

# POLICY PLATFORM

# POLICING, SENTENCING, BAIL AND PRE-TRIAL DETENTION REFORM

## PROGRESSIVE VALUE

Comprehensive reform of policing, sentencing, bail, and pre-trial detention systems that ensures justice is unbiased, fair, and rooted in the presumption of innocence.

## ROOTED IN JUDAISM

Jewish law emphasizes the importance of fair and impartial judges, who must assume a person is innocent until proven guilty. The system recognizes the significance of motive in determining punishment, offering refuge for those guilty of manslaughter without ill intent. Rather than relying on imprisonment, Torah provides various paths to atonement and reintegration into society, ensuring that even those who have been expelled can find a way to return. This approach reflects a broader commitment to justice, where punishment is balanced with opportunities for repentance and restoration, underscoring the value of mercy and second chances in a just society.

## REFLECTED IN ZIONISM

As a liberation movement, Zionism demands us to work for the liberation of all people. Where we know policies have a disparate impact on one group of people we know there is not liberation or freedom. And where we know that one mistake or error of judgment can result in an entire life without freedom — even after justice has been served — we know that Jewish and Zionist values are not reflected.

## POSITION STATEMENTS

- **We recognize that bias in policing leads to an assumption of guilt or innocence based on factors outside of neutral judging, including an individual's race, class, ethnicity, or religion.**
- We recognize that our pre-trial systems do not assume everyone is innocent, or even equally innocent, until proven guilty. We recognize that by creating a cost-based system, those with more resources are able to continue to live as though they are innocent until their trial, while those with fewer means are subject to the treatment of the guilty before they have stood trial.
- **We also recognize that when someone is incarcerated they often lose their job, their housing, and their social networks. When someone faces pre-trial detention, even if they are proven innocent, they have been punished merely for having been accused. When someone is convicted of a crime and serves time in prison, they more-often-than-not return to society with fewer supports and more barriers.**
- We support programs that remove bias from policing work, including training, body cameras, regular audits, changes to use-of-force standards that limit dangerous holds and require reporting of incidents in which physical force was used, and a high standard for recertification of law enforcement officers.
- **We stand against excessive use of force and police brutality, which not only harms the individual but creates lasting distrust between communities and police.**
- We support the end to qualified immunity, which creates a barrier to culture change within police forces and makes it harder to hold officers accountable when they act with bias and in turn makes it harder to remove bias from policing culture.
- **As a group that is often targeted by hate crimes and relies on public safety officers to investigate and protect, we see an important role for police. We also have no tolerance for police who bring bias into their work.**
- We support sentencing reform. We know that sentencing are biased and we must undo the current system which punishes some people very differently than others.
- **We support reforms to the pre-trial system, and support a system which presumes innocence and avoids punitive measures until someone has stood trial, regardless of their economic resources.**
- We oppose the use of private prisons, which have been proven repeatedly to have more biased outcomes and less accountability than prisons operated within the public sector.
- **We support investments in public defenders and reforms which ensure income is not a barrier to a fair defense or to returning to society.**
- We support sentencing reforms and restorative justice, which allow someone who has committed a crime to engage in teshuvah, repentance and returning, which often involves giving back to a harmed community through community supervision instead of incarceration.