

FY2019 Data Snapshot



City of Philadelphia
Office of Homeless Services

Summary

Since implementing a new HMIS (homeless management information system) in 2017, the Office of Homeless Services has worked tirelessly to provide training and technical assistance to users, address data quality concerns, and encourage agencies to use HMIS in order to ensure that the data collected is comprehensive and accurately reflects the community. The FY18 Data Snapshot was the first report produced with data from HMIS by the Office of Homeless Services that contained a system-wide overview of the City’s progress towards ending homelessness. This report is the second comprehensive data report released by the Office of Homeless Services, and it aims to expand upon the data that was provided in the first Data Snapshot, and to illustrate the community’s progress towards ending homelessness.

Note: At the time of this report, 80% of the beds dedicated to people experiencing homeless by various agencies in the City of Philadelphia were reporting into HMIS. Agencies providing shelter for Survivors of Domestic Violence, and agencies that do not use Philadelphia’s HMIS are only included in the Point-in-Time and Housing Inventory Count sections. The remainder of this snapshot reflects data from the 80% of beds reported in HMIS and is therefore not representative of the entire homeless assistance system.



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Making Homelessness Rare, Brief and Non-recurring

The Office of Homeless Services tracks its progress towards ending homelessness by measuring the number of people entering the homeless system for the first time (rare), the length of time someone experiences homelessness (brief), and the number of people who return to homelessness after exiting the system (non-recurring). These measures are described in [Roadmap to Homes, Philadelphia’s Five Year Strategic Plan for the Homeless Assistance System](#), and align with the national goals for addressing homelessness established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

GOAL: MAKE HOMELESSNESS RARE

METRIC: NUMBER OF PERSONS ENTERING AN EMERGENCY SHELTER, SAFE HAVEN, TRANSITIONAL HOUSING OR PERMANENT HOUSING FOR THE FIRST TIME

FY2018 Baseline	FY19
73%	72%
7,524 (73%) of the 10,303 persons who entered a project in FY18 were entering a housing assistance project for the first time	9,083 (72%) of the 12,651 persons who entered a project in FY19 were entering a housing assistance project for the first time

The Office of Homeless Services’ goal to make homelessness rare starts with aiding households at-risk of experiencing homelessness by emphasizing prevention and diversion strategies and building partnerships with a diverse array of organizations in order to effectively allocate resources. Through prevention and diversion, the Office of Homeless Services can help households maintain their current housing or identify and create new pathways to housing, while connecting households to services and supports that provide direct assistance. Aligning these efforts helps at-risk households attain housing stability while preserving scarce housing resources.

In an effort to strengthen prevention and diversion practices, Office of Homeless Services (OHS recently increased its support for prevention and diversion assistance. As a result, **over 1,300 households received prevention or diversion assistance in FY19**. As a result, between FY18 and FY19, OHS reported in a decrease in the number of persons experiencing homelessness for the first time.

GOAL: MAKE HOMELESSNESS BRIEF

METRIC: AVERAGE LENGTH OF TIME (DAYS) IN AN EMERGENCY SHELTER, SAFE HAVEN OR TRANSITIONAL PROJECT FOR ALL PERSONS

FY2018 Baseline	FY19
233 days	161 days
is the average length of time participants are enrolled in an emergency shelter, safe haven or transitional housing (median length of stay = 154 days)	is the average length of time participants are enrolled in an emergency shelter, safe haven or transitional housing (median length of stay = 68 days)

The average length of stay in emergency shelter and safe haven projects indicates the homeless system’s ability to move people out of homelessness. It can also measure the system’s ability to embrace the Housing First Approach, which strives to move people into housing as quickly as possible by removing barriers for households entering housing assistance projects. This measure decreased significantly (-72) in FY19, which is a success for the community. The expansion of emergency shelter beds reporting into Philadelphia’s HMIS, as previously mentioned, which indicates that FY19 is a more accurate reflection of the current system.

