

# Indigenous Justice Program Recidivism Study & Costing Analysis



## About the Study

As part of the 2021 Evaluation of the Indigenous Justice Program (IJP), Justice's Evaluation Branch conducted a statistical analysis of the impact of the IJP Community-Based Justice Programs on the likelihood of recidivism.<sup>1</sup> To further the study, a costing analysis was conducted to estimate the impact that the IJP has had on reducing costs to the Criminal Justice System (CJS). The analysis compared the costs of an offender participating in an IJP supported program versus going through the CJS court process, the primary alternative for IJP participants.

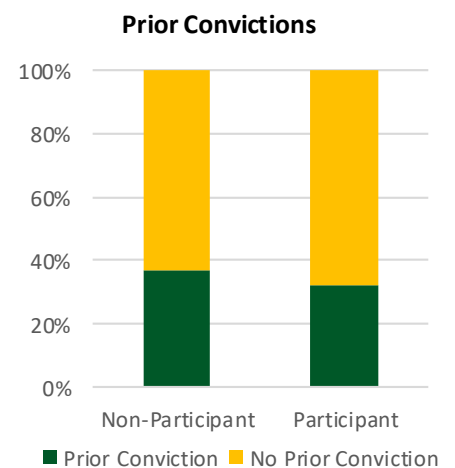
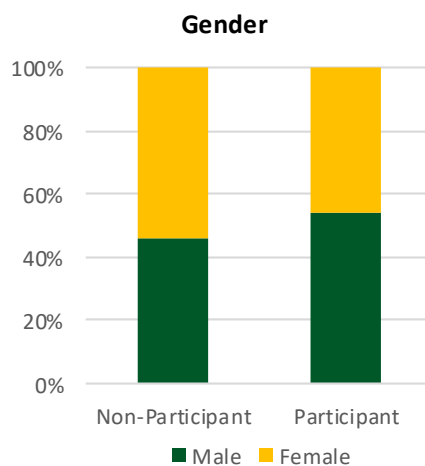
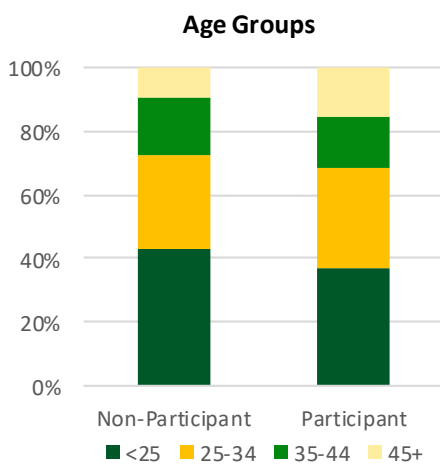
## About the IJP

The IJP is a federally led initiative that is cost-shared with all thirteen provinces and territories and delivered in partnership with Indigenous communities. The Program has operated since 1991 to support Indigenous community-based justice programs that offer alternatives to criminal justice processes. Community-based justice programs are unique as the services offered are based on the justice-related priorities of the communities in which they are situated and designed to reflect Indigenous culture and values. Although the primary focus for most of the programs is diversion from the CJS, the programs also provide a range of other justice-related services from prevention to reintegration.

## Methodology

Statistical methods were used to compare the likelihood of reconviction for offenders who participated in an IJP supported program, compared to offenders who were referred to an IJP supported program but did not participate (i.e., quasi-experimental). Individuals who were referred to the program between October 1, 2013 and March 31, 2016, with a program release date<sup>2</sup> on or before March 31, 2016 were included in the analysis, yielding a sample of 1,800 people (i.e., participants and non-participants) from 47 IJP supported programs across Canada. Regression modeling was used to measure the odds of reconviction at one to five year time intervals following program release. The key variables that were also used in the regression modeling include age, gender and criminal history.<sup>3</sup>

## Sample Characteristics



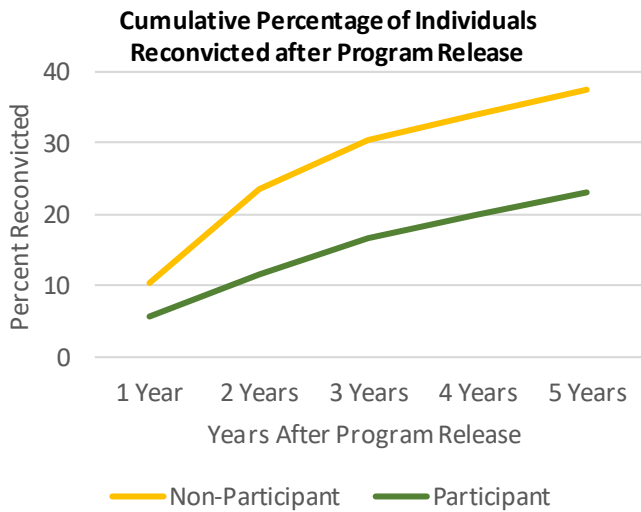
<sup>1</sup> Recidivism was defined as a criminal conviction for a new offence following program participation or a non-participant's referral to the program.

<sup>2</sup> For non-participants, the program release date reflects the date at which their file for the referral was closed because they did not participate in the program.

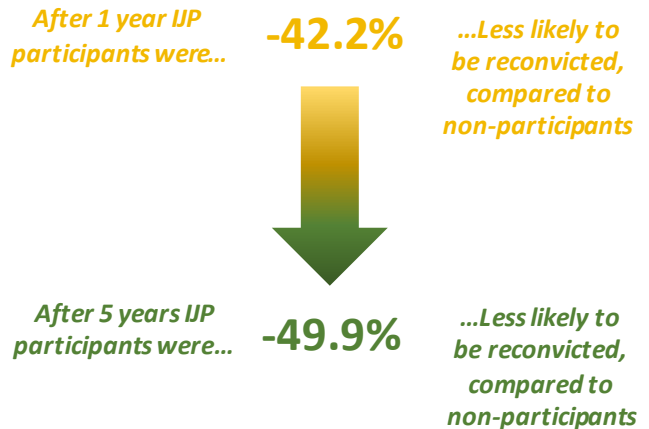
<sup>3</sup> These variables were added in the regression model to account for any differences between participants and non-participants that may have an impact on the odds of reconviction.

# Findings

**A higher proportion of non-participants were reconvicted** in the first five years after program release, while program participants were significantly less likely to be reconvicted each year, and **50% less likely** to be reconvicted after five years.



## Likelihood of IJP Participants being Reconvicted 1-5 Years Post-Program, compared to Non-Participants

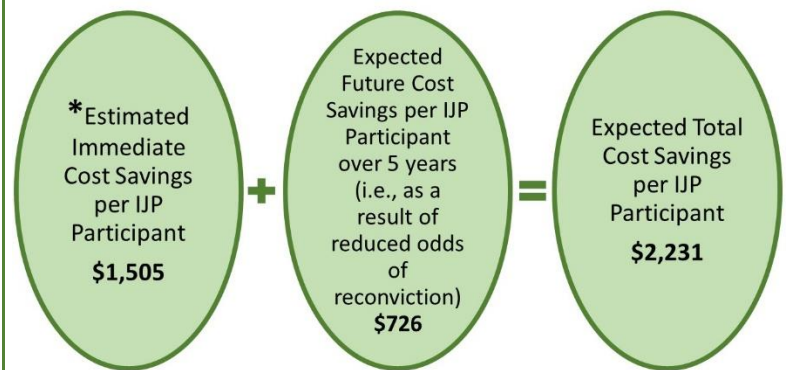


The IJP costs an estimated **\$2,231 less per participant** compared to the criminal justice system, while accounting for an estimated immediate and expected future cost savings due to a reduction in the odds of reconviction. As a result, the IJP has demonstrated both **cost savings and cost effectiveness**.

### Expected Costs Per Participant (2018)

	<b>\$ Criminal Justice System</b>		<b>\$ Indigenous Justice Program</b>
Court Costs	\$1,296	IJP Spending	\$3,065
Prosecution Costs	\$2,803	Court, Prosecution & Legal Aid Costs	\$1,267
Legal Aid Costs	\$1,738		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,837</b>	<b>vs. Total</b>	<b>\$4,332</b>

**\$5,837 - \$4,332 = \$1,505\***



**Estimated Total Cost Savings<sup>4</sup> = \$19.9 Million (2022\$)**

<sup>4</sup> Includes immediate and future cost savings to the CJS over five years (\$2,231) for all IJP participants in 2018 (n=7,923), (\$2,231 x 7,923 = \$17.7M). Since calculations were made in 2018 dollars, the Bank of Canada Inflation Calculator was used to convert costs savings to 2022 dollars to account for inflation.