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PAROLE AND MANDATORY SUPERVISED RELEASE IN ILLINOIS: A HISTORICAL REVIEW FROM 1895 TO 2022



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Abstract: The number of people under mandatory supervised release (MSR), commonly referred to as parole, in Illinois has fallen dramatically in the past two years, reaching a 30-year low in June 2021. The SAFE-T Act of 2021 may further reduce the MSR population in coming years. In light of the changing landscape of supervision in Illinois, this article reviews the state's history of parole and mandatory supervised release, including parole/MSR population trends, key legislation, and administrative policies that have impacted correctional practices.

Introduction

The overwhelming majority of those who are incarcerated will someday be released to rejoin their communities. That act of reentry is of utmost importance to the state and was a priority of multiple Illinois governors over the past 30 years.¹ The SAFE-T Act,² which took effect January 1, 2022 mandates major changes to supervision after release from incarceration. These changes are, in many cases, rooted in public debate and policies that go back more than a century. This article is intended to provide the reader with a broad understanding of the history and context of parole in Illinois, from passing its initial parole law in 1895,³ to the replacement of parole with mandatory supervised release (MSR) in 1978 and the most recent reforms required by the SAFE-T Act.⁴

In doing so the article will touch on changes over time to the following:

- The length of time that individuals are expected to remain in prison for a given sentence.
- The process by which individuals are released from prison and, relatedly, who has discretion over these decisions
- The information used to evaluate who is released from prison and when they are released.
- The relative number of individuals under supervision/parole over time compared to the number of individuals in prison and the total population of residents in the state.
- Recurring public and governmental concerns with the operation of parole.

The presentation of these issues is intentionally brief in nature and seeks to provide definitions for concepts such as parole and MSR as they are presented throughout the article and to situate them within their historical context, as the meaning of these terms has shifted over time. Throughout the article reference is made to multiple interconnected graphs (figures), depicting the total number of individuals in prison and on parole/MSR as well as a reference line showing 0.1% of the Illinois population (this number is equivalent to 100 per 100,000) over time. In addition to the figures, a single higher resolution diagram showing the entire timeline since 1830 is provided as supplementary material.

In the same vein, in depth discussion of many points will be omitted to provide the reader with a clearer narrative of what parole for adult offenders is, and was, at various points in Illinois history. In particular, the reader should be aware that a multitude of smaller revisions to offense classification and sentencing guidelines have been omitted in order to focus on larger reforms that have clear historical and/or present relevance. Likewise, the system for juvenile offenders is not covered, and important issues such as racial and economic equity are not covered.

As a quick note on terminology, naming practices have changed multiple times since the late 19th century: this applies to how legislation is referenced in speeches and written reports by both

government officials and the press. The terminology used in this article generally reflects the language used by the contemporary cited sources.

19th Century Illinois Penitentiary System and Parole

The de facto first official parole in Illinois was the release of prisoners of war from Alton Penitentiary during the Civil War⁵. This was likely motivated by the overcrowded and unsafe conditions at Alton. In this context, a paroled prisoner was released on their honor to exit prison and not rejoin combat. The term *parole* would also be applied to enslaved people who had been permitted limited freedom to travel or work⁶. Consistent with this, in 19th century Illinois, prisoners were sometimes leased to private companies for work⁷, though this form of contract labor was banned in Illinois in 1886⁸. Though not technically parole, these arrangements de facto allowed individuals to be released from prison to outside employment and were precursors to the later parole system's operations.

In 1895, Illinois passed its first parole law, generally referred to as the Illinois Parole Law, and introduced indeterminate sentencing for all but the most severe crimes such as rape, murder, and treason.⁹ Under the 1895 law, a minimum sentence would be given for a specific crime at a specific prison. The law gave prison wardens the power to release individuals on parole after serving that minimum time. The maximum amount of time an individual would serve depended on the crime the individual was convicted of and the warden's decision on whether to grant parole prior to that time.

Prior to 1895, sentencing was set as a definite, as it was termed at the time,¹⁰ number of years based on crime type, with no form of parole or early release. Proponents of the parole system believed that these definite sentences often led to shorter sentences with less chance for rehabilitation (while incarcerated) and higher chances of corruption at the level of the individual judge and/or prosecutor.¹¹ Some crimes remained definite sentence crimes (murder, rape, kidnapping, and treason) under the 1895 law. In the initial 1895 parole system, wardens had near absolute discretion over release, and based their decision on individuals behavior while incarcerated and their perceived risk of offending, the latter often depending heavily on who was willing to sponsor the individual on parole as there were no staff to monitor those released from prison.

If granted parole, individuals would sign a parole agreement with conditions such as keeping a job or refraining from alcohol use, and would have a sponsor.¹² In practice, this meant that the early parole system was characterized by public and private partnerships, with wardens establishing relationships with charitable organizations as well as businesses/employers who would, essentially, supervise parolees, either by assisting them in finding housing or employment, or by directly employing them, and thereafter sending monthly reports to the warden¹³. As a result of these differing arrangements, parolee living conditions varied considerably, as some parties were highly motivated to help parolees become independent and avoid breaking the law, while others actively sought to exploit low wage workers with limited rights.¹⁴

In 1899, Illinois amended its parole law to provide for one parole agent per prison responsible for visiting parolees. In practice, the system remained largely the same due to the small number of agents. The small number of agents was compounded the fact that most agents' travel was largely focused on bringing those who violated the terms of their agreement back to prison.¹⁵

1915-1917 – Parole Placed Under the Department of Public Welfare

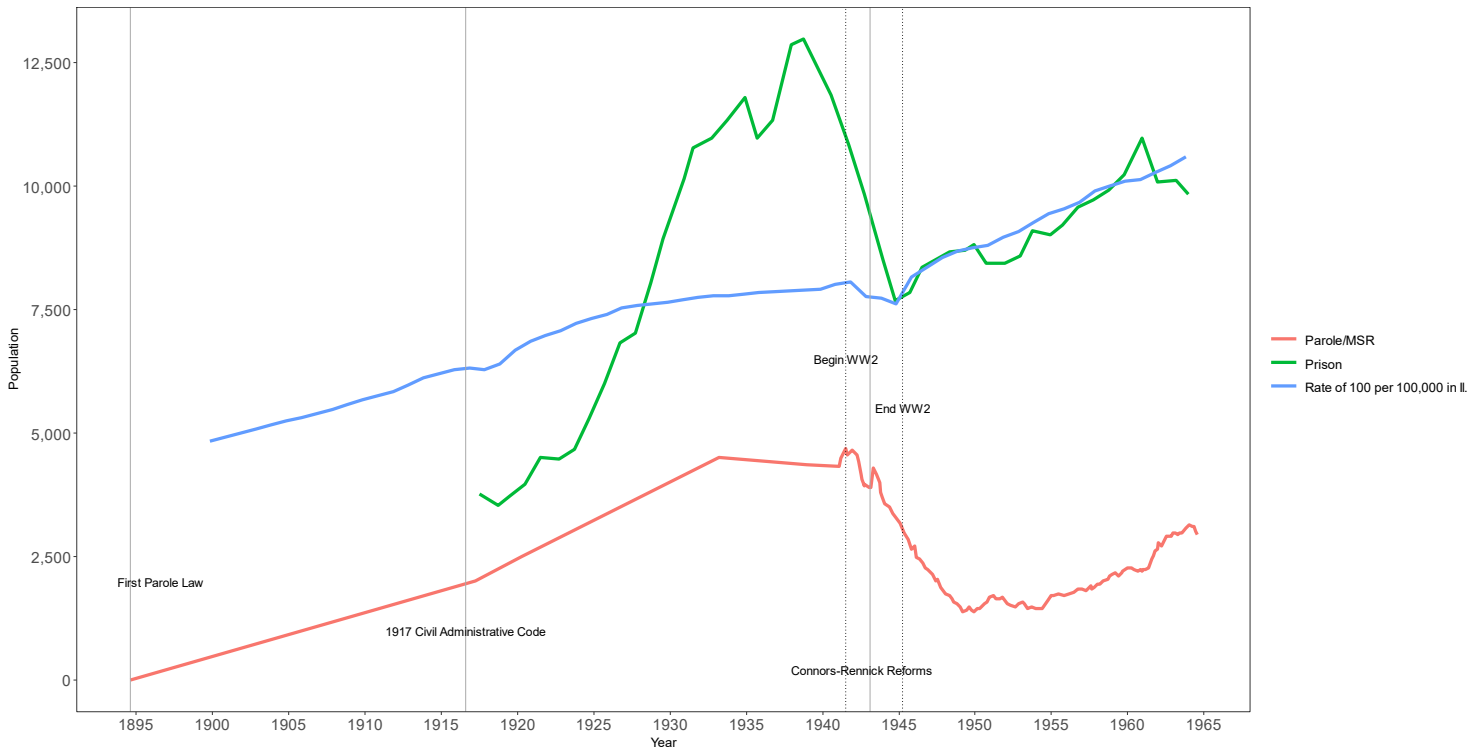
In 1915 and 1917, a series of reforms were passed that substantially altered parole in Illinois and the organization of the administration. Under these reforms, individuals sentenced to definite terms (e.g, for murder, rape, kidnapping) became eligible for parole after serving the greater of one third of their sentence or the statutory minimum allowable sentence for the crime. Those serving life sentences became eligible after 20 years.¹⁶ The Civil Administrative Code, also passed in 1917, consolidated the parole and pardon systems into the Division of Pardons and Parole under the Department of Public Welfare, itself in charge of the prison system.¹⁷ This moved both the decision to grant parole and the administration of parole supervision away from prison wardens, and consolidated those powers under a new central authority instead.¹⁸