GOAL: MAKE HOMELESSNESS NON-RECURRING

METRIC: NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO EXITED TO PERMANENT HOUSING DESTINATION IN THE PAST TWO YEARS AND RETURNED TO HOMELESSNESS

FY2018 Baseline	FY19
<p style="text-align: center;">92%</p> <p>of participants who exited a project for a permanent housing destination did not return to homelessness</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">85%</p> <p>of participants who exited a project for a permanent housing destination did not return to homelessness</p>

To track the community’s progress towards making homeless non-recurring, the Office of Homeless Services tracks the number of persons who exited to a permanent housing destination and then re-entered a housing assistance project. This measure provides the percent of people who stably and successfully exited homelessness.

Similarly to the previous measure, this one was also impacted by the expansion of emergency shelter projects in Philadelphia’s HMIS, and the 85% reported for FY19 reflects a more accurate representation of this measure. Moving forward, the Office of Homeless Services continues to advocate for more permanent housing resources.

Additional Performance Measures

The Office of Homeless Services tracks additional performance measures that relate to and support the community’s mission of making homelessness brief, rare and non-recurring. For example, employment and income growth is closely related to a household’s ability to remain stably housed and is therefore tracked in order to better understand the community’s progress towards making homeless non-recurring. The chart below reviews the income reported during a person’s exit compared to the income they reported during their enrollment. Between FY18 and FY19, there was a 2% increase in the percent of persons receiving earned and non-employment income who exited from a project funded by the Continuum of Care program.

INCOME CHANGE: ADULTS WHO EXITED*

	FY18	FY19
Number of adults who exited (leavers)	1,053	1,155
Leavers with increased earned income	286 (27%)	285 (25%)
Leavers with increased non-employment cash income	246 (23%)	328 (28%)
Total leavers with any increase in income (earned + non-employment income)	476 (45%)	542 (47%)

*This chart reports on data collected is from projects that were funding by the Continuum of Care program only. More information on the Continuum of Care can be found at <http://philadelphiaofficeofhomelessservices.org/about-us/continuum-of-care/>

One of the key indicators of success for housing projects is the percent of exits to a permanent housing destination. Examples of permanent housing destinations include moving into a rental unit, moving in with friends or family, or entering a permanent housing project. In FY19, 26% of all persons who were enrolled in an Emergency Shelter, Safe Haven, Transitional Housing or Rapid Rehousing projects exited to a permanent housing destination.

EXITS TO PERMANENT HOUSING

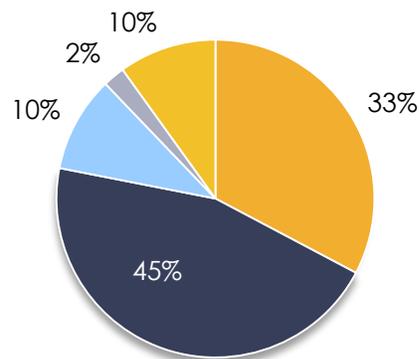
	FY18	FY19
Persons in Emergency Shelter, Safe Haven, Transitional Housing and Rapid Rehousing	6,818	9,193
Of those, who exited to a permanent housing destination	2,008	2,417
Successful Exits	29%	26%

Housing Inventory Count

The HIC (Housing Inventory Count) is a complete inventory of the emergency shelter, transitional housing and permanent housing beds available in Philadelphia during the January Point-in-Time Count. It identifies the community’s capacity to serve persons experiencing homeless, and it can be used to detect the need for the additional projects for populations that are under-served.

In Philadelphia’s homeless assistance system, 35% of the total beds are for temporary shelter (emergency shelter and safe haven), and 20% are for projects with longer stays that are intended to lead to independent living (transitional and rapid re-housing); and 45% of beds are dedicated to providing permanent housing for households with someone who has a disability.

