



Sex Offender Recidivism

A total of 3,205 sex offenders were released from the Arizona prison system over the 15-year period FY 1984-FY 1998, for an average of 214 per year. Average yearly sex offender releases increased from 152 over the period FY 1984-FY 1988, to 217 over the period FY 1989-FY 1993, to 272 over the period FY 1994-FY 1998.

The 3,205 sex offenders released over the period FY 1984-FY 1998 included 818 committed for sexual assault/rape, 800 committed for child molestation, 634 committed for sexual conduct with a minor, 577 committed for sexual abuse, 279 committed for sexual indecency/exposure, and 97 committed for miscellaneous sex offenses.

Among the 3,205 released sex offenders, the average (mean) time served prior to release was 4.9 years, and varied as 3.7 years for FY 1984-FY 1988 releases, 4.8 years for FY 1989-FY 1993 releases, and 5.6 years for FY 1994-FY 1998 releases. Average time served varied as 7.0 years for sexual assault/rape, 5.9 years for child molestation, 4.4 years for sexual conduct with a minor, 2.4 years for sexual abuse, 1.7 years for sexual indecency/exposure, and 5.2 years for miscellaneous sex offenses.

Most released sex offenders (78.5%) were not granted an early release from prison. Most were released at expiration of sentence (29.5%), by mandatory release six months prior to expiration (25.6%), or by the accumulation of earned release credits (19.7%). More than half of released sex offenders (51.4%) were released to the supervision of state parole officers, while 36.4% were otherwise released in Arizona, and 12.2% were released to out-of-state authorities (detainers or out-of-state supervision or custody).

Among the 3,205 released sex offenders, 25.2% returned to prison in Arizona at least once within an average follow-up period of 6.85 years. Among the 3,205, 18.9% returned with a new felony conviction, 10.0% with a new felony conviction for a crime against persons (violent or sex crime), and 5.5% with a new felony conviction for a sex crime.

Rates of return with a new felony conviction varied by original committing offense as 27.5% for sexual assault/rape, 22.7% for miscellaneous sex offenses, 22.2% for sexual abuse, 21.9% for sexual indecency/exposure, 15.1% for sexual conduct with a minor, and 9.4% for child molestation. Rates of return with a new felony conviction for a sex crime varied as 11.3% for miscellaneous sex offenses, 9.3% for sexual indecency/exposure, 5.9% for sexual assault/rape, 5.0% for child molestation, 5.0% for sexual abuse, and 3.5% for sexual conduct with a minor.

Among the 1,649 sex offenders released from the Arizona prison system to the supervision of state parole officers, 70% eventually returned to prison with a new felony conviction for a sex crime, including 1.5% who committed a new sex crime while under state supervision.

For released sex offenders who could be followed for the following lengths of time, 2.5% returned to prison with a new felony conviction within one year of release, 8.2% within two years, 12.6% within three years, 15.7% within four years, 18.3% within five years, 20.7% within six years, 22.4% within seven years, 24.0% within eight years, 24.8% within nine years, 26.2% within ten years, 26.8% within eleven years, and 28.3% within twelve years. Furthermore, 0.5% returned with a new felony conviction for a sex crime within one year of release, 2.0% within two years, 3.4% within three years, 4.6% within four years, 5.1% within five years, 6.0% within six years, 6.7% within seven years, 7.1% within eight years, 7.2% within nine years, 7.8% within ten years, 7.9% within eleven years, and 8.7% within twelve years.

Rates of return to prison within three years of release dropped from 18.9% for FY 1984-FY 1989 releases to 18.0% for FY 1990-FY 1995

releases. Rates of return with a new felony conviction dropped from 14.2% for 11.9%, rates of return with a new felony conviction for a crime against persons (violent or sex crime) dropped from 7.0% to 5.8%, and rates of return with a new felony conviction for a sex crime dropped from 4.6% to 3.3%.

Reports and Statistics