

For Gaussian sampling matrices, we provide bounds on the minimal number of measurements m required to achieve robust weighted sparse recovery guarantees in terms of how well a given prior model for the sparsity support aligns with the true underlying support. Our main contribution is that for a sparse vector $x \in \mathbb{R}^N$ supported on an unknown set $S \subset \{1, \dots, N\}$ with $|S| \leq \kappa$, if S has weighted cardinality $\omega(S) := \sum_{j \in S} \omega_j^2$, and if the weights on S^c exhibit mild growth, $\omega_j^2 \geq \gamma \log(j/\omega(S))$ for $j \in S^c$ and $\gamma > 0$, then the sample complexity for sparse recovery via weighted ℓ_1 -minimization using weights ω_j is linear in the weighted sparsity level, and $m = O(\omega(S)/\gamma)$. This main result is a generalization of special cases including a) the standard sparse recovery setting where all weights $\omega_j \equiv 1$, and $m = O(k \log(N/k))$; b) the setting where the support is known a priori, and $m = O(\kappa)$; and c) the setting of sparse recovery with prior information, and m depends on how well the weights are aligned with the support set S . We further extend the results in case c) to the setting of additive noise. Our results are nonuniform that is they apply for a fixed support, unknown a priori, and the weights on S do not all have to be smaller than the weights on S^c for our recovery results to hold.