Percent of Total Beds by Project Type 2019



■ Emergency Shelter ■ Permanent Supportive ■ Rapid Rehousing ■ Safe Haven ■ Transitional Housing

2017-2019 HOUSING INVENTORY COUNT: BEDS AVAILABLE YEAR-ROUND

	2017	2018	2019
Emergency Shelter	3,652 beds	3,429	3,725
Safe Haven	85	255	254
Transitional Housing	1,587	1,244	1,129
Rapid Re-housing	1,179	1,176	1,111
Permanent Supportive Housing	5,279	4,926	5,158

2017-2019 HOUSING INVENTORY COUNT: BEDS AVAILABLE BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE

	2017	2018	2019
Emergency Shelter, Safe Haven and Transitional Housing			
Beds for Adult Only Households	2,626	2,534	2,881
Beds for Households with Children & Adults	2,669	2,353	2,208
Beds for Households with Children Only	29	41	19
Permanent Supportive Housing			
Beds for Adult Only Households	2,693	2,570	2,998
Beds for Households with Children & Adults	2,586	2,356	2,160

Point-in-Time Count

The Point-in-Time (PIT) Count is an annual count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January. It provides the homeless assistance community with data needed to understand the number and characteristics of persons who are experiencing homelessness.

- ▶ **Unsheltered population** includes persons sleeping in any location not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans, such as on the streets, transportation centers, public parks, abandoned buildings or cars.ⁱ
- ▶ **Sheltered population** includes persons experiencing homelessness that are staying in an emergency shelter, safe haven or transitional housing project.

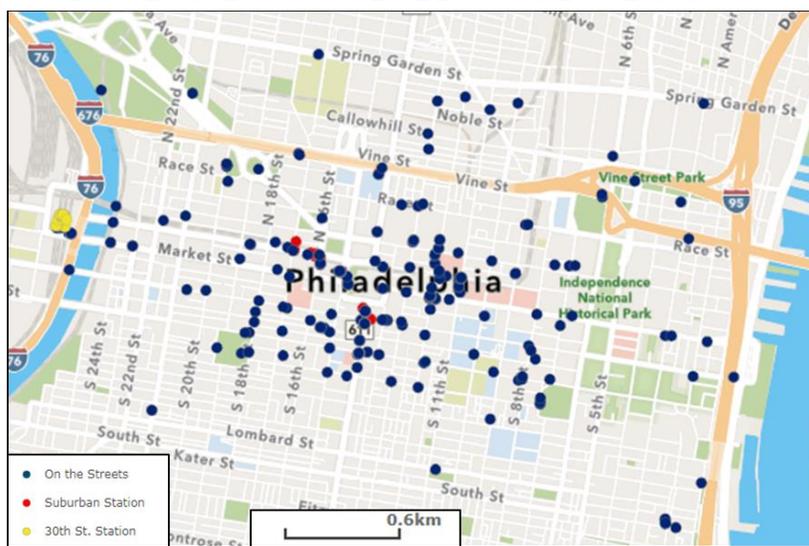
2019 POINT-IN-TIME COUNT

	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total
Total Persons	4,762 persons	973	5,735
Total Children (Under 18)	1,280	6	1,286
Total Youth (Ages 18 to 24)	374	74	448
Total Adults (Over 24)	3,108	893	4,001

Between 2015 and 2018 the total number of unsheltered persons counted during the Point-in-Time Count has risen, while the total number of sheltered persons declined. The 2019 PIT Count, which resembles the results from 2018, disrupts this pattern, with a slight increase in sheltered persons and a decrease in unsheltered.

