

# Landscape Analysis of Baltimore City

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HOUSING AS A PATHWAY TO JUSTICE

### **About Enterprise Community Partners**

Enterprise is a national nonprofit that exists to make a good home possible for the millions of families without one. We support community development organizations on the ground, aggregate and invest capital for impact, advance housing policy at every level of government, and build and manage communities ourselves. Since 1982, we have invested \$64 billion and created 951,000 homes across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands – all to make home and community places of pride, power, and belonging. Join us at [enterprisecommunity.org](http://enterprisecommunity.org).

### **About Arcstratta**

Arcstratta is a woman of color-owned professional services firm that provides research, evaluation, and management consulting services to local, national, and international public and private entities through an equity, cross-cultural, and multidisciplinary lens. We partner with clients in developing and advancing social, health, and economic interventions focused on underserved and vulnerable populations. Our services deepen clients' understanding of the communities they support, enhance their strategies, and sharpen operational and programmatic frameworks to strengthen their impact.

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## Executive Summary

One hundred (100) million people in the United States have criminal records and a compromised ability to secure housing. Enterprise Community Partners engaged in a landscape assessment of the intersection of the housing and criminal legal system in Baltimore City to address this need for individuals with legal system involvement. The assessment of this important market in Enterprise's Mid-Atlantic portfolio included a literature review, key informant interviews, and case studies that provided an overview of the market's context, needs, resources, and barriers; a map of the carceral and provider systems; and profiles of housing service delivery models.

Baltimore City is Maryland's largest city, and nearly two-thirds of the population identify as Black/African American. The City does not have control over its jails, which shifted to state oversight in 1991. Division of Pretrial Detention & Services facilities are in Baltimore City, which includes the Baltimore Pre-Release Unit tasked with preparing incarcerated individuals for reentry. Although the city accounts for 9% of Maryland's population, Baltimore City residents account for 40% of incarcerated individuals—the highest incarceration rate in the state. More than three-fourths (79%) of individuals experiencing homelessness in the City are Black/African American, and 82% have criminal records. Thirteen percent of people experiencing homelessness in the City are employed.<sup>1,2</sup>

Furthermore, a recent study found housing instability and serious mental illness as the strongest predictors of recidivism 3, 6, and 12 months from release. The combination of mental health and substance use challenges, housing instability, and prior violent crime charges significantly increased the likelihood of rebooking.<sup>3</sup>

### **The Baltimore City Housing and Reentry Landscape**

Baltimore City is majority-minority city perceived as having significant potential for growth. The median rent has been increasing and has reached more than \$1,500 in various parts of the City.<sup>4</sup> Less diverse neighborhoods in the City have seen home values and investments increase. The City is working to resolve vacancy, foreclosure, eviction, homelessness, and affordable housing development and preservation issues stemming from post-civil war segregation and wealth suppression efforts targeting Black residents. Studies have found that 50% of Baltimore residents spend more than 50% of their income on housing, well above the recommended amount (e.g., 30%).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Journey Home (2022). *Baltimore City Point-In-Time Count Report*. [Baltimore City 2022 PIT Count Report.pdf](#)

<sup>2</sup> The Journey Home (2018). *Journey to Jobs: Understanding and Eliminating Barriers Imposed on Homeless Jobseekers*. <https://journeyhome.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/J2J-FINAL-REPORT.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Sill, K., & Diaz, L. (2020). *Analysis of the effect of housing instability on rebooking at DOC*. Washington, DC: Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. Available at [DOC Housing Instability Rebooking Analysis Report.pdf \(dc.gov\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.zillow.com/rental-manager/market-trends/baltimore-md/>

<sup>5</sup> Roper, M. (November 15, 2022). *Baltimore City Council to hold hearing on expiring Inclusionary Housing Program*. [Baltimore City Council to hold hearing on affordable housing \(wmar2news.com\)](#).

Baltimore City providers, advocates, and legislators have worked to address its affordable housing development and preservation issues through legislative efforts, and greater attention, investment, and strategies are needed. Interviewees cautioned that there is severely limited fair housing infrastructure in the city, which could be categorized as ineffective. The City has committed investments in vacancy, homelessness, and violence prevention interventions. Housing advocates have focused on the City's expired inclusionary housing law and hope for an improved iteration. The previous iteration resulted in 37 affordable units over a 15-year period. Other proposed housing legislation addresses rental assistance/eviction, foreclosure, and vacancy issues. Criminal legal reform was presented as a state-level matter. Current community-based collaborative efforts on affordable housing do not include a particular focus on housing returning citizens.

Providers interviewed described returning citizens' needs as numerous, intersecting, simultaneous, and urgent. These needs included re-acclimating to the community, obtaining government identification and documentation, employment, education and training, mental and physical healthcare, substance use disorder treatment, and legal and financial support. Housing-related challenges include inaccessible public housing; insufficient and inefficient voucher programs; housing provider discrimination; insufficient transitional and permanent housing; and residents' and landlords' understanding of housing laws, rights, and protections.

Interviewees described a general lack of funding specifically to serve returning citizens. Existing funding is not designed to meet the population's service or housing needs. The only dedicated funding is workforce related. Interviewees expressed the need for comprehensive housing development funding for returning citizens that includes capital, operations, and program/service funds.

Cross-case study analysis of four Mid-Atlantic (District of Columbia and Baltimore City) reentry providers revealed that resource and fundraising capacity, social capital, limited resources, government agency inefficiencies, and beliefs about effective client programming shaped their models. Most were engaged in transitional housing, often using a scattered site model. Providers deeply appreciate the need for permanent housing for returning citizens. Many, however, do not have the capacity or incentive to offer it. Providers face barriers in securing housing for their clients due to public opinion that characterizes individuals as safety risks rather than fellow community members who share a fundamental need for shelter, security, and safety.

### **Strategies to Increase Housing Access and Support for Returning Citizens**

Housing justice and post-release success lies beyond recidivism. Key considerations for Enterprise as convenor and advocate include:

- Encourage funders to design grant applications and management processes that are responsive to provider capacity.
- Advocate for comprehensive returning citizen-specific housing programming and funding resource opportunities (e.g., Affordable Resident Services Act).

- Encourage funding for permanent housing and comprehensive supportive services for returning citizens that includes capital, operational, and program service funding, and/or encourages developers/housing providers to collaborate with existing community-based reentry providers.
- Assist with know-your-rights initiatives/campaigns specifically designed for returning citizens.
- Support and encourage efforts to examine and effectively respond to local Public Housing Authority practices pertaining to individuals with justice system contact.
- Encourage the allocation of financial assistance (e.g., guaranteed basic income) and benefits for returning citizens at impactful levels, including single/unmarried individuals.
- Encourage research that produces knowledge on the spectrum of service and housing needs of returning citizens, assesses real versus perceived risks pertaining to housing justice-involved individuals/returning citizens, and identifies promising and best practices in the field.
- Continue to transform existing deficit-based narratives grounded in stigma, discrimination, and exclusion to strengths-based and trauma-informed narratives.

Key considerations as provider and program collaborator:

- Encourage investment and participation in scattered site housing models. Leverage existing reentry provider databases to identify providers that can refer tenants with justice system contact.
- Consider increasing trauma-informed engagement, research, and data opportunities to inform Enterprise's advocacy, programmatic, and convening efforts.
- Examine how to integrate a trauma-informed perspective into housing design and resident services.
- Continue to examine the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2016 Guidance on Application of Fair Housing Act Standards to the Use of Criminal Records by Providers of Housing and Real Estate-Related Transactions, and local legislation, which may have implications on housing application processes.

## Section I: Landscape Analysis of Baltimore City Overview

### 1. Introduction

As the country's most comprehensive national affordable housing provider, Enterprise Community Partners (Enterprise) recognizes the pronounced inequities at the intersection of the United States legal system and access to economic, health, and social resources. This literature review and Enterprise's mission demonstrate that stable housing is critical to ensuring that individuals -- especially those with legal system involvement -- and their children and families can meet their basic needs, contribute to, and build thriving communities and just societies.

The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world, with more than two million people in prisons, jails, detention centers, and other involuntary confinement.<sup>i,ii</sup> Approximately four million people are under community supervision (i.e., probation, parole, pre-trial supervision), and 600,000 individuals are released from prisons annually.<sup>iii,iv,v,vi</sup> The broad reach and impact of the criminal legal system on communities is evidenced by the fact that nearly one-half of adults have an immediate family member who has been incarcerated, and one in four (100 million) adults in the U.S. has a criminal record.<sup>vii,viii</sup> Due to persistent racism and marginalization, Black and Brown men and women are three times more likely to be incarcerated than all adults and six times more likely than White adults.<sup>ix</sup>

Systemic racism and discriminatory policies are structural and intersecting barriers that adversely impact people with criminal legal system involvement, particularly Black and Brown communities. Furthermore, communities with high poverty rates, underemployment and unemployment, unstable housing, and that are systematically deprived of resources are more likely to have higher arrest rates, conviction rates, and more severe sentences than other communities.<sup>x,xi,xii</sup> Research suggests that up to 15% of incarcerated people experienced homelessness in the year prior to incarceration.<sup>xiii</sup> Formerly incarcerated individuals are approximately ten times more likely to experience homelessness than the general population, and people of color, women, and those who have been incarcerated more than once are at even higher risk of homelessness. These racial, ethnic, gender, economic, social, and health disparities have significant effects before, during, and after incarceration and are critical to reduce to improve individuals' well-being and sustained return to their communities.

Incarceration not only has lasting impacts on the individuals who are imprisoned but also has multigenerational implications for their children, families, and communities. Unique opportunities exist to address these realities and challenges in the Mid-Atlantic region, including Baltimore City. Baltimore City is central to some of the country's larger and wealthier metropolitan areas and yet has some of the greatest economic inequities in the country. The City is Black led with a majority person of color population,<sup>xiv</sup> and high incarceration rates, with an overrepresentation of Black individuals in jails and prisons.<sup>xv</sup> In Maryland, 36,000 residents are incarcerated (0.5% rate), disproportionately from Baltimore City. Approximately 7,400 individuals are released annually.<sup>xvi</sup>

Baltimore City has a small legislature with a democratically leaning voting bloc.<sup>xvii</sup> The City continues to contend with the long-standing, multigenerational impacts of post-civil war segregation and economic destabilization. Baltimore City faces changing economic, social, and housing trends that can significantly displace Black residents and affect their ability to leverage the city's economic gains.

The current landscape analysis builds upon Enterprise's Housing as a Pathway to Justice (H2J) initial guiding research and national scan by exploring the housing-related needs and lived experiences of individuals with justice involvement and their children, families, and communities in Baltimore City. Understanding the current system landscape of this city in Enterprise Community Development's (ECD) portfolio will expand knowledge to improve policies, practices, programs, services, partnerships, and funding at the intersection of housing and criminal legal reform. Appreciation of the unique Baltimore City context will inform how Enterprise, other housing providers, and partners can address housing needs and increase resources to contribute to successful reentry, recidivism reduction, and the health and stability of families and communities.

## 2. Methods and Approach

An examination of the literature around the criminal legal system, housing system, and realities of individuals with legal system involvement is a core element of the landscape analysis. The literature review aimed to:

- Outline the context of the jail and prison system in Baltimore City as well as the reentry process and related housing needs and resources;
- Define the needs at the intersection of housing and the justice system that housing providers can address, including conditions that increase and decrease the likelihood of involvement with the criminal legal system; and
- Increase shared knowledge within Enterprise and the H2J initiative of how the criminal legal and housing systems in Baltimore City overlap and the implications for Enterprise's work.

The scan of the literature focused on peer-reviewed literature; grey literature including white papers, government documents, and technical reports; and databases accessed via websites and search tools (e.g., Google Scholar). Identified sources were published within the last ten years unless literature was considered seminal. Topics of interest regarding the intersection of the criminal legal system and housing and keywords related to the population involved in the justice system, the criminal legal system and reentry processes, housing outcomes and options, and areas and policies that intersect with these systems guided the literature search (see Exhibit 1). Sources also were identified through the reference sections of reviewed articles and reports.



The scan included literature specific to Baltimore City and regional, national, and system-level literature. Approximately 135 sources were reviewed and entered a database organized by research prompt, topic and theme, and locality.

