

OVERVIEW

Overwhelming evidence shows that when we address the underlying causes of criminal behavior, we reduce crime and increase public safety. Our current system falls short when it comes to providing the support needed to avoid recidivism and succeed. It is time we work to heal New Mexico families and communities by prioritizing access to treatment, expanding diversionary programs and other evidence-based alternatives to incarceration.



To reach these goals New Mexico should pass legislation that:

- Increases community-based substance use disorder and mental health treatment
- Eliminate debt-based driver's license suspension
- Invest in housing support for the un-housed and formerly incarcerated people
- Automatic voting rights restoration upon release from state prison
- Fully fund the Law Offices of the Public Defender



Re-imagining Drug Policy

Substance use disorder has plagued New Mexico families for decades. For years, communities in New Mexico have had some of the highest overdose death rates in the country. At the same time, instead of providing treatment infrastructure, we incarcerate people for simply possessing controlled substances. Evidence has shown that a public health response is more effective than incarceration and that locking people up for drug offenses, years at a time, has a questionable impact on public safety. It's time we treat substance use as a public health issue, not a criminal justice issue and pass policies that save lives and restore communities.

To address substance-use disorder in our communities, New Mexico should :

- De-felonize simple possession of controlled substances
- End habitual offender Enhancements for simple drug possession
- Establish overdose prevention sites
- Support efforts to recruit and retain mental health and substance-use disorder providers*

*This proposal generates revenue, saves money or represents a reinvestment of money saved through criminal legal system reforms

Individualized Sentencing

The medical and security under-staffing in New Mexico prisons and jails is a recipe for disaster. Yet, we continue to incarcerate people for technical probation and parole violations and failing to pay court-ordered fines and fees. It is time we stop wasting public money incarcerating people for missing appointments or struggling with addiction. We must also stop the unfair practice of funding government functions and programs by charging exorbitant fees at every stage of the criminal legal system. These practices further marginalize our communities, are not sustainable, and do nothing to improve public safety. Instead, we need to eliminate bureaucratic rules that lead to unnecessary incarceration and stop gouging people with egregious fees.



To achieve these objectives New Mexico support policy that:

- Reforms probation and parole in the state
- Create 2nd chances for juveniles sentenced as adults
- Provides judicial discretion for habitual offender enhancements
- Eliminates criminal justice system fees

Police Accountability

New Mexicans shouldn't fear calling the police will result in death or great bodily harm. Excessive use of force erodes community trust, especially when officers aren't held accountable. For years, New Mexico has had the highest or second highest police killing rate in the nation. From 2016 to 2020, New Mexico police officers killed approximately 108 people, three times the national average. Comparatively, police officers in New York, with nearly 10 times the population, killed approximately 109 people during the same time period. The state's largest municipal police force is under a federal consent decree because of its history of violating individuals' constitutional rights resulting in death and great bodily harm. Legal accountability is crucial to maintaining public safety and increasing public trust.



To be safe in our communities, New Mexico needs to hold police accountable by enacting:

- Limits Use of Force
- Bans choke holds
- Requires officers to intervene
- Bans no-knock warrants and quick-knock raids
- Creates database to track police misconduct

This proposal generates revenue, saves money or represents a reinvestment of money saved through criminal legal system reforms