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The Chicago Reentry Report

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AT
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The Chicago Reentry Report June 2020

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Author

Timothy O. Imeokparia, Ph.D., AICP
Associate Director
of Research and Planning

Research Assistants

Thad Boertje, MUPP
Brandon Duong, MUPP

Acknowledgements

Teresa L. Córdova, Ph.D.
Director and Professor

Jackson C. Morsey, AICP
Urban Planner

Great Cities Institute (MC 107)
College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs
University of Illinois at Chicago
412 South Peoria Street, Suite 400
Chicago, Illinois 60607-7067

312.996.8700
gcities@uic.edu
greatcities.uic.edu

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Executive Summary

Approximately 97¹ percent of incarcerated individuals in the U.S. will eventually be released and return to their communities - whether released on probation, parole, or unconditionally discharged. That is, out of the Illinois' 38,259 prison population (as of December 31, 2019), 36,346 will at some point be released, varying by sentencing guidelines.

However, criminal justice contact and incarceration stigmatizes and results in substantial social and economic costs such as constraints on employment, housing, voting, and welfare benefits, in addition to enduring effects on physical and mental health. This is compounded by the collateral consequences, such as legal and regulatory sanctions, of incarceration. Even if not incarcerated, many with criminal records will find themselves deprived of certain rights and stripped of opportunities for housing, education, employment, social services, and other necessities. All of this increases the likelihood of return to criminal activity.

...criminal justice contact and incarceration stigmatizes and results in substantial social and economic costs...

The process of reentry is one with many challenges and an often-difficult one to navigate. Studies suggest that those reentering the community will again be incarcerated at fairly high rates. This is a measure of both the extent to which reentering individuals face impediments to successful reentry as well as the resources available to reentry service providers to support the reentry population in surmounting these obstacles.

Managing reentry to accomplish long-term reintegration has wide-ranging benefits for former prisoners, their families and the impoverished neighborhoods most impacted by reentry.

Managing reentry to accomplish long-term reintegration has wide-ranging benefits for former prisoners, their families and the impoverished neighborhoods most impacted by reentry.

The ability to meet the demand and complex needs of the reentry population, however, is significantly vitiated by the impoverished and discontinuous make-up of the reentry infrastructure, which is severely under built and underfunded and therefore, inadequate to the task of enabling the successful reentry of the formerly incarcerated, resulting in difficulties for many individuals returning to the community from prison or jail.

It is of significant importance that issues facing reentry populations and their families and communities be addressed through a concerted policy and programmatic focus that also requires an examination of how the problem is created in the first place.

While urgent, addressing these issues is made more difficult by the complexity of the reentry phenomenon. The goal of this report is to increase understanding of re-entry and to inform the development of and to advocate for specific policy initiatives and programs that address re-entry by examining the issues and challenges surrounding prisoner reentry in the city of Chicago.² By reviewing existing studies and the best available data,

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¹ Hughes, T. and Wilsonson, D. J. (2003). Reentry Trends in the United States, US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics (Washington, DC: 2003).

² Re-Entry Policy Council, 2005 p. 2

this report attempts to provide a more systematic understanding of the complexities and problems attendant with prisoner reentry - as both a concept and a practice. It is intended to contribute to ongoing efforts by various stakeholders in the city to increase the possibilities for successful prisoner reintegration.

The concept of reentry can be applied to *the different contexts in which individuals transition to the community* after being held for a period of time in a state prison, local jail, federal institution, or a juvenile facility. For purposes of this report, the term reentry is used to refer to the population that includes those with prison experience as well as the large number of those who have not served time but suffer from the impacts of a felony conviction.

Re-entry populations are not identical, they are quite diverse. This requires that planning for reentry address the complexities of this population, which entails developing a thorough understanding of the characteristics of returning prisoners.

In order to devise and put into practice re-entry programs/proposals that meet the needs of returning prisoners, it is critical to understand who is being released from prison. That is, identifying the characteristics (their nature and needs) will help increase a program's effectiveness as it informs a program's strategy, services, and service delivery methods.³ Taking this variation into account, this report also examines prisoner reentry through a number of different policy lenses focused on the intersection of issues of health (including mental illness) and housing instability, education and employment, substance abuse disorders, the LGBTQ+ community, and a host of other problems, which co-occur and are exacerbated by other associated challenges.

Counting the Reentry Population

The reentry movement is focused primarily on the approximately 614,844 individuals in the U.S. returning to their communities annually from state and federal prisons.⁴ However, there were 10,675,400 annual admissions to jails in the U.S. in 2018 with a weekly inmate-turnover rate of 54.9 percent. The estimate average time in jail is 25.2 days. Therefore, there are 5,860,816 individuals returning from local jails each year.⁵ When the millions of individuals who have gone through the criminal justice system and finished their sentences and those previously under felony supervision are included, the size of the reentry population increases significantly.⁶ The U.S. statistical system does not even provide an approximation of the number of Americans who have a felony conviction in their background.

Thus, the extent of the reentry population is magnified when we examine whether reentry comprises only those just released, those under supervision, or the entire universe of persons who have formerly been in prison or under felony supervision.

Effective advocacy and policy-making necessitates up-to-date information. Yet, a finding of this report is that accurate, current and comprehensive data for ex-felons does not exist. Nonetheless, this report attempts to provide estimates of populations with previous prison and felony supervision experience in the United States and the state of Illinois. The data used for this report are based on the most current study that has produced estimates of ex-prisoners and ex-felons.

Data Highlights

Based on Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) prison population data, as of March 30, 2020, 36,903 individuals were incarcerated in Illinois prisons.⁷ As of the same date, 25,166 individuals were paroled from Illinois prisons compared to 25,723 as of on March 30, 2019.⁸

In the U.S. and Illinois:

- The estimated U.S. population formerly in prison and parole (with prison records) for the following years is: 1980 (996,290), 1990 (1,671,217), 2000 (3,088,214) and 2010 (4,912,321).

3 Re-Entry Policy Council, 2005 p. 26

4 Carson, 2020

5 Zeng, 2020

6 Shannon, et al., 2017, p. 1799

7 <https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/reportsandstatistics/Pages/Prison-Population-Data-Sets.aspx>

8 <https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/reportsandstatistics/Pages/Parole-Population-Data-Sets.aspx> Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) reports prison and population data quarterly. Technically, changes in population and parole populations between reporting periods should equal the difference between entries and exits. However, those numbers may not necessarily be the same as.

- The estimated U.S. population with felony records for the following years is: 1980 (3,918,100), 1990 (6,033,157), 2000 (9,076,642), and 2010 (14,474,204).
- In the state of Illinois, there were 41,427 (2017) and 39,965 (2018) prisoners under the jurisdiction of state or federal correctional authorities (Carson, 2020).
- Estimate of people formerly incarcerated in the State of Illinois, for the following years is: 1980 (38,860), 1990 (73,181), 2000 (178,396) and 2010 (255,118).
- Estimate of people formerly under felony correctional supervision in the State of Illinois, for the following years: 1980 (105,501), 1990 (219,063), 2000 (392,982) and 2010 (585,466).
- In the U.S., one-third of the adult population is susceptible to the adverse impact of prior justice involvement on employment obtainment, retention and advancement, as well as economic mobility (Bucknor and Barber, 2016).
- In 2014, between 6.0 and 6.7 percent of the male working-age population were former prisoners; while between 13.6 and 15.3 percent were people with felony convictions (Ibid).
- Two-thirds of the businesses would not intentionally hire an ex-prisoner (Holzer et al., 2004). The resumes of applicants with prison records are roughly 50 percent less likely to get a response from employers relative to comparable resumes without a record (Looney and Turner, 2018 p. 4. See also The National Reentry Resource Center, n/d).
- In Illinois, 5.4 percent of the prison population did not enter high school, 31.9 percent entered but did not complete high school and 30.7 percent had received either a high school diploma or GED (IDOC's 2018 Annual Report).
- In 2000 of the fifty-seven of ninety-eight occupations that required state licensure, the state of Illinois subjected applicants with a criminal record to conditions and/or limitations on their employment (Street, 2002 pp. 3-6).
- Over 27 percent of previously incarcerated individuals are unemployed, nearly five times higher than that for the general U.S. population.
- Two-thirds (66 percent) of people on probation make less than \$20,000 per year, approximately 2 in 5 people on probation (38 percent) make less than \$10,000 per year, which is much lower than the poverty line (Finkel, 2019).
- Arrest and incarceration correlate with lower employment and earnings of perhaps 10-30 percent lower than for those with no criminal history.
- In 2008, job discrimination against ex-offenders in the U.S. removed 1.5 to 1.7 million workers from the labor market leading to a productivity loss of 57 to 65 billion dollars that year (National Conference on State Legislatures, 2018).
- In the U.S., job discrimination against ex-offenders eliminated 1.5 to 1.7 million workers from the labor market leading to a productivity loss of 57 to 65 billion dollars that year and a loss of roughly \$78 to \$87 billion in annual GDP (Bucknor and Barber, 2016; National Conference on State Legislatures, 2018).
- In Chicago 90 percent of recently released prisoners (paroled) lived with family members, 5 percent moved into transitional living facilities, 2 percent into shelters or boarding houses, and 1 percent moved into residential treatment facilities. The rest were homeless (Visher & Farrell, 2005).
- In the U.S, individuals who were formerly incarcerated are almost 10 times more likely to be homeless; almost 20 percent of single homeless adults have been previously incarcerated; in the year prior to being incarcerated 15 percent experience homelessness; those who have been incarcerated just once become homeless at a rate nearly 7 times higher than the general public and 13 times higher for those who have been incarcerated more than once.
- Of the individuals released from Illinois prisons who returned to Chicago, 1,200 are released directly from prison to homeless shelters; as much as 48 percent of individuals living in emergency shelters in Chicago state that they have a felony conviction.
- Approximately 44 percent of males and 21 percent of females in Chicago shelters had been in jail or prison previously.
- 60 percent of unsheltered men and 58 percent of women were formerly incarcerated. 40 percent of the women were unable to pay rent. A further 60 percent had been evicted and 28 percent were, at some point, homeless (Harris, Moreno and Rudolph, 2019).
- 8 in 10 men and 9 in 10 women of prisoners returning to the community have chronic health conditions requiring treatment or management, which includes co-occurring health problems such as mental health and substance abuse disorders. These conditions are usually unaddressed while confined and result in reincarceration shortly after release.

While incarcerated:

- Two-thirds of men and three-quarters of women with physical health conditions received treatment. Eight to ten months after release, treatment rates declined to five in 10 men and 6 in 10 women.
- 6 in 10 men and women with mental health conditions received mental health treatment. Eight to ten months after release the treatment rates declined to one-half of men and 4 in 10 women. 50 percent of men and 4 in 10 women with substance abuse disorders participated in substance abuse treatment services. Eight to ten months after release, only one-quarter continued with treatment.

- Approximately 4 in 10 men and 6 in 10 women attested to a combination of physical health, mental health, and substance abuse conditions.
- The ability of returning prisoners to meaningful access community-based access to treatment for their recurring health conditions is constrained by not having health insurance. Thus, whatever treatment inmates receive while incarcerated typically ends when they re-enter the community.
- 8 to 10 months after release, 68 percent of men and 58 percent of women were without health insurance. Nevertheless, over 7 in 10 individuals with physical and mental health conditions utilized some health care within 8 to 10 months of their release. One-third used emergency rooms and one-fifth were hospitalized; a very costly alternative.
- The decision by some states such as Illinois to expand eligibility for Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act has improved health outcomes for individuals after they are released.
- Less than 20 percent of the incarcerated were enrolled in Medicaid prior to reentry before Medicaid expansion, and less than a year after expansion more than 60 percent had coverage.
- 70 percent of the incarcerated who satisfied the conditions for substance addiction or abuse were more likely to have a criminal record compared to 46 percent of inmates who do not.
- Prisoners who are substance dependent were two times as likely to have been homeless in the year before their offense (16 percent v. 9 percent). 52 percent of incarcerated women were dependent on drugs or alcohol in comparison to 44 percent of men (Karberg and James, 2005).

