



**State of New Jersey**  
**Department of Corrections**  
**State Parole Board**  
**Juvenile Justice Commission**

**2015 RELEASE COHORT OUTCOME REPORT:  
A THREE-YEAR FOLLOW-UP**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: ADULT COHORT

- There were 9,017 inmates released from DOC facilities in 2015. The number of DOC inmates released annually decreased 28.5% between 2007 and 2015. (Section 1)
- The 3-year rates of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration declined between 2007 and 2015. Approximately 30% of all inmates released in 2015 were reincarcerated within three years. This represents one of the lowest reincarceration rates of the past decade. (Section 1)
- Nearly 31% of all readmissions to a DOC facility within three years post-release were the result of a new commitment and 57% were due to technical parole violations (TPVs). Commitments for new offenses decreased 25.2% between 2010 and 2015 while readmissions for TPVs increased 54.8%. (Section 1)
- Readmissions to DOC facilities for the 2015 cohort peaked at 4 months post-release. Nearly 52% of all releases who were reincarcerated within three years were readmitted to a DOC facility within the first year of release. (Section 1)
- The majority of released inmates were committed from Camden and Essex Counties. The top 5 counties of commitment (Camden, Essex, Middlesex, Union, and Atlantic) encompass approximately 50% of all releases. (Section 2)
- Counties with the highest number of returning inmates were not the same as those counties with the highest proportion of returning inmates. (Section 2)
- Male releases represented 92.8% of the total 2015 release cohort. Six hundred forty-nine female inmates were released in 2015. Male releases were rearrested, reconvicted, and reincarcerated at higher rates than their female counterparts post-release. (Section 3)
- The majority of releases self-identified as black/African American, followed by white/Caucasian and Hispanic. Releases who self-identified as black/African-American were rearrested, reconvicted, and reincarcerated at significantly higher rates than white/Caucasian, Hispanic, and other race/ethnicity releases within three years of release. (Section 3)
- Approximately 72% of releases had at least a high school degree or high school equivalency at release. Releases without a high school degree had higher rates of rearrest and reconviction than releases with a high school degree and above. (Section 3)
- The average inmate at release was approximately 36 years old. Inmates who were under the age of 21 at release had the highest rates of recidivism within three years. (Section 3)
- Inmates in the 2015 release cohort served an average of 2.4 years before being released. Inmates who served more than 2 years of incarceration had the lowest recidivism rates in the 3-year follow-up period post-release. (Section 4)
- Most releases were paroled (61.5%) while a little under 40% completed their term with no time owed (i.e., “maxed out”). Approximately 52% of the 2015 release cohort served a mandatory minimum term (MMT) and only 13% of the full release cohort was sentenced to serve a mandatory term under the No Early Release Act (NERA). Inmates who served a MMT of incarceration had slightly lower rates of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration than the 2015 release cohort as a whole. Inmates serving a sentence under NERA had lower rates of rearrest and reconviction than the 2015 release cohort but a higher rate of reincarceration. (Section 4)
- The majority of 2015 inmates were released following time served for a violent offense (33%). Inmates who were serving a sentence for a community supervision violation (CSV) and were

released in 2015 consistently had the highest rates of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration in the 3-year follow-up period. (Section 4)

- Many releases in 2015 were not first-time offenders. The average released inmate had one prior DOC admission. Released inmates, on average, also had eight prior arrests on record and nearly five prior convictions. (Section 4)
- Unsupervised releases were 44.6% more likely to be rearrested and 69.0% more likely to be reconvicted than supervised releases. However, unsupervised releases were 56.8% less likely to be reincarcerated. (Section 4)
- Approximately 35% of the full 2015 release cohort attended a Residential Community Release Program (RCRP) and 26% of all releases completed a RCRP. Inmates who participated in and completed a RCRP prior to release experienced lower rates of reconviction and reincarceration than inmates who did not participate in a RCRP. (Section 5)
- Within the 2015 release cohort, there were a total of 351 inmates who participated in mandatory education programming during their stay of incarceration. One hundred nine inmates who participated in mandatory education programming took the HSE test. Of these, 101 passed and 8 failed, for a pass rate of 92.7%. (Section 6)
- Of the 2015 releases, 1,224 inmates completed vocational education programming during their stay of incarceration. Nearly 90% of all vocational education participants were employed at any time within three years of release. Vocational education participants had slightly lower 3-year rates of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration than the full 2015 cohort. (Section 6)
- Nearly 20% of all inmates released in 2015 participated in psychoeducational drug treatment during their stay of incarceration. Psychoeducational drug treatment participants had slightly lower 3-year rates of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration than the full 2015 cohort. (Section 6)
- The complete 2015 female cohort consisted of 649 released inmates. Female releases were predominately of black race/ethnicity, single, and under the age of 40. The majority had a HS diploma or higher education level. The average woman was 36 years old at release. (Section 7)
- The majority of female releases did not have a prior admission to a DOC facility (60%). The most common offense of conviction was a property offense (31.3%) followed by a drug offense (30.6%). The average inmate served a little less than two years prior to release and most had a prior criminal record, with 7 prior arrests and 4 prior convictions on record. (Section 7)
- The majority of female releases were committed from Camden County. (Section 7)
- Approximately 40% of women were rearrested, 28% were reconvicted, and 23% were reincarcerated within three years of release. Between 2010 and 2015, rearrest rates increased 9.0%, reconviction rates increased 6.5%, and reincarceration rates increased 1.8% over the six-year period. (Section 7)
- Supervised releases were 32% less likely to be rearrested and 41% less likely to be reconvicted within three years of release when compared to unsupervised releases. However, supervised releases were 428% more likely to be reincarcerated than unsupervised releases. (Section 7)
- White women had the highest rates of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration within three years of release compared with women of other races/ethnicities.
- Generally, younger releases recidivated at higher rates than older releases within three years. (Section 7)

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: JUVENILE COHORT

## OVERALL JUVENILE FINDINGS

- In 2015, the Juvenile Justice Commission recidivism rate was lower than it had been in 2012 on all three measures of recidivism, despite small upticks between 2014 and 2015. Since 2012, new court filings/arrests have decreased 0.9 percentage points, new adjudications/convictions have decreased 6.4 percentage points, and new commitments to state custody have decreased 5.1 percentage points.
- Approximately 72.0% of juvenile offenders did not return to a juvenile or adult State facility within three years of release from custody.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF 2015 JUVENILE COHORT

- The juvenile cohort was comprised of 336 releases.
- The average age at release from the JJC was 18.2 years.
- The racial/ethnic composition of the cohort was 72.9% Black, 17.0% Hispanic, 9.2% White, and 0.9% other, or 90.8% minority.
- Males comprised 92.3% of the juvenile release cohort and females comprised 7.7%.
- The average time served in custody for the juvenile cohort was 390 days.
- Most youth served sentences for persons offenses (40.5%), followed by violations of probation (19.0%), property offenses (16.7%), weapons offenses (8.6%), drug offenses (8.3%), and public order offenses (6.8%).

## JUVENILE COHORT RECIDIVISM WITHIN THREE YEARS

- 78.0% of the cohort had a new court filing/arrest.
- 61.3% of the cohort had a new adjudication/conviction.
- 28.0% of the cohort had a new commitment.
- The average time to re-offend for a new court filing/arrest was 303 days.
- The average time to re-offend for a new adjudication/conviction was 310 days.
- The average time to re-offend for a new commitment to a State facility was 340 days.

## DIFFERENCES IN RECIDIVISM (REARREST) ACROSS KEY VARIABLES

- Males were more likely to recidivate (78.3% males vs. 65.3% of females).
- Recidivating youth had accumulated a greater number of total adjudications of delinquency in their history than non-recidivists (6.5 vs. 4.5).
- Recidivating youth had higher scores on the JJC's Initial Classification & Custody Document than non-recidivists (12.4 vs. 11.8).
- Youth of color were more likely to recidivate than white youth (79.3% vs. 61.3%).
- Youth residing in the 15 most densely populated cities were more likely to recidivate compared with other youth (84.4% vs. 71.1%).
- Youth committed/admitted on drug charges (as their most serious offense) were most likely to recidivate (90.4%), followed by weapons offenses (87.5%), Violations of Probation (83.6%), public order offenses (81.4%), property offenses (79.5%), and persons offenses (67.3%).
- Youth committed/admitted on disorderly persons/petty disorderly persons offenses (as their most serious offense) were most likely to recidivate (92.3%), followed by 83.6% for Violations of Probation, 81.3% for 3<sup>rd</sup> degree offenses, 80.0% for 4<sup>th</sup> degree offenses, 72.6% for 2<sup>nd</sup> degree offenses, and 65.5% for 1<sup>st</sup> degree offenses.



**REHABILITATION AND REENTRY PROGRAMMING ANALYSES (REARREST)**

- Youth who did not have a GED or high school diploma when leaving the JJC were more likely to recidivate than those who had a high school credential (79.3% vs. 74.6%).
- Sex offender specific treatment is provided in both secure and residential environments. The recidivism rate for those in secure care receiving sex offender treatment was 40.6% and 36.8% for those receiving sex offender treatment in a residential setting.
- Intensive substance abuse treatment is provided in both secure and residential environments. The recidivism rate for those receiving most of their intensive substance abuse treatment in secure care was 75.8%, as compared to 83.6% for those receiving the majority of their intensive substance abuse treatment in a residential setting.
- Youth participating in a transitional program had a higher recidivism rate (82.9%) than youth who did not participate in a transitional program (75.8%).
- Youth who departed secure care recidivated 22 days sooner than youth departing residential programs (287 vs. 309 days).

# INTRODUCTION

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This report is the result of a legislative mandate instituted by P.L. 2009, c.329, (C.30: 4-91.15). The law enforcement agencies of the New Jersey Department of Corrections (DOC), New Jersey State Parole Board (SPB) and the New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) are tasked by the legislature to compile reports that record and examine annual recidivism rates. This report is also the result of a legislative mandate instituted by P.L. 2015, c. 144 (a4008). The DOC, SPB, and JJC are tasked with measuring the effectiveness of the State's reentry initiatives and programs. This report is the ninth in a series of reports that measures overall recidivism levels, describes adult and juvenile cohort characteristics and analyzes recidivism factors. It is the third report that examines reentry programming consistent with P.L. 2015, c. 144 (A4008).

There are multiple sections to the report. The introduction presents the various agencies' mission statements and describes the report methodology. It should be noted that the methods and definitions used in this report may significantly differ between agencies and careful attention should be given to the varying definitions of recidivism. Sections 1 through 7 provide details of the 2015 adult release cohort including cohort demographics, recidivism rates, and reentry and rehabilitative programming analyses. The adult cohort includes 1) adult releases of the DOC who are supervised by the SPB or Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) Intensive Supervision Program upon release and 2) unsupervised adult releases (i.e., max outs) from the DOC. Section 8 details the 2015 juvenile release cohort; demographics, recidivism rates, and reentry and rehabilitative programming analyses are also provided for the youth releases. The juvenile cohort includes all juveniles released from the New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission in 2015.

In New Jersey, law enforcement agencies such as the DOC, SPB, and JJC attempt to prepare adult inmates and juvenile residents for the transition from behinds bars to the community to assist releases in becoming law abiding citizens. Offenders start preparing for rehabilitation and reentry immediately upon intake into our system. Inmates receive a comprehensive plan based upon their assessment scores at intake. The plan includes the in-prison programs and treatment that will be beneficial to an offender once released from prison. Programs and treatment (such as education, vocational classes, anger management, and substance abuse classes, among others) lead inmates to better understand their behavior and provide necessary skills to assist with community reentry.

As noted within the mission statement of each agency, the rehabilitation of offenders who will return to society is paramount. Each of the three agencies in this report promote offender rehabilitation and provide services that boost a successful transition back to the community for adult and juvenile offenders. This release outcome report is one tool that measures the effectiveness of New Jersey's reentry initiatives and programs. The success of these agencies is illustrated in our decreasing recidivism rates, as less juveniles are returning to juvenile facilities and less adult offenders are returning to prisons.

## AGENCY MISSION STATEMENTS

### **New Jersey Department of Corrections**

The mission of the New Jersey Department of Corrections is to protect the public by operating safe, secure and humane correctional facilities. The mission is realized through effective supervision, proper classification, appropriate treatment of offenders, and by providing services that promote successful re-entry into society. According to the 2018 budget, the department is responsible for managing nearly \$1 billion and employing approximately 8,000 persons, including more than 5,800 in custody positions, to supervise approximately 20,000 offenders. The DOC is responsible for 13 institutions-eight adult male correctional facilities, three youth correctional facilities, one women's correctional institution and a central reception/intake unit. These facilities collectively house inmates in minimum, medium and maximum security levels. In addition, the department contracts with various Residential Community Release Program centers to provide for the transition of minimum security inmates back into the community.

The Department is committed to providing offenders with structured learning experiences, both academic and social, which will enhance their return to the community as productive citizens. The DOC's goal is to provide the offender with the experiences and skills necessary to enter the job market. Comprehensive academic education and career technical training are important elements to a successful transition into society and the workforce. The department also offers an array of institutional and community-based program opportunities for offenders, including community labor assistance, library (lending and law) services and substance abuse treatment. Other specialized services include victim awareness, chaplaincy services, transitional services, Intensive Supervision Program and ombudsman services, which is one of many options available to offenders to seek redress for problems and complaints.

Additionally, the DOC, acting in conjunction with the New Jersey State Parole Board, provides a continuum of treatment services for offenders as they complete their sentences. Public safety is enhanced through the development, coordination, administration and delivery of these institutional and community-based programs and services.

### **New Jersey State Parole Board**

The New Jersey Parole Act of 1979 grants the New Jersey State Parole Board the authority and responsibility to decide which inmates of the State's and of the counties' correctional institutions shall be granted release on parole and what the conditions of that release will be.

Since 2001, the State Parole Board has been charged with the responsibility of overseeing all of the functions, powers, and duties of the State's 384 sworn parole officers who supervise and monitor parolees. The Parole Act of 1979 created presumptive parole, meaning that when an inmate appears before a Board Panel, the assumption, before anything is said or reviewed, is that the inmate has a legitimate expectation of release upon his or her parole eligibility date. It is important that the Board make appropriate release decisions based on all relevant information. To assist Board members with this important task, they obtain a comprehensive pre-parole package that includes a current

psychological evaluation of the inmate as well as a risk and needs assessment tool (the LSI-R) to determine what degree of supervision and what program placement may be appropriate if release is authorized.

The statute further provides, as to offenses committed on or after August 19, 1997, that an adult inmate shall be paroled unless he or she has failed to cooperate in his or her own rehabilitation or there is a reasonable expectation that the inmate will violate conditions of parole. This statutory standard implements an important objective of parole--namely, to encourage an inmate to avoid institutional disciplinary infractions and for them to participate in institutional programs while incarcerated. Once an offender is granted parole release, the Board then has the continuing responsibility of ascertaining and monitoring compliance with the conditions of supervision that have been earlier established by the Board. If the parolee does not comply with the conditions of supervision, the Board has the lawful authority to issue a warrant for the arrest of that parolee. Following an administrative hearing, a Board Panel may either "revoke" the grant of the offender's parole and return the parolee to prison, or modify the offender's parole conditions.

The Board is committed to a mission of promoting public safety and fostering rehabilitation of offenders by implementing policies that result in effective parole case management. The Board seeks to accomplish this through the administration of an innovative parole system. The parole system in New Jersey addresses the needs of the community, victims, and offenders through responsible decision-making and supervision processes. The implementation of this system results in effective parole case management and serves to attain the important goals of the Board, which are to increase public safety and decrease recidivism while promoting successful offender reintegration.

### **New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission**

The New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) is the state agency responsible for providing juvenile rehabilitation and parole services. Established in 1995 by statute, the JJC serves to coordinate services, planning, and policies affecting delinquent youth throughout the state. From prevention to parole, the JJC is a partner in the entire juvenile justice system, redirecting the lives of young people.

As a partner with communities, the JJC works to identify and address specific issues that face at-risk youth. The JJC awards millions of dollars in state, federal, and private funding each year to communities allowing them to implement programs and services that help at-risk and court-involved youth grow into successful adults. The vast majority of court-involved youth receive the necessary interventions and rehabilitative assistance in their communities and never enter a JJC facility.

For those youth who, as a matter of community safety, require out-of-home placement with the JJC, a comprehensive classification process, which involves in-depth evaluations and assessments, determines each resident's placement in the JJC's continuum of secure-care facilities, residential community homes, and transitional programs, as well as the rehabilitative services each young person receives. Medical needs, education level, mental health diagnosis, history of substance abuse, suicide risk level, and gang

affiliation are also examined and used to guide services. Routine case action planning and reclassification reviews assess progress and inform whether adjustments to placement and programming are warranted.

The JJC also oversees juvenile parole and reentry services, striving to help youth stay on track after they return home. Each youth leaves the JJC with a structured reentry plan that includes goals, required services, and a monitoring schedule. JJC Parole Officers document each parolee's success with these plans and help youth reconnect with their community through education, work, and mentoring.

The JJC has additional significant responsibilities which include: partnering with counties in implementing juvenile justice reforms designed to improve outcomes for young people and communities; coordinating through County Youth Services Commissions the planning and expansion of local services and interventions; establishing standards for county detention facilities and monitoring compliance; overseeing the implementation of education programs in county detention facilities; and in partnership with the Governor's Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Committee, monitoring compliance with the core requirements of the federal JJDP Act.

## REPORT METHODOLOGY

### Adult Sample: Department of Corrections

Sections 1 through 7 of this report examine the subsequent criminal activity of adult offenders released from the completion of a maximum sentence with the DOC or released to supervision by the SPB or the AOC Intensive Supervision Program in 2015; this resulted in the review of criminal activity for a total of 9,017 adults. Unless otherwise noted, all analyses review criminal activity that occurred within three years of release, or 1095 days. Each individual's State Bureau of Identification (SBI) number was used to electronically retrieve information for criminal events that occurred within New Jersey both before and after the 2015 release. This allowed researchers to track all measures of recidivism over the course of the follow-up period.

The adults who are excluded from these analyses are offenders who were arrested outside of New Jersey, offenders without a SBI number, offenders who were deceased within three years of release, and offenders who were released to other agencies (e.g., released to a law enforcement agency in another state, released to a federal law enforcement agency).

