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WORK RELEASE IN MINNESOTA

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MINNESOTA STATE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

WORK RELEASE IN MINNESOTA

By

James F. Hulburt, Jail Consultant
Nathan G. Mandel, Ph.D., Director of Research

Prepared by the Section on Research and Statistics
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WORK RELEASE IN MINNESOTA

As of 1964, Minnesota was one of 24[1] states which had statutes currently providing for work release sentences. As practiced here,[2] a court of criminal jurisdiction may permit a person to work at a job in the free community while serving his sentence during non-working hours. The granting of permission to the offender to serve his sentence under the work release law is a prerogative of the court. The major objective of this program was to provide support for the offender and his dependents while serving his sentence. Earnings of each prisoner may be collected by the sheriff, probation department, welfare board, or person or agency designated by the court. Whoever is responsible to receive these earnings may pay for the support of dependents, pay fines, and pay for the prisoners support while serving his sentence. Any balance is retained for the prisoner until his discharge. Other important considerations in this essentially new correctional program are the retention of the offender's job which is often lost during incarceration, the monetary savings to the confining jurisdiction to which the offender pays for his support during confinement, the monetary savings to the community which does not have to support dependents while the offender is serving his sentence, and many psychological advantages accruing to the offender who in a large measure is able to retain his place as a self-supporting member of the free community.

This report is the first summary of data pertaining to work release in the state. It provides pertinent information about 1,708 individuals (7 females, 1,701 males) whose work release programs terminated during the calendar year 1965. During the

[1] Wisconsin (1917), Nebraska (1917), West Virginia (1917), Hawaii (1937), Massachusetts (1950), Virginia (1956), Minnesota (1957), California (1956), Idaho (1957), North Carolina (1957), North Dakota (1957), Wyoming (1957), Arizona (1959), Montana (1959), Oregon (1959), Illinois (1959), Washington (1961), Missouri (1961), Michigan (1962), Florida (1963), Maryland (1963), Indiana (1963), Pennsylvania (1963), and South Carolina (1963).

[2] Minnesota Statutes (1961), Chapter #631, Section #425.

same year,16,553 individuals were sentenced to county jails, workhouses or lockups, and although a comparison of only terminations with admissions to work release in 1965 is not particularly valid, it is reasonable to conclude that approximately ten percent of persons so committed were permitted to participate in a work release program.

To date, Wisconsin, North Carolina and Maryland appear to be the only states which have made a state-wide evaluation of the extent to which work release has been used. As far as is known, Minnesota with this report, is the fourth state to develop reasonably inclusive data describing the work release program. Although the Minnesota Statute provides that the sentencing courts make annual reports to the State Department of Corrections, it has not been possible to date, to obtain this information through the courts on an all-inclusive basis. This report is based on the data obtained through the valuable cooperation of sheriffs and jail administrators who submitted an individual report for every individual under their jurisdiction who served his sentence on work release to successful or unsuccessful termination during 1965.

FINDINGS

The following tables summarize the findings of this study:

TABLE 1. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND YEAR SENTENCED

YEAR SENTENCED	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
1964	112	1	113	6.6
1965	1589	6	1595	93.4
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

Approximately ninety-three percent of individuals whose work release terminated in 1965 had been placed on the program during the same year. About seven percent were carry-overs from 1964. Women comprised only .4% of those participating in the program.

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TABLE 2. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND OFFENSE

OFFENSE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Aggravated Assault	2		2	
Assault (No Degree)	28		28	1.6
Assault (Other)	24		24	1.4
Auto Theft	1		1	
Burglary	10		10	
Carrying Deadly Weapon	1		1	
Checking Without Funds	16		16	
Disorderly Conduct	50		50	2.9
Escape	3		3	
Counterfeiting	6		6	
Fraud in Obtaining Credit	15		15	
Indecent Assault	1		1	
Larceny	10		10	
Liquor Law Violation	24		24	1.4
Loitering	2		2	
Manslaughter 2nd	1		1	
Misappropriation by Public Officer	7		7	
Narcotic Law Violation	2		2	
Non-support Wife-Child	10		10	
Possession Stolen Property	4		4	
Fraudulent Bill to Public Officer or Govt.	4	1	5	
Armed Robbery	1		1	
Shoplifting	2		2	
Theft	19	1	20	
Vandalism	7		7	
Criminal Negligence	2		2	
Car Prowling	20		20	1.2
Indecent Conduct	15		15	
Contempt of Court	21		21	1.2
Drunkeness	56	1	57	3.3
Non-moving traffic violation including driving after suspension or revocation	928	4	932	54.6
Moving traffic violation improper physical operation of vehicle	373		373	21.8
Other (Misc.)	36		36	2.1
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

