

RE-ENTRY/COMMUNITY



1. Are there enough services in the community to support parolees (mental health, substance use disorder, etc)?

The people who will be released on parole have undergone an assessment to demonstrate they are stable, have housing and employment, and the ability to meet their financial obligations (restitution, insurance, treatment programs), thus **posing no threat to public safety.**

There has been a recent shift in the practice of probation officers **diverting their clients to treatment instead of re-incarceration**, because the amount of services in the community for people with

substance use disorder and mental health needs has been increasing in recent years. This is **in line with evidence-based approaches** to treat the root causes of crime rather than strictly punitive responses.

2. What would be the impact of parole on probation officers (who also supervise residents on SCCP)?

There would be minimal impact on the current resources. Under the existing structure, incarcerated residents are transitioned to Maine's Supervised Community Confinement Program (SCCP) at the 30-month mark (rather than needing to wait until the 24-month mark) so that there are no more than 90 residents per probation officer. Even if 400 people were paroled in the first year, that would only amount to **a maximum of 5 new probation/parole officers being hired.**

3. The parole board will be making decisions about people they do not know.

How will this process be safe?

The same system used for evaluation by Maine's Supervised Community Confinement Program (SCCP) can easily be used to assess risk for people eligible for parole. **It is a misnomer that decisions for SCCP are made by people who "know" the residents they are evaluating.**

If the DOC believes the system of evaluation for SCCP is adequate, then they also agree that this system can inform parole decisions. The same level of input will be included in residents' parole applications.

4. What is the rate of reoffense (not recidivism that includes technical violations) for parolees v. probationers v. straight release?

There are no available statistics that disarticulate overall recidivism rates from returns to custody based on technical violations. What follows **includes technical violations.**

NATIONAL STATISTICS:

- According to the [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#), the overall national recidivism rates are 71% for straight release v. 45% with supervision
- About 6 in 10 (62%) prisoners (total) released across 34 states in 2012 were arrested within 3 years, and 7 in 10 (71%) were arrested within 5 years.
- Less than half (46%) of prisoners released in 2012 returned to prison within 5 years for a parole or probation violation or a new sentence.

MAINE STATISTICS ([Return to Custody Report, 2010-2019](#)):

- 14.4% of the clients released to probation from 2010-2019 returned to a MDOC facility within one year post release.
- 6.4% of all straight releases from 2010-2019 returned to a MDOC facility within one year post release.
- Risk assessment: For clients released with a low or administrative score in 2019, 6.0% returned within 1 year post release.

Note: MDOC calculates recidivism rates based upon a person's return to a OC facility. These statistics do not include reincarceration in county jails.

5. Can we compare the rate of successful completion of SCCP in Maine with the national rate of successful completion of parole? Why or why not?

It would not be an accurate reflection to compare national statistics to Maine's success rates due to the large differences between the two programs, including amount of time incarcerated and when a person becomes eligible. However, we can compare the current success of Maine's Supervised Community Confinement Program (SCCP) with the likelihood of parole success.

As the DOC argues, **the successes of the Maine Model of Corrections all indicate that offenders are being rehabilitated and prepared for release.** Using this working model with an effective parole system only aids in transitioning individuals who no longer benefit society by being incarcerated.

6. Will parolees who violate go to jail or back to prison?

People on parole who violate the terms of parole, and whose parole officer deems it necessary to revoke their parole, **will be returned to the facility from which they were released.** There would be no added costs for county jails as a result of this bill. Maine's Supervised Community Confinement Program (SCCP) violations are extremely low and we expect the same for parolees.

Parole officers would use various sanctions based on severity of the violation, so that the punishment is proportionate to the violation(s). **This is a current practice in the DOC** with their probation officers — a culture change that all leaders of MDOC have touted as being long overdue, and one that is working for those currently on supervision in the community (including SCCP).