The administration of parole supervision was further organized into districts based on the location of parolees instead of the prison they were released from. The number of agents was also increased from 9 in 1915 to 20 in 1917, to supervise approximately 2,000 individuals throughout the state. Decisions about whether or not to grant parole were determined by a part-time appointed board called the Board of Pardons and Parole, within the same organization administering parole supervision and the prison system.¹⁹ (For the sake of simplicity, the Board of Pardons and Parole and its similarly named successors will be referred to as the *parole board*, prior to the 1978 abolishment of parole, after which it becomes the Prisoner Review Board.)²⁰

The central administration benefitted record keeping considerably. Parolee records from this era until the introduction digital technologies beginning in the 1960s and 1970s are still housed at the Illinois State Archives. Though the total population under supervision was only tabulated as

needed, the total prison population began to be tabulated and tracked at the state level, both of which are visible in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Parolee and Prison Populations 1895-1965



Note: Figure 1 is a composite of multiple sources detailed in references. Note that while prison population totals become available on a yearly basis starting around 1917, parole MSR statistics prior to 1941 are based on public statements by officials and reporting²¹.

1926-1928 – Parole Board Becomes Independent After Scandal

In 1926, the chairman of the parole board, Will Colvin²² resigned, as two grand juries investigated evidence²³ that the board had been exchanging early parole for bribes and/or political favor²⁴. This led Governor Len Smalls²⁵ to appoint H.G. Clabaugh as chairman of the parole board²⁶. Clabaugh took substantial action to reform the parole board and win public trust in the institution: 1) he made all parole hearings public, 2) he requested that the state legislature make the parole board independent of the Department of Public Welfare (and therefore the prison administration and the supervision of parole), and 3) convened an external commission of academics to advise whether indeterminate sentencing and parole should continue and, if so, how they should be operated.

As a result, in 1927, the Illinois legislature separated the parole board, making it independent from the Department of Public Welfare, the prisons, and the administration responsible for supervising parolees. The board was also expanded to nine appointed members, giving it substantially higher capacity, though these seem to have been part time appointments based on later reporting.²⁷ The report from the academic commission was released in 1928²⁸ and largely supported the system of indeterminate sentencing combined with parole as effective for reducing

re-offense by released individuals²⁹. The commission also observed that though the new parole board had greater capacity to review cases, and no evidence of intentional political influence could be observed, its methods of judging cases largely resembled the prior board in terms of focusing on face-to-face interviews with potential parolees and review of collected case files.³⁰

1933 – Establishment of Risk Assessment in the Parole System

While not adopted by Clabaugh's parole board, the 1928 report contained seminal work by sociologist Ernest Burgess, which was adopted later as integral part of the criminal justice system nationally. This work analyzed 3,000 parolees' prison and post-incarceration records and identified 22 predictive factors into an actuarial table for estimating the risk of whether or not a parolee would reoffend.³¹

after a large prison riot was attributed by both rioters and administrators as being a result of overcrowding, the public sought a way to safely determine who could be released.³² The Department of Public Welfare then began including results from Burgess' actuarial tables in the case files provided to the parole board for review in 1931. This eventually led to sociologists being hired by the Department of Public Welfare in 1933 and investing in the actuarial methods developed by Burgess and their further development.³³ This aspect of parole in Illinois remained and grew until the 1970s, with sociologists conducting numerous studies while working at the department³⁴ and further developing risk assessment tools. However, as can be seen in *Figure 1*, there was no trend to increase parole release in the 1930s.

1933-39 – Early Mass Incarceration

Throughout the 1930s, a confluence of factors led to Illinois reaching a maximum prison population of 13,444 in 1939.³⁵ The first was the prohibition of alcohol from 1920-1933, and the related policing efforts to prevent gang activity, which led to increased admissions. The second was the parole board remaining conservative in granting parole and liberal in revoking parole after it was granted, which continued even as admissions decreased in the late 1930s.³⁶ This approach was partly rooted in Clabaugh's approach to regaining public trust in the late 1920s.³⁷

Press coverage put great emphasis on high profile cases of violent recidivism by individuals granted parole, which both proponents and detractors of the parole system agreed led to parole being granted sparingly in the late 1930s.³⁸ In *Figure 1*, it can be seen that there are relatively few data points for the parole population in the 1930s, however the population under parole supervision maintained a level around 4,500 while the prison population peaked at over 13,000.

1933 also saw the creation of the Illinois Penitentiary System within the Department of Public Welfare.³⁹ Prior to this reform, convicted offenders were sentenced to a specific prison. However, after this reform, sentences were applied more generally to the statewide Illinois Penitentiary System.

1941 – Department of Public Safety

In 1941, the Illinois legislature passed administrative reforms that created the Department of Public Safety.⁴⁰ Prison and parole administration moved from the Department of Public Welfare to the newly formed Department of Public Safety, which also handled various other public safety functions, such as criminal identification, highway patrol, and crime prevention. Through this organizational change, parole supervision was treated more as a policing duty as opposed to the earlier focus on welfare. The parole board remained its own separate entity. Notably, the Department of Public Safety also began tracking the number of individuals under parole supervision on a monthly basis, providing greater detail, as shown in *Figure 1* from 1941 onward and in the entirety of *Figure 2*.

1943 – Connors-Rennick Parole Reform

In 1943, the Illinois legislature passed parole reforms sponsored by State Senators Connors and Rennick⁴¹ This legislation was passed after previous failed attempts, including an earlier version that was passed, but voided after being deemed unconstitutional. The Connors-Rennick law, as it was called⁴², enabled judges to render minimum and maximum sentences that could only be overridden by vote of the full parole board. This was intended by its sponsors to limit the power of the parole board relative to the judiciary to determine when individuals were released.

This may have been expected to further decrease the number of paroles granted, as minimum sentences could both limit the likelihood of early parole and increase the prison population. However, historical data indicates that such decreases did not occur. As seen in *Figure 1*, during this time prison populations declined after peaking in 1939. These decreases continued through the 1940s. *Figure 1* also shows the earliest consistently available data on the number of individuals under parole supervision Parole trends mirror declines in prison populations throughout the 1940s.

The actual number of those released on parole due to the Connors-Rennick Act may have been offset by parole releases granted to individuals who volunteered for military service. From 1940 to 1947, Illinois paroled 2,942 individuals serving time for felony crimes to the Army, and once paroled to the Army the period of parole supervision itself was additionally shortened.⁴³ This was at least a contributor to the reduction in prison populations and parolee populations (as well as at least one of the short term increases in parolee population), visible in *Figure 2*. While not necessarily the only cause of the decrease prison and parole population, this was certainly one factor.

