CRJ
CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

Needs-Q Sections Scripts and Supporting Questions

This handout provides a suggested script to introduce each section of the Needs-Q assessment. Please feel free to use these scripts as you learn what works the best when administering the Needs-Q assessment. Also, the supporting questions are listed here for each section.

Education/Employment

Script: *This first section of questions will help me understand if you have any needs related to education and employment. We may be able to provide you with programming or resources during your supervision that can help you with any goals related to education and employment.*

Supporting Questions:
- Can you tell me what school was like for you?
- How would you describe your relationship with teachers and other students during school?
- Have you faced challenges around succeeding in school? (If yes: What kind of challenges?)
- Can you tell me about your current or past jobs?
- How would you describe your relationship with other people you worked with and your supervisor?
- Can you tell me about any challenges you have faced in keeping a job?
- How long have you worked at your current and past jobs?

Substance Abuse

*If there is no official record or information to indicate the offender has a need in this area:

Script 1: *This second section of questions will help me understand if you have any needs related to substance abuse. I recognize it may be difficult to talk about any concerns related to substance abuse as they are personal, but I want to assist you with setting realistic goals to support you on leading a healthy life. We may be able to provide you with programming or resources during your supervision that can help you with any goals related to substance abuse and if you have conditions with your supervision to participate in programming, I am happy to tell you more about the programs so you will know what to expect. What is important is that we work together to see if you may have some substance abuse concerns, and then we can identify which resources will be the best fit for you.*

*If there is information that the offender may have substance abuse concerns:

Script 2: *This second section of questions focuses on substance abuse. I had an opportunity to review information about you before we met today and learned that you may have some substance abuse needs. Some of the information that I read suggests (pick one example or all that apply)...*
- *Examples:*
    - *that you have drug or alcohol convictions (e.g., drug possession, DUIs)*
    - *that you have been in treatment before*
    - *that you have had past positive drug and or alcohol tests while on supervision*

- *that you have conditions to participate in a substance abuse program*
- Script 2 continued:

First, while that is what I learned about you on paper, I would like to get a sense from you how substance abuse has impacted your life. This will help me understand your needs related to substance abuse. I recognize it may be difficult to talk about any concerns related to substance abuse as they are personal, but I want to assist you with setting realistic goals to support you on leading a healthy life and to help you avoid the criminal justice system in the future. We may be able to provide you with programming or resources during your supervision that can help you with any goals related to substance abuse and if you have conditions with your supervision to participate in programming, I am happy to tell you more about the programs so you will know what to expect. What is important is that we work together to see if you may have some substance abuse concerns, and then we can identify which resources will be the best fit for you.

Supporting Questions:
- Tell me about the last time you used drugs and/or alcohol.
- Describe to me your first experiences with drugs and alcohol including what age these experiences occurred.
- Can you tell me more about when you drink alcohol/consume drugs and how often?
- Can you please describe what a typical scenario looks like when you use drugs and/or drink?
- Can you tell me about your family history with drugs and/or alcohol?
- How often would you say your drink alcohol and/or use drugs?
- Have you experienced negative consequences (e.g., loss of job, health issues, relationship issues) associated to drug or alcohol use?
- Do you have any concerns regarding your drug or alcohol use?
- Tell me about any times that you have attended treatment.

Attitudes

Script: *We are nearly halfway through these questions and you are doing great so far. Thanks for working with me to answer these questions. This next section of questions will help me understand what your thoughts were regarding your involvement in the criminal justice system, your ideas about the law, and if you believe you were treated fairly. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, so feel free to share your honest viewpoints and opinions with me.*

Supporting Questions:
- Can you tell me about your current case and what occurred? Were there others involved? Tell me about that.
- Can you tell me some more about your previous cases and what occurred? (if appropriate)
- How did the police respond to you for your current case?
- Can you tell me about how the courts treated you for your current case?
- What do you think about your sentence and conditions of your current case?

Relationships

Script: *You are doing great and thanks for continuing to work with me to answer these questions. So, this next section of questions focuses on your relationships with family and friends. Often times, those who are closest to us may also have had some experience with the criminal justice system and that can influence your involvement. My goal with these questions is to learn more about your relationships and not for you to feel uncomfortable. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, so feel free to discuss your responses openly with me and ask any questions if you do not understand.*

Supporting Questions:
- Can you tell me about your family – parents, brothers, sisters? What are your relationships like with them?
- Do you have other family members that you may be close to? What are your relationships like with these family members?
- Tell me about any situations where your family members might have been involved with the law or illegal acts.
- Let's talk about your friends next. Tell me a little bit about your friends.
- Tell me about any interactions your friends have had with the law or illegal activities.
- What do your family and friends say about your case and/or incarceration?

Personality

Script: *We have made it to the last section. Thanks so much for working with me up to this point. This next section of questions focuses on how you deal with stressful situations, frustration, and what decisions you make for yourself. Being on supervision can be stressful for individuals and can cause anger and frustration. Occasionally, some people feel as though they are not in control and this can cause additional stress. Some individuals also make decisions without having much time or opportunity to consider what the benefits and consequences may be. As you have heard me say throughout this discussion, there are no right or wrong answers to these questions, so feel free to discuss your responses openly with me and ask any questions if you do not understand.*

Supporting Questions:
- Can you tell me what situations cause you the most stress and frustration?
- Tell me about a time that someone in your life may have triggered stress or frustration for you.
- When given an opportunity to try something new, even if it is a bit risky (might get you into trouble with the law), how do you react? Do you go for it?
- When thinking about your current (or prior) cases, tell me about the situation, who was involved and whether you thought about the possible outcomes of the situation?
- Tell me about situations in your life where you do not feel as though you had been in control.
- What typically prompts you to be the most frustrated or angry?
- How do you respond to situations that make you frustrated or angry?

# MDOC Risk Assessment Scoring Guide Community Version

This guide is designed to assist in the scoring of the MDOC Risk Assessment tool. For each item on the assessment, use the information provided to determine the appropriate number of points to be assigned for that item. After all items have been assessed, add the points for all items to determine the total Risk Assessment score. The information needed to score this assessment can be found in Caseload Explorer and Offendertrak. This assessment should be completed as part of the intake process and scored accordingly.

To access the Risk Assessment in Offendertrak, please follow the steps described below.

1. Log into Offendertrak and select the "Booking" menu option, and then select "Booking Management"
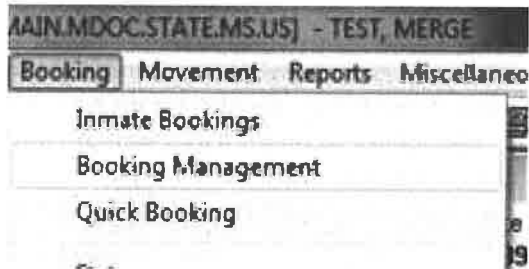
2. Click on the "Classification" tab. Expand the "COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS" tree node by clicking plus(+) symbol. Click or expand "Community Risk Assessment and Criminogenic Needs Questionnaire"

Page 1
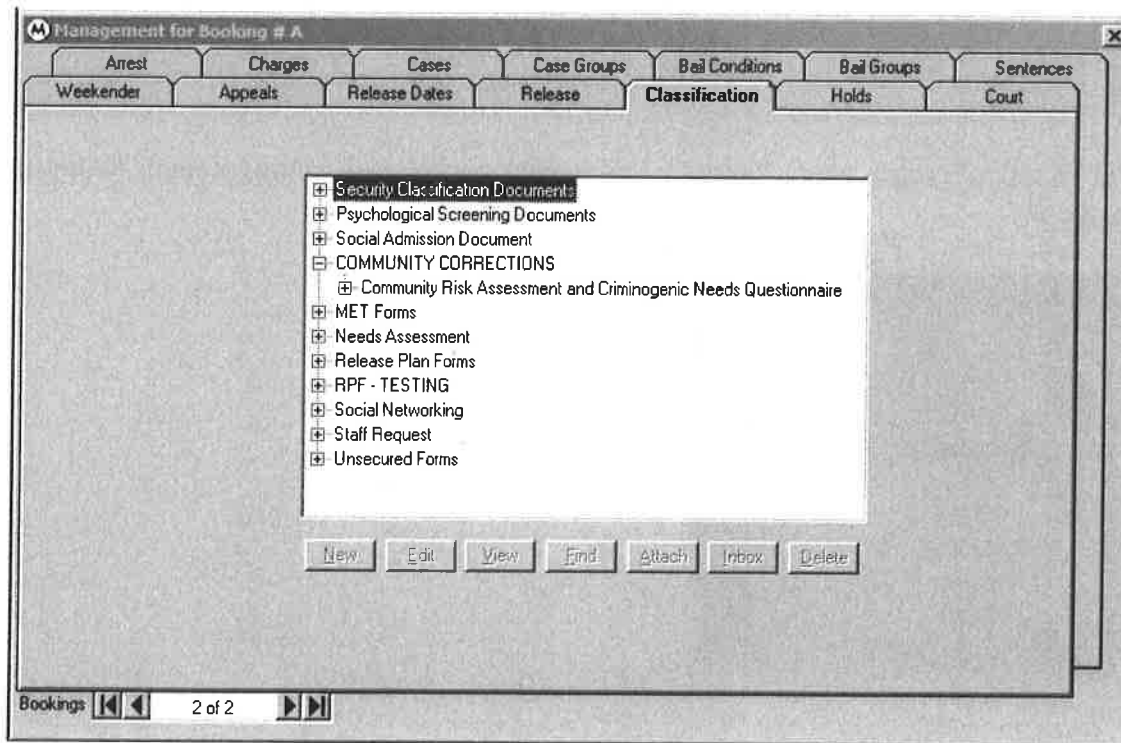
1. Age

Intent of item – This item is intended to measure the offender's age at the time of supervision intake for the current sentence. If an offender has been on community supervision prior to this term, **do not** score based on the age at that term of supervision. Only calculate age based on the current supervision start date.

How to score item -

0 points = the offender is 27 years of age or older at the start of supervision

1 point = the offender is 26 years of age or younger at the start of supervision

Where to find scoring information – The risk assessment form has been automated to generate the offender's age at intake based on the offender's age at the time of their current status of custody.
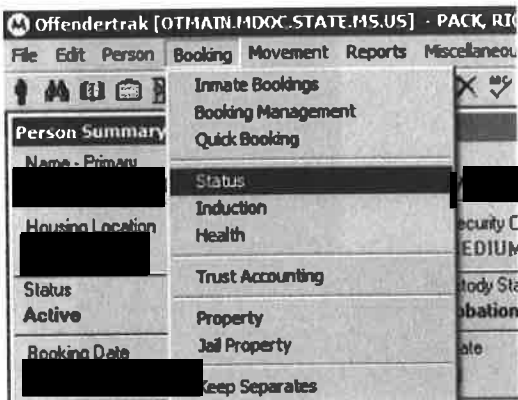
Offender Information

| INMATE NAME | ███████████ | MDOC# ██████ | DATE: | ▼ | AGE AT SUPERVSION START: 47 |

To verify the offender's age, please follow the steps described below.

1. Enter the offender's MDOC number into Offendertrak and review the "Person Summary" section. On the "Person Summary" section you will see the offender's date of birth (DOB) as highlighted below. In the example below, the offender's date of birth is July 16, 1968.

2. From the "Booking" menu, select "Status." This will bring up a small window called "Status and Identification"

355 Boylston Street • Boston, MA 02116 ☎ 617.482.2520 • Fax 617.262.8054 • www.crj.org/cji

Status and Identification

Identification

Inmate ID	State ID	FBI Number
▮▮▮▮		

Status

Status	Custody Status	
Active	Probation	☐ Indigent

History   History

Remove From Count   Reset Values

3. Click the "History" button under the "Custody Status" field to display the offender's custody. In the example below, this offender's latest custody status is "Probation" as of March 17, 2016. From the Person Summary section, we see that the offender's date of birth was July 16, 1968. In this case the offender was roughly, 47 years and 9 months old at the time of his Probation. Therefore the score value would be 0 (27 years and older).

Custody Status

Start Date	Status	End Date
▮▮▮▮	▮▮▮▮	

2. Gang involvement

Intent of item – This item is intended to measure whether the offender has known gang involvement. "Known" involvement means that the offender has been identified by MDOC as having affiliation with a security threat group (STG) while in the facility.

