



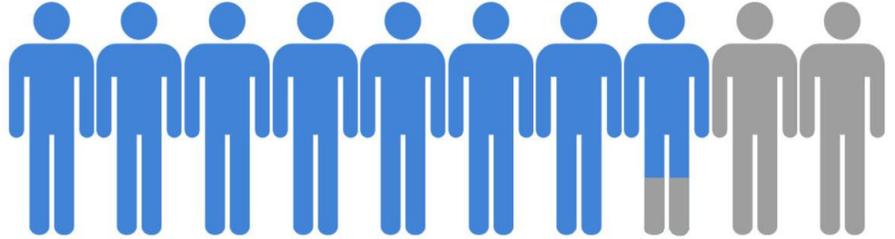
Probation & Parole

Delaware Department of Correction

Focus on Success

August 2020

How Delaware Probation and Parole
Has Implemented Best Practices
Toward a **77%**
Probation Success Rate



Executive Summary

The Delaware Department of Correction's Division of Probation & Parole (P&P) has maintained a probation success rate of more than 75% since 2013 among people on Level 1-3 supervision. Success means that a case is closed without a Violation of Probation sentence imposed by the court ordering an additional term of probation or incarceration at a Level 5 or Level 4 facility in that case. Delaware P&P also has achieved the following advancements over the past several years by implementing best practices in community supervision:

- An **83% decrease in zero tolerance** special conditions of supervision between 2018-2020 resulting from a P&P directive and a partnership with the Delaware Judiciary, which has increased the ability to address minor violations in the community, reducing Probationer's risk of re-incarceration.
- A **38% decrease in administrative warrants** issued between 2014-2019, resulting in fewer Probationers being detained pending a violation of probation hearing before the court.
- A **102% increase in graduated responses** between 2014-2019, with a 1,523% increase in graduated incentive responses specifically. Graduated sanctions provide additional opportunities to resolve non-compliance in the community, rather than an immediate return to incarceration. Graduated incentives serve to reinforce positive, prosocial behaviors.
- A **398% increase in administrative commitments** of Probationers to short duration stays in community corrections centers, in lieu of violation of probation reports being submitted to the courts, which could result in lengthier incarceration stays.
- Accreditation (2016) and reaccreditation (2019) by the American Correctional Association (ACA), with a **100% compliance** score both times, affirming that Delaware P&P meet the highest industry standards.
- Working with eligible, moderate to high risk Probationers to **secure housing** and pay the first months' rent utilizing grant funds.
- **Expansion of case management** by a community-based organization at all probation offices statewide to help Probationers obtain employment, housing, and other critical services.

Introduction

The dual role of the Probation & Parole (P&P) Division of the Delaware Department of Correction (DOC) presents unique challenges. P&P Officers are law enforcement officers who carry out the mission of promoting public safety, providing programs and services that promote law abiding behavior, and supporting efforts to make the victim whole. As the DOC seeks to continually modernize its operations, increase probationer success rates, and implement best practices, multiple reforms to probation practices have been made to enhance public safety.

While the number of people on probation is 7% lower than it was in 2013, the volume of probationers is still demanding. During Fiscal Year 2019 alone, there were 11,193 admissions to probation. Despite the challenges of their dual role as law enforcement agents and rehabilitation support professionals, and despite the demands of high volume caseloads, P&P Officers helped their probationers successfully complete their terms of probation in 77% of cases.

While more than 7 in 10 probation terms last year were closed successfully, the remaining 3 in 10 cases present poignant challenges. To target supports to individuals who are struggling to comply with the conditions of their supervision, DOC has implemented or formalized a number of initiatives and approaches. These efforts include expansion of supportive case management services for probationers statewide, grant-funded programs to help probationers with living expenses, a broadened and formalized graduated response process for probationer rewards and sanctions to motivate compliance, more use of administrative commitments as an accountability measure in an effort to address compliance issues without court involvement, and positioning P&P Officers as behavior coaches through the use of evidence-based cognitive interventions prescribed in Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS).

