

AN ANALYSIS OF RECIDIVISM RATES AMONG  
RESIDENTS RELEASED FROM MASSACHUSETTS CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS  
IN 1977

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DEC 5 1979

ACQUISITIONS

Prepared by:

Yvette Smart  
Research Analyst

Massachusetts Department of Correction

William T. Hogan  
Commissioner

November, 1979

PUBLICATION # 11626

Approved By Alfred C. Holland, State Purchasing Agent

63860

## ABSTRACT

As one of a continuous series, this study presents an analysis of recidivism rates for individuals released from the Massachusetts Correctional Institutions in the year 1977.

Maintaining the downward trend documented in previous departmental recidivism research, the overall recidivism rate for the 1977 releasee population is 15%. For releases in the years 1971 through 1976, the rates were as follows: 25%, 22%, 19%, 19%, 20%, and 16% respectively.

The results of this study reaffirmed prior major findings. Individuals who participated in the Home Furlough Program and a graduated release process prior to their release (to the streets) had significantly lower recidivism rates compared with those who did not participate.

New results that have emerged in the 1977 analysis included: 1) significantly lower rates in recidivism for the Concord population; 2) total prior incarcerations as a distinguishing variable between recidivists and non-recidivists; 3) a significantly lower return rate for the black population of inmates as compared with whites.

In summary, this study along with prior recidivism research, attributes the reduction in rates to three major factors: 1) participation in the Home Furlough Program; 2) release from a pre-release center; and 3) the combined effect of the two programs. Therefore, we can conclude that graduated release programs along with various reintegrative efforts, are germane to the reduction in recidivism rates of the incarcerated.

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INTRODUCTION

Recidivism rates have been used to measure the effectiveness of the state's correctional programs since the implementation of the Correctional Reform Act of 1972 which instituted pre-release centers, the Home Furlough Program and work and education release. As part of a continuing effort in assessing these programs, the Research Unit has annually studied and evaluated recidivism rates. Through this process, we can determine whether these programs are making the positive impact intended by the Department of Correction, to rehabilitate and reintegrate individuals back into society.

Analysis from prior years has shown that there has been a reduction in recidivism rates.<sup>1</sup> The overall trend has been downward. For releases in the year 1966, the mean recidivism rate was 30%; for 1971, 25%; for 1972, 22%; for 1973, 19%; for 1974, 19%; for 1975, 20%; for 1976, 16%.

Controlling for selection factors in furlough program participation, it has been found that participation in the program results in lower rates of recidivism. Moreover, participation in pre-release programs prior to release also resulted in lower rates of recidivism. Finally, the security level of the institution from which an individual is released has a positive bearing on recidivism rates.

The present study represents a continued attempt to study the above trends and identify any additional trends in recidivism rates. This study is based on the format of prior annual recidivism reports for comparative purposes.

The Research Unit collected data describing the background

characteristics and the recidivism variables for all individuals released from Massachusetts correctional institutions in 1977. The statistics are available for MCI's Walpole and Concord (maximum security institutions); MCI-Norfolk (medium security); Forestry Camps and MCI-Framingham (minimum security); MCI-Bridgewater (including the Southeastern Correctional Center and Bridgewater State Hospital); and Pre-Release Centers. The raw data for this report has been published as a separate study.<sup>2</sup>

During 1977, the period of this study, Concord was considered maximum security, although it has been subsequently designated a medium security facility.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Definition of Recidivist:

A recidivist was defined as any subject returned to a federal or state correctional institution or to a county jail or house of correction for 30 days or more as a result of either a parole violation or a new court sentence.

Follow-Up Period:

The follow-up period was one year from the date of the subject's release to the community.

Variables Collected:

The analyses in this report are based on five categories of variables: (1) commitment variables, (2) personal background variables, (3) criminal history variables, (4) furlough variables and (5) recidivism variables. Appendix I gives a specific listing of these variables.

