

Preliminary Data and Analysis of 12-Month Recidivism for Seattle's Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP) Completers vs. Non-Completers

December 29, 2025

Michaela Benson-Goldsmith, Ph.D.¹, Tara N. Richards, Ph.D.², Avanti Adhia, Ph.D.³

¹ Research Associate, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska Omaha, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9036-7567>

² Distinguished Professor, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska Omaha, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9239-2192>

³ Assistant Professor, Department of Child, Family, and Population Health Nursing, University of Washington, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3582-2990>

Funding Note and Disclaimer: Research reported in this manuscript was sponsored by the Office on Violence Against Women Research and Evaluation Grants #5JOVW-21-GG-02488-MUMU and #15JOVW-24-GG-01527-MUMU. The conclusions expressed in this study are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Office on Violence Against Women.

Background

In 2017, the Seattle Mayor's Office of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault convened a planning group including a range of partners (e.g., the Seattle Municipal Court, Seattle Municipal Court Probation, Seattle City Attorney's Office, Salvation Army Domestic Violence Program in Seattle, Coalition Ending Gender-Based Violence) to improve community safety through evidenced-based domestic violence (DV) intervention treatment and multi-agency collaboration and response. Over the course of a multi-year process, this planning group developed the Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP). The DVIP's treatment population consists of male perpetrators of DV. All referrals to the DVIP are initiated by Seattle Municipal Court with input from prosecution, defense, and probation. Victim-partners are connected to a Seattle City Attorney's Office court-based victim advocate.

The DVIP follows the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 388-60B-0415 (i.e., that DV treatment providers use risk assessments, differentiated treatment levels based on the identification of a participant's level of risk, and individualized treatment plans to address 15 "Areas of Change") and goes beyond the state standards by using multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs) to supervise participants. The DVIP MDTs include a (1) probation counselor, (2) treatment provider, (3) system-based victim-survivor advocate, (4) community-based victim-survivor advocate, and (5) the DVIP coordinator; (6) community advisory members (e.g., mental health counselors, substance dependence counselors) are also included as needed. On the MDT, the probation counselor prioritizes participant monitoring and containment, the treatment provider is responsible for completing risk assessments with participants and making recommendations for cognitive/behavioral change, and the victim-survivor advocates represent general victim-survivor safety concerns, and in some cases, specific concerns from the victim-survivor (that the victim-survivor has given them permission to share). The DVIP coordinator serves in a leadership and administrative role. Other professionals (i.e., community advisory members) may be included on an as-needed basis, such as a chemical dependency counselor and/or mental health counselor.

Thus, MDT members can balance public safety (i.e., participant monitoring and containment), participants' risks and needs and treatment, and victim-survivor safety through collective decision-making and case management. Concerns for these multiple factors are used to make decisions regarding participants' placement in treatment levels, development of individualized treatment plans, treatment plan reviews, and discharge decisions. Further, the DVIP embodies system change: system and community actors actively and consistently communicate and share data, thereby increasing system accountability and transparency to victims, perpetrators, the criminal justice system, and the community.

In 2018, after a soft roll out of the DVIP, DVIP team members contacted the study's second and third authors regarding external evaluation of the DVIP. The research partners first conducted a formative evaluation and evaluability assessment to understand how the DVIP worked in practice and to identify barriers and areas for improvement (see Richards et al., 2024; Richards et al., forthcoming). Findings confirmed that important process documents were in place, that implementation fidelity was strong, and that data for outcomes of interest were accessible. The results of this formative evaluation and evaluability assessment showed that

future evaluation of the DVIP was feasible, justified, and needed. Here, we present preliminary data regarding individuals referred to DVIP and findings on the relationship between DVIP completion and DV recidivism.

Objectives and Methods

We assessed the criminal history and recidivism for 319 individuals referred to DVIP between April 2018 (i.e., onset of DVIP) and July 2023, and whose cases were closed (i.e., either DVIP was completed, revoked, stricken, or a warrant was issued) by June 1st, 2024. Data on race/ethnicity, case obligation start and end dates, and case closure type were provided by Seattle Municipal Court. To obtain criminal history and recidivism, Seattle Municipal Court (SMC) DV Probation staff accessed National Criminal Incident Center (NCIC) records for this cohort of DVIP participants and printed full criminal records (both pre-index offense [i.e., criminal history prior to the incident that lead to the DVIP obligation] and one-year post-discharge from DVIP [i.e., criminal recidivism]); these records were kept in a secure room at SMC. In May 2025, the researchers (2nd and 3rd authors) convened at SMC for a two-day retreat where they reviewed NCIC records with the DV Probation Unit Supervisor to learn how to read the NCIC records, develop the coding scheme, and pilot test coding the records to troubleshoot any unforeseen issues. The DV Probation Unit Supervisor provided the researchers with a glossary of terms and abbreviations for NCIC records and was present to answer questions and brainstorm ideas for addressing nuanced coding decisions. The final coding scheme and process were developed collaboratively by the researchers and DV Probation Unit Supervisor.

