

**Massachusetts Department of Correction**

*Luis S. Spencer, Commissioner*

**A LOOK AT THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION PRE-  
RELEASE FACILITIES**

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**Introduction**

In response to the Department of Correction's mission change to increase the number of inmates being released from pre-release facilities, research was done to look at releases from Boston Pre-Release Correctional Center, the pre-release facility which releases the majority of males back into the community and South Middlesex Correctional Center, the only female pre-release facility in the Massachusetts Department of Correction (MADOC). The objective of this brief is to examine Boston Pre-Release Correctional Center and South Middlesex Correctional Center to gauge how long an inmate remains in a pre-release facility prior to release, how long it takes to obtain employment, and to calculate and describe one year recidivism rates for inmates released to the street from a pre-release by employment status.

**Methodology**

A cohort of inmates released to the street from Boston Pre-Release Correctional Center and South Middlesex Correctional Center between January 1, 2007 to September 1, 2010 was extracted using the MADOC Inmate Management System (IMS). Variables identified for use in the analysis were gathered from IMS including: dates the offenders were incarcerated in Boston Pre-Release Correctional Center or South Middlesex Correctional Center, offense data, and demographics. For the purposes of this brief, offenders who were transferred to another facility from the pre-release fifteen days or more prior to their release were not included in this study. The time an inmate spends in a pre-release facility only reflects an inmate's current sentence. For example, if an inmate was released on parole and returned into custody as a parole violator, any time before their parole violation date which was spent in a pre-release facility is not counted. If an inmate went on an interview, was in a job placement program employment, or was employed for less than **15** days then it was not considered for employment purposes.

The recidivism data was also gathered from the MADOC Inmate Management System (IMS), in addition to the Massachusetts Board of Probation (BOP). The criminal activity of inmates released to the street between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2009 was tracked through Massachusetts Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) to determine the first re-incarceration within one year<sup>1</sup> of the inmates release to the street. An inmate can be re-incarcerated in one of the following ways: technical violation of parole, violation of parole with a new offense, new court commitment to a Massachusetts county facility, new court commitment to Massachusetts state facility, new court commitment to a federal facility, technical violation of probation, or probation violation with new offense.

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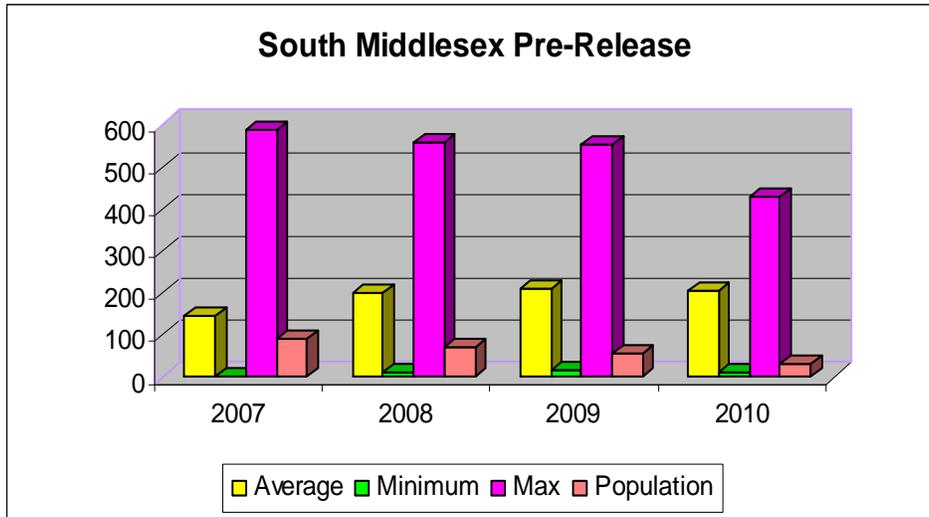
<sup>1</sup> One year re-incarceration is not standard for the MADOC in reference to recidivism; typically we look at whether an inmate has been re-incarcerated within three years from their release date.