Data was derived primarily from the computerized data base developed by the Correction and Parole Management Information System. Additional data was collected from the files of the Department of Correction, the Parole Board, and the Board of Probation. The data was analyzed on the Massachusetts State College Computer Network. An "other" category has been devised because of the relatively small sample size. This category includes RDC's (Reception Diagnostic Centers), Lemuel Shattuck Hospital and Bridgewater State Hospital, also Medfield Prison Project.

FINDINGS

In 1977, a total of 1138 individuals were released from the Massachusetts Correctional Institutions (MCI). Of the 1138, 969 or 85% were not returned to a correctional institution within one year of their release while 169 or 15% were reincarcerated within the one year follow-up period. Therefore, the 1977 recidivism rate was 15%. This is a one percent decrease from 1976.

Upon examination of individual institution recidivism rates, variation occurs. Table I illustrates the differential rates of institutional releases.

TABLE I  
RECIDIVISM RATES BY RELEASING INSTITUTION, 1977

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF RELEASES</u>	<u>PERCENT OF TOTAL POPULATION</u>	<u>RECIDIVISM RATE</u>
Walpole	118	( 10)	25%
Concord	252	( 22)	18%
Norfolk	76	( 7)	15%
Framingham-Men	1	( 0)	0%
Framingham-Women	107	( 9)	23%
Forestry Camps	57	( 5)	14%
SECC	44	( 4)	20%
Pre-Release Centers	473	( 42)	8%
*Other	10	( 1)	22%
TOTAL	1138	(100)	15%

\*Other includes RDC's (Reception Diagnostic Centers), Lemuel Shattuck Hospital and Bridgewater State Hospital, also Medfield Prison Project.

An overall downward trend in annual recidivism rates remains outstanding for the years 1966-1977. However, comparison of individual institution rates show considerable variation.

Recidivism rates for the Forestry Camps (Monroe, Warwick, Plymouth) have increased. This increase is not statistically significant because of the relatively small sample size (N=57).

The Southeastern Correctional Center (SECC) which began operation in 1976 is classified as a medium security institution. Their increase in recidivism rate is not statistically significant. At this time, it is difficult to determine reasons for their increase. Further studies will better analyze the rate of recidivism for SECC using 1976 as the base year for comparison. Table II presents comparative recidivism rates of individual institutions for 1966-1977.



TABLE II

COMPARATIVE RECIDIVISM RATES FOR YEARS 1966-1977

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>CONCORD</u>	<u>WALPOLE</u>	<u>NORFOLK</u>	<u>FRAMINGHAM</u>	<u>PRE-RELEASE</u>	<u>FORESTRY</u>	<u>S.E.C.C.*</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1966	30%	33%	28%	32%	-	27%	-	30%
1971	28%	27%	18%	29%	-	14%	-	25%
1972	27%	21%	15%	18%	-	14%	-	22%
1973	26%	21%	14%	17%	12%	14%	-	19%
1974	27%	22%	19%	12%	12%	7%	-	19%
1975	26%	27%	12%	18%	14%	15%	-	20%
1976	25%	24%	22%	19%	9%	5%	12%	16%
1977	18%	25%	15%	23%	8%	14%	20%	15%

\* Classified as a medium institution, the Southeastern Correctional Center (SECC) began operation in 1976.

Of noted interest is the reduced recidivism rate for the Concord releases. There exists a statistically significant difference in the recidivism rate for 1977 when compared to 1976. ( $\chi^2=9.5, d.f.=1, p < .05$ ). Upon examination of this initial finding, we found that there was a difference between the 1976 and 1977 Concord populations. Further investigation revealed that this difference was outstanding when the age of the population was isolated. The statistical test of significance, (chi square) showed that the difference occurred specifically between ages: 21-22; 22-23; and 23-24 years old. The direction of this difference in age is moving downward.

