



**North Carolina Department of Public Safety
Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice
Community Corrections
Recruitment and Retention Evaluation**

Commissioned by the Criminal Justice Standards Division of the
North Carolina Department of Justice for the
North Carolina Criminal Justice Education & Training Standards Commission

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this study was to assess the recruitment and retention of community corrections officers. These human resources issues are particularly important to consider for the field of corrections, where reported voluntary turnover rates are exceptionally higher than other fields. High turnover rates in the field of corrections are problematic for several reasons including the high proportion of inexperienced personnel delivering services to the offending population, inconsistent supervision strategies, and the cost of recruiting and training new staff on an ongoing basis. Assessing the causes of voluntary turnover among community corrections staff can lead to improved recruitment and retention efforts in this field.

The population of community corrections officers and supervisors (n = 2,028) was used to assess the perceptions and attitudes of staff. Surveys were administered via email to employees' official email addresses. A total of 1,211 respondents completed at least some portion of the survey, resulting in a response rate of 60%. Seventeen percent of respondents were supervisors. Exit information was also gathered from the NCDOJ database.

Nearly 12% of respondents indicated they were in their first year of employment. Of those, 76% felt that they were supported in their first year of employment. Respondents who have not felt supported were concerned about not feeling valued, not feeling that supervisors were professional or held accountable, and issues with training.

When asked what efforts were currently being made to recruit staff to community corrections, several avenues were mentioned including college job fairs, listings on the state website, bumper stickers on state vehicles and use of internships. A significant number of respondents, however, stated that they are not aware of any recruitment efforts being made and many stated that they themselves were not recruited, they just applied to the agency. When asked if they felt that the agency actively makes efforts to retain staff, 86% of respondents responded in the negative. Only 14% felt that community corrections leadership tried to retain personnel. Respondents were asked what efforts could be made to retain staff and provided several suggestions related to pay, supervisory support, opportunities for advancement, and other benefits.

When asked what they liked most about their job, a very common response was the ability to help people, in particular the opportunity to help offenders change their lives for the better. Respondents also noted every day being different, the opportunity to have a flexible schedule, and the opportunity to do field work as positives. However, respondents also noted a number of concerns with community corrections employment including overwork, growing caseloads, and not having enough time in the day to complete work. Low salary, being paid monthly, uncertainty stemming from high turnover, the unpredictable schedule of trainings, and constant change regarding what is expected, and how the job is performed, were also noted as negative aspects of the job. Additional areas of concern included paperwork, aspects of management, and stress related to being held accountable for the actions of offenders.

Turnover intent (an individual's desire to stay or leave his or her organization) was measured by four items, which were added together to form an index. Sixty-five percent of respondents stated that they had thought about quitting their job in the last six months, and 41% stated they currently desired to quit their job. The index could range from two to twelve, with a higher number indicating a greater degree of turnover intent. The mean degree of turnover intent among all respondents was 6.5, and non-supervisors had a significantly higher degree of turnover intent compared to supervisors.

Exit information was obtained to determine why individuals have left community corrections. Five years of data, from 2011 through 2015, were analyzed. Data indicated that more than half of the employees who left resigned and, of those, slightly more than 40% did so for better employment. The remaining exits were due to retirement, transfer or reassignment, dismissal, or departure while under investigation.

When respondents were asked if the standards required for entry into the field were stringent enough, 58% agreed that they were while 42% thought they were not. Thirty-four percent of respondents provided suggestions on changes they would make to hiring standards. Respondents were also asked if they felt the training received for their job was adequate. Roughly half of the respondents felt that both pre-basic and basic training was sufficient, while nearly 72% of respondents thought in-service training was adequate.

About 47% of all respondents stated that they were aware of professional development opportunities that were available. Sixty-eight percent of supervisors stated they were aware of professional development opportunities compared to 42% of non-supervisors. Of those who were aware, 51% had taken advantage of such opportunities.

A total of three ordinary least squares (OLS) regression equations were estimated to predict turnover intent. The final model (Model 3) included personal characteristics, work environment perceptions, and job attitudes as independent variables. This full model indicated that, in terms of personal characteristics, respondents who were a minority, who had a graduate degree, and who were younger were more likely to consider leaving. In terms of work environment perceptions, respondents who perceived that they had less input into decision making, perceived less support from their supervisor, and perceived less ambiguity (role strain) in their job were more likely to indicate an intent to turnover. Finally, in terms of job attitudes, respondents who felt more burned out and who felt less satisfaction with their job were more likely to consider leaving.

Both the statistical analysis of turnover intent and the qualitative analysis of employee perceptions (described more detail in the full report) indicate areas upon which the agency can focus to improve retention. In particular, a number of suggestions were provided by employees to improve perceptions of input into decision making, supervisory support, burnout, and job satisfaction.

Introduction

In December 2014, the Principal Investigator was approached by a research and planning specialist in the Criminal Justice Standards Division of the North Carolina Department of Justice to determine the degree of interest in studying recruitment and retention within criminal justice. The proposed research study was a component of NCDOJ's three-year plan, and a two-pronged study (one of local law enforcement and one of corrections) was proposed. Faculty at East Carolina University ultimately agreed to conduct the corrections component of the study. No compensation for this study was provided. Topics and occupations of interest within corrections were developed through subsequent planning conversations with NCDOJ, as well as input from Commissioners on the Criminal Justice Education & Training Standards Commission.

The purpose of this study was to assess the recruitment and retention of community corrections officers. These human resources issues are particularly important to consider for the field of corrections, where reported voluntary turnover rates are exceptionally higher than other fields. The annual average voluntary turnover rate for correctional officers is estimated to range between 12 and 30%, with some estimates placing this figure closer to 45% (Lambert, 2001; Lommel, 2004; Nink, 2010; Wees, 1996; Wright, 1993). These rates are slightly lower (approximately 10-15%) for probation and parole officers (Idaho State Legislature, 1999; Lee, Phelps, & Beto, 2009; North Carolina Department of Corrections, 2003; Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, 2003; Won-Jae, Joo & Johnson, 2009) and the figures pertaining to juvenile justice officers and court counselors are unknown due to the limited research in this area.

Literature Overview

The nature of working in corrections is stressful for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the difficulty associated with managing and intervening in situations involving the offending population. The stressors are similar for institutional and community corrections officers. Specifically, the emotionally and physically demanding workload, dangerous environmental conditions (especially for prison correctional officers), low pay, and long hours make working in corrections particularly stressful. Communication difficulties with fellow officers and supervisors is also a source of frustration for both institutional and community correctional officers (Cheek & Miller, 1983; Finn & Kuck, 2005). In addition, the role conflict associated with attempting to balance treatment and custody directives from administrators can also increase employee stress levels and burnout, while decreasing overall job satisfaction, thereby heightening the likelihood for one to seek an alternative career path (Cheek & Miller, 1983; Finn & Kuck, 2005; Huckabee, 1992).

High turnover rates in the field of corrections are problematic for several reasons. First, employee turnover is an indicator of organizational effectiveness and stability. Secondly, constant turnover can weaken the management structure, internal communication, and leadership, all of which are critical to carrying out the mission of correctional agencies. Thirdly, turnover in the institutional and community corrections setting equates to a high proportion of inexperienced personnel delivering lower quality of services to the offending population and inconsistent supervision

strategies. Finally, recruiting and training new staff on an ongoing basis is costly to the already burgeoning correctional budget (Cheek & Miller, 1983; Cullen, Link, Wolfe, & Frank, 1985; Lambert, 2001; Lambert & Paoline, 2008). Taking these issues into consideration, assessing the causes of voluntary turnover among correctional staff can lead to improved recruitment and retention efforts in this field.

