



***COUNTY OF OTTAWA
CIRCUIT COURT
PROBATION AND PAROLE***

2009 YEAR END REPORT

Administrative Offices: Grand Haven, Holland, Hudsonville

I. VISION

To protect the public and build trust within Michigan communities.

II. MISSION

To create a safer Michigan through effective offender management and supervision in our facilities and communities while holding offenders accountable and promoting their success.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Circuit Court Probation and Parole Department oversees those offenders convicted of felony and high court misdemeanor offenses. Probation may be imposed for all misdemeanors and felonies except murder, treason, armed robbery, criminal sexual conduct in the first or third degree and those felonies in which a firearm was used. The maximum term of probation that may be imposed is five years for felony convictions and two years for misdemeanor convictions. Probation terms may include up to one year in jail in conjunction with the probation term as well as payment of restitution, fines, court ordered costs, and supervision fees. Those released on parole from prison also have similar conditions imposed.

Once placed on probation or parole, the agents monitor the offender's behavior and enforce the terms of the order. The special conditions imposed typically include full time employment/education, treatment, community service and the prohibited use of alcohol and drugs. More specific conditions are created and imposed based upon the offender's individual specific needs. Probation staff are also involved in the supervision of offenders in the Drug Court which combines increased supervision along with a higher level of case management between drug court personnel, probation and treatment agencies.

The probation department also completes pre-sentence investigation (PSI) reports for the courts. Provided in the PSI report is a recommendation for sentencing which is formulated on a background investigation of an offender and completion of sentencing guidelines taking into account the particular crime committed.

IV. PRE-SENTENCE INVESTIGATION REPORTS

Pre-sentence reports (PSI) are prepared by the field agents and used by the judges when sentencing an offender. The PSI includes an evaluation of the offender, circumstances of the offense, and background information of the offender. The agent also completes an assessment of probable risk to the public and utilizes sentencing guidelines to formulate an

appropriate recommendation for sentencing. During the investigation process, the agent also makes contact with the victims of the offenses and includes their statements in the PSI report. The agent also determines the amount of restitution that is to be ordered and forwards this as part of the recommendation to the court.

The Ottawa County Circuit Court Probation completed 948 PSI reports in 2009.

V. SENTENCING OPTIONS

Sentencing options include:

- Probation
- Jail
- Prison
- Fines, costs and restitution.

In addition to the standard terms of supervision, options for supervision also may include the use of the electronic monitoring, placement in treatment facilities and the Special Alternative Incarceration (boot camp). These are often used as diversion programs from jail and prison for low risk offenders and technical violators.

The agents enforce the rules and special conditions ordered by the judge or parole board. Failure to comply with the order of probation may result in probation violation charges being initiated. Probation agents utilize a risk-driven violation guidelines designed to make full use of community sanctions. Probation Violation Response Guidelines provide a range of possible response to violations. Agents are to determine the best possible response which is the least restrictive response with public safety. The responses include a continuum of alternatives that protect the public, hold the offender's accountable for their behavior and reduce the offenders' likelihood of engaging in criminal activity.

In addition, our office continues to work closely with the Community Corrections Office to develop and use other sentencing options available to the courts. This office oversees the community service department, intensive supervision officers and is the gatekeeper for the probation residential beds. Through our collaboration, we strive to minimize the impact on the jail and prison populations. We continue to maintain a prison commitment rate of 7.9% as compared to the state average of 20.2%.

71 % of probationers were successfully discharged in 2009.

The electronic monitoring system (tether) is used as a resource to enhance supervision. The tether allows active monitoring of an offender 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is a curfew enforcer that determines when an offender is to be at home at designated times allowing the offender to maintain employment and attend other approved functions such as

treatment, community service, etc. Most offenders are placed on the system in lieu of jail, providing a much more cost effective manner of supervising offenders.

The "Sobriator" and SCRAM units are two types of units that allow for monitoring of alcohol use of an offender. This equipment has been used frequently for OUIL 3rd cases as well as for those probation violators who test positive for the use of alcohol.

