Justice Reinvestment in Kansas

Analyses & Policy Options to Reduce Spending on Corrections & Reinvest in Strategies to Increase Public Safety

Background

In June 2012, Governor Sam Brownback, Chief Justice Lawton Nuss, Attorney General Derek Schmidt, Department of Corrections (DOC) Secretary Ray Roberts, and House and Senate leaders requested technical assistance from the Council of State Governments Justice Center (CSG Justice Center). They sought to employ a data-driven “justice reinvestment” approach to develop a statewide policy framework that would reduce spending on corrections and reinvest resulting savings in strategies that increase public safety. Assistance provided by the CSG Justice Center was made possible through a partnership with and funding from the Pew Center on the States Public Safety Performance Project and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, a component of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Enacted by the Kansas legislature in June 2012, House Bill 2684 established a bipartisan, bicameral, and inter-branch Justice Reinvestment Working Group, which comprised state lawmakers, members of the judiciary, corrections officials, prosecutors, and other stakeholders. The full working group met on four occasions between June and December 2012 to review analyses conducted by the CSG Justice Center and discuss policy options that would increase public safety and manage growth in the prison population.

The CSG Justice Center collected and analyzed a vast amount of state criminal justice data, drawing on information maintained by the Kansas DOC, the Kansas Judicial Branch, the Kansas Sentencing Commission (KSC), and the Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI). In total, the CSG Justice Center analyzed over 1.2 million individual records across these agencies’ information systems.

In addition to these quantitative analyses, the CSG Justice Center convened focus groups and meetings with corrections administrators and program staff, prosecutors, behavioral health treatment providers, victim advocates, judges, probation directors and field officers, police chiefs, sheriffs, and others. Since June 2012, the CSG Justice Center participated in more than 75 in-person meetings with nearly 250 individuals. During this time they also conducted three online surveys: one of chiefs of police and sheriffs, one of community corrections directors, and one of court services directors.

This report summarizes the CSG Justice Center’s findings and provides state leaders with a policy framework to address key issues that emerged from the quantitative and qualitative analyses. Policy options are organized around the following three objectives: 1) stronger probation supervision, 2) successful reentry, and 3) safer communities.
# Summary of Challenges

1. Probation resources are not consistently focused on practices that are efficient, cost effective, or targeted at the people most likely to reoffend.
2. Growth in the prison population, coupled with budget cuts, has made it difficult to prioritize funding for reentry efforts.
3. Kansas has a relatively low crime rate compared to other states, but the crime rate in half the state’s counties is increasing. Budget constraints have caused many police departments to cut back on community-based crime reduction programs and to be unable to invest in the tools and training necessary to respond to the growing number of incidents involving individuals with mental illnesses.

## Justice Reinvestment Policy Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Stronger Probation Supervision</td>
<td>2(A): Allow the Prisoner Review Board to focus resources on higher-risk cases and reduce the length of time on post-release supervision (PRS) that successful, lower-risk people serve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2(A): Increase access to community-based programming for people sentenced to felony probation supervision who are at a higher risk of reoffending.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1(B): Enable probation officers to apply swift and certain responses to people under felony supervision who commit technical violations.</td>
<td>2(B): Require that people who are reincarcerated for a probation revocation and subsequently released to the community be assigned to PRS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1(C): Establish a violation response sanction to replace the existing costly and ineffective community corrections revocation process.</td>
<td>2(C): Increase access to community-based programming for people on PRS that are at a higher risk of reoffending.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1(D): Allow probation officers to prioritize higher-risk cases and reduce the length of supervision time for successful, lower-risk probationers.</td>
<td>2(D): Create a task force to study ways to make the crime victim restitution collection process more efficient and effective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3(A): Provide law enforcement agencies with competitive grant funding for initiatives that help them analyze crime data and improve their responses to people with mental illnesses.</td>
<td>3(B): Enhance the Kansas Bureau of Investigation’s ability to process crime scene evidence and apprehend and prosecute individuals committing crime more efficiently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Projected Impact of the Policy Framework

Savings and Reinvestment

By slowing growth in the state prison population between FY 2014 and FY 2018, this package of policies averts approximately $61 million in new spending on operating costs that would otherwise be needed to accommodate prison population growth. These savings will enable the state to reinvest $6 million annually in fiscal years 2014 through 2018 in programs shown to be effective at reducing recidivism (e.g., substance use treatment) and grants to help local law enforcement agencies fight crime. Making these reinvestments leaves the state with $31 million in net savings and ensures that the policies will have the maximum impact on public safety.