When examining factors associated with voluntary turnover, several key dimensions arise in the literature. Because it is often difficult to gather information from individuals that have left the field of corrections, several researchers have attempted to examine factors associated with turnover intent using samples of currently employed institutional and community corrections officers (Lambert & Paoline, 2010; Lambert, 2006; Lee, et al., 2009). The assumption underlying this approach is that factors associated with one's intent to leave the organization ultimately influence one's actual departure from the field. As stated by Lee et al. (2009), "turnover intention has been found to be the best predictor and the most immediate precursor of actual turnover" (pg. 31). This line of research has revealed that turnover intent is linked to several work environment characteristics in the field of corrections, such as input into decision-making, instrumental communication, organizational fairness, and role stress (Lambert, 2006; Lambert & Paoline, 2010). These researchers have also found that several work-related attitudes are associated with turnover intent, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job involvement (Lambert, 2006; Lambert & Paoline, 2010; Lee et al., 2009). Many of the work environment characteristics just listed have been studied in relation to work-related attitudes in an effort to assess how work conditions influence employee satisfaction as a precursor to turnover. Research in this area has found that these dimensions tend to overlap and interact with one another in the correctional environment (i.e. job satisfaction is linked to work stress and role strain, role stress is linked to organizational commitment, input into decision-making, etc.) suggesting further research is needed to disentangle these measures in this context (Cullen, Link, Wolfe, & Frank, 1985; Lambert, 2001; Lambert & Paoline, 2008).

Another measure that has been discussed in the context of retention and turnover intention among correctional staff is job burnout. Burnout is described as the emotional and physical exhaustion that results from work stress, often leading to personal and professional problems (Morgan, VanHaveren, & Pearson, 2002). Many of the studies that have examined burnout among individuals working in a human services field have utilized a scale that was developed by Maslach (1981) which consists of three subcomponents: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion taps into the overwhelming emotional toll and exhaustion that can stem from work-related stress. The depersonalization subscale measures the extent to which individuals have begun to embrace an impersonal and distant approach to working with clients (offenders). The final subscale of job burnout, lack of personal accomplishment, assesses negative self-evaluations of job performance. Job burnout can be conceptualized as the sum of these subscales or these subscales can be examined independently. When this concept has been examined using samples of correctional staff, Whitehead and Lindquist (1986) found that lack of job satisfaction is associated with all three subscales, while role conflict, lack of support, age of employee, and work stress are only associated with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Moreover, lack of

participation in decision-making was linked to emotional exhaustion and scores on the personal accomplishment subscale. Prior research has also found that gender, tenure (length of employment), and prison type (male vs. female inmates) influence scores on the burnout scale among correctional staff (Carlson, Anson, & Thomas, 2003; Morgan, et al., 2002).

Research Methodology

Research Design

In an effort to assess factors associated with retention among the North Carolina Department of Public Safety employees, the current study builds off the existing literature to examine the work environment characteristics and attitudinal dimensions just described in relation to turnover intention among community corrections officers. Much of the prior research on the topic of recruitment and retention in the field of corrections has focused on institutional correctional officers. Therefore, exploring these factors among community corrections officers contributes to the state of the knowledge surrounding these issues. In addition, this study explored the relationships between the work environment characteristics and the attitudinal dimensions that are associated with turnover intent in the correctional environment. To this end, the study identified the key factors (work environment characteristics and attitudinal dimensions) that contribute to turnover intent among community corrections personnel.

As an additional component of this study, participants were asked a number of questions pertaining to recruitment and retention to assess what strategies may be employed in the future to improve efforts in these areas. Specifically, participants were asked to identify factors that compelled them to join the field of corrections. In addition, they were asked to specify what efforts are currently being made, and what could be done in the future, to improve the recruitment and retention of staff.

Data Collection

The population of community corrections officers and supervisors (n = 2,028) was used to assess the perceptions and attitudes of staff. Surveys were administered via email to employees' official email addresses. Each potential respondent who did not respond to the initial request for participation received two follow-up emails. Data collection opened on April 21, 2016 and closed on May 13, 2016. A total of 1,211 respondents completed at least some portion of the survey, resulting in a response rate of 60%. Exit information was also gathered from the NCDOJ database.

Measures

The following measures were used:

- **Turnover intent** refers to an individual's desire to stay or leave his or her organization and is measured by four items, two indicating simple agreement, one indicating degree of likelihood, and one indicating degree of activity (adopted from Sager et al., 1998, per Lambert (2006)).

- **Input into decision-making** is the degree to which staff members perceive they have a voice in the decisions made by the organization. It was measured by four items answered using a 5-point Likert scale indicating how much input respondent feels he or she has (adopted from Curry et al., 1986, per Lambert & Paoline, 2008)
- **Burnout** is a type of job stress, a state of physical, emotional, or mental exhaustion. Employees who are burned out may be physically present, but be psychologically withdrawn from work which can be of particular concern in the field of corrections. Job burnout was measured by twenty-two items answered using a 5-point Likert scale indicating level of agreement (adopted from Malasch & Jackson, 1981, per Whitehead & Lindquist, 1986).
- Employees working in the field of corrections may oftentimes feel that their job is a dangerous job. Perception of **dangerousness** was measured by five items answered using a 5-point Likert scale indicating level of agreement (adopted from Cullen et al., 1985, per Lambert & Paoline, 2008).
- **Supervisory support** refers to the degree that a staff member feels supported by administration. Four items answered using a 5-point Likert scale indicating level of agreement (adopted from Cullen et al., 1985) were used to measure supervisory support.
- **Peer support** refers to the degree that a staff member feels supported by other staff members. Peer support was measured by four items answered using a 5-point Likert scale indicating level of agreement (adopted from Cullen et al., 1985).
- **Work stress** is a response to work-related stressors and consists of an individual's feeling of job-related tension, worry, or anxiety. Six items answered using a 5-point Likert scale indicating level of agreement (adapted from Crank, Regoli, Hewitt, & Culbertson, 1995, per Lambert & Paoline, 2008) were used to measure work stress.
- **Job satisfaction** is the fulfillment of certain needs associated with work and is measured by five items answered using a 5-point Likert scale indicating level of agreement (adapted from Brayfield & Rothe, 1951, per Lambert & Paoline, 2008).
- An employee can experience **role strain** when assigned responsibilities and duties are ill-defined and ambiguous or when direction from administration is contradictory. Role strain was measured using seven items answered using a 5-point Likert scale indicating level of agreement (adapted from Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970, Cullen et al., 1985, and Poole & Regoli, 1983, per Lambert & Paoline, 2008).
- **Formalization** refers to the extent to which rules and procedures are established and known by the members of the organization and was measured by five items answered using a 5-point Likert scale indicating level of agreement (adopted from Oldham & Hackman, 1981, and Taggart & Mays, 1987, per Lambert & Paoline, 2008).
- **Organizational commitment** is the connection that an employees has with his/her organization, and it was measured by two items answered using a 5-point Likert scale indicating level of agreement (adapted from Mowday et al., 1982, per Lambert & Paoline, 2008).

Demographic information including race/ethnicity, education, age, and gender, and job characteristics including supervisory status, position, and tenure, was also captured. Additional

items were added by community corrections leadership, and the results of these added items are included as well. In particular, Lori Millette (Personnel Manager) and John Hegger (Lead Field Specialist) graciously provided their time and expertise to refine the data collection instrument.

Analytical Plan

The data were analyzed using univariate, bivariate, and multivariate procedures. The key dependent variable examined in the study was turnover intent, as an indicator of employee retention. A series of analyses were conducted to examine the bivariate relationships between perceptions of work conditions (dangerousness, role strain, work stress, formalization, and input into decision-making) and turnover intent among participants. A similar set of bivariate analyses were employed to assess the relationships between several work-related attitudinal measures (job satisfaction, burnout, and organizational commitment) and turnover intent. These initial analyses were conducted to identify the measures that are significantly associated with turnover intent. Additional bivariate analytical procedures were utilized to examine the correlations between the work condition measures and the attitudinal measures previously described to determine if interaction terms need to be built into multivariate modeling procedures. Once all key independent measures were tested in relation to turnover intent, a multivariate model incorporating interaction terms and demographic control variables was constructed to examine the strength of the measures collectively in explaining turnover intent.

Simple frequency distributions and descriptive statistics were provided for all variables pertaining to retention and recruitment. In addition, content analysis was conducted on all open-ended questions to identify themes pertaining to employees' perceptions of what is currently being done, and what may need to be done in the future, to recruit and retain staff.

