



Justice Center

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

Initial Incarceration, Reentry Analysis, and Comparison of Relevant States Interim Committee

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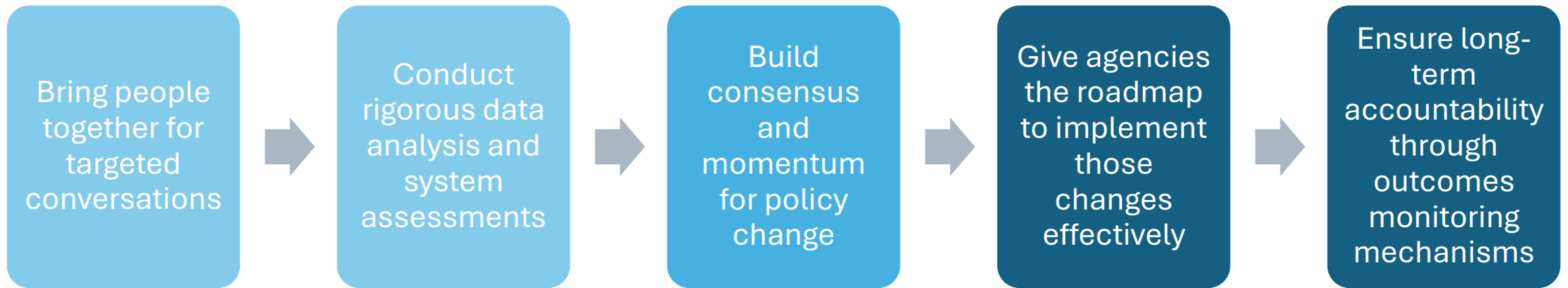
We are a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that combines the power of a membership association, serving state officials in all three branches of government, with policy and research expertise to develop strategies that increase public safety and strengthen communities.



**Justice
Center**

The CSG Justice Center has worked alongside **38 states** to assess their correctional challenges and develop tailored policy changes.

How We Work





Montana improved the quality of prison programs

Problem:

State leaders didn't know if in-prison programming investments were reducing recidivism as intended

Montana's Approach:

- **Convened an evaluation committee** to align programs with evidence, standardize offerings, and prioritize high-impact initiatives
- **Established program standards and quality assurance processes** to ensure best practices
- **Adopted an evidence-based evaluation tool** to measure program effectiveness
- **Trained staff** in research-validated practices

Outcomes:

- DOC focused resources on a set of 23 vetted evidence-based programs
- Every program regularly assessed for quality and adherence to model



North Dakota increased the availability community-based behavioral health services upon reentry

Problem:

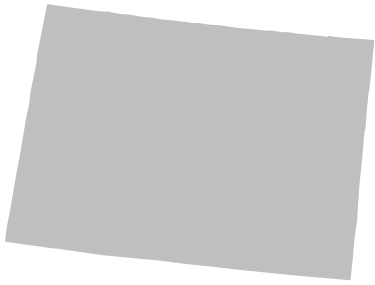
- The prison population was increasing, driven by admissions for low-level offenses and revocations from supervision.
- North Dakota ranked 6th highest in alcohol and drug abuse, but 43rd in the availability of treatment in the nation.

North Dakota's Approach:

- **Created Free Through Recovery**, a new community-based behavioral health services program for people on probation and parole

Outcomes (Through July 1, 2025):

- **7,931** total participants since 2017; 1,500 currently enrolled (capacity expanding to 2,000)
- **70%** achieved 3 of 4 stability outcomes monthly:
 - Housing: **78%**
 - Employment: **70%**
 - Recovery: **72%**
 - Law enforcement: **75%**



Wyoming transformed supervision practices to reduce prison admissions

Problem:

- Prisons at capacity with overflow being held out of state
- Behavioral health challenges increasing supervision revocations

Wyoming's Approach:

- Required supervision officers to use **evidence-informed practices** to manage the behavior of people on supervision
- Required the use of **validated risk and need assessments**
- Trained supervision officers in evidence-based practices to reduce recidivism

Outcomes:

- **20% decrease** in prison admissions for supervision violations (2018–2023)
- **20% decrease** in supervision failures (FY21 vs. FY19)
- **19% increase** in successful supervision completions (no return to custody within 3 years)

As South Dakota invests in a new prison, it has a critical opportunity to advance recidivism reduction goals.

