

COLORADO PROBATION ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2001

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Special Points of Interest

- Probation supervises 63% of adults and 80% of youth under correctional supervision.
- Probation is experimenting with the use of satellite technology to assist in offender containment.
- State probation has partnered with private probation agencies to stretch limited resources and focus supervision efforts on higher risk cases.
- Focusing on offender's strengths, rather than their deficits facilitates behavioral change among probationers.
- Crime victims and community members have increased avenues in which to participate in and voice concerns regarding offender sanctioning and placement requirements.

COLORADO PROBATION SERVICES FISCAL YEAR 2001

At the end of fiscal year 2001 over 62,000 adults and approximately 11,400 youth were under state correctional supervision in Colorado and some 63% of adults and 80% of youth were under the supervision of probation. Specifically, on June 30, 2001 there were 39,241 adult and 9,130 juvenile probationers in Colorado. In addition to its traditional roles of investigation and supervision, Colorado probation provides services to crime victims, including notification regarding changes in offender status, referral for services and other supportive and informational services.

Probation officers work within a range of regular and intensive probation programs in which they offer educational programs, and refer probationers to treatment and skill-building programs. Regular probation programs maintain offenders with less serious criminal records, while the more intense specialized programs have been designed to manage higher risk offenders. In the absence of specialized probation programs, these offenders would be prison-bound. Greater contact levels, higher levels of account-

ability, individualized case plans and specialized treatment characterize these programs.

The work of probation includes a combination of processes and practices that are designed to protect the safety of the community, identify and repair harm and guide and shape pro-social behaviors of offenders. Probation officers use validated instruments to assess the level of risk offenders pose to the community, and the types of "needs" they possess. This information provides the basis for a thoughtful supervision plan, which promotes pro-social functioning. Probationers are supervised within the community according to their assessed risk level, and they are referred to appropriate community based treatment and skill-based programs, based upon their assessed needs. To more effectively manage growing probation caseloads, state probation has recently initiated a partnership with private probation agencies to supervise lower risk probationers, freeing state supervision resources to manage the higher risk and more time consuming cases.

In recent years, Colorado probation has designed a number of activities designed to improve outcomes and the efficiency and effectiveness of probation. These improvement initiatives have been self-initiated and are delivering intended results. Probation is cognizant of the need to work toward increased efficiencies in its operations, but recognizes this cannot be done at the expense of public safety.

In this document, we highlight some of the efforts that Colorado probation has engaged in during the past year to improve our work.

Vern Fogg, Director
Division of Probation Services

DIVISION OF PROBATION SERVICES

The Office of Probation Services was upgraded to a Division in the Office of the State Court Administrator during fiscal year 2002. The Division's staff provide training, technical support, program research and evaluation to the approximately 990

certified and contract staff in the 23 probation departments throughout the state, as well as producing publications and required reports. The Division's staff is divided into the following units: Training, Research and Evaluation, Programs and Administration.

DIVISION OF PROBATION SERVICES Mission Statement

The Division of Probation Services is committed to improving the quality of probation services in Colorado through assistance, training and leadership.

COMMUNITY SAFETY & ACCOUNTABILITY

Probation, in a broad sense, is considered community corrections insofar as offenders receive the privilege of remaining in the community while under correctional supervision. A community sentence allows offenders to meet requirements set by the court, such as completing treatment requirements or paying restitution, while also working to support their families, attend school, and remain positively involved in their community. A community-based sentence, however, is feasible only to the extent that community safety is not unduly jeopardized.

Colorado Probation incorporates a risk-based model for the supervision of offenders in the community. Not all offenders receive the same level of supervision, rather supervision intensity is based on the offender's

assessed level of risk.

Offenders supervised on Regular Probation are assessed and then classified as maximum, medium, or minimum risk. On June 30, 2001 there were 45,783 offenders on probation.

Included in this population are 7,793 low risk offenders supervised by private probation services.

Colorado Probation also supervises a population of offenders whose assessed risk level is high and whose criminal history is more serious than the typical probationer. These offenders are placed in limited-capacity programs, referred to as *specialized probation programs*.