1950-1970 - Shift to Service Perspective

The system of sentencing and organization of parole in Illinois were relatively stable between 1950 and 1970, with a few relatively minor legal shifts. In 1951, the Connors-Rennick Act sustained a final legal challenge⁴⁴ and, subsequently, remained the prevailing system until the 1970s. One substantive change to sentencing during this period took effect in 1957,⁴⁵ giving judges the option to sentence repeat offenders to a lengthy indeterminate sentence instead of a mandatory life sentence.

This change was perhaps indicative of an overall shift towards a stronger focus on rehabilitation that continued through the 1960s. During the 1960s parole agents began to adopt a counselor service perspective instead of a public safety perspective.⁴⁶ Halfway houses were established to ease reintegration into communities, and in the late 1960s work and day release centers were created. Notably however, the latter were considered in-prison custody and not parole, though those individuals at the centers were able to work outside of prison prior to parole.

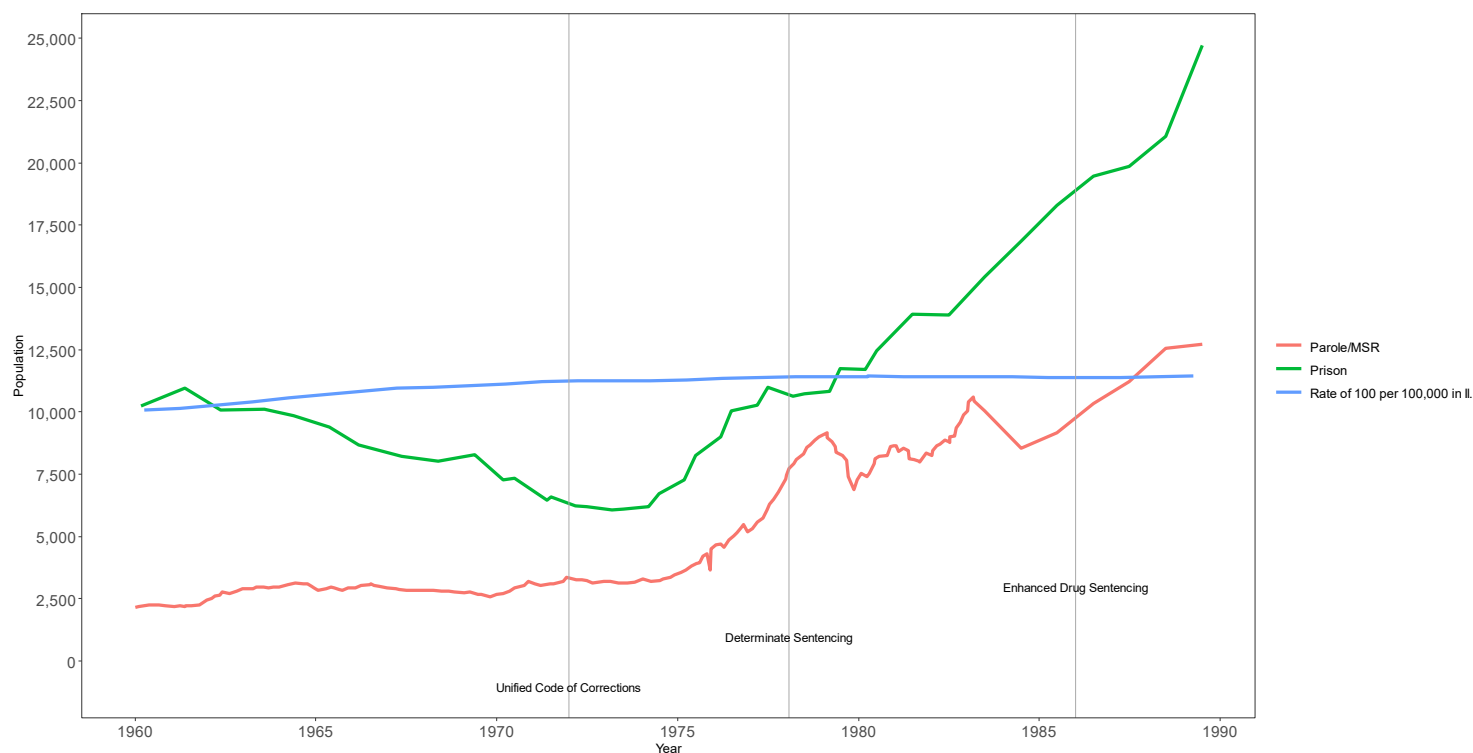
The public and legislative focus during this time was on the operation and decision making⁴⁷ of the parole board as well as the administration of parole supervision. During this time, changes in overall parole populations were relatively small, compared to the later changes to come.⁴⁸

1970s – Large-Scale Criminal Justice Reform

The 1970s brought sweeping criminal justice reforms to Illinois. In 1970, the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) was created⁴⁹, placing increased focus individual needs of those who were incarcerated and separating prison and parole operations from state police operations.⁵⁰ Shortly after this the parole board became full time.⁵¹ In 1972, the Unified Code of Corrections was adopted⁵². Although the reforms primarily applied to prison conditions, the Code also shifted authority for determining the intensity and level of supervision for parolees exclusively to parole administration within IDOC and away from the parole board. The parole board remained an independent entity however and was still responsible for determining parole conditions. An additional change impacting parole and supervision was the implementation of statutory parole,⁵³ which granted parole six months prior to completion of the maximum sentence (including for parole ineligible offenses). This effort was intended to ensure that all persons exiting prison had some degree of re-entry supervision.

At the end of 1973, Illinois had approximately 5,600⁵⁴ adults serving sentences in prison (approximately 50 persons per 100,000 in the Illinois population⁵⁵; *Figure 2*), the lowest since 1925, when the total was approximately 5,287 or 72 persons per 100,000 in the Illinois population were incarcerated⁵⁶. This decrease can be partly attributed to new policies whereupon persons sentenced to prison for under six months served their sentence in jail as opposed to prison.⁵⁷ The prison population's low point coincided with rising crime, leading to public scrutiny of the parole board⁵⁸. Following this historic low in prison population came the fastest growth in prison populations on record as the prison population reached 10,982 by June 1977⁵⁹ (*Figure 2*).

Figure 2 Parole and Prison 1960 to 1990



Concurrent with this sharp rise in prison populations, the Illinois legislature conducted a two-year review of the parole and sentencing system in Illinois from 1975 to 1977. The review resulted in a series of reform bills⁶⁰. What the legislature eventually passed in 1977 was promoted as a ‘get tough on crime’ law⁶¹ and included considerable changes to sentencing as well. In particular, it established an additional class of felonies (‘X’) for sentencing and added aggravating factors to existing criminal offenses that could be considered by judges, allowing for longer sentences (e.g., offenses occurring near a place of worship, offenses involving a child victim, or a repeat offense).

Broader reforms went into effect February 1978⁶² and were rooted in David Fogel’s⁶³ Justice Model⁶⁴ that pushed against rehabilitation/medical perspectives of incarceration in favor of transparent penalties and procedural fairness⁶⁵. This new system ended the era of indeterminate sentencing and parole, which had relied upon the parole board to make discretionary decisions regarding inmate release, and replaced it with a system designed to allow almost no discretion by anyone besides the trial judge and/or jury on the length of time individuals spent in prison and once released under mandatory supervised release (MSR; the successor to parole in Illinois; described in fuller detail below). The sentencing changes that took effect in 1978 are summarized in *Table 1*.

