

1974 YEARLY STATISTICAL REPORT  
OF THE  
FURLOUGH PROGRAM

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The furlough program for residents of Massachusetts correctional facilities has been extensively implemented since the program commenced operation in November of 1972. Between that time and the end of 1974, the Mass. Department of Correction has allowed a total of 16,469 furloughs. In 259 cases, residents have failed to return to their respective correctional facility within two hours of their prescribed time of return, resulting in a 1.6% escape<sup>1</sup>rate.

If furlough statistics are analyzed on a yearly basis (see Table I), it can be seen that the furlough escape rate declined during 1974 as compared to the previous year. In 1974 the escape rate fell to 1.5% compared to 1.8% in 1973. It should also be noted that from 1973 to 1974 the total number of furloughs granted rose by 11%. During 1974 therefore the Department of Correction successfully managed to increase the number of furlough with a corresponding decrease in the number of escapes.

A breakdown of yearly escape rates by institution indicates that seven correctional facilities have experienced diminished escape rates. As can be seen in Table I, MCI's Walpole, Norfolk, Bridgewater, Framingham, Plymouth and Boston State Pre-Release Center have lower escape rates in 1974 than in the previous year. It should be noted that MCI-Concord has fewer escapes in 1974 but the decrease in number of furloughs granted gives a higher rate.

Several facilities, however, witnessed an increase in escape rates in 1974 despite the fact that the number of furloughs granted

<sup>1</sup> The Department of Correction furlough statistics define an "escape from furlough" in accordance with Departmental Order 4670.1 entitled "Furloughs - Rules and Regulations". According to Section 10.4 (c) "Failure of the resident to return to the correctional facility after the two hour period set forth in Section 10.4 (b) shall be considered an escape regardless of prior notification to the facility by the resident that he would be late. The superintendent or his designee shall notify, forthwith, appropriate law enforcement officials of the escape."

TABLE 1  
YEARLY FURLOUGH STATISTICS

Institution	1 9 7 2*			1 9 7 3			1 9 7 4			T O T A L		
	Furloughs	Escapes	Rate	Furloughs	Escapes	Rate	Furloughs	Escapes	Rate	Furloughs	Escapes	Rate
MCI Walpole	51	0	0.0	108	4	3.7	312	6	2.0	471	10	2.1
MCI Concord	179	4	2.2	1,243	44	3.2	935	38	4.1	2,357	86	3.6
MCI Bridgewater	45	0	0.0	239	1.3	5.4	283	4	1.4	567	17	3.0
MCI Norfolk	398	2	.5	1,799	41	2.4	1,416	28	2.0	3,613	71	2.0
MCI Framingham	60	0	0.0	570	9	1.6	740	8	1.1	1,370	17	1.2
MCI Warwick	89	0	0.0	320	3	.9	212	5	2.4	621	8	1.4
MCI Monroe	74	1	1.4	340	1	.3	301	8	2.7	715	10	1.4
MCI Plymouth	104	0	0.0	448	5	1.1	396	2	.5	948	7	0.7
Boston State Pre-Release	104	0	0.0	1,347	6	.4	2,084	6	.3	3,535	12	0.3
Shirley Pre-Release	46	0	0.0	726	6	.8	489	12	2.5	1,261	18	1.4
Charlotte House	0	0	0.0	64	0	0.0	81	2	2.5	145	2	1.4
Brooke House	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	270	1	.1	270	1	.1
Coolidge House	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	461	0	0.0	461	0	0.0
Roxbury Community Release Center	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	133	0	0.0	133	0	0.0
Reception Diagnostic Center	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	2	0	0.0	2	0	0.0
TOTAL	1,150	7	.6	7,204	132	1.8	8,115	120	1.5	16,469	259	1.6

\*Program commenced operation on November 6, 1972.

was reduced. These facilities specifically include Shirley Pre-Release, MCI-Warwick and MCI-Monroe

During 1974, the monthly escape rates fluctuated widely. The low for the year was 0.6% in May and the high was 2.8% in October. The monthly average consisted of 668 furloughs per month and 10 escapes. (See Table 2).

During the course of a month an average of 453 individual residents were furloughed, or 21.9% of the total resident population. (See Table 3).

#### MCI-CONCORD

In 1974, MCI-Concord granted a total of 935 furloughs. Of these furloughs, 38 resulted in a failure to return at the designated time, yielding an escape rate of 4.1%. It is interesting to note that in 1974, MCI-Concord decreased the number of furloughs (935) compared to the previous year (1243). A lower number of escapes ensued, but not proportionately, therefore in 1974 a higher escape rate occurred.

