

SEPTEMBER 2022



**Saving Money,
Encouraging Work
and Improving Safety
Through More Rigorous
Electronic Monitoring**



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A P R E F A C E T O

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Of the convicted criminals Wisconsin imprisons, most will serve a sentence and be released. Then what?

The released offenders usually will be supervised, with the official hope that they avoid further crime. This requires a lot of watching on the part of the state, and that watching could be done more closely on those who most merit it if the state had better means of tracking individuals — such as convicted drunken drivers — who present known and lesser risks than violent offenders.

This can help prevent recidivism and is important because our prison system is overcrowded and the state needs to make sure there is room for serious, violent offenders who deserve long sentences. Public safety requires that the taxpayers' resources be focused where they are most needed.

The Badger Institute has long studied this matter — how state corrections dollars can offer the best protection of the public. Here, we summarize the results of that research, offering recommendations about how the state's resources can best be used in preventing more crime from those who already have been caught and convicted.

— *Badger Institute*

Saving Money, Encouraging Work and Improving Safety Through More Rigorous Electronic Monitoring

Introduction

The Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) has the largest budget of any state agency — \$2.68 billion for 2019-'21. The DOC budget is eight times larger than what it was 25 years ago and is expected to increase as the prison population continues to grow and age at a time when corrections costs are on the rise.

Even with all of this spending, state prisons are over capacity, with more than 20,000 prisoners inhabiting facilities designed for 17,600. Making matters worse, many of these facilities are outdated and understaffed.

One proposed solution — building a new 1,200-bed maximum security prison — likely would cost at least \$500 million¹ and still fall short of solving the overcrowding issues.

Fortunately, there are more productive options that other states have adopted with success.

A New Age of Electronic Monitoring

A variety of devices can allow corrections and law enforcement officials to closely monitor the actions, locations and even sobriety of nonviolent offenders, those who are awaiting trial or immigration hearings, those engaged in work release programs or individuals under supervision.

More and more agencies nationwide are capitalizing on this technology. The use of electronic monitoring grew from 52,000 individuals to 125,000 between 2005 and 2015² — an increase of 140%, according to a study published by the Pew Charitable Trusts. That number likely has grown substantially since then.

In Wisconsin, when and how electronic monitoring can be used is determined by statute, criminal sentences and/or court orders. The DOC also has discretion to monitor those who are under community supervision.

A team of DOC staff conduct round-the-clock electronic monitoring from within the Division of Community Corrections.³

As of September 2022, there were 3,471 offenders under DOC supervision:

- The majority (1,900) were sex offenders required by law to be monitored by GPS.
- Another 580 were sex offenders on discretionary GPS monitoring ordered by the DOC.
- Just over 700 were on the Soberlink system, which requires the use of breathalyzer alcohol monitoring devices.
- Some 280 offenders under curfew orders were on radio frequency monitoring.
- Three offenders were on GPS monitoring for domestic violence convictions.

County Level

Judges, county sheriffs and house of corrections superintendents have the discretion to use electronic monitoring for home detention.⁴ Sheriffs' decisions are typically made based on the capacity of county jails and the risks posed by offenders. While any jail inmate can be placed or removed from home detention by a sheriff at any time, state law requires the use of "active electronic monitoring"⁵ for those on home detention.

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Private companies typically provide monitoring services and equipment for sheriff's departments on a contract basis.

Compiled data on the number of individuals being monitored by sheriff's departments in Wisconsin's 72 counties is not readily available, but from what can be ascertained, the numbers are significant.

Over the course of 2018 in Milwaukee County alone, nearly 860 offenders were on some form of electronic monitoring, an average of 155 per day.

Between 2005 and 2018, nearly 16,000 offenders were on continuous alcohol monitoring in Milwaukee, Waukesha, Kenosha, Sheboygan, Jefferson, Ozaukee and Manitowoc counties, according to Wisconsin Community Services, the company that provides monitoring services in those counties.

Types of Electronic Monitoring

There are three main types of electronic supervision in use in Wisconsin and nationwide: radio frequency (RF), GPS location (satellite) and remote alcohol monitoring.