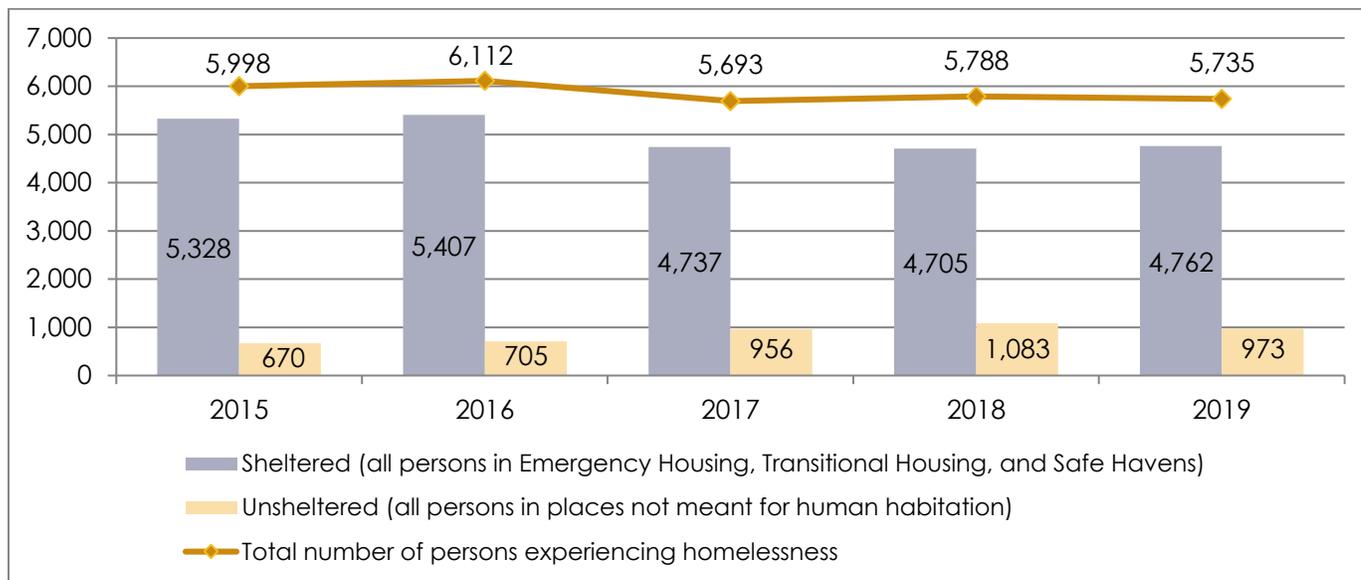
2019 PIT COUNT: UNSHELTERED INDIVIDUALS SURVEYED IN CENTER CITY

For this year, the PIT Count was held on the night of Wednesday, January 23rd from midnight to 4:00 am. The map to the right shows the location of unsheltered persons who were sleeping on the streets, or in either Suburban Station or 30th Street Station, and completed a survey conducted by volunteers. In the Center City area, defined here as south of Spring Garden, north of South Street, and bordered by the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers, there were a total of 454 individuals counted.



Since 2015, the total number of persons experiencing homelessness has decreased by 4% (-263 people). However, this reduction is primarily due to a decrease in the number of persons in shelter. The number of unsheltered persons increased from 2015 to 2017 and remained high during 2018 and 2019. This trend can be attributed to the encampments that were a result of opioid-driven homelessness. These encampments were closed during FY19, with services and shelter offered to all of the persons who were residing there.

2015-2019 POINT-IN-TIME COUNT TRENDS



For households with at least one child and one adult, the sheltered count has decreased by 20% (162 households) since 2017, and in 2018 and 2019, the sheltered count remained at zero. By contrast, the number of number households without children increased by 17% (402 households) and the unsheltered fluctuated from 2017 to 2019.

HOUSEHOLDS REPORTED 2017-2019 POINT-IN-TIME COUNTS

	2017	2018	2019
Sheltered Households	3,199	3,237	3,426
Households without children	2,352	2,474	2,754
Households with adults and children	825	744	663
Households with only children	22	19	9
Unsheltered Households	943	1,083	973
Households without children	938	1,066	967
Households with adults and children	1	0	0
Households with only children	4	17	6
Total Households	4,142	4,320	4,399

To be considered chronically homeless, a person must have a disabling condition and their homeless experience must be at least one year long; or during the last three years, they must have at least four occasions of homelessness that equal one year in length. In the 2018 PIT Count, the number of chronically homeless persons was reported by each agency using a local survey. For the 2019 PIT Count, local surveys were collected from non-HMIS participating agencies and combined with the data collected from the HMIS database. The 9% increase in chronic homeless may be the result of the new calculation method used in 2019, which is likely to be more accurate.

POINT-IN-TIME COUNT: CHRONICALLY HOMELESS

	Emergency Shelter	Safe Haven	Unsheltered	Total	% Change from previous year (2018)
Chronically Homeless Individuals	626	182	224	1,032	9% ▲

Several population subgroups are considered by HUD to more vulnerable. This includes persons who are chronically homeless, unaccompanied youth (18 to 24 years old), and veterans. Of the subpopulations identified in the table below, persons experiencing a severe mental illness and chronic substance abuse are the most represented. Both of these populations increased their percentage of the adult population from last year’s Point-in-Time Count. During the 2018 Count, 34.1% (1,482 out of 4,334 total adults) of all adults reported a mental illness, and in 2019, it increased to 40.6% of the adult population. For chronic substance abuse, the percentage rose from 33.8% (1,468 out of 4,334) in 2018 to 37.5% in 2019. These increases are a result of both the sheltered and unsheltered population.

