

# IMPACTS OF MENTAL HEALTH



Homeless people are often struggling to survive with very little income, and trying to build skills or find work while also seeking housing. Stress and depression may lead them to withdraw from friends, family and other people. This loss of support leaves them fewer coping resources in times of trouble. Mental illness can also impair a person's ability to be resilient and resourceful; it can cloud thinking and impair judgment. For all these reasons, people with mental illness are at greater risk of experiencing homelessness.

## HOMELESSNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH

People with poor mental health are more susceptible to the three main factors that can lead to homelessness: poverty, disaffiliation, and personal vulnerability.



## IMPACTS OF MENTAL HEALTH



**The environment in a jail or prison is overcrowded, with some prisoners subjected to solitary confinement. Prisoners experience routine exposure to violence, which can be inherently damaging to mental health.**

**Researchers have even theorized that incarceration can lead to “Post-Incarceration Syndrome,” a syndrome similar to PTSD, meaning that even after serving their official sentences, many people continue to suffer the mental effects.**

### MASS INCARCERATION ON MENTAL HEALTH

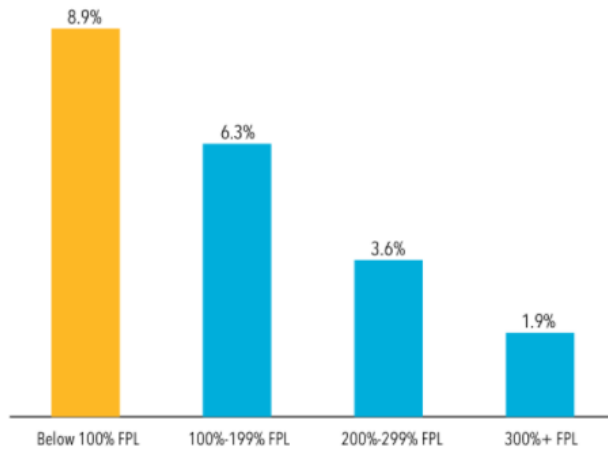
**According to NIH, incarceration is linked to major depressive disorder and bipolar disorder.**

**Prisoners are isolated from society, and isolated from their family and friends. Isolation and uncertainty impairs their sense of purpose and self-respect.**



## Serious Mental Illness Is More Common Among Adults Living in Poverty

Serious Mental Illness Among Californians Age 18 and Older by Income, 2015



FPL = Federal Poverty Line  
Source: Data provided by Charles Holzer and Hoang Nguyen

California Budget & Policy Center  
Independent Analysis. Shared Prosperity.

## POVERTY ON MENTAL HEALTH

**In California, nearly 1 in 6 adults experience mental illness and 1 in 25 experience a serious mental illness.**

**In 2015, about 1 in 11 adults with incomes below the federal poverty line (FPL) had a serious mental illness. The 2015 FPL was \$12,331 for a single person and \$24,036 for a family of four.**

**Low levels of household income are linked to mental health conditions.**

**In addition to socioeconomic factors, experience of racism and discrimination negatively impacts mental health for multiple racial and ethnic groups.**

