



Homelessness and Corrections

Formerly incarcerated people are almost 10 times more likely to be homeless than the general public.¹



Being homeless, unstably housed, or living in a high crime neighborhood all increase a person's risk of reoffending.

What can prisons, jails, and parole and probation departments do?

Reentry Housing Programs



Stable housing is a necessity for people transitioning out of custody or on community supervision. In fact, being on community supervision can contribute to housing instability when sanctions cause people to be removed from their surroundings for a short period of time. Their absence affects both their housing security and their ability to maintain employment.

Corrections can intervene with solutions that may help prevent homelessness. These activities are often more cost effective than waiting until people are without housing and returned to the justice system before helping them. Improving discharge plans, expanding transition services, and providing transitional housing are a few of the options available to help people transitioning from confinement settings. Parole and probation officers can be advocates for people on community supervision by connecting them with transitional and longer term housing.

Community providers for housing, healthcare, and related services can collaborate with local jurisdictions to help people connect to services they may have already used or will use in the future. Such collaboration enables people to be served more efficiently and can diminish duplication of services.



Housing Programs



There are a number of programs that show significant reduction in homelessness and use of jail beds. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), for example, is a community-based program that places people experiencing homelessness in housing that includes participation in case management and wrap around supportive services. Housing First is another program that prioritizes permanent housing, offers voluntary services, and does not require sobriety.

Community engagement and collaboration are a big part of successful PSH and Housing First programs. These programs require collaboration both with the releasing agency and the supervising authority. Transition planning begins when a person enters the custody setting and culminates with a plan that can be transferred to the supervising authority in the community.

Resources

For Jails and Prisons

Preparing People for Reentry

The Council of State Governments released an updated version of “Preparing People For Reentry” in October of 2021. The checklist is designed for prisons and jails and can inform parole and probation departments on the needs of people being released.



For Jails Partnering with Community Corrections and Community Providers

Breaking the Homelessness-Jail Cycle with Housing First

The Denver Supportive Housing Bond aimed to increase housing stability and reduce jail bed day usage. See the report titled Breaking the Homelessness-Jail Cycle with Housing First: Results from the Denver Supportive Housing Social Impact Bond Initiative for more information.



Just in Reach Pay for Success

L.A. county Just In Reach Pay for success program was created to ease the transition for people from jail to community. Click Just in Reach Pay for Success in Los Angeles - CSH to learn more.



Bibliography

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