Research Findings

Characteristics of Those Responding to the Survey

The demographic characteristics of respondents are presented in Table 1. Slightly more of the respondents were male (52%) than female (48%). Most respondents were White, and non-Hispanic/Latino. Roughly 17% of respondents had a master's degree or higher, and 15% had served, or were currently serving, in the military. Seventeen percent of the respondents were supervisors.

Table 1: Demographics of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Gender (N = 1,203)¹		
<i>Male</i>	624	51.9%
<i>Female</i>	579	48.1%
Race (N = 1,199)		
<i>White</i>	787	65.6%
<i>Black or African-American</i>	342	28.5%
<i>Asian or Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian</i>	9	1.0%
<i>American Indian or Alaska Native</i>	19	1.5%
<i>Multi-racial</i>	28	2.3%
<i>Other</i>	14	1.1%
Ethnicity (N = 1,177)		
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	30	2.5%
<i>Non-Hispanic/Latino</i>	1,147	97.5%
Age (N = 1,161)		
<i>22-29</i>	220	18.9%
<i>30-39</i>	317	27.3%
<i>40-49</i>	410	35.3%
<i>50-59</i>	190	16.4%
<i>60 and older</i>	24	2.1%
Education – Master’s Degree or Higher (N = 1,198)		
<i>Yes</i>	201	16.8%
<i>No</i>	997	83.2%
Military Service (N = 1,203)		
<i>Yes</i>	182	15.1%
<i>No</i>	1,021	84.9%
Supervisor (N = 1,195)		
<i>Yes</i>	205	17.2%
<i>No</i>	990	82.8%
Division (N = 1,042)		
<i>Division 1</i>	262	25.1%
<i>Division 2</i>	251	24.1%
<i>Division 3</i>	307	29.5%
<i>Division 4</i>	213	20.4%
<i>Special Population/CRV</i>	9	0.9%

Nearly 12 percent of respondents (N = 139) indicated they were in their first year of employment. Of those, 76% felt that they were supported in their first year of employment. Respondents who have not felt supported provided their opinion on how the agency could support them. These

¹ N within tables refers to the sample size, which varies by question. For example, N = 1,203 means that of the 1,211 employees who participated in the survey, 1,203 answered the question about gender.

included their concerns about not feeling valued, not feeling that supervisors were professional or held accountable, and issues with training.

In terms of feeling valued, some respondents expressed a desire for supervisors to be available when needed, and to provide positive feedback. As one respondent noted, “tell us when we are doing something right, not just when we do something wrong.” Others indicated a desire for fellow officers to be more supportive or helpful when asked questions from new employees. One respondent noted that “there are many people in my office I feel as though I could not approach.” Other comments related to a desire for management to be more transparent, and concerns that “management tries to supervise through fear” and that the agency is more concerned about “looking for problems then promoting knowledge in the job.”

A number of respondents who expressed dissatisfaction with the first year provide opinions about training including a desire for more hands-on training, particularly with intake and all the components of handling a caseload. For example, one respondent noted that “sitting in and watching other officers is not as helpful as hands-on training.” Another recommended that new staff have OPUS training before basic, as well as a short course on general statutes, and judgments and modifications.

Recruitment and Retention

Efforts to Recruit Staff

Respondents were asked what efforts were currently being made to recruit staff to community corrections, and they mentioned several avenues including college job fairs, listings on the state website, and bumper stickers on state vehicles. Respondents also mentioned use of internships as an effective recruiting method. A significant number of respondents, however, stated that they are not aware of any recruitment efforts being made. Although not the focus of the question, many respondents also provided their opinion about hiring recent college graduates. Although some were positive about this trend, many expressed the opinion that “recruiting applicants based on a 4-year degree and sometimes no job experience” was not good for the agency because it resulted in higher turnover.

Respondents were also asked how they were initially recruited into the agency. A large number noted that they were not actively recruited, they just applied. Others indicated that they responded to an ad, were referred by an employee, learned about an opportunity through word of mouth, or transferred from another state agency. A number also stated that they were recruited through a college job fair, or applied after completing an internship.

Efforts to Retain Staff

When asked if they felt that the agency actively makes efforts to retain staff, 86% of respondents responded in the negative. Only 14% felt that community corrections leadership tried to retain personnel. Respondents were asked what efforts could be made to retain staff and provided several suggestions related to pay, supervisory support, opportunities for advancement, and other benefits.

In terms of pay, respondents specifically stated a desire for regular pay increases, as well as merit raises. Also mentioned was more competitive salaries, and a salary that was based on education and experience. One respondent summarized concerns about pay by noting that “older employees don't want to stay when new employees make almost what they do, and new employees can't see a future where pay does not keep up with the cost of living.”

Other suggestions relating to retention of staff pertained to increased support from supervisors, and measures to improve and foster morale. Areas of potential improvement noted by respondents included less micromanagement from superiors, better training for management, and better communication. Respondents also indicated that lack of respect for staff, and lack of recognition for good work, was hampering retention. One stated that a department this large “is inherently intimidating considering the number of employees and scope of work . . . [and] many times staff are not reassured they are doing a good job which adds to the current stress.” Others noted that “retention and employee satisfaction aren't valued” and that employees should be appreciated because they are “the greatest assets of an organization.”

Additional areas that might improve retention discussed by respondents included increased opportunities for advancement and a more level playing field in terms of promotional opportunities. Respondents also mentioned a desire for more training, as well as regular stress testing and opportunities to debrief. One stated that the agency needs to “be more concerned about staff's well-being relating to mental and physical health than the offenders.”

A number also mentioned additional or improved benefits as a means to improve retention. Mentioned in particular were tuition reimbursement programs or education incentives, take-home vehicles, more flexibility in work schedules, and better health insurance plans. Many also cited the need for a better retirement plan, specifically one that would include certified Probation/Parole Officers into the law enforcement retirement benefit.

Positive Aspects of Job

When asked what they liked most about their job, a very common response was the ability to help people, in particular the opportunity to help offenders change their lives for the better. One respondent said the best part of the job was “being able to help those that would otherwise be unable to help themselves, and being able to make a difference in the lives of others.” Respondents also noted the opportunity to have a flexible schedule, the opportunity to do field work, and the fact that every day is different as positives. As one stated, “every day there is something new. The job is ever evolving, it is never boring.” Others counted colleagues as the best part of the job, with a number describing co-workers as “family.”

Negative Aspects of Job

When asked what they liked least about their job, a large number of respondents noted overwork, growing caseloads, and not having enough time in the day to complete work as major concerns. This concern was noted by both staff and supervisors. One supervisor stated that he/she supervises “more officers than a normal 40 hour week allows me to” which means “I don't

have a lot of time to teach or assist my officers.” This concern is echoed by additional data. Respondents were asked separately if they felt they had enough time to get work done on a daily basis – 55% said no. Salary was also noted as a negative, as a number of respondents feel they are “overworked and underpaid.” Many respondents also disliked being paid monthly and would prefer a more frequent pay schedule.

Another aspect of the job that many respondents disliked was uncertainty. This area of concern included comments related to a high rate of turnover (which creates a stressful working environment), the unpredictable schedule of trainings (in particular, respondents noted that last minute notification of required training is stressful because appointments have to be rescheduled), and constant change regarding what is expected, and how the job is performed. Additionally, respondents indicated that this concern is exacerbated by lack of communication. As one stated, there is an “increasing demand on employees” but management does not give “employees information about the reasons for change.”

Respondents also noted paperwork, aspects of management, and stress as additional concerns. In terms of paperwork, respondents believe that there are too many tasks per case, and that many are redundant. Further, many noted that they are responsible for clerical duties that could be handled by someone administrative position (thus lightening the overall workload for officers). Respondents also counted micromanagement and lack of professionalism by those in positions of leadership as negative aspects of the job.

