



Second Chances Successes in 2023

Legislative Victories: Second Chances Laws Enacted in 2023

California

- [AB 600](#) allows judges to resentence people who were sentenced under old laws that were changed after the person was sentenced. See [here](#) to learn more.

Colorado

- [HB 23-1293](#) allows people sentenced as habitual offenders who have served at least 10 years to petition the court for resentencing.

Connecticut

- [SB 952](#) expanded youth parole eligibility to include people who were under 21 at the time of the crime and sentenced prior to 2005.

Minnesota

- [SF2902](#) was an omnibus criminal justice bill. It included several second chances provisions:
 - Abolishing life without the possibility of parole sentences for children and establishing resentencing eligibility for people serving life or long sentences who were under age 18 at the time of the crime. See [here](#) to learn more.
 - Establishing prosecutor-initiated resentencing. See [here](#) to learn more.
 - Giving some people convicted of murders that were committed by someone else the opportunity to be resentenced.
 - Changing the standards for sentence commutation to require only the governor and a majority of the Board of Pardons, rather than a unanimous vote as had previously been required.

New Mexico

- [SB64](#) ended life without parole as a sentencing option for children and gave life and long-sentenced youth who have experienced positive transformation an opportunity for release. See [here](#) to learn more.

- [SB29](#) lowered the age for geriatric parole eligibility and made other changes to geriatric and medical parole.

North Carolina

- [HB 259](#) (pages 448-449), North Carolina's budget, made several improvements to the state's medical release program, including:
 - Lowering the age for geriatric medical release from 65 to 55.
 - Extending eligibility based on terminal illness to include people who have illness likely to produce death within 9 months, rather than 6 months as had previously been required.
 - Slightly expanding the required public safety finding from "no risk" to "low risk."

U.S. Sentencing Commission Amendments to Compassionate Release Policy Statement

The U.S. Sentencing Commission amended the policy statement governing federal compassionate release. The amendments included two provisions that help position compassionate release as a potential avenue for challenging unjust sentences in federal cases:

- If someone has served 10 or more years of a sentence that is longer than they would get for the same crime today due to changes in the law after they were sentenced and there is a gross disparity between their sentence and current law, the amended policy statement allows judges to reduce their sentence.
- The amended policy statement give judges the discretion to grant compassionate release based on a reason that is not explicitly listed in the policy statement, as long as the ground is similar in gravity to grounds enumerated in the policy statement

See [here](#) to learn more.