

MONEY FOR COMMUNITIES, NOT CAGES

The Case for Reducing the Cook County Sheriff's Jail Budget

A report by Chicago Community Bond Fund



October 2018

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Introduction

For decades, Cook County Jail has been one of the largest jails in the world, caging thousands of people inside its walls at any given time. Hundreds of thousands of people have been admitted to Cook County Jail—not because they were convicted of a crime but simply because they could not afford to pay their money bond. Many of these individuals spent months and even years incarcerated in Cook County Jail. These hundreds of thousands of lives were needlessly destabilized, in turn further destabilizing their communities, which are already under-resourced due to systemic inequities and racist policing practices that thrive on economic and racial segregation.¹ Money bonds and the costs of incarceration also extracted millions of dollars out of communities as families struggled to find ways to both buy their love one's freedom via bond or cover the costs of commissary, phone calls, and other needs inside.²

Over the last several years, under the leadership of the #BlackLivesMatter movement, communities have pushed to reduce the number of people in the jail. Impacted communities are not only demanding a reduction in incarceration; the people most targeted by the criminal legal system are pursuing proactive solutions in the areas where the government has neglected them the most—and demanding society invest in institutions that promote their well-being, from schools to clinics. The Movement for Black Lives named this approach “Invest/Divest” and made it one of the six core demands of their policy platform released in 2016.³

Elected officials often discuss criminal legal reform as a cost-savings measure, failing to recognize that local and state governments already spend millions on our most marginalized communities—in the form of policing, surveillance, and incarceration.⁴ To effectively repair the harms of mass incarceration, savings generated by criminal legal reforms must be reinvested in the communities most harmed by decades of criminalization. ***As Cook County spends less on jailing Black and Brown individuals, the money saved must be used to create security and safety in the form of educational access, physical and mental health services, and employment programs for the communities most targeted by mass criminalization.***

Executive Summary

In 2013, more than 10,000 people were incarcerated in Cook County Jail on any given day, and the Cook County Sheriff's Department had a budget of \$445 million dollars. On October 21, 2018, there were 6,095 people in Cook County Jail and another 2,180 people in custody on Electronic Monitoring. Despite this massive 44% decrease in the number of people incarcerated in the jail between 2013 and 2018, the Sheriff's Budget grew 28% over that same five year period—reaching a whopping \$588 million in 2018.

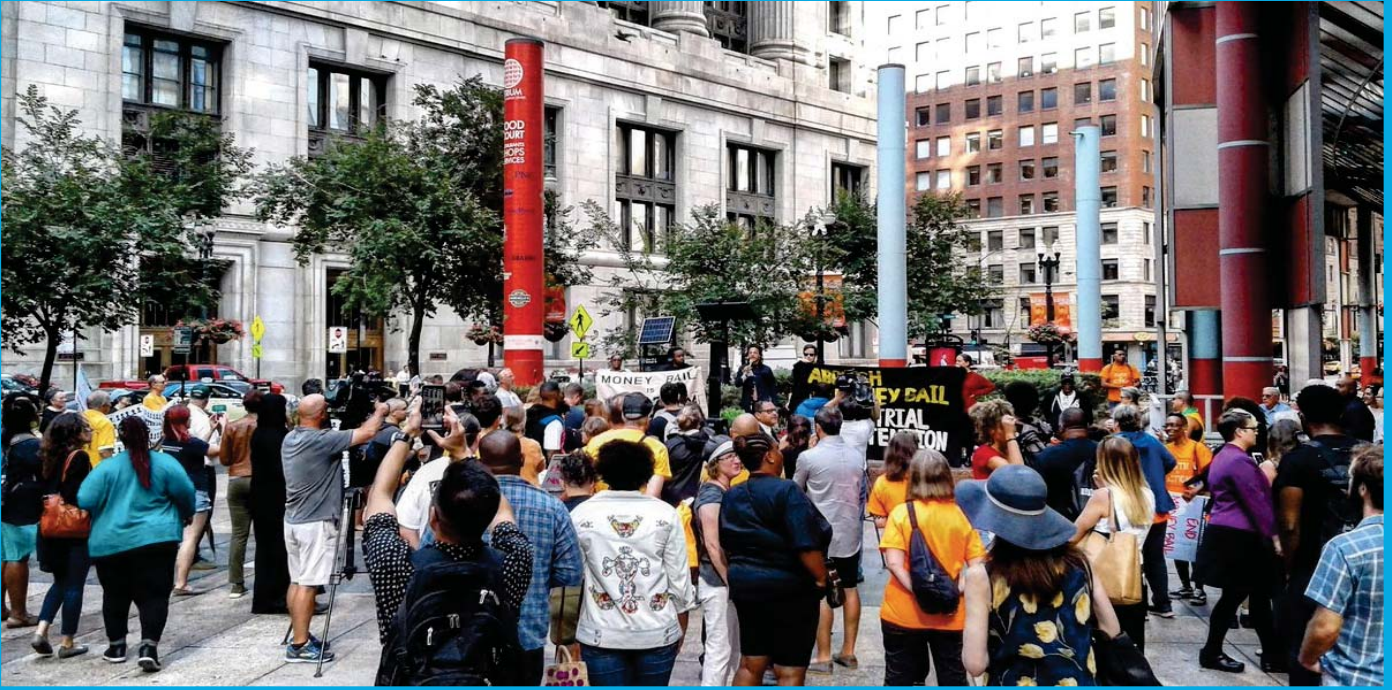
This historic decline in the number of people in Cook County Jail, the result of successful pretrial justice reforms, should coincide with a similar decrease in the Sheriff's budget. Instead of being reallocated within the Sheriff's budget, these funds should be redirected to services benefitting Cook County's most marginalized residents. These residents overwhelmingly live in the very same Black and Brown communities most harmed by Cook County Jail and our broken pretrial system.

Cook County is already spending tens of millions of dollars each year specifically targeting these neighborhoods; that money is being allocated to surveillance, policing, and incarceration. Righting the wrongs of this unjust system must include taking the funds previously used to incarcerate Cook County's most marginalized communities and channelling them towards resources that actually strengthen those communities. Spending on Cook County Jail is fundamentally regressive, whereas investment in lower-cost community services allows us to address the root causes of the social problems so often cited to justify bloated budgets for incarceration. Cook County residents need access to mental health treatment in the community, stable housing, effective educational opportunities, and jobs that can support a family. The declining number of people in jail shows that Cook County is ready to take the next step in ending mass incarceration. ***By re-allocating money from reactionary corrections programs to proactive and preventative community services, Cook County can begin to effectively invest in the communities and people previously neglected and criminalized.***

Cook County already has some programs in place to provide the types of services that communities need, but those programs are desperately underfunded. Instead of siphoning more public resources into incarceration, Cook County should prioritize funding housing, mental and physical healthcare, re-entry support and diversion, and jobs for the very communities that are neglected and criminalized. At the same time, Cook County must continue to reduce the jail population by ending pretrial incarceration and money bond—and respecting the presumption of innocence. The decline in the jail population is a good step, but it must be accompanied by a divestment away from the jail, one of Cook County's most violent institutions, and an investment in the public goods that communities need to survive and thrive.

