

JFA Institute

Conducting Justice and Corrections Research for Effective Policy Making

Evaluation of the San Diego County Community Corrections Programs

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Introduction

This document details an evaluation of San Diego County's Community Corrections Programs. More directly, the evaluation examines the three major programs that have been in place since at least 2008: Work Release, Work Furlough, and County Parole. The specific goals of the study, as requested by the County, were to identify:

1. Which people have succeeded (i.e., have not been returned to jail)?
2. What are the attributes of those who succeeded?
3. Can we identify those attributes through an assessment tool?
4. If the county is underutilizing these custody alternatives, can the population of offenders in the programs be expanded without putting the public at risk?
5. Can the programs be applied to both pretrial as well as sentenced inmates?

By identifying and measuring attributes of successful offenders, the study examined whether there are other suitable candidates for these three programs who, for a variety of reasons, are currently not participating in the programs and are presently incarcerated in the county jail system. Simulations were also done to determine the impact on the county jail population if these three programs were to be expanded for either sentenced, pretrial or both populations.

Major Findings and Recommendations

1. Consistent with falling crime and adult arrest rates, the San Diego County jail population was declining prior to the passage of Criminal Justice Realignment (AB109). Since the enactment of AB109 in October 2011, the average jail population has increased by about 1,000 inmates to 5,900 inmates (as of November 2013).
2. The vast majority (nearly 70%) of adult arrests in San Diego County are misdemeanor level crimes, a significant number of which (42%) are for drug and alcohol violations.
3. The annual number of jail bookings and releases has been consistently in the 90,000 range. However, the number of unique individuals passing through the county jails each year is about 62,000, reflecting the fact that some individuals are booked and released multiple times in a year.
4. The current overall length of stay for the county jail system is 20 days and has remained fairly consistent since 2008. Compared with other jail systems around the country, this length of stay is on the shorter end of the spectrum. (This figure is based on individuals who have been released, and therefore does not reflect AB109 inmates still incarcerated.)
5. The three main types of release from the San Diego County Jails are:
 - a. About half (52%) are released within 2 days of booking via posting bail, securing a bond, or having their charges dismissed; in contrast, very few people in pretrial status are able to secure release through the County's limited Pretrial Release Program operated by the Courts.

- b. Another 13% are transferred to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or another correctional agency, including the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR).
 - c. Most of the remaining 35% are released either because they have completed their sentence (often credit for time served) or because they begin a grant of probation (with or without a jail sentence).
6. Participants in Work Release, Work Furlough, and County Parole represent a very small percentage of the total number of jail releases each year. These programs are all under capacity and could be expanded, if appropriate offenders can be identified. Releases to the newly established Residential Reentry Center (RRC), which operates like Work Furlough for offenders without employment, has not significantly increased the overall number of participants in community corrections programs due to a decrease in Work Furlough participation (as a poor economy has led to fewer employed offenders).
 7. The Work Release program is largely targeting people convicted of misdemeanor DUI crimes, whereas Work Furlough, RRC and County Parole accept people convicted of felony and misdemeanor level crimes.
 8. These programs are all well structured and organized. Participants in the Work Furlough program and the RRC speak highly of the programs' services and programs.
 9. The percentage of people who return to the San Diego county jail system at least once within four years is 50%. The one-year return rate is about 30%. Only 10% of those who return were re-arrested for a felony level violent crime. These rates are well below CDCR recidivism rates in this same time period.
 10. Participants in the three evaluated community corrections programs have significantly lower return-to-jail rates than do all "other sentenced" jail inmates. These rates are lower even after controlling for risk factors associated with recidivism. (This evaluation does not include recidivism rates for the RRC; the program is so new that data is not available.)
 11. There are a considerable number of people who are classified as low to moderate risk in the Sheriff's data system who could benefit from alternative custody programs, including the ones evaluated here, as well as new programs.
 12. Special attention could be directed toward a supervised release program for pretrial defendants who have been unable to secure release within 7 days or toward alternative custody programs for sentenced inmates, including those sentenced under AB109.

Evaluation Methodology

The study had several components to it with separate data collection and analytic tasks. These can be generally separated into three sections: process program evaluation, impact evaluation, and program expansion simulations.

Process Program Evaluation

A process study is intended to determine if a specific program or policy is working as intended. Process studies focus on the following key dimensions:

1. Program Objectives and Goals;
2. Selection and Screening Procedures;
3. Intervention or Services Provided; and
4. External Linkages with other Agencies Necessary for Implementation.

In this phase of analysis, each of the three community corrections programs evaluated here were assessed on these four dimensions. The formal objectives and goals were identified through interviews with agency officials. These interviews included questions regarding current and possible utilization of these programs, such as whether the officials believe there are a number of pretrial and sentenced inmates who, if properly selected, supervised, and provided with adequate services, will reduce their recidivism, the number of days incarcerated, and thus, reduce jail population and costs without putting the public at risk.

In order to meet these stated objectives and goals, it is critical that candidates for the programs are being identified through a risk and needs assessment process. Services or work assignments offered to those in the programs must also be consistent with the program's objectives. Program completion rates should be measured to ensure there is not a high level of program failures.

It should be noted here that County Parole can and should be evaluated along these same dimensions even though it is more of a policy than a program. The County Parole Board operates under a set of objectives and achieves those objectives by properly releasing suitable candidates for parole supervision. The "intervention" is thus the decision to release coupled with the supervision and programs offered.

Impact Analysis

The second phase of the evaluation was the impact study, which measured whether and to what extent the three programs had any impact on recidivism and on the jail population. This required conducting a follow-up study of offenders who were admitted to the three programs in 2008 and 2010. We selected these two years as they allowed for at least a two-year follow-up period. The 2010 cohort provided a more current assessment of recent activities.

It was also necessary to conduct a comparison analysis to contrast the results of the three program cohorts. The comparison analysis consisted of people who had similar risk attributes that were similar to the program participants but did not participate in the programs. They reflect what would have happened had the programs not existed.

Data Files

A number of data files were needed to complete the study. What follows is a rough description of these data.

1. Historic Jail Release Data Files (2008 and 2009)
These data files were needed for several purposes. The data identified the individuals who were released to Work Furlough, Work Release, and County Parole as well as all other releases. The data files also identified the status – pretrial or sentenced – of those released individuals. Finally, this file was used to identify and conduct the comparison analysis to assess the impact of the three programs with regard to recidivism and jail beds.

2. Contemporary Jail Release Data File (2012)
This file was used to gain a more current profile of the people being released via Work Furlough, Work Release, and County Parole as well as those who are not being released in that manner. The more contemporary file was used to estimate the impact of expanding the current programs/policies to other inmates (both pretrial and sentenced) on current lengths of stay and jail beds.
3. Existing Jail Population (May 2013)
This file was used to determine the extent to which people who are currently incarcerated could be safely placed in community corrections programs (both pretrial and sentenced). It complements the jail release file but allows the researchers and agency officials to draw subsamples of the targeted inmates to better understand the potential of placing them in alternative programs and placements.
4. Re-Booking Data
In order to calculate the recidivism rates, we used the measure of re-bookings within a one-year and three-year period. Under ideal circumstances it would have been preferable to record all post-jail release arrests for the entire state of California. Such data was not reasonably accessible because it would have required securing data from dozens of local and state agencies. The jail admissions and release data files allowed us to determine if a program participant was rebooked into the San Diego County jail system and, if so, for what reason.

Interviews and Observations

In addition to the quantitative data listed above, several on-site visits were completed for purposes of interviewing key agency officials. The purpose of these interviews was to gain an initial overview of the program's operations and any suggestions for improvements.

A second wave of interviews was conducted with several program participants from the Work Furlough and the Residential Reentry Center (RRC) to better understand the nature of supervision and services being provided. Their views of how the program could be improved were also solicited.

Analysis and Report

The core analysis completed using the above data consisted of answering the following questions:

1. What are the number and type of people being admitted to these programs?
2. How do they differ from other released inmates (both pretrial and sentenced)?
3. What needed services are they receiving or not receiving?
4. What are the attributes of the successful program participants and how do they differ from those who have failed?
5. What has been the impact of the programs and policies on recidivism?
6. Are there inmates who remain incarcerated who could be placed in alternative custody without a substantial risk to public safety?
7. To what extent could these programs be used for pretrial inmates?

Current San Diego County Criminal Justice and Correctional Trends

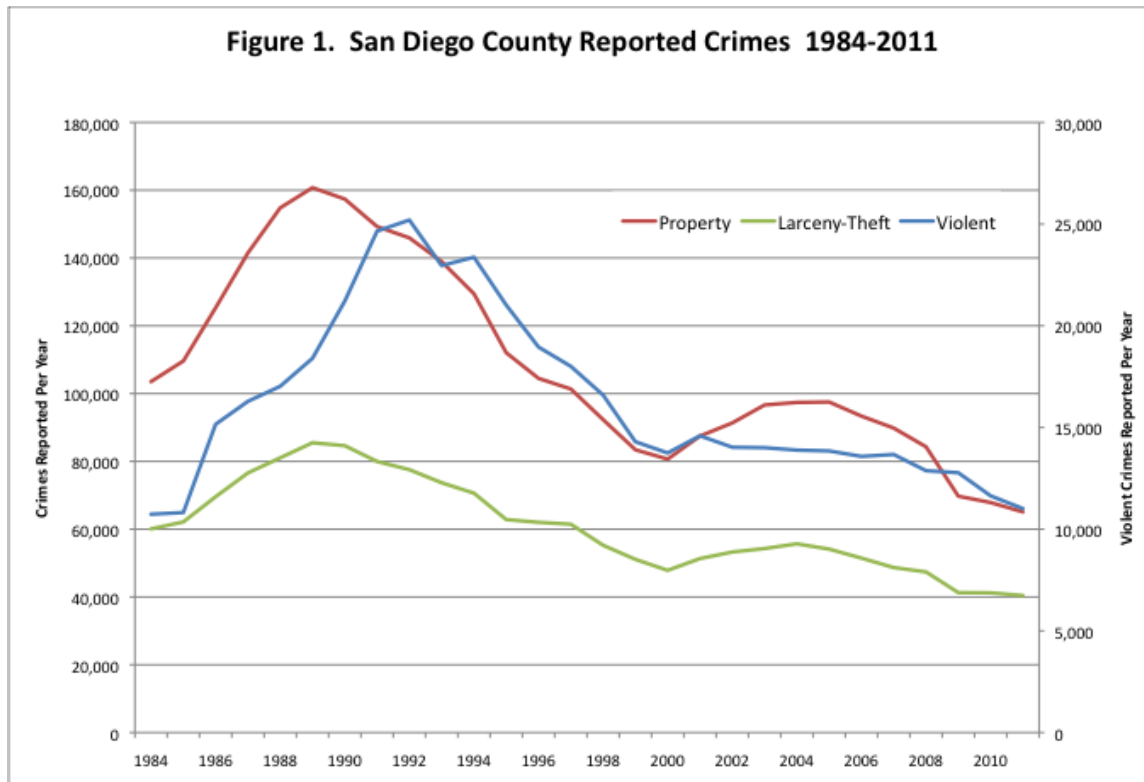
In order to set a context for the evaluation of the community corrections programs, it would be useful to better understand current crime and criminal justice trends, which indirectly impact the need and utility for the programs.

