

MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

WORK RELEASE PROGRAM
RESEARCH PROJECT

FINAL REPORT
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Monica G. Massarand, MA
Interaction Consulting

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I. Executive Summary

This study sought to uncover the impact and value of jail work release programs. An extensive data gathering effort was conducted. Due to the lack availability of methodologically rigorous research, alternative sources were considered, including non-experimentally designed research findings and personal communication with selected community corrections experts and work release directors across the county. Results were compiled and conclusions made based on the “best guess” of what might be the case concerning work release effectiveness, given the nature of information available.

Within the context of data limitations, this study found tentative support for the possibility of program cost effectiveness, limited recidivism reducing potential, and improved post-release employment attainment and maintenance. However, as noted, because the sources reporting such results were largely non-controlled, such benefits cannot be concluded with certainty. Additionally, both published and personal reports provide support for the community reintegrating benefits of work release, suggesting that by reestablishing (or in some cases, not interrupting) ties with community resources and support, work releasees have a better chance of transitioning into a law-abiding lifestyle than those not participating in work release. These results should also be viewed as tentative in the absence of more rigorous research.

It is clear that additional experimental or quasi-experimental studies, utilizing control/comparison group designs, are needed to conclusively determine the nature and magnitude of impact produced by work release programs.

II. Project Goals

The purpose of this study is to present information regarding the effectiveness of work release programs. In particular, the focus of this work is to examine program outcomes for county level programs. Primary factors of interest include program cost effectiveness, post-release recidivism, and other social factor outcomes including post-release employment, housing stability, and mental function.

III. Methodology

Overview

Several sources were used in this study. A review of the electronic resources (i.e., studies, reports, other publications) was initiated first. As the literature review approached completion, jurisdictions were selected for interview. This sequencing reduced redundancy as the available literature was completely reviewed prior to contacting agencies.

All data gathered was critically reviewed for appropriateness, quality, and potential value to informing this study's goals.

Electronic Resource Data Collection

The literature gathering portion of the project began with a comprehensive search of the following major article databases: InfoTrac OneFile, EBSCOhost, and ProQuest. Only peer-reviewed articles were selected for review. The information from these sources was limited in quantity and reasonable in quality. Older articles (i.e., written 10+ years ago) were considered, but wherever possible, more recent information was sought from the researchers or jurisdictions identified in them.

Several national criminal justice government agencies and professional associations were also consulted, by Internet, phone communication, or both. These included the National Institute of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, National Criminal Justice Research Service, Justice Statistics and Research Association, National Sheriff's Association, American Jail Association, International Community Corrections Association, and Community Corrections of Pennsylvania. Selected relevant agency-generated reports were obtained for review. In addition, a general Internet search was conducted, yielding over 500 potential resources. The quality and relevance of these were carefully reviewed for inclusion in this study.

Personal Communication Data Collection

The review of the electronic resources described above guided the selection of the majority of personal communication sources contacted. In particular, these activities directed the selection of many of the jurisdictions interviewed in this study. Many jurisdictions were selected from the Internet search based on their apparent attention to

work release program effectiveness. (See Introduction for factors defining “effectiveness.”) Others were examined based on studies or other literature touting their success or quality. Approximately twenty jurisdictions were initially selected for contact, and of those, only eight were included in this report. Exclusions occurred when, upon further examination, a jurisdiction appeared not to add value to the study. Factors suggesting this included lack of outcome or cost-effectiveness measures (which was very common in general) and/or lack of any other features either differentiating that program from others (see Unique Attributes column of table in Appendix C.)

Various criminal justice/community corrections experts across the country were identified and contacted. These included nationally renowned university professors/researchers, community corrections consultants, and staff/directors of various government agencies with reputations for experience and expertise in community corrections. These topic experts contributed information on studies concerning work release program effectiveness, trends in work release and community corrections, jurisdictions possibly conducting evidence-based work release programs, important considerations when evaluating the effectiveness of work release programs, and other potential sources of quality information.

IV. Findings

Overview

As noted previously, the primary goal of this study is to present information on work release program impact and effectiveness. The main factors examined to determine effectiveness were recidivism, program cost-effectiveness, and post-release outcomes such as employment stability, housing stability, and mental function. Ideally, outcome measurement should include comparison of work release participants to similar non-participants (i.e., control and/or comparison groups) to allow solid conclusions of benefit. However, as in many organizations across the continent, there remains a dire need for the collection of data to provide the basis for evidence-based programming. The availability of such data is currently the exception rather than the norm, making it difficult to unequivocally determine the value of work release programs. However, this report attempts to draw tentative conclusions from what information is available, given its limitations.

The Findings section of the report begins by outlining factors to consider when attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of work release programs. Next, it presents the findings of the peer-reviewed literature search, agency and other reports obtained, and work release facility interviews, respectively.

