

Connections between  
**Criminal Justice**  
**and Health**



**Hailey Akah**

Health Policy Institute of Ohio

July 29, 2021



# VISION

Ohio is a model of health, well-being and economic vitality

# MISSION

To provide independent and nonpartisan analysis  
needed to create evidence-informed state health policy  
that improves health value

# HPIO CORE FUNDERS



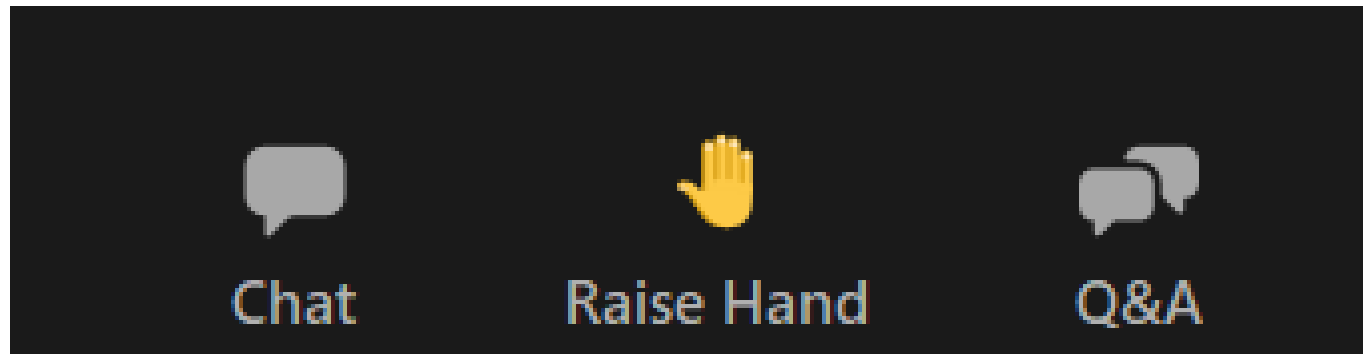


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# Agenda

- Overview of *Connections between Criminal Justice and Health*
- Audience Q&A
- What you can do to influence policy



# Hailey Akah

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# Health Policy Brief

## Connections between criminal justice and health

### Overview

According to the HPIO *Health Value Dashboard*, Ohio ranks 47 out of 50 states and D.C. on health value — a composite measure of population health outcomes and healthcare spending. Incarceration, arrest and crime contribute to Ohio's poor health value rank.

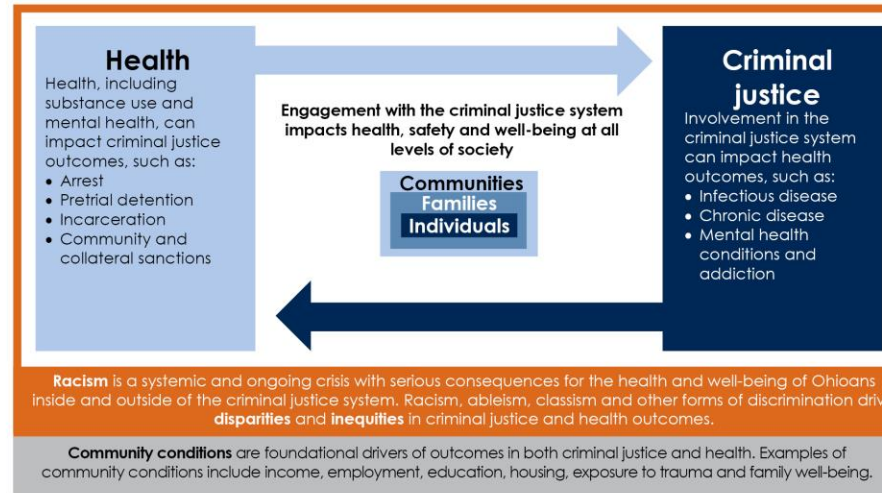
This brief summarizes research on the complex connections between criminal justice and health (see figure 1), with a focus on the impact of criminal justice involvement on health and well-being. The brief also outlines policy options that state policymakers and other community leaders can take to reduce incarceration and improve the health of Ohioans at highest risk for criminal justice involvement.

The research evidence is clear that poor mental health and addiction are risk factors for criminal justice involvement and that incarceration is detrimental to health. Obstacles to health and well-being are particularly striking for Ohioans who are at highest risk of criminal justice involvement.

