Beyond Recidivism: Life Quality Outcomes for Participants in Federal Alternative to Incarceration Programs

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ALTERNATIVE TO INCARCERATION (ATI) programs refer to judge-led "front end" (pre-adjudication or pre-sentencing) programs that address defendants' criminogenic risk and needs that relate to criminal behavior. Such programs seek to avoid traditional adversarial court processes that rarely adequately address the underlying causes of criminal behavior. Using behavioral interventions, the programs emphasize rehabilitation while holding defendants accountable for their behavior using systematic sanctions and rewards. Though currently many federal "problem solving courts" exist in the prison reentry context, this article refers exclusively to those in the pretrial context where defendants are given opportunities to participate in programs whereby successful completion will result in dismissal of charges or a non-custodial sentence, thereby earning the label of "alternative to incarceration" programs.

Recent evaluation studies of federal ATI programs demonstrate these programs can be effective at reducing incarceration sentences without expense to community safety. In this article, we review recidivism studies conducted to date on defendants who participated in federal ATI programs across multiple jurisdictions. These studies mark the first time that federal programs were evaluated with sufficient statistical rigor to make inferences about their effectiveness at improving success on pretrial supervision and reducing recidivism after program completion, the primary measure with which most criminal justice programs are evaluated (Wolff et al., 2019). In this article, we summarize the findings of the extant studies and expand discussion to quality-of-life outcomes that are markers of well-being, independence, and healthy functioning in the community.

Extant Studies on Criminal Justice Outcomes of ATI programs

Though the federal system has operated ATI programs for more than two decades, little formal study had been conducted on their efficacy with sufficient rigor to make meaningful inferences about their effect (Wolff et al., 2020). Led by the districts of New Jersey and Eastern New York, in 2018 pretrial services and probation offices in seven districts[1] began collaborating on research efforts to quantify the association of short-term pretrial supervision outcomes. The study (Baber et al. 2019), conducted under contract with Dr. Kevin Wolff of New York University's John Jay College of Criminal Justice, demonstrated that compared to a statistically matched group of defendants who did not participate in an ATI program, program participants are significantly less likely to be arrested, are employed a greater percentage

[1] Eastern District of Missouri – Sentencing Alternatives Improving Lives (SAIL).

Northern District of California – Conviction Alternatives Program (CAP).

Central District of California – Conviction and Sentencing Alternatives (CASA).

Central District of Illinois – Alternatives to Detention Initiative (PADI).*

Southern District of New York – Young Adult Opportunity Program (YAOP).

Eastern District of New York – Pretrial Opportunity Program (POP) and Special Options Services (SOS).

District of New Jersey – Pretrial Opportunity Program (POP).

* *No longer operational as of 2016*

of days under supervision, and are less likely to test positive for illicit substances. Further, defendants who completed the ATI program demonstrated superior outcomes compared to those who participated but did not complete the program. This study also concluded that case adjudication and sentencing outcomes of successful completers were significantly superior to those of non-participants, accruing higher rates of case dismissals, non-custodial sentences, and shorter prison terms when imposed as part of the sentence.

In 2021, the original seven study districts expanded to include six additional federal districts,[2] providing an expanded and more recent data set with longer observation times. This study replicated the findings of the earlier study, also demonstrating that successful completion of an ATI program is associated with more favorable case outcomes, including greater rates of dismissals and less punitive sentences. More than a third of those who completed a program were dismissed, allowing individuals to remain in the community, thus avoiding the detrimental effects of incarceration, resulting in fewer tax dollars spent on incarceration and averting the generational cycle of community and family ill-effects (Baber et al., 2020).

The research team then moved its attention to studying recidivism of ATI defendants, analyzing rearrest rates for one, two, and three years post program completion. A dataset of 26,283 defendants was assembled from Probation and Pretrial Services Case Tracking System (PACTS). Of the full dataset, 500 ATI participants were statistically matched with a group of defendants who did not participate in an ATI. Criminal history data was obtained from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) repository and matched to PACTS data of defendants who were at risk to recidivate in the community. This included defendants who had their cases dismissed, were sentenced to non-custodial sentences without supervision to follow, or have completed their community supervision terms (Wolff et al., 2024).

Of the 480 participants available for one-year follow-up, the ATI group exhibited statistically significantly lower rearrest rates for major offenses[3] than the comparison group. Even defendants who were exposed to participation in an ATI program but did not successfully complete it had lower rearrest rates than the comparison group. Importantly, those who completed the program successfully were arrested at statistically significant lower rates for violent offenses as well.

Analyses of rearrest rates for major crimes for years two and three were more neutral, however. With the two- and three-year follow-up cohorts, no meaningful differences are found.[4] Nevertheless, coupled with the favorable short-term pretrial outcomes and case disposition outcomes, a comparatively lower rate of rearrests during the first year after program exit suggests that ATI participation is an effective alternative to pretrial detention and incarcerate sentences. Further, because arrest rates for years two and three for the ATI group were no worse than for their counterparts in the non-ATI group, one can reasonably conclude that ATI programs can allow defendants to remain in the community and conserve system resources without expense to community safety.

Though important, recidivism measures nevertheless fail to capture the full potential impact on individuals' lives, families, and communities. Stakeholders and former program participants alike are replete with anecdotal evidence of improved lives, particularly in contrast to those individuals who did not participate in such programs. Program proponents believe that improvements derive from several key aspects common across ATI programs: avoiding pretrial detention pending case adjudication in favor of release to community supervision (Carr, 2017; Didwania, 2020; Dozier et al., 2024); avoiding the deleterious effects of custodial sentences and/or avoiding life-long collateral consequences of felony conviction (Wolff et al., 2024; Petrich 2021); the intense rehabilitative interventions that program participants receive[5]; and enhanced procedural justice[6] inherent in the collaborative model of judge-led programs (MacKenzie, 2016).

Despite the importance of these well-documented aspects of federal ATIs, no empirical evidence exists that quantifies the benefits of using non-criminal justice measures. In fact, to address this limitation, study sponsors commissioned a study to assess the impact of ATI participation on major quality indicators. Using first-hand accounts of defendants, researchers designed a study to ascertain the extent to which participation is associated with defendants' perceived quality of life across several major domains. In addition to rating their satisfaction across these domains, defendants were queried on their satisfaction with various aspects of the program, their attitudes as they reflect the programs' adherence to concepts of procedural justice, and suggestions for improvement. Using a structured survey instrument, defendants from four districts, matched on relevant characteristics, were interviewed by telephone. Through the lens of the participants themselves, the results offer a meaningful longer-term assessment of the downstream benefits to ATI participants.

Recidivism vs. Non-criminal Justice Measures of Program Effectiveness

Though criminal justice systems also pursue other objectives, including incapacitation, punishment, and deterrence, ATI programs are inherently focused on rehabilitative goals. Nevertheless, rehabilitation remains a key benchmark used by policymakers to assess the criminal justice system's effectiveness. Program evaluations within the field are most often based on whether they reduce criminal activity beyond the instant offense.

[2] District of Massachusetts – Repair Invest Succeed Emerge Program (RISE).

District of Hawaii – Kapilipono.

Northern District of Illinois – Sentencing Options that Achieve Results (SOAR).

District of New Hampshire – Law Abiding Sober Employed and Responsible Lifestyle (LASER).

Western District of Washington – Drug Reentry Alternatives Model (DREAM).

District of Rhode Island – Deferred Sentencing.