Specialized programs are designed to contain offender risk, while also providing services that will address the factors that correspond to a criminally

active lifestyle. Following is a list of the six specialized programs supported by probation across Colorado:

- Adult Intensive Supervision Probation (AISP)
- Juvenile Intensive Supervision Probation (JISP)
- Female Offender Program (FOP)
- Sex Offender Intensive Supervision Probation (SOISP)
- Specialized Drug Offender Program (SDOP)

Adults	29,466
Juveniles	8,524
Private Probation	7,793
Specialized Programs	2,767

The Probation Academy is the backbone of our training system. The Academy provides new officers with a foundation in all areas they will need to do their jobs.

GPS PROJECT: EYES IN THE SKY

In an effort to maximize community safety, probation departments in six districts are pilot-testing the use of global positioning satellite tracking devices to assist in monitoring high risk sex offenders. The technology allows a probation officer to track an offender's movements 24 hours per day and to identify certain locations or areas that are off-limits to the offender. If the

offender enters one of the restricted areas, the officer is notified by telephone, pager, e-mail or other pre-determined method of communication. These tracking devices allow officers to immediately respond to proximal violations. At the end of December, there were 20 devices in use, and there are plans to expand the pilot project by increasing the number of devices and adding participat-

ing districts.



SCREENING FOR MENTAL ILLNESSES

The presence of mental illness among adult and juvenile probationers is estimated to range between 16% and 25%. Treatment literature supports the notion that the identification and treatment of mental illness significantly enhances the likelihood of successful community placement. Currently, there is no uniform method to screen for the presence of mental illnesses within the criminal jus-

tice system.

To address this shortfall, a multi-agency effort is under way to develop a standardized screening process to identify mental illnesses in adult and juveniles involved in the criminal justice system. The effort is designed to screen for mental illness at the earliest point of contact in the criminal justice process, allowing for the initia-

tion of further assessment, referral and treatment. Pre-trial release programs, jails, detention centers, probation departments, community corrections agencies, parole and prisons are all involved in this project.

COORDINATING A RESPONSE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Supervising and monitoring domestic violence offenders continues to be a challenge for probation departments. On June 30, 2001, there were 3,540 domestic violence perpetrators under probation supervision accounting for 12% of the adult cases. This number reflects an increase of 503 offenders, and one percent of the population, since last fiscal year. Recognizing the complexity of the cases and the victim safety issues, probation departments increasingly look to the use of specialized management tools and community coordination to monitor offenders.

The heart of probation's domestic violence offender management strategy is the use of two instruments, the Domestic Violence Screening Instru-

ment and the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment. The instruments aid in collecting pertinent criminal and social history about offenders that can be used to guide case and supervision strategies. Through federal funding from the Office of Justice Programs, Violence Against Women Office, the Division of Probation Services was able to validate the instruments' use with domestic violence offenders. Use of the instruments and supervision strategies are detailed in a recently completed *Guidelines for Supervision of Domestic Violence Offenders*. The Guidelines were developed in consultation with probation officers, victim services professionals and members of the Domestic Violence Offender Management Board.

The Guidelines and probation supervision strategies emphasize the importance of developing a coordinated community response to domestic violence. Coordinated efforts link probation supervision work with law enforcement, prosecutors, victims' service organizations and batterer treatment programs. Two probation departments (the 4th judicial and the 11th judicial) were instrumental in organizing local domestic violence conferences that brought the communities together to identify successes and strategize about bridging gaps.

Examples of Innovative Community Restoration Initiatives: Opportunities for dialogue, understanding and giving back.

- ✓ Female offenders collect clothing and baby goods for distribution to needy families.
- ✓ Community Accountability Boards provide neighborhood residents with a forum to meet with juvenile property crime offenders and discuss the impact their crimes, property. Victim-Offender Dialogue programs provide similar opportunities for victims.
- ✓ A local neighborhood meeting program helps residents to assess potential and ongoing conflicts that have, or may, result in criminal acts.
- ✓ Victim empathy groups teach offenders how crime impacts victims and the community.
- ✓ Residents of one county are regularly ordered, as part of their sentence, to donate food and other items to the local food bank and other charitable organizations.
- ✓ Juveniles earn money to pay restitution through work on community works projects.

