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Research in Brief

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New Dimensions in Probation: Georgia's Experience With Intensive Probation Supervision (IPS)

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Georgia's Intensive Probation Supervision (IPS) program, implemented in 1982, has stirred nationwide interest among criminal justice professionals because it seems to satisfy two goals that have long appeared mutually contradictory: (1) restraining the

growth of prison populations and associated costs by controlling selected offenders in the community and (2) at the same time, satisfying to some extent the demand that criminals be punished for their crimes. The pivotal question is whether or not

prison-bound offenders can be shifted into Intensive Probation Supervision without threatening the public safety.

A new research study, partially funded by the National Institute of Justice, suggests that intensive super-

From the Director

As the number of offenders behind bars continues to grow—passing the half million mark last year—crime as measured by the National Crime Survey has declined for the fourth straight year. At the same time, there is understandable concern about crowding in our jails and prisons. Reports on the “crisis” in prisons are front page news. But what is less well known is that only one quarter of offenders under correctional supervision are actually incarcerated. The remainder are in the community on probation or parole.

Overwhelming probation caseloads make it difficult to provide adequate supervision for many of these offenders, who are, in effect, then left unsecured in the communities they victimized. Citizens are placed in jeopardy when offenders, particularly felons, are released without sufficient safeguards. Earlier research by the National Institute of Justice showed that fully two-thirds of a sample of felons on probation in Alameda County, California, were rearrested within 3 years. The majority of charges filed against them were for crimes the public fears the most—robbery, burglary, and theft.

If we do not send convicted criminals to prison, are there alternatives that give probation officers better tools to do their jobs and permit them to exert greater control over convicted felons?

One promising answer to this question is described in this *Research in Brief*. Intensive probation supervision programs are being tried in a number of jurisdictions as a means of providing more control over offenders in the community and keeping them focused on more productive and less threatening behavior. These programs invoke strict curfews and require offenders to maintain employment, receive counseling, provide community service, remain drug and alcohol free, and make restitution to their victims.

This *Brief* reports on an evaluation of one such program, Georgia's Intensive Probation Supervision (IPS) program, conducted by the State's Department of Corrections and funded in part by the National Institute of Justice.

The results of the study are encouraging. The evaluation suggests that the intensive supervision approach is cost effective and poses less of a risk to public safety than does ordinary probation. Many of the more than 2,300 offenders sentenced to the

program are still on probation. Fifteen percent have successfully completed their sentences. Only 16 percent have been removed from the program and returned to prison for technical violations or new crimes.

Most important, the study suggests that in Georgia, the more stringent supervision reduced the risk to the community. Offenders in IPS committed fewer and less serious crimes than comparison groups of regular probationers and those released from prison.

The Georgia experience, summarized here, offers useful information for policymakers and probation officials searching for ways to make probation a real sanction against offenders. The National Institute will continue to watch with great interest the growing experience with intensive supervision programs to determine what approaches work to control repeat crime by convicted offenders in the community and to ensure a greater measure of protection for the public.

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vision provides greater controls than regular probation and costs far less than incarceration. The study was conducted by the Georgia Department of Corrections, Office of Evaluation and Statistics, and was assisted by an Advisory Board funded by the National Institute of Justice. This *Research in Brief* summarizes the findings.

The Georgia program

The IPS program began in 1982 as a pilot in 13 of Georgia's 45 judicial sentencing circuits. By the end of 1985, it had expanded to 33 circuits and had supervised 2,322 probationers.

While probation programs with varying degrees of supervision have been implemented throughout the country, Georgia's IPS is widely regarded as one of the most stringent in the Nation. Standards include:

- Five face-to-face contacts per week;
- 132 hours of mandatory community service;
- Mandatory curfew;
- Mandatory employment;
- Weekly check of local arrest records;
- Automatic notification of arrest elsewhere via the State Crime Information Network listing;
- Routine and unannounced alcohol and drug testing.

The supervision standards are enforced by a team consisting of a Probation Officer and a Surveillance Officer. The team supervises 25 probationers. In some jurisdictions, a team of one Probation Officer and two Surveillance Officers supervises 40 probationers.

The standards are designed to provide sufficient surveillance to control risk to the community and give a framework to treatment-oriented counseling. The counseling is designed to help the offender direct his energies toward productive activities, to assume responsibilities, and to become a law-abiding citizen.

