



The Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability
Post-Release Outcomes for Clients Exiting Juvenile
Rehabilitation, SFY15-19 Part II: Employment



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

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Suggested citation:

Goins, A.M. & Fox, A.M. (2023). Post-Release Outcomes for Clients Exiting Juvenile Rehabilitation Part II: SFY15-19 Employment, *Department of Children, Youth, and Families, Office of Innovation, Alignment & Accountability*, Olympia, WA

Introduction

A key priority of the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) is to create successful transitions into adulthood, including providing appropriate supports to promote reentry into their communities.¹ In Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR), clients are released to their communities after serving a period of confinement. The purpose of this analysis is to increase DCYF's understanding of post-release employment rates, the effect of current practices on those rates, and to inform potential improvements to policies or processes. Evaluators with DCYF's Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability (OIAA) identified factors that were believed to have some relationship with post-release employment. These factors were: Environmental Adherence (EA) scores, reentry preparation, monthly room-confinement/isolation (RC/I) rates, and employment in the year prior to release.²

Executive Summary

Key Findings

- Clients who had both a Reentry Plan and Release Reentry Team Meeting (RTM) had significantly higher odds of post-release employment than clients who had neither.
- Clients who experienced a monthly RC/I rate of more than two hours had significantly lower odds of post-release employment than clients who did not have any RC/I.
- Clients who were employed in the year prior to release had significantly higher odds of post-release employment than those who did not.

About the Study Population

The current analysis examined all residential obligations that ended during SFY2015-2019. During SFY15-19, there were 2,727 total obligations that ended, of which 880 obligations were included in the current analysis. Obligations that were excluded from analysis include clients who transferred directly to Department of Corrections upon their release from JR, or they began another obligation at JR within two days of their release, considered a consecutive obligation ($N = 69$). Clients were also removed from multivariate analysis if they were missing EA score information or if their race or ethnicity was unknown ($N = 56$). Clients who were younger than 18 at the time of their release ($N = 1,722$) were excluded from analysis, as clients who are younger than 18 face additional barriers to employment³ and may have fewer expectations to gain

¹ See page 1 of [The Department of Children, Youth, and Families Strategic Priorities 2021-2026](#) for more information on the agency's Strategic Plan.

² See Technical Appendix for additional information on independent variable creation and definitions.

³ For information on restrictions to employment of minors in WA state, see: <https://www.lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/youth-employment/hours-of-work>.

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employment, instead of other activities, like education. If a client had multiple obligations during SFY15-19, each obligation was included separately in analysis. A client was considered to have recidivated if they committed a new offense within 18 months of being released, and were adjudicated of that offense within the following 12 months.

Table 1 below shows the percentage of releases during SFY15-19 by various demographic or sentence characteristics. Only clients who were age 18 or older at the time of release were included.

Table 1:
Client Demographics by SFY Release for Clients age 18 or Older at Release, SFY15-19 (N=880)

Client Demographic	
Racial Category	
American Indian/Alaskan Native	11%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3%
Black/African American	26%
Hispanic	22%
White	38%
Offense Type	
Person	43%
Other (Including Sex Offenses)	57%
Gender	
Male	92%
Female	8%
Went to a CF	
Yes	57%
No	43%
Follow-up during COVID	
Yes	35%
No	65%
Parole Aftercare	
Had Parole	51%
Did not receive Parole Aftercare	49%

Data Source: DCYF Juvenile Rehabilitation. (November 2022).
Automated Client Tracking (ACT)[2008-2019].

Figure 1 below shows the percent of clients released during SFY15-19 by the factors of interest for clients who were 18 or older at the time of release. Forty-one percent of clients experienced an EA score of 2.5 or higher during their time in JR.⁴ A majority of clients released during SFY15-19 had either a reentry plan or release

⁴ This EA score cut point was taken from a former standard implemented at Echo Glen Children’s Center which set a goal of consistently obtaining an EA score of 2.5 or higher.