**Rehabilitative
programming and
reentry**

*To be examined by the
task force*

**Diversion and
community-
based
rehabilitation**

**Supervision
success**

Other areas to consider

An in-depth assessment process can get South Dakota policymakers the information they need to develop targeted programming and reentry improvements.

WHO?

- Who is—and isn't—receiving programming and services?
- When and how are people accessing them?
- What are people's needs, including for culturally responsive programming?

WHAT?

- What programs and services currently exist?
- Where are the gaps between what exists and what people need?
- Is South Dakota directing resources toward the interventions most effective at reducing recidivism?

HOW WELL?

- Are programs being implemented as effectively as possible?
- How can quality assurance be strengthened?
- How can South Dakota monitor outcomes to continue progress?

Even effective reentry programs can fall short without the cross-agency collaboration needed to meet people's needs.

Significantly improving reentry outcomes means addressing complex, interconnected challenges.

Departments of Corrections play an important role, but they can't solve this alone.

- Human services
- Workforce
- Education
- Housing
- Behavioral health
- Community providers

State Highlight

Nebraska's Reentry 2030 goals:

- Increase GED completion by 30%
- Boost participation in vocational and life skills programs by 25%
- Ensure 100% of people leaving prison have IDs and birth certificates in hand
- Help at least 90% of people released find employment within 30 days

Collateral Consequences: National Model Policies

Fair Chance Hiring and Licensing

Expands licensure and job opportunities for people with criminal histories

Expungement

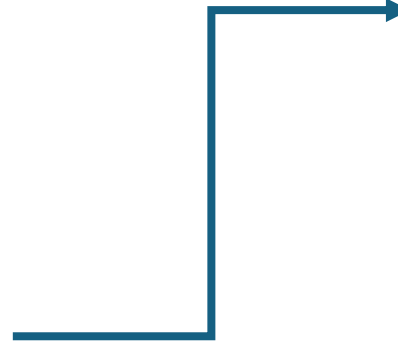
Erases or seals a criminal record making it unavailable to the public

Certificates of Relief

Offers credentials that provide evidence of rehabilitation

Employer Liability Protection

Limits the extent that employers can be held liable for negligent hiring based on employee's criminal record



17 states including KS and ND allow expungement for a wide range of felony convictions.

21 additional states including NE and WY allow expungement for a smaller subset of felonies.

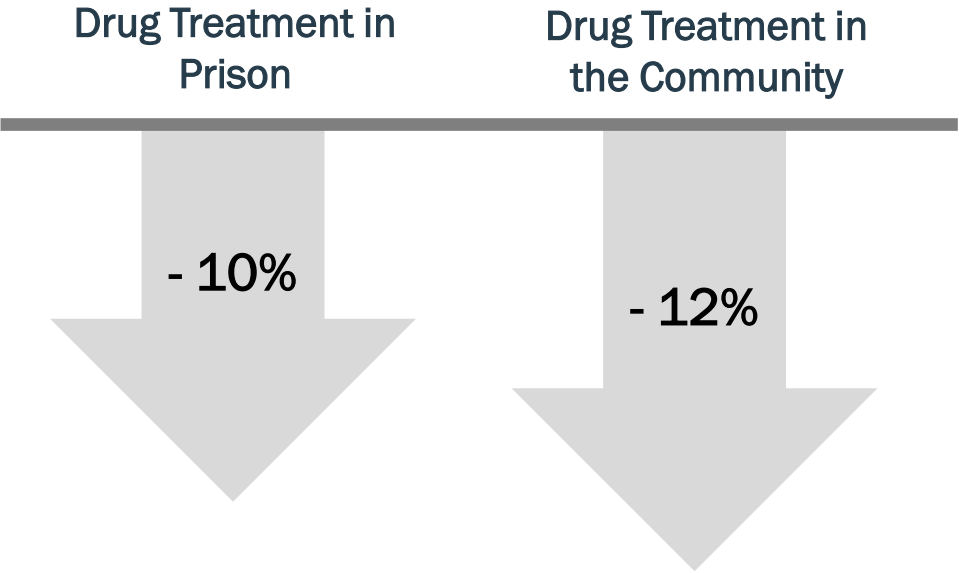
Waiting periods range from **3 to 10 years** depending on the offense