Radio Frequency Monitoring

Radio frequency systems, often used for individuals on home detention or required to meet curfews, consist of an ankle bracelet worn by the offender and a radio unit installed in his or her residence. The system notifies the monitoring agency when the wearer enters

or leaves a certain radius from the radio unit and sends an alert when such movement occurs outside of approved times.

Individuals on RF monitoring may be allowed to leave their residence to go to work, receive medical treatment, shop for groceries or attend rehabilitative programs. Since RF systems do not provide location information, they are being phased out in many jurisdictions in favor of GPS-based systems.

GPS Monitoring

Under a GPS system, the offender wears an ankle bracelet that continuously transmits his or her location to a digital map in the monitoring agency. Attempts to tamper with the bracelet or failure to charge the battery triggers an audio warning transmission from the bracelet speaker, and the monitoring center is alerted to the individual's last known location.

This approach allows law enforcement to designate off-limits areas for the individual being monitored. Sex offenders, for example, can be prohibited from being in the vicinity of schools. The monitoring center can use a speaker on the ankle bracelet to direct the offender to leave an area. They also can contact his agent or direct law enforcement to his location.

GPS monitoring systems maintain records of an offender's movement so if a crime is committed, police can use this information to determine if a monitored individual was nearby at the time.

In Wisconsin and other states that monitor domestic violence offenders, this technology is used to notify the monitoring center when an offender approaches his victim's home or workplace.

Remote Alcohol Monitoring

Using breath or transdermal testing, remote alcohol monitoring systems can determine if an offender has consumed alcohol and transmit the results to the monitoring agency.

Breath testing is conducted with either a home-based system or handheld breathalyzer device and is often used for convicted drunken drivers on home detention. The former uses a landline telephone or a wireless router to connect a breathalyzer device to the monitoring center. The offender is required to blow into the device at regular or random intervals to determine whether he or she has consumed alcohol. The drawback to this method is that the offender usually must be at home to be tested.

Advances in technology now allow for individuals to carry cellphone-sized, battery-powered devices that use cellular networks or Wi-Fi to transmit test results. This allows offenders to be tested at any time, making it easier for them to hold a job and giving the

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monitoring agency more flexibility in ordering testing.

The individual being monitored must carry the device at all times so he can be notified when a test has been ordered. At that point, he simply blows into the breathalyzer tube. If the device is unable to transmit, test results are recorded and transmitted when a connection is re-established.

These devices include anti-fraud technology that measures the strength of the breath and takes a picture to prevent an offender from cheating.

Transdermal testing is conducted via an ankle bracelet that uses sensors to automatically check the subject's skin throughout the day to determine if alcohol has been consumed. The device connects to a modem that daily transmits test results to the monitoring agency. The offender's only active responsibility is to keep the battery charged.

This system provides continuous monitoring and allows the offender to go to work without interruptions for testing. Over time, transdermal testing is likely to replace breathalyzer devices at both the state and local levels.

These devices include anti-fraud technology that measures the strength of the breath and takes a picture to prevent an offender from cheating.

Expand Electronic Monitoring by the State

The DOC is better suited to expand electronic monitoring programs than are most counties. It could do so in multiple ways.

Monitoring OWI Offenders

Drunken drivers make up a growing proportion of Wisconsin's prison population. In 2000, 4.7% of prison admissions were due to drunken driving. In 2019, that percentage had grown to 11.6%,⁶ with nearly 21,000 convictions for drunken driving in Wisconsin that year.

That number is even more disturbing given that under Wisconsin law, a first-offense operating while intoxicated (OWI) charge results in only a fine.

Subsequent drunken driving offenses are charged as misdemeanors or felonies that, upon conviction, result in either supervision or incarceration. Electronic monitoring can be used more effectively in both cases.

- **A different approach to supervision**

An alcohol-monitoring ankle bracelet would allow agents to know if offenders are abstaining. If a positive test is recorded, the agent can quickly impose holds or sanctions on the violator.

Wisconsin also should consider increasing the use of ignition interlock devices — in-car breathalyzers — as an additional deterrent. These devices prevent a vehicle from starting

until the test confirms driver sobriety.

