

Probation and Parole Supervision Practices to Improve Women Offenders' Dependable Transportation

Miriam Northcutt Bohmert, Ph.D., Dept. of Criminal Justice, Indiana-Bloomington

Access to dependable transportation increases women's probation and parole success. Research shows that agents provide much advice to women clients and the women remember and use this advice (Cornacchione et al., 2016). Thus, advice regarding how to increase transportation access is a promising intervention.

The research: Cornacchione, Jennifer, Sandi Smith, Merry Morash, Miriam Northcutt Bohmert, Jennifer Cobbina & Deborah Kashy (2016). "Topics of, and Reactions to, Female Offenders' Memorable Messages from Probation and Parole Officers." *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 44(1): 60-77.

Assess clients' access to transportation at least twice a year by asking these questions

- ✚ Currently, would you say that the way you get to and from supervision appointments, grocery stores, medical appointments, etc. is stressful or complicated – or easy and not worrisome?
- ✚ Currently, do any of your current arrangements for getting around place you in danger or in violation of the law or supervision rules? If yes, in what way?

Tell clients about strategies that research found effective for women offenders

- ✚ build extensive social networks,
- ✚ make travel arrangements well in advance of appointments,
- ✚ utilize several modes of transportation,
- ✚ live close to places to which you frequently travel and in neighborhoods with transportation access and safe walking areas

The research: Northcutt Bohmert, Miriam (2016). "The Role of Transportation Disadvantage for Women on Community Supervision." *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 43(11): 1522-1540.

If possible, use these practices

- ✚ Minimize travel for women, for example, allow phone reporting if low risk
- ✚ Schedule women when it is easiest for them to travel or conduct home or workplace visits
- ✚ Consider travel time, frequency, and distance needed to meet supervision requirements
- ✚ Help women obtain bus tickets, access to bicycles, or other travel resources
- ✚ Advocate for safe and affordable transit for women who lack it