Factors to Consider

As noted in the Methodology, several “topic experts” were consulted for this study. The most valuable input they collectively provided was information regarding factors to consider when assessing work release program effectiveness. First, it is important to understand that work release programs exist in various forms. Differing attributes can

certainly affect program outcomes (Bob Cushman, personal communication, June 2004). Therefore, it is important to be very clear about program attributes when assessing and comparing cost effectiveness and outcomes. Some of the main factors having the potential to impact work release program success and outcomes include:

- Length of time on work release (i.e., the longer the term, the greater likelihood of program failure);
- The philosophy of the center management and staff (e.g., civilian staff may be more likely to treat inmates in a respectful and supportive manner, thus contributing to participants' motivation to do whatever it takes to be successful in the program);
- The strictness with which rule infractions are addressed (i.e., zero tolerance policies reduce the likelihood of program completion);
- How much participants are charged to be in the program (i.e., flat fee for all or a percentage of actual earnings); and
- How well the community accepts their local work release program (i.e., willingness to fund and to house in the community) (Major Steve Whithall, Work Release Director, Vanderburgh County, IN, personal communication, June 2004).

(Note: All above points except the last one were referenced from personal communication with Bob Cushman, June 2004).

The table contained in Appendix C captures various attributes of the work release facilities contacted/included in this study to help typify the various programs and allow for more accurate analysis of patterns in program outcomes.

It is also important to consider the impact of work release programs on reducing criminogenic factors such as drug and alcohol addiction; lack of employment skills, experience, or stability (e.g., lack of ability to support one's household); and lack of sources of support in the community. As will be presented in subsequent report sections, the work release experience can potentially reduce these factors and increase the likelihood that participants remain law abiding post-release (Robert Chircos, Director of Planning and Research, Maricopa County Adult Probation, personal communication, June 2004).

Literature Review

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

An electronic search of peer-reviewed journals (described in the Methodology) yielded few articles on the effectiveness of work release programs. Several articles did appear on the effectiveness of combining a treatment community (TC) approach with work release, but only one quality article was included in this section (Nielsen and Scarpitti, 1997).

One of the most significant findings regarding work release effectiveness involved the **pairing of work release with TC**. This treatment approach yielded better treatment and community reintegration outcomes as compared to TC intervention alone (Nielsen and Scarpitti, 1997).

Another study reported findings regarding **inmates more or less likely to be successful in work release** yielded the following:

- No difference between those removed from work release and returned to prison and those completing their entire sentences in prison;
- Older, Caucasian are most likely to successfully complete the program as were those with no prior criminal records;
- Those with cocaine or crack dependence are most likely to commit program infractions;
- Those incarcerated for their first offence were least likely to commit program infractions; and
- Those whose most serious charge was theft had a higher likelihood of rearrest (Turner and Petersilia, 1998) (Note: The Turner and Petersilia study focused on state-level corrections).

Another common theme among articles was the **general utility of work release**: both quantitative and qualitative evidence suggests work release programs facilitate participants in becoming responsible, financial contributors and help reintegrate participants into the community (Friar Williams, 1996; Nielsen and Scarpitti, 1997; and Turner and Petersilia, 1998).

Turner and Petersilia (1998) also discuss **the trend toward reduced funding for work release programs**. A societal factor reinforcing this trend is the shifting climate from offender rehabilitation to incarceration. John Beatty, Inmate Work Director, North Carolina DOC, echoed this trend, stating that the economic challenges of the past several years have reduced work release numbers (personal communication, June 2004).

A unique perspective raised in Turner and Petersilia's study (1998) was to question the **appropriateness of focusing on recidivism and cost effectiveness** when assessing the effectiveness of work release, or other alternative correctional programs. They suggest reevaluating performance measures and developing ones more realistic for the expected accomplishments of correctional programs (e.g., keeping low-risk offenders closer to their communities and providing more prison space for the more violent ones).

Government Organization-Published Articles and Other Literature

Selected public agencies have conducted or funded research on the effectiveness of work release programs. In addition, state/county audit reports and other articles located via Internet search are included in this section of the report. A summary of these findings is presented below. Appendix B summarizes the findings of each article in matrix format. It is recommended that the table be reviewed in detail to gain full benefit of these findings.

This category of literature suggests a small to moderate degree of **cost effectiveness** of work release programs, for the administering agencies and the community at large (e.g., enables payment of restitution, decreases reliance on social welfare programs) (Aos et al, 2001; FADAA, 2002). The definitions of cost effectiveness considered in this study assume equal total incarceration periods, regardless of participation in work release. While the data available suggests work releasees may end up with longer sentences due to committing work release program rule infractions (Turner and Petersilia, 1998),

there was not other information encountered to suggest overall differences in sentence length between program participants and non-participants.

While evidence concerning **recidivism** is mixed, the majority of sources reviewed suggest at least small recidivism reducing effect. This finding is most prevalent with the low risk offender population (Aos et al., 2001; Belcourt and Motiuk, 1996; Oregon DOC, 2002). Other community corrections sanctions, such as community service and work crews, appear to be more effective than work release programs for reducing recidivism among higher risk incarcerated populations (Oregon DOC, 2002).

Two studies found that work release graduates had greater **success in finding and maintaining employment** post-release than those not participating in work release (Finn, 1998; Visher et al., 2004). In general, work release participation was found to facilitate **reintegration into the community** (Urban Institute, 2004; Visher et al., 2004).