Figure 1. Savings and Reinvestment in Millions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2014</th>
<th>FY 2015</th>
<th>FY 2016</th>
<th>FY 2017</th>
<th>FY 2018</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRISON POPULATION AND IMPACTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Prison Bed Capacity</td>
<td>9,564</td>
<td>9,564</td>
<td>9,564</td>
<td>9,564</td>
<td>9,564</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Prison Population Projection</td>
<td>9,916</td>
<td>10,154</td>
<td>10,312</td>
<td>10,624</td>
<td>10,819</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of JR Policies on Prison Beds</td>
<td>-611</td>
<td>-892</td>
<td>-880</td>
<td>-905</td>
<td>-928</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Prison Population Projection with JR Policies</td>
<td>9,305</td>
<td>9,262</td>
<td>9,432</td>
<td>9,719</td>
<td>9,891</td>
<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gross Savings††</td>
<td>$2.3 M</td>
<td>$14.8 M</td>
<td>$14.1 M</td>
<td>$14.7 M</td>
<td>$15.1 M</td>
<td>$61 M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **REINVESTMENTS** |         |         |         |         |         |       |
| Community Corrections and Court Services Programming | $4.5 M  | $4.5 M  | $4.5 M  | $4.5 M  | $4.5 M  | $22.5 M |
| Post-Release Supervision Programming | $0.5 M  | $0.5 M  | $0.5 M  | $0.5 M  | $0.5 M  | $1.5 M  |
| Law Enforcement Grant Program | $1 M   | $1 M   | $1 M   | $1 M   | $1 M   | $5 M   |
| Total Reinvestment | $6 M   | $6 M   | $6 M   | $6 M   | $6 M   | $30 M   |

| **Net Savings (Cost)** | $-3.7 M | $8.8 M  | $8.1 M  | $8.7 M  | $9.1 M  | $31 M   |

† As of June 30th each fiscal year-end.
†† Gross savings represent avoided operational costs assuming a cost per day of $45 multiplied by the average reduction in bed demand for the whole fiscal year as opposed to the reduced bed demand as of fiscal year-end. For FY 2014, the average reduction in bed demand is much lower than the fiscal year-end reduction because of the time it takes for policies to reach full impact.
Assumptions

It is projected by the KSC that, under existing policies, the prison population will increase 15 percent over a six-year period, growing from 9,374 in June 2012 to 10,819 by June 2018. It is also projected that the number of total prison admissions each year will increase 2 percent. From FY 2009 to FY 2012, the actual average annual growth rate in total prison admissions was 3 percent.

Using this information as a baseline, CSG Justice Center staff developed a projection model to simulate the impact of the proposed policy framework on the prison population by making conservative assumptions about how the target population would be impacted. For example, using research from the field on implementation of evidence-based supervision strategies, it was determined that 20 percent of the probationers currently revoked for technical reasons would instead successfully complete their terms of supervision as a result of the new policies. As for probationers who would be expected to violate the terms of their supervision and receive a prison sanction, the projection model determined that 50 percent would violate again and be sent back to prison for a second sanction period, and 25 percent would violate a third time and be sent back to prison for a full revocation.

In order to allow for the time required to properly implement the supervision investments and improved practices, it will take one year to realize the full impact of these projected prison population reductions.

Figure 2. Kansas Prison Population Trend and Projections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Prison Population</th>
<th>Current Projection</th>
<th>Alternative Projection with Justice Reinvestment Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 09</td>
<td>8,610</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 10</td>
<td>9,374</td>
<td>+1,139 Beds</td>
<td>928 Fewer Beds Needed Through 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 11</td>
<td>9,564</td>
<td>10,819</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 12</td>
<td>9,619</td>
<td>10,819</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 13</td>
<td>9,721</td>
<td>10,819</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 14</td>
<td>9,819</td>
<td>10,819</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 15</td>
<td>9,891</td>
<td>10,819</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 16</td>
<td>9,964</td>
<td>10,819</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 17</td>
<td>9,964</td>
<td>10,819</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 18</td>
<td>9,964</td>
<td>10,819</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Ibid.
Objective 1: Stronger Probation Supervision

CHALLENGE: Probation resources are not consistently focused on practices that are efficient, cost effective or targeted at the people most likely to reoffend.

Responses to probation violations in many judicial districts are neither swift nor certain.

- State statute allows a judge sentencing someone to felony probation to establish that a violation of particular supervision conditions may result in the placement of the probationer in county jail for up to 60 days. Judges, however, interpret this statute differently across the state, and few actually employ the provision. Instead, multiple violations often accumulate without punitive response, and when a motion to revoke probation is finally filed, a court hearing may not occur for weeks or months. In fact, approximately 70 percent of community corrections directors surveyed noted that it typically takes one month between the time when a motion to revoke is filed and the revocation hearing is held.

- Two out of every three community corrections directors surveyed said that judges sentencing someone to probation typically provide the probation officer with the discretion to increase reporting requirements or impose a curfew without having to go back to court first. Only half of those directors, however, reported they can impose a brief jail stay or put their client on electronic monitoring without approval from the sentencing judge.

Community Supervision in Kansas

Community Corrections: Kansas's community corrections program provides a community sanction as an alternative to prison for certain adult felony offenders. State law stipulates that people who meet the following criteria are eligible: if the sentence falls within a designated border box (see box titled "Kansas's Sentencing Guidelines"); if the severity level and criminal history classification designate a presumptive prison sentence but the person receives a non-prison sentence; if risk and need levels are high as determined by a risk assessment; or if the sentence to community corrections was for first-time drug possession. The legislature allocates funding each year to DOC for community corrections; DOC then awards grants to the 31 community corrections agencies, which are locally operated. On December 1, 2012, Kansas community corrections agencies were supervising a total of 7,800 felons.

