

Nowhere to Go: Homelessness among formerly incarcerated people

By [Lucius Couloute](#)
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It's hard to imagine building a successful life without a place to call home, but this basic necessity is often out of reach for formerly incarcerated people. Barriers to [employment](#), combined with explicit discrimination, have created a little-discussed housing crisis.

In this report, we provide the first estimate of homelessness among the 5 million formerly incarcerated people living in the United States, finding that formerly incarcerated people are **almost 10 times more likely to be homeless** than the general public. We break down this data by race, gender, age and other demographics; we also show how many formerly incarcerated people are forced to live in places like hotels or motels, [↗](#) just one step from homelessness itself.

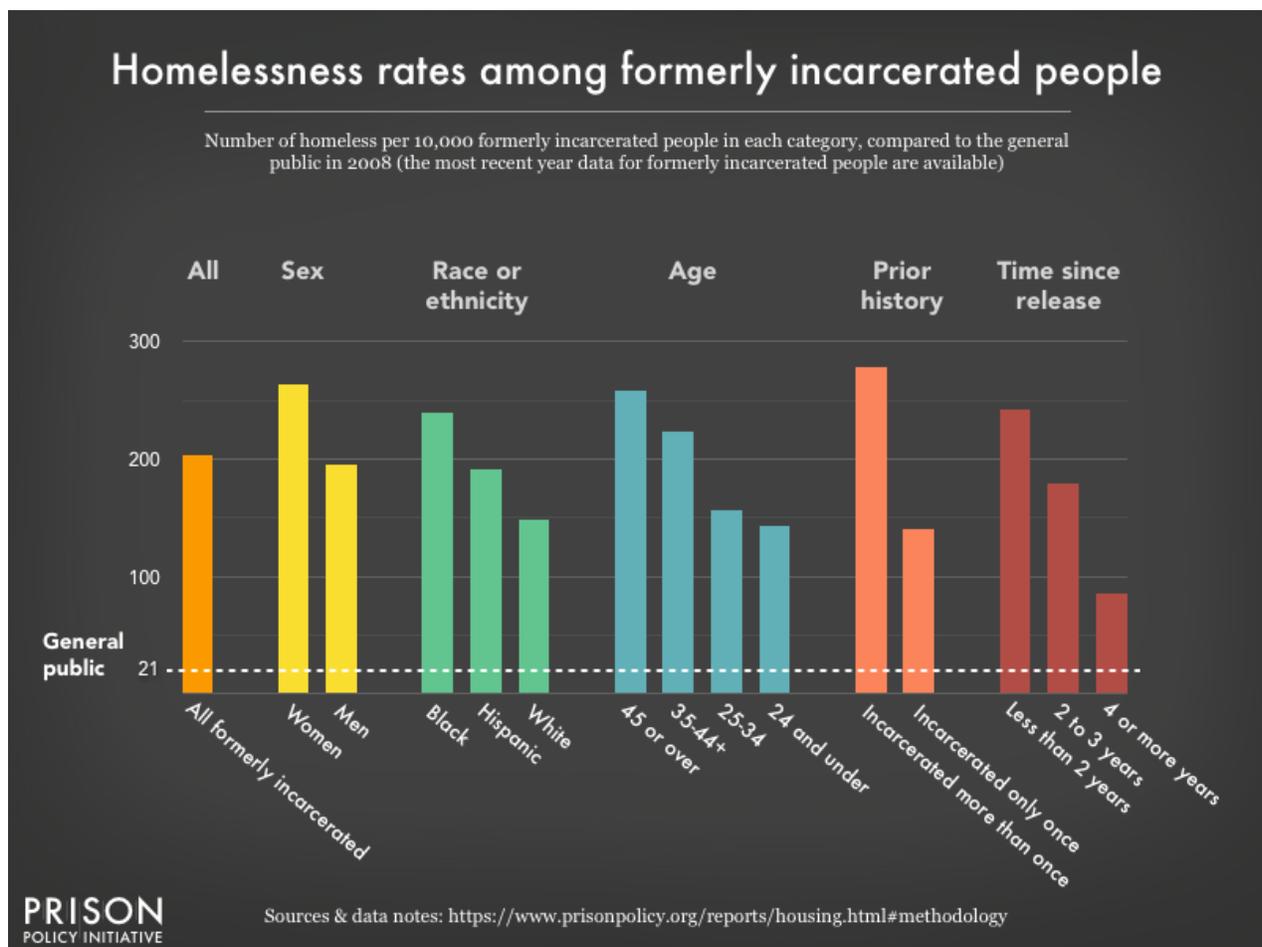


Figure 1. 2% of formerly incarcerated people were homeless in 2008 (the most recent year for which data are available), a rate nearly 10 times higher than among the general public.

