

2013

Wisconsin's Mass Incarceration of African American Males: Workforce Challenges for 2013


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Recommended Citation

Pawasarat, John and Quinn, Lois M., "Wisconsin's Mass Incarceration of African American Males: Workforce Challenges for 2013" (2013). *ETI Publications*. 9.

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**Wisconsin's Mass Incarceration
of African American Males:
Workforce Challenges for 2013**

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2013

Executive Summary

Among the most critical workforce issues facing Wisconsin are governmental policies and practices leading to mass incarceration of African American men and suspensions of driving privileges to low-income adults. The prison population in Wisconsin has more than tripled since 1990, fueled by increased government funding for drug enforcement (rather than treatment) and prison construction, three-strike rules, mandatory minimum sentence laws, truth-in-sentencing replacing judicial discretion in setting punishments, concentrated policing in minority communities, and state incarceration for minor probation and supervision violations. Particularly impacted were African American males, with the 2010 U.S. Census showing Wisconsin having the highest black male incarceration rate in the nation. In Milwaukee County over half of African American men in their 30s have served time in state prison.

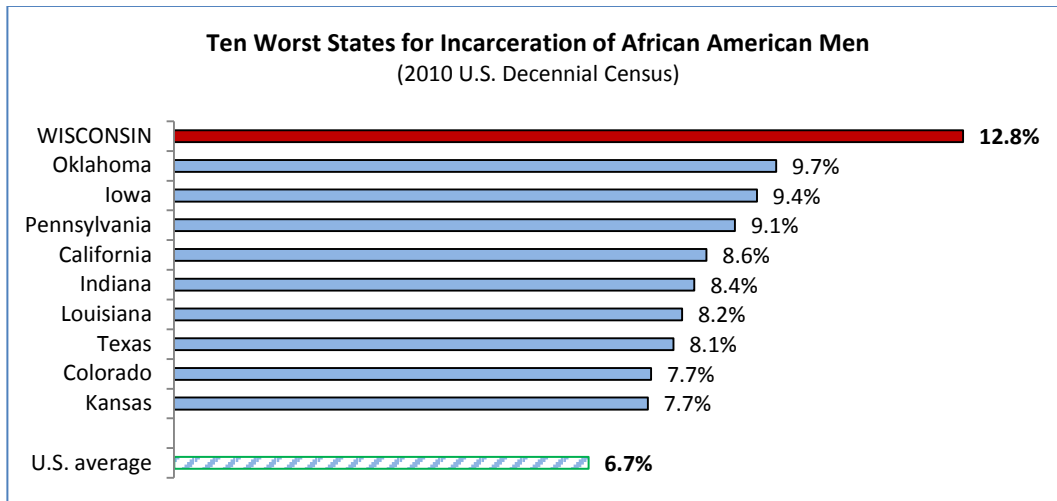
This report uses two decades of state Department of Corrections (DOC) and Department of Transportation (DOT) files to assess employment and training barriers facing African American men with a history of DOC offenses and DOT violations. The report focuses on 26,222 African American males from Milwaukee County incarcerated in state correctional facilities from 1990 to 2012 (including a third with only non-violent crimes) and another 27,874 men with DOT violations preventing them from legally driving (many for failures to pay fines and civil forfeitures).

Prison time is the most serious barrier to employment, making ex-offender populations the most difficult to place and sustain in full-time employment. When DOT driver's licensing history is also considered, transportation barriers make successful labor force attachment even less likely. Yet, most of the recent state policy discussions about preparing the Wisconsin workforce and debates over redistribution of government job training dollars have largely ignored African American men and relegated ex-offender populations to a minor (if not invisible) place in Wisconsin's labor force.

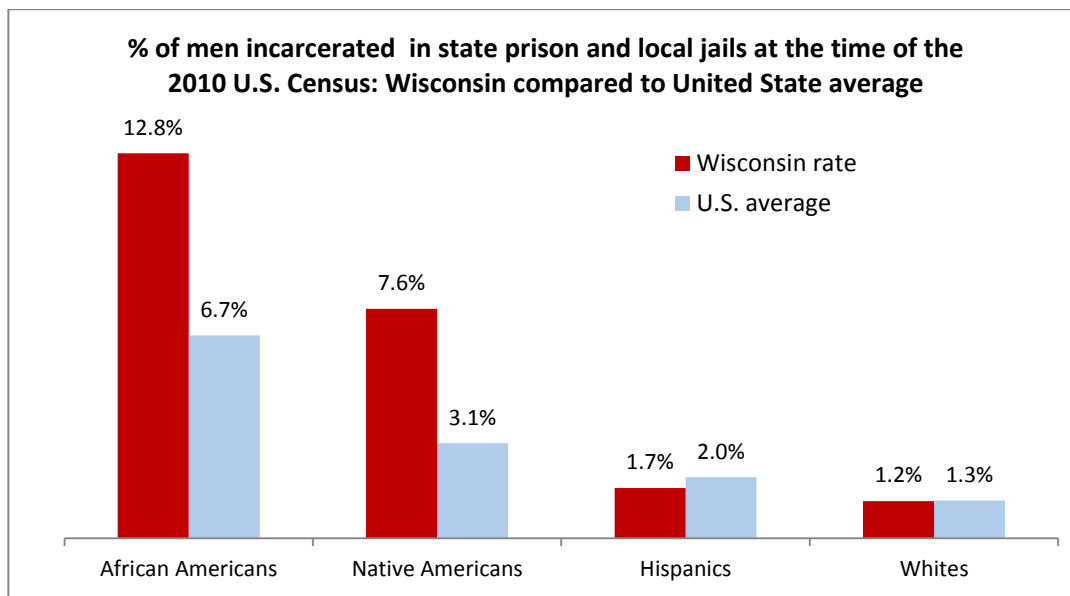
- This paper quantifies Milwaukee County African American male populations in need of increased workforce policy attention and program support.
- Proposed changes in state policies and legislation have been brought forward by religious groups, the Milwaukee County District Attorney, The Sentencing Project, and others to reduce Wisconsin's levels of incarceration. They deserve serious consideration.
- Programs to address reentry and workforce needs are currently operated by the Department of Corrections and non-profit organizations but serve only a small portion of those in need. These should be expanded and tested for their effectiveness.
- Recognizing that there is no quick fix for ex-offender populations, the cost savings from reductions in the prison population should be used to fund employment and training programs for those in and out of corrections and to support programs to assist those without driver's licenses, an essential employment credential.
- The Windows to Work, a joint effort between the DOC and workforce investment boards, should be expanded. If successful, these efforts will save the state money, help ensure public safety, and reduce recidivism.

Findings

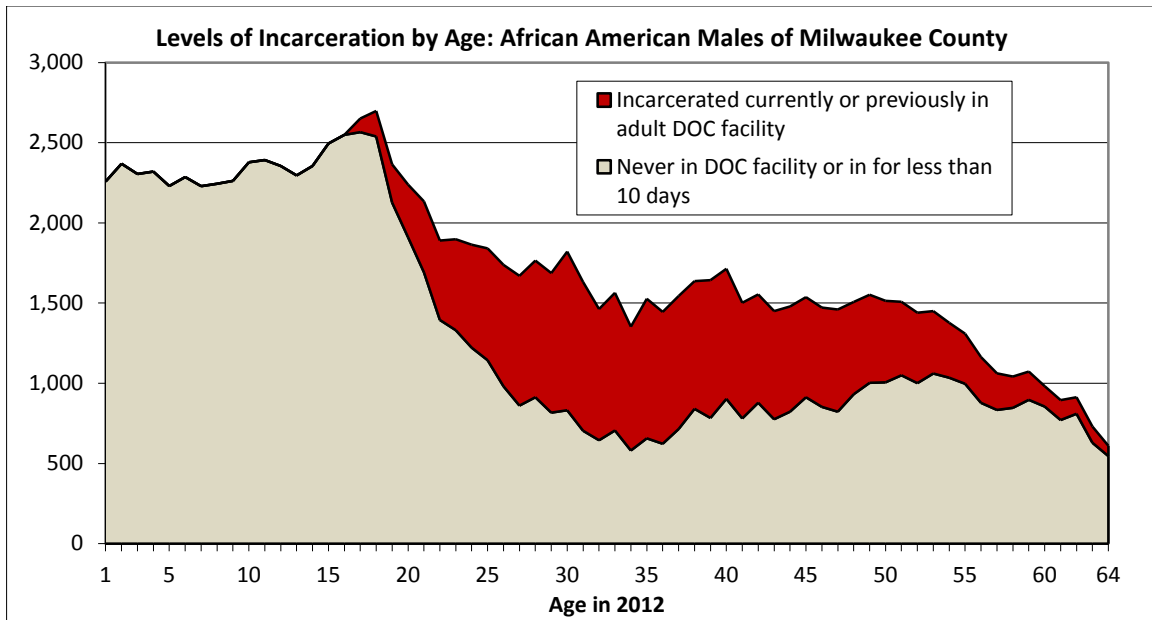
1. In April of 2010 when the U.S. Census Bureau conducted its decennial count of Wisconsin residents, it found 12.8% (or 1 in 8) of African American working age men behind bars in state prisons and local jails. This rate of mass incarceration is the highest for African American men in the country and nearly double the national average of 6.7% (or 1 in 15). See graph, page 8.



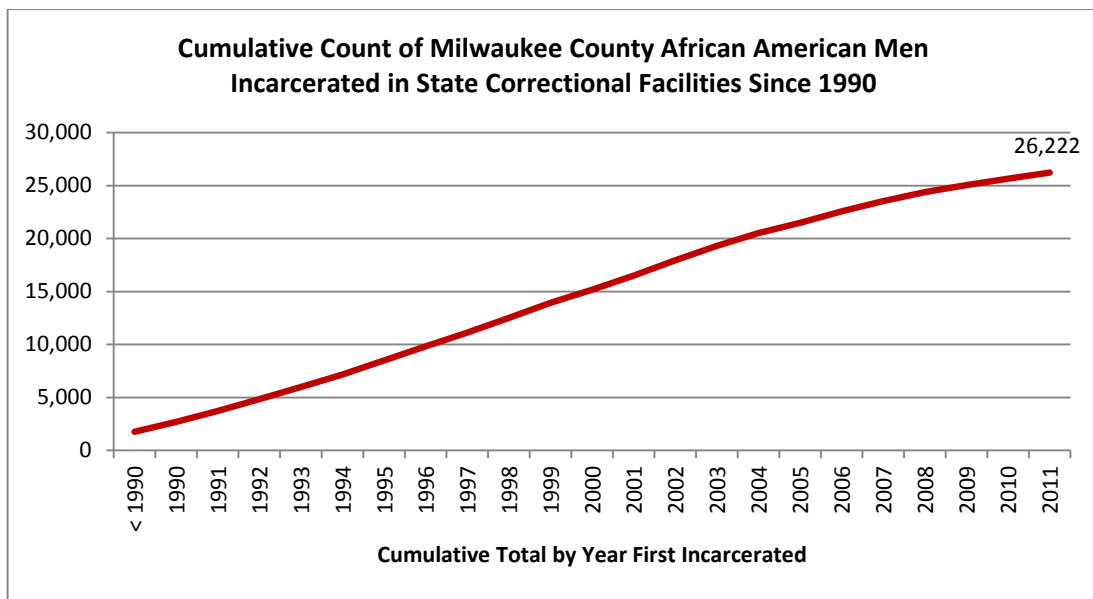
Wisconsin also leads the nation in incarceration of Native American men, with 7.6% of working age men (or 1 in 13) in state prisons and local jails in 2010, compared to 3.1% (or 1 in 32) nationally. By contrast, Wisconsin's rate of incarceration of white men is similar to the national average.



2. State DOC records show incarceration rates at epidemic levels for African American males in Milwaukee County. Over half of African American men in their 30s and half of men in their early 40s have been incarcerated in state correctional facilities.



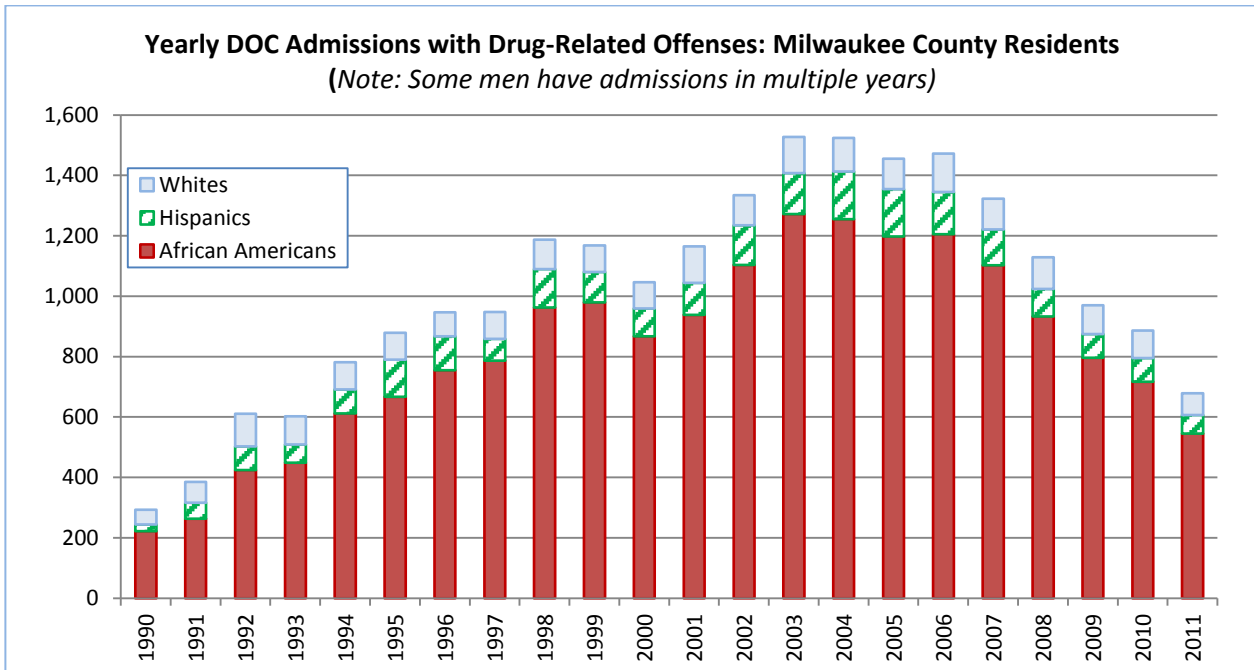
- From 1990 to 2011 Wisconsin incarcerated 26,222 African American men from Milwaukee County in state correctional facilities. As of January 2012, 20,591 men had been released back into the community and 5,631 were still imprisoned.



