A Study of Homelessness in Seven Colorado Jails

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Section 1 – Background and summary

Background

This study examined the proliferation of homelessness among those in the criminal justice system by administering questionnaires to a sample of inmates in the following seven jails: Arapahoe, Denver (city and county jails), El Paso, Larimer, Mesa, and Pueblo. Questionnaires were administered to 507 jail inmates who agreed to participate in the study, representing a response rate of 83.4%. Among those surveyed, 297 of 488 who answered the question identified as homeless (60.8%), however, the study design intentionally oversampled homeless respondents.

Homelessness was defined as, in the past 30 days, living on the street, outdoors, in an abandoned building, shelter, living free with family/friends, or living in a motel.

Data were collected between June 12, 2017 and October 22, 2017 at the seven jail facilities.

Summary of findings

Homelessness. The study was designed to oversample the homeless and consequently these results are not representative of the entire jail population. Nevertheless, among all respondents, self-reported <u>lifetime</u> homelessness across facilities exceeded 80% among the 494 respondents who answered this question and, among this group, 85% reported recent homelessness (within the past year).

Nearly half (46.3%) of those who were *not homeless* in the past 30 days reported that they expected to be homeless upon leaving the jail or they did not know if they would be homeless. This figure was 79.2% among those who reported homelessness in the past 30 days.

Reasons for moving to Colorado. Among those surveyed, nearly 38.5% of the sample were Colorado natives. For those who moved to Colorado from other states, 59.0% arrived before 2012.¹

The most commonly reported reason *homeless* inmates came to Colorado after 2012 was "to get away from a problem" (44.2%) followed by family (38.9%). The third most prevalent reason was marijuana (35.1%) when the responses for both medical and recreational were combined. The most common reason for *non-homeless* inmates to move to Colorado was friends (37.8%), family (37.8%), and employment (32.4%). Non-homeless inmates reported marijuana as a reason to come 21.6% of the time. There was no statistically significant difference between the homeless and non-homeless respondents in terms of the proportion that selected marijuana as the reason for coming to Colorado.

When asked why they stayed in Colorado, the top reasons for homeless inmates were family (31.1%), outdoor activities (28.3%), and friends (26.6%). Marijuana moved to 6th place with 18.5% of the homeless respondents indicating that as their reason for staying. The top reasons for non-homeless

¹ Those who reported they had been in Colorado five years or more years were coded as being in Colorado prior to marijuana legalization. Respondents reporting they were in Colorado at the end of 2012 were considered to be here pre-legalization.

inmates to stay were family (19.9%), employment (14.7%), and weather (11.2%). There was no significant difference between homeless and non-homeless inmates in their responses.

Employment and dependents. Not surprisingly, those who were not homeless in the month prior to coming to jail were significantly more likely to have worked than those who were homeless. Homeless respondents were significantly less likely to have dependents who relied on them financially compared to non-homeless respondents.

Drug use. The proportion of homeless inmates who reported having been diagnosed with a substance use disorder (45.9%) was significantly greater compared to inmates who were not homeless (35.3%). A large proportion of both homeless (82.0%) and non-homeless (88.0%) respondents who reported that they were diagnosed with a substance abuse disorder stated they had received treatment for it. There was no statistically significant difference between homeless and non-homeless respondents regarding whether they received treatment or not.

While many respondents reported drug use in the 30 days prior to incarceration, especially cannabis and methamphetamine, a greater proportion of homeless respondents compared to non-homeless respondents reported using marijuana, methamphetamines, and amphetamines, and fewer reported using alcohol and crack cocaine compared to non-homeless inmates. However, these differences were not statistically significant.

Mental Health. Those who were homeless in the month prior to coming to jail were significantly more likely to report a mental illness (64.2%) than those who were not homeless (46.4%). Statistically significant differences were found in anxiety and depression symptoms reported by homeless and non-homeless respondents, with homeless inmates reporting more severe symptoms. In addition, a greater proportion of homeless inmates met the diagnostic criteria for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) than non-homeless inmates. In an assessment of complex trauma, which captures exposure to extended and prolonged traumatic experiences in childhood that have negative impacts across the life-span, homeless respondents were slightly more likely to meet the criteria (42.9%) than non-homeless respondents (35.6%) but the difference was not significant.

Crime. Across all facilities, non-homeless respondents were statistically significantly more likely to be charged a violent crime. In contrast, across all facilities, homeless inmates were significantly more likely to be charged with a drug crime and/or trespassing.

Service needs. The following categories of service needs were expressed similarly across the two groups:

- Mental health and substance abuse treatment services
- Housing assistance: sober living facilities, facilities for people without dependents, short term housing vouchers, long term subsidies, felon friendly facilities
- Health care: needing access to care, medication, access to a doctor who takes Medicaid
- Obtaining identification and specific assistance: driver's license or state ID, birth certificates, health insurance, food stamps
- Clothing bank²

² Non-homeless inmates indicated that they needed help obtaining clothing, often because they were concerned about becoming homeless upon release.

• Transportation assistance: bus passes, getting cars out of impoundment³

Homeless and non-homeless inmates differed on only a few suggested services or programs that would help them better transition into the community. Among the homeless, some inmates indicated wanting more individual and group counseling services, and suggested that there be homeless service facilities, similar to truck stops, where homeless individuals could shower, do laundry, obtain mail, make phone calls, and obtain referral information for jobs and other services. Some respondents also stated that they wanted to see criminal justice reform so that the fines imposed on them were not so punitive, as they could not then pay for other living expenses.

Several non-homeless respondents indicated a need for legal aid related to immigration or child custody, and wanted additional educational assistance in the form of information about loans and grants. Finally, a few non-homeless inmates mentioned that they wanted help managing the social stigma of being a felon.

Although a larger proportion of homeless respondents reported needing drug treatment upon release (39.1%) than non-homeless inmates (29.2%), this difference was not statistically significant. It is important to note that a meaningful proportion of homeless and non-homeless inmates reported that they did not know whether they needed drug treatment (13.5% and 14.6%, respectively), suggesting that they had concerns about their substance use.

A larger proportion of inmates reported needing mental health treatment upon release from jail than drug treatment, and the difference in this reported need was significantly greater for homeless than non-homeless respondents. Over 60% of homeless respondents reported needing mental health treatment compared to approximately 45% of non-homeless respondents. A small proportion of respondents indicated not knowing whether they needed mental health treatment (approximately 7% of homeless respondents and 10% of non-homeless respondents), so these individuals may be also in need of mental health screening or support services.

Report organization

This report is organized as follows: Section Two describes the method and sample, including a review of the extent of homeless in the seven jails; Section 3 explores factors associated with homeless; Section 4 provides information about the index crimes of the sample; Section 5 considers the reasons individuals moved to Colorado; Section 6 provides information on services needed upon release from jail, and Section 7 provides a brief summary of findings.

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³ Additional needs reported by respondents can be found in Section 6.

Section 2 – Method and sample description

Jail site selection

The criteria used to select the jails included regional diversity (rural versus urban), a large homeless population generally, and the facilities' ability to identify homeless inmates in the jail population. The selected jail facilities were those in Arapahoe County, Denver County and Denver City, El Paso County, Larimer County, Mesa County and Pueblo County. Denver County separates sentenced inmates and those with longer stays (Denver County) from those who are awaiting adjudication or serving shorter sentences (Denver City Jail) into two facilities, so inmates were surveyed at both facilities to ensure that the county's jail population was comparable to the other facility populations.

Human subjects

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the study was obtained from the University of Southern Maine, ensuring that human subjects and privacy protections were in place prior to data collection.

Sample

Two random samples of inmates were drawn across the seven facilities, inmates that were homeless and a comparison group comprised of inmates that were not homeless. Although the goal was to survey 800 inmates, many logistical factors precluded reaching this number, including facility staffing limitations, budget constraints, and time restrictions related to inmate availability. With these factors in mind, researchers randomly sampled 5% of inmates at larger facilities (El Paso, Denver City, Arapahoe) and 10% of the inmate population at smaller facilities (Larimer, Mesa, Denver County, Pueblo).

Using booking data, researchers worked with each facility to extract and generate a sampling frame for all inmates categorized at intake as homeless or not homeless. Inmates self-reported this classification to staff during the intake process. Facility staff reported that inmates do not always provide this information, so a number of individuals were not classified as homeless when, in fact, they were. These discrepancies were corrected when the data were collected and respondents documented their homelessness status on the questionnaire.

Inmates classified as homeless were over-sampled at each facility such that approximately two-thirds of the entire sample were initially flagged as homeless. This oversampling approach was employed because the main topic of interest was homelessness and most of the analyses involved within-group analyses of the homeless group. That said, because the classification of homeless status was based on self-report, many of the non-homeless sample (as flagged by the facility) were actually homeless. Two facilities, Denver County and Denver jails, indicated that the tracking of homeless status information was not reliable, so researchers were unable to randomly select inmates based on this classification. Therefore, the sample was randomly selected from the entire pool of inmates. Though deemed unreliable by facility staff, some data about flagged homeless status was still made available from these sites.

