

California first state to eliminate bail; will free nonviolent suspects within 12 hours

[Matt Richardson](#)

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[Video](#)

[California eliminates cash bail](#)

California ends cash requirement in bail assessments saying current system favors rich; Jeff Paul reports.

Suspects awaiting trial in California will now have their bail eliminated, according to a bill signed by Democratic Gov. Jerry Brown on Tuesday.

In lieu of bail, suspects will be gauged under a risk-assessment system, although the details of the program, which will take effect in October 2019, were not immediately clear.

Suspects looking at serious, violent felonies won't be eligible for release prior to trial but the majority of suspects arrested for nonviolent misdemeanors will be let go within 12 hours of being booked, according to the legislation.

The bill gives officials 24 hours to determine whether other suspects should be released before trial. That time can be extended by 12 hours if necessary.

"Today, California reforms its bail system so that rich and poor alike are treated fairly," Brown said in a statement, according to [The Sacramento Bee](#).

Brown's signature gives the state's Judicial Council, the policy-making body for California's courts, broad authority to reshape pretrial detention policies.

Each county will use the council's framework as a basis to set its own procedures for deciding whom to release before trial, potentially creating a patchwork system based on where a suspect lives.

Senate Bill 10, the formal title of the legislation, was approved by the legislature earlier this month, according to The Sacramento Bee, but faced significant opposition from the bail industry prior to Brown's signing on Tuesday.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.