

Improving Outcomes and Safely Reducing Revocations from Parole Supervision in Colorado

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About the Crime and Justice Institute

The Crime and Justice Institute (CJI), a division of Community Resources for Justice, bridges the gap between research and practice with data-driven solutions that drive bold, transformative improvements in adult and youth justice systems. With a reputation built over many decades for innovative thinking, a client-centered approach, and impartial analysis, CJI assists agency leaders and practitioners in developing and implementing effective policies that achieve better outcomes and build stronger, safer communities. CJI works with local, state, tribal, and national justice organizations, providing nonpartisan policy analysis, implementation consulting, capacity-building assistance, and research services to advance evidence-based practices and create systems-level change. For more information, please visit: www.cj institute.org.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	4
Background	5
Parole Supervision in Colorado.....	5
Key Findings	6
REVOCATION TRENDS	6
CONDITION FINDINGS.....	9
VIOLATION FINDINGS.....	12
RESPONSES TO BEHAVIOR	16
USE OF EVIDENCE-BASED SUPERVISION PRACTICES	21
AVAILABILITY OF AND ACCESS TO PROGRAMMING, TREATMENT, AND SERVICES.....	23
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE	26
Opportunities to Reduce Revocations and Strengthen Parole Supervision	28
FOCUS RESOURCES ON THE HIGHEST-RISK POPULATION	28
ENSURE SUPERVISION PRACTICES INTENDED TO REDUCE RECIDIVISM ARE IMPLEMENTED WITH FIDELITY.....	29
ADDRESS BARRIERS TO SUPERVISION SUCCESS	31
ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY OF POLICY AND PRACTICE CHANGES INTENDED TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES	33
Appendix: Methodology	36

Executive Summary

Across the United States, the majority of people under correctional supervision serve their sentence on probation or parole. As of 2020, data show that while just under 2 million people are incarcerated in either prison or jail, about 3.9 million individuals are on probation or parole.¹ Of the 1.8 million individuals who exit probation or parole annually, almost half do not successfully complete supervision. Of those who do not complete their supervision, 211,000 will return to prison or jail.² This has made revocation from probation or parole a leading driver of incarceration in the United States.³

In Colorado, the parole population has remained relatively flat, with 11,113 individuals under parole supervision as of 2019. Colorado's parole rate is 246 individuals per 100,000, lower than the national state average of 301. Though both have decreased between 2010 and 2019, Colorado's is decreasing faster, doubling the gap between the state and national rates from 9 percent in 2010 to 18 percent in 2019. Revocations from parole in Colorado, too, have decreased in recent years, declining by 30 percent between 2014 and 2019.

Despite these recent declines, Colorado has expressed an interest in understanding the drivers of parole outcomes, with the goal of continuing to strengthen community supervision practices and expanding efforts to reduce recidivism. In November of 2019, the Colorado Department of Corrections requested technical assistance from the Crime and Justice Institute (CJI) to examine parole revocation trends and the factors driving unsuccessful parole outcomes. Over the course of 18 months, CJI assessed Colorado's parole system, analyzing individual-level and case-level data, reviewing the administrative and legal framework governing parole supervision and revocation decision-making, and conducting focus group interviews with stakeholders involved in parole supervision in Colorado. Through this assessment, CJI found that:

- Revocation rates have declined consistently over the past decade, but revocations continue to be highest for Black and Native American males between the ages of 18-29 and for those assessed as high risk;
- Individuals on parole are most likely to be revoked and returned to prison around the six-month mark, with most individuals spending less than a year on parole prior to being revoked;
- Substance use-related violations are the most frequently occurring violation category, but residence and report violations are more common among those who are revoked;
- Systemic factors – including misalignment of conditions with an individual's criminogenic risk and challenges with treatment availability and access – are impacting supervision outcomes; and
- While efforts have been made to align policies and practices with evidence-based practices intended to reduce recidivism, challenges exist that limit the full implementation and sustainability of these changes.

Based on these findings, CJI identified 14 potential opportunities to safely reduce revocations and improve parole outcomes in Colorado. These opportunities are centered around six overarching goals: focusing resources on the highest risk population, ensuring current evidence-based practices are implemented with fidelity, addressing barriers to success, reducing racial and ethnic disparities, expanding programming and treatment access, and improving organizational culture.

The findings and recommendations outlined in this report are meant to guide policymakers, local government officials, supervision administrators, and all other relevant stakeholders. This report seeks to provide them with the information necessary to improve their current practices through the

implementation of data-driven reforms that will help promote long-term success for justice-involved individuals and their families.

Background

Although revocation of probation or parole is now a leading driver of incarceration in the United States, there remains little research to identify what is driving revocations.⁴ To fill this gap and help states understand what is leading to high rates of failure, the Crime and Justice Institute (CJI), with support from Arnold Ventures, worked with supervision agencies in four states to understand the factors driving revocations and identify strategies to safely reduce revocations while improving public safety. CJI selected supervision agencies as partners in Colorado, Florida, Mississippi, and Montana based on a variety of criteria such as availability of data, state interest in and willingness to entertain change, and access to agency personnel.

In all four states, CJI completed an analysis focused on several key areas:

- Who is being revoked on community supervision and for what?
- How are supervision conditions set, modified, and monitored, and how do those conditions affect an individual's success on supervision?
- What kinds of tools are available to help probation or parole officers respond to violations of supervision conditions?
- To what extent are policies and practices focused on reducing recidivism and assisting the individual in successfully completing supervision?
- What programming and resources are available in the community to address the supervised population's criminogenic needs⁵ and responsivity factors?⁶
- What are the attitudes, values, and beliefs shared among stakeholders in regard to the purpose of community supervision and use of evidence-based practices to reduce recidivism?

To answer these questions and develop a comprehensive understanding of the factors driving unsuccessful supervision outcomes, CJI analyzed individual-level data in each state to assess the supervision population and understand outcome trends. In addition to this quantitative analysis, CJI conducted a qualitative assessment that included reviewing state statutes, court rules, and administrative policies and procedures to understand the legal framework, as well as interviewing key stakeholders, including agency leadership and staff, line staff and supervisors, the Parole Board, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and advocacy organizations. As needed, CJI also conducted a staff survey and a review of case files to supplement the information collected through other sources. CJI's full methodology for the assessment can be found in the Appendix.

This report summarizes the quantitative and qualitative findings and makes recommendations to improve parole outcomes and enhance public safety in Colorado. A separate national report summarizes the findings from all four states.

Parole Supervision in Colorado

Colorado has a bifurcated community supervision system, with individuals placed on probation and those released to parole supervised by different agencies. This is distinct from some other states that often have one agency, typically the state Department of Corrections, overseeing both types of community supervision. The Colorado Judicial Department is responsible for the direct oversight of those placed on probation, while the Colorado Department of Corrections, Division of Adult Parole (DAP) is responsible for the supervision of individuals released to parole.⁷

An individual is eligible for parole in Colorado after serving a specific percentage of their sentence determined by the severity of the offense, minus any “good time” credits earned (up to 10 days per month).⁸ Any person sentenced for a Class 2, Class 3, Class 4, Class 5, or Class 6 felony, or a Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, or Level 4 drug felony, or any unclassified felony is parole eligible after serving 50 percent of their sentence, less earned good time.⁹ Individuals convicted of more serious offenses, including second degree murder, second degree assault, first degree kidnapping, first degree arson, first degree burglary or aggravated robbery, must serve 75 percent of their sentence (minus good time) before becoming parole eligible.¹⁰ Individuals convicted of sex offenses must serve mandatory minimums depending on offense type, and the Parole Board may place them on parole for life.¹¹

Between 2010 and 2019, the number of individuals on parole remained steady, growing by only 1 percent and reaching more than 11,000 individuals on parole supervision in 2019. Parole admissions increased 3 percent between 2010 and 2019, while parole terminations dropped by approximately 15 percent during this same time. While parole admissions increased, as of 2019, Colorado’s parole rate was 246 individuals on parole per 100,000, 18 percent lower than the national state average of 301.¹² With this context in mind, the following section summarizes the key findings from CJI’s qualitative and quantitative assessments.

Key Findings

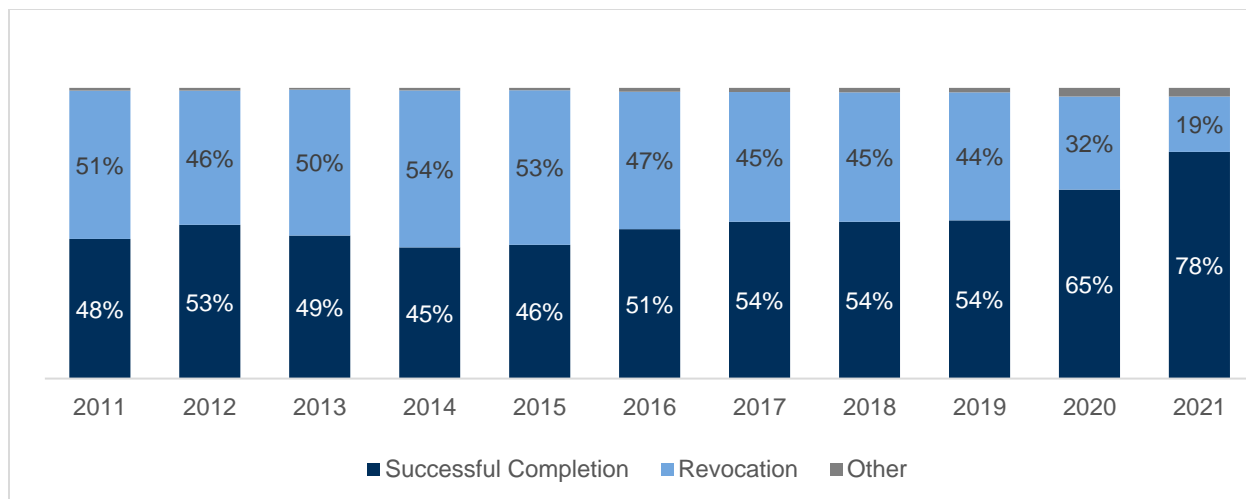
REVOCATION TRENDS

The majority of the data included in this section were pulled from cohorts of individuals who terminated parole supervision between 2010 and 2019. Given the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the justice system throughout the country, CJI supplemented these trends with aggregate data from 2020 and 2021 provided by DAP to assess the impact the pandemic had on revocations.

Revocation rates have declined consistently over the past decade with the most substantial decline occurring amidst the COVID pandemic

CJI examined overall parole outcomes, looking at successful and unsuccessful terminations, and found that revocation rates have been decreasing over the past decade. This decrease speaks to state and agency leadership’s efforts to strengthen community supervision practices and reduce revocations. In 2015, Senate Bill (SB) 124 was enacted, which required parole officers to use swift, certain, and proportional sanctions; authorized the use of short jail terms of no more than five days as an intermediate sanction for individuals on parole who have a pattern of technical violations; redefined drug use on parole as a technical violation rather than a new crime; and repealed the requirement of mandatory arrest if an individual refuses to submit to a urinalysis test. Figure 1 below shows that revocations from parole in Colorado peaked in 2014 (comprising 54 percent of all parole terminations, both successful and unsuccessful) and have been steadily decreasing since, representing 44 percent of all parole terminations in 2019.

Figure 1. Parole Releases by Termination Type, 2011-2021



Since 2019, revocations have continued to decline, dropping to 19 percent of parole terminations in 2021. In March 2020, at the start of the pandemic, Colorado made swift changes to reduce the community supervision population and mitigate the spread of COVID-19, which may explain the decline. These changes included temporarily suspending arrests of individuals who commit technical violations unless a critical public safety concern exists, expanding eligibility for early discharge, and streamlining the process for transferring individuals onto low-risk, low-custody caseloads, which encompass a lower level of supervision with limited contact standards.¹³

While revocations have declined, Black and Native American males between the ages of 18 and 29 and those who are assessed as high risk continue to be most likely to be revoked

While success rates have increased in recent years, revocations are consistently more common among certain demographic groups. In 2019, males, Black and Native American individuals, and persons between the ages of 18 and 29 had lower parole success rates compared to other demographic groups. In particular, males had revocation rates of 45 percent (compared to 40 percent for females), Black and Native Americans were revoked 50 percent and 58 percent of the time, respectively (compared to 44 percent for Latino/Hispanics, 43 percent for Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 41 percent of white individuals), and individuals aged 18 to 29 were revoked 52 percent of the time (compared to 42 percent for persons aged 30 and older).