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Most offenders chosen for the IPS pilot program were already sentenced to prison, presented an acceptable risk to the community, and had not committed a violent offense. A risk assessment instrument was used to screen offenders. While the majority of those selected fell into the category of nonviolent property offenders, a large number of individuals convicted of drug- and alcohol-related offenses also were included as the program developed. Some of these offenses also involved personal violence.

Of the 2,322 people in the program between 1982 and 1985, 370 (or 16 percent) absconded or had their probation revoked. The remaining 1,952 were successfully diverted from prison; many are still under some form of probationary supervision. Some have successfully completed their sentence.

The evaluation findings

The evaluation evidence strongly suggests that the IPS program has played a significant role in reducing the flow of offenders to prison. The percentage of offenders sentenced to prison decreased and the number of probationers increased. The kinds of offenders diverted were more similar to prison inmates than to regular probationers, suggesting that the program selected the most suitable offenders. IPS probationers committed less serious crimes during their probation than comparable groups of regular probationers or probationers released from prison. The extensive supervision required seems to exert significant control and thus gives better results.

The cost of IPS, while much greater than regular probation, is considerably less than the cost of a prison stay, even when construction costs are not considered. In addition, society receives thousands of hours of community service from IPS offenders. Criminal justice practitioners seem to accept the program as suitable intermediate punishment. Judges particularly like it because it increases local control.

The evaluation addressed seven major issues:

1. Did the program divert offenders from prison to an alternative operation? The evidence indicates that intensive probation supervision diverted a substantial number of offenders from prison.

Georgia sentencing statistics from 1982 through 1985 show a 10-percent reduction in the percentage of felons sentenced to incarceration. At the same time, the percentage of offenders placed on probation increased 10 percent (from 63 percent in 1982 to 73 percent in 1985). Jurisdictions with intensive supervision teams showed an increase of 15 to 27 percent in the percentage of offenders on probation, markedly higher than the statewide average increase of 10 percent.

A 10-percent reduction in the percent of felons who were incarcerated represents major progress in easing prison crowding. The precise extent of the impact of intensive probation supervision cannot be determined, however, because many factors influenced judges' decisions to consider alternative sentences. Nevertheless, in view of the shift toward increased use of probation, the influence of intensive supervision must be considered substantial.

2. Would the felons who were placed in the IPS program have gone to prison if the program had not existed? Because Georgia does not have determinate or presumptive sentencing guidelines, the judicial circuits historically have exhibited a great deal of sentencing disparity. In general, sentences in the rural circuits are more severe than in urban circuits. For this reason, selecting offenders for the program according to crime type or risk measure may not have achieved equal impact among the various circuits in diverting offenders from prison.

Hence, IPS administrators targeted a particular type of offender—specifically serious but nonviolent offenders who, without the intensive supervision option, would have gone to prison in the jurisdiction where they were sentenced. This carefully reasoned

The Intensive Probation Supervision evaluation methodology

Developers of innovative programs generally view the results of their work enthusiastically; others tend to be skeptical. To ensure an objective evaluation, the National Institute of Justice provided an independent advisory board of experienced correctional practitioners and researchers. The board worked with the Office of Evaluation and Statistics of the Georgia Department of Corrections to assess the Intensive Probation Supervision program. The evaluation employed solid measurement techniques and standard statistical approaches. The evaluators consulted probation officials in other States who assisted in formulating evaluation questions about the ease with which the program could be transferred.

The evaluation analyzed data on all probationers processed through the program between 1982 and 1985. The evaluators used several different samples depending on the issue being assessed:

- To evaluate some issues (community safety for example), the evaluators analyzed characteristics of the entire sample under supervision no matter how long the individual had been in the program.
- To evaluate other issues, selected samples were drawn of offenders with comparable sentencing dispositions.
- To assess the general effectiveness of the program, the evaluators sampled groups of offenders with matching characteristics.

Using constructed samples makes conclusions fairly tentative, but applying truly experimental conditions is often not possible in operational situations.

Comparison groups were tracked for 18 months, and the evaluators measured the number of arrests, convictions, and incarcerations.

Such measures cannot quantify the precise extent of criminal activity, but because the measures are applied to each of the various samples, they probably represent a fair comparative assessment. Also, because of the close contact between the Surveillance Officers and the probationers in the IPS program, the actual amount of criminal activity might be presumed to be somewhat less than for those under regular probation supervision or for those released from prison.

