

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL (CJCC)

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Knoxville, Tennessee, showing various buildings, streets, and green spaces. A prominent red triangle is on the left side of the image, pointing towards the text. The text 'TABLE OF CONTENTS' is written in a large, bold, dark blue font across the top of the image. The background shows a mix of modern and older buildings, with a tall tower in the distance and a clear blue sky with some clouds.

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“ WHAT WE ACHIEVE
TOGETHER WILL ALWAYS
BE GREATER THAN WHAT
WE DO ALONE. ”

LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we look back on 2024, I am proud of the progress we've made and the strides we've taken toward building a safer and more just community for the citizens of East Baton Rouge Parish and Louisiana. This year, we will continue to uphold the principles that have guided our work from the start—fostering cross-system dialogue and collaboration among law enforcement, justice, municipal and community leaders. Together, we are committed to enhancing public safety, reducing crime and ensuring that justice is impartial and effective for all residents.

Reflecting on our work in 2024, I am proud to say that the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) continues to establish itself as a vital facilitator of criminal justice and public safety-related issues and solutions not only in East Baton Rouge Parish but throughout the state of Louisiana. Through intentional and meaningful engagement with justice system stakeholders, we've made significant improvements that benefit both those working within the system and those navigating it. Among our key accomplishments, we've continued to safely reduce the daily jail population, connected hundreds of incarcerated individuals to essential resources and treatment to help them rebuild their lives and remain arrest free, ensured defendants are receiving legal representation

sooner, expedited case processing and resolution and worked to restructure pretrial bond setting procedures to be fairer—all while continuing to enhance public safety.

In 2024, we also saw the successful start and continuation of several important initiatives. The CJCC hosted the First Annual Louisiana Public Safety Summit, bringing together stakeholders from across the state to discuss strategies and ideas to improve safety in our communities. We coordinated Community Jail Tours, where community leaders were able to visit our local correctional facilities and gain firsthand insight into the conditions and challenges within these antiquated justice facilities. We continued to assist with the implementation of a Pretrial Services Unit and validated risk assessment tools at the 19th Judicial District Court, ensuring that individuals in the judicial process receive fair and objective bonds while also providing support for their needs. We launched the Capital Area Prisoner Reentry Initiative (CAPRI), which has created a comprehensive collaborative of community-based service providers who work together to ensure

that citizens returning to their communities from incarceration have all the resources and support they need to help them reintegrate into society successfully and remain arrest-free.

Looking forward, we remain committed to building on the progress we've made in 2024. The CJCC will continue to strengthen its efforts to improve the justice system and expand its initiatives to include state-wide justice improvements and collaborative partnerships. These efforts will contribute to a more fair and just community where all residents can thrive. We look forward to continuing our work with all of our partners in the year ahead, creating lasting positive change for East Baton Rouge Parish and Louisiana.

We are very grateful for your continued support and are excited about the future and all that we can accomplish together.

Sincerely,



Christopher Csonka
Executive Director of the CJCC

BOARD MEMBERS

Judge Donald R. Johnson
Board Chair, 19th Judicial District Court

Jennifer Carwile
Vice Chair, Community Member, Together Baton Rouge

John Spain
Board Secretary, CEO & Founder of John Spain Consulting, LLC

Kyla Romanach
Board Treasurer, Chief Public Defender, East Baton Rouge Parish Public Defender's Office

Brandi Lawrence
Board At-Large, Baton Rouge City Prosecutor

Mayor-President Sid Edwards
Mayor-President, City of Baton Rouge: East Baton Rouge Parish

Sheriff Sid Gautreaux
East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff

Judge Gail Grover
East Baton Rouge Parish Juvenile Court

Warden Cathy Fontenot
East Baton Rouge Parish Prison

Judge Yvette M. Alexander
Baton Rouge City Court

Chris Meyer
President & CEO of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation

Hillar Moore
District Attorney, East Baton Rouge Parish

Dianna Payton
CEO, YWCA of Greater Baton Rouge

Chief Thomas Morse
Baton Rouge Police Department

Michael A. Mitchell
Trial Level Compliance Officer, Louisiana Public Defender Board



ABOUT THE CJCC

WHO WE ARE

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) is a coalition of local government agencies, law enforcement, judicial officials and community leaders working together to improve public safety and ensure a fair and effective justice system. We are committed to creating a more efficient, transparent and just system for all residents of East Baton Rouge Parish. We strive to reduce crime, support individuals returning to society and ultimately build stronger, safer communities.

WHAT WE DO

Through initiatives such as the Case Navigators Program, Pre-Trial Diversion and Capital Area Prisoner Reentry Initiative (CAPRI), we provide individuals with critical resources to reduce recidivism and prevent unnecessary incarceration. Additionally, we work to improve public trust in the justice system by hosting events like the Louisiana Public Safety Summit, where policymakers and stakeholders discuss crime prevention and justice system improvements.

WHY WE'RE HERE

We exist to address the systemic challenges that contribute to crime and incarceration, including poverty, mental health issues and lack of access to legal resources. We believe that justice should not be determined by wealth or background and work to ensure that all individuals have a fair opportunity to navigate the legal system. We help break the cycle of repeat offenses, reduce jail overcrowding and promote a justice system that prioritizes safety and fairness for all.



OUR INITIATIVES

ADVANCING JUSTICE, PUBLIC SAFETY AND REHABILITATION

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) is committed to developing innovative programs that promote public safety, reduce recidivism and provide meaningful alternatives to incarceration. In 2024, our initiatives focused on intervention, rehabilitation and reentry support, ensuring that individuals have the resources needed for a successful transition back into the community.

CASE NAVIGATORS *Breaking the Cycle of Incarceration*

The first 72 hours after arrest are critical in determining an individual's future. Without immediate intervention, many face obstacles that increase the likelihood of repeat incarceration. By bridging the gap between the justice system and critical support services, the Case Navigators Program empowers individuals to break free from the cycle of incarceration, fostering a safer and more just community for all.

