California Prison Programs and Reentry Pathways

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Why evaluate prison programs?

- California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) expanded programs in 2005
- In 2012, CDCR aimed to reach 70% of eligible people
- Other agencies raised concerns
  - People do not get the programs they need
  - Programs do not achieve aims or reduce recidivism
  - Recommended an independent evaluation
PPIC and CDCR began collaborating in 2018

- We focus on 168,500 people released between 2015 and 2019
- We examine Division of Rehabilitative Programs (DRP) programs
- The Office of Research (OR) provides data
- The current report lays the groundwork for future research
California prisons and prison programs impact many Californians

- 1 in 1,000 Californians released from prison each year
- In 2015, 46% had participated in any program
- By 2019, 64% had participated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Released</th>
<th>Participated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>40K</td>
<td>19K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>34K</td>
<td>20K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>36K</td>
<td>22K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>37K</td>
<td>22K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>37K</td>
<td>24K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First-timers are more likely to be imprisoned for violent crime than those with prior prison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Domestic violence</th>
<th>Assault (not DV)</th>
<th>Violence (not assault)</th>
<th>Non-violent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First time in prison</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felony Conviction</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imprisonment Crime</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prior prison term</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felony Conviction</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imprisonment Crime</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
People in prison have significant needs that programs aim to address

Percent with medium or high COMPAS scores

- Education: 41%
- Substance Use: 68%
- Anger Management: 47%
- Criminal Thinking: 40%
- Family Relationships: 25%
- Employment: 41%
CDCR offers education, employment, and rehabilitative programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Rehabilitative</th>
<th>Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Basic Education (ABE)</td>
<td>Substance Use Disorder Treatment (SUDT)</td>
<td>Career Technical Education (CTE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GED</td>
<td>Anger Management</td>
<td>Transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Courses</td>
<td>Criminal Thinking</td>
<td>Cal-ID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DRP offers other programs PPIC will evaluate. PPIC will not evaluate Prison Industry Authority, self-help, or innovative programs.
CDCR expanded programs and added slots between 2014 and 2019

- Education
- Rehabilitative
- Employment
Participation rates increased but stayed low

**Education**
- High School Courses: 8% (2015) to 13% (2019)
- Adult Basic Education (Level 1): 8% (2015) to 13% (2019)

**Rehabilitative**
- Substance Use Disorder: 3% (2015) to 10% (2019)
- Family and Relationships: 8% (2015) to 19% (2019)

**Employment**
- Transitions: 4% (2015) to 8% (2019)
- Career Technical Education: 5% (2015) to 12% (2019)
### Targeting programs to people who need them remains a challenge

Participation rates for people initially assessed with and without need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>With need</th>
<th>Without need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Courses (GED)</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Basic Education Level 1</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rehabilitative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Use Disorder</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Relationships</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitions</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Technical Education</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many factors can contribute to nonparticipation

- Prisons struggle to hire teachers, which reduces available slots
- People move often, which can interrupt participation
  - About 20% of prisoners move on each day
- People do not spend enough time in prison to participate
  - People serve 60% of their sentence on average
  - 40% of prisoners serve one year or less
People who spend less than one year in prison are far less likely to participate in programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Rehabilitative</th>
<th>Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 6 months</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months to 1 year</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 2 years</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reconviction rates have fallen but remain high
Additional investments are needed to increase participation

- Investments increased participation but not to the 70% goal
  - 68% were assessed to need substance use treatment
  - 59% tested had math skills at or below 6th grade
  - 38% had reading skills at or below 6th grade

- Targeting programs more accurately could increase participation
  - Most people with assessed needs did not participate
  - Some people without assessed needs did
Programs to address violence and substance use could improve reentry pathways

- People who return home may bring violence with them
  - 7% of people were imprisoned on domestic violence charges

- Substance use and abuse pose the greatest threat to reentry
  - 62% of people are rearrested within two years
  - Six drug possession crimes account for 17% of rearrests
Notes on the use of these slides

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

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Thank you for your interest in this work.