

EBDM Decision Point: State Institutional Release

Why this Decision Point is Important:

- This decision point offers an opportunity to properly prepare inmates for release from prison, which can reduce recidivism and increase public safety.
- Early release options can incentivize positive adjustment, improved behavior and program participation among inmates.
- Pre-release programming can provide access to needed treatment while an inmate is incarcerated and awaiting release.
- Early release mechanisms reduce the cost of incarceration.

What Should Happen at this Decision Point:

1. Pre-release programming and release decisions are evidence-based.
2. Pre-release programming decisions for those who are parole eligible are coordinated between DOC and the Parole Commission.
3. Inmates are properly prepared for release.
4. Effective communication regarding release planning occurs between social workers and probation/parole agents.
5. Equal access to programs is available, regardless of race, religion, or other socioeconomic factors.
6. Victim and community input is considered in release decisions.
7. Adequate pre-release programming resources are available, and there are no internal or external barriers for offenders to enter programs.

Selected Research:

- Direct release from high security, segregated supermax settings to the community is associated with increases in recidivism rates and shorter time to reoffending. *Primary Citation:* Lovell, Johnson, & Cain (2007)
- Empirical evidence suggests that institutional misconduct is predictive of future criminal outcomes in the community. It is therefore appropriate for parole boards to incorporate this information into their decision-making process. *Primary Citation:* Mooney & Daffern (2011)
- Mental illness per se does not tend to predict recidivism among parolees. *Primary Citations:* Matejkowski, Draine, Solomon, & Salzer (2011); Walters & Crawford (2014)
- Halfway house interventions with supervision geared to level of risk/need can be effective with higher risk offenders. *Primary Citation:* Andrews & Janes (2006)
- A sample of non-violent inmates in Kentucky who had their sentences commuted posed no greater threat to public safety than those who remained incarcerated until their sentence expiration date. Moreover, by releasing the commuted sentence group, the research team estimated a cost savings of \$13,430,834. *Primary Citation:* Vito, Tewksbury, & Higgins (2010)

Resources:

Further resources on the topic

