



SAFER MISSOURI STRONGER MISSOURI



MISSOURI CHAMBER
FOUNDATION

SAFER MISSOURI STRONGER MISSOURI

Ferguson Police officer Greg Casem and Sergeant Dominica Fuller console a mourning child during a candlelight vigil held in honor of Jamyla Bolden in Ferguson, Missouri.

Casem carried Jamyla Bolden, 9, to an ambulance after she was struck by a stray bullet from a drive-by shooting and killed while doing her homework at her home in Ferguson.

(Photo by Michael B. Thomas/Getty Images/2015)





Contents

Introduction 2

Where Missouri Stands 4

Recommendations 9-28

 I. Deploy evidence-based and hot spot approaches to crime reduction 10

 II. Increase and protect tools to support policing 12

 III. Address substance misuse and mental health 14

 IV. Reduce recidivism among those on probation or parole 17

 V. Improve training and employment opportunities
 for incarcerated individuals 19

 VI. Increase public safety staffing 22

 VII. Improve public perception of law enforcement. 26

 VIII. Increase prosecutorial consistency and transparency 28

Sources 29

This report is part of the Missouri Chamber Foundation’s overarching Missouri 2030 strategic plan, a data-driven initiative to reposition our state as a global economic leader.

Research for this report was provided by Economic Leadership LLC.

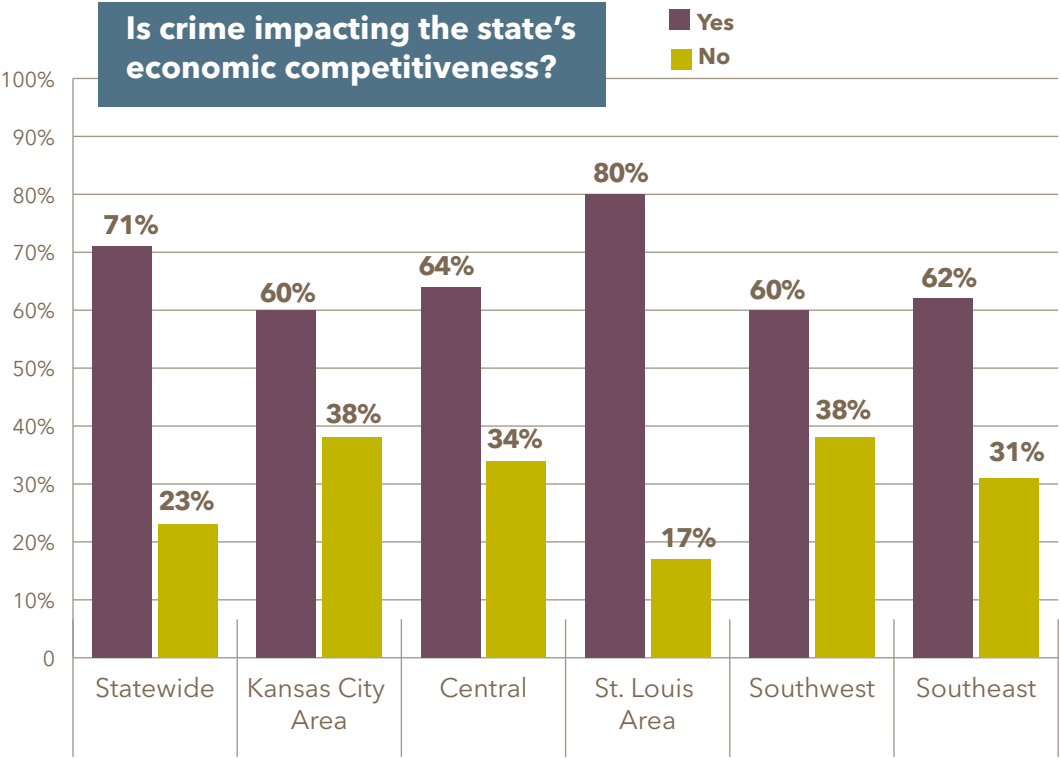
Introduction

Public safety affects every Missourian. Low crime rates are consistently reported as a top factor for people choosing where to live. It influences where they shop, play and work. Safety and security contribute to citizens' mental health and well-being. Beyond the personal effects, crime can rob a town or neighborhood of its vitality and its sense of community.

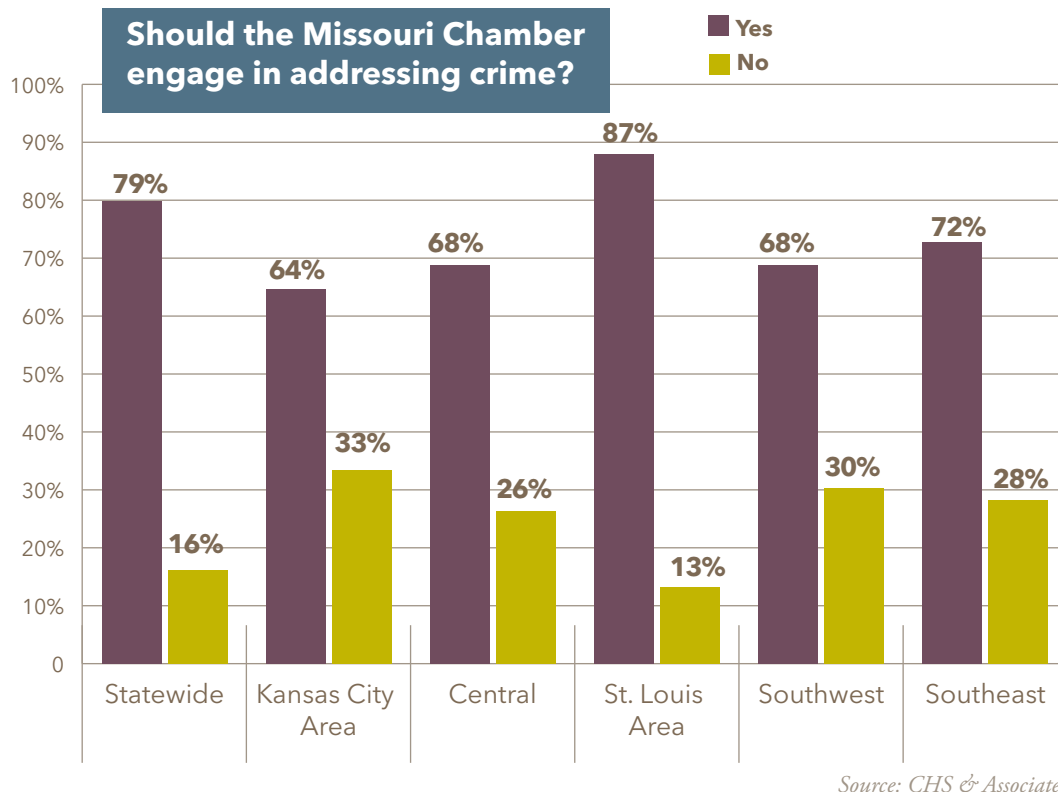
In a 2021 poll of Missouri CEOs, the Missouri Chamber asked if crime was affecting economic competitiveness. The poll was conducted by CHS and Associates, who reached out to more than 600 CEOs and business leaders from around the state and across industries. The results were overwhelming. The vast majority of business leaders believe crime is hurting our economy and they want to see change.

Public safety is also a significant business issue. It impacts profitability, risk and access to employees and customers. In the past year, concern about public safety in Missouri has risen among the state's business leaders. The negative national attention stalls economic growth as it hinders the recruitment of talent and business investment. The persistent headlines raise doubts about the future. But most importantly, the day-to-day impacts on Missouri lives and communities are unacceptable. Something must be done to address public safety issues in Missouri.

Nearly three quarters of Missouri business leaders see crime negatively impacting the state's economy. Concern among St. Louis business leaders hit a remarkable 80 percent.



Source: CHS & Associates



Not only do members see crime as an issue, nearly eight of every 10 CEOs surveyed want the Missouri Chamber to engage to find solutions. St. Louis CEOs are most urgently asking for assistance to address crime in their region.

For this report, we conducted one-on-one interviews with a wide variety of stakeholders across the state. We spoke with leaders in local, state and federal law enforcement, as well as with legal, criminal justice and corrections experts. Stakeholders from major civic organizations participated. Leaders from the fields of health, mental health, social services and community service organizations also provided their

frank input. This input was a critical component of the recommendations that follow.

Regardless of whether the interviewee was a law enforcement professional or community leader, there was widespread agreement that public safety is a significant concern across Missouri, perhaps even “the state’s most important issue.” Individuals described crime as “terrible” and “out of control.” Perceptions of violent crime varied by location, with homicide a particularly pressing issue in larger cities. Others noted that property crimes are increasingly turning violent. Stakeholders believe that public safety is a quality of life issue,

affecting people looking to move to Missouri or even stay in parts of the state.

In addition to speaking with stakeholders, we took a close look at crime statistics and tactics in Missouri and nationwide to understand what is driving crime trends and how other states and regions are dealing with it. In the last decade, many states have enacted significant criminal justice reforms. Reforms encompass a wide range of topics, as evidenced by the best practices highlighted in this report. The primary theme in many of these is better use of limited state and local resources by focusing on high-risk individuals and high-crime geographic areas.