Court Services: Court services-administered probation in Kansas is an option that district/county attorneys and judges have to sentence felony offenders whose criminal history classification and the severity level of their crime designate a presumptive probation sentence on the sentencing grid (see figure 5, “Sentencing Range”). Court services probation, whose officers also supervise misdemeanor probationers, is a less intensive form of community supervision than its counterpart, community corrections. If revoked, felony court services probationers typically are transferred to community corrections supervision instead of being sent to prison. The Office of Judicial Administration is responsible for the salaries and training of court services officers; the remainder of court services costs are county funded. At the end of FY 2012, Kansas court services departments were supervising a total of 16,957 individuals (3,750 felons and 13,207 misdemeanants).

Post-Release Supervision: Upon completion of the prison portion of their imposed sentences, most inmates will be released to serve a term of post-release supervision (PRS), plus the amount of time earned for good behavior while imprisoned. Offenders on PRS are supervised by DOC parole officers. At the end of FY 2012, there were a total of 6,871 individuals on PRS.

4. CSG Justice Center Community Corrections Survey, July 2012. The response rate was 96 percent, or 30 out of the 31 Kansas Community Corrections directors contacted. Fifty-three percent of respondents said that one to three months normally pass between the motion being filed and the final hearing. Another 17 percent said that more than three months normally pass.
5. Ibid.
7. In Kansas, parole refers to an action taken by the state's parole board to release individuals from prison once they are eligible. Individuals remain under supervision of a parole officer until the sentence is complete. Beginning with convictions in 1993, parole was replaced by post-release supervision. Under the new system, offenders serve a pre-determined period of time under supervision once they have completed the prison portion of their sentence and have been released into the community. In 2011, the state replaced the parole board with the prisoner review board.
Revoking an individual to prison from community corrections is more costly and less effective at reducing recidivism than revoking an individual on PRS to prison.

- The number of people revoked to prison increased 20 percent between FY 2009 and FY 2012. In FY 2012, nearly 4 out of 10 admissions to prison were people whose term of community corrections supervision had been revoked.8

**Figure 3. Probation Revocations to Prison Have Increased Almost 20% Over the Past Three Years**

![Bar chart showing probation revocations to prison from FY 2009 to FY 2012.](image)

- Kansas has a structured revocation response for PRS violators, whereby they receive a set period of prison time instead of serving out the remainder of their PRS term behind bars.11 After they have served their set term of incarceration, PRS violators return to the community and continue on supervision for the remainder of their PRS term.

- By contrast, community corrections probationers revoked to prison serve out the remainder of their term behind bars and are usually returned back to the community without any form of post-release supervision. Of the 1,582 condition violators released from prison in FY 2011, 890, or 56 percent, returned to the community without any post-release supervision.12

**Figure 4. Number of People in FY 2011 Released from Prison After Serving a Sentence for Probation Violations**

![Pie chart showing number of people released from prison after serving a sentence for probation violations.](image)

- Although people who violate conditions of community corrections supervision are returned to prison for similar reasons as people who violate conditions of PRS, the former remain in prison about four times as long (11 months versus 3 months).10

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9. Ibid.
10. CSG Justice Center Analysis of Kansas Department of Corrections, 2009–11 Release and Inmate Assessment Data.
11. By policy, PRS condition violators must serve a 180 day sanction of incarceration, but are eligible for day-for-day good time credits resulting in as few as 90 days actual time served.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
Kansas’s Sentencing Guidelines

The Kansas Sentencing Guidelines Act became effective July 1, 1993. Two grids, which contain the sentencing range for drug crimes and nondrug crimes, were developed for use as a tool in sentencing. The determination of a felony sentence is based on the current crime of conviction and the offender’s prior criminal history. The sentence contained in the grid box where the severity level of the crime of conviction and the offender’s criminal history meet is the “presumptive sentence.”

In both grids, the criminal history categories make up the horizontal axis, and the crime severity levels make up the vertical axis. Each grid contains nine criminal history categories. The drug grid contains five severity levels; the nondrug grid contains ten severity levels. Both grids are separated into sections where the presumptive sentence is probation and sections where the presumptive sentence is prison.

Within each grid box are three numbers that represent the sentence range in months. The sentencing court has discretion to sentence within that range. The middle number in the grid box is the standard number and is intended to be the appropriate sentence for typical cases. The upper and lower numbers should be used for cases involving aggravating or mitigating factors.

The grids also contain boxes that straddle the presumptive prison and probation sections, which are referred to as “border boxes.” A border box carries a presumptive prison sentence, but the sentencing court may choose to impose a non-prison sentence without having to make a formal finding as to the reason for the departure from the presumptive sentence.

**Figure 5. Sentencing Range – Nondrug Offenses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category II</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Severity Level</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 Person Felonies</td>
<td>2 Person Felonies</td>
<td>1 Person &amp; 1 Nonperson Felonies</td>
<td>3 Person Felonies</td>
<td>2 Person Felonies</td>
<td>3 Person Felonies</td>
<td>2 Nonperson Felonies</td>
<td>1 Nonperson Felony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>267</td>
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<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>206</td>
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<td>102</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>172</td>
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<td>154</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>71</td>
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<td>69</td>
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<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>135</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
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<td>IX</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:**
- Presumptive Probation
- Border Box
- Presumptive Imprisonment

People sentenced to community corrections supervision that are determined to be at low risk of reoffense spend more time on supervision than those determined to be at high risk of reoffense.

