PROBATION AND PAROLE PRACTICES: SUPERVISING TO RISK

Department of Corrections
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2017 Justice Reinvestment formalized supervising according to recidivism risk

Around 10,000 offenders on community supervision

Around 70% of corrections population
23 P&P OFFICES SUPERVISE AROUND 10,000 OFFENDERS IN SIX REGIONS
Determine if the Probation and Parole Division supervises offenders according to recidivism risk level, as required by state law and best practices.
Reviewed PPD policy and procedures
Reviewed state statute and administrative rules
Shadowed PPOs at 4 supervising offices
Surveyed PPOs & Supervisors
Surveyed individuals on Community Supervision
Reviewed other states’ programs
Analyzed completion of risk assessments, use of MIIG, and frequency of offender contacts
Completed Usability Study of Offender Management Information System
PROCESS EFFICIENCY & CASELOAD
RISK ASSESSMENTS

Completing annual reassessments initial assessments

Not completing after life altering events

Difficult to keep up with annual reassessment requirements

Reducing assessment length and increasing automation can improve completion and use of risk assessments
RECOMMENDATION #1

Simplify the assessment and reassessment process without decreasing effectiveness at predicting recidivism risk.

Department response: Concur
Nearly one-third of officers reported they meet contact requirements for half or fewer of offenders on their caseload.
High risk offenders were less likely to have minimums met.
HIGH CASELOADS AND EXCESSIVE PAPERWORK HINDER ABILITY TO MEET MINIMUMS

Volume of data entry and required paperwork biggest challenge.

Only 28 percent of officers felt they could supervise caseloads over 70.

Higher caseloads related to fewer offenders with minimum contacts met.
RECOMMENDATION #2

Improve process requirements and decrease caseloads by:

• decreasing caseloads below 70 offenders,
• decreasing the administrative requirements for supervision of some offenders, and
• decreasing the amount of paper processes and signatures.

Department response: Concur
IT IS DIFFICULT FOR OFFICERS TO IDENTIFY CASELOAD CONTACT NEEDS
RECOMMENDATION #3

Develop a method in the caseload health dashboard to easily identify offenders due for a contact according to their risk level and last date of contact.

Department response: Concur
EVALUATING PERFORMANCE AND PROGRAM OUTCOMES
JRI had short implementation timeframes.

DOC implemented policies and procedures, but have:
- incomplete integration and
- some underdeveloped quality assurance frameworks.
MULTIPLE REASONS FOR NOT USING RISK ASSESSMENTS IN CASE MANAGEMENT

- Not enough guidance in current tool and policy
- Quality assurance measures ineffective at identifying underuse of risk assessments in case management
- Officers lack confidence in the effectiveness of the risk assessment
RECOMMENDATION #4

Strengthen the inclusion of offender risk assessment results in officer case management strategies by:

• revising current case plan and policy,
• establishing quality assurance methods,
• providing annual refresher training, and
• evaluating and validating risk assessments for Montana’s offender population.

Department response: Concur
Montana Incentives and Intervention Grid:

Tool used to guide responses to offender behavior, using incentives to encourage good behavior and interventions to discourage harmful behavior.
FREQUENCY OF OFFICERS FELT THEY COULD REMOVE OFFENDERS POSING AN ACTIVE RISK FROM THE COMMUNITY.

- Never: 14%
- Sometimes: 46%
- About half the time: 11%
- Most of the time: 25%
- Always: 5%
CONCLUSION

Statutory changes, including the cap on rates for jail stays, contributed to limiting PPD officers’ ability to fully utilize the MIIG and supervise to risk.
Research indicates incentives are powerful tools to improve supervision outcomes for higher-risk offenders and should be used more often than interventions.
70% of officers record using more interventions than incentives. Almost half of officers record four times more interventions than incentives.
HIGH RISK OFFENDERS RECEIVED FEWER INCENTIVES THAN INTERVENTIONS.
RECOMMENDATION #5

Develop processes for ongoing maintenance and evaluation of the MIIG, including making necessary revisions and targeting training efforts.

Department response: Concur
DATA INTEGRITY TO MONITOR & EVALUATE SUPERVISION TO RISK
OFFENDER MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SYSTEM (OMIS)

USED TO TRACK OFFENDER DATA

SECOND ITERATION OF A HOMEGROWN SYSTEM
IDENTIFIED DATA INTEGRITY ISSUE

- Front-end user needs haven’t been prioritized
- Change request process inefficient
- User interface design not conducive to data entry
- Data needs not identified or monitored for quality
- Identified extensive errors and inconsistencies

Need to Consider Long-term Information System Needs
RECOMMENDATION #6

Address data integrity issues by:

• updating OMIS to ensure data collection needs are met,
• establishing a process for prioritizing change requests,
• developing a plan to improve ease of data entry, and
• evaluating long-term system needs for the department.

Department response: Concur
QUESTIONS