In 1977, there was an administrative move directed to keeping the Concord population at a young age, whereas the oldest offender would be 23 years. This move proved to have seemingly a positive effect - a reduction in the recidivism rate from 1976's 25% to 1977's 18%. The implication is, as the older, more experienced inmates were moved out of Concord, the recidivism rate dropped. A closer follow-up is necessary to reveal the change in profile of the Concord inmate contrasted to previous years.

Security Level of Releasing Institutions:

The security level of the institution from which an individual is released plays an important role on his or her post-release behavior. It has been shown that graduated release from an institution of lesser security aids in preventing the incidence of recidivism, (Mershon, 1975, 1976). Administrators have come to accept this fact and are increasing placements in pre-release centers. The proportion of releases from pre-release centers has increased over the years. In 1975, 224 or 28% of releases were from a pre-release center. For 1976 and 1977, the proportions were respectively: 365 or 40% and 473 or 42%. The department is also expanding medium security institutions to accommodate more beds. The Southeastern Correctional Center and Gardner are examples of this.

It is clear to see from Table III, that the lower the security level of the institution an individual experiences prior to his or her release to the streets, the less a chance of them recidivating. On the other hand, the more security placed on an individual prior to his or her release to the street, the higher their chances of recidivating. Therefore, the reintegrative process via the de-escalating levels of security proves to be an effective measure in curbing recidivistic behavior.

TABLE III

INSTITUTIONAL SECURITY LEVEL OF RELEASE\*

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>	<u>RECIDIVISM RATE</u>
Pre-Release Centers	473	( 41)	8%
Minimum Security	165	( 15)	18%
Medium Security	120	( 11)	18%
Maximum Security	370	( 33)	21%
TOTAL	1128	(100)	15%

NOTE: \*This table does not include the Reception Diagnostic Centers (RDC's) Lemuel Shattuck Hospital and Bridgewater State Hospital, or Medfield Prison Project.

Individual pre-release centers' recidivism rates vary considerably from 0% to 25%. As noted in the 1975 recidivism report (Mershon, 1978) some of the variation is a result of the small sample size of individual centers. The selection process made by the classification boards as to where an inmate spends the final part of his incarceration before being paroled is dependent on the suitability of the inmate to adjust to that environment as well as available space.

Prior research has also demonstrated that the variation in recidivism rates of individual pre-release centers is a function of the risk potential of the population upon which that particular center draws.<sup>3</sup> Table IV illustrates individual rates for pre-release centers. Of notable interest is the 0% recidivism rate for: Lancaster Pre-Release, Boston Offenders Services Project (BOSP), METAC and Park Drive.

TABLE IV

RECIDIVISM RATES FOR SPECIFIC PRE-RELEASE CENTERS, 1977

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF RELEASES</u>	<u>PERCENT OF TOTAL PRE- RELEASE POPULATION</u>	<u>RECIDIVISM RATE</u>
Park Drive	10	( 2)	0%
BOSP	14	( 3)	0%
METAC	17	( 4)	0%
Lancaster	37	( 8)	0%
577 House	57	( 12)	4%
Drug Houses	21	( 4)	5%
Boston State	64	( 14)	5%
Temporary Housing Project	34	( 7)	6%
Charlotte House	15	( 3)	7%
Coolidge House	15	( 3)	7%
Shirley	67	( 14)	12%
Brooke House	31	( 7)	13%
South Middlesex	24	( 5)	13%
Norfolk Pre-Release	19	( 4)	16%
699 House	48	( 10)	25%
TOTAL	473	(100)	8%

Comparison of pre-release centers' recidivism rates for the years 1973-1977 revealed fluctuation. Again, much of this is due to the relatively small sample sizes of individual pre-release centers. Park Drive is a new center which began operation in 1977.

The comparative recidivism rates of individual pre-release centers are shown in Table V.

