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Intersection of Homelessness and Incarceration

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Statistical Data


- Over 650,000 inmates are released from state and federal prisons each year.
- Over 10 million will be released back into the community from over 3200 jails throughout the United States.
- Expenditures on corrections alone increased from \$9 billion in 1982 to almost \$60 billion in 2002.



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Texas State Prison Data


- Overall, 33,950 state offenders were released to supervision in FY08.
- The Texas Department of Criminal Justice currently has 1,563 Contracted Beds with 9 facilities in Austin, Beaumont, and Bexar County.
- They currently have work release programs in El Paso (2), Ft. Worth, Houston, Travis County and Dallas.
- In FY08, 5,875 state offenders were placed in contracted beds.



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Texas Federal Offender Data


- According to the US Probation Office, there are currently 14,073 clients under supervision in the State of Texas.
- Of these, 1388 clients are in San Antonio.
- There are an estimated 1600 to 1800 contracted beds in Texas for federal offenders.
- There are 127 contracted beds in San Antonio for federal offenders.



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Cost

- The costs involved with maintaining people in prisons and jails have a median *per diem* cost of \$60 and \$70 (Lewin Group, 2004), respectively.
- These costs are high enough that an economic argument could be made for community-based interventions such as specialized reentry housing if such housing could be shown to reduce or avoid subsequent incarceration episodes.




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Heightened Risk

- Homelessness is a condition frequently faced by those involved in the Criminal Justice System.
 - Approximately 10% of the prison population was homeless prior to incarceration and approximately 10% will be homeless at some time following release. (Metraux 2007).
 - In a national survey of jail inmates, 15.3% reported having been homeless at some point during the prior year (Greenberg and Rosenheck, 2008).
- Incarceration contributes (upon release) to a heightened risk of homelessness.
 - Families can often provide an immediate source of safe housing to people released from prison, but doing so may mean risking the entire family's tenancy in publicly subsidized housing.


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Shelters

- Homelessness may be one result of more general readjustment problems that follow release from incarceration. Shelter use among persons released from incarceration is seen as one outcome related to a problematic community reentry process (Petersilia, 2001; Travis et al., 2001).
- One study revealed that those released prisoners who stay in shelters, 54.4% enter within 30 days of their release from prison (Metraux & Culhane, 2004).

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Criminalized Homelessness


- In 244 of the largest U.S. cities, most had at least one ordinance or policy that effectively criminalized homelessness (NLCHP, 2006).
- Many were either enforcing such policies or selectively enforcing other ordinances against homeless persons.

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Types of Ordinances


- Anti-loitering
- Anti-sleeping
- Anti-sitting
- Anti-panhandling
- Anti-camping



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Consequences of Housing Policies


- Federally subsidized housing providers, such as local public housing and Section 8 programs, may—and sometimes must—deny housing to people with a criminal history involving drugs or violence.
- Homelessness and recidivism are among the consequences of these discriminatory policies.
- Studies have proven that supportive housing reduces criminal justice involvement and mitigates risk for re-incarceration. (Cho, 2008).




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Second Chance Act signed into law on April 9, 2008 (Public Law No. 110-199)


- "Coordination – In developing a reentry plan under this subsection, an applicant shall coordinate with communities and stakeholders, including persons in the fields of public safety, juvenile and adult corrections, housing, health, education, substance abuse, children and families, victims services, employment, and business and members of nonprofit organizations that can provide reentry services".
- Demonstration Grants will be made available to states and local governments that may be used to promote the safe and successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals through employment services, substance abuse treatment, housing, family programming, mentoring, victim services and methods to improve release and revocation decisions.



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Augusta House Pryor House
Corporate HQ
Hall House Blackburn House




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Role of Halfway Houses

- Provide employment assistance.
- Help procure stable housing.
- Develop or enhance support system.
- Build savings for transition.

Crosspoint Inc. FY '08

- 515 Clients.
- Over 80% achieved basic program goals and successfully completed services.
- Earned over \$1.9 million.
- Returned over \$487,000 to the government in form of subsistence payments.



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Resources

Justice Center, the Council of State Governments: The Second Chance Act of 2007, H.R. 1593/S. 1060 (November 2007).

National Health Care for the Homeless Council, 2008 Policy Statements


National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty

National Symposium on Homeless Research: Incarceration and Homelessness, 2007 Reentry Policy Council

U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics

Vera Institute of Justice, "Preventing Homelessness Among People Leaving Prison", December 2003

Weir, L. (2008). "Homelessness and the Criminal Justice System". National Law Center for Homelessness and Poverty.



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Studies

Cho, Richard, Corporation for Supportive Housing. "Overlap and Interaction of Homelessness and Incarceration: A Review of Research and Practice." NAHC Research Summit, March 2008.

Greenberg, G., and Rosenheck, R. (2008). "Jail Incarceration, Homelessness, and Mental Health: A National Study." *Psychiatric Services*, February 2008, Vol. 59, 170-177, February 2008.

National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, and the National Coalition for Homelessness. "A Dream Denied". January 2007. Washington, D.C.

Legal Action Center, "Housing Laws Affecting Individuals with Criminal Convictions" (New York: Legal Action Center, 2000)

Lewin Group (2004). *Costs of serving homeless individuals in nine cities*. New York: Corporation for Supportive Housing.



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- Metraux, S., Culhane, D.P. (2004). Homeless shelter use and reincarceration following prison release: Assessing the risk. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 3(2), 201-222.
- Petersilia, J. (2001). Prisoner re-entry: Public safety and reintegration challenges. *The Prison Journal*, 81 (3), 360-375.
- Re-Entry Policy Council, "Charting the Safe and Successful Return of Prisoners to the Community" (New York:
- Travis, J, Solomon, A.L. & Waul, M. (2001). *The dimensions and consequences of prisoner reentry*. Washington DC: Urban Institute.
