RECIDIVISM IN DELAWARE
An Analysis of Offenders Released in 2012 through 2014

December 2018

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Statistical Analysis Center
Delaware Criminal Justice Council
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December 2018

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Executive Summary

This report is released annually per the requirements set forth by Delaware Title 11 § 8903. This report explores all three required recidivism measures for 2014 prison releases set forth by the aforementioned statute and provides a detailed methodology on how these three categories are measured. As in previous reports, only Delaware recidivism events are utilized to calculate these rates.

Since the inception of the report, three-year cumulative recidivism rates have remained fairly consistent. Rearrest rates have ranged between 72-77%, reconviction rates between 67-74%, and recommitment rates between 63-69%. Since the 2011 release cohort, all three measures of recidivism have been at the lower end of those ranges, with the 2014 release cohort having the lowest recidivism rates in the seven years measured (72.8% for rearrest, 67.6% for reconviction, and 63.5% for recommitment).

Table 1. One, two, and three year series recidivism rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012 Release Cohort</th>
<th>2013 Release Cohort</th>
<th>2014 Release Cohort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rearrest</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>69.9%</td>
<td>75.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconviction</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
<td>62.9%</td>
<td>68.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommitment</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
<td>64.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With this installment of recidivism analysis, the Center has now analyzed seven prison release cohorts. Figure 1 displays three year rates of rearrest, reconviction and recommitment for each cohort.

Figure 1. Three year recidivism rates for 2008 through 2014 cohorts
Introduction

This is the sixth report produced pursuant to Delaware Title 11 § 8903. As required, three measures of recidivism were analyzed for this report: rearrest, reconviction, and recommitment. This version covers 2012 through 2014 release cohorts, with a focus on offenders released in the year 2014. Recidivism measures and research methods remain largely consistent with those used in prior studies; but due to advances in the Statistical Analysis Center’s (the Center) ability to obtain and analyze data, measures have been taken to improve the clarity of data obtained for these cohorts.

Delaware has a unified correctional system, with all correctional facilities and services falling under the jurisdiction of the State. This unified system integrates prison and jail systems. Within the unified system, Delaware maintains a five-level system of supervision for offenders: Level V (24-Hour Incarceration); Level IV (Quasi-Incarceration); Level III (Intensive Probation Supervision); Level II (Standard Probation); Level I (Administrative Probation).

Delaware defines a prison term as the aggregate of Level V sentences for an offender totaling greater than one year, while a jail term is defined as the aggregate total of sentences for an offender being one year or less at Level V. Only offenders released from prison terms were included in this study. Early release of any type does not remove the offender from the studied cohort, as the offender was still sentenced to an aggregate contiguous sentence of greater than a year at Level V.

Individuals become subjects of this study at each prison release event. Only in-state recidivism events are captured for this analysis, with the first event for each of the three recidivism measures counted during the associated tracking period. Each individual can thus be counted only once as a recidivist after a given prison release. However, a return to prison can mean that a subject could enter a new tracking period following his/her next release. As such, an offender can appear as a study subject multiple times in one or more release cohorts.

This study explores the required measures of Delaware recidivism in limited context of cohort demographics, length of stay, and release crime categories. While comparison of recidivism rates across jurisdictions can lead to erroneous conclusions, a one-time comparison of Delaware data using the known recidivism definitions of several other states is included in this report.
Methodology

Offenders who were studied for this report:

- Were released from a Level V prison term (aggregate sentence of greater than one year) in a Delaware facility;
- Were not immediately released to federal custody from Delaware incarceration, either to serve time or be deported;
- Were not released immediately to other state or local authorities that would go on to imprison the offender to a period of incarceration that would extend beyond that offender’s at-risk period of three years following their Delaware release;
- Were tracked from the point of release from secure custody (which identifies the start of the at-risk period) for up to three years until a recidivism event or death occurred.

Subjects of this study were tracked for rearrest, reconviction, or recommitment occurring after their at-risk dates using electronic data stored in the state’s criminal justice information system, court, and Department of Correction (DOC) records. Offenses counted as recidivism were limited to state felonies, serious misdemeanors, or violations of probation or parole. Excluded as recidivism events are most state motor vehicle offenses, state criminal offenses classified as violations, and all municipal ordinances. Also post-release arrests or convictions for offenses that occurred prior to release were not counted as recidivism events. A small number of offenses excluded from recidivism counts can result in jail terms, but the general distinction used for exclusion was that only jailable state offenses were counted as recidivism. (Refer to Appendix A for details.)