- By January 2012 the 26,222 African American men from Milwaukee County had been imprisoned for a total of 42,675,397 days (or almost 117,000 years). At the average 2012 corrections' operating cost of \$91 a day per capita cited by Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau, the cost of this incarceration would total \$3.88 billion at 2012 prices.¹ In early 2012 the state was spending over half a million dollars a day to incarcerated 5,631 African American men from Milwaukee County.
- 8,287, or one-third, of the African American men incarcerated since 1990 showed only non-violent offenses.

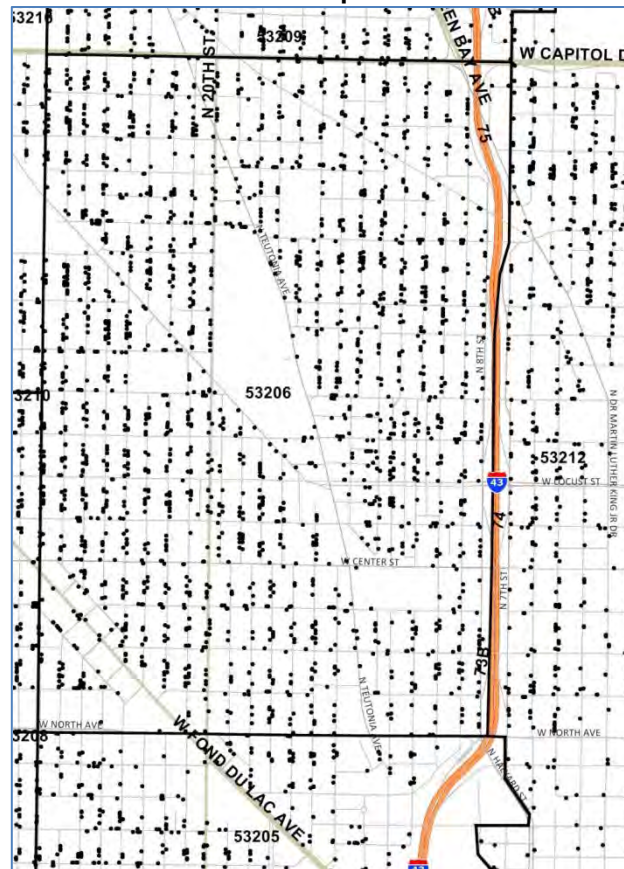
¹ **Adult Corrections Programs, Informational Paper 56** (Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau, January 2013), p.3.

6. Forty percent (N=10,497) of the African American males from Milwaukee County incarcerated since 1990 were drug offenders. In the early 1990s African Americans had 4 times as many annual admissions for drug-related offenses as white men. As drug offenses soared in the 2002 to 2005 years African American men had 11 to 12 times as many drug-related prison admissions as white men.

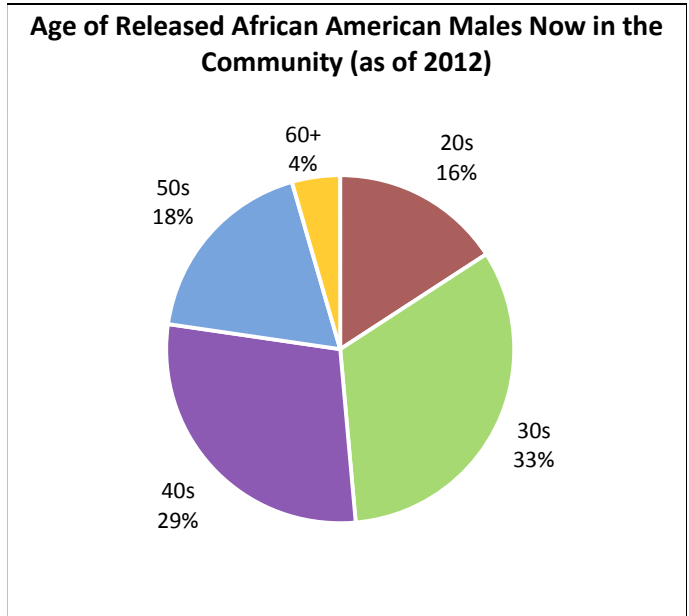


7. Given the high levels of racial and economic segregation in Milwaukee County, two-thirds of the county's incarcerated African American men came from 6 zip codes in the poorest neighborhoods of Milwaukee. The ability of ex-offenders to help support their families is very limited for many released inmates. Most ex-offenders return from prison into inner city neighborhoods that have extremely large gaps (i.e., 25 to 1 in May 2009) between the number of active job seekers compared to available full-time work.

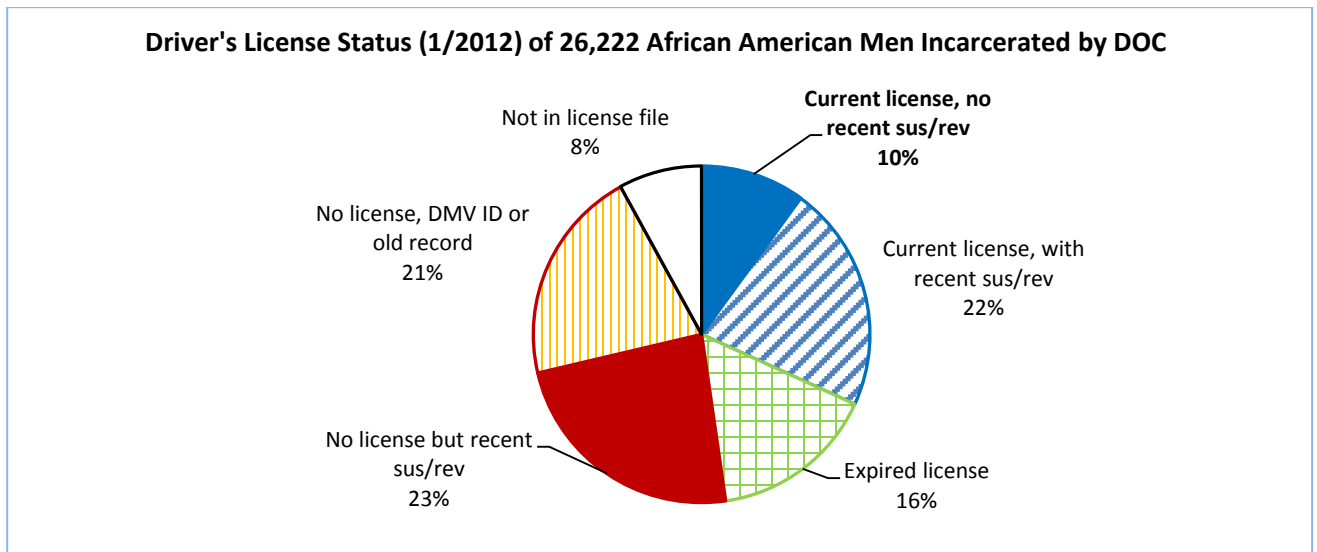
Concentration of Released and Incarcerated Ex-Offenders in Milwaukee Zipcode 53206



8. The majority of African American male ex-offenders released from DOC facilities to Milwaukee County are of working age. Most (78%) released from DOC facilities since 1990 are under 50, with only 4% aged 60 or above.



9. The driver's license is essential for getting to job sites and for avoiding arrests for illegal driving, yet only 10% of African American men with DOC incarceration records (2,627 out of 26,222) showed a current valid Wisconsin driver's license with no recent suspensions or revocations, as of January 2012.



10. In addition to the ex-offenders with driver's license problems, another 27,874 African American men in Milwaukee County (and not in the DOC incarcerated population) had revoked or suspended licenses. These included 5,622 men with revoked licenses, 11,801 with suspended licenses, and 10,451 with suspensions in the DOT file but no driver's license. Without a license, workers are unable to legally drive to job sites throughout the metro area and subject to police arrests, particularly when driving through suburban communities.

Recommendations

Policies and programs should be focused on four groups: (1) offenders not yet sentenced, (2) those incarcerated in state correctional institutions and approaching release, (3) ex-offenders previously released from DOC facilities and now living in the community, and (4) non-offending residents, including youth, who would immediately benefit from preventative initiatives supporting their employability. Funding for ex-offender populations' employment initiatives should be increased, using savings from reduced incarceration of non-violent offenders and diversion of drug offenders into treatment programs.

1. **Changes in laws contributing to mass incarceration of lower-risk offenders and alternatives to imprisonment** (funded with the savings from reductions in the prison population) **are critically needed** with the focus on increasing public safety, supporting employment, and strengthening families.

Recommendations for reducing levels of imprisonment and improving life outcomes for offenders have been advanced by religious leaders throughout the state ("11x15 Campaign for Justice" at prayforjusticeinwi.org), Milwaukee County District Attorney John Chisholm (February 2011 address on reducing crime and prison numbers at archive.law.marquette.edu/s3/site/images/events/chisholm-speech.pdf), The Sentencing Project (www.sentencingproject.org), and the Commission on Reducing Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System (report and appendices posted at www.eti.uwm.edu/reprints/DisparitiesCommissionReport.pdf and www.eti.uwm.edu/reprints/DisparitiesCommissionAppendix.pdf). See also, "The Cost of Corrections: Wisconsin and Minnesota" by the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance, April 2010 at <https://wistax.org/publication/the-cost-of-corrections-wisconsin-and-minnesota>.

2. **Technical violators** of probation rules should be diverted, whenever appropriate, to community supervision to allow employed ex-offenders **to continue working**.
3. Programs such as **Windows to Work**, a joint effort between the DOC and workforce investment boards, should be expanded to improve **employment readiness**, including restoration and repair of the driver's license for those with fixable problems. Those unable to secure or repair their license should be given assistance obtaining a state photo ID. Obtaining a driver's license and clearing up license suspensions and revocations should also be a priority employment initiative for those already released into the community.
4. **Transitional jobs programs** for released inmates and for offenders diverted from incarceration are needed in communities with high unemployment and job gaps.
5. Funding for employment training, job placement, and driver's licensing should target the large population of **black males approaching adulthood in Milwaukee County**. Without such investments the population incarcerated will likely only increase and public safety problems escalate.
6. **State aids funding free driver's education** in school districts where the families of more than half of the students are poor or near poor would advance the engagement of low-income youth in the labor force.

Part One:

Mass Incarceration of African American Males

Two issues stand out when reviewing incarceration rates for Wisconsin residents. First is that the United States has the highest number of incarcerated persons and the highest rate of incarceration in the world, according to international prison population databases. (See Appendix A, page 31.) The total incarceration rate for the state of Wisconsin is similar to the U.S. average.

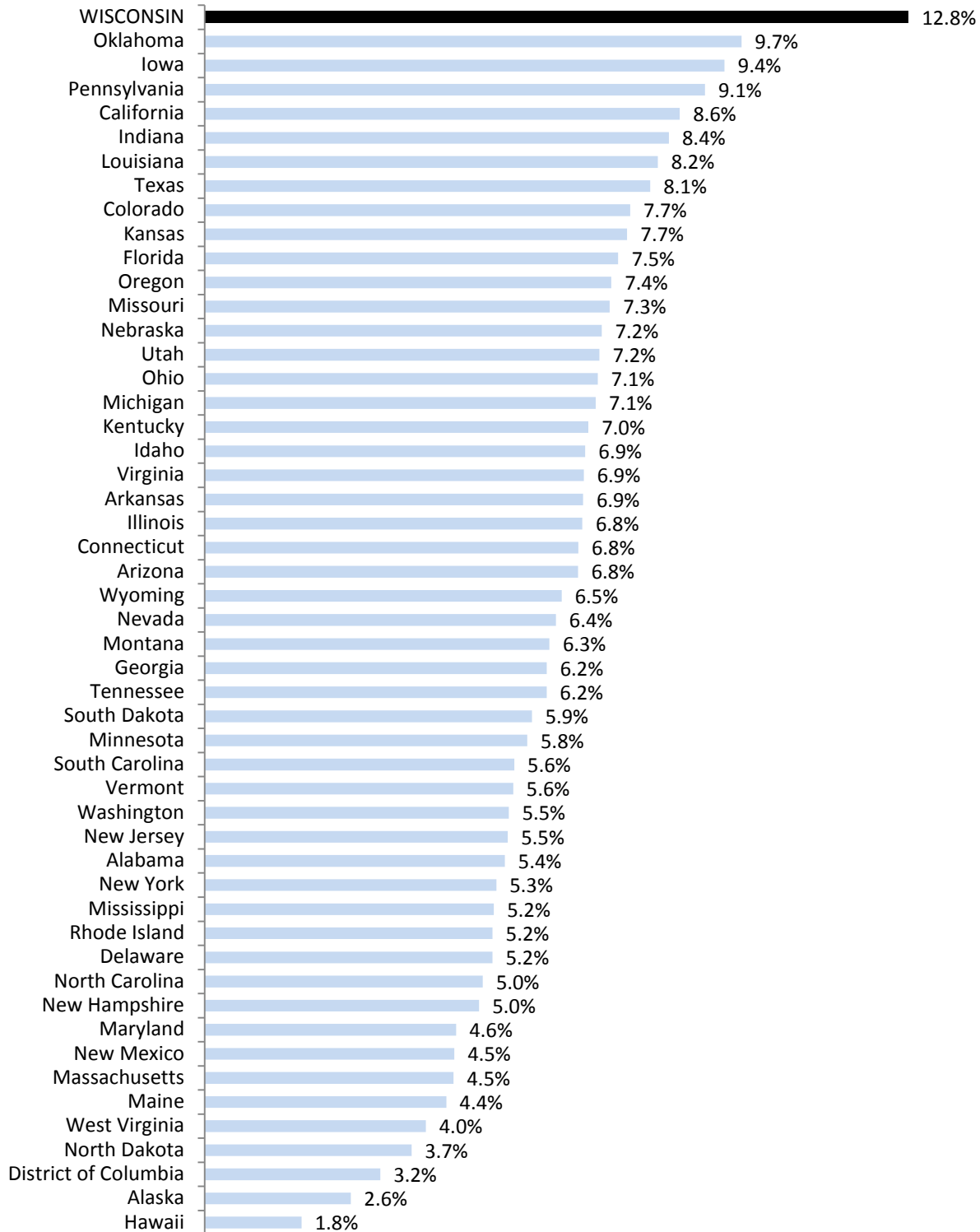
What makes Wisconsin unique is its exceptionally high rate of imprisonment for African American males. Wisconsin's African American male incarceration rate is the highest in the United States. In fact, the rate is 32% higher than the second worst ranking state (Oklahoma), according to the U.S. 2010 Census counts.