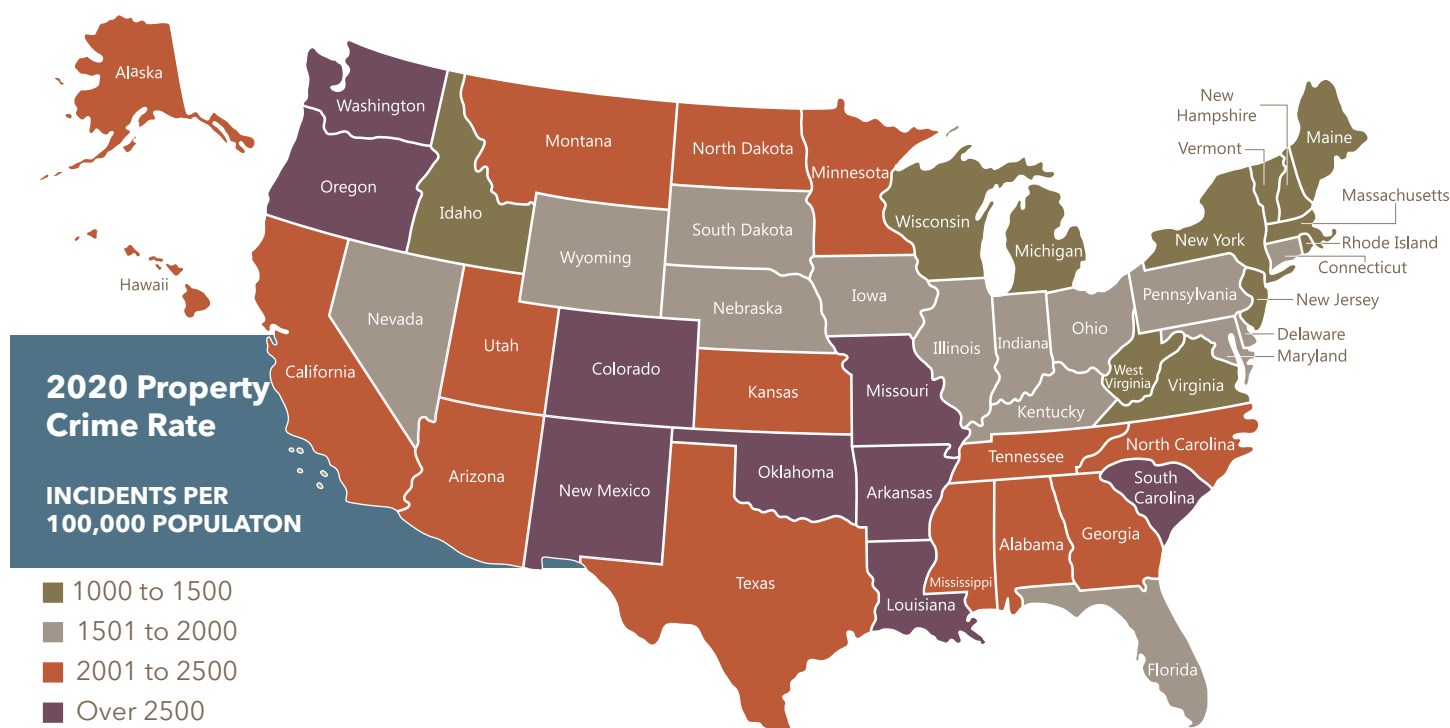
Where Missouri Stands

Missouri's crime challenge is not defined by shocking headlines or political hyperbole – it is in the data. All of our various Missouri 2030 reports, including this one, are rooted in data. We have used the information that businesses and citizens use when they are making decisions about investments or expansion into states and regions. Missouri's crime data reveals a growing problem.

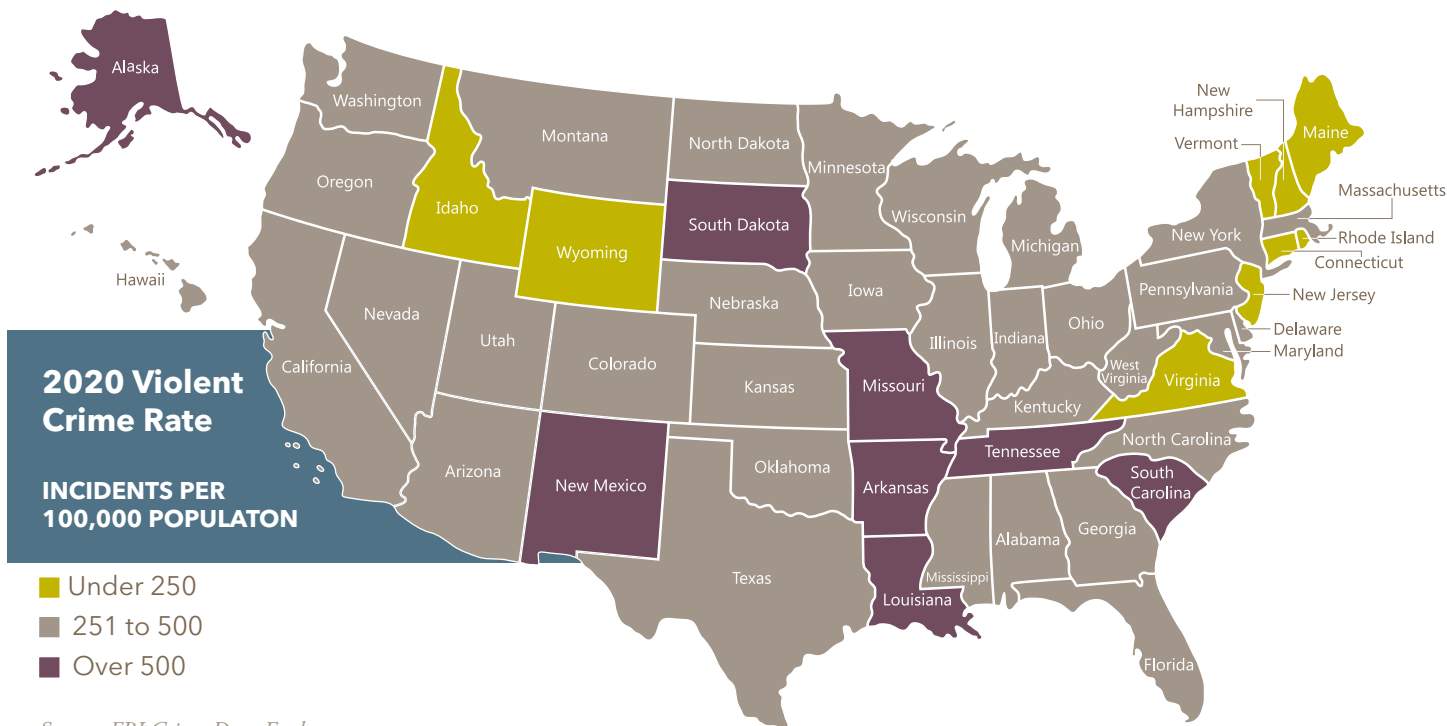
particular – spiked nationally starting in the summer of 2020. Between 2019 and 2020, a year dominated by lockdowns and economic hardship, the national violent crime rate increased by 4.6 percent. Missouri's rate rose by 8.6 percent. All neighboring states experienced a surge in violent crime, including double digit increases in Tennessee and Arkansas.

Until the COVID-19 pandemic, crime rates in the United States had been on a long decline. In 2019, the violent crime rate in America was about one-half of its peak in the early 1990s. Property crime fell even further, dropping by 60 percent from its rate in the early 1990s. However, violent crime – and homicide in

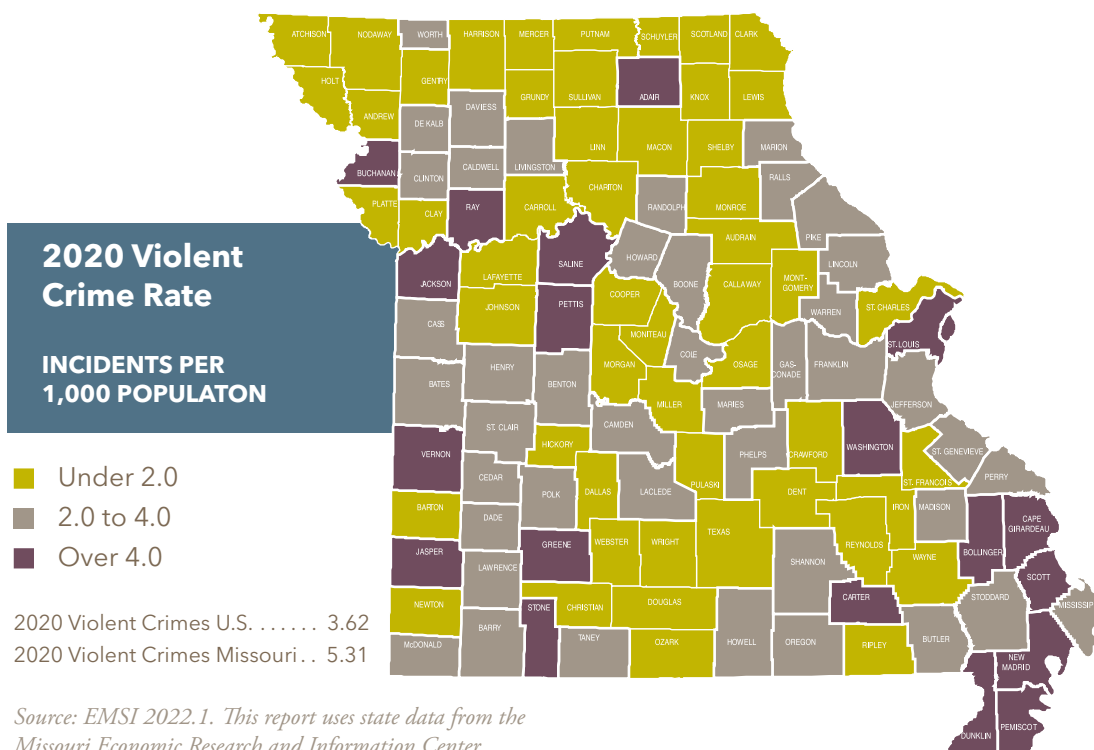
Crime rankings in the United States indicate that Missouri Chamber members are right to focus on public safety as an important business and quality of life issue. For the rate of violent crimes per person, Missouri ranked sixth highest in America among the 50 states in 2020.ⁱ Only Alaska, New Mexico, Tennessee,



