

# Corrigendum to “A Viable Alternative? Alternatives to Incarceration Across Several Federal Districts”

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** *The authors of “A Viable Alternative? Alternatives to Incarceration Across Several Federal Districts,” which appeared in the June 2019 issue of Federal Probation (Vol. 83, no. 1), have learned that due to a previously unknown data issue in the administrative case management data system (known as PACTS) from which they drew their data for the study, the measure of prior convictions used within the estimation of the propensity score was deemed unreliable. The authors provide a new set of tables that eliminate the incorrect data, and they explain the effect of eliminating that data on their study results.*

*We are reviewing past Federal Probation articles to determine whether anyone else made use of this PACTS prior convictions data during the time it was faulty.*

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**THE AUTHORS REGRET** that due to previously unknown data issues present in the administrative case management data system (known as PACTS) upon which all data was drawn for this study, the measure of prior convictions used within the estimation of the propensity score was deemed unreliable. Specifically, PACTS stores the number of prior arrests and convictions as integers in its database. The database management system stores integers as zero by default. This made it impossible for the researchers to distinguish a missing value from a true zero (or to remove cases that were missing data on this measure). The research team learned of this issue only after publication. Accordingly, this measure was removed from the propensity score matching analysis altogether (although the prior felony convictions measure is captured in another data element as part of the PTR

score) and all results were re-estimated. All revised figures appear in this corrigendum.

Although many of the point estimates changed as a result of this re-analysis of the data, the majority of the substantive conclusions remain unchanged. Unlike the originally published results, the revised results suggest that ATI participants were not significantly more likely to have a violation of bail associated with location monitoring, employment requirements, or association restrictions (Figure 3). As a whole, ATI participants also worked a significantly greater proportion of their days on pretrial supervision (42.26 vs 37.47%;  $p < .05$ ). While the differences in employment among successful ATI and their matched counterparts was marginally significant in the original analysis, this difference was statistically significant upon the removal of the unreliable data element (Figure

4). Revised results also suggest that successful ATI participants had significantly fewer drug tests with a positive result ( $p < .05$ ). Finally, in terms of sentences imposed, all findings were substantively identical to those published, except that in the revised analyses there was no indication that ATI participants were more likely than their matched counterparts to receive a probation term (Figure 6). However, paralleling the original results, the major finding stemming from this portion of the analysis is that ATI participants were more likely to avoid prison and probation altogether and had their charges dismissed following their completion of the ATI program.

Notwithstanding that the data errors which necessitated these revisions were outside of our control, the authors would like to apologize for any inconvenience caused to the readers of *Federal Probation*.

**FIGURE 1.**  
Descriptive Statistics for the Evaluation  
of ATI Programs from 7 Districts

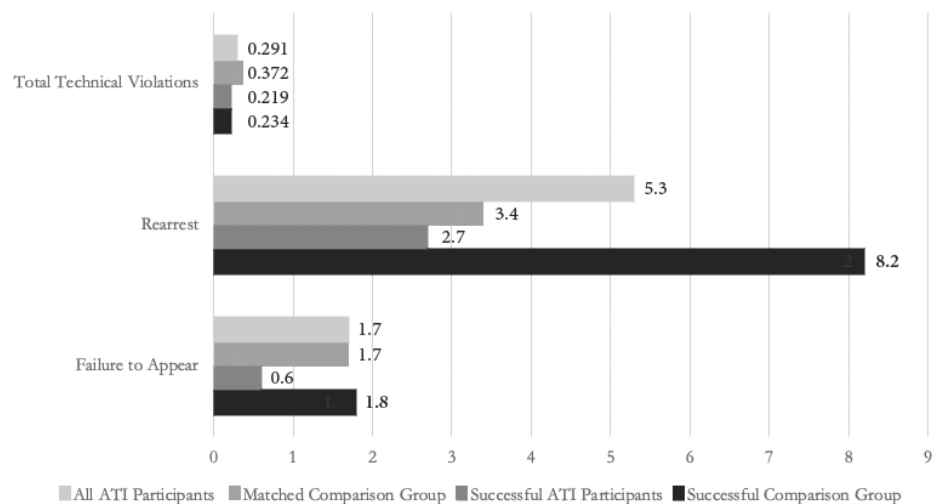
	N	Percent
<b>ATI Indicator</b>		
Regular Supervision	13390	96.16
ATI Participant	534	3.84
<b>Sex</b>		
Female	3190	22.91
Male	10734	77.09
<b>Race</b>		
White	5468	39.27
Black	3752	26.95
Hispanic	3408	24.48
Other	1296	9.31
<b>Citizenship</b>		
Non-Citizen	3618	25.98
U.S. Citizen	10306	74.02
<b>Current Offense Type</b>		
Drug Offense	4434	31.84
Financial Offense	5832	41.88
Violent Offense	798	5.73
Weapons Offense	898	6.45
Other Offense	1962	14.09
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Age</b>	40.05	12.97
<b>Time Under Supervision Months</b>	14.93	12.27
<b>PTRA Score</b>	5.63	2.69
<b>PTRA Category</b>		
Category 1	51	9.55%
Category 2	114	21.35%
Category 3	200	37.45%
Category 4	123	23.03%
Category 5	46	8.61%
<b>Conditions of Supervision</b>		
	Proportion	
Alcohol Restrictions	.255	
Substance Abuse Testing	.464	
Drug Treatment	.425	
Mental Health Treatment	.238	
Passport Restrictions	.791	
Travel Restrictions	.860	
Weapons Restrictions	.393	

