



## Homelessness Among Drug-Using Adult Male Arrestees in Anchorage, 2000-2003

### The Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) Program

This Research Overview presents information on the prevalence of homelessness among Anchorage arrestees. The data come from the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program, a national multi-site drug monitoring research project. ADAM was designed to collect detailed information on drug use behaviors among those booked into local jails and charged with violating at least one local or state criminal statute. Researchers at each site entered local jails for 14 consecutive days four times a year to conduct face-to-face interviews with arrestees. Anchorage was an ADAM site from 1999 to 2003.

The data presented here are limited in three important ways. First, they are limited to adults. Anchorage did not collect information from juvenile arrestees. Second, they are limited to males. (Data for female arrestees will be published in a future Research Overview). Third, the data presented here are limited to drug-using arrestees. As explained below, detailed housing information was only collected from arrestees who reported using illicit

drugs within one year of arrest. Readers are encouraged to keep these sample specifications in mind when interpreting the data.

### Calendaring

ADAM collected month-by-month housing information from arrestees using a retrospective 12-month calendar. Because of its focus on illicit drug use, calendar information was obtained only from those arrestees who reported any form of illicit drug use in the preceding year. Respondents were first asked to note significant life events that occurred during the 12-month preceding arrest – for example, birthdays,

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Adult Male Arrestees**

	Domiciled	Homeless*
<b>Race</b>		
White	43.2 %	41.1 %
Black/African American	12.9	12.8
American Indian/Alaska Native	28.9	34.2
Pacific Islander	2.6	0.9
Asian	1.8	0.9
Other	3.5	2.7
Multiracial	6.1	6.8
<b>Hispanic origin</b>		
No	91.1 %	92.7 %
Yes	7.7	6.8
<b>Highest educational degree</b>		
High school/GED	45.6 %	42.0 %
Vocational/trade school	10.1	11.9
Some college/assoc. degree	21.5	19.6
4-year college degree or higher	4.9	2.3
No degree	17.4	24.2
<b>Current work status</b>		
Full-time employment	47.0 %	26.0 %
Work part-time	7.0	9.6
Unemployed	37.9	52.5
Retired	1.1	0.9
Disabled for work	5.8	11.0
<b>Current legal marital status</b>		
Single, never married	56.7 %	57.5 %
Divorced	16.5	19.6
Legally separated	4.4	5.0
Widowed	1.3	2.7
Married	20.2	15.1

\* Homeless for at least one month in year prior to arrest.

**Figure 2. Percent of Adult Male Arrestees Homeless at Least One Month in Year Prior to Arrest**

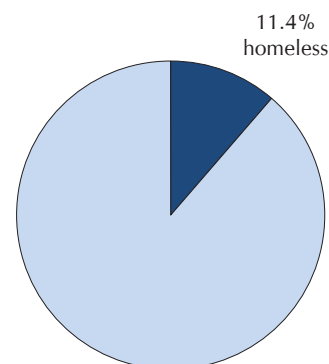


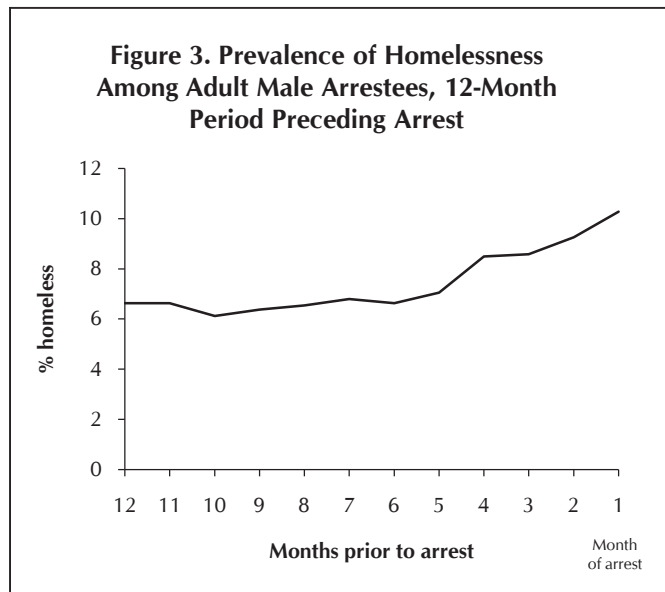
Figure 2. Sample Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) Drug Use Calendar  
(Adapted from original.)