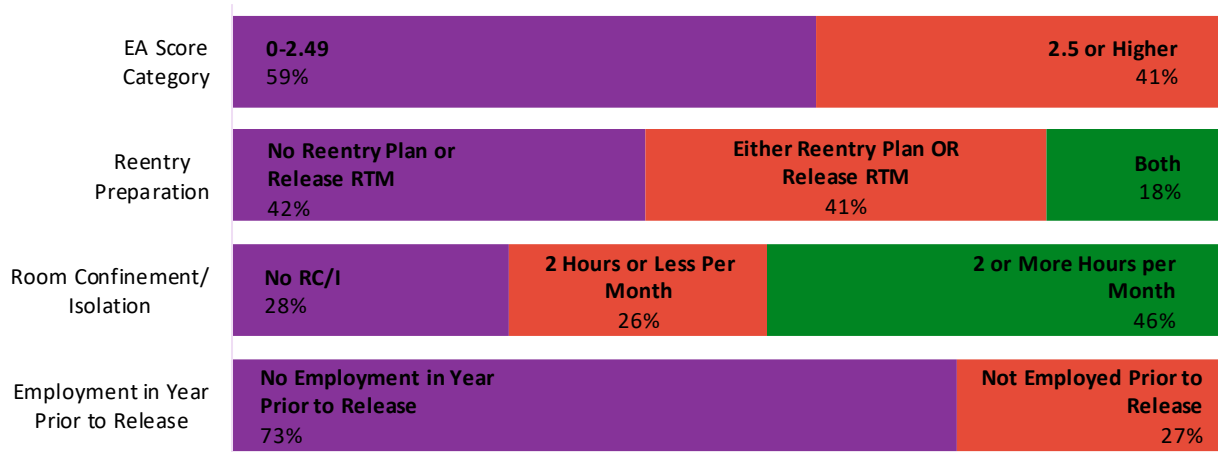
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RTM, or both, within 60 days prior to their release. Seventy-two percent of clients who were 18 or older at release experienced RC/I during their obligation.

Of those, 46% experienced a monthly RC/I rate of more than two hours. Twenty-seven percent of clients had some employment reported to employment security in the year prior to their release.

Figure 1:

Percent of Release Population by Factors of Interest for Clients Age 18 or Older at Release, SFY15-19 (N=880)



Data Source: DCYF Juvenile Rehabilitation. (November 2022). Automated Client Tracking (ACT)[2008-2019].

Findings

Logistic regression was used to analyze the relationship between EA scores, reentry preparation, monthly RC/I rates, employment in the year prior to release, and post-release employment, for clients who were age 18 or older at the time of their release. Client race/ethnicity, gender, and committing offense type were included as covariates in the statistical model, as well as a client’s receipt of parole aftercare or if they were indicated as having spent one or more days in a CF during their obligation⁵. The State of Emergency declared in Washington in response to COVID-19 was also included as a control in the model⁶.

⁵ Client risk assessment scores were considered for inclusion in the model, but were found to disproportionately assess risk and are no longer used in JR as a result. During the period of inclusion in this report, that was the primary risk assessment used to determine placement.

⁶ Clients were indicated as having the COVID-19 State of Emergency in their post-release follow-up period if any of those follow-up days occurred between or during March 2020 through October 2022. These dates were determined by the start and end dates of the State of Emergency.

Original Date: May 4, 2023 | Revised Date: October 2, 2023

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Clients' weighted EA score did not have any significant effects on their likelihood of post-release employment. This means the EA score was not related to a client's likelihood of employment when controlling for other factors of interest for clients who were 18 or older at the time of their release.

Clients who did not have a Reentry Plan or Release RTM had significantly lower odds of having post-release employment than clients who had both a Reentry Plan and Release RTM, among clients who were 18 years old or older at the time of their release. Clients who did not have either a Reentry Plan or Release RTM had 53% lower odds of post-release employment (95% CI [.28, .77]) than clients who had both.

Clients who only had one or the other appeared to have lower odds of post-release employment, but this finding was not statistically significant.

Clients who experienced more than two hours of RC/I per month had significantly lower odds of having employment in the six quarters post-release than clients who did not have any RC/I. Clients with a monthly RC/I rate of more than two hours had 34% lower odds of having post-release employment (95% CI [.46, .97]) than clients who did not experience any RC/I. Clients who had experienced room confinement at a rate of two or fewer hours per month did not have significantly different odds of post-release employment compared to clients who hadn't experienced RC/I.

