

Summary of National Survey of States' Earned and Good Time Earning Options, Focusing on States That Have Few Offense-Based Exclusions

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Introduction

This report presents a summary of states' earned and good time options, focusing on states that have minimal offense-based exclusions. Although the precise definitions and usage of the terms vary by state, in general, "good time" and "earned time" (or "merit time") credit structures allow incarcerated people to earn time off their sentences through good behavior and participation in programming. These structures are vital to safety and well-being inside and outside of prisons, as research shows that when incarcerated people participate in treatment and programming, the result is improved safety for incarcerated people and staff, as well as for members of the community when people are released.¹

Nonetheless, laws that restrict sentence credits were popularized in the 1980s and 1990s to ensure that people, particularly those convicted of violent offenses, served most of their sentences in prison before becoming eligible for release.² Through the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (the 1994 Crime Bill), the federal government expanded these limits by offering grants to states that required people convicted of violent offenses to serve at least 85 percent of their sentences.³ More than 40 states passed these so-called "truth in sentencing" policies from 1984 to 1999.⁴ In some states, these laws more than doubled people's expected time in prison.⁵

These restrictions arose from a narrative that people convicted of violent offenses were either unworthy or incapable of change through good behavior. This is untrue.⁶ Research and people's lived experiences show that most people convicted of violent offenses can and do change, have some of the lowest recidivism rates, and contribute positively to their communities after release.⁷

Instead, by limiting opportunities for early release by offense, states remove a key incentive for incarcerated people to engage in programs that support personal growth, education, and skill-building, necessary goals for people convicted of all offenses, including violent offenses. Indeed, national studies have shown that removing the incentive of good and/or earned time has an impact on people, during and after incarceration.⁸ In Georgia, for example, when incarcerated people lost the possibility of early release through a 1998 state policy change that required people convicted of 20 enumerated offenses to serve 90 percent of their sentences before parole eligibility—rather than the roughly 33 percent that must be served for other convictions—disciplinary infractions rose and program completion declined.⁹ Similarly, when Arizona eliminated its early-release incentives, prison rule violations rose sharply, and educational enrollment dropped.¹⁰ In both states, post-release recidivism rates increased as well.¹¹

Fortunately for safety in and out of prisons, some states, both blue and red, either never removed eligibility for earned or good time credits, did so partially, or opened up eligibility based on crime type over time. This report identifies the states—Alabama, Alaska, California, Delaware, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming—that allow people convicted of violent offenses to earn more than 15 percent off their sentences, the percentage set by "truth in sentencing" restrictions in the 1990s. This report groups states into three structural categories:

- high-earning, low-exclusion model states;
- high- to medium-earning states with some exclusions; and

- hybrid or tiered systems in which people convicted of some violent offenses are eligible for credit.

Accompanying this report as an appendix is a chart containing a summary and links to all 50 states' good time and earned time statutes, noting offense-based exclusions. Note that good time systems usually exclude people serving life sentences because there is no set number of days or years from which to deduct time. This exclusion flows from the type of sentence, not the specific offense.

Model Framework: High-Earning, Low-Exclusion

These states offer the most expansive time credit-earning opportunities in the United States, significantly exceeding the 15 percent federal suggested cap on sentence reductions and applying these earnings broadly.

West Virginia

West Virginia administers one of the most expansive good-time systems in the country.¹² People earn one day of good time for every day served, producing a 50 percent reduction in nearly all cases.¹³ This day-for-day credit applies uniformly to people convicted of all offenses, excluding only people serving life sentences, people under mandatory supervision for sex offenses, and people designated as youth adult offenders housed in specialized facilities serving sentences of six months to two years.¹⁴ All other incarcerated people, including those convicted of serious violent crimes, remain fully eligible. West Virginia supplements its baseline framework with up to 90 days of additional credit for successful completion of academic or vocational programs, reinforcing the state's strong incentive structure.¹⁵

Wyoming

In Wyoming, good-time credits accrue at a maximum of 15 days per calendar month, with no offense-based exclusions or any mandatory-minimum restrictions that limit the effect of credit accrual.¹⁶ People serving life sentences are excluded.¹⁷ Wyoming's broad eligibility rules and high earning rate make it one of the country's most expansive credit systems.

California

After passing voter-approved Proposition 57 in 2016, California now also provides an expansive credit system.¹⁸ People convicted of violent offenses earn 33 percent conduct credit—one day of credit for every three days served—applied to either the sentence itself (for determinate terms) or the minimum eligible parole date (for indeterminate terms).¹⁹ Except for people sentenced to life without parole or death, people convicted of violent felonies and people convicted of most non-life sexual offenses remain eligible for the full 33 percent conduct-credit rate and all program-based credits.²⁰

California supplements this baseline with up to a 50 percent reduction in sentence through an extensive program credit framework that applies to people of all conviction backgrounds, except those serving life without parole sentences or those on death row.²¹

High- to Medium-Earning with Some Exclusions

These states offer anywhere from 23 percent up to 66 percent off sentences (or, in the case of Utah, up to eight months total), but they exclude more offenses than the high-earning, low-exclusion category. However, all of the states listed allow some people with violent convictions to earn more than 15 percent off their sentences. The states are ordered below from most generous earning potential to least.

Maryland

Maryland provides a baseline of five days per month of good-conduct credit for people convicted of violent offenses, with additional opportunities to earn program-based credits that can significantly raise the monthly total.²² People convicted of violent crimes other than those serving life sentences may earn up to 20 days per month for program-based credits, equivalent to a 65 percent annual reduction. Only specific sex crimes are excluded from credit eligibility. These credits accumulate through educational programming, work assignments in institutional industries or facility operations, and treatment participation.

Nebraska

Nebraska provides six months of good time for each year of incarceration, for a 50 percent reduction, with no carveouts by offense.²³ However, the Nebraska Supreme Court has declared that people who are serving mandatory minimum sentences must serve this minimum before good time is applied to the remainder of their sentences, resulting in them serving more than 50 percent.²⁴ Some violent crimes, such as murder, kidnapping, sexual assault, and weapons offenses are subject to these mandatory minimums.²⁵ Other violent crimes, such as manslaughter and robbery, are not. Nebraska's high earning thus is applicable to some violent offenses but not others. Even those who must serve the minimum before earning at a 50 percent rate, though, will see reductions of their sentences in excess of 15 percent.²⁶

Massachusetts

Massachusetts authorizes up to 15 days per month of earned-time credit.²⁷ The total reduction is capped at 35 percent of a person's minimum sentence.²⁸ All incarcerated people, including those convicted of violent offenses, are eligible to earn time.²⁹ This requirement reflects Justice Reinvestment Initiative reforms effective in 2019, which expanded access to earned-time categories and increased the monthly maximum to its current level.³⁰

Rhode Island

In Rhode Island, most incarcerated people receive 10 days per month of good-conduct credit, with an additional five days per month for active program participation.³¹ The state supplements these reductions with up to 30 days of credit for program completion and two days per month for work in institutional industries, including manufacturing, food service, and facility maintenance.³² A separate meritorious credit category awards up to three days per month, capped at 36 days per year, for exceptional performance, leadership roles, crisis response, or other forms of outstanding institutional conduct.³³

For the most part, Rhode Island does not impose broad offense-based exclusions. People convicted of the majority of crimes, including those classified as violent, are eligible for monthly conduct, program participation, and work credits. When applied together, these overlapping categories allow people convicted of violent offenses to earn substantial reductions, depending on participation and institutional performance.

