

Landlord Attitudes Toward Renting to Released Offenders*

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[Research Question](#)
[Literature Review](#)
[Theory](#)
[Survey](#)
[Analysis](#)
[Conclusions](#)
[Future Research](#)

THIS STUDY EXPLORES landlords' perspectives toward housing released criminal offenders. Prior research has focused on the barriers offenders face in trying to find employment, housing, life stability, solutions for homelessness, or community reentry programs. Housing is often cited as a hurdle to successful reentry, but little research has been done to identify the actual boundaries of this particular hurdle. This study surveyed landlords in the city of Akron, Ohio regarding their priorities in screening applicants and their histories and attitudes towards housing released offenders. The survey results indicate the need to develop new approaches to re-entry programs and to perform future research, both qualitative and quantitative.

[back to top](#)

Research Question

Since most prior research investigated the issue of housing from the released offenders' perspective, it does not adequately address the extent to which a criminal background is an obstacle in obtaining housing. One study that did look at attitudes toward applicants with a criminal record provides limited information. Helfgott (1997:20) found

Of the property managers and owners surveyed (n = 196), 67 percent indicated that they inquire about criminal history on rental applications. Forty-three percent said that they would be inclined to reject an applicant with a criminal conviction. The crimes of particular concern to the property managers who said they would reject an ex-offender applicant were violent offenses (49 percent), sex offenses (37 percent), murder (19 percent), drug offenses (9 percent), all felonies (9 percent), domestic violence (6 percent), arson (9 percent), and property offenses (7 percent).(n9) The primary reason for their inclination to reject an applicant with a criminal history was protection and safety of community. The second most

offered reason for rejection was that ex-offenders are not wanted on the property or in the neighborhood because they have bad values. One respondent commented, "I don't like these people. They should all stay in jail." Of those respondents who did not inquire about criminal history, the main reason offered for not inquiring was that everyone should have another chance. One respondent commented, "A person has to live somewhere."

Helfgott obtained but did not include in her article information from the landlords who indicated that they would accept an applicant with a criminal history, would house such an applicant or under what circumstances. There are many factors beyond a criminal record that could affect a landlord's decision to rent or not rent to someone, including credit, rental history (or lack of such a history), income, and employment. If all things are equal between two applicants, what additional criteria are necessary for the released offender to qualify over someone else? Exploring how these factors interact with a criminal history might lead to more focused reentry programs. The first question, however, is to determine how much resistance landlords may have towards released offenders and what factors may play a role in the decision to rent to such a person.

[back to top](#)

Literature Review

Many aspects of the issues surrounding released offenders have been examined. Recent research on reentry problems and concerns have focused on readjustment (La Vigne, 2004), reintegration (Visher and Travis, 2003), civic re-involvement (Uggen, Manza, and Behrens 2004), attitudes (Kenemore and Roldan, 2006), stigma (Pager, 2003), need for subsidized housing (Holtfreter, 2004), employment (Pager 2003) and others.

Articles written specifically on housing tend to address the challenges presented by: the housing market (Scally, 2005; Bradley, et al., 2001; Roman and Travis, 2004); community and neighborhood issues (Levenson, 2005 sex offender registration programs); needs, successes, and failures of homeless shelters (Metraux and Culhane, 2002), reentry programs that provide transition support to released prisoners (Roman, 2004), and policy issues (Petersilia, 2000).

The Urban Institute issued a series of reports from a longitudinal study of released prisoners from four locations (Visher, 2003; La Vigne, et al., 2003; La Vigne, 2004; Solomon, 2004; Roman, 2004). The studies consisted of interviews with released offenders on a range of topics. In the area of housing, the reports highlighted the fact that while most prisoners expected to live with their families, for others housing is a serious issue. Concerns ranged from not being allowed to return to the family home, especially if the family lives in subsidized housing, to maintaining good relations with the family or others in order to be allowed to stay in whatever housing is found.

In the past several years, local newspapers across the nation have highlighted the unintended results of the "tough on crime" campaign—the difficulties of reintegrating offenders back into the community (see Eckholm, 2006, need for housing; Riley, 2003 ex-prisoner interviews; *Austin Weekly News*, 2005 reentry program; *Traverse City Record Eagle*, 2005, community opposition to half-way house; *Kansas City Star*, 2006 planned community restrictions on offenders). As the prison and jail population has increased, so has the number of offenders being released. Many communities are now facing the dilemma of reintegrating these men and women and making it possible for them to stay out of prison by providing employment, housing, education, and training.