- Just 4 percent of people determined to be at low risk of reoffense were returned to prison. On the other hand, 76 percent of those determined to be at high risk of reoffense were revoked.\(^{16}\) Despite these differences in success rates, in FY 2011 low-risk probationers spent an average of 24 months on community corrections supervision, while high-risk probationers were supervised for an average of 22 months.\(^{17}\)

- The DOC administrative policies for community corrections provide clear guidelines for minimum contacts based on the risk level of the offender. The number of contacts a high-risk person has with a community corrections probation officer is much higher than that of a low-risk person, which is consistent with evidence-based practices.\(^{19}\) Despite the less intensive supervision provided to low-risk individuals, the lengthy period of time a low-risk person is on a community corrections caseload compared to a high-risk person still consumes the time of the supervision officer and does little to reduce the risk of reoffense.

**Figure 6. 96% of Low-Risk Offenders Are Successful on Probation, Yet They Are Supervised for Longer than High-Risk Offenders who Fail Probation at Vastly Higher Rates\(^{18}\)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Level</th>
<th>Average Supervision Period</th>
<th>Revocation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Risk</td>
<td>24 months</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Risk</td>
<td>25 months</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Risk</td>
<td>22 months</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Understanding Risk Assessment\(^{20}\)

Risk assessment tools help users sort individuals into low-, medium-, and high-risk groups. They are designed to gauge the likelihood that an individual will come in contact with the criminal justice system, either through a new arrest and conviction or reincarceration for violating the terms of supervision. These tools usually consist of 10 to 30 questions designed to ascertain an individual’s history of criminal behavior, attitudes and personality, and life circumstances. Risk assessments can be administered at any time during a person’s contact with the criminal justice system—from first appearance in court through presentencing, placement on probation, admission to a correctional facility, the period prior to release, and post-release supervision. They are similar to tools used by an insurance company to rate risk: they predict the likelihood of future outcomes according to their analysis of past activities (e.g., criminal history) and present conditions (such as behavioral health or addiction). Objective risk assessments have been shown to be more reliable than any individual professional’s judgment. Too often, these judgments are no more than “gut” reactions that vary from expert to expert about the same individual.

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16. The 4 and 76 represent the average of each year from FY 2007 to FY 2011. The averages were steady each year.
17. CSG Justice Center Analysis of Kansas Department of Corrections, Community Corrections Data.
18. CSG Justice Center Analysis of Kansas Department of Corrections, Community Corrections Case Data.
Most of the people whose community corrections supervision was revoked had difficulty getting access to community-based substance use treatment.

- A law passed in 2003 (SB 123) created mandatory community-based supervision and substance use treatment for individuals convicted of a first or second offense of simple drug possession. In eligible cases, judges must sentence people convicted of drug possession who have no prior convictions for sale or manufacture of drugs to 18 months or less of community corrections supervision and state-funded drug treatment.21

- Like people convicted of drug possession, many people sentenced to probation for committing crimes other than drug possession require community-based substance use treatment to reduce their risk of reoffense. Most of these people, however, are not eligible to receive this type of treatment because the crime they committed is not drug related. Not surprisingly, the state’s risk assessment data show that most probationers revoked to prison are higher risk and have behavioral health needs that are not addressed while on probation. In fact, of higher risk felony probationers with behavioral health needs revoked to prison each year, 76 percent are not eligible for SB 123 programming.22

- Seventy-four percent of moderate- and high-risk probationers who were revoked to prison in FY 2011 had at least one behavioral health problem. Two-thirds of those individuals received little, if any, treatment. In comparison to their counterparts who were revoked, the moderate- and high-risk probationers who were not revoked were almost twice as likely to have successfully completed programming in the community. This demonstrates the correlation between the absence of behavioral health interventions for those in need and the likelihood that moderate- and high-risk probationers will violate probation conditions.23

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**Policy Options**

1(A): Increase access to community-based programming for people sentenced to felony probation supervision who are at a higher risk of reoffending.

- Provide treatment and programming services to individuals on community corrections and court services supervision whose risk of reoffense is moderate or high.22 These services shall include treatment for substance use and mental health disorders, as well as cognitive behavioral treatment.

- Increase funds appropriated to DOC for this purpose. Dedicate a percentage of those funds for use on higher-risk, felony court services probationers who can be treated via placement through local community corrections departments. The remainder of the funds shall be used to treat higher-risk felony probationers on community corrections.

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22. CSG Justice Center Analysis of Kansas Department of Corrections, Community Corrections, Prison Admissions and Inmate Assessment Case Data.


25. Sixty-six percent of probationers sentenced to community corrections in FY 2011 were assessed as moderate/high risk to reoffend. Twenty-eight percent of felony probationers sentenced to court services probation in FY 2011 were assessed as moderate/high risk to reoffend. CSG Justice Center Analysis of Kansas Department of Corrections Community Corrections Case Data; CSG Analysis of Court Services Risk Assessment Results.
**Rationale:** Most people who did not comply with the terms and conditions of probation were those determined to be at a higher risk of reoffense who were not able to access quality treatment programs in the community. Research clearly demonstrates that community supervision of high-risk individuals with substance use needs that does not incorporate treatment has little positive impact on recidivism. For example, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy conducted a study on surveillance-oriented supervision and found it to be ineffective. However, when this type of community supervision was combined with treatment and officers had the ability to apply intermediate sanctions, they found a 22 percent reduction in recidivism.26

1(B): Enable probation officers to apply swift and certain responses to people under felony supervision who commit technical violations.

