



ACES

Alabama Commission on the
Evaluation of Services

An Evaluation of the Cost-Effectiveness of Electronic Monitoring

REPORT SUMMARY

SEPTEMBER 2026

CONCLUSION: Electronic monitoring is working well for the population it was expanded to serve. Among mandatory supervised release offenders, monitoring decreases reincarceration roughly 14 percentage points, keeps offenders free from prison over 100 days longer, and does so at a cost of less than \$7 per avoided prison day. However, the result for probationers is different. While electronic monitoring should continue to be targeted for mandatory supervised release, follow up evaluations should be done to determine other best use cases.



Key Findings



Electronic monitoring is effective at reducing recidivism for offenders on mandatory supervised release.

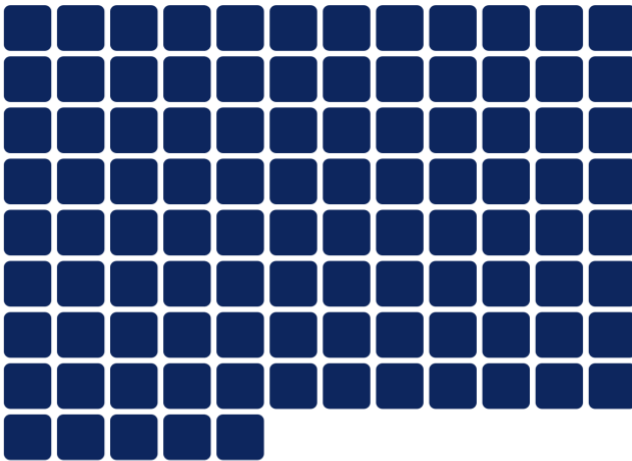


It cost the state of Alabama roughly \$6.03 in electronic monitoring expense per prison day avoided.



Electronic monitoring may have harmful effects on probationers, particularly those assigned a lower risk.

FY25 cost per avoided prison day, mandatory supervised release



Each square = 1 avoided prison day per offender (101 total)

Cost per prison day
avoided

\$6.03

\$5.57–\$6.49

Total marginal cost

\$1.36M

2,237 offenders

Prison days avoided

225,977

101 days per offender,
on average

Electronic monitoring's effect on recidivism for probationers reverses at the **highest risk level**.

While the most severe risk group (**Risk Level 5**) saw a positive effect, the second most severe risk group (**Risk Level 4**) experienced the most harmful effect



Values are percentage points.

RECOMMENDATIONS



A follow-up evaluation should be conducted to determine the marginal cost of a prison day and the other benefits associated with reduced crime and avoided incarceration.



A follow-up evaluation of probationers on electronic monitoring should be conducted to determine the effect of electronic monitoring. If possible, the evaluation should utilize a randomized control design.