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Recidivism Analysis for Offenders Administered the Domestic Violence Screening Instrument (DVSI)

Executive Summary

A total of 1,240 completed DVSI instruments were received between 2003 and 2005 from the 1st Circuit court and entered into a statistical database. Data were collected in August 2005 such that 955 offenders were tracked for six months; 683 were tracked for twelve months; and 338 were tracked for eighteen months in order to determine if any recidivating event had occurred (per the Interagency Council on Intermediate Sanctions (ICIS), recidivism is defined as a new arrest or probation, parole, or pre-trial revocation within three years of being placed on community supervision).
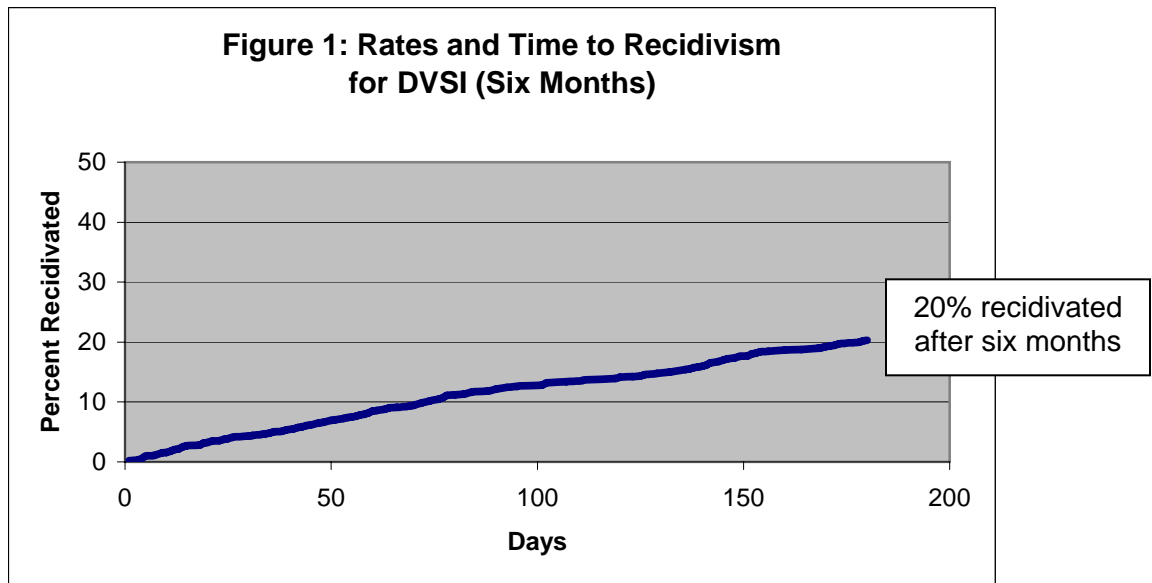
The data show that the DVSI recidivism rate increases over time. Six months after assessment, the rate is 20%; after one year it is 35%; and after eighteen months it is 42%. However, the rate appears to level off somewhat at the eighteen-month mark (additional time and research are necessary to determine how much, if at all, the recidivism rate will climb beyond this point).

The data also show that those who score higher on the DVSI demonstrate higher overall recidivism rates. For the six-month sample, only 11% of those who were classified as "administrative risk" (a score of 1-5 on the DVSI) recidivated, as compared to 42% of those who were classified as "surveillance risk" (a score of 18+ on the DVSI). Similarly, for the one-year sample, only 20% of those classified as "administrative risk" recidivated, as compared to 65% of those who were classified as "surveillance risk." Finally, for the eighteen-month sample, only 27% of those classified as "administrative risk" recidivated, as compared to 92% of those who were classified as "surveillance risk." The differences in recidivism rates by DVSI risk level for all three samples are statistically significant. (The term "statistically significant" is used throughout this report to indicate a result that can be mathematically demonstrated to be at least 95 percent unlikely to have occurred merely by chance.)