TABLE V

COMPARATIVE RECIDIVISM RATES FOR PRE-RELEASE CENTERS FOR YEARS 1973-1976

	<u>SHIRLEY</u>	<u>BOSTON STATE</u>	<u>PARK DRIVE</u>	<u>CHAR-LOTTE HOUSE</u>	<u>COOLIDGE HOUSE</u>	<u>BROOKE HOUSE</u>	<u>TEMPO-RARY HOUSING</u>	<u>699 HOUSE</u>	<u>DRUG HOUSE</u>	<u>BOSP</u>	<u>METAC</u>	<u>577 HOUSE</u>	<u>SOUTH MIDDLE SEX</u>	<u>IAN-CASTER</u>	<u>NORFOLK PRE-RELEASE</u>	<u>TOTAL PRE-RELEASE</u>
1973	10%	8%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12%
1974	21%	7%	-	14%	6%	11%	0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12%
1975	10%	7%	-	0%	14%	23%	100%	33%	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	14%
1976	9%	3%	-	0%	6%	10%	7%	21%	29%	15%	10%	11%	0%	6%	0%	9%
1977	12%	5%	0%	7%	7%	13%	6%	25%	5%	0%	0%	4%	13%	0%	16%	8%

Recidivism Rate by Type of Release:

Two categories of release are used in the Research Unit's coding: 1) parole release and 2) discharge (expiration of sentence). In 1977, the recidivism rate for parolees was 15% and 12% for dischargees. This finding is not unexpected due to: 1) parolees can be returned for a technical infraction of the conditions of parole where dischargees cannot and, 2) parolees are under closer supervision than dischargees so that law-breaking activity may be more readily detected.



TABLE VI  
TYPE OF RELEASE, 1977

	<u>WALPOLE</u>			<u>CONCORD</u>			<u>NORFOLK</u>			<u>SECC</u>			<u>FRAMINGHAM</u>			<u>FORESTRY</u>			<u>PRE RELEASE</u>			<u>OTHER</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>		
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>RR</u>
Parole	92	( 78)	27	230	( 91)	19	63	( 83)	14	37	( 84)	22	59	( 54)	26	56	( 98)	14	432	( 91)	9	7	( 67)	33	976	( 86)	15
Discharge	26	( 22)	15	22	( 9)	5	13	( 17)	15	7	( 16)	14	49	( 46)	20	1	( 2)	0	41	( 9)	2	3	( 33)	0	162	( 14)	12
TOTAL	118	(100)	25	252	(100)	18	76	(100)	15	44	(100)	21	108	(100)	23	57	(100)	14	473	(100)	8	10	(100)	22	1138	(100)	15

Specific Category of Recidivism For Releases in 1977:

Three types of categories were used to determine recidivists. An individual was reincarcerated and thus labelled recidivist for the following reasons: 1) a technical infraction of his or her parole condition (i.e., failure to complete a particular program, failure to maintain employment, failure to keep in contact with parole officer, etc.); 2) a new arrest in association with a parole violation; 3) a new court commitment.

Of the 1138 releases, 169 were reincarcerated. Forty-four of these recidivists were returned for a technical infraction of their parole conditions; seventy-four had new arrests; and fifty-one were returned on a new court commitment.

Consistent with 1976 findings, a smaller amount of individuals were returned for a technical infraction of their parole conditions (48%), and a larger amount for new arrests (7%). (It should be noted that a new arrest does not necessarily mean a new commitment.) Table VII summarizes these findings.