Jurisdiction Contacts

Overview

Appendix C describes work release programs of various jurisdictions across the country selected for inclusion in this study. This section contains a summary of the major factors assessed and a discussion of their effectiveness. As stated in the above Findings section overview, for purposes of this study, factors indicating effectiveness included program cost effectiveness, post-release recidivism, and other social outcome factors. While few of the jurisdictions studied gather reliable information on these indicators, what does exist is reported and limitations noted. Work release centers included in this report were selected according to their relative quality as compared to all identified work release centers. As noted in the Methodology section, those appearing to either collect some type of outcome data and/or have unique program attributes likely to enhance their success were given priority for inclusion in this study. It is recommended that readers of this report review the table in Appendix C in detail.

Summary of Findings

Of the approximately 20 work release centers considered for inclusion in this study, **eight were selected** based on their quality, recommendation from community corrections experts, availability of effectiveness data (including anecdotal evidence¹), and unique attributes appearing to provide valuable information about innovative approaches to program design. The selected facilities contained a range of 36 to 550 **beds**. Over half have both female and male beds. The most common program **goals** included facilitating successful transition back into the community, successful participant completion of the program, lowering recidivism, and providing alternative sentencing measures. All programs were considered **cost effective**, at least in terms of returning funds to the community (i.e., through rent, restitution, household support, etc.) not possible without the program. Ada County's (ID) work release program, however, appears to pay for itself and generates revenue above and beyond administration costs.

¹ The reader should consider anecdotal evidence with considerable caution. While such data can provide valuable insights, it is often not corroborated by statistics and may not provide an unbiased perspective.

Most **program eligibility criteria** exclude inmates with violent or sex crime-related histories. There seems to be a general trend toward considering inmates with more questionable histories, partly due to improving systems of inmate risk identification. Judges in many jurisdictions appear to have the discretion to bypass program criteria and order an offender directly into work release.² The **most common crime** committed by work releasees varies by jurisdiction: while many are DWI-related, some are drug possession/use and fraud-related. **Average length of stay** depends greatly on whether the facility accepts federal or state inmates into its program. The range for jail inmates across facilities is 30 days to 1 year, although it is rare that the average exceeds six months for any participants.

Treatment and educational **programs available** in-house vary widely. While some facilities offer a broad spectrum of in-house services, several others outsource many if not all of these programs. Part of reasoning behind this are the philosophies that 1) expertise is greater at the facilities specialized in offering services, and 2) it is beneficial for inmates to obtain as much community contact as possible while in work release to further facilitate their reintegration into the community. Work skills education programs are least likely to be outsourced.

Unique attributes were also recorded. One of the most striking factors was the infrequency, or complete lack in one instance, of altercations among participants or participants and center staff. Some attribute this phenomenon to that fact that inmates who have made it as far as work release (i.e., in a graduated sentence) have a lot to lose. However, facility rule infractions are still quite common, especially returning to the center late or not being at the approved work site during work hours. In one case (Larimer County, CO), in the 20 years of facility operation, there has apparently never been an altercation among program participants or between participants and staff. The facility director attributes this to the unconditional positive regard and respect with which participants are treated by staff, the fact that staff do not expect problems to occur, and that the facility is staffed by civilian personnel (Lynette Schweizer, Director, Larimer County Alternative Sentencing Unit, personal communication, June 2004).

In terms of **program issues**, many mentioned the need to expand bed space to accommodate long wait lists to get into the program. Many also acknowledged the need to collect data and conduct studies on program effectiveness, particularly with regard to tracking post-release outcomes. The most common **outcome measurement/success data** available is concerning recidivism. In all cases where available, work releasee post-release recidivism rates were lower than for program non-participants. In most cases, research methodologies used to ascertain this were not particularly rigorous, lacking control/comparison group designs. There exists only a tentative suggestion from these programs that work releasees are less likely to recidivate. It is quite possible that those admitted into work release programs are different than those who are not, and that it is not the work release experience that reduces recidivism but preexisting characteristics. None of the facilities contacted had data on any other social factors. However, anecdotal evidence of program success typically focused on the value of work release in facilitating reintegration into the community, providing participants with much

² This may have a considerable impact on the ability to conduct quality research on work release populations unless these individuals are clearly identified and perhaps even excluded as study subjects.

needed skills and hope to enter and maintain a law-abiding lifestyle, and the ability of work releasees to pay restitution and family obligations.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Without exception, jurisdictions included in this study believed their programs to be cost-effective, at the least in providing money toward restitution and family obligations, and at best, generating agency revenue. One must recall, however, that these conclusions are based primarily on anecdotal evidence. It is recommended that facilities with purported success coupled with low per day operating costs be examined more closely to ascertain the best mix of facility approach and low-cost operation.

Facility distancing from correctional institutions and staffing with civilians versus correctional/sworn personnel appears beneficial. Such settings appear to foster community reintegration and more harmonious, rehabilitation-enabling (and possibly psychologically advantageous) living conditions. In addition, civilian staff salaries are less than those of sworn personnel, contributing to program cost effectiveness. Program privatization may be another option likely to reduce costs and enhance program effectiveness (see Crossroads Community Correctional Center, Chicago, Illinois).

Some work release facilities employ creative and innovative methods designed to enhance program success, community reintegration, and acceptance by the community. It is recommended that these methods be reviewed for ideas concerning creative variations likely to boost program success.

Perhaps most importantly, work release programs should pair program goals with quality outcome measurement systems that indicate their value. This is the essence of evidence-based programming.

