



**nmSAFE**

Making New Mexico safe for all children & families

**2019**

**Legislative Roadmap**

New Mexico SAFE seeks to move New Mexico toward a holistic model of public safety – a system that is substantially smaller, smarter, and committed to the personal safety, health, equity, rights, and dignity of individuals and communities. To accomplish this, the public debate around crime and solutions must shift to a discussion fueled less by a desire for punishment and more by an understanding of the need to support our communities. Accordingly, a sharp and pragmatic plan for increasing public safety will address the social and economic factors that have caused our state to have one of the highest crime rates in the country.

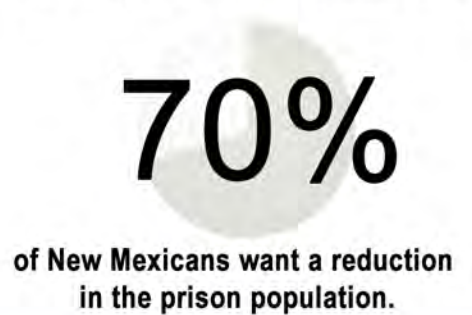
We believe the next governor of New Mexico should support and sign public safety legislation that provides New Mexican families with the tools they need to thrive, reforms the broken justice system, and creates opportunities for people who have been involved in the criminal justice system to fully reintegrate back into society.



We urge the governor to work in coordination with our coalition to prioritize, actively support, and sign legislation in 2019 to:

1. Expand opportunities for successful reintegration and reentry;
2. Reform New Mexico’s broken parole system;
3. Enact smarter drug policies that treat mental health and addiction as public health issues rather than criminal justice issues; and
4. Push for smarter sentencing structures that account for fiscal responsibility and that decriminalize offenses that do not affect public safety.

**60%** of New Mexicans have been affected by crime.  
**92%** of New Mexicans want criminal justice reform.  
**75%** of New Mexicans prefer rehabilitation and training over imprisonment.



We also believe the criminal justice system is one component in a much broader system of public safety that is failing many New Mexican families. We urge the governor to take a holistic approach to public safety. The governor should support families and communities by giving them the tools they need to thrive, such as expanded early childhood education, access to behavioral health services, access to substance use treatment, and an economy where all New Mexicans can succeed.

# 1 - REENTRY AND REINTEGRATION

New Mexico has more incarcerated parents than almost any other state in the country. Without a meaningful path forward after an arrest or conviction, families and entire communities struggle to succeed. New Mexico needs legislation that provides opportunities for people with a criminal record to obtain safe housing, earn a living for themselves and their families, and remove the stigma of having a criminal background.

We urge the governor to support the following reentry and reintegration legislation:

- ✔ Expungement
- ✔ Uniform Collateral Consequences of Conviction Act
- ✔ Fair Chance Hiring (Ban the Box) for Private Employers

**NEW MEXICANS BELIEVE IN REENTRY**

**72%** of New Mexicans want elected officials who remove barriers so that those with convictions can obtain housing, jobs and education.

### CRIME VICTIMS

**78% of crime victims** believe keeping people locked up who no longer pose a threat to public safety is a waste of taxpayer dollars and resources.

# 2 - PRISON AND PAROLE REFORM

New Mexico's prison population has skyrocketed over the last few decades and the system has shifted away from a rehabilitation model to simply warehousing prisoners. A significant number of inmates serve "in-house parole" instead of being released into the community to begin transitioning to the outside world. These are not smart or sustainable policies and they do nothing to make our communities safer. We need a smarter system that is designed to favor rehabilitation and reintegration.

We urge the governor to support the following prison and parole reform legislation:

- ✔ Solitary Confinement Reform
- ✔ Geriatric/Medical Parole
- ✔ Parole Board Procedures Reform

**75%**

of New Mexicans desire **rehabilitation and training over a more punitive correctional system.**

**65%**

of New Mexicans want parole boards to **use their discretion to decide who in prison don't need to serve max sentences.**

**80%**

of New Mexicans say they want **expanded options for early release for incarcerated people who have shown they can be rehabilitated.**

## 3 - DRUG POLICY

New Mexico families have suffered for decades from substance abuse, with the rate of overdose deaths worst or nearly worst in the country. At the same time, we incarcerate far too many people for simply possessing illegal substances. It's time we treat substance abuse as a public health issue, not a criminal justice issue.

72%

of New Mexicans believe drug addicted people don't belong in prison but instead should be in rehabilitation programs.

We urge the governor to support the following smart drug policy legislation:

- ✔ Expansion of Good Samaritan Law to Probationers and Parolees
- ✔ Legalization of Marijuana
- ✔ Reducing Penalty for Simple Possession to Misdemeanor

## 4 - SENTENCING

Tough on crime policies, such as longer sentences, bringing back the death penalty, and enhanced three strikes laws are not serious policy solutions because they do not make our communities safer. A better approach would prioritize treatment, diversionary programs such as Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion, and other alternatives to incarceration that reserve prison only for those that are truly a threat to public safety.

65%

of New Mexicans want to reduce sentences and use the cost savings to reinvest in community programs that have been shown to prevent crime.

72%

of New Mexicans prefer to allow more incarcerated people, including those convicted of serious crimes who show they can be rehabilitated, to be eligible for reduced sentences.

We urge the governor to support the following smart sentencing reforms:

- ✔ Fiscal Impact Assessment of Criminal Sentencing
- ✔ Decriminalization of certain offenses

### Acknowledgements

Poll numbers courtesy of Latino Decisions/NM Safe poll taken August 22-29, 2018. Sample size was 502 adults with a margin of error +/- 4.4 percentage points. For more information on the NM SAFE Coalition, visit our website at [NMSAFE.org](http://NMSAFE.org).