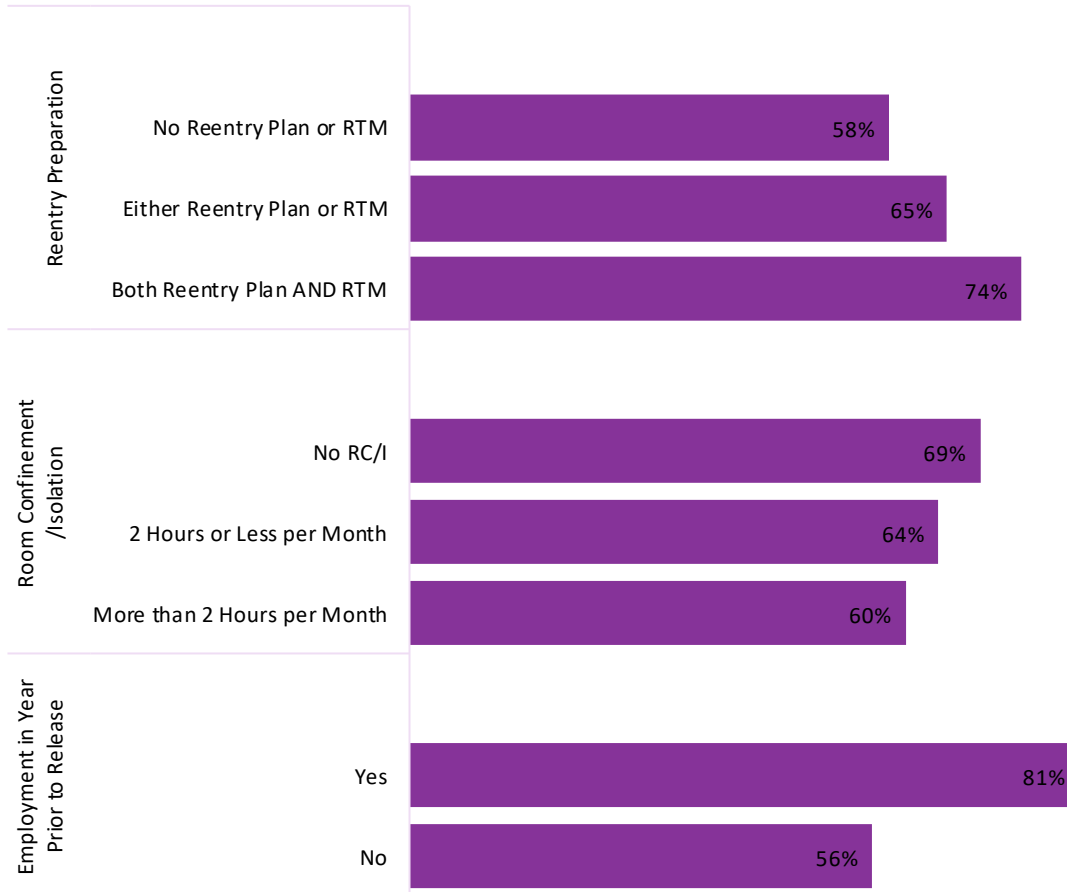
Clients who worked in the year prior to their release had significantly higher odds of having employment in the six quarters post-release than clients who did not have employment. For clients who worked in the year prior to their release, the odds of having post-release employment increased 238% (95% CI [2.21, 5.17]).

In addition to the factors of interest in the analysis, clients' offense type had a significant associations with post-release employment. Clients with Person-type offenses, such as assault, kidnapping, murder, and robbery had significantly lower odds (28%) of having post-release employment than clients who had committed other offense types (95% CI [.53, .99]).

Figure 2 below shows the predicted post-release employment rates, from the logistic regression model. The percentages in this graph represent the estimated post-release employment rate for each group when controlling for other variables in the model. These rates are the statistical estimates of post-release employment related to our variables of interest. In this figure, we are estimating how post-release employment would vary if all clients were the same as each other, except for the factor we are interested in testing (i.e. EA score, R/CI, Reentry Prep, Employment). Figure 2 only includes variables that were significantly related to post-release employment. For example, we would expect to see a 74% employment rate for clients who had both a reentry plan and release RTM compared to clients who did not have any reentry preparation, while controlling for all other items in the statistical model (such as weighted EA score, monthly RC/I rates, etc.).