Given wide disparities in income among racial groups in Wisconsin and the intense levels of segregation in the Milwaukee metropolitan area, large numbers of ex-offenders released from Wisconsin correctional institutions reside in the poorest neighborhoods of Milwaukee – areas which have seen dramatic job losses and foreclosure actions during the economic recession. Bringing ex-offenders into full engagement in the current labor force is one of the most important challenges for Milwaukee and for the state.

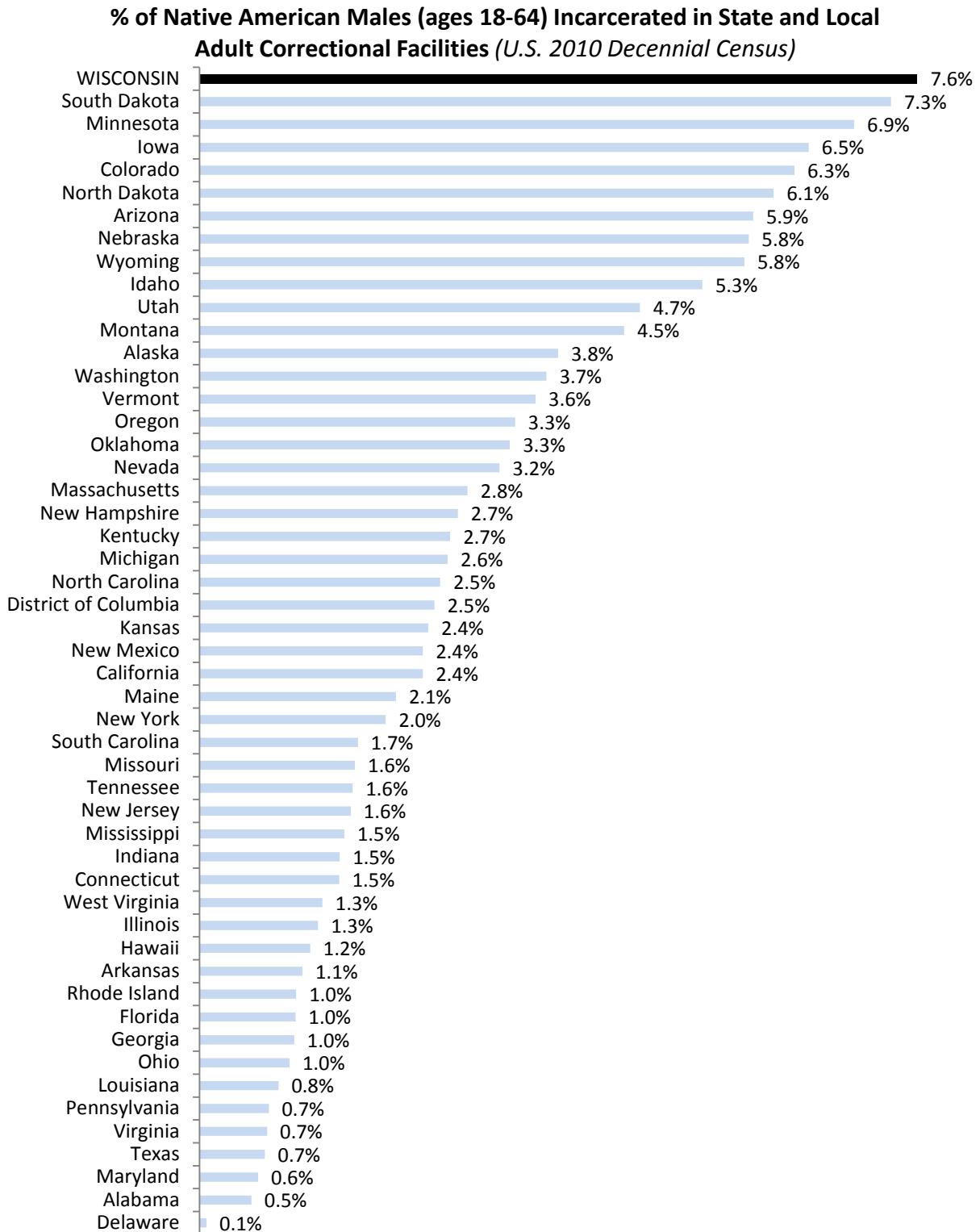
Wisconsin has highest incarceration rate in U.S. for black males.

In 2010 the U.S. decennial census count of men (ages 18-64) incarcerated in state and local correctional facilities showed Wisconsin with the highest incarceration rate for African American men in the United States, with 12.3% (or 1 in 8 men) behind bars. Wisconsin's rate is far higher than those of its neighboring states. The rate for Illinois is 6.8%; for Michigan the rate is 7.1%.

% of African American Males (ages 18-64) Incarcerated in State and Local Adult Correctional Facilities (U.S. 2010 Decennial Census)

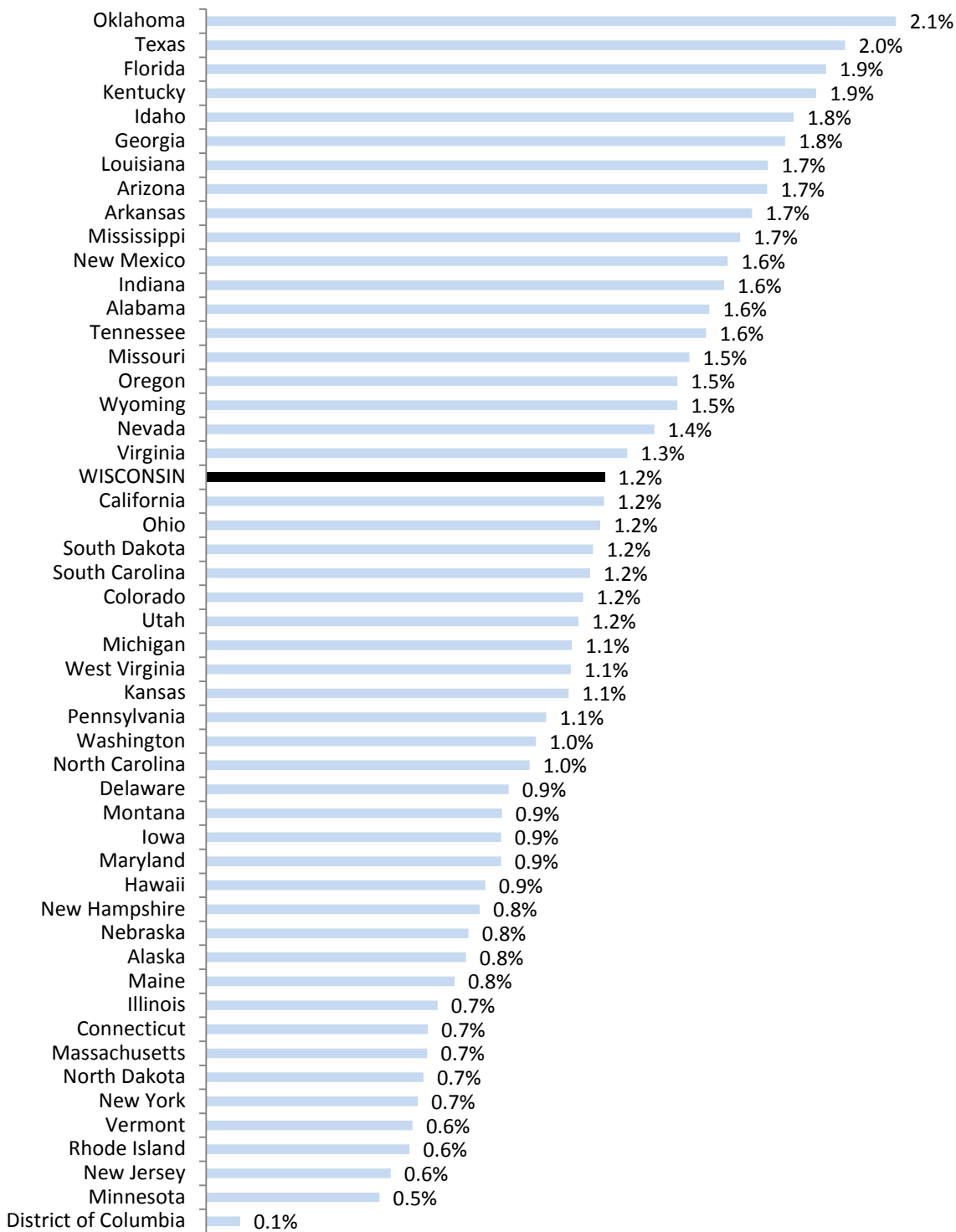


Wisconsin also showed the highest rate of incarceration for Native Americans, according to the 2010 U.S. Census, with 7.6% (or 1 in 13 men) incarcerated in state and local correctional facilities.



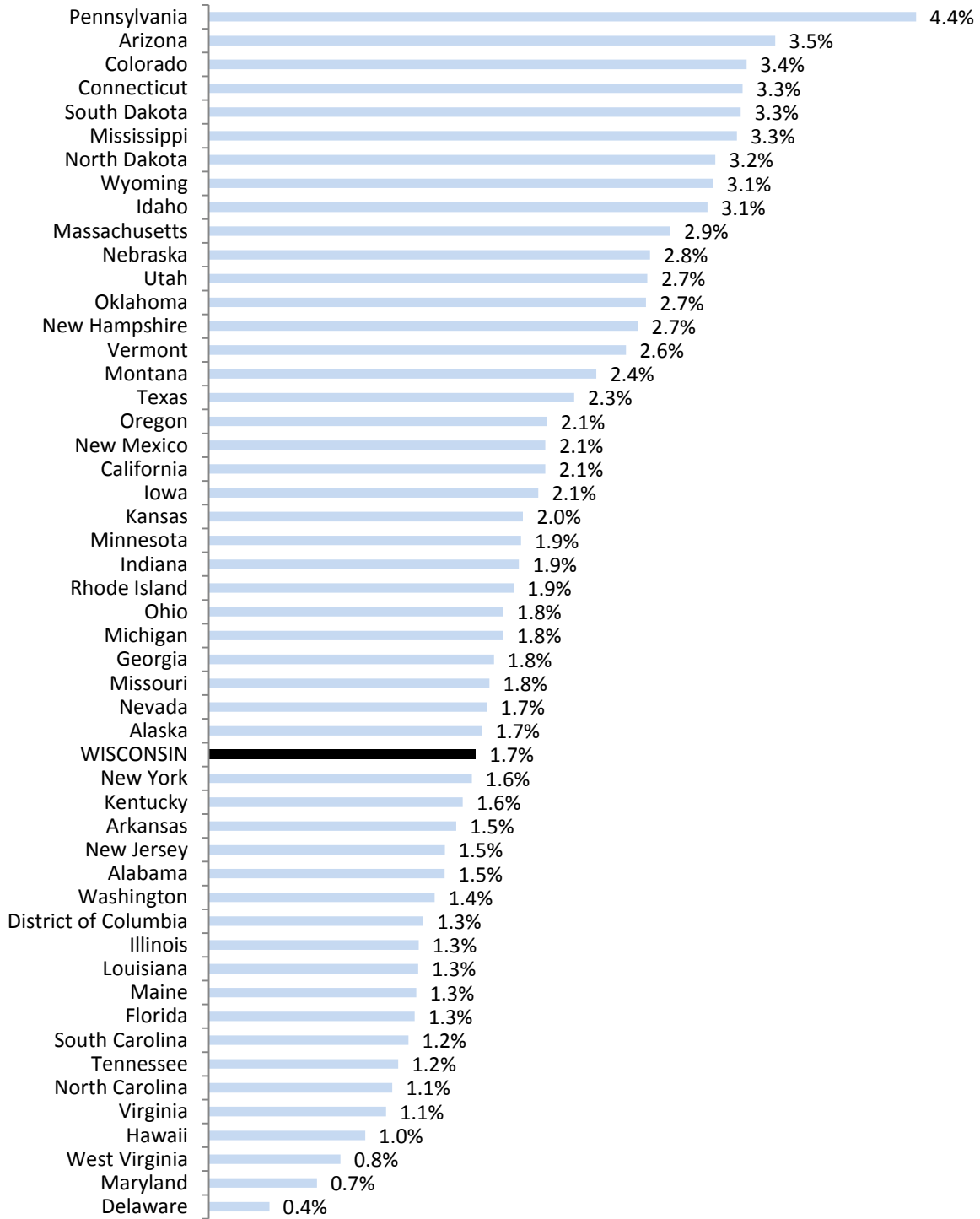
The incarceration rate for white males in Wisconsin was 1.24% (or 1 in 81 men), nearly identical to the national average of 1.25% (or 1 in 80). This rate is ten times less than the Wisconsin incarceration levels for African American men, according to the 2010 Census, but still above that of most of the rest of the world (see page 31).

% of White Men (ages 18-64) Incarcerated in State and Local Adult Correctional Institutions (U.S. 2010 Decennial Census)



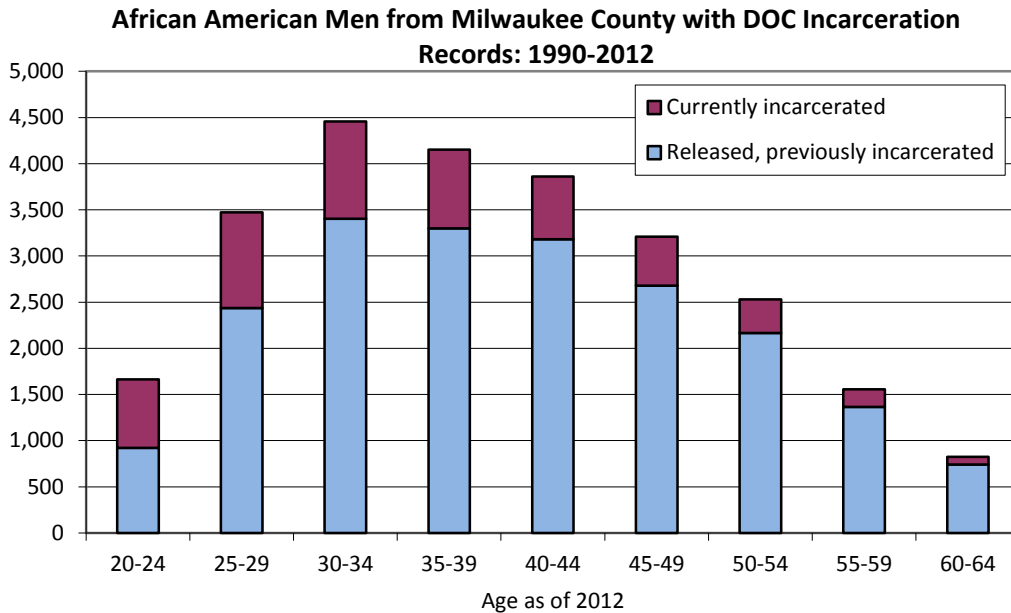
The Wisconsin incarceration rate for Hispanic males was 1.7% (or 1 in 60 men), below the national average of 2.0%.

% of Hispanic Men (ages 18-64) Incarcerated in State and Local Adult Correctional Facilities (U.S. 2010 Decennial Census)



Staggering levels of black incarceration impede post-release employment success.

Since 1990 Wisconsin has incarcerated over 100,000 Wisconsin residents in state correctional facilities. By 2012, a total of 26,222 African American men from Milwaukee County had been incarcerated by the DOC, not including men housed for very brief periods in secure detention. Most of these men are of prime working age.



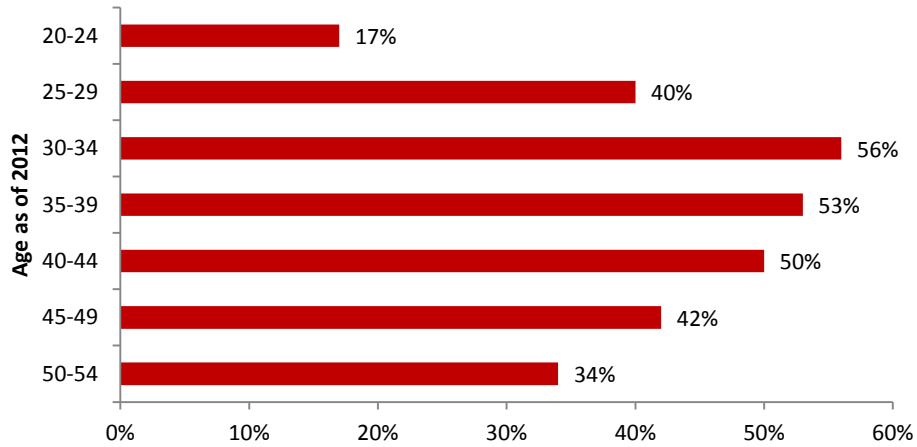
Milwaukee County African American Males Incarcerated in the DOC System, Ages 20 through 54

Age as of 2012	Currently incarcerated (1/2012)	Formerly Incarcerated (1990-2011)	Total Incarcerated	U.S. Census: 2010 population in Milwaukee County	Total 2010 resident population + in prison	% with DOC incarceration
20-24	739	923	1,662	9,082	9,821	17%
25-29	1,036	2,436	3,472	7,623	8,659	40%
30-34	1,054	3,402	4,456	6,871	7,925	56%
35-39	850	3,301	4,151	6,998	7,848	53%
40-44	679	3,183	3,862	7,111	7,790	50%
45-49	532	2,678	3,210	7,041	7,573	42%
50-54	362	2,167	2,529	7,012	7,374	34%
Total, 20-54	5,252	18,090	23,342	51,738	56,990	41%

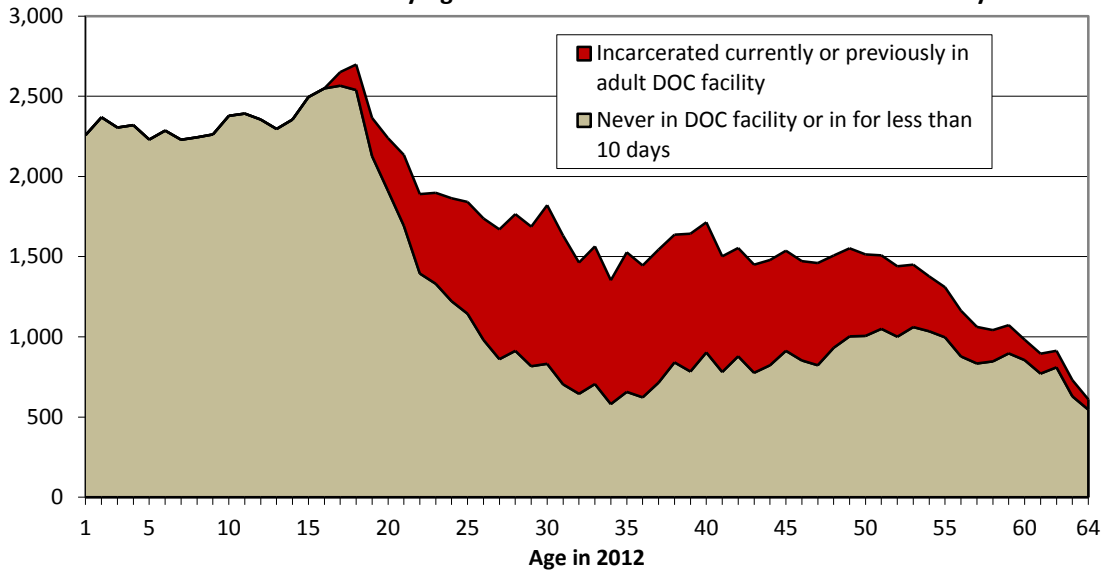
The incarcerated population excludes persons imprisoned for brief periods in secure detention.
The Census count is of non-Hispanic blacks.

The volume of black males of prime working age imprisoned has increased to such an extent that over half of all African American men from Milwaukee County in their 30s and half of men in their early 40s have been or currently are in adult DOC correctional institutions.

Est. Percent of Milwaukee County African American Males Currently or Previously Incarcerated in State Facilities



Levels of Incarceration by Age: African American Males of Milwaukee County



Having completed their time in prison, often for non-violent crimes and drug-related offenses, to date these men have received little attention in the state’s “skills development” and “talent pool” workforce discussions.² Ex-offenders are a largely ignored source of labor force talent and yet are least likely to be successfully engaged in sustained employment due to their felony records, time out of the labor force, persistent legal problems, low education attainment levels, restrictions on access to student loans, limited

² The 2012 **Be Bold 2: Growing Wisconsin’s Talent Pool** report by Competitive Wisconsin, for example, ignores both African American ex-offenders and coming-of-age African American males as priority populations in need of employment training and job support, dismissing most current Wisconsin workforce initiatives as “focused more on what would be considered anti-poverty efforts rather than worker advancement or prosperity-oriented efforts.” Instead the paper supports funding easier-to-serve populations by using government funds for “worker training programs that assist current workers to advance, and [thus] open up entry-level positions for others.”

government supports for education and vocational training, high recidivism rates, and driver's license suspensions and revocations.

Given their prior employment problems, ex-offenders were particularly hard-hit by the economic recession.³ Most return to neighborhood where the job gap between job seekers and available job openings is extremely high.

- Job openings surveys conducted by the Employment and Training Institute found 25 job seekers for every 1 available full-time job opening in May 2009 in the central city Milwaukee zipcodes with the highest concentrations of returning ex-offenders. Even prior to the recession in May 2006 the job gap in these neighborhoods was 7 to 1.⁴
- A majority (89%) of full-time job openings in the region (in May 2009) required education and training beyond high school or occupation-specific prior job experience.
- In the first two years of the recession African American males saw the bottom drop out of their employment in large and mid-size private companies in the Milwaukee area, with a 24% decrease in "blue collar" employment (i.e., jobs in the occupational areas of skilled workers, semi-skilled operatives, and laborers), according to company reports filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. No other major racial/ethnic group experienced such a high proportion of blue collar job losses.⁵
- African American men from the Milwaukee area saw a disproportionate loss of construction trade apprenticeship jobs during the recession, suffering 15% of apprenticeship job losses (even though they comprised only 8% of active apprentices) and showing an unassignment rate of 14% (compared to a 9% rate for white apprentices). The higher unemployment rates for African American apprentices could not be explained by the "last hired, first fired" standard; on average, African Americans who were unassigned had started their apprenticeship programs 11 months before the unassigned white apprentices.⁶

Ex-offenders' successful reentry into the workforce is critical for the public safety and economic well-being of local communities. They are now, however, competing with unemployed and underemployed skilled and unskilled workers for jobs that become available.

³ **Understanding the Unemployed Workforce in Milwaukee County** (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute, 2009), posted at www.eti.uwm.edu/2009/UnemployedWorkforce.pdf.

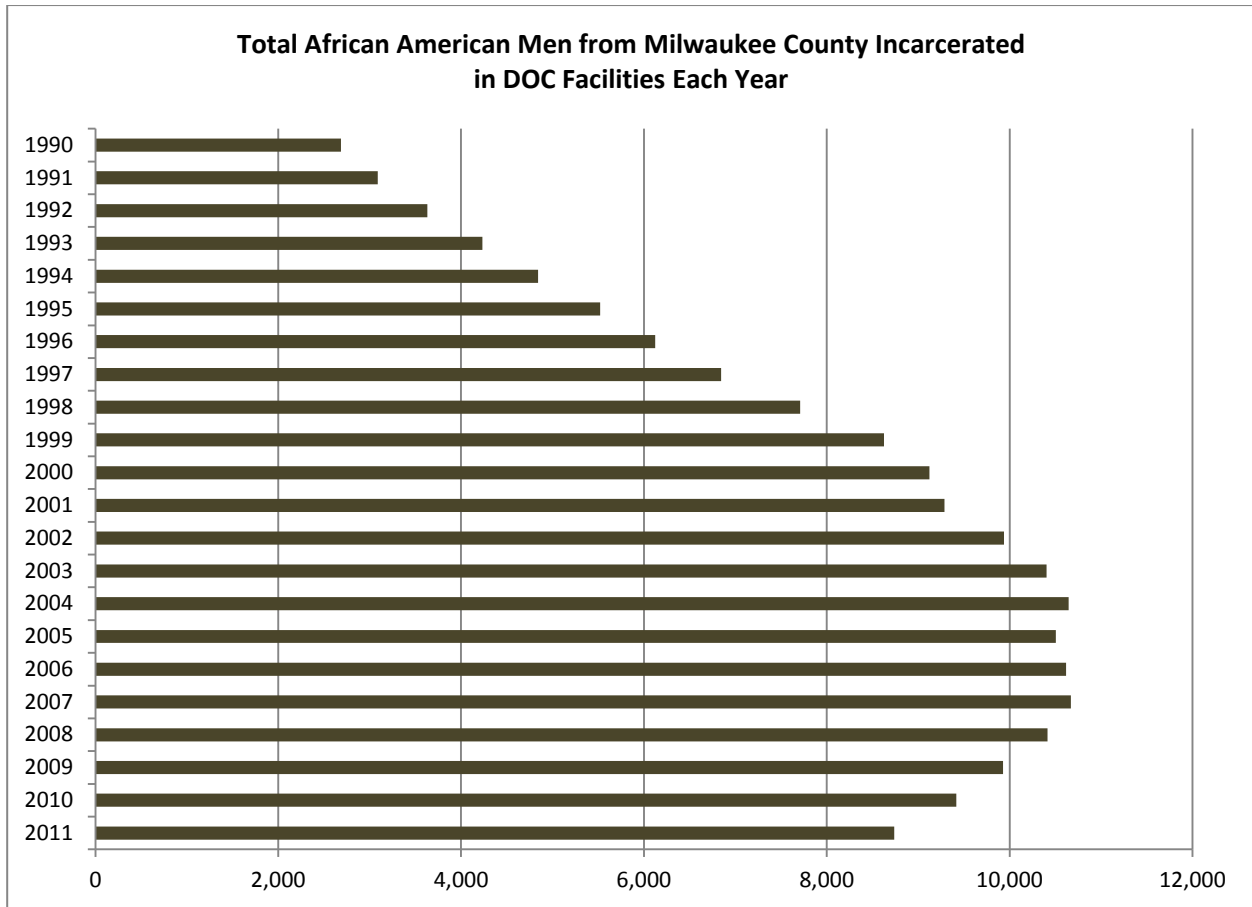
⁴ **Survey of Job Openings in the 7 Counties of Southeastern Wisconsin: Week of May 25, 2009** (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute, 2009), posted at www.eti.uwm.edu/2009/RegionalJobOpenings.pdf.

⁵ Employment and Training Institute analysis of 2008-2010 EEO-1 reports filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission by 1,730 private companies in the four-county Milwaukee metro area. Private companies with 100+ employees (and financial institutions with 50+ employees) are required to file annual EEO-1 reports detailing their workforce by race/ethnicity, gender and occupational categories.

⁶ **Losing Ground: 2010 Report Card on Apprentices in the Construction Trade** (A Collaborative Report of the NAACP – Milwaukee Branch and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute, 2010), posted at www.eti.uwm.edu/construction/LosingGround.pdf.

Annual levels of black male incarceration

The number of African American men from Milwaukee County incarcerated in Wisconsin DOC facilities remained above 10,000 annually from 2003 through 2008. Reductions in numbers incarcerated were seen after 2008, going down to a total of 8,737 imprisoned in 2011. Practices adopted in Milwaukee County to divert nonviolent offenders into substance abuse treatment and into community supervision rather than incarceration have contributed to reductions in prison admissions in recent years.