V. Conclusions

While the availability of methodologically rigorous data on work release effectiveness is limited, the amalgamation of sources utilized in this study, containing both quantitative and qualitative data, provide a tentative picture of the value of work release programs. This section summarizes the overriding themes that emerged from the entire research project. However, the reader is urged to review the summaries and conclusions of each subsection of this report.

Most sources utilized in this study suggest work release program **cost effectiveness**, at least to some degree or by certain definition (i.e., cost effectiveness can be characterized as cost recovery, revenue generation, prevention of future incarceration or victimization costs, etc.). However, as noted in the report, this assumes equal length sentences between work release participants and non-participants.

While data on work release impacted **recidivism** is mixed, most sources suggest lower recidivism for work release graduates. Much of the recidivism data reviewed does not use methodologically stringent methods (e.g., control or comparison group designs) to ascertain recidivism; therefore, findings should be viewed with caution as recidivism differences among work release participants and non-participants may be affected by pre-existing group characteristics. However, multiple sources suggest that work release programs can contribute to reduced recidivism, particularly for low-risk offenders. In addition, work release combined with a TC approach appears quite successful in reducing recidivism.

Limited evidence also suggests that work release participation enables better **post-release employment success** (i.e., job acquisition and maintenance). There exists a general lack of data assessing the outcomes of other social factors.

This study contains considerable information concerning various work release program attributes and impacts. Overall, it appears that work release programs may add value to participants, correctional agencies, and the community. However, future methodologically sound studies are needed to further clarify the nature of impact produced by work release program participation.

VI. References

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Visher, C, Kachnowski, V., La Vigne, N., & Travis, J. (2004). Baltimore prisoners' experience returning home. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

Appendix A

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles

Author, Year, and Title	Identified Issues/Success
Friar Williams, E. (1996). A tie that binds: fostering the mother-child bond in a correctional setting.	"Dennis Mahon, vice president of corrections for VOA Indiana, stresses that the work release program helps the women return to the community as productive citizens. They don't just serve time; they are employed and pay taxes. Most important, they return to society with new attitudes - accountability, discipline and hope."
Nielsen, A. & Scarpitti, F. (1997). Changing the behavior of substance abusers: Factors influencing the effectiveness of therapeutic communities.	<p>Work release appears to enhance treatment community (TC) participation and promotes successful reintegration into the community. The work release component of the program in this study was introduced earlier than in other similar programs</p> <p>(Note: Several articles have been published on this topic. This one was selected as it appeared in a peer-reviewed journal and was written by the researchers actually conducting the research.)</p>
Petersilia, J. & Turner, S. (1998). Recidivism and corrections costs in Washington State: Alternatives to incarceration.	<p>In contrast to the national trend of decreasing funding for work release, WA state has allocated more than one-third of its community corrections budget to work release programs.</p> <p>Less than 5% of work releasees committed crimes while in the program, most of which were not serious crimes.</p> <p>A quarter of participants were returned to prison due to infractions (usually involving program rule infractions and drug possession). However, no cost difference was found between inmates completing sentence in prisons versus work releasees returned to prison.</p> <p>Older, Caucasian offenders were most successful in the program.</p> <p>Work release funding has declined (i.e., Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration funding ceased), leading to the discontinuation of many programs. Also, the correctional climate has shifted away from rehabilitation and toward incarceration. Transitional services have lost their popularity with the public.</p> <p>The study could not identify a solid profile for a successful work release participant. However, those with cocaine or crack dependence were most likely to commit infractions; those whose most serious charge had been theft had a higher proportion of re-arrest; and older, Caucasian, or first offence participants were least likely to commit program infractions.</p> <p>The work release experience enables job acquisition, payment of rent, and abstaining from crime while in the program.</p> <p>The program was not found to reduce recidivism rates or corrections costs. The latter was accounted for by the cost of programs made available to work releasees and the cost to reincarcerate those who fail work release due to program violations.</p>

