

Key Findings from the New South Wales Department of Corrections:

- AIFP screening reduced sick leave by 40% in first two years of service
- Correctional Officers hired using AIFP much less likely to leave the job
- AIFP saves Department tens of thousands of dollars in recruiting costs

NSW Department of Corrections Uses AIFP to Reduce Sick Leave, Attrition Rate

Background

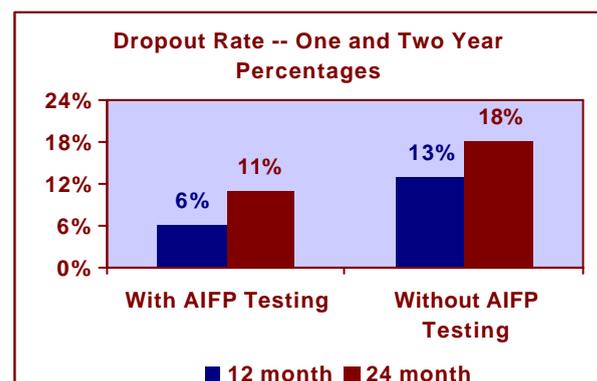
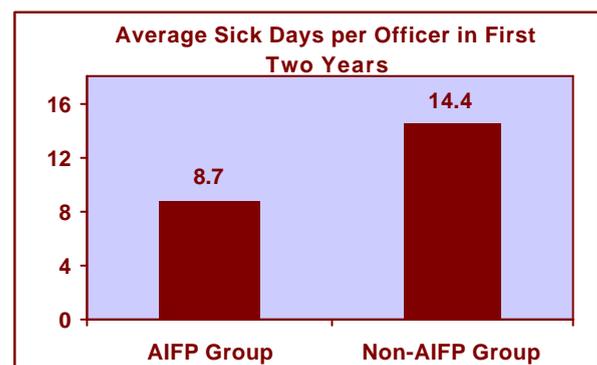
Since June 1995, the New South Wales Department of Corrections has used the AIFP Critical Character Assessment System to assist them in selecting the best possible candidates from applicants for the role of Corrections Officer. Since the Department began using the system, over 5,000 candidates have been tested, evaluated, and interviewed using the AIFP system. In early 2001 the Department completed a study to investigate the effectiveness of the AIFP system in reducing sick leave and dropout rates. This summary details the results of that study.

The research used the employment records of 240 correctional officers, half of whom had been admitted just prior to the introduction of the AIFP system, and half of whom had been admitted just after introduction of the system. Department records for each group were examined in order to see if the AIFP group differed from the other group in terms of sick leave and dropout rate. These factors were measured for each group for the two-year period following their commencement on the job.

Results of the New South Wales Study

The study found that officers hired using the AIFP system took significantly fewer sick days overall than the officers admitted without AIFP screening. In fact, over the course of the first two years, officers admitted without the AIFP screening averaged 14.4 sick days compared to 8.7 sick days for those screened by AIFP. This finding indicates that **AIFP screening reduced by 40% the number of sick days taken by correctional officers** in the group being studied.

In addition, **the AIFP-screened group showed significantly lower dropout rates at both the 12- and 24-month period.** At the 12-month mark, only 6% of AIFP-screened officers had left the job, compared to 13% of those hired without AIFP screening. And at the 24-month mark, 11% of the AIFP-screened group had left as compared to 18% of the non-AIFP group.



Implications of the New South Wales Study

In the 1996/7 financial year, the Department spent almost \$4 million on sick leave for officers working in correctional centres. The reduction of these costs by almost 40% for officers screened with the AIFP system represents an enormous budgetary savings for the Department

Correctional officer absenteeism not only has financial implications for the Department, but also poses problems in providing consistent and secure care for prisoners. It can often translate into increased shutdowns in correctional centres, dissatisfied and therefore less manageable inmates, and overworked staff members who become more vulnerable to the stress already inherent in the job.

This study suggests that the AIFP Critical Character Assessment System has improved the personality and character fit between the requirements of the correctional officer job and those hired to fill it. This results in officers coming into the job better equipped to handle the demands of the work, and less likely to experience frustration, anger, anxiety, or disillusionment with the role, when compared to officers hired without AIFP screening.

The reduced turnover of staff at both the 12- and 24-month points yields a greatly improved return on the substantial investment made in recruiting, selecting, and training new officers, estimated by the Department to be over \$11,000 per officer. **The cost to put an applicant through the AIFP system is approximately one-half of one percent of this amount.**

Reduced turnover and number of sick days taken are indicators that officers are probably more well-suited to their jobs and more satisfied with them. This would therefore also result in:

- Improved morale
- Better quality of inmate care.
- More effective teamwork
- Fewer stress claims
- Fewer reportable incidents and lowered legal risk

For more information on this or other studies, or to discuss how AIFP can help your organisation recruit the best possible candidates for your public safety positions, please contact us.

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