

# PATHWAYS HOME

## A Promising New Model for Post-Release Community Supervision

Alameda County Probation Department piloted a new model of Post-Release Community Supervision (PRCS) known as the Pathways Home Program for individuals released between December 31, 2018 and July 31, 2020. Pathways Home is a collaborative, service-oriented program that changes the dynamic between a client and their probation officer. Pre-release planning, personalized support, and relationship-building are key elements of this program (see program details below).

Researchers at the University of California, Berkeley followed 261 male clients who were classified as "high-risk" for a year after their release. They compared outcomes for those randomly assigned to the Pathways Home program and those who went through ACPD's traditional PRCS protocols as a control.

They found that clients assigned to the Pathways Home program were 17 percentage points more likely to report to their first probation meeting within the required 48 hours after release than those in the traditional program. Additionally, clients in the Pathways Home program were 14 percentage points less likely to have their probation revoked during the year following release.

## FINDINGS

### Pre-Release Planning

In the Pathways program, probation officers and clients hold a video conference and work together ahead of release to ensure that the clients have transportation, housing, and referrals to service organizations that can assist with housing, employment, career technical education, higher education, family reunification, mental health, substance use, and general supportive services. This individualized approach helps establish rapport between officers and clients. It also responds to the unique circumstances of each client. Clients in the Pathways program received earlier and more referrals (92%) than those in the control group (78%).

### First Probation Meeting

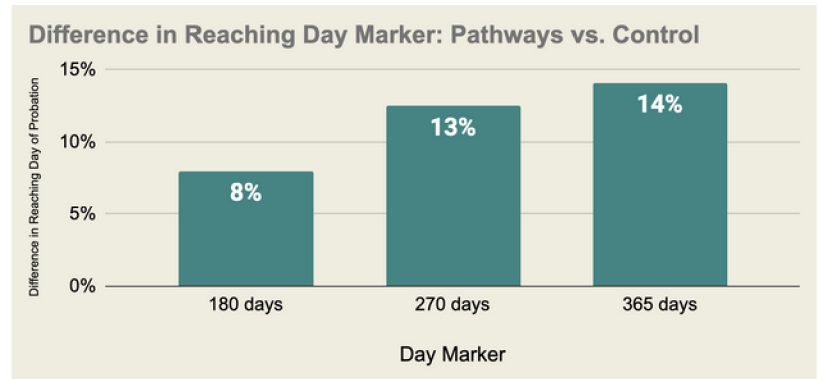
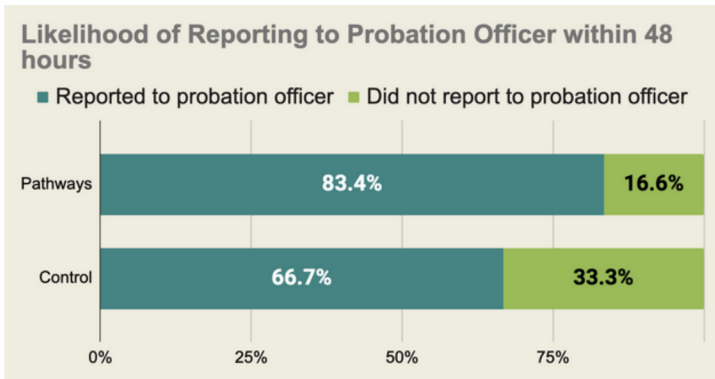
Additionally, we know that clients who report to their first probation meeting within 48 hours of release are more likely to successfully complete their year-long probation period. Pathways increased the likelihood of clients classified as high-risk making it to that first meeting from roughly two-thirds to about 83%.

### Year-One Completion

Finally, we found that Pathways participants were 14 percentage points less likely to have their probation revoked a year after release. Through personalized support, program referrals, release pre-planning, and a collaborative relationship between officers and clients, the Pathways program shows promise for decreasing revocation in the first year.

# RESULTS

Pathways Home demonstrated promising results in both post-release reporting and probation completion.



---

## IMPLEMENTATION

The Pathways Home program is built on three principles:

- 1. Self-Direction:** Officers are instructed to foster intrinsic motivation, skills training, and to provide feedback to help clients assess progress.
- 2. Individualized Support:** Officers work with clients to outline a set of tailored resources and provide referrals specific to the clients needs.
- 3. Positive Reinforcement:** Officers are encouraged to reinforce good behavior, rather than focusing on technical violations; in the event of negative behavior, sanctions are swift, certain, and appropriate.

Officers and clients meet for the first time via video conference before the client is released. In this first meeting, the client and officer talk through housing, transportation, and available resources. The pre-release meeting helps establish a relationship, and leads to higher rates of attendance at the first post-release meeting.

Officers do not have any special leeway with Pathways clients. Pathways clients are subject to the same probation violations as other PRCS participants.

***A challenge and an opportunity:** The success of innovative programs like Pathways Home is often contingent on training and investment. Shifting to collaborative pre-release and case planning requires leadership and cultural change. Officers need training on the process, and the department needs to align incentives and reward structures for officers to adhere to the new model.*