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To protect the public and  
reduce crime by holding youth  
offenders accountable  
and providing opportunities  
for reformation in safe  
environments.*

# Recidivism Findings For Offenders Released by Department of Corrections from Oregon Youth Authority Close Custody FY01–FY05 Cohorts

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## **RECIDIVISM FINDINGS FOR OFFENDERS RELEASED BY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FROM OREGON YOUTH AUTHORITY CLOSE CUSTODY, FY01–FY05 COHORTS**

### **Executive Summary**

The Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) Research and Evaluation Unit has compiled and analyzed data on the recidivism rates for individuals under Department of Corrections jurisdiction who were released from OYA close-custody facilities between the start of fiscal year 2001 (FY01) and the end of fiscal year 2005 (FY05). Tracking recidivism supports the OYA's mission by measuring the extent to which agency services have been able to protect the public. In addition, reporting the recidivism measure reflects the agency's values of excellence in public service, openness, and accountability to the public.

Recidivism is defined by four variables: a group of people to track, a date to track from, an event that indicates *recidivism*, and a length of time to track. In this analysis, the recidivism event is any felony adjudication (juvenile court) or felony conviction (adult court) from the date the individual was released from OYA close custody. Furthermore, the recidivism indicator is triggered only by the first felony adjudication or conviction. Recidivism rates are calculated at 12, 24, and 36 months; however, most of the analysis in this report is based on the more stable 36-month rates, which were available only for the cohorts released in FY01, FY02, and FY03.

The DOC release cohorts between FY01 and FY03 exhibited an upward trend in 36-month recidivism rates. Recidivism increased from 12.5% in the FY01 cohort to 18.8% in the FY03 cohort. Greater recidivism among males was responsible for the change. The data showed there were no cases of recidivism among females from any of the cohorts.

In brief, those who recidivated were most likely to have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Released in the FY03 cohort
- Male
- In the Age 16–17 group when released from OYA close custody to DOC post-prison supervision
- Member of the Over-Represented Minority group (comprises Hispanics, African Americans, Native Americans, and Asians)

Conversely, those who did not recidivate were most likely to be characterized by one or more of the following:

- Released in the FY01 cohort
- Female
- In the Age 21+ group when released from OYA close custody to DOC post-prison supervision
- Member of the All-Others group (comprises Caucasians and Other/Unknown races/ethnicities)



## RECIDIVISM FINDINGS FOR OFFENDERS RELEASED BY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FROM OREGON YOUTH AUTHORITY CLOSE CUSTODY, FY01–FY05 COHORTS

The Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) Research and Evaluation Unit has compiled and analyzed data on the recidivism rates of offenders under Department of Corrections jurisdiction who were released from OYA close-custody facilities between fiscal year 2001 (FY01) and fiscal year 2005 (FY05).

Tracking recidivism supports the OYA's mission by measuring the extent to which agency services have been able to protect the public. In addition, reporting the recidivism measure reflects the agency's values of excellence in public service, openness, and accountability to the public.

Offenders held in OYA close custody occupy one of three *bed* categories: Department of Corrections (DOC), Public Safety Reserve (PSR), or Discretionary Bed Allocation (DBA). DOC beds are designated for youth committed to OYA after being convicted in adult courts; however, these offenders remain under the jurisdiction of Department of Corrections during and after incarceration. PSR beds are set aside to ensure that close-custody capacity is available for offenders adjudicated in juvenile courts for the most serious crimes (murder, rape in the first degree, arson in the first degree, etc.). The remaining youth in close custody are committed to DBA beds. This report examines only DOC offenders released from OYA facilities, as their post-custody supervision is managed solely by Department of Corrections.

