



Criminal Justice Challenges and Opportunities

CSG Midwestern Legislative Conference, July 29, 2025

Violent Crime

Challenges

- Overall decline in violent crime but not in all communities
- Ongoing public concerns about crime
- Drastic decline in federal funding for crime victim services
- Low solve rates for violent offenses

Opportunities for Impact

- Increasing use of cross-system, evidence-informed strategies
- Investing strategically in criminal justice system and community responses
- Building public trust through community engagement

State	% Change in Violent Crime, 2019-2023	Solve Rate for Violent Crime, 2023
Illinois	-25%	-
Indiana	-11%	51%
Iowa	-3%	51%
Kansas	+6%	47%
Minnesota	+10%	46%
Michigan	+4%	45%
Nebraska	-25%	53%
North Dakota	-11%	57%
Ohio	-3%	30%
South Dakota	-12%	55%
Wisconsin	-3%	52%

FBI UCR Summary Reporting System, Illinois did not report enough data on solved crime to the FBI to make reliable estimates.

Recidivism and Reentry

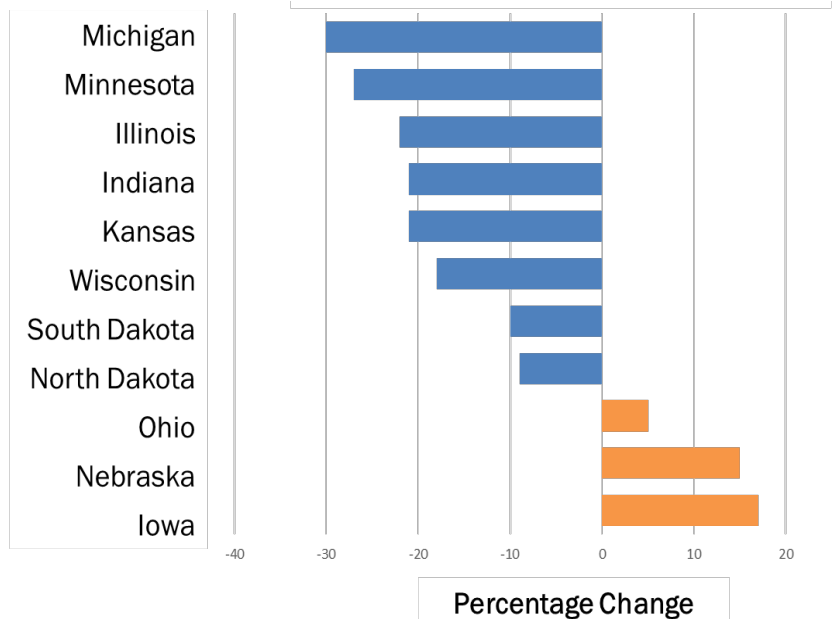
Challenges

- High reincarceration rates despite historical trends downward
- Supervision violations driving prison admissions
- Significant gaps in reentry supports
- Persistent economic barriers

Opportunities for Impact

- Leveraging cross-system partnerships and resources
- Strengthening community supervision
- Expanding access to housing, employment, health care, and education

Change in recidivism since 2008, Midwest region



CSG Justice Center analysis of published state recidivism reports.

Youth Justice and Adolescent Health

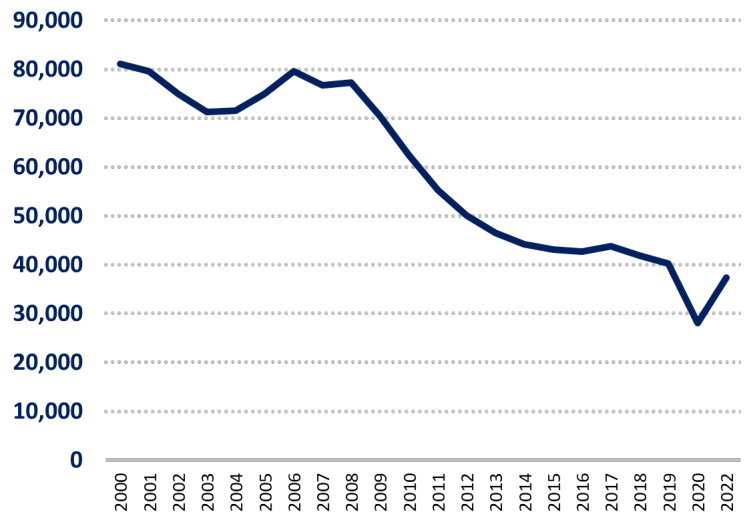
Challenges

- Overall decline in youth arrests for violent offenses but surge in arrests for homicide and weapons
- Increase in youth mental health, school, and community violence challenges
- Increase in homicides with youth victims
- Provider shortages

Opportunities for Impact

- Implementing statewide approaches to adolescent prevention services and supports
- Focusing limited resources on small number of youth who pose the greatest public safety risk
- Addressing provider capacity issues