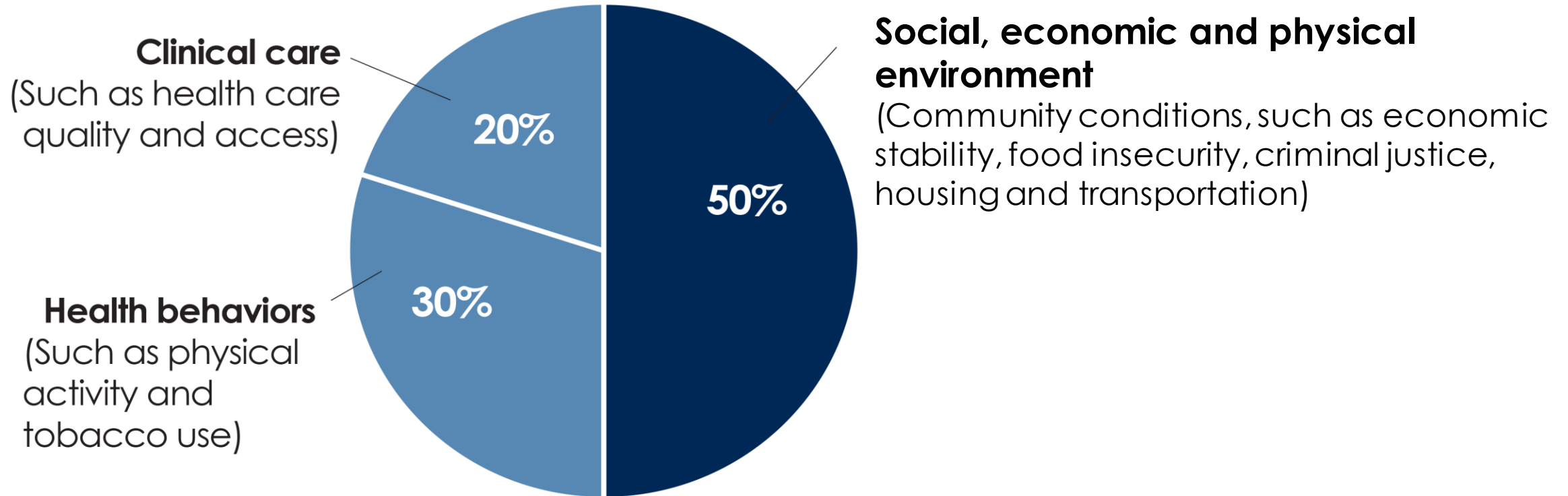
### 3 key findings for policymakers

- **There is a two-way relationship between criminal justice and health.** Mental health and addiction challenges can lead to arrest and incarceration, and incarceration contributes to poor behavioral and physical health for many Ohioans.
- **Racism and community conditions contribute to criminal justice involvement and poor health.** Racist and discriminatory policies and practices and community conditions, such as poverty, housing instability and exposure to trauma, lead to increased criminal justice involvement and drive poor health outcomes.
- **Improvement is possible.** There are evidence-informed policy solutions to combat the drivers of criminal justice involvement and poor health outcomes.

Figure 1. The relationship between criminal justice and health



# Modifiable factors that impact health



**Underlying drivers of inequity**  
Racism and other forms of discrimination (i.e., ableism, ageism, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia, etc.), trauma, exposure to violence, toxic stress, stigma

**Source:** Booske, Bridget C. et al. *County Health Rankings Working Paper: Different Perspectives for Assigning Weights to Determinants of Health*. University of Wisconsin Public Health Institute, 2010.

## Health

Health, including substance use and mental health, can impact criminal justice outcomes, such as:

- Arrest
- Pretrial detention
- Incarceration
- Community and collateral sanctions

Engagement with the criminal justice system impacts health, safety and well-being at all levels of society

Communities  
Families  
Individuals

## Criminal justice

Involvement in the criminal justice system can impact health outcomes, such as:

- Infectious disease
- Chronic disease
- Mental health conditions and addiction

**Racism** is a systemic and ongoing crisis with serious consequences for the health and well-being of Ohioans inside and outside of the criminal justice system. Racism, ableism, classism and other forms of discrimination drive **disparities** and **inequities** in criminal justice and health outcomes.

**Community conditions** are foundational drivers of outcomes in both criminal justice and health. Examples of community conditions include income, employment, education, housing, exposure to trauma and family well-being.

# 3 key findings for policymakers

- **There is a two-way relationship** between criminal justice and health
- **Racism and community conditions** contribute to criminal justice involvement and poor health
- **There are evidence-informed policy solutions** to combat the drivers of criminal justice involvement and poor health outcomes

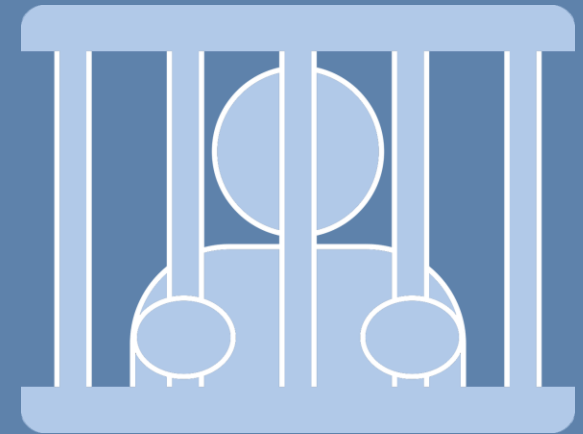
What is the  
**criminal justice**  
**system?**