Delaware

Delaware offers two to three days of good time per month (three days after someone has served 365 days), plus up to 10 days per month for satisfactory participation in education, rehabilitation, work, or other programs designated by the commissioner.³⁴ Delaware does not specifically exclude any violent offense from good time, although there are some exceptions that may include some people convicted of violent offenses. These exclusions are life sentences and sentences imposed under Delaware's "habitual felony offender" law—which requires lengthy mandatory sentences for people with two prior violent felony convictions or three prior felony convictions of any type—and people whom a judge sentenced to the maximum sentence within a range that must be served in state prison.³⁵

Alaska

Alaska authorizes good time deductions of one-third off a prison term, with the following exclusions: people serving a mandatory 99-year prison term, people sentenced to a Class A felony or an unclassified felony (murder, attempted murder, solicitation for murder, kidnapping, or misconduct involving a controlled substance in the first degree), and sexual felonies.³⁶ All other convictions, including violent convictions, are eligible for the one-third deduction.

Maine

Maine offers up to nine days off a prison sentence based on a combination of good conduct and program participation for most violent crimes.³⁷ Everyone can earn at this rate, except for people convicted of murder, various sex offenses and crimes against family members, kidnapping, and indecent sex offenses, who are able to earn just five days off per month for good behavior.³⁸ This leaves many common violent crimes—including robberies and assaults—earning at the higher rate.

Nevada

Effective in 2025, Nevada changed its good-time laws to require 25 percent off sentences for people who comply with programming instead of a more robust 20 days per month, affecting people who committed crimes before January 1, 2025.³⁹ The 25 percent is taken off the minimum sentence for nonviolent offenses and the maximum sentence for offenses involving the use or threatened use of force against a person and felony-level sex offenses.⁴⁰

Vermont

Vermont authorizes incarcerated people to reduce their sentences by seven days per month, approximately 23 percent of a sentence.⁴¹ This applies to people convicted of violent offenses, subject only to a limited set of statutory exclusions for the most severe crimes.⁴² Other violent offenses remain eligible.

North Dakota

North Dakota authorizes five days per month of good-time credit for compliant behavior.⁴³ Additional time is available for exceptional performance or heroic acts, up to two days per month.⁴⁴ Together, people can earn seven days per month, or 84 days annually, equivalent to a reduction of approximately 19–23 percent of a typical violent-offense sentence.

Eligibility for earned time extends to some violent offenses, including assault.⁴⁵

Tiered or Hybrid Credit Systems That Include Violent Offenses

These states differ from percentage-based or monthly systems because they classify people into tiers, program-based categories, or offense-based groups in which people convicted of violent offenses may fall into credit brackets that yield reductions greater than 15 percent. Their structures are more complex, often blending statutory definitions, department of corrections rules, and program-based incentives. Violent-offense eligibility depends on how an offense is categorized within these tiered structures, which can create significant credit-earning opportunities even for serious offenses.

Indiana

Indiana's credit-class structure is one of the country's most generous earned-time frameworks available to people convicted of violent offenses. People in "credit class" A earn day-for-day conduct credit, reducing their sentences by as much as 50 percent, while those in Class B (most violent offenses, including murder, are in this category) earn one day of credit for every three days served, a 33 percent reduction.⁴⁶

Indiana supplements these baseline credits with educational-credit systems and substantial vocational, substance use treatment, and cognitive-behavioral program credits, typically worth three to six months each, which accumulate alongside conduct credits.

Alabama

Alabama awards good time at varying rates depending on assignment into classes, determined by crime of conviction and assignments and behavior within the prison system.⁴⁷ Some people cannot earn time off at all, for example if they are convicted of a Class A felony, caused the death of another by means of a deadly weapon, or received a sentence of 15 years or more.⁴⁸ Below that threshold, people convicted of violent offenses may earn 15 days off their sentences for 30 days served if they earn the Class II designation through working at jobs under the supervision of correctional employees.⁴⁹

Washington

Washington administers a percentage-based "earned release time" framework under which people convicted of some violent offenses may reduce their sentences by up to 33 percent.⁵⁰ State law limits earned-time accrual to 10 percent for people convicted of "serious violent offenses," but people whose offense lands on a shorter statutory list (including robbery, sex offenses, domestic violence, and certain drug crimes) can earn up to one-third off their sentence.⁵¹

North Carolina

North Carolina's corrections department offers reductions of four to nine days per month off a person's maximum sentence, depending on the intensity of programming in which the person engages.⁵² A person engaging in "high-intensity or high-skilled" programming at least six hours per day can earn nine days a month off their maximum sentence, or 30 percent off. The only exclusions are for people serving time for a driving while intoxicated and people serving life sentences.

Conclusion

Together, these 18 states illustrate the broad range of earned-time structures that remain open to people convicted of most offenses. Their approaches span high-percentage reductions, monthly accrual systems, tiered classifications, and blended program-based models, yet all provide meaningful opportunities for eligible people to reduce their sentences by more than 15 percent.

These reductions serve multiple statutory and policy goals. They incentivize program participation, promote institutional safety, reduce recidivism through engagement in evidence-based treatment and education, and create structured pathways to successful reentry. They also enable corrections administrators to promote safety more effectively by linking behavioral incentives to measurable outcomes. In several states, the combined effect of earned-time and program credits produces reductions of 30–50 percent for many people convicted of violent offenses.