**Exhibit 1. Sample Literature Search Keywords**

- Affordable housing
- Bail
- Community supervision
- Criminal justice, criminal legal system, reform
- Disability rights
- Disparities, overrepresentation
- Education
- Employment
- Families, Black families
- Health, mental health, substance use
- Homelessness
- Housing support, programs, requirements, policies
- Jail and prison systems and populations
- Justice involved
- Law enforcement
- Neighborhood characteristics, contexts
- Parole
- Pre-release, release, post-release
- Probation
- Recidivism
- Reentry, reentry services
- Returning citizens
- Social services, benefits eligibility
- Subsidized housing
- Transitional housing
- Trauma, trauma informed

### 3. The Landscape – Findings

#### Systems Overview

##### Context of the Jail and Prison Systems

Baltimore City does not oversee the operations of its jail, which was placed under the state’s Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services’ control in 1991. Maryland is the only state to have control over what is considered a “large” local detention center. The Maryland carceral system consists of Maryland Correctional Enterprises; Maryland Reception, Diagnostic, and Classification Center; the Maryland Correctional Pre-Release system; and ten state prisons. All Division of Pretrial Detention & Services facilities are in Baltimore City, which includes the Baltimore Pre-Release Unit tasked with preparing incarcerated individuals for release with job readiness programming.<sup>xviii</sup>

Approximately 15,000 Marylanders are in state prisons, 4,000 in federal prisons, and 12,000 in local jails.<sup>xix</sup> The average length of incarceration is 65 months (about 5 and a half years). Approximately 40% of individuals sentenced are serving at least 15 years. Baltimore City has the highest incarceration rate in Maryland. Forty percent of persons incarcerated in Maryland prisons are from Baltimore City, although the city represents only 9% of the State’s residents.<sup>xx</sup> Incarcerated individuals can access the following resources (Exhibit 2):

**Exhibit 2. Reentry Resources Facilitated by the Maryland Carceral System**

Provider	Program/Service
<b>Baltimore County Office of Adult Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for GED completion</li> </ul>
<b>Department of Corrections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work release program funded by local businesses</li> </ul>
<b>Home Detention Unit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home Detention Program as an alternative to incarceration</li> </ul>
<b>Department of Recreation and Parks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work Details workforce program, in community facilities such as Maryland Environmental Services recycle facility</li> </ul>
<b>Alternative Sentencing Office</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime Program - substance use treatment and intensive case management</li> </ul>
<b>Department of Corrections’ Detention Center and the Baltimore County Library</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library services for education and recreation</li> </ul>
<b>Public Safety Works</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment skills, community service</li> </ul>
<b>Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services in conjunction with the Baltimore City Police Department and Community Development Corporations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships for Re-Entry Programming (PREP) rehabilitation program</li> </ul>

Baltimore City had a three-year recidivism rate of 33% between 2016 and 2019, and the highest recidivism rates happened within the first year following release.<sup>xxi</sup> Recidivism, however, tends to be due to technical violations of post-release supervision (probation or parole), typically within the first six months of release. Nationally, 45% of prison admissions are for supervision violations, costly admissions, increased imprisonment, and do not necessarily improve community safety.<sup>xxii,xxiii</sup> Maryland defines a supervision violation as one that does not involve an arrest or summons on a statement of filed charges, a violation other than a minor traffic offense, a violation of a protective order, or absconding.<sup>6</sup> Maryland limits incarceration for a first violation to 15 days, a second violation to 30 days, and subsequent violations to 45 days. Incarcerated individuals with shorter sentences had higher recidivism rates than those with longer, more severe sentences.<sup>xxiv</sup>

Baltimore City residents experience income, poverty, unemployment, racial and ethnic, and incarceration disparities when analyzed across socioeconomic status indicators. The worst impacts of mass incarceration are concentrated in neighborhoods that are systematically under-resourced. The mass incarceration of Black males contributes to an increase in female-headed households (72% of persons incarcerated in Maryland identify as Black and 97% as men).<sup>xxv</sup> More than one-third of Baltimore City residents in state prison come from 10 of the city’s 55 neighborhoods, and the areas with the most individuals incarcerated are in zip codes 21213 and 21217.<sup>xxvi</sup> Specific factors affected in neighborhoods highly disrupted by incarceration include life expectancy, community health, mental health, exposure to environmental dangers, education, and community resources and engagement.<sup>xxvii</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Maryland Code, Correctional Services § 6-101

## The Reentry Process

Baltimore City has the most densely concentrated geographic distribution of returning citizens in Maryland. The highest concentrations of returning citizens have been in the Clifton-Berea, Greater Rosemont, Sandtown-Winchester/Harlem Park, Southern Park Heights, and Southwest Baltimore areas.<sup>xxviii</sup> Strategies to support individuals in their return to the community are based in part on the level of risk and length of stay, and the Baltimore City Jail Reentry Strategies Project<sup>2</sup> identified key components of reentry efforts:

- Classification, screening, and assessment to determine an individual's risk for recidivism and needs and identify supports to reduce risks;
- Reentry plans to determine the most effective interventions;
- Jail-based intervention and community in-reach that offer pre-release activity, including access to community-based providers, treatment, volunteers, and social support; and
- Continuity of care consisting of pre-release, release (recognizing that the initial days of return are critical), and ongoing engagement in the community post-release.<sup>xxix</sup>

Existing pre-release programs through the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Division of Corrections include (see also Exhibit 2):

- Active work release for individuals within 18 months of release; unsupervised community employment in private businesses with a standard work schedule and wage;
- Community-based outside detail on civil improvement projects (supervised or unsupervised);
- Local re-entry programs that transfer individuals within 12 months of release to serve their remaining time in the county in which they intend to live upon release; and
- Home Detention.<sup>xxx</sup>

The Maryland Division of Corrections, in partnership with the Enterprise Foundation,<sup>3</sup> the Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice, the Division of Parole and Probation, the Baltimore City Police Department, and local Community Development Corporations, leads the Partnership for Re-Entry Programming transition program that is offered to 90% of individuals released from the Division's custody. The PREP program includes cognitive skills training, employment readiness and career development, community resource information, and victim/offender impact and awareness. The goals of PREP include securing returning citizens' government-issued identification, which is necessary to access services and resources; enhancing pre-release and transition services; and coordinating training opportunities.<sup>xxxi</sup> Community-based providers offer reentry housing programs, including shelters, transitional housing, and permanent housing, as well as recovery and employment services.

### **Baltimore City Reentry Housing Programs**

- Sarah’s Hope – Day and night shelter for women and children, including pregnant women
- My Sister’s Place Women’s Center – Day shelter
- Cottage Avenue – Transitional housing for returning citizens with children
- Frederick Ozanam House – Recovery-based transitional housing for men
- Marian House – Transitional and permanent housing for women
- Home Connections – Permanent housing for men and women
- Christopher Place Employment Academy – 18-month residential employment program for men

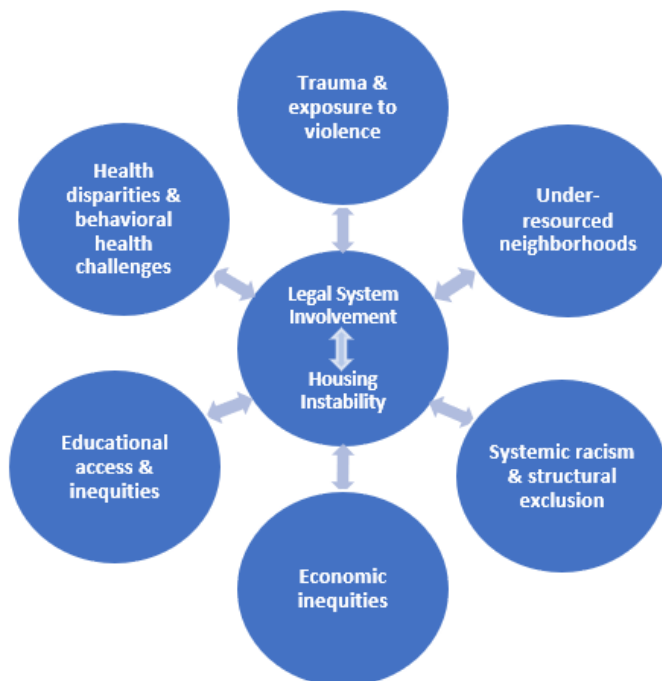
Access to housing is a significant barrier to successful reentry. Length of stay affects the reentry process, particularly individuals’ housing needs. Stability of housing can be a greater need and risk factor for women and sentenced (versus detained) men. Studies of reentry strategies and recidivism risk (as determined by service need assessment and arrest, charge, conviction, and incarceration history) found that individuals who are incarcerated for shorter periods (e.g., up to 30 days) receive resource information as pre-release reentry support. However, more interactive assistance with developing a reentry plan that addresses key needs, including housing, employment and finances, education, family relationships, social support, and substance use treatment, is more beneficial for individuals deemed at higher risk of recidivism. Recommendations for individuals with moderate or high recidivism risk who are incarcerated for longer than 30 days include giving them specific service provider information, helping them make appointments with providers pre-release and upon release, and following up with providers to ensure released individuals kept the appointments. These strategies are important considerations for available and needed reentry support and services in Baltimore City.<sup>xxxii</sup>

### **Needs, Resources, and Opportunities at the Intersection of Housing and the Criminal Legal System**

Structural barriers, racism, and exclusion; poverty; adverse childhood events; involvement in systems such as child welfare; experiences of trauma and exposure to violence; substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health challenges; lower educational attainment; disability (e.g., physical, cognitive, sensory); and household instability increase the likelihood of involvement with the criminal justice system.<sup>xxxiii,xxxiv,xxxv,xxxvi,xxxvii</sup> These complex, interactive risks disproportionately impact Black and Brown communities and can continue adversely affecting individuals during incarceration (e.g., re-traumatization, insufficient support services and treatment). They also have implications for stable, affordable, safe housing options and related needs around the social determinants of health after release (Exhibit 4).<sup>xxxviii,xxxix</sup> The impacts are compounded when considering the intersecting identities of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, and disability. The effects extend beyond individuals to their families and communities, including separation and disrupted relationships with children, partners, and other support systems; reunification challenges when returning home; and barriers to housing, employment, and education that affect economic mobility and wealth-building opportunities.

Furthermore, the bidirectional relationship between the criminal legal system and housing means that higher or reduced risks for involvement or instability in one system is related to higher or reduced risks in the other. The experiences and histories of individuals with criminal justice involvement must be considered to understand their housing needs and opportunities to reduce barriers to their permanent return to the community.

**Exhibit 3.** *The Dynamic Relationship between Housing and the Criminal Legal System*



### Impact of the Criminal Legal System on Housing Outcomes

Baltimore City spends far more on imprisonment than on long-term resources to help address the issues that lead to mass incarceration. For the amount spent on incarcerating one person for one year, Baltimore could pay for two-bedroom apartments for 30 families for one month.<sup>xi</sup> Additionally, the criminalization of homelessness, including arrests for loitering and sleeping outdoors, perpetuates the cycle of incarceration and homelessness.<sup>xii</sup> With respect to available housing, no law prevents landlords from discriminating against Baltimore renters with justice system involvement. Private landlords have access to criminal records, and people convicted of crimes, such as drug-related or violent crimes, may be denied public housing.<sup>xiii</sup> The criminal legal system has ripple effects across the housing bundle, which includes housing stability, housing affordability, housing quality, neighborhood context, and wealth-building assets.

*Housing instability.* According to the City’s Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandated Point-in-Time (PIT) Count of homelessness, Baltimore City has approximately 1,597 people experiencing homelessness, as measured by residents housed in shelters, transitional housing, and unsheltered persons

found on the streets or “other places not meant for human habitation.”<sup>xliii</sup> Although nearly two-thirds (64%) of Baltimore City’s population is Black/African American, 79% of individuals experiencing homelessness are Black/African American and 82% of these individuals have criminal records. Forty-three percent (43%) have at least one expungable record. Most expungable cases (81%) are misdemeanors and only 11% resulted in conviction.<sup>xliv</sup>

Nearly one-third of residents are unemployed. However, unemployment is as high as 50% in some neighborhoods. Additionally, whereas two-thirds of individuals experiencing street homelessness expressed an interest in securing employment, 13% of people experiencing homelessness were employed.<sup>xlv</sup> In fiscal year (FY) 2016, one-quarter of adults who participated in HUD-funded Continuum of Care programs saw an increase in their income. HUD’s Continuum of Care program is designed to promote community-wide commitment to end homelessness; and fund nonprofit provider and State and local government efforts to rehouse homeless individuals and families promptly while minimizing the trauma dislocation causes to homeless individuals, families, and communities.<sup>xlvi</sup>

Additional programming to address housing instability includes Recovery residences, an initiative of the National Alliance for Recovery Residences.<sup>xlvii</sup> Recovery residences (e.g., sober living houses, recovery homes, and Oxford Houses) are “sober, safe, and healthy living environments” that promote and sustain substance use disorder recovery and physical, mental, spiritual, and social well-being. The number of recovery residences in the U.S. has grown dramatically in the past 25 years, helping to strengthen community-based treatment and peer support. Some challenges recovery residences face include difficulty: 1) advancing the model due to variations in recovery housing definitions; 2) funding recovery supports and services; and 3) connecting and collaborating with established systems of care.<sup>xlviii</sup>

The Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services provides a city shelter hotline, a list of five shelter options, and 11 Coordinated Access Navigator sites in the City.<sup>xlix</sup> Return Home Baltimore provides an online database of resources for the City’s returning citizens, by gender, parole/probation status, veteran status, and housing that excludes people convicted of sex offenses.<sup>l</sup> Additional information about a person’s fit with the service focus is available by contacting the provider.

