

Barriers to Reentry

Center for Women in Transition | 2022



Introduction

The United States released 614,051 individuals from federal and state prisons in 2019, citing similar statistics each year. Missouri accounted for 18,617 (3%) of those released.¹

Justice-involved people are attempting to reenter successfully into their communities but are navigating housing, employment, education, treatment, and other systems with inequitable access². Without stability, the likelihood of recidivism increases.

With high numbers of individuals released from correctional institutions each year, rates of recidivism indicate the efficacy of justice-involved persons reintegration into society. Recent reports from the U.S. Department of Justice detail 36.8% of impacted individuals are arrested within one year of their release, 61.5% were arrested in the first three years, and 70.8% were arrested within 5 years³. This data concludes only 30% of individuals are rehabilitated under the current reentry system. The percentage of those individuals arrested that are returning to prison due to parole or probation violations or new sentences within five years after their initial release is 45.8%⁴. This demonstrates the failure in policies and programs to reenter justice-involved people long-term. However, the data reports each year post-release the likelihood of arrest declines from 24.0% of post-release arrests occurring in the first year, 19.3% occurring in the third year, and only 17.2% occurring in the fifth year post-release⁵. It is critical that reentry services begin supporting justice-involved individuals immediately after release, if not while still incarcerated, to increase the wellbeing of justice-involved people and the communities in which they interact.

¹ Corrections Statistical Analysis Tool (2019). *Count of Total Releases* [Data set]. Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=nps>

² LaCourse, A., Listwan, S. J., Reid, S., & Hartman, J. L. (2019). *Recidivism and Reentry: The Role of Individual Coping Styles*. *Crime & Delinquency*, 65(1), 46–68. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011128718790497>

³ Durose, M. R., & Antenangeli, L. (2021). *Recidivism of prisoners released in 34 states in 2012: A 5-year follow-up period (2012-2017)* (NCJ 255947). Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/rpr34s125yfup1217.pdf>

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

Due to the above information and experience working in the field, the Center for Women in Transition prioritizes discussing and working towards equitable policies to overcome barriers to housing access, employment access, child support debt relief, and expungement.

Housing Access

Securing stable housing is a critical step for the reentry process. The Center for Women in Transition utilizes principles from the housing-first model which states The housing-first model is guided by the principle that having a place to live is a baseline necessity that must be met before substance-use treatment, securing employment, or learning life-skills⁶. This model practices the belief that all people deserve stable housing, regardless of criminal history, substance use, employment status, and more. In conjunction with the housing-first model, the transitional housing programs through the Center for Women in Transition have been proven to support justice-involved women during their initial stages of reentry. Funding for transitional housing should not be restricted in order to fund housing-first initiatives.

Housing is essential because it provides people with consistent shelter, and it also serves as a gateway to other benefits. Housing helps people with access to employment, prosocial activities, and maintaining sobriety⁷, along with reunification of guardians and their children⁸. However, opportunities to access housing are limited for justice-involved individuals due to lack of low-income housing spaces and limitations on Housing and Urban Development services.

When released from the Missouri Department of Corrections, a housing plan must be approved by the parole officer and field officer of the housing area proposed⁹. Many addresses proposed are for temporary placement, sometimes with family members, and individuals plan to later secure a more permanent housing solution¹⁰. Other options for housing include finding housing through the private market, federally subsidized housing units through voucher programs, supportive housing programs, community correctional facilities, or homeless shelters¹¹. Even

⁶ National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2016). *Fact sheet: Housing First* [Fact Sheet]. <https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/housing-first-fact-sheet.pdf>

⁷ Fontaine, J., & Biess, J. (2012). Housing as a platform for formerly incarcerated persons. *Washington, DC: Urban Institute*.

⁸ Wilson, A., & Koons-Witt, B. (2020). "They Still Know I'm Their Momma": Incarcerated Mothers' Perceptions of Reunification and Resuming a Caregiver Role. *Feminist Criminology*, 1557085120983468.

⁹ St. Louis Alliance for Reentry (STAR). 2014 White Paper: Missouri Offender Reentry and Housing

¹⁰ Id.