In Chicago:

- La Vigne et al. (2003) claim 53 percent of prisoners released from state prisons in Illinois returned to the city of Chicago in Cook County.
- Based on a rate 53 percent return to Chicago, the estimate of people formerly incarcerated returning to Chicago, for the following years is: 1980 (20,596), 1990 (38,786), 2000 (94,550), and 2010 (135,213).
- The estimate of people formerly under felony correctional supervision in the State of Illinois, for the following years is: 1980 (55,916), 1990 (116,103), 2000 (208,280) and 2010 (310,297).
- In 2019 the City of Chicago was home to 35 percent of returning prisoners released from Illinois state prisons. They returned to only 6 of the city's 77 Community Areas - Austin, North Lawndale, East Garfield Park, West Englewood, Humboldt Park, and Englewood (ibid.).
- 1,200 individuals are released directly from prison to homeless shelters in Chicago annually, while as many as 48 percent of individuals in Chicago emergency shelters report having a felony conviction (Hamlin, 2017).
- Similarly, in a report that reviewed barriers to safe and affordable housing and re-entry housing issues, the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) and Illinois Justice Project (IJP) found that 60 percent of unsheltered men and 58 percent of women report being previously incarcerated; 40 percent of the women reported being unable to pay rent. Another 60 percent had been evicted, and 28 percent were homeless at some point (Harris, Moreno and Rudolph, 2019).
- Given the need, it is noteworthy that the State of Illinois does not set aside specific funding to provide or support housing for the reentry population (ibid., p. 7).
- Based on arrest data for the City of Chicago Between 01/01/2001 – 12/31/2019, there was a total of 1,943, 597 arrests in the City of Chicago. The arrest data is based on Crimes - 2001 to the present from the City of Chicago's Data Portal. The dataset reflects reported incidents of crime (with the exception of murders where data exists for each victim) that occurred in the City of Chicago. CAVEAT: There is no way to track "the virgin arrest ratio" (i.e., the portion of arrestees who have never before been arrested).

Concluding Reflections

While this report focuses on offenders who leave prison and return to their communities on parole or some type of post-incarceration supervision as well as those formerly incarcerated or under felony supervision, it is worth noting that a large number of offenders leave prison when they complete their sentences without additional supervision. If it is difficult for offenders on supervision to successfully reintegrate when they have access to reentry services, it is likely even more difficult for those offenders who need and require reentry support - and it is difficult to track them.

Successful reintegration can reduce the recidivism rate as well as the social and economic costs of reincarceration. Yet, policy responses to the problematic issue of prisoner reentry has largely been inadequate with respect to both the scale of the problem and the funding required. Programs aimed at enabling the effective reentry of the previously incarcerated receive insufficient material support from states and municipalities sufficient to attend to the need of formerly incarcerated individuals.

The report does not seek to identify, document or evaluate every reentry program and service available to released prisoners in the city of Chicago or to empirically assess the state of Illinois's reentry policies and practices. This report argues, however, that current reentry programs, while valuable in their own right, are not able to fully address the fundamental reasons for the city's and the state's recurrent reentry predicament. They are a panacea intended to enable communities ameliorate the problem, not to solve it completely. Taking the most optimistic or favorable view, even the most effective reentry programs will be largely marginal in their impact on the reentry problem until policing strategies and sentencing practices are reconsidered simultaneously⁹.

In sum,

- Available reentry figures are severe underestimates of the actual numbers of individuals in our communities who have been incarcerated or received felony convictions.
- Reentry figures typically include only those just released but when the millions of individuals who have gone through the criminal justice system and finished their sentences and those previously under felony supervision are included, the size of reentry population increases significantly and reveals the magnitude of the issues affecting reentry populations.
- A large number of offenders leave prison when they complete their sentences without additional supervision.
- Criminal justice contact and incarceration stigmatizes and results in substantial social and economic costs such as constraints on employment, housing, voting, and welfare benefits, in addition to enduring effects on physical and mental health. This is compounded by the collateral consequences (legal and regulatory sanctions) of incarceration. Many people with criminal records find themselves deprived of certain rights and stripped of opportunities for housing, education, employment, social services, and other necessities. All of this increases the likelihood of return to criminal activity.
- Managing reentry to accomplish long-term reintegration has wide-ranging benefits for former prisoners, their families and the impoverished neighborhoods most affected by reentry.
- Given that the reentry population is diverse, planning for reentry necessitates that attention be paid to the complexities of this population.
- The ability to meet the demand and complex needs of the reentry population is greatly diminished by the discontinuous and impoverished nature of the reentry infrastructure that is severely under built and underfunded and therefore, inadequate to the task of facilitating the successful reentry of the formerly incarcerated.
- Programs aimed at facilitating the successful reentry of formerly incarcerated individuals into society receive insufficient support from states and municipalities sufficient to address the need of formerly incarcerated individuals.
- Yet the most important way for society to address issues facing reentry populations is to direct resources and pursue policies that reduce the number of individuals that are incarcerated or receive felony convictions.
- Diagnosing the scope of existing problems regarding prisoner re-entry is an essential first step to initiation a re-entry initiative (Re-Entry Policy Council, 2005 p. 22).
- It is recognized that no single agency or organization can, on its own, execute/put into practice all the dimensions of the reentry system; collaboration (and ideally, partnerships), particularly among service providers in non-criminal justice sectors (like public health, workforce development, and housing), who do not typically collaborate, is critical to success. Therefore, it is suggested that as a first step the City of Chicago should setup a local Re-Entry Task Force with the diverse group of stakeholders represented (Re-Entry Policy Council, *ibid.* p. xxiv; pp. 5-6).

Successful reintegration can reduce the recidivism rate as well as the social and economic costs of reincarceration. Yet, policy responses to the problematic issue of prisoner reentry has largely been inadequate with respect to both the scale of the problem and the funding required. Programs aimed at enabling the effective reentry of the previously incarcerated receive insufficient material support from states and municipalities sufficient to attend to the need of formerly incarcerated individuals.

⁹ Byrne, 2004 p. 1

Introduction

U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno identified prisoner reentry as “one of the most pressing problems we face as a nation” in 2000.¹⁰ This is the predictable outcome during that period of the steady release by federal and state correctional institutions of record numbers of incarcerated individuals (Thompson, 2004 p. 255). Approximately 97 percent of the incarcerated will eventually be released and will return to their communities whether released on probation, parole or unconditional discharge. The process of reentry is an often-difficult one for individuals to navigate which heightens the challenges of returning to society. Studies suggest that those reentering the community are failing at fairly high rates. The chances are high that many of these individuals will return to criminal activity: two-thirds (68 percent) of parolees are arrested within three years of release and between 40 and 50 percent return to prison (Hughes, Wilson and Beck, 2001; Langan and Levin, 2002; and Latessa, Listwan and Koetzle, 2014 p. 201). Such a high failure rate is a measure of both the extent to which reentering individuals face impediments to successful reentry as well as the capacity of reentry services to support the reentry population in surmounting these obstacles (Jacobs et al., 2017 pp. 147-148).

This report examines the issues and challenges surrounding prisoner reentry in the city of Chicago by reviewing existing studies and data in an attempt to provide a more systematic understanding of the complexities and problems attendant with prisoner reentry as both a concept and a practice (Stojkovic, 2017 p. 10). To increase the possibilities for successful prisoner reintegration in the City of Chicago, this report is targeted at a broad and varied audience, and it is intended to contribute to ongoing efforts by various stakeholders “in the criminal justice, health, mental health, substance abuse treatment, housing, and workforce development systems” (Re-Entry Policy Council, *ibid.* p. xix) (*ibid.*, p. xx).

The concept of reentry is applicable to the different contexts in which individuals transition to the community after being confined for a period of time in a state prison, local jail, federal institution, and a juvenile facility (Zajac, Hutchison and Meyer, 2014 p. 1 and La Vigne et al., 2003 p. 1). In the reentry literature, the focus tends to be on those “leaving the adult state prison system and returning to society” that is, those “managed by state correctional and parole systems” (La Vigne et al., *ibid.*). Even though incarceration has serious consequences, several of the collateral consequences of punishment especially for the labor market, housing, and access to public benefits does not necessarily stem “from incarceration experiences but from the application of a widely known and publicly disseminated felony label” (Shannon et al., *ibid.* p. 1806). Therefore, for purposes of this report, the term reentry is used to refer to the population that includes those with prison experience as well as the large number of those who have not served time but suffer several identical consequences of a felony conviction. (*ibid.*, p. 1796). Holtfreter and Wattanaporn (2014, pp. 41-42) note that “there is consensus that reentry is best conceptualized as a process, rather than a discrete outcome” such as reducing recidivism. Similarly, Solomon, et al. (2008, p. xvi) observe that, “[r]eentry is not a program, not a form of supervision, not an option.”

The reentry movement is focused primarily on the approximately 614,844 individuals returning to their communities each year from state and federal prisons (Carson, 2020). However, it is important to note that “most people with felony¹¹ convictions never enter prison but instead serve their sentences in jail or on probation in the community” (Shannon, et al., *ibid.* p. 1806). There are approximately 6 million (Zeng, 2020) returning from jail each year. When it comes to the number of Americans who have a felony conviction in their background, the U.S. statistical system does not even provide an estimate of their size. In addition, little is known about the whereabouts or fortunes of people formerly incarcerated. Their overall size and geographic distribution remain undetermined (Shannon et al., *ibid.* p. 1799). When the millions of individuals who have gone through the criminal justice system and finished their sentences and those previously under felony supervision are included, the size of reentry population increases significantly (*ibid.*). Thus, the magnitude of the reentry population varies depending on whether reentry is considered to comprise only those just released unconditionally as well as those under parole supervision or the entire universe of persons who have ever been incarcerated or have had felony supervision (Lynch and Sabol, 2001 p. 2).

10 See <http://www.usdoj.gov/archives/ag/speeches/2000/doc2.htm>.

11 The terms felon and prisoner refer to conviction and incarceration status rather (Shannon, Uggen, Schnittker, Thompson, Wakefield, and Mas-soglia, 2017 p. 1796). A felony is a broad categorization and has historically been used to differentiate a number of “high crimes” or “grave offenses” from less-serious, misdemeanor offenses. The distinction is primarily defined by the period of incarceration with, felonies typically punishable by more than one year in prison and misdemeanors resulting in less serious sanctions, such as shorter jail sentences, fines, or both. Nevertheless, not everyone with a felony conviction necessarily goes to prison, many more serve time in jail or on probation (*ibid.*, p. 1797).

This report focuses on offenders who leave prison and return to their communities on parole or some type of post-incarceration supervision as well as those formerly incarcerated or under felony supervision. It is worth noting that a large number of offenders leave prison when they complete their sentences without additional supervision. According to Byrne and Taxman (2004, p. 53), approximately 20 percent of the offenders leaving prison were released unconditionally. It can be assumed that if it is difficult for offenders on supervision to successfully reintegrate when they have access to reentry services, it is likely doubly problematic for those offenders who need and require reentry support (perhaps more than anyone) and it is difficult to track them (Schlager, 2013 p. xvi).

While there is nothing novel about the hardships that ex-offenders face (Ndrecka, Listwan and Latessa, 2017 pp. 177-178), these challenges are exacerbated by the unique set of challenges facing the formerly incarcerated (Baer et al., 2006 p. 2). These include substance abuse, health and educational limitations, and the stigma resulting from a criminal conviction that makes it difficult to find secure employment, housing, and other services (Petersilia, 2003; Travis, 2005; Visher and Travis, 2003; Gill and Wilson, 2016 p. 337). However, the reentry population is diverse, which requires that planning for reentry demands that attention be paid to the complexities of this population (Lynch and Sabol, 2001 p. 3), which requires a developing a methodically sound understanding of the characteristics of returning prisoners. For purposes of this report, the term reentry is used to refer to the population which includes those with prison experience as well as the large number of those who have not served time but “suffer many of the same consequences of a felony conviction” (Shannon et al., 2017 p. 1796).

...criminal justice contact and incarceration stigmatizes and results in substantial social and economic costs such as constraints on employment, housing, voting, and welfare benefits, in addition to enduring effects on physical and mental health. This is compounded by the collateral consequences (legal and regulatory sanctions) of incarceration.

