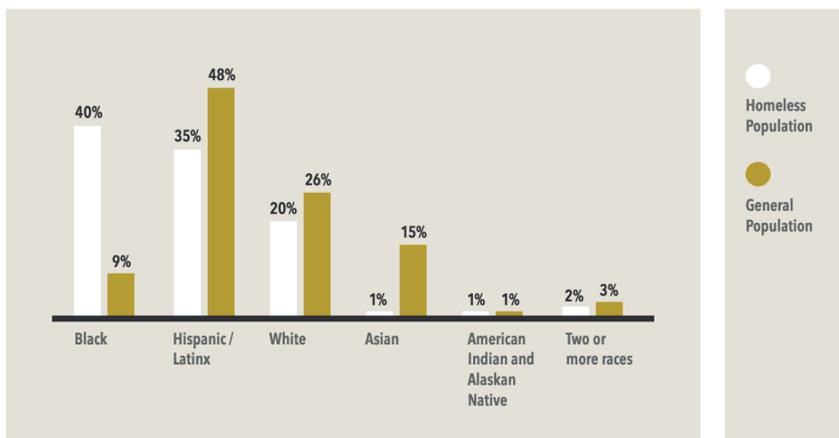


Advocacy Weekly Wrap

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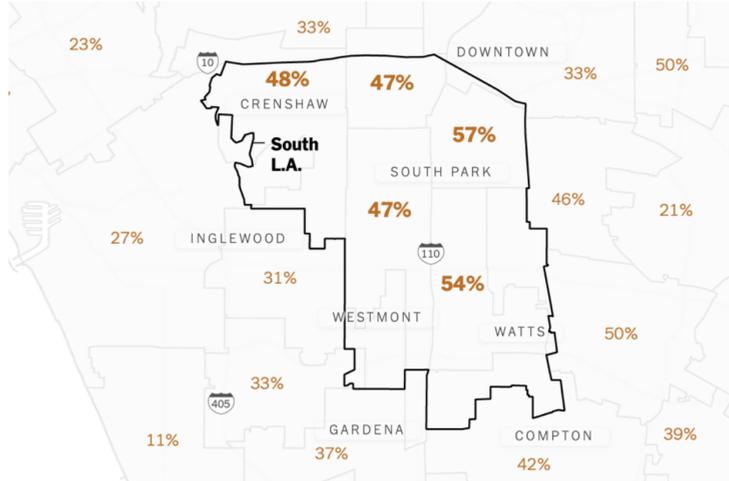
ISSUE SPOTLIGHT: Racial Disparities Among the Unhoused Population in LA

GRAPH 1: Homeless Population vs. General Population, by Race & Ethnicity, Los Angeles Continuum of Care, 2017



Source: Los Angeles Homelessness Services Authority

- While Black individuals make up 8-9% of the population of LA, they make up around 33%-40% of the unhoused population for any given year, according to data from the [LAHSA Greater Los Angeles Homelessness Count](#) from the past 5 years.
- According to a 2018 report by LAHSA's Ad Hoc Committee Report on Black People Experiencing Homelessness, Black Angelenos disproportionately face homelessness at higher rates due to multiple factors including:
 - **The Revolving Door Effect:**
 - Black individuals are overrepresented in California's criminal justice system, [making up 6% of the state population but 30% of those who are incarcerated](#). This is due to California's legacy of [discriminatory policing and criminal justice policies](#) that disproportionately affect Black residents.
 - Having a felony record makes it [very difficult](#) to find a good job or lease an apartment, which can lead to [housing insecurity among the formerly incarcerated](#).
 - Unhoused people in LA are also more likely to [come in contact with law enforcement](#) and wind up in the criminal justice system due to policies in place that [criminalize homelessness](#), further contributing to the cycle.
 - **Discrimination in LA's Rental and Real Estate Market:**
 - Black Angelenos have been historically and systematically [excluded from housing opportunities](#). Part of this is due to [redlining and exclusionary zoning policies](#), which made it difficult for individuals to take out mortgages in certain neighborhoods, especially in Black communities. To this day, Black people have a [harder time getting mortgage applications approved](#) and often face higher fees and interest rates compared to white borrowers.
 - Consequently, Black homeownership has declined at nearly [5 times the rate](#) of white ownership over the past 50 years. The consequences of these practices prevents the [accumulation of generational wealth](#) for Black families. It also leaves people with no option but to rental in increasingly unaffordable neighborhoods.
 - **Employment Discrimination:**
 - Black people [face systematic discrimination in the labor market](#), which makes it more difficult to find jobs that pay enough to keep up with the high cost of living in Los Angeles.
 - **Bias in Child Welfare:**
 - Black children are more likely to be [removed from their families](#) in Los Angeles due to biases among child welfare case workers. Being in the foster care system significantly impacts the likelihood of experiencing homelessness in the future.
 - **Racial Bias in Everyday Life:**
 - As the LAHSA put it, ["it is impossible to untangle the pervasive effects of institutional racism from other system failures that together cause a person to experience homelessness."](#)



Share of Black Households experiencing severe rent burdens. In historically redlined South LA, the share of Black households experiencing severe rent burdens is about 50%, exceeding those in surrounding areas. (Source: New York Times)

- **What can be done to address this issue:** In a [115 page report](#), LAHSA outlined the urgent need for policy and systems change in Los Angeles, giving 67 recommendations about how stakeholders can act. Among their recommendations:
 - Act to **eliminate structural bias in government** and advance racial equity through policy.
 - Implement a means of **enforcement against discriminatory practices** in housing and employment.
 - Develop stronger mechanisms to **promote fair hiring practices** and improve workforce programs tailored to and accessible to Black people.
 - **Expand reentry support** for formerly incarcerated individuals, including services for mental health, job-training, and mentoring.
 - Address bias in the foster care system and improve more resources and **support for youth leaving foster care**.

LEARN MORE:

- [Article](#): "Black, Homeless and Burdened by L.A.'s legacy of Racism" (New York Times)
- [Article](#): "The Unsurprising Reason More Black Americans Are Becoming Homeless" (Curbed LA)
- [Toolkit](#): "Racial Equity Resources" (National Alliance to End Homelessness)

IN THE NEWS:

- On April 20, a federal judge ordered LA city and county to [offer shelter to all unhoused residents of Skid Row by the fall](#).
 - In response, activists have pointed out that merely offering shelter is an inadequate solution to the city's homelessness crisis, citing concerns that [it will further lead to the criminalization of unhoused residents](#).
 - In addition, unhoused Skid Row residents have raised concerns about the [quality of shelters offered by the city](#), pointing out that "dorm style" bridge-home shelters and tiny house villages do little to offer privacy and are without attached bathrooms.
- The first ["government-run homeless encampment"](#) opened this week in East Hollywood.
 - Located in an empty parking lot, it provides toilets, showers, and meals to unhoused individuals. The approximate cost of the program per individual per month: \$2,663. That's [higher than what a typical one-bedroom apartment rents in LA](#).

ACTION ITEMS:

- Watch [this video](#) and listen to [this podcast](#) about redlining and its effects on segregation and write a short reflection (~1 paragraph) about something you learned (1 hour).
- [Join the Advocacy Slack channel!](#) There, we hope to post information and action items (for hours) on a more regular basis than this newsletter.

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

Special thanks to Victor for helping out with the newsletter this week!

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