Crime Trends

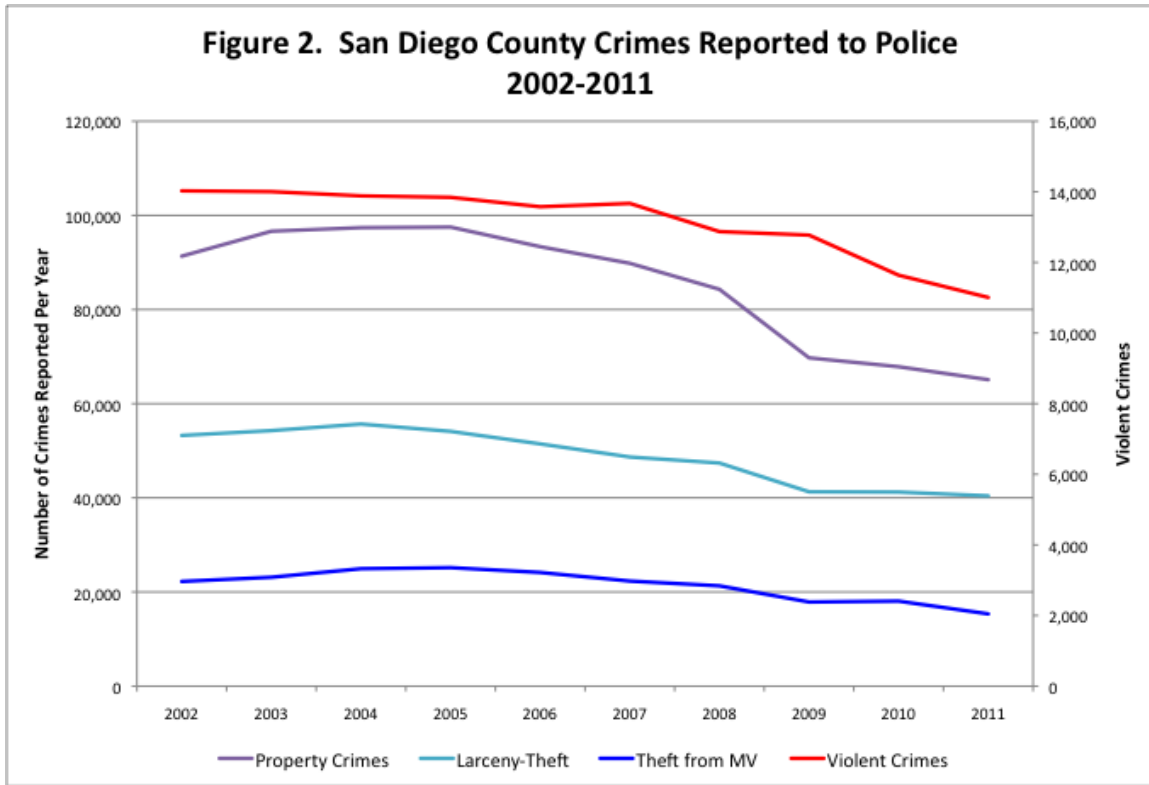
As with national, state and local jurisdiction trends, San Diego County has been seeing a steady and significant decline in the number of crimes being reported to police each year. Figure 1 shows the number of crimes reported between 1984 and 2011 (most recent data available from the California Department of Justice). Reported crimes began to decline in the early 1990s and have continued since then. Crime rates increased in San Diego for the first time since the early 2000s, but the overall rates remain quite low as compared to the previous three decades (SANDAG, April 2013).

Figure 2 shows the trend line for the past ten years. Here one can see that the vast majority of the reported crimes are in the property category and within that group, the vast majority fall into larceny theft. Within the larceny theft group the largest crime type is theft *from* a motor vehicle (not auto theft).

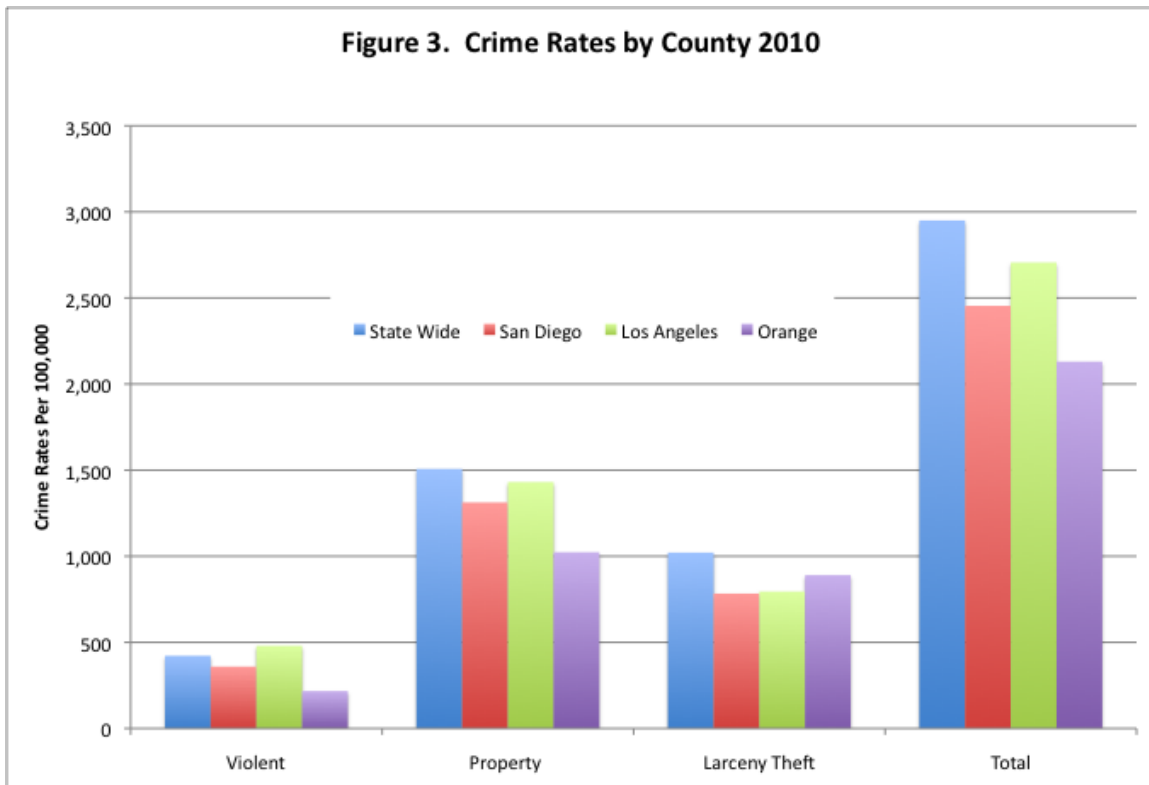
In terms of crime rates per 100,000 population, the most recent data published by the California Department Justice shows that San Diego County's crime rate is below both the statewide rate and Los Angeles County. However, it is well above the rates in Orange County (Figure 3).



Source: Department of Justice, California Attorney General



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Source: Department of Justice, California Attorney General

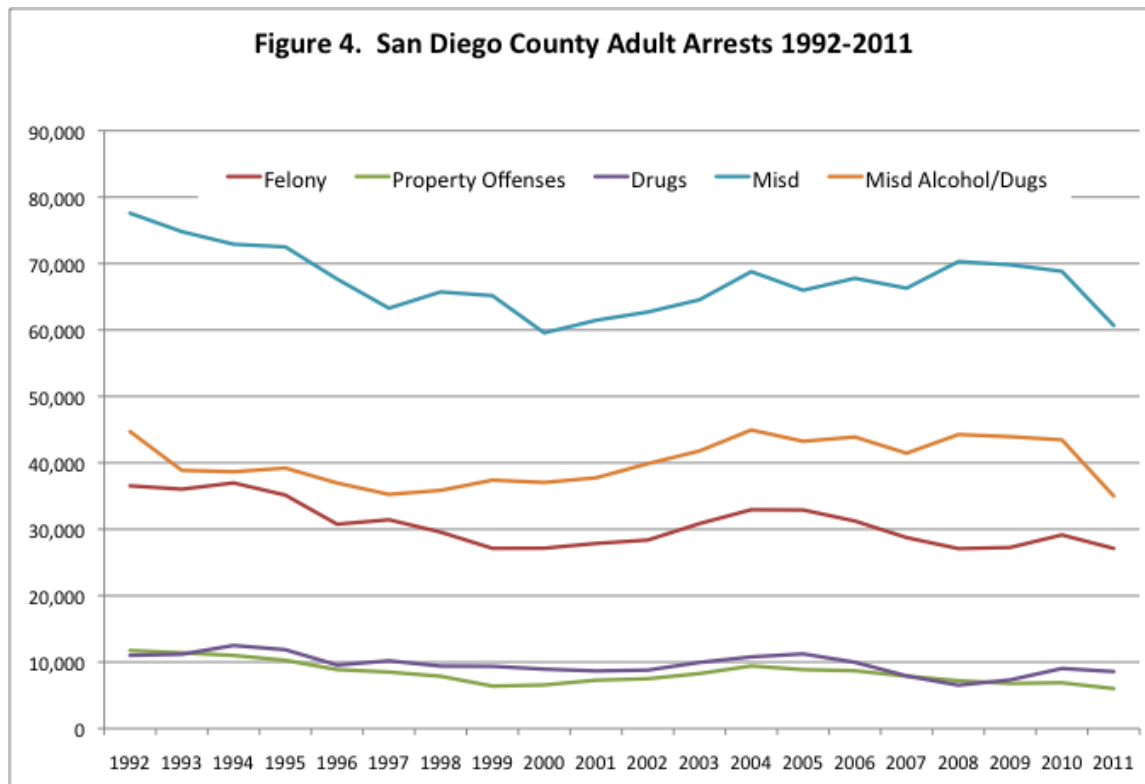
Adult Arrest Trends

Given the strong association between the number of arrests and jail bookings, it is important to consider adult arrest rates and types. The below historical analysis relies on data provided by the California Department of Justice. For more recent arrest data, see *Arrests 2012: Law Enforcement Response to Crime in the San Diego Region* (SANDAG, November 2013).