The Cook County Budget Process

There are a variety of reasons why fewer people are in jail today, but the most recent decline is the result of successful pretrial justice reforms. In response to advocacy from groups like Chicago Community Bond Fund and our partners in the Coalition to End Money Bond, in September 2017, General Order 18.8A went into effect for people charged with felonies in Cook County. This order, put forward by Cook County Chief Judge Timothy Evans, ordered judges to set money bonds only in amounts that people could afford to pay and end the decades-old practice of wealth-based pretrial incarceration. Implementation of the order has been uneven, particularly because adherence to the order has varied widely by judge.⁵ Nonetheless, Cook County Jail's population dropped from 7,500 people in September to a low of fewer than 6,000 people in December 2017.



Cook County residents rally on September 18, 2018, the anniversary of General Order 18.8A taking effect, to demand its full implementation.

As Cook County judges continue to incarcerate people awaiting trial through unaffordable money bonds,⁶ the County has also been planning for next year's budget. Cook County's fiscal year begins on December 1, and the County Board of Commissioners generally adopts a budget in November. Setting the Cook County budget, however, is a process that takes several months each year. It is primarily overseen by the Department of Budget and Management Services (DBMS).⁷ In 2018, the budgeting process began on July 12, when there was a public hearing on the 2018 Preliminary Forecast, which assessed how expenditures in the current year related to the budget. From July 23 to 25, DBMS held mid-year budget hearings, and sent budget targets to each County agency in preparation for setting the 2019 budget. These budget targets are based on previous expenditures, stated agency goals, and other factors such as inflation and changed circumstances. The agencies also submitted proposed budgets to DBMS.

Throughout August and September, DBMS met with each agency to reconcile differences between the agencies' budget requests and DBMS' budget targets. In these meetings, the agencies themselves advocated for their budget plan, while DBMS questioned the needs for certain expenditures and collaborated with the agencies to find a budget that will be acceptable to both the County and the agency. Through this process, DBMS and the County's Performance Management office helped prepare the President's Executive Budget Recommendation, which was presented to the County Board of Commissioners and released to the public in early October 2018.⁸

Throughout October and November, the Board is holding public hearings on the budget. Commissioners can propose amendments to the budget on behalf of agencies that believe they require a different allocation of funds. Once all the amendments have been made, the Commissioners will vote to adopt the budget as the Appropriations bill in late November.

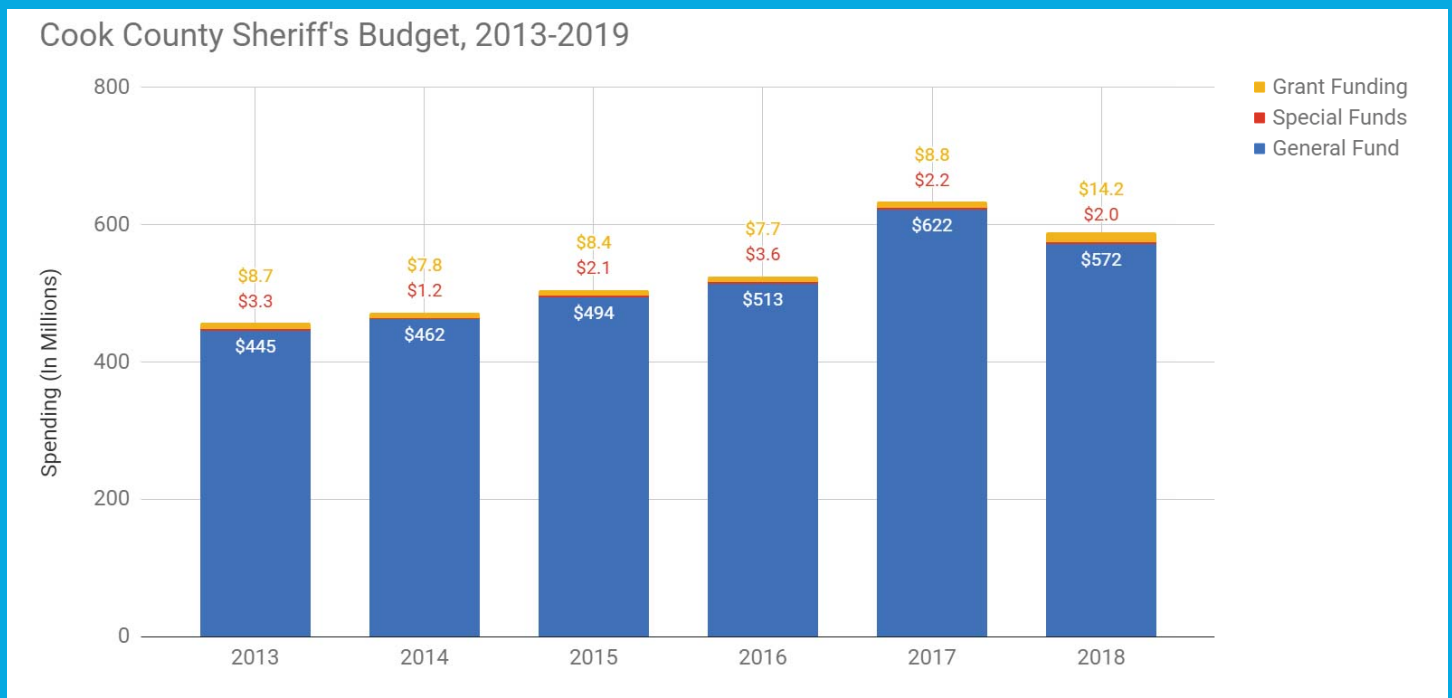
As the budget hearings progress, Commissioners decide where their priorities lie. This year, Commissioners have a choice: They can choose to prioritize the continued caging of thousands of people presumed innocent under the law, who are forcibly removed from their families and communities, or they can prioritize services for those very same communities.

The Cook County Sheriff's Budget

Budgets are highly political documents; the public only sees what the government agencies want us to see, and there is often a lack of explanation and transparency, making the concrete impact of their abstract numbers inaccessible. The Cook County Sheriff's budget is no exception. The publicly available budget shows only broad categories of spending broken down by the number of personnel that staff a given department. Viewing the budget in isolation leaves questions about other spending that is visibly taking place but is not easily identified in the budget itself.

