

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/publications/justice-in-review-new-trends-in-state-sentencing-and-corrections-2014-2015>

Policy Issue Resources

Publication

In 2014 and 2015, 46 states enacted at least 201 bills, executive orders, and ballot initiatives to reform at least one aspect of their sentencing and corrections systems. In conducting this review of state criminal justice reforms, Vera found that most of the policy changes focused on three areas: creating or expanding opportunities to divert people away from the criminal justice system; reducing prison populations by enacting sentencing reform, expanding opportunities for early release from prison, and reducing the number of people admitted to prison for violating the terms of their community supervision; and supporting reentry into the community from prison. By providing concise summaries of representative reforms in each of these areas, this report serves as a practical guide for other state and federal policymakers looking to effect similar changes in criminal justice policy.

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