### What is recidivism?

Recidivism is defined by four variables: a group of people to track, a date to track from, an event that indicates *recidivism*, and a length of time to track. In this analysis, the recidivism event is any felony adjudication (juvenile court) or

felony conviction (adult court) from the date the DOC offender was released from an OYA close-custody facility. Furthermore, the recidivism indicator is triggered only by the first felony adjudication or conviction. Recidivism rates are calculated at 12, 24, and 36 months and are cumulative (meaning that the longer tracking periods include all cases of recidivism up to that point). By defining recidivism in this way, the OYA recidivism rates are computed in a manner comparable to those of the Oregon Department of Corrections, thereby meeting the criteria suggested by HB 5058 from the 2003 Oregon Legislative Session.<sup>1</sup>

### Participants and data

For comparison purposes, this report groups individuals into cohorts using the State of Oregon fiscal year calendar (Table 1). Each cohort includes all DOC youth offenders who were released from OYA close custody during that particular fiscal year.

**Table 1**

**State of Oregon Fiscal Year Calendar Dates**

Fiscal Year	From	To
2001 (FY01)	July 1, 2000	June 30, 2001
2002 (FY02)	July 1, 2001	June 30, 2002
2003 (FY03)	July 1, 2002	June 30, 2003
2004 (FY04)	July 1, 2003	June 30, 2004
2005 (FY05)	July 1, 2004	June 30, 2005

<sup>1</sup> During the Oregon Legislative Session 2003, the Joint (House/Senate) Committee on Ways and Means, Public Safety Subcommittee (HB 5058 – OYA June 5, 2003 Budget Work Session) expressed a desire for an “additional measure related to recidivism similar to the Department of Corrections measure that tracks felony convictions within three years of release from prison.”



Data for the recidivism measure is captured in the Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS). Offender data in JJIS has been augmented with commitment data from the Department of Corrections information system, thus enabling the OYA to track individuals' recidivism status into adulthood.

**Analysis**

Descriptive statistics were used to examine the recidivism rates. Frequencies and percentages were tabled by groups and cohort years across demographic and other selected variables to explore trends across time and identify the variables that appeared to influence recidivism. As mentioned previously, recidivism rates are cumulative. For example, the numerator for the recidivism rate calculated for a group at the 36-month tracking period is a sum of everyone who recidivated within 36 months of release, which includes those individuals who were reported in the numerator of the recidivism rates at 12 months and 24 months.

Key relationships are included in the text of this report as graphs and tables. A complete report of all data is found in the Appendix.

In general, the 36-month tracking period, rather than the 12- or 24-month tracking period, was selected for analysis. The preference for the longer tracking period is that it can capture more of those who actually recidivated in the statistic. This occurs not only because more re-offenders have been apprehended but also because more of them will have been sentenced or adjudicated. Recall that the recidivism event is not tabulated until an individual has received a felony adjudication or conviction. The actual crime and arrest may have occurred in either the current or a previous tracking period. Because it takes varying amounts of time for the juvenile or adult system to fully process a case, analysis based on longer tracking periods is less affected by this processing time and provides a better

picture of whether one particular cohort is performing differently than the others.

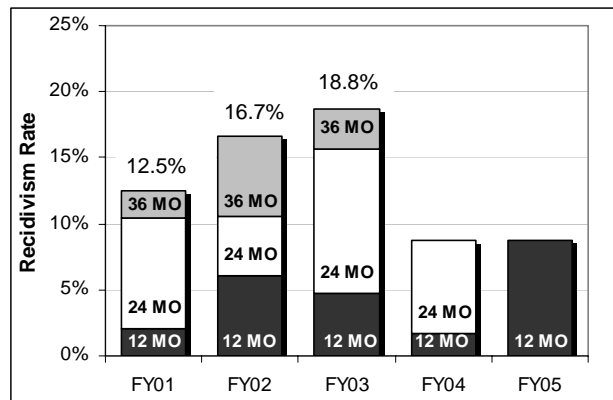
Furthermore, while we have made the raw numbers available, recidivism rates were not reported in the tables for any cohort with fewer than 30 base cases because the rates become too unstable and have little practical meaning. For example, if there are 20 individuals in a particular group of DOC releases, one additional instance or one fewer instance of recidivism will cause the rate to increase or decrease by 5.0%. Our threshold of 30 base cases means that each case of recidivism can impact the rate by no more than 3.3%.

