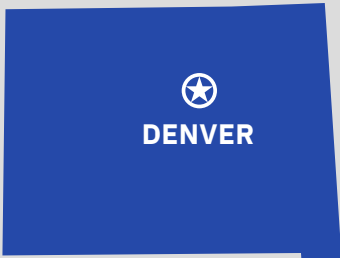


The Council of State Governments West (CSG West) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization serving western state legislatures. Through a variety of programs and services offered to legislators and legislative staff, CSG West facilitates regional cooperation, exchange of information and strengthening of legislative institutions among its 13 member states.

CSG West is one of 4 regions of the Council of State Governments, the nation's largest nonpartisan organization serving all three branches of state elected and appointed officials. CSG's regional and national structure invites focused participation from members on a more intimate, regional level while also providing a national platform to exchange ideas and an opportunity to engage with state officials of all three branches of state government.



2024 HIGHLIGHTS

COLORADO



Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes, CSG is a joint governmental agency of Colorado. State dues, which are established by the bipartisan CSG National Executive Committee, enable the organization to deliver substantive programs and services to state officials across the country. State dues are leveraged with federal grants and support from private sector partners to offer forums, trainings, in-depth research, and technical assistance. CSG, through its regional and national offices, serves all members and staff of the Colorado General Assembly.

CSG Leaders in Colorado

- [Representative Matt Soper](#) serves as co-chair of CSG West's Health and Human Services Committee
- [Senator Cathy Kipp](#) served as CSG West's Education Committee Co-chair and serves as a Colorado Senate Liaison, providing information to colleagues about CSG programs and services, and how to get involved.
- [Senator Cleave Simpson](#) serves as a CSG West Colorado Senate Liaison.
- [Representative Junie Joseph](#) serves as a CSG West House Liaison.
- [Senator Jeff Bridges](#) served on CSG National's Intergovernmental Affairs Committee.
- [Senator Rachel Zenzinger](#) served on CSG National's Interbranch Affairs Committee.

Rooted in Colorado

[Colorado Senator Henry Toll](#) founded CSG in 1933, and is the namesake of the distinguished Toll Fellowship.

Since 2000 CSG West has hosted its flagship professional development program for newer legislators - [the Western Legislative Academy](#) - in [Colorado Springs](#). This program, which is conducted in [partnership with Colorado's El Pomar Foundation](#), is designed to assist legislators within their first four years of service in becoming effective leaders and strengthening their legislative institutions.

Developing Legislative Professionals

Western Legislative Academy

The Western Legislative Academy is the organization's premier training program for Western legislators within their first four years of service.

The following member participated in the 2024 class of the Western Legislative Academy that convened December 10-13 in Colorado Springs:

- Representative Kenneth DeGraaf
- Representative Regina English
- Representative Junie Joseph
- Representative Manny Rutinel
- Representative Ty Winter

Pursuant to the program rules, Colorado's legislative leadership determine the state's participants.



Legislative Service Agency & Research Directors

Comprised of nonpartisan legislative staff directors of the West, the group provided training and the opportunity to exchange ideas.

- Elizabeth Burger, Deputy Director, Colorado Legislative Council
- Christy Chase, Deputy Director, Colorado Office of Legislative Legal Services
- Ed DeCecco, Director, Colorado Office of Legislative Legal Services
- Craig Harper, Staff Director, Joint Budget Committee



Leadership Excellence for Nonpartisan Staff

CSG West launched an online academy for the next generation of staff leadership with foundational leadership skills. Participants included:

- Anna Gerstle, School Finance & Fiscal Analyst
- Nicole Myers, Managing Senior Attorney and Assistant Team Leader
- Brita Darling, Senior Attorney



Collaborating on the issues that are critical to Colorado and the Western region



Colorado River Forum (CRF) Phoenix, Arizona, November 2024

Attending legislators:

- Representative Karen McCormick
- Representative Julie McCluskie
- Representative Matt Soper

The Colorado River Forum meeting, provided participating policymakers an opportunity to hear critical updates on the Colorado River, and was led by Nevada Assemblymember Howard Watts, co-chair of the CRF.

Legislators heard from officials of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation on the current hydrology of the Colorado River system and the progress on new operating guidelines.

Despite some impressive inflows in 2023 and 2024, and ongoing conservation measures, the overall storage levels in the system are at 36%.

