



Research in Brief

Impact of Housing on Offender Reintegration

A history of unstable accommodation is most common, and has the strongest impact on revocation, in the Pacific Region.

Why we did this study

Given the limited availability of affordable housing in the Greater Vancouver Area, the Pacific Region of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) requested that a study be conducted to examine the impact of housing stability on offenders released in the region.

What we did

We sought to determine how prevalent having a history of unstable accommodation was among federal offenders as well as its potential impact on post-release outcomes. The participants in this study consisted of all federal offenders in Canada who completed a multi-faceted needs assessment at intake between September 28, 2009 to October 10, 2015 (N=25,862) and those who were subsequently released to the community for a period of at least six months (N=14,517).

What we found

The highest prevalence of unstable accommodation was found among offenders in the Pacific Region. Forty-nine percent of offenders in the region had a history of unstable accommodation compared to the national average (34%; Table 1). Nationally, this need area is markedly higher for women than men.

Table 1
*Prevalence of Unstable Accommodation**

Region	All Men (N = 24,509)	All Women (N = 1,353)	All offenders (N = 25,862)
	%	%	%
Atlantic	27.2	47.1	28.7
Ontario	30.1	42.7	30.8
Pacific	49.2	48.0	49.1
Prairie	39.2	60.2	40.4
Quebec	26.1	46.0	26.7
All Regions	33.3	50.1	34.2

*From the Community Functioning domain of the *Dynamic Factor Identification and Analysis-Revised* assessment.

A history of unstable accommodation was significantly associated with risk for return to custody for offenders in CSC in general, but the strength of the relationship varied widely across the five regions. The strongest effect is found for those released in the Pacific Region where 75% of offenders with a history of accommodation instability had their release revoked within 6 months. This compares to a national rate of 52%. The lowest revocation rate for those with unstable accommodation was in the Atlantic Region (36%; Table 2).

Table 2
Impact of Unstable Accommodation: Revocation Rate in a 6-Month Follow-Up

Region	Men (N = 14,517) % Revoked
Atlantic	35.5
Ontario	53.3
Pacific	75.4
Prairie	53.9
Quebec	44.2
All Regions	51.9

What it means

Overall, offenders with a history of unstable accommodation are at greater risk for revocation when released than those without this history. The results demonstrate that assisting offenders in finding stable accommodation once released in the community is an important component in risk management. The Pacific Region, in particular, requires an effective accommodation strategy to assist offenders on release in finding stable living arrangements.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#) or contact us by phone at (613) 995-3975.

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