



Alaska's evidence-based investment

As we enter a new year, there is heightened awareness of the important goals of public safety and investing state dollars wisely. Evidence-based practices — those which have undergone rigorous academic study — have been incorporated in Alaska and other places with the goal of addressing both of these concerns. In this issue, we look at a new evidence-based practice, the pretrial risk assessment tool, and a recent report that provides a benefit cost analysis of Alaska's more established evidence-based programs designed to reduce recidivism.

It will take a while before we know whether Alaska's new pretrial risk assessment tool will improve public safety and reduce criminal justice costs as intended. What we do know, however, is that most of Alaska's evidence-based adult criminal justice programs are showing positive return on state investment of money. The Alaska Justice Information Center's (AJiC) Alaska Results First analysis not only shows the benefit to cost ratio — or monetary return on the state's investment — it also provides tools for assessing how changing the cost structure and delivery method can impact benefit to cost ratios of current programs as well as providing benefit to cost ratio estimates for prospective programs. An added benefit to the analysis — a new eight-year recidivism rate study.

As always, I encourage you to go online to read the *Alaska Justice Forum* where you will find the full AJiC Alaska Results First report as well as a video discussion of the new pretrial risk assessment tool.

Pamela Cravez

AlaskaJusticeForum@alaska.edu



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Editor: Pamela Cravez

Editorial Board: Allan Barnes, Jason Brandeis, Sharon Chamard, Ron Everett, Ryan Fortson, Kristin Knudsen, Cory R. Lepage, Brad Myrstol, Troy Payne, Deborah Periman

Typesetting and Layout: Melissa Green

Brad Myrstol, Interim Director, Justice Center

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College of Health

University of Alaska Anchorage

3211 Providence Drive

Anchorage, AK 99508

(907) 786-1810

(907) 786-7777 fax

uaa.justice@alaska.edu

<http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/justice/>

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