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Virginia Community Corrections

Baseline Recidivism Study

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Introduction

In 1995, Virginia passed the Comprehensive Community Corrections Act which established local, community-based probation as an alternative to incarceration for persons convicted of certain misdemeanors or non-violent felonies for which sentences would be 12 months or less in a local or regional jail. In Virginia, community correction agencies are operated by local units of government but are funded by State general funds through grants administered by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). DCJS provides administrative oversight to local probation and pretrial services. There is also a statewide association, the Virginia Community Criminal Justice Association (VCCJA), which represents and serves local probation and pretrial service agencies. As of 2012, there are 37 local probation agencies operating in Virginia, serving 128 of 134 localities in Virginia.¹

Like many probation agencies across the nation, Virginia has experienced increasing levels of probationer non-compliance with supervision conditions resulting in violations that often lead to unsuccessful termination from supervision. In 2005, VCCJA and DCJS committed to addressing this trend by beginning the process of integrating evidence-based practices (EBPs) into all probation and pretrial services agencies. The goal of this initiative is to use practices that have been empirically tested and have been shown to reduce recidivism among offenders. What started as a small pilot in 2005 with four agencies introducing EBPs into supervision has grown to 20 agencies as of 2012.

EBP Sites in Virginia

Phase I sites (implemented in 2005/2006):

- Blue Ridge Community Corrections
- Chesterfield/Colonial Heights Community Corrections
- Colonial Community Corrections
- Hampton/Newport News Criminal Justice Agency
- Henrico Community Corrections
- Lynchburg Community Corrections
- OAR/Jefferson Area Community Corrections
- Old Dominion Community Corrections
- Piedmont Court Services - Mecklenburg County

¹ *Comprehensive Community Corrections and Pretrial Services Act Report* (December, 2012). Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services.

- Rappahannock Community Corrections

Phase II sites (implemented in 2010)

- Culpeper County Criminal Justice Services
- Fairfax County Court Services Division
- Halifax/Pittsylvania Court Services
- New River Community Corrections & Pretrial Services
- Northern Neck Community Corrections
- Piedmont Court Services – Prince Edward County
- Portsmouth Community Corrections & Pretrial Services
- Prince William Office of Criminal Justice Services
- Riverside Criminal Justice Agency
- Virginia Beach Office of Community Corrections & Pretrial Services

Project Approach

In the fall of 2012, the Virginia Community Correction Justice Association contracted with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to complete a baseline analysis of outcomes associated with FY04 probation completers. The primary purpose of the baseline analysis is to document the outcomes achieved by local probation in Virginia pre-EBP implementation. Specifically, the baseline evaluation sought to answer the following questions:

- What was the demographic profile of probationers who completed Community Corrections supervision in FY04?
- Did the probationers being supervised in FY04 (by the 20 sites that would become the EBP) sites differ demographically from the probationers supervised in the nonEBP sites in a statistically meaningful way?
- What was the average length of probation supervision in FY04?
- By offense category and offense level, what were the primary placement charges for the FY04 probation completers?
- What was the average number of office contacts per probationer for the FY04 completers?
- What services were local probationers court-ordered to complete in FY04?
- What were the case closure types for local probationers whose cases were closed in FY04? If unsuccessful, why?

- What percentage of FY04 local probation completers were re-arrested and/or received a new conviction while under supervision?
- What percentage of FY04 local probation completers were re-arrested and/or received a new conviction post-program three years from exit date?
- What types of new offenses were committed by local probationers after exiting probation supervision in FY04?
- What, if anything, predicted whether a probationer would complete local probation supervision successfully in FY04?
- What, if anything, predicted whether a probationer would be convicted of a new crime post-program in FY04?

Sources of Data

The cohort for this report was defined as Community Corrections probationers who completed supervision between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2004. Data was collected from several sources regarding this cohort.

Pretrial and Community Corrections Case Management System

Case-level and probationer data came from the statewide Pretrial and Community Corrections (PTCC) case management. The PTCC case management system was developed under the auspices of the Department of Criminal Justice Services and is mandated for all local probation and pretrial service agencies. In 2004 the PTCC system was still in its relative infancy so some data elements that are now mandatory and/or more defined were still optional in 2004.

Virginia State Police Data

Pre-program criminal history and all new arrest and conviction data were obtained from the Virginia State Police for the FY04 probation completers selected for inclusion in the study. Criminal history records for the sample were obtained in February 2013. Criminal history information was separated into three categories: prior criminal history, placement offense and recidivism offenses. Recidivism offenses were further divided into two categories, in-program recidivism and post-program recidivism. *In-program recidivism* is defined as an

arrest and/or conviction (reported separately) for a criminal offense that occurred between the probation entry and exit date. *Post-program recidivism* is defined as a conviction for a new criminal offense that occurred anytime between the exit date from probation and three years post-exit date.

Sample Selection

The study sample was drawn from all 37 local probation offices in Virginia. Because the number of completers differed across sites, a sample was drawn from each site using the following logic:

- If 10% of a local probation office's sample, after ineligible records were removed, was comfortably greater than 100, then a random sample of 10% was drawn.
- If 10% of the site list was less than 100, then 100 records were drawn at random from the list.
- For three of the sites, the final list itself was either below or very near 100, and in those instances the entire site list was retained for the analysis sample.

Therefore, the sampling rate for the sites ranged from 10% to 100% for the three smallest offices in population size. The remaining sites were sampled at a rate above 10%, producing 100 individuals each. It is important to note that transfer in/out cases were attributed to the jurisdiction that actually provided the supervision for purposes of this study.

The entire population of Community Corrections probation in FY 2004 was 33,656. A 10% sample of that population would total 3,366. However, due to oversampling at the smaller sites as described above, the final sample size totaled 4,705. All estimates of statewide summary statistics and correlations below account for this sampling strategy with the use of probability weights and the number of observations reflect the weighted counts, rather than the number of sampled observations. Observation totals will not always sum to the entire population due to rounding errors or missing data.

Key Findings

This report was designed to establish a baseline recidivism rate, pre-EBP implementation, for Virginia's Community Corrections agencies. Based on a sample of 4,705 probationers who completed probation in FY04 we found:

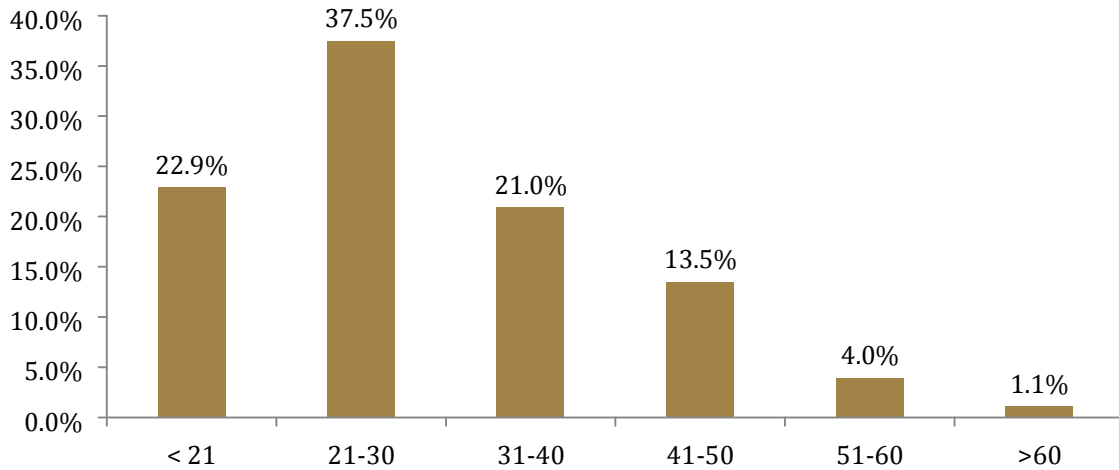
- The recidivism rate, as measured by a new arrest for a criminal offense three years post-exit, was 26.5% for successful completers and 44.2% for unsuccessful completers.
- The recidivism rate, as measured by a new conviction for a criminal offense three years post-exit, was 16.2% for successful completers and 31.1% for unsuccessful completers.

Baseline Evaluation Questions

Question 1: What was the demographic profile of probationers who completed Community Corrections supervision in FY04?

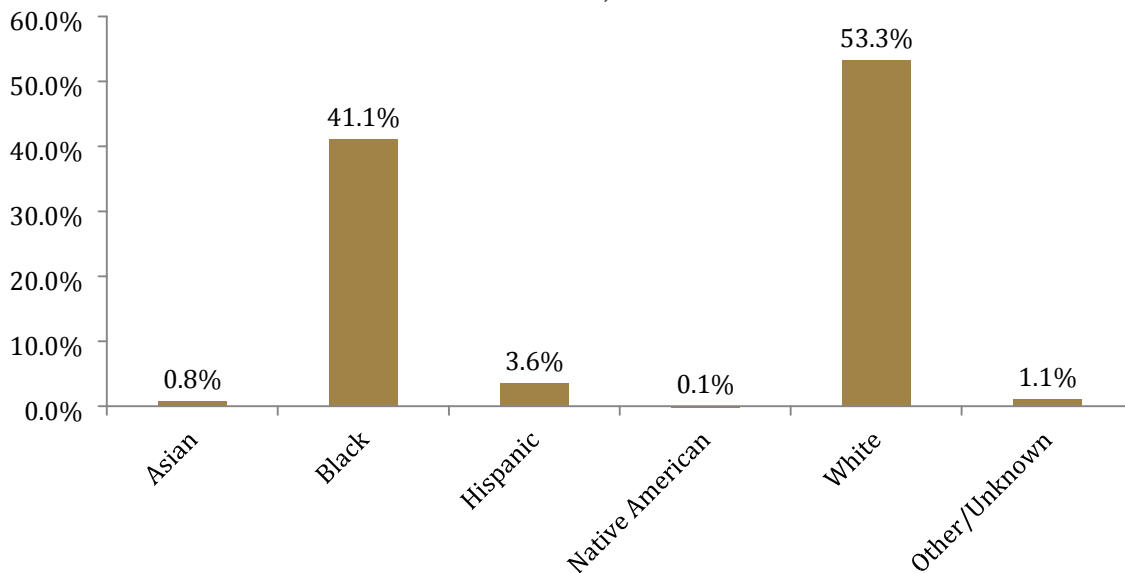
The average age for probationers completing supervision in FY04 was 30 years. As Figure 1 shows, more than 80% of probation completers in FY04 were forty years old or younger.