One feature that all of the articles have in common, both scholarly and popular, is that they look at the issue of housing from the perspective of the released offender or the community rather

than the market. Some of the barriers faced by released offenders are also faced by many low-income and young individuals and families. Two of these, affordability and illegal discrimination, must be addressed by communities, social service programs, families, individuals, reentry programs, and advocates.

Affordability has always been a problem in America. The public housing program was started during the Great Depression of the 1930s as a means to address the issue of affordability for low-income families. In the 1980s the Section 8 subsidized housing program for the private rental market was first funded. Despite these efforts, housing affordability for low-income families remains a serious issue. In 2000 the Department of Housing and Urban Development released a report on the housing market which indicated significant increases in the number of families living in the worst-case scenario of being at the lowest level of income while paying the highest percentage of income for a shrinking supply of housing (DHUD 2000). Released offenders face the same difficulties as other people who lack adequate economic resources. While the presence of a stigma from a criminal conviction will not be discussed here, it should be noted that a stigma should not be assumed. Helfgott (1997) interviewed landlords to judge their willingness to rent to released prisoners. As stated previously, she found that 43 percent would deny applications from released offenders. Not thoroughly discussed in Helfgott's article were the 57 percent who were willing to consider applications from released offenders. There are many reasons for landlords to reject offenders. Offenders may lack an appropriate credit history, not have adequate funds to offer a security deposit for an apartment (Roman, 2004), have a limited employment record (Waldfogel, 1994), limited education, or generally lack the technical work skills needed for many jobs (Visher, et al., 2006).

[back to top](#)

Theory

While the cost of housing may be the most significant barrier for a returning offender (Solomon, 2004), another important barrier is the landlord's lack of willingness to rent to a released offender. Landlords must have trust in their tenants. The ownership of rental properties represents a large monetary investment; the return on the investment rests upon the behavior of someone not totally under the control of the landlord. Generally the landlord has to judge the trustworthiness of an applicant through "signs" such as credit reports, court records, and pay stubs, rather than direct or personal knowledge (Bacharach and Gambetta, 2001). In addition, as discussed below, the landlord needs to evaluate the applicant's potential for causing harm within the local neighborhood. Landlord trust is based on demonstrable traits of the applicant, personal and economic, and an evaluation of the potential impact on the neighborhood and for law enforcement actions by police or neighbors if the tenant's behavior is deemed a nuisance or criminal.

The common trust signs that landlords focus on are credit history, prior rental history, employment, and income. The most important thing for a landlord is finding a tenant who has the income to pay for housing and a history that reflects a willingness to pay the rent, on time and in the proper manner. Without a reliable income, rental applicants generally are not approved. A poor prior rental history, especially one including evictions, or a lack of rental history are also barriers to obtaining housing. The landlord must weigh the applicant's rating on each of these criteria against market forces, availability of other applicants, and vacancy levels. A higher level of credit, employment, and income might be required when the supply of housing is tight and demand is high. Likewise, requirements could ease during periods of high vacancy rates and reduced supplies of applicants with good credit and employment histories. A poor tenant may be better than no tenant at all.

In addition to concerns about their property, landlords worry about being held responsible for injuries or harm to the tenant and others. The issue of landlord responsibility for criminal acts by third parties has been examined in Ohio and elsewhere. Courts have generally held that the landlord is not responsible for the criminal acts of third parties, or for the criminal acts of their tenants, if they have no prior knowledge of the criminal behavior (*Thomas v. Hart Realty, Inc.*

[Hamilton, 1984] 17 Ohio App.3d 83, 477 N.E.2d 668, 17 O.B.R. 145). However, if the criminal act could be reasonably foreseen or the landlord promised a certain level of security to other tenants that was subsequently not provided, then the landlord might be liable (“Apartment Tenant Thrown Down Stairwell By Another Tenant,” *Security Law Newsletter*, 05/01/2003; *Rhaney v. Univ. of Md. Eastern Shore* No. 118 [Md. Ct. Spec. App. Aug. 15, 2005]).

Despite repeated findings by courts that landlords are not generally liable for the criminal acts of third parties, including those of tenants, many landlords greatly fear being sued by tenants or neighbors if criminal acts were to occur on the rental property. Part of this fear has been fueled by municipal programs, such as the city of Akron’s Project HAPPEN, which cite rental property owners for building code violations and board the dwellings up following drug raids by the police (Remmel, 1998; Zanin, 2004). This fear of income loss causes rental property owners to use criteria that may discriminate against persons perceived as likely to engage in criminal activities. One obvious sign for landlords is an applicant’s criminal history. Landlords are concerned about their reputations in the community, and being known as willing to rent to released offenders may prevent those landlords from attracting other applicants or retaining current tenants.