[3] Offenses were designated as either major or minor, where a major offense is comparable to a felony, and a minor offense is comparable to a misdemeanor. Infraction level offenses were not included. When the offense level was missing from the criminal history arrest information, the offense was given the designation that closely resembles the offense designation of the preponderance of similar offenses(s). States differ significantly in how they classify offenses and the reporting thresholds for less serious crimes, which makes tabulation of minor offenses unreliable. For this reason, the study emphasized major offenses over minor offenses.

[4] The large proportion of non-significant differences is at least partially due to the infrequent occurrence of rearrests in both groups. The modest sample sizes being analyzed, along with the rarity of rearrests, diminish the statistical power of analyses, making it challenging to detect effects even if present. Therefore, potentially substantive differences in recidivism observed between the two groups may not necessarily lead to a statistically significant result.

[5] The study team did not examine service intensity provided to ATI programs as compared to their counterparts, but given that participants are on the higher end of the risk continuum, service delivery is commensurate with elevated risk. ATI participants also receive a comparatively more individualized and personal focus by the program team.

[6] Procedural justice has four key components: voice, neutrality, respectful treatment, and trustworthy authorities (MacKenzie, 2016).

Accordingly, the "what works" literature usually relies on recidivism as the principal measure of effectiveness of its interventions. While recidivism is a useful measure for assessing the impact of interventions and guiding improvements, it has significant limitations. It does not fully capture the gradual and often uneven process through which individuals adopt prosocial values, develop law-abiding identities, build life skills, and experience transformative life events—such as marriage, employment, or parenthood—that are inconsistent with criminal behavior (Laub & Sampson, 2001). For this reason, recent literature encourages policymakers to include quality of life and desistance measures as well. In *The Impact of the Front End on Federal Sentencing and Beyond: Recidivism and More,* Dozier et al. discuss alternate strategies for developing more comprehensive measures in addition to or in lieu of recidivism. Noting that recidivism is a binary measure which captures whether a new criminal event (such as arrest, conviction, or incarceration) occurs within a defined period, Dozier discusses desistance as the ongoing process through which criminal activity declines and eventually ceases. Unlike the binary measure of recidivism, desistance emphasizes the interplay of internal and external factors that shape behavioral change over time. Research has consistently shown that desistance is often lengthy, nonlinear, and marked by setbacks. Moreover, recidivism rates overlook meaningful indicators of progress, such as reductions in offense severity or longer intervals between reoffending (National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (2022)).

Dozier et al. note that federal ATIs primarily serve individuals assessed as high risk. They note that beyond substance use disorders—commonly the central intervention focus—many have extensive criminal histories, entrenched antisocial thinking, negative peer and family influences, trauma, unstable early life experiences, educational and vocational deficits, and co-occurring mental health conditions. Because the program duration is typically 12 to 18 months, even intensive ATI rehabilitation addresses only a small, though meaningful, portion of an individual's life and recidivism fails to capture the uneven trajectory of desistance from crime.

Dozier et al. also note that neither recidivism nor desistance measures reflect a comprehensive picture of rehabilitation programs such as ATIs. In a 2022 publication by the *National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine*, the authors call for additional measures of success of criminal justice interventions. Though this publication is aimed explicitly at post-release success measures, its points apply to intervention programs at all stages. Reliance on recidivism or desistance as sole measures ignores progress in other domains that often prove to be essential to success, including education, health, family, and employment. The report also highlights the unique and essential insights of people ensnared in the criminal justice system and proposes a framework that actively engages them in the evaluation processes. The current study incorporates this framework.

Procedural Justice

Procedural justice theory emerged in the late 20th century, primarily through the work of Tom R. Tyler. The theory was developed as an alternative to traditional views that primarily focused on the outcomes of decisions (substantive justice) rather than the processes that reach those decisions (procedural justice). In the 1970s, John Thibaut and Laurens Walker highlighted the importance of fair procedures in legal settings. Tyler expanded this concept, arguing that procedural justice is crucial not only in the legal context but also in various other contexts (Vidmar, 1990). It is applicable across various contexts where authority figures make decisions, such as in employer/employee relations, educational settings, policing, and the courts. Procedural justice is also recognized for its importance in the community supervision context, given the discretion afforded to community supervision officers. Empirical studies support that the views of persons under community supervision regarding the quality of interactions with their supervising officers do shape supervision outcomes including illegal substance use, treatment participation, jail days, and subsequent criminal justice involvement (Blasko & Taxman, 2018).

Procedural justice focuses on how people experience authority, which heavily influences people's satisfaction with encounters with authorities, sometimes more than or as much as the outcomes themselves. In *The Judge is the Key Component: The Importance of Procedural Fairness in Drug-Treatment Courts (2016),* Mackenzie writes that over nearly three decades, research has consistently shown that when authorities conduct themselves in accordance with the principles of procedural justice, defendants view actors in the criminal justice system as more legitimate and cooperate more fully with them and that those findings hold true regardless of demographics, including race, ethnicity, and gender. Paying heed to the importance of procedural justice, study sponsors sought to learn how defendants perceive the legitimacy, trustworthiness, and fairness of federal court actors in general, and specifically of ATI program staff.

Methodology

Recruitment and Sampling

The study team assembled data from the probation and pretrial services national case management system (PACTS) comprising a sample of 27,283 defendants. Defendants who were candidates to be interviewed were drawn from a subset of this cohort. To establish a comparison group, ATI defendants who completed an ATI program were matched to a sample of non-ATI defendants who had either completed their prison sentence and were under post-conviction supervision or had fully exited the federal justice system. To ensure comparability between the two groups, defendants were matched on a set of demographic and case characteristics: age, sex, race, and Pretrial Risk Assessment (PTRA) level.[7] To protect confidentiality of the participants, all data for the study came from the survey itself, and no administrative data from PACTS was used.

For manageability, defendants from five programs across four districts were selected to survey:

- Pretrial Opportunity Program (POP) and the Special Options Services (SOS) program of the Eastern District of New York (NY-E).
- Young Adult Opportunity Program (YAOP) of the Southern District of New York (NY-S).
- Pretrial Opportunity Program (POP) of the District of New Jersey (NJ).
- Conviction Alternatives Program (CAP) of Northern District of California (CA-N).

Data Collection

The study team recruited subjects through

[7] The Pretrial Risk Assessment (PTRA), a risk assessment instrument developed and used by federal pretrial services officers to assess defendants' risk for pretrial violations (new arrests, missed court appearances, and technical violations that result in bond revocations). The instrument is used to help officers provide a sound release/detention recommendation to the Court. Source: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/probation-and-pretrial-services/evidence-based-practices/pretrial-risk-assessment

outreach to ATI participants and matched non-participants. When research team members could reach defendants in advance of telephonic survey administration, they obtained defendants' permission to be interviewed. Defendants were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality, and the interviewers collected no names or personal identifying information (PII). Despite systematic efforts to maximize participation, challenges in contacting and securing consent and participation limited the final sample. Ultimately, 40 non-ATI defendants and 55 ATI defendants were surveyed, for a total of 95 observations.

Survey instruments are displayed in appendices. The ATI survey instrument is contained in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 contains the non-ATI instrument. Though the surveys closely parallel one another, slight differences exist because certain responses and several questions were applicable to the ATI group only. ATI defendants were asked about the ATI program they participated in, and non-ATI defendants were instructed to consider the entire pretrial supervision period. The survey instrument provided suggested language to instruct the respondents to respond appropriately to the circumstances of their case.