Studies (Ewald and Uggen, 2012; Massoglia, 2008; Schnittker and John, 2007) show that criminal justice contact and incarceration stigmatizes and results in substantial social and economic costs such as constraints on employment, housing, voting, and welfare benefits, in addition to enduring effects on physical and mental health. This is compounded by the collateral consequences (legal and regulatory sanctions) of incarceration. Many people with criminal records find themselves deprived of certain rights and stripped of any “opportunities for housing, education, employment, social services, and other necessities, such as substance use or mental health treatment” (<https://www.vera.org/state-of-justice-reform/2017/the-state-of-reentry>).

...the allocation of an insignificant amount of criminal justice funds to reentry efforts has resulted in a reentry infrastructure inadequate to the task of facilitating the successful reentry of the formerly incarcerated.

Unfortunately, reentry programs and services in the United States are extremely fragmented and in need of fundamental transformation. This creates challenges for many individuals returning to the community from prison or jail. The ability to meet the demand and complex needs of the reentry population is greatly diminished by a laissez-faire attitude regarding reentry that has resulted in a discontinuous and impoverished reentry infrastructure (Jacobs et al., 2017 pp. 145-146). This is attributable to (1) an approach, which devolves responsibility to municipalities and nonprofit agencies that lack coordinated responses and actions. As Mendel et al. (2019, p. ix) note, these agencies are siloed in a range of service sectors, including health and behavioral health, housing and

homelessness, employment, criminal justice, family and social services, etc.; and (2) the allocation of an insignificant amount of criminal justice funds to reentry efforts has resulted in a reentry infrastructure inadequate to the task of facilitating the successful reentry of the formerly incarcerated (Jacobs, Katcher, Krummenacher and Tonnesen, 2017 pp. 145-146).

Effective advocacy and policy making necessitates up-to-date information. Therefore, this report attempts to provide estimates of populations with previous prison and felony supervision experience in the United States, the state of Illinois and the City of Chicago. The estimates used for this report are based on the most current study that has produced estimates of ex-prisoners and ex-felons because the data for ex-felons does not exist.

The scale of the task of attaining successful reentry creates a particularly challenging task for the City of Chicago, service providers, and the local communities that have to absorb these individuals when they return home. Therefore, managing reentry to accomplish long-term reintegration has wide-ranging benefits for former prisoners, their families and the impoverished neighborhoods most affected by reentry (Travis, Solomon and Waul, 2001 pp. 1-2). Successful reintegration can reduce the number of people that return to prison, while reducing the social and economic costs of incarceration. (La Vigne, 2010 n.p.). More importantly, there is a need to take a step back and critically examine the offender reentry phenomenon in order to develop evidence-based reentry strategies and programs whose efficacy has been confirmed to address the multiple problems presented by individuals leaving prisons and jails (Bryne, 2004 pp. 1-2). Yet, public response to prisoner reentry has largely been inadequate with respect to both scope and funding. Programs aimed at facilitating the successful reentry of formerly incarcerated individuals into society receive insufficient support from states and municipalities sufficient to address the need (Jacobs et al., *ibid.* pp. 145-146).

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can reduce the number
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economic costs of incarceration.***

A Note on Terminology

There is little consensus in the United States on how to refer to the reentry population. This population has been referred to by such terms as ‘formerly incarcerated’ or ‘ex-offenders’ (Fox, Lane, and Turner, 2018; Noble, 2016). Mendel et al. (*ibid.* pp. 2-3) suggest “returning citizen,” as another term for this population, while recognizing that it is possible to misunderstand the term as excluding noncitizens rather than emphasizing “the rights and dignity of all individuals returning from incarceration on par with other members of the community.”

People in jail are held under a number of assorted legal statuses. In this report, any mention of “inmates” refers to all people held in local jails (correctional facilities that house individuals awaiting adjudication of a crime or serving sentences of more than a year) and “prisoners” to people incarcerated in state and federal prison (facilities that house individuals serving sentences of less than a year) (Wang, Wang and Krumholz, 2013 p. 1622).

Limitations of this Report

This report does not address re-entering juveniles. Rather, it focuses on those currently under probation and felony supervision and those of former jail inmates as well as those formerly under felony supervision.

Even though all the studies reviewed in this report focus on the issues faced by returning offenders, they do not necessarily measure the same thing or examine them the same way. The result “is an amalgam of conflicting studies and limited findings for communities to use going forward in the management of returning offenders” (Stojkovic, 2017 p. 2).

This report is focused on post-release reentry programs and outcomes for offenders who return to the city of Chicago rather than on in-prison employment training and experiences (Kachnowski, 2005 p. 1). Research suggests that most prisoners do not take advantage of programming while incarcerated even though the majority of state and federal prisons offer opportunities for educational, employment, and vocational training (Lynch and Sabol, *ibid.*; Duwe, 2012 p. 560).

This report examines prisoner reentry through a number of different policy lenses focused on the intersection of issues of health and housing, education and employment, substance abuse disorder, housing instability, the LGBTQ++ community, mental illness, and a host of other problems, which co-occur and are exacerbated by the simultaneous presence of other challenges (Solomon, Osborne, LoBuglio, Mellow and Mukamal, 2008 pp. xv and 15; National Institute of Corrections Information Center, 2015 p. 3). It does not attempt to identify and document every reentry program and service available to released prisoners in the city of Chicago or to empirically assess the state of Illinois’s reentry policies and practices. This would require a gap analysis of reentry programs and services (Zajac, Hutchison

and Meyer, *ibid.* p. 1). Ideally, to engage in a meaningful public policy debate requires a more fruitful process that identifies “the pathways of prisoner reintegration, examines what factors contribute to a successful or unsuccessful re-entry experience, and identifies how those factors can inform policy” (Baer, et al., 2006, p. 2). In other words, reentry strategies that identify “*what works, with whom, and why*” (Byrne and Taxman, 2004 p. 57).

Structure of Report

This report is organized as follows: To lay the foundation for and contextualize the experiences of offender reentry, the Introduction presents an overview of the central themes and concerns of this report. The Data and Methods section delineates data sets used in the report and the limitations of publicly available data. The Prisoner Reentry: An Overview section, attempts to understand what comprises offender reentry by exploring the various dimensions of reentry phenomenon. It briefly reviews some of the scholarly literature on prisoner reentry and barriers to successful reentry. This is followed by sections that detail the some of the key issues which underlie all aspects of a re-entry effort, (Gender, Housing/Homelessness, Employment/Economic Opportunity, Education and Training, Physical and Mental Health and LGBTQ+ issues). The final section outlines a number of overarching recommendations in attempt to layout current approaches to accomplishing more effective reentry outcomes for individuals.

Section Two attempts to understand what comprises offender reentry by exploring the various dimensions of offender reentry. It briefly reviews some of the scholarly literature on prisoner reentry and barriers to successful reentry.

Data and Methods

An important first step in formulating public policy with respect to improving reentry outcomes is a better grasp of the number of the reentry population by combining the number of those currently under probation and felony supervision and those of former jail inmates as well as those formerly under felony supervision (Shannon et al., *ibid.*). However, it is a challenge trying to ascertain the size and characteristics of the total felon population – those recently released on parole, on probation, released unconditionally, and individuals formerly incarcerated or under felony supervision (Shannon et al., *ibid.* p. 1796). While some studies (Bonczar 2003; Pettit and Western 2004) have estimated the number of former prisoners in the population, only (Shannon, et al. *ibid.*) have attempted to estimate the size of the much more sizeable population of former felons with the understanding that in “addition to ex-prisoners and parolees, the exfelon population also contains ex-probationers and ex-jail inmates” (Uggen, Manza and Thompson, 2006 p. 284).

While the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) makes available comprehensive data on people currently under criminal justice supervision, as Eberstadt (2020, n.p.) notes, “the US statistical system does not even offer an estimate of the total size of the population of Americans who have a felony conviction in their background!” Likewise, Shannon et al. (*ibid.*, p. 1799) note that the “available data often obscure the much broader population of people with felony records – and what happens to them when they are no longer under supervision.” Equally as problematic is that no similar information is available at the state-level for former prison or felony supervision populations (*ibid.*, p. 1796). State level estimates are of interest because each state runs its systems of incarceration and supervision and as such vary in their punishment, conviction, and incarceration rates as well as in their sentencing patterns and use of imprisonment as opposed to community supervision (*ibid.*, p. 1798). There are variations both within and across states in experiences with the criminal justice system; a fact that can be concealed by national level analyses. (*Ibid.*, p. 1797).

...“available data often obscure the much broader population of people with felony records – and what happens to them when they are no longer under supervision.”

Therefore, this report attempts to provide estimates of populations with previous prison and felony supervision involvement in the U.S., the state of Illinois, and the City of Chicago. The goal is to propose a more inclusive view in that it is not only directed at “one stage (e.g., arrest) or experience (e.g., incarceration) in the U.S. criminal justice system” (*Ibid.*, p. 1796).

The estimates used for this report are based on the most current study that has produced estimates of ex-prisoners and ex-felons because the data for ex-felons does not exist. The study by Shannon, et al., (2017) “develops state-level estimates based on demographic life tables and extends previous national estimates of the number of people with felony convictions to 2010” (*Ibid.*). This study is so far the most current and methodologically sound, because it accounts for recidivism, mortality, mobility, and deportation.

Data Limitations

This report utilizes secondary data from the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) and the most recent publicly available Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) national data on prison populations. However, much of the official statistics from the BJS are not always available for the most recent year. In some cases, the data is ten or more years old and while pertinent, it is not recent (Schlager, *ibid.* p. xvii). Where available, this report is based on data on the number of people in state and federal prisons on 2018 (Carson, *ibid.*). Much of the data used in the studies reviewed for this report was collected by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and is at the institution level often focused on simple demographic questions rather than on individual inmates. This is problematic because it makes granular analysis impossible. Thus, some of the studies that have attempted “to construct simple education breakouts (for example, prisoner populations by race and educational attainment) have to go to different, non-ideal datasets, or construct complicated statistical proxies, to even get a rough estimate” (Cooper, 2015 n.p.).

Data Tables

The data presented in tables 1-7 presents estimates of national and state-level estimates of the number of individuals currently under probation and felony supervision and those who were former jail inmates as well as those formerly under felony supervision for 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. For estimates from 1980 to 2010 see Appendix A. Table 7 presents number of individual offenders in the U.S. and the state of Illinois in the national criminal history files from 1992 to 2016.

Table 1: Estimated U.S. population with prison records by year and race

Year	Currently in Prison or on Parole		Formerly in Prison or on Parole		Total in Prison or on Parole	
	Total	African American	Total	African American	Total	African American
1980	551,857	225,375	996,290	299,435	1,584,147	524,810
1990	1,305,326	640,120	1,671,217	581,337	2,976,543	1,221,457
2000	2,107,419	928,645	3,088,214	1,303,328	5,195,633	2,231,973
2010	2,392,589	915,864	4,912,321	1,956,864	7,304,910	2,872,728

Data Source: Table 1, Shannon et al, ibid. p. 1805.

Table 2: Estimated U.S. population with felony records by year and race

Year	Current Felons		Former Felons		Total Felons	
	Total	African American	Total	African American	Total	African American
1980	1,058,073	368,042	3,918,100	942,682	4,976,173	1,310,724
1990	2,335,791	988,524	6,033,157	1,871,726	8,368,948	2,860,250
2000	4,166,091	1,633,749	9,076,642	3,609,082	13,242,733	5,242,831
2010	4,548,433	1,552,493	14,474,204	5,329,716	19,022,636	6,882,208

Data Source: Table 2, Shannon et al, ibid. p. 1808.

**Table 3: Estimates of Current and Formerly Incarcerated Adults
and African-Americans in the State of Illinois: 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010 (in thousands)**

Year	Overall			African-American		
	Current	Estimated Ex-Felons Lower-Upper Bound	Total Lower-Upper Bound	Current	Estimated African- American Ex-Felons Lower-Upper Bound	Total African- American Ex-Felons Lower-Upper Bound
1980	50	98 - 106	148 - 155	20	25 - 34	45 - 53
1990	85	204 - 219	289 - 304	46	5 - 73	102 - 119
2000	160	320 - 393	579 - 553	88	142 - 181	229 - 268
2010	144	45 - 585	609 - 730	7	211 - 273	278 - 340

Data Source: Shannon et al, ibid. Tables S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, and S9 in Supplementary Material 1.