By far the greatest proportion of offenses by work releasees were for traffic violations (76.4%). Driving after suspension or revocation of driver's license accounted for over half (54.6%) of all offenses. From these data, it appears that traffic offenders were most likely to be given the opportunity to serve their sentences under this program

TABLE 3. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND COUNTY OF COMMITMENT

COMMITTING COUNTY	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
*Anoka	100		100	
Beltrami	10		10	
*Carlton	3		3	
*Dakota	8		8	
Douglas	1		1	
Goodhue	3		3	
*Hennepin	1056		1056	61.8
Koochiching	1		1	
Lyon	1		1	
Martin	2		2	
Mower	1		1	
*Olmsted	1		1	
*Otter Tail	2		2	
Polk	8		8	
*Ramsey	392	7	399	23.4
*St. Louis	93		93	5.4
*Scott	1		1	
*Stearns	9		9	
Steele	1		1	
*Washington	2		2	
Winona	6		6	
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

*24 hour surveillance of prisoners.

It is obvious that the granting of work release by the courts is most likely to occur in metropolitan counties. The three metropolitan counties accounted for 90.6%

of all work releases even though they accounted for 67.7% of all sentences.

Sixty-two of Minnesota's 87 counties have jails and/or workhouses that hold sentenced prisoners. Twenty-five counties do not have facilities for prisoners. Of the 62 who do hold sentenced prisoners, only 16 have provisions for 24 hour surveillance by an officer on duty and awake at all times. Eleven of these sixteen counties used the work release program. Of the 46 counties who held sentenced prisoners and did not have 24 hour surveillance, 10 used the work release program.

TABLE 4. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND TYPE OF COMMITTING COURT

TYPE OF COURT	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Justice of Peace	12		12	.7
Municipal	1622	7	1629	95.4
Municipal - Probate	5		5	
District	62		62	3.6
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

Because Municipal Courts hear the great preponderance of cases usually sentenced to jails, workhouses, and lockups, it is logical to find that this type of court used the work release program most frequently.

TABLE 5. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND LENGTH OF SENTENCE

DAYS SENTENCED	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Under 10	44	2	46	2.7
10 - 29	300	5	305	17.9
30 - 44	803		803	47.0
45 - 59	91		91	5.3
60 - 89	222		222	13.0
90 - 119	178		178	10.4
120 - 179	24		24	1.4
180 And Over	39		39	2.3
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

The median sentence is 38.8 days with 30-44 days being the modal sentence interval.

TABLE 6. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND LOCALITY WHERE INCARCERATED

MUNICIPALITY	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Alexandria	11		11	
Anoka	100		100	5.9
Austin	1		1	
Carlton	2		2	
Cloquet	1		1	
Crookston	8		8	
Duluth	90		90	5.3
Fairmont	2		2	
Fergus Falls	2		2	
Hastings	8		8	
Hibbing	3		3	
International Falls	1		1	
Marshall	1		1	
Minneapolis	1056		1056	61.8
Owatonna	1		1	
Red Wing	3		3	
Rochester	1		1	
St. Cloud	9		9	
St. Paul	392	7	399	23.4
Shakopee	1		1	
Stillwater	2		2	
Winona	6		6	
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

TABLE 7. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND TYPE OF INSTITUTION TO WHICH SENTENCED

TYPE INSTITUTION	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Workhouse	1447	7	1454	85.1
County Jail	249		249	14.6
City Jail or Lockup	5		5	.3
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