¹¹ Fontaine, J., & Biess, J. (2012). Housing as a platform for formerly incarcerated persons. *Washington, DC: Urban Institute*.

with numerous types of housing to choose from, the barriers in securing housing often limit the options for people.

Housing access for re-entry is restricted by low-income affordable housing availability, an issue impacting every county in the United States¹². In Missouri, 27% of renter households are extremely low income¹³. Extremely low income (ELI) households are categorized by household incomes 30% of the area median income or at or below the poverty line¹⁴. A shortage of 122,075 rental homes exists for ELI individuals and families in the state¹⁵. On top of the lack of rental homes, there is a lack of rental subsidies as well. Often, the wait lists for federal, state, and local programs are no longer accepting new applicants or have waiting lists as long as 10 years¹⁶. The median income for the first year after prison release is \$6,000¹⁷, increasing the demand for low-income housing for justice-involved individuals. The St. Louis Housing Authority indicates the waitlist for public housing is currently only open to senior housing developments and the housing choice voucher wait list is closed¹⁸.

Solutions proposed to overcome the lack of low-income housing units include capitalizing on resources and changing policies to increase the quantity of accessible units for low-income individuals and families. Proposed programs include utilizing vacant and public space to accommodate individuals with housing needs, specifically immediately post-incarceration. . Another solution can be to change current zoning and construction policies to assure more opportunities for increasing the lack of low-income housing units. Important components to change include banning zoning rules that only permit single family homes and mandating all new construction projects are mixed-income.

Discrimination from landlords is a prevalent barrier to securing housing during the reentry process. Although Housing and Urban Development only list restrictions for convictions of methamphetamine production on federally funded housing property and people who have a

¹² MacDonald, G., & Poethig, E. C. (2015, May 13). We've mapped AMERICA'S rental housing crisis. Urban Wire: Housing and Finance. Retrieved September 28, 2021, from <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/weve-mapped-americas-rental-housing-crisis>.

¹³ NLIHC. (2021). *Housing needs by state/ Missouri*. National Low Income Housing Coalition. Retrieved September 28, 2021, from <https://nlihc.org/housing-needs-by-state/missouri>.

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ Keene DE, Rosenberg A, Schlesinger P, Guo M, Blankenship KM. Navigating Limited and Uncertain Access to Subsidized Housing After Prison. *House Policy Debate*. 2018;28(2):199-214. doi:10.1080/10511482.2017.1336638

¹⁷ B. Western, *Homeward: Life in the Year After Prison*, New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 2018.

¹⁸ St. Louis Housing Authority. (2021, November 10). *St. Louis Housing Authority - Home Page*. St. Louis Housing Authority. Retrieved November 11, 2021, from <https://www.ssha.org/>.

lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program,¹⁹ states are permitted to make their own provisions for restricting access to housing. Missouri, along with other states and local ordinances, allow for a case-by-case review of criminal history; however, with the shortage of Extremely Low Income units available, potential tenants with felony convictions are often overlooked²⁰. This will disproportionately impact Black and Brown people because the United States carceral system impacts communities of color at a higher rate²¹. Black Missourians only make up 12% of the Missouri population, but they make up 39% of the Missouri jail population and 34% of the Missouri prison population²².

Solutions to housing discrimination require policies that protect justice-involved individuals in the housing selection process, and if running background checks on applicants, only looking at recent and relevant histories²³. In 2016, HUD released guidelines about how to implement the Fair Housing Act in terms of criminal histories. The considerations landlords must make include evaluating the nature of the crime, severity, and length of time that has passed since the crime took place, and making a decision based on evidence.

Since HUD adds restrictions for methamphetamine production and lifetime registration on sex offender registry, these individuals are not able to receive federal subsidies for housing, such as living in public housing or qualifying for emergency housing grants or section 8 vouchers²⁴. Missouri's Shelter Plus Care program intentionally includes those falling into restrictive categories from HUD, as long as they meet the other criteria such as being unhoused or having a disability²⁵. Therefore, in order for these individuals to receive government assistance from the program, unless they meet another requirement, they must meet HUD's definition of homelessness. Unfortunately, HUD's definition of homelessness does not include individuals

¹⁹ St. Louis Alliance for Reentry (STAR). 2014 White Paper: Missouri Offender Reentry and Housing

²⁰ Poulos, C. (2021). Criminal record based housing discrimination harms public safety. *Seattle Journal for Social Justice*, 19(2), 399-408.

