

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 2007-2008

SJUD

12507

PART TWO- COMMUNITY CRIME LEVELS

How, then, does crime in the City of Fairbanks compare with other similar communities? This question was posed to the U.A.F. Justice Department in 2005; they were tasked with finding truly "comparable communities" elsewhere in the United States- those being defined as a central cities of 30,000 to 45,000 residents, surrounded by a larger borough or county population comprising a total of 80,000- 100,000 residents. These communities are listed in Table 1 below, with the City of Fairbanks included at the bottom of the table.

Table I.- CENTRAL CITIES SURROUNDED BY LARGER BOROUGH POPULATIONS

<u>State</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Population</u>
Washington	Cowlitz	96,189	Longview	35,741
Texas	Angelina	81,492	Lufkin	33,162
Texas	Bowie	90,248	Texarkana	35,199
Georgia	Floyd	94,009	Rome	35,303
Georgia	Lowndes	95,787	Valdosta	45,059
Georgia	Whitfield	89,461	Dalton	30,341
Alabama	Lauderdale	87,515	Florence	35,852
Michigan	Midland	84,615	Midland	42,175
West Virginia	Wood	87,100	Parkersburg	32,100
Virginia	Albemarle	88,726	Charlottesville	39,162
Wisconsin	Manitowac	81,864	Manitowac	34,080
Illinois	Vermillion	82,786	Danville	33,106
Tennessee	Bradley	91,196	Cleveland	37,368
Arkansas	Garland	92,141	Hot Springs	36,770
New York	Chemung	89,984	Elmira	30,336
Alaska	North Star	87,650	Fairbanks	31,182

(Source: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>)

After these communities were identified, the respective numbers of reported criminal offenses for each community (using 2005 U.C.R. data) were quantified, and compared with the crime experienced in Fairbanks. The results of this comparison are listed on the following page under Table #2.

Table 2: COMPARATIVE CRIMES FOR SIMILAR-SIZED COMMUNITIES

City	Homicide	Sex Assault	Robbery	Agg. Assault	Burglary	Theft
Longview	1	12	37	150	910	2511
Lufkin	1	21	39	139	483	1596
Texarkana	6	27	68	308	645	2135
Rome	6	13	67	352	624	1972
Valdosta	3	24	101	170	600	2489
Dalton	0	4	42	149	285	1426
Florence	0	15	42	109	304	1241
Midland	0	18	4	51	14	830
Charlottesville	1	20	71	211	195	1229
Manitowac	0	8	6	28	176	888
Cleveland	3	10	30	267	452	1518
Hot Springs	3	18	80	291	915	3246
Average	2	15.8	48.9	185.4	477.8	1756.75
Fairbanks	3	56	69	195	243	1263

As is plainly evident, the City of Fairbanks experiences a higher number of crimes than the average City in all serious "crimes-against-persons" categories. This finding in itself is somewhat alarming, as the population-average for the cited communities is **36,684** residents. At the low end of the population range with only 31,182 residents, Fairbanks experiences an equivalent or higher number of actual crimes than most of these somewhat larger communities. More alarming are the sexual-assault statistics, which in Fairbanks show a staggering amount in excess of three times the numbers reported in comparable communities.

Lastly, while there have been significant concerns expressed over the amount of property-crime occurring in Fairbanks, we are actually doing better than many of the other cited communities. When adjusted on a per-capita basis, the City of Fairbanks is experiencing 7.8 burglaries per 1000 residents, whereas the other communities are averaging 13 burglaries per 1000 residents. Similarly, Fairbanks experiences 40.5 thefts per 1000 residents, whereas the average for the other communities was 48 thefts per 1000 residents.

Before moving on to examinations of comparable police-staffing, I would like to briefly revisit the community of Juneau, with its nearly identical population size of 32,000 residents. As was referenced in the introduction, one would expect to see a relatively lesser amount of crime in our Capital City, given the fact that they have no outlying population affecting their residence-base. However, the true disparity in crime in our respective communities is significant, as expressed in Table 3.

Table 3.- Fairbanks vs. Juneau 2005 U.C.R. Crime Statistics

<u>Crime</u>	<u>Fairbanks</u>	<u>Juneau</u>	<u>% Difference</u>
Homicide	3	0	--
Sexual Assault	56	30	+86%
Aggravated Assault	195	89	+119%
Simple Assault	1260	433	+190%
Robberies	69	14	+392%
Burglaries	243	125	+94%
Larceny	1263	1124	+12%
Auto Theft	224	47	+376%

Clearly, there is a significant difference in the amount of crime experienced in Juneau versus that of Fairbanks. Inclusive in the above assault statistics- and another effective barometer of the relative difference in the use/demand on police resources- is the relative difference in domestic violence in our respective communities. In 2005, the Juneau Police Department responded to 458 incidents of reported domestic violence, while the Fairbanks Police Department responded to 902 such calls.

With crime alarmingly higher than our nearest base of comparison in Alaska, and significantly higher in serious crimes-against-persons categories than other comparable communities in the lower 48, one would expect that the Fairbanks Police Department would be staffed at levels comparably higher- or at the very least equivalent to- the police staffing in these other communities in order to effectively address the serious crime issues that we face. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

PART THREE- COMPARATIVE POLICE STAFFING

Every year, the Federal Bureau of Investigation evaluates and quantifies the number of sworn, full-time police personnel servicing a given jurisdiction. These numbers are expressed as a ratio, (i.e. # of officers per 1000 residents) and are further broken-down according to geographic regions and community size/types.

In the F.B.I.'s *CRIME IN THE UNITED STATES* for 2004, the most recent year completed, it was found- for city/municipal police departments- the nationwide average for police staffing is **2.3 sworn officers per 1000 residents**. This number varies by region, with the Northeast having the highest ratio at 2.7 officers per 1000 residents, and the Western U.S. having the lowest average at 1.7 officers per 1000 residents. Cities that fell within the size-range of Fairbanks (25,000- 49,999 residents) had an average of **1.8 sworn officers per 1000 residents**.

Examining these numbers, it is clearly evident that the City of Fairbanks falls well below national- and even regional- averages. Our current authorized-strength of 43 sworn officers for a City of 31,182 equates to a ratio of **1.38 officers per 1000 residents**. If the City of Fairbanks were staffed at the national average, we would have seventy-one officers serving our community.

Even at the regional average of 1.8, Fairbanks should have a minimum of fifty-six officers serving our City, an increase of thirteen additional officers over what we have currently. This, of course, presupposes that we would staff the "national average" to deal with "average crime rates." As has already been explicitly shown, our crime-rates are significantly above average, and would thus suggest staffing-levels that should exceed these averages as well.

Returning to the aforementioned U.A.F. study of "comparable communities" in the lower-48, I've taken the liberty of listing the eight communities with the smallest populations- those closest to the City of Fairbanks. Table 4 (below) shows the number of full-time, sworn officers employed by each of these respective cities.

Table 4- Police Staffing

City	Population	Homicides	Sex Assaults	Robberies	Agg Assaults	Burglaries	Thefts	# of Police	Police/1000 residents
Longview	35,741	1	12	37	150	910	2511	56	1.56
Lufkin	33,162	1	21	39	139	483	1596	73	2.21
Texarkana	35,199	6	27	68	308	645	2135	80	2.27
Rome	35,303	6	13	67	352	624	1972	98	2.78
Don	30,341	0	4	42	149	285	1426	89	2.93
Florence	35,852	0	15	42	109	304	1241	90	2.51
Manitowac	34,080	0	8	6	28	176	888	63	1.84
Hot Springs	36,770	3	18	80	291	915	3246	99	2.69
Fairbanks	31,182	3	56	69	195	243	1263	43	1.37

Once again, it is plainly evident that while our crime compares with, and/or exceeds that experienced in comparable communities, the number of police which are staffed to address these problems are much greater in other communities, sometimes exceeding a 100% difference.

One other topic in this area that needs to be dealt with on a factual basis: that of assisting agencies and concurrent jurisdictions. When discussing police staffing and public-safety needs in the City of Fairbanks, some residents will ask whether or not the Alaska State Troopers, University Police, etc. are being included in this mix. They are not, nor should they be.

As has been previously stated, all of the U.C.R. Crime Statistics (and- by inference- the comparative workload put upon the Fairbanks Police Department) that have generated these comparisons are *those crimes which have been reported to-and handled by- the City of Fairbanks Police Department within our City limits.* While the Alaska State Troopers

technically share concurrent jurisdiction within the City, the reality is that their staffing situation is as comparatively bad or worse than ours, and they are tasked with covering all unincorporated areas within the Fairbanks North Star Borough, as well as extending South to Delta Junction and Cantwell, and North to Coldfoot, Manley, etc. As such, their resources are directed solely towards those areas outside of our City limits. Similarly, the University Police Department does not exercise law enforcement activity within City limits. In this respect, our City can truly be viewed as somewhat of an "island" within the much larger Borough, where all reported crime within the City is handled by the Fairbanks Police Department.

Returning once again to Juneau, it would be reasonable to assume that a City with far less crime, and far less impact of a surrounding population, would put considerably less resources toward policing. It turns out that the opposite is true; in 2006 the City of Juneau staffed eighteen additional police and police-support positions over that of Fairbanks, funding a budget of \$10.9 million dollars vs. Fairbanks' \$6.59 million dollar budget for police and central dispatch. (A 65.4% difference)

CONCLUSIONS

In 1971, before pipeline construction even began, the City of Fairbanks staffed 49 sworn officers and 25 civilian support personnel to service its (then) population of 18,600 residents, who experienced a total of 878 UCR Part-1 Crimes. By contrast, in 2005 the City was staffed with only 41 sworn officers and 16.5 civilian support personnel to service our population of 31,182 residents, experiencing a total of 2053 UCR Part-1 Crimes.

I have been criticized in the past for failing to stress that the City Police shrank to an all-time low of 33 sworn officers in the early 1990's, and that perhaps I should place greater emphasis on the fact that we have indeed grown somewhat from that point. As a City Police Officer who was actually working the streets during those years in the early 90's, I can personally attest to the fact that we were indeed operating at "crisis levels" during that time, under truly dangerous conditions. I believe that our citizenry would be shocked to know how much serious crime was going completely unaddressed during this period.

While I am indeed thankful that we have grown from that dismal period of Fairbanks history, I don't believe our citizens should be either proud or content with the fact that we have only managed to climb back to the point where we find ourselves today. We have grossly insufficient investigative resources to follow up on serious crimes, a complete lack of resources to follow up on property-crime, and patrol-staffing which barely allows for daily call-to-call response, with no staffing available for proactive, preventative measures.

