

The Commission's 2024 Correctional Program Evaluation examines recidivism (recidivist arrest and recidivist incarceration) for offenders who were released from supervised probation or prison in FY 2021.¹ This document expands upon the analyses for prisoners by examining the effect of participation in work release on recidivism outcomes using multivariate analysis, a statistical technique used to analyze how multiple factors, taken together, affect the probability of recidivism.

As shown in the table below, compared to prisoners not assigned to work release, prisoners assigned to work release had a 6% lower probability of recidivist arrest and an 8% lower probability of recidivist incarceration.

Effect of Personal and Criminal Justice Factors on Recidivism for FY 2021 Prison Releases

Independent Variables	Average Recidivism Probability: Two-Year Follow-Up	
	Model 1 Arrest n=10,833	Model 2 Incarceration n=10,833
Work Release	-6%	-8%
Personal Characteristics		
Male	7%	6%
Nonwhite	N.S.	-9%
Age at Prison Release		
Under 21 years	Reference	Reference
21-29 years	-10%	-12%
30-39 years	-21%	-20%
40-49 years	-30%	-26%
50+ years	-40%	-30%
Married	N.S.	N.S.
High School Dropout/GED	3%	7%
Prior Employment	N.S.	-4%
Substance Use Indicated	N.S.	3%
Mental Health Indicated	N.S.	6%
Prior Criminal Justice Contacts		
Under 21 at First Adult Criminal Justice Contact	N.S.	-3%
Number of Prior Arrests	2%	1%
Prior Incarceration	N.S.	7%
Sample Conviction		
Offense Class		
Class B1 – D Felony	-6%	-4%
Class E – G Felony	-3%	-3%
Class H – I Felony	Reference	Reference

continued

¹ See NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, *FY 2021 Correctional Program Evaluation*.

Effect of Personal and Criminal Justice Factors on Recidivism for FY 2021 Prison Releases

Independent Variables	Average Recidivism Probability: Two-Year Follow-Up	
	Model 1 Arrest n=10,833	Model 2 Incarceration n=10,833
Incarceration Profile		
Type of Prison Entry		
New Crime	Reference	Reference
Probation Revocation	N.S.	4%
PRS Revocation	5%	4%
Infractions	4%	6%
Time Served		
12 months or less	Reference	Reference
13-24 months	N.S.	N.S.
25+ months	-7%	-6%
Restrictive Housing	4%	5%
Correctional Programs/Jobs		
Program Only	N.S.	-8%
Job Only	N.S.	-8%
Both Program and Job	N.S.	-8%
No Program or Job	Reference	Reference
Risk and Need Profile		
Risk Level		
Extreme	21%	19%
High	22%	15%
Moderate	16%	N.S.
Low	Reference	Reference
Need Level		
Extreme	9%	12%
High	9%	10%
Moderate	N.S.	N.S.
Low	N.S.	N.S.
Minimal	Reference	Reference
Time at Risk (in days)	-0.1%	--
R²	16%	11%
Max Rescaled R²	21%	15%

Note: "N.S." indicates the estimated effects were not statistically significant. Prisoners with missing data were excluded from the analysis. For categorical and dichotomous independent variables, the results are interpreted in relation to the reference category. Prisoners assessed as minimal risk were excluded from analysis due to small numbers (n=10).

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2021 Correctional Program Evaluation Data