

PROPOSITION 47

Issue Brief

Funding for local programs has made California safer, helped crime survivors heal, but larger investments are needed.

Executive SUMMARY

California voters passed Proposition 47, the Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act, on November 4, 2014. By changing sentencing for low-level crimes, this unprecedented criminal justice reform measure significantly reduced prison and jail populations and allocated the savings to local public-safety programs, trauma recovery services for crime survivors, and programs for vulnerable youth.

This report summarizes how Proposition 47 is making California communities safer and reducing recidivism while also maintaining historic low crime rates. It also recommends new investments, particularly in mental health services and housing, that will build upon the success of Proposition 47.

Key outcomes from Proposition 47 include:

A significant drop in incarceration.

It is estimated that within the next year California's prison and jail populations will have fallen by about 20,000 since Proposition 47 passed.

More than \$300 million invested in local public safety programs.

Sixty-five percent of Proposition 47 savings, about \$200 million, is being spent on mental health, substance- use treatment, diversion, and housing programs for people who have been arrested, charged, or convicted of crimes. Local behavioral health or health-care agencies are receiving 74 percent of these funds. The governor's 2020-21 budget provided an additional \$103 million in Proposition 47 spending, and if current trends continue, well over \$400 million will be directed to programs within a year.

Support for programs that reduce recidivism.

The programs funded by Proposition 47 have been shown to reduce recidivism, either through the implementation of proven best practices or reported outcomes to date. A pre-booking diversion initiative called LA DOOR (See page 14, [Los Angeles Diversion Outreach & Opportunities for Recovery](#)), for example, reported a participant reconviction rate of only 13.5 percent, compared to 40.5 percent in a comparison group. Three other Proposition 47 programs, in Merced, Alameda, and San Bernardino counties, report participant recidivism rates of 12 percent or less.

A dramatic expansion in trauma recovery services.

Ten percent of savings from Proposition 47 are directed to support Trauma Recovery Centers (TRCs), programs that combine outreach, clinical case management, and trauma-informed mental health and substance use services to help crime survivors. Proposition 47 generated \$30 million to help expand the presence of TRCs. As a result, over five years the number of TRCs in the state has grown from 1 to 14.

More support for keeping vulnerable youth in school.

A quarter of the savings from Proposition 47 has been reallocated to the education system, funding programs designed to reduce truancy and to support kids who are at risk of dropping out or committing crimes.

Approximately \$42 million dollars has been reallocated from prison spending to education programs.

Crime rates remain at record lows.

Since the passage of Proposition 47, California's crime rate has remained relatively constant. Violent crime rates are lower than at any time since 1969. Rates of property crime are at the lowest levels since records were available.

Proposition 47 also led narrowing racial disparities in key statewide criminal justice outcomes.

More investment is needed in Proposition 47 programming

While programs funded by Proposition 47 have shown positive results, a much bigger investment is warranted. Given the prison budget 42 times greater than the state's investment in Proposition 47 programs, California needs to redouble its support for each of the areas listed below:

Mental health.

About 1.8 million Californians experience a serious mental illness. However, fewer than a third of those who need services get them. And, despite growing demand, the availability of in-patient acute psychiatric beds is near all-time new lows. Police, who receive hundreds of

thousands of service calls related to mental illness every year, say they lack options to address the huge need for treatment they encounter.

Housing.

California needs more than 1.4 million affordable rental homes to meet the needs of its lowest-income renters. The state's housing crisis, which predates Proposition 47, is particularly hard on people with past convictions, who are excluded—by both statute and stigma—from many housing and employment opportunities.

Healing.

About 5 million people in California have suffered from a violent crime in the past 10 years. But only a tiny fraction of them have been able to access services from a Trauma Recovery Center since the first one was established 2001. California needs to dramatically scale up the number of TRCs, increase their budgets, and provide technical assistance to ensure services are delivered effectively.

Local public safety approaches.

The state needs more local safety solutions, including programs that divert arrested people to treatment and probation reforms that reallocate resources to individuals who need more supervision and support. California also needs more programs for people accused of low-level misdemeanors and re-entry programs to prepare jail-sentenced people to return to the community. A conservative estimate shows these programs could be scaled up to meet the needs of 260,000 people for about a quarter of what California spends on corrections—with far lower recidivism rates.



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BACKGROUND

California voters passed Proposition 47, the Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act, on November 4, 2014. This unprecedented criminal justice reform measure authorized changes in sentencing for low-level crimes and reallocated prison spending to support local public safety programs, trauma recovery services for crime survivors, and programs for vulnerable youth.¹ Under the law, prison savings are calculated every year through the budget process, and reallocated to key types of local programs that support healing and keep communities safe.

Proposition 47 also led narrowing racial disparities in key statewide criminal justice outcomes.

Since Proposition 47 was enacted, California's prison population is down 16.6 percent (from 136,038 people in October 2014,² to 125,021 in September 2019), and the 2020-2021 budget estimates the prison population will fall to 123,716.³ During the same time period, as a significant number of people were shifted from state confinement to the custody of local governments, the number of people in California's jails declined from an average daily population of 80,310⁴ in October 2014 to an average daily population of 72,806 in September 2019.⁵

In total, including the population reductions proposed in the budget, the prison and jail populations will have fallen by 20,000 since Proposition 47 passed.

This issue brief identifies and aggregates the savings generated by Proposition 47, describes how these funds were reallocated and to what effect, and identifies next steps to build upon the measure's significant success in reducing over-reliance on incarceration and replacing it with investments that have been shown to be more effective at breaking the cycle of crime and violence.

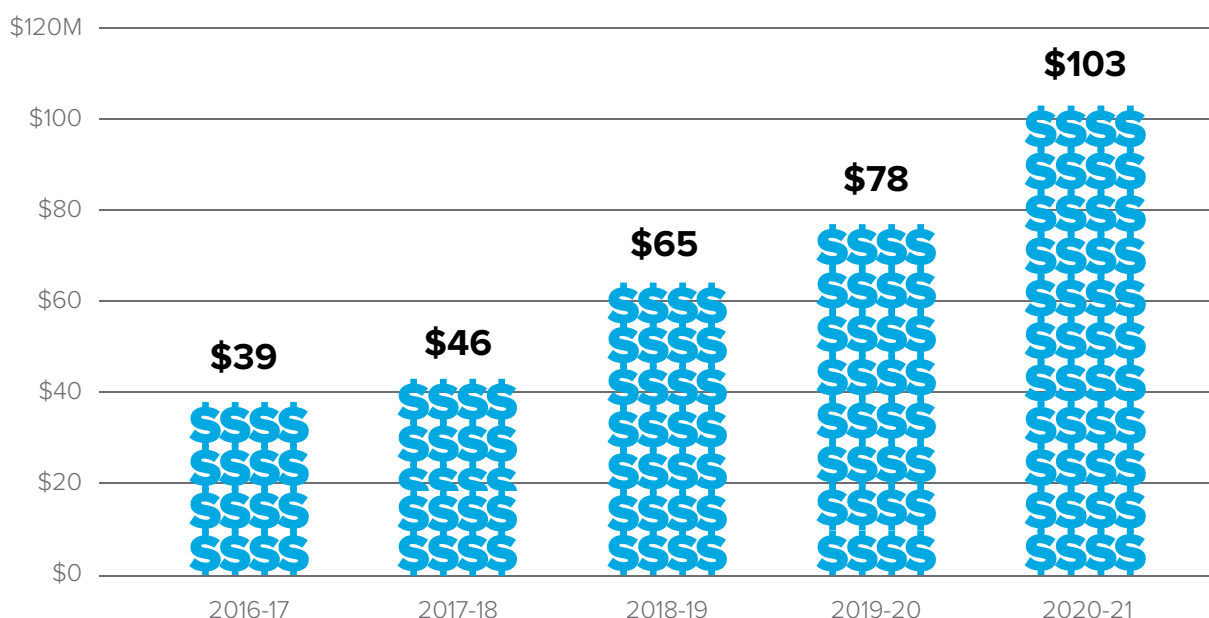
More than \$300 million in savings has been reallocated to **LOCAL PROGRAMS**

