

California -

# SUBSIDY a perspective

A COHORT ANALYSIS OF SUPERIOR COURT  
NON-SUBSIDY AND SUBSIDY CASES

18787



**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

**EVELLE J. YOUNGER, Attorney General  
CHARLES A. BARRETT, Chief Deputy Attorney General**

**DIVISION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT**

**ROBERT A. HOUGHTON, Director  
ORVILLE J. HAWKINS, Assistant Director**

**BUREAU OF CRIMINAL STATISTICS**

**W. H. Hutchins, Chief**

**RESEARCH AND SPECIAL STUDIES SUBSIDY STATISTICS**

**R. Peter Marlock  
Hugh E. Penn**

**1/73 1.5M**

SUBSIDY

A Perspective

A cohort analysis of superior court non-subsidy and subsidy cases.



This is one of a series of reports published by the Bureau of Criminal Statistics concerning non-subsidy and subsidy probation caseload experience. Data in earlier reports provided through contract agreement with the California Youth Authority pertained to active caseload descriptions and case movement. This is the first published report concerned with probation adjustment (as is represented in arrest rates), both during and following supervision experience. Additional studies of this nature are contemplated.

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The Anthony L. Palumbo Study Highlights are as follows:

1. Arrest and violation rate data presented in this report show that offender characteristics are more influential in the outcome of probation than is the type of program.
2. Subsidy caseloads are found to be more arrest prone both during and following probation supervision than are non-subsidy cases.
3. Subsidy probationers tend to be more serious offenders during program supervision than are non-subsidy probationers.
4. The arrest liability for subsidy cases whether under close or regular supervision during probation is almost identical. In other words, the arrest experience of subsidy cases neither lessens or increases when placed under non-subsidy probation supervision.
5. A test of arrest and violation proneness of "subsidy like cases" was inconclusive. Results of this test suggest that caseload personality traits not reported to BCS together with social characteristic differences may be the most apt indicators of expected probation performance and outcome.

## INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared for Colonel Anthony L. Palumbo, member of the Governor's Select Committee on Law Enforcement Problems. The Bureau of Criminal Statistics was specifically requested to assist the Committee by 1) providing it any available information relating to probation and probation subsidy programs and 2) by developing new information that might show whether it is the "kind of offender or the programs to which he is exposed" that most influence his response to correctional treatment.

The Governor's Select Committee on Law Enforcement Problems recognized that complete attainment of the project goals would be most difficult in view of the paucity of subsidy probation program information. Existing data consists of only one year (1971) of subsidy caseload experience. Further, a time constraint of two months in which to complete this study was imposed.

It can be stated with confidence that the study project did accomplish the goal of providing new and fresh insights into the adjustment of probationers in non-subsidy and subsidy programs. This should be of prime importance in charting new directions for future study of subsidy probation in California.

Missing from the information contained in this report are data describing the arrest activity of juvenile probationers. Arrest information concerning juvenile probation caseloads must be developed by special and more time-consuming means than is true for adult caseloads. Nevertheless, it is believed that development of data covering arrest experience of juvenile probation caseload is possible. It would be a productive and fruitful source of information.

## DISCUSSION

The probationer, not the program, determines the success or failure of the supervisory process. This was an evident finding after study of 1,278 sample cohort probation cases. These cohort cases represent selected samples of non-subsidy and subsidy cases which were removed from superior court (adult) probation during 1971.

The finding that the nature of the offender rather than the nature of the program most concretely affects probation adjustment and outcome is based primarily on: 1) 1971 physical characteristics and violation rate data covering non-subsidy and subsidy caseloads published to date by BCS and 2) the ensuing arrest activity tables and analysis prepared for the Governor's Select Committee on Law Enforcement Problems. All comparisons made between sample cohort data and 1971 active caseload data published by BCS includes state less Los Angeles totals only. The basic measures of probation adjustment used for this report are the violation and arrest experience recorded for the two sample cohorts both during and after probation supervision took place.