Source: FBI Crime Data Explorer



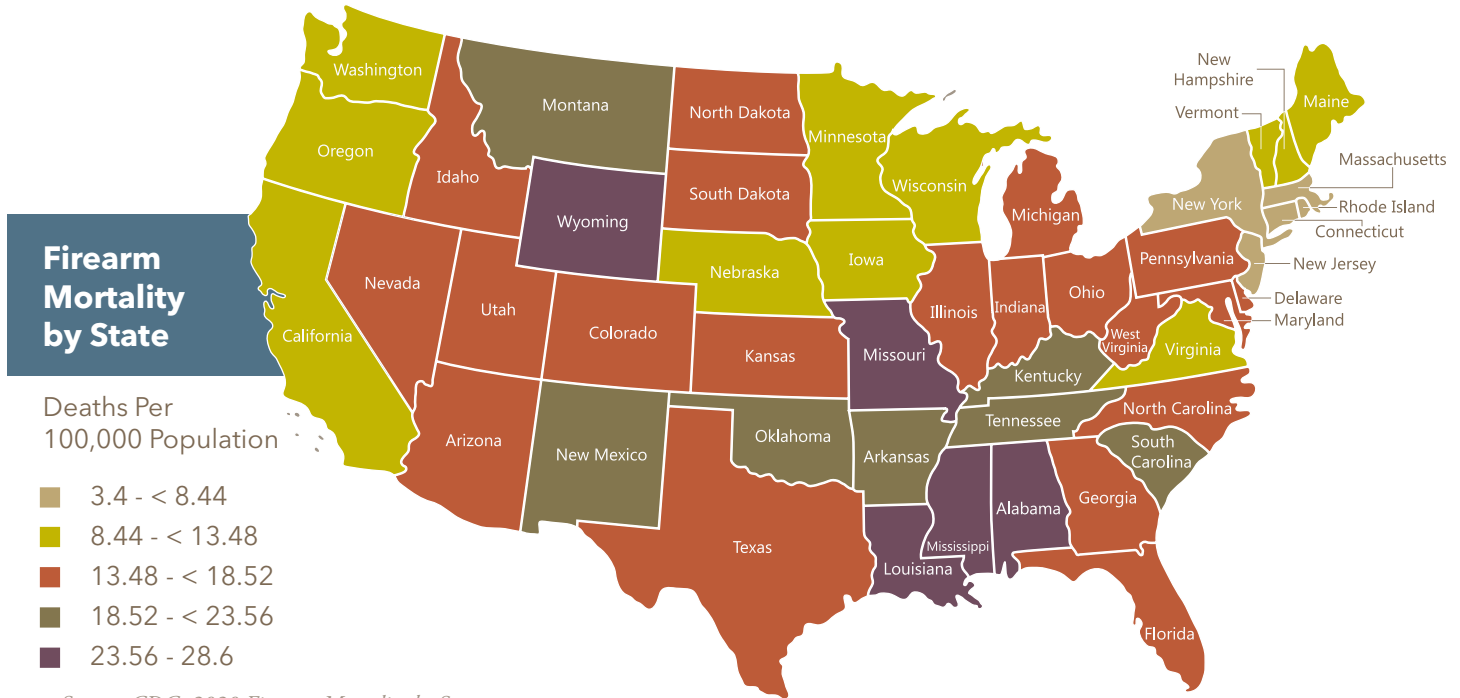
Source: FBI Crime Data Explorer



Source: EMSI 2022.1. This report uses state data from the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center.

Where Missouri Stands

(continued)



Arkansas, and Louisiana ranked higher. For property crimes, Missouri had the ninth-highest rate per capita in 2020.[#]

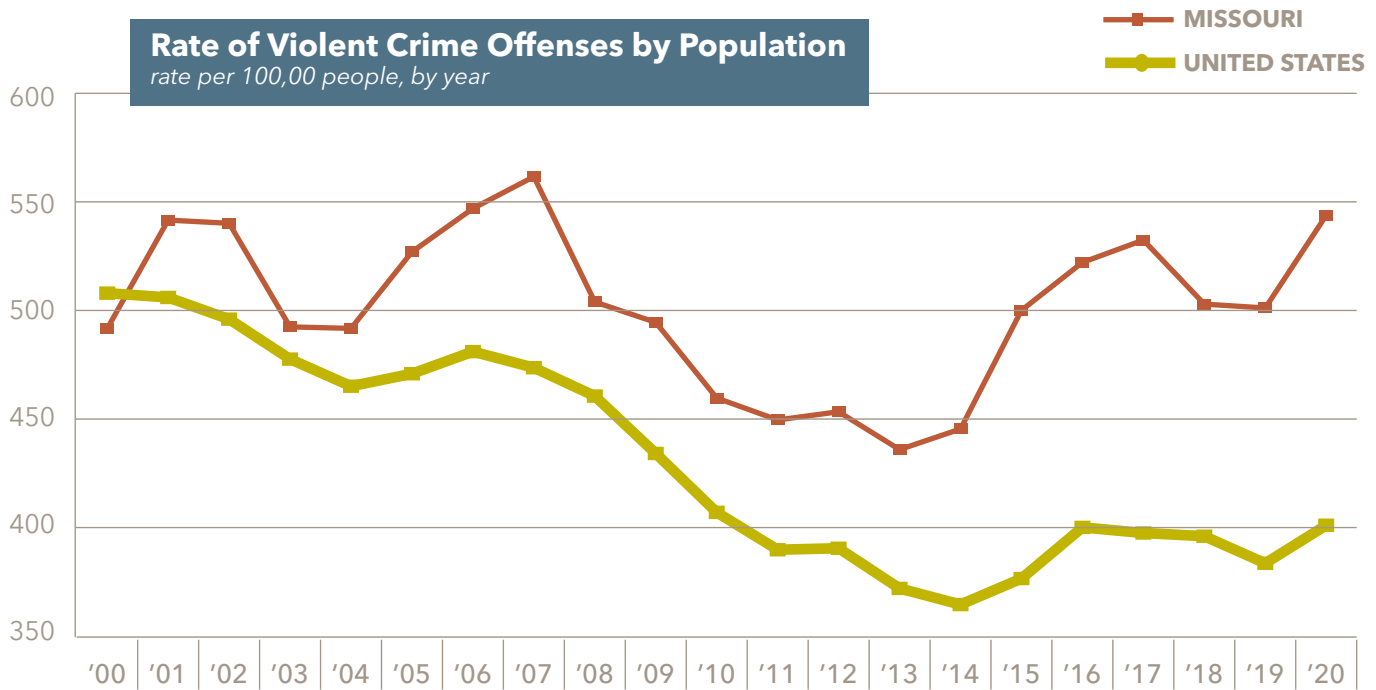
Gun violence continues to grow at an alarming rate in Missouri. In 2020, 1,462 Missourians died by firearms, according to the CDC. With a rate of 23.9 deaths per 100,000 people, Missouri has the fourth highest rate of gun deaths in the United States.

The toll is especially high among minority populations. Across all states, Missouri had the highest rates of gun

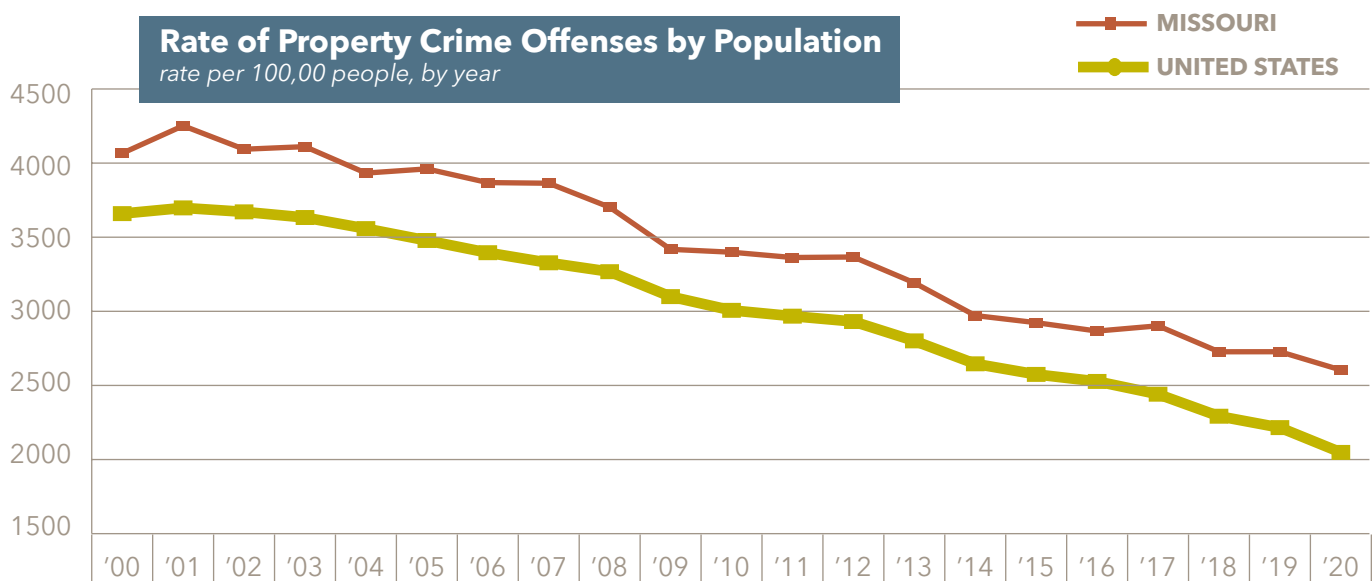
deaths among Black people in 2020, followed by Indiana and Illinois.