- Create a set of meaningful responses (e.g., placement on electronic monitoring, requiring cognitive behavioral treatment, rapid assignment into substance use treatment, or a short two- or three-day jail stay) that probation officers can use without a court hearing to respond to minor probation condition violations.
- Require that this authority be established as a part of each sentence imposed, unless waived by the judge.
- Establish procedures to protect the due process rights of individuals while imposing these sanctions. This shall include the right to a court hearing if the probationer does not agree to the sanction imposed by the probation officer. Also, require administrative approval before a probation officer can take such action, to ensure this authority is used appropriately and fairly.

**Rationale:** This policy would provide probation officers with the authority and flexibility they currently lack to ensure that responses to supervision violations are swift and certain. Research has demonstrated that failure to respond swiftly to condition violations gives a probationer the impression that their behavior is not important enough to warrant immediate attention and consequences.

Probation departments in Georgia have implemented a similar policy, which enables probation officers to impose these types of sanctions without seeking a court hearing. Researchers have found that these changes have reduced by 70 percent the number of days that people on probation spent in jail because they violated a condition of supervision or because they were awaiting a court hearing.27

The Hawaii Opportunity Probation with Enforcement (HOPE) program, which aims to reduce crime and drug use among people sentenced to probation, also demonstrates the benefits of applying a model of swift, certain, and proportionate sanctions to address probation violations. In a one-year randomized controlled trial comparing HOPE probationers with similar probationers not in the HOPE program, HOPE probationers were 55 percent less likely to be arrested for a new crime, 72 percent less likely to use drugs, 61 percent less likely to skip appointments with their supervision officers, and 53 percent less likely to have their probation revoked.28

**Figure 8. Research on the HOPE Program Suggests That Short, Swift and Certain Sanctions Work Best to Reduce Recidivism**29

29. The full Hawaii HOPE evaluation from NIJ is available at: http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/229023.pdf
1(C): Establish a violation response sanction to replace the existing costly and ineffective community corrections revocation process.

- Create a new sanctioning procedure, to be called a “violation response sanction” (VRS), to respond to repeated violations of felony probation.
- Upon the first probation violation hearing, modify the community corrections term with a VRS of 120 days of incarceration. The second violation hearing shall result in a VRS of 180 days of incarceration. Thereafter, the offender may be revoked for the remainder of his or her sentence. This policy shall not apply to individuals convicted of a new crime.
- Probation condition violators facing return to prison as part of this sanction would be eligible to earn time credits on a 2-for-1 basis, resulting in stays of 60 and 90 days based on good behavior and compliance with expectations while incarcerated.
- Sanctions of incarceration should be served in either prison or county jail, with jail used in lieu of prison when county government agrees to use the jail for this purpose and is reimbursed for the costs incurred.

RATIONALE: Sanctioning an individual with up to 180 days of incarceration followed by a return to supervision and programming in the community increases accountability among people who would have otherwise been released from prison to the community without any supervision. It also increases the likelihood that at least some treatment is provided in the community, where research demonstrates it is most likely to have an impact on recidivism. Finally, it saves the state significant money used for costly prison beds because it shortens the 11-month average length of stay for people returned to prison for a violation of a condition of release.

Kansas currently uses this approach with much success for the parole and PRS population, even though this population generally has a more serious criminal history than those who were sentenced to probation.

1(D): Allow officers to prioritize higher-risk cases and reduce the length of supervision time for successful, lower-risk offenders.

- Improve the incentive for probationers who are at low risk of reoffending to comply with probation conditions by offering to terminate their term of supervision after 12 months if they can demonstrate compliance with conditions of supervision and full payment of restitution obligations.

RATIONALE: Research shows that the greatest reductions in recidivism can be achieved when treatment and supervision resources are concentrated on higher-risk, higher-need individuals. Furthermore, research demonstrates that applying the same level of supervision resources to high- and low-risk offenders is counterproductive and can actually increase recidivism rates for low-risk offenders. This is because low-risk individuals are more likely to have positive influences in their life such as jobs, prosocial associations, limited criminal histories, and few substance use problems. These positive influences can be disrupted with high-intensity supervision and treatment if it is not truly needed.

Time spent supervising these lower-risk probationers beyond 9 to 12 months consumes officer time and resources that could otherwise be used for more intensive supervision for higher-risk probationers.

Objective 2: Successful Reentry

**CHALLENGE:** Growth in the prison population, coupled with budget cuts, has made it difficult to prioritize funding for reentry efforts.

Kansas has demonstrated success in reducing recidivism.

