

# Vera Institute of Justice

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

**<https://www.vera.org/research/the-anatomy-of-discretion-podcast-2-of-4-interview-with-anne-j-swern>**

## Policy Issue Resources

This is the second in a four-part series discussing findings from The Anatomy of Discretion, a Vera Institute study of factors that influence prosecutors decisions in criminal cases. In this part, prosecutor Anne J. Swern discusses the effects of resource constraints. Swern is First Assistant District Attorney for Kings County, NY, and serves on the board of directors and the executive committee of the National District Attorneys Association. In other podcasts in this series, one of the studys authors summarizes its main findings; a federal judge discusses the balance between individualized treatment of defendants and consistency in decision making across similar cases; and a law professor discusses the balance between strength of evidence and other considerations.

This is the second in a four-part series discussing findings from The Anatomy of Discretion, a Vera Institute study of factors that influence prosecutors decisions in criminal cases. In this part, prosecutor Anne J. Swern discusses the effects of resource constraints. Swern is First Assistant District Attorney for Kings County, NY, and serves on the board of directors and the executive committee of the National District Attorneys Association. In other podcasts in this series, one of the studys authors summarizes its main findings; a federal judge discusses the balance between individualized treatment of defendants and consistency in decision making across similar cases; and a law professor discusses the balance between strength of evidence and other considerations.

On September 26, thousands of people held in Alabama state prisons went on strike. The Alabama Department of Corrections (ADOC) has been under federal investigation since 2016, and conditions inside the state prisons are among the deadliest in the nation. Strikers say the horrific conditions include overcrowding, neglect, abuse, and a drug epidemi ...

As we approach the first midterm election since the January 6 Capitol Hill riot, the integrity of our elections is under more scrutiny than ever. Fearmongering around the myth of voter fraud is a deliberate tactic at the local, state, and federal level, and mass incarceration is central to that strategy. This summer, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis ...

To truly tackle the devastating impact of the criminal legal system, we need politicians who have lived experience.

When I vote, I feel free. This past spring, passersby could read these words on a billboard at 1201 Half Street Southeast in Washington, DC. The billboard was a result of a national campaign by artist-led consortium For Freedoms, in which artists, activists, and prison reform organizations responded to the question: What does justice mean to you ...

Transformative change, sent to your inbox.

Vera Institute of Justice. All rights reserved.