[back to top](#)

[Table 1](#)

Survey

The survey ([Exhibit A](#)) had 31 questions covering applicant screening criteria (e.g., credit, income, employment, rental history), the importance of an applicant’s criminal history (currently accepting applicants, weight of different types of crimes), market factors (vacancy level, rent level), community concerns (enforcement of housing codes resulting from criminal activities), advertising results, trust, and demographics of the landlord and rental business. Two survey forms were used, differing only as to the gender of the offender. The returned surveys split evenly on gender.

Three primary questions were posed to the Akron landlords who participated in the survey.

- Question 5: “Do you now accept applicants with criminal histories?”
- Question 6: “If you do not accept applicants with a criminal background would you reconsider if the applicant was able to show that they were rehabilitated?”
- Question 10: “Do you rent to applicants with any of the following types of convictions: Felony, Misdemeanor, Drug Use, Drug Sales, Domestic Violence, Assault, Sex Offender, Multiple Convictions”?

The survey was conducted by mail. Surveys were mailed to landlords who had registered their rental units with the City of Akron as of January, 2006. The city requires that all rental units within the municipal limits be registered and inspected for code violations on a regular basis. The list included 4600 registered property owners and over 12,000 dwellings. From the 4600 property owners, 3000 were randomly selected for the survey. Of those mailed surveys, 611 completed surveys were returned. Of the remainder, 63 returned their surveys uncompleted, 78 were undeliverable, 5 were returned and resent to new addresses, and 2262 were unreturned. The response rate was just over 20 percent.

The majority of the respondents were older, white males with some college experience or a college degree. Blacks and women are underrepresented in proportion to the general population (2005 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau).

The 2005 American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau) found that 55.2 percent of rental housing is found in 1 to 4 unit buildings. [Table 2](#) shows that 66.4 percent of the respondents to the survey own one to five rental units. The vacancy rate of 14 to 17 percent is very high, especially for such small owners, since one vacant unit would represent between 20 percent and 100 percent loss of rental income.

Analysis

Since almost all of the questions of interest were categorical in nature, cross tabulations were used to analyze the data. Chi-square tests were performed to determine statistical significance. Responses on several questions were recoded into dummy variables for comparison purposes. These questions asked for responses ranging from “never” to “very often.” “Never” was coded as 0 and all other responses were coded as 1. The questions recoded to 0 or 1 asked about housing persons with histories of felonies, misdemeanors, drug crimes, violence, sex offenses, and multiple convictions. If a respondent indicated anything other than “never,” they were counted as leasing to released offenders.

The three main questions (listed above) were intended to determine if there was a difference between the generalized thoughts of landlords and the reality that they face in screening applicants. While a policy to deny applicants with criminal histories may be articulated, when faced with limited choices, poor market conditions, and face-to-face contact, landlords might disregard a stated negative policy, “trust their gut,” and make exceptions.

Starting with the screening criteria, landlords indicated that eviction history, employment, and income were of greatest importance (see [Table 3](#)).

As can be seen in [Table 3](#), a criminal record fell behind not only those factors but rental history. [Table 4](#) shows that landlords are willing to consider explanations of employment and income deficiencies but less willing to consider explanations regarding criminal history. However, the three top criteria all have mean scores above 4 on a 5-point scale, with the other factors ranking lower.

Questions about criminal history and the tendency of the landlord to lease to ex-offenders included both general and specific topics. Landlords were asked if they had rented to applicants with criminal histories three years prior and if they rented to such applicants today. The answers were similar to those obtained by Helfgott (1997), in that a majority stated that they did not and currently were not accepting applicants with criminal histories (see [table 5](#)). But when the question was asked: “If you do not accept applicants with a criminal background would you reconsider if the applicant was able to show that they were rehabilitated?” the responses changed, with 60 percent of the landlords stating that they would consider such an applicant. Sixty-two percent indicated that they would reconsider if the applicant would be living with their family. One of the issues discussed in the literature is the double bind that questions about criminal background pose for released offenders. If they acknowledge their convictions, then they may be rejected outright. However, 72 percent of the survey respondents indicated they would reject an applicant if the applicant lied on the application about a criminal background. Twenty percent responded that they sometimes reject applicants who lie. Only 7 percent of the landlords indicated that they never reject someone for lying about a criminal background. This would relate to the trust factors that landlords rely on when making decisions about applicants. A lie on the application is a clear indication that the person is not trustworthy.