Recidivism events were established by offense dates, not arrest or conviction dates. The intent was to associate recidivism events as closely as possible with an offenders’ return to criminal behavior, rather than when that behavior was discovered or progressed through the criminal justice system. Recommittals were based only on DOC admission dates, regardless of when the underlying offense(s) occurred. Any secure custody readmissions, in detained or sentenced status, and regardless of sentence length, were counted as recommittals.

Each subject’s at-risk date marked the start of one-year intervals established for the recidivism time series. The intervals are calculated from each individual’s at-risk date. Recidivism rates were calculated for each of the three study measures at each tracking interval. For each recidivism measure and tracking interval, all initial cohort subjects were classified into one of three groups.

- **Recidivists:** In a given interval, a subject becomes a recidivist if records indicate a recidivism event occurred by the interval’s end. Only the first event of each measure is counted, but the recidivist identifier carries forward to all intervals for a given measure after that first event.
- **Non-recidivists:** In a given interval, a subject is regarded as a non-recidivist if not counted in the cohort attrition group and no recidivism events were recorded as occurring through the end of that interval, including all prior intervals. A subject counted as a non-recidivist up to an interval when death was known to occur would be moved to the cohort attrition group from that interval onward, but would still be counted as a non-recidivist in recidivism-free intervals prior to death.
- **Cohort attrition:** If not already identified as a recidivist, a subject is counted in the cohort attrition group in a given interval, and each subsequent interval, if the subject’s death was known to occur before the end of that interval. For recidivism measured by reconviction, a subject in fugitive status on a pending recidivist rearrest case is counted in the cohort attrition
group as of the interval when a warrant was issued; this cohort attrition designation can be temporary if a fugitive is found to have been returned and adjudicated in a follow-up study.

With the terms above representing counts in each group, the following equation holds throughout the tracking period.

\[ \text{Initial Cohort Size} = \text{Recidivists} + \text{Non-recidivists} + \text{Cohort Attrition} \]

Rearranging the previous equation yields the following.

\[ \text{Recidivists} + \text{Non-recidivists} = \text{Initial Cohort Size} - \text{Cohort Attrition} \]

Using the terms defined above, interval recidivism rates were calculated using the following equation.

\[ \text{Interval Recidivism Rate} = \left( \frac{\text{Recidivists}}{\text{Recidivists} + \text{Non-recidivists}} \right) \times 100\% \]

This method is intended to include only those who had the opportunity to recidivate in the recidivism rate calculation. Note that the denominator in the interval recidivism rate equation can diminish over time due to cohort attrition, and denominators can differ with each measure in the same interval. For example, consider a subject first rearrested in the second tracking interval, who died without another event, but also before the case could be adjudicated. That subject would be included in the rearrest recidivism rate denominator for all intervals (and in the numerator from the second interval onward). For the reconviction measure, the subject would be moved to the cohort attrition group in the second interval, thus reducing the reconviction rate denominator by one for the second and subsequent intervals.

The Center does not generally have access to non-Delaware criminal records except those released to the public. However, Delaware information system records can provide a non-public source that assists in the identification of non-Delaware activity. State and public records reviewed in the research process revealed that some subjects had significant criminal justice events in other jurisdictions during the tracking period. For example, court dockets from a neighboring state might show that a probationer is incarcerated in another jurisdiction. If such sources gave reliable indications of incarceration in the tracking period by a subject who had not recidivated in Delaware, that subject was removed from the study, as if they were not in the initial release cohort. Criminal activity in other jurisdictions cannot be completely accounted for through available sources, so it is not possible to reliably identify when and where non-Delaware events occurred. The Center holds the position, however, that it is unreasonable to regard subjects as non-recidivists if the offender has significant criminal activity elsewhere during the three year tracking period.
Recidivism Subject and Offense Group Summaries

There were 1,151 offenders tracked for up to three years following release from a prison term in 2014. Breakouts of race, gender, age, length of stay, and offense histories are provided in this section. These are common parameters in recidivism research, and may appear to have some association with recidivism rates, but correlations are not examined in detail.