Appendix

Good Time and Earned Time Eligibility: 50-State Review

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
Alabama Ala. Code § 14-9-41	Class I: 30 days for each 30 days while prisoner is classified as a Class I individual. Class II: 15 days for each 30 served as Class II. Class III: Five days for each 30 days served as a Class III. Class IV: No correctional incentive time is allowed for Class IV individuals.	N/A	Offenses not eligible for any good time: Types of offenses: - Class A felonies; - caused the death of another person with a deadly weapon; and - sex offense involving a child. Types of sentences: - sentenced to death; - sentenced to life; and - received a sentence for more than 15 years.	The commissioner establishes the incarcerated person classifications based on behavior, discipline, work practices, and job responsibilities. Every person is to be in Class IV for at least three months before they can advance. Offenses not eligible for Class I classification: - convicted of an assault where victim suffered permanent injury; - perpetrated sexual abuse to someone under the age of 17; and - convicted of a Class B felony that is a violent offense.
Alaska Alaska Stat. § 33.20.010	A person is entitled to a deduction of one-third of the time rounded off to the nearest day for good behavior.		A person is not eligible if they: - have a mandatory 99-year term of imprisonment for first-degree murder or murder of an unborn child; or - are sentenced to a Class A or unclassified felony with two or more prior serious felonies. Unclassified felonies are sexual felonies and murder in the first and second degrees. Alaska Stat. Section	A person serving a mandatory 99-year sentence may apply for a one-time modification or reduction in sentence after serving half of their sentence without consideration of good time. Alaska Stat. §§ 12.55.125(f)(3) and 12.55.125(j). A person may not be awarded a good time deduction for any period spent in a treatment program, in a private residence, or on electronic monitoring.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
			11.81.250. (Alaska Stat. § 12.55.125(l)) , Imprisonment for a minimum or mandatory term for murder, attempted murder, solicitation for murder, kidnapping, or misconduct involving a controlled substance in the first may not be reduced. Alaska Stat. § 12.55.125(f)(3) .	
Arizona Ariz. Rev. Stat. § 41-1604.06 Ariz. Rev. Stat. § 41-1604.07 Arizona Department of Corrections, Department Order 1002 - Inmate Release Eligibility System (amended November 26, 2023) .	For crimes committed after 1994, incarcerated people earn one day per six served, except for people convicted of some drug crimes, who earn at three days per seven served.		People are eligible for three days per seven served if sentenced for drug crimes (marijuana, “dangerous drug,” narcotics, or drug paraphernalia), have successfully completed a drug program or other self-improvement program while incarcerated, and have not previously been convicted of a violent or aggravated felony.	People sentenced to natural life are not eligible for any good time.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
Arkansas Ark. Code § 16-93-1801-1805 Ark. Code § 16-93-1804	Arkansas amended its good time law in 2023, effective for crimes committed on or after January 1, 2025. For offenses not listed under the 100 percent or 85 percent mandates, release to community supervision eligibility is set at 50 percent of the sentence, which can be further reduced to 25 percent depending on where the offense is listed in a seriousness grid developed by the Arkansas Sentencing Commission and approved by the legislative council.		People convicted of certain violent crimes have to serve 100 percent of their sentences without possibility of early release: • aggravated robbery, • capital murder, • first-degree murder, • kidnapping, and • rape. People convicted of other violent crimes and additional offenses must serve 85 percent of their sentences without the possibility of early release.	Notwithstanding any minimum serving requirement, upon recommendation of the Director of the Division of Correction, the Post-Prison Transfer Board may consider a person for transfer to post-release supervision if: • the person is at least 60 years of age; and • the person has served at least one-half of their sentence. Ark. Code § 16-93-1805(b).
California Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 15, § 3043.2	Violent crimes: As of 2021, people earn 33 percent off a sentence applied either to the sentence length itself (determinate) or the minimum time to parole consideration (indeterminate sentences) for good conduct. 50 percent for Fire Camp participants. Nonviolent: 50 percent good conduct credit. 66 percent for Fire Camp participants.	Milestone credits can earn up to 12 weeks of credit a year for achievement of a distinct objective of approved rehabilitative programs, including academic programs, social life skills programs, Career Technical Education programs, Cognitive Behavioral Interventions programs, Enhanced Outpatient Program, group module treatment programs, or other approved programs with similar demonstrated rehabilitative qualities. Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 15, § 3043.3. Rehabilitative achievement awards can earn a maximum of 40 days off a year.	People convicted of violent and nonviolent offenses can earn credit. People sentenced to death or life without parole not eligible.	Proposition 57 gave the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) authority to award good-time credits at a rate it approved, undoing previous rules and legislation around good time. The CDCR issued the latest iteration in 2021.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
		Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 15, § 3043.4. Educational merit can earn 90 or 180 calendar days for completing GED, bachelor's degrees, associate's degrees, postgraduate degrees, or certifications Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 15, § 3043.5 Extraordinary conduct credits can earn up to a year for performing a heroic act in a life-threatening situation or providing help to maintain safety and security of prison. Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 15, § 3043.6.		
Colorado Colorado Prop. 128 (2024) Colo. Rev. Stat. § 17-22.5-301 – Good time Colo. Rev. Stat. § 17-22.5-303.3 – violent offenders; parole Colo. Rev. Stat. § 17-22.5-302 – Earned time Colo. Rev. Stat. § 17-22.5-405 –	15 days per month. This brings parole eligibility to 50 percent of one's sentence, except for specified violent crimes, for which people must serve 75 percent (before January 2025) or 85 percent (after January 2025) of their sentences.	Earned time: 30 days per six months (15 percent). Extra earned time: 10 days per month (people convicted of murder when juveniles) or 12 days per month (limited to low-level offenses). Both come off the minimum sentence. Earned time can't equal more than 30 percent off the minimum. One extra day of earned time for each day spent working in disaster relief pursuant to Colo. Rev. Stat. § 17-24-124.	Due to Proposition 128 (2024), people convicted of crimes committed after January 1, 2025, of second degree murder, first-degree assault, first-degree kidnapping (unless the first-degree kidnapping is a class 1 felony), first-degree arson, first-degree burglary, or aggravated robbery are eligible for parole after serving 85 percent of their sentence. No earned time is deducted to get to the 85 percent. For crimes committed before January 1, 2025, people are parole-eligible after serving 75 percent of their sentence, less earned time.	

