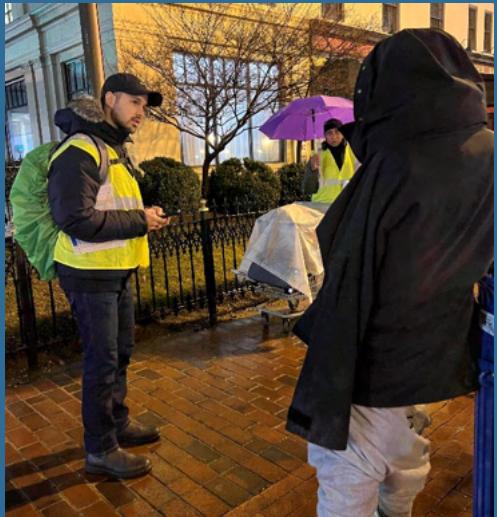


# HOMELESSNESS IN METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON

Results and Analysis from the Annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness

May 2023



Metropolitan Washington  
**Council of Governments**

## **HOMELESSNESS IN METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON**

Prepared by the Homeless Services Planning and Coordinating Committee

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the 23<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Homeless Services Planning and Coordinating Committee has conducted a regional Point-in-Time (PIT) enumeration of the area's residents experiencing homelessness.

This year's enumeration and survey occurred on January 25, 2023. The report provides a one-night "snapshot" of the region's residents experiencing homelessness within nine metropolitan Washington area jurisdictions. It is important to note that this "snapshot," by definition, provides only one perspective on the state of homelessness in the region on only one night, and the count may be influenced by numerous variables, such as weather and shelter bed availability by jurisdiction.

## Impact of COVID-19

This year was the third year that the region's Continua of Care (CoCs)<sup>1</sup> conducted the enumeration since the declaration of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Precautions for the 2023 enumeration mirrored the protocols used during the 2022 count, following guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and local health departments, but largely resembled enumerations conducted prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. In many CoCs, survey volunteers rejoined staff and other outreach service providers for the unsheltered portion of the count.

As in past years, the majority of the PIT count was enumerated electronically using the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), as 85 percent of people experiencing homelessness were sheltered on January 25, 2023.

## Findings, Highlights, and Trends from the 2023 Enumeration

### LITERAL HOMELESSNESS COUNT

- The 2023 PIT enumeration resulted in a total count of **8,944 individuals experiencing homelessness**. This is the fifth consecutive year in a row that the literally homeless total has been below 10,000 persons.
- The region's number of persons experiencing homelessness **increased by 1,339 persons from 2022, an 18 percent increase from the 2022 enumeration.**

This is a significant increase from the 7,605 persons counted experiencing homelessness in 2022. All nine jurisdictions recorded an increase in the number of persons experiencing homelessness in 2023 from the 2022 count, indicating that this is a larger trend, not isolated to any one jurisdiction's experiences that may influence the numbers of persons counted locally each year.

<sup>1</sup> According to HUD, a Continuum of Care is "a community plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximize self-sufficiency. It includes action steps to end homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness." Definition accessed at <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/what-is-a-continuum-of-care/>

## **SHORT-TERM CHANGES, 2022 TO 2023**

- The District of Columbia had the greatest increase in the number of persons experiencing homelessness from 2022 to 2023 (512 additional persons), followed by Montgomery County (313 additional persons).

## **LONGER TERM CHANGES, 2019 TO 2023**

- During the period from 2019 to 2023, the metropolitan Washington region experienced a nine percent decrease in the total persons counted experiencing homelessness. Four of nine CoCs recorded a decline between the 2019 and 2023 enumerations.
- The District of Columbia experienced the greatest reduction in persons experiencing homelessness during this period, counting 1,580 fewer individuals. The District of Columbia also had the largest proportion of the region's residents experiencing homelessness (56 percent). The City of Alexandria had the second largest reduction between 2019 to 2023, with 46 fewer persons experiencing homelessness counted, followed by Frederick City and County with 38 fewer persons counted.
- The District of Columbia reported the highest percentage reduction in its literally homeless count from 2019 to 2023 (25 percent).

## **VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**

The region's count of veterans experiencing homelessness increased slightly from 2022; there were 35 additional veterans on the night of the count from the previous year's enumeration.

- In 2023, the total number of veterans counted on the night of the PIT was 327, representing an 11 percent increase from the 2022 enumeration.
- The District of Columbia recorded the greatest reduction in the number of veterans counted between 2019 and 2023 (79 fewer veterans counted), followed by Prince George's County (20 fewer veterans), and Fairfax County (eight fewer veterans).
- Five of nine CoCs reduced the incidence of veteran homelessness since 2019, for a regional reduction of 21 percent.

## **CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS**

The number of persons experiencing chronic homelessness counted on January 25, 2023 decreased slightly in the 2023 enumeration, with 41 fewer persons counted as experiencing chronic homelessness in 2023 than 2022. Regionally, the nine participating CoCs recorded a decrease of four percent between 2019 to 2023.

- Four of the nine participating jurisdictions experienced decreases in their counts of people experiencing chronic homelessness since 2019, and six CoCs recorded a decrease between the PIT counts of 2022 and 2023.
- The District of Columbia had the greatest reduction in the region in the number counted from 2019 to 2023 (60 fewer persons counted in 2023), followed by Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, (56 and 33 fewer persons counted experiencing chronic homelessness respectively).
- The City of Alexandria had the same greatest regional percentage reduction (87 percent) of single adults experiencing chronic homelessness since 2019, followed by Arlington County (76 percent reduction) and Loudoun County (27 percent reduction).

## **PERMANENTLY HOUSED**

The number of individuals who are in permanent housing and no longer experiencing homelessness was more than three times the number of people counted as literally homeless on the night of the annual enumeration. The region has increased the total number of persons who are permanently housed and no longer experiencing homelessness by 10 percent since 2019.

In addition, in 2023:

- 10,807 individuals were rapidly re-housed;
- 13,085 persons were served in permanent supportive housing; and
- 5,125 persons were served in other permanent housing.

**This brings the regional total of persons previously experiencing homelessness in 2023 to an all-time high of 29,017 additional people housed than at this time last year.** The significant number of people placed in permanent housing has constrained the incidence of homelessness in the region and helped prevent it from growing unchecked.

## **CONCLUSION**

This is the third year conducting the annual enumeration since the COVID-19 public health emergency began. The results during the period of 2020 to 2023 provide further evidence that strategies the region's CoCs are implementing, when scaled up, are effective in preventing and ending homelessness. Some programs, unique to the pandemic, such as eviction moratoriums and the significant provision of emergency housing assistance, reduced the number of people who entered the homeless services system as well as quickly assisted people whose incidences of homelessness could not be prevented into stable housing. The end of the eviction moratoriums and exhausted emergency rental and utility assistance funding has had an impact on the number of people whose housing crisis resulted in an experience of homelessness. While the results of the 2023 enumeration only present information collected during one day in January, data collected this

year confirms that one of the most persistent barriers to ending homelessness in our communities is the insufficient number of affordable and available permanent housing opportunities for the lowest income households.

The 2023 report continues to highlight the fundamental nature of housing to protect human lives with several key, recurring themes:

1. The significant increase in the number of people formerly experiencing homelessness who have accessed permanent housing with the assistance of CoC housing interventions;
2. The positive impact of shelter diversion and homeless prevention programs; and
3. The critical need to increase the supply of housing affordable and appropriate supportive services to the lowest-income households.

Dedication to addressing the region's homelessness issues, particularly during the enormous challenges posed by the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, has resulted in steady, measurable progress in providing shelter and wrap-around services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The region should celebrate the achievements, dedication, and coordinated efforts of their communities to prevent people from entering the homeless system, to improve service delivery, and to increase permanent housing solutions. Reductions in homelessness achieved during the past five years reflect focused efforts to ensure that the experience of homelessness is **brief, rare, and one-time only**.

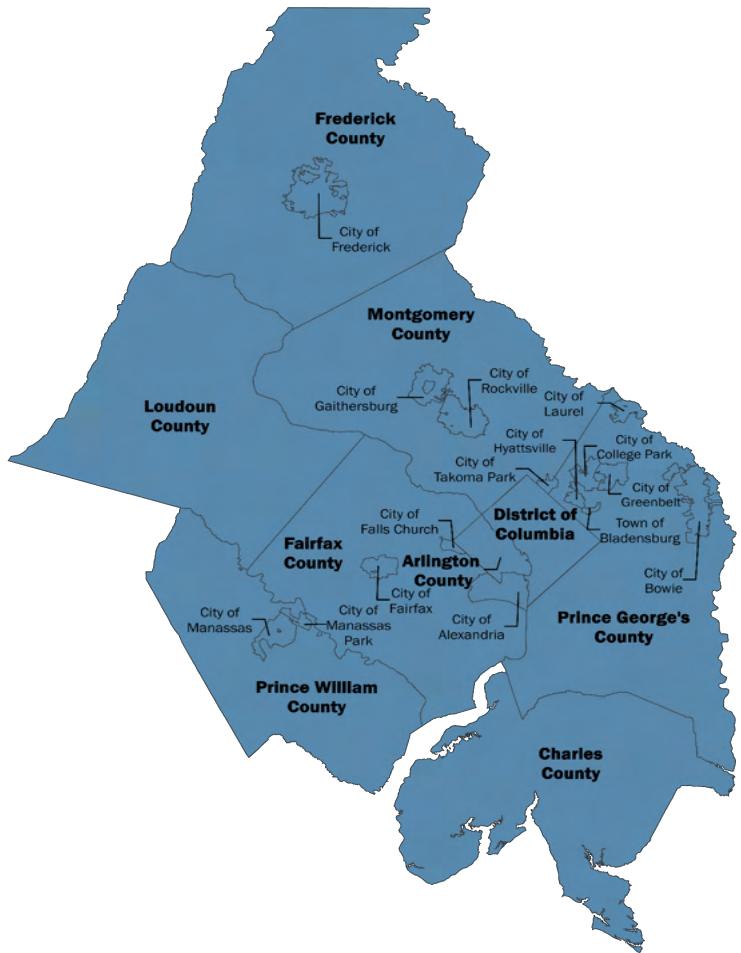
However, there remain significant challenges highlighted in this year's PIT efforts. While the numbers in this year's report demonstrate that effective strategies are in place, a sustained commitment to creating and adequately funding viable housing solutions for the lowest-income individuals and families, continuously improving data tracking and interpretation, and providing service pathways to ensure housing is sustained are among the most critical components to making further significant reductions in the annual PIT count.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The map on the following page represents those jurisdictions which are members of COG. However, Charles County is not included in this Point-in-Time report. Unlike the other jurisdictions, Charles County provides its homelessness data to the Baltimore HUD Field Office.

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The following report includes a count of the region's residents who are:

- Unsheltered and living on the streets, including parks, alleys, and camp sites;
- Staying in an emergency or hypothermia shelter or safe haven;
- Living in transitional housing where they receive supportive services designed to help them move into some form of permanent housing;
- No longer experiencing homelessness and are now living in permanent supportive housing or other permanent housing and who may be receiving supportive social services.



# INTRODUCTION

The 2023 Point-in-Time (PIT) enumeration provides information on the number of unsheltered persons in the region as well as figures on how many persons use winter shelters, year-round emergency shelters, safe havens, transitional housing, and several permanent housing solutions. The PIT count also provides information on the extent to which persons experiencing homelessness in each jurisdiction live with disabling conditions or whose special needs are represented among various subpopulations. There is no “one size fits all” housing solution. The region’s Continua of Care (CoCs), a public-private partnership designed to coordinate a response to a person’s housing crisis, respond with different housing types and services to meet residents’ unique needs.

The metropolitan Washington region’s homeless services system consists of nine jurisdictions, each representing a local CoC that receives federal funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Program to assist its residents experiencing homelessness.

The participating jurisdictions include<sup>3</sup>:

- City of Alexandria, Virginia;
- Arlington County, Virginia;
- District of Columbia;
- Fairfax County, Virginia, including data from the City of Falls Church and the City of Fairfax;
- Frederick City and County, Maryland;
- Loudoun County, Virginia;
- Montgomery County, Maryland;
- Prince George’s County, Maryland, including data from the City of Bowie, the City of Greenbelt, and the City of College Park; and
- Prince William County, Virginia, including data from the City of Manassas and the City of Manassas Park.

The report includes narratives prepared by each of the respective jurisdictions. The narratives briefly describe each jurisdiction’s CoC and provide detailed explanations of their respective enumeration results. All the region’s CoCs use a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to count people experiencing homelessness in their respective jurisdictions, in addition to other methodologies. HMIS is an electronic data collection system that is used to produce an unduplicated count of people experiencing homelessness for the respective jurisdictions, improve program operations, measure program performance, and coordinate services community-wide.

Similar to past enumerations, the 2023 count does not include people who “double up” with relatives or friends, in accordance with HUD guidelines. HUD’s requirements for conducting the annual PIT count can be found in its Standard and Methods for Point-in-Time Counts of Homeless Persons and the annual Housing Inventory Count updates at [www.hudexchange.info](http://www.hudexchange.info).

<sup>3</sup> Although Charles County, Maryland is a COG member, the county’s homeless enumeration figures are not tracked as part of this report. Charles County submits its enumeration results to the Baltimore, Maryland HUD office and not the Washington, D.C. HUD office, unlike the other COG member jurisdictions.

Due to high housing costs and limited housing options for households with lower incomes, the collaborating jurisdictions and service providers represented in this report are concerned that many of the region's residents are at risk of experiencing homelessness.

These concerns have been exacerbated since COVID-19 began affecting the region in March 2020. All jurisdictions in the metropolitan Washington region have been impacted by the end of federal emergency funding provided to keep people stably housed. The results of the end of these rental assistance programs and eviction prevention measures are represented in part by the results of the 2023 enumeration.

While not yet defined as experiencing homelessness, many households are believed to be doubled up and/or living in overcrowded situations. Homelessness is often the next step for such households once the family members or friends who have been sheltering them can or will no longer do so.

## How We Define Homelessness

The region's jurisdictions use HUD's definition of homelessness which is defined as *people who reside in emergency shelter, transitional housing, domestic violence shelters, runaway youth shelters, safe havens, or places not meant for human habitation, such as streets, parks, alleys, abandoned buildings, and stairways.*

**Literal Homelessness**, which may also be referred to as "experiencing homeless" in this report, includes the status of people in Households without Children, Households with Adults and Children, and Households with Only Children, who may be **sheltered or unsheltered**.

**Formerly Experiencing Homelessness** in this report refers to the status of having moved into permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, or other permanent housing immediately after an experience of homelessness. This does not include persons who are able to secure other permanent housing outside of the homeless system, including a non-subsidized apartment or room, moving in with a relative or friend, or receiving a mainstream rental subsidy.

Data for the 2023 enumeration were collected in the following three categories, as defined by HUD:

1. **Households without Children.** Households without children consist of only adults age 18 or over. This report also refers to households without children as "single adults." The majority of households without children are single persons, although this category may include couples without minor children or a parent and an adult child over the age of 18. These households are counted as single adults for purposes of the PIT count.
2. **Households with Adults and Children.** Households with adults and children contain at least one adult age 18 or over and at least one child under age 18. In this report, we also refer to households with adults and children as "families" or "families experiencing homelessness."
3. **Households with ONLY Children.** Households with ONLY children contain no adults aged 18 or over, only persons under age 18, including teenage parents under 18 with at least one child, or other households with only persons under age 18.

## Why We Conduct This Count

COG's Homeless Services Planning and Coordinating Committee, concerned by the lack of regional data available, undertook the first effort to produce an unduplicated PIT count of adults and children experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region in 2001. Regional information can help inform local efforts and provide an avenue for sharing strategies to better serve the region's residents facing a housing crisis.

HUD requires communities which receive federal funds (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants) to conduct an annual count during the last ten days of January. The annual count is done using electronic administrative records to enumerate people living in shelters. Unsheltered counts are only required every other year, although the nine CoCs in the metropolitan Washington region have conducted an unsheltered count annually for 23 years.

Point-in-Time counts are valuable for gathering trend data, establishing the scope of homelessness, and are necessary and essential to policymakers and community members alike in tracking progress toward the goal of ending homelessness. At the federal level, HUD uses PIT count data to inform Congress about the number of people experiencing homelessness nationwide and the effectiveness of HUD's programs and policies in achieving its goals.<sup>4</sup>

At the local level, PIT counts can assist CoCs to identify any service gaps and appropriately size its system to meet the current needs of its residents, measure progress towards ending the experience of homelessness, identify individuals who may not be known to the homeless services system, and raise awareness that may attract additional resources to help solve a community's housing challenges.<sup>5</sup>

It is important to note, however, that the PIT count provides a limited and imperfect perspective on the challenges, successes, and progress made in ending homelessness. It does not provide a complete picture of the dimensions of homelessness, or the scale of people served during a week, month, or year. It is not unusual for a jurisdiction to serve as many as four or five times the number of people during a year as are counted during one night of the PIT enumeration.

Further, many variables—bed availability, weather, surveying methodology, the willingness of people to be interviewed, and the availability of trained outreach workers—can impact the number of people counted on any given night.

To round out the limited perspective that PIT data provides, the region's CoCs use other data sources to measure the extent of the number of people experiencing homelessness and determine the best responses. These include having a quality by-name list, which provides live, up-to-date information

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<sup>4</sup> <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/what-is-a-point-in-time-count/>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

on exactly who is experiencing homelessness; Longitudinal System Analysis reports, which provides information about how people experiencing homelessness use their homelessness response systems, and System Performance Measures,<sup>6</sup> which HUD requires of communities to measure their performance as a coordinated system of homeless assistance as opposed to programs and funding sources that operate independently.

However, the PIT count remains a dependable source upon which the nine participating CoCs in the metropolitan Washington region can measure their efforts over time to prevent and end the experience of homelessness.



Surveyors prepare to begin the unsheltered portion of the Point-in-Time count on January 25, 2023 in the District of Columbia (Photo credit: Pathways to Housing DC)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/system-performance-measures/#guidance>

# HOW MANY LOCAL RESIDENTS ARE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS?

On January 25, 2023, 8,944 people throughout the metropolitan Washington region indicated that they were experiencing homelessness, an increase since 2022. Table 1 illustrates the region's 2023 enumeration across jurisdictions compared to last year.

All nine CoCs recorded an increase in the number of people experiencing literal homelessness counted from the previous year's enumeration. Overall, the region recorded an 18 percent increase from the 2022 to the 2023 enumerations.

TABLE 1: People Experiencing Literal Homelessness by Jurisdiction, 2022 - 2023				
Jurisdiction	2022	2023	Change in Number of Persons 2022-2023	Percent Change 2022 - 2023
City of Alexandria, VA	120	152	32	27%
Arlington County, VA	182	213	31	17%
District of Columbia	4,410	4,922	512	12%
Fairfax County, VA	1,191	1,310	119	10%
Frederick County, MD	210	248	38	18%
Loudoun County, VA	99	220	121	122%
Montgomery County, MD	581	894	313	54%
Prince George's County, MD	571	659	88	15%
Prince William County, VA	241	326	85	35%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,605</b>	<b>8,944</b>	<b>1,339</b>	<b>18%</b>

Source: COG

For the longer period of 2019 to 2023, four of nine CoCs recorded decreases in the number of persons counted experiencing homelessness. This is shown in Table 2 on the following page, which illustrates the numerical and percentage change in the number of residents in the region experiencing homelessness.

## How Has the Number of People Experiencing Homelessness Changed?

Although all nine CoCs experienced an increase in the number of individuals counted from the 2022 to 2023 enumerations, four of nine CoCs experienced decreases in the number of people experiencing homelessness between the longer period of 2019 and 2023. The District of Columbia had the largest percentage decrease since 2019 (25 percent), followed by the City of Alexandria (23 percent) and Frederick County (13 percent). The region reduced the number of persons counted by 850 or nine percent between 2019 and 2023.

The District of Columbia, the City of Alexandria, and Frederick County experienced the largest decreases in the total number of people experiencing homelessness during the 2019 to 2023 period. The District of Columbia counted 1,599 fewer individuals in 2023 than in 2019 followed by the City of Alexandria (46 fewer individuals) and Frederick County (38 fewer individuals).

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change in Number of Persons 2019-2023	Percent Change 2019-2023
City of Alexandria	198	207	106	120	152	-46	-23%
Arlington County	215	199	171	182	213	-2	-1%
District of Columbia	6,521	6,380	5,111	4,410	4,922	-1,599	-25%
Fairfax County	1,034	1,041	1,222	1,191	1,310	276	27%
Frederick County	286	308	223	210	248	-38	-13%
Loudoun County	169	179	80	99	220	51	30%
Montgomery County	647	670	577	581	894	247	38%
Prince George's County	447	453	537	571	659	212	47%
Prince William County	277	326	282	241	326	49	18%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,794</b>	<b>9,763</b>	<b>8,309</b>	<b>7,605</b>	<b>8,944</b>	<b>-850</b>	<b>-9%</b>

Source: COG

The District of Columbia attributes the decrease in persons experiencing homelessness between 2019 and 2023 primarily to the reduction in the number of families experiencing homelessness. This has been achieved through the use of Short-Term Family Housing (STFH), a type of family shelter program that provides housing-focused case management in apartment-style living facilities, which has resulted in shortened length of stays. While there were more families in shelter in 2023 than in the previous year, most of the increase was anticipated due to operational changes and program expansion. In 2022, New Beginnings/Park Road, a new STFH site, opened; this expansion accounts for 22 of the 25 additional families counted in emergency shelters at PIT. The CoC also saw an increase in families in its programs that serve households fleeing domestic and intimate partner violence. Providers serving survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence in the District and throughout the U.S. have added beds in their programs to respond to the nation-wide surge in domestic violence incidents during the pandemic.

The District of Columbia is also continuing its work to make improvements to the system for unaccompanied individuals. The Bridge Housing program expedites the transition to housing for people who have been matched to a permanent housing resource but have not yet leased up. Bridge Housing offers participants apartment-style living space, in lieu of congregate shelter or staying outside, while they work with program staff to finalize their move to their own housing. A newer effort, "Operation Make Movement" is designed to speed up the match-to-lease up process as well. This effort involves trained street outreach and shelter staff supporting individuals with their housing applications prior to being matched to a housing provider. While in its early stages of

implementation, the effort has shown promise in reducing the time between being matched with a housing resource and signing a lease.

The strategic importance of a strong focus on shelter diversion and prevention was cited by other CoCs as another factor that contributed to the reduction in the number of persons counted as experiencing literal homelessness in 2023 compared to 2019. With the end of federal and local eviction moratoriums, eviction cases have been rising steadily and some residents who were facing housing instability entered the homelessness response system. These diversion strategies are critical, along with tenant protections, to keep people in their homes and prevent someone from experiencing the trauma of homelessness.

The City of Alexandria attributes the decrease in the number of persons experiencing homelessness counted between 2019 and 2023 partly to the effective application of additional resources and new policies to keep residents housed. In the context of the past 5 years, the 2023 PIT count can be viewed as a trend reversal in some ways, where the city saw COVID specific resources and tenant protections dissolve, leading to increased need throughout the year and a count closer to those seen in 2020 and prior. It also illustrates the efficacy of the CoC system and its providers for exceeding in service delivery when emergency funds were available, then limiting an inevitable backslide through strategic planning and system design.

Frederick City and County also attributes success reducing its literally homeless count during the past five years to a few contributing factors. Beginning in 2020, new leadership has pushed for policy and application changes within the CoC geared towards better connections and an improved understanding for the needs of the servicing community.

Second, the use of up-to-date applications and changes in tools used for the PIT count itself allowed the compilation and review of the data to be more efficient with improved accuracy. Duplicated counts of individuals and/or families were identified and eliminated with greater ease than in years past.

A combination of factors account for increases in homelessness during the past five years and the region-wide increase during the past year. The end of federal rental assistance and eviction moratoriums has had a significant impact on jurisdictions' abilities to keep people stably housed. The region's high housing costs make it very difficult for extremely low-income households to find or maintain housing that they can afford. A shortage of living wage jobs compounds the difficulty in finding and maintaining affordable housing, particularly given the impacts of rising inflation on individuals with lower incomes.<sup>7</sup>

Further, efforts to prevent and end the experience of homelessness cannot exclude a simultaneous examination of systemic racism as a root cause. Segregation and discrimination in housing, incarceration, over-policing in communities of color, and a lack of access to quality health care and educational opportunities all compound inequities that result in the disparities seen in metropolitan Washington's systems of care.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.marketplace.org/shows/marketplace-morning-report/wages-arent-keeping-up-with-inflation-hitting-low-income-workers-the-hardest/>

<sup>8</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness, "Homelessness and Racial Disparities", Accessed at <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/what-causes-homelessness/inequality/>

At the federal level, the COVID-19 stimulus funding was critical during the public health emergency, but cannot quickly solve the persistent, long-term challenge of finding permanent housing options easily. The lack of deeply affordable housing in the metropolitan Washington region constrains local jurisdictions' ability to make dramatic progress in providing more permanent housing solutions.



An outreach worker prepares to survey individuals on the night of January 25, 2023 in the District of Columbia. (Photo credit: Pathways to Housing DC)

## REGIONAL HOMELESSNESS BY TOTAL POPULATION

The prevalence of homelessness can also be understood by determining the number of persons experiencing homelessness counted in the metropolitan Washington region as a percentage of its total population. Including the District of Columbia, there was a 0.16 percent incidence of homelessness in the region. This figure has increased from 0.14 in 2022. Excluding the District, the incidence of homelessness is 0.08 percent for the region's suburban population, which is a slight increase from the 0.07 percent that had previously not changed since 2016.

HUD's national 2022 CoC Point-in-Time data (the most recent information available) states that there were 582,462 people experiencing homelessness in the country. This rate is 0.002 percent of the total US population (332,403,650 as of January 2022), compared to the region's rate of 0.16 percent. The incidence of homelessness per 1,000 persons is higher in our region than the national average, although the difference is less significant: 1.75 persons per 1,000 Americans were experiencing homelessness on the night of the count in 2022 compared to 1.6 persons per 1,000 in the metropolitan Washington region in 2023.

**TABLE 3: 2023 Share of Population That Is Experiencing Homelessness**

Jurisdiction	2022 Total Population*	2023 Homelessness Enumeration	Homeless as Percent of Total Population	Homeless Persons per 1,000 People
City of Alexandria	155,525	152	0.10%	1.0
Arlington County	234,000	213	0.09%	0.9
District of Columbia	671,803	4,922	0.74%	7.3
Fairfax County <sup>1</sup>	1,177,752	1,310	0.11%	1.1
Frederick County	287,079	248	0.09%	0.9
Loudoun County	432,085	220	0.05%	0.5
Montgomery County	1,052,521	894	0.08%	0.8
Prince George's County	946,971	659	0.07%	0.7
Prince William County <sup>2</sup>	546,288	326	0.06%	0.6
Region with D.C.	<b>5,504,024</b>	<b>8,944</b>	<b>0.16%</b>	<b>1.6</b>
Region without D.C.	<b>4,832,221</b>	<b>4,022</b>	<b>0.08%</b>	<b>0.8</b>

\*Source: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Cities, Counties, and the District of Columbia in the COG region: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2021. (CO-EST2022-POP-11) U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. Release Date: March 2023

<sup>1</sup> Includes the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church

<sup>2</sup> Includes the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park

The results described above are shown in Table 3 (see above). The District of Columbia has the largest local incidence of homelessness within the region's population. Of every 1,000 people in the District, 7.3 are experiencing homelessness, an increase from last year when it was 6.6 people.

## Household Composition

Table 4 compares enumeration survey responses from the three main categories of households from 2019 to 2023. Regional family homelessness (the number of persons in families) reversed the pattern of decline seen during the previous four enumerations and increased 30 percent from 2022 to 2023.

TABLE 4: Household Composition					
		Total Persons in Households without Children	Total Persons in Households with Adults and Children	Total Persons in Households with ONLY Minor Children* (Unaccompanied Minors)	Regional Total
COG REGION	2023	5,901	3,018	25	8,944
	2022	5,273	2,322	10	7,605
	2021	5,917	2,376	16	8,309
	2020	5,990	3,760	15	9,765
	2019	5,735	4,044	15	9,794
2019 - 2023 Percent Change		3%	-25%	10	-9%

\*Change in Households with ONLY Minor Children is shown in total numbers, not a percentage, due to the small overall number of individuals counted.

Source: COG

Conversely, the longer-term trend from 2019 to 2023 represents a positive 25 percent reduction in persons in families experiencing homelessness. This decline in families experiencing homelessness during the past four years exceeds changes observed at the national level, where family homelessness declined by 5.5 percent between 2020 and 2022.<sup>9</sup> The slight progress seen in reducing the number of single adults experiencing homelessness in metropolitan Washington in 2022 reversed course in 2023, with a 12 percent increase between 2023 and 2022 and a three percent increase since 2019.

## Family Households

Families represent 33 percent of all people experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region. Tables 5 and 6 (following pages) illustrate the 2023 survey responses from the region's families without a permanent home. As of January 25, 2023, a total of 951 family households were counted as experiencing homelessness, a higher number than the 761 families counted in 2022. This ends the five-year trend of recorded consecutive declines in families

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/6291/2020-ahar-part-1-pit-estimates-of-homelessness-in-the-us/>

experiencing homelessness although numbers are still lower than were recorded prior to the pandemic.

In 2023, all nine CoCs noted an increase in the number of persons in families on the night of the enumeration from the previous year. Fairfax County had the greatest increase in the number of persons in families from the 2022 PIT count, with 188 additional family members counted.

<b>TABLE 5: 2023 Persons In Families Experiencing Homelessness by Jurisdiction</b>				
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Number of Families</b>	<b>Adults in Families</b>	<b>Children in Families</b>	<b>Total Persons in Families</b>
City of Alexandria	21	23	47	70
Arlington County	21	23	43	66
District of Columbia	388	466	704	1,170
Fairfax County	218	292	460	752
Frederick County	38	37	64	101
Loudoun County	21	29	49	78
Montgomery County	85	101	168	269
Prince George's County	119	154	222	376
Prince William County	40	52	84	136
<b>ALL COG COCs</b>	<b>951</b>	<b>1,177</b>	<b>1,841</b>	<b>3,018</b>

*Note: Chart above does not include Households with Only Children (Unaccompanied Minors).*

Source: COG

One distinguishing characteristic of families experiencing homelessness is that the age of adults in families experiencing homelessness tends to be much younger than single adults experiencing homelessness. For example, a single adult experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region is most likely to be between the ages of 45 and 54, but adults in families with children are most likely to be between the ages of 25 to 34.

A positive trend is reflected in the longer period of 2019 to 2023, when three of nine regional CoCs recorded decreases in family homelessness. During this period, the District of Columbia experienced the greatest percentage decrease (56 percent) and the greatest reduction in numbers of persons counted in families (1,170 fewer persons in families from 2019 to 2023).

**TABLE 6: Change In Persons In Families Experiencing Homelessness by Jurisdiction**

Jurisdiction	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019-2023
City of Alexandria	74	86	43	47	70	-5%
Arlington County	66	60	44	50	66	0%
District of Columbia	2,646	2,431	1,235	1,004	1,170	-56%
Fairfax County	526	528	480	564	752	43%
Frederick County	74	70	58	57	101	36%
Loudoun County	45	50	30	33	78	73%
Montgomery County	206	183	97	173	269	31%
Prince George's County	247	240	286	298	376	52%
Prince William County	160	112	103	96	136	-15%
<b>ALL COG COCs</b>	<b>4,044</b>	<b>3,760</b>	<b>2,376</b>	<b>2,322</b>	<b>3,018</b>	<b>-25%</b>

Note: Chart above does not include Households with Only Children (Unaccompanied Minors).

Source: COG

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, the Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area's (MSA) median monthly housing costs are \$1,890 and median monthly gross rent is \$1,762. Regionally, nearly half of all households—46 percent—are housing cost burdened, meaning they pay more than a third of their incomes to satisfy these monthly housing costs<sup>10</sup>. Severely cost-burdened households (i.e., paying more than 50 percent of monthly income towards housing costs) vary by income level. Seventy-three percent of households with extremely low incomes (at or below 30 percent of the average median) are severely cost burdened in the metropolitan Washington region and may face difficult decisions regarding which basic needs to prioritize for payment.<sup>11</sup> In the District of Columbia, a person earning the minimum wage (\$16.10 per hour) in 2022 would need to work 75 hours per week to be able to afford a one-bedroom apartment at the Fair Market Rent (\$1,567/month).<sup>12</sup> The region's lowest-income households face significant challenges affording housing, especially as the area's housing demand creates pressure on rental rates. This trend makes otherwise affordable units unaffordable for households, especially as they compete with the general public for housing in a highly constrained market.

## Children in Families Experiencing Homelessness

It is important to note that children face particularly adverse effects from experiencing homelessness. Children may be dislocated from familiar surroundings, relatives, friends, and

<sup>10</sup> Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, Renter Cost Burdens, Metropolitan and Micropolitan Areas. Accessed at [https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/ARH\\_2017\\_cost\\_burdens\\_by\\_metro](https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/ARH_2017_cost_burdens_by_metro)

<sup>11</sup> National Low Income Housing Coalition, *The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Rental Homes*. <https://nlihc.org/gap/state/dc> Accessed on April 17, 2023.

<sup>12</sup> National Low Income Housing Coalition, *Out of Reach 2022* <https://nlihc.org/oor/state/dc> Accessed on April 17, 2023.



neighborhood schools when their families lose their housing. Children must also contend with the associated stigma when navigating their new surroundings and making friends.

Children who experience homelessness may have poor nutrition, increased incidence of health impairments, higher exposure to violence, and severe emotional distress as compared to their housed peers.<sup>13</sup>

Homelessness and hunger are also closely intertwined. Children experiencing homelessness are twice as likely to experience hunger as their housed peers, which negatively affects their physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. Schooling for children experiencing homelessness is often interrupted and delayed: children are twice as likely to have a learning disability, repeat a grade, or be suspended from school.<sup>14</sup> Combined, these conditions eliminate feelings of safety and predictability that are important for healthy growth. In addition to the trauma the experience of homelessness causes children, some students experience additional hardships, such as having limited English proficiency or a disability that requires special supports.<sup>15</sup>

The impacts on educational attainment from the COVID-19 pandemic continue to be felt even as schools have returned to their full in-person operating capacity. Recent research has found the pandemic widened preexisting educational attainment gaps. The crisis not only left children months behind average in their learning, but high school seniors were less likely to pursue post-secondary education. Further, the impacts were not limited to learning, but on children's mental health as well.<sup>16</sup>

COG's 2023 enumeration identified 1,841 children experiencing homelessness, representing 21 percent of the region's total population of persons experiencing homelessness (8,944). This represents a slight increase from 18 percent of the total population of children experiencing homelessness represented last year. Children account for 61 percent of all people in families experiencing homelessness; this proportion is essentially unchanged from 2022 and has otherwise remained consistent since 2010.

<sup>13</sup> National Center for Homeless Education, <http://center.serve.org/nche/briefs.php>, *Domestic Violence, Homelessness, and Children's Education*: 1.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.apa.org/pi/families/poverty.aspx>

<sup>15</sup> National School Boards Association, "Homeless Students in Schools Across America: Down But Not Out", [https://www.nsba.org/Perspectives/2021/homeless-students#:~:text=How%20Many%20Homeless%20Students%20Are,in%202019%20\(Figure%201\)](https://www.nsba.org/Perspectives/2021/homeless-students#:~:text=How%20Many%20Homeless%20Students%20Are,in%202019%20(Figure%201)). Accessed April 11, 2022.

<sup>16</sup> Emma Dorn, Bryan Hancock and Jimmy Sarakatsannis, "COVID-19 and education: The lingering effects of unfinished learning." Accessed at <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>

Some of the region's public schools have reported higher numbers of homeless children than are reported in the annual count. The primary reason for this is that area public schools track the number of unsheltered children on a cumulative basis throughout the school year, compared to the one-day snapshot of the region's homelessness provided by the PIT count. Also, the self-reported information regarding the experience of homelessness used by public schools is based upon definitions provided by the U.S. Department of Education.

Children counted by public schools may or may not be experiencing homelessness per the HUD definition and may be living in doubled up situations.

Editorial Projects in Education, the publisher of *Education Week*, reported that a record high 1.5 million students were experienced homelessness during the 2017-2018 school year, which represents an 11 percent increase over the previous year and nearly double the number from a decade ago.<sup>17</sup> The National Center for Homeless Education reported that during the 2019-2020 school year, 78 percent of students that self-identified as facing homelessness reported they were "doubled up" with family or friends.<sup>18</sup> Based upon HUD's guidelines, local jurisdictions cannot count people who live in doubled up situations for the PIT count.

Table 7 provides a breakdown of households of children experiencing homelessness without adults (or unaccompanied minors) by jurisdiction. The small number of Households with Only Children counted in 2023 reflects the challenges of counting youth experiencing homelessness accurately. One difficulty is the HUD definition of homelessness, which excludes persons who are "doubled up." In addition, many youths do not want to be found because they may be fleeing abuse or fear being or hide in plain sight. placed in foster care. Most are not connected to formal supports such as the child "couch surfing,"<sup>19</sup> a form of shelter often used by youth. Also, methods often used for counting adults experiencing homelessness do not accurately capture survival strategies particularly common

**TABLE 7: Households With Only Children Under Age 18 By Jurisdiction, 2020 - 2023**

Jurisdiction	2020	2021	2022	2023	Absolute Change 2020 - 2023
City of Alexandria	0	0	0	0	0
Arlington County	0	0	0	0	0
District of Columbia	11	11	9	11	0
Fairfax County	0	5	1	3	3
Frederick County	0	0	0	1	1
Loudoun County	0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery County	0	0	0	0	0
Prince George's County	1	0	0	10	9
Prince William County	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>13</b>

Source: COG

<sup>17</sup> Education Week. *Number of Homeless Students Hits All-Time High*. February 10, 2020. Accessed May 2020. <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/02/12/number-of-homeless-students-hits-all-time-high.html>

<sup>18</sup> National Center for Homeless Education, *Student Homelessness in America School Years 2017-18 to 2019 – 20*. Accessed April 11, 2022. <https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Student-Homelessness-in-America-2021.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Couch surfing is typically understood to mean a temporary stay in a series of acquaintances' homes at no cost, rather than a hotel, making use of improvised sleeping arrangements.

to youth, such as being mobile and transient, latching onto friends and staying in groups, or trying to welfare, juvenile justice, and mental health systems and many avoid or are unaware of available services.<sup>20</sup>

There are many challenges with counting homeless youth, and because their experiences with homelessness are episodic, single point-in-time counts will always underestimate the true number.

