Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

Cross Tracking Recidivism Dashboard FAQs

Q: What is cross tracking?
A: Cross tracking is the Commonwealth's new statewide data initiative to standardize criminal justice information. Conceived as part of the criminal justice reform law signed by Governor Charlie Baker, the fully integrated data framework is designed to enhance transparency, improve access to criminal justice data, and facilitate high-level analysis for the public, stakeholders, and researchers to inform public policy and improve public safety.

Q: Why create this dashboard, and what impact will it have on justice involved individuals?
A: Criminal Justice Reform required the EOPSS, in consultation with the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security (EOTSS), to create a data collection and Cross Tracking system for criminal justice agencies and the Trial Court.

The system was designed to provide a streamlined, 360-degree view of an individual's engagement with the criminal justice system following them from the point of arrest to entry into a custodial institution and eventual release to Parole Supervision.

The integrated data system has six primary goals:
- Drive operational efficiency and effectiveness
- Connect individual records across the criminal justice system
- Increase criminal justice data availability, quality, and public trust
- Empower data-driven decision making and monitoring
- Analyze disparities and evaluate effectiveness of reform programs
- Enable internal and independent studies of recidivism and other criminal justice research

Q: What steps has EOPSS taken thus far to develop the Cross Tracking system?

A: EOPSS approached this complex process knowing that it required technological expertise and consensus among public safety partners. The integrated Cross Tracking system required state leaders to develop uniform data collection and reporting standards across a broad range of agencies and independent constitutional offices. EOPSS promulgated regulations to this end which established consistent data definitions, defined the governance framework, outlined integration requirements, and developed operational and implementation procedures. EOPSS supported the Sheriff Office Offender Management System upgrade to allow for the collection of the consistent data elements. EOPSS further coordinated with various Sheriff Offices in securing LiveScan devices to provide more fingerprinting capabilities during the booking procedure. EOPSS also secured a Data Use License Agreement from each phase one criminal justice partner agency.

Together, the partners strategized how to standardize data for presentation, moved data securely from agencies to the dashboard, and developed the public-facing visualization designs.

This is the second dashboard that EOPSS has created for Cross Tracking and the first of its kind. EOPSS is excited for users to engage with this dashboard, review data trends, and provide feedback to EOPSS. As the first of its kind, EOPSS anticipates improvements throughout the development of cross tracking.

Q: What are the counties referred to in the graphs?
A: In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, there are 14 counties: Barnstable, Berkshire, Bristol, Dukes, Essex, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, Middlesex, Nantucket, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester. With the exception of Nantucket, each County Sheriff's Office holds incarcerated individuals. Individuals convicted and/or arrested on Nantucket are transferred to the Barnstable County Sheriff's Office.

Q: What is a house of correction, jail, state facility, and prison?
A: There are several kinds of correctional facilities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Each County Sheriff's Office, excluding Nantucket, oversees a Jail. A Jail is a pretrial holding facility where individuals awaiting trial or sentencing are housed at the discretion of a judge.

The Sheriffs oversee Houses of Correction. An Offender sentenced to a House of Correction will receive a sentence limited to 2.5 years. But an Offender with a state prison sentence (more than 2.5 years), may also be transferred to a House of Correction and subsequently released to a DOC institution.

DOC operates state correctional facilities (also referred to as prisons) housing various Offenders. Depending on their security and programming needs, individuals entrusted to DOC's care live in a pre-release, minimum, medium, or maximum-security facility.

Q: Will the dashboard allow members of the public to access information about a specific person?
A: No, due to Criminal Offender Record Information Laws (CORI) which prohibit the dissemination of justice-involved individuals to the public, the public facing information does not include any personally identifiable information. While criminal justice agencies can access person-specific information to develop effective, personalized rehabilitation plans, the public facing dashboard should be used to understand trends across the larger system.

For more information about a specific individual, you may request access through the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS).

Q: Were any data exclusions made?
A: These population counts include only sentenced individuals released to the community. Excluded from these counts are:

- Civilly Committed Individuals;
- Juveniles;
- Individuals under the jurisdiction of the federal government, or another state's jurisdiction through an Interstate Compact Agreement;
- Any person sentenced in Massachusetts and serving custody in another jurisdiction via interstate compact;
- The model includes all criminally sentenced Offenders released to the community. If a sentenced Offender is released to a pre-trial status and subsequently released from pre-trial status, that case is not included in the model; and
- Any individual booked by another criminal justice agency and held temporarily at a Jail or House of Correction under a Safe Keep Agreement. A person who was previously booked by another criminal justice agency and then transported to a Jail or House of Correction to be held for pre-arraignment or detention purposes. This is known as a "Safe Keep." (not pretrial or convicted)

Q: How does the dashboard display data that predates Criminal Justice Reform (CJR)?
A: Given that data submitted by the participating criminal justice agencies predates the CJR data reporting standards outlined in the new governing regulations, EOPSS has taken great care to review and match the records from the various agencies to consolidate the data seen in the dashboard. In doing so, some of the older data, known as legacy data, was not able to meet these matching criteria and therefore, is not shown in the dashboard. EOPSS will continue to work through the legacy data with its stakeholders to ensure accuracy to be able to display it on the dashboard.

