



JUDICIAL COUNCIL of CALIFORNIA

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HON. PATRICIA GUERRERO
Chief Justice of California
Chair of the Judicial Council

HON. BRAD R. HILL
Chair, Executive and Planning Committee

HON. STACY BOULWARE
EURIE
Chair, Legislation Committee

HON. JOAN K. IRION
Chair, Rules Committee

HON. MARIA D. HERNANDEZ
Chair, Technology Committee

HON. ANN C. MOORMAN
Chair, Judicial Branch Budget Committee
Chair, Litigation Management Committee

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MS. MICHELLE CURRAN
Administrative Director
Judicial Council

October 27, 2025

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Legislative Counsel
1021 O Street, Suite 3210
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Ms. Erika Contreras
Secretary of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 305
Sacramento, California 95814

Ms. Sue Parker
Chief Clerk of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 319
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: Report on the California Community Corrections Performance Incentives Act of 2009: Findings From the SB 678 Program (2025), as required under Penal Code section 1232

Dear Ms. Jenkins, Ms. Contreras, and Ms. Parker:

Under Penal Code section 1232, the Judicial Council is submitting the *Report on the California Community Corrections Performance Incentives Act of 2009: Findings From the SB 678 Program (2025)* on Senate Bill 678.

If you have questions related to this report, please contact Francine Byrne, Director, Criminal Justice Services, at 415-865-8069.

Sincerely,

Michelle Curran
Administrative Director
Judicial Council

Ms. Cara L. Jenkins
Ms. Erika Contreras
Ms. Sue Parker
October 27, 2025
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MC/FB/rl

Enclosures

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Report title: *Report on the California Community Corrections Performance Incentives Act of 2009: Findings From the SB 678 Program (2025)*

Statutory citation: Penal Code section 1232

Date of report: October 27, 2025

The Judicial Council has submitted a report to the Legislature in accordance with Penal Code section 1232.

The following summary of the report is provided under the requirements of Government Code section 9795.

The Judicial Council is required to submit a comprehensive report to the Legislature and Governor on the implementation of Senate Bill 678, including information on the effectiveness of the SB 678 program. This year's report provides background on the SB 678 program, summarizes program results, and provides specific recommendations designed to improve future implementation of the SB 678 program. These recommendations include (1) a re-implementation of the incentive-based payments to county departments with a new, updated formula to determine specific amounts, and (2) additional oversight of evidence-based practices in place in the county probation departments. The report also describes the Judicial Council's role in the collection, monitoring, and reporting of program outcome and implementation data.

The full report can be accessed at www.courts.ca.gov/7466.htm.

A printed copy of the report may be obtained by calling 415-865-8994.

October 27, 2025



Report on the California Community Corrections Performance Incentives Act of 2009

FINDINGS FROM THE SB 678 PROGRAM
(2025)



Judicial Council of California

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

Hon. Patricia Guerrero

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Executive Summary

The California Community Corrections Performance Incentives Act of 2009 (Sen. Bill 678)¹ was designed to alleviate state prison overcrowding and save state General Fund by reducing the number of adult felony probationers sent to state prison—and to meet these objectives without compromising public safety. The SB 678 program allocates a portion of state savings from reduced prison costs to county probation departments that implement evidence-based supervision practices and achieve a reduction in the number of locally supervised felony offenders revoked to state prison. The program has been successful in supporting the increased use of evidence-based practices by probation departments and lowering the percentage of individuals returned to custody without evident negative impact to public safety.

By lowering the number of supervised offenders sent to state prison through the SB 678 performance-based funding mechanism, the program has resulted in allocations to county probation departments ranging from \$88.6 million to \$138.3 million per fiscal year (FY), for a total of \$1.6 billion—including \$116.1 million in FY 2024–25 alone. In addition, in each of the years since the start of the SB 678 program, the state’s overall revocation rate has been lower than the original baseline rate of 7.9 percent. Although the number of offenders revoked has decreased, California’s crime rates have remained below the 2008 baseline levels, with no evidence to suggest that public safety has been negatively affected by the SB 678 program.

A fundamental component of SB 678 is the implementation of evidence-based supervision practices by county probation departments. SB 678 defines evidence-based practices as “supervision policies, procedures, programs, and practices demonstrated by scientific research to reduce recidivism among individuals under probation, parole, or postrelease supervision.”² Although no probation department in the state has fully implemented evidence-based practices in all facets of supervision, findings from an annual survey indicate that the SB 678 program has been highly successful in increasing the levels of evidence-based practice implementation throughout the state. All components of evidence-based practices measured in the survey are substantially higher than they were at baseline when the program began.

California has made significant changes in criminal justice policies since SB 678 was passed in 2009. These changes resulted in the need for modifications to the allocation methodology and data collection for the SB 678 program. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted local practices and data collection capacity. As a result, beginning in FY 2021-22, the Legislature departed from incentive payments based on probation failures data for each county and since that year has set the allocation amount for each county by statute.

¹ Stats. 2009, ch. 608, courts.ca.gov/documents/sb678.pdf.

² Pen. Code, § 1229(d).

In calendar year (CY) 2025, the statewide probation failure-to-prison rate fell after rising over the previous three years since 2020. Statewide felony probation populations remained significantly lower than their pre-pandemic levels as well.

Since its inception in 2009, SB 678 has matured from a program that focused on implementing evidence-based practices to one that focuses on their sustainability and expansion. Many of the recommendations made by the Judicial Council in previous years have been realized. This report contains new recommendations to account for changes to probation practices and responsibilities, ensuring that the original incentive structure of the program can be combined with funding stability for evidence-based practices subject to oversight to support departments going forward. These recommendations include supporting a revised incentive funding formula that ensures stable funding for evidence-based practices, and additional review and verification of the evidence-based practices in use and their implementation.

Introduction

The California Community Corrections Performance Incentives Act of 2009 (implementation of which is hereafter referred to as the “SB 678 program”) is designed to alleviate state prison overcrowding and save state General Fund by reducing the number of county-supervised adult felony offenders sent to state prison for committing new crimes or violating the terms of their supervision, and to meet these objectives without compromising public safety. The SB 678 program allocates a portion of reduced incarceration costs to county probation departments to support the use of evidence-based supervision practices and achieve a reduction in the number of supervised felony offenders who are revoked to state prison or sent to state prison on a new charge.

Through the SB 678 performance-based funding mechanism, county probation departments have received over \$1.6 billion since program inception, including allocations totaling \$116.1 million in FY 2024–25. Allocations to county probation departments have ranged from \$88.6 million to \$138.3 million per fiscal year.

The Legislature tasked the Judicial Council with reporting annually on the implementation and outcomes of the SB 678 program. This report:

- Presents a brief background on the SB 678 program and documents changes made to the program due to criminal justice policy changes and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Provides results from the first 16 years of the program, including the impact of the SB 678 program on revocation rates, the amount of state savings from the reduction in revocations to prison, and funding allocations to the counties;
- Provides information on trends in public safety and the reported use of funds and evidence-based practices by county probation departments.
- Presents additional recommendations for the enhancement and improvement of the program.

Courts have the authority to order defendants to be placed on probation (a judicially imposed suspension of sentence and a form of community supervision) in lieu of a long-term jail or prison sentence.³ If an individual successfully completes probation without a violation or a new charge, the probationer will not be required to serve any further custody time in jail or prison. If the individual violates the conditions of supervision or commits a new offense, supervision may be

³ Pen. Code, § 1228(c): “Probation is a judicially imposed suspension of sentence that attempts to supervise, treat, and rehabilitate offenders while they remain in the community under the supervision of the probation department. Probation is a linchpin of the criminal justice system, closely aligned with the courts, and plays a central role in promoting public safety in California’s communities.”

revoked and the individual sent to state prison or county jail, resulting in incarceration costs to the state or county.

Each of California's 58 counties administers its own adult felony probation system.⁴ In a 2009 report, the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) estimated that 40 percent of new prison admissions from the courts were the result of probation revocations.⁵ The report also noted that in the preceding years, many county probation departments had insufficient resources to implement evidence-based probation supervision practices that could help reduce probation failures.⁶ The LAO recommended creation of a program to provide counties with a financial incentive to improve their community corrections practices and lower their probation failure rates.

Subsequently, in 2009, the Legislature enacted the California Community Corrections Performance Incentives Act (SB 678) with bipartisan support. This legislation created an incentive program designed to improve public safety, alleviate state prison overcrowding, and save state General Fund by supporting effective supervision practices and reducing the number of adult felony probationers sent to state prison for committing new crimes or violating the terms of probation.

In FY 2009–10, the state Legislature appropriated \$45 million for county probation departments to begin expanding the use of evidence-based practices with adult felony probationers. After the first year of the program, probation departments received a portion of the state's savings attributed to avoided incarceration costs resulting from a reduction in the probation failure rate (PFR) compared to a baseline PFR.⁷

The amount of savings the state shared with probation departments each year was originally determined by each county's improvement in its probation failure rate as compared to its 2006–2008 baseline rate.⁸ A county that sent fewer individuals to prison than would be expected

⁴ Probation differs from parole, which is a form of supervision that takes place upon release from prison for specified offenders and is administered by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

⁵ Legislative Analyst's Office, *Achieving Better Outcomes for Adult Probation* (May 2009), pp. 19–20, lao.ca.gov/2009/crim/Probation/probation_052909.pdf.

⁶ Evidence-based practices are defined as “supervision policies, procedures, programs, and practices demonstrated by scientific research to reduce recidivism among individuals under local supervision.” (Pen. Code, § 1229(d).)

⁷ Pen. Code, § 1233.1(a). The PFR was initially defined in statute as the number of adult felony probationers revoked to state prison in a year as a percentage of the average probation population during the same year.

⁸ The baseline probation failure rate is a weighted average of the PFR in 2006, 2007, and 2008. After the conclusion of each calendar year, the California director of finance—in consultation with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Joint Legislative Budget Committee, Chief Probation Officers of California, and Judicial Council—calculates for that calendar year an estimate of the number of adult felony offenders, supervised by probation, that each county successfully prevented from being sent to prison (or to jail, following Realignment) based on the reduction in the county's return-to-prison rate. In making this estimate, the director of finance is required to adjust the calculations to account for changes in each county's adult felony caseload in the most recently completed calendar year, as compared to the county's adult felony population during the baseline period. (Pen. Code, § 1233.1(c), (d).)

(applying their baseline rate to the current year's felony probation population) would receive a share of the state savings from reduced incarceration costs.⁹ Counties that were unsuccessful in reducing their PFRs were also provided with a small amount of funding to bolster their efforts to implement evidence-based practices and reduce recidivism, while counties with PFRs more than 50 percent below the statewide average were given high-performance awards to support the ongoing use of evidence-based practices in counties.¹⁰

There have been numerous policy changes since the original implementation of SB 678 that have impacted the program and how its funds are allocated to counties. These include 2011 Public Safety Realignment (Realignment), which restricted the ability of counties to sentence individuals to state prison for probation failure convictions; Proposition 47 in 2014,¹¹ which reduced certain crimes from felony to misdemeanor status, allowed for retroactive application, and resulted in reducing the felony probation population; and AB 1950 in 2020, which introduced new limits to the lengths of probation terms that could be imposed. Changes to the SB 678 allocations and data collection reflecting these changes include the incorporation of mandatory supervision and postrelease community supervision (PRCS) populations and a focus on admissions to prison instead of probation failures. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic had a substantial impact on program activities, resulting in allocations for FY 2021–22 through FY 2024–25 determined not by allocation formula but by a schedule given in Penal Code section 1233.12.