²¹ ACLU. (2021). *Mass incarceration*. American Civil Liberties Union. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from <https://www.aclu.org/issues/smart-justice/mass-incarceration>.

²² Vera Institute of Justice. (2019). *Incarceration Trends in MO* [Fact sheet]. <https://www.vera.org/downloads/pdfdownloads/state-incarceration-trends-missouri.pdf>

²³ Marin, J. A., Crew, E., & diZerega, M. (2021, April). *Looking Beyond Conviction History: Recommendations for Public Housing Authority Admissions Policies*. VERA. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from <https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/looking-beyond-conviction-history.pdf>.

²⁴ St. Louis Alliance for Reentry (STAR). 2014 White Paper: Missouri Offender Reentry and Housing

²⁵ Missouri Department of Mental Health. (2013). *Housing- HUD*. Missouri Department of Mental Health. Retrieved September 29, 2021.

living in correctional institutions if they have done so for 90 days or more²⁶. Individuals who have nowhere to go as they reenter society risk living in places not meant for human habitation or transitional housing placements. They will have to remain in these conditions until they meet other characteristics of homelessness as outlined by HUD to qualify for services. Since being unhoused impacts the likelihood of recidivism, this is a barrier to successful reentry. To assist individuals reentering society, specifically those with methamphetamine production charges or have a lifetime requirement to register on the sex offender registry, HUD's definition of homelessness needs to consider individuals leaving the Department of Corrections and other institutions.

Even Higher Barriers to Access

Under the framework of the housing first model, housing is an essential component of maintaining wellbeing for each individual and their community. Sex offenders are a population with high barriers to housing access; however, every person deserves housing. Public housing excludes individuals registered on sex offender registries with the intention of maintaining safety in their public housing spaces²⁷. Not all individuals required to be registered on the sex offender registry will pose a threat to their community, since people have lifetime requirements for failure to protect a child from sexual abuse and indecent exposure²⁸. People convicted of violent sexual crimes will be incarcerated for a longer sentence²⁹, hence blanket policies about offenders registered on sex registries cause harm to rehabilitated individuals seeking a place to live. In Missouri, justice-involved individuals on sex offender registries cannot live within 1,000 feet of certain organizations, such as schools and day cares³⁰.

Another group of individuals experiencing increased barriers to housing are those with convictions for producing methamphetamine on the premise of federally assisted housing. Public Housing Authorities are mandated to deny access to public housing and housing choice vouchers to these individuals³¹. However, just as all people need access to housing to reduce

²⁶ US Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). *Homeless Definition*. HUD Exchange. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HomelessDefinition_RecordkeepingRequirementsandCriteria.pdf

²⁷ "No Second Chance: People with Criminal Records and Denied Access to Public Housing". (2004). *Human Rights Watch*. <https://www.hrw.org/reports/2004/usa1104/>

²⁸ *Id.*

²⁹ *Id.*

³⁰ Helping Offenders Successfully Transition. (n.d.). *Host Transition Services*. <https://www.hosttransitionservices.com/living-res-missouri>

³¹ McCarty, M., Aussenberg, R. A., Carpenter, D. H., & Falk, E. H. (2012). Drug testing and crime-related restrictions in TANF, SNAP, and housing assistance

recidivism, individuals convicted of the production of methamphetamine on public housing premises need access to stable housing.

Employment Access

Having income is important to pay for food, housing, utilities, transportation, among others. However, finding employment for people reentering society from incarceration has added barriers, such as employers hesitant to hire justice-involved individuals, occupational licensing restrictions, limited education or employment skills, and transportation issues³².

Many employers are hesitant or unwilling to hire previously incarcerated individuals. A survey conducted revealed that approximately 60% of employers were not going to hire anyone with a criminal record³³, 70% of employers have hesitancy in hiring people with property offences and 75% for violent crimes³⁴. This stigma limits the job availability for individuals reentering society, despite the fact that gainful employment, with income, benefits, and other resources, can bolster an offense-free lifestyle³⁵. Steady employment opens possibilities for a more stable life, social support, and income. Communities will be healthier and safer as more individuals have steady employment and consistent income.