An in-depth assessment of reentry and rehabilitative programming can ensure that the **right people** receive the **right interventions** at the **right time**.

A comprehensive reentry approach should also address **cross-system barriers to reentry**.

Programming provided in the community can be as effective and less expensive than programming in prison.

Impact on Recidivism Rates



2024 South Dakota Annual Average Total Cost Per Person



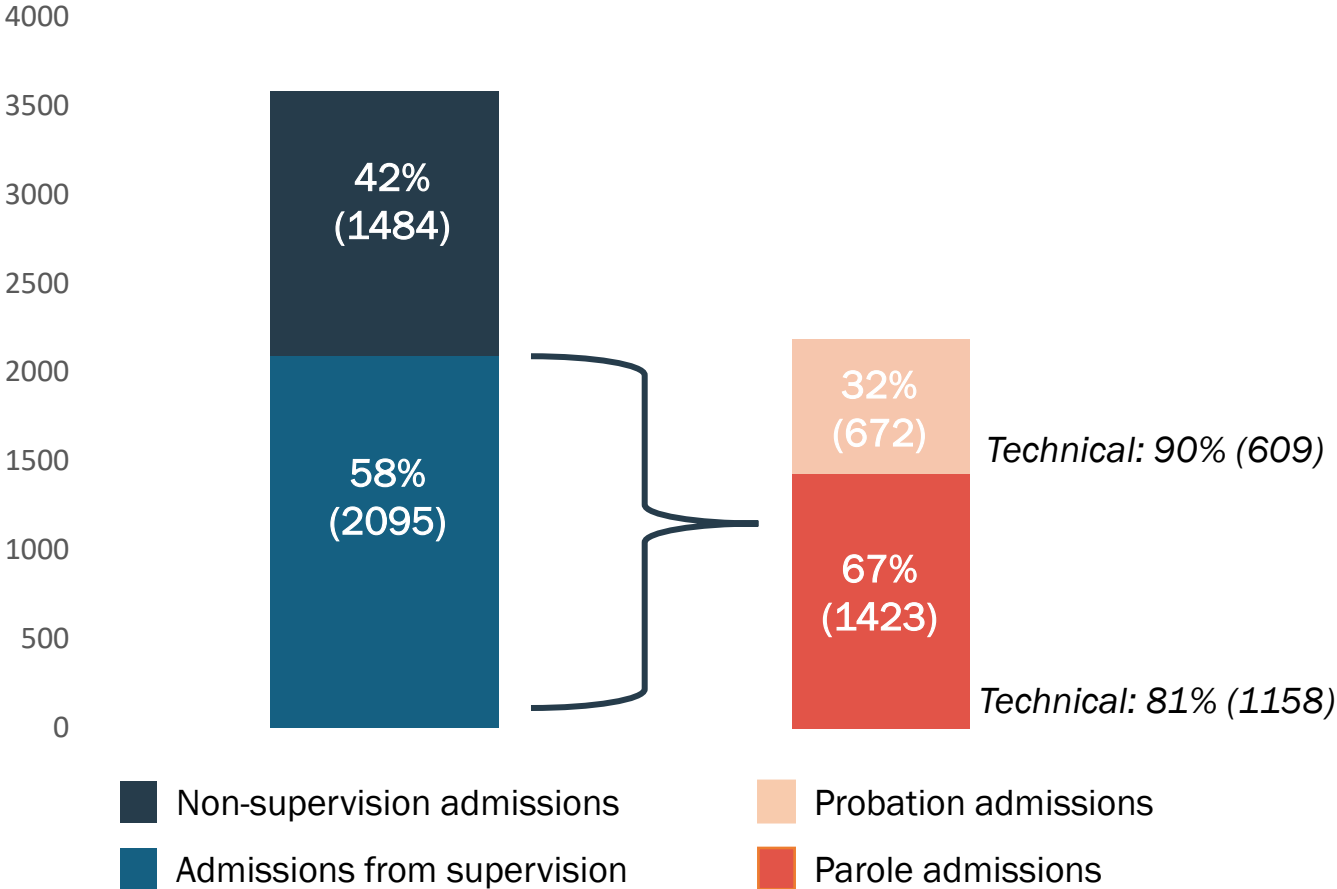
Projected Impact: Reducing Nonviolent and Drug Admissions to Prison