Law  
enforcement



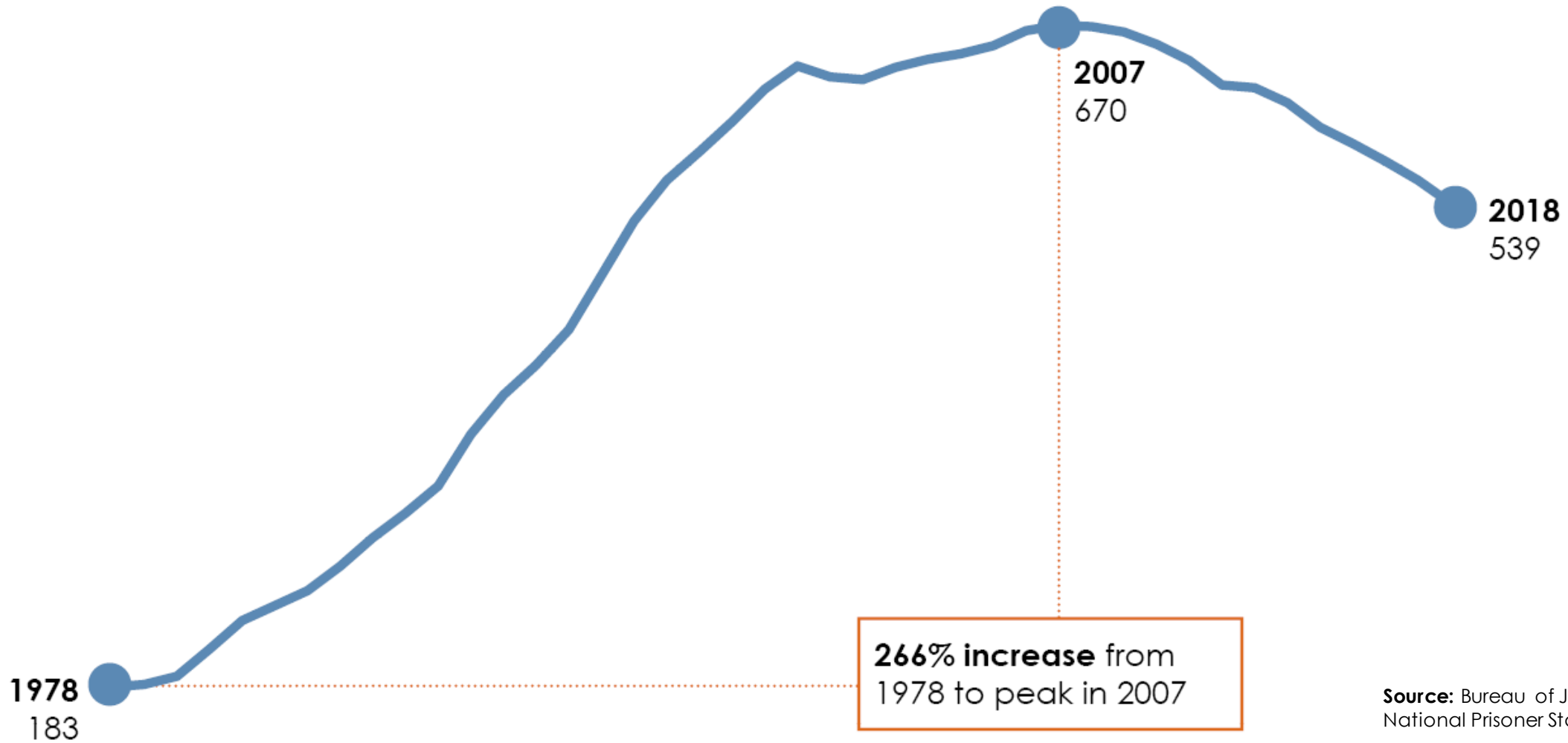
Courts



Corrections

# Adult imprisonment rate

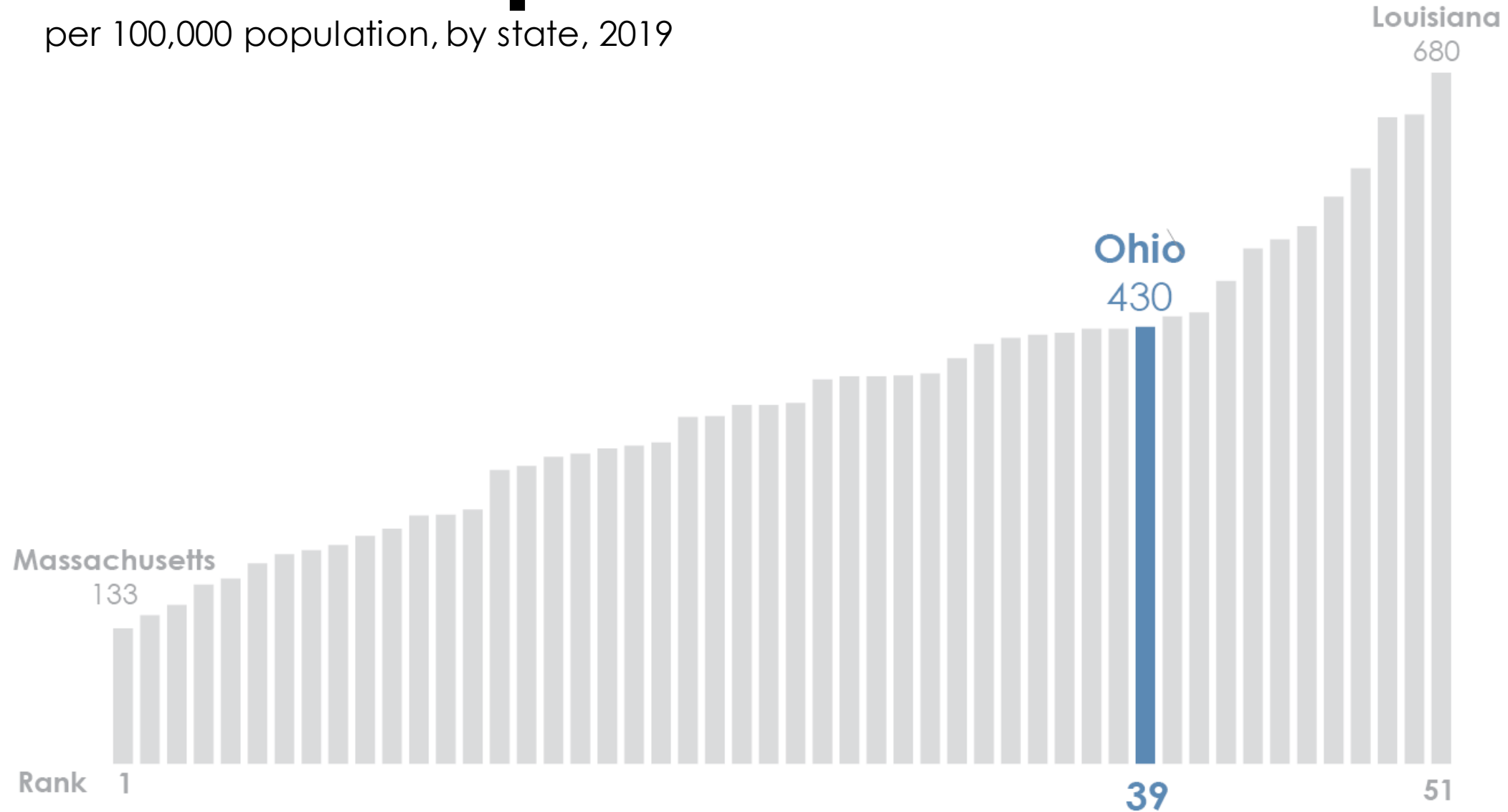
per 100,000 population, U.S., 1978-2019



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics, 1978-2019

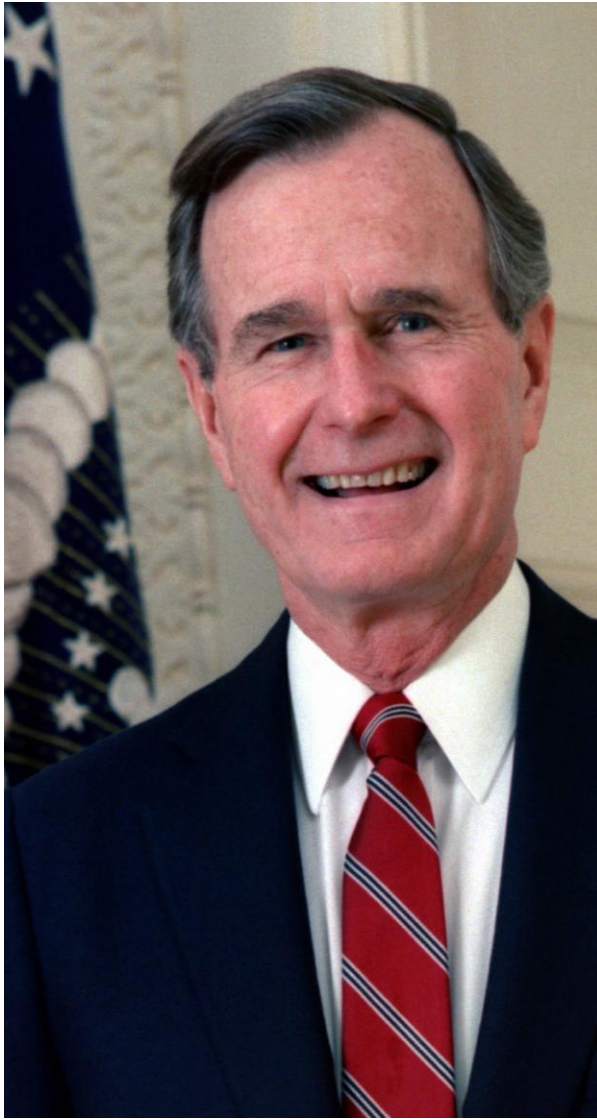
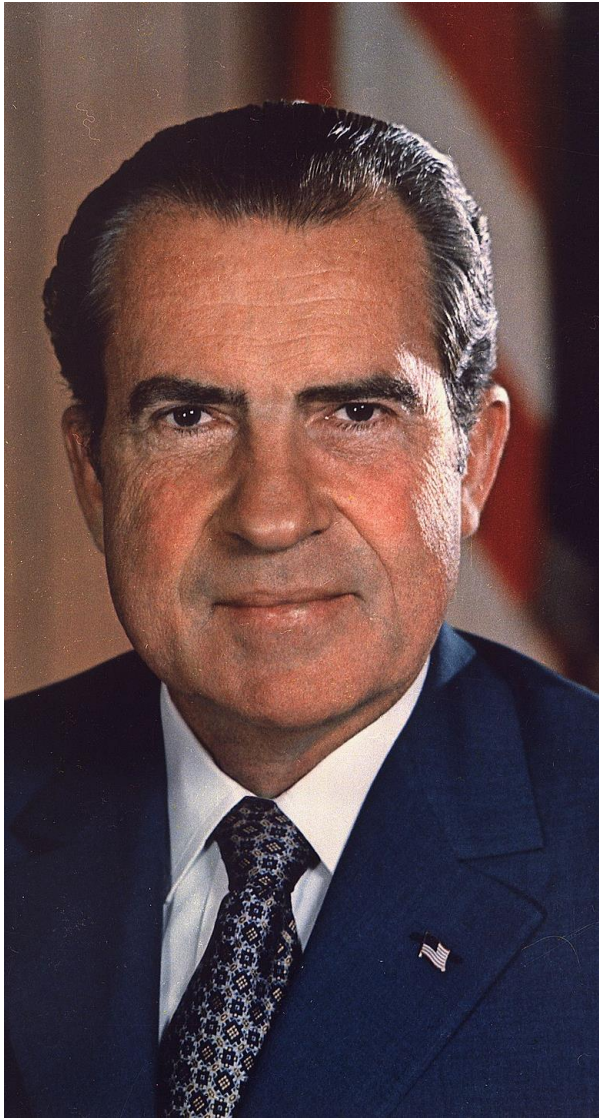
# Adult imprisonment rate

per 100,000 population, by state, 2019



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics





# Policy decisions contributing to high incarceration rates

- Drug control policies
- The money bail system
- Charges brought by prosecutors

How does health  
impact **criminal justice**  
**involvement?**

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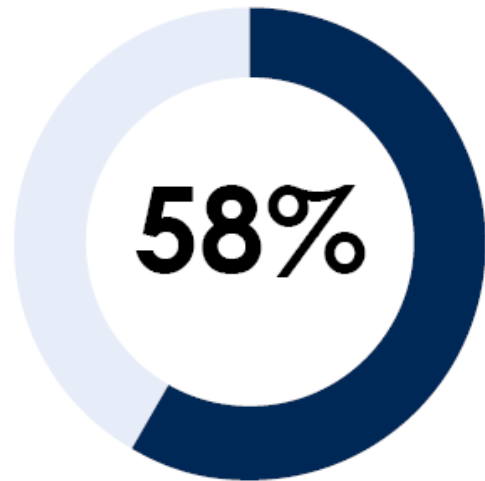
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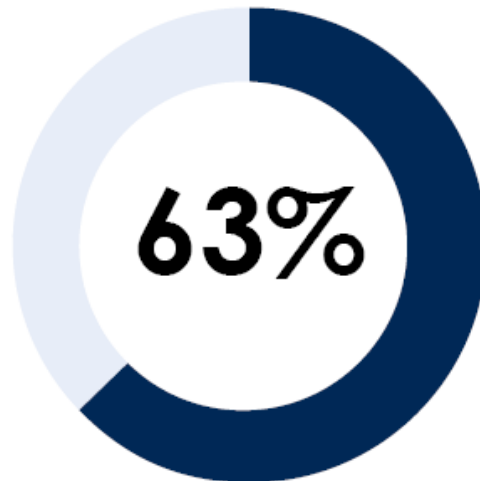
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# Drug dependence among incarcerated people in the U.S.