This combination would allow continuous monitoring of alcohol use and make it more difficult for offenders to drive drunk without an intervention.

It also would reduce or eliminate offender meetings with probation and parole agents and random in-person drug and alcohol tests that are disruptive to offenders' employment. In addition, it would free up agents to focus on offenders who pose a greater risk to public safety or any OWI offenders who could not be monitored remotely.

All of this could be accomplished without changes in state law. Wisconsin judges have discretion to order monitoring, and the DOC has wide latitude in administering community supervision and the authority to place offenders on electronic monitoring. New legislation would be required, however, to make ignition interlock devices mandatory.

- **Transition for incarcerated inmates**

When the state does incarcerate offenders with alcohol-related convictions, GPS and transdermal alcohol monitoring should be considered options for a pre-release transitional home detention program near the end of the sentence.

Inmates with OWI offenses that did not result in death or injury could apply to the DOC secretary to serve the final six months of their sentence in home detention under orders of complete sobriety enforced by these technologies.

Local law enforcement would be notified of the offenders' location and restrictions. Failure to remain within approved GPS-monitored boundaries or a positive alcohol test would result in a return to prison and possible additional criminal penalties.

This type of home detention is not within the authority of the DOC and would require new legislation.

Work Release Home Detention Transitional Program

Inmates in the Wisconsin Correctional Center System (WCCS), which prepares them "for safe and successful reintegration into the community,"⁷ have access to a DOC work release program. Participants leave the correctional centers, work at jobs in the community and return at the end of the day. They earn market wages and are better equipped for a successful transition to the community. They pay fees for room, board and transportation to reduce the burden on taxpayers.

Although COVID-19 forced the DOC to halt work release to limit the spread of the virus to participants' institutions or workplaces, work release resumed in July 2021. Prior to the suspension of the program, there were 779 inmates in new work release placements in fiscal year 2020.⁸

The DOC should consider an electronically monitored transitional program where partic-

An electronically monitored transitional program would reduce costs and free up needed beds for more serious offenders.

Participants who follow the rules and receive positive reports from employers can apply to transition to home detention prior to release. Aside from work and authorized activities (e.g., grocery shopping), participants would be restricted to their residence and have an established curfew. Failure to maintain employment or abide by the rules would result in reincarceration. Participants should be charged fees to cover the cost of electronic monitoring.

This approach would reduce costs and free up needed beds for more serious offenders. It also would incentivize inmates to work hard and follow the rules.

Since eligible inmates already live in the lowest security level institutions and work in businesses without DOC supervision, risks to the public would be minimal. Close monitoring and swift responses to violations would keep participants in check. Had this model been in place during the pandemic, those in home detention could have continued to work.

New legislation would be needed for the DOC to allow for this option. Wisconsin's Huber Law, which authorizes sheriffs to assign home detention, could be a model for granting similar authority to the DOC secretary for defined categories of inmates. A starting point would be to allow any inmate who successfully participates in work release for six months to apply to serve the final six months of the sentence on home detention.

High-risk Offenders After They've Served Their Time

Wisconsin policymakers should look to other states that effectively use GPS technology to supervise high-risk and violent offenders.

While Wisconsin's electronic monitoring policies are geared toward compliance, California uses these tools to deter criminal behavior and assist law enforcement, especially in the area of gang activity. The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has a statewide program that uses GPS tracking to detect criminal activity by gang members after their release from prison but while still under supervision. The intent is to prevent crime by providing close supervision that allows violations to be quickly detected and addressed.

The opportunities provided by GPS monitoring to deter or investigate violent crime support a significant expansion in its use.

Additional benefits include providing law enforcement with intelligence about gang activity and affiliations and using GPS tracking to identify offenders who were near crime scenes.

The program costs California \$7,738 per offender per year vs. \$2,628 per year for standard supervision. The results showed that while offenders were more frequently caught violating conditions of their parole, they were less likely to be arrested for new crimes.⁹

Legislation would be needed to allow Wisconsin to run a similar program. The state lacks specially trained DOC staff, and Wisconsin has no unit dedicated to anti-gang activities or violent offenders.