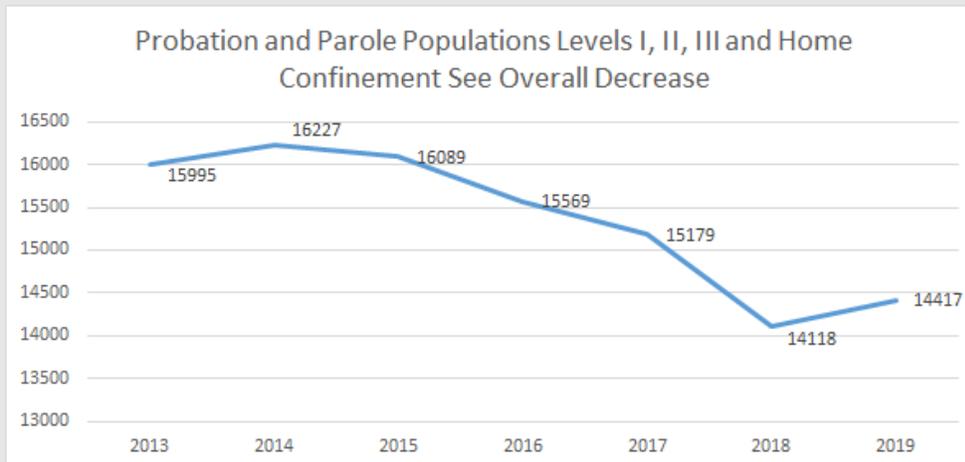
Probation & Parole Population Overview

Probation rates have steadily declined for the last 7 years. At the end of Fiscal Year 2019, there were 14,417 people under P&P supervision (not including Level 1 Restitution Only). The count includes Level 1 (low risk), Level 2 (moderate risk), Level 3 (high risk), and Level 4 Home Confinement. Within 45 days of Intake, Probationers are assessed for the appropriate supervision level through a risk assessment conducted by P&P staff. The primary tool utilized to assess the risk for reoffending is the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R). Individuals who score low risk are placed on Level 1 supervision; Individuals



Delaware Department of Correction Probation & Parole

August 2020



who score moderate risk are placed on Level 2 supervision; and individuals who score high risk are placed on Level 3

supervision. Individuals sentenced to Level 4 Home Confinement are also assessed; they are moved to their assessed level of supervision upon completion of Home Confinement.

Vignettes & Case Studies: Understanding Violations of Probation and the Dual Role of Probation & Parole

Probation Officers' dual role of promoting public safety and providing programs and services that promote law-abiding behavior requires a skillful approach to supervision. The following probation case studies illustrate the balanced approach taken in two different scenarios. Probationers' needs and risk factors were addressed through the provision of services and supports, and the Probationers were held accountable for their behavior through the use of graduated responses.

Tom's Story

In the summer of 2018, "Tom" was sentenced to probation following a conviction for attempting to remove a firearm from a police officer and resisting arrest. Tom was given a chance to serve this sentence in the community instead of serving his sentence in a Level 5 facility. In his first meeting with his Probation Officer, Tom showed clear signs of distrust towards law enforcement and the criminal justice system as a whole. His Probation Officer reassured him that he was there to help him reach a better version of himself, and asked him to complete a homework assignment for the following week. The Officer asked him to think of three goals he wanted to complete by the end of his probation. Tom came back the next week and stated his three goals were to obtain his Commercial Driver's License (CDL), to attend trucking school, and to work in the trucking industry. The Officer



**Delaware Department of Correction
Probation & Parole**

August 2020

promised Tom that as long as he agreed to believe in himself, regardless of any setbacks or hurdles, he would be here with him to help. Tom agreed.

Though not without the occasional setback, Tom stuck to his word. He agreed to receive services from programs such as the Delaware Center for Justice, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Treatment Access Center. The services he received from these programs helped him to obtain his permit, CDL B & A, and eventually secure a job driving milk delivery trucks. Through the use of graduated sanctions such as more stringent curfews and graduated incentives like less frequent reporting, Tom appeared to regain not only confidence in the criminal justice system, but himself too. Eventually, after completing all of the conditions of his probation while maintaining full time employment, the Officer made a recommendation to the Judge that Tom was ready to be discharged from supervision. The Judge agreed and congratulated Tom in person, stepping off the bench to shake his hand. To this day, Tom still calls the Officer periodically to provide updates on how he is doing. He is now driving hazardous material trucks, providing for himself and his family, and has not had any further negative interactions with the criminal justice system since. The Judge who handled Tom's case still enjoys receiving updates on his progress from the Officer and asks that he extend words of congratulations and encouragement to him on her behalf.

Reflecting on the success of this Probationer, the Officer said, "Probation & Parole Officers are human, too. We want nothing more than to see our clients succeed and become productive members of our community. And if nothing else, it shows that treating your fellow human with dignity and respect can forge a meaningful bond."

Steven's Story

"Steven," a 21 year old male gang member, was convicted of violent felony charges and released to home confinement in 2018. Steven tested positive for illegal substances while on home confinement and received a graduated sanction (increased drug testing and a verbal warning) in lieu of a violation of probation charge, which could have resulted in a return to incarceration.

When he completed home confinement, he began Level 3 supervision. During this time, Steven failed to report for probation and left the state without permission, which his Probation Officer addressed with verbal warnings. During the course of his probation, the Officer helped Steven obtain Medicaid coverage. He started to build credit, gained new full time employment, and started participating in a program that helps former athletes, whose athletic opportunities became limited due to criminal justice



Delaware Department of Correction Probation & Parole

August 2020

involvement, re-engage in their sport. When Steven reported to probation visits as required and maintained employment, his Officer reduced his reporting requirements (weekly to bi-weekly) and gave him verbal recognition for his efforts.