Because of the wording, only those landlords that answered in the negative about renting to ex-convicts should have answered Question 6. But the cross-tabulation of the questions on currently accepting and reconsidering because of rehabilitation shows that there is some overlap. Seventy-six landlords who currently accept applicants with criminal histories did not answer the question about rehabilitation; the remaining 117 did. While it is possible that some would answer no to later questions about specific crimes, it is assumed that these landlords would be likely to consider applicants who could show some efforts at rehabilitation. For the cross-tabulations given in [Table 6](#), the Chi Square value of 160.32 is significant at $p < .000$. Sixty-two percent of the landlords who indicated that they currently do not accept applicants with criminal histories (Question 5) would reconsider if rehabilitation could be shown (Question 6). Of the 569 responses to both these questions, approximately three-quarters of the respondents fall into the

category of being willing to consider applicants with criminal histories.

The following question was posed: “Do you rent to applicants with any of the following types of convictions?” The list of convictions was: Felonies, Misdemeanors, Drug Use, Drug Sales, Assault, Domestic Violence, Sex Offenses, and Multiple Crimes. The answers to these questions were crosstabulated with Questions 5 and 6 about current practices regarding applicants with criminal histories and reconsidering if there was some showing of rehabilitation (see [Table 7](#) and [Exhibit B](#)).

[Table 7](#) shows several things. First, landlords are more willing to consider renting to applicants with misdemeanor convictions (67 percent) than to felons (43 percent), with or without rehabilitation. It also shows that rehabilitation is an important factor that landlords consider when faced with an applicant who has a criminal history, especially if the crime is a misdemeanor.

Only 35 percent of the landlords were willing to accept a felon without rehabilitation, while 62 percent, which includes landlords who are currently accepting applicants with a criminal history, would accept them with rehabilitation. Results for misdemeanors show similar trends.

Using the specific crimes rather than level of crime ([Exhibit B](#)), with the exception of seem to be willing to reconsider an applicant with a criminal history. An interesting finding is that when the numbers were computed to determine how many landlords actually rented to someone with a criminal history, 55 percent indicated that they did while only 34 percent indicated on Question 5 that they would accept such applicants.

To evaluate the fears that landlords may have about housing someone with a criminal history, Question 12 asked: Do you worry that the city might take an action against your property if you rent to someone who later commits: a. A crime that involves drugs? b. A crime that involves violence (physical assault)? The city of Akron, where the survey was conducted, had a housing code enforcement program (Project HAPPEN) from 1993 through 1997 for properties where drug arrests were made (Rommel, 1998). Rather than focusing solely on drug houses, however, Project HAPPEN also conducted neighborhood code enforcement sweeps prior to redevelopment programs being implemented and intervened when complaints of unsanitary conditions were filed. Following such an inspection, it could take the property owner several months to a year to obtain permits, complete the work and comply with re-inspection requirements, during which time the dwelling could not be occupied. As illustrated in Table 9, this program and the delays that occurred caused landlords concern, since they could not foresee which tenants might cause the kind of problems that would lead to city code enforcement. Thus landlords had a legitimate fear of losing income if they leased to the wrong tenant. This fear continues despite the termination of Project HAPPEN. After the project was shut down, the city initiated a rental registration program which requires interior and exterior code compliance inspections, has expanded its code enforcement complaint system, and established a program that requires landlords to pay for police calls at rental properties if nuisance complaints are filed more than three times.

[Table 8](#)

The willingness of landlords to accept misdemeanants and felons was regressed against vacancy rate and rent level. There was strong indication that vacancies and willingness to accept misdemeanants had a positive relationship (coefficient = .10, SE .04, $p < .007$). In contrast, average two-bedroom rent, number of properties owned, and length of time as a landlord were not significant predictors of willingness to rent to misdemeanants or felons. This pattern indicates that landlords are responsive to characteristics of the local rental market forces, as well as individual applicant characteristics. That is, convictions may be less important in landlord decision making when market forces dictate tougher times.

[back to top](#)

Conclusions

It is undisputed that finding housing is a significant hurdle for many released offenders. However, this survey shows that a criminal history may not be the most important issue for landlords in the city of Akron. The analysis of the data shows that there are landlords willing to consider applicants with certain kinds of criminal backgrounds. A landlord's decision to lease to a specific person is based upon many factors, including, but not limited to, credit, income, employment, rental history, and criminal background. Each of the factors represents a basis for the landlord to develop a sense of trust in the applicant's ability and willingness to comply with lease requirements and certain standards of behavior.

For released offenders, the survey indicates that the landlords may want more in the form of evidence of rehabilitation than employment and a qualifying income. While the survey shows that eviction history, employment, and income are the critical factors considered by landlords, for released offenders, rehabilitation is also important.