**Upward trend in overall recidivism**

Figure 1 depicts an increase in recidivism rates at the 36-month tracking period for successive DOC release cohorts from FY01 to FY03. Recidivism data at 36 months for the FY04 and FY05 cohorts are yet unavailable, so whether the uptrend will persist remains a question.

**Figure 1**

**Cumulative Percent of Felony Adjudications or Convictions of DOC Youth Released to PPS**



Note: PPS = post-prison supervision by Dept. of Corrections.

Table 2 summarizes all known recidivism data from the FY01 through FY05 cohorts at 12, 24, and 36 months. Both Figure 1 and Table 2 illustrate the problem that may ensue from using the shorter 12- and 24-month tracking periods to

**Table 2**  
**Recidivism of DOC Releases**  
**(rates are cumulative)**

Cohort	# in Cohort	12-mo. Rate	24-mo. Rate	36-mo. Rate
FY01	48	2.1%	10.4%	12.5%
FY02	66	6.1%	10.6%	16.7%
FY03	64	4.7%	15.6%	18.8%
FY04	57	1.8%	8.8%	—
FY05	80	8.8%	—	—

Note: Dash (—) indicates unavailable data.

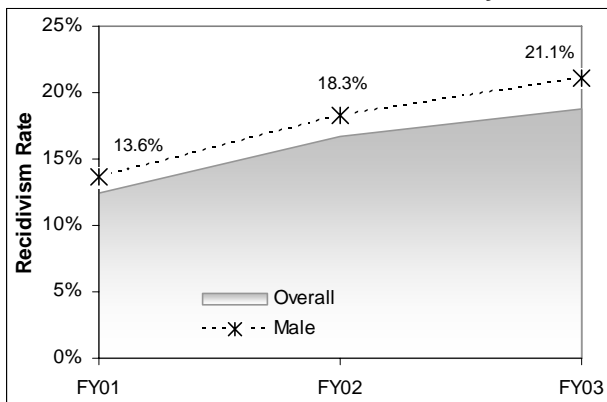
gauge recidivism. At 12 months, the FY02 cohort appears poised for a higher recidivism rate than either of its adjacent cohorts. However, by 24 months, the FY01 and FY02 cohorts are nearly equivalent, and the FY03 cohort has pulled ahead. At 36-months, an upward trend from the FY01 to the FY03 cohort is apparent. A note of caution about the uptrend in 36-month recidivism: Due to the relatively small DOC population, just two additional cases of recidivism in the FY01 cohort and two fewer cases in the FY03 cohort would have flattened the trend line.

**Males recidivated more than females**

An analysis of recidivism data by sex revealed that males were more prone to recidivate than females. Because there were fewer than 30

**Figure 2**

**Recidivism Rates at 36 Months by Sex**



females in any single cohort, we did not calculate their recidivism rate. However, as Figure 2 shows, the recidivism rate for males trended above the overall rate at the 36-month tracking period. Clearly, the only explanation for this was the addition of females into the computations for the overall rate.

Even after pooling the FY01–FY03 cohorts, there were fewer than 30 females. As a consequence, we were not able to assess how much more likely males were to recidivate than females. That said, Table 3 shows that of the 17 females in the FY01–FY03 cohorts, not a single one received a felony adjudication or felony conviction within 36 months of release: a zero recidivism rate.

**Table 3**

**Recidivism Counts of DOC Releases by Sex**  
**(rates are cumulative)**

Cohort	Sex	# in Cohort	# at 12 Months	# at 24 Months	# at 36 Months
FY01	Female	4	0	0	0
	Male	44	1	5	6
FY02	Female	6	0	0	0
	Male	60	4	7	11
FY03	Female	7	0	0	0
	Male	57	3	10	12
FY04	Female	7	0	0	—
	Male	50	1	5	—
FY05	Female	11	0	—	—
	Male	69	7	—	—

Note: Dash (—) indicates unavailable data.

