



**THE BAIL
PRaJECT**

**Freedom
should be
free.**

THE BAIL PROJECT

The Bail Project combats mass incarceration by disrupting the money bail system—one person at a time. **We restore the presumption of innocence, reunite families, and challenge a system that criminalizes race and poverty.** We're on a mission to end cash bail and create a more just, equitable, and humane pretrial system.

MISSION

VISION

MISSION

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Dear Friend,

This has been a year of unprecedented challenges, and yet, I have never been so inspired by the community of people who make The Bail Project possible. From our dedicated staff to our loyal supporters and the community of clients we have served, I am incredibly grateful to be on this journey together. There is a common thread of humanity, resilience, and determination in the stories I hear from our teams across the country, overcoming obstacles and innovating new processes for bailouts in these times of COVID-19; our clients who are beginning new lives and families; and our supporters who have stood by our side no matter what. In these stories, I find courage and, most importantly these days, hope.

Three years ago, we set out to challenge the injustices of the cash bail system and secure freedom for as many people as possible until we achieve meaningful pretrial reform and can put ourselves out of business. We are well on our way. In these pages, you will see what we've accomplished this year together. Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to creating a new day for justice in America.

Onward,

Robin Steinberg
CEO and Founder

THE BAIL CRISIS

EVERY YEAR, NEARLY 5 MILLION AMERICANS CHURN THROUGH LOCAL JAILS

Most will make critical decisions about their lives and legal cases based not on law or evidence, but on how much money they have.

Today, 1 in 2 adults in the U.S. has a family member who's been incarcerated. Mass incarceration is an American epidemic, and cash bail is one of its key drivers.

CASH BAIL ENTRENCHES SYSTEMIC RACISM.

If you are Black or Latino, a judge is likely to set a bail amount twice as high as the average bail set for a white person. As a result, you'll be more likely to plead guilty and forfeit your right to trial.

CASH BAIL IS EXPENSIVE.

We spend nearly \$14 billion tax dollars annually incarcerating people who have not been convicted of a crime and are presumed innocent.

Most Americans cannot afford a \$1,000 emergency expense. The Bail Project's average bail payment is more than twice that amount.

CASH BAIL UNDERMINES OUR RIGHTS.

It puts a price tag on our due process protections, creating a two-tiered system of justice: one for those with money and one for those without.

Cash bail is unnecessary and unjust. We must end it. **That's why The Bail Project exists.**



OUR IMPACT

Since the launch of our first site in 2018, we've bailed out over

11,775 PEOPLE TOTAL.

Today, we have community-based teams providing free bail assistance, day in and day out, in over **20 cities** across America.¹

With your support, we bailed out

5,834 PEOPLE THIS FISCAL YEAR ALONE,

while working with over 140 local organizations to connect our clients to social services and community resources as needed throughout their pretrial process.²

Your contributions power The Bail Project's **National Revolving Bail Fund**. Since our launch, we have posted **\$27.2 million** in bail,

PREVENTING OVER 100,000 DAYS OF INCARCERATION.³

It costs jurisdictions **over \$11 million** to hold people in pretrial incarceration that many days. Instead, those tax dollars could fully fund one of these supports/alternatives:

+52,900 students receiving youth-based substance use prevention education

+44,100 adults in job training programs

+16,000 days of inpatient mental health care for those with critical mental health needs

+2,400 individuals receiving a full year of drug treatment

Cash bail is based on the myth that people will not come back to court unless they have money on the line, but nationwide our clients have returned to **nearly 90%** of their court dates, even though they have no financial obligation to us or the courts.

Our teams have provided court notifications and other support for over **27,457 court appearances**, helping people get their day in court. **Freedom makes all the difference:** Of those whose cases have closed, **nearly 40%** had their cases entirely dismissed, and **less than 10%** had to spend additional days in jail as part of a sentence.

Using data and the power of human stories, we are taking a clear and indisputable case for bail reform to policy makers and the American public.

¹ All figures as of June 30, 2020

² Fiscal Year 2020 = July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020

³ Donated dollars revolve in our fund at an average of twice per year as bail payments come back at the end of a case.



OUR STRATEGY

THE CASH BAIL SYSTEM HAS CREATED A HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN OUR JAILS AND A CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS IN OUR COURTS.

The Bail Project responds on both fronts through immediate bail assistance at scale and a multifaceted strategy to end cash bail and demonstrate a community-based alternative for pretrial release.