TABLE 8. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND AGE AT COMMITMENT

AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
17 - 21	388	2	390	22.8
22 - 26	488	1	489	28.6
27 - 31	242		242	14.2
32 - 36	128	1	129	7.6
37 - 41	176	2	178	10.4
42 - 46	109		109	6.4
47 - 51	82	1	83	4.9
52 - 56	32		32	1.9
57 - 61	20		20	1.2
62 - 66	8		8	.5
67 - 71	2		2	.1
72 - 76	1		1	.1
Unreported	25		25	1.5
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

The median age of study subjects is 26.1 years with a modal interval of 22-26 years.

TABLE 9. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND TYPE OF JOB

TYPE JOB	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Professional	22		22	1.3
Clerical-Sales	202	2	204	11.9
Agricultural	14		14	.8
Skilled Labor	701	3	704	41.2
Unskilled Labor	720	2	722	42.3
Student	42		42	2.5
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

TABLE 10. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND HOW JOB WAS OBTAINED

HOW JOB OBTAINED	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Retained previous job	1470	5	1475	86.4
Self	150		150	8.8
Sheriff Department	6		6	.4
Police Department				
Spouse				
Children				
Relative	7		7	.4
Social Agency	6	1	7	.4
Friend	6		6	.4
Jail/Wrkhse. Personnel	10		10	.6
Other	32	1	33	1.9
Unknown	14		14	.8
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

The data in this table indicate that those who have a job or find one themselves are probably given preferential consideration for work release by the court. It appears that minimal effort is made to secure employment for prisoners after commitment.

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TABLE 11. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS

NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
None	638	4	642	37.6
1 - 3	710	2	712	41.7
4 - 6	281	1	282	16.5
7 - 9	67		67	3.9
Over 9	5		5	.3
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

One-thousand-sixty-three (62.4%) of the subject group were responsible for the support of approximately 3,400 dependents. If work release were not available to them, the community would usually have to extend public assistance to these dependents at an appreciable cost. It must also be remembered that of the 1,708 work releases, 1,618 paid for their support while incarcerated (See Table 13).

TABLE 12. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND GROSS DOLLAR INCOME DURING PROGRAM

DOLLARS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
None	56	1	57	3.3
1 - 49	52		52	3.0
50 - 99	113	2	115	6.7
100 - 299	635	3	638	37.4
300 - 500	462	1	463	27.1
Over 500	383		383	22.4
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

Sixteen-hundred-fifty-one inmates had incomes and earned a total gross dollar income of $675,986.00 or an average of $409.44 per person. The approximate daily income equalled $22.75, although this average is skewed in the direction of the higher incomes. The average time served was 25.3 days of which 18 days were working days.

TABLE 13. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND DOLLAR AMOUNT PAID FOR BOARD AND ROOM DURING PROGRAM

DOLLARS PAID	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
None	86	4	90	5.3
1 - 25	310	1	311	18.2
26 - 50	487	2	489	28.6
51 - 75	302		302	17.7
76 - 100	251		251	14.7
101 - 150	143		143	8.4
151 - 200	62		62	3.6
Over 200	60		60	3.5
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

Sixteen-hundred-eighteen individuals paid $107,488 for board and room, which averages $66.43 per inmate. The approximate average daily rate paid was $2.63. Board and room was not charged to students and others not having incomes.

TABLE 14. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND HOW SENTENCE WAS SERVED

HOW SERVED	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Days	84		84	4.9
Nights	1355	3	1358	79.5
Week-ends	163	4	167	9.8
Other Combinations	99		99	5.8
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

TABLE 15. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND HOW HOURS WERE WORKED

HOW HOURS WORK	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Full-time Days	1456	6	1462	85.6
Full-time Nights	78		78	4.6
Rotating Shifts	108		108	6.3
Part-time, Day	11		11	.6
Part-time, Night	8		8	.5
Other Combinations	40	1	41	2.4
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

TABLE 16. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND REASON PROGRAM TERMINATED