Please note that the recidivating events tracked in this report include those that may not be related to domestic violence. Therefore, this analysis does not validate the DVSI as a tool for predicting future domestic violence events. To do so, the data would need to be examined in relation only to new domestic violence-related offenses, which presents an array of definitional and data-related concerns that most likely could not be readily addressed with existing ICIS research resources.
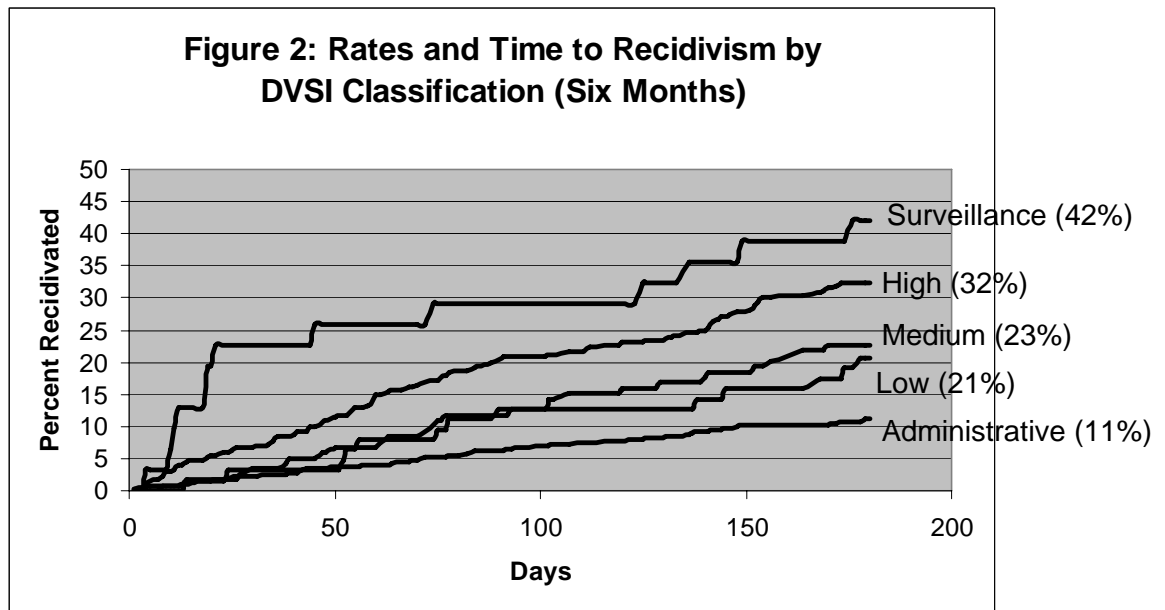
6-month (180 days) Recidivism Rate

Figure 1 shows the DVSI recidivism rate tracked over six months. At three months (90 days) after assessment, 12% of the sample of 955 offenders had recidivated; after six months (180 days), 20% had recidivated.

Figure 1: Rates and Time to Recidivism for DVSI (Six Months)

*Each offender in this sample was tracked for exactly 180 days after his/her DVSI assessment. The sample excludes all offenders in the database with less than 180 days of tracking data.

6-month (180 days) Recidivism Rate by Risk Category

Figure 2 shows the 6-month DVSI recidivism rate tracked by risk category. After 180 days, the recidivism rate is 11% for "administrative risk" offenders (469 cases), 21% for "low risk" offenders (63 cases), 23% for "medium risk" offenders (119 cases), 32% for "high risk" offenders (273 cases), and 42% for "surveillance risk" offenders (31 cases).