To determine the extent to which offenders were diverted from prison, the researchers analyzed a set of factors that would best predict the prison-versus-probation decision. To ensure that offenders accepted into the IPS program were true diversions from prison, the staff screened offenders who had already been sentenced to prison. Staff then recommended sentence modification for those selected. Some success was achieved: about half the cases assigned to IPS had their sentences modified—a technique that provided obvious evidence that the offender was diverted from prison.

Many judges—even those who were committed to the program and its criteria—declined to amend sentences as a regular procedure. For those cases, special procedures were developed to screen cases and make recommendations prior to sentencing. These cases appeared to represent cases diverted from prison, but it is difficult to determine this with certainty.

Characteristics were analyzed of all offenders sentenced in the 26 districts that had IPS programs during calendar year 1984. The characteristics included age, race, sex, risk score, need score, crime type, and location of the district (rural or urban).

For offenders sentenced during 1983, the first year the program was fully operational, evaluators compared the profiles of three groups: IPS probationers, regular probationers, and prison releasees. A computer selected the sample of 200 regular probationers and 200 IPS probationers matched by age, sex, race, crime type, risk score, and need score. These two groups were tracked from the date they were assigned to community supervision. To select the group of incarcerated offenders, newly admitted inmates were screened at the institutional intake centers; 176 were selected. Of this group, 97 were eventually released and tracked for 18 months from the date they were released.

Since the risk assessment instrument, based on a Wisconsin instrument, had been validated on Georgia offenders as a predictor of recidivism, each of the groups was divided into four risk categories. Risk scores are (0-7) Low Risk, (8-14) Medium Risk, (15-24) High Risk, and (25 and over) Maximum Risk.

The decision to include cases with low risk scores has caused some reviewers to ask if Georgia's intensive program has taken less serious cases. It is important to note that an offender without a serious previous criminal history may score low on the risk scale; but the nature of the instant offense may be so serious the offender would be considered for incarceration by existing standards in the sentencing jurisdiction. The low risk scores for 5.2 percent of the incarcerated cohort confirm this reality. However, the criterion for selecting offenders and evaluating the effects of the program was this question: "Would this offender go to prison without the program?"

decision reflected the administrators' desire to achieve maximum support from the judiciary.

The evaluation results indicate that 59.4 percent of the IPS cases were more similar to those incarcerated than to those placed on probation. The results also suggest that 24.6 percent of those actually incarcerated were very similar to those probated. The evidence seems clear: the offenders actually sentenced to IPS resembled those incarcerated more than those who received probation.

3. Was risk to the community reduced? The experience suggests that IPS sufficiently controls offenders so that risk to the community is markedly limited. The recidivism rates are considerably better for IPS offenders than for groups under regular probation and for those released from prison. IPS offenders commit fewer and less serious crimes.

Of the 2,322 offenders sentenced to the IPS program:

- 68 percent are still on probation under IPS or regular probation caseloads;
- 15 percent have successfully completed their sentences;
- 1 percent were transferred to other jurisdictions;
- 16 percent have been terminated from the program and returned to prison for technical violations or new crimes.

Only 0.8 percent of the IPS probationers have been convicted of any violent personal crimes (including simple battery, terroristic threat, etc.). Most new crimes have been drug- and alcohol-related offenses. To date, no IPS probationer has committed a subsequent crime that resulted in serious bodily injury to a victim. Of the 2,322 cases admitted to the program, the following serious crime convictions have resulted: 1 armed robbery, 6 simple assaults, 4 simple battery offenses, 1 terrorist threat, 18 burglaries, 19 thefts, and 3 motor vehicle thefts.