In recent years, the gap between Missouri and the national violent crime rate has widened. Between 2000 and 2019, the United States saw a 24.8 percent drop in violent crime. During the same period, Missouri's violent crime rate rose by 2.0 percent. Among Missouri's neighbors, rates dropped in most states but rose in Arkansas (+30.4%), Iowa (+8.0%) and Kansas (+4.1%).

Property crime rates display a similar pattern, although with a less dramatic gap.



Source: FBI Crime Data Explorer



Source: FBI Crime Data Explorer

Where Missouri Stands

(continued)



Investigators on the scene of a Kansas City, Mo. building destroyed by arson.

(Photo by Joe Ledford/Kansas City Star/Tribune News Service/Getty Images/2015)

NATIONAL SENTIMENT ON PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES

Recent national surveys show increased concerns about crime. According to the Pew Research Center, 61 percent of Americans in July 2021 said that violent crime was a “very big problem” in the nation. In June 2020, that figure was just 41 percent. Also, more Americans said that public safety funding in their own community should be increased. In September 2021, 47 percent wanted to see more police funding, compared with 31 percent in June 2020. Only 15 percent wished to see public safety funding decreased. Opinions vary significantly based on factors such as race, ethnicity and political party. One of the biggest differences is by age: 63 percent of those aged 65 and older want to see greater spending, but 32 percent of people ages 18 to 29 favor decreased police spending in their area.ⁱⁱⁱ Still, the nation as a whole is demonstrating heightened concern about crime and more support for spending on public safety.

Recommendations

THESE NUMBERS ARE DAUNTING AND WILL REQUIRE AN AGGRESSIVE AND COLLABORATIVE APPROACH BY STATE AND LOCAL POLICYMAKERS.

The Missouri Chamber understands the complex nature of the problem and knows that many groups must work together to find solutions. We also believe that many of those solutions will emanate locally. Numerous efforts are underway, many with the support of local companies and chambers of commerce.

However, as this study reveals, statewide policy and initiatives must also be deployed to address this problem effectively. The pages that follow detail several of the state and nation's most pressing crime-related issues. The report highlights best practices in Missouri and across

the nation, and you will learn what actions are currently underway and what more needs to happen. Most importantly, this study provides a plan for statewide action to reduce crime and improve our economic competitiveness and the quality of life for Missourians.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS ARE OUTLINED IN THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW:

- I. Deploy evidence-based and hot spot approaches to crime reduction
- II. Increase and protect tools to support policing
- III. Address substance misuse and mental health
- IV. Reduce recidivism among those on probation or parole
- V. Improve training and employment opportunities for incarcerated individuals
- VI. Increase public safety staffing
- VII. Improve public perception of law enforcement
- VIII. Increase prosecutorial consistency and transparency

Deploy evidence-based and hot spot approaches to crime reduction



THE PROBLEM:

Across the nation, a disproportionate amount of crime is committed by a small percentage of people in concentrated areas. This trend is consistent in Missouri's metropolitan communities.

Stakeholders said that it is important to prioritize public safety spending by geography to target areas with the most recurrent violent crimes. They suggested increasing the detention of violent, habitual criminals before trial and freeing up jail space for more dangerous, habitual offenders. Having more uniform sentencing guidelines for repeat violent offenders was also a suggestion by stakeholders to help address the large volume of crime committed by a small number of perpetrators.

There is more to addressing persistent offenders than stricter enforcement. Many

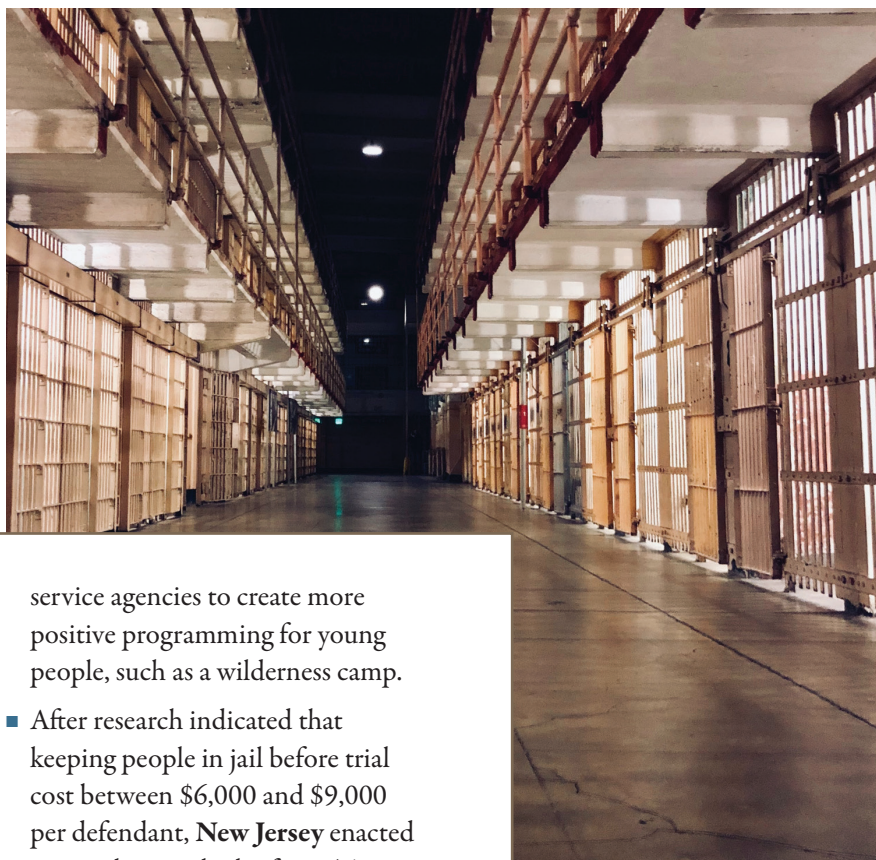
US jurisdictions are using an approach called “pulling levers,” which tries to deter the most prominent offenders by confronting them and informing them that they are being tracked and will be prosecuted heavily if caught in an offense.

Addressing social and economic factors that lead to crime is a critical element in incident prevention in crime hotspots. In 2021, Missouri enacted the Economic Distress Zone Fund grant program with the intent of financially supporting community organizations that create opportunities for youth in high-crime areas. The Missouri Department of Public Safety administers the grants. The inaugural recipients of the grants: the Beyond Housing; Community of Hope; Lift for Life; New Madrid County Human Resource Council; and the Urban League of Metro St. Louis.



WHAT OTHER STATES HAVE DONE:

- An example of broad sentencing and corrections reforms that have shown success is **South Carolina's** 2010 reform legislation. This package strove to a) protect public safety, b) hold individuals accountable, and c) control prison population growth. The legislation changed sentencing standards to prioritize prison space for repeat offenders and those convicted of the most serious crimes. It increased penalties for some violent crimes while allowing probation, parole and good conduct credits for non-trafficking drug offenses. It increased the threshold for property crimes to be judged a felony. Senate Bill 1154 also strengthened probation and parole supervision and improved the decision-making process for releasing inmates. Between 2010 and 2015, South Carolina's crime rate fell by 16 percent. The prison population declined by 16 percent from 2009 to 2016, saving an estimated \$491 million. Meanwhile, the share of prison space devoted to violent offenders rose by 27 percent.^{iv}
- **Oklahoma's** Safe Oklahoma Grant Program funds law enforcement



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ✓ Change sentencing standards to prioritize prison space for repeat offenders and those convicted of the most serious crimes.
- ✓ Expand the use of home incarceration and work release.
- ✓ Work with community organizations, churches and social service agencies in hot spot areas to provide youth with alternative activities to crime.

strategies to reduce violent crime.

The program provided \$5.3 million in a recent three-year period to develop data-driven crime reduction initiatives. Safe Oklahoma focuses on five key areas for reducing violent crime: a) evidence-based policing; b) increased technological capacity; c) improved analytical capacity; d) engaging with community partners; and e) providing victim services.

- In 2013, the **Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP)** studied hot spot policing strategies. It concluded that deploying one additional police officer in known crime hot spots would yield seven dollars in benefits for every dollar of program cost. Benefits included crime reduction, improved high school graduation, better labor market availability and reduced health care costs.^{viii}
- After experiencing a spike in drug-related youth crime, the rural area of **Berea, Kentucky** worked with the U.S. Department of Justice to implement community policing strategies. Police focused on making drug use hot spots less favorable for criminal activity. They also worked with community organizations, churches and social

service agencies to create more positive programming for young people, such as a wilderness camp.