Commensurate with the declines in crime, the number of adults arrested each year has been declining but not nearly as much as the drop in crime itself. Most people in San Diego County are arrested for misdemeanor crimes, which are not included in the official crime data. As shown in Figure 4 and Table 1, the number of people arrested in 2011 for a misdemeanor crime was 60,674 or 69% of the total number of adult arrests. In contrast, there were 27,107 adult felony arrests, or 31% of the total. In 2012, there were 56,541 adult misdemeanor arrests and 27,834 adult felony arrests. These numbers remain far below where they were in 1992, when there were 77,576 adult misdemeanor arrests and 36,531 felony arrests.

The dominant crimes for which people are being arrested are related to drugs and alcohol. For misdemeanor crimes, the most frequent crimes are public drunkenness, DUI, liquor law violations and possession of a variety of illegal drugs. The class of misdemeanor level drugs and alcohol actually increased prior to 2011, but dropped in 2011. (This coincided with the reduction of the state penalty for low-level marijuana possession to an infraction.) Adult arrests for misdemeanor level drugs and alcohol violations fell by another 30% in 2012 from the previous year.

At the felony level, over half of adult arrests in 2011 (and 2012) were for property and drug crimes. The most dominant violent crime arrest in 2011 was assault, which accounts for 86% of all adult arrests for a violent crime.



Source: Department of Justice, California Attorney General

Table 1. Adult Arrests in San Diego County by Type of Crime, 2011

Crime	N	%
Felony	27,107	31%
Violent Offenses	7,754	9%
Assault	6,610	8%
Property Offenses	6,010	7%
Burglary	3,408	4%
Theft	1,749	2%
Motor Vehicle Theft	532	1%
Drug Offenses	8,565	10%
Other Felonies	7,521	9%
Misdemeanor	60,674	69%
Assault and Battery	6,111	7%
Petty Theft	3,878	4%
Drugs	6,585	8%
Alcohol Related	13,250	15%
Driving Under the Influence	15,167	17%
City / County Ordinances	4,783	5%
Failure to Appear Non-Traffic	4,611	5%
Other Misdemeanors	8,643	10%
Total Arrests	87,781	100%

Source: Department of Justice , California Attorney General

Jail Population Trends

Jail populations are the product of two basic factors: bookings (or admissions) and length of stay. A jail population can be distinguished by two major legal statuses – pretrial and sentenced – that also impact eligibility for community corrections programs that can lower a jail population.

Individuals in pretrial status are those who have been arrested and booked into jail but whose cases are still pending. They may be released (typically by posting bail or being released on their own recognizance) or remain in jail until their criminal charges are disposed of by the courts. Individuals in sentenced status are those who have been sentenced to the jail and who remain in custody until their sentence is completed. Also in this category are individuals who have been sentenced and are awaiting transfer to the state prison system or some other correctional system/jurisdiction.

The San Diego County Sheriff’s Department does not maintain a regular historical reporting system for the daily jail population and/or the annual number of bookings and releases. Such data was summarized in a 2011 SANDAG report, *Adult Offenders in Local Custody and Under Community Supervision in San Diego County: Current Capacities and Future Needs*. Another source of San Diego County jail data is the statewide jail survey conducted quarterly by the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC).

According to the most recent BSCC survey, the jail population has remained fairly stable with only modest variation from year to year. However, there has been a decline in the number of people held in pretrial status and an associated increase in the number of sentenced inmates. The increase in the sentenced population is no doubt related to the implementation of AB109. The decline in the pretrial population has been more than offset by the increase in the sentenced population.

According to the Sheriff's Department, the jail population as of mid-November 2013 was approximately 5,900, up by about 1,000 inmates since the enactment of AB109. Of the total jail population, about 1,370 are sentenced under AB109 – called 1170(h) inmates; another approximately 650 AB109 individuals are either Post Release Offenders or State Parolees incarcerated in the county jail system for a sanction (i.e., “flash incarceration”) or a violation. Together, AB109 inmates account for roughly one-third of the total jail population.

Table 2. San Diego County Jail Population Trends 2009-2013

As of June	Pretrial			Sentenced			Work Furlough	Total
	Males	Females	Pretrial Total	Males	Females	Sentence Total		
2009	2,878	433	3,311	1,541	302	1,843	235	5,389
2010	2,747	413	3,160	1,264	275	1,539	187	4,886
2011	2,452	363	2,815	1,420	290	1,710	283	4,808
2012	2,409	388	2,797	1,885	382	2,267	205	5,269
June 2013	2,665	453	3,117	1,970	370	2,340	256*	5,713

**Including 8 in pretrial status.*
Source: Board of State and Community Corrections Quarterly Jail Survey.

The 2011 SANDAG report provides data on bookings, daily population and length of stay for 2006, 2009, and 2010. These comparisons show that felony bookings have declined slightly but misdemeanor bookings have increased. The total number of bookings was in the 95,000 range. The length of stay for sentenced inmates (who had been released) had declined from 73 days to 69 days, while the length of stay for pretrial inmates had remained constant at five days.

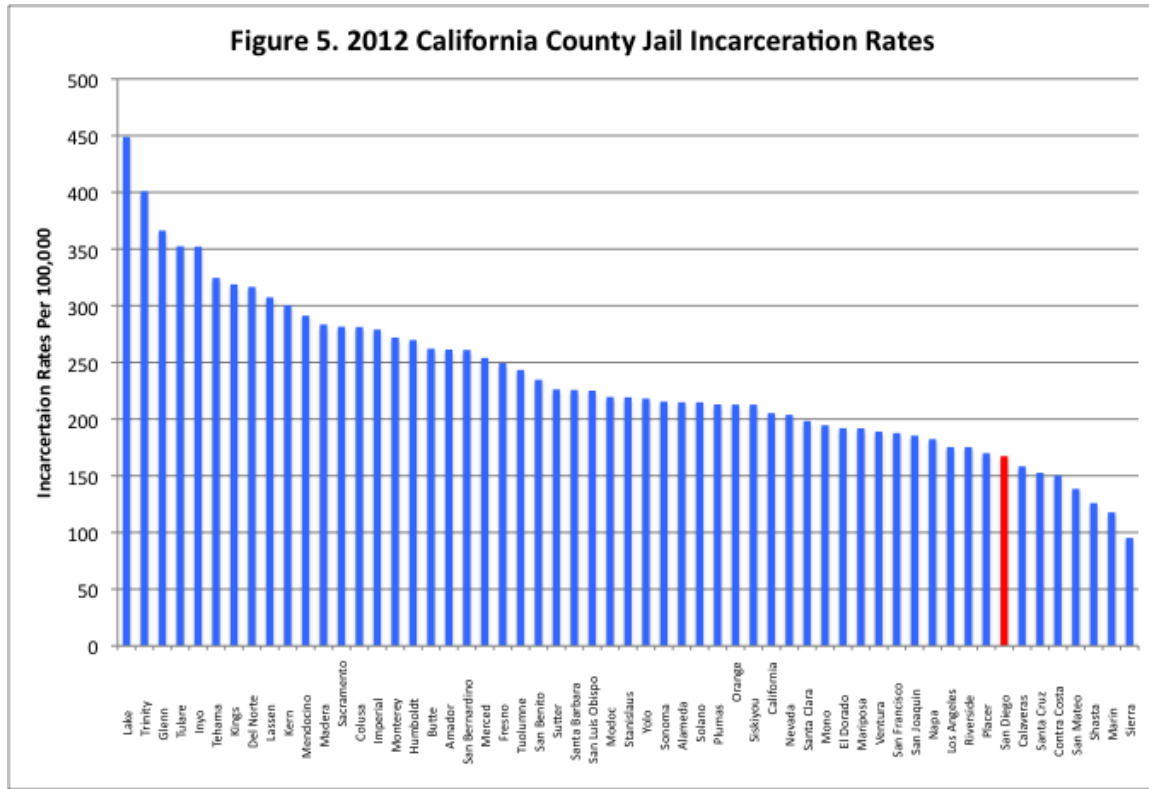
Based on received data files, the number of releases each year from January 1, 2008 through October 31, 2012 was computed at roughly 95,000, which is similar to the SANDAG report (See Table 3). Beginning in 2011, jail bookings and releases declined slightly. The length of stay had declined slightly but has since increased due, in part, to the implementation of Realignment.

