



Evaluating Monroe County Swift, Certain & Fair Pilot Probation

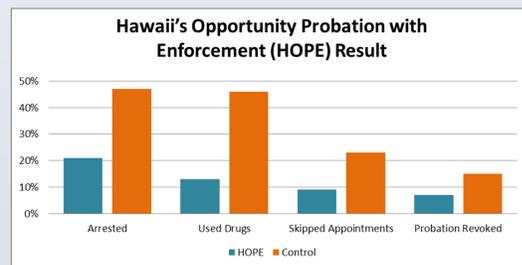
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Introduction

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.



Swift, Certain & Fair

- Swift:** Deliver a sanction immediately upon detection of a violation.
- Certain:** Use consistent and predictable punishments to make the consequences of bad behavior clear to the offender.
- Fair:** The clear demarcation of the offenders' new supervision conditions and the opportunity for a fresh start allow the offender to view the system as fair, which is critical for them to regain their sense of self-control.

Monroe County SC&F Program

Goal

Monroe County Swift Certain & Fair (SC&F) Pilot Program is designed to reduce homicide deaths and gun violence and improve outcomes among 16-24 year olds in the City of Rochester, targeting the highest crime communities—those specifically located within the City's areas identified as "hot spots."

Target Population

- Highest/greatest risk on the New York Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (NYCOMPAS)
- Age: 16-24 years
- Resident of the City of Rochester and associated with a designated "Hot Place"
- Violent felony and gun-related offenses
- Current charge or prior arrest/conviction for violent felony level charges
- Gang involved
- Prior non-compliance with community supervision Family Court involvement

Stakeholders' Roles

Judge

- Greater Demands on Time
- Critical Leadership

Probation Supervisor

- Active Leadership
- Monitoring Fidelity

Probation Officer

- Lead Implementers
- Adapt to Increased Workload
- Adapt to Potential Loss of Discretion

Court Staff

- Adjust to the Fast Pace Requirement
- Unsung Heroes

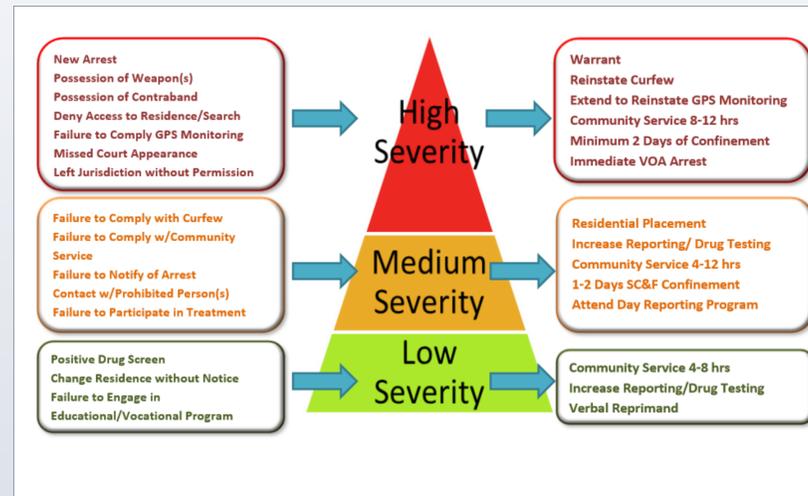
Prosecutor

- Critical Early Buy-in
- Adjust to SC&F Schedules

Public Defender

- Critical Early Buy-in
- Client Advocate and Contact

Behavioral Triage



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

Evaluation Research Activities



Attend Court Hearings



Track Probationers' Compliance/Noncompliance Records



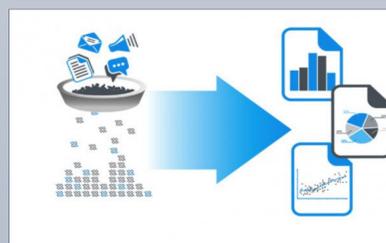
Ride-along with Probation Officers



Attend Stakeholders' Monthly Meeting; Interview Different Stakeholders



Observe Probation Interviews



Analyze Data

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

Thoughts on Current Incentives in Probation:

- Almost no incentives
- Current perceived incentive: POs' praise
- New probationer(s): not receiving/perceiving any reward yet

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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