

# The 2008/2009 Study of Probation and Parole Revocation

## Summary of Major Study Findings

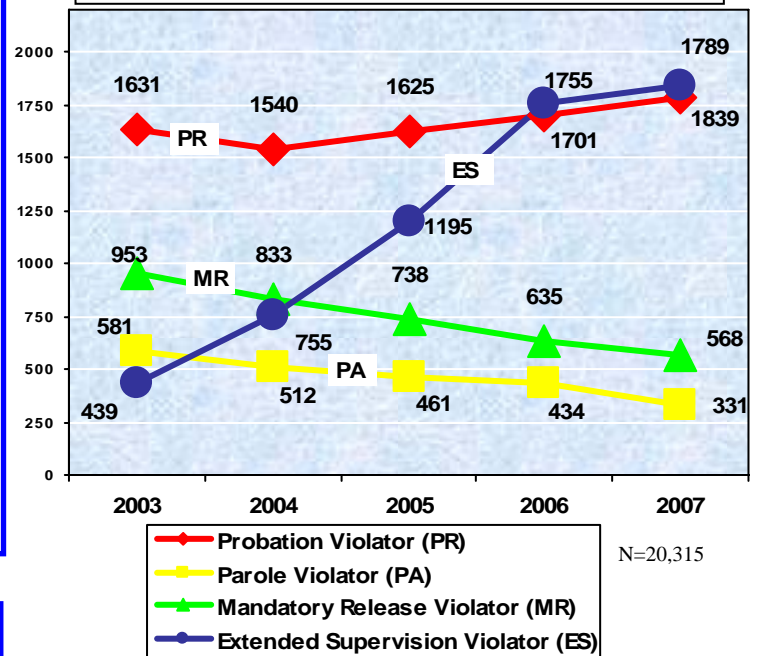
The 2008/2009 Study of Probation and Parole Revocation was conducted by the UW Population Health Institute (PHI) for the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. The study included a best practices review on reducing revocation, a revocation data quality review, an analysis of aggregate historical data, an in-depth case review of 200 randomly selected offenders, and an examination of racial disparities in revocation.

### Aggregate Historical Revocation Analyses

The aggregate dataset included 20,315 cases that were revoked and admitted to prison with no new sentence between 2003 and 2007 (excluded sex offenders, alternative to revocation admissions, and temporary probation/parole admissions).

- The overall number of offenders revoked and admitted to prison with no new sentence increased each year between 2003 and 2007
- There were significant increases in the number of extended supervision (ES) violators and probation violators admitted to prison with no new sentence between 2003 and 2007 (Figure 1)
- There were 3,361 individual offenders admitted to prison with no new sentence more than once during the study timeframe, accounting for 7,281 of the 20,315 prison admissions

Figure 1: Revocations by Violator Type by Year

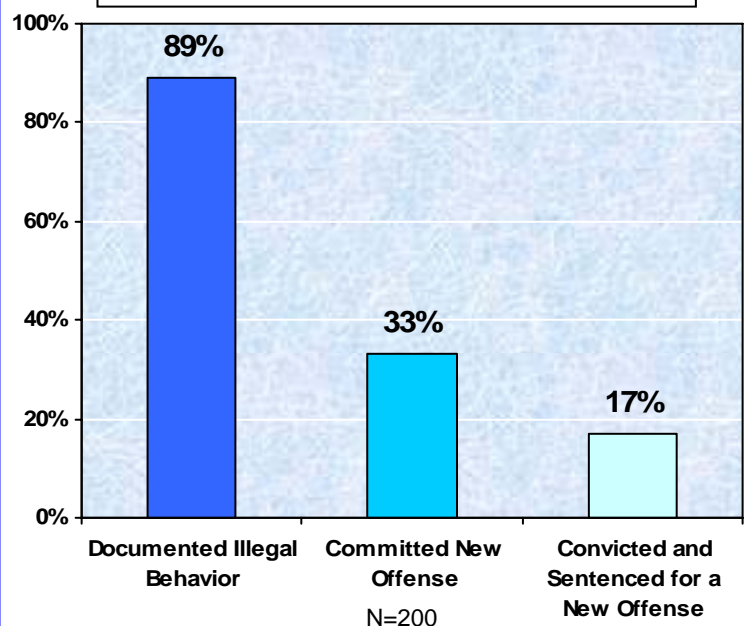


### In-Depth Case-Level Analyses

The analyses included 200 cases randomly selected proportionately by supervision region

- The majority of offenders (89%) committed a new offense or illegal act while on supervision, 33% of all offenders committed a new offense that was the basis for the revocation, and 17% committed a new offense for which they were later convicted and sentenced (Figure 2)
- In 81% of the cases agents responded to offender behaviors with a combination of intermediate sanctions, community-based alternatives to revocation, repeated attempts to encourage offender success, or filing for revocation in response to a new offense
- Agents used graduated responses in about one-half (48%) of all of the cases
- Agents filed for revocation an average of 15 months after supervision start for all cases and after an average of 8 months for ES violators
- There were no significant differences in time to revocation filing by gender, race, age, year, region, prior felony conviction, prior juvenile incarceration, convicted of a new crime, or type or length of governing offense sentence

