



CSOSA

CSOSA FY20 Annual Performance Report and FY22 Annual Performance Plan

May 28, 2021

Annual Performance Report: FY20

Although the COVID-19 pandemic presented considerable challenges during FY20, CSOSA reached at least 90 percent of the target on 75% of its performance goals (see, Figure 1). For five goals, the Agency exceeded established performance targets and, for an additional seven, achieved between 90 to 100 percent of the target. Figure 2 contrasts the Agency's FY19 and FY20 performance. For each goal, a gray horizontal bar shows the performance threshold (i.e., 90% of target), and a second, colored horizontal bar displays the observed level of performance the Agency achieved as dark blue, light blue, or red conditional on whether the Agency exceeded, met, or fell short of its 90 percent performance threshold, respectively. The Agency's target for each goal is shown by a gold vertical line.

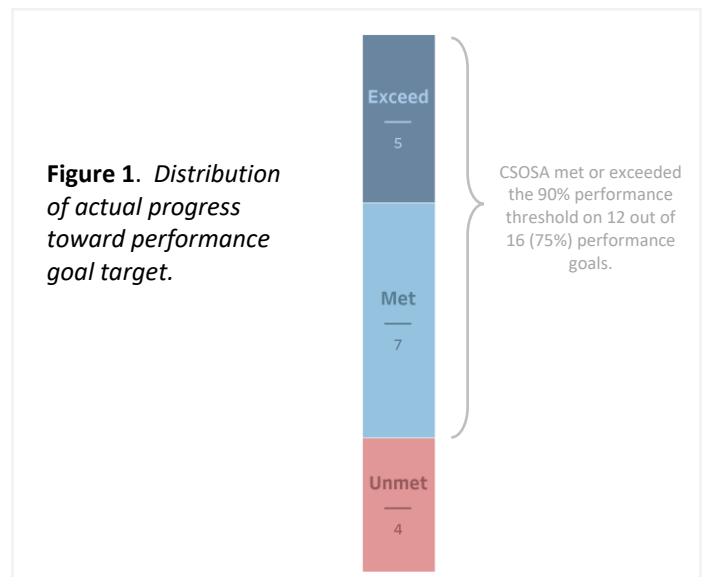


Figure 3 contrasts Agency performance in FY19 and FY20 by quarter in relation to the target, which is represented by the horizontal gold line. A light blue line represents FY19 performance and a dark blue line represents FY20 performance. Red boxes surround goals that were most profoundly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Compared to FY19, the Agency improved on two mission-critical performance goals in FY20: focusing behavioral interventions on high-risk offenders and terminating cases successfully. Meanwhile, the Agency failed to meet its target on four goals, including those related to initial risk assessments and reassessments, submission of progress reports to the United States Parole Commission, and completion of joint accountability tours with officers from the DC Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). For some of the goals where we failed to meet our targets, performance was adversely affected as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Both performance successes and challenges are discussed below.

