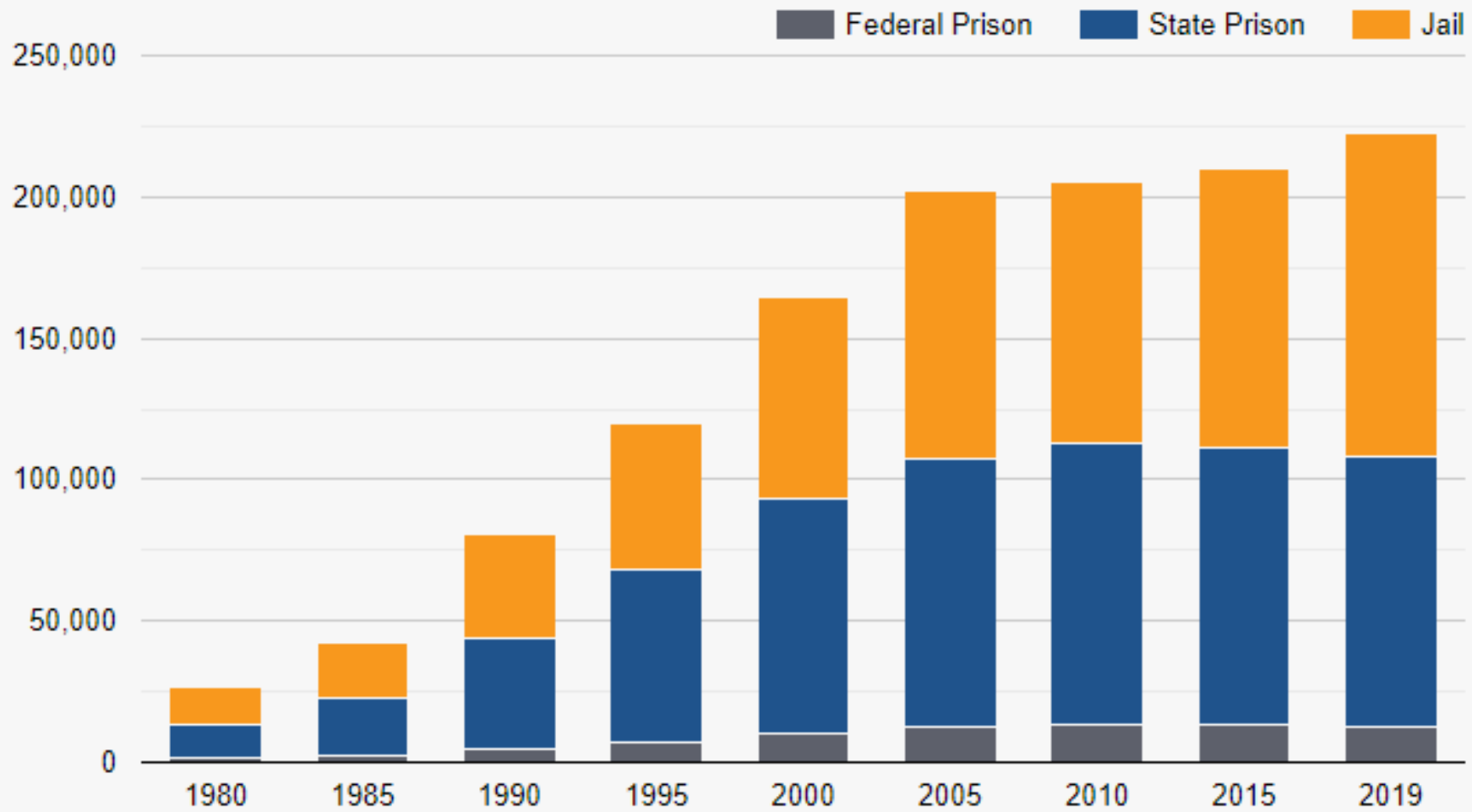


*Perspectives on
Incarceration &
Barriers to Reentry*

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**Prison figures are from year-end 2019 while jail figure is from year-end 2018, the latest available data from the sources used.
Sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics: Historical Corrections Statistics in the United States 1850-1984 (1986); Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear Series (1997-2018), Prisoners Series (1986-2019). Washington, DC.*

Racial Disparity Among Female Offenders

Women of color are **significantly overrepresented** in the criminal justice system.