POINT-IN-TIME COUNT: SUBPOPULATIONS

	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total	% of Adult Population (4,449 adults)
Unaccompanied Youth (18-24)	221	80	301	6.7%
Parenting Youth (18-24)	138	0	138	3.1%
Veterans	230	22	252	5.6%
Mental Illness	1,402	406	1,808	40.6%
Chronic Substance Abuse	1,059	608	1,667	37.5%
Persons with HIV/AIDS	114	9	123	2.7%
Adults fleeing domestic violence	393	2	395	8.8%

Total Persons Served

The Office of Homeless Services records and tracks the number of persons served after each fiscal year (July 1st to June 30th). The tables in this section are based on the total number of persons who enrolled in each project type. Persons with enrollments in multiple project types are reported once for each project type. In FY19, there were a total of 17,766 unique persons served in all project types.



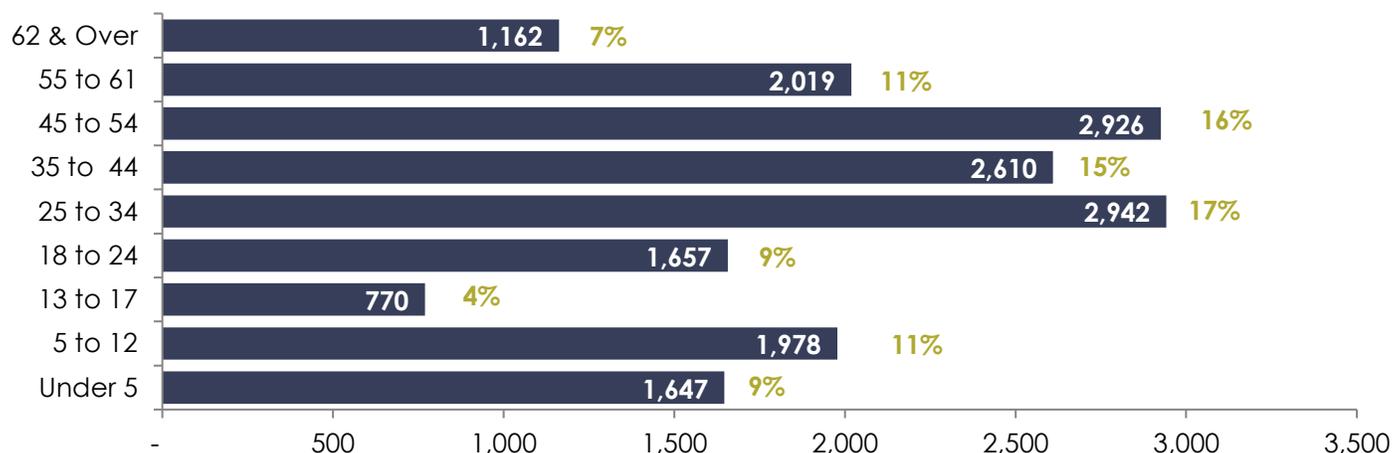
TOTAL PERSONS SERVED BY PROJECT TYPE, FY18-19

	Overflow (After Hours & Winter Initiative)	Emergency Shelter	Safe Haven	Transitional Housing	Rapid Rehousing	Permanent Supportive
FY19	3,811	8,347	561	1,385	2,198	3,653
FY18	2,251	6,633	229	1,590	2,240	3,606

*Persons are reported in each project type that they enrolled in. Persons with multiple enrollments are counted in each project type.

The average age of all persons served a project in FY19 was 33 years, which is higher than the average reported for previous years (31 in 2018; 29 in 2017). Between FY18 and FY19, the total number of children (ages 0 to 17) served decreased, and the total youth (18-24) remained consistent. All of the age groups that captured people 25 and older increased, which is consistent with national trends.

