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Problem-Oriented Guides for Police

No. 12

Monitoring Offenders on Conditional Release

Lacey Schaefer
John E. Eck
Francis T. Cullen

Center for
Problem-Oriented Policing

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The Internet references cited in this publication were valid as of the date of this publication. Given that URLs and websites are in constant flux, neither the author(s) nor the COPS Office can vouch for their current validity.

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About the Response Guides Series

The *Response Guides* are one of three series of the *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police*. The other two are the *Problem-Specific Guides* and *Problem-Solving Tools*.

The *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police* summarize knowledge about how police can reduce the harm caused by specific crime and disorder problems. They are guides to preventing problems and improving overall incident response, not to investigating offenses or handling specific incidents. Neither do they coverall all of the technical details about how to implement specific responses. The guides are written for police—of whatever rank or assignment—who must address the specific problems the guides cover. The guides will be most useful to officers who:

- Understand basic problem-oriented policing principles and methods
- Can look at problems in depth
- Are willing to consider new ways of doing police business
- Understand the value and the limits of research knowledge
- Are willing to work with other community agencies to find effective solutions to problems

The *Response Guides* summarize knowledge about whether police should use certain responses to address various crime and disorder problems, and about what effects they might expect. Each guide:

- Describes the response
- Discusses the various ways police might apply the response
- Explains how the response is designed to reduce crime and disorder
- Examines the research knowledge about the response
- Addresses potential criticisms and negative consequences that might flow from use of the response
- Describes how police have applied the response to specific crime and disorder problems, and with what effect

The *Response Guides* are intended to be used different from the *Problem-Specific Guides*. Ideally, police should begin all strategic decision making by first analyzing the specific crime and disorder problems they are confronting, and then using the analysis results to devise particular responses. But certain responses are so commonly considered and have such potential to help address a specific crime and disorder problems that it makes sense for police to learn more about what results they might expect from them.

Readers are cautioned that the *Response Guides* are designed to *supplement* problem analysis, not to *replace* it. Police should analyze all crime and disorder problems in their local context before implementing responses. Even if research knowledge suggests that a particular response has proved effective elsewhere, that does not mean the response will be effective everywhere. Local factors matter a lot in choosing which responses to use.

Research and practice have further demonstrated that, in most cases, the most effective overall approach to a problem is one that is unlikely to provide you with sufficient information on which to base a coherent plan for addressing crime and disorder problems. Some combinations of responses work better than others. Thus, how effective a particular response is depends partly on what other responses police use to address the problem.

These guides emphasize effectiveness and fairness as the main considerations police should take into account in choosing responses, but recognize that they are not the only considerations. Police use particular responses for reason other than, or in addition to, whether or not they will work, and whether or not they are deemed fair. Community attitudes and values, and the personalities of key decision-makers, sometimes mandate different approaches to addressing crime and disorder problems. Some communities and individuals prefer enforcement-oriented responses, whereas others prefer collaborative, community-oriented, or harm-reduction approaches. These guides will not necessarily alter those preferences, but are intended to better inform them.

The COPS Office defines community policing as "a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime." These guides emphasize *problem solving* and *police-community partnerships* in the context of addressing specific public safety problems. For the most part, the organizational strategies that can facilitate problem solving and police-community partnerships vary considerably and discussion of them is beyond the scope of these guides.

These guides have drawn on research findings and police practices in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, and Scandinavia. Even though laws, customs and police practices vary from country to country, it is apparent that the police everywhere experience common problems. In a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected, it is important that police be aware of research and successful practices beyond the borders of their own countries.

Each guide is informed by a thorough review of the research literature and reported police practice, and each guide is anonymously peer-reviewed by a line police officer, a police executive and a researcher prior to publication. The review process is independently managed by the COPS Office, which solicits the reviews.

For more information about problem-oriented policing, visit the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing online at www.popcenter.org. This website offers free online access to:

- The *Problem-Specific Guides* series
- The companion *Response Guides* and *Problem-Solving Tools* series
- Special publications on crime analysis and on policing terrorism
- Instructional information about problem-oriented policing and related topics
- An interactive problem-oriented policing training exercise
- An interactive *Problem Analysis Module*
- Online access to important police research and practices
- Information about problem-oriented policing conferences and award programs.

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Members of the San Diego; National City, California; and Savannah, Georgia, police departments provided feedback on the guide's format and style in the early stages of the project.

Kimberly Nath oversaw the project for the COPS Office. Phyllis Schultze conducted research for the guide at Rutgers University's Criminal Justice Library. Nancy Leach coordinated the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing's production process. Marian E. Haggard edited this guide.

Introduction

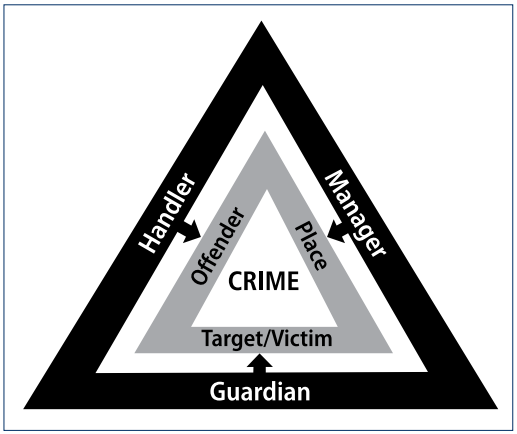
The routine convergence of three elements is necessary for a persistent crime problem: offenders, targets, and places. In addition, people who would normally prevent those crimes—controllers—must be missing or ineffective. This basic formula is often depicted by the crime problem triangle (see Figure 1). The elements in the inner triangle are necessary for crime, and the controllers in the outer triangle are sufficient for the prevention of crime. Police and researchers have developed and tested a variety of prevention options for all six elements.

The Goals of this Guide

This guide focuses on offenders; specifically, people who have already been convicted of crimes and who are under community supervision ordered by courts or correctional authorities. Although many of these individuals are not actively engaged in offending, the past behavior of people on probation and parole suggests that they have a heightened risk of committing a crime. Consequently, reducing the risks of offending for people on probation and parole can be an ingredient in sustainable solutions to crime problems.

In this guide we discuss how offenders are supervised by correctional agencies while on community release. These offenders can cause problems for police (e.g., recidivate and prompt calls for service), so understanding community supervision can be extremely useful for solving such problems. This response guide provides a review of the most effective practices for monitoring offenders on conditional release. For police and their partners, this will help them better understand community supervision, and appreciate the benefits and potential hurdles in their collaborations with community corrections agencies. For probation and parole authorities, this guide may help them develop an understanding of the ways police officers can assist offender supervision and community reintegration.

Figure 1. The Crime Problem Triangle



Police Interests

There are four reasons why offenders under community supervision are important to police:

- *First*, individuals on probation and parole have an elevated risk of recidivism. Knowing that this population of people is more likely to commit crime than the general population makes them a group of concern.
- *Second*, offenders on supervised release reside in the community instead of jail or prison. As such, individuals on probation or parole will be tempted by accessible targets or facilitating crime places. As the police seek to make targets less vulnerable and places less conducive to crime, addressing offenders under community supervision can also be an important component to reducing crime problems. While corrections agencies focus on court compliance and rehabilitation *after* the crime, the police have a distinct interest in preventing crime.
- *Third*, the police represent the best line of defense in protecting victims and witnesses in criminal court cases. Doing so requires that the police are knowledgeable of community supervised offenders in their jurisdiction.
- *Fourth*, these offenders are known; criminal justice agencies have some control over them, and the police in particular have leverage over offender conduct. This is important if there is reason to believe such offenders are connected to the crime problem being addressed. If they are, then police agencies should enlist another set of partners—probation and parole authorities—in their crime prevention efforts.