**Table 3. San Diego County Jail Releases
January 1, 2008 through October 31, 2012**

Year	Release Events	Avg. Length of Stay (days)
2008	99,432	20.1
2009	100,183	19.9
2010	99,145	18.4
2011	94,503	18.7
2012*	93,359	20.0
Avg. % Change	-5.7%	

*Source: SCSD Data Files; * Based on 10 months of actual data adjusted for 12 months.*

Compared to other California counties, San Diego has a lower than average jail incarceration rate (i.e., the number of people in jail on any given day per 100,000 county population). Figure 5 shows the jail population incarceration rates by county. The rate for San Diego, at 168 per 100,000 population, is well below the statewide average of 199.



Source: Department of Justice, California Attorney General

Table 4 summarizes the key adult criminal justice data for both San Diego County and California. As noted previously, San Diego has a significantly lower crime rate which is associated with a lower adult felony arrest rate. The adult misdemeanor arrest rate is slightly higher than the state rate which makes the overall adult arrest rate comparable with the state rate.

A lower felony arrest rate will generally produce lower rates of correctional supervision and incarceration, which seems to be the case here. The last two indicators in the table show that the rate of corrections and probation per 100 adult arrests is comparable to the state rate. In general, San Diego is benefiting from a lower crime rate which serves to relieve some of the pressures on criminal justice services and costs.

Table 4. Summary of Key Criminal Indicators (San Diego and California) - 2012

Indicator	San Diego County		California	
Population	3,143,429		38,826,898	
Crime Rate (per 100,000 population)	2,421		3,026	
	N	Rate (Adult arrests per 100,000 pop)	N	Rate (Adult arrests per 100,000 pop)
Adult Felony Arrests	27,107	862	376,511	970
Adult Misd Arrests	60,674	1,930	741,122	1,909
Total Adult Arrests	87,781	2,793	1,117,633	2,879
Jail	5,269	168	77,340	199
Prison	9,436	300	136,395	351
Parole	4,299	137	83,062	214
Felon Probation	19,306	614	255,720	659
<i>Total</i>	<i>38,310</i>	<i>1,219</i>	<i>552,517</i>	<i>1,423</i>
	Rate (per 100 adult arrests)		Rate (per 100 adult arrests)	
Corrections/Arrest Rate	44		49	
Probation/Arrest Rate	22		23	

Sources: California Attorney General and CDCR.

Overview of the San Diego County Community Corrections Programs

Since 2008, more than 6,000 people have been assigned to San Diego County’s Work Release, Work Furlough and County Parole programs. As shown in Table 5, the Work Release and Work Furlough programs have had more participants to date. More recently, the San Diego County Probation Department created the Residential Reentry Center (RRC) program. (The RRC program is included in this section; however, the program is too new to have recidivism measures yet.)

As of mid-2013, a total of 505 people were participants in the four programs (as distinct from admissions; see Table 5). Of those, approximately 60 were in Work Furlough; 200 were in Work Release; 100 were under County Parole and another 145 people were assigned to the more recently established RRC. Almost all participants are sentenced offenders.

Table 5. Program Admissions by Program Type and Year

Program	CY2008	CY2009	CY2010	CY2011	CY2012 (partial)	Totals
Work Furlough	778	586	518	477	136	2,495
RRC	NA	NA	NA	NA	160	160
County Parole	83	111	74	91	61	420
Work Release	453	710	905	742	277	3,087
Totals	1,314	1,407	1,497	1,310	474	6,162

All four programs are primarily designed to reduce recidivism.

Below are descriptions of these programs based on agency documents and interviews with the program officials.

Work Furlough

This program has been operating since 1980 but was turned over to a contractor (currently Correctional Alternatives, Inc.) in 1995. CAI operates the program within a larger CAI facility, which houses a total of 483 offenders (170 on Work Furlough, 165 on RRC, 100 on U.S. Federal RRC, and 10 on U.S. Federal Pre-Trial Service).

The Court flags (for the Sheriff's Department) defendants who can serve their time at the Work Furlough facility rather than the county jail. Offenders must have employment in order to enter the Work Furlough program. While assigned to this facility, offenders must maintain their own employment (generally during the day), and are required to be housed at the facility overnight.

1. Program Objective and Goals

CAI provides opportunities for offenders to work while still under custody supervision. Program participants are permitted to check out of the facility to go to work, and they are required to return to the facility once their workday is completed.

Participants also attend court-ordered support groups or services (e.g., alcoholics anonymous, narcotics addiction programs). The various programs are offered on-site weekly. The inmate's family and friends can visit on weekends at the facility.

These services are designed to reduce recidivism rates for program participants. It is also expected to reduce costs, as Work Furlough is a less expensive form of custody supervision. As noted below, participants pay a daily fee.

2. Selection and Screening Procedures

The Work Furlough screening process is initiated by the defendant being sentenced to the Work Furlough program by the Court. All felony cases require a defense attorney to complete a screening application to assert his client's Work Furlough eligibility. Each defendant sentenced to custody in the Work Furlough program will have a case reviewed for approval by the Probation Department's Work Furlough Oversight (WFO) Unit.

A second stage of screening is performed by the Probation Department, which uses a version of the COMPAS screening instrument to determine risk level. After sentencing, the inmate calls the CAI facility to verify his reporting date and personal information. The inmate reports to the facility on his court-ordered report date to begin the intake process.

CAI then completes its own internal risk assessment using the "Ohio Risk Assessment: Community Supervision Tool." This is yet another instrument that is expected to assess the same risk factors as the COMPAS instrument. They conduct a formal orientation for all newly accepted inmates. CAI reports that individualized case management is an integral part of their programming.

3. Intervention and Services Provided

Each offender is assigned a CAI case manager. During the orientation the participant is given a tour of the facility and is provided a bunk and a locker. Offenders report to their jobs on a regular basis and then return to the facility for housing and meals.

CAI staff provides job search counseling and support, religious services, as well as other community-based programs. However, program participants are fully responsible for their own medical care. Each offender is also responsible for paying a \$42/day program fee and required to bring a \$300 deposit on or before the day the person checks into the facility.

CAI maintains a 1 to 50 staff-inmate ratio. The facility is staffed and conducts various programs 24 hours each day. Offenders earn good time credits for their time assigned to Work Furlough, which is then deducted from their sentence.

During the site visits to Work Furlough, 11 people assigned to the program were interviewed. (These individuals, though housed at the Work Furlough facility, were mostly participants in the newly established Residential Reentry Center program.) Those people interviewed had been in a county jail for 2-8 weeks with the exception of one female offender who was in jail for six months prior to being admitted to the program.

Most individuals in Work Furlough reported having learned about the program through their own research and had requested their respective attorneys assist in gaining access to the program. For some, they felt they did not have the option to decline participation in the program.

In general, offender response was overwhelmingly affirmative. For the most part, participating offenders have the desire to change; and therefore, feel the program is helpful. The program provides information, opportunity, support, and tools to avoid pitfalls.

4. External Linkage with Other Agencies Necessary for Implementation

The San Diego County Probation Department has final authority over placement of offenders into the Work Furlough program. However, the San Diego County Sheriff's Department and Probation Department are responsible for creating program termination procedures that would allow an unsuccessful Work Furlough participant to be returned to the Sheriff's custody.

Residential Reentry Center

The recently established Residential Reentry Center (RRC) program allows both pretrial and sentenced offenders to be housed at the CAI facility alongside Work Furlough. The main reason RRC participants are not assigned to Work Furlough is that they are not employed and thus cannot pay for the costs of their placement at CAI.

All candidates are screened by the Sheriff's County Parole and Alternative Custody (CPAC) Unit, which has established a centralized screening process. If an offender does not qualify for County Parole or Work Furlough, they can be assigned to the RRC.

The intervention strategy is similar to that of Work Furlough except that participants are required to attend activities such as computer lab time, physical training, "Online Job Hunt", small group discussions, and residential reentry meetings with counselors. The classes include "Transitional Skills", "Solutions (Women/Men)", Narcotics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous, "Parenting", and "Job Readiness."

In general, participants reported that the program is very good and had a favorable outlook of the facility and its staff. When asked which program activities are most helpful, they tended to correlate with their personal needs. For example, people who reported substance abuse tended to speak

highly of the substance abuse treatment programs. Those with children spoke highly of the parenting services. However, most of the offenders collectively agreed that time in the computer lab, “Transitional Skills”, “Solutions”, and meetings with the RRC counselors are most beneficial.

When asked if there were any areas for improvement, some program participants suggested more strict screening of offender candidates to ensure that they are likely to secure a job upon their arrival to the program. This relates to the policy that participants need to have good prospects for securing such work. If participants are unable to secure work, they can have a negative impact on the program’s housing environment. It was also suggested that an increase in programming staff would enhance staff availability to participants.

In terms of program activities, some were concerned that they were forced to participate in classes that taught skills that they already possess. Participants overwhelmingly agreed that the “Online Job Hunt” is least helpful because of the class format. Responses included: (1) There are too many people in attendance at one time, and (2) There is not enough variety for types of jobs as www.craigslist.com is the only job site provided for this time designated for online job hunting.

Relative to reducing recidivism rates among inmates released back to the community, it was suggested that the program should help inmates create ways to occupy and manage their time when they return to the community. One inmate said, “Our time is managed here because we have work and program goals to meet.”

County Parole

California Penal Code Sections 3074-3801 provide for County Parole and require each County Parole Board to establish written rules and regulations for inmates serving county jail sentences to apply for parole. The purpose of the parole system is to assist county jail inmates to reintegrate into society as constructive individuals as soon as they are able. Since inmates are not confined for the full term of their sentences, the program also alleviates the cost of keeping the inmates in jail.

In San Diego County, the current target group is low-risk inmates who are considered by a three-person board to be suitable for release. Under current law, the length of supervision can last up to two years but is generally one year. (As of January 1, 2014, this upper limit will be extended to three years; see AB884.) Supervision is provided either by the Sheriff or Probation Department based on whether the inmate is serving a county jail sentence with or without a probation term. This program directly impacts the inmate’s length of stay.

The County Parole and Alternative Custody (CPAC) Unit – formerly the County Parole Unit – is comprised of sworn and non-sworn San Diego Sheriff Department staff members. This Sheriff’s Department unit was primarily an electronic monitoring (EM) unit and was initially created solely for administering electronic monitoring for the Sheriff Department since the early 1980s. As of July 2013, 58 offenders were on County Parole. (An additional 105 offenders were on Alternative Custody; the Alternative Custody program can currently accommodate a total of 305 offenders.)

