



Criminal Deterrence: Evidence from an Individual-level Analysis of 24/7 Sobriety

Background

- While there were a million DUI arrests in 2018, most people driving under the influence are never detected.
- Crime related costs of excessive drinking were over \$70 billion in 2006.
- South Dakota allowed DUI offenders in five counties to test their blood alcohol content twice a day. Failure brought immediate certain punishment.

Study Overview

- This paper evaluates South Dakota's 24/7 Sobriety Program—a novel, large-scale intervention requiring those arrested for or convicted of an alcohol-related offense to abstain from alcohol and submit to alcohol tests multiple times daily.

Learn More

- Kilmer, B. and Midgette, G. (2020), CRIMINAL DETERRENCE: EVIDENCE FROM AN INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL ANALYSIS OF 24/7 SOBRIETY. *J. Pol. Anal. Manage.*.. doi:10.1002/pam.22217
- <https://doi.org/10.1002/pam.22217>

Key Takeaways

- Multiple offenders in the 24/7 program were less likely to be arrested 12 months, 24 months, and 36 months later than those multiple offenders not in the program.
- The authors posit that only a third of offenders were enrolled in the program. They conclude full participation would lower the re-arrest rate by 36%
- Among offenders who had committed their third DUI, the percentage of reduction in re-arrest were greater: 52% reduction at 12 months; 38% reduction at 24 months; 33% reduction at 36 months.
- These findings provide empirical support for applying “swift-certain-fair” sanctions to deter noncompliance in community supervision settings.
- This paper also provides policymakers with evidence for a new approach to reduce criminal activity among those whose alcohol use leads them to repeatedly threaten public health and safety.