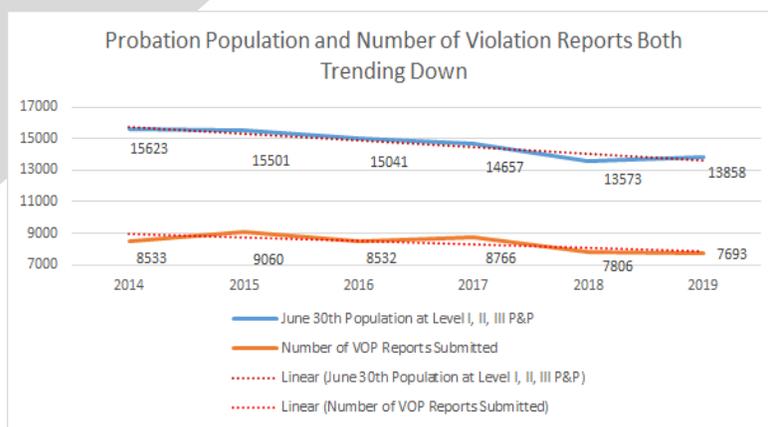
Despite his progress, Steven continued to struggle with substance use. As his Probation Officer considered whether to submit a violation report to the court about Steven’s drug use, he was given an opportunity to provide a negative drug screen prior to a decision being made. By working with his Officer and other supports that were in place, he was able to provide a negative drug screen and was successfully discharged from probation. There were multiple opportunities throughout the course of supervision where a violation of probation could have been submitted to the court. However, the various Officers who supervised Steven during this term recognized his motivation and struggles and provided the support, services, and interventions that he needed to be successfully discharged.

Probation Case Closure Success Rates & Violations of Probation

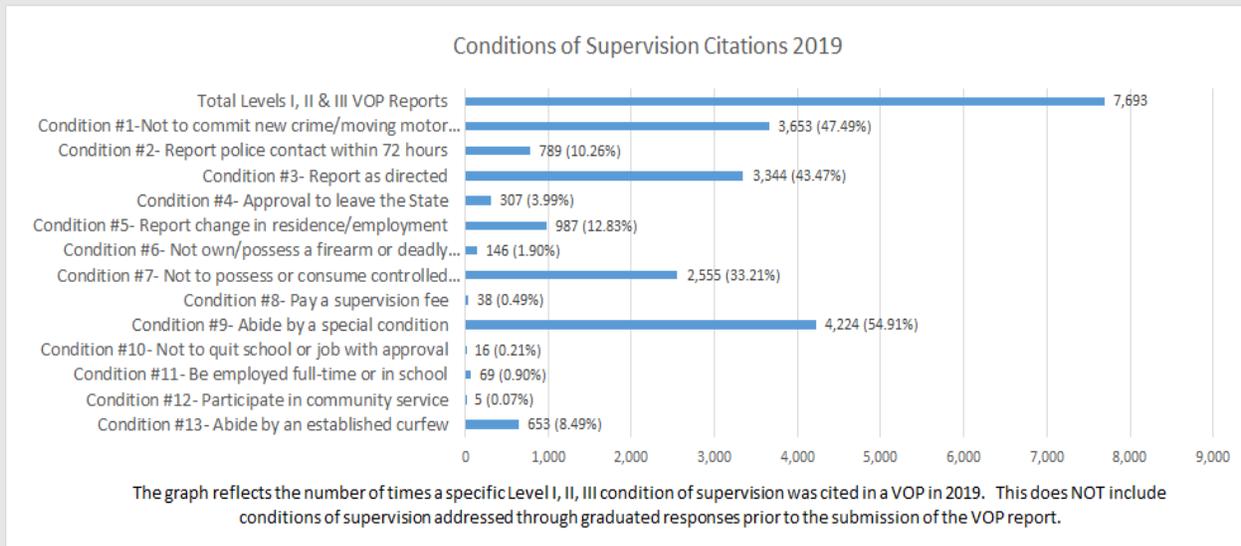
Probation cases are closed successfully in the majority of cases, with successful closure rates hovering at or above 75% since 2013. In 2019, 77% of cases resulted in successful closure. While it is difficult to determine closure success rates by levels of supervision because some individuals have multiple concurrent levels of supervision occurring simultaneously, a 2018 examination of cases closed where only one level of supervision was active indicated that Level 1 cases were closed successfully 83% of the time; Level 2 were closed successfully 71% of the time; and Level 3 were closed successfully 45% of the time.

In 2019, P&P submitted 7,693 VOP reports, written on 5,199 unique individuals on Level 1, 2, and 3 probation. The most common conditions of supervision violated in 2019 were Conditions 1,

3, and 9- committing a new crime or motor vehicle offense, not reporting as directed, and not abiding by a special condition (chart below). Additionally, only 2.01% (155) of VOP reports were submitted with Condition 7—not to possess or consume a controlled substance cited as the only violation, and in



45.8% of those cases graduated responses were imposed prior to a VOP being submitted. Condition 13—abide by an established curfew was cited as the only violation in three total reports in 2019 (0.04%). Two of those three reports were supplemental reports meaning the Probationer violated curfew while already pending a VOP hearing.



Of the 7,693 VOP reports submitted in 2019, 2,494 of those reports were written for individuals who had at least one additional VOP during the year. There are multiple reasons a person could have more than one VOP Report written during the same calendar year:

- The Probationer could have violated the conditions of their probation multiple times in the same calendar year.
- The Probationer could be serving a term of probation from multiple courts. Violation of Probation reports must be submitted to each court.
- The Probationer could incur new violations while the original Violation of Probation hearing is pending. The courts require supplemental Violation Reports under these circumstances.
- The Probationer could be serving Conditional Release and probation concurrently. The courts have required a separate Violation of Probation Report be submitted for each term.