Measures

Survey sections captured key domains relevant to quality-of-life indicators and procedural justice:

- *Quality of Life*: overall well-being and stability across personal and social domains (Section 3 of the instrument).
- *Employment* (Section 4 of the instrument): satisfaction with obtaining and maintaining adequate and meaningful employment.
- *Social Support:* availability and perceived adequacy of support from family, peers, and community networks (Section 5 of the instrument).
- *Perceptions of Procedural Justice*: perceptions about fairness, respect, transparency, and legitimacy in defendants' interactions with the justice system (Section 6 of the instrument). The survey questions in this section were designed to elicit responses consistent with the core components of procedural justice: voice, respect, neutrality, and trust (Mackenzie, 2016).

Analytic Strategy

The analysis proceeded in three stages. First, descriptive statistics were generated to summarize sample characteristics and outcomes of interest. Next, bivariate tests (e.g., t-tests, chi-square) were conducted to examine preliminary differences between ATI and non-ATI defendants across the primary quality-of-life domains. Finally, multivariate regression models were estimated to adjust for relevant covariates and assess the association between ATI participation and outcomes related to overall quality of life, employment, social support, and perceptions of procedural justice.

TABLE 1.
Comparison of ATI Participants and Traditional Defendents Who Completed the Survey

		Non-ATI Group (n= 40)	ATI Group (n = 55)	Sig. Differences?
Sex	Male	15.4%	21.8%	No
	Female	84.6%	78.2%	
Age	(Years)	46.6 (11.3)	40.7 (11.3)	Yes ($t = 2.5$, $p < .001$)
Marital Status	Cohabitating	7.5%	16.4%	No
	Divorced/Separated	12.5%	14.5%	
	Married	37.5%	14.5%	
	Single / Never Married	40.0%	54.6%	
	Widowed	2.5%	0.0%	
Education	< High School	10.0%	9.1%	No
	HSD /GED	35.0%	58.2%	
	Vocational/ Technical	5.0%	1.8%	
	Associate's	27.5%	20.0%	
	Bachelor's	20.0%	10.9%	
	Graduate/ Professional	2.5%	0.0%	
Pretrial Period	(Months)	21.7 (2.5)	37.0 (22.0)	Yes ($t = 3.5$, $p < .001$)
Prison	No	63.20%	83.60%	Yes ($X^2=6.45$, $p < .05$)
	Yes	31.60%	13.40%	
Experienced Bias	No	89.50%	98.20%	No
	Unsure	5.25%	0	
	Yes	5.25%	1.80%	

Results

Description of Defendants Surveyed

Table 1 describes the demographic and case characteristics of both groups of defendants surveyed. Both groups were predominantly female, comprising 84.6 percent of the non-ATI group and 78.2 percent of the ATI group. Though the ATI group had a slightly greater percentage of females, these differences were not statistically significant.

There were no statistically significant differences in the marital status of the two groups. The non-ATI group comprised 7.5 percent who were cohabitating, 12.5 percent divorced or separated, 37.5 percent married, 40 percent single, and 2.5 percent widowed. The ATI group had a higher proportion of defendants who were single (54.6 percent) and a lower proportion who were married (14.5 percent). Sixteen percent (16.4 percent) of the ATI group were cohabitating, and 14.5 percent were divorced or separated.

Similarly, there were no statistically significant differences in the education level of the two groups. The non-ATI group comprised 10 percent with a high school diploma, 35 percent with a Graduate Equivalence Diploma (GED), five percent with a vocational or technical school degree, 27.5 percent with an associate's degree, 20 percent with a bachelor's degree, and 2.5 percent with a postgraduate degree. The ATI group contained a larger percentage of defendants with a GED (58.2 percent), 9.1 percent with a high school diploma, 1.8 percent with a vocational or technical school

diploma, 20 percent with an associate's degree, 10.9 percent with a bachelor's degree, and none with a post-graduate degree.

We also examined the differences in the two groups regarding the length of time under pretrial services supervision, where we found that the ATI group served a statistically significant greater amount of time (37 months versus 21.7 months), which is to be expected given the design of the ATI programs.

We also observed statistically significant differences in prison sentences served between the two groups, with only 13.4 percent of ATI defendants serving prison time while 31.6 percent of non-ATI group serving prison time. Estimates were based on responses rather than administrative data and may not be completely accurate or distinguish between time served and actual post-adjudication prison time.

Last, no statistically significant differences were observed between the two groups related to perceived bias by court actors during the pretrial period, with 98.2 percent of the ATI group indicating that they perceived no bias, and 89.5 percent of the non-ATI group reporting the same.

Table 2 displays the results of analyzing differences between the ATI and its comparison group. When asked to rate on a 10-point scale their satisfaction with their overall quality of life, ATI respondents indicated greater satisfaction, and the differences were statistically significant. ATI respondents responded with a mean of 8.6 and non-ATI defendants with a mean of 7.7 ($t = 2.39$, $p < .01$).

Respondents were asked whether various domains of their life had improved since their time of pretrial supervision (for non-ATI defendants) and time in the program (for ATI defendants). Those domains included employment, mental health, physical health, access to health care, housing, financial wellness, educational attainment, relationships with friends, family, romantic partners, and community engagement. Statistically significant differences in the percentage of defendants who reported improvement in employment (76.4 vs. 55 percent), financial (78.2 vs. 55 percent), and educational attainment (32.7 vs. 15 percent) domains were reported by the ATI group compared to the non-ATI group ($p < .05$). Marginally significant, a greater percentage of the ATI group reported improvement in their housing situation (72.7 vs. 55 percent) ($p < .10$). Finally, in the aggregate the ATI group reported improvement in a greater number of domains compared to traditional defendants (mean 6.7 vs. 5.62; $p < .05$).

Section 3.7 – Sufficient Resources to Improve Quality of Life

Respondents were queried about their perceptions of pretrial services (for the non-ATI group) and the program itself (for the ATI participants) on adequacy of resources to improve their lives. A statistically significant greater percentage of ATI defendants responded affirmatively that they were provided with sufficient assistance and resources (72.7 vs. 52.5 percent), while 16.4 percent of the ATI defendants answered "somewhat" vs. 5.0 percent for the non-ATI group).

Section 3.8 – Satisfaction with Support

When asked to rate on a 10-point scale the satisfaction of the support they received during the program or pretrial supervision period, ATI defendants indicated a greater level of satisfaction (mean = 9.5 vs. 7.7; $t = 3.87$, $p < .01$).

Section 5.8 – Maintaining Sobriety

When asked whether they had been able to maintain sobriety since finishing the program (or the period of supervision for the comparison group), no statistical differences emerged. Eighty-four (83.65 percent) of the ATI group indicated that they had maintained sobriety, while 92.5 percent of the non-ATI group reported the same.

Section 6.2 – Level of Social Support

Survey administrators asked defendants to rate on a scale of 1 to 10 their satisfaction with the level of current social support. The mean ratings were nearly identical with a mean of 8.91 for the ATI group and 8.95 for the non-ATI group.

Section 6.3 – Positive Changes in Social Supports

Statistically statistical differences were reported by the ATI group when asked if they have experienced improvements in their social support networks, with 84.5 percent of ATI defendants responding in the affirmative compared to 72.5 percent in the non-ATI group.

Section 6.6 – Role of Social Support Networks in Improving Life Quality

Non-ATI defendants indicated that social support networks have played a significant role in improving their quality of life as compared to their counterparts (87.2 vs. 83.6 percent). This difference is statistically significant.

