



**COLLEGE OF CRIMINOLOGY
AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

Research Brought to Life.

A Demonstration of the Use of Criminal History Data for Recidivism Research

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Overview of the Presentation

- **Describe a study in progress addressing whether Florida's Minimum 85% of Sentence Served Law impacts recidivism rates.**
- **Discuss the use of both Florida Department of Corrections (FDOC) and Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) data are being used.**
- **Describe the accuracy of matching process of the data from both agencies.**
- **Discuss how the research was enhanced with the merging of the two data source.**



Florida's Deterministic Sentencing Law

Florida's Minimum 85% Time Served Law:

Enacted on October 1, 1995.

Requires all offenders convicted of crimes committed on or after October 1, 1995 who are sentenced to prison to serve a minimum of 85% of the court imposed sentence.

Even though parole was eliminated in Florida in 1983, prior to the minimum 85% law, inmates served an average of one-third of their sentence because of liberal gain-time, early release credits, etc.



Florida's Deterministic Sentencing Law

Offenders released in August 2009 served an average of 86.7% of their sentence.

Of the 100,893 inmates in prisons in August 2009, 88,063 (87.3%) had been sentenced under the minimum 85% law.

Since June 1995, the prison population has grown from 61,992 to 100,893 inmates, or by 62.8%.



Research Questions:

- 1. What is the effect of the minimum 85% of sentence served law on the probability of recidivism among released inmates?**
- 2. What is the effect of the minimum 85% of sentence served law on the probability of recidivism across various offenses for which offenders were imprisoned (i.e., violent, sex, property, drug, other offenses)?**
- 3. What is the effect of the minimum 85% of sentence served law across different types of offender demographic groups (i.e., gender, race, ethnicity, age)?**
- 4. What is the effect of the minimum 85% of sentence served law across groups of released inmates with varying levels of the seriousness of their prior criminal records?**



A cohort of 209,288 inmates released from Florida's prison between 1995 to 2005 provided by the Department of Corrections.

Personal identifying variables included in this dataset:

Last name

First name

Date of Birth

Gender

Race

Social Security Number

Offender Identification Number - assigned by FDOC

State Identification Number (SID) - assigned by the Florida

Department of Law Enforcement when a person is first arrested and fingerprinted. This results in an FDLE criminal history record in their Computerized Criminal History (CCH) file.

FBI Number



Covariates to examine the effect of the 85% law on recidivism:

Sentenced Under 85% Law

Age At Release

Male

Black, Non-Hispanic

Hispanic, White or Black

Close Custody

Medium Custody



Covariates to examine the effect of the 85% law on recidivism:

Release Offense-Violent

Release Offense - Sex

Release Offense -Drug

Release Offense-Other

Prior Number of Supervision Violations

Number of Prior Recidivism Events

Months in Prison

Number of Disciplinary Infractions

Supervision Following Prison Release



Recidivism Measures from the FDOC Data:

- 1. Convicted for a new felony offense within one, two and three years of prison release.**
- 2. Time to a new felony offense.**
- 3. Re-imprisonment within one, two and three years of prison release.**
- 4. Time to Re-imprisonment**



Matching FDOC and FDLE Data

Matching FDOC Recidivism File to FDLE's Computerized Criminal History (CCH) Data:

**Florida Statistical Analysis Center (FSAC), located at FDLE,
has a SAS data warehouse which contains all of the CCH
identification, arrest, conviction, and custody data.**

Over 3 million individuals in the FSAC CCH data warehouse.

**When BJS provided substantial funding to states in the 1970's
to enhance their computerized criminal history databases,
they had both operational and research goals.**

**Both goals have been embraced in Florida and many other
states.**



Identifiers the FSAC uses to match to external databases:

1. Last name (Full and Partial)
2. First name (Full and Partial)
3. Date of Birth (Full and Partial)
4. Social Security Number
5. Offender Identification Number - assigned by FDOC
6. State Identification Number (SID) - assigned by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement when a person is first arrested and fingerprinted. This results in an FDLE criminal history record in their Computerized Criminal History (CCH) file.
7. FBI Number

The FDOC's database also contains all of the variables noted above.



Outcome of Matching FDOC Inmate Release Data to FDLE CCH Arrest Data

The FSAC works closely with FDOC's research unit on a regular basis and the two agencies request the matching of their data for projects on a frequent basis.

The FDOC shared the recidivism file of 209,288 inmates released from Florida's prisons between 1995 to 2005 with FDLE's FSAC.

98% of the individuals in the FDC prison release file matched precisely to FDLE's CCH data on all seven identifiers, which virtually ensures a precise match of the prison and arrest records for each case.



Additional Covariates From CCH Data

**Additional covariates to examine the effect of the 85% law on
recidivism from the CCH arrest data:**

Prior Misdemeanor Arrest Charges

Prior Felony Arrests – Violent

Prior Felony Arrests – Sex

Prior Felony Arrests – Property

Prior Felony Arrests – Drug

Prior Felony Arrests – Other

Length of Criminal Career



Recidivism Measures from the FSAC Data:

**Arrested within one, two and three years of prison
release**

Timing to a new arrest

**Arrested for a new felony offense within one, two and
three years of prison release**

Timing to a new felony arrest



Value of CCH Data

Value of Supplementing the CCH Arrest Data to the FDOC Recidivism Data:

Improves the predictive models of recidivism

**Increases our confidence that the effects of the
85% minimum sentence served law are reliable**

Provides for re-arrest recidivism measures.



Additional Florida State University Research Projects Involving the FSAC Matching to CCH Data:

**Impact of educational achievement of youth
released from Juvenile Justice commitment
programs on recidivism – three different annual
cohorts.**

**Palm Beach County, Florida Youth Violence
Prevention Programs evaluation study – two
years of follow-up – and profiles of arrestees.**