Throughout this report, the DOC provides data on multiple levels of criminal activity (i.e., rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration), as well as violations of community supervision. Specifically:

1. Rearrest: Defined as a rearrest on felony charges within three years post-release (i.e., 1095 days) regardless of outcome. The term rearrest includes violations for releases placed on parole or other forms of supervision (e.g., Intensive Supervision Program).
2. Reconviction: Defined as a felony reconviction within three years post-release (i.e., 1095 days). This count is collected regardless of whether or not the offender went on to be readmitted to DOC custody.
3. Reincarceration: Defined as a DOC readmission for a felony conviction within three years post-release (i.e., 1095 days). This count also includes inmates released to any form of community supervision who are reincarcerated for a new offense only.

4. Reincarceration for a community supervision violation: Defined as a DOC readmission for a community supervised offender who returns to a DOC facility within three years of release for any violation of supervision (e.g., dirty urine, curfew infraction). A community supervised offender with both a supervision violation and an arrest for a new crime is classified under the rearrest category only.
5. Reincarceration for a new commitment: Defined as a DOC readmission for any offender due to a new offense. The offender has been arrested, convicted, and incarcerated for an offense for which he/she has not served a sentence previously. The new commitment occurs within three years of release.

In multiple sections, the categorizations of the offense of conviction, or the offense for which they were serving time and released in 2015, were separated consistent with the federal government's crime types, including violent, weapons, property, drugs, and other crimes. "Other" crimes includes offenses that do not fit into the other typologies, such as crimes against the courts (e.g., contempt, failure to appear) and traffic offenses. The category of community supervision violation is also incorporated to capture releases who returned to prison on either a technical parole violation or a violation of another form of supervision (e.g., Intensive Supervision Program, supervision under Megan's Law).

Additional variables are included and analyzed in an effort to determine whether an association with recidivism exists. These variables include but are not limited to release status, release age, time served on sentence, gender, race/ethnicity, marital status, Residential Community Release Program (RCRP) completion, education level, and prior criminal history.

For all analyses of the adult sample, statistical significance is determined when the significance of  $\alpha$  is found to be .05 or lower, indicating a 5% risk or less of concluding that a difference between groups exists when there is no actual difference.

### **Juvenile Sample: Juvenile Justice Commission**

Section 8 of this report examines the release of youth offenders (n=336) from the JJC in 2015. For the JJC analysis, the measures and definitions of recidivism were consistent with the work of the National Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators (CJCA). Recidivism was defined as "a new offense that would be a crime if perpetrated by an adult, committed by a previously-adjudicated youth who has been released from a program or returned to the community." Measurement of recidivism refers to the type(s) of data used to identify an individual as a recidivist or non-recidivist. While there are various ways that recidivism can be measured, the present study focused on three measures. The three primary measures of recidivism considered in the study address three distinct questions.

1. Do youth have a subsequent delinquency court filing or adult arrest for a new offense?
2. Do youth have a subsequent adjudication or conviction for a new offense?
3. Do youth experience a subsequent commitment to the JJC or to the New Jersey Department of Corrections for a new offense?

The three measures, therefore, are identified as:

1. New court filing/arrest (regardless of whether it results in an adjudication of delinquency or conviction as an adult)
2. New adjudication/conviction
3. New commitment to the JJC or NJDOC

The date recorded for the recidivism event was the available date most closely representing when the juvenile committed (or allegedly committed) the new offense. The study used this offense date to determine whether a given recidivism event occurred within three, six, 12, 24, or 36 months. The JJC's Information Technology Unit provided a database, based on its Juvenile Information Management System (JIMS), containing youths' names and relevant information to identify youth released from JJC custody during 2015. For each of the releases initially identified, an additional search was conducted with the assistance of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). The AOC provided recidivism-related data from its Family Automated Case Tracking System database. After matching these data, JJC staff conducted case look ups for recidivism-related data from the State Police Criminal Case History database.

Note that the average age at release for youth in the study was 18.2 years. As a result, and as suggested by the three questions noted above, the study reviewed both juvenile and adult records for youth in the study in order to assess recidivism.

# SECTION 1: RECIDIVISM TRENDS

There were 9,017 inmates released from DOC facilities in 2015. The number of DOC releases has steadily declined since 2007. As displayed in Table 1, the number of inmates released annually decreased 28.5% between 2007 and 2015. The 3-year rates of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration declined between 2007 and 2015. Approximately 30% of all inmates released in 2015 were reincarcerated within three years. This represents one of the lowest reincarceration rates of the past decade (Table 1 and Figure 1).

Year of Release	Total Releases	Rearrested Within 3 Years	Reconvicted Within 3 Years	Reincarcerated Within 3 Years
2007	12,617	56.7%	44.5%	37.0%
2008	12,989	54.3%	41.9%	34.8%
2009	11,895	53.1%	38.8%	32.4%
2010	11,388	56.8%	45.4%	34.9%
2011	10,835	52.7%	39.8%	31.3%
2012	9,934	53.3%	40.1%	31.3%
2013	9,669	52.3%	38.2%	29.8%
2014	9,109	51.2%	38.0%	30.5%
2015	9,017	51.4%	38.4%	30.4%

**Recidivism Decreases:  
2007-2015**

Rearrest ↓ 9.3%  
Reconviction ↓ 13.7%  
Reincarceration ↓ 17.8%

TABLE 1. RELEASE COUNTS AND RECIDIVISM PERCENTAGES

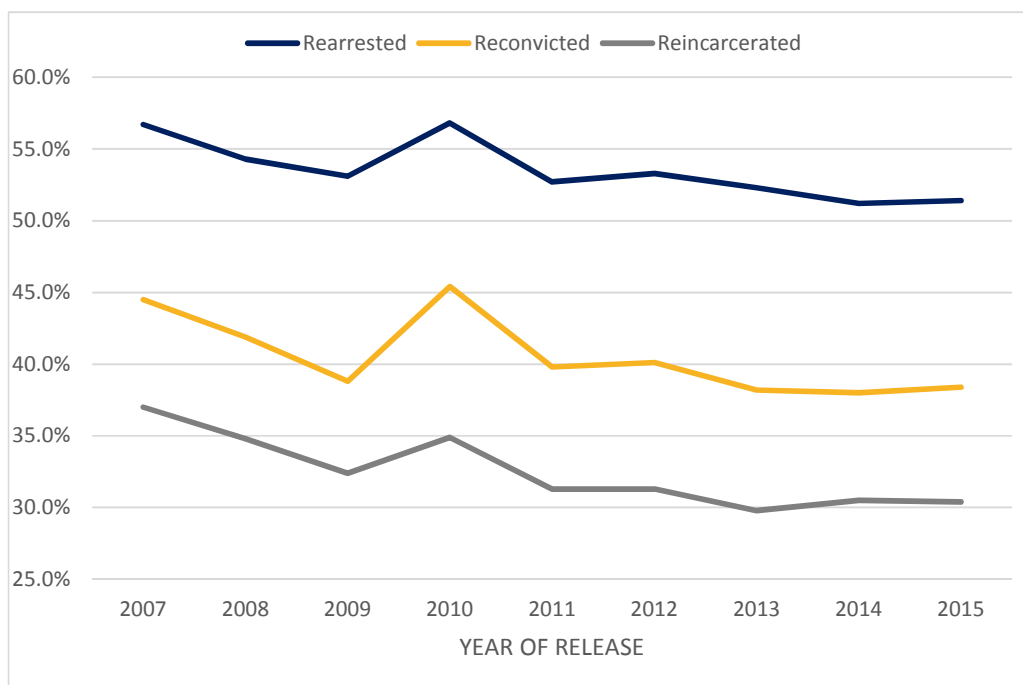


FIGURE 1. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES



SECTION 1: RECIDIVISM TRENDS

Further analysis of reincarcerations was completed for the 2010-2015 release cohorts (Table 2). For the 2015 release cohort, 30.6% of readmissions to a DOC facility over a three-year period were the result of a new commitment and 58.6% were due to technical parole violations (TPVs). Commitments for new offenses decreased 25.2% between 2010 and 2015 while readmissions for TPVs increased 54.8%.<sup>1</sup>

Year of Release	Number of Releases Reincarcerated	Type of Reincarceration	
		Technical Parole Violations	Commitments for New Offenses
2010	3642	35.6%	40.9%
2011	3392	54.5%	40.2%
2012	3114	54.0%	36.1%
2013	2884	53.4%	33.1%
2014	2777	55.9%	34.2%
2015	2741	58.6%	30.6%

TABLE 2. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES FOR TPVS AND NEW COMMITMENTS

For those who recidivated, rearrests and reincarcerations post-release typically occurred within the first year of follow-up (Table 3). In contrast, reconvictions occurred most frequently in the second year of release.

	≤ 6 Months	≤ 1 Year	≤ 2 Years	≤ 3 Years
Rearrested	28.0%	52.7%	82.7%	100.0%
Reconvicted	13.0%	32.5%	71.7%	100.0%
Reincarcerated	28.5%	51.8%	81.1%	100.0%

TABLE 3. RECIDIVISM PERCENTAGES FOR 2015 RELEASE COHORT OCCURRING BY TIME INTERVAL

Readmissions to DOC facilities for the 2015 cohort peaked at 4 months post-release. By the first year of follow-up, 1,403 releases (or 15.6% of the entire release cohort) was reincarcerated. Said another way, nearly 52% of all releases who were reincarcerated in the follow-up period were readmitted to a DOC facility within the first year of release. (Figure 2)

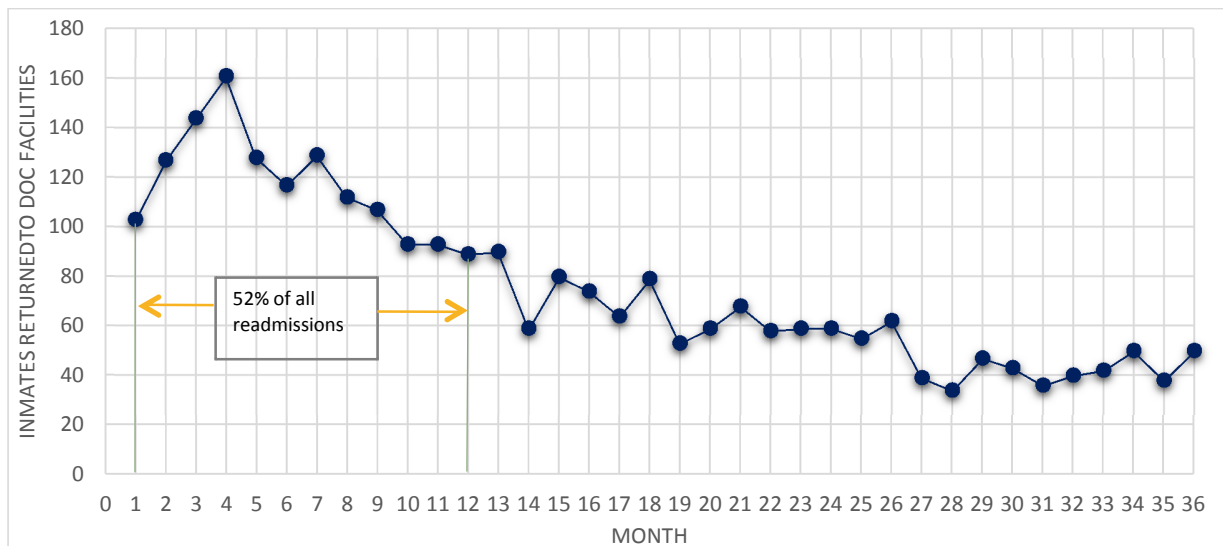


FIGURE 2. MONTHLY COUNTS OF INMATES RETURNED TO DOC FACILITIES WITHIN 3-YEARS

<sup>1</sup> Annual totals will not sum to 100%. Reincarcerations can occur for reasons outside of a TPV or new commitment.

## SECTION 2: COUNTY OF COMMITMENT

This section details the recidivism levels of the 2015 release cohort by the county from which inmates were committed. Please note that NJDOC does not track the county of release.

Committed County	Inmates Released	Percent of Release Cohort
Atlantic	679	7.5%
Bergen	347	3.8%
Burlington	319	3.5%
Camden	1235	13.7%
Cape May	318	3.5%
Cumberland	239	2.7%
Essex	1088	12.1%
Gloucester	213	2.4%
Hudson	590	6.5%
Hunterdon	72	0.8%
Mercer	517	5.7%
Middlesex	780	8.7%
Monmouth	463	5.1%
Morris	125	1.4%
Ocean	357	4.0%
Passaic	564	6.3%
Salem	96	1.1%
Somerset	154	1.7%
Sussex	70	0.8%
Union	701	7.8%
Warren	80	0.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9017</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



### Top 5 Counties of Commitment

1. CAMDEN
2. ESSEX
3. MIDDLESEX
4. UNION
5. ATLANTIC

TABLE 4. COUNTY OF COMMITMENT FOR 2015 RELEASES

The majority of released inmates were committed from Camden and Essex Counties (Table 4). Nearly 14% of the entire release cohort was committed from Camden County. Essex County was the next highest at 12%. Overall, the top 5 counties of commitment encompassed approximately 50% of all releases.

SECTION 2: COUNTY OF COMMITMENT

TABLE 5. OFFENSE OF CONVICTION BY COUNTY OF COMMITMENT FOR 2015 RELEASES

Committed County	Offense of Conviction												
	2015 Releases	Violent		Weapons		Property		Drugs		Other		CSV	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Atlantic	679	147	21.6	77	11.3	105	15.5	173	25.5	31	4.6	143	21.1
Bergen	347	94	27.1	23	6.6	82	23.6	82	23.6	19	5.5	46	13.3
Burlington	319	77	24.1	25	7.8	96	30.1	34	10.7	22	6.9	62	19.4
Camden	1235	260	21.1	182	14.7	148	12.0	291	23.6	83	6.7	262	21.2
Cape May	318	41	12.9	9	2.8	74	23.3	99	31.1	22	6.9	72	22.6
Cumberland	239	43	18.0	32	13.4	42	17.6	47	19.7	22	9.2	51	21.3
Essex	1088	284	26.1	177	16.3	124	11.4	200	18.4	83	7.6	215	19.8
Gloucester	213	55	25.8	10	4.7	52	24.4	37	17.4	21	9.9	38	17.8
Hudson	590	170	28.8	71	12.0	66	11.2	126	21.4	24	4.1	130	22.0
Hunterdon	72	12	16.7	2	2.8	18	25.0	15	20.8	8	11.1	17	23.6
Mercer	517	96	18.6	79	15.3	94	18.2	114	22.1	27	5.2	105	20.3
Middlesex	780	181	23.2	56	7.2	162	20.8	205	26.3	45	5.8	128	16.4
Monmouth	463	94	20.3	46	9.9	80	17.3	133	28.7	20	4.3	89	19.2
Morris	125	33	26.4	14	11.2	17	13.6	24	19.2	14	11.2	21	16.8
Ocean	357	102	28.6	21	5.9	63	17.6	82	23.0	20	5.6	69	19.3
Passaic	564	178	31.6	79	14.0	43	7.6	132	23.4	15	2.7	114	20.2
Salem	96	18	18.8	19	19.8	20	20.8	16	16.7	6	6.3	17	17.7
Somerset	154	37	24.0	10	6.5	25	16.2	33	21.4	12	7.8	36	23.4
Sussex	70	9	12.9	4	5.7	17	24.3	19	27.1	4	5.7	17	24.3
Union	701	177	25.2	88	12.6	86	12.3	197	28.1	31	4.4	119	17.0
Warren	80	17	21.3	1	1.3	18	22.5	18	22.5	5	6.3	21	26.3

TABLE 6. OFFENSE OF CONVICTION BY COUNTY OF COMMITMENT: TOP COUNTIES

The county of commitment was further analyzed in terms of the offense of conviction. Those counties with the highest *number* of inmates in each offense category were not the same as those counties with the highest *proportion* of inmates in each category.

Offense of Conviction	Top County By Raw Count	Top County by Proportion
<i>Violent</i>	Essex	Passaic
<i>Weapons</i>	Camden	Salem
<i>Property</i>	Middlesex	Burlington
<i>Drugs</i>	Camden	Cape May
<i>Other</i>	Camden/Essex (Tie)	Morris
<i>CSV</i>	Camden	Warren

SECTION 2: COUNTY OF COMMITMENT

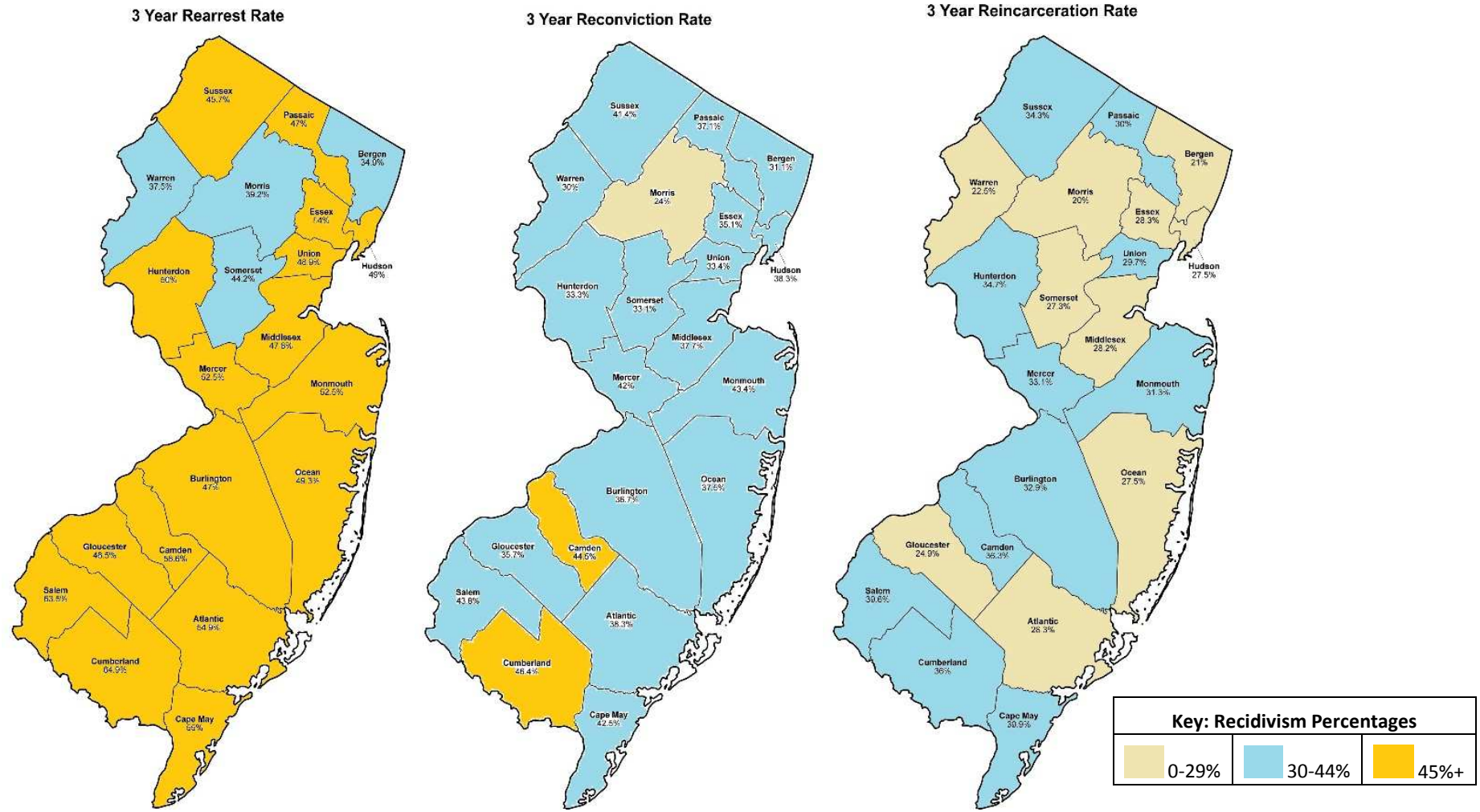
Table 7 below details the 3-year recidivism rate outcomes for each county in New Jersey. It should be noted that those counties with the highest *number* of returning inmates were not the same as those counties with the highest *proportion* of returning inmates. The highest sending counties of releases are ranked below.

