

# THE SAFETY + JUSTICE CHALLENGE

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Vera Institute of Justice

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# Vera Institute of Justice

- Independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization with offices in New York City, Washington, DC, Los Angeles, and New Orleans
- Partner with government and civil society to improve the systems people rely on for justice and safety
  - Conduct research and analysis
  - Develop and test solutions
  - Use publications and expertise to engage stakeholders and the public
- One of four site coordinator organizations

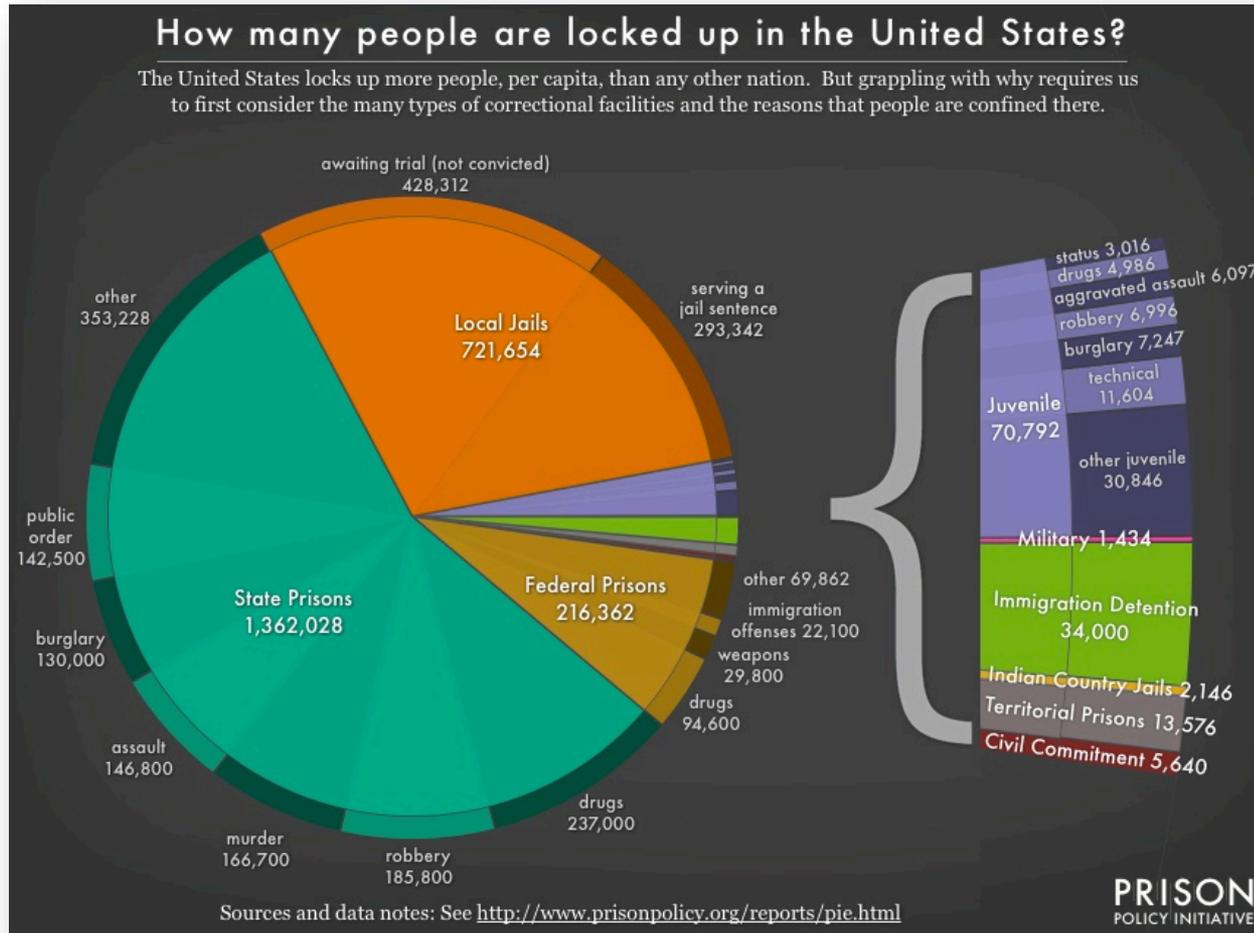
# Vera Institute of Justice

- Center on Sentencing and Corrections
- Center on Immigration and Justice
- Center on Youth Justice
- Center on Victimization and Safety
- Family Justice Project
- Substance Youth and Mental Health Program
- Cost-Benefit Analysis Unit

# The Safety & Justice Challenge

- Funded by the MacArthur Foundation, the Safety & Justice Challenge is a deep investment in local reform, research, experimentation, and communications aimed at changing the way America thinks about and uses *jails*.
- Spokane County is part of a nationwide network of selected local jurisdictions that, with technical and financial assistance, will identify ways to safely reduce incarceration, particularly the disproportionate incarceration of racial and ethnic minorities.

# The Big Picture of Jails

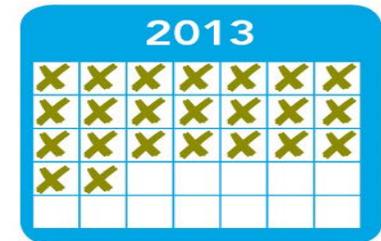


# The Big Picture of Jails

- Annual Admissions = 11,700,000
  - This is 19 times the number of admissions to prison (631,000)
- Jails hold both convicted and unconvicted inmates
  - 62% are unconvicted and presumed innocent
  - 38% are convicted and serving sentences generally less than 1 year
- Average lengths of stay have been increasing over the past 30 years



14 DAYS



23 DAYS

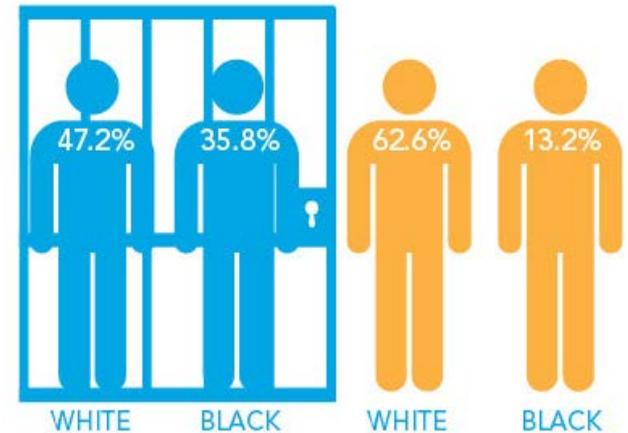
# Mental Illness & Substance Use

- Jails have become the provider of last resort for people with mental health issues
  - Serious mental illness affects men and women in jail at rates four to six times higher than in the general population
  - Sixty-eight percent have a history of abusing drugs, alcohol, or both



# Racial & Ethnic Disparities

- Jails often hold minorities at much higher rates than whites
  - Nationwide African Americans are jailed at almost four times the rate of white Americans



# Consequences

- Compared to low-risk defendants held for no more than 24 hours, those held for 8-14 days were...

