The Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) defines recidivism as a return to incarceration within three years of the offender’s date of release from a state correctional institution. A recent study by the IDOC calculated the 2016 recidivism rate for offenders released from IDOC during 2013. This study found that:

- 2016 recidivism rates decreased after two consecutive years of increase. Of those offenders released in 2013, 36.99% were recommitted to the IDOC within three years of their release date, for either a new conviction or a violation of post-release supervision.

- Of all offenders who recidivated, approximately 47.7% returned to IDOC for the commission of a new crime, compared to approximately 52.3% for a technical rule violation of post-release supervision.

- Male offenders had a higher recidivism rate when compared to female offenders. Of male offenders released in 2013, 38.9% returned to the IDOC, versus 27.2% of female releases.

- The recidivism rate for African American offenders decreased to 38.3%, compared to 37.3% for Caucasian offenders and 22.3% for Hispanic offenders, which the latter increased slightly for the fourth consecutive year.

- The younger the offender is at the time he/she is released, the more likely they are to return to the IDOC. Also, offenders serving less than 5 years with IDOC represent 91% of all recidivists.

- Offenders who had zero conduct violations during their incarceration period were 24.0% less likely to recidivate when compared to offenders who had at least one conduct violation.

- Offenders who received visits from family or friends while incarcerated were 14.6% less likely to recidivate compared to those offenders who did not receive any visits.

- Those offenders who participated in a work release program were 30.8% less likely to return to prison when compared to offenders who did not partake in a work release program.