Sixty-five percent of the funds reallocated through Proposition 47 (about \$200 million) are dedicated to the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) for grants to community-based organizations that deliver mental health services, substance use treatment, or diversion programs for people who have been arrested, charged, or convicted of crimes. An additional 10 percent, more than \$30 million, has been reallocated to support Trauma Recovery Centers, a specialized intervention model with a track record of addressing the needs of crime survivors who are underserved by traditional models, including communities of color and

people experiencing street violence. The remaining 25 percent of funds have gone to K-12 educational programs designed to address the needs of vulnerable youth. In the 2020-2021 budget, the governor has offered an estimated \$103 million for future spending on Proposition 47 programming. Not including the \$28 million appropriated in the first few years to support the BSCC's ability to scale up the local programs, more than \$300 million dollars will have been reallocated, including the anticipated FY 2020-21 revenue in the budget, as illustrated in the chart below. If the growth in Proposition 47 funding continues at current trends, well over \$400 million will have been reallocated to programs within a year.

MORE THAN \$300 MILLION WILL BE REALLOCATED FROM PRISONS TO PROGRAMS THROUGH PROPOSITION 47

Funds reallocated to the Safe Schools and Neighborhoods Funds (in millions)



Source: California e-Budget Corrections and Rehabilitation Details, FY2018 and FY2019, California e-Budget Corrections and Rehabilitation, Governor's Proposed, 2020-21. The bars portray the Governor's proposed budget for each fiscal year. The first year, 2016-2017, underestimates the actual dollars spent, as additional allocations were won during the budget process, including \$10 million for the BSCC to allow programs development to begin, and \$18 million to support the start of the education programs (for a total of \$68 million that year).

Programs that reduce recidivism among people arrested, convicted, or sentenced for crimes.

Of the approximately \$300 million saved through Proposition 47 and reallocated to the Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Fund, 65 percent is distributed to local public safety programs through a competitive grant process managed by the BSCC. These Proposition 47 funded programs⁶ must:

- **Target services to meet specific needs**—adults and youth who have been arrested, charged, or convicted of crimes and who have a history of mental health or substance use disorders;
- **Offer key treatment services known to reduce recidivism**—mental health services, substance-use treatment, diversion, or some combination of the three; and
- **Include an evaluation plan**—applicants must dedicate funding to evaluate their program, including a metric of recidivism.

Preference is given to programs that provide housing-related services and/or community-based supportive services, such as case management, job skills training, or civil legal services.

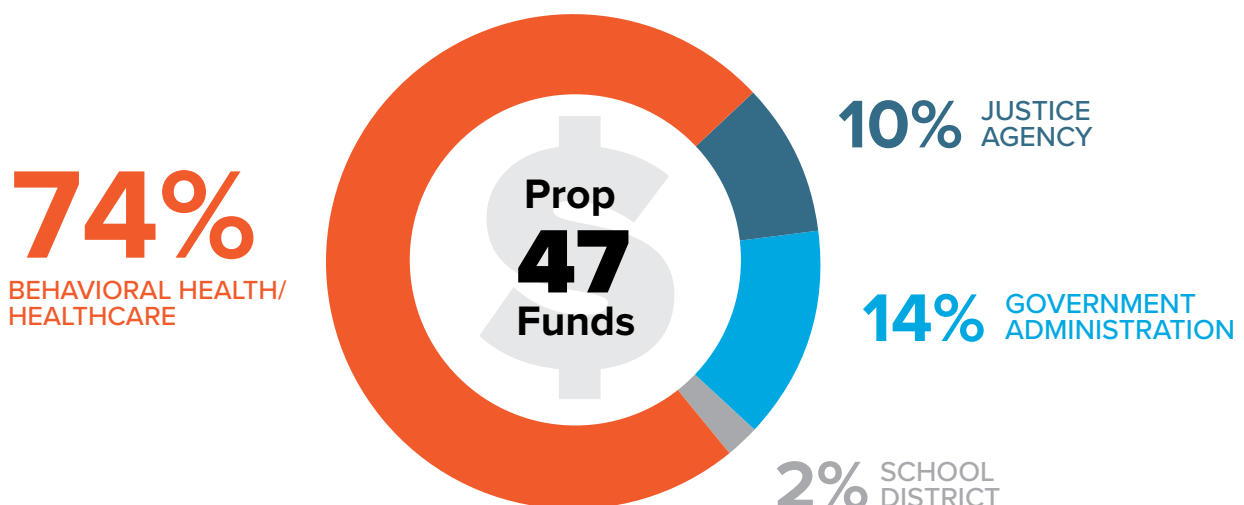
The first grant cycle began in 2017 and will run until 2021 the second began in 2019. As of November 2019, the first cohort of grantees had served 11,349 people arrested, convicted, and sentenced for crimes. Of the individuals served by these public safety programs so far:⁷

- 69 percent identified as male
- 64 percent were people of color; and
- 76 percent were over the age of 25.

While all grantees were required to provide mental health services, substance use treatment, or diversion, funding went to different kinds of agencies.⁸ Behavioral health or health-care agencies received three-quarters of the funding, about \$77 million, in the first cohort. All of the grantees provided either housing-related support or

SEVENTY FOUR PERCENT OF PROPOSITION 47 FUNDS WENT TO HEALTH OR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS.

Percent of Prop. 47 funds received by agency type in the first grant cycle



community-based supportive services. All but five of the grantees received funding for programs that included both housing-related supports and community-based supportive services, such as case management. The chart on [page 9](#) illustrates the range of agencies that received Proposition 47 funds in the first grant cycle.

Los Angeles County has received the most grant funding (\$35 million)—about one-third of the funds available in Year One. The money was divided among one county initiative, the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, two city initiatives, and the El Rancho Unified School District. Ten other counties received \$6 million, the next highest grant award: Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, Orange, Riverside, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, Solano, and Yolo.

