

National Crime Poll

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DO NOT CROSS

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Introduction

A new national Cicero Institute poll finds overwhelming support for accountability-driven crime and homelessness reforms. Across partisan and demographic lines, majorities back stronger sentencing for violent criminals, stricter monitoring of sex offenders, removal of lenient judges, and accountability in homelessness services.

Foreword

Americans are crying out for accountability. Across the nation, families are watching their neighborhoods decline under the weight of unchecked crime, drug abuse, and untreated mental illness. Homelessness has exploded into public view, violent criminals cycle endlessly through the courts, and too many judges seem more interested in appeasing activists than protecting the people they serve. The result is predictable: citizens feel less safe, less secure, and less confident in the institutions charged with delivering justice.

This poll confirms what many of us already knew intuitively. Voters across every political, demographic, and regional line are demanding stronger sentencing for violent offenders, stricter monitoring of sex offenders, removal of judges who show repeated leniency, and accountability in homelessness programs. They are not clamoring for excuses, but for order. They do not want to hear about why the government cannot deliver, but how it will.

The public's expectations are clear. They want drug dealers punished more severely when they prey on vulnerable people near homeless service centers. They want new technology and electronic monitoring to close dangerous gaps in tracking transient sex offenders. They want compassion paired with responsibility in homelessness programs, help for those who are willing to get sober, get healthy, and get back on their feet, but no tolerance for encampments that destroy public spaces and endanger families.

On crime, voters' patience with institutional failure has expired. When mentally ill offenders commit aggravated murder, Americans overwhelmingly support sentences of life in prison or the death penalty. When states repeatedly release violent criminals back onto the streets, they expect federal investigations. When judges demonstrate a pattern of disregard for public safety, voters believe they should be removed from the bench. These are not fringe views; they represent the center of American opinion today.

What we see here is not a thirst for cruelty, but a yearning for justice. Americans want accountability because they know compassion without order collapses into chaos. They understand that responsibility and opportunity must go hand in hand. And they are calling on leaders to have the courage to enforce laws, protect communities, and demand more from the very institutions that too often excuse failure.

The Cicero Institute has long argued that accountability is the foundation of justice. This poll provides the most substantial evidence yet that the American people agree. It is, in effect, a mandate not only for policymakers in Washington but also for governors, legislators, judges, and local officials across the country. Citizens are telling us that the status quo is unacceptable. They want a justice system that delivers consequences, not excuses, and safety, not slogans.

The voice of the people could not be more unmistakable: accountability is not optional. It is the price of public trust, the precondition of opportunity, and the first duty of government. Leaders ignore it at their peril.

— Stefani E. Buhajla

Senior Director of Communications, The Cicero Institute



SECTION ONE

Crime and Disorder in Our Cities

Summary

Drug trafficking near homeless service centers draws strong support for harsher penalties. Often, those living on the streets are battling addiction, sometimes on multiple fronts. They deserve safe places to receive services and to get well where drug traffickers aren't exploiting their weakness.

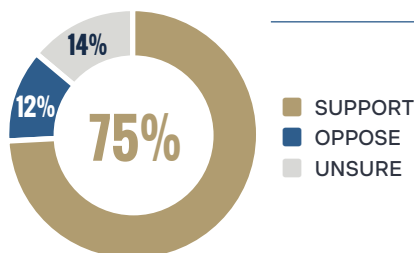
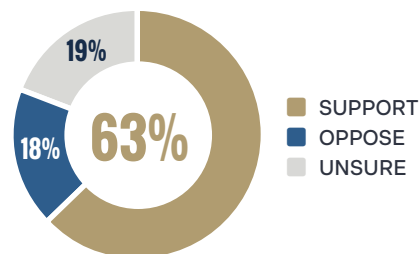
There is overwhelming support for better technology and electronic monitoring to track transient sex offenders. In some states, the number of transients who appear on the sex offender registry exceeds 50 percent or more.

TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ Drug dealers deserve stiffer penalties when they prey on vulnerable homeless individuals near the service centers that are trying to help.
- ▶ The newest tech and monitoring are needed to close dangerous gaps in tracking transient sex offenders who fly under the radar of local law enforcement.

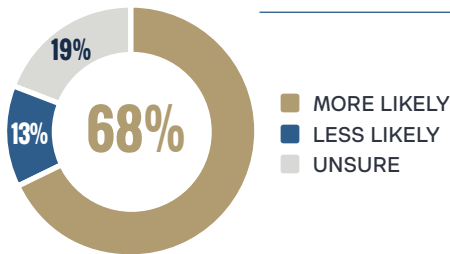
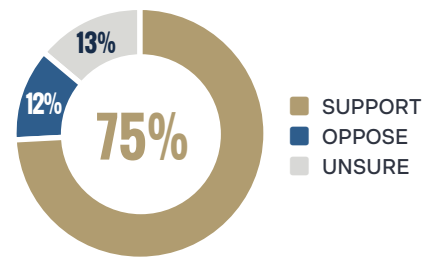
TOPLINES

Would you support or oppose increasing criminal penalties for drug trafficking around homeless charity facilities?



Would you support giving law enforcement better technology to track transient sex offenders?

Would you support electronically monitoring the whereabouts of transient sex offenders?



If you knew that more than half of all transients are sex offenders, would you be more likely or less likely to support electronic monitoring for this population?

SECTION TWO

Violent Crime and Judicial Reform

Summary

Public concern about rising violent crime is high. Voters support requiring court-ordered treatment for mentally ill offenders and making it easier to commit individuals with violent tendencies.

Perhaps one of the most striking revelations of this poll is the response to aggravated murder sentencing for the mentally ill, with 82% supporting either the death penalty or life in prison.

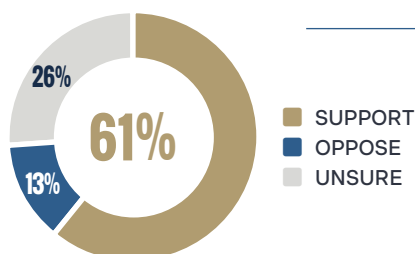
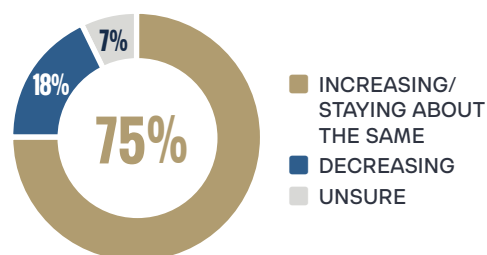
Strong support exists for automatic federal investigations into states for repeat-release cases and for removing judges with patterns of leniency. These results reflect demand for accountability across institutions while preserving justice.

TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ Violent crime is rising, and citizens demand stronger accountability paired with effective treatment for dangerous offenders.
- ▶ Forced commitment and treatment, not neglect, is the responsible path for the mentally ill who pose risks.
- ▶ 82% support either the death penalty or life in prison in cases where mentally ill individuals are convicted of aggravated murder.
- ▶ When repeat violent offenders are allowed to continually cycle through the justice system, federal investigations and judicial impeachment are necessary.

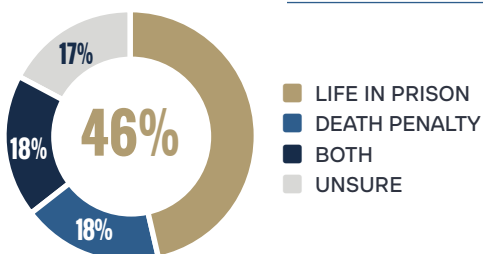
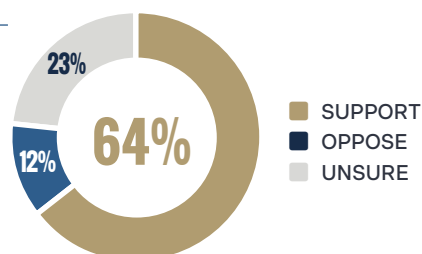
TOPLINES

Is violent crime in America increasing, decreasing, or staying about the same?