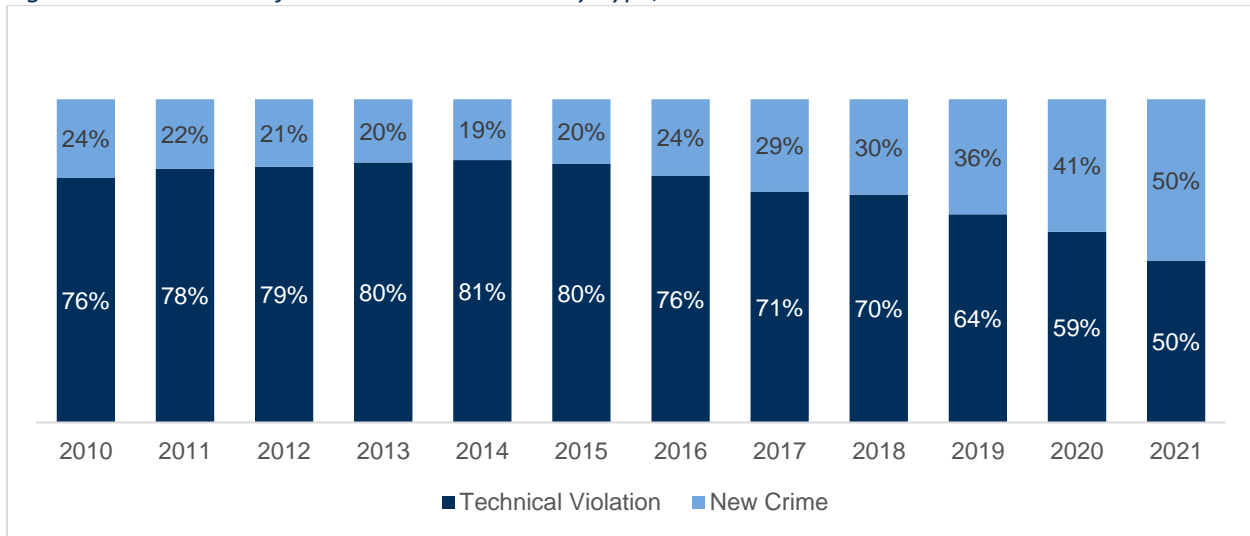
In addition, the rate of revocation appears to increase as risk level increases. This is notable given that individuals assessed as maximum risk were 52 percent of the parole population in 2019, a 7 percent increase since 2010. Revocation rates have declined over time across all risk levels, but despite those decreases, more than a third of individuals assessed as medium risk and more than half of individuals assessed as maximum risk were revoked in 2019.¹⁴

Revocations for technical violations have historically comprised the bulk of all revocations, but this trend has changed in recent years

Revocations comprise two primary categories: revocations due to technical violations and revocations due to new crimes.¹⁵ While overall revocations have constituted a declining proportion of all parole terminations (as shown in Figure 1, above), Figure 2 shows that in every year of CJI’s analysis (2010 to 2019), revocations due to technical violations represented a majority of all revocations, peaking at 81 percent in 2014, then steadily decreasing to 64 percent in 2019. This decrease continued through 2020 and

2021, with technical violations and new crimes comprising an equal proportion of revocations in 2021 for the first time.

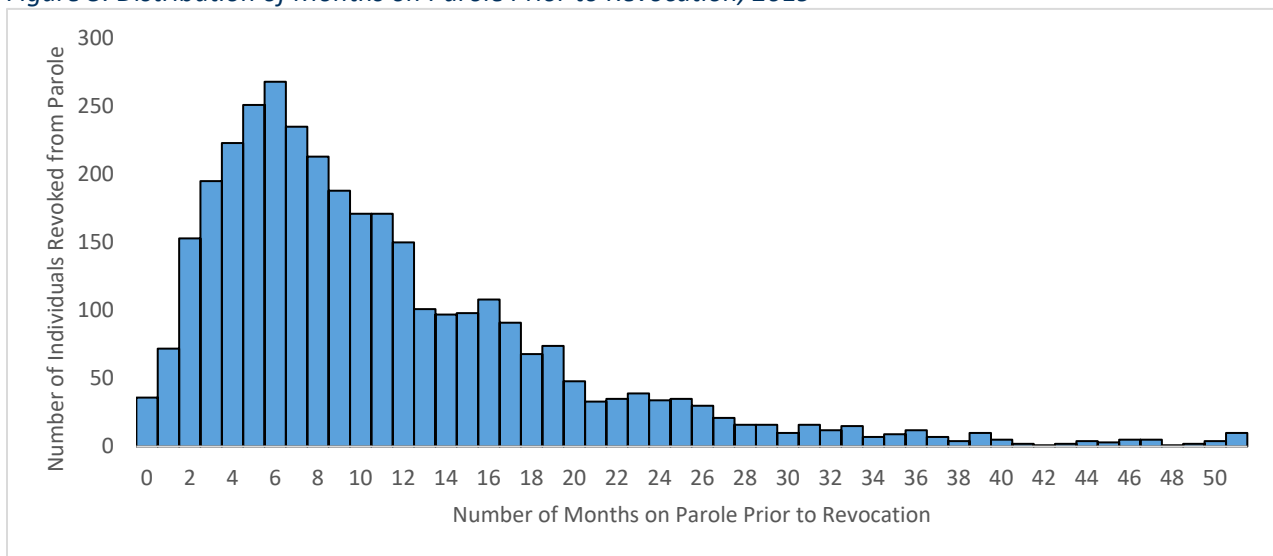
Figure 2. Distribution of All Parole Revocations by Type, 2010-2021



Time to revocation peaks at six months, with most individuals spending less than a year on parole prior to revocation

CJI also examined the length of time on parole supervision relative to supervision outcomes. In 2019, those revoked spent about half as much time on parole as those who successfully completed. For those who were revoked in 2019, the median time on parole was nine months, compared to 17 months for those who successfully completed. While the majority of those revoked spent less than one year on parole prior to revocation, Figure 3 shows that the likelihood of revocation appears to peak when an individual has been on supervision for six months. Thirty-five percent of those revoked in 2019 spent six months or less on parole, while 68 percent spent a year or less.

Figure 3. Distribution of Months on Parole Prior to Revocation, 2019



There are also notable differences in the length of time on parole by outcome and risk level. Individuals assessed as minimum risk, when revoked, were also revoked nearly a year later (16.5 months) than those assessed as maximum risk (7.8 months) in 2019. These findings support existing research that stresses the critical importance of the first few months individuals are on supervision and the need to connect individuals with services and support as soon as they are placed on supervision.¹⁶

Due to data limitations, CJI was unable to address several relevant questions with the data provided for the quantitative analysis portion of this project, such as details on the conditions ordered and violations leading to revocation. To fill these gaps, CJI conducted a review of parole files, examining a representative sample of randomly selected parole terminations from 2019. Findings from this analysis are summarized in the following sections, along with findings from the qualitative assessment.

CONDITION FINDINGS

CJI examined case files of individuals who terminated parole in 2019 to identify the most frequently ordered conditions and reviewed current policies and practices related to the condition setting process. CJI focused part of its assessment on the condition setting process given that conditions of supervision set the foundation for supervision. Studies show that conditions should be realistic, relevant, and research-supported:

- Realistic conditions are ones that an individual has the ability to follow and that supervision officers have the capacity to monitor;
- Relevant conditions address an individual's criminogenic needs and take into account individual strengths and responsivity factors; and
- Research-supported conditions focus on conditions that lead to long-term behavior change.¹⁷

Under Colorado law, every individual placed on parole supervision is required to comply with a number of standard conditions of supervision. These standard conditions require an individual to:

- Report directly to the Parole Board upon release;
- Establish a stable residence;
- Obey all laws and follow directives of the parole officer;
- Report as directed by the parole officer;
- Not own or possess any weapons;
- Not associate with others on parole, probation, or with a criminal record;
- Obtain employment, education, or vocational training;
- Not use or possess any drugs or abuse alcohol;
- Pay all legal dependents, restitution, and all legal fees.¹⁸

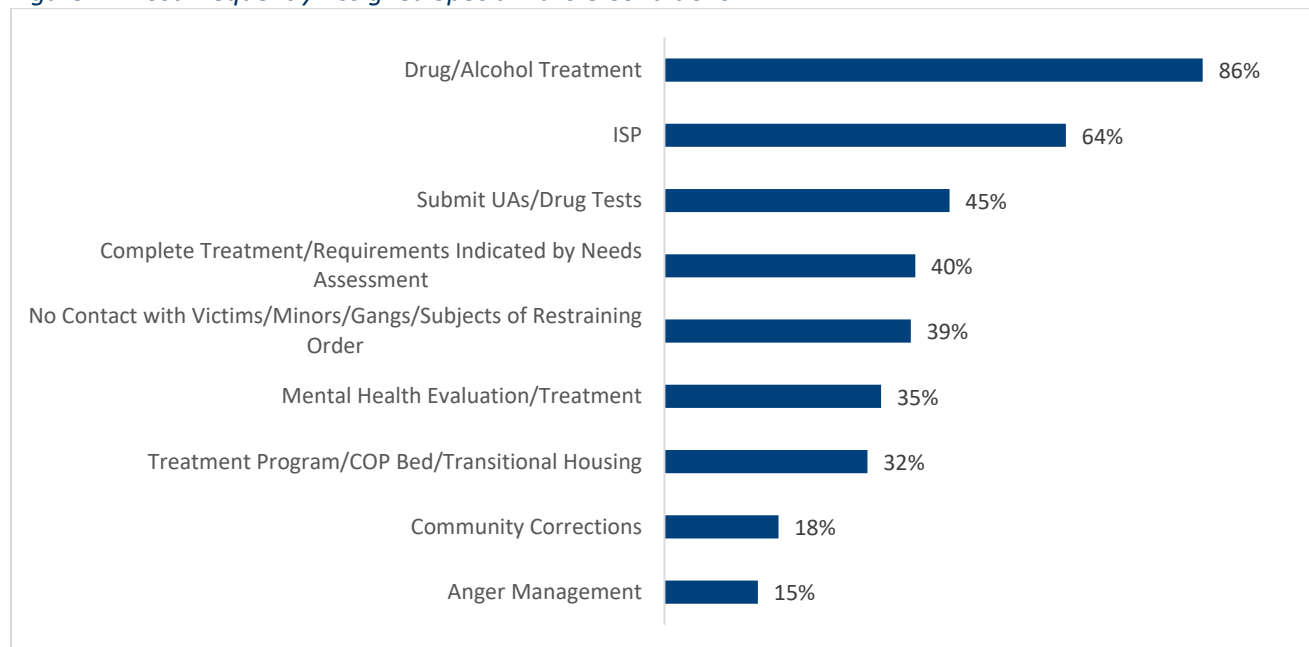
In addition to these standard conditions, the Parole Board is authorized to impose additional special conditions based on several factors, including the results of a risk and needs assessment, offense type, criminal history, and programming completed while incarcerated.¹⁹

Furthermore, individuals placed on parole are required to abide by a number of parole directives, which are orders given by a parole officer to clarify an existing condition or modification of parole. With approval from supervisory staff, parole officers can issue written parole directives at any time during parole, but the directives must be related to an existing parole condition.²⁰

Nearly every individual on parole receives the condition of drug/alcohol treatment and two-thirds receive authorization for intensive supervision

As part of the file review, CJI examined the most frequently ordered conditions and found that everyone on parole from the 2019 sample received at least one special condition. Figure 4 below shows the frequency of the 9 most frequently assigned special conditions. Eighty-six percent of individuals in the file review sample received the special condition of drug and/or alcohol evaluation and treatment and nearly two-thirds received the special condition authorizing the use of an intensive supervision program (ISP).