PRETRIAL DIVERSION & RECOVERY PROGRAM

A Restorative Alternative to Incarceration

The David O'Quin Pretrial Diversion & Recovery Program offers a rehabilitative pathway for nonviolent offenders who struggle with mental health or substance abuse challenges. Instead of remaining in jail, eligible participants receive individualized case plans that focus on treatment, support and recovery.

CAPITAL AREA PRISONER REENTRY INITIATIVE (CAPRI)

Empowering Individuals to Rebuild Their Lives

The Capital Area Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (CAPRI) is designed to reduce recidivism by providing comprehensive reentry support for individuals leaving incarceration. This initiative offers a path between release and reintegration by ensuring that formerly incarcerated individuals have access to employment, education, housing and essential services.

LIGHTS ON! INITIATIVE *Turning Traffic Stops into Community Support*

The CJCC, in partnership with Baton Rouge Police Department and the EBR Sheriff's Office, launched the Lights On! Initiative. Lights On! is a community-driven program that helps build goodwill between law enforcement and their communities. Instead of tickets, police officers can give drivers with burned out lightbulbs or taillights a free voucher to get it fixed at participating auto shops. This initiative greatly helps low-income individuals who may not be able to afford fixing a lightbulb on their car.

PUBLIC SAFETY SUMMIT *Collaboration for a Safer Louisiana*

The Louisiana Public Safety Summit serves as a premier platform for key stakeholders, policymakers, law enforcement officials, legal experts and community leaders to address pressing challenges in public safety and criminal justice throughout Louisiana.

WHAT WE DID IN 2024

In 2024, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) made significant strides in improving the justice system in East Baton Rouge Parish. Through targeted programs and public safety initiatives, we worked to reduce incarceration and improve rehabilitation efforts. Our focus remained on diversion, reentry services and expanding resources for those impacted by the justice system.



CASE NAVIGATORS *Providing Immediate Support*

Case Navigators played a critical role in reducing recidivism and strengthening public safety. Navigators connected newly arrested individuals with critical support services needed to create a pathway for stability. They provided early intervention and followed up post-release to ensure continued support.

1,327 individuals were interviewed and **771 total service connections were made** through referrals for drug treatment, mental health treatment, housing assistance, employment placements and government benefits applications.

PRETRIAL DIVERSION AND RECOVERY PROGRAM

Expanding Alternatives to Incarceration

The Pretrial Diversion and Recovery Program provided a pathway to rehabilitation for individuals charged with nonviolent crimes, are unable to afford bail and face mental health or substance abuse challenges. The program connected them to treatment and support services to address the root causes of their justice system involvement.

In 2024, **193 individuals** have been referred to the program, have completed assessments for eligibility, have been approved to participate or have successfully graduated the program.

Our diversion programs help reduce unnecessary incarceration while improving lives and public safety.

PUBLIC SAFETY SUMMIT *Fostering Collaboration*

On February 16, 2024, CJCC hosted the Inaugural Louisiana Public Safety Summit at the Hilton Capitol Center in Baton Rouge. This event brought together over 100 legislators, law enforcement officials and business leaders to discuss the state of public safety in Louisiana and explore innovative crime prevention strategies.

Key discussion topics included crime trends and justice system improvements, reducing incarceration through diversion and rehabilitation and building trust between law enforcement and communities.

CAPRI *Supporting Successful Integration*

The Capital Area Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (CAPRI) helped formerly incarcerated individuals transition back into society by providing employment, housing, education and support services. Recognizing that stable reentry reduces recidivism, CAPRI worked with social service agencies to ensure participants had access to the resources needed for long-term stability. Capri achieved this by providing:

- Job training and employment placement
- Transitional housing and rental assistance
- GED and vocational education programs
- Mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment
- Legal and financial assistance to support a fresh start

CAPRI helped reduce repeat offenses and promote successful community reintegration.

LIGHTS ON! *Punitive to Supportive Traffic Stops*

The Lights On! Initiative is a community-driven program designed to replace traffic fines with repair vouchers for drivers with burned-out headlights, taillights or turn signals. Instead of issuing a ticket, officers provide a voucher to cover repair costs, helping low-income drivers avoid financial hardship while improving vehicle safety. In 2024, 700 vouchers were issued by BRPD and EBRSO.

By shifting traffic stops from punitive to supportive, the Lights On! Initiative fosters trust, safety and economic equity, ensuring that all residents have access to community-centered solutions.



CASE NAVIGATORS PROGRAM





The Case Navigators Program provides essential support for newly arrested individuals, helping them access critical resources that reduce their likelihood of reoffending. By identifying individual needs, connecting participants with services and ensuring continued support after release, this program plays a vital role in stabilizing lives and breaking the cycle of repeat incarceration.

Case Navigators assist individuals by first conducting an initial needs assessment, identifying challenges such as substance abuse, mental health conditions, financial instability and housing insecurity. They then connect participants with treatment programs, employment services, housing assistance and government benefits to create a stronger foundation for reentry. Beyond these immediate connections, they provide ongoing support and follow-up after release, ensuring that individuals continue to receive the necessary resources they need to stay on track and avoid reoffending.

2024 CASE NAVIGATOR OUTCOMES

1,327

INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED

771

TOTAL SERVICE CONNECTIONS

171

DRUG TREATMENT REFERRALS

33

MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT REFERRALS

107

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

429

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SERVICES

31

GOVERNMENT BENEFITS ASSISTANCE

The success of the Case Navigators Program underscores the importance of addressing the root causes of justice system involvement. By connecting individuals to essential services early in the process, the program reduces recidivism, alleviates pressure on the jail system and creates a pathway for long-term stability and success.

“

THE SUCCESS OF THIS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED FOR EXPANDED DIVERSION INITIATIVES THAT FOCUS ON TREATMENT AND SUPPORT RATHER THAN PROLONGED INCARCERATION.