Table 4: Estimates of Adults and African-Americans Currently and Formerly Under Felony Correctional Supervision in the State of Illinois: 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010

Year	Overall			African-American		
	Current	Estimated Ex-Prisoners Lower-Upper Bound	Total Lower-Upper Bound	Current	Estimated African-American Ex-Prisoner Lower-Upper Bound	Total African-American Lower-Upper Bound
1980	11	34 - 42	45 - 53	6	14 - 19	22 - 25
1990	28	62 - 79	90 - 106	19	29 - 41	47 - 60
2000	45	155 - 190	200 - 235	33	105 - 125	135 - 158
2010	48	223 - 277	272 - 325	28	129 - 164	157 - 192

Data Source: Shannon et al, *ibid.* Tables S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, and S9 in Supplementary Material 1.

Table 5: Estimates of People Formerly Incarcerated and Formerly Under Felony Correctional Supervision in the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago¹²: 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010

Year	Ex-felons Illinois	Ex-felons Chicago	Total Felons Illinois	Total Felons Chicago	Ex-prisoners Illinois	Ex-prisoners Chicago	Total Prisoners Illinois	Total Prisoners Chicago
1980	105,501	55,916	155,447	82,387	38,860	20,596	49,584	26,280
1990	219,063	116,103	304,368	161,315	73,181	38,786	100,697	53,369
2000	392,982	208,280	552,618	292,888	178,396	94,550	223,677	118,549
2010	585,466	310,297	729,683	386,732	255,118	135,213	303,536	160,874

Data Source: Shannon et al, *ibid.* Supplementary Material 3.

Table 6: Estimates of African-Americans Formerly Incarcerated and Formerly Under Felony Correctional Supervision in the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago: 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010

Year	Black Ex-felons Illinois	Black Ex-felons Chicago	Total Black Felons Illinois	Total Black Felons Chicago	Black Ex-prisoners Illinois	Black Ex-prisoners Chicago	Total Black Prisoners Illinois	Total Black Prisoners Chicago
1980	33,527	17,769	53,198	28,195	19,184	10,168	25,493	13,511
1990	73,329	38,864	119,307	63,233	41,315	21,897	59,989	31,794
2000	180,569	95,702	268,251	142,173	106,765	56,585	139,544	73,958
2010	273,402	144,903	340,164	180,287	163,979	86,909	191,569	101,532

Data Source: Shannon et al, *ibid.* Supplementary Material 3.

¹² Based on the claim by La Vigne et al. (*ibid.*, p. 46) that 53 percent of inmates released from the state's prisons in Illinois returned to Chicago

**Table 7: Number of subjects (individual offenders)
in state criminal history file**

Year	Total U.S.	Total Illinois
1992	47,307,900	2,493,200
1993	47,833,600	2,558,000
1995	49,851,600	2,613,600
1997	54,210,800	3,042,600
1999	59,065,600	3,280,000
2001	64,282,700	3,928,100
2003	71,028,500	4,162,000
2006	80,665,300	4,899,100
2008	92,329,600	5,542,400
2010	97,893,200	5,752,100
2012	100,596,300	6,164,800
2014	105,569,200	6,646,200
2016	110,235,200	7,092,400

Data Source: Survey of State Criminal History Information Systems,
1992- 2016: A Criminal Justice Information Policy Report.

Prisoner Reentry: An Overview

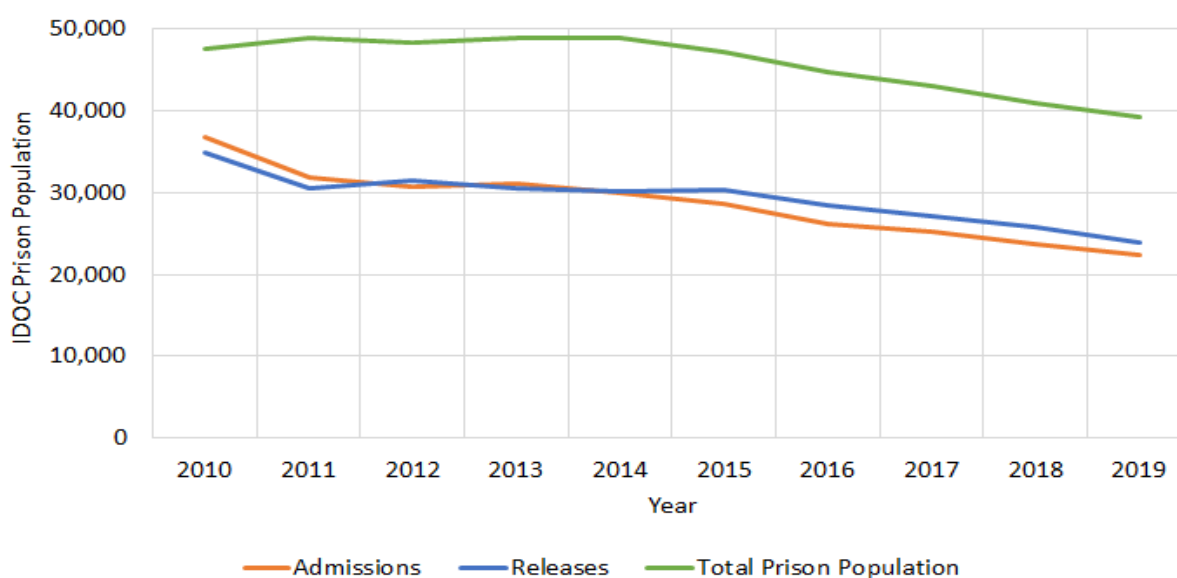
It is inevitable that almost all incarcerated offenders will return to their communities (Travis and Visser, 2005). However, reasoning about offender reentry requires an understanding of the dimensions of the practice and an awareness of the various issues at the intersection of education, stable housing and employment, physical and mental health, substance abuse disorders and the prisoner reentry process (Schlager, *ibid.* p. xv).

On the whole, at the time of release, inmates tend to be younger typically under the age of thirty-five, from minority racial groups and poor urban areas, a sizeable percentage are high school dropouts and lack the literacy necessary to cope with most jobs and many everyday situations, a substantial number of them have from substance abuse disorders and other health difficulties (Travis, Solomon, and Waul 2001; Holzer, Raphael and Stoll, 2004 p. 206). Many of these problems attend and are made worse by the presence of other co-morbidities (Solomon, Osborne, LoBuglio, Mellow and Mukamal, 2008 p. 15). Therefore, many returning individuals, particularly those who have served long sentences, have immediate practical needs such as shelter, food, clothing, transportation, and financial assistance that require attention when they return to their communities (Gill and Wilson, 2016 p. 337).

...at the time of release, inmates tend to be younger typically under the age of thirty-five, from minority racial groups and poor urban areas, a sizeable percentage are high school dropouts...

Chart 1 shows IDOC's admissions, releases and ending population for the past ten years that demonstrates a gradual decrease over the past five years in each category (2019 releases were calculated based on beginning and ending population less reported admissions and miscellaneous changes). During IDOC's fiscal year ending June 30, 2019, the calculated number of men and women released was approximately 23,800, a decrease of approximately 21.6% compared to 2015 releases (30,369) and of approximately 31.7% compared to 2010 releases (34,930) (2010, 2015 and 2019 IDOC Fact Sheets, n.d.).

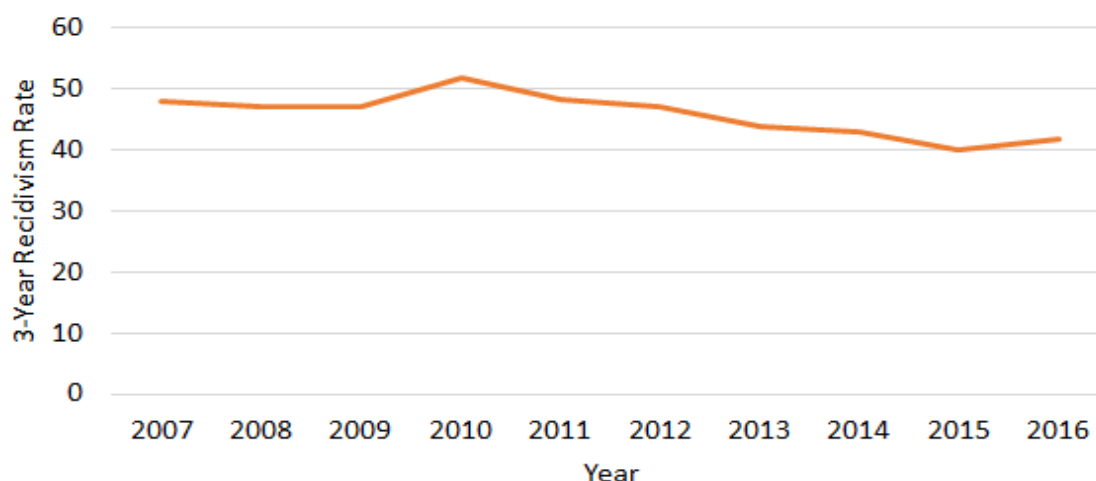
Chart 1: IDOC Admissions, Releases, and Total Prison Population, 2010-2019



Data Source: 2010 through 2019: IDOC Fact Sheets 2013, 2016 through 2018: IDOC Annual Reports.

For the year ending June 30, 2019, approximately 23,800 inmates were released from Illinois jails. The average age is 38.7 years old, 94 percent are male, and the population is approximately 54 percent black, 32 percent white and 13 percent Hispanic (IDOC 2019 Fact Sheet, n.d.). While the total prison population has slowly decreased, Chart 2 shows that the 3-year cumulative recidivism rate for discharges has remained relatively consistent over the past 10 years. Specifically, for fiscal year 2016, the rate was 41.6 percent compared to 2014 and 2015 rates of 43.0 percent and 39.9 percent, respectively. The 3-year cumulative recidivism rate for 1997, twenty years earlier, was reported to be 44 percent, consistent with current rates (La Vigne et al, 2003).

Chart 2: IDOC 3-Year Recidivism Rate, 2007-2016.



Data Source: 2007 through 2009 and 2011 through 2016: IDOC Fiscal Year Fact Sheets 2010: IDOC Impact Incarceration Program FY2013 Annual Report.

Using the four years for which IDOC parole data was available, Table 8 shows the number of parolees returning to Chicago and Cook County. It indicates consistency in the percentage of parolees who return to Chicago as well as Cook County, with the percentage returning to Chicago averaging approximately 35 percent. While parole terms vary, with many former inmates assigned a 3 year requirement (IDOC 2019 Parole Population Data Set, n.d.), a reasonable expectation of the number of parolees returning annually to Chicago can be obtained by applying the return rate (35 percent) to the inmate population expected to be released in the following year. Based on IDOC's Prison Population Data Set for December 31, 2019, the number of inmates with exits planned for 2020 was 12,116 (10,329 to be released to parole supervision plus 1,787 whose sentence is scheduled to be discharged during 2020) which, considering the return rate of 35 percent, suggests approximately 4,240 former inmates will return to Chicago during 2020 (n.d.).

Table 8: Total IDOC Parole Population and the Parole Population Returning to Cook County and Chicago, Including Related Percentage of the Total Population, 2016-2019

	Total Parole Population	Cook County Population	Percent of Total Parole Population	Chicago Population	Percent of Total Parole Population
December 2019	24,901	11,623	46.7%	8,203	32.9%
December 2018	25,963	12,575	48.4%	8,963	34.5%
December 2017	26,311	13,790	52.4%	10,084	38.3%
December 2016	30,615	14,924	48.7%	10,955	35.8%

Data Source: Parole Population Data Sets, 2016-2019.