How to score item –
0 points = no known gang involvement
0 points = self-reported gang involvement (please see note below) ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
1 point = known/documented gang involvement

NOTE: The self-reported gang involvement item is being tracked for data collection purposes. When the MDOC Risk Assessment was developed, only the MDOC gang indicator data could be used to develop this risk factor for the tool, so self-reported data was not available in the development of the MDOC Risk Assessment. As part of this pilot, the self-reported gang involvement response to this question should only be marked provided that the only source of gang involvement is based on self-reported information. Should the MDOC data systems (Offendertrak, Caseload Explorer) indicate the offender has known/documented gang involvement, the item worth 1 point 'known/documented gang

Page 3

355 Boylston Street • Boston, MA 02116 ☎ 617.482.2520 • Fax 617.262.8054 • www.crj.org/cji

involvement' should be marked. If there is no known gang involvement, then please select 'no known gang involvement,' which is worth 0 points.

Where to find scoring information – Information on the offender's gang affiliation can be found in Offendertrak under the "Person" menu as described in the steps below.

1. Select the "Person" Menu in Offendertrak, then select "Demographics" as shown highlighted below.
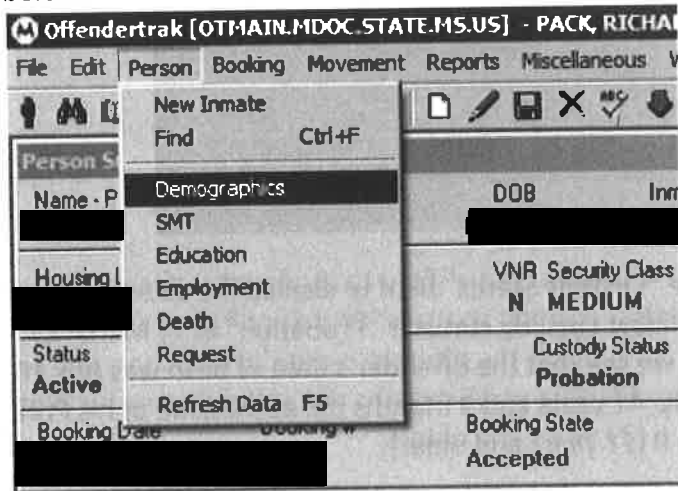
2. On the last tab on the Demographics page you will find the gang affiliation information for the inmate. In the example below, the offender did not have any gang affiliation recorded in the data system so the score for this item would be 0 points.
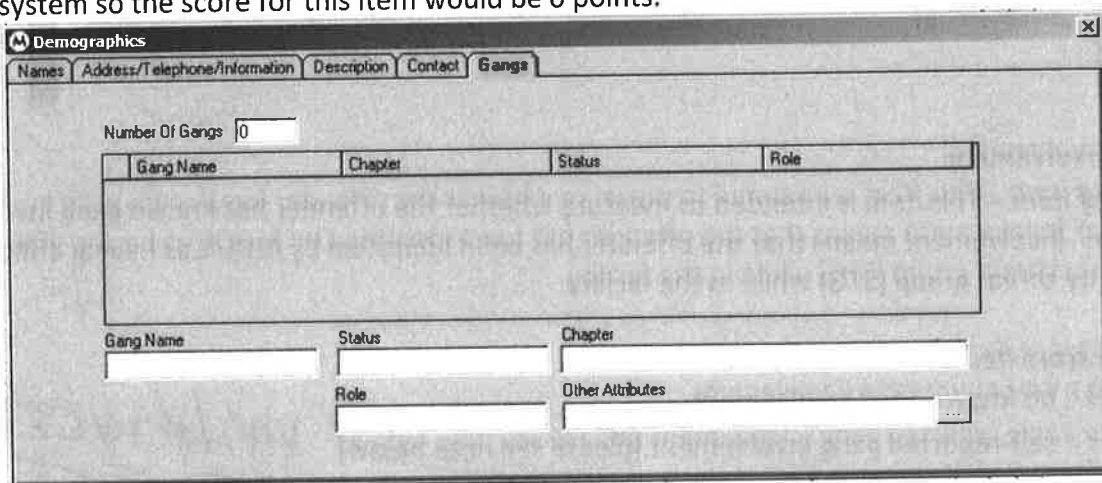
3. **Total number of current felonies**

   Intent of item – This item is intended to measure the total number of felony convictions on the current case at the start of supervision. **Only** felony convictions for the current supervision should be counted. If there are multiple counts of the same crime (e.g. two counts of felony burglary), this counts as two felonies. **Do not** count prior felony convictions from previous cases. **Do not** count felonies for the current case that did not result in a conviction.

   How to score item – To score this item, add the total number of all felonies in the current conviction.

355 Boylston Street • Boston, MA 02116 ☎ 617.482.2520 • Fax 617.262.8054 • www.crj.org/cji

0 points = 1 felony at time of supervision start on current case

1 point = 2 felonies at time of supervision start on current case

2 points = 3 or more felonies at time of supervision start on current case

Where to find scoring information - This information can be found in Offendertrak under the "Booking" menu as described in the steps below.

1. Select "Booking" and then "Booking Management"

2. On the Booking page, select the "Sentences" tab to locate the offender's list of offenses. In the example below, the offender has 2 felony offenses so the score for this item is 1 point.

355 Boylston Street • Boston, MA 02116 ☎ 617.482.2520 • Fax 617.262.8054 • **www.crj.org/cji**
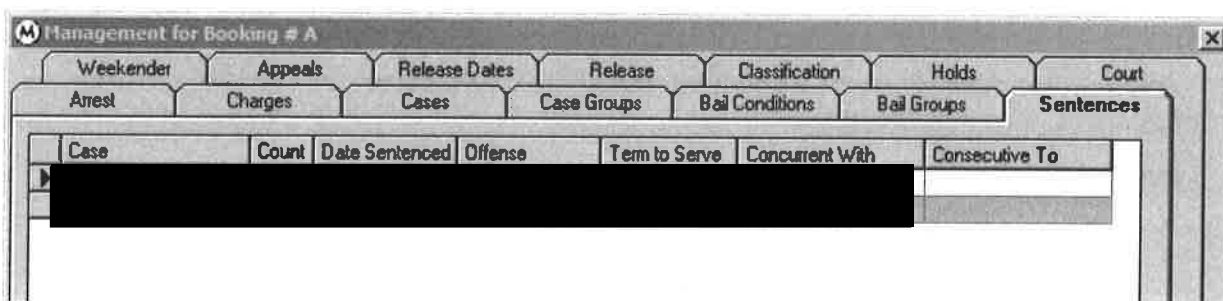
4. Number of prior incarcerations

Intent of item – This item is intended to measure the total number of prior incarcerations for the offender. Any prior sentence of incarceration that was served by the offender should count in this item. This includes prior incarcerations that were the result of a probation or parole violation or revocation. **Do count** prior incarcerations for the same original booking or original sentence when there is a parole or probation violation or revocation. For example, if an offender starts a period of incarceration for a sentence, is released on community supervision and then is revoked or is incarcerated for a supervision violation on that same original sentence or original booking, then the original incarceration would now be counted as a prior incarceration for this booking for the supervision violation or revocation. Incarceration sentences served within jails **do** count toward this total number of prior incarcerations. The number of prior incarcerations is to be taken only from the MDOC data systems (Offendertrak and Caseload Explorer). **Do not** count self-reported incarcerations. If the offender has both prior incarcerations in MDOC and other jurisdictions, only count and score the MDOC prior incarcerations. For example, if the offender has one prior incarceration from another jurisdiction (outside MDOC) and one prior incarceration from MDOC, the correct response is '1 point = 1 prior incarceration'.

How to score item – To score this item, add the total number of all prior incarcerations.
0 points = 0 prior incarceration
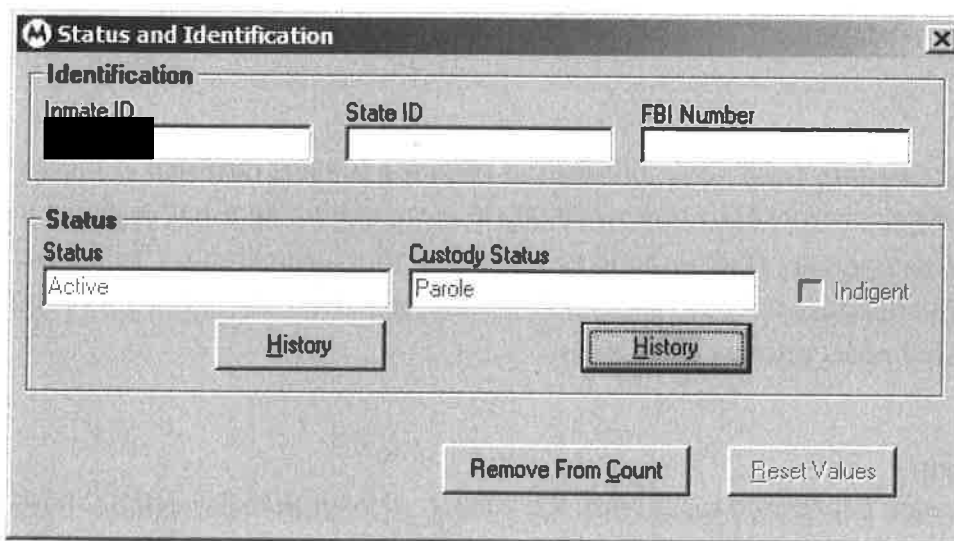0 points = prior incarcerations from other jurisdictions (please see note below)
1 points = 1 prior incarceration
2 points = 2+ prior incarcerations

Where to find scoring information –

1. From the "Booking" menu, select "Status." This will bring up a small window called "Status and Identification."
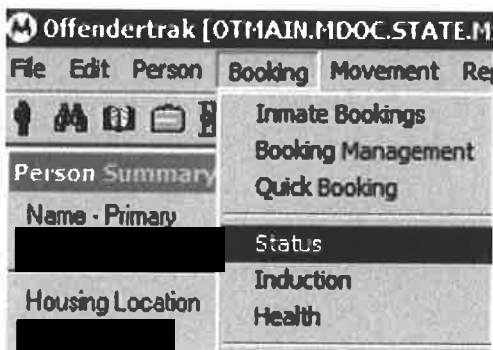
Click the "History" button under the "Custody Status" field to display the offender's custody status history.

Count the number of Custody Status entries that are designated as "Inmate" or "RID" on the most recent booking. Then scroll to previous bookings by selecting the left arrow, which scrolls back one booking at a time.

Count the number of Custody Status entries that are designated as "Inmate" or "RID" on each prior booking. In the example below for Offender #197628, this offender has **2** prior MDOC incarcerations.

355 Boylston Street • Boston, MA 02116 ☎ 617.482.2520 • Fax 617.262.8054 • www.crj.org/cji

NOTE: The prior incarcerations from other jurisdictions response is being recorded as these data were not available in the development of the tool. Only MDOC incarceration data was available for this risk factor in the tool's development. **Only** respond to '0 points = prior incarcerations from other jurisdiction' if the offender does not have any MDOC incarcerations but does have out of state, self-report, or inter-state compact prior incarcerations.

5. **Institutional violations**
   Intent of item – This item is intended to measure the number of institutional violations in the offender's history. This includes violations that occurred in a jail and are captured in the MDOC data systems (Offendertrak and Caseload Explorer). Only those violations that were documented should be counted in this item. All institutional violations are counted for this item regardless of severity.

   How to score item – To score this item, add the total number of all institutional violations in the offender's history. This includes all major, serious, and institutional violations.
   0 points = no institutional violations
   1 point = at least 1 institutional violation

   Where to find scoring information - This information can be found in Offendertrak under "Incident Report" as described in the steps below.