Taking note of seasonal conditions that affect whether youth will seek shelter or stay on the street, some homelessness researchers make sure they count in more than one season.<sup>21</sup>

Noting the importance of counting youth during non-winter months, Prince George's County, the District of Columbia, Montgomery County, and Frederick County have all held separate youth counts.

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Youth counts in metropolitan Washington have resulted in higher numbers of youth than were counted in the PIT enumeration of literally homeless persons in January.

Youth counts differ from the annual Point-in-Time census in January in several important ways. First, the count takes place during warmer months, when youths are more likely to be spending time outside, and potentially unsheltered. Second, the youth count generally takes place during a longer period than just one day and includes intentional enumeration by school personnel with knowledge of and connections to youth and young adults who may not be regularly attending school and would be missed in the one-day count. Third, in addition to counting youth who are experiencing literal homelessness, per the HUD definition, the youth count efforts include those who are unstably housed who may be doubled-up or "couch surfing." Finally, the youth count includes a much broader series of questions designed to identify social, economic, developmental, and other contributing factors leading to youth homelessness for the purposes of strategic system design at the local level as well as to reveal opportunities for focused diversion and prevention work among youth who are unstably housed and at risk of experiencing literal homelessness.

The youth counts conducted in metropolitan Washington included individuals between the ages of 13 and 24 and have resulted in higher numbers of youth than were counted in the PIT enumeration of literally homeless persons in January.

Prince George's County is one of six CoCs in Maryland which has participated in the Youth REACH MD (Reach out, Engage, Assist and Count to End Homelessness) demonstration pilot since 2015 to count unaccompanied homeless youth and young adults and serves as one of three regional team leaders providing technical assistance to Maryland CoCs doing the count for the first time.<sup>22</sup> The enumeration involved surveying youth through shelter counts, service-based counts (meaning youth/young adults who used services from participating providers during the count), and kick-off/magnet events and street counts.<sup>23</sup> Further, results from this state-wide effort concluded that

<sup>20</sup> The Urban Institute, *Youth Count! Process Study*: 10.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.healthycal.org/archives/11079>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.youthreachmd.com/>

<sup>23</sup> Maryland's First Unaccompanied Homeless Youth & Young Adult Count: Findings from Youth REACH MD Phase 2 (May 2016), accessed at <https://theinstitute.umaryland.edu/docs/YouthREACHMD-Phase2Report-Final.pdf>

combining survey data and administrative data (via HMIS or Homeless Management Information Systems) result in a more accurate picture of youth homelessness than survey data alone.<sup>24</sup>

In October 2018, Maryland passed the Ending Youth Homelessness Act of 2018 (SB 1218). The Ending Youth Homelessness Act of 2018 defines unaccompanied homeless youth as individuals of 24 years of age or younger who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; makes the annual Youth REACH MD unaccompanied homeless youth count a permanent fixture under the leadership of the Department of Housing and Community Development; and, provides additional grant funding to end youth homelessness and address related disparities based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity by establishing the Ending Youth Homelessness Grant Program.<sup>25</sup>

The 2022 Youth REACH MD count took place for two weeks, depending on the jurisdiction, between March 1 to April 30 and was the first year that all Maryland jurisdictions participated in Youth REACH MD. The youth count in Maryland takes place every two years; the next youth count will be held in 2024.

The District of Columbia passed the End Youth Homeless Amendment Act in 2014, which not only provided expanded funding for youth-accessible services, but also mandated an annual census.<sup>26</sup> The most recent of the past eight homeless youth counts took place over two weeks during September 2022.



Photo credit: Ian Rideaux, Changing the Narratives Fund

to end youth homelessness was originally released in 2017 and will be updated during 2023.

The District of Columbia's CoC created a Youth Action Board called *Supporting Hopeful Youth*, which ensures youth who have experienced homelessness have a role in planning services for this population. The CoC also worked with The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness (TCP) to develop and implement *Solid Foundations*. In turn, this plan has highlighted youth service needs leading to the establishment of a 24-hour youth drop-in center, prevention and family reunification services, rapid rehousing for Transition-Aged Youth (TAYs), and a new model called extended transitional housing which allows for longer lengths of stay with intensive supportive services, progressive engagement, and a housing first approach. The District of Columbia's strategic plan

Both Prince George's County and the District of Columbia received nationally competitive HUD grant funding from the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program.<sup>27</sup> The program requires convening a large variety of stakeholders, assessing the needs of special populations, convening Youth Action

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.youthreachmd.com/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://dc-aya.org/youth-count-dc-2018/>

<sup>27</sup> For more information about YHDP, see: [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/yhdp](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/yhdp)

Boards, and creating a coordinated community plan for youth experiencing homelessness. It also provides an opportunity to test new approaches to address youth homelessness.

In the Maryland and District of Columbia youth counts, a key contributing factor to youth experiencing homelessness was conflict with a parent, guardian, or foster parent. Findings from the Maryland Youth REACH initiative suggest that focused interventions on prevention among youth and young adults who identify as Black or African American, LGBTQIA+, are in high school and/or are pregnant or parenting are needed to reduce the numbers of youth and young adults who are unstably housed or experiencing literal homelessness.<sup>28</sup>

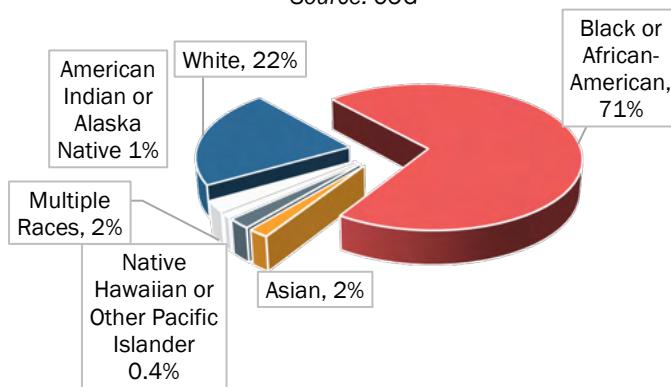
## Demographic Profile of the Region's Residents Experiencing Homelessness

In 2014, COG began reporting questions regarding ethnicity and race in addition to age and gender. HUD specified the ethnic and racial categories included in the Point-in-Time questionnaire which generally reflect a social definition of race recognized in this country and are not an attempt to define race biologically, anthropologically, or genetically. The answers are also limited and may not fully represent the varied racial and ethnic backgrounds of all people who live in our region.

The survey question on ethnicity asks respondents to identify whether they are Hispanic or Latina/o/x (people who identify their ethnic origin as Hispanic or Latina/o/x may be of any race<sup>29</sup>). In addition, the categories of the race item include racial and national origin or ethnicity were self-reported, and individuals could choose “multiple races” to indicate their racial identity, such as “American Indian” and “White.” Of the 5,909 single adults experiencing homelessness (Figure 1) who responded to these

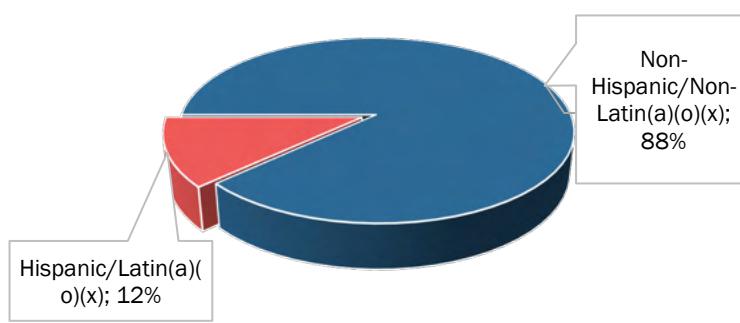
**Figure 1: Regional Homeless Single Adults Demographic Profile (Race)**

Source: COG



**Figure 2: Regional Homeless Single Adults Demographic Profile (Ethnicity)**

Source: COG



<sup>28</sup> <http://www.youthreachmd.com/content/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/YRMD-2017-Report-Executive-Summary-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.census.gov/population/race/>

demographic questions, 90 percent were over the age of 24, and the majority (70 percent) identified as male. For those single adults who responded to the question regarding ethnicity (Figure 2), 88 percent self-identified as non-Hispanic or non-Latina/o/x.

The racial breakdown for single adults experiencing homelessness included 71 percent Black or African American, 22 percent White, two percent as multiple races, and two percent Asian. Less than one percent declined to respond, or the information was not recorded.

The remaining categories (American Indian or Alaska native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander) all were one percent or less of the total literally homeless single adults experiencing homelessness.

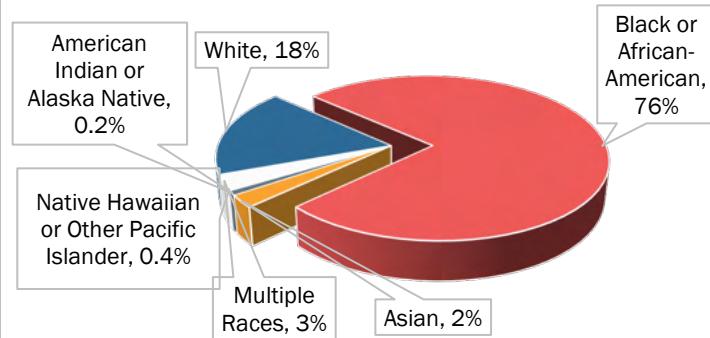
In Frederick and Loudoun counties, the single adult racial profile differs slightly from the rest of the region. In Frederick, 53 percent of single adults experiencing homelessness are White and in Loudoun County, 43 percent of the single homeless adults identified racially as White. However, it's important to note that the limited options the Census Bureau offers for race and ethnicity categories may impact the results reflected here when respondents are unclear which option to choose.

The demographic profile of families experiencing homelessness (Figure 3) differs from that of single adults in a few key characteristics. In families experiencing homelessness, most adults (81 percent) identify as female. The average age of adults also tends to be younger than single adults. Twenty-five percent are aged 18 to 24, 42 percent are aged 25 to 35, and overall, 75 percent are over age 24. Ethnically, 89 percent of adults in homeless families are Non-Hispanic/Non-Latina/o/x, and racially, 76 percent identified as Black or African American. White adults in families experiencing homelessness make up 18 percent of the regional population of families experiencing literal homelessness (remaining unchanged from 2022), two percent identified as Asian, and three percent identified as multiple races, with the other racial categories all less than one percent.

Again, the demographic profile of adults experiencing homelessness in families in Frederick County differs from the rest of the region; 54 percent of adults in Frederick families identified as White. In prior years, the racial identity of families experiencing homelessness in Loudoun County was similar to Frederick County. In 2023, however, 21 percent of families in Loudoun identified as White on the night of January 25, 2023.

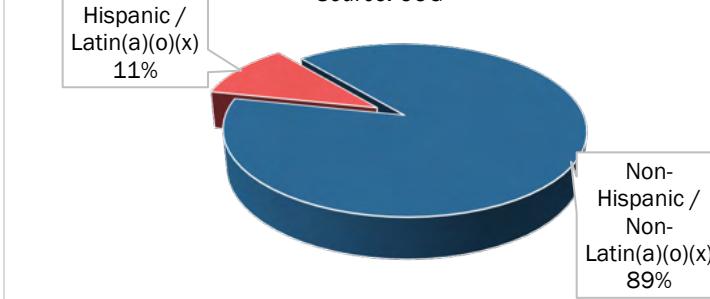
**Figure 3: Regional Homeless Adults in Families Demographic Profile (Race)**

Source: COG



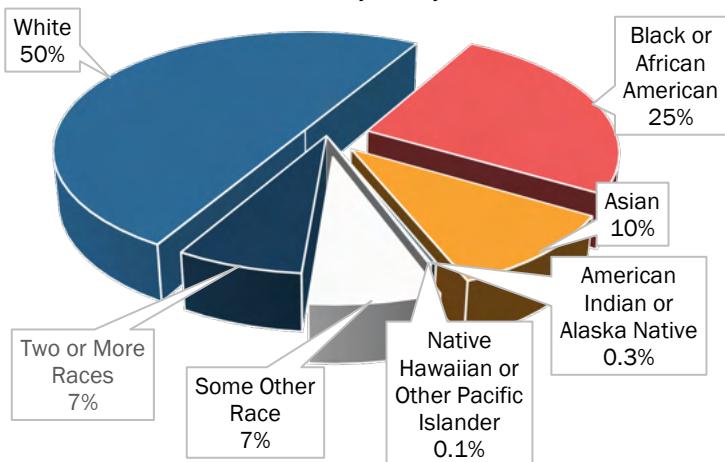
**Figure 4: Regional Homeless Adults in Families Demographic Profile (Ethnicity)**

Source: COG



**Figure 5: Regional Total Population Demographic Profile (Race)**

Source: American Community Survey 2021 5-Yr Estimates



The region's racial breakdown (Figure 5), in contrast with the data shown in Figures 1 through 4, shows that 50 percent of the population identifies as White and only 25 percent identifies as African American or Black. With the exception of Frederick County, persons experiencing homelessness are disproportionately more likely to be Black or African American than they are in the general regional population.

## Addressing Racial Inequality

The racial disproportionality reflected in the regional 2023 PIT count demographic data is not unique to metropolitan Washington. Rather, it reflects a long history of racial segregation and discrimination in the United States that continues to impact Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) to this day. Several organizations have worked to address this concern, focusing specifically on people experiencing homelessness. One example is C4 Innovations' (formerly known as the Center for Social Innovation) mixed-methods research study known as SPARC (Supporting Partnerships for Anti-Racist Communities).

Among some of the key findings from its first phase research, it notes that, "Although Black people comprise 13% of the general population in the United States and 26% of those living in poverty, they account for more than 40% of the homeless population, suggesting that poverty rates alone do not explain the over-representation."<sup>30</sup>

The research coalesced around five major areas of focus regarding racial inequity and homelessness, including economic mobility, housing, criminal justice, behavioral health, and family stabilization. The disparate experiences of BIPOC in these realms are all factors that can lead to high rates of homelessness and prolong exits to permanent housing.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> <https://endhomelessness.org/time-change-findings-sparc-study-race-homelessness/>

More recently, Cornell University published findings in February 2023 of the first-ever national, annualized rates of sheltered homelessness over time across race and ethnicity.<sup>32</sup> Although this study was limited to people experiencing homelessness in shelters, it found that between 2007 and 2017, the “lowest rate of homelessness among Black Americans – 1.4% - was more than four times the highest prevalence for white individuals and families.”

The legacy of structural racism and bias through deliberate practice (de facto) as well as legal (de jure) decisions have led to segregated communities and decisions that disadvantaged persons of color in favor of those who were or are white. These neighborhoods are comprised of residents who are living in impoverished networks – where not just an individual or family, but the entire network, lacks the economic and social capital necessary to prevent and end homelessness.<sup>33</sup>

To address the racial disparities noted in metropolitan Washington’s homeless services system, the CoCs collaborated on a regional racial equity systems analysis in 2021 through 2022. The analysis closely reviewed each of the nine participating jurisdictions’ CoC operations to develop an equity-driven, results-based action plan that centers racial equity in our shared efforts to end disparities in the homeless response system. Once the recommendations are final, the region’s CoCs will work together to prioritize and implement actions that can be taken at the local as well as the regional level.

## Older Adults Experiencing Homelessness

There is concern among the region’s CoCs that there may be a growing number of senior citizens facing a housing crisis and who are seeking emergency shelter.

Elderly persons experiencing homelessness face unique vulnerabilities due to health or mobility limitations. They may also have more significant health concerns not typically seen in homeless services systems, such as Alzheimer’s disease or cancer.<sup>34</sup>

It’s important to note that older adults experiencing homelessness already have medical ages that exceed their biological ages. Multiple studies have demonstrated that older adults experiencing homelessness have age-related medical conditions, such as decreased mobility and cognitive decline, on par with housed counterparts who are 20 years older.<sup>35</sup> This was emphasized



Photo credit: Wonderferret “homeless”/Flickr

<sup>32</sup> Dean, James. *Cornell Chronicle*. “Staggering disparities: Homelessness risk varies across race.” Accessed at <https://news.cornell.edu/stories/2023/02/staggering-disparities-homelessness-risk-varies-across-race>

<sup>33</sup> <https://endhomelessness.org/time-change-findings-sparc-study-race-homelessness/>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.seniornavigator.org/article/12426/special-concerns-elderly-who-are-homeless>

<sup>35</sup> Brown, R.T., Hemati, K., Riley, E.E., et al. Geriatric conditions in a population-based sample of older homeless adults. (2017). *Gerontologist*, 57(4), 757-766. Doi:10.1093/geront/gnw011. (n/u). As accessed in *The Emerging Crisis of Aged Homelessness: Could Housing Solutions Be Funded by Avoidance of Excess Shelter, Hospital, and Nursing Home Costs?*, <https://www.aisp.upenn.edu/aginghomelessness/>

by Dr. Margot Kushel, a health care practitioner who has tracked the rise in older adults experiencing homelessness, and noted that, “Fifty is the new 75.”<sup>36</sup> The average life expectancy of a person experiencing homelessness is estimated between 42 and 52 years, compared to 78 years in the general U.S. population.<sup>37</sup>

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**As aged homelessness grows, so too will service use and costs, including for hospital and nursing home stays.**

experiencing homelessness. By 2030, that number is expected to more than double to 106,000.<sup>39</sup>

In the metropolitan Washington region, 34 percent of persons in Households without Children (2,032 individuals) were over the age of 55, and 383 older adults were unsheltered. This represents an increase from the 118 seniors without children who were counted as unsheltered in 2022.

On January 25, 2023, the region counted 219 adults aged 70 or above experiencing homelessness, 18 of whom were unsheltered. A total of 32 persons over 80 years old were experiencing homelessness on the night of the PIT count. In addition, there were at least three seniors over the age of 90 counted on the night of January 25, 2023, one of whom was unsheltered.

Beginning in 2018, the nine-member CoCs in the metropolitan Washington region provided a more detailed age breakdown in the regional report to monitor these data more closely and determine how best to respond to changing demographic needs.

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**The average life expectancy of a person experiencing homelessness is estimated between 42 and 52 years, compared to 78 years in the general U.S. population.**

Figure 6 (following page) illustrates the age distribution of single adults experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region during the night of the PIT count. In previous years this figure represented data showing older adults defined as age 62 or older. In 2023, the region’s CoCs chose to revise the breakouts to better follow and assess the number of seniors at older ages above age 62. This younger age threshold also reflects the observed difference between biological and chronological ages of older adults experiencing homelessness. For trend comparison, the data are reflected here showing age 55 as the highest age category.

<sup>36</sup> Thomas Fuller. “A Rising Tally of Deaths on the Streets” *The New York Times*. April 18, 2022. Accessed at <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/18/us/homeless-deaths-los-angeles.html>

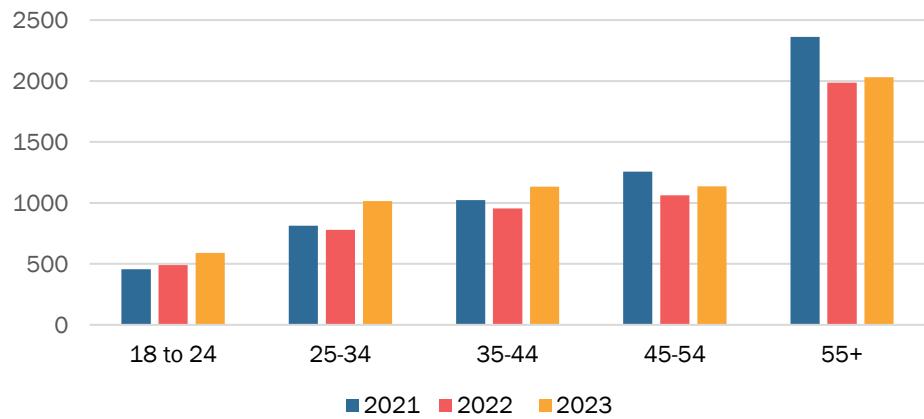
<sup>37</sup> National Coalition for the Homeless, *Health Care and Homelessness*, Accessed at <https://www.nationalhomeless.org/factsheets/health.html>

<sup>38</sup> “The Emerging Crisis of Aged Homelessness: Could Housing Solutions be Funded by Avoidance of Excess Shelter, Hospital, and Nursing Home Stays?” University of Pennsylvania, accessed at <https://aisp.upenn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Emerging-Crisis-of-Aged-Homelessness.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> RRF Foundation for Aging, “Home Front and Center, Supporting Access to Affordable and Quality Housing Issue Brief 4: February 2022”, Accessed at <https://www.rrf.org/wp-content/uploads/RRF-ISSUE-BRIEF-ON-HOUSING.pdf>,

**Figure 6: Age Distribution of Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness**

Source: COG

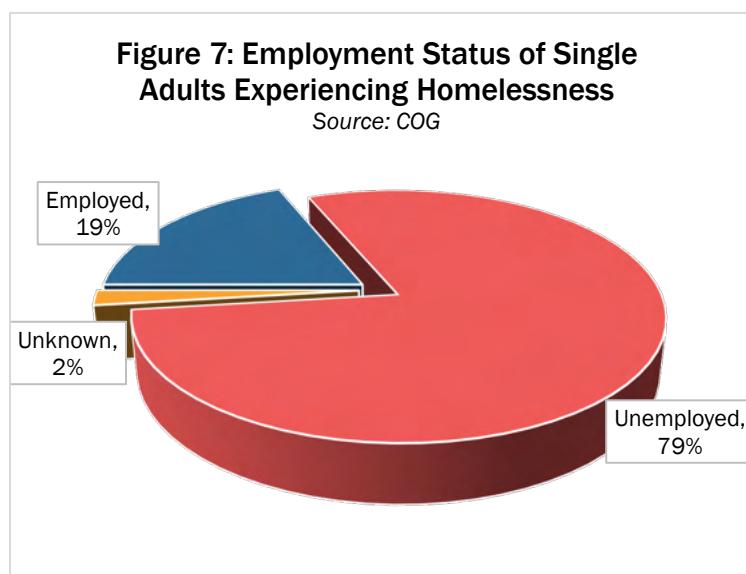


Several CoCs in the region have medical respite beds for persons discharged from the hospital who need rest to recover which elderly persons may be able to use. However, many older adults require ongoing medical assistance and lack access to adequate care. The region's CoCs are working to address the unique needs of older adults while anticipating a growing need to expand resources to assist this group of residents appropriately and safely in the future.

# INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, AND HOMELESSNESS

Employment, or having an adequate and reliable source of income, is crucial to a household's ability to afford housing. According to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, the metropolitan Washington region's preliminary unemployment rate for February 2023 was 2.9 percent, compared to 3.9 percent for the nation. The region's unemployment rate decreased slightly from three percent in January 2023.<sup>40</sup>

While the region's job growth has expanded and unemployment continues to decline in the metropolitan Washington region, this obscures the economic outlook for many of the region's residents who struggle with housing instability. Unemployment continues to be a concern for those without a high school diploma, college, or advanced degree.



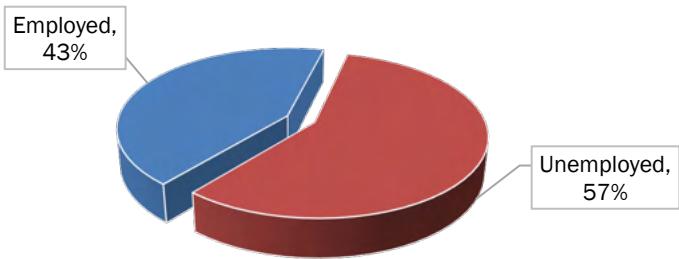
Among all adults experiencing homelessness who responded to this question on the night of January 25, 2023 – both single adults and adults in families – 17 percent were employed. The rates of employment vary by household type; Figures 7 through 9 illustrate the employment status (including full- and part-time employment) of single adults and adults in families experiencing homelessness throughout the region. Also included are percentages for people experiencing homelessness for whom employment status was unknown.

Similarly, approximately 19 percent of single adults experiencing homelessness were employed, which is a slight increase from 14 percent in 2022 (Figure 7). The lower rate of employment for homeless single adults (compared to adults in families) is attributed to higher incidences of conditions that make securing and maintaining employment difficult, such as physical disabilities, and multiple behavioral and chronic health issues, including substance use disorders and mental illness. The priority the region's CoCs place on serving the most vulnerable residents is reflected by the larger proportion of single adults experiencing homelessness who were unemployed on the night of the PIT count.

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/web/metro/laummtrk.htm>

### Figure 8: Employment Status of Adults in Families Experiencing Homelessness

Source: COG 2023



Data from the 2023 enumeration suggests that 43 percent of all homeless adults in families with children who responded to the question were employed (Figure 8), but the picture varies significantly by jurisdiction.

Figure 9 shows that, in all nine of the region's participating CoCs, less than 40 percent of single homeless adults were employed on the night of the annual

enumeration. Seven of nine CoCs had higher rates of employed single adults experiencing homelessness in 2023 than in 2022 (only Fairfax and Frederick counties had slightly lower employment rates in 2023). However, region-wide, only 18 percent of adults reported being employed and this trend has been consistent during the past five years. The lower observed rates of employed single adults is in part due to the priority the region's CoCs place on assisting the most vulnerable residents to get into housing. These persons may have higher barriers to employment due to having a disability, serious mental illness, or substance use disorder.

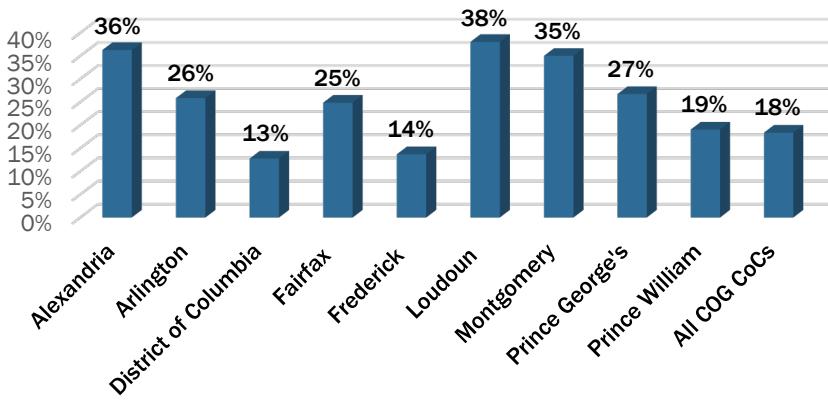
In contrast, in seven of nine local jurisdictions, more than 30 percent of adults in family households were employed (see Figure 10, following page).

Rates of employment for adults in families experiencing homelessness vary not only from one year to the next, but across jurisdictions in metropolitan Washington. In Arlington County, for example, 52 percent of adults in families were employed, compared to 14 percent in Montgomery County (see Figure 10, following page). Approximately 56 percent of adults in these families region-wide were unemployed and employment status is unknown for one percent. The overall rate of employment is higher than during the 2022 enumeration.

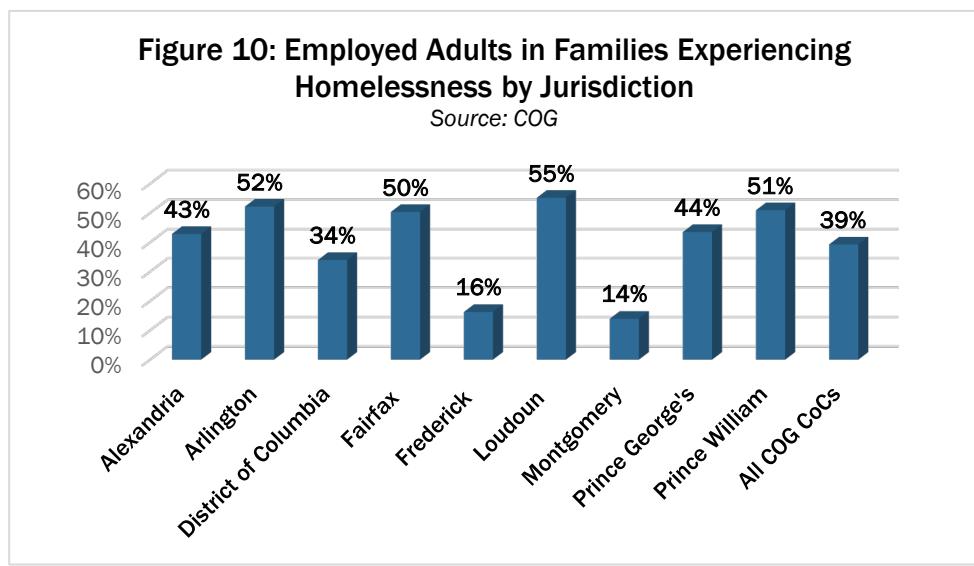
Although the total number is small, 23 children in homeless families were employed on the night of the enumeration. Only three of the 25 unaccompanied minors in the region's Households with Only Children were employed on the day of the PIT. This is attributed to the youths' age, levels of employability, and housing status.

### Figure 9: Employed Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness by Jurisdiction

Source: COG



While metropolitan Washington has traditionally enjoyed a lower unemployment rate compared to other national metropolitan areas, it remains one of the country's most expensive areas in which to live. In a region where housing prices are rising faster than wages, the lowest income workers face tremendous pressures. To afford a one-bedroom apartment making a minimum wage in metropolitan Washington (\$16.10 per hour) requires working 75 hours per week.<sup>41</sup> The reality is stark for the region's homeless households as evidenced in the figures shown in this section.



As a region, the percentage of employed adults in families increased from 28 percent in 2022 to 43 percent in 2023.

Improving the employment picture for some of the region's most vulnerable residents remains challenging, but CoCs will continue efforts to increase residents' earned income as a critical component for long-term housing stability.

Combined with the high cost of housing, the availability and safety of living wage jobs remains a key obstacle to ending homelessness, even for those individuals who are already employed.

## Income

While a portion of the region's population of people experiencing homelessness reports receiving monthly income, many do not receive any monthly income. In 2023, 65 percent of adults in families reported having income, but only 45 percent of single adults reported income. Nearly half (48 percent) of all adults for whom this information was available report having some form of monthly income. Among single adults experiencing homelessness, 34 percent reported that employment wages and salaries were their primary source of income (see Figure 11, following page). The largest source of primary income was disability (such as Supplemental Security Income), followed by employment, retirement (such as Social Security), and last, other sources of income. Source of income was unknown for seven percent of single adults.

Among adults in families who responded to this question, 49 percent reported the primary source of income being from employment. This is essentially unchanged from 2022. The next largest primary

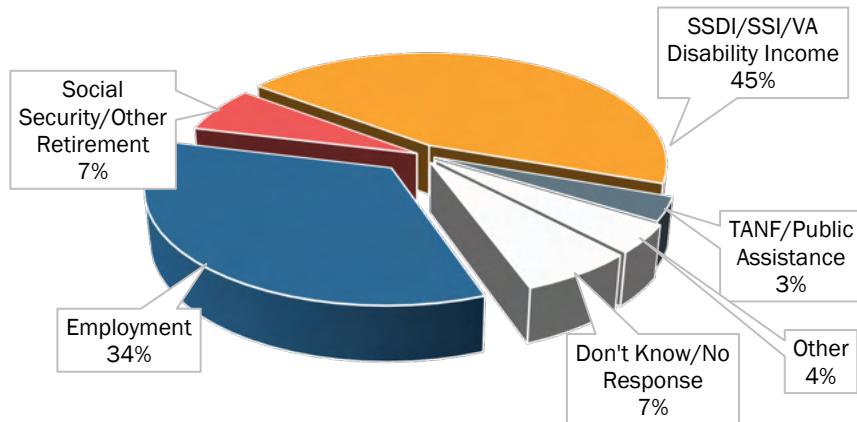
<sup>41</sup> National Low Income Housing Coalition, *Out of Reach* 2022. Accessed at <https://nlihc.org/oor/state/dc>

source of income was public assistance, which supports a much larger number of families than single individuals experiencing homelessness.

Figure 11 illustrates the primary source of income for the 2,460 single adults who provided this information; Figure 12 represents the responses from 787 adults in families.

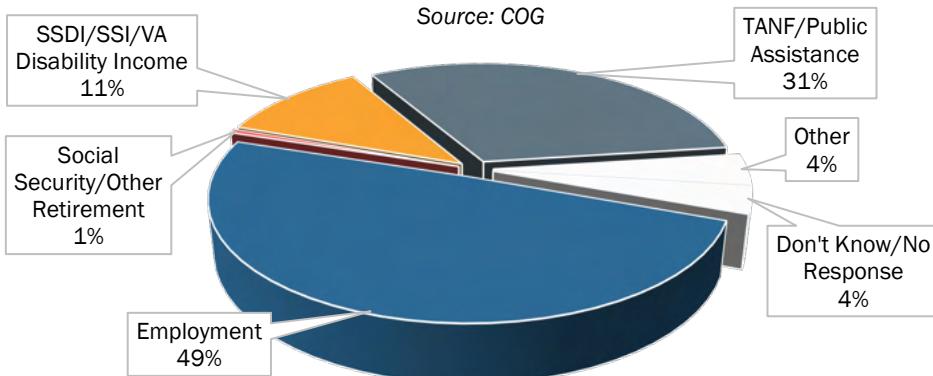
**Figure 11: Source of Income for Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness**

Source: COG



**Figure 12: Source of Income for Adults in Families Experiencing Homelessness**

Source: COG



## UNSHeltered HOMELESSNESS

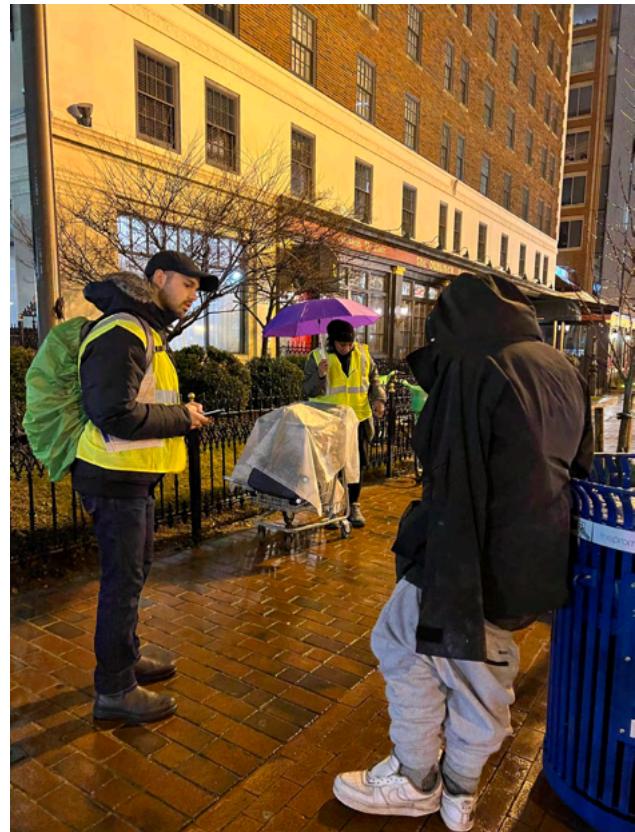
On January 25<sup>th</sup>, outreach workers and experienced volunteers for the region's CoCs surveyed their communities to count the area's unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness. Outreach workers counted people living on the streets, in alleys, under bridges, in local parks, in camp sites, and in other places frequented by people experiencing homelessness. In 2023, the unsheltered portion of the count more closely resembled approaches used prior to the COVID-19 pandemic with increased numbers of survey volunteers assisting with conducting interviews for the count.

According to the 2023 enumeration, 1,372 persons (approximately 15 percent of the region's 8,944 persons experiencing homelessness on the night of the PIT) were unsheltered. While almost all were single adults, 13 people were in four families including seven children, as well as six unaccompanied minors who were unsheltered on the night of the count. The 1,353 unsheltered single persons counted represents a 41 percent increase in the number of unsheltered adults in Households without Children counted in 2022 (394 additional persons counted). Overall, regional homelessness among unsheltered single adults increased 26 percent (277 additional persons) during the period between 2019 and 2023.

The fluctuations in the unsheltered count during the past five years may be attributed to a variety of factors. Typically, the number of individuals counted residing in areas unfit for human habitation can depend on weather conditions, the number of surveyors employed for the count, and methodology (complete coverage or sampling). Several CoCs in the region have been engaged in vigorous efforts to assist individuals experiencing chronic homelessness attain permanent housing, which may have contributed to decreases recorded in some jurisdictions.

Weather may have affected the unsheltered count in 2023, as temperatures were relatively warm (ranging between 40 to 50 degrees Fahrenheit) across the region on the night of January 25.

In Loudoun County, due to COVID-19 precautions, the methodology for the unsheltered portion of the enumeration in 2022 and 2021 changed from in-person, face-to-face interviews, to an observation-only count. In-person, face-to-face interviews often allow for communication regarding where other persons experiencing homelessness may be located throughout the county. In 2023, Loudoun County returned to a more comprehensive census methodology for the unsheltered portion of the count, which was conducted by a diverse team of thirty volunteers comprised of Loudoun County

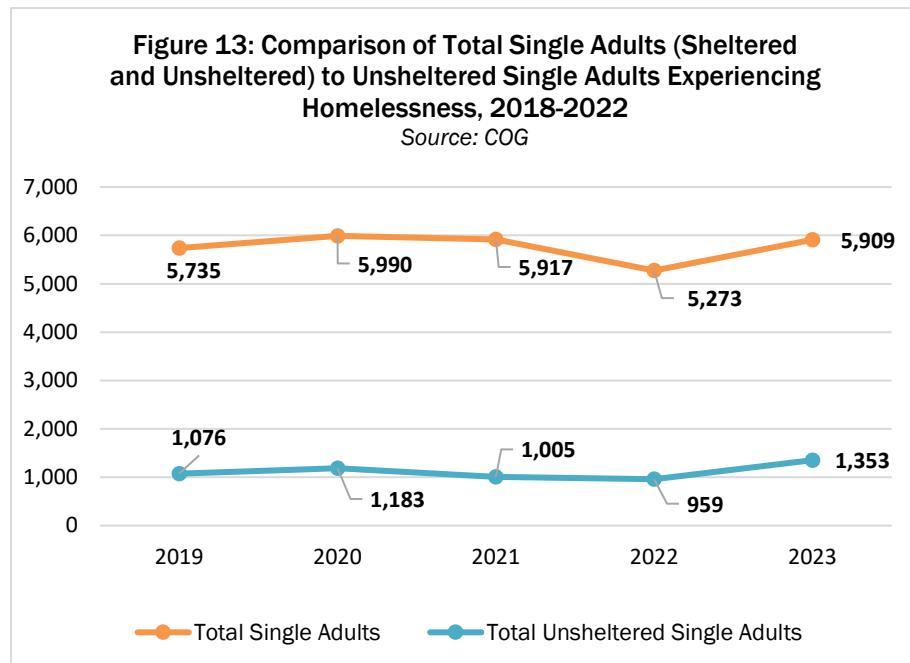


A volunteer surveyor interviews a person experiencing homelessness outside on the night of the Point-in-Time count on January 25, 2023.

government employees, local homeless service providers' staff, local Veterans, and other volunteers. Loudoun County is comprised of both densely populated urban areas as well as rural areas. The vast geography of rural areas can make homelessness easy to miss, and often harder to quantify during a PIT count. As in previous years, homeless outreach workers conducted outreach through rural western Loudoun County to include small towns and incorporated villages. People camping in the woods or more rural landscapes may not self-identify as experiencing homelessness, even though the place where they stay could be identified as "unfit for human habitation" in an urban environment.

