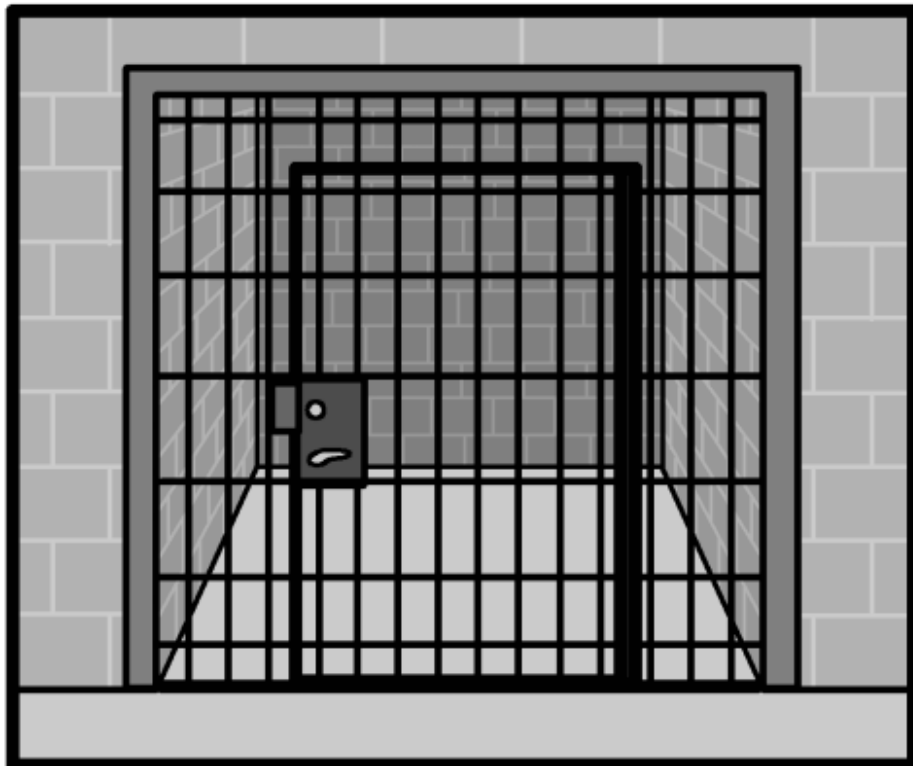


HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH

ACLU

Problems with probation and parole in the United States

Probation and parole are rules that the government can make people follow if they are found guilty of a crime



An Easy-to-Read report

Revoked: How Probation and Parole Feed Mass Incarceration in the United States



About us



We are called Human Rights Watch and ACLU. ACLU is short for American Civil Liberties Union.



Human Rights Watch and ACLU work to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and gets their rights.

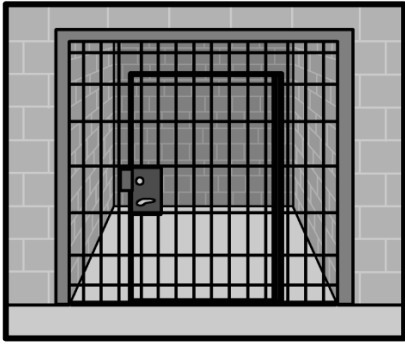
About this Easy to Read report



This report is about problems with probation and parole in the United States.



Probation and parole are rules that the government can make people follow if they are found guilty of a crime.



If people don't follow the rules they could go to jail or prison.

But it is often hard to follow the rules. This means people might end up in jail or prison anyway.



We looked at problems with probation and parole in the United States.



We looked at 3 parts of the United States where the problems happen a lot.

They are Georgia, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.



We looked at information about probation and parole.



We also talked to people, like:

- People who are in jail or prison because of probation or parole rules.
- Their families.
- People from the government.
- People who support the rights of people in jail or prison.

What we found out



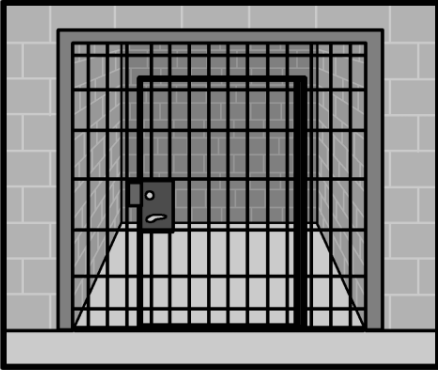
There are a lot of people in jail and prison in the United States because the government says they broke the rules of probation or parole.