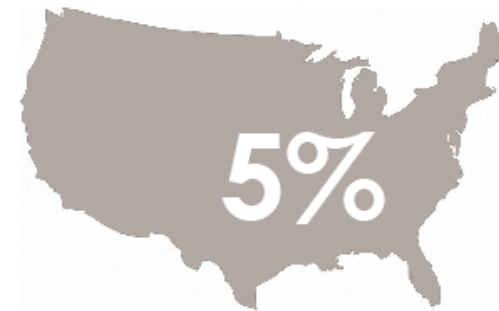
Prison



Jail



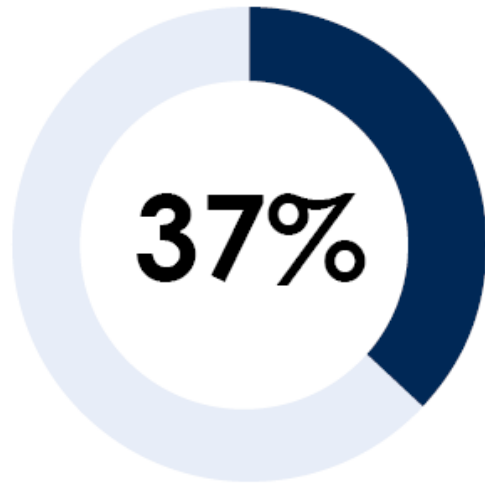
Overall population



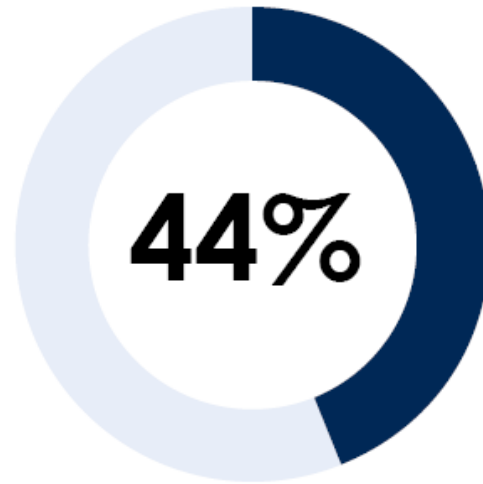
**Source:** U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Special report: Drug Use, Dependence, and Abuse Among State Prisoners and Jail Inmates, 2017 (data from 2007-2009)

# Mental health problems among incarcerated people in the U.S.

Prison



Jail



Overall population



History of depression

**Source:** U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Special report: Indicators of Mental Health Problems Reported by Prisoners and Jail Inmates, 2017 (data from 2011-2012)

# Behavioral health crises



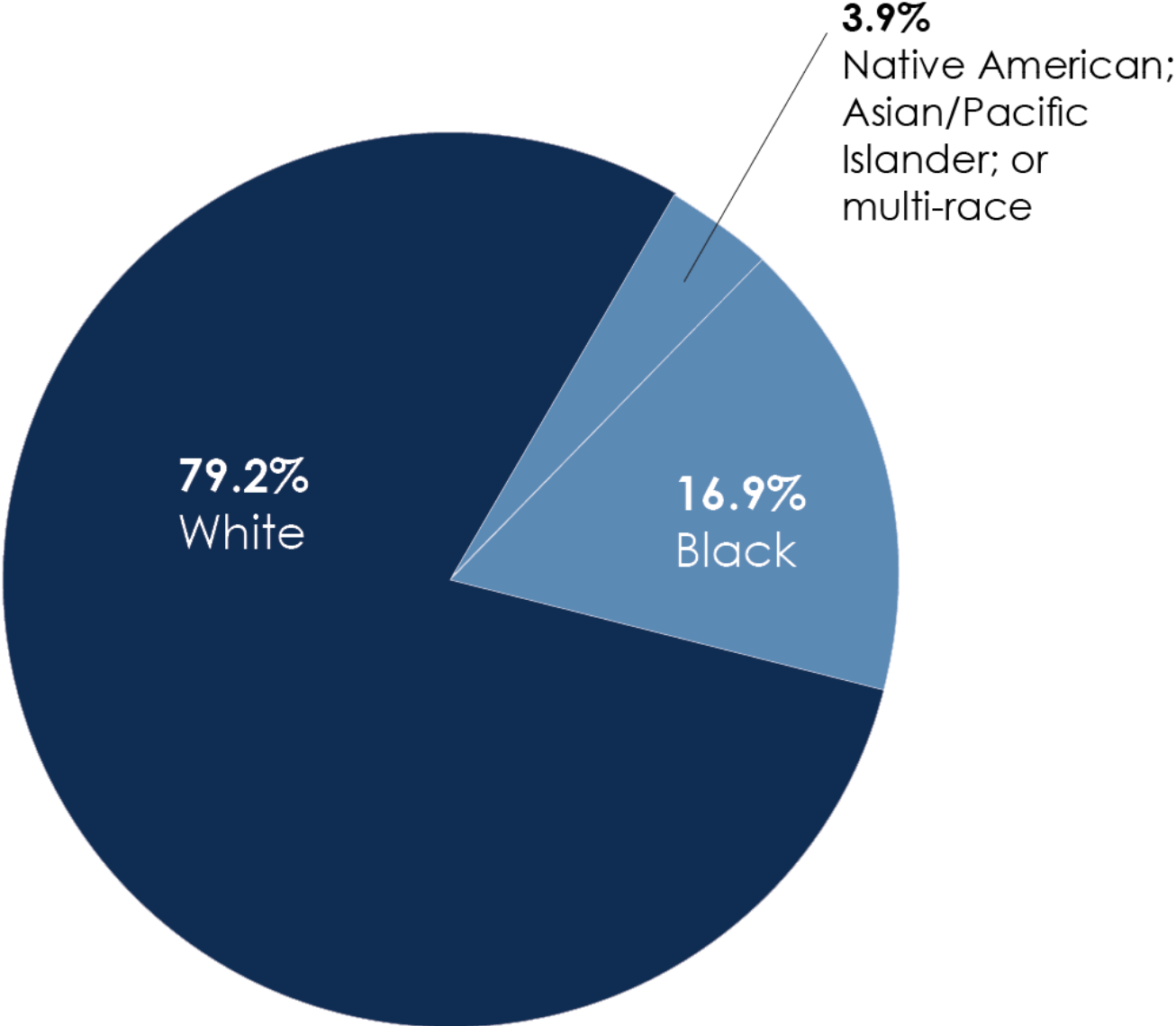
**CAUTION**

Access to  
**behavioral health  
treatment**



# Ohio treatment court participation

by race, as of Nov. 11, 2020



**Note:** There are several types of specialized dockets included in the national definition of treatment courts, including adult and juvenile drug courts, human trafficking dockets, operating a vehicle under the influence (OVI) courts, substance abuse mental illness (SAMH) courts, family drug courts and veteran's treatment courts.

**Source:** HPIO analysis, Supreme Court of Ohio

How does criminal  
justice involvement  
**impact health?**

## Health

Health, including substance use and mental health, can impact criminal justice outcomes, such as:

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# Incarceration and health concerns

Examples:

- **Infectious diseases.** HIV, hep C, COVID-19
- **Chronic diseases.** Hypertension, diabetes, asthma
- **Behavioral health conditions.** Depression, PTSD, substance use disorder



# Policies detrimental to health

Drug sentencing  
laws



Money bail



Limited access to  
pretrial diversion



# Healthcare access and incarceration

For incarcerated people with  
“persistent medical problems”,  
**20% in state prisons** and  
**68% in local jails** did not receive  
a medical examination.



