



# Research in Brief

## Comparing Different Approaches to Managing Temporarily Detained Offenders

*Approaches to the management of temporarily detained offenders appear to be associated with different patterns of suspension outcomes.*

### Why we did this study

Offenders' gradual and supervised return to the community has been shown to contribute to public safety, and virtually all offenders serve a period of their sentence in the community. While in the community, offenders are closely supervised and, if their behaviour warrants it (for example, due to breaching a condition of release or an increase in risk), their release can be suspended. When such suspensions occur, offenders are temporarily detained in custody pending either a cancellation of the suspension or a revocation of release. The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) employs different approaches to temporary detentions; in this study, the approaches were compared.

### What we did

Using data from CSC's administrative database, 3,338 suspensions resulting in a return to federal custody during 2013-14 were identified. Three groups were contrasted based on the approaches used to manage the temporarily detained offenders:

1. Direct placement in population;
2. Temporary detention unit with a dedicated intervention; and,
3. Temporary detention unit without a dedicated intervention.

### What we found

Overall, a much greater percentage of offenders in temporary detention units with a dedicated intervention had their suspensions locally cancelled (that is, cancelled by CSC before referral to the Parole Board of Canada). In keeping with timeframes wherein local cancellation is possible, outcomes were quicker with this approach. That said, the three management approaches were not associated with differences in offenders' rates of later re-offence.

Compared to offenders in the other two groups, offenders whose suspensions resulted in them being housed in a temporary detention unit with a dedicated intervention were more likely to have been granted

discretionary release. That said, they were also more likely to be assessed as high risk and as low reintegration potential, both at intake and prior to release. They were similar to those in the other groups in terms of their reasons for suspension, with the exception that their suspensions were less likely to be due to a new charge or offence (6% vs. 11% for each of the other two groups).

### Comparison of Temporary Detention Approaches

Outcome	Group		
	Direct placement N = 1433	TD unit (no inter.) N = 1453	TD unit (w/ inter.) N = 452
Suspension outcome (%) <sup>a</sup>			
Local cancellation	14	19	55
Board cancellation	16	25	20
Revocation	70	56	25
Days from suspension until final outcome (M; SD)	78 (64)	79 (73)	49 (63)
Days in federal custody prior to outcome (M; SD) <sup>b</sup>	58 (44)	71 (66)	42 (37)
Re-offence within one year after warrant expiry (%) <sup>c</sup>	6	6	6

<sup>a</sup>Analyses confirmed that this pattern continued to be present after accounting for differences in offenders' levels of risk, age, and type of release. <sup>b</sup>This time is shorter than that from suspension until outcome because suspended offenders are not always immediately returned to federal custody. <sup>c</sup>In order to allow for the appropriate follow-up period, this analysis was conducted using data for offenders suspended in 2010-11. The number and distribution of suspensions was similar to 2013-14.

### What it means

Clearly, different approaches to the management of temporarily detained offenders are associated with different outcomes. Consistency could likely be increased by using the same approach nationally.

### For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#) or contact us by phone at (613) 995-3975.

You can also visit the website for a full list of research publications.

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