

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/publications/the-fiscal-crisis-in-corrections-rethinking-policies-and-practices>

Policy Issue Resources

Publication

States across the United States are facing the worst fiscal crisis in years. All but two states are dealing with budget deficits, and spending is being cut across the board. Second only to Medicaid, corrections has become the fastest growing general fund expenditure in the United States. Considered off limits for many years, corrections budgets are now subject to these same cuts. Based on a survey of enacted FY2010 state budgets and other recent sentencing and corrections legislation, this new report from Vera's Center on Sentencing and Corrections found that at least 26 states have reversed the trend of recent decades and cut funding for corrections. This report examines the form of these cuts, including reductions in operational costs, reforms in release policy, and strategies for reducing recidivism, and it highlights some of the innovations that states are pursuing for long-term savings while also maintaining public safety.

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