

# Vera Institute of Justice

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

**<https://www.vera.org/research/chicago-ideas-it-doesnt-have-to-be-this-way>**

## Policy Issue Resources

The Vera Institute of Justice teamed up with Chicago Ideas to envision the American prison system, and imagine a society in which prisons serve as rehabilitation facilities for communities and citizens, rather than as crippling institutions. The conversation combined performance, first-person testimony, and compelling dialogue that all looked into not only how the American prison system can cause civil death, but also what everyday citizens can do to help reshape the way in which incarceration affects the country.

Part Two: It Doesn't Have to Be This Way A moderated, multi-disciplinary conversation that looked into the power and potential of reimagining our prison system to emphasize human dignity over punishment.

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How to Increase Safety and Break Our Failed Reliance on Mass Incarceration

In the United States, violence and mass incarceration are deeply entwined, though evidence shows that both can decrease at the same time. A new vision is needed to meaningfully address violence and reduce the use of incarceration and to promote healing among crime survivors and improve public safety. This report describes four principles to guide p ...

Vera @ Chicago Ideas - Part III

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Lifting a nearly 30-year ban on Pell Grants for people who are incarcerated, Congress passed the FAFSA Simplification Act, which restores their Pell Grant eligibility starting in 2023, allowing them to affordably pursue postsecondary education in prison. The Second Chance Pell (SCP) Experiment has highlighted the success of prison education program ...

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