Table 1

Outcomes for offender groups after 18-month tracking by risk classification^a

<u>Offender classification</u>	<u>No. of Cases</u>	<u>Rearrested</u>		<u>Reconvicted</u>		<u>Sentenced to jail or prison</u>		<u>Incarcerated in State prison</u>	
Low risk		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
IPS probationers	12	5	41.6%	3	25.0%	3	25.0%	2	16.7%
Regular probationers	11	3	27.0%	0	0.0%	1	9.1%	1	9.1%
Prison releasees	13	6	46.2%	5	38.5%	4	30.8%	3	23.1%
Medium risk									
IPS probationers	62	21	33.9%	10	16.1%	10	16.1%	9	14.5%
Regular probationers	58	20	34.5%	14	24.1%	9	15.5%	6	10.3%
Prison releasees	12	7	58.3%	6	50.0%	4	33.3%	2	16.7%
High risk									
IPS probationers	69	24	34.5%	19	27.5%	14	20.3%	11	15.9%
Regular probationers	73	22	30.1%	18	24.7%	13	17.8%	10	13.7%
Prison releasees	47	27	57.4%	21	44.7%	10	21.3%	6	12.8%
Maximum risk									
IPS probationers	57	25	43.6%	15	26.3%	12	21.1%	11	19.3%
Regular probationers	58	26	44.8%	16	27.6%	11	19.0%	8	13.8%
Prison releasees	25	16	64.0%	9	36.0%	7	28.0%	6	24.0%
Total for all risk groups									
IPS probationers	200	80	40.0%	37	18.5%	39	19.5%	33	16.5%
Regular probationers	200	71	35.5%	48	24.0%	34	17.0%	25	12.5%
Prison releasees	97	56	57.8%	41	42.3%	25	25.8%	17	17.5%

^a Numbers and percentages do not add across the columns because the categories are separate but not mutually exclusive. A percentage of those offenders arrested are convicted. Some of those convicted are placed in jail while others are returned to prison.

Risk scores are based on a Wisconsin instrument; scores are (0-7) Low Risk, (8-14) Medium Risk, (15-24) High Risk, and (25 and over) Maximum Risk.

Table 1 shows the number and percent of rearrests, reconvictions, and reincarcerations for selected samples of offenders sentenced during 1983. Prison releasees had the highest rate of rearrest in all risk categories. IPS probationers had a higher rate of rearrest than regular probationers, which is not surprising considering the higher level of surveillance.

The recidivism pattern that begins to emerge from Table 1 involves greater intervention (e.g., more incarceration,

tighter supervision) paired with more negative outcomes. This pattern tends to hold for most risk groups except offenders with high risk classifications. Offenders with high risk classifications who had been incarcerated showed the lowest percentage of reincarcerations in State prison; however, this same subgroup had the highest rate of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration in jail.

Table 2

New serious crimes committed during 18-month followup period

Type of Crime	IPS probationers (No. = 200)		Regular probationers (No. = 200)		Prison releasees (No. = 97)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sale of Marijuana	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	0	0.0%
Sale of Cocaine	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	0	0.0%
Theft by Taking	4	2.0%	4	2.0%	3	3.2%
Auto Theft	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	0	0.0%
Burglary	4	2.0%	8	4.0%	13	14.0%
Aggravated Assault	0	0.0%	2	1.0%	3	3.2%
Robbery	0	0.0%	2	1.0%	0	0.0%
Armed Robbery	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	2	2.2%
Rape	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	2	2.2%

was convicted of fewer serious new crimes against persons than either of the other two groups. Although not shown in Table 2, minor repeat offenses, primarily marijuana possession, were numerous. Judges reacted strongly in such cases since they felt the offender had already been given his last chance. Serious offenses were, however, remarkably infrequent.

While many IPS probationers were convicted for possession of marijuana and habitual alcohol-related offenses, the most serious new offenses were 4 burglaries and 1 armed robbery in which no one was injured. The regular probationers had more serious offenses; they committed 8 burglaries, 1 rape, and 2 aggravated assaults in addition to other less serious new crimes. The prison releasees were convicted of the most new crimes: 13 burglaries, 3 aggravated assaults, 2 rapes, and 2 armed robberies. This comparison suggests that IPS surveillance provided early detection of uncooperative behavior or substance abuse and effectively reduced danger before citizens were harmed.

Although more IPS probationers violated the conditions of probation than regular probationers (7 percent compared to 4.5 percent), this might be anticipated because IPS probationers were so closely supervised. What might not be expected is the very low number who absconded. Only one of the sample of 200 IPS probationers absconded compared to four of the 200 regular probationers.

4. How much did the program cost?

Preliminary estimates suggest a savings of \$6,775 for each case diverted from prison (see Table 3). If all 2,322 offenders placed in IPS through the end of 1985 were diverted, considerable savings were realized—more than \$13 million.