In Prince William County, the increase in the numbers of people counted as experiencing unsheltered homelessness is not a reflection of increased need, but rather improved data accuracy and program coordination. In 2023, Prince William County improved its methodology by completing observation surveys for persons who could not be interviewed directly and used the HUD extrapolation tool to determine needed outcomes. Prince William CoC staff also completed multiple supplemental (service-based) counts between the night of the count and through the allowable seven-day period (ending on January 31, 2023). Prince William County CoC staff re-visited known encampments, went to drop-in centers for at least 2 days, visited community dinners, local libraries, and other places persons are known to congregate during the day such as fast-food restaurants, parks, and the local mall. One of the CoC's primary goals the past few years has been to expand its street outreach programs. Prince William County has made several steps towards this goal with new programs and staff online, new partnerships with existing providers, and strengthened relationships with local police departments. This, in addition to the improved methodology, has had a significant impact on this year's unsheltered count.

The variation in the unsheltered count by year makes discernment of a real trend difficult. This is represented graphically in Figure 13. While the prior four counts reflect a slight upward trend in the total number of homeless single adults, the count of single adults who were unsheltered on the night of the enumeration does not precisely correspond.

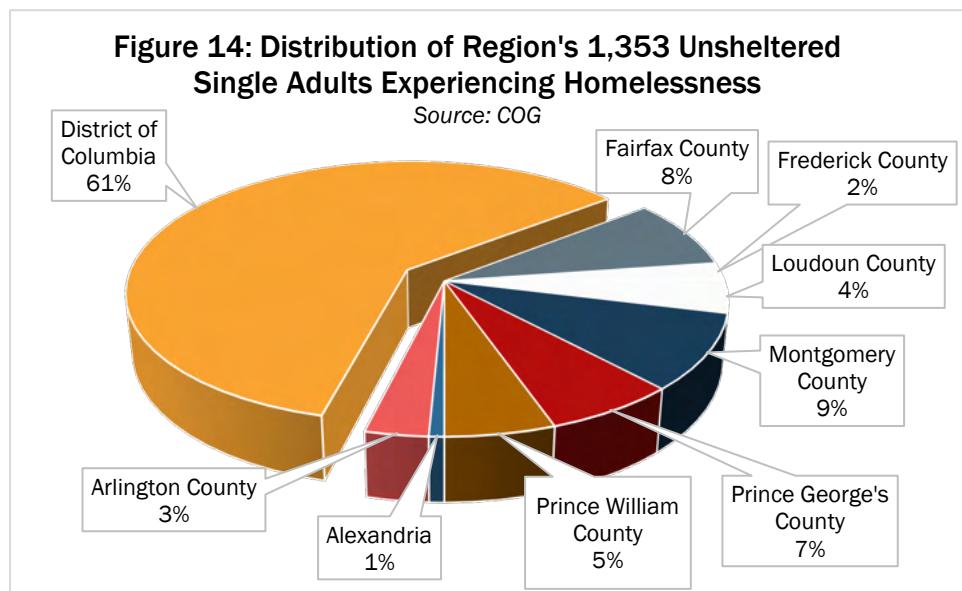


## Distribution of the Region's Unsheltered Single Adults

Where are people experiencing homelessness outside the shelter system in the metropolitan Washington region? Figure 14 indicates where survey volunteers interviewed persons experiencing homelessness in places not meant for human habitation, such as streets, parks, alleys, abandoned buildings, stairways, and rural campsites.

The District of Columbia accounts for 61 percent of the region's unsheltered homeless single adults in 2023. This proportion of the regional share represents a decrease from 2022 when 72 percent of unsheltered single adults experiencing homelessness were counted in the District of Columbia.

Notably, all nine CoCs recorded an increase in their unsheltered counts from 2022 to 2023.



Overall, the region counted 41 percent more unsheltered single adults in 2023 than in 2022, when the region recorded a five percent reduction. The largest increase during this one-year period was recorded in the District of Columbia (130 additional persons), followed by Fairfax County and Montgomery County (56 and 55 additional unsheltered single adults counted respectively). Prince William County and Loudoun County had the greatest increased rate from 2022 to 2023 (170 percent and 124 percent more persons counted unsheltered) counting 46 additional unsheltered persons in Prince William and 31 in Loudoun respectively.

Weather conditions on the night of January 25, 2023 may have contributed to higher numbers of persons counted experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Changes in methodologies, including the return of survey volunteers across the region in numbers similar to counts before the pandemic, in some jurisdictions may have resulted in more accurate unsheltered counts than in the prior year given COVID-19 precautions. This continues to be among the many challenges the region's CoCs are facing in keeping people experiencing homelessness safe during the winter months.

## Comparison of Unsheltered Homelessness by Jurisdiction

Reviewing the unsheltered count for a longer period than one year provides a different perspective of the PIT count results, although discerning a pattern in the findings is less clear.

Notably, again, every CoC in metropolitan Washington experienced an increase in the number of people counted as experiencing unsheltered homelessness since 2022. Between the longer period of the counts from 2019 to 2023, only two of nine jurisdictions recorded reductions in their unsheltered counts.

Frederick County recorded the greatest decline in its rate (65 percent) or a difference of 51 fewer people counted in 2023 than in 2019. Loudoun County experienced a 21 percent rate of reduction and counted 15 fewer unsheltered individuals in 2023 than in 2019. However, the majority of CoCs experienced an increase between the 2019 and 2023 enumerations. The District of Columbia and Montgomery County recorded the greatest increase in the number of unsheltered single adults experiencing homelessness during this period. In the District of Columbia, 212 additional persons were counted in 2023 than in 2019, and in Montgomery County, the difference was 49 additional persons during the same period. Overall, the region's percentage of unsheltered single adults increased by 26 percent from 2019 to 2023. Table 8 presents the number and percentage of single adults experiencing homelessness by CoC from 2019 to 2023. Table 9 (following page) represents the percentage of each individual jurisdiction's literally homeless population that was unsheltered during the same period.

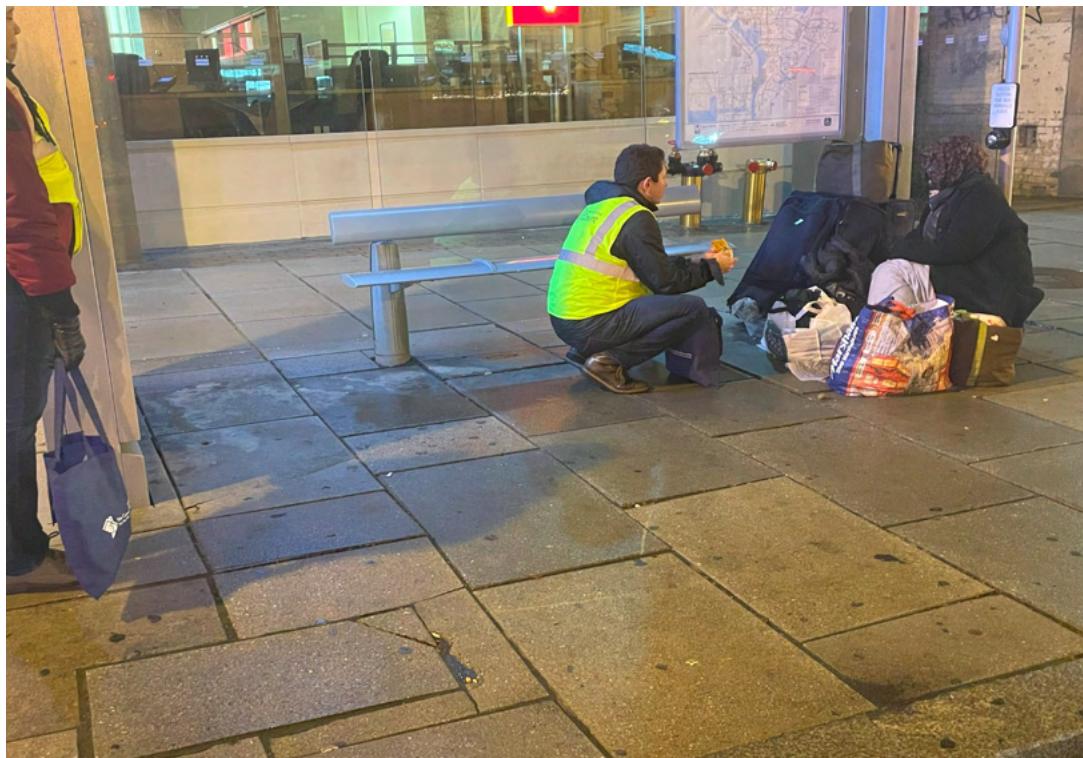
TABLE 8: Comparison of Unsheltered Single Adults By Jurisdiction, 2019 – 2023							
Jurisdiction	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change in Number of Persons 2019-2023	Percent Change 2019 - 2023
City of Alexandria	10	11	8	5	10	0	0%
Arlington County	36	34	27	20	42	6	17%
District of Columbia	607	652	681	689	819	212	35%
Fairfax County	89	88	57	57	113	24	27%
Frederick County	78	45	26	18	27	-51	-65%
Loudoun County	71	57	28	25	56	-15	-21%
Montgomery County	75	103	68	69	124	49	65%
Prince George's County	73	91	68	49	89	16	22%
Prince William County	37	102	42	27	73	36	97%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,076</b>	<b>1,183</b>	<b>1,005</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>1,353</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>26%</b>

Source: COG

**TABLE 9: Unsheltered Single Adults As A Percentage of Total Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness By Jurisdiction, 2019 - 2023**

Jurisdiction	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
City of Alexandria	5%	4%	8%	4%	7%
Arlington County	17%	14%	16%	11%	20%
District of Columbia	9%	11%	13%	16%	17%
Fairfax County	9%	5%	5%	5%	9%
Frederick County	27%	8%	12%	9%	11%
Loudoun County	42%	0%	35%	25%	25%
Montgomery County	12%	10%	12%	12%	15%
Prince George's County	16%	15%	13%	9%	14%
Prince William County	13%	13%	15%	11%	22%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>15%</b>

Source: COG



Jorge Membreño interviews a woman experiencing homelessness on January 25, 2023 in the District of Columbia.  
(Photo credit: District of Columbia Interagency Council on Homelessness)

# CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

The nine CoCs in the region are working to reduce the number of residents who meet the definition of chronic homelessness<sup>42</sup>. HUD's definition of an individual experiencing chronic homelessness as an unaccompanied adult or youth head of household is someone with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years; the episodes of homelessness must cumulatively equal at least 12 months. The definition of a chronically homeless family includes an adult member of a family who has a disabling condition and meets the same time requirements as an unaccompanied adult. Persons who are not the head of the household under the age of 18 do not meet this definition in this scenario, nor are other adults in the family who do not meet the HUD definition. However, all members of the family household are counted as persons in a family experiencing chronic homelessness. Also, persons under the age of 18 who are heads of household, including unaccompanied youth and parenting youth, may be counted as chronically homeless.

It is important to note that PIT data are self-reported, and persons who may disclose being chronically homeless, upon further investigation, may not meet HUD's definition.

Numerous studies<sup>43</sup> have found that housing individuals experiencing chronic homelessness leads to greater stability and independence and, significantly reduces the overall numbers of people experiencing homelessness. This helps communities reduce public expenditures, particularly for the most frequent users of medical, judicial, and other emergency services. For example, one study, completed by the University of California Irvine in June 2017<sup>44</sup>, found that the costs incurred by a person experiencing chronic homelessness can be cut in half (from an average of \$35,500 per year) when they are provided with permanent supportive housing. However, it is worth noting that the cost of homelessness declines when someone experiencing homelessness is housed, whether someone has experienced multiple episodes of homelessness or not.

The more important benefit to housing chronically homeless persons using a Housing First<sup>45</sup> approach, however, may be in achieving an improved quality of life rather than basing the value of this approach solely from a public cost savings perspective. This may have the unintended effect of implicitly devaluing the lives of people experiencing homelessness.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>42</sup> HUD updated the definition of chronic homelessness in 2015.

<sup>43</sup><http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/supportive-housing-is-cost-effective> and <http://www.upenn.edu/pennnews/news/housing-homeless-mentally-ill-pays-itself-according-university-pennsylvania>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.unitedwayoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/united-way-cost-study-homelessness-2017-report.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> Housing First, a successful and well-documented national best practice, focuses on placing residents experiencing homelessness in housing first and receiving wrap-around social services to maintain housing stability rather than requiring behavioral health changes to be eligible for housing assistance.

<sup>46</sup> Stefan G. Kertesz, M.D., Travis P. Baggett, M.D., M.P.H., James J. O'Connell, M.D., David S. Buck, M.D., M.P.H., and Margot B. Kushel, M.D., "Permanent Supportive Housing for Homeless People – Reframing the Debate", New England Journal of Medicine 2016; 375:2115-2117 December 1, 2016 DOI: 10.1056/NEJMmp1608326. Accessed April 14, 2017 at <http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMmp1608326#t=article>

## **Single Adults Experiencing Chronic Homelessness**

Nineteen percent of the region's population of people experiencing homelessness were single adults who met the chronic homelessness definition. This percentage is a decrease from 23 percent that was recorded in 2022.

However, among all single adults experiencing homelessness, the incidence of experiencing chronic homelessness is nearly 10 percent higher than among all persons experiencing homelessness (29 percent of single adults in contrast to 19 percent of all persons experiencing homelessness on the night of the enumeration).

Six of nine jurisdictions experienced a decrease in their chronic homelessness count since 2022 (unchanged from 2022) and four of nine noted reductions between 2019 and 2023. Fairfax County had the greatest reduction in the numbers of people counted as chronically homeless (25 fewer persons) from 2022 to 2023. Montgomery County, Prince George's County and the City of Alexandria recorded similar decreases from the previous year's enumeration (noting 22, 21, and 18 fewer chronically homeless persons respectively.) The District of Columbia had the greatest reduction during the longer period of 2019 to 2023 (60 fewer individuals).

The City of Alexandria and Arlington County had the greatest rate of reduction (87 percent and 76 percent respectively) in the numbers of people counted as chronically homeless between 2019 and 2023. The City of Alexandria counted 33 fewer chronically homeless persons and the Arlington County recorded 56 fewer individuals who were chronically homeless between these two enumerations.

The region's CoCs attribute the decrease in the number of residents counted as chronically homeless from 2022 to 2023 to a variety of related factors. In some jurisdictions, prioritization of mainstream Housing Choice Vouchers for persons experiencing homelessness may have led to increased numbers of persons moving to permanent housing on one day in January. In some jurisdictions, such as the City of Alexandria, Emergency Housing Vouchers were targeted to persons experiencing chronic homelessness. These additional housing resources may have had a positive impact on the number of people considered chronically homeless on the day of the annual enumeration.

An ongoing contributing challenge to making additional progress ending chronic homelessness is the lack of affordable and available housing options, particularly permanent supportive housing, to enable more residents to exit homelessness and remain stably housed. This situation has been true for many years, and the situation has grown more severe since the onset of the pandemic. The end of eviction moratoriums and other tenant protections that were put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19 may slow the region's progress in ending chronic homelessness in the future.

Overall, the region has worked tirelessly to decrease the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness. The regional four percent decrease is encouraging, but the CoCs in metropolitan Washington still face significant challenges finding permanent housing in a high-cost housing market for residents who may be among the most vulnerable due to having a disabling condition and experiencing the trauma of multiple episodes of homelessness.

An important region-wide strategy for ending chronic homelessness is the use of a coordinated entry system and a by-name list to prioritize housing for the most vulnerable residents. Several of the

region's CoCs also attribute success in reducing the number of persons experiencing chronic homelessness during the longer period between 2019 and 2023 to participation in several successive nationwide campaigns, such as Community Solution's Built for Zero.<sup>47</sup> Montgomery County, Fairfax County, Arlington County, and the District of Columbia participate in the Built for Zero effort. Montgomery County created its own campaign, called Inside/Not Outside in its efforts to end the experience of chronic homelessness in the county.<sup>48</sup>

**TABLE 10: Single Adults Experiencing Chronic Homelessness by Jurisdiction, 2019 - 2023**

Jurisdiction	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change 2019 - 2023
City of Alexandria	38	15	21	18	5	<b>-87%</b>
Arlington County	74	20	34	39	18	<b>-76%</b>
District of Columbia	1,374	1,337	1,618	1,257	1,314	<b>-4%</b>
Fairfax County	213	174	318	273	248	<b>16%</b>
Frederick County	37	183	N/A	53	47	<b>27%</b>
Loudoun County	37	21	23	22	27	<b>-27%</b>
Montgomery County	11	10	51	40	22	<b>100%</b>
Prince George's County	12	15	34	46	24	<b>100%</b>
Prince William County	19	53	49	31	33	<b>74%</b>
<b>All COG CoCs</b>	<b>1,815</b>	<b>1,828</b>	<b>2,148</b>	<b>1,779</b>	<b>1,738</b>	<b>-4%</b>

Source: COG

Table 11 (following page) provides the sheltered status breakdown of the single adults experiencing chronic homelessness counted as part of the 2023 Point-In-Time Enumeration. Most residents suffer from severe physical health and mental health-related impediments. Health impediments may include physical disabilities and substance use disorders. The problem is more acute when individuals suffer from multiple challenges. To provide appropriate services for a person experiencing chronic homelessness, jurisdictions and service providers must ensure that individuals receive adequate screenings and are accurately and timely diagnosed. Additionally, in many cases, people need medical assistance and/or other regimented methods of care and counseling. People may not immediately respond to the care they receive, or their care may be required for the remainder of their lives. In such instances, proper case management services are essential.

<sup>47</sup><https://www.community.solutions/what-we-do/built-for-zero>

<sup>48</sup><https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/homelessness/InsideNotOutside.html>

**TABLE 11: 2023 Shelter Status Of Single Adults Experiencing Chronic Homelessness**

Jurisdiction	Total Single Adults	Number of Sheltered* Single Adults	Number of Unsheltered Single Adults	Percentage of Single Adults Who Are Unsheltered
City of Alexandria	5	5	0	0%
Arlington County	18	6	12	67%
District of Columbia	1,314	765	549	42%
Fairfax County	248	182	66	27%
Frederick County	47	29	18	38%
Loudoun County	27	15	12	44%
Montgomery County	22	21	1	5%
Prince George's County	24	12	12	50%
Prince William County	33	17	16	48%
All COG CoCs	<b>1,738</b>	<b>1,052</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>39%</b>

Source: COG

\*Refers to persons experiencing chronically homeless residing in Emergency, Winter Shelters, and Safe Havens and excludes Transitional Housing.

## Families Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

Most families experiencing chronic homelessness across the region reside in emergency and/or winter shelters. There were 27 families experiencing chronic homelessness (or 87 total persons in families) counted in the region in 2023, a decrease in the number of households from the 47 families counted in 2022, and a decrease in the total number overall.



In 2023, three CoCs (Arlington County, Montgomery County, and Prince William County) did not count any families experiencing chronic homelessness. Two families with a total of four children were unsheltered on January 25, 2023.

New Beginnings, a new short-term family shelter facility, has helped contribute to a reduced length of time homeless for families experiencing homelessness in the District of Columbia. (Photo credit: District of Columbia Department of Human Services)

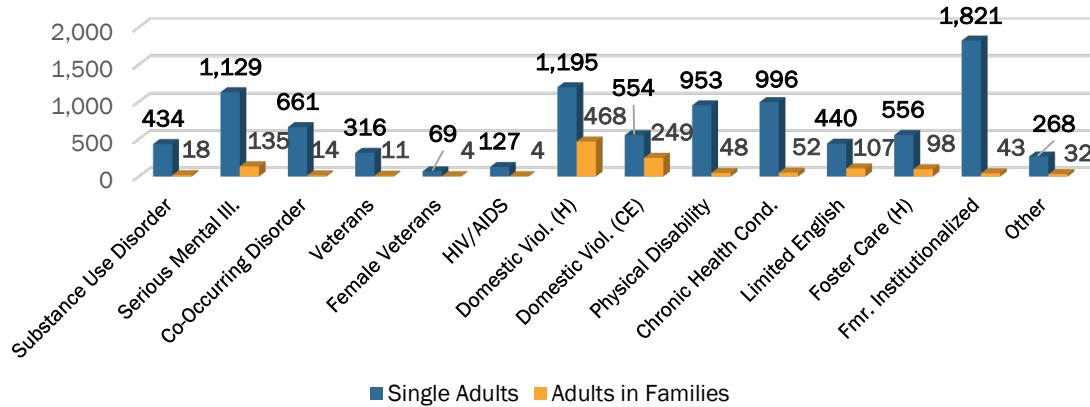
## VULNERABILITIES AND LIFE EXPERIENCES

According to the 2023 enumeration, a number of the region's residents experiencing homelessness live with chronic health conditions, physical disabilities, substance use disorders, severe mental illness, or were formerly institutionalized and discharged directly into homelessness. The high incidence of substance use disorders, severe mental illness, or co-occurring disorders among persons experiencing homelessness is similar among all CoCs in the region. Nationally, an estimated 20 to 25 percent of people experiencing homelessness live with some form of severe mental illness<sup>49</sup>, compared to only six percent who live with serious mental illness in the general population.<sup>50</sup>

While these conditions may contribute to housing instability, the experience of homelessness itself can be the cause of or exacerbate poor mental health—the stress of being without housing can contribute to anxiety, depression, sleeplessness, or lead to substance use.<sup>51</sup> Media coverage can conflate these issues and contribute to an inaccurate picture of homelessness as an intractable problem or that is something caused by individual shortcomings.<sup>52</sup> Failings of multiple systems of care, including systemic racism as a root cause, result in the number of people who experience homelessness in metropolitan Washington.

**Figure 15: Life Experiences and Vulnerabilities of Adults Experiencing Homelessness**

Source: COG 2023



Note: These subgroups are not mutually exclusive. It is possible for adults experiencing homelessness to be counted in more than one subgroup.

In 2023, the most prevalent characteristic reported among Households without Children was having a history of institutionalization, followed by serious mental illness. The next most reported characteristic for single adults experiencing homelessness is having a history of domestic violence

<sup>49</sup> [http://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/fixing-the-system/features-and-news/3965-research-weekly-homelessness-increases-among-individuals-with-serious-mental-illness-](http://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/fixing-the-system/features-and-news/3965-research-weekly-homelessness-increases-among-individuals-with-serious-mental-illness)

<sup>50</sup> Psychology Today. "The Complex Link between Homelessness and Mental Health." May 21, 2021. Accessed April 16, 2022.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/mind-matters-menninger/202105/the-complex-link-between-homelessness-and-mental-health> and [http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/facts/Mental\\_Illness.pdf](http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/facts/Mental_Illness.pdf)

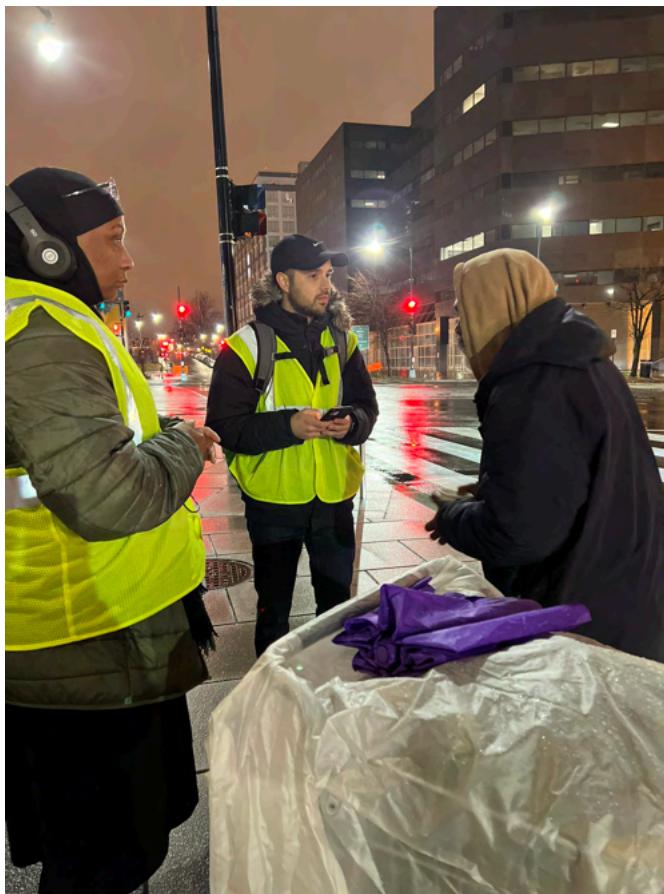
<sup>51</sup> <http://homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/topics/mental-health>

<sup>52</sup> Center for American Progress. "Lack of Housing and Mental Health Disabilities Exacerbate One Another." November 20, 2018, Accessed April 16, 2021 at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/poverty/news/2018/11/20/461294/lack-housing-mental-health-disabilities-exacerbate-one-another/>

and living with a chronic health condition. Other past experiences people reported in the survey included having a physical disability, followed by a co-occurring disorder (or having both a mental health and substance use disorder).

Among families, the most defining characteristic is an incidence of domestic violence, either as a contributing factor to the current episode of homelessness on the night of the enumeration or having a history of domestic violence. Forty percent of the adults in families who responded in the subpopulation categories indicated having experienced domestic violence in the past, and 21 percent reported their current episode of homelessness was related to domestic violence. This represents a decrease from the 23 percent recorded in 2022 for the number of adults in families whose current episode of homelessness was caused by domestic violence.

Beginning with the 2013 enumeration, HUD requested data on persons who had a *history* of domestic violence. To maintain base data for trend comparison, both elements are collected and are shown in Figure 15 (previous page). Regionally, the number of single adults reporting their experience of homelessness was a result of a current episode of domestic violence (DV-CE) increased in 2023 from 381 to 554 persons. However, the number of single adults (1,195) who were identified as having a history of domestic violence at any time (DV-H) is higher (20 percent) than the number of single adults whose current episode of homelessness was caused by domestic violence (nine percent).



Two volunteers interview a person experiencing unsheltered homelessness on January 25, 2023 in the District of Columbia.

# VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS



Photo credit: Maryland GovPics /Flickr

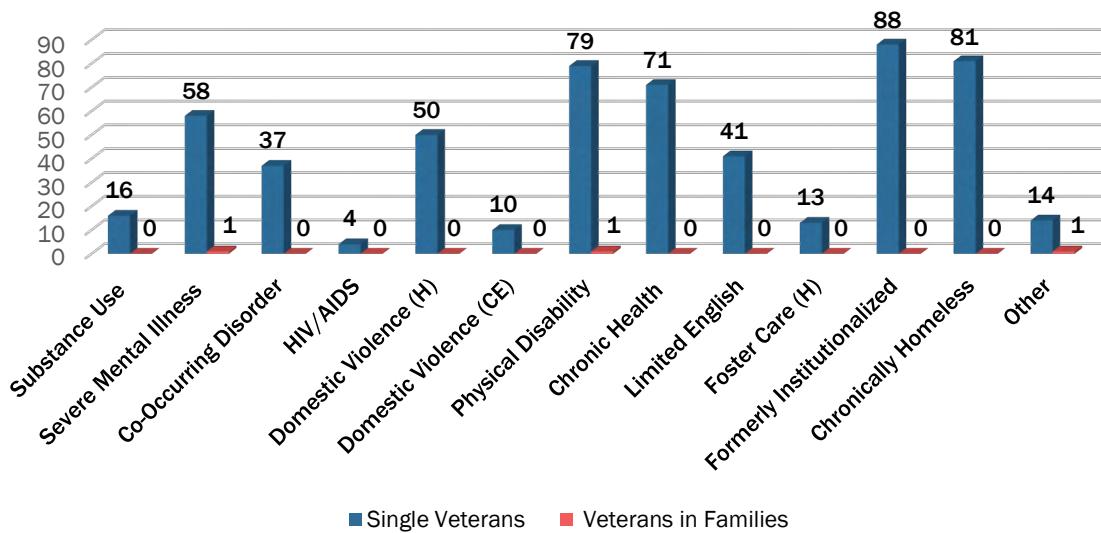
Veterans are another subset of people experiencing homelessness tracked by HUD and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This is the tenth year that the region's CoCs collected separate data on single adult veterans as well as veterans in families to better understand and address their unique experiences of homelessness.

Nationally, as of 2022, veterans represent six percent of the total number of persons experiencing homelessness.<sup>53</sup> In contrast, in the metropolitan Washington region, four percent of persons experiencing homelessness were veterans as of the PIT count in 2023. Of the total self-reported veterans experiencing homelessness in the

2023 enumeration, 73 of 327 total veterans identified as female (22 percent of all veterans experiencing homelessness or one percent of all people counted as literally homeless). One of the veterans experiencing homelessness identified as transgender. Figure 16 graphically represents some experiences and challenges these veterans face; veterans are broken out separately as

**Figure 16: The Region's Veterans' Life Experiences**

Source: COG



Note: These subgroups are not mutually exclusive. It is possible for veterans experiencing homelessness to be counted in more than one subgroup.

<sup>53</sup> As of the 2022 Point-in-Time Count. See <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3031/pit-and-hic-data-since-2007/>

individuals in Households without Children as well as Households with Adults and Children. Veterans, like other persons experiencing homelessness, have a high incidence of former institutionalization, living with severe mental illness, and a physical disability, as shown in Figure 16. However, veterans in Households without Children reported higher incidences of living with a physical disability and suffering from chronic homelessness.

For those single veterans who reported having income in 2023, nearly a third (27 percent) reported that employment was the primary source of income. The likelihood of having a disability is reflected in the veteran populations' source of income; 47 percent of veterans with income noted SSVI/SSI/VA disability and retirement as their primary source of income, as shown in Figure 17.

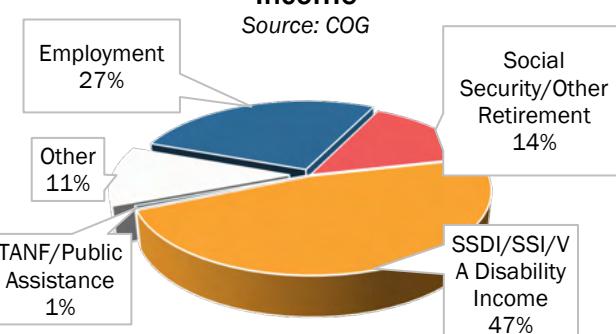
Most homeless veterans who reported their race selected Black or African American (68 percent of single adults and 100 percent of adults in families). It is important to note that the total numbers of adult veterans in families is small (seven persons) compared to the total number of single veterans (315) who reported their racial identity.

All veterans in families indicated that they identify racially as Black or African American, so a graphic representation is not included here.

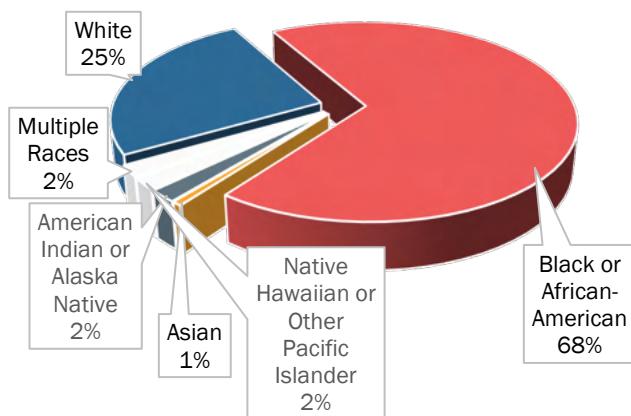
White veterans in Households without Children made up the next largest racial identity shared, with 25 percent. This remains essentially unchanged since 2018. See Figure 18 for self-reported racial identities for single veterans.

HUD and the VA, through the VA's Supportive Housing program (VASH), have focused efforts to increase the supply of Housing Choice Vouchers to put more

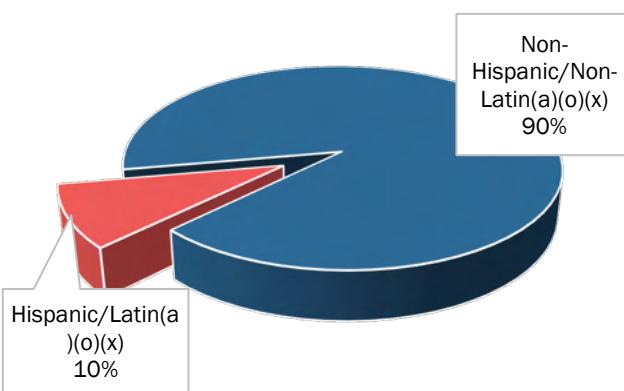
**Figure 17: Veteran Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness: Source of Income**



**Figure 18: Single Adult Veterans Experiencing Homelessness (Race)**



**Figure 19: Single Adult Veterans Experiencing Homelessness (Ethnicity)**



veterans experiencing homelessness into permanent housing.

Key strategies used throughout the region in reducing the number of veterans experiencing homelessness include strong eviction prevention services, diversion services, street outreach and implementation of a Housing First approach.

Housing First, a successful and well-documented national best practice, focuses on placing residents experiencing homelessness in housing first and receiving wrap-around social services to maintain housing stability rather than requiring behavioral health changes to be eligible for housing assistance.

Unlike in 2022, none of the nine CoC reported a reduction in the number of veterans experiencing homelessness from 2022 to 2023. Four CoCs reported no change from the previous year's enumeration (Arlington County, Frederick County, Prince George's County and Prince William County.)

However, the longer-term trend as shown in Table 12 demonstrates that during the period of 2019 to 2023, five CoCs reduced their incidence of veterans experiencing homelessness and the region reduced the number of veterans experiencing homelessness by 21 percent.

Jurisdiction	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change in Persons 2019 - 2023	Percent Change 2019 - 2023
City of Alexandria	7	9	3	2	5	-2	-29%
Arlington County	10	3	4	6	6	-4	-40%
District of Columbia	297	302	187	208	218	-79	-27%
Fairfax County	42	33	48	32	34	-8	-19%
Frederick County	4	6	N/A	8	8	4	100%
Loudoun County	4	7	4	2	14	10	250%
Montgomery County	13	14	19	15	23	10	77%
Prince George's County	28	28	19	8	8	-20	-71%
Prince William County	10	16	12	11	11	1	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>-88</b>	<b>-21%</b>

Source: COG

Coordinated regional efforts from the local to state and federal level at the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Veterans Affairs (VA) have had a positive impact on reducing the number of veterans experiencing homelessness in our region since 2019. Key elements of this success include the increased availability of permanent housing resources (such as SSVF and VASH vouchers), tied to the use of coordinated entry to ensure that available resources are used efficiently.

The CoCs in the metropolitan Washington region will continue to implement proven strategies to end the experience of homelessness for those who have served in the armed forces by assisting veterans in accessing permanent housing.

## TRANSITION AGE YOUTH

In response to growing concerns about young adults experiencing homelessness, beginning in 2015, as required by HUD, the region's CoCs began collecting demographic information on Transition Age Youth (TAY). Transition Age Youth are between the ages of 18 and 24 and face several unique challenges on their path to a successful adulthood, including finding employment with health benefits, as they may have become ineligible for Medicaid or SCHIP (State Children's Health Insurance Program). Youth who may be "aging out" of foster care (reaching age 18 without returning to their birth families or being adopted) or leaving juvenile detention facilities face significant challenges in finding affordable housing and employment as well.<sup>54</sup>

In 2023, the region counted 758 persons who were between the ages of 18 and 24 experiencing homelessness. This represents nine percent of the total number of people counted as literally homeless on the night of January 25, 2023. Transition Aged Youth in Households without Children represent 10 percent of all single adults experiencing homelessness and 15 percent of adults in families. Since 2019, persons in this age range were more likely to be single adults than adults in families; 76 percent of all adults in TAY households were single young adults in 2023. Like other families experiencing homelessness, 60 percent of persons in TAY family households were children.

**TABLE 13: Transition Age Youth (TAY) Experiencing Homelessness by Jurisdiction: 2023**

Jurisdiction	Single Adults (TAY)	Adults in Families (TAY)	Total
City of Alexandria	2	1	3
Arlington County	7	3	10
District of Columbia	362	119	481
Fairfax County	47	26	73
Frederick County	11	4	15
Loudoun County	16	0	16
Montgomery County	33	8	41
Prince George's County	85	14	99
Prince William County	15	5	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>758</b>

Source: COG

The longer-term trend between 2019 and 2023, as shown on the following page in Table 14, indicates that the number of single TAYs experiencing homelessness has increased by 46 percent between the PIT counts of 2019 and 2023. Some CoCs attribute this in part to continuing to increase capacity and programming to support people experiencing homelessness in this stage of their lives.

Single TAYs have one characteristic that distinguishes them from other single adults experiencing homelessness: they are more likely to have a history of foster care involvement (see Figure 20). Like

<sup>54</sup> <http://youth.gov/youth-topics/transition-age-youth>

their peer adults, they were also likely to have experienced institutionalization and have a history of experiencing domestic violence.