Energy, water use and agriculture in the lower basin came into sharp focus during the meeting. Water banking, diverse energy sources, solar covered canals, and irrigation district practices were discussed in detail.

Arizona Senator Tim Dunn brought key stakeholders to explain the genesis, implementation and evaluation of the On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program. This overview on how to make real change in water use to achieve conservation goals included how the law was written and successfully passed, and the role of farmers, ranchers, irrigators, and the University of Arizona in putting the program to work and measuring its effectiveness.

Policy Committee Members

CSG West policy committees work on the urgent issues facing Western legislatures. They provide a forum for legislators to learn from each other and hear from recognized experts. Committees can recommend bipartisan positions on behalf of Western members. Members are appointed by their state's leaders.

Agriculture & Water

Senator Dylan Roberts
Senator Nick Hinrichsen
Senator Janice Marchman
Senator Kevin Priola
Senator Cleave Simpson
Senator Rod Pelton
Senator Byron Pelton
Representative Karen McCormick
Representative Marc Catlin
Representative Barbara McLachlan
Representative Matthew Martinez
Representative Meghan Lukens
Representative Richard Holtorf

Canada Relations

Representative Ruby Dickson
Representative Matt Soper
Representative Lindsey Daugherty
Representative Brianna Titone
Representative Rick Taggart

Education

Senator Janet Buckner
Senator Janice Marchman
Senator Rhonda Fields
Senator Chris Kolker
Senator Mark Baisley
Senator Paul Lundeen
Senator Janice Rich
Representative Barbara McLachlan
Representative Emily Sirota
Representative Mary Bradfield
Representative Mary Young
Representative Meghan Lukens
Representative Eliza Hamrick
Representative Jennifer Bacon
Representative Cathy Kipp

Energy & Environment

Senator Faith Winter
Senator Kevin Priola
Senator Lisa Cutter
Senator Tony Exum
Senator Sonya Jaquez Lewis
Senator Byron Pelton
Senator Cleave Simpson
Senator Chris Hansen
Representative Ruby Dickson
Representative Brianna Titone
Representative Cathy Kipp
Representative Elizabeth Velasco
Representative Mike Weissman
Representative Alex Valdez
Representative Ty Winter
Representative Jenny Willford

Housing

Senator Sonya Jaquez Lewis
Senator Tony Exum
Senator Julie Gonzales
Senator Dylan Roberts
Senator Byron Pelton
Senator Rod Pelton
Senator Janice Rich
Representative Meg Froelich
Representative Javier Mabrey
Representative William Lindstedt
Representative Naquetta Ricks
Representative Junie Joseph
Representative Steven Woodrow
Representative Stephanie Vigil
Representative Marc Catlin
Representative Don Wilson
Representative Tisha Mauro

Legislative Oversight

Senator Julie Gonzales
Senator Bob Gardner
Representative Marc Snyder
Representative Bob Marshall
Representative Mike Weissman
Representative Shannon Bird
Representative Lisa Frizell

Health

Senator Rhonda Fields
Senator Joann Ginal
Senator Janet Buckner
Senator Lisa Cutter
Senator Sonya Jaquez Lewis
Senator Kyle Mullica
Senator Janice Rich
Senator Jim Smallwood
Senator Perry Will
Representative Dafna Michaelson Jenet
Representative Lindsey Daugherty
Representative David Ortiz
Representative Kyle Brown
Representative Matt Soper
Representative Iman Jodeh
Representative Ron Weinberg
Representative Sheila Lieder

Public Safety

Senator Julie Gonzales
Senator Robert Rodriguez
Senator Bob Gardner
Senator Dylan Roberts
Representative Jennifer Bacon
Representative Leslie Herod
Representative Elisabeth Epps
Representative Said Sharbini
Representative Gabe Evans
Representative Mike Lynch

Committee 2023-2024 Priorities

Impact and Connections

AGRICULTURE & WATER

2023: Sustainable Western Agriculture and Water

2024: Food Security and Zero Waste, and Harnessing Artificial Intelligence to Support Farms, Food Systems and Healthy Ecosystems

CANADA RELATIONS

2023: U.S. Dam Regulation & Safety, and Hydrogen's Future in the U.S. and Canada

2024: The Importance and Recovery of the Canada-U.S. Border Following the Pandemic Border Restrictions, and Idaho's and Alberta's Efforts to Eradicate Aquatic Invasive Species