PRETRIAL DIVERSION & RECOVERY PROGRAM





The Pretrial Diversion and Recovery Program provides an alternative to incarceration for individuals charged with nonviolent crimes who are unable to afford bail and have an identifiable mental health or substance abuse challenge. Rather than keeping these individuals in jail for extended periods due to financial hardship, the program offers targeted support, treatment and supervision to help them reintegrate into the community while addressing the underlying issues that contribute to their justice system involvement.

Program staff work closely with participants, legal representatives and community organizations to ensure that individuals receive mental health services, substance abuse treatment and structured case management. This approach not only helps reduce recidivism but also ensures that resources are used more effectively by prioritizing rehabilitation over incarceration.

2024 PROGRAM OUTCOMES

124

REFERRALS RECEIVED

33

ASSESSMENTS COMPLETED

25

APPROVED FOR THE PROGRAM

11

GRADUATED IN 2024

84

TOTAL GRADUATES SINCE PROGRAM START

The success of this program highlights the need for expanded diversion initiatives that focus on treatment and support rather than prolonged incarceration. As demand grows for effective alternatives to jail for nonviolent offenders, programs like this play a critical role in reducing the burden on the justice system while improving outcomes for individuals in need of rehabilitation.

CAPITAL AREA PRISONER REENTRY INITIATIVE (CAPRI)





The Capital Area Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (CAPRI) is dedicated to helping formerly incarcerated individuals successfully reintegrate into society by providing access to essential resources. Many individuals leaving the justice system face significant barriers to employment, stable housing and education, which can lead to repeat offenses and reentry into the system. CAPRI works to break this cycle by ensuring individuals have the support needed to build a stable and productive future.

Through strategic partnerships with local businesses, housing providers, educational institutions and social service organizations, CAPRI provides personalized reentry plans tailored to the unique needs of each individual. The program focuses on long-term success by addressing the core challenges that contribute to recidivism.

KEY SERVICES PROVIDED BY CAPRI



EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE



HOUSING SUPPORT



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS



MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE RESOURCES



LEGAL & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE



TRANSPORTATION

By removing barriers to reentry, CAPRI helps reduce recidivism rates, strengthens families and promotes safer communities by ensuring that formerly incarcerated individuals have the tools and opportunities needed to succeed. As the CJCC continues to seek smarter approaches to public safety and rehabilitation, CAPRI remains a critical resource in building a justice system that prioritizes second chances and long-term stability.

PUBLIC SAFETY SUMMIT





On February 16, 2024, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) hosted the Inaugural Louisiana Public Safety Summit at the Hilton Capitol Center in downtown Baton Rouge. This landmark event brought together over 100 legislators, legal officials, law enforcement leaders, business professionals and community advocates to discuss the state of public safety in Louisiana.

The summit served as a collaborative platform for addressing crime trends, justice system challenges and innovative strategies for improving public safety statewide. Attendees engaged in meaningful discussions on crime prevention, community policing, rehabilitation programs and legislative efforts aimed at reducing incarceration rates while maintaining public safety.

KEY TOPICS DISCUSSED

- State and national crime trends, including shifts in violent and nonviolent offenses.
- Challenges in law enforcement and criminal justice improvements, focusing on community trust and system improvements.
- Alternative approaches for Juvenile Offenders, such as diversion programs and mental health interventions.
- Innovative crime prevention strategies, highlighting successful models from across the country.
- Collaboration between government, law enforcement and local organizations to create data-driven public safety solutions.

The Public Safety Summit was a major step forward in fostering dialogue between policymakers and community stakeholders. By bringing together leaders from multiple sectors, CJCC is working to develop forward-thinking solutions that address the root causes of crime and enhance long-term public safety. This annual event will continue to serve as a critical forum for shaping Louisiana's future justice policies and crime prevention strategies.



EAST BATON ROUGE SAFETY AND JUSTICE SURVEY

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

To understand public perceptions of safety, law enforcement and the justice system in East Baton Rouge Parish, CJCC, along with LJR Custom Strategies, conducted a survey of 500 adults across the region.

TIMEFRAME

Conducted from January 2–7, 2025

SAMPLE SIZE

500 adults in East Baton Rouge Parish

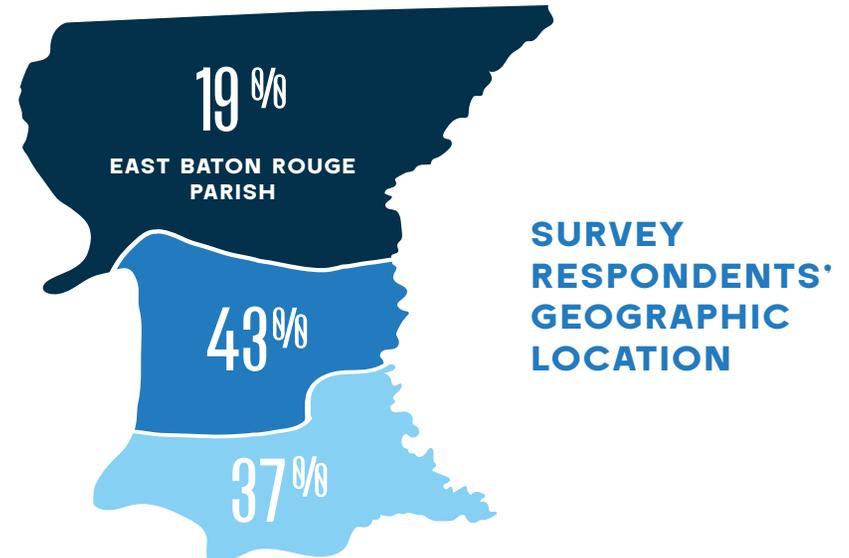
METHODOLOGY

Telephone survey (landline and cell phone)

MARGIN FOR ERROR

± 4.9% for the total sample

± 10% for subgroup findings



NORTH / NE

Zip Codes: 70714, 70739, 70748, 70770, 70777, 70791, 70818, 70819, 70722, and 700875

CITY

Zip Codes: 70801, 70802, 70804, 70805, 70806, 70807, 70808, 70811, 70812, 70814, and 70815

SOUTH / SE

Zip Codes: 70776, 70769, 70809, 70810, 70816, 70817, 70820, 70826, and 70836

26% OF THE RESPONDENTS REPRESENT UNDERSERVED ZIP CODES

70801, 70802, 70805, 70806, 70807, 70811, and 70812



KEY FINDINGS

This survey highlights shifting perceptions of safety, incarceration and justice system accessibility. While crime data shows a decrease in violent and nonviolent offenses, public confidence in the justice system remains mixed. The findings emphasize the need for continued reform, improved public education and investments in programs that support rehabilitation and reentry.

NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY PERCEPTIONS

For the first time, respondents are nearly evenly split on whether their neighborhoods are safe or unsafe. In 2020, 80% of residents felt their neighborhoods were safe, but that number has significantly declined. Despite this increase in safety concerns, 2024 crime data shows a reduction in both violent and nonviolent offenses, suggesting a gap between perceived and actual crime trends.

INCARCERATION & JUSTICE SYSTEM ACCESSIBILITY

Public concerns about Louisiana's incarceration rate remain strong, with nearly two-thirds (65%) of respondents agreeing that there are too many people in prison. Many believe the current system focuses too heavily on punishment rather than rehabilitation and does not offer enough support for individuals transitioning out of incarceration.

Additionally, 63% of respondents say that navigating the justice system is more difficult for people in poverty. Barriers such as limited access to legal representation, bail disparities and a lack of reentry resources continue to disproportionately impact low-income individuals. These findings reinforce the need for expanded legal aid services, pre-trial diversion programs and policies that create a more equitable justice process.

PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Despite ongoing efforts to increase transparency and education, only half of the respondents (51%) reported that they understand how the East Baton Rouge justice system works. This highlights the need for:

- Public education campaigns to explain court processes, sentencing laws and pretrial procedures.
- Greater accessibility to legal resources for individuals navigating the system.
- More community engagement opportunities to increase awareness of reforms and programs designed to improve justice outcomes.

Increasing understanding of the justice system is a critical step toward rebuilding trust, ensuring accountability and promoting informed discussions around crime and punishment.

SUPPORT FOR NEW CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Efforts to build new adult and juvenile correctional facilities have gained modest public support. Compared to previous years, approval for a new tax to fund these facilities has increased, but it still remains below 50%. While many agree that existing correctional facilities need improvements, the lack of majority support suggests public hesitation about investing in expanded incarceration rather than alternative solutions.

This data indicates that residents are more likely to support reforms that focus on rehabilitation, early intervention and crime prevention, rather than building additional correctional facilities.

TOP PRIORITIES FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

When asked about the most important priorities for justice system improvement, respondents identified the following areas as critical:

- 1 Holding People Accountable for Crimes
- 2 Offering Programs to Assist People When They Leave Jail
- 3 Breaking the Cycle of Repeat Arrests and Convictions

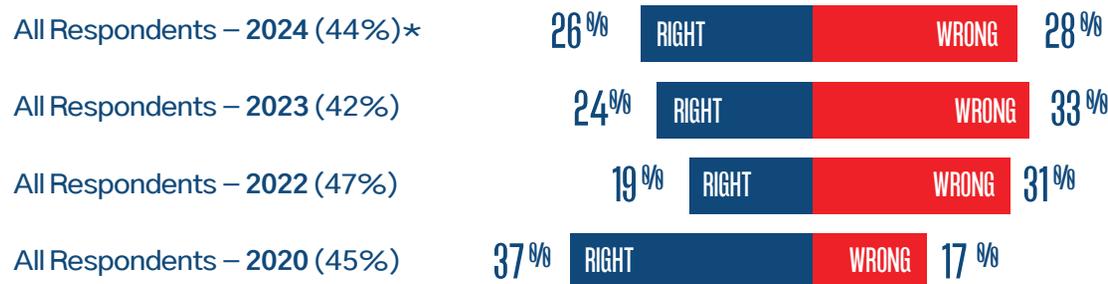
These priorities highlight a community-driven desire for a balanced approach to justice—one that enforces accountability while also providing individuals with the resources needed to successfully reintegrate into society.

GENERAL OUTLOOK

Public perception of neighborhood conditions and community direction remains divided across East Baton Rouge Parish. While some residents feel their neighborhoods are improving, others express concerns about safety, development and local policies. The contrast between those who feel safe and those who do not play a significant role in shaping these views.

DIRECTION IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

▶ IS YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD GOING IN THE RIGHT OR WRONG DIRECTION?



*Percentages in parentheses volunteered “combination/both.” “Don’t know” and refused percentages are not shown.



NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY

All Respondents – 2024



All Respondents – 2023



All Respondents – 2022

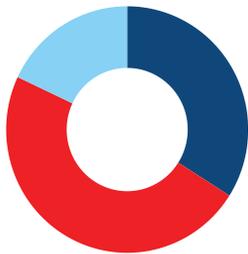


All Respondents – 2020

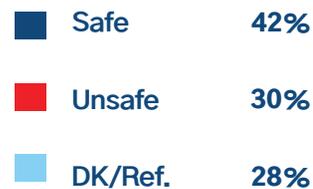
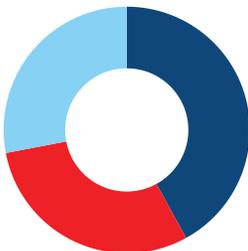


SAFE VS UNSAFE – REPUBLICAN VS DEMOCRAT

▶ REPUBLICAN

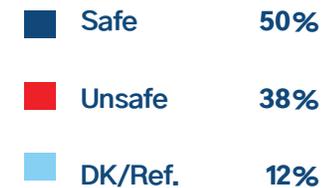
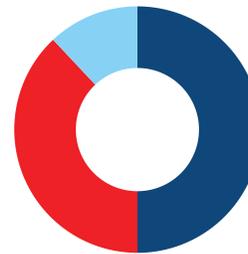