⁹ Depending on how a county's PFR compared to the statewide average, a county received either 40 or 45 percent of the state savings. Counties with a PFR no more than 25 percent above the statewide PFR received 45 percent of the state savings. Counties with a PFR greater than 25 percent above the statewide PFR received 40 percent of the state savings.

¹⁰ From FY 2010–11 to FY 2014–15, these awards were funded with 5 percent of the overall savings to the state. A county could receive an award based on state incarceration cost savings or a high-performance grant payment but not both; the county could choose which award to receive in a year when it qualified for both.

¹¹ Prop. 47 was approved by the voters at the November 2014 General Election.

I. Program Results

The analysis of SB 678's effectiveness is guided by the Legislature's stated intent¹² and summarized in three overarching questions:

- How did the SB 678 program affect revocation rates, and what was the effect on public safety?
- Did the state save money because of reductions in locally supervised populations sent to state prison, and was a portion of these savings directed to county probation departments to implement evidence-based practices?
- Did county probation departments implement evidence-based practices, and how did these practices affect the outcomes of locally supervised populations?

A. SB 678 Program Impact on Revocation Rates and Public Safety Outcomes

Revocation rates during the SB 678 program

Changes in criminal justice policies and the SB 678 funding formula have altered the way program effectiveness is measured.¹³ The following analysis focuses mainly on the adult felony probation population because data on this group have been tracked since the project inception; however, some data on the supervised populations created post-Realignment are also displayed.

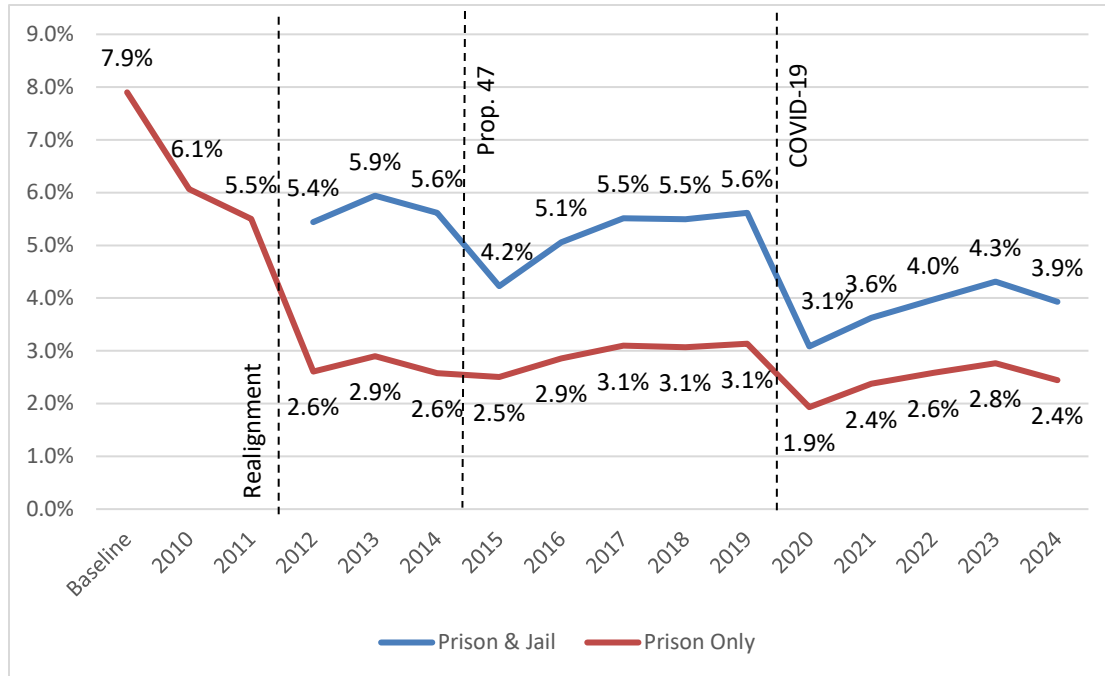
Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on supervision and correction practices, statewide rates of revocation to prison and revocation to jail declined significantly in 2020. In 2024 the revocation-to-prison figure (2.4 percent) declined after three consecutive years of increase from 2021 to 2023 (Figure 1). The rate for 2024 marks the third lowest since the SB 678

¹² "Providing sustainable funding for improved, evidence-based probation supervision practices and capacities will improve public safety outcomes among adult felons who are on probation. Improving felony probation performance, measured by a reduction in felony probationers who are sent to prison because they were revoked on probation or convicted of another crime while on probation, will reduce the number of new admissions to state prison, saving taxpayer dollars and allowing a portion of those state savings to be redirected to probation for investing in community corrections programs." (Pen. Code, § 1228(d).)

¹³ The SB 678 program's effectiveness was originally measured annually by comparing each probation department's probation failure rate (the percentage of felony probationers sent to prison) to a baseline period before the program was implemented (a weighted average of the PFR in 2006, 2007, and 2008). The return-to-prison rate was initially calculated as the total number of adult felony probationers sent to prison in the year as a percentage of the average statewide adult felony probation population for that year. (Pen. Code, § 1233.1(b).) Penal Code section 1233.1(b) was revised by Senate Bill 105 (Stats. 2013, ch. 310) to include subdivision (b)(2), adding commitments to county jail under section 1170(h) and to place this formula in effect each year, beginning with calendar year 2013. Section 1233.1(c) was also revised by SB 105 to include felony probationers sent to state prison or county jail and to place this revised county probation failure rate formula in effect each year, beginning with calendar year 2013.

program began, behind only 2020 and 2021. The statewide revocation-to-jail rate (1.5 percent) also decreased, though only slightly from 2023.¹⁴

FIGURE 1. PERCENTAGE OF FELONY PROBATION INCARCERATION RATES



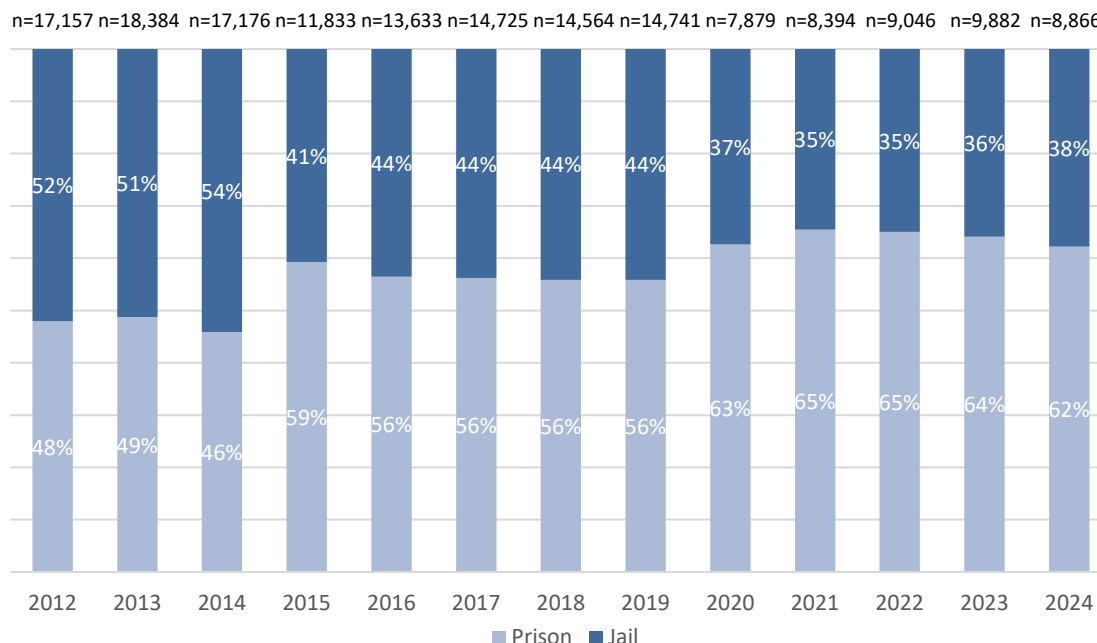
Source: Probation revocation data reported by probation departments to the Judicial Council.

Note: Incarceration rate includes only those supervised under adult felony probation.

The proportion of revocations to incarceration to prison rather than to jail decreased for the second straight year in 2024 (see Figure 2, noting the lower overall instances of these revocations for 2020–2024 than for previous years).

¹⁴ See Appendix A: Percentage of Failure/Return-to-Prison Rates by County for each county probation department's annual rates from 2017 through 2024.

FIGURE 2. PERCENTAGE OF FELONY PROBATION FAILURES TO JAIL AND PRISON



Source: Revocation data reported by probation departments to the Judicial Council.

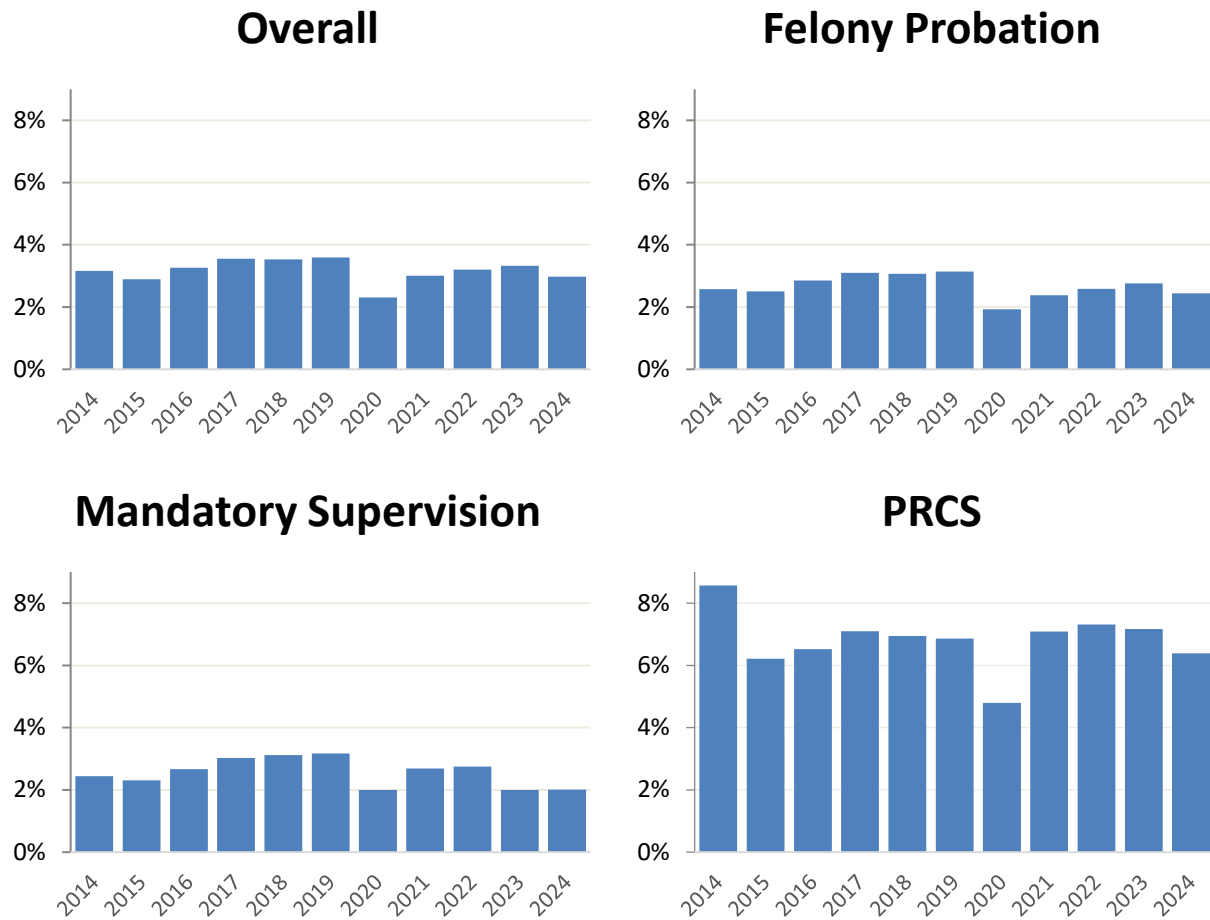
Note: Chart includes only those supervised under adult felony probation.