During the course of a month, an average of 69 individual residents were furloughed, or 16.9% of the total resident population.

#### MCI-WALPOLE

MCI-Walpole granted a total of 312 furloughs in 1974; six individuals failed to return at the required time resulting in a 2.0% escape rate. A comparison of these statistics with those of the previous year indicates that MCI-Walpole has expanded the program while simultaneously reducing the escape rate. In 1973 only 108 furloughs were granted with a resulting 3.7% escape rate.

TABLE 2

ESCAPE RATES BY MONTH1974

<u>Month</u>	<u>Furloughs</u>	<u>No. of Escapes</u>	<u>Escape Rate</u>
January	429	6	1.4
February	566	6	1.1
March	823	8	1.0
April	720	11	1.5
May	659	4	0.6
June	729	6	0.8
July	717	12	1.7
August	847	17	2.0
September	627	9	1.4
October	577	16	2.8
November	761	11	1.4
December	664	14	2.1
<u>YEARLY TOTAL</u>	8,119	120	1.5
<u>MONTHLY AVERAGE</u>	668	10	1.5

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS FURLOUGHED  
MONTHLY IN PROPORTION TO TOTAL POPULATION

<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION</u>	<u>AVERAGE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS FURLOUGHED PER MONTH</u>	<u>PROPORTION TO POPULATION</u>
MCI Walpole	488	24	4.9
MCI Concord	408	69	16.9
MCI Bridgewater	135	22	16.3
MCI Norfolk	668	113	16.9
MCI Framingham	126	52	41.3
MCI Warwick	33	18	54.5
MCI Monroe	37	18	48.6
MCI Plymouth	46	28	60.9
Boston State Pre- Release Center	54	49	90.7
Shirley Pre-Release	47	31	66.0
Charlotte House	7	5	71.4
Brooke House	8	10	*
Coolidge House	11	13	*
Roxbury Multi-Service Center	17	7	41.2
Reception Diagnostic Center	19	1	5.3
<u>TOTAL</u>	2,104	460	21.9

\*The greater number of individuals furloughed than average number of residents at Brooke House and Coolidge House is a result of the high turnover rate at these facilities.

This maximum security institution, however, continues to furlough only a small proportion of its total population. On a monthly basis, an average of 24 residents, or 4.9% of its total population receive furloughs.

#### MCI-BRIDGewater

A total of 283 furloughs were granted to the prisoner population at MCI-Bridgewater during 1974. Four individuals did not return at the required time; therefore the 1974 escape rate is 1.4%. This rate is significantly lower than the previous year's rate of 5.4% despite the fact that a greater number of furloughs were granted in 1974.

During 1974, an average of 22 residents were furloughed each month, representing 16.3% of the total population.

#### MCI-NORFOLK

The 1974 escape rate for MCI-Norfolk was 2.0%, i.e. 1,416 furloughs and 28 escapes. This rate is somewhat lower than the previous year's rate of 2.4%. It is important to mention that the total number of furloughs granted was lower in 1974 than in 1973.

On the average, 113 individuals were furloughed each month, a figure which represents 16.9% of the total population.

#### MCI-FRAMINGHAM

In 1974, MCI-Framingham granted a total of 740 furloughs; eight residents failed to return on time, yielding an escape rate of 1.1%. Because MCI-Framingham houses many residents on pre-release status, i.e., they are participating in work or

educational release programming, this facility makes extensive use of the furlough program. As a result, an average of 52 individual women and men, or 41.3% of the total population, are furloughed each month.

#### FORESTRY

The three forestry camps, MCI's Monroe, Plymouth and Warwick, granted a combined total of 909 furloughs in 1974. During that year, 15 residents failed to return to their camp at the proper time, resulting in an overall 1.7% escape rate. MCI-Plymouth's escape rate of 0.5% was exceptionally low and involved only two incidents of escape.

With the exception of MCI-Plymouth, the 1974 escape rates for Forestry were higher than in 1973.

The Forestry camps are minimum security facilities which currently serve as work release centers. Consequently, the furlough program plays a substantial role in forestry camp programming. Therefore, over half (55.2%) of the forestry camp population is furloughed each month on the average.

#### BOSTON STATE PRE-RELEASE CENTER

During 1974, Boston State Pre-Release Center granted 2,084 furloughs. Six individuals were considered escapes and the ensuing escape rate was 0.3%. The same number of residents escaped the previous year but the lower number of furloughs granted in 1973 yielded a higher rate of 0.4%.