Appendix B

Agency-Published Reports and Other Literature

Author(s)/Organization, Year, and Title	Identified Issues/Successes (i.e., Outcomes)
Aos et al. (2001). The comparative cost and benefits of programs to reduce crime. (Version 4.0). Washington State Institute for Public Policy.	Findings indicate a low to moderate rate of effectiveness of work release programs. These researchers used the most sophisticated techniques of all resources found for quantifying cost effectiveness. They reviewed methodologically rigorous program evaluations across N. America and found only two studies with adequate methodological integrity. (Program evaluation was based on comparison to participating in regular programs or no treatment programs.) Of these two, they calculated the average (net direct) cost per participant at \$456, with a very low crime-reducing effect. However, according to these researchers, even small crime-reducing effects can translate into significant cost benefits, both in terms of taxpayer savings and victims. In addition, these researchers used a very conservative approach to calculating return on investment (ROI), resulting in potentially diminished effect sizes. Of the two work release studies considered, the cost savings (i.e., net benefit minus cost per program participant) ranged from \$507 to \$2351. The former figure represents taxpayer benefit only while the latter incorporates both taxpayer and crime victim benefit. Compared to other adult-centered crime-reduction programs reviewed in this report, the magnitude of this return is small to modest. However, most of the other programs' benefit analyses were based on a higher numbers of cases. It is possible the two work release cases in the study were atypical in effectiveness; therefore, the ROI numbers yielded should be viewed with caution.
Belcourt, R. L., & Motiuk, L.L. (1996). Prison work programs and post-release outcome: a preliminary investigation.	This study assessed post-release recidivism of former Canadian Corrections work release program participants. These inmates yielded lower recidivism, particularly those classified as low risk.
Cox, Major W. (1995). Can work release really benefit all?	This review contains anecdotal evidence for the value of work release programs. It states that work release benefits everyone involved, including taxpayers, employers in the community, prisons employees, and participating inmates. It further suggests that work releasees are not taking jobs away from the rest of the community; local workers are given priority for similar jobs.
Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association (FADAA) (2002). Studies in Delaware and Southern California show benefits of providing treatment.	<p>Offenders receiving substance abuse treatment in a work release program spend 49 fewer days reincarcerated than those receiving work release alone.</p> <p>Reincarceration is common among drug offenders due to drug-related activity.</p> <p>Other economic benefits of work release include employment, reduced dependence on social welfare programs, reduced costs of health consequences due to drug use, and reduced cost of repeat offenses resulting in reincarceration.</p> <p>Studies have shown those receiving in-prison treatment commit fewer infractions, have reduced drug use, and cost the system less in terms of reincarceration. Correctional center staff absenteeism is also lower in these cases.</p>
Finn, Peter (1998). Successful job placement for ex-offenders: The Center for Employment Opportunities.	<p>This study describes a community resources center in New York City that provides transitional services, such as job finding, to ex-offenders immediately after their release (i.e., when they are most vulnerable to negative influences).</p> <p>Those participating in therapeutic community treatment and/or work release have better post-release success in finding and keeping employment.</p>

Author(s)/Organization, Year, and Title	Identified Issues/Successes (i.e., Outcomes)
<p>Georgia State Auditor (2004). Follow-up review of DOC work release program.³</p>	<p>Once approved for work release by DOC, approx. half of potential participants spend three months in a Pre-transitional Unit (PTU) designed to provide preparation support for work release (e.g., counseling, work details). An evaluation of the PTU shows it is effective in screening higher risk inmates for placement into work release. Also, graduates of the PTU are dismissed from work release less often than those not participating in the PTU.</p> <p>Since 2001, the program has started evaluating its effectiveness. Currently, it has developed and implemented a methodology utilizing a control-group design to measure recidivism. The audit states “work release graduates have consistently lower return to prison rates and reconviction rates than the control group.” DOC intends to continue its data collection/analysis efforts and expand it to measure the impact of changes made to the program.</p> <p>The two major factors impacting participant success in the program are the participant selection process and the proximity of the facility to a participant’s home. Regarding the former, GA DOC intends to expand their identification of attributes of successful work release graduates to refine program selection criteria. The latter factor is utilized in determining locations of future work release facilities.</p> <p>Beginning in 2005, a consultant will begin evaluating impact of various factors on participant program success and post-completion outcomes (e.g., employment, substance abuse, education, family involvement, and self-improvement).</p>
<p>Jolin, A., & Stipack, B. (1991). The impact of Clackamas County, OR community corrections intensive drug program.</p>	<p>Work release and electronic monitoring program participants yielded lower recidivism rates than those under intensive supervised probation/parole (ISP).</p>
<p>Oregon DOC (2002). Evaluation of community-based sanctions in reducing recidivism.</p>	<p>A statewide study revealed that all those participating in community corrections sanctions (including work release) have lower re-conviction rates (one year post-release) than comparable jailed non-participants. Among work releasees, those classified as low/limited risk yielded the lowest reconviction rates. There was no significant difference between high-risk offender participants and non-participants; indeed, this was the case for all type of community-based sanctions. In terms of re-arrest one year post-release, compared with all community sanctions, restitution/work release participants yielded the highest rates of re-arrest for high and medium risk offenders. (Note: Participants were not randomly assigned to the various sanctions in this study, potentially biasing the results.) Other community corrections sanctions, such as community service and/or work crews, appeared to have greater impact on reconviction than restitution/work release centers and other community based alternatives for medium to high risk offenders.</p> <p>The review of national data on community sanctions and recidivism indicates no difference in those participating in community corrections sanctions when rehabilitation is not a component of that sanction (e.g., drug and alcohol abuse treatment). Therefore, it is recommended that community corrections sanctions include services aimed at changing inmate behavior over the long term. However, at the least, community sanctions can provide a more cost effective alternative to jail.</p>

³ While county-run programs are the focus of this study, this report referenced selected unique attributes of Georgia’s programs believed potentially to be of interest to the audience of this report.

