

Racial Disparity and its Consequences in Oregon's Criminal Justice System

- Racial minorities comprise 22% of Oregon's population but over 26% of the state's adult inmate population.^{1,2}
- Youth of color comprise 25% of Oregon's youth population but represent 36% of youth referrals to OYA and 36% of youth indicted under Measure 11.^{3,4}

African Americans

- African Americans comprise just 2% of Oregon's population, but 9% of the state's adult inmate population.^{5,6}
- African Americans in Oregon are six times more likely than whites to be incarcerated.⁷
- African Americans constitute 4% of Oregon's youth population but 19% of the state's Measure 11 indictments among youth.⁸
- African Americans are also disproportionately affected by crime; they comprise 7% of Portland's population but 45% of the city's homicide victims.⁹

Oregon Department of Corrections Inmate Demographics, 2013

White: 73.6%
Hispanic: 13.3%
Black: 9.4%
American Indian: 2.5%
Asian: 1.3%

Oregon Statewide Demographics, 2011

White: 78.1%
Hispanic: 12%
Black: 2%
American Indian: 1.8%

¹ Oregon Department of Corrections Inmate Population Profile for 5/1/2013.

(http://www.oregon.gov/DOC/RESRCH/docs/inmate_profile.pdf.)

² Oregon Quick Facts. United States Census Bureau. (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/41000.html>.)

³ Misguided Measures: The Outcomes and Impacts of Measure 11 on Oregon's Youth. Partnership for Safety and Justice.

⁴ Total Referrals (2012). Juvenile Justice Information System, Oregon Youth Authority.

(http://www.oregon.gov/oia/reports/jjis/2012/2012_youth_referrals.pdf.)

⁵ Oregon Department of Corrections Inmate Population Profile for 5/1/2013.

(http://www.oregon.gov/DOC/RESRCH/docs/inmate_profile.pdf.)

⁶ Oregon Quick Facts. United States Census Bureau. (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/41000.html>.)

⁷ The State of Black Oregon. Urban League of Portland. 2009.

http://www.doj.state.or.us/victims/pdf/the_state_of_black_oregon.pdf

⁸ Misguided Measures: The Outcomes and Impacts of Measure 11 on Oregon's Youth. Partnership for Safety and Justice.

Latinos

- Latinos are slightly overrepresented in Oregon’s adult prison system. While they represent 12% of the total population, they make up just over 13% of the adult inmate population.^{10,11}
- Overrepresentation of Latinos in Oregon’s youth detention system is somewhat more pronounced. Latinos make up 15% of the state’s youth population, but represent approximately 18% of referrals to the Oregon Youth Authority.¹²
- Latino youth who are charged with a Measure 11 offense are far more likely than white and black youth to be convicted of that offense. Among such youth, 35% are convicted of the Measure 11 offense with which they were charged, compared to 22% of white youth and 15% of black youth. Furthermore, 95% of Latino youth charged with a Measure 11 crime are convicted of some type of adult crime, compared with 87% of black youth and 85% of white youth. This suggests that language/cultural barriers may affect the outcomes of Measure 11 indictments among youth.¹³

Collateral Consequences

- Because minorities are involved in the criminal justice system at disproportionate rates, they are also disproportionately affected by the collateral consequences of incarceration, including difficulty securing housing and employment and exclusion from public benefits.¹⁴
- Many of the most severe collateral consequences of incarceration stem from policies aimed specifically at drug offenses. These laws were instituted during the federal “War on Drugs” in the 1980s and ’90s, which led to a surge in incarceration rates across the country and greatly exacerbated racial disparities in sentencing and incarceration.¹⁵
- Research shows that the negative impact of a criminal conviction is substantially larger for blacks than for whites. A recent social science experiment to determine how a criminal record affects hiring decisions found that black job applicants with a criminal record were half as likely as virtually identical white applicants to receive a callback or interview.¹⁶

⁹ The State of Black Oregon. Urban League of Portland. 2009.

¹⁰ Oregon Department of Corrections Inmate Population Profile for 5/1/2013.

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¹¹ Oregon Quick Facts. United States Census Bureau. (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/41000.html>.)

¹² Total Referrals (2012). Juvenile Justice Information System, Oregon Youth Authority.

(http://www.oregon.gov/oia/reports/jjis/2012/2012_youth_referrals.pdf.)

¹³ Misguided Measures: The Outcomes and Impacts of Measure 11 on Oregon’s Youth. Partnership for Safety and Justice.

¹⁴ Collateral Consequences of Criminal Convictions: Confronting Issues of Race and Dignity. NYU Law Review.

(2010) http://digitalcommons.law.umaryland.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1820&context=fac_pubs.

¹⁵ See *id.* at 470 and 515-17.

¹⁶ Investigating Prisoner Reentry: The Impact of Conviction Status on the Employment Prospects of Young Men.

(2009) <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/228584.pdf>.