Section 6.7 – Strengthening Social Networks

Consistent with question 6.6 about the role of social networks in improving quality of life, a greater percentage of non-ATI defendants reported that they had experienced a strengthening or broadening of social networks ("yes" 71 vs. 69.1). Results are somewhat mixed, however, as a larger proportion of the ATI group reported that the social networks have "somewhat" improved (14.5% vs 5.3%). Overall, the statistically significant chi-square test indicates that the distribution of responses is not due to chance and that perceived changes in the respondents' social network differ meaningfully between the groups. Although the findings on social networks might seem counterintuitive in light of other domain findings in favor of the ATI group, one possible explanation is that the non-ATI group may have started at a higher level of satisfaction with their social networks leaving less opportunity for perceived improvement after exit from the criminal justice system.

Section 7 – Procedural Justice

Table 3 (page 42) displays the results of analyzing the relationship between ATI participants and their perceptions of procedural justice. Unless otherwise specified, a 5-point scale was used for the rating.

Question 7.1 – Satisfaction with fairness and transparency of decision-making processes.

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with fairness and transparency as it related to their experience in the program (or on pretrial supervision for the non-ATI group). The ATI group reported greater satisfaction with those elements, and those differences were statistically significant (mean 4.82 vs. 4.12).

Question 7.2 – Treatment with dignity and respect

Subjects were asked to rate their perceptions of fair and dignified treatment. ATI respondents reported a statistically significant higher rating on this dimension (mean 4.96 vs. 4.24).

Question 7.3 – Communication of reasons behind decisions and participation

Subjects were asked to rate their perceptions of how well pretrial services or program staff communicated the reasons for their decisions and processes. ATI respondents reported a

TABLE 2.
Comparison between ATI Participants and Traditional Defendants on QoL Measures

	Non-ATI Respondents (n = 40)	ATI Respondents (n = 55)	Sig. Differences?
3.1. On a scale of 1 to 10, rate your satisfaction with your current overall quality of life.			
	m = 7.7 (2.4)	m= 8.6 (1.3)	Yes; t = 2.39, p < .01
3.2. What aspects of your life have IMPROVED since participating in the program? (Select all that apply)			
Employment	55%	76.40%	Yes; X^2 = 4.80, p <.05
Mental Health	72.50%	80.00%	No
Physical Health	62.50%	69.10%	No
Access to Care	60.00%	65.50%	No
Friends	62.50%	63.60%	No
Family	72.50%	78.20%	No
Partner	52.50%	52.70%	No
Housing	55.00%	72.70%	Marginally X^2 = 3.20, p <.10
Financial	55	78.20%	Yes; X^2 = 5.76, p <.05
Education	15.00%	32.70%	Yes; X^2 = 3.85, p <.05
Total Domains	5.62	6.7	Yes; t = 1.72, p < .05
3.7. Did the program/pretrial services provide you with sufficient assistance and resources to improve your quality of life?			
No	32.5%	7.3%	Yes; X^2 = 13.8, p <.01
Unsure	10.0%	3.6%	
Somewhat	5.0%	16.4%	
Yes	52.5%	72.7%	
3.8. On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with the support you received during the program/pretrial supervision?			
	M = 7.7 (3.1)	M = 9.5 (1.4)	Yes; t = 3.87, p <.01
5.8 Have you been able to maintain sobriety since finishing the program (Y/N)?			
No	2.50%	7.25%	No
Somewhat	5.00%	9.10%	
Yes	92.50%	83.65%	
***6.2. On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with the level of social support you currently have? (1 being very dissatisfied, 10 being very satisfied)**			
	8.95 (1.6)	8.91 (1.6)	No
***6.3. Have you experienced positive changes in your social support networks since finishing the program/pretrial supervision?**			
No	20.0%	3.6%	Yes; X^2 = 7.83, p <.05
Unsure	0.0%	3.6%	
Somewhat	7.5%	7.3%	
Yes	72.5%	84.4%	
***6.6. Have your social support networks played a significant role in improving your life since finishing the program/pretrial supervision?**			
No	12.8%	1.8%	Yes; X^2 = 10.03, p <.01
Somewhat	0.0%	14.6%	
Yes	87.2%	83.6%	
***6.7. Have you experienced strengthening or broadening or other positive changes in your social networks since finishing the program/pretrial supervision?**			
No	23.7%	5.5%	Yes; X^2 = 11.75, p <.01
Unsure	0.0%	10.9%	
Somewhat	5.3%	14.5%	
Yes	71.0%	69.1%	

statistically significant higher rating on this dimension (mean 4.89 vs. 3.97).

Question 7.4 – Voice in decisions and participation

Subjects were asked to rate their perceptions of how pretrial services or program staff allowed them to have a voice in decisions affecting them and whether they had an opportunity to participate in that decision-making. Again, ATI respondents reported a statistically significant higher rating on this dimension (mean 4.74 vs. 3.46), as compared to non-participants who rated pretrial services staff on this measure.

Question 7.5 – Fair treatment regardless of background, race, and ethnicity, and gender

Interviewers asked subjects to rate their perceptions of fair treatment regardless of their individual characteristics of background, race, ethnicity, and gender. Though all respondents rated this dimension highly, ATI respondents reported a statistically significant higher rating (mean 4.96 vs. 4.69).

Question 7.6 – Clear guidelines and expectations

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they were provided clear guidelines and expectations about program or supervision requirements. ATI respondents reported a statistically significant higher rating (mean 4.98 vs. 4.61).

Question 7.10 – Consideration of individual circumstances

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which pretrial services or program staff considered their individual circumstances when making decisions about them. Again, ATI respondents reported a statistically significant higher rating (mean 4.89 vs. 4.31).

Question 7.11 – Overall satisfaction with procedural justice aspects

Respondents were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with procedural justice aspects of their experience. Again, ATI respondents reported a statistically significant higher rating (mean 4.87 vs. 4.23).

Overall Satisfaction

Question 8.1 – Overall satisfaction with their experience in the federal criminal justice system

On a 10-point scale, respondents were asked

to rate their overall satisfaction with their experience in the federal criminal justice system. ATI respondents reported a statistically significant higher rating (mean 9.64 vs. 7.87).

Question 8.3 – Positive Impact on Life

Respondents were asked if their experience with an ATI program (or pretrial supervision for non-ATI defendants) positively impacted their life. By a significant margin, ATI defendants indicated that the experience has positively impacted their life compared to non-ATI defendants (98.2 vs. 76.3 percent), and this difference was statistically significant.

Total Procedural Justice Index

We calculated a standardized additive index of all procedural justice items (questions 7.1 to 8.1 discussed above). This index is a single summary score that combines all survey items about fairness, respect, communication, voice, and clarity into an overall measure of how participants perceived the justice and fairness of the program. Because it is standardized, the overall sample average is set to zero, with scores above zero reflecting more positive perceptions of procedural justice and scores below zero reflecting less positive perceptions. Our results suggest the non-ATI group averaged -0.44 (lower than average) while the other averaged 0.31 (higher than average), showing clear differences in how fairly and respectfully participants felt treated. This difference was also statistically significant ($t = 5.35$, $p < .01$).

In summary, ATI defendants reported higher satisfaction and ratings on each of the individual questions in the procedural justice section. Apart from question 7.5 on perceived fairness regardless of race, gender, etc. ($p < .05$), all differences met statistical significance tests at $p < .01$ or lower.

Discussion

The study described in this paper represents the first time that ATI participants across multiple districts were surveyed methodically to obtain their perceptions based on their own experiences. Results clearly suggest that successful completion of an ATI program is associated with favorable impressions of their experience and satisfaction with important life quality domains. Because the study is self-reported, it demonstrates that defendants perceived the value of ATI programs to themselves. Measures of employment, financial, and educational attainment indicate statistically significant favorable responses compared to their counterparts who did not participate in a program. Housing measures were superior as well, although the results were marginally statistically significant ($p < .10$).

