Calculating a Unified Recidivism Rate for Philadelphia

A DATA SNAPSHOT OF REENTRY AND RECIDIVISM 2012-2015

Data and Metrics Subcommittee
March 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

As of April 2018: A previous error on page 13, on the chart showing recidivism by sex and agency in 2015, which did not match the narrative text, has been revised to accurately reflect the data.

Introduction

The Philadelphia Reentry Coalition brings agencies and organizations working on reentry in Philadelphia together to collectively reduce recidivism. Our shared plan, Home for Good, focuses on increasing communication, facilitating collaboration, and building capacity among these stakeholder groups. The Coalition's 103 members include local, state, and federal government agencies, community-based service providers, researchers, advocates, returning citizens, faith-based groups, and others who partner as Coalition members. Our shared vision is that every person released to Philadelphia from jail or prison succeeds as a productive member of the community.

The Coalition currently has 8 subcommittees with different objectives and goals. The objectives of the Data and Metrics Subcommittee, which produced this report, are to coordinate the collection of metrics and data (including recidivism), facilitate data sharing among stakeholders, and advise stakeholders on data-related issues, to ultimately increase the accuracy, availability, sharing, and decision-making of and with data about reentry in Philadelphia. The subcommittee's first major task was the selection of a recidivism measure to use. This was not straightforward given the multiple levels of government that return citizens to Philadelphia from custody (federal, state, and local) as well as the various branches of government (executive and judicial) which control needed data sources.

Because the overall mission of the Reentry Coalition is the reduction of recidivism in Philadelphia, and our collective action plan has an explicit target of a 25% reduction in recidivism over 5 years, coming up with an objective, reliable measure that can be calculated each year is of primary importance. Recidivism can have many meanings, and each way it is defined measures something different. Furthermore, most recidivism is tracked by individual agencies that only concern themselves with people who are leaving or returning to their own system. The Reentry Coalition wanted to identify a more unified recidivism metric that would correspond to Philadelphians returning from incarceration regardless of whether they were in county, state, or federal custody. Prior to the work of this subcommittee, no such metric existed.

Although any single measure of recidivism will only tell part of the story, being able to track trends in recidivism over time will allow us to see if the collective commitment of Coalition members might in fact be leading to reductions in recidivism. With this sort of data analysis we cannot identify the exact causes of changes in the recidivism rate, because of numerous influences and factors and the complexity of efforts being made in all forms in Philadelphia, but we believe that this is a crucial first step. Furthermore, we are able to identify some basic trends.

The term "returning citizen" is commonly used in Philadelphia to refer to community members who are formerly incarcerated. In 2013, Mayor Nutter signed an executive order requiring City offices and employees to use the term to describe anyone "who has recently been released from a federal, state or local correctional facility, or a person who was not recently incarcerated but has a criminal record or history." The term is not highly technical, and is defined differently across Philadelphia. In this report, "returning citizens" refers to Philadelphians who have been previously incarcerated (and does not refer to citizenship status).

Data and Methods

From an academic and practitioner perspective, there is no single agreed upon definition of recidivism that is used by criminal justice agencies, researchers, or other stakeholders. Recidivism has been variously defined as: a new arrest, a new conviction, or a return to custody. For example, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (PA DOC) measures how often people released from its custody are re-arrested and/or re-incarcerated in state prison. The Philadelphia Department of Prisons (PDP) measures the rate at which people who are released from their custody are re-incarcerated in their own system, regardless of legal status at time of release. There is no consensus on a single timeframe for a recidivism measure; studies range from 6 months to 3 or more years. Each criminal justice agency defines recidivism according to its own needs, goals, and data capacity. To truly understand and analyze recidivism, as many metrics and data points as possible should be tracked and evaluated to enable a sophisticated analysis of opportunities to break the cycle of recidivism.

To track recidivism as a Coalition, the primary metric we selected to focus on was **one year re-arrest rates for people released to Philadelphia by the Philadelphia Department of Prisons or the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections.** The selection of this metric, which uses the cohort-based methodology of measuring recidivism, was based in large part on the availability of data. This is the primary recidivism rate that we will track going forward, and which we hope to see a 25% reduction in between 2015 and 2020. In addition to this primary unified metric, the Data and Metrics Subcommittee also analyzed re-arrest rates in more detail, as well as basic demographic information about people being released to Philadelphia annually.

We urge caution in comparing our primary recidivism measure, or the other data contained in this report, to other recidivism measures that may be published by other entities/agencies within Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, or any other geographical region. Because there are so many ways of defining and measuring recidivism, comparisons are frequently not "apples to apples."

The data for this report came from several sources. First, we needed to identify people returning to Philadelphia from custody at each level of government (local, state, and federal). PDP provided data on people released from Philadelphia county jails. PA DOC provided data on people released from state prisons. Data from the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) was used to aid in the data analysis process. Through the PA DOC, the Pennsylvania State Police provided arrest data that allowed us to identify whether or not someone had been re-arrested within specified time periods after being released from custody. The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) also provided the total number of individuals released to Philadelphia for the years analyzed in this report. Because we did not have individual-level data for releases from BOP, those individuals are not represented in the recidivism rates in this report.

The data in this report only includes people released to Philadelphia who have been charged with a criminal non-summary type offense[1] in the Philadelphia adult criminal justice system. For an expanded discussion on data and methods, including data limitations, please see the technical appendix.

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[1] A summary offense is the most minor type of criminal offense in Pennsylvania. The data in this report does not include people charged with only summary offenses or civil citations.

Findings: Reentry in Philadelphia

People Returning from Incarceration in County and State Prisons and Jails by The Numbers

Between 2012 and 2015, between 24,000 and 26,000 people returned to Philadelphia from incarceration in local, state, and federal jails and prisons.[2] **Table 1** shows that each year, around 80% of those people are returning from incarceration in county jails (PDP), slightly less than 20% are returning from Pennsylvania state prisons (PA DOC), and 2% are returning from federal custody (BOP). **Figure 1** below shows the breakdown of releases to Philadelphia in 2015.

Table 1. Number of People Released to Philadelphia from Local, State, and Federal Incarceration (2012-2015)

Type of Incarceration	2012	2013	2014	2015
Local (PDP)	19,306 (79.1%)	21,331 (81.0%)	20,714 (79.7%)	19,555 (79.3%)
State (PA DOC)	4,537 (18.6%)	4,453 (16.9%)	4,690 (18.0%)	4,534 (18.4%)
Federal (BOP)	549 (2.3%)	556 (2.1%)	590 (2.3%)	570 (2.3%)
Total	**24,392**	**26,340**	**25,994**	**24,659**

Figure 1. People Released to Philadelphia from Local, State, and Federal Incarceration (2015)
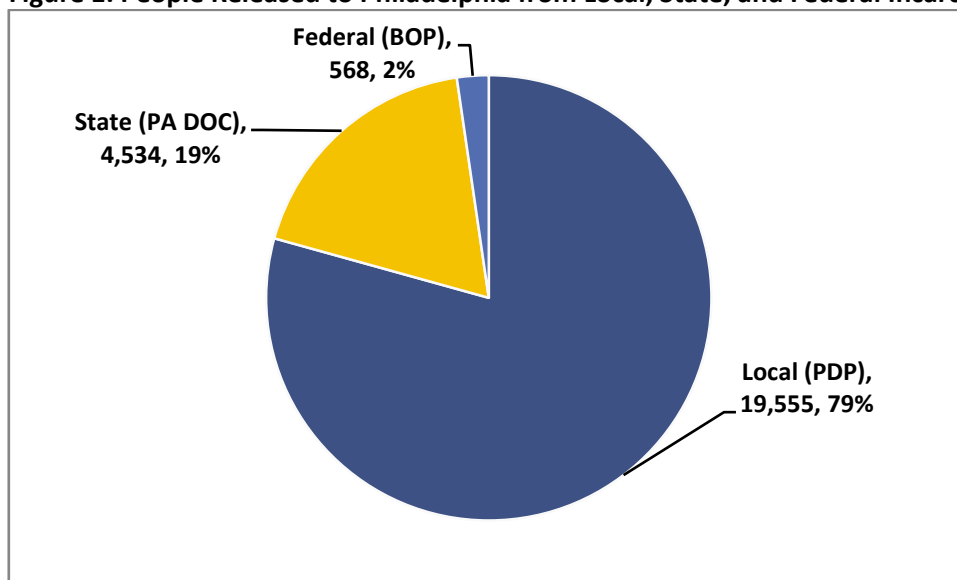
The roughly 20,000 people who left PDP each year have various statuses including: those who were detained and are awaiting trial; those who have either completed their full sentence or are paroled to finish their sentence in the community; and people who are released from a variety of other holds such as probation detainers or holds from other jurisdictions. Because these different statuses have different implications for someone's "reentry," we wanted to be able to differentiate those who have finished a sentence and those who were released from custody to the community for some other reason. In the data we used, however, we were not able to accurately determine exactly who was sentenced at the time of their release. Therefore, except

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[2] Each person is only counted the first time they are released within the year. However, they could be counted again in following years. See the technical appendix for more detail.

where stated otherwise, **the data in this report related to people from PDP includes all people released regardless of sentenced status.**[3]

Demographic Profile of People Released to Philadelphia

The rest of this report refers only to people released from county jail and state prison, thus accounting for 98% of the people released to Philadelphia each of the years analyzed (federal prison accounted for roughly 2% each year). Because the data was combined from multiple sources, categories in the data are not necessarily exactly identical (for example, different agencies may have different processes for collecting information about race/ethnicity).

