CALL FOR PAPERS

Special Issue of Criminal Justice and Behavior on
Research to Advance “Smart Decarceration” Policies, Programs, and Interventions

Guest Edited by:
Matt Epperson (University of Chicago)
Amy Blank Wilson (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill) and
Gina Fedock (University of Chicago)

Manuscript Submission Deadline: May 31, 2019

Although the United States leads the world in number and proportion of its population incarcerated, there is evidence that the era of mass incarceration has reached a tipping point. The adult incarceration rate has declined slightly but steadily since 2009, and key stakeholders, including policymakers, practitioners, and researchers, call for a new era of decarceration - wherein the use of incarceration could be significantly reduced. As this period of decarceration begins to take shape, it will be essential for research to yield evidence that informs “Smart Decarceration” policies and practices that effectively eliminate/lessen the use of incarceration. Smart Decarceration is defined by three interrelated outcomes:

1- Substantially reduce the prison and jail populations;
2- Reverse existing disparities (primarily those related to race and behavioral health) among those incarcerated; and
3- Maximize public safety and well-being, particularly the well-being of communities most impacted by mass incarceration.

This special issue of Criminal Justice and Behavior will highlight important research contributions to the emerging field of Smart Decarceration. Topics to be addressed include, but are not limited to:

- Evaluations of state and/or local policies and interventions intended to significantly reduce the number of incarcerated adults;
- Decarceration-focused innovations across the criminal justice continuum (law enforcement, courts, jails and prisons, and community supervision);
- Community-based efforts aimed at diverting adults from incarceration;
- Interventions that specifically target existing disparities among incarcerated populations;
- Initiatives in which formally incarcerated people play an active role in decarceration work.

The success of Smart Decarceration policies and practices depends on strong interdisciplinary efforts. Therefore, scholars from a wide variety of disciplines (e.g. social work, criminal justice and criminology, psychology, public health, etc.) are strongly encouraged to submit manuscripts. Additionally, each manuscript should include a sub-section entitled “Implications for Future Smart Decarceration Research” that discusses how this work contributes to Smart Decarceration and specific next steps needed to further this research trajectory.
Manuscripts may be submitted electronically through https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/cjb between December 1, 2018 and the deadline of May 31, 2019. Authors should specify in their cover letter that their submission is intended for this special issue. Authors must follow all formatting guidelines for regular manuscript submission to the journal (https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/journal/criminal-justice-and-behavior#submission-guidelines). The ideal length for manuscripts is 25 to 35 double-spaced pages, and we encourage authors to recommend reviewers for their manuscript. Questions about the special issue and potential paper topics should be directed to Lead Editor Matt Epperson at mepperson@uchicago.edu.

For more information about Smart Decarceration, see recent efforts within the Grand Challenges for Social Work focused on Promoting Smart Decarceration: http://aaswsw.org/grand-challenges-initiative/12-challenges/promote-smart-decarceration/