Author(s)/Organization, Year, and Title	Identified Issues/Successes (i.e., Outcomes)
Urban Institute (2004). Family support, substance abuse help, and work release programs are essential as ex-prisoners restart lives in Baltimore.	<p>This author reported on a study that collected data through inmate interviews, one before and two after release. The research “clearly shows that helping prisoners continue to work, receive treatment for substance abuse, and strengthen their family ties while they are incarcerated is crucial to making sure they successfully reintegrate back into the community after leaving prison.”</p> <p>Work release was identified as a “promising tool” in successful inmate reintegration into society.</p>
Visher, C et al. (2004). Baltimore prisoners’ experience returning home. (See also Urban Institute reference above.)	<p>This research report presents the results of 3-year longitudinal study involving extensive interviews with a sample of inmates, both pre- and post-release. Almost half of the subjects stated they participated in various treatment and education programs while incarcerated, but of those, 41% said those were of no value to them. (6.2% perceived value in holding a job and 4.1% in job training programs.) Instead, a quarter of respondents would have preferred job training and 13% desired simply a job.</p> <p>Work release graduates had higher post-release employment rates than non-participants. This study suggests that expanding work release programs could increase post-release employment rates.</p> <p>Those employed full-time post-release were more likely to be male, held a work release job while incarcerated, and maintained those jobs for longer continuous periods than those not employed.</p>

Appendix C

Individual Work Release Programs Included in this Study

Jurisdiction, Institution Name, Contact(s), and Capacity	Program Goals	Inmate Cost	Agency Cost	Program Participation Criteria	Most Common Crime	Average Length of Stay	Unique Attributes	Identified Issues/ Successes
<p>Ada County, ID, Work Release Center</p> <p>Sgnt Bill Stanko and Deb Taylor</p> <p>102 Beds⁴ (4 male:1 female)</p>	<p>1) Successful program completion.</p> <p>2) Improved post-release transition back into the community.</p>	<p>\$25/day rent and \$25 one-time admin. fee</p>	<p>Approx. \$10 – 15/day.</p> <p>Jail is \$47 - 50/day.</p>	<p>Risk classification on “Northpoint System” as 5 or above.</p> <p>Excluding factors: assault history, child-related crimes, sex offender, employed by self or family member, jobs involving serving alcohol.</p> <p>Judge can order and override criteria (e.g., felony domestic battery).</p>	<p>DWI and DWP (for both jail and prison inmates).</p>	<p>County inmates: sometimes entire sentence.</p> <p>State: usually during last six mos. of sentence.</p>	<p>Altercations are very rare. Believed associated with the fact that participants have much more to lose than jail/prison incarcerated inmates.</p>	<p>Recent rule clarifications were made, resulting in more consistent rule enforcement.</p> <p>Inmates are now more likely to be sent back to prison for anything but the most minor rule infractions (e.g., returning less than 2 hours late from work).</p> <p>Escapes from the facility are very rare. “Walkaways” from work average 2 – 3/year.</p> <p>Cost effective based on operating cost recovery alone.</p> <p>Two+ month waiting list.</p> <p>No outcome data available.</p>
<p>Chicago, Illinois Crossroads Community Correctional Center⁵</p> <p>Ron Tonn and Jim Zangs</p> <p>550 Beds (all male)</p>	<p>1) Successful program completion.</p> <p>2) Participants adhere to the program rules.</p> <p>3) Prepare participants for smooth reentry into the community.</p>	<p>20% of income each week once employed up to \$200.</p> <p>Mandatory savings plan comprising of 20% of earnings.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Nonviolent crimes against property or person. Sexual crime and arson excluded.</p>	<p>Drug-related offenses.</p>	<p>6 – 9 mos.</p>	<p>Program offers a complete variety of in-house inmate services/ treatment.</p>	<p>No data on cost effectiveness, but state DOC publication asserts cost savings of work release placement over jails costs (i.e., believed the most economical way to incarcerate an inmate).</p> <p>Safer Foundation (private) programs are apparently more cost effective than public ones due to competitive contract.</p> <p>Program recidivism rates of 17% (for those who have maintained at least 30 days of employment) vs. county-run work release facility rate of over 50%.</p> <p>(Anecdotal) There are two essential elements to the program’s success: access to both education and employment (tools to succeed and opportunity to participate).</p>

⁴ Figure accounts for County beds only. Currently, beds are split between state and county prisoners at a ratio of about 60:40 respectively. Only county prisoners are eligible to participate in the work release program. The County plans to transition all state beds to county within the next year.

⁵ Two privately run work release (“adult transitional”) facilities operate under this program.

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Larimer County, CO Alternative Sentencing Unit (ASU) Lynette Schweizer 36 Beds (all male; planning to expand to 56)	Goals and objectives are revised annually. Currently, the center is focusing on developing additional alternative sentencing programs to maximize the use of its center to support the goal of reducing the current community sanction waiting list time of 6 months.	Min. \$12/day. If hourly wage >\$12, daily rate is calculated at one hour's pay. Participants are charged \$20 for each random drug test required.	\$22/day for all alternative sentencing programs combined. Largest proportion of cost is staff salaries (civilian). \$69/day to house inmate in jail.	NCIC background check (7 year history) conducted. Selection committee reviews each case. Histories of arson, escape, assault, menacing behavior, and violence are carefully reviewed to ascertain the details of each situation. (Consequently, those with domestic violence, assault, and sex offense histories can be admitted to the program.) Judges can override committee by sentencing offenders directly to alternative sanctions.	Traffic offenses (multiple DWI, no insurance - due to DWI cost increases, DWP), misdemeanor assault.	Most commonly 90 days or 180 days.	Staff treats participants with unconditional positive regard. They communicate expectations, enforce rules fairly, and are courteous to participants. They expect no problems. No in-house programs. Prefer to allow inmates to attend in the community, both to aid community reintegration and because community-based programs are experts in their field.	The ASU contains four different community based sanction programs, work release being one of them. The ASU has been identified as a benchmark for other states. It is also one of the few accredited work release programs in the nation. In 2002, over all programs, there was a savings of 11,975 days of inmate expenses resulting from the approx. 400 participants attending ASU programs. In the 20 years of the program, the center has never experienced an altercation between participants or participants and staff. (See "Unique Attributes" column for explanation.) Trying to initiate a recidivism study in collaboration with CO State University.