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
Earned achievement time Colo. Rev. Stat. § 17-24-124 - Inmate disaster relief		Earned time is available for: • work and training; • group living; • participation in counseling sessions and involvement in self-help groups; and • progress toward the goals and programs established by the Colorado diagnostic program.	People who are convicted of the 85 percent crimes who have two previous crimes of violence (not defined) in their lifetimes must serve 100 percent of their sentence.	
Connecticut Conn. Gen. Stat. § 18-98a Conn. Gen. Stat. § 18-98e Conn. Gen. Stat. § 18-98b		For work in the institution, one day per seven consecutive days worked. § 18-98a. For risk reduction plans, up to five days per month for accountability plan compliance, participation in eligible programs, and good conduct. § 18-98e. May have their sentences reduced by up to 120 days for an “outstanding meritorious performance.” § 18-98b.	Ineligible crimes include • murder, • felony murder, • arson murder, • capital felony, • aggravated sexual assault, and • home invasion.	
Delaware 11 Del. Code § 4381	During the first year of any sentence, good time may be awarded at the rate of two days per month beginning on the first day of confinement. After completing 365 days of any sentence, good time may be awarded at the rate of three days per month.	Meritorious good time may be earned by participation in education, rehabilitation, work, or other programs as designated by the commissioner at a rate of up to 10 days per calendar month. For people sentenced on or after August 8, 2012, up to 60 days of additional meritorious good time may be awarded for successful	Life sentences are not eligible. Will not apply to sentences imposed pursuant to § 4214 (“habitual felony offenders”) or § 4204(k) (sentences of imprisonment for one year or less or sentences of imprisonment that are equal to the statutory maximum sentence available).	The exceptions to good time are not based on violent versus nonviolent offenses; the court may direct that very short or statutory maximum sentences are not subject to diminution by good time.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
		completion of an approved program designed to reduce recidivism. No more than a total of 180 days of good time and meritorious good time may be earned in any 365 days served.		
Florida Fla. Stat. § 944.275 Fla. Stat. § 944.801(3)(i)(5) Florida Department of Corrections, "Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Gaintime," 2013	Starting October 1, 1995, 10 days of "basic gain time" for each month of sentence imposed, except all people must serve 85 percent of their sentence.	Meritorious good time may be considered for an incarcerated person who commits an outstanding deed. Maximum award is 60 days. Fla. Stat. § 944.275(4)(c). Education: A one-time award of six days may be awarded to an incarcerated person who satisfactorily completes the Mandatory Literacy Program. Fla. Stat. § 944.801(3)(i)(5).	The 85 percent service requirement applies to nonviolent and violent offenses. In addition, people serving life sentences or sentenced for offenses committed after July 1, 2023, including murder, kidnapping, sexual battery, lewd behavior, and computer child pornography are not eligible to earn any good time. Fla. Stat. § 944.275(e)(1).	
Georgia Ga. Code § 42-5-101 Ga. Code § 17-10-6.1(4)	N/A	One day of work incentive credits for each day during which the incarcerated person has participated in approved educational or other counseling programs, has satisfactorily performed work tasks assigned by the penal institution, and has complied with satisfactory behavior standards established by the department.	People convicted of serious violent offenses cannot earn good time. These crimes are murder, armed robbery, kidnapping, rape, aggravated child molestation, aggravated sodomy, and aggravated sexual battery. Ga. Code § 17-10-6.1(4).	The work credits are a recommendation to the parole board; the board does not need to credit them. The parole board is free to accept or ignore the recommendations. Credits have no formalized effect on the lengths of minimum or maximum terms, as they do in most other states. While credits may influence actual dates of release in many individual cases, this occurs through the parole board's exercise of its discretion rather than any inherent legal force of the credits themselves. Robina Institute, Georgia DOI Report 7 7 22.
Hawai'i	N/A			No good time in Hawai'i.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
Robina Institute: Hawai'i State Report				
Idaho Idaho Code § 20-101d	N/A	15 days per month sentenced for an outstanding act of heroism such as saving a life, protecting state property during a riot, or preventing an escape. Idaho Code § 20-101d.		No good time in Idaho for prison. Five days per month good time for jails. Idaho Code § 20-621.
Illinois 730 Ill. Comp. Stat 5/3-6-3 Illinois Department of Corrections FAQs	Basic good time: day-for-day good time credit, resulting in 50 percent off a sentence. For some nonviolent offenses regarding drug conspiracies, people must serve 75 percent of sentences. For other violent offenses (armed robbery, sex assaults, firearm usage resulting in great bodily injury, driving under the influence (DUI)): 85 percent. For first-degree murder (intention to kill) or terrorism, no good time.	One day credit for each day engaged in work or programming. In addition, 90 days for high school equivalency test; 80 days of sentence credit shall be awarded to any incarcerated person who obtains a bachelor's degree or master's degree. However, people in custody convicted of offenses that require them to serve 100 percent or 85 percent of their sentence are not eligible but may still be able to participate in such programming. People in custody earn one-half day off their sentence for each day of participation in such programs if they successfully complete the programs. 730 Ill. Comp. Stat 5/3-6-3(4).	Most violent convictions shall receive no more than 4.5 days of sentence credit for each month of a person's sentence of imprisonment (15 percent credit). 730 ILCS 5/3-6-3. Most serious drug-related crimes shall receive no more than 7.5 days sentence credit for each month of a person's sentence of imprisonment (25 percent credit). People convicted of Murder 1 or terrorism shall not receive any sentencing credit. People serving natural life shall not receive any sentencing credit.	
Indiana Ind. Code § 35-50-6-3.1. Credit Time Classes	Class A: day for day. Class B: day for every three days (33 percent). Class C: day for every six days (15 percent).	Indiana has educational credits: • six months for completion of GED;	"Credit restricted felons" (CRF) start at Class C, at 85 percent. CRF are various versions of child molestation (including murder as part of child	These educational credit changes went into effect for crimes committed after June 30, 2014.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
Ind. Code § 35-50-6-3.3. Educational Credit Time Ind. Code § 35-50-6-4. Credit Time Assignments Prison-Release Discretion and Prison Population Size: Indiana (Robina, 2021)	Class D: no time credits. Level 6 felonies (lowest level) start out as Class A, every other felony except for "credit restricted felons" start at Class B. Credit restricted felons start at Class C.	- one year for graduation from high school; - not more than one year for completion of an associate degree; - not more than two years for completion of a bachelor's degree; - not more than a total of one year for technical or vocational education programs; - not more than a total of six months for substance use programs approved by the department of correction; and - not more than a total of six months for literacy and basic life skills programs. People may earn no more than two years or one-third of their credits (including good-time credits) through educational credits, whichever is less.	molestation). Ind. Code §§ 35-31.5-2-72, 35-50-6-4(g). All other violent offenses start out as Class B: 33 percent. For example, a murder sentence is 45 to 65 years. If the person stays at Class B (they can move up or down depending on behavior), they will serve two-thirds of that. Life without parole sentences are ineligible. Ind. Code § 35-50-6-8.	
Iowa Iowa Code § 903A.2 Iowa Code § 902.12 Prison-Release Discretion and Prison Population	Category A (most felonies): one and 2/10ths days per one day served. Category B (violent offenses): 15/85ths of a day per one day served for good conduct depending on category of incarcerated person (Categories A and B respectively).	People in Category A, in addition to exhibiting good conduct, must also satisfactorily participate in any program or placement identified by the DOC director in order to obtain earned-time credit. People in Category A who perform "exemplary acts" are	Incarcerated people serving sentences for enumerated violent felonies (murder, robbery, etc.) must serve at least seven-tenths of the maximum term of the person's sentence. Iowa Code Section 902.12. Earned time may not reduce the sentences of any	Incarcerated people required to complete a domestic abuse program (Category B) or sex offender program (Category A) may not earn reductions in sentences until completion of the program.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
Size: Iowa (Robina, 2021)	Category A is all felonies other than Category B and C. Category B is violent offenses. Category C (attempted murder of a peace officer): ineligible for reduction in sentences.	eligible for a one-year sentence reduction.	incarcerated person who is serving a life sentence or any mandatory minimums for a Class A felony except if the life sentence is commuted to a term of years; then the earned time can be credited against them.	
Kansas Kan. Stat. Ann. § 21-6821	For crimes committed after July 1, 1993, 15 percent reduction time for most prison sentences for good behavior, 20 percent for some low-level crimes.	Not more than 120 days for GED, substance use treatment, and vocational or work training.	20 percent off sentences for nondrug crimes level 7–10 (lower-level felonies, nonviolent), and 20 percent for lower-level drug crimes. Most other crimes earn 15 percent off. Offenses that carry mandatory life sentences (“off-grid” offenses) are not eligible or a person may have to serve a specified number of years before becoming eligible to apply good-time credits.	
Kentucky Ky. Rev. Stat. § 197.045 Ky. Rev. Stat. § 197.047	Up to 10 days per month served for good behavior.	90 days for vocational or technical programming, drug treatment, or GED or degree completion. Government services work-related activities allow incarcerated people to receive one sentence credit for every eight hours worked. Five sentence credits equal a one-day sentence reduction.	People convicted of sex offenses may accrue but not apply good-time credits until they complete a treatment program unless an intellectual disability would prevent them from completing the program. Persons convicted of violent offenses as defined by Ky. Rev. Stat. § 439.3401 shall not be released on parole or other form of release until they serve 85 percent of their sentences. They are also not eligible for time credits other than those awarded for time spent in	Performing exceptionally meritorious service or performing duties of outstanding importance in connection with institutional operations and programs, awarded at the discretion of the commissioner in an amount not to exceed seven days per month.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
			custody prior to the commencement of a sentence. These offenses include murder, robbery, felonies involving serious physical injury, sex offenses, and kidnapping.	
Louisiana La. Stat. § 15:571.3.1 La. Stat. § 15:571.3 La. Stat. § 15:833.1 La. Stat. § 15:828	People convicted of crimes committed on or after August 1, 2024, can earn up to a maximum of 15 percent off their sentence based on good behavior. For crimes committed before August 1, 2024, the baseline for nonviolent offenses is 13 days of credit for seven days of incarceration. People convicted for the first time of a crime of violence can earn good time at the rate of one day per three days served for crimes committed from 2017 to 2024.	People in a work release (La. Stat. § 15:1199.10) shall be eligible to earn an additional 180 days of credit toward the reduction of the projected good-time parole supervision date. People participating in disaster relief may receive 30 days credit. La. Stat. § 15:833.1. People who earn a bachelor's degree are eligible for 90 days of credit; people who earn a master's degree can earn an additional 90 days. La. Stat. § 15:828.	People convicted of sex offenses and under “habitual felony offender” statutes are not eligible for any good-time credits. For program credits/earned time, everyone is eligible except people convicted of sex offenses and those convicted of more than one violent offense.	
Maine Maine Stat. tit. 17-A, § 2308 Maine Stat. tit. 17-A, § 2307 Maine Department of Corrections Commission to Reexamine Parole. “Good Time.” October 7, 2022	For crimes committed after August 1, 2004, up to five days off per month for people convicted of murder and various sex offenses or family violence offenses. For all other offenses, up to four days off for good time.	Up to five days a month, calculated via a metric of completion of assigned duties and programming.	Violent offenses other than murder and specified sex and family violence offenses are eligible for the full nine days per month of combined good time and earned time credit.	