On the day of survey administration, a random number generator was used to, first, randomly select inmates identified as homeless and recruited them for participation in the study. After reaching about two-thirds of the overall sample number for each site, the random number generator was then used to select inmates who were not flagged as homeless.

Using this process, 608 inmates were identified for survey administration. However, 101 inmates (16.6%) declined to participate in the study. The final sample was 507 inmates, of which 297 (58.5%) were homeless in the 30 days prior to incarceration.

Homelessness definition

An individual was considered homeless in this study if they answered affirmatively to any of the following statements about their living situation "in the 30 days before coming to jail."

- I lived on the street or outdoor place
- I lived in an abandoned building
- I lived in a mission or shelter
- I paid to live in a motel or hotel
- I lived for free with family or friends
- I lived in a car or other vehicle

Survey

Questionnaire administration and recruitment

Questionnaires were administered between June 12, 2017 and October 22, 2017 at each of the seven jail facilities. To minimize disruption to each facility, researchers worked 10-14 hour shifts to administer the surveys at each jail. Questionnaires were programmed into a survey administration software program (Survey Gizmo) and loaded onto six laptop computers.

Questionnaires were administered in a variety of environments, depending on what space was available at each facility. Typically, surveys were administered in small interview rooms or flex space rooms used for programming. In lower security housing units, some facilities allowed for the administration of surveys to several inmates at a time.

Inmates varied substantially on the amount of time required to complete the survey, ranging from 15 to 90 minutes. The reason for this range was due to some inmates (between 8 and 15 at each facility) needing members of the research team to read the survey and record responses onto the computer for them (for example, one inmate was blind, some had vision problems, and others were illiterate). The total sample drawn for the day was then compared to the sample goal to determine the sampling strategy for the next day.

Response Rates

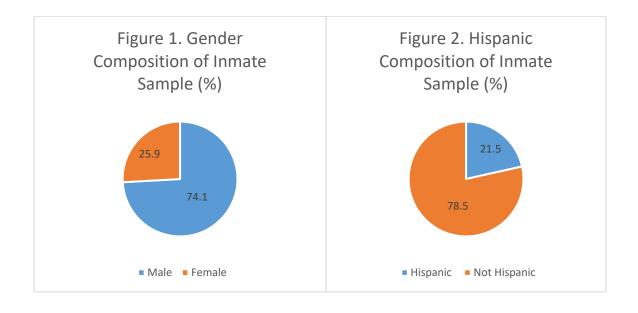
Information about survey administration and response rates are shown in Table 1. Overall, 16.6% (n=101/608) of inmates declined taking part in the survey resulting in an 83.4% response rate. The response rates varied by jail site.

Table 1. Survey Administration Details

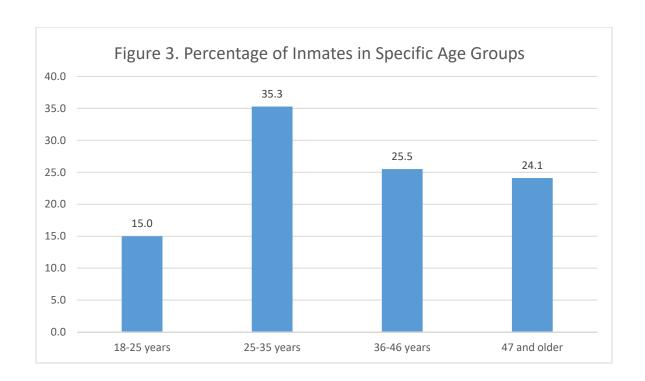
Jail	2017 Survey Administration Dates	Total Population at Time of Survey	Total Sample Recruited	Total Number of Declines	Total Completed Surveys	Percentage of jail population surveyed
Arapahoe	June 12 - June 14	950	98	9 (9.2%)	89	9.4%
Denver	October 20 -	780	40	11 (27.5%)	29	3.7%
County	October 22					
Denver Jail	October 20 -	1940	158	47 (29.7%)	111	5.7%
	October 22					
El Paso	June 26 - June 28	1622	97	14 (14.4%)	83	5.1%
Larimer	June 21 - June 22	615	58	6 (10.3%)	52	8.5%
Mesa	June 6 - June 8	515	62	3 (4.8%)	59	11.5%
Pueblo	June 19 - June 21s	826	95	11 (11.6%)	84	10.2%
Total		7,248	608	101 (16.7%)	507	7.0%

Sample demographics

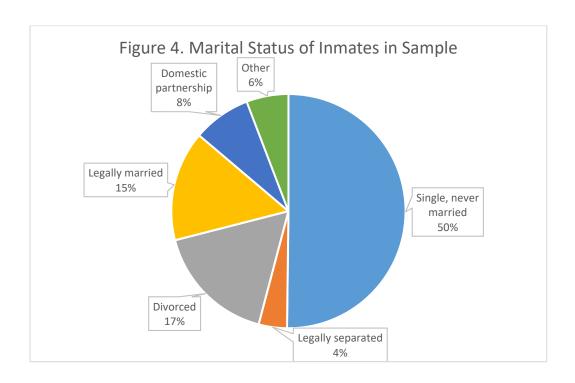
The majority of the sample that answered these questions (n=421) was male (74.1%) and White (79.1%). Seventeen percent of the sample indicated that they were Black, and two inmates reported being Native American or mixed race/other. Over one-fifth of the sample (21.5%) reported being Hispanic (see Figure 2).



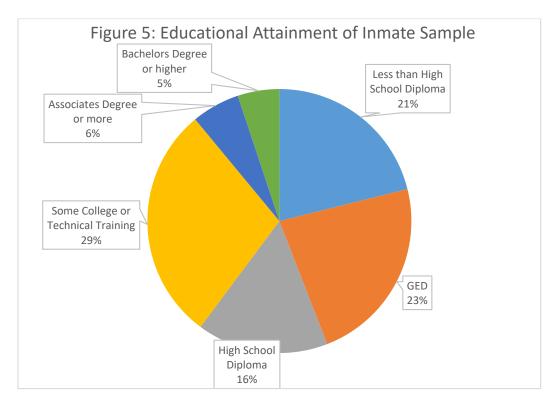
Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 78 years, with an average age of 37.7 years. Figure 3 presents the percentage of inmates falling into specific age categories. The largest proportion of respondents was between 25-35 years of age.



Half of the respondents (50.2%) reported being single and never married. Of the remaining half of the sample, 15.2% were legally married, 16.9% were divorced, and the rest were legally separated, in a domestic partnership or civil union, or an unspecified "other" category (see Figure 4).



Of those that answered this question (n=473), nearly two-thirds (60.1%) reported having a high school diploma (or equivalent) or less. Only 5.0% reported having a bachelors or advanced degree (see Figure 5).



Nature and extent of homelessness in the sample

An individual was considered homeless in this study if they answered affirmatively to any of the following statements about their living situation "in the 30 days before coming to jail."

- I lived on the street or outdoor place
- I lived in an abandoned building
- I lived in a mission or shelter
- I paid to live in a motel or hotel
- I lived for free with family or friends
- I lived in a car or other vehicle

Inmates were also asked whether they experienced homelessness over their lifetime (ever), in the 12 months prior to jail, 30 days prior to jail, and immediately before jail.

Ever been homeless over lifetime

The questionnaire asked "Have you ever been homeless?" Surveys administered across the seven jail facilities revealed that 81.4% of inmates (n=402/494) reported homelessness in their lifetime. The self-reported lifetime homelessness in the sample across facilities exceeds 78%. Larimer County's sample

had the highest proportion (88.2%) of inmates reporting homeless at some point in their lifetime while Mesa County had the lowest proportion (77.9%) (data not presented). Note that the study was designed to oversample the homeless and these results are not representative of the entire jail population.

Homeless: Previous 12 months

Of those respondents reporting homelessness at least once in their life⁴ (n=395), 85.3% indicated recent homelessness. Nearly one-third (32.0%) said they were homeless for up to three months before coming to jail, 20.3% between three and six months, and 47.8% had been homeless from six to 12 months. Over 80% of respondents in a majority of facilities had reported homelessness in the prior 12 months. El Paso County (89.8%) had the most inmates and Denver County had the fewest (68.2%) inmates reporting homelessness over this period (data not presented).

Homeless: 30 Days prior to jail

A total of 60.8% of survey respondents reported homelessness during the previous 30 days prior to jail (297/488). El Paso (70.4%) and Larimer (70.2%) counties had the highest proportion of inmates reporting homeless in the previous 30 days while Denver Jail (50.9%) and Denver County (50.0%) reported the lowest proportion (data not presented).