Or they are found guilty of breaking the rules.



We found many problems with probation and parole in the United States.

Problems following the probation and parole rules



Many people on probation and parole end up going to jail or prison.

Sometimes for a long time.



This is because the government says they broke the probation and parole rules.

But the rules can be hard to understand and follow.



And there are often too many rules.

For example, people might have to:

- Pay a lot of money they cannot afford to the court
- Go to lots of meetings
- Stop using drugs and alcohol
- Tell someone every time they change their home or job



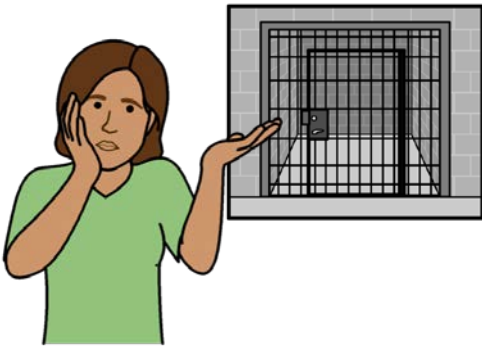
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People might have to follow the rules for a long time.

Sometimes for many years.

This might be too hard for many people.



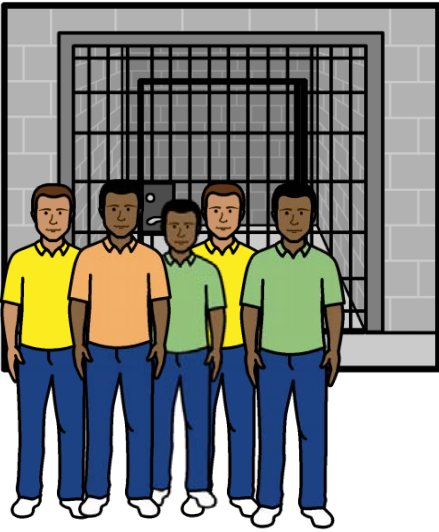
People might have to go to jail or prison even if they break the rules in a small way.

For example, by not telling the court about a new address.

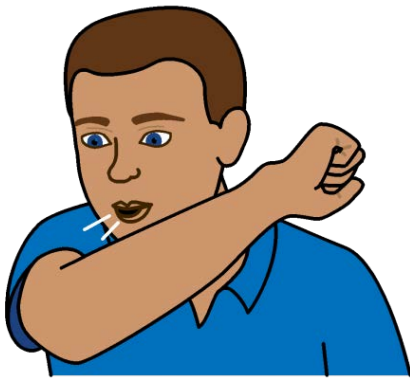


People can also break the rules if they do another crime.

People do not get all of their rights when this happens.



Some jails and prisons that people go to are dirty and have too many people.



And jails and prisons might be more unsafe now because of Covid-19.

Covid-19 is a new illness that many people are getting.

Covid-19 can spread fast in jails and prisons where there are many people.

Not enough support for people to follow the probation and parole rules



Many people might break the rules because there is not enough support to help them follow the rules.



For example, people might use alcohol or drugs again because they do not get the right support to stop.

There are things that people might need to help them follow the rules and change their lives.

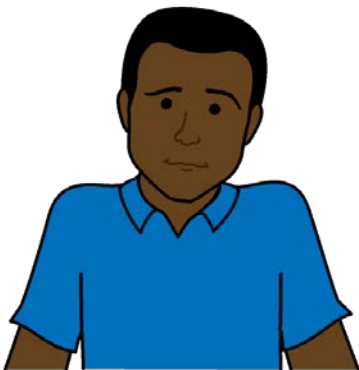


For example:

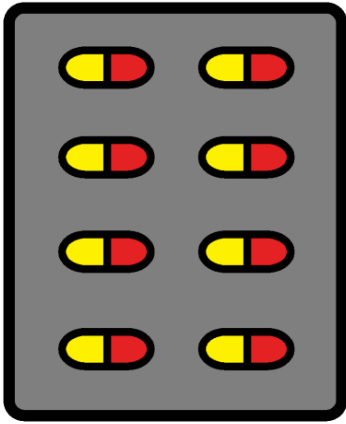
- A home
- A job
- Enough money to pay the courts
- Good transport
- The right health care. This includes mental health care and support for drug problems if they want it.
- Support to do everyday things



But many people on probation and parole do not have these things.



