

EVALUATION OF OREGON'S MEASURE 57 DRUG COURT PROGRAM

Oregon Criminal Justice Commission and NPC Research

Research Brief: Outcome Highlights

Measure 57 Intensive Drug Courts are designed to provide mandated post-adjudication intensive drug court services for medium- to high-risk property offenders. The Oregon Criminal Justice Commission (CJC), in cooperation with the Department of Corrections and other partners, designed a multi-site randomized controlled trial study to evaluate the effectiveness of the Measure 57 Drug Courts, as compared to traditional probation. The study has several components, including a process evaluation, an interview study, and a preliminary outcome evaluation. The CJC partnered with NPC Research to conduct the process evaluation, interview study, and program cost calculations. This report combines analysis conducted by both the CJC and NPC Research.



The outcome evaluation analyzes the proportion of study participants who had new criminal charges in the year following their original arrest, as well as the average number of new charges and new cases within that first year. The drug court group had 28% fewer new charges, and 26% fewer new cases (cases can contain multiple charges), than the control group; these differences are statistically significant. When charges are categorized, drug court participants also had significantly fewer felony, misdemeanor, and drug charges. Figure A provides the various charge types and the difference in number of charges between the participants and the control group. Figure B shows the difference in number of cases. Overall, the drug court group had 37% fewer new charges for drug crimes than the control group. A follow-up evaluation with a longer time frame to analyze recidivism is planned.

Figure A - Drug Court Participants Had Fewer New Charges in All Charge Categories

