

Center for California Studies

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FACULTY RESEARCH FELLOWS PROGRAM

Eviction: What do we know about the long-term costs of eviction and successful eviction intervention programs?

Request for proposals

The Center for California Studies at Sac State has received a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to support policy research on topics related to reducing income and wealth inequality. The following RFP is part of a series intended to inform policy solutions to income and wealth inequality; the series is partially funded through the grant from the Gates Foundation.

Project Title

Eviction: What do we know about the long-term costs of eviction and successful eviction intervention programs?

Background

Economic inequality has risen sharply since the 1970's in many industrial countries. This rise has been particularly pronounced in the U.S, where reliable growth in labor productivity over the past five decades has not translated into a corresponding growth in wages, denying most Americans any benefit from this growth and instead enriching the country's already wealthiest citizens.ⁱ As pronounced as this inequality is at the national level, it is even greater in California, where income inequality is among the highest in the country.ⁱⁱ

In recent years, state policy makers have ranked the state's income and wealth inequality as among the state's most pressing problems.ⁱⁱⁱ Bills introduced in the California State Legislature contain hundreds of proposals to address the problem, from increasing the availability of affordable housing to health care subsidies and tuition-free community college. Governor Newsom's latest budget revision includes aggressive anti-poverty proposals: a \$5.2 billion renter

ⁱ Steven Vogel, "The Regulatory Roots of Inequality in America," *Journal of Law and Political Economy* (2021) p. 272

ⁱⁱ Public Policy Institute of California, "Just the Facts: Income Inequality in California," January, 2020, [Income Inequality in California - Public Policy Institute of California \(ppic.org\)](http://Income Inequality in California - Public Policy Institute of California (ppic.org))

ⁱⁱⁱ Elizabeth Castillo and Lauren Rosenthal, "A Deep Blue Sea of California Lawmakers Takes Oath of Office," [CalMatters](http://CalMatters, December 3, 2018.), December 3, 2018.

assistance package, proposals on affordable housing and homelessness, and a universal basic income pilot program.^{iv}

Of the numerous policy solutions pursued to address the growing income and wealth divide in California, the most intractable seems to be affordable housing and growing homelessness. In a 2020 PPIC poll, 63% of Californians said housing affordability is a big problem in their area.^v In a 2020 report, the State Auditor noted that in 523 out of 539 jurisdictions in California, at least 1 in 5 low-income rental households spends at least half of their income on housing – a severe financial burden.^{vi} Our history of discriminatory housing policies, denying some the support or even ability to build wealth through homeownership, also means that certain groups are more likely to face the threat of eviction because they are less likely to have the wealth to weather a financial crisis. The undue burden of housing costs extends into the middle class as well: by some estimates, 4 out of 10 California spend more than 30% of their income on housing, a threshold considered financially burdensome by most economists.^{vii}

Unfortunately, the housing affordability crisis is not expected to subside anytime soon; the State Auditor estimates that the state will need to build 125,000 affordable housing units annually through 2029, far more than we currently build, to address the current shortage.^{viii} The economic effect of this affordable housing shortage is a financial strain for many Californians, but for some, the ultimate effect is eviction, affecting tens of thousands of Californians a year.^{ix}

The long-term effects of eviction can be devastating. Fortunately, due to the economic hardships experienced by many renters due to COVID-19, California lawmakers have supported temporary eviction moratoriums and other supports for struggling renters. It is unclear, however, how the state's eviction protections will evolve once the COVID-19 crisis is over. Given the difficulty of increasing the state's affordability housing supply, a possible spike in evictions can only lead to long-term homelessness for those affected.

Purpose of Research

This research is intended to aid state policymakers in crafting policies to reduce poverty and overall income and wealth inequality in California. It is intended to answer the following policy questions:

- What does existing research say about the long-term effects of eviction on an individual or family's mental health, financial well-being, educational attainment, and long-term economic trajectory (e.g., trauma, credit, lost schooling, homelessness)?