- In 2007, Kansas passed SB 14, legislation enacted to expand availability of in-prison treatment and services that have been shown to help reduce the risk of reoffending. SB 14 also sought to provide people with an incentive for completing these programs by establishing a 60-day program credit for adults who successfully complete such treatment and services.32

- Availability of prison-based services and treatment to reduce risk of reoffending increased tenfold between FY 2007 (the year before SB 14 was implemented) and FY 2011. In FY 2007, of the 1,822 people released to PRS, 6 percent of those needing behavioral health programming received it. By FY 2011, that portion had reached 64 percent.33 Funding for these efforts, however, has decreased by 64 percent since the policy’s implementation, from $7.3 million in FY 2008 to $2.6 million in FY 2012.34

**Figure 9. Programming in Prison Has Increased Tenfold between FY 2007 and FY 200835**

- Between FY 2007 and FY 2012, PRS revocations due to violations decreased 23 percent, from 1,234 to 955, despite a slight increase in the number of offenders released to supervision as well as an increase in the total supervised PRS population. During the same time period, PRS revocations due to new offense convictions declined 30 percent.36

**Figure 10. Significant Reductions in Post-Release Supervision Revocations to Prison37**

- In July 2011, under the leadership of Governor Brownback, Kansas launched Mentoring4Success, a community-based initiative to increase the likelihood that people’s transition from prison to the community is safe and successful. By the end of 2012, the program had matched 1,150 incarcerated people with individual mentors within 6 to 12 months of release.38

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32. The programs include: substance use treatment, a general education diploma, a technical or vocational training program, or any other program the Secretary of Corrections believes will reduce an inmate’s risk of violating the terms of his eventual release.

33. CSG Justice Center Analysis of Kansas Department of Corrections, Prison Release and Inmate Assessment Case Data.

34. Data collected through personal communication with DOC staff.

35. CSG Justice Center Analysis of Kansas Department of Corrections, Prison Release and Inmate Assessment Case Data.


37. Ibid.

Post-release supervision resources, similar to probation resources, are being inefficiently allocated, with a large share used to supervise people at low risk of reoffense.

- Low-risk individuals on PRS are monitored for an average of 31 months before their term of supervision is complete, whereas high-risk individuals are monitored for 17 months. This 14-month difference amounts to valuable time and resources that could otherwise be used to supervise high-risk people more intensively.

![Figure 11. The Number of Months Spent on Post-Release Supervision Shows that Resources Are Focused on People Least Likely to Reoffend](image)

- Antiquated data systems make it difficult for parole and PRS officers to easily determine the amount of restitution owed by someone they are supervising and to monitor that person’s payment history.

**POLICY OPTIONS:**

**2(A): Allow the Prisoner Review Board to focus resources on higher-risk cases and reduce the length of time on post-release supervision that successful, lower-risk people serve.**

- Encourage people assigned to PRS who are at low risk of reoffending to comply with supervision conditions by offering those who have complied with their conditions of release and met their restitution obligations to end their term of PRS after 12 months on supervision.

- Amend the statute related to the way institutional DOC time credits are calculated so that credits earned and retained are not added to the length of PRS. Such a change in law would not reduce the amount of time a person serves in prison.

**RATIONALE:** A person incarcerated who complies with prison rules and participates in available programming earns time off of their prison sentence but adds to their term of PRS. This situation results in higher caseloads for PRS officers, divesting their already scarce resources from what should be their priority: supervision of people at high risk of reoffending. Current practice might even dissuade some people incarcerated from participating in programming because they know it will increase their PRS term.

- Other states have found ways to free up and better target resources toward high-risk individuals, often through incentive-based earned discharge options for low-risk offenders.

**Kansas’s victim restitution collection policies present opportunities for improvement.**

- When a person is sentenced to prison, restitution collection does not begin until he or she is assigned to work release, at which point 25 percent of the person’s income is garnished from their wages.

- There is no surcharge on purchases made from the in-prison commissary, which could be applied to restitution; similarly, no deductions are made from tax returns or outside deposits to an inmate’s account.

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39. CSG Justice Center Analysis of Kansas Department of Corrections, Parole/Post-Release Supervision Case Data.
40. Ibid.
41. K.S.A. § 60-2310(b). The offender may have all disposable income in excess of $217.50 per week or a different amount claimed by the plaintiff garnished if either amount is equal to less than 25 percent of the offender’s wages.
2(B): Require that people who were reincarcerated for a probation revocation and subsequently released to the community be assigned to PRS.

- Ensure that after a person returns to the community following a prison or jail stay due to probation revocation for violation of conditions of supervision, he or she receives a period of post-release supervision. The mandatory PRS term would be determined by the original crime of conviction on the sentencing grid and the corresponding supervision requirement.

**Rationale:** Post-release supervision is essential to close the existing loophole that allows probationers to “get off supervision” by being revoked for technical reasons. Furthermore, a period of post-release supervision for those who have repeatedly demonstrated an inability to stay crime-free in the community increases public safety.

2(C): Increase access to community-based programming for people on PRS that are at a higher risk of reoffending.

- Increase availability of treatment and services demonstrated to reduce risk of reoffense among people on parole and PRS, including community-based substance use treatment, mental health care, and cognitive behavioral treatment.

**Rationale:** Parole and PRS revocations for technical violations have decreased in recent years, despite insufficient funding for community treatment and services. To keep recidivism down, additional investments in community-based programming must be made. This is particularly important because of policy 2(B), which states that a person shall return to the community on PRS following a prison or jail stay because of probation revocation for violation of conditions of supervision. Given that this will increase the number of people on PRS, it would follow that additional resources are allocated.

2(D): Create a task force to study ways to make the crime victim restitution collection process more efficient and effective.

- Create a task force to develop a well-defined set of issues relating to victim restitution for study to be reported on for consideration by the 2014 legislative session.

**Rationale:** Kansas victims, survivors, and their advocates have identified the improvement of restitution collection as a key priority for the state to increase accountability among people who have committed a crime and to help victims and survivors recover from the financial losses they have sustained.

