



News Release

For Immediate Release

December 9, 2014

Reoffend Rate Remains High for High-risk Offenders, Auditor General Says

(TORONTO) Treatment and rehabilitation programs for adult offenders serving sentences in the community have done little over the last 10 years to reduce the rate at which these offenders reoffend, Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk says in her *2014 Annual Report*.

“The overall average reoffend rate for these people has actually increased slightly over the last 10 years, and the rate at which high- and very-high-risk offenders reoffend is much higher than the overall average rate,” Lysyk said today following the release of the Report.

“As well, we noted that lower-risk offenders were often oversupervised while higher-risk offenders were undersupervised,” she said.

On an average day, the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services is responsible for supervising more than 51,200 offenders serving community-based sentences, which include probation, conditional sentences, parole and temporary absences.

In addition to the audit of the Ministry’s programs, the Auditor General also examined the Ontario Parole Board.

Significant findings included the following:

- The Ministry did not have adequate processes to ensure that probation and parole officers completed risk assessments for all offenders within the required six weeks of offenders’ initial appointments with an officer. Completing risk assessments is critical to establishing an effective rehabilitation plan for an offender.
- The Ministry did not have reliable information on offenders who breached the conditions of their release, nor did probation and parole officers use effective measures to ensure that conditions imposed by courts, such as curfews and house arrest, were enforced.
- Many probation and parole officers have not been trained to effectively oversee higher-risk offenders or those with mental health issues.
- Rehabilitation programs intended to reduce the risk of offenders reoffending are not consistently available across the province. About 40 of 100 probation and parole offices did not have core programs available, such as anger management and substance abuse programs.
- Contacts with community service providers for rehabilitative programming were not adequately managed to ensure payments were only for those offenders attending programs.

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