Figure 1: Age of Probationers Completing Supervision in FY04
N = 33,626



More than half of the probationers completing supervision in FY04 were white. As Figure 2 indicates, over 40% were black and a small percentage, 3.6% were Hispanic.

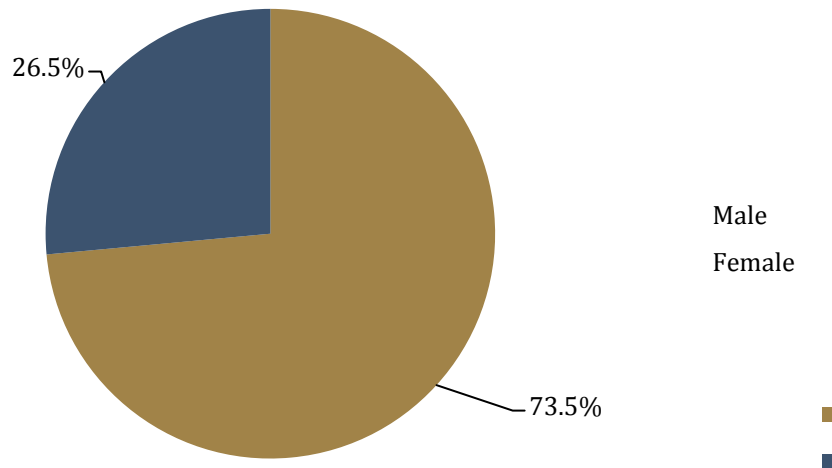
Figure 2: Race of Probationers Completing Supervision in FY04
N = 33,655



According to the 2000 US Census, 72.3% of Virginians were white and 19.6% were black and 4.7% were Hispanic.² As Figure 2 indicates, there was a disproportionate representation of black persons in the FY04 sample.

Males represented nearly three-quarters of the probation completer sample in FY04. This is also an over-representation, as in 2000 males comprised only 49% of the population in Virginia. However, this percentage is not uncommon in correctional settings.

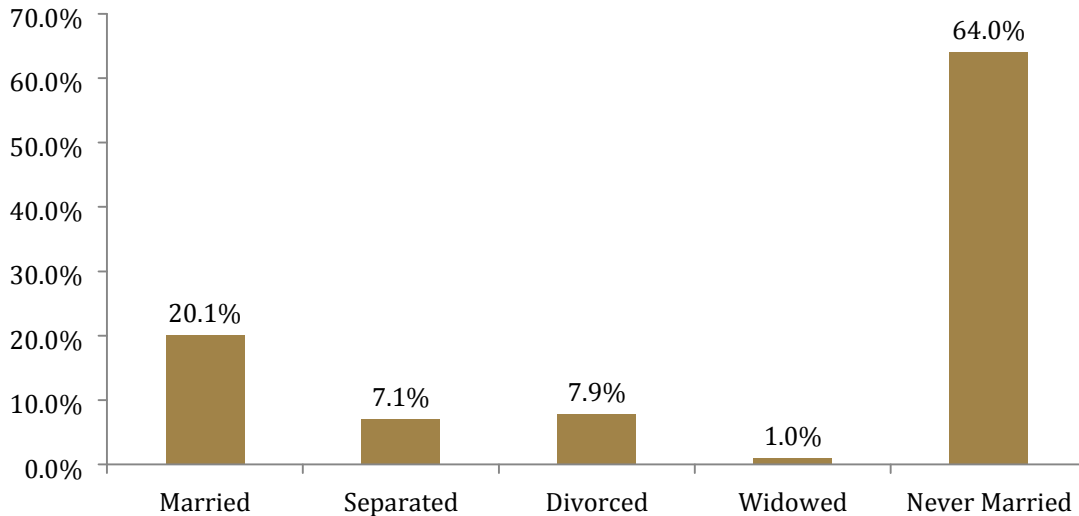
Figure 3: Gender of Probationers Completing Supervision in FY04
N = 33,654



As Figure 4 demonstrates, nearly 65% of probation completers in FY04 reported having never been married. In the context of average age of probationers in the sample being 30 years, this appears reasonable.

² United States Census Bureau. (2000). *Profile of General Demographic Characteristics*. Washington, D.C.: United States Census Bureau.

Figure 4: Marital Status of Probationers Completing Supervision in FY04
N = 33,555



Nearly half of the probationers completing supervision in FY04 had at least a high school diploma/GED. Twenty percent (20%) of the probationers in the sample attended some college.

Figure 5: Education of Probationers Completing Supervision in FY04
N = 33,518

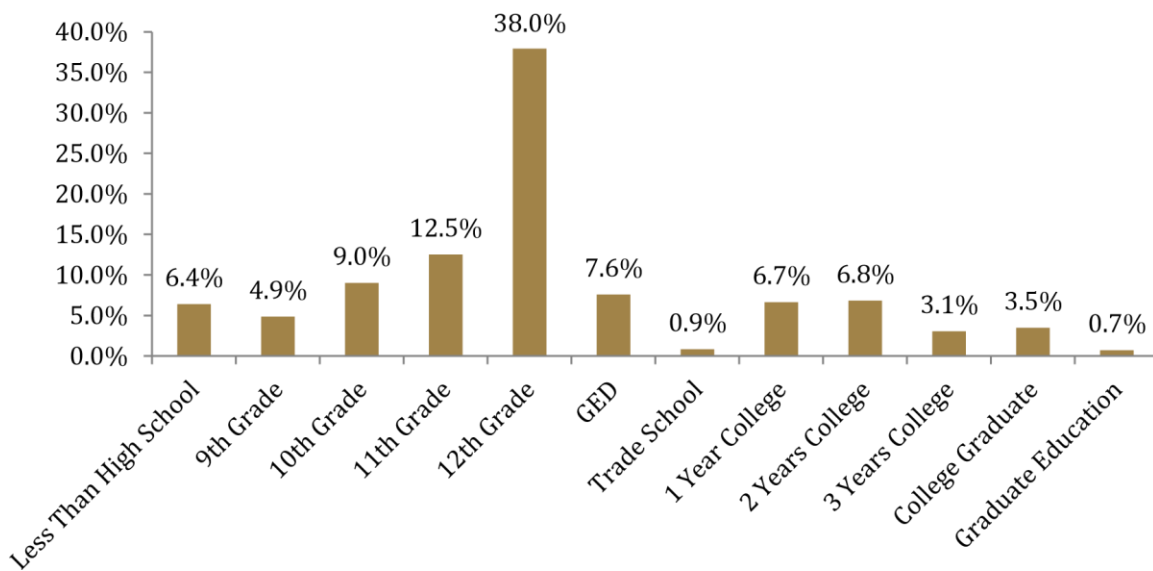
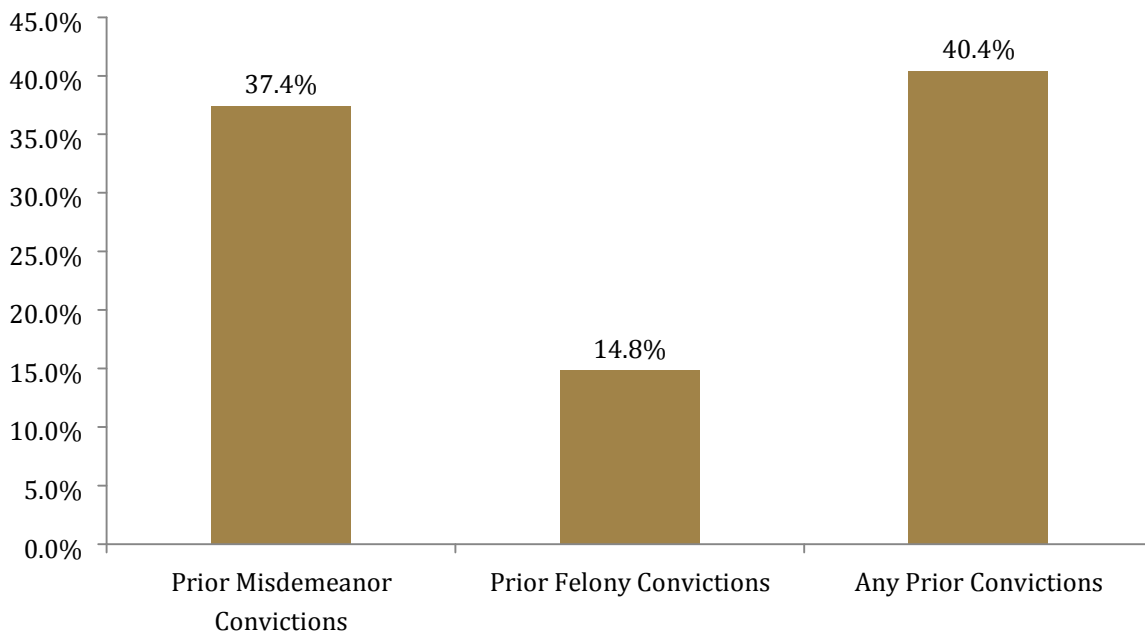


Figure 6 indicates that 40% of the probationers completing supervision in FY04 had a prior conviction of some type. Approximately 37% had a prior misdemeanor conviction and 14.8% had a prior felony conviction. Probationers could be represented in both categories depending on the types of convictions in their criminal history.

Figure 6: Percentage of Probation Completers in FY04 with Prior Misdemeanor and Felony Convictions

N = 33,654

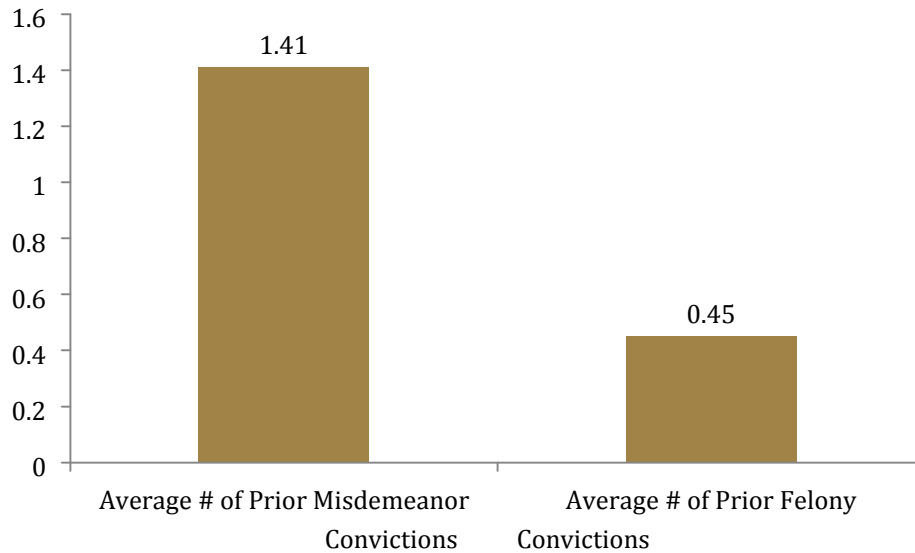


As Figure 7 demonstrates, the average number of prior misdemeanor convictions was 1.4 and the average number of prior felony convictions was .45. Of note based on both Figure 6 and 7, is that at least anecdotally, a large portion of the probationers in the sample were considered low risk probationers and yet a substantial portion of them have prior convictions.³

³ Risk level is not available as implementation of the Modified Offender Screening Tool (M-OST) and the Offender Screening Tool (OST) did not occur until FY07.