**TABLE 14: Single Transition Age Youth (TAY) Experiencing Homelessness by Jurisdiction: 2019-2023**

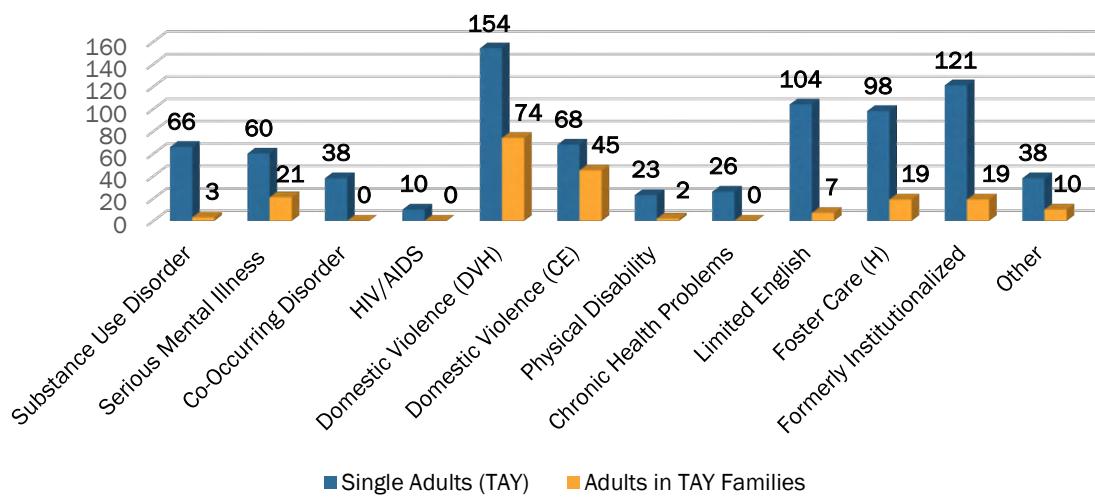
Jurisdiction	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change in Persons 2019-2023	Percent Change 2019 - 2023
City of Alexandria	5	2	1	1	2	-3	-60%
Arlington County	6	5	6	4	7	1	17%
District of Columbia	258	243	325	351	362	104	40%
Fairfax County	48	47	50	41	47	-1	-2%
Frederick County	19	12	4	12	11	-8	-42%
Loudoun County	18	20	9	3	16	-2	-11%
Montgomery County	20	31	20	19	33	13	65%
Prince George's County	18	22	26	47	85	67	372%
Prince William County	5	11	12	6	15	10	200%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>46%</b>

Source: COG

Adults in TAY families experiencing homelessness were more likely to report having experienced a past incident of domestic violence, followed by an incidence of domestic violence which led to their current experience of homelessness on the night of the count. This is shown below in Figure 20.

**Figure 20: Transition Age Youth Life Experiences and Vulnerabilities**

Source: COG 2023

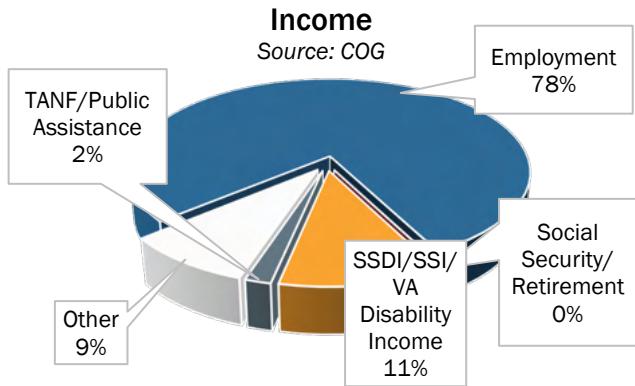


Note: These categories are not mutually exclusive; it is possible for TAYs to be counted in more than one category.

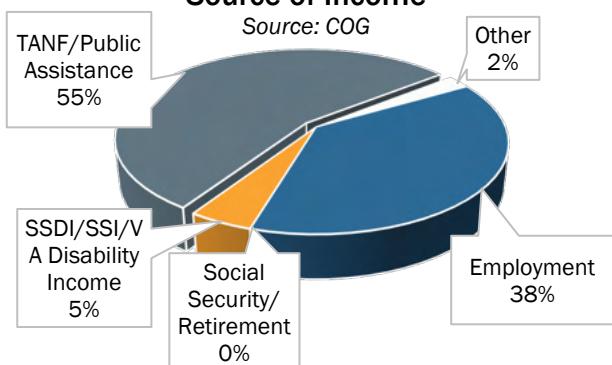
Transition Age Youth, or young adults in Households without Children who report having income were most likely (78 percent) to report their primary source of income was from employment. This is an

increase from the 2022 enumeration of 47 percent. Adult TAYs in families who responded to these questions reported their primary source of income was from public assistance (54 percent). For another 39 percent of adults in TAY families, the primary source of income was employment, and five percent of adults in TAY families' primary form of income was from SSI/SSDI. The next largest category of income for single adult TAYs was from disability income (11 percent), followed by public assistance. See Figures 21 and 22 below.

**Figure 21: Homeless Young Single Adult/Transition Age Youth Source of Income**

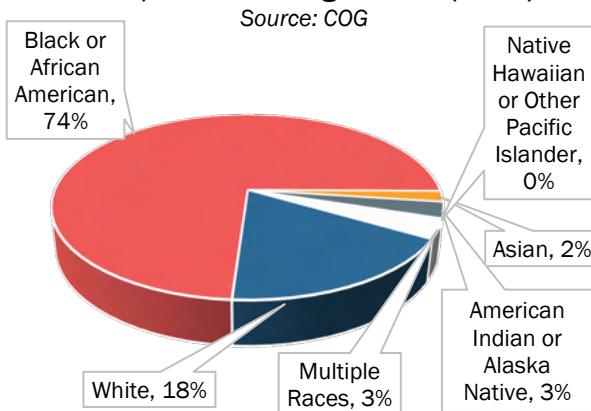


**Figure 22: Homeless Young Adults in Families/Transition Age Youth Source of Income**

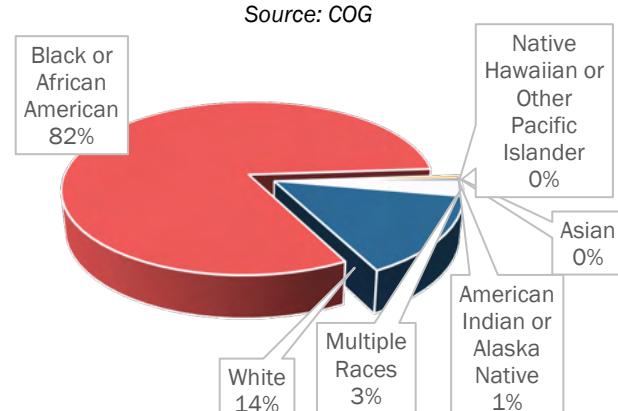


Reflecting the same characteristics as the larger population experiencing homelessness, most single TAY adults who reported their race identified as Black or African American (74 percent) as well as adults in TAY families (82 percent). Transition Age Youth identifying as White made up the next largest group, with 18 percent of single adult TAYs and 14 percent of adult TAYs in families. These percentages represent a slight decrease in the numbers of TAYs who identify as Black or African American (from 76 percent of single adult TAYs and 84 percent adult TAYs in families) and a slight increase in those who identify as White (from 17 percent of single TAYs and 12 percent of adult TAYs in families) in 2022.

**Figure 23: Single Young Adult/Transition Age Youth (Race)**



**Figure 24: Young Adult/Transition Age Youth in Families (Race)**



# SHELTER FACILITIES AND PERMANENT HOUSING SOLUTIONS

The metropolitan Washington region's multi-faceted CoC model focuses heavily on providing permanent housing solutions while continuing to provide emergency shelter for those facing an immediate housing crisis. The model for assisting persons experiencing homelessness has evolved due to the recognition that it is difficult to adequately address the systemic and individual problems that many people without permanent housing experience solely with the emergency shelter-based model. Emergency shelter alone cannot provide the intensive longer-term assistance people experiencing homelessness may need to sustain permanent housing. Housing models such as transitional, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing programs can provide this assistance, based on each individual's needs and circumstances.

Table 15 provides the region's 2023 distribution of emergency, seasonal and overflow, transitional, safe haven, rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing and other permanent housing beds for individuals, unaccompanied minors, and families experiencing homelessness. These facilities were available in the winter months during the enumeration and during the year's warmer months from April to October.

It's important to note that the availability of beds for persons experiencing literal homelessness are also affected by weather conditions; during a hypothermia alert, the number of seasonal beds (shown in Table 15) increases to meet the demand for those beds.

During the 2021 and 2022 enumerations, shelter capacity in all the region's CoCs had to adjust to meet public health guidelines from the CDC (Centers for Disease Control). Congregate shelters were forced to reduce bed capacity to maintain proper distancing and use existing rooms for isolation and quarantine purposes. CoCs used hotel rooms, and other public facilities (such as closed recreation centers), to accommodate the need for alternative shelter spaces and to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Capacity had to be modified not only to adjust spatial requirements, but also operationally to include staggered mealtimes, daily screening protocols, and COVID testing. During the 2023 enumeration, while some non-congregate shelter programs remained in place, most CoCs have returned to pre-pandemic level shelter capacity and operations. In some CoCs, such as Montgomery County, shelter capacity has continued to increase to meet the growing need. Between 2019 and 2023, the region added 8,013 permanent supportive housing beds to its year-round facility inventory. This represents a significant 72 percent increase since 2019.

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The metropolitan Washington region achieved a significant 72 percent increase in permanent supportive housing beds between the PIT counts of 2019 and 2023.

Permanent supportive housing beds in 2023 comprise 43 percent of the region's inventory serving households experiencing or formerly experiencing homelessness. This remains unchanged from 2022.

The region reflected 3,446 more rapid re-housing beds in use on the night of the 2023 PIT than in 2019, bringing the total inventory of permanent supportive housing and rapid re-housing beds to 29,952. Rapid re-housing capacity, as reflected in the PIT count, is counted by utilization which may

ebb and flow over time, while permanent supportive housing stock includes designated beds or units. A better representation of rapid re-housing bed utilization would review the number of people served during a year.

Beds categorized as “other permanent housing” also represent another source of permanent housing. The region’s increased supply of permanent housing is consistent with the national initiative to use a Housing First<sup>55</sup> model. Persons in rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing, or other permanent housing are no longer considered to be experiencing homelessness; they are counted as “formerly homeless” persons.

Other permanent housing was included in Table 15 for the first time in 2017. Other permanent housing is housing that is specifically targeted for persons experiencing homelessness. Examples of other permanent housing in the metropolitan Washington region includes non-profit agency partners purchasing housing units and designating them for persons who are formerly homeless and using project-based Housing Choice Vouchers to provide a longer-term rental subsidy. The data on other permanent housing are also reported to HUD and reflect a more complete picture of the number of formerly homeless beds available in the metropolitan Washington region. Including other permanent housing in the bed count shows an additional 729 beds since 2019 that would otherwise not be counted.

The region recorded 6,133 emergency, seasonal and overflow beds in 2023, representing a decrease increase of 451 beds since 2022 and a decrease of 1,727 beds since 2019. The reduction in emergency, seasonal, and overflow beds may be the result of several factors, such as weather conditions on the night of the count and the loss of some facilities for emergency shelter (such as churches) since the pandemic began.

The region continued to lose transitional beds from 2019 through 2023. The trend began prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, the region provided 467 fewer beds, or a 20 percent decrease. This decrease is consistent with reductions noted last year between 2018 and 2022.

The reduction in transitional housing beds is due to several factors. One main factor is resource reallocation to focus on prevention and permanent supportive housing. As funding to support transitional housing declines, primarily due to changed policy and practice at HUD, the region’s jurisdictions are faced with the need to eliminate beds as a result. In several jurisdictions, some transitional housing units have been converted to better meet the identified individual CoC needs, such as providing more rapid re-housing or permanent supportive housing. Overall, the reduction in transitional housing beds reflects a change in approach that emphasizes permanent housing solutions, as transitional housing programs are inconsistent with a Housing First approach.

Transitional housing beds comprised four percent of the region’s literally homeless beds in winter in 2023, a proportion that is unchanged since 2022. The distribution of emergency, seasonal and overflow shelter beds comprised 14 percent in 2023, a decrease of one percent from the previous year. The region currently has a total of 44,267 beds for its residents currently or formerly experiencing homelessness across each of the facility categories; this number has increased by 9,956 beds compared to 2019. Table 15 (shown below in two parts) represents this regional resource for persons who were literally or formerly experiencing homeless on January 25, 2023.

<sup>55</sup> Housing First is an approach to solving homelessness that emphasizes providing housing first and making use of clinical services optional. This strategy has proven successful in stabilizing persons experiencing homelessness, lowering returns to homelessness, and reducing the use of crisis services. For more information: [http://usich.gov/usich\\_resources/fact\\_sheets/the\\_housing\\_first\\_checklist\\_a\\_practical\\_tool\\_for\\_assessing\\_housing\\_first\\_in\\_and](http://usich.gov/usich_resources/fact_sheets/the_housing_first_checklist_a_practical_tool_for_assessing_housing_first_in_and) <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/what-is-housing-first>

**TABLE 15: 2019 - 2023 Winter and Year-Round Inventory of Beds in Metropolitan Washington**

	Beds for Singles	Beds for Unaccompanied Youth	Beds for Persons in Families	All Beds: Winter	Percent Distribution in Winter	All Beds: Warm Months	Percent Distribution in Warm Months
<b><i>Beds for Literally Homeless</i></b>							
<b>Emergency, Seasonal &amp; Overflow Beds</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>3,969</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2,246</b>	<b>6,236</b>	<b>76%</b>	
	2022	4,398	0	2,186	6,584	76%	
	2021	5,266	16	2,618	7,900	78%	
	2020	4,230	24	3,368	7,622	78%	
	2019	4,561	21	3,278	7,860	76%	
<b>Transitional Housing Beds</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>1,079</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>1,907</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>1,907</b>
	2022	1,162	0	882	2,044	24%	2,044
	2021	1,133	0	1,030	2,163	21%	2,163
	2020	1,116	0	982	2,098	22%	2,098
	2019	1,092	0	1,207	2,374	23%	2,374
<b>Safe Haven</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>24</b>
	2022	32	0	n/a	32	0%	32
	2021	25	0	n/a	25	0%	25
	2020	34	0	n/a	34	0%	34
	2019	46	0	n/a	62	1%	62
<b>Subtotal: Beds for Literally Homeless</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>5,072</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>3,066</b>	<b>8,167</b>		<b>8,167</b>
	2022	5,592	0	3,068	8,660		8,660
	2021	6,424	16	3,648	10,088		10,088
	2020	5,380	24	4,350	9,754		9,754
	2019	5,613	36	5,176	10,296		10,296
<b>Percent Change Since 2019</b>		-10%	-19%	-41%	-21%		-21%

Source: COG

Between 2019 and 2023, the metropolitan Washington region's supply of permanent housing beds increased by a significant 51 percent or 12,188 beds. This in part reflects the addition of other permanent housing to the inventory count; however, it also reflects the priority the region's CoCs continues to place on increasing resources for permanent housing solutions. The region currently has 36,203 permanent housing beds, representing 82 percent of the region's total bed inventory. This is reflected in the second portion of Table 15 below.

TABLE 15: 2019 - 2023 Winter and Year-Round Inventory of Beds in Metropolitan Washington (Continued)

		Permanent Housing Beds for Formerly Homeless Persons						
		Beds for Singles	Beds for Unaccompanied Youth	Beds for Persons in Families	All Beds: Winter	Percent Distribution in Winter	All Beds: Warm Months	Percent Distribution in Warm Months
Permanent Supportive Housing Beds	2023	10,373	0	8,736	19,109	53%	19,109	53%
	2022	10,126	0	9,102	19,228	54%	19,228	54%
	2021	8,530	0	10,424	18,954	63%	18,954	63%
	2020	6,857	0	7,076	13,933	58%	13,933	58%
	2019	5,550	0	5,547	11,097	46%	11,097	46%
Rapid Re-Housing & RRH Demonstration Beds	2023	1,235	0	9,591	10,826	30%	10,826	30%
	2022	1,185	0	8,153	9,338	26%	9,338	26%
	2021	657	0	8,810	9,467	31%	9,467	31%
	2020	746	0	6,847	7,593	32%	7,593	32%
	2019	589	0	6,807	7,396	31%	7,396	31%
Other Permanent Housing	2023	1,292	0	4,959	6,251	17%	6,251	17%
	2022	1,880	0	5,409	7,289	20%	7,289	20%
	2021	774	0	897	1,671	6%	1,671	6%
	2020	1,274	0	4,982	6,256	26%	6,256	26%
	2019	1,885	0	3,637	5,522	23%	5,522	23%
Subtotal: Beds for Formerly Homeless	2023	12,900	0	23,286	36,186		36,186	
	2022	13,191	0	22,664	35,855		35,855	
	2021	9,961	0	20,131	30,092		30,092	
	2020	8,024	0	15,991	24,015		24,015	
	2019	8,024	0	15,991	24,015		24,015	
TOTAL - All beds (literally and formerly homeless)	2023	17,972	29	26,352	44,353		44,353	
	2022	18,783	0	25,732	44,515		44,515	
	2021	16,385	16	23,779	40,180		40,180	
	2020	13,711	21	20,476	31,280		33,769	
	2019	13,711	21	20,476	34,311		34,311	
Percent Change Since 2019		31%	38%	29%	29%		29%	

Source: COG

According to Figure 25 (following page), 14 percent of the region's distribution of beds is for emergency, seasonal and overflow shelter. In 2014, the region added the number of rapid re-housing beds to the inventory it tracks. Rapid-rehousing beds accounted for 25 percent of the region's inventory during the 2023 enumeration. Transitional housing comprises four percent of the region's bed inventory, which remains unchanged since 2022. Safe haven beds were less than one percent of the regional inventory in the 2023 PIT count.

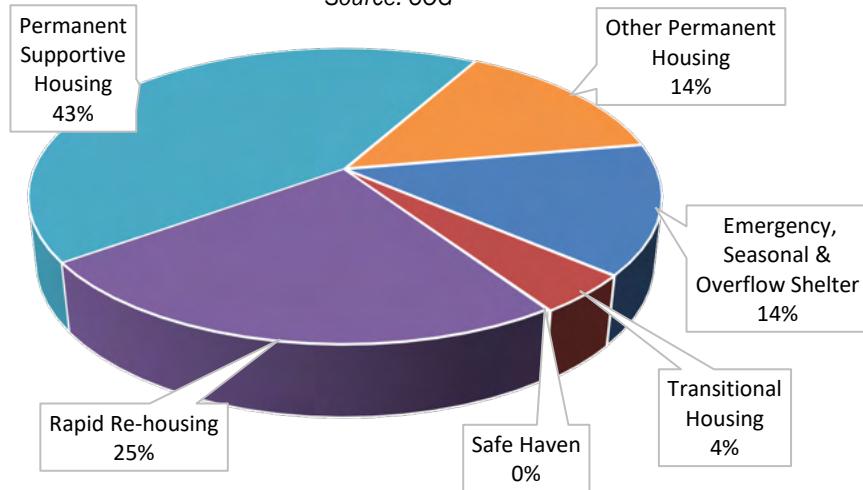
In addition to the resources represented in Table 15, the region also has a limited supply of medical beds to provide short-term recuperative care for people who are too ill or vulnerable to use emergency shelter services, but who are not sick enough to be admitted to a hospital. These facilities provide an important short-term safety net solution for persons with significant medical needs. Some hospital systems, such as Bon Secours, recognize housing as an important social determinant of health and have partnered with housing providers to create additional permanent housing for persons experiencing homelessness.

The District of Columbia's 15,441 permanent supportive housing beds for single adults and families represent 81 percent of the region's total number of permanent supportive housing beds.

Montgomery County has 11 percent of the region's permanent supportive housing beds at 2,113 beds, and Fairfax County, the next largest system, had five percent or 986 permanent supportive housing beds in the region on the night of the 2023 enumeration.

**Figure 25: Regional Distribution of Beds by Facility Type**

Source: COG



## FROM HOMELESSNESS TO PERMANENT HOUSING



Homeless service providers and government housing officials are often asked, “How many people who previously experienced homelessness are now in housing?” The question was harder to answer when governments followed the emergency shelter model of the 1980s. Under this model, people experiencing chronic homelessness comprised most of the shelter population and were less likely to access permanent housing. This happened because people who were referred on to permanent housing had to demonstrate “readiness” for housing evidenced by completing treatment,

maintaining sobriety, or otherwise successfully “graduating” from temporary housing like shelter or transitional housing.

Housing First is an alternative to this “housing readiness” model which is founded on the belief that all people, regardless of their experiences or needs, deserve housing. Another core principle of the Housing First model is that the most vulnerable person experiencing homelessness is more responsive to interventions and social services support after they are in their own housing, rather than while living in temporary or transitional housing facilities. Under a Housing First model, people can gain the stability necessary to better manage the challenges in their lives.

The CoCs in metropolitan Washington have adopted a Housing First approach as a systems model to respond to homelessness. This includes programs that are low-barrier, person-centered, housing-focused, and are not just geared towards those who may experience chronic homelessness or live with a disabling condition.

The ultimate goal of the metropolitan Washington region’s homeless CoCs is to assist people in accessing permanent housing in communities where they can thrive. Permanent supportive housing is one solution that engages people who formerly experienced homelessness to build trust and rapport to identify what wrap-around services will best assist them in their efforts to live as independently as possible. These services may include substance use counseling, life skills training, health care, mental health services, and job training. Many of these crucial supportive services and housing subsidies are provided by the region’s CoCs, comprised of local governments, nonprofits, and other human services agencies.

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**The CoCs in metropolitan Washington use an approach that is low-barrier, person-centered, and housing-focused to end the experience of homelessness.**

Table 15 (previous section) provides information on the region’s residents who previously experienced homelessness living in different categories of permanent housing. Other permanent housing solutions, such as rapid rehousing, may meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness who do not need the level of support that permanent supportive housing provides.

**TABLE 16: Persons Formerly Experiencing Homelessness In Permanent Housing**

		Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	Rapid Re- Housing (RRH)	Rapid Re- Housing (RRH)	Other Permanent Housing (OPH)	Other Permanent Housing (OPH)	Total Permanently Housed
		Persons in Households Without Children	Persons in Households with Adults and Children	Persons in Households Without Children	Persons in Households with Adults and Children	Persons in Households Without Children	Persons in Households With Adults and Children	
ALL COG CoCs	2023	6,888	6,197	1,238	9,569	1,282	3,843	29,017
	2022	6,740	4,631	962	7,917	1,056	3,064	24,370
	2021	7,330	6,730	657	8,812	682	817	25,028
	2020	5,615	5,810	565	6,741	912	2,651	22,294
	2019	5,395	5,461	502	6,647	1,645	3,522	23,172
	Percent Change Since 2019	28%	13%	147%	44%	-22%	9%	25%

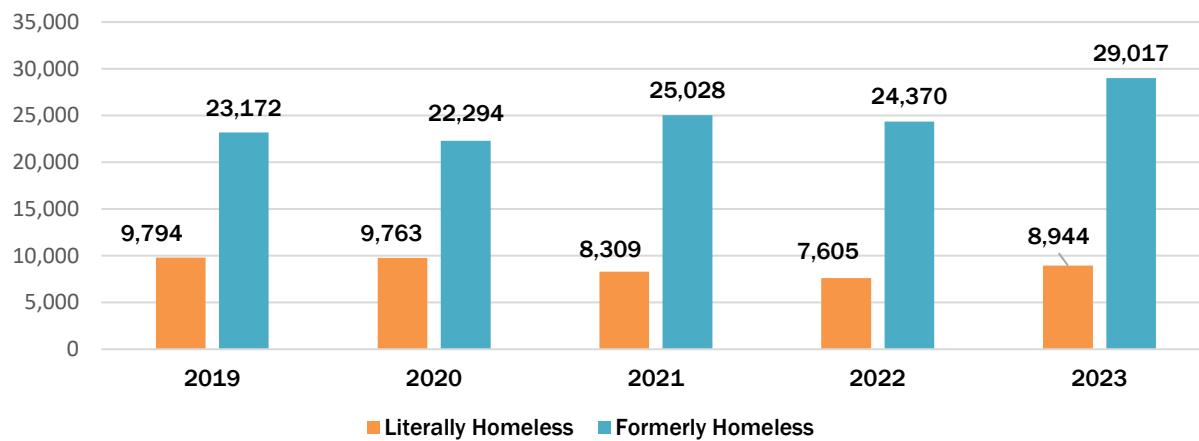
Source: COG

According to the 2023 enumeration, there were 29,017 people formerly experiencing homelessness currently residing in some form of permanent housing; this represents 4,647 additional individuals in permanent housing than in 2022. Table 16 cites the region's number of people living in permanent supportive housing (PSH), rapid re-housing (RRH) and other permanent housing (OPH) by household category and reflects the evolving pattern of permanent housing solutions for persons experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region. The change in the number of people from 2022 to 2023 may reflect a variety of factors, including the availability and use of affordable units as of the day of the annual enumeration, or the continuing, compounding impacts of the pandemic on the demand for affordable housing in the region.

Figure 26 compares the total number of persons counted the night of the enumeration as literally homeless and formerly homeless from 2019 through 2023. The totals should not be combined as a proportion of each may be duplicated as people exit homelessness and move to permanent housing.

**Figure 26: Region's Literally and Formerly Homeless in Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Re-Housing, and Other Permanent Housing**

Source: COG



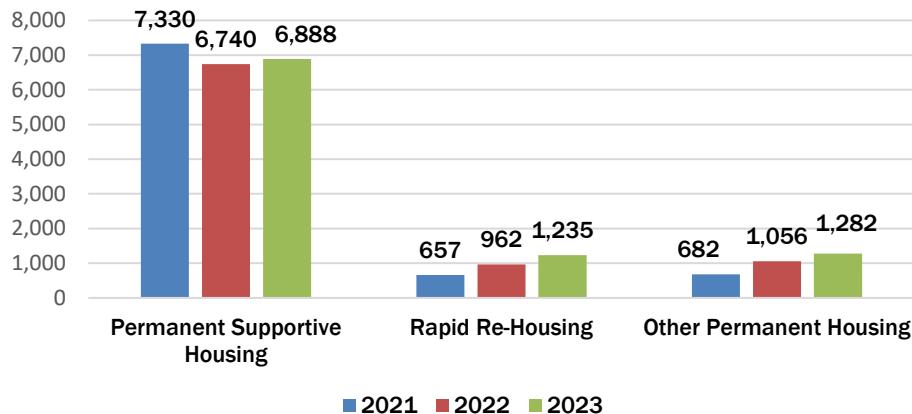
The data for persons who were formerly experiencing homelessness for 2019 through 2023 reflect not only persons in permanent supportive housing, but other forms of permanent housing such as

rapid re-housing and other permanent housing. Per HUD's requirements, people who were previously experiencing homelessness and are now living in permanent housing are not counted as part of the people counted as experiencing literal homelessness who live on the streets, in emergency shelter, or in transitional housing programs.

By definition, people who formerly experienced homelessness include people presently living in permanent housing following a period of living on the street or in emergency or transitional shelter. Since 2014, the nine participating Continua of Care have gathered data on permanent housing options in addition to permanent supportive housing.

**Figure 27: Permanent Housing Solutions for Formerly Homeless Single Adults, 2021 - 2023**

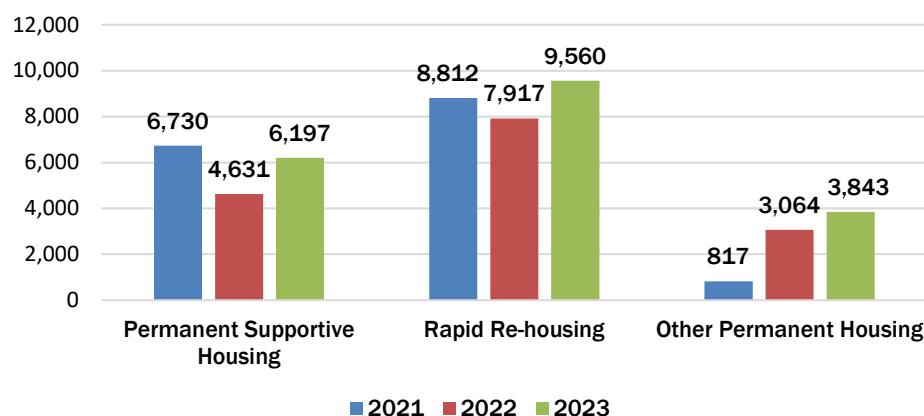
Source: COG



Other permanent housing options include rapid re-housing, which primarily serves families experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region, and other supportive housing options.

**Figure 28: Permanent Housing Solutions for Formerly Homeless Adults in Families, 2021 - 2023**

Source: COG



The differences in the rates of use of permanent supportive housing and other permanent housing strategies by household type are represented graphically by Figures 27 and 28 and help demonstrate the importance of having different options to solve each person's unique housing needs.

As mentioned earlier in this report, it is important to note that the PIT count is only a one-day snapshot of people experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region. People face

homelessness every day and this number fluctuates throughout the year. Growing pressures on the region's competitive housing market and high rents continue to negatively impact people experiencing homelessness. The pandemic has placed new pressures on the housing market, and in a region where housing costs are rising faster than incomes, it creates additional challenges for residents with low-wage jobs and remains a critical obstacle to ending homelessness. The region's focus on preventing homelessness, reducing the length of time residents experience homelessness, and creating more pathways to permanent housing has contributed to the region's efforts to reduce the number of people who experience homelessness at any given point in time.

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS



A surveyor studies a map prior to conducting interviews with people experiencing homelessness for the unsheltered portion of the Point-in-Time count on January 25, 2023. (Photo credit: Pathways to Housing DC)

As of January 25, 2023, 8,944 people throughout metropolitan Washington were experiencing homelessness. This is an increase since the 2022 enumeration, when the region recorded the lowest number of persons experiencing homelessness since the first annual Point-in-Time count in 2001. This change represents an 18 percent increase from the previous year's enumeration and demonstrates the ongoing challenge of keeping people stably housed in a market with a highly constrained supply of deeply affordable housing without additional resources for rental assistance and the lifting of strong tenant protections put in place as part of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

It is important to recognize that many factors influence the results of the annual enumeration and changes from one year to the next do not necessarily indicate evidence

of a larger trend. However, the fact that all nine CoCs recorded an increase in the count from 2022 to 2023 is rare and notable. A review of the enumeration results during the past three years helps us understand the impact of key aspects of the regional system response during the pandemic, even if the PIT survey does not allow us to determine the impact of any one policy or program.

The end of some programs unique to the COVID-19 pandemic may have contributed to this year's increase in literal homelessness. On the prevention side, the lifting of local and federal eviction moratoriums has allowed eviction proceedings to move forward at rates that in some jurisdictions are now higher than before the pandemic began.<sup>56</sup> Federal funding for emergency rental and utility assistance has largely been expended. The region's CoCs continue to focus on diversion as an alternative to entering the homeless services system, but reduced housing resources means that fewer people's experiences of homelessness can be prevented. The scale of resources made available from the federal government and the flexibility in administering these new programs during the pandemic made a significant difference in reducing the number of people entering the homeless services system throughout the region. Results observed during the past two annual enumerations help demonstrate that access to additional housing resources can make a difference in reducing the number of people experiencing homelessness.

However, results from the 2023 enumeration also represent a nine percent reduction from the total number of persons counted as experiencing homelessness in 2019. In some jurisdictions, program and system level changes have contributed to reductions seen in the number of people experiencing homelessness during the past five years. These improvements have constrained the number of people facing a housing crisis below numbers seen prior to the pandemic and kept the total number

<sup>56</sup> <https://dcist.com/story/22/10/11/evictions-dc-md-va-rising-covid-protections/>

of people experiencing homelessness below 10,000, a milestone that was achieved for the first time in 2019.

Our region faces significant challenges in its efforts to end homelessness. Several of these key challenges are not new: high rents that continue to rise every year and make it very difficult for extremely low-income households to find or maintain housing that they can afford,<sup>57</sup> and wages that have not increased to keep pace with the rising cost of housing, particularly for less-educated workers.<sup>58</sup> In addition, the region's declining supply of permanently affordable housing continues to expand the gap between the options available for the lowest-income households and the increasing need.

Despite these persistent challenges, what may be more significant than the one-year 18 percent increase in the regional homeless count is the fact that over 29,000 people who were formerly experiencing homelessness were residing in some form of permanent housing on the night of the count in 2023.

During 2020, COG's Human Services Policy Committee created a Regional Compact to End Homelessness, which was adopted by resolution of the COG Board of Directors on January 13, 2021. This compact sets forth a vision for regional cooperation to create a client-centered approach to ending the experience of homelessness by identifying and breaking down barriers to get people the resources they need.

To address these significant challenges and to implement the vision of the 2021 Regional Compact to End Homelessness, the **COG Homeless Services Planning and Coordinating Committee recommends the following:**

- 1. It is critical that housing affordable for all income levels, including subsidized housing targeted for extremely low-income households, must be available across the region for metropolitan Washington to realistically reduce and eliminate the experience of homelessness. Resources from the local, state, and federal level should be maximized with a sustained commitment to achieve an end to homelessness.**

While the provision of housing is one of the most important elements of the solution to ending homelessness, the importance of jobs that pay wages high enough to allow individuals and families to be financially stable and remain housed for the long-term cannot be overstated.

- 2. The Committee recommends that each of the region's CoC jurisdictions continuously increase its permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing and other permanent housing inventory to meet the need equitably throughout the region.** The provision of supportive wrap-around services, in conjunction with permanent housing, helps people experiencing homelessness become more confident and independent once their challenges are diagnosed and addressed.

Permanent supportive housing is one solution to ending homelessness that is particularly effective for individuals who experience chronic homelessness. However, some individuals in emergency shelter do not require the high level of care associated with permanent supportive housing. There is no "one size fits all" solution to ending a person's housing crisis.

<sup>57</sup> [http://www.urban.org/research/publication/housing-security-washington-region/view/full\\_report](http://www.urban.org/research/publication/housing-security-washington-region/view/full_report), p. 5

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.marketplace.org/shows/marketplace-morning-report/wages-arent-keeping-up-with-inflation-hitting-low-income-workers-the-hardest/>

The greatest need in the metropolitan Washington region is permanent housing that is affordable to the lowest-income households, combined with a subsidy to be able to support the housing costs in this region and remain in housing for the long-term. Rapid re-housing is one solution in our region to ending homelessness for families and single adults facing a short-term economic crisis. However, without adequate affordable housing options, we will not be successful in assisting these families in remaining stably housed for the long-term.

- 3. Each jurisdiction should continue its efforts to reach out, assess, and house unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness.** The region's CoCs have in place, or are developing, systems to rapidly re-house people experiencing homelessness into appropriate permanent housing.

Emergency shelters are an important resource for an immediate housing emergency, but do not provide the long-term solution to ending homelessness.

- 4. The committee further recommends that jurisdictions continue to provide job training opportunities and partner with employers to create ladders of opportunity to careers with higher-paying jobs.**

As the region recovers economically from the shock created by the COVID-19 pandemic, jurisdictions should ensure that workforce development programs are appropriately staffed and able to meet the rising need for more job seekers in the marketplace.

As noted earlier in this report, PIT data provides a limited, one-day perspective of the region's progress in preventing and ending homelessness. Other data sources can also measure the extent of the number of people experiencing homelessness and help determine the best responses.

- 5. In addition to the data required by HUD, jurisdictions should continue to gather the best possible up-to-date information on persons experiencing homelessness using a by-name list and seek opportunities to share data within and across the region's CoCs to strengthen local programs and improve outcomes for persons experiencing homelessness.**

A by-name list includes everyone in a jurisdiction experiencing homelessness, and access to housing resources is determined through a coordinated entry system and prioritized based on level of vulnerability. Jurisdictions' use of a coordinated entry system is critical to ensure that housing resources are targeted and appropriate to ending a person's unique experience of homelessness.

A guiding principle in all these efforts is to center racial equity in our solutions to ensure that the homeless services system does not compound existing structural inequities and contribute to the disproportionate representation of people of color experiencing poor housing outcomes.

- 6. The committee recommends that each of the region's CoC jurisdictions aim to close gaps in systems of care that lead to disproportionality and disparities. To understand the impacts of those gaps and identify appropriate and effective responses, communities should consult the people most impacted in their planning, design, and implementation.<sup>59</sup>**

<sup>59</sup> <https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-Fra>

The CoCs in the metropolitan Washington are committed to ensuring that system transformation is not only grounded in the principles of racial equity, but that it involves people with lived experience of homelessness to advise and inform how best to assist people experiencing a housing crisis.

The nine jurisdictions comprising COG's CoCs worked hard to decrease the region's incidence of homelessness over the past year. However, housing availability and funding challenges at all levels of government will have a direct impact on whether the region's CoCs are able to prevent an increasing number of people experiencing homelessness this year.

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**We know what works to prevent and end homelessness in metropolitan Washington, but this cannot be solved by one jurisdiction alone.**

**Only by working as partners across jurisdictional boundaries as a region can we move the needle on ensuring that everyone here has a safe place to call home.**

**-Elisabeth Young, COG Homeless Services Committee Chair**

housing, and the region must continue these best practice efforts to realize the goal to provide permanent, affordable homes for all of its residents and end homelessness, rather than merely managing it through the provision of emergency shelter. Housing is the foundation for being able to live a safe and healthy life. No one should have to live without a place to call home.

The availability of federal stimulus funds provided during the COVID-19 pandemic provided an opportunity for innovation at the local level and to demonstrate that the region's CoCs can make progress towards the goal of reducing the number of residents who experience a housing crisis, given additional tools and resources. A strong commitment is necessary to continue to make progress in preventing and ending homelessness in metropolitan Washington now that emergency restrictions have been lifted, and federal aid packages are exhausted.