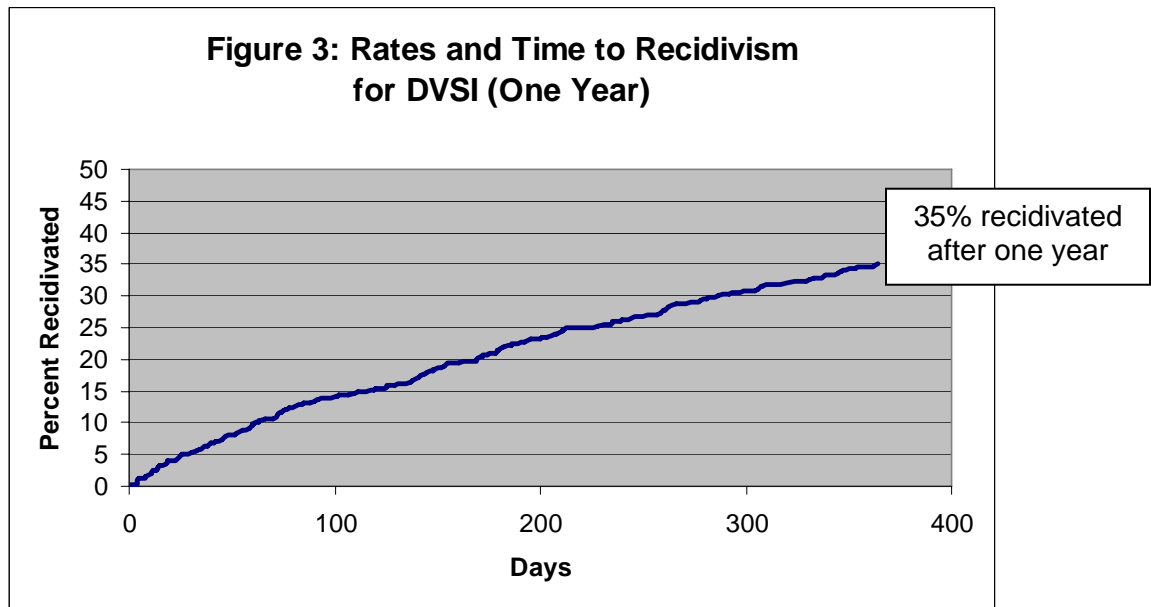**Figure 2: Rates and Time to Recidivism by DVSI Classification (Six Months)**

*Each offender in this sample was tracked for exactly 180 days after his/her DVSI assessment. The sample excludes all offenders in the database with less than 180 days of tracking data.
**Administrative = a score of 0-5 on the DVSI; low = 6; medium = 7-8; high = 9-17; surveillance = 18+.
***The differences in recidivism rates by DVSI risk level are statistically significant.
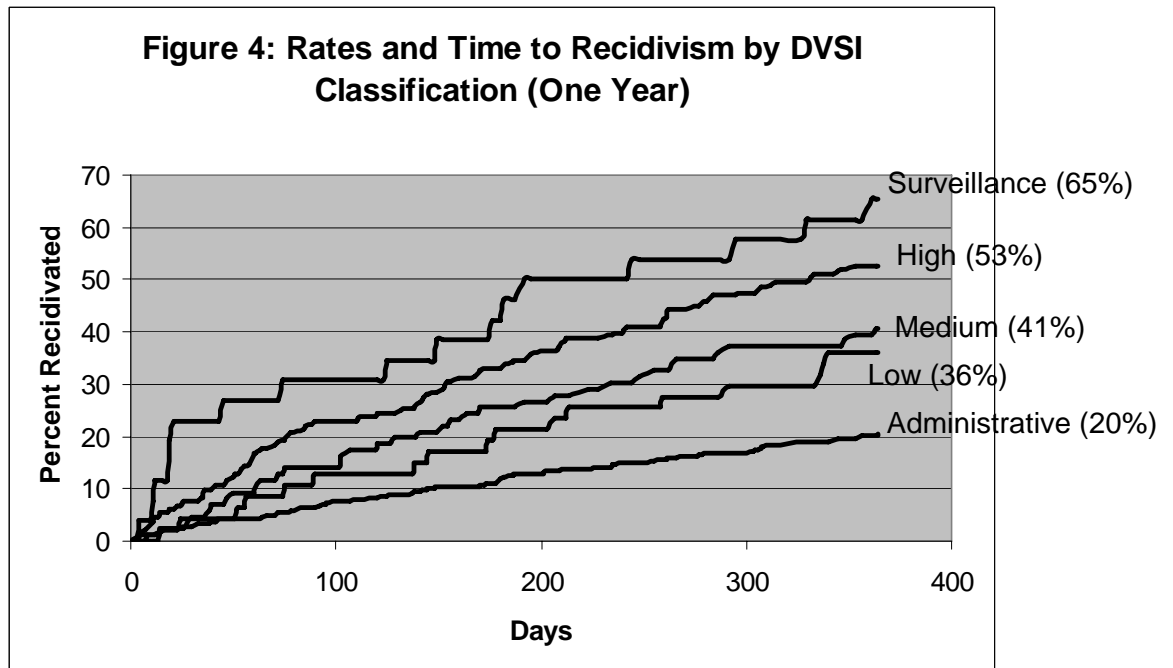
One-Year (365 days) Recidivism Rate

