

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/blog/justice-brief-the-biggest-justice-reform-stories-you-missed-last-week-explained>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

On Monday, Denver city officials [announced the launch of a legal defense fund](#), called the Denver Immigrant Legal Services Fund, to provide legal representation to immigrants facing detention and deportation. [Denvers decision](#) makes it the 12th U.S. jurisdiction to join Veras [SAFE \(Safety And Fairness For Everyone\) Cities Initiative](#) alongside Oakland/Alameda County, CA; Sacramento, CA; Santa Ana, CA; Atlanta, GA; Chicago, IL; Baltimore, MD; Prince George's County, MD; Columbus, OH; Austin, TX; San Antonio, TX; and Dane County, WI.

Modeled after a similar effort in Baltimore, [Philadelphia officials are expanding](#) a new diversion program called Police-Assisted Diversion that trains law enforcement to treat and connect people struggling with addiction to social services instead of arresting them. [Participants are offered two opportunities](#) to participate in the program, after which a third offense will be prosecuted. The program is partly funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundations Safety and Justice Challenge to help the city's efforts to reduce its jail incarceration rates.

A [new poll](#) from YouGov/Huffington Post shows that [63 percent of Americans](#) believe that people with felony conviction histories should have their voting rights restored as soon as they've completed their sentences.

A [New York State initiative](#) is training people who are soon to be released from prison to use the life-saving drug, naloxone, in their communities upon release, proving an effective public health intervention to the opioid crisis. [By involving three key actors in the program](#), corrections and parole staff, incarcerated individuals, and their family members, the program provides a comprehensive response to the opioid crisis that invests in high-risk communities.

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