Table 1: Sentencing Under Indeterminate and Determinate Sentencing

<i>Felony Class</i>	<i>Indeterminate Sentencing (1977)</i>			<i>Determinate Sentencing (1978 onward)</i>			
	Minimum	Maximum	Supervision	Minimum	Maximum	Supervision	<i>Supervision (SAFE-T Act, eff.1/1/2022)</i>
<i>Murder</i>	14 years	Life	5 years	20 years	60 years ^a	3 years	<i>3 years</i>
<i>Class X</i>	<i>Did not exist prior to Determinate Sentencing</i>			6 years	30 years	3 years ^b	<i>1.5 years^b</i>
<i>Class 1</i>	4 years	Life	5 years	4 years	15 years	2 years	<i>1 year</i>
<i>Class 2</i>	1 year	20 years	3 years	3 years	7 years	1 year	<i>1 year</i>
<i>Class 3</i>	1 year	10 years	3 years	2 years	5 years	1 year	<i>up to 1 year</i>
<i>Class 4</i>	1 year	3 years	2 years	1 year	3 years	1 year	<i>up to 1 year</i>

Note: Although not shown in the table, determinate sentencing also included provisions for extended sentences when offenses include aggravating factors or repeat offenses. In some instances, repeat offenders may be tried as Class X felons even when the underlying offense is a lower tier felony. In addition, under determinate sentencing, life sentences are possible for repeat offenders and/or for offenses that include aggravating factors.

^a In 1978, the maximum sentence for murder was 40 years, this was later increased to 60 years.

^b After 2005, individuals convicted of certain Class X sex crimes could be kept under MSR for an indeterminate length of time by the Prisoner Review Board.

Under the revised system of determinate sentencing and MSR, which, by and large, remains in effect, all sentences are ordered by a judge as a specific time, e.g., 6 years. For each day that individuals are not involved in disciplinary action, they earn a day off their sentence (thus, determinate sentences are considered “Day for Day” sentences), so that a sentence of 6 years is expected to result in many or even most individuals serving 3 actual years in prison. The IDOC Director can additionally grant up to discretionary 90 days off, which is typically award for good conduct such as completion of courses but can also be used to release individuals slightly early when the administration deems it appropriate.

Critically, under MSR, when prisoners are released, they have fulfilled their prison sentence. Thus, after release, supervision is considered mandatory supervised release (MSR) and not parole from their prison sentence. This was not the case for parole as originally introduced in 1895, where parole was, at least initially, seen as revocable reprieve from serving the full sentence⁶⁶. A particular implication of this distinction is that if someone violates the terms of MSR, they could be returned to prison up and until the maximum of their remaining MSR term, not the remaining calendar days of their original nominal sentence. So for example, someone

sentenced to 6 years for a class 2 felony would be released to MSR after approximately 3 years, and if their release was revoked they could only be held for one additional year for a total of 4 years, not 6 years.

The parole board was formally abolished and replaced with the Prisoner Review Board (PRB). In practice, the PRB continued many duties of the parole board and continued to adjudicate supervision conditions and revocation decisions for both those remaining under the old parole law and MSR. Because so many duties remained present and the PRB remained very active for years handling all individuals who had been sentenced to indeterminate sentences, the word parole remains commonplace in both the public press and government administration in Illinois, however it generally refers to MSR.

However, the board no longer had discretion over when someone would be released from prison, excepting that they had authority to approve IDOC requests related to reinstatement and/or reduction in time earned credits⁶⁷. This also de facto ended the era of risk assessment tools being used during release decisions, as had been adopted by Burgess in the 1930s.

1980s - Mandatory Supervised Release and the War on Drugs

By 1982, and as seen in Figure 2, the Illinois prison population reached 13,967 (or roughly 115 persons per 100,000 in the Illinois population), exceeding its prior maximum of 13,444 (reached in 1939, roughly 170 persons per 100,000; *Figure 2*). By 1987, the prison population had increased even further to reach its highest level relative to the population, at 19,928, or 174 persons per 100,000.

Starting in the mid-1980s, Illinois frequently modified sentencing criteria for drug offenses. This included increased sentence durations for drug offenses (effective January 1, 1986) and decreased quantities of drugs required to receive the most severe penalties.⁶⁸ This, combined with determinate sentencing/MSR and the sentences related to X class offenses, contributed to further increases in the prison population.⁶⁹

From 1978 to 1987, the population of people under post-release supervision fluctuated between approximately 8,000 and 12,000 as the remainder of those serving pre-1978 parole completed their terms and an increasing number of individuals entered supervision under the shorter MSR rules. In 1987, 84 of 128 parole agents were laid off from IDOC, leaving 44 agents to manage 11,500 individuals under supervision.⁷⁰ Though agents were rehired starting 18 months later, parole agents still had large caseloads on average, between 188 and 260 parolees per agent. When laid off agents returned to work, it was not treated as return to the prior state, but as of a 'rebuilding' the department.⁷¹

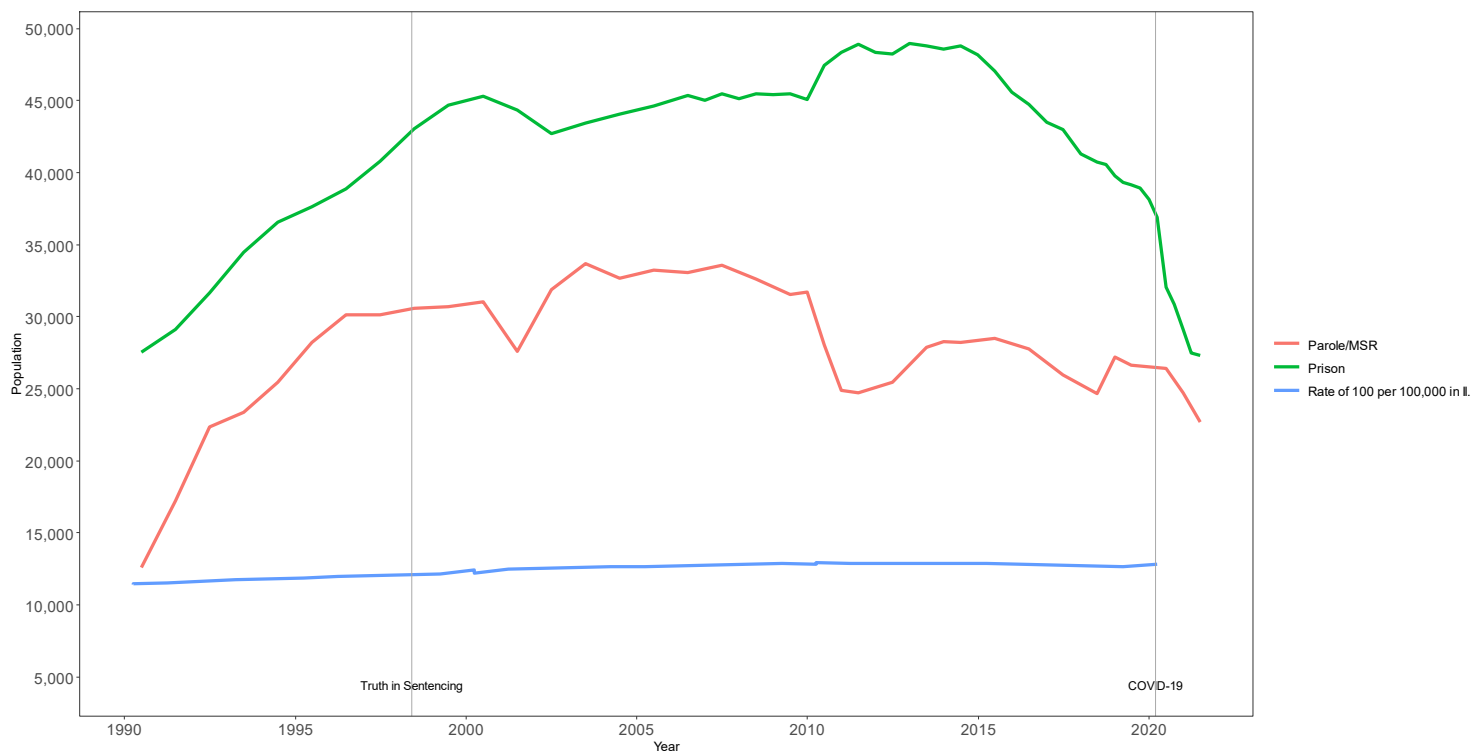
1990s - Community Services, PreStart, and Truth-in-Sentencing Laws

In July 1991, the Illinois Department of Corrections began implementation of the PreStart program.⁷² The PreStart program was intended to reduce recidivism and technical violations by providing additional programming in prison prior to release (Phase I) as well as supportive services post-release (Phase II). The program was also intended to shift the emphasis of

supervision from enforcement to supportive assistance, so much so that enforcement functions of supervision (e.g., to detect parole violations) were separated from more supportive functions (e.g., to make referrals related to housing, employment, education, etc.) Finally, the PreStart program was also intended to improve resource utilization, (i.e., allow operation of the system with more people under supervision by fewer agents). The department shifted operations from assigning individuals to their own agents to assigning them to a parole office, where the caseload was shared across agents.⁷³

A program assessment indicated that completion of the PreStart program was statistically related with lower rates of recidivism⁷⁴, and especially to lower levels of technical violations that would have lead to reincarceration⁷⁵. Unfortunately, it also found implementations issues in terms of training, funding, and staffing the program especially during the supervision portion (Phase II).