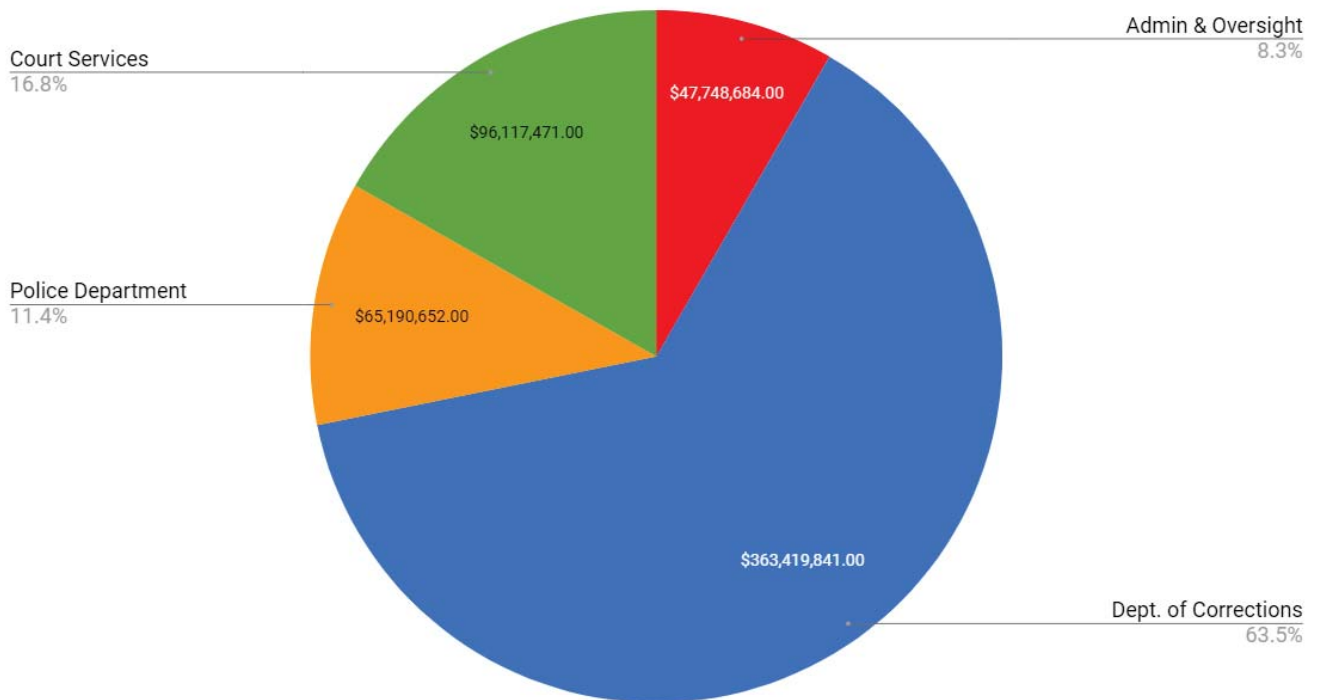
The overall Cook County budget is around \$5.2 billion dollars. “Public safety” is the second largest category of spending in the Cook County budget, at around \$1.25 billion, or 26% of the total budget. Spending on public safety is exceeded only by spending for healthcare. “Public safety” spending includes the Sheriff’s Office as well as the County’s courts and probation department.

The Sheriff’s Office, like many departments in the County, receives funding from three sources: the General Fund (which is primarily money collected through things like taxes and fees), special funds (which are set up for specific purposes and have their own revenue streams), and grants (which can come from the federal government, state government, or private philanthropy). On a year-to-year basis, the County has the most control over how it uses its General Fund.



The Sheriff’s Office uses General Fund dollars for four broad types of spending: administration and oversight of the office, policing services, court security, and operating Cook County Jail. Almost 65%—or \$363 million—of the Sheriff’s budget goes toward operating the Jail.

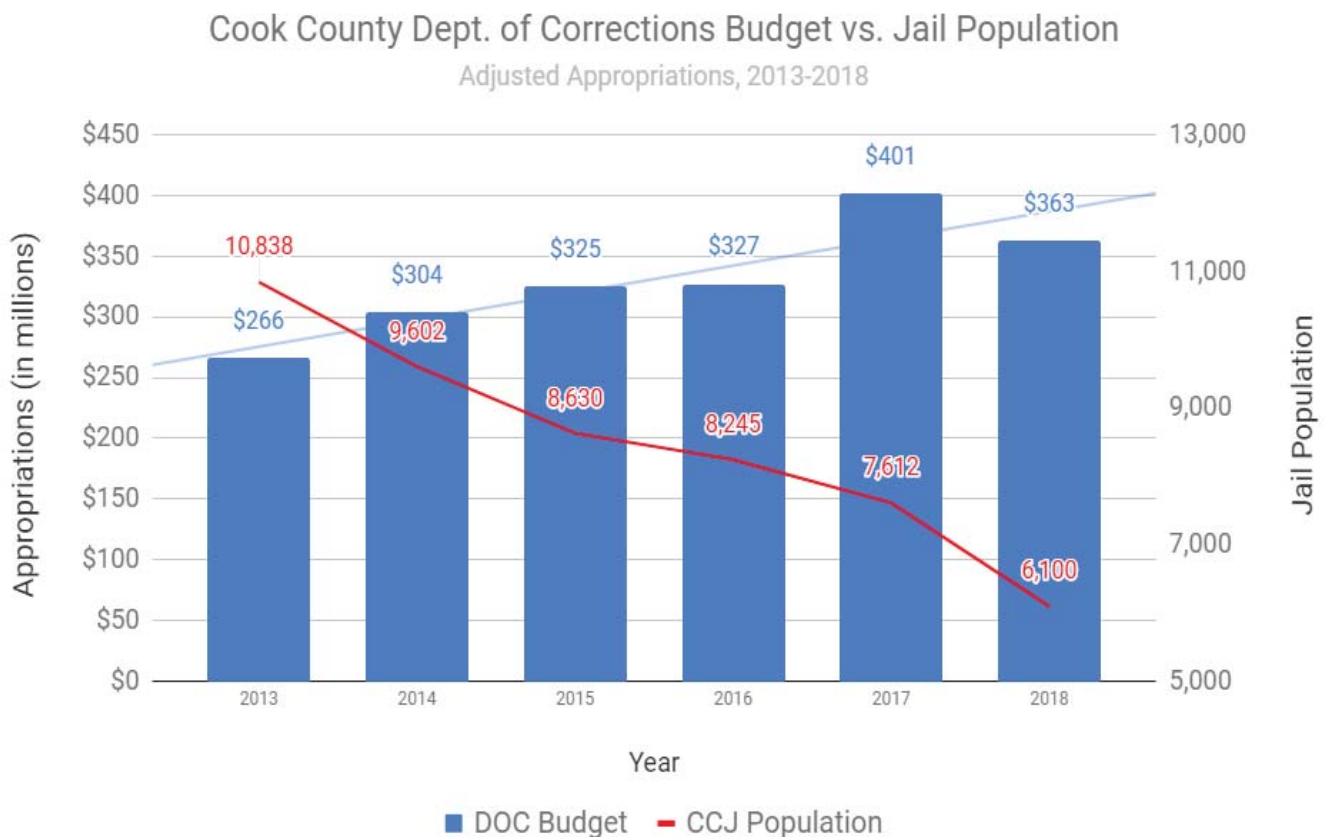
Breakdown of Cook County Sheriff's General Fund Spending, 2018 Adopted Budget



