

May 2023

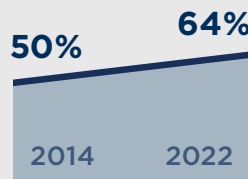
Justice Reinvestment Initiative: Prioritizing Prison Resources Where They Matter Most

The **Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI)** is a partnership with state leaders from all three branches of government committed to using their criminal justice data to examine and improve their systems by implementing proven, innovative, and comprehensive approaches to reduce crime, cut recidivism rates, and shift resources toward more effective public safety strategies.

A central goal for states engaging in JRI is to focus prison space on those who have committed serious, violent, or repeat offenses, freeing up resources to invest in more effective recidivism-reduction strategies.

The Justice Reinvestment Initiative is an intensive, data-driven approach that allows states to address key challenges in their criminal justice systems, including violent crime, opioid addiction, mental illness, corrections costs, and recidivism. JRI is funded through a public-private partnership between the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, Arnold Ventures, and The Pew Charitable Trusts. The initiative supports states to increase the cost-effectiveness of their justice systems and reinvest the savings into high performing strategies to increase public safety.

Mississippi



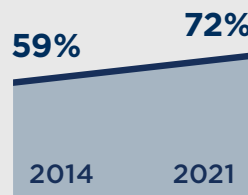
Percentage of Prison Beds Occupied by those Convicted of Violent Offenses

22% Decrease in Prison Population

JRI Passed in 2014:

- **Increased** eligibility for prison alternatives such as probation, intensive supervision, and drug court for those convicted of nonviolent offenses
- **Granted** the option for retroactive parole eligibility for some individuals incarcerated for a nonviolent offense
- **Required** mandatory time served before parole eligibility for nonviolent offenses and doubled that time for violent offenses

Utah



Percentage of Prison Beds Occupied by those Convicted of Violent Offenses

21% Decrease in Prison Population

JRI Passed in 2015:

- **Reduced** penalties for certain lower-level offenses, most of which are nonviolent
- **Increased** alternative sanctions in lieu of revocation to prison
- **Expanded** the availability of community-based drug and mental health treatment

Achieving the Goal

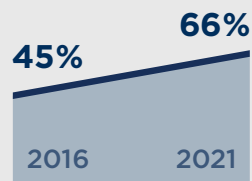
A key indicator of progress toward prioritizing prison resources where they matter is the increase in the proportion of a state's prison population comprised of people convicted of violent offenses versus nonviolent offenses.

Four states that received technical assistance from the [Crime and Justice Institute \(CJI\)](#), with funding from [BJA](#), enacted policies to achieve this goal.

The main strategies to shift the composition of the states' prison populations include:

1. **Creating tiered penalties to address violent conduct based on severity**
2. **Focusing recidivism reduction resources on those most likely to reoffend**
3. **Prioritizing incentives to encourage completion of treatment, employment, and education programs**
4. **Expanding parole eligibility for those convicted of nonviolent offenses**

Louisiana



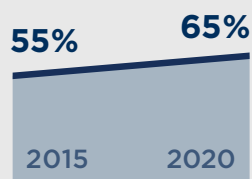
Percentage of Prison Beds Occupied by those Convicted of Violent Offenses

26% Decrease in Prison Population

JRI Passed in 2017:

- **Reduced** penalties and expanded eligibility for prison alternatives and treatment for some nonviolent offenses
- **Allowed** more individuals convicted of nonviolent offenses to earn time off their prison sentence through good behavior and participation in rehabilitative programs
- **Expanded** parole eligibility to individuals convicted of nonviolent, non-sex offenses, including those sentenced under the habitual offender statute

Alaska



Percentage of People Incarcerated for Violent Offenses

14% Decrease in Incarcerated Population

JRI Passed in 2016:

- **Expanded** law enforcement arrest discretion to focus on serious offenses
- **Reclassified** certain lower-level misdemeanors as violations and some nonviolent felonies as misdemeanors
- **Reduced** presumptive sentencing ranges for some offenses
- **Increased** penalties for homicides

Contact

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Sources: All data from annual reports from state departments of corrections and the Bureau of Justice Statistics *Prisoners* series.