Consistent with prior research (e.g., Bouffard & Zedakar, 2016; Murphy et al., 2021), adult criminal history and recidivism incidents were coded into one of 6 mutually exclusive categories based on the state's criminal statutes. Using Washington State Criminal Codes ([Chapter 9](#)), we developed the following hierarchical coding scheme: (1) DV-related offense (e.g., protection order, violation of protection order, homicides, assaults, kidnappings, sex offenses, or harassment); (2) other person offense (e.g., non-DV homicides, assaults, kidnappings, sex offenses, or harassment); (3) property offense (e.g., burglary, trespass, robbery, theft, malicious mischief); (4) substance-related offense (e.g., possession, distribution, driving while intoxicated/under the influence), (5) all other felony offenses (e.g., unlawful possession of a firearm, escape jail), and (6) all other misdemeanor offenses (e.g., unlawful recreational fishing, probation/supervision violation, failure to pay fare, discharge of firearm, public nuisance). For each criminal incident, the top-level offense was coded based on the coding scheme above. For example, an incident involving both a DV protection order violation and a trespassing offense would be coded as "DV" (i.e., coded as "1"). In addition, both arrests that did and did not result in charges were coded; however, each incident was only coded one time. Further, during pilot coding, the team identified a few individuals who had very lengthy criminal histories (e.g., 15+ incidents). Given resource constraints and attention to likely "diminishing returns" of coding these individuals' entire criminal histories, the team coded only the 15 most recent incidents and then recorded the date of the first adult criminal history event for all individuals to capture "total length of criminal history."

Sample Description

Half of the cohort identified as White, 28.9% as Black, 9.3% as Asian or Pacific Islander, 3.0% as another race, and 6.9% as Hispanic (of any race). Nearly 60% (59.3%) were referred to DVIP after a DV-related assault charge and a third were referred for violation of a DV protective order (PO) (33.1%). Other DVIP referral offense types (7.5%) included harassment, stalking (including cyberstalking), or property destruction. The DVIP obligation start date began an average of 149.17 days after the referring offense ($SD = 162.22$; Range = 0–1,049 days) and participants were typically assessed an average of 151.25 days after their DVIP obligation start date ($SD = 292.95$; Range = 0–1,743 days). Ultimately, participants spent an average of 16.35 months in DVIP ($SD = 12.22$ months, Range = 0.1–65.7 months).

Prior to their DVIP index offense, 19.3% of the cohort had no criminal history (i.e., no other criminal incidents defined as arrests or charges prior to the index offense that resulted in referral to DVIP), 22.9% had 1-3 incidents, 13.0% had 4-6 incidents, 9.9% had 7-9 incidents, 8.4% had 10-12 incidents, and more than a quarter (26.5%) had 13 or more criminal history incidents. Nearly two-thirds of the cohort (63.3%) had a history of DV-related incidents prior to the index offense. In addition to DV-related incidents, 47.3% had a history of property crimes, 46.4% of participants had a history of substance-related crimes, 37.0% had a history of other person crimes, and 6.6% and 9.0% had a history of other misdemeanor and other felony crimes, respectively. The average length of criminal history prior to the index offense was 11.1 years ($SD = 9.37$ years) but ranged from 4 days to 42.2 years. **Approximately 44% of individuals who were referred to DVIP completed DVIP; 23.5% were revoked from DVIP, 20.1% were stricken, and 12.5% had a warrant issued.**

Analyses and Findings

Criminal History and Recidivism Pathways for DVIP Completers and Non-Completers

First, Sankey plots were created to visualize individuals' criminal career pathways: from their criminal histories prior to DVIP obligation date to their criminal recidivism within 12 months following their DVIP obligation end date. Individuals were grouped into four criminal history categories: (1) no criminal history, (2) non-DV criminal history (i.e., the index offense resulting in their DVIP referral was their first DV offense), (3) one to two DV incidents, and (4) three or more DV incidents. They were also grouped into four recidivism categories: (1) no criminal recidivism, (2) any non-DV related recidivism, (3) one DV incident, and (4) two or more DV incidents. Findings showed that **criminal history to recidivism pathways differed for individuals who completed DVIP compared to those who did not complete (i.e., DVIP was stricken, revoked, or a warrant was issued)** (See Figures 1 and 2 below).