EDUCATION

2023: Decoding School Funding Formulas

2024: BARR: A Comprehensive, K-12 Strengths-Based Approach to Boosting Student Achievement, and Legislative Challenges, Successes, and Critical Issues in Education Roundtable

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

2023: Permitting Reform for Energy and Ecological Restoration Projects

2024: Extended Producer Responsibility Laws, and Securitization

HEALTH

2023: Psychedelics Research, Psilocybin Therapy, and Collaborative Care

2024: Mental Health Roundtable, and Women's Health Issues

HOUSING

2023: Housing Affordability & Homelessness in the Rapidly Growing West

2024: Housing Forum

- Housing Market Insights
- Innovation in Housing and Construction
- Tenant Protections and Housing Security
- Trends in Housing Innovations
- Boosting Housing Supply & Affordability
- State Housing Policy Initiatives

LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT WORKING GROUP

2023: The Nuts and Bolts of Legislative Oversight

2024: The Cycle of Accountability, and Child Welfare & Homelessness Case Studies

PUBLIC SAFETY

2023: Enhancing Reforms in Public Safety: Juvenile Justice

2024: Juvenile Justice, and the Fentanyl Crisis

WESTRENDS BOARD

2023: Powering the West Through a Reliable Energy Grid

2024: Gateway for Accelerated Innovation in Nuclear (GAIN) - Trending Issues in the West: Small Modular Nuclear Reactors, and Emerging Topics in Plastics & Recycling



CSG West Annual Meeting Portland, Oregon

The CSG West Annual Meeting in July was a huge success with members raving about the location, content, hospitality, and ability to have relationship-building opportunities with other Western legislators.

Attending Legislators

- Senator Cathy Kipp
- Senator Julie Gonzales
- Senator Dafna Michaelson Jenet
- Senator Robert Rodriguez
- Representative Jennifer Bacon
- Representative Junie Joseph
- Representative Mandy Lindsay
- Representative Naquetta Ricks
- Representative Manny Rutinel

Attending Legislative Staff

- Conrad Imel, Senior Attorney, Office of Legislative Legal Services
- Jamie Grant, Lead Systems Administrator, Legislative Council
- Julia Jackson, Principal Research Analyst, Legislative Council



Representative Junie Joseph led a panel discussion during the CSG West Housing Forum at the 2024 CSG West Annual Meeting.

CSG National Center for Innovation

Objective, in-depth analysis of data and policy best practices.

The CSG National Center for Innovation (COI), based in CSG's headquarters, provides policymakers across the country with objective, in-depth analysis of data and policy best practices on a variety of issues, connects policymakers with subject matter experts, provides technical assistance, and has a broad policy portfolio that supports diverse populations and policy concerns.

2024 Henry Tolls Fellow:

[Senator Dafna Michaelson Jenet](#)

2024 CSG National Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana

- [Senator Dafna Michaelson Jenet](#)
- [Representative Javier Mabrey](#)

Also present were directors from the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment and Department of Regulatory Agencies.

CSG National Center for Interstate Compacts

The CSG National Center for Interstate Compacts promotes the use of interstate compacts to meet the demand for cooperative state action. Acting as an information clearinghouse, as well as providing training and technical assistance, the Center works with states to review, revise, and create new interstate compacts designed to address multistate problems and provide alternatives to federal preemption.

CSG Justice Center

The CSG Justice Center is a major policy division within CSG with over 100 staff who work daily with and on behalf of the states on criminal justice and public safety public policy. CSG established its Justice Center to help policymakers across government answer key questions about the effectiveness of their criminal and juvenile justice systems and the impact of state investments to reduce crime and improve outcomes. Since then, the CSG Justice Center has worked in every state to further bipartisan, research-driven efforts to increase public safety and strengthen communities.

CSG Justice Center: Colorado Training and Technical Assistance

[Denver Police Department \(DPD\)](#) is the newest [Law Enforcement-Mental Health Learning Site](#).

This program is supported by the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)'s Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCPC). As a learning site, DPD serves as a peer mentor for law enforcement agencies seeking to build collaborative responses to people with mental health needs.