REASON	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Sentence Completed	874	7	881	51.6
Sentence Suspended	286		286	16.7
Absconded	83		83	4.9
Violation of Rules	71		71	4.2
Employment Ended	13		13	.8
At Own Request	5		5	.3
Illness	2		2	.1
Parole to Hennepin Co. Municipal Court Services	330		330	19.3
Paid Fine As Alternative	19		19	1.1
Other	18		18	1.1
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

Those individuals who completed their sentence, had their sentence suspended, were paroled, or paid a fine as alternative to imprisonment, were considered to have "successfully" completed the program (88.7%). Persons who absconded or violated rules (9.1%) were considered "failures". Other reasons for termination (2.3%) could not validly be classified as either "success" or "failure".

TABLE 17. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND TOTAL TIME ON PROGRAM

DAYS SERVED	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Under 10	351	4	355	20.8
10 - 29	946	2	948	55.5
30 - 44	192	1	193	11.3
45 - 59	107		107	6.3
60 - 89	73		73	4.3
90 - 119	19		19	1.1
120 - 179	5		5	.3
180 And Over	8		8	.5
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

The median time served on the work release program was 17.4 days as opposed to the median sentence of 38.8 days.

TABLE 18. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND WHETHER SAME JOB ON PROGRAM WAS RETAINED WHEN RELEASED

JOB RETAINED	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Yes	1253	2	1255	73.5
No	78		78	4.6
Unknown	370	5	375	22.0
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

TABLE 19. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND OPINION OF SUPERVISOR OF CUSTODY WHETHER PROGRAM HELPED INDIVIDUAL

PROGRAM HELPED	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Yes	1512	7	1519	88.5
No	179		179	10.5
Unknown	10		10	.6
TOTAL	1701	7	1708	

The responses of supervisors of custody indicate a high opinion of the value of the work release program to persons involved. It is interesting to note the high correlation between these opinions and the "success" and "failure" rating in Table 16.

TABLE 20. TERMINATIONS BY SEX AND IF PROGRAM DID NOT HELP, WHAT SENTENCE WOULD BE BETTER

BETTER SENTENCE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Straight Jail Sentence	43		43	24.0
Workhouse Or Work Farm Sentence	127		127	70.9
Fine				
Probation				
Other	6		6	3.4
Unknown	3		3	1.7
TOTAL	179		179	

SUMMARY

During 1965, 16,553, individuals were sentenced to jails and workhouses. Of these 1,708 (1,701 males and 7 females), 10.32% participated in the work release program.

The greatest proportion (76.4%) persons permitted to engage in work release were traffic offenders.

The three metropolitan counties; Hennepin, Ramsey, and St. Louis, accounted for 90.6% of all work releases granted (Hennepin 61.8%, Ramsey 23.4%, and St. Louis 5.4%) even though they accounted for only 67.7% of all sentences.

Work release was most frequently granted by Municipal Courts (95.4%).

Median sentence was 38.8 days with a median time served of 17.4 days. Sentences were mainly served at night (79.5%).

Median age was 26.1 years.

Jobs engaged in by work releasees were those retained (86.4%) or found by the individual (8.8%).

One-thousand-sixty-three work releasees supported themselves and approximately 3,400 dependents earning a gross income of $675,986.00 (total average $409.44: daily average $22.75).

Sixteen-hundred-eighteen (94.7%) individuals paid $107,488.00 ($2.63 average per day) for board and room to the confining institution.

Approximately 89% of work releasees served their sentences to a "successful" conclusion and only 9.1% failed to do so.

After release, 73.5% retained the job in which they were engaged while serving their sentence.

Those responsible for supervision of custody indicated that they felt that 88.5% of all persons serving work release sentences were helped by the program.

The proportion of sentenced offenders who were placed on work release (10.32%) was remarkably small compared with the apparent "success" of the program; there is hesitation on the part of non-metropolitan areas to use the work release program. It is difficult to draw conclusive inferences from this one evaluation. Since this report will be prepared annually there will develop a body of comparative data which will permit more valid comparisons to be made.

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