

Conditional release supervision standards: An update in training for offender risk/needs assessment (R-13, 1991)

The research report provides an overview on the training sessions conducted for the implementation of the standards for conditional release supervision. It outlines the training format used and describes the hands-on training exercise in relation to the Community Risk/Needs Management Scale assessment device.

The hands-on training exercise was designed to establish an acceptable level of agreement among community case managers for frequency of contact decisions. It focused on two different approaches. One was an individual assessment of a practice case, the other, a group assessment of a different case.

Overall, the results of the hands-on training exercise indicate that systematic assessments have practical utility for case managers working with offenders in the community.

The following provides a summary of the major findings.

- The hands-on training exercises confirmed the ability of community case managers to apply the Community Risk/Needs Management Scale as a systematic method for assessing the needs of offenders, the risk of reoffending and any other factor that might affect the successful adjustment of an offender into the community.
- The results of the practice case assessments demonstrated acceptable levels of agreement among case managers when assessing the same case for the first time using the Community Risk/Needs Management Scale with respect to frequency of contact considerations.
- The variability in case needs level ratings at different training sites points to a need for clarification of the various needs dimensions being assessed with training and reference to the guidelines.
- A combination of individual and group practice exercises can result in improved levels of agreement among case managers for risk/needs ratings.

Thus, it appears that, throughout the hands-on training exercises, there was considerable agreement among trainees regarding the supervision requirements of particular cases. More important, the training on systematic offender assessment resulted in the implementation of Section 5 of the conditional release supervision standards across federal corrections.