Figure 4. Most Frequently Assigned Special Parole Conditions

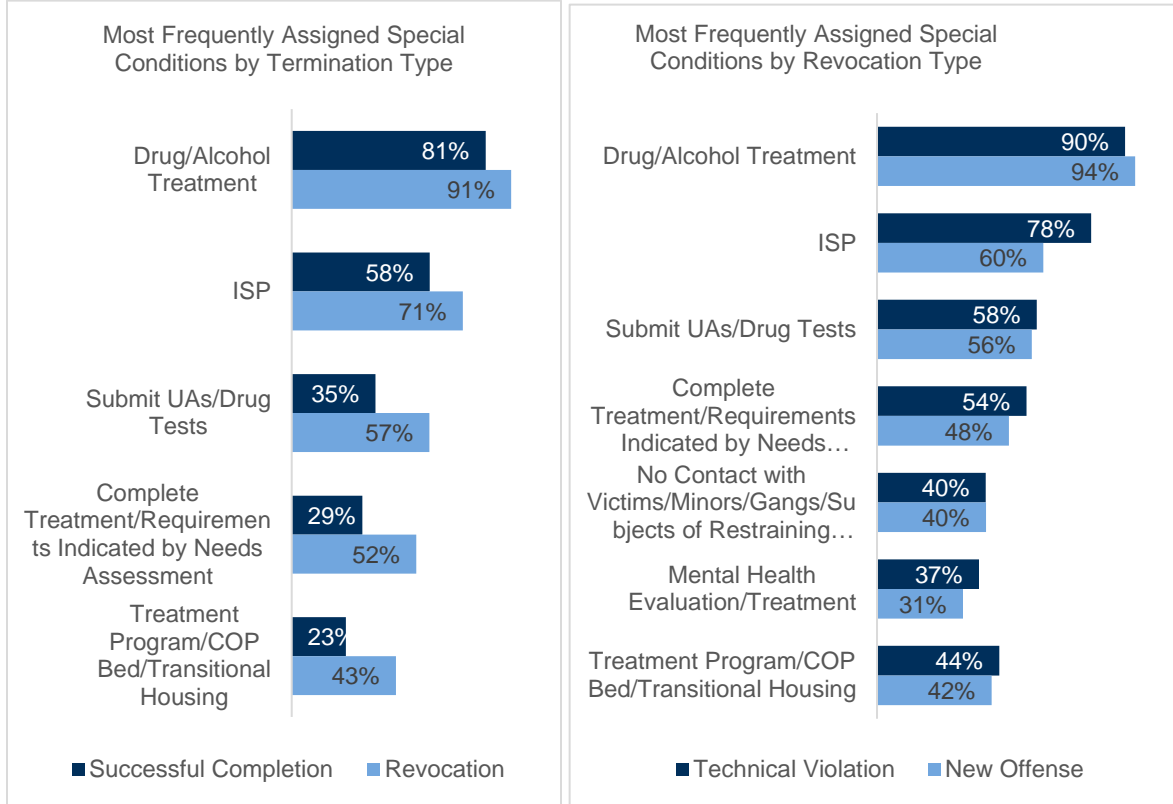


Source: CDOC File Review, 2019 Parole Terminations

Individuals revoked in 2019 were more likely to be ordered to comply with special conditions

CJI found that individuals who were ultimately revoked from supervision in 2019 were more likely to have special conditions imposed than those who successfully completed parole. Ninety-one percent of individuals who were revoked received drug and/or alcohol evaluation and treatment as a condition, as compared to 81 percent of those who successfully completed, and 71 percent of individuals who were revoked received authorization for ISP compared to 58 percent of individuals who successfully completed parole supervision. Individuals who were revoked were more likely to receive the special condition requiring them to submit urinalysis or drug tests. They were also nearly twice as likely to receive the special condition of completing treatment or other requirements indicated by the needs assessment, the special condition of participating in a treatment program, Community Corrections Condition of Parole (COP) bed, or transitional housing than those who successfully completed. ISP was also more frequently authorized for individuals who were revoked for technical violations than for those who were revoked for new offenses (78 percent versus 60 percent of individuals, respectively). Figures 5 and 6 compare the proportion of the 2019 file review sample who received some of the most frequently assigned special conditions by termination and revocation type.

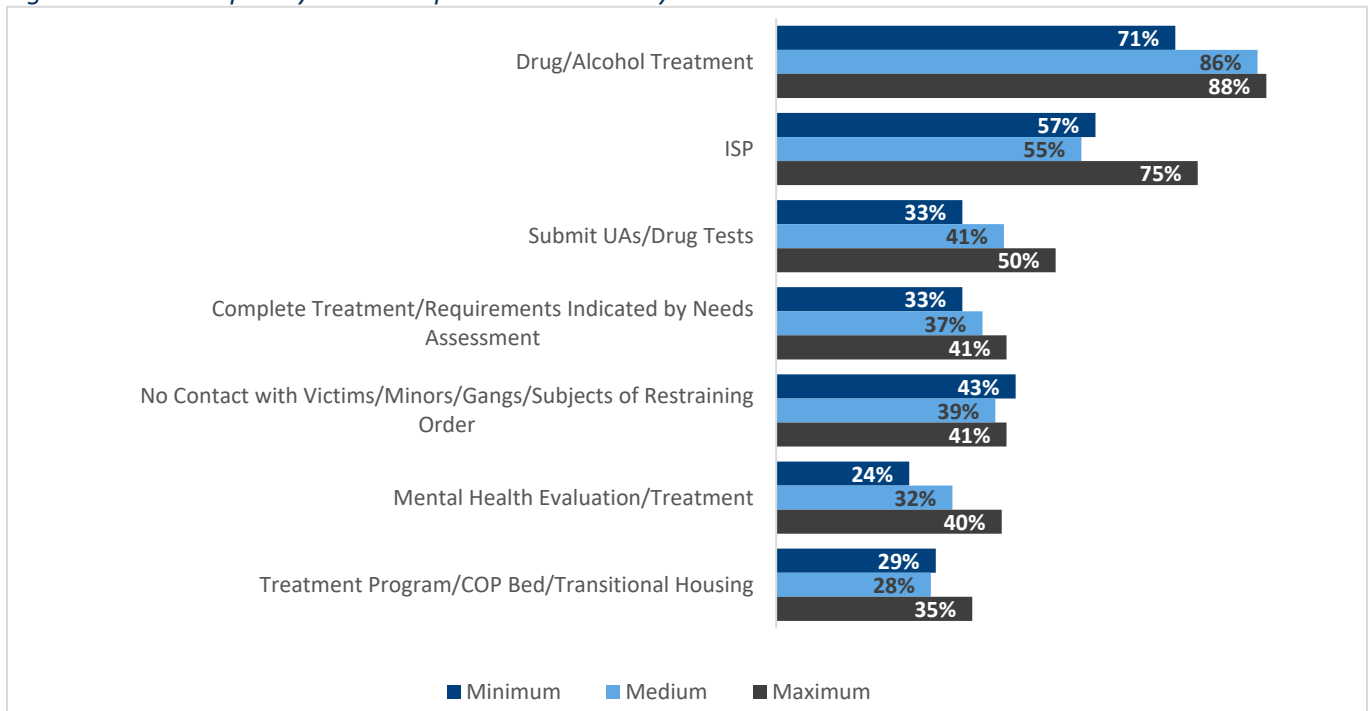
Figure 5 & 6. Most Frequently Assigned Special Conditions by Termination and Revocation Type, 2019 File Review



A substantial number of individuals assessed as low-risk were ordered to an intensive supervision program as a special condition, which is best suited for higher-risk individuals

As part of the file review, CJI examined the special conditions ordered by risk level. As illustrated in Figure 7 below, more than half of individuals assessed as minimum risk were ordered to ISP as part of their special conditions. The Parole Board has the discretion to order ISP conditions outright or to require individuals to complete an ISP program as directed by DAP. CJI was not able to separate out ISP conditions by those that were required by the Parole Board from those later required by DAP. However, the high number of individuals assessed as minimum risk being given a special condition of ISP is notable given research that has found that intensive supervision programs should be directed to those who have the highest risk to reoffend and that placing low-risk individuals in an ISP program will likely increase their risk of recidivism.²¹

Figure 7. Most Frequently Ordered Special Conditions by Initial Risk Level



Source: CDOC File Review, 2019 Parole Terminations

Black and Hispanic individuals were more likely to receive intensive supervision, no contact and/or anger management conditions and women more likely to receive conditions related to mental health evaluation and treatment

CJI also examined special conditions by sex and race and found a few notable disparities. Men in the file review sample were more likely to receive a special condition limiting contact between the individual and minors, victims, gang members, co-defendants, or subjects of a restraining order than women (42 percent versus 22 percent, respectively). Women, meanwhile, were more than twice as likely to receive the special condition for mental health evaluation and treatment (65 percent of women compared to 30 percent of men).

When exploring special conditions by race, CJI found that Black individuals were more likely to be ordered to complete ISP (81 percent of Black individuals in the file review sample, as compared to 59 percent of Latino/Hispanic individuals and 61 percent of white individuals). In addition, Black and Latino/Hispanic individuals were more likely than white individuals to receive a special condition limiting contact between the individual and minors, victims, gang members, co-defendants, or subjects of a restraining order than white individuals (nearly half of Black and Latino/Hispanic individuals received this condition, compared to 30 percent of white individuals). Finally, Black and Latino/Hispanic individuals were also about twice as likely to receive anger management (20 percent of Black individuals and 19 percent of Latino/Hispanic individuals as compared to 10 percent of white individuals).

VIOLATION FINDINGS

Using additional data files supplied by the Colorado Department of Corrections and a review of 2019 case files, CJI analyzed violation data to parse out the most frequent violations among those on parole, as well as the violations that most often lead to revocation. Findings from these analyses are included in this section.

DAP tracks violations using the Colorado Violation Decision Making Process (CVDMP), a graduated sanctions tool to guide parole officers in determining the appropriate response to a violation. The violations collected through the CVDMP are often repetitive (e.g. “missed drug/alcohol test,” “positive drug/alcohol test,” “positive drug/alcohol test or admission,” “multiple missed drug/alcohol tests (3-5 previous entries)”) or very specific (e.g. “sex offender in possession binoculars,” “curfew-violation of more than two but less than four hours,” “multiple positive drug/alcohol tests that result in child endangerment”). As a result, CJI created 13 overarching violation categories (see Appendix A for a full list of categories) encompassing similar types of violation behaviors (e.g. all missed or positive drug or alcohol tests or admissions under Substance Use-Related Violations, all treatment or programming noncompliance or failure under Failure to Attend/Complete Programming Requirements, etc.), to better track which types of violation behaviors are most common and which are driving revocations.

Most Frequent Violation Categories Across Parole Population

Using data provided by the Colorado Department of Corrections, CJI first examined the most frequent violations across the entire parole population by type of termination to understand the full scope of violation behavior of those on parole supervision.

Substance use-related violations are the most common technical violation category across the entire parole population, regardless of termination type

CJI found that by and large the most common technical violation category, across both successful and unsuccessful terminations, was substance use-related violations, encompassing 68 percent of all technical violations. When looking specifically at six of the most common violation categories by type of termination in Table 1, CJI found that 56 percent of all violations incurred by those revoked in 2019 were substance use-related, while substance use-related violations comprised 74 percent of all technical violations for those who successfully completed parole supervision.

The substance use-related violation category includes a missed or positive drug test, missed treatment sessions, or termination from treatment. The majority of these violations are for missed or positive drug or alcohol tests or admissions. Missed drug or alcohol tests comprised 47 percent of all substance use-related violations for those who were revoked and 54 percent for those who successfully completed supervision. Positive drug or alcohol tests or admissions comprised 33 percent of all substance use-related violations for those who were revoked and 36 percent for those who successfully completed supervision. These findings indicate that most individuals on parole receive more than one substance-used related violation. This is not surprising given the finding mentioned in the previous section that more than 85 percent of individuals in the file review sample received the special condition of drug and/or alcohol evaluation and treatment.

Table 1. Most Common Technical Violation Categories by Termination Type, 2019

Technical Violation Category	% of Technical Violations from All Terminations, 2019	% of Technical Violations from Successful Terminations, 2019	% of Technical Violations from Revocations, 2019
Substance Use-Related Violations	68%	74%	56%
Lack of Compliance/Status Offenses	9%	7%	13%
Failure to Attend/Complete Programming Requirements	9%	9%	8%

Missed Reporting Requirements	7%	6%	11%
Lack of Compliance/Location Monitoring	4%	3%	6%
Sex Offender Violations	2%	0.34%	3%

While positive drug tests are one of the most common substance-use related violations, those violations involved a range of different substances. CJI examined the most frequent drugs for which individuals on parole tested positive and found that amphetamines/methamphetamine were the most common substance among those revoked – with two-thirds of those revoked having at least one test that was positive for these substances.