COMMUNITY RESTORATION EFFORTS

In addition to efforts to improve safety and assist victims and the larger community in their recovery from the effects of crime, many probation departments have created programs that provide offenders with opportunities to give back to the community, as well as providing crime victims and commu-

nity members with opportunities to directly speak with criminal offenders and in some cases, participate in responses to crime. Such programs are developed to meet the needs of specific communities and to address local concerns and problems.



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever does.

— Margaret Mead

OFFENDER ACCOUNTABILITY TO CRIME VICTIMS & THE COMMUNITY

Community members appropriately expect that offenders will be held accountable for the damage resulting from crimes they commit. Probation officers take seriously this responsibility of offenders to "give back" in a manner that is commensurate with the damage they invoked. To

this end, the collection of restitution is an important aspect of a probation officer's work on behalf of crime victims. Additionally, offenders are frequently required to compensate for their crimes by engaging in Useful Public Service (UPS). Offenders involved in UPS are required to

participate in work projects that have value to the community, such as working on crews that clean trash along roadways, removing graffiti, or working with community based non-profit agencies.

STRENGTH-BASED OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

Historically the field of corrections, when conducting offender assessments, has focused on the identification of deficits. While compatible with the current literature, indicating that individuals with certain unmet needs, like job skills or substance abuse addictions, are more likely to continue to engage in criminal behavior, a deficits framework is sorely lacking. Missing from the traditional assessment picture is the inclusion of an individual's strengths,

which can be built upon to that can mitigate involvement in crime. This emerging body of research was highlighted in June 2001, when Probation hosted a regional "Strength-Based Personnel Management." Strength-based training teaches probation professionals how to identify and use an strengths to re-direct negative behavior. By practicing strength-based management in probation departments, it is anticipated that strength-based strategies will

also be incorporated into probation supervision strategies.

The strength-based model is also the basis for a new case planning initiative, taken on by probation officers in Colorado, and described below.

"If you want to monitor problems and compliance, focus your energy on risk. If you want to see a change in behavior, focus your energy on strengths and assets that you can build upon."

— Michael Clark



CASE PLANNING OVERHAUL

Incorporating offenders' strengths into case supervision plans is at the heart of a new format for case planning, developed during the past year by a statewide committee of probation staff. While the new case planning format borrows heavily from case planning practices currently in use, it emphasizes issues related to the harm caused to victims and the community, and reparation of that harm. At its core, the new model focuses on the use of offender strengths to effect behavioral change. An additional component to

the new case planning strategy is the incorporation of assessment-driven offender typologies. While this component is still under development, when completed, it will allow probation officers to use these typologies as guidance for working with different types of offenders. The typology categories, which describe patterns of behaviors, will allow for a more thorough understanding of offenders. Additionally, strategies linked directly to the typologies will be developed to help officers employ the most effective methods for managing spe-

cific types of offenders.

Approximately 35 probation officers from 12 of the state's 23 probation departments will participate in a field test of the revised case plan format for six months. Officers will be asked to evaluate the new case plan method. It is anticipated that statewide adoption of the new system will closely follow the pilot test project.

VICTIM SAFETY AND RESTORATION

The Victim Rights Act provides victims of specified crimes the opportunity to receive notification from probation when there is a significant change in the status of the offender, such as a violation of probation, a transfer of supervision to another location or termination of supervision. Notifying victims of these events is intended to enhance their level of safety. Once notified of their rights, crime victims must request notification from the probation department in writing.

Each of the state's 23 probation departments employs a Victim Assistance Coordinator, who is responsible for providing notification as well as assisting victims in securing services that will aid the victim in their recovery from the impact of the crime. Additionally, probation officers prioritize the offender's payment of restitution in their supervision plans.

Services Frequently Provided to Crime Victims

- Education about the probation system
- Assistance in obtaining victim compensation
- Assistance in obtaining restitution payments
- Developing personal safety plans
- Referrals for service

EFFICIENCY & EFFECTIVENESS

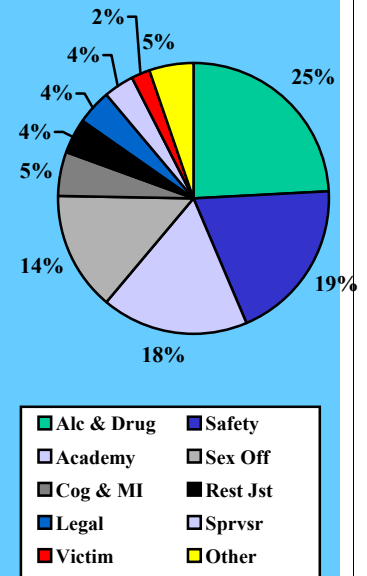
The Colorado Probation system not only focuses on the provision of direct services to offenders and victims; there are also efforts to assess and address the day-to-day needs of probation departments. Additionally, the probation system is involved in projects that focus on improving accountability and effectively anticipating and meeting future needs. In this report, we highlight some of these projects.

