



# Rhode Island Department of Corrections CY14 Recidivism Brief

June 2018

## Introduction & Methodology

This report explores the recidivism rates for inmates released from the Rhode Island Department of Corrections (RIDOC) during calendar year 2014 (CY14).

For the purpose of this report, RIDOC defines a recidivist as:

- An offender who was released from a sentence at RIDOC, and
- Who returned to RIDOC as a sentenced offender, or
- Who returned to RIDOC as an awaiting trial inmate as noted.

Data is based on information available at the time of data collection from RIDOC's inmate tracking system. Data is subject to change in future reports as information is updated.

An inmate can be re-incarcerated and considered a recidivist in the following ways: an awaiting trial detainee, a newly sentenced offender, or a parole or probation violator.

## The Release Cohort

There were 2,896 sentenced offenders released in CY14, accounting for 3,191 distinct release events. The majority of offenders were white (53.6%), males (88.2%), and averaged 35 years upon release.

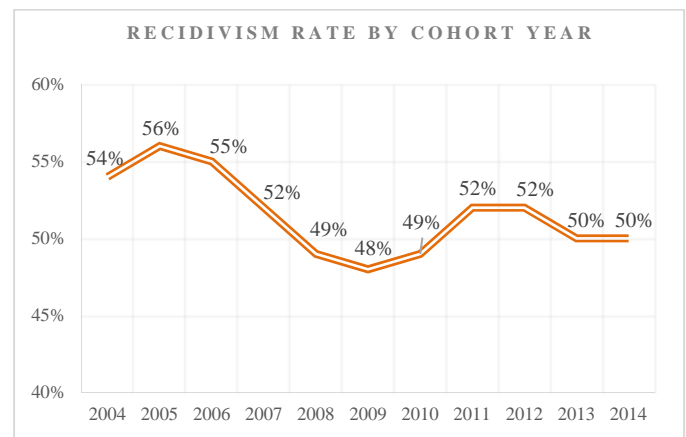


Over three quarters of those released served a sentence for a nonviolent<sup>1</sup> (45.1%) or violent (31.4%) crime.<sup>2</sup> The

average sentence length imposed by RI courts was 1.5 years while the median length of stay for a released offender was approximately 3 months. As a result of the relatively short sentences, the most common manner of release was expiration of sentence (90%). Due to the imposition of split sentences, where a term of probation follows a term of incarceration, RIDOC estimates over 85% of offenders released from incarceration immediately begin probation supervision in the community.

## Sentenced Readmissions

At 3-years post-release, 50% of offenders returned to RIDOC as a sentenced offender. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of females and 52% of males were recommitted as sentenced offenders. This CY14 recidivism rate has not changed over the past year and remains the same as the CY13 cohort.



Virtually all offenders who returned were for a probation violation (49%) or a new sentence (43%). Parole violators accounted for approximately 8% of recidivists. However, parolees had a higher rate of reoffending in

<sup>1</sup> Nonviolent crimes include charges such as violation of a no contact order, shoplifting, or drug violations.

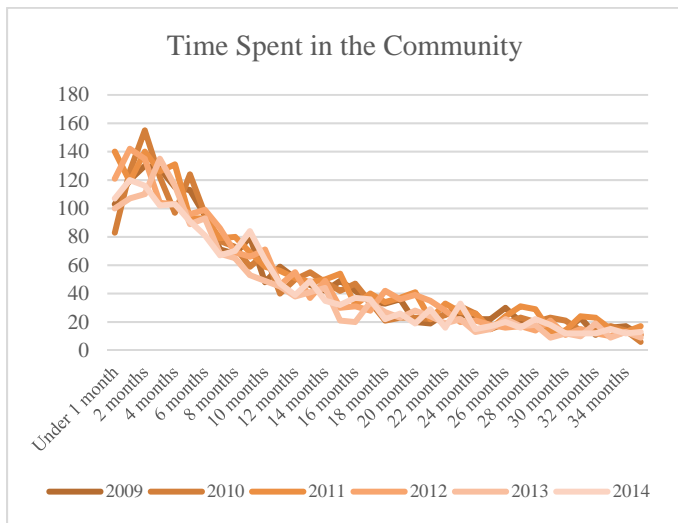
<sup>2</sup> The remaining types of crimes not listed are sexual crimes, property crimes such as breaking and entering, and drug crimes.

general. Sixty-four percent (64%) of offenders released to parole supervision in CY14 returned as a parole violator within 3 years.