Figure 3 Prison and Parole 1990 to 2021



In 1995, Illinois passed its first truth-in-sentencing (TIS) laws. The original bill was found unconstitutional, however a revision was drafted and passed in 1998⁷⁶. The Illinois TIS law changed the day-for-day provisions of the original 1978 statute for certain offenses. Under the 1978 system, prisoners were expected to be released after serving approximately 50% of their time. Under TIS, fewer earned credits were allowed for certain violent offenses (primarily from the class X felonies established by the 1978 reform), thus requiring prisoners to serve a minimum of 85% of their time. TIS laws have been subsequently modified multiple times, primarily to add offenses to the 85% category. Additionally, a 75% tier was also introduced for certain drug related offenses⁷⁷.

By the end of the decade, PreStart Phase II was essentially discontinued. Supervision again focused on enforcement and staffing was increased, specifically toward the goal of bolstering surveillance.⁷⁸

2000s - Operational Reforms

In 2001, parole agent staffing returned to levels comparable to the early 1980s (roughly 91 parolees per agent as compared to 80 parolees per agent in 1986 prior to the layoffs). However, the focus of supervision was very much shifted back towards surveillance activities. For example, parole agents participated in joint operations with Chicago Police specifically aimed at finding parole violations.⁷⁹ This resulted in a sharp decrease in the parole population between 2000 and 2001⁸⁰ (*Figure 3*). These decreases were followed by legislation establishing mandatory conditions for all parolees, such as parolees consenting to search of their person/property, providing true information, and submitting to drug testing.⁸¹

An administrative reform program called Operation Spotlight began in 2003 and focused on improving technology, case management practices, and hiring additional agents.⁸² However hiring fell short of goals, so that it merely kept up with increasing parole populations, based on reported agent staffing and the parole population. Concurrently with Operation Spotlight and administrative efforts to improve reentry programming⁸³, the legislature passed substantial reforms that gave the PRB discretion to sentence high risk sex offenders to indefinite parole supervision. This placed additional conditions on sex offenders to register with law enforcement, restricted where they could live and work, and created programs for GPS monitoring of their location.⁸⁴

2010s - Evidence-Based Reforms

The Crime Reduction Act of 2009 went into effect on January 1st, 2010.⁸⁵ While not containing any specific changes to parole and/or sentencing, it established the Adult Redeploy, a prison diversion program that provides supportive services to low-risk justice-involved individuals. The Act also established the Sentencing Policy Advisory Council to advise the legislature on sentencing impact. The Act placed emphasis on evidence-based practice, specifically as it relates to sentencing, as well as creating and supporting mechanisms to allow low-risk offenders to avoid incarceration and/or be released sooner. This effort was further bolstered by the formation of the Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice Reform, which made policy recommendations to reduce prison populations by 25% over 10 years.⁸⁶

These efforts informed passage of numerous bills in the 2010s that were largely focused on systemic issues related to community impact of crime, sentencing, and rehabilitation with the intent of decreasing incarceration (and, therefore, decreasing the MSR population over time; *Table 2*).

Table 2: Reform Bills passed in the 2010s

YEAR	NAMED ACTS	CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILLS PASSED	SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES
2012	N/A	SB 2621, SB3579, SB3258, HB4590	Early release may be granted by IDOC (via discretionary credit) after as few as 60 days in prison for low-risk offenders.
2016	N/A	SB 3164, HB 6291, HB 5017, HB 6200, SB 3005, HB 2569, HB 4515, HB 5572, HB 5613, HB 5771, HB 5973, HB 6037, HB 6324, HB 6328, SB 2370, SB 2885, SB 2228	Requires judges to review presentencing report and provide a written rationale prior to sentencing someone with no prior violent convictions to prison for a class 3 or class 4 felony. Possession of small quantities of marijuana changed to a civil offense with a fine associated from a misdemeanor punishable with jail time.
2017	The Neighborhood Safety Act	SB2872, SB1688, SB1781, HB2373, HB698, HB 514, HB3817	The state will provide trauma recovery services for victims of crime, as well as additional rehabilitation, job training, and substance abuse programming for offenders. The number of low-level offenses that are eligible for probation (instead of prison) is increased.
2018	Criminal Justice Practices Act	SB1607	IDOC is required to use evidence-based practices to supervise individuals on MSR, and focus supervision on those assessed as high-risk, decreasing supervision for those assessed to be lower risk. Victim compensation funds are expanded.
2019	Illinois Cannabis Regulation and Taxation Act	HB1438	The Act creates a legal infrastructure for production and sale of marijuana for recreational use in Illinois. Past convictions for marijuana possession under 30 grams are automatically expunged. Tax revenue from sales will be reinvested in community services of disadvantaged communities.

2020-2021 - COVID-19 and the SAFE-T Act

In early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted Illinois, resulting in statewide stay at home orders and remote work. This impacted the operation of state's attorney's offices, courts, and law enforcement agencies.⁸⁷ In particular, the impact on prison populations has been dramatic, and the impact on parole populations is beginning to be seen. Moreover, during the pandemic, a major criminal justice reform bill, the SAFE-T Act, was passed, expanding IDOC's authority to grant sentence credits and significantly reducing the lengths of mandatory supervised release for most offenses.

Prison admissions in Illinois during the pandemic are dramatically lower than prior years. Because people continue to exit prison based on their existing sentences, the overall prison population has dropped from 39,306 people in June 2019 to 27,413 in June 2021⁸⁸, the lowest prison population since 1990. Moreover, this shift is more pronounced for those serving shorter sentences, as that population inherently turns over quicker, as seen in *Figure 1*.

Consequently, it is likely that decreases in the parole population seen during the same period (see *Figure 3* for the decline in parole population from mid-2010 that accelerates during COVID-19) will continue. This will in turn be accelerated by the SAFE-T Act, as shown in Table 1 on the rightmost column, which halves the duration of MSR terms for felonies (except murder, sex offenses, those required to serve at least 85% of their sentence pursuant to Truth in Sentencing laws) sentenced after January 1, 2022. This is likely to decrease the population under supervision over time as parole terms will end more quickly. In addition, under the SAFE-T Act, MSR is only to be imposed on lesser (Class 3 and 4) felonies if the PRB determined sufficiently high risk using an evidence-based risk needs assessment.

Conclusion

This historical review is guided by the principle that past criminal justice policy and practice can provide a view of the future⁸⁹. Although the murder of George Floyd in 2020 and the protests that followed were seen as the impetus for passing the SAFE-T Act, the strategies it enacts for supervision are older. The concept of risk assessment was introduced in 1928 in the wake of the parole scandal. The proposal of length reductions to MSR adopted by the SAFE-T Act are nearly identical to a proposal from 1986⁹⁰. Senate Bill 2333 which has received considerable press, proposes parole hearings for those who have served more than 20 years in prison⁹¹, closely resembling the parole reforms of 1915.

