Introduction

Probation is one of the most widely used community correction approaches in the U.S. However, the noncompliance rate remains high: about one third of probationers fail the terms of their supervision, making probation one of the major sources for the prison population. The complicated procedure and inconsistent operation is hindering the probation system’s efficiency.

A new probation system where the violations of conditions are responded to with swift, certain and proportionate consequence – HOPE (Hawaii’s Opportunity Probation with Enforcement) – launched in 2004 and achieved impressive improvements in compliance rates for drug offenders.

Why? GPS ankle bracelet is loss of freedom; Curfew is an inconvenience

A Critical Early Buy

Certain:

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Why? GPS ankle bracelet is loss of freedom; Curfew is an inconvenience

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The clear demarcation of the offenders’ new supervision conditions and the behavior expected from them. These changes were put into effect immediately, without previous warning or consultation.

Adapt to Potential Loss of Discretion

Critical Leadership

Stakeholders’ Roles

Judge

• Greater Demands on Time
• Critical Leadership

Probation Supervisor

• Active Leadership
• Monitoring Fidelity

Probation Officer

• Lead Implementers
• Adapt to Increased Workload

Court Staff

• Adjust to the Fast Pace Requirement
• Unseen Heroes

Prosecutor

• Critical Early Buy-in

Public Defender

• Critical Early Buy-in

Client Advocate and Contact

Behavioral Triage

High Severity

Medium Severity

Low Severity

*Sanctions are based on the SC&F draft and are subjected to change.

Evaluation Research Activities

Observe Probation Interviews

Attend Court Hearings

Track Probationers’ Compliance/Noncompliance Records

Role along with Probation Officers

Attend Stakeholders’ Monthly Meeting; Interview Different Stakeholders

Pre-study Focus Group Results

Participants:

• 10 Probationers from Monroe County Probation Night-watch Program
  • Average age: 19.2 years old

Thoughts on Probation:

• “Annoying,” “Stressful,” “Being locked outside,” etc.

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Thoughts on Current Incentives in Probation:

• Almost no incentives
• Current perceived incentive: PO’s praise

Most Desirable Incentives:

• Reductions in custody related requirements for increased freedom
• Examples: reducing curfew time, getting off GPS bracelet, reductions in probation office visiting frequency, getting off probation supervision early, etc.

Need for Individualization in Probation:

• Meaningful incentives: Incentives that meet probationers’ needs and show understanding for individual’s life

  “If I don’t need sneakers, why would you give me a Footlocker gift card?”

• Regardless of what form of incentive, “care” should be the essential message delivered through the reward.

• Standard Tangible Rewards are demeaning

  “I go to jail after I mess up, but I only get a ticket or a gift card for doing well!”

Basic Statistics

• Approximately 1 in 52 adults in the United States were under community supervision at year end 2014.
• Youth are more likely to carry and fire a gun.
• Gang membership and gang associations greatly increase individual’s gun-related behaviors and risk of victimization by shootings.
• Most victims and offenders in shootings are 16 to 28 year old males.
• New York Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (NYCOMPAS) is a risk–and-needs assessment instrument which assists probation officers and community corrections professionals in making recommendations to assist in their decision-making process regarding the suitability of community corrections sentencing and release options.
• Although there are some differences in operations, Monroe County Probation Night-watch program and the Swift, Certain & Fair program do share some important features: both are designed to reduce violent crimes in the City of Rochester and both target young people in a similar age group.

Contact

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