TABLE 7. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY COUNTY OF COMMITMENT FOR 2015 RELEASES

Committed County	2015 Releases	Rearrest		Reconviction		Reincarceration	
		Raw Count	Percentage	Raw Count	Percentage	Raw Count	Percentage
Atlantic	679	373	54.9%	260	38.3%	192	28.3%
Bergen	347	121	34.9%	108	31.1%	73	21.0%
Burlington	319	150	47.0%	117	36.7%	105	32.9%
Camden	1235	724	58.6%	550	44.5%	448	36.3%
Cape May	318	175	55.0%	135	42.5%	127	39.9%
Cumberland	239	155	64.9%	111	46.4%	86	36.0%
Essex	1088	588	54.0%	382	35.1%	308	28.3%
Gloucester	213	99	46.5%	76	35.7%	53	24.9%
Hudson	590	289	49.0%	226	38.3%	162	27.5%
Hunterdon	72	36	50.0%	24	33.3%	25	34.7%
Mercer	517	284	54.9%	217	42.0%	171	33.1%
Middlesex	780	373	47.8%	294	37.7%	220	28.2%
Monmouth	463	243	52.5%	201	43.4%	145	31.3%
Morris	125	49	39.2%	30	24.0%	25	20.0%
Ocean	357	176	49.3%	134	37.5%	98	27.5%
Passaic	564	265	47.0%	209	37.1%	169	30.0%
Salem	96	61	63.5%	42	43.8%	38	39.6%
Somerset	154	68	44.2%	51	33.1%	42	27.3%
Sussex	70	32	45.7%	29	41.4%	24	34.3%
Union	701	343	48.9%	234	33.4%	208	29.7%
Warren	80	30	37.5%	24	30.0%	18	22.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9017</b>	<b>4639</b>	<b>51.4%</b>	<b>3459</b>	<b>38.4%</b>	<b>2741</b>	<b>30.4%</b>

Rearrest		Reconviction		Reincarceration	
Top 3 Counties by Raw Count	Top 3 Counties by Proportion	Top 3 Counties by Raw Count	Top 3 Counties by Proportion	Top 3 Counties by Raw Count	Top 3 Counties by Proportion
1. Camden 2. Essex 3. Atlantic	1. Cumberland 2. Salem 3. Camden	1. Camden 2. Essex 3. Middlesex	1. Cumberland 2. Camden 3. Salem	1. Camden 2. Essex 3. Middlesex	1. Cape May 2. Salem 3. Camden

Recidivism rate proportions are also illustrated in Maps 1, 2, and 3.



MAP 1. 3-YEAR REARREST RATES BY COUNTY OF COMMITMENT

MAP 2. 3-YEAR RECONVICTION RATES BY COUNTY OF COMMITMENT

MAP 3. 3-YEAR REINCARCERATION RATES BY COUNTY OF COMMITMENT

## SECTION 3: RELEASE COHORT DEMOGRAPHICS

This section will provide a detailed description of the offenders released from DOC facilities in 2015. Unless otherwise noted, analyses include the full release cohort (N=9,017).

### Descriptives

TABLE 8. 2015 RELEASE COHORT DEMOGRAPHICS

	N	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
<i>Male</i>	8368	92.8%
<i>Female</i>	649	7.2%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
<i>White</i>	2613	29.1%
<i>Black</i>	4978	55.4%
<i>Hispanic</i>	1346	15.0%
<i>Other</i>	55	0.6%
<b>Marital Status</b>		
<i>Single</i>	6407	82.3%
<i>Other</i>	1377	17.6%
<b>Education Level</b>		
<i>Some schooling</i>	2427	27.6%
<i>HS graduate/HSE degree</i>	5541	63.1%
<i>Any college and beyond</i>	817	9.3%
<b>Age at Release</b>		
<i>Under 21</i>	99	1.1%
<i>21-29</i>	3105	34.4%
<i>30-39</i>	2898	32.1%
<i>40-49</i>	1830	20.3%
<i>50-59</i>	886	9.8%
<i>60 and above</i>	199	2.2%
	<b>Mean (sd), Range</b>	
<b>Age at Release (years)</b>	35.6 (10.5), 18-87	

Male releases represented 92.8% of the total 2015 release cohort. Six hundred forty-nine female inmates were released in 2015.

Race/ethnicity is a self-reported descriptive. The majority of releases self-identified as black/African American, followed by white/Caucasian and Hispanic.

Most of the 2015 releases were single. Less than 20% presented as being married, divorced, separated, or widowed.

Approximately 72% of releases had at least a HS degree or high school equivalency (HSE) at release. Of these, 9% reported having some college education.

The average inmate at release was approximately 36 years old. Age at release ranged from 18 to 87. Nearly 36% of the sample was under the age of 30 and 32% were between the ages of 30 and 39. Releases over the age of 50 accounted for only 12% of all releases.

Note: Counts may not sum to the cohort total (N=9017) and percentages may not sum to 100% due to missing information.

## Recidivism

Male releases were rearrested, reconvicted, and reincarcerated at higher rates than their female counterparts post-release.<sup>1</sup> Female releases were 23%, 29%, and 26% less likely to be rearrested, reconvicted, and reincarcerated within three years of release, respectively.

FIGURE 3. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY GENDER

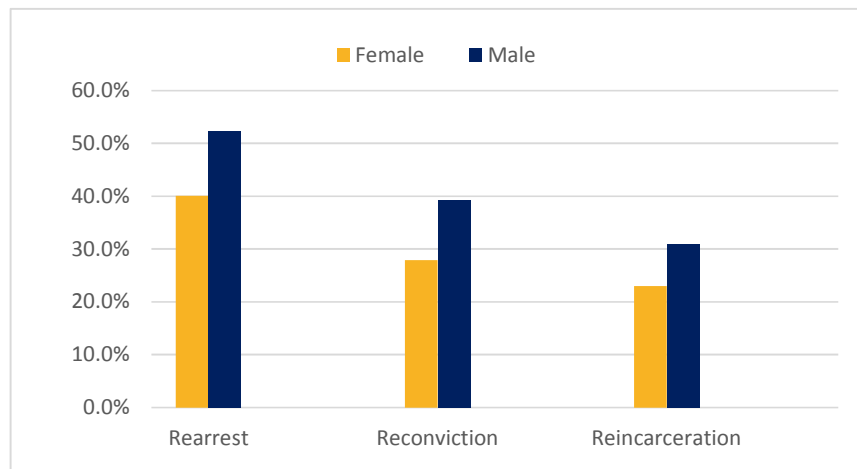
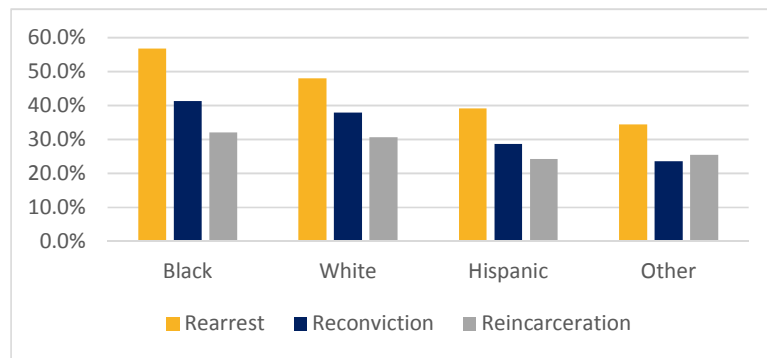


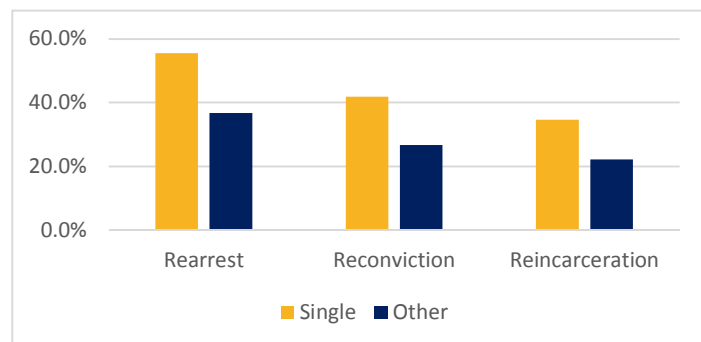
FIGURE 4. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY RACE/ETHNICITY



Releases who self-identified as black/African-American were rearrested, reconvicted, and reincarcerated at significantly higher rates than white/Caucasian, Hispanic, and other race/ethnicity releases in the three year follow-up period.<sup>2</sup>

Releases who self-reported a marital status of single were more likely to reoffend post-release on all measures of recidivism.<sup>3</sup> Single releases were 51% more likely to have a rearrest and 57% more likely to have either a reconviction or reincarceration than non-single releases.

FIGURE 5. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY MARITAL STATUS



<sup>1</sup> These differences were statistically significant. (Rearrest:  $\chi^2=37.39$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reconviction:  $\chi^2=33.08$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reincarceration:  $\chi^2=18.75$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

<sup>2</sup> These differences were statistically significant. (Rearrest:  $\chi^2=286.89$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reconviction:  $\chi^2=212.03$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reincarceration:  $\chi^2=200.99$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

<sup>3</sup> These differences were statistically significant. (Rearrest:  $\chi^2=161.29$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reconviction:  $\chi^2=109.39$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reincarceration:  $\chi^2=80.22$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

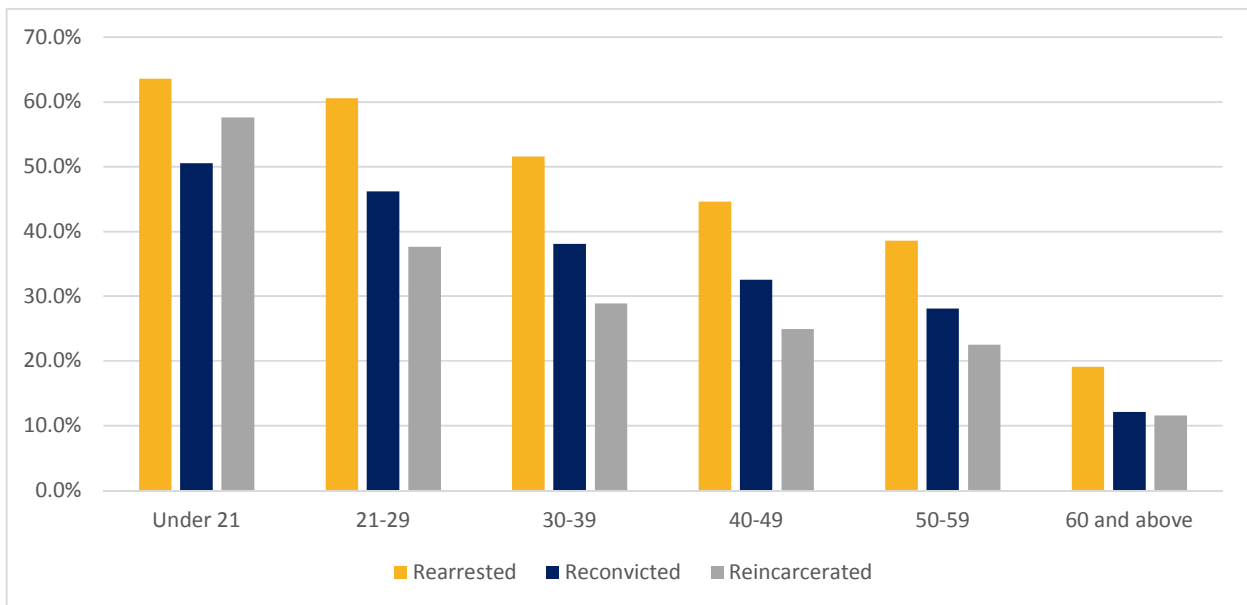
Recidivism by education level was analyzed (Table 9). Releases without a high school degree had higher rates of rearrest and reconviction than releases with a high school degree and above.<sup>4</sup> Reincarceration rates three years post-release were found to be similar among all three education groupings.

	<i>Rearrested</i>	<i>Reconvicted</i>	<i>Reincarcerated</i>
<i>Some schooling</i>	55.7%	42.6%	30.3%
<i>HS graduate/HSE degree</i>	52.1%	38.7%	31.6%
<i>Any college and beyond</i>	42.2%	29.5%	29.3%

TABLE 9. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY EDUCATION LEVEL

Because of the known association between criminality and age,<sup>5</sup> recidivism was analyzed in terms of release age grouping (Figure 6, below). Of the groups, inmates who were under the age of 21 at release had the highest rates of recidivism within three years.<sup>6</sup> Releases aged 21-29 had the second highest rates of recidivism post release. Each age group thereafter decreased in recidivism rates. These results follow the typical age-crime curve (see Footnote 5).

FIGURE 6. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY RELEASE AGE GROUPING



<sup>4</sup> These differences were statistically significant. (Rearrest:  $\chi^2=44.54$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reconviction:  $\chi^2=44.14$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

<sup>5</sup> For example, Hirschi, T., & Gottfredson, M. (1983). Age and the explanation of crime. *American Journal of Sociology*, 89(3), 552-584; Farrington, D. P. (1986). Age and crime. *Crime and Justice*, 7, 189-250.

<sup>6</sup> These differences were statistically significant. (Rearrest:  $\chi^2=286.89$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reconviction:  $\chi^2=212.03$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reincarceration:  $\chi^2=200.99$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.000$ ).



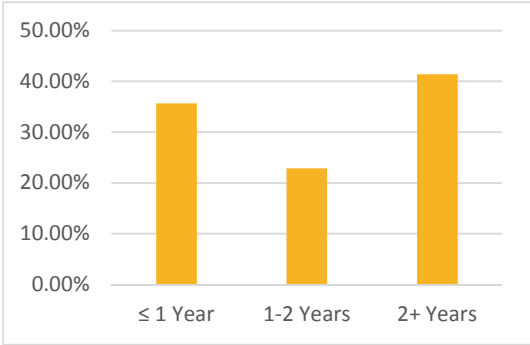
# SECTION 4: CRIMINAL HISTORY, INCARCERTION STAY, AND RELEASE STATUS

This section details the criminal histories of the 2015 releases as well as information pertaining to their stays of incarceration and supervision post-release. Recidivism rates based on these metrics are analyzed. Unless otherwise noted all analyses include the full release cohort (N=9,017).

### Descriptives

Inmates in the 2015 release cohort served an average of 2.4 years before being released (median= 1.6 years; *sd*=3.2 years). Despite this average length, the majority of inmates served less than two years (Figure 7).

FIGURE 7. TIME SERVED



Most releases were placed on supervision (61.6%) while a little under 40% completed their term with no time owed (i.e., released without supervision). Approximately 52% of the 2015 release cohort served a mandatory minimum term (MMT). In New Jersey, inmates with a MMT must serve the mandatory minimum portion of their sentence before becoming eligible for parole. This

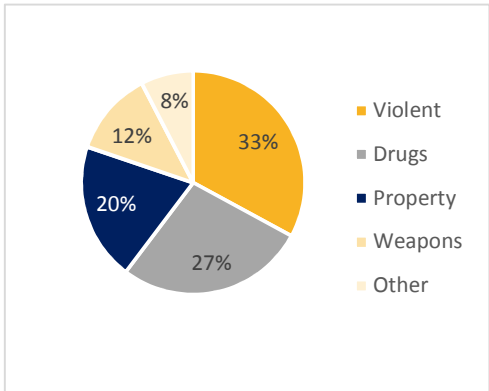
calculation does not include earned credits for commutation, minimum security, or work.<sup>1</sup> Only 13% of the 2015 release cohort was sentenced to serve a mandatory term under the No Early Release Act (NERA). Under NERA, inmates who are convicted of certain types of 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> degree crimes must serve at least 85% of their sentence before reaching parole eligibility. No Early Release Act terms are a form of MMTs.

The majority of 2015 inmates were released following time served for a violent offense (33%). The second highest offense of conviction was a drug offense (27%). Property, weapons, and “other” offenses comprised 40% of the sample.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE 10. SENTENCE DESCRIPTIVES FOR 2015 RELEASE COHORT

	N	Percentage
Total Inmates with a MMT	4669	51.8%
Sentenced Under NERA	1172	13.0%
Total Released	9017	
Unsupervised Releases	3466	38.4%
Supervised Releases	5551	61.6%
Average Prison Time Served	2.4 years	

FIGURE 8. OFFENSE OF CONVICTION CATEGORY



<sup>1</sup> For more information please see <https://www.state.nj.us/corrections/pages/FAQ.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Other offenses include but are not limited to administrative crimes (e.g., escape, official misconduct, hindering apprehension) and public order crimes (e.g., riot, violation of public health and safety), among others.