Geography

The geography of where people were released to is determined by the zip code provided with an individual's self-reported address. Almost 17% of the individuals released in 2015 did not have accurate zip code data, so the following data relates to the 83%, or 20,045 people, for whom we have data.   The map in **Figure 2** and chart in **Figure 3** show the relative frequency with which people were released to different zip codes in 2015. The twenty zip codes that people returned to most frequently represent over 65% of all people released. The six zip codes that more than 1,000 people returned to (19134, 19124, 19140, 19132, 19143, and 19133) make up over a third (34%) of all people released in 2015. Five of these six zip codes are adjacent to one another, from Strawberry Mansion on the west to Frankford on the east. Finally, the three zip codes that the most people returned to (19134, 19124, and 19140) account for more than 20% of the people released to Philadelphia in 2015 (Figures 2 and 3).[4] Clearly, the number of people returning from incarceration to some neighborhoods is much higher than to others.

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[3] See the technical appendix for additional information about the status of people leaving PDP, as best as we could determine.

[4] A map with number of people returning to each zip per capita is included in the technical appendix.

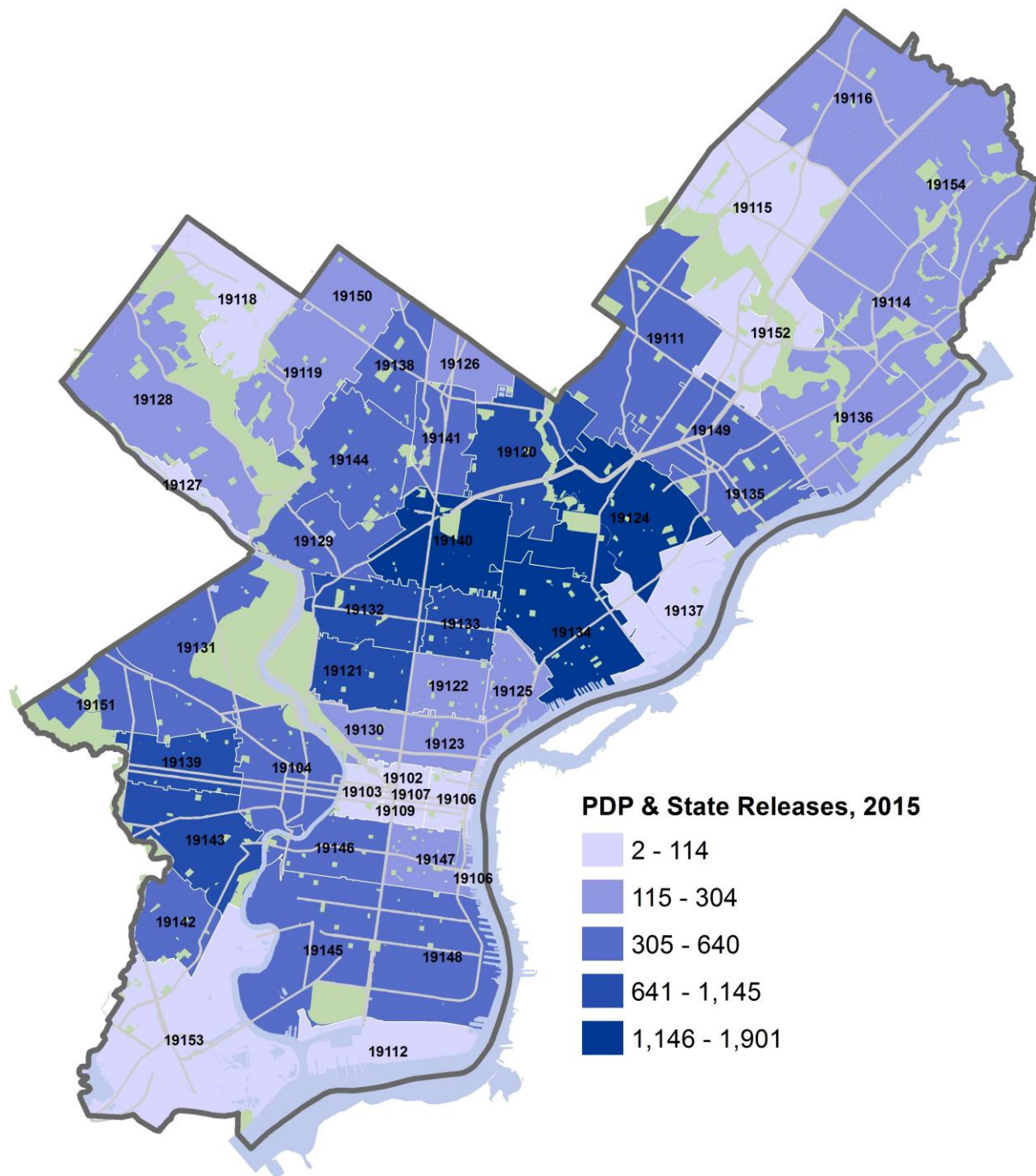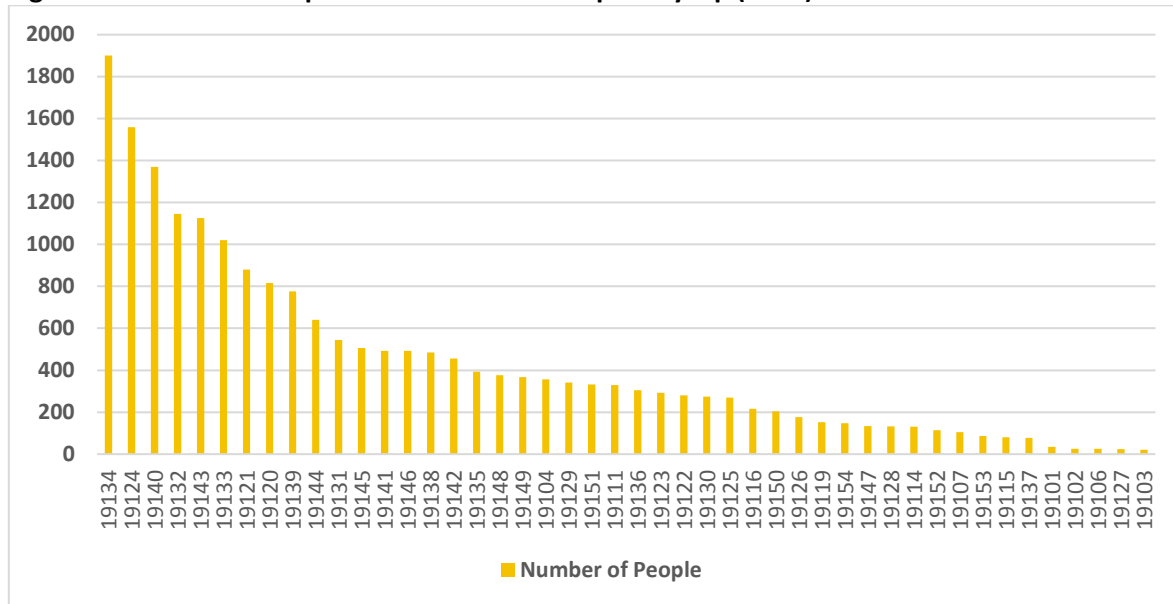**Figure 2. Number of People Released to Philadelphia By Zip (2015)**

PDP & State Releases, 2015

- 2 - 114
- 115 - 304
- 305 - 640
- 641 - 1,145
- 1,146 - 1,901

Figure 3. Number of People Released to Philadelphia By Zip (2015)[5]

Race/Ethnicity

The two agencies providing release data use the same categories for race (Black, Hispanic, Asian, White, and Other). Because race and ethnicity are conflated (i.e., ethnicity is not captured independently from race), we cannot make some distinctions, for example, between someone who identifies as Black and Hispanic versus someone who identifies as Black and non-Hispanic. The majority of returning citizens are Black (66%) while roughly equal numbers identify as White (16%) or Hispanic (16%). The remainder is made up of Asians (1%) and others (1%). Compared to the population of Philadelphia, this means that Black and Hispanic people are overrepresented, and Whites and Asians are underrepresented, among the people being released to Philadelphia from incarceration (**Figure 4**).