Figure 2 shows the demographic breakdown by race and gender for offenders released in 2014. Females were broken out further to better display the racial breakdown of the female cohort. Figure 3 shows race and gender proportions of tracked subjects in the 2014 prison release cohort, but subjects in the “Other” race category are not represented in the bar chart due to representing less than 1% of both the male and female prison populations.

Males accounted for 89% of the prison releases in the 2014 cohort, while females comprised the remaining 11%. Annual prison releases of female offenders are generally low. Readers should be mindful of small group counts, especially for females, as samples of this size are generally more susceptible to fluctuation from anomalous behavior in recidivism studies.

Table 2 displays offender at-risk age quartiles over a three year series, broken out by race and gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age at start of at-risk period</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25th percentile</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75th percentile</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figures 4 and 5, respectively, show counts of male and female subjects in selected at-risk age groups. Subjects are grouped by at-risk age as of their last birthday on or before their at-risk date. Figure 5 illustrates an example of the small group issues previously mentioned regarding breakouts of subject characteristics. Note that for females only a few of the selected age groups have more than 20 subjects.

Average lengths of stay for the 2014 release cohort by race and gender are displayed in Figure 6. Length of stay calculations in the prison release data include credit for time served in detention. It is important to mention that a number of variables impact an offender’s length of stay such as the prior criminal history of the offender and the crime committed.
Release offense is a common recidivism research parameter, but it is often difficult to attribute a prison term to a single offense type. Complex cases with multiple offense types and plea-bargaining are common, and a single offense can be misleading in describing reasons for an offender’s imprisonment.

Figure 7 (following page) displays the percentage of each lead offense category for race and gender. A salient feature of Figure 7 is the high number of black males in the public order offense group. Key factors in that group count are drug dealing and weapon offenses. There are around four times more black males than white males in the drug dealing group, and almost three times more black males than white males in the weapon offense group.

![Figure 7. Subjects by race and gender in prison release lead offense groups](chart)

For subjects in this study whose prison terms involved multiple offenses, the Center identified a lead offense by the longest single term served. If the longest term criteria yielded more than one offense type, ties were broken using an offense hierarchy that loosely follows the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reporting hierarchy. Table 3 (following page) lists offense type classifications from most to least serious for the 2014 prison release cohort. The table shows counts of subjects for each lead offense type by race and gender. Offense types are listed under broad offense groups of violent, property, and public order, with subject counts also shown for each group. Violations of probation or parole are counted as the underlying offense for which the probationer or parolee had been sentenced. The number inside the parentheses in the following table displays the count of violations of probation from the total count of each category listed in the table.
Table 3. Prison term lead offense classification counts by race and gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prison Term Lead Offense</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black (180)</td>
<td>Black (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>White (128)</td>
<td>White (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homicide</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>35 (6)</td>
<td>1 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>81 (5)</td>
<td>5 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>40 (11)</td>
<td>5 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Sex Offenses</td>
<td>8 (2)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Violent Offenses</td>
<td>12 (1)</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>57 (15)</td>
<td>5 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson, Unoccupied</td>
<td>2 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>37 (10)</td>
<td>1 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>11 (2)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud/Forgery</td>
<td>6 (2)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Property Offenses</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Public Order             | 354 (41)      | 10 (3)        |
| Drug Dealing             | 185 (26)      | 5 (1)         |
| Other Drug Offenses      | 12 (2)        | 0 (0)         |
| Weapons                  | 105 (6)       | 3 (1)         |
| Driving Related          | 34 (5)        | 1 (1)         |
| Vehicular Homicide       | 5 (0)         | 1 (1)         |
| Vehicular Assault        | 1 (0)         | 0 (0)         |
| DUI                      | 23 (4)        | 0 (0)         |
| Other Motor Vehicle Offenses | 5 (1) | 0 (0)         |
| Other Public Order Offenses | 18 (2) | 1 (0)         |

Table 4 displays recidivism rates for each required measure broken out by race and gender.