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
Maryland Md. Code Corr. Servs. § 3-702 Md. Code Corr. Servs. § 3-704 Md. Code Corr. Servs. § 3-705 Md. Code Corr. Servs. § 3-706 Md. Code Corr. Servs. § 3-706.1 Md. Code Corr. Servs. § 3-707 Md. Code Corr. Servs. § 3-708	10 days per month for nonviolent offenses. Violent offenses and some drug-related crimes (manufacturing, dispersing): five days per month.	Five days per month for educational/drug program; five days for work programs; 10–20 days per month for special selected work projects or special programs; 60 hours for completion of higher education programs.	Incarcerated people serving sentences for certain sex offenses involving children under the age of 16 are not eligible for good or earned time deductions. People convicted of murder in the first degree and sex offenses for which registration is required are not eligible for higher education credits.	People who have been convicted of violent crimes, sexual offenses, and some drug offenses may not exceed 20 days per month of good and earned time; people convicted of nonviolent offenses may not exceed 30 days per month. Good and earned time is removed from the overall sentence. Once a person has served half (violent offenses) or one-quarter (nonviolent offenses) of their sentence including reductions, they may be considered for parole. For people sentenced to life with parole, they may appear before the parole board at 20 years (after 2021) or 15 years (before 2021). Md. Code Corr. Servs. § 7-301.
Massachusetts Mass. Gen. Laws Ch. 127, § 129D Mass. Gen. Laws Ch. 94C, § 32H Will Brownsberger, “The CSG package – good time and completion credits,” May 13, 2018		Those incarcerated in state prisons can earn up to a maximum of 15 days per month for satisfactory conduct plus performance in work, education, or other programming. In addition, up to 80 days of completion credits per program are available for completing programming, with a cap of 17.5 percent of the maximum sentence. In no event shall a person earn more than 35 percent off their minimum and, if not granted parole, maximum sentence.	People convicted of certain drug offenses can earn but not apply earned time before their minimum sentence is completed.	Massachusetts has minimum/maximum sentences rather than determinate sentencing; earned time is deducted from both simultaneously to yield an earlier parole eligibility date and an earlier full discharge date. Technically no good-time eligibility because incarcerated people still have to complete some sort of activity. These increases came about in 2019 after a Justice Reinvestment Initiative process to increase people’s ability to earn good time.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
Michigan	N.A.			Michigan removed good time credits for all offenses committed after January 1, 1983.
Minnesota Minn. Stat. § 244.43 Minn. Stat. § 244.44 MN Department of Corrections Policy no. 204.064 Earned Incentive Release Credit Policy, February 2, 2026		People incarcerated in Minnesota may earn up to 17 percent off their term of imprisonment through Earned Incentive Release Credits.	People with a “predatory offender risk level” of III are not eligible to receive earned credits.	Minnesota sentences have an incarceration and a supervised release component. Release credits only apply to the incarceration component and, besides the 17 percent cap, may not reduce the carceral part of the sentence to be shorter than the supervised release component. Until 2025, credits were nonrevocable; in 2025, they became revocable if the person violates the rules of the facility. Minn. Stat. § 244.44 ; Chapter 35 - MN Laws .
Mississippi Miss. Code. § 47-5-138(5),(6) Miss. Code § 47-5-138.1	4.5 days per 30 days, capped at 15 percent of sentence.	30 days per 30 days of participation in programming for people in trusty status.	Trusty status can be held but trusty time cannot be earned by people with life sentences, those convicted of sex offenses or drug trafficking, those sentenced under “habitual offender” sentencing, and those who have not served out their mandatory minimum terms for conviction of robbery or attempted robbery with a deadly weapon.	Credits earned and not forfeited are deducted from incarcerated people’s judicial maximum sentences to produce earlier mandatory release dates, with deductions limited to 15 percent of the maximum term, except for people under 21 convicted of a nonviolent offense. (No limit for these people.)
Missouri Mo. Rev Stat § 558.041 Mo. Code Regs. tit. 14 § 10-5.010 Mo. Rev. Stat. §557.021	People convicted of Class A and B offenses may earn one month per 12 months based on good behavior and program participation (8 percent off sentence). People convicted of Class C or D earn two months per 12 months (16 percent off).		People serving life sentences, convicted under “habitual offender” laws (including drug and sex offenses), or convicted of witness or victim tampering are not eligible for any good time. People serving sentences with mandatory minimum terms may not apply their time until the minimum has passed.	Statute gives the commissioner the ability to set rules and extends eligibility to everyone except people sentenced as a prior offender and people sentenced as persistent sexual offenders. The commissioner’s rules are more restrictive than the authorizing statute.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
Montana DOC Policy Brief Montana DOC Policy No. 1.5.1 (rev. January 25, 2012) Prison-Release Discretion and Prison Population Size: Montana (Robina, 2023)	N/A	N/A	N/A	In 2025, the legislature created a work credit of one day per 40 hours of work for people on community supervision. MT SB 217 (2025); Laura Sherley, Credit for Time Served: Summary of Montana's Policy (Montana Criminal Justice Oversight Council, 2025).
Nebraska Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-1,107 Neb. Rev. Stat. § 28-105	Six months per year, pro rata for any sentences shorter than a year. An additional three days on the start of any month following a 12-month period with no Class I or II and no more than three Class III disciplinary infractions. These three days are not subject to revocation. Good time is taken off the maximum sentence.		People with mandatory minimums must serve those minimums before being eligible for parole. <i>State v. Russell</i>, 863 N.W.2d 813, 818 (2015) (stating that a prisoner “will not receive any good time for the entire duration of the mandatory minimum”). Offenses with mandatory minimums include all Class IC, IB, IC, and ID offenses, which include murder, firearms offenses, first-degree sexual assault, and kidnapping. Class II offenses, which are not subject to mandatory minimums, include manslaughter, first-degree assault, robbery, and burglary.	Nebraska law allows for enhancement of the felony class based on the victim, so the offense itself is not the only factor determining whether a mandatory minimum will apply. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 28-115.
Nevada Nev. SB 413 (2023)	For crimes committed after July 1, 2025, good time must be deducted for 25 percent off the minimum sentence and may be deducted for up to 58 percent of the sentence.		For crimes that involve the use or threatened use of force against a person, some DUI offenses, and felony sex crimes, the 25 percent good	

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
Nev. Rev. Stat. § 209.4465 (pre-2025 version)	For crimes committed before July 1, 2025, a robust combination of good time and earned time that resulted in deductions of up to 58 percent off of the minimum.		time applies to the maximum only. For other offenses, it also applies against the minimum.	
New Hampshire N.H. Rev. Stat. § 651:2(II-e) N.H. Rev. Stat. § 651-A:22 N.H. Rev. Stat. § 651-A:22-a	Incarcerated people can earn up to 12.5 days per month for good conduct, as determined by the commissioner on a monthly basis. This is deducted from a 150-day per year of a minimum sentence of “disciplinary” time that is added to sentences. So although people don’t earn time off their sentences, they can keep time from accumulating to their sentences through good behavior.	180 days for college degree; 60 days for vocational or mental health program. Earned time is capped at no more than 21 months off the minimum and 21 months off the maximum.	Only people at the lowest security levels within general population in a facility are eligible for earned time. N.H. Rev. Stat. § 651-A:22-a(IV) .	
New Jersey N.J. Rev. Stat. § 30:4-140 N.J. Rev. Stat. § 30:4-92a N.J. Rev. Stat. § 2C:43-7.2	Commutation credit is automatically applied at a rate of 7 to 16 days a month, applied to the minimum and maximum sentences, with the longer deductions applying to longer sentences (capped at the 30-year rate). However, good time does not apply to most violent crimes until people have served 85 percent of their sentences.	For work in honor camps, farms, or other details for minimum security people: three days per month for first year, then five days per month. The commissioner has authority to develop and grant other earned-time opportunities. These are very modest, for example, earning a Bachelor of Arts earns 20 days off the maximum sentence, but there is no cap on the time off that may be earned in this manner. Liz Velez, “Educational Freedom.” Inside Corrections, February 2020.	People serving time for most violent crimes are ineligible for release before they have served 85 percent of their sentences. N.J. Rev. Stat. § 2C:43-7.2 . This includes murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, aggravated sexual assault, weapons trafficking, kidnapping, and carjacking.	
New Mexico		Four or 30 days a month for participation in recommended	People convicted of a “serious violent crime” earn at four days	Heroic acts or extraordinary conduct may make you eligible for additional time off at

