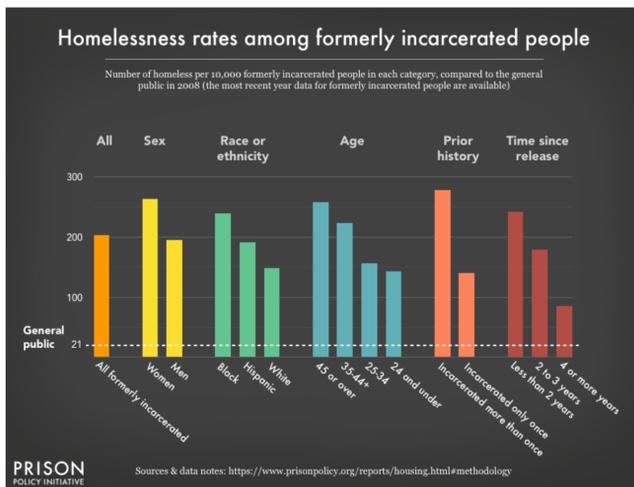


Advocacy Weekly Wrap

ISSUE 4: NOVEMBER 19, 2020

ISSUE SPOTLIGHT:

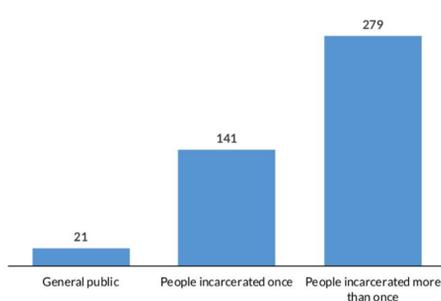
Incarceration & Homelessness: The Revolving Door



- **Incarceration and homelessness have a cyclic relationship.** Formerly incarcerated people are almost [10 times more likely to be homeless](#) than the general public. Homeless individuals are more likely to be incarcerated (or reincarcerated) due to laws that criminalize homelessness. This cycle of incarceration and release is termed “The Revolving Door.”
- **People with criminal histories have a hard time finding housing due to various systemic regulations.** Many landlords do not accept tenants with criminal record histories. One study suggests that [67% of property managers and owners](#) surveyed indicated that they inquire about criminal history on rental applications. Many public housing officials also require the use of credit checks, large security deposits and other housing application requirements that could prevent previously incarcerated people from acquiring housing.
- **Incarceration for homeless individuals is far more likely due to policies that criminalize homelessness.** These policies enforce ticketing of actions like panhandling, sleeping in public spaces, public urination, etc. Many homeless individuals may not be able to pay the tickets for these offenses and the [tickets would go to warrant and the individuals would go to jail](#). Those that have been recently released from incarceration may be even more likely to be reincarcerated due to the probation system present in the American criminal justice system.
- **A “Housing First” strategy could be effective in alleviating this cycle.** The central concept in “Housing First” is that [finding permanent housing is the foundation for further improvement of one’s quality of life](#). Basic necessities (like housing and food) must be prioritized over other less critical things (like occupation, budgeting, etc). There should be no prerequisites to acquire permanent housing.
- Other solutions to the “revolving door” cycle:
 1. **Implement programs that help recently released prisoners find permanent housing.** This can be done through social programs or government-enforced financial aid (housing vouchers).
 2. **Ban discriminatory practices used by housing authorities.** These include things like background checks for criminal history, credit checks, large housing deposits, among others.
 3. **End the criminalization of homelessness.** Advocacy against policies that criminalize things like sleeping on the street, public urination, and other actions that specifically target homeless populations.

People Incarcerated More Than Once Are 13 Times More Likely to Experience Homelessness Than the General Public

Number of people experiencing homelessness per 10,000 people in 2008



LEARN MORE

Statement: [Housing First](#) (National Alliance to End Homelessness)

Publication: [“Stopping the Revolving Door: How Health Centers Can Serve Justice-Involved Populations”](#) (CSH)

Webinar: [“Policing, Incarceration, Homelessness, & COVID-19”](#) (National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty)

Article: [“Five Charts that Explain the Homelessness-Jail Cycle and How to Break It”](#) (Urban)

ACTION ITEMS:

- **Watch a webinar on incarceration & homelessness (1.5 hours):**
 - Watch the [linked webinar](#) on policing, incarceration, homelessness & COVID-19 and write a brief reflection on it (2-3 paragraphs). The reflection can be a summary of what was said as well as your own personal thoughts on the topic at hand. You can turn in this reflection under the task description question of the service hours form!
- **Oppose the criminalization of homelessness [continued from last week]:**
 - As you might know from the last newsletter, LA City Council has delayed the vote on the [October 21 motion](#) to criminalize homelessness to [November 24th](#).
 - To recap what this motion includes, it calls for the amendment of LA Municipal codes 41.58 and 56.11, allowing the city to ban:
 - Sitting, sleeping or lying down within 500 feet of freeways, ramps, and tunnels
 - Sitting, sleeping or lying down within 500 feet of any facility opened after January 2018 that provides housing, shelter, services, safe parking, or storage to unhoused people
 - Storing property in the areas listed above
 - **What you can do:** (do both to get 0.5 hour)
 - Call and email City Council to demand that they oppose this motion ([link to instructions and sample scripts](#)). The LA Council Member for Westwood is [Paul Koretz](#).
 - Email: paul.koretz@lacity.org
 - Phone number: +1 (213) 473-7005
 - Submit a written public comment ([link to LA Public Comment Form](#)).

Thank you so much for reading! If you found this informative, please share! If you would like to subscribe, [click here](#).

HP Members: If you have completed action items and would like to report them for hours, please complete [this form](#) (also available on the “Members” page of the Hunger Project Website).

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