Through daily and weekly conversations with all manner of individuals, business representatives, and community-groups, I receive overwhelmingly consistent feedback that indicates our citizenry desires- and often demands- a "full service" police agency. In addition to addressing serious crimes-against-persons, our community expects aggressive traffic enforcement, timely and comprehensive follow-up investigation on property crime, drug interdiction, and

preventative patrol with directed crime-prevention efforts. The Fairbanks Police Department will always be committed to providing the best service possible with whatever resources are provided. However, it is somewhat unrealistic for our community to expect that we can deliver full-service in all of the above-mentioned areas. We are currently staffed at levels significantly under the norm for comparable communities, and must deal with a crime rate that is far above the norm for a community of our size.

Returning to the minimum cited averages for "average cities" in the Western U.S., and forgetting for the moment that we have "above average" crime rates to deal with, staffing to meet these minimal averages would increase our Department by thirteen sworn positions over our present complement. To take the *extremely conservative* road and even cut this number in half, the addition of seven officers (bringing us to a total of 50 total sworn) would allow for the formation of a two-person property-crimes unit in our Investigations Division, the addition of two sexual-assault investigators, and three additional patrol officers to bolster existing shifts.

Even at these numbers, I don't believe that our staffing could be deemed sufficient. However, we somehow need to start taking measured, incremental steps towards providing the basic police services that are wanted- and needed- by the citizens we serve. I am hopeful that our Public Safety Commission will consider this assessment, and work with our elected representatives to address this most serious issue.

--End--

Memorandum of Agreement: Multi-Agency Justice Integration Consortium (MAJIC)

1. Purpose

The Consortium is formed to help agencies more efficiently share complete, accurate, timely information with each other in order to enhance the performance of the criminal justice system as a whole.

2. Need for Agreement

- ◆ For the justice system to be effective, all branches and levels of government must share critical information at key decision points;
- ◆ Without a unified strategy, information sharing efforts are undermined by mistaken assumptions, incompatible approaches, and wasteful redundancy;
- ◆ No single entity has the authority, resources or knowledge to impose information sharing on other agencies;
- ◆ Because of complex political, organizational, geographical, policy, procedural, and technological challenges and the constitutional separation of powers, we need a formal organizational structure to coordinate information sharing;
- ◆ The events of September 11, 2001 underscore the need to broaden and accelerate information sharing efforts. The 9-11 Commission's Executive Summary concluded:

Across the government, there were failures of imagination, policy, capabilities, and management.

3. Shared Principles

- ◆ We see a need for innovation and creativity in planning and developing integration technology;
- ◆ We value the work being done at the national level to develop functional, process, information, and technical standards for information sharing;
- ◆ We believe that decision making by consensus is the best way to achieve integration;
- ◆ We acknowledge the Constitutional independence of parties charged with public protection and administration of justice, but to operate effectively, each must cooperate with others;
- ◆ We recognize the need to protect the confidentiality of investigatory and deliberative processes to ensure effective operation of the justice system;
- ◆ We also recognize that public access to records declared open by law can help citizens obtain services more efficiently and help ensure accountability for the justice system;
- ◆ We understand the need to keep our information and systems secure and to protect the privacy, due process, and other rights of citizens under the United States and Alaska Constitutions;
- ◆ We seek opportunities to collaborate and cooperate with justice-related organizations at all levels of government to enhance the performance of the system as whole.

Memorandum of Agreement: Multi-Agency Justice Integration Consortium (MAJIC)

4. Scope of Agreement

We agree that justice information sharing can best be improved by working together to

- ✓ Identify processes, standards, models, tools and "best practices" that have been proven effective in real-world applications; and
- ✓ Share operational, technical, and project management resources to achieve agreed upon objectives.

Nothing in this agreement grants the Consortium the authority to

- ✓ Impose rules or standards on any agency;
- ✓ Commit the resources of any agency;
- ✓ Create, change, use, or disseminate information other than as authorized by law.

5. Participating Agencies

A government agency or organization that exchanges information with an Alaska criminal justice agency may enter into this Agreement. By signing the Agreement, the agency commits to:

- ✓ **Appoint an employee to serve as the agency's liaison** to the Consortium and carry out the responsibilities described below; liaisons can be administrators, managers, practitioners, or information technology staff – all are equally welcome because cross-disciplinary involvement is an asset to integration;
- ✓ **Review and vote on proposed amendments** to this Agreement.

A participating agency may withdraw from the Consortium at any time by sending written notice to the Consortium Administrator.

6. Agency Liaison Responsibilities

- ✓ **Serve as the agency's policy, business, and information technology point of contact** for Consortium activities;
- ✓ **Assist the Consortium with projects involving the agency**; for matters outside the liaison's expertise or authority, conduct the necessary research or provide the appropriate referral to ensure a timely response;
- ✓ **Keep appropriate personnel within the agency informed** of Consortium activities and convey agency concerns to the Consortium.

Memorandum of Agreement: Multi-Agency Justice Integration Consortium (MAJIC)

7. Consortium Steering Group

Agency liaisons willing to perform additional duties will form a Steering Group to:

- ✓ **Meet biweekly** to improve communications and knowledge transfer between agencies and disciplines; Steering Group meetings are open to all agency liaisons and other employees of Consortium member agencies;
- ✓ **Identify and endorse information sharing standards** that maximize reusability and compatibility while minimizing conflicts and customization;
- ✓ **Develop a strategic plan** identifying needs and opportunities to improve information sharing;
- ✓ **Solicit, evaluate, prioritize and provide assistance for justice integration projects;** assistance may include sponsorship, endorsement for a funding request, project management, JIEM documentation, other technical assistance, or referral to other resources;
- ✓ **Charter project teams** to implement or assist in implementing approved data exchange projects;
- ✓ **Develop a repository of "as is" and "to be" information exchange documentation for reference and analysis,** using SEARCH's Justice Information Exchange Model (JIEM); the repository will include information about laws/rules/policies, forms, and constraints/conditions affecting data exchanges;
- ✓ **Participate in state, regional and national forums to share knowledge** of current tools, best practices, and lessons learned, as resources allow.

8. Consortium Administrator

The Alaska Court System will appoint an employee to perform these administrative duties:

- ✓ **Chair and distribute agendas for bi-weekly Steering Group meetings;**
- ✓ **Administer Alaska's Justice Information Exchange Model (JIEM)** in coordination with SEARCH, the organization that maintains the JIEM database;
- ✓ **Maintain a Consortium library** including this Agreement; contact information for Consortium liaisons and Steering Group members; meeting minutes; strategic plans; project proposals; project files; reference materials, and other publications;
- ✓ **Keep Consortium liaisons and other interested persons informed** of Steering Group meetings, strategic planning, project proposals, projects, and other activities.

**Memorandum of Agreement:
Multi-Agency Justice Integration Consortium (MAJIC)**

9. Signature and Appointment of Agency Liaison

I am authorized to enter into this Agreement on behalf of my agency/organization. I appoint the person named below to serve as the agency's liaison.

Signature _____

Date _____

Name/Title of Official _____

Agency/Organization _____

Liaison Name/Title: _____	
Division/Section/Office: _____	
Phone: _____	Fax: _____
Mail: _____	
E-Mail: _____	
_____	_____
Consortium Liaison Signature	Date



ALASKA'S MULTI-AGENCY JUSTICE INTEGRATION CONSORTIUM

Helping agencies more efficiently share complete, accurate, timely information in order to enhance the performance of the criminal justice system as a whole.

www.aisac.state.ak.us/maaic

<u>Liaison/Title</u>	<u>Member Agency/Organization</u>	<u>Joined</u>
1 Diane Schenker Integrated Justice Mgr	Alaska Court System	08/27/04
2 Maxine Andrews Program Manager	Nat'l Law Enforcement & Corrections Technology Center NW	09/07/04
3 Scott Purden Chief Investigator	Alaska Dept. of Administration, Public Defender Agency	09/14/04
4 Alan McKelvie Director	University of Alaska Justice Center, Statistical Analysis Center	09/15/04
5 John McConnaughy Prosecutor	Municipality of Anchorage, Prosecutor's Office	09/15/04
6 John Rockwell Data Systems Supervisor	Anchorage Police Department	09/22/04
7 Susan McKelvie Research Analyst	Alaska Judicial Council	09/24/04
8 Lu Woods CRIMES Coordinator	Alaska Dept. of Law, Criminal Division	09/24/04
Carl Gonder Research Analyst	Alaska Dept. of Transportation, Program Development	11/05/04
10 Greg Browning Chief, Juneau Police Dept.	Alaska Association of Chiefs of Police	12/03/04
11 Donna White, Director Probation/Parole	Alaska Dept. of Corrections	12/10/04
12 Kerry Hennings Driver Services Supervisor	Alaska Dept. of Administration, Division of Motor Vehicles	04/08/05
13 Jim Stanton Probation Officer II	Alaska DHSS, Div. of Behav Hlth/ASAP	04/11/05
14 Dave Salmon JOMIS Manager	Alaska DHSS, Division of Juvenile Justice	06/10/05
15 Jana Goff Criminal Justice Technician	Alaska DHSS, Div. of Public Health, AK Background Check Pgm	09/13/05
16 Dan Boone Chief Investigator	Alaska Dept. of Revenue, Permanent Fund Division	09/14/05
17 Chris Thomas Research Analyst	Alaska Dept. of Transportation, Alaska Highway Safety Office	12/20/06
18 Colonel Audie Holloway Director	Alaska Dept. of Public Safety, Alaska State Troopers	03/28/07
19 Jonathan O'Quinn Program Manager	Alaska Division of Elections	08/31/07
20 Carrie Longoria SAFETY LINKS Program Mgr	Municipality of Anchorage, Health & Human Services	01/11/08



Alaska Felony Process: 1999

February 2004

**Handout – Judiciary Committee Presentation
April 2, 2004**

**Alaska Judicial Council
1029 W. 3rd Ave., Suite 201
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 279-2526 www.ajc.state.ak.us**

Figure 2
1999 Alaska Population Compared to
Charged Felons, by Ethnicity

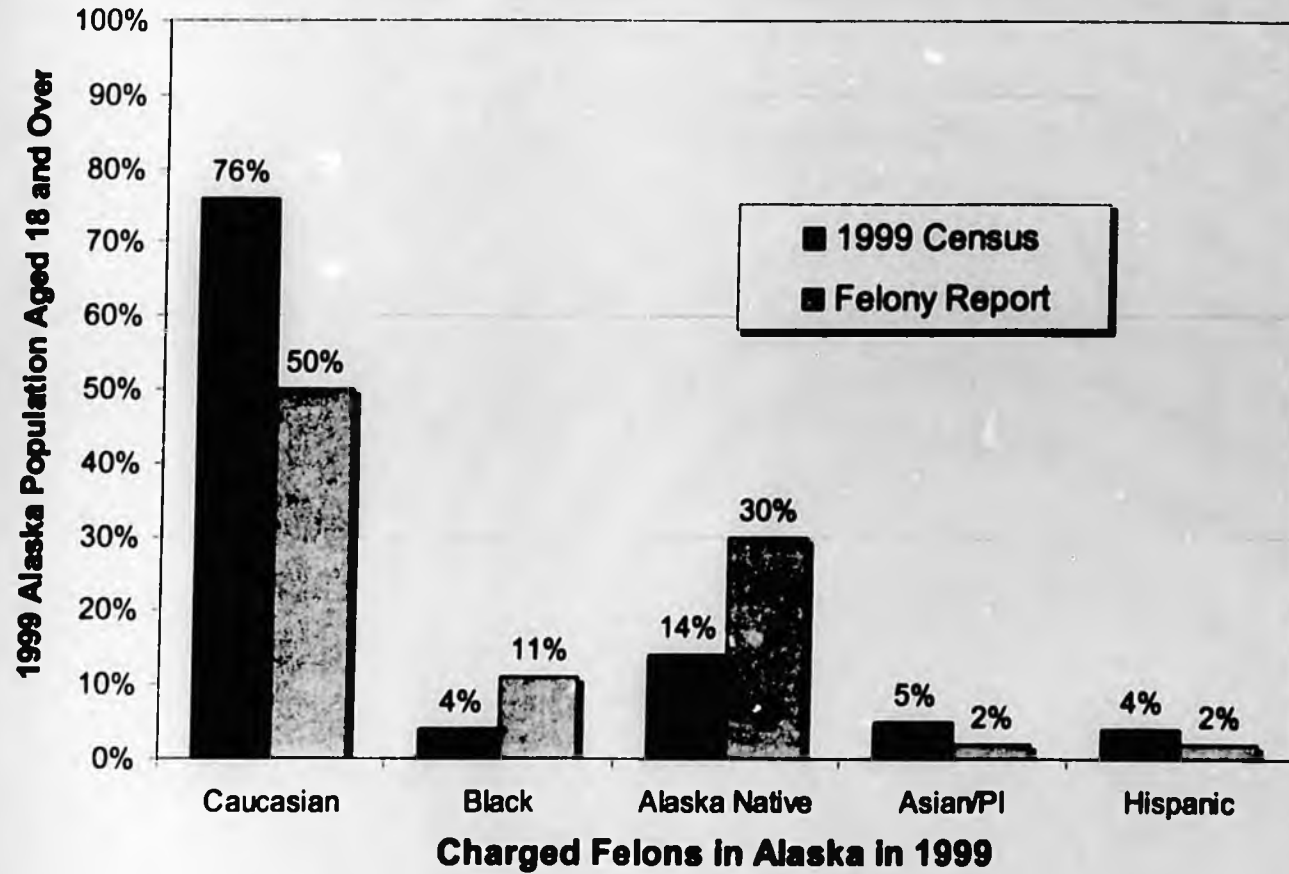


Figure 5
Percentage of Charged Felony Defendants Who Were Alaska Native by Offense Type

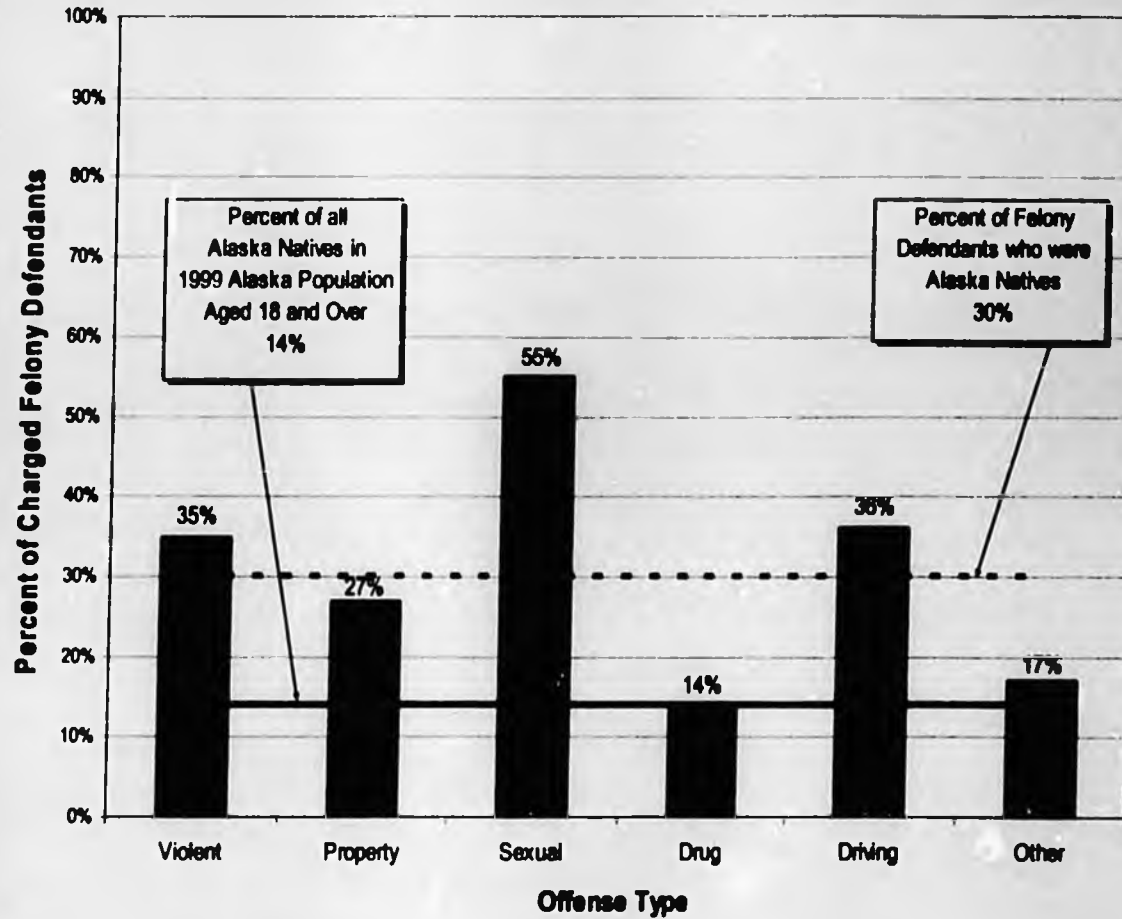


Table 16
Distribution of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Problems by Location

Location	Defendants in this Location with Alcohol Problems		Defendants in this Location with Drug Problems		Defendants in this Location with Mental Health Problems	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Anchorage	500	54%	412	44%	267	29%
Fairbanks	163	63%	119	46%	74	29%
Juneau	69	78%	48	54%	47	53%
Southcentral	261	64%	197	48%	122	30%
Southeast	105	71%	77	52%	43	29%
Other (mainly rural)	374	76%	184	37%	111	23%
Statewide	1,472	63%	1,037	45%	664	29%

Figure 6
Distribution of Charged Felony Defendants
by Prior Criminal Convictions

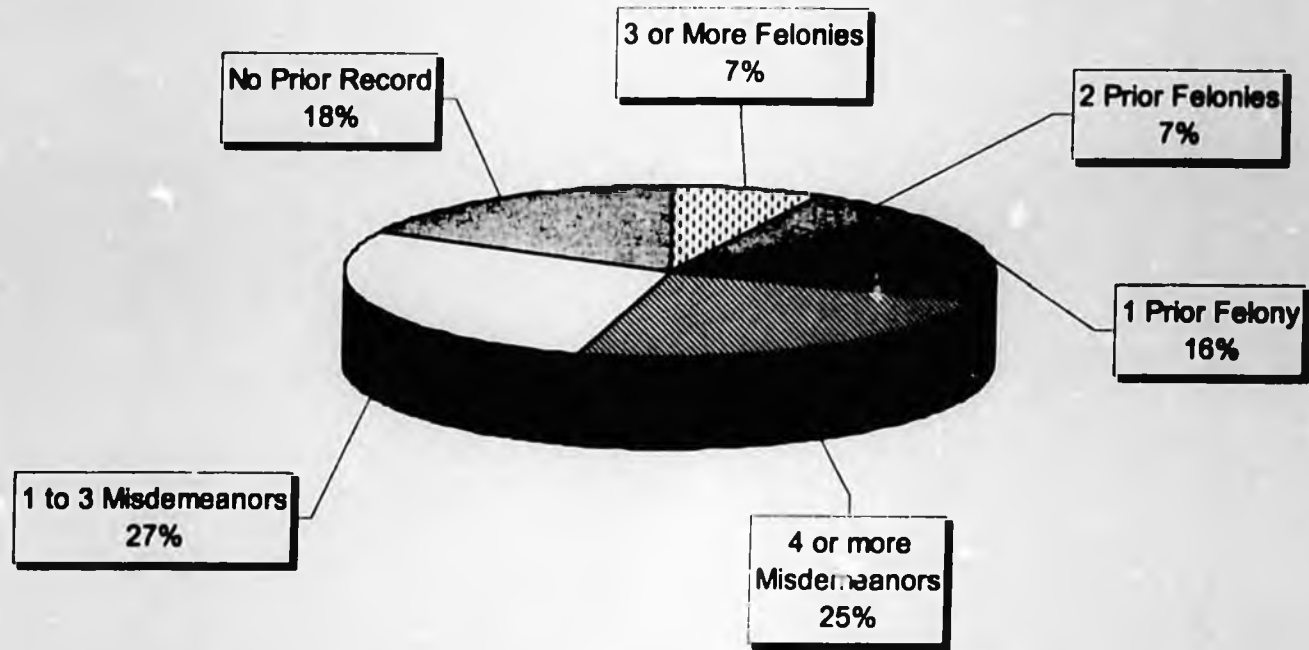


Figure 10
Single Most Serious Charged Offenses
by Class of Offense
N=2,331

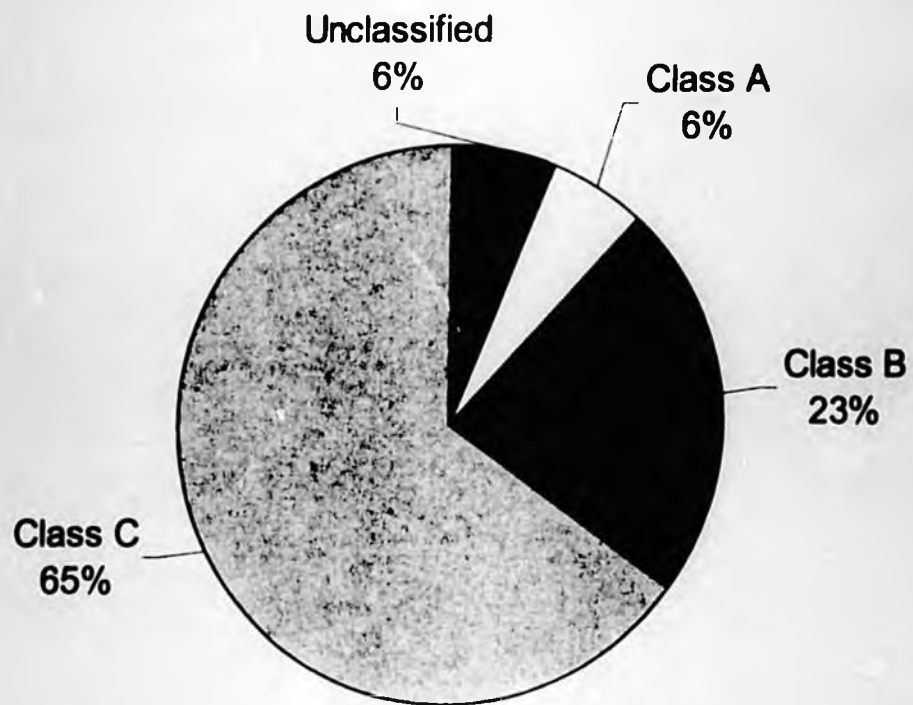


Figure 12
Most Serious Charged Offenses
by Type of Offense

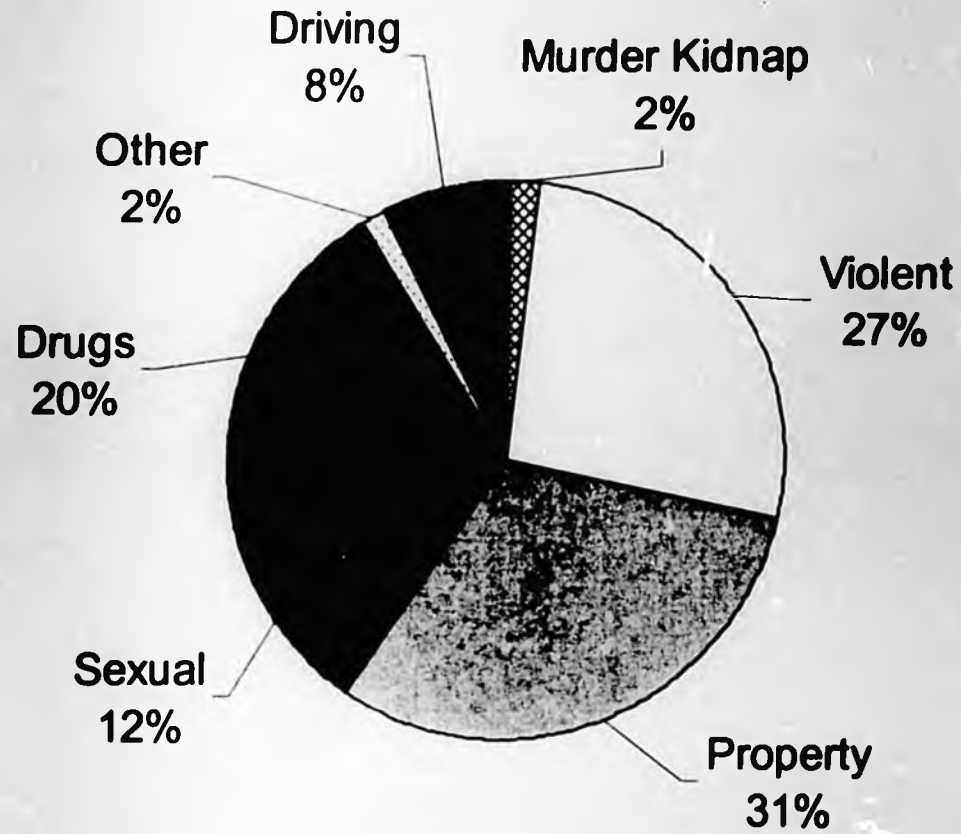


Figure 13
Case Dispositions for All Defendants
(N=2,331)

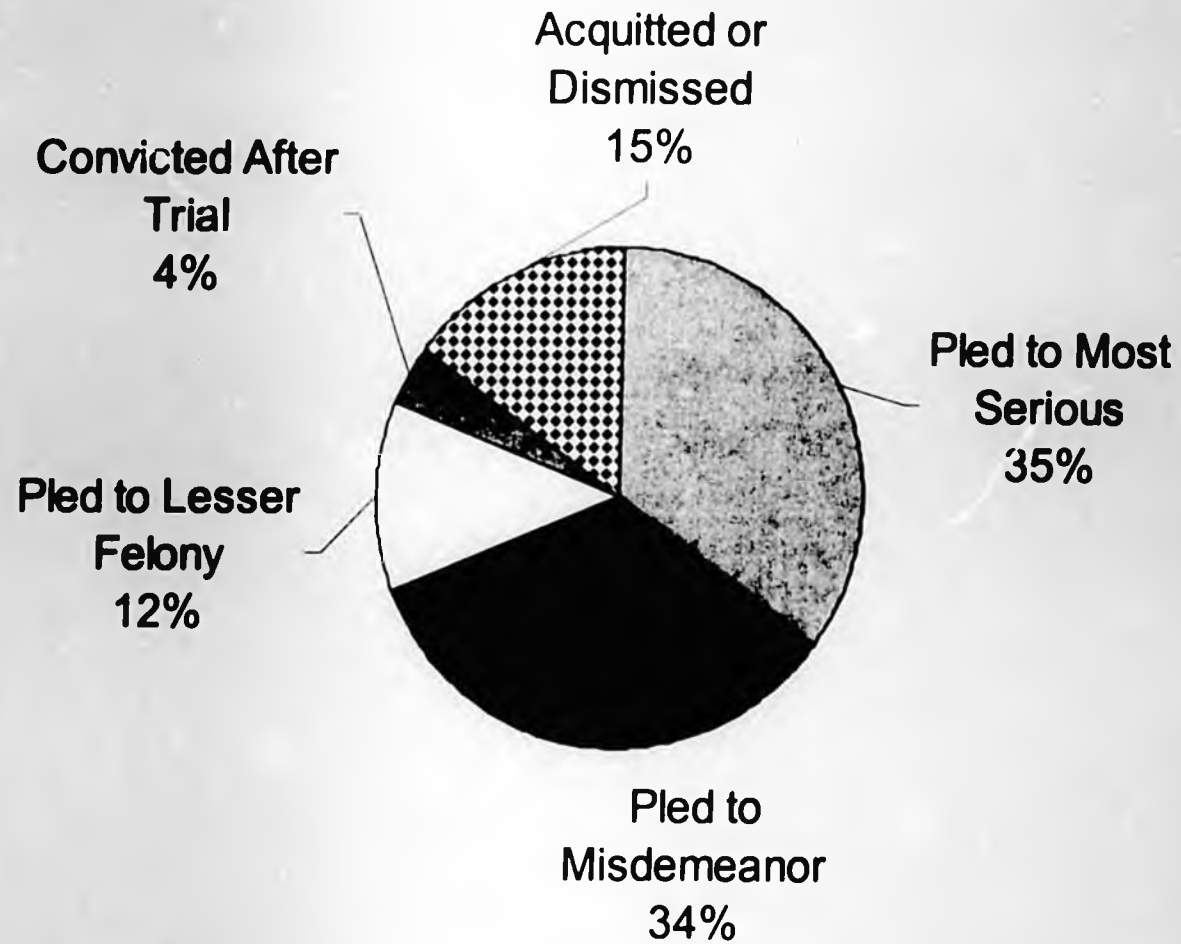


Figure 11
Single Most Serious Final Offenses
by Class of Offense
N=2,331

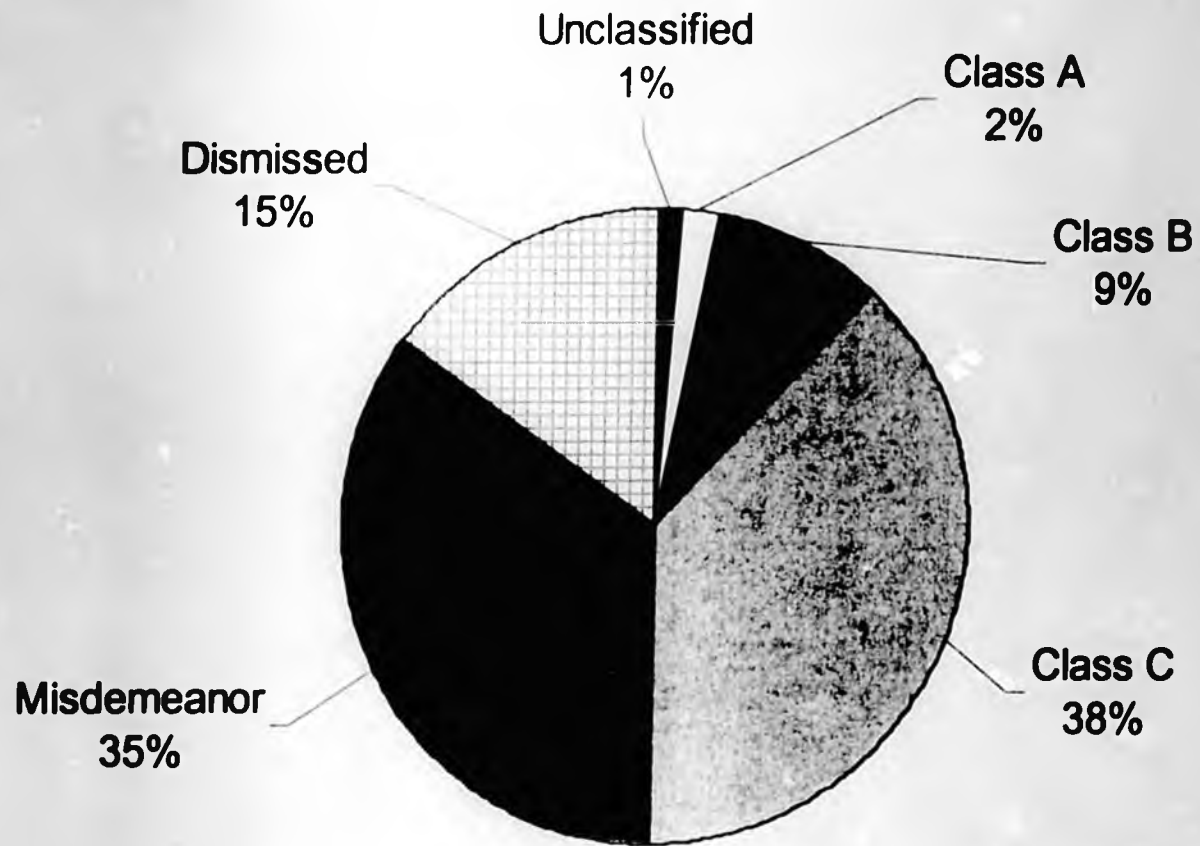
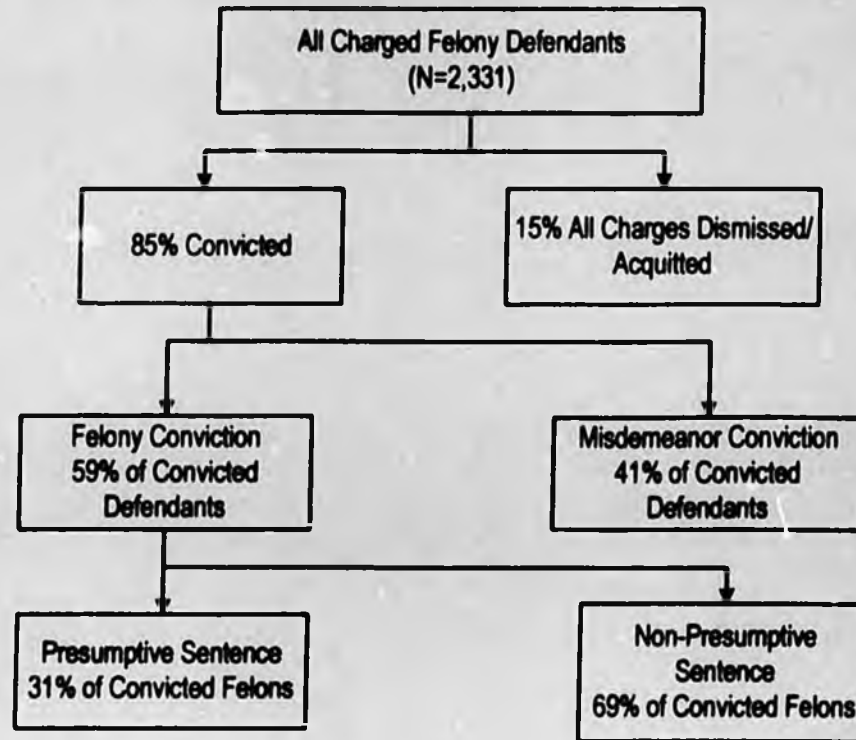


Chart 2 Distribution of Non-Presumptive and Presumptive Sentences Among Convicted Defendants



- 18% convicted of felony subject to presumptive sentence
- 41% convicted of felony subject to non-presumptive sentence
- 41% convicted of misdemeanor
- 82% of convicted defendants subject to non-presumptive sentence

Table 11
Change in Percentages of Felony Defendants
Convicted of Most Serious Charged Offense from 1984-1987 to 1999
Selected Offenses

Most Serious Charge	Class of Charged Felony Offense	Change in Percentage of Felony Defendants Convicted of Most Serious Charge From 1984-1987 to 1999
Sexual Assault 1	Unclassified	72% reduction
Burglary 1	Class B	62% reduction
Assault 1	Class A	56% reduction
MICS 3	Class B	51% reduction
Assault 2	Class B	50% reduction
Sexual Abuse of Minor 1	Unclassified	43% reduction
Criminal Mischief 2	Class C	39% reduction
Sexual Abuse Minor 2	Class B	30% reduction
Robbery 1	Class A	28% reduction
Forgery 2	Class C11	20% reduction
Theft 2	Class C	18% reduction
Burglary 2	Class C	11% reduction
Sexual Assault 2	Class B	9% reduction
Assault 3	Class C	3% reduction
MICS 4	Class C	12% increase

Table 12
Change in Percentages of Felony Defendants
Convicted of Misdemeanors from 1984-1987 to 1999
Selected Offenses

Most Serious Charge	Class of Charged Felony Offense	Change in Percentage of Defendants Convicted of Misdemeanors From 1984-1987 to 1999
Sexual Assault 1	Unclassified	314% increase
Forgery 2	Class C	167% increase
Sexual Abuse Minor 1	Unclassified	150% increase
Burglary 1	Class B	91% increase
Burglary 2	Class C	50% increase
Assault 1	Class A	44% increase
Sexual Abuse Minor 2	Class B	44% increase
Theft 2	Class C	40% increase
Criminal Mischief 2	Class C	25% increase
Assault 2	Class B	20% increase
MICS 3	Class B	13% increase
Robbery 1	Class A	no change
Assault 3	Class C	no change
MICS 4	Class C	14% reduction
Sexual Assault 2	Class B	2% reduction

Figure 8
Distribution of Sentences in Presumptive Sentencing Cases
All Offenses Combined

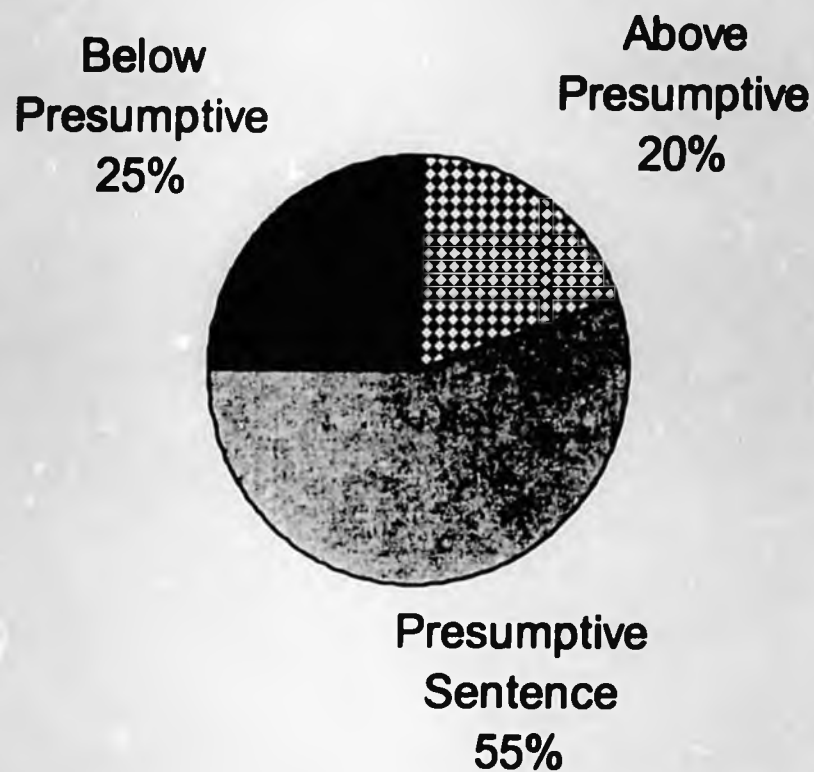


Table 21
Felony Convictions Relative to the Number of Reported Crimes
and Arrests
for State Courts Nationally (1998) and Alaska (1999)

Offense	Uniform Crime Reports Alaska		Arrests as percent of reports	Estimated No. of Alaska felony convictions	For 100 reports		For 100 arrests	
	No. Of Crimes reported to the police	No. of adults arrested			No. of felony convictions		No. of felony convictions	
					Estimated Alaska	U.S.	Estimated Alaska	U.S.
Rape	517	112	22%	38	7	12	34	45
Robbery	566	140	25%	71	13	9	51	44
Aggravated Assault	2,773	935	34%	236	9	8	25	16
Burglary	3,787	294	8%	101	3	4	34	41

Table 22
Comparison of Felony Convictions in Alaska
with State Courts Nationwide by Type of Offense

Most serious conviction offense	Felony convictions in state courts nationwide		Felony convictions in Alaska	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All Offenses Combined	927,717	100%	1,152	100%
Violent Offenses	164,584	18%	405	35%
Property Offenses	283,002	31%	301	26%
Drug Offenses	314,626	34%	259	23%
Weapon Offenses	31,904	3%	19	2%
Other Offenses	133,601	14%	168	15%

Table 23
Alaska Felony Sentences Compared to
Sentences in State Courts Nationwide, by
Incarceration versus Probation

Most serious conviction offense	State courts nationwide Percent of felons sentenced		Alaska Percent of felons sentenced	
	Incarceration	Probation	Incarceration	Probation
All Offenses Combined	68%	32%	85%	15%
Violent Offenses	78%	22%	97%	3%
Property Offenses	65%	35%	75%	25%
Drug Offenses	68%	32%	70%	31%
Weapon Offenses	66%	34%	95%	5%
Other Offenses	63%	37%	98%	2%

Table 25
Alaska Felony Sentences Compared to Sentences Imposed
in State Courts Nationwide by Mean Sentence Length for Felons
Sentenced to More Than One Year of Incarceration

Felony Offense	Mean Sentence Length for Felons Sentenced to More than One Year of Incarceration (Single Felony Offense)	
	State Courts Nationwide	Alaska
All Offenses Combined	51 months	44 months
Violent Offenses	82 months	58 months
Property Offenses	41 months	34 months
Drug Offenses	45 months	30 months
Weapon Offenses	38 months	45 months
Other Offenses	39 months	27 months

ACTUAL TIME SERVED

- **Nationwide, convicted felons sentenced to more than one year in prison by state courts serve 47% of time imposed for All Offenses Combined.**
- **In Alaska, 71% of convicted felons who were sentenced to more than one year in prison received a presumptive or mandatory minimum sentence requiring them to serve at least two-thirds of their sentence.**
- **Nationally, 29% of the adult correctional population under state supervision was incarcerated. Seventy-one percent were on probation or parole.**
- **In Alaska, 44% of the correctional population was incarcerated and 56% was on probation or parole.**
- **Among the fifty states, Alaska had the sixth highest percentage of incarcerated defendants among its adult correctional population.**

SUMMARY

- **Offenders charged with a felony were much more likely to receive a sentence of incarceration in Alaska whether convicted of a felony or misdemeanor.**
- **Convicted felons sentenced to incarceration on a single felony offense were likely to have shorter sentences in Alaska.**
- **Convicted felons in Alaska were more likely to be convicted of more than one felony offense, subjecting them to additional incarceration.**
- **Convicted felons in Alaska sentenced to more than one year in prison probably served substantially more of the time imposed than similarly situated offenders in other states.**

Criminal Recidivism in Alaska

Alaska Judicial Council

January 2007

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Recidivism in Alaska

Executive Summary

How well does Alaska's criminal justice system work to protect the public? What works best? What needs improvement? Can less costly alternatives more effectively promote public safety? Knowing what happens after offenders serve their sentences can help answer these questions.

This report by the Judicial Council is the first general study of recidivism in Alaska. It describes the percentages of offenders who were re-arrested, had new court cases filed, were re-convicted, or remanded to custody for new offenses or for probation or parole violations. The report shows how soon after release these events occurred, and what factors were most closely related to an increased chance that offenders would be involved again in the criminal justice system. The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services funded the report.

The Council followed 1,934 offenders, all of whom were charged with at least one felony in 1999 and convicted. Of those, 59% were convicted of a felony, and 41% of a misdemeanor. This report focuses on the 1,798 offenders who had been out of custody for at least three years after they had served their sentence. The Council found that within three years after release from their sentence on the 1999 offense:

- 66% of all offenders in the sample had been re-incarcerated at least once, for a new offense or a probation or parole violation.
- 59% were arrested at least once for a new offense.

Recidivism rates during the three-year period by demographic factors and type of offense (see Parts 3 and 6)

- The likelihood that an offender would be re-arrested was affected by the type of offense for which the offender was convicted in 1999: 67% of Property offenders were re-arrested, as compared to 61% of Driving offenders, 60% of Violent offenders, 52% of Drug offenders, and 39% of Sexual offenders.
- The factors most closely related to increased recidivism were the offender's age, and indigent status (indigent offenders were those who qualified for public attorney representation in 1999).
- An offender's ethnicity (if Native), prior criminal history, alcohol, drug and mental health problems were other factors that increased the chance of re-arrest.

Types and seriousness of new convictions (see Part 4)

- Youthful offenders, males and those previously convicted of a Violent offense were more likely to commit a new offense at a more serious level than their 1999 offense.
- Most offenders who were convicted of a new offense were convicted of an offense of the same or lesser seriousness level than their 1999 conviction. Offenders with alcohol or drug problems in 1999 were less likely than others to be convicted of a more serious offense. An offender's indigency or mental health problems were not related to conviction on a more serious offense.
- Sexual offenders were the least likely to commit the same offense again; those previously convicted of Driving offenses were the most likely to commit the same offense again.

Timing of recidivism (see Part 5)

- Offenders were arrested for most of their new offenses within the first year after release, particularly during the first six months after release.

Recidivism in Alaska

Executive Summary

The Department of Corrections has conducted a study to determine the extent of recidivism among individuals released from state custody in Alaska. This report provides a summary of the findings and recommendations.

The study was conducted over a period of 12 months, from January 1998 to December 1999. It involved a review of criminal records, parole files, and court proceedings for 1,000 individuals who were released from state custody in Alaska during the study period. The findings indicate that the overall rate of recidivism is 25.3% within one year of release.

The study also identified several factors that are associated with higher rates of recidivism. These include a history of prior convictions, particularly for violent crimes, a lack of stable employment, and a lack of family support. Additionally, individuals who were released from custody without a parole plan had a higher rate of recidivism than those who were released with a plan.

Based on these findings, the Department of Corrections recommends several strategies to reduce recidivism, including providing pre-release counseling, ensuring access to employment and housing services, and implementing intensive supervision programs for high-risk individuals.

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The Department of Corrections is committed to reducing recidivism and promoting the successful reintegration of individuals into the community. This study provides valuable information to guide our efforts.

The study was conducted by the Research and Statistics Division of the Department of Corrections. The findings are based on the data provided and are subject to change as more information becomes available.

The Department of Corrections is committed to transparency and accountability. This report provides a clear and concise summary of the study's findings and recommendations.

The Department of Corrections is committed to providing the highest quality of services to the community. This study is a key component of our ongoing efforts to improve our programs and services.

The Department of Corrections is committed to working in partnership with the community to address the challenges of crime and recidivism. This study is a key component of our ongoing efforts to improve our programs and services.

The Department of Corrections is committed to providing the highest quality of services to the community. This study is a key component of our ongoing efforts to improve our programs and services.

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Part 1

Measures of Recidivism

The Council looked at four measures of recidivism for offenders charged with a felony filed in calendar 1999, and convicted of a felony or misdemeanor.¹ They were:²

- Re-arrests of the offender (using Department of Public Safety data).
- New court cases filed against the offender (using data from Alaska Court System).
- Re-convictions of the offender (using Department of Public Safety data).
- Remands to incarceration of the offender, which included remands for new arrests, and for probation and parole violations (using Department of Corrections data).³

These sources chosen for data are standard sources of information about criminal justice events for specific offenders.⁴ Similar databases are used by all fifty states to report information and conduct statistical analyses. Therefore, the Council's data on recidivism can be compared more easily to data from other jurisdictions.

As in other jurisdictions, reports such as this one rely on criminal justice record repositories that probably understate the actual level of re-arrests and re-convictions.⁵ Although many recidivism reports use only one or two of these measures, the Council has chosen to use all four. Three of the four: re-arrest, new cases filed, and remands to custody do not reflect proven criminal behavior.

¹ The Alaska Judicial Council reported data about these offenders and their 1999 offenses in *ALASKA FELONY PROCESS: 1999*, published in February 2004. It is available at the Judicial Council web site, www.ajc.state.ak.us under "Publications." All 2,331 defendants (about two-thirds of all persons charged with a felony offense in 1999) included in the 1999 report were charged with at least one felony. The offenders in the present report were those who were convicted of at least one offense, felony or misdemeanor, and who met other criteria for selection (e.g., still alive). The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services funded the report.

² Each measure of recidivism refers to the period of three years after the offenders' releases from custody following their convictions on the 1999 offenses. Each measure includes only in-state recidivism. Resources did not allow the Council to obtain data about offenders' possible out-of-state arrests, court cases and convictions.

³ These measures of recidivism overlap substantially. The most inclusive measure of an offender's subsequent contacts with the criminal justice system is remands to custody.

⁴ P. Langan and David Levin, "Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1994," Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), June 2002, Reference number NCJ 193427. This report served as a model for the Council's report. It contained data about recidivism for offenders in other states.

⁵ The police agency making the arrest or the court disposing of the case and recording the conviction may not send the notifying document to the repository. Even if the document is sent, the Department of Public Safety may not be able to match the person in the document to the correct person in the database, or may not enter the new information. The court system data had fewer identifying numbers than did data from the other agencies, making it more time-consuming to match individual offenders to their cases. The Department of Corrections provided computerized databases from its former data collection system (Offender Based Corrections Information System, or OBSCIS) and its current system (Offender Tracking Information System, or OTIS). Council staff worked carefully to account for any overlapping information that appeared in both systems. However, the Council did not have enough information to determine whether the remands were for new offenses or for probation or parole violations.

Remands may reflect violations of conditions of probation or parole (for example, no drinking) that are not criminal behavior, or they may be a remand because the offender was arrested for a new offense.⁶ The fourth measure, new convictions, shows only criminal behavior that has been proven in court, whether by a plea from the defendant or conviction after trial. Re-arrests, new cases filed, and remands are useful to understand the frequency with which the criminal justice system had new contacts with offenders.

⁶ In addition, an offender may be arrested for a new offense and a violation of probation simultaneously. In these cases, prosecutors may decide to drop the new offenses charged and prosecute the offender only on the probation violation.

Part 2

Characteristics of the Offenders

The offenders who had been out of custody for at least three years after their 1999 offense had the following characteristics.⁷

A. Demographics

Of the offenders released from incarceration after their 1999 offense:

- 83% were male.
- 52% were Caucasian.
- 33% were Alaska Native or American Indian.
- 11% were Black.

B. Type of 1999 offenses

Among released offenders:

- 26% were convicted in 1999 of Violent offenses (assaults, robbery).
- 31% were convicted in 1999 of Property offenses (burglary, thefts, frauds).
- 9% were convicted in 1999 of Sexual offenses (sexual assaults, sexual abuse of a minor, various levels of seriousness).
- 16% were convicted in 1999 of Drug offenses (mainly possession and sales).
- 6% were convicted in 1999 of Other offenses (e.g., weapons, public order, perjury, escape, etc.).
- 12% were convicted in 1999 of Driving offenses (drunk driving, refusals to take tests, eluding, etc.).⁸

C. Class of 1999 offenses

- 41% of the 1999 convicted offenders were convicted of a misdemeanor as their single most serious offense, and 59% were convicted of a felony.⁹

⁷ Some of the offenders convicted in 1999 were not included in this report. Twelve had died, and thirty-one who had appeared twice in the 1999 report were used only once in this report. The remaining group of 1,934 offenders included forty-eight offenders who were still incarcerated in November 2005 when the Council began its research. They had been convicted of assaults, homicides, robberies, sexual offenses, and a handful of other serious offenses. The still-incarcerated offenders were not part of the analysis.

⁸ Other driving offenses included Driving While License Suspended, Revoked or Invalid; Leaving Scene of Accident; Failure to Render Assistance; and Reckless or Negligent Driving.

⁹ Data from ALASKA FELONY PROCESS: 1999, *supra* note 1. This is one of the most important differences between the BJS report, *supra* note 4, and the Judicial Council review, *supra* note 1. The BJS report looked at a sample of all offenders released from prisons in 1994. Those offenders had been convicted of felonies and a few serious misdemeanors and had sentences of one year or more. The Judicial Council sample had been charged with

Part 3
Recidivism rates three years after release
according to demographic and other characteristics¹⁰

A. Type of 1999 offense

The likelihood that an offender would be re-arrested was affected by the type of offense for which the offender was convicted in 1999.

- More Property offenders were re-arrested (67%), when compared to 61% of Driving offenders, 60% of Violent offenders, 52% of Drug offenders, and 39% of Sexual offenders.
- Offenders previously convicted of a Sexual or a Drug offense had a much smaller likelihood of being arrested for a new offense, having a new case filed, being re-convicted during the first three years following release or being remanded to custody.
- Persons convicted in 1999 of Property offenses were the most likely to recidivate, by any of the measures used.
- Offenders who used a weapon in the 1999 case recidivated at about the same rate as the offenders who did not use a weapon.

B. Location of 1999 offense

The Council did not find any significant differences in recidivism between offenders in urban areas and those in rural areas.

C. Offender characteristics¹¹

Specific characteristics of the offenders were related to each of the four measures of recidivism. An offender's age, ethnicity (if Native), economic status (indigent offenders were those who qualified for public attorney representation in 1999), prior criminal history, alcohol, drug and mental health problems were among the factors tied to a greater chance of re-arrest. Men were more likely to be remanded to custody than women.

1. Age of offender at release

- The youngest offenders, between the ages of 17 and 24, had the highest rates of recidivism.
- Offenders from the ages of 25 to 44 also had higher rates of each measure of recidivism.
- At age 45 and older, the recidivism rates dropped substantially.

felonics in 1999 but often were convicted of misdemeanors. The Judicial Council group, as a whole, probably consisted of a much different mix of serious and less-serious offenders, when compared to the BJS report.

¹⁰ The analysis in Parts 3 through 6 was based on 1,798 offenders who were released from incarceration of their 1999 offense at least three years prior to the analysis. Tables for each of the following sections are in Appendix B, Tables.

¹¹ All of the findings in section C on offender characteristics were statistically significant, unless noted.