Violations Leading to Revocation

To supplement the data provided by CDOC, CJI conducted a case file review to understand the most common violations that lead a parole officer to seek a revocation and which violations most often result in the Parole Board revoking parole. CDOC policy requires parole officers to exhaust all appropriate or available interventions, treatment, and support services prior to filing a complaint for revocation when the underlying behavior is not a new criminal offense.²² Under current law, parole officers are required to file a complaint seeking revocation in the following circumstances:

- The individual is found with a deadly weapon;
- The individual is arrested and charged with any felony; crime of violence; assault involving a deadly weapon, injury, or death; third degree sexual assault; or unlawful sexual contact; or,
- The individual purposefully removed an electronic monitoring device worn as a requirement of parole.²³

Most individuals who are revoked have two or three violation categories cited on their complaint for revocation and are found guilty by the Parole Board of violating one condition of parole

CJI’s review of files from 2019 terminations found that 61 percent of individuals who were revoked had two or three different types of violation categories cited on the complaint submitted to the Parole Board. When examining the Parole Board’s subsequent decisions to revoke, CJI found that 61 percent of those revoked were found guilty of violating one condition of parole (which can encompass multiple violation behaviors). Individuals were most frequently found guilty of violating the condition prohibiting new law violations and ensuring compliance with parole directives; this was also the condition most frequently dismissed by the court. Additionally, the only time a single violation would result in revocation is if all other violations leading up to a complaint have been factored into interventions or sanctions prior (as required by statute), or if the remaining technical violations are dismissed in an effort to expedite a hearing.

New offense and absconding-related violations are more likely to lead to revocation

While CJI’s analysis of CDOC violation data revealed that substance use-related violations appear to be the most frequent violation category regardless of the termination type, a case file review of parole terminations found that absconding-related violations and new felonies were the most common violation categories cited on complaints for those who were revoked in 2019. As seen in Table 2, nearly half of the file review sample had at least one absconding-related violation cited on their complaint (44 percent, as compared to 36 percent with at least one substance use-related violation), and 38 percent of the file review sample had at least one new felony cited on their complaint.

Table 2. Most Frequent Violation Category Cited on Complaints for Revocation, 2019

Violation Category	% of Revoked Individuals with Violation Category		
	Overall	Revoked for Technical Violations	Revoked for New Offenses
Absconding-Related	44%	46%	40%
New Felony	38%	21%	81%
Substance Use-Related	36%	35%	38%
New Misdemeanor	28%	28%	26%
Treatment-Related	16%	16%	17%
Location Monitoring	15%	16%	12%
New Municipal Violation/Petty Offense	14%	15%	12%
Sex Offender-Related	7%	8%	2%
Special Conditions	6%	8%	--
New Traffic Offense	6%	7%	5%
Community Corrections-Related	4%	4%	5%
Possession of Drugs/Weapons	3%	4%	2%

Source: CDOC File Review, 2019 Parole Terminations

Possession of a controlled substance is the most common new felony cited on complaints for revocation

Between 2012 and 2019, revocations due to new offenses grew 44 percent, and by 2021 represented half of all revocations. This increase is largely seen in the violation category “all felonies,” which grew from encompassing 29 percent of new crime violations for those revoked in 2012 to half of new crime violations for those revoked in 2019. While CJI was not able to break down the specific violations within this category from the original data received from CDOC, this was an area CJI explored through the file review.

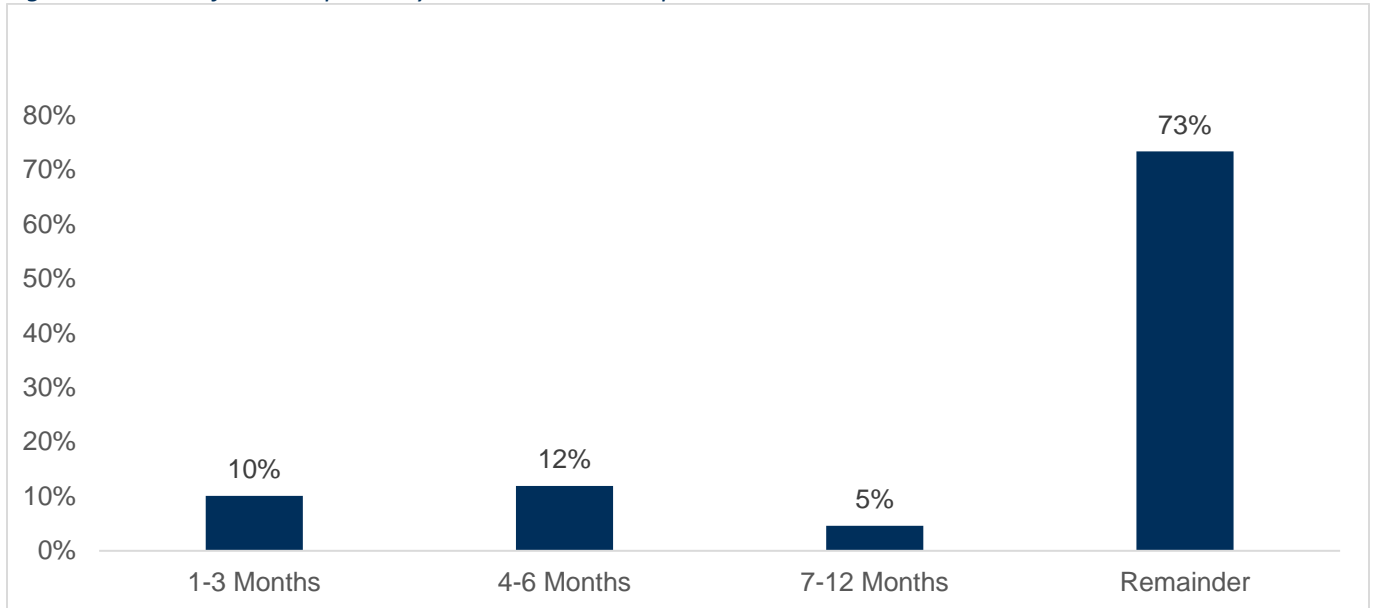
Thirty-eight percent of the file review sample had an “all felonies” violation cited on the complaint for revocation submitted to the parole board, including 21 percent of individuals ultimately coded as revoked due to a technical violation (see Table 2). CJI examined the specific offenses that make up the “all felonies” category in the 2019 file review sample and found that possession of a controlled substance was the most frequent new felony offense cited on complaints, comprising over a third of “all felonies” violations in 2019. This felony was even more common among individuals eventually revoked for technical violations; of the 21 percent of individuals with a new felony violation who were ultimately coded as revoked due to a technical violation, over half of them had possession of a controlled substance listed on their complaint for revocation.

Most individuals who are revoked are ordered to serve the remainder of their sentence

As part of the file review, CJI examined the outcome of those who were revoked by the Parole Board. The majority of individuals (73 percent) that ultimately had their parole term revoked were ordered by the Parole Board to serve the remainder of their sentence (see Figure 8). Under existing law, if the Parole Board determines that the individual has violated a condition through commission of a felony or

misdeemeanor crime, the Board can revoke parole and order a period of incarceration up to the remainder of the parole period.²⁴ While most individuals are revoked for the remainder of their sentence, each case is reviewed for re-release annually, except for certain felonies that allow a longer deferral from the Parole Board.²⁵

Figure 8. Period of Time Imposed by the Parole Board Upon a Parole Revocation.



Source: CDOC File Review, 2019 Parole Terminations.

In addition to examining trends in conditions and violations, CJI’s assessment of Colorado’s parole system included an assessment of the various decision points and systemic factors that may contribute to supervision outcomes. In the key findings sections that follow, CJI outlines its findings related to responses to behavior, adherence to evidence-based supervision practices, access to programming and services, and organizational culture.

RESPONSES TO BEHAVIOR

To inform its findings related to responses to behavior, CJI examined current policies and practices, analyzed data provided by CDOC on the use of their current graduated sanctions tool and available incentives, and conducted a case file review to understand to what extent sanctions aligned with policy and research. CJI examined administrative and statutory responses to violations, factors that influence a parole officer’s decision-making regarding violation responses, the officer’s level of autonomy, and the use of incentives across the state. Research shows that to effectively change behavior, responses to violations should be proportional to the violation committed, delivered objectively, and focused on the behavior instead of the person. Similarly, incentives should be delivered impartially, focused on the behavior, and used to reinforce continued positive behavior. Incentives should be used four times more often than sanctions to effectively change behavior.²⁶

A graduated sanctions system was implemented to standardize responses to violations, but implementation challenges limit the tool’s effectiveness

In 2011, pursuant to House Bill 10-1374, DAP developed and implemented the Colorado Violation Decision Making Process (CVDMP) to provide guidance to staff when responding to violations of the terms and conditions of parole supervision with the goal of ensuring consistent responses.

When an individual is suspected of violating a condition of supervision, administrative policy requires parole officers to use the CVDMP to determine the appropriate response. A number of factors are considered, including the severity of the violation, past violation behavior, and risk level. In cases where the individual has committed multiple violations, the most serious violation will determine the severity level. The CVDMP program calculates the presumptive response level and provides the parole officer with a list of possible violation responses with options ranging from low to high. While parole officers have autonomy to impose low-level sanctions, officers must seek supervisory review and approval for sanctions that involve requesting a warrant or revocation (known as high jail sanctions), or the use of short-term jail sanctions.²⁷

Officers are also required to seek supervisory approval if requesting an override or underide for sanctions at a higher or lower level than the presumptive response. When requesting over- or underides, parole officers have the option of selecting destabilizing factors (such as instability of residence, increased or continuing substance use, or minimizing responsibility) or stabilizing factors (such as residence stability, pro-social support, or providing financial support) in the CVDMP to indicate the reason for a higher or lower response level. Destabilizing factors supporting the use of a higher level of sanctions are used more often, with 64 percent of individuals in the file review sample having at least one destabilizing factor cited (as compared to only 12 percent with at least one stabilizing factor), indicating that escalating to a higher response level is far more common. Once parole officers meet the threshold for requesting a formal revocation by exhausting all available interventions and sanctions in the CVDMP, revocation requests must be approved by executive staff.²⁸

The CVDMP was intended to be a helpful tool for officers in responding to violations. However, there is a lack of buy-in for the tool among staff. In a survey administered to DAP staff, 79 percent of respondents indicated that they do not feel that the CVDMP is an effective tool to respond to technical violations and to change the behavior of the individuals on their caseloads. When staff were asked to elaborate on their concerns with the CVDMP, staff expressed concern that the tool is out of date and has not been properly maintained since its inception 10 years prior.

Another consistent theme noted during interviews with staff was the lack of options available to respond to violations. Staff reported a lack of available alternative sanction options (e.g., cognitive-behavioral programming) in some areas that were previously available, leaving parole officers to choose from responses that may not adequately address their criminogenic needs. Parole officers also reported limited response options for certain violations, such as failure to attend treatment or submit to drug testing. Currently the CVDMP does not provide parole officers with options for addressing failure to comply, nor allow for graduated responses to multiple violations for the same behavior. Parole officers reported that their response options are often not proportionate to the severity of the behavior.

CJI's review of the CVDMP indicates that many sanction options available to staff are not being used, indicating a disconnect between what officers report and what the data reveal. The CVDMP provides many potential low, medium, and high-level sanctions and interventions for parole officers to use in response to violations. However, the majority of responses available to staff are rarely, if ever, used. An analysis of sanctions used in response to violations from the file review sample indicated that the majority of violation behaviors receive only one or two possible sanctions from each possible category. From all possible low-level sanctions, verbal reprimands and withholding earned time were each used to respond to about 40 percent of violations; the next most frequent low-level sanction, increased therapy, was only used 9 percent of the time. From all possible medium-level sanctions, withholding earned time

was used to respond to a third of violations; the next most frequent medium-level sanction, increasing or extending the level of supervision, was used 16 percent of the time. From all possible high-level sanctions, Sure and Swift, a short-term jail sanction, was used to respond to 60 percent of violations; the next most frequent high-level sanction, summons to the Parole Board, was used 17 percent of the time. Table 3 outlines how frequently each CVDMP response was used, by sanction level, in response to violation behavior by individuals in the 2019 file review sample.

