

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/state-of-justice-reform/2018>

Policy Issue Resources

Justice reform took an unlikely end-of-year turn with the success of the bipartisan-supported FIRST STEP Act, the first major federal criminal justice reform since 2010. But overall, 2018 was a year of deepening tensions. Immigrant families were separated at the border, even as jurisdictions around the country mounted public defense programs for people facing deportation. Some states reforming their justice systems added harsher penalties for opioid offenses. And, in the age of #MeToo, one sexual assault survivor reluctantly took the spotlight to challenge a Supreme Court nominee.

Join Vera for a journey through the stories that shaped American justice in 2018.

Like many justice reform organizations, Vera is often asked, What are the latest and most interesting developments in the field? Especially in 2018 as the nation grappled with immigration, mass incarceration, and the opioid crisis more and more people confronted the need to improve the nation's broken justice system and wanted to help.

Justice reform progressed unevenly this year: some states embraced reform, some enacted more punitive measures, and the federal government continued its assault on immigration. Our interactive report, *The State of Justice Reform 2018*, cites major trends and developments during the year, including a focus on the historic midterm elections. Below, we highlight some of our favorite justice-related films, books, podcasts, art, and music from 2018:

Share the facts about criminal justice reform with your networks. Together, we can build and improve justice systems that ensure fairness, promote safety, and strengthen communities.

Explore how justice reform issues play out in the media and popular culture through these spotlights on key moments in the news.

What does justice reform look like in your state?

We are grateful to the many people who helped bring the State of Justice Reform and Best of Justice Reform 2018 to life. This project was made possible in part by the Present Progressive Fund.