Homelessness among formerly incarcerated people

The transition from prison to the community is rife with challenges. But before formerly incarcerated people can address health problems, find stable jobs, or learn new skills, they need a place to live.

This report provides the first national snapshot of homelessness among formerly incarcerated people, using data from a little-known Bureau of Justice Statistics survey. Our analysis builds on existing research showing that past incarceration and homelessness are linked. National research suggests that up to 15% of incarcerated people experience homelessness in the year before admission to prison. And city- and state-level studies of homeless shelters find that many formerly incarcerated people rely on shelters, both immediately after their release and over the long term.

We find that rates of homelessness are especially high among specific demographics:

- People who have been incarcerated more than once [↗](#)
- People recently released from prison [↗](#)
- People of color and women [↗](#)

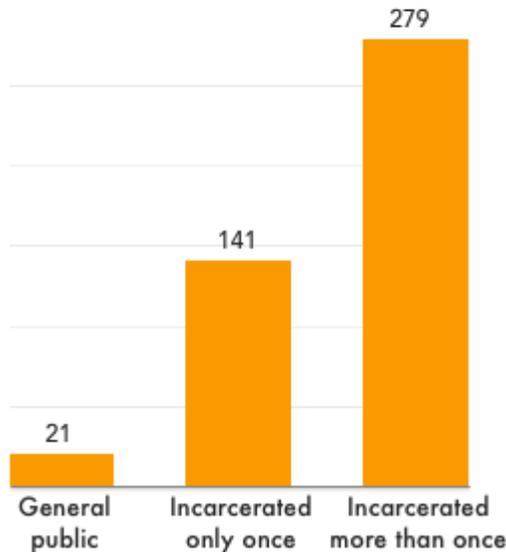
In the following sections, we take a closer look at these populations. We also break down how many formerly incarcerated people are living in marginal housing [↗](#) - a step away from homelessness.

The revolving door & homelessness

We find that people experiencing cycles of incarceration and release - otherwise known as the “revolving door” of incarceration - are also more likely to be homeless.

The revolving door of prison contributes to homelessness

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



People who have been to prison just once experience homelessness at a rate nearly 7 times higher than the general public. But people who have been incarcerated *more than once* have rates *13 times higher* than the general public. In other words, people who have been incarcerated multiple times are twice as likely to be homeless as those who are returning from their first prison term.

Unfortunately, being homeless makes formerly incarcerated people more likely to be arrested and incarcerated again, thanks to policies that criminalize homelessness. As law enforcement agencies aggressively enforce “offenses” such as sleeping in public spaces, panhandling, and public urination - not to mention other low-level offenses that are more visible when committed in public - formerly incarcerated people are unnecessarily funneled back through the “revolving door.”

Homelessness among recently-released individuals

Previous research has shown that formerly incarcerated people are most likely to be homeless in the period shortly after their release. Our data supports this research: We find that people who spent two years or less in the community were more than twice as likely to be homeless as those who had been out of prison for four years or longer.

Homelessness among recently released individuals is a fixable problem. States can - and should - develop more efficient interagency systems to help formerly incarcerated people find homes. But

longer-term support is also needed: Our analysis found that even people who had spent several years in the community were 4 times more likely to be homeless than the general public.

A closer look: sheltered and unsheltered homelessness by race and gender

Within the broad category of homelessness, there are two distinct populations: people who are **sheltered** (in a homeless shelter) and those who are **unsheltered** (without a fixed residence).

We find - in keeping with previous research on homelessness in the general public - that the sheltered and unsheltered formerly incarcerated populations have significant demographic differences.

For example, we find important differences by gender. Overall, formerly incarcerated women are more likely to be homeless than formerly incarcerated men. But among homeless formerly incarcerated people, men are less likely to be *sheltered* than women, whether for reasons of availability or personal choice.

Table 1. Rates of sheltered and unsheltered homelessness per 10,000 formerly incarcerated people by gender.

	Homeless(Rate per 10,000)	Sheltered(Rate per 10,000)	Unsheltered(Rate per 10,000)
Men	195	90	105
Women	264	156	108
Total	203	98	105

Unsheltered homelessness by race and gender

We find that formerly incarcerated Black men have much higher rates of unsheltered homelessness than white or Hispanic men.

