

Illinois

The project selected Illinois to receive intensive, nonpartisan research, analysis, and expertise. Among other factors, its leaders have demonstrated both a bipartisan commitment to explore meaningful policy change and a dedication to collecting and using criminal justice data as a basis for sound reforms.

Progress Update »

Chicago Metropolis 2020, a prominent group of business and civic leaders tackling key social and economic issues facing Illinois, recognized the need to revise the state's 300,000-word criminal code to make it clearer and more rational. The group established the CLEAR (Criminal Law Edit, Alignment and Reform) Initiative, a panel of top policy makers and criminal justice practitioners. The Vera Institute of Justice, a partner of the Public Safety Performance Project, supported the Initiative's commissioners and staff by collecting criminal justice data and providing analysis.

Armed with the commission's information, Illinois lawmakers are considering comprehensive legislation that would reorganize and reduce the size of the criminal code by about one-third. The revisions should make the administration of justice in Illinois more effective and efficient. Benefits include minimizing disputes over interpretation of the code that were causing expensive court delays, appeals and retrials, and making it easier for policy makers to understand the implications of amendments to the code they might offer in the future.

Lawmakers also are considering creating a Joint Criminal Law Review Commission to evaluate all proposed criminal and penal legislation to determine whether it is constitutional, duplicates or is inconsistent with existing law, and is placed in an appropriate place within the code.

State Profile »

A profile of Illinois that provides statistical and analytical data about its sentencing and corrections systems, describes factors shaping those systems, and highlights opportunities for reform.

[Download Illinois state profile](#) (PDF) [Adobe Reader®](#) required.

State Research & Analysis »

Chicago Metropolis 2020: 2006 Crime and Justice Index

An ambitious catalogue of crime, its cost and the criminal justice response as documented by Chicago Metropolis 2020, a Public Safety Performance Project partner.

[Download "Crime and Justice Index"](#)

News

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- **A refreshing concept; Prison offers a new lease on life for inmates battling drug addictions**
- *The News-Gazette*
- April 22, 2007

When Charles Truitt began working in the Illinois state prison system in 1992 after more than seven years as a military policeman, he described himself as assertive and eager. "I wanted to come to work. I have never been a quitter," he said. But he was also living on edge. "When I started in 1992, at the beginning of my day, I was not certain I would depart the facility in the same way I entered," Truitt said...

To read the full article, visit the [News-Gazette's Web site](#).

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- **Illinois Crime Riddle**

- *Chicago Tribune*

- January 7, 2007

No one theory explains why crime rates have declined in Illinois and around the country since the early 1990s. A decline in drug and alcohol abuse has been a welcome contributor. Community policing has been effective in many places. Crime tends to be an occupation of the young, but the population is aging. More people have been locked up and kept off the streets. The economy has been strong, unemployment low.

To read the full article, visit the [Chicago Tribune Web site](#).

**Registration or login required.*

- **System fails to turn former prisoners into productive citizens, report says**

- *Chicago Tribune*

- October 30, 2006

Almost half the children released from the state's juvenile detention facilities are later rearrested, according to a regional crime report that also points out other prison woes dampening the news of declining property and violent crimes.

The 2006 Crime and Justice Index also notes that elder-abuse cases are climbing in Cook, DuPage, Kendall, Will, Lake and McHenry Counties.

To read the full site, visit the [Chicago Tribune Web site](#).

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