education 1 = Up to 11 th grade 2 = HS Diploma/GED 3 = Some college +	-.041	.876	.960
Emotional/Personality	.014	.603	1.014
Attitudes and Orientation	.149	51.521	1.160***
Constant	-.553	11.126	.575***
Percentage of Cases Accurately Classified	73.6%		
Cox & Snell	.068		
Nagelkerke	.099		

⁺ $p \leq .10$, * $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$



Criminogenic Risk and Recidivism

In Table 11, researchers examined the association between criminogenic risk, as calculated by the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) and one year recidivism. Because the analysis has large numbers of probationers, these findings can be considered robust, and help to shed light on case management needs for probationers with different risk levels. Except for maximum risk level cases, criminal history was a significant predictor of recidivating within one year across all risk levels, and accommodations were a predictor in three of the risk levels.

TABLE 11 – RISK LEVEL AND LSI PREDICTORS

Risk Level	LSI Subscale	N	R ²
Administrative	Criminal History**	5,025	.026
	Accommodations**		
Low	Criminal History**	8,389	.018
	Education/Employment**		
	Accommodations**		
	Companions**		
Moderate	Criminal History**	6,487	.013
	Education/Employment**		
	Financial**		
	Accommodations**		
High	Criminal History*	3,003	.015
	Leisure/Recreation**		
Maximum	Emotional/Personality*	1,395	.031
	Attitudes/Orientation**		

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Discussion

This study helps to shed light on recidivism patterns over an eight year period in Maine’s adult community corrections system, by analyzing a sample of 28,884 offenders who entered probation between January 2004 and December 2011.

The study found that recidivism rates did not change significantly across the eight cohorts, but that administrative and lower risk offenders in the 2011 cohort showed significantly better outcomes than their counterparts from previous cohorts. These initial trends may reflect policy changes effected by MDOC to incorporate evidence-based principles into probation supervision practice over the study period. Starting in 2007, MDOC supervised its Administrative cases and Low risk probationers far less intensively than in the past in order to concentrate supervision on higher risk probationers.

The recent decision to hire Probation Officer Assistants (POAs) to manage this group of offenders may further decrease the overall rates, since their responsibilities do not include supervision standards at a level currently performed by probation officers.



Higher risk probationers performed worse over the first few years of the study period, but have started to perform better in the last three years. The 2011 cohort, although not fully complete, showed recidivism levels comparable to the 2004 cohort (a cohort that had a far higher number of misdemeanants).

In view of the literature on evidence-based practices in community corrections, higher risk probationers can be expected to perform worse (have higher recidivism rates) if supervision becomes more intensive, without adequate service provisions, such as cognitive behavioral therapy aimed at changing offending attitudes and behaviors. In order to successfully address this higher risk population and achieve real reductions in recidivism rates, research suggests smaller caseloads, and the placement of probationers into sufficiently intensive cognitive-behavioral interventions that target their specific criminogenic needs. The hiring of POAs should reduce the caseload size of probation officers, allowing them to focus more intensively on the needs of higher risk probationers.

Anecdotally and from the study researchers' work in the field, there is a growing awareness of the lack of cognitive behavioral therapy in many parts of the state to adequately address the anti-social, behavioral issues of higher risk offenders. The shortage of evidence-based programming to improve offender outcomes across Maine is likely to play a large role in the ongoing challenge to reduce recidivism rates among higher risk offenders.

This report identified significant factors that increased the chances of reoffending for probationers in the sample. Gender was a factor: Males were significantly more likely than females to recidivate within one year. Marital status, education, employment, unmarried probationers, those with less than a high school degree, and those not employed on a full-time basis were more likely to recidivate within one year. Finally, the age of the probationer was a significant factor in whether the offender recidivated. These findings are consistent with previous research on probationer recidivism, and are highlighted in the literature summary.

Binary logistic regression identified a number of variables as having a significant effect on recidivism outcomes. These included static factors such as gender, probationer age and number of prior arrests, and dynamic factors such as full-time employment and the LSI-R domains of Criminal History, Accommodations, and Financial.