SECTION 4: CRIMINAL HISTORY, INCARCERATION STAY, AND RELEASE STATUS

Many releases in 2015 were not first-time offenders. The average released inmate had one prior DOC admission and only 46% of inmates were released after a first stay of incarceration (Figure 9). Released inmates, on average, also had eight prior arrests on record and nearly five prior convictions (Table 11).

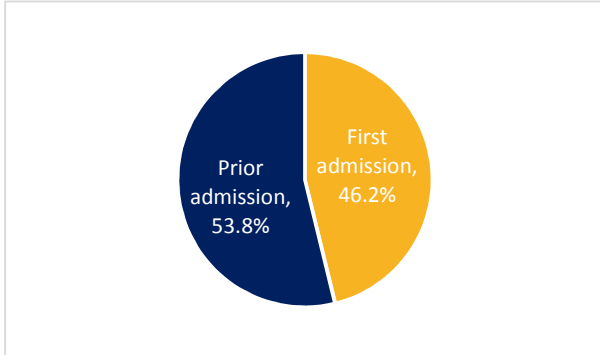


FIGURE 9. PRIOR ADMISSIONS PERCENTAGE

TABLE 11. CRIMINAL HISTORY DESCRIPTIVES

	Mean	Median	Percent of Release Cohort
Prior Arrests	7.6	6.0	89.4
Prior Convictions	4.5	3.0	81.9
Prior Admissions	1.3	1.0	53.8

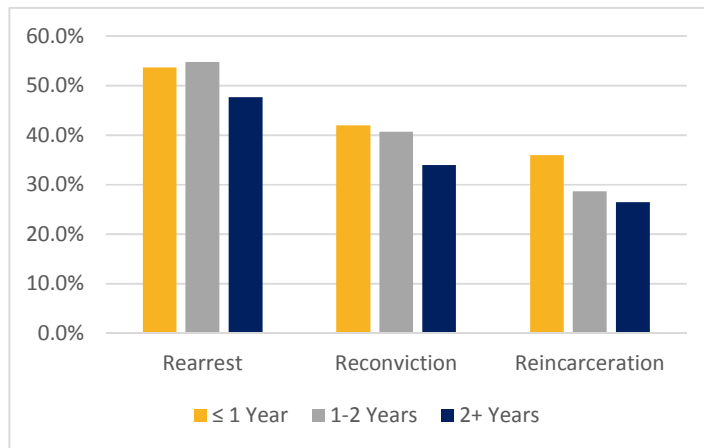
Recidivism

Correlates of recidivism were examined. Specifically, sentence length, MMTs, NERA sentences, offense of conviction categories, and supervision post-release were analyzed.

Sentence Length

Inmates who served more than 2 years of incarceration had the lowest recidivism rates in the 3-year follow-up period post release (rearrest: 47.7%, reconviction: 34.0%; reincarceration: 26.5%).<sup>3</sup> In contrast, inmates who served between 1 and 2 years had the highest rate of rearrest (54.8%). Inmates who served one year or less had the highest rates of both reconviction (42.0%) and reincarceration (36.0%).

FIGURE 10. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY SENTENCE LENGTH



<sup>3</sup> These differences were statistically significant. (Rearrest:  $\chi^2=37.32$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.000$ ); Reconviction:  $\chi^2=53.14$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reincarceration:  $\chi^2=76.61$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

SECTION 4: CRIMINAL HISTORY, INCARCERATION STAY, AND RELEASE STATUS

Special Sentences: MMTs and NERA

**Releases with MMTs**  
*Rearrest: 48.4%*  
*Reconviction: 34.8%*  
*Reincarceration: 29.5%*

Inmates who served a MMT of incarceration had slightly lower rates of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration than the 2015 release cohort as a whole (Figure 11).

FIGURE 11. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES FOR INMATES WITH MMTs

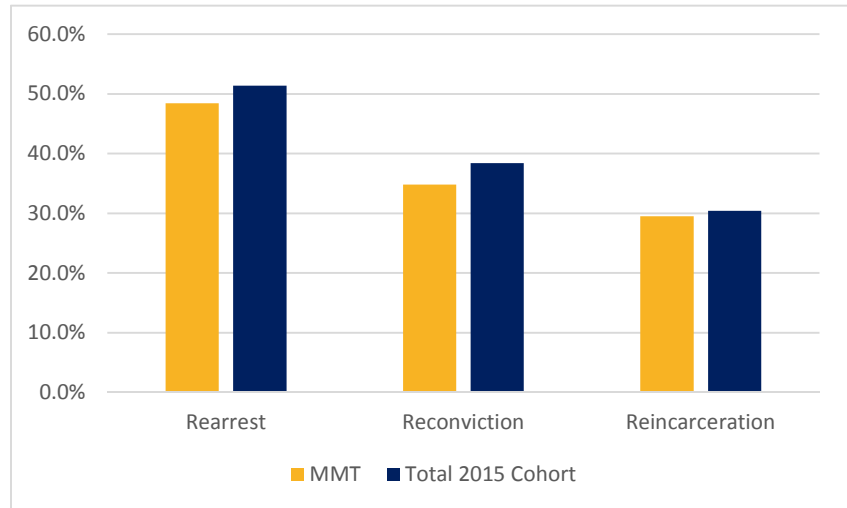
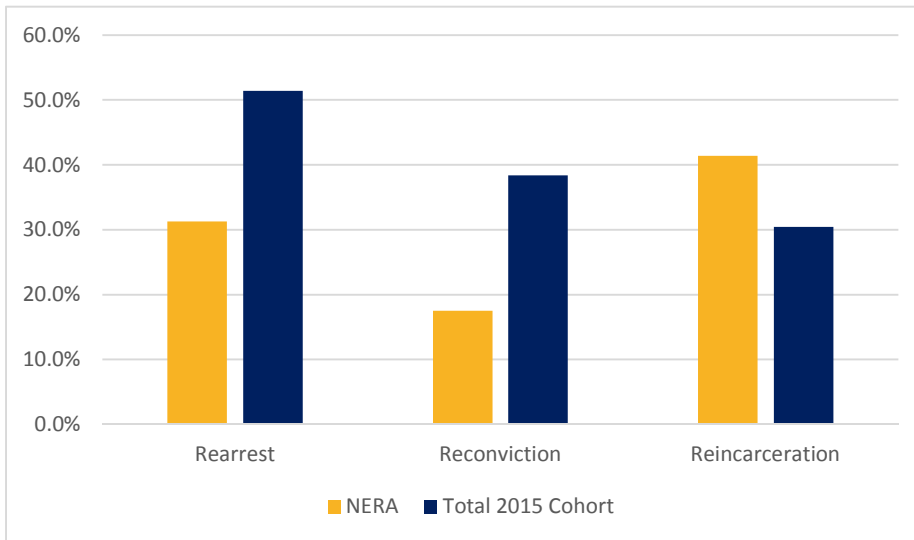


FIGURE 12. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES FOR INMATES WITH A NERA SENTENCE



**NERA Releases**  
*Rearrest: 31.3%*  
*Reconviction: 17.5%*  
*Reincarceration: 41.4%*

Inmates serving a sentence under NERA had lower rates of rearrest (31.3%) and reconviction (17.5%) than the 2015 release cohort (Figure 12), but a higher rate of reincarceration (41.4%). Under New Jersey law, offenders sentenced under NERA are mandated to a term of parole supervision upon release.

*Offense of Conviction*

Recidivism rates by offense of conviction were reviewed (Table 12). Inmates who were serving a sentence for a community supervision violation (CSV) and were released in 2015 consistently had the highest rates of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration in the 3-year follow-up period. Inmates who were released after serving a sentence for a violent offense had the lowest rates of rearrest and reconviction. Inmates who served a sentence for a weapons offense had the lowest rates of reincarceration.<sup>4</sup>

TABLE 12. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY OFFENSE OF CONVICTION

	Rearrest	Reconviction	Reincarceration
<b>Violent</b>	41.9%	28.6%	34.4%
<b>Weapons</b>	58.1%	43.1%	22.5%
<b>Property</b>	58.4%	48.0%	32.4%
<b>Drugs</b>	53.2%	39.7%	28.1%
<b>Other</b>	56.8%	41.8%	26.9%
<b>CSV</b>	72.0%	60.0%	54.0%

For those releases who were reincarcerated within three years, the offense of reincarceration was analyzed according to the original offense of conviction. Table 13 displays these results. In all offense of conviction categories, inmates who returned to DOC custody

Reincarceration Offense	Offense of Conviction					
	Violent	Weapons	Property	Drugs	Other	CSV
<i>Violent</i>	5.6%	13.8%	6.0%	4.2%	11.6%	3.7%
<i>Weapons</i>	2.9%	19.9%	2.1%	3.7%	4.7%	3.7%
<i>Property</i>	2.2%	0.4%	16.2%	1.7%	9.9%	0.0%
<i>Drugs</i>	2.5%	17.1%	4.3%	15.4%	4.1%	0.0%
<i>Other</i>	1.4%	4.1%	1.9%	3.0%	6.4%	25.9%
<i>CSV</i>	85.2%	44.7%	69.3%	72.0%	63.4%	59.3%

TABLE 13. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY OFFENSE OF CONVICTION &amp; REINCARCERATION OFFENSE

were most likely to return for a CSV.<sup>5</sup> The second highest reincarceration category was typically the same category as the offense of conviction. For example, 2015 releases who served a sentence for a violent offense were second-most likely to return to custody for a new violent offense. The same pattern is found for weapons, property, and drug offenders. The only exception to this was inmates convicted of “other” crimes; these inmates were most likely to return for violent offenses after CSVs.<sup>6</sup>

*Prior Admissions*

As noted earlier, most inmates who were released in 2015 were already recidivists in that they had prior DOC stays on record (i.e. 53.8%). Recidivism rates for this group can be viewed in Figure 13. First-time releases were significantly less likely to reoffend within three years post-release compared to those

<sup>4</sup> Differences in recidivism rates by offense of conviction were statistically significant. (Rearrest:  $\chi^2=180.85$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.000$ ); Reconviction:  $\chi^2=214.94$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reincarceration:  $\chi^2=81.23$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

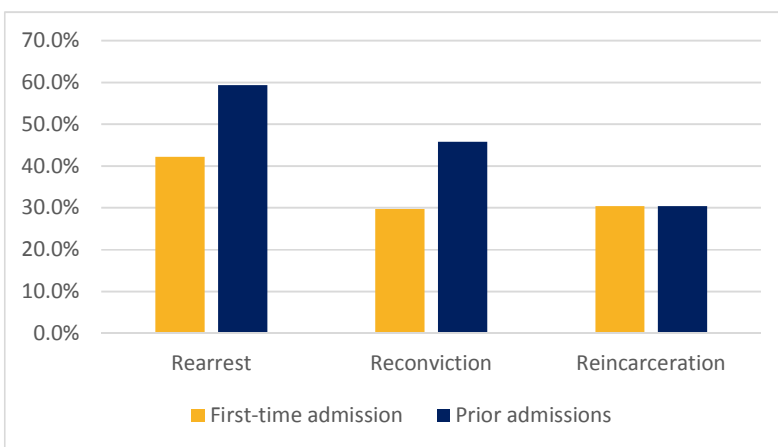
<sup>5</sup> These differences were statistically significant. ( $\chi^2=697.46$ ,  $df=30$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

<sup>6</sup> Other offenses include but are not limited to administrative crimes (e.g., escape, official misconduct, hindering apprehension) and public order crimes (e.g., riot, violation of public health and safety), among others.

SECTION 4: CRIMINAL HISTORY, INCARCERATION STAY, AND RELEASE STATUS

inmates who had multiple DOC stays of incarceration on record.<sup>7</sup> First timers were 28.9% less likely to be rearrested and 35.2% less likely to be reconvicted. There were no differences between first timers and recidivists in terms of reincarceration; both groups were reincarcerated at a rate of 30.4%. These results highlight the “revolving door” nature of corrections that impacts some inmates in particular.<sup>8</sup>

FIGURE 13. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BASED ON NUMBER OF PRIOR ADMISSIONS



Post-Release Supervision

Overall, most inmates who returned to DOC custody within three years were readmitted due to a CSV (Figure 14). Community supervision violations include technical parole violations (TPVs), violations of probation supervision, and juvenile post-incarceration violations. This is not surprising given that the majority of releases were released to parole supervision (i.e., 61.5%).

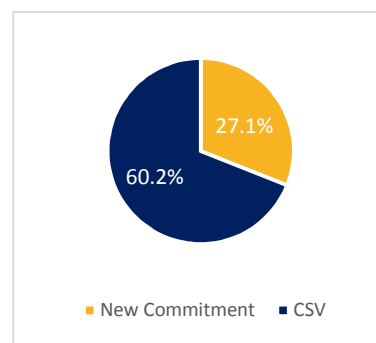


FIGURE 14. READMISSION REASON FOR RELEASES WHO RETURNED WITHIN THREE YEARS

The specific rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration rates for releases who were and were not supervised post-release are available to view in Table 14. Unsupervised releases were 44.6% more likely to be rearrested and 69.0% more likely to be reconvicted than supervised releases. However, unsupervised releases were 56.8% less likely to be reincarcerated. Nearly 40% of all supervised releases were reincarcerated within three years of release compared to 17% of unsupervised releases.<sup>9</sup>

Trends of 3-year recidivism rates by release status are also displayed in Table 14. Over the six release cohorts, supervised releases had decreases in the rates of rearrest and reconviction, but an increase in the rate of reincarceration. Unsupervised releases experienced decreases in the rates of reconviction and reincarceration, but a slight increase in the rate of rearrest. These results are also displayed graphically in Figure 15.

<sup>7</sup> These differences were statistically significant. (Rearrest:  $\chi^2=267.20$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ ); Reconviction:  $\chi^2=245.89$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

<sup>8</sup> Pew Center on the States. (2011). State of recidivism: The revolving door of America’s prisons. Washington, DC: Pew Charitable Trusts.

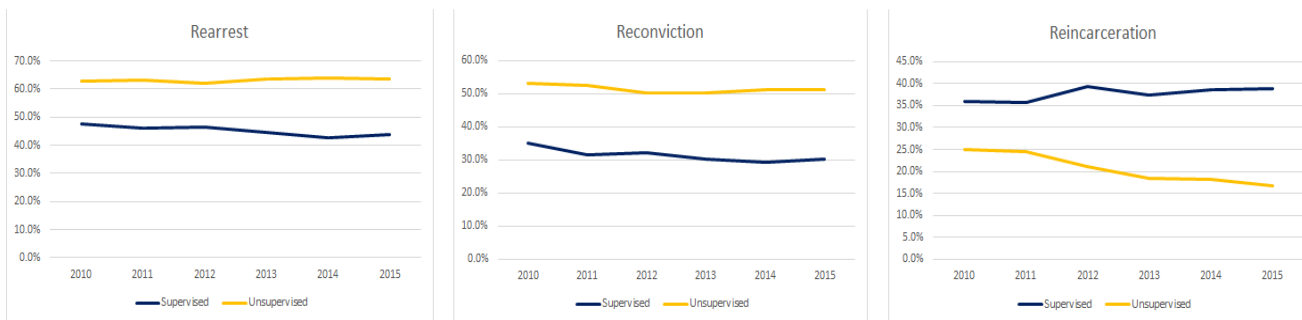
<sup>9</sup> These differences were statistically significant. (Rearrest:  $\chi^2=326.00$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ ); Reconviction:  $\chi^2=393.23$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reincarceration:  $\chi^2=488.48$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

SECTION 4: CRIMINAL HISTORY, INCARCERATION STAY, AND RELEASE STATUS

TABLE 14. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY RELEASE STATUS: TRENDS FROM 2010 TO 2015

	Rearrest		Reconviction		Reincarceration	
	Supervised	Unsupervised	Supervised	Unsupervised	Supervised	Unsupervised
2010	47.6%	63.0%	35.0%	53.0%	36.0%	25.0%
2011	46.0%	63.1%	31.5%	52.5%	35.8%	24.4%
2012	46.6%	62.1%	32.2%	50.3%	39.3%	21.1%
2013	44.8%	63.5%	30.1%	50.2%	37.5%	18.4%
2014	42.7%	63.8%	29.2%	51.1%	38.7%	18.3%
2015	43.9%	63.5%	30.3%	51.2%	38.9%	16.8%
<b>Δ</b>	<b>-7.8%</b>	<b>+0.8%</b>	<b>-13.4%</b>	<b>-3.4%</b>	<b>+8.1%</b>	<b>-32.8%</b>

FIGURE 15. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY RELEASE STATUS: TRENDS FROM 2010 TO 2015



## SECTION 5: RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY RELEASE PROGRAMS

In calendar year 2015, NJDOC contracted with 15 Residential Community Release Program (RCRP) facilities to serve inmates transitioning from DOC custody to community corrections before being released in the community. RCRPs serve both male and female inmates. Two of the contracted RCRPs were assessment and treatment centers, one was a program for special needs inmates in transition, four were houses with a work release program, and the remaining eight houses utilized drug treatment with a work release component. A listing of the RCRPs can be found below.

TABLE 15. LIST OF 2015 NJDOC CONTRACTED RCRPS

Name	Type of RCRP
Clinton House	Work Release RCRP
Urban Renewal Corporation 1	Work Release RCRP
Urban Renewal Corporation 2	Work Release RCRP
Fletcher House	Work Release RCRP
Comunidad Unida Para Rehabilitación de Adictos (CURA)	Drug Treatment RCRP
The Harbor	Drug Treatment RCRP
Tully House	Drug Treatment RCRP
Kintock-Newark	Drug Treatment RCRP
Kintock-Bridgeton	Drug Treatment RCRP
Fenwick House	Drug Treatment RCRP
Garrett House	Drug Treatment RCRP
Hope Hall	Drug Treatment RCRP
Columbus House	Special Needs (Other)
Talbot Hall	Assessment Center (Other)
Albert M. "Bo" Robinson	Assessment Center (Other)

### Descriptives

There are a limited number of beds available in the RCRPs. As a result, only 35% of the full 2015 release cohort attended a RCRP and 26% of all releases completed a RCRP. Eighteen percent of the entire release cohort completed a drug house and 4.3% completed a work release program. Approximately 7% of offenders in the cohort completed an "other" RCRP.