The data also suggests that women of color experience unsheltered homelessness at higher rates than white women. (Though there were too few unsheltered formerly incarcerated Black and Hispanic women in our dataset to analyze, the rate of unsheltered homelessness among white women was substantially lower than the rate for women generally. Therefore, it is clear that formerly incarcerated Black and/or Hispanic women experience unsheltered homelessness at significantly higher rates than white women.)

Table 2. Rates of unsheltered homelessness per 10,000 formerly incarcerated people by race and gender. To compare rates of homelessness (sheltered, unsheltered, and all homelessness) and housing insecurity for all groups in our dataset, see [Appendix Table 2](#).

	Black(Rate per 10,000)	Hispanic(Rate per 10,000)	White(Rate per 10,000)	Total(Rate per 10,000)
Men	124	82	81	105
Women	n/a	n/a	87	108
All	123	90	82	105

Sheltered homelessness by race and gender

Black women experienced the highest rate of sheltered homelessness - nearly four times the rate of white men, and twice as high as the rate of Black men. Combined with our breakdowns of race and gender separately (see [Figure 1](#)), this analysis shows that Black women face severe barriers to housing after release.

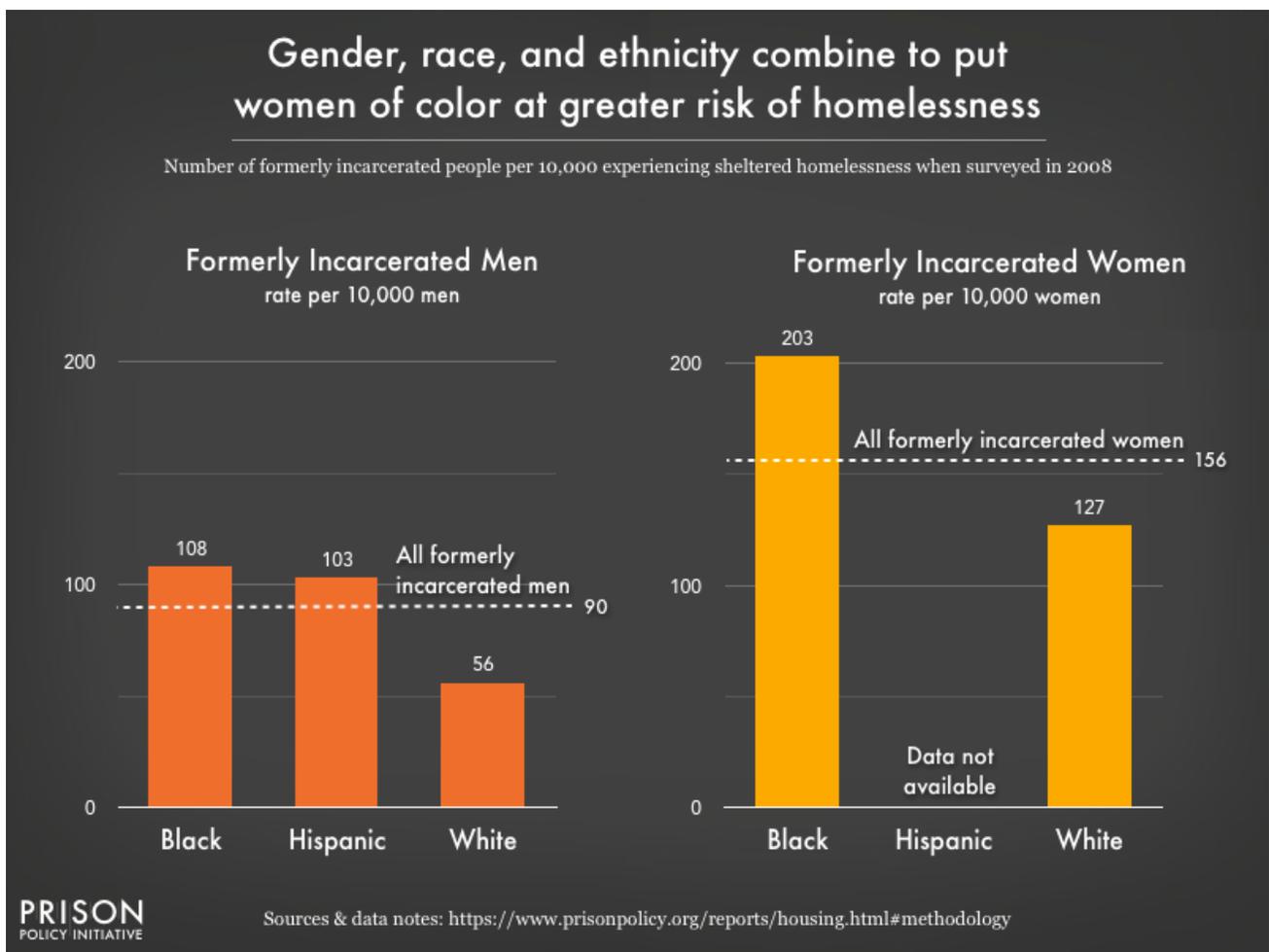


Figure 2. Rates of sheltered homelessness among formerly incarcerated people differ widely by race and gender, with Black women nearly four times more likely than white men to be living in a homeless shelter.