What drives both  
**criminal justice and  
health outcomes?**

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What drives both criminal justice  
and health outcomes?

**Racism**

# Four levels of racism framework

## Structural racism

is racial bias among institutions and across society

## Institutional racism

occurs within institutions and systems of power

## Interpersonal racism

occurs between individuals

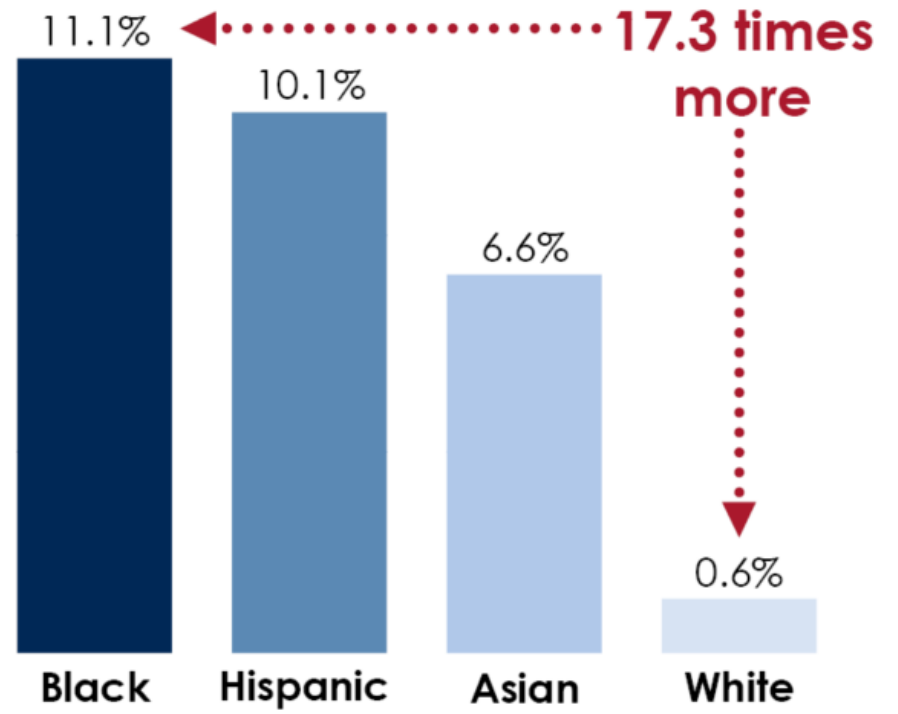
## Internalized racism

lies within individuals

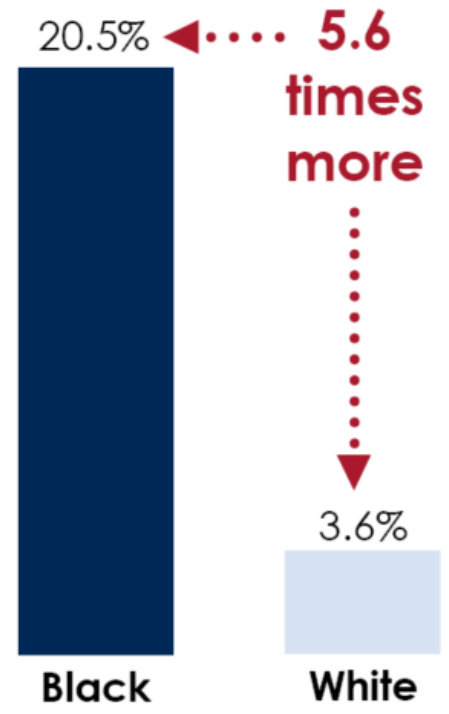
**Source:** Adapted from Race Forward's Four Levels of Racism framework.

# Experiences of racism

**Unfair treatment due to race/ethnicity for children** Ohio, 2016-2019



**Physical or emotional symptoms experienced due to treatment based on race** Ohio, 2011



Source: Analysis of Health Resources and Services Administration, National Survey of Children's Health by Ani Ruhil, The Voinovich School of Leadership & Public Affairs, Ohio University

Source: HPIO analysis of Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. Data provided by the Ohio Department of Health upon request.