Figure 4. Race/Ethnicity of People Returning to Philadelphia vs. Race/Ethnicity of Philadelphia's Total Population (2015)
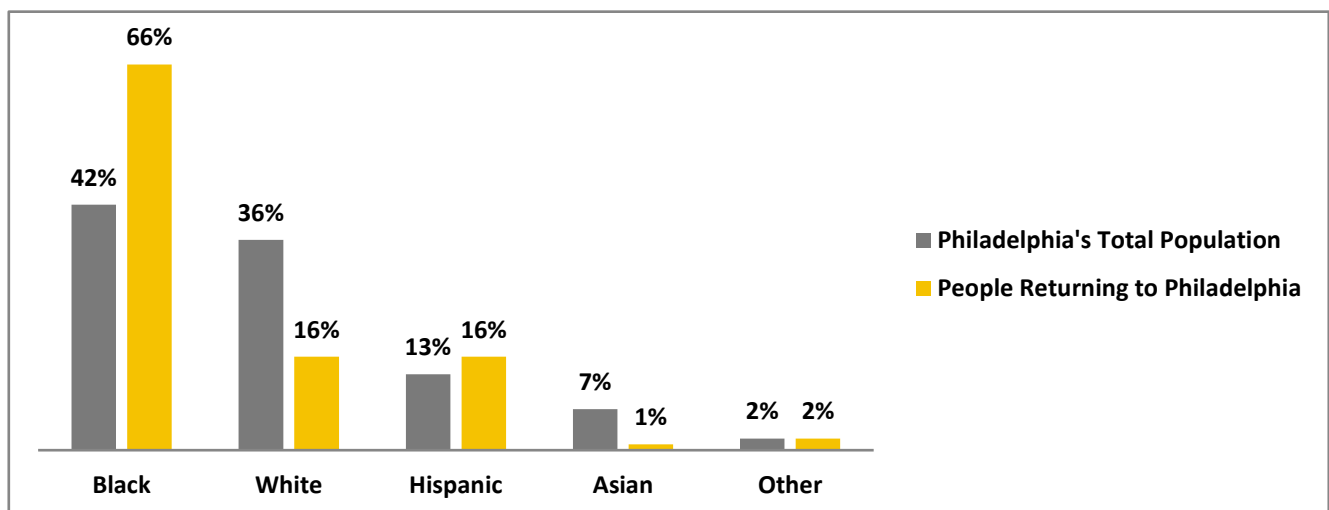

Source of Philadelphia population data: http://www.pewtrusts.org/~/media/assets/2015/05/2015-state-of-the-city-report_web.pdf

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[5] This chart excludes 18 zip codes to which a total of 31 people returned.

Sex

As shown in **Figure 5,** the vast majority of returning Philadelphians are male (85%); only 15% are women. Since the sex breakdown in Philadelphia is close to 50/50, this means that males are highly overrepresented among people returning to Philadelphia from incarceration.
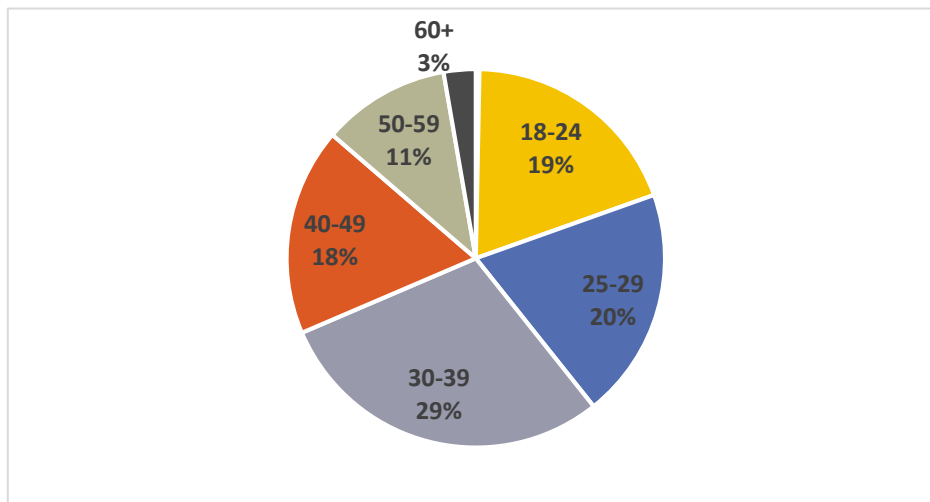
**Figure 5. Releases by Sex (2015)**
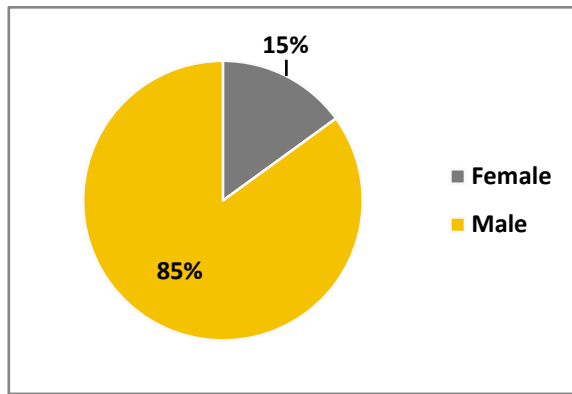
Age

Overall, 19% of returning citizens from PDP and the PA DOC are 18-24 years old, and 20% are between 25 and 29 years old. 29% are 30-39, 18% are 40-49, 11% are 50-59. As shown in **Figure 6,** very few are over 60 (3%) or under 18 (75 individuals, or .3%).

Figure 6. Releases by Age (2015)

On average, persons released from city custody are 35 years of age while those released from state custody are 38 years of age (see **Figure 7**). Almost 40% of people released from PDP in 2015 were between 20 and 29 years old, compared to 28% of people released from PA DOC. 28% of people released from PDP were between 30 and 39, compared to 35% of people released from PA DOC. Besides people under 20, none of whom were released from PA DOC (and who made up 3% of people released from PDP), the remaining age groups make up similar proportions of people released from each custody agency.

Figure 7. Releases by Age by Agency (2015)
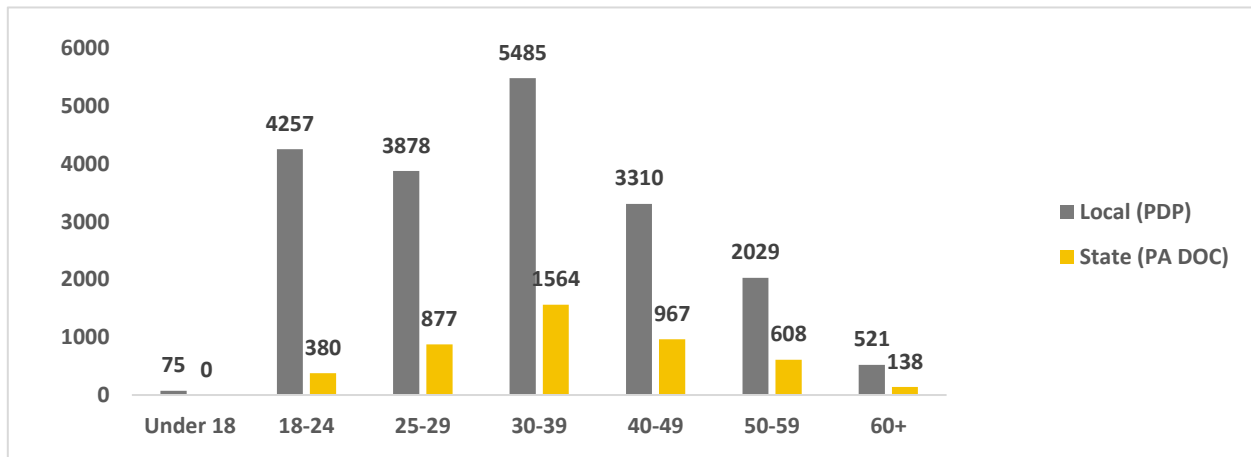
Offense Type of Original Charge

Here we examine the type of offense for which someone was incarcerated, which we refer to as the "original charge."[6] There were similar numbers of people released in 2015 who were incarcerated for a violent offense or a drug offense (29% and 28% respectively). Public order and property offenses were next most common, making up 20% and 18% respectively. Sex offenses (5%) were the least common offense among people released in 2015 (**Figure 8**).