The high rates of homelessness among Black women are especially striking in light of [our similar finding](#), last month, that unemployment rates among formerly incarcerated Black women were higher than any other demographic group. Our findings illustrate that Black women, in particular, have been excluded from the social resources necessary to succeed after incarceration.

Almost homeless: Housing insecurity among formerly incarcerated people

Measuring homelessness among formerly incarcerated people is a critical step forward, but it doesn't fully capture the exclusion of formerly incarcerated people from *stable housing* - the kind of housing most people need to thrive and contribute to their communities.

To better measure the scope of the problem, we created a second metric - **housing insecurity** - that includes formerly incarcerated people who are homeless (both sheltered and unsheltered) as well as those living in **marginal housing** like rooming houses, hotels, or motels.

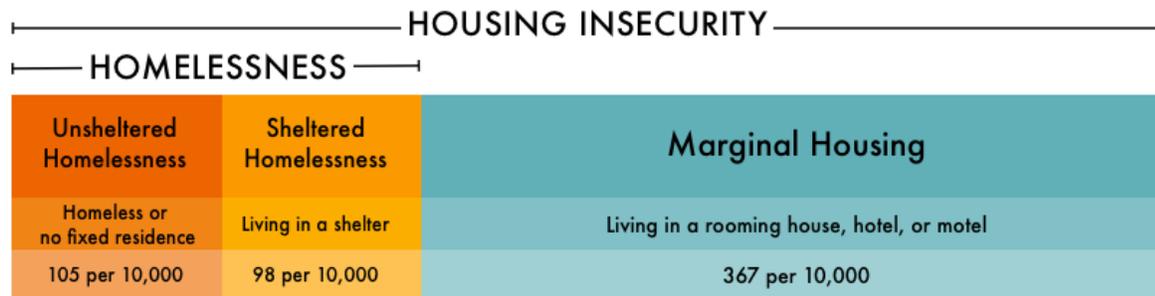


Figure 3. Housing insecurity includes people who are **homeless** as well as those living in **marginal housing**. 570 out of every 10,000 formerly incarcerated people fall into one of these categories, making housing insecurity nearly three times more common than homelessness alone.

Housing insecurity provides a more realistic measurement of the number of formerly incarcerated people denied access to permanent housing. While we found that 203 out of every 10,000 formerly incarcerated people were homeless, nearly three times as many - 570 out of every 10,000 - were housing insecure.

We also uncovered notable demographic differences by expanding our view to the housing insecure population: Hispanics, for example, were more likely than people of any other race to live in marginal housing. Men had much higher rates of marginal housing than women, resulting

in high rates of housing insecurity. And older formerly incarcerated people experienced the highest rates of housing insecurity.

Ideally, this report would directly compare the prevalence of housing insecurity among formerly incarcerated people to that of the general public. Unfortunately, the [equivalent national statistics](#) on housing insecurity do not yet exist. Even without that comparison, however, it's clear that having been to prison is a major risk factor for housing insecurity.

Causes and consequences of housing insecurity after release

Stable housing is the foundation of successful reentry from prison. Unfortunately, as our data show, many formerly incarcerated people struggle to find stable places to live. Discrimination by public housing authorities and private property owners, combined with affordable housing shortages, continues to drive the exclusion of formerly incarcerated people from the housing market.

Part of the problem is that property owners and public housing authorities have the ability to implement their own screening criteria to determine if an applicant merits housing - a process that often relies upon criminal record checks as the primary source of information. In practice, this means local authorities and landlords have wide discretion to punish people with criminal records even after their sentences are over.

The use of credit checks, exorbitant security deposits, and other housing application requirements - such as professional references - can also act as systemic barriers for people who have spent extended periods of time away from the community and [out of the labor market](#).

Excluding formerly incarcerated people from safe and stable housing has devastating side effects: It can reduce access to healthcare services (including addiction and mental health treatment), make it harder to secure a job, and prevent formerly incarcerated people from accessing educational programs. Severe homelessness and housing insecurity destabilizes the entire reentry process.

