

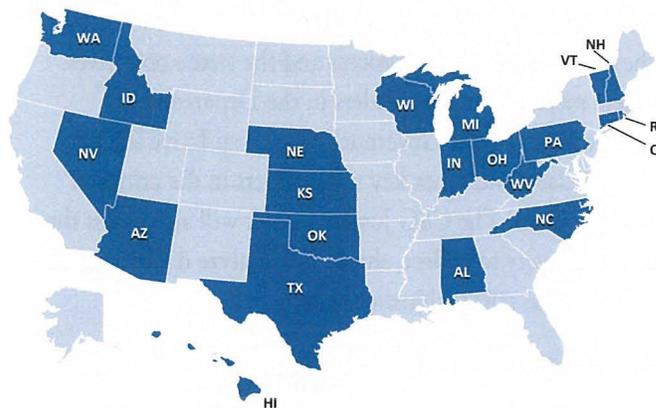
# Justice Reinvestment: How States Can Reduce Corrections Spending and Reinvest in Public Safety

Nationwide, state spending on corrections has risen faster than nearly any other state budget item—from about \$12 billion in 1988 to \$53 billion a year for all 50 states in 2013. As spending has escalated, states have sought to contain costs without compromising public safety through “justice reinvestment,” a data-driven approach to reducing corrections spending and reinvesting a portion of savings in strategies that can reduce recidivism and increase public safety. Through comprehensive, independent analysis of a state’s criminal justice data, justice reinvestment helps policymakers identify the drivers of rising costs and develop practical solutions. States engaged in a justice reinvestment process receive intensive technical assistance to:

- 1. Look at the big picture.** The CSG Justice Center provides an in-depth, objective analysis of criminal justice data to help policymakers understand what is driving crime, recidivism, prison population growth, and corrections costs.
- 2. Craft policy solutions.** The CSG Justice Center works intensively in each state to bring together the data, research on what works to change criminal behavior, and stakeholder input to develop state-specific policy options.
- 3. Turn policy into practice.** The CSG Justice Center works with all three branches of government to provide the training and technical support necessary to develop and implement effective plans that help translate policy into practice.
- 4. Measure the impact.** The CSG Justice Center works to build each state’s capacity to measure and communicate outcomes to ensure that states stay on course.

The CSG Justice Center has worked with more than 20 states using the justice reinvestment approach. As more and more states have used justice reinvestment, the range of strategies and policies deployed to reduce spending on corrections at the state and local level has evolved. From Texas to Idaho and Pennsylvania to Hawaii, states have reinvested millions of dollars in public safety efforts ranging from behavioral health treatment, law enforcement, victim services, and effective supervision strategies.

## STATES THAT HAVE RECEIVED ASSISTANCE FROM THE CSG JUSTICE CENTER



- States such as West Virginia and Kansas have taken steps to expand access and funding for behavioral health treatment.
- Oklahoma has reinvested in law enforcement grants targeting high crime areas.
- Idaho and Hawaii have implemented policy changes designed to increase the amount of restitution collected from individuals in prison.
- Many states, including Pennsylvania and North Carolina, strengthened their supervision systems by training supervision officers and providing officers with the authority to respond to supervision violations swiftly.

## Funding for Justice Reinvestment

Justice reinvestment technical assistance is funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance and The Pew Charitable Trusts. The first phase of a project, including data analysis, stakeholder engagement, and the development of policy recommendations typically lasts between 9 and 18 months. For states that adopt policy changes based on the analysis, an additional 12 to 24 months of technical assistance is available to support the implementation of these new policies and tracking their impact.

## STATE SELECTION PROCESS

### 1. Expression of interest

In conversations with CSG Justice Center staff, state leaders must indicate their interest in exploring a justice reinvestment approach.

### 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 the Department of Corrections and the Governor's office, legislative leaders, the judiciary, and 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. Submission of letter of interest

State leaders must submit a formal letter to the Bureau of Justice Assistance and The Pew Charitable Trusts requesting technical assistance in conducting a justice reinvestment project. The letter must demonstrate bipartisan support from across all three branches of government, with signatories including the Governor, Chief Justice, Senate President, Speaker of the House, and the Secretary or Director of Corrections.

### 4. Determination by funders

BJA, Pew, and other members of the Justice Reinvestment Initiative steering committee will consider the letter of interest, as well as a memorandum from the CSG Justice Center assessing the readiness of the state to undertake a justice reinvestment project.

## NEXT STEPS

**Engage all three branches of government and key stakeholders from across the political spectrum to request assistance.**

In Idaho, for example, legislative leaders held a joint meeting of key elected and appointed state officials to receive a briefing from the CSG Justice Center on other states' experiences with justice reinvestment and to learn what kind of tailored assistance the state could expect from pursuing a justice reinvestment approach.

**Collect data from across the criminal justice system for analysis.**

States that benefit the most from justice reinvestment are able to provide data on criminal history, arrest, sentencing, jail, prison, supervision, behavioral health, and parole (if applicable).

**Establish a high-level, interagency task force to guide the effort.**

In New Hampshire, the Attorney General chaired a committee that included the Chief Justice, the House Speaker, the Senate President, and other key stakeholders.

**Plan a public announcement for state leaders to launch the effort and outline the big picture goals.**

In Nebraska, the Governor, Chief Justice, and Speaker of the unicameral legislature joined together for a press conference to formally launch the state's justice reinvestment effort.

## The Council of State Governments Justice Center

The Council of State Governments (CSG) is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan membership association of state government officials that engages members of all three branches of government. The CSG Justice Center provides practical, nonpartisan advice and evidence-based, consensus-driven strategies to increase public safety and strengthen communities.

To learn more about the CSG Justice Center, please visit [csgjusticecenter.org](https://csgjusticecenter.org).