Self-reported maintenance of sobriety is a measure in which a greater percentage of non-ATI defendants reported maintenance of sobriety compared to ATI participants. We did not account whether either group had substance abuse problems at the outset of the program or release on supervision, but we can reasonably assume that a larger proportion of ATI defendants did, because the four ATI programs studies largely target defendants with substance abuse problems. This may explain why a higher percentage of non-ATI participants reported success at maintaining sobriety.

Procedural Justice

This study revealed that both ATI defendants and their non-ATI counterparts rate procedural justice elements quite favorably. This is a testament to the professionalism and training of pretrial services officers who interact with defendants routinely. Nonetheless, results clearly indicate that participants of the ATI programs report superior ratings on all aspects of procedural justice as compared to non-ATI participants. Mackenzie (2016) cites research that establishes that participants significantly value the role of the judge in judge-led court programs and that judicial behavior consistent with procedural justice influences improved outcomes. He cites empirical evidence that each of these components individually contribute to superior outcomes in the form of reduced recidivism, better compliance with court-ordered mandates, and reduced drug

TABLE 3.
Comparison by ATI and Non-ATI on Procedural Justice Measures

	Non-ATI Respondents (n = 40)	ATI Respondents (n = 55)	Sig. Differences?
7.1. How satisfied are you with the fairness and transparency of the decision-making of the program/system?	4.12 (1.3)	4.82 (0.43)	Yes; $t = 3.61$, $p < .01$
7.2. To what extent do you feel that program/system staff and case managers treated you with dignity and respect?	4.24 (1.15)	4.96 (0.19)	Yes; $t = 4.61$, $p < .01$
7.3. How well program staff communicate the reasons behind their decisions and processes while you were on pretrial release?	3.97 (1.38)	4.89 (.315)	Yes; $t = 4.75$, $p < .01$
7.4. Do you feel that you had a voice in decisions and opportunity to participate in decisions during the program/process?	3.46 (1.62)	4.74 (0.75)	Yes; $t = 5.15$, $p < .01$
7.5. How fairly did the program/system treat participants regardless of their background, race, ethnicity and gender?	4.69 (0.86)	4.96 (0.19)	Yes; $t = 2.26$, $p < .05$
7.6. Did the program/system provide clear guidelines and expectations for you while you were in the program/system?	4.61 (0.88)	4.98 (0.13)	Yes; $t = 3.05$, $p < .01$
7.10. Did the program/system consider your individual circumstances when making decisions or providing support during pretrial release?	4.31 (1.10)	4.89 (0.42)	Yes; $t = 3.54$, $p < .01$
7.11. Overall, how satisfied are you with the procedural justice aspects of the program/ system?	4.23 (1.18)	4.87 (0.58)	Yes; $t = 3.49$, $p < .01$
8.1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with the program/ court agencies and staff?	7.87 (2.53)	9.64 (0.87)	Yes; $t = 4.79$, $p < .01$
Total Procedural Justice Index (Standardized Additive Index of all Items Above - Alpha = .912)	-0.44 (1.0)	0.31 (0.26)	Yes; $t = 5.35$, $p < .01$
8.3. Do you believe that the program/your release on pretrial has positively impacted your life?	76.3% - Said Yes	98.2% - Said Yes	Yes; $X^2 = 11.20$, $p < .001$

usage. While we did not assess the quality of the ATI programs in this study, nor survey participants on their perceptions of the judge alone, it is reasonable to hypothesize based on existing research that the program judge at least partially explains the program participants' enhanced perceptions of procedural justice as compared to their counterparts who lack the same opportunities to interact with the judge in a meaningful, more personal way. There are undoubtedly other forces at play, such as a more intensive rehabilitation focus, but exploration of potentially explanatory factors was outside the scope of the study.

Conclusion

Overall, the study demonstrates that former ATI participants perceive life quality as enhanced compared to those who did not participate in a program. Importantly, the study provided an inside-looking-out vantage point by hearing directly from defendants' first-hand accounts. These findings highlight the potential of ATI programs to foster not only improved perceptions of procedural justice but also meaningful gains across several domains of life quality, including employment, finances, and education.

This is an important finding as it augments other empirical evidence that federal ATI programs result in improved case dispositions, averted or abbreviated prison sentences, and superior pretrial services supervision outcomes in the form of fewer rearrest violations, a greater percentage of days employed, and reduced rates of positive substance tests.

More important, the study adds dimension to an overall understanding of the efficacy of these programs beyond the sole measure of recidivism. Earlier studies discussed in this article find that in year one following program exit, program participants are rearrested at lower rates than their counterparts, and that for the subsequent two years of follow-up, rearrest rates for participants are comparable to those of non-participants, demonstrating that ATI programs are an effective strategy for reducing unnecessary detention and over reliance on custodial sentences—without expense to community safety. Life quality measures augment recidivism measures to provide a more robust picture of efficacy and lend empirical support to anecdotal evidence of success.

Though the study adds to the body of knowledge about the overall efficacy of ATI programs, additional work could more thoroughly explore the impact of these programs on life quality and procedural justice. The scope and design of the study did not allow for assessment of the extent to which quality indicators were positively influenced by the nature and intensity of the programs themselves versus avoidance of incarceration usually reserved for successful participants. For example, pre- and post-program exit defendant surveys could more definitively attribute positive outcomes to the programs themselves and would be less likely to suffer from nonresponse. Nevertheless, the study establishes a critical foundation for understanding how defendants themselves evaluate ATI programs, offering insights that complement more traditional outcome metrics such as recidivism rates. The results suggest that successful program participants perceive their lives to be of higher quality across important domains.

A key limitation of our work is the potential for non-response and selection bias in the sample. We cannot be sure that respondents who agreed to be interviewed are truly representative of their respective comparison group in terms of demographics or other variables that might impact perceptions of their experiences. Further, because only those participants who agreed to speak with us are represented, the results may not fully reflect the experiences of all individuals who went through the program. Those who chose not to participate may have had different or less favorable views, and our sample may over-represent individuals who were more engaged or satisfied. In addition, respondents may have been motivated to present the program in a positive light, either out of gratitude, loyalty, or a belief that speaking negatively could have repercussions. This social desirability bias suggests the results should be interpreted with caution, as they may overstate the extent of positive experiences.

Future program stakeholders are encouraged to consider undertaking other studies that should continue to refine these measures by incorporating longitudinal data, independent assessments, and program-level evaluations that can capture variation in design and implementation. In doing so, policymakers and practitioners will be better positioned to understand not only whether ATI programs work, but also how, why, and under what conditions they can most effectively enhance both justice system legitimacy and the lived experiences of participants. Further, given the importance of procedural justice, all court actors, including supervision officers and judges, should consider receiving training on how to improve the procedural justice aspects of their interactions with defendants. Investments in these areas may not only improve individual experiences but also contribute to more equitable and effective system-wide outcomes.

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Appendix. Surveys of ATI Defendants and Non-ATI Defendants

The following pages contain the full survey.

ATI - U.S. Pretrial Services Research Survey

Suggested Introduction:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research. We are conducting a survey to gather information on the quality of life of people who were released to the community pending outcome of their federal case. We refer to this as the pretrial release period in the questions we will ask you.

We will ask you questions about various aspects of life, including employment, access to health care, sobriety, and social support systems. We will also ask you questions about your perceptions of fairness and respect in your interactions with pretrial services offices and supporting office staff.

When you are answering the survey questions, please restrict your answers to your *pretrial release period only.* This period began when you were released on bail by the Court and concludes when you were:

(A) sentenced to probation and you began your probation term, OR

(B) sentenced to prison, and you physically entered custody of the Bureau of Prisons subsequent to conviction, OR

(C) case was dismissed or acquitted.