Following Realignment, Senate Bill 85 (Stats. 2015, ch. 26) revised the SB 678 program to include all supervised felony populations—under felony probation, postrelease community supervision, and mandatory supervision—and to focus exclusively on revocations to state prison. These additional supervision categories were added to the quarterly data reported by probation departments. Revocation-to-prison rates (RPR) for all supervision types are shown in Figure 3.

When reporting on all felony supervision types that began in 2013, the combined RPR (including all supervision types) averaged 3.2 percent. There was an uptick in RPR across all supervision types between 2015 and 2019, with the overall rate approaching 3.6 percent of the average felony supervision population. In 2024 the overall revocation-to-prison rate fell after three straight years of increase since 2020. The overall rate largely reflects the felony probation population's rate due to that population comprising 83 percent of the total population (Figure 4), but the rate for the postrelease community supervision population in California fell in 2024 as well, to its lowest level since 2020 (6.4 percent). The proportion of those on felony supervision in the postrelease community supervision population was up slightly in 2024 to 13.7 percent from 13.3 percent in 2023, while the proportion in the felony probation population declined to 83.4 percent from 83.8 percent.

The 2024 revocation-to-prison rate for the mandatory supervision population (2.0 percent) did not change significantly from the 2023 rate.

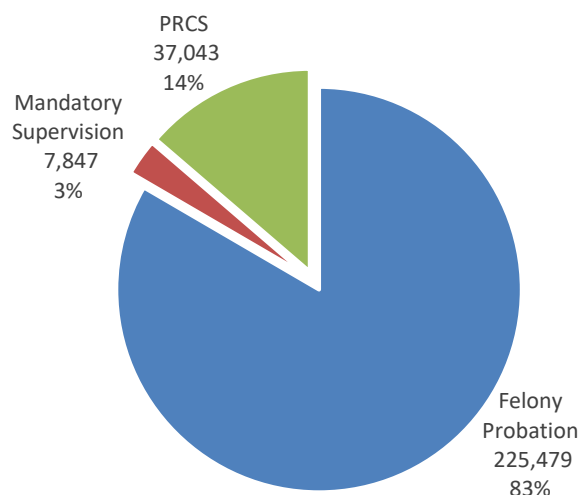
FIGURE 3. FELONY SUPERVISION REVOCATION-TO-PRISON RATES



Source: Revocation data reported by probation departments to the Judicial Council.

PRCS = postrelease community supervision.

FIGURE 4. AVERAGE POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY SUPERVISION TYPE, 2024



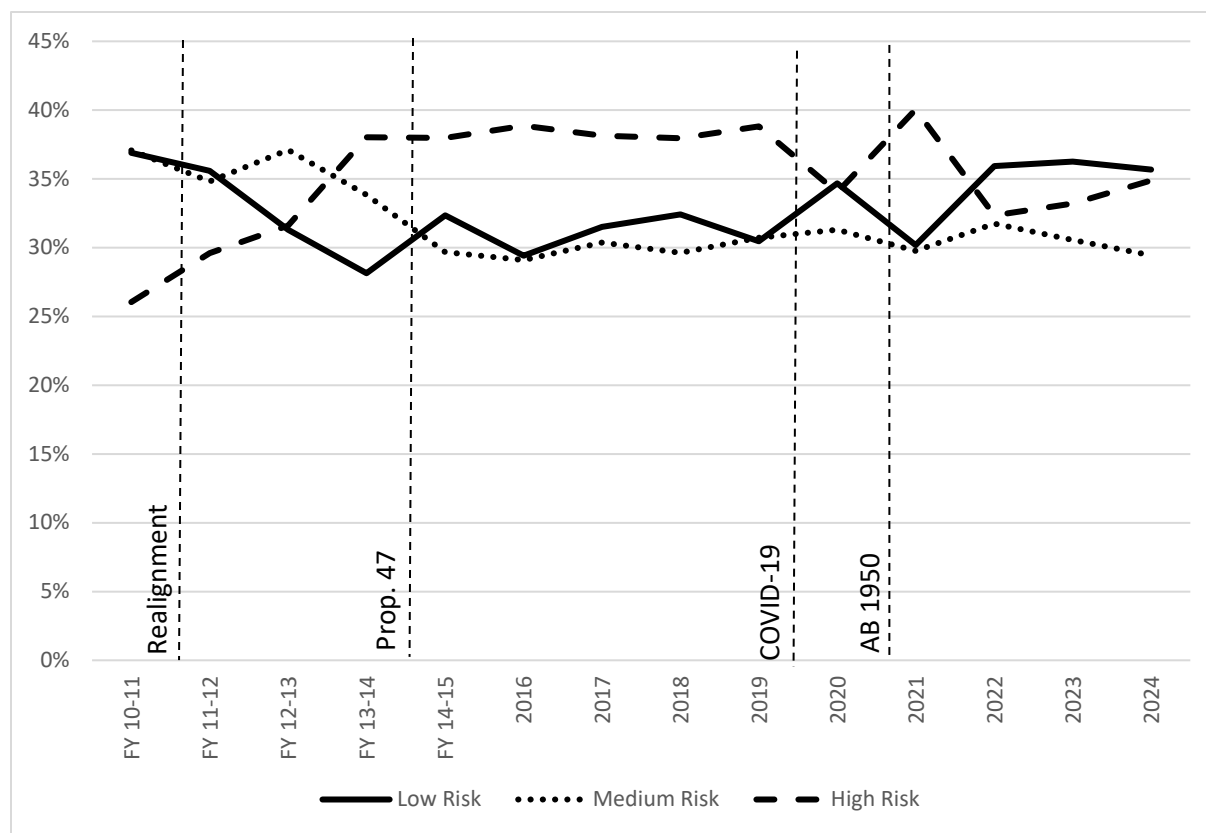
Source: Quarterly population data reported by probation departments to the Judicial Council.

Risk level of locally supervised populations

An important tenet of evidence-based practices in probation relates to ensuring that a probationer's assessed risk level informs supervision practices, with the highest-risk individuals receiving the most intensive supervision. Distribution of risk levels in 2024 was mostly consistent with those seen in 2022 and 2023, with individuals assessed as low risk again making up the largest group. The proportion of the supervised population assessed as high risk rose slightly for the second straight year, while the proportion assessed as low risk again fell slightly (Figure 5).¹⁵

¹⁵ See notes for Table 1, Reported Use of Funds for Evidence-Based Practices, for a list of county probation departments and years for which survey responses were missing.

FIGURE 5. PERCENTAGE OF SUPERVISED CASELOAD BY RISK LEVEL



Source: *Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices: Annual Assessment Survey* (data reported by probation departments to the Judicial Council).

Notes: Percentages represent statewide averages. Caseload includes those supervised under felony probation, mandatory supervision, and postrelease community supervision.

SB 678 program and public safety outcomes

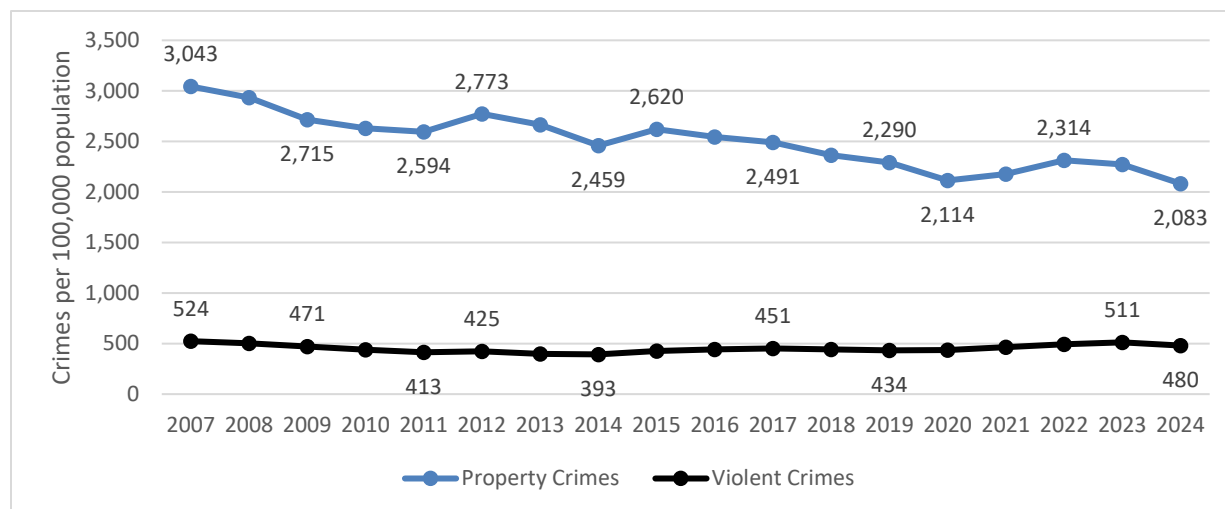
The Legislature designed the SB 678 program to save state funds and improve the effectiveness of community supervision practices without compromising public safety.¹⁶ The sweeping and significant changes to the criminal justice system over the past 15 years, including Public Safety Realignment and Proposition 47, make it impossible to isolate and measure the impact of the SB 678 program on public safety. However, data suggest that public safety has not been compromised in the years since the programs was initially implemented.