Homeless: Housing status immediately before jail

All respondents were asked: "What was your housing status immediately before you came to jail?" Across facilities, most homeless inmates (32.0%) were living on the street, in a shelter or in a car, followed by homeless but staying with friends (16.3%). Across jails, living homeless on the street, shelter or car was the most prevalent category and Larimer County had the highest percent of inmates in this category (44.6%) (data not presented).

What percent of inmates report they will be homeless after release from custody?

The questionnaire asked: "Do you believe you will become homeless upon release from custody?" Nearly 40% (39.7%) of 491 inmates across facilities reported that they will be homeless after release from jail. However, among inmates who indicated that they were not homeless in the previous 30 days, 21.0% anticipated homelessness post-release compared to 53.8% who did not anticipate homelessness, and 25.3% reported that they did not know. Of the inmates indicating that they were homeless the 30 days prior to entering jail (n=294), 18.7% stated that they did not think they would be homeless upon release, while 52.0% said yes, and 29.2% did not know (data not presented).

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⁴ This is the "ever" homeless group.

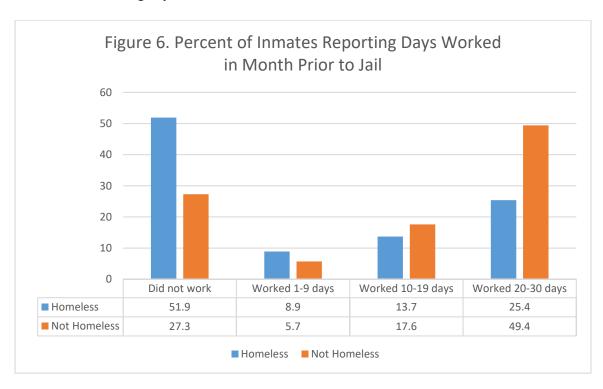
Homelessness following release

Nearly 40% of all respondents reported the belief that they will be homeless after release from jail. Respondents were asked: "Where do you plan on staying on your first night after release from jail?" Inmates chose one of 10 location categories to denote where they would go on their first night post release. Across all facilities, 32.4% of respondents reported they would stay with family or friends while 29.4% reported they did not know where they would spend their first night after release from custody. These were also generally the most prevalent two categories across all jail facilities (data not presented).

Section 3 – What factors are associated with homelessness?

Inmate employment status

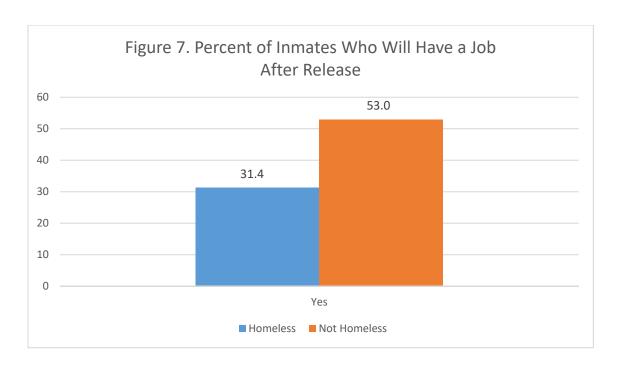
To examine employment differences across homeless and non-homeless respondents, 467 respondents replied to this question, "About how many days did you work in the month before you came to jail?" Those inmates reporting homelessness over the past 30 days were compared to inmates who were not homeless over that period of time. As shown in Figure 6, those who were not homeless in the month prior to coming to jail were significantly more likely to have worked than those who were homeless. Over half of the homeless inmates (51.9%) indicated not working at all in the thirty days before coming to jail, while almost half (49.4%) of the non-homeless inmates reported working 20-30 days in the month before coming to jail.



Respondents were asked "Do you have a job to go back to when you are released or a job lined up?" Only 31.4% of the 290 homeless inmates reported that they had a job secured compared to 53.0% of 183 inmates who were not homeless (see Figure 7).⁶

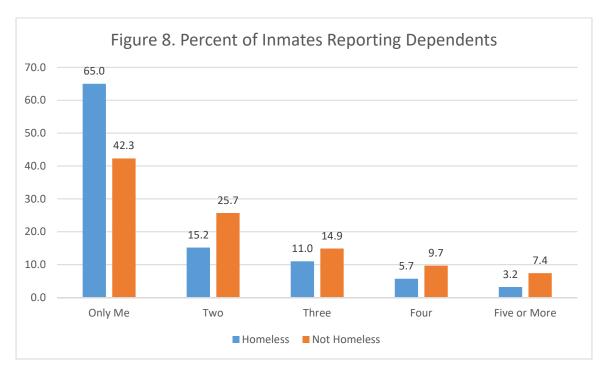
 $^{^{5} \}chi^{2}[3] = 36.51, p < .001.$

⁶ $\chi^2[1] = 21.91$, p < .001.



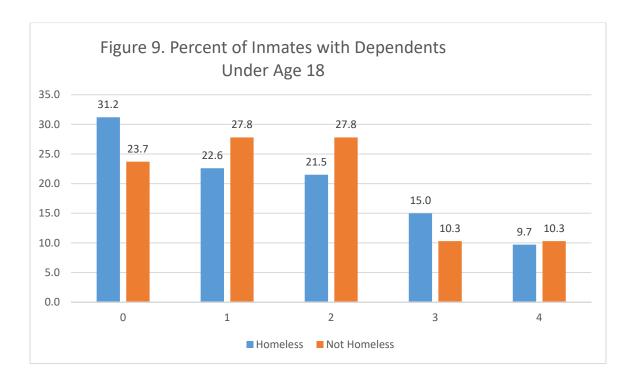
Dependents

Respondents were asked "How many people depend on you for food, shelter, etc." As shown in Figure 8, those who were homeless in the month prior to coming to jail were significantly less likely to report dependents than those who were not homeless.⁷



 $^{^{7}\}chi^{2}[4] = 24.01, p < .001.$

Those respondents reporting dependents were asked "How many of those dependents were under the age of 18? There were no statistically significant differences in the number of minor children that homeless and non-homeless respondents reported (see Figure 9).



Military service

Respondents were asked "Have you served in the military?" Among inmates with military service there was no significant difference between those who were homeless in the month prior to coming to jail than those who were not homeless.

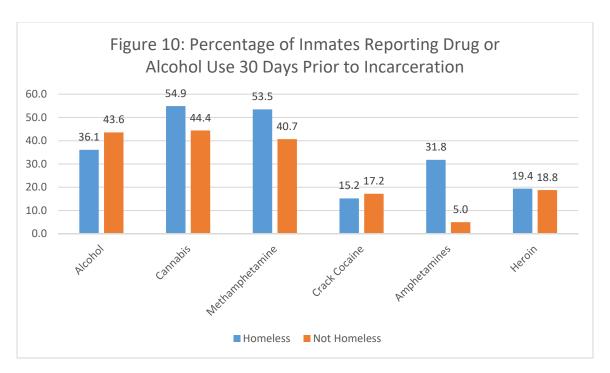
Substance Abuse

What is the extent of substance use among inmates over the 30 days prior to incarceration?

Because respondents were asked about substance abuse⁸ in the prior 30 days, we restricted the sample to those inmates who were incarcerated for 30 days or less (n=150).

A small proportion of respondents incarcerated for 30 days or less reported no illicit drug use prior to their incarceration (22.0%, n=33/150). While a greater proportion of homeless respondents reported using marijuana, methamphetamines, and heroin, fewer reported using alcohol and crack cocaine than the non-homeless inmates, but these differences were not statistically significant (see Figure 10).

⁸ Few respondents reported using certain drugs (synthetic marijuana, barbiturates, inhalants, tranquilizers, opioids, bath salts, hallucinogens, methadone, and club drugs). Data regarding these drugs is not reported.



Note: The percentages reported in Figure 10 are based on the inmates who were incarcerated one month or less.

How frequently do inmates report a diagnoses of a substance use disorder and for which drugs?

The proportion of homeless inmates (n=285) who reported having been diagnosed with a substance use disorder (45.9%) was significantly greater compared to inmates who were not homeless (n=184), at 35.3% (data not presented).⁹

How many inmates reported receiving treatment for a substance abuse disorder?

A large proportion of both homeless and non-homeless respondents who reported that they were diagnosed with a substance abuse disorder reported receiving treatment for it (82.0% and 88.0%, respectively). There was no statistically significant difference between homeless and non-homeless respondents regarding whether they received treatment or not.

Extent of mental illness and treatment

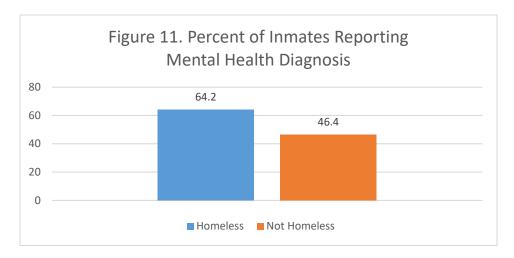
Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding the presence of mental illness, the number of mental health diagnoses, the type of mental health diagnoses, and if inmates reported receiving treatment. The next section examines the homeless versus non-homeless population for each of these topics.