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In their publicly available budget documents, several branches of Cook County government, including the Sheriff's Office, list "reduction of the jail population" as a policy priority. In fact, in 2017, Cook County received grant funding through the MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge to aid the County in that effort.¹⁰ Several recent changes to practice and policy—most importantly, decreasing overall arrest rates and General Order 18.8A—have led to incarceration of fewer people awaiting trial in Cook County Jail. Despite these decreases, however, the budget allocated to the Sheriff's office to administer the jail has continued to climb.

In 2013, the Cook County Department of Corrections had a budget of \$266 million dollars, and the jail detained an average of 10,838 people. ***Between 2013 and 2017, the number of people in jail dropped to 7,612—a decrease of just under 30%. During that same five-year time period, the Department of Corrections budget increased by over 50%.*** In just one year, between 2016 and 2017, the number of people in Cook County Jail decreased by 7.7%. During those same years, the amount of money appropriated to the Department of Corrections increased by 22.6%. 2018 was the first year that the Sheriff's budget decreased in many years.



Due to the shrinking number of people in jail and the increasing DOC budget, the ***per-person spending more than doubled between 2013 and 2018***. In 2013, the DOC budgeted around \$24,750 per person in the jail. By 2018, despite the slight decrease in the overall budget that year, that amount had skyrocketed to ***almost \$60,000 per person***—almost enough to cover tuition plus room and board for each person in jail to attend the University of Chicago. This begs the question: were the thousands of people who were released from the jail back into their communities benefiting from a similar increased investment in services in their communities?

Cook County DOC Yearly Spending Per Incarcerated Person

2013-2018



Care Happens in Communities, Not in Jails

Part of the justification for increases in the budget stems from the Sheriff Tom Dart positioning himself and the jail as a provider of care for incarcerated people. Cook County Jail is often referred to as the state's largest mental health facility, since an estimated one third of people incarcerated in the jail are in need of mental health services.¹¹ As journalist Maya Dukmasova notes, when it comes to mental health resources in Cook County, "getting arrested is one of the few ways people from Chicago's poorest neighborhoods can access the therapy they need."¹² When a person has a mental health crisis, often the only response the government has is law enforcement. Dukmasova quotes Cook County State's Attorney Kimberly Foxx as lamenting that "the police have nowhere to take [someone in a mental health crisis], so they take them either to the county hospital or to the Cook County Jail."¹³



Southside Together Organizing for Power (STOP) protesting the closure of public mental health clinics by the City of Chicago in 2012.

(Photo by Sarah-Ji of loveandstrugglephotos.com)

This approach to mental health is profoundly misguided and dangerous, given that jails are highly deadly places for people with mental health and substance use-related needs. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Suicide has been the leading cause of death in jails every year since 2000.”¹⁴ In 2017, at least 22 people died in Cook County Jail, many of them from suicide or medical issues related to withdrawal.¹⁵ As a fundamental rule, jails do not treat people with mental health needs; they cage and incarcerate those in need after their condition has been criminalized.

Anti-incarceration activist James Kilgore has named this rebranding of mass incarceration “carceral humanism,” which “recasts the jailers as caring social service providers.”¹⁶ Kilgore warns that such a re-branding “institutionaliz[es] the funding of mental health and other services behind the walls, further diverting money from the already bare bones social services in communities.”¹⁷

The services in Cook County Jail include cognitive skills, interpersonal problem solving, anger management, alcohol and drug education classes, alcohol and drug treatment services, relapse prevention, support system development, and social skills. While it is indisputable that many people inside Cook County Jail need and deserve access to these services, there is an inherent mismatch between the care these programs are intended to provide and the isolating, punishing institution in which they are being administered. Jails are not therapeutic environments, and they are not set-up for or equipped to serve people with mental health needs.¹⁸ As Dukmasova remarked, “If we have a sheriff playing therapist because the mental health clinics are closed [...] we haven’t addressed the real problems.”¹⁹

Between 2009 and 2012, Illinois defunded critical mental health, substance abuse treatment, and counseling programs and services through massive cuts in the state budget. According to a report by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Illinois cut \$113.7 million in funding for mental health services between 2009 and 2012.²⁰ Since 2009, two state-operated in-patient facilities and six City of Chicago mental health clinics have been shut down. In 2012, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel closed half of the city’s public mental health centers to save the city a measly \$2.2 million over the course of two years.

Such disinvestment in community well-being, health, and safety may necessitate acts of survival that are criminalized and can result in arrest and incarceration. Drug possession, for example, may indicate attempts at self-medication, and a person without a home may trespass simply to find a place to sleep. Beyond services provided for those detained at Cook County Jail, a greater investment in holistic mental health services and programs in communities is necessary to ensure that all Cook County residents not only have the means to survive but are able to thrive in their communities.

It is important to note that even careful study of the Sheriff's budget and contracts raises questions about spending that is either not included or not identifiable in those documents. For example, people regularly sue Cook County Jail as a result of civil rights abuses and poor conditions within the jail. Those lawsuits result in settlements ranging from a few hundred dollars paid to individual people²¹ to almost \$60 million paid to class action plaintiffs related to the jail's previous practice of strip searching.²² Most of those cases are related to medical or mental health neglect and physical abuse by jail staff against incarcerated people.²³

The Sheriff's Office can also elect to hire private outside counsel to defend against such lawsuits, rather than using the representation of the State's Attorney's Office. In a recent lawsuit related to electronic monitoring, Sheriff Tom Dart used government funds to hire outside counsel to defend his office, resulting in a significantly greater cost to taxpayers. ***Between 2014 and 2017, Cook County paid out over \$12 million dollars in settlements in almost 100 lawsuits against the department.²⁴ The costs of these settlements, which must be approved by the Cook County Board of Commissioners, comes out of the County's General Fund and not the Sheriff's Office's budget, effectively reducing the resources available for other services.***