AGE OF ALL PERSONS SERVED IN FY19



*Total of 55 persons (<1% missing Date of Birth information).

The percent of adults aged 55+ in shelter is anticipated to grow significantly as the Baby Boomer generation and Generation X age. Studies show that older individuals experiencing homeless age prematurely, with rates of cognitive decline and decreased mobility equal to persons 20 years older and currently housed.ⁱⁱ This suggests that with the

increase of older individuals, the homeless assistance community should anticipate an increase in costs associated with health care services when serving this population. Hopefully expanding housing solutions, such permanent supportive housing, can be used as solution to mediate the anticipated cost burden on health care services. The Office of Homeless Services hopes to expand such services over the next several years, as noted in the Roadmap to Homes plan.

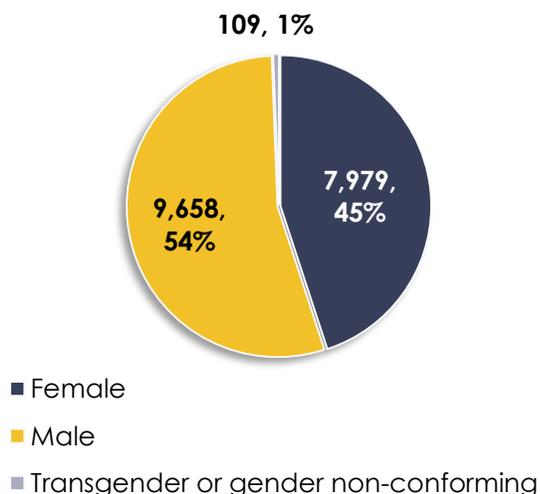
HOUSEHOLDS SERVED IN FY19

	Families*	Adults Only	Child Only	Total Households
Total Households	2,120	10,714	84	12,917
Total persons in Households	6,781	10,899	84	17,766

*Families includes all households with at least on Adult and one Child (less than 18 years old)

Identifying the type of households served in crisis housing can be challenging, as family structures are able to change for various reasons, such as children aging or individuals leaving a household. The total households reported above are based on the most recent enrollment reported, unlike in FY18, which reported the households based on all enrollments. For FY19, a total of 6,781 persons in a household with at least one adult and child were served in FY19, with an average household size of 3 people.

GENDER OF ALL PERSONS SERVED IN FY19



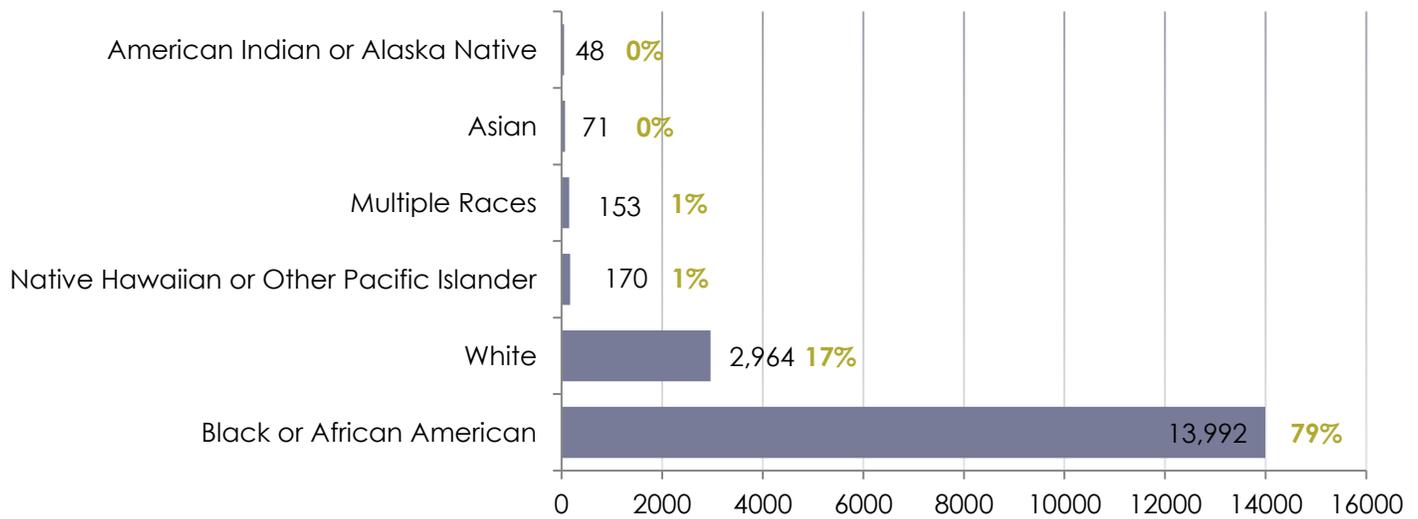
In the City of Philadelphia, 54% of persons experiencing homeless were male, 45% were female, and the remaining 1% were transgender or gender non-conforming. Although this distribution appears to be a fairly even, a closer review suggests otherwise. Adding the household type reveals that for individuals (households with adults only), 65% were male and 34% female. The difference between the percent of male and females widens even further when looking at the number of individuals who were unsheltered during the 2019 Point-in-Time Count, with 78% male (759), 20% female (198) and 1% transgender (10). Studies have shown that men are more likely to stay in unsheltered situations and experience longer durations of homelessness than women and transgender individuals.^{iii, iv,v}