In the course of a month, nearly all (90.7) of the residents



of Boston State received furloughs. Because the primary purpose of pre-release centers is to prepare residents for release to the community, the furlough program is an integral and necessary component of pre-release programming and is therefore available to the entire population.

#### SHIRLEY PRE-RELEASE CENTER

Shirley Pre-Release Center furlough statistics for 1974 were 489 furloughs, and 12 escapes. The escape rate of 2.5% is significantly higher than the 0.8% escape rate of 1973. In addition, fewer furloughs were granted in 1974, only 489 compared to 1973's 726 furloughs.

In an average month, 31 individual residents at Shirley were furloughed. This number constitutes 66.0 of the total average population.

#### PRE-RELEASE CONTRACT FACILITIES

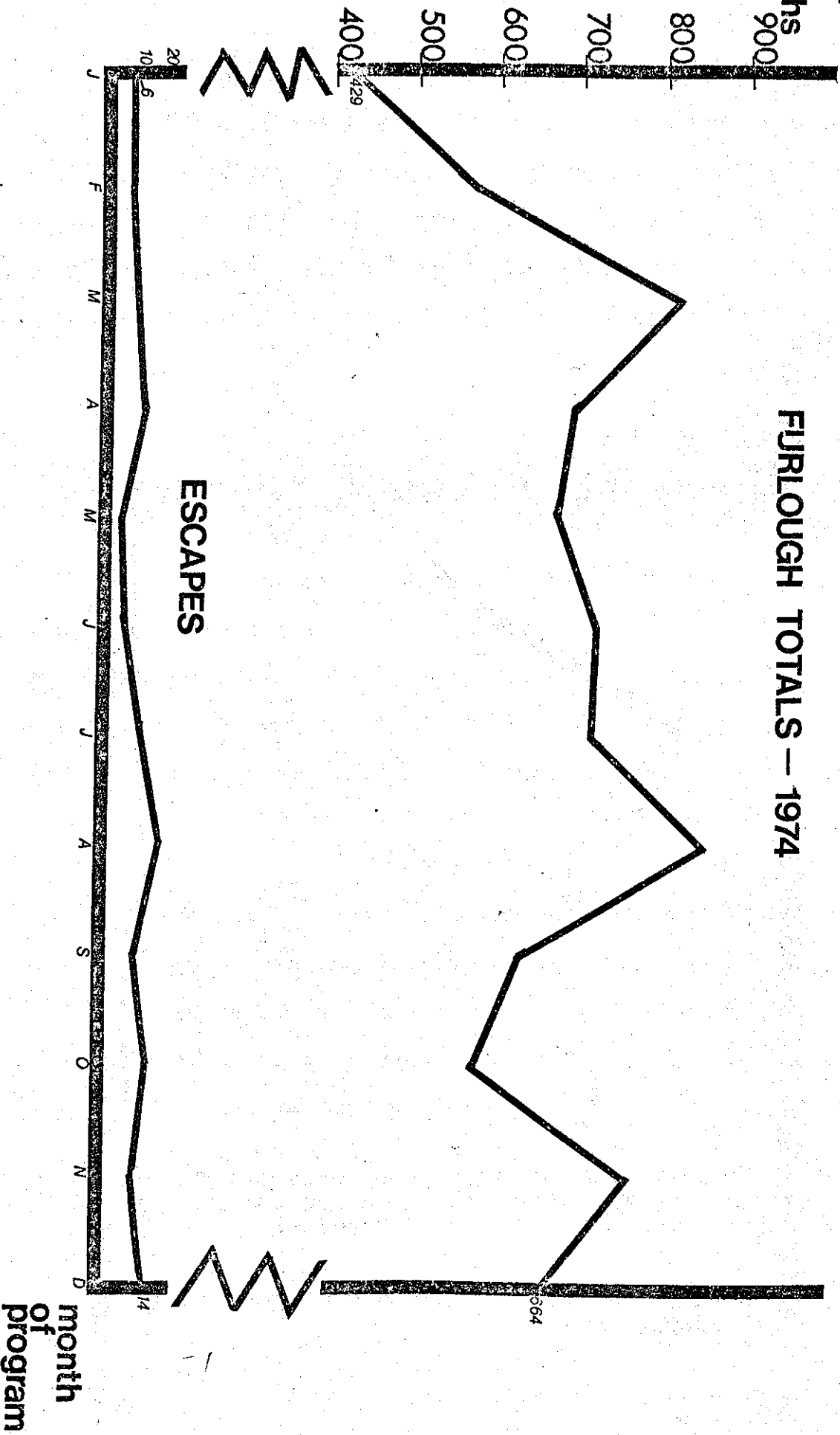
Pre-Release contract facilities consist of Charlotte House, Brooke House, Coolidge House, and Roxbury Community Release Center. In 1974 they granted a combined total of 945 furloughs. Only three residents failed to return, two from Charlotte House, and one from Brooke House. The resulting escape rate is 0.3%. With the sole exception of Charlotte House, all contract houses began receiving clients on a pre-release status in 1974. Previously they had residents on post-release status, i.e., following parole. Charlotte House commenced operation in 1973. In that year it reported no furlough escapes.