Figure 1 depicts DVIP completers' ($n = 140$) criminal career pathways before DVIP obligation start date (i.e., criminal history) to 12 months after DVIP obligation end date (i.e., criminal recidivism). As shown on the left side of Figure 1, 35.7% ($n = 50$) had no history of criminal arrests or charges, 20.0% ($n = 28$) had no history of DV incidents but had a history of other criminal arrests or charges, 28.6% ($n = 40$) had a history of one or two DV incidents prior to DVIP referral, and 15.7% ($n = 22$) had an extensive history of DV incidents with three or more previous arrests or charges. Individuals' criminal trajectories are depicted in the gray waves

flowing from the left (i.e., criminal history incidents) to the right side (i.e., criminal recidivism incidents) of Figure 1. Following the trajectories from left to right shows that the **majority of DVIP completers (79.3%, $n = 111$) had no new criminal incidents in the 12 months after DVIP, irrespective of their criminal histories**. Among the DVIP completers who recidivated in the 12-months after their DVIP obligation end date: 10.0% ($n = 14$) had one DV incident, 7.9% ($n = 11$) had a new non-DV incident, and 2.9% ($n = 4$) had two or more DV incidents.

Figure 1. Criminal Career Pathways among DVIP Completers

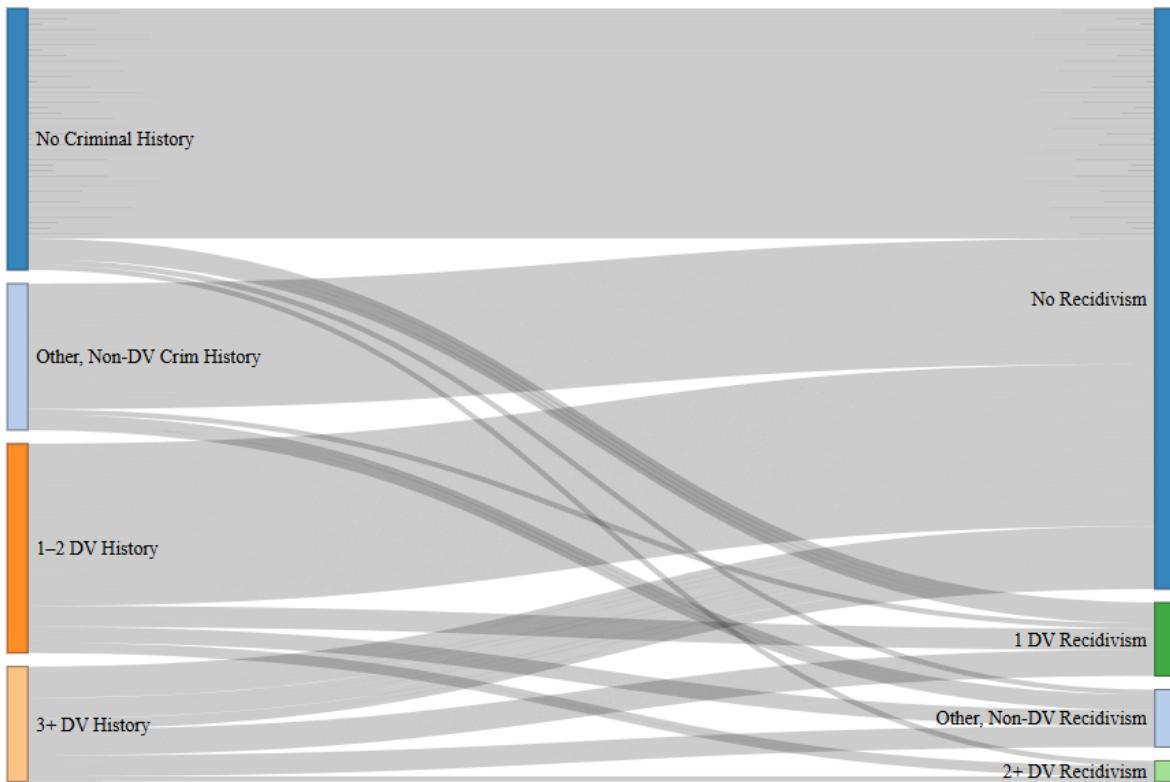
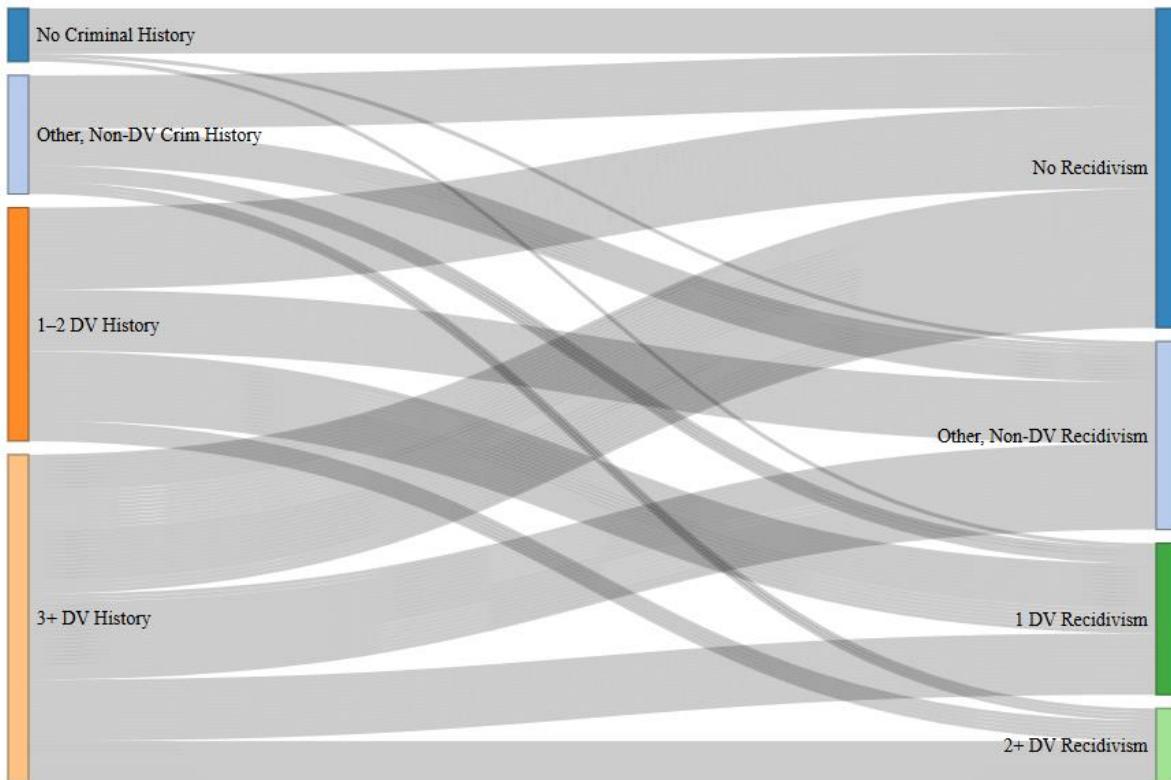