Table 4. Recidivism rates by race and gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Year</th>
<th>2 Year</th>
<th>3 Year</th>
<th>1 Year</th>
<th>2 Year</th>
<th>3 Year</th>
<th>1 Year</th>
<th>2 Year</th>
<th>3 Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rearrest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reconviction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Recommitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>68.5%</td>
<td>74.6%</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
<td>64.2%</td>
<td>69.7%</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
<td>64.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>75.6%</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
<td>64.8%</td>
<td>70.7%</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
<td>66.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>47.2%</td>
<td>64.5%</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
<td>64.8%</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td>61.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
<td>63.0%</td>
<td>69.3%</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
<td>55.5%</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td>71.6%</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
<td>68.4%</td>
<td>50.5%</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recidivism Findings

Table 5 shows recidivism rates at one-, two-, and three- year intervals for the measures studied. The column headings $R+N$ and $R$ represent the denominator and numerator, respectively, in the recidivism rate equation provided in the methodology section.

Table 5. Series recidivism rates at 1, 2, and 3 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rearrest R+N</th>
<th>Rearrest R</th>
<th>Recidivism Rate</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rearrest R+N</th>
<th>Rearrest R</th>
<th>Recidivism Rate</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rearrest R+N</th>
<th>Rearrest R</th>
<th>Recidivism Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,014</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,174</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,142</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,010</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>69.9%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,171</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,132</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,007</td>
<td>762</td>
<td>75.7%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,168</td>
<td>869</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,128</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>72.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Reconviction R+N</td>
<td>Reconviction R</td>
<td>Recidivism Rate</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Reconviction R+N</td>
<td>Reconviction R</td>
<td>Recidivism Rate</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Reconviction R+N</td>
<td>Reconviction R</td>
<td>Recidivism Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,013</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,170</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>47.2%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,132</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,009</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>62.9%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,165</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>62.4%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,119</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>62.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,009</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>68.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,158</td>
<td>785</td>
<td>67.8%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,109</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>67.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Recommitment R+N</td>
<td>Recommitment R</td>
<td>Recidivism Rate</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Recommitment R+N</td>
<td>Recommitment R</td>
<td>Recidivism Rate</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Recommitment R+N</td>
<td>Recommitment R</td>
<td>Recidivism Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,014</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,172</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,133</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,011</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,166</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,120</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>57.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,007</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>64.9%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,161</td>
<td>764</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,113</td>
<td>707</td>
<td>63.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8 (following page) shows three year recidivism rates for the 2014 prison release cohort grouped by release offense type. As with any other breakout presented herein, many factors are at play in addition to the focus variable. In Figure 8, for the primary measure of rearrest, the association of length of stay with offense type is also explored. The bold vertical line indicates the three year rearrest rate for 2014 (72.8%). The average length of stay was calculated for each offense category. Average length of stay was highest for the homicide group at 17.6 years. For each offense group in Figure 8, average length of stay relative to the homicide average is represented by the semi-transparent bar overlaying recidivism rate bars. For example, the average length of stay for the robbery group was about 3.7 years, which is represented as 21% of the average for homicide.
Figure 8. Rearrest recidivism rates at 3 years by lead offense type

Percent Rearrested Within Three Years Following At-risk Date

- Homicide (11)
- Rape (80)
- Robbery (131)
- Assault (65)
- Other Sex Offense (22)
- Other Violent Offense (23)
- Burglary (146)
- Property, except Burglary (83)
- Drug Dealing (244)
- Other Drug Offense (24)
- Weapons (147)
- MV Offenses (115)
- Other Public Order (37)

2014 Prison Release Cohort
Group Average Length of Stay Relative to Homicide (17.56 years for Homicide)
Recidivism in Other States

In this installment of recidivism analysis, the Center has worked to provide several new examples of recidivism analysis based on known recidivism definitions provided by other states. It is important to be cognizant of the pitfalls of comparison of recidivism rates among other states, as not all states have the same methodologies for analyzing recidivism, nor is there even a standard definition of recidivism. Some states use reconviction as their standard measure, others use recommitment. Some states only consider new charges recidivist events, not including violations of probation. Other states further require offenders to be originally incarcerated on a felony charge to be considered or resentenced to a specific minimum time for that offender to be considered a recidivist.

Delaware is one of six states with a unified correctional system. As such, comparing recidivism rates with states that have non-unified systems presents its own set of challenges. States that do not have unified corrections systems typically use county-run jail facilities to house offenders that are detained awaiting trial or sentencing. Some states that utilize non-unified correctional systems omit offenders housed in county jail facilities. These offenders may be incarcerated on “short-term prison sentences.”