Figure 2: Documented Illegal Behavior or New Offense During Supervision

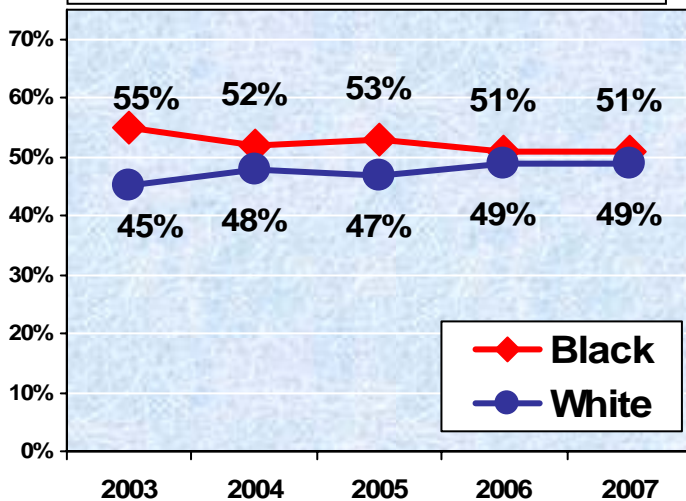


## Racial Disparities Analyses

Analyses included 19,413 cases from the aggregate dataset with a race designation of either White (including Hispanic) or Black. Cases with a race designation of Native American, Asian, or other were excluded.

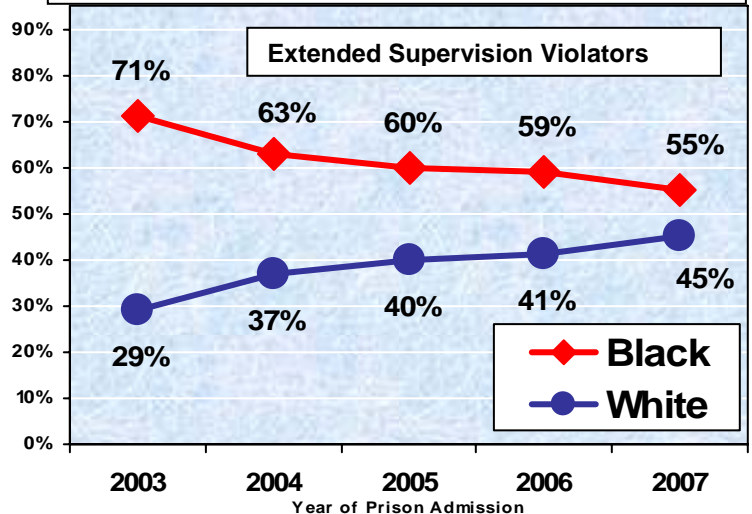
- Consistent with the results of other efforts examining disparities, the data reveal that a higher proportion of blacks than whites are admitted to prison with no new sentence.
- In 2007 blacks made up a smaller segment of the group of offenders admitted to prison with no new sentence than they did in 2003 (Figure 3). This is a statistically significant decrease.
- The proportion of the ES violators admitted to prison with no new sentence who were black decreased from 71% in 2003 to 55% in 2007 (Figure 4).
- There is no indication that agent decisions to revoke were made based upon inappropriate considerations such as race. There were no significant differences between black and white offenders related to:
  - Whether agent responses to offender behaviors preceding revocation were consistent with the type/severity of offender behaviors and with current agency practice;
  - Whether agents used graduated responses to offender behaviors prior to revocation; or
  - How quickly agents filed for revocation (days from supervision start to agent revocation filing)
- There were no significant differences between black and white offenders by year, region, how quickly the revocation hearing was conducted, new criminal offense, or length of governing offense sentence

**Figure 3: Proportion of Prison Admissions With No New Sentence by Race by Year**



N=19,413

**Figure 4: ES Violators Only -- Proportion of Prison Admissions With No New Sentence by Race by Year**



N=5,719

## Recommendations

The Department should utilize a multi-faceted approach to reducing revocation by choosing from options identified in the best practices review, the results of the current study, and the recommendations of the Justice Reinvestment Initiative.

- 1) Emphasize use of a continuum of non-incarceration intermediate sanctions;
- 2) Increase the consistent use of graduated responses to offender behaviors through continued implementation of the *Functional Response to Violation* grid;
- 3) Improve uniform use of the DOC-502 risk/need assessment tool to focus resources on higher risk offenders and to improve the consistency of agency implementation of the assessment tool;
- 4) Collaborate with existing reentry initiatives, *Assess, Inform, Measure (AIM)* pilots, criminal justice coordinating councils, specialty treatment courts, and the *Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD)* programs to facilitate a coordinated, system-wide partnership;
- 5) Collaborate with the judiciary to assess the impact of Truth-In-Sentencing practices on the length of extended supervision sentences and the subsequent effect on prison populations.