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Figure 2:
Predicted Post-Release Employment Rates by Factors of Interest, Marginal Effects From Logistic Regression Model (N=880)



Data Source: Employment Security Department (October 2022). [1993-2019] DCYF Juvenile Rehabilitation (November 2022). Automated Client Tracking (ACT)[2009-2019]

In addition to analyzing overall post-release employment rates, logistic regression was used to analyze the relationship between the factors of interest and the likelihood of clients who gained employment in the six quarters, post-release, beginning their employment in the first quarter, post-release.

As this logistic regression model only includes clients who had employment in the six quarters post-release, 545 of the total 880 obligations were included in this portion of the analysis. The only factor of interest which had a significant effect on the odds of beginning employment in the first quarter post-release was having had employment in the year prior to release. Clients who were employed in the year prior to release had 123% higher odds of having employment in the first quarter, post-release, than clients who did not (95% CI [1.43,3.49]). Client-age at release (for those 18 or older at the time of release), gender, offense-type, or other demographics, did not have significant associations with employment in the first quarter, post-release.

Original Date: May 4, 2023 | Revised Date: October 2, 2023

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Logistic regression was also used to analyze the relationship between the factors of interest identified and the likelihood of clients working four or more quarters ($\geq 50\%$ of the post-release quarters analyzed) for those who had post-release employment and were 18 or older at the time of release (N = 545). A client's odds of working four or more quarters in the six quarters immediately following release were affected by their weighted EA score, monthly RC/I rate, and employment in the year prior to release. For every point increase in a client's weighted EA score, their odds of working four or more quarters, post-release, increased by 70% (95% CI [1.03, 2.78]). Clients who experienced a monthly RC/I rate of less than two hours per month had 82% higher odds of working four or more quarters, post-release, compared to clients who had no RC/I (95% CI [1.12, 2.96]). Clients with a monthly RC/I rate of more than two hours per month did not have significantly different odds of working four or more quarters, post-release, from clients who did not experience any RC/I. Clients who were employed in the year prior to release had 100% higher odds of working four or more quarters, post-release (95% CI [1.29, 3.11]). Client demographics and sentence characteristics (parole-assignment, offense-type, etc.) did not have significant associations with working four or more quarters, post-release.

Conclusion

The current analysis explores the relationship between client-Environmental Adherence (EA) scores, reentry preparation, monthly RC/I rate, employment in the year prior to release and post-release employment for clients who were 18 or older at release. For clients who did gain employment, additional analysis explored the relationship between the factors of interest listed above and the odds of beginning employment in the first quarter after release or working four or more quarters (of six analyzed) in the period, post-release. Overall, reentry preparation, monthly RC/I rate, and employment in the year prior to release had significant effects on the odds of post-release employment. For those who gained employment, monthly RC/I and employment in the year prior to release had significant effects on the odds of either beginning employment in the first quarter, post-release, or working four or more quarters, post-release.

Technical Appendix: Variable Definitions

Independent Variable Definitions

Environmental Adherence (EA) Scores

Environmental Adherence (EA) Scoring was developed as a Quality Assurance (QA) tool that provides a score based on observation conducted by QA staff on how well staff are adhering to the Dialectical Behavioral Therapy model (DBT), JR’s current residential treatment model. Prior to April 2021, one EA observation was expected to occur twice a year, but after an evaluation of JR’s implementation of DBT in JR⁷, the rate of observation was reduced to once per year, per a recommendation in the report based on available resources at that time.⁸ Scores range from 0 to 3, with higher scores indicating greater adherence to the treatment model.