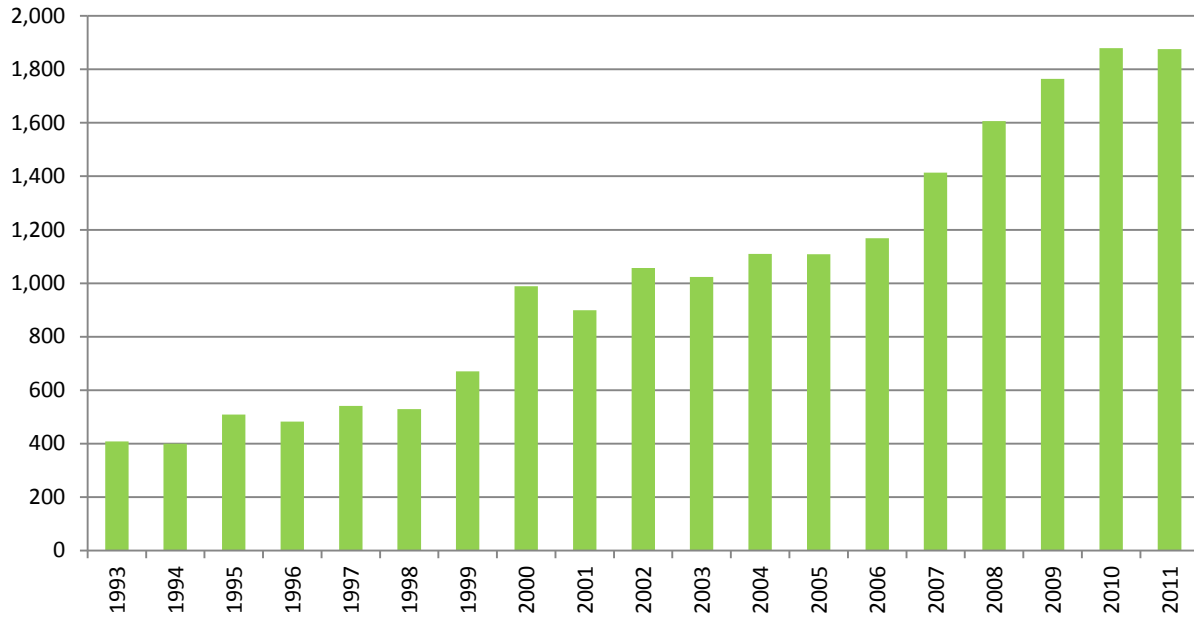
The incarceration levels in the 2003-2008 period are nearly four times those seen in 1990 before drug law changes, truth-in-sentencing, mandatory sentences, and three-strikes laws were broadly imposed. Even with a recent decline in incarceration levels, in 2010 Wisconsin still showed the highest incarceration rate for African Americans in the U.S.

“The United States prison population did not balloon by accident, nor was its expansion driven principally by surging crime rates or demographic dynamics beyond the control of state leaders. Rather, the growth flowed primarily from changes in sentencing laws, inmate release decisions, community supervision practices and other correctional policies that determine who goes to prison and for how long. And while expanded incarceration contributed to the drop in violent crime in the United States during the 1990s, research shows that having more prisoners accounted for only about 25 percent of the reduction, leaving the other 75 percent to be explained by better policing and a variety of other less expensive factors.”⁷

⁷ **Collateral Costs: Incarceration’s Effect on Economic Mobility** (The PEW Charitable Trusts, 2010), p. 6.

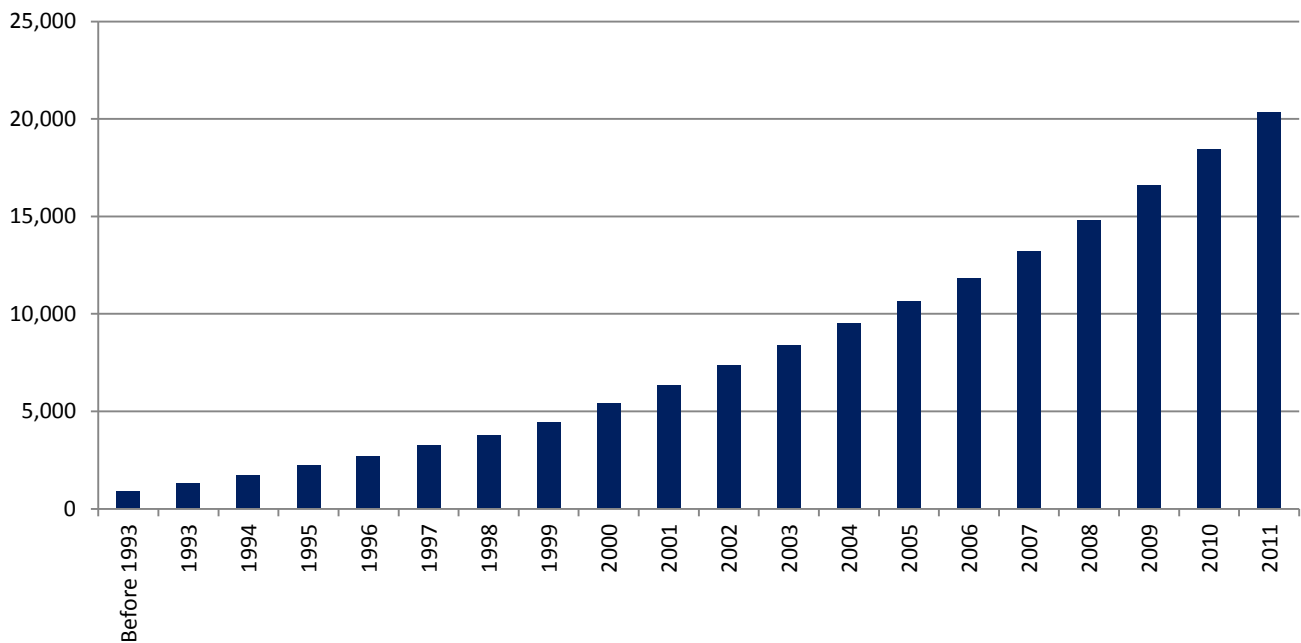
For 8 of the last 10 years over 3,000 men were released (or re-released) annually back into the community. (Note: These yearly counts include men returning home from prison for the first time as well as recidivists and probation/supervision violators returning home for second or third, or more, times.) When release dates are examined by the **last year of release only**, the following patterns are seen.

Black Males Released from DOC Incarceration: BY YEAR OF LAST RELEASE



By 2012 a cumulative total of over 20,000 African American state inmates had come home to Milwaukee County.

Cumulative Number of African American Ex-Offenders RELEASED into Milwaukee County by Inmates' Last Year of Release



Time spent in prison costs billions while limiting employment sustainability.

The 26,222 African American men from Milwaukee County incarcerated by the DOC from 1990 to 2012 were imprisoned 42,675,397, or almost 117,000 years. At the Legislative Fiscal Bureau's estimated cost for Wisconsin incarceration of \$91 per day, this level of incarceration costs approximately \$3.88 billion in 2012 prices.⁸

- For the **20,591 released** black males in Milwaukee County their total number of days imprisoned was 26,150,652 days (or **71,645 years** of incarceration). At the estimated cost for Wisconsin incarceration of \$91 per day, this level of incarceration costs approximately \$2.38 billion in 2012 prices.
- The **5,631 African American men still incarcerated** in January 2012 had already spent 16,524,745 days in prison (or **45,273 years**). At the estimated cost for state incarceration of \$91 per day, this level of incarceration – up to 2012 – costs approximately \$1.5 billion in 2012 prices.
- It cost over \$1/2 million a day to incarcerate the 5,631 men imprisoned in January 2012.

“To be clear, violent and career criminals need to be put behind bars for significant terms. At the same time, lower-risk offenders can be diverted to a system of high-quality community supervision, services and tough sanctions that reduces recidivism and enhances public safety while costing far less than prison. ... Every day spent under community supervision rather than behind bars is an opportunity for a sentenced individual to work. It’s an opportunity to build vocational experience. When supervised properly in the community, probationers and parolees can repay their debts while building work skills and an employment track record.”⁹

To finance the total state levels of imprisonment, in the 2011-2012 biennium the Wisconsin governor and legislature allocated more taxpayer dollars for the Department of Corrections than for the entire University of Wisconsin higher education system.¹⁰

⁸ **Adult Corrections Programs, Informational Paper 56** (Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau, January 2013), p. 3. The Vera Institute of Justice estimated state incarceration costs higher -- \$104/day when capital costs, statewide administrative costs, and inmate hospital services were included. “The Cost of Prisons|Wisconsin: What Incarceration Costs Taxpayers” (Vera Institute of Justice, 2012). This would bring the state cost of incarcerating 26,222 African Americans for 42,675,397 days to \$4.4 billion at 2012 prices.

⁹ **Collateral Costs: Incarceration’s Effect on Economic Mobility** (The PEW Charitable Trusts, 2010), p. 24.

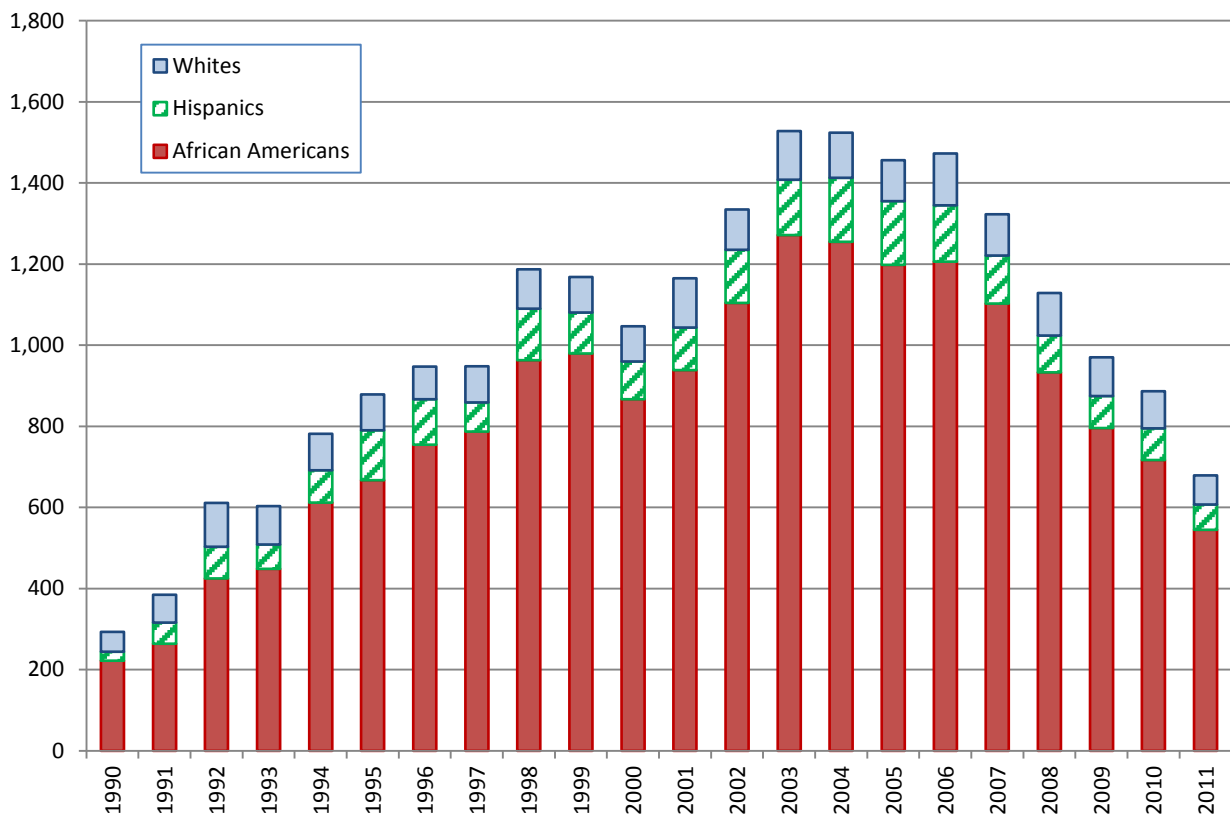
¹⁰ Alison Bauter, “As priorities shift, corrections budget passes UW System,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (August 16, 2012), posted at <http://www.jsonline.com/news/statepolitics/wisconsin-corrections-spending-passes-that-of-uw-system-ua62t4k-166039926.html>.

40% of incarcerated African American males have drug-related offenses.

The prison populations in the state and county grew rapidly during the 1990s, driven by new laws governing drug-related arrests, mandatory minimum sentences, mandatory three-strikes incarceration irrespective of the third crime, and truth-in-sentencing laws. The annual number of drug imprisonments for Milwaukee County men rose from around 300 in 1990 to a high of over 1,500 in 2004, then declining to below 700 in 2011.

“The impact of greater emphasis on law enforcement and incarceration of drug offenders has had a dramatic impact on African American communities as a result of three overlapping policy decisions: the concentration of drug law enforcement in inner city areas; harsher sentencing policies, particularly for crack cocaine; and, the drug war’s emphasis on law enforcement at the expense of prevention and treatment. Given the shortage of treatment options in many inner city areas, drug abuse in these communities is more likely to receive attention as a criminal justice problem, rather than a social problem.”¹¹

Yearly DOC Admissions with Drug-Related Offenses: Milwaukee County Residents
(Note: Some men have admissions in more than one year.)



Since 1990 African American males have made up 82% of DOC imprisonments of Milwaukee County male residents with drug offenses.

¹¹ Marc Mauer and Ryan S. King, **A 25 Year Quagmire: The War on Drugs and Its Impact on American Society** (The Sentencing Project, Sept. 2007), posted at www.sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/dp_25yearquagmire.pdf.

Drug sentencing offenses rose from 222 for **African American males** admitted to prison in 1990 to a high of 1,272 for those admitted in 2003, then declining below 800 in 2009 and below 550 in 2011. African American men in Milwaukee County went from having 4 times as many annual admissions for drug-related offenses as white men in the early 1990s to having 11 to 12 times as many in the 2002 to 2005 years when incarceration of African Americans for drug offenses was soaring. Of the 26,222 African American males incarcerated from 1990 to 2012, 40% (N=10,497) had sentences for drug offenses.

Hispanic males from Milwaukee County showed 22 admissions to prison in 1990 with drug offenses, then rising to 158 admitted in 2004 with declines thereafter.

During the same period **white males** imprisoned with drug offenses from Milwaukee County went from 49 admissions to prison in 1990 then up to 128 in 2006 and declining thereafter.