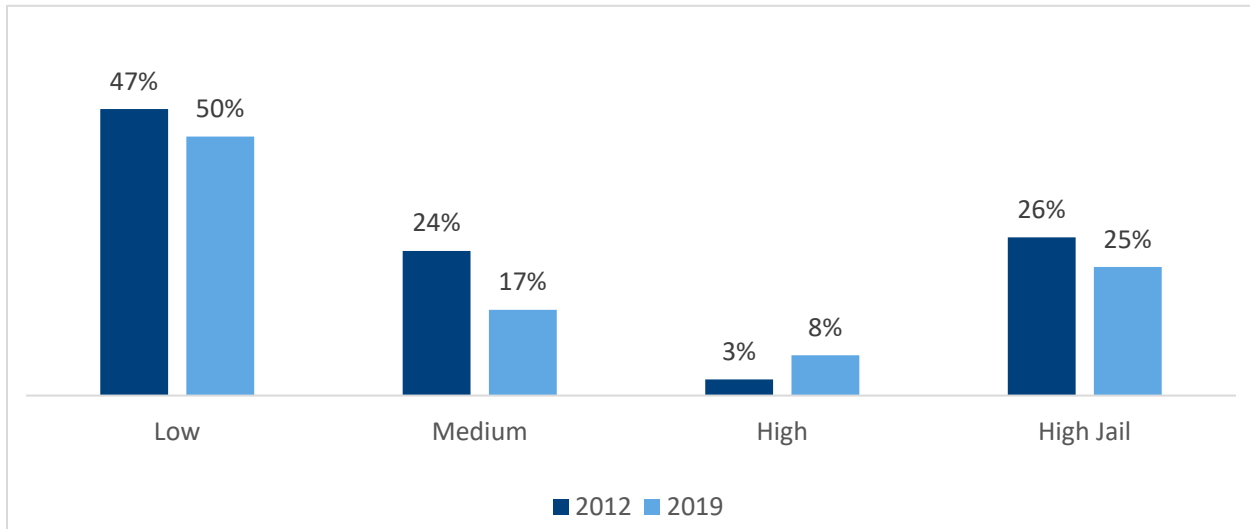
Table 3. CVDMP Responses Used in Response to Violations by 2019 File Review Sample Parole Terminations

Low-Level Sanction	% of Low-Level Sanctions	Medium-Level Sanction	% of Medium-Level Sanctions	High-Level Sanction	% of High-Level Sanctions	High Jail Sanction	% of High Jail Sanctions
Verbal Reprimand	40%	Withhold Earned Time	34%	Sure and Swift	60%	Warrant Request	56%
Withhold Earned Time	39%	Increase/Extend Level of Supervision	16%	Summons to Parole Board	17%	Jail - Seek Revocation/Regression	44%
Increased Therapy	9%	Increased Therapy	15%	Jail-Based Treatment Program	11%		
Outpatient Therapy	2%	Sure and Swift	7%	Short-Term Inpatient Treatment Program	6%		
Increased Drug/Alcohol Testing	2%	ISP-EM/TMS/GPS	6%	Long-Term Residential Therapy	4%		
Written Homework	1%	Curfew Restrictions	4%	Remediation to Community Corrections	2%		
Increased Check-In by Phone	1%	Outpatient Therapy	4%				
Intervention	1%	Intensive Outpatient Therapy	4%				
Curfew Restrictions	1%	Short-Term Inpatient Treatment Program	3%				
Referral to AA/NA	1%	Increased Drug/Alcohol Testing	2%				

Furthermore, the CVDMP does not follow the trends expected of a graduated response system. Figure 10 shows that throughout the decade, about half of all responses to violations were low-level sanctions, while the second most frequent response level was high jail (which includes revocation requests and short-term jail stays), used for about a quarter of responses to violations. By comparison, medium-level sanctions were used for 17 percent of responses to violations in 2019 (down from 24 percent in 2012), and high-level sanctions were only used for 8 percent (up from 3 percent in 2012). Sanctions and

therapeutic interventions are included interchangeably within the CVDMP, and the tool contains no formal mechanism to help parole officers incentivize positive, pro-social behavior. However, during interviews, CJI learned that parole officers hold punitive responses in high regard and view interventions as the same thing as sanctions. This indicates a need for more training about how graduated sanctions can be used to change behavior and a need for a quality assurance process in place to ensure the CVDMP tool is used as intended.

Figure 10. Distribution of Responses to Violations by Level of Severity, 2012 and 2019



Barriers exist that limit a parole officer’s ability to use early discharge and earned credits as meaningful incentives for behavior change

While supervision agencies around the country have relied on the use of sanctions to respond to the behavior of those on supervision, research shows that encouraging positive behavior change with incentives and rewards can have an even greater effect on motivating and sustaining change than using sanctions alone.²⁹ For an intervention to be considered an incentive, it must be proportional to the individual’s behavior, be applied in a timely manner, and used consistently to recognize and reward desired behavior.³⁰ CJI examined the use of incentives for those on parole supervision and found that DAP does not have a method of providing graduated incentives (e.g., gifts cards or written certificates for program completion) on a regular basis to support positive behavior change. Instead, DAP has two formal incentives available to motivate behavior – early discharge and earned time.

CJI found that early discharges from parole have almost tripled, growing from 6 percent of successful parole terminations (and 3 percent of overall terminations) in 2012 to 20 percent of successful terminations in 2019 (and 11 percent of overall terminations). Since 2019, the use of early discharge has grown even further and as of 2021 represented nearly a third of successful parole terminations (and 24 percent of overall terminations).³¹ While early discharge rates for all racial groups have grown, they were lowest in 2019 for Black and American Indian/Native American individuals (15 percent and 12 percent, respectively, compared to 19 percent for white individuals and 24 percent for Latino/Hispanic individuals).

Individuals on parole are eligible for early discharge once they have met one of the following criteria: they have completed 50 percent of their parole term if that term is one year or less; they have completed 25 percent of their parole term if that term is two years or less; or, in cases in which an

individual is re-paroled after a revocation, a minimum of six months remains on their parole term.³² In addition, individuals must have been assessed as low or medium risk on an LSI or to be substantially in compliance with all conditions, including fulfilling all treatment requirements, maintaining sobriety, securing stable housing and employment, and being free of any pending violations.³³ When considering an individual for early discharge, parole officers stated they take into account an individual's progress on parole, whether or not their initial crime was victim-involved, how long the individual has been out of treatment, and what steps the individual has taken to mitigate their risk. In addition, DAP policy requires that if an individual's crime involved a victim that is registered in the Victim Notification Program, the victim must be notified and given the opportunity to provide a victim impact statement before the application can be sent to the Parole Board for consideration.³⁴ Further, parole officers must be able to show proof of their client's sobriety through urinalysis testing.³⁵ Individuals within four months of discharge from parole are excluded from consideration of early discharge.³⁶

The ultimate decision on whether or not to grant early discharge rests with the Parole Board. However, the Parole Board does not explain its decision to deny an individual's early discharge request. If an individual seeking an early discharge is denied, they can resubmit their request after six months.³⁷ The absence of an explanation for denial does not allow the parole officer to provide any feedback to an individual regarding what they can do differently or improve upon to potentially be granted early discharge in the future. These barriers prevent officers from utilizing early discharge as an incentive for compliance. In a survey conducted by CJI, 84 percent of staff reported that early termination from parole is an available incentive; however, when asked about frequency of use, the majority of respondents reported requesting early termination for only 25 percent of clients. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, DAP made changes to the early discharge policy that helped to streamline the process. These changes included expanding eligibility to two groups: those age 60 or older and those on supervision for certain classes of offenses who were either assessed as low or medium risk or completed a minimum of one year on parole. Parole officers throughout the state expressed a desire to sustain these changes moving forward.

CJI also examined the current use of the earned time policy. Current law allows eligible individuals on parole to earn 10 to 12 days per month of earned time for demonstrating substantial and consistent progress in a few areas.³⁸ Individuals can earn days for the following: work and training achievements (up to 4 days), progress toward the goals and programs established by the Colorado Diagnostic Program and self-help programming (up to 4 days), and positive behavior in group living situations (up to 2 days).³⁹ Individuals supervised for a Class 4, 5, or 6 felony offense can earn 2 additional days of provisional earned time per month. Any credits earned are applied toward the individual's parole discharge date.⁴⁰ Earned time cannot exceed 30 percent of the individual's sentence, with the exception of individuals convicted of a Class 1 felony committed while the person was a juvenile.⁴¹ Individuals reincarcerated after revocation of parole are eligible to receive earned time but will not receive it for the month of revocation. The following individuals are not eligible to receive any earned time: those with sentence enhancements; those under the interstate corrections compact agreement; those serving life, life without the possibility of parole, or those serving under the death penalty; those on abscond or escape status; those sentenced to the Department of Corrections (CDOC) but who remain in county jail; and those who have been sentenced and are serving a consecutive misdemeanor sentence in county jail before returning to CDOC to resume a felony sentence.⁴²

During focus group interviews with parole officers and supervisors, CJI asked about the incentives available to motivate behavior change for individuals on parole. Earned time was very rarely discussed, and it does not appear to be seen as a mechanism for promoting behavior change by staff. In fact, CJI's

file review revealed that loss of earned time is one of the most commonly used responses to violation behavior, resulting in it being used more as a sanction than an incentive.

USE OF EVIDENCE-BASED SUPERVISION PRACTICES

CJI assessed Colorado’s use of evidence-based supervision practices – examining overall adherence to the Principles of Effective Intervention – including the use of risk and needs assessments, targeting programming and services for those assessed as high risk, use of effective case planning, and fidelity monitoring.⁴³ Research demonstrates the need to utilize the risk, need, and responsivity principles to guide supervision decision-making.⁴⁴ The risk principle is based on the idea that treatment should correspond to each individual’s risk of recidivism; a high-risk individual should receive a different supervision response than someone with a low risk of recidivism.⁴⁵ The needs principle states that conditions should target an individual’s criminogenic needs, such as substance use or interaction with people who contribute to their antisocial behavior.⁴⁶ The responsivity principle shows the importance of identifying and overcoming barriers for treatment to be effective.⁴⁷

Reassessment of individuals’ criminogenic risk and needs may not be occurring regularly, and training, oversight, and validation is needed

One of the hallmark evidence-based practices supported by more than 30 years of research is the use of a risk and needs assessment to identify the risk level of individuals on supervision.⁴⁸ DAP uses a risk and needs assessment called the Level of Service Inventory (LSI) to determine the risk level, guide the supervision type, and inform the supervision plan of individuals placed on parole supervision. DAP policy requires that the LSI be completed prior to an individual’s prison release date, and a reassessment must be completed every six months.⁴⁹ However, a review of data and interviews with parole officers revealed that reassessments are not occurring as frequently as required by policy, and that risk level changes occur very rarely. Without regular reassessments, parole officers cannot be certain they are providing the appropriate level of intervention and supervision needed to reduce an individual’s risk of recidivism, and this could lead to the over- or under-supervision of individuals on parole.

In 2011, less than 30 percent of individuals on parole were reassessed less often than required by policy (i.e., every six months); by 2019, this proportion more than doubled, with nearly two-thirds of individuals reassessed less than once every six months. Risk level changes have also decreased in frequency. In 2011, 21 percent of individuals on parole experienced at least one change in risk level prior to their completion of parole. In 2019, this dropped to only 12 percent of individuals terminating parole.

Parole officers reported receiving initial training on the use of the LSI during their orientation but currently no follow-up or refresher training occurs, even though administrative policy dictates that retraining should happen semi-annually.⁵⁰ Staff reported that parole officers often use the LSI before they receive any formal training. Twenty-four percent of staff surveyed reported that their training on evidence-based practices, such as risk and needs assessments, core correctional practices, motivational interviewing, graduated sanctions, and/or earned discharge, is insufficient and cite issues including inconsistency in training across the division, inexperienced trainers, and limited effectiveness due to lack of officer discretion. In addition to the lack of ongoing staff training on the LSI, there is also no quality assurance process in place to ensure that the LSI is completed with fidelity.