Figure 8. Releases by Offense Type of Original Charge (2015)
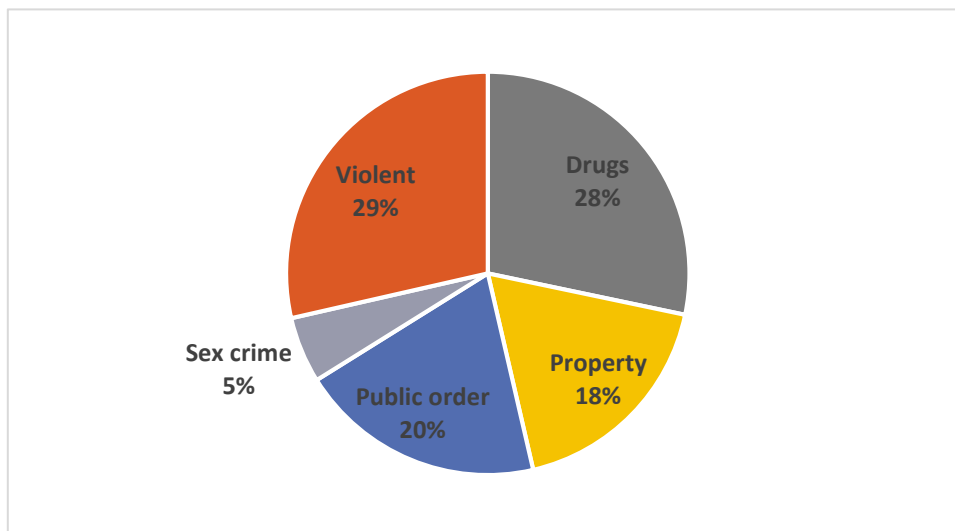
Philadelphia's Unified Recidivism Rate and Goal to Reach by End of 2020

To track recidivism as a Coalition in a more comprehensive way than any single agency has done, the primary metric we selected to focus on was **one year re-arrest rates for people released by the Philadelphia Department of Prisons or the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections to Philadelphia.[7]**

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[6] The offense types of original charges are based on ASCA categories. Please see the technical appendix for more information about what types of charges are included in each category.

[7] See the technical appendix for a more detailed description of the data, as well as 6-month and 3-year re-arrest rates.

In 2015, the one-year unified recidivism rate for people returning to Philadelphia was 33.9%. Looked at differently, this means that of the 24,089 people released to Philadelphia from PDP and PA DOC in that year, roughly 8,000 people who were re-arrested at least once within a year after their return to the community from incarceration, and 16,000 were not. **Table 2** provides a comparison of the unified recidivism rate for 2015 and the three years prior.

Table 2. Unified Recidivism Rate
(1-Year Re-Arrest Rates for People Released from PDP or PA DOC) by Year

Release Year	One Year Recidivism Rate
2012	35.1%
2013	33.9%
2014	34.1%
2015	33.9%

In Home for Good, we committed to collectively reducing recidivism in Philadelphia by 25% over 5 years. Part of the motivation for this data project was to calculate the baseline from which to measure our shared goal of recidivism reduction.

Our shared goal as a Reentry Coalition is to reduce the unified recidivism rate by 25% by the end of the year 2020. This would mean a unified recidivism rate of 25.4%, or 2,000 fewer people re-arrested within a year of release from state prison or county jail.[8]

Additional Breakdown of 1-Year Re-arrest Rates

Next, we take a closer look at the relative rates at which people were re-arrested based on a range of characteristics like place of custody, demographics, and the type of offense that lead to their incarceration.

Recidivism by Place of Custody

People returning to Philadelphia are released from custody by three agencies: local, state, and federal jails/prisons, but we only have individual-level data from the first two sources. The one-year re-arrest rates for people released from county prisons are generally 13-14 percentage points higher than those released from state prison (see **Figure 9**).

Figure 9. Unified Recidivism Rate vs. Recidivism Rate by Place of Custody

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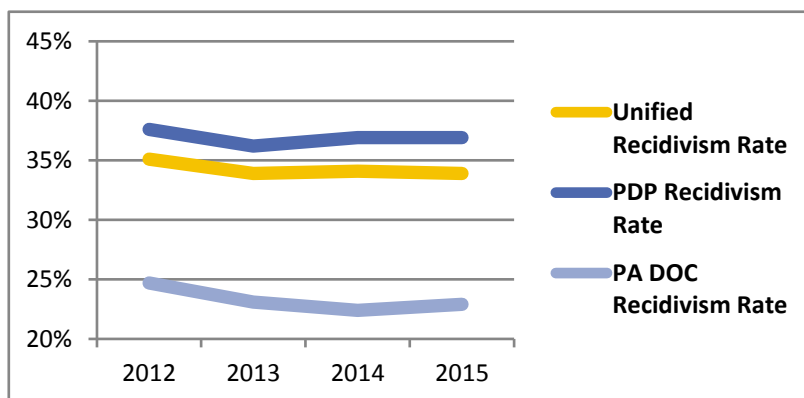
[8] Based on number of people released in 2015.

The higher re-arrest rates for people released from county jails compared to people released from state prisons could be caused by numerous factors that are beyond the scope of this report. One possible explanation is the difference in age between those released from local and state incarceration because younger people tend to have higher recidivism rates than their older peers. On average, people released from city custody are 34 years of age while those released from state custody are 37 years of age.[9] Looking at the group most likely to recidivate, those aged 18-24, there is a large difference in the size of the groups who are released from city versus state custody (26% versus 9%). In other words, people released from city custody are nearly 3 times as likely as those released from state custody to be in the riskiest age group.

Recidivism by PDP Legal Status

As described earlier, the more than twenty thousand people who left PDP in 2015 includes people leaving custody with different legal statuses, which have different implications for reentry. We looked at re-arrest rates for the group that we could confirm were sentenced at the time of their release and compared them to the data on all people released from PDP. People who we could confirm were sentenced at the time of their release were re-arrested at higher rates than the average for all people released from PDP (See **Table 3**).

**Table 3. Recidivism Rate by Legal Status of Release from PDP**

Release Year	Sentenced PDP Rate	All PDP Rate
2012	44.6%	37.6%
2013	42.5%	36.2%
2014	43.0%	36.9%
2015	42.0%	36.9%

Recidivism by Age

Consistent with other research, younger returning citizens are re-arrested at a higher rate than older ones. For the 18-24 year old group, the rate is 44.5%, which is considerably higher than the overall recidivism rate, which hovers around 34%. Those in the 25-29 year old group are also slightly above average with a rate of 37%. There is not a large difference in recidivism rates between returning citizens who are in their 30s (33%) or 40s (32%) but both groups are slightly below the overall rate. People ages 50 and above have a recidivism rate of 24%, which is well below the average. Put another way, more than two thirds of people 50 and above remain arrest-free for the first year after their release, while only slightly over half of 18-24 year-olds do. Many programs specifically target the 18-24 year old group for special services. The data supports this, but also indicate that high recidivism rates persist for people in their late 20s, 30s, and 40s (**Figure 10**).

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[9] The median age for city releases is 31 years while the median age for state releases is 35 years.

Figure 10. Recidivism by Age Group (2015)
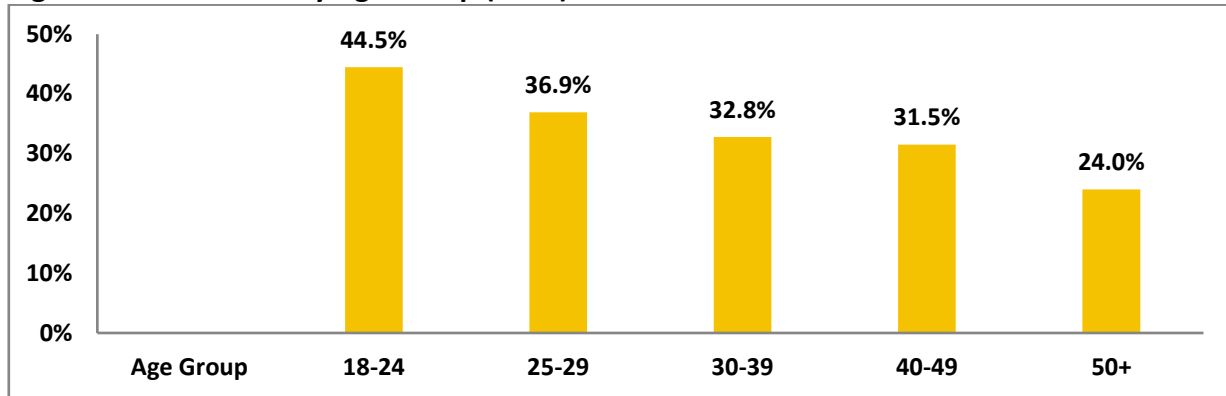
Recidivism by Race

There seem to be some differences in recidivism rates by race/ethnicity of the returning citizen, which are not consistent with some other research on recidivism. Black people have the lowest rate (32.5%) followed by Hispanic people (35.7%) and White people (39.8%). As shown in **Figure 11,** these patterns are true for people released from PDP and PA DOC, though more pronounced for those released from PDP. The explanations for these differences are beyond the scope of this report.