Figure 7: Average Number of Prior Misdemeanor and Felony Convictions among Probation Completers in FY04

N = 33,654



Question 2: Did the probationers being supervised in FY04 (by the 20 sites that would become the EBP) sites differ demographically from the probationers supervised in the non-EBP sites in a statistically meaningful way?

As Table 1 shows, there were no statistically significant differences between the demographics of the probationers at the 20 sites that would become the EBP sites versus the non-EBP sites in 2004. The EBP sites tended to be proportionately more white and less black than the non-EBP sites but, again, the difference was not statistically significant. As early implementers, the original EBP sites will continue to be sources of interest because they will have the longest track record of employing the targeted EBPs and will be used in comparisons to other agencies at varying stages of progress of adopting the targeted EBPs. The expectation is that probation outcomes will improve as the targeted EBPs are implemented and that they should consequently improve first among the early implementers and later in later-adopting agencies. To assess the impact of the targeted EBPs on probationer outcomes, we want to be able to attribute any differences in outcomes between probationers from agencies at varying stages of adoption to the stage of adoption and not some demographic difference between the populations of the agencies. A primary outcome, recidivism, is strongly related to many demographic characteristics such as gender

and age. This analysis rules out significant demographic differences between the EBP and non-EBP sites which make it more likely that any differences in outcomes between the two types of sites will be due to their stage of implementation of the targeted EBPs.

Table 1: Comparison of Demographic Characteristics of Probationers from Evidence-Based Practices Sites and Non-EBP Sites

| Demographic Characteristic | Evidence-Based Practice Sites | Non-EBP Sites | Difference (EBP – Non-EBP) |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| % Female | 26.2% | 26.9% | -0.7% |
| % Asian | 0.9% | 0.6% | 0.3% |
| % Black | 39.2% | 44.0% | -4.8% |
| % Hispanic | 3.8% | 3.4% | 0.4% |
| % Native American | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.0% |
| % White | 55.0% | 50.7% | 4.3% |
| % Race/Ethnicity Unknown or Other | 1.1% | 1.3% | -0.2% |
| Average Age | 29.4 | 30.4 | -1.1 |

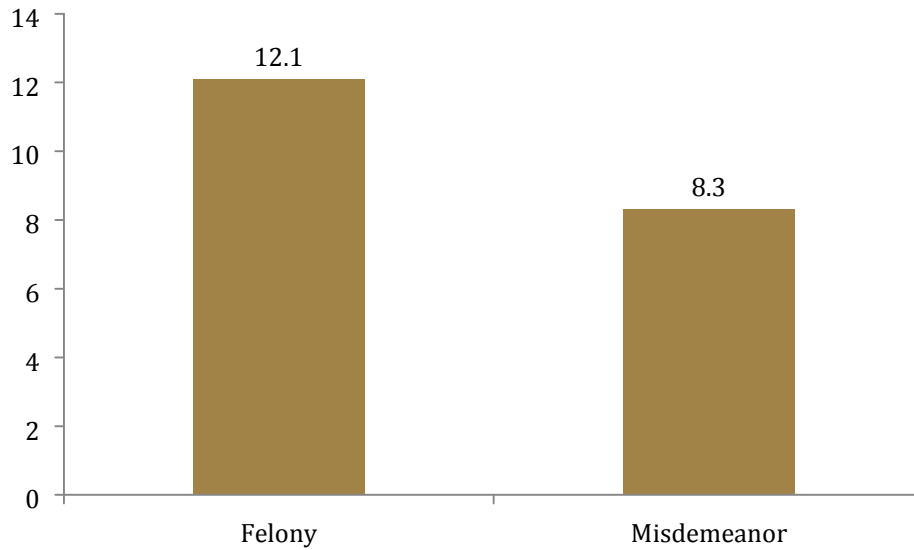
NOTE: None of the differences are statically significant.

Question 3: What was the average length of supervision in FY04?

The average length of supervision for the entire sample was 8.6 months. For successful probation completers the average length of supervision was 8.2 months and for unsuccessful probationers it was 9.4 months. As Figure 8 indicates, the average length of supervision for felony placements was 12.1 months and 8.3 months for misdemeanor placements.

Figure 8: Average Length of Supervision by Placement Offense Level

N = 31,153



Question 4: By offense category and offense level, what were the placement charges for the FY04 Probation Completers?

The vast majority of probation completers in FY04 were placed on probation supervision for a misdemeanor offense. Only 7% were placed on a felony offense.

Figure 9: Placement Charge for the FY04 Probation Completers by Offense Level

N = 31,153

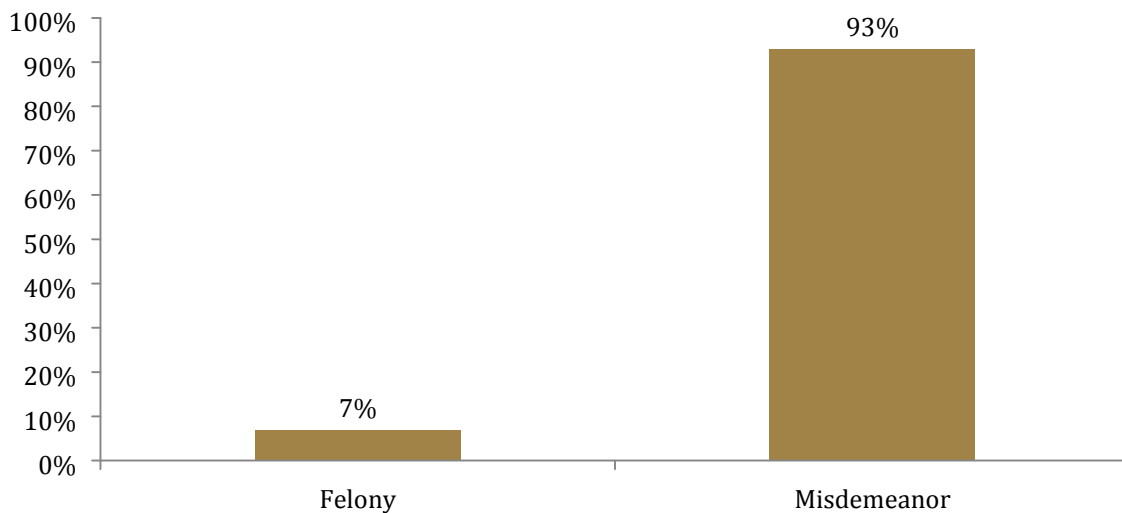


Figure 10 indicates the percentage of misdemeanor placements by offense category. Person and drug offenses had the highest placement rates. Refer to Appendix A for a description of charges included in each category.

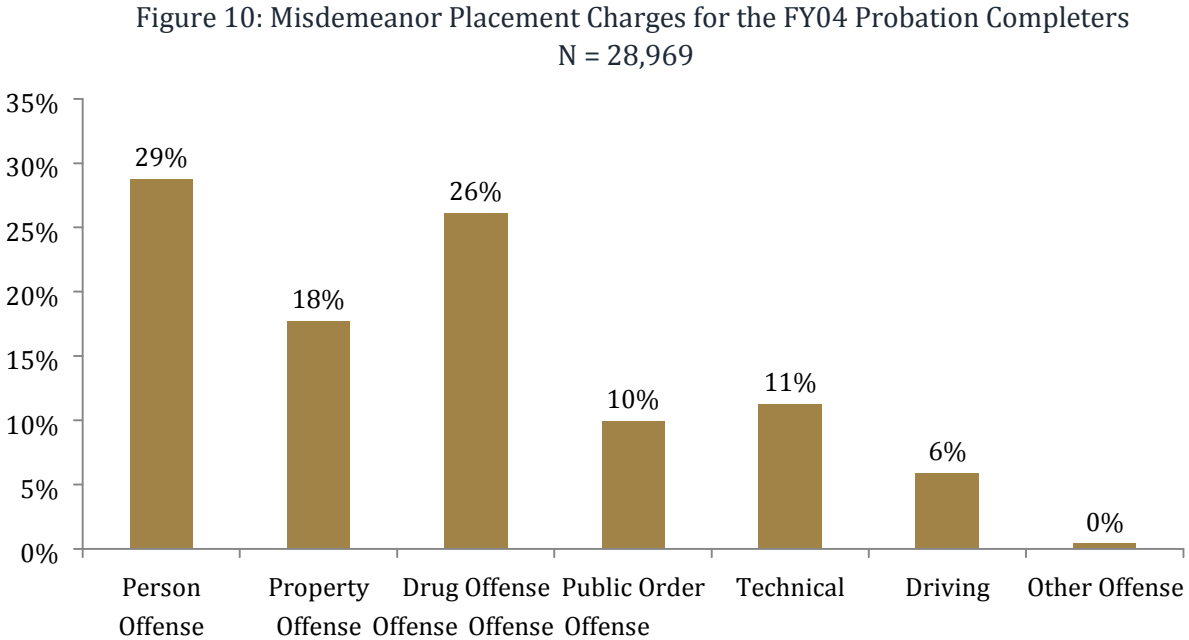
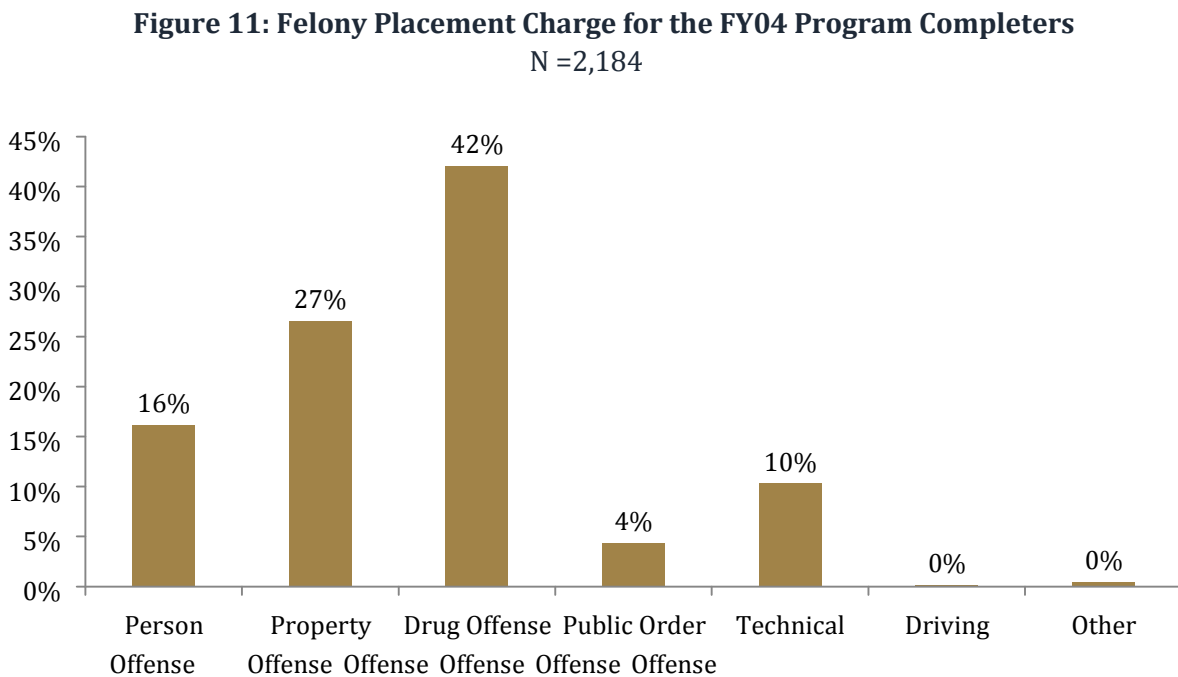