Based on 2001 data, La Vigne et al. (2003) found that 97 percent of those released from prisons in Illinois return to communities in the state. Roman and Travis (2004, pp. ii-iii) claim that a sizable percentage of released prisoners (about two-thirds of the prisoners released from state prisons) return to a small number of impoverished urban communities in metropolitan areas. In these disadvantaged communities, "housing, employment and education-

al opportunities, transportation infrastructure, and health care services are inaccessible, limited, or nonexistent” (Johnson, 2015 p. 786). Therefore, they are disproportionately impacted by the challenges of prisoner reentry and reentry concerns are most pressing (La Vigne et al., *ibid.* p. 3). While the return of 4,240 formerly incarcerated men and women does not seem significant to a city the size of Chicago, La Vigne et al. (*ibid.*, p. 46) found that for the state of Illinois, 53 percent inmates released from the state’s prisons returned to Chicago and to only 6 of the city’s 77 Community Areas - Austin, North Lawndale, East Garfield Park, West Englewood, Humboldt Park, and Englewood (*ibid.*, p. 51). These communities to which prisoners return are ill-equipped to withstand the economic and social burdens resulting from such a large reentry population (Thompson, 2004 p. 255). The concentration of the formerly incarcerated in these mostly impoverished neighborhoods that, also tend to lack social service resources, presents a situation of high resource demands for residents (La Vigne, Cowan, and Brazzell 2006; Roman and Travis, 2004 pp. ii-iii; Lynch and Sabol 2001).

An substantial body of research has established that there a common set of socioeconomic obstacles to reentry: these are, housing insecurity caused by a “lack of access to affordable housing and housing discrimination”; unemployment, resulting from “lack of education and skills, lack of experience”, discrimination and stigma from incarceration; and substance abuse disorder (Jacobs, Katcher, Krummenacher and Tonnesen, 2017 p. 148).

The goal good public policy is the reduction of recidivism and this demands that returning prisoners be helped to successfully reintegrate into society after incarceration by make available opportunities for housing, education, employment, and other needed services as well as enacting policies that reduce obstacles to obtaining these important resources (Washington, DC: National Reentry Resource Center and Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2017; Cortes and Rogers, 2010 p. viii).

...this demands that returning prisoners be helped to successfully reintegrate into society after incarceration by making available opportunities for housing, education, employment...

Gender

Incarceration rates differ substantively by gender, race, and age. Traditionally, men have been imprisoned at rates far greater than women. However, women constitute an increasing segment of incarcerated populations. One out of every 109 adult women are subject to correctional supervision in the United States (Glaze and Bonczar, 2011). In 2017 that was over 1.5 million women. Women consisted of one-fourth of the probation population in 2013 and 12 percent of the parole population in 2014 (Herberman and Bonczar, 2015). In 2016 2,190 women were released from Illinois state prisons (Prison Policy Initiative, 2019).

Although there are shared challenges to reentry that impact the ability of men and women to successfully reintegrate on returning to society (for instance deficiencies in the areas of employment, education, and housing choices), these challenges vary across gender (Johnson, 2015; Zettler, 2019). Research suggests “individual differences (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity), community characteristics (e.g., economic disadvantage), and other contextual circumstances (e.g., state policies)” could lead to variations in reintegration experiences (Holtfreter and Wattanaporn, 2014 p. 42).

The relationship between health status and reentry outcomes differs by gender with, women experiencing poorer outcomes than men regardless of health status.

Research suggests that with substance abuse disorder is more correlated with arrest and crime rates for women than men (Johnson, 2015 pp. 786-787). The relationship between health status and reentry outcomes differs by gender with, women experiencing poorer outcomes than men regardless of health status. Therefore, the interaction between gender and health status amounts to a double disadvantage (Mallik-Kane and Visser, 2008 pp. 1-3). In addition, formerly incarcerated women are more likely to be homeless than formerly incarcerated men. (Couloute, 2018 n.p.).

Zettler (ibid., p. 157) contends that “[t]he majority of reentry programs have focused primarily on the criminogenic risk factors of males, largely neglecting the potentially unique needs of female offenders.” Therefore, existing policy and practice are formed, applied, and evaluated with the reentry risk and needs of men who are the majority of the incarcerated and not those of incarcerated women (Spjeldnes and Goodkind, 2009 p. 314). Holtfreter and Wattanaporn (2014, p. 42) note, while “one-size fits all” correctional programs may represent efficient and cost-effective approaches to reentry in terms of implementation, failure to attend to gender responsive factors may prove more economically and socially costly in the long run.” However, as Spjeldnes and Goodkind (ibid., p. 315) caution, this does not necessarily require “rely[ing] on stereotypical assumptions about gendered needs, but rather on the realities of women’s and men’s experiences.”

Gender offers divergent pathways into crime and subsequent involvement in the criminal justice system. Female offenders have unique, gender specific needs which necessitates gender-specific interventions are for women’s successful reentry to society. For example, Scroggins and Malley (2010) in an evaluation of 155 reentry programs showed that ‘childcare and parental skills, healthcare and counseling services, housing and transportation, and education’ (p. 160) are critical reentry needs for women (Johnson, 2015 p. 787).

...‘childcare and parental skills, healthcare and counseling services, housing and transportation, and education’ are critical reentry needs for women.

Recommendations

Based on gender-specific offender demographics and incarceration statistics, an attempt should be made to develop specific post-release risk factors for returning women in order to understand gender-related needs and to advance gender-specific reentry programs and enable effective reentry (Lattimore & Visser, 2009; Zettler, ibid.).

Housing/Homelessness

Gaining access to safe and secure housing within the community is considered fundamental to successful reentry when a person is released from prison (Cortes and Rogers, 2010 p. vii). Stable housing underpins any successful reentry from prison. According to The Re-Entry Policy Council (2005, p. 272), “the first month after release from prison is a vulnerable and critical period during which the risk of becoming homeless and/or returning to criminal justice involvement is high.” Failure to obtain stable housing is possibly “destabilizes an individual’s re-entry process and ability to remain crime-free altogether” (ibid.).

...“the first month after release from prison is a vulnerable and critical period during which the risk of becoming homeless and/or returning to criminal justice involvement is high.”

There is very little research linking the availability of stable housing and reduced recidivism. However, Métraux and Culhane (2004) in a study of almost 50,000 individuals released from New York State prisons and returned to New York City between 1995 and 1998 found that 11 percent of these individuals move into a homeless shelter and 33 percent were re-incarcerated within two years of their release. Amongst individuals newly released from prison, those without access to stable or reliable housing were more than twice as likely to commit additional crimes when compared to those with access to housing

(Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, 2015). The necessity for housing is particularly critical for the parolee population because it affords a base for service provision and facilitates community integration (Pleggenkuhle, Huebner and Kras, 2016 p. 381). Nelson, Deess and Allen (1999) in a study of parolees who returned to New York City after release from state prisons, found that compared to those who had some form of housing, parolees who utilized homeless shelters were seven times more likely to disappear during their first month of release.

Taking into consideration the vastness of housing possibilities and the information needed to make effective referrals and placements, it is a formidable task to find sustainable housing placements for individuals re-entering the community (Re-Entry Policy Council, ibid. p. 262). This makes obtaining affordable and appropriate housing difficult in the reentry process, further diminishing the already narrow odds of successful community reintegration (Roman and Travis, 2004 p. i). Bradley et al., (2001, p. 1) note that housing is the “lynchpin that holds the reintegration process together.” Yet, housing, a basic necessity is often out of reach for many formerly incarcerated individuals.

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There are significant variations, depending of the jurisdiction, in the number of offenders leaving prison with no specific address to which they are returning (Schlager, 2013 pp. 51-52). For many returning prisoners, the family or friends provide the first option of a place to stay after they are released from a correctional institution. For those who cannot rely on families or friends for housing, at least temporarily, the options are: transitional housing, homeless shelters, hotel or motels, and homelessness (the street and abandoned buildings) (Couloute, 2018 n.p.).

A report focused on reentry within the Chicago area found almost 90 percent of former inmates interviewed lived with family members after release with the remainder paroled to transitional living facilities (5 percent), shelters or boarding houses (2 percent), residential treatment facilities (1 percent), or were homeless (Visser & Farrell, 2005). These results point to a slightly higher percentage living with family post-release compared to similar survey reports (including Maryland, Ohio and Texas), which reflected approximately 80 percent of parolees lived with family members (La Vigne et al, 2003).

Collateral consequences (legal and regulatory sanctions) of incarceration created by public policies on employment, drug treatment, housing, and health care often impede successful reentry into society after a period of incarceration

(Freudenberg, Daniels, Crum, Perkins and Richie, 2005 p. S191). Such is the case with the prohibition of previously incarcerated people from the private and public housing market driven by the dictates of criminal justice system. For example, failing the background check is the number one reason for ex-prisoners being denied housing.

Advocating for appropriate housing options for the recently incarcerated is made even more difficult given the overwhelming demand for and inadequate supply of affordable housing for those who have had no contact with the criminal justice system (Couloute, 2018 n.p.).

Homelessness

Each person leaving prison needs a place to go. The critical issue is the incidence of homelessness following release. (Bradley et al. 2001; Metraux and Culhane 2004; Padgett et al. 2011). People released from prison and jail disproportionately experience homelessness. According to (Langan and Levin, 2002), more than 10 percent of those who cycle in and out of prisons and jail are homeless in the months before and after they are incarcerated. The rates are even higher (about 20 percent) for those with mental illness (Langan and Levin, 2002; Ditton, 1999). Burt et al (1999) claim that 49 percent of homeless adults purportedly spent five or more days in a city or county jail with, 18 percent had been imprisoned in a state or federal correctional institution.

However, given the lack of national statistics on homelessness amongst individuals leaving correctional institutions, it is difficult to grasp the accurate picture of the problem (Rodriguez and Brown, 2003 p. 2). This is not surprising given that in many cases the homeless are “uncountable due to differing definitions of homelessness and the invisibility of homelessness” (Schlager, 2013 pp. 51-52). In addition, in light of the diverse ways rates of homelessness can be calculated, an exact count of the homeless is virtually impossible (Ibid.). In the first national estimates of homelessness among the previously incarcerated, the Prison Policy Initiative found that for the 5 million formerly incarcerated individuals living in the United States, they “are almost 10 times more likely to be homeless than the general public.”; almost 20 percent of single homeless adults have been previously incarcerated; 15 percent of incarcerated people experience homelessness in the year prior to being incarcerated; people who have been incarcerated just once become homeless at a rate nearly 7 times higher than the general public, while those who have been incarcerated more than once have rates of homelessness 13 times higher than the general public. A previously incarcerated individual is twice as likely to be homeless if they have been locked up multiple times as those who are returning from their first prison term (Couloute, 2018 n.p.). These estimates likely understate the problem because counting the intermittently homeless is not a full measure of homelessness, which should include those who have experienced homelessness for sustained periods in the last year (the causes of homelessness last longer than an individual’s last night on the street). However, as Couloute (2018, n.p.) note, “there is not yet a way to calculate this fuller picture of homelessness among formerly incarcerated people” (Couloute, 2018 n.p.).

...people who have been incarcerated just once become homeless at a rate nearly 7 times higher than the general public, while those who have been incarcerated more than once have rates of homelessness 13 times higher than the general public.

...60 percent of unsheltered men and 58 percent of women report being formerly incarcerated; 40 percent of the women recounted not being able to pay rent.

In Chicago, as in other places, the need for ex-offender housing is considerable. According to Hamlin (2017), of the individuals released for prison who returned to Chicago, 1,200 are released directly from prison to homeless shelters in Chicago annually with, as much as 48 percent of individuals living in emergency shelters in Chicago claim to have a felony conviction. Similarly, in a report that reviewed impediments to safe and affordable and re-entry housing issues in Illinois, Harris, Moreno, and

Rudolph, (2019) found that 60 percent of unsheltered men and 58 percent of women report being formerly incarcerated; 40 percent of the women recounted not being able to pay rent. A further 60 percent had been evicted and 28 percent were, at some point, homeless (Harris, Moreno and Rudolph, 2019).

Current Attempts to Provide Housing for the Reentry Population

IDOC Operated Adult Transition Centers (ATCs)

North Lawndale, operated by the Safer Foundation has a 200-bed capacity. Another facility, Crossroads operated by the Safer Foundation has a 330 bed operational capacity. Fox Valley, operated by IDOC (female prisoners only) has a 130 bed operational capacity. Peoria, also operated by IDOC has a 248 bed operational capacity (Moreno, et al., 2018 p. 9). In total, the IDOC supports only 908 beds to serve the potential needs of the thousands of prisoners who have been in prison for more than one year and are released each year and (ibid. p. 10). Safer operates a ten-unit building in Chicago's Austin neighborhood, the Focus Apartments (ibid.).