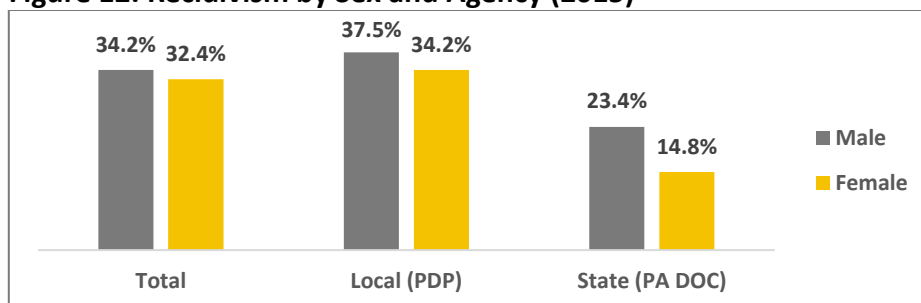**Figure 11. Recidivism by Race/Ethnicity and Agency (2015)**
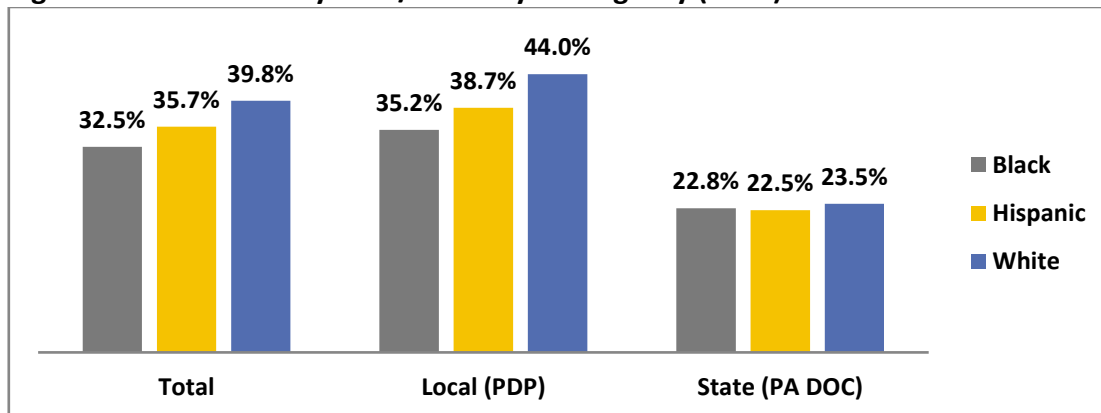
Recidivism by Sex

There is only a slight difference in recidivism rates by sex (34.2% for males, 32.4% for females). The difference is much more dramatic for people released from PA DOC: 23.4% of males were re-arrested within a year, compared to 14.8% of females (**Figure 12**).

Figure 12. Recidivism by Sex and Agency (2015)

13

Recidivism by Offense Type of Original Charge

Here we examine recidivism rates by the offense type of the original charge, meaning the most serious offense type for which the person was incarcerated.[10] There are some clear differences. Those serving time for property offenses were the most likely to be arrested for a new offense (46.4%) while those incarcerated for public order crimes were the least likely to be rearrested (23.6%). Sex, violent, and drug crimes hovered in the middle, ranging from 30.8% for violent offenses and 40.2% for sex offenses. The re-arrest rates for people incarcerated for different types of controlling offenses vary between people released from local jails and people released from state prison (**Figure 13**). The reason(s) for these differences is beyond the scope of this report.

Figure 13. Recidivism by Offense Type of Original Charge and Agency (2015)
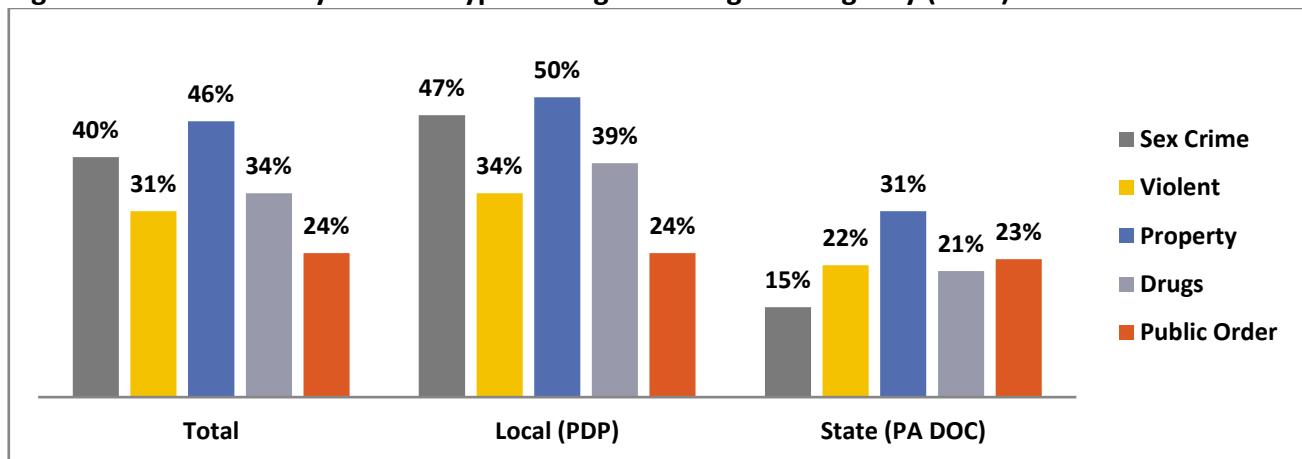
Now we take a closer look at the types of offenses for which returning citizens are re-arrested. We break these down in two different ways, first using broad categories and then using a more fine-grained approach. There are literally thousands of offenses the PA Crimes Code, so some method of categorizing offenses is necessary.
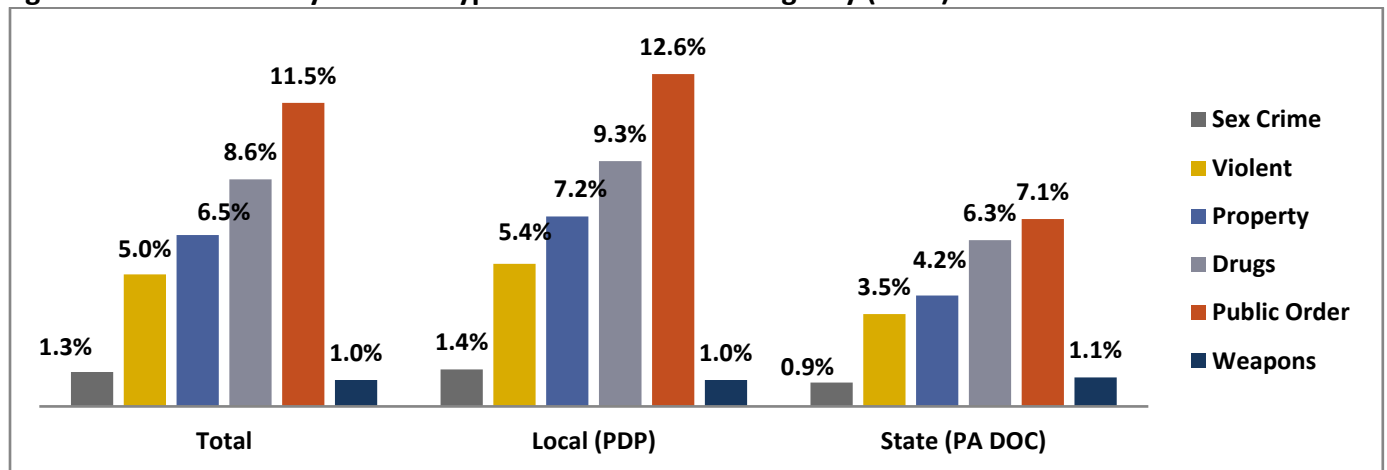
Recidivism by Offense Type of New Arrest

Offense types of new arrests are categorized differently than offense types of original charges, to allow us to analyze in more detail.[11] Overall, public order offenses are the most common type of new arrests, with 11.5% of those released to Philadelphia from PA DOC and PDP in 2015 re-arrested at least once for public order offenses. The next most common arrest type was drugs, with 8.6% of the returning citizens having such an arrest, followed by 6.5% for property offenses. Five percent of the group had a new arrest for a violent crime, and 1.3% were arrested for a sex offense within one year of release (**Figure 14**). Weapons arrests were the least common, with 1% incurring a charge of this type. In comparing releases from PDP and DOC, there are some differences between the two populations. The most marked differences are for public order and property offenses, where re-arrest rates for people released from local incarceration at PDP are nearly twice those for people released from state incarceration at PA DOC.