*Housing affordability and private market rental housing.* Studies demonstrate that 50% of Baltimore residents pay more than 50% of their income on housing, well above the recommended amount (e.g., 30%).<sup>li</sup> The median rent in Baltimore City is \$1,569, and the average size unit is 825 square feet.<sup>lii,liiii</sup> Recent legislation proposed by city councilmembers aim to address this issue, which particularly can impact justice-involved individuals, as incarceration contributes to an income loss of up to 30%.<sup>liv</sup> City Council member Odette Ramos introduced two bills with implications on affordable housing accessibility and stability in 2022.<sup>lv</sup>

The first bill proposes providing up to \$1,500 in monthly rent assistance for families in housing crises. The driving force behind the bill is the notion that housing is a cornerstone of “success.” The bill is

focused on supporting families at risk for homelessness, mortgage foreclosure, or tax sale foreclosure. Also noted was the concern of two organizations focused on the justice-involved that raised the importance of diminishing housing instability to minimize community violence.<sup>lvi</sup> The second bill proposed reinstating the City's Inclusionary Housing Program, which expired July 2022. The original version of the program resulted in the development of 37 affordable units in the 15-year history of the program, and the new bill proposes producing 700 units of affordable housing for low-income residents. City Council member Ramos is working with advocates to revise the program to remove waivers used as loopholes by developers.<sup>lvii</sup>

Councilmember Ryan Dorsey introduced a bill with additional implications. The legislation would ease restrictions on converting single-family homes into affordable multifamily residential properties in wealthier neighborhoods. The legislation is designed to desegregate neighborhoods and decrease costs by increasing housing supply.<sup>lviii</sup>

Legislation passed in 2016 established a Housing Production Trust Fund in Baltimore City. The funds are for housing for residents with income levels at 50% of the area median income, and at least half of the funds are to be used to house residents with 30% of the area median income. The City has allocated \$2 to \$7 million between FY 2020 and FY 2023. The largest investment in the fund will occur in FY 2023 at \$7 million.<sup>lix</sup>

*Public and subsidized housing.* Access to public and subsidized housing has been a longstanding issue in Baltimore City. In 2013, there were about 37,134 families on the waitlist for public housing, with only 23,078 subsidized units available. Overall, 82,997 renters met HUD's low-income eligibility requirements. Currently, the Housing Choice Voucher program waitlist is closed to new applicants. Those who receive a voucher can face discrimination while applying for rental units. Baltimore landlords can decide whether to accept subsidized housing vouchers and often are incentivized to do so in more undesirable neighborhoods, feeding into the cycle of the reconcentration of poverty.<sup>lix</sup>

Baltimore's returning citizens face the same limitations in accessing public housing and subsidized housing vouchers as they do with private housing. Public Housing Authority (PHA) policies pose barriers for individuals with justice system contact attempting to access public housing. According to a 2023 article, HUD's exclusionary housing policies directed at people with justice system contact can be traced back to the 1988 Federal Anti-Drug Abuse Act, which required PHAs to have provisions in their leases that allowed for the eviction of tenants or tenants with friends and family with criminal records. Additionally, tenants evicted due to engagement in drug-related activity would be banned from properties for three years. Tenants can be evicted if a guest uses marijuana on their property without their knowledge. The Housing Opportunity Program Extension Act of 1996 made it easier for PHAs to evict tenants and allowed them to screen for criminal records of existing and prospective tenants. People with a lifetime requirement on the sex offender registry cannot be housed in public housing.<sup>lxi</sup>

HUD publishes general guidelines for PHAs to determine public housing eligibility. These guidelines are separated into two categories of prohibitions: mandatory and permissive. Mandatory prohibitions for which PHAs automatically disqualify applicants include:

- Any household member is “currently engaging in illegal use of a drug;”
- A household member’s “illegal drug use or a pattern of illegal drug use may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents;”
- Any household member has ever been convicted of “drug-related criminal activity for manufacture or production of methamphetamine” on federally assisted housing property;
- A household member has been evicted from public housing for “drug-related criminal activity” three years prior; and
- Any member of the household is subject to lifetime registration under “a state sex offender registration program.”<sup>lxii, lxiii</sup>

Permissive prohibitions are not federally required but can be used by PHAs to expand their criteria for housing denial. PHAs can additionally deny housing if any household member “is currently engaged in, or has engaged in during a reasonable time before admission” in:

- “Drug related criminal activity;”
- “Violent criminal activity;”
- “Other criminal activity which may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents or persons residing in the immediate vicinity;” or
- “Other criminal activity which may threaten the health or safety of the owner, property management staff, or persons performing a contract administration function or responsibility on behalf of the PHA (including a PHA employee or a PHA contractor, subcontractor, or agent).”

The Prison Policy Initiative recommends investigating local PHAs, generally around more restrictive applications of guidelines, and advocating for changes. Pertinent policy documents are published annually with public comment periods.

### Impact of Regional and Local Housing Factors on People with Criminal Legal Involvement

Baltimore City is a majority Black city that has had to confront most post-civil war strategies to destabilize and segregate Black communities in the United States, including slum clearance, urban renewal, highway construction, gentrification, and mass incarceration.<sup>lxiv</sup> Baltimore is also one of just three cities in the country that is not housed within a county government structure and is one of the smallest major cities at 81 square miles. As an independent city, it does not have access to the resources of a county government and has limited representation in the state legislature. It has not annexed surrounding land as larger, well-resourced major cities have over time. For example, New York City has grown to 309 square miles and Los Angeles to 469 square miles through annexation.<sup>lxv</sup>



As a result of purposeful uprooting and disinvestment, Baltimore City's population has been declining for seven decades since 1950. According to the 2020 Census, this decline continues though it has slowed from -1.81% to -0.61%. Most declines in population were found in Black/African American neighborhoods. A slight increase was found among white residents. The biggest increase in population was found within the Latino and Asian communities. Furthermore, less diverse parts of the City have seen significant increases in home values and growing private investments (Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan Chase), as it is considered one of the last affordable cities with growth potential on the East Coast.<sup>lxvi</sup>

The City's decline is also believed to be driven by a lack of investment in its transit and transportation system, which isolates lower-income Black residents. Parts of the City with a more developed transportation system have seen more than 30% growth in residents (Midtown and downtown areas). However, a deliberate investment to uproot Black residents under the guise of expanding its transportation system also exists. In February of 2023, Baltimore City was awarded \$2 million from the Department of Transportation to assess how the City might redevelop the west side of Baltimore where a 1.4 mile of highway, of a planned 2.3 miles, was built and displaced 1,500 residents and 62 businesses in the 1970s.<sup>lxvii</sup> Residents and advocates stopped the project called "the Highway to Nowhere." The highway project contributed to the destruction of the west side of Baltimore.<sup>lxviii</sup>

Further impacting Baltimore's housing conditions is its older housing stock. Baltimore City has the highest number of old housing stock in the nation. It is ranked second in the nation in terms of its proportion of older housing stock after Buffalo, NY. Almost half (47%) of Baltimore's housing was built before 1939- 139,053 of its 294,858 housing units.<sup>lxix</sup> In addition to outdated infrastructure, during the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 40% of residents in lower-income neighborhoods did not have access to the Internet.<sup>lxx</sup>

The City also struggles with vacant homes. There are approximately 15,000 vacant homes in Baltimore City, of which approximately 13,000 are privately owned. Most of these homes (11,000) are in Council Districts 7 (James Torrence), 9 (John Bullock), 12 (Robert Stokes), and 13 (Antonio Glover). This loss of housing plays a significant role in incarceration rates. However, the Mayor has invested \$39 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to address this issue.<sup>lxxi</sup> According to a survey conducted in 2013, 74% of respondents that experienced homelessness before their incarceration said that access to stable housing would have prevented their incarceration.<sup>lxxii</sup> The areas with elevated levels of incarceration are where most of these vacant housing units are located. These neighborhoods include: Sandtown-Winchester/Harlem Park, Greenmount East, Southern Park Heights, Allendale/Irvington/ South Hilton, Greater Rosemont, and Clifton-Berea.<sup>lxxiii</sup>

Additionally, the mayor planned to invest \$90.4 million in homelessness prevention and intervention as of February 2022. Learnings from COVID emergency housing efforts will inform the City's response.<sup>lxxiv</sup> The expansion of the Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRs) is another investment opportunity announced in December 2022. The Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement has piloted the strategy in the Western Police District since January 2022. After demonstrating a 33.8% reduction in

non-fatal shootings and homicides, the program will expand to the Southwestern, Central, and Eastern Districts in 2023, and citywide in 2024.<sup>lxxxvii</sup>

## Section II: System Mapping and Interviews

The current section synthesizes findings from a series of key informant interviews and field research to 1) further understand stakeholders, policies, practices, programs and services, partnerships, and funding and resources at the intersection of housing and the criminal legal system in Baltimore City; and 2) examine Enterprise’s portfolio in the context of neighborhoods and residential communities in Baltimore City. The implications of identified trends, gaps, and opportunities in reentry and housing resources for individuals with criminal legal system involvement can inform how housing organizations like Enterprise effectively enhance policies, services, partnerships, and resources to support returning citizens’ reintegration.

### 1. Methods and Approach

The research team collaboratively developed and conducted 14 key informant interviews with nonprofit and public agency leadership and staff members familiar with the intersection of the legal system and housing, service providers, and individuals with lived experience (see Exhibit 4). Organizations were identified through the literature review, networks in the field, Enterprise recommendations, and the Housing as a Pathway to Justice Mid-Atlantic Work Group. The team also used snowball sampling, asking interviewees for recommendations of other individuals and organizations to contact.

**Exhibit 4.** Key Informant Interview Participants

Sector	Organization	Interviewees
<b>Government Agency</b>	• Baltimore City Council	1
	• Baltimore City Office of Equity & Civil Rights	1
	• Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development	1
	• Maryland Department of Public Safety & Correctional Services (DPSCS)	1
	• Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Safety & Engagement (MONSE)	2
<b>Reentry Housing/Support Services</b>	• Bon Secours Community Works*	1
	• Marian House	2
	• PIVOT (Post Incarceration Vision of Transformation)	1
	• Prison-to-Professionals	1
	• Return Home Baltimore	1
	• St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center*	1

Sector	Organization	Interviewees
<b>Community &amp; Economic Development</b>	• CASH Campaign of Maryland	2
	• Communities Planning & Housing Association	1
	• Northern Real Estate Urban Ventures (NREUV)*	1
<b>Housing Providers</b>	• Real Estate Developer	1
<b>Funders</b>	• Abell Foundation	1
		<b>19</b>

\*Mid-Atlantic Work Group member

The interview questions pertained to programs, policies, partnerships, and resources that exist and are needed at the intersection of housing and the criminal legal system to effectively support returning citizens (see Exhibit 5 for the question topics and Appendix A for the interview protocol). The research team documented responses from the 60-minute confidential virtual interviews through notes and recordings with participants’ consent and developed a codebook based on the interview protocol and responses. Salient themes were identified and coded using the Dedoose analysis application.

The team supplemented information gathered on programs, policies, and funding through interviews and follow-up communications with key informants with research that included examination of current and proposed legislation,<sup>lxxiv,lxxv</sup> funding sources, and service resource guides.<sup>lxxvi,lxxvii</sup> The system and resource data were mapped in a visual representation and database of pre- and post- and providers, services, and support for short- to long-term housing; relevant legislation; and available funding for housing and services for returning citizens.

Data from the Enterprise Community Development 2021 Annual Resident Survey (224 respondents from five family and eight senior properties) and the Enterprise Residential housing application process were reviewed to examine ECD properties in the context of the larger Baltimore City Columbia housing market (see Exhibit 2). The sample sizes were considered (e.g., representativeness and response rates) when analyzing and interpreting the data.

**Exhibit 5. Interview and Supplemental Research Data**

Interviews & Online Resources	Resident Survey	Housing Application Process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders and key issues around housing and the criminal legal system</li> <li>• Disproportionately affected populations</li> <li>• Policies and practices</li> <li>• Programs, services, supports</li> <li>• Partnerships and community engagement</li> <li>• Funding and other resources</li> <li>• Recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfaction with the community</li> <li>• Household concerns and activities</li> <li>• Office and maintenance staff and services</li> <li>• Pride in the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rental criteria</li> <li>• Criminal Conviction Policy</li> <li>• Applicant screening criteria and data</li> <li>• Criminal conviction appeals process</li> <li>• Rental applicant resources</li> </ul>

**2. Key Findings**

The service landscape includes economic, political, and community factors that affect reentry resources. These intersecting factors are critical to consider meeting the short- to long-term housing needs of returning citizens and ensure access to resources that support their reintegration.