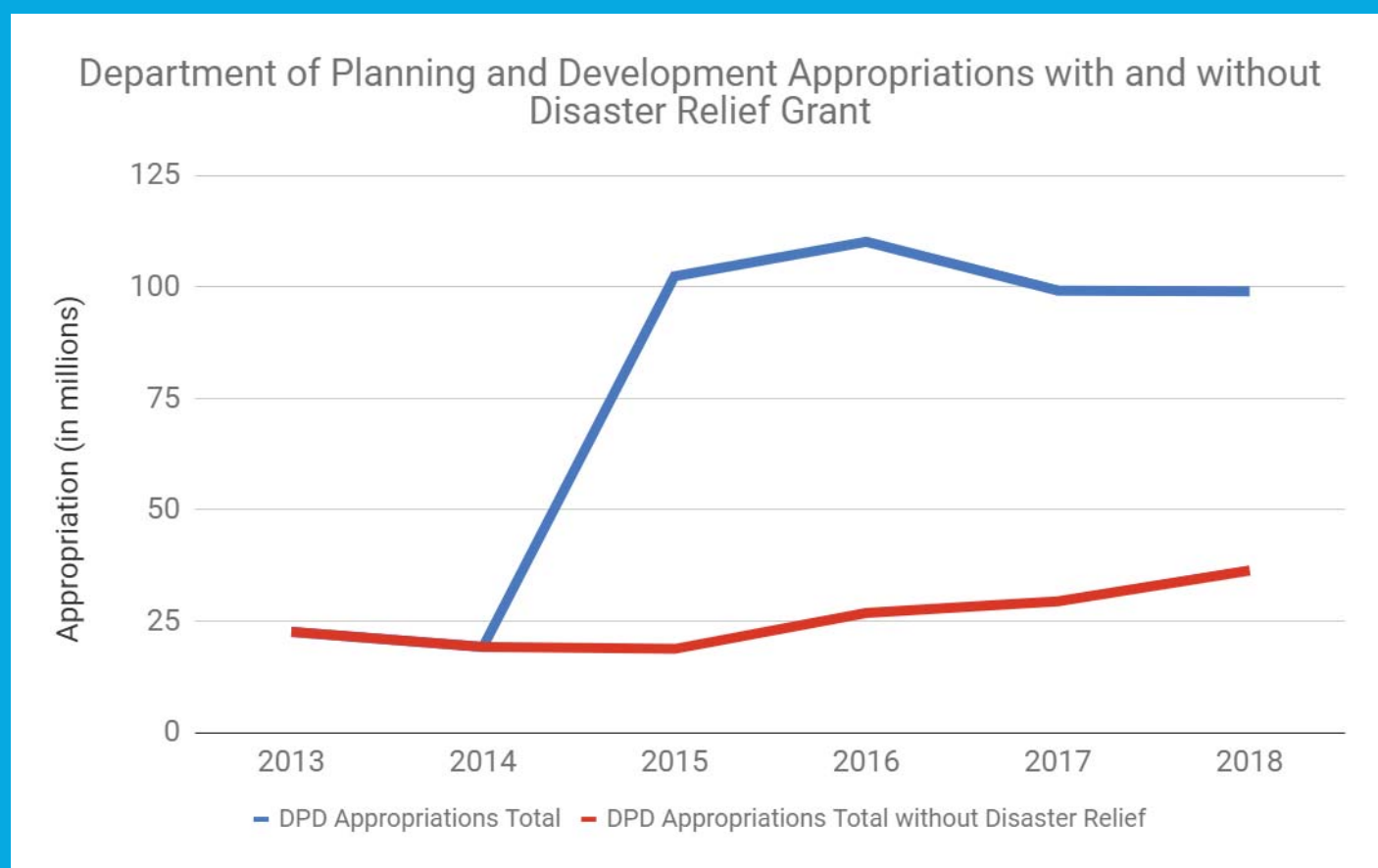
Considering the inherent dangers of incarceration and the particular threats of violence in Cook County Jail, vulnerable residents in need of treatment and other services must be given those resources in the community.

Comparison of Budget Priorities: Planning and Development versus Corrections

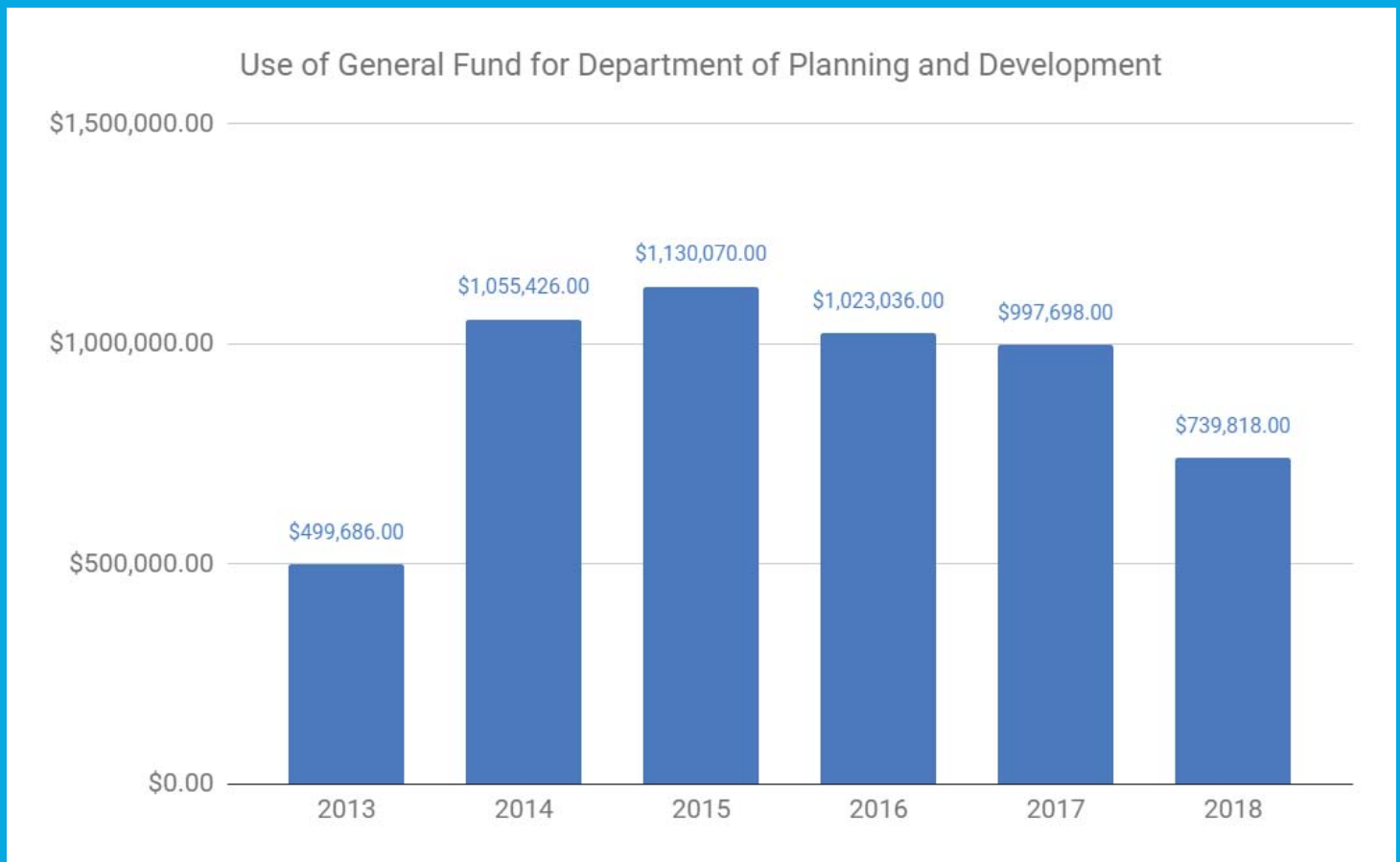
This growth in the Cook County Department of Corrections (DOC) budget stands in contrast to the shrinking budgets of other programs that aim to meet the basic needs of Cook County residents, such as housing and economic development.