And they might not have help to get them.



Many people are sent to jail or prison for using drugs.

But sending them to jail or prison does not help. It can make things worse.

People losing some of their rights



The government decides if people have broken the probation or parole rules.

And what should happen if they did break the rules.

People on probation and parole do not always get their rights when this happens.

For example, many people have to wait in jail for a long time while the government decides if they broke the rules.



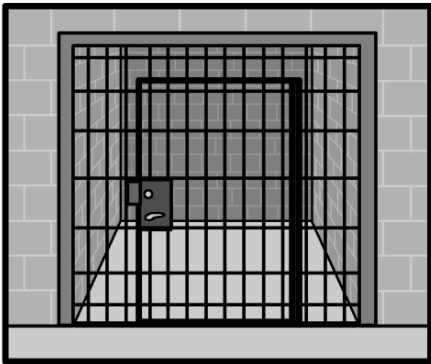
Sometimes they did not break the rules. But it can be hard to get a lawyer or other support to show this.

The problems are often worse for Black and brown people



Police are often unfair to Black and brown people.

They might arrest them more and say they have done a crime.



Black and brown people are put on probation and parole more than white people.

And they are sent to jail or prison more for breaking the rules.



Many Black and brown people do not have the things they need to follow the rules.

Like enough money or good housing.

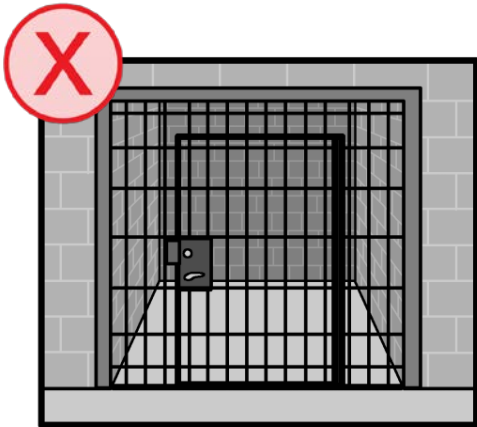
What some parts of the United States are doing



The United States should be following laws in the world about people's rights.

We found this is not always happening with probation and parole.

Some parts of the United States are working to make probation and parole fairer.



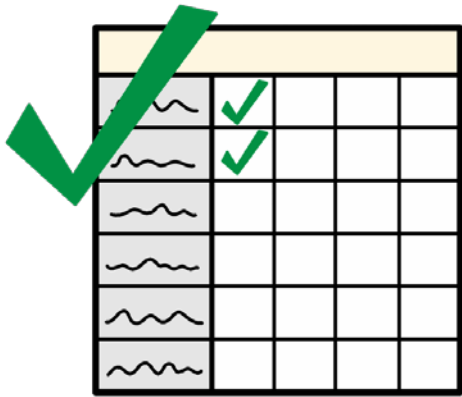
For example, they are:

- Trying to stop so many people going to jail or prison for breaking the rules



- Making sure there is more support for people near where they live instead

But this should be happening more.



What we want to happen next

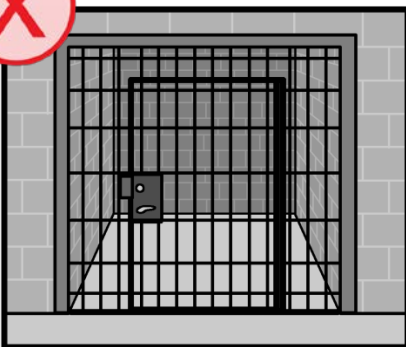
We want governments in the United States to do the following things:

Use probation and parole less.

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Have less rules for probation and parole. And make them easier to follow.

And people should follow the rules for a shorter time.



Stop sending so many people to jail or prison because they break probation and parole rules.



Look at better ways to deal with some problems instead of sending people to jail or prison.



Make sure people have the things they need to help them follow the rules.

Like housing, education and jobs.



Get better support for people near where they live.

Like better support for drugs, alcohol and mental health conditions if people want it.