Data presented in Figure 6 indicate that the property crime rate per 100,000 population in California decreased for the second straight year to its lowest rate since SB 678 was enacted (2,082.7). The violent crime rate per 100,000 fell as well between 2023 and 2024. Annual increases or decreases in the rates for these broad categories of crimes at the statewide level are

¹⁶ Pen. Code, §§ 1228(c), 1229(c)(1).

influenced by a complex array of underlying factors that can be difficult to fully measure or isolate.

FIGURE 6. PROPERTY AND VIOLENT CRIME RATES IN CALIFORNIA



Source: California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, *Crime in California*, 2024 (Table 1).

B. Allocation of State Savings to County Probation Departments: Reported Use of Funds for Evidence-Based Practices and Evaluation

State savings and allocation to county probation departments

The SB 678 program has been effective in saving state General Fund. The evolution of the funding formula to its current methodology has been outlined in detail in previous reports to the Legislature on the SB 678 program.¹⁷ The SB 678 funding formula used through FY 2020–21 has three funding components and is discussed in greater detail in Appendix B.

As previously stated, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the practices measured by the data used in calculating SB 678 allocations. As a result, the Legislature chose to implement a different funding formula for FY 2021–22. Assembly Bill 145 (Stats. 2021, ch. 80) allocated SB 678 funding to probation departments based on a specifically defined schedule¹⁸ in which each department received an allocation equal to the highest amount allocated to it over the previous three fiscal years (FY 2018–19 through FY 2020–21).¹⁹ More recently, Assembly Bill 200 (Stats. 2022, ch. 58) extended the allocation schedule used in FY 2021–22 to remain in

¹⁷ Previous reports are available on the “Reports to the Legislature” webpage on the California Courts website at <https://courts.ca.gov/news-reference/reports-publications/reports-legislature>.

¹⁸ Pen. Code, § 1233.1.

¹⁹ See Appendix C: SB 678 Allocation Payments, FY 2018–19 to FY 2023–24 for these amounts.

place for FY 2022–23 and FY 2023–24 and Assembly Bill 168 (Stats. 2024, ch. 49) extended that schedule in a modified, reduced form for FY 2024–25.²⁰

TABLE 1. REPORTED USE OF SB 678 FUNDS FOR EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

Spending Category	Average % Spent, per Calendar Year							
	CY 2017 (N = 55)	CY 2018 (N = 52)	CY 2019 (N = 49)	CY 2020 (N = 58)	CY 2021 (N = 58)	CY 2022 (N = 49)	CY 2023 (N = 54)	CY 2024 (N = 58)
Hiring, support, and/or retention of case-carrying officers/supervisors	63	59	57	63	60	58	57	59
Evidence-based treatment programs	18	18	17	16	16	17	18	19
Improvement of data collection and use	3	4	5	4	5	5	6	4
Use of risk and needs assessment	4	6	6	4	6	6	4	4
Use/implementation of intermediate sanctions	2	3	4	3	5	5	4	4
Evidence-based practices training for officers/supervisors	4	3	4	3	3	4	4	4
Other evidence-based practices ¹	5	7	8	7	6	6	7	7
Notes: The following counties provided incomplete or invalid responses to these questions and were excluded from these analyses: CY 2017 — Alameda, Del Norte, Mendocino CY 2018 — El Dorado, Glenn, Los Angeles, Mendocino, Stanislaus, Tehama CY 2019 — Del Norte, El Dorado, Glenn, Inyo, Kings, Los Angeles, Modoc, San Diego, Santa Cruz CY 2022 — Amador, Glenn, Imperial, Mariposa, Modoc, Mono, San Joaquin, Shasta, Trinity CY 2023 — El Dorado, Mariposa, Sacramento, Santa Cruz ¹ Includes operational costs, administration and clerical support, materials, incentives, and associated startup costs. A number of counties reported placing some funds in a reserve account for program maintenance, additional positions, and services related to their SB 678 program.								

²⁰ The schedule was modified by reducing the amount counties received in each the prior three years by 5.5 percent. Counties that would have received annual funding of less than \$200,000 with the 5.5 percent reduction were allocated a minimum \$200,000 for FY 2024–25.

Probation departments' reported use of funds for evidence-based practices and evaluation

County probation departments across California reported²¹ using SB 678 program funds to implement a variety of evidence-based practices (Table 1).²² The Judicial Council uses the self-reported information from probation departments to provide context for the ways in which resources are allocated.

Probation departments have consistently reported using most of their SB 678 funds on the hiring, retention, and training of probation officers to supervise moderate- and high-risk probationers consistent with evidence-based practices. The number of officers supervising those on probation is the primary way departments can control number of individuals each of their officers are supervising at any given time. Research has shown that reducing this ratio of supervised population to supervising officers, also known as caseload sizes, can improve the outcomes for those being supervised.²³ Smaller caseload sizes provide supervising officers with more capacity to implement other evidence-based practices for all of the individuals assigned to them. The Judicial Council collects data that can be used to determine average caseload sizes. These figures, as of the last day of each calendar year, can be found in Table 2.²⁴

²¹ Each year, the Judicial Council surveys probation departments through the *Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices: Annual Assessment Survey* (Annual Assessment). This assessment requires each probation department to measure its current level of implementation of evidence-based practices, as well as the programs and practices used or funded during the previous fiscal year. The Annual Assessment is used to satisfy the outcome-based reporting requirements outlined in SB 678. (See Pen. Code, § 1231(b).) This survey also fulfills the requirement in Penal Code section 1231(c) that counties provide an annual written report to the Judicial Council. The Annual Assessment has been administered each year beginning in FY 2010–11. In 2016 the report time frame was revised to the calendar year rather than fiscal year.

²² Caution is advised when interpreting these results. Spending categories are neither mutually exclusive nor exhaustive. For example, funds for support of officers may be used for training or for the improvement of data collection because case-carrying officers often perform these data collection functions. Reported proportions are representative of the SB 678 funds *spent* on the implementation of evidence-based practices, not the amount of funds received.

²³ See, e.g., Sarah Kuck Jalbert and William Rhodes, “Reduced caseloads improve probation outcomes” (July 2012) 35 *Journal of Crime and Justice* 221–238.

²⁴ The American Probation and Parole Association recommend a standard ratio of 50:1 cases to staff for this population. American Probation and Parole Association, *National Standards for Community Supervision* (June 2024), Standard 6.3, p. 77, [appa-net.org/eweb/docs/APPA/APPAs_National_Standards_for_Community_Corrections.pdf](https://www.appa-net.org/eweb/docs/APPA/APPAs_National_Standards_for_Community_Corrections.pdf).

TABLE 2. AVERAGE STATEWIDE CASELOAD SIZE BY YEAR, MODERATE TO HIGH RISK

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Average Caseload Size Statewide, Moderate to High Risk	43.4	48.7	45.0	37.0	29.1	24.4	32.2	34.3

Source: *Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices: Annual Assessment Survey* (data reported by probation departments to the Judicial Council).

Probation departments also report using a sizable proportion of their SB 678 funds on evidence-based treatment programs and services. The departments reported spending funds on five major categories of treatment programs and services:

- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Outpatient substance abuse treatment programs
- Day reporting centers
- Vocational training/job readiness programs
- Other treatment programs/services

C. Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices

The SB 678 program was designed specifically to improve the effectiveness of probation departments' supervision practices through increased use of evidence-based practices. The SB 678 program recognizes five areas of evidence-based practices as most critical for implementation for county probation departments:²⁵

- Use of risk and needs assessments
- Effective supervision practices
- Collaboration with justice partners
- Effective management and supervision
- Effective treatment and intervention

²⁵ See Appendix D for more information about each of these areas.

To measure probation departments' self-reported evidence-based practice implementation levels²⁶ and changes in evidence-based practice implementation over time,²⁷ the Judicial Council created the *Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices: Annual Assessment Survey*.²⁸ Each probation department is required to provide assessment results annually to the Judicial Council. This survey is based on extensive research and consultation with leading experts in the study of probation practices and contains items related to quantitative measures of departments' implementation of certain established evidence-based practices as well as descriptions of various levels of implementation of certain practices that departments can choose between to best match the way these are implemented locally. The Annual Assessment survey relies on the county probation departments to conduct their own internal research into these levels of implementation and report those to the Judicial Council. Findings from the Annual Assessment indicate that the SB 678 program has been highly successful in increasing the levels of evidence-based practice implementation throughout the state. In addition to assessing county departments' implementation of identified evidence-based practices using the Annual Assessment survey, the Judicial Council reviewed additional literature in 2024 and 2025 to ensure the practices being asked about in the survey were in line with the current state of knowledge of best practices.

All components of evidence-based practices measured in the survey are indicative of substantially higher rates of implementation of evidence-based practices than at baseline. Survey responses for 2024 show reported implementation levels above those reported for 2023 overall, but down slightly from the 2022 rates (see Appendix D). Figure 7 shows the statewide implementation of evidence-based practices rates for CY 2024 versus the baseline level (FY 2010-11), based on survey responses.

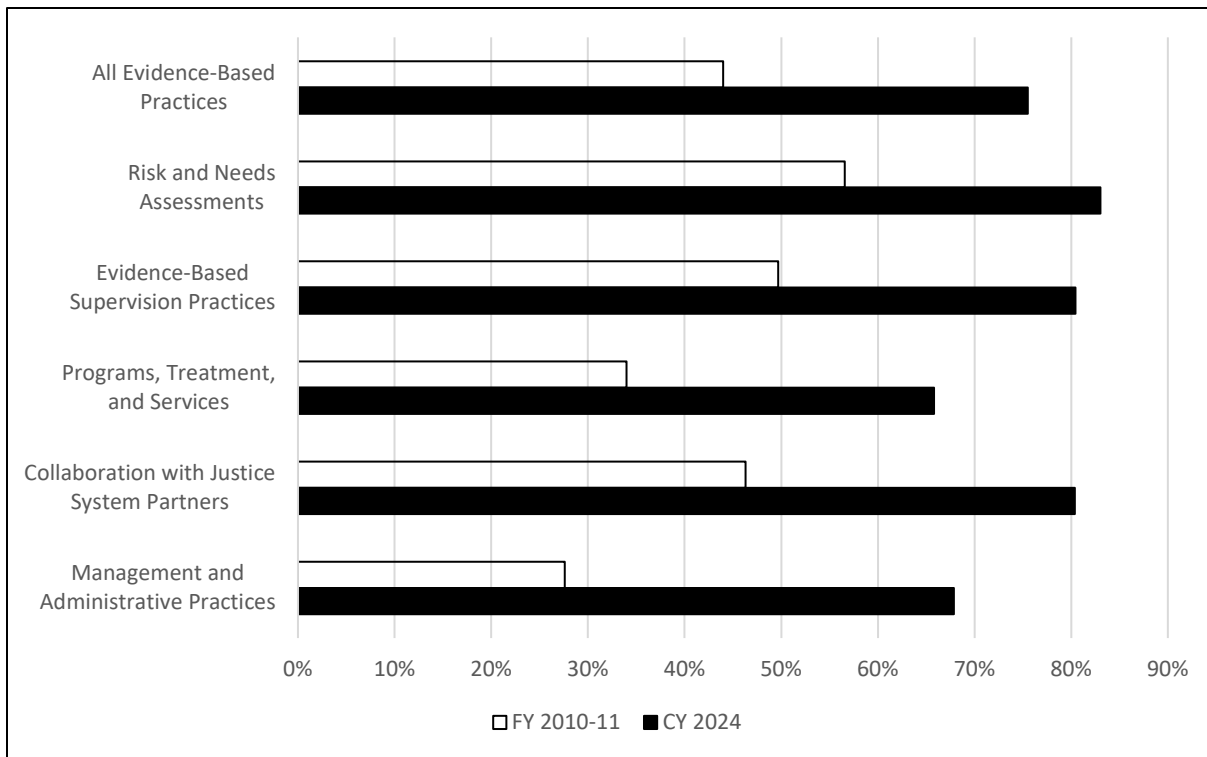
All 58 counties report assessing at least some portion of adult felony offenders who began a supervision term in 2024. Statewide, over 92 percent of all individuals who began a felony supervision term in 2024 were assessed.

