

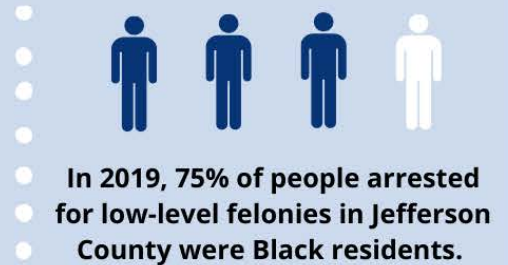


ABOUT RESET JEFFERSON COUNTY

Reset Jefferson County diverts people out of jail with a proportionate, effective, and meaningful response to low-level offending. Through Reset, participants avoid a criminal record and the court process by completing community-based program requirements. Our approach holds people accountable for their actions, strengthens public trust in the justice system, and creates opportunities for young, low-level offenders to move forward without the lifetime impediment of a felony conviction.

WHY WE NEED IT

Alabama prisons disproportionately harm Black Americans housed in deplorable conditions. Incarceration often begins with low-level offenses. Existing diversion programs are unduly burdensome for defendants - too costly and lengthy. Failure to complete programs can result in a felony record, jail time, and can lead to job loss and education disruption - systemic responses unequal to the crime. Reset participants are held accountable without the life-altering punishment of a felony conviction and the financial burden of court or program costs. Reset reduces the likelihood of future convictions and resolves cases faster with less costs.



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Reset shows our generation that not everyone looks down on them for making mistakes. Continued use of Reset would be beneficial and allow for improvement in our community.

- RESET GRADUATE

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HOW IT WORKS

In Jefferson County, more than 500 people aged 18-24 are arrested each year for low-level felonies such as drug possession and forgery. Reset serves people in this cohort with first-time arrests who accept responsibility for their actions, and rather than attending court, choose to engage in restorative justice programming with Reset staff and a community programming provider. Participants are treated with dignity, and community partners address underlying issues that led to dangerous behavior. Participants reflect on their accountability and discuss how to avoid future arrests. Reset staff also refer participants to community organizations to help address barriers such as employment and housing.

When participants complete programming, the District Attorney's Office will decline to prosecute them, and they won't have to appear in court.

MODELS OF SUCCESS

Reset Jefferson County follows the evidence-based model of the Center for Court Innovation's (CCI) successful Project Reset program in New York. CCI's five-year proven track record found that participants were significantly less likely than defendants in a comparison group to be convicted of a new crime within one year. The study also documented improved case processing times, case outcomes, and positive perceptions of the program. More than 95 percent of participants said they made the right decision by entering the program and that they would recommend Project Reset to someone in a similar situation. (Source: Project Reset: An Evaluation of Pre-Arrest Diversion Program in New York City).

PROGRESS

Enrollment in Reset began in March 2022 upon establishing the case flow for participants in conjunction with the Jefferson County Public Defender's Office, the University of Alabama at Birmingham Community Justice Programs, and the 10th Judicial Circuit Court of Alabama. Thus far, twenty-nine participants have had their felony and/or misdemeanor cases permanently dismissed by completing Reset. Six participants are actively enrolled in the program and are working towards completion. Enrollment in Reset is ongoing.



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