**FIGURE 2.**  
Equivalent Groups Generated by Propensity Score Matching

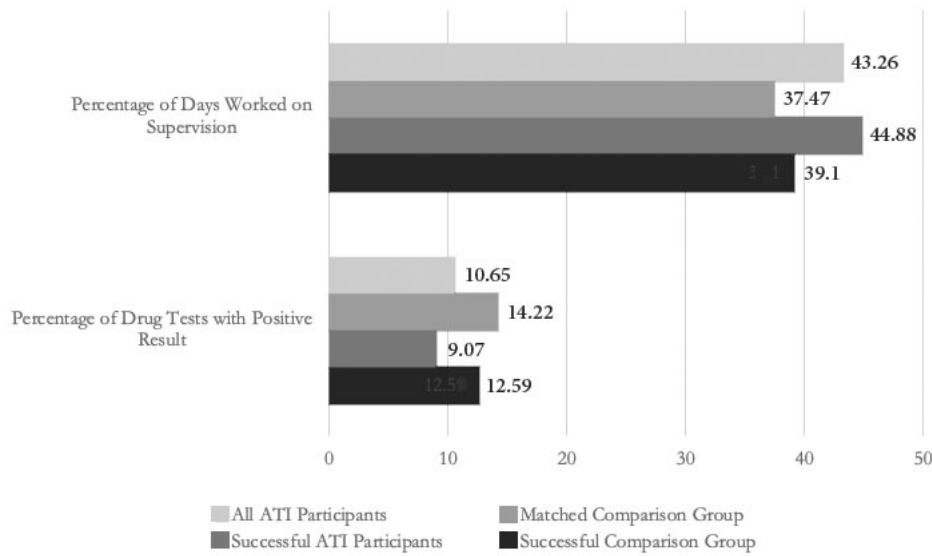
	Matched ATI Participants (n=471/534)	Matched Defendants (n=471)	% Bias Reduction	T-Statistic	p-value
Sex (Male=1)	.531	.527	98.4	.130	.896
Age at Intake	33.561	33.074	94.1	.726	.468
White	.420	.471	23.7	-1.574	.116
Black	.242	.195	41.4	1.724	.085
Hispanic	.295	.297	97.1	-.071	.943
Other Race	.051	.051	100.0	.000	1.000
U.S. Citizen	.898	.909	93.9	-.551	.582
Drug Offense	.611	.650	89.8	-1.215	.225
Financial Offense	.299	.274	85.6	.864	.388
Violent Offense	.036	.030	76.0	.547	.584
Weapon Offense	.045	.038	80.1	.490	.624
Other Offense	.008	.008	100.0	.000	1.000
Length of Supervision	21.993	20.234	72.3	1.914	.056
PTRA Total Score	7.327	7.342	99.2	-.100	.920
Alcohol Restrictions	.444	.456	93.9	-.393	.695
Substance Abuse Testing	.779	.813	91.2	-1.294	.196
Drug Treatment	.752	.788	90.9	-1.315	.189
Mental Health Treatment	.403	.359	73.6	1.409	.159
Passport Restrictions	.695	.665	95.0	.416	.678
Travel Restrictions	.813	.779	62.9	1.294	.196
Weapons Restrictions	.425	.463	35.0	-1.180	.238

Note: Nearest Neighbor Matching with Caliper of .05 used. Matching was done using a two-step process to assure that ATI defendants were matched to defendants within their own districts. The matching procedures are described in more detail in the methods section.

**FIGURE 3.**  
Program Outcomes for Matched Groups



**FIGURE 4.**  
**Program Outcomes for Matched Groups**



**FIGURE 5.**  
**ATI Case Dispositions for ATI Defendants Across Districts**

Panel A : ATI Participants		
	Cases	Percent
Were Dismissed / Deferred Resulting in Dismissal	179	43%
Received TSR Time Only	12	3%
Received a Probation Term	90	22%
Received a Prison Sentence	135	32%
<b>Total</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>100%</b>

Panel B : Successful ATI Participants		
	Cases	Percent
Were Dismissed / Deferred Resulting in Dismissal	179	49%
Received TSR Time Only	12	3%
Received a Probation Term	78	22%
Received a Prison Sentence	94	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>100%</b>

Panel C : Unsuccessful ATI Participants		
	Cases	Percent
Were Dismissed / Deferred Resulting in Dismissal	0	0%
Received TSR Time Only	0	0%
Received a Probation Term	12	23%
Received a Prison Sentence	41	77%
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Note: There were a total of 96 open ATI cases and 22 for which sentencing data was not available at the time of the analysis.*

**FIGURE 6.**  
**Sentences Received by Defendants Matched to Dismissed/Diverted ATI Cases**

(n=170)	Cases	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Prison Time in Months	132	28.99	18	42.71	0.033	366
Probation Time in Months	38	37.89	36	13.81	12	60
TSR Time in Months	132	49.84	36	26.02	12	120