



**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

***DIVISION OF ADULT CORRECTION
COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS***

PROBATION/PAROLE OFFICER WORKLOAD STUDY

January 1, 2013

**Beverly Eaves Perdue
Governor**

**W. David Guice
Section Chief**

**Reuben F. Young
Secretary**

Session Law 2011-145

SECTION 18.13. (b) The Department of Correction shall conduct a study of probation/parole officer workload. The study shall include analysis of the type of offenders supervised, the distribution of the probation/parole officers' time by type of activity, the caseload carried by the officers, and comparisons to practices in other states. The study shall be used to determine whether the caseload goals established by the Structured Sentencing Act are still appropriate, based on the nature of the offenders supervised and the time required to supervise those offenders.

SECTION 18.13.(c) The Department of Correction shall report the results of the study and recommendations for any adjustments to caseload goals to the House of Representatives and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Justice and Public Safety by January 1, 2013.

The Division of Adult Correction, Community Corrections Section is responsible for the supervision of all adult offenders on probation, parole or post-release supervision in North Carolina. Community Corrections also has oversight of the Community Service Work Program (CSWP). The Division supervises approximately 104,936 offenders on probation, parole or post-release supervision and oversees 10,762 unsupervised offenders in CSWP for a total offender population of 115,698.

Appropriate workload distribution based on the types of offenders probation officers supervise, the amount of time they spend conducting that supervision, and other job-related activities is difficult to measure without proper data collection methods and analysis. Session Law 2009-451 required a workload study be conducted and the results submitted to the House of Representatives and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Justice and Public Safety by January 1, 2011. In 2009, the Department of Correction contracted with the UNC School of Social Work to conduct the study. The results were submitted to the General Assembly in January of 2011.

At the time of the study, the Department was undergoing a major change in the way we supervise offenders; the change is ongoing. The risk and needs assessment was being validated and cases were being appropriately leveled during the completion of the study. The offender supervision requirements and policy that accompanied the leveling changes were new to officers who participated in the workload study and they were unable to provide adequate answers about use of time and supervision obligations. The final recommendation of the 2011 study indicated the Department's caseload goal should not exceed 60 offenders per officer. The risk and needs assessment has since been completely implemented and caseload distribution is level based on the offenders' assessment scores. However, we have not met the 60 offender caseload goal recommendation due to lack of staff resources. The Justice Reinvestment Act which became effective December 1, 2011, gives additional supervision tools to probation officers, provides new violation response options for judges, and places all felons released from prison under community supervision. The Justice Reinvestment legislation supported the aforementioned caseload goal of 60 offenders per officer; but made the requirement specific for moderate to high risk cases. The Department has worked tirelessly to invoke the changes as outlined in the law by training staff and making the necessary policy changes. A second round of practical training for Justice Reinvestment is being conducted with field staff this winter.

Adult Correction realizes the importance of a follow up workload study. However, due to the timing of the Justice Reinvestment Act and budgetary constraints, we were not afforded an opportunity to contract with a local college to conduct a study in 2012. After collecting more data and reviewing the current practices, Community Corrections will produce a full study and submit the findings in January of 2014.