**The Age 16–17 group recidivated most**

For this portion of the analysis, youth were grouped by their age at release from OYA close custody to DOC post-prison supervision. Note that age at release is not the same as the age at recidivism. For example, an offender who was 19 on the release date is included in the Age 18–20 group; however, because our focus is on 36-month recidivism, the youth may have turned 22 (19 years plus 36 months) by the time he or she

was convicted of a subsequent felony (the recidivism event).

After dividing youth into age groups, we could not meet the minimum 30-case threshold from FY01 to FY03. Consequently, we were limited to examining recidivism between age groups after pooling the FY01–FY03 data. Based on the pooled data, we were able to determine how much more likely one age group was to recidivate than another by calculating the relative risk ratio. We used the Age 18–20 group as the baseline in this ratio because it represented the largest share of the DOC releases. In interpreting relative risk, note that a ratio of 1.0 would indicate the two groups in the comparison were at equal likelihood of recidivating. A figure greater than 1.0 would indicate greater likelihood of recidivating than the Age 18–20 group, while a relative risk figure below 1.0 would indicate less likelihood of recidivating than the Age 18–20 group.

We found that members of the Age 16–17 group experienced the highest recidivism at 36 months. Table 4 summarizes the performance of the three age groups along with their relative rates of recidivism. The Age 16–17 group was twice as likely to recidivate as the Age 18–20 group, while the 21+ group was less likely to recidivate.

**Table 4**

**36-Mo. Recidivism of DOC Releases by Age Group (FY01–FY03, Pooled)**

Age at Release	# in Cohort	# at 36 Months	36-mo. Rate
Age 16–17	35	10	28.6%
Age 18–20	96	14	14.6%
Age 21+	47	5	10.6%
Relative Risk of Age 16–17 group to Age 18–20 group (28.6%/14.6%): 2.0			
Relative Risk of Age 21+ group to Age 18–20 group (10.6%/14.6%): 0.7			

**Over-Represented Minorities group experienced higher recidivism**

The cohort-size limitations for analysis by race/ethnicity were similar to those encountered when inspecting the data by age groups. Not one of the race/ethnicity classifications had at least 30 base cases in each of the fiscal year cohorts. Table 5 shows that even after pooling the FY01–FY03 cohorts, only Caucasians had more than 30 cases.

**Table 5**

**36-Month Recidivism of DOC Releases by Race/Ethnicity (FY01–FY03, Pooled)**

Race/Ethnicity	# in Cohort	# at 36 Months	36-mo. Rate
Caucasian	107	16	15.0%
African American	28	6	—
Hispanic	27	6	—
Native American	2	0	—
Asian	12	1	—
Other/Unknown	2	0	—
Overall	178	29	16.3%

Note: Dash (—) indicates fewer than 30 base cases.

While Table 5 does not enable a handy comparison of relative recidivism between the various race/ethnicities, it does show that Caucasians recidivated at a somewhat lower rate than the overall DOC release population from FY01 to FY03. This observation led us to an examination of the recidivism rates of an aggregated group consisting of only over-represented minorities.

Table 6 compares the race/ethnicity composition of the DOC release group and Oregon’s youth population. The table shows that there are four over-represented minorities identified within the DOC release group: African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Asians. These minorities are considered over-represented because each constitutes a disproportionately large share of the DOC release population in comparison to its estimated share of youth aged



10–17 in Oregon. For example, in 2003, Hispanics were an estimated 10% of youth throughout Oregon but represented 16% of the DOC releases over the years covered by this analysis.