## Time in the Community

The average time spent in the community for CY14 was 10.9 months. Almost 7% of recidivists had returned within 30 days of release. An additional 32% returned between 1 and 6 months. By 1-year post-release, nearly two-thirds of recidivists had returned to RIDOC.

Overall, the time spent in the community prior to re-offense remains steady following the same trend as previous years.



## Awaiting Trial Readmissions

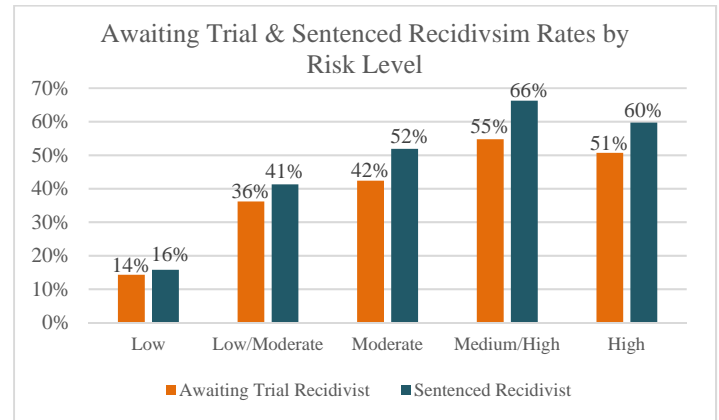
RIDOC operates a unified correctional system, meaning all pre-trial detainees and sentenced offenders (regardless of sentence length or crime type) are under the department’s jurisdiction. Unlike most corrections departments, this gives RIDOC the unique ability to report rates for those who returned to await trial. By 36-months, 60% of the cohort returned as awaiting trial detainees. These rates follow the same trends reported in past cohorts.

## The Level of Service Inventory-Revised

Over the past decade, RIDOC has moved toward using risk assessments to inform case management decisions by implementing the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R), a 54-item empirically supported risk/need assessment that quantifies offender’s likelihood of re-offending across 10 domains; criminal history,

education/employment, financial, family/marital, accommodation, leisure/recreation, companions, alcohol/drug problem, emotional/personal, and attitudes/orientation. For those in the CY14 cohort, the average score for females was 26, indicating a high risk to re-offend. For men, the average score was 27 indicating a moderate risk to re-offend.

Analysis indicates a positive correlation to recidivism; the higher the LSI-R score and risk level, the more likely an offender is to recidivate. The chart below illustrates this for both sentenced and awaiting trial recidivists. For example, 14% of those who score low on the LSI-R return to RIDOC within 3 years as an awaiting trial detainee and 16% of those who score low return as sentenced offenders in the same time period. Compare those rates to releases who score moderate/high where 55% return as awaiting trial detainees and 66% as sentenced offenders.



Risk level also corresponds to time in the community. Those at higher risk of re-offending tend to spend less time in the community than their lower risk counterparts prior to recidivating. In fact, low risk offenders spend on average nearly 200 days longer in the community than high risk offenders.

All 10 domains of the LSI-R were individually correlated with recidivism. Criminal history had the strongest relationship followed by education, family, leisure/recreation, and companions. Identifying an offender’s needs through these domains is tantamount to success. By relying on the LSI-R, appropriate case management strategies can be implemented on an individual level. For example, an offender may score high in the attitudes/orientation domain. This would indicate he or she may benefit from cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), an evidence-based form of treatment known to address criminal thinking behaviors and patterns. When interventions are done correctly and with fidelity, the overall LSI-R can be reduced, resulting in a lower risk to re-offend and an increase in public safety.