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⁹ χ^2 [1] = 5.20, p = .02.

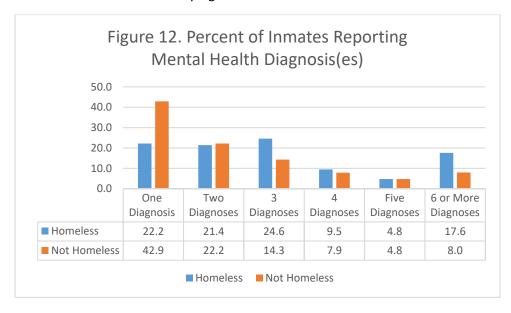
Mental health diagnosis

As shown in Figure 11, those who were homeless in the month prior to coming to jail were significantly more likely to report a mental illness (64.2%) than those who were not homeless (46.4%).¹⁰



Number of diagnoses

Next, inmates were asked: "What was your mental health diagnosis/diagnoses?" As shown in Figure 12, nearly 80% of homeless inmates with some mental health diagnosis report receiving more than one diagnosis, with 17.6% reporting six or more diagnoses. The mean score for the number of mental health diagnoses for homeless inmates was 2.89 and the mean for non-homeless inmates was 2.40; the difference was not statistically significant.



 $^{^{10}\,\}chi^{2}[1]=14.9,\,p<.001.$

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Type of diagnoses

An analysis of types of mental health diagnoses of homeless and non-homeless in the sample found no significant differences between the two groups across eight reported mental health diagnoses made by a mental health professional (see Table 2).

Table 2. Self-Reported Mental Health Diagnosis/Diagnoses among Inmates Diagnosed By a Medical or Mental Health Professional

Disorder	Homeless	Non-Homeless	Chi Square
	(n=185)	(n=85)	Significance Test
Anxiety	69.2%	68.2%	Not Significant
Bipolar	47.3%	41.2%	Not Significant
Depression	80.0%	76.5%	Not Significant
Impulse Control	20.1%	27.1%	Not Significant
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	14.1%	10.6%	Not Significant
Personality Disorder	21.1%	12.9%	Not Significant
PTSD	58.3%	48.2%	Not Significant
Schizophrenia	21.1%	16.5%	Not Significant
Other	3.2%	3.5%	Not Significant

Presence of indicators of mental health disorders

In addition to the questionnaire, respondents were administered several assessments to identify the prevalence of anxiety, depression and PTSD symptoms, independent of whether they reported being diagnosed with a mental health disorder. Anxiety was measured using a modified version of the Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) assessment, and depression was assessed using the Patient Health Questionnaire Version 9. Trauma was assessed using the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) Version 11 from the Harvard Trauma Questionnaire and the Trauma Symptom Checklist (see footnote references that follow).

As indicated in Table 3, statistically significant differences were found in anxiety and depression symptoms reported by homeless and non-homeless respondents, with homeless inmates reporting having more severe symptoms. In addition, a greater proportion of homeless inmates met the diagnostic criteria for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) than non-homeless inmates. In an assessment of complex trauma, which captures exposure to extended and prolonged traumatic experiences in childhood that have negative impacts across the life-span, approximately 40% of all respondents met

the diagnostic criteria, with homeless respondents being slightly more likely to meet the diagnostic criteria than non-homeless respondents.

While there were a small number of military veterans in the sample (n=31), 70.0% met the diagnostic criteria for PTSD, compared to 50.3% of the non-veteran sample (data not presented).

Table 3. Self-Reported Indicators of Mental Health: Mean Scores for Anxiety, Depression and PTSD

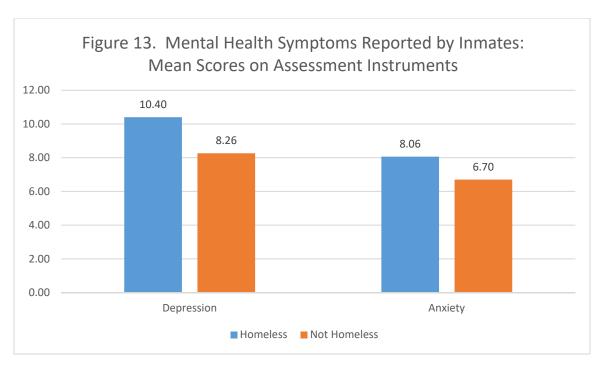
Disorder	Homeless	Non-Homeless	Significance Test
Anxiety ¹¹	Moderate 8.06 n= 284	Low Moderate 6.70 n= 174	F(1,456)= 5.27, ρ = .02
Depression ¹²	Moderate 10.4 n= 278	Mild 8.26 n= 173	F(1,450)= 7.70, ρ < .01
PTSD ¹³	54.9% Met Diagnostic Criteria n= 157/286	44.8% Met Diagnostic Criteria n= 77/172	$X^{2}(1) = 4.41$ P = .04
Complex Trauma ¹⁴	43.9% Met Diagnostic Criteria (n= 127/289)	35.6% Met Diagnostic Criteria (n= 63/177)	$X^{2}(1)=3.17$ $p = .08$

Figure 18 displays mean scores for depression and anxiety for homeless and non-homeless respondents. Homeless respondents were significantly more likely to self-report indicators of anxiety and depression.

¹¹ Inmates were screened for anxiety using a modified version of the Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) assessment.

 $^{^{12}}$ Inmates were screened for depression using the Patient Health Questionnaire, Version 9.

¹³ Inmates were screened for PTSD using the International Classification of Diseases (ICD), Version 11, from the Harvard Trauma Questionnaire and the Trauma Symptom checklist. See Hyland, P., Shevlin, M., Elklit, A., Murphy, J., Vallières, F., Garvert, D.W., and Cloire, M. (2017). An Assessment of the Construct Validity of the ICD-11 Proposal for Complex Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice and Policy*, 9(1): 1-9.



Note: The ranges of possible values differed for each measure (0-27 for depression, 0-18 for anxiety).

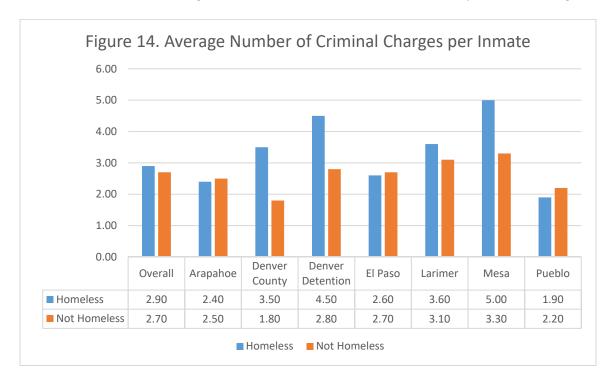
Treatment for mental illness

Respondents were asked "Have you ever been treated by a counselor, social worker, or doctor for mental illness?" While more non-homeless respondents reported receiving mental health treatment (86.9% versus 79.2%) the difference between the groups was not statistically significantly different (data not presented).

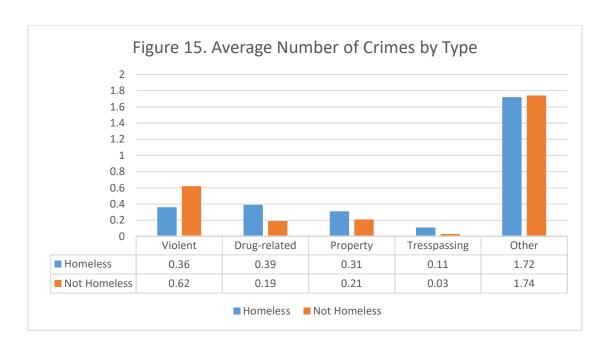
Section 4 –Crime and homelessness

What type of crimes are inmates booked for?

The booking data contained the respondents' current charges. There was considerable variability in the number of criminal charges that inmates in the sample were incarcerated for (ranging from 1 to 20); across facilities, the average number of charges was 2.85. There were no statistically significant differences in the number of charges between homeless and non-homeless respondents (see Figure 14).

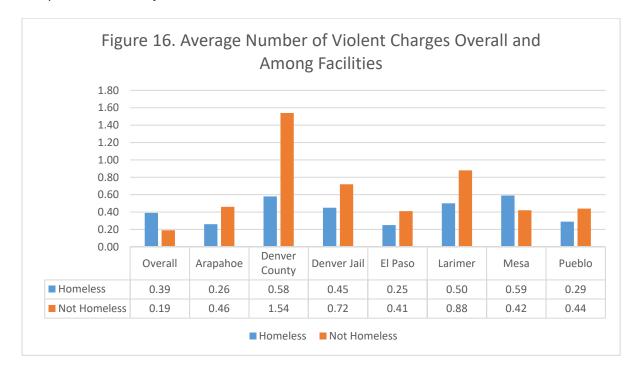


To examine the nature of criminal charges across the two populations of interest, offenses were categorized into *violent crimes* (e.g., assault, robbery), *drug crimes* (e.g., possession, distribution of controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia), *property crimes* (e.g., auto theft, shoplifting, trespassing) or other (e.g., parole/probation violation, illegal possession of a fire arm, traffic violations, failure to appear, escape, violation of protection order) (see Figure 15). Crimes were summed get the total number of charges in each category for each respondent in the samples (Figure 16). By far, the most common offense type among the homeless respondents included crimes that fell in the "other" category.



