

## Early Release and Parole Conditions at the Margin

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### Abstract:

While over 70% of U.S. prisoners are released under parole supervision, relatively little is known about the effects of supervised release. In this work, I first investigate the effects of early release from prison using the randomized assignment of parole board members and hearing examiners to parole hearings in Pennsylvania. I find that, at the margin of release, individuals initially paroled experience higher rates of recidivism than individuals denied parole and released at a later date. Second, I separately identify the effects of the three major components of parole supervision – (1) special conditions such as curfew or placement in a halfway house, (2) parole supervision intensity, and (3) the parole officer who manages supervision. To do so, I leverage three separate quasi-experimental assignment mechanisms in Pennsylvania – random assignment of parole board members and hearing examiners who set special conditions, recidivism risk test score discontinuities that determine supervision intensity, and the random assignment of parole officers. I find that, among individuals at the margin, special conditions slightly increase parole violations but have little corrective impact, high and low supervision levels both lead to increased recidivism relative to a medium supervision level, and different parole officers have a relative impact on documented parole violations and employment but little effect on new arrests.

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*Preliminary Draft*

REDACTED – Awaiting approval from the Pennsylvania Parole Board to post the draft publicly. Approval will tentatively be provided by September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Until then the current draft is available upon request – please email me at [mlaforest@psu.edu](mailto:mlaforest@psu.edu) for a copy.