RECEPTION DIAGNOSTIC CENTER

The Reception Diagnostic Center grants only emergency escorted furloughs. It allowed two such furloughs in 1974, both of which were successful.

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# FURLOUGH TOTALS - 1974



### 1974 Research Publications Re Furlough Program

During the course of 1974, two separate research investigations were conducted concerning the furlough program: (1) a descriptive study of Massachusetts inmates who escaped while on furlough<sup>2</sup> and (2) a national survey of furlough programs<sup>3</sup> was conducted. A brief summary of the results of these two investigations follows.

#### 1. Furlough Escapee Study

Since the furlough program's inception on November, 1972 through May 25, 1974, a total of 11,549 furloughs were issued to residents of Massachusetts correctional facilities. 172 of these furloughs resulted in escapes, i.e. the resident failed to return to the facility within two hours of the appointed time of return. An in-depth investigation of the records of these 172 individuals resulted in the following profile of the average furlough escapee.

#### Escapee Profile

The escapee most probably was on furlough from one of the larger correctional facilities, MCI-Norfolk or MCI-Concord, which can be attributed to the simple fact that these two large institutions grant substantial numbers of fur-

<sup>2</sup> See Michele Wright and Faye Farrington, "Selected Characteristics of Residents Who Have Escaped on Furlough from Massachusetts Correctional Institutions, November 6, 1972 through May 25, 1974

<sup>3</sup> See Michele Wright, "National Furlough Data", Massachusetts Department of Correction

loughs. Of the 172 escapees from furlough, three fourths (75%) had been returned to the custody of the Massachusetts Department of Correction or were being detained in other correctional or law enforcement detention facilities (average length of escape = ten days). Although the majority of returned escapees (72.1%) were returned via apprehension by law enforcement authorities, a sizeable proportion (27.9%, N=36) returned of their own volition, usually within a matter of hours of their required time of return. These individuals, while in serious violation of furlough regulations would more fairly be considered late returns rather than escapes. However, the legal definition of escape (see page one) entails that they be included in escape statistics. Note though that if these residents were excluded from the official escape statistics, the escape rate would drop from 1.5% to 1.2%.

Usually facing criminal prosecution on return from furlough escape, the resident probably received a new three month sentence to be served from and after his current sentence for one year. If he was charged with committing

a new offense while on escape, which is unusual according to available data, it would probably be for an offense against the person.

Like that of most residents receiving furloughs, the major committing offense of the escapee was usually an offense against the person. Prior to the furlough on which he escaped, the resident had served approximately one year and eight months of his sentence and was likely to either have successfully completed only one furlough or have not had any previous furloughs. Like most of the resident population, the escapee usually did not have any prior escape record. In the six months prior to his furlough escape, the resident had probably not seen the Parole Board.

## 2. National Furlough Data

During the summer of 1974, a national survey was conducted to determine furlough policy and statistics in other correctional jurisdictions, including the fifty states, Washington, D.C., and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. It was determined that thirty-nine states offer some form of home furlough program. Wide variation exists among the states in regard to types of furlough programs available, eligibility of residents, purpose of furloughs, etc. Escape rates also vary widely

and should not be directly compared with each other because of critical differences in definitions of escape and furlough, numbers of furloughs granted, and policy variations.

In comparison to the remainder of the United States, Massachusetts offers an exceptionally progressive furlough program in that it is devoid of many of the restrictive eligibility restrictions that characterize most other furlough programs. Despite the openness of the Massachusetts program, its escape rate is not significantly higher than that of other states and its rate is in fact surpassed by several other states whose furlough laws and policy are considerably more conservative.

