

Parole Violations and Revocations in California

Ryken Grattet, Ph.D.
Joan Petersilia, Ph.D.
Jeff Lin, Ph.D.

Funded by the National Institute of Justice

July 2008

UC DAVIS
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



UCIrvine

CENTER FOR
EVIDENCE-BASED CORRECTIONS

What we set out to do:

The Largest, Most Comprehensive, Most
Rigorous Study of Parole Violations and
Revocations Ever Conducted

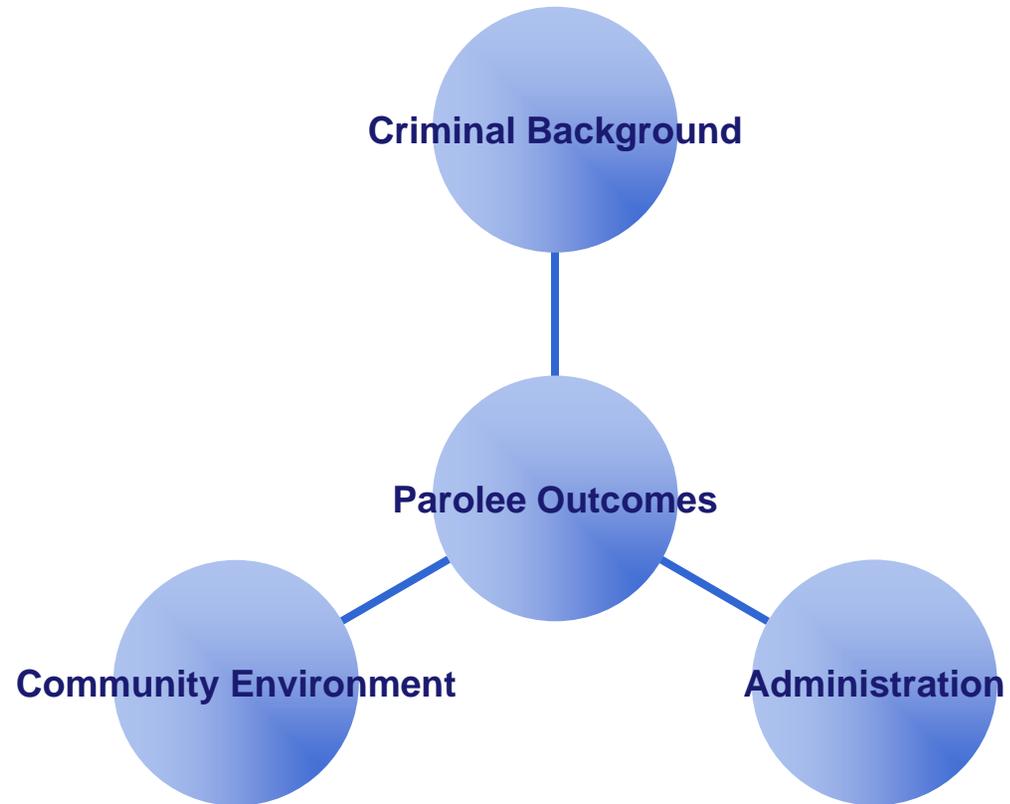
Use the Knowledge We Gain about
Violations and Revocations to Make
Recommendations about Improving
California Parole Process

What we've done:

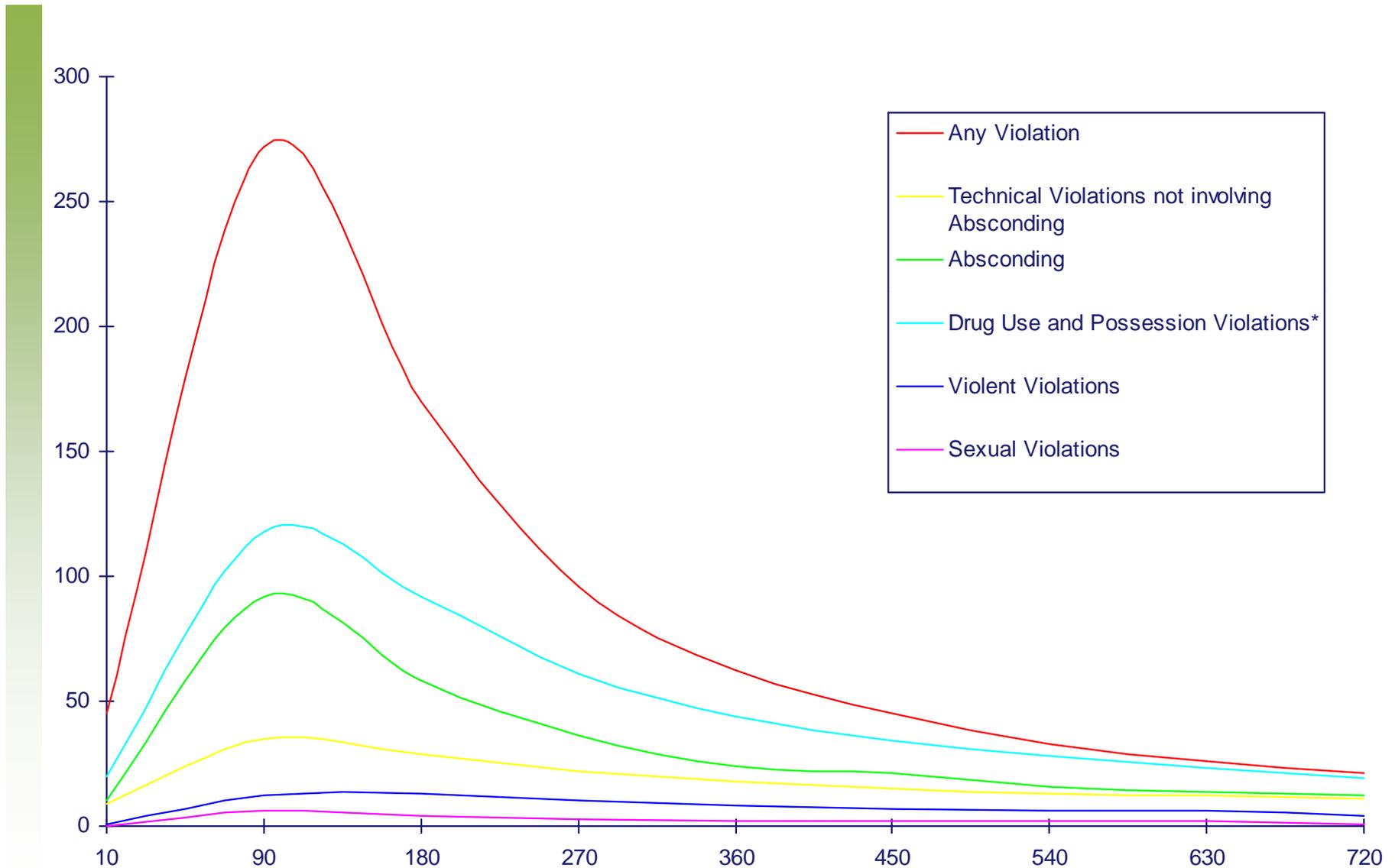
Collected data on every parolee on parole during 2003-4. 254,468 individuals

- Violations (Criminal, Absconding, and other Technical)
- Revocations (Via the Board or Local Court)
- Worked with CDCR Officials on Various reform initiatives (e.g., Violation Matrix)