   1. From the Offendertrak menu, select "Reports" and then "Reports" as shown below.

355 Boylston Street • Boston, MA 02116 ☎ 617.482.2520 • Fax 617.262.8054 • www.crj.org/cji
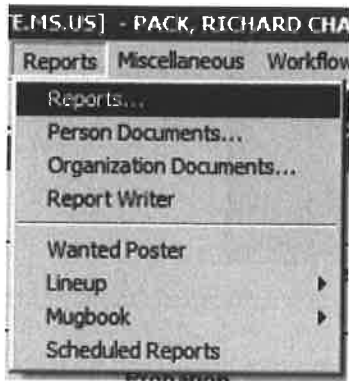
2. Next, select "Inmate Reports" by clicking the plus (+) symbol.
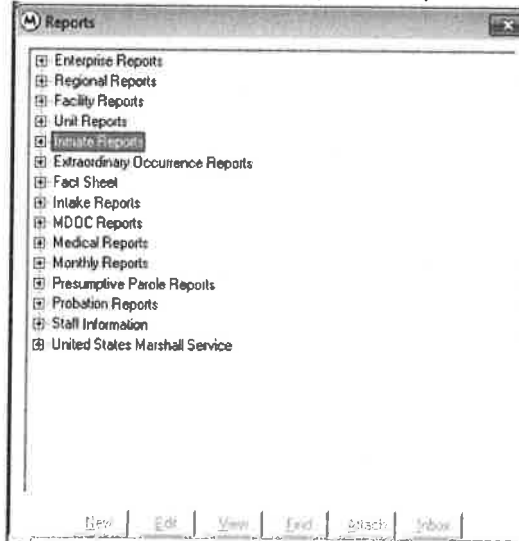
3. From there, scroll down to "Incident Report" and finally, click the "View" button.
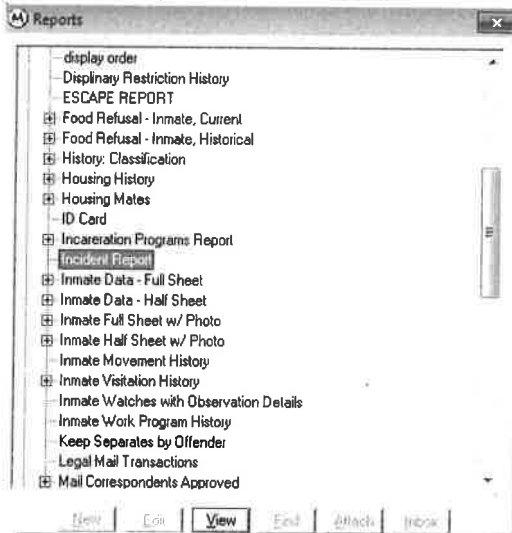
4. After you click view, enter a date range in the box below and select "Preview" to display the report. In the example below, inmate #199907 has no reported institutional violations.

355 Boylston Street • Boston, MA 02116 ☎ 617.482.2520 • Fax 617.262.8054 • www.crj.org/cji

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Incident Report

March 18, 2016

Facility:	SOUTH CC
Begin Date :	01/01/2001
End Date :	03/18/2016

Inmate: ▓▓▓▓▓	
ID:	FBI ID:
SID:	SSN: ▓▓▓▓

No Data Found.

Needs-Q Scoring Guide

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

CRJ
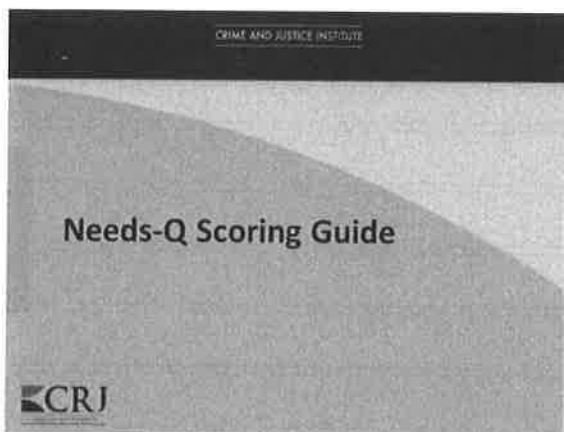
Purpose of Scoring Guide

- The purpose of the scoring guide is to provide direction to staff in terms of interviewing offenders for the assessment
- The scoring guide will also assist staff in consistently scoring the items on the Needs-Q
  - Consistency is vital for ensuring inter-rater agreement
- While this guide does not provide a list of open-ended questions to be asked in the interview, the scripts and questions document provides starter questions for each section

CRJ

Needs-Q Sections Review

- For each section, we will review the following
  - The purpose/intent of the Needs-Q section
  - Scripts that can be used to introduce the section
    - Can be used to motivate the offender and to share with him/her the types of questions that will be asked
  - Supporting questions to start the discussion on the section
    - Actual yes/no questions can be added the discussion
    - Helps to build rapport, obtain helpful information for the case plan, and make scoring the Needs-Q easier
  - Scoring tips to clarify definitions and examples of questions
  - Scoring expectations to provide guidance on proper scoring of the section

CRJ

27

Interview Activity

· For your assigned Needs-Q section
  · Training participants will divide up into five groups
  · A Needs-Q section will be assigned to each group
  · Write an introduction
  · Write 3 open-ended questions
  · Assign someone to present your introduction and questions

CRJ

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

Needs-Q:
Employment/Education

CRJ
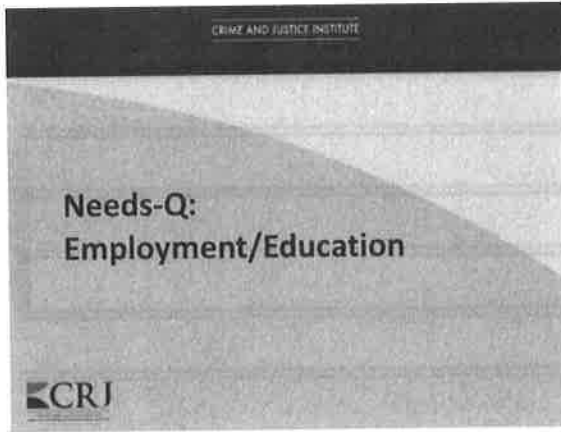
Purpose/Intent of Section

· The purpose of this section is identify if the offender has criminogenic needs associated with employment or education
· Offenders often have supervision conditions related to completing school or gaining employment, but criminogenic needs in this area may make this difficult
· These criminogenic needs are often related to difficulty getting and/or keeping a job, or staying involved in school long enough to finish

CRJ

28

Purpose/Intent of Section

- Earning a high school diploma or GED and being employed are stabilizing factors in a person's life
- When employment/education is identified as a need area, case plan goals and action steps should focus on identifying the challenges that are present for the offender in getting a job or finishing school
- Future action steps should focus on how to maintain employment

CRJ

Supporting Questions

- *Can you tell me about what school was like for you?*
- *Can you tell me about your current or past jobs?*
- *How long have you worked at your current job?*
- *How long have you worked at your past jobs?*
- *How would you describe your relationship with other people you worked with or your supervisor/boss?*
- *What have the challenges been with keeping a job? (only ask if appropriate)*
- *What have the challenges been with school? (only ask if appropriate)*

CRJ

Employment Question 1

- Are you currently unemployed or were you unemployed prior to incarceration?
  - Currently means at the beginning of a supervision term
  - If the offender is capable of work, but is unemployed, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender is retired and retirement funds are sufficient for him/her to be financially stable, score this item 'No'
  - If the offender is retired and funds are NOT sufficient, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender has a disability and collects SSI or other disability funding, score this item 'No'
  - If the offender has a disability but does not collect SSI or other disability funding, score this item 'Yes'

CRJ

29

Employment Question 2

• Have you ever been fired from a job?
  • If the offender has ever been fired from a job, score this item 'Yes'
    • This includes jobs that were held as a juvenile or jobs that were paid 'under the table'
  • If an offender reports that he/she quit a job because he/she was going to get fired, score this item 'Yes'

⊑CRJ

Employment Question 3

• Have most of your jobs been for less than a year?
  • 'Most' means more than half of the jobs an offender reports having
  • If the majority of the offender's jobs have lasted less than one year, score this item 'Yes'
  • If an offender says that he/she has never held a job for more than a year, score this item 'Yes'
  • If most of the offender's jobs have lasted more than one year, score this item 'No'

⊑CRJ

Employment Question 4

• Were you unable to graduate from high school or earn a GED?
  • If the offender reports that he/she **does not** have a high school diploma or GED, score this item 'Yes'
  • If the offender reports that he/she does have a high school diploma or GED, score this item 'No'
    • It does not matter the location the offender earned his/her high school diploma or GED (as long as the degree is valid)

⊑CRJ

Employment Question 5

- Were you ever suspended or expelled from school?
  - If the offender reports that he/she has ever been suspended or expelled from any school setting, this item should be scored 'Yes'
    - This includes suspensions or expulsions from an elementary school, junior high or middle school, high school, and alternative school

CRJ

Employment Question 6

- Have you typically had poor relationships with job supervisors, fellow workers, teachers, and fellow students?
  - If the offender reports having bad relationships in school or work settings, score this item 'Yes'
  - If negative relationships at school and work are a common part of the offender's experience, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender classifies himself/herself as a 'loner' or isolates from co-workers/school peers, score this item 'Yes'
  - If an offender reports only one or two isolated incidents, score this item 'No'

CRJ

Employment Question 7

- Would your most recent job supervisor or most recent teacher say your work performance was poor or you had difficulty getting along with others?
  - The offender should be asked about his/her most recent supervisor if employed just before his/her supervision
  - If the offender reports that the person in this role would assess his/her performance as poor, score this item 'Yes'
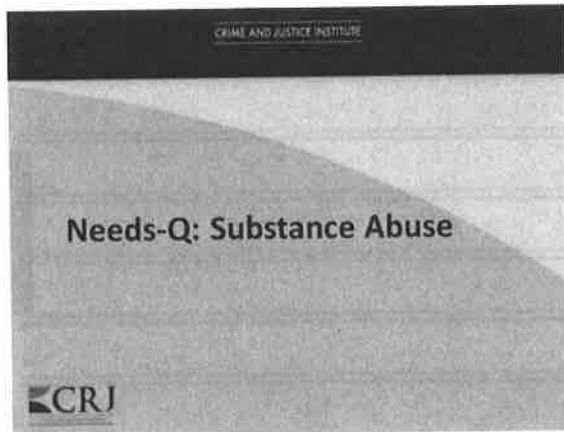
CRJ

31

Needs-Q: Substance Abuse

CRJ

Purpose/Intent of Section

- The purpose of this section is to identify whether an offender has criminogenic needs associated with substance abuse
- This information should be used to write case plan goals designed to target this area
- There are often supervision conditions related to this area that may include substance abuse programing/treatment and/or to comply with drug and/or alcohol screening
  - This section can help clarify the needs related to this section and can assist in treatment planning

CRJ

Purpose/Intent of Section

- Many who have needs in this area also have needs in other related areas
  - Antisocial peers who are involved in substance abuse
  - Mental health concerns
- When this is identified as a need area, goals and action steps should focus on identifying how substance abuse has impacted the offender's life, and identifying reasonable steps to be taken to address the abuse

CRJ

32

Purpose/Intent of Section

- Some offenders may not be willing to seek help or support to address this need
- Also, an offense related to drugs or alcohol (e.g., trafficking) does not *necessarily* indicate a substance abuse problem

KCRJ

Supporting Questions – Defining If There is Drug or Alcohol History

- Have you recently had any alcohol?
- Have you recently experimented with any drugs?
- How old were you when you first tried alcohol? (if appropriate)
- How old were you when you first tried any drugs? (if appropriate)
- Can you tell me some more about when you drink alcohol and how often (e.g., social events with others but not often, at home by myself daily)?
- Do you have family and friends that drink alcohol or use drugs?
- Have alcohol or drugs caused any problems with your health?
- Do you have any concerns regarding drugs or alcohol use?
- Do you feel like you need programming or services for alcohol use or drug use?

KCRJ

Supporting Questions – The Extent of Drug or Alcohol Use

- Describe for me about how old you were and when you first started drinking/using drugs.
- Do you use drugs or alcohol primarily by yourself, with family or friends, or both?
- How often would you say you drink alcohol/use drugs? Daily? Weekly? Monthly?
- Have you ever showed up to work drunk/on drugs? What did your employer do?
- Have drugs or alcohol had an impact on your health? If yes, how?
- Are you interested in programming or treatment for drugs or alcohol?
- It came up that you had been in programming before for substance abuse, can you tell me about that program and what it was like for you?
- I read that you have several convictions for DUIs/drugs. Can you tell me a little bit about these DUIs please?