The weighted EA score per obligation, or client, was calculated first by determining the average EA score for each living unit, as scores reflect living unit, not individual client or staff scores. Then we examined the total number of days a client spent at each location, and the average EA score that they received every day. In order to get the weighted EA score, we then divided by all of the days a client was housed in a location with an EA score. Doing so adjusted the EA score based on the number of days a client was in each location to produce a more accurate representation of the average EA score that a client experienced during their obligation. If a living unit was missing an observation, then an average of the prior and post observations were utilized.

$$\frac{\text{Average EA Score} \times \text{Number of days in specific location}}{\text{Total Number of Days in an EA scored location during obligation}} = \text{Weighted EA Score per client}$$

Reentry Preparation – Reentry Plans and Release Reentry Team Meetings (RTMs)

The reentry preparation category is intended to explore the degree to which release Reentry Team Meetings (RTM) or Reentry Plans have an impact on post-release outcomes. Both RTMs and Reentry Plans were developed as a way to formalize, document, and communicate with client’s and their supports about their transition plans. A Release RTM is a meeting that the client, case manager, and other identified supports in the client’s life attend to discuss and plan for the client’s transition back to their community upon their release from residential care. These meetings are documented in case notes. A client was considered to have received a Release RTM if there was a Release RTM case note that was submitted within 60 days prior to their residential release.

The Reentry Plan is a document that a case manager or RTM facilitator prepares that includes information about a client’s housing, employment, program referrals, etc. This document is a summary of domains discussed during the Release RTM and is provided to the clients upon their release. A client was considered to

⁷ Fox, A. M., Miksicek, D., and Veele, S. (2019). An evaluation of Dialectical Behavior Therapy in Washington State’s Juvenile Rehabilitation. Olympia, WA: Department of Children, Youth, and Families, Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability.

⁸ Fox, A. (2021) Residential Treatment Quality: Update on the 2019 Dialectical Behavior Therapy Recommendations.

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have a Reentry Plan if a Reentry Plan had been submitted within 60 days prior to the client's release from residential care.

Room Confinement & Isolation (RC/I)

Room Confinement and Isolation records were included in analysis if they were submitted and were at least one minute in length. To get the monthly rate of room confinement and isolation, evaluators first determined the total number of hours a client spent on RC/I, then divided it by the number of days the client was in a JR Institution in order to get a daily rate. This was then multiplied by 30 to obtain the monthly rate. Days spent in a CF were not included in this calculation because clients are not placed on RC/I in the CFs, so the rate is based only on days where a client could have been placed on room confinement.

Employment in the Year Prior to Release

Clients in JR are able to obtain employment during their obligation, and are encouraged to do so where possible. As clients transition to less restrictive environments in the JR continuum of care, namely CFs, clients ability to gain employment increases, as they may be allotted time away from the facility to attend work. This metric identifies clients who obtained some sort of employment that was reported to WA Employment Security Department (ESD) sometime in the year prior to their release. If a client worked at all in the year prior to their release, they were considered in this analysis to have had employment during their obligation. A client's quarter of release was not included in their indication of employment in the year prior to their release, as we cannot determine if the employment began during or after the obligation end.

Post-Release Outcome Definitions

Recidivism

To determine recidivism rates, OIAA Evaluators identified in administrative records all clients whose residential obligation ended during SFY15-19. They obtained all conviction data from the Washington State Center for Court Research. Recidivism in this analysis is defined as an offense that occurred within 18 months of release from a residential facility, which resulted in a conviction or an adjudication. Twelve months were then allowed for the offense to go through the court process to determine if a conviction, diversion, or deferred adjudication would occur.

Recidivism types include any recidivism, misdemeanor, non-violent felony, and violent felony. All clients with any type of recidivism are included in this evaluation. Evaluators identified the most serious offense that occurred in the 18-month follow up period to determine the type of recidivism event, and utilized the first offense date post-release to determine the number of days from release to offense.

Post-Release Employment

Post-release employment data was provided by ESD to OIAA and was then matched to SFY15-19 residential releases. Clients were considered to have had post-release employment if any hours were reported to ESD in the six calendar quarters post-release (18 months). Evaluators also determined the total number of quarters worked, and the first quarter of employment post-release for clients. Client's quarter of release is not included in post-release employment rates, as we cannot determine if the employment began during or after the obligation end.

Original Date: May 4, 2023 | Revised Date: October 2, 2023

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Appendix A.

