

Housing the Homeless: The Effect of Placing Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness in Housing Programs on Future Homelessness and Socioeconomic Outcomes

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This study measures the impact of rapidly placing single adults experiencing homelessness in housing programs on future homelessness, crime, and health. Using case worker placement tendencies design and a novel dataset constructed by linking administrative records from multiple public agencies in Los Angeles County, I estimate that rapidly placing individuals in housing programs significantly reduces the likelihood of future return to the homeless support system, crime, and reliance on emergency cash assistance, yet it does not have a detectable effect on health services utilization. These findings demonstrate that rapid housing placements can have both rehabilitative and potentially cost-savings impacts.

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Around 580,000 people in the U.S. are homeless on a given night, and 1.4 million use homeless services annually (Henry et al., 2020, 2021). Homelessness leads to adverse outcomes (e.g., increased mortality, criminal activity, worse health and reduced housing and job prospects). It can cost public agencies and governments as much as \$80,000 per person per year (Flaming, Toros and Burns, 2015). Public recognition of this social problem has grown in the past decade, with funding for

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