*20 persons missing gender information excluded

Transgender individuals are reported to experience more frequent episodes of homelessness, and on average, are significantly younger than other gender cohorts.^{vi, vii} This is seen in individuals served in Philadelphia during FY19, where the average age for adult females was 38, for adult males 45, and for transgender & gender non-conforming 35 was the average age.

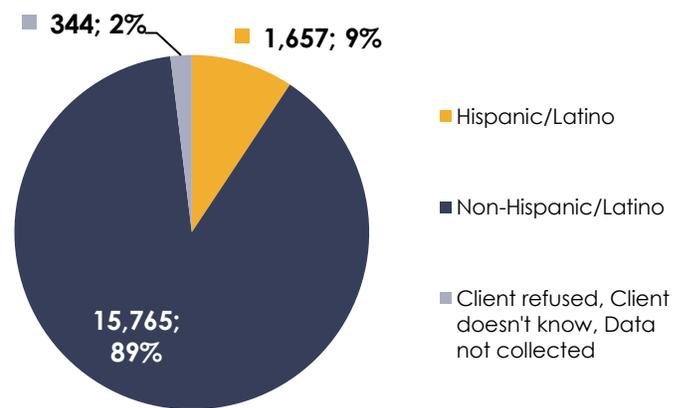
For the past three decades, studies have shown that African Americans have been overrepresented in the in the U.S. homeless population.^{viii} Reviewing the cumulated results from last year’s Point-in-Time counts revealed that nationally, four in ten people experiencing homelessness were African American, whereas in the general population, African Americans represent one in ten.^{ix} This trend is also evident in Philadelphia, where African Americans represent 79% of the persons served in housing crisis and assistance programs in FY19, but only 44% of the city’s general population.^{xi}

RACE & ETHNICITY OF ALL PERSONS FY19



*Excludes the 368 (2%) persons with Client Refused, Client Doesn’t Know, Data Collected selected for Race

Additionally, the share of the U.S. population identifying as Hispanic, 18%, also has a slightly higher representation with this population, representing 22% of persons experiencing homelessness.^{xii} In Philadelphia, 14% of the general population identified as Hispanic/Latino, but in the housing assistance programs, this group only represented 9% of the population served.^{xiii} This may be due partly to the fact Hispanics are less likely to use standard homeless sleeping arrangements (shelters, churches, etc.) and more likely to be in crowded inadequate housing or “doubling up.”^{xiv} This may consequentially, exclude



this population from accessing housing crisis programs, which focus on serving persons who are homeless according to the definition provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This agency’s defines people experiencing homelessness as persons sleeping in any location not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans, such as on the streets public parks, abandoned buildings or cars.^{xv} Therefore, people who are experiencing homelessness but are doubled up or in over-crowded housing may be excluded from housing services.