Fortunately, on-the-ground advocates across the country have made important progress in reducing overall homelessness. But an estimated 550,000 people are still homeless on any given night in the United States, many of them individuals with a history of criminal justice system contact. It's critical that policymakers develop comprehensive responses to this problem, rather than continuing to punish those without homes.

All people - and particularly those carrying the stigma of criminalization - need these solutions. In such a wealthy country, it's time we eliminate homelessness for good.

Conclusion

This report provides the first national estimates of homelessness among formerly incarcerated people, but these estimates likely understate the problem. Because the effects of intermittent homelessness last longer than your last night on the street, the best measures of homeless include those who have *experienced* homelessness in the last year. However, there is not yet a way to calculate this fuller picture of homelessness among formerly incarcerated people.

Nevertheless, our findings make it clear that the 600,000 people released from prisons each year face a housing crisis in urgent need of solutions. State and local reentry organizations must make housing a priority, and provide additional services thereafter - a strategy known as “Housing First.” If formerly incarcerated people are legally and financially excluded from safe, stable, and affordable housing, they cannot be expected to successfully reintegrate into their communities.

Recommendations

Excluding formerly incarcerated people from stable housing harms not only individuals, but public safety and the economy at large. State- and city-level policymakers have the power to solve this housing crisis:

1. **States should create clear-cut systems to help recently-released individuals find homes.** Even in states like New York, there is often “[no central, coordinating force](#)” set up to ensure that people leaving prison will land somewhere other than a shelter. Improved systems should help incarcerated people understand their housing options before release; find pathways to both short-term and permanent housing; and receive financial supports, such as housing vouchers, from the state.
2. **Ban the box on housing applications.** Cities and states should ensure that public housing authorities and landlords evaluate housing applicants as individuals, rather than explicitly excluding people with criminal records in housing advertisements or applications. A criminal record is not a good proxy for one’s suitability as a tenant.
3. **End the criminalization of homelessness.** Cities should end the aggressive enforcement of quality-of-life ordinances. Arresting, fining, and jailing homeless people for acts related to their survival is not only cruel; it also funnels formerly incarcerated people back through the “revolving door” of homelessness and punishment, which reduces their chances of successful reentry at great cost to public safety.
4. **Expand social services for the homeless, focusing on “Housing First.”** States like Utah have made permanent housing for the chronically homeless a budget priority. [This successful approach](#) acknowledges that stable homes are often necessary before people can address unemployment, illness, substance use disorder, and other problems. “Housing First” reforms, along with expanded social services, would help to disrupt the revolving door of release and reincarceration.

Appendix

To the extent possible, this report uses terms commonly found in the literature on homelessness in the United States. However, given the limitations of the data set we used, the **terms and definitions used in this report** are not always consistent with those used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which is the data source we use for comparisons with the general public. Appendix Table 1, below, summarizes the differences between the terms used in this report and terms used by HUD.

Appendix Table 1. By necessity, our definitions of homelessness and housing insecurity differ slightly from those used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Term	Definitions used in this report	Equivalent Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definitions
Homelessness	<p data-bbox="391 1150 834 1220">Includes people who reported their current, usual residence as:</p> <ul data-bbox="440 1262 753 1367" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="440 1262 594 1293">• a shelter <li data-bbox="440 1297 753 1367">• homeless or no fixed residence 	<p data-bbox="878 747 1422 894">“Literally homeless” includes any “Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:</p> <ul data-bbox="927 936 1422 1587" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="927 936 1422 1041">• Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; <li data-bbox="927 1045 1422 1367">• Is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, and local government programs); or <li data-bbox="927 1371 1422 1587">• Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.”
Sheltered Homelessness	Includes people who reported that they currently live in a shelter most	<p data-bbox="878 1629 1422 1808">Note that in 2008 (the reference year we use to compare HUD data to our own) this category included people exiting an institution where they had resided for 30 days or less, not 90 days.</p> <p data-bbox="878 1812 1422 1885">Includes individuals and families “who are staying in emergency shelters, transitional</p>