Landlords face many choices in the rental business. A vacancy not filled immediately results in a loss of income. However, putting in a tenant who does not pay rent on time or causes damage can result in a greater financial loss. The choice is between waiting for the perfect applicant and choosing one where there is a greater risk of non-payment or destructive behavior. The rental eligibility standards may be relaxed or lowered in the face of a high level of vacancies or increased market competition. The market may dictate that a landlord accept less qualified applicants. However, regardless of the market conditions, a landlord does not have an unlimited amount of time to decide the trustworthiness of an applicant. As reflected in the survey, the landlord depends upon interpreting common signs of trust such as the credit standing, rental history, and employment. In tight rental markets where supply is low and demand is high, standards can be set high enough to filter out applicants who seem not to be trustworthy. For example, in a good market, a landlord may screen out applicants by requiring monthly income to be three times the rent, a minimum credit score of 620 (generally good credit), and six months of steady employment. In poor markets the landlord may be able to find few, if any, applicants who meet these criteria. Where a rental history might be positive (no prior evictions), a lower credit score or recent time of unemployment and short-term re-employment may cause concern. The landlord has to balance the positive signs of the rental history against the negative signs of the unemployment and short-term re-employment.

In contrast to other applicants whose problems are limited to credit, employment or eviction, released offenders are associated with additional negatives. These negatives include probation or parole requirements that may interfere with full-time employment, a total lack of credit due to imprisonment, and disapproving neighbor reactions. However, a released offender who has participated in prison or re-entry rehabilitation programs and has made efforts to "go straight" upon release brings to the table additional signs of trust for the landlord's consideration. The very fact that someone is taking affirmative steps to stabilize his or her life and work toward commonly accepted social goals invokes a more positive picture than someone who is simply trying to make do or get by.

Beyond the stigma of the conviction, released offenders face many of the same problems other low-income individuals and families face. Affordable quality housing is difficult to find. Housing in the suburban areas where jobs are available may not be priced to accommodate workers. Transportation to suburban jobs may be difficult to access or utilize. Even if a released offender does find employment, housing and transportation may present insurmountable barriers to successful reintegration. However, these challenges are not unique to released offenders. They are overcome by education and employment that increases their chances of mobility.

In the Akron area, the pressure is on the landlords. The city of Akron and its surrounding region are experiencing exceptionally high vacancy rates. A "normal" rate would be considered 3 to 5 percent. Anything over 10 percent would result in a loss of profit for most landlords. The survey showed the average vacancy rate at that time to be 16 percent, indicating that the housing bubble proclaimed in other markets has not been experienced in the Akron region. Moreover, Ohio leads the nation in foreclosures. Since 2001, over 3000 foreclosures have been filed each year in the city of Akron. That represents around 7 percent of the total housing units in the city each year.

Foreclosed housing often is bought and turned into rental properties. Throughout 2006, Akron was also experiencing a “buyer’s” market. Because of the low demand and high supply of single family dwellings, many potential sellers are offering their homes as “lease with option to buy” rentals. The pressure of the high vacancy rate and a saturated market may be two reasons that landlords are willing to consider released offenders.

Cities face difficult problems in dealing with returning offenders. The “tough on crime” programs are resulting in increases in the number of offenders returning to the community. At the same time, through programs such as Project HAPPEN, the city has made the problem of finding housing even harder for the released offenders. Landlords fear extended vacancies caused by criminal and code enforcement programs, which means that the landlords are less likely to accept someone with a criminal history, especially if that history includes convictions for drug-related offenses. Sex offenders face an especially difficult time finding housing, not just because of the location restrictions placed upon them but due to the landlord dislike of the type of crime and landlord fear of the home being targeted by neighbors or the city for complaints or legal action in order to force the tenant to move out.

The results of the survey can provide direction for re-entry programs. Based upon the findings of this survey, one focus should be employment options in order to make finding housing easier. A steady income and employment are critical factors for landlords.

A second focus should be assisting clients in documenting rehabilitation programs and other efforts that prove their trustworthiness. This includes letters of support from local ministers, community programs, employers, medical and treatment specialists; tax records (to document employment); educational program transcripts; results of drug screening tests; and volunteer efforts in local community groups.

[back to top](#)

Future Research

Trust is an important element in the process of selecting tenants. Landlords depend upon signs such as credit, employment, and rental history to determine if a person is trustworthy. A criminal conviction is most likely interpreted as a sign of untrustworthiness. The positive responses to Question 6 on rehabilitation suggest that landlords are willing to extend trust if signs of rehabilitation can be shown. Research needs to be done to determine what landlords consider “rehabilitation.” Even if the criminal applicant demonstrates rehabilitation by being employed and having a steady income, those two factors by themselves may not be enough for establishing trust.