TABLE 16. 2015 RELEASES AND RCRP COMPLETION RATES

	N	Percentage
<i>Attend Any RCRP</i>	3160	35.0%
<i>Complete Any RCRP</i>	2343	26.0%
<i>Complete a Drug Treatment RCRP</i>	1620	18.0%
<i>Complete a Work Release RCRP</i>	386	4.3%
<i>Complete a Special Needs or Assessment Center RCRP</i>	639	7.1%

## Recidivism

Residential Community Release Program participation and recidivism were examined. Inmates who participated in and completed any RCRP prior to release to the community did not have statistically lower rates of rearrest than inmates who did not complete a RCRP, but experienced lower rates of reconviction and reincarceration.<sup>1,2</sup>

FIGURE 16. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES AND RCRP COMPLETION

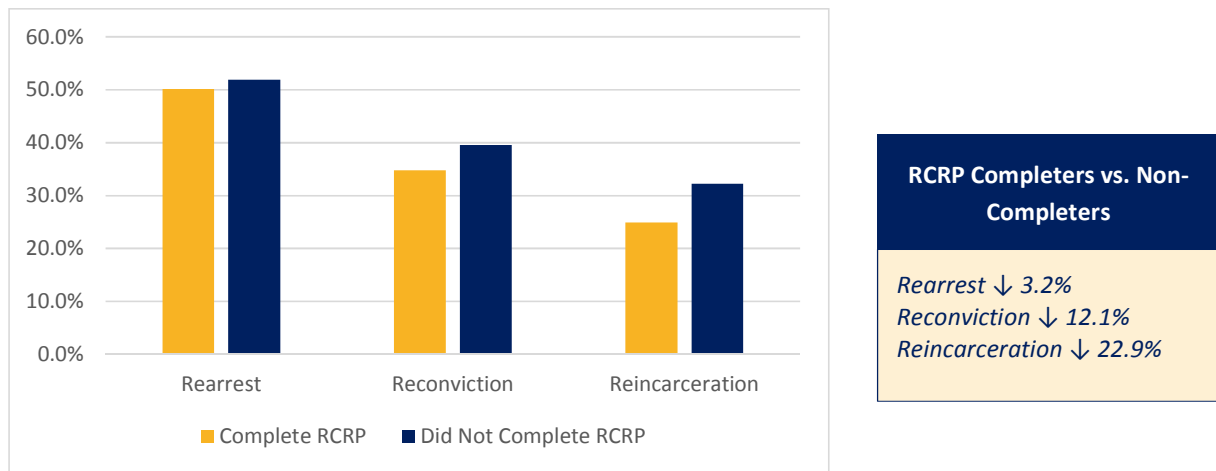


Table 17 details the three year recidivism rates based on type of RCRP attended. It should be noted that inmates may have attended more than one RCRP prior to release. For example, an inmate could complete a drug treatment RCRP and then be transferred to a work release RCRP. Thus, the rates should not be compared to one another and are displayed to illustrate the differences in recidivism rates between RCRP completers and the total 2015 release cohort. Completion of any RCRP did not result in recidivism rates higher than the 2015 release cohort as a whole; in many instances, RCRP completion was associated with a decrease in rates

compared to the full sample. For RCRP completers specifically, releases who attended and completed a work release RCRP prior to release had the lowest rates of all recidivism types post-release.

TABLE 17. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY RCRP COMPLETION TYPE

	Rearrest	Reconviction	Reincarceration
<b>Total 2015 Cohort</b>	51.4%	38.4%	30.4%
<b>Complete Any RCRP</b>	50.2%	34.8%	24.9%
<b>Complete Work Release RCRP</b>	42.2%	28.5%	17.1%
<b>Complete Drug Treatment RCRP</b>	51.0%	36.0%	22.4%
<b>Complete Other RCRP</b>	51.6%	33.5%	32.1%

<sup>1</sup> These differences were statistically significant. (Reconviction:  $\chi^2=16.72$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reincarceration:  $\chi^2=44.81$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

<sup>2</sup> Non-completers include inmates who did not attend a RCRP at any time during their stay of incarceration or inmates who did attend a RCRP but did not successfully complete their participation for any reason.



# SECTION 6: REHABILITATION AND REENTRY PROGRAMS

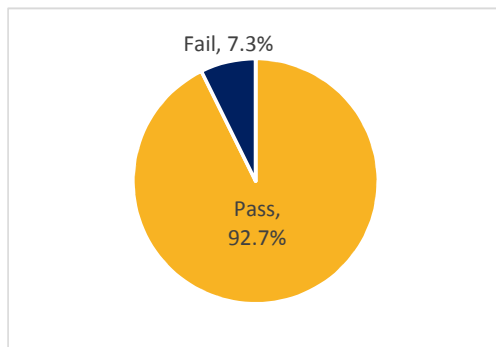
## Mandatory Education

The NJDOC provides mandatory education to inmates who do not have a high school diploma or a high school equivalency (HSE) degree. Under the State Facilities Education Act (SFEA) of 1979 (N.J.S.A. 18A:7B-1 et seq.), all inmates under the age of 20, as well as those under age 21 with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), are provided traditional high school coursework. Students earn credits from their home school districts toward the fulfillment of their high school diplomas. Similarly, inmates who are over the age of 21 who do not have a high school diploma or HSE and have 18 months or more remaining on their sentence before a mandatory release date are eligible for mandatory education programming to obtain a HSE (N.J.S.A. 30:4-92.1 (P.L. 2009, c.330)). Within the 2015 release cohort, there were a total of 351 inmates who participated in mandatory education programming during their stay of incarceration. Information about these 351 inmates can be viewed in Table

TABLE 18. DESCRIPTIVES OF MANDATORY EDUCATION PARTICIPANTS

	N	Percentage
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
<i>White</i>	61	17.4%
<i>Black</i>	235	67.0%
<i>Hispanic</i>	50	14.2%
<i>Other</i>	5	1.4%
<b>Gender</b>		
<i>Male</i>	331	94.3%
<i>Female</i>	20	5.7%
<b>Offense of Conviction</b>		
<i>Violent</i>	151	43.0%
<i>Weapons</i>	79	22.5%
<i>Property</i>	35	10.0%
<i>Drugs</i>	65	18.5%
<i>Other</i>	21	6.0%
<b>Mean (sd), Range</b>		
<b>Age at Release (years)</b>	30.1 (8.0), 20-58	
<b>Number of Prior Arrests</b>	6.1 (6.1), 0-34	
<b>Number of Prior Convictions</b>	3.4 (3.6), 0-23	
<b>Number of Prior Incarcerations</b>	1.0 (1.4), 0-8	
<b>Time Served (days)</b>	1212.5 (812.35), 1-5850	

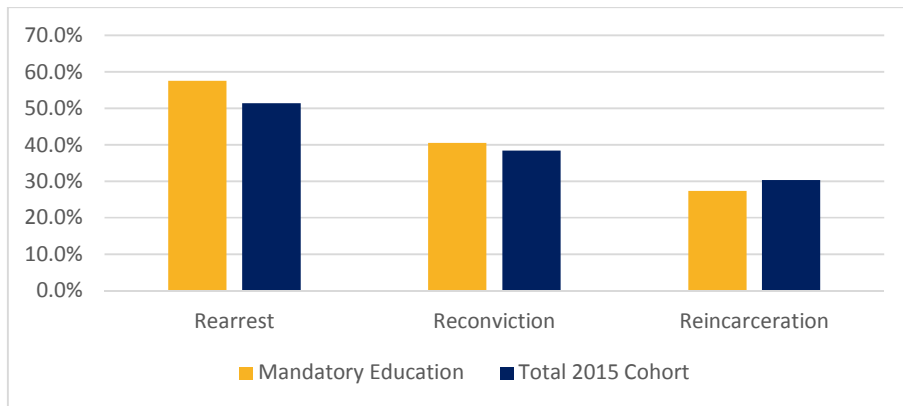
FIGURE 17. HSE TEST RESULTS



18. Inmates who participated in mandatory education were predominately of black race/ethnicity, male, and serving a sentence for a violent offense. The average age was 30 years old and the majority of inmates had a prior criminal history and one prior DOC admission. These inmates served an average of 3.3 years.

During their stay of incarceration, 109 inmates who participated in mandatory education programming took the HSE test. Of these, 101 passed and 8 failed, for a pass rate of 92.7%.

FIGURE 18. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES FOR MANDATORY EDUCATION PARTICIPANTS



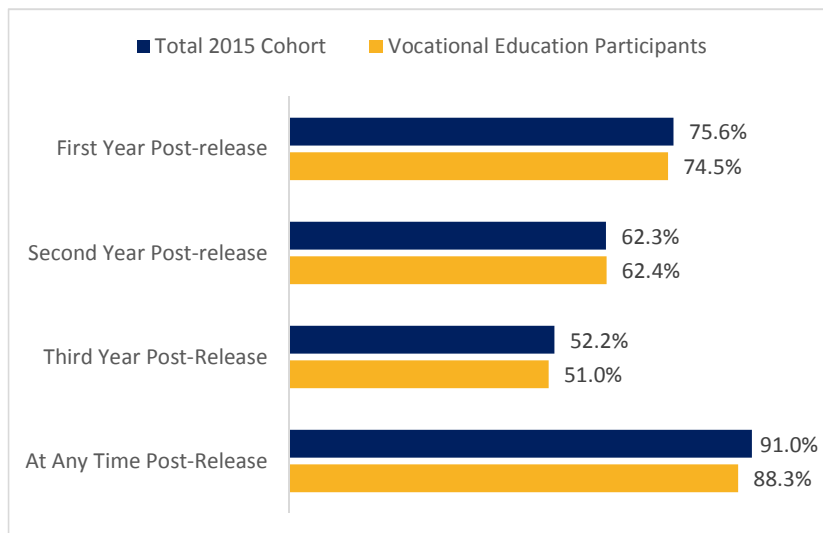
Mandatory education participants had slightly higher rates of recidivism than the 2015 release cohort as a whole (Figure 18). This is likely attributed to inmate age at release. The average inmate was 36 years old at release in 2015 (see Section 3). Mandatory education inmates were, on average, 5 years younger at release than the full cohort. Research indicates that criminality declines with age.<sup>1,2</sup>

### Vocational Education

DOC provides vocational education programs to inmates at all facilities. There are 23 courses of study which include cabinetmaking, cosmetology/barbering, plumbing, and graphic arts, among others. Of the 2015 releases, 1,224 inmates completed vocational education programming during their stay of incarceration.

Nearly 90% of all vocational education participants were employed at any time within three years of release. Employment rates for each individual year post-release were similar to those of the 2015 release cohort as a whole (Figure 19).

FIGURE 19. 3-YEAR EMPLOYMENT RATES FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PARTICIPANTS



<sup>1</sup> Farrington, D.P. (1986). Age and crime. In M. Tonry and N. Morris (Eds.), *Crime and Justice: An Annual Review of Research*, Volume 7 (pp.189-250). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

<sup>2</sup> Tremblay, R.E. & Nagin, D.S. (2005). The developmental origins of physical aggression in humans. In R.E. Tremblay, W.H. Hartup, and J. Archer J (Eds), *Developmental origins of aggression* (pp.83-106). New York: Guilford Press.

SECTION 6: REHABILITATION AND REENTRY PROGRAMS

Income Range	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
	Vocational Education	2015 Cohort	Vocational Education	2015 Cohort	Vocational Education	2015 Cohort
\$0	56.4%	57.40%	54.5%	56.0%	58.1%	59.9%
Under \$10,000	40.8%	40.6%	40.5%	39.6%	35.9%	34.8%
\$10,000-\$19,999	2.7%	1.8%	4.7%	4.0%	5.5%	4.9%
\$20,000-\$29,999	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%
\$30,000-\$39,999	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%
\$40,000 +	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%

TABLE 19. INCOME LEVELS OF EMPLOYED RELEASES 3 YEARS POST-RELEASE

Of those inmates who were employed post-release, nearly 99% had an income level of under \$20,000 (Table 19). Income levels were similar across vocational education participation and the full 2015 release cohort, though a greater proportion of vocational education participants achieved income in the \$10,000-\$19,999 range compared to the entire 2015 release cohort.

In analyzing recidivism, vocational education participants had slightly lower 3-year rates of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration than the full 2015 cohort.

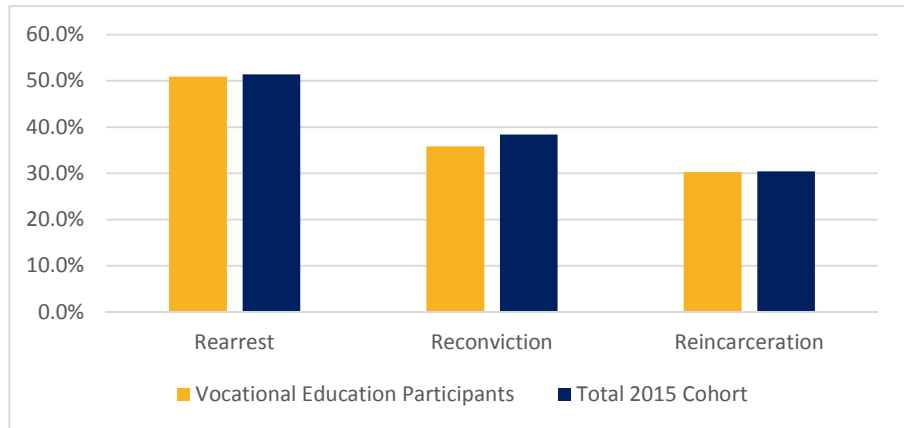


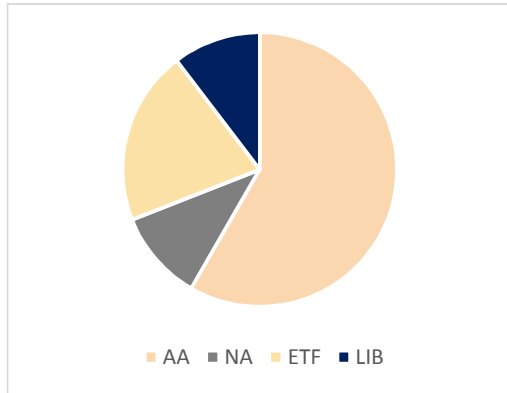
FIGURE 20. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PARTICIPANTS

**Psychoeducational Drug Treatment**

The DOC provides addiction treatment services to its substance use disorder offender population through programs including Living in Balance, Engaging the Family, Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and Gamblers Anonymous. Living in Balance (LIB) is a research-based, psychoeducational program which provides treatment sessions for persons who abuse or are addicted to alcohol and other drugs. Participation is dependent on sentence length and RCRP eligibility. LIB programs are available in all DOC facilities. The Engaging the Family (ETF) program engages the spouse/committed partner and children of inmates as allies in the end of the criminal and addictive lifestyle of their loved ones. The goals of the program are to strengthen marriage and family relationships of inmates, enhance the well-being of children of incarcerated fathers, and motivate and prepare incarcerated fathers to maintain drug and crime free lifestyles. Participation is focused on inmates who will serve the entirety of their sentence behind bars. ETF is available in nine DOC facilities. Alcoholics Anonymous is available in all DOC facilities, Narcotics Anonymous is available in two facilities, and Gamblers Anonymous is available in one facility.

SECTION 6: REHABILITATION AND REENTRY PROGRAMS

FIGURE 21. PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL DRUG TREATMENT PARTICIPATION



Nearly 20% of all inmates released in 2015 participated in psychoeducational drug treatment during their stay of incarceration. Alcoholics Anonymous was the most attended psychoeducational drug treatment program followed by NA. Together, AA and NA comprised 78.9% of all psychoeducational drug treatment participation.

**Psychoeducational Drug Treatment Participation**

AA: 1,293 inmates  
 NA: 456 inmates  
 ETF: 237 inmates  
 LIB: 230 inmates

In analyzing recidivism, psychoeducational drug treatment participants had slightly lower 3-year rates of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration than the full 2015 cohort (Figure 22).

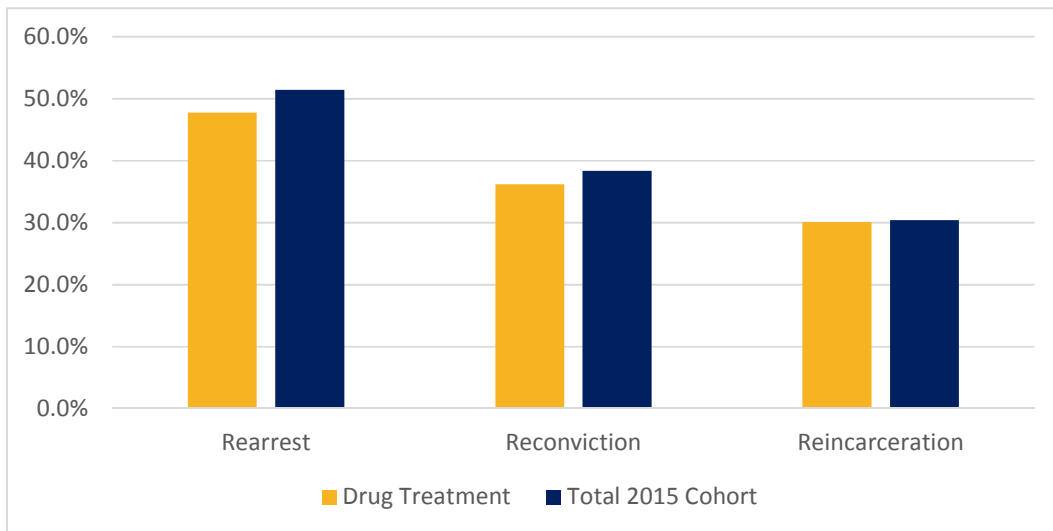


FIGURE 22. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES FOR PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL DRUG TREATMENT PARTICIPANTS

# SECTION 7: FEMALE RELEASES

This section focuses only on the women released from NJDOC custody in 2015. Women represented 7.2% of all releases (n=649). Descriptives of the female sample are reported and recidivism is analyzed.

## Descriptives

### Demographics

The complete 2015 female cohort consisted of 649 released inmates (Table 20).<sup>1</sup> Female releases were predominately of black race/ethnicity, single (i.e., never married), and under the age of 40. The majority had a HS diploma or higher education level (67.5%). The average woman was 36 years old at release (*sd*=10.15).

