

Philadelphia 2016 Safety and Justice Challenge Fact Sheet

We've got a problem to fix:

- Philadelphia has the highest incarceration rate of any large jurisdiction in the country.
- What's more, 60 percent of the city's jail population is comprised of individuals that are awaiting trial, the vast majority of whom were detained for nonviolent offenses. Approximately half of the individuals awaiting trial are also being held for other reasons including violations of probation
- Unfortunately, despite the fact that individuals awaiting trial are innocent until proven guilty, the waits are not short: lengthy case processing has led to the city having an average length of stay for detainees that's around 95 days – four times the national average. These long jail stays also disproportionately impact African Americans, who comprise 72 percent of individuals awaiting trial in Philadelphia.

There are proposed solutions to create a fairer, more effective local justice system:

- Sustained efforts over the past year have already had a concrete impact on the Philadelphia jail population. Since beginning the Challenge last year, the average daily jail population has dropped from more than 8,100 inmates in 2015 to just over 7,500 in January of 2016.
- To find a more appropriate use of jails in Philadelphia, the city will be investing more than \$2 million in reform efforts over the next two years and will receive an additional \$3.5 million from the Safety and Justice Challenge.
- Through this investment, Philadelphia will implement a range of strategies to tackle the disproportionate impacts of the system on communities of color and low-income residents by reducing the reliance on cash bail and releasing individuals who pose a low risk to the public. Instead, it will connect these individuals with supervised, community-based alternatives using a new needs assessment tool.
- The city will also develop and implement a pre-arrest diversion pilot program in two adjoining districts that have particularly high rates of racial and ethnic disparity at the point of arrest. Additionally, Philadelphia will develop an auditing process to better track disparities in the system, while also carrying out an implicit and explicit bias training program for all employees in the justice system.
- As a result of these and other strategies in the city's three-year reform plan, Philadelphia aims to decrease the jail population by 34 percent.

Who is helping to affect change?

- The reforms outlined in the Safety and Justice Challenge are being led by the Philadelphia County Criminal Justice Advisory Board, a group of top-level county officials.
- Key stakeholders and champions including the Mayor Jim Kenney, City of Philadelphia Managing Director's Office, the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Police Department, the Philadelphia Prison System, the District Attorney's Office, the Defender Association of Philadelphia, City Council, community members, and many more are working together toward a shared vision that represents a paradigm shift in how Philadelphia uses its jails.