What forms of rehabilitation engender trust? Would treatment programs, church attendance, or involvement in community activities qualify, or would the landlords be looking for something more intangible? Is there a “moral” measure that must be met to overcome the stigma of criminal record?

While this study has shown that there are some differences to be found between the level of the crime (misdemeanor vs. felony), other factors like offender age, length of time served, and length of time since release may be similarly important. Does one positive factor, such as being older and presumably more mature, mitigate a negative factor like a longer sentence? How is the nature of the crime balanced against the forms of rehabilitation? Another area of research would be the impact of social policies related to the political “get tough on crime” campaign on landlord decisions.

Finally, as suggested in Pager (2003), research on the effect of racial discrimination should be done. Pager (2003), in a study of race, criminal history and employment, found that a black man with some college received fewer job callbacks than a white man with a criminal conviction. Given the high number of black men currently residing in prisons and jails or under community control, the importance of determining the potential of such discrimination occurring cannot be

understated. HUD rules currently do not allow for fair housing testing to be done using testers with criminal convictions. It matters a great deal if someone is turned away from housing on a pretext of criminal history if the underlying reason is racial discrimination.

[back to top](#)

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[References](#)

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Table 1: Landlord Demographics

Gender			Age			Race			Education		
	%	#		%	#		%	#		%	#
Men	63%	385	<40	10.5%	64	White	76.3%	466	Less than HS	3.3%	22
Women	33%	204	40-49	20.0%	122	Black	16.0%	98	HS	30.6%	187
Unknown	4%	22	50-59	26.4%	161	Other	3.6%	22	Some College	30.6%	187
Gender			60+	40.6	248				College	44.4%	271

EXHIBIT A

Landlord Survey – Summer 2006

Please circle one response for each item.

Q1. *Below are factors that some landlords consider when reviewing rental applications. How important are the following factors to **you** when reviewing rental applications.*

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Not Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Income	1	2	3	4	5
Employment	1	2	3	4	5
Credit level of applicant	1	2	3	4	5
Prior rental history	1	2	3	4	5
Prior evictions	1	2	3	4	5
Landlord references	1	2	3	4	5
Criminal background	1	2	3	4	5

Q2. *Do you give applicants an opportunity to explain the problems you may have with their application?*

	Never	Sometimes	Always
Income	1	2	3
Employment	1	2	3
Credit level of applicant	1	2	3
Prior rental history	1	2	3
Prior evictions	1	2	3
Landlord references	1	2	3
Criminal background	1	2	3

Q3. *In the PAST THREE YEARS, have you changed any standards regarding the following?*

	More Restrictive	Less Restrictive	No Change
Credit Standards	1	2	3
Income Requirements	1	2	3
Employment Standards	1	2	3

Q4. *Three years ago did you accept applicants with criminal histories?* Yes No

Q5. *Do you now accept applicants with criminal histories?* Yes No

Q6. *If you do not accept applicants with a criminal background would you reconsider if the applicant was able to show that they were rehabilitated?* Yes No

Q7. *Would you be more likely to rent to a released offender if their family would be living with them?* Yes No

Q8. *How long would a person need to be out of prison before you would consider them for renting?*

Under six months	6 months	1 year	2 years	3+ years	It depends upon the crime
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Q9. If you accept *male* applicants with criminal backgrounds, do you inquire as to

	Yes	No
What they were convicted of	1	2
Rehabilitation programs they participated in	1	2
Current rehabilitation efforts they may be involved in	1	2
References from parole or probation officers	1	2

Q10. Do you rent to *male* applicants with any of the following types of convictions?

	Never	Once in awhile	Fairly Often	Very Often
Felony (of any kind)	1	2	3	4
Misdemeanor (of any kind)	1	2	3	4
Drug use or possession	1	2	3	4
Drug sales	1	2	3	4
Domestic violence	1	2	3	4
Assault	1	2	3	4
Sex offender	1	2	3	4
Multiple convictions	1	2	3	4

Q11. Do you reject an applicant if they lie about a criminal record on their application?