**TABLE VII**  
**RECIDIVISM BREAKDOWN FOR 1977 RELEASES BY CATEGORY OF RETURN**

	<u>WALPOLE</u>		<u>CONCORD</u>		<u>NORFOLK</u>		<u>FORESTRY</u>		<u>FRAMING- HAM WOMEN</u>		<u>FRAMING- HAM MEN</u>		<u>PRE- RELEASE</u>		<u>SECC</u>		<u>OTHER</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Non Recidivists	89	( 75)	207	( 82)	65	( 86)	49	( 86)	82	( 77)	1	(100)	433	( 92)	35	( 80)	8	( 70)	969	( 85)
Recidivists: Parole Violation Technical	8	( 7)	7	( 3)	5	( 7)	3	( 5)	8	( 7)	0	( 0)	8	( 2)	3	( 7)	2	( 22)	44	( 4)
Parole Violation New Arrest	12	( 10)	25	( 10)	2	( 2)	4	( 7)	3	( 3)	0	( 0)	26	( 5)	2	( 4)	0	( 0)	74	( 7)
New Court Commitment	9	( 8)	13	( 5)	4	( 5)	1	( 2)	14	( 13)	0	( 0)	6	( 1)	4	( 9)	0	( 0)	51	( 4)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>1138</b>	<b>(100)</b>

Furlough Program Participation:

Of the 1138 inmates released from the Massachusetts Correctional Institutions, 546 or 48% did not receive a furlough prior to their release and had a recidivism rate of 23%. The remaining 592 inmates or 52% did receive one or more furloughs during incarceration and their respective recidivism rate was 7%.

It is clear to see that individuals who experienced furloughs prior to their release had significantly lower rates of recidivism than those who did not ( $\chi^2=61.28$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Past documentation along with the present finding has shown that furloughs make a positive impact during an individual's incarceration period and is positively correlated to a low rate of recidivism.<sup>4</sup>

The recidivism rate broken down by participation in the furlough program is shown below in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII

RECIDIVISM RATE BROKEN DOWN BY PARTICIPATION IN FURLOUGH PROGRAM

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>RECIDIVISM RATE</u>
Did not receive a furlough	546	( 48)	23%
Received a furlough	592	( 52)	7%
TOTAL	1138	(100)	15%

When the furlough variable is broken down by specific releasing institution, the generalization regarding the effectiveness of the furlough program is again reaffirmed. Within each institution, the recidivism rate of individuals participating in the furlough program is lower than those who did not participate. Table IX illustrates this finding.

TABLE IX  
FURLOUGH PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING FURLOUGHS,  
COMPARED WITH THOSE WHO DID NOT, 1977

	<u>WALPOLE</u>		<u>CONCORD</u>		<u>NORFOLK</u>		<u>SECC</u>		<u>FRAMINGHAM</u>		<u>FORESTRY</u>		<u>PRE- RELEASE</u>		<u>OTHER</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>RR</u>
Recidivism Rate of Individual NOT receiving a furlough prior to release	81	32%	167	21%	56	18%	19	37%	80	26%	12	25%	124	19%	8	28%	546	23%
Recidivism Rate of Individuals who received a furlough prior to release	37	8%	85	12%	20	5%	25	8%	28	14%	45	11%	349	4%	2	0%	592	7%
Recidivism Rate Total Population	118	25%	252	18%	76	15%	44	20%	108	23%	57	14%	473	8%	10	22%	1138	15%

VARIABLES FOUND TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN RECIDIVISTS AND NON-RECIDIVISTS

Analysis next proceeded in an attempt to identify specific variables found to distinguish between recidivists and non-recidivists, based on the various background information collected on the 1977 releasee population. Each variable was dichotomized to determine the best split for high and low recidivism risk categories. Those variables which produced a statistically significant difference ( $\chi^2 > 3.8$ ) between high and low recidivism risk groups were chosen as distinguishing variables for this discussion. Five categories of variables were chosen:

- I. Furlough History
  - (1) Number of furloughs
  - (2) Number of successful furloughs
- II. Total Prior Incarcerations
- III. Institution Released From
- IV. Age at First Arrest
- V. Race (White vs. Black)

The variable furlough history has consistently showed up as an important element in an inmate's period of incarceration since 1973. Individuals who experienced furloughs prior to their release had a significantly lower rate of recidivism than individuals who never received a furlough. Specifically, individuals who never received a furlough recidivated at a rate of 23% compared with those who received one or more; their rate was 7%. Along the same line, individuals who experienced one or more successful furloughs maintained a low rate of recidivism.