A nation-wide initiative to confront the discrimination from employers is the “Ban the Box” legislation. It has been passed in several cities and counties, banning employers from asking questions about criminal history during the first stages of applications³⁶. The intention was to allow justice-involved people to rejoin the workforce by overcoming employer discrimination. However, “Ban the Box” has no restriction on the use of background checks after the interview is conducted. This upholds the space for employers, with a hesitancy to employ people with criminal records, to discriminate based on criminal history for job openings. It is estimated that 92% of employers use criminal background checks in the hiring process³⁷.

³² Anderson-Facile, D. (2009). Basic challenges to prisoner reentry. *Sociology Compass*, 3(2), 183-195.

³³ Holzer, Harry J., Steven Raphael and Michael A. Stoll 2002. ‘Can Employers Play a More Positive Role in Prisoner Reentry?’ Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

³⁴ Pager, Devah and Lincoln Quillian 2005. ‘Walking the Talk? What Employers Say Versus What They Do.’ *American Sociological Review* 70: 355–380.

³⁵ Anderson-Facile, D. (2009). Basic challenges to prisoner reentry. *Sociology Compass*, 3(2), 183-195.

³⁶ St. Louis. (n.d.). *About the “Ban the box” ordinance*. St. Louis- MO Government. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/civil-rights-enforcement/ban-the-box-ordinance-71074.cfm>.

³⁷ Guerin, L. (2014, February 5). *Employer use of arrest and conviction records in Missouri*. Nolo. Retrieved October 19, 2021, from <https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/employer-use-arrest-conviction-records-missouri.html>.

If discrimination for criminal history did not exist, barriers would arise since most jobs require certain years of experience and education for employment. More than half of people incarcerated in state prisons do not hold a high school diploma³⁸. Having a high school diploma will increase wages and decrease unemployment³⁹. People who participate in programs to continue education while incarcerated are projected to have better employment outcomes during their reentry process. Individuals who participate in correctional education programs are 43% less likely to reoffend and 13% more likely to find a job post-release⁴⁰. The funding for human capital building programs while individuals are incarcerated and immediately upon release needs to be a priority. Justice-involved people earn 40% less annually than people with no involvement in the justice system⁴¹. Individuals incarcerated lose the ability to build job experience and skills, so supplementing these experiences with programs can help rebuild the job market for justice-involved people during reentry.

Another barrier for employment during reentry is occupational licenses. People with criminal records are often banned from being able to apply and receive licensure for certain professions. In Missouri, the Fresh Start Act, loosens restrictions to this licensure for many professions by limiting exclusions for only offenses that relate directly to the work⁴². Also, individuals can learn whether their record would disqualify them from licensure before completing the training and requirements, saving individuals time, money, and other resources⁴³. However, this policy needs to be expanded to include all professional licensure. Right now, this act does not impact accountants, teachers, podiatrists, dentists, physicians, surgeons, pharmacists, veterinarians,

³⁸ US Department of Justice. (n.d.). *Reentry essentials: An overview of Employment and Correctional Education*. National Reentry Resource Center. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from <https://nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/resources/reentry-essentials-overview-employment-and-correctional-education>

³⁹ U.S. Employment and Training Administration. (2021, June). *Education, wages and employment*. Missouri Economic Research and Information Center. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from <https://meric.mo.gov/workforce-research/jobs-education/education-pays>.

⁴⁰ US Department of Justice. (n.d.). *Reentry essentials: An overview of Employment and Correctional Education*. National Reentry Resource Center. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from <https://nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/resources/reentry-essentials-overview-employment-and-correctional-education>

⁴¹ *Id.*

⁴² Institute for Justice. (2020, July 14). *Missouri eases barriers to work for ex-offenders, expands out-of-state license recognition*. Institute for Justice. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from <https://ij.org/press-release/missouri-eases-barriers-to-work-for-ex-offenders-expands-out-of-state-license-recognition/>.