**Market Context**

Baltimore City was described as a city with an eviction, vacancy, and affordable housing crisis. The growth continues to follow longstanding neighborhood boundaries and segregation created by racist housing and government-based development policies. The City faces economic opportunities that advocates worry will contribute to existing disparate outcomes if affordable housing policies and strategies are not strengthened. The City’s providers play an outsized role in reintegrating the state’s returning citizens. Deliberate strategies to permanently house returning citizens are recent.

Interviewees characterized the reentry service system in the City as abundant yet lacking in reach and scale, acknowledging that the resources, services, and providers in the City cannot meet demand. Interviewees pointed out that the City does not have a single housing funding source focused on the housing of returning citizens other than a more recent allocation of vouchers. Interviewees also were interested in housing models responsive to the varying needs of the City’s returning citizens and considered housing a critical component of successful reintegration.

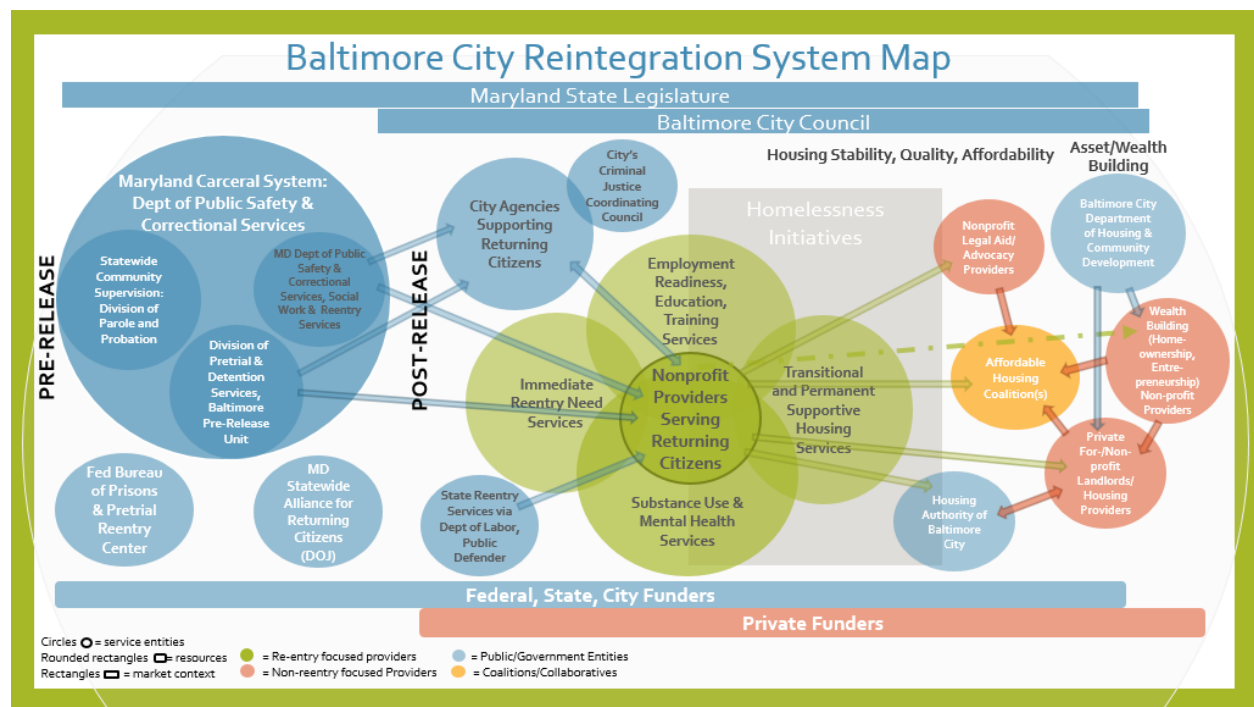
**System Map**

The following system maps visually represent information gathered through research and interviews. The first map provides an overview of the key entities involved in the release, reentry, and reintegration process. The system map is focused on the interface between reentry-focused providers; entities that

facilitate housing stability, quality, and affordability (couched within the Housing Bundle); and entities that enable longer-term financial stability through wealth-building interventions.

The system map includes entities within the carceral system, government, and nonprofit sectors. The map is divided into three sections: 1) the pre-release/carceral and post-release/reentry systems (Exhibit 6), 2) reentry-focused government and nonprofit providers (Exhibit 7), and 3) providers that are not focused on reentry but are key to returning citizens' long-term stability and ability to access permanent housing and advocate for needed changes (Exhibit 8). The structure of the carceral system information is based on research. Some interviewees collaborate with the carceral system, which also is noted in this section. Interviews and research primarily inform the reentry and wealth-building provider system map. Homeless initiatives are noted in the background, given that entities focused on serving populations experiencing homelessness do not appear to center the needs of returning citizens as entities focused on assisting individuals exiting the carceral system. (Appendix B contains the list of stakeholders and provider directories.)

**Exhibit 6. Baltimore City Reintegration System Map**

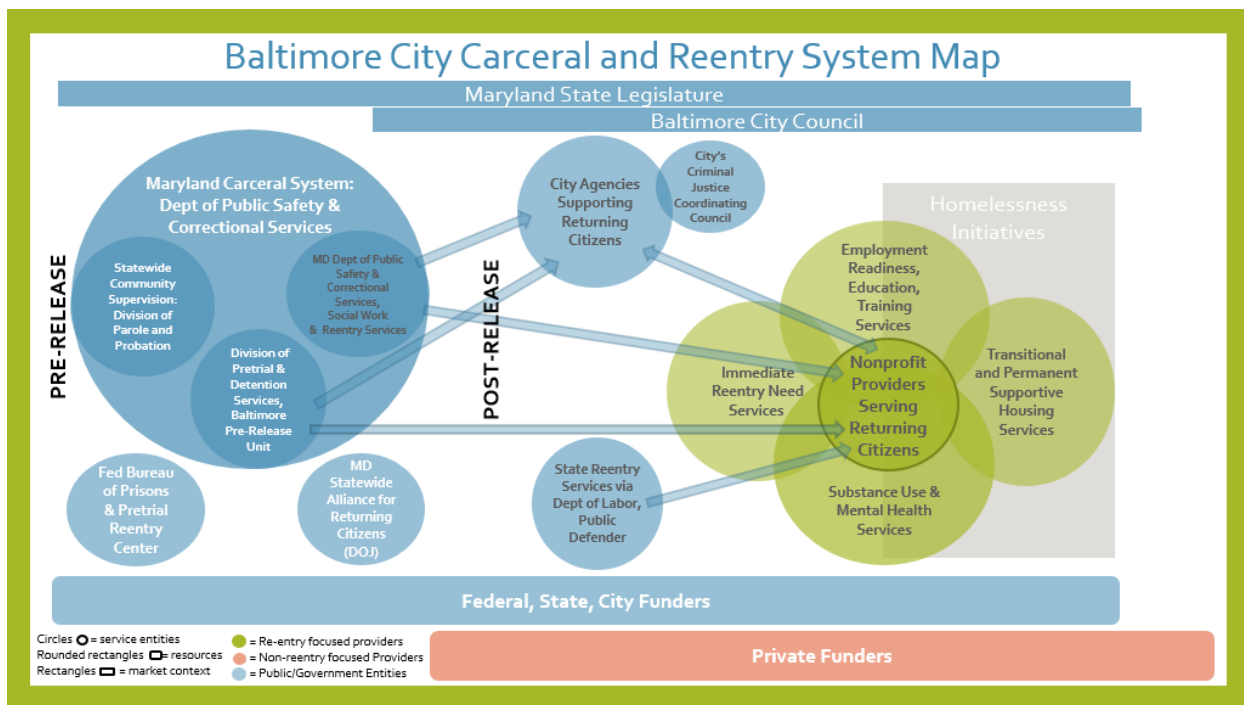


As discussed in Section I, Baltimore City does not oversee the operation of the City's jail. It appears that all Division of Pretrial Detention and Services facilities are in Baltimore City, including the Baltimore Pre-Release Unit tasked with preparing incarcerated individuals for release with job readiness programming.<sup>v</sup> According to an interviewee, the first pre-release center for women recently opened in Baltimore City. There are four centers in the City for men. Services assist with the reentry process and rely on providers to meet the needs of released individuals. However, housing is not a focus. The state's

Department of Labor offers reentry-focused job readiness programming and pertinent technical assistance to workforce development providers around the state. Also noteworthy is the MD Statewide Alliance for Returning Citizens, a new coalition. Return Home Baltimore shared that they encouraged the state to establish this coalition.

The City agency responsible for facilitating the City’s reentry initiatives is the Mayor’s Office on Neighborhood Safety and Engagement. The City’s Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) is housed within the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement and comprises senior staff from city, state, and federal level government agencies within the justice system. The Council is tasked with ensuring identifying “cross-cutting criminal and juvenile justice issues, promote systemwide accountability to implement coordinated solutions, and facilitate cooperation that will improve public safety and delivery of justice-related services.”<sup>lxviii</sup>

**Exhibit 7. Baltimore City Carceral and Reentry System Map**



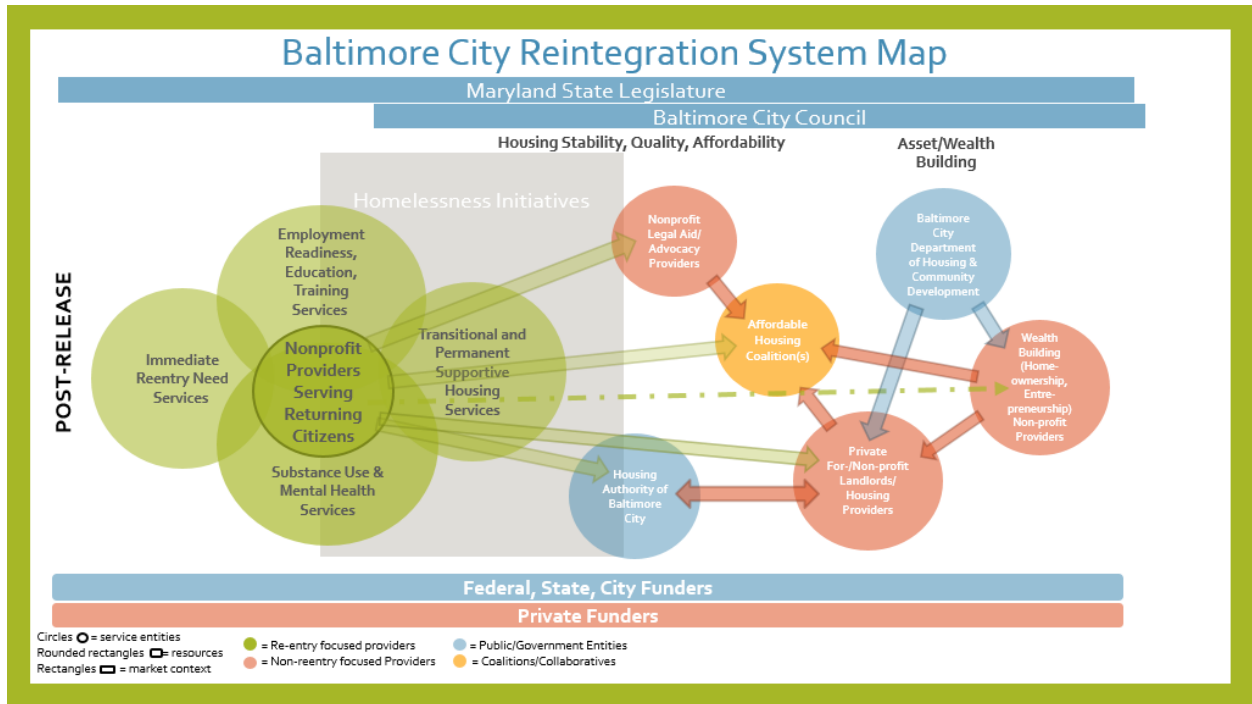
Some interviewed providers shared that they developed relationships with departments within the carceral system to facilitate the reentry process and the success of returning citizens (e.g., judges, reentry counselors, and parole officers). Staff members contact them directly to assist individuals when released. Interviewees often commented on both the many reentry providers in Baltimore City and the lack of resources available for these providers to meet demand. They also explained that Baltimore City providers bear a substantial responsibility of the state reentry process for Maryland as individuals who were not formerly Baltimore City residents remain in the City after their release, given the more developed reentry infrastructure.

