

## Interagency Council on Intermediate Sanctions



HAWAII STATE  
DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH

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## Hawaii Recidivism Study, A Three-Year Baseline Follow-Up Analysis

This recidivism study tracks the progress made by the State of Hawaii's Probation Services and the Hawaii Paroling Authority (HPA). The primary focus of this study is to track the State wide recidivism rate - an important indicator of the Interagency Council on Intermediate Sanctions (ICIS) effort to reduce recidivism by 30% over a ten-year period (1999 to 2008). Although ICIS is monitoring additional success measures, recidivism reduction represents a critical, long-term outcome that ICIS is committed to as a primary goal. This study represents a compilation of offenders studied from the following ICIS agencies:

1. Hawaii State Probation Services - 1,859 *Offenders Sentenced to Felony Probation*.
2. Hawaii Paroling Authority - 782 *Offenders Released to Parole (Parolees)*.

The first ICIS recidivism study was completed in 2002. It analyzed a group of offenders who were sentenced to probation or paroled in FY 1999. They were subsequently tracked for three years (1999 through 2003) for criminal offense charges, or infractions/technical violations that led to the revocation of parole and probation. As a result of the 2002 baseline study, ICIS reported a recidivism rate of 53.7% for Felony Probationers, and 72.9% for Parolees. In 2006, ICIS replicated the original study using the same methodology. This second recidivism study included 1,720 Felony Probationers and 1,108 Parolees in FY 2003. It reported a recidivism rate of 48.2% for Felony Probationers, and 65.7% for Parolees. This represented 5.5 and 7.2 percentage point declines in recidivism, respectively, for Felony Probationers and Parolees.

This 2008 report is the third recidivism study and replicates the methodology and recidivism definition adopted in the previous two studies. This replication is critical to the methodological consistency necessary for time-series trend analyses, and subsequently, will allow for a valid comparison of recidivism trends among probationers and parolees. This study involves 1,856 Felony Probationers, and 782 Parolees in FY 2005. It elaborates on the study's methodological details, the pertinent findings examined in the Data Analysis Section, and the Discussion of Findings summarized in the Conclusion Section.

## Methodology:

The recidivism dataset includes data fields from the following State information systems: the CYZAP database; Department of the Attorney General's Proxy database; Hawaii State Probation's PROBER information system; and the Hawaii Paroling Authority's (HPA) database. The arrest charges compiled for this study are from the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS), September 29, 2008 download. The data elements from the CJIS download include *SIDs*, *Arrest/Conviction Dates*, *Initial Charge Severity* (Felony, Misdemeanor, Petty Misdemeanor), and *Initial Charge* and *Disposition* descriptions. Demographic information includes *Race*, *Sex*, and *Date of Birth*. The CJIS download included 60,049 total charges rendered as of FY2005. Due to the multiple agencies identified in this study, the *Follow-up Start Date* is determined by each agency. This date is critical in calculating the *Time to Recidivism* field (length of time expired before the arrest charge or revocation violation). In situations where multiple charges are filed on the same arrest date, the most severe charge (Felony, Misdemeanor, or Petty Misdemeanor) was used to record the recidivism event. The following paragraphs specify the methodologies employed by each agency, and the defined data fields.

### 1. Probation Services:

A total of 2,292 Probationers (Felon, Non-Felon, and Probationers with DAG pleas) were included in the database, of which 887 offenders were extracted from PROBER. Additionally, 913 offenders were extracted from the AG's PROXY database, and 492 probationers came from the CYZAP database.<sup>1</sup> However, this study only included 1,859 Felony Probationers who received probation services during FY 2005. They received a Proxy test used to screen for elevated risk patterns, and an initial LSI-R/ASUS risk assessment used to identify important criminogenic needs. The *Follow-up Start Date* comes from the reported supervision start date (sentencing date). Additionally, probation cases that have a current DAG/DANCP plea initiated within the FY 2005 period, or probationers subsequently serving time in jail during the initial probation period (greater than 6 months), were excluded from the analysis. These procedures are consistent with the methodology employed by the two previous recidivism studies, and are critical to the internal validity of the study.