[Boulder County's Community Services Department's Behavioral Health Assistance Program](#) was selected as one of ten new Criminal Justice-Mental Health Learning Sites, a new peer-to-peer learning program supported by BJA which launched in 2024. BHAP is a jail reentry program that provides intensive, long-term support to people in the justice system who have severe and persistent mental illness, substance use disorders, or co-occurring disorders.

The Colorado Department of Public Safety closed out an FY21 JMHCPC Connect and Protect grant in September 2024 which enabled them to enhance training for 911 call takers and dispatchers on recognizing mental health calls, understanding dispatch options, and dispatcher self-care.

CDPS also recently released a [call for applicants](#) for a statewide learning site program modeled after the national Law Enforcement-Mental Health Learning Site program that will focus specifically on Public Service Answering Points (PSAPs) across the state.

There are ten [Stepping Up](#) counties in Colorado.

Amid growing concerns about crime and violence, the CSG Justice Center analyzed the [latest data on violent crime and accountability](#), sharing key state-specific insights with state leaders nationwide, including those in Colorado.

Colorado was selected to participate in the highly competitive [Medicaid and Corrections Policy Academy](#). The Medicaid and Corrections Policy Academy, supported by BJA, convenes senior leaders from state Medicaid, corrections, and behavioral health agencies from August 2024 to February 2025. This initiative aims to help states develop a shared vision for reentry services, strengthen partnerships, and leverage Medicaid to enhance health coverage access, care quality, and reentry outcomes.

- Colorado received approval for its 1115 Reentry Waiver in January 2025 and is now focused on implementation strategies.
- As part of these efforts, Colorado is working with jails to assess their readiness to bill Medicaid and implement federal requirements. Additionally, they are facilitating the adoption of Section 5121 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, which expands Medicaid and CHIP services for incarcerated youth.
- Notably, among the 14 states that applied, Colorado submitted the strongest application and interview, demonstrating exceptional team composition, well-defined goals, and a strong cross-agency commitment. Team members included representatives from All state folks, so Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, Colorado Department of Corrections, and Colorado Behavioral Health Administration.

CSG Justice Center Colorado Training and Technical Assistance

Colorado has nine active Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program and Second Chance Act grantees, including three new grants to the state:

- The Judiciary Courts of the State of Colorado: The Courts received an FY24 JMHCP Grant to enhance Colorado's competency court docket system. Through standardized protocols, best practice development, and comprehensive evaluation, the project seeks to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and equity of competency-related processes.
- The Colorado Department of Corrections (CDOC), Clinical Division will use FY24 SCA Crisis Stabilization and Community Reentry funding for the Community Peer Support and Early Intervention program which provides specialized case management and peer support services to adult individuals who are reentering the community with co-occurring mental health needs and moderate to high substance use needs. The goal of the program is to reduce the number of these individuals who end up in crisis and abscond, need hospitalization, receive jail time, or revocation and improve their overall reentry experience.
- The Colorado Department of Corrections (CDOC) Division of Adult Parole received FY24 SCA funding to develop a Pay for Performance Program that coordinates recovery residences for individuals with serious mental illness (SMI) for the first 6-9 months of reentry and for re-stabilization of individuals before a crisis occurs, provide behavioral health services within the residences, and provide a step-down process to successfully transition individuals from corrections, to community, and into independent living.



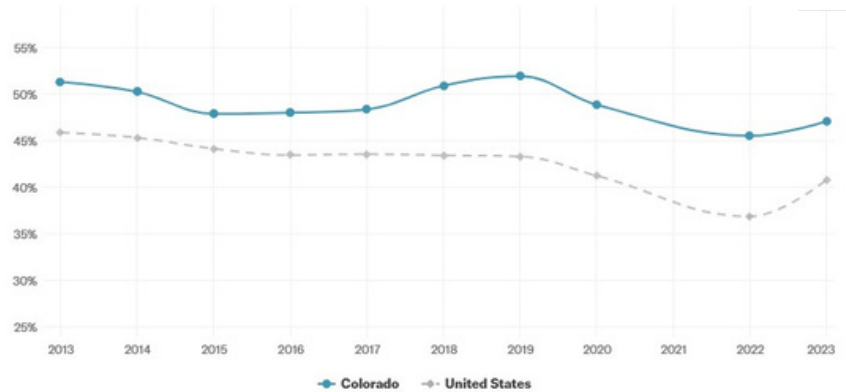


Unsolved Violent Crime in Colorado

The public is concerned about violent crime and lacks trust in the justice system’s ability to keep communities safe. ¹Nationally, less than half of violent crimes reported to police in 2023 were solved. ²While there is no one-size-fits-all approach to improving public safety, prioritizing solving more violent crime is an important and achievable step toward improving public trust and reducing crime.