	of the time. The type of shelter was not specified.	housing programs, or safe havens.”
Unsheltered Homelessness	Includes people who reported that they are currently homeless or have no fixed residence most of the time.	Includes people “whose primary nighttime location is a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for people (for example, the streets, vehicles, or parks.)”
Marginal housing	Includes people who reported currently living in a rooming house, hotel, or motel most of the time. Unlike the HUD definition, this is not exclusive to those whose housing is being paid for by charitable organizations or government programs.	HUD does not use this term, but includes people living in hotels and motels paid for by charitable or government programs in its definition of “literally homeless.”
		HUD does not use this measure, but includes children living in a hotel or motel due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations in its description of “Additional Forms of Homelessness and Housing Instability,” using data from the U.S. Department of Education. Other living situations included in HUD’s analysis of additional forms of homelessness and housing instability include:
Housing Insecurity	A combined measure that includes people experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness, and people living in marginal housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “People who live with another household and then move out; • People who move into a unit with a pre-existing household;... and • Low-income renters who are severely rent burdened, have severe housing problems, and have other indicators of instability such as missed rent payments or no good choice for a destination if evicted.”
Source	National Former Prisoner Survey (2008)	<p>U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For “literally homeless” definition: “Homeless Definition” • For sheltered and unsheltered

- homelessness definitions: The 2017 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress, [Definition of Terms](#) (p. 2-3)
- For housing instability definition: The 2016 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress: Part 2, [Additional Forms of Homelessness and Housing Instability](#) section (p. 3)

Appendix Table 2, below, summarizes **all of our findings on housing** from the National Former Prisoners Survey. Note that the “general public” rates come from our calculation of HUD homeless counts and Census Bureau population estimates for 2008, and that all data is reported as rates per 10,000 population.

Appendix Table 2. Homelessness (sheltered, unsheltered, and combined) and housing insecurity among formerly incarcerated people in 2008, by characteristics. Comparable “point in time” demographic information about people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity in the general public is not available.

		Sheltered Homeless (per 10,000)	Unsheltered Homeless (per 10,000)	Sheltered & Unsheltered Homeless (per 10,000)	Living in rooming house, hotel, or motel (per 10,000)	Total housing insecure (per 10,000)
General public	All general public	13	8	21	n/a	n/a
	All formerly incarcerated	98	105	203	367	570
Race or ethnicity	Black	117	123	240	358	598
	Hispanic	101	90	191	396	587
	White	66	82	148	350	498
Formerly incarcerated	Gender					
	Men	90	105	195	386	581
	Women	156	108	264	226	490
Race and gender	Black men	108	124	233	369	602
	Hispanic men	103	82	185	409	594
	White men	56	81	137	383	520
	Black women	203	n/a	n/a	247	n/a

	Hispanic women	n/a	n/a	n/a	297	n/a
	White women	127	87	214	158	371
Age	24 and under	52	91	143	132	274
	25-34	76	80	156	250	406
	35-44	113	111	224	327	551
	45 or older	124	134	258	607	865
	Less than 12 months	127	151	278	368	646
Time in prison	12-23 months	103	143	246	330	577
	24-35 months	101	89	190	404	594
	36-59 months	98	87	185	291	476
	60-119 months	64	51	115	438	554
	120 months or longer	69	n/a	n/a	409	n/a
Year released (Years since release)	2007-2008 (less than 2 years)	127	115	242	437	679
	2005-2006 (2-3 years)	64	115	179	292	471
	2004 or before (4 or more years)	37	48	85	185	270
Prior history	Incarcerated more than once	136	143	279	434	713
	Incarcerated only once	67	74	141	312	453

Figure 4, below, explains **our method of calculating “housing insecurity.”** Housing insecurity captures the full extent to which formerly incarcerated people lack stable housing, even if they are not literally homeless. We define this term in more detail below:

Homelessness is part of the larger problem of housing insecurity

Number of formerly incarcerated men and women, per 10,000, experiencing homelessness or living in marginal housing (rooming house, hotel, or motel) in 2008



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Sources & data notes: <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/housing.html#methodology>

Figure 4. Our metric of housing insecurity includes people living in rooming houses, hotels, and motels, as well as those experiencing homelessness. Using this measure, it's clear that many more formerly incarcerated people are in precarious housing situations than the rate of homelessness alone suggests.

Methodology

This report's analyses of homelessness and housing insecurity are primarily based on our analysis of an underutilized government survey, the National Former Prisoner Survey, conducted in 2008. The survey was a product of the Prison Rape Elimination Act, and mainly asks about sexual assault and rape behind bars, but it also contains some very useful data on housing.

Because this survey contains such sensitive and personal data, the raw data was not available publicly online. Instead, it is kept in a secure data enclave in the basement of the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research. Access to the data required the approval of an independent Institutional Review Board, the approval of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and required us to access the data under close supervision.

The practicalities of having to travel across the country in order to query a computer database limited the amount of time that we could spend with the data, and [other rules](#) restricted how much data we could bring with us. Additionally, if the number of respondents falling within any one group was too small, we were not allowed to export the data for that group due to privacy concerns.

