

# Michigan DOC Increases Offender Compliance and Implements Criteria-Based Programs With SCRAM CAM

Parole/Reentry  
Probation  
Statewide

**Lansing, MI** – In collaboration with the Council of State Governments, in 2004 the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) launched the Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative (MPRI) to overcome shrinking budgets and overcrowded prisons. The program has become even more important following the 2008 economic downturn.

MPRI uses a comprehensive and individualized case-management strategy to balance public safety and sentencing with offender rehabilitation. The program has helped the state eliminate thousands of prison beds, reduce recidivism, and dramatically cut costs while enhancing public safety.

MDOC has operated an electronic monitoring program for over 25 years using alcohol, home curfew, and GPS monitoring devices. As a leader in the use of electronic monitoring, MDOC was selected as one of three pilot programs to use SCRAM Continuous Alcohol Monitoring (SCRAM CAM) before the product was released nationally in 2003.

The department now operates the largest felony probation and parole SCRAM CAM program in the United States. Nearly 14,000 offenders have been monitored with SCRAM CAM since the program's inception in 2003.

MDOC is responsible for incarcerating and supervising individuals convicted of felony DUI and other alcohol-related offenses. In addition, the department handles offenders where alcohol was a contributing factor to their offense, such as assault or domestic violence. MDOC uses SCRAM CAM to:

- Assess offenders' drinking patterns and adjust supervision accordingly.
- Save significant dollars by shortening prison stays that average \$96 per day.
- Support behavioral change objectives of re-entry programs.

SCRAM CAM has become a tool of choice for Michigan to enhance public safety, effectively supervise offenders in the community, and provide alternatives

## Highlights of Success

- Increased number of offenders who are fully compliant and sober through court-ordered sobriety from 68% to 75%.
- Implemented one of the only SCRAM CAM programs for felony parolees to help them successfully re-enter society.
- Monitored nearly 14,000 offenders with SCRAM CAM since 2003.
- Has become a model program for electronic monitoring best practices nationally and internationally.

**SOBER DAYS: 99.4%**

What are Sober Days?

to incarceration. MDOC has increased its use of SCRAM every year, and since 2011 the program has grown 85%.

## How is SCRAM CAM Being Used?

On any given day, MDOC monitors an average of 1,300 individuals with SCRAM CAM in both probation and parole programs. The department also provides monitoring for some district and probate courts, sheriffs' departments, and juvenile offenders. Offenders are placed on SCRAM for an average of 127 days.

Based on its extensive experience with SCRAM CAM, MDOC has developed unique programs to support offender sobriety and compliance:

### Safe and Sober Program

MDOC's Safe and Sober Program is a unique, criteria-based treatment program for felony parolees who are sentenced for a drunk-driving related offense. The program's 4- to 6-month residential treatment component is followed by community supervision with SCRAM CAM to encourage offender sobriety.



In keeping with MPRI's individualized approach, the program tailors SCRAM CAM use to the offense:

- Individuals convicted of a drunk-driving offense involving death or a BAC of 0.24 or higher are placed on SCRAM CAM for the entire length of supervision.
- Individuals convicted of a drunk-driving offense with a BAC of 0.23 or less are placed on SCRAM CAM for at least 6 months.

MDOC uses SCRAM CAM to reinforce offender sobriety as they transition from the intense supervision of incarceration and residential treatment back into the community. This approach has proven to reduce DUI recidivism and more effectively reintegrate offenders into society.

### ***Specialized SCRAM Caseloads***

Thirty percent of all MDOC SCRAM CAM clients are supervised by agents who specialize in SCRAM caseloads, meaning they average ten cases or more each day. MDOC has found that offenders supervised by these agents:

- Achieve higher rates of compliance even though they are generally on SCRAM CAM longer.
- Have a greater number of Sober Days (24-hour periods without alcohol consumption or tampering violations) before their first violation and have fewer repeat violations of their court-ordered sobriety.
- Have violations addressed more quickly and efficiently to get them back on track with court-ordered sobriety.

### ***SCRAM CAM with House Arrest***

In 2013, MDOC began using SCRAM CAM's RF functionality to provide agents with additional information about offender behavior. This functionality allows agents to see when offenders are leaving and entering their home and whether they are complying with curfews. This information helps agents see patterns in offender behavior and modify sanctions accordingly.

## **Outcomes**

- Since 2006, MDOC has increased the number of offenders who are fully compliant throughout the whole term of their court-ordered sobriety from 68% to 75%.
- This increase in compliance has come even as MDOC has increased the average number of days that offenders are on SCRAM CAM from 92 to 127.
- By increasing offender compliance, SCRAM CAM is helping MDOC reduce recidivism rates and improve public safety. Supervised sobriety is part of MDOC's efforts to assist offenders toward becoming productive members of the community.
- SCRAM CAM is also giving Michigan a cost-effective alternative to prison. The state spends, on average, nearly \$96 per day (\$35,000 per year) to incarcerate an inmate. In comparison, SCRAM CAM costs just a fraction of that amount each day, and some of the costs for SCRAM CAM are paid for by offenders. In 2012 alone, Michigan used SCRAM CAM to monitor parolees for approximately 232,000 days. Continued incarceration of these individuals would have cost the state more than \$19 million.

## **An International Role Model**

MDOC has become a model program for electronic monitoring.

When officials from the United Kingdom wanted to learn about best practices in offender management, they turned to MDOC. On a recent fact-finding trip, officials from the City of the London and the U.K.'s Policy Exchange visited the department's electronic monitoring unit in Lansing to see first-hand how Michigan employs the SCRAM CAM technology to make its communities safer and to reduce costs.

During his visit, Max Chambers, Head of Crime and Justice at the Policy Exchange, noted, "We have a big alcohol problem in the U.K., particularly around alcohol-related crime as well as drunk driving, and we can see how you could transplant some of this technology. This is part of a solution we see to tackle that problem. It's been a real eye-opener to see how incredible some of the numbers are. These programs are cutting the number of drinking days quite dramatically."