Despite the many complex and unique challenges the region faced during the past year, member local jurisdictions' housing first approaches have proven successful in returning many people to permanent

**TABLE 17: People Experiencing Literal Homelessness by Jurisdiction, 2019 - 2023**

Jurisdiction/Year		Households Without Children	Unaccompanied Youth/ Households with Only Children	Households with Adults and Children	All Persons
City of Alexandria	2023	<b>82</b>	0	70	<b>152</b>
	2022	73	0	47	120
	2021	63	0	43	207
	2020	121	0	86	198
	2019	124	0	74	198
2019-2023 Percent Change		-33.9%	N/A	-5.4%	-23.2%
Arlington County	2023	<b>147</b>	0	66	<b>213</b>
	2022	132	0	50	182
	2021	127	0	44	171
	2020	139	0	60	199
	2019	149	0	66	215
2019-2023 Percent Change		-1.3%	N/A	0.0%	-0.9%
District of Columbia	2023	<b>3,741</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1,170</b>	<b>4,922</b>
	2022	3397	9	1004	4,410
	2021	3,865	11	1,235	5,111
	2020	3,937	12	2,431	6,380
	2019	3,862	13	2,646	6,521
2019-2023 Percent Change		-3.1%	-15.4%	-55.8%	-24.5%
Fairfax County	2023	<b>555</b>	3	<b>752</b>	<b>1,310</b>
	2022	626	1	564	1,191
	2021	737	5	480	1,222
	2020	513	0	528	1,041
	2019	507	1	526	1,034
2019-2023 Percent Change		9.5%	200.0%	43.0%	26.7%
Frederick City & County	2023	<b>146</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>248</b>
	2022	153	0	57	210
	2021	165	5	58	228
	2020	238	0	70	308
	2019	212	0	74	286
2019-2023 Percent Change		-31.1%	N/A	36.5%	-13.3%

Source: COG

**TABLE 17: People Experiencing Literal Homelessness by Jurisdiction, 2019 - 2023**

Jurisdiction/Year		Households Without Children	Unaccompanied Youth/ Households with Only Children	Households with Adults and Children	All Persons
Loudoun County	2023	142	0	78	220
	2022	66	0	33	99
	2021	50	0	30	80
	2020	129	0	50	179
	2019	124	0	45	169
2019-2023 Percent Change		14.5%	N/A	73.3%	30.2%
Montgomery County	2023	625	0	269	894
	2022	408	0	173	581
	2021	480	0	97	577
	2020	487	0	183	670
	2019	441	0	206	647
2019-2023 Percent Change		41.7%	N/A	30.6%	38.2%
Prince George's County	2023	273	10	376	659
	2022	273	0	298	571
	2021	251	0	286	537
	2020	212	1	240	453
	2019	199	1	247	447
2019-2023 Percent Change		37.2%	900.0%	52.2%	47.4%
Prince William County	2023	190	0	136	326
	2022	179	0	103	282
	2021	214	0	112	326
	2020	117	0	160	277
	2019	190	2	182	374
2019-2023 Percent Change		0.0%	-100.0%	-25.3%	-12.8%
COG REGION	2023	5,901	25	3,018	8,944
	2022	5,273	10	2,322	7,605
	2021	5,917	16	2,376	8,309
	2020	5,990	13	3,760	9,763
	2019	5,735	15	4,044	9,794
2019-2023 Percent Change		2.9%	66.7%	-25.4%	-8.7%

Source: COG

# **APPENDICES**

## **APPENDIX A: SHELTER HOTLINE RESOURCE NUMBERS**

This section provides a regional overview of resources to call when a person is in need of shelter throughout the metropolitan Washington region.

## **APPENDIX B: HOMELESSNESS ENUMERATION JURISDICTIONAL NARRATIVE REPORTS**

This section provides each of the nine participating Continua of Care the opportunity to provide additional details regarding the Point-in-Time count conducted in their jurisdiction as well as an overview of the activities of their respective CoCs during the past year.

## **APPENDIX C: COG HOMELESS SERVICES COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

## **APPENDIX A: SHELTER HOTLINE RESOURCES**

The information below is designed to assist a person experiencing a housing crisis with an emergency solution. Additional shelter resources may become available during the winter months (typically November through March each year) when a hypothermia alert is issued.

In addition to the information below, regional resources may be found online via the Interfaith Council of Metropolitan Washington's [Emergency Services Directory](#) at <https://ifcmw.org/resources/emergency-services-directory>.<sup>1</sup>

### **Alexandria, VA**

(703) 746-5700 Homeless Services Assessment Center (Monday through Friday, 8 A.M. to 5 P.M., except holidays). After hours, persons needing emergency overnight stay should contact the Alexandria Community Shelter (703-746-3660) or Carpenter's Shelter (703-548-7500 ext. 228).

### **Arlington, VA**

(703) 228-1300 during business hours or (703) 228-1010 (24/7)

### **District of Columbia**

(202) 399-7093 (24/7) or 311 in DC. Youth under the age of 18, call Sasha Bruce Youth Hotline: (202) 547-7777

### **Fairfax County, VA**

(703) 222-0880 (Households with Adults and Children), Coordinated Services Planning; Adults Only Households: (703) 820-7621 (Baileys), (703) 799-0200 (Kennedy), and (703) 437-1975 (Embry Rucker)

### **Frederick, MD**

(301) 600-1506 Frederick Community Action Agency

### **Loudoun County, VA**

(703) 777-0420 weekdays 8:30 AM - 5 PM - Coordinated Entry Services. After hours, call (571) 258-3033 (Adults only households), (703) 724-1555 (Households with Adults and Children, single women, and single mothers), (703) 777-6552 (survivors of domestic violence)

### **Montgomery County, MD**

240-907-2688 or 240-777-4000 Montgomery County Crisis Center (24/7) (TTY 240-777-4815)

<sup>1</sup> The IFCMW Directory does not include resources in Frederick, MD.

**Prince George's County, MD**

(888) 731-0999 (toll free in Maryland) or (301) 864-7095 (24/7)

**Prince William County, VA**

(703) 792-3366, Coordinated Entry System (CES), 7 days a week, 9 AM - 9PM

## **APPENDIX B: HOMELESS ENUMERATION JURISDICTIONAL NARRATIVE REPORTS**

This section provides each of the nine participating Continua of Care the opportunity to provide additional details regarding the Point-in-Time count conducted in their jurisdiction as well as an overview of the activities of their respective CoCs during the past year.

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

## DESCRIPTION OF HOMELESS SERVICES

The Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness in the City of Alexandria (The Partnership) made up of public and private non-profit homeless, housing, and mainstream service providers, faith-based and educational institutions, advocates, former homeless consumers, and other community stakeholders serves as the homeless services Continuum of Care (CoC). The Partnership develops and implements the Strategic Plan to End Homelessness in the City of Alexandria and coordinates and oversees the delivery of prevention and homeless services to residents experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.

The Housing Crisis Response System is the CoC's centralized and coordinated approach to addressing the needs of persons experiencing or at-risk of homelessness in the City of Alexandria. The comprehensive screening and assessment process ensure that all households that present with a housing crisis are screened for diversion services first to ensure the most appropriate assistance is offered and unnecessary entries into shelter are avoided. Intended outcomes include 1) reductions in the number of first-time shelter entries; 2) shortened lengths of homelessness; and 3) the prevention of reoccurring episodes of homelessness.

## CITY OF ALEXANDRIA HOUSING CRISIS RESPONSE SYSTEM SERVICE COMPONENTS

<u>COMPONENTS</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
<u>Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)</u>	Outreach and assistance provided to adults with serious mental illness who are experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless. Services include community-based outreach, mental health, substance abuse, case management and other supportive services, and a limited set of housing services.
<u>Day Shelter</u>	Facility providing services to meet the basic needs of unsheltered homeless individuals including access to showers, laundry machines, lockers, phone, and voicemail services, mailing address, case management, outreach, and linkage and referral to community resources.
<u>Homeless Services Assessment Center</u>	Assistance for persons experiencing or at-risk of homelessness to determine the best immediate next step to effectively address the housing crisis. Services include screening for diversion services and emergency shelter as appropriate, basic needs assessment, and mainstream and community resource linkages and referrals.
<u>Diversion and Prevention Services</u>	Temporary support to persons at-risk of homelessness including housing location, case management, housing counseling, linkage to mainstream resources, landlord-tenant mediation, job search assistance and employment services, budgeting/ financial management and financial assistance.
<u>Emergency Shelter</u>	Temporary lodging and supportive services for homeless individuals and families.
<u>Domestic Violence Program</u>	Crisis intervention and supportive counseling services to victims of domestic and sexual violence. Services include temporary accommodations, 24-hour hotline, individual counseling, support groups, and court and medical facility accompaniment.

<u>Rapid Re-housing Assistance</u>	Temporary supportive services and limited financial assistance to aid persons experiencing homelessness to quickly return to and remain in permanent housing.
<u>Winter Shelter</u>	Seasonal shelter from November 1 to April 15 to protect persons experiencing homelessness from exposure-related conditions such as hypothermia and frostbite during cold weather months.
<u>Safe Haven</u>	Supportive housing for hard-to-reach homeless individuals with serious mental illness who have been unable or unwilling to participate in housing or supportive services.
<u>Transitional Housing</u>	Extended supportive housing targeting homeless individuals and families needing longer-term assistance to facilitate a move to permanent housing.
<u>Permanent Supportive Housing</u>	Permanent housing with supportive services including barrier-free units for individuals designed to allow formerly homeless adults with children and individuals with serious mental illness to live in the community as independently as possible.
<u>Other Permanent Housing Resources</u>	Public housing units with and without supportive services; private income-based apartment units; Housing Choice voucher-subsidies; as well as rent relief subsidy for seniors and the disabled.

Operating within COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for congregate care setting, the CoC provided a combined total of 103 year-round emergency shelter beds, 50 for households without children and 53 for households with adults and children during the 2023 Count. Combined, the transitional housing inventory consisted of 79 beds (7 for male households without children and 20 for households with adults and children).

The Domestic Violence Program shelter provided 11 undesignated year-round beds to serve persons in imminent danger of domestic or sexual violence, with 10 more available in hotels for overflow. From October 1 to April 15, the Winter Shelter Program provided an additional 46 undesignated seasonal beds to protect unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness from exposure-related conditions such as hypothermia and frostbite during cold weather months.

#### CITY OF ALEXANDRIA CONTINUUM OF CARE HOMELESS SERVICES UNIT & BED INVENTORY

<u>INVENTORY TYPE</u>	Units for Households with Adults & Children	Beds for Households with Adults & Children	Beds for Households without Children	Year-Round Beds
<u>Winter Shelter</u>	-	11	35	-
<u>Emergency Shelter</u>	-	53	50	<b>103</b>
<u>Domestic Violence Program Shelter</u>	-	9	2	<b>11</b>
<u>Transitional Housing</u>	10	20	7	<b>27</b>
<u>Safe Haven</u>	-	-	12	<b>12</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>155</b>

- Not Applicable

\* These numbers represent a combined total of 35 undesignated cold weather seasonal beds to serve households without children and those with adults and children. Designations are made each year based upon average occupancy during the Winter Shelter season.

## **SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE THE 2022 WINTER ENUMERATION**

### **Alexandria Strategic Plan Update**

In 2022, the CoC updated the City of Alexandria's Strategic Plan to End Homelessness and received Governing Board Approval for a 2023-2028 plan. Multiple focus groups of service participants at emergency shelters and homeless assistance programs were conducted to inform the plan, and new to the structure, lead to the creation of two Overarching Themes in the Plan. Those themes serve as guiding principles for all subsequent actions that were assigned, and include a focus on addressing racial inequity, and centering the voices of those with lived experience in policy decisions.

### **Alexandria Eviction Prevention**

In 2021 the City of Alexandria permanently established the Eviction Prevention Task Force (Task Force) whose eviction prevention efforts focused on reducing the impact of the current evictions crisis and developing long-term prevention strategies through collaboration among the City, state government agencies, businesses, non-profits, landlords, tenants, faith community and community advocates.

Also in 2022, the Task Force installed new eviction prevention positions around the City including Housing Relocators, Service Navigators, Court Navigators, moving and storage support, and Housing Justice Attorneys, who all work towards supporting tenants involved in eviction processes, and landlords in need of connection to community resources. These crucial positions were identified by the Task Force as gaps that existed in the community and were advocated for on behalf of tenants and landlords in the City

In 2022, the CoC establish monthly Housing Stability Systems meetings, where eviction trends are tracked alongside homeless service metrics to forecast future shelter needs. This has given the CoC real-time, leading indicator metrics around housing instability in the City, which has been utilized by City Councilmembers and state legislators in their decisions.

### **Alexandria Racial Equity Initiatives**

68% of residents experiencing homelessness during Alexandria's 2023 Point in Time (PIT) count identified as Black or African American, compared to National Census Data, where 22% of Alexandria's population is Black or African American. This disproportionate representation is the result of institutionalized racial inequity within systems of care nationwide, but remains a local trend, spurring the CoC to closely monitor housing stabilization processes and services for any opportunity to address those disparities. In 2021 the CoC utilized local housing assistance access trends to incorporate race and ethnicity as a quantified housing barrier within coordinated entry and prioritize residents more accurately for housing assistance. In 2022, the CoC engaged in a regional Case Care Coordinate Workgroup through the DC Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MW-COG), where a new assessment tool is being vetted with a specific focus on racial equity.

This year, the CoC's Governing Board updated Alexandria's Strategic Plan to End Homelessness and included overarching themes to advance Racial Equity within each goal and establish avenues for input from persons with lived experience. The Board also formalized a CoC Racial Equity Action Committee, responsible for aligning the CoC's racial equity initiatives with the City's established framework and the community's needs.

Alexandria's Eviction Prevention Task Force similarly focuses on the intersectionality of eviction prevention and racial equity. There is a disproportionate number of those experiencing homelessness who come from historically marginalized communities and identify as Black, Indigenous, Hispanic, and persons of color. In 2022, the Task Force held a retreat on Racial Equity, resulting in action steps for the group to take in FY24. Alexandria DCHS has its own equity initiatives as well, which have supported equity training for service providers throughout the City, as well as adoption of the City's racial equity framework by the CoC Governing Board, and other Commissions, and policy influencing bodies.

## HOMELESS POINT-IN-TIME COUNT

The Partnership conducted the 2023 Winter Point-in-Time count for those sheltered solely by collecting data through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). This process provides the CoC with more accurate, client-level specific data in our reporting. It also gives the CoC the ability to conduct a Point-in-Time count on an ad-hoc basis, leaving potential for comparable Summer PIT data in the future. A manual count of unsheltered homeless persons was conducted under the leadership of the Office of Community Services using four survey teams, including volunteers, and at least one representative from a CoC service provider to serve as lead. Reflected below are the demographic and sub-population comparisons from previous years' enumerations.

## HOMELESS COUNT BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE

PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS	2020	2021	2022	2023	% Change 2022-2023			
Total Persons	207	106	120	152	21%			
<b>HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT CHILDREN</b>								
Men	85	46	73%	60	82%	60	73%	0%
Women	36	17	27%	13	18%	22	27%	69%
Transgender	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
Total Households	121	63		73		82		12%
<b>HOUSEHOLDS WITH ADULTS &amp; CHILDREN</b>								
Total Households	32	14		17		21		24%
Single Parent Households	28	12	86%	14	82%	16	23%	14%
Adults	36	16	37%	20	49%	23	33%	15%
Children	50	27	63%	21	51%	47	67%	124%
Total Persons in Households	86	43		41		70		71%
<b>LOCATION ON THE NIGHT OF THE COUNT</b>								
Unsheltered	11	8	8%	5	4%	10	7%	100%
Sheltered	196	98	92%	115	96%	142	93%	23%
Total Persons	207	106		120		152		27%
<b>HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT CHILDREN</b>								
Place Not Meant for Human Habitation	11	8	13%	5	7%	10	12%	100%
Winter Shelter	21	8	13%	22	30%	19	23%	-14%
Emergency Shelter	65	30	48%	28	38%	32	39%	14%
Emergency Shelter for Registered Sex Offenders	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
Domestic Violence Program Shelter	2	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	100%
Transitional Housing	11	10	16%	7	10%	10	12%	43%
Safe Haven	11	7	11%	11	15%	10	12%	-9%
Total Households	121	63		73		82		12%

A total of 152 persons experiencing homelessness were identified in this year's PIT Count, a 21% increase from 2022. No child-only households were identified in the 2023 Count, the same as in 2022. There were 82 households without children, a 12% increase from 2022. There were 22 single women and 60 single men identified, which was a 69% increase for women and no change for men compared to last year's count. The loss of COVID-19 funding and federal policies that followed had the greatest impact on Alexandria's 2023 PIT numbers, resulting in a partial return to pre-pandemic counts.

On the 2023 count, 21 households with adults and children were counted, an increase from 17 in 2022. The number of adults in families also increased from 20 last year to 23 this year, while children in families increased from 21 to 47.

#### TOTAL COUNT AND BREAKOUT BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE

LOCATION ON THE NIGHT OF THE COUNT	2011	2020	2021		2022		2023		% Change 2022-2023
Unsheltered	42	11	8	8%	5	4%	10	7%	100%
Sheltered	374	196	98	92%	115	96%	142	93%	23%
<b>Total Persons</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>106</b>		<b>120</b>		<b>152</b>		<b>27%</b>
<b>HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT CHILDREN</b>		2011	2020	2021		2022		2023	
Place Not Meant for Human Habitation	42	11	8	13%	5	7%	10	12%	100%
Winter Shelter	57	21	8	13%	22	30%	19	23%	-14%
Emergency Shelter	102	65	30	48%	28	38%	32	39%	14%
Emergency Shelter for Registered Sex Offenders	-	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
Domestic Violence Program Shelter	*	2	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	100%
Transitional Housing	51	11	10	16%	7	10%	10	12%	43%
Safe Haven	12	11	7	11%	11	15%	10	12%	-9%
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>63</b>		<b>73</b>		<b>82</b>		<b>12%</b>
<b>HOUSEHOLDS WITH ADULTS &amp; CHILDREN</b>		2011	2020	2021		2022		2023	
<b>Number of Households</b>	<b>32</b>		0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0%
Place Not Meant for Human Habitation	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	100%
Winter Shelter	0	0	0	0%	8	47%	11	52%	38%
Emergency Shelter	25	18	8	57%	8	47%	6	29%	100%
Domestic Violence Program Shelter	*	6	0	0%	3	18%	6	26%	-50%
Transitional Housing	27	8	6	43%	6	35%	3	14%	-70%
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>14</b>		<b>17</b>		<b>21</b>		<b>24%</b>
<b>Number of Adults</b>	<b>58</b>		0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0%
Place Not Meant for Human Habitation	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	1	4%	200%
Winter Shelter	0	0	0	0%	10	63%	7	35%	86%
Emergency Shelter	27	22	10	63%	7	35%	13	57%	100%
Domestic Violence Program Shelter	*	6	0	0%	3	15%	6	26%	-70%
Transitional Housing	31	8	6	38%	10	50%	3	13%	15%
<b>Total Adults</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>20</b>		<b>23</b>		<b>15%</b>
<b>Number of Children</b>	<b>50</b>		0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0%
Place Not Meant for Human Habitation	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	2	4%	300%
Winter Shelter	0	0	0	0%	15	56%	13	48%	131%
Emergency Shelter	46	23	11	0%	6	22%	10	21%	67%
Domestic Violence Program Shelter	*	11	12	44%	8	30%	5	11%	-38%
Transitional Housing	48	16	27	27	27	27	47	47	74%
<b>Total Children</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>27</b>		<b>27</b>		<b>47</b>		<b>74%</b>

100% of households with adults and children were sheltered on the night of the count. Of households with adults and children, 52% were present in Emergency Shelters, 14% in Transitional Housing, and 29% in the Domestic Violence Shelter. 7% of Households without children were unsheltered, or in a place not meant for human habitation. The number of unsheltered households increased by five since last year. 93% of all households were sheltered.

## HOMELESS COUNT BY SUBPOPULATION

<u>CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>		<u>2022</u>		<u>2023</u>		<u>% Change 2022-2023</u>
Households without Children	15	13	21%	18	25%	5	6%	-72%
Households with Adults & Children	0	0	0%	2	12%	1	1%	-50%
<u>SUBPOPULATIONS (ALL ADULTS)†</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>		<u>2022</u>		<u>2023</u>		<u>% Change 2022-2023</u>
Veterans	9	3	4%	2	2%	4	4%	100%
Substance Use Disorder	13	4	5%	12	13%	9	9%	-25%
Serious Mental Illness	17	22	28%	37	40%	38	36%	3%
Co-Occurring	5		0%	6	6%	4	4%	-33%
Physical Disability	4	6	8%	5	5%	17	16%	240%
Chronic Health Conditions	12	6	8%	7	8%	10	10%	43%
HIV/AIDS	1	1	1%	2	2%	0	0%	-100%
Limited English Proficiency	7	8	10%	5	5%	10	10%	100%
History of Foster Care	10	6	8%	1	1%	12	11%	1100%
Institutional Discharge^	12	5	6%	13	14%	6	6%	-54%
<u>DOMESTIC VIOLENCE</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>		<u>2022</u>		<u>2023</u>		<u>% Change 2022-2023</u>
Homeless Due to Domestic Violence	30							
Total Households	15	8	8%	4	4%	7	5%	75%
Single Women	5	4	24%	4	31%	1	5%	-75%
Women w/Minor Children	9	3	25%	3	21%	6	38%	100%
Children	15	7	26%	6	29%	10	21%	67%
Total Persons	30	14	13%	13	11%	17	11%	31%

As reflected in the chart above, there was one chronically homeless household with adults and children in the 2023 count; a small but notable decrease from 2022. There was also a 72% decrease in the number of chronically homeless households with adults only.

There were also increases in subpopulation categories for serious mental illness, physical disabilities, chronic health conditions, history of foster care, and limited English. Most notably, there were 12 more clients with a physical disability and 11 more clients with a history of foster care on the 2023 count compared to 2022. One client increased the number of clients with a serious mental illness. There was a decrease in some subpopulations, including substance use disorder and co-occurring.

There was a notable increase in the number of households that reported experiencing homelessness due to fleeing domestic violence; 4 households in 2021, and 7 households in 2023. The increase in total clients in the domestic violence shelter has also increased, going from 13 in 2022 to 17 in 2023.

## EMPLOYMENT & MONTHLY INCOME FOR HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT CHILDREN

EMPLOYMENT	2020	2021		2022		2023		% Change 2022 - 2023
Not Reported	9	3	2%	1	1%	1	1%	0%
No	67	43	35%	53	46%	50	61%	-6%
Yes	45	25	20%	17	15%	31	38%	82%
GROSS MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME	2020	2021		2022		2023		% Change 2022 - 2023
Not Reported	6	1	1%	3	3%	1	1%	-67%
No	56	22	18%	28	25%	22	27%	-21%
Yes	59	38	31%	42	37%	59	72%	40%
Income Amount								
\$1-150	3	1	3%	0	0%	2	3%	3%
\$151-250	3	1	3%	5	12%	4	7%	-20%
\$251-500	3	1	3%	1	2%	5	8%	400%
\$501-1,000	28	21	55%	21	50%	24	41%	14%
\$1,001-1,500	11	7	18%	6	14%	13	22%	117%
\$1,501-2,000	14	7	18%	5	12%	5	8%	0%
More than \$2,000	7	3	8%	4	10%	6	10%	50%
Primary Source of Income								
Wages	27	11	29%	17	40%	31	53%	82%
Retirement+	5	4	11%	0	0%	5	8%	600%
Disability^	4	9	24%	21	50%	18	31%	-14%
Public Assistance*	2	5	13%	4	10%	5	8%	25%
Other**	0	9	24%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
No Reported	73	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1700%

38% of households without children were employed in 2023, an 82% increase from last year. 72% of these households received income, a 40% increase from last year. Of those that reported having income, the majority reported having monthly income of \$501-1,000. Six (6) households without children reported having incomes higher than \$2,000. Earned wages were reported as the majority income source for this population.

## EMPLOYMENT AND MONTHLY INCOME OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH ADULTS AND CHILDREN

EMPLOYMENT (ADULTS)	2020	2021		2022		2023		% Change 2022 - 2023
Not Reported	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	-
No	18	8	26%	8	40%	8	36%	0%
Yes	18	8	26%	12	60%	15	68%	25%
<b>GROSS MONTHLY INCOME (ADULTS)</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>		<b>2022</b>		<b>2023</b>		% Change 2022 - 2023
Not Reported	6	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	-
No	14	6	19%	4	20%	3	14%	-25%
Yes	16	10	32%	16	80%	20	91%	25%
<b>Income Amount</b>								
\$1-150	0	0	0%	0	0%	2	10%	0%
\$151-250	1	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	0%
\$251-500	4	2	20%	0	0%	0	0%	200%
\$501-1,000	3	0	0%	4	25%	5	25%	25%
\$1,001-1,500	2	3	30%	4	25%	4	20%	0%
\$1,501-2,000	6	2	20%	0	0%	2	10%	600%
More than \$2,000	5	3	30%	8	50%	6	30%	-25%
<b>Primary Source of Income</b>								
Wages	14	10	100%	12	75%	15	75%	25%
Retirement+	0	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	100%
Disability^	1	0	0%	3	19%	0	0%	-100%
Public Assistance*	1	0	0%	1	6%	3	15%	200%
Other**	0	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	0%

Fifteen (15) adults in households with adults and children were employed, three more than in 2022. 20 adults reported monthly income, while three reported not having income. Of those receiving some income, the majority reported monthly incomes between \$501-1,500.

## HOMELESS POINT-IN-TIME RESULTS ANALYSIS

While the number of those experiencing homelessness increased from 2021 to 2023, the annual PIT decreased compared to the pre-pandemic counts from 2020. That decrease can be partly attributed to the effective application of additional resources and new policies to keep residents housed.

In the context of the past five years, the 2023 PIT Count can be viewed as a trend reversal in some ways, where the City saw COVID specific resources and tenant protections dissolve, leading to increased need throughout the year and a count closer to those seen in 2020 and prior. It also illustrates the efficacy of the CoC system and its providers for exceeding in service delivery when emergency funds were available, then limiting an inevitable backslide through strategic planning and system design.

The CoC identified solutions for shortfalls at all stops on the housing continuum, from prevention to shelter to housing. The work of the Eviction Prevention Task Force and Rapid Rehousing programs had a direct impact on reducing homelessness in Alexandria. Still, neither is without unique challenges, including:

- Households still struggle to find affordable units for which they qualify;
- There has been an increase in evictions in the community since the eviction moratorium was lifted, and as a result, an increase in the number of residents reporting eviction as the reason for homelessness;
- The extent of the need for rental assistance consistently exceeds original projections. The assistance must be tailored to fit the household's budget and ability to sustain housing costs post-assistance, which often limits the household's ability to meet its housing need; and
- Grantors' guidelines for rapid re-housing funding assistance dictate that rental subsidies do not exceed fair market rents, which creates a barrier for households to access the limited affordable permanent housing.

During this past year, the CoC Lead Agency, Alexandria's Office of Community Services, successfully advocated for an additional \$300,000 in rental assistance to support low-income residents in 2023. Collaboration with community partners such as the Alexandria Health Department and Neighborhood Health helped City shelters reclaim 100% capacity just weeks after the 2023 PIT count. Most recently, Carpenter's Shelter received, through the Virginia Homeless Solutions Program, \$600,000 in Rapid Rehousing funds to move Alexandrians from homelessness into stable housing through Calendar Year 2024. Adding eviction prevention positions like service navigators and housing relocators, and utilizing tax credit programs like the Waypoint and the Spire, have all been hugely beneficial to residents, and were the direct result of increased funding for housing for persons at 30% AMI and below.

Looking forward, while these strategies have helped the CoC address increased housing instability over the past year, community need continues to rise. One factor that impacts this need is Alexandria's huge demand rental market where there is a huge gap between fair market rents and market rate rents. Another factor is the continuing economic spikes in housing, food, and transportation costs. Without additional resources and policies like those established in response to the pandemic, the impact of CoC services will be limited to reactive solutions.

## **HOMELESSNESS, PREVENTION, SHELTER DIVERSION AND HOUSING PLACEMENT**

### **PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR CHRONICALLY HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS**

To assist formerly homeless persons, the CoC currently operates 55 Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) beds for households without children and 3 PSH units totaling 8 beds for households with adults and children whose heads of household have a serious mental illness. On the night of the 2021 count, 92% of the beds were occupied. The HMIS team maintains a current list of chronic homeless clients, which is prioritized using NAEH Assessment scores. When a vacancy becomes available in a PSH program, the team recommends clients in prioritization order. The count of chronic homeless persons on the PIT decreased from 2022 to 2023, but disabilities amongst the entire population stayed the same or increased, showing that high vulnerability persists even if the specific chronic definition is being met less often.

## **HOMELESS PREVENTION, DIVERSION & RAPID RE-HOUSING**

Since 2013 the City of Alexandria Housing Crisis Response System has enabled the CoC to assess the needs of persons seeking shelter more efficiently and effectively, best utilize community resources, quickly return households to permanent housing, and significantly reduce the number of households entering the shelter system.

Prevention and Diversion services have since the previous enumeration, with Prevention being the official program title, and Diversion, being a method that is attempted at each step in case management, in an effort to prevent persons from experiencing a possible episode of homelessness.

- ***Diversion & Prevention*** - state homeless prevention subsidies were underused in years past as a result of the eviction moratorium and subsequent rental assistance resources, but utilization rebounded in 2022 with the elimination of those policies and an increase in need. The CoC also hired new housing locators and service navigators at the coordinated entry to bolster prevention strategies at the front door.
- ***Rapid ReHousing*** – Utilization in the City’s RRH programs outpaced funding projections in 2022, prompting a hiatus on RRH enrollments in December and January. For this reason, RRH numbers on the night of the 2023 count may be artificially low and less indicative of the growing need for RRH throughout the year. A better illustration was the CoC’s success in documenting that community need when applying for RRH funds to replenish exhausted resources. This resulted in a recent \$600k award solely for RRH to be used throughout CY23.

It is clear that Eviction Prevention and RRH programs have a direct impact on reducing homelessness in the City of Alexandria, but neither is without unique challenges: 1) Households still struggle to find affordable units for which they qualify; 2) The extent of need for rental assistance consistently exceeds original projections; 3) The assistance must be tailored to fit the household’s budget and ability to sustain housing costs post-assistance, which often limits the household’s ability to meet its housing need; and 4) Grantors’ guidelines for rapid re-housing funding assistance dictate that rental subsidies not exceed fair market rents, which creates a barrier for households to access the limited permanent housing for which they qualify. This is a result of the City of Alexandria’s high-demand rental market where there is a huge gap between the fair market rents and the market rates.

## **FUTURE TRENDS IN HOMELESSNESS**

The greatest barriers to preventing and ending homelessness in Alexandria are 1) persistent racial inequity among residents experiencing poverty and housing instability 2.) expiration of COVID-relief funding and potential termination of eviction prevention resources 3.) the lack of fixed affordable permanent housing opportunities for the lowest income households (i.e., those with an income 30% and below the area median of \$110,300)

- 1.) Race remains the strongest predictor of housing instability in Alexandria, where 10-year annual data trends exhibit disproportionate representation of Black residents within Alexandria homeless and housing assistance services. Over the past 5 years, Alexandria’s population of residents experiencing homelessness has never been less than 66% Black or African American, while only 22% of all City residents identified as Black or African American on the last Census. As predicted,

the disparity remained through the pandemic and was again displayed on the 2022 PIT Count where 73% of residents identified as Black or African American.

The CoC is working to better understand racial inequity within our service delivery, but has learned that addressing homelessness for Black residents, shelters' majority population, offers the best chance to decrease homelessness overall. New policies are being vetted to assess residents more accurately for housing barriers related to race and ethnicity, then better prioritize them for available housing opportunities. Following that, education and training initiatives for leadership and direct service staff will follow to align program guidelines and service delivery with the CoC's commitment to racial equity. While these strategies cannot create the intended change alone, and certainly not immediately, they can help the CoC stem the tide of increasing racial inequity as COVID-19 fallout persists and provide more information to policymakers and the public about the origins of housing instability in the city of Alexandria.

- 2.) Like the federal moratorium on evictions in 2021, new eviction prevention infrastructure has had the largest impact on Alexandria's 2022 count of residents experiencing homelessness. Recognizing that the mandates and resources supporting eviction prevention at the state level may not be permanent, and many residents may lose housing in FY23, preparing Alexandria's housing stability system is crucial to keep services from being overwhelmed.

Local improvements to housing crisis response, like Alexandria's Eviction Prevention Taskforce and Eviction Prevention Partnership, have been formally established for future application. In 2023, four new full-time roles will bolster their work, including a housing locator and service navigator.

The relationship between eviction prevention and the annual count of residents experiencing homelessness highlights the importance of "upstream" housing crisis resources, and coordination between housing stability services with systems that exit unhoused residents. More than anything the marginal increase the 2022 PIT illustrated those experiences of homelessness, as defined by HUD, could be ended if adequate prevention policies and resources were permanently established.

- 3.) The need for more fixed-affordable housing options in our community remains, including PSH and housing with limited supports services. 2022 PIT decreases in unsheltered homelessness was a result of new PSH units and public housing vouchers coming online, but recent increases in winter shelter utilization, chronic homelessness, and adults with SMI, highlight a continued need. More options of this sort could functionally end chronic homelessness in the City or help address services gaps like housing for residents with SMI, substance abuse, or co-occurring disorders who are experiencing homelessness.

For the larger shelter population RRH still proves invaluable for its ability to quickly return residents to market-rate housing. In 2022 the CoC housed more shelter residents using RRH subsidies than ever before, largely due to the influx of pandemic response resources supporting RRH. Together these accomplishments show the CoC can be effective at preventing and ending homelessness even in our high-cost housing market if we have the resources to do so.

#### 4.) Zoning for Housing / Housing for All Initiative

*Zoning for Housing* is a comprehensive proposal of zoning reforms with the goal of expanding housing production and affordability and addressing past and current barriers to equitable housing access. The City of Alexandria is continuing its *Zoning for Housing* work begun in

2020 by exploring additional solutions to these long-standing challenges through proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.

*Housing for All* is the equity component of *Zoning for Housing* and will explore the extent of past discriminatory housing policies and their continued impact, especially on people of color and/or low-income. This initiative will also focus on how Alexandria can help ensure residual effects of past exclusionary housing provisions are identified and addressed in new policies under *Zoning for Housing* by setting equity goals and metrics for those policies.

# Arlington County, Virginia

## Arlington County's Continuum of Care

The Arlington County Continuum of Care (CoC) is an effective and collaborative homeless response system. Our mission is to sustain an integrated, community-based support system which helps households at-risk of homelessness keep their housing and assist any household that does experience homelessness in regaining stable housing. Arlington's CoC is led by Arlington County's Department of Human Services.

The CoC's mission is supported by a shared community responsibility, that includes collaborative planning, and alignment of stakeholders and resources essential to Arlington County's Action Plan for Ending Homelessness. At the time of this year's Point-in-Time Count, Arlington County was also in the midst of multi-phased Strategic Planning effort which places racial equity and the voices and expertise of people with lived experience of homelessness in the forefront of planning and future implementation.

The Arlington County CoC includes:

- Centralized Access System (CAS): Provides access to services across the entire Arlington CoC, matching households as quickly as possible, with the interventions that will most effectively and efficiently prevent or end their homelessness and lead to long-term stability.
- Street Outreach and Engagement: Outreach workers connect with individuals living on the street and other outdoor environments to help navigate them towards a path of stability and housing. Outreach teams include social workers, behavioral health clinicians, and CoC nursing staff.
- Targeted Prevention: Efforts to provide acute crisis intervention services to at-risk households to prevent homelessness before it occurs are an integral part of the Arlington CoC.
- Shelters: Five Arlington County homeless shelters provide a safe, structured environment for singles and families who are experiencing homelessness as well as survivors of domestic violence. The Arlington CoC includes 134 single adult shelter beds and 85 family shelter beds. During this year's PIT Count, all beds had returned to full or traditional occupancy rates after the 2 years of operating at reduced capacity in response to COVID-19, except for the Doorways Safehouse, which operated at expanded, non-congregate capacity (master-lease apartments in the community and hotels) in addition to their Safehouse shelter facility.
- Hypothermia Shelter: Arlington County provides low-barrier access to hypothermia shelter through the winter months (November – March) and is included in the Point-in-Time Count with all other shelters. Unlike the traditional emergency shelter options, people experiencing homelessness often utilize hypothermia shelter to take refuge from inclement weather and are less interested in long-term shelter services. During Hypothermia seasons shelter staff utilize this opportunity to build rapport and relationships with individuals and households that experience homelessness to encourage them to engage in on-going services. With the end of the state of emergency which allowed Arlington's hypothermia program to run at higher capacity, this year's hypothermia capacity was reduced by 10 beds to return to pre-pandemic capacity: 25 hypothermia beds and 6 overflow beds.
- Transitional Housing: Transitional housing programs provide housing services to help Arlington families and individuals prepare for permanent housing. The CoC has 14 single adult transitional housing beds for persons in recovery and 3 family transitional housing beds.

- Rapid Re-housing: Rapid Re-housing programs move households quickly out of shelter into housing with rental support and services to help families maintain housing.
- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH): Permanent supportive housing programs provide rental assistance and case management services for households who are homeless and have (or a family member has) a disabling condition.

At the time of the 2023 Point-in-Time Count, the Arlington County CoC was largely operating as it had pre-pandemic, while also following CDC guidelines for increased prevention in congregate spaces. Emergency shelters were operating at full capacity with identified space for onsite isolation; the Isolation and Quarantine hotel capacity had closed; eviction prevention resources had significantly declined; and eviction rates were steadily on the rise. The CoC had also just resolved a COVID-19 outbreak at one of its largest emergency shelters at the start of hypothermia season and as Point-in-Time Count planning was underway.

As such, Arlington, VA's CoC also expanded its Point-in-Time Count surveying approach to include additional volunteers beyond outreach staff and County/non-profit personnel. All surveyors were encouraged to self-administer COVID-19 tests the day before the Count and monitor for symptoms.

The 2023 Point-in-Time Count was an important marker for Arlington's CoC to measure the impact of the continuously shifting dynamics happening across the country and in the region.

#### **Point-in-Time Count Survey Analysis**

Arlington County is an urban county home to approximately 235,764 residents within the County's 26.1 square mile radius. In 2023, the Arlington County Continuum of Care (CoC) experienced an overall 17% increase in homelessness since the prior year's Point-in-Time Count (from 182 people counted in 2022 to 213 people counted in 2023 or an increase of 31 people), Arlington CoC's 2023 Point-in-Time count recorded increases across all sub-population groups, except those experiencing chronic (-49% change) and veteran (0% change) homelessness.