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[10] The offense types of original charges are based on ASCA categories, which may not be intuitive to someone not familiar with them. Please see the technical appendix for more information about what types of charges are included in each category.

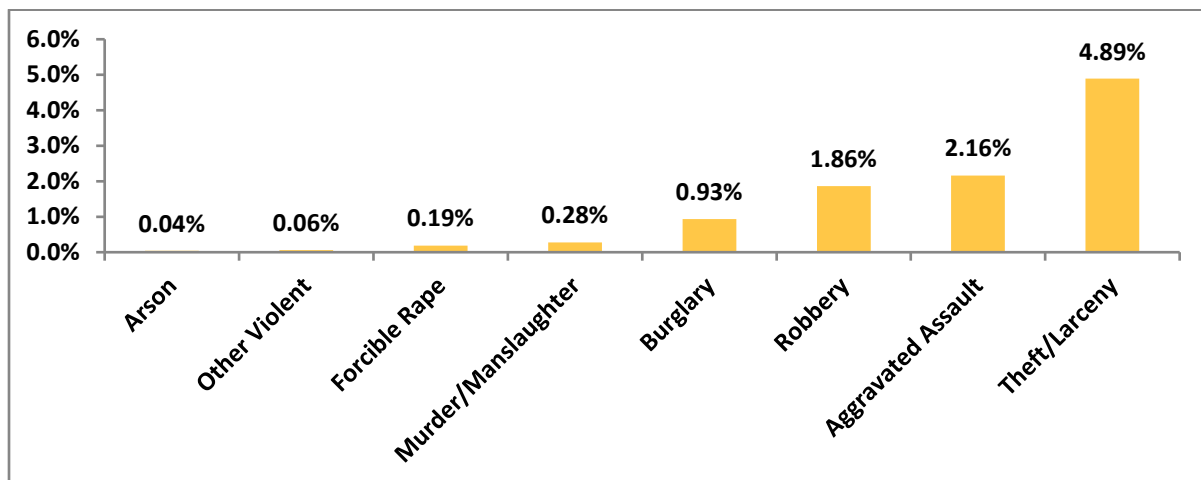[11] These re-arrest offense types use Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) categories for offense types, and only include the most serious offense type of an individual's first arrest in the year following their release from custody. Please see the technical appendix for more information about what types of charges are included in each category.

Figure 14. Recidivism by Offense Type of New Arrest and Agency (2015)

Legend:
- Sex Crime
- Violent
- Property
- Drugs
- Public Order
- Weapons

Total: Sex Crime 1.3%, Violent 5.0%, Property 6.5%, Drugs 8.6%, Public Order 11.5%, Weapons 1.0%

Local (PDP): Sex Crime 1.4%, Violent 5.4%, Property 7.2%, Drugs 9.3%, Public Order 12.6%, Weapons 1.0%

State (PA DOC): Sex Crime 0.9%, Violent 3.5%, Property 4.2%, Drugs 6.3%, Public Order 7.1%, Weapons 1.1%

Figures 15 and **16** break down the arrest types into Part I and Part II offenses. Part I Offenses (shown in **Figure 15**) are also commonly referred to as Index Offenses[12] and are considered the most serious types of crimes. The most common Part I Offense for this cohort was theft/larceny (4.9%) followed by aggravated assault (2.1%) and robbery (1.9%). All of the other Part I Offenses fall at or below 1% of new arrests. By far, the most prevalent new arrest type (theft/larceny) is one of the least serious.

Figure 15. Re-Arrest Rates for UCR Part I Offenses (2015)

Arson 0.04%, Other Violent 0.06%, Forcible Rape 0.19%, Murder/Manslaughter 0.28%, Burglary 0.93%, Robbery 1.86%, Aggravated Assault 2.16%, Theft/Larceny 4.89%

For Part II Offenses, the most common type is drug (8.6%) followed by Part II Other (7.4%), which includes disorderly conduct and other public order offenses. Prison breach is the third most common (2.9%) and includes leaving a halfway house without permission. The rate for the remaining Part II Offenses is at or below 1%. (See **Figure 16**).

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[12] The breakdown into 'index' and 'non-index' offenses is somewhat antiquated. For example, kidnapping and some sex offenses are not considered 'index' offenses even though most people would consider these more serious than theft or larceny.

Figure 16. Re-Arrest Rates for UCR Part II Offenses
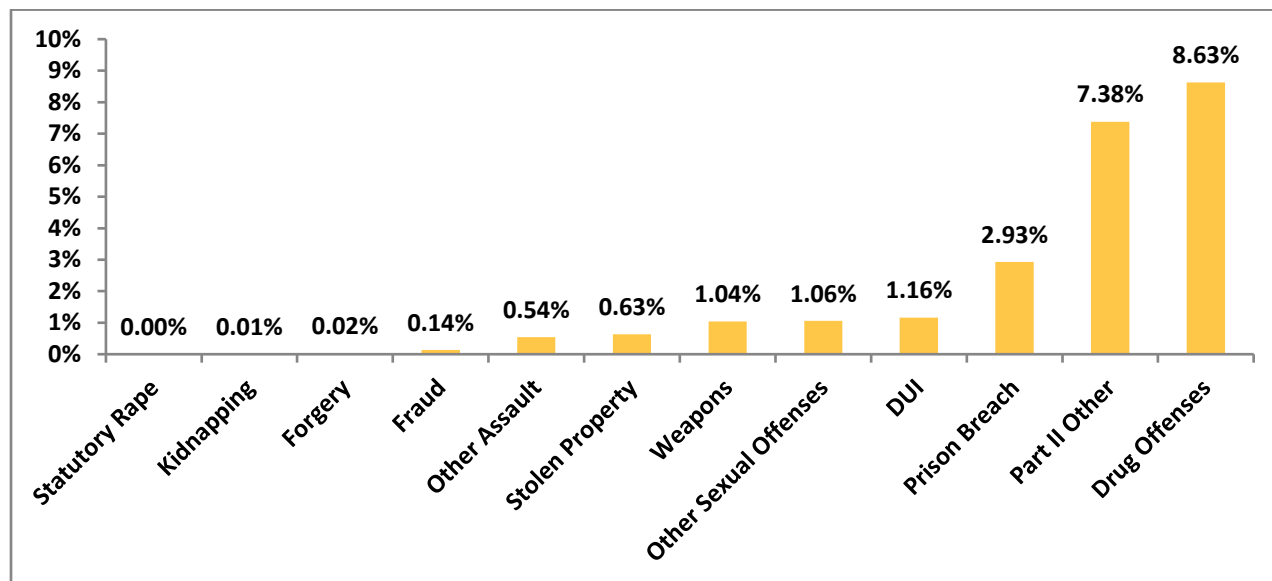
Conclusion

The data presented in this report provide basic information about who is being released to Philadelphia from incarceration in Philadelphia county jails and Pennsylvania state prisons, and the rates at which those people are re-arrested within a year following their release. It is valuable because these statistics are not readily available, and rarely reflect people released from both types of incarceration. As a city, it should not matter where people are incarcerated prior to being released; we should collectively reduce barriers and build stronger support systems so that **everyone released from incarceration has the opportunity to be a productive and healthy member of society and achieve their own goals in the community**.

Key takeaways from this report include:

- Around **25,000 people were released to Philadelphia annually** between 2012 and 2015.

- These 25,000 people released to Philadelphia annually are **disproportionately Black and Hispanic, male**, **under 40 years old**, and **return to some neighborhoods far more frequently than others**.