Never Sometimes Always

Q12. Do you worry that the city might take an action against your property if you rent to someone who later commits

	Yes	No
A crime that involves drugs?	1	2
A crime that involves violence (physical assault)?	1	2

Q13. Over the past three years, have the number of responses to rental vacancy advertisements

Increased Remained About the Same Decreased

Q14. Over the past two years have the number of dwellings you own

Increased Remained About the Same Decreased

Q15. How successful are the following methods of obtaining applicants:

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Mostly	Very Successful
Referral from existing tenant	1	2	3	4	5
Referral from other landlord	1	2	3	4	5
Referral from agency	1	2	3	4	5
Phone book	1	2	3	4	5
Sign in yard/building	1	2	3	4	5
Advertisement in Beacon Journal	1	2	3	4	5
Advertisement in local weekly paper	1	2	3	4	5

Table 2: Number of Units Owned and Vacancy Rate

# Units Owned	# of Landlords	% of Total	Vacancy Rate
1-5 units	406	66.4%	17%
6-10 units	75	12.3%	14%
11-20 units	49	8.0%	17%
21-50 units	28	4.6%	14%
51+ units	28	4.6	13%
Total # Units 12,585		Mean Vacancy Rate 16%	

Table 3: Screening Criteria Rankings

Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	Range
Prior Evictions	591	4.65	0.79	1-5
Employment	596	4.62	0.74	1-5
Income	604	4.50	0.82	1-5
Rental History	595	4.37	0.87	1-5
Criminal History	594	4.34	0.99	1-5
Landlord References	592	3.93	1.11	1-5
Credit Level	592	3.81	1.08	1-5

1 = Not Important At All 5 = Very Important

Table 4: Does the Landlord Allow Applicant to Explain Deficiencies

Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	Range
Employment	587	4.19	1.10	1-5
Income	591	4.14	1.08	1-5
Rental History	597	4.01	1.15	1-5
Credit Level	581	3.87	1.26	1-5
Prior Evictions	584	3.82	1.39	1-5
Landlord References	580	3.78	1.24	1-5
Criminal History	580	3.77	1.44	1-5

Table 5: Acceptance of Applicants with Criminal Histories

Question	Response	#	%
Three years ago did you accept applicants with criminal histories?	No	368	64.79
	Yes	200	35.21
Do you now accept applicants with criminal histories?	No	376	66.08
	Yes	193	33.92
If not currently accepting applicants, will you reconsider if they can show they are rehabilitated?	No	130	21.28
	Yes	367	60.07
	No answer	114	18.66
Are you more likely to accept if the applicant is living with his/her family?	No	217	37.80
	Yes	357	62.20
Do you reject an applicant if they lie about a criminal record on their application?	Never	39	7.3
	Sometimes	109	20.4
	Always	386	72.3

Table 6: Cross-tabulation of Now Accepting*Reconsider if Rehabbed

	Now Accept Applicants		Total
Reconsider if Rehabilitated	No	Yes	
No	129 (22.3%)	2 (.35%)	129 (22.7%)
Yes	234 (41.1%)	115 (20.2%)	349 (61.3%)
Missing on Rehab Question	15 (2.6%)	76 (13.4%)	91 (16.0%)
Total	376 (66.1%)	193 (34.0%)	569 (100.0%)

Table 7: Do you rent to applicants with any of the following types of convictions* accepting applicants/rehabilitation

	Now Accept Applicants			Reconsider If Rehabilitated			
Felony	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Missing	Total
No	220 (47.6%)	43 (9.3%)	263 (56.9%)	87 (18.5%)	156 (33.1%)	27 (5.7%)	270 (57.3%)
Yes	78 (16.9%)	121 (26.2%)	199 (43.1%)	14 (3.0%)	140 (29.8%)	47 (9.9%)	201 (42.7%)
Total	298 (64.5%)	164 (35.5%)	462 (100%)	101 (21.4%)	296 (62.9%)	74 (15.7%)	471 (100%)
Chi-Square	1df value=97.8 p<.0001			2df value=50 p<.0001			
	Now Accept Applicants			Reconsider If Rehabilitated			
Misdemeanor	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Missing	Total
No	130 (28.1%)	21 (4.6%)	151 (32.7%)	58 (12.3%)	82 (17.3%)	14 (3.0%)	154 (32.6%)
Yes	163 (35.3%)	148 (32.0%)	311 (67.3%)	40 (8.4%)	217 (45.9%)	62 (13.1%)	319 (67.4%)
Total	293 (63.4%)	169 (36.6%)	462 (100%)	98 (20.1%)	299 (63.2%)	76 (16.1%)	473 (100%)
Chi-Square	1df value=49.7 p<.0001			2df value=42.1 p<.0001			

Exhibit B: Do you rent to applicants with any of the following types of convictions?