- After research indicated that keeping people in jail before trial cost between \$6,000 and \$9,000 per defendant, **New Jersey** enacted comprehensive bail reform. Too many individuals at a low risk of reoffending were kept in jail because they could not post bail, while some high-risk offenders could afford bail and avoided detention. New Jersey's reforms included use of evidence-based risk assessments for release decisions and limits on the length of pretrial detentions. In the first year, there was a 20 percent drop in the number of people being held in jail pretrial.^{vi}
- Many states have adopted issuing citations in lieu of arrest for misdemeanor crimes and petty offenses. A few states – including **Alaska, Louisiana, Minnesota** and **Oregon** – have expanded citations to include some felony offenses. The goal of these reforms was to ensure there is enough jail space so the worst offenders can be detained.

I

Increase and protect tools to support policing



THE PROBLEM:

At a time when crime is rapidly rising in Missouri, tools to make policing more effective are rapidly changing. Our state's law enforcement agencies are struggling to keep up with changing technology. Yet technology may be the only sustainable way law enforcement can keep up with shrinking staff and growing crime. Stakeholders suggested providing more funding for tools like drones, body cameras and the use of predictive analysis.

A problem facing our criminal justice system nationwide that is frequently cited is the lack of shared information on law enforcement activities, outcomes and other agencies' work impacting crime reduction.

If more solid data is collected about how crime is being

approached and prosecuted, better decisions for allocating limited resources could be made. In addition, this data needs to be shared statewide, not just exist in pockets of the state.

Another obstacle facing law enforcement agencies are unintended consequences of recent change in state policies.

In 2015, the Missouri Supreme Court essentially nullified the use of red light cameras in St. Louis, Kansas City and St. Peters, Mo. While the court did not ultimately decide the legality of automated vehicle cameras, it did make the future of their use uncertain in Missouri. The Supreme Court ruled that it is up to the state – not the vehicle owner – to prove the identity of driver. That ruling removed this tool from most community police forces.

Another tool that is missed by law enforcement is the use of sobriety checkpoints to deter and remove dangerous drivers from our highways. In 2017, Missouri lawmakers cut funding

for sobriety check points and subsequent legislative sessions have continued that move. More than 21 states support this policing tool, a measure that is found to reduce alcohol and drug-related fatalities by 20 percent according to the CDC.

Gun laws impact crime as well. The Second Amendment Preservation Act (SAPA), which was enacted in Missouri in 2021, is causing concern among law enforcement officials and prosecutors. Some interpret the law as a strict prohibition of state law enforcement officers from

working with any federal agency on a weapons-related case while others believe it is needed to protect second amendment rights from federal overreach. While there may be some confusion and disagreement on the interpretation of the statute, communities can be made safer when state and federal law enforcement officials collaborate to take violent criminals off the streets. The state should consider a solution that continues to protect second amendment rights, as prioritized by Missouri's elected leaders, while ensuring its law enforcement officials have all tools available to tackle violent crime.



WHAT OTHER STATES HAVE DONE:

- **Florida's** Senate Bill 1392 in 2018 required all counties to collect data on more than 50 criminal justice system measures and built a statewide database that is available to the public. The bill included \$1.75 million for database development and offered financial incentives for every county to participate.
- **North Carolina** created a Criminal Justice Law Enforcement Automated Data Services (CJLEADS) database to combine information from various other databases in the state. Data involves warrants; jail, court, and prison records; supervision status; and sex offender registration.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ✓ Secure state funding to give law enforcement the technology to more effectively approach crime prevention.
- ✓ Prioritize funding to provide better data collection and analysis to improve policing.
- ✓ Provide incentives and funding to secure statewide adoption and promote crime data sharing across the state.
- ✓ Review existing laws and adjust if these create a roadblock to responsible crime prevention.

III

Address substance misuse and mental health



THE PROBLEM:

Substance misuse and mental health are related to crime in multiple ways. There is strong evidence that indicates that drug users are more likely than nonusers to commit crimes, and that arrestees and inmates were often under the influence of a drug at the time they committed. A 2017 Bureau of Justice report revealed that 21 percent of sentenced people in state prisons and local jails are incarcerated for crimes committed to obtain drugs or money for drugs. Almost 40 percent of people locked up for property crimes and 14 percent of those incarcerated for violent crimes reported that they had committed their most serious offense for drug-related reasons.

Stakeholders indicated that providing funding to improve capacity to deliver mental health

services should also be a priority. Many of the experts we spoke with made a direct connection between crime and addressing mental health needs in communities. Staffing is a significant concern in this arena as well.

Missouri is making strong strides in this area. In 2021 alone, Missouri increased the Division of Mental Health budget by more than \$300 million, with funding going to establish six new mental health and substance misuse crisis centers. But despite the increase in funding, the growth in the number of individuals needing help is outstripping gains. According to the Missouri division of Behavioral Health, the number of adults suffering from mental illness has increased from 862,000 in 2016 to 1,056,000 in 2020. Thousands of those needing mental health resources are on waiting lists,



A homeless couple panhandle on a street in Southwest Missouri.

(Photo by Spencer Platt/Getty Images/2021)

leading to increases in financial insecurity, homelessness and crime.

In addition, we realize that addressing mental health should start at a young age. For example, in a Columbia School District program (funded by a local tax), troubled youth can be evaluated at a mental health facility rather than sent to detention after an incident.



WHAT OTHER STATES HAVE DONE:

Many states are working with organizations such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) to develop crisis intervention teams (CITs) statewide. CITs are partnerships between public safety officers and mental health professionals, developing protocols for first responders to better manage and assist those with mental illness or addiction disorders. Ohio had trained CIT officers in 86 of 88 counties by late 2017. It also has created a statewide CIT strategic plan with strategies such as a) striving to have a law enforcement and a mental health coordinator in every county CIT program; b) training 911 dispatchers; and c) providing mental health crisis centers where CIT officers can take individuals for assessment and care.^{vii} In addition to crisis intervention teams, **Oklahoma** has



developed corrections crisis response teams (CCRTs) to improve interactions between corrections officers, supervision officers and people with a mental illness.

- Citing a survey that 70 percent of judges in **North Dakota** sometimes sentence people to prison to get them the behavioral health treatment they need, the state developed a plan to increase services for those under supervision (probation and parole) in their communities and especially in rural areas. The state invested \$7.5 million^{viii} in a two-pronged approach:
 - Free Through Recovery – providing more services for those with serious behavioral health conditions and at a high risk of reoffending. Each participant is assigned a care coordinator and a peer support specialist who has experienced similar challenges.
 - A training and recruitment strategy to develop more certified care coordinators and peer support specialists. Recruitment strategies include more outreach in rural areas; scholarships and loan forgiveness; distance learning; and out-of-state recruitment.

In 2018, **Massachusetts** launched a pilot project for those in the criminal justice system with serious behavioral health issues. While incarcerated, individuals get a post-release treatment plan including appointments scheduled with community-based service providers, assistance with housing needs and creation of a community support network. After release, they have daily contact with community-based providers during the first month and on an as-needed basis after.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ✓ Research and deploy ways to dedicate funding for more robust mental health and drug rehabilitation systems to divert some cases away from law enforcement.
- ✓ Expand resources to increase use of CITs, a collaboration between law enforcement and mental health professionals with a 40-hour training program for public safety officers on behavioral health and de-escalation strategies.
- ✓ For youth who are disruptive in their school or community, provide more mental and behavioral health interventions that include evaluation and treatment rather than detention and interaction with the criminal justice system.
- ✓ Expand trained CITs in law enforcement agencies across Missouri, and develop corrections crisis response teams in corrections facilities.
- ✓ Improve identification and treatment of incarcerated individuals with serious mental illness, and arrange continued, community-based treatment after release.
- ✓ Provide resources to employers to help identify substance use disorder in their workplaces, and provide training for establishing recovery-friendly workplaces to give Missourians an opportunity to recover rather than turn to crime.

IV

Reduce recidivism among those on probation or parole



THE PROBLEM:

A frequent criminal justice concern is the extent to which people under supervision (on probation and parole) contribute to crime. Fortunately, some states have collected and analyzed data on recidivism. In California, a three-year data review found that those on probation and parole accounted for 22 percent of all arrests. They accounted for only 17 percent of violent

crime arrests but 33 percent of drug arrests. Meanwhile, a study in Michigan indicated that 23 percent to 24 percent of people under supervision were rearrested within one year of their release. Increasingly, states are developing targeted initiatives to reduce recidivism among this population.

Increased jobs training for individuals inside of Missouri

correctional facilities is the leading recommendation for deterring repeat offenders. (This issue will be discussed in more detail in the next section of the report.)

In addition to this approach, many states are leveraging data to better target high-risk offenders. The data is being used to improve release plans, better inform judges and improve probation and parole officer caseloads.



Welding is one of three re-entry training programs provided at the Algoa Correctional Facility.