Felons incarcerated for drug-related convictions face additional problems upon release securing private and public sector employment and also have limitations placed on their access to federal aid and scholarships to attend vocational education classes, college, and other post-secondary education programs. They may also be denied access to public housing or required to participate in drug treatment and testing programs as conditions for the housing. Likewise, even if income-eligible, they may be denied access to FoodShare program support and participation in TANF-funded programs unless they participate in drug-testing regimens.¹²

“Merely reducing prison terms does not have a major impact on the majority of people in the system. It is the badge of inferiority – the felony record – that relegates people for their entire lives to second-class status. ... forced to “check the box” indicating a felony conviction on employment applications for nearly every job, and denied licenses for a wide range of professions, people whose only crime is drug addiction or possession of a small amount of drugs for recreational use find themselves locked out of the mainstream society and economy – permanently.”¹³

¹² For recommendations of the Commission on Reducing Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System, appointed by Governor Jim Doyle, on addressing needs of drug offenders in the criminal justice system see the Final Report (February 2008) available at www.eti.uwm.edu/reprints/DisparitiesCommissionReport.pdf and appendix at www.eti.uwm.edu/reprints/DisparitiesCommissionAppendix.pdf.

¹³ Michelle Alexander, **The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness** (The New Press, 2010), p. 94.

8,287 inmates with non-violent or drug offenses only

When the offenses of incarcerated African American men from Milwaukee County were examined, two-thirds (68%) had violent offenses listed at some time during their incarceration periods while 32% (N=8287) showed only non-violent offenses or drug-only charges. While offense patterns were complex (particularly for those first imprisoned for non-violent or drug possession charges and later returning to prison as violent criminals), drug offenders as a group were more likely to be incarcerated for non-violent offenses. Less than half (44%) of men with drug offenses also showed violent offenses, compared to 84% of non-drug offenders.

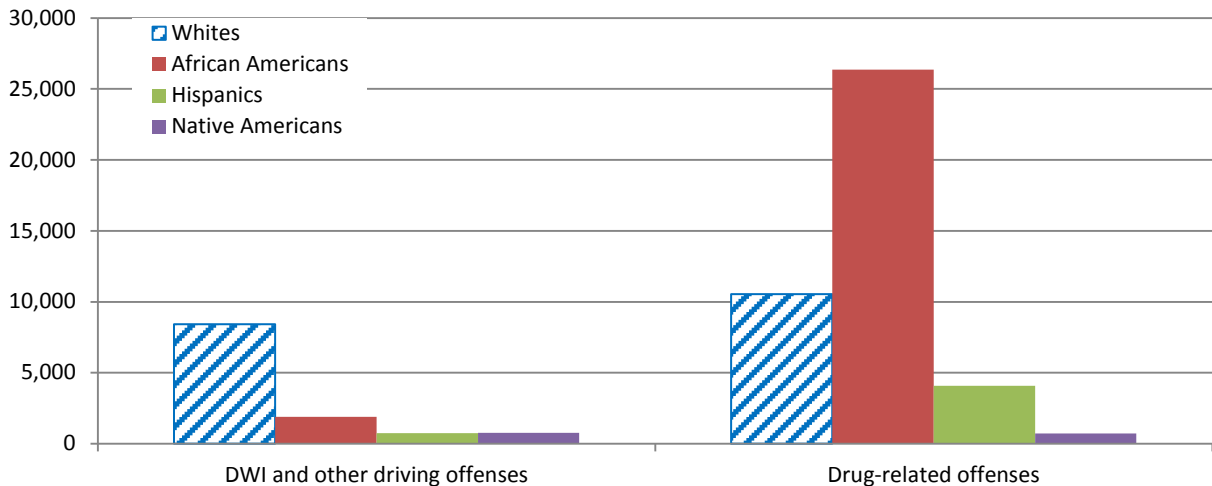
Offenses by Imprisoned African American Men from Milwaukee County	Drug offenders	Non drug offenders	Total offenders
Sub-total with violent offenses	4,649	13,286	17,935
With non-violent offenses (and no violent offenses)	2,670	2,439	5,109
With drug offenses only	<u>3,178</u>	--	<u>3,178</u>
Sub-total with non-violent or drug only offenses	5,848	2,439	8,287
Total incarcerated	10,497	15,725	26,222

As of October 2012, the 5,848 African American men serving sentences for non-violent and drug-only offenses had spent 5,140,651 days in prison since January 1990 (or 14,084 years).

Drug vs. driving offenses as reasons for statewide incarcerations

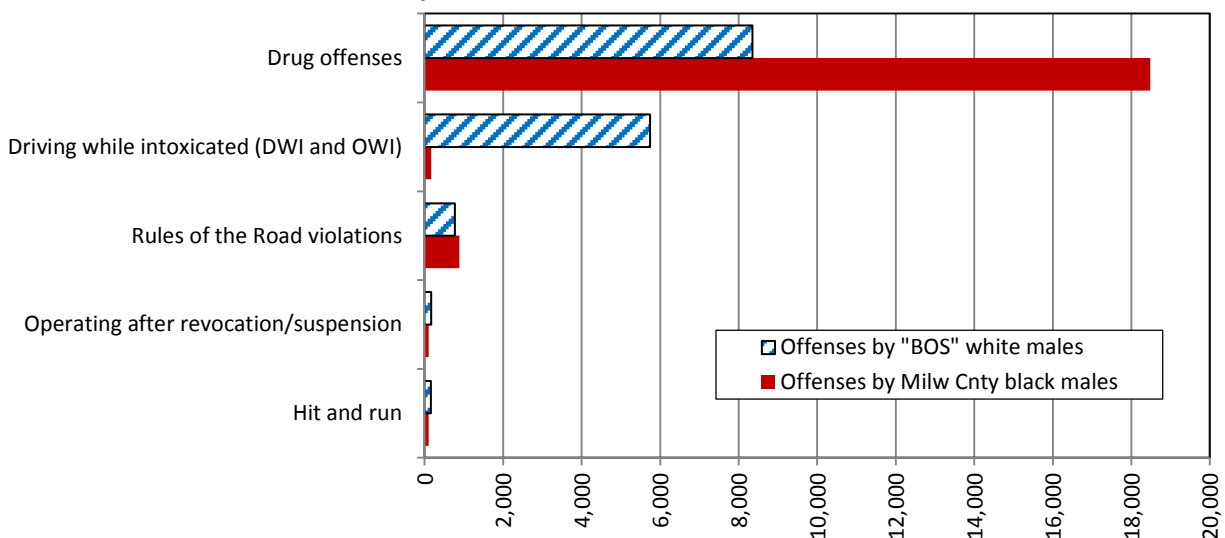
When annual imprisonments in Wisconsin for drugs and driving offenses are compared, the sharp spikes in incarceration of African American males from Milwaukee County show state policy impacts since 1990. Only 6% of African American men incarcerated from Milwaukee County show DWI (driving while intoxicated) offenses compared to 40% with drug-related offenses. In terms of male incarcerations in Wisconsin correctional facilities, DWI incarcerations reflect the racial make-up of the state of Wisconsin with 83% of the statewide DWI offenses listed for white inmates. By contrast, African American male inmates statewide had 67% of the drug offenses.

Statewide Cumulative Driving vs. Drug Offenses by Males Incarcerated in DOC Institutions, 1990-2011 (Note: individuals may show more than 1 offense.)



When offenses of incarcerated African American males from Milwaukee County are compared to the offenses of white males from the “balance of the state,” the white BOS population showed more drunk driving offenses and black males more drug offenses.

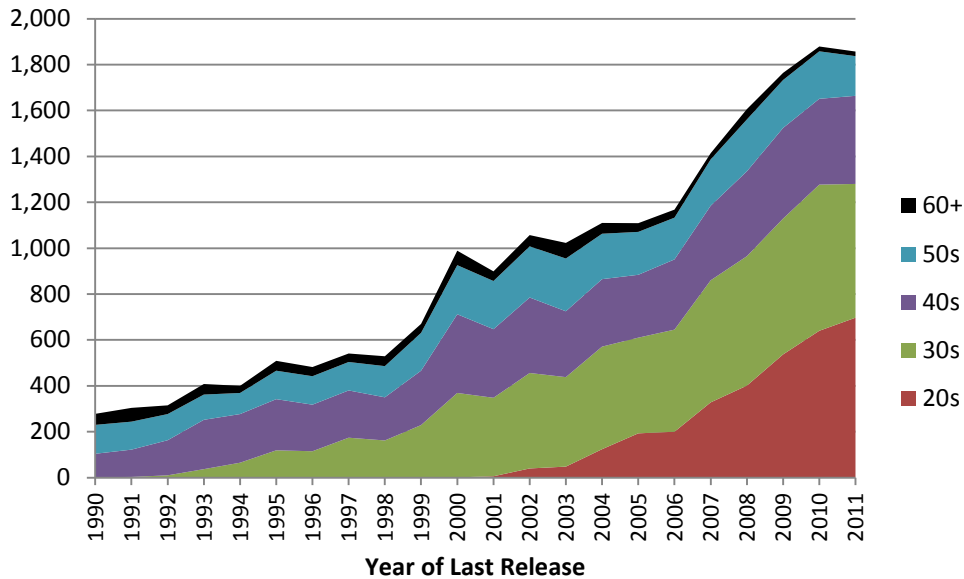
Cummulative offenses for drugs and driving: Milwaukee County African American males compared to white males from the "balance of the state"



Age of released prisoners now living in the community

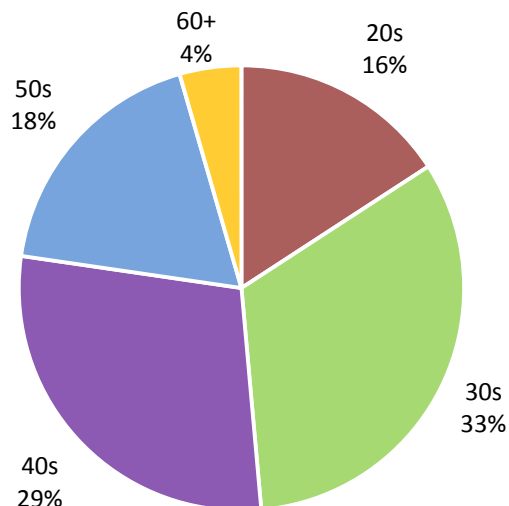
The graph below shows the current age of African American male ex-offenders from Milwaukee County and the year when they were last released from prison. For the population of 20,591 men currently no longer in imprisoned, 27% had a last release date of 2009 through 2011, 26% had their last release is years 2005 through 2008, 25% in years 2000 through 2004, and 22% in the 1990s (i.e., 1990 through 1999).

Age (in 2012) of African American Males by Their Year of Last Release



The majority of ex-offenders released from DOC facilities are of working age. Most (78%) of the African American men who have been released from DOC facilities since 1990 are under 50, with only 4% aged 60 or above.

Age of Released African American Males as of 2012



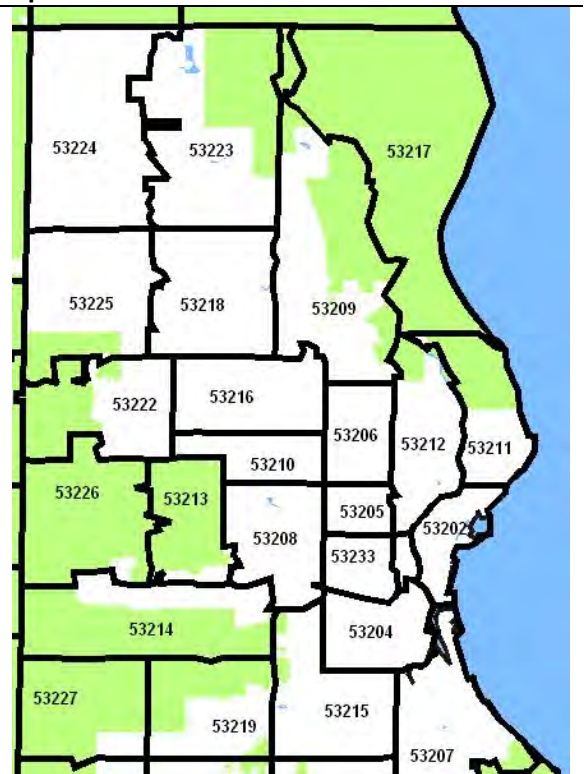
Incarcerated populations by Milwaukee zipcode neighborhood

The heaviest concentrations of released inmates and currently incarcerated adults were in the poorest neighborhoods on Milwaukee’s northside and near southside. For many inner city neighborhoods having parents or other family members incarcerated in state prison (or in the Milwaukee County House of Corrections) has become a way of life, given the extremely high rates of incarceration among central city Milwaukee residents. The prison/ex-offender overlay has profound implications for youth and families as high poverty neighborhoods are rife with hardened criminals, drug violence, and lack of safety for youth. At the same time, many ex-offenders and current prisoners are themselves parents – and struggling (or not struggling) to support their children financially and emotionally and to reattach to their families.

Given the high levels of racial and economic segregation in Milwaukee County, two-thirds of the incarcerated African American men came from 6 zip codes: 53206, 53209, 53210, 53218, 53212, and 53216. Over 90% came from the 15 zip code neighborhoods listed below.