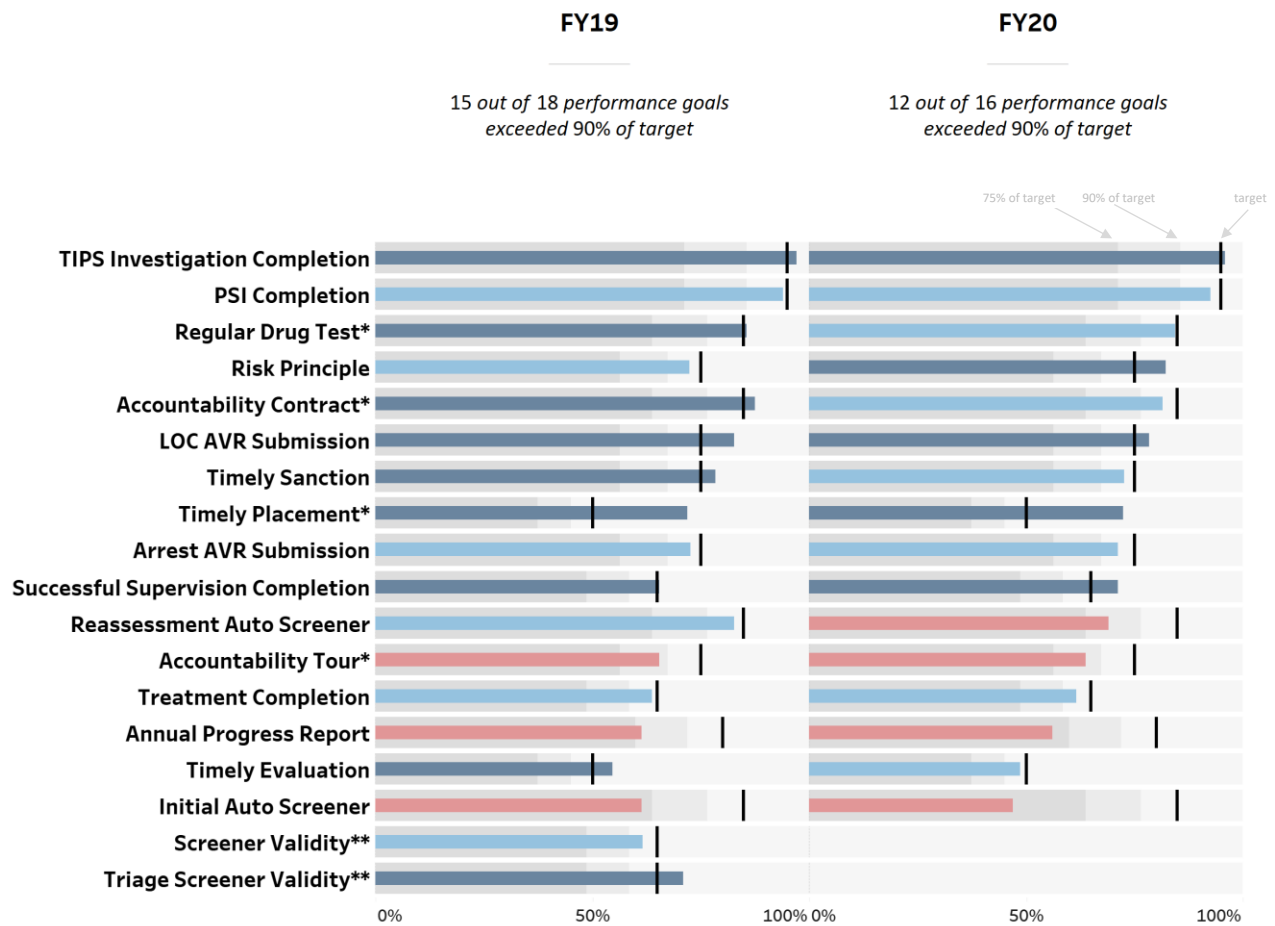


Figure 2. Performance toward target, FY19 and FY20. Bar lengths show actual performance encoded less than 90%, 90% to 100%, and 100% or more progress to target.

Notes. *FY20 performance data for goals related to regular drug testing, completion of the accountability contract, completion of joint accountability tours with officers from DC’s MPD, and timeliness of treatment placements are limited to Q1 and Q2 because those measures were profoundly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; all other measures reflect full FY20; **Goals related to screener and triage screener validity are no longer supported by our reporting structure and will be recalculated and reported once the new structure is complete.

Successes

CSOSA made positive improvements in 1) ensuring the highest risk offenders (e.g., those supervised at the intensive and maximum levels) had access to behavioral interventions, and 2) guiding offenders towards successfully completing supervision. Because the COVID-19 pandemic amplified challenges offenders regularly face, such as employment and housing, it became critical for CSOSA to focus on connecting our highest risk offenders with resources. One of the ways CSOSA did so was through behavioral intervention placements. In FY20, 82 percent of placements in behavioral interventions were made for high-risk offenders, compared to 72 percent in FY19.

CSOSA also increased the percentage of cases terminating successfully upon release. Successful case closures imply that offenders have fulfilled all of their supervision conditions and are integrating back into society in a prosocial manner. In FY20, 71 percent of cases terminated successfully, compared to 66 percent in FY19. While successful completions increased throughout the year, CSOSA exceeded its target on positive case closures during the latter half of FY20, with 83 percent of cases closing successfully during both the third and fourth quarters of the year.

Challenges

Timeliness of both initial risk assessments and reassessments decreased in FY20. Compared to FY19, both measures realized a 14 percentage point decrease in FY20. The decrease in initial risk assessments may partly stem from the integration of results from an automated screening instrument into CSOSA's case management system. This instrument, the Triage Screener, uses data from existing administrative records to provide an appropriate supervision level on the first day of supervision. An unintended consequence of integrating the Triage Screener into our case management system is that it diminished the urgency to complete a full initial risk assessment, which requires an offender interview and is a more time consuming data collection. The challenge with not completing the full assessment is that, because the triage screener utilizes only administrative records, it cannot account for many of the dynamic factors impacting risk, compliance or other stabilization factors. To remedy this issue, the Agency piloted shorter pulse surveys to offenders in FY20, each consisting of 6-8 questions, to fill in those gaps. While those surveys provided useful information, implementation proved to be cumbersome and the Agency is currently considering additional alternatives to replace our current assessment tool. In addition, moderate decreases in performance from the second to third quarter of FY20 suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic may have negatively impacted initial assessments as they shifted from being conducted in-person to relying on completing them while supervising offenders remotely. A 22 percentage point increase in performance on the measure between the third and fourth quarter of the year may be attributed to the dissemination of clearer guidance on how to conduct assessments remotely and supervision officers adjusting to the new protocol.

