

# CRIME, DRUGS, RENT PRICES: WHAT'S THE STRONGEST CONNECTION TO U.S. HOMELESSNESS?

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Homelessness is a complex issue that is often treated as a single problem. CSI's study aims to break down the correlations between total homelessness, chronic homelessness rates, and unsheltered homelessness rates.

## Strongest Correlations Are Between:

### Chronic Homelessness Rates and

- Illicit substance use
- Statewide combined crime rates
- Police per population



### Unsheltered Homelessness Rates and

- Police per population
- Hours needed to pay rent
- Combined crime rates



Colorado ranks

9<sup>TH</sup>

In the nation for the rate  
of total homelessness

Full report at  
[commonsenseinstituteus.org/colorado](http://commonsenseinstituteus.org/colorado)

Data suggests homelessness is **higher in wealthy, expensive states with high state spending, wide-spread drug use, higher crime, and lower policing levels.**

## Homelessness Funding Structure

**Are current funding priorities being directed to the most effective ends?**

Traditionally, the U.S. Department of Housing and Development **prioritized funding for "Housing First" programs.**

Other models such as "Work First" or "Intervention First" faced barriers.

An executive order signed in July 2025 shifted funding to non-housing first treatment models.