It should be noted that these estimates are based on incarceration costs (\$30.43 per day) and supervision costs only. The estimates do not include any capital outlay, which could quite legitimately be included because the

Table 3

Comparison of costs per offender
(average days incarcerated or under supervision)

Incarcerated Offenders	Cost
255 days @ \$30.43 = \$7,759.65 (Excludes capital outlay)	\$7,759.65
IPS Probationers	\$984.66
196 days @ \$4.37 under IPS = \$856.22 169 days @ \$.76 under regular probation = \$128.44	
Cost avoidance per IPS probationer = \$6,774.69	

The apparent variation in the go-to-prison rate may be attributed to some unknown factor rather than differences in offenders' behavior. For example, it is not unusual for a Georgia judge to decide that an offender may have been released from prison too soon. When that individual appears before the judge on a subsequent offense, the judge will often use jail, county work camps, or some other method of detention and supervision to ensure more direct control over the offender and the period of incarceration.

Recidivism patterns also may be affected by the selection process for the incarcerated sample. This group included only those who had been released for 18 months at the time of

the study. Because screening for this group was done in December 1983, only those offenders who were released before July 1984 could be tracked. Thus, those tracked had experienced a short period of incarceration—2 to 6 months. The early release means they were apparently deemed less serious offenders. This suggests that comparisons with more serious offenders released from prison would reflect an even more favorable view of the IPS group.

Table 2 shows the number of convictions for various crimes for the three groups of offenders. The IPS group

prisons in Georgia are full. If the 1,000 offenders under the IPS program at any given time had been incarcerated, they would have filled two moderate-sized prisons which, if constructed, would have cost many millions of dollars.

Another benefit of IPS is the thousands of hours of public service IPS offenders provide. If these hours are valued at even minimum wage, the contribution to society would be considerable.

Probation supervision fees were critical to financing IPS. In 1982, the Georgia Department of Corrections instituted a policy that allowed judges to order probationers to pay supervision fees. The fees currently range from \$10 to \$50 per month. The policy followed an Attorney General's ruling that existing statutes permitted court-ordered fee collection if the fees were used to improve probation supervision. IPS was implemented at the same time the probation fee collection system was initiated. No funds were requested from the legislature.

Judges, who had been vocal in requesting stricter supervision standards, were advised that intensive supervision would be phased in using resources made available through fee collection. The amount of money collected from fees exceeded expectations. Over the 4 years of operation, the money collected for probation fees exceeded IPS costs and was used for numerous additional special probation needs. This does not mean that IPS probation fees alone have supported the program—regular probation fees also were included. Georgia judges impose probation fees on a case-by-case basis. (The issue of probation supervision fees is of considerable interest—what level of fees should be levied on which offenders; what is the most effective collection process; and what kinds of penalties are imposed for nonpayment—but represents an entire study outside the scope of this Brief.)

5. What kinds of cases have been assigned to the IPS program?

Looking at the 2,322 offenders sentenced to the program through 1985, the following profile emerges: 68 percent were white, 89 percent were male, 46 percent were 25 years old or younger, and another 24 percent were between 26 and 30 years old. Forty-three percent were convicted of property offenses, 41 percent of drug- and alcohol-related offenses, and 9 percent were convicted of violent personal crimes.

6. What kinds of cases were most successful in the IPS program? Drug offenders responded better to the IPS program than they did to regular probation (90 percent success rate during the 18-month followup study). Frequent contact during the evening and on weekends and the urinalysis monitoring may be particularly effective in supervising drug offenders.

The finding that offenders convicted of drug- and alcohol-related offenses had the highest success rates raises interesting questions because the program initially considered discouraging substance abuse offenders from being accepted in the program. But judges were obviously looking for constructive alternatives for substance abuse cases; hence staff training and urinalysis capabilities were increased.

Females succeeded at a slightly higher rate than males, as they did under regular supervision. There was no significant difference in outcome by race.

The evaluators used discriminant analysis techniques to predict which offenders might be most effectively supervised under an intensive program. These techniques enabled the evaluators to predict 64 to 68 percent of the variation in outcome. The analysis identified risk score as the most important variable in predicting that a probationer is likely to fail in the IPS program. Being a property offender was the next most important predictor. Sex of the offender, need score (a scale depicting the social

service needs of the probationer), race, and drug possession each made small additional contributions to the predictions.

7. How well has the program been accepted? Judges are now among the strongest supporters of the program in part because the program has a high degree of accountability. A judge can contact an IPS officer about a case knowing that the officer has had direct, recent contact with the offender. The officer knows what the offender is doing and how he is adjusting.

IPS staff have maintained high morale throughout the life of the program despite long, irregular work hours and heavy paperwork. Few have abandoned the program; most who leave the program have been promoted to other jobs. Probation Officers who are interested in joining the program must add their names to a waiting list.