Figure 11 indicates that the majority of the felony placements were for drug offenses.

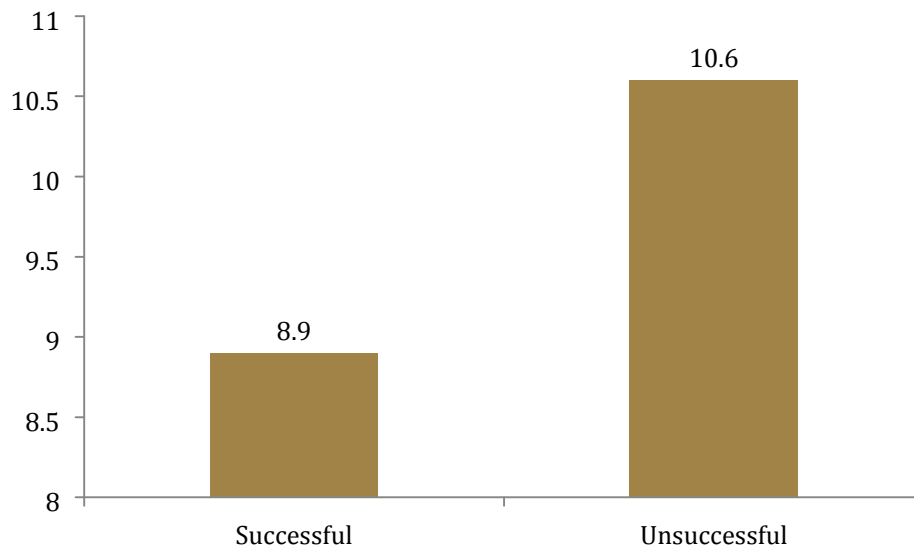


Of note are the person offenses, particularly in the felony category. Over 70% of the person offenses, both misdemeanor and felony combined were domestic violence related.

Question 5: What was the average number of office contacts per probationer for the FY04 completers?

Not all sites documented office contacts in PTCC in FY04. For the sites where this information was documented, the average number of office contacts for successful completers was 8.9 contacts and for unsuccessful completers was 10.6 contacts. Based on the average length of supervision discussed in question 3, this equates to approximately one contact per month during the period of supervision.

Figure 12: Average Number of Office Contacts per Probation Completer in FY04
N = 33,654

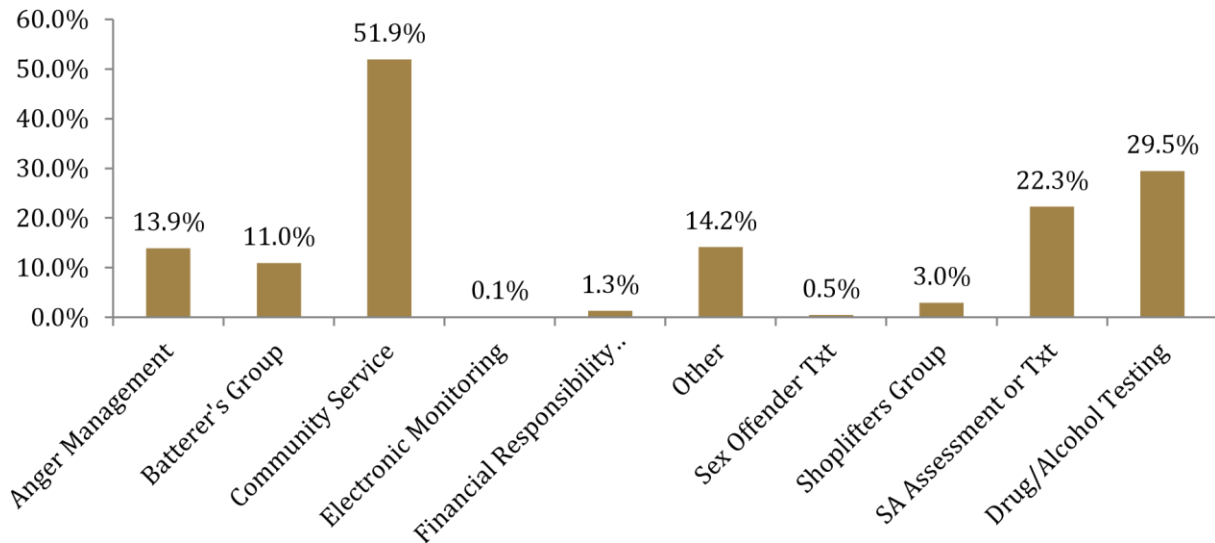


Question 6: What services were probationers ordered to complete in FY04?

Figure 13 details the types of services probationers were ordered to complete. It is important to highlight that approximately 27% of all placements were for drug charges and 22.3% probationers received substance abuse assessment and/or treatment. And that

71% of the person offenses were domestic violence related (which equates to approximately 20% of all placements) and 25% of probationers received anger management or batterer's intervention services.

Figure 13: Court-Ordered Services for FY04 Probation Completers
N = 33,654

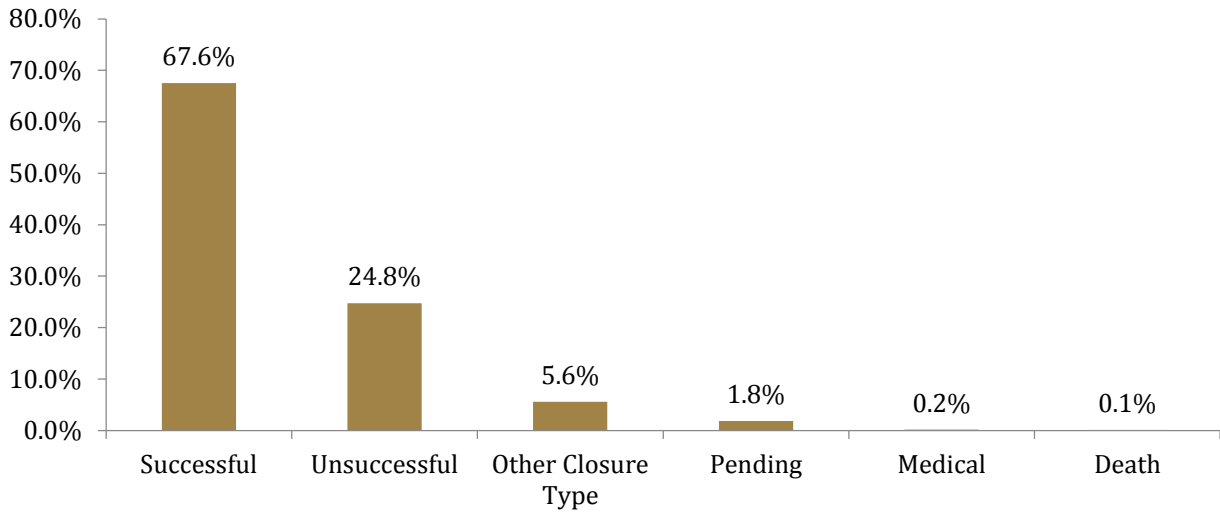


Question 7: What were the case closure types for local probationers whose cases were closed in FY04? If unsuccessful, why?

As Figure 14 suggests, over two-thirds of probation cases closed in FY04 were closed successfully. "Successful case closure" is defined as completion of all requirements of supervision.