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD), for example, focuses on community development in suburban Cook County, where studies have shown that the poverty level is rising.²⁵ Some services administered by DPD include affordable and fair housing efforts, homelessness prevention/intervention services, other social services such as youth programming, and small business loans.

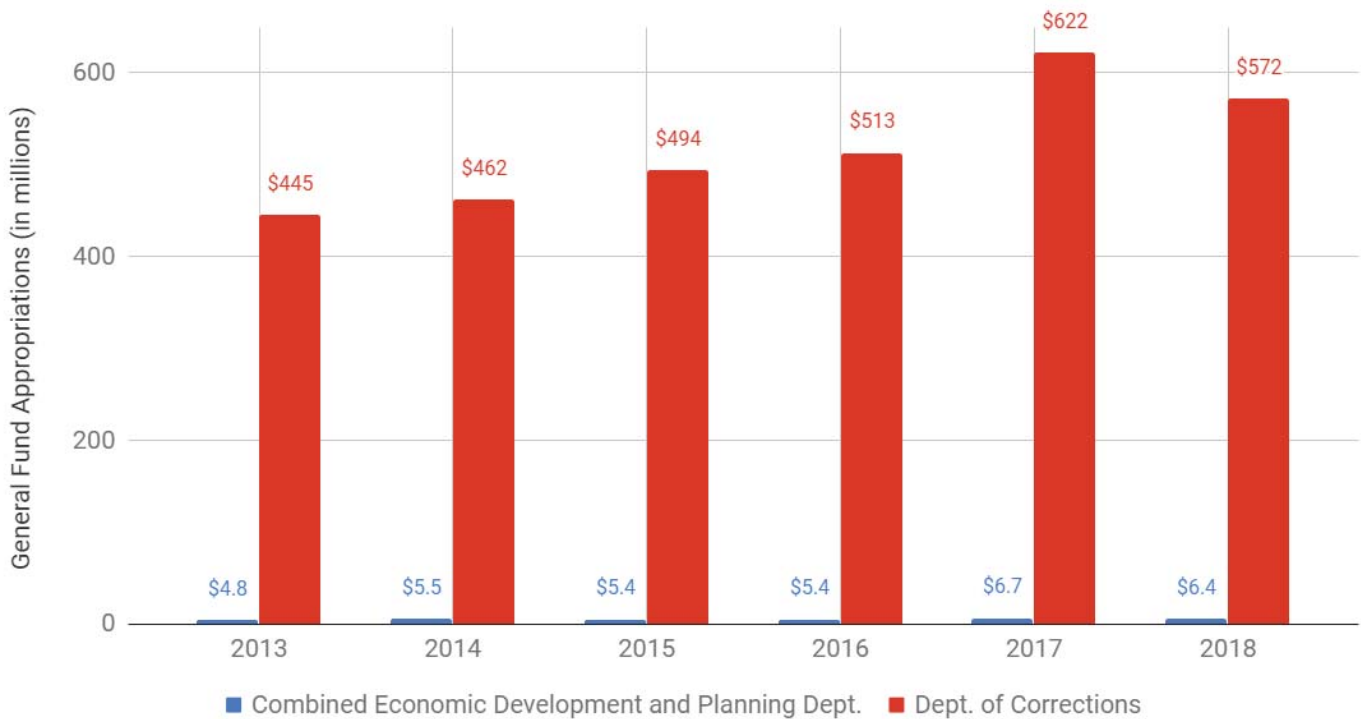
DPD's \$98,976,222 budget for 2018 is just over a quarter of the size of the Department of Corrections (DOC) budget, making up only 2.1% of Cook County's 2018 operating budget. Moreover, 98.9% of DPD's funding comes from (mostly federal) grants. In fact, one Community Development Block Grant for Disaster Relief makes up the majority of this money, and its funds are restricted for use toward recovery from severe flooding that occurred in suburban Cook County in 2013. This leaves DPD with \$36,697,782 to administer the services mentioned above—about 10% of the DOC budget.



Cook County puts an exceptionally small amount of its own funds toward DPD's programs. Only \$739,818 of Cook County's general fund is slated to go to DPD in 2018, which means that ***Cook County has appropriated only .08% of its general fund to pay for the services it provides to suburban Cook County residents.*** Unlike the DOC budget, the amount appropriated to DPD in the general fund has also been steadily dropping since 2015.



Cook County General Fund Expenditure Comparison: Economic Development vs. DOC
2013-2018



Cook County's reliance on grants to fund DPD's programs leaves the Department's budget vulnerable to shifts in the availability of these grants, which can also shape the nature of the services that are available. For example, many of the services provided by DPD are only offered to suburban Cook County because this is a condition of the grants received from HUD. ***Investing more general funds into DPD would ensure that these services have a steady source of funding and present opportunities for more community influence over what services are needed.***

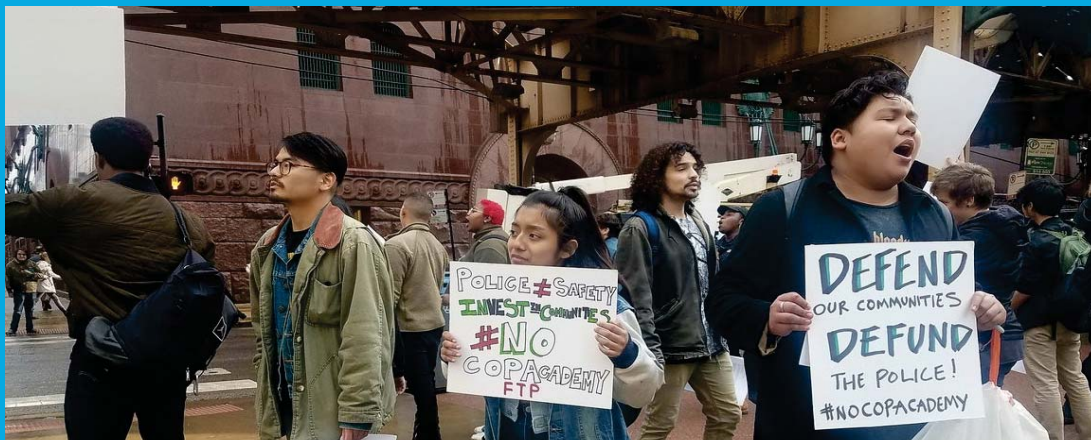
This report does not provide similar in-depth analysis for all types of spending throughout other parts of the Cook County Budget. This sample comparison of spending on community-based investments with spending on imprisonment reveals concerning priorities as measured by County Budget allocations.

