



## **NATIONAL COALITION *for* HOMELESS VETERANS**

*“Risk of incarceration and other characteristics of Iraq and Afghanistan era veterans in state and federal prisons.”*

Tsai, Jack, Robert A. Rosenheck, Wesley J. Kaspro, and James F. McGuire. / [Full Report](#)

### Quick Takeaways:

- Veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and Operation New Dawn (OND) are at a lower risk of incarceration than veterans of other wars.
- OEF/OIF/OND veterans have a higher rate of combat exposure and higher rates of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
- OEF/OIF/OND veterans who are incarcerated have higher rates of substance abuse than non-incarcerated veterans, and high rates of being intoxicated at time of offense.

### Study:

Researchers analyzed data from the Health Care for Reentry Veterans program representing 30,968 veterans. They examined demographic data (i.e. race, age, gender) of incarcerated veterans in comparison to non-incarcerated veterans, using data from the 2010 National Survey of Veterans, to understand factors associated with incarceration. They also compared the differences between incarcerated OEF/OIF/OND veterans to veterans of other wars. Their areas of study included: type of offense, length of incarceration, history of incarceration, history of homelessness, history of mental illness, history of substance abuse, service history, and combat exposure.

### Findings:

Researchers found that OEF/OIF/OND veterans had lower rates of incarceration and were less than half as likely to be incarcerated as other veterans. Among incarcerated veterans, OEF/OIF/OND veterans had shorter durations of incarceration, and they were more likely to only have substance use issues with alcohol.

### Conclusion:

Despite a belief that veterans, and in particular OEF/OIF/OND veterans, are at a higher risk of incarceration, the data does not bear this out. OEF/OIF/OND veterans have high rates of combat exposure and higher rates of PTSD, but are incarcerated at lower rates than both the public at large and veterans of other wars.