▶ DEMOCRAT

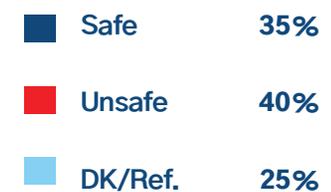
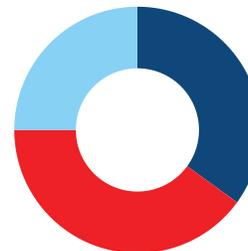


SAFE VS UNSAFE – WHITE VS PEOPLE OF COLOR

▶ WHITE



▶ PEOPLE OF COLOR

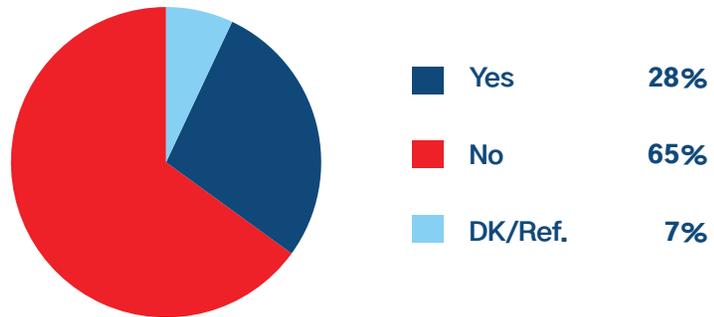


*Percentages based on averages of answers.

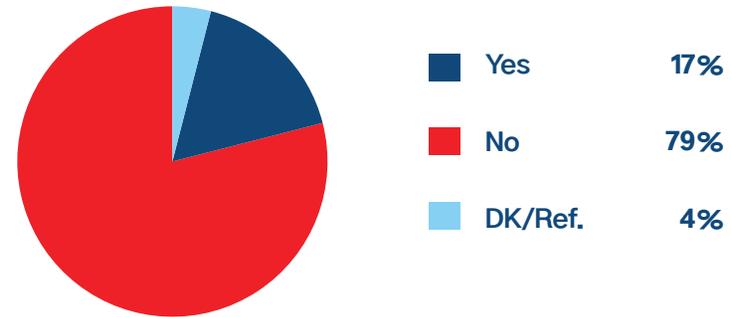
JUSTICE SYSTEM EXPERIENCE

INTERACTION WITH THE POLICE IN EBR IN PAST 12 MONTHS

▶ 2024

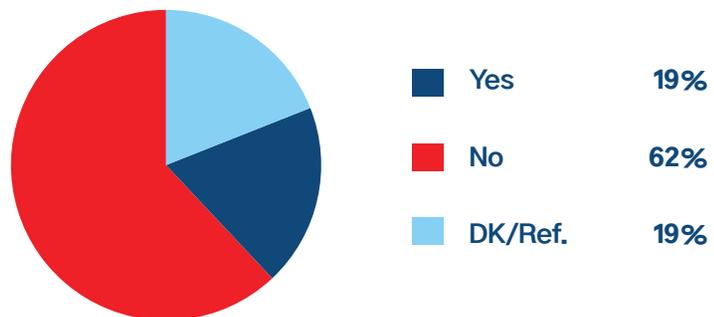


▶ 2023

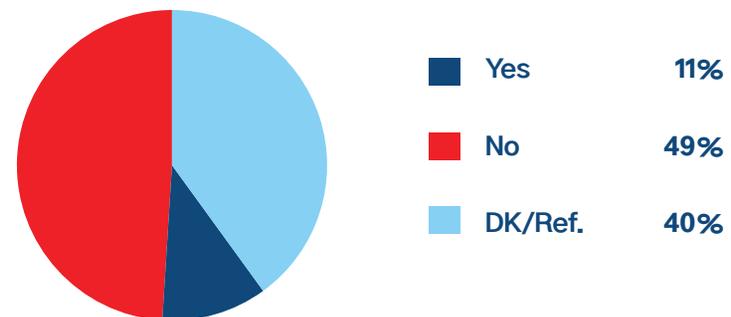


VICTIM OF A CRIME IN EBR PARISH

▶ 2024



▶ 2023





65% OF RESPONDENTS WHO LIVE IN A HOUSEHOLD WHERE SOMEONE HAS BEEN ACCUSED OR ARRESTED OF A CRIME SAY THAT MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE PLAYED A ROLE IN THE ACCUSATION/ARREST.

THE ROLE OF MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN ARRESTS

The connection between mental health challenges and justice system involvement has been well-documented in both national and local studies. In East Baton Rouge Parish:

- Individuals with untreated mental health disorders are more likely to cycle through the justice system repeatedly.
- Substance use disorders often lead to arrests for minor offenses, such as drug possession, theft or disorderly conduct.
- Many of those arrested do not receive adequate mental health or addiction treatment while incarcerated, increasing the likelihood of recidivism.

Expanding prevention and intervention programs could significantly reduce these interactions and create better outcomes for both individuals and the justice system as a whole.

THE NEED FOR ALTERNATIVE RESPONSES

The survey findings reinforce the importance of expanding programs that address mental health and substance abuse outside of the traditional justice system. Instead of relying solely on arrests and incarceration, there is growing support for:



Crisis Intervention Teams (CITs): Specialized law enforcement units trained to de-escalate situations involving mental health crises.



Diversion and Treatment Programs: Redirecting individuals struggling with addiction or mental illness away from jail and into rehabilitation and counseling services.



Community-Based Behavioral Health Support: Strengthening mental health and addiction recovery resources to reduce justice system interactions in the first place.

As the data shows, many justice system interactions stem from issues that could be better addressed through public health approaches rather than incarceration. Prioritizing treatment, support services and preventative care will be key to reducing the burden on law enforcement and improving long-term outcomes for those dealing with mental health challenges.

