

# The Effects of Private Prison Confinement on Offender Recidivism: Evidence from Minnesota

Grant Duwe, Valerie Clark

*Criminal Justice Review*

February 25, 2013 0734016813478823

<http://cjr.sagepub.com/content/early/2013/02/22/0734016813478823.abstract>

## Abstract

Evidence has been mixed as to whether private prisons are more effective than state-operated facilities in reducing recidivism. This study analyzes whether private prison confinement in Minnesota has had an impact on recidivism by examining 3,532 offenders released from prison between 2007 and 2009. Propensity score matching was used to individually match a comparison group of 1,766 inmates who had only been confined in state-run facilities with 1,766 offenders who had served time in a private prison facility. Using multiple measures of recidivism and private prison confinement, 20 Cox regression models were estimated. The results showed that offenders who had been incarcerated in a private prison had a greater hazard of recidivism in all 20 models, and the recidivism risk was significantly greater in 8 of the models. The evidence presented in this study suggests that private prisons are not more effective in reducing recidivism, which may be attributable to fewer visitation and rehabilitative programming opportunities for offenders incarcerated at private facilities.