^{iv} [California Roars Back: Governor Newsom Presents \\$100 Billion California Comeback Plan | California Governor](#)

^v [PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and Their Government - Public Policy Institute of California](#)

^{vi} [Report 2020-108 \(ca.gov\)](#)

^{vii} [California's Affordable Housing Crisis: Why Prices Are So High and How to Solve It \(bloomberg.com\)](#)

^{viii} [Report 2020-108 \(ca.gov\)](#)

^{ix} Eviction Lab, [Eviction Map & Data | Eviction Lab](#)

- What does the research say about the effectiveness of eviction intervention programs (e.g., emergency rental assistance, pre-eviction filing mediation, etc.) in helping people avoid eviction?
- How much would successful eviction intervention programs save over time per household in avoided costs related to eviction and homelessness (i.e., how much would successful eviction intervention programs save the state in human services, health care, and other costs over time over time per household as compared to letting people become homeless and then having to help move people out of homelessness)?

How much would successful eviction intervention programs save per household in avoided costs related to eviction and homelessness to the family experiencing eviction; what are the costs and financial burdens imposed by eviction and experiencing homelessness?

- What do we know about CalWORKs' rental assistance program and its effectiveness in helping participants avoid eviction?
- What are policy implications of the findings to the above questions?

Scope of Research

This project is one of several focused on informing state policy making as it relates to the policy implications of reducing inequality in California and improving the economic circumstances of California's lowest- and middle-income residents, in the long-term. The researcher or research team for this project will review and summarize existing research on eviction, its long-term effects on individuals and families, effective eviction intervention programs, and the long-term savings of effective eviction programs. They may also develop their own estimates of such savings. The researcher or research team may contact the appropriate state government entity to inquire about any evaluations of CalWORKS' rental assistance program. The researcher will also deduce the policy implications for California. Deliverables and Timeline

Deliverables and Timeline

1. Participate in a planning call with legislative requesters and Center for California Studies staff, prior to beginning the project.
2. Provide preliminary drafts of the following to the Center for California Studies by August 15: a report and a two-page summary of findings and recommendations.
3. Respond to any comments or questions about the draft and provide a final report and two-page summary to the Center for California Studies by September 30.
4. Present research in Sacramento by the end of 2022, on a date mutually agreeable to both the researchers and the Faculty Research Fellows Program award recipient. (The Center can cover travel costs for faculty doing the presentation.)

Budget

\$ 20,000 This amount includes any indirect costs charged by the recipient's institution, as well as travel costs and all other costs (except for travel costs related to the presentation, which will be covered by the Center for California Studies).

Who May Apply:

Faculty and staff at any California State University campus may submit proposals. Preference is given to principal investigators who are full-time faculty or staff, but part-time faculty may also apply. Part-time faculty and CSU students may also be included as secondary investigators and assistants.

How to Apply

Proposals are due May 27, 2022. Submit proposal by email (in a single Word document or PDF file) to Leonor Ehling, Executive Director, Center for California Studies, at leonor.ehling@csus.edu. Include "FRPR Gates proposal – Eviction" in the subject line. Notification of awards will occur by June 3, 2022.

Proposal should be no longer than five single spaced pages (excluding a list of cited works, curriculum vitae, and evidence of approval from applicant's campus office of research). The proposal should include the following:

1. An introductory statement that demonstrates an understanding of the subject matter.
2. Explanation of the research design including the methods of analysis and source of data, if applicable.
3. A timeline for completing the project in the allotted period.
4. A proposed budget including the portion to be devoted to faculty time and travel to Sacramento for presentation of the research.
5. Description of the researcher's (s') qualifications for performing the study.
6. Telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for the principal researcher (s).
7. A resume or vitae for each person funded under the project.
8. Approval by the principle investigator's campus office of research and sponsored programs, in conformance with Chancellor's Office Executive Order Number 890 [EO 890 - Administration of Grants and Contracts in Support of Sponsored Programs \(csusm.edu\)](http://www.csus.edu/center/center-california-studies/EO_890_-_Administration_of_Grants_and_Contracts_in_Support_of_Sponsored_Programs_(csusm.edu))

Questions about this RFP may be directed to:

Leonor Ehling (leonor.ehling@csus.edu)

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