Violent crimes

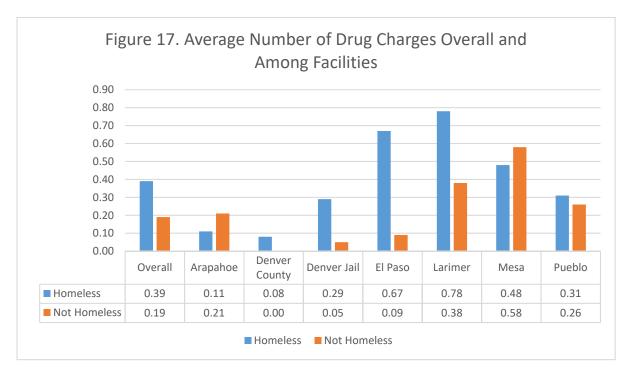
As shown in Figure 16, across all facilities, non-homeless respondents were statistically significantly more likely to be charged a violent crime, with an average of .62 violent offenses compared to homeless respondents, who had an average of .36 violent crimes.¹⁵ There were too few cases to conduct this analysis for individual jails.



 $^{^{15}}$ F(1,403)=4.23, p=.007.

Drug crimes

In contrast to the finding above regarding violent crimes, across all facilities, homeless inmates were significantly more likely to be charged with a drug crime, with a mean of .39 compared to a mean of .19 for non-homeless inmates. ¹⁶ Two of the facilities, El Paso County Jail and Denver Jail, had sufficient sample sizes to demonstrate statistically significant differences when examined separately (see Figure 17).

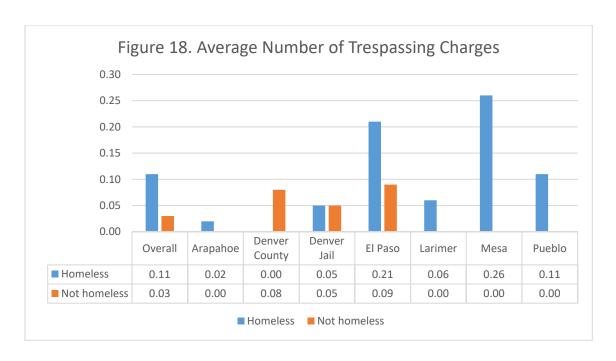


Trespassing

As shown in Figure 18, across all facilities, homeless respondents were significantly more likely to be charged with trespassing compared non-homeless inmates, with means of .11 versus .03, respectively.

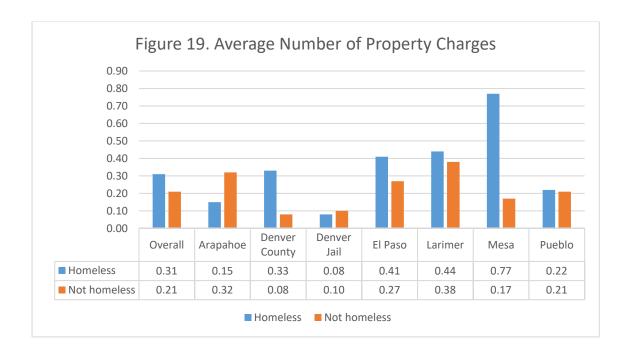
26

 $^{^{16}}$ F(1,403) = 9.97, p = .002.



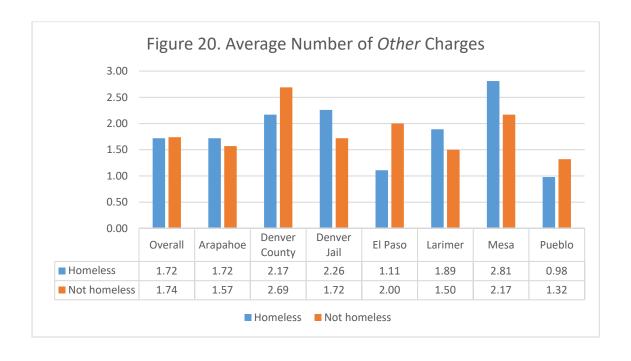
Property crimes

Across all facilities, there were no statistically significant difference in the average number of property crimes charges among homeless and non-homeless respondents, with an average number of .31 and .21 property offenses, respectively. A sufficient sample size allowed for analyses by facility, but the findings of no significance remained (see Figure 19).



Other crimes

No statistically significant differences were found, across facilities, in the number of other types of crimes with which homeless and non-homeless inmates were charged (an average of 1.72 compared to 1.74, respectively). When the analysis focused on individual facilities, statistically significant differences were found for the El Paso County Jail between homeless (average was 1.11 charges) and non-homeless (average was 2.27 charges) respondents. ¹⁷ No differences were detected for the other jails (see Figure 20).



 $^{^{17}}$ F(1,76)= 4.84, p = .03.

Section 5 – Moving to Colorado

Inmates were asked "Have you lived in Colorado your entire life?" Among those who responded (n=481), just over one-third (38.5%) reported that they lived in Colorado their entire life while 61.5% indicated they relocated from other states (see Figure 21). Among those who are not Colorado natives, 41.3% moved here after 2012, the year recreational marijuana was legalized.

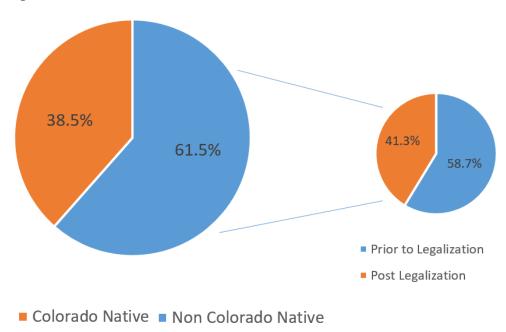
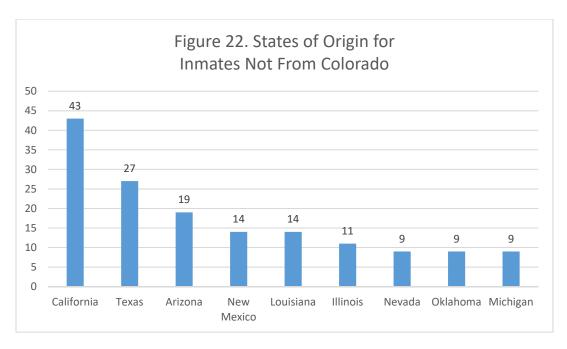


Figure 21. Percent of Inmates from Colorado

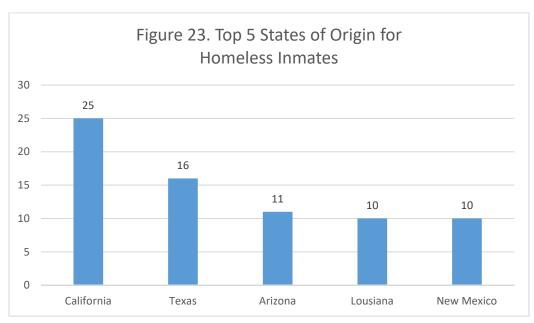
Respondents who had not lived in Colorado their entire life were asked: "Where did you live before coming to Colorado?" As shown in Figure 23, the largest number of inmates who moved to Colorado from another state reported coming from California, with the second largest number coming from Texas, and the third largest number coming from Arizona. This is similar to existing demographic trends for Colorado. In 2016, the states who contributed the largest percent of new residents to Colorado were California (11%), Texas (11%), Florida (5%), and Arizona (4%).¹⁸

¹⁸ Internal Revenue Service, SOI Tax Stats – Migration Data – 2015-2016. Available at https://www.irs.gov/statistics/soi-tax-stats-migration-data-2015-2016.



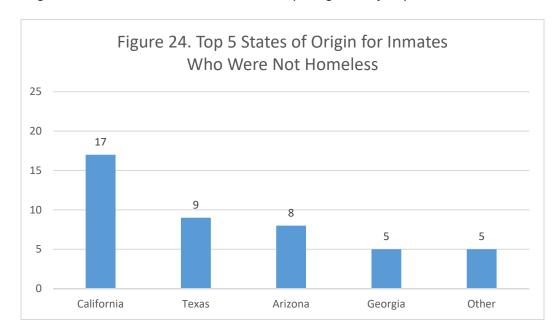
State of origin: Homeless inmates

Among those who reported they were homeless in the past 30 days and those who had not lived in Colorado their entire life (n=184), inmates were from the following states of origin with California, Texas, and Arizona comprising the majority of the states (see Figure 24).