St. Leonard's operates four facilities on Chicago's near West Side: St. Leonard's House, houses up to 125 each year; Grace House serves women only houses up to 45 women each year; St. Andrew's Court serves men who have successfully finished the St. Leonard's House program houses 42 men at one time; St. Leonard's also operates a floor at Harvest Commons, a Heartland Alliance building that houses seventeen residents at one time. (ibid., p. 11).

A Safe Haven has a continuing program with the Cook County Department of Corrections with housing locations at 40 sites all over the Chicago region that comprises affordable, transitional (with a capacity for 500 beds), supportive, veterans and senior housing (Moreno, et al., 2018 p. 12). At its main campus facility on Roosevelt Road, A Safe Haven operates a facility that houses an average of 100 persons, comprising men and women pending their trial (ibid., p. 12).

Homeless Shelters

Homeless shelters are often the first place individuals recently released from a correctional institution go to find housing after they are released. Métraux and Culhane (2004) in a study of individuals released from New York State correctional institutions, found that over half of those who utilized a shelter in the first two years after their release from prison did so in the first month. 43.7 percent of males and 21.2 percent of females in Chicago shelters had been in jail or prison previously. In 2018 the City of Chicago had 3,788 emergency beds and 1,391 transitional housing beds in its shelter system. (ibid., p. 8).

IDOC's Parole Division includes the Parole Reentry Group ("PRG"), which specifically assists with reentry housing services (IDOC, n.d.). Through coordination with community resource providers, the PRG placed 3,900 parolees in community housing according to IDOC's 2018 annual report, 2,276 parolees in short duration supportive (paid) placements for short durations, and 1,624 parolees in homeless shelters (6.3 percent of the parole population). In 2017 and 2016, PRG placed 2,636 and 2,583 parolees into homeless shelters, which reflected 10.0 percent and 8.4 percent of the parolee population, respectively. While it is unclear how many parolees receive PRG services, the past 3 years of reporting indicate an average at least 8.2 percent of IDOC parolees are homeless at the time of release.

In view of the importance of housing and social support during the reentry process, what is needed is (1) an explicatory account of the barriers and challenges facing returning prisoners, in addition to possible opportunities for supplying or supporting the housing-related needs of returning prisoners, (2) a review of potential housing and other housing-related service programs for returning prisoners and ex-offenders (Roman and Travis, 2004 p. i). Given the need, it is surprising that the State of Illinois does not set aside specific funding to provide or support housing for the reentry population (ibid., p. 7).

Recommendations

Given the diminishing the stock of affordable housing, a broad attempt should be made to facilitate the development of affordable rental housing by maximizing the existing housing resources. In addition, it should be a policy objective to "identify and eliminate barriers to the development, distribution, and preservation of affordable housing" (Re-Entry Policy Council, ibid. p. vi).

Reentry housing should be developed "to meet the specific and unique needs of people released from prison or jail" (Re-Entry Policy Council, 2005 p. 274). In other words, the housing needs of those returning to the community should be based on an individualized and particular housing needs of the reentry population "collected through a housing assessment of the individual, including his or her previous housing histories, histories of homelessness and institutionalization, and eligibility for subsidized or special-needs housing" (ibid., p. 263).

While it is important to make sure people being released from prison have immediate access to housing, it is imperative to take into account long- and short-term housing options available to individuals (ibid., p. 269).

Employment/Economic Opportunity

Employment is a critical dimension of successful prisoner reentry. The failure to find meaningful employment undermines the reentry efforts. This is exacerbated by the lack of available jobs in the communities with high concentrations of those released from correctional institutions and the stigma of having a criminal record, which encumbers their employability and earnings capabilities (ibid., 2005 p. 294). As it is, these neighborhoods have substantial a number of residents with low-skills and comparatively limited number of unskilled jobs. The result is a surplus of workers relative to the number of obtainable jobs often referred to as a “spatial mismatch (ibid.).

The formerly incarcerated fare poorly in the formal labor market after they are released. Serving time diminishes future earnings and employment prospects. After leaving prison, ex-offenders have poor employment outcomes, low earnings when working, and little attachment to the formal sector. (Looney and Turner, 2018 p. 7). Couloute and Kopf (2018) found that rate of unemployment for previously incarcerated individuals is over 27 percent, an unemployment rate nearly five times higher than that for the general U.S. population.

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While stable employment is an essential part of a positive post-release adjustment in its own right and that a job has a potential effect on a former prisoners’ prospects of reoffending, obtaining and maintaining meaningful employment after release is a significant reintegration challenge facing ex-inmates. Research shows that finding and sustaining a legitimate job after release can reduce the chances of reoffending following release from prison (Visher and Kachnowski, 2007 p. 80). For example, Duane, La Vigne, Lynch and Reimal (2017) found that 72 percent of companies carry out background checks, which sometimes does not make a distinction between arrests that led to a conviction and those that did not and 82 percent of companies screen potential employees for their criminal histories. The authors report that data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) showed that between 2010 and 2014, the utilization of criminal history records for non-criminal justice reasons increased 22 percent, with 30 million records provided. Nevertheless, what is needed are studies that analytically study “the employment experiences of persons released from prison or identified characteristics of released prisoners who are successful in locating employment after release” (Visher and Kachnowski, ibid. p. 81). It should be acknowledged however, that analyzing the impact of these ex-prisoner characteristics on employment outcomes has been missing from much of the existing research because such analyses necessitate expensive data collection techniques to collect the required self-reported information (ibid.).

A substantial body of literature demonstrates how contact with the criminal justice system (arrest, conviction, and incarceration) affects a broad range of economic outcomes, such as income, wealth, employment stability, and occupational prestige (Anderson, 1990; Bushway, 1998; Hagan, 1991, 1993; Hagan and McCarthy, 1998; Monk-Turner, 1989; Padilla, 1992; Sampson & Laub, 1993; Sullivan, 1989; Thornberry and Christenson, 1984; Western, 2002; Kerley and Copes, 2004 pp. 65-66; Emmert, 2019 pp. 706-707).

...each additional year of incarceration diminishes earnings potential by as much as 12 percent and future earnings growth by as much as 30 percent.

There is substantial literature that have investigated the negative effects of incarceration on labor market outcomes as well as direct impacts on future employment and earnings of having an arrest record (Grogger 1995) or of having been incarcerated (Kling 2000). Research findings (Western, Weinman and Kling, 2001; Western, 2002; and Needles, 1996) imply that each additional year of incarceration diminishes earnings potential by as much as 12 percent and future earnings growth by as

much as 30 percent (Looney and Turner, 2018 p. 4). From data reviewed by Looney and Turner (2018) they found that in the first full calendar year subsequent to their release from confinement, only 55 percent have any reported earnings. With these jobs, the median annual pay is \$10,090 and only 20 percent earned above \$15,000 that year

which is approximately equal in amount to the wages of a full-time worker at the federal minimum wage.

A study by the Prison Policy Initiative found that people on probation and parole are much more likely to be low-income than comparable individual who are not. It shows that nationwide, two-thirds (66 percent) of people on probation make less than \$20,000 per year, approximately 2 in 5 people on probation (38 percent) make less than \$10,000 per year, which is much lower than the poverty line (Finkel, 2019). The pressing question is how to increase employment opportunities for reentering citizens. Employment is correlated with lower rates of reoffending because without meaningful and remunerative attachment to the labor market, formerly incarcerated individuals are likely to reoffend (Street, 2002 p. 3). Duane, La Vigne, Lynch and Reimal (2017) claim that when they earn \$10 or more per hour, individuals just released from jail are less likely to be imprisoned again than corresponding individuals earning lower wages.

Saluja and Rosen (2015) found that between 40 to over 50 percent of people with criminal records report no annual income quite a few years after a period of imprisonment and wage growth is reduced by over 30 percent among former inmates. The authors claim that in 2008 job discrimination against ex-offenders removed 1.5 to 1.7 million workers from the labor market leading to a productivity loss of 57 to 65 billion dollars that year. Bucknor and Barber (2016) provide a higher estimate of the cost of the difficulty people with records have in securing employment resulted in a loss of about \$78 to \$87 billion in annual GDP (see also, National Conference on State Legislatures, 2018).

There are no self-evident explanations why arrest and imprisonment correlate with lower employment and earnings of perhaps 10-30 percent lower than for those with no criminal history. Nevertheless, there are a number of reasons to assume that the low education, poor cognitive skills, and other personal circumstances of the ex-offender population would limit their prospects for employment. “Do the characteristics that send men to prison also make them less acceptable employees? Or are employers simply less willing to hire men with criminal records?” (Holzer, Raphael and Stoll, 2004 p. 40).

...a survey of three thousand employers in four major metropolitan areas, [found] that two-thirds of the businesses would not intentionally hire an ex-prisoner.

Holzer et al. (2004) found in a survey of three thousand employers in four major metropolitan areas, that two-thirds of the businesses would not intentionally hire an ex-prisoner (Visher and Kachnowski, 2007 pp. 80-81). For example, studies by Pager, Western and Sugie (2009), Pager, Western and Bonikowski (2009) and Pager (2003) found that typically, resumes with prison records are far less likely (roughly 50 percent) to get a response from employers relative to comparable resumes without a

record. (Looney and Turner, 2018 p. 4. See also The National Reentry Resource Center, n/d). Given what we know about employer preferences and state laws regulating employment of felons and access to felony records; arrest, conviction, and incarceration impose immediate wage penalties and alter long-term earnings trajectories by restricting access to career jobs (Freeman 1992; Pager 2003; Western 2002). A number of occupations are closed to some or most categories of ex-felons such as, jobs requiring contact with children, certain health service occupations, and security services (Dietrich 2002; May 1995). (Uggen, Manza and Thompson, 2006 p. 298).

Employment barriers faced by people with felony convictions include occupational licensing and other challenges. Many ex-offenders are banned or severely restricted from employment in a large number of professions, job categories, and fields by professional licensing statutes, rules, and practices which discriminate against potential employees with felony records. Bucknor and Barber (2016) contend that in the U.S., one-third of the adult population are subject to the collateral consequences of prior involvement with the criminal justice system on the ability to obtain and retain employment in addition to advancement and economic mobility. The authors estimate that in 2014, between 6.0 and 6.7 percent of the male working-age population were former prisoners, while between 13.6 and 15.3 percent were people with felony convictions. Street (2002 pp. 3-60 cites a 2000 study by the DePaul Law School that found that in Illinois, for applicants with a criminal record, there were conditions and/or limitations placed on fifty-seven of the then ninety-eight occupations that required state licensure, including in some instances even misdemeanors. Typically, several of these 57 occupations are capable of providing opportunities for good-paying jobs and profitable self-employment.

The private sector offers a large number of individuals released from correctional institutions or who are required to find a job as a stipulation of their probation or parole with employment opportunities. What is required by the reentry, and workforce development sectors is an integrated tool that pulls together “the best thinking about reducing recidivism and improving job placement and retention to guide correctional supervision and the provision of community-based services” (Duran et al., 2013 p. v).

Education and Training

Most of the people who enter correctional institutions have “limited marketable work experience, low levels of education or vocational skills” (Solomon, Osborne, LoBuglio, Mellow and Mukamal, 2008 p. 15). Education and employment are inescapably linked and is an important question with respect to offender reentry (Harlow, 2003). Generally, research supports the idea that education is essential for offenders because it can lessen the chance of reoffending (Crayton and Neusteter, 2008; Schlager, 2013 pp. 64-65). Besides, in the U.S., the extent one’s educational attainment (a barometer used to ascertain the degree to which a person is educated) unambiguously impacts job prospects, job placement, and opportunities to advance on the job (Schlager, 2013 p. 63). When offender populations are taken into consideration, these distinctions take on added meaning. In a review of data from the most current national study on education and correctional populations, Harlow (2003) found that 31 percent of offenders on probation had not finished high school or acquired a GED compared with 18 percent of the general population. In Illinois, 5.4 percent of the prison population did not enter high school, 31.9 percent entered but did not complete high school and 30.7 percent had received either a high school diploma or GED. The report noted educational achievement was unreported for over 23 percent of inmates (IDOC’s 2018 Annual Report).