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<p>Maricopa County, AZ Work Furlough Program</p> <p>Pam Morrow</p> <p>320 Beds (280 male and 40 female)</p>	<p>1) To facilitate participant ability to pay for household support and restitution.</p> <p>2) To enable participants to maintain employment and schooling while incarcerated.</p> <p>3) To protect the community.</p> <p>4) To reintegrate participants into the community as easily as possible.</p> <p>5) To reduce recidivism.</p>	<p>One hour's pay/day, with a min. of \$9/day plus a \$3/day admin. fee.</p> <p>Up to 50% of total fees can be subtracted from paycheck, including child support (current or back).</p> <p>\$25/ week retained for transportation.</p>	<p>\$3 more/day than regular jail incarceration. Work releasees are housed in the jail plus are provided work-site supervision.</p>	<p>Not accepted if current convictions or criminal history is violent in nature, escape history, in or requiring residential treatment (e.g., D & A, mental illness), sex offender with multiple victims or offences, illegal alien, additional charges pending, <18 years, and "unemployable".</p>	<p>DUI, drug possession-related offenses.</p>	<p>6 months. 30-day minimum for those continuing pre-incarceration jobs and 45 days for those with new jobs.</p>	<p>Program administered by Adult Probation Dept. versus County Sheriff's Office.</p> <p>When considering participant acceptance into the program, the review committee focuses on actual behaviors versus convictions alone.</p> <p>Two in-house education programs: life skills and "Rules of the Game" (i.e., living legally in society).</p> <p>Unemployed participants have a maximum of five days to find employment.</p> <p>Mothers and fathers must remain in program until they become current on child support obligations.</p> <p>Employer is required to sign a Letter of Understanding that confirms the job details and outlines employer's responsibilities (e.g., call Probation Office if participant does not arrive at work on time, divert wages to child support, etc.)</p>	<p>Approx. 75% successful program completion rate.</p> <p>Exceptional relationship with Sheriff's Office contributes to the successful operation of the program (e.g., sanctions supported, no support of negative behaviors of inmates going between centers, and general open communication between agencies).</p> <p>72% of unemployed participants find jobs within the 5-day maximum. Those not finding work return to jail.</p> <p>The program gets people back in the habit of working. This makes probation officers' job easier and enables participants to support families.</p> <p>Program considered cost effective as it allows participants to contribute to their households and pay restitution.</p>

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<p>Multnomah County, OR Restitution Center⁶</p> <p>1998 and 2003 County Reports</p> <p>160 Beds</p> <p>CLOSED Jan. 2003</p>	<p>1) Keep offenders working at their current job or job search.</p> <p>2) Provide offenders with needed services and resources.</p> <p>3) Provide enough structure, new skills, and transitional services to avoid recidivism and transition into the community with support systems in place.</p>	<p>Employed pay daily room and board fee. Not employed required to pay \$15/day.</p>	<p>\$83.09/day</p>	<p>Cooperative and remorseful, no recent WR failures that were self-destructive in nature (e.g., AWOL, drug or alcohol use), property crimes or person crimes not viewed as dangerous to the community, and a “questionable” criminal history (e.g., habitual criminality). Approx. 80% of applicants accepted</p>	<p>Property, DWI, DWP, minor person crimes, behavioral crimes (e.g., failure to pay child support, trespassing, etc.)</p>	<p>48 days</p>	<p>Access to a combination of in-house treatment programs and community based programs.</p>	<p>Thorough screening process.</p> <p>Reportedly had lowest recidivism rate in the nation.</p> <p>Highest accreditation scores in the nation.</p> <p>Judges view program as “very valuable,” particularly with regard to treatment and accountability focus and enabling pre-incarceration employment stability.</p> <p>Greater corrections staff-resident ratio than other Multnomah County jails (1 FTE to 6.8 beds).</p> <p>Projected revenue for the program for FY02-03, had the program not closed, was \$657,000.</p> <p>16 – 17% fail to show up to the program as scheduled.</p>

⁶ Included for comparison purposes.