Figure 2 depicts DVIP non-completers' ($n = 179$) criminal career pathways before DVIP obligation start date (i.e., criminal history) to 12 months after DVIP obligation end date (i.e., criminal recidivism). The left side of Figure 2 shows far more DVIP non-completers had histories of one or two DV incidents (31.8%, $n = 57$) or three or more DV incidents (44.7%, $n = 80$) than no DV criminal history (16.2%, $n = 29$) or no non-DV criminal history (7.3%, $n = 13$). Over half of DVIP non-completers had a new criminal incident within 12 months of their DVIP obligation end date (56.5%, $n = 101$); most had one new non-DV-related incident or one new DV incident; approximately 10% of the DVIP non-completers ($n = 18$) had two or more DV-related incidents in the 12 months after their DVIP obligation end date.

Figure 2. Criminal Career Pathways among DVIP Non-Completers



DVIP Completion and DV Recidivism

Finally, we conducted a series of logistic regression models to assess the relationship between DVIP completion and 12-month DV recidivism while controlling for individuals' race and criminal history. First, we assessed whether there was a significant relationship between DVIP completion (yes/no) and DV recidivism (yes/no). Then, we assessed whether the specific type of case closure: DVIP completion, stricken (e.g., the court determined DVIP was unnecessary or an alternative treatment program would be more effective for an individual), revoked (e.g., the participant failed to comply with DVIP requirements), or warrant issued (e.g., a bench warrant was issued for the participant) was significantly associated with DV recidivism.