Another perspective worth mentioning is that laws are themselves part of and products of culture⁹². While the text of this article has focused primarily on the passage of legislation and the rise and fall of prison and parole populations, a close examination of *Figures 1, 2, and 3* and the supplementary composite shows that changes in prison and parole populations often precede legislation that might otherwise be associated with it. For example, prior to the passage of determinate sentencing in 1978, the prison and parole populations were already sharply increasing. Prisons were already over capacity before the passage of truth-in-sentencing. One

possible interpretation is that once a viewpoint has gained traction in society it is likely to express itself through administrative priorities such as the level of policing, the aggressiveness of prosecution, the length of sentences levied by judges, and, in the case of parole, the PRB's decision whether or not to return a parolee to prison for a technical violation. All of these are administrative decisions that can occur without legislation or guidance by the executive branch and substantively impact parole and prison populations.⁹³

Finally, for readers interested in learning more about prison and parole practices in Illinois, there is a great deal of information available to the public for further review. This includes annual reports, fact sheets, and data available on the Illinois Department of Correction's website⁹⁴, policy analysis available via the Sentencing Policy Advisory Council's website⁹⁵, and ICJIA's Research Hub⁹⁶. Accompanying the publication of this article, ICJIA will also be publishing an interactive Parole Population Data Explorer that enables users to examine data on parole populations over time in different regions of Illinois, including demographics and gender. This tool will be made available on ICJIA's Research Hub.

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¹ Evans, C. M., & Dighton, D. (2002). Ex-offenders help each other overcome obstacles to reentry. *The Compiler*, 8.; *Inside Out: A Plan to Reduce Recidivism and Improve Public Safety: (586322010-001)*. (2006). [Data set]. Community Safety and Reentry Working Group. <https://doi.org/10.1037/e586322010-001>; *Final Report*. (2016). Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform.

http://www.icjia.org/cjreform2015/pdf/CJSR_Final_Report_Dec_2016.pdf

² Illinois Safety, Accountability, Fairness and Equity-Today Act, Pub. L. No. 101-0652 (2021).

<https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/101/PDF/101-0652.pdf>

³ Whitman, J. L. (1918). Operation of the New Parole Law in Illinois. *Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 9(3), 385. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1133551>

⁴ Illinois Safety, Accountability, Fairness and Equity-Today Act, Pub. L. No. 101-0652 (2021).

<https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/101/PDF/101-0652.pdf>

⁵ Cameron, T. (n.d.). Alton's POWs. Retrieved September 2, 2021, from

<https://www.lib.niu.edu/2007/ih030708.html> ; Civil war prisoners and casualties at Alton confederate prison. (2007, May 7). Fold3. <https://www.fold3.com/page/771/civil-war-prisoners-casualties-at-alton-confederate-prison/stories> ; Shahan, M. J. (2020). Getting out: Parole, politics, and risk assessment before the carceral state, 1895-1939. Johns Hopkins University.

⁶ A white family redeemed from slavery. (1859, April 5). *Chicago Tribune*.

⁷ Shahan, M. J. (2020). *Getting out: Parole, politics, and risk assessment before the carceral state, 1895-1939*. Johns Hopkins University.

⁸ Shahan, M. (2020). Making Good: On Parole in Early Twentieth-Century Illinois. *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, 19(3), 369–389. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537781420000158>

⁹ Whitman, J. L. (1918). Operation of the New Parole Law in Illinois. *Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 9(3), 385. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1133551> ; Shahan, M. J. (2020). *Getting out: Parole, politics, and risk assessment before the carceral state, 1895-1939*. Johns Hopkins University.

¹⁰ Note that while the later change away from indeterminate sentencing was to “determinate” sentencing, the original sentencing format was referred to as “definite”, as described by government officials in *Illinois parole law: Accomplishments, statistical data, papers and addresses on its provisions and its administration: After care of prisoners released on parole, crime survey* (p. 106). (1921).

¹¹ Barbour in *Illinois parole law: Accomplishments, statistical data, papers and addresses on its provisions and its administration: After care of prisoners released on parole, crime survey* (p. 106). (1921). [Crime survey]. Department of Public Welfare.

¹² Shahan, M. J. (2020). *Getting out: Parole, politics, and risk assessment before the carceral state, 1895-1939*. Johns Hopkins University.

¹³ Shahan, M. (2020). Making Good: On Parole in Early Twentieth-Century Illinois. *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, 19(3), 369–389. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537781420000158>

¹⁴ Shahan, M. J. (2020). *Getting out: Parole, politics, and risk assessment before the carceral state, 1895-1939*. Johns Hopkins University.

¹⁵ *Illinois parole law: Accomplishments, statistical data, papers and addresses on its provisions and its administration: After care of prisoners released on parole, crime survey* (p. 106). (1921). [Crime survey]. Department of Public Welfare. This perspective seems shared by both Whitman and Colvin, while Colvin goes into some detail on the inadequacy of assigned parole agents.

¹⁶ Whitman, J. L. (1918). Operation of the New Parole Law in Illinois. *Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 9(3), 385. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1133551>

¹⁷ Whitman, J. L. (1918). Operation of the New Parole Law in Illinois. *Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 9(3), 385. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1133551> ; Shahan, M. J. (2020). *Getting out: Parole, politics, and risk assessment before the carceral state, 1895-1939*. Johns Hopkins University.

¹⁸ *Illinois parole law: Accomplishments, statistical data, papers and addresses on its provisions and its administration: After care of prisoners released on parole, crime survey* (p. 106). (1921). [Crime survey]. Department of Public Welfare.

¹⁹ Shahan, M. J. (2020). *Getting out: Parole, politics, and risk assessment before the carceral state, 1895-1939*. Johns Hopkins University. Note that use of the name in contemporary reporting is inconsistent.

²⁰ In particular, the relationship between the pardon functions and parole functions of the board changed at various points, as well as the location of the board within the organization of the state government. Some references around 1915-1917 seem to indicate that there was a Board of Pardons that also made parole decisions and was often called the parole board as well, while from 1917 to 1927 there was the Board of Pardons and Parole, post-1927 there are references to the Board of Parole as being separate from pardons after it was made independent. However, at the time of parole abolishment in 1978 it was called the “Parole and Pardon Board”.

²¹ Data used in the figures is a composite of multiple data sources: Prison data comes from: Population & Capacity Report: Illinois Human Services Data Report, Volume II, Part 1- Section 1 Fiscal Year 1982. (1982). Illinois Department of Corrections. For 1830s until 1982, from the Illinois Department of Corrections Human Service Plans and Statistical Presentations from 1982 until 1999, and from SPSS prison population stock extracts provided to ICJIA by the Illinois Department of Corrections from 2000 to 2021. For Parole data, the sources were Miller, L. (1983). *Patterns of change over time in the Illinois adult prison population: 1941 to 1983*. Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/pcotiapp4183.pdf> for data from 1941 until 1983, then IDOC Human Services Plans until 1999 and SPSS parole population stock extracts for 2000 to 2021. There are only five data points prior to 1941: According to Whitman there were of course no parolees at the beginning of 1895, and approximately 2000 average under supervision by 1917 and upwards of 2500 by 1920. Whitman, J. L. (1918). Operation of the New Parole Law in Illinois. *Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 9(3), 385. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1133551> ; According to Colvin in in *Illinois parole law: Accomplishments, statistical data, papers and addresses on its provisions and its administration: After care of prisoners released on parole, crime survey* (p. 106). (1921)., there were 25,496 parolees released between 1895 and Sept 1918, also corroborating the approximate numbers from Whitman. Finally, two articles published in the Chicago Tribune indicated the number in supervision as about 4,500 in 1933 and 4,344 in 1939.; Old offenders commit 35% of