Other areas of stress, beyond those already noted, were also mentioned frequently. Some supervisors, for example, felt that they are often “caught in the middle between management and staff,” and some stated that they regret being promoted. Officers noted the stress of “numbers-driven policies” and the stress of case reviews that “never acknowledge the positive work put into a case.” Respondents also counted being held accountable for the actions of offenders as a negative aspect of the job. In the words of one, it is stressful “being held accountable for a population that does not hold themselves accountable.”

Turnover Intent

Turnover intent was measured by four items, which were added together to form an index. Specifically, respondents were asked if they had thought about quitting their job in the last six months, and if they currently desired to quit their job. They were also asked how likely it was that they would be in their current job a year from now (reverse coded), and how actively they had searched for a job with other employers in the last year. Sixty-five percent of respondents stated that they had thought about quitting their job in the last six months, and 41% stated they currently desired to quit their job.

As mentioned, the four items were summed to create an index of turnover intent which had a Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of .66. The index could range from two to twelve, with a higher number indicating a greater degree of turnover intent. The mean degree of turnover intent among all respondents was 6.5. The mean degree of turnover intent for supervisors was

5.9, while the mean degree for non-supervisors was 6.7. The difference in degree of turnover intent between supervisors and non-supervisors was significant, as determined by a Mann-Whitney U test. In other words, non-supervisors had a significantly higher degree of turnover intent compared to supervisors.

The difference in turnover intent was also considered by division, and is provided in Table 3. As shown, turnover intent is highest in Divisions 2 and 3, and lowest in Divisions 1 and 4.

Table 3: Degree of Turnover Intent by Division

	Median Degree of Turnover Intent
Division 1	6.0
Division 2	7.0
Division 3	7.0
Division 4	6.0

Exit Information

Exit information was obtained to determine why individuals have left community corrections. Five years of data, from 2011 through 2015, were analyzed and are summarized in Table 4. More than half of the employees who left resigned and, of those, slightly more than 40% did so for better employment. The remaining exits were due to retirement, transfer or reassignment, dismissal, or departure while under investigation.

Table 4: Exit Information for Community Corrections, 2011-2015

	Number	Percent
Resignation	535	53.7%
<i>Better employment</i>	232	43.4%
<i>No reason given</i>	67	12.5%
<i>Medical/Disability</i>	14	2.6%
<i>Moved</i>	18	3.3%
<i>Personal reasons</i>	204	38.2%
Dismissed	77	7.7%
Left while under investigation	63	6.3%
Other	38	3.8%
Transfer/reassignment/promotion	145	14.5%
Retirement	140	14.0%
TOTAL	998	100%

The Decision to Work in Community Corrections

Respondents were asked what influenced their decision to work in community corrections (Table 5). Roughly 80% were moderately or extremely influenced by their interest in the field, and about 74% were compelled by a desire to contribute to society. Only 25% stated they were moderately or extremely influenced by financial reasons.

Table 5: Factors Influencing the Decision to Work in Community Corrections

	Not at All	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Extremely
	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)
Financial Reasons (N = 1,136)	391 (34.4%)	183 (16.1%)	283 (24.9%)	173 (15.2%)	106 (9.3%)
Self-Fulfillment (N = 1,132)	97 (8.6%)	127 (11.2%)	284 (25.1%)	389 (34.4%)	235 (20.8%)
Career Development (N = 1,129)	97 (8.6%)	104 (9.2%)	264 (23.4%)	401 (35.5%)	263 (23.3%)
Contribution to Society (N = 1,135)	45 (3.9%)	53 (4.7%)	200 (17.6%)	404 (35.6%)	433 (38.1%)
Interest in the Field (N = 1,140)	26 (2.3%)	42 (3.7%)	146 (12.8%)	416 (36.5%)	510 (44.7%)
Exploration of New Opportunities (N = 1,135)	111 (9.8%)	119 (10.5%)	268 (32.4%)	400 (35.2%)	237 (20.9%)

Level of Satisfaction

Table 6 presents the level of satisfaction respondents felt with various aspects of the job. Respondents indicated that they were most satisfied with the gender and racial/ethnic diversity of their co-workers, and the amount of teamwork present in their job. They were least satisfied with the pay and benefits, and career advancement opportunities.

Table 6: Level of Satisfaction with Factors Associated With Current Job

	Not at All Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)
Teamwork (N= 1,136)	101 (8.9%)	153 (13.5%)	295 (25.9%)	376 (33.1%)	211 (18.6%)
Pay and Benefits (N = 1,136)	561 (49.4%)	284 (25.0%)	200 (17.6%)	80 (7.0%)	11 (1.0%)
Size of Caseload (N = 1,131)	271 (24.0%)	228 (20.2%)	295 (26.1%)	227 (20.1%)	110 (9.7%)
Career Advancement Opportunities (N = 1,136)	591 (52.0%)	226 (19.9%)	195 (17.2%)	98 (8.6%)	26 (2.3%)
Communication with Other Staff (N = 1,140)	112 (9.8%)	195 (17.1%)	328 (28.8%)	358 (31.4%)	147 (12.9%)
Communication with Supervisors (N = 1,138)	227 (19.9%)	190 (16.7%)	252 (22.1%)	293 (25.7%)	176 (15.5%)
Gender Diversity of Co-Workers (N = 1,136)	115 (10.1%)	126 (11.1%)	285 (25.1%)	360 (31.7%)	250 (22.0%)
Racial/Ethnic Diversity of Co-Workers (N = 1,133)	86 (7.6%)	118 (10.4%)	298 (26.3%)	371 (32.7%)	260 (22.9%)
Meaningfulness of the Job (N = 1,138)	151 (13.3%)	172 (15.1%)	301 (26.4%)	334 (29.3%)	180 (15.8%)
The Work Itself (N = 1,137)	139 (12.2%)	181 (15.9%)	332 (29.2%)	362 (31.8%)	123 (10.8%)
Resources Available to Support Your Efforts (N = 1,136)	295 (26.0%)	300 (26.4%)	296 (26.1%)	191 (16.8%)	54 (4.8%)
Work-Life Balance (N = 1,136)	248 (21.8%)	231 (20.3%)	334 (29.4%)	244 (21.5%)	79 (7.0%)

Hiring Standards

When respondents were asked if the standards required for entry into the field were stringent enough, 58% agreed that they were while 42% thought they were not. Supervisors were slightly less likely than non-supervisors to feel that hiring standards were stringent enough. Thirty-four percent of respondents provided suggestions on changes they would make to hiring standards.

Many felt that hiring employees out of college, without any internship or work experience, was detrimental to the department. Others, conversely, stated that it was not so much standards of education or experience that led to inappropriate hires but too little focus on appropriate “fit” for the job. As one stated, there should be “more focus on an applicant's interpersonal skills, quality of education and moral compass rather than just their college major.”

Respondents also noted a need for more stringent background checks, and felt that new hires should be required to complete basic training before starting work. A large number also believed there should be a fitness standard for new employees, and many thought that employees should have to qualify with a firearm before they were hired.

Training

Respondents were asked if they felt the training received for their job was adequate. As shown in Table 7, roughly half of the respondents felt that both pre-basic and basic training was sufficient, while nearly 72% of respondents thought in-service training was adequate. There were no meaningful differences between supervisors and non-supervisors when it came to perception of training.

Table 7: Perception that Training Received for Job is Adequate

	Yes # (%)	No # (%)
Pre-basic Training (N = 1,128)	575 (51.0%)	553 (49.0%)
Basic Training (N = 1,135)	615 (54.2%)	520 (45.8%)
In-service Training (N = 1,120)	802 (71.6%)	318 (28.4%)

Recommendations Regarding Basic Training

Those who were not satisfied with training were provided the opportunity to express what additional training they wanted. Many respondents did not seem to distinguish between pre-basic and basic training when providing suggestions, so these suggestions have been combined. A number suggested the newly hired employees go through Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET), as well as receive more physical and firearms training. Respondents also expressed a desire for more hands-on situational training that is more specific to the job. In the words of one

respondent “I do not feel that basic training teaches officers how to actually do the job and deal with the different situations they may face.” A desire for mentorship was also mentioned by many respondents.