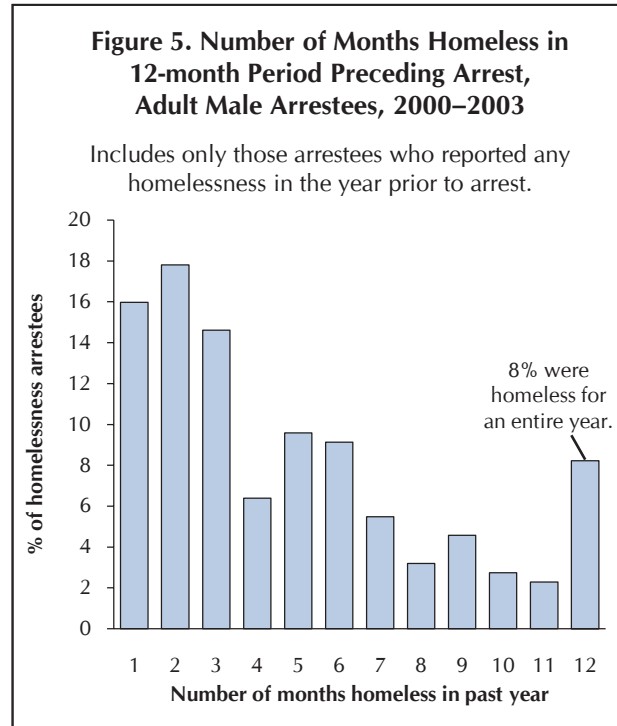
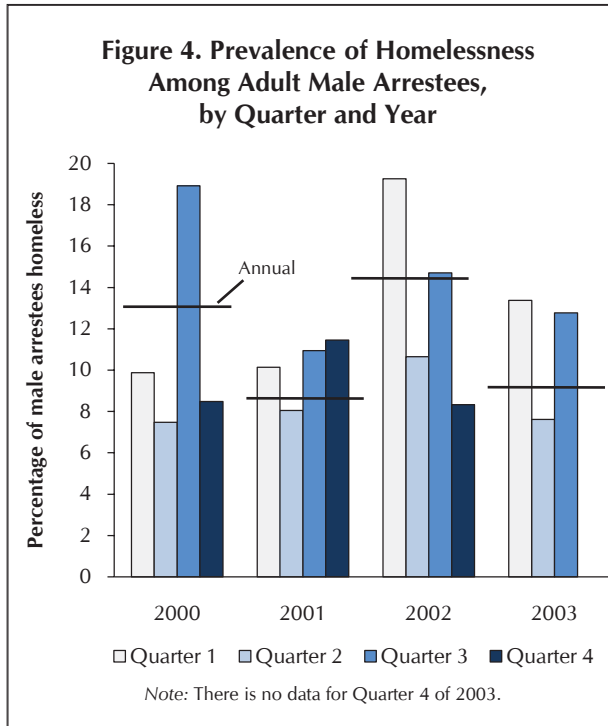
[LABEL]	PAST 12 MONTHS											
	M12	M11	M10	M09	M08	M07	M06	M05	M04	M03	M02	M01
HOLIDAYS												
BIRTHDAYS												
OTHER EVENTS												
<b>HOUSING STATUS</b>												
IN-PATIENT												
OUT-PATIENT												
MENTAL HEALTH												
ARREST												
JAIL PRISON												
ALCOHOL												
MARIJUANA												
CRACK/ROCK COCAINE												
POWDER COCAINE												
HEROINE												
METHAMPHETAMINE												
OTHER DRUG												

religious holidays, anniversaries, and major happenings in their life that occurred in the past year. These significant life events were then used as reference points to aid with recall of their housing status for each month during the preceding year.

To assess housing status, arrestees’ were asked where they lived “most of the time” (defined as 15 days or more) for each of the 12 months preceding arrest. Response choices were: (1) *house, mobile home, or apartment*; (2) *residential hotel, rooming house, dormitory, group home, student housing, or military base*; (3) *hospital, treatment facility, or extended care facility*; (4) *shelter*, or; (5) *no fixed residence or homeless*. Arrestees who answered (4) or (5) were coded as homeless for the analyses reported here.

In addition to being asked about their housing status, arrestees were also asked to provide information on any admissions to in-patient and out-patient substance abuse treatment, over-





night stays in mental hospitals, arrests, incarcerations in jail or prison, and alcohol and drug use. (These data will appear in Research Overview No. 7.)

**Characteristics of Homelessness of Male Adult Drug-Using Arrestees**

- Between 2000 and 2003 11.4% of arrestees who used illicit drugs in the year preceding arrest were homeless for at least one month.
- With the exception of two things—not having a high school degree and unemployment—the demographic characteristics of homeless arrestees population did not differ greatly from those who were domiciled.
- There was notable variability in the prevalence of homelessness among arrestees from quarter to quarter and year to year.
- The risk of homelessness increased markedly in the months preceding arrest.
- Most arrestees who experienced homelessness in the prior year were without permanent, stable housing for four months or less.
- A significant percentage of arrestees experienced chronic homelessness—10 months or more—in the past year. Fully eight percent were homeless for the entire year.

*Research compiled by Brad A. Myrstol, Assistant Professor*



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