Framework



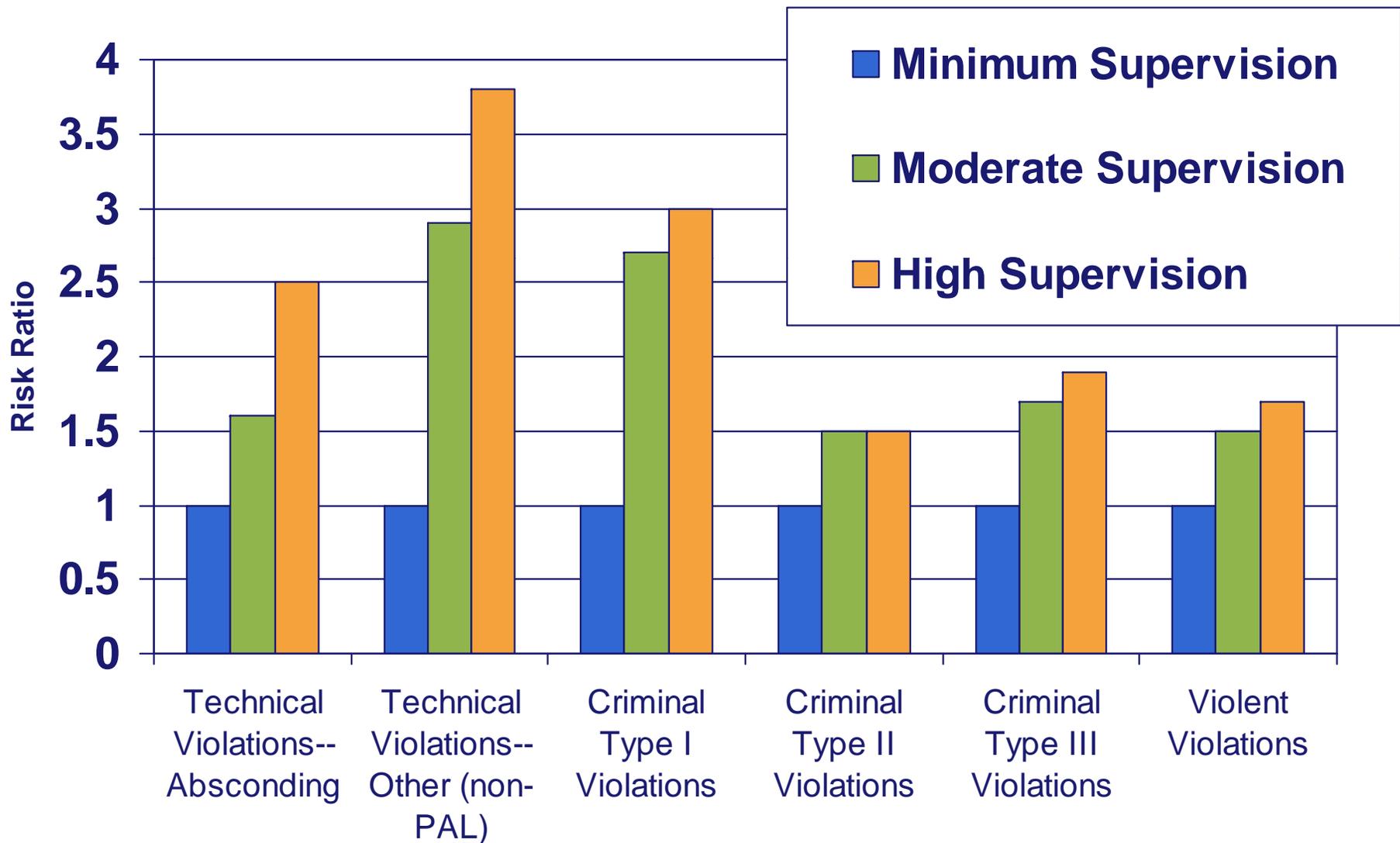
Violation Risk Peaks in the First 90 Days



What Doesn't Predicts Violations?

- ❖ Offender Background Factors That Tend not to Matter
 - Violent and Sexual Commitment Offense
 - Number of Prior Violent and Serious
 - Second Striker
 - Sex Offender Registrant