Table 6

**Race/Ethnicity Representation of Oregon Risk Population and DOC Releases**

Race/Ethnicity	Risk Population <sup>a</sup>	DOC Releases <sup>b</sup>	Over-Rep'd?
Caucasian	79%	59%	NO
Hispanic	10%	16%	YES
Asian	4%	5%	YES
African American	3%	16%	YES
Native American	2%	4%	YES
Other/Unknown	2%	<1%	NO

<sup>a</sup> Percentage of estimated youth 10–17 in Oregon. Source: OYYA Quick Facts (May 2003). <sup>b</sup> Percentage of FY01–FY05 DOC releases from OYA. Source: JJIS

We combined the data for the over-represented race/ethnicity groups to arrive at a recidivism rate that included all over-represented minorities. Aggregating data in this way masks differences between the individual minorities; however, in this case, as none of the minorities met the 30-case threshold, pooling their data gives some insight about whether minority status was associated with recidivism.

Table 7 summarizes the FY01–FY03 pooled recidivism rates of the Over-Represented Minorities and the All-Others groups at the 36-month tracking period. The relative risk ratio of

Table 7

**36-Month Recidivism and Relative Risk of DOC Releases by Race/Ethnicity (FY01–FY03, Pooled)**

Race/Ethnicity	# in Cohort	# at 36 Months	36-mo. Rate
Over-Represented	69	13	18.8%
All-Others	109	16	14.7%
Relative Risk of Over-Represented to All Others (18.8%/14.7%): 1.3			

1.3 indicates that members of the Over-Represented Minorities group were somewhat likelier to recidivate than were members of the predominantly Caucasian All-Others group.

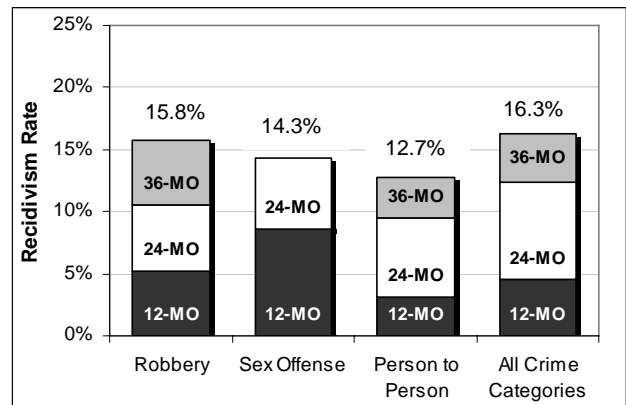
**Recidivism was not heavily influenced by crime category**

Offenders were assigned to one of nine OYA crime categories, which represented the most serious offense leading to the close-custody commitment. After separating the data by these categories, not one crime type had ample cases to examine 36-month recidivism on a cohort-by-cohort basis from FY01 to FY03. However, after pooling the FY01–FY03 data, three categories were available for analysis: person-to-person, robbery, and sex offense.

Figure 3 shows that among DOC releases, robbery offenders recidivated more than sex offenders, and sex offenders recidivated more than person-to-person offenders. Having said this, only one fewer case of recidivism in the robbery group would have reduced its rate below that of sex offenders. Similarly, one additional case in the person-to-person group would have elevated its rate to that of sex offenders.

Figure 3

**Cumulative Percent of Felony Adjudications or Convictions of DOC Releases by Crime Type**



Although robbery, sex offense, and person-to-person offenders together constituted 87% of the DOC release population from FY01–FY03, each experienced somewhat lower recidivism than the overall rate of 16.3%. Even so, just one fewer case of recidivism in any other crime category would have dropped the overall rate within the range of the three major crime types. Table 8 details the frequencies for all crime types.

**Table 8**  
**36-Month Recidivism of DOC Releases by Crime Type (FY01–FY03, Pooled)**

Crime Type	# in Cohort	# at 36 Months	36-mo. Rate
Robbery	57	9	15.8%
Sex Offense	35	5	14.3%
Person to Person	63	8	12.7%
Weapon	2	0	—
Property	8	3	—
Criminal Other	9	2	—
Arson	3	1	—
Substance/Alcohol	1	1	—
Public Order	0	0	—
Overall	178	29	16.3%

Note: Dash (—) indicates fewer than 30 base cases.