The use of arrest data as an indicator of treatment response has inadequacies. But the deliberate choice to use arrest data as the central means to attain the objectives of this report was made: 1) because arrests rather than dispositions are least influenced by local court intervention programs, 2) because arrest activity covers a much broader base of cases than is true for dispositions and 3) because arrest data represents the sharpest indicator of crime control workload at the local level.

Data describing psychological and personality differences of probationers was unavailable for use in this study. This type of information is not easily obtained nor does it lend itself readily to statistical measures. However, an additional aspect of this study will suggest that personality differences may indeed be relevant factors contributing to differences in arrest and violation rates of non-subsidy and subsidy caseloads<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>a</sup>A joint counties, California Youth Authority and Bureau of Criminal Statistics Subsidy Probation Study Project (C-Pro) will look at personality classification in relation to program experience as one study feature.

TABLE 1  
SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF NON-SUBSIDY AND SUBSIDY COHORT SAMPLE CASELOADS  
REMOVED FROM SUPERIOR COURT PROBATION, 1971

By Sex

	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	1,278	100.0	1,119	87.6	159	12.4
Non-subsidy . . . . .	1,156	100.0	1,008	87.2	148	12.8
Subsidy . . . . .	122	100.0	111	91.0	11	9.0

By Age

	Total		18-20		21-24		25-29		30 and over	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	1,278	100.0	73	5.7	477	37.3	372	29.1	356	27.9
Non-subsidy . . . . .	1,156	100.0	65	5.6	420	36.3	335	29.0	336	29.1
Subsidy . . . . .	122	100.0	8	6.6	57	46.7	37	30.3	20	16.4

By Race

	Total		White		Mexican-American		Negro		Other	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	1,278	100.0	918	71.8	131	10.3	214	16.7	15	1.2
Non-subsidy . . . . .	1,156	100.0	840	72.7	112	9.7	191	16.5	13	1.1
Subsidy . . . . .	122	100.0	78	63.9	19	15.6	23	18.9	2	1.6

By Prior Record

	Total		None and minor		Major		Prison	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	1,278	100.0	848	66.4	330	25.8	100	7.8
Non-subsidy . . . . .	1,156	100.0	779	67.4	283	24.5	94	8.1
Subsidy . . . . .	122	100.0	69	56.6	47	38.5	6	4.9

By Existing Criminal Status

	Total		Not under commitment		Parole		Probation		Institutions	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	1,278	100.0	1,051	82.2	52	4.1	170	13.3	5	0.4
Non-subsidy . . . . .	1,156	100.0	954	82.5	47	4.1	150	13.0	5	0.4
Subsidy . . . . .	122	100.0	97	79.5	5	4.1	20	16.4	0	-

Sample cohort characteristics

Earlier subsidy program caseload reports prepared by the Bureau of Criminal Statistics have shown that subsidy probationers tend to be characteristically different than non-subsidy cases<sup>b</sup>. They are as a group younger, more non-white and have more serious criminal backgrounds. Table 1 points out the fact that comparable differences between the non-subsidy and subsidy cohort caseloads also exist. In fact, these differences are more pronounced in the removal cohort caseloads than was true for the active caseloads comparisons published in the 1971 Annual Report. An explanation for this happening is suggested in Table 2 below.

Probation outcome and social characteristics

As is shown in Table 2, which describes the samples and total caseloads (from which they were drawn), both of the subsidy caseloads (sample and total) have higher proportions of violational removals than do the non-subsidy caseloads. Violators tend to drop out of the caseloads at a faster rate than is true for those that terminate probation. Therefore, subsidy caseloads which have higher proportions of violational removals should also have higher proportions of social characteristics indicating violational or criminal proneness. This, as indicated in Table 1, was clearly the case. The contrasting affects of these group characteristic differences on non-subsidy and subsidy arrest activity is the main focus of the following sections.