KCRJ

33

Substance Abuse Question 1

- Do you have a history of alcohol abuse or problems with alcohol?
  - 'History' means the offender had problems with alcohol more than one year ago
  - If the indicators are present in official documentation (e.g., OffenderTrak, Caseload Explorer), score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender self reports having a history of alcohol problems, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender reports problems in multiple areas of his/her life related to alcohol use, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender reports occasional use or social drinking that does not cause problems, score this item 'No'

≤CRJ

Substance Abuse Question 2

- Do you have a history of drug abuse or problems with drugs?
  - 'History' means the offender had problems with drugs more than one year ago
  - 'Drugs' includes illegal psychoactive substances as well as misuse of prescription drugs
  - If the indicators are present in official documentation (e.g., OffenderTrak, Caseload Explorer), score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender self reports having a history of drug problems, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender reports problems in multiple areas of their life related to drug use, score this item 'Yes'

≤CRJ

Substance Abuse Question 2 (continued)

- Do you have a history of drug abuse or problems with drugs?
  - If there is an indicator present that drug abuse has caused problems in the offender's life, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender reports experimental use that does not cause problems, score this item 'No'
  - If an offender reports that he/she has used more frequently than experimentation, but there is no evidence that his/her use has caused a problem, score this item 'No'

≤CRJ

34

Substance Abuse Question 3

- Do you have family or friends who have problems with drugs or alcohol?
  - 'Family' and 'friends' should include people that the offender sees and spends time with on a regular basis
  - 'Problems' may include legal problems, medical issues, trouble with work or school, or trouble with relationships related to the use of drugs or alcohol
    - Includes if others are concerned about alcohol or drug use
  - The drug or alcohol problem should be current (or in the last 12 months)
  - If an offender reports that he/she has family and/or friends that have problems with drugs or alcohol, score this item 'Yes'

≤CRJ

Substance Abuse Question 4

- Have drugs or alcohol caused problems with your jobs or school?
  - This should take into consideration the last 12 months
  - 'Problems' may include showing up to work/school late, missing work/school because they are hungover or still intoxicated, showing up to work or school intoxicated, and problems with peers/supervisors because of their use
  - If there are indicators that the offender has problems with school or work based on their substance use, score this item 'Yes'
  - If these problems occurred prior to the past 12 months and do not currently occur because the person is not using, score this item 'No'

≤CRJ

Substance Abuse Question 5

- Have drugs or alcohol caused problems with any relationships?
  - Refer to the offender's use of drugs and alcohol within the past 12 months
  - If there are indicators that the offender's use of drugs or alcohol has caused problems in relationships with family or friends, score this item 'Yes'
  - If there were problems with family or friends because of the offender's use and those problems have since been resolved, score this item 'No'

≤CRJ

Substance Abuse Question 6

· Have you been in trouble with the law for drugs or alcohol?
  · Score based on the offender's entire history including adolescence
  · 'Trouble with the law' includes being arrested for drug or alcohol related crimes as well as being incarcerated in jail or prison as a result of drug and/or alcohol use
  · If an offender was under the influence of drugs or alcohol when he/she was arrested, score this item 'Yes'
  · If the offender only has charges related to drug trafficking or possession and does not use drugs, this item should be scored 'No'

ᛕCRJ

Substance Abuse Question 7

· Have you ever participated in treatment for drugs or alcohol?
  · If the offender has participated in treatment at any point in his/her life, score this item 'Yes'
    · Participation includes successful and unsuccessful discharges
    · Includes participation as a juvenile
    · Includes both inpatient and outpatient treatment as well as one-on-one counseling for substance abuse
  · If the offender has only participated in Alcoholic's Anonymous or Narcotic's Anonymous, score this item 'No'

ᛕCRJ

Substance Abuse Question 8

· Do you believe drugs or alcohol are a current problem?
  · This item should be scored based on the offender's **self-report** of their drug and alcohol use in the past 12 months
  · If the offender indicates that he/she thinks he/she has a problem with drugs and/or alcohol, score this item 'Yes'
  · If the offender reports he/she used to have a problem but indicates no present problem, score this item 'No'
  · If the offender self-reports that he/she does not believe he/she has a problem, but there are other indicators of a drug or alcohol problem, score this item 'No'
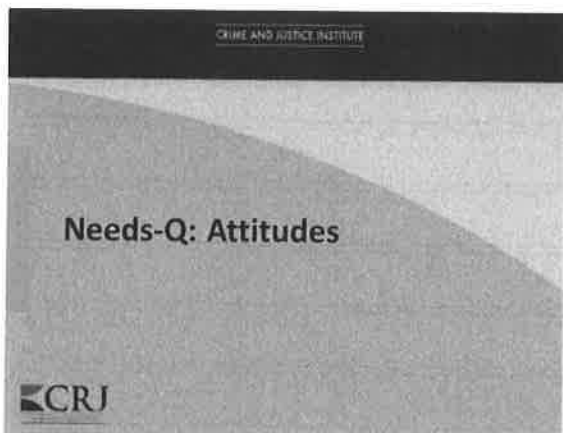
ᛕCRJ

36

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

Needs-Q: Attitudes

CRJ

Purpose/Intent of Section

· The purpose of this section is to identify whether an offender has antisocial attitudes

· Antisocial attitudes are one of the strongest predictors of criminal behavior

CRJ

Purpose/Intent of Section

· Offenders will often express antisocial attitudes by
  · Justifying their criminal behavior
  · Minimizing their responsibility or the harm caused by their actions
  · Expressing that the system treated him/her unfairly
  · Suggesting that most people are involved in criminal behavior, so there is no need to "make a big deal" out of his/her offending behavior

· Often you will hear these attitudes in other sections of the Needs-Q

CRJ

37

Purpose/Intent of Section

- When antisocial attitudes are identified as a criminogenic need, case plan goals and action steps should address these as a primary target area
- Specifically, goals and action steps should focus on identifying what thoughts and attitudes an offender has used to justify his/her offending behavior
- Goals can also address teaching and practicing new prosocial attitudes, behaviors, and skills so that the offender can have an alternate prosocial response to previously risky situations

CRJ

Supporting Questions

- *Can you tell me about your current case and what occurred?*
  - *Were other people involved? Tell me more about the others involved in your case.*
- *Can you tell me some more about your previous cases and what occurred? (If appropriate)*
- *How did the police respond to you on the current case?*
- *Can you tell me about how the courts treated you on the current case?*
- *What do you think about your sentence and conditions on the current case?*

CRJ

Attitudes Question 1

- Do you believe that most people get into trouble with the law?
  - If the offender self-reports that he/she believes that the majority of people get in trouble with the law, score this item 'Yes'

CRJ

38

Attitudes Question 2

- Do you believe that your trouble with the law is due to bad luck or misunderstanding?
  - If there are indicators that the offender does not take responsibility for his/her actions and seems to blame others, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender states that he/she has 'bad luck for getting caught' or there was a misunderstanding by police, the victim, or the courts, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender reflects statements that he/she has taken responsibility for their criminal behavior, score this item 'No'

⬛CRJ

Attitudes Question 3

- Do you believe the police and court treated you unfairly?
  - If the offender reports that he/she feels he/she was treated unfairly during their dealings with the police or the courts, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender reports that he/she was treated unfairly by one person in the process of their case, but not by the system as a whole, score this item 'No'
  - If the offender indicates he/she was treated fairly through the criminal justice process, score this item 'No'

⬛CRJ

Attitudes Question 4

- Do you believe your sentence on the current case unfair?
  - This item is based off of the offender's current sentence
  - If the offender reports that he/she believes the current sentence was unfairly harsh, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender indicates his/her sentence is fair, score this item 'No'

⬛CRJ

39

Attitudes Question 5

- Did the police or court make a bigger deal out of your case than necessary?
  - This question measures the extent to which the offender agrees with the laws and consequences pertaining to his/her criminal behavior
  - If the offender minimizes the seriousness of his/her offense or the harm it may have caused, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender indicates that the handling of his/her crime was consistent with the level of seriousness of the behavior, score this item 'No'

◼CRJ

Attitudes Question 6

- Should the law focus more time on other crimes instead of the crime you were convicted of?
  - If question #5 is scored yes, it is important to distinguish if he/she also expects that law enforcement and the courts should focus on other crimes
  - If the offender indicates that he/she believes the law incorrectly focused on the crime, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender minimizes the seriousness of the crime, score this item 'Yes'

◼CRJ

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

Needs-Q: Relationships

◼CRJ

40
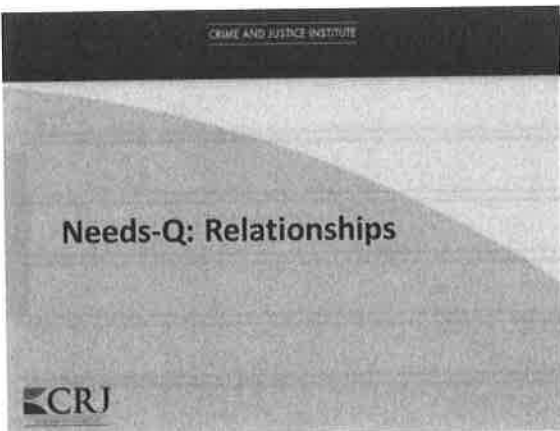
Purpose/Intent of Section

- The purpose of this section is to identify if the offender has relationships with antisocial peers and others
- The presence of antisocial others is a risk factor, as is the absence of prosocial others
  - We are interested in learning whether the offender has strong relationships with others who engage in crime or support offending behaviors
  - We are also interested in learning whether the offender has strong relationships with individuals who are prosocial and would support the offender adopting that lifestyle

CRJ

Purpose/Intent of Section

- When relationships are identified an a criminogenic need, the case plan goals and action steps should target this as a priority area
- Action steps and goals should focus on identifying the characteristics of others who are prosocial, participating in prosocial activities, developing coping skills to avoid antisocial others, and developing communication skills to build and maintain prosocial relationships

CRJ

Purpose/Intent of Section

- These goals should be guided by the offender as they recognize how difficult it might be to minimize contact with antisocial others – especially if those people are family members

CRJ

41

Scoring Tips

· To clarify some of the terminology in this section, some definitions have been provided:
  · *Family members* – individuals who the offender has legal or biological relationships with (e.g., spouse, parents, siblings, step parents, aunts, cousins, etc.)
  · *Close friends* – individuals who the offender does not have a legal or biological relationship with but, by self-report from the offender, considers the individual(s) to be close to him or her (e.g., significant other, best friend, etc.)
  · *Associates* – individuals who the offender does not have a legal or biological relationship with and the offender does not label this person as a close friend but may engage with occasionally (e.g., neighbors, coworkers, etc.)

ᴇCRJ

Scoring Tips

· Definitions
  · *Trouble with the law* – does not require convictions or incarcerations. This can mean being arrested, detained in jail, picked up by the police, having court dates, etc. If the offender is young and has young friends or siblings, involvement with the juvenile justice system counts here as well
  · *Free time* – consider the time that the offender spends outside of structured prosocial activities that occur regularly. Work and school are structured prosocial activities, but what an offender does outside of work and school would be considered free time

ᴇCRJ

Supporting Questions

· *Can you tell me about your family – parents, brothers and sisters? What are your relationships like with them?*
  · *Have any of your family members ever been involved in the criminal justice system?*
· *Do you have other family members that you may be close to? Like cousins, aunts and uncles, or grandparents? What are your relationships like with these family members?*
· *Tell me a little bit about your friends.*
  · *Who do you spend the majority of your time with?*
  · *How do you and your friends spend your free time?*
· *Have any of your friends been in trouble with the law?*
  · *How have they responded to your current supervision?*

ᴇCRJ

42

Relationships Question 1

• Do you have family members who have been in trouble with the law?
  • If the offender indicates that he/she has family members who have been arrested, convicted, on community supervision, and/or incarcerated, score this item 'Yes'
  • If the family members who have been in trouble with the law are estranged and the offender has no contact with them, score this item 'No'

≤CRJ

Relationships Question 2

• Do you have at least one close friend who has been in trouble with the law?
  • If the offender indicates that he/she has at least one close friend who has been arrested, convicted, placed on community supervision, or incarcerated, score this item 'Yes'

≤CRJ

Relationships Question 3

• Have you participated in activities with family or friends that could get you in trouble with the law?
  • If the offender reports that he/she has engaged in criminal behavior with individuals that fall in the 'family' or 'close friends' definitions, score this item 'Yes'
    • If the behavior could have resulted in an arrest, score this item 'Yes'
    • If the behavior is illicit drug use, score the item 'Yes'
  • If the offender's close friends and family members are law-abiding, score this item 'No'

≤CRJ

Relationships Question 4

· Have family members ever been upset with you for being in trouble with the law?
  · If there are indicators that the offender's trouble with the law has had a negative effect on their relationships with family members, score this item 'Yes'
    · This includes family members expressing their displeasure with the offender's behavior or if the behavior has caused a rift in the relationship with family members
  · If the offender reports that he/she has close, positive relationships with his/her family members, score this item 'No'