Another creative use of GPS technology has been adopted in Boston where law enforce-

ment officials created a “real time crime center” that links ShotSpotter, a system of sensors used to locate the source of gunfire, with police cameras and GPS bracelets worn by offenders.¹⁰ When ShotSpotter detects gunfire, city-controlled cameras are automatically directed toward the location and sensors identify anyone wearing a GPS ankle bracelet in the area, allowing police to quickly track and record who is in the vicinity and dispatch officers to look for suspects.

The Milwaukee Police Department uses ShotSpotter but does not track those wearing GPS devices.

As these examples indicate, the opportunities provided by GPS monitoring to deter or investigate violent crime support a significant expansion in its use.

The DOC primarily uses discretionary GPS for homeless sex offenders, but it also could be used for high-risk offenders with a history of violent crimes or habitual felony arrests during the first two years of their community supervision. Research¹¹ published by the Badger Institute shows that the majority of revocations occur within the first two years of supervision, so this timeframe would be the most critical. Offenders could be charged fees to offset or cover their monitoring costs.

This group would not need to be supervised as closely as sex offenders. The very act of monitoring serves as a deterrent to the commission of new crimes. It also can serve as a valuable law enforcement tool when investigating crimes or rule violations.

If the DOC does not use its existing authority to increase GPS usage, the Legislature could require expansion of the program. The department also should transition from radio frequency to GPS monitoring systems for the reasons listed above.

New Technologies and Opportunities

The use of GPS tracking devices likely will increase as they become smaller, cheaper to operate and more versatile. Software is being developed that analyzes data to determine when an offender is committing a violation, allowing quicker law enforcement response and requiring fewer staff. In other cases, these devices will allow officials to better monitor the activities of high-risk offenders in the community.

Advances in monitoring technology will provide alternatives to incarceration for non-violent offenders and more options for those transitioning to the community. There are drug-detecting sensors in development that would operate similar to the transdermal alcohol units.

Cost and Potential Savings

On average, it costs Wisconsin taxpayers approximately \$37,000 a year (including all administrative costs) to house an inmate. When institution spending alone is counted, the amount is closer to \$27,000 per year.¹²

The average cost for an offender on supervision, however, is just \$3,241 per year including

all administrative costs. The costs of GPS monitoring are included in this average, though there are only about 3,200 offenders being monitored out of a community supervision population of around 63,000.

Monitoring costs vary per inmate, partly because the state recoups some of the expense by charging those under supervision based on income. The fees are authorized by statute, and the schedule is set by administrative code.¹³

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If we assume the highest tracking fee rate (\$240 per month) for monitored individuals, the annual cost of GPS monitoring would be \$2,880 per offender.

Sex offenders, high-risk individuals and those who are revoked cost more to monitor, while low-risk offenders, those who do not require drug or alcohol treatment and those who follow the rules cost less.

Even if increased electronic monitoring doubled the average cost of community supervision to approximately \$6,400 per year (likely a significant overestimate), it still would save the DOC \$24,000 per minimum-security inmate who is able to

leave the institution per year.

When more cells are needed for violent offenders, policymakers could expand electronic monitoring for nonviolent offenders to relieve prison and jail crowding, more effectively encourage sobriety and reentry, produce significant savings and ultimately improve community safety.

Reforming Community Supervision

Background

As noted earlier, some 63,000 people in Wisconsin are currently serving criminal sentences in the community.

Every year, thousands of people are released from prison and placed under active supervision of the DOC in the form of extended supervision. Thousands of others are sentenced to probation — an alternative to incarceration where offenders spend their sentence in the community.

Wisconsin's truth-in-sentencing law requires every prison sentence to be bifurcated into periods of initial confinement and extended supervision. The latter must equal at least 25% of the total period of initial confinement and, with few exceptions, may be as long as the maximum sentence minus the period of initial confinement.