Additional areas of desired additional training included communication (specifically how to interact with offenders more effectively), training about the court system “and all the inner workings of the criminal justice system in North Carolina,” and more specific instruction on case management. One respondent stated that “on-boarding training has come a long way, however more intensive training or classroom training prior to basic or post-basic to help prepare officers for the case planning and paperwork/documentation requirements would be helpful.” A number of respondents also mentioned a need for training in how to identify common controlled substances and paraphernalia. General recommendations included a longer timeframe for training, county-specific training, and a minimal wait time between hiring and basic training.

Recommendations Regarding In-Service Training

Those who were not satisfied with in-service training were provided the opportunity to express what additional training they wanted. Suggestions included recurring CDRT, firearms, and situational trainings, ongoing training on interviewing strategies, and officer safety training. Respondents also suggested yearly substance abuse training “to include what the newest and most popular drugs are and how to identify them” as well as training on how to respond to substance abuse. One respondent stated that “this area of study is extremely fluid and, similar to computer technology, is always changing yet we never receive updated training.” Another area of desired in-service training mentioned was arrest and search and seizure procedures. Finally, a few noted the need for area-specific training. For example, one respondent suggested that officers meet with local law enforcement to better understand area-specific drugs of choice and local drug areas for safety reasons.

Professional Development

About 47% (N = 526) of all respondents stated that they were aware of professional development opportunities that were available. Sixty-eight percent of supervisors stated they were aware of professional development opportunities compared to 42% of non-supervisors. Of those who were aware, 51% had taken advantage of such opportunities. Among respondents who indicated that they had taken advantage of professional development opportunities, 197 provided additional information about the form of training. These included leadership training, trainings related to instructor certification, PEAK performance training, and trainings related to crisis intervention, gang, and suicide prevention.

Respondents were also asked, if they were aware that professional development opportunities existed, why they had not taken advantage of them. One concern stated by many was fear of getting behind in existing work. One respondent noted that “time away from the office gets you deeper into a hole that is tough to climb out of” while another stated that “I do not have enough hours in the day to complete what is required of me in my current position [and] placing more on myself only creates more stress.” Others did not take advantage because they did not feel as

if there was enough advance notice given to allow them to adjust scheduled appointments in order to attend. Some respondents chose not to attend professional development opportunities because they did not care to advance in the organization, or were at the end of their career. Others indicated that they were interested in advancing, but had no motivation to take advantage of opportunities because the “only way to climb the ladder is knowing the right people.” This sentiment was echoed by those who indicated interest in development, but had not been selected by management to attend. As one stated, “the agency gives the false impression that all can participate.”

Input into Decision Making

Input into decision making was measured by four items, which were added together to form an index. These four items, and how respondents responded, are provided in Table 8. Forty-four percent of respondents believe they have little or no say over what happens on their job, and nearly 47% believe the same about taking part in decisions that affect them.

Table 8: Perception of Input into Decision Making

	Not at All # (%)	A Little # (%)	Some # (%)	A Lot # (%)	A Great Deal # (%)
How much does your job allow you to make decisions on your own? (N= 1,125)	107 (9.5%)	241 (21.4%)	346 (30.8%)	322 (28.6%)	109 (9.7%)
How much say do you have over what happens on your job? (N = 1,124)	218 (19.4%)	276 (24.6%)	405 (36.0%)	183 (16.3%)	42 (3.7%)
How much freedom do you have as to how to do your job? (N = 1,125)	110 (9.8%)	246 (21.9%)	393 (34.9%)	287 (25.5%)	89 (7.9%)
How much does your job allow you to take part in making decisions that affect you? (N = 1,125)	240 (21.3%)	285 (25.3%)	366 (32.5%)	191 (17.0%)	43 (3.8%)

As mentioned, the four items were summed to create an index of input into decision making, which had a Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of .90. The index could range from four to twenty, with a higher number indicating a greater degree of input into decision making. The mean perception of input into decision making among all respondents was 11.2. There was no significant difference in perception of input into decision making between supervisors and non-supervisors, as determined by a Mann-Whitney U test.

The difference in perception of input into decision making was also considered by division, and is provided in Table 9. As shown, perception of input into decision making lowest in Division 2.

Table 9: Perception of Input into Decision Making by Division

Median Perception of Input into Decision Making	
Division 1	12.0
Division 2	10.0
Division 3	12.0
Division 4	12.0

Work-Life Balance

Table 10 summarizes the frequency in which respondents feel that their work and home lives are not in balance. Roughly 24% of respondents stated that their work life infringes on their home life on a daily basis, and an additional 24% stated that work infringed on home on a weekly basis.

Table 10: Work-Life Balance

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Few Times	Rarely	Never
		# (%)	# (%)	a Year	# (%)	# (%)
				# (%)		
My work life infringes on my home life (N= 1,124)	272 (24.2%)	273 (24.3%)	160 (14.2%)	149 (13.3%)	210 (18.7%)	60 (5.3%)
My home life infringes on my work life (N = 1,122)	32 (2.9%)	44 (3.9%)	77 (6.9%)	146 (13.0%)	533 (47.5%)	290 (25.8%)

Nearly 58% of supervisors indicated that their work life infringed on their home life either daily or weekly compared to 47% of non-supervisors. This difference was significant, as determined by a Mann-Whitney U test.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction was measured by five items, which were added together to form an index. These five items, and how respondents responded, are provided in Table 11. Most respondents indicated satisfaction with their job. Nearly 42% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they found real enjoyment in their job, compared to 22% that disagreed. Similarly, 53% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they were seldom bored with their job, compared to 26% that disagreed. However, 65% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that they would not consider taking another job.

Table 11: Job Satisfaction

	Strongly Disagree # (%)	Disagree # (%)	Neutral # (%)	Agree # (%)	Strongly Agree # (%)
I am seldom bored with my job. (N = 1,048)	110 (10.5%)	164 (15.6%)	216 (20.6%)	325 (31.0%)	233 (22.2%)
I would not consider taking another job. (N = 1,045)	384 (36.7%)	295 (28.2%)	209 (20.0%)	90 (8.6%)	67 (6.4%)
Most days I am enthusiastic about my job. (N = 1,049)	120 (11.4%)	153 (14.6%)	343 (32.7%)	354 (33.7%)	79 (7.5%)
I find real enjoyment in my job. (N = 1,046)	104 (9.9%)	130 (12.4%)	377 (36.0%)	342 (32.7%)	93 (8.9%)
I feel fairly well satisfied with my job. (N = 1,047)	122 (11.7%)	185 (17.7%)	344 (32.9%)	330 (31.5%)	66 (6.3%)

As mentioned, the five items were summed to create an index of job satisfaction, which had a Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of .74. The index could range from five to 25, with a higher number indicating a greater degree of job satisfaction. The mean degree of job satisfaction among all respondents was 14.9, meaning respondents were fairly neutral about job satisfaction. There was no significant difference in job satisfaction between supervisors and non-supervisors, as determined by a Mann-Whitney U test.

The difference in degree of job satisfaction was also considered by division, and is provided in Table 12. As shown, respondents in Division 1 had the highest level of job satisfaction.

Table 12: Degree of Job Satisfaction by Division

	Median Degree of Job Satisfaction
Division 1	16.0
Division 2	14.0
Division 3	15.0
Division 4	15.0

Job Burnout

Job burnout was measured by 22 items, which were added together to form an index. Two additional items related to job burnout were added by Community Corrections leadership. These 24 items, and how respondents responded, are provided in a table in the appendix. The original 22 items were measured as a 7-point Likert scale ranging from never to every day. Items included statements such as “I feel emotionally drained from my work” and “I can easily understand how the offenders I supervise feel about things.”

The index of job burnout had a Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of .87. The index ranged from 25 to 143, with a higher number indicating more burnout. The mean degree of job burnout among all respondents was 75.7. The mean degree of job burnout for supervisors was 78.6, while the median degree for non-supervisors was 75.1. The difference in degree of job burnout between supervisors and non-supervisors was significant, as determined by a Mann-Whitney U test. In other words, supervisors had a significantly higher degree of job burnout compared to non-supervisors.

