FISCAL BRIEFING

Lifetime Supervision in Colorado: The Fiscal Picture

What the Sex Offender Lifetime Supervision Act costs, what revocations convert, and how every figure in this brief can be reproduced from the state's own publications.

PREPARED	BASIS	METHOD	CONTACT
November 2026	CDOC FY2025 Annual Report; JBC FY2026-27 Figure Setting	Published figures only; estimates labeled and shown in full	(720) 715-9577

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Colorado has released **2,066 people** to parole under the Lifetime Supervision Act. In 27 years, **153 (7.4%)** have ever been discharged from supervision.
2. **690 parolees have been revoked.** Only **86** of those revocations, 12.5 percent, were for new felony convictions.
3. A prison bed costs **$196.01 per day** against **$26.43 per day** for parole supervision. Each revocation converts a $9,647 supervision year into a $71,544 prison year.
4. The Lab estimates the Act's annual cost at approximately **$128 million**, built line by line in Section 4 from verified populations, published rates, and reported treatment expenditures.

2,066
RELEASED TO PAROLE UNDER THE ACT, CUMULATIVE

153
EVER DISCHARGED: 7.4% IN 27 YEARS

690
REVOCATIONS, CUMULATIVE

86
REVOCATIONS FOR NEW FELONY CONVICTIONS

1 THE PROGRAM, IN BRIEF

Since 1998, Colorado has sentenced people convicted of certain sex offenses to indeterminate terms: a minimum number of years to a maximum of natural life, with release and discharge both discretionary. As of June 30, 2025, the Department of Corrections reported 2,800 people in custody under the Act: 1,345 in state prison, 396 in private prison, 1,056 on parole, and 3 in

other status. Cumulatively, 2,066 people have been released to parole under the Act. Of those, 153 have ever been discharged from supervision: 7.4 percent, across 27 years of operation.

2 THE UNIT ECONOMICS

PLACEMENT	COST PER DAY	COST PER YEAR	SOURCE
State prison bed	$196.01	$71,544	JBC FY2026-27 figure setting
Private prison bed	$80.00	$29,200	JBC FY2026-27 figure setting
Parole supervision	$26.43	$9,647	JBC FY2026-27 figure setting

A prison bed costs 7.4 times a parole slot. Every revocation of parole converts a $9,647 supervision year into a $71,544 prison year, an added $61,897 per person per year of re-incarceration, before treatment and transport costs.

3 REVOCATIONS: THE CONVERSION ENGINE

OUTCOME, CUMULATIVE THROUGH FY2025	COUNT	SHARE
Released to parole under the Act	2,066	100%
Ever discharged from supervision	153	7.4%
Revoked from parole (cumulative)	690	33.4%
Revocations for new felony convictions	86	12.5% of revocations
Revocations in FY2025 alone	44	1 for a new felony

> KEY FINDING
>
> **87.5 percent of all revocations under the Act were not for a new felony conviction.** Most were for technical violations of supervision conditions. Priced at the Joint Budget Committee's own rates, FY2025's 44 revocations represent roughly $2.7 million in added annual cost for each year those individuals remain incarcerated (44 × $61,897). That figure is arithmetic from published rates, offered as an illustration of scale, not as a Department of Corrections number.

4 THE AGGREGATE: AN ESTIMATE, BUILT IN THE OPEN

The Lab estimates the Act's annual cost at approximately **$128 million**. The build is shown in full so any reader can reproduce or challenge it. Populations are FY2025 actuals (June 30,

2025); rates are the Joint Budget Committee's FY2026-27 figures; treatment lines are FY2025 reported expenditures.

COMPONENT	ARITHMETIC	ANNUAL COST
State prison incarceration	1,345 people × 365 days × $196.01	$96,226,209
Private prison incarceration	396 people × 365 days × $80.00	$11,563,200
Parole supervision	1,056 people × 365 days × $26.43	$10,187,179
Treatment: incarcerated (assessment, treatment, testing, evaluation)	FY2025 reported	$4,012,601
Treatment: parolee provider services	FY2025 reported	$3,651,018
Treatment and evaluation: probation track	FY2025 reported	$2,582,729
Estimated total		**$128,222,936**

Conservatisms in this estimate: it annualizes a single day's population snapshot; it excludes the supervision cost of the 856 people on the probation track under the Act, so the true all-in figure is higher; and it counts no court, transport, or Parole Board hearing costs. The estimate is a floor built from verified inputs, not a ceiling.

5 WHAT THE MONEY IS BUYING

- **Throughput:** In the Act's first 13 years, 159 people completed the prison treatment program that gates parole eligibility. A 2016 State Auditor review found 1,979 people on the treatment waitlist as of December 31, 2015.
- **Risk over time:** Peer-reviewed research (Hanson et al., 2014) finds that the recidivism risk of people convicted of sex offenses falls to 4.2 percent after ten offense-free years in the community. Supervision intensity, and its cost, does not decay with that risk under the current statute.
- **Evaluation:** In 27 years, the program has never had an independent outcome evaluation measuring cost against results. The figures above are drawn entirely from the state's own operational reporting.

6 METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

Every figure in this brief traces to one of the following public sources. No figure rests on advocacy-organization data, media reporting, or estimation beyond the labeled aggregate in

Section 4.

- **Populations, releases, discharges, revocations:** *Lifetime Supervision of Sex Offenders Annual Report*, FY2025 (Colorado Department of Corrections, Department of Public Safety, and Judicial Department, November 1, 2025), reporting status as of June 30, 2025 and cumulative outcomes since the Act's 1998 effective date.
- **Unit rates:** Joint Budget Committee staff figure setting for the Department of Corrections, FY2026-27: $196.01 per day (state prison), $80.00 per day (private prison), $26.43 per day (parole supervision). Annual figures are the daily rates multiplied by 365.
- **Treatment expenditures:** FY2025 amounts as reported in the FY2025 annual report and CDOC budget documents: $4,012,601 (incarcerated assessment, treatment, testing, and evaluation), $3,651,018 (parolee treatment provider services), $2,582,729 (probation treatment and evaluation).
- **Waitlist and early throughput:** Colorado Office of the State Auditor, *Sex Offender Management Board and Sex Offender Treatment and Monitoring Program* performance audit (November 2016): 1,979 people waitlisted as of December 31, 2015; 159 treatment completions in the program's first 13 years.
- **Risk decay:** Hanson, R.K., et al. (2014), recidivism-risk trajectories for people convicted of sex offenses; risk estimated at 4.2 percent after ten offense-free years in the community.

The Day One Policy Lab maintains a full verification register for this work: every published figure, its source document, and its reproduction path. The register, and any cut of the underlying data (by year, by revocation type, by placement), is available to any legislative office on request, without condition.

Day One Policy Lab · Office line (720) 715-9577

This brief was prepared from public data. Every figure can be verified independently from the sources cited.