Greater Supervision Intensity Leads to More Violation Reports



Community Effects are Weaker, But Present

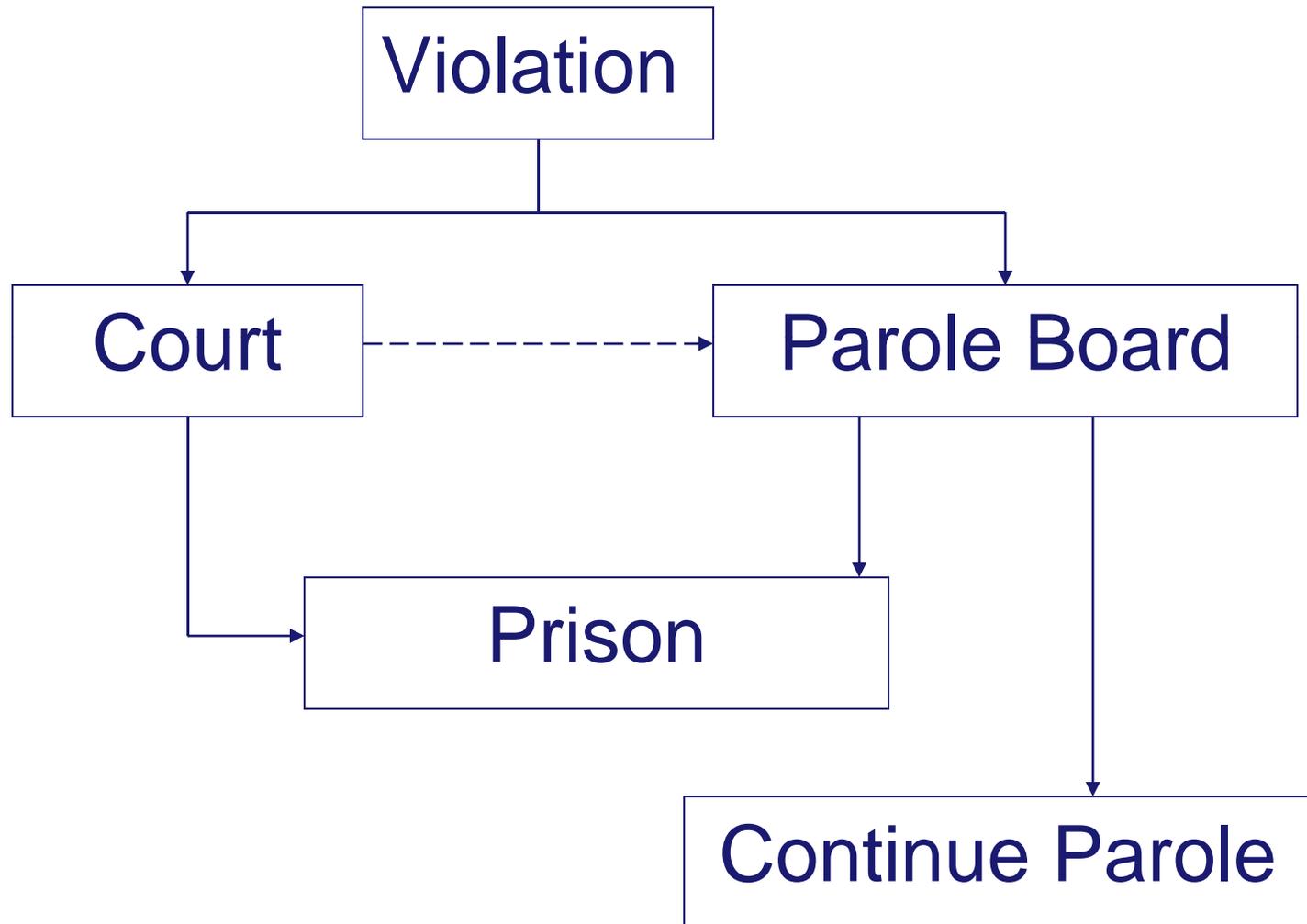
Criminogenic Conditions

- ❖ Poverty affects absconding
- ❖ Residential Turnover affects other technicals

Reentry Supports

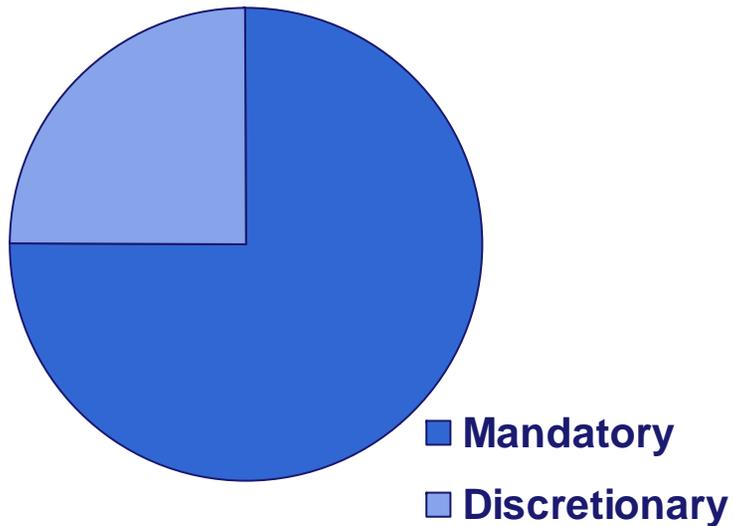
- ❖ Availability of MH and SA services decreases the risk of technicals not involving absconding AND least serious criminal violations