National youth arrests for violent index crimes, 2000–2022



FBI UCR Summary Reporting System, National Incident Based Reporting System

Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice

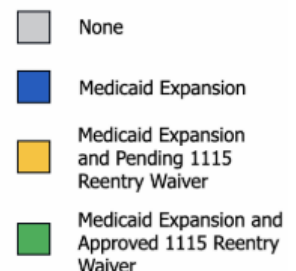
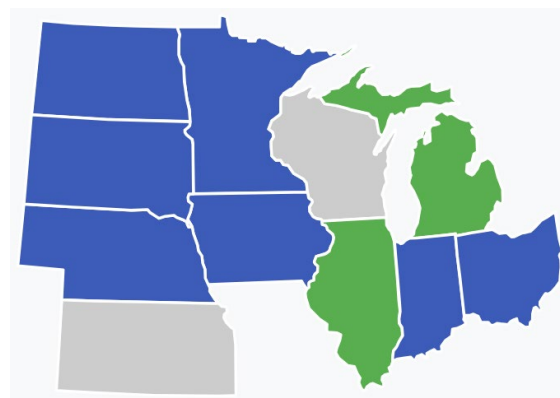
Challenges

- Estimated half of people entering jail have a behavioral health need
- Continually high overdose death rates despite recent declines
- Provider shortages
- Lack of coordination across behavioral health and criminal justice systems

Opportunities for Impact

- Improving cross-system alignment to break cycles of incarceration, hospitalization, and housing instability
- Increasing use of alternative response models to connect people to care and reduce pressure on law enforcement
- Leveraging Medicaid waivers to improve reentry outcomes for people with complex needs

Medicaid expansion and 1115 reentry waiver status



Budget Uncertainties

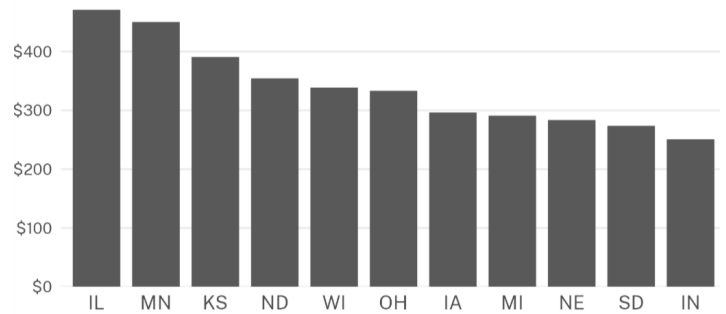
Challenges

- Lower revenue projections in FY 2026 in some states
- Uncertainty about federal funding and policy shifts
- Impact of ending COVID-19 relief funding
- Concerns about potential economic volatility

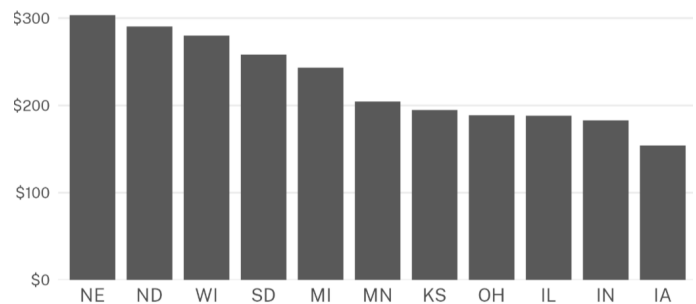
Opportunities for Impact

- Identifying what is working to improve outcomes for people in the justice system—and what isn't
- Increasing efficiency and effectiveness through evidence-informed investments
- Coordinating existing funding and resources for greater impact

State and local law enforcement expenditures, total per resident, Midwest region, 2021



State and local corrections expenditures, total per resident, Midwest region, 2021



U.S. Census Bureau Annual Survey of State and Local Government Finances

Political Partisanship

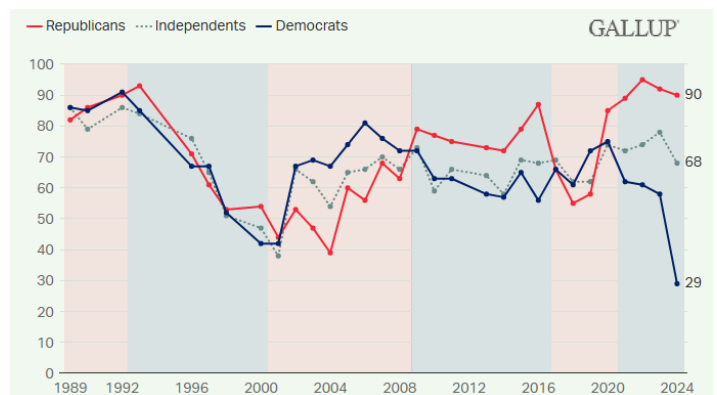
Challenges

- Dramatic increase in partisan divides regarding perceptions of crime and safety beginning in 2020

Opportunities for Impact

- Using data to identify state-specific issues and needs
- Relying on evidence-informed strategies to guide policymaking

Partisans' perceptions of national crime, 1989–2024



Jeffrey M. Jones, "Smaller Majorities Say Crime Is Serious, Increasing," *Gallup*, June 27, 2024, accessed July 14, 2025, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/652763/smaller-majorities-say-crime-serious-increasing.aspx>.

Justice Data Snapshots

Criminal justice trends vary by state, now more than ever. Decision-makers need up-to-date, state-specific data to navigate today's challenges. These snapshots pull together the most recent data for each state on crime, arrests, behavioral health, workforce, recidivism, and more in one place.

Scan to see your state's Justice Data Snapshot.



Illinois



Indiana



Iowa



Kansas



Minnesota



Michigan



Nebraska



North
Dakota



Ohio



South
Dakota



Wisconsin

Interested in learning more or partnering with the CSG Justice Center?
Contact Madeleine Dardeau at mdardeau@csg.org.