Q: Will additional data become available in the future?
A: Yes, the dashboard will expand to include additional statutory fields statutory data fields about governing offenses (date, time, location, admission/release dates, etc.). When fully achieved, Cross Tracking will provide quality, standardized data to all agencies improving the

efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice system. Equally important, the Cross Tracking dashboards will provide anonymized and comprehensive data to the public and any interested party.

Q: What do cumulative and marginal rates mean?
A: As many recidivistic events typically occur within the first year, with smaller numbers and percentages occurring in the second or third year following the actual release date, EOPSS and its stakeholders determined that it would be best to display the data at both cumulative and marginal rates. The cumulative data will show the total recidivism rate after three years as each year includes the data that occurred the year prior. This means that year one includes recidivistic events only from year one, year two includes recidivistic events from year one and year two, and year three includes recidivistic events from years one, two, and three to ultimately show the total recidivism rate after three years. The marginal data includes only recidivistic events that occurred each year; it does not include any events that occurred the year(s) prior. Year one will only include recidivistic events for year one, year two will only include recidivistic events for year two, and year three will only include recidivistic events for year three.

- For example, if 100 releases occurred in a particular year and 30 had a reconviction within the first year, 10 had a reconviction within the second year, and 5 had a reconviction within the third year:
    - The marginal recidivism rate in year 1 is 30/100 or 33.3%
    - The marginal recidivism rate in year 2 is 10/100 or 10%
    - The marginal recidivism rate in year 3 is 5/100 or 5%
    - The cumulative recidivism rate in year 1 is 30/100 or 33.3%
    - The cumulative recidivism rate in year 2 is 40/100 or 40%
    - The cumulative recidivism rate in year 3 is 45/100 or 45%

Q: What if an Offender is convicted after release for an Offense prior to their incarceration?
A: The dashboard accounts for any conviction that occurs after an individual is released from custody or Parole Supervision. That means, even if the Offense occurred prior to their release date but they are reconvicted post release, it will be included in the data.

Q: How does Reincarceration account for Jail Credits?
A: The date of reincarceration is the date the sentence is imposed by the court or the date of admission as a sentenced Offender to a custodial agency. For most agencies, the model does not incorporate any jail credits or adjust the date of reincarceration to the effective date of the sentence

Q: Is an incarceration for a Technical Violation considered a Reincarceration?
A: Yes, the Query Model does not distinguish reincarcerations due to a technical violation of Parole or Probation from reincarcerations due to a new criminal offense.

Q: Can an individual be included in the data more than once?
A: Yes, an individual is included in the data each time they are released to the community. For example, an individual may be released from custody in February 2018, reincarcerated in July 2018, and released again in October 2018. This individual would be in the data twice, once for each release, even within the same calendar year.

Q: How does the dashboard address multiple releases on the same date for the same person?
A: In those instances where two or more releases occurred for the same Offender for the same date, only one release was included in the model using the following method:

- Same Agency. For individuals released twice on the same date from the same custodial agency, only one release event is included in the model.
- Different Agencies. For individuals released twice on the same date from different custodial agencies, the dashboard accounts for only one release: the release from the custodial agency to which the Offender was admitted most recently.

Q: What if the Offender was returned to custody on the same date as the release?
A: If an Offender was released from custody and reincarcerated as a sentenced Offender on the same day, their data is not included in the dashboard. They are not considered releases as they were not released to the community. If an Offender is released from custody and reincarcerated as a pre-trial Offender on the same day, their release is included in the dashboard

Q: How are individuals who are subject to Lifetime Parole Supervision accounted for in the dashboard?
A: For the CMR compliant model, because Offenders with Lifetime Parole Supervision have no Parole end date, these Offenders are included in the model. The Base Date for these individuals is the Date Exiting Custody. These individuals are included in the Query Model as they typically would be.

Q: Is there anything else to know about the new Parole data incorporated in the dashboard?
A: This is the first time Parole data is being ingested into a Cross Tracking dashboard. Because of that there are some nuances EOPSS had to work through. Below are a few things to note:

- Parole Start Dates. For the CMR Model, in instances where the custodial agency indicates a release without supervision, but Parole indicates a start date on the same date, the dashboard assumes that the Offender was not released to parole. But, in instances where the custodial agency indicates a release with Parole Supervision, but there is no Parole start date, the dashboard assumes that the Offender was not released to Parole.
- Out of State Parolees. Parolees who are released from a Massachusetts DOC or Sheriff's Office but supervised out of state, are not included in the CMR Model because Parole

does not track them in the same way as those Offenders supervised within Massachusetts. Out of state parolees are included in the Query Model.

- Parole Releases Before 2017. If a sentenced Offender was paroled prior to 2017 and discharged from Parole in 2017 or later, that release event was not included in either Model.