We expanded our national effort during Fiscal Year 2020 by launching teams in seven new cities and forming strategic partnerships in three others. We also grew our central support hub with experts in data, policy, and legal advocacy, and launched our roadmap for reform beyond the elimination of cash bail (aftercashbail.org).

Today, The Bail Project is an agile organization that is helping thousands of people every year, challenging the status quo, and offering solutions by working with over 140 direct service partners across the nation to put our model of **Community Release with Support** into action.

Together, we will end cash bail and help reimagine the criminal legal system from the ground up.



LOCATIONS

Spokane, WA
Los Angeles, CA
San Diego, CA
Phoenix, AZ
San Antonio, TX
San Marcos, TX
Houston, TX

Oklahoma City, OK
Tulsa, OK
Fayetteville, AR
Baton Rouge, LA
New Orleans, LA
St. Louis, MO
Chicago, IL

Gary, IN
Indianapolis, IN
Louisville, KY
Cincinnati, OH
Detroit, MI
Cleveland, OH
Charlotte, NC
Augusta, GA



TERRANCE

LOUISVILLE, KY

Louisville, Kentucky, is home to one of The Bail Project's first sites. Our local effort is led by Operations Manager Shameka Parrish-Wright, a visionary activist and a pillar of her community. To date, Shameka and her team have provided free bail assistance to over 2,000 low-income Louisville residents, while building a support network of local resources to make sure people get the help they need upon release.

This year, Louisville became a national focus as protests erupted in response to the police killing of Breonna Taylor. Shameka and her team have stood by their community, providing support for people arrested during demonstrations, working with local pro bono attorneys to coordinate legal representation, and providing bail assistance to over two dozen protesters.

Terrance is one of them. He was arrested at a protest after attempting to help a Black woman who was being harassed by police. He was beaten so severely that his breathing is impaired to this day. Held on bail, he was also at risk of contracting COVID-19 at the jail before The Bail Project was able to post his bail.

KEANNA CHICAGO, IL

When the first cases of COVID-19 were reported in the U.S., we knew it would not take long before the virus entered overcrowded jails and spread inside like wildfire. Facilities like Cook County Jail in Chicago were sure to become hot spots, and our teams quickly jumped into action. While our advocacy team contacted court and city officials across the country, urging them to release people, our local teams figured out how to conduct bailouts without the option of going into jails or courts.

In April, as infections at Cook County Jail climbed from zero to several hundred in under two weeks, we allocated nearly a million dollars from our **National Revolving Bail Fund** to emergency bailouts in Chicago. We also partnered with the nonprofit TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities) to support people upon release, and with REFORM Alliance and other organizations to deliver thousands of face masks to the jail. In four weeks, our team bailed out over 500 people, including Keanna, who was pregnant at the time.





BYRON SPOKANE, WA

Cash bail and incarceration tear families apart. By providing free bail assistance, we not only protect the presumption of innocence—we also keep families together.

Families come in all shapes and sizes. Like Byron and Blade. Byron is a veteran. Blade is his loyal service dog. Together they live in a travel van.

When our Spokane team met Byron at the local jail, Byron broke into tears, worried about what would happen to Blade who had been taken to an animal shelter. He was more worried about Blade than anything else.

Fortunately, our team was able to post Byron's bail and accompany him to the animal shelter to retrieve Blade. At the shelter, Blade was scared and refused to leave the kennel until she saw Byron. After a week of separation, they were finally together, a human and his best friend.

Byron is one of the many clients we feature in our upcoming documentary *Freeing Spokane*, a film about mass incarceration and our work in the Lilac City.

JULIUS

LOS ANGELES, CA

COVID-19 has had a far-reaching impact beyond the spread of the deadly virus. Some of our most vulnerable minority communities are not only seeing higher rates of infection and death, but also unemployment.

In our home base of Los Angeles, our team reached out to local clients to ask how they were faring during these uncertain times. They spoke of layoffs. They worried about evictions. Some were expecting babies and did not know how they would make ends meet. There was anxiety but also voices of hope and resilience, like our client Julius, who before the pandemic used to visit his local community center to speak with teens about substance abuse prevention. A survivor of gun violence, Julius battles PTSD while staying focused on how he can make a difference in his community.