- In 2015, **33.9%** of the people released to Philadelphia from state prison or county jail were re-arrested within a year (we are calling this metric a **unified recidivism rate**).

- **Our shared goal as a Reentry Coalition is to reduce the unified recidivism rate by 25% by the end of the year 2020.** This would mean a unified recidivism rate of 25.4%, or 2,000 fewer people re-arrested within a year of release from state prison or county jail.[13]

- **Young people (18-24) are the most likely to be re-arrested within a year of being released from incarceration,** and in general re-arrest rates decrease as age increases.

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[13] Based on number of people released in 2015.

- People released from county jail are more likely than people released from state prison to be re-arrested within a year.

- Many questions arise from these data which are beyond the scope of this report but deserve additional attention.

Going forward, the Data and Metrics Subcommittee plans to track the data points in this report on an annual basis. Additional subcommittee projects will include creating an online repository of locally relevant recidivism statistics, and working with Reentry Coalition members to build capacity around data collection and management and data sharing, all in service of the subcommittee's ultimate goal of increasing the availability, sharing, and decision-making of/with data about reentry in Philadelphia.

More data analysis is necessary in order to shed light on the complex causes and interactions of the data represented in this report, including both who is released from incarceration, and the rates at which people are re-arrested.

Acknowledgements

This data project was truly a team effort by the Philadelphia Reentry Coalition's Data and Metrics Subcommittee. Specifically, data was analyzed by the PA Department of Corrections' Office of Research and Statistics, and the City of Philadelphia's Office of Criminal Justice. Additional Subcommittee members include representatives of the First Judicial District, Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity, Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services, JEVS Human Services, Temple University, Maternity Care Coalition, Jefferson's Center for Urban Health, and Drexel University's Department of Criminal Justice.

Technical Appendix

Data and Methods

Sources
The data for this report came from multiple sources:
- Individual-level release data was provided by the Philadelphia Department of Prisons (PDP), and the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (PA DOC).[14]

- Arrest data was obtained from the Pennsylvania State Police through the PA DOC.

- Data from the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) was used, to match records between the data sets as well as to try to determine sentenced status of people released from PDP.

Identifying People Released to Philadelphia 2012-2015
The data in this report only includes people released to Philadelphia (as indicated by self-reported address) who have been charged with a criminal non-summary type offense in the Philadelphia adult criminal justice system. Each person is only counted as one release within each year even if they were released from custody multiple times in a year. If the same individual was released in multiple years between 2012 and 2015, they are counted once for each year. If someone was released from both PDP and PA DOC within a single year, their first release was counted, except for when they were likely transferred between PDP and PA DOC custody and never actually "released," which we measured by less than 3 days between a release date and an admission date, noting that sometimes the dates are not exact. More specifically:
- When someone was released from PA DOC first and their date of entry to PDP was more than 3 days after their release from PA DOC, we used their release date from PA DOC.

- When someone was released from PA DOC first and their date of entry to PDP was within 3 days of their release from PA DOC, we used their release date from PDP.

- When someone was released from PDP first and their date of entry to PA DOC was within 3 days from their release date from PDP, we used their release date from PA DOC.

All individuals released from PA DOC are assumed to have been sentenced (at least for original charge) at the time of their release. To try to determine individuals' sentenced status at the time of their release from PDP, we used two methods:
- Some of the records included information about the reason of an individual's release that indicate whether they were sentenced or not.

- For those with ambiguous release reason information, we looked at the same year and two years prior of AOPC data to match records whenever possible, and used case disposition information when available to indicate if someone was sentenced at the time of release.

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[14] The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) provided the total number of individuals released to Philadelphia for the years analyzed in this report.

- The records for which we could not confirm someone's sentenced status at the time of their release were those with ambiguous release reason information, and who were not found as a match in the AOPC data (likely because they were in earlier AOPC data which we did not reference, or because their records had been expunged).

Measuring Recidivism Rates

The primary metric the Reentry Coalition selected to focus on is **one year re-arrest rates for people released by the Philadelphia Department of Prisons or the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections to Philadelphia,** based in large part on the availability of data. Because there are so many ways of defining and measuring recidivism, we urge caution in comparing our recidivism findings directly to other recidivism measures that may be published by other entities/agencies within Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, or any other geographical region.

To calculate recidivism, we looked at the first time someone in the group of people released was re-arrested in Pennsylvania, and the amount of time between their release and their arrest. If someone was released and then re-incarcerated without being arrested, they would not show up as having recidivated. If someone was re-arrested multiple times after being released, they are only counted the first time they are re-arrested.

Data Limitations

Some of the limitations in the data include:
- The limitations associated with using only a single metric to analyze recidivism.

- Specifically, the limitations associated with using arrest to measure recidivism, because an arrest does not indicate a conviction, and criminal activity does not always lead to arrest.

- Using self-reported address as a proxy for whether they are returning to Philadelphia upon release.

- Only accounting for cases in Philadelphia county.

- Only accounting for people in the adult criminal justice system.

- An individual might be released in multiple years between 2012 and 2015 and will be counted separately for the first time they are released in each different year.

- Our analysis cannot account for the time someone is actually "on the street" and able to be re-arrested: if an individual is released on January 1st and re-incarcerated on January 15th without an arrest, and is incarcerated through December 31st, they will not show up as having been re-arrested, but due to incarceration they will have had much less chance of be re-arrested than an individual who was not incarcerated during those 11.5 months.

- Only using arrest data for Pennsylvania.

- The denominator for the recidivism calculation (people released to Philadelphia) does not exclude many people who should be excluded (for example people who died shortly after release, people who left the jurisdiction, people incarcerated in other jurisdictions

without involving an arrest in Pennsylvania, and those transferred to the custody of immigration or other correctional authorities.

Association of State Corrections Administrators (ASCA) Offense Categories

There are tens of thousands of crimes in the Pennsylvania Crime code, making it necessary to come up with a way to categorize offenses to a manageable number. For this report, we used the ASCA crime categories. Below is a breakdown of the types of offenses included in each category:

- Sex Offenses: indecent assault, false imprisonment, rape, luring a child into an automobile, incest, failure to register as a sex offender, sexual assault, incest, indecent exposure, obscene materials, sexual abuse of children, prostitution, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, statutory rape.

- Violent Offenses: aggravated assault, arson of inhabited buildings, homicide by vehicle, bomb threats, robbery, witness intimidation, voluntary manslaughter, murder, criminal homicide, simple assault, cruelty to animals, terroristic threats.

- Property Offenses: arson, burglary, unlawful entry, forgery, fraud, counterfeiting, criminal trespass, forgery, vandalism, tampering with evidence, receiving stolen property, theft, auto theft.

- Drug Offenses: possession, manufacture, and/or distribution of illegal substances.

- Public Order Offenses: DUI, contempt of court, criminal contempt, failure to appear, disorderly conduct, drunkenness, false report, loitering, obstruction of justice, possession of firearms, sale of weapons, possessing instruments of crime.

Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Categories

The below shows how we collapsed the Part I and Part II UCR offenses into fewer categories.

- Violent: aggravated assault, murder/manslaughter, other violent, robbery, kidnapping, other assault.

- Property: arson, burglary, theft/larceny, forgery, fraud, stolen property.

- Sex: forcible rape, other sexual offenses, statutory rape.

- Drugs: drug offenses.

- Public Order: DUI, Part II Other, prison breach.

- Weapons: weapons offenses.

Additional Data

Sentenced Status of People Released from PDP

Table 4 shows the number and percent of people released from PDP custody each year who we were able to confirm were sentenced or not sentenced at the time of their release, as well as the number and percent for whom we were unable to determine sentenced status at time of release. While incomplete, this information is important to consider because legal status at the

moment of release has different implications for someone's "reentry" into the community from incarceration.

Table 4. Sentenced Status of People Released from PDP custody (2012-2015)[15]

Sentenced Status	2012	2013	2014	2015
Sentenced	5,662 (29%)	8,026 (38%)	9,013 (44%)	7,329 (37%)
Not Sentenced	10,930 (57%)	9,942 (47%)	8,300 (40%)	7,369 (38%)
Unknown if Sentenced	2,714 (14%)	3,363 (16%)	3,401 (16%)	4,857 (25%)
Total	**19,306**	**21,331**	**20,714**	**19,555**

6-Month and 1-Year Re-arrest Rates

Table 5. 6-month Re-arrest Rate by Place of Custody

Release Year	Local (PDP) Rate	State (PA DOC) Rate
2012	24.9%	11.9%
2013	23.5%	10.9%
2014	23.9%	10.9%
2015	24.2%	10.7%

Table 6. 3-Year Re-arrest Rate by Place of Custody

Release Year	Local (PDP) Rate	State (PA DOC) Rate
2012	58.5%	50.4%
2013	57.3%	48.9%

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[15] Percentages might not total 100 due to rounding errors.

