

PROP 47 GRANT PROGRAM

Cohort II Statewide Evaluation

The Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) administers the Proposition 47 grant program. Proposition 47 requires that these funds be awarded to public agencies to provide mental health services, substance use disorder treatment and/or diversion programs for those in the criminal justice system. Additional legislation (AB 1056, Chap. 438, Stats. of 2015) requires that the grants be awarded competitively, specifies that funds may serve both adults and juveniles and allows funds to be used for housing-related assistance and other community-based supportive services, including job skills training, case management or civil legal services. The BSCC further requires that at least 50 percent of the award made to grantees is passed through to community-based service providers.

The evaluation of Proposition 47 cohort II grant program completed by the BSCC highlights how the \$92 million in funding benefited California in several ways.¹ More than 21,000 people received mental health or substance use disorder treatments or were diverted from the criminal justice system. Program participants also received other supportive services, including case management, legal, housing and employment services. The benefits of these services include lower recidivism rates and a reduction in homelessness and unemployment. The benefits are immeasurable for the thousands of people whose life trajectory has taken a positive turn.

GRANTEES AND FUNDING

In June 2019, over \$92 million in Prop 47 grant funds were distributed to 21 grantees consisting of 13 county departments, five cities, and three school districts. The grant period began in August 2019 and ended in May 2023. During this time, grantees spent over \$81 million in grant funding. Of that amount, \$64 million was passed through to community-based organizations.

PARTICIPANTS

A total of 21,706 people received services through the grant-funded projects. Most participants were male (72.3%); and between the ages of 26 and 35 (35.0%). Most participants identified as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish (37%) and black or African American (24%). Sixty percent of participants had a high school diploma or less. At the time of enrollment, 31 percent of participants were unhoused, and 65 percent were unemployed.

¹ <https://www.bscc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/H-2-Proposition-47-Cohort-2-Final-Evaluation-Report-FINAL-1.pdf>.

PROJECT SERVICES

Most grantees provided mental health services, substance use disorder treatment, and/or diversion programs, as required. Grantees also provided support services including assistance with food, basic necessities, case management, education, employment, housing, legal, social and transportation services. Approximately 19 percent of participants received one-time intervention services, such as mental health crisis intervention or diversion to a sobering center. At the end of the grant period, 22 percent of participants were still receiving services. Statewide, 32.5 percent of participants completed the program requirements².



Mental Health Services
Provided by 95% of grantees



Substance Use Disorder Treatment
Provided by 91% of grantees

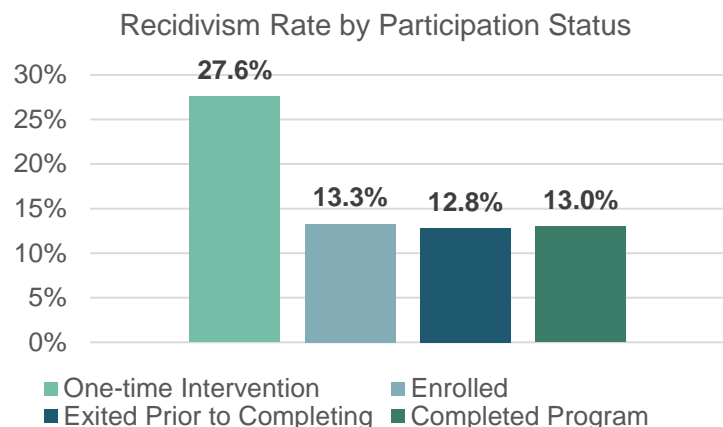


Diversion Programs
Provided by 62% of grantees

RECIDIVISM OUTCOMES

For this evaluation, recidivism was defined as the conviction of a misdemeanor or felony after program enrollment.³ For the participants for which recidivism data were available, **15.3 percent of participants were convicted of a new misdemeanor or felony**. This rate is lower than other reported statewide recidivism estimates which range from 35 to 45 percent; data from these reports may not provide equitable comparison groups. Recidivism rates were:

- lower for participants who identified as black or African American (11%) compared to other race/ethnicities (12-17%).
- lower for those participants who were employed either part-time or full-time (12%) compared to those who were unemployed (15.4%).
- lower for those who were living independently (11%) compared to those who were homeless (18%) or living with family or relatives (19%).
- lower for participants who received ongoing services (13%) compared to those who received one-time interventions (28%; e.g., sobering centers).