For these reasons, police departments may be interested in collaborating with community corrections agents. Yet in order to effectively partner with community correctional authorities, police need to know what strategies work. What sorts of supervision can curtail crime and what sorts may increase crime? What services are effective at curbing offending and what programs are ineffective? Researchers have come a long way in uncovering effective practices in deterring and treating offenders—not 100 percent of the time, but better than past alternatives. Equally important, we also know what practices do not work well.

This guide reviews such information, providing police with an overview of the best practices for managing offenders in the community. Specific recommendations for police wishing to partner with probation and parole authorities are also provided. A later section discusses strategies for use with special populations of offenders under community correctional control; however, the guide is written with a special emphasis on *adult* probationers and parolees that are at a *high risk* of committing additional crimes.

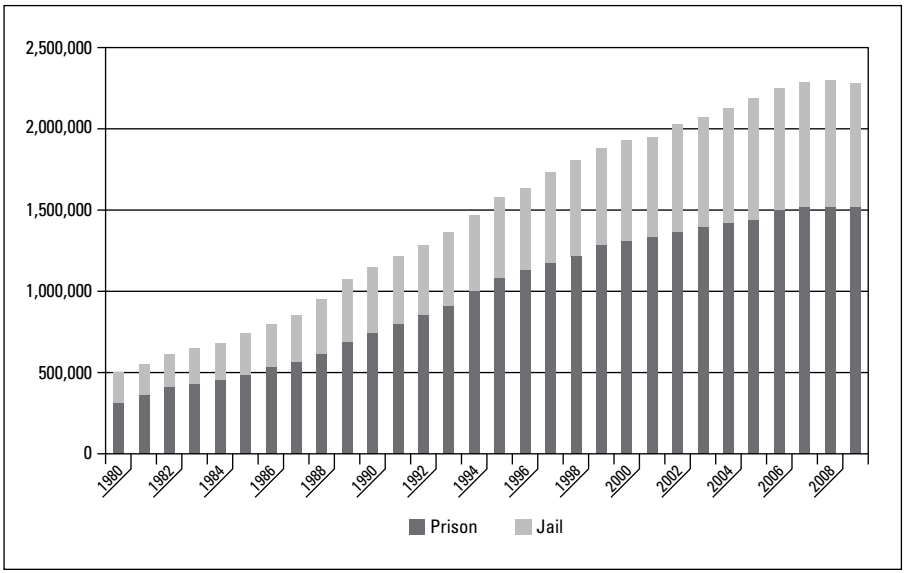
To be clear, we are not advocating that police departments assist in the monitoring of all offenders under community correctional supervision. However, some offenders on probation and parole are central contributors to common crime problems that police try to solve. As such, police departments may find it helpful to collaborate with formal offender supervisors. Although police officers will have a narrow role to play in preventing crime among high-risk probationers and parolees, it is important that they have a working appreciation for the larger goals of community supervision and the different strategies used to accomplish these goals. Only then can the research on the effectiveness of different offender monitoring tactics be presented to them, including specific recommendations tailored for how the police can best help.

Overview of Community Supervision

Correctional supervision in the community is a contract between the offender and the court: The individual's freedom is conditional, meaning that any behavior that violates certain rules can result in the revocation of community release and a return to incarceration. An offender can be conditionally released to community supervision for three reasons: pre-trial release/bail, probation, or parole (either mandatory or discretionary). Each of these groups is subject to different supervision conditions, and as such, the police can use different strategies to prevent reoffending among these different offenders.

Prior to detailing these strategies, it is imperative to first describe the problem. Importantly, changes in legislature and judicial practices have greatly impacted corrections populations. Many jurisdictions have removed the possibility for prisoners to earn their release, and many more offenders are being sentenced to incarceration (see Figure 2); this directly increases the number of offenders who will ultimately be supervised in the community, either through diversion or post-release supervision. With so many probationers and parolees, the communities absorbing these offenders must develop strategies to effectively prevent more crime.

Figure 2. Individuals in prison or in jail, 1980–2009



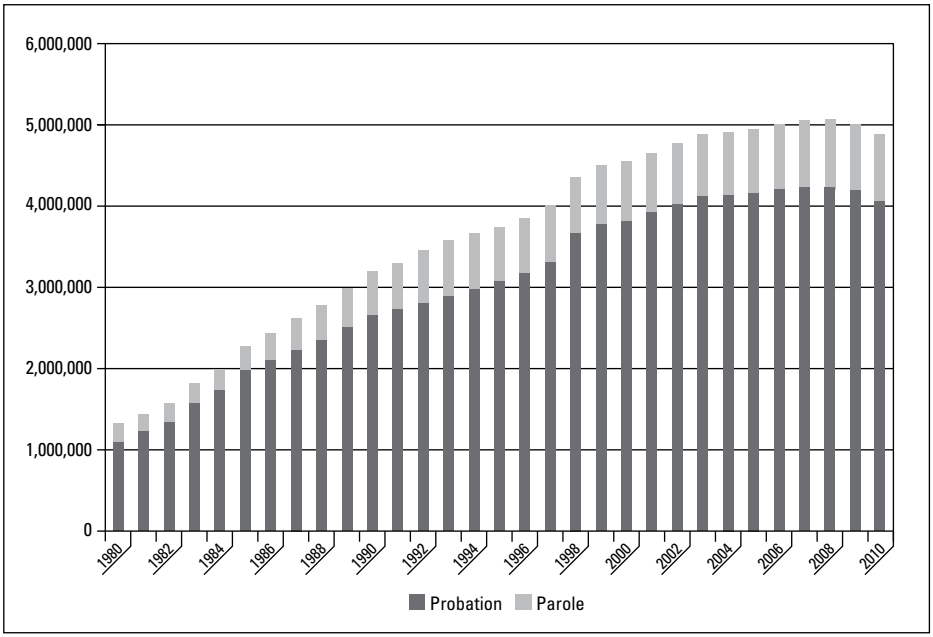
Source: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics

Although criminal justice spending has grown over time, it has not matched the increased number of offenders being monitored in the community. Police and community corrections agencies are being required to do more with less; even though caseloads have risen and support for reentry services has diminished, the public still demands community safety. These constraints must be balanced by using practices that are demonstrated to be useful. Given the context the police must work in, the need for effective monitoring practices is greater now than ever.

Descriptive Statistics

Though there is no way to know how many actively offending individuals are on conditional release, we know that the number of people on probation or parole at any one time is quite high. At the end of 2010, nearly five million offenders (about 1 in 48 adults in the United States) were under conditional release (see Figure 3). Of the 1.6 million offenders in American prisons, the overwhelming majority (around 95 percent) will be returned to the community, at the rate of approximately 700,000 individuals per year.

Figure 3. Individuals under probation or parole, 1980–2010



Source: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics

In 2010, the number of offenders under community supervision declined, following 30 years of increases. Of the 4,887,900 offenders on conditional release, probationers account for 83 percent of this total (see Table 1). Property offenders receive probation more often, while violent and drug offenders are a larger proportion of parolees. The average community supervision term is 22 months for probation, and 18 months for parole.