Recommendations

Politicians and other County officials are more likely to talk about reforms than actually implement them, and every time they choose to reinforce the current system, Black and Brown people suffer. Cook County Jail and the Sheriff who runs it are part of that system, and the County must stop seeing the jail as a solution to social challenges. Investment in communities is the only way to sustainably promote public safety and achieve justice. By shifting money away from corrections and towards supportive services that can improve well-being, Cook County's 2019 budget can begin to work towards the self-determination for all residents.

1. Invest in Community-Based Services, Not Jails and Criminalization

Divesting from pretrial incarceration and the Sheriff's budget is not enough to address the harms caused by the criminal legal system. Funds must be reinvested into programs that serve Black and Brown communities in Cook County that are currently underserved and over-incarcerated.²⁶ If the County truly cares about the safety of its residents, it should be funding the services that help these residents and their communities flourish, including accessible physical and mental healthcare, affordable housing, and community-driven economic development. By doing this, the County can take steps to ensure that people do not need to go to jail to have their basic needs met.



CCBF is a proud endorser of the #NoCopAcademy campaign, which is pushing an invest/divest framework at the city level.

2. End Money Bond and Pretrial Incarceration

Unaffordable money bonds currently cage more than 2,500 people in Cook County Jail and further harm countless thousands of other people who depend on their incarcerated loved ones to support and strengthen communities around the County. Money bond is racially discriminatory, with Black people comprising 73% of the people currently jailed on an unaffordable money bond²⁷ even though Cook County is just 24% Black. This means that it is Black communities that are disproportionately hurt by continued reliance on money bonds and resulting pretrial incarceration. System stakeholders across the country have long recognized that money bond does not help ensure appearance in court pending trial or promote public safety and instead only criminalizes poverty. Money bond also causes unjust outcomes within the criminal legal system by pressuring people to plead guilty, regardless of the strength of the evidence against them, often only to be released from incarceration either on probation or for time already served.²⁸ Several states and jurisdictions around the country have already taken steps to end wealth-based pretrial incarceration,²⁹ and researchers and policy organizations from a wide range of arenas have advocated for the end of secured money bond. Even the Federal Bureau of Prisons concluded in 2017 that the use of money bond should be prohibited or strongly restricted in a proper pretrial framework,³⁰ and community groups and policy advocates throughout Cook County have been campaigning against money bond for years.



Banners created by For The People Artists Collective representing the more than 2,500 people currently incarcerated in Cook County Jail simply because they cannot afford to pay their money bond.

Ending money bond and pretrial incarceration will mean that people accused of crimes are actually innocent until proven guilty and are not required to suffer incarceration before being convicted. ***As of August 1, 2018, there were only 114 people serving sentences in Cook County Jail, while over 5,000 people were incarcerated awaiting trial.***³¹ If the County were to divest from pretrial incarceration and allow people to continue to be with their families and communities while they fight their cases, the County would have money to invest in strengthening and supporting those same communities. Ending money bond is the first step toward reducing the number of people in jail and addressing the racially discriminatory legacy of mass incarceration in Cook County.



Community organizations from the Coalition to End Money Bond rallying in support of General Order 18.8A on the day it was implemented in September 2017.

3. Increase Support for Re-entry and Diversion

Given the significant drop in the number of people in jail, Cook County should drastically increase investments in supporting people re-entering their communities. The Cook County Justice Advisory Council (JAC) is a promising example of how this is beginning to happen. This initiative, under the direction of Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, intentionally directs funding to community-based initiatives aimed at reducing recidivism and promoting public safety. The program has offered over \$17 million in grants since 2010.³² During that same period of time, however, the County spent over \$4 billion dollars operating the Department of Corrections. Cook County should adjust its priorities and reallocate many millions more to JAC initiatives.

4. Increase Access to Mental Health Care

In recent years, low-income Black and Brown neighborhoods have seen drastic cuts to community-based mental health care services through budget cuts on the federal, state, and local levels, while prisons and police receive more funding to respond to the same issues. Cook County should consider restoring and increasing funding that supports mental health and well-being of those communities most harmed by violence and criminalization before people interact with the criminal legal system.

One example of a positive program is the Healing Hurt People Initiative, operated out of Cook County's public hospital, Stroger. The program provides intensive therapeutic and case management services to victims of violence in order to "prevent clients' re-injury and mortality, reduce retaliation, and lessen involvement in the criminal justice system."³³ In recent years, staff of that program have reported that they cannot meet the demand for their services given the high need for supportive services among Stroger patients. They also have expressed a desire to expand the age group served by their initiative, which currently only serves adolescents 18 and younger, in order to target the young adults in their twenties who make up the majority of those injured by penetrating trauma (such as gunshot wounds).³⁴



Cook County residents calling for greater access to public mental health care services in 2012.

(Photo by Sarah-Ji of loveandstrugglephotos.com)

5. Develop Universal Housing

One way Cook County can invest in housing for communities affected by the criminal legal system is by providing additional funding to “best practices” programs in re-entry housing. One such program in Cook County exists through St. Leonard’s Ministries, an umbrella agency providing residential and supportive services to men and women exiting Illinois prisons.³⁵ Through five different programs, St. Leonard’s offers interim housing and services for men and women; housing services for men and women who complete the interim housing programs; and education and employment training programs. St. Leonard’s reports that men who have completed their program return to prison at a rate of 16% versus the statewide 48%, and women return to prison at a rate of 5% versus about 35% statewide. St. Leonard’s offers services such as addiction counseling and relapse prevention, employment counseling, housing placement assistance, and stress management through its residential programs. About 75% of St. Leonard’s program staff are formerly incarcerated and, thus, sensitive to the needs of program participants and the challenges of transition.³⁶ Cook County should demonstrate a commitment to supporting and caring for the formerly incarcerated by investing in such programs, particularly because St. Leonard’s identifies stable and consistent funding as a significant, ongoing challenge.