(Photo by Missouri Department of Corrections/2021)



WHAT OTHER STATES HAVE DONE:

- **Iowa's** Statewide Recidivism Reduction effort focused on the 38 percent of people on supervision identified as a moderate to high risk of reoffending. This group is responsible for 72 percent of recidivism. Strategies include evidence-based practices; more careful pre-release planning; better staff training; and use of a data dashboard by the Iowa Department of Corrections. Iowa is aiming for a 30 percent recidivism reduction over five years.
- **West Virginia** budgeted \$11 million over three years to expand addiction treatment and services for people on probation and parole, prioritized for those most likely to reoffend.
- Research in **Arizona** showed that individuals who violated conditions of their probation accounted for one-third of all prison admissions. Arizona implemented reforms such as ensuring that judges have better risk and needs assessment reports; stakeholder training on use of evidenced-based practices; and focusing time and resources on people most likely to reoffend. Arizona reported a 31 percent decline in people entering prison because of probation revocations over a nine-year period. Over that same period, new felony convictions fell by 17 percent. Arizona estimates that these results saved taxpayers more than \$460 million.^{ix}
- States are striving to reduce incarceration and costs for technical violations of probation and parole. Legislation in **Louisiana** capped jail or prison stays at 90 days for those on supervision who were initially convicted of a non-violent offense and are first-time technical violators of their supervision conditions. An evaluation after the first five years of these changes concluded:
 - The average length of incarceration for first-time technical violators fell by more than nine months;
 - The number of those on supervision returned to custody for new crimes fell by 22 percent;
 - Taxpayers saved more than \$17 million annually in correction facility costs.^x
- Other states fund supervision sufficiently to keep officer caseloads low for those working intensively with individuals at a high risk of reoffending. **Texas** parole officials might typically have 75 people per officer, but this is reduced to 14 people per officer for intensive supervision. **Minnesota** has a similar standard for intensive supervision: no more than 30 people per two officers.
- Finally, **Pennsylvania** incorporated performance-based contracts with halfway house operators after determining that parolees who stayed at halfway houses had higher recidivism rates. The 37 Community Contract Facilities (halfway houses) in the state now provide services including behavioral therapy, addiction treatment, educational and vocational programming. The CCFs are paid based on their ability to reduce recidivism. In the first year after the changes, Pennsylvania found that overall recidivism declined by more than 11 percent.^{xi}



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ✓ Collect data on recidivism rates in Missouri and develop an action plan for addressing high-risk groups.
- ✓ Analyze parole officer caseloads and focus manpower on high-risk populations.
- ✓ Identify ways to help remove barriers to re-entry, such as housing, behavioral support and employment opportunities.

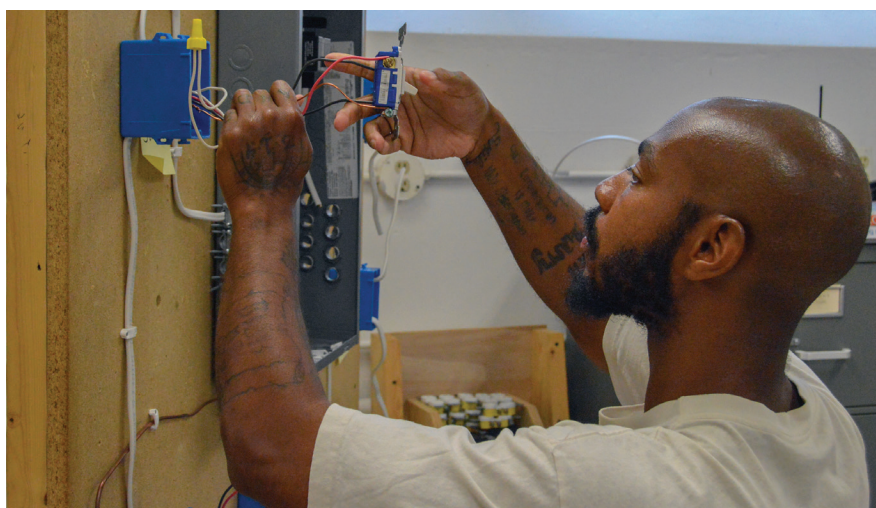
Improve training and employment opportunities for incarcerated individuals



THE PROBLEM:

Too often, individuals are being released unprepared for the world outside of prison. The result is a return to crime and further interaction with Missouri's criminal justice system. For this report, we asked stakeholders about efforts to prepare incarcerated people for productive roles in Missouri's labor force after they are released. Most agreed that this can be helpful for reducing recidivism and strengthening the workforce pipeline. As one said, "Retraining is a win for everyone." Diverting people away from future interactions with the criminal justice system can also free up law enforcement time and resources to be focused where they are needed the most.

Stakeholders stressed that this cannot merely be a dumping of individuals back into the community. It requires a careful strategy and numerous supports. It should start within prisons, connecting individuals to in-demand jobs that match their career interests. Upon release, individuals may need assistance dealing with housing, transportation, work "soft skills" and re-establishing family connections.



Preparing for re-entry, this man hones his electrical skills at the Boonville Correctional Facility. (Photo by Missouri Department of Corrections/2018)

A robust, statewide program to educate and train incarcerated citizens for employment upon release would address several important goals. It would help to reduce recidivism among these individuals. It would also free up prison space and criminal justice resources to use elsewhere. At the same time, it would help expand the chronically small labor pools that businesses face because of demographics and other trends.

This report highlights some nationally acclaimed workforce training initiatives for justice-involved individuals, but there are also commendable programs

within the state. The Missouri Department of Corrections provides workforce training within many of its facilities. Missouri Vocational Enterprises provide opportunities for individuals to gain work skills and experience.

The Department is also piloting a new workforce training initiative in cooperation with national firm Tremco Roofing and its service subsidiary, Weatherproofing Technologies Inc. (WTI). The ELEVATE program was launched in 2021 at Western Reception, Diagnostic & Correctional Center in St. Joseph. The eight-week ELEVATE vocational training includes live stream instruction,

self-paced learning and on-site, hands-on training leading to employment as a commercial roofing technician. Tremco estimates that starting wages for these positions are around \$16 per hour.

This marks the first time that the Department of Corrections has offered workforce training with employers inside a prison for individuals before release. In addition to the potential for reducing recidivism and saving money in the state's corrections budget, ELEVATE is designed to benefit Tremco Roofing by addressing the "chronic construction labor shortage."^{xiii}

In St. Louis, the Concordance is making significant impact through its re-entry model for justice-involved adults.

In 2020, the Greater Kansas City Chamber started a Workforce Opportunities for Returning Citizens (WORC) pilot program to connect ex-offenders with career opportunities in the region. The KC Chamber Foundation also joined with a number of non-profit organizations that provide support services for returning citizens and can refer them to potential employers. The pilot involved eight Kansas City employers, and was expanded in 2021 with 15 participating businesses and additional non-profit support organizations.



WHAT OTHER STATES HAVE DONE:

- The state of **Washington** has several strategies to better prepare men and women in prison for outside employment. The Trades Related Apprenticeship and Coaching (TRAC) program is a registered pre-apprenticeship for women at a state prison.
 - It provides a direct path for women to enter into a construction trades apprenticeship upon release, and it partners with an outside organization to offer wrap-around support services after release.
 - Correctional facilities in Washington have adopted the team-teaching approach for incarcerated people, with one person teaching vocational skills such as carpentry and automotive
- technology while another teaches adult basic education (ABE) skills in math, reading and writing.
- An executive order in 2016 directed that pathways be developed for incarcerated people to access post-secondary education and apprenticeships.
- **Indiana's** Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (HIRE) program was launched in 2012, and in 2018 HIRE won a national award for best state-level workforce program. The HIRE model prepares felony inmates in four ways:
 - A nine-module HIRE Academy addressing workplace readiness, community reintegration, digital and financial literacy.
 - Outreach to area businesses for job placement.
 - Coordination with support organizations to assist



The Chillicothe Correctional Facility offers horticulture training and these women will use these skills in jobs after incarceration.

(Photo by Missouri Department of Corrections/2018)

with clothing, housing and transportation.

- A HIRE Coordinator (mentor) works with each participant for one year after an initial job placement. In 2018, the HIRE program placed over 2,400 individuals in jobs, with a three-month retention rate of 99 percent.^{xiii} Participants also have lower recidivism rates.
- The Certificate of Relief program in **North Carolina** gives certain lower-level offenders a certificate that overrides automatic disqualifications for housing and employment and serves as evidence of rehabilitation. It also limits civil liability for landlords who rent to individuals holding a Certificate of Relief.
- Multiple states are reforming expungement laws for non-violent misdemeanors or felonies to help individuals overcome their legal records to obtain gainful employment. **Alabama** enacted the REDEEMER Act, authorizing petition-based expungement of non-violent misdemeanors and violations. **Arizona** is making strides to get individuals with minor criminal records into the workforce by authorizing its courts to seal many types of conviction records upon petition. Arizona also granted its courts authority to issue a Certificate of Second Chance to individuals whose convictions are set aside.
- Lockhart Correctional Facility in the Austin, **Texas** area uses the model of working closely with a local community college to provide in-prison education and training.
- In **Kansas**, the legislature passed a measure in 2021 to create a public-private partnership and begin fundraising to build a Career Campus at Lansing Correctional Facility. It is expected that a majority of the \$25 to \$30 million cost for the Career Campus will be raised from the private sector.
- In its 2021 **South Carolina** policy agenda, Chamber leaders in upstate South Carolina called for reforms to “prepare individuals for high-demand career opportunities and make it easier to transition into the workforce.” Agenda specifics include expanding expungement for non-violent offenders; assisting returning citizens with vital records upon release; and creating a state tax credit for businesses that hire returning citizens.”^{xiv}

(Photo by Missouri Department of Corrections/2019)



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ✓ Support expansion of programs such as ELEVATE that provides workforce training to soon-to-be released individuals.
- ✓ Support expansion of the Kansas City Chamber’s pilot program that provides a connection and commitment by employers to provide second-chance employment.
- ✓ Enact a recently proposed expungement law for certain non-violent charges to expand access to employment opportunities for low-level offenders.
- ✓ Provide social support services, such as the Certificate of Relief program, to prevent lower-level offenders from housing and employment disqualifications.
- ✓ Create a state incentive for businesses that hire justice-involved individuals.