Interviewees described the many complex and simultaneous needs individuals with justice system contact can have, particularly at their time of release and especially among returning citizens who served long-term sentences. With respect to meeting their clients' housing needs and challenges, reentry-focused entities rely on private non- and for-profit housing landlords to house their clients. The one reentry service believed to be offered at a sufficient level was expungement support services provided by legal groups and made accessible through at least one local library. Some interviewees shared that the Baltimore City Housing Authority offers a voucher for returning citizens. However, there is a general shortage of vouchers, and interviewees familiar with vouchers complained about the associated bureaucracy and delays.

Few providers referred to meeting the wealth-building needs of their clients or connecting with wealth-building entities. One provider aspires to systematically facilitate homeownership among its clients who are returning citizens. Therefore, the connection to wealth-building entities in the map is depicted with a dotted line. Also included in the exhibit is the City agency tasked with supporting wealth-building initiatives via homeownership and entrepreneurship initiatives - the Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development.

Additionally, on the right side is an orange circle that represents collaborative efforts. Some interviewees shared that they were unaware of any collaboratives/coalitions focused on the housing needs of returning citizens. However, staff with one entity shared the names of two collaborative efforts surrounding community development and affordable housing efforts. Organization staff shared that a coordinated reentry board that included all pertinent government and nonprofit providers at the city and state level previously existed, facilitating decision-making due to the presence of the mayor and governor. Other entity planned to launch an effort to improve the coordination of reentry services in the City.

**Exhibit 8. Baltimore City Reentry & Stability Service System Map**





## Section III: Programs, Policies, Services, and Funding Overview Specific to Housing and Re-Entry Service Delivery

Interviewees discussed needs, trends, and opportunities related to the reintegration of returning citizens into the community. Interviewees underscored the importance of stable housing as a “number one need,” “biggest deficit,” and “main factor in the success of a returning citizen.”

### Programs and Services: Interconnected Factors

Service providers, advocacy groups, and funders particularly described the intersecting needs of returning citizens and challenges resulting from criminal legal system involvement. Interviewees discussed the need for immediate to long-term affordable, safe housing solutions. A reentry support provider discussed the need to integrate people into communities, having the right to be welcomed, not “othered,” and to rent and own a home. The interviewee suggested that returning citizens who successfully reintegrate can serve as a mentor for others.

Reentry support providers and City agencies also discussed the unique needs of particular populations of returning citizens. Women with children need safe transitional housing options. One interviewee stated they “*don’t see a lot of halfway houses for women, and shelters seem to be their only option.*” Another provider expressed concern that experiencing domestic violence qualifies people for homelessness intervention programs unless their incarceration is related to domestic violence. Increasing housing solutions for individuals convicted of sex offenses also was a concern. One provider recommended understanding individuals’ charges and whether they should impact the type of housing they receive and ensuring that people do not feel “ostracized, labeled, or numbered.” Another interviewee also noted that youth, individuals whose primary language is not English, older adults who may have had longer sentences and subsequently less connection to the community, veterans, and Asian American and LGBTQ+ communities are not adequately considered in housing options for returning citizens.

*“People don’t understand how important housing is for the success of returning citizens.”*

*“The transitional housing, reentry, and homeless world are siloed, but all is interconnected... We don’t recognize the human experience as interconnected.”*

Interviewees also discussed other primary needs that affect housing access and stability. Reentry support providers, City agencies, and funders discussed challenges in obtaining key documentation such as Social Security cards, birth certificates, and government-issued identification, which are necessary for employment. An interviewee cited programs such as No Struggle No Success and PIVOT that help people obtain vital documents and identification. Others stated that the issue also needs to be addressed through improving policies, with one interviewee explaining that, under the Real ID Act, individuals no longer can use their prison identification to obtain government identification. Interviewees also discussed the discrimination that returning citizens face when seeking employment. One provider described clients’ “horrible experiences” with employers giving and then rescinding employment offers

after conducting background checks, which affected clients' mental health and self-esteem. Interviewees also discussed that unmet mental health and substance treatment needs could impact housing. Providers discussed the need for support with family reintegration and relationships, applying for benefits, accessible transportation, and factors such as comfort with changing technology, which can impact individuals' ability to find and apply for services.

Reentry service providers and government agencies discussed the need for additional staff to build their capacity and support from multisector stakeholders to increase accessible and affordable housing options for returning citizens. Key groups cited include nonprofit housing organizations that provide treatment and direct long-term housing, local and state governments, affordable housing providers focused on returning citizens, housing inspectors, people with lived experience, healthcare providers, fair housing organizations, advocates and lobbyists, and employers. One interviewee wanted *"everyone at the table [for] different perspectives and to confront the barriers returning citizens face and find solutions."*

**Service System Trends and Opportunities.** Some interviewees recognized the abundant reentry services in Baltimore City and emerging efforts around the intersection of criminal legal system reform and housing. One provider explained that, in addition to returning citizens from Baltimore City, many who are not residents return to the City because of the availability of services, including treatment, mediation, and housing, compared to portions of Maryland (e.g., Western Maryland, Eastern Shore). Despite the available services, providers suggested that they and their colleagues have had to work creatively to address the housing needs of returning citizens considering the barriers and neighborhood "blight." Housing and related services need to further understand people's circumstances and give them opportunities. Two representatives interviewed discussed their lived experiences of the legal system, sharing that the reentry challenges their families faced informed their approaches and services.

Reentry support and housing providers described the effective components of their services, from pre-release to ongoing holistic support in the community. One interviewee shared that they work to ensure that "behind the wall and outside," people are building the skills to be successful in their lives and reduce risks of recidivism. Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services provides pre-release case management; release planning that includes nonprofit housing organizations, treatment facilities, mediation, transportation, and legal services; and engagement with social workers and reentry specialists to identify needs up to one-year post-release and connect returning citizens with services. DPSCS coordinates community partners, nonprofit organizations, and state agencies for individuals' smooth transition to the community. City agencies such as MONSE also assess the needs of returning citizens and provide reentry coordinator services. Providers such as Return Home Baltimore curate resources and collaborate with providers to ensure returning citizens have access to information and services to facilitate reentry.

Housing providers consider short- and long-term housing needs. Marian House, for instance, provides transitional housing (six months to one year) for single women, with integrated care that comprises meals, personal supplies, substance use treatment, trauma-focused therapy, medical care referrals, GED education, and training such as job readiness and financial literacy to prepare them for independent living. Marian House also offers permanent supportive and shared housing programs. St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center also uses a home-sharing model, offering individual rooms with a shared communal area or “mini-apartment” for \$500 to \$600 per month. Individuals with 30% AMI can qualify for housing, and St. Ambrose accepts housing choice vouchers. Reentry support services include rental, employment and training, expungement referrals, and financial counseling classes. Providers such as PIVOT and NREUV work with private realtors, landlords, and property managers in their network who are amenable to housing returning citizens. PIVOT pays the security deposit and first month’s rent. The program offers a nine-week reentry program to women, which includes workforce development; personal success coaching; case management; trauma-informed mental health and wellness activities such as dance therapy, art therapy, and yoga; as well as offers support to alumni (e.g., financial). A value of the program is choice, with women selecting the services that meet their needs, preferences, and goals.

Providers such as Bon Secours Community Works develop affordable housing that is not specifically for returning citizens but is in the zip codes to which many formerly incarcerated individuals return. Bon Secours offers a pre-release and post-release reentry program that includes financial education and services (e.g., eviction prevention, tax preparation), case management, and referrals to mental health services.

Reentry support services highlighted the promising practices they or others provide. Holistic reentry programs offer wraparound services, case management, life skills, and interpersonal support. Providers referenced the evidence-based TYRO individual and family development curriculum ([theridgeproject.com](http://theridgeproject.com)) and large-scale treatment facilities with temporary housing, on-call medical staff, and case management (e.g., Tuerk House Baltimore). Effective approaches include organizational leadership and staff with lived experience or work history in the legal system to “*connect and relate in a way that not everyone can.*”

Interviewees also found a need to provide advocacy to ensure returning citizens are aware of their rights and that living environments are safe and adequate. Other promising or innovative practices in the field include providing assistance in the first 72 hours of release to address immediate needs (e.g., The First 72+, New Orleans, LA); using Airbnb for temporary housing; and asset/wealth-building programs, such as Morgan State University’s RIDE (Returning Citizens Inspired to Develop Entrepreneurial Ventures) Center,<sup>vii</sup> Baltimore Community Lending Program for Returning Citizens, and CASH Campaign (Creating Assets, Savings, and Hope).

Interviewees also emphasized that comprehensive reentry plans, with pre-release preparation focused on ensuring support from the moment of release and long term, are critical for reintegration and

reduced recidivism. Reentry support providers stated that *“when released, they’re on their own or connected with probation and parole, which are great but have a minimum reentry focus”* and *“people are released with no money or place to go; they need support from release.”* Providers discussed the need for support with family reintegration and relationships, applying for benefits, and considering factors such as comfort with technology, which can impact individuals’ ability to find and apply for services. One interviewee explained that parole boards want a strong reentry plan that the returning citizen and their families understand, citing that PREPARE (Prepare for Parole and Reentry) offers reentry planning and mediation services.

Interviewees shared opportunities and goals to increase access to quality affordable housing for returning citizens. Reentry and housing providers expressed interest in replicating their programs, purchasing vacant properties for housing for returning citizens, expanding family reunification, and support efforts. Another interviewee discussed land bank opportunities to acquire properties through foreclosure to use for housing and services.

### Funding Sources

Several interviewees spoke to private program/service funding sources. They noted that no specific source is dedicated to the housing of returning citizens other than vouchers allocated in response to advocacy by a resident with justice system contact. However, there are concerns regarding the limited funding for vouchers in the City. One interviewee explained that the Maryland Senator, Chris Van Hollen, has been working to increase voucher funding.

An interviewee noted that some transitional housing funding could apply to returning citizens, although it tends to be restricted to co-occurring disorders. Two interviewees noted the U.S. Housing and Urban Administration’s shift from transitional to permanent housing. They lamented that funding in transitional housing decreased, given their belief that transitional housing is a critical service in the reentry process. The provider shared challenges they have experienced with the City’s Housing First efforts, which have yet to include increased funds for the support services component of the model. Another reentry provider shared the need for transitional housing that does not require sobriety, emphasizing that mothers who do not want to expose their children to the difficulties of recovery often seek dry (sober) transitional housing. Both providers serve women, some of whom have children, which presents additional nuances in housing.

Interviewees discussed other funding challenges. One entity has observed that most reentry providers do not focus on housing and have limited capacity for fundraising related to housing development, noting the difficult nature of raising capital, operations, and service funding for permanent supportive housing. Three reentry providers experienced difficulties identifying and applying for funding opportunities. While one provider explained that they can access local funding sources and feel confident about their relationships with these funders, they do not have the capacity to apply for the federal opportunities they need. Two other providers with leadership with lived experiences with the

justice system shared difficulties accessing funding opportunities. One explained that as a small operation, they have difficulty balancing service delivery and fundraising efforts and associated data tracking and reporting. The other provider shared concerns that their leadership does not have relationships with key decision-makers and expressed the concern that their own contact with the justice system may cause funders to lose confidence in them. Additionally, two interviewees shared concerns regarding the lack of funding for fair housing testing in the City. They explained that testing and related educational efforts have not occurred in earnest, if at all.

To supplement interview data about housing-related funding sources, the research team compiled a comprehensive list of funders who support affordable housing programming based on identified resources from the Corporation for Supportive Housing and a housing consultant (see Appendix C). Public and private funds for capital (e.g., Department of Housing and Community Development, Enterprise), program operations (e.g., local housing authorities), and support services (e.g., HUD, local providers) are available. In addition to the funding sources, a housing development consultant suggested exploring two other sources: 1) Maryland's Bond Bills and 2) New Market Tax Credits (NMTC). The consultant explained that Maryland Bond Bills could be used for local capital projects using state-owned buildings. The Maryland General Assembly reviews and approves the bills. However, the bond bills are reimbursement based, which would require bridge funding for the borrower. Regarding NMTC, the consultant explained that they are working on an affordable homeownership project in another state, which may be replicated with the use of NMTC and would involve selling a portfolio of affordable homeownership properties to a group that would rent them to returning citizens.

## Policy Landscape

Few interviewees could speak about the City's legislative structure or policy landscape. The following is based on three interviewees with some or deep familiarity with policy issues pertaining to housing or returning citizens. One reentry housing provider involved in advocacy observed that many more bills were introduced given the impending new democratic administration, including a few bills regarding the need for research.

Two interviewees shared policy successes they believed have implications for the housing landscape in general and returning citizens. The policies included:

- The Home Act is said to provide protections against income-based discrimination, though the City is experiencing implementation issues due to a lack of capacity among Fair Housing organizations;
- Bridge financing for Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) projects;
- Tenant right to counsel, though it presently lacks funding;
- Funding set aside four years ago for a Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development affordable housing needs assessment. Looking to use the data to inform Baltimore City's affordable and other housing strategies; and

- The release of individuals with cannabis judgements.