...more likely  
to be rearrested  
before trial



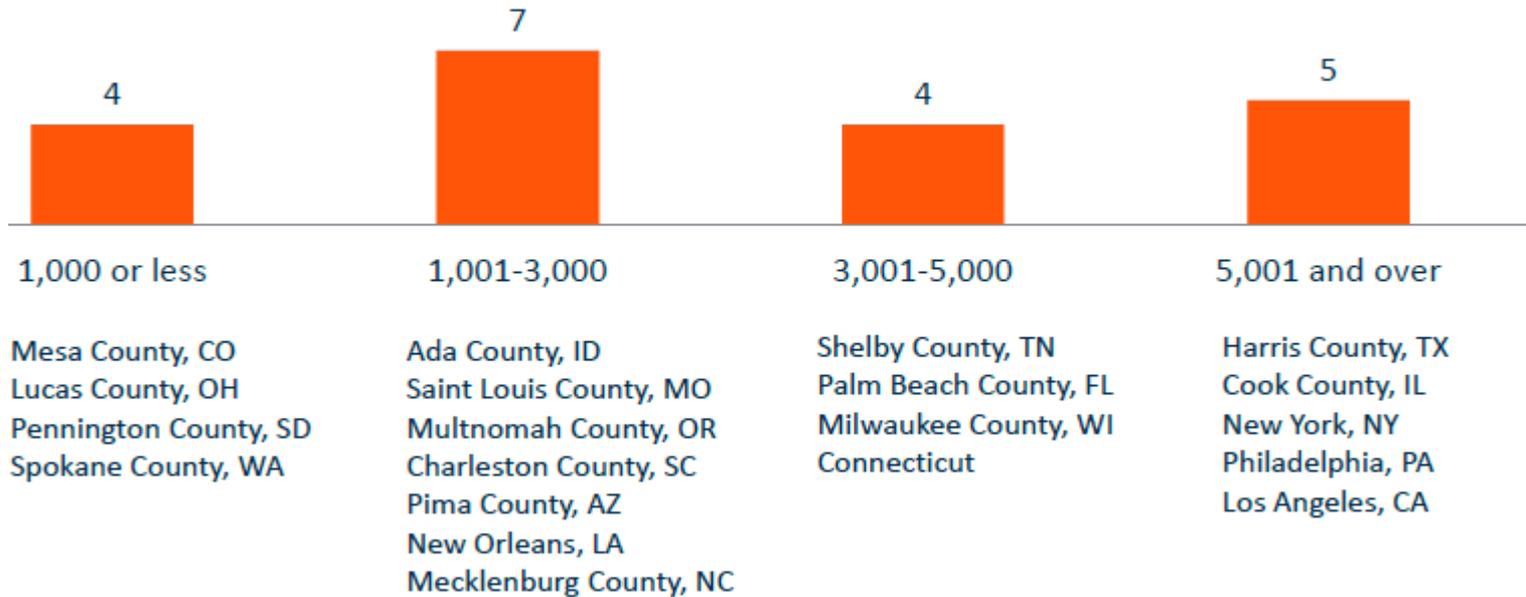
...more likely to  
recidivate after  
sentence completion



# The Competition

- Round 1: Planning
  - 20 sites, \$150,000 each plus intensive technical assistance, 7 months
  - Vera: 5 sites
- Round 2: Implementation
  - 10 sites, \$500,000 to \$2 million annually plus technical assistance, 2 years with option to extend
- Data collection and performance measurement
- Evaluation