1. 1.1 Age (in years)

_____

2. 1.2. Gender

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female
- ◯ Non-binary
- ◯ Prefer not to say
- ◯ Transgender (to Male)
- ◯ Transgender (to Female)

3. 1.3. Current Marital Status

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Single / Never Married
- ◯ Co-habitating with significant other
- ◯ Married
- ◯ Divorced /Separated
- ◯ Widowed

4. 1.4. Highest Level of Education

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Less than high school
- ◯ High school / GED
- ◯ Vocational or Technical School
- ◯ Associate's Degree
- ◯ Bachelor's Degree
- ◯ Graduate or Professional Degree

Pretrial Release and Sentencing:

The next section of this survey includes questions related to your experiences with Pretrial Services

5. 2.1. How long were you on pretrial release supervision (Total Months)?

_____

6. 2.3 If convicted, did you serve time in prison?

If you were sentenced to prison, but your time in pretrial detention satisfied your prison sentence, we refer to this as "time served."

Do **not** consider time in pretrial detention prior to your guilty plea or conviction.

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ Yes, but to time served
- ◯ No

7. 2.4. If so, how long of a sentence did you serve?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. 2.5. Are you currently on post-conviction supervision either on probation or supervised release as part of your sentence for your conviction?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes
- ◯ Unsure
- ◯ Unwilling to answer

Quality of Life

9. 3.1. On a scale of 1 to 10, rate your satisfaction with your current overall quality of life.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Con	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Completely Satisfied

10. 3.2 What aspects of your life have IMPROVED since participating in the program? (Select all that apply)

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Employment
- ☐ Mental Health
- ☐ Physical Health
- ☐ Access to Healthcare (including insurance)
- ☐ Relationships with friends
- ☐ Relationships with family
- ☐ Relationship with spouse or significant other
- ☐ Housing situtation
- ☐ Financial stability
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Other

11. 3.3. If other, please indicate what aspects(s) of your life have improved.

_____

12. 3.4. What aspects of your life have DETERIORATED since participating in the program? (Select all that apply)

Check all that apply.

- [ ] Employment
- [ ] Mental Health
- [ ] Physical Health
- [ ] Access to Health Care
- [ ] Relationships with friends
- [ ] Relationships with family
- [ ] Relationship with spouse or significant other
- [ ] Housing situtation
- [ ] Financial stability
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Other

13. 3.5. If other than above, please indicate what aspects of your life have deteriorated.

_____

14. 3.6 What challenges, if any, are you currently facing in your daily life? This might include for example: being unable to get a job, not making enough money to support you and your family, unable to find suitable housing, or family or relationship difficulties. These are examples.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

15. 3.7. Did the program provide you with sufficient assistance and resources to improve your quality of life?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ Somewhat
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

16. 3.8. On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with the support you received during the program?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Con	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Completely satisfied

Employment

17. 4.1 Are you currently employed?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ On Disability
- ◯ Retired
- ◯ Do not need to work because you receive sufficient income from sources other than retirement, social security or disability

18. 4.2. If yes, how long have you been employed since ending your participation from the program?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Less than 6 months
- ◯ 6 months to 1 year
- ◯ 1 to 2 years
- ◯ More than 2 years

19. 4.3. What type of employment do you currently have? (Select all that apply)

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Full-time employment (at least 30 hours per week)
- ☐ Part-time employment
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Temporary / Contract work
- ☐ Seasonal or Periodic
- ☐ Unpaid / Volunteer Work
- ☐ Other

20. 4.4. Did the program provide skills and training that help you secure employment? (Y/N)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Somewhat
- ◯ Unsure

21. 4.5. On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with your current employment situation? (1 being very dissatisfied, 10 being very satisfied)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very Satisfied

HealthCare and Sobriety

22. 5.1. Have you experienced improvements in your physical health since completing the program? (Yes/No)

Mark only one oval.

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ Unsure

23. 5.2. Have you experienced improvements in your mental health since finishing the program? (Yes/No)

Mark only one oval.

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ Unsure

24. 5.3. If yes to improvements to physical health and/or mental health, please describe those improvements.

_____

_____

_____

25. 5.4. Have you experienced deterioration in your mental health finishing the program? (Yes/No)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

26. 5.5. Have you experienced deterioration in your physical health since finishing the program? (Yes/No)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

27. 5.6. If yes to mental health and/or physical deterioration, please explain the deteriorations.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

28. 5.7. Have you been able to access healthcare services, including regular check-ups, doctor visits, medications, treatments for physical or mental health issues since finishing the program?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

29. 5.8. Have you been able to maintain sobriety since finishing the program (Y/N)?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Somewhat
- ◯ Prefer not to answer

30. 5.9. *If no,* please provide some information on the challenges you have faced in maintaining sobriety and any efforts you have made to address them.

Social Support Networks

6.1. Social support includes family and friends and other people you know through clubs, religious activities, sports and recreational activities, etc. who are a positive influence on you and help you maintain a stable, law-abiding lifestyle and support you.

31. 6.2. On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with the level of social support you currently have? (1 being very dissatisfied, 10 being very satisfied)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very satisfied

32. 6.3. Have you experienced positive changes in your social support networks since finishing the program (Y/N)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Somewhat
- ◯ Unsure

33. 6.4. What types of social supports have improved since finishing the program? (Y/N)

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Friends
- ☐ Family
- ☐ Support groups including AA, NA, or other treatment therapy groups
- ☐ Online communities
- ☐ Mentors from work or others who help you improve your life
- ☐ Community organizations
- ☐ Religious / spiritual groups
- ☐ Other (specify below)

34. 6.5. If you indicated OTHER above, please indicate source of support.

_____

35. 6.6 Have your social support networks played a significant role in improving your life since finishing the program? (Y/N)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Somewhat
- ◯ Unsure

36. 6.7. Have you experienced strengthening or broadening or other positive changes in your social networks since finishing the program? (Yes/No)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Somewhat
- ◯ Unsure

37. 6.8. If yes, please describe the relationships that have been a part of your support network and how they have helped you.

38. 6.9. If no, please indicate any barriers or challenges you have faced in establishing or maintaining social support and any efforts you have made to address them.

Procedural Justice

The next section of the survey relates to the concept of procedural justice *during your pretrial release*. People involved in the criminal justice system strongly prefer to feel that processes were fair, consistent, and transparent; that is, that they were informed of the reasons for decisions made by your pretrial services officers during your release, that your voice was heard, and that you were treated with respect and impartiality.

Do NOT include probation staff with whom you interacted AFTER you began post-conviction supervision (upon release from prison if you were sentenced to prison, OR upon commencement of your probation term if sentenced to probation.)

Do not include other entities you may have encountered during your visits to the federal courthouse, such as court security, U.S. Marshalls, Clerks Office staff.

39. 7.1. How satisfied are you with the fairness and transparency of the decision-making of the program?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very satisfied

40. 7.2. To what extent do you feel that program staff and case managers treated you with dignity and respect?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	To a great extent

41. 7.3. How well program staff communicate the reasons behind their decisions and processes while you were on pretrial release?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very well

42. 7.4. Do you feel that you had a voice in decisions and opportunity to participate in decisions during the program?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No,	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Yes, definitely

43. 7.5. How fairly did the program treat participants regardless of their background, race, ethnicity and gender?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very fairly

44. 7.6. Did the program provide clear guidelines and expectations for you while you were in the program?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No,	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Yes, definitely

45. 7.7. How satisfied are you with the program's response to your concerns?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Very satisfied
- ◯ Satisfied
- ◯ Neutral
- ◯ Dissatisfied
- ◯ Very dissatisfied
- ◯ Not applicable

46. 7.8. Have you ever experienced bias or discrimination by court agencies while in the program?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

47. 7.9. If you answered yes above, please briefly describe your experience **with specifics.** Describe the program staff (pretrial services officer, defense attorney, prosecutor, judge, treatment provider) with whom you experienced discrimination or bias and what specific practices were biased or discriminatory.