Table 1

Yearly Totals by Household and Individuals			
	2023	2022	2021
<b>Overall Total</b>	213	182	171
<b>Total Family Households</b>	21	19	14
<b>Total Single Adult Households</b>	147	132	127
<b>Total Number of persons in Families</b>	66	50	44
<b>Total Number of Adults in families</b>	23	21	20
<b>Total Number of children in families</b>	43	29	24
<b>Total Number of single adult persons</b>	147	132	127

The biggest drivers impacting this year's PIT results include:

- An increase in unsheltered homelessness (110%)
- Increased utilization of single adult emergency shelter (11%)
- Larger households with more children served in emergency shelters for families (32%)

### ***Unsheltered Homelessness***

Unsheltered homelessness more than doubled since the 2022 Point-in-Time Count, from 20 people counted in 2022 to 42 people counted in 2023 representing a 110% increase and 22 people. Arlington has not recorded an unsheltered count of this comparable level since the 2015 unsheltered Point-in-Time Count. In 2023, the Arlington County CoC recorded 64% of PIT persons surveyed (27 individuals) were not previously known to the Arlington, VA CoC. Most people surveyed on the night of the Count were staying in the Rosslyn area, a more densely, urban neighborhood in Arlington at the Key Bridge into Washington, D.C. Persons staying in this area represented 38% of those experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Arlington, VA (double the number of people counted in this neighborhood compared to 2022 and 2021 counts). As reported by Arlington's Street Outreach teams, more people identified as having recently come from other Washington DC Metropolitan jurisdictions, particularly Washington, D.C. and reporting "feeling safer" and "having a better chance" of receiving assistance in Arlington, VA.

Also of note, 3 of the 10 Transition-Aged Youth (TAY; ages between 18-24) households counted in 2023 were unsheltered on the night of the Count, corroborating other trends seen across the Arlington CoC with an increased prevalence of young adult households. Additionally, several individuals openly admitted being actively under the influence or planning to use illicit drugs. These individuals expressed grave concerns about the prevalence of fentanyl and increases in overdoses. To help combat the prevalence of opioid overdoses, Point-in-Time surveyors were equipped with fentanyl test strips and supplies of Narcan to provide to those they encountered.

### ***Increased Utilization of Single Adult Emergency Shelter***

At the time of the 2023 Point-in-Time Count, the Arlington, VA CoC had closed their Isolation and Quarantine Hotel by June 2022. The Arlington County CoC entered the 2023 PIT in stark contrast to the 2022 and 2021 when single adult shelter was largely operated out of a local hotel in response to, and to further prevent, the spread of the COVID-19 and spawned variants. While Hypothermia Shelter capacity had returned to pre-COVID capacity in 2023 (now 25 beds as opposed to 35 beds available during the pandemic), additional efforts had been made to connect people staying in hypothermia shelter to longer-term shelter beds in advance of the Point-in-Time Count to ensure immediate access to hypothermia shelter beds in anticipation of more people sleeping outdoors. Additionally, due to milder winter weather leading up to and during the 2023 Count, Hypothermia bed utilization on the night of the Count was 60% less in 2023 as compared to 2022 (16 people in 2023 as compared to 34 people in 2022).

That said, the work to assist people in accessing long-term beds from hypothermia shelter and the efforts made to resume shelter operations at full capacity is evident in the increased utilization of both single adult emergency shelters, the Homeless Services Center (HSC) operated by PathForward and the Residential Program Center (RPC) operated by New Hope Housing. In 2022, these shelters served a combined 56 people. In 2023, this number increased to 80 people, representing an increase of 43%.

### ***Larger households with more children served in emergency shelters for families***

Similar to emergency shelter for single adults, emergency shelter for families also returned to pre-pandemic capacity in 2023. In fact, after admitting a family of six the day after the 2023 Point-in-Time Count, one shelter program exceeded the prior year total people, or total household members served within the first 6 months of FY 2023. While the number of households served across family shelters only increased by 2 (from 19 households in 2022 to 21 households in 2023), the total

number of household members served within family shelter increased by 16 (from 50 people in 2022 to 66 people in 2023). Forty-three (43) or 65% of the total family household members counted were children in the 2023 Point-in-Time Count. In particular, the Sullivan House Shelter, operated by Bridges to Independence, served more larger families on the night of the 2023 Count. For the past 4 years, family sizes averaged 3 household members per household. In 2023, the average household size increased to just over 4 household members per household.

The increase of shelter utilization is also reflective of reductions in funding for eviction prevention and the Arlington County CoC's inability to prevent and divert people from experiencing homelessness. In May 2022, the Commonwealth of Virginia's statewide Rent Relief Program (RRP) had closed providing vital eviction prevention and rental arrearage funding to households in distress as a result of the COVID-19 impact throughout communities. Prevention efforts were further impacted by rising rental costs, a tightening housing market, and evictions. As the eviction moratorium ended, the Arlington CoC collaborated with affordable housing partners and Legal Services of Northern Virginia to both monitor the growing eviction docket and target available assistance to those most at-risk of experiencing homelessness. However, with fewer prevention resources available and rental debts mounting, these dynamics not only impacted increases in the prevalence of homelessness, but also the lengths of stay and exit rates to permanent housing for those who did experience homelessness.

Larger families faced compounding barriers given the lack of larger, affordable dwellings in Arlington County. An increased presence of immigrant/refugee households faced additional housing barriers, including the inability to find gainful employment and other forms of rental assistance for which they may qualify.

### **Subpopulations**

#### ***Veterans***

The 2023 Point-In-Time marks the 8<sup>th</sup> consecutive year in which Arlington, VA's CoC sustained an end to Veteran Homelessness. Six (6) Veterans were counted in the 2023 and 2022 Point-in-Time Counts. Efforts to functionally end Veteran homelessness, including deployment of VASH Housing Vouchers, coordination with Veterans Affairs and other area Veteran supportive service agencies, and utilizing Built for Zero strategies (such as a By Names List) demonstrate successes in quickly identifying and assisting Veterans in accessing permanent housing.

#### ***Chronic Homelessness***

The 2023 Point-in-Time Count identified 18 people who met the Chronic Homeless definition. This is a 54% reduction from 2021 (from 39 people in 2022 to 18 people in 2023). This may be attributed to the work the Arlington, VA CoC has done to prioritize those experiencing chronic homelessness for available housing resources were made in the past fiscal year. For example, the deployment of available Emergency Housing and Mainstream Vouchers were targeted to those who experienced chronic homelessness – people living with disabilities, who experienced the longest episodes of homelessness, and who had the highest vulnerabilities and risk factors for exasperated health and housing outcomes. These efforts assisted people experiencing chronic homelessness who were either sleeping in places not meant for human habitation or emergency shelter, exit to permanent housing with a permanent housing subsidy. Additionally, the 2023 Point-in-Time Count also highlighted an increase in unsheltered homelessness among those who were not experiencing chronic homelessness.

### ***Survivors of Domestic Violence (DV)***

Of those surveyed in the 2023 Point-in-Time Count, 40 people (including counted household members) indicated they were currently experiencing domestic violence and 74 people indicated having a history of domestic violence. This is the highest rates of reported DV experiences in the past 5 years of the annual Point-in-Time Count. In contrast, during the 2022 Point-in-Time Count, 25 people reported current experiences of homelessness and 51 people reported having histories of domestic violence. This is a 60% and 45% increase, respectively.

These increases are aligned with the increase in people served at the Doorways Domestic Violence Safehouse during the Point-in-Time Count and in the past fiscal year as Doorways operated at expanded DV capacity, to include their Domestic Violence Safehouse, Scattered-site/master-leased apartments in the community, and hotels. During the 2023 Point-in-Time Count, Doorways Safehouse served 25 people (representing 12 households). In 2022, Doorways Safehouse served 17 people (representing 10 households), an increase of 47. These upward trends have been accounted by the higher level of severity and risk among Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Hotline callers, as well as additional coordination and prevention efforts organized by Arlington County's Project PEACE, to include training for Arlington County Police Officers in the use of a common lethality assessment tool.

### ***Transition-Aged Youths (TAYs)***

The 2023 Point-in-Time Count saw a 7% increase in TAYs, from 15 people in 2022 to 16 people in 2023. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row that the Arlington, VA CoC experienced an increase in this population. Three (3) of the TAYs counted were sleeping outside on the night of the count (as opposed to 0 TAYs last year). The increased prevalence of young adults experiencing homelessness is an annual trend CoC partners have also observed. Given the increased use of opioids and substance use reported by persons surveyed in this year's count, the CoC is actively collaborating with Arlington County's Department of Human Services' Behavioral Health Division's Treatment on Wheels program who assists people in accessing substance use services, Narcan and fentanyl test strips.

### ***Persons with Substance Use, Mental Illness, or Co-Occurring Disorders***

While substance use disorders were not reported as frequently during 2023's count (from 27 people in 2022 to 13 people in 2023), serious mental illness was reported by 52 people, consistent with 2022. Reported rates of co-occurring disorders nearly doubled, with 22 people reporting in 2022 and 40 people reporting in 2023. This is consistent with observations made by providers across the Arlington, VA CoC. CoC partners report underlying mental illness or co-occurring disorders among many people served across shelters and housing programs – from depression and anxiety to more severe and persistent mental illness and substance use. Access to behavioral health services continues to be a challenge in Arlington, Virginia, like other parts of the country, due to staffing shortages and inadequate funding. People with the most severe mental health needs are largely prioritized for services, and even then, must wait for available clinicians. Lingering mental health needs from the pandemic; the opioid crisis; and the compounding traumas from racism, homelessness, family or intimate partner violence, and/or immigration are often left untreated and exacerbate people's ability to attain and maintain housing.

### ***Older Adults***

The majority (64%) of single adult households surveyed were under 55 years of age. Among the surveyed population 55 years of age and older: 26% of all single adults were ages 55-64; 3% were ages 65-69; and 7% were ages 70-79. One Veteran surveyed (in shelter) was between the ages of 70-79. CoC partners have also noted the upward trend in the aging populations, including those sleeping in places not meant for human habitation. In some cases, age, declining health, and

increased frailty have motivated people to come inside and off the streets, as sleeping outside has become too difficult. The need for assisted living, specialized services for people who are struggling with dementia, and the chronic health concerns (hypertension, diabetes, assistance with activities of daily living, etc.) are added challenges CoC partners identify among people experiencing homelessness.

### ***Intersections of Race and Homelessness and Root Causes***

As in years past, people identifying as Black/African American were largely over-represented among people surveyed during the 2023 Point-in-Time Count. While comprising just under 10% of the Arlington population (per the U.S. Census Bureau's 2021 Population Estimates), people identifying as Black/African American represented nearly 56% of those who were surveyed on the night of the count. Those identifying with Multiple Races were also over-represented at 7% of those surveyed as compared to comprising approximately 3.6% of the Arlington population, overall.

These disparities are consistent across other sub-groups of those counted:

- Transition-Aged Youths (young adults): 69% identified as Black/African American and 6% identified with Multiple Races
- Adults of Family Households: 67% identified as Black/African American
- Children within Family Households: 67% identified as Black/African Americans
- Single Adults: 31% identified as Black/African American and 6% identified with Multiple Races.

Racial equity and addressing these disparities are key priorities for the Arlington, VA CoC. It requires an intentional focus on elevating the voices and expertise of people with lived experience, developing systemic partnerships to support the intersecting identities of those experiencing homelessness, addressing issues at their root causes, and creating new policies that undo harmful and oppressive practices. These solutions work to undo harms from the Country's past legacies of the genocide of Indigenous people on this land and the enslavement of Black and Brown people, giving voice and power to those who are impacted most by oppressive policies and practices. The Arlington County Department of Human Services has recently hired a Racial Equity Senior Management Analyst to provide leadership and expertise to the CoC in these efforts.

### **Year-Round and Winter Inventory of Beds**

On the night of the 2023 Point-in-Time Count, the CoC had the following bed capacity availability:

- 236 Beds (148 single adult shelter beds and 88 family and DV shelter beds)
- 175 Units (148 single adult shelter units and 27 family and DV shelter units)

### **Permanent Housing Inventory Count**

On the night of the 2023 Point-in-Time Count, the CoC had the following Permanent Housing capacity:

- 448 Beds (311 single adult Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing beds and 137 family RRH and PSH beds)
- 331 Units (311 single adult Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing units and 50 family RRH and PSH units)

### **Key Take-Aways:**

The Point-in-Time Count is one of many approaches to enumerate the housing and homelessness needs communities face. It is a helpful snapshot in time that can measure trends year over year. Additionally, the Arlington, VA CoC also measures the number of people served across a 12-month period. In FY 2022, the Arlington, VA CoC served 1,070 people across all its programs. This includes 305 people across each of its emergency shelters. The message is clear: By examining the increase

in Point-in-Time Count data from 2023's Count and annualized CoC data, the need for homeless assistance and housing resources is critical and on the rise.

However, the Point-in-Time Count also illuminates important dynamics underway in our region. Twenty-seven (27) people counted had specifically reported coming to Arlington, VA for more assistance. Displacement of unsheltered people living in encampments without offering housing and services will continue to drive increases in people experiencing homelessness across the region. This strategy does not end homelessness. And coupled with divestments in prevention and housing resources while employment and wages lag, homelessness will be on the rise and housing options will become even more limited.

Despite the pandemic and its hard-felt impacts on people and systems of care, the Arlington, VA CoC made great progress during the past 2.5 years, leveraging emergency resources to prevent people from experiencing homelessness to rapidly housing people from the streets and shelters. This included increased hypothermia shelter access by 10 beds. Efforts promoted more positive health outcomes in the community and congregate shelter spaces. The CoC reduced homelessness over the course of the pandemic by 7% in 2020 and 14% in 2021 per Point-in-Time Counts. In 2022, the unsheltered count was reduced by 26%, a historic low for Arlington, VA.

The emergency response to homelessness and the resources deployed to address the health and housing crisis magnified by the pandemic was an illustration of possibilities. The 2023 Point-in-Time Count is an indicator of what happens when the valve is closed off. This is felt hardest among the most vulnerable people in the community, including young adults; seniors; Black, Indigenous and other People of Color (BIPOC); survivors of DV; people living with addictions and serious mental illness; and people sleeping unsheltered.

# District of Columbia

## System Overview

The District of Columbia's Continuum of Care (CoC) includes more than 200 provider agencies that deliver services to individuals and families who are facing housing loss, experiencing homelessness, or who formerly experienced homelessness. In Fiscal Year (FY) 22 alone, CoC programs served nearly 7,800 family households and more than 17,500 unaccompanied individuals.

While most CoC programming is dedicated to serving either families or unaccompanied men and women, there are many programs that are designed for key subpopulations such as youth, United States Military Veterans, the LGBTQ+ community, seniors, or survivors of domestic or intimate partner violence. In addition to street outreach, shelter, and transitional housing, the CoC's providers serve meals, offer respite care, administer prevention and diversion assistance, and offer a variety of housing resources such as rapid rehousing (RRH), targeted affordable housing (TAH)<sup>1</sup>, and permanent supportive housing (PSH).

The District's Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) sets the strategic framework for the CoC and acts as its board. The ICH membership includes officials from Mayor Muriel Bowser's cabinet, persons who are currently or who have formerly experienced homelessness, providers, and advocates. The ICH's strategic plan, Homeward DC<sup>2</sup>, guides this work and sets the vision of making homelessness in the District rare, brief, and nonrecurring.

The District of Columbia Department of Human Services (DHS) administers local dollars to support CoC programming, along with its prime contractor, The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness (TCP). TCP acquires federal resources through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) CoC Program that complement the local funding. Additional support for CoC programs comes from the U.S. Departments of Veteran Affairs (VA) and Health and Human Services (HHS).

As a part of its work with ICH, DHS, and federal partners, TCP also administers the District's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) which is the primary repository for person-level information on the individuals and families receiving CoC services. More than 90 percent of the programs in the District use the local HMIS and, in turn, TCP produces much of the data that informs the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count with that system. TCP has administered the HMIS and conducted the PIT Count on behalf of the District since 2001.

## Access to Services

Families facing housing loss in the District can visit DHS's Virginia Williams Family Resource Center for connection to homelessness prevention resources, shelter placement, or other services based on the family's needs. All families placed in emergency shelter from Virginia Williams have access to RRH through the Family Rehousing and Stabilization Program (FRSP) to assist with exiting shelter for housing in the community. The CoC's family shelters, or Short-Term Family Housing (STFH) programs, provide housing-focused case management in apartment-style living spaces and FRSP services include time-limited rental subsidies and case management support. After the FRSP subsidies end, some families continue to receive TAH or PSH resources to support their housing retention.

<sup>1</sup> Targeted affordable housing is a permanent subsidy that provides quarterly case management services, targeted to those living with a disabling condition, who do not require the level of intensive services associated with permanent supportive housing.

<sup>2</sup> Homeward DC is available at the ICH's website, ich.dc.gov

For unaccompanied individuals, access to the CoC's services is more decentralized. Individuals may stay at any of the District's low barrier emergency shelters and/or engage in case management at meal program sites and drop-in centers such as the Downtown Day Services Center, the Adams Place Day Center in Northeast DC, or at 801 East on the Campus of St. Elizabeths. Day Centers provide access to showers and laundry facilities, meals, and services provided by the District Departments of Health (DC Health), Employment Services (DOES), Motor Vehicles, and from non-governmental partners like Unity Health Care.

Over the past year, DHS has been working to streamline the "front door" to homeless services for unaccompanied adults and to re-orient the system towards homelessness prevention and diversion. The Project Reconnect program serves individuals who have newly entered shelter or who are currently facing housing instability by providing counseling and flexible funding that will either divert someone from needing homeless services or will facilitate a rapid exit from the homeless services system. Project Reconnect assists individuals with developing a housing plan, identifying resources, and setting goals that will help them access services and maintain or return to stable housing with their pre-existing support networks.

In addition to the resources mentioned above, unaccompanied and pregnant/parenting youth who are 24 or under may visit Zoe's Doors Drop-in Center in Northeast DC, the Latin American Youth Center's Drop-in Center in Columbia Heights, or Sasha Bruce Youthwork's Drop-in Center in Southeast DC. Youth visiting these locations may access food, clothing/laundry services, showers, and case management, or receive referrals to other services. DHS also administers the Youth Housing Options Prevention Education (HOPE) program which provides prevention, reunification, and stabilization services. Youth HOPE works to divert youth from shelter and reunite them with support networks (family, mentors, allies, etc.) via mediation services and family support, whenever safe and possible, as well as with identification of permanent housing solutions.

Veterans experiencing homelessness (or who are at risk) due to financial hardship, lack of employment, disabling conditions, or transition from corrections can connect with a VA homeless services care coordinator via the Washington DC Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC). Through the CRRC, veterans can receive food assistance, access shelter or housing resources, or can receive referrals for employment opportunities and other financial support, justice system navigation, addiction and/or mental health treatment, and health and dental care.

The CoC's Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement (CAHP) system, led by TCP, works with the CoC to provide standardized access and referrals to RRH, TAH, and PSH as well as youth- and veteran-specific transitional housing resources. The CAHP system uses a common assessment tool<sup>3</sup> as well as information from dedicated CAHP liaison staff at service provider organizations to determine when an individual or family's service needs are a good fit for an open CoC housing resource.

### **Recent System Changes and Achievements**

As will be covered in more detail in the next section, after several consecutive years of overall decreases in the CoC's PIT Count, the 2023 Count is up by close to 12 percent from 2022. This includes a ten percent increase among unaccompanied individuals and a 12 percent increase in families. Despite the increase, the 2023 Count is lower than the count recorded in 2020 which was

<sup>3</sup> The CoC uses the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) series of assessments. More information about CAHP and the SPDAT series of assessments is available on TCP's website, [community-partnership.org/dc-coordinated-entry-cahp](http://community-partnership.org/dc-coordinated-entry-cahp).

the last PIT Count held prior to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

In FY 20 and 21, the CoC saw decreases in the number of individuals and families served throughout the year, stemming from decreases in system inflow – households either newly experiencing homelessness or returning to the CoC after a previous exit. This, in turn, led to lower numbers of individuals and families in the system on a given day, as reflected in the 2021 and 2022 PIT Counts. In FY22, this began to reverse and nearly half of all single person and family households served throughout the fiscal year were either entirely new to the CoC or had not been served in the District since before the public health emergency.

Though exact causes for all inflow into the system are not clear, the increase in people experiencing homelessness in 2023 is a reflection of the economy and associated impacts of COVID-19. As has been the case with previous economic downturns, increases in homelessness tend to lag a year or two behind the downturn itself.

In addition to the District's prevention resources, there were many federal prevention-oriented resources funded during the public health emergency which have since expired. That said, the CoC was likely serving households facing housing loss in FY20 and 21 via these programs instead of in shelter and transitional housing, thereby keeping them from being counted in exercises like PIT in those years. To wit, STAY DC, DC's COVID-19 eviction program, and the DC eviction moratorium were two critical components to prevent homelessness during the public health emergency. Over the course of the program, STAY DC served 38,223 unique households and provided \$276 million in rental and utility assistance, but the program stopped taking new applications at the beginning of FY22.

The District continues to adapt the CoC based on lessons learned during the public health emergency. Low barrier shelters for individuals have continued to provide 24-hour access to facilities instead of limiting access to overnight hours, meals are now served “grab-and-go” style as opposed to cafeteria-style, and the enhanced cleaning protocols for shared spaces adopted in 2020 have been maintained in keeping with the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and DC Health.

During the public health emergency, the District also created two programs that provide non-congregate emergency shelter in local motels for people who had tested positive for COVID-19 or who were living with underlying health conditions which put them at risk. While these resources have begun to scale down, the CoC added non-congregate options to its shelter inventory, namely Bridge Housing. Bridge Housing provides apartment-style shelter for people who have been matched to permanent housing but have not completed the lease-up process. Non-congregate emergency shelter and Bridge Housing have been shown to expedite the transition from shelter to permanent housing by giving individuals a consistent place to stay, onsite case management, and housing navigation support while they lease-up.

The District is also implementing changes to its congregate shelter sites for individuals. Shortly after the 2022 PIT Count, DHS replaced the 801 East Shelter for men with a new facility that now includes a mix of low barrier beds, beds dedicated for working people, a dorm for seniors, a section for those in need of medical respite care, and a Day Center. Similar improvements are planned for other low barrier shelters.

LGBTQ+ adults have been an emerging subpopulation in subsystem for unaccompanied adults. The CoC's youth subsystem has seen increases in LGBTQ+ youth homelessness over the years, and without housing supports, many LGBTQ+ individuals are aging into the adult subsystem. To address

this need, DHS, TCP, and service providers KBEC Group and Coalition for the Homeless established the District's first shelter for LGBTQ+ adults in 2022. This and other specialized programming like the services offered at 801 East will help address the needs of key groups within this subsystem as they transition back to housing.

TCP's CAHP team works with CAHP liaisons at provider organizations to match unaccompanied men and women to the CoC's housing resources including RRH, TAH, and PSH funded both by DHS and federal sources. Those matches resulted in more than 1,200 unaccompanied individuals exiting shelter and unsheltered situations for permanent housing destinations in FY22 – up nearly 57 percent from the 764 exits that occurred in FY21.

As stated, the CoC served fewer individuals and families during FY20 and 21 than it did in the fiscal years prior to the public health emergency. Unlike the family subsystem, however, this trend continued for individuals in FY22, where the annualized count of unaccompanied men and women served by outreach, shelter, and transitional housing providers decreased by roughly 500 people from the previous year. The CoC credits the decrease to placements into its permanent housing programs – which have housing retention rates nearing 100 percent – with helping to reduce the number of individuals who re-experience homelessness over time. That said, increases in persons newly experiencing homelessness – which increased in FY22 -- are reflected in the increased counts of individuals served on a given day, as seen in the PIT Count.

To optimize use of its housing resources for individuals, and to speed up the match-to-lease up process, the District is working to implement creative strategies such as “Operation Make Movement.” This effort involves trained street outreach and shelter staff supporting individuals with their housing applications prior to being matched to a housing provider. While in its early stages of implementation, the effort has shown promise in reducing the time between match and lease-up.

For families, the pairing of STFH and FRSP is continuing to have positive impacts despite the increase at PIT. To wit, the STFH programs help to move families on to housing faster than previous congregate sites did. In FY22, the average length of time that families experienced homelessness was 115 days<sup>4</sup>, down from 168 days in FY21 and down considerably from its peak of 350 days when the DC General hospital and motel sites were utilized for the majority of the CoC's family shelter inventory.

Although there were more families in shelter at PIT than the previous year, the CoC is keeping pace with exits from the system to counter the new inflow. The CoC's shelter and transitional programs served 1,037 families throughout FY22, up by 113 families from FY21, though nearly 80 percent of families served in both years exited the CoC for permanent housing destinations. As seen in the other subsystems, the CoC's permanent programs for families have high retention rates; in FY22 STFH programs served just 24 families who were returning to the system within a year of a previous shelter exit. That said, more families newly experiencing homelessness are contributing to inflow; 455 of the families served by the CoC throughout FY22 were in their first episode of homelessness – up by 50 families from FY21.

While there were more families in shelter at PIT than in the previous year, most of the increase was anticipated due to operational changes and program expansion. In 2022, New Beginnings/Park Road, a new STFH site, opened; this expansion accounts for 22 of the 25 additional families counted in emergency shelters at PIT. The CoC also saw an increase in families in its programs that serve households fleeing domestic and intimate partner violence. Providers serving survivors of domestic

<sup>4</sup> This figure refers to the average time families spent in emergency shelter and transitional housing collectively. The average length of stay for families that only used STFH prior to exit was 83 days.

and intimate partner violence in the District and throughout the U.S. have added beds in their programs to respond to the nation-wide surge in domestic violence incidents during the pandemic.

As stated, most families exit STFH for RRH through FRSP, and in FY22, 700 families either transitioned from FRSP to PSH or TAH or exited to those destinations directly from STFH. To aid in the transition from FRSP, especially for those who do not receive TAH or PSH subsidies, DHS introduced a pilot program called Career Mobility Action Plan (Career MAP). Career MAP aims to remove barriers that District families confront as they pursue employment and increased earnings. For up to five years, the pilot provides resources directly to parents who recently experienced homelessness, are committed to pursuing a career in a high-demand sector, and are at risk of losing TANF, SNAP, rental subsidies, and/or other benefits more quickly than their income can cover these lost resources. As of April 2023, 524 families have enrolled in the program. Additionally, to enable housing stabilization, the District continued its DC Flex program which provides a shallow subsidy for rent; this includes \$8,400 per year for up to five years for families exiting FRSP. In FY22, DC Flex served 290 families.

The CoC's veteran subsystem continued its work to right size the portfolio of veterans-specific transitional housing by working to convert those temporary resources to permanent housing solutions. Several VA-funded Grant Per Diem (GPD) providers used philanthropic funding to convert their programs to affordable housing units for veterans.

Moreover, in 2021, the District received additional support for veterans experiencing homelessness to specifically address financial barriers to securing housing. Through 2022, these dollars assisted nearly 50 veterans with security deposits, rental assistance, moving costs, and even car repairs. The District also received \$500,000 in prevention funding in 2021 which helped nearly 200 veterans (through 2022) who were at risk of homelessness, pointing to prevention and diversion resources being key to ending homelessness.

Building on lessons learned from the individuals' subsystem, the youth subsystem worked in 2022 to establish CAHP liaisons at provider agencies to better connect youth experiencing homelessness to stabilizing resources. The need for this dedicated role at youth-serving agencies is due in part the continued expansion of youth subsystem since the launch of Solid Foundations DC<sup>5</sup> in 2016. In just the last few years the youth subsystem has added six extended transitional housing programs, which offer up to six years of assistance to youth experiencing homelessness, as well as two new youth RRH projects established by HUD's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP) grant. YHDP funds were renewed by TCP in 2022 to ensure the ongoing implementation of these programs. Also in 2022, 10 new PSH vouchers were designated for youth experiencing chronic homelessness.

## 2023 Continuum of Care Inventory

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SHELTER & HOUSING INVENTORY		
Category	Units for Individuals	Units for Families
Emergency Shelter <sup>6</sup>	2,785	374
Safe Haven	20	-
Transitional Housing	907	242
Rapid Rehousing	720	2,430
Permanent Supportive Housing	8,358	2,829
Other Permanent Housing <sup>7</sup>	1,076	1,345

The table above shows the number of units of various CoC program types operating as of the night of PIT for unaccompanied individuals and families. Persons served by emergency shelters, safe haven, and transitional housing programs (in addition to unsheltered persons) are the individuals and families included in the PIT Count. Those in rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, or other permanent housing, are not included in the PIT Count as they are no longer experiencing homelessness, yet these programs require that the households served were experiencing homelessness at entry.

The District's CoC is predominantly funded by DHS, with additional support coming from federal sources such as the HUD Continuum of Care (HUD CoC) Program. While HUD CoC dollars are the primary federal source of homeless services funding, the District, TCP, and the provider community also receive federal funds from HUD via YHDP and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG); from HHS's Runaway and Homeless Youth program; and from the VA's Grant Per Diem transitional housing program, Supportive Services for Veteran Families RRH program, and VA Supportive Housing (VASH) PSH program. Some CoC providers use private funds to establish their own programs or to support programs that are also publicly funded.

## 2023 Point-in-Time Count: Methodology

The CoC conducted its PIT Count on Wednesday, January 25, 2023. TCP used HMIS and the Survey123 application (for non-HMIS providers and volunteers without access to HMIS) to collect the HUD-required PIT information. The information provides both an enumeration of persons experiencing homelessness on the PIT date as well as information on the household composition, demographics, life experiences, economic circumstances, and service needs of persons counted.

Service provider staff and community volunteers collect this information during engagements on the night of PIT with persons who were unsheltered, staying in emergency shelters, and residing in transitional housing programs. Day Centers and meal programs worked with TCP to report information on persons served at their locations the morning after the PIT Count. These program participants indicated where they spent the night of PIT which TCP used augment the information collected on the PIT night itself. TCP used personally identifying information collected from survey respondents to ensure de-duplication within the final set of information.

<sup>6</sup> Includes all shelter beds/units for unaccompanied adults, unaccompanied minors, and families located at the District's severe weather, low-barrier, temporary, Short Term Family Housing (STFH), and Bridge Housing programs as well as the non-congregate motel spaces opened as a part of the District's public health emergency response that were occupied on the night of PIT.

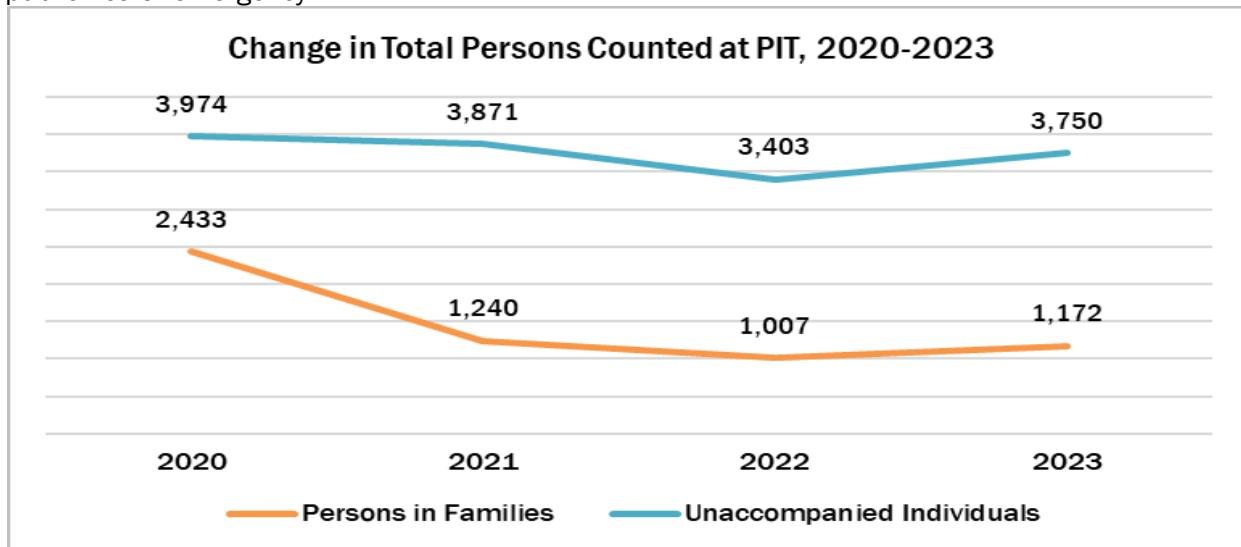
<sup>7</sup> Includes Targeted Affordable Housing (TAH) and Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV).

Most of the information collected for PIT comes from the HMIS, as more than 90 percent of all programs operating in the District are represented in that system. For the engagements with unsheltered persons and with persons who were in programs that do not use HMIS, TCP used the Survey123 application to collect the same information collected in HMIS. TCP trains HMIS users monthly to ensure that information on persons in their care is up to date throughout the year and trained non-HMIS providers, street outreach professionals, and volunteers to use Survey123 in the weeks leading up to the PIT Count.

A small number of service providers were only able to provide “head counts” on persons in their programs on PIT or were unable to submit identifying information due to programmatic restrictions,<sup>8</sup> but information received from these providers was aggregated with HMIS and Survey123 information to ensure that the count was as thorough as possible.

### 2023 Point-in-Time Count: Results

As noted above, after several years of decreasing PIT Counts, the count in 2023 increased by roughly 12 percent from 2022 but is 23 percent lower than the 2020 count, the last PIT recorded prior to the public health emergency.



As shown in the graph, the 2023 count increased by 165 persons in families and 347 unaccompanied individuals from year to year. However, both subsections of the count are down by 52 percent and 5 percent (respectively) from the 2020 Count.

#### Families

As shown in the following table, there was a 12 percent increase in the number of families – and a 16 percent increase in the number of persons in families – counted in 2023 as compared to 2022. Notwithstanding this year’s increase, the count of families mirrored the decrease of persons in families and remained down by 49 percent from the 2020 Count.

<sup>8</sup> Information from programs where participants are fleeing domestic/intimate partner programs may not include information like participants’ names or program locations in their submissions in keeping with the *Violence Against Women Act*.

While the environment surrounding the public health emergency played a role in decreased counts in 2021 and 2022, during that time the CoC also completed its transition from using congregate and motel sites for family shelter to the STFH model. This shift, along with use of FRSP and increased prevention options for families visiting Virginia Williams are the primary drivers behind family PIT Counts that are half of what they were just a few years ago.

	FAMILIES COUNTED AT PIT					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	% Change 2022 - 2023	% Change 2020 - 2023
Families	768	405	347	389	12.1%	-49.3%
Persons in Families	2,433	1,240	1,007	1,172	16.4%	-51.8%

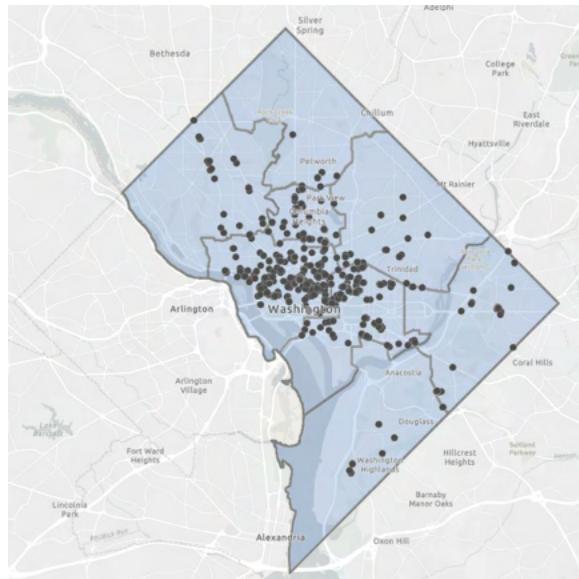
### Unaccompanied Individuals

The total count of unaccompanied individuals increased by 10 percent from the 2022 PIT Count. Prior to this year's Count, the CoC reported year-to-year reductions in the overall count of unaccompanied individuals since 2019, even as unsheltered homelessness rose slightly during that time. The count of individuals staying in an unsheltered location on the night of PIT follows the upward trend of the last several counts, however the increase was more substantial in 2023, at 19 percent.

Persistent inflow among unaccompanied men and women newly experiencing homelessness has kept the PIT Count for individuals relatively flat in comparison to the family count. Even as the CoC has increased exits to permanent housing and decreased the number of individuals served over the course of the fiscal year, new entries are making up a greater proportion of individuals served. While new inflow accounted for roughly 30 percent of men and women served annually between FYs 19 and 21, 51 percent of individuals served in FY22 were either new to the CoC or had not been served since prior to the public health emergency, pointing to the need for resources like those funded in response to the pandemic.

	UNACCOMPANIED INDIVIDUALS COUNTED AT PIT					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	% Change 2022 - 2023	% Change 2020 - 2023
Emergency Shelter	2,580	2,547	2,166	2,314	6.8%	-10.3%
Transitional Housing (incl. Safe Haven)	714	643	547	615	12.4%	-13.9%
Unsheltered	653	681	690	821	19.0%	25.7%
Total Persons	3,947	3,871	3,403	3,750	10.2%	-5.0%

**Map: Engagements with Unsheltered Persons at PIT (January 25, 2023)**



## 2023 Point-in-Time Count: Population Characteristics and Service Needs

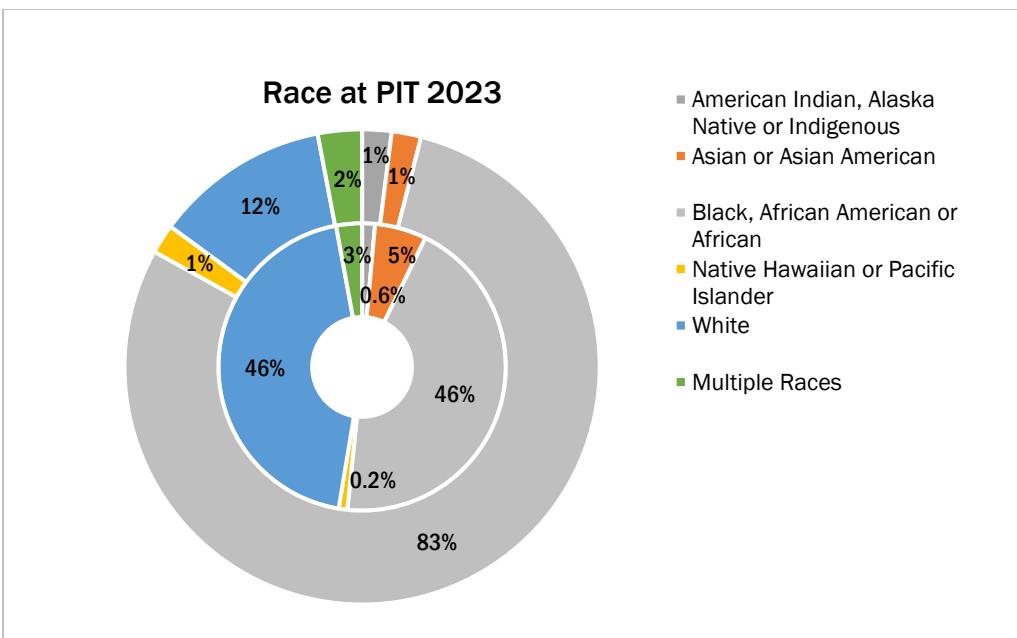
The number of individuals and families counted at PIT is a key performance indicator for the CoC and provides useful information on the size of the population of people experiencing homelessness at a given time. The PIT survey tool, however, provides deeper insight into the population's demographic make-up, life experiences, economic circumstances, and service needs. The survey information highlights key differences between subsystem populations (unaccompanied individuals versus families) but also displays the differences between subpopulation groups and persons with different life experiences. While the information that follows will focus primarily on the differences between unaccompanied adults and adults in families, TCP's website includes a dashboard tool that allows for further exploration of intra-subsystem differences. The dashboard is available at [community-partnership.org](http://community-partnership.org).