Additional Maps

Figure 17. Number of People Released to Philadelphia from PDP By Zip (2015)
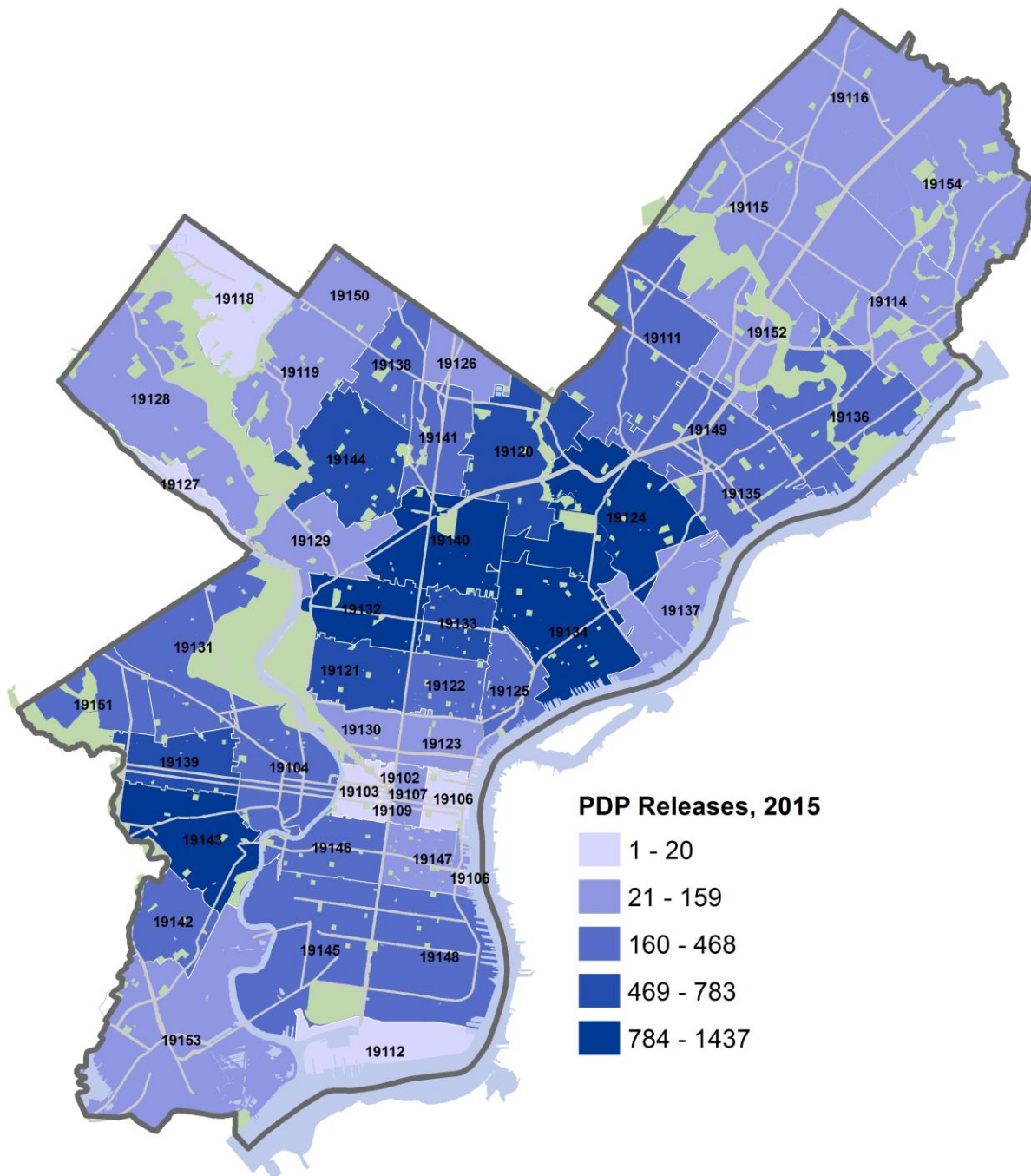
Figure 18. Number of People Released to Philadelphia from PA DOC By Zip (2015)

State Releases, 2015
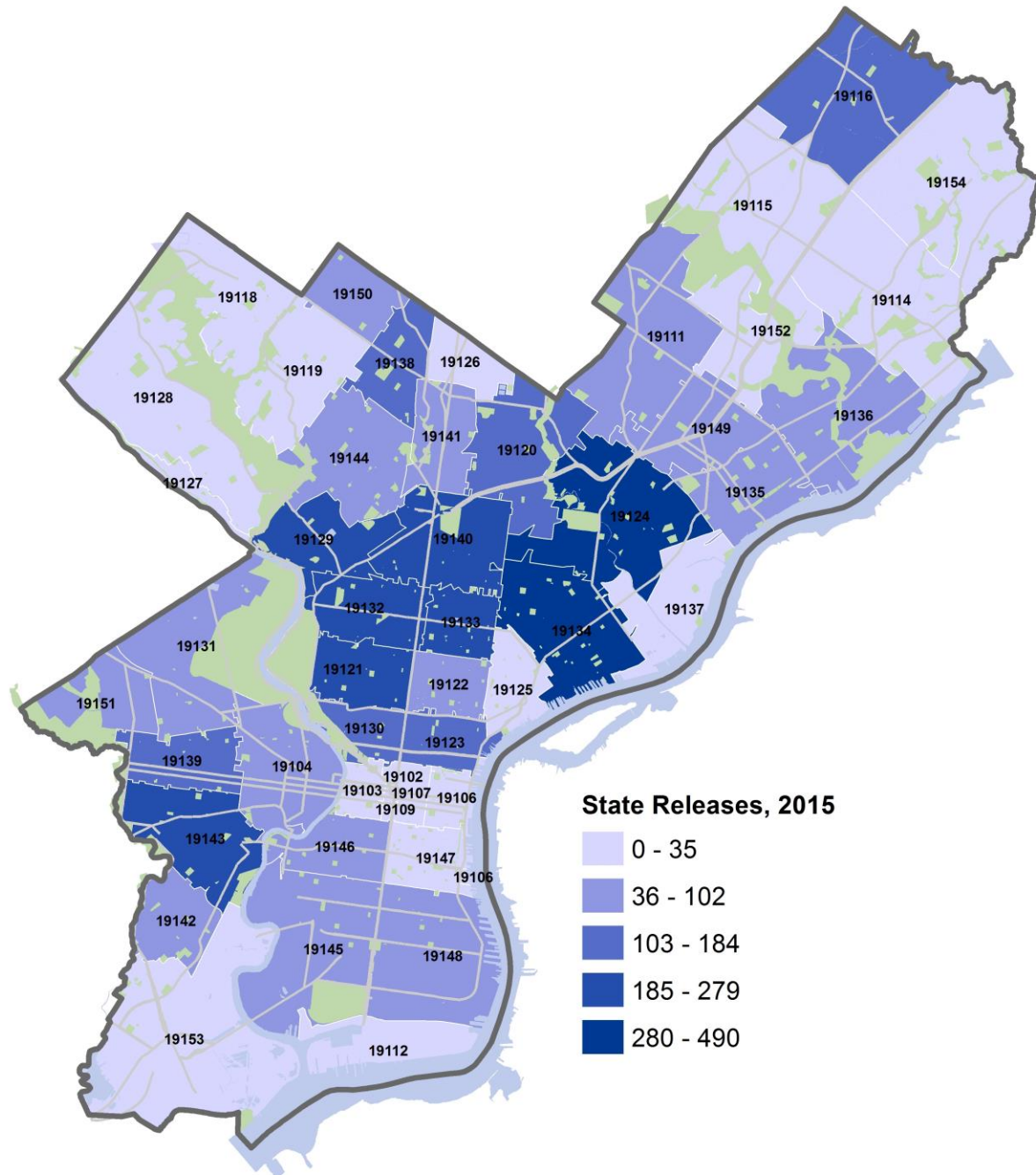- 0 - 35
- 36 - 102
- 103 - 184
- 185 - 279
- 280 - 490

Figure 19. Number of People Released to Philadelphia per 1,000 Residents By Zip (2015)

PDP & State Releases, 2015
Releases Per 1,000 Residents

- 0 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 15
- 16 - 20
- More than 20