TABLE 2  
TOTAL AND COHORT SAMPLE CASELOADS REMOVED FROM SUPERIOR COURT PROBATION DURING 1971  
By Type of Removal

Type	Total caseloads				Extracted cohort sample caseloads			
	Non-subsidy		Subsidy		Non-subsidy		Subsidy	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	12,264	100.0	1,437	100.0	1,156	100.0	122	100.0
Terminations . . . . .	8,408	68.6	788	54.8	803	69.5	69	56.6
Violations . . . . .	3,856	31.4	649	45.2	353	30.5	53	43.4
Sentenced . . . . .	1,184	9.6	237	16.5	104	9.0	21	17.2
Not sentenced . . . . .	2,402	19.6	353	24.6	232	20.0	30	24.6
Loss of jurisdiction . . . . .	270	2.2	59	4.1	17	1.5	2	1.6

<sup>b</sup> See Annual Subsidy Report for 1971 describing superior and juvenile court caseloads, individual non-subsidy case data is not available from Los Angeles County. Therefore, Los Angeles County data could not be included in this cohort study.

Subsidy cohort arrest proneness

Subsidy cohort cases were found to be more arrest prone than were non-subsidy cohort cases. This was evident both during and following probation program supervision. Further, subsidy cohort cases tend to be more serious arrest offenders. Finally, subsidy cohort cases were found to have the same arrest liability when placed under non-subsidy program supervision. In other words, the arrest rates for subsidy probationers was found to be practically identical when experiencing either non-subsidy or subsidy program supervision. The supporting data for these findings are depicted in Tables 3 through 7.

Arrest activity during program supervision

Fifty-one percent of the 1,156 cohort cases which had no known<sup>c</sup> subsidy program exposure had no reported arrest during their probation terms. A much lower proportion, 28 percent, of the subsidy cases having subsidy program exposure at some time had no reported arrests during their probation terms. Table 3 shows that arrests per case were almost one arrest greater for subsidy cohort probationers.

TABLE 3  
ARREST STATUS OF NON-SUBSIDY AND SUBSIDY COHORT SAMPLE CASELOADS  
WHILE UNDER SUPERIOR COURT PROBATION SUPERVISION DURING 1971

By Arrest Status

Status	Non-subsidy				Subsidy			
	Cases		Arrests		Cases		Arrests	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	1,156	100.0	1,479	100.0	122	100.0	274	100.0
No arrests . . . . .	591	51.1	-	-	34	27.9	-	-
One or more arrests . . . . .	565	48.9	1,479	100.0	88	72.1	274	100.0
One . . . . .	221	19.1	221	14.9	28	23.0	28	10.2
Two . . . . .	134	11.6	268	18.1	20	16.4	40	14.6
Three . . . . .	76	6.6	228	15.5	12	9.8	36	13.1
Four . . . . .	51	4.4	204	13.8	7	5.7	28	10.2
Five . . . . .	24	2.1	120	8.1	7	5.7	35	12.8
Six or more . . . . .	59	5.1	438	29.6	14	11.5	107	39.1
	Average number of arrests per case, 1.3				Average number of arrests per case, 2.2			

63 Non-Subsidy

<sup>c</sup>It is conceivable that a small number of non-subsidy cohort cases may have had some juvenile or adult court subsidy program exposure prior to December, 1970.

The most serious offense for which arrested

Robbery, assault and burglary were recorded as the most serious offense for which arrested with almost double the proportionate frequency for subsidy sample cases. Table 4 shows that for the "other offense" category (made up largely of drunk and traffic arrests) the non-subsidy percent was 24.9 compared to 15.9 for subsidy cases.

The Bureau's 1971 Annual Report shows drug law convictions to be 37 percent of the total probation commitments for both subsidy and non-subsidy caseloads. No logical explanation comes to mind for this apparent lessening of drug involved arrest activity for the two sample offender groups displayed in Table 4.

