

Addressing Violent Crime in Louisiana

What We Know About Violent Crime

Violent crime trends in recent years:

- Violent crime increased in Louisiana and nearly every state in the country in 2020 and 2021.
- Since the end of 2021, Louisiana and nearly every other state has experienced a steady decline in violent crime.
- Regardless of their approach to crime, states across the country saw a drop in violent crime. Some states made changes in policing practices, some focused on the use of guns, some states addressed opioid overdoses and some resumed local crime intervention programs. And all these states, like Louisiana, experienced a reduction in violent crime that continued through 2023.

What has impacted crime:

- A worldwide pandemic forced massive changes to all aspects of society.
- Public safety and justice systems changed practices to minimize exposure:
 - Courts shut down.
 - Police officials restricted confrontation of low-level suspects.
 - Treatment facilities and support programs closed, some permanently.
 - Violent crime intervention strategies stopped operating.
- As the pandemic wound down, a staffing crisis developed that affected all components of the system, and this crisis continues today.
- The delays and disruptions in the system have yet to be fully studied or resolved.

What We Don't Know About Crime

There are many outstanding questions about what causes the rise and fall of violent crime:

- *What caused some crime to rise and other crime to fall?*
- *The influence the pandemic had on criminal behavior?*
- *The relationship between the reduction or elimination of normal law enforcement practices and judicial system processes on criminal behavior?*
- *The causes of the decrease in violent crime?*
- *The influence restored policing strategies and behavioral health interventions has had on crime rates?*

What We Need to Know More

What exactly is happening with violent crime in Louisiana?

Louisiana's Violent Crime Task Force concluded that the state lacks sufficient data to understand the scope of its challenges and the effectiveness of its system programs. It recommended greatly improving data collection and transparency.

What We Need: More data on arrests and rearrests, juvenile offenders, reentry programming successes, supervision failures, recidivism drivers, time served, etc.

What has worked?

Violent crime has declined over the past two years. Are current strategies responsible for this decrease? What does the research say is most effective to deter criminal behavior?

What We Need: An assessment of current crime-control initiatives as well as research and examples of strategies proven to be effective at preventing violence.

How would current proposals to address violent crime impact the State?

In FY2023, The Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement received \$4.3 million dollars from reinvestment funds for the Crime Victim's Reparation Fund, housing for domestic violence victims, and the crime lab, among others.

The average cost per inmate per day at a state facility is \$89. In 2016, the Department had close to 8,500 more individuals in custody, which would cost the state an additional \$276 million today.

In 2023, LDPS&C had 563 vacant positions.

What We Need: Projected impacts of the prison population. Additional funding sources for programs to protect victims and incentivize staff to fill vacant positions.

How would current proposals to address violent crime impact the Parishes?

In 2023, 53% of the state's inmates were serving in local Parishes. The cost per day per inmate at a local facility is \$75. A state prison population similar to 2016 could cost the Parishes an additional \$123 million today.

Seven percent of local jails in Louisiana were under a court order to reduce capacity in 2019 and 6% were ordered to execute specific conditions for detainees.

What We Need: Projected impacts of prison population housed in local facilities. Additional funding sources for Parishes to accommodate this population.