

JUSTICE REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE (JRI)

Nebraska

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Between 2004 and 2013, Nebraska’s prison population grew 19 percent and prison facilities were operating at 159 percent of capacity in 2014. The prison population was projected to grow another 7 percent by 2020, and facilities to reach 170 percent of capacity. With technical assistance through JRI, Nebraska enacted LB 605 in 2015 to increase public safety and control corrections spending by focusing prison space on people convicted of serious offenses, strengthening probation, and authorizing and requiring postrelease supervision for most people released from prison.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Through LB 605, Nebraska:

Focused Prison Space on Serious Offenses

Required that misdemeanor sentences be served in jail rather than prison and created a grant program to fund costs of holding people in local jails in select counties.

Adopted evidence-based parole guidelines requiring the Board of Parole to consider risk factors and needs in release decisionmaking.

Strengthened Probation and Parole Supervision

Expanded the range of sanctions probation and parole officers can use in response to supervision violations with no increase in revocations to prison, even as the number of people on supervision rose by 28 percent between 2015 and 2017.

Authorized postrelease supervision for people with prison terms shorter than one year, and required at least nine months of postrelease supervision for low-level felony offenses. The number of people released from prison without any supervision decreased 20 percent between 2015 and 2017.

Streamlined reentry by requiring corrections agencies to collaboratively develop transition plans for people moving from prison to community supervision.

Supported Victims of Crime

Improved the process for collecting restitution and reinvested nearly \$240,000 in the state’s victims’ compensation fund between 2016 and 2017.

INNOVATION THROUGH JRI

Through JRI, local and state partners collaborated to develop a targeted transitional living program—Project Integrate—to support people returning home from prison.

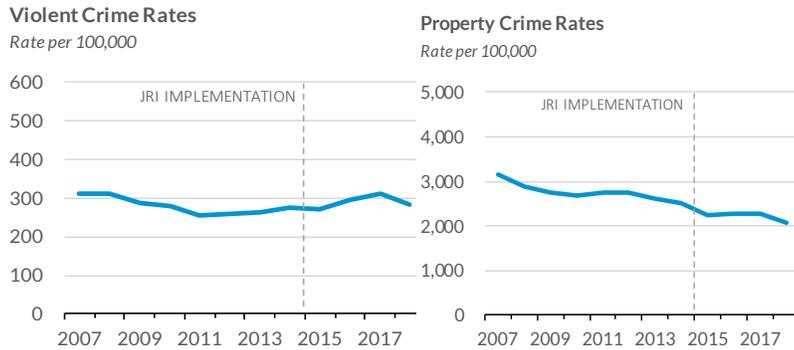
Through LB 605, Nebraska required a term of postrelease supervision for most people convicted of low-level felonies upon release from prison or county jails. Since 2015, the state’s probation agency has provided supervision and services for this population and noted several challenges to successful reentry, particularly a lack of housing and sober-living options. To address these barriers, the agency developed a transitional living program that provides people at high risk of reoffending short-term housing in halfway houses and transitional living facilities. Through a JRI Maximizing grant, funded by BJA, the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services, Douglas County Corrections, and the Office of Parole Administration collaborated to expand housing options in Omaha for people returning to the community who need housing and are diagnosed with a mental health or substance use disorder. Through this initiative, called Project Integrate, stakeholders have partnered with 10 providers to date to offer targeted housing and wrap-around programs and services to match client needs. More than 250 referrals had been made as of June 2019.

SAVINGS/REINVESTMENT

Savings/averted costs	State JRI investment
Unknown	\$16,200,000

DATA TRENDS*

Violent and Property Crime Rates, 2007-18

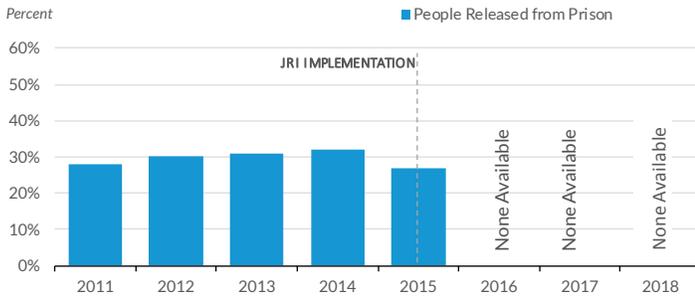


Source: FBI, Uniform Crime Reporting Program (2007–2018).

↑ Violent crime rates were flat before JRI and increased after reform.

▬ Property crime rates were declining before JRI and remained relatively stable after reform.

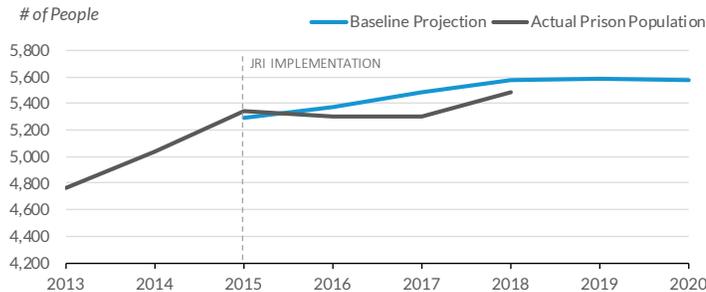
Recidivism Rate: Reincarceration within Three Years



Source: Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Quarterly Population Summary, January-March 2019.
Note: Data is not yet available for 2016 and sufficient time has not passed to calculate the three-year rate for 2017-2018.

↓ Recidivism rates increased and then declined for people released from prison between 2011 and 2015.

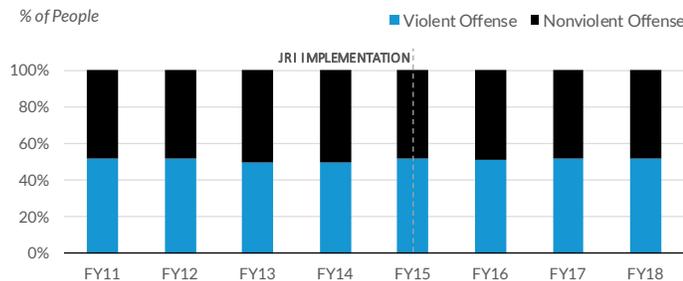
Prison Population



Source: Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) Design Capacity and ADP FY 1982-2023; NDCS monthly count as of June 30th, each year.

↓ In 2018, there were approximately 100 fewer people in Nebraska prisons than projected before reform.

Prison Composition



Source: Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) Annual Reports 2011-2018; Rates for 2015 and 2016 provided by NDCS.

▬ In 2018, 52 percent of people in prison were there for a violent offense consistent with 52 percent in 2011.

*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 urbn.is/JRI to see detailed sources for information in this fact sheet.