

Kansas

The project selected Kansas 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 »

Two-thirds of people admitted to prison in Kansas have violated the conditions of their parole or probation supervision. These high rates of failure make neighborhoods less safe, and they are a key reason why the Sentencing Commission projected in 2006 that the prison population would grow 26 percent over the next 10 years, costing taxpayers an additional \$500 million to build and operate additional correctional facilities.

To reverse these trends, policymakers requested data analyses and policy options from the Council of State Governments Justice Center, a Public Safety Performance Project partner. After reviewing the analyses and considering the policy options, a strong bipartisan majority of the legislature in 2007 passed and the governor signed into law a comprehensive package of sentencing and corrections policy measures that will reduce recidivism, increase public safety, and avert up to \$80 million in additional construction and operating costs over the next five years. The measures include a credit of up to 60 days off the sentences of people in prison who complete programs designed to cut their risk of reoffending after release, and an increase from 15 percent to 20 percent in the time that nonviolent offenders can earn for good behavior behind bars. The bill also creates performance-based incentive grants for local community corrections programs, offering funding to communities that develop plans to cut failure rates by at least 20 percent.

Case Study »

By 2004, high rates of parole and probation revocations were greatly contributing to growth in Kansas' prison population and corrections expenditures. See how the Public Safety Performance Project and its partner, the Council of State Governments, helped reduce the number of monthly parole revocations in Kansas by 50 percent over the next two years.

[Download Kansas case study](#) (PDF) [Adobe Reader®](#) required.

State Research & Analysis »

Justice Reinvestment State Brief: Kansas

This brief is part of a series for state policymakers interested in learning how particular states across the country have employed a data-driven strategy called justice reinvestment to better manage corrections spending, increase public safety, and redirect some of the savings toward efforts that will improve conditions in the neighborhoods to which most people released from prison return.

[Download Kansas State Brief](#)

Tough and Smart: Opportunities for Kansas Policy Makers to Reduce Crime and Spending (Slideshow)

Two presentations prepared by the Council of State Governments Justice Center, a Public Safety Performance Project partner. The first (pages 1-12) describes the strain on Kansas' criminal justice system, analyzes policy options designed to relieve that strain, and presents sustainable neighborhood-based strategies. The second (pages 13-22) describes the principals of effective treatment, analyzes the treatment needs of Kansas' probationers, and outlines challenges and opportunities for Kansas' policy makers.

[Download "Tough and Smart" slide show](#)

Tough and Smart: Opportunities for Kansas Policy Makers to Reduce Crime and Spending (Briefing)

The Council of State Governments Justice Center, a Public Safety Performance Project partner, prepared this two-page analysis of Kansas' prison population along with policy options projected to reduce crime and prison spending. [Download "Tough and Smart" briefing](#)

Policy Options to Increase Public Safety and Manage the Growth of the Prison Population

The Council of State Governments Justice Center, a Public Safety Performance Project partner, prepared this detailed four-page analysis of the prison-bed and spending implications of several policy reform packages. [Download Kansas policy options](#)

News

Select news clips »

- **Bill provides state more time to build prison space**
- *Lawrence Journal-World and News*
- May 31, 2007

Probation supervisors across the state will be applying for new grants to keep offenders from getting their probation sentences revoked and taking up prison space. Legislators recently passed a \$4.4 million bill that Gov. Kathleen Sebelius signed into law aimed at extending the time that the state will have to build more prison space... To read the full article, visit the [Lawrence Journal-World and News' Web site](#).