Figure 3 shows the DVSI recidivism rate tracked over a one-year period. After 365 days, 35% of the sample of 683 offenders had recidivated.

Figure 3: Rates and Time to Recidivism for DVSI (One Year)

35% recidivated after one year

*Each offender in this sample was tracked for exactly 365 days after his/her DVSI assessment. The sample excludes all offenders in the database with less than 365 days of tracking data.

One-Year (365 days) Recidivism Rate by Risk Category

Figure 4 shows the one-year DVSI recidivism rate tracked by risk category. After 365 days, the recidivism rate is 20% for "administrative risk" offenders (328 cases), 36% for "low risk" offenders (47 cases), 41% for "medium risk" offenders (86 cases), 53% for "high risk" offenders (196 cases), and 65% for "surveillance risk" offenders (26 cases).

Figure 4: Rates and Time to Recidivism by DVSI Classification (One Year)

Surveillance (65%)
High (53%)
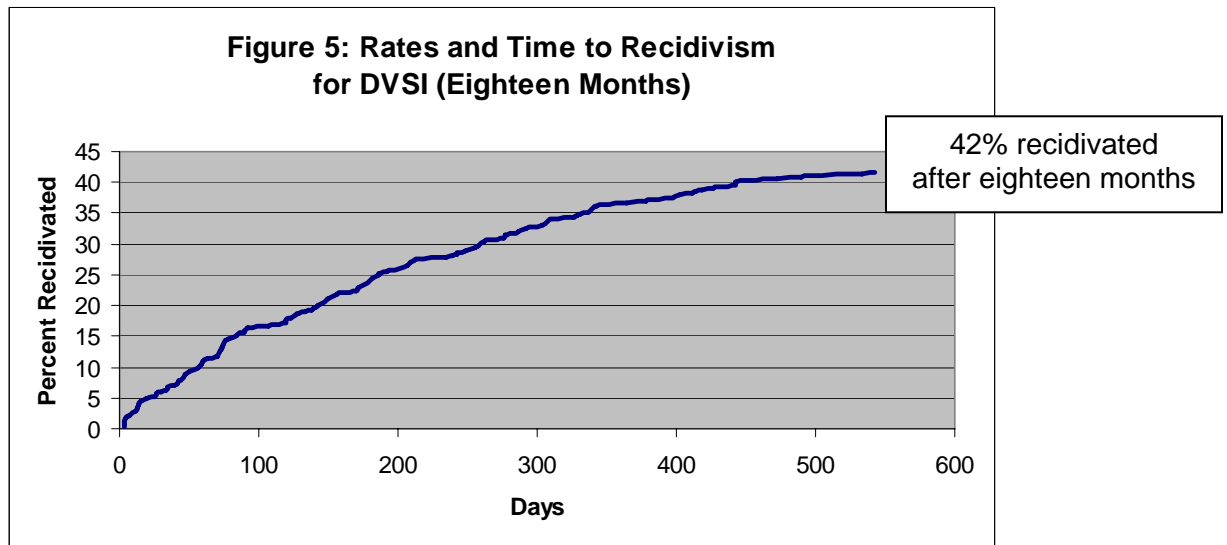Medium (41%)
Low (36%)
Administrative (20%)

