To better design sustainable solutions to homelessness, it is important for policymakers and researchers to understand the relationship between employment and housing stability. While over a half million people across the United States experienced homelessness in 2017, we still know little about these individuals’ employment and earnings before, during, and after homelessness spells. This paper uses homeless service data provided by LA County and quarterly employment and earnings data provided by the state of California to explore labor market participation and earnings among people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles between 2010 and 2018.

Till von Wachter is Professor of Economics at the University of California Los Angeles, Faculty Director of the California Policy Lab, Director of the Federal Statistical Research Data Center, and Associate Dean for Research for the Social Science Division. Prof. von Wachter’s research examines how labor market conditions and institutions affect the well-being of workers and their families. This includes the analysis of unemployment and job loss on workers’ long-term outcomes, as well as the role of unemployment insurance and disability insurance in buffering such shocks. Current research projects focus on job and earnings mobility of young workers over their careers, as well as several projects on homelessness using administrative data from Los Angeles. Professor von Wachter’s research has been supported by the National Science Foundation, the National Institute for Aging, the Social Security Administration, the Sloan Foundation, the Russell Sage Foundation, and the Laura and John Arnold Foundation. Prof. von Wachter has been an expert witness in numerous testimonies before congressional committees of U.S. Congress, and has provided expert assistance to the U.S. Department of Labor, the Canadian Labor Ministry, the OECD, the United Nations, and the IMF.

For questions contact Brooke Miller-Jacobs at (916) 445-5161 or bmillerjacobs@ucdavis.edu