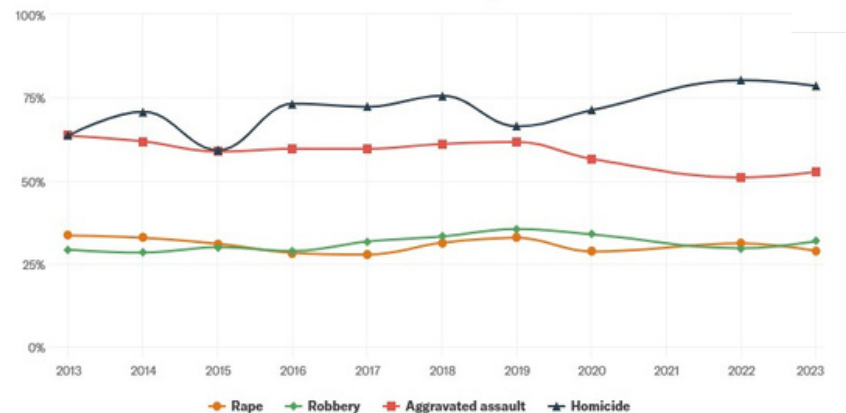
In 2023, **47 percent** of violent crimes reported to police in Colorado were solved. This is **4 percentage points lower** than the solve rate in 2013. ³

Violent crime solve rate in Colorado



This means that nearly **half of people who reported a violent crime in Colorado** in 2023 did not get closure. It also means that the justice system was not a deterrent for most people who committed violent crimes in 2023. When crime goes unsolved, it signals to people that public safety is not a priority and that the criminal justice system is unable to deliver justice for victims and their families.

Violent crime solve rate in Colorado, by offense



Addressing violence requires a collective and comprehensive approach. Strategic investments in tools, resources, and community-driven efforts that improve solve rates will result in greater public safety, happier residents, and more trust in the system. Want to know more? Visit the [Colorado page](#) in the CSG Justice Center’s “Tools for States to Address Crime” or contact Robert Hamill at rahamill@csg.org.

1. Jeffrey M. Jones, “More Americans See U.S. Crime Problem as Serious,” Gallup, November 16, 2023, accessed January 25, 2024, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/544442/americans-crime-problem-serious.aspx>.
2. 2024, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/544442/americans-crime-problem-serious.aspx>.
3. CSG Justice Center analysis of data from FBI Uniform Crime Reporting, October 2024. Ibid.

ADVANCING SAFETY AND SECOND CHANCES



The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center provides policy and research expertise to state officials in all three branches of government to improve public safety and strengthen communities. Our areas of expertise include the following:

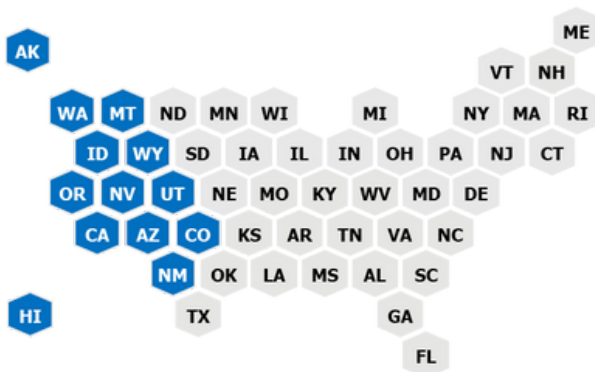
Reentry Crisis Response Supervision

Parole Juvenile Justice Medicaid

Criminal Justice Data Competency to Stand Trial Behavioral Health and Housing

CSG West Regional Highlights

Strengthening safety and accountability through collaboration with the CSG Justice Center



Utah is advancing state policy on crisis response to break the cycles of incarceration, hospitalization, and homelessness for people with behavioral health needs.

