

# **Robynn Cox**

**Assistant Professor of Social Work at USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work**  
Los Angeles, CA, US

Dr. Cox focuses on understanding the social and economic consequences of mass incarceration.

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## **Biography**

Dr. Robynn Cox is an assistant professor at the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work and a faculty affiliate at the USC Edward R. Roybal Institute on Aging and the USC Schaeffer Center for Health Policy and Economics. Her research interests include the fields of crime, health, labor, housing, food insecurity, and social and racial inequality. She is primarily an inequality researcher who is concerned with understanding the social and economic consequences of criminal justice policies in general, and mass incarceration in particular. Specifically, her work focuses on how to successfully transition individuals impacted by mass incarceration policies back into society using a life course approach. Her life course approach to reentry has three pillars: systemic/institutional barriers to reentry (macro), family and community (mezzo), and the individual (micro). Because of the housing barriers faced by the formerly incarcerated (and marginalized groups disproportionately impacted by mass incarceration), Cox (and colleagues) has taken the lead in developing a global definition and approach to improve the measurement of housing insecurity based on the development of the food insecurity measure. Her work purports that there are seven dimensions of housing insecurity: housing stability, housing affordability, housing safety, housing quality, neighborhood safety, neighborhood quality, and homelessness. Much like food insecurity, individuals that are income constrained will face tradeoffs across these factors to secure housing. Her work has led to the conceptualization and incorporation of a pilot housing insecurity module within the 2019 American Housing Survey (AHS). In AY 2018-2019, Cox was selected as a visiting scholar at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis? Opportunity and Inclusive Growth Institute (OIGI) and a Kelso Fellow at the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations? Institute for the Study of Employee Ownership and Profit Sharing. In AY 2014-2015, she was selected as a Resource Center for Minority Aging Research Scholar (funded by the NIA) at the USC Schaeffer Center, where her research explored the impact of incarceration on health outcomes over the lifespan. Cox has received additional funding from the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, the Russell Sage Foundation, the USDA Food and Nutrition Services, and the University of Kentucky Center for Poverty Research.

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## **Industry Expertise**

Social Services, Research, Education/Learning, Health and Wellness

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## **Areas of Expertise**

Consequences of Mass Incarceration, Mass Incarceration, Social Inequality, Social Work Education, Social Work, Economics, Race and Class Inequalities

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## **Education**

**Georgia State University**  
PhD

**Georgia State University**  
MA

**Duke University**  
BA

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