



Research at a glance

Outcomes for Offender Employment Programs: Assessment of CORCAN Participation

KEY WORDS: CORCAN, offender employment, institutional employment, offender reintegration

What it means

While CORCAN participation supports offender reintegration by helping offenders obtain employment after release, results of this research also highlight the importance of assisting offenders in retaining their initial employment to help decrease their likelihood of reoffending.

Findings further highlight the importance of community employment in reducing the likelihood of reoffending and readmission to federal custody.

What we found

- 61% of offenders employed with CORCAN were granted day parole, compared to 41% of offenders employed with Correctional Service Canada (CSC) institutional employment (excluding CORCAN), and 51% of offenders who were not employed in the institution.
- Offenders employed with CORCAN were 1.09 times more likely than offenders employed in non-CORCAN institutional employment and 1.37 times more likely than offenders not institutionally employed to obtain a job in the community, even after controlling for important risk factors.
- Community Employment Centre (CEC) participation, as well as vocational certification in addition to CORCAN employment were both found to contribute to an increased likelihood of obtaining a job in the community.
- Involvement in CORCAN employment was *not* found to have a significant impact on the length of time that offenders retained their first job post-release.
- There was no overall association between CORCAN participation and direct reductions in recidivism (any revocation or revocation with a new offence).
- Offenders who were employed in the community, regardless of institutional employment participation, were almost three times less likely to be revoked with a new offence than those who were not employed.

Why we did this study

Approximately 60% of offenders in the CSC have employment needs identified at intake to federal custody. CORCAN is a key rehabilitation program that focuses on providing offenders with employment and employability skills training. Offenders who participate in CORCAN are afforded the opportunity to develop employment skills through vocational certification and on-the-job skills training during their incarceration. There is a need for CSC to examine the effect of CORCAN participation on key correctional results.

What we did

The current research compared the outcomes of three study groups: 1) offenders who participated in CORCAN employment, 2) offenders who participated in CSC institutional employment (employment that is not part of CORCAN and involves general work around the institution), and 3) offenders who had no employment assignment during their incarceration. Analyses examined: rates of institutional charges and admissions to segregation, time to and type of first conditional release, community job attainment and retention, and recidivism (any revocation and revocation with a new offence while on conditional release).

For more information

Nolan, A., Wilton, G., Cousineau, C., & Stewart, L. (2014). *Outcomes for offender employment programs: Assessment of CORCAN participation*. Research Report R-283. Ottawa, ON: Correctional Service of Canada.

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