We share this sense of solidarity, and perhaps nobody embodies it better than our Director of Community Outreach, Dolores Canales, who quickly coordinated care package deliveries to several of our clients' families in Compton and other L.A. communities, after hearing about their experiences during the pandemic. Working in partnership with St. John's Well Child and Family Center, Initiate Justice, and the Sister Warriors Freedom Coalition, our team delivered food items, hygiene products, face masks, hand sanitizers, baby essentials, and information on where to receive free testing for COVID-19 to nearly 50 families.





S.L.

TULSA, OK

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

As tens of thousands of people of conscience began taking to the streets in response to the police killing of George Floyd, we used our existing infrastructure to offer support for those arrested and held on bail. We established a 24-hour emergency bailout hotline to field calls to our teams on the ground. In cities like Indianapolis and Louisville, our Bail Disruptors worked with community partners to staff information tables with Know-Your-Rights information, connections to legal services, food, and water. Across all our sites, we began posting bails for dozens of protesters.

In Oklahoma, the situation on the ground intensified as President Trump announced his first re-election rally in Tulsa in June, around the anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre. Our local team was able to help several protesters who were held on bail, including two teenagers in Oklahoma City, H.C. and S.L. (names withheld to protect their privacy), who were arrested while protesting and had their bails set at \$100,000 each.

TASHIRA

NEW ORLEANS, LA BATON ROUGE, LA

Across the country, The Bail Project partners with over 140 local direct service organizations to create community-based support systems for people coming out of jail in need of stable housing, treatment, and work. Partnerships make **Community Release with Support** possible. In New Orleans, we had the privilege of partnering this year with Operation Restoration, a visionary grassroots organization that's been leading the way in combating the mass incarceration of women and girls in Louisiana.

Louisiana's pretrial detention rate is three times the national average, and Black Louisianans are twice as likely to be jailed than their white counterparts. This year, Louisiana also faced one of the fastest-growing COVID-19 rates in the world, making the need for decarceration and bail reform even more urgent.

Our partnership with Operation Restoration's Safety and Freedom Fund in New Orleans complements our efforts in Baton Rouge, where our local team has bailed out nearly 200 people since last year, including Tashira, who is now pursuing her degree in criminal justice.





CRISTIAN SAN DIEGO, CA

Two years ago, when San Diego's federal courts implemented Operation Streamline to fast-track the mass prosecution of immigrants crossing the southern border, local civil rights organizations knew the legal and humanitarian disaster that was about to ensue.

Cash bail would play a key role in forcing people to take same-day pleas, resulting in convictions that limit access to immigration relief or asylum. So the Federal Defenders of San Diego reached out to The Bail Project, and we launched a site to pay bail for immigrants.

Since then, our local team has posted bail for nearly 1,000 people in San Diego, giving immigrants a fighting chance in court. Cristian is one of them. Like so many, he's doing everything in his power to keep his family together in the U.S.

This year, we are passing the baton through a partnership with Community Advocates for Just and Moral Governance, a San Diego-based legal advocacy organization, that will receive technical assistance and funding from The Bail Project to continue bailouts in the region.

JOCELYN

ST. LOUIS, MO

St. Louis City is home to The Bail Project's inaugural site, and our local efforts are led by Statewide Policy and Advocacy Manager for Missouri, Mike Milton. Under Mike's leadership, we have expanded free bail assistance to St. Louis County and neighboring St. Charles, helping nearly 3,000 low-income residents since 2018.

From the beginning, our local bailouts have been closely connected to the Campaign to Close the Workhouse, the city's infamous jail. The campaign is the result of close collaboration between Action St. Louis, ArchCity Defenders, and The Bail Project. When it launched, over 98% of people at the jail were held pretrial, mostly because of cash bail, and the majority came from Black communities. After two years of bailouts, advocacy, and organizing that brought the jail population down to less than 100 people, the campaign achieved a significant milestone this summer when the city's Board of Aldermen voted to close the jail and redirect tax dollars towards social services and community resources.

Jocelyn is one of the many incredible people we have met in this journey. Two years ago, she was trapped at the Workhouse before The Bail Project was able to post her bail. Since then, she's become a passionate advocate for reform and a member of the Campaign to Close the Workhouse.



We know that cash bail is not only unjust—functioning as a driver of mass incarceration and racial disparities in the legal system—but it’s also unnecessary and ineffective as a mechanism for ensuring people come back to court. We need to end it. Less obvious, however, is what ought to replace it.

But The Bail Project’s vision is clear: To effect real change, overall success in any bail reform effort should be measured by the level of decarceration and reduction of racial disparities in how criminal justice is applied, not just the abolition of cash bail.

