



Research in Brief

Examining Time Spent in Administrative Segregation

Recent changes in administrative segregation practice have resulted in reducing duration.

Why we did this study

Substantial declines for both counts in and admissions to administrative segregation have been observed in recent years. Since April 2014, the federal population in administrative segregation showed a decrease of 41.8% from 780 to 454. Concurrently, fiscal year admissions to administrative segregation have decreased 18.4% from 8,319 to 6,788. While administrative segregation counts and admissions have followed the same downward trajectory, exploring trends in time spent or duration in administrative segregation adds some important information with respect to the utilization of administrative segregation in federal corrections.

What we did

All releases from administrative segregation were drawn from Correctional Service Canada's (CSC) Offender Management System for three consecutive fiscal years (2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16). In 2013-14 there were 8,181 releases from segregation, then in 2014-15 there were 8,418 releases and in 2015-16 there were 6,980 releases. Trend analyses explored various lengths of stay in days (less than 15, 15 to 29, 30 to 60, 61 to 120, greater than 120) over time, nationally as well as for women.

What we found

Overall, among those released from administrative segregation in 2013-14 there were 505 inmates (or 6%) who had spent more than 120 days. In 2014-15 there were 498 (or 6%) and in 2015-16 there were 247 (or 4%). This represents a substantial reduction of 258 inmates (or -51.0%) of longer-term placements over recent years. Of special note, in 2015-16 there were no women who had been in segregation over 120 days.

On the other hand, the percentage representation of those inmates released from administrative segregation who had spent less than 15 days was 49% in 2013-14, 50% in 2014-15 and increased to

53% in 2015-16. For women, the percentages were substantially higher, 86% in 2013-14, 85% in 2014-15 and 90% in 2015-16. Cumulatively, the percentage representation of those inmates released from administrative segregation who had spent less than 30 days was 66% in 2013-14, 67% in 2014-15 and increased to 71% in 2015-16. Again, for women the percentages were much higher, 95% in 2013-14, 97% in 2014-15 and 98% in 2015-16.

The percentage representation of those inmates released from administrative segregation who had spent between 30 and 60 days was 17% in 2013-14, remained the same in 2014-15 and decreased to 16% in 2015-16. For women, the percentages were substantially lower, 4% in 2013-14, 6% in 2014-15 and 2% in 2015-16. For those inmates released from administrative segregation who had spent between 60 and 120 days the percentage representation was 11% in 2013-14, 10% in 2014-15 and decreased to 9% in 2015-16. For women, the percentages were 1% in 2013-14, 0% in 2014-15 and 1% in 2015-16.

What it means

The recent and substantial decline in administrative segregation counts, admissions and duration is reflective of concerted efforts being made by CSC to improve the segregation process by analyzing risk; involving senior leadership more at the institutional level; enhancing oversight with regional and national authorities, reviewing cases earlier, and implementing a more structured assessment scheme. The aforementioned appear to be effectively moderating the duration of administrative segregation in federal corrections.

For more information

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