1. Programs Goals and Objectives

The County Parole program creates an opportunity for sentenced inmates in County custody to be released before completion of sentence to the supervision of the Sheriff’s Department. It is designed to identify low-risk sentenced inmates who no longer require incarceration. As such, no direct services are provided to offenders on County Parole.

2. Selection and Screening Procedures

The inmate screening process starts with inmates who have a sentence of 365 days or less. The Sheriff's Department provides inmates access to County Parole applications, which the inmates must complete themselves.

The applications are initially screened by Sheriff Department County Parole staff, which then conducts evaluations of the applications and advises the inmates as to whether they qualify. If the inmate is qualified he or she is notified of a hearing date before the County Parole Board.

The County Parole Board is comprised of three members: a representative from the Sheriff's Department, a representative from the Probation Department and a member from the community who is appointed by the Court. The County Parole Board considers the inmate's criminal history, behavior in the custody setting, participation in custody programs and his plans for his life post-release.

3. Intervention and Services Provided

The County Parole Board may grant parole effective immediately or on a date in the future. The Board may mandate that the inmate complete an educational or some other rehabilitative program prior to being released. All parolees must remain on parole until their calendar release date. However, the Parole Board may order the inmate to parole for a longer period of time, up to a maximum of two years. (That maximum increases to three years in 2014.)

The Sheriff's CPAC unit is an administrative unit that coordinates the monitoring of inmates on parole. All parolees are assigned to a County Parole Officer/Counselor. A violation of parole conditions could result in re-arrest with **no** court proceedings, and the inmate must return to custody and serve his entire sentence with **no** credit provided for time previously spent on parole status. The inmate is also subjected to losing all or a portion of his early release credits.

4. External Linkage with Other Agencies Necessary for Implementation

The monitoring of parolees is accomplished with the resources of the Sheriff's Department and the San Diego County Probation Department. Sheriff's Department staff members consider themselves in a unique relationship with the San Diego County Probation Department because two of their members have authorized access to the San Diego County Probation computer data system. They also have access to a local unit level system used to extract local demographic data. Additionally, they have access to a state-wide law enforcement officer notification system created to alert officers in other counties and jurisdictions when a subject has violated conditions of his parole.

Work Release

California Penal Code Section 4024.2 authorizes County Boards of Supervisors to establish a Work Release program. The San Diego County Board of Supervisors enacted a resolution in 1993, authorizing the Sheriff's and Probation Departments to offer a voluntary Work Release program for offenders with a custody sentence of 30 days or less. The Work Release sentence typically consists of having to perform up to 96 hours of public service. This is usually accomplished over several weeks (on weekends or during the week) while the person holds his or her regular job. On any given day there are about 300 people under Work Release.

1. Programs Goals and Objectives

The program is designed to serve as an alternative to incarceration. Instead of the sentenced offender serving time in jail for 30 days or less, the person is allowed to provide labor to the County on a number of public work sites to work off his sentence. There are no rehabilitative services provided by the program. As such, the program should not have any impact on recidivism via services. However, recidivism rates may be affected via the deterrence effect. Work Release is used as a cost-effective way to manage the custody population and provide service to the community using offender labor.

2. Selection and Screening Procedures

Candidates for Work Release are referred by the Court at the time they are sentenced. In general, these people are not in the custody of the jail at the time of sentencing having secured some form of pretrial release. The sentencing court forwards a minute order with sentencing information to the Work Release Office which is located in the downtown jail facility. San Diego Sheriff Work Release staff screen the subjects for eligibility based on criteria set out in the County Board of Supervisors' resolution, and then books and releases them to Work Release. In practice, as discussed below, the vast majority of referrals are people convicted of a misdemeanor DUI. In general, the person must report to the Work Release Office within 24 hours.

The subject contacts the Work Release Office by telephone to receive and schedule an appointment with Work Release staff. Eligible subjects are provided an intake appointment and given an orientation with a booking and release date. Then the inmate is told to report to the Work Project Office within four business days to receive a work assignment. According to the Board of Supervisors resolution, the offender must pay a fee at the time of the work assignment to the San Diego Probation Department, which operates the Work Release program.

The subject must be physically able to work. The offender also must qualify by passing preset criminal history standards. If not, the Work Release Office provides the offender with a letter declaring him ineligible for the program. Ineligible subjects are referred back to the Court for disposition. In addition, the offender is referred back to the Court if compliance with the rules and requirements of the program is not achieved.

Most of the people referred by the Courts have been convicted of a DUI and are facing a jail sentence of 30 days or less. With the good time credits a person would receive in custody, the actual amount of time served would be no more than 15 days.

3. Intervention and Services Provided

Work Release is a public works project where people are required to work off their jail sentence by providing cost-free labor. The types of work assignments tend to be litter removal. If applicable, negative information regarding the subject is reported to the Court on a weekly basis. Only negative information, such as failure to appear or failing to complete work requirements, is provided to the Court. Male subjects are processed at the San Diego County Central jail facility and females at the Los Colinas facility.

4. External Linkage with Other Agencies

The major linkage is between the Sheriff and Probation Departments. As noted earlier, the Sheriff's Work Release staff handles the referrals from the Courts while the Probation Department provides the supervision of the program participants. County agencies help designate work assignments (e.g., public parks, public buildings).

Quantitative Assessment of the Community Corrections Programs

This part of the study focuses on the quantitative attributes of the community corrections programs and relates them to those of the overall county jail population. We begin by looking at the flow of people admitted and released from the jail from 2008 through 2012 based on the data files received from the Sheriff's Department.

Table 6 shows that in 2008-2012, on average, there were slightly fewer than 100,000 bookings and releases each year. However, the numbers from 2011 and 2012 are significantly lower than reported in 2008, 2009, and 2010. This downward trend is associated with the lower number of arrests for 2011 as shown earlier in the report. These numbers are close to those reported by SANDAG.

Data also reveal that a significant number of releases were of people who have more than one release in a given year. In 2008, 74,232 unique people produced 99,150 releases, meaning that about 25,000 releases were produced by people having more than one release. In 2012, 63,034 unique people produced a total number of 91,554 releases, meaning that about 18,500 releases were produced by people having multiple releases. The average length of stay has been approximately three weeks and has remained relatively constant since 2008 even with the implementation of Criminal Justice Realignment in October 2011 (as measured by individuals who have been released).

Table 6. Historical Jail Releases and Lengths of Stay, 2008-2012

Year	Total Releases
2008	99,510
Length of Stay	17 days
Persons in 2008	74,232
Length of Stay	22 days
2009	100,237
SANDAG 2009 Report	97,337
2010	99,193
2011	94,542
2012	91,554
Length of Stay	20 days
Persons in 2012	63,034
Length of Stay	21 days

Attributes of Jail Releases

The next step in the analysis is to briefly review the attributes of the overall releases. This section focuses on the most recent 12-month period to gain the most contemporary view of jail releases. This analysis considers person-based releases rather than all releases (to ensure that the data is reflective of the population passing through the jails, and not skewed by those who passed through the jails multiple times). As shown in Table 7, the key facts are as follows:

1. Most of the releases are white and Hispanic males.
2. Blacks have a significantly longer length of stay than other ethnic groups.
3. Females make up a small proportion of jail releases and a significantly shorter length of stay than males.
4. Many of the releases are people in pretrial status who spent a very short time in jail before posting a bond, cash or receiving a simple Sheriff citation.
5. A significant number of pretrial releases were people whose charges were dismissed in less than two days.
6. Of those released in sentenced status, most were those who completed their sentences, those released to probation, and those released to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to serve a state prison sentence.
7. Inmates released to CDCR have the longest length of stay of any release group (150 days), which reflects the length of time it takes to dispose of such cases.
8. Of those released to CDCR, most are “new” sentences and about 250 are probation technical violators.
9. Another significant number are released to ICE for immigration holds and possible deportation.

Work Release and County Parole both constitute a very small percentage of releases. Less than 1% of all releases were to Work Release; such releases occur very shortly after the person is “booked” into the jail system at the Work Release Office located next to the main downtown jail facility. Even fewer releases were to County Parole.

About half of all releases are of individuals whose primary charge was in the misdemeanor category; they have, as expected, a very short length of stay (4 days). Among the felony releases, most of these primary offenses are “other violent”, drug possession, and drug sales (Table 8).

Finally, a significant number of releases are people who were booked on a parole or probation violation. These people occupy about 200 beds on a daily basis and have an average length of stay of 29.1 days (Table 8).

There are also a number of possible risk factors that are collected by Sheriff’s Department staff at the time of booking/admission that are worth noting. These are summarized in Table 9 below. Later on in the report we will examine whether these or other inmate attributes are associated with recidivism rates.