Racial profiling of women of color is **especially prevalent in cases** involving:



Prostitution



The War on Drugs

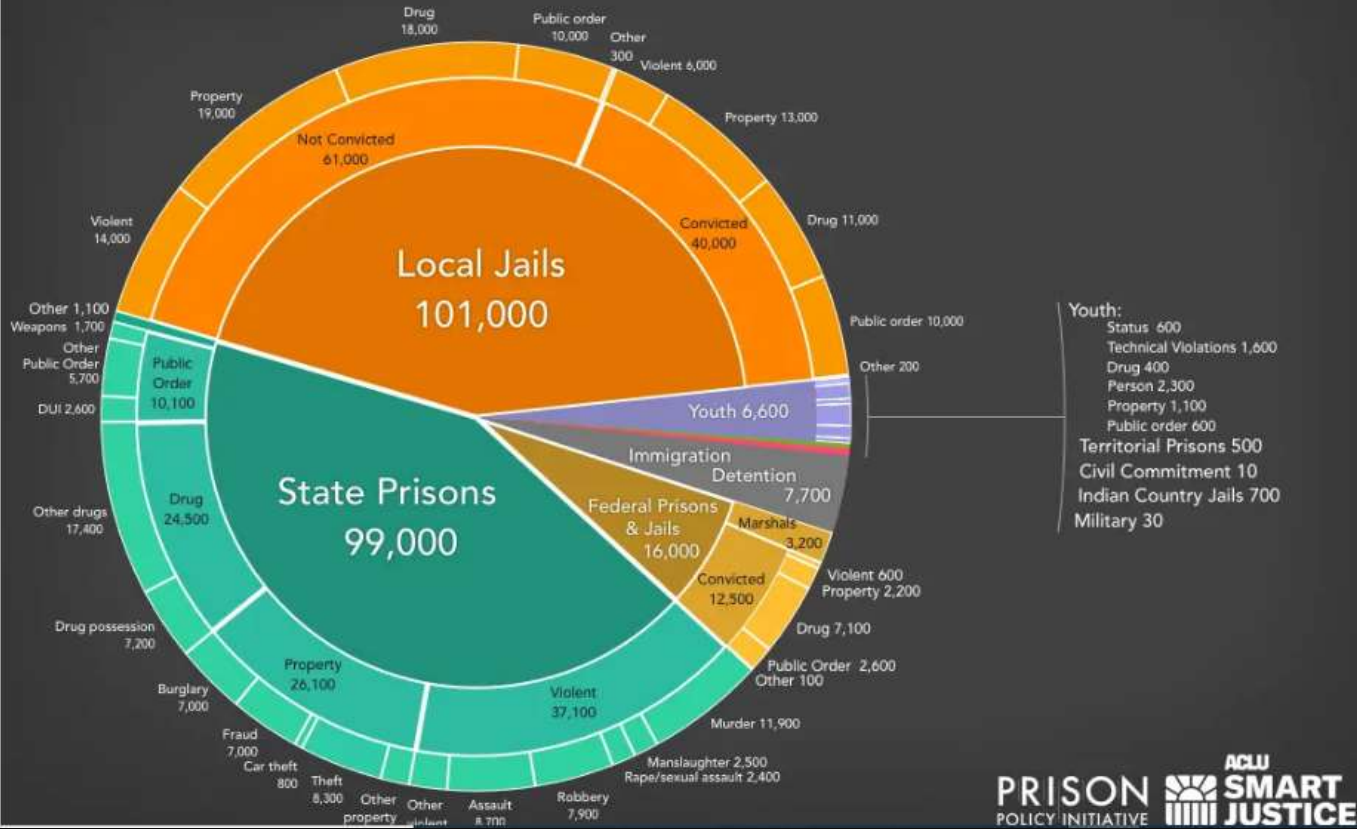


2/3 of incarcerated women are women of color



How many women are locked up in the United States?

The United States is one of the top incarcerators of women in the world. Changing that will require knowing where 231,000 incarcerated women fall within our decentralized and overlapping systems of mass incarceration.



- There are 231,000 incarcerated women in the US
- More women are in jail than prison
- The Federal system houses the least number of women, even when factoring in immigration detention.

JAIL vs PRISON

- Jail is a **confinement facility** where **people stay while they are awaiting trial or sentencing.**
- Jails also confine *less serious offenders* who have been sentenced to less than 1 year (each charge)
- A Jail is run by local law enforcement and may be called a detention facility

- Prison is a **facility** for those **who have already received a sentence and the court has proven them guilty of the crime(s).**
- Prisons are run by state and federal government
- Some private companies operate prisons through agreements to house certain offenders

Three prevalent categories of female offenses in jails

<p><u>Drug Crime:</u></p> <p>Possession Trafficking</p>	<p><u>Public Order Crime:</u></p> <p>Obstruction of Justice Drunkenness/Morals DWI Other Traffic Parole/Probation Violation</p>	<p><u>Property Crime:</u></p> <p>Financial Fraud Larceny/Theft</p>
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Most women are arrested, charged and convicted of nonviolent crimes, usually drug related or property related.

Most women in local jails (~60%) have not been convicted and are being held while they await trial, often because they cannot afford bail



Bail, Contact, and other challenges



Bail is a monetary guarantee that defendants (not yet convicted) must pay to be released from jail until their trial.

Many women in jail have trouble affording bail (often a year's salary)

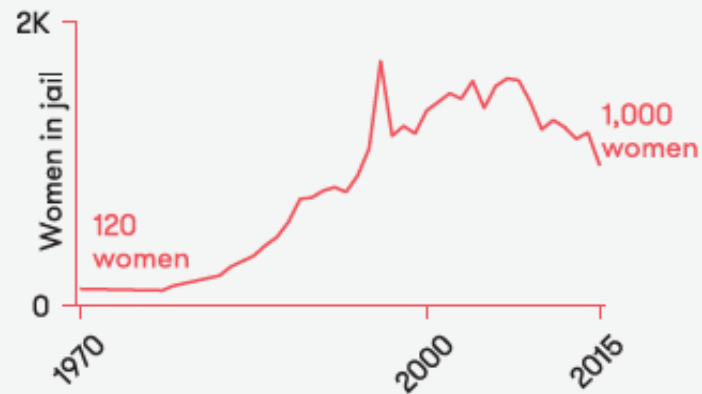
- 60% of women in jails have NOT been convicted of a crime and are awaiting trial

The average in-state phone call in jail costs \$1.50/minute



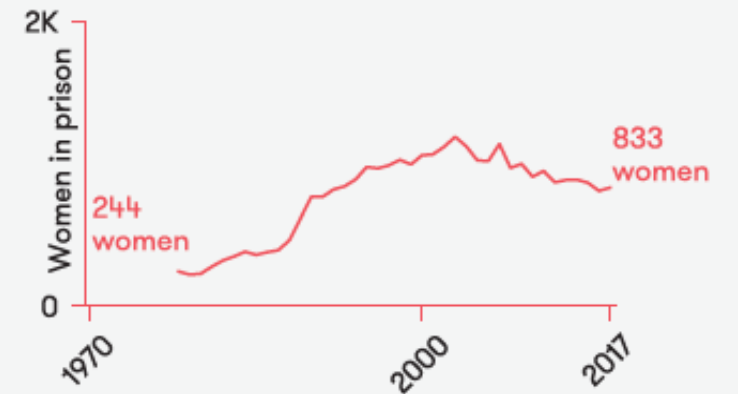
Maryland Trends

JAILS



The number of women in Maryland's jails has increased more than eightfold, from 120 in 1970 to 1,000 in 2015.