State of origin: Non-homeless inmates

Among those who reported they were not homeless in the past 30 days and those who had not lived in Colorado their entire life (n=181), as shown in Figure 25, inmates were from the following states of origin with California, Texas, and Arizona comprising the majority of the states.



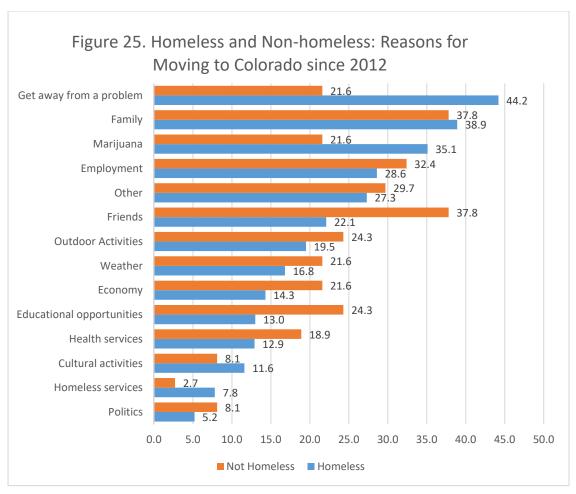
Why they came

Those who had moved to Colorado were asked to indicate the reason they moved here, using a standardized list of 14 items, plus an additional item where inmates could specify a reason not already on the list. Respondents could choose more than one reason. The results are presented in Figure 26.

Among those who were homeless in the past 30 days and moved here *after* legalization of recreational marijuana in 2012 (n=77), the top five reasons for moving to Colorado were as follows: (1) to get away from a problem (44.2%); (2) family (38.9%); (3) for medical and/or recreational marijuana (35.1%); (4) for employment (28.6%); and (5) for friends (22.1%).

Among those who were not homeless in the past 30 days and moved to Colorado after legalization of recreational marijuana in 2012 (n=37), the top four reasons for moving to Colorado were as follows: (1) family (37.8%) (2) employment (32.4%), (3) outdoor activities (24.3%), and (4) educational opportunities (24.3%). There was a four-way tie for the fifth spot with 21.6% rating medical and/or recreational marijuana, weather, economy, and getting away from a problem.

Comparing differences between homeless and not homeless inmates for reasons to move to Colorado since the legalization of marijuana, the only reasons that were significantly different were friends and to get away from a problem, with greater proportions of homeless inmates selecting both as reasons to stay.



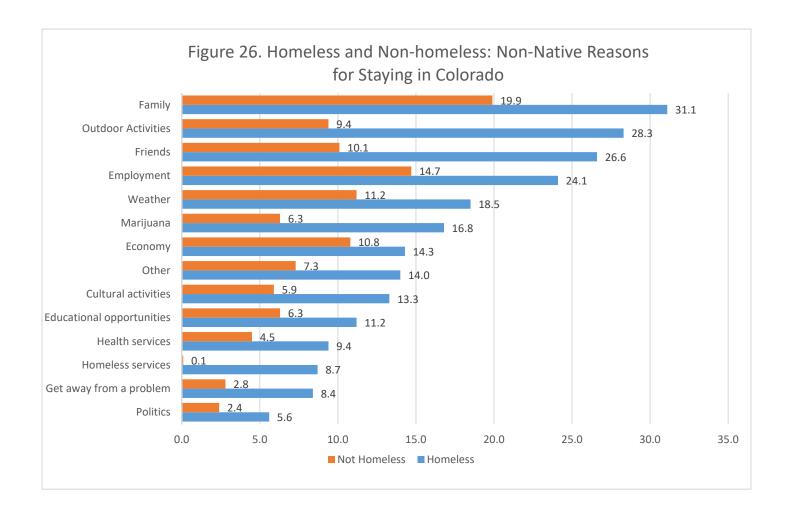
Why they stayed in Colorado

To identify the reasons respondents who were not natives of Colorado (regardless of when they moved here) may have remained in the state, the reasons for *staying in Colorado* were examined. Respondents could select more than one reason for staying in Colorado. Figure 27 presents the proportion of homeless and non-homeless inmates who are not native to Colorado who report their reasons for staying in Colorado (n=286). The only differences between homeless and non-homeless reasons were for outdoor activities, ¹⁹ friends, ²⁰ and homeless services, ²¹ with greater proportions of homeless inmates selecting all three as reasons to stay than non-homeless inmates. Marijuana was cited as a reason to stay by 16.8% of the homeless sample and 6.3% of the non-homeless sample, but there was not a significant difference between the two groups.

¹⁹ $\chi^2[1]$ = 8.60, p < .01.

 $^{^{20}}$ $\chi^{2}[1]$ = 4.28, p = .04.

 $^{^{21}}$ χ^{2} [1]= 10.38, p = .001.



Section 6 – What services are needed for those leaving jail?

What services do inmates report they need upon release from jail?

Respondents were asked "When you are released from jail, what services or programs would help you in your transition?" Categories of services/programs/needs were developed to analyze the information.

Similar themes for services needed by inmates

Many of the items identified by the non-homeless inmates were quite similar to those identified by the homeless inmates. One reason for this similarity is that many inmates communicated concerns about becoming homeless because of their incarceration, while others needed assistance moving forward.

The following categories of service needs were expressed similarly across the two groups:

- Mental health and substance abuse treatment services
- Housing assistance: sober living facilities, facilities for people without dependents, short term housing vouchers, long term subsidies, felon friendly facilities
- Health care: needing access, medication, access to a doctor who takes Medicaid
- Obtaining identification and specific assistance: driver's license or state ID, birth certificates, health insurance, food stamps
- Clothing bank²²
- Transportation assistance: bus passes, getting cars out of impoundment
- Start-up financial help: rental deposits, cell phones, a month or two of grocery money
- Food bank
- Education/training: GED classes, vocational training, life skills training (e.g., parenting, budgeting, anger management)
- Job assistance: listings of jobs/employers that hire felons
- Social support: assistance reconnecting with family, religion
- Updated resource materials: numerous inmates indicated that transition booklets/materials were very outdated and not useful
- Relocation: several inmates indicated wanting to relocate to another state after release, but not having the means to do this

Differences across inmates for services needed

Homeless and non-homeless inmates only differed on a few suggested services or programs that would help them better transition into the community. Among the homeless, some inmates indicated wanting more individual and group counseling services, and suggested that there be homeless service facilities, similar to truck stops where homeless individuals could shower, do their laundry, obtain their mail, make phone calls, and obtain referral information for jobs and other services. Some inmates also stated

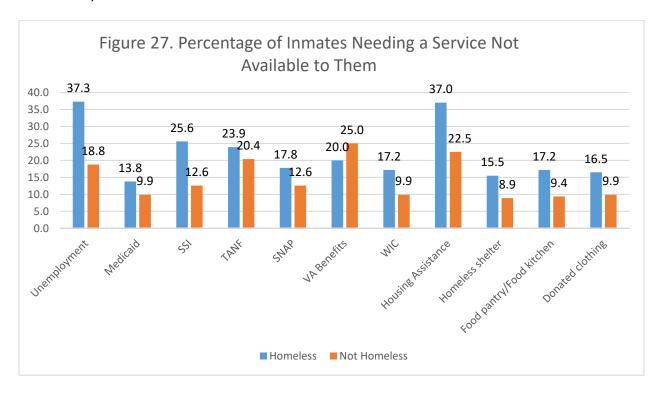
²² Non-homeless inmates indicated that they needed help obtaining clothing, often because they were concerned about becoming homeless upon release.

that they wanted to see criminal justice reform so that the fines imposed on them were not so punitive, as they could not then pay for other living expenses.

Several non-homeless respondents indicated a need for legal aid related to immigration or child custody, and wanted additional educational assistance in the form of information about loans and grants. Finally, a few non-homeless inmates mentioned that they wanted help managing the social stigma of being a felon.

What specific services do inmates report they need when released from custody?

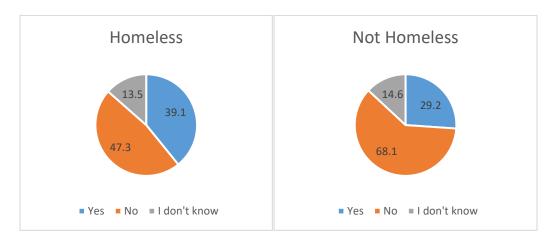
Respondents were provided with a list of programs and asked whether there were any that they had received, or wanted to receive but were not available to them. The proportion of homeless and non-homeless inmates who indicated that they wanted a service but it was not available to them is presented in Figure 28. Across all categories, except for VA benefits, more homeless inmates indicated needing services than non-homeless inmates. Only a small percentage of inmates indicated being a veteran (6.4%), so many who selected needing the benefits were likely not eligible because they did not have military service.