Table 7. Person-Based Releases Demographics, 2012

Demographic	N	%	Avg. Length of Stay (days)
Base	63,374	100.0%	20.9
Gender			
Female	14,961	23.6%	13.1
Male	48,413	76.4%	23.3
Race			
White	28,070	44.3%	16.5
Hispanic	21,999	34.7%	23.6
Black	9,256	14.6%	27.1
Other	4,049	6.4%	22.8
Release Reason			
Pretrial			
Bond/Bail	23,077	36.4%	1.1
Dismissed	8,072	12.7%	1.8
Book and release	2,585	4.1%	0.2
Release on own recognizance (OR)	1,447	2.3%	9.7
Pretrial supervision	329	0.5%	7.8
Other Pre Trial	1,522	2.4%	7.0
Sentenced			
Completed local sentence	8,315	13.1%	68.6
Probation	6,765	10.7%	13.9
CDCR - DOC	2,212	3.5%	150.3
Other Sentenced	1,536	2.4%	19.0
Court order	806	1.3%	39.3
Work Release	508	0.8%	0.1
County Parole	74	0.1%	134.0
Release to immigration	3,692	5.8%	28.0
Release to other agency	2,434	3.8%	35.7
Age at Release			
25 or younger	20,947	33.1%	18.0
26-35	17,819	28.1%	21.8
36-50	16,148	25.5%	23.7
50 and older	8,460	13.3%	21.0
Avg. age	34.3 years		

Table 8. Person-Based Releases by Most Serious Charge, 2012

Demographic	N	%	Avg. Length of Stay (days)
Base	63,374	100.0%	20.9
Felony	28,568	45.1%	40.9
Murder	221	0.3%	321.3
Sex	728	1.1%	117.8
Manslaughter	29	0.0%	69.9
Assault	2,093	3.3%	69.0
Robbery	864	1.4%	89.7
Other violent	5,415	8.5%	28.7
Drug sale	3,488	5.5%	47.0
Burglary	3,387	5.3%	48.4
Theft	1,929	3.0%	36.5
Fraud	832	1.3%	24.9
Forgery	72	0.1%	12.2
Weapon	748	1.2%	32.0
Other property	699	1.1%	24.3
DUI	517	0.8%	45.4
Drug possession	4,456	7.0%	14.1
Parole/Prob. Violator	2,522	4.0%	29.1
Other non-violent	568	0.9%	18.5
Misdemeanor	31,647	49.9%	4.0
Deportation Procedure	2,044	3.2%	10.0
Unknown	1,115	1.8%	12.0

Table 9. Risk Factors Recorded at Booking

Risk Factor	All Person-Based Releases (2012)
Criminal Sophistication?	7%
Current Assaultive History?	9%
Escape History?	0%
Institutional Behavior Problem?	3%
Parolee?	7%
Prior Assaultive Felony?	54%
Drug Abuse?	20%

A Closer Look at Work Release, Work Furlough and County Parole Releases

This section of the report compares the attributes of the three alternatives to incarceration programs with other sentenced releases. (RRC is too new for it to be analyzed in this section.) The large pool of pretrial releases, ICE transfers and CDCR transfers has been removed from the analysis as they are currently not eligible for any of these community corrections programs. With these adjustments in mind, the most interesting differences among the four cohorts are:

1. Work Release is currently used exclusively for people convicted of misdemeanor crimes, the vast majority of which are misdemeanor DUI offenses.
2. Work Furlough is equally divided between misdemeanor and felony level crimes.
3. County Parole releases are almost exclusively felony level sentences.
4. Work Furlough is disproportionately male.
5. Blacks are under-represented among Work Release and Work Furlough releases.
6. There are no major differences among the sentenced release groups with respect to age, although participants in Work Furlough and County Parole are slightly younger.

Table 10. Special Population Comparison, 2012

	Work Release		Work Furlough		County Parole		Other Sentenced*	
	%	Length of Stay	%	Length of Stay	%	Length of Stay	%	Length of Stay
Totals	508	0.1	389	101.4	74	134	17,037	40.3
Gender								
Female	24%	0.1	12%	93.4	22%	122	21%	35.1
Male	76%	0.1	88%	102.6	78%	137.3	80%	41.6
Race								
Black	11%	0.1	12%	106	26%	130.2	19%	42.1
Hispanic	29%	0.1	40%	99.9	37%	158.6	33%	41.2
Other	9%	0.1	9%	117.3	3%	143	5%	50.7
White	51%	0.1	40%	98.1	35%	110.7	43%	37.5
Age at Release								
<26	21%	0.1	25%	103.6	43%	164.9	29%	40.8
26-35	44%	0.1	39%	102.3	19%	109	27%	41.8
36-50	25%	0.1	26%	96.6	30%	112.4	28%	40.6
>50	10%	0.1	10%	105.9	8%	107.4	16%	36.1
Avg. age	34.8 yrs.		32.3 yrs.		32.8 yrs.		35.4 yrs.	
Most Serious Charge								
Felony Violent	0%	0.1	18%	130.3	28%	171.5	15%	74.2
Felony Prop.	0%	-	11%	154.4	31%	123.4	16%	60.6
Felony Drug	0%	0.1	14%	133.3	23%	32.8	16%	51.1
Felony DUI	0%	-	6%	109.2	5%	72.3	1%	65.7
Felony Weapon	0%	-	2%	145	0%	-	2%	48.7
Felony Other	0%	-	2%	111.6	4%	104.3	13%	33.3
Misd. DUI	85%	0.1	40%	67.3	5%	83.7	12%	17.8
Misd. Other	14%	0.1	7%	54.6	3%	140.8	26%	13.6

**This is not a comparison group; rather, this group includes all releases not in the other listed categories, EXCEPT the large pool of pretrial releases and transfers to ICE and CDCR.*

Recidivism

For purposes of this evaluation, recidivism is measured by county jail booking. The evaluation determined both who had been readmitted to the county jail system and for what offense. The earliest cohort was for 2008 with subsequent cohorts for 2009, 2010 and 2011. For all of these cohorts, we were able to compute the percentage of people who were returned to the jail at least once within 12 months of their release date. For the earliest cohort, we have a four-year follow-up period, whereas we have only a 12-month follow-up period for the most recent cohort (2011). (These figures look at all jail releases, not just those involved in the evaluated community corrections programs.)

Table 11. Return to Jail Rates by Release Cohort

Year	12 Months	24 Months	36 Months	48 Months
2008	33.0%	42.7%	47.6%	50.5%
2009	32.7%	42.0%	46.4%	n/a
2010	33.4%	41.9%	n/a	n/a
2011	33.3%	n/a	n/a	n/a

There are some interesting findings in terms of the overall return rates for all jail releases (pretrial and sentenced). First, as shown in Table 11, the recidivism rates at 12 months, two years, and three years are largely unchanged since 2008. Next, the fact that the rates have remained remarkably constant suggests that recent changes in the criminal justice system, taken together, have had little impact on the overall recidivism rate of people admitted to and released from the jail system.

Finally, of the type of crimes that are resulting in the return to the jail system, only 10% of these crimes are for felony level violent crimes. The vast majority (90%) are felony non-violent or misdemeanor level crimes.

Table 12. Types of Crimes Resulting in a Return to Jail

Return Charge	All 2011 Releases		
	N	%	Avg. Return Time (days)
Felony			
Violent	2,327	10%	128.6
Property	2,419	11%	129.3
Drug	3,350	15%	119.5
DUI	518	2%	140.9
Weapon	292	1%	129.2
Other non-violent	2,883	13%	141.4
Misd. Other	8,072	35%	121.0
Misd. DUI	2,984	13%	137.2
Total	22,845	100%	127.6

In terms of risk analysis, the key attributes associated with the return-to-jail rates of all jail releases are as follows:

1. Sex: Males have higher recidivism rates as compared to females.
2. Race: Blacks have higher recidivism rates as compared to other ethnic/race groups.
3. Offense: People convicted of assault, robbery, weapons, drug possession, or who are parole violators, have higher recidivism rates than other offenders; while people convicted of murder, sex, or DUI offenses have lower recidivism rates.
4. Drug use: People identified as having a drug abuse problem had a higher recidivism rate as opposed to those with no drug use.
5. Classification: People with the following Sheriff’s Department classifications have lower recidivism rates:
 - a. Lacking criminal sophistication;
 - b. Not an institutional management problem; and/or
 - c. Not a prior felony for assault.

Preliminary Recidivism Data on Released AB109 Population

We were also able to analyze the return-to-jail rate of the initial wave of AB109-sentenced inmates who have been sentenced and released since the law (AB109) took effect in October 2011. Through 2012, there were 637 people who had completed their sentences and were released after spending an average of 190 days in custody. Since these are the first AB109 releases from county jail, many of them have one-year sentences. As of April 2013, 20% had been returned to the jail for mostly misdemeanor, or felony level property and drug crimes (Table 13). Only 6 had been returned for a violent crime.

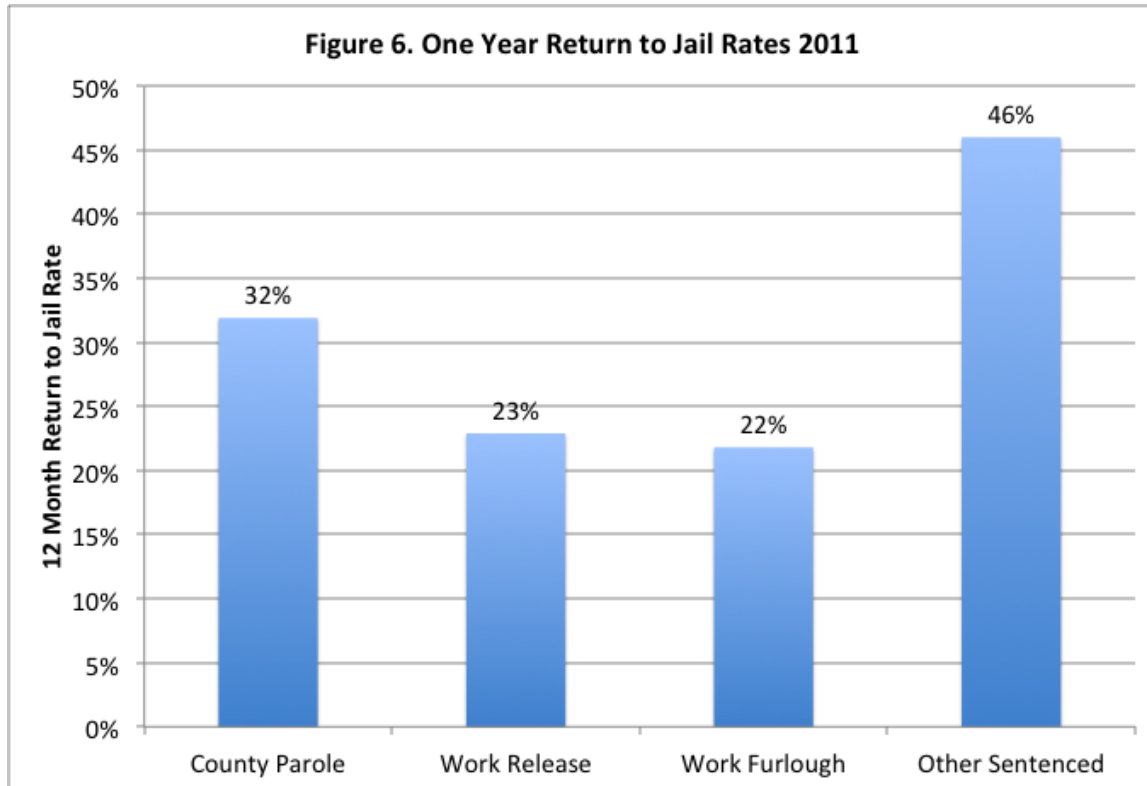
These preliminary rates are well below the return rates for this same group who spent some portion of their time in CDCR as well as the local jail. While a longer follow-up period will be required to make a complete 12-month analysis, it may well be that the locally sentenced inmates have lower recidivism rates than those who were released from CDCR prior to Realignment.

