

Studying Recidivism

Introduction

The VADOC studies recidivism to gather information on the success of offenders re-entering society once released from State Responsible (SR) incarceration. SR incarceration requires a Virginia felony conviction with a sentence of one year or more or a parole violation with a sentence of two years or more. Recidivism studies can measure a variety of repeat behaviors for a range of follow-up periods. These measures are limited to known behavior that has been captured in data. VADOC routinely studies three standard measures of recidivism—re-arrest, re-conviction and re-incarceration—for time periods ranging from 6 to 36 months. These measures are consistent with other Virginia criminal justice agencies' standard recidivism measures.

Re-Arrest:

Re-arrest is defined as any arrest reported in the Virginia State Police (VSP) criminal history database for a felony or misdemeanor offense, including supervision violations, within the specified time period after release. Local ordinance violations, such as non-criminal speeding, are not considered re-arrests.

Re-Conviction:

Re-conviction is defined as a conviction resulting from a re-arrest that occurred within the specified time period. The actual conviction may occur outside the follow-up period.

Re-Incarceration:

Re-incarceration is defined as any SR re-incarceration within the specified time period.

State Responsible Releases

This report provides information on recidivism of State Responsible (SR) releases. SR releases include all Virginia felons who were sentenced to an incarceration period of one year or more and were released from SR incarceration.

VADOC only includes SR releases who were at liberty and had the opportunity to recidivate. Those excluded from the analysis include SR releases who died in custody or were transferred to another jurisdiction upon release.

State Responsible Releases		
Release Year	Total Releases	Releases in Study
FY2007	12,571	12,361
FY2008	12,960	12,817
FY2009	12,995	12,885
FY2010	13,113	13,018
FY2011	12,380	12,263
FY2012	11,585	11,496
FY2013	11,661	11,576

Releases from Detention and Diversion Centers are studied separately. In addition, recidivism measures for those on community supervision are under development and are not included in this report. Recidivism rates may vary slightly from what was reported in previous versions of this report due to data maturity.

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UNIT

Recidivism At a Glance

Releases from State Responsible Incarceration

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Recidivism at a Glance

Releases from State Responsible Incarceration

Re-Arrest

Re-arrest rates declined during the past six years. The FY2007 release cohort had a 6-month re-arrest rate of 16.6% while the FY2013 cohort had a rate of 14.0% (down 2.6 percentage points). The FY2007 18-month re-arrest rate was 41.8%, while the FY2012 cohort had a rate of 37.9% (down 3.9 percentage points). Finally, the FY2007 release cohort had a 36-month re-arrest rate of 57.3%, which compared to 55.0% for the FY2010 release cohort (down 2.3 percentage points).

Months since Release	Re-Arrest				
	6	12	18	24	36
FY2007	16.6	31.3	41.8	45.8	57.3
FY2008	15.5	29.2	38.9	43.3	54.9
FY2009	14.3	28.2	37.4	41.6	54.0
FY2010	14.0	27.9	38.0	42.3	55.0
FY2011	13.2	26.9	37.5	41.6	
FY2012	13.1	27.2	37.9		
FY2013	14.0				

Re-arrests are reported on VSP criminal history database without delay. Therefore, this measure is immediately available. However, re-arrest is not necessarily indicative of new criminal behavior. Some re-arrests will lead to findings of not guilty or be nolle-prossed.

Re-Conviction

Re-conviction within 6 months dropped with the FY2008 release cohort, but have stayed fairly stable since then. The FY2007 release cohort had a 6-month re-conviction rate of 10.8%, while the FY2012 cohort had a rate of 9.6% (down 1.2 percentage points). Conviction rates for longer follow-up periods has been relatively stable except for a slight increase at the 24-month follow-up.

Months since Release	Re-Conviction				
	6	12	18	24	36
FY2007	10.8	21.0	29.2	34.8	43.5
FY2008	9.9	19.3	26.9	32.8	42.3
FY2009	9.2	19.1	27.0	33.8	43.7
FY2010	9.7	20.7	29.6	36.4	
FY2011	10.0	20.9	29.7		
FY2012	9.6	20.8			
FY2013					

Re-convictions are reported at the conclusion of court proceedings and entry into the VSP database. Because of this processing time lag, the measure is not immediately reportable. However, this measure is indicative of new criminal behavior because the charge is adjudicated in a court of law.

Re-Incarceration

Re-incarceration rates among the past several release year cohorts show a declining trend. The FY2007 cohort had an 18-month re-incarceration rate of 12.4% that declined to 9.7% for FY2011 (down 2.7 percentage points). The FY2007 cohort had a 24-month rate of 18.1% that dropped to 14.9% for the FY2010 cohort (down 3.2 percentage points). The FY2007 cohort had a 36-month re-incarceration rate of 26.1% that declined 3.3 percentage points to 22.8% with the FY2009 cohort.

Months since Release	Re-Incarceration				
	6	12	18	24	36
FY2007	1.6	6.1	12.4	18.1	26.1
FY2008	1.3	5.5	11.0	15.8	23.4
FY2009	1.2	4.5	9.4	14.5	22.8
FY2010	1.2	4.8	10.1	14.9	
FY2011	1.3	4.7	9.7		
FY2012	1.3	4.4			
FY2013					

Re-incarceration is reported once the data is entered into VirginiaCORIS (VADOC's offender management system) following court proceedings. SR incarceration requires a Virginia felony conviction with a sentence of one year or more or a parole violation with a sentence of two years or more. This measure indicates criminal behavior which impacts VADOC bed space needs.