Officer Tools for Supporting Successful Completion of Probation

Officers have a variety of tools and resources available for motivating, supporting, and holding Probationers accountable towards the goal of successful completion of probation. The table below provides an overview of the most common approaches utilized.



Delaware Department of Correction Probation & Parole

August 2020

Motivation

Officers use verbal recognition/praise when Probationers comply with conditions of supervision

Implement a graduated incentive response (relaxed curfew, less frequent reporting) to reward and reinforce compliance with probation terms

Probation Officer can recommend early probation discharge to court

Probationers can achieve earned compliance credit discharge (“probation good time”) for full compliance with conditions of supervision

Officer & Probationer use EPICS framework to enhance Probationer’s intrinsic motivation by identifying and replacing criminal thinking patterns and conducting role play (skill building) to address challenging situations encountered by Probationer

Support

Risk and needs assessments are determined to determine the Probationer’s risk for recidivism and criminogenic needs. The supervision plan is crafted to address and support those needs.

Work referral to assist Probationer with working off costs and fines

Subsidies for first month’s rent, bus passes, and vital documents costs to qualified Probationers

Probationer can be referred for public housing Family Reentry Pilot

Refer for case management services by a community provider that is co-located at P&P Offices

Refer for evaluation & treatment of mental health and/or substance use disorders

Refer Probationer to short-term cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) groups held at P&P offices

Individuals being released from Level 5 or Level 4 after serving 6 months or more are provided a Delaware Personal Credential Card enabling them to get a Delaware ID and birth certificate at no cost

Accountability

Implement a graduated sanction response (for example, more frequent urinalysis) to hold Probationer accountable for violating conditions of supervision. Officers can administratively commit Probationer for weekend incarceration at a Level 4 facility where cognitive behavioral therapy is required

Submit required violation reports to court requesting a summons (if the Probationer is reporting and not an immediate threat to public safety) or requesting a capias (if Probationer has absconded) Administrative warrant can be executed if there are factors that necessitate immediate response.

Screen and refer high risk Probationers with gang, gun, or violence history to police partnership task forces for added monitoring



Delaware Department of Correction Probation & Parole

August 2020

Probation & Parole Policy Priorities

Over the past several years, a number of policy and operational initiatives have been implemented to further the goal of creating positive behavior change among Probationers. These efforts include elimination of zero tolerance orders, decreased use of administrative warrants, and increased use of graduated responses including sanctions and incentives, and increased use of administrative commitments.

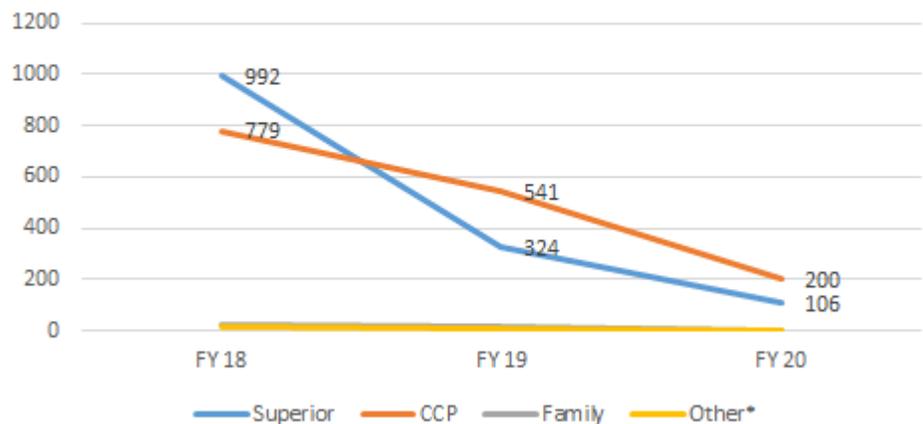
Elimination of Zero Tolerance Orders

Sentence orders with a special condition of zero tolerance, also referred to as “Zero tolerance orders,” were eliminated in 2018 due to the often unreasonable nature of these conditions of supervision and the lack of discretion they allowed the Officer regarding whether or not to submit a violation report. These orders add a Zero tolerance stipulation to court ordered special conditions such as having no contact with a specific person, address, or geographic area; a total prohibition against testing positive for any substance such as drugs or alcohol; not having any driving violations; weapons; missed appointments; missed curfews; or non-compliance with treatment or programs, among others.

This was problematic from a supervision standpoint in cases when a Probationer was generally compliant with the conditions of supervision but violated a zero

tolerance condition Typically, Officers would have discretion in submitting a violation report or in utilizing graduated responses; however, zero tolerance orders require mandatory notification to the court. In July of 2018, P&P leadership partnered with the Delaware Superior Court to create consensus for elimination of “zero tolerance orders”. Officers were instructed by the DOC Bureau of Community Corrections Bureau Chief to refrain from recommending zero tolerance orders to the court, and the Superior Court was