FEELINGS TOWARD JUSTICE SYSTEM

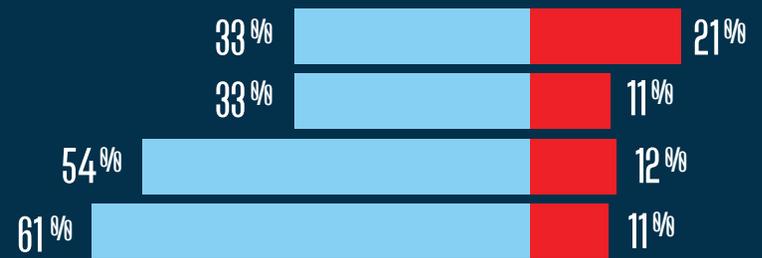
FEELINGS TOWARD JUSTICE SYSTEM ORGANIZATIONS

■ Positive
 ■ Negative

**Percentages in parentheses represent recognition, which is calculated by subtracting “know name, can’t rate” and “don’t recognize” from 100%. “Neutral” ratings are not show.*

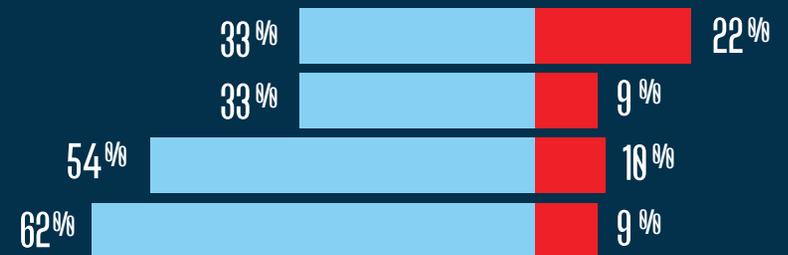
Police Dept. (86%)*

2023 (76%)
 2022 (96%)
 2020 (98%)



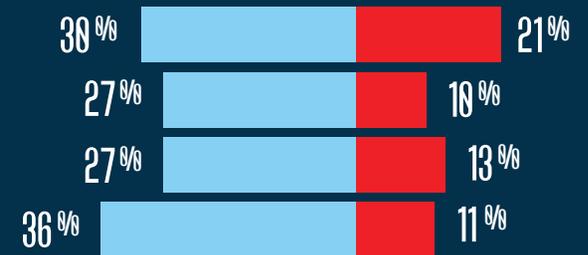
Sheriff’s Dept. (86%)*

2023 (76%)
 2022 (95%)
 2020 (94%)



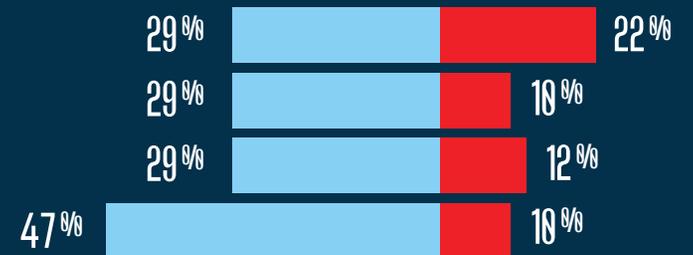
Public Defender’s Office (68%)*

2023 (57%)
 2022 (77%)
 2020 (81%)



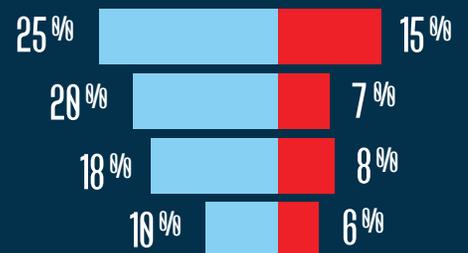
District Attorney’s Office (67%)*

2023 (58%)
 2022 (79%)
 2020 (85%)

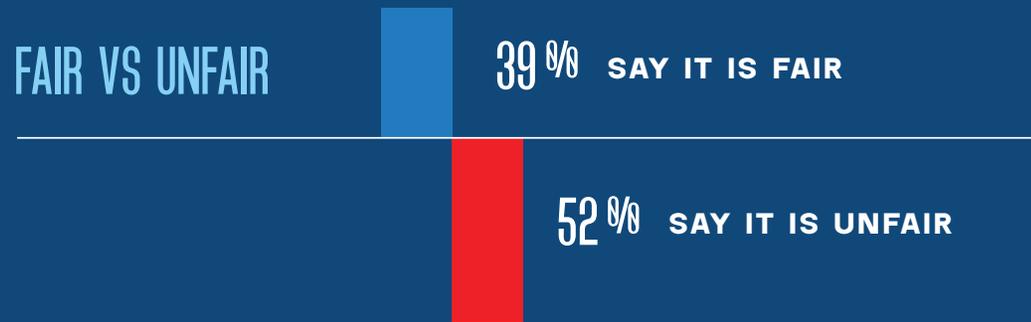


CJCC (55%)*

2023 (43%)
 2022 (48%)
 2020 (31%)

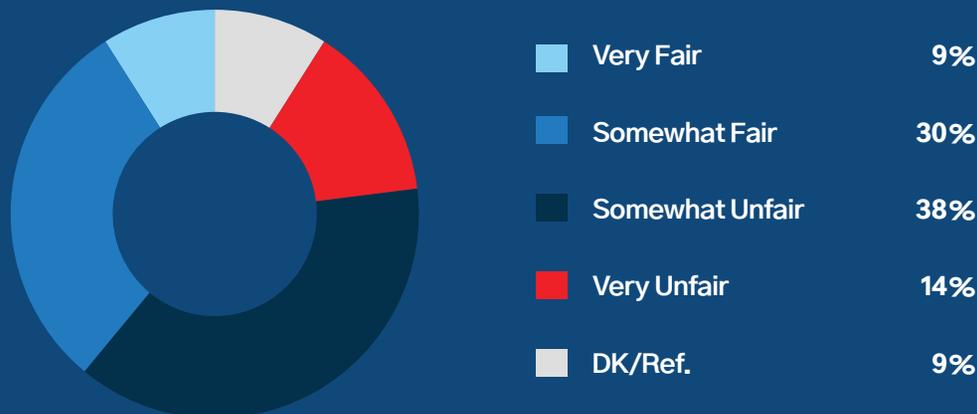


BAIL PRACTICES



ON AVERAGE, CASES INVOLVING INDIVIDUALS CHARGED WITH NON-VIOLENT FELONY CHARGES TAKE APPROXIMATELY 6 TO 9 MONTHS TO RESOLVE.