The essential message in this section is that due to the small size of the DOC release population, apparent differences in computed recidivism rates among the crime categories are really quite negligible. In other words, there appears to be no association between crime type and recidivism.

**Summary of Key Findings**

We analyzed recidivism data for individuals under jurisdiction of Department of Corrections who were released from OYA close custody between FY01 and FY05. Most of the analysis was limited to the cohorts released in FY01, FY02, and FY03 due to a preference for using the 36-month tracking period when calculating recidivism rates.

Overall, we found that 36-month recidivism rates trended upward from the FY01 cohort to the FY03 cohort. Not surprisingly, this pattern was also evident among males, who made up 90% of the FY01–FY03 release population.

None of the other variable breakouts by age group, race/ethnicity, or crime category had sufficient cases to assess trends. However, by pooling the FY01–FY03 data, we were able to make some comparisons:

- Based on the offender’s age at release, the 36-month recidivism rate of the Age 16–17 group was considerably higher than that of either the Age 18–20 or the Age 21+ group. The Age 21+ group experienced the lowest recidivism.
- Recidivism at 36 months for Over-Represented Minorities—an aggregate group comprising Hispanics, African American, Native Americans, and Asians—recidivated somewhat more than the All-Others group, which is predominantly Caucasian.
- An analysis by crime type showed little association with recidivism at the 36-month tracking period.



## APPENDIX

Oregon Youth Authority Recidivism of DOC Releases from OYA Close Custody: All Offenders Data through June 30, 2006							
Cohort	# in Cohort	12 Months		24 Months		36 Months	
		#	Rate	#	Rate	#	Rate
FY01	48	1	2.1%	5	10.4%	6	12.5%
FY02	66	4	6.1%	7	10.6%	11	16.7%
FY03	64	3	4.7%	10	15.6%	12	18.8%
FY04	57	1	1.8%	5	8.8%	—	—
FY05	80	7	8.8%	—	—	—	—

Oregon Youth Authority Recidivism of DOC Releases from OYA Close Custody by Sex Data through June 30, 2006								
Cohort	Sex	# in Cohort	12 Months		24 Months		36 Months	
			#	Rate	#	Rate	#	Rate
FY01	Female	4	0	—	0	—	0	—
	Male	44	1	2.3%	5	11.4%	6	13.6%
FY02	Female	6	0	—	0	—	0	—
	Male	60	4	6.7%	7	11.7%	11	18.3%
FY03	Female	7	0	—	0	—	0	—
	Male	57	3	5.3%	10	17.5%	12	21.1%
FY04	Female	7	0	—	0	—	—	—
	Male	50	1	2.0%	5	10.0%	—	—
FY05	Female	11	0	—	—	—	—	—
	Male	69	7	10.1%	—	—	—	—

Dash (—) indicates data not available (affects FY04 and FY05 only) or fewer than 30 base cases.



Oregon Youth Authority Recidivism of DOC Releases from OYA Close Custody by Age Group Data through June 30, 2006								
Cohort	Age Group at Release	# in Cohort	12 Months		24 Months		36 Months	
			#	Rate	#	Rate	#	Rate
FY01	Age 16 - 17	16	1	—	4	—	5	—
	Age 18 - 20	26	0	—	0	—	0	—
	Age 21+	6	0	—	1	—	1	—
FY02	Age 16 - 17	11	2	—	2	—	3	—
	Age 18 - 20	38	1	2.6%	4	10.5%	7	18.4%
	Age 21+	17	1	—	1	—	1	—
FY03	Age 16 - 17	8	1	—	2	—	2	—
	Age 18 - 20	32	2	6.3%	7	21.9%	7	21.9%
	Age 21+	24	0	—	1	—	3	—
FY04	Age 16 - 17	3	0	—	2	—	—	—
	Age 18 - 20	33	0	0.0%	1	3.0%	—	—
	Age 21+	21	1	—	2	—	—	—
FY05	Age 16 - 17	8	2	—	—	—	—	—
	Age 18 - 20	42	5	11.9%	—	—	—	—
	Age 21+	30	0	0.0%	—	—	—	—

Dash (—) indicates data not available (affects FY04 and FY05 only) or fewer than 30 base cases.