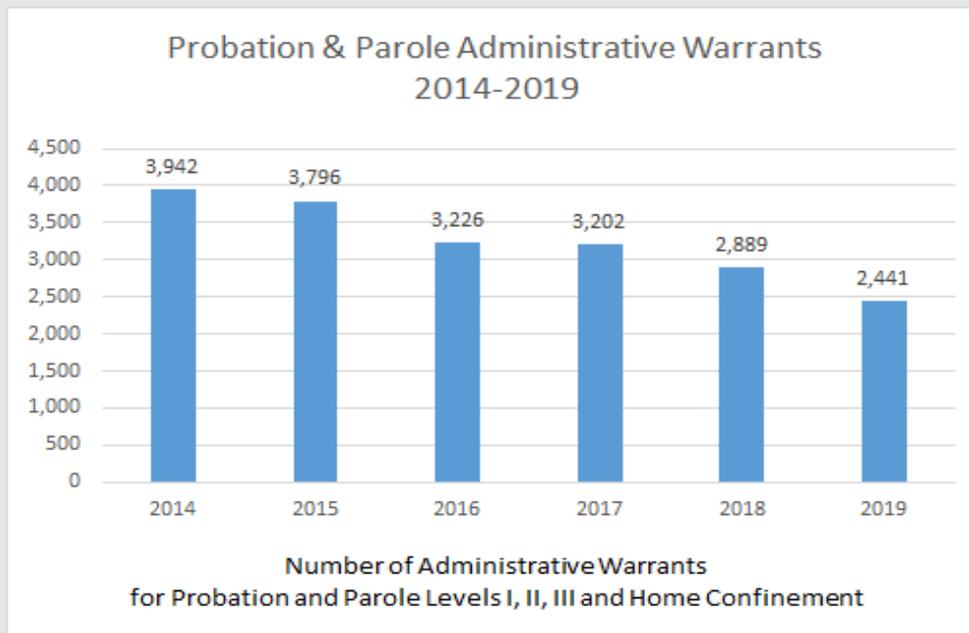
Zero Tolerance Probation Conditions Decrease Dramatically Between 2018 and 2020



similarly instructed by the President Judge to refrain from issuing these types of conditions of supervision. As a result of the Probation directive and the Court's partnership, zero tolerance orders from the Delaware Judiciary decreased 83%.

Decreased Use of Administrative Warrants

The use of administrative warrants by Probation and Parole decreased by 38% between 2014-2019. P&P Officers are legally authorized to arrest a Probationer without a court-issued warrant in situations where it has been determined that the individual's actions require an immediate response. This decrease correlates with Probation and Parole's increased efforts to resolve non-compliance with probation terms in the community before returning the individual to the court for a violation hearing. Probationers who may have



previously been arrested on an administrative warrant and detained for several days while awaiting a court hearing may now avoid a probation violation all together. Instead, Officers have

increased use of administrative commitments and graduated responses, avoiding the disruptions caused by even short periods of incarceration. DOC's continued commitment to adopt best practices and elicit lasting, positive behavior change has resulted in the decreased need for administrative warrants.



Officers display donations for Clothing Closet at Georgetown P&P



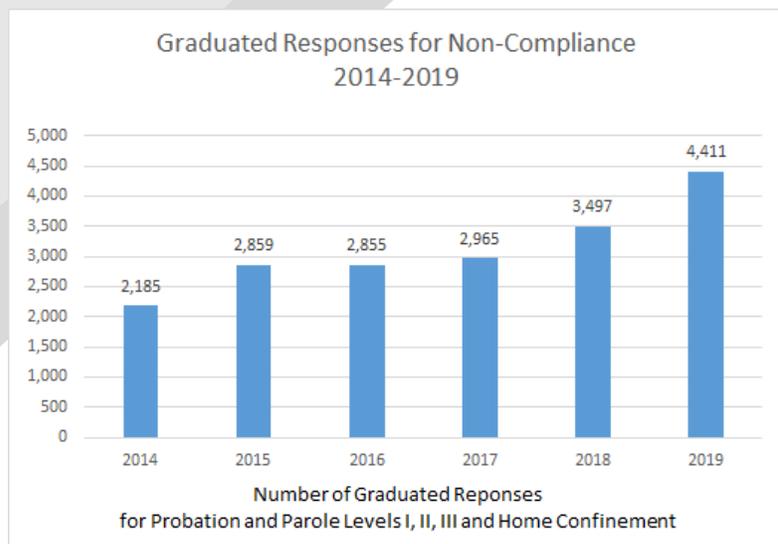
Delaware Department of Correction Probation & Parole

August 2020

Increased Use of Graduated Responses

Graduated responses refer to strategies that can be utilized to motivate and reward positive behavior (incentives) and discourage and hold Probationers accountable for negative behavior (sanctions). Graduated sanction responses are designed to give P&P Officers many options in addressing non-compliance with conditions of supervision without having to utilize the formal violation process. These sanctions are not always linear; in other words, sanctions may be applied on an individualized basis with consideration of the Probationer's supervision/risk level, the severity and frequency of the non-compliant behavior, the offense for which the Probationer is under supervision, and the length of time remaining on supervision. A combination of these factors may lead to the following graduated sanction responses being applied, ranging from verbal warnings to travel restrictions, increased contact, imposition of community service hours, wage attachments, increased substance use testing, participation in work crew, imposition of a curfew (if none exists), use of electronic monitoring equipment, or a short-term (weekend) administrative commitment to a Level 4 facility. The number of graduated response sanctions has increased by 102% since 2014. This increase in reported use of sanctions is partially due to a concerted effort to exhaust graduated response sanctions as an alternative to VOP's, and partially due to enhancements made to DOC's automated computer system, DACS, in 2017 to better track the use of graduated responses.