The funded programs have been shown to have reduced recidivism, and a few have reported reduced recidivism—although these outcomes are preliminary and reflect small sample sizes and short time periods. For example, LA DOOR (Los Angeles Diversion, Outreach, and Opportunities for Recovery), a pre-arrest diversion initiative with intensive case management, reports a participant reconviction rate of 13.5 percent, compared to 40.5 percent in a comparison group.⁹ Among people released from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), 46.5 percent are reconvicted within three years.¹⁰ The chart below shows recidivism rates, and some comparisons, for a number of the recidivism-reduction programs funded by Proposition 47 savings.

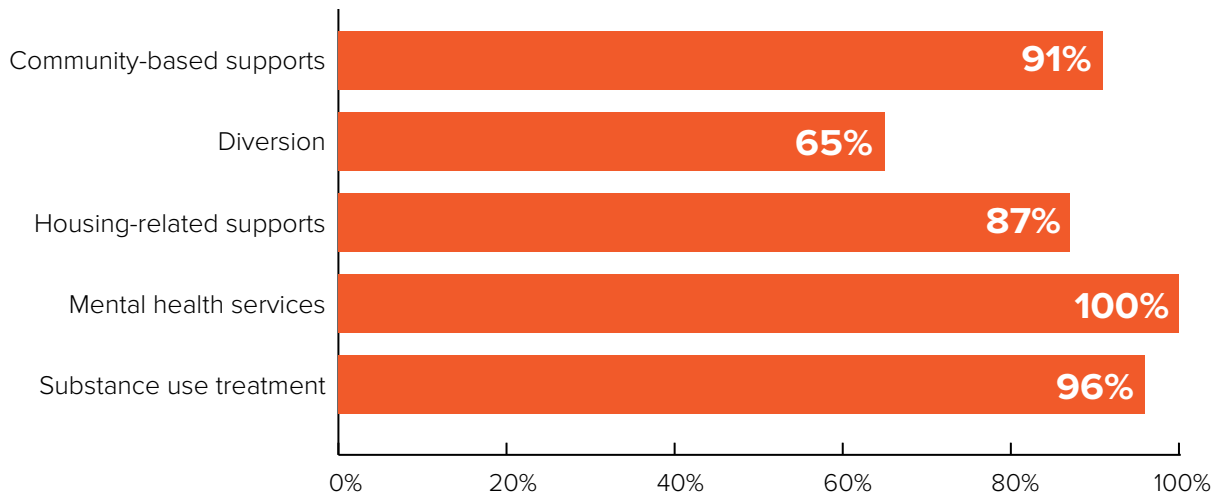
Proposition 47 Programs Reduced Recidivism

Select results from two-year BSCC cohort I grant evaluation reports

County	Program name	Participant recidivism	Comparison recidivism
Los Angeles	LA DOOR ¹¹	13.5% ¹²	40.5% ¹³
Alameda County	Multidisciplinary Reentry Teams (MRTs) ¹⁴	12% ¹⁵	—
Marin County	Marin County Proposition 47 ¹⁶	0% ¹⁷	—
Merced County	The Hub ¹⁸	11.4% ¹⁹	26.2% ²⁰
Orange County	Proposition 47 Grant-Related Services ²¹	36% ²² (at 90 days)	44% ²³
Riverside	Proposition 47 Integrated Care Behavioral Health Full-Service Partnership Program ²⁴	0% ²⁵	—
San Bernardino	Proposition 47 ²⁶	4% ²⁷	59% ²⁸
California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation	A prison term ²⁹	46.5% ³⁰	

MOST PROPOSITION 47 PROGRAMS DELIVER MULTIPLE TYPES OF SERVICES

Percent of grantees delivering different services



While recidivism outcomes will vary across jurisdictions as these relatively new programs report their outcomes, all use the following approaches, which are required by the *Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Fund* and have been shown to reduce recidivism:

Mental health services. An analysis of 58 studies by researchers at Vanderbilt University of mental health services, specifically cognitive behavioral therapy, for people arrested, convicted, or sentenced to prison for crimes showed a 25 percent reduction in recidivism compared to control groups.³¹

Substance use treatment. An evaluation of substance use disorder treatment for 133,776 people in Florida who were arrested, convicted, and sentenced to community corrections programs showed that people in nonresidential treatment were 12.9 percentage points less likely to be arrested for any felony in the two years of supervision compared to a no-treatment comparison group. The researchers also found that if the no-treatment group had been provided treatment, arrests for any felony over two years would have been reduced by 16.3 percent.³²

Housing-related supports. Washington State's Reentry Housing Program found that program participants were 39.3 percent less likely to be reconvicted and 34.4 percent less likely to return to prison than a comparison group.³³

Another evaluation, of Returning Home Ohio (RHO), a supportive housing initiative for people leaving prison who had a developmental disorder, severe addiction, or serious behavioral health problems, found participants 40 percent less likely to be rearrested for any crime than the comparison group.³⁴

Community supports. Community supports, specifically case management, can help reduce recidivism as well. An evaluation of Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), an intensive community-based case management program for people with mental health disorders in Virginia, showed that 92 percent of participants had no arrests.³⁵

Programs that keep vulnerable youth in school and reduce their involvement in crime.

A quarter of the funding went to grants for the Learning Communities for School Success Program (LCSSP). The LCSSP provides grants to local education agencies to support kindergarten through 12th grade public school programs that reduce truancy and support students who are at risk of dropping out or who are victims savings from Proposition 47 is reinvested into the California Department of Education.³⁷ Since Proposition 47 passed, approximately \$42 million has been reallocated from prison spending to education programs.³⁸

Specificall , funds reallocated from prisons to the education system³⁹ may be used to:

- Establish community schools;
- Develop partnerships with community-based organizations to support implementation of evidence-based responses to school misbehavior;
- Implement restorative practices to keep students in school and reduce referrals of students to law enforcement;
- Provide activities that advance social-emotional learning, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), culturally responsive practices, and trauma-informed strategies; and
- Design programs and hire staff for approaches aimed at improving attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism.

The places and programs⁴⁰ prioritized for funding are communities that have chronic absenteeism, above-average out-of-school suspension or school dropout rates, overrepresentation of foster youth in their student body, and crime rates above the statewide average.

Increased investments in educational outcomes—particularly for vulnerable youth—improve public safety. Research shows that students who cycle through a school disciplinary system are at risk for juvenile justice involvement. One longitudinal study found that students who were suspended or expelled were nearly three

times as likely to be arrested in the following year. The same study found that students with no prior school discipline involvement had about a 1 in 20 (5.5 percent) chance of being arrested, compared to a nearly 1 in 6 (17.3 percent) chance for students who had been disciplined more than 11 times.⁴¹

Evidence supports a link between higher levels of educational attainment and crime reductions.⁴² The U.S. Department of Education recently reported, for example, that an estimated 10 percent increase in high school graduation rates results in a 9 percent decline in criminal arrest rates.⁴³

Programs that help crime survivors move past the trauma of crime.