Two Pathways to Revocation

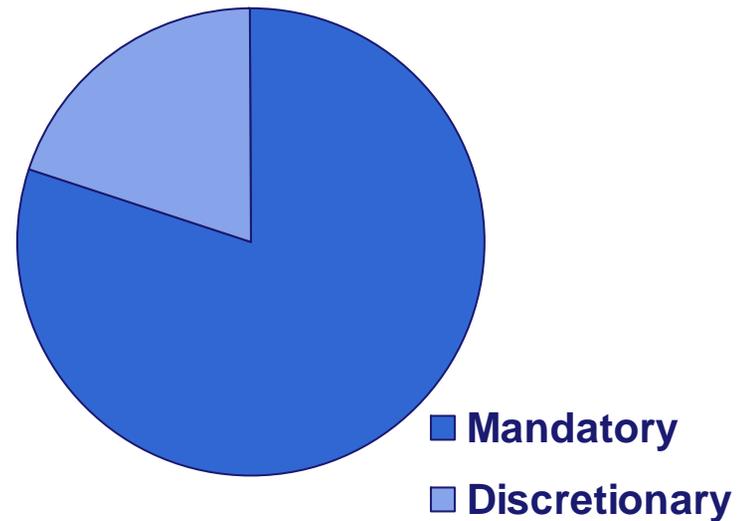


Most Parole Board Cases Result from Mandatory Referrals

Criminal Violations

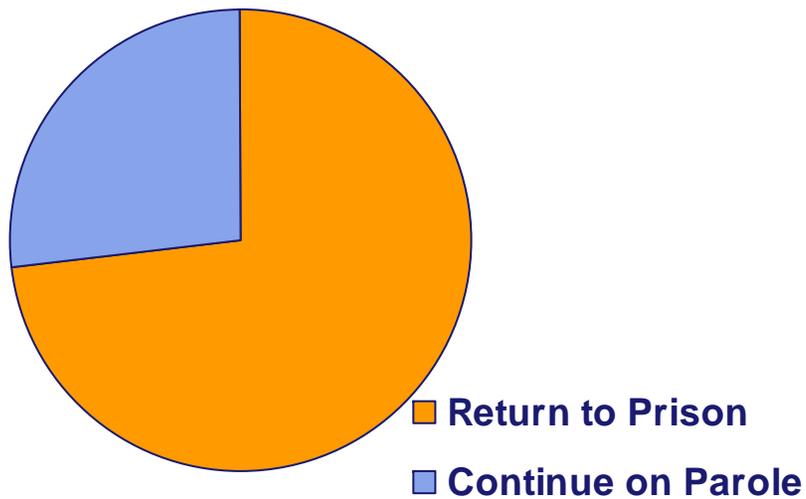


Technical Violations

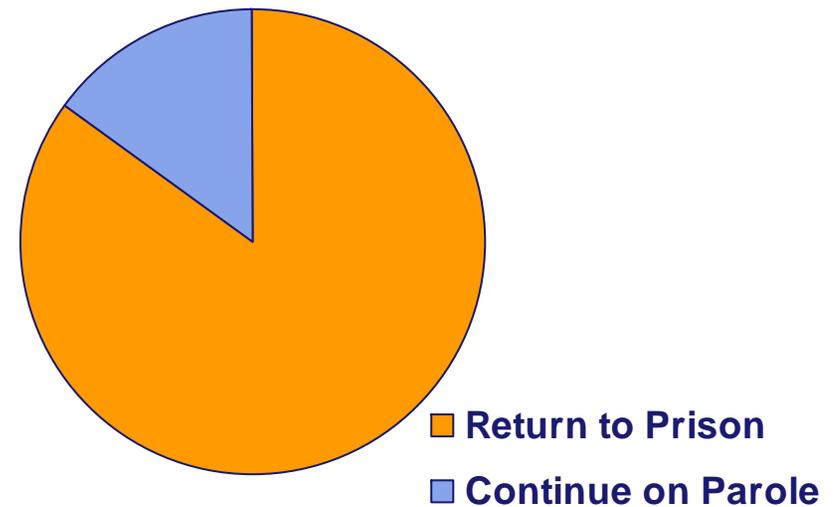


Most Parole Board Cases Result in Return to Prison

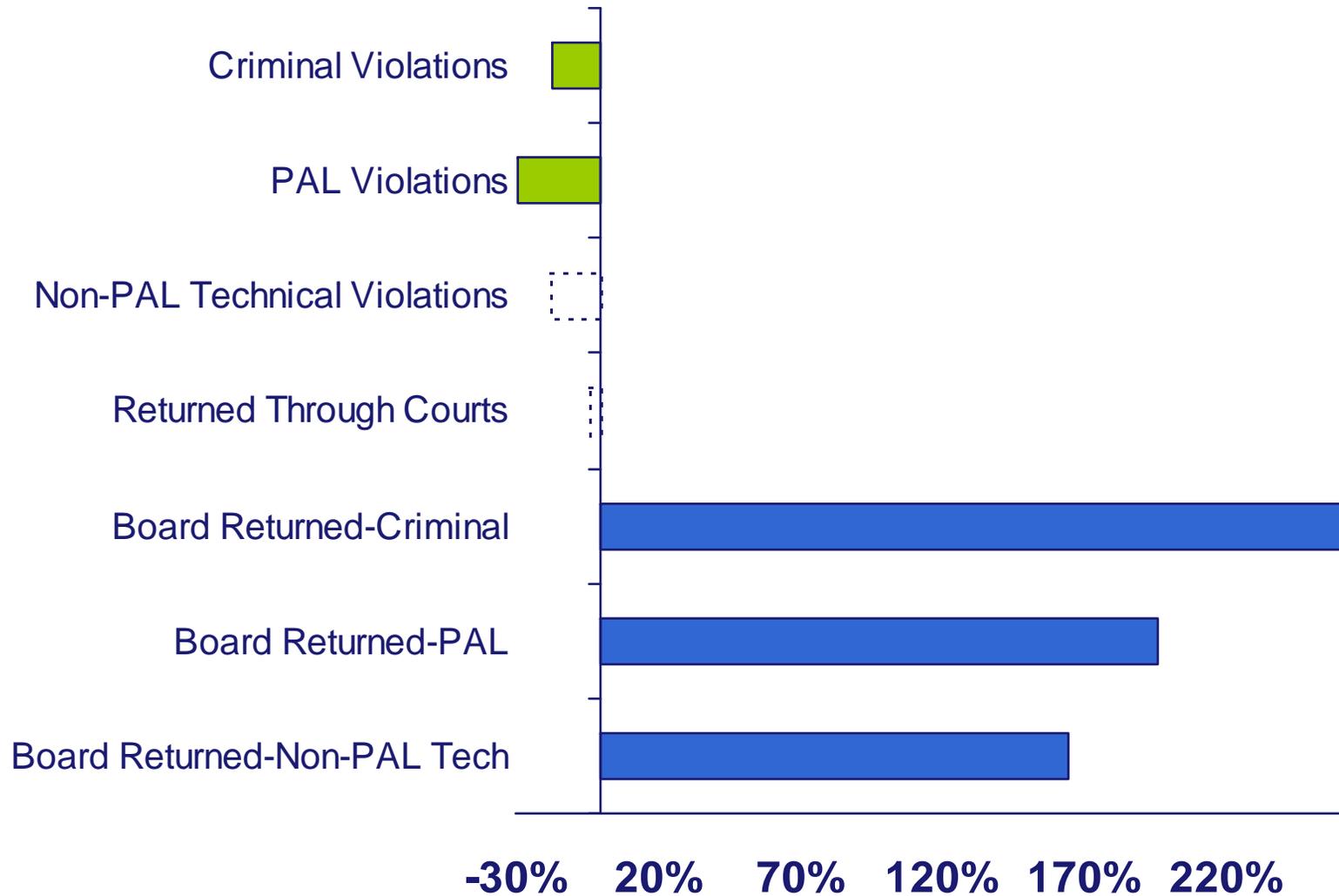
Criminal Violations



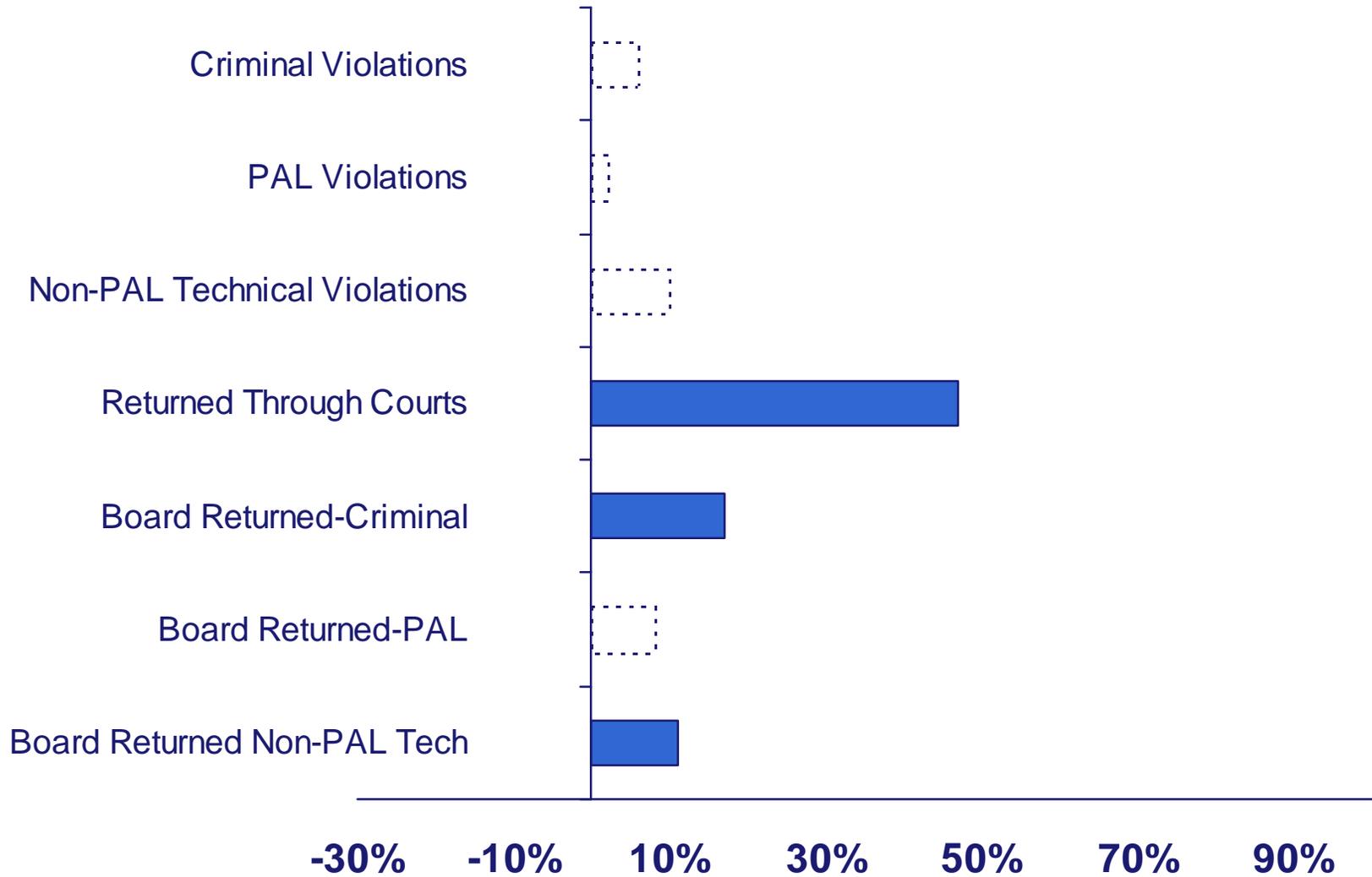
Technical Violations



Sex Offender Violation and Revocation Pattern



Second Strikers Violation and Revocation Pattern



Other Accessory Factors also Shape Revocations