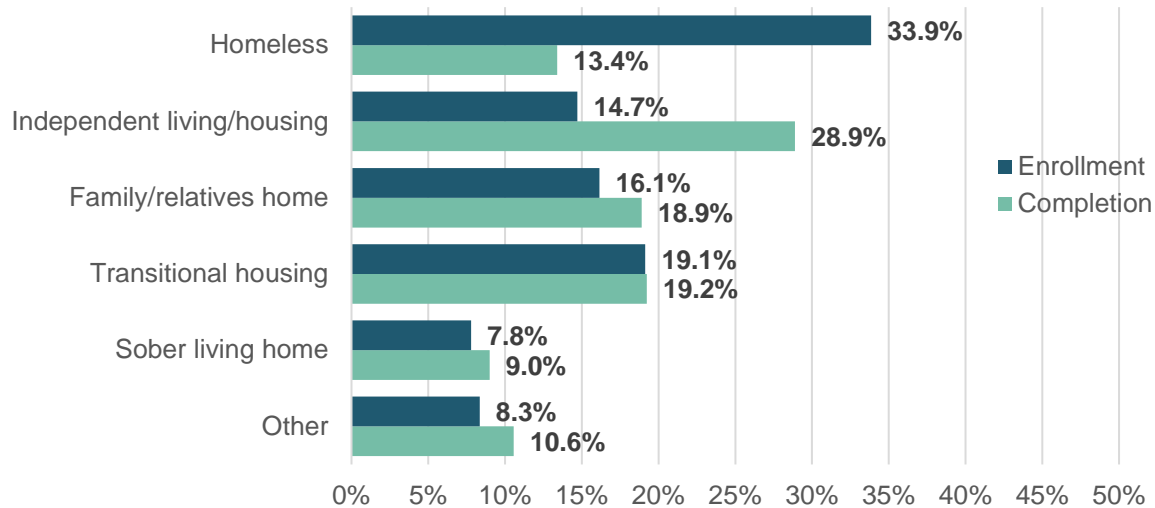


² The definition of what constituted program completion varied by grantee.

³ The grant term is shorter than the usual recidivism definition of a new conviction within three years.

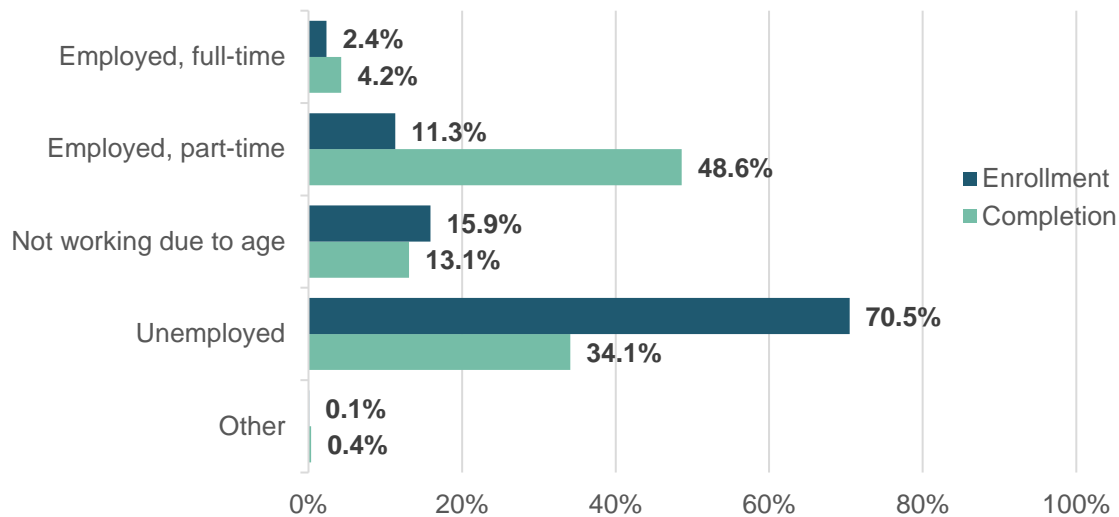
HOMELESSNESS OUTCOMES

Almost 6,000 participants identified housing as a goal. For these participants who completed program requirements ($n = 2,168$), **homelessness at program completion was reduced by 60 percent relative to program enrollment**. Additionally, the proportion of people living independently nearly doubled.



EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Over 6,000 participants identified employment as a goal. For these participants who completed program requirements ($n = 1,871$), **unemployment was reduced by 50 percent relative to program enrollment**. Most employment gains were in part-time employment, although the proportion of participants who were employed full-time also increased.



CHALLENGES AND ACCOMMODATIONS

While all grantees encountered challenges – including the COVID-19 pandemic, staffing shortages, and lack of affordable housing – grantees were still able to accomplish most of their goals. The COVID-19 pandemic, which started five months into the grant period, led to delays in start times, reduced participant capacities, and reductions in referrals. Grantees adapted to this challenge by providing telehealth options, providing personal protective equipment to staff working in the field, adhering to social distancing guidelines when meeting participants, and meeting outdoors. Many grantees noted challenges surrounding availability of housing, particularly low-income housing, and the complexity of obtaining subsidized or permanent supportive housing. Most grantees reported issues related to recruiting and retaining quality staff. These shortages impacted grantees’ ability to provide comprehensive services to participants, particularly when the vacant position was for a key role such as licensed clinical staff, substance use specialists, or therapists. As with the COVID-19 pandemic, grantees found creative ways to address these challenges, allowing them to provide services to participants and achieve or partially achieve their goals.

MOVING FORWARD

As the Proposition 47 grant program continues, data collection and evaluation for the program continue to be refined. For cohort III, BSCC staff plan on using local arrest and conviction data as reported to the California Department of Justice to create an equivalent comparison group for recidivism rates. However, for the current report, recidivism rates for participants were compared to other published recidivism rates for California, which may not be an equivalent comparison group.