**African American Males Incarcerated in DOC Facilities:
Top 15 Milwaukee County Zip Codes**

ZIP Code	Last Released (1990-2011)	Incarcerated (1/1/2012)	Total
53206	2,967	870	3,837
53209	2,319	569	2,888
53210	2,004	597	2,601
53218	1,791	502	2,293
53212	1,754	510	2,264
53216	1,764	466	2,230
53208	1,666	503	2,169
53205	975	262	1,237
53225	736	220	956
53223	563	155	718
53204	537	155	692
53224	529	146	675
53233	451	130	581
53215	394	90	484
53222	262	46	308



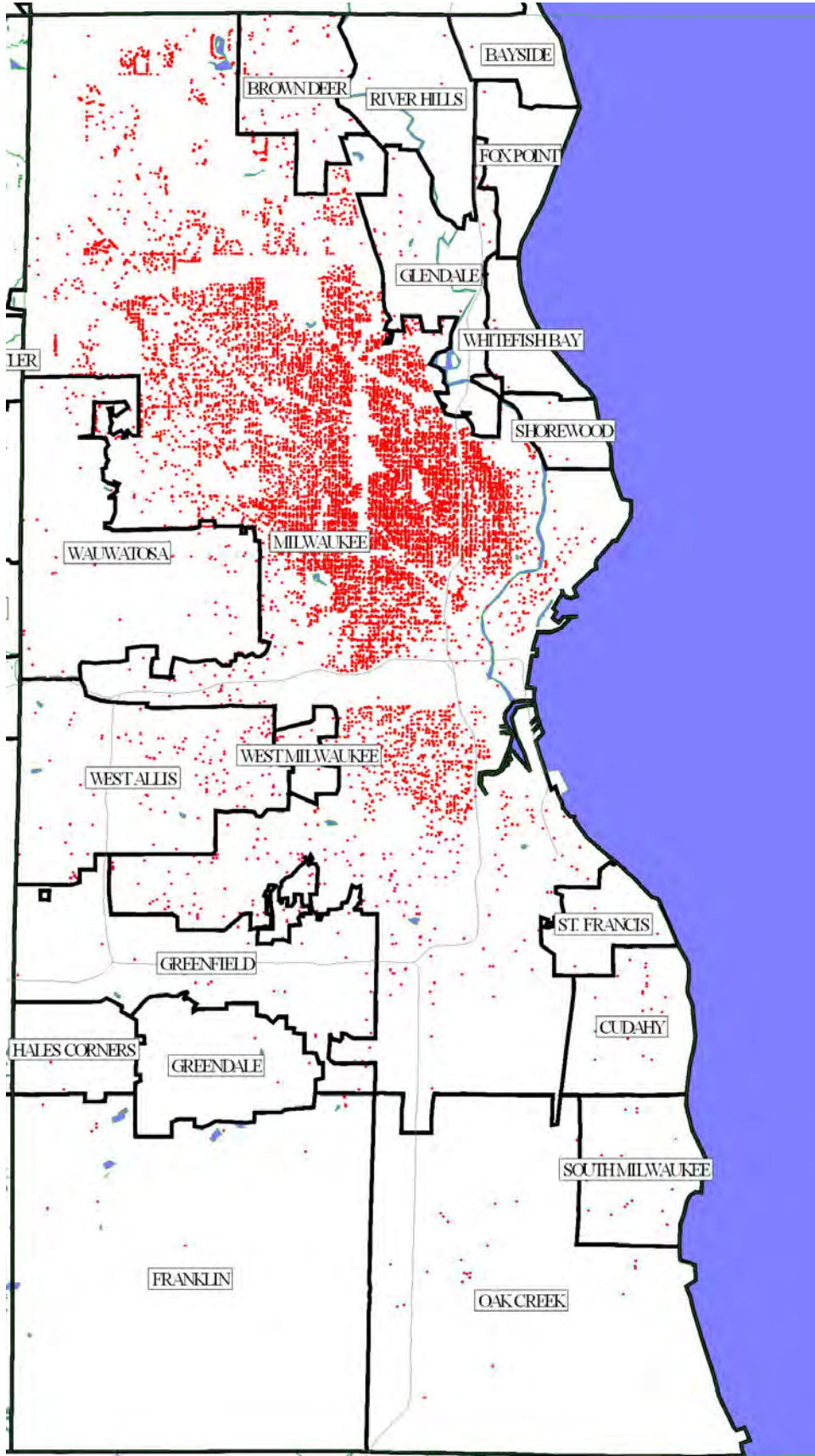
White areas = Milwaukee
Shaded areas = suburbs

The ability of ex-offenders to help support their families is very limited for many released inmates. Most ex-offenders return from prison into inner city neighborhoods that already have extremely large job gaps between the numbers of active job seekers compared to available full-time work.

“The concentrated poverty of inner-city neighborhoods erodes the web of social connections that often restrains crime in urban areas. Lacking neighbors with their eyes on the street, and without much adult supervision for teenage males, poor neighborhoods are acutely exposed to the risks of crime and delinquency.”¹⁴

¹⁴ Bruce Western, **Punishment and Inequality in America** (Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), pp. 109-110.

Home Residence of African American Male State Prisoners
(Incarcerated and Released)

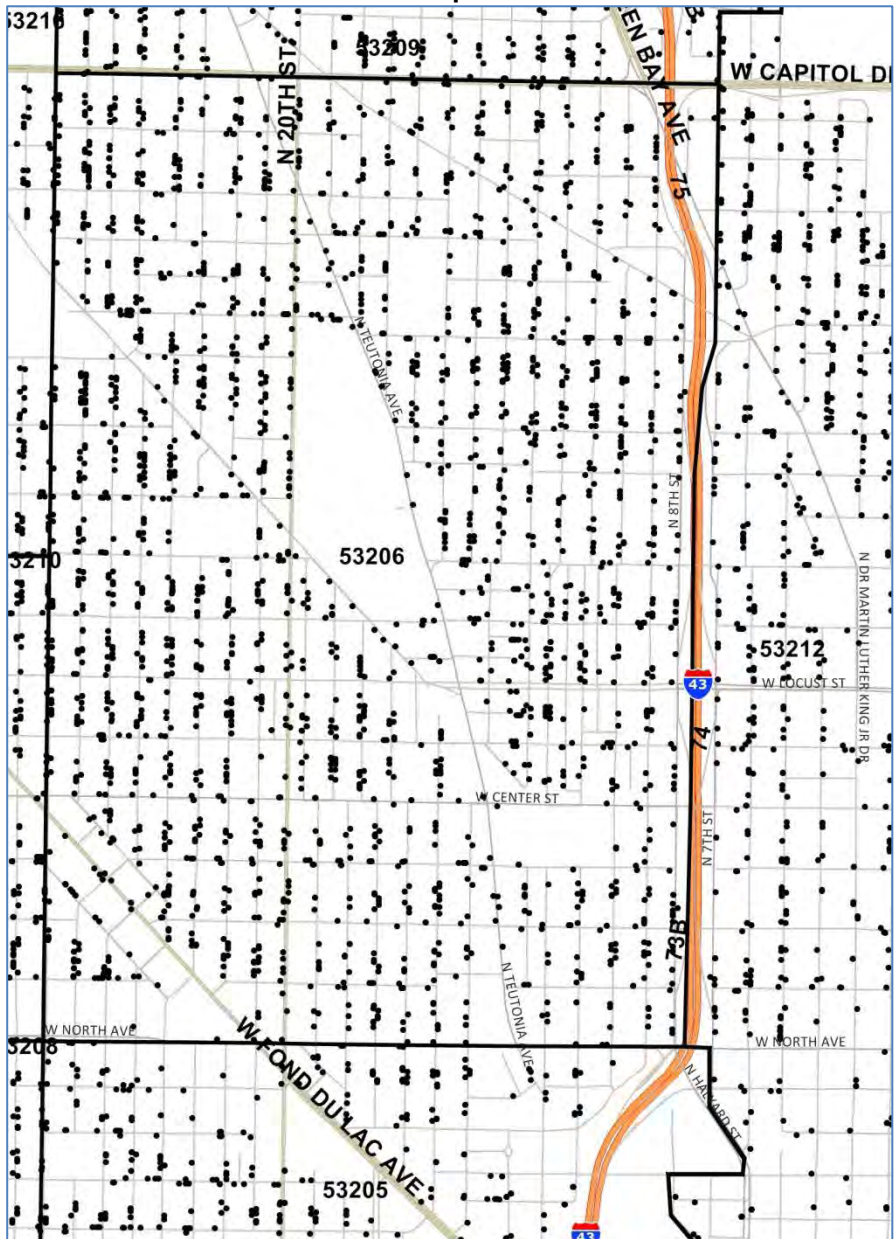


Ground zero for black male incarceration: zipcode 53206

The cumulative effects of the high levels of incarceration of African American males can be seen in Milwaukee zipcode 53206 where 4,008 males (including 3,837 African Americans) were either presently or previously incarcerated in adult state correctional institutions. By 2012 nearly every residential block in the neighborhood had multiple numbers of ex-offenders with prison records.

"It is a vicious cycle. Being without a job can encourage illegal moneymaking activities in order to make ends meet, which increases the risks of incarceration. Upon release from incarceration, a prison record carries a stigma in the eyes of employers and decreases the probability that an ex-offender will be hired, resulting in a greater likelihood of even more intractable joblessness."¹⁵

Concentration of State Prisoners (Incarcerated and Released) in Milwaukee Zipcode 53206



¹⁵ William Julius Wilson, *More than Just Race: Being Black and Poor in the Inner City* (W. W. Norton and Company, 2009), p. 78.

Part Two:

Transportation Barriers to Employment

Thousands of adults concentrated in Milwaukee low-income neighborhoods have suspensions placed on their driver's licenses solely for not paying fines and civil forfeitures, and others including teens, have been issued license suspensions for failure to pay fines even though they have never had a driver's license. Many teens and adults with suspensions continue to drive with or without a valid license.

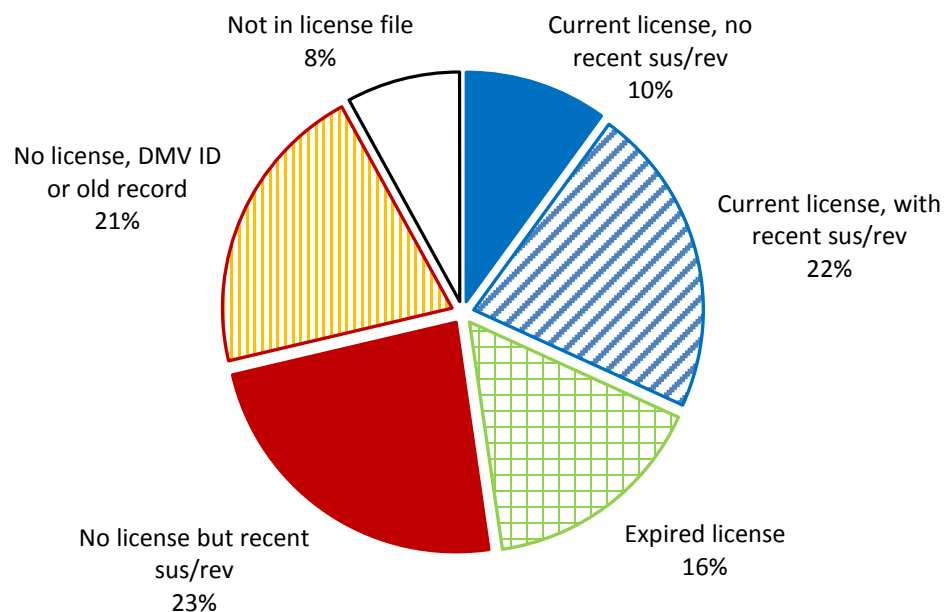
African American males are most likely to have driver's license problems related to fine collections. Those who continue to drive to work with suspended licenses often are stopped for minor vehicle or traffic infractions only to be cited for driving under suspension or revocation -- far more serious offenses.

Driver's license problems for ex-offenders are extensive – and fixable.

Driver's license problems limit the access of ex-offenders to jobs throughout the metro area and raise the possibility of arrests for driving-without-a-valid-license offenses, yet are fixable. Programs operated by the Center for Driver's License Recovery & Employability have demonstrated the efficacy of driver's license recovery programs for this population, yet thousands of black men remain unlicensed or with fines and forfeitures preventing their legal driving.¹⁶ In order to assess transportation employment barriers facing current and former prisoners, DOC driver's license data for the last six years were matched for each individual in the DOC file, including license status, driving suspensions, and driving revocations.

Of the 26,222 African American men incarcerated by the DOC, all but 2,093 were found in the state Department of Transportation driver's license files. Only 2,627 of the men (10%), however, had a current Wisconsin driver's license with no recent suspensions or revocations. These included 2,005 with a regular license, 417 with a probationary license, and 205 with an instructional permit. An additional 4,323 had a regular current license with a recent suspension or revocation, 1,094 had a probationary license with a recent suspension or revocation, and 296 had an instructional permit with a suspension or revocation.

Driver's License Status of 26,222 African American Men Incarcerated by the DOC



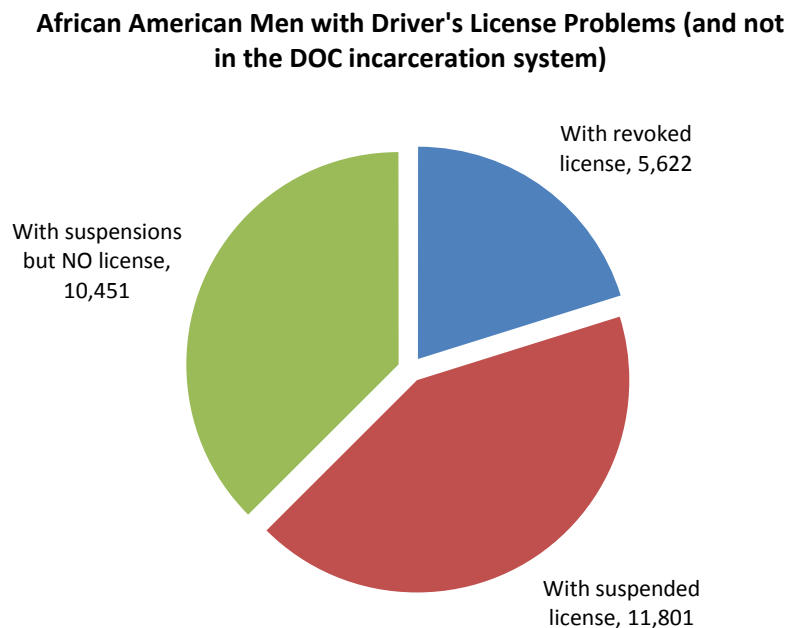
In all, two-thirds of the men were unlicensed, including 16% with expired licenses, 23% with recent suspensions and revocations but no license, another 21% with a DOT record but no license (including those obtaining state photo IDs from the DMV or having old suspension or revocation records), and 8% having no DOT listing. State reforms eliminating most drug conviction driver's license suspensions should help reduce problems for a number released prisoners and unlicensed teens.

¹⁶ The **Second Year Evaluation of the Center for Driver's License Recovery and Employability** (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute, 2008), posted at www4.uwm.edu/eti/2008/Evaluation.pdf found that over a fourth (27%) of men seeking out CDLRE program services had been formerly incarcerated in state correctional facilities, and 58% of these clients successfully addressed all financial and legal obstacles in order to obtain their driving privileges.