		Projected Change in Prison Population		
		1 year	5 years	10 years
Percent Reduction of Admissions by Offense Type, South Dakota	-10% all property and public order	-6	-29	-54
	-10% all drug, property, public order	-15	-70	-127
	-25% all property and public order	-14	-72	-135
	-25% all drug, property, and public order	-36	-174	-319

Diversion for nonviolent and drug offenses could connect people to services while also potentially reducing prison admissions.

In 2023, people on supervision represented over half of all prison admissions in South Dakota.

Prison Admission by Type
South Dakota, 2023



Improving supervision success starts with an analysis on who's falling short.

Who?

What is the profile of people who are failing? Do certain groups need different types or more intensive support?

When?

How early in the supervision term do people fail? How should parole supervision and reentry support change over the trajectory of a supervision term?

Where should South Dakota prioritize resources?

Based on the reasons people fail supervision, where should state leaders focus improvements to get the largest impact?

Understanding **who on supervision is entering prison, **when**, and **where to focus resources** would chart a course to reducing prison admissions and improving reentry outcomes.**

South Dakota needs a clearer picture of its current system to develop tailored approaches that deliver measurable results.

*Rehabilitative programming
and reentry*

Where are the gaps,
and which
successful
approaches could
be expanded to
reduce recidivism?

*Diversion and community-
based rehabilitation*

What opportunities
exist to enhance or
expand diversion
options?

*Supervision
success*

How can South
Dakota increase
supervision success
and reduce
admissions to
prison from
supervision?

The CSG Justice Center is currently partnering with SD DOC through the Advancing Data in Corrections Resident Analyst program.

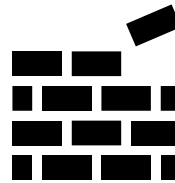
South Dakota applied for and was awarded a federally funded embedded data analyst through May 2026.

Goals:

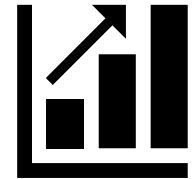
- Strengthen reentry data analytics
- Enable data-driven strategic decisions



Compile reentry best practices & identify gaps in data, reports, and processes



Build reentry metrics framework (housing, employment, health)



Advance the design of a leadership dashboard for real-time insights

How does the CSG Justice Center help states answer these types of questions?

We serve as an impartial, non-partisan resource to help state leaders tackle complicated challenges.

Rehabilitative programming and reentry

Work with the Task Force to advance their priorities and structure work for the greatest impact.

Assessments of programming and reentry to identify gaps, challenges, and opportunities.

Ongoing stakeholder engagement and data analysis to provide crucial context and help build consensus.

Assistance developing policy, budget, and practice recommendations.

Thank You!

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