

Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Judicial Department Annual Recidivism Report: Executive Summary¹

Introduction

In 2025, probation shifted the way in which it reports recidivism data to be more accessible and user-friendly. This was accomplished by creating an executive summary providing a broad overview of the findings and using a publicly available dashboard to visualize the full scope of metrics contained typically contained in the annual recidivism technical report. Additionally, per the 2024 recommendations of the [Recidivism Definition Working Group](#), a new six month recidivism metric has been added, all terminations considered to be neutral have been removed, and termination cohorts from fiscal years (FY) 2023, 2022, and 2021 are being analyzed again to allow courts an additional year of time to process cases, thus increasing the accuracy of reported figures. Given some of these changes and the dynamic nature of data being extracted from the Judicial case management system, variations in reported rates and numbers are to be expected when compared to the previous year's report. Fiscal year 2024 Probation Terminations will be available in next year's executive summary and dashboard.

Cohort Descriptive Information

In fiscal year 2023, 36,387 unique individuals terminated from probation. Of these, 34,842 were on probation for an adult case and 1,545 were on probation for a juvenile delinquency case. Individuals who have terminated from probation and participated in an intensive program account for 1,605 (4.6%) adults and 75 (4.9%) juveniles. The population of probationers terminated in fiscal year 2023 is generally reflective of the active adult probation population described in the annual report, where approximately 25% of the population is female, most are Caucasian, and individuals between the ages of 25 and 39 years make up about half of the population. The majority (46.2%) of adults are assessed as low risk at the start of probation, 25.2% are considered moderate risk, and 16.1% are assessed as high risk. For juveniles, 39.2% are classified as low risk, 29.3% as moderate risk, and 15.9% as high risk. The remainder do not have risk data available (12.6% of adults and 14.7% of juveniles).

Outcomes

Most adults and juveniles completed probation successfully and remained crime free for at least one year following termination. This is true even if they had a pre-release recidivism event. Recidivism for Colorado probation is currently defined using two components: pre-release and post-release. Pre-release recidivism is defined as a new deferred agreement, adjudication, or conviction while under supervision. Post-release recidivism is defined as a new deferred agreement, adjudication, or conviction at intervals of six months, one-, two-, and three-years' post-release from probation

¹ This executive summary is submitted to the General Assembly's Joint Budget Committee to satisfy conditions of request #1, Judicial Department, Probation and Related Services.

regardless of whether that release is considered successful. Rates included in this summary include both individuals who were only on regular probation and those who participated in an intensive program during their supervision. For more detailed breakouts of recidivism rates by program, please see the Probation Recidivism Dashboard.

Pre-Release Recidivism

Pre-release recidivism occurred in 18.8% of adult terminations and 18.6% of juvenile terminations in fiscal year 2023. Even though adults and juveniles have a similar rate of pre-release recidivism, the actual number of individuals in each group differs greatly as the juvenile population is much smaller. Of note, pre-release recidivism did not automatically lead to an unsuccessful termination from probation—8.4% of adults and 9.0% of juveniles had pre-release recidivism events and completed probation successfully. Rates of pre-release recidivism were substantially higher for individuals who were terminated from probation unsuccessfully. Pre-release recidivism events occurred for 34.9% of adults and 35.2% of juveniles who were terminated from probation due to technical violations. As expected, pre-release recidivism rates are elevated for high risk adults and juveniles (41.2% and 45.2%, respectively). Alternately, pre-release recidivism rates are marginal for low risk adults and juveniles (8.7% and 7.4%, respectively). Moderate risk adults and juveniles fall between these two rates (24.7% and 22.4%, respectively).

Post-Release Recidivism

Overall post-release recidivism rates within the first year are below 8% for those who successfully complete probation—3.8% for adults and 7.6% for juveniles. These rates account for both six month and one year recidivism, which share nearly equal proportions of the overall rate within one year. As expected, rates of post-release recidivism are higher for individuals who unsuccessfully terminate from probation. Post-release recidivism rates for adults and juveniles are highest for individuals who were terminated from probation for new crimes (20.0% and 16.9%, respectively). Post-release recidivism in Year 2 for the cohort terminated in fiscal year 2022 stayed fairly constant compared to rates of 6 Month and Year 1 recidivism. The tables below illustrate the overall post-release recidivism rates by risk level for adults and juveniles who terminated in fiscal year 2021.

FY21 Adult Terminations by Starting Risk Level and Post-Release Recidivism

Starting Risk Level	No Recidivism	6 Month	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
High	70.44%	10.59%	5.90%	7.66%	5.40%
Moderate	81.71%	5.58%	3.89%	5.07%	3.76%
Low	91.32%	2.02%	1.81%	2.75%	2.11%
Missing	81.14%	6.99%	4.21%	4.68%	2.97%
Total	84.38%	4.93%	3.29%	4.30%	3.09%

FY21 Juvenile Terminations by Starting Risk Level and Post-Release Recidivism

Starting Risk Level	No Recidivism	6 Month	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
High	62.23%	10.05%	9.24%	10.05%	8.42%
Moderate	73.81%	5.31%	5.88%	9.87%	5.12%
Low	83.37%	3.31%	3.01%	5.31%	5.01%
Missing	84.81%	4.44%	4.44%	3.33%	2.96%
Total	77.62%	5.09%	4.95%	6.98%	5.36%

Most adults were placed in jail for post-release recidivism events (49.7%), followed by probation (18%), then DOC (10.7%), other sentences (5.1%) and community corrections (3.7%) for 1-year recidivism. 12.8% had not yet been sentenced for convictions received. Juveniles followed a similar pattern, with 35.3% being sentenced to juvenile detention, 29.4% being sentenced to DYS, 17.7% being sentenced to probation, 5.9% receiving other sentences, and 11.8% not yet receiving a sentence.

