

POSITION 5: BLACK AND BROWN INCARCERATION RESEARCHER

Position Overview

The Black and Brown Incarceration Researcher examines racial disparities throughout the criminal justice system with particular focus on Harris County and Texas. This role combines quantitative analysis of incarceration data with qualitative research documenting lived experiences to expose systemic inequities and inform TXFPF's racial justice advocacy.

Primary Responsibilities

Quantitative Research & Data Analysis (35%)

- Analyze Texas Department of Criminal Justice demographic data on incarceration rates
- Examine Harris County arrest, prosecution, and sentencing patterns by race
- Study disparities in bail amounts, plea bargains, and conviction rates
- Research racial composition of Texas prison population over time
- Compare Harris County justice outcomes to state and national averages
- Analyze geographic concentration of arrests and incarceration by neighborhood
- Track racial disparities in eviction filings and JP court outcomes

Qualitative Research & Documentation (30%)

- Conduct interviews with formerly incarcerated individuals about their experiences
- Document stories of families impacted by mass incarceration
- Attend court proceedings and document observations of racial dynamics
- Review case files (with appropriate permissions) for pattern analysis
- Collect testimonials for "Beyond the Bench" podcast and advocacy materials
- Participate in community listening sessions in target neighborhoods

Literature Review & Context (20%)

- Review academic research on racial disparities in criminal justice
- Study historical context of mass incarceration and War on Drugs
- Research school-to-prison pipeline in Houston ISD and surrounding districts
- Examine connections between redlining, disinvestment, and incarceration
- Analyze impact of criminal records on employment, housing, and civic participation
- Study successful racial justice organizing campaigns nationally

Reporting & Advocacy Materials (15%)

- Produce comprehensive report on racial disparities in Harris County justice system
- Create fact sheets and infographics for community education
- Write opinion pieces and letters to the editor highlighting findings
- Develop testimony for county commissioners and city council
- Contribute to podcast content on systemic racism in justice system

- Present research findings at community forums and academic conferences

Learning Objectives

- Apply critical race theory to criminal justice analysis
- Develop mixed-methods research skills (quantitative and qualitative)
- Understand systemic racism and structural inequality frameworks
- Learn ethical considerations in research with vulnerable populations
- Practice translating academic research for public audiences
- Analyze historical roots of contemporary racial disparities

Required Skills & Qualifications

- Strong research and analytical capabilities
- Understanding of racial justice issues and terminology
- Ability to handle sensitive subject matter with appropriate gravity
- Interviewing skills and cultural competency
- Data analysis skills (Excel, SPSS, or similar)
- Excellent written communication
- Empathy and active listening skills

Ideal Academic Background

Sociology, Ethnic Studies, African American Studies, Criminal Justice, Social Work, History, Political Science, Public Policy

Projects & Deliverables

- Comprehensive research report: "Racial Disparities in Harris County Criminal Justice System"
- Data visualization series showing incarceration rates by race over 20 years
- Community education toolkit on racial profiling and discriminatory enforcement
- Oral history collection from 10-15 formerly incarcerated Black and Brown individuals
- Policy recommendations for reducing racial disparities in Harris County

Time Commitment: 12-15 hours per week