Figure 14: Case Closure Types for Local Probation Completers in FY04

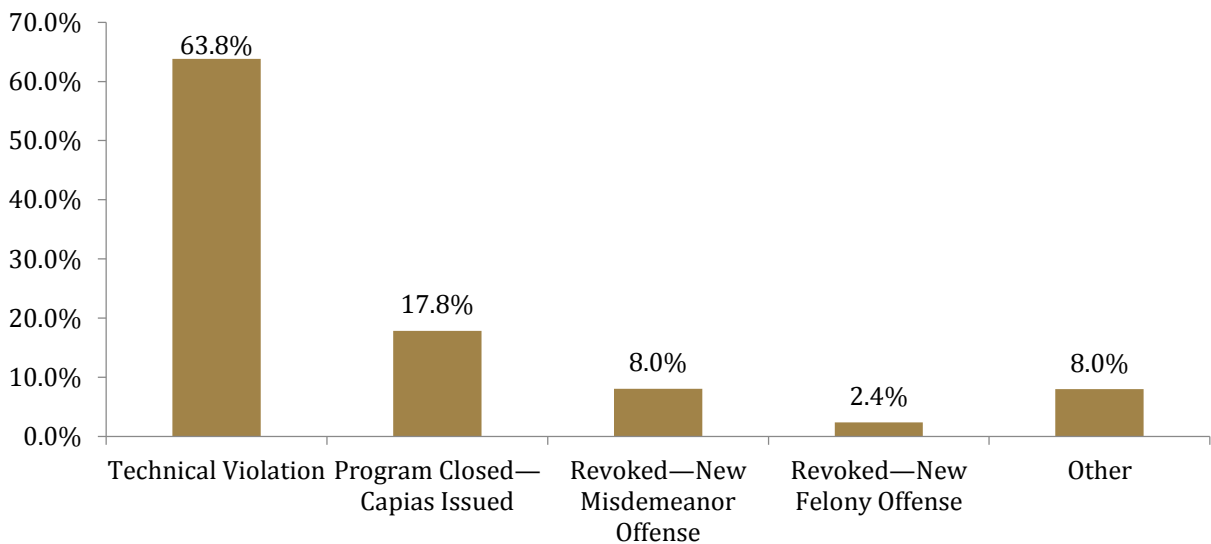
N = 33,654



As Figure 15 depicts, technical violations were the most common reason for unsuccessful case closure. A technical violation is defined as a violation of the terms and conditions of probation whereby a probationer was returned to the sentencing court for review of the case.

Figure 15: Reason for Unsuccessful Completion among FY04 Probation Completers

N = 8,337

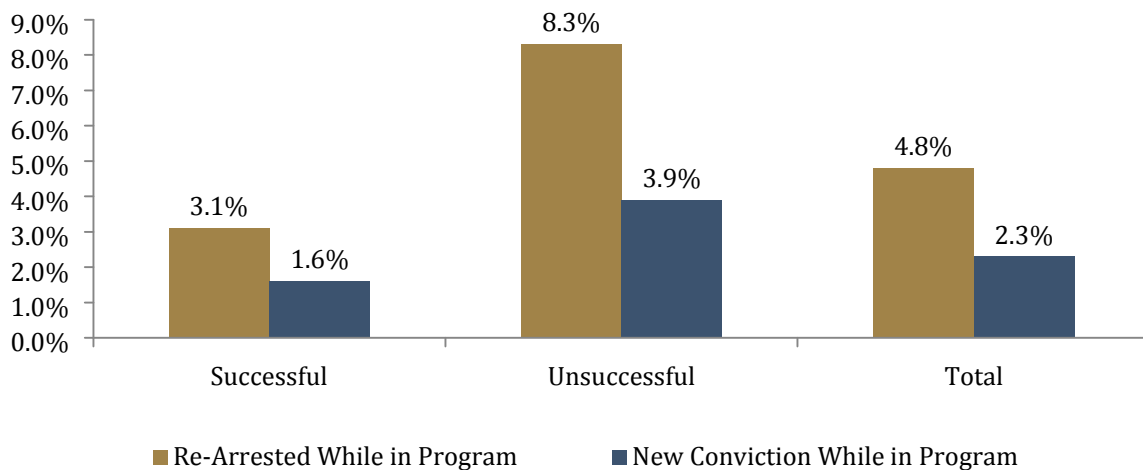


Question 8: What percentage of FY04 local probation completers were re-arrested and/or received a new conviction while under supervision?

Figure 16 demonstrates recidivism that occurred while probationers were under probation supervision, broken out by successful and unsuccessful completers, and showing the group as a whole. Both new arrests and new convictions were reported. Differences in rates between arrest and conviction are due in large part to the short periods of supervision and the sometimes lengthy criminal justice process to move from arrest to conviction, particularly for new felony offenses. Differences between the successful and unsuccessful completers on both measures are significant at the .001 level.

Figure 16: Re-Arrest and New Conviction Rates While Under Supervision for FY04 Probation Completors

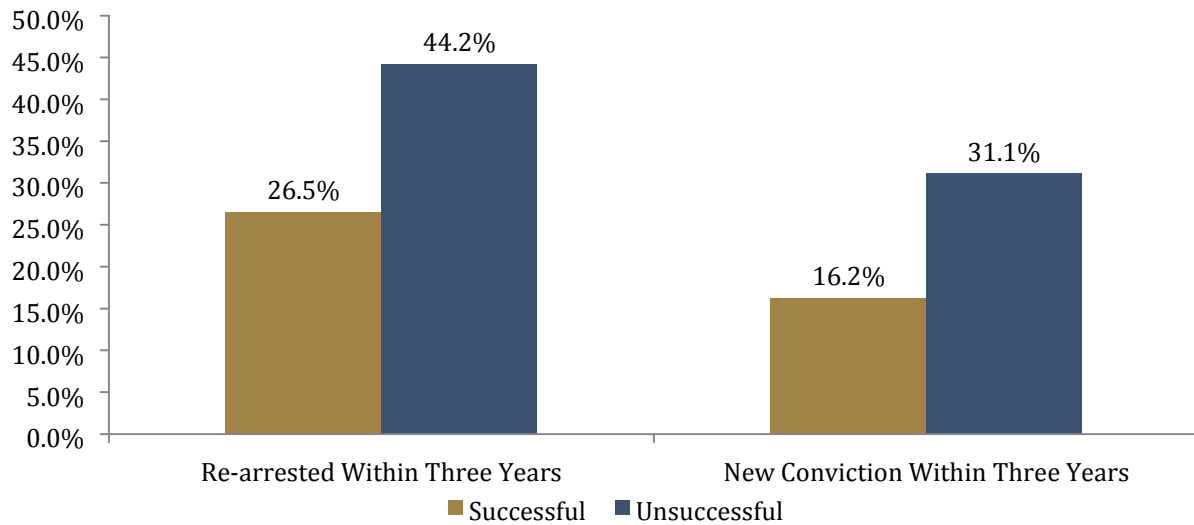
N = 33,654



Question 9: What percentage of FY04 local probation completers were re-arrested and/or received a new conviction post-program three years from exit date?

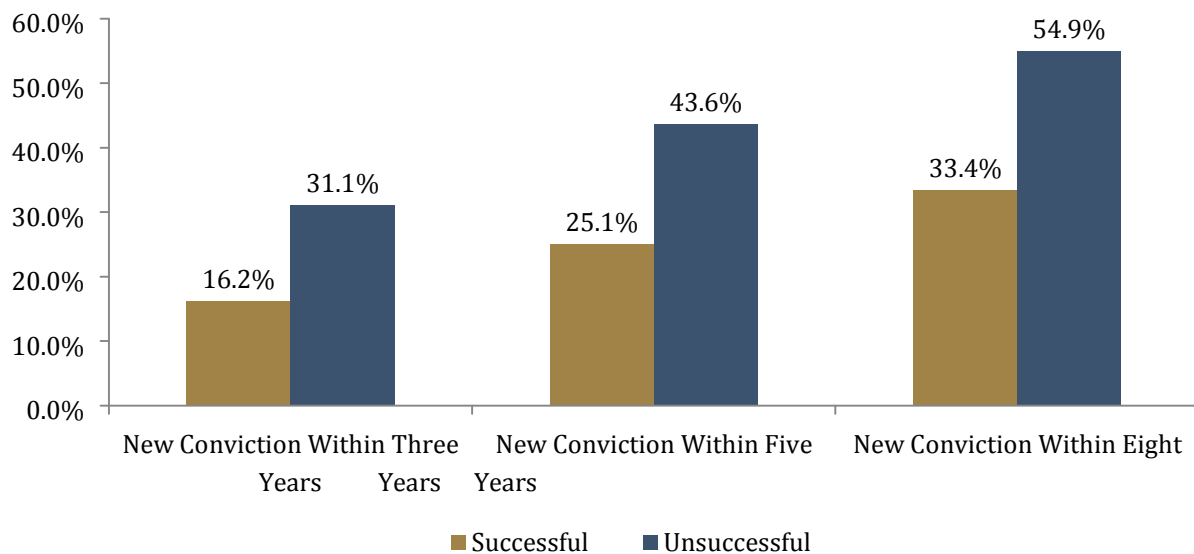
Figure 17 reflects recidivism that occurred three years after exit from Community Corrections probation supervision. Both new arrests and new convictions were reported. Differences between the successful and unsuccessful completers on all measures are significant at the .001 level.

Figure 17: Re-Arrest and New Conviction Three Years Post Exit for FY04 Probation Completers
N = 33,654



Since the period of time from FY04 to the current study date was over 8 years in duration, recidivism could be examined for a longer period of time. Figure 18 demonstrates the longterm recidivism rates for FY04 probation completers.

Figure 18: New Conviction Rates Post Exit for FY04 Probation Completers
N = 33,654

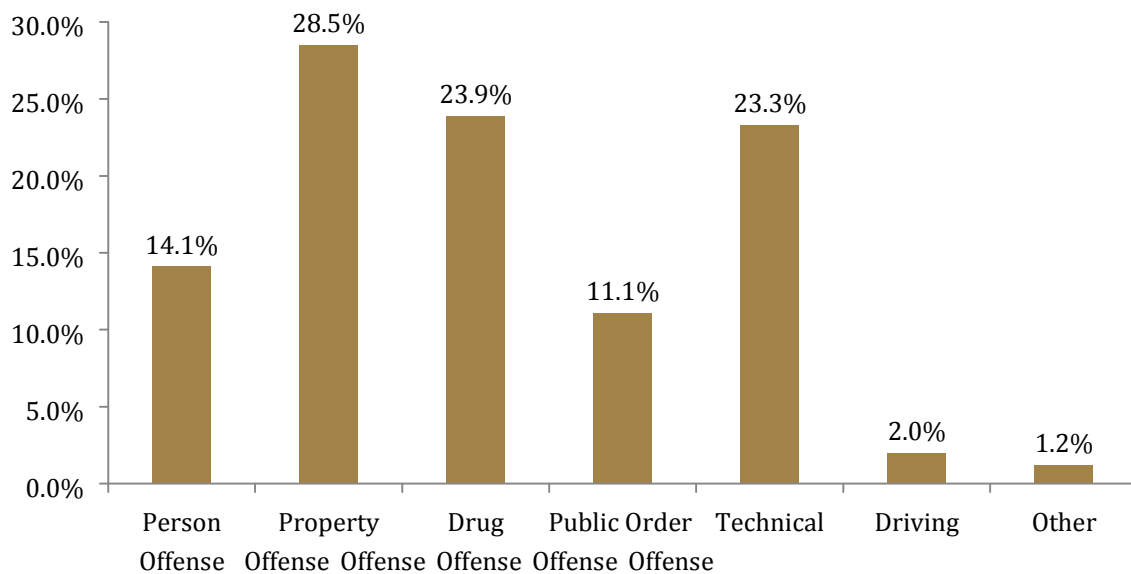


Though recidivism rates cannot decrease over time, there is a leveling-off effect that can be seen. Over time, the increase in the rate diminishes. Differences between the successful and unsuccessful completers on all measures are significant at the .001 level.