The *Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Funds* also reallocates 10 percent of savings from Proposition 47 to the California Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board to make grants for Trauma Recovery Centers (TRCs). TRCs combine outreach, clinical case management, and trauma-informed, evidence-based mental health and substance abuse services. *Thus far, about \$30 million has been used to help expand Trauma Recovery Centers from one site in the state to 14.*

TRCs have been effective at addressing the needs of crime survivors and produce better outcomes than other models of care. A randomized control trial showed TRC clients, compared to a control group in usual care, were 56 percent more likely to return to jobs and 41 percent less likely to be homeless. It also found that 52 percent of participants had a decrease in depression symptoms and that 88 percent of survivors with alcohol or substance use problems reported improvements dealing with those problems.⁴⁴

TRCs are particularly effective at addressing the needs of underserved crime survivors and reduce disparities in services across educational, income, and racial and ethnic groups. The TRCs provide services that are culturally relevant and provide multiple services to address multiple needs, serving people who have been impacted by multiple crimes.⁴⁵

PROPOSITION 47 PROGRAM PROFILE

San Diego: Local Public Safety Programs Breaking the Cycle of Misdemeanor Crime.³⁶

San Diego County was awarded a \$6 million Proposition 47 grant to implement a program to reduce recidivism of individuals in the county who have been repeatedly cited, arrested, charged with, or convicted of misdemeanor offenses and have a history of mental health needs and/or substance-use disorders.

With Proposition 47 funds, San Diego further expanded and refined their Community Based Services and Recidivism Reduction (CoSRR) and, with the San Diego City Attorney's Office, expanded the San Diego Misdemeanants At Risk Track (S.M.A.R.T.) program. To enter either program, someone arrested for crimes must have a substance-use disorder (SUD) diagnosis and a current or past Proposition 47 eligible charge(s). S.M.A.R.T. participants also must have had two quality-of-life arrests in the past year.

CoSRR and S.M.A.R.T. serve individuals in the county's Central and North regions, where the greatest number of adult misdemeanor drug and property arrests occur. The majority of clients in both programs are in their mid-40s, were experiencing homelessness at intake, were unemployed and have obtained a high school diploma or less.

Photo caption to go here.



The programs target people arrested for crimes who did not succeed in other programs and connect them to substance-use disorder treatment, housing, and other needed support services. In both programs, clients are diverted to a case manager who assesses what services they might need, and then, develop case plan for services, and treatment. If a client also has housing needs, they are diverted to community-based supportive housing, and emergency or transitional housing. S.M.A.R.T. clients live in the program's housing throughout their enrollment unless they can live at home, and clients must have permanent housing placement upon exit.

From September 2017 through March 2019, CoSRR and S.M.A.R.T. served a total of 133 unique clients (78 in CoSRR and 55 in S.M.A.R.T.). By providing treatment, housing, and other support services to clients, CoSRR and S.M.A.R.T. are addressing complex needs while advancing wellness and healing, building skills for self-sufficiency, and supporting rehabilitation—all of which increase the likelihood that participants will succeed in the community.

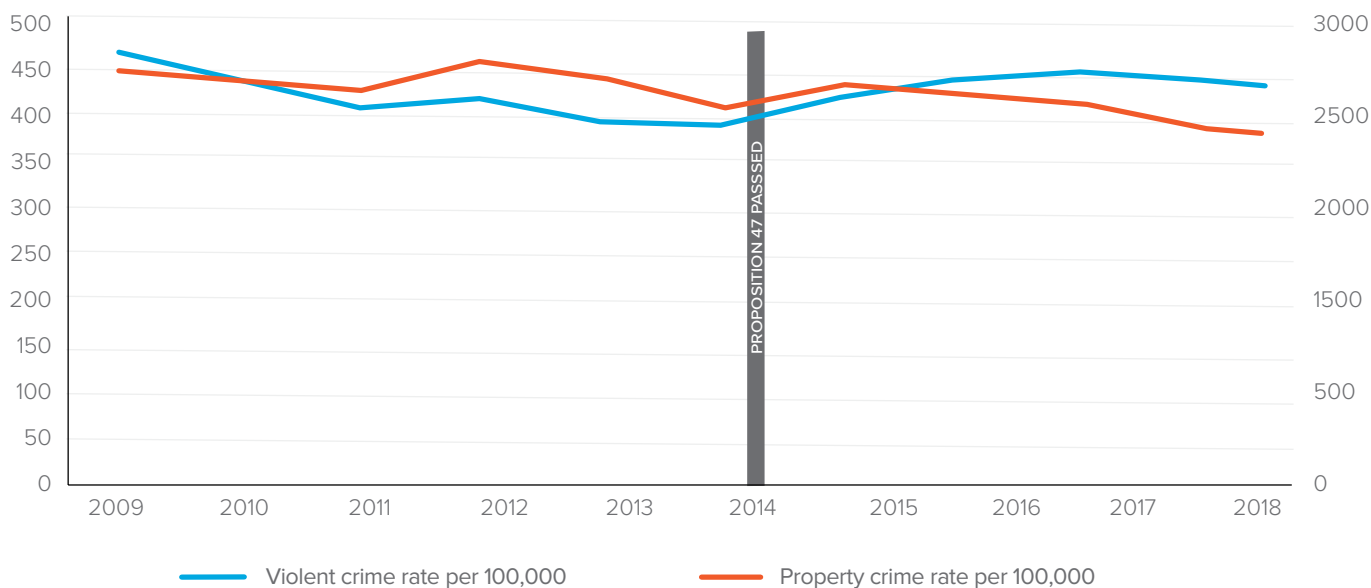
Crime rates remain at the **LOWEST LEVELS** since the 1960s

During the last decade of criminal justice reform, which includes Proposition 47, crime rates fell overall. According to the latest data published by the California Department of Justice, between 2009 and 2018, violent crime rates fell 6.3 percent and property crime rates fell 13 percent.⁴⁶

Year over year, violent crime rates have remained relatively constant. After a 14 percent increase in violent crime rates between 2014 and 2017, which could be partially attributable to a change in the definition of rape, violent crime rates again decreased by 1.4 percent between 2017 and 2018.⁴⁷

VIOLENT AND PROPERTY CRIME RATES ARE ESSENTIALLY FLAT.