PRISONS



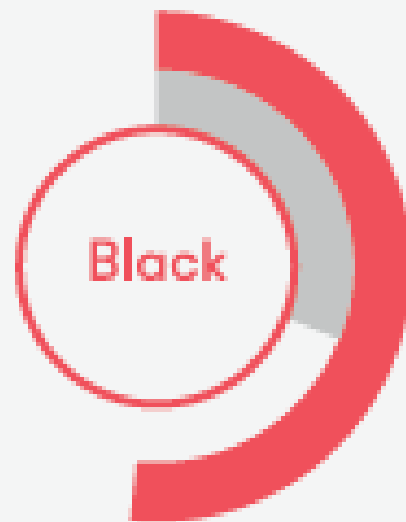
The number of women in Maryland's prisons has increased more than threefold, from 244 in 1978 to 833 in 2017.

Women now makeup almost 1 in 4 jail admissions up from fewer than 1 in 10 in 1983

Incarceration and Race in Maryland

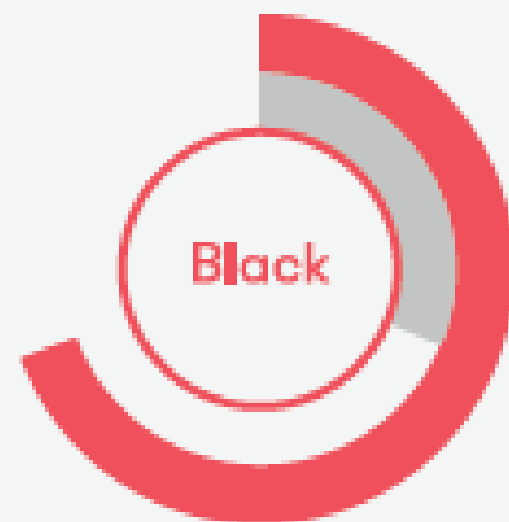
JAILS

31%
of state
pop. | 52%
of jail
pop.



PRISONS

31%
of state
pop. | 69%
of prison
pop.




In Maryland, Black people constituted 31% of state residents, but 52% of people in jail and 69% of people in prison.

How women became the fastest growing incarcerated population?

- **The Chivalry Hypothesis** -female offenders should receive more lenient treatment throughout the criminal justice system.
- **The Typicality Hypothesis**- women are only treated with chivalry when the crime and charges are consistent with female stereotypes.
- The **“war on drugs”** and **“get-tough laws”** focusing on more expansive law enforcement





A Woman's engagement in criminal behavior

- Often related to their connections, relationships and disconnections
- Victimization, trauma and abuse
- Poverty and Low Socioeconomic Status
- Mental illness
- Substance abuse

Intimate Partner Violence Victimization and Abuse

- Nationally, more than 37% of women (who reported) in state prisons have been raped before incarceration
- Women in prison are 3x as likely as women in the general public to report childhood histories of physical or sexual abuse.
- Childhood abuse is reported by 25% to 50% of incarcerated women

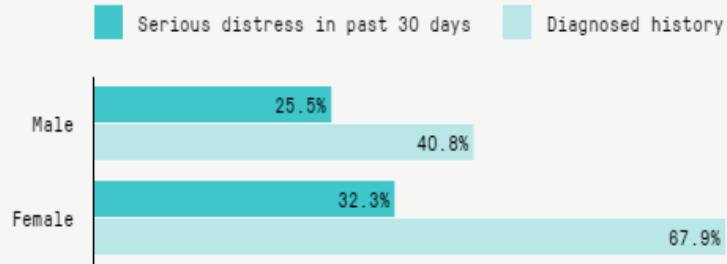
Poverty and Low Socioeconomic Status

Incarcerated people had a median annual income of \$19,185 prior to their incarceration, which is **41% less than non-incarcerated people of similar ages**

	Incarcerated people (prior to incarceration)		Non-incarcerated people	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
All	\$19,650	\$13,890	\$41,250	\$23,745
Black	\$17,625	\$12,735	\$31,245	\$24,255
Hispanic	\$19,740	\$11,820	\$30,000	\$15,000
White	\$21,875	\$15,188	\$47,585	\$26,188

Prior to incarceration, the average woman made less than \$15,000/year

Percent of people in jail who reported mental health problems



Percent of people in prison who reported mental health problems



Mental Illness

- 68% percent of women in jail reported having been diagnosed with a mental health condition
- Although women make up only 7% of the prison population,
 - 66 % of women in prison reported having a history of a mental disorder
- 1 in 5 women in prison had recently experienced serious psychological distress