Question 10: What types of new offenses were committed by local probationers after exiting in FY04?

New offenses committed by FY04 probation completers three years post-exit were primarily property, drug and technical violations. Refer to Appendix A for a description of offenses included in each category.

Figure 19: New Convictions within 3 Years by Offense Type for FY04 Probation Completers
N = 33,654



Among those probation completers who committed a new offense, the average number of re-arrests was 2.18 misdemeanors and 1.76 felonies three years post-supervision. Likewise, for those probation completers who had new convictions, the average number of new convictions was 1.81 misdemeanor convictions and 0.73 felony convictions within three years among all recidivists. The average number of new convictions for misdemeanors was more than double the average number of new felony convictions.

Figure 20: Average Number of Re-Arrests and New Convictions within 3 Years for FY04 Probation Completers

N = 33,654

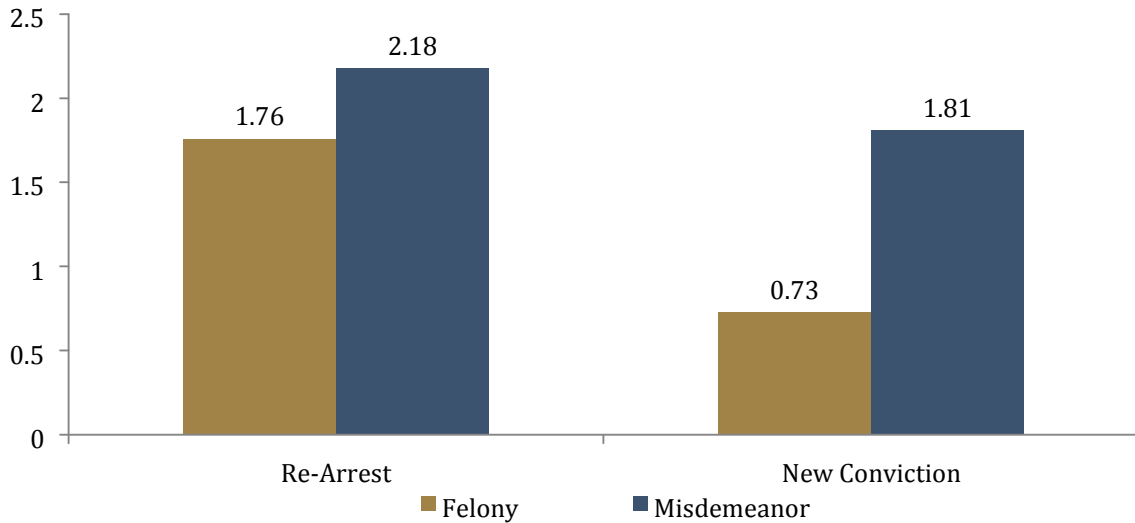


Figure 21 depicts new convictions within three years by placement charge type. Those probationers on supervision for a technical offense had the highest conviction rate for a new charge. With the exception of driving offenses, all placement types had relatively the same percentage of new convictions among all recidivists.

Figure 21: New Convictions within 3 Years by Placement Charge for FY04 Probation Completers

N = 33,654

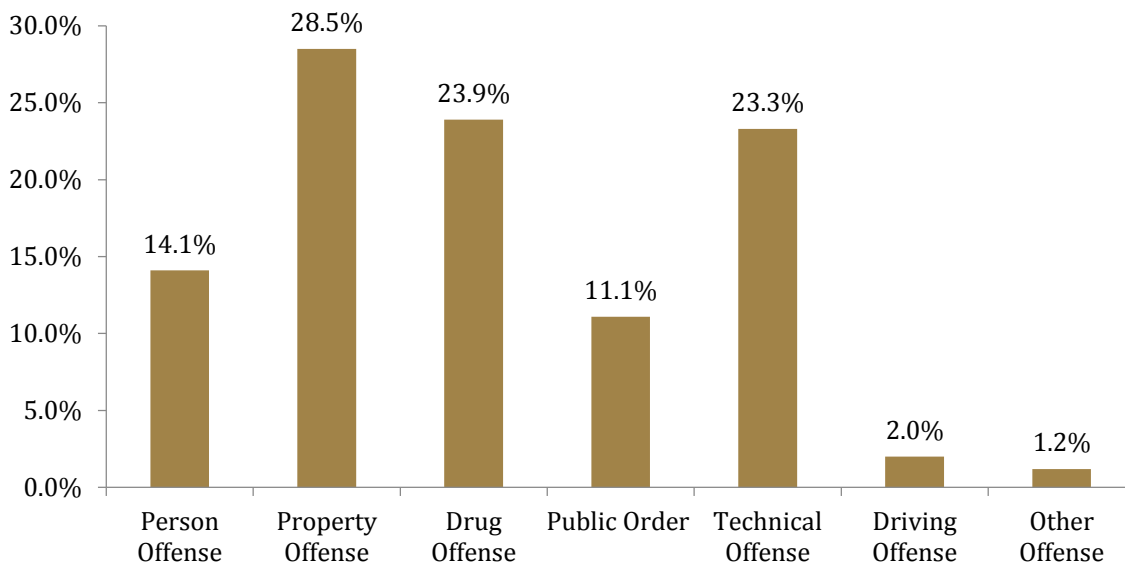


Figure 22 indicates the new convictions by type for probation completers that were on supervision for a person offense. Of the 22.9% that were convicted of a new person offense post-supervision, 62.5% of the new offenses were misdemeanors and 37.5% were felonies. Fifty-percent (50%) of the new person offenses were domestic violence related. This could indicate a lack of appropriate resources and treatment interventions while the defendant was on supervision (batterer’s intervention as opposed to anger management).

Figure 22: New Convictions, by Type, for Probationers Placed on Supervision for a Person Offense in FY04
N = 1,786

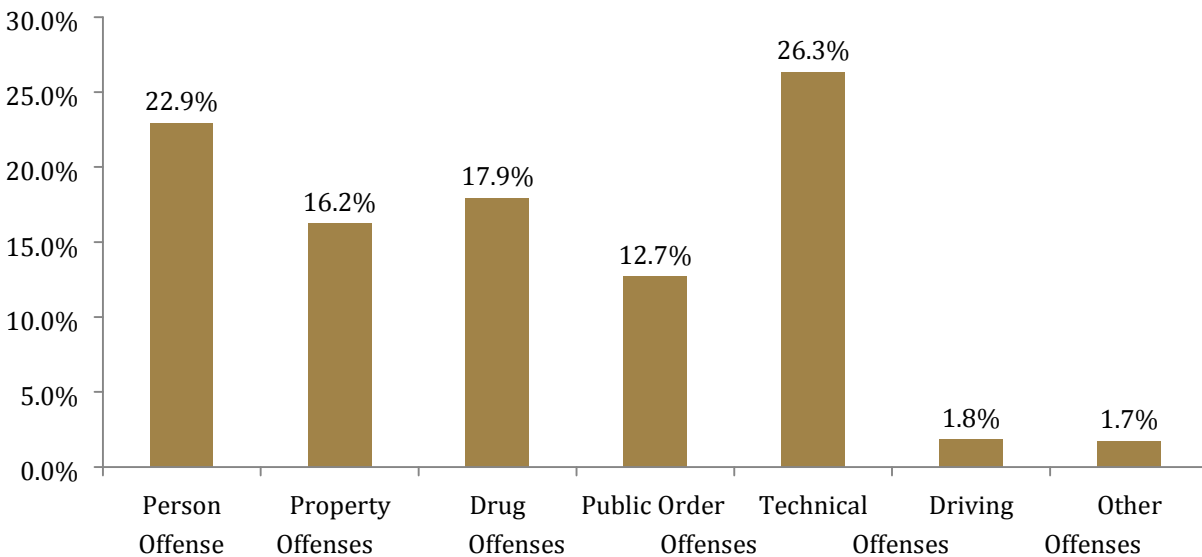


Figure 23 indicates the new convictions by type for probation completers that were on supervision for a property offense. The majority of the new convictions were for subsequent property offenses, for example, a probationer on supervision for shoplifting receiving a subsequent conviction for concealment. This could indicate a lack of resources in cognitive behavioral treatment.

Figure 23: New Convictions, by Type, for Probationers Placed on Probation for Property Offenses in FY04
N = 1,262

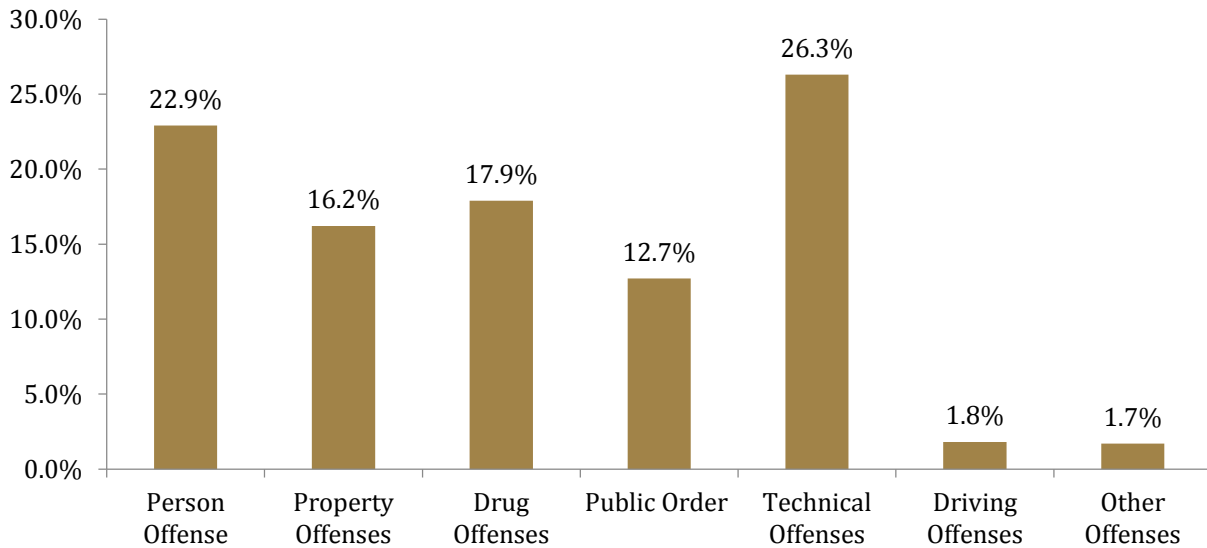


Figure 24 indicates the new convictions by type for probation completers that were on supervision for a drug offense. The majority of the new convictions were for subsequent drug offenses. This could also indicate a need for additional resources in the area of substance abuse screening, assessment and treatment.