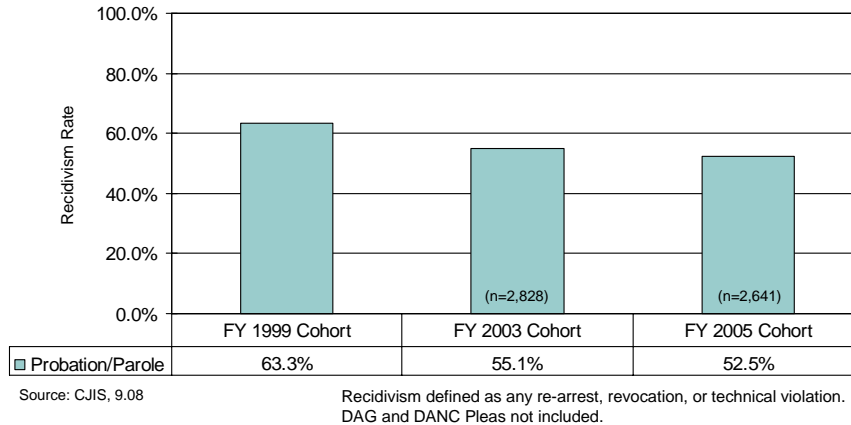
### 2. Hawaii Paroling Authority:

There are 782 offenders who were formerly incarcerated, and released to HPA in FY 2005. HPA provided an August 2008 download that included *SIDs*, and *Release to Parole Dates*. No problems were encountered regarding the methodological procedures employed by the two previous studies. The *Release to Parole Date* is essentially the *Follow-up Start Date*.

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<sup>1</sup> Probationers from the CYZAP database and the Attorney General's PROXY database were added to this study. However, a significant percentage of these Felony Probationers were not added to the PROBER database. The reasons for these missing records are not known. As a result, these probationers did not have a supervision start (sentencing) date, and instead, either the PROXY date or the LSI-R initial assessment date was used in lieu of the sentencing date. Although these alternate LSI-R assessment and PROXY dates were not perfectly aligned with the supervision start (sentencing) date, they do not differ widely from each other, as most of the pertinent date fields were recorded within a two-month span of each other, and all within FY 2005.

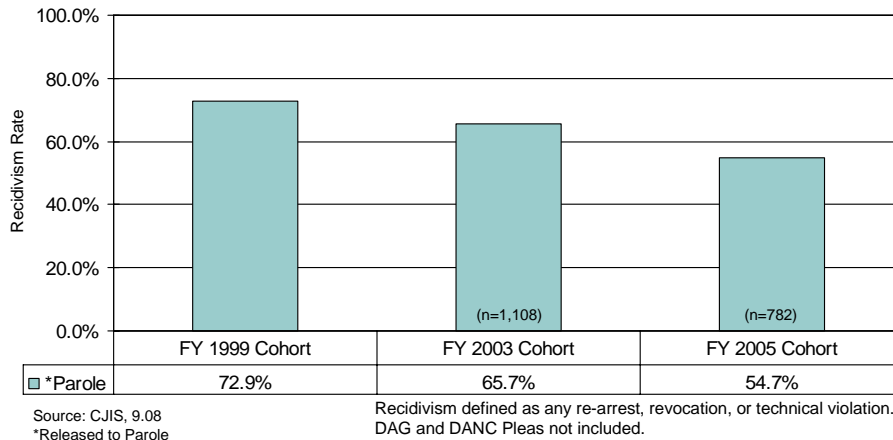
**Figure 1: Recidivism Rate Trends, Felony Probationers and Parolees**



**Figure 1** depicts the recidivism trends for Felony Probationers and Parolees in FY 1999, FY 2003, and FY 2005.

- The recidivism rate for the FY 2005 cohort (n=2,641) is at 52.5%.
- This is a 10.8 percentage point decline from the FY 1999 cohort and a 2.6 percentage point decline from the FY 2003 cohort.

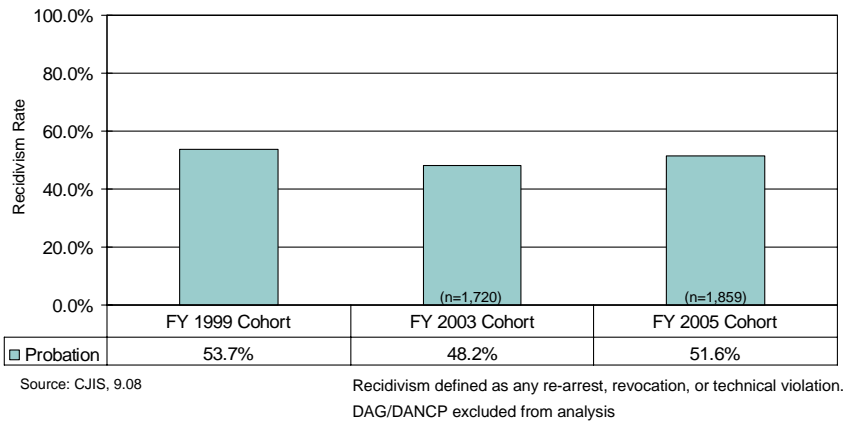
**Figure 2: Recidivism Rate Trends, Parolees**