Violent and property crime rates per 100,000

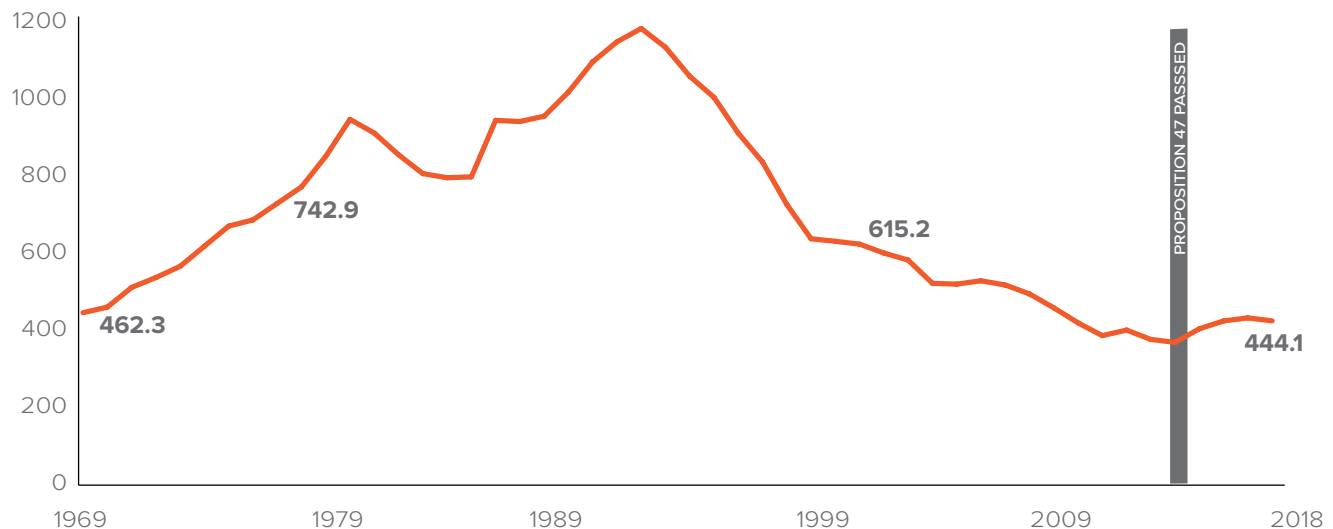


Source: Open Justice *Crime Reported from 2009 to 2018* Retrieved February 3, 2020. <https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/data-stories/2018/crime-reported-2009-2018>

VIOLENT CRIME RATES ARE THE LOWEST SINCE 1969.⁴⁸

Violent Crime is at its Lowest Level Since 1969

Violent Crime Rate Per 100,000 Population, 1969 - 2018



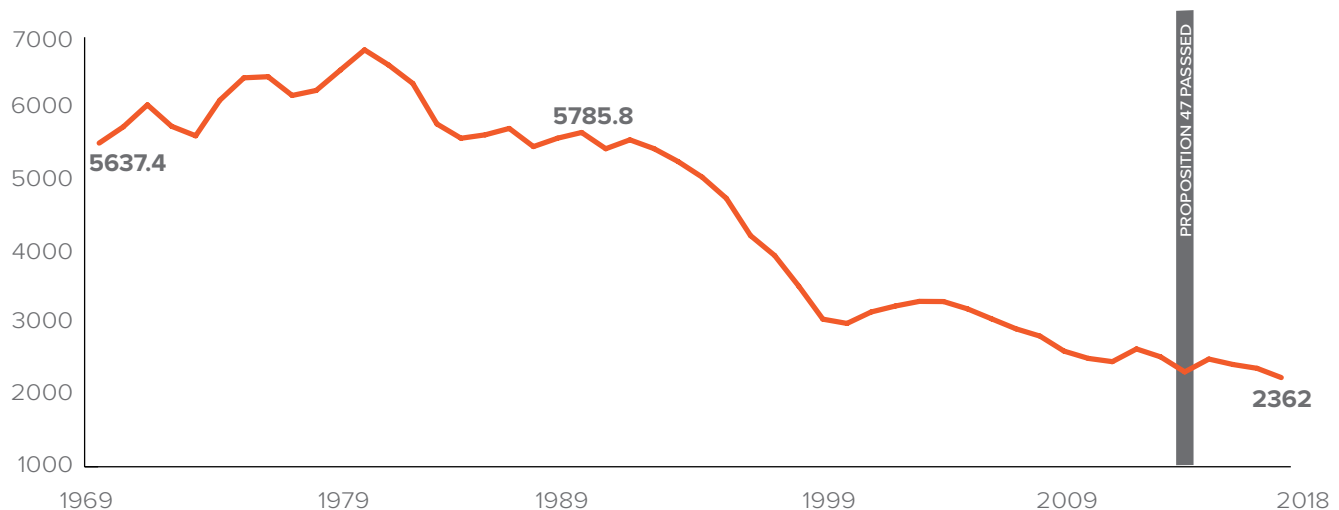
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports prepared by the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data. *Uniform Crime Reporting Statistics – UCR Data Online, Estimated crime in California*. Retrieved from www.ucrdatatool.gov/ OpenJustice. *Crime Reported from 2009 to 2018*. Retrieved from <https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/data-stories/2018/crime-reported-2009-2018>

Property crime rates are less than half what they were in 1969 and the lowest since records are available. Property crime rates were 3,235 per 100,000 Californians in 1960, 27 percent higher than in 2018.⁴⁹

PROPERTY CRIME RATES ARE LESS THAN HALF WHAT THEY WERE IN 1969 AND THE LOWEST SINCE RECORDS ARE AVAILABLE.

Property Crime is Down by Half Since 1969

Property Crime Rate Per 100,000 Population, 1969–2018



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports prepared by the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data, "Uniform Crime Reporting Statistics – UCR Data Online, Estimated crime in California." Retrieved from www.ucrdatatool.gov/ and OpenJustice, "Crime Reported from 2009 to 2018," Retrieved from <https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/data-stories/2018/crime-reported-2009-2018>

Los Angeles: Opening New Doors to Safety and Recovery through LA DOOR.⁵⁰

In 2017, the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office (LACA) was awarded a \$6 million, three-year Proposition 47 grant to fund the Los Angeles Diversion, Outreach, & Opportunities for Recovery (LA DOOR) program. Operated by LACA, LA DOOR targets historically low-income parts of South Los Angeles, and people arrested for crimes with a history of mental health and substance-use challenges.

LA DOOR clients tend to be older, male and from the African American community. Seventy-three percent of clients report having substance-use problems, over one-third (35 percent) have mental health issues, most are homeless, have less schooling, and lack stable income sources.

LA DOOR serves clients through mobile service outreach and pre-booking diversion. As part of the outreach component, LA DOOR has a 12-person mobile team that delivers social services to the target population in the field. Most members of the mobile team are from South Los Angeles and have past experiences with addiction, incarceration, or homelessness. The mobile team is deployed to five South Los Angeles “hot spot” locations identified by LACA—typically neighborhoods with a high number of misdemeanor drug arrests and homeless populations—to proactively engage potential clients.

Team members begin building rapport with an individual through a gesture as simple as offering a bottle of water and a granola bar. Once trust is established, an individual is offered services. Should they accept the services offered by the mobile team, they are entered into the LA DOOR program. Once they are in the program, a client may receive treatment for substance-use disorders, and staff can connect them to case management, and mental health, legal, and housing services. A client can complete the program within two months.

In an alley in South Los Angeles, members of the LA DOOR hotspot team make initial contact with a man who says he's addicted to crack and wants help.

(Photo courtesy of BSCC California)



Angel Espinoza and Jose Rodriguez are part of the hotspot team.

(Photo courtesy of BSCC California)

People arrested for crimes can also enter LA DOOR through its pre-booking diversion component. The Los Angeles Police Department can refer people arrested on drug possession to LA DOOR rather than booking them into custody and beginning a formal court process.

From January 2018 through March 2019, LA DOOR enrolled 281 participants. Fifty-six percent of participants completed the program and 40.5 percent continued to receive services through LA DOOR after the two-month period. Program outcomes show reduced recidivism among LA DOOR participants: Data suggest that individuals who entered

the program through pre-booking diversion were less likely to commit crimes than comparable individuals who did not participate in LA DOOR. Data also show that just 13.5 percent of LA DOOR participants had a subsequent reconviction compared to 40.5 percent in the comparison group.