Figure 9, below, displays Delaware’s official recidivism measure (three year rearrest rate) compared to how Delaware data would appear using the known recidivism measures of several other states, such as Virginia, Vermont, and Maryland. These rates were calculated using raw DOC data, specifically unverified lead charge information.

![Figure 9. Delaware recidivism rates using other known state recidivism measures](image-url)
Conclusions

Summary of Findings
The findings of this study provide an overview of recidivism for the 2014 prison release cohort. The Center tracked 1,151 offenders in the 2014 cohort for three years following release from secured custody for three recidivism measures: rearrest, reconviction, and recommitment. Tracking times were divided into one year intervals, and individuals were designated as recidivists as of the tracking interval in which their first recidivism events occurred. Offense dates were used to determine rearrest or reconviction events to most closely represent return to criminal behavior. For the recommitment measure, recidivism was identified by the date of first readmission to secure custody in a DOC facility, whether in detained or sentenced status, and for any length of time.

The Center captured race, gender, and at-risk age for each study subject as they were recorded in the state’s information systems, with some manual review to resolve data conflicts. Ethnicity was not studied due to concerns with data quality. About 89% of offenders released in 2014 were males; almost 58% of males were black, up from approximately 55% in the previous cohort. Approximately 77% of females released in the 2014 cohort were white, up from 62% in the previous cohort.

For the purposes of analysis, the Center also categorized subjects by the offense which determined the majority of their prison stay (lead offense). The lead offenses were grouped into three major categories of violent, property, or public order. Of released inmates included in this study, about 50% were released from sentences in the public order group; about 29% from violent offense sentences, and about 19% from property offense sentences. These rates are very similar to rates reported in prior cohort years.

Rearrest rates varied substantially over the identified release offense groups. The highest three year rearrest rate among the crime categories is that of burglary, at 83.6%. Rape and other sex offense groups had the lowest rates among the categories, at 52.5% and 45.5%, respectively. This is commensurate with the previous cohort.
Considerations and Limitations

Limited analyses of race, gender, at-risk age, and offense types show sometimes large differences in rearrest recidivism for those groupings. Conclusions should be drawn carefully though, as more in-depth analyses should be conducted.

Recidivism rates generally decreased as at-risk age increased which is consistent with research in this area. Rates also generally decreased as length of stay increased, but at-risk age is generally correlated with longer lengths of stay. Advanced analytical research that could possibly show relationships with length of stay and at-risk ages were outside the scope of this study.

In addition to the primary measure of rearrest, reconviction and recommitment measures are required and reported in this study series, but those measures add dubious value in enhancing our understanding of offenders’ post-release behavior. An absence of reconviction does not necessarily negate the indication of reoffending inferred from rearrest. Likewise, recommitment is not necessarily a reliable indicator of the severity or certainty of reoffending.

Analyzing recidivism is challenging, as it is a complex, multifaceted subject. This study, while providing some rich data about the subject, raises far more questions than the Center was able to explore given the study’s time, resource, and data limitations. It is important to remember that this study did not examine the complexities of offender behavior. Recidivism is only one type of measure needed to determine whether a package of sanctions and interventions was successful in deterring an individual from future offending. Recidivism and desistance are essentially all or none measures – either a person continues to reoffend or they do not. However, rehabilitation is a gradual, non-linear process with progress occurring in incremental steps. Examination of recidivism then should also include appropriate study of rehabilitation efforts to understand the progress offenders are making on the path toward no longer recidivating.

If recidivism is intended as a measure of rehabilitative success, recidivism research should also include appropriate study of rehabilitation efforts to understand progress offenders are making on the path toward desistance. Such a study should include particular focus on those who appear to be successfully rehabilitated. Resources that are essential for more comprehensive studies are beyond the capacity of the Center alone. Thorough research will require dedication of more resources and collaboration of multiple entities. The Center hopes to widen the scope of recidivism study by assisting in the newly established Delaware Correctional Reentry Commission (DCRC). As part of the DCRC, Delaware will be providing a survival (success) analysis that will compare a baseline analysis to a release cohort that is receiving increased and newly-established reentry services as a result of Executive Order 27.
Appendix A

Recidivism Offenses and Prison Lead Offenses

Most offenses of relevance in this study, whether related to pre-release or recidivism follow-up, are identified in Titles 11, 16, 21, or 31 of the Delaware Code. In measuring rearrest and reconviction recidivism, the Center used only what it refers to as serious criminal offenses. In addition to probation or parole violations, selected offenses are identified in the Delaware Code as felonies or misdemeanors with incarceration as a possible (or mandatory) sanction. In a small number of cases, Delaware arrests and detentions of subjects held as fugitives for others jurisdictions were also counted as recidivism. Offenses/events used in rearrest and reconviction recidivism measures are summarized in Table A1.

