

Re-Incarceration and Re-Arrest Rates of VADOC FY2015 SR Releases

Among the 42 states that report re-incarceration of offenders with an SR sentence within three years of their release, Virginia's re-incarceration rate remained the lowest at 23.1% for the most recently reported rates. Although only 23.1% of offenders released had a new SR sentence within 3 years, 53.4% were re-arrested within that same time period. This report explores the characteristics of FY2015 SR releases who recidivated vs. those who didn't recidivate.

Offender demographics, such as gender and age, have shown to be predictive factors of recidivism. Aligned with previous research, males and younger offenders had higher re-incarceration and re-arrest rates. Male offenders had a re-incarceration rate almost five percentage points higher than females (23.7% and 18.9%, respectively). Male offenders also had a higher re-arrest rate than female offenders (54.2% and 48.2%, respectively). Offenders released before thirty years of age had a 27.7% re-incarceration rate compared to 17.4% for offenders released age fifty to fifty-nine. Furthermore, younger offenders had higher re-arrest rates than older offenders.

Offender criminal history and SR location history are also known predictive factors for recidivating. Offenders with a greater history of SR incarcerations showed higher re-incarceration and re-arrest rates than offenders who were released after their first SR incarceration. Offenders who spent their entire SR term in jail had higher re-incarceration and re-arrest rates (25.7% and 58.5%, respectively) than offenders who spent at least part of their SR incarceration in a DOC facility (21.2% and 49.6%, respectively). Offenders whose crime type of their most serious offense was property/public order had higher re-incarceration and re-arrest rates (26.8% and 58.8%, respectively) than offenders with drug (19.9% and 49.3%, respectively) or violent (19.9% and 48.4%, respectively) crime types. Offenders whose most serious offense was Burglary/B&E or Larceny/Fraud had the highest re-arrest rates (61.9% and 60.7%, respectively). Offenders whose most serious offense was 'Other, Non-Violent' or Sex Offense had the highest re-incarceration rates (40.0% and 30.4%, respectively).

3 Year Re-Incarceration and Re-Arrest[†] Rates of FY2015 Releases				
		N	Percent Re-Incarcerated	Percent Re-Arrested[†]
All Releases		12,385	23.1%	53.4%
Gender				
	Male	10,768	23.7%	54.2%
	Female	1,617	18.9%	48.2%
Age at Release				
	Under 30	3,691	27.7%	62.6%
	30-49	6,652	22.7%	52.7%
	50-59	1,652	17.4%	42.3%
	60-69	342	11.7%	26.6%
	70+	48	6.3%	16.7%
Previous SR Incarcerations				
	No previous SR terms	6,678	17.9%	46.6%
	1 previous SR term	2,984	25.9%	57.6%
	2 previous SR terms	1,393	32.1%	64.0%
	3 previous SR terms	705	32.2%	65.4%
	4 previous SR terms	338	32.0%	68.3%
	5 or more previous SR terms	287	39.0%	70.4%
Location History				
	DOC Facility Releases	7,084	21.1%	49.6%
	Jail Only Releases	5,301	25.7%	58.5%
Crime Type				
	Violent	3,772	19.9%	48.4%
	Property/Public Order	5,706	26.8%	58.8%
	Drug	2,907	19.9%	49.3%
Most Serious Offense				
	Capital Murder [^]	10	10.0%	30.0%
	Homicide-1st	73	6.8%	16.4%
	Homicide-2nd	43	0.0%	7.0%
	Manslaughter	102	8.8%	26.5%
	Abduction	198	15.2%	42.4%
	Rape/Sexual Assault	579	21.4%	37.5%
	Robbery	944	19.9%	51.1%
	Assault	1,457	21.3%	55.2%
	Weapons	366	23.3%	53.3%
	Arson	89	29.2%	59.6%
	Burglary/B&E	1,240	27.3%	61.9%
	Larceny/Fraud	3,306	28.8%	60.7%
	Conspiracy [^]	14	7.1%	42.9%
	Sex Offense	237	30.4%	50.2%
	DUI	362	16.0%	45.6%
	Habitual Offender	428	16.6%	51.9%
	Other Non-Violent	30	40.0%	53.3%
	Drug Sales	1,679	17.8%	46.6%
	Drug Possession	1,228	22.7%	53.1%

[†] Arrest records come from the Virginia State Police (VSP) and are matched to data in CORIS based on key identifiers.

[^] Most Serious Offense category with less than 30 offenders.

Additional factors, such as mental health impairment and drug use, are associated with recidivism. Offenders with no evidence of mental health impairment have lower re-incarceration and re-arrest rates (22.5% and 51.8%, respectively) than offenders with evidence of mental health impairment (26.2% and 55.8%, respectively). Offenders with a history of testing positive for both opioids and cocaine had a re-incarceration rate approximately 21 percentage points higher than offenders with no history of testing positive for opioids or cocaine. Offenders with no history of testing positive for opioids or cocaine had a re-arrest rate of 44.4%, much lower than offenders with a history of testing positive for only cocaine (70.6%), only opioids (65.2%), or both (77.5%).

The COMPAS risk and needs assessment tool is used by the VADOC to determine risk of general recidivism and risk of violent recidivism as well as to identify criminogenic needs for the offenders who may have needs to address to reduce recidivism risk (such as substance abuse, criminal thinking, etc.). Offenders who scored higher on both the general and violent risk of recidivism scales showed higher re-incarceration and re-arrest rates than those who scored lower. Offenders who scored “Highly Probable” on the substance abuse needs scale had higher rates of re-incarceration and re-arrest (23.8% and 54.2%, respectively) than those who scored “Probable” (19.1% and 48.7%, respectively) or “Unlikely” (17.4% and 41.3%, respectively).

3 Year Re-Incarceration and Re-Arrest⁺ Rates of FY2015 Releases				
		N	Percent Re-Incarcerated	Percent Re-Arrested⁺
All Releases		12,385	23.1%	53.4%
Mental Health Code				
	Evidence of Impairment	2,434	26.2%	55.8%
	No Evidence of Impairment	6,344	22.5%	51.8%
	Not Reported	3,607	22.0%	54.7%
History of Positive Drug Tests*				
	No Opioids or Cocaine	8,106	17.8%	44.4%
	Cocaine only	1,693	31.7%	70.6%
	Opioids only	1,482	30.5%	65.2%
	Both Opioids and Cocaine	1,104	38.7%	77.5%
COMPAS General Risk of Recidivism**				
	High	2,347	29.4%	66.7%
	Medium	2,396	21.9%	52.2%
	Low	2,445	12.7%	31.7%
	Not Reported	5,197	25.7%	58.2%
COMPAS Violent Risk of Recidivism**				
	High	1,584	33.3%	69.4%
	Medium	2,431	23.4%	56.6%
	Low	3,173	13.5%	35.1%
	Not Reported	5,197	25.7%	58.2%
COMPAS Substance Abuse Needs Scale**				
	Highly Probable	3,750	23.8%	54.2%
	Probable	1,748	19.1%	48.7%
	Unlikely	1,657	17.4%	41.3%
	Not Reported	5,230	25.7%	58.3%

⁺ Arrest records come from the Virginia State Police (VSP) and are matched to data in CORIS based on key identifiers.

*History of drug test was examined in offenders before or within three years of release (end of three year follow-up for non-recidivists or recidivated date for recidivists).

**The last COMPAS assessment prior to release from this release term.

Offenders who spent their entire SR term in jail were included in the 'Not Reported' category.