Graduated incentive responses, with the exception of early discharge and earned compliance credit ("probation good time"), are less formalized options that P&P Officers may use to reward compliance with supervision conditions.

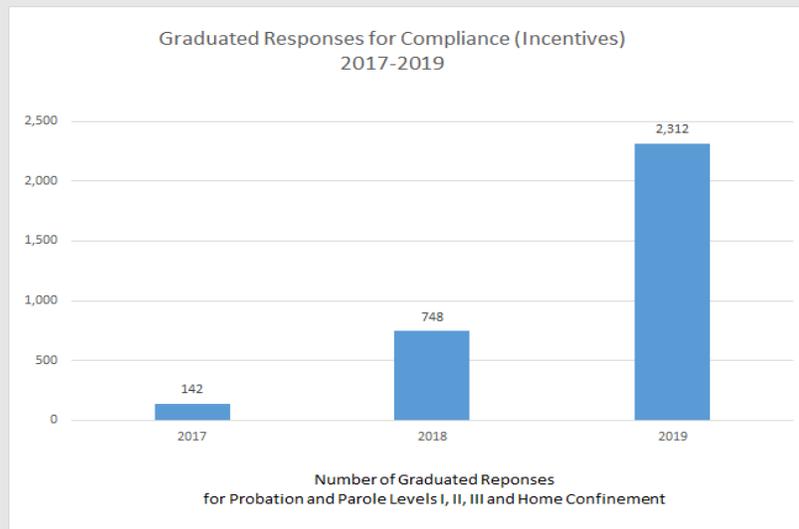


Some incentives may be granted at the Officer's discretion, while others require approval by a P&P Supervisor. Discretionary incentives can include verbal recognition, receiving a certificate of completion for appropriate special conditions, a reduction in curfew hours, and reduced reporting contact requirements.

Supervisor approval is required for rewards such as increasing travel flexibility, earned compliance credit discharge, or "other"

incentive. Judicial

(court) approval is needed for modification or removal of special conditions of supervision and for early discharge from probation. The use of graduated incentives has increased 1,523% between 2017 (142) and 2019 (2,312).



Increased use of administrative commitments to reduce risk of lengthier court-ordered incarceration

The use of the administrative commitment option was recognized by the Bureau of Community Corrections and P&P leadership as an important behavior change strategy. This sanction (short term incarceration) may help some Probationers change their non-compliant behavior by addressing their behavior in a swift manner. Non-compliant behavior earlier in the week can now result in an administrative commitment the upcoming weekend, versus non-compliant behavior addressed at a VOP hearing several weeks to months after the behavior occurred.

There are several benefits to the use of administrative commitments:

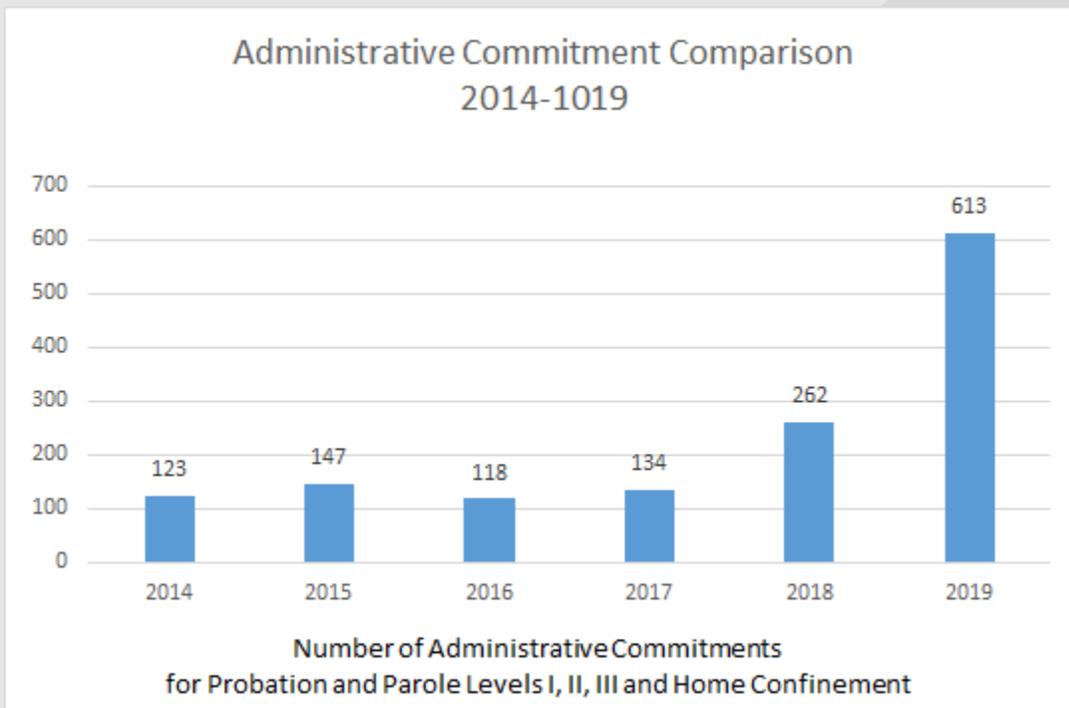
- Clean slate—violations of conditions cited in an administrative commitment cannot be used in future Violation of Probation reports.
- No court involvement, eliminating the risk of a longer period of incarceration.
- The maximum expiration date of the probation term does not change, whereas, at a typical VOP hearing, the terms are often restarted for the original duration.