Many people on supervision end up back in state prison — whether for a new crime or through revocation for violating a term of their supervision. According to the DOC, 39%

of all admissions to prison in 2019 were for a revocation only, and another 21% were for a revocation with a new crime.¹⁴

The Problem

University of Wisconsin-Madison Law Professor Cecelia Klingele, in research published by the Badger Institute,¹⁵ examined why so many people on supervision end up back behind bars. One consistent factor was addiction. Klingele found¹⁶ that 81% of revocation cases examined involved drugs or alcohol as a contributing factor.

State law contributes to the high revocation level as well. Wisconsin is an outlier in the way it both imposes and calculates extended supervision. The first is the length of the supervision term. The second is how time is calculated in the event of a revocation.

Klingele's report found that as a result, Wisconsin imposes longer terms of supervision relative to other states. Twenty-one percent of all felony cases (or 4,554 individuals) in 2018 were sentenced to more than three years of supervision. That includes 28.7% of all extended supervision sentences and 17.1% of all probation sentences that year. Forty-four percent of these sentences were for lower-level felonies.

Wisconsin is an outlier in the way it both imposes and calculates extended supervision.

But most revocations occur shortly after people are released into the community. Badger Institute research found that 72% of the revocations studied occurred within the first 18 months

after release from custody, and 92% occurred within the first two years of community supervision.

The public safety benefit of supervising individuals for longer than two to three years is minimal in comparison to earlier benefits. Many states and the federal system cap felony probation at five years or less. Wisconsin imposes longer terms than neighboring Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan and Minnesota.

Alternatives

If Wisconsin were to shorten supervision terms, probation and parole agents could focus more on the individuals recently released from prison who are more likely to commit a new crime or violate their supervision terms. This also would save taxpayers money, maintain public safety and allow deserving offenders to move on with their lives.

Wisconsin should cap felony probation at five years or less to align Wisconsin with best practices from other states.

Another unique aspect of Wisconsin's supervision law is that while days spent in custody count against initial confinement, time spent following the rules in the community does not count as time served in the event of a revocation. This means offenders can end up serving more time under DOC supervision than originally intended by a sentencing judge. Offenders should get credit for time spent in compliance following their rules of supervision.

Many states allow for time off of a sentence for time spent in compliance — often referred to as “compliance credits.” Some states allow one month off a sentence for one month of following the rules. Others calculate time off using other formulas, such as 20 days off for 30 days in compliance. Such programs incentivize good behavior, increasing the likelihood of success on community supervision.¹⁷ At least 19 states have some type of compliance credit program.¹⁸

Other states incentivize good behavior on supervision through short-term, non-custodial sanction programs, which are alternatives to incarceration that guarantee some level of immediate punishment if a term of probation is violated. Hawaii and Michigan¹⁹ each have programs that have been found to reduce recidivism among participants, especially high-risk offenders.

Wisconsin should count time served following the rules in the community toward the completion of a sentence in the event of a revocation. Those serving a sentence in the community should be treated the same as those serving time behind bars before a trial.

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Data and Definitions

When making decisions about corrections-related and criminal justice-related issues — including those discussed above and many others — Wisconsin lawmakers are at a disadvantage because thorough, consistent information from the state and county level is frequently lacking, difficult to locate and varied in its definitions. Whether it’s the prison system, the courts, district attorneys, public defenders, county sheriffs or police jurisdictions, each entity maintains its own records and defines its own terms.

For example, if someone wanted to know how many criminal cases were resolved through a deferred prosecution agreement in Wisconsin in 2021, he would have to file 72 public records requests, one with each county district attorney’s office. Even if a request can be fulfilled, it may be of limited value because the agency has access to only some of the information.

And Wisconsin law allows public records requests to be denied if the record holder is required to analyze data and create a new document to report the information.

State policymakers should require the collection, analysis and reporting of comprehensive data from state agencies and local governments alike. Identifying key data points and a standard process for collection and publication would fill a large gap in the state’s reporting structure.

Data and definitions legislation would help Wisconsin policymakers identify opportunities and challenges in corrections, policing and other areas throughout the justice system.

Are our policies working? Are they cost-effective? Can we do better? It's difficult to answer these questions without adequate statewide reporting or uniform data.

States such as Texas and Michigan in recent years adopted meaningful data bills that informed later legislative reforms.