- **Corrections hopes bill will reduce recidivism**
- *The Topeka Capital-Journal*
- May 28, 2007

The state could avoid having to build an estimated 1,300 additional prison beds over the next 10 years, according to the Department of Corrections, with the implementation of a recently signed bill creating a grant program to reduce recidivism. The \$4.4 million bill, signed by Gov. Kathleen Sebelius this past week, offers performance-based grants for community corrections to design programs that reduce recidivism by at least 20 percent, an idea modeled after a Shawnee County trial... To read the full article, visit the [Topeka Capital-Journal's Web site](#).
**This is a pay service.*

- **Press Release: Governor Heralds Bipartisan Legislation to Increase Public Safety, Reduce Recidivism, and Avert Spending on Corrections**
- May 22, 2007

Governor Kathleen Sebelius joins state legislators and correctional officials in heralding the enactment of a comprehensive approach to public safety. By boosting community corrections, creating incentives for program participation, and maintaining reductions in parole violations, Senate Bill 14 is projected to avert substantial prison bed construction and operating expenses. [SB14 press release](#)

- **Goal: Fewer parolees sent back to prison**

- *The Wichita Eagle*
- February 18, 2007

Over the next decade, Kansas taxpayers may be asked to spend \$500 million to take care of a projected 26 percent increase in the state's prison population. The growth is largely the result of such get-tough-on-crime measures as Jessica's Law, which when enacted last year mandated long prison terms for child sex offenders. To read the full article, visit the [Wichita Eagle Web site](#).

- **Presentation to legislators shows prison population issue**
- *The Topeka Capital-Journal*
- February 6, 2007

It is rare when a couple of out-of-state guys waltz into a legislative committee room and toss out solutions to the tricky business of reducing the prison population, maintaining public safety, and saving the state millions of dollars. And it is extraordinary when such talk is taken seriously.

To read full article, visit the [Topeka Capital-Journal Web site](#).

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- **Lawmaker wants corrections reform**
- *The Topeka Capital-Journal*
- February 3, 2007

Rep. Pat Colloton is convinced the human and financial toll of the state's "track 'em, nail 'em and jail 'em" philosophy of community corrections can no longer be tolerated. "What we've been doing is failing. We need a sea change," the Leawood Republican said Friday in an interview. "We can just keep watching or we can help people turn their conduct around."

To read full article, visit the [Topeka Capital-Journal Web site](#).

**This is a pay service.*

- **State Must Prepare Inmates For Life Outside Cells**
- By State Senator John Vratil, *The Kansas City Star*
- January 27, 2007

Safeguarding communities and ensuring cost-effective public spending are core responsibilities of government. That's why Kansans should be concerned about the high rates of failure among people on probation and parole, and the mounting costs of running our prison system.

To read full article, visit the [Kansas City Star Web site](#).

- **State Prisons Almost Filled Up**
- By Scott Rothschild and Eric Weslander, *Lawrence Journal-World*
- January 11, 2007

Kansas lawmakers reaped the political benefits of passing tough-on-crime legislation last year. Now they must pay the bill.

The state inmate population is expected to exceed the system's capacity within two years, officials said Wednesday. Some say that means lawmakers must now plan to build more prison space. To read full article, visit the [Lawrence Journal-World Web site](#).

- **Crowd control: Conference describes ways to save money, conserve space in correctional facilities**
- By Eric Weslander, *Lawrence Journal-World*
- December 13, 2006

Kansas is on track to run out of prison space within two years unless something changes, speakers warned Tuesday at a conference in Lawrence. There's an option of building a new prison with an estimated cost of about \$500 million during the next nine years. Or there's a second option of working to keep people from violating their probation or from returning once they're released from prison — an approach that researchers say can allow the prison system to remain at its current capacity until roughly 2015. To read the full article, visit the [Lawrence Journal-World Web site](#).

- **Preparing Prisons, Criminals for a Better Future**
- By Robyn Flohrschutz, *NBC Channel 27, KSNT*
- December 12, 2006

Kansas is already ahead of the curve when it comes to criminal justice. Now the state is teaming up with two national foundations to take steps even further toward a safer, more cost-effective state. To read the full article, visit the [Channel 27, KSNT Web site](#).

- **Kansas prison population issues addressed in Lawrence**
- *Channel 49, ABC News*
- December 12, 2006

Kansas' prison population is expected to climb by 26 percent over the next nine years, and there are more than \$500 million in associated costs. With those potential problems lingering overhead, lawmakers, state officials, and local leaders gathered in Lawrence on Tuesday to discuss the situation and possible solutions. To read the full article, visit the [Channel 49, ABC News Web site](#).
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