One final critical element to ensure agencies adhere to the fidelity principle is conducting regular validations of the risk and needs assessment tool used.⁵¹ Colorado statute requires that the DAP’s risk assessment tool be validated every five years, or more often if the analysis falls below an acceptable

level of predictive accuracy.⁵² However, CJI was not able to determine when the last validation study occurred.

The DAP is phasing out the use of the LSI and will begin using the Colorado Actuarial Risk Assessment (CARAS) Community Transition Accountability Plan (CTAP). CARAS is currently used to assess risk and target interventions in CDOC facilities, and in conjunction with the LSI it is used by the Parole Board to assess individuals prior to their release from incarceration.

Supervision planning is required, but may not occur in practice

The use of effective supervision planning is another evidence-based practice that can lead to reductions in recidivism. Research has found that effective supervision planning should be based on an assessment of risk and criminogenic need, ongoing, comprehensive, targeting specific criminogenic needs, client-driven, responsive, and collaborative.⁵³ Research shows that working on key criminogenic risk factors (such as antisocial attitudes, antisocial peers, antisocial personality characteristics, and history of antisocial behavior) during the supervision planning process, when needs are present as assessed through an actuarial risk and needs tool, will have the greatest effect on reducing risk level.⁵⁴ Effective supervision planning should incorporate sanctions, incentives, and therapeutic interventions to keep individuals focused on their goals and encouraged to continue moving forward.⁵⁵

Current DAP policy requires parole officers to use the results of the LSI to create a supervision plan for each individual on their caseload within 30 days of their release from incarceration and placement on parole.⁵⁶ The policy requires supervision plans include the individual’s LSI score, immediate goals and criminogenic needs, specialized supervision conditions, long-term goals, a schedule for reviewing the individual’s progress, and participation and input from the individual themselves.⁵⁷ However, parole officers report that the required development of supervision plans may not be occurring in practice.

One of the barriers impacting the use of supervision plans is the lack of formal training for staff. During focus group interviews, staff reported they do not receive any formal training on how to create a supervision plan during or after their initial orientation and did not articulate a clear commitment to goal-based, proactive supervision aimed at reducing criminogenic risk and enhancing long-term behavior change. When asked about the use of supervision plans to target criminogenic needs, 44 percent of survey respondents reported they do not believe case plans are helpful in addressing criminogenic needs.

In addition, policy dictates that parole managers are responsible for overseeing a case supervision audit process.⁵⁸ Supervisors and/or team leaders are instructed to conduct a minimum of one case audit per month, using the Colorado Web-Based Integrated Support Environment (CWISE) system to guide their evaluation. Following evaluation, policy requires supervisors review the results with the parole officer involved and, when appropriate, develop an action plan to address any deficiencies.⁵⁹

The Division of Adult Parole (DAP) does not offer staff ongoing training and skill development on core correctional practices

Core correctional practices (CCP) are a set of skills used to enhance long-term behavior change and include components of cognitive behavioral interventions in a formal or informal setting. CCP include skills such as active listening, providing feedback, role clarification, effective use of reinforcement, disapproval, and authority, as well as cognitive restructuring tools. Research on the use of CCP has shown that parole officers trained to use these skills spend more time discussing and targeting criminogenic needs than their untrained counterparts, and that individuals supervised by parole officers

trained in CCP have lower recidivism rates.⁶⁰ While DAP provided training to staff on Effective Practices in Community Settings (EPICS) several years ago, DAP never fully implemented the curriculum in practice.

AVAILABILITY OF AND ACCESS TO PROGRAMMING, TREATMENT, AND SERVICES

CJI’s assessment also examined the tools and resources available in the community to address the supervised population’s criminogenic needs and responsivity factors. CJI’s examination focused on both availability of and access to programming, treatment, and services. To inform this assessment area, CJI conducted focus group interviews with parole staff and system stakeholders (including judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, the Parole Board, and advocacy organizations). CJI also reviewed policy and related statutes to understand existing processes in place to address these needs.

Housing and employment conditions are substantial barriers to success

A consistent theme that emerged in interviews with staff and stakeholders across the state is the challenge many individuals on parole supervision face adhering to housing and employment conditions. Individuals placed on parole are required to secure stable housing and maintain employment as part of their standard conditions, but stakeholders noted that these individuals are not consistently given the resources necessary to successfully acquire housing and employment upon release. Access to affordable housing is a significant issue throughout the state as the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment is \$1,154 per month. An individual making minimum wage, currently \$12 an hour, would only be able to afford a maximum monthly rent of \$641, resulting in a deficit of \$513 per month.⁶¹ The lack of affordable housing leaves justice-involved individuals competing with others who have no criminal history for the same limited resources. In addition, many federal housing assistance programs can place temporary or lifetime bans on individuals with drug-related offenses or violent criminal histories, as well as people on the sex offense registry, and private landlords frequently use criminal background checks to disqualify individuals.⁶² Parole officers reported that the lack of secure, available housing is one of the primary factors driving absconding behavior of individuals on their caseloads. Without secure housing, individuals face increased difficulty maintaining compliance on supervision. Lack of housing can impact the individual’s ability to obtain employment, access treatment services, or successfully reintegrate with their family.⁶³ Individuals often stop reporting to their parole officer, seeking to evade intermediate sanctions that may include incarceration, and eventually get placed on absconder status. In addition, stakeholders such as prosecutors, defense attorneys, and advocacy groups noted during focus group interviews that there is a significant need for social workers to connect with individuals prior to reentry.

The WAGEES program helps support individuals through reentry but needs to be expanded

The Work and Gain Education and Employment Skills (WAGEES) program, established in 2014 through HB14-1355, is a grant program within CDOC that provides funding for community-based reentry programs to support individuals transitioning from incarceration onto parole supervision.⁶⁴ The WAGEES program was designed to provide grants to community-based organizations that administer a wide range of reentry programs and services, such as employment preparation and placement, work clothing and tool assistance, group and individual mentoring, acquisition of identification and medical benefits, vocational training cost assistance, transportation assistance, housing assistance, family reunification/parenting support, educational assistance, substance use support and more.⁶⁵ While WAGEES is a grant program within CDOC, the Latino Coalition for Community Leadership (LCCL) administers the WAGEES grants to community-based organizations on behalf of CDOC.⁶⁶ LCCL also provides administrative oversight and support to help WAGEES community partners meet the individual needs of their communities.

The WAGEES program came up repeatedly during focus group interviews with DAP staff and system stakeholders – such as prosecutors, defense attorneys, and advocacy groups. These groups spoke highly of the program but expressed the need for additional outreach across the state to educate the public about services offered through WAGEES. The lack of knowledge about the program and the services it provides can be a barrier to access, as many individuals are connected to services by referral. The WAGEES program often has a long wait list and when spots open, they fill up quickly, especially in more rural areas where WAGEES may be the only service provider available. As a result, DAP staff and stakeholders expressed the need for the WAGEES program to be expanded across the state.

Treatment for mental health and co-occurring disorders is lacking and several barriers preclude individuals on parole from accessing treatment

Stakeholders across the state reported a significant need for mental health services and co-occurring disorder treatment. Forty percent of staff surveyed reported that mental health services are not available in their area of Colorado. The Mental Health Alliance (MHA) ranks Colorado 33rd among states in the prevalence of mental illness and access to mental health care for adults and 34th for youth.⁶⁷ Parole officers stated that connecting individuals to mental health services can take up to six months and it is often difficult for clients to gain access to necessary medications. Staff from The Latino Coalition for Community Leadership reported that mental illness and trauma are the most destabilizing factors for individuals reentering the community after a prison stay and are particularly present in the female population.

Aside from treatment availability, there are several barriers precluding individuals on parole supervision in Colorado from accessing treatment. Through interviews with staff and stakeholders and upon a review of the results of the survey administered by CJI, the top three barriers that emerged were transportation, financial restraints, and issues with location and hours of services. Of those survey respondents that said clients are not able to access services, 88 percent of survey respondents indicated that transportation was the most significant barrier for individuals on parole. Many parole officers reported that individuals on their caseloads have to travel long distances to access services, which poses an issue since public transportation is lacking in many areas in the state. Another common barrier for individuals attempting to access treatment is the associated costs – with 63 percent of survey respondents indicating that financial restraints were a significant barrier to accessing services. In addition, many survey respondents noted that the location, hours, and having to take time off from work presented barriers to accessing services and treatment.

Parole officers also reported a lack of cognitive behavior programs, language support/translation services, and limited access to inpatient treatment, especially for sex offenders. Some officers stated that while they can refer individuals to treatment, they cannot require them to attend or enforce repercussions for lack of participation unless an underlying related condition necessitates it. Of those surveyed, 83 percent of staff reported they do not have the resources necessary to assist clients in overcoming barriers.

In addition to the barriers to accessing treatment, stakeholders expressed concern over the quality of the treatment programs available to them, particularly in areas that are more rural. Staff reported that treatment providers often fail to address an individual's responsivity factors and instead utilize a one-size-fits-all approach. Parole officers across the state reported that providers are insufficiently educated on criminogenic risk, need, and responsivity and there is a need for further training on how to effectively treat the individuals within this specific population.

Instability of residence or poor performance in treatment are the most frequently cited destabilizing factors for those who are who revoked

The CVDMP allows for the selection of destabilizing factors to override a sanction and employ one of higher severity instead; many of these factors reflect barriers to success on supervision. Table 4 shows the destabilizing factors most often cited by parole officers in the 2019 terminations from CJI’s file review sample. More than half of individuals revoked from parole in the sample had instability of residence or poor performance in treatment cited at least once, and both were more common among those revoked from parole than among those who successfully completed. Additionally, mental health instability was cited twice as frequently for individuals revoked from parole as for those who successfully completed.

Table 4. Destabilizing Factors Most Frequently Cited in the CVDMP, 2019

Destabilizing Factor	% of Individuals with Destabilizing Factor Cited		
	Overall	Successful Completion	Revocation
Increase/Continued Substance Abuse	55%	53%	55%
Lack of Pro-Social Activities	54%	53%	54%
Instability of Residence	48%	40%	52%
Minimizing Responsibility	47%	52%	45%
Unwillingness to Participate or Poor Performance in Treatment	54%	43%	59%
Repeating/Escalating Violations Under Supervision	38%	34%	40%
Negative Support	37%	38%	36%
Under 6 Months of Supervision in the Community	33%	31%	34%
Violation Related to Current Conviction and Criminal History	32%	41%	27%
Mental Health Instability	15%	9%	18%

Source: CDOC File Review, 2019 Parole Terminations.

The CVDMP also allows for the selection of stabilizing factors as a reason to underwrite a sanction and employ one of lesser severity instead. While the use of stabilizing factors is far less common, Table 5 shows the most frequently cited stabilizing factors among the 2019 file review sample. While residence stability was a commonly cited factor for all terminations, participation in employment or educational programs was nearly three times as common among those who successfully completed parole than among those who were revoked, and participation in treatment and mental health stability were never cited for those who were revoked. This further illustrates the importance of support for housing, treatment, and mental health needs among the supervision population to better support successful supervision outcomes.

Table 5. Stabilizing Factors Most Frequently Cited in the CVDMP, 2019

Stabilizing Factor	% of Individuals with Stabilizing Factor Cited		
	Overall	Successful Completion	Revocation
Residence Stability	60%	56%	65%

Pro-Social Support	46%	39%	53%
Participates in Employment/Educational Programs	43%	61%	24%
Provides Financial Support	31%	33%	29%
Positive Supervision	23%	39%	6%
Takes Responsibility	23%	28%	18%
Participation in Treatment	3%	6%	0%
Mental Health Stability	3%	6%	0%

Source: CDOC File Review, 2019 Parole Terminations.

The section below includes CJI’s findings – in collaboration with The Moss Group – on organizational culture. This section of the report includes findings related to organizational culture and sustainability that CJI would not classify as primary drivers of supervision outcomes but are essential to ensure an agency’s success in implementing and sustaining policies and practices intended to improve supervision outcomes.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

CJI partnered with The Moss Group, a criminal justice and public safety consulting firm, to conduct an assessment of organizational culture. In particular, CJI and The Moss Group focused this portion of the assessment on examining attitudes, values, and beliefs among agencies and system stakeholders – including judges, prosecutors, and the Parole Board – as they relate to supervision approaches, strategies to engage and motivate individuals on parole and methods to influence behavior change.

