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Research Snippet

Reintegration Challenges Facing Women Offenders

KEY WORDS: *community supervision, parole, federal women offenders, reintegration*

What it means

Our results demonstrated that, according to Parole Officers, the majority of women offenders face challenges to successful reintegration, particularly relating to finances and housing. Reintegration challenges such as these can often impede an offender’s success while under community supervision. A greater focus on addressing these challenges pre-release (e.g., obtaining proper identification documents) may lessen the impact of certain challenges and thereby contribute to successful community outcomes.

What we found

Parole Officers reported that the most common reintegration challenges facing women were having no credit history and the burden of financial debt (see Table). Other notable reintegration challenges for women include: not having transportation, not being able to afford a residence and not having references for housing.

Impetus

The *Revised National Community Strategy for Women Offenders* (CSC, 2010) notes that supportive supervision relationships that can aid women in overcoming challenges such as financial and housing difficulties, is a central principle of women’s corrections. Identifying the most salient reintegration challenges can aid in improving the transition to the community and increase success rates.

What we did

As part of a larger project examining the needs of women offenders under community supervision, 57 Community and Institutional Parole Officers completed an online survey answering questions regarding the women in the community or soon to be released from an institution to the community that they currently supervise. The Parole Officers who participated provided information regarding approximately half the women in custody (*n* = 247) and under supervision in the community (*n* = 264) at the time the data were collected. Surveys were completed between January 14 and February 5, 2013.

Reintegration Challenges Facing Women Offenders

Challenge	Women Facing Challenge According to POs %		
	None	Some	Most/All
Have no credit history	11	23	66
Have financial debt	8	29	63
Do not have transportation ^a	33	19	48
Cannot afford a residence	21	32	47
Do not have references for housing	25	36	39
Do not have references for a job	23	40	37
Do not have or difficulties accessing a family physician ^a	40	33	27
Do not have a history of employment	24	54	22
Do not have proper identification documents	37	39	24
Do not have a current telephone number ^a	81	16	3

^a Calculated using only Community Parole Officers’ responses.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#) or contact us by phone at (613) 995-3975.

You can also visit the website for a full list of research publications.

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