# Ohio incarcerations in state prison

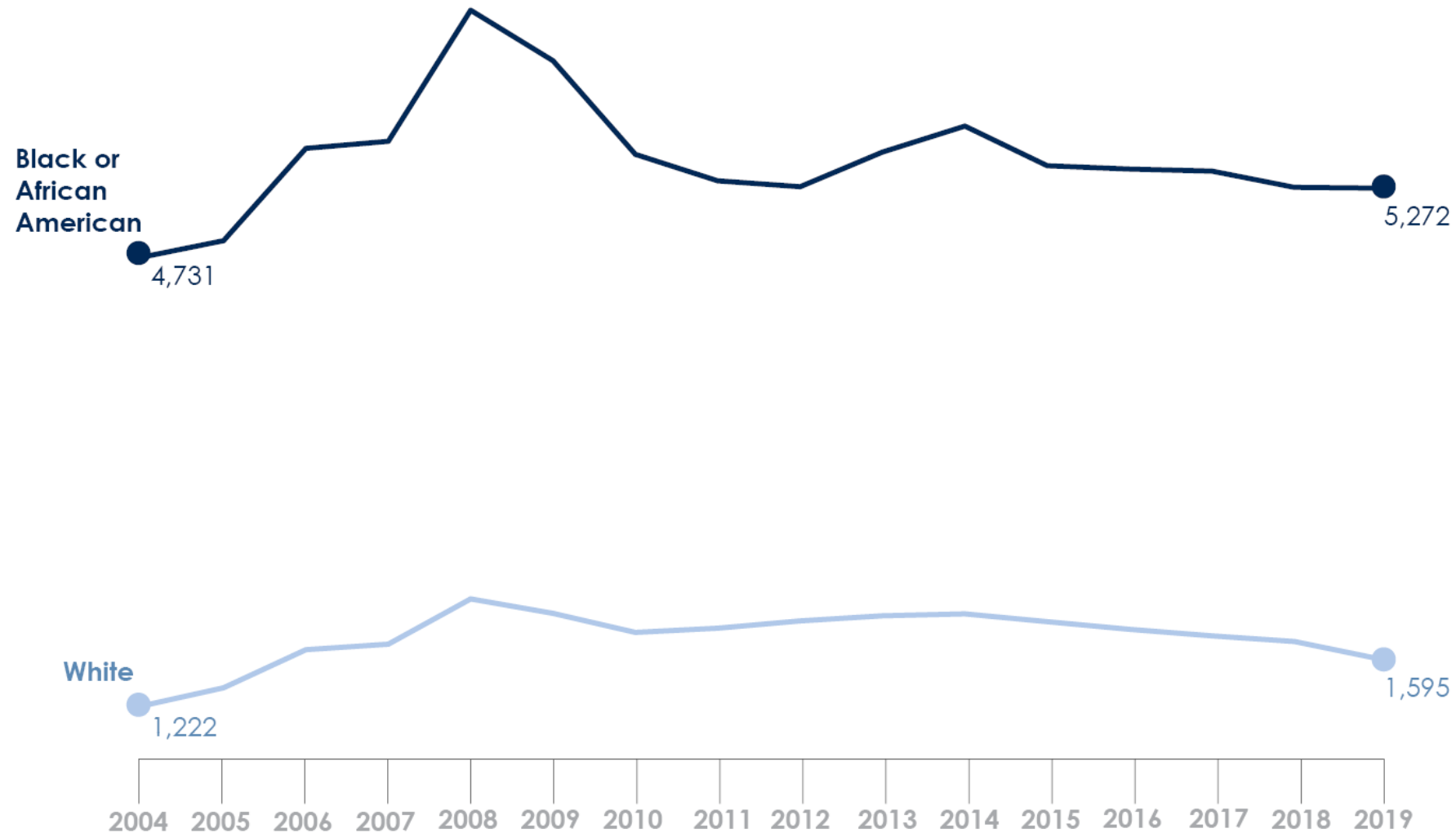
per 100,000 population, by race, July 2020



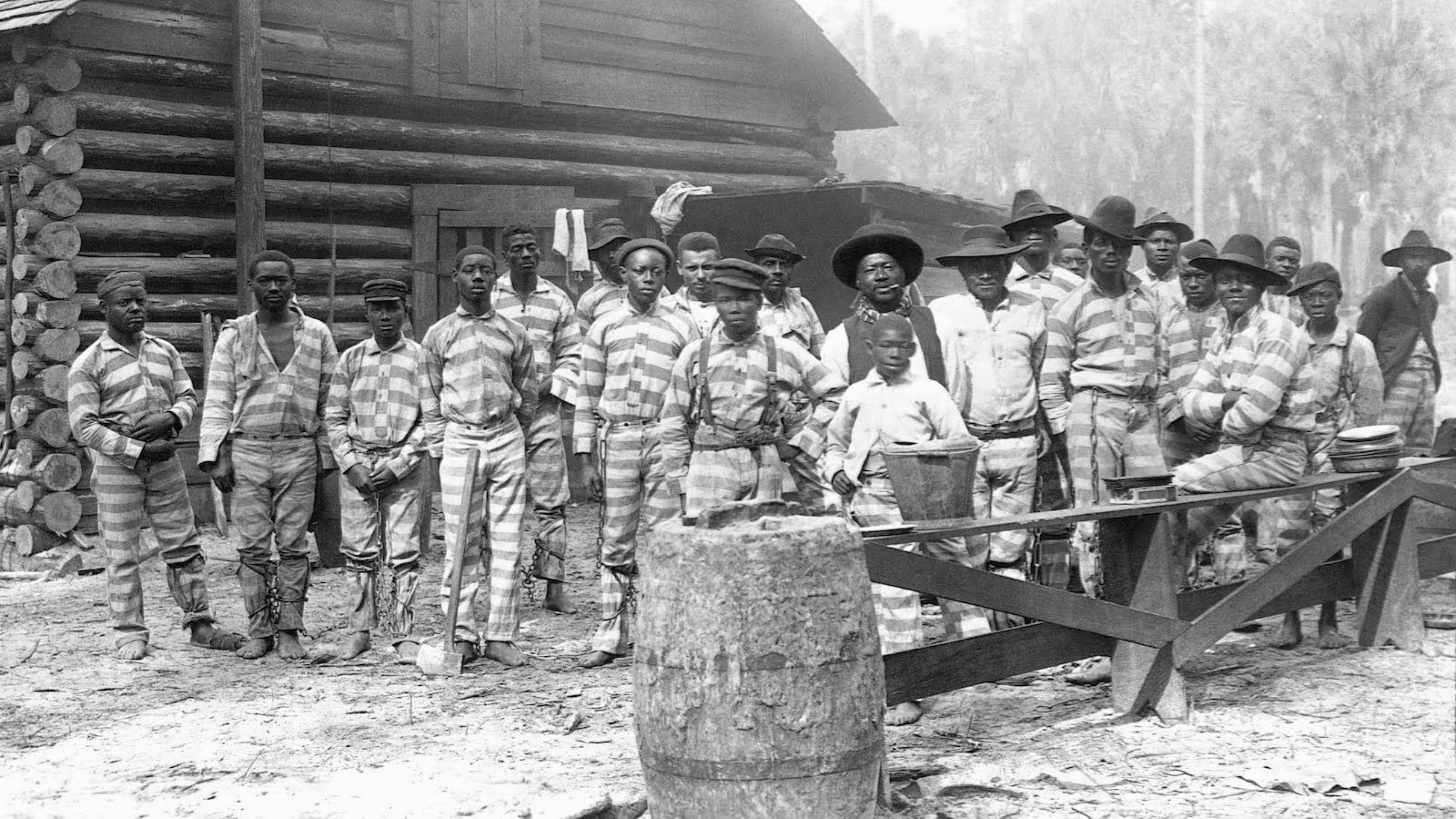
**Source:** HPIO analysis of Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections annual report and Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau

# Ohio arrests

per 100,000 population, by race, 2004-2019



Source: Ohio Department of Public Safety





**BAIL  
BONDS**

TURNER  
BAIL BOND  
OPEN

TURNER  
BONDING  
605-988-8777

10 N DELAWARE BAIL BONDS

12

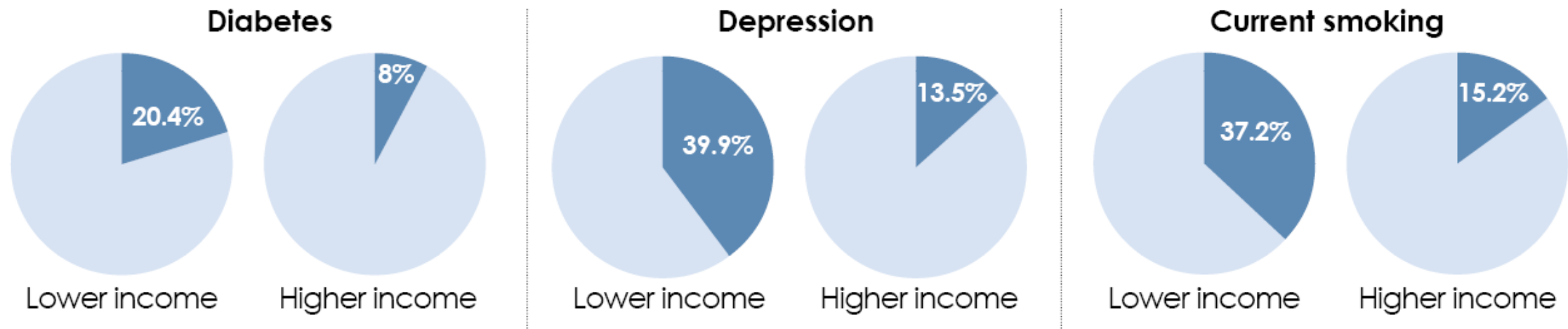
What drives both criminal justice  
and health outcomes?

**Income,  
employment and  
education**

# Health disparities by income

Ohio, 2019

In 2019, Ohioans with low incomes (less than \$15,000 per year) were more likely than Ohioans with higher incomes (\$50,000 or more per year) to report:



**Source:** 2019 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

# Income and incarceration



The pre-incarceration median income for justice-involved people is 41% lower than the median income of other Americans of similar ages

**Source:** Rabuy, Bernadette and Daniel Kopf. *Prisons of Poverty: Uncovering the Pre-Incarceration Incomes of the Imprisoned*. Prison Policy Initiative, 2015.

# Education and incarceration





What drives both criminal justice  
and health outcomes?

# Trauma and family well-being

# Adverse Childhood Experiences

Abuse	Household challenges	Neglect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emotional abuse</li><li>• Physical abuse</li><li>• Sexual abuse</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intimate partner violence</li><li>• Substance use in the household</li><li>• Mental illness in the household</li><li>• Parental separation or divorce</li><li>• Incarcerated member of the household</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emotional neglect</li><li>• Physical neglect</li></ul>

**Source:** Health Policy Institute of Ohio, "Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Health impact of ACEs in Ohio." Information from Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



# Impacts of childhood adversity persist

**Birth**

**Adulthood**



Adverse childhood experiences



What drives both criminal justice  
and health outcomes?

# Housing and homelessness

# Housing and health



# Housing and criminal justice



# Homelessness and criminal justice

# Taking **action**

# To improve criminal justice and health outcomes:

- Support mental well-being and improve crisis response
- Reduce the number of people incarcerated
- Improve health for people who are currently or formerly incarcerated
- Improve community conditions



# Improve crisis response



# Reduce the number of people incarcerated



Reduce  
**collateral  
sanctions**

# Who is at higher risk of criminal justice involvement?

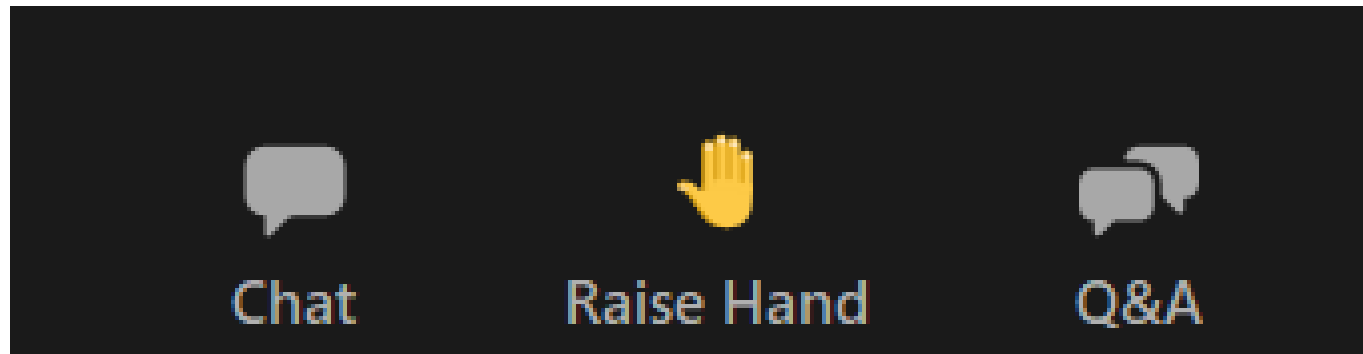
- Black Ohioans and other people of color
- People with low incomes
- People with behavioral health and/or disabling conditions
- People who were formerly incarcerated

# 3 key findings for policymakers

- **There is a two-way relationship** between criminal justice and health
- **Racism and community conditions** contribute to criminal justice involvement and poor health
- **There are evidence-informed policy solutions** to combat the drivers of criminal justice involvement and poor health outcomes

# Questions?

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# POLL QUESTION



# Ways to influence policy

- Write letters, emails or make phone calls
- Provide district specific data
- Provide analysis of a bill
- Provide testimony at a legislative hearing
- Provide a one-page fact sheet
- Organize community partners to visit key policymakers
- Invite policymakers to visits your organization or speak at a meeting you host

# POLL QUESTION

# Download the complete “Connections between Criminal Justice and Health” policy brief at [www.hprio.net/connections-between-criminal-justice-and-health/](http://www.hprio.net/connections-between-criminal-justice-and-health/)

June 2021

**hprio** Health Policy Brief  
health policy institute of ohio  
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**Figure 1. The relationship between criminal justice and health**

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**Communities**  
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