### **Demographics**

#### **Race & Ethnicity**

Both nationally and in the District people of color are disproportionately represented among those who experience homelessness; this is particularly true for Black and African American persons as well as Indigenous persons. At PIT 2023, 88 percent of the total population of persons (including children) experiencing homelessness identified as Black, Indigenous, or other persons of color, while this is true for just 54 percent of District residents at large.<sup>9</sup> The cause for this overrepresentation is due to myriad drivers of homelessness that have, for generations, disparately impacted communities of color, the insidiousness of which not only contributes to higher rates of homelessness but can also affect a person's or family's ability to resolve their housing crisis.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/DC>



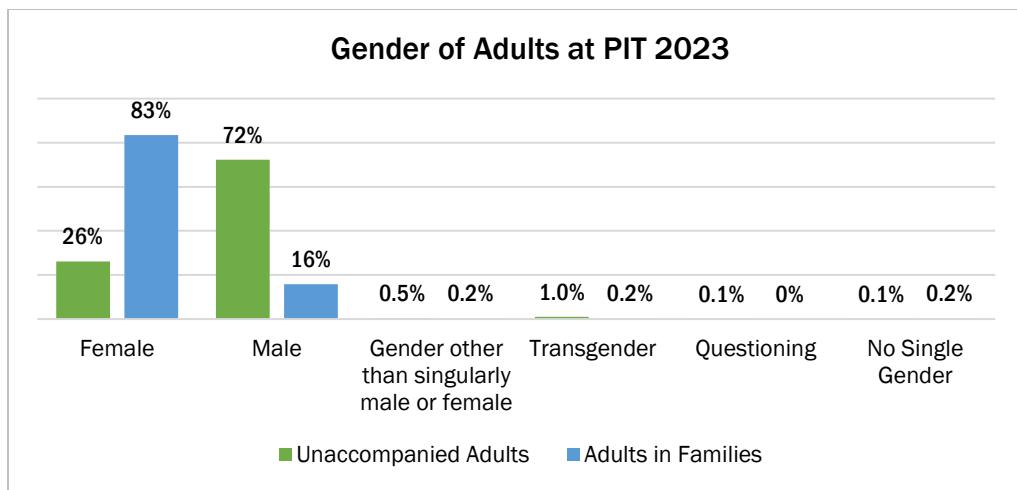
In the family subsystem, the disparity is even larger; Black, Indigenous, or other persons of color make up 97 percent of persons counted at PIT (up slightly from 96 percent in 2022). For unaccompanied individuals, Black, Indigenous, or other persons of color made up 85 percent of men and women counted at PIT 2023 (down slightly from 89 percent in 2022).

Regarding ethnicity, HUD currently asks PIT survey respondents to categorize themselves as either Hispanic/Latin(a)(o)(x) or non-Hispanic/Latin(a)(o)(x). In the 2023 PIT Count, both the rates at which persons in families and unaccompanied individuals identified as Hispanic/Latin(a)(o)(x) increased slightly from the previous year. That rate increased from six to eight percent among all persons in families (including children) and from seven to ten percent of all unaccompanied individuals (including unaccompanied minors) counted at PIT.

## Gender

From year to year, the difference in the gender makeup of unaccompanied individuals compared to that of persons in families stayed relatively consistent. Driven by the prevalence of persons who identify as female among adults in families, women and girls made up 61 percent of persons in families counted in 2023.

As shown in the graph below, when looking at just adults, the divergent ways men and women engage with the CoC is even more striking. Women make up 83 percent of adults in families, whereas male-identifying persons make up 72 percent of the unaccompanied individuals subsystem.



## Age

The PIT survey asks respondents to provide their date of birth or age as a deduplication mechanism but also to help identify the extent to which the CoC is serving two important age-based subpopulation groups – youth and seniors. Youth are defined by HUD as either a household with only children (i.e. unaccompanied or parenting minors) or Transition Age Youth (TAYs) (people who are 18 to 24 years old), and Seniors are defined as persons who are age 55 and older.

Among adults counted at PIT, median age for unaccompanied individuals was 47 (48 for men and 47 for women) and was 28 for heads of family households. The unaccompanied individual population skewed slightly younger in 2023, down from a median age of 49 last year, while the adults in families are skewed slightly older. Whereas 40 percent of family heads of household were in the TAY age range in previous counts, they made up 30 percent in 2023.

AGE RANGES, HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD AT PIT 2023 <sup>10</sup>		
	Unaccompanied Individuals	Families
13 to 17 (Households with only children)	0.3%	0.3%
18 to 24 (TAYs)	9.5%	29.6%
25 to 34	16.6%	49.2%
35 to 44	19.0%	15.0%
45 to 54	19.0%	4.8%
55+ (Seniors)	35.6%	1.1%

Although the count of TAYs in the family subsystem has decreased, the count of unaccompanied TAYs has increased as the CoC has continued to invest in resources for this population. Historically young people experiencing homelessness are among the hardest to count in efforts like PIT because they often use services on the periphery of the system like drop-in centers and may stay in multiple

<sup>10</sup> While most tables in this narrative include information on all adult persons in both the unaccompanied individuals and family subsystems, this table includes just the designated heads of households for families to ensure inclusion of the households headed by minors and to denote the number of families in the CoC where the family would be eligible for youth specific resources because the head of household is a minor or TAY.

places over time. To better serve youth, the District continues to expand its portfolio of youth services and, as that portfolio has grown, so has the number of youths using CoC shelter and residential services.

In addition to programs serving TAYs, the CoC includes a few shelter and transitional sites that are licensed to work specifically with minors. There were seven unaccompanied minors counted in shelter at PIT as well as one family headed by a minor who was in transitional housing on the night of the count. Two unaccompanied minors were counted in an unsheltered location on the night of PIT as well.

Regarding seniors, persons 55 or older make up 32 percent of all adults counted at PIT; there were 1,321 unaccompanied adults and five heads of family households who were seniors as of the PIT date. The CoC's inventory for seniors includes units in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and PSH. These resources are important given that older adults experiencing homelessness are at greater risk of health problems, tend to exhibit mental and physical health issues that are more consistent with non-homeless people who are at least ten years older than them, and have higher rates of early mortality than the general population.

### **The LGBTQ+ population**

Among adults surveyed at PIT, 349 identified as part of the LGBTQ+ community based on their responses to questions about their sexual orientation and gender identity. LGBTQ+ identifying persons were overwhelmingly using the unaccompanied adults subsystem, with the count including 338 individuals and just 11 adults in families.

Transition Age Youth (ages 18-24) counted at PIT were more likely than older adults experiencing homelessness to report LGBTQ+ identification. Indeed, 30 percent of unaccompanied youth and five percent of parenting youth (or 25 percent of all 18- to 24-year-olds counted at PIT) identified as LGBTQ+ compared to just nine percent in the District at large based on recent estimates from DC Health.<sup>11,12</sup>

For LGBTQ+ youth, the CoC inventory includes 61 transitional housing units and a rapid rehousing program that serves 15 individuals at a time. As previously noted, the CoC established its first LGBTQ+ shelter for adults aged 25 years and older in 2022; this program serves up to 27 individuals at a time in a low barrier shelter setting and was at capacity on the night of PIT.

### **Life Experiences**

The PIT survey also asks adult respondents about life experiences that are known contributors to housing instability. The information collected at PIT helps the CoC and its partners that work with survivors of domestic or intimate partner violence, migrant communities, and the foster care and justice systems to develop tailored prevention strategies as well as new programming for these populations.

Through the HUD CoC funding process, TCP and the provider community established transitional and permanent housing opportunities for survivors of domestic violence and persons returning from the justice system; these projects are slated to open later in 2023.

<sup>11</sup> <https://doh.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/doh/publication/attachments/LGBT%20Health%20Report.pdf> (Note: Report refers to "LGBT", not "LGBTQ+")

<sup>12</sup> <https://voicesofyouthcount.org/brief/lgbtq-youth-homelessness/>  
(Note: Report refers to "LGBTQ" not "LGBTQ+")

REPORTED EXPERIENCES AMONG ADULTS AT PIT 2023		
	Unaccompanied Adults 2023	Adults in Families 2023
Survivor of Domestic Violence	23.7%	54.9%
Limited/No English Proficiency	6.5%	2.1%
Formerly in Foster Care	12.1%	16.1%
Resided in an Institutional Setting	43.8%	7.1%

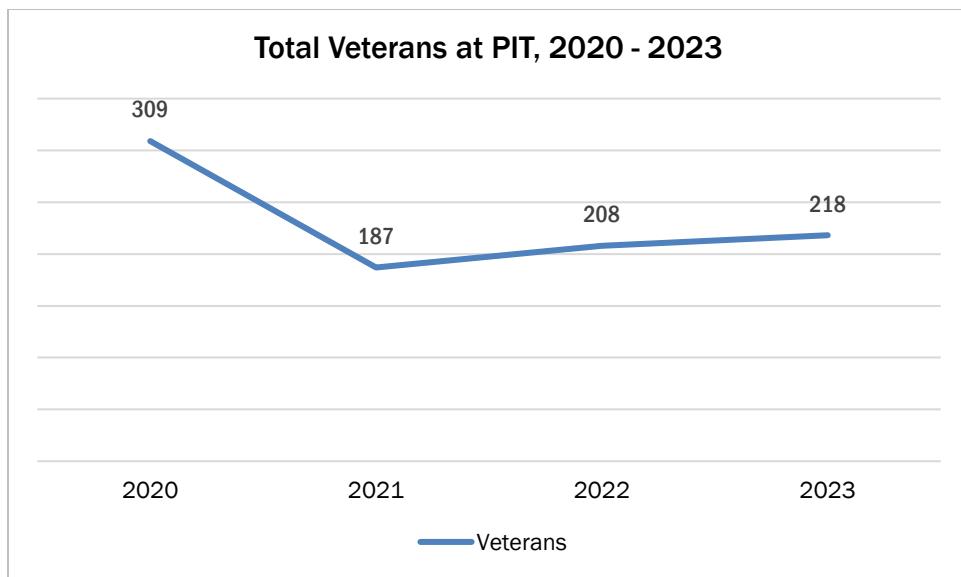
As has been the case for several years in the District's PIT Count, surviving domestic or intimate partner violence is the most reported life experience among adults in families, with most family heads of household reporting in 2023 that this was true for them and/or their children. While this was reported by 24 percent of unaccompanied individuals, when breaking the individuals' subsystem down by gender, the PIT surveys showed that this was reported at a rate of almost 50 percent for unaccompanied women as opposed to 14 percent for men.

PIT survey information also showed that nearly 44 percent of unaccompanied individuals experiencing homelessness had resided in institutional settings such as treatment programs, hospitals for long stays, and the justice system prior to experiencing homelessness. More than one in ten adults throughout the entire CoC reported histories with the foster care system, with 27 percent of persons ages 18-24 reporting that this was true for them as well.

### Veterans

As noted, the CoC's work to find housing solutions for veterans experiencing homelessness has involved repurposing funding from shelter and transitional resources to create permanent housing options while leveraging private funds to prevent veteran homelessness. While the PIT Count of veterans increased by ten persons in 2023, the increase is not as significant as other subpopulations within the overall PIT Count.

In FY22, the CoC helped 252 veterans move to permanent housing, up slightly from 234 the previous year, and more than 125 have moved to permanent housing thus far in FY23. While the Veterans CAHP community is successful in helping to facilitate these exits to PSH and RRH resources, many veterans continue to newly present to the CoC each month which accounts for the increase in the PIT Count and underscores the need for continued investment in homelessness prevention for veterans in addition to housing resources.



## Employment and Income

PIT provides insight into whether persons experiencing homelessness are receiving income, particularly from employment. Information on income sources and associated amounts is tracked throughout the year to document changes over time, but the PIT information provides a snapshot look at what this indicator looks like on a given day.

Receiving income and the rate of employment is typically higher among adults in families; this is generally attributed to adults in families being younger and living with fewer disabling conditions than their counterparts in the unaccompanied individuals subsystem. For those with income in both subsystems, however, a small majority report that a benefit is their primary (greatest) source as opposed to income from employment.

INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT AT PIT 2023		
	Unaccompanied Adults	Adults in Families
Receiving Income	43.1%	74.0%
Employed	12.9%	41.8%
PRIMARY INCOME SOURCE		
Employment	28.6%	31.8%
Social Security/Retirement	4.6%	0.0%
SSI/SSDI (Disability Income)	52.4%	14.5%
TANF/Public Assistance	2.9%	50.9%
Other	4.0%	0.9%

Connecting adults with income and helping those who can gain or maintain employment is a key performance indicator for the CoC and is tracked by ICH, DHS, and TCP at both the provider and system level. For those who will not be prioritized for a permanent housing subsidy, employment income will be key for maintaining housing in the District's high-cost housing market. As noted, the

new 801 East shelter will include beds specifically for working people to ensure that they have a place to stay so that housing loss does not jeopardize their employment.

### **Disabling Conditions and Chronic Homelessness**

PIT also includes an enumeration of the extent to which adult persons are living with various disabling conditions. The CoC develops programs based on this information to ensure that its program inventory meets the needs of the individuals and families presenting for services. Persons living with disabling conditions who have lengthy or repeated episodes of homelessness – the HUD-defined “chronically homeless<sup>13</sup>” -- are among the most vulnerable persons served by the CoC and are prioritized for matches to PSH resources.

As has been the case in previous years, the disabling conditions tracked at PIT have been more prevalent among unaccompanied adults than adults in families. The lower prevalence of disabling conditions among adults in families coupled with the efforts to exit families from shelter to housing quickly have translated to a markedly low rate of chronic homelessness among families in the District. Similar housing-focused case management efforts and funding for permanent housing resources for unaccompanied adults may also result in decreases in chronic homelessness over time.

DISABLING CONDITIONS & CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS AT PIT 2023		
	Unaccompanied Adults	Adults in Families
Substance Abuse (SA) History	19.3%	2.4%
History of Mental Illness (MI)	29.4%	16.1%
Dual Diagnosis (SA & MI)	12.1%	1.3%
Chronic Health Problem	16.6%	2.8%
Developmental Disability	6.3%	2.8%
Living with HIV/AIDS	2.8%	0.0%
Physical Disability	14.4%	2.7%
Experiencing Chronic Homelessness <sup>14</sup>	42.0%	4.3%

### **2023 Point-in-Time Count: Permanent Housing**

As a part of the PIT process each year the CoC also enumerates persons who formerly experienced homelessness – individuals and families who are in housing resources dedicated to serving those who were experiencing homelessness at the time of program entry.

<sup>13</sup> Chronic homelessness, as defined by HUD, is experienced when an adult person has been unsheltered or in emergency shelter for a year or more or has had four or more episodes of homelessness in three years (which total at least 12 months) and is living with a disabling condition. Families are experiencing chronic homelessness if at least one adult person in the household meets those criteria.

<sup>14</sup> Other figures in this table use the sum of persons who are unsheltered, in emergency shelter, and in transitional housing as the denominator when calculating the associated percentages. The “Experiencing Chronic Homelessness” calculation is based on those who meet the definition described in footnote 12, and as such, the denominator used to calculate this percentage is only the sum of unsheltered persons and persons in emergency shelter (as persons in transitional housing cannot be considered chronically homeless).

While not a part of the official PIT Count, households in these programs would likely still be in shelter or living in unsheltered situations if not for these permanent housing solutions. At PIT 2023, 6,775 unaccompanied individuals and 5,325 families were residing in housing units that are a part of the CoC's RRH, TAH and PSH inventory.

	Unaccompanied Individuals	Family Households
Other Permanent Housing (e.g., TAH)	1,076	986
Permanent Supportive Housing	4,979	1,510
Rapid Rehousing	720	2,829
Total	6,775	5,325

Funding for these programs comes largely from the District via DHS, but also from HUD, the VA, and private sources. As these resources expand, the District and TCP's CAHP team work to match eligible individuals and families to open slots in new and existing programs. In FY22, the CoC facilitated the exit of more than 1,200 unaccompanied men and women and over 800 families to housing resources.

## Conclusion

Despite increased PIT counts, the CoC's strategic use of its shelter, transitional, and housing inventories are resulting in positive outcomes. The expansion of housing solutions increased the number of exits to permanent housing destinations and is helping to decrease the time households experience homelessness. To wit, the average stay in the family system decreased by 53 days and the low rate of families experiencing chronic homelessness reflect a well-functioning system. That said, increased inflow from both individuals and families newly experiencing homelessness signals the need to expand prevention and diversion while continuing to add to our supportive housing inventory.

While supportive housing, prevention, and affordable housing are the key resources, a CoC where providers, funders, and system-level partners tailor services to address changes to the system of care will also help foster housing stability. Portions of the PIT increases seen in 2023 are due to the CoC responding to emerging needs – modernizing programs during the pandemic, providing additional safe spaces for survivors of domestic violence, and creating new programs for burgeoning subpopulations such as LGBTQ+ adults have meant adapting shelter and transitional resources while developing housing solutions for a changing population.

In the work of making homelessness in the District rare, brief, and nonrecurring, the District of Columbia's CoC remains committed to implementing innovative and proven solutions while evaluating their efficacy and system impacts through exercises like Point-in-Time.

# Fairfax County, Virginia

## Description of Homeless Services

The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness, the community's Continuum of Care (CoC), is comprised of non-profit and governmental partners, faith-based communities, advocates, those with lived experience of homelessness, and other community stakeholders. The Fairfax County CoC is guided by the CoC Committee, which serves as the governance of the CoC, and community-wide vision that every person in the community can access and maintain safe and affordable housing.

The homeless services system is comprised of a spectrum of homeless service interventions, all of which are designed to achieve the goal of ensuring homelessness is brief, rare, and one time. This includes the following project types:

- **STREET OUTREACH:** Outreach services include engagement, case management, community linkages, and supportive services to individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness.
- **HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION:** Homelessness Prevention is designed to stabilize households in their current housing or help them move into new housing through the provision of services and / or rental assistance.
- **EMERGENCY SHELTER:** Emergency Shelter is a short-term, temporary solution while housing-focused case management services are provided to quickly resolve the immediate housing crisis. Fairfax County's CoC operates with a total of eleven shelters serving single individuals, households with children, victims of domestic violence, and youth (ages 13-17).
- **HYPOTHERMIA PREVENTION PROGRAM:** The Hypothermia Prevention Program is an expansion of emergency shelter capacity through existing shelters as well as auxiliary sites based in government buildings and houses of worship during the winter months for single individuals to prevent death and injury due to hypothermia.
- **TRANSITIONAL HOUSING:** Transitional Housing includes the provision of case management and services meant to bridge the gap from homelessness to permanent housing and is primarily used in Fairfax County for special populations, including victims of domestic violence and transition-aged youth (ages 18-24).
- **RAPID REHOUSING:** Rapid Rehousing programs are designed to help households experiencing homelessness move quickly into permanent housing through the provision of housing location support, ongoing case management services, and / or rental assistance.
- **PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING:** Permanent Supportive Housing is non-time-limited, affordable housing with wrap-around intensive support services for people experiencing homelessness where a member of the household has a long-term disability that is not expected to resolve, and the disability significantly interferes with their activities of daily living.
- **OTHER PERMANENT HOUSING:** Other Permanent Housing programs provide non-time-limited housing options for people experiencing homelessness. These programs have specific eligibility and prioritization criteria determined by the project's funding source.

The project types are all connected to the continuum's Coordinated Entry system, which was developed to standardize the access, assessment, and referral process across the Fairfax County CoC to make rapid, effective, and consistent client-to-housing and service matches.

## **Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing: Capacity**

*Emergency Shelters.* There are eleven shelters in the Fairfax County CoC that are operated by non-profit partner organizations year-round. Shelter composition in Fairfax County includes the following:

- Households without Children (single adults), 3 shelters.
- Households with Children (families), 3 shelters.
- Households with and without Children (single adults and families), 1 shelter.
- Domestic Violence Survivors, 3 shelters.
- Youth shelter (ages 13 – 17 years), 1 shelter.

The shelters also provide limited overflow beds throughout the year. A hypothermia prevention program serving single individuals operates in several locations throughout the county between December 1 – March 31 in collaboration with non-profit partners and faith-based communities. Families with children are also sometimes sheltered in hotels when capacity in the year-round shelter beds are limited.

Emergency shelter capacity (including winter seasonal and overflow capacity) decreased by seven percent between the 2022 and 2023 Housing Inventory Counts due to the closure of nearly all temporary non-congregate shelters established as part of the response to COVID-19.

*Transitional Housing:* There are three transitional housing programs that serve single adults and five transitional housing programs for households with children. These programs are operated by non-profit agencies with various combinations of private, county, and federal funding. The transitional housing programs primarily serve special populations, including victims of domestic violence and transition aged youth (18-24).

## **A Year of Re-Evaluation**

In 2022 Fairfax County initiated an assessment process of its efforts to prevent and end homelessness. In April 2022 the Board of Supervisors initiated the project in three-parts:

1. Assess the operational performance of County and nonprofit homeless assistance providers.
2. Update the County's homelessness strategies in collaboration with the CoC Board.
3. Prepare a set of recommended improvements and necessary funding to assure that local homeless assistance programs are not only effectively ending homelessness, but that they are providing safe and caring environments for County residents in housing crisis.

The following month, May 2022, the Board of Supervisors directed County staff to also:

1. Evaluate the successes and challenges experienced with the Quarantine, Protection, Isolation, and Decompression (QPID) hotel program in response to the COVID pandemic, including costs, operations, and results, as well as a comparison with the success of the County's established use of hotel rooms as temporary shelter for families with children experiencing homelessness.
2. Identify site-specific options for the development of more permanent supportive housing, with a focus on creative solutions for the long-term housing and service needs of the population experiencing homelessness.
3. Review current zoning requirements and allowances for emergency shelter in commercial

and industrial districts where vacant and underutilized properties might be used by private entities to provide shelter and services to the population experiencing homelessness, including a possible addition to the Zoning Ordinance work program for the Board's consideration.

4. Provide an analysis of other available options that are not currently being used to address homelessness in the County, including costs and benefits of each, and provide recommendations for the Board's consideration. The analysis should also include a review of successful efforts that have been implemented in other jurisdictions.
5. Ensure that the County's partners in addressing homelessness have an opportunity to provide input to staff regarding matters addressed herein, including the operational review previously requested.

County staff presented its findings at the Board of Supervisors' Housing Committee meeting in November 2022. And, in December 2022 the Board of Supervisors directed County staff to return in 2023 with a recommendation for the re-constitution of a new CoC Board, then work with the re-constituted CoC Board to develop strategic priorities to address homelessness for FY 2025 budget recommendations, including ways to implement new and underutilized options. The Board also directed staff to include the zoning proposal to facilitate the adaptive reuse of vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial properties by private entities to provide shelter, services, and permanent supportive housing to the homeless population as a Priority 1 item on the FY 2024 Zoning Ordinance Work Program for the Board of Supervisor's consideration.

### **Point-in-Time Count Survey Analysis**

The 2023 Point-in-Time Count was conducted on January 25, 2023, in coordination with the Metro DC region. This annual count, organized in accordance with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development guidelines, included people who were literally homeless – those in shelters, in time-limited transitional housing programs, as well as those who were unsheltered and living on the street. Conducting the enumeration required extensive efforts by a wide range of community partners, involving dozens of staff from public and private nonprofit organizations that work with people experiencing homelessness in the Fairfax-Falls Church community.

There were 1,310 people experiencing homelessness on the night of the 2023 Point-in-Time Count, which is an increase of 10 percent (119 people) from the 2022 Point-in-Time Count. The overall increase is primarily driven by the higher number of people in families with children experiencing homelessness, which increased by 33 percent (188 people) between the 2022 and 2023 Point-in-Time Counts. The overall increase would be even higher if the number of single adults had not decreased by 11 percent during the same period.

Overall, the increase in people experiencing homelessness is attributed to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on community health and economics. In 2022, the third year of the pandemic, the Fairfax CoC began experiencing a period of surging demand for emergency shelter from families with children. The number of families with children being referred to shelter increased to levels not seen since 2017. The increase is primarily attributed to the end of state and federal eviction moratoria, along with the cumulative negative effects of thousands of people experiencing illness and death from COVID, sudden changes in employment, and inflationary pressures, especially in rental costs. Meanwhile, while the demand for assistance quickly increased, public and private human service providers were experiencing unprecedented challenges in recruiting and retaining personnel, as well as the depletion of emergency rental assistance and other pandemic-era resources for homeless assistance. It is currently impossible to determine whether the increase in people experiencing homelessness is a temporary one or if the numbers will stabilize in future years.

In contrast to the Point-in-Time Count, it is also important to track the number of people experiencing homelessness over a full year. The Fairfax CoC reported in its latest System Performance Measures to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, which covered the federal fiscal year 2022 (10/1/2021-9/30/2022), that the total number of sheltered homeless persons, not including dedicated domestic violence shelters, was 3,135 people – which was 312 more people, or 11 percent more, than the prior year.

The following tables detail the number of people identified as experiencing literal homelessness during the past five years by household type, as well as project types.

FAIRFAX COUNTY POINT-IN-TIME COUNT (2019 – 2023)						
COUNT OF PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY POPULATION	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	% Change 2022 to 2023
Total # of Single Adults	555	626	737	513	507	(11%)
Total # of Families with Children	218	169	140	161	150	29%
Total # of Persons in Families	752	564	480	528	526	33%
Total # of Adults in Families	292	232	189	210	197	26%
Total # of Children in Families	460	332	291	318	329	39%
Total # of Children Only Households	3	1	5	0	1	-----
<b>Total # of Persons Experiencing Homelessness</b>	<b>1,310</b>	<b>1,191</b>	<b>1,222</b>	<b>1,041</b>	<b>1,034</b>	<b>10%</b>

FAIRFAX COUNTY POINT-IN-TIME COUNT (2019 – 2023)						
COUNT OF PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY PROJECT TYPE	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	% Change 2022 to 2023
Unsheltered	113	57	57	88	89	98%
Emergency Shelter	1,049	996	1,004	763	774	5%
Transitional Housing	148	138	161	190	171	7%
<b>Total # of Persons Experiencing Homelessness</b>	<b>1,310</b>	<b>1,191</b>	<b>1,222</b>	<b>1,041</b>	<b>1,034</b>	<b>10%</b>

## Subpopulations

Within the total population of people experiencing homelessness in Fairfax County there are a variety of subpopulations that have specific needs and require tailored assistance. The following table details some of the most important subpopulations identified in the count.

FAIRFAX COUNTY POINT IN TIME COUNT SUBPOPULATIONS			
CATEGORY	HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN (TOTALS FOR ADULTS ONLY)	HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT CHILDREN	TOTAL
Chronic Homelessness	9	248	257
Substance Use Disorder	14	119	133
Serious Mental Illness	30	212	242
Physical Disability	19	128	147
Chronic Health Problems	24	131	155
Domestic Violence—History	121	106	227
Domestic Violence—Current	52	35	87
Limited English Proficiency	57	69	126
U.S. Military Veteran	1	33	34

- CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS: The number of adults experiencing chronic homelessness decreased slightly between the 2022 and 2023 Point-in-Time Counts. There were 282 adults that identified as experiencing chronic homelessness during the 2022 Point-in-Time Count (33 percent of the total adults counted) and 257 adults experiencing chronic homelessness (30 percent of the total adults counted) during the 2023 Point-in-Time Count.
- VETERANS: There were 32 people that identified as veterans identified during the 2022 Point-in-Time Count (4 percent of total adults counted) and 34 people that identified as veterans identified during the 2023 Point-in-Time Count (4 percent of the total adults counted).

- TRANSITION AGED YOUTH: There were 91 transition-aged youths (persons between the ages of 18 and 24 years) identified during the 2022 Point-in-Time Count (8 percent of total adults counted) and 73 transition-aged youths identified during the 2023 Point-in-Time Count (9 percent of the total adults counted).
- SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: There were 115 households identified as currently fleeing domestic violence and 220 households that reported a history of domestic violence during the 2022 Point-in-Time Count (15 percent and 28 percent of total households counted). There were 87 households identified as currently fleeing domestic violence and 229 households that reported a history of domestic violence during the 2023 Point-in-Time Count (11 percent and 30 percent of total households counted).
- UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS: The number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness increased 98 percent or by 56 people, between the 2022 and 2023 Point-in-Time Counts.
- RACE & ETHNICITY: The most significant disparity in the demographics of those experiencing homelessness on the night of the 2023 Point-in-Time Count is the disproportionate representation of people identifying as Black or African American. Although only 10 percent of the general population in Fairfax County identifies as Black or African American, 48 percent of people experiencing homelessness on the night of the 2023 Point-in-Time Count identified as Black or African American.

FAIRFAX COUNTY 2023 POINT IN TIME COUNT		DEMOGRAPHICS	
CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	NUMBER	PERCENT
Age	Number of Persons (under age 18)	463	35%
	Number of Persons (18 - 24)	109	8%
	Number of Persons (over age 24)	738	56%
Gender	Female	623	48%
	Male	677	52%
	Gender other than singularly male or female	4	0%
	Transgender	1	0%
	Questioning	-	0%
	No Single Gender	-	0%
	Unknown	5	0%
Ethnicity	Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	976	75%
	Hispanic/Latino	304	23%
	Unknown	30	2%
Race	White	439	34%
	Black or African-American	633	48%
	Asian	75	6%
	American Indian or Alaska Native	14	1%
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	5	0%
	Multiple Races	101	8%

	Unknown	43	3%
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### Year-Round and Winter Inventory of Beds

The following table details the number of emergency shelter beds (year-round, seasonal, and overflow), as well as transitional housing, on the night of the 2023 Point-in-Time Count.

FAIRFAX COUNTY HOUSING INVENTORY COUNT (2023)					
Beds for Persons Experiencing Literal Homelessness BY PROJECT & POPULATION	HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN BEDS   UNITS	HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT CHILDREN BEDS	CHILDREN ONLY HOUSEHOLDS BEDS		TOTAL
Emergency Shelter	279   84	166	8		453
Winter Seasonal/Overflow	293   n/a	271	0		564
Transitional Housing	158   55	33	0		191
<b>Total # of Beds</b>	<b>730   139</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>1,208</b>

The following table details the change in the number of emergency shelter beds (year-round, seasonal, and overflow), as well as transitional housing, over the past five years of Point-in-Time Counts.

FAIRFAX COUNTY HOUSING INVENTORY COUNT (2019 – 2023)						
Beds for Persons Experiencing Literal Homelessness BY PROJECT TYPE	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	% Change 2021 to 2022
Emergency Shelter	453	730	814	507	483	-38%
Winter Seasonal/Overflow	564	363	292	322	340	-25%
Transitional Housing	191	200	255	247	249	-5%
<b>Total # of Beds</b>	<b>1,208</b>	<b>1,293</b>	<b>1,361</b>	<b>1,076</b>	<b>1,072</b>	<b>-7%</b>

### Permanent Housing Inventory Count

Increasing permanent housing capacity, including rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, and other permanent housing, remains a critical strategy in preventing and ending homelessness in Fairfax County. Access to permanent, affordable housing that matches the individualized needs of those experiencing homelessness influences the overall homeless services system performance. Housing is critical to ending homelessness.

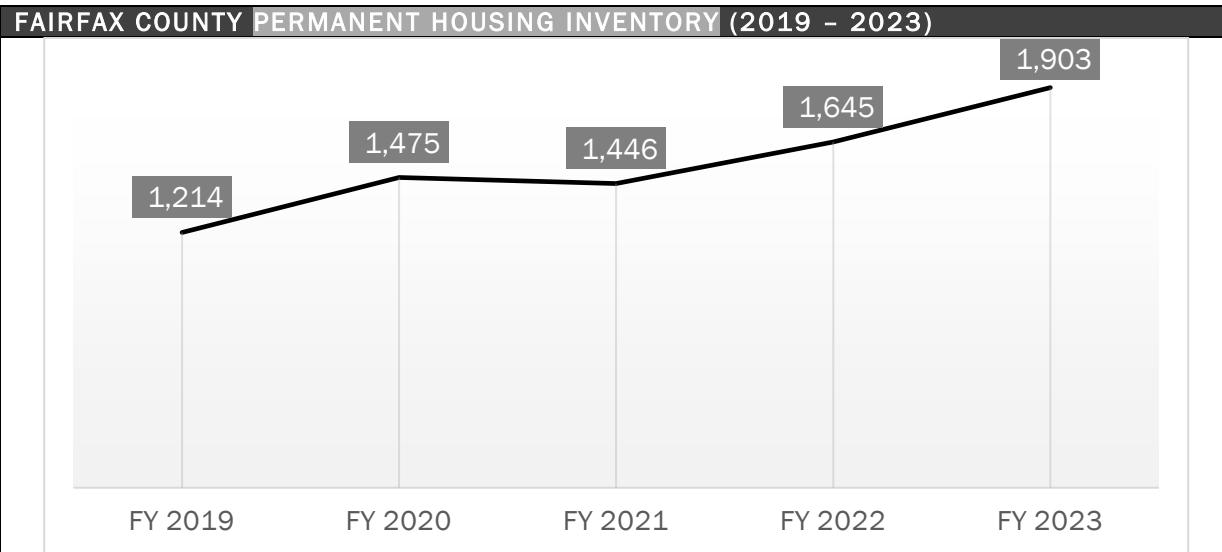
- **RAPID REHOUSING:** Fairfax County CoC decreased by 17 percent between the 2022 and 2023 Housing Inventory Counts. The reduction is primarily driven by the reduction in remaining resources from the supplemental Emergency Solutions Grants program under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) funding (ESG-CV), along with

the pandemic relief funding from the Virginia COVID Homelessness Emergency Response Program (CHERP).

- PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING: The number of permanent supportive housing beds in the 2023 Housing Inventory Count was three percent lower than the previous year, primarily because of a reduction in VASH units in Fairfax County. Most of the permanent supportive housing in the Fairfax County CoC is funded through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care Program. The remaining projects are funded through US Department of Housing and Urban Development Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program, along with smaller state and local county funding. In 2016, a public finance bond was passed that includes \$48 million over the next several years to renovate the 30-year-old shelters. The first facility, Bailey's Shelter and Supportive Housing, was designed to include co-located emergency shelter and permanent supportive housing. This model supported the addition of 18 new units of permanent supportive housing, which became available in 2019. Development is underway for the other shelters included in the bond. An additional 88 permanent supportive housing units are under development through two new projects that are part of public-private partnerships with the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority.
- OTHER PERMANENT HOUSING: In 2022 two large projects got fully underway and increased the number of other permanent housing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness. First, the locally funded “Rental Subsidy and Services Program” (RSSP; formerly the Bridging Affordability program), was re-launched at the beginning of fiscal year 2022 and was fully subscribed by the time of the Point-in-Time Count. Like rapid rehousing, RSSP provides time-limited rental assistance combined with services to help program participants achieve and maintain housing stability. Similarly, 169 new “Emergency Housing Vouchers” (EHV’s) from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development were awarded at the beginning of FY 2022 and was nearly fully subscribed by the Point-in-Time Count. Eventually paired with supportive services from the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority, the EHV’s are now serving families and individuals with greater housing challenges and barriers with longer-term rental assistance and more intensive supportive services, much like permanent supportive housing.

The following tables detail the changes permanent housing beds in the Fairfax CoC by project type and year.

FAIRFAX COUNTY PERMANENT HOUSING INVENTORY (2019 – 2023)							
BEDS BY PERMANENT HOUSING PROJECT TYPE		2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	% Change 2022 to 2023
PERMANENT HOUSING FORMERLY HOMELESS	Rapid Rehousing	550	659	455	366	269	-17%
	Permanent Supportive Housing	649	669	668	627	639	-3%
	Other Permanent Housing	704	317	323	482	306	122%
<b>Total # of Beds</b>		<b>1,903</b>	<b>1,645</b>	<b>1,446</b>	<b>1,475</b>	<b>1,214</b>	<b>16%</b>



# Frederick County, Maryland

## Description of Homeless Services

Frederick County, MD has a wide range of public, non-profit, and faith-based organizations that work together to address the needs of homeless individuals and families. Many of the core service providers participate in a coordinated-entry system and all the homeless services providers operate under a “No Wrong Door” mentality so that homeless individuals and families can maintain dignity and expedite service delivery. All major providers of homeless services participated in the 2023 Point-In-Time Count (PIT) including Advocates for Homeless Families, The Dept of Housing and Human Services (DHHS), Frederick County Behavioral Health Agency (BHA), Frederick Rescue Mission, Heartly House, Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs, Salvation Army, and Student Homelessness Initiative Partnership (SHIP). All the above organizations are also active members of the Frederick County Continuum of Care Collaborative (FCCCC).

Established in 1983 under the name of the Frederick County Coalition for the Homeless (FCCH), the FCCCC is the oldest local coalition working to end homelessness in Maryland. The FCCH changed its name to the Frederick County Continuum of Care Collaborative this past year. The FCCCC is a coalition comprised of both public and private organizations as well as private citizens (to include current and formerly homeless individuals) and elected officials. The private organizations include for-profit and non-profit businesses as well as religious institutions. Along with homeless service providers, other business fields include banking, community development, health care, mental health, peer support, substance abuse treatment, and emergency services. The FCCCC meets monthly to coordinate the planning of local homeless services, discuss local needs, approve new projects, and advocate for additional resources to address homelessness.

## Point-in-Time Count Survey Analysis

The 2023 Point-in-Time count was conducted on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Like last year, we again used the Survey123 app from ArcGIS. This year all data from subpopulations was able to be addressed through the app, bringing it up to the specifications mandated by HUD. Because of the COVID restrictions being lifted, we were able to again use volunteers in addition to the staff of other FCCCC members. All persons assisting in the PIT count were trained on the use of the app. Those that were new to either the PIT count or the Survey123 app were paired with an individual who was familiar with both. Teams were also sent out with paper copies of the interview questions in case the area they were in was not in a network serviceable range.

