



# Building Consensus

Moving Nevada Toward a Shared  
Definition of Recidivism



Katie M. Snider, Ph.D.  
Research & Evaluation  
Consultant

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## **Current work with deflection and diversion programs across Nevada:**

- Consult on evaluation planning, data collection, and data management
- Facilitate grant reporting
- Analyze program data to develop monthly and quarterly reports
- Disseminate program information
- Co-facilitate monthly collaboration meetings

## **Related Experience:**

- Holistic Defense for Rural and Frontier Nevada (2025-present)
- NAMI Western Nevada Freedom Bridges (2025-present)
- Henderson Mobile Crisis Intervention Team (2024-present)
- North Las Vegas Community Correctional Center ORAS Implementation (2023)
- MOST Evaluation (2022)
- FASTT Evaluation (2022)
- Carson Tahoe ACT Jail Diversion Program Annual Reports (2021-present)
- Reno Community Court Evaluation (2020)

# Overview

1. What is recidivism?
2. How is recidivism currently defined?
3. What are the challenges a unified definitional framework would address?
4. What are the solutions we are proposing?



# What is Recidivism?

Repeating or returning to criminal behavior; committing new offenses after being punished for a crime.



# Background

**Recidivism** is used as an outcome measure in most deflection and diversion programs

- Stated goal of many grants and funded programs to reduce recidivism
- Recidivism used as an outcome measure for programs across the state:
  - Mobile Outreach Safety Teams (MOST)
  - Forensic Assessment Services Triage Team (FASTT)
  - Specialty Courts (Community Court, Mental Health Court, Veteran's Court, Drug Court)
  - Prison Reentry Programs



# Current Definition

## Recidivism in the 2019 Release Cohort

Nevada Department of Corrections



A return to NDOC custody (re-incarceration) within 36 months (3 years) of an individual's release.

This includes first return events—either parole violations or new felony-based convictions leading to imprisonment—and tracks only the first release and readmission per cohort.

*Source:*

<https://sentencing.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/sentencingnv.gov/content/Meetings/2024/2019%20Recidivism%20Presentation.pdf>

## Issues with this definition

Not applicable for early intercept  
diversion and deflection

Fails to capture variances in recidivism  
frequency as a measure of progress

Does not measure Escalation

Does not measure Desistance

# Recidivism & the Sequential Intercept Model





# Key Elements of Recidivism Definitions

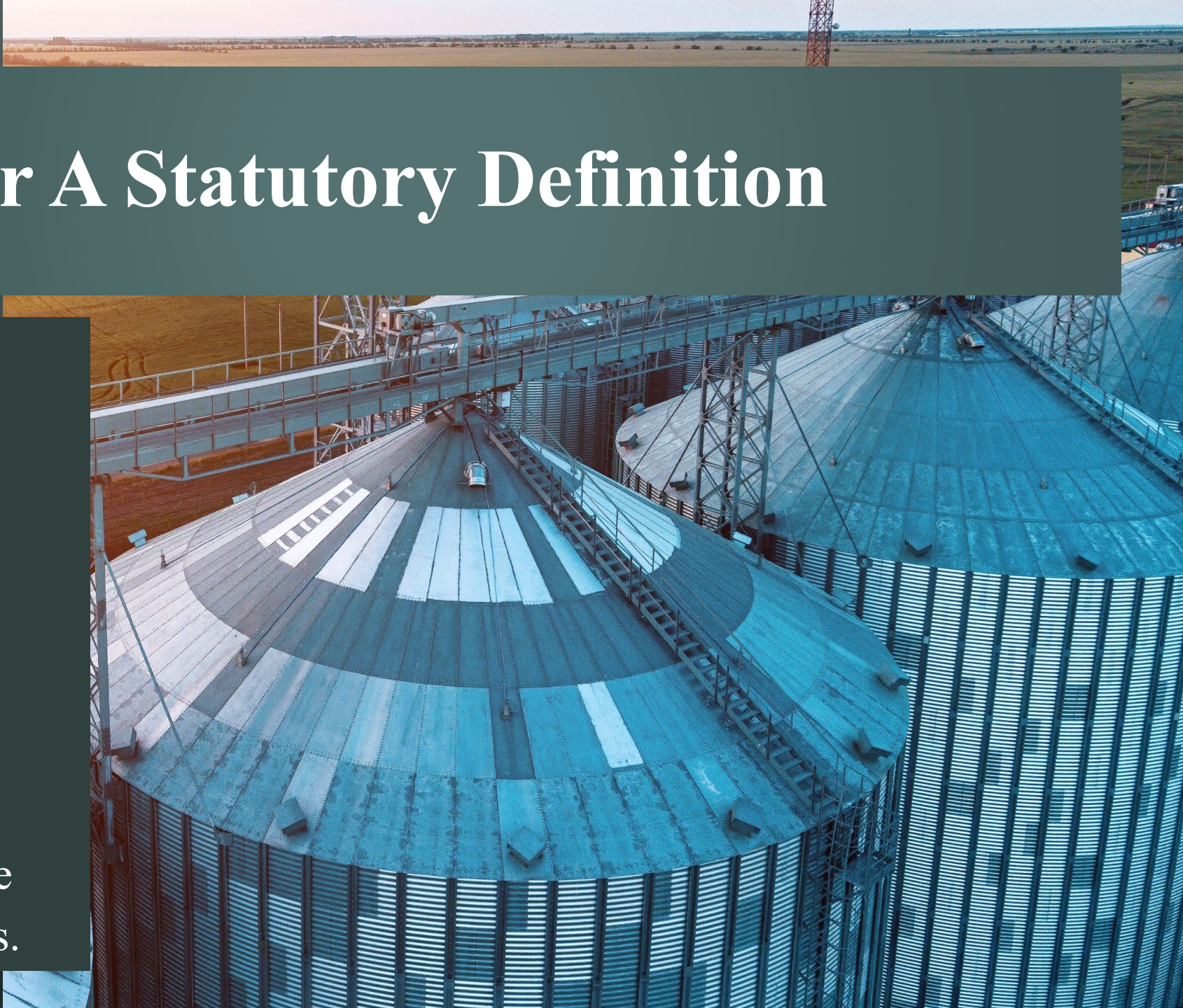
Element	Description
Precursor (Start of Measurement)	Arrest (regardless of outcome), Program Enrollment (i.e., specialty court, MOST), Court Supervision, Probation, Incarceration (jail or prison), Parole
Recidivism Events	Misdemeanors vs. Criminal Accusations, Failure to Appear, Violations/Status Offenses, Calls for Service or Arrests (regardless of outcome), Program Enrollment, Convictions or Pleas, Sentence (Suspended?), Incarceration
Location/System Parameters	Same State/City/County, Same justice system/program
Recidivism Timeline	Within a specified period of time?





# Push for A Statutory Definition

- Departments, agencies, and programs operationalize recidivism differently.
- Different definitions makes comparisons difficult.
- A statutory definition would guide policy and research to more consistently measure the impacts of different initiatives.





# How do we accomplish this?



- State agencies should require programs to adopt an operational definition when awarding funding for programs that purport to reduce recidivism.
- Offer flexible options for definitions that include the key elements and offer appropriate tailoring for programs place in Sequential Intercept Model.
- Measurement should capture change in frequency of recidivism events – not just dichotomous outcome.
- Allow for comparison between programs operating at the same intercept.