POLICY
ROADMAP
POLICY
ROADMAP
POLICY
ROADMAP

This year, we released a roadmap to get us there. The framework is based on our experience working in diverse pretrial systems across the country and the collective expertise of our community-based teams. It proposes five basic principles that are essential to evaluate the merit of nearly any legislative proposal and help keep bail reform on track to meaningful change. Visit aftercashbail.org to learn more.



REMEMBERING CLINTON WASHINGTON

COVID-19 has now taken over one million human lives, each of them unique and precious. For The Bail Project family, that life was Clinton Washington, a dear colleague who channeled his passion for justice into his work as a Client Advocate at The Bronx Freedom Fund, our predecessor.

Clinton was deeply dedicated to his clients and the work he did at The Bronx Freedom Fund. He was a dedicated husband and father. He was a man of unwavering faith, a leader in his church, and someone who gave his whole self to his community. As The Bail Project launched, Clinton offered his knowledge and experience as the first Client Advocate of The Bronx Freedom Fund, to help shape the future role of Bail Disruptors.

Speaking at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City to mark Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Clinton highlighted the

injustice of cash bail and closed with a quote from Dr. King's Letter from a Birmingham Jail.

"The question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be. Will we be extremists for hate or for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice or for the extension of justice?"

The question could not be more relevant today. We will miss our friend and take solace in knowing that his legacy lives on in his community and contributions to The Bail Project.

“Will we be extremists for hate or for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice or for the extension of justice?”

OUR SUPPORTERS

Nearly 500,000 individuals, companies, and foundations power The Bail Project with contributions of all sizes, and their belief that rights should never be for sale and freedom should be free. Here's our **Supporter Spotlight** for Fiscal Year 2020.



ABBI JACOBSON AND ILANA GLAZER

Over the summer, The Bail Project teamed up with Abbi Jacobson and Ilana Glazer—from the hit Comedy Central show *Broad City*—to host a special fundraiser: *Abbi and Ilana's Sweepstakes to End Cash Bail*. In addition to raising over \$100,000 for our **National Revolving Bail Fund**, three lucky winners got an opportunity to hang out with Abbi and Ilana on Zoom.



Photo credit: Elizabeth Sampat @twoshooters

TANYA DEPASS/ @CYPHEROFTYR

A native of Chicago, Tanya DePass loves games—especially video games. Online, Tanya goes by the name @Cypheroftyr and is an avid player of action games. Passionate about social justice, Tanya is also founder of a nonprofit, I Need Diverse Games, which works to make the gaming industry more diverse and inclusive.

In June, as people across the country protested in defense of Black lives, Tanya decided to host a charity stream on Twitch, a gaming platform, to raise funds for The Bail Project and help those stuck in jail simply because they couldn't afford bail. Within just a few days, @Cypheroftyr—along with a team of gamers from all over cyberspace—raised over \$350,000 for our **National Revolving Bail Fund**.



AL AND AUDREY RATNER

In June 2018, Holley and Rob Martens emailed The Bail Project, asking what they could do to help start a local site in Cuyahoga County. Within just a few weeks, they had organized a meeting with other community members who were also eager to help. A year later, The Bail Project – Cleveland launched.

As our Cleveland team began posting people's bails and engaging local media to educate the public about the bail crisis, Holley and Rob continued raising support across the city. Collaborating with Erica and Cecil Lipscomb, executive director of the United Black Fund of Greater Cleveland, to co-host a fundraiser in late 2019, this dynamic team then invited two additional community

leaders, Al and Audrey Ratner, to come together and form a local steering committee, Friends of The Bail Project – Cleveland. Launched this year in partnership with the Cleveland Foundation, the Friends group has already raised more than \$540,000 to fund our operations in Cuyahoga County.