**Figure 2** depicts the recidivism trends for Parolees in FY 1999, FY 2003, and FY 2005.

- The recidivism rate for FY 2005 cohort (n=782) is at 54.7%.
- This is an 18.2 percentage point decline from the FY 1999 cohort and an 11.0 percentage point decline from the FY 2003 cohort.

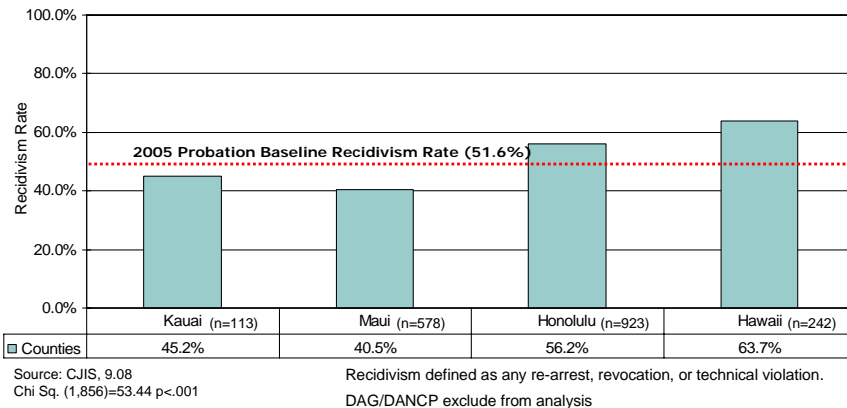
**Figure 3: Recidivism Rate Trends, Felony Probationers**



**Figure 3** depicts the recidivism trends for Felony Probationers in FY 1999, FY 2003, and FY 2005.

- The recidivism rate for FY 2005 cohort (n=1,859) is at 51.6%.
- This is a 2.1 percentage point decline from the FY 1999 cohort and a 3.4 percentage point increase from the FY 2003 cohort.

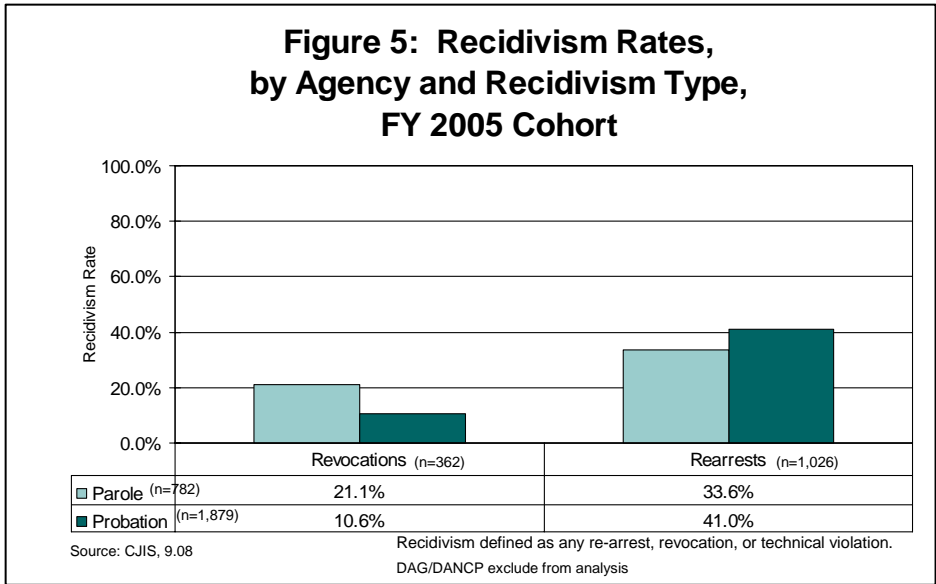
**Figure 4: Recidivism Rates, Felony Probationers, by County, FY 2005 Cohort**



**Figure 4** depicts the FY 2005 recidivism rates for Felony Probationers, by county. The differences in recidivism rates between the counties are statistically significant at the p<.001 level.