- ❖ Greater overcrowding in the Reception Centers leads to lower likelihood the case will go through court
- ❖ Greater caseload pressure among local DAs decreases the likelihood a case will go through the court
- ❖ Communities with greater substance abuse and mental health services are more likely to go through the board

Policy Implications are Many

- ❖ Structural and Legal Changes
- ❖ Supervision Changes (Use Risk Principal to Drive Supervision Intensity)
- ❖ Risk Assessment Tools
- ❖ Violation Matrices
- ❖ Mandatory Referral Policies
- ❖ Early Discharge
- ❖ Expansion of Alternative Sanctions
- ❖ Community Service Infrastructure Development
- ❖ Caseload Reductions
- ❖ Supervision Technologies

Violation Matrix

❖ Opportunities

- Reduce discretion in system
- Reduce Returns to Prison
- Increase Use of Alternative Sanctions
- Increases Use of Risk-based Approach

❖ Obstacles

- Parole Board Must Sign On
- Parole Agents Must Use it
- Overrides Must be Minimized

Contact information

Ryken Grattet, Ph.D.

Department of Sociology
University of California
Davis, California 95616

Tel: (530)754-6137

E-mail: rtgrattet@ucdavis.edu

Joan Petersilia, Ph.D.

Department of Criminology, Law & Society
University of California
Irvine, California 92697-7080

Tel: (949) 824-6438

E-mail: petersilia@stevet.edu