CRJ

Relationships Question 5

· Have close friends ever been upset with you for being in trouble with the law?
  · If there are indicators that the offender's trouble with the law has had a negative impact on their relationships with close friends, score this item 'Yes'
  · If the offender reports that he/she has strong positive relationships with their close friends and that they are supportive of the offender, this item should be scored 'No'

CRJ

Relationships Question 6

· Have the majority of your friends or associates been in trouble with the law?
  · If the majority (more than half) of the offender's close friends and/or associates have ever been arrested, convicted, placed on community supervision, and/or incarcerated, score this item 'Yes'
  · If the offender only has one 'close friend' that individual counts as the majority of the offender's friends and associates

CRJ

44

Relationships Question 7

- Do your family members, who have not been in trouble with the law, avoid seeing you or talking with you?
  - If the offender reports that any of his/her family members who have not been in trouble with the law have reduced the amount of time they spend with the offender or avoid him/her, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender reports that he/she regularly sees his/her law-abiding family members, score this item 'No'

ⵏCRJ

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Relationships Question 8

- Is it hard to have a close relationship with family or friends who have not been in trouble with the law?
  - If the offender reports difficulty in maintaining relationships with family members and friends who have not been in trouble with the law, score this item 'Yes'
    - Indicators may include an offender's self-reported difficulty in maintaining these relationships or lack of involvement with family and friends who have not been in trouble with the law
  - If the offender reports that he/she maintains close relationships with family and friends who have not been in trouble with the law, score this item 'No'

ⵏCRJ

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Relationships Question 9

- Do you spend the majority of your free time with others who have been in trouble with the law?
  - Define 'free time' for the offender
  - If the offender reports that he/she spends most of his/her free time with individuals who have been in trouble with the law, score this item 'Yes'
    - Includes family members, close friends, and/or associates

ⵏCRJ

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

45

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

Needs-Q: Personality

◄CRJ
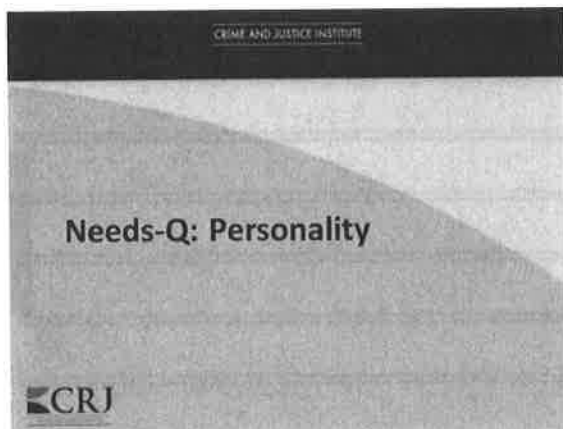
Purpose/Intent of Section

- The purpose of this section is to identify if the offender has antisocial personality characteristics
  - This is not a way to diagnose antisocial personality disorder
- This is one of the Big Four in terms of criminogenic needs, thus, if it is a problem for an offender it should be prioritized in case planning
- When identified as a need in the case plan, goals and action steps should focus on addressing impulsive decision making, coping skills, problem solving skills, responding to conflict and/or stressful situations in a calm and prosocial manner, and recognizing the impact of their behavior on others

◄CRJ

Supporting Questions

- *Can you tell me what situations cause you the most stress and frustration?*
  - *What do you do to address this stress and frustration?*
  - *Are there individuals in your life who you feel may trigger this stress for you?*
  - *How do you handle being around these individuals?*
- *When given an opportunity to try something new, even if it is a bit risky (it might get you into trouble with the law), how do you react – do you go for it?*
  - *When you know a situation or decision may result with you getting into trouble, do you feel as though you have taken the time to think through the possible consequences?*

◄CRJ

46

Supporting Questions

- *Are there situations in your life where you do not feel as though you have been in control?*
  - *When you are not in control of a situation, how do you typically react/respond?*
- *What situations or people in your life frustrate you the most?*
  - *What typically prompts you to be the most frustrated or angry?*
  - *How do you respond to situation that make you frustrated or angry?*
  - *When facing a problem, would you say you typically try to think about the different ways to address the problem, or do you find it easier to ignore the problem?*

≤CRJ

Personality Question 1

- Do you often do things without thinking?
  - If the offender reports that he/she often acts quickly or impulsively, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender reports acting impulsively or responding quickly on a one-time or infrequent basis, score this item 'No'

≤CRJ

Personality Question 2

- Do you act immediately to situations that are stressful?
  - If the offender reports that he tends to respond to stressful situations very quickly or without thinking, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender reports using drugs or alcohol immediately to alleviate stress, score this item 'Yes'
  - If the offender reports that he/she likes to weigh many options when making a decision or reports any other prosocial coping strategies to deal with stress, score this item 'No'

≤CRJ

47

Personality Question 3

- Is it hard to pay attention?
  - If the offender reports that he/she has difficulty attending to a single task, has a hard time completing tasks that require a lot of attention, or does not perform well in situations requiring attention to detail over an extended period of time, score this item 'Yes'
  - If an offender is being medicated for Attention Deficit Disorder or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, is taking his/her medication as prescribed, score this item based on his/her behavior while medicated

≡CRJ

Personality Question 4

- Do you try new things because 'you only live once'?
  - If the offender indicates a willingness to try a variety of behaviors, regardless of risk, out of a need to have various experiences, score this item 'Yes'
    - Includes vocalizations such as 'YOLO,' 'you are only young once,' and 'just living life to the fullest'
  - If an offender indicates that he/she makes decisions with a degree of caution and/or recognizes that some choices may be detrimental and therefore not worth pursuing, score this item 'No'

≡CRJ

Personality Question 5

- Do you feel that sometimes you are not in control?
  - If the offender indicates that he/she does not feel in control of the circumstances of his/her life, score this item 'Yes'
    - Includes phrases such as 'that's the way it is,' 'it wasn't my fault,' or other statements that indicate a lack of control
  - If an offender makes statements that suggest he/she accepts responsibility for his/her behavior or recognizes that the consequences experienced are a result of his/her behavior, score this item as 'No'

≡CRJ

48

Personality Question 6

• Do you respond to many situations in an angry manner?
  • Look for angry responses as a pattern of behavior for this individual
  • If an offender engages in many verbal or physical altercations, especially if he/she is the instigator in these situations, score the item 'Yes'
  • If an offender reports that he/she rarely gets angry, score this item 'No'

<CRJ

Personality Question 7

• Is it hard to be calm when you are stressed or upset?
  • This question differs from Question #6, as this item assesses responses to stress and elevated emotional states, rather than anger
  • If an offender reports that he/she does not deal well with stress, has a hard time remaining calm, or gets upset frequently or easily, score this item 'Yes'
  • If the offender reports being able to calmly handle most stressful situations, score this item 'No'

<CRJ

Personality Question 8

• Do you enjoy taking risks?
  • While risky behavior can include criminal behavior, a criminal record alone does not warrant scoring this item 'Yes'
  • If the offender reports a pattern of behavior enjoying risky activities or participates in risky activities frequently, score this item 'Yes'
    • Indicators: offender enjoys engaging in behavior that is risky physically, emotionally, financially, or otherwise carries a high potential for harm to the offender
  • If the offender reports only an occasional risky behavior, score this item 'No'

<CRJ

49

Personality Question 9

· Do people close to you know how to make you angry or intentionally 'push your buttons'?
  · If the offender reports that he/she is angered easily and quickly and/or reports feeling targeted or antagonized into anger frequently or easily, score this item 'Yes'
  · If an offender reports rarely responding to antagonism with anger, score this item 'No'

CRJ

Personality Question 10

· Do some individuals just ask for trouble or problems?
  · If the offender reports that he thinks that people who are victimized share some responsibility for their victimization, score this item 'Yes'
    · Indicators: offender saying that a person was 'asking for it' or that they 'deserved what they got'
  · If an offender expresses empathy for victims in general, score this item 'No'

CRJ

Personality Question 11

· Do you find it easier to give up or ignore a problem rather than deal with it?
  · If the offender indicates that one of their primary coping skills for difficult situations is to give up or deny that a problem exists, score the item 'Yes'
  · If the offender reports that he/she avoids dealing with difficult situations, score this item 'Yes'
  · If the offender reports walking away from or ignoring problems is typical, score the item 'Yes'
  · If the offender reports that he/she would rather deal with problems when the problem comes up and this behavior seems consistent, score this item 'No'

CRJ

50

Finalize Needs-Q Scoring

- Confirm that all Needs-Q information has been responded to and entered into OffenderTrak or Caseload Explorer
- Review each section and ensure that a total number of items present has been pre-populated
- Review the Needs-Q Total section and ensure that the total number of items present has been captured and the total number of items has been pre-populated
- Save your responses and submit

CRJ

General Scoring Tips

- Always review the information available in OffenderTrak and Caseload Explorer *before* the interview
- Use the scoring guide manual – review definitions, supporting questions and scoring expectations
- Develop Needs-Q section introductions and open-ended questions that work for you
- Remember to use active listening throughout the interview

CRJ

Needs-Q Practice Activity #1

- Using practice activity #1, complete the information for the Needs-Q
- Sum the total number of items present for each section
- Sum the total number of items present for the whole Needs-Q once all items have been responded to
- Compare responses within your small groups

CRJ

51

Needs-Q Practice Activity #2

- Using practice activity #2, complete the information for the Needs-Q
- Sum the total number of items present for each section
- Sum the total number of items present for the whole Needs-Q once all items have been responded to
- Compare responses within your small groups

CRJ

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

Inter-rater Reliability

CRJ
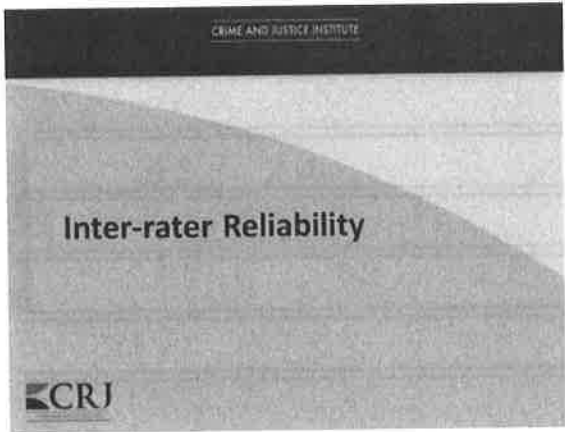
Inter-rater Agreement

- Inter-rater agreement refers to the degree to which independent risk assessment raters score the same offender's risk level on the same risk assessment instrument
- Inter-rater reliability refers to the consistency of scoring of the risk assessment instrument by an agency's staff across time
  - For inter-rater reliability to exist, risk assessment scores and inter-rater agreement should remain consistent or increase as the agency continues utilizing the risk assessment tool

CRJ

52

Importance of
Inter-rater Agreement

· Criminal justice agencies make critical decisions related to offenders and utilize information from actuarial risk assessment tools in decision-making
  · This information must be accurate and reliable as it is used across the justice system for significant decision-making purposes
· An offender's risk levels include dynamic risk factors (e.g., antisocial attitudes, antisocial peers, etc.) that must be interpreted and scored by assessors
  · Important that assessment process accurately and reliably assess these factors across offenders and across time

CRJ

Inter-rater Agreement Plan

· An inter-rater agreement plan provides an agency with a strategy for assessing inter-rater agreement and improving the rate of agreement over time
· Establishing an inter-rater agreement plan includes
  · Choosing a method of measuring inter-rater agreement
  · Developing a process for oversight and recording/reporting of progress
  · Establishing staff expectations and benchmarks
    · E.g., 25%, 50%, and 75% scoring agreement amongst assessment staff

CRJ

Measuring Inter-rater Agreement

· Two methods of measuring
  · Real-time assessment and coaching
    · Staff assesses the offender while the coach also completes assessment
      · Compare scores across multiple sessions and determine proficiency
    · Allows for multiple sessions and immediate coaching and feedback to staff from the coach on the assessment process and interviewing skills
    · Best for initial implementation and new employees recently training on the risk assessment

CRJ

53

Measuring Inter-rater Agreement

- Two methods of measuring (Continued)
  - Scenario/vignette for assessment
    - Staff conduct assessments using a scenario/vignette
    - Staff scores are compared against the master score to determine proficiency
    - Best for on-going evaluation and annual certification

CRJ

Inter-rater Agreement Plan

- Timeline
  - Begins with "going live" with the risk assessment
    - Conduct initial inter-rater agreement reviews immediately after beginning risk assessments
      - Subsequent reviews should occur in 1-2 month intervals, with the period of time between reviews extending as the process continues

CRJ

Inter-rater Agreement Plan

- Benchmarks
  - Trainers/Coaches will measure how well staff assess the same offender using the risk assessment, calculating the rate of agreement across domains and on the total assessment
    - Benchmarks include: 25%, 50%, 70%, 75% and 80% agreement
    - Progress should be tracked, including details of any questions or areas of the assessment where staff may benefit from targeted booster trainings

CRJ

54

Measuring Inter-rater Agreement

- Establish agreed upon margin of error (by question, domain, and/or total score)
  - Compare across staff
    - Overall score comparison
    - Domain score comparison
    - Individual question score comparison
  - Calculate level of agreement across staff

CRJ

Measuring Inter-rater Agreement

- Follow plan for responding to levels of proficiency, identifying needs for additional training, and developing booster trainings
- Document inter-rater agreement and proficiency progress (important for validation)
  - Include: level of proficiency reached, date it was reached, identified training needs, etc.

