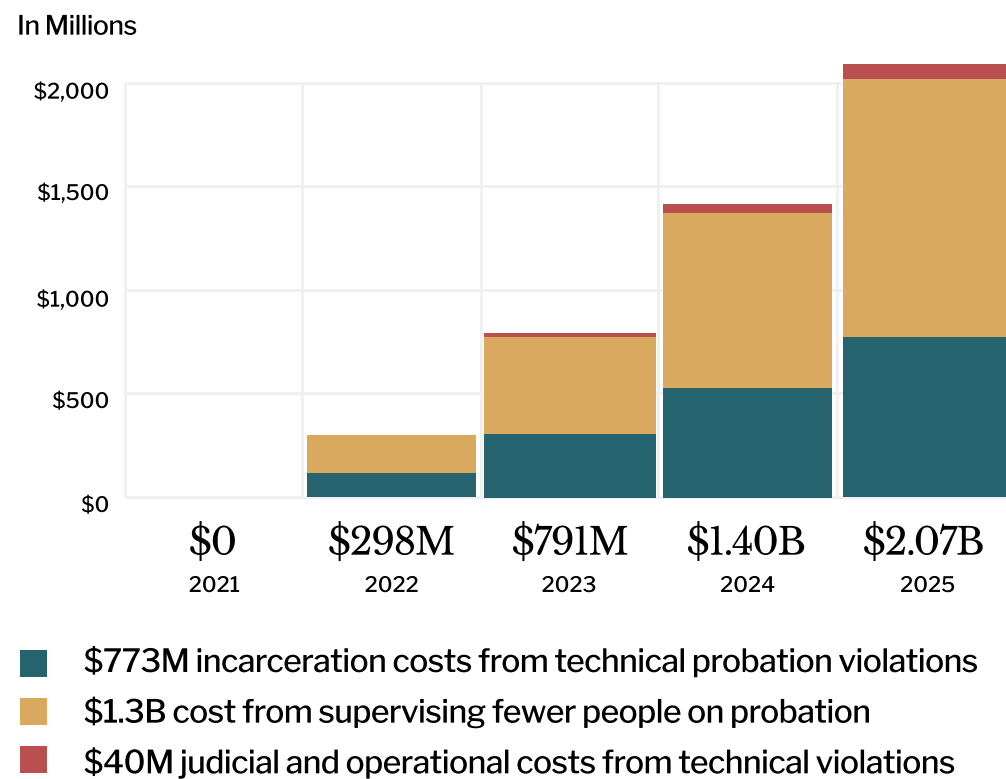


AB1950: Probation Caps for Felonies and Misdemeanors

5-year impact in California

Cumulative cost avoidance



The opportunity

Reducing probation terms from 3 years to 1 year for misdemeanors and 5 years to 2 years for felonies could amount to \$2.1B in reduced incarceration, probation, and judicial and operational costs over 5 years. Doing so could also reduce the probation population by 33%, give 24,000+ life years back, and prevent 48,000+ prison admissions due to technical probation violations.

Roughly 300,000 adults are on probation in California, with each of them costing taxpayers over \$4,400 annually. Overall, the state spends \$2 billion each year to incarcerate people for supervision violations – \$235 million of which is spent on incarcerating people for victimless, technical violations like coming home late from work.

Research shows that probation services, such as mental healthcare and addiction treatment, are most effective during the first 18 months of supervision and that providing increased supervision services earlier reduces an individual’s likelihood to recidivate.

The current recommended probation sentence in CA is 3 years for misdemeanors and 5 years for felonies, but people remain on probation for longer due to exorbitant fines and fees or violations of supervision conditions.

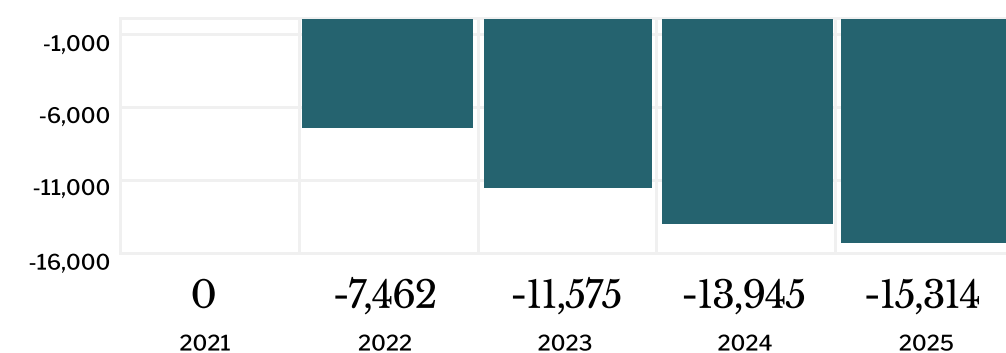
People who remain on probation for extended periods of time are less likely to be successful because even minor or technical violations of the law may result in a violation of probation resulting in more fines and longer terms of probation.

Projected population impact

48,000+
Fewer prison admissions from technical probation revocations

24,000+
Life years back

Annual prison admissions from technical probation revocations



43 states have some form of probation caps

Georgia passed a probation reform bill in 2017 to, among other things, shorten probation sentences and reduce the caseloads of probation officers who are spread thin.

In 2017, Michigan passed a package of bills to minimize punishments for “technical violations” of probation and allow judges to shorten probation time for good behavior. Since the enactment of Michigan’s reforms prison admissions for probation violations have dropped over 20% and the state is currently voting on a package of bipartisan bills to further decrease probation lengths.

South Dakota has been updating its probation system since 2014, enacting a law in 2017 that allows people convicted of lesser crimes to be discharged from probation after a year for good behavior.

Impact on probation population