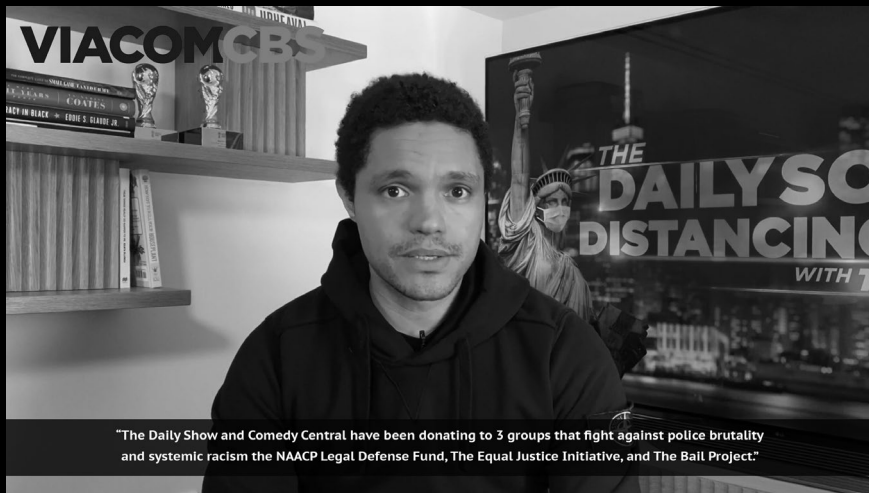


HOLLEY AND ROB MARTENS



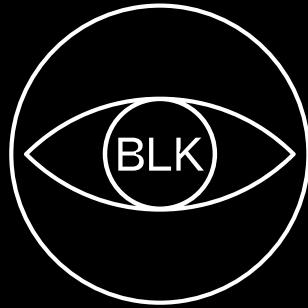
ERICA AND CECIL LIPSCOMB

FRIENDS OF THE BAIL PROJECT - CLEVELAND



VIACOM CBS

This summer, ViacomCBS and all their brand channels lent their support to nonprofit organizations fighting to end systemic racism in the criminal legal system. The Bail Project was among the select group, and we received \$800,000 to advance our mission to end cash bail and combat mass incarceration. *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* additionally raised over \$200,000 for The Bail Project by encouraging their audience to donate.



SEE IN BLACK

In response to police violence in Black communities, See In Black was formed as a collective of Black photographers working to dismantle white supremacy and systematic oppression. Through the sale of original images from Black photographers, See In Black raised funds to support several causes working in defense of Black lives—including over \$95,000 for The Bail Project.



HOPE TRIBBLE

Through her church, Broadway United Methodist Church in Indianapolis, Hope is very active in social justice causes across her community. As director of audit and performance for the City of Indianapolis-Marion County, Hope and her pastor, Rev. Mike Mather, reached out to The Bail Project in May 2018 asking how they could help bail out fellow residents of Indianapolis. With just a few phone calls, Hope connected The Bail Project with the Marion County Reentry Coalition, which helped establish the relationships that our team needed to get up and running.

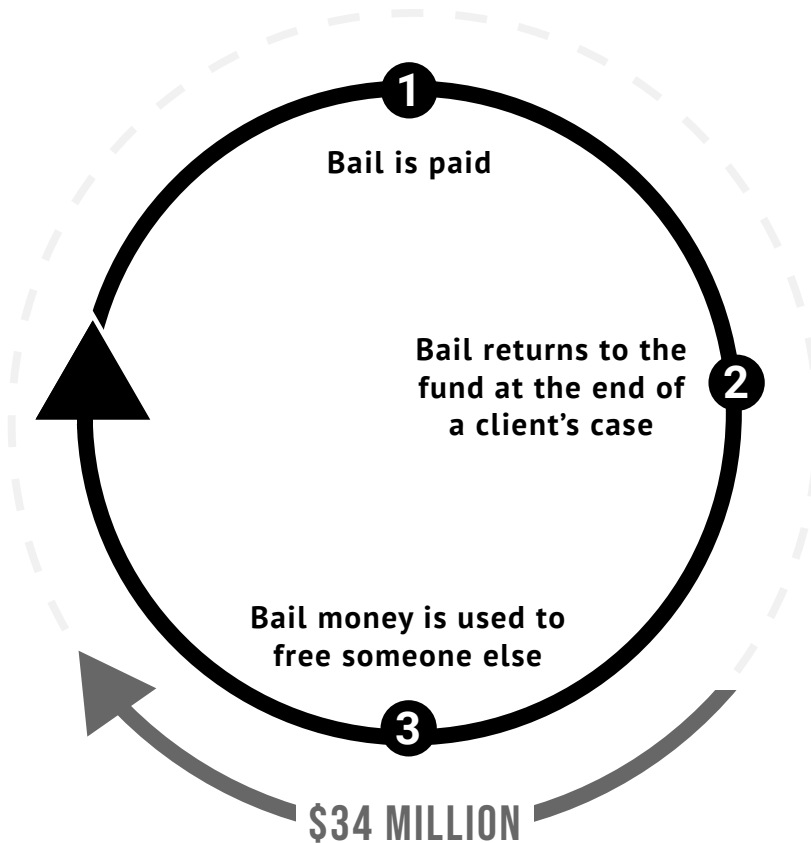
Not only did Hope make those initial introductions, she's been a consistent monthly donor and hosted a birthday fundraiser on Facebook, which raised more than \$1,000 for our **National Revolving Bail Fund**. And she's just getting started!

