

## **The Employment Journey: Gender, Race, and Homelessness**

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### **Abstract**

Social scientists and criminologists have sought to understand the employment transition of those formally incarcerated. These studies commonly evaluate employment likelihood, earnings, and how convictions “signal” assumptions to potential employers. Literature has also begun to explore the broader “sequence of events applicants go through” that highlight the structural barriers and the role of cumulated, structural inequality in shaping access to and forms of employment. We build upon this literature by applying an intersectional identity perspective of those formerly incarcerated to a political economy of work context in Knoxville, Tennessee. This emphasis underlines how the interlocking of race, class and gender identities of those formerly incarcerated shape employment processes in a neoliberal employment landscape where new modes of labor flexibility and the emergence of precarious work define re-entry success. In this backdrop, those formerly incarcerated are also beginning to organize to demand employment options, criminal justice change, and social services.