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
N.M. Stat. § 33-2-34		programs, depending on commitment offense. Three months for a high school degree; three months for a vocational degree; 120 days for an associate degree; 150 days for a bachelor's degree; 150 days for a graduate qualification. No more than one year of earned time off per calendar year.	per month, everyone else earns at 30 days per month. Serious violent crime includes second-degree murder, first- and second-degree robbery, sex offenses, and various degrees of assaults. It does not include weapons possession. People serving life sentences do not earn any time off.	the discretion of the director, capped at one year.
New York N.Y. Correct. Law § 803 N.Y. Correct. Law § 803-B	Indeterminate sentences except for life sentences: one-third off the maximum sentence. Determinate sentences: one-seventh off the maximum. Not applicable to life sentences.	Called “merit” time in New York. Indeterminate sentences: one-sixth off the minimum or one-third off the minimum for drug offenses. Determinate sentences: one-seventh off the minimum. People who do not qualify for traditional merit time (excepting sex offenses and first-degree murder) may be eligible to earn a six-month Limited Credit Time Allowances off the minimum if they achieve program credentials or complete programming that takes typically 18 months to two years to achieve.	Regular merit time excludes people convicted of violent felony offenses, sex offenses, and non-drug life sentences.	People may earn both good and merit time, if eligible.
North Carolina N.C. Gen. Stat. § 15A-1355 N.C. Gen. Stat. § 148-13	Available for people convicted of offenses committed before October 1, 1994, and convicted of driving while impaired regardless of offense date, but only for that portion of their	Available to people convicted after October 1, 1994, who may earn three, six, or nine days per month depending on the skill level and time commitment of work or programming in which	People serving a life sentence or a parole violation or DWI are not eligible for earned time.	Statute directs rules for earned time to be promulgated by the Department of Corrections. Meritorious time cannot be used to reduce a sentence below the minimum.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
State of North Carolina DOC, Policy and Procedure Ch. B § .0100 et seq. (2011)	sentence. One day for each day incarcerated.	they partake. Days are taken off the maximum sentence. People may earn meritorious time credits for working overtime, working in emergency conditions, working in inclement weather, exemplary acts, apprenticeship training, and program and educational achievements such as earning degrees. There is no cap on meritorious time, but it must be approved on a per-award basis by facility heads (30 days or fewer) or the director of prisons (more than 30 days).		
North Dakota N.D. Cent. Code § 12-54.1-01 Good time N.D. Cent. Code § 12.1-32 N.D. Cent. Code § 12.1-32-09.1 Exclusions	N/A	Five days per month for good performance and participation in recommended treatment programs and good work performance. Two additional days available for meritorious performance.	People sentenced for murder, manslaughter, sex offenses, aggravated assault resulting in injury, robbery, burglary with injury, and kidnapping must serve 85 percent of their sentences.	Under exceptional circumstances, a lump sum reduction may be awarded for heroic acts or as a “special control or security measure” (not to exceed two days per month while the special measure is needed). In 2025, SB 2128 attempted to extend the 85 percent requirement to all felonies. It failed. SB 2128 - Versions North Dakota Legislative Branch.
Ohio Ohio Rev. Code § 2967.193 (prior to April 4, 2024) Ohio Rev. Code § 2967.194 Ohio Admin. Code 5120-2-06		One or five days per month for participation in an education program or vocational training (five days is the norm; one day for sex offenses). This comes off the minimum. 90 days or 10 percent of sentence for a GED or college degree attainment or technical school vocational certificate.	Not eligible for credits if mandatory prison term, a prison term imposed for murder, crimes in which a firearm was used, some sex offenses, mandatory minimum drug offenses, and corruption offenses, an offense of violence, or a prison term imposed for a sexually oriented offense.	

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
Oklahoma Okla. Stat. tit. 57 § 138 Okla. Stat. tit. 21 § 13.1v2	Many class stratifications. 0, 22, 33, or 44 credits per month. Each credit is one day.	90 days for GED. 100 days for associate degree. 200 days for bachelor's degree. No provision is made for postbaccalaureate work. 10–30 days for other programs. 80 days for vocational training. 70 days for alcohol or drug treatment.	People convicted of violent offenses shall not be eligible for earned credits or any other type of credits that have the effect of reducing the length of the sentence to less than 85 percent of the sentence imposed, regardless of how many credits they may appear to have earned.	Good time on paper looks very generous, even as to offense eligibility, but a separate section requiring 85 percent sentence completion undercuts this.
Oregon Or. Rev. Stat. § 421.121 Or. Rev. Stat. § 137.635 Or. Rev. Stat. § 137.700		For sentences of more than a year, up to 20 percent off the sentence.	People convicted for the second time of murder (first- and second-degree) and the first degree of manslaughter, robbery, burglary, assault, kidnapping, rape, and sodomy are given determinate sentences (no minimum, no parole) and are ineligible for good time. People convicted of violent crimes have mandatory minimums. Good time does not reduce the mandatory minimums.	
Pennsylvania 61 Penn. Con. Stat. § 4503 61 Penn. Con. Stat. § 4505		Recidivism reduction programming may reduce a sentence by as much as one-fourth for sentences of less than three years and one-sixth for sentences of more than three years.	People ever convicted of violent offenses or sex offenses are not eligible, unless prosecutor waives ineligibility (must give notice to victims).	

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
61 Penn. Con. Stat. § 4506				
Rhode Island 42 R.I. Gen. Laws. § 42-56-24 42 R.I. Gen. Laws. § 42-56-26	10 days per month for good behavior.	Five days per month for participation in recommended programs plus a one-time reduction of up to 30 days for completion of the program. Two to five days per month for working in institutional industry. Meritorious acts may allow a person to earn three days per month up to a maximum of 36 days per year.	People serving time for murder, assault with intent to commit murder, kidnapping a minor, first-degree sexual assault, or child molestation (first- or second-degree) cannot earn good time.	Excluded crimes don't include robbery, burglary, weapons, or most assaults.
South Carolina S.C. Code § 24-13-210 S.C. Code § 24-13-230 Christina Catoe Bigelow, "Understanding Prison Sentences," attachment to Department of Corrections' letter to the SC House Legislative Oversight Committee, May 24, 2019	20 days per month for everyone but "no parole offenses." Three days per month for "no parole offenses" (determinate sentences with a 20-year maximum)—good and earned time cannot reduce these sentences below the statutory minimum or 85 percent.	For parole-eligible offenses, up to one day for every two days employed or enrolled in programming, up to a maximum of 180 days of work and education credits combined. For "no parole offenses," six days per month employed or enrolled in programming, up to a maximum of 72 days.	Life sentences or a mandatory minimum of 30 years for murder are not eligible to earn any good-time, work, or education credits. Educational credit is not available to people convicted of violent crimes. "No parole offenses" must serve 85 percent of their sentences. S.C. Code § 24-13-150 . These offenses are defined as Class A, B, and C felonies, and unclassifiable crimes with at least a 20-year maximum. S.C. Code § 24-13-100 . This correlates closely but not exactly with violent crimes listed in S.C. Code § 16.1.60.	
South Dakota		Up to 90 days of discharge credits for each program completion.	As of July 1, 2023, people convicted of the following violent offenses are eligible to	

