

# Ventura County Probation Agency

PRETRIAL SERVICES

## Pretrial Services Mission Statement

Pretrial Services will assist the Court in making informed bail decisions through the use of a Pretrial risk assessment. Pretrial Services is committed to maximizing court appearances by those defendants that are released on their own recognizance and promoting community safety while reducing the jail population of low level defendants.

## Pretrial Services Process

- The District Attorney's Office emails non-prison eligible, 1170(h) filings, to Post Release Administrative Services (PRAS). The Senior Deputy Probation Officer assigns Pretrial reports to the Deputy Probation Officers in the unit. In most cases, the referrals are received before 11:00 a.m. and the defendant's first appearance (arraignment) is scheduled for that afternoon.
- The Pretrial report includes an assessment and recommendation that the defendant either remain detained, be released on their Own Recognizance (OR), or be released on OR with Pretrial supervision.

## Eligibility Criteria

- Eligible defendants include those in custody for a non-prison eligible 1170(h) offense, that reside in Ventura County and are scheduled to appear for their first arraignment.
- Ineligible defendants include those with a hold, those that were returned to custody on a warrant, those in custody on a "no bail" case, sentenced prisoners, or those who were out on bail/OR for a felony offense when arrested for the current crime.
- Any referrals received after 11:00 a.m. are either screened in court or held over to the following day so a report and assessment can be completed.

## Pretrial Risk Assessment

- Probation obtains the defendant's prior criminal history information, the circumstances of the current offense and interviews each defendant in custody.
- The Ohio Pretrial Risk Assessment tool is used for each defendant that is interviewed. The first three of the seven questions can be answered by the officer; however, the last four questions need to be answered by the defendant. If a defendant refuses to be interviewed, it is not possible to complete the assessment and an OR release is not recommended.
- If a defendant scores "low" on the risk assessment, a recommendation for OR with no supervision will be made; a "moderate" score will result in a recommendation for an OR release with Pretrial supervision; a "high" score will preclude a recommendation for any type of release.

## Pretrial Supervision

- Once a defendant is released on Pretrial supervision, the court officer will provide them with a Notice to Report to probation for their first "check-in" appointment. A defendant may be given drug, alcohol, stolen property or stay away terms as conditions of their OR release.
- The probation officer will meet with each defendant on a weekly basis for the first four weeks and bi-weekly thereafter.
- For all defendants that are released on OR, probation will mail reminder notices one week prior to their court date and will either email, call or text each defendant the day before their court date.

## Violations of Pretrial Supervision

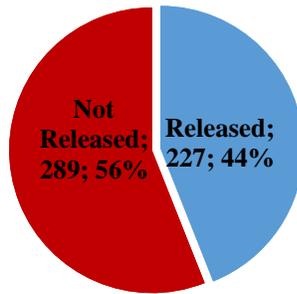
- A defendant will be returned to court for revocation of Pretrial supervision should any of the following occur: A defendant refuses to submit to drug and/or alcohol testing as ordered by the Court; tests positive for drugs and/or alcohol; fails to report to probation as directed, or is arrested/cited for a new misdemeanor or felony offense.
- In Ventura County, the Court decided on a zero tolerance policy regarding drug and alcohol use. A defendant is returned to court the first time they test positive for any substance, other than marijuana (if it is still in their system from the arrest). The National Pretrial Release Standards advise to notify the Court of any Pretrial violations. However, most counties do not remand a defendant upon their first positive drug or alcohol test.
- A defendant will be returned to court for successful completion of their Pretrial supervision should they report to probation as directed, test negative for drugs and/or alcohol and appear for all of their court proceedings for a period of approximately ten weeks.

## Methods of Termination

- There are five ways a defendant can be terminated from Pretrial supervision
  1. Termination by the Court due to a satisfactory performance
  2. Termination by the Court due to a poor performance
  3. The defendant is sentenced on the existing offense
  4. A bench warrant is issued for a failure to appear in court
  5. The defendant is returned to custody for a new offense

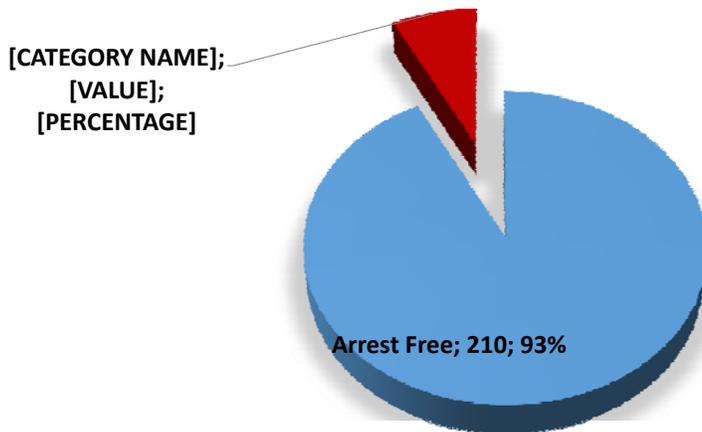
# Ventura County Statistical Information

## Offenders Released on Pre-Trial Supervision 516 Reports Completed

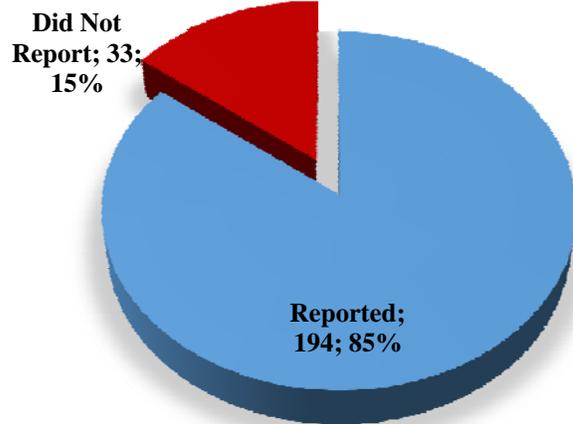


## Offenders Who Remained Arrest Free 227 Total Released

11 defendants were arrested for felony offenses (4 drug related, 6 property crimes & 1 DUI with injuries)  
6 defendants were arrested for misd. offenses (4 drug & alcohol related, 1 trespassing and 1 resisting arrest)



### Offenders Who Reported to Court 227 Total Released



## Statistical Data Continued...

\*17% of the 227 defendants were returned to court for violations of their Pretrial supervision for either failing to report to probation as directed or testing positive for drugs or alcohol. A total of 18 defendants failed to report to probation as directed and 21 defendants tested positive for drugs and/or alcohol.

\*A total of 68% of the 227 Pretrial defendants reported to probation as directed, tested negative for controlled substances/alcohol, remained arrest free and appeared in court as directed.

## Contact Information

Ventura County Presiding Judge, Donald D. Coleman

Supervising Deputy Probation Officer Michelle Larson;  
Post Release Administrative Services

Deputy Probation Officer Karin Castro; Post Release Administrative Services

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