27,874 African American men (non-DOC) with driver's license problems

The problems of African Americans and low-income populations receiving driving citations for failure to pay fines and civil forfeitures and penalized for minor vehicle infractions has been documented in other Employment and Training Institute reports.¹⁷

For this report the population was identified of African American men **not in the Department of Corrections incarceration system** but with driver's license problems in the state Department of Transportation files. A total of 27,874 men had problems including 5,622 with revoked licenses, 11,801 with suspended licenses, and 10,451 with suspensions in the DOT file but no driver's license.



Well over half of this population resides in the city's poorest neighborhoods where few jobs are available even for the lowest-skilled workers. Without a valid driver's license access to jobs is very limited. The problems are most acute for men in the twenties, with 2/3 of the men in this age group showing driver's license problems. History shows that many of the men with driver's license problems will continue to drive, incurring additional suspensions and revocations and experiencing multiple police stops.

¹⁷ See the Employment and Training Institute webpage on "Driver's License Issues for Milwaukee Workers" at www.eti.uwm.edu/2007/MJS.htm.

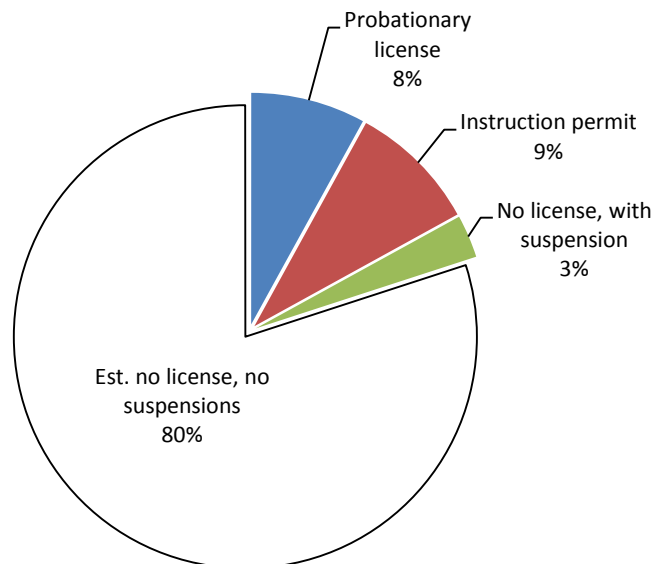
Addressing teen driver's license issues before the criminal justice system is involved

Concerted efforts to ensure that African American teens obtain their driver's license should be an immediate priority for state and local governments. The driver's license, while an essential asset for employment for most workers, is increasingly expensive to obtain for lower-income youth. Wisconsin discontinued state aids for driver's education while requiring that school age youth participate in a school or commercial driving program as a condition for obtaining their license.

As of January 2012, an estimated 4,010 African American males in Milwaukee aged 16 and 17 lacked a driver's license or learning permit.

Only 17% of African American male teens (ages 16-17) in the city of Milwaukee had a driver's license, including 9% with an instruction permit and 8% with a probationary license.

Milwaukee African American Males (Ages 16-17): License Status



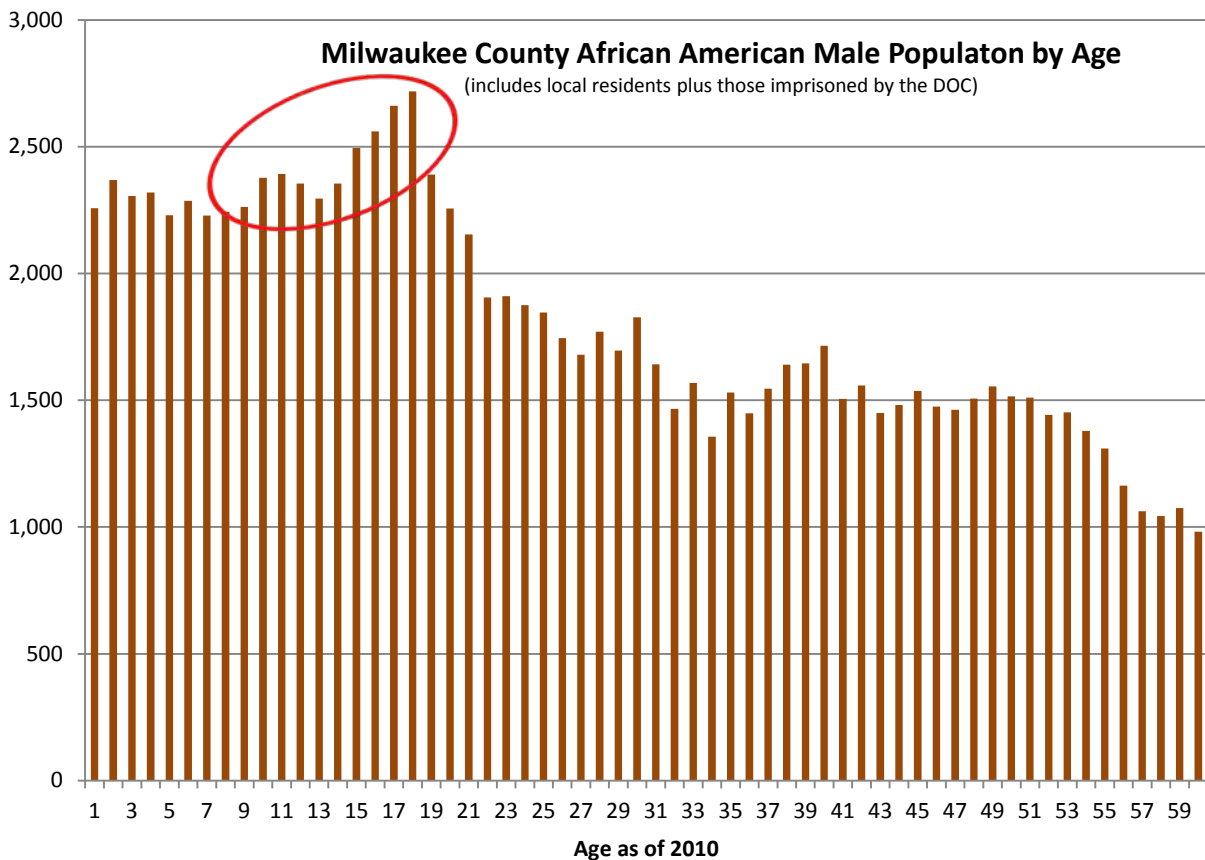
By contrast 64% of white male teens (ages 16-17) living in the suburbs of the county had a license, including 17% with a learner's permit and 47% who already had their probationary license.

Paying for a driving course, maintaining a working vehicle, and securing insurance coverage for teenagers (particularly in inner city zipcodes where insurance rates are highest) is a costly undertaking for many financially strapped families. Unfortunately, thousands of Milwaukee teens drive even though they have not taken driver's education, do not have a license, and cannot afford auto insurance.

Young adult African American males need immediate attention if future Wisconsin incarceration rates and license problems are to be lessened.

A large population of African American males is approaching adulthood in Milwaukee County. These young men will either swell the ranks of Wisconsin prisons, most initially incarcerated for drug-related offenses, or successfully join the workforce contributing to the economic health of their families and the community. Focus on employment training and job placement for young African American men is crucial if Milwaukee is to support their transition into adulthood and the state is to prevent a new surge of prisoners into the state DOC system.

“High rates of incarceration remove young working-age people from the community during the college or career-beginning age and return them several years later with reduced prospects for education and employment. Further, the young people often return with greater ties to criminal networks.”¹⁸



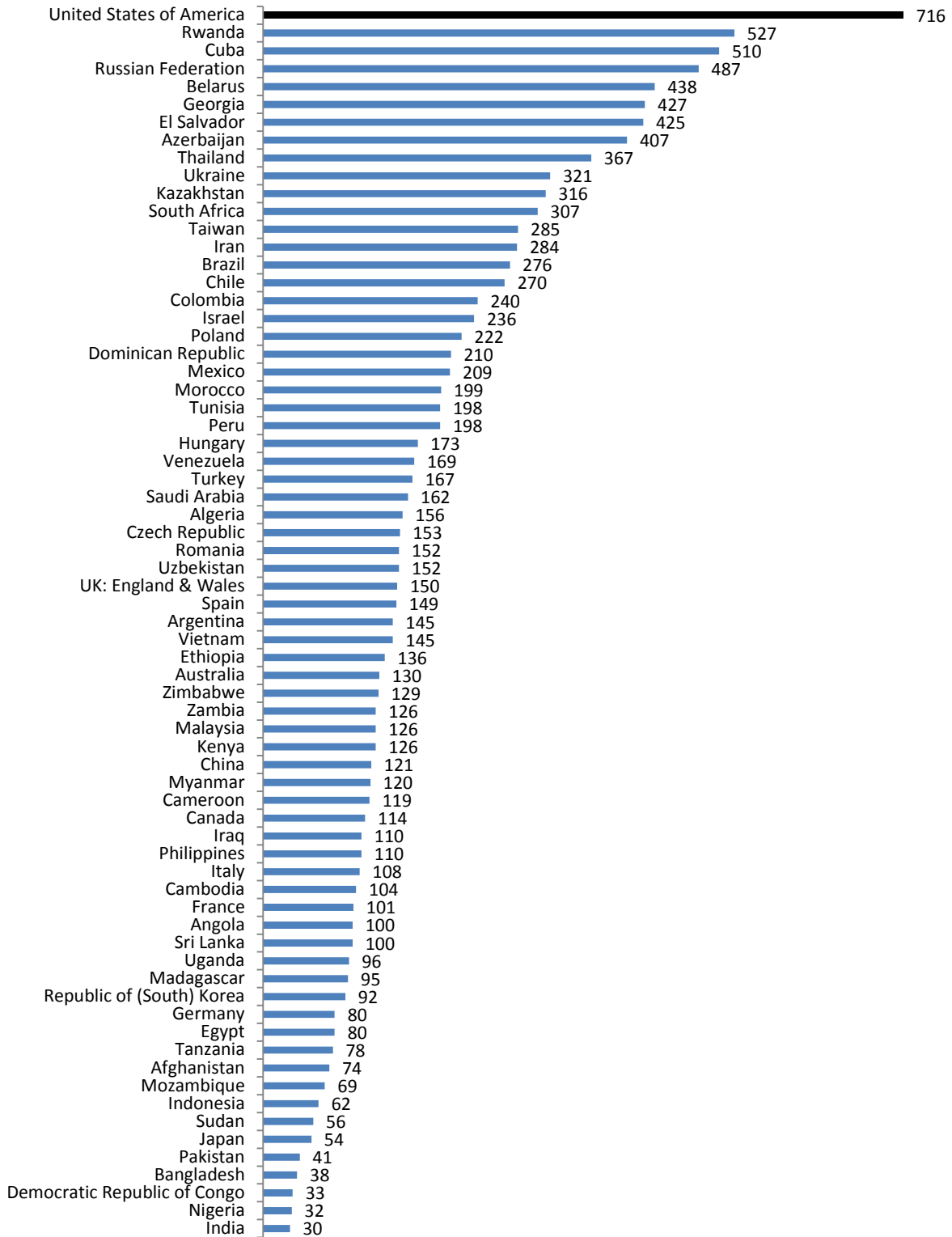
Demographics point to a large young African American male population approaching adulthood. Young African American males ages 1 to 18 in the 2010 census averaged 2,362 per single age year (from 2,258 one-year-olds to 2,607 eighteen-year-olds). This compares to an average of 1,499 black males in each age year in the 25-34 population. When the population of African American males currently incarcerated in DOC facilities is added to the Milwaukee County residents' census count, the average number of men per age year is 1,659 for the 25-34 age cohort.

¹⁸ Commission on Reducing Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System Final Report (February 2008), p.4.

Appendix A: Incarceration Rates by Country

The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world, according to the International Centre for Prison Studies. “World Prison Brief Online” at www.prisonstudies.org/info/worldbrief/wpb_about.php, downloaded on April 4, 2012. The graph below shows incarceration rates per 100,000 population (for all residents, not just adults) for countries with more than 15,000 persons imprisoned.

Incarceration Rates per 100,000 Total Population (i.e., Men, Women and Children)



Appendix B: Methodology

Wisconsin Department of Corrections Public Inmate Records

The Employment and Training Institute analyzed the Wisconsin Department of Corrections public inmate files of individuals incarcerated for the period from January 1990 to October 2012 in order to identify the cumulative number of adults incarcerated and returning to Milwaukee County and to assess their needs for employment and training services. The records show rapidly increasing numbers of men released back to Milwaukee County and heavily concentrated in central city Milwaukee neighborhoods.

This report examined the population of African American males with a Milwaukee County address (as their last found home address) who were incarcerated in Wisconsin Department of Corrections facilities from 1990 to January 2012. The report tracks all individuals with DOC records – whether currently incarcerated or having served time previously. (For this report individuals were excluded from the DOC populations studied if they were incarcerated for only short-term periods, i.e., of less than 10 days, usually in the Milwaukee Secure Detention Facility.) Unlike studies reporting point-in-time levels of incarceration or average daily inmate populations, this report examines the cumulative numbers of the incarcerated since 1990 based on individual's prison records. Many of the African American men from Milwaukee County have had multiple terms of imprisonment, contributing to over 65,000 admissions of 10 or more days and over 59,500 release events. Men are considered "currently incarcerated" if they were incarcerated on January 1, 2012, the year of the most recent DOC files examined. Men are considered "previously incarcerated" if they were last released from DOC facilities between 1990 and 2011. Rates of incarceration are calculated using U.S. Census Bureau 2010 population counts by race, gender and age. Unless otherwise noted, the population studied is limited to those aged 18-64 as of 2012.

Note: The Department of Corrections incarceration totals in this report do not include additional males incarcerated in federal prisons, state juvenile correctional facilities, or county and city jails.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation Driver's License Records

The Employment and Training Institute has tracked the driver's license status of Wisconsin and Milwaukee County residents since the 1990s using the state Department of Transportation files on licenses, suspensions and revocations.

2010 U.S. Census

State rates of incarceration of males ages 18-64 were calculated by dividing the number of males in state prisons and local jails and other municipal confinement facilities by the total population in that age cohort as of the census count on April 1, 2010.

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute addresses workforce training, transportation, and education needs of low-income and unemployed workers and families through applied research, policy development, and technical assistance. For more information, see the Employment and Training Institute website at www.eti.uwm.edu.