This report is the first recidivism study of adult offenders entering probation in Maine. Future research on Maine probationers may wish to examine sentencing policy and management strategies that have an influence on recidivism outcomes. Although not included in this report, preliminary analyses show probationers in the sample who entered probation directly from prison or jail (split sentence) had worse outcomes than probationers with a probation-only sentence. In addition, actions taken by probation officers after an initial violation appear to influence the future behavior of the offender. These questions are worth examining more closely, as they may contribute to our understanding of recidivism behavior and help identify potential causes.



APPENDIX

COHORT BY CRIME TYPE (FELONY/MISDEMEANOR)

			Cohort								Total
			2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	
Misdemeanor	Count		2,965	1,845	1,601	1,519	1,473	1,424	1,348	659	12,834
	% within cohort		63.2%	52.1%	48.1%	45.8%	45.7%	44.1%	42.0%	43.9%	49.3%
Felony	Count		1,729	1,694	1,729	1,801	1,747	1,804	1,860	843	13,207
	% within cohort		36.8%	47.9%	51.9%	54.2%	54.3%	55.9%	58.0%	56.1%	50.7%

There has been a steady decline in the amount of misdemeanor crimes committed from 2004 to 2011. The most significant decline occurred from 2010 to 2011. In 2004 and 2005 more misdemeanor crimes were committed than felonies, however every year subsequent to 2005 show that more felony crimes have been committed than misdemeanors.



TOP FIVE OFFENSES BY COHORT

			Cohort								Total
			2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	
#1	ASSAULT/THREATEN	Count	1,268	1,124	1,008	930	924	855	844	415	7,368
		% within cohort	27.0%	31.8%	30.3%	28.0%	28.7%	26.5%	26.3%	27.6%	33.7%
#2	DRUGS	Count	542	385	496	600	501	563	585	249	3,921
		% within cohort	11.5%	10.9%	14.9%	18.1%	15.6%	17.4%	18.2%	16.6%	15.1%
#3	OUI	Count	603	445	427	360	378	356	318	158	3,045
		% within cohort	12.8%	12.6%	12.8%	10.8%	11.7%	11.0%	9.9%	10.5%	11.7%
#4	THEFT	Count	408	295	301	321	315	303	350	159	2,452
		% within cohort	8.7%	8.3%	9.0%	9.7%	9.8%	9.4%	10.9%	10.6%	9.4%
#5	BURGLARY	Count	335	288	272	271	279	292	291	136	2,164
		% within cohort	7.1%	8.1%	8.2%	8.2%	8.7%	9.0%	9.1%	9.1%	8.3%

The top five offenses committed from 2004-2011 were assault/threatening, drugs, OUI, theft, and burglary respectively.

**ONE-YEAR, TWO-YEAR, AND THREE YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY COHORT**

All Probationers								
Recidivism Rates	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
1 year rearrest for new crime	21.7%	24.0%	25.4%	25.7%	25.4%	23.6%	23.1%	24.0%
1 year rearrest for technical violation	27.0%	28.9%	29.6%	31.9%	30.8%	29.7%	29.9%	31.7%
1 year rearrest for either a new crime or technical violation	41.8%	45.0%	46.0%	47.2%	46.1%	44.5%	44.3%	46.0%
1 year revocation for new crime	19.0%	21.2%	22.8%	22.4%	22.5%	20.5%	20.2%	19.0%
1 year revocation for technical violation	19.6%	20.8%	20.6%	20.6%	20.9%	21.0%	19.0%	18.0%
2 year rearrest for new crime	27.6%	31.5%	33.3%	33.5%	33.4%	31.1%	31.2%	
2 year rearrest for technical violation	35.3%	36.8%	38.5%	41.1%	40.5%	38.4%	39.4%	
2 year rearrest for either a new crime or technical violation	50.3%	54.1%	55.4%	57.5%	56.7%	53.8%	55.2%	
3 year rearrest for new crime	30.6%	34.4%	35.8%	35.8%	35.9%	33.5%		
3 year rearrest for technical violation	38.7%	40.8%	42.1%	45.3%	44.6%	42.2%		
3 year rearrest for either a new crime or technical violation	53.1%	57.3%	57.5%	60.1%	59.7%	56.1%		

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