## TIME SPENT IN A PRE RELEASE

### SOUTH MIDDLESEX CORRECTIONAL CENTER

The number of inmates released from the pre-release at South Middlesex Correctional Center decreased in each of the years from 2007 to 2010, dropping from 93 to 32 inmates. While the number of inmates released has decreased, the average number of days that an inmate spent in pre-release increased each year, particularly after 2007.

#### **South Middlesex Correctional Center January 1, 2007- September 1, 2010**

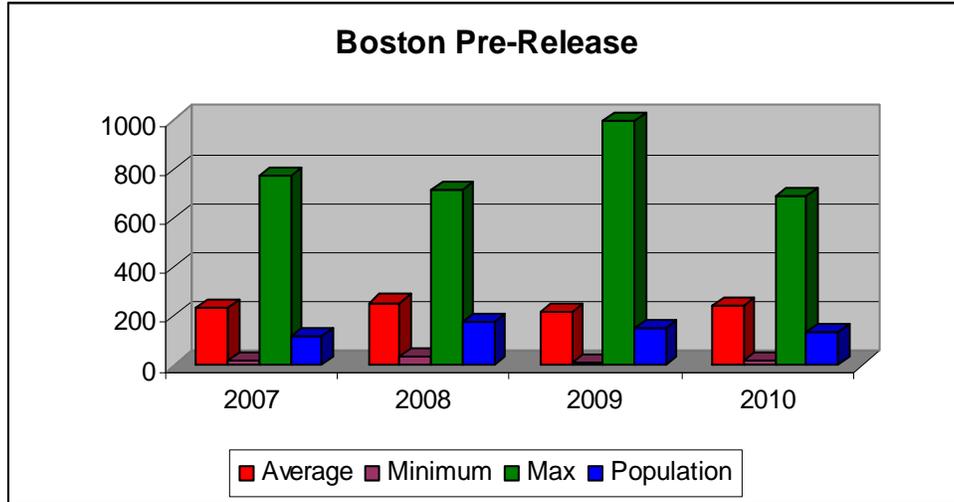


	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>
<b>Average # of days</b>	144	203	210	207
<b>Minimum # of days</b>	3	10	15	10
<b>Maximum # of days</b>	586	558	551	427
<b>Number of Inmates Released</b>	93	73	58	32

**BOSTON PRE-RELEASE CENTER**

The number of inmates released from Boston Pre-Release increased from 2007-2008, from 123 to 174 releases. From 2008 to 2010 the number of releases decreased by 38. Though a decrease was experienced from 2008 to 2010, more inmates were released in 2010 compared to 2007, 136 and 123 respectively.

**Boston Pre-Release Center January 1, 2007- September 1, 2010**



	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Average # of days</b>	234	256	222	240
<b>Minimum # of days</b>	21	35	8	22
<b>Maximum # of days</b>	771	718	995	693
<b>Number of Inmates Released</b>	123	174	153	136

**TIME TAKEN TO FIND EMPLOYMENT**

***ON AVERAGE, INMATES INCARCERATED AT SOUTH MIDDLESEX CORRECTIONAL CENTER FOUND EMPLOYMENT IN 20 DAYS.***

***ON AVERAGE, INMATES INCARCERATED AT BOSTON PRE-RELEASE CENTER FOUND EMPLOYMENT IN 77 DAYS.***

The difference in the time it takes to find employment may be related to the amount of inmates that are going through each facility and area employment opportunities. South Middlesex Correctional Center had a much lower number of inmates being released per year compared to Boston Pre-release Correctional Center. This may give more opportunity for South Middlesex Correctional Center staff to find inmates in their custody employment.

At South Middlesex Correctional Center out of the 256 inmates released 181 (71%) were able to obtain employment whereas 75 (29%) did not. For Boston Pre-Release Center, of

the 586 releases from custody, 426 (73%) were able to obtain employment whereas 160 (27%) were not. There are a number of reasons why inmates may be unable to obtain employment such as, lack of skills, health reasons, decrease in employment opportunities, etc.