Staff and leadership are not aligned on organizational goals and objectives on the focus of parole and long-term behavior change

DAP leadership has expressed a commitment to implementing strategies that would improve parole outcomes, organizational culture, and reduce staff turnover, and they have included these as goals in the Division’s current Parole Management Plan. The plan, developed on an annual basis, outlines the DAP’s performance goals and strategies, as well as methods to measure the progress of these goals. The plan is reviewed regularly, with performance measures reported quarterly.

While leaders have been clear in their commitment to goal-based, proactive supervision aimed at reducing criminogenic risk and enhancing long-term behavior change, staff are not fully aligned in their support for this approach and do not appear to view their role as one focused on long-term behavior change. When staff were asked about their role, they spoke largely about consequences and accountability and very little about reducing recidivism or improving supervision success rates.

Staff report a lack of autonomy in decision-making

CDOC has implemented multiple administrative policies over the past decade with the goal of safely reducing revocations for technical parole violations. During staff interviews, parole officers expressed that changes to law and administrative policy have lessened what they are able to do in response to violation behaviors and expressed concern over the lack of discretion they have in responding to certain violation behaviors, such as missed treatment or treatment discharges. In fact, 64 percent of survey respondents noted the inability to hold individuals on parole accountable as the biggest challenge they face when making decisions related to responding to behavior. Part of this frustration appears to stem from the time and resources parole officers spend monitoring conditions that do not have clear responses outlined in the CVDMP. For example, a consistent theme during interviews was the time and

resources directed at drug testing but the lack of available responses to missed and positive drug tests. Since drug testing and treatment are frequently ordered conditions, officers view the lack of available sanctions to respond to missed and positive drug tests as a lack of accountability.

Interviews and survey results found a disconnect between leadership’s goal to use all available sanctions and interventions before seeking revocation and staff’s understanding of how this translates into practice, as well as what resources are available to them. Eighty percent of staff surveyed stated they do not have discretion when making a decision about recommending a revocation. Parole officers expressed a desire for their recommendations to play a larger role in decisions around revocation. Fifty-one percent of survey participants reported that they want the ability to arrest, revoke, or sanction, and an additional 29 percent reported they want increased discretion. Fifty-seven percent of staff surveyed cited the inability to sanction/lack of ability to hold individuals accountable to be their biggest challenge when making revocation decisions. Staff additionally expressed frustration with the recent efforts made by the legislature to decrease revocations for technical violations. Many staff reported they often cannot effectively intervene until or unless an individual commits a new crime, and parole officers reported they cannot effectively respond to technical violations.

Communication between the Parole Board and parole staff could be improved

There is a reported disconnect between the Parole Board and line staff regarding the overall goals and purpose of parole. Parole Board members reported that DAP utilizes a sanction-based model, rather than a needs-based model (i.e., treatment used as a sanction in response to a violation rather than to address a need). During interviews, Parole Board members reported that their mission and DAP’s mission do not appear to align in practice.

Additionally, throughout the interview process, parole staff expressed the need for more collaboration and communication between themselves and the Parole Board. For example, parole officers reported that it would be helpful for the Parole Board to reach out to them prior to condition setting in cases where an individual was previously on parole.

Current data system used by CDOC acts as a barrier to real-time decision-making

The CDOC’s current data system prevents officers from making evidence-informed decisions in real-time. The CDOC was unable to provide many of the data points requested from CJI for the data analysis. This is likely because the multiple data systems used by the division, the Colorado Web-Based Integrated Support Environment, (CWISE), Department of Corrections Information System (DCIS), Personal Computer Department of Corrections Information System (PCDCIS), and Offender Portal, do not allow for the extraction of information on conditions, sanctions, details on new offenses, or stabilizing/destabilizing factors (individual manual review is required for each of these). Supervision plan documents are also not stored in the system and cannot be easily accessed. Further, the system does not allow for retrieval of certain information from prior parole periods, such as start/end dates and conditions set, with the most recent parole period’s information; those documents are stored in a separate data system (WebExtender), where they can be difficult to access, stored out of chronological order, or missing entirely.

Enhanced access to data and information sharing could enable DAP to make data-driven decisions in a timely manner, including improvements in monitoring and skill development around the use of evidence-based practices.

Opportunities to Reduce Revocations and Strengthen Parole Supervision

The recommendations included in this report are meant to guide policymakers, local government officials, supervision administrators, and all other relevant stakeholders who have a hand in Colorado's parole system. The goal of these recommendations is to improve policies and practices through the implementation of data-driven reforms to help promote long-term success for justice-involved individuals and their families.

Based on the findings included in the sections above, CJI has outlined 14 recommendations to safely reduce revocations while improving parole outcomes in Colorado, organized in 4 overarching themes:

- Focus resources on the highest-risk population to maximize public safety and resources;
- Ensure supervising practices intended to reduce recidivism are implemented with fidelity;
- Address barriers to supervision success; and
- Ensure sustainability of policy and practice changes intended to improve outcomes.

FOCUS RESOURCES ON THE HIGHEST-RISK POPULATION

RECOMMENDATION 1: Ensure parole conditions are individualized and aligned with the results of risk and needs assessments

CJI's analysis found that conditions of parole do not appear to align with the results of an individual's risk assessment or identified criminogenic needs. Conditions that are misaligned with the results of a risk and needs assessment may ultimately serve as a barrier to success and can lead to over- or under-supervising individuals on parole. CJI found that a significant number of individuals assessed as low risk were ordered to complete an intensive supervision program that is best suited for higher-risk individuals. In addition, nearly every individual on parole received the condition of drug/alcohol treatment and two-thirds received authorization for intensive supervision. While research has found drug testing to be useful to monitor compliance with supervision conditions, there is no research to support the use of drug testing as a means to reduce re-offending or continued drug use.⁶⁸ In addition, research has found that intensive supervision programs should be directed to those at highest risk to reoffend and placing low-risk individuals in an ISP program will likely increase their risk of recidivism.⁶⁹

CJI recommends:

- Limiting standard conditions to ones that most closely relate to public safety, risk of reoffending, and individuals' criminogenic needs.
- Ensuring that intensive supervision conditions are only imposed for individuals with the highest risk of reoffending, either through changes to state law or administrative standards.
- Taking a more targeted approach to drug testing and using results to tailor interventions.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Expand the use of early discharge and earned time to ensure resources focus on individuals with the highest risk of reoffending

When examining revocation rates by risk level, CJI found that revocation rates increased as risk level increased. This is notable given that more than 50 percent of the parole population in 2019 comprised individuals assessed as high risk. As such, resources should be directed at, and prioritized for, higher risk individuals to maximize public safety outcomes. One policy employed by states around the country to ensure resources are focused on those at the highest risk to reoffend is the use of incentives that

streamline the release of those who pose the lowest public safety risk.⁷⁰ In 2019, individuals assessed as low risk spent, on average, 24 months on parole supervision. While Colorado has two existing options to streamline release – early discharge and earned time – opportunities exist to expand these options and reduce the period of time individuals within the lower risk categories are spending on active supervision.

For changes to early discharge, CJI recommends:

- Revising existing administrative policy to expand eligibility by amending the definition of substantial compliance to remove evidence of being free of substance use through drug testing and allowing treatment participation to be considered rather than treatment completion.
- Establishing an automatic review process to review eligible individuals.
- Allowing those on Low Risk, Low Custody (LRLC) supervision to be eligible for early discharge after serving 25 percent of their parole term or six months, whichever is less.
- Providing CDOC the discretion to grant early discharge for those placed on LRLC without having to go back to the Parole Board for approval.
- Requiring that the Parole Board states on the record its reasoning for denying an individual early discharge to ensure the individual understands how to improve prior to resubmission.

For changes to the current earned time policy, CJI recommends:

- Expanding eligibility for earned time and allowing individuals on parole to begin earning credits after their first full month on supervision, as well as allowing them to earn extra credits for the completion of certain evidence-based programs.
- Limiting the Parole Board’s discretion to deny earned time for circumstances unrelated to public safety.
- Removing the option for parole officers to withhold earned time as a response to violations or establishing safeguards that detail the specific violations for which parole officers can withhold earned time.

ENSURE SUPERVISION PRACTICES INTENDED TO REDUCE RECIDIVISM ARE IMPLEMENTED WITH FIDELITY

RECOMMENDATION 3: Ensure effective implementation of risk and needs assessment

Ensuring that staff complete risk and needs assessments with fidelity requires ongoing coaching and skill development. Parole officers reported receiving initial training on the use of the LSI during their orientation, but no follow-up or refresher training occurs, even though administrative policy dictates that retraining should happen semi-annually. Twenty-four percent of staff surveyed reported that their training is insufficient on case management and 25 percent reported insufficiencies in training on violation responses. Those who reported insufficient training cite issues including inconsistency in training across DAP, inexperienced trainers, and limited effectiveness of training concepts due to lack of parole officer discretion.

CJI recommends:

- Requiring annual refresher trainings on the use of the risk and needs assessment and utilizing feedback from staff to inform areas of need.
- Establishing a quality assurance process to ensure staff score the assessment accurately and reassess individuals every six months as required by administrative policy.

- Requiring that the risk and needs assessment used is validated by an external evaluator in accordance with CDOC’s definition of recidivism.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Review and update the CVDMP to include incentives for positive behavior and appropriate responses for violation behavior

During interviews with CJI, a majority of staff expressed a lack of confidence in the CVDMP. Staff expressed frustration with the lack of options available for responding to violation behavior and the lack of formal mechanisms to incentivize positive behavior change. However, CJI’s file review indicated that the full range of response options available in the CVDMP was used very infrequently, with only two low-level response options comprising 79 percent of all low-level responses to violations (when 20 responses were available) and three medium-level response options comprising 65 percent of all medium-level responses (when 19 total were available).

CJI recommends:

- Providing staff training and skill development on the use and importance of graduated responses, including proper use of the CVDMP.
- Reviewing and updating the CVDMP to ensure the appropriate resources are available for responding to all types of behavior, including options for incentivizing positive behavior change.
- Limiting use of urinalysis testing to those assessed as having a substance use disorder.
- Establishing a schedule to review the CVDMP with regularity, including gathering input from staff.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Fully implement the use of effective case management

Research has found that supervision planning should be a collaborative process and that when individuals feel included in the planning process, they are more invested in the outcome.⁷¹ Parole officers in Colorado are instructed to develop supervision plans that include the individual’s LSI score, immediate goals and criminogenic needs, specialized supervision conditions, long-term goals, a schedule for reviewing the individual’s progress, and input from the individual. However, parole officers report that the development of supervision plans may not be occurring effectively or consistently in practice.

CJI recommends:

- Providing initial and ongoing staff training and skill development on effective case management.
- Revising existing administrative policy to require periodic case plan updates and include case plan reviews for team leaders and supervisors.
- Requiring that officers collaborate with the individuals they supervise to co-produce supervision plans and develop goals.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Provide ongoing training, coaching, and staff skill development on evidence-based practices

DAP has implemented an array of evidence-based practices over the last decade. Staff receive training on risk and needs assessment during the academy, but there are no follow-up skill development, coaching, or booster trainings currently available to ensure staff use these skills effectively. Beyond this, DAP does not currently offer Effective Case Management (ECM), Core Correctional Practices (CCP), or

Principles of Effective Intervention (PEI) trainings. There is also no process in place for DAP to ensure continuous quality improvement of staff’s use of these skills.

CJI recommends:

- Reviewing current training curricula to ensure the inclusion of ECM, CCP, and PEI skills.
- Ensuring Risk and Needs Assessment, ECM, CCP, and PEI trainings are provided to staff.
- Providing ongoing refresher/booster training to avoid drift.
- Implementing a system of continuous quality improvement that includes staff feedback and skill development.