Alaska and **Colorado** are leveraging new Medicaid opportunities to enhance health services and reentry support for people with behavioral health needs.

Washington launched Reentry 2030 to scale reentry efforts statewide.

Idaho, Oregon, and the **Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes** are reducing returns to incarceration and homelessness.

New Mexico hosted a juvenile justice listening summit focused on improving outcomes for youth and families.

Wyoming participated in a data analyst in residence program to develop their corrections data capacity.

How can the CSG Justice Center support your work?

Discover insights. Check out your state's Criminal Justice Data Snapshot and connect with our team for a deeper dive.

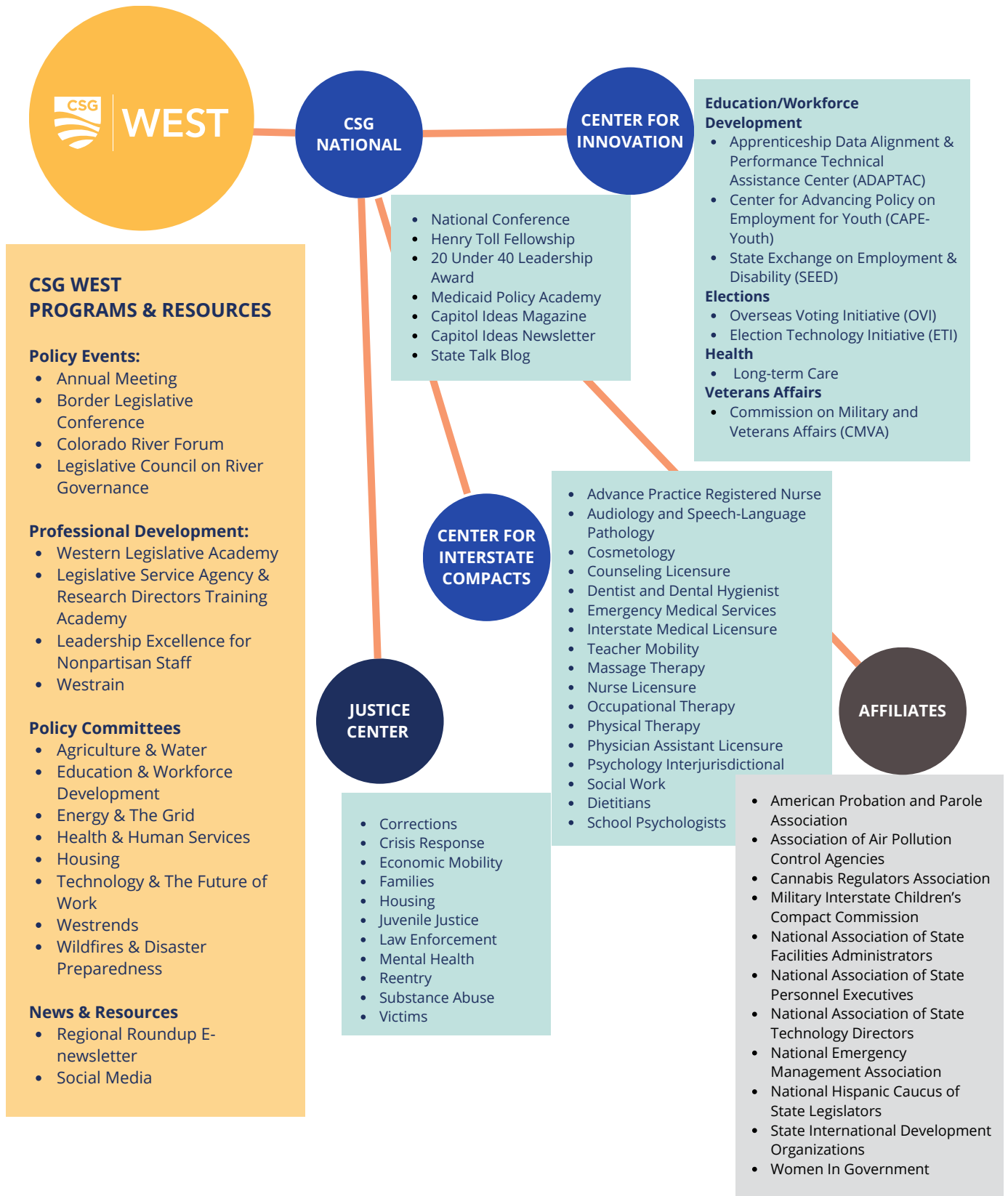
Drive policy change. Reach out to us for the data, research, and information you need to craft criminal justice policies that have a real, lasting impact.