Figure 24: New Convictions, by Type, for Probationers Placed on Probation for Drug Offenses in FY04
N = 1,640

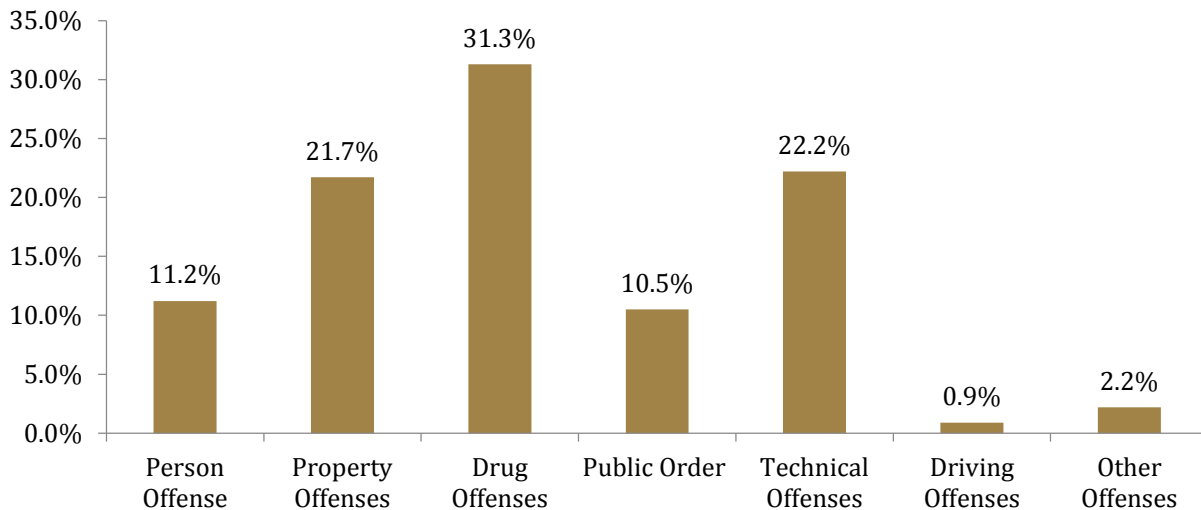


Figure 25 indicates the new convictions by type for probation completers that were on supervision for a public order offense. The majority of the new convictions were for subsequent drug offenses, for example, a probationer on supervision for indecent exposure receiving a subsequent conviction for possession of marijuana. This could indicate a lack of resources in drug/alcohol testing, and substance abuse screening, assessment and treatment.

Figure 25: New Convictions, by Type, For Probationers Placed on Supervision for Public Order Offenses in FY04

N = 723

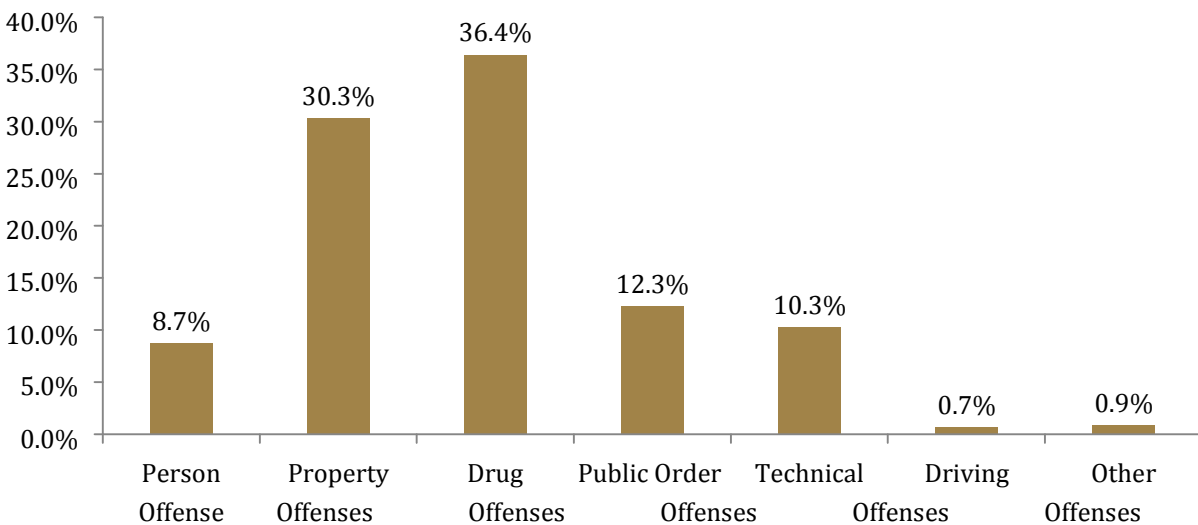
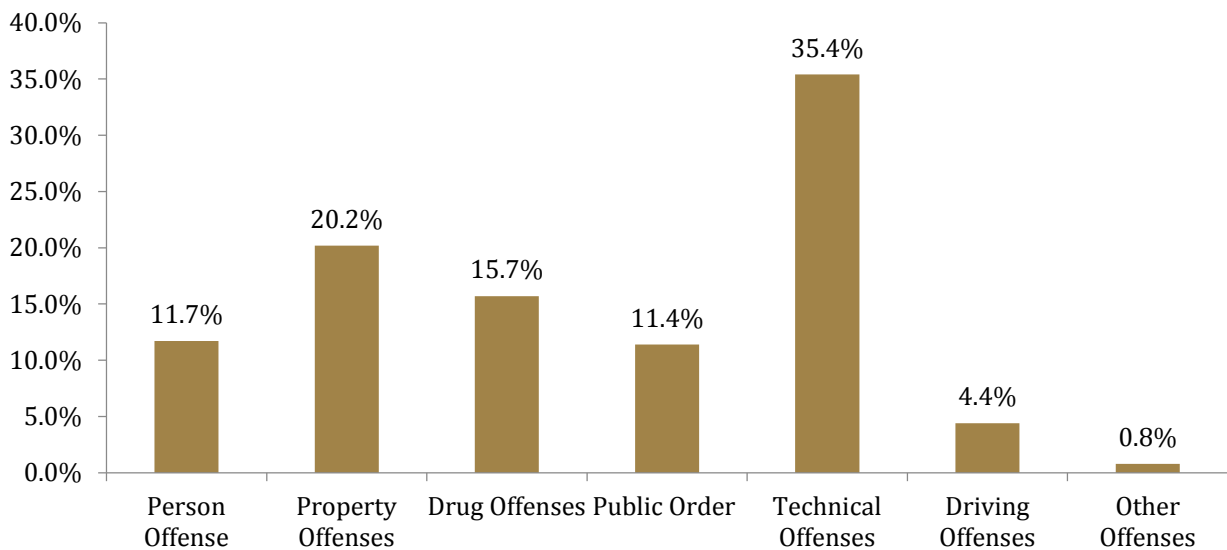


Figure 26 indicates the new convictions by type for probation completers that were on supervision for a technical violation. The majority of the new convictions were for subsequent technical violations, for example, a probationer on supervision for violation of a protective order receiving a subsequent conviction for failure to appear. This could indicate a lack of resources in screening and assessment, case planning and cognitive behavioral treatment.

Figure 26: New Convictions, by Type, for Probationers Placed on Supervision for Technical Violations in FY04

N = 1,000



Question 11: What, if anything, predicted whether a probationer would complete local probation supervision successfully in FY04?

Multivariate analyses were conducted to identify the factors that predicted the probability of (1) successful completion and (2) recidivism. Because *Type of Completion* and *Recidivism* are complex phenomenon, any number of factors could explain variation in these two variables (e.g., age, race, sex). To determine each of these factors' unique contribution to explaining such variation, it is necessary to simultaneously control for the influence of all the other explanatory factors by means of a multivariate analysis. The factors included in the multivariate analyses of both successful completion and recidivism (a conviction for an offense that occurred within three years of exit from probation) were:

- Gender
- Race
- Felony placement offense
- Prior misdemeanor conviction
- Prior felony conviction
- Age (centered by site to control for average differences between sites)
- Years of schooling (centered by site to control for average differences between sites)

- Successful completion (used in analysis of recidivism)

The multivariate regression of successful completion revealed the following:

- Blacks were 31% less likely to successfully complete than whites.
- Probationers placed on a felony-level charge are 53% less likely to successfully complete than
- Probationers with a prior misdemeanor conviction at placement are 42% less likely to successfully complete than .
- Probationers with a prior felony conviction at placement are 38% less likely to successfully complete than .
- At each site, every year of education beyond the average for that site increases the odds of successfully completing by 6%.
- At each site, every year of age beyond the average for that site increases the odds of successfully completing by 2%.

All of the findings above are statistically significant at the .05 level or greater.

Question 12: What, if anything, predicted whether a probationer would be convicted of a new crime post-program in FY04?

The multivariate regression of recidivism (conviction for an offense that occurred within three years of probation exit) revealed the following:

- Women are 35% less likely to recidivate than men.
- At each site, every year of age beyond the average for that site decreases the odds of recidivism by 4%.
- Blacks are 39% more likely to recidivate than whites.
- Probationers with prior misdemeanor convictions at placement are 117% more likely to recidivate than those without prior misdemeanor convictions.
- Successfully completing probation decreases the odds of recidivism by 46%.

All of the findings above are statistically significant at the .05 level or greater.

