

PROGRESS

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS

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COLORADO GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
2021, 2022, 2023

Pursuing more humane and effective policies around  
crime prevention, policing, and incarceration.

## Restraints in Prison

HB23-1013 places basic guardrails around the use of restraints to ensure the safety and fundamental rights of people in custody, avoid severe psychological harm, and clarify protocols for Department of Corrections staff.

## Prison Phone Calls

HB23-1133 lowers the cost of prison phone calls for incarcerated people and their family members. Research shows maintaining connections can reduce recidivism, increase safety for prison staff, and better prepare incarcerated people for their release.

## Kids & Incarcerated Parents

HB23-1187 enables courts to consider alternative sentencing options for pregnant or postpartum people to keep new families together and reduce the chances of future involvement in the justice system. SB23-087 will help break cycles of incarceration by implementing policies to maintain connections between incarcerated parents and their children.

## Pathways to Care

HB23-1153 advances a study to explore how the state might establish systems specifically for Coloradans with the most serious mental illnesses get the care they need before they commit any crimes.

## Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity

HB22-1061 made updates to Colorado's laws related to people found not guilty by reason of insanity (NGRI) to ensure we prioritize mental health resources for people in need, while protecting civil rights and public safety.

## Civil Commitment

HB22-1256 strengthened and streamlined the state’s involuntary civil commitment system to protect patients and providers, reduce recidivism, and improve mental health care and outcomes. It will help reduce criminal justice involvement by more proactively addressing mental health issues.

## Inpatient Mental Health

HB22-1303 allocated \$65 million in Federal dollars to add 16 adult residential behavioral health care beds at the Colorado Mental Health Institute at Fort Logan, and 125 beds in smaller facilities located across the state. People with untreated, serious mental illness often are criminal justice involved. More treatment can help people and society avoid this pain and cost.

## Pre-Trial Diversion

SB22-010 identified eligible individuals with behavioral health disorders in order to divert them from the criminal justice system into community treatment programs through pretrial diversion..

## Competency to Proceed

HB22-1386, HB23-1138 and HB23-1012 begin to unknot one of the most pernicious issues in CO's criminal justice system – restoring people with mental illness to competency so they can participate in their own defense. Holding people in jail while they await a severely backlogged restoration process creates far more problems than it solves. This issue is interconnected to many others in our criminal justice system. We have a long way to go and I'm committed to this work.

## County Jail Standards

HB22-1063 created a Commission to recommend operational standards that will make our county jails more modern, humane, and consistent. I serve as Chair of the Commission's Oversight Committee, and expect to introduce legislation based on the Commission's recommendations this year.

## Mentoring Youth

SB21-192 strengthened and expanded mentorship programs to include individuals currently housed in the Colorado's Youthful Offender System.

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## Solitary Confinement

HB21-1211 put limits on the use of solitary confinement in jail for people who are susceptible to the effects of extreme isolation — like juveniles and people with serious mental illnesses.

## Juvenile Registry

HB21-1064 reformed the sex offender registry for youth, which was having a devastating and outsized impact on people's lives. We created a coalition of prosecutors, public defenders, and advocates to implement changes that will right grievous wrongs.