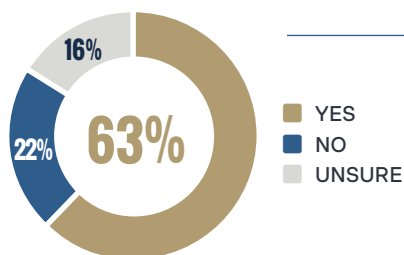
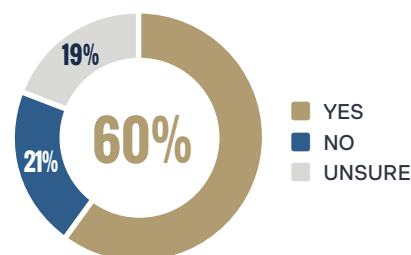
Should habitual criminals with a history of mental illness receive court-ordered treatment and stabilization?

Would you support making it easier to commit individuals with violent tendencies to mental health facilities?



If a person with a mental illness is convicted of aggravated murder, what sentences should be on the table: life in prison, the death penalty, both, or none of the above?

Should states that have a history of releasing repeat violent criminals be subject to automatic federal investigations?



Should judges with a pattern of being too lenient on repeat violent criminals be removed from the bench?

SECTION THREE

Compassion and Accountability

Summary

Voters want conditions placed on taxpayer-funded housing benefits that include participation in sobriety programs, mental health treatment, and job training.

The public prefers compassion balanced with order when it comes to the general homeless population. They reject unmanaged encampments in public spaces, preferring shelter placement. When shelters are unavailable, they are open to temporary structured camping zones with services and security, so long as they are located away from residential and business areas.

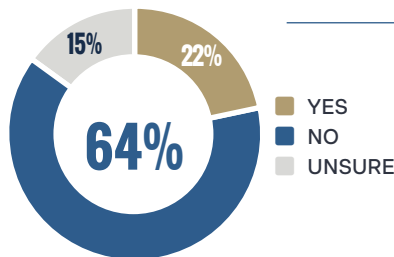
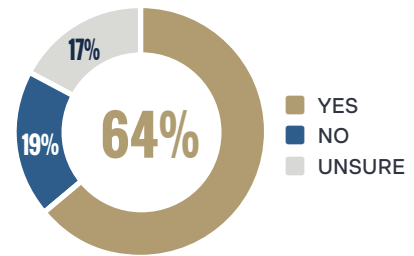
Voters strongly support accountability-based juvenile criminal justice reforms. Majorities favor conditional probation reductions tied to education or treatment for low-risk, nonviolent juvenile offenders.

TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ Public benefits must come with shared responsibility. If an individual expects to participate in taxpayer-funded housing programs, he or she should do their part to get to a place where they can leave the program and live independently.
- ▶ Sidewalks and parks aren't living quarters; they're shared public spaces for all to enjoy.
- ▶ Compassion without order fails everyone—shelters paired with accountability, not sidewalks covered with tents and waste, are the solution.
- ▶ When shelters are unavailable or for those who are shelter-resistant, safe, structured, sanitary camping zones are better than crime-ridden street camps.
- ▶ Accountability and opportunity go hand in hand. Reducing the length of probation should be a reward for kids who work hard to turn their lives around and become upstanding citizens.

