

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/publications/detention-of-alleged-probation-and-parole-violators-in-orleans-parish-prison>

Policy Issue Resources

Publication

Close to one in five people detained in the New Orleans jail are waiting for a court date (also known as adjudication) to resolve alleged probation or parole violations. This detention affects nearly 2,000 people a year and heavily inflates the local jail population. In this report, Vera conducted a thorough analysis of all probation and parole violation detentions in the year 2012, and concluded that pre-adjudication detention was overused in a high number of cases. Vera made the following recommendations to reduce the overuse of detention:

These evidence-based recommendations are a key opportunity for jurisdictions to rethink detention practices, safely reduce jail populations, and improve the lives of people under supervision.

We must look at who we are putting in our jails, how long we detain them, and whether they should be there in the first place. New Orleans is an example of how detention can be overused and unnecessary, and how policy changes that reduce detention of alleged violators of probation and parole can improve public safety and reduce harm for people under supervision.

Detaining probationers and parolees can greatly destabilize their lives, risking the loss of jobs, income, and housing, which hurts their chances of community success and increases their chances of recidivism.

While discretion is allowed, it is not often used: large numbers of people are detained with no consideration of their circumstances or the appropriateness of detention.

The majority of people who are detained for probation and parole violations do not go to prison after adjudication but are released and sent back to supervision.

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