...[nationally] 31 percent of offenders on probation had not finished high school or acquired a GED compared with 18 percent of the general population.

This report does not assess the current landscape of correctional education. That is, it is not focused on both the educational needs of people who are incarcerated, and the programs being provided to meet those needs. Rather, the report explores educational opportunities available at some stage in the reentry process and the linking of educational programs with employment opportunities in the community.

Recommendations

Identify prototypical industries for the employment of ex-offenders with the intention of informing work-force development programs of the importance of understanding and making connections to the target population and developing critical partnerships with all relevant stakeholders (ibid., pp. 491-492). This entails identifying target industries that satisfy “specific criteria, including accessibility to the target population, demand for workers, high wages, and potential career ladders” (ibid., p. 491).

Consequently, the focus should be on the workforce development system taken together rather than the narrower concerns of the reentering population. The goal is a workforce development system that “responds quickly and effectively to ever-changing economic conditions to develop job opportunities and to prepare and match people to these opportunities” (ibid., p. 424).

Physical and Mental Health

A good number of the people who enter correctional institutions have several “health-related issues, ranging from mental illness to substance abuse histories and relatively high rates of communicable diseases” (Solomon, Osborne, LoBuglio, Mel-low and Mukamal, 2008 p. 15). These health difficulties impact reentry outcomes because a substantial number of returning prisoners have health-related issues (Mallik-Kane and Visser, 2008 p. 3). Greifinger (2007, p. v) argues that the American prison health system does not do enough to ensure that the incarcerated return to society in good health. Unaddressed while confined, these health problems persist upon reentry and result in reincarceration shortly after release.

Prisoners returning to the community often have co-occurring health problems. Mallik-Kane and Visser (2008, pp. 1-3) claim that “[r]oughly 4 in 10 men and 6 in 10 women reported a combination of physical health, mental health, and substance abuse conditions, including an estimated one-tenth of men and one-quarter of women with co-occurring substance abuse and mental health conditions.” They add that “[t]wo-thirds of men and three-quarters of women with physical health conditions received treatment during prison” (Mallik-Kane and Visser, 2008 pp. 1-3). Eight to ten months after release, these treatment rates decreased to One-half of men and 6 in 10 women. While “[a]bout 6 in 10 men and women with mental health conditions received mental health treatment in prison. Eight to ten months after release the share receiving treatment declined to one-half of men and 4 in 10 women.” During their incarceration, 50 percent of men and 4 in 10 women with substance abuse disorders partook of treatment services while in incarcerated and eight to ten months after release, one-quarter were still receiving such services (Mallik-Kane and Visser, 2008 pp. 1-3).

...less than 25 percent of those with chronic disorders see a physician in the first year post-release...

Any treatment inmates receive while incarcerated usually ends when they re-enter the community as a result of a lack of meaningful access to care when released, due primarily to a lack of health insurance. For example, less than 25 percent of those with chronic disorders see a physician in the first year post-release while 80 percent report no community treatment preceding their last arrest (Regenstein and Christie-Maples, 2012).

This report takes a comprehensive perspective on “health” and therefore, focuses on the effect of physical health conditions, mental illness, and substance abuse disorders on the reentry process (Mallik-Kane and Visser, 2008 p. 1). A good number of the individuals cycling in and out of correctional institutions have above average rates of chronic medical conditions, acute mental health disorders, and substance abuse disorders (Bronson and Berzofsky, 2017). Many of the formerly incarcerated do not receive needed medical treatment despite the necessity for timely and continuous access to care (Mallik-Kane and Visser, 2008; Wilper et al., 2009; Aslim, Mungan, Navarro and Yu, 2019 p. 1).

According to Binswanger et al. (2007, p. 157), previously incarcerated individuals are “at high risk for death after release from prison, particularly during the first 2 weeks.” They claim that the “leading causes of death among former inmates were drug overdose, cardiovascular disease, homicide, and suicide” (ibid.). In a study of 110,419 individuals who were previously incarcerated and Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries for risk of hospitalizations soon after, Wang, Wang and Krumholz (2013 ,pp. 1621-1622) found that:

...“leading causes of death among former inmates were drug overdose, cardiovascular disease, homicide, and suicide.”

- 1559 individuals (1.4 percent) were hospitalized within 7 days after release;
- 4285 individuals (3.9 percent) within 30 days; and 9196 (8.3 percent) within 90 days;
- approximately 1 in 70 former inmates are hospitalized for an acute condition within 7 days of release; and
- 1 in 12 by 90 days, a rate much higher than in the general population.

The odds of hospitalization were higher for released inmates compared with those of matched controls.

The population under supervision by the criminal justice system has high rates of medical, mental health, and substance use conditions;

- Nearly two-thirds have at least one chronic health condition (Biswanger, Redmond, Steiner and Hicks, 2012);
- Nearly 70 percent meet diagnostic criteria for drug and/or alcohol use disorders (Karberg and James, 2005;
- 15 percent of men and 30 percent of women meet the criteria for serious mental illness (Steadman, et al., 2009).
- 72 percent of those with a serious mental illness also meet the criteria for a co-occurring substance use disorder (Abram and Teplin, 1991). This subset is also:
 - 40 percent more likely to have a co-morbid medical problem;
 - 30 percent more likely to have multiple medical problems (Cuddeback, Scheyett, Pettus-Davis, and Morrissey, 2010); and
 - has a reduced life expectancy of 25 years compared to the general population (Lutterman et.al., 2003).

Health Insurance

The central difficulties Americans experience with the health care system are related to access, costs, and quality. Somewhat over 60 percent of Americans obtain their health insurance as a result of their employer. Many in the reentry population as well as those who have very low incomes or are unemployed, do not have access to adequate health care. The absence of health insurance coverage means a gap between the care that should be provided compared to that which is actually delivered (ibid., p. 472). Thus the capacity of returning prisoners to access community-based treatment for their recurring health conditions is constrained by not having health insurance (Mallik-Kane and Visser, 2008 p. 13). Lack of access to health insurance does not only create barriers to successful reentry, it could also contribute to increased recidivism. It is crucial that the reentry population have access to health insurance that provides for mental health and substance use disorder coverage (Aslim, Mungan, Navarro

and Yu, 2019 p. 1). Returning prisoners with physical and mental health problems rely heavily on emergency room visits and hospitalizations. According to Guyer, Bachrach and Shine (2015) 4.2 percent of the U.S. adults who have had contact with the criminal justice system are accountable for an estimated 7.2 percent of hospital costs and 8.5 percent of emergency department expenditures.

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Mental Illness Among Ex-offenders

Thus far there is scant research on the nature and extent of serious mental illness among the formerly incarcerated (Lurigio, Rollins and Fallon, 2004 p. 46). Mental illness is a contributing factor in individuals getting involved with the criminal justice system and subsequent and repeated incarceration. About half of the individuals incarcerated in prisons and two-thirds of people in jails had one or the other of an existing severe psychological disturbance or has had in the past mental health disorders; only roughly a third of these were presently getting treatment. Women in jails especially report high rates of mental health issues compared to men. Inmates with a past of a mental health disorder, 31 percent had major depressive disorder, in comparison to bipolar disorder (25 percent), an anxiety disorder (18 percent), or PTSD (16 percent) (Bronson and Berzofsky, 2017).

Data on reentry programs that concentrate on mental health care are scarce, but it is a significant dimension of the reentry process (Ndrecka, Listwan and Latessa, 2017 p. 191). There is not much known about the risk for hospitalizations among those recently released from correctional institutions, a period when there is most likely to be discontinuity in care (Wang, Wang and Krumholz, 2013 pp. 1621-1622). More importantly, is how returning prisoners with these health conditions face distinct challenges with regard to finding housing and employment, abstaining from substance use and avoiding reoffending (ibid., p.1; see also United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2018).

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Substance Use Disorders

According to Dong, Must and Tang (2018), eight to ten months after release, roughly one-third of the formerly incarcerated reported recently engaging in substance abuse. The BJS tracks the rate of substance abuse and addiction within the U.S. jail population as well as data on the number of people who take part in and complete substance abuse programs. In 2002 more than two-thirds of jail inmates were dependent on or abused alcohol or drugs. Of the inmates who satisfied the conditions for substance addiction or abuse (70 percent) were more likely to have a criminal record than inmates who did not (46 percent). Inmates who were substance dependent were two times as likely to

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have been homeless in the year before their offense (16 percent v. 9 percent). 52 percent of incarcerated women were dependent on drugs or alcohol in comparison to 44 percent of men (Karberg and James, 2005). Interestingly, former inmates ranked substance abuse recovery, employment, housing, and food security as the highest priorities and healthcare last (Mallik-Kane and Visser, 2008 pp. 1-3).

There are different possible channels through which access to health care can impact an ex-offender's successful reentry. The decision by some states to expand eligibility for Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act can improve health outcomes post-release. The extension of public coverage significantly increases the opportunity to access substance use disorder treatment (Mallik-Kane and Visser, *ibid.* p. 4). Guyer, Bachrach and Shine, (2015) note that before Medicaid expansion, less than 20 percent of the incarcerated were enrolled in Medicaid prior to reentry and more than 60 percent gained coverage less than a year subsequent to expansion. This brings to light the medical vulnerability of the formerly incarcerated and the need to enhance correctional and community preventive health services (Rosen, Schoenbach and Wohl, 2008 p. 2278).

Recommendations

To achieve positive outcomes, it is critical to make available individualized, accessible, coordinated, and effective community-based mental health treatment services. The goal is to ensure continuity of care by institutionalizing collaborative practices exemplified by coordinated efforts to treat co-occurring mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders at the point of contact with the reentry population (Re-Entry Policy Council, *ibid.* pp. 445-450).

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LGBTQ+

The transgender reentry population poses unique challenges and opportunities in reentry programing and service provision. There is a lack of research that analyzes the experiences of LGBTQ+ ex-offenders returning to society. The predicament for LGBTQ+ individuals involved in the criminal justice system is confounded by other types of discrimination in the community after incarceration. The risk of homelessness, unemployment due to bias and discrimination for the LGBTQ+ community is amplified by their transgendered status (Maschi, Rees and Klein, 2016 p. 1279). Changes in classification and rehabilitative programs have to be modified to be inclusive of LGBTQ+ ex-prisoners if they are to successfully transition to society upon completion of their sentences (Trimble, 2018-2019, p. 36).

Research and practice have collectively supported processes which assign reentry services based on the former inmate's individual needs. This is particularly true for the LGBTQ+ population whose members frequently wrestle with marginalization and rejection through their individual and societal relationships. Reflecting these concerns, the National Alliance on Mental Illness finds 1) "LGBTQ+ adults are more than twice as likely as heterosexual adults to experience a mental health condition", and 2) "LGBTQ+ people are at a higher risk than the general population for suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts" (n.d.). Compounding these challenges, conviction and incarceration add the issues associated with having a criminal record. While estimates of the LGBTQ+ population within the IDOC system could not be determined, LGBTQ+ representation has been found to be approximately twice as high in the prison population as the U.S. general population (Center for American Progress and the Movement Advance Project ("CAPMAP", 2016). While there appears to be an awareness of the concerns surrounding the intersection of LGBTQ+ populations and the criminal justice system, minimal research and study of particular reentry programs or issues had been conducted to support alternative programming recommendations.

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A 2013 U.S. Department of Justice report on sexual victimization in jails and prisons found inmates who identify their sexual orientation as gay, lesbian, or bisexual have the highest rates of sexual victimization while in custody - 12.2 percent of prisoners and 8.5 percent of jail inmates reported sexual victimization from other inmates. Further,

...an understanding of the LGBTQ+ custodial experience may inform their reentry process, particularly in the areas of behavioral health, including trauma, and sexually transmitted diseases.

5.4 percent of prisoners and 4.3 percent of jail inmates reported victimization by staff (Beck et al, 2013). Maschi et al reported in their summary of interviews with formerly incarcerated LGBTQ+ persons that personal safety and prison management prevented or discouraged many LGBTQ+ persons from attending educational classes (2016). While reentry organizations do not have the capability of addressing these custodial issues, an understanding of the LGBTQ+ custodial experience may inform their reentry process, particularly in the areas of behavioral health, including trauma, and sexually transmitted diseases.