Rates of failure in probation supervision are much lower than for parole, although the raw number of offenders not completing the supervision term is higher for probationers. In 2010, nearly two-thirds of probationers satisfactorily completed the terms of their community sentence, while only 35 percent of parolees successfully completed their supervision. There is certainly room for growth, and some strategies are more effective than others; research consistently reports that recidivism is reduced when the emphasis of supervision is on service (risk reduction) as opposed to surveillance (risk control).[1] Criminal justice agents can contribute to crime prevention by understanding and altering the characteristics that place offenders at a high risk for reoffending.

Table 1. Characteristics of offenders under community supervision, 2010

Characteristics	Probation	Parole
Gender		
Male	76%	88%
Female	24	12
Race		
White	55%	42%
Black	30	39
Hispanic/Latino	13	18
American/Alaskan Native	1	1
Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	1
Most serious crime		
Violent	19%	27%
Property	28	24
Drug	26	35
Weapon	0	3
Public-order	18	0
Other	10	12
Status of supervision		
Active	73%	82%
Residential/Treatment program	1	0
Supervised out of jurisdiction	2	4
Inactive	6	7
Warrant status	6	0
Absconder	9	6
Other	3	2
Average length of supervision		
In months	21.7	17.9

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics

Goal Conflict

Police, courts, and corrections officials may have very different ideas of what success looks like for offenders on conditional release. These differences are important, because they reflect diversity in the goals that each agency has. Simply, interventions are usually judged by their ability to lower rates of recidivism; not so simply, how recidivism is measured affects what results are observed. There are two important and related points that readers should be aware of:

- *First*, there is a murky distinction between technical violations and official recidivism. Technical violations refer to when offenders break the rules of the supervision term (such as failing to seek employment or associating with a known gang member), while recidivism formally refers to those instances where offenders under community corrections sentences commit a new crime. Both can result in an arrest, although for different reasons. Technical violations of parole conditions accounted for more than one-third of all prison admissions in 2003, while only 10 percent of parolees returned to prison due to a new conviction.[2] Similarly, nearly half of all jail inmates are on probation or parole at the time of their arrest.[3] Thus, readers should appreciate the difference between the types of rearrest for community supervised offenders; one is due to a technical violation (like consistently showing up late for an Alcoholics Anonymous course) and one is due to committing a new crime (a breach of law regardless of the offender's supervision status). It is important to note that many technical violations are unrelated to criminal propensity, especially when generic rules of supervision are broken.
- *Second*, like other patterns of behavior, small relapses are not a total failure (e.g., cheating on a diet or smoking one cigarette while trying to quit). The revocation of a probation or parole sentence may not be a good reflection of persistence in crime, as the rules that were violated may be inconsequential to offending. This is important, because short-term compliance may be a necessary precursor to more lasting behavioral change, especially when the conditions of supervision are carefully designed to address the factors that cause that individual to commit crime. Yet, desisting from crime is a gradual and cumulative process, so many outcomes should be used to measure success. The effectiveness of community supervision should be assessed by "intermediate" measures (such as stable employment and participation in treatment) in addition to "hard" outcomes (like convictions for new crimes). Though an individual may remain involved in crime, their level of offending may decrease substantially while under supervision. This can be used to promote additional change within the offender, until their criminal identity is entirely eliminated and full desistance is observed.

When criminal justice agencies define success and measure outcomes very differently, this can mean that the goals of different agencies conflict with one another. Police have the immediate goal of reducing a crime problem of interest, preferably in a period of months. Community corrections officials have the more distant goal of reducing offending; rehabilitation takes many months, and the time to success is often measured in years, as relapses in progress are expected. These goals may sound similar, yet evaluating whether these goals are being met is different for each agency: Police look for absolute, definitive signs of success (e.g., thefts from auto in the target area have decreased by half), while correctional authorities look for comparative, subtle signs of success (e.g., the offender reports less anger since drug use has decreased).

These differences in what police and probation/parole authorities are trying to achieve may make partnerships difficult. With this kind of goal conflict there is unfortunately no global solution, yet importantly, the goal of enhancing public safety is shared. Police and community corrections agencies are encouraged to exploit the leadership and resources of local administrative and community networks. By soliciting many partners, conflicting goals are more likely to each be represented in the collaboration. Though no specific solution to this conflict exists, we can provide seven useful points to consider based on successful interventions:

- The more specific problem solvers are in defining their problem, and the more information that is known about the problem, the more likely it is that a leverage point can be located and exploited for a solution. A failure to create clearly-outlined goals will make it more difficult to resolve the goal conflict.
- The goals of a problem-solving effort should be expanded to include short-term and long-term solutions. When the immediate goal of resolving a crime problem is met and maintained, efforts can shift toward improving offender monitoring and treatment over time.
- Partners should set clear and measurable goals for offender monitoring that are directly tied to community safety (e.g., increase the median time between relapse). This commitment can be built into solutions that will reduce chances for offenders to recidivate.
- Problem solvers should isolate a small group of offenders whose behavior they are trying to change. In this way, recidivism is better understood and more easily corrected. Moreover, police will be able to identify the offenders that need to be removed from the community.

- By creating a specific definition of the crime problem and identifying a specific group of offenders to be targeted, police–community partnerships can provide precise assistance to the offender desistance process. This intensive focus will reduce the number of relapses, increase the time between relapses, and decrease the seriousness of relapses.
- Problem solvers should identify the factors that contribute to offender failure, locating the situations that cause recidivism. To improve offender outcomes, probation and parole authorities will likely need police partnerships to help solve specific problems.
- Offenders may be consulted in classifying the crime problem and developing solutions. Incorporating this expertise will help solve that crime problem, and will add to the rehabilitation of that individual by expanding his/her pro-social network and attitudes.

Varieties of Offender Monitoring

Community supervision has several goals. Practically, these types of sanctions provide alternatives to incarceration; this unburdens the system, especially when the individual has committed a minor crime or is a first-time offender. Conceptually, community supervision is a conditional form of release. Probation and parole are trials where the offender must demonstrate that they can be trusted to live freely. When they fail to meet the stipulations of their conditional release, they are incarcerated.

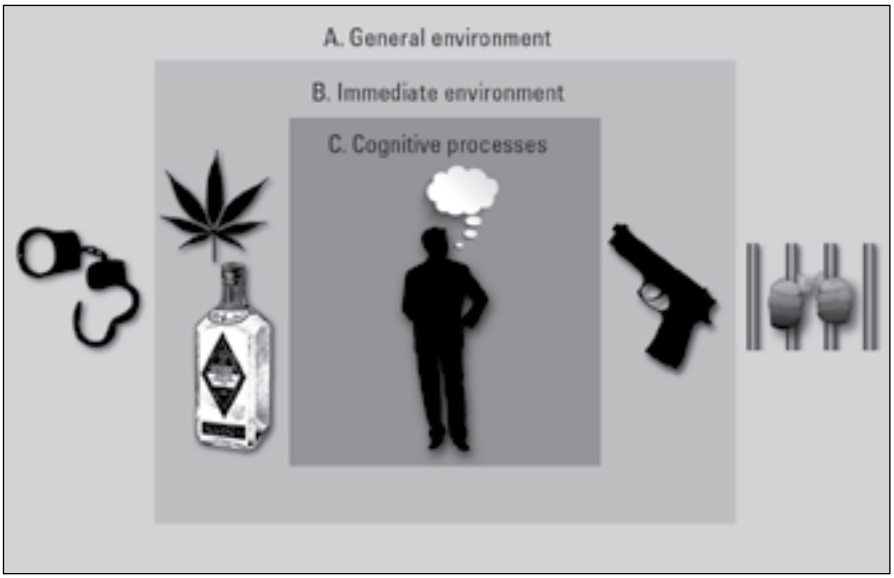
This section of the guide discusses the different kinds of community supervision strategies that are used to monitor offenders on probation and parole. It is important for police to appreciate what tactics are used with what offenders, as well as what practices are the most effective.

