

Principles of Pretrial Reform in Illinois

Every year, almost 200,000 people are jailed while awaiting trial in Illinois; the majority of them are incarcerated simply because they cannot afford to pay a money bond. The overuse of pretrial incarceration comes at tremendous cost to impacted individuals and entire communities. It leads to loss of jobs, housing, and even custody of children. It also worsens people's case outcomes and feeds mass incarceration, which disproportionately harms Black, Brown and poor communities.

Since 2016, the Principles of Pretrial Reform have shaped efforts to address this injustice throughout Illinois. These Principles were informed by the Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice's extensive work studying best practices and speaking to a wide variety of stakeholders and impacted community members throughout the state and nation. Most notably, the Principles were used to guide the drafting of The Pretrial Fairness Act, legislation that will end Illinois' practice of wealth-based jailing in January of 2023.

As state courts and stakeholders implement the protections provided by the Pretrial Fairness Act, it is essential to avoid the establishment or expansion of practices that would increase the harms of pretrial incarceration or hinder the success of people awaiting trial in the community. The Principles of Pretrial Reform provide guidance for guarding against those pitfalls and ensuring that pretrial fairness is accessible to all Illinoisians.

1. Access to money should not determine whether or not an accused person is detained in jail or subject to other conditions pending trial.
2. Pretrial services programs should be used to promote court attendance and provide needed services on a voluntary basis and not place unnecessary conditions on the accused person.
3. Conditions of pretrial release should not prevent an accused person from performing basic personal responsibilities, impose direct or indirect economic costs, or unduly expose the accused person to new criminal charges.
4. Pretrial detention and other restrictions on liberty should be used only as a last resort to ensure community safety and the accused person's appearance in court.
5. Data on detention and release outcomes should be collected and made available for public review and system assessment purposes. Risk assessments, if used, must be validated, transparent, and their impact must be tracked.
6. Administrative reforms should be made to ensure court practices conform to the law. Judges should receive education and training consistent with existing law and these principles.

Principles of Pretrial Reform in Illinois Endorsements

U.S. and Illinois State Public Officials

U.S. Congressman Jesús G. “Chuy” García, 4th District of Illinois
U.S. Congresswoman-elect Delia C. Ramirez, 3rd District of Illinois
Senator Omar Aquino, 2nd District, Illinois General Assembly
Senator Jacqueline Y. Collins, 16th District, Illinois General Assembly
Senator Laura Ellman, 21st District, Illinois General Assembly
Senator Ann Gillespie, 27th District, Illinois General Assembly
Senator Robert Martwick, 10th District, Illinois General Assembly
Senator Cristina H. Pacione-Zayas, 20th District, Illinois General Assembly
Senator Robert Peters, 13th District, Illinois General Assembly
Senator Mike Simmons, 7th District, Illinois General Assembly
Senator Elgie R. Sims, Jr., 17th District, Illinois General Assembly
Senator Karina Villa, 25th District, Illinois General Assembly
Senator Ram Villivalam, 8th District, Illinois General Assembly
Representative Carol Ammons, 103rd District, Illinois General Assembly
Representative Kam Buckner, 26th District, Illinois General Assembly
Representative Kelly Cassidy, 14th District, Illinois General Assembly
Representative Lakesia Collins, 9th District, Illinois General Assembly
Representative Will Guzzardi, 39th District, Illinois General Assembly
Representative Barbara Hernandez, 83rd District, Illinois General Assembly
Representative-elect Lilian Jiménez, 4th District, Illinois General Assembly
Representative-elect Kevin Olickal, 16th District, Illinois General Assembly
Representative Justin Slaughter, 27th District, Illinois General Assembly
Representative Anne Stava-Murray, 81st District, Illinois General Assembly

County and City Public Officials and Agencies

County Clerk Aaron Ammons, Champaign County
Board Member Emily Rodriguez, Champaign County
Chief Deputy Treasurer DeShawn Williams, Champaign County
President Toni Preckwinkle, Cook County Board of Commissioners
Commissioner Brandon Johnson, 1st District, Cook County Board
Commissioner Kevin B. Morrison, 15th District, Cook County Board
Commissioner-elect Anthony Joel Quezada, 8th District, Cook County Board
Sharone R. Mitchell, Jr., Cook County Public Defender
Cook County Justice Advisory Council
Township Supervisor Danielle Chynoweth, Cunningham Township
Member-elect Krystle Able, McLean County Board
Aldersperson Jeff Crabill, Bloomington City Council
Alderswoman Mollie Ward, Bloomington City Council
Alderman Daniel LaSpata, Chicago City Council
Alderman Matt Martin, Chicago City Council
Alderman Carlos Ramirez-Rosa, Chicago City Council
Alderswoman Rossana Rodríguez Sanchez, Chicago City Council
Alderman Andre Vasquez, Chicago City Council
Mayor Daniel Biss, City of Evanston

Alderwoman Aprel Prunty, Rockford City Council
Alderman Roy Williams, Jr., Springfield City Council
Alderman Shawn Gregory, Springfield City Council
Member Chris Evans, Urbana City Council

Organizations:

A Just Harvest
Access Living
ACLU of Champaign County
ACLU of Illinois
ACLU of Peoria
ACLU of Springfield
Action Now
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago
Believers Bail Out
Beyond Legal Aid
Black Justice Project
Black Lives Matter Bloomington-Normal
Black Lives Matter Springfield
Bluhm Legal Clinic at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law
Business and Professional People for Public Interest (BPI)
Cabrin Green Legal Aid
Champaign County Bailout Coalition
Change Peoria
Chicago Appleseed Center for Fair Courts
Chicago Community Bond Fund
Chicago Council of Lawyers
Chicago Democratic Socialists of America
Chicago Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights
Chicago Metropolitan Association - Illinois Conference, United Church of Christ
Chicago Urban League
Chicago Votes
Clergy for a New Drug Policy
Community Renewal Society
Criminal Justice Taskforce, First Unitarian Church of Chicago
Decarcerate BloNo
Faith Coalition for the Common Good
Fully Free Campaign
Hughes Socol Piers Resnick & Dym, Ltd.
Illinois Alliance for Reentry and Justice
Illinois Justice Project
Illinois National Organization for Women (IL-NOW)
Illinois Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-IL)
Indivisible DuPage
John Howard Association of Illinois
Juvenile Justice Initiative
Justice and Witness Ministry of Chicago Metropolitan Association – IL Conference United Church of Christ
Lawndale Christian Legal Center
League of Women Voters of Cook County

League of Women Voters of Illinois
Live Free Illinois
MacArthur Justice Center
Masjid Al-Taqwa
NAACP Peoria
Nehemiah Trinity Rising
Nikkei Uprising
Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church
Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church, United Methodist Women
Peoria Coalition to End Money Bond
Quad Cities Democratic Socialists of America
Quad Cities Interfaith
Restore Justice
Revolution Workshop
Rockford Urban Ministries
Safer Foundation
Showing up for Racial Justice Chicago
Shriver Center on Poverty Law
Southsiders Organized for Unity and Liberation (SOUL)
Students for Sensible Drug Policy - Illinois
TASC, Inc. (Treatment Alternatives for Safer Communities)
The Center for Empowerment and Justice
The Coalition to Reduce Recidivism in Lake County
The Illinois Prisoner Rights Coalition
The Next Movement at Trinity United Church of Christ
The People's Lobby
Thresholds
Unitarian Universalist Advocacy Network for Illinois
Unitarian Universalist Prison Ministry of Illinois
United Congregations of Metro East
United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations (UCCRO)
West Suburban Illinois Democratic Socialists of America
Workers Center for Racial Justice