Using this survey data, we were able to produce the first national estimates of homelessness among formerly incarcerated Americans. We also uncovered many other questions, which we do not yet have the necessary data to answer on a national level, but which suggest avenues for further research:

- How often do formerly incarcerated people move?
- How often are formerly incarcerated people forced to live with someone they know because of a lack of housing options?
- Are formerly incarcerated people likely to reside in overcrowded living spaces?
- How often are formerly incarcerated people denied housing, compared to the general public?
- How often are formerly incarcerated people in danger of eviction due to the inability to pay rent?

Even so, we believe that the analyses presented in this report begin to illuminate the severe housing-related inequalities experienced by criminalized people.

Data Sources

We used the National Former Prisoner Survey (NFPS) as our main data source for measuring homelessness and housing insecurity among formerly incarcerated people. This survey began in January 2008 and concluded in October 2008, and was derived from the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003, which mandated that the Bureau of Justice Statistics investigate sexual victimization among formerly incarcerated people.

The NFPS dataset includes 17,738 adult respondents who were previously incarcerated in state prisons and under parole supervision at the time of the survey. Individual respondents were randomly selected from a random sample of over 250 parole offices across the United States.

It is important to note that because this survey was given to people on parole, it is not a perfect tool to measure homelessness and housing insecurity among all formerly incarcerated people. Some incarcerated people are released without supervision, and their ability to attain stable housing may be different than those on parole. Previous research suggests, however, that parole officers have a minimal (or at best, inconsistent) effect on post-release housing stability. A [national survey of state parole agencies](#) in 2006 found that most - 60% - had no housing assistance program. Two regional studies of post-release shelter use, meanwhile, had conflicting findings: In [New York](#), parole increased the likelihood of shelter use, but it appeared to reduce shelter use in Philadelphia. These mixed results are unsurprising: A [synthesis of the literature](#) explains that there is “little collaboration among [corrections and social service] systems and little consistency over time. What results is a prisoner reentry system that is disconnected from

the housing and homeless assistance services system and from the neighborhoods where released prisoners live.” Future research should more closely examine the effect of supervision on homelessness and housing stability.

We drew upon specific NFPS survey questions for this report:

- A2. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?
- A3. Which of these categories describes your race?
- C1. Are you male, female, or transgendered?
- F15. Where do you currently live most of the time?
- B2a, B2b. Date of admission.
- B3a, B3b. Date of release.
- B13a. Before your confinement in [AdmDate2] had you ever served time in a state or federal prison? [IF AdmDate2=blank] Before the confinement we just discussed, had you ever served time in a state or federal prison?

To measure homelessness in the general public, we used the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s [Point-in-Time counts](#) of sheltered and unsheltered homeless people, along with Census Bureau [population estimates](#). This data is from 2008, the most recent year in which comparable data for formerly incarcerated people exists.

There is one minor, but notable, difference between HUD’s Point-in-Time counts (which we used to calculate homelessness in the general public) and our NFPS data (which we used to calculate homelessness among formerly incarcerated people). HUD’s Point-in-Time counts relied upon special local groups, called [Continuums of Care](#), to [record and report](#) the total number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless people during the last 10 days in January 2008. The National Former Prisoner Survey, conversely, asked subjects about their housing status directly.

About the Prison Policy Initiative

The non-profit, non-partisan Prison Policy Initiative was founded in 2001 to expose the broader harm of mass criminalization and spark advocacy campaigns to create a more just society. The organization is known for its [visual breakdown of mass incarceration in the U.S.](#), as well as its data-rich analyses of [how states vary](#) in their use of punishment. The Prison Policy Initiative’s research is designed to reshape debates around mass incarceration by offering the “big picture” view of critical policy issues, such as [probation and parole](#), [women’s incarceration](#), and [youth confinement](#).

The Prison Policy Initiative also works to shed light on the economic hardships faced by justice-involved people and their families, often exacerbated by correctional policies and practice. Past reports have shown that people [in prison](#) and people [held pretrial in jail](#) start out with lower

incomes even before arrest, [earn very low wages](#) working in prison, and [face unparalleled obstacles to finding work](#) after they get out.

About the author

Lucius Couloute is a Policy Analyst with the Prison Policy Initiative and a [PhD candidate in Sociology](#) at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, his dissertation examines both the structural and cultural dynamics of reentry systems. Most recently he co-authored [Out of Prison & Out of Work](#), which provided the first-ever unemployment rate among formerly incarcerated people.

