WHAT IS THE LSI?

The Level of Service Inventory (LSI)[4,5] is one of the most common classification tools used with adult offenders. The LSI is used in a variety of correctional contexts across the United States to guide decision-making. In Colorado, the LSI is used in probation, community corrections, prison, and parole to develop supervision and case management plans and to determine placement in correctional programs. In some states, the LSI is used to make institutional assignments and release from institutional custody decisions. It may be the most used instrument: In a 1999 study, researchers found that 14% of the agencies surveyed in a national study were using the LSI with another 6% planning on implementing it in the near future.[6] The instrument is perhaps the most researched correctional risk/needs assessment and, from the first validation study in 1982, it has continued to show consistent predictive validity for a range of correctional outcomes.[7]

The LSI assessment is administered via a structured interview. Supporting documentation should be collected from family members, employers, case files, drug tests, and other relevant sources.[8]

The instrument includes 54 items that measure ten components of risk and need. The components measured are:

- Criminal history,
- Education and employment,
- Financial,
- Family and marital relationships,
- Residential accommodations,
- Leisure and recreation activities,
- Companions,
- Alcohol and drug problems,
- Emotional and personal, and
- Attitudes and orientations.

The LSI predicts recidivism, but perhaps more importantly, it also provides information pertaining to offender needs. Re-assessment every six months allows for an examination of whether the offender's need level was improved by the intervening programming.

Probation and DOC apply differing score paradigms for determining levels of risk and need for their respective individual populations.

Table 5.3. LSI score categories for designation of risk/need

RISK/NEED category	Probation	DOC
Low	1-18	0-12
Medium	19-28	13-26
High	29-54	27-54

LSI total score (Raw score)	Percent chance of recidivism within one year (based on total score)
0 to 5	9%
6 to 10	20%
11 to 15	25%
16 to 20	30%
21 to 25	40%
26 to 30	43%
31 to 35	50%
36 to 40	53%
41 to 45	58%
46 to 50	69%
50 to 54	<70%

Source: Andrews, D.A. and Bonta, J. L. (2003). *Level of Supervision Inventory-Revised. U.S. Norms Manual Supplement*. Multi Health Systems. Toronto.

4   Andrews, D.A. and Bonta, J. (1995). *The Level of Service Inventory-Revised*. Multi-Health Systems, Toronto.

5   The information provided and studies referenced pertaining to the LSI also apply to the LSI-r.

6   Jones, D.A., Johnson, S., Latessa, E.J., and Travis, L.F. (1999). *Case classification in community corrections: Preliminary findings from a national survey*. Topics in Community Corrections, National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, D.C.

7   Andrews, D.A. (1982). *The Level of Supervision Inventory (LSI): The first follow-up*. Ontario Ministry of Correctional Services. Toronto; Andrews, D.A., Dowden, C., and Gendreau, P. (1999). Clinically relevant and psychologically informed approaches to reduced re-offending: A meta-analytic study of human service, risk, need, responsivity and other concerns in justice contexts. Carleton University, Ottawa.

8   Andrews, D.A. and Bonta, J. (1995). *The Level of Supervision Inventory-Revised*. Multi-Health Systems. Toronto.