Nearly 65% of all women were released to supervision. There were few demographic differences between supervised and unsupervised releases with the exception of marital status: a higher proportion of supervised inmates were not single in comparison to unsupervised inmates.<sup>2,3</sup>

### Criminal History

Table 21 displays criminal history and stay of incarceration information for the female releases. The majority of releases did not have a prior admission to a DOC facility (60%). The most common offense of conviction, or the offense that inmates were sentenced for which led to the 2015 release, was a property offense (31.3%) followed by a drug offense (30.6%). The average inmate served 705 days (or 1.9 years). The average female release had a prior criminal record, with 7 prior arrests and 4 prior convictions.

TABLE 20. DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTIVES OF 2015 FEMALE RELEASES

	Supervised <i>n</i> =419	Unsupervised <i>n</i> =230	Total <i>N</i> =649
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
<i>White</i>	35.9%	44.3%	<b>38.9%</b>
<i>Black</i>	49.0%	44.3%	<b>47.4%</b>
<i>Hispanic</i>	14.1%	10.9%	<b>13.0%</b>
<i>Other</i>	1.0%	0.4%	<b>0.8%</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>			
<i>Single</i>	76.4%	84%	<b>79.1%</b>
<i>Other</i>	23.6%	16%	<b>20.9%</b>
<b>Education Level</b>			
<i>Some schooling</i>	29.5%	37.9%	<b>32.5%</b>
<i>HS graduate/HSE degree</i>	58.3%	52.5%	<b>56.3%</b>
<i>Any college and beyond</i>	12.1%	9.6%	<b>11.2%</b>
<b>Age Group</b>			
<i>Under 21</i>	0.5%	0.0%	<b>0.3%</b>
<i>21-29</i>	31.5%	29.1%	<b>30.7%</b>
<i>30-39</i>	38.9%	28.7%	<b>35.3%</b>
<i>40-49</i>	18.4%	26.5%	<b>21.3%</b>
<i>50-59</i>	8.4%	13.9%	<b>10.3%</b>
<i>60 and above</i>	2.4%	1.7%	<b>2.2%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Percentage totals may not sum to 100 due to missing information.

<sup>2</sup> "Other" marital status refers to inmates who self-reported being married, divorced, separated or widowed.

<sup>3</sup> This difference was statistically significant. ( $\chi^2=90.67$ , *df*=1, *p*=.000)

Releases were again aggregated based on post-supervision status (Table 21). Though supervised inmates served nearly a month and a half less time in prison prior to release than unsupervised inmates, these differences were not found to be statistically significant. However, supervised releases, on average, had fewer prior arrests, convictions, and incarcerations on record when compared to unsupervised releases. These differences were found to be significant.<sup>4</sup>

TABLE 21. CRIMINAL HISTORY DESCRIPTIVES OF 2015 FEMALE RELEASES

	Supervised <i>n=419</i>	Unsupervised <i>n=230</i>	Total <i>N=649</i>
<b>Prior DOC History</b>			
<i>No prior admissions</i>	73.5%	35.2%	59.9%
<i>1 + prior admissions</i>	26.5%	64.8%	40.1%
<b>Offense of Conviction</b>			
<i>Violent</i>	31.3%	19.6%	27.2%
<i>Weapons</i>	3.6%	6.1%	4.5%
<i>Property</i>	29.4%	34.8%	31.3%
<i>Drugs</i>	29.2%	33%	30.6%
<i>Other</i>	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%
<b>Mean Time Served – Days (sd)</b>	687.6 (1097.0)	735.4 (1430.3)	704.6 (1224.6)
<b>Mean Prior Arrests (sd)</b>	6.0 (6.8)	9.3 (9.8)	7.1 (8.1)
<b>Mean Prior Convictions (sd)</b>	3.5 (4.6)	5.7 (6.2)	4.3 (5.3)
<b>Mean Prior DOC admissions (sd)</b>	0.5 (1.0)	1.4 (1.6)	0.8 (1.3)

### County of Commitment

The counties of commitment for the female releases were examined (Table 22). Camden County had the most women committed (79, or 12.2% of all female releases) than any other county in the state. Middlesex (10.8%) and Atlantic (9.7%) counties rounded out the top three counties of commitment.

The county of commitment was further analyzed in terms of the offense of conviction. Those counties with the highest *number* of inmates in each offense category were not the same as those counties with the highest *proportion* of inmates in each category. In terms of raw numbers, Camden County often produced the largest numbers of inmates in each respective category; this was true for weapons, drugs, CSVs and “other” crimes. However, Essex County provided the greatest number of

#### Top 5 Counties of Commitment

1. CAMDEN
2. MIDDLESEX
3. ATLANTIC
4. UNION
5. MONMOUTH

<sup>4</sup> Prior arrests:  $t=4.64$ ,  $df=353.21$ ,  $p=.000$ ; prior convictions:  $t=4.77$ ,  $df=368.50$ ,  $p=.000$ ; prior incarcerations:  $t=7.38$ ,  $df=339.41$ ,  $p=.000$ .

SECTION 7: FEMALE RELEASES

inmates with convictions for a violent offense. The counties with the highest proportions of inmates were mixed (Table 23). Passaic County provided the greatest number of inmates with convictions for a violent offense, proportionally.

TABLE 22. COUNTY OF COMMITMENT FOR 2015 FEMALE RELEASES

Committed County	Inmates Released	Percent of Female Cohort
Atlantic	63	9.7%
Bergen	21	3.2%
Burlington	41	6.3%
Camden	79	12.2%
Cape May	35	5.4%
Cumberland	21	3.2%
Essex	39	6.0%
Gloucester	19	2.9%
Hudson	21	3.2%
Hunterdon	9	1.4%
Mercer	33	5.1%
Middlesex	70	10.8%
Monmouth	42	6.5%
Morris	9	1.4%
Ocean	39	6.0%
Passaic	22	3.4%
Salem	9	1.4%
Somerset	17	2.6%
Sussex	7	1.1%
Union	43	6.6%
Warren	9	1.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



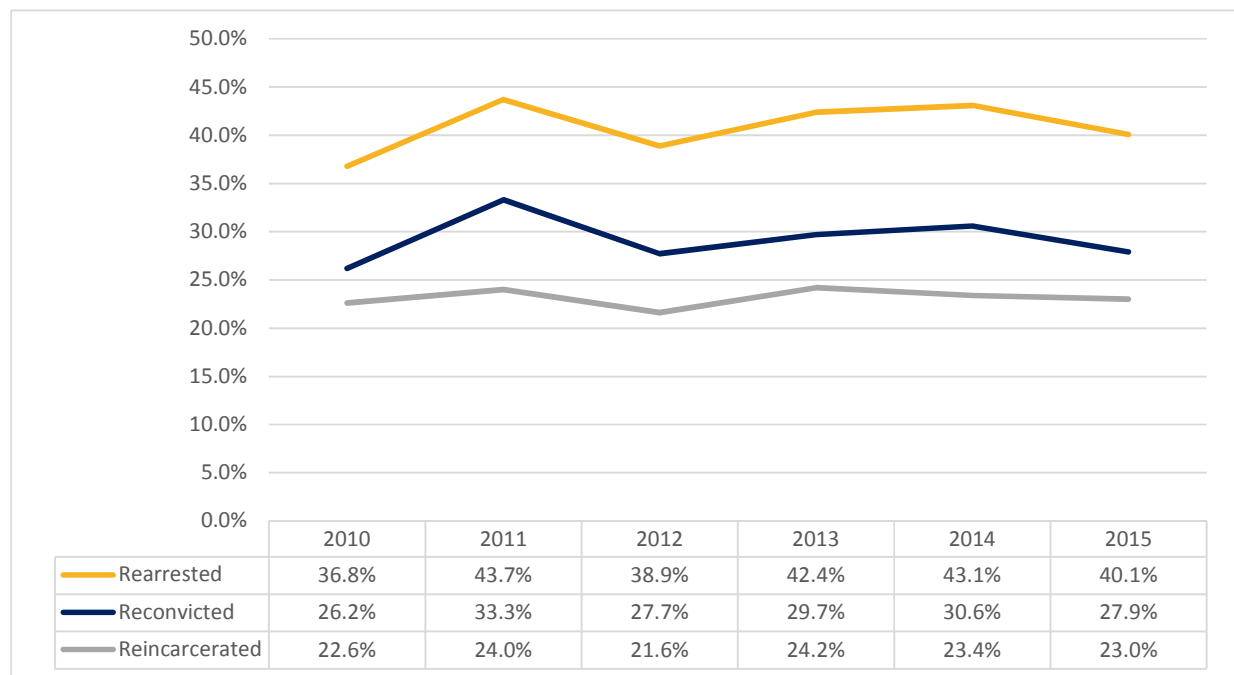
TABLE 23. OFFENSE OF CONVICTION BY COUNTY OF COMMITMENT: FEMALE RELEASES

Offense of Conviction	Top County By Raw Count	Top County by Proportion
<i>Violent</i>	Essex	Passaic
<i>Weapons</i>	Camden	Salem
<i>Property</i>	Middlesex	Burlington
<i>Drugs</i>	Camden	Cape May
<i>Other</i>	Camden/Essex (Tie)	Morris
<i>CSV</i>	Camden	Warren

## Recidivism

The three-year recidivism rates of female releases were analyzed. For the 2015 cohort, 40.1% of women were rearrested, 27.9% were reconvicted, and 23.0% were reincarcerated within three years. These rates are comparable with the recidivism rates for each year between 2010 and 2015. Overall, rearrest rates increased 9.0%, reconviction rates increased 6.5%, and reincarceration rates increased 1.8% over the six-year period. The highest rates were experienced in 2011.

FIGURE 23. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES FOR 2015 FEMALE RELEASE COHORT



Three-year recidivism was stratified by release status. Supervised releases were 32% less likely to be rearrested and 41% less likely to be reconvicted than unsupervised releases. However, supervised releases were 428% more likely to be reincarcerated than unsupervised releases. These release status trends mimic those of the overall sample (as presented in Section 4), though the rates on all measures of recidivism are lower for the female cohort compared with the full 2015 release cohort. All differences between supervised and unsupervised releases were statistically significant.<sup>5</sup>

TABLE 24. 3-YEAR FEMALE RECIDIVISM RATES BY RELEASE STATUS

	Supervised	Unsupervised
<i>Rearrested</i>	34.4%	50.4%
<i>Reconvicted</i>	22.4%	37.8%
<i>Reincarcerated</i>	32.2%	6.1%

<sup>5</sup> Rearrest:  $\chi^2=15.96$   $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reconviction:  $\chi^2=17.49$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ ; Reincarceration:  $\chi^2=57.33$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .



SECTION 7: FEMALE RELEASES

Table 25 below details the 3-year recidivism rate outcomes for each county in New Jersey. Those counties with the highest *number* of returning inmates were not the same as those counties with the highest *proportion* of returning inmates. The highest sending counties of female releases are ranked below.

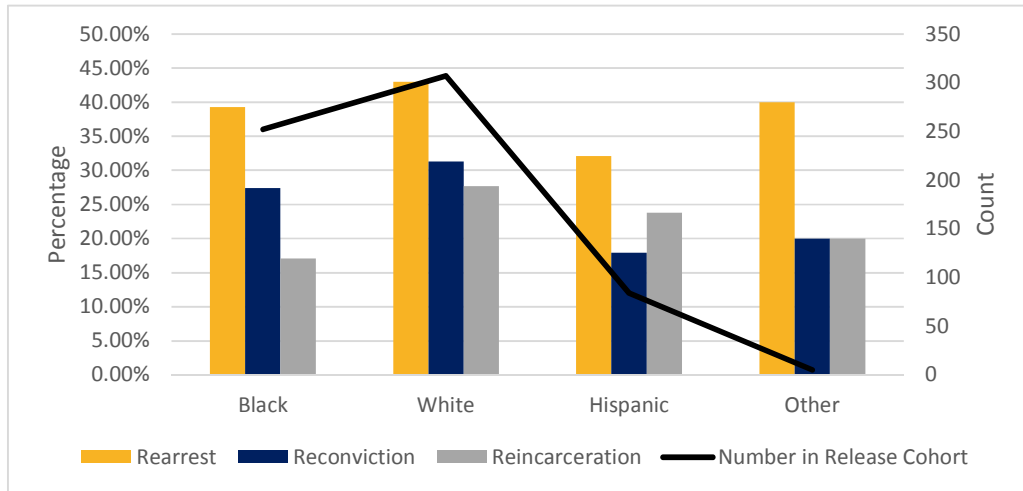
TABLE 25. 3-YEAR RECIDIVISM RATES BY COUNTY OF COMMITMENT FOR 2015 FEMALE RELEASES

Committed County	2015 Releases	Rearrest		Reconviction		Reincarceration	
		Raw Count	Percentage	Raw Count	Percentage	Raw Count	Percentage
Atlantic	63	27	42.9%	22	34.9%	12	19.0%
Bergen	21	9	42.9%	6	28.6%	3	14.3%
Burlington	41	17	41.5%	11	26.8%	10	24.4%
Camden	79	29	36.7%	17	21.5%	19	24.1%
Cape May	35	11	31.4%	6	17.1%	11	31.4%
Cumberland	21	11	52.4%	11	52.4%	8	38.1%
Essex	39	7	17.9%	3	7.7%	7	17.9%
Gloucester	19	11	57.9%	7	36.8%	3	15.8%
Hudson	21	6	28.6%	3	14.3%	3	14.3%
Hunterdon	9	5	55.6%	4	44.4%	6	66.7%
Mercer	33	15	45.5%	11	33.3%	8	24.2%
Middlesex	70	31	44.3%	18	25.7%	15	21.4%
Monmouth	42	16	38.1%	13	31.0%	13	31.0%
Morris	9	2	22.2%	2	22.2%	0	0.0%
Ocean	39	24	61.5%	17	43.6%	13	33.3%
Passaic	22	8	36.4%	5	22.7%	3	13.6%
Salem	9	6	66.7%	5	55.6%	3	33.3%
Somerset	17	6	35.3%	6	35.3%	3	17.6%
Sussex	7	3	42.9%	3	42.9%	2	28.6%
Union	43	13	30.2%	9	20.9%	5	11.6%
Warren	9	3	33.3%	2	22.2%	2	22.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>40.1%</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>27.9%</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>23.0%</b>

Rearrest		Reconviction		Reincarceration	
Top 3 Counties by Raw Count	Top 3 Counties by Proportion	Top 3 Counties by Raw Count	Top 3 Counties by Proportion	Top 3 Counties by Raw Count	Top 3 Counties by Proportion
1. Middlesex	1. Salem	1. Atlantic	1. Salem	1. Camden	1. Hunterdon
2. Camden	2. Ocean	2. Middlesex	2. Cumberland	2. Middlesex	2. Cumberland
3. Atlantic	3. Gloucester	3. Ocean	3. Hunterdon	3. Ocean	3. Ocean

Recidivism by self-reported race/ethnicity was also examined. The criminogenic patterns of the female releases appear to be different than the 2015 release cohort as a whole, which is predominately male. White women had the highest rates of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration within three years of release. This is in contrast to the full sample in which releases who self-identified as black/African-American were rearrested, reconvicted, and reincarcerated at significantly higher rates than releases of other racial/ethnic groups.

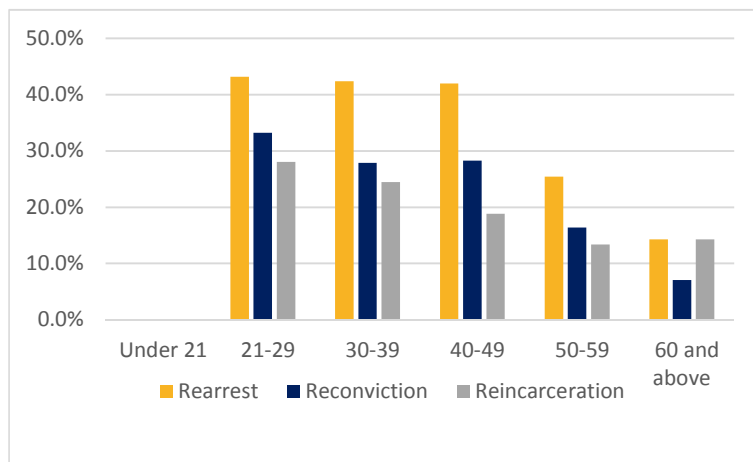
FIGURE 24. 3-YEAR FEMALE RECIDIVISM RATES BY RACE/ETHNICITY



An examination of recidivism rates by education level did not yield differences in reoffending rates across educational attainment. Despite the lack of statistical significance, there is a meaningful difference in the recidivism rates. Women who did not have a HS degree or HSE experienced the highest rates of rearrest and reconviction.

TABLE 26. 3-YEAR FEMALE RECIDIVISM RATES BY EDUCATION LEVEL

	Rearrest	Reconviction	Reincarceration
<i>Some schooling</i>	43.5%	31.0%	23.0%
<i>HS graduate/HSE degree</i>	41.3%	29.5%	23.4%
<i>Any college and beyond</i>	33.3%	21.7%	24.6%



Few differences in reoffending post-release were also found between age groupings; differences were only noted for rearrests.<sup>6</sup> Overall, the rates of recidivism are reflective of the age-crime association: generally, younger releases recidivated at higher rates than older releases within three years.

FIGURE 25. 3-YEAR FEMALE RECIDIVISM RATES BY AGE GROUP

<sup>6</sup> Rearrest:  $\chi^2=12.78$   $df=5$ ,  $p=.026$

## SECTION 8: JUVENILE RELEASES

### ***2015 Release Cohort: Youth Characteristics***

The 2015 cohort was comprised of 336 youth released from JJC facilities. All juveniles were released from a committed (65.5%) or a probationer status (34.5%). More than a third (38.4%) of the cohort left from secure care (100% of those were committed youth), 60.7% left from residential programs (44.6% were committed and 55.4% were probationers), and 0.9% left from day programs (100% probationers). The average length of stay in custody was 390 days, which was a decrease of 3 days from 2014. The average length of stay was 368 days for youth departing residential programs (an increase of 19 days from 2014), 429 days for youth departing secure care (down 27 days from 2014), and 205 days for the three youth departing day programs (a decrease of 37 days from 2014).

