



JUSTICE REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE:

How States Use Data to Design Innovative Strategies to Reduce Crime, Recidivism, and Costs

State policymakers are grappling with a unique combination of public safety challenges, including upticks in violent crime, the opioid epidemic, people who have mental illnesses in the justice system, high rates of recidivism, and the high cost of corrections, all while trying to improve services for victims and increase opportunities for people returning to communities from jail and prison. To address the challenges in their states, policymakers are recognizing that they need to collect and analyze criminal justice and behavioral health data and use that information to shift spending away from ineffective policies and practices and reinvest in cost-effective strategies that increase public safety. To tackle these issues, 30 states have partnered with The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center to use the Justice Reinvestment Initiative.

HOW IT WORKS

The Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI) is funded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) with support from The Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew) and utilizes criminal justice, behavioral health, and other reentry experts from the CSG Justice Center to

- Collect data that is often siloed and underanalyzed to spotlight the most pressing trends and drivers of crime, recidivism, and costs;
- Meet with a range of stakeholders and assess statutes, policies, and current practices;
- Deliver findings and recommendations to state leaders and stakeholders in clear, compelling, and actionable presentations;
- Help address implementation challenges once changes are adopted; and
- Establish an ongoing data monitoring process.

RESULTS

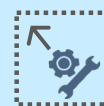
The Justice Reinvestment Initiative has resulted in significant and cost-effective public safety improvements across the country, such as

- Investments in effective law enforcement strategies to reduce crime;
- Expanded access to substance addiction treatment and other programs proven to reduce recidivism for people on supervision;
- Improved accountability at less cost with swift and proportionate responses to violations of supervision;
- Double-digit reductions in recidivism rates due to investments in smaller supervision caseloads, training, and policy changes; and
- Prioritization of prison space for people convicted of the most serious and violent offenses, thus averting prison construction and/or reducing prison overcrowding.

STATES USE THE JUSTICE REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE TO:



Tackle state and local public safety and health challenges, from recent crime trends to people who have behavioral health needs.



Scale up recidivism-reduction efforts, such as increasing the use of risk and needs assessments, the quality of supervision, and access to effective, research-based programs and services.



Enhance data collection, develop analytical capacity, and create a shared understanding of criminal justice issues.



Manage costs associated with state prison and local jail population trends.



STEPS FOR LAUNCHING A STATE'S JUSTICE REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE

1. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

In conversations with CSG Justice Center staff, state leaders indicate their commitment to receiving intensive technical assistance through JRI to address their state's challenges.

2. ORIENTATION MEETINGS

CSG Justice Center staff meet with state leaders to discuss the Justice Reinvestment process and the state's objectives. These meetings include leaders in corrections and community supervision agencies, the governor's office, the legislature and the judiciary, as well as other key stakeholders in the criminal justice system. The CSG Justice Center will also assess the state's capacity to collect, share, and analyze data across key points in the criminal justice system.

3. APPROVAL

The Justice Reinvestment Initiative is funded by BJA and Pew. State leaders must submit a letter of interest to BJA and Pew, which will be reviewed to assess the readiness of the state to undertake the Justice Reinvestment Initiative.

4. INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE CREATION

States create a committee—informally or by statute or executive order—to guide the Justice Reinvestment effort. While states tailor the composition and leadership of their committee to meet their needs, all committees should include representatives from all three branches of government and key criminal justice stakeholders.

5. DATA SHARING

States will make as much data available as possible to the CSG Justice Center, including case-level data, inclusive of basic demographics, that cover arrests and criminal history, sentencing, jails, prison, probation and parole supervision, and behavioral health. This data ensures that once a state launches JRI, the CSG Justice Center can conduct a comprehensive analysis of the state's crime, arrest, and conviction rates and pretrial, probation, parole, prison, and jail populations.

6. LAUNCH

Most states plan a public announcement for state leaders to launch the effort and outline big-picture goals. Usually this involves a press conference with the governor, chief justice, Senate president, Speaker of the House, and other key officials formally launching the state's Justice Reinvestment effort.

7. PROJECT PHASES

The first phase of a project, including data analysis, stakeholder engagement, and the development of policy recommendations, typically lasts between 9 and 18 months. States may be eligible to continue for an additional 12–24 months to support the implementation of new policies and track their impact.

The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that combines the power of a membership association, representing state officials in all three branches of government, with policy and research expertise to develop strategies that increase public safety and strengthen communities. For more information about the CSG Justice Center, visit www.csjusticecenter.org.



Justice Center
THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS



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To learn more about the
CSG Justice Center's Justice
Reinvestment work in
states, please visit
csjjusticecenter.org/jr.

This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-ZB-BX-K001 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs and helps to make American communities safer by strengthening the nation's criminal justice system. Its grants, training and technical assistance, and policy development services provide state, local, and tribal governments with the cutting edge tools and best practices they need to reduce violent and drug-related crime, support law enforcement, and combat victimization. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. Visit www.bja.gov for more information.