PETER HOYT & GEORGE WISHART

With the largest single jail site in the country and the possibility of statewide reform, Chicago is a crucial battleground for the future of pretrial justice in America. Thanks to the support and encouragement of Peter Hoyt and George Wishart, we were able to launch our Chicago site in the summer of 2019 and have been working tirelessly ever since to bring an immediate lifeline to hundreds of low-income residents trapped by cash bail. George and Peter have not only hosted fundraisers, raising over \$800,000 to support our work in Chicago, but have built a local community of allies equally invested in seeing bail reform come true.



THE REVOLVING FUND



The Bail Project's **National Revolving Bail Fund** is a powerful tool to combat mass incarceration. **100% of donations made through our website** go directly into the fund to provide free bail assistance to thousands of people every year.

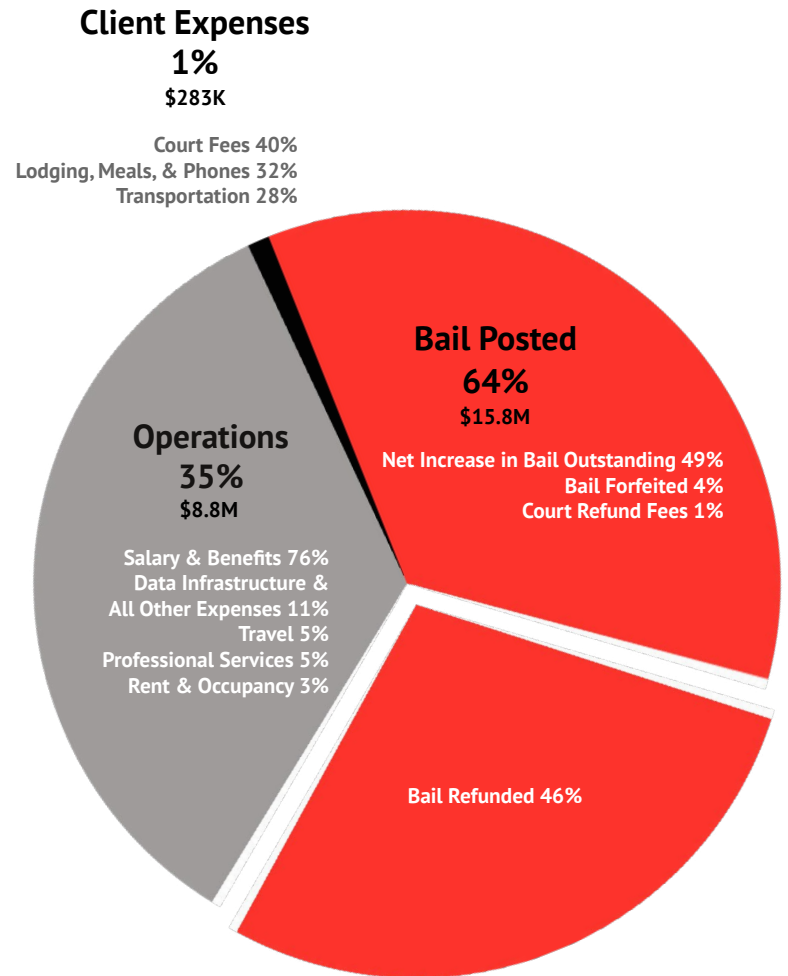
**THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT,
THE FUND IS \$34 MILLION
AS OF THE END OF FISCAL
YEAR 2020.**

Since 2018, we've used \$27.2 million to conduct over 11,775 bailouts. Of that \$27.2 million, \$11.6 million has already been returned to the fund after people's cases closed and recycled to pay new bails.⁴

⁴All figures as of June 30, 2020 and include bail posted by partnerships sites

FINANCIALS

In FY20, The Bail Project raised over \$41 million in donations and pledges from more than 468,000 individual donors.



THANK YOU
THANK YOU
THANK YOU