Substance Use Prior to Incarceration

- 71% of the women's prison population has an active substance use disorder (SUD)
- Another 20% did not meet the official criteria for an SUD, but were under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of their crime



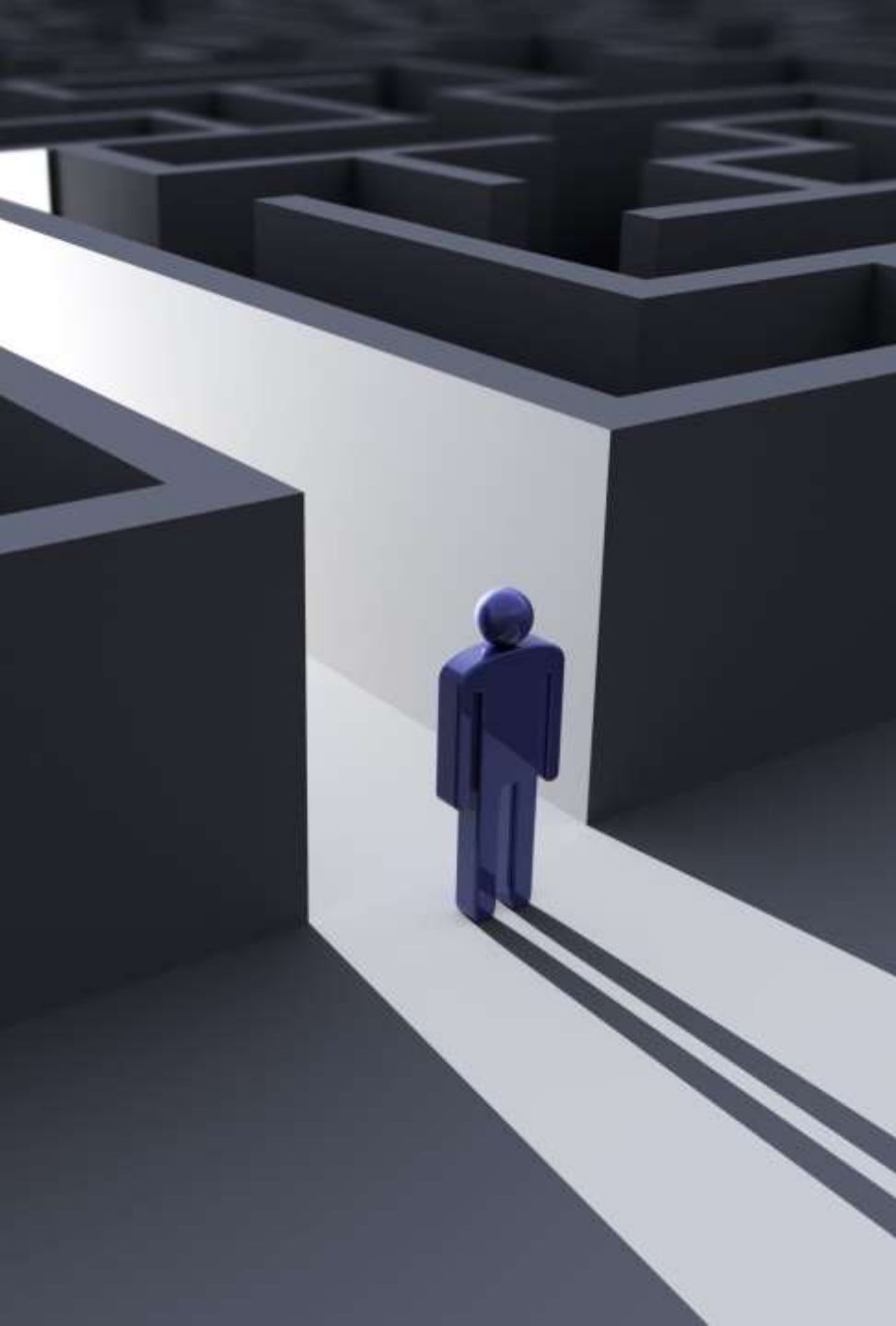
Fewer than 30 jails and prisons

in the United States have treatment programs that offer methadone or buprenorphine, two medications that effectively treat opioid addiction.