The difference in degree of job burnout was also considered by division, and is provided in Table 13. As shown, degree of job burnout is fairly even across divisions, but highest for Division 2.

Table 13: Degree of Job Burnout by Division

	Median Degree of Job Burnout
Division 1	74.5
Division 2	80.0
Division 3	75.0
Division 4	73.5

Dangerousness

Dangerousness was measured by five items, which were added together to form an index. These five items, and how respondents responded, are provided in Table 14. In general, respondents felt that they worked in a dangerous job. Nearly 92% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they worked in a dangerous job, compared to 2% that disagree. Similarly, 89% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that their job is a lot more dangerous than other kinds of job, and 81% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that a person stands a good chance of getting hurt in their job.

Table 14: Dangerousness

	Strongly Disagree # (%)	Disagree # (%)	Neutral # (%)	Agree # (%)	Strongly Agree # (%)
My job is a lot more dangerous than other kinds of jobs. (reverse coded) (N= 1,017)	14 (1.4%)	19 (1.9%)	81 (8.0%)	370 (36.4%)	533 (52.4%)
In my job, a person stands a good chance of getting hurt. (reverse coded) (N= 1,014)	12 (1.2%)	35 (3.5%)	149 (14.7%)	383 (37.8%)	435 (42.9%)
There is really not much chance of getting hurt in my job. (N = 1,011)	619 (61.2%)	275 (27.2%)	78 (7.7%)	19 (1.9%)	20 (2.0%)
A lot of people I work with get physically injured in the line of duty. (reverse coded) (N = 1,008)	103 (10.2%)	448 (44.4%)	302 (30.0%)	120 (11.9%)	35 (3.5%)
I work in a dangerous job. (reverse coded) (N = 1,014)	5 (0.5%)	12 (1.2%)	67 (6.6%)	402 (39.6%)	528 (52.1%)

The index of dangerousness had a Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of .75. The index ranged from nine to 25, with a higher number indicating a greater perception of dangerousness. The mean perception of dangerousness among all respondents was 19.9, meaning respondents considered their job to be dangerous. There was no significant difference in perception of dangerousness between supervisors and non-supervisors, as determined by a Mann-Whitney U test.

The difference in perception of dangerousness was also considered by division, and is provided in Table 15. As shown, perception of dangerousness is even across divisions.

Table 15: Perception of Dangerousness by Division

	Median Perception of Dangerousness
Division 1	20.0
Division 2	20.0
Division 3	20.0
Division 4	21.0

Supervisory Support

Supervisory support was measured by five items, which were added together to form an index. These five items, and how respondents responded, are provided in Table 16. Many respondents were neutral when it came to their opinion about supervisory support. However, nearly 55% felt that supervisors stressed the importance of the job, and 45% felt that supervisors encouraged them to do the job in a way that they could be proud of. In contrast, 36% felt that supervisors often blamed others when things went wrong, even when it might not be the fault of those blamed.

Table 16: Supervisory Support

	Strongly Disagree # (%)	Disagree # (%)	Neutral # (%)	Agree # (%)	Strongly Agree # (%)
My supervisors often encourage us to do the job in a way that we really would be proud of. (reverse coded) (N= 1,010)	126 (12.5%)	125 (12.4%)	272 (26.9%)	288 (28.5%)	199 (19.7%)
The people I work with often have the importance of their job stressed to them by their supervisors. (reverse coded) (N = 1,000)	56 (5.6%)	114 (11.4%)	285 (28.5%)	386 (38.6%)	159 (15.9%)
My supervisors often encourage the people I work with to think of better ways of getting the work done which may never have been thought of before. (reverse coded) (N = 1,002)	150 (15.0%)	177 (17.7%)	331 (33.0%)	249 (24.9%)	95 (9.5%)
My supervisors often blame others when things go wrong, which are possibly not the fault of those blamed. (N = 1,008)	121 (12.0%)	280 (27.8%)	247 (24.5%)	211 (20.9%)	149 (14.8%)
When my supervisors have a dispute with one of my fellow guards they usually try to handle it in a friendly way. (reverse coded) (N = 996)	83 (8.3%)	114 (11.4%)	410 (41.2%)	295 (29.6%)	94 (9.4%)

The index of supervisory support had a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .76. The index ranged from five to 25, with a higher number indicating more supervisory support. The mean perception of supervisory support among all respondents was 15.9, meaning respondents were

neutral in their perception of supervisory support. The mean perception of supervisory support among supervisors was 17.3, while the mean perception of supervisory support was 15.6. The difference in perception of supervisory support between supervisors and non-supervisors, as determined by a Mann-Whitney U test, was significant. That is, supervisors perceived more supervisory support from their supervisors than did non-supervisors.

The difference in perception of supervisory support was also considered by division, and is provided in Table 17. As shown, perception of supervisory support is highest for Division 1.

Table 17: Perception of Supervisory Support by Division

	Median Perception of Supervisory Support
Division 1	17.0
Division 2	16.0
Division 3	16.0
Division 4	16.0

Peer Support

Peer support was measured by five items, which were added together to form an index. These five items, and how respondents responded, are provided in Table 18. Most respondents felt that there was a high degree of peer support in their jobs. Nearly 54% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that fellow officers often complimented someone who has done his/her job well, and 43% felt that fellow officers often encouraged each other to think of better ways of getting the work done. However, 29% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that fellow officers often blamed each other when things go wrong.

Table 18: Peer Support

	Strongly Disagree # (%)	Disagree # (%)	Neutral # (%)	Agree # (%)	Strongly Agree # (%)
My fellow officers often blame each other when things go wrong. (N= 1,011)	167 (16.5%)	285 (28.2%)	263 (26.0%)	192 (19.0%)	104 (10.3%)
My fellow officers often encourage each other to think of better ways of getting the work done which may never have been thought of before. (reverse coded) (N = 1,005)	74 (7.4%)	173 (17.2%)	325 (32.3%)	337 (33.5%)	96 (9.6%)
My fellow officers spend hardly any time helping me work myself up to a better job by showing me how to improve performance. (N = 1,005)	128 (12.7%)	360 (35.8%)	323 (32.1%)	133 (13.2%)	61 (6.1%)
My fellow officers often compliment someone who has done his/her job well. (reverse coded) (N = 1,004)	59 (5.9%)	140 (13.9%)	264 (26.3%)	411 (40.9%)	130 (12.9%)
My fellow officers often encourage each other to do the job in a way that we would really be proud of. (reverse coded) (N = 1,003)	47 (4.7%)	139 (13.9%)	319 (31.8%)	378 (37.7%)	120 (12.0%)

The index of peer support had a Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of .75. The index ranged from five to 25, with a higher number indicating more peer support. The mean perception of peer support among all respondents was 16.6, meaning respondents were neutral in their perception of peer support. There was no significant difference in perception of peer support between supervisors and non-supervisors, as determined by a Mann-Whitney U test.

The difference in perception of peer support was also considered by division, and is provided in Table 19. As shown, perception of peer support was lowest for Division 2.

Table 19: Perception of Peer Support by Division

	Median Perception of Supervisory Support
Division 1	17.0
Division 2	16.0
Division 3	17.0
Division 4	17.0

Work Stress

Work stress was measured by six items, which were added together to form an index. These six items, and how respondents responded, are provided in Table 20. Most respondents indicated a fair amount of work stress in their job. Nearly 70% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they were usually calm and at ease when working, compared to 10% that disagreed. However, 61% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they usually feel they are under a lot of pressure when at work, 52% felt that there were a lot of aspects of their job that could make them pretty upset about things, and 47% felt that the job made them very frustrated or angry a lot of the time.