ADDRESS BARRIERS TO SUPERVISION SUCCESS

RECOMMENDATION 7: Streamline the procedure to modify terms and conditions

CJI’s analysis of the most frequently ordered special conditions revealed the need for improvements to Colorado’s condition modification process. While a process exists for parole officers to request a condition modification in response to an individual’s shifting needs, parole officers reported that this process is lengthy and rarely occurs proactively in practice. Administrative policy authorizes parole officers to request a condition modification, either in response to a violation or to an individual’s shifting needs. However, all requests must be reviewed and approved by a supervisor and/or a manager prior to a parole officer submitting a completed request for modification form to the Parole Board for approval.⁷² Parole officers reported that this multi-step process is often tedious and prevents the application of timely interventions, thus limiting the parole officer’s ability to effectively respond to an individual’s criminogenic needs. For example, if a parole officer identifies that an individual on their caseload is in need of a specific program or treatment, the officer does not have the discretion to proactively place the individual into the treatment program without Parole Board approval.⁷³ During interviews, staff at multiple levels reported that when condition modification does occur, the majority of modification requests occur in conjunction with the submission of a parole violation report, and not in response to an individual’s criminogenic needs or as a means to remove a condition that cannot be completed due to a significant responsivity factor. Parole officers expressed a desire to streamline this process for lower-level modifications, such as removing a required urinalysis test following consistent compliance with sobriety.

CJI recommends:

- Requiring that condition modification requests are handled expeditiously to ensure changes to conditions occur in a timely manner.
- Authorizing DAP to adjust supervision conditions and apply low-level interventions without the need for approval from the Parole Board to ensure changes in an individual’s risks and needs are addressed quickly.
- Allowing officers to utilize low-level interventions as a mechanism for incentivizing compliance, such as removing conditions that cannot be completed due to significant responsivity factors.
- Requiring the removal of conditions that do not align with the results of an individual’s risk and needs assessment to further reduce barriers to success, including training and oversight to support this effort.
- Implementing a feasibility assessment for each person before imposing conditions related to housing or employment.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Reduce barriers to reporting for parole

Between 2012 and 2019, the number of individuals receiving violations for missed reporting increased 17 percent. Several barriers appear to exist impacting an individual's ability to report for meetings with their parole officer or attend required program and treatment sessions. Through interviews with staff and stakeholders, and upon a review of the results of the survey administered by CJI, the top three barriers that emerged were transportation, financial restraints, and issues with location and hours related to both meetings with officers and programming.

In addition, nearly half of the 2019 file review sample had at least one absconding-related violation cited on their complaint. A quarter of individuals with absconding-related violations also had substance use violations; a third of individuals with substance use violations also had absconding-related violations, which appears to indicate a connection between absconding and those struggling with substance use but additional information is needed to fully understand the factors driving absconding among the parole population.

CJI recommends:

- Continuing and expanding the use of remote reporting, which was rolled out during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Exploring the implementation of text notification capabilities for individuals on parole to increase returns to court for appointments, hearings, and meetings.
- Analyzing factors driving absconding rates to provide parole officers with additional options for responding to absconding behavior.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Enhance access to affordable housing and employment prior to release from prison

Standard conditions of parole require individuals to secure stable housing and maintain employment.⁷⁴ However, individuals on parole supervision are not consistently provided with the resources necessary to successfully acquire both housing and employment upon release. DAP included an effort to prioritize and address this issue in its 2020-2021 parole management plan.

CJI recommends:

- Creating a workgroup to examine the housing needs of individuals released to parole and seek DAP funding to subsidize housing prior to release.
- Assisting an individual in beginning the process of seeking employment placement before release.
- Making efforts to expand access to WAGEES programming and supporting educational employment services.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Reduce racial and ethnic disparities in parole supervision

While success rates have increased in recent years, when looking specifically at the demographics of those who are revoked, CJI found that revocations were more common among certain groups. CJI's data analysis revealed that Black and Native American males between the ages of 18 and 29 had the lowest parole success rates. Further, when examining conditions by race, CJI found that Black individuals were

more likely to be ordered to complete an ISP (81 percent of Black individuals in the file review sample, as compared to 59 percent of Latino/Hispanic individuals and 61 percent of white individuals).

CJI recommends:

- Requiring regular validation of the currently used risk and needs assessment tool to ensure the tool does not create or increase racial disparities.
- Conducting an analysis of what disparities currently exist in the parole population’s ability to access services and exploring options to address those disparities.
 - For example, reviewing options for expanding language support services for non-English speakers and reviewing performance measures regularly to examine the existence of disparities in parole outcomes.
 - Including in this analysis a look at the parole decision-making process to determine criteria that might be leading to disparities.
- Examining disparities that exist for certain conditions that may lead to a higher likelihood of parole failure (e.g., ISP).

ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY OF POLICY AND PRACTICE CHANGES INTENDED TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES

RECOMMENDATION 11: Identify and address gaps in treatment to respond to the criminogenic needs of the parole population

CJI examined the length of time on parole relative to supervision outcomes and found that revocations appeared to peak when an individual has been on supervision for six months. Thirty-five percent of those revoked in 2019 spent six months or less on parole, while 68 percent of those revoked spent a year or less. These findings support existing research that stresses the critical importance of the first few months individuals are on supervision and the need to connect individuals with services and support as soon as they are placed on supervision.⁷⁵ CJI identified several programming gaps in its assessment, including a need for more treatment services for those struggling with mental health and co-occurring disorders. However, a more comprehensive evaluation is necessary to understand the extent of the gaps and to assess the quality of treatment services available.

CJI recommends:

- Conducting a comprehensive treatment gap analysis to assess the criminogenic needs of individuals on parole, the availability of services to address those needs, the average time between referral and intake, and the quality of the services provided.
- Addressing identified gaps in the services following analysis, including through telemedicine and tele-counseling.
- Creating and/or updating standards for treatment providers to ensure quality of services.

RECOMMENDATION 12: Enhance the data system to allow for real-time evidence-based decision-making

The current data system used by parole staff may impact officers’ ability to make evidence-informed decisions in real time. The current system does not allow for real-time analysis of performance measures and may also be limited in its ability to track certain vital data points. Enhanced access to data and information sharing could enable DAP to make data-driven decisions in a timely manner, including

improvements in monitoring and skill development around the use of evidence-based practices. DAP is currently working with a technical assistance provider to enhance the usability of the data they collect.

CJI recommends:

- Prioritizing the following improvements:
 - Adding data dashboards.
 - Allowing for the ability to track and examine reasons for revocation.
 - Allowing for the ability to flag individuals who are eligible for placement on low-risk, low-custody caseloads and early discharge.
 - Creating an alert for when risk/need assessment results do not align with supervision conditions.

RECOMMENDATION 13: Align staff with CDOC’s mission of creating opportunities for positive behavior change

CJI’s assessment revealed that parole staff and leadership are not fully aligned in the focus and goals of parole supervision. While CDOC leadership has been clear in its commitment to goal-based, proactive supervision aimed at reducing recidivism and enhancing long-term behavior change, staff are not fully aligned in their support for this approach and do not appear to view their role as one focused on long-term behavior change. When staff were asked about their role, they spoke largely about consequences and accountability and very little about reducing recidivism or improving supervision success rates. Part of the concern from staff appeared to stem from a lack of autonomy to make decisions about the individuals on their caseloads and the lack of resources available to respond to the behavior and challenges individuals on their caseload are facing.

CJI recommends:

- Creating a staff workgroup to improve staff support and implementation of evidence-based practices.
- Conducting a review of the DAP’s mission statement to ensure it clearly articulates that positive behavior change is the predominant goal.
- Establishing a method for parole officers to provide input on new policies prior to finalization and feedback once implementation has occurred.
- Enriching communication between leadership and line staff, including providing opportunities to ensure staff have a comprehensive understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and what improvements may be made collectively to improve overall morale.

DAP’s current strategic plan references the implementation of a “referee to coach” model. As the Division works toward implementing this new model, CJI recommends:

- Revising job descriptions to ensure roles and responsibilities align with the division’s mission and recruiting and hiring staff based on their commitment to this mission.
- Tying staff performance evaluations to the use of evidence-based practices and incentivizing the use of these practices throughout the state.

RECOMMENDATION 14: Strengthen communication between leadership and staff and with justice system stakeholders

Through their organizational culture assessment, The Moss Group identified an opportunity to increase the appreciation for communication between leadership and staff, including opportunities to raise awareness for staff at all levels throughout the organization of each other's responsibilities and address how to make improvements collectively to improve overall morale. Difficulties in communication result in officers believing there is a lack of departmental support for requested revocations. Eighty-six percent of DAP staff that responded to the survey reported that they are not encouraged to speak out frankly when critical of well-established ideas and approaches. Further, 58 percent of survey respondents said they are not asked to participate in generating ideas to make policy changes.

CJI recommends:

- Identifying methods to promote enhanced communication and collaboration among division leaders, Parole Board members, managers, supervisors, and parole officers.
- Creating opportunities for staff to provide input on ways to increase awareness of cultural dissonance and improve morale.
- Providing education to policymakers and other stakeholders in the community to generate further awareness of the role of parole through the lens of risk, need, and responsibility.

Appendix: Methodology

For its quantitative analysis, CJI requested and received individual-level data from the Department of Corrections focusing on cohorts of individuals who terminated parole supervision between 2010 and 2019. Given the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the justice system throughout the country, CJI supplemented these trends with aggregate data from 2020 and 2021 provided by DAP to assess the impact the pandemic had on revocations. The individual-level data examined included:

- Demographic information,
- Risk levels,
- Offense and sentencing history,
- Violation behavior, and
- Information on the population being revoked to prison.

The data provided were cleaned and analyzed to better understand the differences between the general supervision population and those being revoked from parole. In addition to the data provided by CDOC, CJI compiled publicly available data on crime rates, community-level behavioral health needs, and other related information to develop a more comprehensive picture of the factors driving parole revocations and violation behavior.

As part of the qualitative analysis, CJI conducted interviews with relevant stakeholders over the course of six months in 2020, including agency leadership and staff, line staff and supervisors, judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and advocacy organizations. With the help of CDOC leadership, CJI worked to identify officers, regions, and groups with whom to conduct interviews. CJI scheduled and facilitated 16 total interviews with a cross section of stakeholders in the justice system, including division leaders and administrators, parole officers, supervisors, managers, prosecutors, public defenders, and advocacy organizations, such as the Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition and the Latino Coalition for Community Leadership. CJI also distributed a survey to DAP staff to gather information about factors that may lead to revocation. The survey was distributed to 211 parole officers, 22 team leaders, and 26 supervisors, and had a response rate of 38 percent.

CJI supplemented this information with a review of state statutes, court rules, administrative policies and procedures, and other documents related to community supervision to map out the administrative and legal framework governing parole supervision in Colorado.

Additionally, the CJI team partnered with The Moss Group to conduct an assessment of the agency's organizational culture. The Moss Group's assessment explored attitudes, values, and beliefs related to community supervision and revocations among agency and system stakeholders. The Moss Group's organizational culture assessment centered on the following domains: leadership/supervision, communication, training/resources, employee relationships, and policy and procedure.

Finally, the CJI team conducted a file review of case-level data to supplement the gaps identified in the information collected from the state – primarily more detailed information on conditions of supervision and violations of parole conditions. CJI examined a representative sample of randomly selected parole terminations from 2019. A sample of 360 files was selected, comprising equal numbers of successful terminations and revocations. The final sample included 358 files, analyzed quantitatively to provide information unavailable in the original data provided. Information was collected from individuals' case files, primarily through CWISE, collecting information from the CVDMP on violations and responses to

violation behavior, as well as conditions of supervision, where available. For individuals who were revoked, CJI supplemented information on conditions through WebExtender, also using this data system to collect information from complaints for revocation and the Parole Board mittimus. These files were manually supplemented when missing from the system.

To streamline and condense the violation information collected through the file review, CJI created 13 overarching violation categories encompassing similar types of violation behaviors. These violation categories included:

- Substance Use-Related Violations
- Lack of Compliance/Status Offenses
- Missed Reporting Requirements
- Failure to Attend/Complete Programming Requirements
- Lack of Compliance/Location Monitoring
- Sex Offender Violations
- Lack of Compliance/Employment
- Lack of Compliance/Weapons
- Contact with Felons/Co-Defendant/Gang Members
- Absconding
- Failure to Pay Fines/Fees/Restitution
- Mental Health-Related Violations
- Contact with Victim/Child

End Notes

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