VI

Increase public safety staffing



THE PROBLEM:

As crime has risen, Missouri's largest police departments are operating under unprecedented officer shortages. The St. Louis police department has been short by 100 officers or more at any given time for at least five years, according to the St. Louis Post Dispatch. The Kansas City Star reports that the Kansas City Police Department is short 300 people and projects that it will be under 1,000 officers in 2022, the lowest level in 25 years. Meanwhile in rural Missouri the shortage is even more acute, with overworked officers covering territories that span multiple communities.

Law enforcement agencies across the United States are struggling to recruit and hire police officers. In a 2019 survey, 78% of agencies reported having difficulty in recruiting qualified candidates, and 75% said that the problem was getting more difficult.

The State of Recruitment: A Crisis for Law Enforcement
The International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2019

The stakeholders we interviewed said that reduced staffing of policing organizations is heavily impacted by negative perceptions of police, a lack of respect for those who serve, the job's inherent dangers and low pay in some city and many rural areas. Poor pay leads many officers to move to higher-paying suburban departments after a



Lincoln University Law Enforcement Training Academy salutatorian Endre Jefferson greets LU Police Chief Gary Hill at the graduation ceremony for the inaugural class of the academy at Lincoln University, Jefferson City.

(Photo by Jason Strickland/News Tribune/2021)

few years, or leave the profession altogether. Staffing difficulties were highlighted by the police chief of a small Missouri city on the edge of a major metro region. The chief indicated that his jurisdiction is among the highest-paying in the area. Still, when they recently advertised for four open positions, they received just seven applications.

Law enforcement pay is an important consideration, although cost of living varies greatly across the United States and within Missouri, and this should be taken into consideration. The map on the following page shows the median annual pay level for law enforcement officers in 2020,

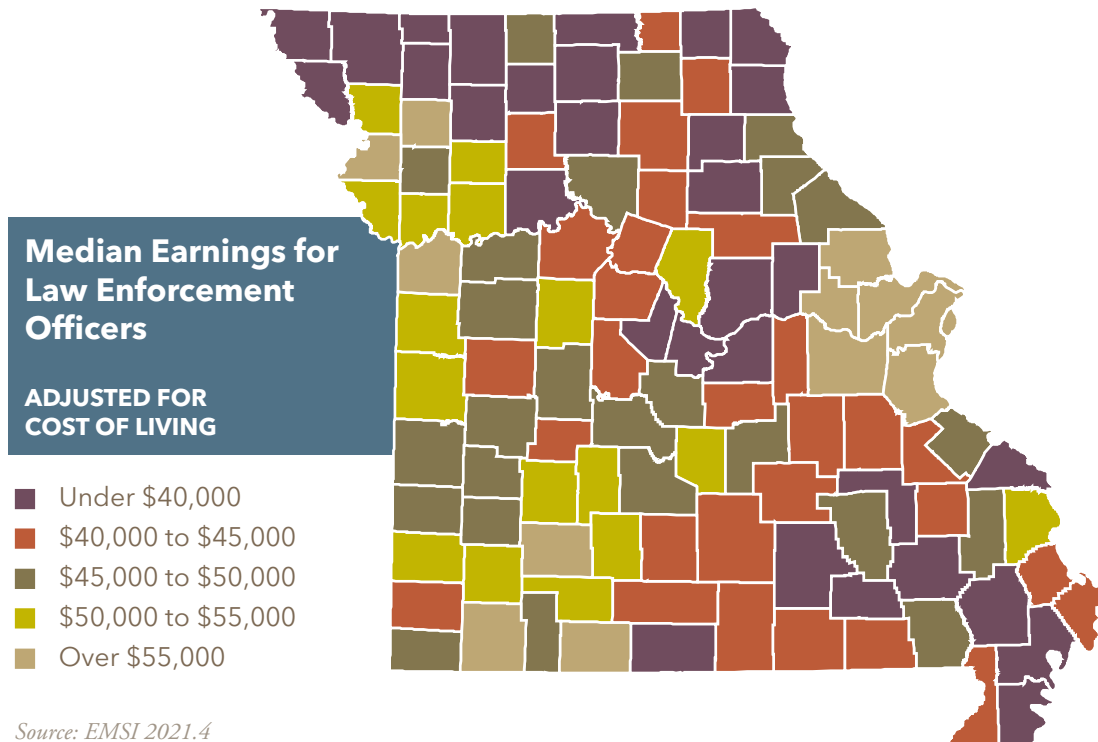
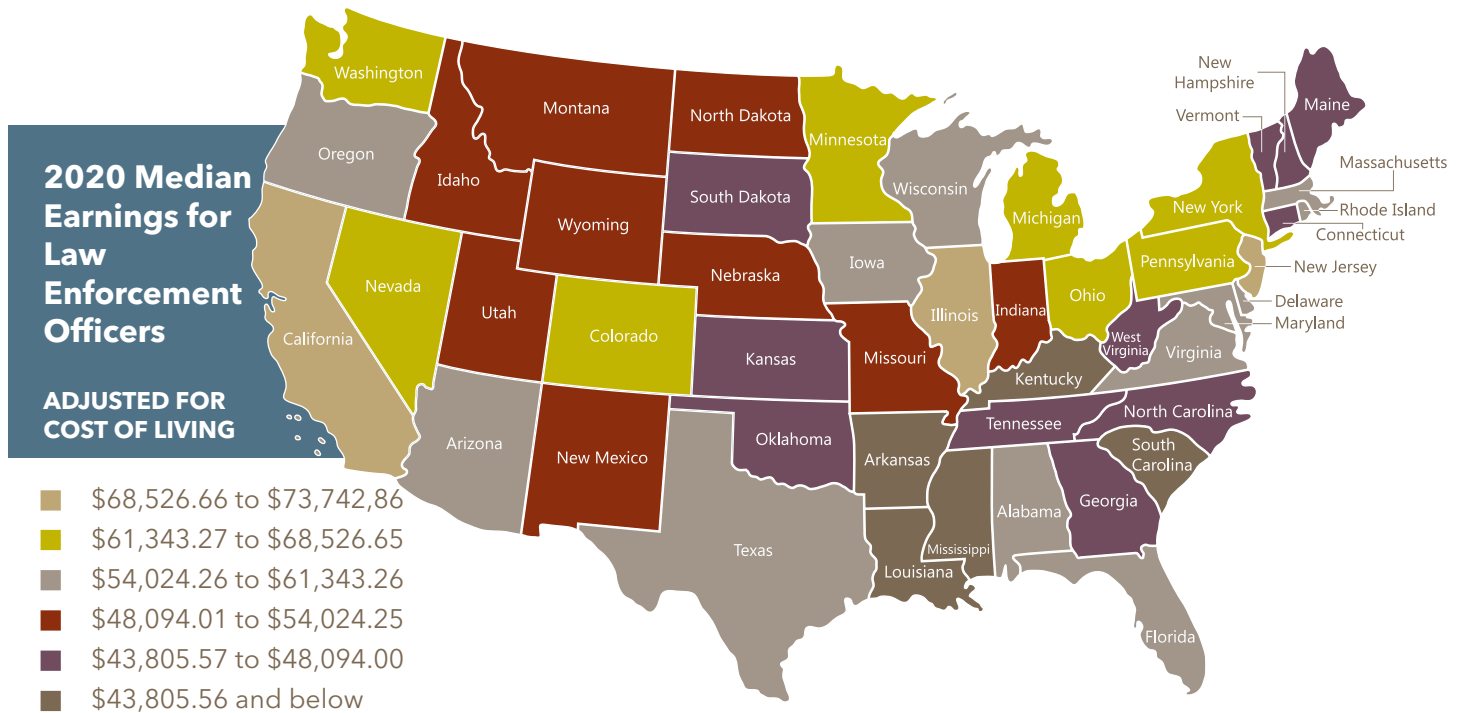
with the cost of living factored in. Compared with the state's neighbors, pay in Missouri is higher than five adjacent states — but lower than in Nebraska and far below Iowa and Illinois.

There is great variation in cost-adjusted pay within the state as well.

Surveys indicate little support for defunding the police or drastically reducing the scope of their duties. Americans and Missourians want to feel safe in their communities, and the presence of law enforcement professionals is an important component of that. But one of the clearest needs in public safety — having an adequate

workforce of well-trained public safety officers — is also one of the most difficult to address. America has had a very tight labor market for years, with a huge cohort of aging workers entering retirement. As COVID-related shutdowns end, the nation appears to be heading toward chronic low unemployment once again. On top of that, law enforcement work is dangerous, stressful and not especially well-paying. Finally, nationally prominent incidents have attached a stigma to police work and public safety officers.