Table 20: Work Stress

	Strongly Disagree # (%)	Disagree # (%)	Neutral # (%)	Agree # (%)	Strongly Agree # (%)
I like my job better than the average correctional officer does. (N= 1,009)	49 (4.9%)	104 (10.3%)	339 (33.6%)	361 (35.8%)	156 (15.5%)
There are a lot of aspects about my job that can make me pretty upset about things. (reverse coded) (N = 1,010)	32 (3.2%)	160 (15.8%)	290 (28.7%)	361 (35.7%)	167 (16.5%)
I am usually calm and at ease when I am working. (N = 1,006)	19 (1.9%)	76 (7.6%)	211 (21.0%)	479 (47.6%)	221 (22.0%)
A lot of times, my job makes me very frustrated and angry. (reverse coded) (N = 1,003)	57 (5.7%)	190 (18.9%)	289 (28.8%)	277 (27.6%)	190 (18.9%)
Most of the time when I am at work, I don't feel that I have very much to worry about. (N = 1,003)	173 (17.2%)	394 (32.3%)	251 (25.0%)	173 (17.2%)	19 (1.9%)
I usually feel that I am under a lot of pressure when I am at work. (reverse coded) (N = 1,007)	29 (2.9%)	120 (11.9%)	244 (24.2%)	322 (32.0%)	292 (29.0%)

The index of work stress had a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .75. The index ranged from six to 30, with a higher number indicating more work stress. The mean perception of work stress among all respondents was 18.8, meaning respondents were moderately stressed. There was no significant difference in perception of work stress between supervisors and non-supervisors, as determined by a Mann-Whitney U test.

The difference in degree of work stress was also considered by division, and is provided in Table 21. As shown, degree of work stress is lowest for Division 1 and highest for Division 2.

Table 21: Degree of Work Stress by Division

	Median Degree of Work Stress
Division 1	18.0
Division 2	19.0
Division 3	19.0
Division 4	18.0

Role Strain

Role strain was measured by seven items, which were added together to form an index. These seven items, and how respondents responded, are provided in Table 22. Most respondents indicated a moderate amount of role strain in their job. Nearly 88% agreed or strongly agreed that they knew the responsibilities for their job. Similarly, 54% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that felt certain about how much authority they have. However, 41% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that there are so many people telling us what to do here that you can never be sure who is boss.

Table 22: Role Strain

	Strongly Disagree # (%)	Disagree # (%)	Neutral # (%)	Agree # (%)	Strongly Agree # (%)
There are so many people telling us what to do here that you never can be sure who is boss. (reverse coded) (N= 1,015)	116 (11.4%)	269 (26.5%)	218 (21.5%)	217 (21.4%)	195 (19.2%)
I feel certain how much authority I have. (N = 1,009)	51 (5.0%)	127 (12.6%)	282 (27.9%)	380 (37.7%)	169 (16.7%)
I know what my responsibilities are for my job. (N = 1,011)	11 (1.1%)	32 (3.2%)	75 (7.4%)	483 (47.8%)	410 (40.6%)
I know what exactly what is expected of me for my job. (N = 1,009)	23 (2.3%)	84 (8.3%)	186 (18.4%)	451 (44.7%)	265 (26.3%)
The rules and regulations are clear enough here that I know specifically what I can and cannot do on my job. (N = 999)	77 (7.7%)	153 (15.3%)	230 (23.0%)	374 (37.4%)	165 (16.5%)
I know that I have divided my time properly. (N = 1,004)	18 (1.8%)	55 (5.5%)	267 (26.6%)	490 (48.8%)	174 (17.3%)
The rules that we're supposed to follow here never seem to be very clear. (reverse coded) (N = 1,007)	103 (10.2%)	292 (29.0%)	277 (27.5%)	222 (22.0%)	113 (11.2%)

The index of role strain had a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .75. The index ranged from seven to 33, with a higher number indicating more role strain. The mean perception of role strain among all respondents was 17.4, meaning respondents perceived moderate role strain. There was no significant difference in perception of role strain between supervisors and non-supervisors, as determined by a Mann-Whitney U test.

The difference in degree of role strain was also considered by division, and is provided in Table 23. As shown, degree of role strain is highest for Division 2.

Table 23: Degree of Role Strain by Division

	Median Degree of Role Strain
Division 1	17.0
Division 2	18.0
Division 3	17.0
Division 4	17.0

Formalization

Formalization was measured by five items, which were added together to form an index. These five items, and how respondents responded, are provided in Table 24. Most respondents indicate a high degree of formalization in their job. Roughly 84% agreed that a “rules and procedures” manual exists and is readily available within this organization, and 77% agreed that the organization keeps a written record of everyone’s job performance. Similarly, 63% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that whatever situation arises we have procedures to follow in dealing with it.

Table 24: Formalization

	Strongly Disagree # (%)	Disagree # (%)	Neutral # (%)	Agree # (%)	Strongly Agree # (%)
My organization keeps a written record of everyone’s job performance. (N = 1,015)	45 (4.4%)	43 (4.2%)	141 (13.9%)	403 (39.7%)	383 (37.7%)
A “rules and procedures” manual exists and is readily available within this organization. (N = 1,000)	25 (2.5%)	20 (2.0%)	113 (11.3%)	437 (43.7%)	405 (40.5%)
Job guidance is readily available. (N = 1,010)	51 (5.0%)	159 (15.7%)	315 (31.2%)	382 (37.8%)	103 (10.2%)
There is no policy manual for my job. (reverse coded) (N = 1,008)	640 (63.5%)	299 (29.7%)	43 (4.3%)	6 (0.6%)	20 (2.0%)
Whatever situation arises, we have procedures to follow in dealing with it. (N = 1,001)	42 (4.2%)	92 (9.2%)	236 (23.6%)	469 (46.9%)	162 (16.2%)

The index of formalization had a Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of .61. The index ranged from five to 25, with a higher number indicating more formalization. The mean perception of formalization among all respondents was 19.7, meaning respondents perceived the organization to be formal. The mean degree of perception of formalization for supervisors was 20.4, while the mean degree of perception of formalization for non-supervisors was 19.5. The difference in perception of formalization between supervisors and non-supervisors was significant, as determined by a Mann-Whitney U test. In other words, supervisors had a significantly higher degree of perception of formalization compared to non-supervisors.

The difference in degree of formalization was also considered by division, and is provided in Table 25. As shown, degree of formalization is even across division.

Table 25: Degree of Formalization by Division

	Median Degree of Formalization
Division 1	20.0
Division 2	20.0
Division 3	20.0
Division 4	20.0

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment was measured by two items, which were added together to form an index. These two items, and how respondents responded, are provided in Table 26. Many respondents were neutral in their degree of organizational commitment. Nearly 48% agreed or that they were proud to tell others they were part of the organization, compared to roughly 19% that were not. Roughly 40% felt the job inspired the best in them in the way of job performance.

Table 26: Organizational Commitment

	Strongly Disagree # (%)	Disagree # (%)	Neutral # (%)	Agree # (%)	Strongly Agree # (%)
This job really inspires the best in me in the way of job performance. (N = 1,012)	83 (8.2%)	172 (17.0%)	355 (35.1%)	305 (30.1%)	97 (9.6%)
I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization. (N = 1,008)	71 (7.0%)	116 (11.5%)	339 (33.6%)	329 (32.6%)	153 (15.2%)

The index of role strain had a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .71. The index ranged from two to 10, with a higher number indicating more organizational commitment. The mean degree of organizational commitment among all respondents was 6.5, meaning respondents were neutral in their degree of organizational commitment. There was no significant difference in degree of organizational commitment between supervisors and non-supervisors, as determined by a Mann-Whitney U test.

The difference in degree of formalization was also considered by division, and is provided in Table 27. As shown, degree of organizational commitment was lowest in Division 2.

Table 27: Degree of Organizational Commitment by Division

	Median Degree of Organizational Commitment
Division 1	7.0
Division 2	6.0
Division 3	7.0
Division 4	7.0

Predicting Turnover Intent

A number of personal characteristics, work environment perceptions, and job attitudes were used to predict turnover intent. Only respondents who had provided answers for all of these items could be included in the multivariate analysis. Thus, the sample for the models included 795 respondents (out of the 1,211 respondents who completed at least some portion of the survey). Table 28 provides the descriptive statistics for the variables included in the analysis.