The staff

Conflicts between the treatment and enforcement functions of a Probation Officer are well documented. One of the most interesting findings of the IPS evaluation is the near impossibility of separating treatment from enforcement. The Georgia design places the Probation Officer in charge of case management, treatment and counseling services, and court-related activities. Surveillance Officers, who usually have law enforcement or correctional backgrounds, have primary responsibility for frequently visiting the home unannounced, checking curfews, performing drug and alcohol screening tests using portable equipment, and checking arrest records weekly. The Surveillance Officer becomes well acquainted with the family and the home situation and is often present in critical situations. Both the Probation and Surveillance Officers report a great deal of overlap of functions and even a reversal of their roles.

Because the Surveillance Officer is in frequent contact with the probationer, a close supportive relationship often develops. The Probation Officer spends a great deal of time with court matters and screening potential cases and is thus sometimes viewed as the representative of the repressive aspects of probation. Such divergent roles could lead to conflict and general dysfunction. However, the small caseloads contribute to close, often daily communication among the staff. Thus the probationer's needs—whether for control or support—are clearly identified and the team develops a coordinated plan and follows it closely.

The evaluators report that one major benefit of the team approach may be the support that officers give one another. This enables them to maintain high morale in very demanding jobs. During the evaluation period, each officer became absorbed in attaining the goals of the cases rather than simply performing according to the job description. Roles overlapped and officers exhibited an impressive, cooperative team spirit. Some officers interchanged roles whenever circumstances required scheduling adjustments. Staff seemed to function with mutual respect and concern for each other and for the continuity of supervision.

Smooth staff functioning, however, was not achieved by accident. The program's Probation Officers were selected from among the most experienced and best available. The Surveillance Officers were hired by the Probation Division specifically for the new program. In addition, true teams might not have emerged without careful attention to training. A National Institute of Corrections grant supported concentrated staff training coordinated through the Criminal Justice Department of Georgia State University. The freshly trained and invigorated staff were seen as emissaries of the new intensive supervision, and their energetic and dedicated response to the program may well have contributed significantly to the program's success.

IPS is a successful option in Georgia

IPS has proven itself to Georgia officials and has become an integral part of the corrections system. Intensive Probation Supervision is a highly visible probation option that satisfies public demand for a tough response to crime while avoiding the costs of prison construction.

The cost of IPS, while much greater than regular probation, is considerably less than the cost of a prison stay, even when construction costs are not considered. In addition, society receives thousands of hours of community service from those in the IPS program. Criminal justice practitioners seem to accept the program as a suitable intermediate punishment. Judges particularly like it because it increases local control.

In Georgia, IPS is seen as one option on a continuum of increasing levels of control. Probation administrators, mindful of the public's increasing demand that probation clearly demonstrate appropriate punishment, have responded with a creative range of options. The options have varying degrees of severity and intrusiveness.

One rapidly growing alternative is the Community Service Program in which probationers perform court-ordered community service under the conditions of regular probation. The Community Service Program is far less intensive and less costly than most and is therefore able to manage a large volume of cases. Other alternative sanctions include placement in a community diversion center and Special Alternative Incarceration, which is a 90-day "shock" incarceration program.

By providing a series of graduated options, Georgia's Department of Corrections has responded seriously to repeat violators but also has shown a commitment to try alternatives to

prison whenever possible. Instead of a stark prison-versus-probation decision, judges have a wider choice of sanctions. A highly innovative staff has taken the initiative to use the full range of options.

The attention focused on approaches developed in Georgia for identifying and diverting offenders from prison is well deserved. Georgia has exhibited ingenuity and commitment to try new ways to address a nationwide problem. The lessons gained through Georgia's experience are applicable in other locations that are experiencing similar problems with prison costs and crowding, although the population of offenders who could be diverted may vary a great deal. Jurisdictions that are considering implementing programs such as IPS should not only study Georgia's program; they should also define the target group in terms of their own needs. There is no magic formula, but Georgia's experience demonstrates that enough people can be diverted to achieve significant cost savings without serious threat to the community.

For those interested in more information on the evaluation of the Georgia IPS program, a complete report will be available in the near future. Call the National Institute of Justice/National Criminal Justice Reference Service (800-851-3420) or contact the Office of Evaluation and Statistics, Georgia Department of Corrections, Floyd Veterans Memorial Building, Room 756, East Tower, Atlanta, Georgia 30334 (404-656-4609).

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