Of the youth released, 92.3% were males and 7.7% were females. The average age at release was 18.2 years. The racial breakdown of the cohort was 72.9% Black, 17.0% Hispanic, 9.2% White and Other (0.9%) (or 9.2% White and 90.8% non-White). Most of the youth served sentences for persons offenses (40.5%), followed by violations of probation (VOP) (19.0%), property offenses (16.7%), weapons offenses (8.6%), drug offenses (8.3%), and public order offenses (6.8%).

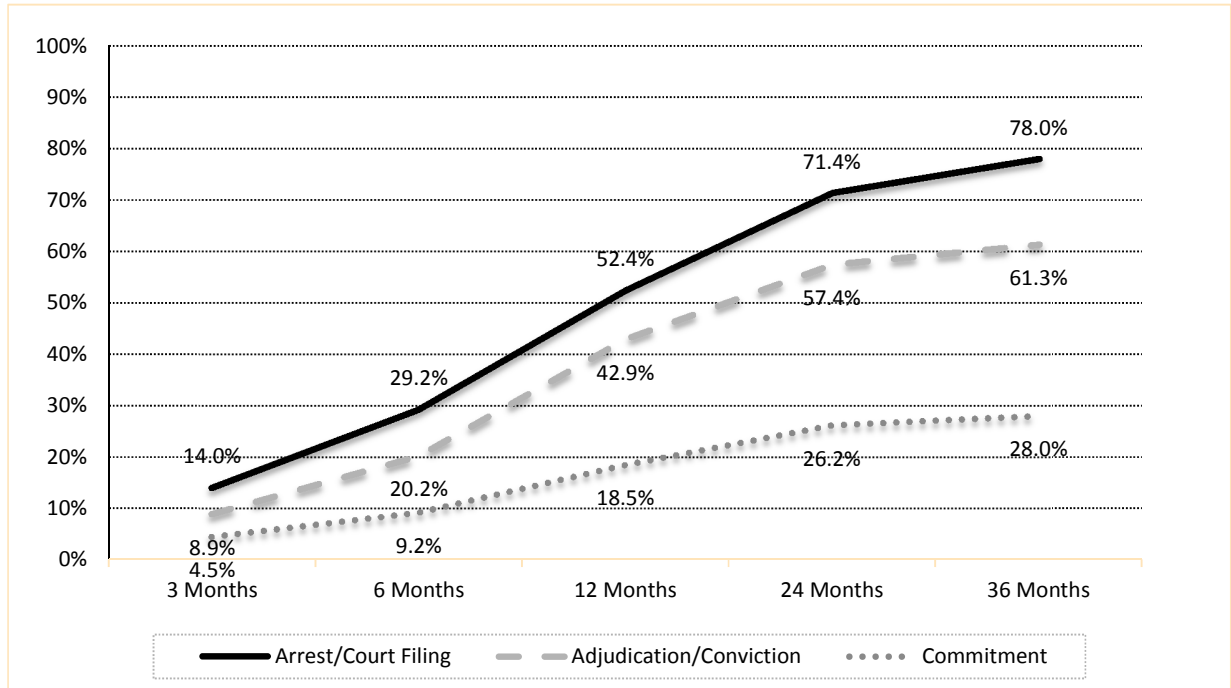
### ***2015 Release Cohort Recidivism Rates***

The reporting of results begins with a focus on an examination of the overall recidivism rates for youth released from JJC custody in 2015. As shown in Figure 26, the rate of recidivism increased over time through the three-year period for each of the three measures, although there is a noticeable slowing after 12 months. By one year following release, 52.4% of the youth released in 2015 had a new court filing/arrest, 42.9% committed a new offense resulting in an adjudication/conviction, and 18.5% re-offended resulting in a new commitment to a State facility. At two years following release, recidivism rates had increased: almost three-quarters (71.4%) had a new court filing/arrest, 57.4% had a new adjudication/conviction, and 26.2% had a new commitment to a State facility. By three years after release, slightly more than three quarters of the youth had new court filings/arrests (78.0%), 61.3% had new adjudications/convictions, and 28.0% had new commitments, representing 94 of the 336 youth.

The study also examined average time to recidivate (in days) for all youth re-offending within three years. Average time to recidivate was as follows:

- for those with a new court filing/arrest, 303 days (10.1 months);
- for those with a new adjudication/conviction, 310 days (10.3 months); and
- for those with a new commitment, 340 days (11.3 months).

FIGURE 26. OVERALL RECIDIVISM RATES FOR YOUTH RELEASED FROM JJC CUSTODY IN 2015



### Recent Trends in Juvenile Recidivism

As part of the analysis, a comparison was made with the previous years' findings with regard to the three measures of recidivism within three years of release. As indicated in the table below, in 2015 recidivism was lower than it had been in 2012 on all three measures, despite small upticks between 2014 and 2015. Since 2012, new court filings/arrests have decreased 0.9 percentage points, new adjudications/convictions have decreased 6.4 percentage points, and new commitments to state custody have decreased 5.1 percentage points.

TABLE 27. RECENT TRENDS IN JUVENILE RECIDIVISM, 2012 TO 2015

Release Year	Court Filing/Arrest	Adjudication/Conviction	Commitment
2012	78.9%	67.7%	33.1%
2013	78.9%	67.6%	30.2%
2014	76.9%	58.9%	23.9%
2015	78.0%	61.3%	28.0%

Table 28 examines changes in the time it took for youth to recidivate, measured in days from the date of a youth's release to the date of re-offense. Since 2012, time to recidivate for court filings/arrests and adjudications/convictions has decreased, though it has increased for new commitments. However, over the most recent one-year period, from 2014 to 2015, time to recidivated has increased for all three measures, a positive finding.

TABLE 28. AVERAGE TIME TO RECIDIVATE IN DAYS, 2012 TO 2015

Release Year	Court Filings/Arrest	Adjudication/Conviction	Commitment
2012	310	326	333
2013	277	288	308
2014	302	289	311
2015	303	310	340

### ***Differences in Recidivism Across Youth Characteristics***

The remaining analyses seek to describe differences between recidivists and non-recidivists in terms of various youth characteristics and across different programmatic interventions. Note that over time, as the result of successful reform efforts and lower rates of youth crime, the number of youth in JJC custody has decreased substantially, resulting in significantly smaller numbers of youth in each one-year release cohort. These small sample sizes make meaningful analyses, and particularly the ability to detect statistically significant differences, difficult. Therefore, the analyses of differences in recidivism rates across various youth characteristics and interventions includes youth released from JJC custody in both 2014 and 2015, bringing the number of cases in the analysis to 713.

Regarding differences in recidivism across youth characteristics, the analysis of bivariate relationships revealed that for youth released in 2014 and 2015, twelve factors were associated at a statistically significant level with recidivism within three years (on one or more of the three measures of recidivism).

**Gender.** Released males were more likely to have recidivated than females. The recidivism rate for males was higher for new court filings/arrests within three years of release (78.3% vs. 65.3%),<sup>\*1</sup> for new adjudications/convictions (61.9% vs. 34.7%),<sup>\*2</sup> and for new commitments (27.1% vs. 8.2%).<sup>\*3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Statistically significant relationships are identified using an \*.  $X^2=4.416$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.036$ .

<sup>2</sup>  $X^2=14.074$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>3</sup>  $X^2=8.554$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.003$ .

*Race/Ethnicity.* Released Black youth were most likely to have had a new court filing/arrest (81.6%), followed by Hispanic youth (71.9%), Other youth (66.7%) and White youth (61.3%).<sup>\*4</sup> Black youth were also more likely to have a new adjudication/conviction (63.8%), followed by Other youth (66.7%), Hispanic youth (53.4%), and White youth (48.0%).<sup>\*5</sup> Finally, Other youth were more likely to have received a new commitment (33.3%), followed by Black youth (29.4%), Hispanic youth (21.2%), and White youth (10.7%).<sup>\*6</sup>

As part of the analysis, race/ethnicity was recoded into “minority” and “nonminority” categories (with White as the sole race/ethnicity category coded as nonminority). Minority youth were more likely to have had a new court filing/arrest (79.3% vs. 61.3%),<sup>\*7</sup> a new adjudication/conviction (61.4% vs. 48.0%),<sup>\*8</sup> as well as a new commitment (27.6% vs. 10.7%)<sup>\*9</sup>.

*Municipality of Residence.* Released youth were categorized as residing in one of the fifteen most densely populated New Jersey cities (the Urban 15 areas) or not.<sup>10</sup> Those residing in the Urban 15 areas were more likely than those in non-Urban 15 areas to have a new court filing/arrest (84.4% vs. 71.1%),<sup>\*11</sup> a new adjudication/conviction, (68.7 % vs. 52.1%),<sup>\*12</sup> and a new commitment (33.3% vs. 19.0%).<sup>\*13</sup> When honing in on the six most densely populated New Jersey cities,<sup>14</sup> the relationship between recidivism and residence remains strong and statistically significant. Those residing in the Urban 6 areas were more likely than those in other areas to have a new court filing/arrest (84.8% vs. 72.2%),<sup>\*15</sup> a new adjudication/conviction (69.6% vs. 53.2%),<sup>\*16</sup> and a new commitment (36.1% vs. 18.5%).<sup>\*17</sup>

*Number of Adjudications.* The average number of adjudications of delinquency accumulated by youth at the time of commitment/admission to the JJC (both prior and current adjudications) was 6.0. The average number of adjudications for youth who experienced a new court filing/arrest within three years of release was higher than for those who did not (6.5 vs. 4.5).<sup>\*18</sup> The same was true for new adjudications/convictions (6.7 vs. 5.1),<sup>\*19</sup> and for new commitments (6.7 vs. 5.8).<sup>\*20</sup>

<sup>4</sup>  $\chi^2=18.705$ ,  $df=3$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>5</sup>  $\chi^2=10.136$ ,  $df=3$ ,  $p=.017$ .

<sup>6</sup>  $\chi^2=14.049$ ,  $df=3$ ,  $p=.003$ .

<sup>7</sup>  $\chi^2=12.406$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>8</sup>  $\chi^2=5.054$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.025$ .

<sup>9</sup>  $\chi^2=10.034$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.002$ .

<sup>10</sup> The Urban 15 Cities are as follows: Bayonne City, Camden City, Clifton City, East Orange City, Elizabeth City, Irvington Town, Jersey City, Newark City, Passaic City, Paterson City, Toms River Township, Trenton City, Union City, Vineland and Woodbridge Township.

<sup>11</sup>  $\chi^2=17.838$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>12</sup>  $\chi^2=20.403$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>13</sup>  $\chi^2=11.851$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.001$ .

<sup>14</sup> The six most densely populated cities are: Camden, Elizabeth, Jersey City, Newark, Paterson and Trenton.

<sup>15</sup>  $\chi^2=19.304$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>16</sup>  $\chi^2=10.748$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.001$ .

<sup>17</sup>  $\chi^2=28.273$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>18</sup>  $F=34.697$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>19</sup>  $F=27.979$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>20</sup>  $F=6.381$   $df=1$ ,  $p=.012$ .

*Type of Offense.* Youth committed/admitted to the JJC for drug offenses were most likely to have had a new court filing/arrest within three years (90.4%), followed by those entering with weapons offenses (87.5%), violations of probation (VOPs, 83.6%), public order offenses (81.4%), property offenses (79.5%), and then persons offenses (67.3%).\*<sup>21</sup> For new adjudications/convictions, the highest rate was for weapons offenses (73.2%), followed by drug offenses (71.2%), public order offenses (69.8%), VOPs (68.7%), property offenses (66.3%), and finally persons offenses (45.7%).\*<sup>22</sup> Finally, for new commitments, the highest rate was for weapons offenses (41.1%), followed by property offenses (33.7%), drug offenses (28.8%), VOPs (27.4%), public order offenses (25.6%), and then person offenses (18.7%).\*<sup>23</sup>

*Degree of Offense.* Youth committed/admitted to the JJC for disorderly persons or petty disorderly persons offenses (DP/PDP) were more likely to have had a new court filing/arrest within three years (92.3%), followed by those entering with VOPs (which have no designated degree) (83.6%), 3<sup>rd</sup> degree offenses (81.3%), 4<sup>th</sup> degree offenses (80.0%), 2<sup>nd</sup> degree offense (72.6%), and finally 1<sup>st</sup> degree offenses (65.5%).\*<sup>24</sup> For new adjudications/convictions, the highest rate was for youth with DP/PDP offenses (73.1%), followed by VOPs (68.7%), 3<sup>rd</sup> degree offenses (68.0%), 2<sup>nd</sup> degree offenses (55.4%), 4<sup>th</sup> degree offenses (53.3%), and then 1<sup>st</sup> degree offenses (41.8%).\*<sup>25</sup> Finally, for new commitments, youth with 4<sup>th</sup> degree offenses (43.3%) had the highest recidivism rate, followed by 3<sup>rd</sup> degree offenses (32.0%), VOPs (27.4%), DP/PDP offenses (26.9%), VOPs (25.0%), 2<sup>nd</sup> degree offenses (25.8%), and 1<sup>st</sup> degree offenses (13.6%).\*<sup>26</sup>

*Comprehensive Informational Assessment (CIA) Needs Area Scores.* The CIA is used to determine levels of need on eight separate life domains. The domains include family/household; educational/vocational; substance abuse; peers/role models; attitudes/behaviors; use of time/leisure activity; medical/physical health; and psychological/mental health. The analysis considered the relationship between all of these needs areas and recidivism, as measured by new court filings/arrests within three years. Recidivists were found to have higher need scores than non-recidivists regarding family/household, 4.8 vs. 3.9,\*<sup>27</sup> substance abuse, 5.2 vs. 3.7,\*<sup>28</sup> education/vocation, 4.0 vs. 3.1,\*<sup>29</sup> peers/role models, 4.0 vs. 3.4,\*<sup>30</sup> use of time/leisure, 2.2 vs. 1.5,\*<sup>31</sup> attitudes/behaviors, 3.1 vs. 2.3\*<sup>32</sup> and medical/physical needs, 1.3 vs. 1.2.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>21</sup>  $\chi^2=29.613$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.001$ .

<sup>22</sup>  $\chi^2=39.863$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>23</sup>  $\chi^2=17.369$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.004$ .

<sup>24</sup>  $\chi^2=20.655$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.001$ .

<sup>25</sup>  $\chi^2=29.542$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>26</sup>  $\chi^2=12.584$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p=.028$ .

<sup>27</sup>  $F=7.476$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.006$ .

<sup>28</sup>  $F=25.074$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>29</sup>  $F=32.758$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>30</sup>  $F=16.058$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>31</sup>  $F=25.223$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>32</sup>  $F=15.795$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.000$ .

<sup>33</sup>  $F=0.279$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.598$ .

Scores in the eighth needs area, psychological/mental health, were slightly lower among recidivists, 2.0 vs. 1.9.<sup>34</sup>

*Initial Classification & Custody Document (ICCD) Scores.* The ICCD guides placement decisions for committed youth and serves as a broad measure of prior delinquency and placement history. The analysis considered the relationship between ICCD scores recidivism, as measured by new court filings/arrests within three years. Among committed youth, the average ICCD score for recidivists was 12.4, compared with 11.8 for non-recidivists.<sup>35</sup>

### **REHABILITATION AND REENTRY PROGRAMMING ANALYSES**

Youth involved with the JJC receive the same basic curricula in three common programs. New Freedom is a cognitive-behavioral substance abuse curriculum that works with residents' thinking patterns to affect and redirect future behavior through the stages of change. The Phoenix curriculum is built on a motivational enhancement and cognitive-behavioral model and is specifically targeted toward disentangling youth from gangs. And ART (aggression replacement training) focuses on the underlying philosophy that every act of adolescent aggression, whether in school, at home, or in the community, has both external and internal causes. ART is an evidenced-based cognitive behavioral intervention that consists of three components: anger control, behavioral skills, and moral reasoning.

There are a few key intervention strategies that differ significantly based on each youth's needs and risk factors. This recidivism study examined differences between those who did and those who did not recidivate in terms of several key interventions provided by the JJC. This analysis focused primarily on *new court filings/arrests* within three years (unless otherwise noted).

*Sex Offender Treatment.* Sex offender specific treatment is provided in both the secure and residential environments. Of the entire two-year cohort, 7.2% of the youth received sex offender treatment. Of that subgroup, 37.3% received the treatment in a residential program and 62.7% received that treatment in a secure care environment. The recidivism rate for those in secure care receiving sex offender treatment was 40.6% and 36.8% for those receiving sex offender treatment in a residential setting.<sup>36</sup> The number of cases in each of these populations is still very small even after combining 2014 and 2015 departures (n=32 for secure and n=19 for residential sex offender programs).

*Substance Abuse Treatment.* Of the entire cohort, 33.5% received intensive substance abuse treatment. Like sex offender specific treatment, intensive substance abuse treatment is provided in both secure and residential environments. Of the youth receiving intensive substance abuse treatment, 72.2% received the majority of their treatment in a residential setting and 27.8% received the majority of their intensive treatment in a secure setting. Some youth received intensive substance abuse treatment in both venues. For the purpose of this analysis, these youth were classified according to the venue in which they receive

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<sup>34</sup> F=0.027, df=1, p=.869.

<sup>35</sup> F=1.347, df=1, p=.246.

<sup>36</sup>  $\chi^2=0.072$ , df=1, p=0.789.



the majority of their substance abuse treatment—secure or residential. The recidivism rate for those receiving most of their intensive substance abuse treatment in secure care was 75.8%, as compared to 83.6% for those receiving the majority of their intensive substance abuse treatment in a residential setting.<sup>37</sup>

*Transitional Reentry Programs.* In 2009, the JJC started transitional programs in certain residential facilities on a small scale. Transitional programs are available for both committed and probationer youth (males). Committed youth attend as a condition of their parole, and probationers attend when they have completed a community residential program and have been granted a release date. This transitional setting allows residents to gain responsibility gradually as they prepare to return to their community, in a facility that is closer to their home. The youth receive education in their home school district or at the transitional program, which follows the Core Curriculum Content Standards of the NJ Department of Education. Each youth receives a myriad of other services that are best suited to meet his release plan, including career exploration, health/wellness, life skills, family reunification, and/or planning for independent living. Residents are permitted to visit their homes, schools, religious services, and work sites in accordance with program policies. A resident's stay can range from two weeks to 45 days. Program completion is determined by each resident's behavior, their individual completion of transitional goals, and the recommendation of the transitional team.