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**Victim Restitution**

Courts order restitution as part of the sentence when it is demonstrated that the victim sustained pecuniary losses (such as medical expenses, lost wages, or stolen or damaged property) as a result of the crime. Restitution is crucially important to victims because they often are without the resources to pay for all the losses they sustained as a result of the crime committed against them. In addition, collection of restitution provides the victim with an important sense that the person who committed the crime is being held accountable for his or her actions.

Court-ordered restitution, however, does not guarantee that the person ordered to pay it will do so. It creates a process through which victims can legally pursue restitution obligations that are owed to them. Many people incarcerated who owe restitution have few resources, and their financial prospects are often unlikely to improve soon after their return to the community.

Given these practical challenges, policymakers and criminal justice practitioners seek strategies and solutions for increasing the rate of restitution collection.

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42. CSG Justice Center focus group with victims, survivors, and their advocates, September 5, 2012.

Objective 3: Safer Communities

CHALLENGE: Kansas has a relatively low crime rate compared to other states, but the crime rate in half the state’s counties is increasing. Budget constraints have caused many police departments to cut back on community-based crime reduction programs and to be unable to invest in the tools and training necessary to respond to the growing number of incidents involving individuals with mental illness.

Although the statewide crime rate declined between 2006 and 2011, many counties in Kansas have experienced an increase during the same time period.

• The violent crime rate in Kansas dropped 20 percent between 2006 and 2011, from 441 to 354 reported violent crimes per 100,000 Kansas residents. During the same period, the national violent crime rate declined 18 percent, from 474 to 386 violent crimes per 100,000 U.S. residents.

• These positive statewide trends notwithstanding, nearly half of Kansas counties (52 out of 105) experienced an increase in their crime rate between 2006 and 2011. The violent crime rate in 5 counties increased more than 200 percent, and in 14 others, there was an increase of more than 100 percent.

• One in six Kansans live in Sedgwick County, where one in three violent crimes are committed. Sedgwick County had the state’s highest violent crime rate in 2011, with 655 reported violent crimes per 100,000 residents; nearly double the 2011 statewide average of 354.

• Between 2006 and 2011, the statewide property crime rate decreased 20 percent, from 3,859 to 3,080 reported property crimes per 100,000 Kansas residents. This decline outpaced the drop in the national property crime rate over the same time period.

49. Index crimes are the eight criminal acts used to measure crime rates reported to law enforcement. Crimes are sorted into two categories: violent (murder, non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault) and property (burglary, larceny-theft, and arson); Crime Statistics by Year, Kansas Bureau of Investigation.
experienced an increase in their property crime rates, including 5 that increased more than 200 percent and 12 that increased 100 percent or more.  

- Wyandotte County’s 2011 reported property crime rate of 5,401 per 100,000 residents was the highest in the state, nearly double the statewide average of 3,080. This is slightly higher than the national rate of 2,909 reported property crimes per 100,000 U.S. residents.

**Reports of domestic violence are on the rise.**

- Reported incidents of domestic violence in Kansas reached 24,159 in 2011. This was the highest number since the state began collecting data on this type of crime.

- Between 2008 and 2011, there was a 12 percent increase in the number of domestic violence incidents reported per 100,000 Kansas residents, from 780 to 820. Domestic violence arrests rose 13 percent over the same period.

- The number of homicides related to domestic violence rose from 17 to 28 from 2007 to 2011, a 65 percent increase.

- In focus group meetings, county and district attorneys, victim advocates, and law enforcement officials repeatedly highlighted the recent increase in domestic violence as a point of particular concern. Recent efforts to address this issue have included the creation of a flag in the file of a person convicted of a domestic violence offense, which triggers an assessment designed to evaluate the unique risks associated with this history. In addition, the state has developed batterers’ intervention programs and changed law enforcement officials’ response to calls involving domestic violence.

**Budget cuts and diminished opportunities for grant funding have forced many local law enforcement agencies to shrink or eliminate crime reduction efforts.**

- In focus groups and in a statewide survey of law enforcement officials conducted by the CSG Justice Center, police chiefs and sheriffs expressed that in previous years they were able to fight crime more proactively by employing strategies such as community policing, youth gang units, partnerships with community organizations, neighborhood watches, and school resource officers. Recent budget cuts, however, have forced them to greatly reduce or eliminate the use of these types of approaches.

- Although law enforcement survey respondents differed in the types of crime that concerned them most, they were unanimous in their support for increased availability of crime analysis tools to help them maximize the impact of their limited resources. Only 25 percent of survey respondents (40 local departments out of 158) indicated they currently use any crime analysis techniques to support patrol and investigations. Of those 40 departments, 14 use crime analysis or predictive policing computer software.

**Figure 13. 40 out of 158 Law Enforcement Survey Respondents Indicated Use of Crime Analysis Techniques**


51. Crime Statistics by Year, Kansas Bureau of Investigation.


53. During this same time period, the definition of what crimes constitute domestic violence was altered. Some people in the field felt that this affected the number of incidents reported and others did not. Kansas law enforcement agencies have been required to fill out a report for every domestic violence incident since 1992.


55. Ibid.

56. CSG Justice Center meetings, focus groups, and surveys of more than 150 law enforcement officials and officers throughout the state, September, October, and November 2012; CSG Justice Center focus group with victims, survivors, and their advocates, September 5, 2012.