A new variable "total incarcerations" emerged as a distinguishing variable between recidivists and non-recidivists. The split occurred between individuals who were never incarcerated and those who had at least one prior incarceration. Individuals who had been previously incarcerated had a recidivism rate of 19%. Those with no prior incarcerations had a rate of 10%. Analysis yields support to the statement that an individual serving his first incarceration is a low recidivism risk.

Aforementioned, the security level of the institution of release determines an inmate's potential recidivism risk. Individuals released from a pre-release center, recidivated at a lower rate - 8% than individuals released from a non-pre-release institution; their rate was 19%.

Previously identified as a component of the collective category "criminal career pattern" age at first arrest was found to be a distinguishing variable in the 1977 releasee population. Upon examination of 1975, 1976 and 1977 the split for this variable occurred between the following: in 1975 between 18 and 19 years old; in 1976 between 19 and 20 years old; in 1977 between 16 and 17 years old. The 1977 data showed an individual sixteen years old or less recidivating at a higher rate than individuals 17 years old or more at the time of their first arrest. Specifically, the recidivism rate of an individual sixteen or less was 19% and for those seventeen or more, their rate was 11%. Prior studies have shown, "the younger the offender is, the higher the recidivism risk", (1974, LeClair). Analysis of 1977 data substantiates this. The age of an individual at first arrest is getting younger. Consequently, the younger offender is recidivating at a higher rate than the older one.

The final distinguishing variable was race. This particular variable is a new emergence as a significant indicator of recidivism in departmental research.

Black inmates were found to have a significantly lower rate of recidivism when compared with whites. The recidivism rate for blacks was 11% contrasted to 17% for whites. When we controlled for institution of release, the real difference was associated with a non-pre-release institution. ( $X^2=5.8, d.f.=1, p < .05$ ). For blacks committed to Walpole and subsequently released from Walpole, Norfolk and Forestry Camps, the significant difference occurred. When released from a pre-release institution, black rates were still lower than whites, however the difference was not statistically significant. Table X documents black recidivism rates compared with white's rates according to institution of release.

TABLE X

RECIDIVISM RATES OF BLACKS COMPARED WITH WHITES

	<u>NON PRE- RELEASE</u>			<u>PRE-RELEASE</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>		
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>RR</u>
Black	194	( 29)	14%	169	( 36)	8%	363	( 32)	11%
White	446	( 67)	22%	284	( 60)	9%	730	( 64)	17%
Other	25	( 4)	16%	20	( 4)	5%	45	( 4)	11%
TOTAL	665	(100)	19%	473	(100)	8%	1138	(100)	15%

In summation, Table XI presents the distinguishing variables of recidivism risk potential.



TABLE XI

RECIDIVISM RISK POTENTIAL BY DISTINGUISHING VARIABLES

<u>VARIABLE</u>	<u>LOW RISK CATEGORY</u>	<u>RECIDI- VISM RATE</u>	<u>HIGH RISK CATEGORY</u>	<u>RECIDI- VISM RATE</u>	<u>MAXIMUM CHI SQUARE</u>
Number of Furloughs	One or More	7%	None	23%	61.28
Number of Successful Furloughs	One or More	7%	None	23%	58.80
Total Prior Incar- cerations	None	10%	One or More	19%	20.55
Institution Released From	Pre-Release	8%	Non-pre-release	19%	19.90
Age at First Arrest	17 or More	11%	16 or Less	19%	14.33
Race	Blacks	11%	Whites	17%	7.34

DISCUSSION

Despite existing controversy and dubious attitudes of professionals, the public, etc., regarding the inability to rehabilitate or reintegrate criminals, recidivism rates in the Massachusetts Department of Correction have evidenced that it is possible. The concerted efforts of the Department of Correction to move inmates through the system in a de-escalating process of institutional security and increased commensurate privileges (upon assessment of the inmate by the Classification Board), have proved to be significantly effective. The 1977 recidivism rate of 15%, a percent decrease from 1976, consistent with the overall downward trend, reaffirms this finding. With respect to furloughs and pre-release, the impact on recidivism has been documented with selection factors controlled for by base expectancy outcome.<sup>5</sup>