What percent of inmates report they will need substance abuse and/or mental health treatment after release from custody?

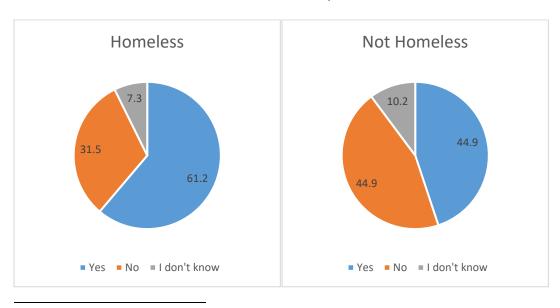
Although a larger proportion of homeless respondents reported needing drug treatment upon release (39.1%) than non-homeless inmates (29.2%), this difference was not statistically significant. It is important to note that a sizeable proportion of homeless and non-homeless inmates reported that they did not know whether they needed treatment (13.5% and 14.6%, respectively), suggesting that they had concerns about their substance use (see Figure 29).

Figure 28. Percentage of Inmates Who Reported Needing Substance Abuse Treatment upon Release



A larger proportion of inmates reported needing mental health treatment upon release from jail than drug treatment, and the difference in this reported need was significantly greater for homeless than non-homeless respondents.²³ Over 60% of homeless respondents (61.2%) reported needing mental health treatment, while 44.9% of non-homeless inmates identified this need. A small proportion of respondents indicated not knowing whether they needed mental health treatment (7.3% homeless and 10.2% non-homeless), so these individuals may be in need of mental health screening or support services (see Figure 30).

Figure 29. Percentage of Inmates Who Reported Needing Mental Health Treatment upon Release

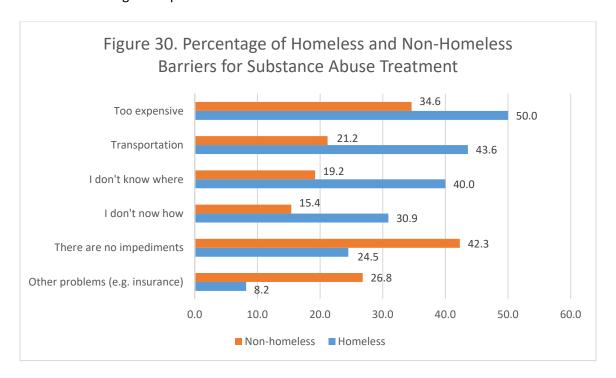


 $^{^{23}}$ $\chi^{2}(2) = 11.08, p=.004.$

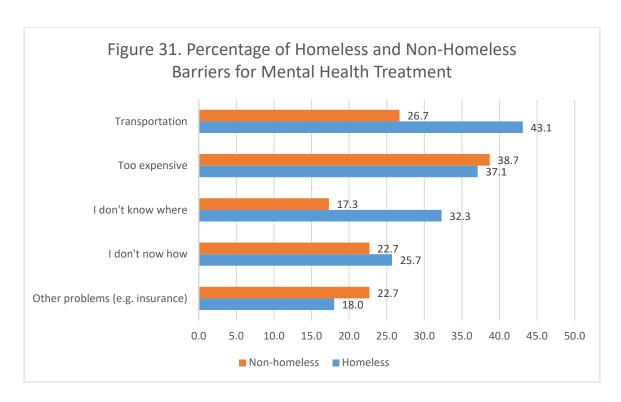
Anticipated barriers to treatment

Respondents were asked what were anticipated barriers for accessing drug or mental health treatment (if they indicated needing it), and they could select multiple responses.

The most commonly selected anticipated barriers for drug treatment for homeless and non-homeless respondents are presented in Figure 31. Compared to non-homeless respondents, homeless respondents were more likely to report not knowing where to access services, transportation barriers, and services being too expensive.



The top categories for anticipated barriers to mental treatment were the same for homeless and non-homeless inmates (see Figure 32). A greater proportion of homeless inmates than non-homeless inmates indicated that transportation and not knowing where to get treatment were the greatest barriers to obtaining mental health treatment.



A greater proportion of non-homeless respondents compared to homeless respondents selected "other" as a barrier to treatment. Respondents were provided an opportunity to write additional reasons. For non-homeless inmates, the reasons included the following: work schedules, not having identification to receive treatment, lacking trust in providers, and not believing they will be able to do it. In addition to these reasons, homeless inmates also reported having believing that treatment would work not for them, needing to address their other needs first (e.g., housing, food, employment), not wanting religious-oriented treatment approaches, and worries about medication and long wait lists.

Section 7 – Summary

The Colorado Department of Public Safety (CDPS), Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ), requested that Eris Enterprises conduct a study of homeless inmates in seven jails. The criteria used to select these study sites included regional diversity (i.e., rural versus urban), a large homeless population generally, and the jail's ability to identify homeless inmates in the population. The selected jails were located in Arapahoe County, Denver County and Denver City, El Paso County, Larimer County, Mesa County and Pueblo County. Data were collected between June 12, 2017 and October 22, 2017 at the seven jail facilities. Inmates classified as homeless by the jail were over-sampled at each facility such that nearly two-thirds of the entire sample was identified as homeless, and the remaining one-third was not. Questionnaires were administered to a sample of 507 jail inmates who agreed to participate in the study, representing a response rate of 83.4%.

Homelessness was defined as, in the past 30 days, living on the street, outdoors, in an abandoned building, shelter, living free with family/friends, or living in a motel.

Prevalence of homelessness in the sample—The study was designed to oversample the homeless and consequently these results are not representative of the entire jail population. Among those surveyed and who answered the question, 60.8% were homeless in the 30 days preceding the current jail stay. Among 494 respondents, <u>lifetime</u> homelessness exceeded 80% and, among this group, 85% reported recent homelessness (within the past year).

Nearly half (46.3%) of those who were *not homeless* in the past 30 days reported that they expected to be homeless upon leaving the jail or they did not know if they would be homeless. This figure was 79.2% among those who reported homelessness in the past 30 days.

Among the inmates surveyed, 38.5% of the sample were Colorado natives. For those inmates that came to Colorado from other states, 59.0% arrived in Colorado before 2012.²⁴ Just over half (55%) of the Colorado natives were homeless in the 30 days prior to incarceration compared to 64% of non-natives were homeless prior to incarceration, a statistically significant difference.

Correlates with homelessness—Several factors were significantly associated with homelessness among those in these jails, including unemployment in the previous month before incarceration and the self-reported presence of a mental health diagnosis (there were no differences in the types of self-reported diagnosis). The homeless sample reported more symptoms of anxiety, depression and PTSD than inmates who were not homeless.

Crime among homeless respondents—Homeless respondents were significantly more likely to have drug and trespassing charges, while non-homeless inmates were significantly more likely to have violent crime charges. There were no statistically significant differences between the two groups in terms of the number of criminal charges.

Marijuana—There was no statistically significant difference between the homeless and non-homeless inmates when it came to the proportion that selected marijuana as their reason for coming to

²⁴ Those who reported they had been in Colorado five years or more years were coded as being in Colorado prior to legalization. Individuals reporting they were in Colorado at the end of 2012 were considered to be here pre-legalization.

Colorado. Both groups ranked marijuana as a reason to stay in Colorado though this was not in the top five reasons for either group.

Services needed— Across all categories of services, except for VA benefits, more homeless inmates indicated needing services than non-homeless inmates. However, both groups of homeless and non-homeless respondents reported the need for services to help them transition back into the community, particularly related to substance abuse and mental health treatment. Those who were homeless in the month prior to coming to jail were significantly more likely to report a mental illness (64.2%) than those who were not homeless (46.4%). Barriers to obtaining services for mental health and substance abuse included transportation, expense, and not knowing how/where to access services.

