

NEWS RELEASE

Office of Performance Evaluations
Idaho Legislature
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
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Meeting Date: November 14, 2012
Meeting Location: Capitol Auditorium, Boise, Idaho
Meeting Time: 3:00 p.m.

Increasing Efficiencies in Idaho's Parole Process, Second Follow-up Report

In a meeting of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee today, evaluators from the Office of Performance Evaluations told the committee that the Commission of Pardons and Parole continues to have significant problems with managing its parole release data. Evaluators reiterated the following key points in their presentation:

1. The Office of Performance Evaluations has issued six reports in the last 11 years that detail problems with data management.
2. Accurate, reliable statistics on the number of offenders who experience release delays is not readily available.
3. After analyzing what data is currently available, evaluators determined that more than half of the offenders in the study sample were released late, translating to \$7.2 million in costs to the state.

Despite having reviewed the parole process many times over the past decade, evaluators told policymakers that the same data management problems which plagued the Commission of Pardons and Parole in the early 2000s continue today. As they did in 2010, evaluators reported that they had to undergo a massive cleanup of offender data in order to conduct an analysis of parole release timeliness. In 2010, evaluators reported that 69% of offenders in the study sample experienced a release delay. This year, 57% of offenders in the study sample had a release delay.

Evaluators told the committee that the methods used to track offender data make the data particularly prone to errors and prevent the state from fully capturing potential reductions in release delays. Evaluators stated that additional follow-up on parole release delays will be of little use until critical changes take place to modernize and automate how data, which is necessary to analyze the timeliness of parole releases, is managed.

Delays in Medicaid Claims Processing, Second Follow-up Report

Evaluators reported to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee that Idaho's Medicaid claims processing system is now operating much more efficiently than when it was first launched two years ago and has recently been federally certified. In addition, evaluators said that providers are indicating greater satisfaction with the system and the Department of Health and Welfare has recovered all but 1% of the \$117 million it issued to providers as interim payments.

As part of its follow-up review to the 2011 report *Delays in Medicaid Claims Processing*, the Office of Performance Evaluations conducted a survey in July 2012 of Idaho's Medicaid providers. The survey looked at providers' level of satisfaction with the claims processing system and sought to identify which areas continue to be a problem. Of the 4,262 providers who were surveyed, 30% responded. Evaluators found that overall satisfaction with the Medicaid claims processing system has improved—25 percent of respondents indicate they are unsatisfied or very unsatisfied, which is down from 33 percent one year ago. Many respondents' indicate their dissatisfaction is with service limits and reimbursement rates, which is outside of the control of the processing system.

Idaho transitioned to a new Medicaid claims processing system in June 2010. In their initial study of the transition, evaluators found that contract terms, system readiness and performance, and reimbursement payments to providers fell short, particularly in the number of pending claims and the length of time those claims pend before final resolution. In this most recent follow-up, evaluators found that the number of pending claims has decreased significantly from 90,000 pending claims per week in June 2011 to less than 6,000 since May 2012. The length of time a claim pends has also decreased significantly. Almost all of the pending claims are now resolved within 15 days, whereas in fall 2010, only a quarter of all claims were resolved within 15 days.

In fall 2010 the Department of Health and Welfare issued \$117 million in interim payments to supplement providers until problems with the system were better resolved. The department advanced the payments with the understanding that future claims of those providers would either be offset by the payment or that the providers would pay the advance back. To date, evaluators found that the department has accounted for all but \$1.5 million in interim payments and will continue to work to collect the remaining outstanding amount.

The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently certified the new claims processing system, allowing Idaho to receive an additional \$9.9 million in federal funds for claims already processed.

Performance audits or evaluations are an essential function of legislative oversight to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent efficiently, effectively, and in accordance with Idaho law. The eight-member committee is equally divided between the two political parties and the two chambers of the Legislature. Senator Elliot Werk and Representative Clifford Bayer co-chair the committee.

Follow-up reports are available on the Office of Performance Evaluations' website at www.legislature.idaho.gov/opec.