Oregon Youth Authority Recidivism of DOC Releases from OYA Close Custody by Race/Ethnicity Data through June 30, 2006								
Cohort	Race/Ethnicity	# in Cohort	12 Months		24 Months		36 Months	
			#	Rate	#	Rate	#	Rate
FY01	African American	9	0	—	0	—	1	—
	Asian	1	0	—	0	—	0	—
	Caucasian	26	1	—	4	—	4	—
	Hispanic	10	0	—	1	—	1	—
	Native American	1	0	—	0	—	0	—
	Other/Unknown	1	0	—	0	—	0	—
FY02	African American	9	1	—	2	—	2	—
	Asian	5	0	—	0	—	0	—
	Caucasian	43	3	7.0%	4	9.3%	7	16.3%
	Hispanic	8	0	—	1	—	2	—
	Other/Unknown	1	0	—	0	—	0	—
FY03	African American	10	0	—	2	—	3	—
	Asian	6	0	—	1	—	1	—
	Caucasian	38	2	5.3%	4	10.5%	5	13.2%
	Hispanic	9	1	—	3	—	3	—
	Native American	1	0	—	0	—	0	—
FY04	African American	10	0	—	1	—	—	—
	Asian	3	0	—	0	—	—	—
	Caucasian	31	1	3.2%	2	6.5%	—	—
	Hispanic	10	0	—	2	—	—	—
	Native American	3	0	—	0	—	—	—
FY05	African American	12	2	—	—	—	—	—
	Caucasian	49	3	6.1%	—	—	—	—
	Hispanic	12	1	—	—	—	—	—
	Native American	7	1	—	—	—	—	—

Dash (—) indicates data not available (affects FY04 and FY05 only) or fewer than 30 base cases.



Oregon Youth Authority Recidivism of DOC Releases from OYA Close Custody by Crime Type Data through June 30, 2006								
Fiscal Year	OYA Crime Category	# in Cohort	12 Months		24 Months		36 Months	
			#	Rate	#	Rate	#	Rate
FY01	Arson	2	0	—	1	—	1	—
	Criminal Other	4	0	—	0	—	0	—
	Person to Person	15	1	—	1	—	1	—
	Property	2	0	—	1	—	1	—
	Robbery	17	0	—	1	—	2	—
	Sex Offense	7	0	—	1	—	1	—
	Weapon	1	0	—	0	—	0	—
FY02	Arson	1	0	—	0	—	0	—
	Criminal Other	3	0	—	1	—	2	—
	Person to Person	24	1	—	1	—	3	—
	Property	2	0	—	0	—	0	—
	Robbery	25	2	—	3	—	3	—
	Sex Offense	9	1	—	2	—	2	—
	Substance/Alcohol Weapon	1 1	0 0	— —	0 0	— —	1 0	— —
FY03	Criminal Other	2	0	—	0	—	0	—
	Person to Person	24	0	—	4	—	4	—
	Property	4	0	—	2	—	2	—
	Robbery	15	1	—	2	—	4	—
	Sex Offense	19	2	—	2	—	2	—
FY04	Arson	2	0	—	0	—	—	—
	Criminal Other	1	0	—	0	—	—	—
	Person to Person	21	0	—	3	—	—	—
	Property	1	0	—	0	—	—	—
	Robbery	17	0	—	0	—	—	—
	Sex Offense	15	1	—	2	—	—	—
FY05	Arson	1	0	—	—	—	—	—
	Person to Person	19	2	—	—	—	—	—
	Property	3	1	—	—	—	—	—
	Robbery	26	3	—	—	—	—	—
	Sex Offense	30	1	3.3%	—	—	—	—
	Weapon	1	0	—	—	—	—	—

Dash (—) indicates data not available (affects FY04 and FY05 only) or fewer than 30 base cases.