▶ FAIRNESS OF A PERSON WHO IS UNABLE TO PAY BAIL REMAINING IN JAIL WHILE A PERSON WHO IS ABLE TO PAY DOES NOT



NEW CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Public support for new adult and juvenile correctional facilities has grown slightly over the past year, but it remains below the threshold needed to pass a tax initiative. Many residents acknowledge the need for facility improvements, yet concerns about costs, effectiveness and the long-term impact of incarceration continue to shape public opinion.

37% SUPPORT A NEW ADULT FACILITY

38% SUPPORT A NEW JUVENILE FACILITY

▶ NEW TAX INITIATIVES FOR CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES



FOR ADULTS



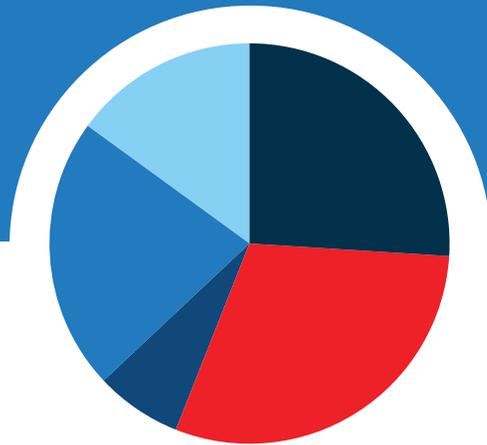
FOR JUVENILES



Support – strongly Support – not strongly Oppose – not strongly Oppose – strongly DK/Ref.

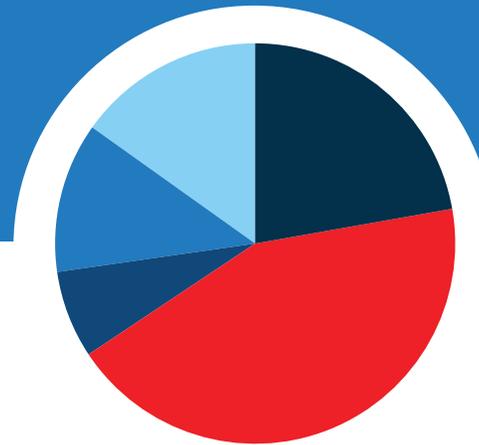
NEW TAX INITIATIVE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW CORRECTIONAL FACILITY FOR ADULTS

▶ 2024



Support – strongly	15%
Support – not strongly	22%
Oppose – not strongly	7%
Oppose – strongly	30%
DK/Ref.	26%

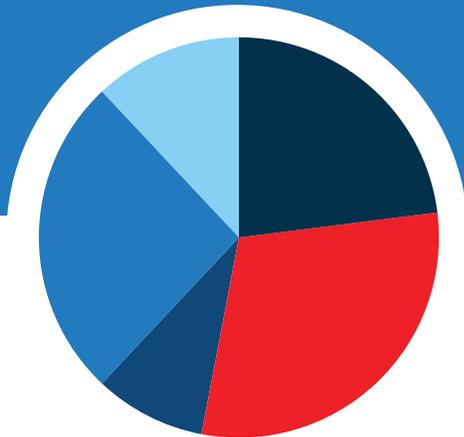
▶ 2023



Support – strongly	15%
Support – not strongly	12%
Oppose – not strongly	7%
Oppose – strongly	43%
DK/Ref.	22%

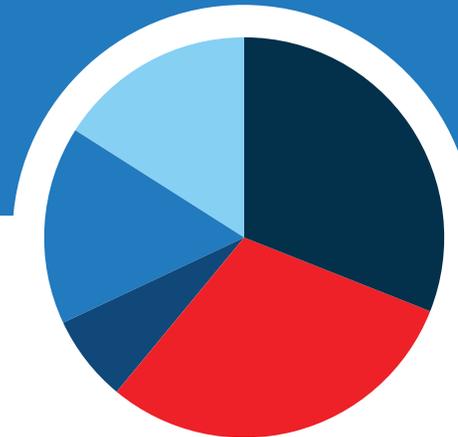
NEW TAX INITIATIVE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW CORRECTIONAL FACILITY FOR JUVENILES

▶ 2024



■ Support – strongly	12%
■ Support – not strongly	26%
■ Oppose – not strongly	9%
■ Oppose – strongly	30%
■ DK/Ref.	23%

▶ 2023



■ Support – strongly	16%
■ Support – not strongly	15%
■ Oppose – not strongly	7%
■ Oppose – strongly	30%
■ DK/Ref.	31%