Acknowledgements

This report benefitted from the expertise and input of many individuals. The author is particularly indebted to Dan Kopf for retrieving this data from the ICPSR Physical Enclave, Amy Sawyer for her valuable insight into the state of homelessness today, Alma Castro for IRB assistance, Allen Beck for his insight into the NFPS, the ICPSR staff for their data retrieval support, Elydah Joyce for the illustrations, Maddy Troilo for background research, my Prison Policy Initiative colleagues, and the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness for their helpful guidance on “Housing First” strategies.

This report was supported by a generous grant from the Public Welfare Foundation and by our individual donors, who give us the resources and the flexibility to quickly turn our insights into new movement resources.

Footnotes

1. Numerous studies show that up to 15% of currently incarcerated people experienced homelessness in the year leading up to their incarceration. For more on this line of research see: [Profile of Jail Inmates, 2002](#) and [Education and Correctional Populations and Jail Incarceration, Homelessness, and Mental Health: A National Study](#). ↩
2. See [Brianna Remster’s \(2017\) work](#) on homelessness among formerly incarcerated people in Philadelphia. Half of the formerly incarcerated people in Remster’s study did not stay in a shelter until two years after release. ↩
3. According to the [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#), 44% of those who were released from state prisons in 2005 were rearrested within one year; 68% within three years; and 83% in 9 years. High rates of rearrest and subsequent re-incarceration after release comprise what is frequently referred to as the “revolving door”. ↩

4. See recent coverage from [The Nation](#) and a report from the [Million Dollar Hoods Research Project](#) on how the criminalization of homelessness operates today. ↵
5. See [Metraux & Culhane \(2004\)](#) and [Remster \(2017\)](#). ↵
6. See [Montgomery et al. \(2016\)](#) and [Nyamathi et al. \(2000\)](#). ↵
7. Because our data source (the [National Former Prisoner Survey](#)) contains restricted information, there were limits on what we could and could not export and analyze. Per [ICPSR](#) policy, if any query produced a result that included less than 200 respondents, we were not able to export that data. See the appendix for more detail. ↵
8. Couloute, Lucius and Dan Kopf. 2018. [Out of Prison & Out of Work: Unemployment among formerly incarcerated people](#). *Prison Policy Initiative*. ↵
9. There is no widely accepted definition of housing insecurity. Instead, researchers have created [different definitions](#) using available data. As such, some researchers have defined and measured housing insecurity using residential moves, ability to pay rent, or rates of “doubling up” and living with others. Our measure represents a broad category of people who self-reported that they are either homeless or living in less-permanent spaces such as rooming houses, hotels, and motels. ↵
10. [Research](#) suggests that most landlords would not accept tenants with criminal record histories. ↵
11. According to [analyses](#) from the National Low Income Housing Coalition, nowhere in the United States can a full time worker earning minimum wage afford a two-bedroom rental home at fair market rent. ↵
12. See Congressional Research Service’s [report](#) on crime-related restrictions on housing assistance and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s [memo](#) on the use of arrest records in housing decisions.

↵

13. Couloute, Lucius and Dan Kopf. 2018. [Out of Prison & Out of Work: Unemployment among formerly incarcerated people](#). ↵
14. Reid KW, Vittinghoff E, Kushel MB. 2008. [Association between the level of housing instability, economic standing and health care access: a meta-regression](#). ↵
15. Bradley K, Oliver RBM, Richardson NC, Slayter EM. 2001. [No Place Like Home: Housing and the Ex-Prisoner](#). ↵
16. Ferguson, Kristy, Kimberly Bender, Sanna Thompson. 2011. [Employment Status and Income Generation Among Homeless Young Adults](#). ↵
17. Stephen Lurie. 2013. [The Astonishing Decline of Homelessness in America](#). The Atlantic. [Release from Prison — A High Risk of Death for Former Inmates](#). The New England Journal of Medicine. ↵
18. [The 2017 Annual Homeless Assessment Report \(AHAR\) to Congress](#). ↵
19. For example, numerous studies show that up to 15% of currently incarcerated people *experienced* homelessness in the year leading up to their incarceration. For more on this line of research see: [Profile of Jail Inmates, 2002](#) and [Education and Correctional Populations](#) and [Jail Incarceration, Homelessness, and Mental Health: A National Study](#). ↵
20. See the [National Alliance to End Homelessness](#) for more on “Housing First” strategies. ↵

21. See [The 2007 National Symposium on Homelessness Research](#). ↩
22. We could not analyze the trans population because the number of trans-identified people in the survey was too small to use, and doing so posed a risk of respondent identification. ↩