57. CSG Justice Center Kansas Law Enforcement Survey, October 2012. The response rate was 41 percent, or 162 out of the 399 Kansas law enforcement officials contacted.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid.
As funding for community mental health services has diminished, law enforcement agencies are experiencing more frequent interactions with mentally ill individuals, and most police chiefs and sheriffs report they do not have the resources and training to respond to these situations effectively.

- Of the 162 survey respondents, 156 (or 96 percent) said that mental illness is a pressing issue in their jurisdiction. Many chiefs and sheriffs observed that interactions with mentally ill individuals have increased.

- Between 2008 and 2012, Community Mental Health Centers in Kansas sustained a $20 million (or 65 percent) reduction in Mental Health Reform grants. Medicaid funding was decreased by more than $33 million, including a 10 percent rate reduction in FY 2010 and a spending reduction for FY 2011 and FY 2012. This trend follows recent reductions in funding for state mental health hospitals, which have left psychiatric crisis services greatly diminished and more people on the street without the treatment they need.

- Four out of five law enforcement executives surveyed reported that their officers/deputies receive at least some training on effective responses to people with mental illnesses. Nearly all of these respondents added, however, that their staff would benefit from additional training.

The KBI has insufficient laboratory capacity to meet the forensic science needs of the Kansas law enforcement community, which contributes to a backlog in the processing of crime scene evidence that delays justice and can result in more crimes being committed.

- Many criminal cases handled by local law enforcement agencies cannot advance until forensic evidence is processed. Since 2010, over 40 percent of agencies that responded to a survey conducted by KBI had cases dismissed or charges reduced as a result of budget cuts. Another 47 percent said that they would benefit, but lack the requisite staff to increase training/resources.

Johnson County’s Crime Reduction Efforts

Johnson County, Kansas, is an exception to the statement that crime reduction efforts across the state are diminishing as a result of budget cuts. Voters there passed a quarter of a percent sales tax for the purpose of funding county and city strategies to improve the local criminal justice system. The original sales tax was passed statewide in 2002 to bolster education funding, but voters approved a measure to redirect the revenue to public safety projects in August 2008. The tax renewal does not expire and will fund jail expansion, a new crime lab, converting the Olathe jail into a booking facility, and new juvenile facilities.

60. CSG Justice Center Kansas Law Enforcement Survey, October 2012.
61. CMHCs are licensed providers responsible for coordinating and delivering publicly funded, community-based mental health services in all 105 counties. State Mental Health Hospitals are in-patient facilities for individuals with severe mental illnesses.
63. CSG Justice Center Kansas Law Enforcement Survey, October 2012. Forty-three percent said that their department could benefit from additional training or resources. Another 47 percent said that they would benefit, but lack the requisite staff to increase training/resources.
64. The co-responder model involves sending a qualified mental health professional with a police officer to a scene where mental illness is suspected.
65. Risë Haneberg (Criminal Justice Coordinator, Johnson County, Kansas) and Kimberly Rowlands (Johnson County Mental Health Center), December 12, 2012.
result of delayed or unavailable KBI laboratory analysis reports.67

• The long delays in processing evidence create additional expenses for some counties; 35 percent of local agencies noted in the KBI survey that they paid a private laboratory for forensic analysis rather than using the state-funded KBI lab.68

POLICY OPTIONS:

3(A): Provide law enforcement agencies with competitive grant funding for initiatives that help them analyze crime data and improve their response to people with mental illnesses.

• Establish a state-funded grant program for law enforcement agencies to implement data-driven responses to crime, such as those involving targeted policing strategies, the use of technology for crime prevention and improved crime analysis capabilities,

3(B): Enhance KBI’s ability to process crime scene evidence and apprehend and prosecute individuals committing crime more efficiently.

• Support the KBI’s public-private initiative to build a new forensic facility by committing the necessary state funds to get this partnership off the ground.

RATIONALE: Research has found that targeted policing strategies that increase police presence in high-crime areas (e.g., “hot spot” policing) can help prevent and reduce crime.70 Data-driven staffing and resource allocation through crime analysis models (e.g., intelligence-led policing) can produce similarly positive results.71 Additionally, community engagement programs that address the many facets of crime, including gang violence, are making communities safer.72

3(B): Enhance KBI’s ability to process crime scene evidence and apprehend and prosecute individuals committing crime more efficiently.

• Support the KBI’s public-private initiative to build a new forensic facility by committing the necessary state funds to get this partnership off the ground.

RATIONALE: Delays in analyzing forensic evidence can mean that people who have committed crimes may not be identified, arrested, or prosecuted, and instead remain on the streets, potentially committing more crime. A new forensic facility would address the shortfall in processing capacity and prevent future victimization by more effectively and efficiently getting crime scene evidence processed. As a result, local law enforcement agencies will not need to contract with privately operated forensic laboratories, therefore preserving precious local dollars for other crime-fighting strategies.

68. CSG Justice Center Kansas Law Enforcement Survey, October 2012.
69. Data collected through personal communication with KBI staff.
To learn more about the justice reinvestment strategy in Kansas and other states, please visit: www.justicereinvestment.org

The Council of State Governments Justice Center is a national nonprofit organization that serves policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels from all branches of government. The Justice Center provides practical, nonpartisan advice and consensus-driven strategies, informed by available evidence, to increase public safety and strengthen communities.

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