Conditions of Supervision

The rules the offender must abide by can be highly varied. Community supervision can incorporate a number of different conditions, and these should vary according to the offender's risks for reoffending. The court sometimes requires that particular conditions be part of a case plan; other times, community corrections officers tailor the supervision agreement for an offender, choosing from a number of possible rules and requirements.

Different conditions of community supervision point to different goals. The singular goal of supervisors is for the offending of their clients to cease; yet, how this goal is achieved varies, as there are different strategies for controlling offenders. Control may stem from internal or external sources, such as emotion management or threats of punishment; or, situational contingencies that link internal and external control together. This situational control is produced through two forms of pressure. Indirect pressure occurs when the supervising officer works with the objective of getting the offender to comply independently. Direct pressure occurs when the supervising officer works to ensure that environmental factors create incentives for the offender to avoid criminal behavior.

Figure 4. Targets of change with community supervised offenders



As such, there are different targets for change with community supervised offenders (see Figure 4). First, the **general environment** includes general threats of deterrence, such as the consequence of incarceration for misbehavior. Second, most often, offender supervisors aim to control the more **immediate environment**, such as by placing stringent restrictions on surroundings and activities (e.g., abstinence from drugs or alcohol). Third, rehabilitation aims to alter the **cognitive processes** of offenders. None of these three layers can stand alone in preventing recidivism; a quality supervision plan should include conditions that address all three factors, independently and in combination. Offenders must associate pro-social thoughts (C) with immediate situational triggers (B) that *lead to* the less visible threat of incarceration (A). Police play a crucial role in this supervision plan, helping offenders to identify and appreciate links between the environment, their reaction to it, and what consequences are likely to occur. Police officers' frequent contact with offenders makes them excellent facilitators for training probationers and parolees to reassess their environments.

Each of these targets for change has different recommended strategies for reducing recidivism. Though new technologies have emerged, many of these community supervision practices have not changed much since they were established. While some conditions are necessary for public safety, others are generic and only loosely linked to weak criminological theory. Typical stipulations in an offender's case plan include:

- Be of good conduct and obey all laws
- Comply with the orders of the court
- Obtain the supervising officer's permission before relocating or leaving the state
- Meet with the supervising officer as scheduled
- Submit to reasonable searches of person and property
- Do not associate with any person having a criminal record
- Do not be in the presence of illegal substances or use alcohol in excess
- Do not be in possession of any weapon
- Abide by any other special conditions

Table 2 on page 18 provides an overview of some of the popular "add-ons" to the traditional components of offender monitoring. Supervision conditions that are tailored to the risks and needs of the individual offender show the greatest promise of reducing recidivism; these programs involve graded sanctions, an emphasis on individual change, and reintegrative treatment. Some community corrections conditions were consistently shown to be counterproductive; programs that are generically applied despite the individual's risks, or heightened control through surveillance or behavior restrictions, all failed to reduce recidivism. Intensive supervision often leads to increases in technical violations, a huge contribution to the failure of community supervision.[4, 5]

Table 2. Components of traditional probation and parole

Component	Definition	Research findings
Alternative sentencing courts	Problem-solving adjudication, aimed at changing offender behavior; includes comprehensive, coordinated supervision	Strong research findings, especially when courts include graduated sanctions
Boot camps	Military-based regimen combining physical exercise and hard manual labor; often composed of volunteer offenders	Weak empirical support; some programs associated with increased recidivism
Community service	A symbolic form of victim restitution, involves court-ordered unpaid work to public service or a charitable organization	Mixed evaluation outcomes; positive results when combined with short detention or treatment
Day reporting centers	An effort to integrate control with treatment, offenders frequently check in with their officer and programs	Minimal positive support; sanctions may overemphasize control rather than change
Fines/restitution	Aims to quantify victim harm, requiring offenders to compensate for damage done; matched to ability to pay	Few research findings to support use beyond necessary reimbursement
Home detention	Employed as pretrial detainment or a means to restrict movement; used with electronic monitoring to verify presence	Moderate empirical support; although it increases control, it may be a form of net widening
Residential treatment centers	Often referred to as "halfway houses;" facilities that attempt to centrally locate many community corrections resources	Minimal evaluations support generic use; may be useful if problem-specific or reintegrative
Shock incarceration	Short period of incapacitation, followed by community supervision, designed to "shock" the offender into desisting	Moderate research support, when brief detention is combined with community treatment
Treatment mandate	Requiring an offender to participate in a program; may include individualized use or generic application	Mixed research findings; success of treatment depends on program type and offender motivation
Work release	Aim to bridge offenders between incarceration and community life; build social skills, including obtaining work	Moderate to strong support, when the goal is reentry rather than solely securing employment

Best Practices in Offender Supervision

Though buzzwords such as "evidence-based" and "best practices" may sometimes seem like empty rhetoric, true research-driven approaches can increase public safety. Agencies that desire to provide the best public service should be well versed in the policing research that identifies the supervision strategies most *and* least effective in combating crime. While there are dozens of strategies for reducing recidivism among probationers and parolees, the majority fall into one of two categories: rehabilitation or control (see Table 3 on page 19). Both supervision approaches have techniques that work to prevent crime—some that do not change offender behavior and others that cause more crime.

Table 3. Two models of offender community supervision

	Rehabilitation	**Control**
Primary objective	To change or limit the influence of *internal* factors that cause the individual to commit crime	To change or limit the influence of *external* factors that cause the individual to commit crime
Methods	Counseling, medication, guided rehearsal, behavior modification	Environmental crime prevention, drug testing, electronic monitoring, threat of arrest/incarceration
Indicator of success	A reduction in criminogenic risk	A reduction in offending
Target population	Offenders with antisocial beliefs, substance abusers, mentally ill	Repeat offenders, individuals exposed to environmental triggers (e.g., unstructured leisure time)
What works	Principles of effective intervention (risk, need, responsivity)	Graduated sanctions, directed deterrence
What doesn't work	Nondirective treatment (generic classes, talking cures), subcultural approaches	Punishing smarter, zero tolerance
Role of courts	Use leverage to mandate necessary treatment and services	Follow through on threats of incarceration for failure to comply with supervision conditions
Role of corrections	Create a case plan specifically tailored to the individual needs of the offender	Revise the case plan to reduce or strengthen external controls based on the offender's progress
Role of police	Service referral, encourage pro-social behavior, reward reform, use graduated freedoms	Recruit offender handlers, create place managers, strengthen target guardians, use graduated sanctions