⁴³ Institute for Justice. (2020, July 14). *Missouri eases barriers to work for ex-offenders, expands out-of-state license recognition*. Institute for Justice. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from <https://ij.org/press-release/missouri-eases-barriers-to-work-for-ex-offenders-expands-out-of-state-license-recognition/>.

nurses, and real estate brokers⁴⁴. The policy should also block boards from considering non-conviction records and old convictions⁴⁵.

Child Support Debt Relief

Debt is a rising issue for people who are in jails and prisons. Estimates show that some people are reentering into society with \$5,000 in debt, accumulated from legal fees⁴⁶, not including child support debt. When child support debt is added, there are people leaving prison with up to \$100,000 in debt⁴⁷. The average child support debt falls around \$20,000 for individuals reentering society⁴⁸. Failure to pay off debt during probation or parole can result in returning to jails and prisons, upholding the cycle of incarceration.

For individuals who have child support obligations while incarcerated, appealing for modification for a substantial change of circumstances is permitted in several states⁴⁹. This is different for individuals incarcerated for non-compliance with child support orders. Missouri is a state in the majority which allows incarceration to be categorized with involuntary unemployment as a substantial change of circumstances. Some states had viewed incarceration as voluntary unemployment, meaning child support ordinances cannot be adapted to fit the current circumstance of the individual⁵⁰; however, the updated policy from the Child Support Enforcement Office prohibits states from classifying incarceration as voluntary unemployment, mandating all states allow people with child support orders in jails and prisons to appeal to change their circumstances on their orders⁵¹.

There is policy prohibiting individuals to retrospectively change their child support orders, so people needing adaptations made to circumstances in their child support order must initiate the

⁴⁴ "Missouri". (2020). *Institute for Justice*. Retrieved October 20, 2021, from <https://ij.org/report/barred-from-working/?state=US-MO>

⁴⁵ *Id.*

⁴⁶ Bucklen, K. B., & Zajac, G. (2009). But Some of Them Don't Come Back (to Prison!) Resource Deprivation and Thinking Errors as Determinants of Parole Success and Failure. *The Prison Journal*, 89(3), 239–264. doi:10.1177/0032885509339504

⁴⁷ Roman, C. G., & Link, N. (2015). Child support, debt, and prisoner reentry: Examining the influences of prisoners' legal and financial obligations on reentry. *Final report to the National Institute of Justice*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University.

⁴⁸ McCann, M. (2019, March). *Child support and incarceration*. National Conference of State Legislatures. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from <https://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/child-support-and-incarceration.aspx>.

⁴⁹ *Id.*

⁵⁰ *Id.*

⁵¹ *Id.*

process as soon as possible⁵². Otherwise, the debt can continue to accumulate. Certain states add additional provisions to the rule to help protect individuals from rising debt. California immediately suspends child support requirements for individuals once incarcerated⁵³.

Expungement and Clean Slate

When it is publicly available to access records of conviction and arrest, the likelihood of justice-involved individuals being impacted during the reentry process is huge. Expungement allows these records to be sealed to the public, only allowing the court to reopen the file.

Under the most recent Missouri law, the expungement process cannot begin until the individual seeking an expungement has paid their fine and completed probation or parole⁵⁴. The individual must not have added to their record in the previous three-years⁵⁵. In Missouri, crimes that are ineligible for expungement are those that require people to be registered on the sex offender registry, felonies that included death or assault, felonies or misdemeanors for domestic assault, and felony offenses for kidnapping, among others⁵⁶.

The process for expungement of offenses not protected under the law includes a petition from the individual with the record to all relevant courts and agencies. If all parties agree to the petition, a hearing will not be needed to expunge the record. When a hearing is necessary, the court is assessing, based on evidence provided by the petitioner, that the expungement would not decrease public safety⁵⁷.

When the court has expunged a record, all rights of an individual before the crime was committed will be restored. This will limit the barriers to reentry to education, housing access,

⁵² Roman, C. G., & Link, N. (2015). Child support, debt, and prisoner reentry: Examining the influences of prisoners' legal and financial obligations on reentry. *Final report to the National Institute of Justice*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University.