CRJ

Improving Inter-rater Agreement

- A formal training curriculum is a key component of the inter-rater agreement process
  - This should include practice and test assessments, booster training sessions and periodic quality assurance checks
- Booster trainings
  - Identify areas of the risk assessment process, instrument, and policies that staff need additional training on
  - Provide professional development related to assessments and processes

CRJ

55

Improving Inter-rater Agreement

- Ongoing process
  - Stay current and consistent with policy and practice
  - Address staff turnover with training and ongoing inter-rater agreement
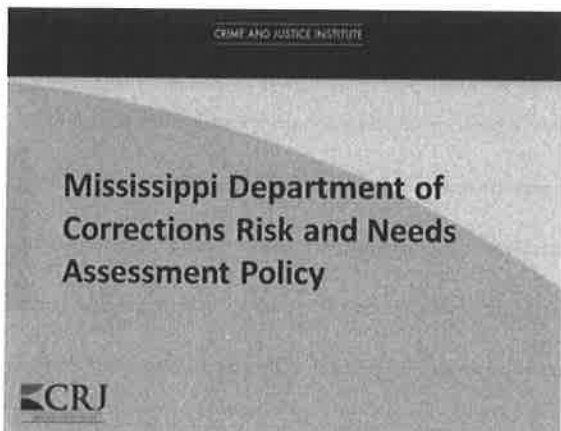
CRJ

Scoring Activity

- Please read Scenario 3 and complete both the risk assessment and Needs – Q survey.
- Discuss your results with a partner

CRJ

Scoring Activity

- Please read Scenario 4 and complete both the risk assessment and Needs – Q survey.
- Discuss your results with a partner

CRJ

56

Mississippi Department of Corrections Risk and Needs Assessment Policy

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

CRJ

MDOC Policy - Implementation

- Offenders are to be assessed as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days after a new admission
- Any adjustments to the supervision category or individual plan are made based on reassessment and are made in accordance with the offender's performance in the community
- A risk and needs reassessment will occur semi-annually and the case plan shall be reviewed and adjusted according to the reassessment

CRJ

MDOC Policy – Supervision Plan

- An individualized supervision plan is developed for each offender. The plan includes, as appropriate:
  - Conditions of supervision
  - The appropriate level of supervision as determined by the offender's risk and needs
  - Objectives to be met by the offender and the Agent
  - Services that address the offender's needs (a minimum of 2 goals addressing criminogenic needs with each goal containing a minimum of 2 action steps)
    - Antisocial attitudes, antisocial personality, and/or antisocial peers will be prioritized for case plan goals
- Staff and offender jointly develop and complete the individualized supervision plan within 60 days of disposition

CRJ

57

MDOC Policy - Training

- All staff members who will be completing intakes on offenders will be certified in administering the risk and needs assessment tool
- Prerequisite – 1 day of PEI training
- Complete initial 2 day risk and needs assessment training
- Annual recertification

CRJ

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

Summary

CRJ
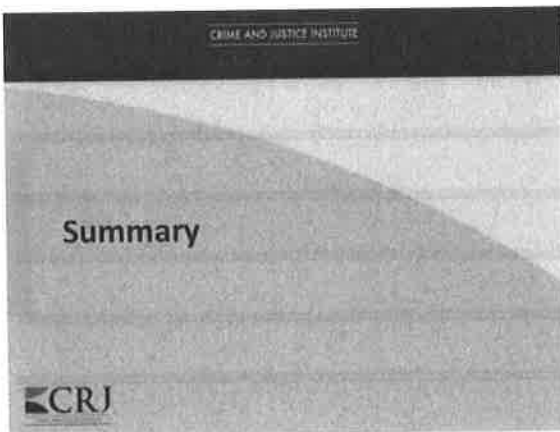
Summary

- Benefits of the new MDOC risk assessment
- The three goals to develop the MDOC risk assessment were satisfied
  - The new risk tool is a stronger predictor of recidivism than the previous risk tool
  - The new risk tool performs well regardless of gender or race
  - The new risk tool properly classifies offenders by risk both in the community and the institutions
- Overall, the MDOC risk tool containing 5 risk factors is a significant predictor of recidivism and predicts well regardless of gender and race

CRJ

58

PEI is Related to Risk Assessment

Principle	Definition	How this relates to risk assessment
Risk Principle	Tells us WHO to target	Distinguishes low, medium, and high risk offenders
Need Principle	Tells us WHAT to target	Incorporate dynamic needs focusing on antisocial attitudes, peers, and personality
Responsivity Principle	Tells us HOW to target offender issues	Identify and address barriers to success- motivation, mental health, etc.
Fidelity Principle	Tells us how to do this work RIGHT	Implementation plan for training on tool, validation and norming by objective researchers, and making changes after reviewing the data

CRJ

Summary

- Inter-rater reliability has multiple benefits
  - Provides information about scoring practices during a pilot period to improve the training and rollout of the MDOC risk assessment and Needs-Q
  - Sets the stage for systematizing risk assessment fidelity efforts within the MDOC
  - Clearly defines the timeframe and assessment data to be used for future validation studies to confirm that the risk assessment accurately predicts recidivism and properly classifies offenders by their appropriate risk level

CRJ

Summary

- Inter-rater reliability involves two primary activities to ensure scoring proficiency and consistency
  - Onsite observations and coaching
  - Scoring vignettes and scenarios online and reviewing the scoring data across the assessment team staff to identify scoring challenges and strengths

CRJ

59

Questions

• Kristin Bechtel ███████████
• Alex Holsinger ███████████

CRJ

Needs-Q Scoring Steps

- Begin the Needs-Q immediately after the risk assessment is scored and the risk level for the offender has been recorded
- Information about the offender and risk assessment score and risk level will pre-populate into the 'Offender Information' section in the Needs-Q
- Confirm that this information is accurate

KCRJ

Needs-Q Scoring Steps

- Complete the self-report question in the 'Offender Information' section. Ask the offender to provide you with his/her age (in years) at first arrest. This information must be entered and an estimate is acceptable. Otherwise, record the youngest age at first contact into the MDOC whether on supervision or incarcerated
- Move through the Needs-Q one section at a time in the order listed

KCRJ

Needs-Q Interview Introduction

- Information that should be included in an introduction
  - Your name and title
  - Purpose of the Needs-Q
    - To learn more about the offender
    - To properly refer the offender to services and programs
    - To create a case plan
  - There are no right or wrong answers
  - The offender can always ask for clarification

KCRJ

Needs-Q Overview

Relationships	Yes	No
Do you have family members who have been in trouble with the law?	O	O
Do you have at least one close friend who has been in trouble with the law?	O	O
Have you participated in activities with family or friends that could get you in trouble with the law?	O	O
Have family members ever been upset with you for being in trouble with the law?	O	O
Have close friends ever been upset with you for being in trouble with the law?	O	O
Have the majority of your friends or associates been in trouble with the law?	O	O
Do your family members, who have not been in trouble with the law, avoid seeing you or talking with you?	O	O
Is it hard to have a close relationship with family or friends who have not been in trouble with the law?	O	O
Do you spend the majority of your free time with others who have been in trouble with the law?	O	O
Total (Add the number of Yes responses)		

CRJ

Needs-Q Overview

Personality	Yes	No
Do you often do things without thinking?	O	O
Do you act immediately to situations that are stressful?	O	O
Is it hard to pay attention?	O	O
Do you try new things because 'you only live once'?	O	O
Do you feel that sometimes you are not in control?	O	O
Do you respond to many situations in an angry manner?	O	O
Is it hard to be calm when you are stressed or upset?	O	O
Do you enjoy taking risks?	O	O
Do people close to you know how to make you angry or intentionally 'push your buttons'?	O	O
Do some individuals just ask for trouble or problems?	O	O
Do you find it easier to give up or ignore a problem rather than deal with it?	O	O
Total (Add the number of Yes responses)		

CRJ

Needs-Q Overview

Needs-Q Total	Total Yes
Employment/Education (Total possible = 7)	
Substance Abuse (Total possible = 8)	
Attitudes (Total possible = 6)	
Relationships (Total possible = 9)	
Personality (Total possible = 11)	
Total (Total possible = 41)	

CRJ

24

Needs-Q Overview

Employment/Education	Yes	No
Are you currently unemployed or were you unemployed prior to incarceration?	O	O
Have you ever been fired from a job?	O	O
Have most of your jobs been for less than a year?	O	O
Were you unable to graduate from high school or earn a GED?	O	O
Were you ever suspended or expelled from school?	O	O
Have you typically had poor relationships with job supervisors, fellow workers, teachers, and fellow students?	O	O
Would your most recent job supervisor or most recent teacher say your work performance was poor or you had difficulty getting along with others?	O	O
Total (Add the number of Yes responses)		

CRJ

Needs-Q Overview

Substance Abuse	Yes	No
Do you have a history of alcohol abuse or problems with alcohol?	O	O
Do you have a history of drug abuse or problems with drugs?	O	O
Do you have family or friends who have problems with drugs or alcohol?	O	O
Have drugs or alcohol caused problems with your jobs or school?	O	O
Have drugs or alcohol caused problems with any relationships?	O	O
Have you been in trouble with the law for drugs or alcohol?	O	O
Have you ever participated in treatment for drugs or alcohol?	O	O
Do you believe drugs or alcohol are a current problem?	O	O
Total (Add the number of Yes responses)		

CRJ

Needs-Q Overview

Attitudes	Yes	No
Do you believe that most people get into trouble with the law?	O	O
Do you believe that your trouble with the law is due to bad luck or misunderstanding?	O	O
Do you believe the police and court treated you unfairly?	O	O
Was your sentence on the current case unfair?	O	O
Did the police or court make a bigger deal out of your case than necessary?	O	O
Should the law focus more time on other crimes instead of the crime you were convicted of?	O	O
Total (Add the number of Yes responses)		

CRJ

Needs-Q

ᴷCRJ

Needs-Q Purpose

· Needs-Q contains simple 'yes' or 'no' questions that will help identify an offender's criminogenic needs
· Needs-Q is to be conducted immediately after the risk assessment has been scored and a risk level has been assigned
· Needs-Q questions have been built into OffenderTrak to allow for easy completion of the items
· Total criminogenic needs present will be automatically calculated as the Needs-Q is calculated
· These criminogenic needs can be used to develop offender case plans and identify interventions

ᴷCRJ

Needs-Q Overview

Offender Information

Offender Name

Needs-Q Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

MDOC #

Custody Status (e.g., DOC, Community Corrections)

Current Risk Assessment Total Score & Risk Level

Earlier Needs-Q Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Self report: Age at first arrest (in years):

ᴷCRJ

MDOC Risk Assessment Scoring Steps

- All information to score MDOC risk assessment is taken directly from OffenderTrak & Caseload Explorer
- When completing the risk assessment, please follow the directions provided in the scoring guide
- Respond to each of the 5 risk factor items by clicking on the correct response
- Once all 5 risk factor items have been responded to, the total score and corresponding risk level will be displayed on the screen
- Confirm that you have entered in the correct information, submit, and save your responses

