

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/publications/the-challenges-of-replacing-prison-with-drug-treatment-implementation-of-new-york-states-extended-willard-program>

Policy Issue Resources

Publication

Extended Willard is a New York State entry in the growing number of programs that emphasize treatment rather than long prison sentences for nonviolent substance-abusing offenders. This report on the implementation of the three-phase, 15-month Extended Willard pilot program evaluates enrollment, completion rates for participants, and the way that criminal justice agencies and non-governmental treatment providers work together to run the program. Results show that creation of new sentencing options may not be sufficient to change sentencing practices. Although about half of those sentenced to Extended Willard completed the program successfully, courts sent less than one-fifth of those with eligible criminal records to the program, sending most to prison instead.

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