

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.

Federal Recidivism Rates: 2011-12 to 2020-21

More federal offenders are successfully reaching sentence expiry and not readmitted to federal custody within 5 years.

Why we are doing this study

Federal recidivism rates are reflective of the results of concerted efforts being made by the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) to deliver safe reintegration outcomes for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders. It is anticipated that placing special attention on delivering targeted interventions for diverse groups while on conditional release will lead to improved public safety and contribute to closing observed performance gaps.

What we did

CSC routinely reports information on public safety outcomes using the automated Performance Direct (PD) system. PD standardizes the historical reporting of two important metrics: 1) the number of offenders successfully reaching sentence completion without readmission (no revocations, no charges or reconvictions), and 2) the number of offenders not returning to federal custody within 5 years of sentence expiration. Performance outcomes over a ten-year period (2011-12 to 2020-21) were examined for the entire federal offender population and the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations separately.

What we found

In Table 1, statistics show that the number and percentage of offenders on conditional release successfully reaching sentence expiration date has increased over the past ten years (54.27% in 2011-12 and 61.45% in 2020-21). More specifically, the relative improvement over time has increased by 383 offenders (or 15.4%). However, it is noteworthy that Indigenous offenders on conditional release display lower rates of successful completion than non-Indigenous.

Table 1: Successfully Reaching Sentence Expiry Date

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Overall
2011-12	350 / 905 (38.67%)	2,140 / 3,683 (58.10%)	2,490 / 4,588 (54.27%)
2015-16	392 / 1,052 (37.26%)	2,236 / 3,587 (62.34%)	2,628 / 4,639 (56.65%)
2020-21	540 / 1,204 (44.85%)	2,333 / 3,471 (67.21%)	2,873 / 4,675 (61.45%)

Table 2 shows that the number and percentage of federal offenders not readmitted to federal custody within 5 years of sentence expiry date (SED) has increased over the past ten years (81.38% in 2011-12 and 87.51% in 2020-21). In particular, the relative improvement over time has increased by 494 (or 13.3%) offenders. As well, it is notable that non-Indigenous offenders have lower rates of federal readmission than Indigenous offenders.

Table 2: Not Readmitted within 5 Years Following SED

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Overall
2011-12	664 / 885 (75.03%)	3,038 / 3,664 (82.91%)	3,702 / 4,549 (81.38%)
2015-16	745 / 960 (77.60%)	3,285 / 3,832 (85.73%)	4,030 / 4,792 (84.10%)
2020-21	904 / 1,121 (80.64%)	3,292 / 3,674 (89.60%)	4,196 / 4,795 (87.51%)

What it means

Notwithstanding the substantial reductions in both federal recidivism measures for Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders during the past decade, there are some notable between group differences. These performance outcomes suggest that CSC continue to offer a differentiated approach to these diverse groups based on their respective needs and requirements for augmented community support.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Kent Merlin