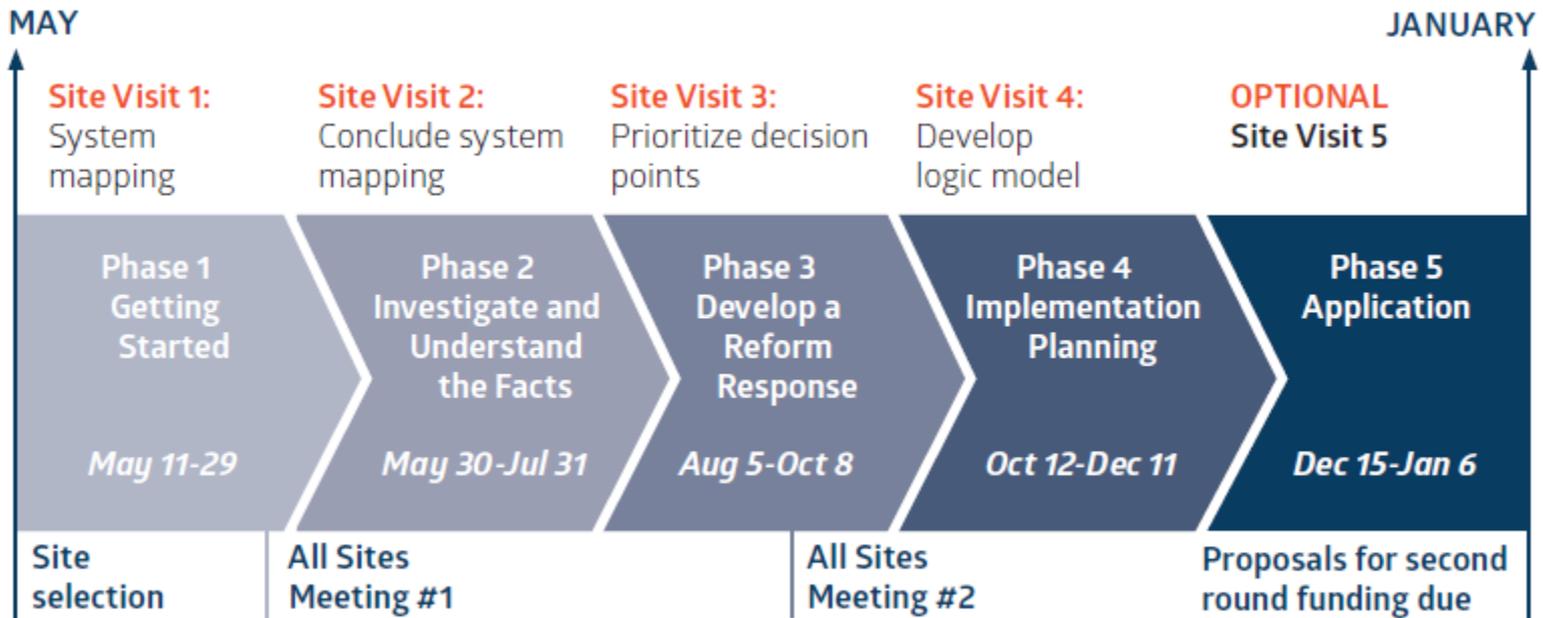
# The 20 Sites



# Phase I: Planning

- Big Picture Goals:
  - Reduce the number of people admitted to jail
  - Shorten lengths of stay in jail
  - Reduce racial and ethnic disparities in local criminal justice system

# Phase I Timeline



# Investigate & Understand

<b>Phase 1: Getting Started</b>	
<b>Duration</b>	May 11 – May 29
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kick-off phone call with each site</li> <li>• Schedule site visits</li> <li>• All Sites Meeting: kick-off with all 20 participating sites</li> </ul>
<b>Grantee products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary contact assigned; participants confirmed</li> </ul>
<b>Coordinator products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting schedule</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 2: Investigate and Understand the Facts</b>	
<b>Duration</b>	May 30 – July 31
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site visits #1 and #2 (2 visits per site)</li> <li>• Interviews with key stakeholders</li> </ul>
<b>Grantee products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background materials and data provided to site coordinator</li> <li>• Draft system map and aggregate data</li> <li>• Complete system maps for all criminal justice decision points with data embedded</li> </ul>
<b>Coordinator products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitation of system mapping</li> <li>• Memo for each site presenting the site coordinator's reflections on the strongest areas for reform</li> </ul>

# System Mapping

- Mapping and analysis of 7 key decision points:
  1. Arrest
  2. Charge
  3. Assignment of counsel
  4. Pretrial release
  5. Case processing
  6. Disposition/sentencing
  7. Post-conviction process/supervision
- Data collection

# Develop a Response

<b><i>Phase 3: Develop a Reform Response</i></b>	
<b>Duration</b>	August 5 – October 8
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Site visit #3 (1 visit per site)</li><li>• All Sites Meeting #2</li></ul>
<b>Grantee products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preliminary logic model, including targets</li></ul>
<b>Coordinator products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SWOT analysis findings (optional)</li></ul>

# Implementation Planning

<b><i>Phase 4: Implementation Planning</i></b>	
<b>Duration</b>	October 12 – December 11
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Site visit #4 (1 visit per site)</li></ul>
<b>Grantee products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initiative charters</li><li>• Detailed implementation plan</li><li>• Final logic model</li></ul>
<b>Coordinator products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Process benchmarks</li></ul>

# Application

<b>Phase 5: Application</b>	
<b>Duration</b>	December 15 – January 6
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Optional site visit #5</i></li><li>• Iterative feedback on sites' applications</li></ul>
<b>Grantee products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Application for second round funding; revised and finalized planning deliverables</li></ul>
<b>Coordinator products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Memo for Foundation on relative merits of each site</li></ul>

# Outcomes

- Local justice system leaders committed to reducing the number of people in jail, addressing racial and ethnic fairness, and tracking progress toward those goals
- Comprehensive analysis of the drivers of jail population growth
- A clearly articulated plan for system change, with measurable goals and benchmarks and responsibility assigned for reaching them
- Application to MacArthur for implementation funding

# Thank you!

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