NO NAMES -- Just Agency

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

48. 7.10. Did the program consider your individual circumstances when making decisions or providing support during pretrial release?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No,	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Yes, definitely

49. 7.11. Overall, how satisfied are you with the procedural justice aspects of the program?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very satisfied

50. 7.12. If you were not satisfied, which aspects of procedural justice during pretrial release need improvement?

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Fairness in decision-making
- ☐ Transparency about decision making
- ☐ Information provided to you
- ☐ Opportunities to voice concerns and preferences about case management decisions
- ☐ Impartiality and neutrality
- ☐ Treatment with respect

Overall Assessment

51. 8.1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with the program?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very satisfied

52. 8.2. *If you were less than satisfied with the program,* please provide *specifics* about the agency or agencies (pretrial services officer, judge, prosecutor, defense attorney, treatment provider) with whom you were dissatisfied and describe why you were not satisfied.

NO NAMES-- Just Agency

53. 8.3. Do you believe that the program has positively impacted your life?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

54. 8.4. What aspects of the program were **most** helpful?

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Access to treatment and support
- ☐ Individual meetings or visits with supervising pretrial services officers
- ☐ Community Integration
- ☐ Individualized Approach
- ☐ **Program Sessions with judges and stakeholders
- ☐ **Peer Support
- ☐ **Length of Program
- ☐ ** Restorative justice
- ☐ Other

55. 8.5. What aspects of the program were **least** helpful?

Check all that apply.

- [ ] Access to treatment and support
- [ ] Individual meetings or visits with supervising pretrial services officers
- [ ] Community Integration
- [ ] Individualized Approach
- [ ] **Peer Support
- [ ] ** Restorative justice
- [ ] **Length of Program
- [ ] Other

56. 8.6. In what specific ways could the program be improved to better support individuals in the program?

Thank you for your valuable participation! Your feedback will greatly contribute to the understanding of how pretrial release impacts the lives of individuals involved. Your answers will help us to identify opportunities for improvement.

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Google Forms

NON-ATI U.S. Pretrial Services Research Survey

Suggested Introduction:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research. We are conducting a survey to gather information on the quality of life of people who were released to the community pending outcome of their federal case. We refer to this as the pretrial release period in the questions we will ask you.

We will ask you questions about various aspects of life, including employment, access to health care, sobriety, and social support systems. We will also ask you questions about your perceptions of fairness and respect in your interactions with pretrial services offices and supporting office staff.

When you are answering the survey questions, please restrict your answers to your *pretrial release period only.* This period began when you were released on bail by the Court and concludes when you were:

(A) sentenced to probation and you began your probation term, OR

B) sentenced to prison, and you physically entered custody of the Bureau of Prisons subsequent to conviction, OR

(C) case was dismissed or acquitted.

1. Email *

_____

Untitled Title

2. 1.1 Age (in years)

_____

3. 1.2. Gender

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female
- ◯ Non-binary
- ◯ Prefer not to say
- ◯ Transgender (to Male)
- ◯ Transgender (to Female)

4. 1.3. Current Marital Status

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Single / Never Married
- ◯ Co-habitating with significant other
- ◯ Married
- ◯ Divorced /Separated
- ◯ Widowed

5. 1.4. Highest Level of Education

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Less than high school
- ◯ High school / GED
- ◯ Vocational or Technical School
- ◯ Associate's Degree
- ◯ Bachelor's Degree
- ◯ Graduate or Professional Degree

Pretrial Release and Sentencing:

The next section of this survey includes questions related to your experiences with Pretrial Services

6. 2.1. How long were you on pretrial release supervision (Total Months)? (months/years)?

_____

7. 2.2. If you were sentenced to prison, but your time in pretrial detention satisfied your prison sentence, we refer to this as "time served."

Do **not** consider time in pretrial detention prior to your guilty plea or conviction.

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes, but time served
- ◯ Was not convicted

8. 2.3. If so, how long of a sentence did you serve? (months/years)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. 2.4. Are you currently on post-conviction supervision either on probation or supervised release as part of your sentence for your conviction?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ No
- ◯ Yes
- ◯ Unsure
- ◯ Unwilling to answer

Quality of Life

10. 3.1. On a scale of 1 to 10, rate your satisfaction with your current overall quality of life.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Con	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Completely Satisfied

11. 3.2. What aspects of your life have IMPROVED since you were released pretrial? (Select all that apply)

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Employment
- ☐ Mental Health
- ☐ Physical Health
- ☐ Access to Healthcare (including insurance)
- ☐ Relationships with friends
- ☐ Relationships with family
- ☐ Relationship with spouse or significant other
- ☐ Housing situtation
- ☐ Financial stability
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Other

12. 3.3. If other, please indicate what aspects(s) of your life have improved.

_____

13. 3.4. What aspects of your life have DETERIORATED since pretrial release? (Select all that apply)

Check all that apply.

- [ ] Employment
- [ ] Mental Health
- [ ] Physical Health
- [ ] Access to Health Care
- [ ] Relationships with friends
- [ ] Relationships with family
- [ ] Relationship with spouse or significant other
- [ ] Housing situtation
- [ ] Financial stability
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Other

14. 3.5. If other than above, please indicate what aspects of your life have deteriorated.

_____

15. 3.6. What challenges, if any, are you currently facing in your daily life? This might include for example: being unable to get a job, not making enough money to support you and your family, unable to find suitable housing, or family or relationship difficulties. These are examples.

_____

_____

_____

16. 3.7. Did the officers who supervised you on pretrial release provide you with sufficient assistance and resources to improve your quality of life?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ Somewhat
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

17. 3.8. On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with the support you received during your time on pretrial release?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Con	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Completely satisfied

Employment

18. 4.1 Are you currently employed?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ On Disability
- ◯ Retired
- ◯ Do not need to work because you receive sufficient income from sources other than retirement, social security, or disability

19. 4.2. If yes, how long have you been employed since released from prison? **OR**

If you were not sentenced to prison, how long have you been employed since your pretrial release period ended?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Less than 6 months
- ◯ 6 months to 1 year
- ◯ 1 to 2 years
- ◯ More than 2 years

20. 4.3. What type of employment do you currently have? (Select all that apply)

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Full-time employment (at least 30 hours per week)
- ☐ Part-time employment
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Temporary / Contract work
- ☐ Seasonal or Periodic
- ☐ Unpaid / Volunteer Work
- ☐ Other

21. 4.4. Did the skills and training you received on pretrial release help you secure employment after pretrial release? (Y/N) **OR**

If you went to prison, did the skills and training you received on pretrial release help you secure employment after release from prison? (Y/N)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Somewhat
- ◯ Unsure

22. 4.5. On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with your current employment situation? (1 being very dissatisfied, 10 being very satisfied)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very Satisfied

HealthCare and Sobriety

23. 5.1. Have you experienced improvements in your physical health since you were released pretrial? (Yes/No) **OR**

If you went to prison, have you experienced improvements in your physical health since being released from prison? (Yes/No)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

24. 5.2. Have you experienced improvements in your mental health since you were released pretrial? (Yes/No) **OR**

If you went to prison, have you experienced improvements in your mental health since being released from prison? (Yes/No)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

25. 5.3. If yes to improvements to physical health and/or mental health, please describe those improvements.

