

## Literature Review Related to Recidivism of Discretionary vs Mandatory Parole Release

**Ellis, T., and Marshall, P. (2000). Does parole work? A post-release comparison of reconviction rates for paroled and non-paroled prisoners. The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology, 3(33), pp 300-317.**

Study: Establish if there is a relationship between parole and lowered reconviction rates for prisoners in England and Wales.

Findings: Reconviction rates are lower for those paroled than those who served their full sentence.

“Table 7 shows that prisoners released on parole who were reconvicted within two years, were reconvicted on significantly fewer occasions than prisoners released at the end of their sentence.” (p 312)

“The results...suggest that parole may delay the onset of re-offending. This may be due to the effect of supervision by the Probation Service.” “It is possible that the delay...is actually responsible for the lower reconviction rates, and the lower number of reconvictions, for parolees.” (p 313)

“We have examined whether there is a “parole effect” on reconviction rates along a number of dimensions and it is clear that those prisoners subject to post-release supervision have lower reconviction rates and, by inference, re-offending rates than those released at the end of their full sentence.” (p313)

“The reduction from predicted to actual reconviction rates is greater for those prisoners sentenced to more than four years. There also appears to be a larger reduction from predicted reconviction rates for higher risk prisoners compared to lower risk prisoners.” (p314)

**Marble, D. (2018). The impact of discretionary release on offender recidivism using survival analysis. Corrections: Policy, Practice and Research, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23774657.2017.1361799>**

Study: Used a sample of 38,000 inmates released from 15 states in 1994 to determine the difference in recidivism between those released by discretionary and mandatory methods.

Findings: Results show a statistically significant difference in recidivism based on re-arrest, between those released from prison. (from abstract)

“Mandatory release inmates had a median re-arrest date about 10 months earlier than paroled inmates.”

“Offender released by discretionary parole release had a 31 percent lower hazard of re-arrest than mandatory release offenders.

**Wisconsin Department of Corrections. (2014). Recidivism after release from prison. WI DOC: Madison, WI**

Study: full recidivism report on Wisconsin inmate (recidivism=return to prison)

Findings: Offenders who had discretionary releases to parole supervision showed lower recidivism rates than those who had non-discretionary releases to supervision.

“Recidivism rates for discretionary releases to parole were consistently the lowest of all release types.”

**Stivers Ireland, C. and Prause, J. (2005). Discretionary parole release: Length of imprisonment, percent of sentence served, and recidivism. Journal of Crime and Justice, 28(2), p 27-49.**

Study: Compared outcomes of discretionary versus mandatory release of national data for offenders released in 1995

Findings: Discretionary parole release is associated with longer prison terms served and greater parolee success. (from abstract)

“Those released under discretionary systems served longer terms of imprisonment than those released under mandatory schemes. Similarly, those released discretionarily were more likely to successfully complete their term of parole supervision than those released under mandatory laws.”

**U.S. Department of Justice (2001). Trends in state parole, 1990-2000 (special report). Washington, DC: national Institute of Justice.**

Findings:

“Among state parole discharges in 1999, over half of discretionary parolees successfully completed their term of supervision, compared to a third of mandatory parolees.”

“Although the average time served by discretionary releases exceeded the time served by mandatory parole releases in both years (1990 and 1999), discretionary releases served a smaller percentage of their prison sentences before release” (34% in 1990; 37% in 1999) (p 7)

“Among parole discharges in 1999, 54% of discretionary parolees were successful compared to 33% of those who had received mandatory parole.” (p 11)