Effective January, 2007, the use of electronic monitoring technology including Global Positioning Systems (GPS) was expanded for sex offenders being released on parole. The active GPS collects data points as the parolee moves throughout the community and reports the movement, including violations in "real time." While the parolee is in the home the unit will act as a normal Radio Frequency (RF or curfew) monitoring device. The use of GPS is also being expanded to other crime groups including Aggravated Stalking and Domestic Violence cases.

Currently, there are approximately 45 cases supervised on GPS.

The *Circuit Drug Court* is also a sentencing option for new convictions as well as for probation violators. Two agents have been designated to handle drug court participants and have been very active in the continued planning and organization of the program.

VI. FEE COLLECTIONS

Restitution, court costs, fines, and other related fees are typically ordered as a term of probation. The agents oversee the collections of these fees and work closely with court personnel to ensure these fees are paid as directed. There continues to be an emphasis on the collection of restitution to help victims recover their losses.

74% probationers have paid court ordered fees in full at discharge.

VII. DRUG TESTING

The probation department completed 11,034 drug tests in 2009 with a 4% positive rate.

VIII. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Probationers were ordered to complete approximately 35,000 hours of community service in 2009. The community service office is under the direction of the Community Corrections Department. The community service is performed at a wide variety of sites located throughout the county. Referrals are often made to these programs as sanctions for technical violations.

IX. MICHIGAN PRISONER REENTRY INITIATIVE (MPRI)

A. Vision & Mission

The Vision of the Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative is to reduce crime by implementing a seamless plan of services and supervision developed with each offender, delivered through state and local collaboration, from the time of their entry to prison through their transition, reintegration and aftercare in the community.

The mission of the MPRI is to significantly reduce crime and enhance public safety by implementing a seamless system of services for offenders from the time of their entry to prison through their transition, community reintegration and aftercare in their communities.

B. Goals

The goals of MPRI are to promote public safety by reducing the threat of harm to persons and property by released offenders in the communities in which they return. Also, the goal is to increase the success rates of former offenders by fostering effective risk management and treatment programming, accountability, and community and victim participation.

Since 2004, Ottawa County has had a local steering committee comprised of various service providers meeting to address the needs of offenders reentering the community from both prison and jail. The focus of the group has been to provide offenders with the tools necessary to be successful in the community.

A MDOC contract is held with Michigan Works to provide added services for those returning from prison to address employment, life skills, housing, and transportation. Unemployment rates for those on probation or parole is approximately 50 to 70% thus, much emphasis is being placed on employment services.



70 x7 Life Recovery has developed a Serving Together group that provides a group mentoring approach that works along side offenders completing community service work. This provides both the offender and potential mentors an opportunity to develop a relationship that potentially will carry over to a more individualized mentor relationship. Ridgepoint Church in Holland has been a main center for these work groups; however, it is now being expanded to other churches in the community.

New Day Staffing is a temporary employment agency developed by 70x7 staff to utilize the mentoring as part of placing offenders in jobs. New Day Staffing provides a relational approach with both the offender and the employer to aid the offender in not only gaining but maintaining employment.

Families Victorious provides support groups in both the jail and when released to the community. Their relational ministry attempts to meet the basic needs of the offender but also again providing the offender the skills to be a productive member of our community.

MDOC also provides additional funding for those being released from prison with significant mental health needs. This is coordinated with Ottawa County Mental Health to provide a seamless transition back into the community.

Our local steering committee meets monthly and we continue to identify gaps in services and develop effective programming to meet these needs.

X. SUMMARY

The Adult Probation and Parole Department has representatives in three locations in Grand Haven, Holland, and Hudsonville. The 25 employees are employees of the Michigan Department of Corrections. Ottawa County provides office space, supplies, and other operating necessities.

Our workload averages have remained relatively stable over the past year. We continue to supervise just over 1,000 offenders on a monthly average.

The staff continue to work closely with the courts, law enforcement, and the Community Corrections department to achieve the most safe, effective and efficient method of handling felony offenders in Ottawa County. We continue to appreciate the high level of cooperation that exists between all the departments that aids in our success.

Submitted by:

Douglas J. Kamphuis, Probation/Parole Manager