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
S.D. Codified Laws § 24-15A-32 S.D. Codified Laws § 24-15-4.1 S.D. Codified Laws § 24-15A-50.1 Prison-Release Discretion and Prison Population Size: South Dakota (Robina, 2023)		Up to 90 days of discharge credits for 360 hours of satisfactory work, not to exceed 180 days of discharge credits for work in a 12-month period. Up to 365 days of earned discharge credits for heroic acts. These credits come off the maximum sentence.	earn discharge credits to the extent that they reduce the time served in prison by 15 percent: • vehicular homicide, • aggravated assault, • aggravated criminal battery of an unborn child, • second-degree kidnapping, • second-degree burglary, • riot, • second-degree manslaughter, • second-degree human trafficking, • felony child abuse, and • attempt, conspiracy. S.D. Codified Laws § 24-15-4.2. All other violent offenses are ineligible for discharge credits.	
Tennessee Tenn. Code § 41-21-236 Tenn. Code § 40-35-501	Up to eight days per month for good behavior.	Up to eight days (additional to good time) per month for satisfactory program performance. May earn a one-time 60-day credit for educational attainment (vocational schooling, high school diploma or GED, or college degree) and a one-time 60-day credit for completion of a substance use program of at least nine months.	Credit earnings were always restricted to 15 percent of sentence for most violent crimes, but in 2022, the legislature removed the ability to earn credits for several violent offenses. This applies to crimes committed after July 2022. The full list is in section bb(1) and cc(2) of Tenn. Code § 40-35-501. It excludes the following offenses from good time: second-degree murder,	Note: instead of repealing any previous versions, Tenn. Code § 40-35-501 adds on new provisions, with the proviso: “Notwithstanding any other provisions.” A reader doesn’t know what is good law until they read to the very end to the latest “notwithstandings.”

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
			aggravated robbery, and aggravated burglary, among other offenses. Everyone else has a credit cap of 35 percent.	
Texas Texas Gov't. Code § 498.002 Texas Gov't. Code § 498.003 Texas Gov't. Code § 508.149	Classifications are made “according to the inmate’s conduct, obedience, and industry” when incarcerated people enter the DOC system. 10, 20, or up to 30 days per month depending on classification. Class II: 10. Class I: 20. Trusty: 30.	Regardless of classification, the department may grant good conduct time to the incarcerated person if actively engaged in agricultural, vocational, or educational endeavors. Must not exceed 15 days for each 30 days.	Only available to incarcerated people who are eligible for parole or mandatory supervision. People convicted of violent (and some nonviolent) crimes are ineligible for mandatory supervision (includes robbery, assault, sex offenses, burglary, etc.). Conviction exclusions extend to prior convictions.	
Utah Utah Code § 77-27-5.4		Four months per program completion, up to two recidivism-risk reduction programs. Board of parole can grant more credits at its discretion.	Life sentences.	
Vermont Vt. Stat. tit. 28 § 818 Vt. Stat. tit. 28 § 811	Seven days per month for good behavior off the minimum and maximum sentence if there are no new convictions and milestones are met. One day per month for people in residential treatment (non-incarcerated).	Up to 30 days per month off the minimum and maximum for time in work camp if the work camp director finds the person to be especially hardworking and “meritorious.”	Murder, voluntary manslaughter, kidnapping, lewd and lascivious conduct with a child, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, and aggravated sexual assault of a child are not eligible to receive good time.	Good time was created in 2020 without statutory exclusions; in 2021, the legislature added the statutory exclusions.
Virginia Va. Code Ann. § 53.1-202.2		Earned time comes off the maximum, not minimum. For violent offenses, a maximum of 4.5 days per month may be earned.	Maximum 4.5 sentence credits may be earned for each 30 days served on sentences for a conviction for violent offenses.	In 2020, Virginia repealed its “truth in sentencing” law and implemented a system of earned sentence credits.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
Va. Code Ann. § 53.1-202.3		For all other offenses, sentence credits are earned based on the quality of participation: • Level 1: 15 days per month; • Level 2: 7.5 days per month; • Level 3: 3.5 days per month; and • Level 4: no days per month. Levels are reviewed at least annually. People who don't have participation opportunities cannot be penalized by moving them down a level.		
Washington Wash. Rev. Code 9.94A.729 RCW 9.94A.729: Wash. Admin. Code § 137-30-030:		A tiered system for “earned release time” consisting of good time and earned time. People convicted of serious violent crimes earn at 10 percent total; others earn at 33 percent total.	People convicted of sex offenses that are also serious violent offenses are not eligible for earned release time. For serious violent offenses and sex offenses that are Class A offenses, incarcerated people must serve 85 percent of their sentence. People sentenced to life without parole are not eligible for earned time. Serious violent offenses are the following:	People in restrictive housing for disciplinary or “unfounded concerns” reasons for more than 20 days cannot earn time.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
			• murder in the first degree; • homicide by abuse; • murder in the second degree; • manslaughter in the first degree; • assault in the first degree; • kidnapping in the first degree; • rape in the first degree; • assault of a child in the first degree; • an attempt, criminal solicitation, or criminal conspiracy to commit one of these felonies; or • any equivalent federal or out-of-state conviction. In all other cases, earned early release time may not exceed one-third of the total sentence.	
West Virginia W. Va. Code § 15A-4-17 W. Va. Code § 62-12-26	One day per day (including jail time).	Exceptional work or service may earn incarcerated people more credits at the commissioner's discretion (including donating blood or exemplary acts). Up to 90 days good time per program for successfully completing an approved, but not required, academic or vocational program.	Life sentences not eligible. Young adults sentenced under a reduced sentence structure of six to two years in specialized young adult facilities are not eligible. People convicted for sex offenses who are under mandatory supervision not eligible. People convicted of violent offenses get one year of good	Good time earned is deducted from the maximum term of indeterminate sentences and from the fixed term of definite sentences. Good time advances an incarcerated person's maximum discharge date such that if the amount of good time accumulated plus the incarcerated person's time served equals their maximum sentence, they shall be discharged.

State	Good Time	Earned Time	Offense Eligibility for Good Time	Notes
		West Virginia's accelerated parole program is essentially an earned-time program that offers a limited benefit for program completion. It requires formal application by the incarcerated person and acceptance by the department of corrections.	time deducted and added to their sentences after release as mandatory supervision, with electronic monitoring.	
Wisconsin Wis. Stat. § 302.43 Wis. Stat. § 302.05	Incarcerated people in a county jail are eligible to earn good time in the amount of one-fourth of their term for good behavior if sentenced to at least four days.	There is an Earned Release Program that applies to people with substance use problems.	Only for people serving in jails.	Wisconsin does not recognize good time for incarcerated people in any state prison.
Wyoming Wyo. Stat. § 7-13-420 0 Wyo. Code R. § 0-3 001-0 Wyo. Code R. §§ 0-4 - Award of Special Good Time State Regulations US Law LII / Legal Information Institute	Standard good-time credits accrue at a rate of 15 days per month off the minimum and/or the maximum sentence in the discretion of prison officials.	In addition, the parole board is authorized to award "special good time" including for program participation. Special good time is capped at one year.	Life sentences and life sentences without parole are not eligible for good time, as there is no minimum or maximum sentence from which to calculate the time. Life sentences are not eligible for parole unless the sentence is commuted to a term of years. Wyo. Stat 6-10-301 (c).	Statute directs governor to create policies for good time allowances. Per Wyoming Administrative Code, good time may be awarded at the discretion of the warden based on an incarcerated person's attitude, conduct, and behavior.