### RECIDIVISM

The preceding analysis was focused on the number of inmates released from South Middlesex Correctional Center (n =256) and Boston Pre-Release Correctional Center (n = 586) to the street as well as to other jurisdictions. The following recidivism analysis is based on those inmates released to the street between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2009. The number of releases in the recidivism analysis will not equal that reported in the preceding analysis.

Of the 219 inmates released from South Middlesex Correctional Center, 132 (60%) were paroled to the street, while 87 (40%) were released via Expiration of Sentence. The overall recidivism rate for inmates released from South Middlesex Correctional Center was 12% for one year post release.

Of the 448 inmates released from Boston Pre-Release Correctional Center, 238 (53%) were paroled to the street, 210 (47%) were released via Expiration of Sentence. The recidivism rate for inmates released from Boston Pre-Release Correctional Center was 16% for one year post release.

**Recidivism Rates by Offense<sup>2</sup> Category and Facility**

	South Middlesex		Boston Pre-Release	
Offense Category	Number Releases	One Year Recidivism Rate	Number Releases	One Year Recidivism Rate
Person	46	15%	165	22%
Property	66	14%	65	28%
Drug	80	4%	180	7%
Other	27	26%	38	8%
Total	219	12%	448	16%

- The recidivism rate for Boston Pre-Release Property (male) offenders was 28%, followed by Person offenders who recidivated at a rate of 22%.
- The recidivism rate for South Middlesex ‘Other’ (female) offenders was 26%, followed by Person offenders with a recidivism rate of 15%.
- Drug offenders released from both South Middlesex and Boston Pre-Release had the lowest recidivism rate.

The table below represents the recidivism rates of inmates who found employment compared to those who did not find employment

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<sup>2</sup> Sex offenders are restricted by statute from being in a pre-release facility therefore they are not reflected in the recidivism rates by offense category chart.

## Recidivism Rates by Employment and Facility

	South Middlesex		Boston Pre-Release		Total	
Employment	Number Releases	One Year Recidivism Rate	Number Releases	One Year Recidivism Rate	Number Releases	One Year Recidivism Rate
Employment	156	8%	346	15%	502	13%
No Employment	63	21%	102	18%	165	19%
Total	219	12%	448	16%	667	14%

- The recidivism rate for inmates being released from South Middlesex who obtained employment was 8% whereas for those inmates who did not find employment their recidivism rate was 21%.
- At Boston Pre-Release those who obtained employment had a recidivism rate of 15%, inmates who did not obtain employment had a recidivism rate of 18%.
- The total recidivism rate for both Boston Pre-Release and South Middlesex for inmates who obtained employment was 13%, whereas inmates who did not obtain employment at both facilities the recidivism rate was 19%.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the data, the number of inmates being released from South Middlesex Correctional Center has declined since 2007 whereas inmates being released from Boston Pre-Release Center have remained constant. If an inmate spends more time on average in a pre-release facility this allows them to find employment in addition to allowing them to stay employed for a longer period of time. Based on recidivism rates by facility, inmates who had employment had a lower recidivism rate than inmates who did not obtain employment while at a pre-release facility. Inmates at both facilities are spending on average under a year in a pre-release facility. While the recidivism rates at both facilities are relatively low, this has no significant correlation to being released from a pre-release facility. However, these rates are lower than the average one year recidivism rates for previous years. Furthermore, inmates releasing from pre-release had a much higher parole rate compared to the Department's average during that time-frame, which makes the lower recidivism rates even more notable.

This Research Brief was written by Ashley Montgomery, Research Analyst. Any comments or questions can be addressed by e-mail: [Research@doc.state.ma.us](mailto:Research@doc.state.ma.us). The contributions by Hollie Matthews, Senior Research Analyst were significant and greatly appreciated. Copies of publications from the Research and Planning Division can be found on [www.mass.gov/doc](http://www.mass.gov/doc).

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