Key Terms

- **Adult:** Persons age 18 and older.
- **After Hours:** An emergency shelter project that provides beds on a night-by-night basis to persons entering emergency shelter after 5:00 pm on weekdays, on weekends or holidays. After Hours beds are also referred to as Overflow beds.
- **Child:** Persons age 17 and younger.
- **Chronically Homeless:** A person experiencing homelessness (in a place not meant for human habitation, safe haven, or an emergency shelter) continuously for at least 1 year, or on at least four separate occasions in last 3 years where the combined length of time is those occasions is at least 12 months; and the person has a disability.
- **Disability:** an individual with a physical, mental, or emotional impairment, including impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder or brain injury. The condition must be:
 - Expected to be long-continuing or of indefinite duration
 - Impedes the individual's ability to live independently; and
 - Could be improved with suitable housing conditions.
- **Emergency Shelter:** Any facility with the primary purpose of providing temporary shelter for persons experiencing homelessness.
- **Household:** One or more individuals who live together.
- **Housing Inventory Count:** also known as the HIC, this chart is a complete inventory of all Emergency, Transitional, Safe Haven, Permanent Supportive, and Rapid Re-housing projects within the Philadelphia Continuum of Care.
- **Parenting Youth:** Youth between the ages of 18 and 24 who identifies as the parent or guardian of one or more children who are present or sleeping in the same place as that youth parent.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing:** Long-term housing project that provides supportive services to assist homeless persons with a disability to live independently.
- **Point-in-Time Count:** Also known as the PIT, this is an annual count of all persons experiencing homelessness, sheltered or unsheltered, on a given night in January.
- **Rapid Re-Housing:** A project that provides rental assistance and supportive services on a time-limited basis to homeless families and individuals.
- **Transitional Housing:** Used to facilitate the movement of homeless families and individuals into permanent housing, this project type provides supportive services and housing for up to 24 months.
- **Unaccompanied Youth:** Persons under the age of 25 who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- **Winter Initiative:** An emergency shelter project that provides supplemental beds on a planned basis during the winter. Winter Initiative beds are also referred to as Seasonal or Code Blue beds.
- **Youth:** Unaccompanied youth are persons under age 25 who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian and are not a parent presenting with or sleeping in the same place as his/her child or children. Unaccompanied youth are single youth, youth couples, and groups of youth presenting together as a household.

Sources

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- ⁱⁱⁱ Montgomery, A. E., Szymkowiak, D., and Culhane, D. P. (2017). Gender Differences in Factors Associated with Unsheltered Status and Increased Risk of Premature Mortality among Individuals Experiencing Homelessness. *Women's Health Issues*, 259-262.
- ^{iv} Montgomery, A.E., Szymkowiak, D., Marcus, J., Howard P., and Culhane, D.P. (2016). Homeless, Unsheltered Status, and Risk Factors for Mortality: Findings from the 100,000 Homes Campaign. *Public Health Reports Vol. XX: 1-8, 3-9.*
- ^v Bird, M., Rhoades, H., Lahey, J., Cederbaum, J. and Wenzel, S. (2017). Life Goals and Gender Differences Among Chronically Homeless Individuals Entering Permanent Supportive Housing. *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*. Vol. 26, No. 1, 9-15.
- ^{vi} Montgomery, A. E., Szymkowiak, D., and Culhane, D. P. (2017). 259-262.
- ^{vii} Begun, S., and Kattari, S.K. (2016). Conforming for survival: Associations between transgender visual conformity/passing and homelessness experiences. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services*, 57-65.
- ^{viii} Jones, M. (2016). Does Race Matter in Addressing Homelessness? A Review of Literature. *World Medical and Health Policy*. 8:2. Page 139.
- ^{ix} U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2018). The 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress. 12.
- ^x U.S. Census Bureau (2017 population estimated); U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
- ^{xi} U.S. Census Bureau (2017 population estimated); U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
- ^{xii} U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2018). The 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress. 12.
- ^{xiii} U.S. Census Bureau (2017 population estimated); U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
- ^{xiv} Conroy, S. and Heer, D. (2003). Hidden Hispanic Homelessness in Los Angeles: The "Latino Paradox" Revisited. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*. Vol. 25 No. 4, 536.
- ^{xv} U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2014).