- Chicago crimes. (1933, August 13). *Chicago Tribune*.; Wright, G. (1939, May 29). Criminals' care is big business: \$600,000. *Chicago Tribune*. Illinois Population data was retrieved from Data Commons compilation of Census Bureau datasets at https://datacommons.org/tools/timeline#place=geoId%2F17&statsVar=Count_Person , as well as *Census bulletin: Twelfth census of the United States* (No. 1). (1900). Census Bureau. <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1900/bulletins/demographic/21-population-il.pdf> ; Finally, minor inconsistencies between the level as indicated on the graph and other printed sources are largely due to different sources as well as to re-digitization of previously printed graphs. As an example, the 1939 peak in prison population is about 13,000, 400 lower than the well reported peak, the graphed number seems to be based on the end of year population not the peak and has a certain degree of error due to digitization. That error is approximately +/- 200 based on the few areas where corroborating sources could be consulted.
- ²² Parole scandal costs Will Colvin his job. (1926, June 5). *Chicago Tribune*. This is in fact the same Colvin as previously cited. One of the earliest compiled works on parole and its statistics in Illinois was published by the parole board and comprised of papers attributed to Colvin himself as head of Parole, Whitman as superintendent of prisons, and Barbour as a sitting state senator. Barbour remained in office and does not seem to have been directly accused of accepting bribes, but was known for presenting cases to the board personally.
- ²³ Essentially those trying to buy parole would allegedly buy stock or otherwise pay money to an engineering company that would lobby for parolees, and stock in that company was held by the Statesville deputy prison warden Klein, parole board chairman Colvin, Governor Smalls, and the head of the Department of Public Welfare. Initial evidence of this was discovered near Klein's body after he was murdered during a prison escape. For fuller details see: Shahan, M. J. (2020). *Getting out: Parole, politics, and risk assessment before the carceral state, 1895-1939*. Johns Hopkins University.
- ²⁴ Small before grand jurors backs pardon. (1926, May 26). *Chicago Tribune*.
- ²⁵ Governor Len Smalls (and others) are mentioned by name in this section because the Smalls administration is often considered to have been the most corrupt in Illinois history and that Gov. Smalls was indicted and found not guilty of embezzlement by a jury, 8 of whom were later hired to government jobs. He also pardoned two purported mobsters accused of tampering that jury. Given this presumptive abuse of the pardon and Gov Smalls' implication in the parole scandal of 1926, it would be reasonable to have concerns over the impartiality of subsequent actions of the parole board appointed by Smalls, which might in turn color the interpretation of the findings that had considerable influence on criminology as a whole. Nonetheless, no recorded suspicion of the Smalls administration exerting influence on the operation or findings of the commission on parole could be found in contemporary or subsequent press or academic literature. Benzkofer, S. (2011, June 19). Len Small: Perhaps the dirtiest Illinois governor of them all. *Chicago Tribune*. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/opinion/ct-per-flashback-small-0619-20110619-story.html>
- ²⁶ Clabaugh rules politics out of parole board. (1926, August 18). *Chicago Tribune*.
- ²⁷ There are almost no mentions in contemporary reporting whether board appointments were part or full time. Shahan (2020) reports that they part time prior to 1917, and bills were proposed in the 1960s to make the board full time, so it is inferred that they remained part time. Time and ongoing COVID-19 restrictions at the time of writing precluded consulting hardcopy records of budgets from the considerable portion of time where the full time status of board members was not entirely clear.
- ²⁸ Parole abuses laid to politics in penal survey. (1928, January 25). *Chicago Tribune*.
- ²⁹ *Illinois Committee on the Study of the Workings of the Indeterminate-Sentence Law and of Parole*. (1928). The workings of the indeterminate-sentence law and the parole system in Illinois a report to the Honorable Hinton G. Clabaugh, Chairman, Parole Board of Illinois.
- ³⁰ Shahan, M. J. (2020). *Getting out: Parole, politics, and risk assessment before the carceral state, 1895-1939*. Johns Hopkins University.
- ³¹ Dean, C. W., & Duggan, T. J. (1968). *Problems in Parole Prediction: A Historical Analysis*. *Social Problems*, 15(4), 450–459. <https://doi.org/10.2307/799833>
- ³² Shahan, M. J. (2020). *Getting out: Parole, politics, and risk assessment before the carceral state, 1895-1939*. Johns Hopkins University.
- ³³ Glaser, D. (1955). Testing Correctional Decisions. *The Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology, and Police Science*, 45(6), 679–684. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1139054> ; Thiernau, A. R. (1957). Utilizing the Services of Professional Personnel In Correctional Institutions. *Journal of Correctional Education* (1949-1972), 9(3), 61–63.
- ³⁴ Such as: Joseph D. Lohman, Blumer, H. (1968). Observations on the Career of Joseph D. Lohman. *Issues in Criminology*, 3(2), 125–128. Also Hans Mattick: Mattick, H. W. (1960). Parolees in the Army during World War II. *Federal Probation*, 24, 49.
- ³⁵ Illinois prison population hits 13,444, a record. (1939, September 1). *Chicago Tribune*.

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- ³⁶ Illinois prison population hits 13,444, a record. (1939, September 1). *Chicago Tribune*.
- ³⁷ Clabaugh rules politics out of parole board. (1926, August 18). *Chicago Tribune*.
- ³⁸ Debaters agree politics hurts parole system. (1939, January 17). *Chicago Tribune*. Numerous examples exit and it is specifically mentioned by Colvin in 1920 as well. (*Illinois parole law: Accomplishments, statistical data, papers and addresses on its provisions and its administration: After care of prisoners released on parole, crime survey* (p. 106). (1921). [Crime survey]. Department of Public Welfare.) This is also evident in press coverage that frequently covered parolees, crimes by parolees, and parole board decisions in detail before establishment of mandatory supervised release: Another tragic murder. (1970, March 6). *Chicago Tribune*.; Doherty, J. (1953, January 10). Stratton set to replace 2 parole aids. *Chicago Tribune*.; Judges can't trust the parole board. (1952, April 24). *Chicago Tribune*.; Slayer is back in Joliet for 30 more years. (1930, November 27). *Chicago Tribune*.; Old offenders commit 35% of Chicago crimes. (1933, August 13). *Chicago Tribune*.
- ³⁹ Population & Capacity Report: Illinois Human Services Data Report, Volume II, Part 1- Section 1 Fiscal Year 1982. (1982). Illinois Department of Corrections.
- ⁴⁰ Population & Capacity Report: Illinois Human Services Data Report, Volume II, Part 1- Section 1 Fiscal Year 1982. (1982). Illinois Department of Corrections.
- ⁴¹ Tagge, G. (1943, April 29). Illinois house votes parole reform bills. *Chicago Tribune*.
- ⁴² Bill in senate is held peril to parole system. (1947, June 15). *Chicago Tribune*.
- ⁴³ Mattick, H. W. (1960). Parolees in the army during World War II. *Federal Probation*, 24, 49.
- ⁴⁴ Doherty, J. (1951, May 31). Uphold judges in fight with parole board. *Chicago Tribune*.
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- ⁴⁷ Gowran, C. (1965, August 29). Judge urges swift justice for criminals. *Chicago Tribune*.
- ⁴⁸ Miller, L. (1983). *Patterns of change over time in the Illinois adult prison population: 1941 to 1983*. Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/pcotiapp4183.pdf>
- ⁴⁹ The legislature. (1969, July 2). *Chicago Tribune*.
- ⁵⁰ Population & Capacity Report: Illinois Human Services Data Report, Volume II, Part 1- Section 1 Fiscal Year 1982. (1982). Illinois Department of Corrections.
- ⁵¹ New work conditions for the parole board. (1970, January 10). *Chicago Tribune*.
- ⁵² Morrison, D. (1974). *The Illinois Unified Code of Corrections—A Legislative Step in the Development of Prisoners' Rights and of Prison Administration*. 33.
- ⁵³ Miller, L. (1983). *Patterns of change over time in the Illinois adult prison population: 1941 to 1983*. Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/pcotiapp4183.pdf>
- ⁵⁴ The low was 5,770 in April 1974 the differences likely coming from methodology of counting. Miller, L. (1983). *Patterns of change over time in the Illinois adult prison population: 1941 to 1983*. Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/pcotiapp4183.pdf>
- ⁵⁵ This appears to have been a comparable level to the early 1860s (based on the 1860 and 1870 census figures and estimated prison population from graphs), however prison population data is not available between 1863 and 1917 for comparison. It seems safe to conclude that prior to the 1860s rates were even lower; Alton penitentiary had 90 prisoners in 1842, which would have been 19 per 100k based on the 1840 census.
- ⁵⁶ Cahalan, M. (1986). *Historical corrections statistics in the United States, 1850-1984*. Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- ⁵⁷ Rutherford, A., Carlson, K., Evans, P., Flanagan, J., Fogel, D., Greenberg, I., Ku, R., Ludington, K., Schaffer, W. A., Sherman, M., Smith, B., & Zimring, F. (1977). *Prison Population and Policy Choices Volume 1: Preliminary Report to Congress*. <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/Digitization/44356NCJRS.pdf>
- ⁵⁸ Mount, C., & Wattley, P. (1974, December 30). Crime soars, but fewer behind bars in 7-year period. *Chicago Tribune*.
- ⁵⁹ From June 30th, 1974 to June 30th, 1975 the prison population increased from 6,707 to 8,237 or 23% yearly increase. By the June 30th, 1976 the population reached 10,054 or a 22% yearly increase. The next highest percent growth, 17% was observed from 1988 (21,081) to 1989 (24,712), estimation from earlier records prior to 1920 indicate there may have been similar sharp growth in the 14-20% range in the late 1910s and early 1860s. Negligible data exists from 1863 to 1917. Rutherford et al (1977) attributes part but not all of the late 1970s increase to sentencing changes in 1972 code of corrections, in summary: after the reform, offenses with short sentences (e.g. 2 years or under) were reduced and potentially only served in jail, while other offenses for 2-3 years had sentences increased, consequently for the first couple of years prison populations decreased until the impact of longer sentences could become apparent.
- ⁶⁰ For more justice in sentencing. (1977, June 20). *Chicago Tribune*.

