

Connecticut

2016 Safety and Justice Challenge Fact Sheet

We've got a problem to fix:

- In 2014, Connecticut had the fewest arrests in more than 40 years and declining crime rates continue to outpace the national average. Despite these positive criminal justice trends, challenges in our justice system remain.
- The average length of stay pre-trial in Connecticut jails is six weeks. Even a short stay in pretrial detention can have consequences for individuals, their families, and communities.

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

- To address the overuse of jails in Connecticut, the state will implement initiatives in the three largest cities which have the highest rates of custodial arrests and concentration of communities of color: Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven. These reforms will be supported by \$2.5 million from the Safety and Justice Challenge.
- In Bridgeport, African Americans make up 34 percent of the population, and yet 48 percent of custodial arrests. The same is true in Hartford and New Haven, where African Americans make up 35 percent and 33 percent of the populations respectively, but 44 percent of custodial arrests in Hartford and 56 percent of custodial arrests in New Haven.
- To address these disparities, the state will expand implicit bias training in all three cities and will undergo an evaluation of current racial and ethnic disparities so that it can establish a baseline for improvement as well as identify additional reforms to reduce disparities.
- The Collaborative Ongoing Review Team, a pretrial court processing pilot in New Haven will increase the number of defendants who are diverted to a community based program instead of jail and reduce the length of stay by two weeks.
- The Hartford Alternative to Arrest Project will provide screening and referrals to detention alternatives for individuals with mental health, substance abuse, and housing needs. The Project is anticipated to help 800 individuals avoid pretrial and jail admission over the next two years.
- The State of Connecticut will expand its Jail Diversion Substance Abuse program to provide an additional 95 defendants with access to court-based diversion to detox and residential treatment to avoid pre-trial detention.

Who is helping to affect change?

- Connecticut is one of a few states that fund and administer jails and other core criminal justice functions at the state level. The reforms outlined in the Safety and Justice Challenge are being championed by Governor Dannel Malloy and other state leaders, who since 2011 have launched several initiatives to reduce the juvenile and adult populations in state facilities. The Connecticut Office of Policy and Management's Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division will lead the implementation of the Challenge-funded reforms.