Interviewees also discussed the following bills housing advocates are pursuing with impacts on the City's affordable housing and reentry population:

- The development of Municipal IDs/Identifications, which the mayor introduced in 2016;
- Inclusionary Housing (the bill will include vouchers) requiring affordable unit set-asides;
- Tax sale reform to ensure homeowners do not lose homes over property tax arrears, which is connected to the city's vacant housing issue. The bill includes a mechanism that would allow Baltimore City to foreclose on the property when the lien exceeds the value of the property; and
- Establishing a Landbank Authority would facilitate a disposition process for the properties whose liens exceed the property value, and the City forecloses.

One government representative explained that landlord-tenant laws, like guidance surrounding criminal background checks, would have to be passed at the state level. They also anticipate that the inclusionary housing bill will pass in the coming months.

### Barriers and Disparities

Interviewees affirmed the disparities within the carceral system, with an over-representation of Black residents and residents from Baltimore City. In addition to the funding and policy gaps, interviewees pointed to various barriers to the reintegration of returning citizens in terms of longstanding beliefs, narratives, and programmatic practices. The major barriers interviewees cited were related to programming and bias.

**Program Practices and Services.** Reentry providers discussed a need for supportive transitional programs and permanent housing to help returning citizens reintegrate, identifying gaps and suggesting challenges related to the shift in focus to permanent housing. Regarding temporary housing, individuals must provide a physical address to probation or parole before release, and shelters are not considered viable options in part because of the inability to inspect the facility.

One interviewee explained that returning citizens may live temporarily with a family member and need transitional housing to have time to acquire the documentation, income, and other resources and skills necessary to move into permanent housing. Individuals staying with a loved one are not considered homeless and, therefore, may be ineligible for housing support programs, although the living arrangement is only short-term. A provider shared that transitional housing is vital for individuals who might not be prepared immediately for Housing First-model permanent housing. Another provider similarly stated that supportive transitional programs are important for long-term success and that more programs are needed.

Reentry support providers also noted challenges with some transitional housing facilities in the City. One interviewee described the shelter system as “overloaded.” Another concern is the restrictive and unsafe housing experiences there. One interviewee explained that transitional housing is available for individuals with a substance use disorder and is funded through Medicaid. However, placement for individuals without a substance use history or with children is more difficult. Transitional housing may accept children due to safety and liability concerns, and women and children may experience trauma from the shelter environments. Another interviewee stated that the structure and requirements of the housing might feel like incarceration. An interviewee also discussed the zoning and community perception issues that make establishing reentry- or treatment-focused housing difficult.

Concerns were expressed regarding the City’s tenant- and unit-based voucher system and barriers related to discrimination. Key concerns pertained to the waitlist for vouchers, delays in the process, lack of protections for individuals who use vouchers, delays in the process, and rules an interviewee described as “counterproductive.” For instance, vouchers may have restrictions for part-time employment, although an individual might be able to work full-time, or against full-time school enrollment. An interviewee explained that people could lose their vouchers if someone is deemed to be living with them (e.g., a family member staying over to provide childcare).

Additional challenges included landlords charging higher rents or security deposits when a person has a voucher (up to three times the amount, according to an interviewee), discriminating against voucher holders, and the lack of incentives for landlords to accept vouchers. Delays include waitlists for inspections and the time required for unit approvals. Another gap in affordable housing occurs when individuals earn too much for subsidized housing but not enough for market-rate apartments. One interviewee noted that this situation may result in reliance on shared housing.

Additionally, the availability of services in Baltimore City was considered a challenge in terms of usage by residents from other areas and siloed programs and information. One provider stated there is reentry “resource overload” in Baltimore City but few services in Baltimore County. Another interviewee said, “*We’re resource-heavy, so everyone comes here.*” The interviewee recommended developing strategies to build capacity in the City, including transportation systems and exploring statewide housing opportunities and efforts.

***Misperceptions and Biases.*** Stigma and discrimination perpetuate housing challenges. Interviewees discussed the stigma of involvement with the criminal legal system and the “not in my backyard” (NIMBY) mentality returning citizens encounter from landlords, property managers, and residents. In contrast to this resistance, some interviewees suggested a lack of attention or focused federal and local investment in supporting returning citizens compared to other populations, such as veterans and individuals who have experienced homelessness. As an interviewee expressed, “*The jurisdictions many people return to have a general unwillingness to support returning citizens, such as zoning or other*

*issues...still dealing with a lot of negativity. People deal with homeless, veterans, but have less sympathy for the prison population.”*

### **Enterprise’s Housing Services and Implications on Housing Returning Citizens**

ECD’s portfolio of properties in Baltimore City can be put into the context of the larger city housing market to inform Enterprise and the broader housing ecosystem about ways to support populations with justice involvement. The ECD Annual Resident Survey can provide insights about the experiences and needs of tenants that can inform Enterprise’s strategies to support residents with criminal legal involvement. Although the data did not include information specific to justice-involved individuals, and the survey instrument was unavailable, the findings have implications for this population. Based on the data provided, residents’ ratings suggested that they were less than completely satisfied with the appearance and condition of their home and the apartment community, rental office and maintenance services, facilities, and safety and security of the community. The conditions of the properties varied, and those with the lowest ratings in neighborhoods/zip codes had higher incarceration rates. Most of the properties in Baltimore City are senior communities. Most properties partnered with agencies and community-based organizations to address housing stability, health and wellness, food security, education, and community building and engagement, which are critical for returning citizens. However, most of the activities appeared to be social in nature and geared toward community building.

Enterprise Residential rental application policies and practices provide insights about the housing process that can inform Enterprise’s strategies to support residents with criminal legal involvement. Although the screening data did not include property-level or applicant information about applications and review decisions, the findings have important implications regarding rental policies and housing market conditions that may particularly impact justice-involved individuals and their families. Key considerations at the intersection of housing and criminal legal reform include further examination of criminal background check processes for rental applications and financial counseling programs as well as government-issued identification, financial, and rental history requirements. (Appendices D, E, and F contain additional information about rental criteria and applicant screenings.)



## Section IV: Case Studies on Delivery Models

Building upon the literature review, supplemental research, and key informant interviews, the research team conducted case studies of local housing service models supporting people with justice involvement. The models can guide partners and practices at the intersection of housing and the criminal legal system. Priority areas for the H2J initiative include trauma-informed services and design, models that connect tenants and landlords (e.g., direct incorporation), housing options such as subleasing approaches, client choice and opt-in to individualized services, and organizations led by people with lived experience. Enterprise is also interested in potential models for ECD and other developers to adapt and partners to engage.

### 1. Methods and Approach

The research team identified more than 20 programs through literature, interviewee references, conversations with Enterprise, and the H2J Mid-Atlantic Work Group. The following program models were selected based on the priority areas:

- Marian House (Baltimore City)
- No Struggle No Success (Baltimore City)
- Jubilee Housing (District of Columbia)
- Who Speaks For Me? (District of Columbia)

The case studies consisted of 1) 75- to 90-minute interviews with executive and program leadership from each organization regarding organizational background, service model, key strategies, promising (not yet validated) and best (validated) practices, partners and funders, program outcomes, and recommendations; and 2) a review of program websites, reports, and materials. Additionally, Enterprise programs Equitable Path Forward (EPF); Strong, Prosperous, and Resilient Communities Challenge (SPARCC); and Faith-based Development were examined as examples of flexible capital providers to glean lessons and innovative approaches for capital providers and smaller developers interested in serving individuals with legal system involvement. The research team conducted a cross-case study analysis of the program models to identify promising practices and opportunities to increase quality short- and long-term housing options for returning citizens.

### 2. Key Findings

The organizations profiled in the case studies varied in leadership, service origins, target populations, and service models. Two entities originated from faith-based institutions, are white-led, have operated for decades, and have \$15M-\$127M in assets. The two other entities are led by women of color with lived and proximate experience and were established more recently. One newer organization reported \$156,531 in expenses for 2021. Three of the four entities were created to serve individuals with justice system contact. Two added housing-related services for returning citizens.

The entities provide many services and refer out for services they do not provide or are beyond their capacity. All entities offer transitional housing in varying ways. Only one provided permanent supportive housing via the Housing First model. All the models use trauma-informed and patient-centered services. All providers emphasized the importance of hiring staff with lived experience and engaging individuals with lived experience in designing programs and services.

Providers spoke to their clients' varying levels of service needs and preferences regarding living arrangements and support service processes. One provider with lived experience described the tension and pressure to produce outcomes, the belief that reintegration is a process, and honoring clients' desire to feel independent as quickly as possible.

Like many nonprofit service providers, existing resource capacity; the size, composition, and resources of their network; their ability to respond to and manage funding opportunities and funder requirements; and funders' administration of grants and contracts shaped the selected entities' programs. Two providers discussed considering their revenues when designing their models and "right-sizing" limited resources with the level of support they can provide their clients. Providers also have creatively allocated resources or used strategies to compensate for the lack of dedicated funding for returning citizens or decreased funding for transitional housing, such as billing Medicaid and developing relationships with potential donors in multiple sectors that intersect with housing and the legal system.

One of these entities explained the challenge of adjusting programming to meet the needs of returning citizens while balancing local and federal policies and funding requirements (e.g., HUD's definition of homelessness), which has caused additional stressors for clients (e.g., having to exit to homeless shelters) and program inefficiencies. The provider also noted that insufficient funding and local government inefficiencies in funding administration have negatively impacted the organization and client outcomes.

Three entities are actively engaged or interested in developing additional housing for returning citizens/individuals with justice system contact (Jubilee Housing, Who Speaks For Me?, and Marian House). Three entities engage in some variation of the scattered-sites model and value it as a housing solution. However, entities also shared challenges regarding their transitional and/or permanent scattered site placements. Two entities with the most developed scattered site placement models have taken steps to reduce the risk to their entity associated with the model. One entity launched a separate Limited Liability Corporation (LLC) through which it processes master/subleasing agreements. The other entity that engages in permanent scattered site placements has opted not to sign leases on behalf of its clients due to suits filed by landlords against the organization. However, staff still lead and manage relationships with landlords. The organization's leadership believes this decision has not impacted the quality of clients' housing and that it was uniquely positioned to make this change given its positive reputation in the city.

The leadership of the profiled providers shared the following lessons, recommendations, and promising practices for providers interested in owning and managing housing and for their supporters:

- Ensure the organization has leadership/staff with lived experience and creates space to hear directly from its clients to strengthen program design and build trust with clients and partners;
- Engage in advocacy for housing funding for returning citizens, fair housing funding and structures, available high-quality affordable housing, and systems reform;
- Provide trauma-informed, healing-centered approaches and tailored wraparound services;
- Cultivate relationships with key entities in the carceral and local government systems and housing providers/landlords to deepen program impact and facilitate timely housing placements for returning citizens;
- Design and deliver deliberate education efforts for landlords/housing providers to change the narrative about legal system involvement (e.g., presentations, meetings, opportunities to hear from returning citizens; discussion of screening criteria and policies);
- Utilize diverse housing models, with protections, that are responsive to system realities (e.g., barriers, inefficiencies) and to the needs, preferences, and experiences of returning citizens (community or private housing, with or without services);
- Focus on long-term well-being and access to communities with economic opportunities that include living in thriving, resource-rich neighborhoods, wealth-building support, and homeownership opportunities;
- Employ comprehensive and creative funding and capacity-building strategies that are responsive to provider and client needs, given the lack of funding and resources dedicated to housing returning citizens; and
- Establish networks of individuals with development expertise that providers can leverage on a pro bono/reduced rate basis.

## Section V: Conclusions and Considerations

A thorough examination of the intersection of housing and the criminal legal system is critical to addressing complex issues that disproportionately affect individuals with legal system involvement, their families, and communities. The information gathered through this landscape assessment via the review of literature and interviews provides insights into opportunities and strategies to build upon promising approaches, address gaps and barriers in programming and resources, and enhance policies to increase access to stable housing. Understanding cross-cutting needs and looking across systems to dismantle structural inequities and “isms” can strengthen the resources necessary to support the reintegration of returning citizens.

Providers described the needs of returning citizens as long, intersecting, simultaneous and immediate. These needs include re-acclimating to the community (navigating family dynamics, technological advancements, gentrified neighborhoods), obtaining government identification and documentation, employment, education and training, mental and physical health care, substance use disorder treatment, and legal and financial support. Housing-related challenges include inaccessible public housing; insufficient and inefficient voucher programs; housing provider discrimination; insufficient transitional and permanent housing; and residents' and landlords' understanding of housing laws, rights, and protections.

With affordable housing crisis and subsequent demand for existing limited housing stock, nonprofit providers, government entities, advocates, funders, and policymakers interviewed stressed the importance of elevating the experiences of returning citizens and the vital role of stable housing in their successful reentry. Housing providers face barriers due to public opinion that often characterizes individuals with justice involvement as risks to the safety of others rather than as community members who share the fundamental needs of shelter, security, and safety. An appreciation of the impact of policies, practices, and structures designed to ensure the economic instability and marginalization of Black and Brown communities, which include incarceration, is lost in this perception and stigma.

