

Differences in Incarceration Rates for Supportive Housing Residents and Individuals Experiencing Homelessness (2019 – 2022)

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Summary

- From 2019 to 2022, individuals living in supportive housing consistently had lower incarceration rates than individuals identified as experiencing homelessness.
 - In 2022, individuals living in supportive housing were incarcerated in provincial correction centres 83.7% less than individuals who were identified as experiencing homelessness (83.9% less in 2021, 85.1% less in 2020, and 81.6% less in 2019).

Background

- Supportive housing is subsidized housing with on-site supports for people who are experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.
- The [Preventing and Reducing Homelessness](#) research project (a [Data Innovation Program](#) project) is a cross-government research collaboration using linked administrative data to better understand homelessness in BC.
- This research involves the [Homelessness Cohort](#), which is made up of individuals on social assistance (the BC Employment and Assistance program) flagged as having No Fixed Address for 3+ months and/or people who accessed a BC Housing-funded Emergency Shelter.
- Recent analyses have explored the usage rates of crisis intervention services in BC, including the rates of incarceration in provincial correctional centres, by people who are residents of BC Housing-funded [Supportive Housing](#) facilities compared to individuals experiencing homelessness.
- BC Corrections provides secure custody for individuals awaiting trial as well as for individuals serving sentences of less than two years.

Key Findings

- In 2022, individuals living in supportive housing had an incarceration rate that was over six times less than that of individuals identified as experiencing homelessness, based on the weighted average of monthly incarcerations per 1,000 people. Similar results were observed in 2019, 2020, and 2021.

- Incarceration rates dropped province-wide between 2019 and 2022 for all populations; the decline began with policies put into place to address the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which were then continued across the study period.

Monthly incarcerations per 1,000 people				
Population Group	2019	2020	2021	2022
Homeless Cohort	30.0	17.8	17.4	16.2
Supportive Housing	5.53	2.65	2.80	2.64
Supportive Housing vs Homeless Cohort	81.6% less	85.1% less	83.9% less	83.7% less

Methods

- Incarceration admissions were identified from [custody movement data](#) provided by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG). This data excludes anyone sentenced to time served in the community as well as those serving intermittent sentences. All analyses are restricted to British Columbia residents aged 19-65.
- The figures reflect a weighted monthly average of visits, standardized per 1,000 service users.
- Further information on the Methods for these analyses is described in the separate [Crisis Intervention Services Methods document](#).

Limitations

These results reflect comparisons between different populations use of specific crisis intervention services captured in administrative data. They do not reflect evidence of a causal relationship between variables, as that would require a different methodology. The results may be impacted by a range of external variables and circumstances. These documents will be updated following any future analyses.