Table A1. Arrest or conviction events counted as recidivism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delaware Code references</th>
<th>Offenses or events counted in rearrest or reconviction recidivism measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title 11</td>
<td>Any criminal felony or misdemeanor punishable by incarceration; Violation of probation (§ 4334) or parole (§ 4352); Arrest prior to requisition (§ 2513)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title 16</td>
<td>Felony or misdemeanor drug offenses identified in Chapter 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title 21</td>
<td>Driving after judgment prohibited (§ 2810); Driving under the influence (§ 4177); Disregarding the signal of a police vehicle, felony only (§ 4103); Leaving the scene of an accident (Chapter 42); Theft, unauthorized use, or damage of vehicles (Chapter 67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title 31</td>
<td>Abusing, neglecting, exploiting, or mistreating an impaired adult (Chapter 39)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A2 (following page) lists generalized offenses within classifications that were identified as lead offenses for offenders released in 2011 through 2013. Lead offense classifications are listed in hierarchical order in the left column; specific offenses in each row are listed in no particular order. The brief literal descriptions should give readers a sense of the nature of offenses covered; those seeking more specificity are referred to the Delaware Code link above.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead Release Offense Classification</th>
<th>Examples of Specific Offenses Included</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homicide</td>
<td>Murder, any degree; Murder by abuse or neglect, any degree; Manslaughter; Criminally negligent homicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>Rape, any degree; Unlawful sexual intercourse, any degree; Unlawful sexual penetration, any degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>Robbery, any degree; Carjacking, any degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>Attempted murder; Assault, any degree; Assault in a detention facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Sex Offense</td>
<td>Unlawful sexual contact, any degree; Sexual abuse of a child; Dangerous crime against a child; Sexual exploitation or solicitation of a child; Child pornography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Violent Offense</td>
<td>Menacing or aggravated menacing; Reckless endangering; Terroristic threatening; Arson 1st degree; Extortion; Riot; Stalking; Promoting prostitution 1st degree; Victim/witness intimidation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>Arson 2nd or 3rd degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>Burglary, any degree; Possession of burglar’s tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>Theft; Shoplifting; Possession of shoplifter’s tools or instruments of theft; Exploitation of resources of infirm or impaired persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud/Forgery</td>
<td>Forgery; Identity theft; Issuing a bad check; Unlawful use of a credit card; Home improvement fraud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Property</td>
<td>Criminal mischief; Criminal trespass; Receiving stolen property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Dealing</td>
<td>Drug trafficking; Possession with intent to deliver drugs; Distribution of drugs to minors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Drug Offense</td>
<td>Possession of drugs; Possession of drug paraphernalia; Maintaining a vehicle or dwelling to use or deliver drugs; Possessing drugs without a prescription or acquiring drugs with fraudulent prescriptions; Delivery or possession of drugs within prohibited zones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons</td>
<td>Carrying a concealed deadly weapon or dangerous instrument; Possession of a deadly weapon or firearm during commission of a felony; Possession of a deadly weapon or firearm by persons prohibited; Wearing body armor during commission of a felony; Theft of a firearm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicular Homicide</td>
<td>Vehicular homicide, any degree; Murder, manslaughter, or criminally negligent homicide if a vehicle was not intentionally used as a weapon (listed as homicide if vehicle intentionally used as weapon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicular Assault</td>
<td>Vehicular assault, any degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving Under Influence</td>
<td>Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Motor Vehicle Offense</td>
<td>Driving after judgment prohibited; Failure to stop at command of a police officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Public Order</td>
<td>Endangering welfare of a child; Hindering prosecution; Escape, any degree; Promoting prison contraband; Resisting arrest; Tampering with a witness; Tampering with physical evidence; Criminal contempt of a domestic protection from abuse order; Non-compliance with conditions of recognizance; Failure to register as a sex offender; Sex offender residing/loitering in prohibited zone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>