²⁶ The Annual Assessment includes 41 scaled items designed to measure the level in which specific evidence-based practice focus areas have been implemented by probation departments. Scaled items are scored on a four-point scale from 0 to 3, with 3 as a gold standard for a given aspect of evidence-based practice. Implementation levels for the five evidence-based practice categories are calculated by adding a department's responses in a particular category and dividing that sum by the total possible points for that category. Overall evidence-based practice implementation levels for each probation department are calculated by taking the average of a department's scores across the five evidence-based practice categories.

²⁷ Increases in the self-reported levels of evidence-based practice implementation have flattened over time given the structure of the Annual Assessment's scoring scheme. It may be challenging for counties to achieve the gold standard across multiple items and categories. As a result, increases in the percentage change in evidence-based practice implementation in the future may be smaller than those reported in the current or previous years.

²⁸ Because the survey was developed before Realignment, it initially focused solely on the felony probation supervision population. Beginning in 2014, probation departments were asked about their use of evidence-based practices in supervising all felony populations, including individuals on mandatory supervision and PRCS.

FIGURE 7. REPORTED USE OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES BY TYPE, BASELINE VERSUS 2024



Source: Data reported by probation departments to the Judicial Council. Percentage of individuals assessed upon beginning a supervision term from *Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices: Annual Assessment Survey*. Number of new grants per county from quarterly data surveys.

II. Recent Developments in California Probation

In October 2023, the Legislative Analyst’s Office published a report on the SB 678 program.²⁹ This report provided background on the program, assessed whether it was achieving its goals, and recommended steps to help ensure it will achieve its goals in the future. The report focused on the probation departments’ role of supervising individuals on felony probation. It did not address the increasing role departments have in supervising and working with those who have been referred to them by courts prior to conviction, such as those ordered to be supervised during a pretrial release period or as part of a diversion program.

In its assessment, LAO found that “the program appeared to effectively achieve its various goals in the initial years of implementation” but that this has been increasingly difficult to determine in more recent years. Achievements noted by LAO included diverting people from prison, providing state savings, and increasing self-certified implementation of evidence-based practices among county departments. It called for more monitoring of the use of evidence-based practices in the counties to verify the self-reported increases in adoption that are included in these Judicial Council evaluations of the program.

The report’s assessment stood by the benefit to the state of providing incentive payments to county departments “when the performance can be accurately measured and there are minimal outside factors affecting the outcomes” and supporting the use of evidence-based practices, provided the state can ensure these are in fact being implemented in ways that are evidence-based. The report emphasized the importance of having the SB 678 funding formula provide both stable and incentive-based payments. The Judicial Council considered the LAO report when making the following recommendations.

²⁹ Legislative Analyst’s Office, *Achieving the Goals of the SB 678 County Probation Grant Program* (Oct. 2023), <https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4806>.

III. Recommendations for the SB 678 Program

Penal Code section 1232(e) requires the Judicial Council to report on the effectiveness of the SB 678 program and provide any recommendations for resource allocation and additional collaboration to improve the program.

The Judicial Council recommends the following:

1. A re-implementation of the incentive-based payments to county departments, last in place in FY 2020-21, with revisions that also ensure a continuation of the stable funding source that county probation departments have relied on for funding evidence-based practices. Both stable and incentive-based funding are crucial to the success of the program.
2. Additional review of evidence-based practices in place in the county probation departments, including:
 - a. Thorough, ongoing review of newly developing evidence supporting existing or emerging practices.
 - b. The collection of additional information by the Judicial Council to supplement the self-reported use of evidence-based practices in county probation departments, including more robust site visit schedules and verification of practices and their effectiveness through independently collected data.
 - c. Gaining additional understanding of what is needed to support the adoption and continued use of specific evidence-based practices and what barriers may exist to that. This includes not just the use of established practices, such as risk assessments, but best practices related to their ongoing use, including regular validation studies, staff trainings, and reliability evaluations.

Conclusion

It has been 16 years since the California Community Corrections Performance Incentives Act (SB 678) passed. Fifteen years of data have shown this to be an effective incentive program that is operating as the Legislature intended when it created the program for county probation departments.

The SB 678 program was designed to:

- Alleviate state prison overcrowding;
- Save state General Fund monies by reducing the number of individuals supervised by probation who are sent to state prison for committing a new crime or violating the terms of supervision;
- Increase the use of evidence-based supervision practices; and
- Achieve these goals without compromising public safety.

SB 678 has been successful in each of these areas. Despite changes in the law resulting in higher-risk individuals constituting an increasing proportion of felony supervision, county probation departments have maintained lower rates of prison returns. Probation departments around the state have implemented and continue to support important evidence-based practices.

Since its inception in 2009, SB 678 has matured from a program that focused on implementing evidence-based practices to one that focuses on their sustainability and expansion.

Appendix A: Percentage of Failure/Return-to-Prison Rates by County, 2017–2024

The return-to-prison rate used in Table A is calculated using the reported number of individuals who were sent to state prison for either a supervision violation or a new offense, across all types of local felony supervision—felony probation, mandatory supervision, and postrelease community supervision.

It should be noted that although the term “return to prison” is used to indicate probation revocations, many individuals supervised by probation departments have never been in prison custody.

TABLE A. PERCENTAGE OF FAILURE/RETURN-TO-PRISON RATES BY COUNTY, 2017–2024

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Statewide Total	3.6	3.5	3.6	2.3	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.0
Alameda	3.4	3.4	2.9	1.0	1.4	1.8	1.7	1.3
Alpine	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.4	0.0
Amador	3.4	7.0	4.0	7.9	4.7	6.5	7.3	1.9
Butte	6.8	7.7	9.1	5.4	8.7	6.7	8.5	9.1
Calaveras	3.3	2.8	0.3	4.7	3.9	4.2	6.8	8.6
Colusa	12.1	7.8	3.0	7.0	3.7	5.1	4.3	7.4
Contra Costa	1.5	2.3	2.5	0.9	1.0	0.5	0.9	0.5
Del Norte	9.8	9.4	7.2	7.6	10.1	8.0	9.0	10.7
El Dorado	3.0	3.2	5.0	3.0	2.5	2.9	5.3	3.7
Fresno	6.3	6.1	5.5	3.1	5.5	5.6	6.4	6.0
Glenn	3.4	2.8	3.0	3.0	0.8	3.6	8.2	4.6
Humboldt	5.8	7.3	3.5	2.9	4.5	5.2	5.3	4.7
Imperial	4.0	4.1	4.8	2.4	3.4	3.7	3.6	3.5
Inyo	3.3	3.4	2.6	4.0	5.1	9.1	6.8	4.9
Kern	3.7	3.9	5.0	4.0	4.5	5.3	4.1	4.0
Kings	5.2	6.6	6.7	7.6	4.8	3.4	3.8	5.0
Lake	6.9	5.9	6.1	4.2	5.5	5.6	5.7	6.6
Lassen	11.2	11.7	3.6	22.2	23.7	1.0	8.9	7.2
Los Angeles	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.2	1.6	1.8	1.6	1.3
Madera	2.8	2.5	2.9	1.7	1.8	0.5	0.2	0.3
Marin	2.4	2.8	2.5	1.2	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.6
Mariposa	3.8	2.8	1.6	1.8	4.3	4.4	0.0	0.0
Mendocino	7.3	4.7	5.4	3.5	5.8	9.0	9.3	4.9
Merced	2.9	3.7	5.1	3.4	4.8	4.2	2.3	2.4

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Modoc	1.5	1.3	7.7	5.1	34.1	8.0	20.7	21.1
Mono	0.6	2.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.6	2.6
Monterey	4.7	4.7	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.8	4.7	2.9
Napa	3.5	3.7	4.4	3.8	2.9	3.6	2.2	3.6
Nevada	2.3	1.2	1.8	2.6	3.9	4.0	3.1	1.6
Orange	2.0	2.3	3.0	2.2	2.2	2.0	2.9	3.1
Placer	2.4	3.0	3.9	2.6	3.1	2.4	4.4	3.8
Plumas	0.0	0.8	3.2	1.9	1.0	6.3	4.3	2.5
Riverside	4.3	4.5	4.4	3.5	4.0	3.9	4.3	3.7
Sacramento	4.2	4.0	4.0	2.5	3.5	4.1	3.2	2.3
San Benito	5.5	2.7	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.9	1.8
San Bernardino	5.8	4.8	4.7	3.4	5.9	5.2	4.9	4.1
San Diego	7.3	6.2	6.7	3.8	4.3	6.5	7.5	7.1
San Francisco	1.0	1.2	1.1	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.5
San Joaquin	2.3	2.4	2.8	1.8	2.0	2.3	2.6	2.8
San Luis Obispo	4.5	4.4	5.0	4.5	4.2	5.3	5.2	5.1
San Mateo	3.9	3.4	3.2	1.6	3.4	3.8	4.3	4.6
Santa Barbara	2.2	2.1	2.3	1.4	4.2	6.0	4.8	3.9
Santa Clara	3.6	3.1	3.1	1.9	2.0	2.3	3.0	2.8
Santa Cruz	1.3	2.8	2.4	1.2	1.5	1.6	1.2	1.0
Shasta	6.9	9.8	11.1	6.5	7.4	6.5	7.4	9.9
Sierra	0.0	3.8	0.0	4.1	14.5	0.0	25.8	0.0
Siskiyou	7.9	6.4	5.1	2.3	2.2	3.8	2.8	4.3
Solano	3.7	4.5	3.3	1.9	2.4	2.7	2.5	1.8
Sonoma	2.6	3.3	2.6	2.1	2.9	4.1	4.0	4.7
Stanislaus	4.3	5.3	4.5	2.0	3.2	4.6	6.9	6.0
Sutter	6.5	7.4	5.7	3.8	8.1	7.9	6.7	4.6
Tehama	1.9	5.7	3.1	2.6	2.9	2.7	3.0	2.9
Trinity	8.8	8.1	6.8	3.4	5.4	6.8	2.2	1.2
Tulare	3.2	3.1	3.2	2.0	3.1	3.3	3.6	3.3
Tuolumne	2.6	3.1	3.1	2.2	3.8	4.0	3.2	6.4
Ventura	7.2	8.0	7.6	4.9	8.0	8.1	7.9	5.9
Yolo	4.5	3.2	2.7	2.0	2.1	3.3	3.8	2.8
Yuba	10.3	9.1	8.5	9.5	13.4	13.4	14.5	10.1

Note: Counties with smaller felony offender populations will be more reactive to small changes in the actual number of revocations. For example, in a county with 1,000 felony offenders, an increase of five revocations would increase the return-to-prison rate (RPR) slightly, from 5 to 5.5 percent, whereas in a county with only 100 felony offenders, an increase of five revocations would double the RPR, from 5 to 10 percent.

