

Don't Overlook First Step Act Pilot Programs

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[In this article](#), Addy Schmitt and Ian Herbert discuss two provisions of the First Step Act, a comprehensive criminal justice reform bill signed into law in December 2018. The first is a pilot program that will allow the Bureau of Prisons to release to home confinement inmates over 60 years old who have served at least two-thirds of their sentences. The second is a recidivism reduction program that will allow prisoners to earn credit worth up to one-third of their sentences for participation in programming designed to reduce recidivism.

"It is difficult to know today how these two programs will be implemented and therefore precisely what impact they will have. However, in theory, both the elderly release program and the recidivism reduction program hold the potential to drastically reduce sentences (by up to one-third) for large swaths of the current prison population. Eligible prisoners and the lawyers who represent them should take immediate action to begin reducing the time they spend in prison," the authors wrote.