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Check Appropriate Box(es) Below: <input type="checkbox"/> Policy/Directive Number: <input type="checkbox"/> Business Process Update <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informational	Issued By Jared Hoy															
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SUBJECT: COMPAS Wisconsin norming																
<p>WIDOC has been using the COMPAS risk/needs assessment tool statewide for over four years. Moving past the initial implementation stages, the focus turns to assessment fidelity and quality assurance. The literature on actuarial risk assessment is clear that norming the tool on a comparable geographical population is an important step in the progression of ongoing assessment fidelity and monitoring.</p> <p>Over the past four years, over 250,000 assessments have been completed by WIDOC and county partners. Now that this ample data set has been compiled, the WIDOC Research & Policy Unit has conducted an analysis comparing a Wisconsin correctional population to the nationwide norm groups. As a result, WIDOC will be switching to Wisconsin-based norm groups for COMPAS adult assessments on 1/25/16. These groups will be utilized to determine what risk or need category an offender is classified into from their COMPAS assessment.</p> <p><u>Rationale</u></p> <p>By utilizing norm groups based upon a WIDOC population, we are better able to capture specific trends of the Wisconsin population that could be missed when utilizing other states for comparison. The Wisconsin norm groups also allow for a larger and more recent sample to be used when determining risk scores, thus increasing validity. Finally, by utilizing our own norm groups we are able to better classify offenders into risk and need categories which align with research-based standards.</p> <p><u>Norm Group Profiles</u></p> <p>Up until this point, WIDOC has used the national norm groups provided by Northpointe. Varying in size based on the assessment, these groups were comprised of criminally-involved people in New York, Virginia, Wyoming, Michigan, Massachusetts, and California. Analysis indicates demographic characteristics of race and gender were comparable to the Wisconsin assessed offenders.</p> <p>The new Wisconsin norm groups will be composed of Wisconsin only COMPAS assessments. The new norm group for Core and Primary Needs assessments will be composed of 76,776 assessments (60,817 males and 15,959 females). The norm group for Reentry and Legacy assessments will be composed of 16,967 assessments (15,796 males and 1,170 females). All new norm groups will be gender-specific (females compared to only females and males compared to only males).</p> <p><u>Practice Implications</u></p> <p>The new Wisconsin norms do not require any change in process other than to note that all assessments completed before 1/25/16 will be placed into a “read only” status. This means that any modifications to these assessments, whether they are complete or incomplete, will require a “copy forward” if an assessor wishes to complete or update them. Assessments conducted from 1/25/16 forward will be based on the new norms.</p>																

Despite research models of the new norms revealing slight modifications to WIDOC risk distributions, it is not anticipated that assessors or case managers will observe any dramatic changes to risk scores or caseloads. However, slight shifts over time may occur. The new Wisconsin norms **will not apply retroactively to previously assessed offenders.**

A Continuous Practice

In the future, WIDOC will continue to add completed assessments to the norm groups, thus increasing the size and validity of our Wisconsin-based norms. Researchers will also continue to check the distribution of offenders in all categories and make adjustments to the cut points if necessary. As sufficient numbers of completed Youth assessments are achieved, WIDOC will replicate this norming process for various COMPAS Youth assessments.

As WIDOC continues to align with evidence-based practice, we engage in the process of data-driven decision-making and refinement. The National Institute of Corrections' overarching principles of *Measuring Relevant Practices* and *Measurement Feedback* must not be forgotten. The norming of COMPAS on a Wisconsin population is a perfect example of the measurement and refinement feedback loop NIC endorses.