BIGGER INVESTMENTS

are needed in the approaches supported by Proposition 47

Over incarceration is understood to be ineffective at reducing crime and may increase crime in some cases.⁵¹ This new understanding has played some role in a recent announcement by Governor Gavin Newsom to further right size the prison system by setting the goal of closing several state prisons between 2022 and 2024.⁵² To do that, other strategies will need to be advanced and resourced to address local public safety challenges. While Proposition 47 has reduced overincarceration and reallocated resources to local public safety programs, the scale of overall investment is still modest: the budget for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for fiscal year 2019-20 is \$12.7 billion,⁵³ 42 times the total \$300 million savings reinvested as a result of Proposition 47 to date.

A much bigger investment in Proposition 47 programming is needed to more appropriately and effectively expand services and supports. In particular, given lessons learned in the first years of Proposition 47, the following strategies should be undertaken going forward:

Mental health

In California, about 1 in 24 adults—nearly 1.8 million Californians—experience a serious mental illness, which the California Health Care Foundation defines as difficulty carrying out major life activities.⁵⁴ Mental illness is even more prevalent in corrections settings. In 2015, 38 percent of women in prison and 23 percent of men sentenced to prison for crimes received mental health treatment while incarcerated.⁵⁵

Slightly more than one-third of California adults with a mental illness reported receiving mental health treatment or counseling during the past year.⁵⁶

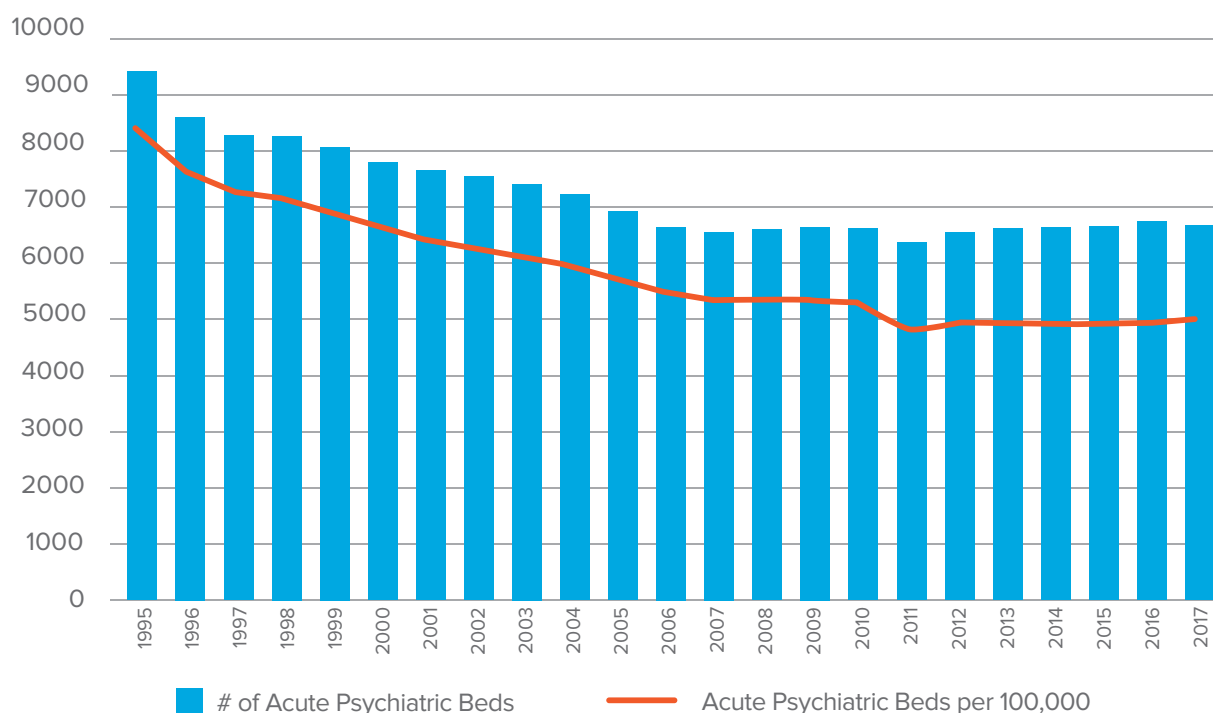
Nationally, inpatient psychiatric treatment beds have decreased 96.5 percent since the 1950s.⁵⁷ Well before the enactment of Proposition 47, California was on a similar trajectory. Although the state added about 200 treatment beds since Proposition 47 passed, the overall availability of beds seems to have reached new lows compared to the population. In 2017, there were 17.2 beds per 100,000 Californians. Twenty years earlier, in 1997, the state had 25.3 beds per 100,000.⁵⁸ As illustrated on [page 16](#), over two decades the rate at which these beds were available fell by nearly a third (32 percent)—despite widespread agreement among law enforcement that the number of beds was not keeping up with the acute treatment needs of people arrested for crimes.

In addition to investing in inpatient psychiatric care and general mental health services, California must also expand other interventions that prevent people with mental health disorders from going deeper into the justice system:

- **Mental health crisis intervention.** More than one million calls for service in California (generally, a 911 call) involved a person in mental health crisis.^{59 60}
- **Behavioral health diversion services.** Although Proposition 47 public safety grants have helped divert, house, or address the treatment needs of thousands of Californians,⁶¹ they have reached only a portion of the hundreds of thousands of arrested people who are likely to need mental health treatment.⁶²

THE AVAILABILITY OF IN-PATIENT ACUTE PSYCHIATRIC BEDS IS NEAR ALL-TIME NEW LOWS.

Number of acute psychiatric beds and number per 100,000 people, 1995–2017



Source: California Hospital Association (2019). *California's Acute Psychiatric Bed Loss* Retrieved from www.calhospital.org/sites/main/files/file_attachments/psychbeddata2017.pdf?1555456346

Housing

California's housing crisis predates Proposition 47. In 2015, the California Legislative Analyst's Office attributed the crises to an array of factors, including high rents, high housing costs, and building shortfalls.⁶³ For example, new housing stock has not kept pace with the increase in California's population since at least 2010, only recently catching up in 2017.⁶⁴

Finding affordable housing is a challenge for nearly all Californians. As of 2018, the average cost of a home in California was \$560,000; nationally, the median home price was \$236,000. At the same time, rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Los Angeles is \$4,500.

Homelessness has been a challenge for Californians long before Proposition 47. In fact, rates of homelessness were lower during the two years

following Proposition 47's enactment than in the two years before. If every person no longer in prison and jail since the initiative passed were homeless, they would only account for 13 percent of the 151,000 people counted as homeless in 2019.

