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Sex Offender Special Sentences Starting to Add Up

Legislative changes effective July 1, 2005 continue to substantially increase the number of sex offenders under supervision along with the cost of supervision. Certain sex offenders convicted of a Class C Felony or greater offense now receive a special sentence to lifetime supervision, in addition to the regular penalty provided by law. Certain sex offenders convicted of a misdemeanor or a Class D Felony receive a special sentence of 10 years under supervision, beyond the regular penalty.

Admissions to Special Sentence

FY2006 = 1 (occurred in late June)

FY2007 = 11

FY 2008 = 48

FY2009 = 133

FY2010 = 27 as of 8/27/2009

Source: ICON, based on all Special Sentence Supervision Statuses.

Further, the Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP) estimates that by the end of FY 2010, based on the special sentences alone, there will be about 300 sex offenders under special sentence supervision in community-based corrections. For FY 2011, CJJP estimates 300 additional offenders under special sentence supervision in the community, or about 600 total. Under current DOC policy, about 84% or 250 of them would require electronic monitoring at a cost of about \$7 per unit per day. This policy is under current review.

Correctional institutions are also experiencing the effects of the special sentence laws, as 42 offenders under these laws have been revoked to prison as of August 27, 2009.

Iowa Corrections has historically responded to increased caseloads and costs with innovative offender supervision and programming to maintain public safety while enhancing offender rehabilitation. We are faced with that challenge once again.