

In fiscal year 2005, nearly 43,000 offenders were placed on federal community supervision. About a quarter (23%) had been sentenced to probation, and the remainder (77%) were on supervision following release from prison.

New arrests

Within 1 year of their placement on community supervision in 2005, about 1 in 5 of the federal offenders (18%) had been arrested at least once. Within 3 years, nearly twice as many offenders (35%) had been arrested at least once. And, within 5 years, approximately 2 in 5 of the offenders (43%) were arrested at least once, although the type of arrests while on supervision varied by federal and nonfederal (i.e., state and local) charges.

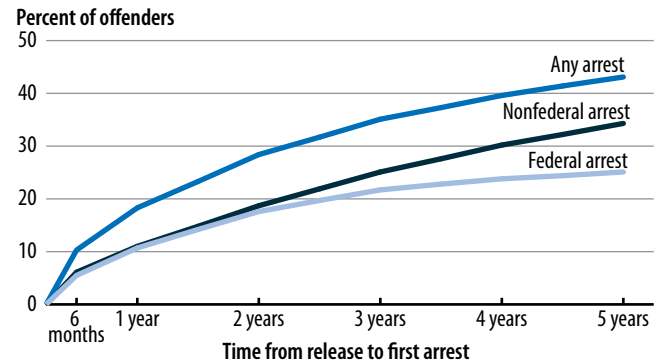
Public order offenses, such as probation violations, accounted for 90% of first arrests for federal offenses, followed by drug (6%), property (2%), and violent (1%) offenses. For nonfederal offenses, public order offenses accounted for 33% of first arrests, followed by property (23%), violent (21%), and drug (21%) offenses.

About the offenders

More than a third (38%) of the federal offenders were sentenced to community supervision in 2005 for a drug offense. About a quarter (24%) of the federal offenders had a property crime as their most serious conviction offense, and an additional quarter (24%) had committed a public order offense that resulted in community supervision. The majority (80%) of the offenders were male. More than a third (41%) of the offenders were white and nearly a third (31%) were black. Approximately 30% of the offenders were age 29 or younger and about 40% were age 40 or older.

Before being placed on federal community supervision, the offenders were arrested about 210,000 times by federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. Nonfederal law enforcement agencies accounted for about three-quarters (76%) of all the prior arrests, with federal law enforcement agencies responsible for the remaining prior arrests. Seventy percent of federal offenders had at least one prior nonfederal arrest, and 35% had four or more prior nonfederal arrests before being placed on community supervision.

Cumulative percent of offenders placed on federal community supervision in 2005 who were arrested for a new crime, by type of arrest, 2005–10



Note: Nonfederal arrests consist of those made by state and local law enforcement agencies. Offenders could have a federal arrest, a nonfederal arrest, or both.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Recidivism of Offenders Placed on Federal Community Supervision in 2005 data collection.

Comparing federal and state offender recidivism patterns

Regardless of demographic characteristics or the number of prior criminal offenses, federal prisoners placed on community supervision consistently had lower rates of recidivism than state prisoners. Among federal prisoners conditionally released from federal prison in 2005, almost half (47%) were arrested within 5 years, compared to more than three-quarters (77%) of state prisoners released on community supervision in 2005. Federal prisoners (32%) also returned to prison less often than state prisoners (59%) during that time period.

Within 5 years of placement on community supervision, less than a third (30%) of federal prisoners had two or more arrests, compared to more than half (57%) of state prisoners. More than a third of federal prisoners (37%) had a nonfederal arrest and nearly a third (29%) had a federal arrest within 5 years following their release. Seventy-five percent of state prisoners had a nonfederal arrest and 4% had a federal arrest during that time period. Overall, 67% of all new arrests among released federal prisoners were for nonfederal charges, compared to 98% among state prisoners.

The full report (*Recidivism of Offenders Placed on Federal Community Supervision in 2005: Patterns from 2005 to 2010* NCJ 249743), related documents, and additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics can be found at www.bjs.gov.