CRJ

Practice Activity #1

- Read the information provided in Activity #1
- Respond to all 5 risk factors on the MDOC risk assessment tool
- Record the total score based on a sum of the points (weights) for each risk factor that is present
- Record the corresponding risk level based on the total points
- Compare your responses in small groups

CRJ

Practice Activity #2

- Read the information provided in Activity #2
- Respond to all 5 risk factors on the MDOC risk assessment tool
- Record the total score based on a sum of the points (weights) for each risk factor that is present
- Record the corresponding risk level based on the total points
- Compare your responses in small groups

CRJ

Community Risk Factor Weights

Risk Factors	Weights
Age	0 points = 27 and older 1 point = 26 and younger
Gang involvement	0 points = no gang involvement 0 points = self-reported gang involvement 1 point = gang involved
Total number of current felonies	0 points = 1 felony at supervision start 1 point = 2 felonies at supervision start 2 points = 3 or more felonies at supervision start
Number of prior incarcerations	0 points = 0 prior incarcerations 0 points = prior incarcerations from other jurisdictions 1 point = 1 prior incarceration 2 points = 2 or more incarcerations
Institutional violations	0 points = no institutional violations 1 point = at least one institutional violation

ᴇCRJ

Zero-Weight Items

· There are two items included on the risk tool for data collection purposes

   · The self-reported gang involvement item is being tracked for data collection purposes. When the MDOC Risk Assessment was developed, only the MDOC gang indicator data could be used to develop this risk factor for the tool, so self-reported data was not available in the development of the MDOC Risk Assessment. As part of this pilot, the self-reported gang involvement response to this question should only be marked if the only source of gang involvement is self-reported information

ᴇCRJ

Zero-Weight Items

· There are two items included on the risk tool for data collection purposes (continued)

   · The prior incarcerations from other jurisdictions response is being tracked for data collection purposes as these data were not available in the development of the tool. Only MDOC incarceration data was available for the risk tool's development

ᴇCRJ

20

MDOC Risk Assessment

- Contains 5 risk factors – so the new risk tool acts as a screener to properly and promptly identify an offender's likelihood to engage in recidivism
  - Age
  - Gang involvement
  - Total number of current felony convictions
  - Number of prior prison incarcerations
  - Total number of institutional violations

ⴿCRJ

Community Supervision
Risk Factor Definitions

- Age – measured as age supervision start
- Gang involvement – measured as the offender having known gang involvement
- Total number of current felonies – measured as the total number of felony convictions on the current case at the time of supervision start

ⴿCRJ

Community Supervision
Risk Factor Definitions

- Number of prior incarcerations – measured as the total number of prior prison incarcerations for the offender
- Institutional violations – measured as any institutional violation in the offender's history
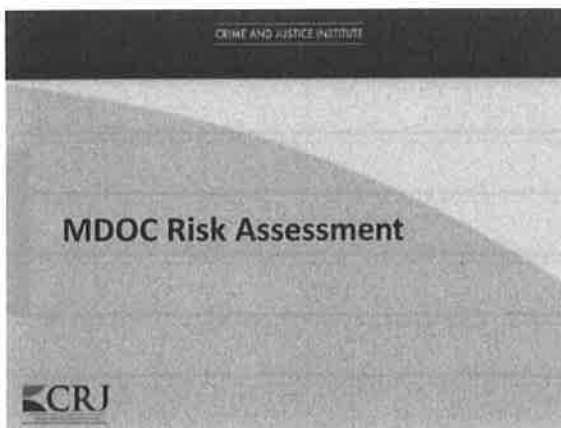
ⴿCRJ

19

Risk Assessment Fidelity

- Why a risk assessment tool is used
  - Using a risk assessment tool allows the offender to be assigned to appropriate interventions based on their risk level
  - If low risk offenders are assigned high risk interventions, low risk offenders can have higher recidivism rates
- How to maintain fidelity to a risk tool
  - Must have a process for inter-rater reliability to ensure the tool is accurately scored to predict low, moderate, and high risk for the target population
  - Must be validated on the target population

CRJ

Principles of Effective Intervention (PEI) are Related to Risk Assessment

Principle	Definition	How this Relates to Risk Assessment
Risk Principle	Tells us WHO to target	Distinguishes low, medium, and high risk offenders
Need Principle	Tells us WHAT to target	Incorporate dynamic needs focusing on antisocial attitudes, peers, and personality
Responsivity Principle	Tells us HOW to target offender issues	Identify and address barriers to success-motivation, mental health, etc.
Fidelity Principle	Tells us how to do this work RIGHT	Implementation plan for training on tool, validation and norming by objective researchers, and making changes after reviewing the data

CRJ

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

MDOC Risk Assessment

CRJ

18

Specific Responsivity

- Specific Responsivity is related to conducting a risk assessment and developing an appropriate case plan
  - Barriers that may need to be identified and addressed prior to or while conducting a risk assessment and in the development of a case plan
- Throughout the interview the assessor should be recognizing and responding to these responsivity characteristics
  - Meet the offender for where he or she is at during the interview

ECRJ

Fidelity Principle

- The Fidelity Principle tells us how to do this work *right*
  - Risk assessment fidelity
    - Tool must be properly developed to ensure that the risk assessment predicts recidivism for the target population
    - Assessment staff must be properly trained
    - Coaching must follow training to support assessment staff with scoring and decision-making
    - Risk tool must be piloted before statewide rollout
    - Inter-rater reliability process must be adopted and maintained to ensure consistent scoring
    - Tool must be validated every 3 years to ensure that the risk assessment continues to predict recidivism

ECRJ

Risk Assessment Fidelity

ECRJ

17

Closed-ended Questions

- Imagine you are interviewing Amanda and you want to know if she has a drug problem
  - In the interview you were only allowed to use close-ended questions:
    - You: *Have you used drugs in the last year?*
    - Amanda: *Yes*
    - You: *What drugs?*
    - Amanda: *Marijuana*

≤CRJ

Open-ended Questions

- Imagine you are interviewing Amanda and you want to know if she has a drug problem
  - In the interview you can only use open ended questions:
    - You: *Tell me about your drug use in the last year*
    - Amanda: *I used marijuana every day over the past year. When I smoked, I was typically with my boyfriend who deals weed, so I don't have to pay for it*

≤CRJ

Interaction Skills

- Reliable information is most likely to be obtained when appropriate skills are used to complete the Needs-Q
- Successful assessment staff are
  - Objective
  - Non-judgmental
  - Clear in describing the purpose of the Needs-Q
  - Use follow-up questions to clarify information or to learn more about the offender
  - Express appreciation for the offender's response and acknowledge the importance of honesty
  - Employ active listening skills to summarize the information provided

≤CRJ

16

General Responsivity

- How does general responsivity apply to risk assessments and case plans?
  - We use general responsivity skills to facilitate a conversation with offenders
  - These skills help us identify an offender's risk and needs that can be used for developing case plan goals
  - Using these skills will keep the offender at ease and model prosocial behavior

CRJ

Being Responsive During a Needs – Q Interview (Active Listening Skills)

- Look at the person who is talking
- Focus and listen to the information being shared without being distracted, interrupting, or passing judgment
- Think about what is being said throughout the section. At the end of each section, verbally summarize what you heard
- Ask for clarification to confirm your understanding

CRJ

Good Interviewing: Open-ended Questions

- Closed-ended questions can be answered with one word (e.g., yes, no)
  - Limits information obtained
  - Limits opportunity to build rapport
  - Creates a suspicious setting/tone
- Open-ended questions cannot be answered in one word
  - Requires a more detailed response
  - Elicits more information
  - Builds rapport
  - Creates a setting that allows an offender to feel at ease

CRJ

15

Need Principle

- Criminogenic needs, or dynamic risk factors, that can be targeted for change are also included on risk and needs assessments and can be used as priority areas for setting goals for a case plan
- Using the Needs-Q will help identify criminogenic needs
  - Antisocial personality (one of the Big 4)
  - Antisocial attitudes (one of the Big 4)
  - Antisocial peers (one of the Big 4)
  - Substance abuse (one of the Big 8)
  - Employment (one of the Big 8)
  - Education (one of the Big 8)

⊆CRJ

Responsivity Principle

- The Responsivity Principle tells us *how* to target
- What gets in the way of the offender benefiting from supervision and treatment?
  - Take into account individual learning styles so we can effectively work with offenders
  - Consider barriers to engaging and interacting with offenders to conduct risk assessments, develop appropriate and individualized case plans, and to provide targeted interventions to improve offender outcomes
- Targeting responsivity factors will increase the likelihood for success

⊆CRJ

Responsivity Principle

- General Responsivity examples
  - Active listening skills
  - Open-ended questions
  - Interaction skills
- Specific Responsivity examples
  - Language
  - Acute mental illness
  - Physical disabilities
  - Learning or cognitive disabilities
  - Anxiety and depression
  - Trauma and victimization
  - Motivation

⊆CRJ

14

Importance of the Big Four – the Heart Attack Study

Risk Factors of Heart Attack
- Increased LDL/HDL ratios (i.e., high cholesterol ratios)
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Abdominal obesity
- Psychosocial (i.e., stress or depression)
- Failure to eat fruits and vegetables daily
- Failure to exercise
- Failure to drink any alcohol

CRJ

Importance of the Big Four – the Heart Attack Study

- The risk of heart attack for individuals who had all 9 of these factors, amazingly, was almost 130 times higher than for somebody with none of them
- The first 2 of these risk factors (bad cholesterol ratios and smoking) predicted 2/3 of all heart attacks

CRJ

Importance of the Big Four – the Heart Attack Study

- Increased LDL/HDL ratios
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Prior Heart Attacks

- Attitudes
- Peers
- Personality
- Criminal History

- Hypertension
- Abdominal obesity
- Psychosocial (i.e., stress or depression)
- Failure to eat fruits and vegetables daily
- Failure to exercise
- Failure to drink any alcohol

- Substance Abuse
- Family
- Education/Employment
- Recreation
- Accommodations
- Financial

CRJ

13

Need Principle

- Distinguishing a risk factor from a criminogenic need
- Risk factor = any characteristic related to recidivism
  - Static = things that cannot change, such as prior incarcerations, prior institutional violations
  - Dynamic = things that can change, such as drug use, antisocial peers, employment
- Criminogenic = crime-producing
- Criminogenic needs = risk factors which predict recidivism AND are dynamic

ECRJ

Need Principle

- "Big Four" – Criminogenic risk factors
  - Antisocial attitudes
  - Antisocial peers
  - Antisocial personality
  - History of antisocial behavior
- Other criminogenic risk factors
  - Substance abuse
  - Employment/education
  - Low family affection/poor supervision/poor communication
  - Leisure/recreation
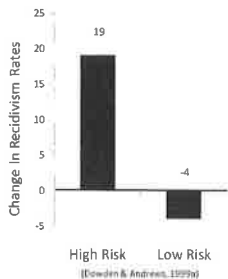   (Andrews & Bonta 1994)

ECRJ

Importance of the Big Four – the Heart Attack Study

- One international study that looked at the risk factors associated with heart attacks
  - Gathered data on all heart attacks
  - Compared to case-matched controls

ECRJ

12

Risk Principle

- Dowden and Andrews' meta-analysis shows that when there are interventions targeted at high risk, recidivism is reduced 19%; but, target the low risk and recidivism increased 4%
- Knowing who is high risk and who is low risk matters
- Using a risk assessment to properly classify offenders is essential

◄CRJ

Risk Principle

- Risk assessments that contain static risk factors often look at an offender's prior criminal history
  - Prior convictions
  - Prior incarcerations
  - Prior supervision and supervision failure/revocation
  - Prior violations within institutional settings or on supervision

◄CRJ

Need Principle

- The Need Principle tells us *what* to target
- Certain factors are tied to recidivism
- Risk and needs assessments will allow for proper identification of an offender's needs
- Targeting these factors will result in a reduction in future offending

◄CRJ

11

Principles of Effective Intervention

· Risk Principle – tells us WHO to target

· Need Principle – tells us WHAT to target

· Responsivity Principle – tells us HOW to target

· Fidelity Principle – tells us how to do this work RIGHT

CRJ

Risk Principle

· The Risk Principle tells us *who* to target
· Risk assessments should be used to objectively and appropriately classify an offender's risk
· The best way to assess an offender's risk factors is by using an actuarial assessment
· Target those offenders with higher probability (higher risk) of recidivism