Access tailored support. Explore one of the CSG Justice Center's many technical assistance and support programs available to states free of charge.

Get your state's Criminal Justice Data Snapshot!



CONNECTED TO A BROAD NETWORK



ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

CSG West is one of 4 regions of the Council of State Governments that form part of a national community of states. CSG's regional and national structure invites focused participation from members on a more intimate, regional level while also providing a national platform to exchange ideas and information access a myriad of national policy research, and to stay abreast of national trends and developments in Washington, D.C. impacting state governments.



CSG WEST STAFF

Serves as an extension of legislative staff through research, analysis, and providing resource connections. Please reach if we can help you with anything. You can reach us at csgw@csg.org



WESTRAIN

In-state training for legislators and staff on various professional development topics such as communication, time management, negotiation and consensus-building, media relations, conflict resolution, and ethics. Expert trainers offer nonpartisan perspectives and hands-on instruction.



CENTER FOR INNOVATION

Objective, in-depth analysis and technical assistance on the states' critical issues, including occupational licensing, workforce development, election policy, and health and human services policy.



NATIONAL CENTER FOR INTERSTATE COMPACTS

Assistance for states in the development of interstate compacts that foster multi-state problem-solving. Search the more than 200 interstate compacts in effect today by state, name, or year on the CSG website.



JUSTICE CENTER

The Justice Center combines the power of a membership association that serves state officials in all three branches of state government with policy and research expertise to develop strategies that increase public safety and strengthen communities.



SHARED STATE LEGISLATION

Effective, data-driven practices and solutions where the criminal justice system intersects with other disciplines, such as public health and education.



BOOK OF THE STATES

A state government encyclopedia featuring easy-to-read summaries, tables, and charts that serve as an invaluable reference tool that has withstood the test of time.



WESTERN LEGISLATIVE NEWS & MEDIA

The Regional Roundup e-newsletter delivers semimonthly updates amplifying the latest people, policies, and events advancing Western state governments. Sign up at csgwest.org/newsletter

Follow CSG West on:

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WEST

2025 PROGRAMS & EVENTS



CSG WEST ANNUAL MEETING

Western members engage regionally on relevant topics, connect and develop relationships with colleagues, and learn from experts. All policy committees, working groups, and leadership convene at the Annual Meeting.

September 16-19, 2025 | Jackson, Wyoming



HENRY TOLL FELLOWSHIP

One of the nation's premier leadership development programs for state government officials. Each year, the Toll Fellowship convenes 48 of the nation's top officials from all three branches of state government for an intensive five-day "leadership boot camp."

August 8-12, 2025 | Lexington, KY

COLORADO RIVER FORUM



COLORADO RIVER FORUM

Legislators connect and address pressing issues and opportunities of this vital river system to the Western region. Appointed members convene annually to exchange information and identify basin-wide strategies.

Dates TBD | Santa Fe, New Mexico



BORDER LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

Legislators from the ten U.S. and Mexico border states convene for ongoing dialogue to strengthen bilateral cooperation and develop solutions to shared challenges along the border.

Dates TBD | Sonora, Mexico



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON RIVER GOVERNANCE

Legislators from the four Columbia River basin states of Idaho, Oregon, Montana, and Washington, facilitates discussion on the everyday challenges of managing water resources in the basin. Legislative leaders appoint members.

Dates TBD | Idaho



CSG NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Brings together state-elected and appointed officials from across the country, providing a space for policymakers to engage on many policy issues facing the country.

December 9-13, 2024 | Chicago, Illinois



WESTERN LEGISLATIVE ACADEMY

An intensive professional development program designed to help newer legislators become more effective leaders and strengthen legislative institutions. Admission to the program is by application, and the selection process is competitive.

December 16-19, 2025 | Colorado Springs, CO



LEGISLATIVE EXCHANGE SERIES

Legislators and legislative staff can participate in virtual gatherings focused on training and policy issues affecting the Western region. Complimenting the work of the policy committees and programs, the series provides insightful and interactive sessions.