TABLE 4

MOST SERIOUS ARREST OFFENSE FOR NON-SUBSIDY AND SUBSIDY COHORT SAMPLE CASES  
ARRESTED WHILE UNDER SUPERIOR COURT PROBATION SUPERVISION, 1971

Offense	Non-subsidy		Subsidy	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	565	100.0	88	100.0
Homicide . . . . .	1	0.2	1	1.1
Robbery and assault . . . . .	63	11.1	18	20.5
Burglary . . . . .	88	15.6	23	26.2
Theft except auto . . . . .	54	9.6	6	6.8
Auto theft . . . . .	16	2.8	3	3.4
Forgery and checks . . . . .	41	7.3	-	-
Sex offenses . . . . .	22	3.9	14	15.9
Drug law violations . . . . .	139	24.6	9	10.2
Other . . . . .	141	24.9	14	15.9

Type of program experience and arrest activity for cases having all or some subsidy supervision

One of the persistent problems is making reliable comparisons between non-subsidy and subsidy cases has been the existence of mixed program experience. Complicating this problem is the fact that subsidy program supervision may be intermittent with non-subsidy supervision experience. However, caseload movement for the subsidy sample cohort was found to be more one directional than first thought to be.

Table 5 and 6 are presentations of subsidy cohort cases having all or at least some known subsidy program exposure. A method was used to group these subsidy cases and to assign directly to them those months of non-subsidy or subsidy supervision each case experienced. Then, matches were made between dates of arrests and periods of non-subsidy or subsidy program supervision that each subsidy case may have had. The 2,910 months of supervisory experience represents the total probationary months for all 122 cohort cases including 34 no arrest cases.

Sixteen subsidy cases which had mixed program exposure also had arrests reported within each of their separate non-subsidy and subsidy supervision periods. In order to control for this overlap between type program and arrest activity these 16 cases were assigned to each supervision experience category. This technically inflated the number of arrest cases from the original 88 to 104 as is indicated in Tables 5 and 6.

It was discovered that only five of the 37 subsidy cases having mixed program experience had non-subsidy program supervision that followed subsidy program supervision. In fact, less than 50 of the 2,910 supervisory months shown in Tables 5 and 6 involved non-subsidy supervision following earlier subsidy experience.

TABLE 5  
TYPE OF SUPERIOR COURT PROBATION SUPERVISION EXPERIENCED  
BY SUBSIDY COHORT SAMPLE CASES, 1971

By Supervisory Months, Cases and Arrests

Type of supervisory experience	Months		Cases		Arrests		Arrest rate per 100 months	Average arrest per case
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Total . . . . .	2,910	100.0	104 <sup>a</sup>	100.0	274	100.0	9.4	2.6
Non-subsidy . . . . .	764	26.3	29 <sup>a</sup>	27.9	78	28.5	10.2	2.7
Subsidy . . . . .	2,146	73.7	75 <sup>a</sup>	72.1	196	71.5	9.1	2.6
All subsidy experience <sup>b</sup>	1,049	36.0	38	36.5	102	37.2	9.7	2.7
Both subsidy and non-subsidy experience.	1,097	37.7	37	35.6	94	34.3	8.6	2.5

<sup>a</sup>There were 16 cases having arrests while under non-subsidy and subsidy supervision. These overlap cases were assigned equally to each category in the above table.

<sup>b</sup>Includes cases having only one month of non-subsidy experience.

Note: A test of significant difference for average number of arrests between non-subsidy and subsidy cases gave a Z score of .86. Required for significance at 5 percent level of probability Z must equal 1.60 (one tail test).

TABLE 6  
TYPE OF SUPERIOR COURT PROBATION SUPERVISION EXPERIENCED  
BY SUBSIDY COHORT SAMPLE CASES, 1971

By Supervisory Months, Cases and Arrests

Type of supervisory experience	Months		Cases		Arrests		Arrest rate per 100 months	Average arrest per case
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Total . . . . .	2,910	100.0	104 <sup>a</sup>	100.0	274	100.0	9.4	2.6
Non-subsidy . . . . .	778	26.7	29 <sup>a</sup>	27.9	78	28.5	10.0	2.7
Subsidy . . . . .	2,132	73.3	75 <sup>a</sup>	72.1	196	71.5	9.2	2.6
All subsidy experience . .	700	24.1	32	30.8	86	31.4	12.3	2.7
Both subsidy and non-subsidy experience <sup>b</sup>	1,432	49.2	43	41.3	110	40.1	7.7	2.6

<sup>a</sup>There were 16 cases having arrests while under non-subsidy and subsidy supervision. These overlap cases were assigned equally to each category in the above table.

