



EXECUTIVE ORDER

2019-09

**EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING THE JUSTICE, EQUITY, AND OPPORTUNITY
INITIATIVE**

WHEREAS, Illinois has an opportunity to create a justice system that better reflects Illinois' values by focusing on increasing justice, equity, and opportunity in Illinois; and

WHEREAS, overincarceration has ripple effects on entire communities, particularly those that have been disproportionately affected by high incarceration rates as the result of a system that has disenfranchised communities of color; and

WHEREAS, boosting economic development in areas of the State that have been left behind by economic progress and improving access to professional licenses, state procurement opportunities, educational opportunities and housing will reduce recidivism and provide opportunities for people in the criminal justice system to return to their communities, obtain high-quality jobs and steer clear of crime after their release; and

WHEREAS, 45% of people released from prison recidivate, a clear indication that the Illinois prison system must do more to successfully rehabilitate people and prepare them to return to their communities after release by, among other steps, strengthening mental health treatment, effectively addressing substance abuse disorders, increasing job training and education programming in Illinois prisons; and

WHEREAS, the people in prison who are the most at risk of recidivating and most in need of services often do not receive those services; and

WHEREAS, increasing the use of high-quality, bias-free risk assessment tools will help judges and the Illinois Department of Corrections make decisions about sentencing and programming; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Department of Corrections has recently faced significant lawsuits alleging discrimination, poor access to health care, and inadequate mental health treatment, demonstrating a clear need for higher-quality training for Illinois Department of Corrections staff and improvements in the services provided to people in the corrections system, changes that will make Illinois prisons safer and reduce the likelihood of recidivism; and

WHEREAS, women make up a growing percentage of Illinois' prison population have unique healthcare and familial needs; and

WHEREAS, while important progress has been made in addressing the needs of women incarcerated in Illinois, including the passage of a law that gives pregnant pretrial detainees an alternative to incarceration, more family-centered and trauma-informed policies are needed; and

WHEREAS, youth make up another unique prison population, and improving juvenile justice education facilities, prevention programming, and diversion opportunities will reduce the number of young people in Illinois prisons and better position those young people in prison for success post-release; and

WHEREAS, increasing judges' use of diversion programs, reducing the use of pretrial detention, implementing bond reform, reducing mandatory minimums, and implementing alternatives to incarceration will all play an important role in making sentencing in Illinois more equitable; and





WHEREAS, building trust between police officers and the communities they serve is a crucial part of criminal justice reform in Illinois, and reducing excessive force, racial profiling, civil asset forfeiture, and vehicle impoundment will all be necessary to implement effective, community-based policing; and

WHEREAS, gun violence is a scourge on Illinois communities and needs to be treated as a public health issue, and the State of Illinois can enhance gun violence prevention programs and improve firearm safety; and

WHEREAS, legalizing cannabis for adult use and ensuring licensing leads to equitable business ownership will help to right some of the wrongs created by the criminal justice system by providing economic opportunity for communities disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs; and

THEREFORE, I, JB Pritzker, Governor of Illinois, by virtue of the executive authority vested in me by Article V of the Constitution of the State of Illinois, hereby order as follows:

I. Definitions

As used in this Executive Order, “State Agency” means any office, department, agency, board, commission or authority of the Executive Branch of the State of Illinois under the jurisdiction of the Governor.

II. The Justice, Equity, and Opportunity Initiative is Established

The Justice, Equity, and Opportunity Initiative is established in the Office of the Lieutenant Governor to:

- a. Convene and create a collaborative environment, especially among stakeholders, State Agencies and the organizations they work with;
- b. Improve communications across State Agencies and ensure a coordinated, holistic effort to transform the criminal justice system and effective implementation of the necessary actions;
- c. Support research and pilot programs that will test groundbreaking efforts to reform the criminal justice system and provide data and analysis to assess program efficacy and guide new and different efforts; and
- d. Advise decision making to ensure the different branches of Illinois government work proactively to create a more fair and equitable criminal justice system.

III. The Justice, Equity, and Opportunity Initiative Shall Report to the Office of the Governor

The Justice, Equity, and Opportunity Initiative shall:

- a. Within 90 days of the effective date of this Executive Order, deliver a report to the Office of the Governor describing the goals and the deliverables for the first year of the Initiative; and
- b. On January 1 of each year, deliver a report to the Office of the Governor describing the accomplishments of the Initiative, as well as the opportunities and challenges the Initiative encounters, and the goals and deliverables for the upcoming year.



IV. The Justice, Equity, and Opportunity Initiative Shall Collaborate with all State Agencies

The Justice, Equity, and Opportunity Initiative shall interact with any State Agency. All State Agencies shall work cooperatively with the Initiative as needed to define and achieve the deliverables of the Initiative.

V. Savings Clause

Nothing in this Executive Order shall be construed to contravene any federal or State law or regulation. Nothing in this Executive Order shall affect or alter the existing statutory powers of any State Agency or be construed as a reassignment or reorganization of any State Agency.

VI. Prior Executive Orders

This Executive Order supersedes any contrary provision of any other prior Executive Order.

VII. Severability Clause

If any part of this Executive Order is found to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect. The provisions of this Executive Order are severable.

VIII. Effective Date

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately upon its filing with the Secretary of State.

JB Pritzker, Governor

Issued by Governor: February 11, 2019

Filed with Secretary of State: February 11, 2019