Colorado Probation puts a

high premium on well-trained staff, recognizing that the benefit of training is increased productivity and improved effectiveness. The Probation Academy is the backbone of our training system. The Academy provides new officers with a foundation in all areas they will need to do their jobs. Training that comes after the Academy is more in-depth and includes required courses as well as specialty training. Examples of training offered include

standardized assessments, officer safety, law and liability, sex offender management, pharmacology, motivational interviewing and cognitive skill building. The graphic to the right details the type and hours of probation training provided during fiscal year 2001.

Training Delivered in FY 2001



ASSESSING PROBATION'S PRACTICES

Probation standards and guidelines, updated annually, provide an outline of basic expectations for probation officers. A periodic review of probation case files provides an objective assessment of individual officers' performance in relationship to the standards and guidelines.

A performance review of the pre-sentence investigation and intake process, identifying both strengths and weaknesses related to this component of probation work was recently completed. The review

identified victim information, assessments, restorative justice and other offender issues as areas for growth. Areas of greatest strength included the current offense, criminal history and sentencing recommendation sections of the pre-sentence report as well as administrative issues and the satisfaction level of the users of pre-sentence report. Local departments and the Division of Probation Services have strategized and implemented changes for improvements based on these findings. Preparations are under way to

conduct the next performance review on case management. Some probation departments are also using electronic tools to review case files and conduct self-assessments regarding adherence to standards. It is anticipated that such attention to issues of quality will lead to improved offender outcomes.

PARTNERING WITH PRIVATE PROBATION SERVICES: STRETCHING LIMITED RESOURCES

In an effort to respond to resource limitations without a loss of efficiency and effectiveness, Colorado Probation initiated the use of private probation service providers for the supervision of adult offenders in FY 1996. Private probation agencies currently supervise low-risk adult of-

fenders, which allows state probation officers to concentrate supervision efforts on the more time-consuming higher-risk offenders. On June 30, 2001 there were 7,793 offenders, 21% of adult cases, being supervised by private probation agencies.

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Colorado Probation is committed to a system of justice that promotes public safety and identifies and repairs the harm to victims and communities. We guide and shape pro-social behavior through the application of sanctions and services. The goals of probation are accomplished in partnership with the community in an environment that respects dignity, diversity and safety of all staff, victims and offenders.

DOES PROBATION WORK?

"Just how effective is probation?" is a question frequently posed to professionals working within this system. The Judicial Branch reports on this question in the Annual Recidivism Study, which has been published since 1996.

The annual probation recidivism report presents data that gets at the question of how successful probation is in assisting probationers in restraining from engaging in crime beyond the period the offender is under supervision. The 2001 study reviews records of all probationers terminated during fiscal year 2000. We report on both pre-release and post-release failures. Pre-release failures are those probationers whose probation was revoked for either the commission of a new crime or for technical reasons. Post-release recidivism includes those proba-

tioners who successfully terminated probation, but received a filing for a new crime within 12 months of completing probation. The results are as follows.

Overall success rates for the four specialized probation programs, which supervise higher-risk prison diversion cases were lower than for non-specialized programs. Overall success rates in these programs ranged from 49.1% for juvenile intensive supervision to 63.5% for the adult specialized drug offender program.

For a copy of the complete recidivism report, please contact Suzanne Pullen at the Division of Probation Services.

Overall Non-Specialized Probation Program Outcomes FY 2000 Terminations

Type of	Juvenile	Adults
Pre-release failure: Technical Revocation	20.6%	27.7%
Pre-release failure: New Crime	5.0%	3.7%
Post-release Recidivism Within One Year	5.8%	4.6%
Overall Success	68.6%	64.0%