In December 2017, Mayor Emanuel introduced the Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool (FHSP), a supportive housing rental subsidy model created in partnership with the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA), and the Center for Supportive Housing.³⁷ The FHSP combines housing/rental subsidy expertise and case management to provide services to residents experiencing homelessness, including more challenging populations that are not necessarily supported under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s targeted homeless housing programs. The FHSP is modeled from similar, successful initiatives in Los Angeles and Houston.

Evaluations of Los Angeles County’s Housing for Health program shows \$1.20 in public spending is saved for every dollar invested in the program. Additionally, supportive housing interventions reduced emergency room visits by 57%, and public services received by program participants decreased by 40% after just one year in supportive housing.³⁸ This is yet another program in which Cook County could invest to demonstrate a real commitment to underserved and over-incarcerated communities. The City of Chicago budgeted significant funds for the first year or two of this program, but an ongoing investment has not been promised. Not only should Cook County and the City invest in such initiatives that aim to serve populations not served by HUD’s programs, but the county should commit to funding the FHSP’s expansion into suburban Cook County in partnership with the Housing Authority of Cook County.

6. Invest in Jobs and Community Economic Development Programs

A commitment to caring for communities and public safety requires community-driven development based on the priorities and needs of the community. United Way of Metro Chicago's Neighborhood Network provides one model for community-driven issue identification and the resulting customized strategies to achieve healthier, safer, and stronger communities. The Neighborhood Network encourages collaboration across community stakeholders to address specific local challenges and needs.³⁹ For example, Brighton Park, one of the ten communities covered by the initiative, was identified as a high-need community due to a lack of social service intermediaries and funding in the community. The Brighton Park Neighborhood Council, with 23 community partners, has set a goal of increasing the graduation rate at Kelly High School to 90%. A few of the results of this partnership and investment in the community-led solutions are expanded mental health services through the hiring of a Domestic Violence Counselor, Community-Based Family Therapist, and School-Based Counselor; a new mentor program, Leaders of Tomorrow, which resulted in a 25% reduction in suspensions at Kelly; and five full-time counselors at six neighborhood schools.⁴⁰ Such programs should be more fully funded so that they can be expanded across Cook County.

Research shows that implementing evidence-based job training services for formerly incarcerated people pays major dividends, with a potential economic benefit of \$20.25 for every one dollar spent.⁴¹ Much of the workforce development money utilized throughout Cook County comes from the federal government through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). ***Despite existing job training programs, Illinois still has among the highest Black unemployment rates in the entire country.⁴² Cook County should supplement existing job training opportunities by funding programming that focuses on providing services to formerly incarcerated people, who face unique barriers to employment.*** St. Leonard's reported that men and women who completed their programs tend to earn twice as much as other community members returning from incarceration, reflecting the payoff of investing in the formerly incarcerated and re-entry services.⁴³ Likewise, Safer Foundation reports that 90% of clients with job starts in Fiscal Year 2016 retained their job for at least 90 days and 74% retained their jobs for at least a year.⁴⁴ Rather than targeting and over-incarcerating communities of color, the County should reallocate funds from the jail to sustainable programs such as these that empower, rather than brutalize, the people who could benefit the most from opportunity-creating investment.

Conclusion

People end up in jail because of a chain of decisions: police officers choosing to bring them to jail rather than to a hospital or triage center; prosecutors deciding to file criminal charges; judges imposing unaffordable bonds or jailing people awaiting trial. Once a person is ordered admitted to the jail, the Sheriff does not have an option of whether or not to take them. Even as reforms have led to a decrease in the number of people in Cook County Jail, the Sheriff's Office continues to advocate for ever-increasing resources. As that money is funneled into the Sheriff's Office, it is excluded from community-based health, housing, and supportive services. This system is not inevitable: Cook County's budget can and must be intentionally shifted to prioritize spending on people in their communities to meet needs in housing, healthcare, jobs, and economic security. Ultimately, such preventative spending on services and opportunities will also work to reduce the number of people in contact with the criminal legal system and increase community safety.



Community members gather outside of Cook County Jail on Mother's Day in 2018 to show support for moms and caregivers incarcerated while awaiting trial.

About Chicago Community Bond Fund

Chicago Community Bond Fund (CCBF) was founded in November 2015 by a group of activists, attorneys, and community members to pay bond for people in Cook County that couldn't afford it themselves and to advocate for the end of money bond and pretrial incarceration altogether. Since then, CCBF has paid over \$900,000 in bond to free more than 160 people from Cook County Jail or house arrest with electronic monitoring.



End Notes

¹The incarceration rates by Chicago neighborhoods were analyzed by Robert Sampson in the 2012 book “Great American City.” “He found that a black neighborhood with one of the highest incarceration rates (West Garfield Park) had a rate more than 40 times as high as the white neighborhood with the highest rate (Clearing).” Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Case for Reparations,” *The Atlantic* (June 2014), available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>.

² See e.g. “Who Pays?: The True Cost of Incarceration on Families,” Ella Baker Center on Human Rights, Forward Together, and Research Action Design (September 2015), available at: <http://whopaysreport.org/who-pays-full-report/>.

³ The Movement for Black Lives has outlined the precise institutions where massive federal and state government spending actively harms Black communities and areas where a reallocation of that money would promote the education, health and safety of those same communities. “Invest-Divest,” Movement for Black Lives, available at: <https://policy.m4bl.org/invest-divest/>. Since then, the approach has also been taken up by philanthropic foundations. In 2018, Funders for Justice released the “Divest/Invest: From Criminalization to Thriving Communities” toolkit for foundations and other funders, available at <https://divest.nfg.org/>.

⁴ See Daniel Cooper and Ryan Lugalia-Hollon, “Million Dollar Blocks,” Chicago’s Million Dollar Blocks, available at: <https://chicagosmilliondollarblocks.com/#total> (discussing the millions of dollars spent incarcerating residents of particular Cook County neighborhoods).

⁵ For an in-depth analysis of how General Order 18.8A has been implemented, see “Shifting Sands: An Investigation Into the First Year of Bond Reform in Cook County,” The Coalition to End Money Bond (September 2018), available at: <https://www.chicagobond.org/reports/ShiftingSands.pdf>.

⁶ See “Shifting Sands: An Investigation Into the First Year of Bond Reform in Cook County,” The Coalition to End Money Bond (September 2018), available at: <https://www.chicagobond.org/reports/ShiftingSands.pdf>.

⁷ See generally <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/Budget>.

⁸ <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/news/preckwinkle-releases-fy19-executive-budget-recommendation>.

⁹ Cook County 2018 Annual Appropriation, Volume 2, page Y-1, available at: http://opendocs.cookcountyil.gov/budget/archive/2018_Annual_Appropriation_Volume_2.pdf.

¹⁰ “Cook County, IL,” Safety+Justice Challenge, available at: <http://www.safetyandjusticechallenge.org/challenge-site/cook-county/>.

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