In addition to traditional reentry needs such as housing, employment, education and substance abuse treatment, the CAPMAP report recognized the LGBTQ+ population experiences two particular reentry issues. First, they experience a lack of support from probation, parole, and reentry programs to address the discrimination they may receive from service providers of employment, housing and other services. Second, LGBTQ+ persons may experience increased isolation from their own families and other community members (CAPMAP, 2016). These intangible issues may be difficult to measure and are possibly interrelated since LGBTQ+ institutional needs may be increased due to a lack of family support. Several reports encourage reentry services designed specifically for LGBTQ+ community members or they encourage increasing training for service providers to increase their sensitivity to these relevant discrimination-related issues.

Due to widespread discrimination within society, the LGBTQ+ population is vulnerable to increased risks of homelessness and unemployment, potential contributors to criminal activity but also challenges to reentry service programs (Texas Criminal Justice Coalition, 2018). Assessing and understanding these risks is relevant to successful reentry for the LGBTQ+ population. While the literature suggests evolving recognition of the issues surrounding this area, there are limited service providers who identify specific LGBTQ+ services. In Chicago, Center on Halsted's website identifies Joliet-based Agape Missions as a comprehensive reentry service provider serving LGBTQ+ persons. Outside of Chicago, Rainbow Heights Club (<http://www.rainbowheights.org>) was identified as a social support and advocacy program affirming LGBTQ+ persons released from New York prisons.

Due to widespread discrimination within society, the LGBTQ+ population is vulnerable to increased risks of homelessness and unemployment, [...] challenges to reentry service programs.

Recommendations

Given the limited research and reporting that exists within the area of reentry programming and LGBTQ+ populations, a first step would be more research into the issues of concern to LGBTQ+ population in order to develop appropriate reentry proposals/initiatives. In addition, there is an immediate need for case management services to facilitate reentry programs/services which are responsive to the unique needs of LGBTQ+ individuals.

Overarching Recommendations

The majority of evaluations of reentry programs and services seek to determine the direct (impact on reducing reoffending) or indirect (reentry programming's) ability to "work" (Schlager, *ibid.* p. xv). While these evaluations have been instrumental in determining what works best for whom and in what contexts. Such evaluations have resulted in policies and programs that are normally "geared toward addressing specific problems and/or deficits in individual offender skill sets but are absent a clear narrative that fuses individual-level offender problems with contextual concerns" (*ibid.*).

It is insufficient to know what works in reentry because the conclusion would be rather unconstructively that more research is needed (Bushway, 2003 p. 3). In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the reentry process and make any substantive change to reentry policy and practice requires "a theoretical construct or narrative through which to discuss offender reentry" (Schlager, 2013 pp. xv-xvi). To be effective, offender reentry has to be "cohesive in what it is and what it does (or how we understand it)" (*ibid.*).

There should be a focus on programs that do not stick to any particular type of intervention or program but rather apply a model intended to tackle the six outcomes (health, education, employment, housing, substance use, and recidivism) of importance to the reentry population (Washington State Institute for Public Policy Benefit-Cost Results, 2019, n.p.).

There have been some attempts to coordinate services for the reentry population using such approaches as multiservice centers, integrated access teams, and interagency reentry programs. However, the impact of these efforts is poorly understood, and, further, most efforts to coordinate services are largely designed from the perspective of providers and system-level decisionmakers (Mendel, et al., *ibid.* p. viii).

It is valuable to have a proper understanding of the various systems (such as mental health, labor, and workforce, etc.) that need to be at the table in any joint initiative around prisoner re-entry. This requires identifying the various groups that play key roles in a system, such as the Workforce Investment Board, which runs the local One-Stop. (Re-Entry Policy Council, *ibid.* pp. 20-21). Consequently, there is a need for a model that tackles prisoner reentry needs at three levels: individual, community, and systems (Roman, Brooks, Lagerson, Chalfin and Tereshchenko, 2007 p. 1). The task of improving reentry outcomes is beyond a single organization. (Solomon, Osborne, LoBuglio, Mellow and Mukamal, 2008 p. xv). At the systems level, a combination of service providers is required to coordinate efforts to provide prisoners returning to society "with comprehensive reentry services including housing assistance, substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, education, vocational training and other services" (Roman, Brooks, Lagerson, Chalfin and Tereshchenko, 2007 p. 1). In the end, this report argues that existing reentry proposals while significant in their own right, do not deal with the underlying reasons for current reentry problem; reentry programs seem to be designed to assist communities to evade rather than to solve the problem outright (Bryne, 2004 p. 1).

It is assumed that all stakeholders invested in making sure ex-offenders successfully adjust to their communities upon release from jail or prison are interested in obtaining evidence-based knowledge of which reentry proposals are the most efficacious. What is needed now is more thorough examination of what works for the various types of offending populations. (Stojkovic, 2017 p. 10). However, it should be acknowledged that a possible reason why a detailed examination of the impact of these ex-prisoner attributes on reentry outcomes has not been common in existing research is due to the fact that such analyses require expensive data collection techniques to gather self-reported information (Visser and Kachnowski, 2007 p. 81).

The goal reentry programming is the reduction of recidivism by connecting the reentry population to services and supports that facilitate successful community reintegration (Cortes and Rogers, 2010 p. viii). However, given that the reentry population is diverse, planning for reentry requires addressing the complexities of this population (Lynch and Sabol, 2001 p. 3). This will entail developing a thorough understanding of the characteristics of returning prisoners and the challenges they face as an important first step in shaping public policy toward improving reentry outcomes (La Vigne, Mamalian, Travis and Visser, 2003 p. 3). The challenge is improving services for returning citizens in a way that meaningfully engages service users (clients) in service improvement (Mendel, et al., *ibid.*). Therefore, identifying effective strategies for helping individuals avoid reoffending and increasing their successful reintegration is critical not only for the individual but for the stability of the mostly impoverished neighborhoods, which also tend to lack social service resources, many of these individuals will return when released (La Vigne, Cowan, and Brazzell 2006; Lynch and Sabol 2001). (Roman and Travis, 2004 pp. ii-iii).

Future Research

It is clear from the literature that returning citizens experience considerable obstacles to reintegration after incarceration. Yet, there is limited evidence of the efficacy of reentry programs is incomplete. A likely reason is the absence “of specificity in matching services to individuals’ unique risk and need profiles” (Gill and Wilson, 2016 p. 336). In an ancillary analysis of data from the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI) evaluation using propensity score modeling and logistic regression, Gill and Wilson (2016, p. 336) discovered that less than half of the participants obtained the services they required.

Prospective research should concentrate on enhancing the combination and tailoring of services. What is needed is the integration of perceived need with actuarial assessments by examining prisoner reentry from the perspective of the returning offender. This report argues that any effective paradigm of prisoner reentry must take into account the perspectives expounded by offenders.

Through their individual and collective experiences, ex-offenders, can offer firsthand experience of what successful reentry involves from their point of view. (Stojkovic, 2017 p. 9). This will demand focus groups to provide narrative accounts of reentry experiences and the design of programs (Pleggenkuhle, Huebner and Kras, 2016 p. 380).

...any effective paradigm of prisoner reentry must take into account the perspectives expounded by offenders.

To better understand how reentry challenges impact successful integration, reentry research needs to be based on the voices and experiences of the reentry population. The main goal of the research should be to foster understanding of the reentry challenges that returning individuals experience as they navigate the reentry process and the strategies used by those who have successfully navigated the process.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the challenges related with reentry after incarceration are daunting in both scale and complexity (Solomon, Osborne, LoBuglio, Mellow and Mukamal, 2008 p. xv). Nevertheless, the collective goal is to ensure the safe and successful reentry of individuals by promoting full community reintegration (Re-Entry Policy Council, *ibid.* p. 331).

As Braga, Piehl and Hureau (2009, p. 411) note that notwithstanding the high level of policy interest in prisoner reentry, there is still little substantive scientific evidence to guide the development of reentry programs and services (Braga, Piehl and Hureau, 2009 p. 411). Offender reentry is an issue of some interest and consequence to policy makers (Schlager, 2013 p. 24). One significant impediment to thinking coherently “about the reentry problem, is that it has no overarching theoretical construct or ‘glue’ that holds it together” (Schlager, 2013 p. xv). This study has attempted to provide insight on how best to advance prisoner reentry efforts based on the most recent and salient analysis of the issues (*ibid.*, p. 11).

Clearly, a subset of the offender population seems to have incorporated as part of their lifestyle and life choices periods of incarceration. This cycle of reoffending has negative outcomes for the offender and the community at large (Byrne and Taxman, 2004 p. 53). Therefore, it is desirable public policy objective to identify effective policies that helps individuals avoid reoffending and increasing their successful reintegration into the society. Successful reintegration reduces the social and economic costs for individuals and the criminal justice system. The question is what the corrections systems can and should do to direct specialized services and controls to this subgroup of offenders to improve their successful integration into communities to which they return (*ibid.*). Ending the cycle of reoffending and re-incarceration requires enabling individuals with previous contact with the criminal justice system to succeed in reintegrating to the society by providing opportunities for housing, education, employment, and other needed services as well as developing policies that reduce obstacles to accessing these important resources (Washington, DC: National Reentry Resource Center and Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2017).

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Reentry is concrete in the sense that it is made up of a hodge-podge of policies and programs that offenders may access (Schlager, 2013 p. xv-xvi). Developing a systematic understanding of the characteristics of the formerly incarcerated and the challenges they face is an essential first step in shaping public policy toward enhancing the reentry process and experience” (La Vigne, Mamalian, Travis and Visser, 2003 p. 3). Ideally, a more fruitful process would be to identify the pathways of prisoner reintegration, which examines what factors play a part in successful or unsuccessful reentry experience, while identifying how these can inform public policy.

Finally, successful reentry is predicated upon the availability of accessible and effective services and supports. While service providers are by and large distinct organizations and it is not always clear whether their missions are consistent with the core objectives of re-entry, it is nevertheless a necessary prerequisite that the leadership commit to working together on the different dimensions of the issue and ensuring collaboration between organizational representatives (Re-Entry Policy Council, *ibid.* p. 18).

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Appendix

Table 9: Estimates of People Formerly Incarcerated and Formerly Under Felony Correctional Supervision in the State of Illinois 1980-2010

Year	Ex-felons	Total Felons	Ex-prisoners	Total Prisoners
1980	105,501	155,447	38,860	49,584
1981	116,861	171,632	41,464	54,670
1982	129,062	185,460	45,622	59,915
1983	140,785	197,449	48,550	64,145
1984	149,005	211,094	50,974	68,088
1985	168,972	225,888	54,012	72,646
1986	180,387	241,666	57,456	76,912
1987	193,916	255,440	61,170	81,020
1988	197,521	262,553	63,500	84,581
1989	207,220	276,687	66,709	91,421
1990	219,063	304,368	73,181	100,697
1991	235,284	329,496	80,147	109,262
1992	251,519	355,564	88,113	119,753
1993	278,063	380,074	93,910	128,405
1994	294,077	403,340	101,082	137,643
1995	305,790	419,531	108,997	146,655
1996	321,236	438,381	116,382	155,234
1997	334,697	456,335	124,905	165,693
1998	348,750	474,296	132,505	175,556
1999	347,867	497,318	140,805	185,465
2000	392,982	552,618	178,396	223,677
2001	402,114	547,740	165,422	209,770
2002	418,033	570,668	178,503	221,196
2003	440,033	594,503	189,910	233,328
2004	536,141	690,633	203,227	247,281
2005	509,446	663,453	215,295	260,214
2006	529,198	683,071	226,622	271,728
2007	544,305	699,718	234,720	279,935
2008	561,020	696,693	242,830	288,304
2009	580,543	735,171	252,421	297,582
2010	585,466	729,683	255,118	303,536

Data Source: Shannon et al, *ibid.* Supplementary Material 3.

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Great Cities Institute

Great Cities Institute (MC 107)
College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs
University of Illinois at Chicago
412 South Peoria Street, Suite 400
Chicago, Illinois 60607-7067

312.996.8700
gcities@uic.edu
greatcities.uic.edu