The cost of rent and the availability of affordable rental units *are the drivers of homelessness*:

- An analysis of Zillow rent data shows that an increase in rent by 3 percent in Los Angeles increases the homeless population by nearly 1,000 people.⁶⁵
- The National Low Income Housing Coalition estimates 1.3 million renters in California have incomes at or below federal poverty guidelines. Yet there are only 286,844 affordable units across the state.⁶⁶

- According to the California Housing Partnership, California currently needs more than 1.4 million affordable rental homes to meet the needs of its lowest income renters.⁶⁷

Although many Californians struggle to find affordable housing, people who have been arrested, convicted, or sentenced for crimes face barriers that are even more acute. For example, they can be excluded from housing because of their past involvement with the justice system, or have difficulty establishing a credit history.⁶⁸ As a result, they are more vulnerable to homelessness—and a statewide shortage of and funding for shelters, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing exacerbates the problem.

Current efforts are unlikely to address the need that exists at scale. In Los Angeles, for example, Measure HHH funded a bond to build 10,000 units of permanent supportive housing, the average per unit loan to build that housing from the city is \$140,000.⁶⁹ Yet the City Auditor put the median cost of building one unit at more than \$530,000.⁷⁰

Obtaining housing is a key first step for people who have been arrested, convicted, or sentenced to incarceration in order for them to get a job, engage in behavioral and physical health treatment, and reconnect with the community, therefore reducing the chances of recidivism.⁷¹

A bigger investment in affordable housing, generally, and specifically for people who are homeless or who have been arrested, convicted, or sentenced for crimes is needed to help California address an ongoing housing challenge and make the state safer overall.

Healing

About 5 million people in California have been the victim of a violent crime in the past 10 years.⁷² By expanding the number of Trauma Recovery Centers in the state, Proposition 47 has helped expand services to help people heal. Still, many people are left without support. The first and oldest TRC, for example, has served only about 10,000 crime survivors in just over a decade.

The National Alliance of Trauma Recovery Centers recently offered the following recommendations to fill this gap⁷³:

- **Ensure each Trauma Recovery Center has a budget of at least \$1 million.** A TRC requires trained staff and an infrastructure that can pay for crime survivors' expenses through complicated state and federal funding reimbursement processes. Scarce resources make it harder for TRCs to work with clients who have multiple needs and complicated trauma and medical histories. As the TRC model has spread to other states, lawmakers have recognized the need to fund the work at a level that supports the model to succeed. Some states have allocated a minimum of \$1 million for each new TRC. In California, however, more than a third of TRCs have an annual budget of \$400,000, and half operate on less than \$650,000.
- **Designate state funding to support technical assistance to new Trauma Recovery Centers.** State-funded TRCs in California are legally obligated to meet a dozen core requirements that define the model and differentiate it from usual care. Knowing how to meet these requirements can be a challenge, particularly for small, community-based nonprofit organizations. Funds should be available for technical assistance to support new TRCs so that all have the guidance and resources they need to effectively replicate the model and leverage existing state investment in successful outcomes.
- **Expand the number of Trauma Recovery Centers in underserved parts of the state.** There are a cluster of TRCs in the Los Angeles basin and the Bay Area, and the model is being advanced in a few population centers in and around Sacramento County. But entire sections of California—particularly the middle of the state and the Central Valley—have no TRCs at all. California should invest in increasing the geographic reach of its TRCs across the state, and in areas where TRCs are underfunded.

PROPOSITION 47 PROGRAM PROFILE

Riverside County: New Beginnings for People Arrested for Crimes and Needing Treatment⁷⁴

Due to a lack of diversion programs, Riverside County had challenges in enrolling people arrested for crimes in treatment programs that could help them break the cycle of addiction. In 2017, Riverside County was awarded a \$6 million, three-year Proposition 47 grant to establish a program to direct people who had been frequently arrested for crimes to treatment.

With Proposition 47 funds, Riverside County worked with Riverside University Health System–Behavioral Health to start a program at two sites in the county—the Coachella Valley (Desert Region) and the area of Perris/Moreno Valley (Mid-County Region). The sites are called *De Novo*, which means “New Beginnings.”



The program currently serves people arrested for crimes who have mental health and/or substance-use challenges, most of whom are aged 30-39, male, Hispanic/Latinx, and who have chronic behavioral health challenges. The most recent figures show that 89 percent of program clients had a mental health diagnosis and 61 percent had a substance-use diagnosis.

When they enter the program, most clients have few financial resources, have been arrested a number of times and spent time in jail, and are either homeless or living in temporary settings. Fifty-six percent of clients reported their housing situation was unstable in the year prior to entering the program, and clients spent on average 148 days (about half the year) homeless.

Once in the program, clients can receive mental health services (such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, psychiatric and medication support), substance-use treatment, anger management, family therapy, health and wellness training, and support with budgeting and money management. A significant number of clients also receive support to get housing: a total of 1,061 bed days of emergency housing was provided to *De Novo* clients, with 43 percent of the clients receiving housing support when they entered the program.

Preliminary outcomes from the program show that more clients served reported they had jobs, fewer experienced homelessness, and fewer were re-arrested or spent time in jail.

Local public safety programs

A decade of criminal justice reform has oriented California communities toward addressing local public safety challenges with investments in local public safety programs rather than with overincarceration. The programs and approaches below should be expanded to address the scale of the problem that exists:

- **Diversion programs.** A conservative estimate suggests that as many as 200,000 arrested would benefit from diversion programs. While some communities have expanded the use of pre-arrest and post-conviction diversion programs—compared to zero 10 years ago, six communities are now advancing Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD), pre-arrest diversion to treatment and housing support at first contact with law enforcement. Los Angeles County has a fully funded Office of Diversion and Reentry, which is part of the Department of Health and Human Services. This office works with the Sheriff, the District Attorney and Police to divert people from jail to treatment. While an important start, all the LEAD programs in California and LA County’s office of diversion and reentry may serve, in total, approximately 3,303 people a year.⁷⁵
- **Probation and parole practices designed to break the cycle of crime.** While much attention is paid to incarceration, every year 10 times as many people are sentenced to probation. Since Realignment, probation departments across the state have been moving toward a supervision philosophy in which a client’s support should be based on the risk that person poses and what is needed to change their behavior—not on the crime itself. Recently, in his 2020-21 budget, Governor Newsom called for key changes in probation: in most cases, cutting terms to two years or less and expanding funding to connect individuals to treatment, jobs, and housing. While this initiative was postponed due to the pandemic, the administration and many lawmakers support this policy change goal.
- **Interrupt the revolving door for people charged with low-level misdemeanors.** The research on risk, need, and responsivity that is driving change in

the policing, probation, and parole fields holds that to change someone’s behavior it is more important to address the person’s assessed treatment need, hold them accountable in a swift fashion, and respond with certainty, regardless of whether the crime committed was a felony or a misdemeanor.⁷⁶

Some cities and counties are using Proposition 47 funds to build out services to respond to the needs of people arrested for misdemeanor crimes—particularly those who are cycling in and out of the system over and over again, and whose primary challenge is an unaddressed treatment need. San Diego County, for example, implemented Community Based Services and Recidivism Reduction (CoSRR) and partnered with the San Diego City Attorney’s Office to expand its San Diego Misdemeanor At Risk Track (S.M.A.R.T.) program. Both programs focus on people with acute substance use disorders and complex social service needs who have had one or more drug offenses since Proposition 47 was enacted and have been arrested at least twice in the past six months for a quality-of-life offense. (See page 12, [San Diego: breaking the cycle of misdemeanor crime](#)).