- Maui County has the lowest recidivism rate (40.5%).
- Hawaii County has the highest recidivism rate (63.7%).
- The City and County of Honolulu has the largest number of Felony Probationers (n=923) and the second highest recidivism rate (56.2%).
- Kauai County has the fewest number of Felony Probationers (n=113) and the second lowest recidivism rate (45.2%).

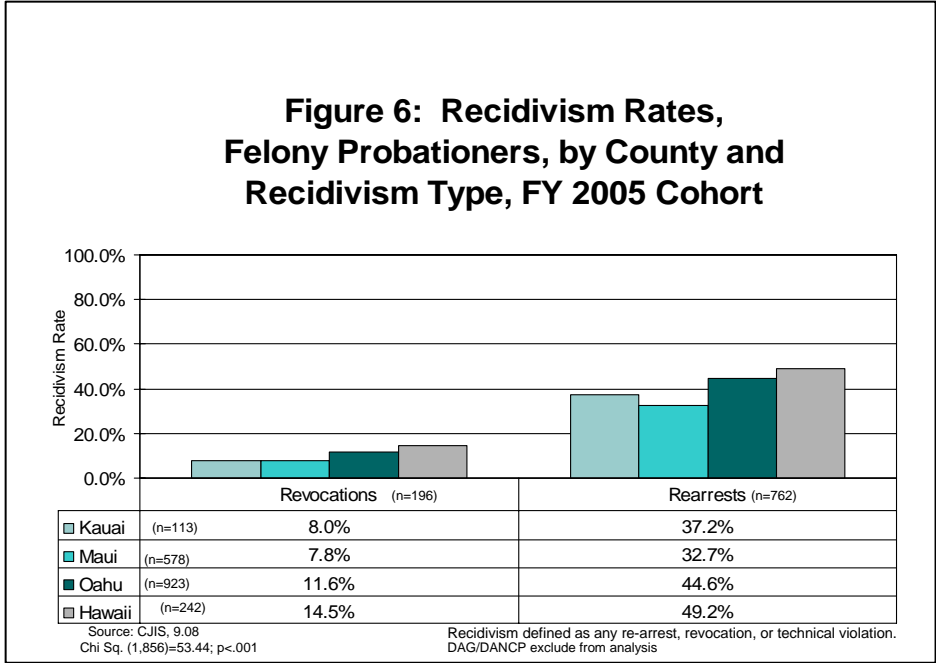
**Figure 5: Recidivism Rates, by Agency and Recidivism Type, FY 2005 Cohort**



**Figure 5** depicts the recidivism rates for Felony Probationers and Parolees in the FY 2005 cohort. Each recidivism rate depicted reflects offenders who had their probation revoked (n=362), or who were re-arrested for a new offense (n=1,036).

- Probation (n=1,879) has a higher re-arrest recidivism rate (41.0%), as compared to Parole (33.6%).
- Parole (n=782) has a higher revocation recidivism rate (21.1%), as compared to Probation (10.6%).

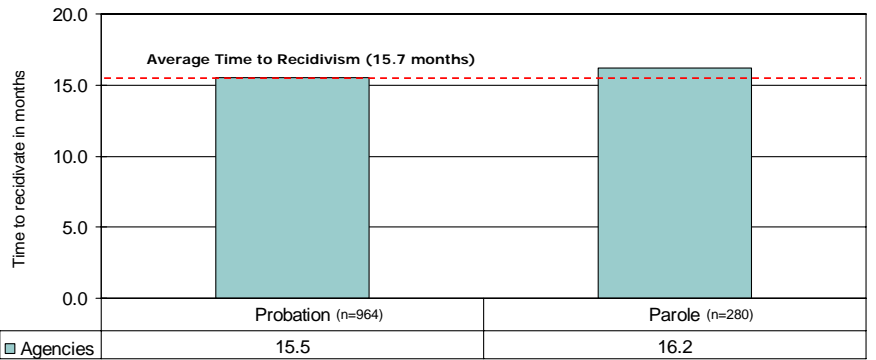
**Figure 6: Recidivism Rates, Felony Probationers, by County and Recidivism Type, FY 2005 Cohort**



**Figure 6** depicts the recidivism rates for Felony Probationers, by county, in FY 2005. Each recidivism rate reflects offenders who had their status revoked (n=196), or who were re-arrested (n=762) for a new offense.