Now Accepting				Reconsider If Rehabilitation Shown			
Drug Use	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Missing	Total
No	242 (51.9%)	79 (17.0%)	321 (68.9%)	89 (18.7%)	198 (41.5%)	40 (8.4%)	327 (68.6%)
Yes	57 (12.2%)	88 (18.9%)	145 (31.1%)	12 (2.5%)	99 (30.8%)	39 (8.2%)	150 (31.5%)
Total	299 (64.2%)	167 (35.8%)	466 (100%)	101 (21.2%)	297 (62.3%)	79 (16.6%)	477 (100%)
Chi-Square	1df value=56.5 p<.0001			2df value=30.2 p<.0001			
Drug Sales	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Missing	Total
No	284 (60.2%)	124 (26.3%)	408 (86.4%)	96 (19.8%)	257 (53.0%)	67 (13.8%)	420 (86.6%)
Yes	18 (3.8%)	46 (9.8%)	64 (13.6%)	5 (1.0%)	46 (9.5%)	14 (2.9%)	65 (13.4%)
Total	302 (64.0%)	170 (36.0%)	472 (100%)	101 (20.8%)	303 (62.4%)	81 (16.7%)	485 (100%)
Chi-Square	1df value=41.3 p<.0001			2df value=8.1 p<.0001			
Domestic Violence	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Missing	Total
No	223 (64.7%)	54 (11.5%)	277 (58.9%)	83 (17.2%)	168 (34.9%)	32 (6.6%)	283 (58.7%)
Yes	81 (17.2%)	112 (23.8%)	193 (41.1%)	18 (3.7%)	133 (27.6%)	48 (10.0%)	199 (41.3%)
Total	304 (64.7%)	166 (35.3%)	470 (100%)	101 (21.0%)	301 (62.5%)	80 (16.6%)	482 (100%)
Chi-Square	1df value=73.9 p<.0001			2df value=35.5 p<.0001			
Assault	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Missing	Total
No	248 (53.6%)	71 (15.3%)	319 (68.9%)	88 (18.6%)	200 (42.3%)	38 (8.0%)	326 (68.9%)
Yes	52 (11.2%)	92 (19.9%)	144 (31.1%)	13 (2.8%)	93 (19.7%)	41 (8.7%)	147 (31.1%)
Total	300 (64.8%)	163 (35.2%)	463 (100%)	101(21.4%)	293 (62.0%)	79 (16.7%)	473 (100%)
Chi-Square	1df value=75.4 p<.0001			2df value=31.7 p<.0001			
Sex Offenders	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Missing	Total
No	279 (59.2%)	124 (26.3%)	403 (85.6%)	94 (19.4%)	260 (53.7%)	61 (12.6%)	415 (85.7%)
Yes	25 (5.3%)	43 (9.1%)	68 (14.4%)	8 (1.7%)	43 (8.9%)	18 (3.7%)	69 (14.3%)
Total	304 (64.5%)	167 (35.5%)	471 (100%)	102 (21.1%)	303 (62.6%)	79 (16.3%)	484 (100%)
Chi-Square	1df value=26.8 p<.0001			2df value=8.1 p<.0001			
Mutiple Crimes	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Missing	Total
No	283 (60.7%)	95 (20.4%)	378 (81.1%)	96 (20.1%)	242 (50.6%)	49 (10.3%)	387 (81.0%)
Yes	19 (4.1%)	69 (14.8%)	88 (18.9%)	5 (1.1%)	58 (12.1%)	28 (5.9%)	91 (19.0%)

Total	302 (64.8%)	164 (35.2%)	466 (100%)	101 (21.1%)	300 (62.8%)	77 (16.1%)	478 (100%)
Chi-Square	1df value=88.8 p<.0001			2df value=28.0 p<.0001			
House Any Criminal	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Missing	Total
No	222 (39.0%)	43 (7.6%)	265 (46.6%)	87 (14.2%)	158 (25.9%)	27 (4.4%)	272 (44.5%)
Yes	154 (27.1%)	150 (26.4%)	304 (53.4%)	43 (7.0%)	209 (34.2%)	87 (14.2%)	339 (55.5%)
Total	376 (66.1%)	193 (33.9%)	569 (100%)	130 (21.3%)	367 (60.1%)	87 (14.2%)	611 (100%)
Chi-Square	1df value=69.3 p<.0001			2df value=46.8 p<.0001			

Table 8: Concern about City Enforcement Actions

Concerned about City Enforcement	Drugs		Violence	
	#	%	#	%
No	120	20.8%	234	41.0%
Yes	458	79.2%	338	59.1%

Landlord Attitudes Toward Renting to Released Offenders

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[back to top](#)

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