<sup>b</sup>Includes cases having only one month of non-subsidy experience. See Table 6 for redistribution of months, cases and arrests when cases having only one month of non-subsidy experience are reassigned to the "both non-subsidy and subsidy experience" category.

Note: A test of significant difference for average number of arrests between non-subsidy and subsidy cases gave a Z score of .50. Required for significance at 5 percent level of probability Z must equal 1.60 (one tail test).

Subsidy cohort arrest rates and types of program supervisory experience

Arrest rates and arrest averages for subsidy cohort cases show little or no variance when they are related to program experience. Table 5 shows an arrest rate of 10.2 for each 100 months of non-subsidy probation supervision experience. For the same subsidy cohort an arrest rate of 9.1 was recorded for each 100 months of subsidy program supervision experience. Tests of significance indicate no existing difference in arrest rates when different kinds of program supervision were experienced. Thus, for the subsidy cases type of program supervision did not exert any treatment influence in so far as arrest rates could indicate. The contrasting arrest performance of the less criminally prone non-subsidy cohort is presented next.

Non-subsidy cohort arrest and program experience

For those cases having no known subsidy program experience (the 1,156 non-subsidy cohort cases) a total of 30,058 probation supervision months were recorded. The arrest(s) (1,479) rate per 100 months of supervision for this group of probationers was found to be 4.9. For the subsidy cohort shown in Tables 5 and 6 an overall higher arrest rate of 9.4 was recorded. This is a major difference in arrest rates.

Though sufficient time to establish a pattern may not have passed, early findings discussed below show that the non-subsidy cohort continues to be a better community risk.

Non-subsidy and subsidy arrest experience following probation supervision

It was indicated earlier that in most instances subsidy cohort cases were under subsidy supervision at time of removal from probation. Table 7 compares the number of subsidy cases having a reported arrest following removal from probation. An average time span of nine months from time of probation removal had elapsed for each cohort. Three hundred and thirty-three, or 29 percent, of the non-subsidy probationers experienced an arrest during this nine month average period. Thirty-seven percent of the subsidy

cases also had arrests reported during this identical average period. Both during and after and apparently in spite of type program supervision received, subsidy cases as a whole were found to have more arrests than did non-subsidy probation cases. These findings provide a strong basis for the stated thesis of this report; that group characteristics rather than type treatment are most apt to influence probation performance.

TABLE 7  
ARREST EXPERIENCE OF NON-SUBSIDY AND SUBSIDY COHORT SAMPLE CASES  
FOLLOWING REMOVAL FROM SUPERIOR COURT PROBATION SUPERVISION, 1971

By Type of Removal

Type	Total	No arrest cases		Arrest cases	
		Total		Total	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Non-subsidy probation. . .	1,156	823	71.2	333	28.8
Termination. . . . .	803	632	78.7	171	21.3
Violational. . . . .	353	191	54.1	162	45.9
Subsidy probation. . . . .	122	77	63.1	45	36.9
Termination. . . . .	69	47	68.1	22	31.9
Violational. . . . .	53	30	56.6	23	43.4

Note: No arrest cases/arrest cases: Z = 1.87. Difference significant at approximately 3 percent level of probability.