Delaware Department of Correction Probation & Parole

August 2020

A concerted effort has been made since June 2018 to increase the use of short-term administrative commitments to Level 4 community corrections facilities as an intermediate compliance tool. There has been a 398% increase in administrative commitments between 2014 (123 administrative commitments) and 2019 (613 administrative commitments). Administrative commitments can be utilized in lieu of reporting a violation of probation to the court, or as “one last chance” prior to violations being reported to the court. To support this effort, the DOC expanded the locations available for administrative commitments from just Sussex Violation of Probation Center (SVOP) to Hazel D. Plant Women’s Treatment Facility (HDP) and Plummer Community Corrections Center (PCCC). The availability of administrative commitment locations statewide is important because of the difficulty that Probationers previously faced in obtaining transportation from New Castle County to Sussex County (a two hour ride, one way) and back for a weekend commitment (2-3 days).



Training that Enhances Positive Interactions between Officers and Probationers

To equip P&P Officers with additional strategies for supporting positive behavior change in Probationers and increasing successful outcomes, P&P has trained approximately 50 Officers to date in Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS). This evidence-based approach to supervision



Delaware Department of Correction Probation & Parole

August 2020

teaches Probation Officers the principles of effective intervention, key core correctional practices, and cognitive behavioral interventions intended to reduce non-compliance.

The EPICS model is a structured approach to office visits which, in addition to the use of graduated responses, encourages Officers to respond with an intervention meant to elicit behavior change. Probation Officers may use a cost benefit analysis to allow the Probationer to explore the pros and cons of a risky behavior versus a prosocial behavior, or may teach a skill or problem-solving technique that could be used when confronted with a risky situation. Probation Officers can also utilize a cognitive restructuring technique that teaches the Probationer to recognize the thoughts and feelings they experienced before participating in a risky or non-compliant behavior, so that when confronted again with the same or similar situation, they recognize those thoughts and feelings and make a different choice. The techniques can be used both proactively and reactively. By focusing on behavioral change, rather than the possibility of re-incarceration, EPICS can teach Probationers the skills needed to reduce non-compliance with the terms of their probation and help break the cycle of incarceration.

Reentry Reforms

A number of grant-funded initiatives are currently supporting Probationer success. Grant programs have been carefully aligned with Governor Carney's Executive Order 27, which requires a number of reforms to the State's prisoner reentry system. Federal funds via the Innovations in Reentry Initiative and Statewide Recidivism Reduction grant streams have allowed DOC to expand reentry case management from just two offices in New Castle County to all probation offices statewide.

Provided by the nonprofit organization Delaware Center for Justice, this case management partnership assists those Probationers who need additional help finding work, finding housing, and adjusting to the demands of being on probation. P&P Officers also are able to apply for financial subsidies for

Probationers on their caseloads needing support with housing costs (first



Delaware Department of Correction Probation & Parole

August 2020

months' rent). Housing stability is a huge stabilization factor influencing a Probationer's success. Probation Officers are able to obtain one month's rent, bus passes, Delaware birth certificates, and a Delaware ID for eligible Probationers.

Grant funds are also being leveraged for validation of two assessment tools used by Probation & Parole to assess Probationer risk and assign supervision levels. The Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) assessment tool determines if Probationers are low, moderate, or high risk to reoffend, and the Static-99 is a specialized tool to assess a sex offender's risk for sexual offending. The scores from these assessments determine much about the supervision standards for Probationers, so regular validation of the tool is essential.

The development of an electronic case management plan that seamlessly passes information between probation, community corrections facilities, and prisons is also being funded by Federal grants. The Transition Accountability Plan (TAP) will allow for creation of an individual's supervision plan that can be accessed in DOC's computerized case management system by correctional staff who are working with the individual to reduce duplication of efforts. The TAP will contain information about the individual's risk factors and needs, their behavioral health, the programming they have completed and what programming is still needed, and a summary of the individual's progress towards goals.

Spurred on by Executive Order 27's charge to create and expand affordable housing options for reentrants, DOC partnered with the Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA) to create the Family Reentry Program (FRP), which will pilot the ability of the State's five Public Housing Authorities (PHA's) to allow eligible reentrants who were released from prison within the last 3 years to reside with a family member who already resides in a public housing unit. The Delaware Center for Justice will assist the DOC with referring eligible individuals to the program and facilitating communication between the PHA's and Probation and Parole.