*Each offender in this sample was tracked for exactly 365 days after his/her DVSI assessment.
The sample excludes all offenders in the database with less than 365 days of tracking data.
**Administrative = a score of 0-5 on the DVSI; low = 6; medium = 7-8; high = 9-17; surveillance = 18+.
***The differences in recidivism rates by DVSI risk level are statistically significant.
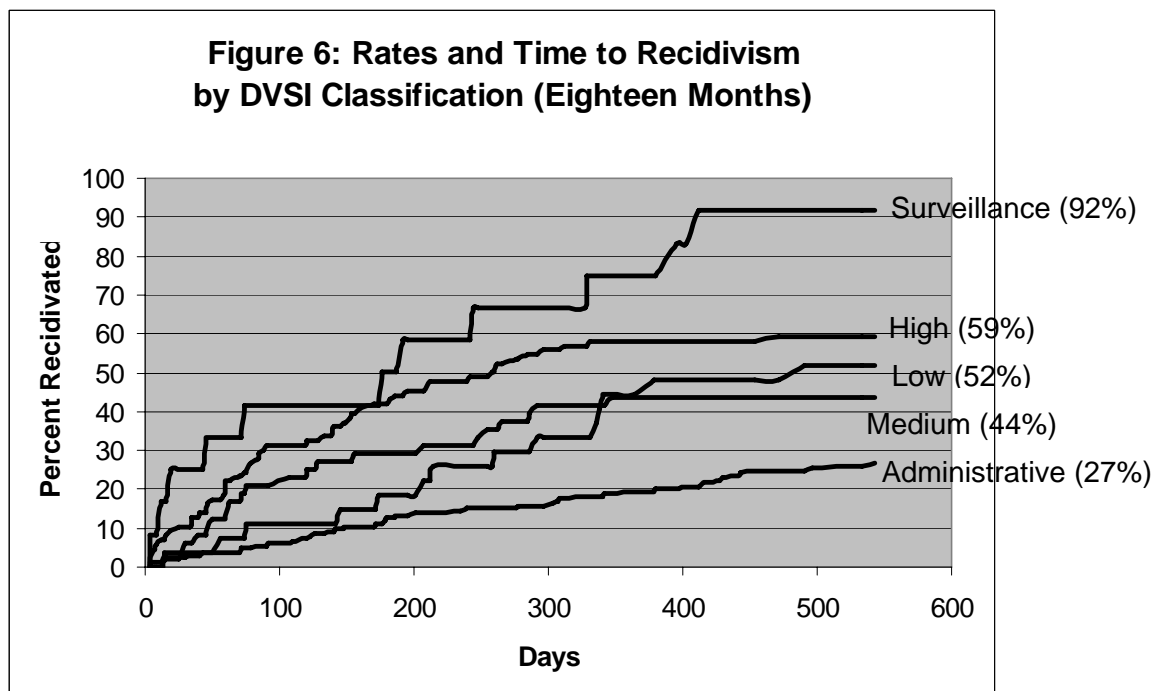
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18-month (545 days) Recidivism Rate

Figure 5 shows the DVSI recidivism rate tracked over eighteen months. After 545 days, 42% of the sample of 338 offenders had recidivated.

Figure 5: Rates and Time to Recidivism for DVSI (Eighteen Months)

42% recidivated after eighteen months

*Each offender in this sample was tracked for exactly 545 days after his/her DVSI assessment. The sample excludes all offenders in the database with less than 545 days of tracking data.

18-month (545 days) Recidivism Rate by Risk Category

Figure 6 shows the 18-month DVSI recidivism rate tracked by risk category. After 545 days, the recidivism rate is 27% for "administrative risk" offenders (165 cases), 52% for "low risk" offenders (27 cases), 44% for "medium risk" offenders (48 cases), 59% for "high risk" offenders (86 cases), and 92% for "surveillance risk" offenders (12 cases).

Figure 6: Rates and Time to Recidivism by DVSI Classification (Eighteen Months)

Surveillance (92%)
High (59%)
Low (52%)
Medium (44%)
Administrative (27%)

*Each offender in this sample was tracked for exactly 545 days after his/her DVSI assessment. The sample excludes all offenders in the database with less than 545 days of tracking data.
**Administrative = a score of 0-5 on the DVSI; low = 6; medium = 7-8; high = 9-17; surveillance = 18+.
***The differences in recidivism rates by DVSI risk level are statistically significant.