In previous reports, this appendix reported the felony offender failure rate using combined failures to state prison and county jail for individuals on probation only. These reports are available on the “Reports to the Legislature” webpage of the California Courts website at <https://courts.ca.gov/news-reference/reports-publications/reports-legislature>.

Appendix B: SB 678 Funding Methodology

Background

Senate Bill 678, the California Community Corrections Performance Incentives Act of 2009, establishes a system of performance-based funding that shares state General Fund savings with county probation departments that reduce the number of adult felony offenders who are revoked to state prison in a year as a percentage of the average offender population during the same period. At the center of SB 678 is the use of incentive-based funding to promote the use of evidence-based practices and improve public safety.

Since passage of the act, the State of California has adopted significant changes in criminal justice policies that directly impacted SB 678—most notably the 2011 Public Safety Realignment, which reduced the number of probationers eligible for revocation to state prison and created two new groups of offenders subject to local supervision. To maintain effective incentives and account for the significant changes in criminal justice policy, Senate Bill 85, adopted as a trailer bill to the 2015–16 State Budget, revised the SB 678 funding formula and created a funding methodology that should serve as a long-term formula. Before the adoption of SB 85, the state adopted temporary measures.

Revised funding methodology, FY 2015–16

Below is a summary of the SB 678 funding formula as revised in 2016, which includes three funding components.

Funding component 1: Comparison of county to statewide return-to-prison rates

The first funding component measures each county's performance against statewide failure rates. Each county's return-to-prison rate (RPR)—which equals the number of individuals on felony probation, mandatory supervision, or postrelease community supervision sent to prison as a percentage of the total supervised population—is compared to statewide RPRs since the original SB 678 baseline period (2006 through 2008).

If a county's RPR is less than or equal to the original statewide baseline of 7.9 percent, the county will receive a percentage of its highest SB 678 payment from the period between program inception and FY 2014–15. Depending on how a county's RPR compares to statewide RPRs, a county can receive between 40 and 100 percent of its highest payment. The statewide RPRs and percentages of savings are defined in Table B.

- If a county's RPR is below 1.5 percent, the county will receive 100 percent of its highest prior payment.
- If a county's RPR is equal to or greater than 1.5 percent but no higher than 3.2 percent, the county will receive 70 percent of its highest prior payment.
- If a county's RPR is above 3.2 percent but no higher than 5.5 percent, the county will receive 60 percent of its highest prior payment.

- If a county's RPR is above 5.5 percent but no higher than 6.1 percent, the county will receive 50 percent of its highest prior payment.
- If a county's RPR is above 6.1 percent but no higher than 7.9 percent, the county will receive 40 percent of its highest prior payment.

TABLE B. TIER CATEGORIES BASED ON RETURN-TO-PRISON RATES

Tier Category Based on Total County RPR	Percentage of Highest Prior SB 678 Payment
RPR <1.5%	100
RPR ≥1.5% and ≤3.2%	70
RPR >3.2% and ≤5.5%	60
RPR >5.5% and ≤6.1%	50
RPR >6.1% and ≤7.9%	40

Funding component 2: Comparison of each county's return-to-prison rate and its failure rate in the previous year

The second funding component is based on how each county performs in comparison to its performance the previous year. Each year, a county's RPR from the previous year is applied to its current year's felony supervised populations to calculate the expected number of prison revocations, as explained below. If a county sends fewer individuals on felony supervision to prison than the expected number, the county will receive 35 percent of the state's costs to incarcerate an individual in a contract bed multiplied by the number of avoided prison stays.³⁰ The number of avoided prison revocations is calculated separately for each felony supervised population (i.e., felony probation, mandatory supervision, postrelease community supervision).

For example, if a county had a 3.2 percent RPR for its felony probation population in 2013 and 10,000 people on felony probation in 2014, its expected number of felony probation prison revocations in 2014 would be 320. If only 300 felony probationers were actually sent to prison in 2014, the county avoided sending 20 individuals to prison and would receive 35 percent of the state's cost to imprison these 20 individuals in a contract bed.

To continue to receive funds under this funding component, probation departments must continually reduce their return-to-prison rates year after year.

Funding component 3: \$200,000 minimum payment

The third funding component guarantees a minimum payment of \$200,000 to each county to support ongoing implementation of evidence-based practices. If a county's total payment (from funding components 1 and 2) is less than \$200,000, the Department of Finance will increase the final award amount to a total of \$200,000.

³⁰ A "contract bed" is defined as "[t]he cost to the state to incarcerate in a contract facility and supervise on parole an offender who fails local supervision and is sent to prison." (Pen. Code, § 1233.1(a).)

Appendix C: SB 678 Allocation Payments, FY 2019–20 to FY 2024–25

TABLE C. SENATE BILL 678 ALLOCATION PAYMENTS

	FY 2019–20	FY 2020–21	FY 2021–22	FY 2022–23	FY 2023–24	FY 2024–25
Statewide	\$112,764,436	\$112,514,699	\$122,829,397	\$122,829,397	\$122,829,397	\$116,144,900
Alameda	2,267,204	2,760,919	2,760,919	2,760,919	2,760,919	2,609,068
Alpine	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Amador	200,000	233,777	233,777	233,777	233,777	220,919
Butte	370,116	200,000	416,404	416,404	416,404	393,502
Calaveras	306,119	512,027	512,027	512,027	512,027	483,866
Colusa	200,000	267,749	267,749	267,749	267,749	253,023
Contra Costa	4,573,373	4,590,826	6,643,176	6,643,176	6,643,176	6,277,801
Del Norte	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
El Dorado	292,477	253,390	348,495	348,495	348,495	329,328
Fresno	2,392,671	3,156,754	3,156,754	3,156,754	3,156,754	2,983,133
Glenn	223,180	200,000	223,171	223,171	223,171	210,897
Humboldt	347,658	1,055,456	1,055,456	1,055,456	1,055,456	997,406
Imperial	200,000	203,247	203,247	203,247	203,247	200,000
Inyo	200,000	222,098	222,098	222,098	222,098	209,883
Kern	1,519,242	1,329,147	1,519,187	1,519,187	1,519,187	1,435,632
Kings	665,694	666,556	1,105,869	1,105,869	1,105,869	1,045,046
Lake	465,104	330,073	465,073	465,073	465,073	439,494
Lassen	253,060	242,388	253,037	253,037	253,037	239,120
Los Angeles	37,262,435	37,413,530	37,413,530	37,413,530	37,413,530	35,355,973
Madera	1,237,578	1,080,042	1,237,543	1,237,543	1,237,543	1,169,478
Marin	955,023	988,095	988,095	988,095	988,095	933,750
Mariposa	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Mendocino	592,562	358,389	592,510	592,510	592,510	559,922
Merced	1,032,967	1,013,123	1,032,961	1,032,961	1,032,961	976,148
Modoc	202,975	200,000	202,975	202,975	202,975	200,000
Mono	200,000	257,466	257,466	257,466	257,466	243,305
Monterey	200,000	200,000	300,463	300,463	300,463	283,938
Napa	329,768	326,188	329,767	329,767	329,767	311,630
Nevada	669,296	440,182	669,278	669,278	669,278	632,468
Orange	4,694,627	4,584,067	4,973,540	4,973,540	4,973,540	4,699,995

	FY 2019–20	FY 2020–21	FY 2021–22	FY 2022–23	FY 2023–24	FY 2024–25
Placer	545,850	460,402	545,848	545,848	545,848	515,826
Plumas	442,681	277,047	442,681	442,681	442,681	418,334
Riverside	6,385,763	6,954,331	6,954,331	6,954,331	6,954,331	6,571,843
Sacramento	12,329,330	11,969,670	12,329,233	12,329,233	12,329,233	11,651,125
San Benito	282,247	200,000	282,215	282,215	282,215	266,693
San Bernardino	8,357,535	6,765,922	8,357,087	8,357,087	8,357,087	7,897,447
San Diego	2,931,434	1,017,874	2,930,998	2,930,998	2,930,998	2,769,793
San Francisco	2,757,568	2,876,383	3,060,552	3,060,552	3,060,552	2,892,222
San Joaquin	2,227,290	2,139,301	2,227,270	2,227,270	2,227,270	2,104,770
San Luis Obispo	1,322,471	1,274,765	1,322,460	1,322,460	1,322,460	1,249,725
San Mateo	1,042,524	1,175,827	1,175,827	1,175,827	1,175,827	1,111,157
Santa Barbara	1,416,974	1,303,322	1,416,944	1,416,944	1,416,944	1,339,012
Santa Clara	1,747,906	1,357,483	1,747,784	1,747,784	1,747,784	1,651,656
Santa Cruz	1,221,950	1,418,192	1,746,643	1,746,643	1,746,643	1,650,578
Shasta	200,000	200,000	512,037	512,037	512,037	483,875
Sierra	200,000	215,489	215,489	215,489	215,489	203,637
Siskiyou	217,562	284,355	284,355	284,355	284,355	268,715
Solano	492,960	807,241	807,241	807,241	807,241	762,843
Sonoma	653,771	1,067,821	1,067,821	1,067,821	1,067,821	1,009,091
Stanislaus	675,613	1,286,879	1,286,879	1,286,879	1,286,879	1,216,101
Sutter	395,672	738,100	738,100	738,100	738,100	697,505
Tehama	200,000	458,088	458,088	458,088	458,088	432,893
Trinity	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Tulare	1,864,489	1,745,269	1,864,437	1,864,437	1,864,437	1,761,893
Tuolumne	294,797	305,456	382,373	382,373	382,373	361,342
Ventura	200,000	714,204	783,267	783,267	783,267	740,187
Yolo	1,504,920	1,415,789	1,504,870	1,504,870	1,504,870	1,422,102
Yuba	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000

Appendix D: SB 678 Monitoring, Reporting, and Evidence-Based Practice Implementation

Senate Bill 678 requires county probation departments to report on their implementation of evidence-based practices and outcomes to enable the Legislature to monitor whether the program is having its intended effect.³¹ The Judicial Council collects quarterly statewide outcome data reported by the counties.³² Since the start of the SB 678 program, the Judicial Council has provided technical assistance in data quality assurance to probation departments through site visits, multicounty conference calls, and contacts with individual counties.³³

The Judicial Council's data collection methods obtain the most critical data, balancing county resource constraints with the Legislature's interest in program evaluation based on accurate and detailed information, as mandated by statute. Data reported by county probation departments focus on quantitative outcomes, including the number of felony offenders placed on local supervision, revoked to prison or jail, and convicted of a new felony offense during the reporting period (see Appendix E). The Judicial Council reports program data to the Department of Finance, which uses the data to determine the appropriate annual level of performance-based funding for each county probation department.³⁴

In addition to collecting quarterly outcome-focused data, the Judicial Council developed an annual survey, *Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices: Annual Assessment Survey* (Annual Assessment), to gather information on probation departments' implementation of evidence-based practices and assist the departments in fulfilling the legislative mandate for evaluating the effectiveness of the SB 678 program.³⁵ The Annual Assessment focuses on five critical evidence-based practices:

- Use of validated risk and needs assessments
- Effective supervision practices, including training on evidence-based practices
- Effective treatment and targeted intervention

³¹ Pen. Code, § 1231(a): "Community corrections programs funded pursuant to this chapter shall identify and track specific outcome-based measures consistent with the goals of this act." *Id.*, § 1231(c): "Each CPO [chief probation officer] receiving funding pursuant to Sections 1233 to 1233.6, inclusive, shall provide an annual written report to the Judicial Council, evaluating the effectiveness of the community corrections program, including, but not limited to, the data described in subdivision (b)."