Table 13. Recidivism Rate and Type for Early Realignment Offenders (2011)

1170(h) Realignment Releases & Returns	
Released since 11/1/2011	637
Avg. Length of Stay in Jail	190 days
Returned	129
Return %	20.3%
Type of Crime	
Felony	81
Violent	6
Property	15
Drugs	39
DUI	0
Other	22
Misdemeanor	47
Misdemeanor DUI	4

Recidivism Data on Community Corrections Program Participants

Looking specifically at the return-to-jail rates of community corrections program participants, we found that people assigned to the Work Release, Work Furlough, and County Parole programs have significantly *lower* recidivism rates than all other people released as sentenced inmates (Figure 6).



The lower recidivism rates for individuals participating in the community corrections programs may be largely explained by who they are. For example, Work Release is largely limited to people sentenced for a misdemeanor DUI offense. Research has found that people arrested and convicted of misdemeanor and felony DUI crimes tend to have lower recidivism rates. The most recent follow-up study for DUI offenders in California found that just 4% re-offended with another DUI within 12 months and 25% within nine years. Repeat DUI offenders have slightly higher re-offense rates: 6% for one year and 28% for nine years.¹ As a class of people, therefore, convicted DUI offenders tend to have low recidivism rates.

Even within the above identified risk factors, the Work Release and to a larger extent the Work Furlough have lower recidivism rates (Table 14). For example, females who are released via Work Release, Work Furlough and County Parole have lower return rates than other released (sentenced) females. For Blacks, participating in one of these three community corrections programs tends to even the overall differences in return rates noted earlier.

¹ See Tashima, Helen N. and Clifford J. Helander. (January 2005), *2005 Annual Report of the California DUI Management Information System*. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Motor Vehicles.

Table 14. One-Year Jail Return Rates by Selective Risk Factors

Demographic	Work Release	Work Furlough	County Parole	Other Sentenced
	% Returned	% Returned	% Returned	% Returned
Base	23%	22%	32%	46%
Gender				
Female	17%	19%	30%	42%
Male	25%	22%	33%	48%
Race				
Black	32%	30%	25%	50%
Hispanic	27%	21%	33%	45%
Other	13%	23%	100%	40%
White	18%	19%	27%	46%
Age at Release				
50 and older	13%	8%	40%	44%
Most Serious Charge				
Felony Violent	NA	22%	25%	42%
Felony Property	NA	26%	50%	50%
Felony Drug	NA	11%	21%	51%
Felony DUI	NA	31%	0%	28%
Felony Weapon	NA	50%	0%	55%
Misd DUI	19%	20%	20%	33%
Misd Other	33%	23%	NA	49%
Criminal Sophistication?	39%	24%	29%	46%

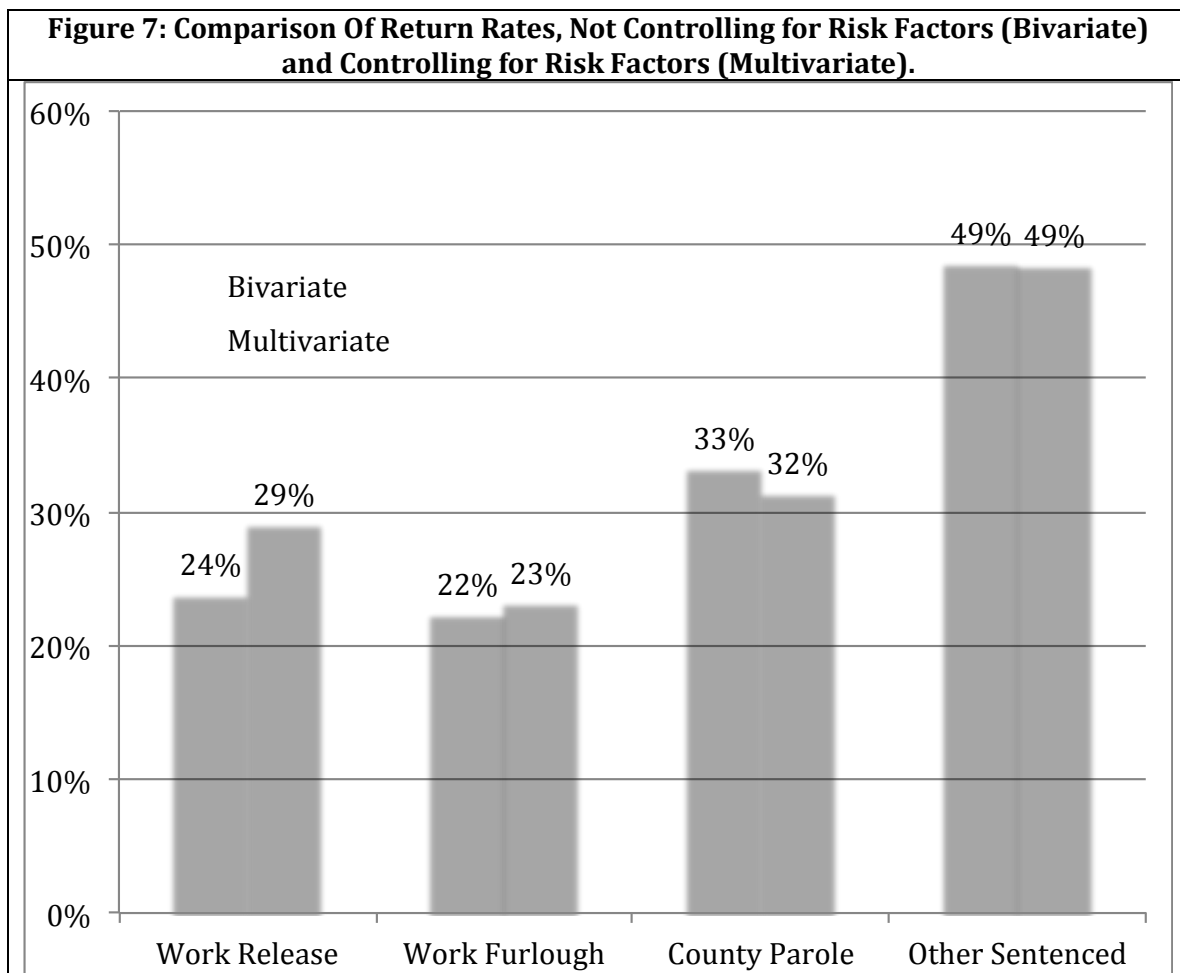
Controlling for Risk Factors in Measuring Recidivism

To further clarify the impact of Work Release, Work Furlough and County Parole on recidivism rates, we conducted a multivariate analysis to determine if the observed lower return-to-jail rates continue after controlling for all the risk-related attributes in Table 14. (See Appendix A for a technical description of the regression analysis.)

Figure 7 presents the expected return rates for each of the four release categories—before controlling for risk (bivariate) and after controlling for risk (multivariate). The figure suggests that after controlling for the attributes included in the multivariate models, the estimated return-to-jail rates for Work Release and Work Furlough participants increase a little but are still significantly lower than the “other sentenced” group.

The major conclusion is that significant differences in recidivism rates persist even after controlling for differences in the relevant risk items among the four release groups. This suggests the programs may have an independent and positive impact on post-release criminal behavior.

It may still be that people who apply for these programs are self-motivated to participate and it is that level of motivation that is producing the lower rates, or it could be the intervention itself. This research design is not able to make such a determination, but the preliminary analysis does show that people placed in these alternative programs have lower rates even after controlling for risk factors. If we were to control for the person’s motivation or other factors we could not measure, the differences would likely diminish. But those factors aside, it appears the programs are associated with a reduction in recidivism by as much as 10%.



Opportunities to Maximize Community Corrections Programs

Given the association between San Diego County’s Community Corrections programs and reduced recidivism, it is recommended to maximize use of these community corrections programs and to consider creating additional programs, particularly for the pretrial population for which there are currently no such programs. In this section, we identify the risk items associated with recidivism and introduce a risk instrument tool that can identify good candidates for these programs.

Risk Instrument Tool

Our research has found eight items related to risk that can be used for screening purposes (and that are already available in the Sheriff’s data system). The eight items were given weights (or points) based on the strength of their association with a return to the jail system within two years of release. The resulting risk instrument is shown in Table 15. Several of these items are factual or are reported by the inmate. There is some subjectivity involved, however, in the determination of “Lack of Criminal Sophistication” and “Not an Institutional Management Problem.”

