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## State of Wisconsin Department of Corrections

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### WI DOC Report Shows Prison Recidivism Rates Falling *New Study Shows Recidivism Rates Declining As Inmate Release Numbers Increase*

MADISON—A new report from the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) shows that the rate at which prisoners are committing new crimes following release from prison, called recidivism, is on a downward trend and has been declining for almost 20 years. Furthermore, the report shows that recidivism rates decreased as the number of offenders released from prison tripled between 1990 and 2009.

Secretary Gary Hamblin said the report sets a foundation for consistent measurement of recidivism rates. “The scope of the analysis is impressive...even more impressive are the results,” said Secretary Hamblin. “I believe that one of the major factors in this success is directly related to the ongoing work and dedication of our staff across all facets of the Department and our collective commitment with our criminal justice and community partners to keep Wisconsin safe.”

The report *Recidivism After Release from Prison*, the first in a series of performance measurement reports by the DOC Research and Policy Unit, tracked 125,000 offenders released from Wisconsin prisons over the last two decades. Analyzing follow-up periods of one, two and three years, the report shows that recidivism rates have gradually decreased since 1993.

The study found the three-year follow-up recidivism rate (the rate at which a person released from a state prison commits a new offense that results in a conviction and sentence to the DOC) decreased by 28.5% from 1993 to 2007. The recidivism rate was the highest in 1993 at 45.3%, but fell to 32.4% in 2007. That means an offender released in 1993 was 1.4 times more likely to recidivate within three years than an offender released in 2007.

Overall, the report analyzed recidivism rates for a total of 124,661 offenders released from prison between 1990 and 2009. Other key findings include:

- Males had consistently higher recidivism rates than females
- Recidivism rates decreased as age increased
- The largest group of recidivists was found among offenders between the ages of 20 and 24

- Fifty percent (50%) of offenders who recidivated within three years did so within the first year following release from prison

The Department continues to implement its expanded Reentry initiative, including using policy and practices that are grounded in research or evidence-based principles. Secretary Hamblin said as those efforts move forward it is important for the agency to measure their effect and impact so taxpayer dollars and resources can be focused on what works.

*Recidivism After Release from Prison* is the first in a series of recidivism reports that will be regularly published by Wisconsin DOC. The next report will include release from incarceration recidivism rates broken down by a number of additional factors not included in the first report. Other future reports will analyze recidivism for offenders admitted to and discharged from supervision.

Please visit [www.wi-doc.com](http://www.wi-doc.com) to read the full report.