Table 28: Descriptive statistics of model variables

Variable	Med.	Min.	Max.	Mean	St dev	α
<i>Personal characteristics</i>						
Gender (male = 1)	1	0	1	0.52	0.50	--
Age	41	22	64	40.12	9.97	--
Race (non-minority =1)	1	0	1	0.65	0.48	--
Education (graduate degree = 1)	0	0	1	0.17	0.37	--
Military (military = 1)	0	0	1	0.15	0.36	--
First Year (first year = 1)	0	0	1	0.11	0.32	--
Supervisor (supervisor = 1)	0	0	1	0.17	0.38	--
<i>Work environment perceptions</i>						
Input into decision making	12	4	20	11.25	3.87	.90
Dangerousness	20	9	25	19.94	2.98	.75
Supervisory support	16	5	25	15.93	4.17	.76
Peer support	17	5	25	16.57	3.85	.75
Role strain	17	7	33	17.36	4.72	.75
Formalization	20	5	25	19.65	2.97	.61
<i>Job attitudes</i>						
Job burnout	76	25	143	75.74	21.57	.87
Job satisfaction	15	5	25	14.92	4.06	.74
Work stress	18	6	30	18.79	4.20	.75
Organizational commitment	7	2	10	6.53	1.91	.71
<i>Dependent variable</i>						
Turnover intent	6	2	12	6.52	2.91	.67

Note: Med., Min., Max., St dev, and α represent median value, minimum value, maximum value, standard deviation, and Cronbach's alpha, respectively.

A total of three ordinary least squares (OLS) regression equations were estimated to predict turnover intent (Table 29). Model 1 used only personal characteristics as independent variables. As indicated, race, education, being in your first year, and being a supervisor, were significant. In other words, respondents who were a minority, those who had a graduate degree, those who were not in their first year, and those who were not a supervisor were more likely to indicate an intent to leave.

Table 29: OLS regression predicting turnover intent

Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	B	β	B	β	B	β
<i>Personal characteristics</i>						
Gender	-.07	-.01	-.13	-.02	-.05	-.01
Age	-.02	-.06	-.03	-.09*	-.03	-.09*
Race	-.52	-.08*	-.55	-.09*	-.42	-.07*
Education	1.13	.15*	1.09	.14*	1.37	.17*
Military	.26	.03	.24	.03	.26	.03
First Year	-.89	-.10*	-.57	-.06	-.40	-.04
Supervisor	-.74	-.10*	-.51	-.07*	-.47	-.06
<i>Work environment perceptions</i>						
Input into decision making			-.20	-.26*	-.08	-.10*
Dangerousness			.11	.11*	.05	.05
Supervisory support			-.11	-.16*	-.08	-.12*
Peer support			-.01	-.01	.04	.05
Role strain			.01	.02	-.05	-.08*
Formalization			-.03	-.03	-.02	-.02
<i>Job attitudes</i>						
Job burnout					.01	.09*
Job satisfaction					-.25	-.36*
Work stress					.06	.09
Organizational commitment					-.09	-.06
R-squared		0.05*		0.23*		0.42*

Note: B represents the unstandardized regression coefficient, and β represents the standardized regression coefficient.

* $p \leq 0.05$

Model 2 included both personal characteristics and work environment perceptions as independent variables. Being a minority, having a graduate degree, and being a supervisor remained significant. In addition, age was significant, with younger employees indicating a greater degree of turnover intent. Input into decision making, dangerousness, and supervisory support were also significant. In other words, in addition to the demographic indicators, respondents who perceived that they had less input into decision making, perceived more

danger in their job, and perceived less support from their supervisor were more likely to indicate an intent to leave.

Finally, Model 3 (the full model) included personal characteristics, work environment perceptions, and job attitudes as independent variables. Being a minority, having a graduate degree, and being younger remained significant, as did input into decision making and supervisory support. In addition, role strain was significant with employees who perceived less ambiguity in their job to be more likely to turnover. Job burnout and job satisfaction were also significant. In other words, in addition to the demographic and work perception indicators, respondents who felt more burned out and who felt less satisfaction with their job were more likely to indicate an intent to turnover.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to assess the recruitment and retention of community corrections officers. The majority of employees were quite negative when asked if they felt the agency actively made efforts to retain staff, and respondents provided a number of suggestions for efforts that could be made to retain staff including pay, supervisory support, opportunities for advancement, and other benefits.

When asked what they liked most about their job, a very common response was the ability to help offenders change their lives for the better. However, respondents also noted a number of concerns with community corrections employment including overwork, growing caseloads, and not having enough time in the day to complete work.

An analysis of turnover intent revealed that 65% of respondents stated that they had thought about quitting their job in the last six months. Further, 41% stated they currently desired to quit their job. Both the statistical analysis of turnover intent, and the qualitative analysis of employee perceptions, indicate areas upon which the agency can focus to improve retention. In particular, a number of suggestions were provided by employees to improve perceptions of input into decision making, supervisory support, burnout, and job satisfaction.

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Appendix

Job Burnout

	Never	A few times a year	Once a month or more	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
"I feel emotionally drained from work."	4.6%	11.5%	10.2%	19.3%	11.5%	23.3%	19.8%
"I feel used at the end of the workday."	5.8%	10.4%	9.7%	15.1%	11.9%	25.8%	21.3%
"I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job."	11.6%	13.2%	12.0%	14.5%	9.7%	20.4%	18.6%
"I can easily understand how the offenders I supervise feel about things." (reverse coded)	18.4%	10.0%	7.4%	17.3%	8.7%	17.9%	20.4%
"I feel I treat some offenders I supervise as they were impersonal objects."	76.7%	8.2%	4.0%	5.5%	2.0%	1.7%	2.0%
"I've become more compassionate toward people." (reverse coded) *	18.7%	12.7%	9.9%	17.7%	8.2%	12.4%	20.4%
"Working with offenders all day is really a strain for me."	33.5%	17.2%	11.2%	17.6%	7.2%	7.4%	5.9%
"I deal very effectively with the problems of the offenders I supervise." (reverse coded)	3.1%	3.0%	2.5%	11.8%	8.8%	24.1%	46.8%
"I feel burned out from my work."	10.7%	19.0%	11.7%	16.6%	9.0%	15.8%	17.2%

"I feel I'm positively influencing offenders' lives through my work." (reverse coded)	4.3%	9.5%	10.7%	19.6%	12.2%	20.0%	23.7%
"I've become more callous toward people."	33.8%	15.6%	10.3%	15.4%	8.0%	8.6%	8.2%
"I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally."	31.0%	13.6%	9.8%	13.5%	8.5%	9.2%	14.3%
"I feel very energetic." (reverse coded)	13.8%	11.0%	11.7%	20.4%	13.0%	18.9%	11.3%
"I feel frustrated by my job."	6.0%	11.7%	10.4%	19.0%	13.4%	20.1%	19.5%
"I want the offenders I supervise to succeed." (reverse coded) *	0.7%	0.4%	1.2%	4.4%	3.4%	9.5%	80.4%
"I feel I'm working too hard on my job."	11.0%	7.5%	8.3%	16.9%	14.7%	17.1%	24.6%
"I don't really care what happens to some of the offenders I supervise."	60.0%	14.2%	5.6%	9.1%	3.9%	4.1%	3.2%
"Working with offenders directly puts too much stress on me."	44.5%	19.5%	11.0%	10.8%	5.8%	5.5%	3.0%
"I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with the offenders I supervise." (reverse coded)	11.2%	5.6%	7.2%	15.3%	10.5%	22.4%	27.8%
"I feel exhilarated after working closely with offenders I supervise." (reverse coded)	35.8%	14.2%	11.9%	17.8%	7.7%	8.0%	4.5%
"I have accomplished many	4.8%	13.5%	9.8%	20.1%	15.3%	19.9%	16.7%

worthwhile things in this job.” (reverse coded)							
“I feel like I am at wit’s end.”	37.5%	16.2%	10.0%	12.5%	7.0%	9.4%	7.4%
“In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.” (reverse coded)	1.7%	4.0%	4.3%	10.5%	9.7%	25.2%	44.6%
“I feel the offenders I supervise blame me for some of their problems.”	25.7%	19.1%	10.0%	15.5%	10.8%	11.1%	7.9%

* Statement added by community corrections staff.