TABLE 8

COMPARISON OF AGREEMENT FOUND BETWEEN SUPERIOR COURT NON-SUBSIDY  
PROBATION MATCHED SUB-SAMPLE AND SUBSIDY PROBATION SAMPLE, 1971

By Sex, Race, Age and Prior Record

Type	Total		Sex		Race		Age		Prior record	
			Male		White		Under 25		None and minor	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Non-subsidy probation matched sub-sample	122	100.0	112	91.8	78	63.9	64	52.5	68	55.7
Subsidy probation sample	122	100.0	112	91.8	78	63.9	64	52.5	68	55.7

TABLE 9

COMPARISON OF PROBATION OUTCOME MEASURES FOR SUPERIOR COURT  
NON-SUBSIDY PROBATION AND SUBSIDY PROBATION, 1971

By Terminations and Violations

Type	Total		Terminations		Violations	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Non-subsidy probation	12,264	100.0	8,408	68.6	3,856	31.4
Non-subsidy probation sample	1,156	100.0	803	69.5	353	30.5
Non-subsidy probation matched sub-sample	122	100.0	78	63.9	44	36.1
Subsidy probation	1,437	100.0	788	54.8	649	45.2
Subsidy probation sample	122	100.0	69	56.6	53	43.4

Note: Los Angeles County excluded in all tables.

Results of case matching procedure

An additional test was made of the proposition that physical characteristics and prior criminality are key indicators of treatment response and outcome. The test was based on the selection of 122 "subsidy like cases" obtained from the non-subsidy cohort group of cases. Table 8 shows that the variables matched were sex, race, age and prior record of the case at time of probation commitment.

Data presented in Table 9 shows that the "subsidy like" sub-sample of non-subsidy cases was not significantly different than the overall non-subsidy cohorts from which it came. This can be seen from comparisons of violation and termination rates shown in Table 9 as well as from the proportions of cases arrested shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10  
COMPARISON OF NON-SUBSIDY, NON-SUBSIDY  
SUB-SAMPLES AND SUBSIDY COHORTS  
(By Arrest Status)

Type cohort	Total		Arrest status			
	Number	Percent	No arrest		Arrest	
			Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total non-subsidy . . . . .	1,156	100.0	591	51.1	565	48.9
Non-subsidy less sub-sample	1,034	100.0	545	52.7	489	47.3
Non-subsidy sub-sample. . .	122	100.0	46	37.7	76	62.3
Non-subsidy subsidy . . . .	122	100.0	34	27.9	88	72.1

The matched non-subsidy sub-sample cohort while composed of more probation violators and more arrestees falls almost midway between the non-subsidy and subsidy cohorts in treatment responsiveness. Though it is conjectural it is reasonable to assume that case background factors other than those contained in the present data are responsible for this inconclusive test results.

Clinical as well as other individualized case reports are available to court and correctional agency personnel. These type data while not reported to the Bureau or perhaps even systematically collected are available in the case folders of probationers. Undoubtedly these behavioral factors become part of the case assessment when program assignments following probation placement is made. Certainly it would seem that information concerning the casework variables used in the assignment of cases to specific programs would provide valuable future program evaluation data. In addition more would be learned about how probation works and why.

Study limitations

The main limitations of this study are:

A) The existence of only one year of subsidy caseload information  
Additional years of subsidy program experience is needed to enable validation of this study's findings.

B) Lack of time and detailed data  
This study by necessity was completed in slightly over two months time. This did not permit the collection and analysis of factors such as arrest dispositions or biographical caseload information not routinely included in the Bureau's subsidy probation data bases.

C) The lack of generally acceptable and objective definitions of probation program adjustment

Arrest data represents a broad legal definition of behavior but does not provide a detailed description of probation behavior and treatment response. Neither seriousness nor extensiveness of human behavior is reflected in data solely based on arrests. Felony convictions describe the most serious aspects of human behavior but do not completely describe caseload adjustment experience either. For example, for this study, considerably less than half of the subsidy cases were convicted of a felony while on probation.

D) The lack of coverage in this study of juvenile subsidy probation  
Juvenile probation cases were not included in this study due to the  
lack of quickly or easily obtained arrest information covering juvenile  
probation cases.

E) The absence in this study of county comparison data

It is possible that generalizations concerning non-subsidy and subsidy  
caseload performance may not be representative for individual counties  
included in this study<sup>d</sup>. Time constraints and other limitations did  
not enable the development and analysis of county comparison data.

**END**

<sup>d</sup>See report on arrest experience of Los Angeles County non-subsidy and subsidy  
sample caseloads published by the Department of Finance in August of 1972.