_____

_____

26. 5.4. Have you experienced deterioration in your mental health since you were released pretrial? (Yes/No) **OR**

If you went to prison, have you experienced deterioration in your mental health since being released from prison? (Yes/No)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

27. 5.5. Have you experienced deterioration in your physical health since you were released pretrial? (Yes/No) **OR**

If you went to prison, have you experienced deterioration in your physical health since being released from prison? (Yes/No)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

28. 5.6. If yes to mental health and/or physical deterioration, please explain the deteriorations.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

29. 5.7. Have you been able to access healthcare services, including regular check-ups, doctor visits, medications, treatments for physical or mental health issues since being released pretrial? (Y/N) **OR**

If you went to prison, have you been able to access healthcare services, including regular check-ups, doctor visits, medications, treatments for physical or mental health issues. since being released from prison? (Y/N)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

30. 5.8. Have you been able to maintain sobriety since your pretrial release (Y/N)? **OR**

If you went to prison, have you been able to maintain sobriety since your release from prison? (Y/N)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Somewhat
- ◯ Prefer not to answer

31. 5.9. *If no,* please provide some information on the challenges you have faced in maintaining sobriety and any efforts you have made to address them.

Social Support Networks

6.1. Social support includes family and friends and other people you know through clubs, religious activities, sports and recreational activities, etc. who are a positive influence on you and help you maintain a stable, law-abiding lifestyle and support you.

32. 6.2. On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with the level of social support you currently have? (1 being very dissatisfied, 10 being very satisfied)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very satisfied

33. 6.3. Have you experienced positive changes in your social support networks since pretrial release? (Y/N) **OR**

If you went to prison, have you experienced positive changes in your social support systems since being released from prison? (Y/N)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Somewhat
- ◯ Unsure

34. 6.4. What types of social supports have improved since pretrial release? (Y/N) **OR**

If you went to prison, what types of social supports have improved since being released from prison? (Y/N)

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Friends
- ☐ Family
- ☐ Support groups including AA, NA, or other treatment therapy groups
- ☐ Online communities
- ☐ Mentors from work or others who help you improve your life
- ☐ Community organizations
- ☐ Religious / spiritual groups
- ☐ Other (specify below)

35. 6.5. If you indicated OTHER above, please indicate source of support.

_____

36. 6.6 Have your social support networks played a significant role in improving your life since you were released pretrial? (Y/N) **OR**

If you went to prison, have your social support networks played a significant role in improving your life since you were released from prison? (Y/N)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Somewhat
- ◯ Unsure

37. 6.7. Have you experienced strengthening or broadening or other positive changes in your social networks since being released pretrial? (Yes/No) **OR**

If you went to prison, have you built or strengthened your social support network since being released from prison? (Yes/No)

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Somewhat
- ◯ Unsure

38. 6.8. If yes, please describe the relationships that have been a part of your support network and how they have helped you.

39. 6.9. If no, please indicate any barriers or challenges you have faced in establishing or maintaining social support and any efforts you have made to address them.

Procedural Justice

The next section of the survey relates to the concept of procedural justice *during your pretrial release*. People involved in the criminal justice system strongly prefer to feel that processes were fair, consistent, and transparent; that is, that they were informed of the reasons for decisions made by your pretrial services officers during your release, that your voice was heard, and that you were treated with respect and impartiality.

When you answer this section, please target your responses to the parties in your case with whom you directly interacted and directly impacted your case after being arrested including pretrial services officers and staff, judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys. In the questions below, we refer to them as the court agencies.

Do NOT include probation staff with whom you interacted AFTER you began post-conviction supervision (upon release from prison if you were sentenced to prison, OR upon commencement of your probation term if sentenced to probation.)

Do not include other entities you may have encountered during your visits to the federal courthouse, such as court security, U.S. Marshalls, Clerks Office staff.

40. 7.1. How satisfied are you with the fairness and transparency of the decision-making of your court agencies while you while on pretrial release?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very satisfied

41. 7.2. To what extent do you feel that court agencies treated you with dignity and respect during your pretrial release?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	To a great extent

42. 7.3. How well did court agencies communicate the reasons behind their decisions and processes while you were on pretrial release?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very well

43. 7.4. Do you feel that you had a voice in decisions made by court agencies while you were on pretrial release?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No,	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Yes, definitely

44. 7.5. How fairly court agencies treat all participants regardless of their background, race, ethnicity and gender?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very fairly

45. 7.6. Did court agencies provide clear guidelines and expectations for you while you were on pretrial release?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No,	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Yes, definitely

46. 7.7. How satisfied are you with court agencies' response to your concerns?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Very satisfied
- ◯ Satisfied
- ◯ Neutral
- ◯ Dissatisfied
- ◯ Very dissatisfied
- ◯ Not applicable

47. 7.8. Have you ever experienced bias or discrimination by court agencies while you were on pretrial release?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

48. 7.9. If you answered yes above, please briefly describe your experience **with specifics.** Describe the particular agency or agencies with which you experienced discrimination or bias and what specific practices were biased or discriminatory.

NO NAMES -- Just Agency

_____

_____

_____

49. 7.10. Did your pretrial services officers consider your individual circumstances when making decisions or providing support during pretrial release?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No,	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Yes, definitely

50. 7.11. Overall, how satisfied are you with the procedural justice aspects of your pretrial release?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very satisfied

51. 7.12. If you were not satisfied, which aspects of procedural justice during pretrial release need improvement?

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Fairness in decision-making
- ☐ Transparency about decision making
- ☐ Information provided to you
- ☐ Opportunities to voice concerns and preferences about case management decisions
- ☐ Impartiality and neutrality
- ☐ Treatment with respect

Overall Assessment

52. 8.1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with court agencies and supporting staff?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very satisfied

53. 8.2. *If you were less than satisfied with court agencies and supporting staff,* please provide *specifics* about the agency or agencies with whom you were dissatisfied and describe why you were not satisfied.

NO NAMES-- Just Agency

_____

_____

_____

54. 8.3. Do you believe that your release on pretrial has positively impacted your life?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Unsure

55. 8.4. What aspects of supervision on pretrial release were **most** helpful?

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Individual meetings or visits with supervising pretrial services officers
- ☐ Community Integration
- ☐ **Program Sessions with judges and stakeholders -- DO NOT USE for non-ATI
- ☐ Individualized Approach
- ☐ Access to treatment and support
- ☐ ** Restorative justice -- DO NOT USE for non-ATI
- ☐ **Length of Program -- DO NOT Use for non-ATI
- ☐ **Peer Support -- DO NOT USE for non-ATI
- ☐ Other

56. 8.5. What aspects of supervision on pretrial release were **least** helpful?

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Individual meetings or visits with supervising pretrial services officers
- ☐ Community Integration
- ☐ **Program Sessions with judges and stakeholders -- DO NOT USE for non-ATI
- ☐ Access to treatment and support
- ☐ Individualized Approach
- ☐ **Length of Program -- DO NOT Use for non-ATI
- ☐ ** Restorative justice -- DO NOT USE for non-ATI
- ☐ **Peer Support -- DO NOT USE for non-ATI
- ☐ Other

57. 8.6. In what specific ways could the pretrial release period be improved to better support individuals on pretrial release?

Thank you for your valuable participation! Your feedback will greatly contribute to the understanding of how pretrial release impacts the lives of individuals involved. Your answers will help us to identify opportunities for improvement.