2. Ethnicity

In this report, 52% of offenders were Caucasian, 33% were Native/Indian, 11% were Black, and 3% were Asian/Pacific Islander.¹²

- Alaska Native/American Indian and Black offenders were the ethnic groups most likely to be rearrested. In both groups, 66% had a new arrest within three years after release on the 1999 offense. Of the Caucasians, 55% were rearrested within the first three years after release. Fewer Asian/Pacific Islanders, 35%, were rearrested.¹³
- Alaska Natives/American Indians had a 62% re-conviction rate in the three years following release on the 1999 offense. Blacks had a 61% re-conviction rate, and the Caucasian re-conviction rate was 50%. For Asian/Pacific Islanders the re-conviction rate was 33%.
- All of the groups had more remands to custody than re-arrests, new court cases, or re-convictions. Alaska Native offenders were remanded to custody at a 75% rate at some time during the first three years after release on their 1999 offense. Black offenders had a 73% remand rate and 61% of Caucasian offenders were remanded to custody at least once. Asian/Pacific Islanders had a 45% remand rate.

3. Indigent offenders

One indicator of an offender's socioeconomic status at the time of the 1999 offense was whether an attorney had been appointed for the offender at public expense.¹⁴ Offenders had to meet specific guidelines to show that they could not afford to employ their own attorneys. Their lack of ability to afford an attorney indicated that they had less income and fewer resources than offenders who used a private attorney to represent them in their 1999 cases.

- 63% of the offenders who were indigent in 1999 were re-arrested, compared to 41% of offenders who used a private attorney in 1999.
- 61% of the offenders who were indigent in 1999 had at least one new court case filed during the three years after release, compared to 40% of those with a private attorney.
- 59% of the offenders who were indigent in 1999 had at least one new conviction, compared to 35% of those who had a private attorney in 1999.
- 70% of the offenders who were indigent in 1999 were remanded to custody at least once during the three years after release, compared to 47% of the offenders with private attorneys.

¹² Only 1% were Hispanic

¹³ The number of Asian/Pacific Islanders (N=52) in this data set was small, but enough for some analysis.

¹⁴ Information about the offenders' incomes was not consistently available from any source.

4. Number of prior convictions in 1999

Among all of the offenders, 19% had no prior record of criminal convictions at the time of their 1999 felony case, and no record of any new arrests after the 1999 charge(s).

- In general, the more prior convictions that an offender had in 1999, the greater the likelihood that the offender would be rearrested during the three years after the release from the 1999 sentence.¹⁵
- 70% of Alaska 1999 offenders with four or more prior misdemeanor (but no felony) convictions were rearrested during the three years following their release, compared to an overall 59% re-arrest rate for all of the offenders in the sample.
- Offenders with one prior felony conviction in 1999 were rearrested at a rate of 64%. Of those with two prior felony convictions in 1999, 80% were rearrested within three years.
- Offenders with four or more prior misdemeanors, or with any number of prior felonies were very likely to have a subsequent remand to custody.

5. Alcohol problem indicators¹⁶

Two-thirds, 68%, of all of the offenders had an indication of an alcohol problem.

- 62% of offenders with an alcohol problem in 1999 were re-arrested during the first three years after release, compared to 54% who did not have an alcohol problem.
- 59% had a new case filed, compared to 53% who had no alcohol problem,
- 57% of offenders with an alcohol problem in 1999 were re-convicted during the first three years after release, compared to 50% without a problem.
- 70% of offenders with an alcohol problem were remanded to custody at least once during the first three years after release, compared to 57% of offenders without an alcohol problem.

6. Drug problem indicators

Of all of the offenders in this sample, 48% had an indicator of a drug problem.

- 62% of the offenders with a drug problem indicator were re-arrested in the first three years after release, compared to 57% of those without.
- 60% of those with a drug problem had new cases filed, compared to 55% of those without.
- 57% had new convictions in the first three years, compared to 53% of those without a drug problem.

¹⁵ *Supra*, BJS, note 4 at p. 10. The BJS Report made a similar finding, saying, "the longer the prior record, the greater the likelihood that the recidivating prisoner will commit another crime soon after release."

¹⁶ Sec Appendix A, Methodology, for detailed information about how alcohol, drug and mental health problems were identified.

- 72% of the offenders with a drug problem were remanded to custody at least once in the three years following release, compared to 60% of those without a drug problem.¹⁷

7. Mental health indicator

Of the offenders in this group, 29% had data indicating a mental health problem.

- 65% of those with a mental health problem had at least one re-arrest after release on the 1999 conviction, compared to 57% who had no mental health problem.
- 63% of these offenders had a new case filed, compared to 55% without.
- 61% of these offenders had a new conviction, compared to 52% without.
- 76% of these offenders were remanded to custody, compared to 62% of the offenders without a mental health problem.

8. Gender

Of the offenders in this group, 17% were women and 83% were men.

- 60% of the men, and 57% of the women were rearrested during the first three years after release.
- 58% of the men and 53% of the women had new cases filed against them in the court.
- 55% of the men and 53% of the women had a new conviction.
- More men (67%) than women (60%) were remanded to custody at least once during the three years following release on their 1999 offense.

¹⁷ The differences between offenders with a drug problem indicator and those without were significant, except for the differences in convictions. There was no statistically significant difference in re-convictions between the two groups.

Part 4

Types and seriousness of new convictions

A. Types of new convictions

Within the first three years of their release, 864 released offenders were convicted of new offenses.¹⁸ The Council compared the type of new offense with the type of offense committed by the offender in 1999 to see how often repeat offenders committed the same type of offense. The Council found that:

- 28% of the persons who were convicted of a Driving offense in a 1999 case had at least one new Driving conviction during the first three years after their release on the 1999 offense.
- 23% of the persons who were convicted of an "Other" offense in a 1999 case had at least one new "Other" conviction.¹⁹
- 23% of the persons who were convicted of a Property offense in a 1999 case had at least one new Property conviction.
- 22% of the persons who were convicted of a Violent offense in a 1999 case had at least one new Violent conviction.
- 7% of the persons who were convicted of a Drug offense in a 1999 case had at least one new Drug conviction.
- 3% of the persons who were convicted of a Sexual offense in a 1999 case had at least one new Sexual conviction.

The data showed that:

- Sexual offenders were the group least likely to be convicted of the same type of offense that they were convicted of in the 1999 sample.
- Driving offenders were the group most likely to be convicted of the same type of offense that they were convicted of in the 1999 sample.
- Driving offenders were eight times more likely to have a new Driving conviction than Sexual offenders were likely to have a new Sexual conviction.
- Most offenders, no matter what their 1999 conviction, were more likely to be convicted of a new Driving offense than of any other type of offense.²⁰

¹⁸ Some offenders were convicted of more than one type of new offense.

¹⁹ New offenses in the "Other" category included escape, perjury, alcohol-related offenses (e.g., bootlegging), prostitution, obstruction of justice, and weapons offenses. There were too few of any specific type of offense to make a new category, and the offenses could not be categorized in any of the other five groups.

²⁰ 28% of Driving offenders were convicted of new Driving offenses, along with 28% of Property offenders, 24% of violent offenders, 19% of Drug offenders, 14% of Sexual offenders and 21% of Other offenders. Sexual offenders were most likely to be convicted of a new "Other" offense (16%), and Other offenders were most likely to be convicted of a new "Other" offense (23%).

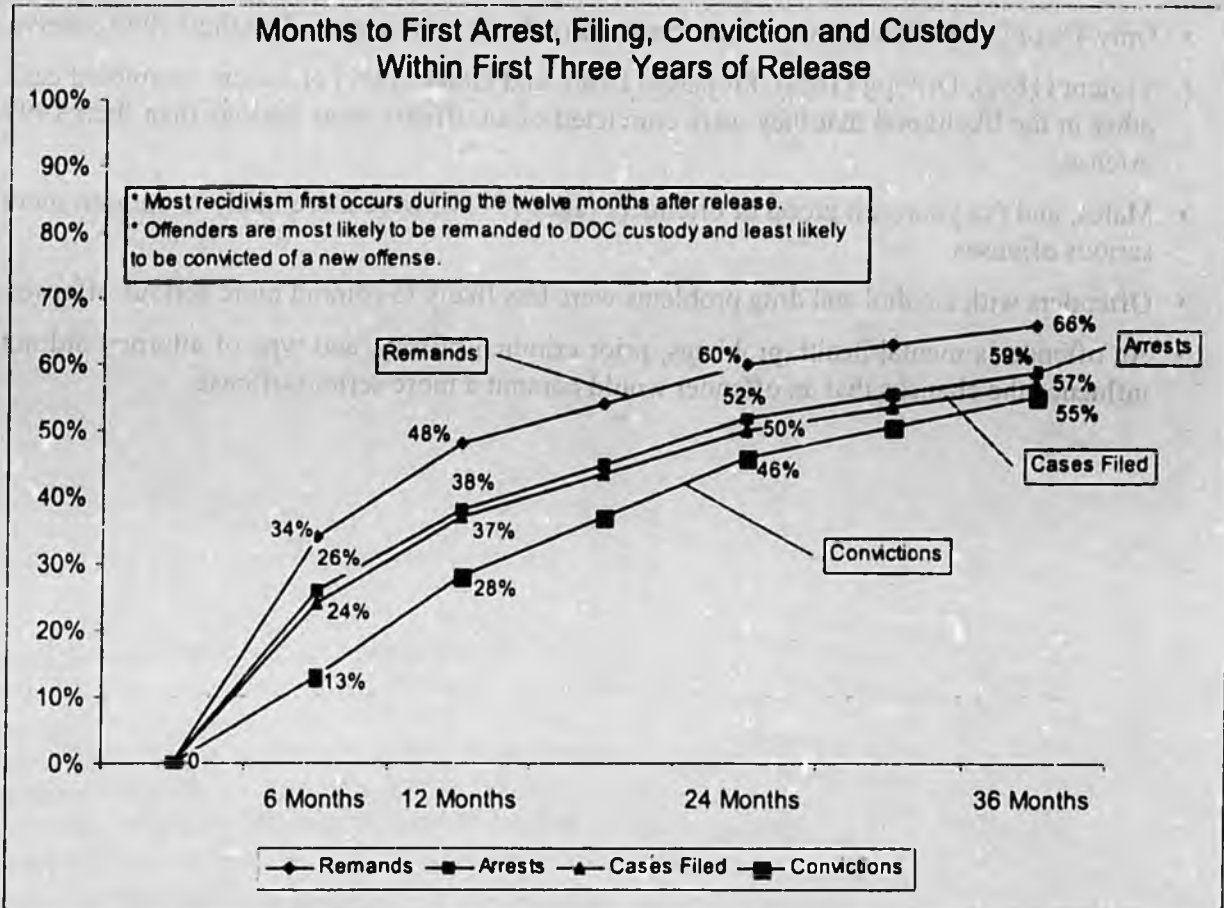
B. Seriousness of new convictions, compared to 1999 conviction

Most offenders who were convicted of a new offense after release from their 1999 case were convicted of an offense that was less serious, or of the same seriousness, as their earlier offense. Seriousness was defined by class of offense. Alaska's laws include Unclassified (the most serious offenses), Class A, Class B, Class C felonies, and Class A and B misdemeanors.