The timeliness of reassessments, which has historically been one of the Agency's better-performing measures, also decreased in FY20. A likely explanation is the introduction of a new assessment tool, the Dynamic Risk Assessment for Offender Reentry (DRAOR). There had been initial discussions regarding whether the DRAOR would replace, or supplement, the Auto Screener. As a result, once the DRAOR was deployed, many staff believed that Auto Screener reassessments were no longer required. Ultimately, the Agency concluded that the DRAOR should supplement the Auto Screener, at least while it determines how well the DRAOR performs on our offender population. Clearer guidance on the use of the tools has since been disseminated and staff have since been fully trained on use of the DRAOR. Therefore, CSOSA expects improved performance moving forward.



Figure 3. CSOSA performance toward **targets**, FY19 and FY20. **Light blue** lines represent FY19 performance and **dark blue** lines represent FY20 performance. **Red** boxes surround goals most profoundly impacted in Q3 following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic; performance improvements to these goals were realized in Q4.

Notes : *FY20 performance data for the performance goal related to regular drug testing is limited to Q1 and Q2 because the Agency was not drug testing during Q3 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Drug testing resumed in August 2020, but was limited to the highest risk offenders.

Another challenge concerns the timeliness of Annual Progress Reports to the USPC. The USPC requires that progress reports are submitted for all parole and supervised release cases within five calendar days following the anniversary of an offender’s supervision start date. These reports are important because they include recommendations the Agency may have about changing terms or conditions of the offenders’ supervision (e.g., requesting early termination for offenders who have demonstrated sustained compliance with release conditions). An FY18 analysis showed that 24 percent of reports were untimely; 20 percent because the reports were simply never completed. Recommendations stemming from the analysis included automating Annual Progress Reports to ensure they were routinely completed on time, but, unfortunately, budget constraints prevented these enhancements and performance on this measure continued to decline: by FY20, more than 40 percent of progress reports were not submitted on

time. To remedy the issue, the Agency is implementing a new performance management system that will allow for decreasing credit to be attributed to tasks completed after policy-prescribed deadlines. Once fully implemented, this change in how performance is calculated will provide staff with a strong incentive to complete tasks on-time, and motivate them to continue work on tasks even when deadlines have passed. We expect that increasing staff motivation in this way will have a positive impact on our goal related to annual progress reports.

Lastly, CSOSA experienced challenges in the areas of having offenders sign their accountability contract, completion of joint accountability tours with MPD and the timely placement of offenders into treatment. Figure 3 shows that performance on these measures decreased substantially during the third quarter of FY20, but improved moderately during the fourth quarter. These findings suggest that, because these activities involve close in-person contact, they were likely to have been more directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Annual Performance Plan: FY22

For FY22, CSOSA prioritized goals for advancing data governance to support performance measurement and dashboard development, redesigning offender assessment processes and instruments, and aligning program offerings with the needs of the supervised population. While many of these goals were established for FY21, several were intended to be long-term goals; changing circumstances must be considered as we develop our priorities.

Advancing Data Governance

To advance data governance, CSOSA will work on integrating and linking a larger share of the Agency's existing data assets and, where necessary, creating new data collections to fill gaps in our holdings. The Agency is also committed to gaining a better understanding of how decision-makers, managers and other program and operations staff use data, as well as to augmenting our information delivery systems to ensure staff have the data they need to perform their day-to-day duties.

CSOSA's program offices currently use many related, but independent, data systems to perform mission-critical functions. Historically and presently, the CSOSA's Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE) has relied on individual offices to provide aggregated information for performance reporting. This is problematic because it leaves the aggregates vulnerable to misinterpretation and possible misuse when records are separated from their original sources. During FY19, CSOSA's Director mandated that the Chief Data Officer work with senior leaders to coordinate means of granting direct access to the ORE on performance-relevant elements in their data holdings. As access to new systems is granted and resources become available, the ORE is integrating and linking the new assets within the Agency's Enterprise Data Warehouse. This work will continue into FY22 as the Agency gains access to additional data sources.

During FYs 2019 and 2020, CSOSA made considerable progress with the development of its performance indicators and had all implementable indicators operationalized by September 30, 2020. There are, however, several mission-critical measures we cannot currently operationalize because they require creating new linkages between existing data systems, or establishing new survey data collections. As a result, linking or collecting the needed data and operationalizing these goals are among CSOSA's priorities in the upcoming years.

In addition to leveraging data to assess and optimize Agency performance, it is important that we understand how staff use data on a daily basis. In FY21, CSOSA launched a staff survey to provide insight into what data elements are needed for staff to most effectively perform their functions, how they access those data, pinpoint challenges our staff face, and identify gaps in our data holdings. Survey results will be used to inform our data governance efforts, guide the development of the Agency's Priority Questions and Learning Agenda and inform our Capacity Assessment.