DOC and P&P expand Reentry Planning for Probationers

Executive Order 27 signed by Governor Carney December 4, 2018 calls for a myriad of reentry reforms including the repurposing of IADAPT Coordinators into P&P Reentry Coordinators. Probation & Parole has four Officers dedicated to Reentry Planning for eligible returning citizens. Individuals that



Delaware Department of Correction Probation & Parole

August 2020

receive this reentry planning will begin probation with education, employment, and treatment referrals; immediate access to Medicaid and food benefits, and a personal credential card that will enable them to get a Delaware ID and birth certificate at no cost. In some instances, eligible inmates may also be released with their social security card. Probation and Parole In Reach Coordinators are dedicated to ensuring Probationers are released with the supports they need to be successful by assisting in providing for basic needs such as food, shelter, and clothing; and more complex needs such as comprehensive mental health or medical care. The P&P In Reach Coordinators work with inmates prior to release, so that upon release, the Probationer has a point of contact and someone knowledgeable about their specific situation. Probation and Parole in Reach works with the assigned Probation Officer to address barriers and needs that may have led to the Probationer being unsuccessful during previous probation terms.

DOC has also expanded Reentry Planning by leveraging services offered by Centurion™, the DOC's contracted medical and behavioral health provider. Centurion™ employs a team of reentry professionals that meet with individuals 4-6 months prerelease and complete a reentry needs assessment. They then follow up with identified needs that may include ensuring the individual is released with proper medication, scheduled medical appointments, appropriate referrals for comprehensive Behavioral Health services that may require long term care, SSDI/SSI application, and any other need identified. Centurion™ reentry staff work closely with P&P In Reach Coordinators to ensure a smooth transition to probation. Recent changes to policy have expanded the Centurion™ reentry teams reach to include eligible detentioners. This can benefit probationers incarcerated pending a Violation of Probation Hearing. The Reentry team can assist with establishing a housing plan, in patient drug treatment, or address other needs that may have led to the non-compliant probation behavior. Having a solid release plan may result in less incarceration sentences for those who violate their probation and more second chances to succeed in the community.

DOC is also contracting with a community service provider to offer Transitional Reentry Services. These services are intended to assist Probationers leaving a Level 5 or 4 DOC facility. The services include transportation, including picking up the Probationer immediately upon release from a facility and taking them to treatment, sober living, or other



Delaware Department of Correction Probation & Parole

August 2020

housing that has been established. The services also provide for rides to Probation and Parole, treatment, food banks and clothing closets, and other appointments. For probationers with very high needs, this service also provides short term case management to ensure stabilization prior to referring to longer term supports if still needed. These services, available for up to 90 days post releases, help probationers overcome some of the immediate challenges of returning to their community.

Conclusion

The Delaware Department of Correction employs a dynamic probation system that leverages proven evidence-based practices and strategies to support reentry, improve compliance by probationers, and reduce the rate of re-incarceration. **These practices and strategies reflect the dual role of Probation Officers in meeting the DOC's mission of public safety and rehabilitation.** Officers' skillful approach to their work is supported by a comprehensive program that identifies probationers' needs and risk factors, tailors supervision plans for each participant, and meets their individual needs through responsive supervision, referral to services, and engagement with community supports.

Delaware's Probation Officers employ a variety of tools and resources to motivate and support probationers while holding them accountable for their behavior choices, with the shared goal of successful completion of court-ordered probation. Officers are guided by DOC's adoption of the *Effective Practices in Community Supervision* model that leverages the use of graduated responses – rather than zero tolerance – along with cognitive behavioral intervention to develop collaborative working relationships, solicit problem-solving, and elicit behavior change.

This modern balanced method of community supervision **has helped the DOC drive the successful closure of court-ordered probation cases consistently at about 77% for the past six years.** That success is due to several initiatives, including collaboration with the judiciary to **significantly reduce zero tolerance orders** (83% reduction) that restrict Officers' ability to use discretion to meet the unique circumstances of individual cases **and significantly reduce the use of administrative warrants** (38% reduction) that see probationers detained pending a court hearing. Meanwhile, in just two years DOC has experienced a **15-fold increase in the use of innovative discretionary incentives** that



Delaware Department of Correction Probation & Parole

August 2020

recognize and reward compliance and positive behavior choices by probationers. When faced with failures to comply, Probation Officers have **doubled the use of graduated responses** in order to motivate behavior change without triggering the formal violation of probation process. When probationers consistently fail to comply with the conditions of their supervision, DOC **increasingly leverages administrative commitments** (398% increase) for short-term stays in community corrections centers in lieu of filing violation of probation reports which could result in lengthier terms of incarceration.

Probation Officers and DOC's Bureau of Community Corrections serve as a gateway to social services and community supports that meet probationers' basic needs for housing and food, healthcare and treatment, training and employment. DOC works with eligible probationers to secure housing and pay the first months' rent utilizing grant funds, has partnered with state and local housing agencies to launch the Delaware family reentry pilot, and hosts a community-based organization in all probation offices to help clients obtain employment, housing, and other critical services. Officers have even taken the initiative to establish clothing and food closets in each probation office that are stocked with items they donated personally and secured from other individuals and non-profits.

The Delaware Department of Correction is the "tip of the spear" in driving our state's renewed focus on improving reentry success and reducing its rate of recidivism. Our Probation Officers demonstrate their deep investment in these goals by engaging with probationers in new ways to build trust, encourage positive behavior, and improve compliance. **Their ability to help probationers achieve the successful completion of their supervision sentences more than three-quarters of the time** is creating new opportunities every day for the men and women in the criminal justice system to live healthy, law-abiding lives, and to meet their full potential.



Delaware Department of Correction Probation & Parole

August 2020