- **Reach-in programs that help people sentenced to jail return to, and remain in, the community.** Sheriffs and jail administrators have noted an increase in the number of people in local jails who have mental health, housing, and rehabilitative challenges. Some have begun collaborating with county agencies outside the justice system to provide services and treatment that are integrated into reentry plans so that, upon release, clients are more likely to connect to treatment, housing, and other support that reduce the likelihood of a new offense. Los Angeles developed an initiative to connect with people in jail who are likely to struggle to find housing, treatment, or other supports after they return to their community. Just in Reach (JIR), originally launched in 2013, gained additional funding as a Pay for Success initiative in 2016. JIR places people who are homeless, in jail, and who have a behavioral health disorder into permanent supportive housing. JIR builds on the success of the Housing for Health program, which has had a 96 percent success rate.⁷⁷ While an important start, JIR serves 75 people in Los Angeles each year—just a fraction of the countywide or statewide need.⁷⁸

CONCLUSION

The promising start of Proposition 47, and the scale of what is needed

As a result of Proposition 47, more than \$300 million has been reallocated to support local public safety programs, trauma recovery for victims of crime, and programs for vulnerable youth. Because of Proposition 47, local public safety dollars are supporting treatment, housing, and community-supports that have been shown to reduce recidivism, and Trauma Recovery Centers help victims of crime heal and resume their lives. Because of Proposition 47, programs that help vulnerable youth see better educational outcomes and steer clear of crimes are being funded.

All the while, crime rates remain at historic lows. And new research shows, Proposition 47 also led narrowing racial disparities in key statewide criminal justice outcomes.⁷⁹

While Proposition 47 funding has provided a good start in addressing local public safety needs, communities continue to struggle to address mental health and housing challenges at the scale they exist in California.

Each year, Californians would benefit from as many as 260,000 more local opportunities for the mental health, housing and treatment approaches that were funded through the first round of Proposition 47 funding.. Anecdotal statements from law enforcement suggest the need could be much higher.

The Governor's budget allots \$13 billion for a corrections system in which half of the people sentenced to prison return to prison within three years. Local justice systems could be better served by public programs that are more effective at reducing recidivism for a third of what we are spending on the corrections budget.

There is strong public support for California to take this policy direction. A recent survey showed, more than 7 out of 10 voters support requiring the wider use of alternatives to incarceration to reduce the prisons budget by at least \$1 billion, with savings designated to protect schools and hospital funding. The public also strongly supports policies that would free up the resources to expand the use of alternatives, like reducing incarceration of people who are low risk to public safety, resentencing of individuals convicted of crimes who are elderly or medically frail and revising and eliminating the Three Strikes Law to reduce extreme sentencing.⁸¹

California must make a bigger investment to expand or refine programs and approaches that are already working. In addition to expanding and better funding Trauma Recovery Centers to promote healing for victims of crime and increasing support for vulnerable youth, California must expand local public safety programs to address the existing need for diversion, treatment, housing and sentencing options.

Endnotes

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78 Over four years, JIR will provide permanent supportive housing solutions to 300 homeless individuals who are currently in custody within the Los Angeles County jail, i.e., approximately 75 individuals annually. See Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Corporation for Supportive Housing, Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office, Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, National Council on Crime & Delinquency, RAND Corporation, UnitedHealthcare. (2019). *Just in Reach & Pay for Success* fact sheet (p. 1). Retrieved from https://hiltonfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/2_-_JIR_PayForSuccess_fact_sheet-3.pdf; Urban Institute. (2020). PFS Project Fact Sheets: Los Angeles County Just in Reach Project. Retrieved from <https://pfs.urban.org/pfs-project-fact-sheets/content/los-angeles-county-just-reach-project>

79 Lofstrom, M., Martin, B., and Raphael, S. Proposition 47's Impact on Racial Disparity in Criminal Justice Outcomes. Public Policy Institute of California. (2020). Repairing the Road to Redemption. Retrieved from <https://safeandjust.org/interactivereport/repairing-the-road-to-redemption-in-california/>

80 Estimates for these figures were based off the following: Arrests of people with mental health needs/diversion: Calculated by using the 18.5% of arraigned defendants have a current diagnosis of serious mental illness * 1,091,694 arrests in California in 2018 = 201,963. As there are currently no statewide data regarding mental illness among arrestees in California, information on arraigned defendants is used as a proxy. Under California law, persons who are arrested and charged with a crime must be arraigned on the charges within 48 hours of their arrest (excluding Sundays and holidays). Sources: California Penal Code § 825; Judicial Council of California. (2011). Task Force for Criminal Justice Collaboration on Mental Health Issues: Final Report citing Nahama Broner, Stacy Lamon, Damon Mayrl, and Martin Karopkin, "Arrested Adults Awaiting Arraignment: Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Criminal Justice Characteristics and Needs," *Fordham Urban Law Review* 30 (2003), pp. 663–721; California Department of Justice. (2019). Crime in California 2018. Table 16: Total Arrests, 1966–2018, p. 20. Supervised by probation: Due to severe data limitations regarding mental illness among probation populations, most studies rely on a 1995 Bureau of Justice Statistics survey finding that 16 percent of people on probation nationwide were experiencing a serious mental illness, defined as self-reporting a mental condition or staying overnight in a mental hospital at some point in their lifetime. As of June 2018, there were 356,952 adults on probation. Thus an estimated 57,112 people on probation suffered from serious mental illness. Sources: Paula M. Ditton. Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). (1999). Mental Health and Treatment of Inmates and Probationers using data from the BJS 1995 Survey of Adults on Probation; Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC). (2018). 2018 California Probation Summary. https://www.cpoc.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/california_probation_executive_summary.pdf?1555517616. Sentenced to jail: Although data regarding mental illness in jail populations are scant, California data shows an average of 25 percent of statewide jail populations had open mental health cases in 2018. About 35 percent of the jail population in 2018 was sentenced. Assuming even distribution of mental health cases among pretrial and sentenced populations, an estimated 18,475 average jail population per month had open mental health cases including 6,377 sentenced average daily population. Source: Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC). Jail Profile Survey. "Mental health cases opened last day of the month", "(ADP totals) Jurisdiction", "(ADP totals) Sentenced males", "(ADP totals) Sentenced females" - Jan thru Dec 2018, all jurisdictions. Note: 18 percent of data entries for open mental health cases were "unknown". Totals divided by twelve to calculate per month averages of 18,475 open mental health cases, 73,060 total ADP, and 25,510 sentenced population. Housing for people who have mental health needs: 20% of people with mental health disorders in jail were homeless before they were arrested. Twenty percent of people arrested with mental health needs (180,130) would be 36,000. For a fuller explanation of these estimates, contact Californians for Safety and Justice.

81 How California Can Cut Prison Spending, Protect Health and Education Spending and Improve Public Safety. (2020). Oakland: Californians for Safety and Justice.



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