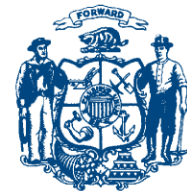




STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
18th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT



Dear Committee Members,

At our first meeting I asked to participate in a COMPAS exam. I am grateful to the DOC for fulfilling the request. This letter is a review of the process, my personal reflections on the system, and my outcomes.

To start, I don't believe our committee should derail our efforts in order to focus solely on COMPAS. I do believe, however, that a solid understanding of risk assessment tools, the evidence behind their use, and the practical implications for participants is helpful moving forward.

COMPAS is an evidence-based decision-making tool. The questionnaire assesses an individual's needs and risks. This is smart. When an individual is placed on a given program, that program should be targeted to address the individual's needs or risks.

Evidence-based decision-making practices are great targets for justice reform and are used throughout Wisconsin and the nation. Wisconsin has a subcommittee of the statewide Criminal Justice Coordinating Council dedicated to evidence-based decision-making, which is helping more jurisdictions adopt these programs.

So what does the evidence say about me?

I'm low risk.

I am a 33-year-old employed lawyer with no history of arrests. I don't have a drug or alcohol problem and no history of mental illness.

We used a conviction of Possession With Intent to Deliver-Cocaine, 1-5 grams in violation of Wis. Stat. 961.41(1m)1r. This is a Class F Felony, maximum penalty of 12.5 years, \$25,000 fine or both.

The sentence was probation with a withheld prison sentence.

The COMPAS exam was administered by DOC agent Kara Rheingans. The entire process took a little more than an hour, though this frequently takes longer.

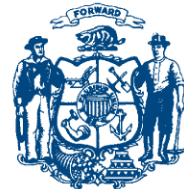
Looking at the attached report, the most interesting results are my "Highly Probable" scale in the "Criminal Personality" and "Criminal Thinking Self Report." Both shocked me. On pages 3 and 4, the report generated the following statements:

"The Criminal Associates and Peers scale indicates Mr. Evan Goyke likely has a modest involvement with antisocial friends. Restricting his contact with any current antisocial associates may help to reduce criminal opportunity. Encourage Mr. Evan Goyke to build more affiliations with pro-social peers in various pro-social activities."

(and on Page 4)



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“Mr. Evan Goyke’s scale score indicates a tendency toward an antisocial personality. This may include factors such as: impulsivity, risk-taking, boredom, no guilt, selfishness, anger, and so on. Referral for a more in-depth personality assessment may be warranted. This score, in some cases, may also indicate a resistance to treatment. Impulsive decision-making, if detected, may be amendable to some form of cognitive therapy. Mr. Evan Goyke may need high levels of control.”

The most important take away for me was the inability to explain or give context to an answer. For example, I was asked deeply moral questions like “is it ok for a hungry person to steal bread to eat”? Even after a career in Catholic Schools I don’t know that I really know the answer, when I answered “yes” that scored toward my scale of “Criminal Thinking.”

More importantly for us as a committee, I believe this information needs to be accessed and used as early as possible in the justice system. It could be quite possible that this was the first time my needs and risks had been assessed – despite the fact that decisions were made to arrest me, charge me, some form of plea negotiations took place, and a judge ordered a sentence.

If the officers, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and judges knew these results, would my case be treated differently? Would we act smarter earlier? I think so.

Everyday our overworked justice system makes life-changing decisions impacting defendants and victims, often with much less information than what’s in my COMPAS exam. It’s scary...or at least it should be.

The experience was well worth the time. Moving forward, I’d like to experience the programming that I would participate in. For example, how would the DOC encourage me to engage in pro-social activities? Or what might the “high levels of control” be? If I can experience those and report back I will.

I’m happy to answer any possible follow up questions. My contact information is below.

All my best,

Evan Goyke

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