³² Pen. Code, § 1231(b).

³³ The Judicial Council's Criminal Justice Services office has developed uniform data definitions, created and administered surveys, checked data submissions, matched revocation records submitted by probation departments with California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation records, and investigated record inconsistencies.

³⁴ Pen. Code, §§ 1231(d), 1233.1.

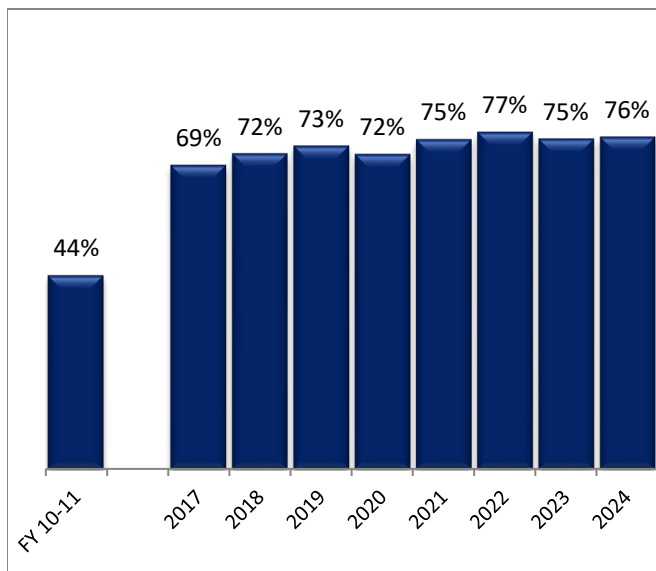
³⁵ Pen. Code, §§ 1231(c), 1232.

- Effective management practices
- Collaboration among justice system partners.³⁶

The survey is designed to measure probation departments’ reported evidence-based practice implementation changes over time and to identify program spending priorities.

The SB 678 program was designed to improve the effectiveness of probation departments’ supervision practices through increased use of evidence-based practices, defined in statute as “supervision policies, procedures, programs, and practices demonstrated by scientific research to reduce recidivism among individuals under local supervision.”³⁷ The term denotes a wide range of systematic supervision practices that research has demonstrated to be effective in promoting and supporting positive individual behavioral change in people with criminal convictions. The

FIGURE D.1. REPORTED USE OF ALL EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES OVER TIME



SB 678 program provides support to probation departments in their efforts to implement necessary programmatic and systemic changes and improve practices that directly target adult felony offender behavior.³⁸

The SB 678 program recognizes five areas of evidence-based practice as most critical for improvement for county probation departments. Each department is required to provide a yearly report (Annual Assessment)³⁹ to the Judicial Council evaluating the effectiveness of its programs focusing on these five areas.⁴⁰ This survey is designed to measure probation departments’ self-reported

³⁶ The importance of each of these areas has been supported in a number of reports; see, for example, Crime and Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice, *Implementing Evidence-Based Policy and Practice in Community Corrections* (National Institute of Corrections, 2d ed. Oct. 2009), crj.org/assets/2017/07/Community_Corrections_BoxSet_Oct09.pdf.

³⁷ Pen. Code, § 1229(d).

³⁸ Pen. Code, § 1230(b)(3)(A)–(E).

³⁹ Because the survey was developed before Realignment, it initially focused solely on the felony probation supervision population. Beginning in 2014, probation departments were asked about their use of evidence-based practices in supervising all felony populations, including individuals on mandatory supervision and postrelease community supervision.

⁴⁰ Pen. Code, § 1231(c).

evidence-based practice implementation levels⁴¹ and changes in evidence-based practice implementation over time.

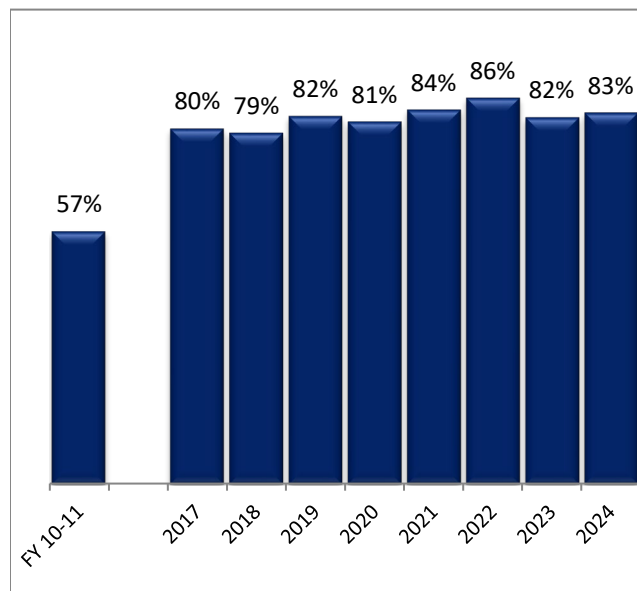
Findings from the Annual Assessment indicate that the SB 678 program has been highly successful in increasing the levels of evidence-based practice implementation throughout the state (Figure D.1). All components of evidence-based practice measured in the survey are indicative of substantially higher implementation of evidence-based practices than at baseline. The overall reported implementation rate increased in 2024 over the 2023 rates, though it remained lower than that reported for 2022.

Validated risk and needs assessments

Validated tools for risk and needs assessment (RNA) are standardized instruments that typically measure both static risk factors (those that do not change, e.g., criminal history) and dynamic risk factors (those that potentially may change, e.g., education level). The use of validated RNA tools has been substantiated as one of the most valuable components of evidence-based practices for supervision of adult felony offenders.⁴² The tools can be used to provide caseload

information to probation departments, helping officers to identify and focus on higher-risk populations while investing fewer resources in low-risk adult felony offenders. Using validated risk and needs assessments to focus resources on higher-risk offenders, and structure caseloads so that low-risk offenders are supervised separately from higher-risk offenders, has proven to be an effective evidence-based practice. The Annual Assessment category of RNA information implementation is based on six questions covering the use and validation of risk and needs assessment tools and how thoroughly the department trains and oversees users of assessments (Figure D.2).

FIGURE D.2. PERCENTAGE OF REPORTED IMPLEMENTATION OF RNA INFORMATION



⁴¹ The Annual Assessment includes 41 scaled items designed to measure the level in which specific evidence-based practice focus areas have been implemented by the probation departments. Scaled items are scored on a four-point scale from 0 to 3, with 3 as a gold standard rating for a given aspect of evidence-based practices. Implementation levels for the five evidence-based practice categories are calculated by adding a department's responses in a particular category and dividing that sum by the total possible points for that category. Overall evidence-based practice implementation levels for each probation department are calculated by taking the average of a department's scores across the five evidence-based practice categories.

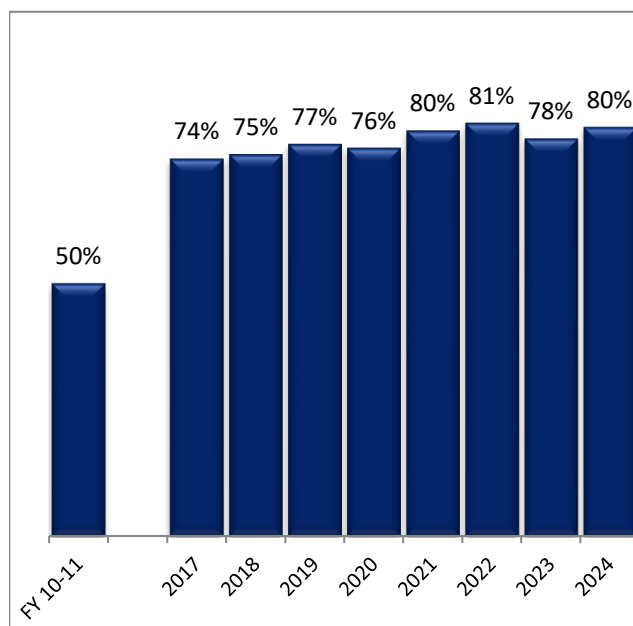
⁴² Crime and Justice Institute, *supra* note 36.

Since the implementation of SB 678, probation departments have made significant improvements in incorporating the use of validated risk and needs assessments in their supervision practices. Every department in the state now uses an assessment tool, and the majority of individuals on supervision undergo an assessment. Although departments are not always able to assess all their individuals (for example, individuals may abscond and be placed on warrant status before the administration of the assessment), and probation departments occasionally base supervision decisions on factors other than RNA information (as mentioned previously for individuals on postrelease community supervision), the use of RNA tools has been incorporated into general supervision practices throughout the state.

Evidence-based supervision practices

The relationship between a probation officer and an adult felony offender plays an important role in increasing the probability of an individual's success on probation (Figure D.3). Officers can support offenders' positive behavior changes by forming appropriate, motivating relationships with those they supervise.⁴³ Providing swift, certain, and proportionate responses to offenders' negative behavior is also an important element that can increase the likelihood of success on supervision.⁴⁴ The Annual Assessment category of evidence-based supervision practices is based on 15 questions focused on the relationship between the probation officer and the offender. Probation departments have substantially increased the use of evidence-based practices since SB 678 began.