WHY SUPPORT REMAINS LOW

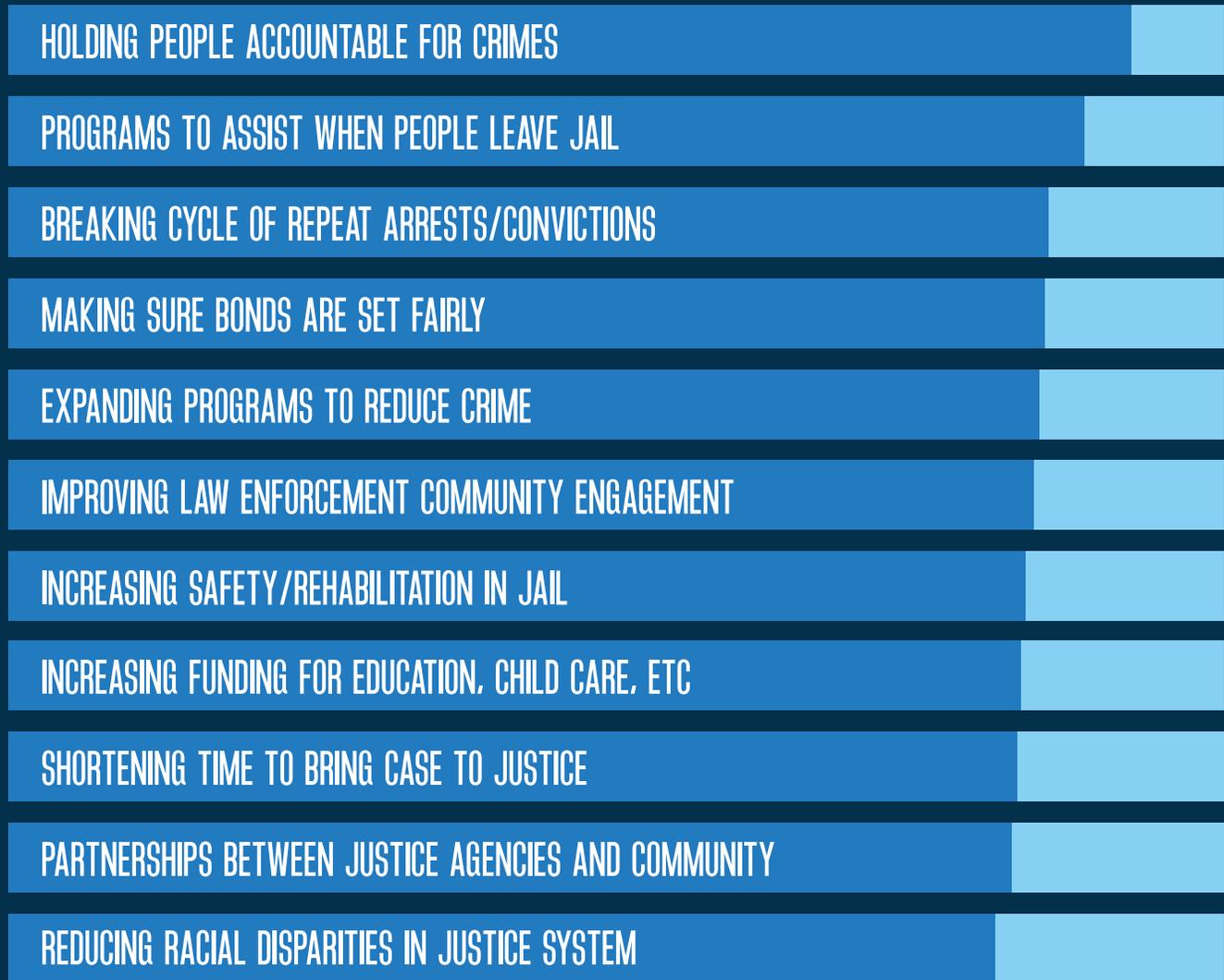
Several factors contribute to hesitancy around funding new correctional facilities. Some might include:

- **Public Preference for Alternative Solutions:** Many residents may favor rehabilitation programs, pretrial diversion and expanded reentry support over new jail construction.
- **Concerns About Cost:** A new facility requires significant taxpayer investment, and some might question whether funds should be directed toward education, mental health services or community programs instead.
- **Uncertainty About Effectiveness:** There may be skepticism about whether building more jails reduces crime or simply increases incarceration rates.

PRIORITIES



On a scale from 1 to 10, respondents were asked to rank priorities for the CJCC. Below are the priorities listed in descending order.



SURVEY SUMMARY

The 2024 East Baton Rouge Safety and Justice Survey reveals growing concerns about neighborhood safety, trust in the justice system and the accessibility of legal resources. While public sentiment is shifting toward reform, many residents feel disconnected from the system and uncertain about its ability to address crime, rehabilitation and fairness.



REBUILDING TRUST IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

- Fewer residents feel safe in their neighborhoods, and negative ratings for justice–related organizations have increased.
- There is an urgent need to restore confidence in law enforcement, the courts and correctional policies through transparency, engagement and education.



PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND BAIL REFORM

- Many residents lack a clear understanding of how the justice system operates, reinforcing the need for community education initiatives.
- Support for bail reform is increasing, with growing opposition to keeping people charged with nonviolent crimes in jail before trial.
- This shift reflects a demand for fairer pretrial practices that prevent unnecessary detention based on financial status.



CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES AND ALTERNATIVES

- Public support for new adult and juvenile correctional facilities remains below 50%, though it has risen slightly and is now about equal for both.
- Many residents favor investment in rehabilitation, diversion programs and community–based solutions rather than expanding detention facilities.
- The conversation around correctional infrastructure must balance the need for modern facilities with a push for non–carceral solutions.



REDUCING RECIDIVISM AND EXPANDING SUPPORT SERVICES

- Overall, EBR residents want a justice system that meets the needs of all, provides greater assistance to low-income individuals and reduces incarceration rates.
- There is strong support for programs that assist people leaving jail, including reentry services, mental health support and job training.
- Breaking the cycle of repeat arrests and convictions is a top priority for many in the community.

SHIFTING APPROACHES TO PUBLIC SAFETY

- Fewer residents are interested in working directly with law enforcement to improve safety, suggesting a disconnect between the community and police.
- Alternative methods of public engagement and education will be necessary to ensure that residents feel heard, informed and involved in justice system reforms.

LOOKING AHEAD

The 2024 survey results highlight the need for structural changes and increased public outreach. Moving forward, the East Baton Rouge Parish must prioritize transparency, fairness and rehabilitation-based strategies to build a more effective, equitable justice system.

CONCLUSION

HOW YOU CAN HELP CJCC ACHIEVE ITS GOALS

The CJCC is committed to creating a more effective and fair justice system in East Baton Rouge Parish. Achieving this goal requires active community engagement, informed advocacy and strong partnerships. By supporting CJCC's efforts, individuals and organizations can help shape policies, expand access to resources and promote long-term solutions that prioritize rehabilitation and public safety.

Your involvement is essential in addressing critical justice issues such as bail reform, diversion programs and reentry support. Whether through advocating for policy changes or supporting rehabilitation initiatives, every effort contributes to a more just and equitable system.

Visit our webpage, ebrcjcc.org, to learn more about CJCC's initiatives and how you can get involved. Follow our social media for local insights, updates and opportunities to engage with justice reform efforts in our community.



