

**JUSTICE REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE (JRI)**

# West Virginia

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Between 2002 and 2011, West Virginia’s prison population increased by 50 percent, and was projected to grow another 24 percent by 2018 at a cost of at least \$350 million. With technical assistance through JRI and guidance from the interbranch Justice Reinvestment Working Group, West Virginia enacted SB 371 in 2013 to strengthen community supervision, improve accountability, and reduce substance use.

**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Through SB 371, West Virginia:

**Improved Access to and Quality of Behavioral Health Treatment**

Invested \$11.1 million between 2014 and 2017 to expand community-based substance use treatment and services, particularly for people at high risk of reoffending.

Created a “treatment supervision” sentencing option, giving judges discretion to sentence people convicted of felony drug offenses to probation with treatment services rather than incarceration.

Expanded use of Day Report Centers to facilitate coordination between local behavioral health and correctional agencies.

Leveraged new funding sources, such as Medicaid, to cover behavioral health treatment and services for people on community supervision.

**Increased Accountability and Improved Supervision Practices**

Ensured all people serving time for violent offenses are supervised in the community for one year after their release from prison.

Established a range of cost-effective sanction options to address supervision violations.

Required the use of risk assessments to inform supervision.

**Increased Efficiency of Parole Release Decisionmaking**

Streamlined assessment practices and decreased delayed parole hearings by 20 percent between 2012 and 2015.

Implemented structured, evidence-based parole release guidelines to streamline the release process.

Prioritized limited programming resources to support evidence-based programs for those most likely to reoffend.

**INNOVATION THROUGH JRI**

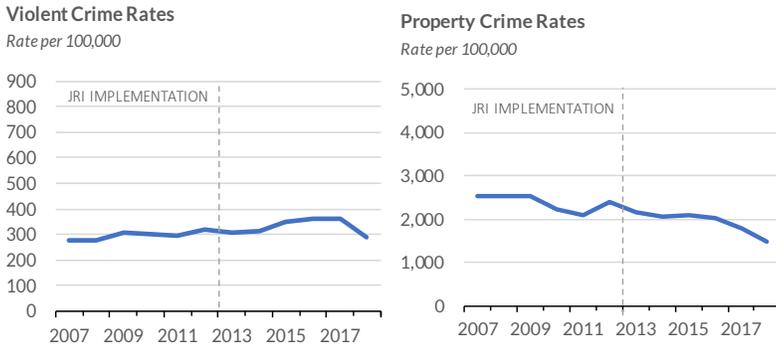
Through JRI, West Virginia created a **unique partnership between corrections and behavioral health agencies** to support expansion in **community-based substance use treatment.**

West Virginia created the Treatment Supervision Program (TSP) through JRI to address the problem of people on probation with substance use needs returning to prison, as well as its opioid overdose death rate, which was the highest in the US. The TSP was developed and implemented in conjunction with the state’s judiciary and behavioral health, corrections, and criminal justice planning agencies to collaboratively expand community-based treatment options. Before JRI, West Virginia provided minimal funding for substance use disorder treatment for those on probation and parole. Through TSP, the state has created critical infrastructure and built a new system to provide substance use treatment services for people supervised in the community. The program funds outpatient services, community engagement specialists, recovery residences, and peer recovery coaches. Between 2014 and 2017, West Virginia invested \$11.1 million to stand-up programs in 39 of the state’s 55 counties.

| <b>SAVINGS/REINVESTMENT</b>  |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Savings/averted costs</b> | <b>State JRI investment</b> |
| \$24,895,115                 | \$11,920,000                |

**DATA TRENDS \***

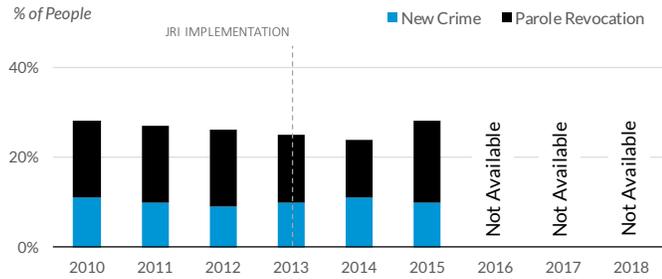
## Violent and Property Crime Rates, 2007–18



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

- ↑ Violent crime rates were increasing before JRI and continued to increase after reform.
- ↓ Property crime rates were declining before JRI and continued to decline after reform.

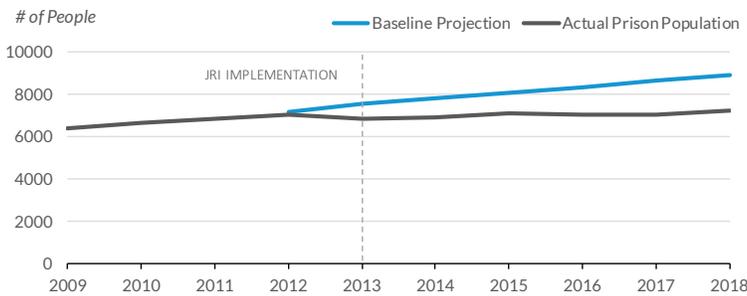
## Recidivism Rate: Reincarceration within Three Years



Source: WV Division of Corrections, "Recidivism... Inmates Released in 2014" (July 2018).  
Note: Recidivism defined as recommitted to custody of WV DOC within three years of release from prison.

- ▬ Between 2010 and 2015, recidivism rates declined and then increased for people released from prison.

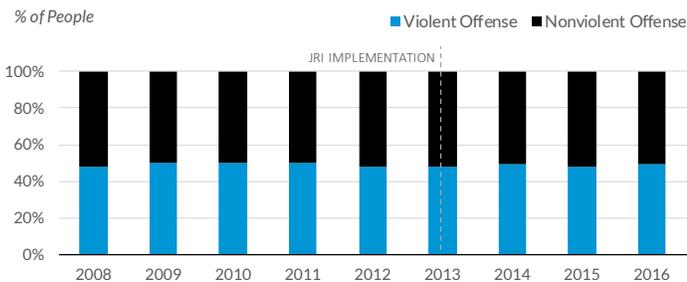
## Prison Population



Sources: WV Division of Corrections, Annual Reports (FY 2009-FY 2018); Baseline prison population projection was calculated by the WV Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center.  
Note: Data are not yet available for 2016 and sufficient time has not passed to calculate a three-year rate in 2017 or 2018.

- ↓ In 2018, there were approximately 1,700 fewer people in West Virginia prisons than projected before reform.

## Prison Composition



Source: WV Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation communication, May 2019.

- ▬ In 2018, 47 percent of people in prison were there for a violent offense, compared with 48 percent in 2012.

\*The data in this summary describe trends and provide additional context on system changes pre- and postreform. 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](http://urban.is/JRI) to see detailed sources for information in this fact sheet.