- No Sexual offenders were convicted of any offense more serious than their 1999 offense.
- Only 4% of Drug offenders were convicted of an offense more serious than their 1999 offense.
- Violent (18%), Driving (16%), Property (15%), and Other (14%) offenders resembled each other in the likelihood that they were convicted of an offense more serious than their 1999 offense.
- Males, and the youngest group of offenders (ages 17-24), were more likely to commit more serious offenses.
- Offenders with alcohol and drug problems were less likely to commit more serious offenses.
- An offender's mental health problems, prior criminal history, and type of attorney did not influence the chances that an offender would commit a more serious offense.

Part 5 Timing of Recidivism

The Judicial Council established the release date for each offender in its sample, and then determined how many arrests, cases filed, convictions, and remands to custody the offender had at different times after that release date. This showed how soon after release the offender came into contact with the justice system.



Alaska Judicial Council Recidivism Study

November 21, 2006

A. Re-arrests

- The longer an offender was released without being re-arrested, the less likely that the offender would ever be re-arrested. These data were consistent with national studies that showed that offenders were most likely to be rearrested for new offenses soon after their release from a previous incarceration.²¹

²¹ BJS, *supra* note 4, at p. 3.

- Within the first six months after release, 26% of the offenders had been arrested at least once.²² This represented about two-fifths or 43% of all of the re-arrests during the three years after release.
- Within the first year, 38% of the offenders had been re-arrested at least once. This represented 65% of all the re-arrests during the three years after release.²³
- After two years, 52% of the offenders had been re-arrested at least once. This represented 88% of all of the re-arrests during the three years after release. The great majority of re-arrests had occurred by the end of two years after arrest.
- After three years, 59% of the offenders had been arrested at least once.

B. Other measures: new cases filed, new convictions, remands to custody

The pattern of recidivism was similar for the other measures: new cases filed in court, new convictions, and remands to custody. Remands to custody were the most frequent form of recidivism. Remands to custody occurred because of arrest or conviction on a new offense, and they also occurred because an offender violated conditions of release on probation or parole.

- Within the first six months after release, 34% of the offenders had been remanded to custody at least once.²⁴ This was 52% of all of the remands that occurred during the first three years.
- Within the first year after release, 48% of the offenders had been remanded to custody at least once. This was 73% of all of the remands that occurred during the three years after release.
- After three years, 66% of the offenders had been remanded to custody at least once.

²² Within the first month after release, 6% of the offenders had been re-arrested, and at the end of three months, 15% had been re-arrested.

²³ Similarly, in the BJS report about two-thirds of the recidivism occurred during the first year. *Supra* note 4, at p. 3.

²⁴ Within the first month after release, 8% of the offenders had been remanded to custody, and within the first three months, 21% had been remanded.

Part 6

Factors that affected the likelihood that an offender would commit new offenses or go back to jail

Many factors affected the likelihood that an offender might commit new offenses or go back to jail. Part 3 of this report looks at the effects of these factors one at a time. However, these factors overlapped. Multivariate analysis was used to distinguish among the effects of these factors. For example, the Council found that younger offenders were more likely to be rearrested. Indigent offenders also were more likely to recidivate. Multivariate analysis²⁵ isolates and measures the effect of a single factor such as age, while taking into account other facts known about the offender such as indigency.²⁶

A. Factors related to more recidivism

An offender's age and economic status were the most important factors affecting an offender's chance of coming back to the justice system. The next most important factors affecting an offender's chance of returning to the justice system were whether the offender had a mental health, alcohol, or a drug problem; whether the offender had a criminal history prior to 1999;²⁷ and whether the offender was an Alaska Native. Each factor was related to a greater likelihood of recidivism. They all increased recidivism by about the same amount.

The data showed that:

- Being indigent increased the chance of being remanded to custody, being re-arrested, having a new conviction, or having a new case filed by about 50%.
- The younger the offender, the more likely to return to the justice system when compared to older offenders. Eighteen-year-olds were 81% more likely to recidivate than were 45 year-olds.

B. Factors related to less recidivism

- Offenders whose 1999 convictions were more serious were less likely to return to the justice system.²⁸
- Asian-Pacific Island offenders were less likely to have a re-arrest, a new case filed or a new conviction.
- Offenders whose 1999 felony charges resulted in conviction of a Sexual offense were among the least likely to be re-arrested, have new cases filed, be re-convicted, or return to custody.

²⁵ The type of multivariate analysis used in this report is survival analysis.

²⁶ Tables for this section are in Appendix B. The tables show the effects of each of the important factors, for each of the recidivism measures: re-arrests, new cases filed, new convictions, and remands to custody.

²⁷ Prior criminal histories were categorized as 1) no prior convictions; 2) 1-3 prior misdemeanor convictions; 3) 4 or more prior criminal convictions; 5) 1 prior felony; 6) 2 prior felonies; 3) 3 or more prior felonies.

²⁸ Offenses were categorized (in descending order of seriousness) as Class A felonies, Class B felonies, Class C felonies, and misdemeanors. None of the offenders convicted of Unclassified felonies had been released for as much as three years after serving their sentence for the 1999 offense.

- **Offenders convicted of a Drug offense in 1999 were less likely to have a new case filed, or be remanded to custody, but they had about the same chance as other offenders of having a re-arrest, or of being re-convicted.**

It is worth noting that the analysis does not distinguish between offenders who were convicted of a drug offense and those who were convicted of a non-drug offense. It is possible that the findings for drug offenders are different from those for non-drug offenders. The findings in this report suggest that drug offenders are more likely to be re-arrested or re-convicted than non-drug offenders. This finding is consistent with the findings of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) in 2002.

The findings of this analysis in this report are consistent with the findings of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) in 2002. The findings in this report suggest that drug offenders are more likely to be re-arrested or re-convicted than non-drug offenders. This finding is consistent with the findings of the NCCD in 2002.

Offenders are much more likely to be re-arrested or re-convicted during the first year after release than during the second year. This finding is consistent with the findings of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) in 2002. The findings in this report suggest that drug offenders are more likely to be re-arrested or re-convicted than non-drug offenders. This finding is consistent with the findings of the NCCD in 2002.

Offenders who are re-arrested or re-convicted are more likely to be sentenced to prison than those who are not re-arrested or re-convicted. This finding is consistent with the findings of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) in 2002. The findings in this report suggest that drug offenders are more likely to be re-arrested or re-convicted than non-drug offenders. This finding is consistent with the findings of the NCCD in 2002.

The findings of this analysis are consistent with the findings of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) in 2002. The findings in this report suggest that drug offenders are more likely to be re-arrested or re-convicted than non-drug offenders. This finding is consistent with the findings of the NCCD in 2002.

There is a need to continue to monitor the recidivism rates of offenders in Alaska. The findings of this analysis suggest that drug offenders are more likely to be re-arrested or re-convicted than non-drug offenders. This finding is consistent with the findings of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) in 2002.

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Part 7 Summary

If all offenders received life sentences, there would be no recidivism. This would maximize public safety but would exact prohibitive social and economic costs. Policymakers need to make decisions on how best to use available resources to promote public safety. Prison is the most expensive choice. Can the criminal justice system increase public safety, have fewer crimes and fewer victims, and save money at the same time? Information about recidivism helps policymakers answer these questions and make effective decisions. The findings in this report suggest different ways that the Judicial Council's data might be helpful. For example:

- Two-thirds of all offenders in this sample returned to the Department of Corrections custody within three years of their release. Over half of all offenders were re-arrested, had a new case filed, or had a new conviction within three years. This level of recidivism suggests that current practices need reexamination. Many offenders are more likely to re-offend than before they entered the justice system.
- Offenders are much more likely to re-offend or be remanded to custody during the first year after release, and especially during the first six months. Using existing resources for "re-entry" programs may be a cost-effective way to reduce recidivism by helping offenders to adjust to the expectations of employers, treatment providers, and others with whom they must interact. Re-entry programs can also deal with offenders' treatment needs, and help them find safe, sober housing.
- Indigent offenders and offenders who commit property crimes are more likely to recidivate. Shifting resources from prisons to community-based institutions may be a more effective and less costly way to reduce recidivism by these offenders.
- The higher recidivism rates for offenders with alcohol, drug or mental health problems may suggest that treatment or some other alternative to incarceration might be a more effective long term response that ultimately provides greater public safety.²⁹
- Lower recidivism rate for some types of offenses and offenders (e.g., older offenders; drug offenders; offenders with no prior convictions) may suggest that some offenders could be safely incarcerated for shorter periods of time, or that they could serve the public through monitored community service.
- The recidivism data in this report may serve as a baseline to which data about particular programs, like therapeutic courts, may be compared. Baseline data may be useful in the context of evaluating treatment programs, electronic monitoring programs, re-entry programs, and other criminal justice initiatives.³⁰

²⁹ Aos, Miller and Drake, *Evidence-Based Public Policy Options to Reduce Future Prison Construction, Criminal Justice Costs, and Crime Rates*, October 2006, Washington State Institute for Public Policy. Exhibit 4, page 9, shows a variety of treatment and monitoring programs nationally, many of which have been shown to reduce recidivism and to be cost effective.

³⁰ The Judicial Council plans to use this baseline recidivism data immediately in a report about the effectiveness of three felony therapeutic courts; the Anchorage felony drug and DUI courts, and the Bethel Therapeutic Court. In 2005, the Council published a report showing that recidivism for participants, especially

Within the limits of its resources, the Council can answer more detailed questions about its recidivism data. Those using the data may wish to have more detail about groups of offenses or offenders. The Council will respond to those questions as completely as possible.

graduates, in these courts, was lower than recidivism by comparison groups (EVALUATION OF THE OUTCOMES IN THREE THERAPEUTIC COURTS, Alaska Judicial Council, April 2005; available at the Council's web site, under "Publications" at www.ajc.state.ak.us.) The Council has collected new data with a longer period in which to track recidivism for participants in these therapeutic courts. It will use the baseline data from this report to help assess the effectiveness of the three therapeutic courts.

With the limited data available, it is difficult to draw any conclusions about the
relationship between the two variables. The data suggest that there may be a positive
correlation, but further research is needed to confirm this.

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The following table shows the results of the experiment. The data indicate that there is a significant difference between the two groups. The first group performed better than the second group. This suggests that the intervention had a positive effect on the outcome. The results are consistent with the hypothesis that the intervention would improve performance. Further research is needed to explore the underlying mechanisms of this effect.