Rehabilitation

Despite a long period when correctional policy maintained that offender treatment was a wasted effort, research now demonstrates the opposite. With the use of quality risk and needs assessments, the development of effective correctional interventions,[6] and a massive knowledge base of what works to prevent recidivism, offender treatment has returned to the mainstream. Crime prevention works when punishments and control are used in the background while the primary focus is individualized treatment.[7] Hundreds of empirical studies have shown that there are several principles that reduce reoffending (see Table 4 on pages 20–21).[8] Evaluations of community supervision programs demonstrate that the use of these principles can produce substantial reductions in reoffending.[9]

Table 4. Principles of successful supervision

Principle	Definition	Example
1. Define success as recidivism reduction and measure performance	Agencies must aim to work beyond public safety, with a more narrow goal of reducing recidivism; definitive benchmarks for measuring such must be provided.	Officers work with the intention of minimizing each individual's criminal activity; offenders are reassessed systematically to determine whether that goal is being addressed/met.
2. Tailor conditions of supervision	Conditions of release ought to be relevant to the individual offender and should be focused on those factors that are thought to contribute to criminal behavior.	Offenders should undergo substance abuse treatment only when their drug or alcohol use is clearly linked to their participation in criminal activity.
3. Focus resources on moderate- and high-risk offenders	Intensive interventions targeted at low-risk individuals may increase their offending; scarce resources should be provided to those with the greatest gains to be made.	The assessment of an individual's risk of reoffending will determine how much control they are subjected to and how much treatment they are afforded.
4. Frontload supervision resources	The period immediately following release poses the greatest risk for recidivism and offender needs; resources should be concentrated in the first weeks of supervision.	Community agencies begin case planning for offenders entering community supervision before official release and require more meetings in the first month of supervision.
5. Implement earned discharge	Lower risk offenders can earn an end to their supervision (or a reduction in the number or strictness of guidelines) by complying with stipulations or demonstrating positive change.	A non-violent offender may reduce the number of desk visits with his supervising officer from one per week to one per month following 90 days of model behavior.
6. Implement place-based supervision	Offenders should be supervised in the communities in which they live; this will provide access to and understanding of the individual's surroundings and relationships.	Officers have geographic-based caseloads so that resources are allocated by place; the agent becomes familiar with the offender's actual environment, beyond what a desk visit provides.
7. Engage partners to explain intervention capacities	Additional community organizations should be incorporated into offender treatment, particularly given the multiple needs of community supervised offenders.	Probation agencies may solicit partnerships with outlets for group therapy and pro-social ties or with organizations that can aid in housing, employment, or health assistance.
8. Assess criminogenic risk and need factors	Agencies ought to use a reliable assessment to identify the risk and need factors that are associated with the offender's criminal behavior; these findings create a case plan.	On intake, an officer employs a standardized assessment, making note of those factors that place the offender at high risk for recidivating; the officer works to reduce those specific needs.

Principle	Definition	Example
9. Develop and implement supervision case plans that balance surveillance and treatment	The supervision of offenders in the community should incorporate mechanisms of control, as well as outlets for treatment, aimed at monitoring and changing the offender.	An offender is required to undergo one home visit and one desk visit per week with random drug testing; the offender must also attend substance abuse and impulse control treatment.
10. Involve offenders to enhance their engagement in assessment, case planning, and supervision	Rather than a contact-driven approach, officers should incorporate a behavioral management model where the offender is an active participant in developing the case plan.	During the initial interview, the offender helps the supervising officer to prioritize the desired goals of supervision and to establish standards of motivation and acceptable outcomes.
11. Engage informal social controls to facilitate community reintegration	Officers cannot maintain persistent contact and do not know offenders well; they can rely on the offenders' relationships with family and friends to produce positive change.	In developing the case plan, an officer might inquire about the offender's support system, developing ways in which their family can be engaged toward reducing recidivism risk.
12. Incorporate incentives and rewards into the supervision process	Offender motivation may increase when positive reinforcement is present; to support pro-social change, good behaviors should be noted and rewarded, incentivizing compliance.	Following three months of no technical violations and a positive attitude, the supervising officer may award a certificate of achievement, ask them to mentor, and lower the frequency of reporting.
13. Employ graduated, problem-solving responses to violations of supervision conditions in a swift and certain manner	Minor violations can be handled best in the community; the sanction should be reflective of the severity of the infraction and must be quick and certain to enhance deterrence.	After failing an office drug test, the officer requires the offender to perform 10 hours of community service the following weekend; the second occurrence will result in 30 days in jail.

Source: The Pew Center on the States (2008), *Putting Public Safety First: 13 Strategies for Successful Supervision and Reentry*

Much has also been learned about what types of programs do not reduce recidivism. This is important, because resources are being wasted on ineffective practices, and some strategies may actually increase offending, thereby jeopardizing public safety. Interventions that do not try to change the characteristics that are known to cause crime are likely to fail. Popular subcultural, medical, and new age "treatments" (such as pet therapy, cosmetic surgery, baking classes, or drum circles) cannot logically prevent crime because they are not addressing what causes people to break the law.

Control

Tough-on-crime initiatives argue that increasing control over offenders will reduce recidivism. Advances in technology have made heightened surveillance of offenders possible, such as through drug testing and electronic monitoring. Evaluations show that many programs have substantially increased their observation of offending activity, though reoffending rates have not changed; this is due to an increased detection of technical violations that may not be related to criminal activity, and to a failure to incorporate treatment components. Numerous studies show that an increase in toughness, surveillance, or control *does not* correspond with positive offender change or improved public safety. In fact, many studies demonstrate that these "punishing smarter" strategies overwhelm the system. While popular, one of the most ineffective practices is intensive supervision;[10] watching offenders more closely does not reduce crime, but only draws more attention to the misbehavior that can revoke community release.

After a number of blanket approaches to offender control failed to reduce reoffending, many jurisdictions began experimenting with focused deterrence (see "Focused Deterrence" on page 23). These strategies intensify enforcement on those individuals responsible for much of the offending within a high crime area. Evaluations of these interventions have shown substantial promise in crime reduction. The principle components of focused deterrence are 1) communicating a clear, unambiguous threat to a small number of active networked offenders, 2) coupling the message of intolerance with active community support, and 3) providing services to offenders wanting to exit crime. For offenders who desire to change their lifestyle after being targeted by law enforcement, greater success is achieved when treatment is provided as a substitute to crime. Many high-risk offenders targeted with focused deterrence are on probation or parole, and police departments can be excellent members of these multi-agency initiatives.

Rehabilitation and Control

Given the limitations of traditional supervision, community corrections agencies recognized the need to balance rehabilitation and control (refer back to Figure 4 on page 16). While correctional rehabilitation is a necessary ingredient to preventing crime, individuals at high risk of committing additional crimes must be subject to some level of control as a safeguard. Multi-agency collaborations allow for the marriage of two seemingly incompatible goals: Offenders can be actively monitored so that risk is managed and short-term compliance is achieved, while still focusing on services that address the factors necessary for long-term behavioral change.

Focused Deterrence

While many evaluations of focused deterrence interventions show a reduction in local crime, this Guide argues that the reason for this success goes beyond heightened law enforcement.

Mark Kleiman's 2009 book, *When Brute Force Fails*, offers an excellent explanation for why this is so. An atmosphere of zero-tolerance can be developed without proud use of incarceration. The key is to clearly specify the new rules of the crime and law game, and then deliver the promised consequences any time one of these rules is broken.

