

# Vera Institute of Justice

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/research/covid-19-and-prisons>

### Policy Issue Resources

During this webinar, former and current corrections and legislative leaders grapple with strategies for releasing people who are in prison, including pathways that currently exist for directors of departments of correction and those that will require gubernatorial or legislative action. Panelists also discuss what types of reentry supports will be needed for those being released under these unique circumstances, such as strategies for securing housing, medical, and cost-of-living support. Finally, to address issues affecting those who will remain in prison, one state department of corrections operations director discusses how to align prison operations with public health recommendations while centering human dignity.

#### Speakers

- Scott Semple, Former Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Corrections; Consultant, Restoring Promise
- Mike Lawlor, Former Undersecretary to Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy; Associate Professor, University of New Haven
- Andre Stancil, Deputy Director Prison Operations, Colorado Department of Corrections
- Richard Cho, CEO, Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness

#### Moderators

- Juan Gomez, Executive Director, MILPA Collective; Co-Director, Restoring Promise
- Alex Frank, Project Director, Vera Institute of Justice; Co-Director, Restoring Promise

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The coronavirus, or COVID-19, has been declared by the World Health Organization to be a global pandemic. As the number of people infected in the United States grows exponentially, we must focus on prevention and containment in the criminal and immigration legal systems. Vera and Community Oriented Correctional Health Services have created a series ...

The COVID-19 crisis is bringing our world to a standstill. However, our nation's jails, prisons, and detention centers are continuing to operate without proper health precautions, leaving incarcerated people and corrections staff extremely vulnerable to the virus. Vera President and Director, Nicholas Turner, responds to the lack of immediate action ...

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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