CRJ

Risk Principle

· High risk offenders are more likely to recidivate and are more active when they do recidivate
  · Require the most intensive intervention (supervision and treatment) for the high risk offender
· Low risk offenders are not as likely to recidivate
  · Too much intervention can increase the likelihood of recidivism for low risk offenders
  · Intervention may not be necessary

CRJ

10

Benefits of MDOC Risk Assessment

- The three goals to develop the MDOC risk assessment were satisfied
  - The new risk tool is a stronger predictor of recidivism than the previous risk tool
  - The new risk tool performs well regardless of gender or race
  - The new risk tool properly classifies offenders by risk both in the community and the institutions
- Overall, the MDOC risk tool containing 5 risk factors is a significant predictor of recidivism and predicts well regardless of gender and race
  - For every one point increase in the total score, the odds of recidivism increase 1.5 times
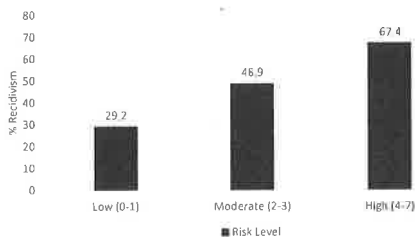
CRJ

Benefits of MDOC Risk Assessment

- The MDOC risk assessment can be completed efficiently to quickly assess and identify the offender's risk level using data already captured in OffenderTrak and Caseload Explorer
- The Needs-Q is a survey that will be administered to offenders to help identify criminogenic needs (dynamic risk factors) that can be targeted for case planning, programming, and interventions
- This information will eventually be combined into a final risk and needs tool which will fully satisfy HB 585 requirements
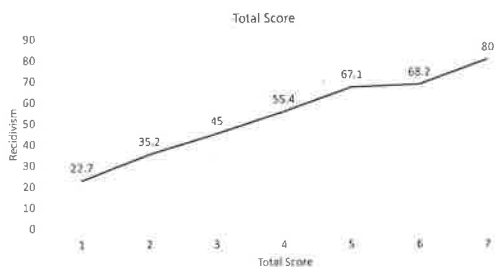
CRJ

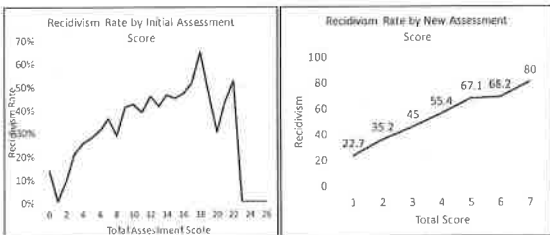CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

Principles of Effective Intervention

CRJ
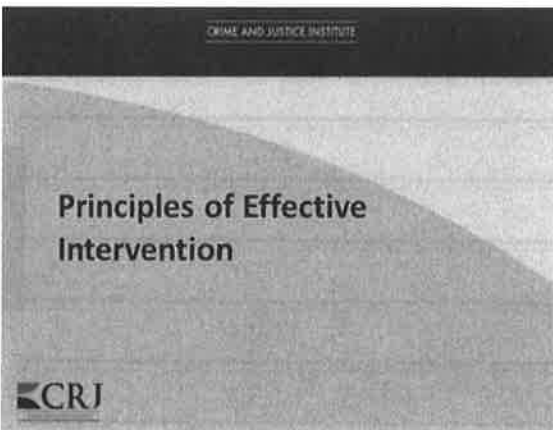
Findings

• Risk Levels – Community Corrections

≤CRJ

Findings

≤CRJ

Comparison of the Old and New MS Risk Assessments

≤CRJ

8

Findings

- Risk factors, such as prior felony convictions, prior supervisions, and prior incarcerations were measuring the same risk
- Similarly, prior revocations and prior incarcerations were measuring the same risk
  - The strongest risk factor, prior incarcerations, was included in the new risk assessment
  - The other risk factors were excluded due to measuring the same risk

◼CRJ

Findings

- Risk Factor Correlations – Community Corrections

Risk Factors	Total	Male	Female	Black	White
Age	.115**	.121**	.059	.130**	.080**
Gang	.172**	.172**	.052	.178**	.143**
Total # current felonies	.185**	.186**	.152**	.190**	.177**
Number prior incarcerations	.149**	.131**	.204**	.141**	.143**
Institutional violations	.197**	.199**	.153**	.209**	.152**

◼CRJ

Findings

- Total Score Correlations & AUC-ROC

Risk Factors	Correlations C/V	AUC-ROC C/V
Community Corrections	.262**/.300**	.648/.673
Institutions	.220**/.231**	.622/.626
Male	.246**/.296**	.643/.672
Female	.246**/.229**	.638/.624
Black	.318**/.248**	.687/.641
White	.256**/.263**	.638/.644

◼CRJ

New Risk Assessment Goals

- Three goals were established for developing the new MDOC risk assessment
  - Increase overall performance – ensure the new tool is a strong predictor of recidivism
  - Develop a new risk assessment so that the instrument performs well regardless of race and gender
  - Ensure that the new risk assessment properly classifies offenders by low, moderate, and high risk

CRJ

Findings

- Multiple static criminal history risk factors were examined for possible inclusion in the risk assessment
- Five risk factors emerged as the strongest predictors of recidivism for both community corrections and institutions
  - Age
  - Gang involvement
  - Total number of current felonies
  - Number of prior incarcerations
  - Institutional violations

CRJ

Findings

- Risk factors, such as offense types, were found to not be statistically significant predictors or even strong predictors by gender and race
  - Property offenses were only a significant predictor for white offenders and current property resulted in an inverse relationship with recidivism
  - Drug possession was only a significant predictor for female offenders
  - Drug trafficking was not a significant predictor

CRJ

Previous Risk Assessment Results

- Knowing the offender's gender predicts recidivism nearly as well as previous risk assessment
- Previous risk assessment was poor for black offenders in comparison to white offenders even with similar recidivism rates

Breakout - Gender and Race	r value	Recidivism rates
Total w/o Gender	.134	
AUC-ROC Value	.579	
Black Offenders	.109	38.3%
White Offenders	.203	37.0%

CRJ

Previous Risk Assessment Results

Recidivism Rate by Initial Assessment Score

CRJ

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

Developing the New Risk Assessment

CRJ

Risk Assessment Performance Indicators

· Performance Ratings for Correlations & AUC-ROC

Predictive Validity	Correlation (r value)	AUC-ROC
Poor	< .10	< .55
Fair	.10-.23	.56-.63
Good	.24-.36	.64-.71
Excellent	.37-1.00	.72-1.00

◣CRJ

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

Previous Risk Assessment Results

◣CRJ
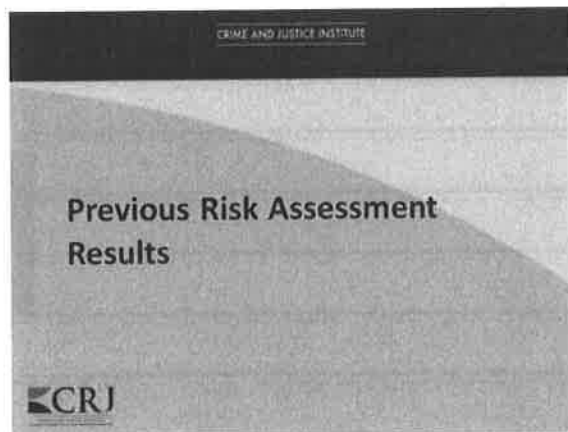
## Previous Risk Assessment Results

· Performance of previous risk tool is fair in predicting recidivism

Risk Assessment Factors	r value
Prior Revocations	.075
Prior Felony Convictions	.064
Current Offense	.061
Active Gang Affiliation	.065
Gender	.090
Current Age	.074
Total Assessment Score	.150
AUC-ROC Value	.589

◣CRJ

4

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

Risk Assessment Performance Indicators

◄CRJ
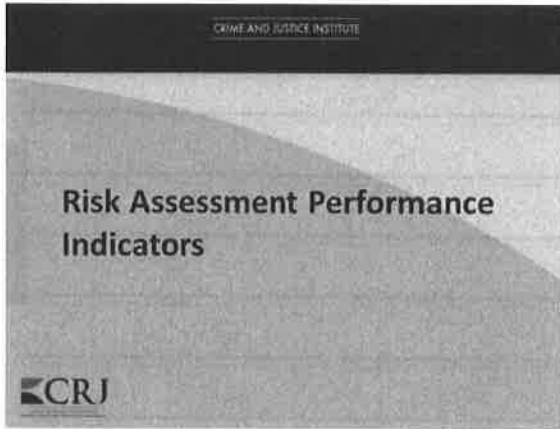
Risk Assessment Performance Indicators

• Measuring risk assessment performance
  • How well does the tool predict future recidivism?
  • Two primary measures are calculated to examine risk tool performance
    • Pearson's r
    • AUC-ROC
  • How well does the tool classify offenders by low, moderate, and high risk?
    • Observe substantial differences in recidivism rates between the risk levels

◄CRJ

Risk Assessment Performance Indicators

• Common Performance Indicators
  • Correlations
    • Measure the strength and direction of the relationship between the risk factor and recidivism
      • Example: Increases in the number of prior incarcerations are related to increases in recidivism
    • Measure the strength and direction of the relationship between the total score and recidivism
      • Example: Increases in total risk assessment score are related to increases in recidivism
  • AUC-ROC
    • Measure the overall predictive accuracy of the risk assessment
    • AUC-ROC values of .50 suggest the risk assessment does not predict much better than chance

◄CRJ

3

HB 585 Risk Assessment Requirements

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

CRJ
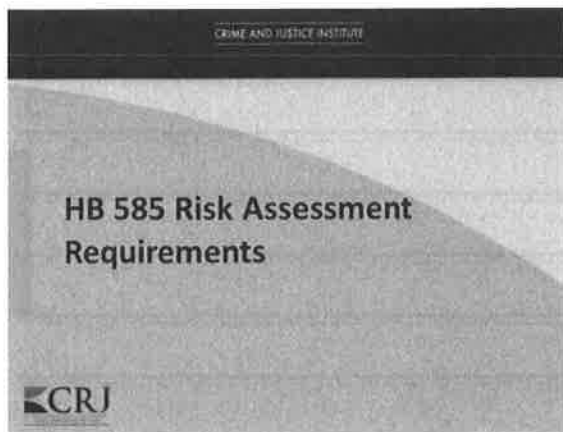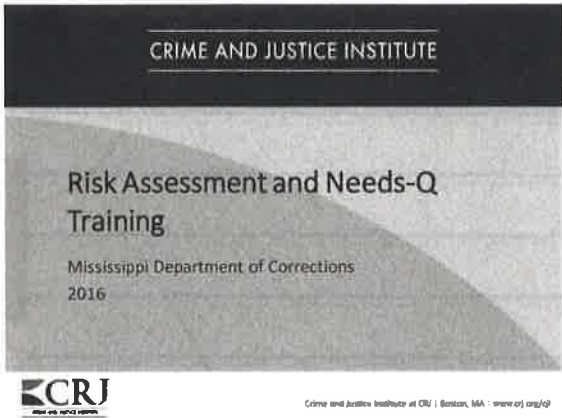
HB 585 Risk Assessment Requirements

- Institutions
  - Administer a validated risk and needs assessment at admission for parole eligible offenders
    - Informs the case plan
    - Assists with program and service referral within the facilities

CRJ

HB 585 Risk Assessment Requirements

- Community Corrections
  - Administer a validated risk and needs assessment upon placement on probation or parole
    - Informs the supervision case plan
    - Assists with program and service referral within the community
    - Guides decision-making and supervision levels

CRJ

2

CRIME AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

Risk Assessment and Needs-Q Training

Mississippi Department of Corrections
2016

CRJ

Crime and Justice Institute at CRJ | Boston, MA : www.crj.org/cji

---

Presentation Overview

- Training Objectives
- HB 585 Risk Assessment Requirements
- Risk Assessment Performance Indicators
- Previous Risk Assessment Results
- Developing the New Risk Assessment
- Principles of Effective Intervention
- MDOC Risk Assessment
- Needs-Questionnaire (Needs-Q)
- Needs-Q Scoring Guide
- Inter-rater Reliability

CRJ

Training Objectives

- Understand the benefits of the new MDOC risk assessment
- Demonstrate how the Principles of Effective Intervention relate to the risk assessment
- Practice scoring the MDOC risk assessment and increase proficiency
- Practice completing the Needs-Q
- Understand the activities and importance of inter-rater reliability

CRJ

1