- Maui County (n=578) has the lowest recidivism rate for both Re-arrests (32.7%) and Revocations (7.8%).
- Hawaii County (n=242) has the highest recidivism rate for both Re-arrests (49.2%) and Revocations (14.5%).
- The differences in recidivism among the various counties are statistically significant at the p<.001 level.

**Figure 7: Average Time to Recidivism, by Agency, FY 2005 Cohort**



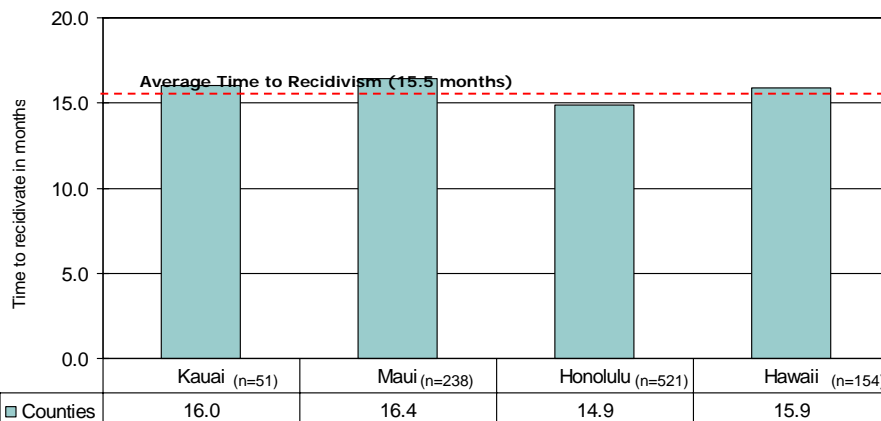
Source: CJIS, 9.08

Recidivism defined as any re-arrest, revocation, or technical violation.  
 DAG/DANCP exclude from analysis

Figure 7 depicts the average time in months between the *Follow-up Start Date* and the *Recidivism Event Date* for Probation Services and the Hawaii Paroling Authority in FY 2005.

- The average time to recidivism for both Probation (n=964) and Parole (n=280) is 15.7 months.
- Parole has a slightly-higher average time to recidivism of 16.2 months, as compared to 15.5 months for Probation.

**Figure 8: Average Time to Recidivism, Felony Probationers, by County, FY 2005 Cohort**



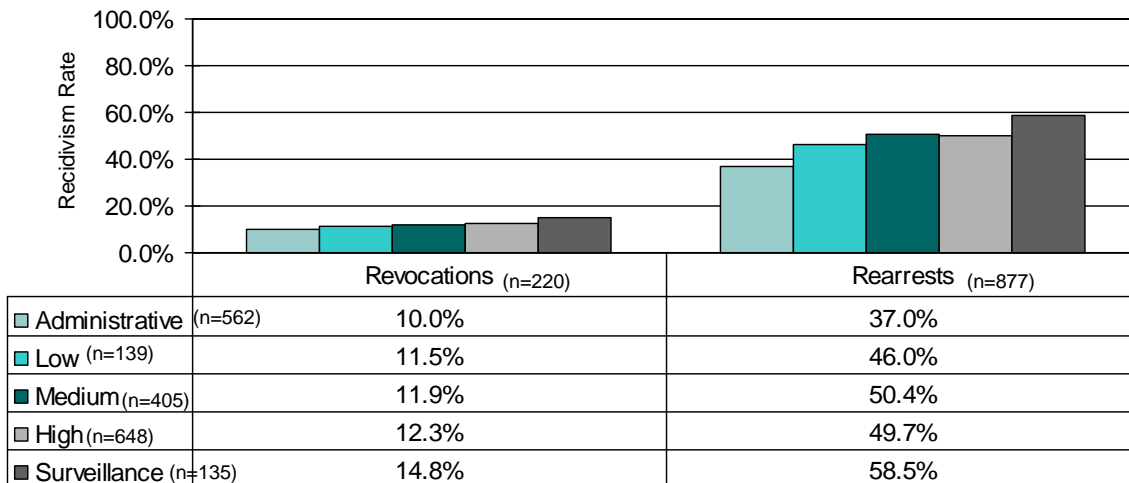
Source: CJIS, 9.08

Recidivism defined as any re-arrest, revocation, or technical violation.  
 DAG/DANCP exclude from analysis

Figure 8 depicts the average time in months between the *Follow-up Start Date* and the *Recidivism Event Date* for Felony Probationers, by county in FY 2005.