By 2015, these transitional programs had taken root in three locations. At the Northern Region Independence and Reentry Success Center, starting in 2009, youth from Essex, Hudson and Union counties could be assigned to this transitional setting. In 2010, the Southern Transitional program began for Atlantic County residents. In 2015, Vineland Preparatory Academy also began a transitional component which served kids from Camden and Cumberland counties. In the combined cohort, 46.7% of the youth participated in these programs. Youth participating in a transitional program had a higher recidivism rate (82.9%) than youth who did not participate in a transitional program (72.6%).<sup>\*38</sup>

*High School Completion.* For youth without a high school diploma or GED, the JJC provides a full, year-round academic program aligned to Core Curriculum Content Standards of the Department of Education. While 7.8% of youth entering the JJC had their GED or diploma prior to intake, 43.6% had their GED or diploma when exiting the JJC, a substantial gain. Of those without a high school credential when leaving, the mean age was 17.7, so a primary contributing factor for their lack of graduation is age.

Youth who had a GED or high school diploma when leaving the JJC were on average 19.2 years of age and were less likely to be arrested (74.6% vs. 79.3%)<sup>39</sup> or adjudicated/convicted (56.9% vs. 61.9%)<sup>40</sup> within three years of release, as compared to those who did not have a high school credential. Additionally, youth with a high school credential were significantly less likely to be committed (19.6% vs. 29.8%)<sup>\*41</sup> within three years.

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<sup>37</sup>  $\chi^2=1.950$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.163$ .

<sup>38</sup>  $\chi^2=10.669$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.001$ .

<sup>39</sup>  $\chi^2=3.961$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.138$ .

<sup>40</sup>  $\chi^2=5.812$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.055$ .

<sup>41</sup>  $\chi^2=19.894$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.000$ .

FIGURE 27. RECIDIVISM RATE FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES VS. NON-GRADUATES (ARRESTS)

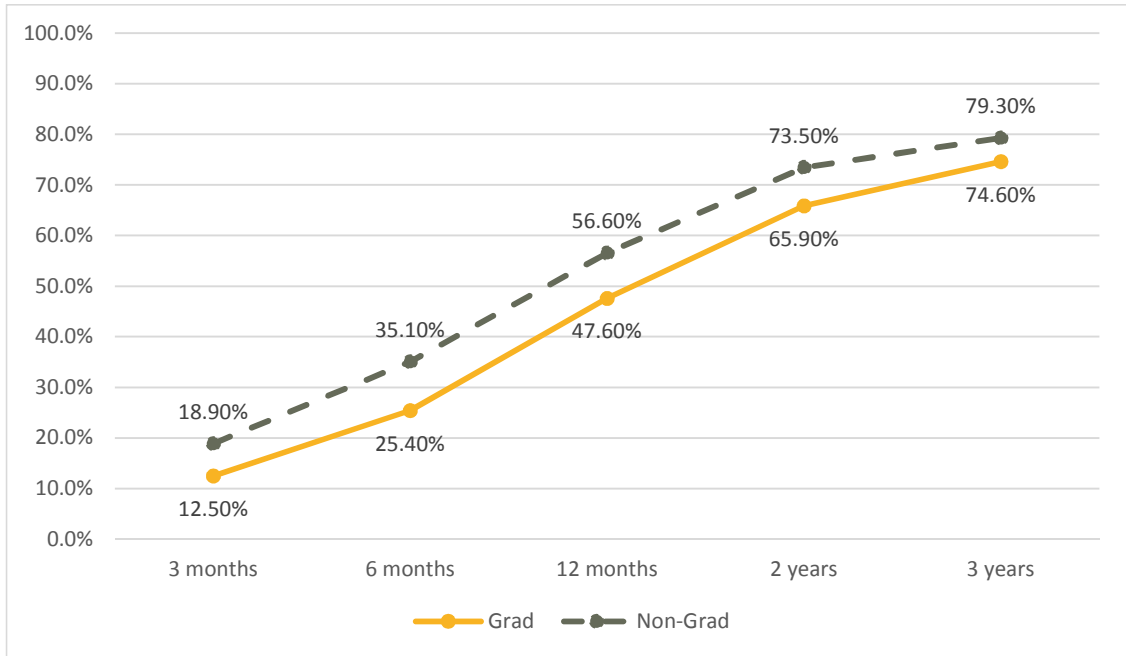


FIGURE 28. RECIDIVISM RATE FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES VS. NON-GRADUATES (CONVICTIONS)

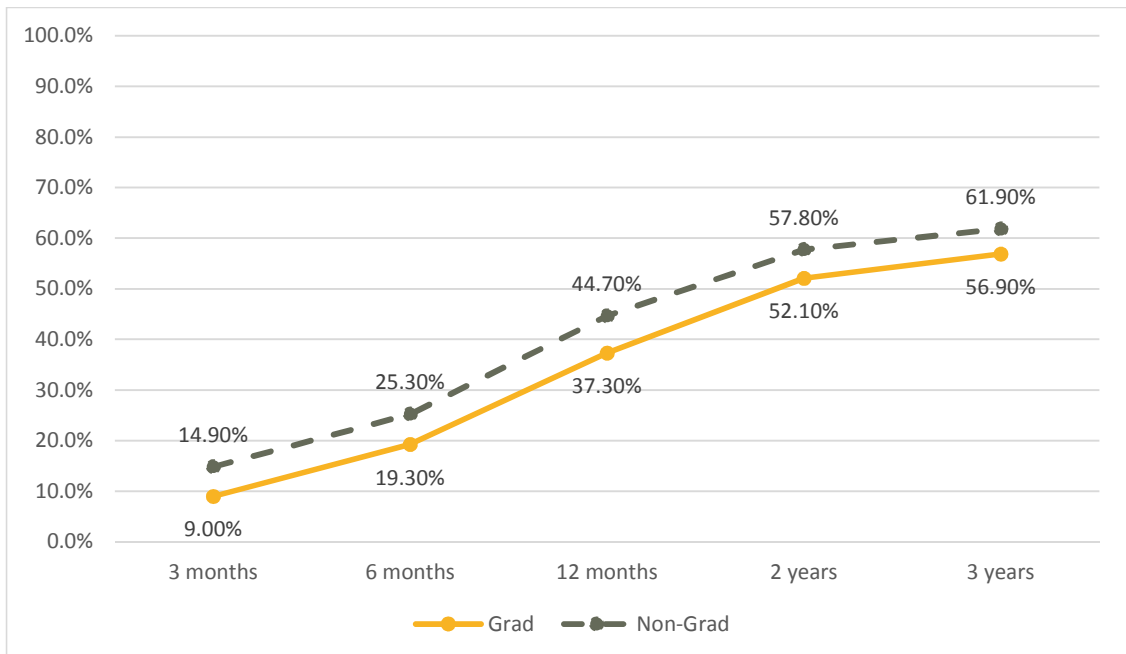
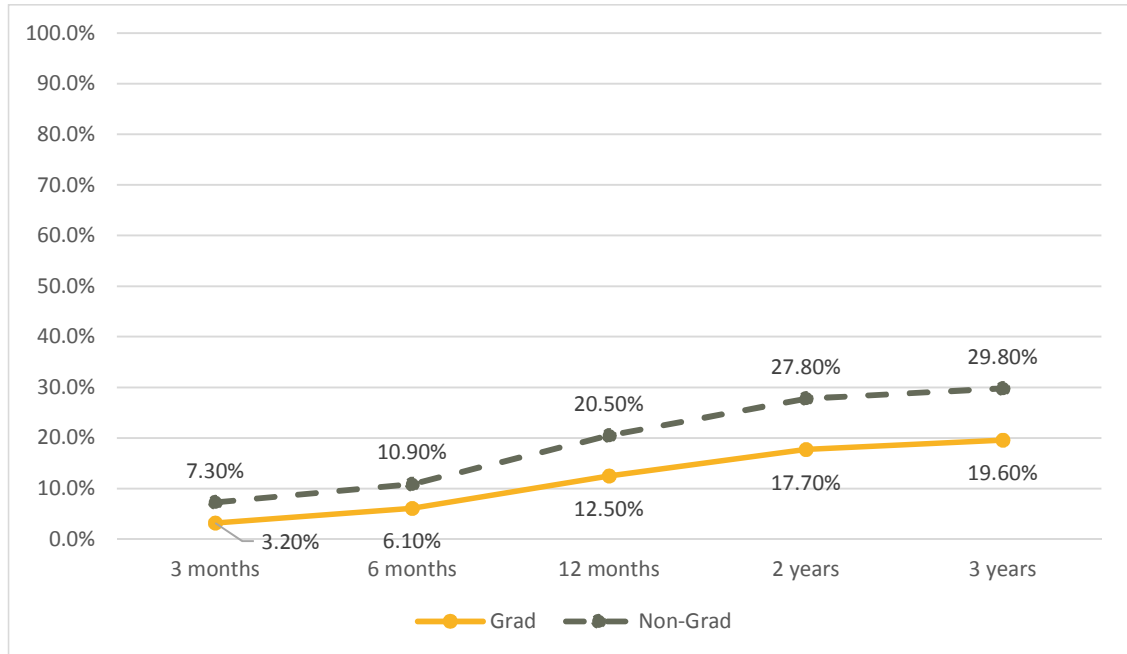


FIGURE 29. RECIDIVISM RATE FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES VS. NON-GRADUATES (COMMITMENTS)



*Type of Facility.* Finally, this analysis compared recidivism across residential and secure care settings in a more in-depth way, again focusing on rearrest/court filings, but considering additional time frames, including time to recidivism.

Youth departing residential programs had similar rates of rearrest/court filings within three years (77.5%) than youth departing secure settings (77.2%). However, youth who departed secure settings recidivated 22 days sooner than youth departing residential settings (287 vs. 308 days).<sup>42</sup> Of the ten youth who departed day programs, 80% recidivated.<sup>43</sup> The average number of days until arrest for those ten kids departing day programs was 461 days. Similarly, youth who spent a majority (51% or more) of their time in custody in secure care recidivated sooner than youth who spent a majority of their time in residential programs (295 vs. 308 days).<sup>44</sup> When looking at committed youth only (who can spend time in either secure or residential), those departing from secure care had a higher rate of rearrest/court filing within three years (77.2%) than youth departing residential programs (76.1%)<sup>45</sup>. Similarly, committed youth who departed from secure facilities recidivated sooner (287 days) than those youth who departed from a residential program (343 days).<sup>\*46</sup>

<sup>42</sup>  $F=2.154$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.117$ .

<sup>43</sup>  $\chi^2=0.049$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=.976$ .

<sup>44</sup>  $F=0.009$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.924$ .

<sup>45</sup>  $\chi^2=0.081$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.776$ .

<sup>46</sup>  $F=4.551$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.034$ .

# CONCLUSION

This report is the ninth in a series of reports measuring various outcomes relative to New Jersey's adult and juvenile offender populations and meets a legislative mandate. To this end, the New Jersey Department of Corrections (DOC), the New Jersey State Parole Board (SPB) and the Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) examined the recidivism of a select cohort of offenders (juvenile and adult) released from the custody of each respective law enforcement agency in calendar year 2015. In addition to measuring overall recidivism levels, this report describes adult and juvenile cohort characteristics and analyzes those factors associated with recidivism.

For the purposes of this report, the DOC defines recidivism in agreement with the Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics and the Pew Center on the States, while the JJC defines recidivism in accordance with the National Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators (CJAC). For the adult analysis, the analysis is expanded beyond the usual recidivism measure of reincarceration to also include data on rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration for a community supervision violation or new commitment that occurs during the follow-up period. For the juvenile analysis, recidivism was defined as a new offense that would be a crime if perpetrated by an adult, committed by a previously-adjudicated youth who has been released from a program or returned to the community. A three-year follow-up period was utilized for all analyses.

The 3-year recidivism rates of adult inmates released in 2015 were similar to those of inmates released in prior cohorts. For the 2015 cohort, 51% were rearrested, 38% were reconvicted, and 30% were reincarcerated within three years of release. Overall, these rates are better than national estimates. A 2014 Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) report analyzing recidivism rates in 30 states found that after a three-year period, nearly 50% experienced a return to prison.<sup>1</sup> A more recent report exploring recidivism within nine years of release also concluded that 68% of releases were rearrested within a three-year time frame.<sup>2</sup> The recidivism outcomes presented in this report continue to place New Jersey well below the estimates for the 30 states included in both BJS studies.

In a 2015 publication from the Brennan Center for Justice at the New York University School of Law, New Jersey was praised for its crime rate decrease and prison population reduction. From 2011-2014, New Jersey reduced its prison population by 9.5% and the crime rate decreased by 20% during this period.<sup>3</sup> Since 2014, New Jersey's prison population has decreased further. Findings from the recidivism analyses included in this report support the notion that New Jersey has continued to demonstrate a pattern of simultaneously reducing recidivism and the crime rate while maintaining public protection.

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<sup>1</sup> Durose, M., Cooper, A., & Snyder, H. (2014). Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 30 States in 2005: Patterns from 2005 to 2010. Bureau of Justice Statistics, US Dept. of Justice, & Office of Justice Programs.

<sup>2</sup> Alper, M. & Durose, M.R. (2018). 2018 Update on Prisoner recidivism: A 9-Year Follow-Up Period (2005-2014). Bureau of Justice Statistics, US Dept. of Justice, & Office of Justice Programs.

<sup>3</sup> Eisen, L-B., & Chettiar, I. (2015). The Reverse Mass Incarceration Act. Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law. Available at: <https://www.brennancenter.org/publication/reverse-mass-incarceration-act>

Despite the gains made in recidivism and crime rate deductions, the findings of this report also highlight the difficulty many inmates face upon reentry, particularly within 12 months of release. Nearly 53% of releases with a rearrest event are rearrested within the first 12 months of release. After this one-year mark, rearrest rates drop significantly. These rates are consistent with national trends,<sup>4</sup> but are concerning nonetheless. The DOC is firmly committed to providing inmates in its custody with programming and resources that will place them in a better position to succeed at the completion of their sentences. The DOC aims to not only protect the public by operating safe, secure and humane correctional facilities, but also provide proper classification, appropriate treatment of inmates and offer programs in the areas of education, behavior modification and substance use treatment that promote successful reentry into society. Specifically, the Department has provided those in DOC custody with licensed substance use disorder treatment and other programming to prevent substance use and relapse. The DOC has worked closely with the Department of Human Services to tailor licensing standards to a correctional setting, thus providing inmates with the same treatment opportunities available in the community. Licensed drug treatment programs are now available at eight RCRP facilities, and, after an extensive planning and renovation process, Mid-State Correctional Facility reopened in April 2017 as the first licensed, clinically driven drug treatment prison operated by the DOC.

The Department has also continued its efforts to provide educational services to those in custody with great success. While completing their sentences, large numbers of inmates are earning their high school and equivalency diplomas and associate degrees. The Department offers a wide range of vocational programming and has issued increasing numbers of industry-based vocational certificates so that inmates are better prepared for meaningful employment once released. Finally, as offenders complete their sentences and prepare to return to the community, they receive assistance in obtaining necessary identification documents. Assistance is also provided in such areas as family reunification and linkage to housing as well as other important resources.

In this regard, the results of the present analyses support the missions of the DOC. Residential Community Release Program completion was related to decreased rates of recidivism post-release. Inmates who participated in psychoeducational drug treatment programming had lower rates of recidivism after release. Nearly 90% of all vocational education participants were employed at any time within three years of release. Further, vocational education participants experienced decreases in rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration compared to the full release cohort. The DOC will continue to examine these data to ensure that the Department is making a positive difference in the lives of inmates as they prepare for reentry, resulting in improved public safety in communities throughout New Jersey and beyond.

For the juvenile cohort, the Juvenile Justice Commission followed the justice system activity of its released youth for three full years after each had been released from custody. Specifically, at the three-year point, 78.0% of the youth released had a court filing/arrest, 61.3% had a new offense leading to an adjudication/conviction, and 28.0% had a new offense leading to a new commitment to the JJC or to State prison. Importantly, an examination of juvenile recidivism rates over a four-year period (2012-2015)

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<sup>4</sup> Durose, M., Cooper, A., & Snyder, H. (2014). Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 30 States in 2005: Patterns from 2005 to 2010. Bureau of Justice Statistics, US Dept. of Justice, & Office of Justice Programs.

indicates recidivism rates have decreased for all three measures. New court filings/arrests have decreased by 0.9 percentage points, new adjudications/convictions have decreased by 6.4 percentage points, and new commitments have decreased by 5.1 percentage points.

To provide context for these results, it is worth noting that the juvenile justice literature reports that juveniles placed in State correctional programs across the country return to offending and to the correctional system at high rates, and often very quickly. The 2014 publication by the Pew Charitable Public Trusts entitled, "Measuring Juvenile Recidivism," notes the difficulties in comparing states' juvenile recidivism rates due to varying data collection techniques. Some correctional agencies do not track recidivism regularly or include detailed measures of recidivism. In addition, the length of time offenders are followed may also vary from state to state. And, some jurisdictions do not track juvenile offenders' involvement with the adult system.

The extent of identified personal, family, and community risk factors faced by youth placed with the JJC underscore the challenges to achieving sustained, successful reintegration back to the community. The JJC continues to work to strengthen its approach to working with youth and to strengthen community and family supports for youth in its care.

It is important to note that all youth leaving JJC custody receive parole supervision, unlike the adult system. The JJC's Office of Juvenile Parole and Transitional Services begins working with residents early in their stay to prepare an individualized transition-release plan. In addition, while this report focuses on the 713 individuals released from the JJC's care in 2014 and 2015, the JJC serves a total population of more than 15,000 youth annually, including youth served through its Office of Local Programs and Services, and its secure and residential programs. The Office of Local Programs and Services administers funding to develop and implement a coordinated, community-based continuum of programs and services to address the needs of at-risk and court-involved youth in the community. This continuum of services includes delinquency prevention programs, court diversion programs, detention alternatives, dispositional options, and re-entry programs. The juvenile arrest rate in New Jersey, and nationally, has decreased steadily over the past decade. These data demonstrate that the JJC's efforts, including parole services, the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative, and community-based prevention programs, are having a significant impact on overall public safety. Since the empirical research in the field indicates that placement in a correctional facility is among the strongest predictors of recidivism, the importance of the JJC's work as it relates to serving youth in these community-based settings is clear.