David Kennedy's 2011 book, *Don't Shoot*, provides a number of examples of how to accomplish this task. Among these include: emphasizing certainty of punishment rather than severity, concentrating on law enforcement efforts as opposed to dispersing them, communicating specific threats to individual offenders, and enforcing the rules of conditional release to support community corrections efforts.

Related to offender monitoring and treatment, focused deterrence means targeting resources toward individual offenders. Rather than hoping that generic threats of punishment influence their behavior, police should tailor the treatment options and consequences of crime to the specific offender.

One tactic that uses these best practices is proactive community supervision.[11] Excessive scrutiny of offenders' compliance with rules is not effective; the closer offenders are watched, the more they are observed violating their supervision conditions. So rather than emphasizing meticulous control, this proactive community supervision model manages behavior. Offenders' behavior is carefully monitored and measured, rewarded and punished as necessary, until pro-social change is observed. Features of these programs include evidence-based standardized offender risk assessments, matching supervisees to services that effectively reduce the propensity to commit crime, emphasizing achievement through the reinforcement of positive behavior, and maintaining an environment where offenders make small improvements and lessons can be learned from relapses.[12]

These proactive problem-solving partnerships are one of the most effective ways of producing pro-social behavior among community supervised offenders.[13] Nevertheless, behavioral management strategies require multiple community partnerships, and the police are pivotal in shaping the actions of offenders on release. The following section outlines specific strategies for police collaborations with community corrections agencies, demonstrating how partnerships can effectively prevent crime among probationers and parolees.

Police Partnerships with Probation and Parole

Although probation and parole authorities maintain central responsibility for the monitoring of offenders on conditional release, research shows that partnerships with community organizations are highly beneficial.[14] Evaluations of these partnerships show that they are successful because each agency provides information, capabilities, and approaches that complement those of others involved in the collaboration. Although potential barriers and hurdles do exist, commitment to an interagency goal of reducing crime among probationers and parolees limits some of these roadblocks.

The police are the most influential partner in offender supervision strategies. The very nature of their public role—to maintain law and order—has relevance for these offenders. Police officers work to ensure that community members follow the law, and they become extremely familiar with the chronic offenders in their jurisdiction. As community corrections agents cannot keep constant tabs on the offenders under their control, it is a practical necessity to incorporate the knowledge base and interpersonal relations skills of the police. Yet, as the police cannot help to supervise all offenders on probation and parole, community corrections agencies should identify for police partners those offenders that are at the highest risk of recidivism.

In addition to the police, offenders' communities are crucial in encouraging positive supervision outcomes. Community agencies are often responsible for making targets and places less conducive to crime, they can create crime controllers (see Figure 1 on page 5), and they are invaluable bedrocks of treatment options. When police strengthen relationships with community service providers, officers can advocate for offenders needing treatment and can encourage treatment providers to reduce crime opportunities. To be effective, police and social service providers must focus on each offender's individual risks for recidivism rather than a rule-based zero-tolerance strategy. By using community policing approaches, neighborhood involvement in probation and parole supervision is incorporated. These community collaborations help the police to make neighborhood residents a part of the solution for offenders on supervision.

Organizational Strategies

> "What prevents effective partnerships between two justice entities that have the same mission? One answer that I have heard often is that police spend much of their time getting offenders off the street while probation and parole officers are trying to keep these same offenders in the community."
>
> —*Carl Wicklund, Executive Director, American Probation and Parole Association.*[15]

Indeed, police–corrections collaborations can be effective, but the traditional roles of each organization may hinder the chance to achieve offender change. A balanced mission is needed, which is best achieved in a community policing framework.[16] Jurisdictions seeking to establish a police–corrections partnership should be prepared for three goal-related problems, as identified by David Murphy's research on corrections-police partnerships.[17] First, officers identify mission creep as problematic, in which their roles and responsibilities expanded beyond what was manageable. Second, mission distortion is common, where officers' identity in relation to their professional role becomes blurred. Third, officers complain of organizational lag, where agency nonparticipation slow the ability of officers to make progress. These potential problems can be overcome in partnerships with foresight and a commitment to success. Quality collaborations include a clearly defined mission statement, an established understanding of each agencies role, and clear ways to reach the stated goals.[18] Two organizational strategies are most effective in meeting these criteria.

The first strategy, which is the most common type of collaboration, involves police and community corrections agencies maintaining clear boundaries. Rather than creating one organization, these two separate agencies find ways to otherwise share information with one another, sometimes in an equally accessible database. In other partnerships, probation officers and police officers meet to exchange information on what is known about and what is expected of offenders under community supervision. This open communication should continue beyond meetings, and police should feel comfortable (even obligated) to contact supervising officers when additional information is obtained or needed. At minimum, these agencies must work together so that police, in routine work, have a clear idea of the high-risk offenders in their jurisdiction.

The second strategy, which has been popularized in recent years, involves police and corrections agents merging roles. Many jurisdictions (mostly in the United Kingdom) are creating multi-agency collaborations referred to as "polibation." These partnerships create a complementary nature between departments by providing cross-training to officers.[19] In one program, a single professional is assigned to provide one-on-one support for an individual offender from pre-release to the expiration of their term. This polibation officer coordinates agency activities, and motivates probation/parole and police to balance compliance with supervision conditions and treatment efforts.[20] The presence of a polibation officer allows for others to focus on rehabilitation or control, with the central organizer balancing these competing goals.

Innovative Collaborations

For interagency partnerships to be mutually beneficial and enhance public safety, four features should be present.[21] First, the goals, roles, and responsibilities of each partnering agency must be clearly defined. Next, the missions of probation/parole versus police must be balanced, organizationally and in practice. Third, each agent/agency must respect the rights and responsibilities of other involved parties. Finally, the organizational structure of the partnership may need to be modified, and re-modified, to fully support a blossoming partnership.

For a brief review of some successful partnerships, see Table 5 on pages 28–29 (readers should note that not all of these programs are still in existence, although much can still be learned from what elements worked in each of these programs). A common theme in these collaborations is increased communication, fostering teamwork, and increasing reciprocity between agencies. Problem-oriented pairings are best, such as fugitive apprehension units or specialized enforcements, in which the police help to target high-risk probationers and parolees. Successful collaborations exhibit three important points in the supervision process: 1) engagement of the offender in the process of change through the assessment of their crime-causing characteristics and development of a plan to address these factors, 2) involvement in early behavioral changes through the use of targeted services and controls, and 3) sustained change through compliance management techniques.[22]

Police should partner with community corrections officers as formal controls (constant surveillance) give way to informal controls (such as through family or treatment providers). For low-risk offenders, police should work on establishing rapport, providing positive reinforcement to probationers and parolees observed engaging in pro-social behavior. For high-risk offenders, police may work in a control capacity (such as enforcing curfew), but may also encourage or help offenders who are having difficulty in meeting pro-social needs.