Table 15. Risk Instrument Attributes – 2011 Releases

Risk Factor	N Releases	% Returned (1 yr)	% Returned for Felony (1 yr)	Points
	11,742	48.8%	25.4%	
1. Gender				
Female	2,662	44.4%	23.2%	0
Male	9,080	50.1%	26.1%	1
2. Age at Release				
50 years or older	1,802	45.7%	18.2%	0
49 years or younger	9,940	49.3%	26.7%	1
3. Current Offense				
DUI, Murder, Sex Offense, Misdemeanor	1,833	34.5%	8.3%	0
Other	7,202	47.0%	24.4%	1
Assault, Robbery, Weapons, Drug Possession	2,707	63.3%	39.6%	2
4. Self Reported Drug Use				
No	10,971	47.9%	24.0%	0
Yes	771	61.7%	36.6%	2
5. Lack of Criminal Sophistication				
Yes	9,508	44.9%	21.6%	0
No	2,234	65.3%	41.5%	2
6. Not An Institutional Management Problem				
Yes	11,551	48.4%	25.0%	0
No	191	73.8%	45.0%	2
7. Prior Felony for Assault				
No	10,971	47.7%	24.4%	0
Yes	771	64.7%	39.7%	2
8. CDCR Parole Violator				
No	11,134	47.5%	23.0%	0
Yes	608	71.9%	54.40%	2

We evaluated this tool by applying it to the 2011 release cohort. We excluded from this analysis released inmates who did not have a computed risk score (because they had no classification applied to them due to their short length of stay). We also excluded inmates who were transferred to ICE and CDCR as their 12-month risk period would reflect substantial periods of time for which they would be incarcerated.

The eight items and their respective sample sizes, recidivism rates, and weights are shown in Table 15. These eight items perform well in terms of predicting the probability of being returned to the jail system for any crime and then for only a felony crime. The 12-month return-to-jail rate for felony crimes is relatively low and there are a fair number of people who have rates that are well below the overall rate (Table 16).

Table 16. Risk Level Scale and Rebooking Rates

Risk Level	Score	N	%	Overall 1 yr. return	1 yr. Felony Arrest return
Low Risk	0	43	0.4%	25.6%	7.0%
	1	642	5.5%	34.0%	8.4%
	2	2,958	25.2%	36.3%	12.9%
	Total Low	3,643	31.0%	35.8%	12.1%
Moderate Risk	3	4,006	34.1%	46.9%	24.9%
	4	1,471	12.5%	56.4%	31.1%
	5	1,160	9.9%	56.8%	32.8%
	Total Moderate	6,637	56.5%	50.7%	27.6%
High	6	622	5.3%	68.8%	42.6%
	7	347	3.0%	73.5%	46.7%
	8	259	2.2%	75.7%	57.5%
	9	106	0.9%	71.7%	47.2%
	10+	128	1.1%	80.2%	69.2%
	Total High	1,462	12.5%	72.20%	48.6%

One statistical measure for assessing the predictive quality of any risk instrument is the AUC (Area Under the Curve) score. The AUC is computed as a means of assessing the effectiveness of an instrument's score in classifying subjects into two groups. In this analysis, the two groups were those returned to jail or not.

Table 17 below provides the AUC scores computed for the classification variable RETURN and FEL_RETURN. The instrument appears to predict Felony Returns (AUC = .67) somewhat better than General Returns (.63).

Table 17. AUC Scores for Proposed San Diego Risk Instrument

Measures	N	AUC Score	Standard Error	95%Lower Bound	95%Upper Bound
RETURN	11,742	0.6372	0.0050	0.6175	0.6369
FEL_RETURN	11,742	0.6760	0.0055	0.6552	0.6767

Such a risk instrument – and/or the one being used by Probation Department or CAI – can be used to screen additional people who could benefit from the existing alternative programs. The benefit of the instrument designed here is that it requires no staff work, as all of the scoring items are embedded in the existing Sheriff’s data system.

Because the risk factors are embedded in the Sheriff’s data system, we were able to apply the risk instrument to a snapshot of the jail population in May 2013 (Table 18). Several hundred inmates (about 11% of the May 2013 population) were assessed as low risk. An even larger group was classified as moderate risk (54%).² Significant proportions of the low and moderate risk inmates are in pretrial status.

Table 18. Risk Levels of the San Diego Jail Population – May 2013

Risk Level	Score	N	%	% Pretrial
Low Risk	0	3	0.1%	100.0%
	1	69	1.5%	49.4%
	2	472	10.0%	54.4%
Moderate Risk	3	873	18.5%	51.3%
	4	689	14.6%	49.5%
	5	998	21.1%	40.3%
High Risk	6	516	10.9%	43.2%
	7	424	9.0%	37.5%
	8	296	6.3%	45.6%
	9	167	3.5%	26.3%
	10	214	4.5%	27.0%
Total		4,721	100.0 %	49.7%
<i>Note: Insufficient risk data meant that an additional 900 inmates from the May 2013 snapshot were not able to be classified using the risk instrument.</i>				

² Applied to AB109 offenders, the risk instrument classified a few as low risk (8%), about two-thirds as moderate risk, and the rest as high risk (29%). However, as there were no AB109 cases in the 2009 population sample used to validate the tool, that analysis is problematic. Such a study could be done in 2014.

Policy Implications

The primary issue that flows from this analysis is whether Work Release, Work Furlough and County Parole programs, which are associated with reduced recidivism rates, can be expanded to other people who are being admitted and released each year but are not currently considered for these alternatives.

Our analysis shows that a significant number of people currently being released in pretrial status do not return to the San Diego jail system and can be viewed as low risk. Yet most of them are not being assigned to community corrections programs that have low return-to-jail rates. Moreover, recent data from the Sheriff's Department shows there is considerable surplus of County Parole and Alternative Custody slots (285 total as of mid 2013).

The question is how these existing community corrections programs might be applied more widely – and whether new programs can be established – to benefit public safety and facilitate jail population management. This discussion is separated below according to the legal status of the inmate population.

Pretrial Release

As shown earlier, most people who are booked into the jail system have been charged with a misdemeanor crime (or crimes) and are quickly released via cash bail, posting a bond via a commercial bondsman, or via a Sheriff book-and-release citation. But if one is unable to secure a quick release, the defendant will remain in custody for several weeks until the court disposes of the charges. The most typical felony arrest disposition will be a jail sentence (with credit for time served) or probation with a jail sentence. Approximately 73% of all felony court dispositions resulted in such a sentence in 2009 (the most recent data available from the California Criminal Justice Statistics Center).

The curriculum and services being provided by Work Furlough and the recently established Residential Reentry Center (RRC) might be an opportunity for people charged with felonies to gain supervised release under the auspices of the Probation or Sheriff's Departments knowing that a large portion of these defendants will ultimately be sentenced to probation and/or jail. And as described below, participation in these programs while in pretrial status could then be segued into alternative programs that would reduce the length of stay.

The San Diego County Board of Supervisors has authorized the Sheriff to operate a pretrial release program that would utilize electronic monitoring and other program services. Pretrial releases typically have very low failure to appear (FTA) and pretrial re-arrest rates. The above risk instrument could be used on the pretrial population to eliminate high-risk candidates and identify low-risk candidates for a program. Coupled with a well administered supervised release program, this could have a significant impact on the current size of the pretrial population.

Sentenced Inmates and Realignment

Since the implementation of AB109, some counties have been seeing increases in their sentenced jail populations, as certain felony offenders are required to serve their sentences in local jails rather than state prisons. This population growth can be somewhat tempered if the County is able to utilize the practice of split sentencing where the imposed prison sentence is reduced.

To date, approximately 25% of imposed 1170(h) prison sentences in San Diego have been split sentences. This rate is on par with the state rate of 23%, which is being dragged down by Los Angeles County (with a rate of just 5%).

Should the County be interested in increasing this rate, greater use of Work Furlough/RRC and County Parole would be an excellent model to use. One scenario would be to allow pretrial inmates charged with non-violent, non-serious, non-sex registerable charges to begin participation in one of these programs, as a condition of securing pretrial release. Those who are unable to be released could continue in the program with the potential for securing a split sentence if convicted of the charges.

Finally, utilizing Alternative Custody for AB109 inmates [sentenced under 1170(h)] prior to their maximum release dates (based on risk level) would be a use of sound evidence-based practices.

As with the pretrial population, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors also authorized the Sheriff to operate a home detention program that could utilize electronic monitoring, program services, and contracted residential beds. Utilizing the above developed risk instrument to eliminate high-risk candidates for post-sentence alternative custody, coupled with a well-administered supervised release program, it would be feasible to have a significant impact on the current size of the sentenced population.

Appendix A Technical Description of the Regression Analysis

In this analysis, we are trying to estimate the independent effects of the three community corrections programs by controlling for differences in the attributes of each group. The analysis is summarized in Table 19.

The left panel presents findings from a bivariate logistic regression (modeling RETURN as a function of only the various release mechanisms) and the panel on the right presents findings of a more elaborate multivariate model that accounts for all the attributes. As such, the effects of the release mechanisms in the multivariate model are *net* of the effect of these auxiliary attributes.

The models suggest that the effects of the various release mechanisms are lower for Work Release, Work Furlough, and County Parole relative to “other sentenced.” After controlling for the effects of various other attributes, the magnitudes of these effects are somewhat lower but persist. With the exception of County Parole, the Beta coefficients are much larger in magnitude in the bivariate model compared to the multivariate model. However, the asymptotic standard errors are also larger. Yet, the z-tests indicate that all three coefficients remain statistically significant (distinguishable from 0) even after controlling for the other attributes.

The risk-based attributes included in the multivariate models include all the risk variables identified from the bivariate analysis as shown in Table 14 in the main report. As noted earlier, in general, males have a higher return rate than females; whites, Hispanics, and other races have lower return rates than blacks; older (than 50) offenders have a lower return rate than younger offenders; and offenders with criminal sophistication and drug use have higher return rates than offenders without. Because of large sample imbalances in the offense distribution, the effects of all offense categories could not be assessed in a single model. As a result, all offense categories other than “Misdemeanor Other” were collapsed into one category. This group had a sufficiently higher return rate than the “Misdemeanor Other” category.

Table 19. Bivariate And Multivariate Regression Models Assessing The Effects Of Attributes On RETURN.

Release Type	Bivariate Logistic Regression Model				Multivariate Logistic Regression Model			
	Beta	a.s.e	z-test	p	Beta	a.s.e	z-test	p
Other Sentenced*
Work Release	-1.11	0.12	-9.16	0	-0.83	0.12	-6.74	0
Work Furlough	-1.19	0.14	-8.68	0	-1.14	0.14	-8.21	0
County Parole	-0.64	0.26	-2.45	0.01	-0.72	0.27	-2.7	0.01