In 2018, a bipartisan coalition of Florida policymakers passed the 2018 Criminal Justice Data Transparency initiative,²⁰ the nation's most comprehensive criminal justice data collection law,²¹ targeting more than 100 data points to be collected and reported by law enforcement, the courts, prosecutors, public defenders, jails, prisons and community supervision.

The law is intended to gather data about the criminal justice system throughout the process in hopes of identifying problems and providing insights. It requires the collection of a range of data, including how courts resolve cases on a statewide and county-by-county basis and detailed information on convictions down to the specific crime committed. Wisconsin's DOC reports only four types of crimes — violent, property, drug and public order — while Florida reports more than 100.

Data and definitions legislation would help Wisconsin policymakers identify opportunities and challenges in corrections, policing and other areas throughout the justice system.

Strengths and Shortcomings

Wisconsin has long been a leader in making data about criminal cases transparent and available to the public through the Consolidated Court Automation Program (CCAP). This information technology service allows users to obtain data about specific cases online.

However, using CCAP to analyze larger data sets is more difficult, in part because the program lacks a publicly accessible interface. Data about other stages of the justice system is not as readily available and is not aggregated.

Wisconsin has other gaps and inconsistencies in important data points related to corrections. A few examples:

- County jails and state community corrections offices do not have a uniform and easy way of collecting information about many aspects of their work that are relevant to public policy.
- The state does not report the number of revocations recommended and approved statewide and by region, the reasons for revocation, the number of successful completions of community supervision and other important measures.
- It's difficult to track criminal charges that are brought against defendants or those on supervision because district attorneys' charging practices differ greatly for each jurisdiction for similar conduct.

Making data collection more robust and uniform would allow policymakers to have a clearer understanding of how tax dollars are being spent and how effective interventions are in the lives of people involved in the criminal justice system.

Lawmakers should create a statewide system where uniform and robust data is aggregated pertaining to everything from county jails to community supervision, from juvenile detention to police use of force. Policymakers, researchers and the public should be given access to the data for regular review.

Conclusion

The Department of Corrections has the largest budget of any state agency and costs are expected only to rise. At the same time, the prison system is overcrowded, understaffed and outdated. Building a new 1,200-bed maximum security prison likely would cost the state at least half a billion dollars while failing to address overcrowding issues.

Fortunately, advances in technology can provide alternatives for nonviolent offenders using cells needed for more serious criminals. These tools would produce savings, relieve overcrowding, incentivize good behavior, encourage work, improve reentry and improve public safety.

Expand Electronic Monitoring

The DOC and policymakers could begin by expanding the use of GPS tracking, both for existing individuals currently monitored by RF technology and for high-risk and violent offenders on supervision.

The combination of remote alcohol monitoring systems and in-car breathalyzers should be adopted to reduce or eliminate the need for testing, free up probation and parole agents to focus on other priorities, allow the supervised individual to maintain employment and keep intoxicated drivers off the road.

These tools also should be considered options for a pre-release transitional home detention program near the end of a sentence.

The DOC should consider an electronically monitored transitional program where participants who follow the rules and receive positive reports from employers can apply to transition to home detention prior to release. Lawmakers could give the DOC secretary authority similar to that granted to sheriffs under Wisconsin's Huber Law for defined categories of inmates.

This would reduce costs and free up needed beds for more serious offenders in an overcrowded system. It also would incentivize inmates to work hard and follow the rules.

Wisconsin should consider a program similar to one in California that tracks high-risk offenders with a history of violent crimes or habitual felony arrests during the first two years of their community supervision. This program has been found to deter criminal behavior and assist law enforcement, especially with offenders involved in gang activity.

Advances in technology can provide alternatives to incarceration for certain offenders. These tools would produce savings, relieve overcrowding, incentivize good behavior, encourage work, improve reentry and improve public safety.

Boston law enforcement provides another model, using GPS technology, police cameras and a system of sensors that locate the source of gunfire to identify anyone wearing a GPS ankle bracelet in an area where shots are fired.