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- ⁶¹ Branegan, J. (1978, April 2). Felons greet “tough” state sentencing law with open arms. *Chicago Tribune*.
- ⁶² Branegan, J. (1978, April 2). Felons greet “tough” state sentencing law with open arms. *Chicago Tribune*.
- ⁶³ David Fogel was at the time executive director of the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission (ILEC), the predecessor of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. According to Haddad (1981) while he did write the first draft of the bill by request of Governor Walker, ILEC was not involved in the drafting or review.
- ⁶⁴ Haddad, J. B. (1981). Commentary: Some Lessons from the History of Illinois Sentencing Laws. *Northern Illinois University Law Review*, 14. ; Travis, J. (1975, December 24). Controversy over criminal justice. *Chicago Tribune*.
- ⁶⁵ Fogel, D. (1979). ...*We are the living proof...* (2nd ed.). Anderson Publishing Co.
<https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/Digitization/66871NCJRS.pdf>
- ⁶⁶ Population & Capacity Report: Illinois Human Services Data Report, Volume II, Part 1- Section 1 Fiscal Year 1982. (1982). Illinois Department of Corrections.
- ⁶⁷ The Prisoner Review Board did and still does retain discretion over release from prison when a parolee returns to prison due to a technical violation. This has been subject to some legal controversy, as sex offenders have been held in prison past their maximum sentence, due to not being able to find acceptable housing. Williams, M. (2016, December 22). Sex Offenders Say Illinois Parole System Is Broken. *Courthouse News Service*.
<https://www.courthousenews.com/sex-offenders-say-illinois-parole-system-is-broken/>
- ⁶⁸ 1988 Statistical Presentation. (1989). Illinois Department of Corrections.
- ⁶⁹ 1988 Statistical Presentation. (1989). Illinois Department of Corrections.
- ⁷⁰ Davidson, J. (1987, August 20). 84 parole agents lose their jobs. *Chicagotribune.com*.
<https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1987-08-20-8703030345-story.html>
- ⁷¹ Gibson, R. (1989, February 8). State gets its parole staff back. *Chicago Tribune*.
- ⁷² Castellano, T. C. (1996). *The Implementation and Impact of Illinois' PreStart Program: A Final Report* (p. 396). Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.
- ⁷³ Human Services Plan Fiscal Years 1991 -1993. (1992). Illinois Department of Corrections.
- ⁷⁴ Castellano, T. C. (1996). *The Implementation and Impact of Illinois' PreStart Program: A Final Report* (p. 396). Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.
- ⁷⁵ This may or may not have also been due to reduced enforcement and staffing. In the assessment, several contemporary programs within IDOC were also compared and PreStart found effective. It however remains the case that the PreStart program was in theory, a parole division wide shift in approach away from enforcement that coincided with several years of very few agents compared to the parole population.
- ⁷⁶ An excellent summary of this is provided by: Gaddy, S. (2013). *The History of Truth-in-Sentencing*.
<http://www.icjia.org/cjreform2015/pdf/Truth%20in%20Sentencing%20memo.pdf>
- ⁷⁷ Azhari, S. (2021, July). Sentences Served at 85% Illinois Law | No Day-for-Day Felony Prison Terms. Criminal Lawyer in Illinois. <https://www.criminallawyerillinois.com/2021/07/01/truth-in-sentencing-defendants-must-serve-more-than-50-of-the-sentence-imposed/>
- ⁷⁸ Long, R., & Parsons, C. (1999, January 29). Ryan beefs up parole agent ranks. *Chicago Tribune*.
- ⁷⁹ Karp, S. (2007, September 27). In the Spotlight. *Chicago Reporter*. <https://www.chicagoreporter.com/spotlight/>
- ⁸⁰ *Drivers of the Sentenced Population: MSR Violators*. (2013). Illinois Sentencing Policy Advisory Council.
<https://spac.icjia-api.cloud/uploads/SPAC%20Report%20MSR%20violation%209-13-20191127T16244660.pdf>
- ⁸¹ Ryan Signs Bill Establishing Stricter Reporting Requirements for Parolees. (2001, August 22). Illinois.Gov.
<https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.1537.html>
- ⁸² Karp, S. (2007, September 27). In the Spotlight. *Chicago Reporter*. <https://www.chicagoreporter.com/spotlight/>
- ⁸³ Inside Out: A Plan to Reduce Recidivism and Improve Public Safety. (2006). [Data set]. Community Safety and Reentry Working Group. <https://doi.org/10.1037/e586322010-001>
- ⁸⁴ Gov. Blagojevich signs legislation establishing stricter release conditions, harsher parole violation penalties, and improved registration requirements for sex offenders. (2004, August 22). Illinois.Gov.
<https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.html>
- ⁸⁵ Illinois Crime Reduction Act of 2009, Pub. L. No. 96–761, 730 ILCS 190. Retrieved September 2, 2021, from <https://ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=3156>
- ⁸⁶ Final Report. (2016). Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform.
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- ⁸⁷ Reichert, J., & Adams, S. (2021). *A preliminary look at Illinois arrest trends during the covid-19 pandemic in 2020*. Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.
<http://www.icjia.state.il.us/assets/articles/COVID%20arrests%20PDF%20to%20post%20on%20web-210305T17262965.pdf>

⁸⁸ The number of people admitted between June 30th, 2019 and June 30th, 2021 was 37% or 16,856 prison admits lower than the two years prior. *Fiscal Year 2021 Fact Sheet*. (2021). Illinois Department of Corrections.

<https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/reportsandstatistics/Documents/FY21%20Adult%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>

⁸⁹ Tonry, M. (2007). Looking Back to See the Future of Punishment in America. *Social Research*, 74(2), 27.

⁹⁰ *Human Services Plan Fiscal Years 1986-1988*. (1986). Illinois Department of Corrections.

⁹¹ Paddock, B. (2021, October 20). New Bill Would Reinstate Parole System in Illinois. *WTTW News*.

<https://news.wttw.com/2021/10/20/new-bill-would-reinstate-parole-system-illinois>

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<https://scholarship.law.georgetown.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1310&context=facpub>

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⁹⁴ <https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/reportsandstatistics/Pages/default.aspx>

⁹⁵ <https://spac.illinois.gov/>

⁹⁶ <https://icjia.illinois.gov/researchhub/>