

Pets for Life

THE IMPACT OF SYSTEMIC POVERTY AND INSTITUTIONAL DISCRIMINATION ON PEOPLE AND PETS

RESOURCE INEQUITY AND LACK OF ACCESS TO PET SERVICES IS A SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUE.

THE IMPACTS OF INSTITUTIONAL RACISM ARE SEVERE AND ENDURING FOR PEOPLE AND PETS.

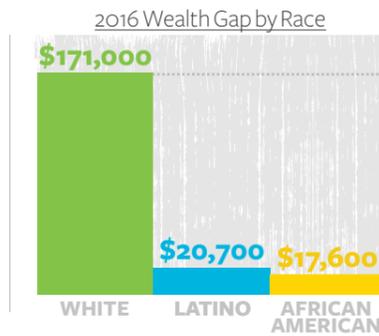
SYSTEMIC POVERTY ELIMINATES OPTIONS FOR PET OWNERS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES.

PEOPLE WITH PRIVILEGE HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE THEMSELVES AWARE AND ACT.

People are impacted by the pressures of living in poverty on a daily basis. It's vital to understand the role that oppressive institutions and policies play in creating endless challenges for millions of pet owners and, disproportionately, for people of color. Of the **40.6 million** United States residents living in poverty as of 2016 (percentage by race):

- 26.2% - American Indian/Alaska Native**
- 22.0% - African American**
- 19.4% - Latino/Latina**
- 10.1% - Asian**
- 8.8% - White, non-Hispanic**

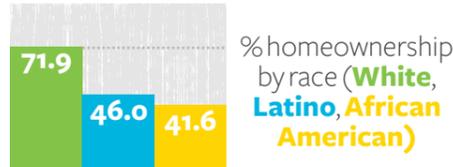
Note: The majority (63%) of the total population is white.



SEGREGATION

In 2016, the net worth of a homeowner was over **44 times** greater than that of a renter... **\$231,400 vs. \$5,200**

Note: Scale is exaggerated so the comparison is visible.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PET OWNERS?

Government sanctioned discriminatory lending practices like denying insured mortgages to people of color or restricting options for home locations eliminated the opportunity for building wealth and created racial segregation. This deliberate division and isolation leads to resource deserts where things like veterinary services, supplies and information are non-existent.

HOUSING INSECURITY



An eviction was filed **every four minutes** in 2016... **2.3 million** for the year



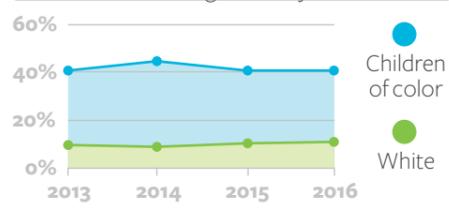
On average in 2017, the U.S. had **only 35 affordable and available rental units** for every **100 extremely low-income renter households**

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PET OWNERS?

African American and Latino households are about twice as likely as white households to rent. With painfully few affordable, available rentals overall, pet friendly options are even more scarce or out of reach financially.

EDUCATION

% U.S. Students in High-Poverty Public Schools



High-poverty school districts spend **15.6% less per student** than low-poverty districts

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PET OWNERS?

Education is a key to escaping poverty, while poverty remains the biggest obstacle to education. Generations of children attending low-income schools are put in a disadvantageous position from the start. Information on pet care is often unavailable to residents in underserved communities and is all the more reason to engage pet owners with patience and non-judgment.

IMPLICIT BIAS

Extensive research has documented the role implicit bias plays in creating societal inequities. A study conducted by multiple universities found that since 1989 **White** people received on average **36% more** callbacks than **African Americans** and **24% more** callbacks than **Latinos** for employment opportunities



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PET OWNERS?

Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions and decisions in an unconscious way. Everyone has them. It is important to recognize this in order to work towards equity for all. Implicit bias can determine who is allowed to adopt a pet or how an animal control agency chooses to enforce laws in a particular neighborhood.

HEALTH CARE



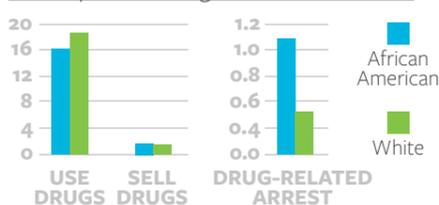
An annual Federal Reserve Board survey found that **44%** of U.S. adults **claim they could not come up with \$400 in an emergency**

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PET OWNERS?

Poverty creates vulnerability; being uninsured makes matters worse. Even the insured often can't afford bills. The consequences of a health emergency can cause long-term financial devastation. When millions are struggling to access health care for themselves, even low-cost pet resources are unattainable. And often, people make their pet's health a priority over their own.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

% of Population: Drug Use, Sales and Arrests



Times more likely than whites to be killed by police
 American Indian: **2.9x**
 African American: **2.6x**
 Latino: **1.7x**

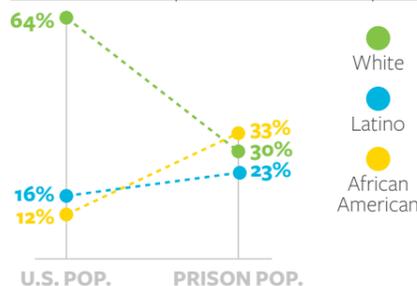
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PET OWNERS?

People of color experience a disproportionate level of punitive measures and use of force by law enforcement. Considering the community's perspective of any agency of authority - even animal control - is extremely important. There is real distrust and fear that must be recognized and respected when engaging around or delivering animal services.

MASS INCARCERATION

States spend **4 times more** per capita to incarcerate than to educate

2016 U.S. Adult Population vs. Prison Population



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PET OWNERS?

The U.S. has 5% of the world's population but nearly 25% of it's prisoners. When people are sent to prison, families are torn apart, including pets. With legal costs, jail time and lack of employment options on release, the money for a pet is drastically impacted.

"It is as though we have run up a credit-card bill and, having pledged to charge no more, remain befuddled that the balance does not disappear. The effects of that balance, interest accruing daily, are all around us."

- The Case for Reparations by Ta-Nehisi Coates -



Pets for Life, a program of the Humane Society of the United States, addresses inequity and the lack of access to pet resources people experience in underserved communities through community outreach and pet owner support services. The program philosophy recognizes that a love for pets transcends socio-economic boundaries, and no one should be denied the opportunity to experience the benefits and joy that comes from the human-animal bond.

SOURCES:

- * U.S. Census Bureau's 2016 estimates
- * The National Low Income Housing Coalition
- * Pew Research Center
- * The Federal Reserve Survey of Consumer Finances
- * National Center for Educational Statistics
- * U.S. Department of Education
- * Bureau of Justice Statistics
- * Report on the Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households
- * Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the U.S.