FIGURE D.3. EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION



Programs/treatment/services and targeted intervention

Research suggests that treatment programs should address the individual offender's assessed risk and needs, with a primary focus on dynamic risk factors. Cognitive behavioral therapy that addresses offenders' antisocial thinking patterns has been demonstrated to be an effective technique for high-risk offenders. Research has also confirmed that the effectiveness of treatment programs increases when the programs are tailored to characteristics such as gender

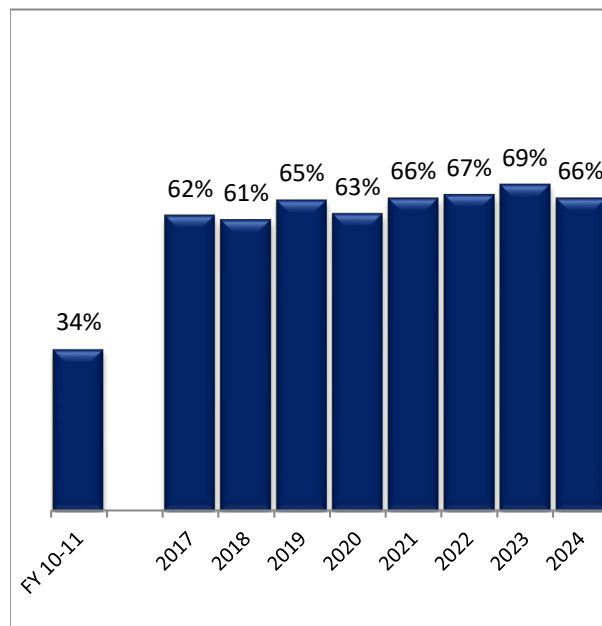
⁴³ M. L. Thigpen, T. J. Beauclair, G. M. Keiser, and M. Guevara, *Motivating Offenders to Change: A Guide for Probation and Parole* (National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, June 2007).

⁴⁴ Mark A. R. Kleiman and Angela Hawken, "Fixing the Parole System" (Summer 2008) 24(4) *Issues in Science and Technology* 45; Faye S. Taxman, David Soule, and Adam Gelb, "Graduated Sanctions: Stepping Into Accountable Systems and Offenders" (June 1999) 79(2) *Prison Journal* 182–204.

and culture.⁴⁵ The Annual Assessment category of treatment and targeted intervention implementation is based on five questions about how referrals are made and the existence of treatment programs that have been evaluated for effectiveness, weighted by the amount of unmet need among medium- and high-risk offenders.

Probation departments have significantly improved in their use of evidence-based treatment since the implementation of the SB 678 program. Many departments developed their own evidence-based practice treatment programs or report having increased access to evidence-based practice treatment resources in their community; however, the majority of departments must rely on the treatment available in their communities. This is an area in which many probation departments report that improvements can still be made and that the need for an increased capacity of evidence-based practice treatment programs is persistent. Increased education and improved communication on evidence-based practice treatments available or potentially available are also needed. Reported programs, treatments, and service implementation rates declined slightly in 2024 as compared to the year before (Figure D.4).

FIGURE D.4. PROGRAMS/TREATMENT/SERVICES



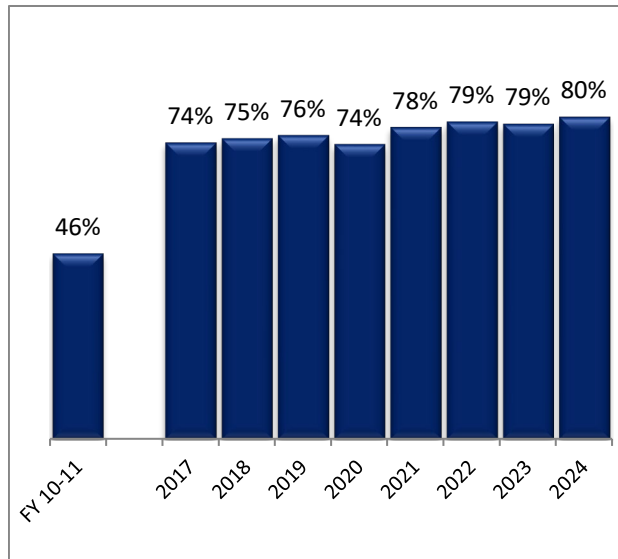
Collaboration among justice system partners

Effective implementation of evidence-based supervision practices requires buy-in from criminal justice partners. The collaboration of judges, district attorneys, public defenders, sheriffs, service providers, and others facilitates efforts by probation departments to put new procedures and protocols into place. Collaboration enables the entire justice system to provide a consistent focus on adult felony offender behavior change and recidivism reduction.⁴⁶ The Annual Assessment measures the level of collaboration implementation based on six questions about the ways in which the department works with its justice partners, including but not limited to courts and treatment providers. Nearly all probation departments have increased the level of collaboration within their counties since the baseline (Figure D.5). Those that have shown the highest degree

⁴⁵ David B. Wilson, Leana Allen Bouffard, and Doris L. Mackenzie, “A Quantitative Review of Structured, Group-Oriented, Cognitive-Behavioral Programs for Offenders” (Apr. 2005) 32(2) *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 172–204.

⁴⁶ Crime and Justice Institute, *supra* note 36.

FIGURE D.5. COLLABORATION



of collaboration have generally shown improved outcomes and are able to implement evidence-based practices that may involve additional justice partner buy-in.⁴⁷

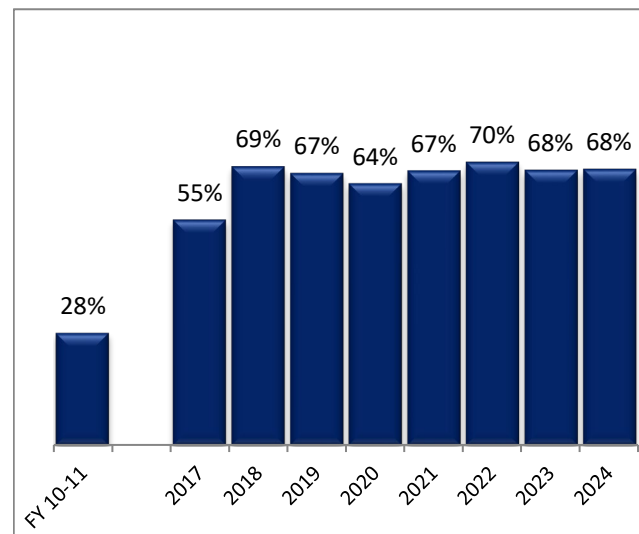
Management and administrative practices

Clear direction, support, and oversight from probation department management are necessary to ensure that officers understand the department's evidence-based practices and protocols and are motivated to work toward full implementation.⁴⁸ To assess how probation departments' management and administrative practices align with evidence-based practices (Figure D.6), the

Annual Assessment includes nine questions that explore how hiring and performance review guidelines and practices are linked to evidence-based practice skills and whether:

- Supervisors monitor evidence-based adult felony offender supervision practices by observing offender contacts;
- The department collects service and offender outcome data and data are used internally to improve services and practices;
- There has been a formal evaluation of supervision practices; and
- Supervisors support and monitor the use of risk and needs assessments, motivational interviewing, and cognitive behavioral therapy.

FIGURE D.6. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION



⁴⁷ See, e.g., Judicial Council of Cal., *The California Risk Assessment Pilot Project: The Use of Risk and Needs Assessment Information in Adult Felony Probation Sentencing and Violation Proceedings* (Dec. 2015), courts.ca.gov/documents/cj-CalRAPP-FinalReport-2015.pdf.

⁴⁸ Paula Smith, Paul Gendreau, and Kristin Swartz, "Validating the Principles of Effective Intervention: A Systematic Review of the Contributions of Meta-analysis in the Field of Corrections" (Feb. 2009) 4(2) *Victims & Offenders* 148–169.

The SB 678 program has been highly effective in increasing the use of evidence-based practices in probation departments throughout the state and has resulted in substantial reductions in the number of adult felony offenders going to state prison.

Appendix E: Performance Outcome Measures for the SB 678 Program

TABLE E. PERFORMANCE OUTCOME MEASURES FOR THE SB 678 PROGRAM (PEN. CODE, §§ 1231 & 1232)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Individuals under local supervision supervised with evidence-based practices¹ (1231(b)(1))	77% (n=55)	81% (n=52)	81% (n=51)	81% (n=58)	81% (n=58)	84% (n=49)	79% (n=54)	83% (n=58)
State monies spent on evidence-based practices (1231(b)(2))	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Supervision policies, procedures, programs, or practices that have been eliminated² (1231(b)(3))	Replacement of a risk and needs assessment tool. No longer using a “one size fits all” supervision approach; now using risk level to determine supervision approach. No longer organizing caseloads by offense type or subjective criteria. No longer actively supervising low-risk felony offenders; now banking low-risk felony offenders. Elimination of “zero tolerance” violation policies; now using graduated sanctions to respond to violations.							
Total probation completions (1231(b)(4))	49,530	47,076	47,090	43,213	62,833	39,843	45,319	44,737
Unsuccessful completions (1231(b)(4))	14,377	14,140	14,772	8,397	9,553	9,816	10,945	10,187
Felony filings³ (1231(d)(1))	189,199	190,822	183,439	174,496	186,569	181,554	183,150	179,821
Felony convictions (1231(d)(2))	112,377	107,121	89,304	75,702	62,858	57,155	61,476	69,424
Felony prison admissions⁴ (1231(d)(3))	37,161	35,366	34,476	11,603	29,398	28,387	29,746	26,674

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
New felony probation grants (1231(d)(4))	60,788	57,805	57,556	40,531	50,445	53,737	51,924	48,093
Adult felony probation population (1231(d)(5))	267,221	265,070	262,483	255,432	231,313	227,683	229,165	225,479
Total supervised felony population	314,592	313,544	311,275	304,431	276,101	271,344	273,615	270,369
Total probation revocations to state prison	8,279	8,137	8,237	4,937	5,495	5,881	6,333	5,516
Prison revocations for new felony offense (1231(d)(6) & (d)(7))	3,249	2,948	2,816	1,858	2,229	2,201	2,457	2,053
Total probation revocations to county jail	6,446	6,427	6,504	2,942	2,899	3,165	3,549	3,350
Jail revocations for new felony offense (1231(d)(8) & (d)(9))	1,617	1,416	1,258	614	699	981	835	691
Total revocations	14,377	14,140	14,772	8,397	9,553	9,816	10,945	10,187
Felony probationers convicted of a crime⁵ (1232(c))	6.32%	6.25%	5.81%	3.64%	4.29%	4.38%	4.39%	4.08%
Felony probationers convicted of a felony⁵ (1232(c))	3.33%	3.27%	3.06%	2.09%	2.60%	2.58%	2.50%	2.28%

Notes: Except where indicated, all data were reported to the Judicial Council by 58 probation departments.
MS = mandatory supervision; PRCS = postrelease community supervision; CDCR = California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

¹ The data reported are statewide averages, including for individuals on warrant status. This figure includes MS and PRCS.

² Probation departments were asked to list supervision policies, procedures, programs, and practices that were eliminated since the effective date of SB 678; 27 probation departments submitted data for this question. The information provided here is a summary of the open-ended responses.

³ These data were taken from the *2025 Court Statistics Report*, <https://courts.ca.gov/system/files/file/2025-court-statistics-report.pdf>. Data are reported by fiscal year.

⁴ For calendar year 2017, the data are from the CDCR's *Offender Data Points* (Dec. 2017), available at cdcr.ca.gov/research/wp-content/uploads/sites/174/2021/06/DataPoints_122017.pdf. Data for calendar years 2018 through 2024 were provided by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Office of Research by request.

⁵ These figures represents probation departments able to report complete data for the year. In 2017 this figure represented 57 departments; in 2018, 55; in 2019, 56; in 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024, 57.