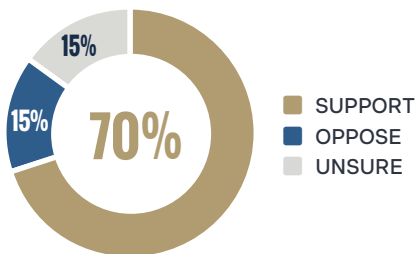
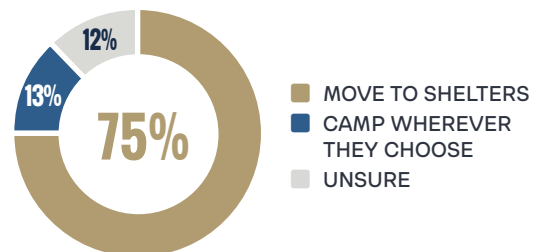
TOPLINES

Should homeless individuals be required to participate in addiction and mental health treatment and job training programs as a condition of receiving taxpayer-funded housing?



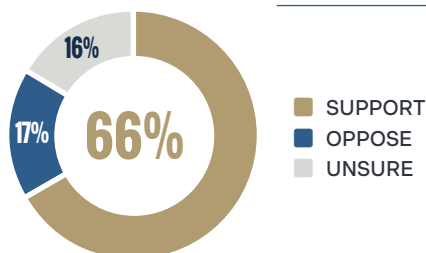
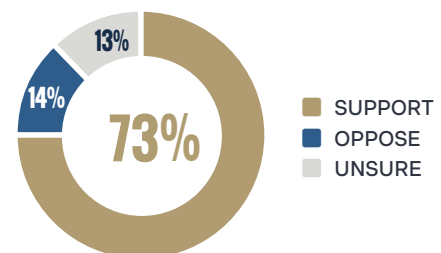
Do you believe homeless individuals should be allowed to camp on public property?

Is it more compassionate to allow homeless individuals to camp wherever they choose or to move them to shelters?



When shelters are unavailable, would you support creating temporary camping areas with water, sanitation, and police services that are away from residential and business areas?

Would you support allowing low-risk juveniles on probation to have shorter probation terms if they complete education or job training programs?



Would you support allowing low-risk juveniles on probation to have shorter probation terms if they are actively pursuing mental health counseling or drug treatment programs?

Conclusion

The results of the Cicero National Crime Poll cut through partisan spin and reveal a simple truth: Americans are united in their demand for accountability. Whether on crime, homelessness, or juvenile justice, voters are sending an unmistakable message. They expect leaders to protect families, enforce the law, and uphold standards of responsibility in every public institution.

This is not a momentary frustration but a fundamental shift in public expectations. Citizens are no longer willing to accept a justice system that excuses repeat violence, courts that prioritize ideology over safety, or policies that enable chaos on the streets. They want institutions that do their job. They want consequences for those who exploit weakness, safeguards against those who endanger others, and opportunities for those who are willing to change.

The Cicero Institute's mission has always been to advance reforms that pair compassion with responsibility and freedom with accountability. These findings reinforce that such reforms are not only good policy but also good politics. Leaders who ignore this reality risk losing the confidence of the very people they serve.

The message from voters is clear: accountability is not an option. It is the mandate.

Those who deliver it will restore trust, order, and opportunity in American life.



METHODOLOGY

Results for this poll were collected using a sampling frame that gathered responses from 2,102 likely voters during live calls, SMS messages, online panels, and automated telephone interviews.

The survey was conducted September 20–25, 2025. The margin of sampling error is ± 2.18 percentage points. The margin of sampling error may be higher or lower for subgroups. Results presented may not always appear to total 100 percent due to rounding.

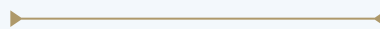
Data were post-stratified using weighted demographic information from the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplement and the state election authorities.

Demographic information for actual voters in past elections was used to construct sample target weights.

This poll was directed by Stefani Buhajla in partnership with Cor Strategies, LLC. Cicero Institute paid for all costs associated with this survey.

ABOUT THE CICERO INSTITUTE

The Cicero Institute is a nonpartisan public policy think tank founded to advance bold reforms that improve public safety, increase accountability, and expand opportunity. Cicero's polling program tracks the views of Americans nationwide on critical issues.



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