

# MH/CJ FACT SHEET

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## *FOCUS: HOMELESS OFFENDERS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS*

*“The single most significant common denominator shared among communities that have successfully improved the criminal justice and mental health systems’ response to people with mental illness is that each started with some degree of cooperation between at least two stakeholders—one from the criminal justice system and the other from the mental health system.”*

—Criminal Justice/Mental Health Consensus Project  
Council of State Governments

- ▶ Approximately 70% of the inmates in prison with mental illness were incarcerated for committing a non-violent offense.
- ▶ Approximately 150,000 former patients of TDMHMR now are caught up in the criminal justice system.
- ▶ Calls for police involving a person with mental illness make up between 7 and 10% of police contacts.
- ▶ Each arrest episode cost an estimated \$2,295 with systemic costs associated with maintaining this population in jail is \$200 to \$350 per day
- ▶ In urban areas, the percentage of parolees who are homeless is 30 to 50%
- ▶ Persons with mental illness in jail or prisons are over 20% more likely to be homeless.
- ▶ Research has shown that people who do not find stable housing in the community are more likely to recidivate than those who do. With each move after release from prison, a person’s likelihood of rearrest increases by 25 percent.
- ▶ Supportive housing has been documented to drastically reduce criminal justice involvement, reducing jail incarceration rates up to 30 percent and prison incarceration rates up to 57 percent.
- ▶ According to a cost analysis by the Corporation for Supportive Housing, a single re-entry housing unit in New York used by two people over one year can save \$20,000 to \$24,000 relative to the cost of release to shelter and re-incarceration.
- ▶ Second Chance Act of 2007, H.R. 1593—a bill that will increase the likelihood that people’s transition from prisons and jails to the community is safe and successful. The House bill authorizes up to \$55 million dollars in grants to state and local governments to develop reentry initiatives to help keep people released from prisons and jails from re-offending and a \$15 million reentry program for community and faith-based organizations to deliver mentoring and transitional services.