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Notes

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⁵ Jeremy Travis, Bruce Western, and Steve Redburn, eds., *The Growth of Incarceration in the United States: Exploring Causes and Consequences* (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2014), 81. By 2002, no state permitted an incarcerated person to serve less than 50 percent of their minimum sentence. See Don Stemen, Andres Rengifo, and James Wilson, *Of Fragmentation and Ferment: The Impact of State Sentencing Policies on Incarceration Rates, 1975–2002* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2005), 83, <https://perma.cc/4R4Q-D222>.

⁶ Alex R. Piquero, J. David Hawkins, Lila Kazemian, and David Petechuk, *Bulletin 2: Criminal Career Patterns (Study Group on the Transitions Between Juvenile Delinquency and Adult Crime)* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, 2013), 9, <https://nij.ojp.gov/library/publications/bulletin-2-criminal-career-patterns-study-group-transitions-between-juvenile>; Nancy LaVigne and Ernesto Lopez, *Recidivism Rates: What You Need to Know* (Washington, DC: Council on Criminal Justice, 2021), https://counciloncj.org/recidivism_report; and Creasie Finney Hairston, “The Staff: Who Are They?,” in *Combating Gun Violence: Hospital Responders and Street Outreach Workers* (Chicago: Jane Addams School of Social Work, University of Illinois Chicago, 2021), <https://socialwork.uic.edu/combating-gun-violence-hospital-responders-and-street-outreach-workers> (individual chapter available at <https://socialwork.uic.edu/news-stories/combating-gun-violence-staff-who-are-they>).

⁷ For recidivism rates by offense category, see Wendy Sawyer, “BJS Fuels Myths About Sex Offense Recidivism, Contradicting Its Own New Data,” Prison Policy Initiative, June 6, 2019, table 2, <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2019/06/06/sexoffenses>.

⁸ Zack A. Goodman and Evan Green-Lowe, “The Consequences of Truth in Sentencing,” *Recidiviz*, April 8, 2022, <https://www.recidiviz.org/updates/the-consequences-of-truth-in-sentencing>; Ilyana Kuziemko, “How Should Inmates Be Released from Prison? An Assessment of Parole Versus Fixed-Sentence Regimes,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 128, no. 1 (2013), 371–424, <https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qjs052>; and David C. Macdonald, “Truth in Sentencing, Incentives and Recidivism,” *Review of Economics and Statistics* (forthcoming, available in online early access November 2024), 1–49, pre-publication version available at https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4806765.

⁹ Kuziemko, “How Should Inmates Be Released,” 2013, 371–424, 377, 402, 405–406.

¹⁰ Macdonald, “Truth in Sentencing, Incentives and Recidivism,” 2024, 3.

¹¹ For Arizona, recidivism was defined as reconviction. *Ibid.*, 12 (definition), 29 (rate). For Georgia, recidivism was defined as “return to prison with or without a new sentence. Kuziemko, “How Should Inmates Be Released,” 2013, 384 (definition), 411, 420.

¹² W. Va. Code § 15A-4-17; W. Va. Code R. § 90-1-2 (incorporating policy manual); and West Virginia Division of Corrections Policy Directive 151.02 (Good Time Restoration), <https://perma.cc/Y762-8K79>.

¹³ W. Va. Code § 15A-4-17.

¹⁴ W. Va. Code § 15A-4-17, W. Va Code §§25-4-1 et seq. and 62-12-26.

¹⁵ W. Va. Code § 15A-4-17(i)(2).

¹⁶ Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 7-13-420, 001-0 Wyo. Code R. §§ 0-1 et seq.; and 001-0 Wyo. Code R. §§ 0-3 (b). See generally Kevin R. Reitz, Bree Crye, and Edward E. Rhine, *Prison-Release Discretion and Prison Population Size State Report: Wyoming* (Minneapolis, MN: Robina Institute, 2022), <https://perma.cc/7DZZ-BFPH>.

¹⁷ The good-time statute requires that a sentence have a maximum or minimum term from which the good time can be deducted. Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 7-13-420. Life sentences in Wyoming do not have a minimum term. If a life sentence is commuted to a term of years, the sentence becomes eligible for good time. Wyo. Stat. § 6-10-301(b),(c).

¹⁸ Cal. Prop. 57 (2016), <https://web.archive.org/web/20161011160759/http://voterguide.sos.ca.gov/en/propositions/57>.

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- ¹⁹ Cal. Penal Code §§2930 et seq.; and Cal. Code Regs. tit. 15, § 3043(a).
- ²⁰ Cal. Penal Code § 2933(b) (violent-offense conduct credits); and State of California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Adult Institutions, Programs, and Parole, *Operations Manual* (Sacramento, CA: State of California, 2026), § 73030 (time calculations), <https://perma.cc/W4SY-S6MH>.
- ²¹ Cal. Penal Code §2931, Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 15, §§ 3043.2–3043.3.
- ²² Md. Corr. Servs. Code § 3-702; and Md. Corr. Servs. Code §§ 3-704, 3-705, 3-706, 3-707.
- ²³ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-1,107.
- ²⁴ *State v. Russell*, 863 N.W.2d 813, 818 (2015).
- ²⁵ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 28-105.
- ²⁶ Kevin R. Reitz, Allegra Lukac, and Edward E. Rhine, *Prison-Release Discretion and Prison Population Size State Report: Nebraska* (Minneapolis: Robina Institute, 2023), 8, <https://perma.cc/5N8L-GK8C>.
- ²⁷ Mass. Gen. Laws Ch.127 § 129D(a).
- ²⁸ Mass. Gen. Laws Ch. 127 § 129D(b).
- ²⁹ Mass. Gen. Laws Ch. 94C § 32H; and Mass. Gen. Laws Ch.127 § 129D(f).
- ³⁰ CSG Justice Center, *Justice Reinvestment in Massachusetts: Reducing Recidivism and Strengthening Public Safety* (New York: CSG Justice Center, 2018), <https://perma.cc/T2CU-DAHM>.
- ³¹ R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-56-24.
- ³² R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-56-24(f)-(g).
- ³³ 42 R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-56-26, webserver.rilegislature.gov/Statutes/TITLE42/42-56/42-56-26.htm.
- ³⁴ 11 Del. Code § 4381.
- ³⁵ 11 Del. Code § 4381(b).
- ³⁶ Alaska Stat. § 33.20.010.
- ³⁷ Me. Stat. tit. 17-A § 2307.
- ³⁸ Me. Stat. tit. 17A § 2308.
- ³⁹ NV SB 413 (2023).
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ Vt. Stat. Ann. tit. 28 § 818.
- ⁴² Vt. Stat. Ann. tit. 28 §818(c).
- ⁴³ N.D. Cent. Code § 12-54.1-01.
- ⁴⁴ N.D. Cent. Code § 12-54.1-03.
- ⁴⁵ People convicted of certain charges that North Dakota defines as violent offenses must serve 85 percent of their sentences before good time is applied. N.D. Cent. Code § 12.1-32-09.1.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid.
- ⁴⁷ Ala. Code § 14-9-41.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰ Wash. Rev. Code §§ 9.94A.729.
- ⁵¹ Wash. Rev. Code §§ 9.94A.729(3)(a)-(c). People sentenced for most serious violent crimes and sex offenses after July 1, 1990, and before July 1, 2003, may earn up to 15 percent. Wash. Rev. Code § 9.94A.729(3)(b). For the shorter statutory list, see Wash. Rev. Code § 9.94A.729(3)(e).
- ⁵² State of North Carolina Department of Correction, Division of Prisons, *Sentence Credits Policy and Procedure*, .0113 (Raleigh, NC: State of North Carolina Department of Corrections, 2011).