

Housing and Re-Entry Statistics

- More than 10 percent of those coming in and out of prisons and jail are homeless in the months before their incarceration.¹ For those with mental illness, the rates are even higher—about 20 percent.²
- A California study, for example, reported that while 10 percent of the state’s parolees were homeless, an estimated 30 to 50 percent of parolees in metropolitan areas such as San Francisco and Los Angeles were homeless.³
- 49 percent of homeless adults have reportedly spent five or more days in a city or county jail over their lifetimes, and 18 percent have been incarcerated in a state or federal prison.⁴
- Recent studies in New York City reveal that more than 30 percent of single adults entering shelters under the Department of Homeless Services are persons recently released from city and state correctional institutions. Many of these individuals are those that continually cycle between incarceration and shelters.⁵
- Shelter use, both before incarceration and after release, is associated with an increased risk of return to prison: in a study of 50,000 individuals who were released from New York State prisons and returned to New York City between 1995 and 1998, risk of re-incarceration increased 23 percent with pre-release shelter stay, and 17 percent with post-release shelter stay.
- A qualitative study by the Vera Institute of Justice found that parolees who entered homeless shelters in New York City after leaving state prisons were seven times more likely to abscond during the first month after release than those who had some form of housing.⁶

¹US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics and US Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons, "Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1997," Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (Ann Arbor: 2001), ICPSR 2598; and US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Survey of Inmates of Local Jails, 1996," Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (Ann Arbor: 1999), ICPSR 2598.

²Ibid.; Paula M. Ditton, *Mental Health and Treatment of Inmates and Probationers*, US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics (Washington, DC: 1999), NCJ 174463.

³California Department of Corrections, *Prevention Parolee Failure Program: An Evaluation* (Sacramento: California Department of Corrections, 1997).

⁴Martha R. Burt et al., *Homelessness: Programs and the People They Serve: Findings From the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients*, US Department of Housing and Urban Development (Washington, DC: 1999).

⁵NYC Department of Homeless Services, "Summary of DOC/DHS Data Match" (draft of data analysis submitted for review as part of the New York City Department of Correction and Department of Homeless Services Discharge Planning Initiative, January 22, 2004).

⁶Marta Nelson, Perry Deess, and Charlotte Allen, *The First Month Out: Post-Incarceration Experiences in New York City* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 1999).