

Impact of JRI Reforms in Louisiana between 2016 and 2023

In 2016, Louisiana had **the highest incarceration rate in the country**—nearly double the national average. As a result of a bipartisan, year-long Justice Reinvestment Initiative, Louisiana took steps to **improve public safety and maximize taxpayer resources** by implementing evidence-based policy changes. According to Department of Public Safety and Corrections (DPSC) data and the 2024 Legislative Auditor’s report, after Louisiana implemented these reforms:

- **Recidivism decreased.**

Between 2016 and 2019 Louisiana saw a **15% recidivism rate reduction** according to the [LA DPSC’s 2023 briefing book](#). Consistent with corrections agencies across the country, recidivism is described as the return to prison within three years of release.

- **Prison population dropped.**

Louisiana is no longer the top incarcerator in the country. Louisiana’s overall prison population has decreased by 24% since 2016. In 2022, Mississippi’s prison population outpaced Louisiana by 10%.

- **More resources were focused on violent offenders.**

In 2022, 63.5% of Louisiana’s prison population was incarcerated for a violent offense, up from 53% in 2016 and 47.4% in 2012. **Violent offenders also served 25% longer sentences in 2022 than in 2018** (the first year that this data was made available).

- **Millions of dollars were saved and reinvested.**

By the summer of 2022, **Louisiana saved \$153 million** as a result of JRI reforms **and reinvested \$107 million in rehabilitative programming and victim services**. \$18.3 million were appropriated to strengthen the juvenile justice system, \$17.7 million to victim supports, and \$70.8 million were invested in community-run organizations and DPSC initiatives to support re-entry and reduce recidivism.

- **Louisiana saw no reduction in public safety.**

The passage of JRI reforms **did not mark an increase in violent crime in Louisiana**. Violent crime decreased in Louisiana between 2016 and 2019, consistent with national trends. Post-pandemic, violent crime is once again on the decline in Louisiana, **dropping 5.1% from 2021-2022**. Louisiana also saw a 16% decline in property crime between 2016 and 2022.