Conclusions

This report was designed to establish a baseline recidivism rate for Virginia's Community Corrections agencies (pre-EBP implementation) using the FY04 probation completers as the baseline sample. A random sample of 4,705 probationers, selected from all the sites across Virginia, was used to establish a baseline recidivism rate of 26.5% for successful completers and 44.2% for unsuccessful completers, as measured by a new arrest for

criminal offense three years post-exit. When using new convictions three years post-exit as the measure of recidivism, the rates drop to 16.2% for successful completers and 31.1% for unsuccessful completers. A number of patterns were identified related to placement offense type and the likelihood of committing specific types of offenses in the future that suggest that defendants could benefit from more targeted interventions to address specific risk factors. At baseline there were no statistically significant differences between what are now EBP sites and non-EBP sites. Therefore, the EBP sites can serve as a valuable point of reference in future studies to examine the potential impacts of the implementation of evidence based practices as they are gradually implemented statewide. Future studies will also benefit from improved data entry into PTCC and enhancements to the system. It is recommended that this study be repeated annually with a cohort to include post-EBP implementation time periods.

Appendices

Appendix A: Examples of Placement Offenses in each Category

Person Offenses: Domestic Assault, Simple Assault, Assault on a Law Enforcement Officer, Child Abuse or Neglect, Hit and Run, Sex Offenses, Robbery, etc.

Property Offenses: Burglary, Larceny, Concealment, Unauthorized Use of a Vehicle, Fraud, Forgery, Embezzlement, Receiving Stolen Property, Destruction of Property, etc.

Drug Offenses: All Possession charges, DUI, Drunk in Public, etc.

Public Order: Prostitution, Indecent Exposure, Disturbing the Peace, Obstruction of Justice, etc.

Technical Violations: Failure to Appear, Violation of Court Order, Violation of Probation, etc.

Driving: Driving with a Suspended Operator's License, Habitual Offender, etc.

Other: Accessory After the Fact, Attempt/Conspiracy/Solicitation to Commit Misdemeanor or Felony, Cruelty to Animals, etc.

Appendix B: Repeatable Recidivism Study

The purpose of the repeatable recidivism study is to measure (1) probationer outcomes and (2) the level of organizational change and evidence-based practice implementation at each of the 37 probation sites in order to establish a causal link between implementation and probationer outcomes. Examining recidivism rates requires selecting a cohort that completed supervision a minimum of three years ago (to allow for a three year follow-up period). As such, the FY10 probation completers are the next group that can be reasonably studied. The FY10 probation completers are the first cohort that contains probationers who were supervised after the introduction of the initial evidence-based reforms at the 10 pilot sites. While the evidence-based reforms were still in their infancy in FY10, this cohort provides an initial opportunity to examine the impact of risk/needs assessment on supervision practices and recidivism – something the FY04 baseline study could not provide. In contrast to examining recidivism, measuring organizational change and evidence-based practices implementation can only be done in the present since this data has not been historically collected using standardized tools. As such, a reasonable schedule for future studies is as follows:

| Study Year | Examination to be Conducted |
|------------|--|
| FY13 | Offender-level outcomes – baseline established using the FY04 probation completers (completed) |
| FY14 | Offender-level outcomes – re-examined using the FY10 completers Agency and organizational outcomes – baseline established in FY14 |
| FY15 | Offender-level outcomes – re-examined using the FY12 completers |
| FY16 | Offender-level outcomes – examined using the FY13 completers Agency and organizational outcomes – FY16 rates compared to FY14 rates to measure change |

| | |
|-------|---|
| FY 17 | Offender-level outcomes – re-examined using the FY14. Examine relation between agency and organizational outcomes in FY14 (as measured by Survey of Organizational Functioning, Probation Services Survey, and Community Resources Map) and outcomes in FY 17. |
| FY 19 | Offender-level outcomes – re-examined using the FY17. Relate change in measures of agency and organizational outcomes between FY14 and FY16 to changes in recidivism rates between FY14 and FY16. |

Evaluation Plan for 2009 Probation Completer Cohort

Selection of the FY10 cohort will be conducted the same as the selection of the FY04 cohort, which was used to establish the baseline recidivism rates. The following steps will be completed:

1. All data related to probationers completing supervision in FY10 will be extracted from PTCC.
2. Any probationer whose supervision was transferred to another jurisdiction will be assigned to the jurisdiction that provided the actual supervision for purposes of the analysis.
3. If probationers have more than one placement in the sample, the placement with the earliest placement start date will be maintained in the sample and the others will be removed.
4. Because the number of completers differed across sites, a sample will be drawn from each site using the following logic:
 - If 10% of a local probation office’s sample, after ineligible records were removed, is comfortably greater than 100, then a random sample of 10% will be drawn.
 - If 10% of a local probation office’s sample is less than 100 but its total list is greater than 100, then 100 records will be drawn at random from the list.
 - The remaining sites will have either below or very near 100 total records on their lists, and in those instances the entire site list will be retained for the analysis sample.
5. Demographic information for the sample will be submitted to the Virginia State Police to obtain criminal history and recidivism information for the sample. This data will be matched up with the PTCC data.

6. Any individual in the sample that does not have matching criminal history information will be removed from the study.
7. Criminal history information will be separated into three groups:
 - Placement offenses will be identified by matching the placement offense description and placement date.
 - All offenses with offense dates prior to the probation date will be considered prior criminal history.
 - All offenses with offense dates after the placement date but prior to the probation closure date will be considered in-program recidivism.
 - All offenses with offense dates after the placement and probation closure date will be considered post-supervision recidivism.

Research Questions for the FY10 Cohort

Many of the research questions from the baseline study will be examined with the FY10 cohort including the following:

1. What was the demographic profile of probationers who completed Community Corrections supervision in FY10?
2. Did the probationers being supervised in FY10 sites differ demographically from the probationers supervised in the non-EBP sites in a statistically meaningful way?
3. What was the average length of probation supervision in FY10?
4. By offense category and offense level, what were the placement charges for the FY10 probation completers?
5. What was the average number of office contacts per probationer for the FY10 completers? Were the FY10 probation completers supervised per their supervision level (as determined by the OST)?
6. What services were local probationers court-ordered to complete in FY10?
7. What were the case closure types for local probationers whose cases were closed in FY10? If unsuccessful, why?
8. What percentage of FY10 local probation completers were re-arrested and/or received a new conviction while under supervision?
9. What percentage of FY10 local probation completers were re-arrested and/or received a new conviction post-program three years from exit date?
10. What types of new offenses were committed by local probationers after exiting in FY10?
11. What impact did risk level (as measured by the OST and M-OST) have on case closure type or recidivism rates for FY10 local probation completers?
12. What, if anything, predicted whether a probationer would complete local probation supervision successfully in FY10?

13. What, if anything, predicted whether a probationer would be convicted of a new crime post-program in FY10?

In addition, a multivariate analysis of recidivism will be conducted that will enable three pertinent comparisons:

14. EBP Pilot vs. EBP non-pilot sites for the 2010 cohort: Provides a preliminary test of effects of introduction of evidence-based reforms, using the non-pilot sites as the comparison group at a particular point in time (2010).
15. FY10 probation completers vs. FY04 baseline cohort at the first 10 EBP pilot sites: Provides another preliminary test of effects of introduction of evidence-based reforms, comparing the pilot sites to themselves over time (pre-EBP implementation versus post-EBP implementation).
16. FY10 probation completers vs. FY04 baseline cohort at the non-EBP pilot sites: Are recidivism rates changing over time for reasons other than the introduction of evidence-based reforms?

While we simply will not have the data that will enable us to definitively establish a causal link between the introduction of the evidence-based reforms and recidivism, we will examine the dates of introduction of the evidence-based reforms in each pilot site and any documentation about their introduction. To the extent possible, this information may enable us to make some preliminary inferences about the effect of the introduction of the evidence-base reforms on recidivism rates. As described below, the additional data that we will collect for the 2010 cohorts will make it possible to more validly and reliably establish whether the introduction of the evidence-based reforms has led to a reduction in recidivism.

Agency and System Level Outcomes for FY14 samples

To measure agency and system level outcomes, the following will be administered in FY14:

| Tool to be Administered | Target Audience for Survey | Approximate Date of Administration |
|--|---|---|
| CJ Survey of Organizational Functioning | All staff | October 2013 |
| Evidence Based Practice Implementation Model Compliance Assessment & Best Practice Survey (which will be integrated into one online survey for ease of administration) | Administration | October 2013 |
| Probation Services Survey | All probationers seen in the office within a two week period during the fall and spring | September 2013 and March 2014 |

All of the tools above (with the exception of the Probation Services Survey) will be automated and available online for the staff to complete. The process of administering the Probation Services Survey will be developed with the Quality Assurance Committee in the summer of 2013.

Evaluation Plan for 2014 and Subsequent Cohorts

It is recommended that the next cohort be samples from probationers whose case was closed in FY14. The addition of this and subsequent cohorts will enable us to more definitively ascertain whether the introduction of the evidence-based reforms as opposed to some other confounding explanation, such as a general drop in crime rates, has led to a reduction in recidivism. For these subsequent cohorts, we will have much more information about the implementation of the evidence-based reforms.

The project logic model found in Appendix C captures our theory of offender change. The model shows that *Inputs* and *Activities* will produce *Outputs* at all three levels (System, Agency, and Case). Outputs measure the work that is accomplished at each level. We hypothesize that changes in outputs at the agency and system level are pre-requisites for changes at the case-level in offender behavior. To restate this hypothesis, we expect that the extent of change at the system and agency-levels will predict the extent of change in offender behavior (recidivism in particular). To test this hypothesis, we will employ a technique known as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)⁴ to determine whether outputs at the agency and system-levels are significantly related to outputs at the case-level, as described in the logic model.

As captured in the logic model, we also hypothesize that changes in outputs are prerequisites for changes in short-term outcomes. Also, we expect that changes in short-term outcomes at the case level will be related to changes in short-term outcomes at the agency and system-levels. These expected relationships will be tested using SEM and will provide evidence as to whether short-term outcomes are related to the introduction of evidence based reforms.

Finally, we also hypothesize that changes in short-term outcomes at all three levels are necessary for changes in long-term impacts. Since we also hypothesize that changes in short-term outcomes must be preceded by changes in outputs (at all three levels), these relationships will all be incorporated in our SEM of long-term impacts. This analysis will test whether implementation of the evidence-based reforms is causally related to long-term offender impacts.

The data collected for cohorts subsequent to the 2014 cohort, can be used to more definitively establish if the evidence-based reforms introduced by local probation agencies are responsible for any observed reductions in the probability of recidivism. In this case we will have at least two cohorts with data about implementation and the data should be analyzed using a time series “panel” design.

⁴ **Structural equation modeling (SEM)** is a statistical technique for testing and estimating causal relations using a combination of statistical data and qualitative causal assumptions.

Appendix C: Logic Model