First, results indicated that **DVIP completers had lower odds of a new DV incident compared to non-completers** (while controlling for the impact of participant race and criminal history) (See Table 1). Specifically, DVIP completers had 63% lower odds of a new DV incident in the 12 months after their DVIP obligation end date than non-completers (OR = 0.37, $p < 0.01$).

Table 1. Logistic Regression Results Examining DVIP Completion/non-Completion on Domestic Violence Recidivism

	Odds Ratio	Standard Error	Confidence Interval
DVIP Completed ^a	0.37 ^{**}	0.35	0.18 - 0.73
Criminal History ^b	1.02	0.03	0.97 - 1.07
White ^c	1.03	0.28	0.59 - 1.80

Notes: ^a Reference category is noncompletion of DVIP; ^b Number of prior criminal arrests/charges before DVIP initiating offense; ^c Reference category is Person of Color. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Next, findings showed that **DVIP completers had significantly lower odds of a new DV incident compared to those who had a warrant issued or who had their DVIP revoked** (while controlling for the impact of participant race and criminal history). More specifically, individuals who had a warrant issued had 207.8% higher odds of a new DV incident within 12 months of their obligation end date ($OR = 3.08, p < 0.05$) compared to those who completed DVIP. Similarly, individuals whose DVIP was revoked had 266.1% higher odds of a new DV incident within 12 months of their obligation end date ($OR = 3.66, p < 0.01$) compared to those who completed DVIP. There were no significant differences in the odds of DV recidivism in the 12 months after obligation end date for DVIP completers and those whose DVIP obligation was stricken.

Table 2. Logistic Regression Results Examining Case Closure on Domestic Violence Recidivism

	Odds Ratio	Standard Error	Confidence Interval
DVIP Closure Status ^a			
Warrant	3.08 [*]	0.46	1.23 - 7.61
Revoked	3.66 ^{**}	0.40	1.68 - 8.12
Stricken	1.77	0.43	0.75 - 4.10
Criminal History ^b	1.01	0.03	0.96 - 1.07
White ^c	1.06	0.29	0.60 - 1.86

Notes: ^a Reference category is DVIP completion; ^b Number of prior criminal arrests/charges before DVIP initiating offense; ^c Reference category is Person of Color. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Summary

Data comprised individuals referred to DVIP from April 2018 (i.e., the onset of DVIP) to July 2023 (i.e., 5+ years later). Findings first showed that **completion of DVIP was associated with a significantly lower likelihood of recidivism for a new DV crime** in the 12 months after obligation end date (while controlling for criminal history and race) than non-completion. When specific types of non-completion were examined (e.g., warrant issued, DVIP revoked, DVIP stricken), findings showed that **DVIP completion was associated with a lower likelihood of recidivism for a DV crime** in the 12 months after obligation end date (while controlling for criminal history and race) **compared to having a warrant issued and/or DVIP revoked**; there were no significant differences between DVIP completion and having DVIP stricken. Taken together, these findings provide strong preliminary evidence that completing

DVIP facilitates behavior change that is associated with a reduction in future DV. Future analyses will include (1) examination of DVIP completion on victim-survivor outcomes (e.g., service referrals and utilization), (2) comparison of these individuals referred to DVIP and similar individuals who were not referred to DVIP regarding DV recidivism, and (3) examination of recidivism for other crime types (e.g., other violence, drug/alcohol related crimes).

References

Bouffard, L. A., & Zedaker, S. B. (2016). Are domestic violence offenders specialists? Answers from multiple analytic approaches. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 53(6), 788–813. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022427816656897>

Murphy, C.M., Richards, T.N., Nitsch, L.J., Green-Manning, A., Brokmeier, A.M., & Holliday, C.N. (2021). Evaluation of a community-informed batterer intervention program in a high-stress low-income urban context. *Psychology of Violence*, 11(6), 509–518. <https://doi.org/10.1037/vio0000387>

Richards, T.N., Wright, E., & Adhia, A. (forthcoming). Promoting the use of evaluability assessments and formative evaluations in domestic violence intervention programs: A case study of Seattle's Domestic Violence Intervention Project. *Criminal Justice & Behavior*. Advanced online publication: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854825139750>
Pre-print available at CrimRxiv: <https://doi.org/10.21428/cb6ab371.18fd5ab7>

Richards, T.N., Wright, E., & Nystrom, A. (2024). *A formative evaluation and evaluability assessment of the Seattle Domestic Violence Intervention Project*. Final report 5JOVW-21-GG-02488-MUMU. Submitted to the Office on Violence Against Women, January, 9, 2024. https://vvsrlab.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/5jovw-21-gg-02488-mumu_final-report.pdf