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Ottumwa, IA Residential Facility ⁷ Mike Baker 55 Beds (approx. 80% male and 20% female)	1) Program completion without immediate reentry into work release.	\$13/day. 10% of wages toward restitution. Child support deducted from pay by employer. \$50/ drug and alcohol treatment course. \$25/ other treatment courses.	\$58/ day vs. average \$50 in prison	Parole violators and prison inmates reviewed by the parole board who have family/support ties to the community and whose crime happened in the district of the center. Only exclusions are class 8 felonies and inmates with known enemies among other program participants or staff.	Drug possession with intent to deliver (approx 60%)	100 – 120 days for men. 5 months for women.	First week in program comprised of a "lock down orientation" during which programs rules and employment/ social rules training occurs. This is followed by job seeking period. This is unique among all 22 state work release programs in the state of Iowa. If no infractions, receive "furlough time" (i.e., family or conjugal visit time in a separate furlough facility).	Latest recidivism statistics (from several years ago) indicated a 68% rate for work release participants compared to approx. 78% for non-participants. Follow up is key to inmate successful reentry into the community. When lacking, inmates tend to "self-destruct" and return to criminal lifestyle within 3 months of release. DWI parolees (voluntarily) participating in a program comprised of returning to the facility for monthly follow up group sessions for a year were much more successful in changing their lifestyles than those who did not attend or have that service available. Fewer infractions seem to occur when participants are well-oriented with program expectations and rules. 2 – 3 month waiting list. Due to budget restraints, parole violators are being sent to work release rather than back to prison (as in the past). The growing proportion of methamphetamine users also appears to be decreasing the program's success. The facility is looking at conducting personality testing to determine which offenders more likely to offend. Observations suggest that younger inmates (age 18 – 21) have higher recidivism rates than those 28 years and older. The program viewed as cost effective in that restitution is being paid and court costs are reduced.

⁷ This is a state-run facility primarily for the prison population. It was included upon the recommendation of Dr. Edward Latessa, an expert in the field of community corrections.

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<p>Sacramento County, Ca Work Release Division</p> <p>Sgnt Kieth Schmalz</p> <p>No beds: participants report to Work Project when not at regular job (e.g., Sat., Sun.)</p>	<p>Mission: "To provide quality alternative correctional programs for the County by working in partnership with government agencies, the citizens of the community, and local organizations."</p>	<p>Participants are interviewed to determine the amount inmate should pay, up to a max. of \$40/day.</p> <p>\$75 processing fee (includes interview).</p>	<p>Based on administrative costs.</p> <p>High supervision costs as participants are supervised by officers all day.</p>	<p>Low risk offenders with a minor criminal sentence, 60-day net sentence (i.e., 90-day gross sentence with 1/3 time off for good behavior). Look at "overall picture" (i.e., the likelihood participant will be okay in public). Also consider criminal history, current charges, disciplinary history, repeat offenses (esp. violent), and past program failures.</p>	<p>Traffic violations, including DWI and DWL.</p>	<p>Usually length of sentence or 60 days.</p>	<p>Involves group work/crews only for primarily government and non-profit organizations. Contracts with agencies for participant services.</p> <p>Started Toy Project whereby participants repair toys, bicycles, etc. that are donated to needy children in the community.</p> <p>Education for the unemployed offered in-house.</p>	<p>Re: cost effectiveness, program has an \$8 million/year budget, of which \$4 – 5 million/year recovered through agency work contracts and participant fees. No jail housing costs. Thousands of labor hours are returned to the community.</p> <p>Program reduces overcrowding in the jails.</p> <p>Program "shining stars" are its education program and Toy Project.</p> <p>Program is popular with the community.</p> <p>No statistical outcome data. However, the following observations have been made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) While do see past participants return to the program, the program is beneficial as it helps participants maintain a connection with the community (i.e., with their families, housing, employers, etc.) 2) Program works best for "responsible individuals" and first time offenders. Those with gang affiliations, criminal histories, and drug and alcohol abuse see less success. 3) The Toy Project has contributed to participant success, especially for "difficult to rehabilitate" offenders.

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<p>Vanderburgh County, IN Community Corrections Center</p> <p>Major Steve Whithall</p> <p>145 Beds (115 male and 30 female)</p>	<p>1) To provide an alternative to the state penal system.</p> <p>2) Support the development of productive household contributors.</p> <p>3) To prepare participants for transition back into community.</p>	<p>\$70/week. May be required by court to pay child support and/or restitution (not handled by Center).</p>	<p>Approx. \$20/day. Jail cost/day \$35 – 50/day.</p>	<p>Fewer than 3 felonies (except Class A).</p> <p>New program criteria implemented beginning of 2004 to aid in exclusion of inappropriate participants.</p> <p>Judge can override criteria and order offenders to work release.</p>	<p>Drug use, particularly methamphetamine, for men. Credit card or other fraud for women.</p>	<p>18 mos.</p>	<p>Center has an excellent working relationship with the community and partners with agencies to provide a broad range of programs for their participants. Limited drug and alcohol treatment offered in-house. This facilitates transition back into the community. Also, Center the building is not conducive to offering programs; it is an old warehouse.</p> <p>Except for Center Director, all remaining staff are civilian.</p> <p>Conduct exit interviews with participants to ensure post-release employment, housing, and continuation of needed treatment.</p> <p>Center receives inmates from the following sources: 40% from jail (including transfers from other counties), 40% directly from sentencing, and 20% from state prisons.</p>	<p>A three-year study of inmates released in 2001 showed a 37% recidivism rate for work release participants. This compares to national figures of approx. 60%.</p> <p>The program is considered cost effective.</p> <p>The program provides a necessary service to the community. It also provides services/ programs/treatment to inmates not available in jails/prisons.</p> <p>The weak link is lack of follow up research once participants exit the Center.</p>