



## SA: Reviewing the Racist Origins of Panhandling and Homelessness Criminalization Laws

Available

### Project Title

Reviewing the Racist Origins of Panhandling and Homelessness Criminalization Laws

### Scope of Work

Produce a memo surveying the passage of these laws in the post-Civil War period across the country, including research into legislative history making explicit the racist origins of these laws.

### Timing

Due July 28, 2023

### Jurisdiction

50 States, plus select municipalities

### Contact Information

Please contact Paul Lee (plee@Steptoe.com) to claim this project as part of the 2023 Summer Associate Project Exchange.

### Description

The matter was referred by the National Homelessness Law Center.

Many Jim Crow era criminal laws, including vagrancy, panhandling, and "sundown town" laws, were passed with the explicit intent of criminalizing formerly enslaved persons and passing them back into slavery through the 13th Amendment's loophole for involuntary servitude as a condition of conviction. Laws criminalizing poverty and homelessness and


regulating who is entitled to be in public space continue to be enforced today, predominantly against Black, Indigenous, and other Persons of Color.

The National Homelessness Law Center has produced national surveys of state and municipal laws criminalizing homelessness for more than 30 years, but has not yet undertaken a historical analysis of when some of these laws were passed prior to this recent period. As part of its broader anti-racist work, the Law Center would like a memo surveying the passage of these laws in the post-Civil War period across the country, including research into legislative history making explicit the racist origins of these laws.

This research may be turned into a public report and used for policy advocacy, as well as informing legal theories to combat these laws in court.

**Subtasks (0)**

**Reminders(1)**

 1 day(s) before