⁵³ McCann, M. (2019, March). *Child support and incarceration*. National Conference of State Legislatures. Retrieved September 29, 2021, from <https://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/child-support-and-incarceration.aspx>

⁵⁴ Fite, F., & Frevert, H. K. (2021, April 6). *Missouri expungement law: What does it mean to seal a record, and how do you do it?* The Missouri Bar. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from <https://news.mobar.org/missouri-expungement-law-what-does-it-mean-to-seal-a-record-and-how-do-you-do-it/>.

⁵⁵ *Id.*

⁵⁶ *Id.*

⁵⁷ Collateral Consequences Resource Center. (2021, December 3). *Missouri Restoration of Rights & Record Relief*. Restoration of Rights Project. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from https://ccresourcecenter.org/state-restoration-profiles/missouri-restoration-of-rights-pardon-expungement-sealing/#III_Expungement_sealing_other_record_relief.

employment access, and more. The public will no longer be able to see the record; however, certain records will be kept for purposes of certain occupational licensing issues⁵⁸.

There exists a need to pass clean slate legislation in order for justice-involved individuals to have just and equitable access to expungement of records. In Pennsylvania, the clean slate legislation qualifies individuals for automatic expungement if people were convicted of misdemeanors punishable by two years or less in prison and their charges did not result in convictions⁵⁹. Utah and Michigan followed Pennsylvania's push for clean slate legislation, and Michigan was able to do so with bipartisan support⁶⁰. This legislation has made it easier for individuals in these states to reenter into society after completing sentencing for crimes committed. It will decrease barriers to reentry for housing and employment access.

Conclusion

Justice-involved individuals face barriers to reentering into society that make it difficult for them to find stable employment and housing, among other necessities. The Center for Women in Transition supports women in reentering society and has found shortcomings in policy which make the systems in which justice-involved people less equitable. Therefore, in alignment with the Center for Women in Transitions' policy priorities to support individuals during the reentry process, we advocate for the following changes in policy to support justice-involved people.

First, immediate and automatic suspension of child support orders when people become involuntarily unemployed due to incarceration. Debt upon release from incarceration destabilizes the process of finding reliable employment and housing. Both factors can increase recidivism. Creating an automatic suspension of child support orders while incarcerated can ensure retrospective payments are not accumulating while individuals are categorized under involuntary unemployment. ***Second, model expungement processes after those outlined in the Clean Slate legislation passed in Pennsylvania, Utah, and Michigan.*** Public records are also contributing the discrimination in employment, education, and housing applications.

Expanding the expungement process can increase public safety by connecting more individuals

⁵⁸ *Id.*

⁵⁹ Morrison, C. (2021, July 20). Clean Slate Legislation Would Make It Easier For Missourians To Move Past Old Mistakes, and Give Them New Opportunities To Have A Second Chance in Life. Empower Missouri. Retrieved November 16, 2021, from <https://empowermissouri.org/clean-slate-legislation-would-make-it-easier-for-missourians-to-move-past-old-mistakes-and-give-them-new-opportunities-to-have-a-second-chance-in-life/>.

⁶⁰ Morrison, C. (2021, July 20). Clean Slate Legislation Would Make It Easier For Missourians To Move Past Old Mistakes, and Give Them New Opportunities To Have A Second Chance in Life. Empower Missouri. Retrieved November 16, 2021, from <https://empowermissouri.org/clean-slate-legislation-would-make-it-easier-for-missourians-to-move-past-old-mistakes-and-give-them-new-opportunities-to-have-a-second-chance-in-life/>.

to the workforce, ultimately decreasing potential for recidivism. **Third, change HUD's definition of "homelessness" to include people living in correctional institutions for a period greater than 90 days.** People leaving prison are required to list a housing address for post-release to avoid placement in correctional transitional housing. Oftentimes, these addresses are temporary, leaving individuals leaving prison vulnerable for being unhoused. Changing HUD's definition will allow people in transition access to services provided through HUD funding. **Finally, increase funding for reentry programs, like the Center for Women in Transition.** Additional funding could help provide more holistic support for justice-involved people during the reentry process. Greater financial resources also allow for expansion of existing services to reach a greater number of people reentering communities.