

Why We Conducted This Audit

We evaluated the Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI) from its inception in October 2017 through June 2022 to determine whether the Louisiana Department of Corrections (DOC) correctly calculated savings resulting from JRI. In addition, we identified and analyzed JRI expenditures made by DOC, the Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ), and the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement (LCLE). We conducted this audit in response to legislative interest. This is the first report in a series of audits on JRI.

What We Found

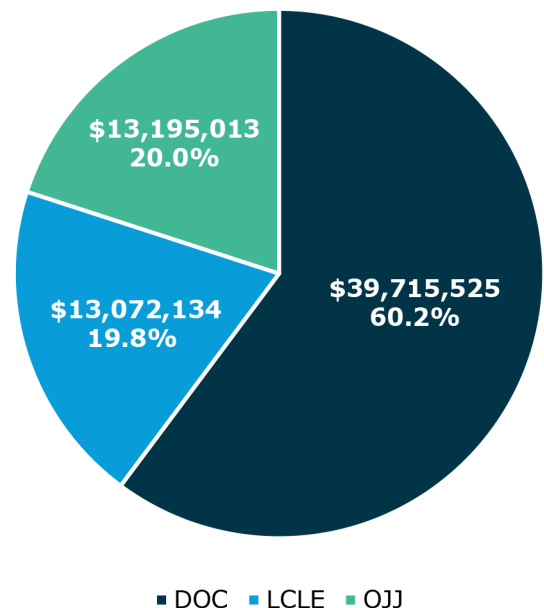
Objective 1: Did DOC correctly calculate JRI savings?

DOC made data entry errors that overstated total actual JRI savings by \$202,714, or 0.5% of the \$37,822,556 in JRI savings calculated by DOC. Developing and implementing internal controls, such as policies and procedures and a review process, would help DOC ensure accuracy and consistency when calculating JRI savings.

Objective 2: How are agencies spending JRI funds?

In Louisiana, agencies spend JRI savings on a variety of services aimed at increasing the success of reentry, reducing recidivism, diverting individuals from incarceration, and supporting victims of crime. During fiscal years 2019 through 2022, DOC, LCLE, and OJJ spent \$66.0 million in JRI funds.

**JRI Expenditures by Agency
Fiscal Years 2019 through 2022**



Source: Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using information from LaGov, DOC, OJJ, and LCLE

Justice Reinvestment Initiative

Savings and Expenditures

What We Found (Cont.)

- **During fiscal years 2019 through 2022, DOC spent \$39.7 million (72.7%) of its \$54.6 million JRI allocation on efforts to enhance reentry services and reduce recidivism. Over this same time period, DOC did not spend \$8.3 million (15.3%), so these funds were reverted back to the state general fund.** However, DOC could strengthen internal controls, such as better tracking of expenditures, around reentry investments spending to ensure spending matches approved budgets.
- **During fiscal years 2019 through 2022, LCLE spent \$13.1 million in JRI funds on a variety of services for crime victims.** In addition, it carried forward \$243,447 into fiscal year 2023 for the Capital Area Family Justice Center, and it did not spend \$121,853 of its JRI allocation for those years.
- **During fiscal years 2020 through 2022, OJJ spent \$4.5 million of JRI funds on alternatives to detention contracts, \$4.7 million on diversion programs, and \$4.0 million on its non-secure residential program.** According to OJJ, any budgeted funds that were not spent on alternatives to detention or diversion programs were moved to cover non-secure residential costs.