

JUSTICE REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE (JRI)

Mississippi

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Between 1983 and 2013, Mississippi’s prison population grew by 300 percent and was projected to grow another 9 percent by 2024 at a cost of \$266 million. With technical assistance through JRI, Mississippi enacted HB 585 in 2014 to ensure certainty in sentencing, improve public safety, and focus prison space on people convicted of serious offenses.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Through HB 585, Mississippi:

Ensured Certainty in Sentencing and Reserved Prison Space for Serious Offenses

Created a uniform definition of “violence” to inform time served requirements and eligibility for parole, habitual offender status, and pretrial diversion.

Implemented requirements that people convicted of nonviolent and violent offenses must serve 25 and 50 percent, respectively, of their sentence before being released.

Revised drug and property offense statutes and established presumptive parole for some property crimes.

Supported Local Corrections Agencies

Limited the length of time people on probation and parole can be held in county jails on technical violations or awaiting hearings to 21 days.

The Mississippi Department of Corrections reimburses counties for holding people on probation and parole awaiting hearings for technical violations.

Strengthened Supervision

Established earned discharge credits for people on probation and parole to encourage compliance and focus supervision resources on people assessed as high-risk. Increased the successful discharge rate from 68 percent in 2012 to 82 percent in 2015.

Created technical violation centers (TVCs) to house people revoked for technical violations of supervision. Capped incarceration for the first and second technical violations at 90 and 120 days, respectively.

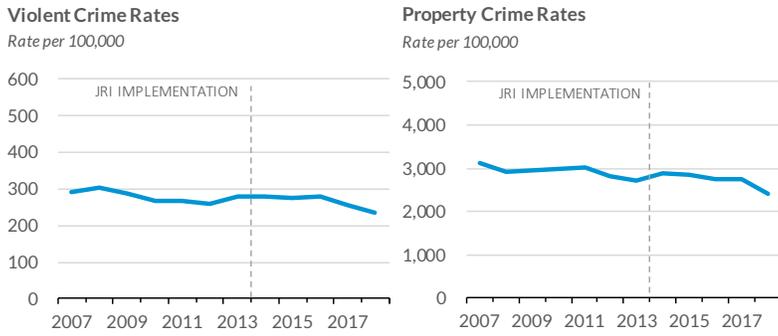
INNOVATION THROUGH JRI

Mississippi established technical violation centers to address the growing number of people admitted to prison for technical violations of probation or parole.

HB 585 created TVCs that provide an alternative to revocation and a rehabilitative approach to address the underlying causes of criminal behavior in an effort to respond more effectively to technical violations for people on probation and parole. Mississippi has faced a number of challenges in implementing the TVCs. For example, only one facility has been opened for women, multiple centers for men have opened and closed in the first three years after reform and programming and services have generally been insufficient. These challenges have made decisionmakers less willing to use TVCs as an alternative to prison. However, as of 2018, programming for men has been consolidated in one facility and standardized for all participants. Although technical-violation admissions to prison were higher between 2014 and 2017 than between 2011 and 2014, technical-violation admissions to TVCs were also higher, and the average length of incarceration and the number of bed days used for technical violations were lower.

SAVINGS/REINVESTMENT	
Savings/averted costs	State JRI investment
\$40,000,000	\$10,850,000

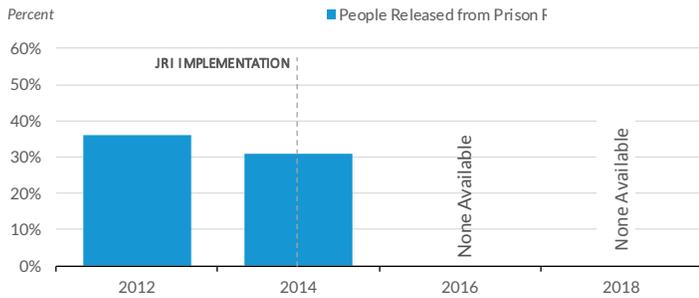
Violent and Property Crime Rates, 2007–18



Source: FBI, Uniform Crime Reporting Program (2007–2018).

- Violent crime rates were steady before JRI and remained stable after reform.
- Property crime rates were steady before JRI and remained stable after reform.

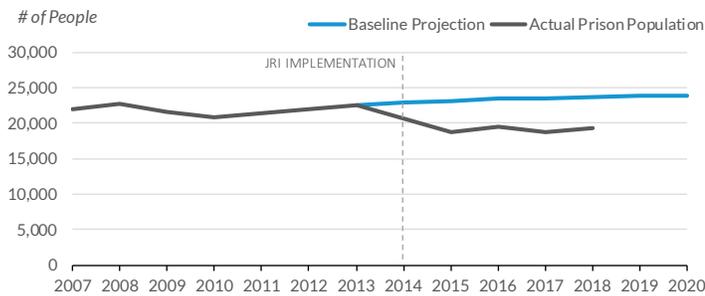
Recidivism Rate: Reincarceration within Three Years



Sources: Mississippi Department of Corrections Recidivism Report, August 2015; CSG 50 State Workbook, Mississippi.

- Recidivism rates declined for people released from prison between 2012 and 2014.

Prison Population

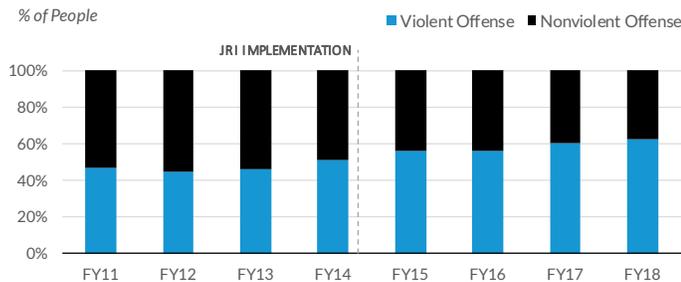


Sources: Mississippi daily inmate population reports as of July 31 of each year; Baseline prison projection from the Mississippi Department of Corrections July 2013 10-year adult prison population projection.

Note: Actual count includes people incarcerated in jails, community work centers, private prisons, and restitution centers. Beginning in 2015 it also includes people held in technical violation centers.

- In 2018, there were approximately 4,500 fewer people in Mississippi prisons than projected prereform.

Prison Composition



Source: Mississippi Department of Corrections Monthly Fact Sheet as of July each year.

Notes: Drug, property, and nonviolent offenses are categorized as nonviolent. Sex, aggravated assault, and violent offenses are categorized as violent offenses. Counts taken as of July 1 or 2 of each year.

*The data in this summary describe trends and provide additional context on system changes pre- and post-reform. Indicators shown here track high-level changes in state justice systems and do not necessarily demonstrate the impact of any specific reform, including JRI policy and practice changes. Visit urban.is/JRI to see detailed sources for information in this fact sheet.

- Mississippi is focusing prison space on people convicted of serious offenses. In 2018, 63 percent of people in prison were there for a violent offense, up from 47 percent in 2011.