- The average time to recidivism for Felon Probationers is 15.5 months.
- Maui County (n=238) has the longest average time to recidivism (16.4 months).
- The City and County of Honolulu (n=521) has the shortest average time to recidivism (14.9 months).

**Figure 9: Recidivism Rates,  
 by LSI-R Risk Categories and Recidivism Type,  
 FY 2005 Cohort**



Source: CJIS, 9.08

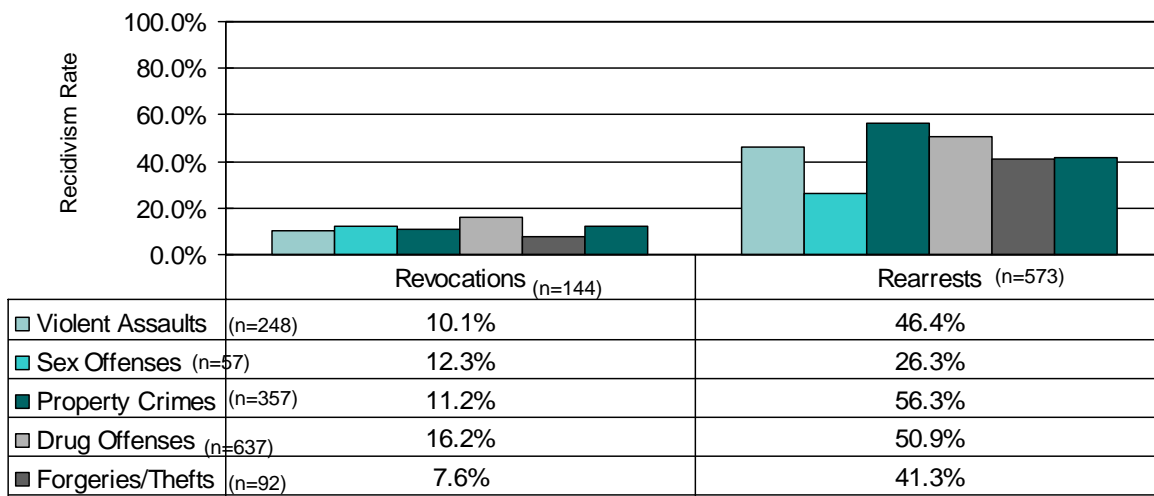
Chi Sq. (1,889)=48.76;  $p < .001$

$\phi$  (1,889)=.161;  $p < .001$

**Figure 9** displays the recidivism rates for Felony Probationers and Parolees who were administered the LSI-R in FY 2005. The depicted recidivism rates correspond to the individual LSI-R risk classification levels for offenders who had their status revoked, or who were re-arrested for a new offense. The difference in recidivism rates between the Administrative, Low, Medium, High, and Surveillance level offenders are statistically significant for both Revocations (n=220) and Re-arrests (n=877) at the  $p < .001$  level. The data reveal that the LSI-R risk classification system is highly predictive of recidivism for both Revocations and Re-arrests.

- The Surveillance (n=135) level offenders have the highest recidivism rates for both Re-arrests (58.5%) and Revocations (14.8%).
- The Administrative (n=562) level offenders have the lowest recidivism rates for both Re-arrests (37.0%) and Revocations (10.0%).
- The Low (n=139), Medium (n=405), and High (n=648) classification levels on the LSI-R total scores, reflect recidivism rates of 46.0%, 50.4%, and 49.7%, respectively, for Re-arrests, and 11.5%, 11.9%, and 12.3% for Revocations. All of the recidivism rates increase as the risk levels increase, except for Re-arrested High risk offenders.

**Figure 10: Recidivism Rates, by Initial Offense Type (LSI-R) and Recidivism Type, FY 2005 Cohort**



Source: CJIS, 9.08

Chi Sq. (1,391)=45.32; p<.001

$\phi$  (1,391)=.181; p<.001

**Figure 10** displays the recidivism rates for Felony Probationers and Parolees who were administered an initial LSI-R in FY 2005. The recidivism rates depicted represent the *Types of Initial Offenses* committed by offenders who either had their status revoked, or who were re-arrested for a new offense. The difference in recidivism rates between the *Types of Initial Offenses* are statistically significant for both Revocations (n=144) and Re-arrests (n=573) at the p<.001 level. The data reveal that recidivism varies by the *Types of Initial Offenses* classification.