Finally, it is imperative that management, program and operations staff have access to information so they can make sound decisions. Acquisition of new data sources and understanding what data are needed for staff to perform is foundational for advancing the development of the Agency's interactive dashboards. In FY20, CSOSA made considerable progress on developing dashboards to display performance trends, identify bottlenecks in reaching performance targets, and assist supervision staff with case management. The data used for these dashboards were largely from the SMART database and the Agency's Enterprise Data Warehouse. With new acquisition of financial data, the Agency is beginning to prototype dashboards that can be used to track funding and expenditures, which will be helpful for budget development and to inform decisions on resource allocations. Moving into FY22, the Agency expects to expand this type of dashboarding to other program areas.

Redesigning Offender Assessments

A second priority is redesigning how offenders are assessed in order to gauge their risks, needs, and other considerations. Such assessments are key factors in deciding the type and amount of resources the Agency devotes to each offender. In the past, the Agency's strategy for screening and assessing its offenders focused primarily on risk and was measured using predominantly static factors. Additionally, assessments were done once every six months (or when an event, such as a rearrest, occurred) which made the Agency susceptible to making supervision decisions based on stale data.

In FY19, CSOSA acquired the DRAOR assessment instrument to improve its ability to identify the highest risk individuals and the needs of the individuals under supervision. The DRAOR augments static risk scales by accounting for real-time changes in dynamic and acute risks (i.e., those demonstrated to anticipate an *imminent* supervision failure). Also, unlike many other correctional assessment tools, the DRAOR assesses protective factors that may mitigate the risk of an offender engaging in future criminal behavior. An officer can complete the DRAOR in 5–10 minutes, a fraction of the time required to complete the Agency's current assessment

instrument. The reduced administrative burden makes it possible to require the DRAOR to be completed at shorter intervals (e.g., approximately monthly for all but the lowest risk cases), yielding updated assessments that are both more frequent and more sensitive to offenders' progress under supervision. During the first quarter of FY20, the Agency trained a cohort of staff to become DRAOR trainers so they could teach additional line staff during the second and third quarters of the fiscal year how to use the DRAOR. In FY20, the Agency began piloting the DRAOR as an aid in making case management decisions and establishing its validity empirically with the Agency's staff and offenders. Staff training and competency assessments continued during the first part of FY20 but were interrupted following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. CSOSA adapted to this changing environment by developing an online training curriculum and, as of the end of October 2020, all staff were certified in DRAOR.


Aligning Programs with Offender Needs

Finally, the Agency prioritized the monitoring and evaluation of its behavioral interventions to ensure they remain effective and aligned with the needs of the supervised population. During the first quarter of FY20, CSOSA's ORE gathered information from the Agency's program offices on all the in-house and contractor-supported services offered to offenders. This collection yielded a catalog of behavioral interventions that includes details about capacity, mode of intervention, staff resources, and focal outcomes. During FYs 21 and 22, the Agency plans to integrate information from the catalog with performance measures to develop capacity utilization rates, assessment data to make more targeted referrals of offenders to programs, and contract monitoring data to deepen its vendor monitoring practices. Additionally, the Agency is continually assessing the needs of the supervised offenders and comparing them to our available programming. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, we expect some shifts in offender needs and we need to be prepared to address them. Understanding the needs of our offender population and adjusting our program offerings, as needed, will allow us to better serve those we supervise, and thereby increase public safety.

While CSOSA's programming continues to focus on addressing risk factors related to offender criminality, the Agency will be placing increased attention on offender stabilization in the coming year, particularly for our high-risk population. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, resources to address stabilization factors, such as housing and employment, were limited. Though not tied directly to criminality, leaving these needs unaddressed may hinder the effectiveness of our supervision program. Connecting offenders to support services and linking them to community resources on both an individual basis and through structured events, such as resource fairs and other re-entry events, will be a priority.

Conclusion

While CSOSA struggled with some of its performance goals because of the COVID-19 pandemic, performance improved in many target areas during the final quarter of FY20 and the Agency met the 90 percent threshold on 75 percent of its performance goals. Some of these successes include



increasing both placements of high-risk offenders in behavioral interventions and successful case closures. During the next fiscal year, the Agency aims to integrate and link data systems, operationalize additional performance goals, and create new survey data collections that provide additional insight to the needs of the offender population. This combination will allow the Agency to make progress toward established goals through collaboration and transparency across the enterprise.

By focusing on data governance to support the continued development of the Agency's performance measures and dashboard, enhancing our risk assessment instruments and procedures, and aligning Agency programs with offender needs through FY22, CSOSA expects to progress towards meeting our goals and improving fulfillment of our mission.