Placement for Negative Terminations

When a probationer is unsuccessful on probation, a new sentence is often entered on the case once probation is terminated. Due to methodology changes allowing two years for court cases to resolve, approximately 4% of cases did not have sentencing data available for this analysis compared to nearly 50% last year. When a new sentence was entered, adults were most commonly sentenced to jail (72.9%), followed by the Department of Corrections (11.1%), then other sentences (7.8%), probation (3.5%), and community corrections (1.0%). The shift in methodology was helpful as the majority of cases resolved during the extended timeframe. At the time of the study, only 3.8% of individuals had not yet been sentenced. Juveniles were most commonly sentenced to jail or juvenile detention (47.7%), followed by the Division of Youth Services (30.0%), then other sentences (13.1%), probation (3.8%), and community corrections (0.4%). At the time of the study, 5.1% of juveniles had not yet been sentenced.

Terminations by Risk Level

Like pre- and post-release recidivism, termination rates are closely associated with risk level. Low risk probationers are much more likely to terminate successfully compared to moderate or high risk probationers. Successful terminations occur in 86.0% of low risk adult probationers, 60.5% of moderate risk, and 31.2% of high risk. For juveniles, 92.3% of low risk, 69.0% of moderate risk, and 38.1% of high risk probationers terminated successfully.

Intensive Programs

Rates of pre-release and post-release recidivism are generally higher for individuals who participated in an intensive program as part of their probation supervision. Pre-release recidivism for juveniles who participated in an intensive program in fiscal year 2023 varied by risk level, with high risk being at 64.3%, moderate risk being 58.6%, and low risk at 33.3%. Adults who participated in an intensive

supervision program varied similarly with high risk individuals experiencing a recidivism event at a rate of 44.0%, moderate risk at 36.1%, and low risk at 22.0%.

Post-release recidivism at either the six month or one year mark followed a similar pattern for those who participated in an intensive program. High risk adults experienced a post-release recidivism event at six months 9.0% of the time and at one year 6.8% of the time. Moderate risk adults rates were 4.2% at six months and 3.8% at one year. Low risk adults had the lowest rates at 1.2% at both the six month and one year mark.

For high risk juveniles who participated in an intensive program, 14.3% had a post-release recidivism event within six months, with no additional individuals experiencing a recidivism event at one year. By the 6-month mark, 6.9% of moderate risk juveniles experienced a recidivism event, with an additional 6.9% experiencing an event at the one-year mark. For low risk juveniles, none experienced a recidivism event within the first six months of probation completion, but 4.8% did within the first year.

All of the juvenile rates above should be interpreted with caution, as the number of juveniles who participated in intensive programs during supervision and terminated in the fiscal year 2023 was very low at only 67 individuals.

The Female Offender Program (FOP) is no longer in place in Probation, though 11 individuals who terminated in FY23 still participated in the program at some point during their probation supervision. Of these individuals, only one had a post-release recidivism event within one year of probation termination. Four individuals experienced a pre-release recidivism event.

Length of Stay

Length of stay on probation is defined as the number of months that elapsed from the initial sentence to probation to the termination date. The median length of stay on probation for adult probationers is 18 months and for juveniles it is just under 14 months. As expected, length of stay was longer for individuals with pre-release recidivism compared to those without. For adults without pre-release recidivism the median length of stay was just under 18 months compared to 27 months for those with pre-release recidivism. For juveniles, those without pre-release recidivism had a median length of stay of 12 months compared to just under 23 months for those with pre-release recidivism.

Conclusion

Most probationers successfully complete probation in under two years and remain crime free following release. Compared to the previous fiscal year, pre-release recidivism increased for adults (from 13.9% to 18.8%) but decreased for juveniles (from 19.9% to 18.6%). The adult rate more closely resembles the pre-release recidivism rate for the fiscal year 2021 termination cohort (17.6%), while the juvenile rate has decreased slightly over two years. Both adults and juveniles are likely to successfully complete probation supervision (65.2% and 74.6%, respectively). Successful terminations are more common in lower risk probationers (86.0% for adults and 92.3% for juveniles) compared to higher risk probationers (31.2% for adults and 38.1% for juveniles). For individuals who

terminated in fiscal year 2023, a small percentage recidivated within six months of discharge, 4.7% of adults and 5.4% of juveniles. An additional 3.5% of adults and 3.6% of juveniles recidivated within 1 year of discharge from probation.

To access the Probation Recidivism Dashboard containing all reported figures, please visit the Colorado Judicial Branch's website, specifically the [Colorado Division of Probation Services Reports and Data](#) page to find the Recidivism Report and Recidivism Dashboard.