Treatment Inside Prison and Jail

“We incarcerate people for their addictions but don’t give them adequate treatment”

- In state prisons and local jails 15-25% of inmates are there for drug offenses
- In federal prison, More than 45% of inmates are there on drug-related charges.



Barriers to Reentry

- A successful reentry back into the community relies on:
 - Addressing mental and physical health challenges including substance use
 - Helping the formerly justice involved find job training, education, and mentoring
 - Opportunities to find and keep affordable housing
 - Family reunification

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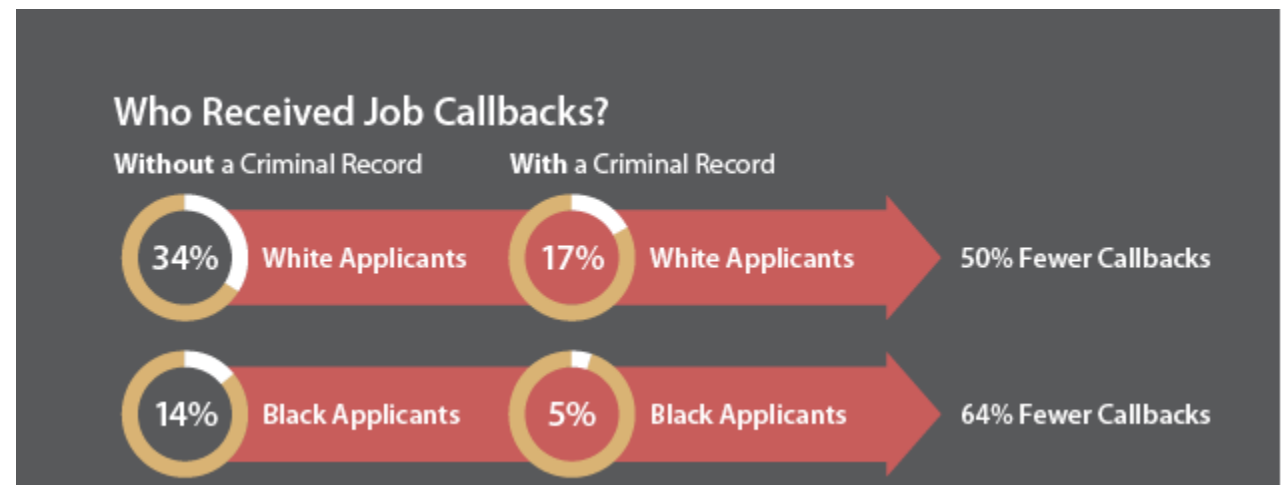
Women's Health and Reentry

- **Formerly incarcerated women do not seek healthcare at a level commensurate with their needs, due primarily to financial barriers and a lack of health insurance**
- ¼ of prisons are unable to hire enough mental health and social work practitioners
- ¼ of prisons have essential services offsite: these include routine Gynecological and Mammography
- Lasting effects of inadequate feminine hygiene can manifest as severe medical conditions
- More than 33% of formerly incarcerated women report a diagnosis of depression and other mental illness



Job training, employment and financial literacy

- Only 33 percent of all formerly incarcerated people find employment within the first year after being released
- Women that obtain employment within the first year are at least 30% less likely to return to offending (recidivate)



Family Reunification

Prior to their arrest and incarceration, most women are sole caregivers of their children

Over 70% of imprisoned women are mothers of children under age 18

Children of incarcerated women are 7x more likely to become justice involved or commit crime themselves

The likelihood of reunification is enhanced when mothers receive a broad range of employment, educational, and family and children's services in addition to substance abuse treatment

Suggested Policy Shifts

- All offenders are human beings
- Develop and implement community-based sentencing schemes
- Help to override Governor Hogan's veto of the Gender Responsive Prelease Act
- Continue to advocate for Maryland to keep its "Ban the Box" /fair chance hiring practices
- Help advocate for funding and bed space for community drug and mental health treatment



Thank you

Laura Hahn

Sources

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- [Women, Crime, and Criminology Jocelyn M. Pollock](#)