

VIC Party positions on JR

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Abstract

Australian Prison Reform Journal is endeavouring to publish the policy positions of the major parties on justice reinvestment. If a party adds or amends their policy at any time, APRJ will amend the publication.

Policies on justice reinvestment

[Australian Prison Reform Journal](#) is asking the major parties for their policy on justice reinvestment, which is considered by the [Journal](#) to be the main way in which the root causes of crime can be addressed and our high rates of incarceration reduced. It is also the main way in which the overrepresentation of First Nations peoples in the criminal justice system can be addressed and the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people closed. The policies of the three major parties in the state of Victoria (VIC) have been sought. One party has responded so far:

Australian Labor Party

The Hon. Sonya Kilkeny MLA, Attorney-General

Party position:

No response after six requests.

Liberal Party of Australia

Mr David Southwick MLA, Shadow Minister for Police and Corrections; Youth Justice

Party position:

The Liberals are committed to taking definitive action to resolve the growing crime crisis facing Victoria. It is essential that any successful criminal justice system or initiative balances the need for punitive measures to discourage criminal activity with the valuable long-term benefits that a

rehabilitative system can bring.

Within this context, justice reinvestment strategies must be examined on a case-by-case basis to determine how effective they will be in achieving the goal of reducing crime within the state. If any proposed community led justice programs were to be deemed likely to improve long-term outcomes for offenders, curb the crime rate, and reduce strain on the Victorian justice system, a Liberal State Government would be willing to consider it in formulating policy.

Australian Greens

Ms Katherine Copsey MLC, Spokesperson for Justice of the Victorian Greens

Party position:

The Greens are committed to Justice Reinvestment, which is Justice reinvestment is a community-led approach that shifts funding from prison systems to local, preventative strategies. Our policies align with targeting the root causes of crime, prioritizing community-led solutions, using data to inform decisions, and empowering local communities.

Our Justice principles and policies are outlined

here, <https://greens.org.au/vic/policies/justice-policy>, and I've copied the relevant items below.

Victorian Greens Justice Reinvestment policy:

4. To provide support for the establishment of community programs managed at local level to increase the community engagement of those at risk of committing crime.
5. A comprehensive, multi-disciplinary and evidence-based approach to reducing crime by addressing the underlying causes of crime and recidivism.
6. Justice reinvestment in targeted communities to create a fairer and more inclusive society and reduce crime, rather than politically motivated law and order campaigns that exploit and fuel public anxieties.

These are underpinned by the following principles, outlined in the same page link above

Principles:

4. Equality before the law can only be achieved when there is recognition of the way in which cultural, social, gender and economic structures and practices influence decision making processes and affect people's choices and opportunities.

6. Access to justice requires policies and resources that overcome social, economic and cultural inequalities to ensure equality before the law.

8. Victorian law must address the particular cultural and social needs of First Nations peoples.

9. Investing in preventing crime is more likely to result in a fairer and safer society than law and order campaigns

10. Victims of crime should receive the necessary support required to facilitate recovery.

11. Reducing access to guns in the community is essential to reducing crime.

12. Police should be focussed on maintaining a safe, peaceful and just society, be effectively trained, and have strong community links

13. Police should have adequate powers to protect the community but at the same time be accountable for the use of all powers.

14. Police should not be further militarised and militarisation that has occurred should be reversed.

15. Police should not investigate police.

16. Prison should be a last resort in the management of offenders.

Also relevant in support of justice reinvestment are the following policies:

Courts and Tribunals

10. Greater investment in dispute resolution and mediation services across Victoria.

Smart Sentencing

29. Expand and properly fund alternatives to imprisonment including community corrections, restorative justice, and diversionary programs.

30. Legislating diversion programs for young offenders.

31. Funding for Bail Support programs particularly in regional locations.

32. To uphold judicial discretion in sentencing and repeal mandatory sentencing

legislation.

33. The reintroduction of suspended sentences and home detention.

34. Detention without charge powers, including those used in counter-terrorism law, to be abolished.

36. Raise the age of criminal responsibility to at least 14 years old

Corrections and Prisons

37. Greater funding for services and staffing to support Community Corrections Orders.

Police

48. Training and support to assist all police officers and PSOs in dealing safely with difficult situations, such as those involving armed offenders, people with a mental illness and those under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

49. Training for all police officers to engage respectfully and effectively with complaints of family violence, sexual offences and child abuse.

51. To prohibit racial profiling, and the arbitrary use of racial descriptors by police or other government agencies.

54. Review public indecency offences and how they are enforced with a view to addressing discrimination against marginalised groups.