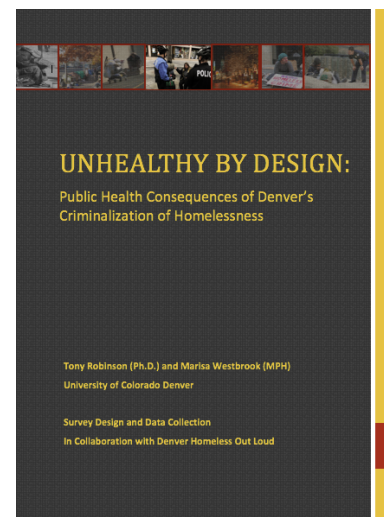


# UNHEALTHY BY DESIGN

## PUBLIC HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF DENVER'S CRIMINALIZATION OF HOMELESSNESS



This study reports on a poll of 484 homeless individuals, regarding their experiences with “quality of life” policing and how those policing practices are affecting their health and quality of life.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ***“Quality of life” policing is frequent:*** 74% of survey respondents have been asked to “move along” by police; 44% have been ticketed or arrested after police contact for a “quality of life” crime violation.
- ***Constant contact with the police leads homeless people to achieve very little sleep, and only in short bursts:*** 70% of respondents report being woken often by police; 52% are constantly worried about police contact while they try to sleep. Those frequently woken by police typically sleep only in short bursts (~2 hours at a time) and achieve less than four hours of sleep per night, resulting in more negative health outcomes.
- ***“Quality of life” policing leads individuals to seek more hidden/isolated sleeping locations, undermining their safety:*** Our respondents all indicate increased rates of robbery, physical violence and sexual assault.
- ***This policing has led many homeless individuals to refrain from use of personal shelter, resulting in dangerous exposure to weather:*** Among those who have been instructed by police to quit using shelter from the elements, there is a higher rate of frostbite, dehydration, and heat stroke.
- ***Policing also has an impact on mental health:*** Constant policing of Denver’s anti-homeless ordinances leads vulnerable homeless individuals to experience increased anxiety, stress, and depression.
- ***Adequate housing/shelter options and personal hygiene facilities are not available on the scale needed for this community.***

To access a PDF of the full report, visit <https://denverhomelessoutloud.org/>  
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