Appendix A: Combined Data and Statistical Tests for the Total Sample

Total of all jails (n=507)

Age	M = 37.65, $SD = 11.62$, Range 18	8-78 years	
Gender	74.1% Male (312/421)	25.9% Female (109/421)	
Race ^a	79.1% White (333/421)	20.4% Black (86/421)	
Ethnicity	74.0% Hispanic (311/420)	26.0% Non-Hispanic (109/420)	
Military Service	6.4% Veteran (31/482)	93.6% Non-Veteran (451/482)	
Worked 30 days before jail	42.4% Did not work (204/481)	57.6% Worked 1-30 days (277/481)	
Job anticipated after jail	59.5% No (288/484)	40.5% Yes (196/484)	
Marital Status ^b		,	
Single, never married	50.2% (232/462)		
Legally separated	3.9% (18/462)		
Divorced	16.9% (78/462)		
Legally married	15.2% (70/462)		
Domestic partnership/Civil union	8.0% (37/462)		
Education			
< high school diploma	21.1% (100/473)		
GED	23.0% (109/473)		
High school diploma	16.1% (76/473)		
Some college or technical training	28.8% (136/473)		
Associate's degree or more	5.9% (28/473)		
Bachelor's degree or more	1.1% (5/473)		
% flagged homeless by facility	54.3% (229/422)		
% self-reported homeless ever	81.4% (402/494)		
% self-reported homeless last year	84.9% (337/397)		
% self-reported homeless 30 days before	60.9% (297/488)		
incarceration			
% misclassified	$X^{2}(1) = 54.02, p < .001, OR = 4.77, CI = 3.10 \text{ to } 7.33$		
	19.6% Homeless but were not	12.0% Not homeless but were flagged as	
	flagged as homeless (80/409)	homeless (49/409)	
% anticipated homeless after jail	32.2% No (158/491)	39.5% Yes 28.3% Don't know	
		(194/491) (139/491)	
Homeless and non-homeless reasons to move Colorado after 2012 (n= 114)			
Weather	1		
	11.4% Homeless (13/114)	7.0% Not homeless (8/114)	

	1 2		
Outdoor activities	$X^{2}(1)=0.35, p > .05, OR = 0.75, CI = 0.29 \text{ to } 1.93$		
	13.2% Homeless (15/114)	7.9% Not homeless (9/114)	
Culture			
	7.9% Homeless (9/114)	2.6% Not homeless (3/114)	
Friends	$X^{2}(1)=7.06, p < .01, OR = 10.20, CI = 1.$	30 to 79.92	
	14.9% Homeless (17/114)		
Family		7 to 2.35	
	26.3% Homeless (30/114)	12.3% Not homeless (14/114)	
Marijuana (recreational and/or medical)	$X^{2}(1)=2.12, p > .05, OR = 1.96, CI = 0.7$	9 to 4.87	
		7.0% Not homeless (8/114)	
Economy	$X^{2}(1)=0.97, p > .05, OR = 0.60, CI = 0.2$	2 to 1.66	
	9.6% Homeless (11/114)	7.0% Not homeless (8/114)	
Employment	$X^{2}(1)=0.18, p > .05, OR = 0.83, CI = 0.3$	6 to 1.95	
	19.2% Homeless (22/114)	10.5% Not homeless (12/114)	
Health services	$X^{2}(1)=0.69, p > .05, OR = 0.64, CI = 0.2$	2 to 1.84	
	8.8% Homeless (10/114)	6.1% Not homeless (7/114)	
Homeless Services			
	5.2% Homeless (6/114)	1.0% Not homeless (1/114)	
Education		7 to 1.27	
	8.8% Homeless (10/114)	7.9% Not homeless (8/114)	
Politics		7 to 1.27	
	3.5% Homeless (4/114)	2.6% Not homeless (3/114)	
Get away from a problem	$X^{2}(1)=5.45, p=.02, OR=2.87, CI=1.1$	6 to 7.07	
	29.8% Homeless (34/114)	7.0% Not homeless (8/114)	
Other unspecified reason	$X^{2}(1)=0.08, p > .05, OR = 0.89, CI = 0.3$	7 to 2.11	
	18.4% Homeless (21/114)	9.6% Not homeless (11/114)	
Homeless and non-homeless non-native's reasons to stay in Colorado (n= 286)			
Weather	$X^{2}(1)=0.65, p > .05, OR = 0.89, CI = 0.5$	2 to 1.50	
	18.5% Homeless (53/286)	11.2% Not homeless (32/286)	
Outdoor activities	$X^{2}(1)=8.60, p < .01, OR = 2.18, CI = 1.2$	9 to 3.70	
	28.3% Homeless (81/286)	9.4% Not homeless (27/286)	
Culture	e $X^2(1)=0.67, p > .05, OR = 1.30, CI = 0.69 \text{ to } 2.45$		
	13.3% Homeless (38/286)	5.9% Not homeless (17/286)	
	-		

Friends	$X^{2}(1)=4.68, p=.04, OR=1.77, CI=1.05 \text{ to } 2.98$		
	26.6% Homeless (76/286)	10.1% Not homeless (29/286)	
Family	$X^{2}(1)=1.48, p > .05, OR = 0.74, CI = 0.46 \text{ to } 1.20$		
	31.1% Homeless (89/286)		
Marijuana (recreational and/or medical)	$X^{2}(1)=2.63, p > .05, OR = 1.65, CI = 0.9$	0 to 3.02	
-	16.8% Homeless (48/286)	6.3% Not homeless (18/286)	
Economy	$X^{2}(1)=2.29, p > .05, OR = 0.66, CI = 0.3$	8 to 1.13	
	14.3% Homeless (41/286)	10.8% Not homeless (31/286)	
Employment			
		14.7% Not homeless (42/286)	
Health services	, , , , , , ,		
	9.4% Homeless (27/286)		
Homeless Services	$X^{2}(1)=10.38, p < .001, OR = 7.86, CI = 0.001$		
		0.1% Not homeless (2/286)	
Education $X^2(1) = 0.003, p > .05, OR = 0.98, CI$			
	11.2% Homeless (32/286)		
Politics			
	5.6% Homeless (16/286)	2.4% Not homeless (7/286)	
Get away from a problem	$X^{2}(1)=1.78, p > .05, OR = 1.78, CI = 0.7$		
		2.8% Not homeless (8/286)	
Other unspecified reason			
	14.0% Homeless (40/286)		
Used illicit drugs 30 days before incarceration	$X^{2}(1)=0.32, p > .05, OR = 1.15, CI = 0.7$	2 to 1.83	
	12.1% Homeless (59/488)	` /	
Diagnosed with a substance abuse disorder	$X^{2}(1)=5.20, p=.02, OR=1.56, CI=1.0$	6 to 2.28	
	27.9% Homeless (131/469)	13.9% Not homeless (65/469)	
Diagnosed with a mental illness	$X^{2}(1)=14.88, p < .001, OR = 2.06, CI = 1.42 \text{ to } 2.98$		
	37.9% Homeless (185/488) 17		
Ever treated for mental illness	$X^{2}(1)=2.94, p > .05, OR = 1.39, CI = 0.95 \text{ to } 2.03$		
		18.2% Not homeless (83/457)	
Depression Symptoms	F(1,449) = 7.71, p < .01,		
	Homeless (n= 278/451)	Not homeless (n=173/451)	
	M=10.40, $SD = 7.90$, $CI = 9.47$ to 11.34	M=8.26, $SD=8.08$, $CI=7.05$ to 9.47	

Anxiety Symptoms			
	Homeless (n= 284/458)	Not homeless (n=174/458)	
	M=8.06, SD = 6.15, CI = 7.34 to 8.78	M=6.70, SD = 6.26, CI = 5.76 to 763	
Meets PTSD criteria	$X^{2}(1)=4.41, p=.04, OR=1.50, CI=1.0$	3 to 2.20	
	34.3% Homeless (157/458)	16.8% Not homeless (77/458)	
Meets complex trauma criteria	$X^{2}(1)=3.17, p > .05, OR = 1.42, CI = 0.9$	7 to 2.09	
	27.2% Homeless (127/466)	13.5% Not homeless (63/466)	
Current Charges (average per person)			
Violent	F(1,403) = 7.23, p < .01		
	Homeless (n= 249/405)	Not Homeless (n= 156/405)	
	M=0.36, SD = 0.77, CI = 0.26 to 0.46	M=0.62, SD = 1.17, CI = 0.44 to 0.81	
Drug	F(1,403) = 9.97, p < .01		
	Homeless (n= 249/405)	Not Homeless (n= 156/405)	
	M=0.39, SD = 0.71, CI = 0.30 to 0.47	M=0.19, SD = 0.44, CI = 0.12 to 0.26	
Trespassing	F(1,403) = 6.63, p = .01		
	Homeless (n= 249/405)	Not Homeless (n= 156/405)	
	M=0.11, SD = 0.35, CI = 0.07 to 0.16	M=0.03, SD = 0.21, CI = -0.01 to 0.07	
Other Property	F(1,403) = 2.40, p > .05		
	Homeless (n= 249/405)	Not Homeless (n= 156/405)	
	M=0.31, SD = 0.67, CI = 0.23 to 0.39	M=0.21, SD = 0.64, CI = 0.10 to 0.31	
Other	F(1,403) = 0.01, p > .05		
	Homeless (n= 249/405)	Not Homeless (n= 156/405)	
	M=1.72, $SD=1.92$, $CI=1.54$ to 1.92	M=1.74, $SD=1.94$, $CI=1.48$ to 1.96	
Colorado Native	$X^{2}(1)=3.72, p=.05, OR=0.69, CI=0.47 \text{ to } 1.01$		
	21.7% Homeless (102/470)	17.4% Not homeless (82/470)	
0.TD 1 (0.40/) (11 ' 31 ' 4 '			

^a Two respondents (0.4%) reported being Native American or "other" ^b Twenty-seven respondents stated some unspecified "other" marital status