Analyses of this recidivism report has shown that: (1) the graduated move from maximum to medium and subsequent release from a pre-release center, had significantly reduced the incidence of recidivism for inmates exposed to this movement; (2) individuals who participated in the Home Furlough Program prior to their release, had lower recidivism rates when compared with individuals who had no privilege of the furlough program; (3) the combined effect of inmates involved in the Home Furlough Program and release from a pre-release center, prior to their release to the streets, yielded substantial support to the effectiveness of this type of "reintegration" technique.

Additional findings uncovered through analysis of this report which may be the development of future trends are: 1) the age of the incarcerated offender (at first arrest) becoming younger, 16-17 years old; 2) a decreasing recidivism rate for Concord releases; 3) a decrease in the recidivism rate of blacks as compared to whites. Further investigation is needed to discern the status of these new possible trends.

FOOTNOTES

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2. Metzler, Charles, Statistical Tables Describing the Background Characteristics and Recidivism Rates of Releases from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions During 1977, Massachusetts Department of Correction Publication #179, September, 1979.

3. Landolfi, Joseph, An Analysis of Recidivism Among Residents Released from the Pre-Release Centers Administered by Massachusetts Halfway Houses, Inc., Massachusetts Department of Correction Publication #119, June, 1976.

4. LeClair, Daniel P., The Effect of the Home Furlough Program on Rates of Recidivism, Massachusetts Department of Correction Publication #116, December, 1977.

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5. Op. Cit., LeClair, Publication #159.

APPENDIX I

VARIABLES

A. COMMITMENT VARIABLES

1. Institution of Original Commitment
2. Number of Jail Credits
3. Age at Commitment
4. Present Offense (most serious charge)
5. Number of Charges Involved in Present Offense
6. Type of Sentence
7. Minimum Sentence
8. Maximum Sentence

B. PERSONAL BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS VARIABLES

1. Race
2. Marital Status
3. Military Service
4. Last Civilian Address
5. Emergency Addressee
6. Occupational Field
7. Length of Employment at Most Skilled Position
8. Longest Time Employed at Any One Job
9. Type of Education
10. Last Grade Completed
11. History of Drug Use

C. CRIMINAL HISTORY VARIABLES

1. Age at First Arrest
2. Age at First Drunk Arrest
3. Age at First Drug Arrest
4. Total Number of Court Appearances
5. Number of Court Appearances for Person Offenses
6. Number of Court Appearances for Property Offenses
7. Number of Court Appearances for Sex Offenses
8. Number of Court Appearances for Narcotic Offenses
9. Number of Court Appearances for Drunkenness Offenses
10. Number of Court Appearances for Escape Offenses
11. Number of Juvenile Commitments
12. Number of House of Correction Commitments
13. Number of Prior State or Federal Commitments
14. Number of Juvenile Paroles
15. Number of Adult Paroles
16. Number of Juvenile Parole Violations
17. Number of Adult Parole Violations
18. Age at Release

D. FURLOUGH VARIABLES

1. Total Number of Furloughs
2. Total Number of Successful Furlough Outcomes
3. Total Number of Late-Under Furloughs
4. Total Number of Late-Over Furloughs
5. Total Number of Escape Furlough Outcomes
6. Total Number of Arrest Furlough Outcomes
7. Specific Institution Granting Furlough.
8. Months Served Before Receiving First Furlough
9. Months Served Before First Furlough Escape

E. RECIDIVISM VARIABLES

1. Category of Return
2. New Arrests
3. Types of Parole Violations
4. Disposition of New Arrests
5. Date Returned to Custody
6. Date Parole Warrant Issued

**END**