Table 1A:
Logistic Regression Model Predicting Post-Release Employment

	Post-Release Employment	
	Odds Ratio	Robust SE
<i>Independent Variables</i>		
Weighted EA Score	0.86	(0.183)
Reentry Preparation		
Both Reentry Plan and RTM	(reference)	
No Reentry Plan or RTM	0.47**	(0.120)
Either Reentry Plan or RTM	0.64	(0.154)
Room Confinement/Isolation		
No RC/I	(reference)	
2 Hours or Less per Month	0.80	(0.166)
More than 2 Hours per Month	0.66*	(0.127)
Employment in Year Prior to Release	3.38**	(0.733)
<i>Control Variables</i>		
Age at Release	1.05	(0.110)
Racial Category		
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.87	(0.217)
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.59	(0.743)
Black/African American	0.98	(0.188)
Hispanic	1.09	(0.214)
White	(reference)	
Offense Type (Other)	0.72*	(0.116)
Gender (Male)	1.72	(0.588)
Went to CF	1.27	(0.204)
Had Parole	0.84	(0.133)
Follow-up period during COVID	0.86	(0.161)
N	880	
Log pseudo-likelihood	-537.23669	
Wald chi-square	77.22**	
Pseudo R-square	0.0811	

*p<.05,

**p<.01

Data Source: Employment Security Department (October 2022). [1993-2019] DCYF Juvenile Rehabilitation (November 2022). Automated Client Tracking (ACT)[2009-2019]

Table 2A:
Logistic Regression Model Predicting Employment in the First Quarter Post-Release

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	Began in First Quarter Post-Release	
	Odds Ratio	Robust SE
<i>Independent Variables</i>		
Weighted EA Score	0.79	(0.209)
Reentry Preparation		
Both Reentry Plan and RTM	(reference)	
No Reentry Plan or RTM	1.03	(0.317)
Either Reentry Plan or RTM	1.13	(0.321)
Room Confinement/Isolation		
No RC/I	(reference)	
2 Hours or Less per Month	1.03	(0.254)
More than 2 Hours per Month	0.79	(0.178)
Employment in Year Prior to Release	2.24**	(0.508)
<i>Control Variables</i>		
Age at Release	1.08	(0.137)
Racial Category		
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.77	(0.258)
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.86	(0.433)
Black/African American	0.85	(0.198)
Hispanic	1.24	(0.310)
White	(reference)	
Offense Type (Other)	1.14	(0.228)
Gender (Male)	0.75	(0.309)
Went to CF	0.87	(0.183)
Had Parole	0.99	(0.198)
Follow-up period during COVID	1.43	(0.327)
N	545	
Log pseudo-likelihood	-351.85444	
Wald chi-square	26.41*	
Pseudo R-square	0.0363	

*p<.05,

**p<.01

Data Source: Employment Security Department (October 2022). [1993-2019] DCYF Juvenile Rehabilitation (November 2022). Automated Client Tracking (ACT)[2009-2019]

Table 3A:

Logistic Regression Model Predicting Working Four or More Quarters Post-Release

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	Worked Four or More Quarters	
	Odds Ratio	Robust SE
<i>Independent Variables</i>		
Weighted EA Score	1.70*	(0.428)
Reentry Preparation		
Both Reentry Plan and RTM	(reference)	
No Reentry Plan or RTM	1.16	(0.362)
Either Reentry Plan or RTM	1.09	(0.305)
Room Confinement/Isolation		
No RC/I	(reference)	
2 Hours or Less per Month	1.82*	(0.450)
More than 2 Hours per Month	1.39	(0.313)
Employment in Year Prior to Release	2.00**	(0.450)
<i>Control Variables</i>		
Age at Release	1.21	(0.154)
Racial Category		
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.66	(0.215)
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.70	(0.355)
Black/African American	0.65	(0.155)
Hispanic	1.33**	(0.143)
White	(reference)	
Offense Type (Other)	1.05	(0.207)
Gender (Male)	0.86	(0.383)
Went to CF	0.84	(0.182)
Had Parole	0.77	(0.151)
Follow-up period during COVID	0.70	(0.158)
N		545
Log pseudo-likelihood		-352.81984
Wald chi-square		40.57**
Pseudo R-square		0.0586

*p<.05,

**p<.01

Data Source: Employment Security Department (October 2022). [1993-2019] DCYF Juvenile Rehabilitation (November 2022). Automated Client Tracking (ACT)[2009-2019]

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