Table 5. Noteworthy interagency collaborations

Collaboration (location)	Overview	Strategic components for police
Reentry Partnership Initiative (multiple sites throughout the United States)[23]	These initiatives seek collaboration among a number of community organizations, led by probation/parole and police. The reentry process is viewed as a community-wide system that works collectively to increase public safety and encourage offender change.	During the institutional phase, police may help determine who to include in the partnership (offender classification); in the structured reentry phase, police may oversee community boards that review offender progress and make accommodations to the reentry plan; in the community reintegration phase, officers work to enforce supervision conditions and make recommendations for pro-social engagements that will limit criminal behavior.
Violence Reduction Partnership (Indianapolis, IN)[24]; Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV; Cincinnati, OH)[25]	These innovate programs included an interagency strategic response to achieve homicide reductions among chronic, at-risk offenders and victims.	Community treatment resources are matched to high-risk offenders, who are identified through collection of shooting data and information obtained from Street Workers. Notification meetings are held for those offenders deemed most influential in the hope that the message of zero-tolerance violence will be delivered to their criminal associates. This focused deterrence, pulling-levers approach seeks to respond to continued violence with severe sanctions.
Project Addressing Repeat Criminality (ARC; England)[26]	This program targets persistent drug offenders, offering them a form of intensive supervision. The project relies on individualized assistance, through multi-agency collaboration in case planning.	Both correctional and law enforcement officers work with offenders on creating and abiding by the supervision plan. Offenders are viewed as active participants in their own community supervision. Rather than focusing on heightened surveillance, this intensive program tries to locate areas to exploit offender change, with attitudinal shifts being more important than avoiding behavioral relapse.
Operation IMPACT (New York State)[27]	This initiative aims for a data-driven approach to policing, relying on an exchange of information, tools, and resources between police and probation/parole.	This highly focused initiative emphasizes law enforcement partnerships, crime analysis, and intelligence development/sharing, relying on one another for expertise and assistance. Uses a "no caseload" approach, where officers are assigned geographic units only. Officers work in the community, making frequent home, street, and work/school visits. Officers invest in high-risk offenders, making effort to involve them in pro-social activities.

Collaboration (location)	Overview	Strategic components for police
Supervision Management and Recidivist Tracking Partnership (SMART; Redmond, WA)[28]	Police and community corrections officers work together to make street sweeps, targeting high-risk crime areas to enforce the law and violations of supervision conditions.	This partnership operates on the assumption that police should be familiar with community supervised offenders within their beat. Though this program requires officers to step outside their traditional professional roles, the intervention is highly effective but not costly. By collaborating (such as through weekly ride-alongs), the officers may work together to identify community supervised offenders and ensure they are within their conditions and the law.
Project Spotlight (TX)[29]	A comprehensive approach to crime reduction that emphasizes offender accountability but balances control with assistance.	To balance the control of offenders and individualized treatment, officers work with each individual in creating their own case plan. Each offender details their own supervision provisions, treatment goals, and supervision conditions/ sanctions. By employing small caseloads, frequent contacts, and multi-agency coordination, the success of the intervention can be attributed to the motivation of individual officers.
Operation Night Light (Boston, MA)[30]; Operation Nightwatch (St. Louis, MO)[31]	These police-probation partnerships work to increase compliance with supervision conditions among high-risk offenders.	To achieve deterrence, police and probation officers are paired to enhance supervision. High-risk offenders are given geographic restrictions, and officers make frequent curfew checks, even visiting popular youth hangouts to search for probationers. Community members are incorporated into each individual's case plan to encourage pro-social behavior and report violations of supervision.
Community Safety Partnerships (multiple sites in the United Kingdom)[32]	An effort to reduce recidivism among supervised offenders by providing a holistic and individualized approach to case planning.	This multi-agency collaboration relies on three mechanisms. First, strategic planning identifies the specific profile of the offender's activity, their risk and needs, and their likely pathway out of crime. Second, problem-solving approaches to operational activities are used, such as through information sharing and targeted policing. Third, case management is required to make individualized choices and modifications to treatment/supervision when necessary.

To help police departments and community corrections agencies create meaningful partnerships, we have outlined specific ways officers can assist in monitoring offenders on conditional release. Ideally, collaborations should exercise actions that emphasize both rehabilitation and control.

Rehabilitation

While traditional treatment approaches, such as offender participation in rehabilitation programs, are outside the control of the police, there are many things officers can do to stimulate and maintain law-abiding behavior among probationers and parolees:

1. Service referral: Police officers who are familiar with the resources available in their community can refer offenders to services and encourage/help them to follow through.
2. Offense interruption: Not only can police disrupt pending criminal activity (e.g., breaking up a large group or monitoring a street segment), they can be advocates for and models of pro-social choices.
3. Encourage pro-sociality: Motivation to change is an important component of treatment success, and police officers play an influential role in encouraging offender change.
4. Reward reform: When engaging with offenders, police officers should provide praise and other reinforcements when they observe positive behavior.
5. Use discretion/graduated freedoms: The interaction style used by police should become more lenient and upbeat as offenders demonstrate gradual desistance.

Control

Because offenders on conditional release have a demonstrable pattern of breaking the law, the police play a pivotal role in detecting, preventing, and responding to relapses in anti-social behavior. In particular, interagency collaborations provide an opportunity for police to enforce conditions of supervision agreements and provide superior surveillance of and information about high-risk supervisees; this allows community corrections agents with useful data and the ability to focus on offender treatment. There are five specific tools that police officers can use to help prevent community supervised offenders from recidivating:

1. Maintain leverage: Police represent formal social control, and can use the threat of arrest and supervision revocation (usually leading to incarceration) to provoke compliance.

2. Recruit offender handlers: Officers familiar with an offender's peer group (friends, family, mentors, and neighbors) can influence these individuals to help police these offenders and encourage pro-social behavior.

3. Create place managers: To disrupt the attraction of offenders to their normal crime hot spots, police can solicit the help of additional controllers to monitor for misbehavior among community supervised offenders (from breeching a probation stipulation like being out past curfew, to anti-social behavior and law violations).

4. Strengthen target guardians: Because officers are familiar with the elements of a situation that attract offenders, the police can help design and implement solutions that change or protect these targets.

5. Use discretion/graduated sanctions: Recognizing that zero-tolerance leads to high failure rates, police should be sensitive to the gradual process of offender change; punishments should be proportional to the misconduct, and can be used as teachable moments.

Policing Special Offender Groups

Many probationers and parolees belong to a special category of offenders that require unique supervision conditions. While there are a great number of special offender groups, we have chosen five classifications that the police are most likely to encounter. And although each category has dozens of research studies about what works in preventing crime, space limitations here prevent a full review. In addition to encouraging pro-social behavior among offenders and monitoring probationers and parolees for compliance with the conditions of their supervision, there are special tasks for which the police are well suited.[33, 34] Many of the jobs detailed could be molded to fit other classes of special offenders, and we encourage readers to reference the endnotes for more detailed information about a particular intervention. We have selected a few example tasks to illustrate how the police are situated to assist community corrections in monitoring offenders.

Sex Offenders

Two stipulations common to sex offender supervision have excellent opportunities for police aid. First, many individuals are required to enroll in a sex offender registry, several of which require some form of electronic monitoring; this gives officers the ability to track the movements of these offenders. Second, most sex offenders are restricted in their whereabouts; police should be knowledgeable of and enforce these space restrictions (e.g., an offender cannot be within 500 yards of a playground). The police are also well positioned to provide offender identification and victim notification services.[35] In addition to past victims, officers can provide expert training about victim avoidance measures.