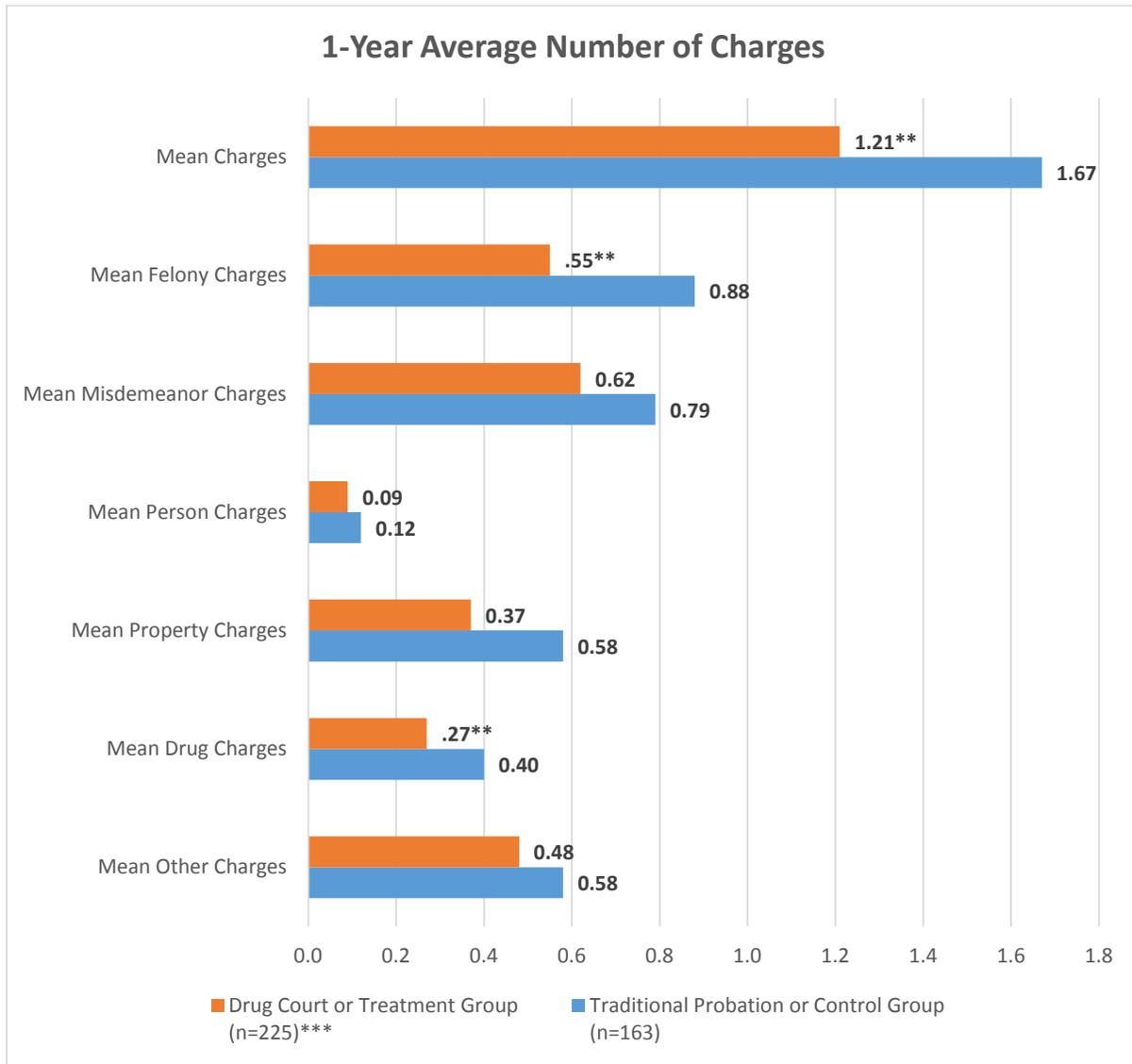
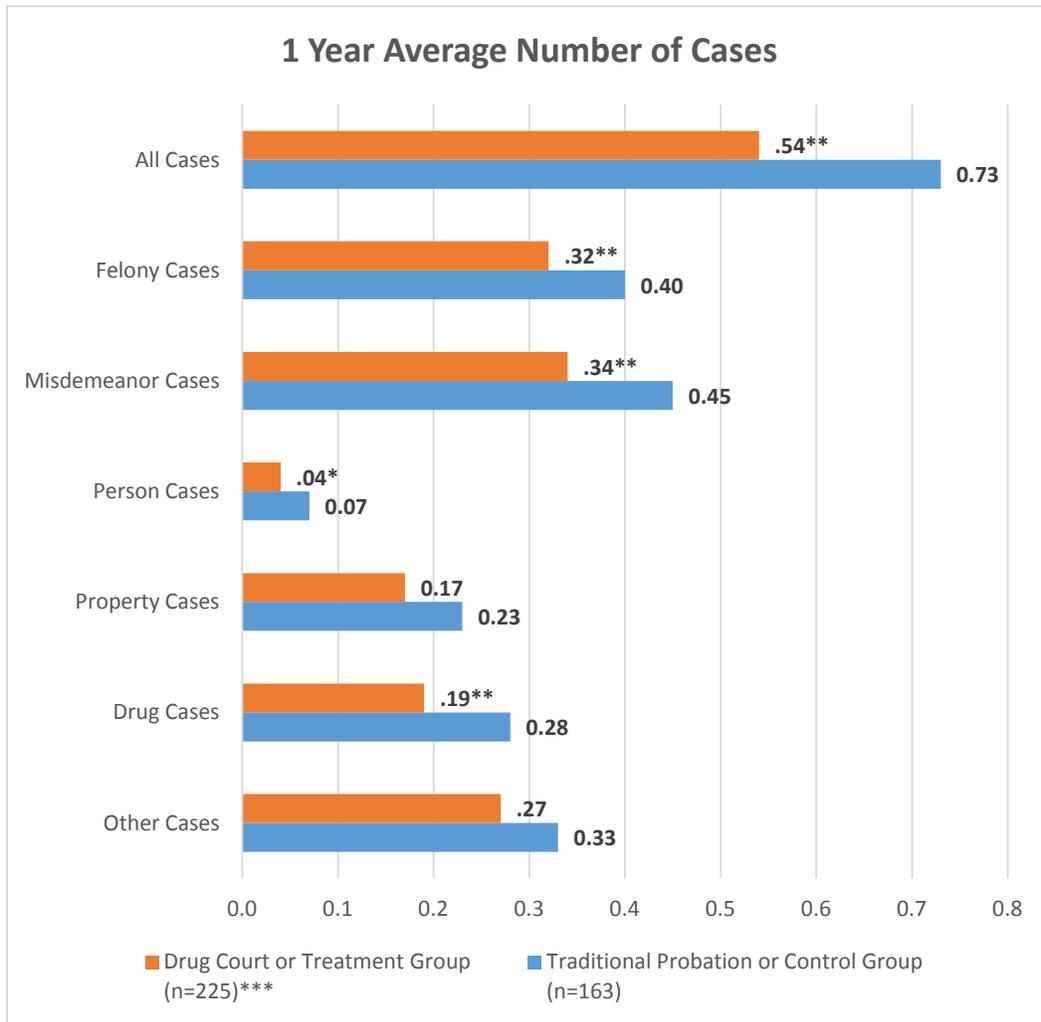


Figure B - Drug Court Participants Had Fewer New Cases with Each Charge Type



This evaluation showed a reduction in recidivism for this group of property offenders when compared to the group of offenders who received traditional probation. Many of the participants in the study were prison-eligible under Measure 57, and this evaluation provides support for drug courts as an effective alternative to prison. The Measure 57 Intensive Drug Court Program is one strategy within the continuum of services and programs for all offenders involved in the criminal justice system. This program is targeted towards a specific population and a specific point of involvement within the criminal justice system. Other types of offenders, including low risk and/or low need, and those at different points of involvement within the criminal justice system, may be better served with other types of services and programs.