



# Department of Justice



## Office of Justice Programs

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BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS  
CONTACT: KARA MCCARTHY  
(202) 307-1241; [Kara.McCarthy@ojp.usdoj.gov](mailto:Kara.McCarthy@ojp.usdoj.gov)

### **RELEASED SEX OFFENDERS WERE THREE TIMES AS LIKELY AS OTHER RELEASED PRISONERS TO BE RE-ARRESTED FOR A SEX OFFENSE**

WASHINGTON — State prisoners released after serving time for rape or sexual assault were more than three times as likely as other released prisoners to be re-arrested for rape or sexual assault during the 9 years following their release, the Bureau of Justice Statistics announced today. Released sex offenders represented 5% of prisoners released in 2005 and 16% of post-release arrests for rape or sexual assault during the 9-year follow-up period.

The BJS [study](#) tracked a representative sample of prisoners released in 2005 in the 30 states that were responsible for 77% of all state prisoners released nationwide and examined their arrests through 2014. An estimated 7.7% of released sex offenders were arrested for rape or sexual assault during the 9-year follow up period, versus 2.3% of other released prisoners.

While rape and sexual assault offenders were more likely than other released prisoners to be arrested for rape or sexual assault, they were less likely than other released prisoners to be arrested for other crimes. About two-thirds (67%) of released sex offenders were arrested at least once for any type of crime during the 9 years following their release, compared to about five-sixths (84%) of other released prisoners. Almost all prisoners who were re-arrested (96% of released sex offenders and 99% of all released offenders) were arrested for an offense other than a probation or parole violation.

This is BJS's first recidivism study on sex offenders with a 9-year follow-up period. Fewer than half of released sex offenders were arrested for any crime within the first 3 years of release, while more than two-thirds were arrested within 9 years.

About 3 in 10 released sex offenders were arrested during their first year after release. About 1 in 5 were arrested during their fifth year after release, and nearly 1 in 6 were arrested during their ninth year.

During the first 3 years after release, 5% of sex offenders were arrested for any crime outside of the state that released them. After 9 years following release, the percentage arrested out of state had increased to 11%.

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Overall, half of sex offenders released from prison had a subsequent arrest that led to a conviction. However, sex offenders were less likely than all released prisoners to have a new arrest resulting in a conviction. Within 3 years of release, 28% of persons released after serving a sentence for rape or sexual assault had an arrest that led to a conviction, compared to 49% of all released prisoners. At the end of the 9-year follow-up, 50% of sex offenders and 69% of all released prisoners had a new arrest that led to a conviction.

Sex offenders were more likely than other released prisoners to receive longer sentences and to be granted unconditional releases from prison. The median sentence length for sex offenders was 60 months versus 36 months for all state prisoners released in 30 states in 2005. About 32% of sex offenders were granted an unconditional release and not placed on parole, probation or some other form of community supervision. About 26% of all released prisoners were granted an unconditional release.

To conduct the analyses in this report, prisoner records were obtained from state departments of corrections through BJS's National Corrections Reporting Program, and criminal-history records were obtained through requests to the FBI's Interstate Identification Index and state repositories via the International Justice and Public Safety Network.

The report, [\*Recidivism of Sex Offenders Released from State Prison: A 9-Year Follow-Up \(2005-14\) \(NCJ 251773\)\*](#), was written by BJS statisticians Mariel Alper and Matthew R. Durose. The report, related documents and additional information about BJS's statistical publications and programs are available on the BJS website at [www.bjs.gov](http://www.bjs.gov).

The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice is the principal federal agency responsible for collecting, analyzing and disseminating reliable statistics on crime and criminal justice in the United States. Jeffrey H. Anderson is the director.

The Office of Justice Programs, directed by Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Matt M. Dummermuth, provides federal leadership, grants and resources to improve the nation's capacity to prevent and reduce crime, assist victims and enhance the rule of law by strengthening the criminal justice system. More information about OJP and its components can be found at [www.ojp.gov](http://www.ojp.gov).

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