Prostitutes & Johns and Drug Dealers & Drug Buyers

Many sex and drug solicitation and sales offenses stem from general social disorder. According to broken windows policing, minor community incivilities can open the floodgates to more serious offending; by improving neighborhood conditions, it sends the message to offenders that that place is not conducive to crime.[36] The police are a crucial part of multi-agency and community-wide interventions aimed at disrupting early signs of these offenders.[37] Aside from place management, officers are ideally situated to assist corrections agents in conducting meetings and property/person searches.

Drunk Drivers

Many offenders convicted of driving while intoxicated receive special conditions as part of their provisional release. Police can assist in enforcing supervision stipulations.[38] For example, many offenders are prohibited from consuming alcohol, or being in attendance of any place or event where alcohol is knowingly served; they may also have a court-ordered curfew or general restrictions on driving. Officers can accompany corrections agents during curfew checks, and should encourage compliance with (and reprimand violations of) supervision conditions.

Gang Members

Being in a gang is not a crime, but the social activities involved with such associations can often lead to crime. Most offenders on community supervision are restricted from socializing with gang members, possessing a weapon, or being around drugs or alcohol. Police departments are most effective at targeted enforcement as part of a larger focused deterrence initiative (see "Focused Deterrence" on page 23).[39] As part of these interventions, probation and parole officers often perform home visits, where police can assist corrections in conducting home searches, making service referrals, and reinforcing the deterrence ("pulling levers") message.[40]

Chronic Nuisance Offenders

One of the most effective approaches to combating chronic nuisance offending is community-oriented policing.[41] Additionally, using a problem orientation allows the police to enforce public disorder ordinances that are contributing to reoffending. In relation to community supervised offenders in particular, police officers can meet with offenders prior to their release to help outline the conditions of their freedom, clarify expectations, and provide the threat of enforcement for violations of their case plan.

Chronic Violent Offenders

Focusing policing efforts on high-rate serious offenders has the potential to prevent more crimes with less effort; however, doing so requires a multi-agency intervention, and a wealth of community resources for offenders seeking to desist.[42] In aiding probation and parole agencies, police officers can provide expert surveillance and perform supervision condition compliance checks during home visits.[43] Police departments can additionally provide victim notification and education resources. Again, when the offenders are known, a targeted enforcement approach (see "Focused Deterrence" on page 23) works best.

Conclusion

Because offenders on conditional release can relapse and commit new crimes, police have a vested interest in monitoring these individuals and preventing recidivism. As the information in this guide has discussed, there are a number of tactics that are proven to be effective at reducing relapse among community supervised offenders; equally important, there are several strategies that do not work, and can even make things worse. Although police–corrections partnerships are young, we hope that the ideas presented in this guide will provide readers with practical solutions for policing conditionally released offenders.

Potential Challenges

While police want to maximize public safety, a number of offender's rights must also be considered. To ensure that police–probation/parole partnerships do not violate the Constitutional rights of offenders, there are two potential limitations that police should be mindful of.

First, experience with past police–community corrections partnerships reveal a number of civil liberties concerns. Most problematic are warrantless searches. Much collaboration involves police officers accompanying probation or parole agents to do home visits or curfew checks. This creates the "stalking horse" phenomenon, in which police gain access to offenders' homes through their partnering visit.[44] Police may accompany probation or parole on warrantless home visits so long as they are under direction of the community corrections agent, and the search is performed for probationary purposes. When the probation/parole officer is being guided by police, or when home visits serve police purposes, resulting gains are illegal.

Second, many innovative programs rely on sharing information relevant to supervised offenders; and though the potential benefits of data exchanges are innumerable, many barriers are present. The National Institute of Justice identifies three steps to overcoming obstacles in data sharing:[45]

- *First*, exact confidentiality laws must be known, with particular attention to the scope and quality of the data. Organizations must find out what limitations exist for intra-agency information sharing. Often, permission can be gained to bypass confidentiality restrictions following approval of new crime reduction partnerships.
- *Second*, policies for data entry and access may need to be modified. When information cannot be freely exchanged due to existing procedures, changes must be made to data storage and retrieval systems so that agents from either side may access the shared database.

- *Third*, staff should be made aware of the benefits of improved and expanded information flow. When job performance will be affected, staff should be trained on how to work within the bounds of the new data sharing procedures. In particular, staff can learn how to maximize the other agency's data without interrupting existing processes.

Implications for Police and Offender Monitoring

Any problem-solving effort that only deals with offenders risks being unsustainable. New offenders may replace rehabilitated offenders unless the opportunities for crime are also reduced. Problem-solving efforts must address more than one side of the crime triangle (see Figure 1 on page 5).

Offender-only solutions are not only vulnerable to offender replacement, they may be less effective than solutions that marry monitoring and rehabilitation to crime opportunity blocking. The reason for this is simple: An offender undergoing rehabilitation who is routinely tempted by crime opportunities is more likely to relapse than a similar offender who is not tempted. By blocking temptations, chances of relapse decrease. We suggest that there is an important synergy between opportunity blocking and rehabilitation. Problem-solving solutions that combine both treatment and control can convert active offenders to former offenders faster, and can prevent new offenders from being created.

The most effective collaborations will use police in a specific capacity for which they are useful, rather than in a general support role for corrections agencies. Using the information in this guide, there are specific implications for how police can assist in monitoring offenders on conditional release. Referring back to the crime triangle (see Figure 1 on page 5), police can follow six guidelines to help reduce recidivism of probationers and parolees, thereby increasing public safety:

- **Offender:** Police should understand and support the principles of effective correctional supervision (see Table 4 on pages 20–21). When resources are targeted at offenders who are at greatest risk of reoffending, when the services given match the specific needs of offenders, and when delivered in settings conducive to offender change, recidivism reductions will be great. Police officers can focus on high-risk offenders, and engage in crime prevention tactics that are proven effective.
  - **Handler:** Police on their own are very important offender handlers. Community-oriented policing should maximize informal social control, by soliciting the help of the offender's family, friends, and neighbors. When the police recruit additional handlers, these individuals act as an extended arm of law enforcement, and send the message that an offender's entire social circle is committed to their success.

- **Place:** Police can direct resources so places become less suitable for offending. Community-oriented policing can accomplish this by helping neighborhood residents to take ownership of their areas; by reducing or correcting minor incivilities, the surroundings convey that more serious crime will not be tolerated.
  - **Manager:** Police should recruit the owners of crime-prone places. Officers can solicit cooperation from managers of locations that are frequented by probationers and parolees. Given the extensive knowledge that police have of the daily routines of community supervised offenders, this information can be exploited to seek the assistance of place managers in limiting reoffending.
- **Target/Victim:** Police can work to make targets of crime less attractive and potential victims of crime less vulnerable. By understanding the routine activities of offenders under community supervision, officers can focus their resources on the targets and victims most likely to fall prey to probationers and parolees.
  - **Guardian:** Police should enlist informal guardians of potential targets and victims. Officers can educate residents about the threat of crime created by offenders on conditional release. By heightening surveillance within a neighborhood, law enforcement is able to extend itself to the most capable protectors of targets and victims vulnerable to crime.

Police agencies represent an invaluable tool in improving outcomes for conditionally released offenders, and police–community corrections partnerships should be pursued. Police agencies also have a vital role to play when the emphasis of offender monitoring is the prevention of crime through the promotion of desistance. Notably, police may expand their tactics to include informal social control and community justice, and may serve as experts in surveillance and deterrence. Most importantly, when police are aware of the offenders in their community that are supervised on conditional release, they are in a unique position to enhance control and match offenders to services.

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