

Nancy G. La Vigne, PhD

Nancy La Vigne is an American criminologist and criminal justice policy expert whose research spans policing reform, federal corrections reform, reentry from prison, criminal justice technologies, and evidence-based criminal justice practices. She is best known for bridging the divide between researchers, practitioners, and policymakers, serving in a translational role to promote data-driven and research informed improvements to policy and practice.

La Vigne currently serves as dean of the School of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University-Newark. Previously she was a presidential appointee in the Biden-Harris administration, serving as director of the National Institute of Justice, the U.S. Department of Justice's research, technology, and evaluation agency. La Vigne oversaw the competitive review and allocation of ~\$90M in research grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts annually, covering topics such as policing, forensics, corrections, victimization, violence reduction, juvenile justice, and criminal justice technologies. Prior to her appointment as NIJ director, La Vigne was a senior fellow with the Council on Criminal Justice, where she served as executive director of the Council's Task Force on Policing.

From 2009 to 2020, La Vigne was vice president of justice policy at the Urban Institute (Urban), a nonprofit social policy research organization based in Washington, DC. Over the course of a decade at Urban, she directed the Institute's Justice Policy Center, leading a staff of over 50 researchers and managing an annual departmental budget of ~\$10 million. From 2014-2016, she was also executive director of the congressionally mandated bipartisan Charles Colson Task Force on Federal Corrections Reform. Before becoming director of the Justice Policy Center in 2009, La Vigne served for eight years as a senior research associate at Urban, leading groundbreaking research on prison reentry.

Before joining Urban, La Vigne was the founding director of the Crime Mapping Research Center at the National Institute of Justice. She later served as special assistant to the acting assistant attorney general for the Office of Justice Programs within the Department of Justice, leading strategic initiatives and serving as liaison to the Office of the Attorney General under Janet Reno. She earlier served as research director for the Texas sentencing commission.

La Vigne has delivered invited testimony before Congress on evidence-based criminal justice interventions, reentry from prison and jail, and state and federal criminal justice reform. A seasoned spokesperson, she has been featured in major media outlets such as NPR's *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered*, and *Marketplace*, as well as *Atlantic Monthly*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Chicago Tribune*.

La Vigne holds a PhD from Rutgers School of Criminal Justice, a MA in Public Affairs from the LBJ School at the University of Texas-Austin, and a BA in Government and Economics from Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts.