

# Prison Work Program (CORCAN) participation: Post-release employment and recidivism (R-69, 1998)

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This study was conducted to investigate the impact of CORCAN on offender employability in the community and effect upon recidivism.

The results, consistent with the risk prediction literature, display an interaction between risk and identified needs and employment status in the first six months of release. Furthermore, the study illustrates the relationship between obtaining employment and subsequent recidivism; offenders who were employed in the first six months of release evidenced fewer convictions than offenders who were unemployed did. Moreover, analysis of the relationship between type of release and recidivism indicated significant differences in the percentage of new violent convictions for offenders who received statutory release, compared with offenders released on day and full parole.

Implications for safe reintegration into the community and future research within CORCAN are discussed.

More than half of the offenders in the sample studied, exhibited employment needs on release and furthermore, two thirds experienced difficulty obtaining employment in the first six months of release. These findings are consistent with previous research

that has examined the post-release employment experience of offenders. Furthermore, offenders identified with employment needs at release are more likely to experience employment difficulties than offenders without these needs are. These findings suggest that the Community Risk/Needs Management Scale (CRNMS) is properly identifying individuals with employment needs. Consequently, enhanced resources should be directed toward overseeing the employment status of offenders with employment needs, given the interaction with recidivism. The CNRMS provides valuable information regarding offender's employment status and provides for assessment of change in employment status and needs over time. ■