

The Effects of Eviction on Poverty

Each year more than two million U.S. households have an eviction case filed against them. For example, in Cook County, IL, more than 35,000 eviction cases appear before the circuit court every year, the majority involving tenants from the poorest areas in Chicago. Prior research suggests that eviction may not only be a symptom of poverty but may, in fact, cause or exacerbate poverty by contributing to circumstances that are adverse to economic mobility. Yet those facing eviction are likely to have recently faced negative economic shocks, which makes establishing the proposed causal relationship difficult.

I am seeking a full-time post-bac to help in on-going and future work evaluating the impacts and policy implications of evictions. In the first paper of this on-going project, my co-authors and I develop the a quasi-experimental design for evaluating the causal impact of eviction on employment, social, and schooling outcomes. Using over 400,000 eviction case histories, our research design leverages Cook County's random assignment of eviction court cases to judges, where some judges are more lenient than others. This provides a source of exogenous variation in eviction outcomes, allowing us to study the effect of eviction on a wide range of short- and long-run household outcomes associated with poverty.

The research assistant hired for this job would work closely with my co-authors and me to answer the broad question of "Does Eviction cause poverty?" across a number of specific applications. As part of this project, the RA would have the opportunity to develop a broad array of research-related skills. The RA would work with administrative records, work on the preparation and analysis, and help in documenting institutional details about eviction court. The RA would also help in the expansion of the project to consider the impacts of eviction reform on rental markets and the residential mobility of low-income residents in urban settings, and the role of credit constraints in the evictions process.

The position would be for one year with the possibility of extending it for a second year. The fellows will be based at Yale University under the direction of Professors John Eric Humphries and his collaborators. The candidate will be provided work space on campus with other research assistants working in similar areas. The researcher will be involved in all parts of the research process. A love of working with data—cleaning it, understanding it, and presenting it in enlightening ways—is essential for this position. Methodological interests in labor economics, the economics of education econometrics, machine learning, and statistics are also a big plus.

Qualifications:

Candidates should have quantitative and coding skills, especially experience in general purpose languages like Python and statistical languages like Matlab, R, or Stata. Candidates experienced working with R, stata, and Latex are preferred. Candidates need not be economics majors, though they should have experience with economics. We welcome applicants from other fields such as, but not limited to, computer science, engineering, mathematics, physics, political science, psychology, and statistics.

How to Apply:

Applications should include a **single pdf document**. Applications can be submitted at <https://economics.yale.edu/tobin-center/predoc-ra-application>. If any problems arise, applications can also be sent to johneric.humphries@yale.edu with subject line “RA Application”:

- Resume with the following information:
 - Your familiarity with R, stata, and other programming languages
 - Your experience as a research assistant and with any independent researcher
 - One or more references with contact information. If possible, one of these references should be someone for whom you have worked as a research assistant or someone who has supervised your research.
- Transcripts
- Writing sample (e.g. thesis or term paper)
- Coding sample (e.g. R, stata, or python code used in an empirical project or written for class)
- Any other relevant information.

Package:

Compensation will be competitive with other top institutions and includes standard benefits such as health insurance.

Questions:

Questions can be directed to johneric.humphries@yale.edu with the subject “Question regarding RA position”.