Expert stakeholders that we interviewed across Missouri offered valuable ideas to improve staffing. To address the negative



stigma, they urge local and state leaders to support the vital role of public safety and help to rebuild communication and trust between law enforcement and their communities. A statewide public relations campaign offering a positive message about public safety organizations could aid this effort. Stakeholders also suggested renewed recruitment in minority communities. The creation of the Law Enforcement Training Academy at Lincoln University, a historically Black university in Jefferson City, MO,

is a valuable step toward that goal. Harris-Stowe, a historically Black university in St. Louis, is slated to expand law enforcement training through its Urban Policing Program.

Both in-state and national experts urge more careful vetting of law enforcement candidates to ensure that they have the maturity to manage stressful situations. This might make initial hiring more difficult, but it should boost retention and reduce the number of problem officers.



WHAT OTHER STATES HAVE DONE:

- Late in 2021, **Florida's** governor proposed \$400 million in pay increases and bonuses for state and local law enforcement officers, corrections officers, first responders and firefighters. Minimum pay for entry-level state law enforcement officers would increase by 20 percent, while veteran officer salaries would increase by 25 percent. Local law enforcement recruits moving from other states would receive \$5,000 signing bonuses. The initiative also would create a law enforcement academy scholarship program.
- In December 2021, the final two-year budget proposal from

Virginia's outgoing governor allocated millions in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to increase starting salaries and address pay compression for state troopers, corrections officers, deputy sheriffs and regional jail officers. Starting correctional officers' pay would rise from \$35,064 to \$44,000 while newly-hired troopers would earn \$51,500.

- Also in 2021, **Ohio** started a pilot program at two state universities to pair criminal justice majors with law enforcement mentors to develop the students' leadership skills. Upon graduation, students are guaranteed a job at one of 12 participating law enforcement agencies across Ohio.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ✓ Conduct a statewide public safety compensation review.
- ✓ Clarify or change the ability of state and local governments in Missouri to provide signing bonuses, referral bonuses and performance incentives for public safety officers. Currently, the state constitution appears to ban extra pay in some situations.
- ✓ Offer a public safety officer apprenticeship at several locations in Missouri.
- ✓ Increase investment in Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) academies and provide more scholarships for law enforcement officers to receive POST licensure.
- ✓ Consider a statewide law enforcement recruiting website similar to the new TeachMO.org site for educators. This site consolidates information on training, internships and scholarships. It is also paired with a teacher recruitment and retention grant program for which local areas can apply. Tools such as these could boost recruitment for public safety positions.

VIII

Improve public perception of law enforcement



THE PROBLEM:

Stakeholders believe the current “stigma” attached to law enforcement work – and its effect on staffing – to be a major public safety issue in Missouri. The public and media perception of public safety officers is said to be negatively affecting the reputation of individual officers, departments and the entire profession. The lack of trust between minority and immigrant communities and police is especially high. This has severe repercussions for the ability of public service organizations to

attract, hire and retain a quality workforce. As an interviewee stated, “No one wants to do the job.” This is understood to be a national issue for law enforcement across America, not just in Missouri.

De-escalating training and implementing body-worn and dash cameras are two promising reforms. Community-oriented policing should also be a priority, done by rebuilding trust between public safety organizations and their communities

through increased community programming, especially focused on youth. As one stakeholder said, it is crucial that young people’s first interaction with police is positive. This can include the steady presence of public safety officers in schools, as School Resource Officers (SROs). Others suggest that SROs be present in neighborhoods, outdoors in the evenings where young people congregate. An early focus on youth is a long-term crime prevention strategy.

Governments and businesses can aid youth programming by financially supporting and getting involved with non-profit initiatives that can impact the trajectory of young people’s lives. In Missouri, these include the Urban League’s Save Our Sons and Gun Violence De-escalation efforts and programs of the Demetrius Johnson Foundation. Another initiative, the Fathers & Family Support Center, is aimed at re-connecting uninvolved fathers with their children and families.

Joplin police officer Lacey Baxter assists Presley-Lynn Belt as she looks at toys during the Shop with a Cop event.

(Photo by Laurie Sisk/
Joplin Globe/2018)





WHAT OTHER STATES HAVE DONE:

■ The **Rhode Island** Police Chiefs' Association worked with a public relations firm to unveil the *Twenty for 2020 Campaign* offering 20 policy amendments and promises to the public for better communication and more transparent operations. The 48 police chiefs across the state made pledges on a wide range of issues: a commitment to hiring diversity; re-emphasizing rigorous training standards; the uniform use of force and civil rights violation reporting; more public open forums; and improved officer wellness programs. The *Twenty for 2020 Campaign* also featured a two-and-a-half minute video highlighting the commitments made.

■ In 2014, then-Governor Kasich of **Ohio** created the Ohio Task Force on Community-Police Relations. This led to the creation of the Ohio Collaborative, a 12-person panel that developed the first statewide standards for law enforcement agency recruiting, hiring, use of force and other policy issues. Agencies from all 88 counties and representing nearly 80 percent of all officers are participating in the certification process to incorporate these standards across the state. The Ohio Collaborative's website details local success stories in improved police-community relations, such as assigning officers to a specific apartment complex, starting a Domestic Violence Follow-Up program, and many programs to increase positive interaction between public safety officers and youth.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ✓ Prioritize state-level policies that would help to rebuild trust in law enforcement professionals and improve communication between police, communities and young people.
- ✓ Deploy an honest, comprehensive, long-term, statewide public relations campaign offering positive messages about the role of public safety professionals.
- ✓ Encourage businesses to drive home the message that public safety is important to talent attraction, employee retention and business expansion.
- ✓ Encourage public safety departments to do more community engagement, especially with youth. This could include in-school police presence and programming and working closely with community-based organizations.

VIII

Increase prosecutorial consistency and transparency



THE PROBLEM:

Prosecutors play one of the most influential roles in the criminal justice system. They are considered the gatekeepers of the criminal legal system and decide whether to prosecute individuals and what to charge. Missouri has 115 elected prosecutors selected by voters in 114 counties and the city of St. Louis.

Inconsistency in how cases are prosecuted, especially drug cases, was cited as a serious problem impacting Missouri's rising crime rates. Workforce shortages and high turnover within several prosecutor's offices has impacted how justice is being delivered in those communities.

Confrontational relationships between prosecutors and police departments is another concern in certain communities. Dysfunction is especially high in Missouri metros, where vastly different practices and outcomes occur within border jurisdictions.



WHAT OTHER STATES HAVE DONE:

- Two state senators in **Connecticut** introduced a bill in the 2021 session that would create standards for state-appointed prosecutors. A board would write the first statewide standards for charging and sentencing of defendants. To increase accountability it would also assess all prosecutors every two years, and reduce appointed prosecutors' terms from eight years to five years.
- In **Pennsylvania**, the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office launched a public dashboard for criminal justice data in 2019. The dashboard is updated daily with data on arrests, charges, bail, case length and case outcomes. Observers hope that tools like this will address the "lack of prosecutorial data that makes it hard to identify and address problematic trends in the system."^{xv}



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ✓ Statewide review of prosecutors' staffing and caseloads to identify problem areas and solutions to address them;
- ✓ Statewide review of prosecutors' approaches to crime and their outcomes to identify best practices and policy and build a public dashboard to present data.

Sources

- i Reported Violent Crime Rate in the United States in 2020, By State. Statista Research Department. September 29, 2021.
- ii Property Crime Rate in the United States in 2020, By State. Statista Research Department. October 7, 2021.
- iii Kim Parker and Kiley Hurst. “Growing Share of Americans Say They Want More Spending on Police in Their Area.” Pew Research Center. October 26, 2021.
- iv “South Carolina Sentencing and Corrections Reforms Save Millions.” 50-State Report on Public Safety. The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center. Updated with 2017 data, October 2018.
- v “Washington State Recognizes Financial Benefits of Hot-Spot Policing.” 50-State Report on Public Safety. The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center. Updated with 2017 data, October 2018.
- vi “New Jersey Pretrial Reform Reduces Statewide Jail Population.” 50-State Report on Public Safety. The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center. Updated with 2017 data, October 2018.
- vii “Implementing Crisis Intervention Team Training in Ohio.” 50-State Report on Public Safety. The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center. Updated with 2017 data, October 2018.
- viii “North Dakota Invests in Treatment to Improve the Quality of Services and Expand the Service Provider Workforce.” 50-State Report on Public Safety. The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center. Updated with 2017 data, October 2018.
- ix “Strengthened Probation Practices in Arizona Improve Public Safety and Reduce Spending.” 50-State Report on Public Safety. The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center. Updated with 2017 data, October 2018.
- x “States Reduce Use of Incarceration for Technical Violations.” 50-State Report on Public Safety. The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center. Updated with 2017 data, October 2018.
- xi “Pennsylvania Uses Performance-Based Contracts to Reduce Recidivism.” 50-State Report on Public Safety. The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center. Updated with 2017 data, October 2018.
- xii “Tremco/WTI, Missouri Department of Corrections Partner On Job Training Program.” Tremco Roofing website. October 5, 2021.
- xiii Indiana Career Ready website, HIRE program page. Accessed November 2021.
- xiv 2021 Policy Agenda. Upstate Chamber Coalition. Online, accessed October 2021.
- xv “Lessons from Reformers: Transparency and Accountability of Prosecutors.” Open Government Partnership.” December 14, 2020.



MISSOURI CHAMBER
FOUNDATION

428 East Capitol Avenue
P.O. Box 149
Jefferson City, MO 65102

573-634-3511

mochamber.com