Reform Community Supervision

Some 63,000 people in Wisconsin are currently serving criminal sentences in the community, either on parole or extended supervision.

Wisconsin imposes longer terms of supervision relative to other states — with no discernable benefit to public safety. Research conducted for the Badger Institute found that 72% of the revocations studied occurred within the first 18 months after release from custody, and 92% occurred within the first two years of community supervision.

Wisconsin should cap felony probation at five years or less to align Wisconsin with best practices from other states, including all of its neighbors.

This would allow probation and parole agents to focus more on the individuals recently released from prison who are more likely to commit a new crime or violate their supervision terms. It also would save taxpayers money, maintain public safety and allow deserving offenders to more quickly acclimate to the community.

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Another unique aspect of Wisconsin's supervision law is that while days spent in custody count against initial confinement, time spent following the rules in the community does not count as time served in the event of a revocation. Many states allow for time off of a sentence for time spent in compliance to incentivize compliance with supervisory rules.

Lawmakers should look to states that incentivize good behavior on supervision through short-term, non-custodial sanction programs that guarantee some level of immediate punishment if a term of probation is violated. Hawaii and Michigan, for example, have programs that have been found to reduce recidivism among participants, especially high-risk offenders.

Improve Data and Definitions

Wisconsin lacks thorough, consistent information on corrections from both the state and county levels. This makes it difficult for policymakers and the public to determine if policies are effective and if money is being well spent.

Lawmakers should emulate Florida, Michigan and Texas and create a statewide system where uniform and robust data is aggregated pertaining to law enforcement, the courts, prosecutors, public defenders, jails, prisons and community supervision.



Badger Institute takeaways

Wisconsin should:

- **Expand electronic monitoring.**
- **Reform community supervision.**
- **Improve data and definitions.**

Endnotes

¹ State budget realities make new prison construction unlikely (badgerinstitute.org)

² Use of Electronic Offender Tracking Devices Expands Sharply | The Pew Charitable Trusts (pewtrusts.org)

³ The state does not contract for monitoring services like county governments, but it does have contracts for equipment and technical support.

⁴ docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/statutes/973.03(3)(d)

⁵ docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/statutes/302.425

⁶ doc.wi.gov/DataResearch/InteractiveDashboards/DAIAdmissionsExecSum2000to2019.pdf

⁷ doc.wi.gov/Pages/OffenderInformation/AdultInstitutions/WisconsinCorrectionalCenterSystem.aspx

⁸ doc.wi.gov/Documents/OffenderInformation/AdultInstitutions/WCCSAnnualReport.pdf

⁹ ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/249888.pdf

¹⁰ shotspotter.com/boston-gunfire-reduction-program/

¹¹ badgerinstitute.org/BI-Files/Reports/RevocationPDF.pdf

¹² Inmates housed at different security level institutions vary in cost, with an average of \$85.64 per day at maximum-security institutions (\$31,258.60 per year), \$68.90 per day at medium-security institutions (\$25,148.50 per year) and \$84.95 per day at minimum-security institutions (\$31,006.75 per year). Medium-security prisons have a lower per-inmate cost because they have large populations with fewer security needs, allowing for economies of scale. Minimum-security institutions tend to have fewer inmates and therefore a higher per-inmate cost.

¹³ Offenders also pay fees to cover the costs of electronic monitoring to participate in Huber release including initial installation or setup costs and daily charges.

¹⁴ doc.wi.gov/DataResearch/InteractiveDashboards/DAIAdmissions2000to2019.pdf

¹⁵ badgerinstitute.org/BI-Files/Reports/RevocationPDF.pdf

¹⁶ badgerinstitute.org/BI-Files/Reports/RevocationPDF.pdf

¹⁷ journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0093854810397866

¹⁸ pewtrusts.org/-/media/assets/2020/04/policyreform_communitysupervision_report_final.pdf

¹⁹ crimesolutions.ojp.gov/ratedprograms/720#pd

²⁰ Florida's corrections data law: A model for Wisconsin - YouTube

²¹ CS/HB 7071 (2018) - Criminal Justice Data Transparency | Florida House of Representatives (myfloridahouse.gov)