- Offenders charged with Property Crimes (n=357) have the highest recidivism rate for Re-arrests (56.3%).
- Offenders charged with Drug Offenses (n=637) have the highest recidivism rate for Revocations (16.2%).
- Sex Offenders (n=57) have the lowest recidivism rate for Re-arrests (26.3%).
- Offenders charged with Forgeries/Thefts (n=92) have the lowest recidivism rate for Revocations (7.6%).
- *Types of Initial Offenses* is highly predictive of recidivism for both Revocations and Re-arrests at the p<.001 level.



## Discussion and Conclusions:

This report reveals a decline in the recidivism rate, over time, after combining the Felony Probationers with Parolees; the FY 2005 cohort recidivism rate is 52.5%, compared to 63.3% for the FY 1999 cohort and 55.1% for the FY 2003 cohort (see Figure 1). The decline in recidivism is especially apparent for parolees, whose 54.7% recidivism rate for the FY 2005 cohort represents an 18.2 percentage point decline from the FY 1999 cohort, and an 11.0 percentage point decline from the FY 2003 cohort (see Figure 2). However, there was a slight recidivism rate *increase* for the FY 2005 Felony Probationer cohort. Presently, recidivism occurs, on average, 15.7 months from the start of probation and 16.2 months from the start of parole.

With respect to county-level data, Felony Probationers in Maui County have the lowest recidivism rate (40.5%), while those in Hawaii County have the highest recidivism rate (63.7%). These county-level trends remain true when analyzing the recidivism rates for both *Revocations* or *Re-arrests* (see Figure 6). Maui County also has the longest average recidivism period (16.4 months) (see Figure 8). Finally, recidivism rates increase in relation to increasing LSI-R risk classification levels. The Surveillance level offenders have the highest recidivism rates for Revocations (14.8%) and Re-arrests (58.5%), while the Administrative level offenders have the lowest recidivism rates for Revocations (10.0%) and Re-arrests (37.0%) (see Figure 9). By *Initial Offense Type*, drug offenders have the highest recidivism rates for Revocations (16.2%), while Property Crime offenders have the highest recidivism rates for re-arrests (56.3%) (see Figure 10).

The recidivism rate for FY 2005 Felony Probationers shows a 3.4 percentage point increase in recidivism, as compared to the FY 2003 recidivism statistic. It is not known why this increase occurred, except that it may be due to random, year-to-year fluctuations in recidivism rates. Additionally, research is not able to control for outside or unknown environmental factors within the offender community. There may be undefined triggers that influence recidivism and contribute to an increase in technical violations or re-arrests, despite the services and programs offered to offenders. Finally, research does not know whether the Probation FY 2005 cohort is equivalent to the FY 2003 cohort. Consequently, significant differences in the demographic profile, risk level, policies and procedures, and/or offender traits may skew the recidivism rate.

In conclusion, it is premature to make a definitive statement on recidivism trends. A cautious and conservative approach is required because of the volatile nature of recidivism studies. There are problems related to the monitoring of probationers or parolees who are easily influenced by internal and external factors that can contribute to recidivism. What is important is that the policies and procedures that Hawaii Probation Services or HPA has in place are conducive to evidence-based practice. In other words, Probation Services and HPA should continue to validate assessment instruments (PROXY, LSI-R, etc) used in risk classification. ICIS should also strive to improve its classification system by minimizing classification errors and by employing a classification system that is both predictive of recidivism, and useful for offender management. This includes the use of the risk and needs principles in providing supervised services. Also, ICIS needs to evaluate the specific evidence-based practices (i.e., MI, COG, case plans) employed by the court officers. It must also evaluate the effectiveness of treatment provider services to offenders, to include the monitoring and evaluation of provider outcomes, such as program completion rates, the delivery of risk-based offender services, and the attention given to post-follow-up service objectives.

*Hawaii Recidivism Study, a Three-year Baseline Follow-up Analysis*  
is available electronically at the ICIS web site:  
<Hawaii.gov/icis>.