Additionally, with decades of inadequate mental health infrastructure, law enforcement and the carceral system have been left to manage mental health needs in communities.<sup>i</sup> The vulnerability and high incidences of exposure to violence and trauma, substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health challenges, and learning and other disabilities among justice-involved individuals are not adequately considered or addressed among housing decision-makers. The failures of existing systems that do not center healing and social and economic advancement exacerbate challenges.

While providers deeply appreciate the need for permanent housing for their clients, most were engaged in transitional housing. This focus was due to a combination of factors including, limited available resources for reentry service delivery (especially housing), the capacity of the provider to secure funding, programming designed in response to existing system inefficiencies (e.g., waiting periods for government-issued identification and documentation needed for employment and housing), and the belief that some needs are best addressed in high-contact and/or group environments (e.g., substance use rehabilitation). Providers also observed needs and preferences among their clients that they believe a variety of housing options and supportive service approaches would address.

Providers also discussed the importance of ensuring individuals with lived experience are prominent in program design and delivery and that services are trauma informed. Trust building with clients was cited as a significant factor in service delivery, which shared experiences can facilitate. Trauma-informed approaches include understanding and working to heal trauma experienced before, during, and after incarceration. Providers described efforts to improve their programmatic impact and reach by collaborating more deeply with the carceral system and engaging individual's pre-release. Interventions

to connect returning citizens and individuals with justice system contact with wealth-building strategies and permanent housing were not central among reentry service providers, especially when compared to immediate and short-term resources and support. Additionally, providers shared they did not have the capacity to engage in advocacy beyond testifying for local government budget allocations for their work. Furthermore, interviewees shared their concern that the city does not currently have an entity to lead and fully implement fair housing initiatives. A broad-based cross-sector collaboration focused on reentry, which includes community-based organizations and advocates, has yet to be formed in the city.

Baltimore City was described as a city of opportunity facing economic pressures that can displace its longstanding Black residents. Housing advocacy efforts focused on the availability of affordable housing stock, permanently housing people experiencing chronic homelessness, eviction prevention, and leveraging the city's vacant housing. The City's inclusionary zoning law expired in 2022 and was ineffective in its previous iteration. The reinstatement of a more effective inclusionary zoning law is a focus of affordable and safe housing advocates. The City recently established a Housing Production Trust Fund and plans to expand its Group Violence Reduction Strategy pilot citywide in 2024, based on initial results of a 34% reduction in fatal shootings and homicides. Although Baltimore City's reentry support system is vast, it lacks the necessary resources to meet demand. Interviewees shared that Baltimore City carries Maryland's reentry support burden, as residents return to the City to receive the array of available services compared to other localities.

Post-release success lies beyond recidivism in domains essential to the success of individuals returning to communities, including education, health, family, and employment.<sup>iv</sup> The following considerations for Enterprise and other housing providers are landscape assessment findings.

#### **Considerations as Convenor and Advocate:**

- Encourage funders to design grant applications and management processes that are responsive to provider capacity. Applications and grants management complexity could increase as provider capacity increases, and/or encourage funders to provide capacity-building and sustainability support.
- Advocate for returning citizen-specific set-asides in existing and new housing programming/resource opportunities (e.g., Affordable Resident Services Act). Effective opportunities are comprehensive, supporting services that span multiple spheres of need (i.e., housing, legal, physical, and mental health, economic, educational) and impact (individual, family, and community).
- Encourage funding for permanent housing and comprehensive supportive services for returning citizens that includes capital, operational, program service funding, and/or encourages developers/housing providers to collaborate with existing community-based reentry providers.
- Assist with know-your-rights initiatives/campaigns specifically designed for returning citizens.

- Support and encourage strengthening the fair housing infrastructure in Baltimore City, including examining, and responding to local Public Housing Authority practices related to individuals with justice system contact.
- Encourage the allocation of financial assistance (e.g., guaranteed basic income) and benefits for returning citizens at levels that are significant/impactful, including single/unmarried individuals.
- Encourage research that produces knowledge on the spectrum of service and housing needs of returning citizens, assesses real versus perceived risks pertaining to housing justice-involved individuals/returning citizens, and identifies promising and best practices in the field.
- Continue to transform existing deficit-based narratives grounded in stigma, discrimination, and exclusion to strengths-based and trauma-informed narratives. These person-centered narratives appreciate individuals' histories and experiences; recognize trauma and marginalization; promote the basic right of housing, healing, and restoration; and challenge the idea that individuals with justice system contact are safety risks and not worthy of chances to reintegrate and participate in their communities.

#### **Considerations as Provider and Program Collaborator:**

- Encourage investment and participation in scattered site housing models. There is a growing recognition among reentry providers that housing is a foundational need for their clients and that the nonprofit sector alone cannot meet the demand. Providers are developing programmatic interventions that recruit and collaborate with landlords in the housing of their clients. This intervention requires operational, financial, and service support for clients. Most models include financial assistance with security deposits and rent payments. Providers invest time in identifying and recruiting landlords, drafting agreements, and managing relationships with landlords. Some providers have incurred additional costs by launching separate entities to legally protect their main service delivery entity. This model is a strategy reentry providers use to overcome widespread discriminatory housing practices through assistance such as advocating for clients and serving as the lessee on their behalf.
- Partner with existing reentry providers referenced in this report and identify additional providers in reentry service databases that can collaborate on scattered site placements and referral of tenants with justice system contact.
- Consider increasing trauma-informed engagement, research, and data opportunities, such as designing resident surveys that focus on knowledge production and understanding of the experiences, needs, and challenges of residents to inform Enterprise's advocacy, programmatic, and convening efforts.
- Examine how to integrate a trauma-informed perspective into housing design and resident services (i.e., Preservation of Affordable Housing [POAH] Trauma-Informed Housing toolkit, the Department of Public Safety & Correctional Services Partnership for Re-Entry Programming).
- Continue to examine the application of HUD's 2016 Guidance on Application of Fair Housing Act Standards to the Use of Criminal Records by Providers of Housing and Real Estate-Related

Transactions, and local legislation, that may have implications on current application processes.

Two key components are:

- **Criminal Record Screenings.** Housing providers are responsible for any decision reached during tenancy screenings, even if they use a third-party screening company. “If housing providers choose to use criminal background screening policies or practices, they should consider taking the following steps to avoid potential violation of the Fair Housing Act: [...] Avoid the use of third-party screening companies that: 1) utilize algorithms that may contain racial or other prohibited bias in their design, 2) have not been shown to reliably predict risk, may produce inaccurate information about the applicant, or 3) make the decision for the housing provider.”
- **Individualized Assessments.** HUD guidance states that housing providers should “conduct an individualized assessment that considers relevant mitigating information beyond that contained in an individual’s criminal record, as this is likely to have a less discriminatory effect than categorical exclusions that do not take such additional information into account.”<sup>lxix</sup>

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Key Informant Interview Protocol

#### Housing as a Pathway to Justice Interview Protocol

##### **Overview and Consent**

Hello and welcome. Thank you for meeting with us today. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am with \_\_\_\_\_. We are supporting Enterprise Community Partners, a national affordable housing nonprofit that aims to make home and community places of pride, power, and belonging and pathways for resilience and upward mobility. The purpose of this discussion is to hear your views about the intersection of housing and the criminal legal system in Baltimore City. We want to understand how housing organizations like Enterprise can be part of effective efforts to enhance policies, services, partnerships, and resources to support residents returning to the community from incarceration to reduce recidivism and promote the well-being and stability of families and communities. My role today is to guide our discussion.

##### ***Participation and Confidentiality***

The discussion will last approximately 60 minutes. With your consent, we would like to record the discussion and take notes to keep track of what you share with us. We will not connect your name to your responses to protect your privacy, and no one outside of the research team will see the session notes.

##### ***Participant Rights***

Your participation is entirely voluntary; you can choose not to respond to any questions you are uncomfortable with or leave at any point if necessary. We will be available after the interview to answer any questions you may have about the discussion or the project in general.

##### ***Consent***

Before participating in this interview, you were asked to sign an informed consent statement. To participate today, we need your written consent, please. If you have not signed it, we can email you the consent form now for your signature.

Are there any questions before we begin?



## Discussion Guide

### ***Introduction***

- What is your role within your organization, and what does your organization do? With which populations do you work? What services do you offer to these populations? *Probes:* Trends, changes over time to beneficiaries, changes over time in resources and funding to sustain services
- What does your organization do within the housing/criminal legal system/intersection of housing and criminal legal system reform? What led you to this work? *Probes:* Where organizations/interviewees would place themselves in this space (stakeholder, partner type)

### ***Intersection of Housing and the Criminal Legal System***

- Who are the key stakeholders (public and private sector) at the intersection of criminal legal system reform and housing in Baltimore City?
  - Who is providing needed programming?
  - Who is advocating for needed changes?
- How are housing stakeholders currently overlapping with criminal legal system reform?
- What services are being provided to support returning citizens or people with criminal records?
- Who in this space has developed a best or promising practice model/intervention?
- For what changes are groups advocating or organizing to effect as it pertains to housing for returning citizens or people with criminal records?
- What are the most pressing [housing, criminal legal system] issues impacting your work? What efforts to address them exist, are effective, and/or are needed?
- Please explain how your housing/criminal legal system work impacts and is impacted by criminal legal system/housing.

### ***Populations Disproportionately Affected***

- What are the most pressing needs of returning citizens in Baltimore City? *Probes:* Challenges, immediate to longer-term needs, barriers; key areas including housing, employment, education, economic, health, family, social support
- Are there geographic areas of concentration within Baltimore City particularly impacted by incarceration/incarcerated residents? How?
- Are there areas with a higher proportion of children with an incarcerated parent, caregiver, or other type of family member?
- What conditions increase and decrease the likelihood of involvement with the criminal legal system and incarceration?

### ***Policies & Practices***

- What policies and practices most directly impact your work (positively or negatively)?
- What previous or existing advocacy/policy change efforts, to your knowledge, improve living conditions for the justice-involved in Baltimore City?

- What would complicate or facilitate policy change efforts for the justice-involved and housing in Baltimore City today? *Probe:* Housing or other policies or programs that are barriers or facilitators, policies that impact the interviewee’s work.
- Are there nuances in the legislative process in Baltimore City of which housing providers looking to support individuals who are justice-involved should be mindful? *Probes:* Classification, screening, assessment; housing requirements; how policies and practices affect returning citizens; disproportionate effects for particular populations.

### ***Programs, Services, & Supports***

- What supports and services are available/offered to individuals with justice involvement pre-release, upon release, and ongoing? (*In addition to the services your organization provides*)
  - Types of resources specific to and beyond housing and reentry, including trauma-informed, healing centered, arts-based
- What supports are available for children with an incarcerated parent or caregiver?
- What support is available for family members and friends of incarcerated individuals?
  - What services and support have been most effective?
  - What is needed or would have been most helpful?

*Probes:* Corrections-, city-, community-based reentry, housing, etc. resources
- Organizations and groups that utilize healing-based modalities and arts & culture?

### ***Partnerships, Stakeholders, & Community Engagement***

- Where and how, if at all, are criminal legal system stakeholders currently partnering with the housing sector in Baltimore City? In what partnerships are you involved? *Probes:* Nature of partnerships, strengths, challenges, how they are working with partners
- Who is focused on serving people with criminal legal system involvement and their children, families, and communities? Are there practices and models that stand out for building trauma-informed practices?
- To date, has there been engagement of the broader community regarding housing people with past arrest or conviction records? What has been the response?
- How well do providers/stakeholders in different sectors work together, and what partnerships are needed? *Probes:* Stronger or more extensive partnerships with housing providers to support individuals with legal system involvement and their families and communities

### ***Funding/Resources***

*If the organization provides services or advocates for the justice involved:*

- What types of sources do you rely on to fund this work?
  - Public: local, state, federal sources
  - Private: foundations, corporations, individual donors
  - Public and private funds
- Of the funds raised to serve justice-involved individuals, which source makes up the largest portion of the funds directed toward this work?

- Do you have dedicated funding for this work, or do you serve the justice-involved with funds not specifically set aside for this population (i.e., pools of funds for the general population)?
  - How has the use of “general funds” impacted your organization’s ability to serve individuals with justice involvement? *(If applicable)*
  - Are there sources providers could utilize to ensure funds are set aside specifically for returning citizens/the justice-involved?
  - What are common federal, state, or county-level programs/initiatives that providers typically utilize to support returning citizens/justice involved?

