

Summary of Legislation

2025



Criminal Justice, Corrections, and Courts

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The Colorado General Assembly passed a variety of criminal justice, corrections, and court-related bills in 2025. The new laws made changes to forensic science, law enforcement, judges and municipal courts, prison policies, and immigration.

Forensic Science

Colorado lawmakers introduced two bills about the state's DNA testing backlog in sexual assault cases, primarily caused by staffing shortages and the fallout from a scandal involving a former Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) forensic scientist.

Employee Misconduct

[House Bill 25-1275](#) establishes a process within the CBI and court system to address intentional and wrongful misconduct by crime laboratory workers. The bill specifically:

- creates a duty to report wrongful actions by crime lab employees;
- requires the crime lab director to investigate such actions; and
- makes a process for individuals to seek post-conviction relief if their case is impacted.

Rape Test Kit Backlogs

[Senate Bill 25-304](#) aims to reduce the number of days it takes to process rape kit backlogs by setting up a 60-day goal. The bill also creates the Colorado Sexual Assault Forensic Medical Evidence Review Board (board) under the purview of the Attorney General's Office. The board is tasked with reviewing and evaluating current protocols, standards, and training practices about the state's responses to sexual crimes. Victims must also be notified every three months about case status, along with additional reporting requirements to the General Assembly.

Law Enforcement

The General Assembly made changes to the peace officer conduct database and created a mechanism to implement a ballot measure about law enforcement funding.

Peace Officer Conduct Database

[House Bill 25-1136](#) updates what information must be included in the online database maintained by the Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) Board. The database provides public access to details on officer conduct, certification, training compliance, and employment status. The bill gives the POST board the authority to correct errors in

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the database and lets peace officers appeal their inclusion in it.

Implementation of Proposition 310

[Senate Bill 25-310](#) honors the intent of Proposition 310, passed by voters last year, to invest in new resources for the state's police agencies. The bill creates a funding mechanism for the distribution of the \$350 million for law enforcement officer recruitment, retention, and training. The bill also invests \$500 million from the General Fund reserve into the state retirement plan, then redirects future interest savings to a new Peace Officer Training and Support Fund to provide annual local police department funding. Lastly, the bill implements the death benefit required in the ballot measure and transfers money to the associated fund.

Judges

In response to concerns about a statewide shortage of judges, lawmakers passed [Senate Bill 25-024](#), adding 15 new judicial positions. Testimony revealed that overworked judges and backed-up dockets were straining the court system, making it difficult to schedule and hear cases in a reasonable timeframe. The bill also allocates funds for courts to add public defenders, deputy district attorneys, and other related personnel.

Municipal Courts

Two bills attempted to align and regulate municipal court practices.

Failure-to-Appear

Testimony showed that municipal courts across Colorado had wide discretion in penalizing individuals who fail to appear (FTA) for a hearing. [Senate Bill 25-062](#) addresses these discrepancies by prohibiting FTAs from being used as grounds for criminal charges or jail time in any municipal court. The bill, however, does not prevent a municipal court judge from issuing a bench warrant for FTA or considering it when setting a bond at a later hearing. Home rule cities cannot override these restrictions.

Legal Standards

[House Bill 25-1147](#) sought to bring municipal courts more in line with state court standards by addressing sentencing disparities, clarifying access to court-appointed counsel, and modifying exemption rules for livestreamed proceedings. The Governor ultimately vetoed the bill citing home rule constitutional issues.

Corrections

State legislators reviewed Colorado Department of Corrections (CDOC) policies about visitation and co-pays for medical care.

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Visitation

In recent years, incarcerated people in Colorado have been denied visitation rights for breaking prison rules. [House Bill 25-1013](#) changes this practice and establishes social visitation as a right, rather than a privilege, for a person confined in a correctional facility. Visitation includes contact and non-contact visits, family time visits, telephone calls, and video visitation.

The CDOC may still impose certain restrictions and exceptions, but is not allowed to restrict visitation beyond what is necessary for routine facility operations or safety purposes. The bill also permits individuals to file a grievance with the CDOC if an inmate is denied social visitation.

Co-Pays for Medical Care

Lawmakers learned that incarcerated individuals across the United States often face medical fees they cannot afford. In Colorado, the law allows the CDOC to charge inmates a copay for health services, with a maximum fee of \$5.

[House Bill 24-1026](#) aimed to ban copayments and late fees for prison medical services, but the Governor vetoed it, preferring that such decisions be made by CDOC. He later issued an executive order for the department to review and update its policy and improve data collection on fees and missed appointments.

Immigration

Colorado legislators addressed immigrations and courts in [Senate Bill 25-276](#). The bill limits local collaboration with federal immigration enforcement and bolsters additional protections as follows:

- eliminates United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) holds in local jails after bond is posted;
- reaffirms the constitutional right to a fair and just legal process of all residents regardless of immigration status;
- expands the ability of the court to vacate minor convictions, which can be used to justify deportation;
- requires judicial warrants for federal immigration agents to enter nonpublic areas of jails, detention centers, and other identified public places;
- strengthens data privacy for immigrants by preventing local governments, courts, and schools from sharing certain personal information; and,
- repeals affidavit requirements for tuition or public identification to reduce risk of discriminatory practices.