*Probes:* Existing resources that could be leveraged for reentry (e.g., services and funds for homelessness, veterans, trauma-informed)

***Wrap Up, Reflections, & Recommendations***

- Of everything we discussed, what do you think is the most important? *Probe:* Priority areas, immediate actions, short- to long-term goals and strategies
- Are there other organizations/individuals you suggest we contact or interventions/ programs we should examine further?
- Is there any research or data you have gathered or are aware of that you recommend we review or that you can share?
- Is there anything we have not talked about that you feel is important to mention, or is there anything else you would like to share (ideas, recommendations, needs)?
- Do you have any questions for our team?

Appendix B: Reentry Stakeholders and Providers in Baltimore City

Stakeholder Sector	Entity Name
<b>Government</b>	Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement
	Mayor’s Office of African American Male Engagement
	Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services
	MD Department of Public Safety & Correctional Services, Social Work & Reentry Services
	Baltimore City Housing Authority
	Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development
	Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
	Mayor’s Office of Employment Development
	MD Department of Labor
	MD Office of the Public Defender
	Baltimore City Council
	Maryland Parole Commission
	University of Maryland
	Enoch Pratt Free Library
	The Federal Bonding Program
	HealthCare Access Maryland, Returning Citizens HealthLink
<b>Nonprofit</b>	No Struggle, No Success
	Marian House
	PIVOT (trauma-informed approach for female returning citizens)
	St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center
	Baltimore Station
	Bon Secours Community Works
	Tuerk House Baltimore
	Maryland Legal Aid (expungement)
	Out For Justice
	Group that inherited Fair Housing testing
	HOPE (Helping Other People Through Empowerment)
	Return Home (website)
	Public Justice Center
	Fair Housing Center
	Maryland Board of Lawyers
	Community Mediation Baltimore (trained mediators support reentry plan process between returning citizen and family)
	PREPARE Parole (volunteers support parole hearings; based on NY Model)
	Charm City Care Connection (substance use harm reduction, East Baltimore)
	Sparc Center (substance use harm reduction, mobile van, East Baltimore)

Stakeholder Sector	Entity Name
	Martha's Place (substance use)
	Civic Works
	Behavioral Health Leadership Institute (mobile van substance use treatment)
<b>Collaboratives/ Coalitions</b>	Community Development Network
	Inclusionary Housing Coalition

A Baltimore City nonprofit, the U.S. Attorney's Reentry Resource Center, Baltimore's Office of Equity and Civil Rights, and the Federal Public Defender produced extensive directories regarding providers in the City:

Source	Link to Directory
Return Home Baltimore	<a href="https://returnhome.org/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwwtWgBhDhARIsAEMcxeAgDhvfWJ-sDk3j9gVaGjrLVZu5NON_jZC4hPbKm4W7HGTRkQ3jeMgaAgdrEALw_wcB">https://returnhome.org/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwwtWgBhDhARIsAEMcxeAgDhvfWJ-sDk3j9gVaGjrLVZu5NON_jZC4hPbKm4W7HGTRkQ3jeMgaAgdrEALw_wcB</a>
United States Attorney's Reentry Resource Guide	<a href="https://www.justice.gov/usao-md/page/file/941351/download">https://www.justice.gov/usao-md/page/file/941351/download</a>
Baltimore Office of Equity and Civil Rights	<a href="https://civilrights.baltimorecity.gov/sites/default/files/ReEntry%20Programs_0.pdf">https://civilrights.baltimorecity.gov/sites/default/files/ReEntry%20Programs_0.pdf</a>
Federal Public Defender for the District of Maryland	<a href="https://md.fd.org/clients/reentry-resource-database?combine=&amp;field_usao_location_tid=34&amp;items_per_page=25">https://md.fd.org/clients/reentry-resource-database?combine=&amp;field_usao_location_tid=34&amp;items_per_page=25</a>

Appendix C: Funding Sources Related to Affordable Housing

Resources Shared by The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)			
Entity	Source	Funding Type	Use of Funds
<b>Capital Sources</b>			
Federal Passthroughs to States for Capital	HOME, Low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC), National Housing Trust Fund	Public	Capital
MD Department of Housing and Community Development (MD DHCD)	Consolidated notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) includes: LIHTC, Housing Trust Fund, HOME, Rental Housing Finance Program, Partnership Rental Housing Program  LIHTC	Public	Capital  Capital/Tax credits
Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Recovery Programs (MORP)	Housing Accelerator Fund- dedicated funding for PSH expected NOFO Summer/Fall 2023	Public	Capital
Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development	Housing Production Trust Fund, Community Safety Works Program, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)	Public	Capital and Services
Traditional Debt		Private	Capital
Private Funders	Abell Foundation	Private	Capital and Services
Momentous/Capital Impact Partners	Multiple (i.e., Diversity in Development - DMV Loan Fund)	Public & Private	Capital (some equity grants available)
Enterprise	Multiple (e.g., Financing, HUD Section 4)	Public & Private	Capital and Grants (TA)
<b>Sources for Operations</b>			
Federal Passthroughs to States for Operating Funds	Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA), Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH), HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Funding (formerly experiencing homeless), HUD Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program	Public	Operating funds

<b>Resources Shared by The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)</b>			
<b>Entity</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Funding Type</b>	<b>Use of Funds</b>
Local Housing Authorities	Vouchers	Public	Operating funds
MD DHCD	Section 811 Rental Assistance (awarded with other DHCD funding)	Public	Operating funds
Private Funders	Abell Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, France-Merrick Foundation, Kaiser Foundation, Meyerhoff, Weinberg, Goldman Sachs, Hirschhorn, Goldseker	Private	Services
<b>Sources for Support Services</b>			
Federal Passthroughs to States for Services	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (SAMHSA PATH) Program, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), CoC Funds, Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF), VASH, HOPWA	Public	Services
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)	Medicaid Housing Services Benefit - Assistance in Community Integration Services (ACIS)	Public	Services
MD DHCD	Homeless Solutions Program	Public	Services
Local city agencies		Public	Services
Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention	Workforce Development Grant (not specific to returning citizens, but can be used this way)	Public	Services
US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	Fair Housing Act	Public	Services
Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development	Programmatic Grants	Public	Services
Governor's Office of Crime Control and Youth Services	Specific source not provided	Public	Services

Resources Shared by The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)			
Entity	Source	Funding Type	Use of Funds
Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement	N/A- It is suspected that they recently began funding programs.	Public	Services
US Department of Health and Human Services - Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services	Medicaid billing for services	Public	Services
US Department of Labor	Employment/job training (specific source not provided)	Public	Services
Private Funders	Abell Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, France-Merrick Foundation, Kaiser Foundation, Meyerhoff, Weinberg, Goldman Sachs, Hirschhorn, Goldseker	Private	Services
Partnerships with local providers		Public & Private	Services



## Appendix D: Rental Criteria

Factor	Criteria
<b>Qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal age to complete application, hold a lease, and contract</li> <li>• Internal Revenue Service Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) requirements - income ceiling, full-time student status</li> <li>• Household income and asset verification</li> <li>• Valid Social Security or Individual Tax ID number</li> <li>• “Approved” or “approved with conditions” score, with favorable references and additional security deposit as required</li> <li>• Rental application fee (non-refundable)</li> </ul>
<b>Occupancy Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximum of two occupants per bedroom, unless local housing code differs</li> </ul>
<b>Restrictions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written approval for pets (non-service animals)</li> <li>• Written approval for waterbeds</li> </ul>
<b>Application Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valid driver’s license, passport, or government-issued picture identification</li> <li>• Most recent six concurrent pay stubs and W-2 or 1099 form</li> </ul>
<b>Fraud &amp; Bankruptcy</b>	Management may decline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications with inaccurate or false information</li> <li>• Applicants with a filed bankruptcy that has not been dismissed or discharged</li> </ul>
<b>Criminal Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management may decline applicants with a history of a conviction for activity that threatened the safety of residents and/or property</li> </ul>

Enterprise Residential has the strictest regulations that HUD allows on criminal background checks based on considerations of risks potential residents pose to apartment community safety. Enterprise Residential’s Rental Criteria and Criminal Conviction Policy state that criminal background checks may be used as qualifying criteria for rental. Enterprise Residential uses a third-party provider, Yardi,<sup>8</sup> to screen applicants. ECD provided Yardi with its screening criteria to produce color-coded results (red, yellow, green) viewed by property managers. Property managers do not see information behind the decision the system produces. Only more executive ECD staff have the capacity to view background information and determine whether to override the system’s decision based on internal criteria (see Appendix E). The process results in the following three outcomes:

- **Accept:** Applicants with approved applications pay the standard security deposit.
- **Conditional Acceptance:** Applications not accepted initially due to an applicant’s credit history (no or marginal credit) are elevated for additional review. Conditional applications are accepted, but applicants pay higher security deposits ranging from \$500 to one month’s rent because of consideration of increased risk.
- **Denial:** Applicants denied because of credit history are encouraged to apply to the Credit.org Rent4Success program; applicants can receive conditional approval if they present a certificate from the program and a deposit fee. Applicants with a criminal history are either accepted or denied for housing. Applicants can appeal denials to explain their circumstances and histories.

Appendix E: Sample Offense History Assessed in Applicant Screening

Offenses	Felony (Years)	Misdemeanor (Years)
Traffic Violations	None	None
Incarceration (Due to Conviction) Release Date	None	None
Gambling	2	1
Alcohol Related	2	0
Cybercrime	3	2
Embezzlement	3	2
Disturbance to Peace & Order	5	3
Fraud	5	3
Assault &/or Battery	7	3
Robbery, Theft/Larceny	7	3
Drug - Sale, Manufacture, Distribution	20	7
Sex Crimes	Any	Any
Homicide	Any	Any

In addition to the criminal background check criterion, requirements for valid government-issued identification and income verification can disproportionately affect individuals with justice involvement who may have difficulty promptly obtaining identification or supplying employment history upon release from prison or jail. Resources that Enterprise Residential provides to applicants, such as the Credit.org Rent4Success program for applicants with marginal or no credit, also use criminal background screening and require two years of verifiable, favorable rental history.<sup>9</sup> This process may pose challenges for individuals recently incarcerated.

Appeals Process. Applicants can appeal a denial and receive instructions for the process within denial documents. Enterprise will ask applicants for additional information if they have a conviction in the scope of the offenses in the screening criteria. According to ECD staff, most appeals are due to mistakes in records, to challenge denials based on the age of the offense (10+ years), or the applicant’s age at the time of charge. An applicant has five business days from the receipt of the notification of the right to appeal to provide additional information. Enterprise will review the response and decide whether to override the initial decision. This information can be emailed, mailed, or provided via hardcopy delivery. An application is deemed abandoned if an applicant does not respond to the request for information within the five-day period.

## Appendix F: Overview of Appendix D and Appendix E

Enterprise Residential rental application policies and practices provide insights about the housing process that can inform Enterprise's strategies to support residents with criminal legal involvement. Although the screening data did not include property-level or applicant information about applications and review decisions, the findings have important implications. Key considerations at the intersection of housing and criminal legal reform include further examination of rental policies and housing market conditions that may particularly impact justice-involved individuals and their families:

- Criminal background check processes for rental applications and financial counseling programs, and perceptions of returning citizens' risk to residents and property. Aspects of the process, including use of third-party screening vendors, screening criteria, and lookback periods, are important to examine, identify, and reduce implicit and explicit bias. There are two components of HUD's 2016 Guidance on Application of Fair Housing Act Standards to the Use of Criminal Records by Providers of Housing and Real Estate-Related Transactions that may have implications on ECDs current application processes:
  - **Criminal Record Screenings.** Housing providers are responsible for any decision reached during tenancy screenings, even if they use a third-party screening company. "If housing providers choose to use criminal background screening policies or practices, they should consider taking the following steps to avoid potential violation of the Fair Housing Act: [...] Avoid the use of third-party screening companies that: 1) utilize algorithms that may contain racial or other prohibited bias in their design, 2) have not been shown to reliably predict risk, may produce inaccurate information about the applicant, or 3) make the decision for the housing provider."
  - **Individualized Assessments.** Housing providers should use an individualized assessment (case-by-case decision) when reviewing criminal record information on applications. HUD guidance states that housing providers should "conduct an individualized assessment that considers relevant mitigating information beyond that contained in an individual's criminal record, as this is likely to have a less discriminatory effect than categorical exclusions that do not take such additional information into account."<sup>10</sup>
- Requirements for government-issued identification such as a Social Security number, driver's license, or passport.
- Proof of employment and income history.
- Credit experience and history.
- Requirements for multi-year verifiable, favorable rental history.
- Mailing and email address notification and time limits to respond to requests for information, which might create communication barriers for individuals with unstable housing or disconnection from social supports or sources of information.
- Access to affordable housing, especially for individuals with lower incomes, educational attainment, wage-earning opportunities, and savings.
- Size of affordable and rent-controlled units for families.
- Location and availability of high-quality, safe housing in communities to which individuals are returning.

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