Overall numbers (see table 1) were about 13.76% higher than last year’s totals with an increase of 30 individuals. This is a result of a 9.5% increase of family household, jumping from 20 to 39. There was an 8.6% decrease in single individuals, going from 161 to 147. It should be noted that this year’s count also includes the number of individuals and families in a Safe Haven, though they were unable to give demographic data on the individuals. Additionally, there was an increase in the number of family shelter units over this past year.

On the night of the PIT count, many organizations were still utilizing funds related to the pandemic. This allowed for an increase in beds, specifically in RRH units and motel placements. Emergency funds were also used throughout the year to focus outreach efforts with the unsheltered population to assist them in getting connected with more services, to include emergency motel placement.

We hypothesize that the overall drop in the past few years is contributed by several factors. One, the

pandemic allowed many to stay in their homes, who would have likely been evicted during “normal” times, due to the moratorium on evictions. Second, the additional funds for housing that were allotted during the pandemic allowed many to obtain housing, who otherwise would not have qualified for a lease. Lastly, utilizing an electronic counting method for the PIT count allowed for easier compilation and review of the data; this also allowed for easier identification of duplicated individuals and/or families. With many of the COVID related funds expiring over the past year, the data has shown an increase in numbers overall.

Table 1

Yearly Totals by Household and Individuals			
	2023	2022	2021
<b>Overall Total</b>	248	218	339
Total Family Households	39	20	25
Total Single Adult Households	141	153	169
Total Number of persons in Families	101	57	62
Total Number of Adults in families	37	23	25
Total Number of children in families	64	34	37
Total Number of single adult persons	146	161	169
Total number of Child only persons	1	-	-

## Subpopulations

The veteran population remained stable from 2022 to 2023, with 8 single adult individuals self-identifying as veterans, and no veteran families. Their ages ranged from 25-79, 7 were sheltered the night of the count, and 4 were receiving benefits through the Social Security Administration and/or the Department of Veteran’s Affairs.

There was one child, without a family, who was counted during the PIT. The child was in transitional shelter. There were 16 individuals who were 65 to 79, but none 80 or over. The most numerous age group in the count were individuals between ages 55 and 64, and children under the age of 18 in families.

57 persons were identified as chronically homeless. 25 persons were identified as having a substance use disorder. The number of persons with a serious mental illness was 38. And 21 were identified as having a co-occurring substance use and mental health conditions.

## Year-Round and Winter Inventory of Beds

Frederick County had a total of 360 beds on the night of the PIT count. The Religious Coalition runs the Alan P Linton Shelter for single adults and the Religious Coalition Emergency Family Shelter. Advocates for Homeless Families, Frederick Rescue Mission, and Heartly House also have emergency shelters for families. Transitional Housing is run by Advocates for Homeless Families, Frederick Rescue Mission, and Student Homelessness Initiative Partnership (SHIP).

### **Permanent Housing Inventory Count**

The Department of Housing and Human Services operates an on-site 14-unit Permanent Supportive Housing Program. The units are designed for adult individuals with 2 room designated for adult couples. The rooms for couples count as a shared bed, The program had 16 residents on the night of the PIT. Additionally, DHHS operates a scattered site PSH program with 14 beds. These programs house formerly chronically homeless individuals with a documented disability.

The Behavioral Health Agency has 22 PSH units. 20 are for single adults and two are for families. They have a total of 25 beds.

The Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs and Advocates for Homeless Families both were operating Rapid Rehousing programs on the night of the count. These bed numbers fluctuate based on availability, but on the night of the PIT count the Religious Coalition had 22 units with 33 beds and Advocates for Homeless Families had 18 units with 80 beds. There was a total of 113 RRH beds the night of the count.

There are no DEM or OPH programs in Frederick County.

# Loudoun County, Virginia

## Description of Homeless Services in Loudoun County, Virginia

Loudoun County Virginia is located in the Washington Metropolitan Area, 25 miles west of Washington, DC, with a land mass of 515.74 sq. miles<sup>15</sup>. Loudoun County was the sixth fastest growing county in the United States between 2000 and 2010, with its population increasing 84 percent. Between 2010 and 2020, Loudoun County continued to be one of the fastest growing counties, increasing by another 35 percent<sup>16</sup>. The US Census estimates the population to be 427,592 as of 2021.<sup>17</sup> Loudoun County consists of a mix of densely populated urban areas to the east as well as rural and agrarian areas to the west.

The Loudoun County Continuum of Care (CoC) provides a broad range of services to the community to assist residents experiencing a housing crisis. The Continuum of Care is a network of county and community partners that work together to provide targeted services using a Housing First approach to assist households that are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of becoming homeless. A description of the Homeless Services and programs provided by the Loudoun County Continuum of Care are listed below:

### Loudoun County Continuum of Care Service Components

Component	Description
Coordinated Entry	A single point-of-entry for people experiencing a housing crisis which provides fair and equitable access to services. Callers are assessed, referred to, and connected to programs and supportive services based on their strengths, presenting need and program capacity. The Coordinated Entry System operates through a dedicated phone number which is staffed Monday-Friday, 8:30am-5:00pm, excluding holidays, and through an online webform which is available at any time. During nights, weekends, and holidays, individuals are connected directly to the emergency shelter for triage and diversion. Coordinated Entry in Loudoun County operates in conjunction with the Information & Referral program, much like a 2-1-1, which allows residents to utilize one number to access homeless services, health and human services including local, state, and federal programs as well as services provided by nonprofits.
Domestic Violence Emergency Services	A full array of comprehensive services is provided to adult and child survivors of domestic and sexual violence. In addition to emergency shelter, to individuals and families actively fleeing intimate partner violence, survivors have access to a host of services specifically designed to meet their needs to include safety planning, counseling, legal services, support groups, advocacy, and community outreach.
Drop-In Day Services	Drop-In Day Services provides a location for individuals experiencing homelessness to attend to their everyday needs and access services and support. Meals, showers, laundry facilities, and the availability to

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/loudouncountyvirginia>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.loudoun.gov/DocumentCenter/View/170612/FY-2023-Adopted-Budget---Volume-1>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/loudouncountyvirginia>

Component	Description
	speak with a case manager are provided on-site. In 2022, Drop-In operating days were expanded to include Saturdays and Sundays.
Emergency Shelter	Designed to provide short-term refuge to Loudoun County residents that are literally homeless <sup>18</sup> , emergency sheltering begins with an initial assessment, which includes diversion. Based on prioritization and capacity, shelter, along with housing-focused case management, employment, housing location assistance, transportation, and other critical services to assist with housing stabilization are provided. Those who are not Loudoun County residents may also be served, however preference is given to residents of Loudoun.
Homeless Prevention & Diversion Services (HPD)	Homeless Prevention and Diversion (HPD) is designed to prevent episodes of homelessness for households at imminent risk of losing their current housing. Services include conducting initial housing assessments, case management, housing stability planning, monitoring, and evaluating participants' progress, and referral to community organizations as needed. Financial assistance may be provided as a last resort after non-financial assistance has been leveraged, where possible, to stabilize households in their current residence. These services are designed to reduce the overall length of homelessness, the number of households becoming homeless and the overall rate of recidivism.
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)	A locally administered database is used to collect client-level information, as well as data on the provision of housing and other services for homeless individuals and families, and those at risk of becoming homeless. The Continuum of Care (CoC) collects data using an HMIS software solution that complies with HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards. The system reports aggregate data to assist with program monitoring and evaluation, outcome measurement, and fiscal management. The system is also used to identify trends and model predictive outcomes.
Housing Location	The Housing Location program works with households that are homeless or at risk of losing their housing to quickly find affordable and sustainable housing and acts as an advocate for households with landlords and property managers.
Hypothermia Shelter	Hypothermia sheltering is a seasonal program that operates from November 15 through March 31 of each year. Temporary beds provide residents with a warm place to sleep during winter months. Free transportation is provided to and from the program, and services include access to showers, laundry facilities, and meals (dinner and breakfast).

<sup>18</sup> [https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HomelessDefinition\\_RecordkeepingRequirementsandCriteria.pdf](https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HomelessDefinition_RecordkeepingRequirementsandCriteria.pdf)

Outreach and Engagement	<p>Outreach and support is provided to vulnerable unsheltered individuals (including but not limited to those with serious mental illness) to address their immediate need for housing and connection to resources in the community to meet their basic needs. Staff work to build trust and engagement over time through face-to-face interactions with individuals, regardless of place, with the goal of connecting residents with primary behavioral healthcare, substance use services and other supports that enhance stability and functioning in the community.</p> <p>Targeted outreach events such as Branching Out, a partnership with the local library system, allows those who are experiencing homelessness or may be struggling to remain housed to connect with services right in their communities and in a location that does not carry stigma, allowing for greater access to information and programming. Staff from various agencies also conduct outreach to local businesses and attend public events to provide information on community programs and services, and to connect with patrons who may need services.</p>
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	<p>Permanent housing that consists of indefinite leasing or rental assistance, paired with supportive services, is provided for those with a history of meeting HUD's definition of chronic homelessness and having a qualifying disabling condition. The PSH program differs from other supportive housing programs due to its federally mandated eligibility criteria such as: a strict definition of chronic homelessness, long lengths of homelessness; and having severe service needs such as a serious mental illness, a chronic physical disability, and/or have a mental health diagnosis.</p>
Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)	<p>RRH is an intervention, informed by a Housing First approach, that is a critical part of a community's effective homeless crisis response system. Rapid re-housing rapidly connects families and individuals experiencing homelessness to permanent housing through a tailored package of assistance that may include the use of time-limited financial assistance and targeted supportive services. RRH programs help families and individuals living on the street or in emergency shelters solve the practical and immediate challenges to obtaining permanent housing while reducing the amount of time they experience homelessness, avoiding a near-term return to homelessness, and linking to community resources that enable them to achieve housing stability in the long-term.</p>
Transitional Housing (TH)	<p>TH is designed to provide individuals and families experiencing homelessness, or who are at-risk of becoming homeless, with time-limited interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing. Currently there are 37 transitional housing beds serving Loudoun County.</p>

Youth Support and Crisis Services	Youth ages 18-24 experiencing a crisis may access a variety of resources such as shelter, housing, and supportive services including re-entry, LGBTQ+ support, and food/nutrition assistance.
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### **Service Changes**

In late 2022 the Permanent Supportive Housing program began the transition of moving five individuals residing in apartments located on-site at the Loudoun Homeless Services Center (LHSC). These individuals were carefully integrated into the community in off-site PSH apartments, allowing for more social interaction and increased independence. This re-location allowed for the placement of 18 overflow emergency shelter beds at the LHSC. Along with additional off-site overflow beds, fifty emergency shelter beds were added for a total of 107 year-round beds.

Drop-in Day Services will be expanding to include a second location in Eastern Loudoun which is expected to open in Summer 2023. The Eastern Loudoun Drop-in Services will be located at Ridgetop Circle in Sterling, VA and will offer the same services to include meals, showers, laundry facilities, and the availability to speak with a case manager.

The Hypothermia Shelter, which reached capacity early in the season, added 13 overflow beds to accommodate the increased need. The CoC is exploring options with the community to further expand homeless hypothermia prevention services for the future.

Although the rapid re-housing program has been in existence in the Loudoun CoC for more than 10 years, the bed count was not reported in the 2022 Housing Inventory Count (HIC). As of 2023 the program has a total of 25 beds to rapidly re-house individuals who are literally homeless into permanent housing. The CoC is continually seeking additional grant funding to support this program.

### **Point-in-Time Count Survey Analysis**

Along with Continuum's of Care across the nation, the Loudoun County CoC (Loudoun CoC) conducted the annual HUD Point-in-Time (PIT) Count on the night of Wednesday, January 25, 2023. The sheltered count was conducted by census method and utilized an electronic survey which was completed by staff at homeless services organizations, to include several County Departments that assist vulnerable populations which may have housed individuals or families experiencing sheltered homelessness on the night of the count.

The unsheltered count was conducted by a diverse team of thirty volunteers comprised of Loudoun County Government employees, local homeless service providers' staff, local Veterans, and other volunteers. These volunteers canvassed Loudoun County both by vehicle and on foot, the night of January 25, 2023, and into the early hours of January 26<sup>th</sup>. Weather conditions included freezing rain during the day and evening temperatures in the 40s. As the night progressed, the volunteers experienced increasingly foggy conditions. Volunteers reported the fog made it challenging to identify anyone sleeping in a vehicle, hence outreach teams were deployed in the days following in an attempt to make contact and survey those who were unsheltered on the night of the count.

### **Rural/Western Loudoun Outreach**

As previously stated, Loudoun County is comprised of both densely populated urban areas as well as rural areas. The vast geography of rural areas can make homelessness easy to miss and often harder to quantify during a PIT Count. As in previous years, homeless outreach workers conducted

outreach through rural western Loudoun County to include small towns and incorporated villages. People camping in the woods or more rural landscapes may not self-identify as experiencing homelessness, even though the place where they stay could be identified as “unfit for human habitation” in an urban environment. Outreach efforts are an ongoing strategy to connect with those experiencing homelessness and are a vital component of the Loudoun County Point-in-Time Count. The Loudoun CoC along with community partners work collectively to document and address the needs of households living in rural areas who may be experiencing, or are at-risk of, homelessness.

### **Additional considerations**

The PIT Count is ultimately an estimate. HUD requires CoCs to provide counts of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night. Counts are provided by the following household types:

- Households with at least one adult and one child;
- Households without children; and
- Household with only children.

Additional information is further reported on subpopulation categories, such as homeless veterans, homeless youth, and people who are chronically homeless.

Local jurisdictions, including Loudoun CoC, collect additional information, such as native language spoken, previous or current foster-care involvement, sources of income (if any), to name a few. Every individual surveyed has the right to decline to answer survey questions or may answer ‘I don’t know’. Thus, the data will contain some unknown or ‘declined to answer’ responses. HUD instructs jurisdictions to extrapolate this unknown data, when necessary, by using a methodology that relies on existing data. Therefore, there will be some slight differences in data reported to COG and data reported to HUD.

Table 1 provides a year over year comparison of the Point-in-Time Count data for the past three years. It should be noted that the 2022 PIT Count was an observational count of the unsheltered due to the pandemic and the rise of the Omicron variant during the time of the count. The 2023 count was more comprehensive using a census method to gather information directly from individuals. The overall count of individuals experiencing homelessness rose 110% from 2022. Of the 220 individuals identified as experiencing homelessness on the night of the count, 133 individuals, or 60%, reported this was their first experience with homelessness.

Table 1 Yearly Point-in-Time Totals

Yearly PIT Totals by Household and Individuals			
	2023	2022*	2021
<b>Overall Total Individuals</b>	220	105	93
<b>Sheltered</b>	164	80	57
<b>Unsheltered</b>	56	25	36
Total Family Households (households with children under 18)	21	9	9
Total Single Adult Households (households with only adults over 18)	142	72	71
Total Number of persons in Families	78	33	22
Total Number of Adults in families	29	11	9
Total Number of children in families	49	22	13

\*Observational Count

During the fiscal years 2021 and 2022 the CoC Lead Agency was without a regular full-time HMIS Systems Administrator, and the data analysis lacked the in-depth quality reviews that were necessary. In 2022, the Lead Agency received the authorization to hire a dedicated full-time HMIS Systems Administrator. A subsequent re-analysis of the raw data for 2021 and 2022 produced a more accurate count which is reflected in Table 1.

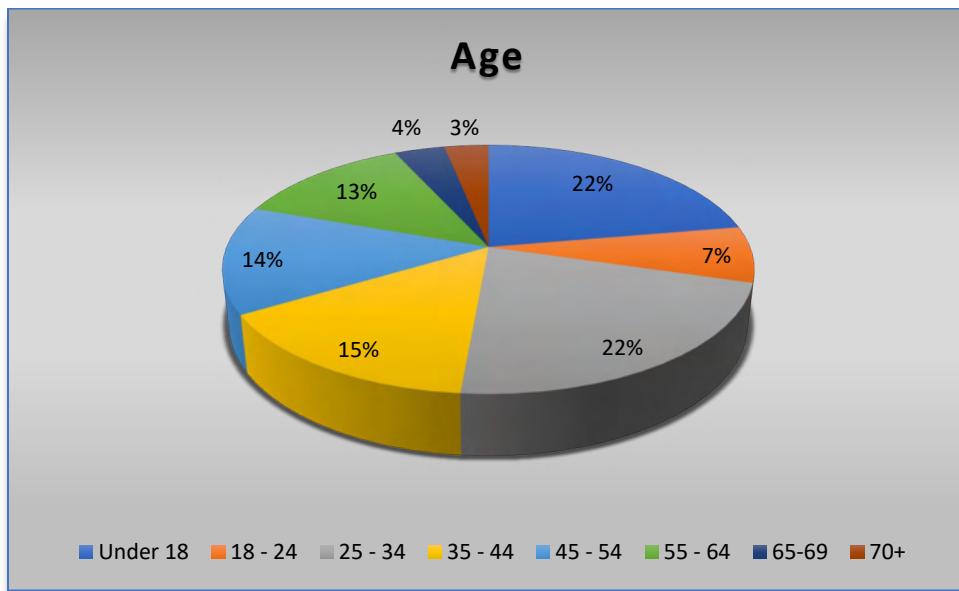
Sheltered individuals include those in emergency and Domestic Violence shelters, hotel/motel paid for by a third party, hypothermia shelter, or transitional housing. Unsheltered individuals include those living in tents, in their vehicle, outdoors, etc.

## Demographics

The PIT Count gathers demographic data required by HUD to track and assess changes over the years for those experiencing homelessness. The data helps local jurisdictions address needs within the community, identify trends, and plan future resources.

Age: Twenty-two percent of those experiencing homelessness were children 17 years of age or younger. A total of 21 family households included 49 children (17 or younger) all of which were sheltered on the night of the PIT Count. Those aged 25-34 comprised another 22% of the count. A breakdown of other age categories can be found in Chart 1 below.

Chart 1 Loudoun CoC 2023 PIT Count Percentages by Age



**Gender:** The majority, 50%, of individuals experiencing homelessness were male, with one male as a head of household and 85 males identifying as single adults. One individual identified as questioning, one as transgender and eight individuals identified as a gender other than singularly female or male. Twenty of the 21 households were headed by females.

**Race and Ethnicity:** Chart 2 shows the breakdown according to race. Forty-six percent of adults surveyed identified as Black, African American, or African, regardless of whether they were single or part of a household. This is an increase of 5% from 2022. Chart 3 shows the percentage of adults identifying as Hispanic, which rose from 10 individuals in 2022, to a total of 27 individuals in 2023. The increase disparity among people of color experiencing homelessness is an alarming trend nationwide that can be tied to poverty, housing discrimination, incarceration, and even access to quality healthcare<sup>19</sup>. The Loudoun CoC has formed the Equality to Equity Committee which is tasked with examining policies and procedures, access, and outcomes for equity.

<sup>19</sup> <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/what-causes-homelessness/inequality/>

Chart 2 Loudoun CoC 2023 PIT Count Percentages by Race

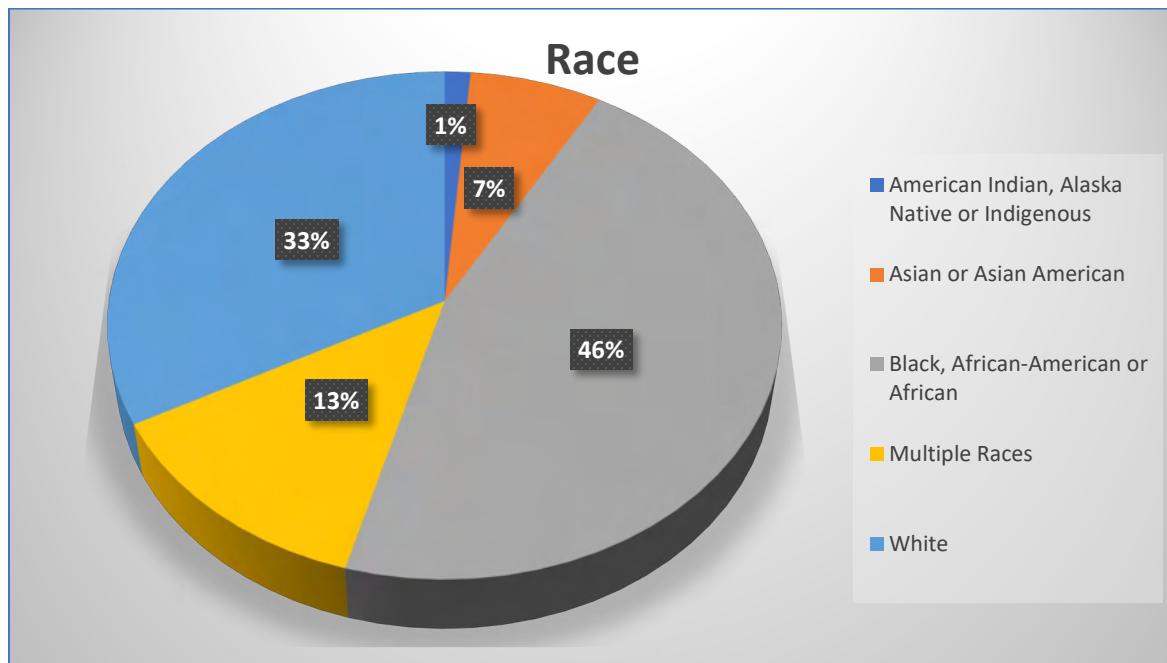
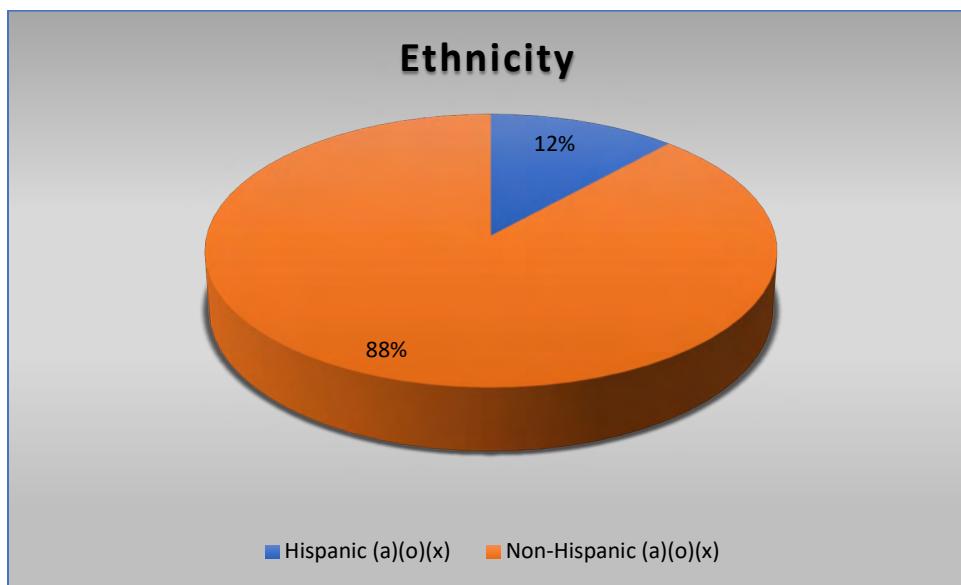


Chart 3 Loudoun CoC 2023 PIT Count Percentages by Ethnicity



## **Subpopulations**

Chronic homelessness as defined by HUD<sup>20</sup> is an individual or head of household with a qualifying disability who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years; the episodes of homelessness must cumulatively equal at least 12 months. The 2023 PIT Count in Loudoun County recorded 28 individuals who met the definition of chronically homeless. The Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program is a program funded by federal and state grants that specifically addresses chronic homelessness by providing housing and intensive case management. The Loudoun CoC has 16 Permanent Supportive Housing beds and continues to apply for additional funding to meet the increasing need in the community.

**First-time homeless:** Individuals and families surveyed who reported this as their first-time experiencing homelessness rose 37%, from 97 in 2022 to 133 in 2023. An increase was anticipated due to the end of both pandemic related assistance and the eviction moratorium which is discussed further in Key Findings. The primary goal of the Homeless Prevention and Diversion program is to help prevent episodes of homelessness for individuals and families at risk of losing their current housing. To be eligible, you must be within 14 days of a court ordered eviction. Services include case management, stability planning, and referrals to community organizations as needed. Financial assistance may be provided as a last resort after all non-financial assistance has been explored. In 2022 the HPD program was able to assist 23 households with case management and 15 households with a combination of financial assistance and case management.

**Veterans:** The number of veterans experiencing homelessness increased by three (10 veterans) in 2023. Addressing veteran homelessness has been a focus of the Department of Veterans Affairs for the past several years with programs like Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) which provides case management and supportive services to prevent the imminent loss of a Veteran's home or identify a new, more suitable housing situation for the individual and their family; or to rapidly re-house veterans and their families who are experiencing homelessness. Another housing assistance program targeted to veterans is HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program which combines HUD's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance for Veterans experiencing homelessness with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Veterans in Loudoun County are assisted by the Veterans Service Coordinator who connects them to services within the community specifically tailored to veterans' needs.

**Transition Age Youth (18-24):** Youth experiencing homelessness are a rapidly growing part of the population that often remains out of sight. In 2017, HUD established a baseline to begin tracking youth homelessness. The trauma of homelessness, even short term, can have a major effect on a youth's future development. Children who experience homelessness have significantly higher rates of emotional, behavioral, and immediate and long-term health problems<sup>21</sup>. The 2023 PIT Count in Loudoun County identified 16 individuals 18-24 years of age comprised of 13 single adults and 3 within families experiencing homelessness. Three identified as having exited the foster care system and 9 indicated serious mental illness. Table 2 provides a year over year comparison of PIT Count totals for transition age youth.

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coc-esg-virtual-binders/coc-esg-homeless-eligibility/definition-of-chronic-homelessness/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.samhsa.gov/homelessness-programs-resources/hpr-resources/youth>

Table 2 Point-in Time Data for Transition Age Youth (TAY)

PIT Counts Transition Age Youth Experiencing Homelessness		2023	2022*	2021
Singles		13	3	9
TAY in Families		3	2	3
Total		16	5	12

\*Observational Count

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program administers the Family Unification Program (FUP) in partnership with Public Child Welfare Agencies (PCWAs) in preventing homelessness for families assisted by the PCWA and youth aging out of foster care. Local nonprofits that focus on transition aged youth are critical for assisting youth with education and employment, food resources, empowerment, mentorship and addressing barriers. Funding for these services is possible through federal, state, and local grants, public and private donations, and volunteers.

Older Adults (65+): Homeless services programs across the area have reported an increase in older adults seeking services. For the 2023 PIT Count, HUD expanded the data collection and reporting requirements for age categories. The metropolitan Washington jurisdictions further captured age ranges through 90+ to obtain the most accurate picture of aging adults who may be experiencing homelessness. The 2023 PIT Count identified 15 adults aged 65 and older, with the oldest aged 83 and sleeping in a vehicle. Older adults who remain homeless are twice as likely to be victimized<sup>22</sup>, have nearly a 2% chance of dying<sup>23</sup>, and have an elevated risk of depression when compared to like individuals who are housed. Adult and Aging case managers are able to screen clients to determine eligibility for Assisted Living Facility placements and Nursing Home placements. Additionally, Companion task-based services can be provided in home to eligible clients (this program has a waitlist and is currently not accepting new applicants).

Survivors of Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault: Sometimes referred to as the “shadow of the pandemic”, domestic violence became even more prevalent during the last several years. Table 3 below details the number of individuals and families that reported current or previous incidents of domestic or sexual violence when questioned as part of the 2023 PIT Count.

Table 3 Point-in-Time Domestic Violence Trends

PIT Count Domestic Violence Trends			
	2023	2022*	2021
<b>Domestic Violence – Current</b>	26	7	11
<b>Domestic Violence - History</b>	19	12	15
Survivors of DV and First-time experiencing homelessness	17	18	11

\*Observational Count

<sup>22</sup> <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31135255/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36036902/>

Women are disproportionately affected by gender-based violence, including domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, human trafficking, and sexual assault. In 2019, a review of the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) data conducted by the California Policy Lab indicates unsheltered women have higher rates of physical health, mental health, and substance abuse concerns, and on average spend more than a decade without the benefit of stable housing. Eighty percent of unsheltered women self-report trauma or abuse as the cause of their homelessness.<sup>24</sup>

Table 4 provides year over year comparison gathered from questions asked on the PIT survey each year. These questions allow the CoC to assess the needs of those experiencing homelessness more deeply and to engage with community partners that serve individuals experiencing these circumstances.

Table 4 Comparison of Subpopulations by Year

Comparison of PIT Subpopulation Totals, 2022 and 2023				
	2023	2022*	Percent Change	
Chronic Health Condition	31	19	63.1%	▲
Chronically Homeless	28	26	7.6%	▲
Co-Occurring Disorder	28	12	133.3%	▲
Formerly Institutionalized	16	11	45.4%	▲
Foster Care History	12	1	200.0%	▲
HIV/AIDS	3	0		▲
Limited English	7	0		▲
Physical Disability	22	9	144.4%	▲
Serious Mental Illness	56	22	154.5%	▲
Substance Use Disorder	35	8	337.5%	▲

\*Observational Count

## Key Findings

The total number of households experiencing homelessness in 2023 (163 households) reveals a 101% increase when compared with the 2022 PIT Count which identified 81 households experiencing homelessness. This overall increase may be attributed to a combination of several important events:

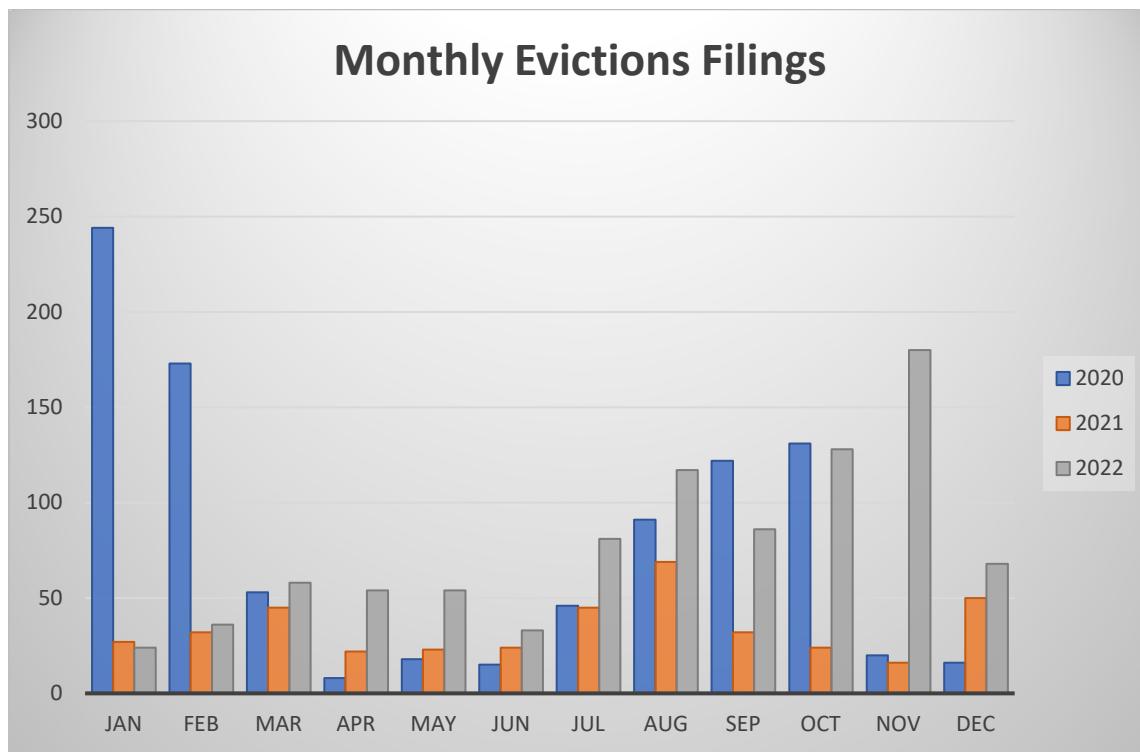
- Ending of pandemic-related rental assistance
- End of the moratorium on evictions
- Dramatic increase in rental rates across the region
- Limited amount of affordable housing
- Limited funding for ongoing rental assistance
- Opening of Metro Silver Line to Ashburn

<sup>24</sup> <https://endhomelessness.org/blog/recognizing-women-experiencing-homelessness-a-womens-history-month-spotlight-on-downtown-womens-center/>

As many programs that offered an infrastructure of care directly tied to the pandemic coming to an end, Loudoun County and the nation begin to experience the aftereffects. Even when individuals become re-employed post-pandemic, many incurred debts that simply cannot be paid off quickly, often forcing them to choose between paying their rent or other expenses like food or healthcare. Unlike mortgage delinquencies, it is difficult to get an accurate summation of rental arrears. However, it is estimated that at the end of 2021, with the availability of pandemic related assistance, renters in Loudoun owed an estimate of \$5,410<sup>25</sup> per household in rent arrears. In 2022, with most pandemic related rent assistance having ended, coupled with the skyrocketing rental rates in Northern Virginia, National Equity Atlas<sup>26</sup> reports that rent arrears increased to \$6,800 per household in Loudoun County.

On August 26, 2021, the Federal moratorium on evictions ended, although Virginia extended protections through June 2022. The end of the moratorium on evictions allowed landlords to proceed with enforcing rent arrears; the courts are processing a record number of evictions. Eviction filings in Loudoun County rose early in the pandemic as shown in Chart 5, reaching nearly 250 in January of 2020. With the eviction moratorium in place and pandemic relief available, the filings slowed significantly in 2021 into the beginning 2022. Beginning in July of 2022 filings began rising as pandemic related state rental assistance funding was exhausted.

Chart 5 Monthly Eviction Filings in Loudoun County by Year



Even more difficult to quantify are informal evictions. An informal eviction occurs when a household chooses to leave their residence as soon as they are unable to pay their rent or receive notice of delinquency. Many families, especially those with limited English and/or a poor understanding of

<sup>25</sup> [https://precisionforcovid.org/rental\\_arrears](https://precisionforcovid.org/rental_arrears)

<sup>26</sup> <https://nationalequityatlas.org/lab/rent-debt>

tenant rights, or those wanting to avoid conflict, may choose to vacate rather than contact the court or homeless services system. An eviction, regardless of the outcome, can make it extremely difficult to rent again as an eviction can follow an individual for years into the future.

Default judgements occur when a tenant does not appear for the scheduled hearing. Under Virginia state law<sup>27</sup>, an automatic ruling is rendered in favor of the landlord if a tenant does not appear in court. A tenant may be unable to appear if they cannot take time off work, if they lack access to childcare or transportation, if they are sick, if they do not understand (due to language barriers), or for any number of other reasons. Having a judgment rendered due to the inability to appear in court disproportionately impacts lower income tenants; they are more likely to be housing cost-burdened and housing insecure and are less likely to have access to paid leave, transportation, and affordable childcare<sup>28</sup>. Additionally, not only will the landlord be granted a default judgement in their favor, the landlord does not need to wait 10 days to get the writ of possession as it can be obtained immediately.

During the home buying explosion that took place in 2021 and into 2022, many tenant families in single family rental homes were notified by property owners that their lease would not be renewed as the home would be sold. Families were often given 30-60 days to find rental housing in a tight market and with rental rates far exceeding what they had previously paid. As home prices rose significantly, many individuals priced out of the home-buying market were left no choice but to rent<sup>29</sup>. Less rental inventory and higher monthly rents, exacerbated by rising inflation, made finding affordable housing a daunting task for those earning below the median income for the area. Often families were simply unable to find housing they could afford at which point they may have stayed with a friend, paid out of pocket for extended-stay hotel, slept in their car, or as a last resort, called for emergency shelter assistance.

According to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC), in 2021, Northern Virginia needed 60,500 affordable rental units to meet the demand<sup>30</sup>. The Loudoun County Department of Housing and Community Development continues to work with developers to add additional affordable housing options.

Table 5: 2022 Rent Affordability in Washington-Arlington-Alexandria Metro Region<sup>31</sup>

Rental Housing	Washington-Metro Region D.C., MD, VA (Avg)	Commonwealth of Virginia
Minimum Wage	\$13.78	\$12.00
Average Renter Wage	\$24.59	\$22.12
Average Monthly Rent for Two bedroom**	\$1,520	\$1,292

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.vacourts.gov/courts/scv/rulesofcourt.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> <http://jlarc.virginia.gov/pdfs/reports/Rpt559.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> <https://ktla.com/news/money-smart/consumer-confidential/heres-why-higher-home-prices-are-also-driving-up-rents/>

<sup>30</sup> <http://jlarc.virginia.gov/pdfs/reports/Rpt559.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> [https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/2022/OOR\\_2022\\_Mini-Book.pdf](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/2022/OOR_2022_Mini-Book.pdf)

Housing Wage Needed for 2 BR**	\$29.24/hr. avg.*	\$24.85/hr.*
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\*Assumes a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year.

\*\*At Fair Market Rent (FMR)

On a yearly basis, HUD updates the income limits that determine eligibility for Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) properties. The income limits published by HUD in April 2022<sup>32</sup>, saw an increase of 10.1% from 2021<sup>33</sup>. Rents for LIHTC may be raised at any time if there is what is known as an ‘escalation clause’. Market rents have no cap on an increase but typically can only occur at lease renewal or with proper notice if specified in the lease. However, income growth has not kept up with inflation and rising rental rates. A Freddie Mac survey in June of 2022 reports just 38% of renters surveyed received an increase in wages, and of those, 32% stated their rents increased more than their wages<sup>34</sup>.

On September 8, 2021, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors adopted the Unmet Housing Needs Strategic Plan (UHNSP)<sup>35</sup>. The purpose of the UHNSP is to define how the County will address unmet housing needs in a strategic and systematic way over the short and long-term. Unmet housing needs are defined by the Loudoun County 2019 General Plan as “the lack of housing options for households earning up to 100 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI)”. In 2021, 100% AMI was \$129,000 for a family of four. The current AMI for 2022 is \$142,300. Annual AMI updates are typically published each April. The UHNSP focuses on adding new strategies and programs to enhance the County’s approach to addressing the unmet housing needs of households along the housing continuum.

The Loudoun County Department of Housing and Community Development provides quarterly updates to the Loudoun County Transportation and Land Use Committee (TLUC) detailing the progress towards the goals outlined in the Unmet Housing Needs Strategic Plan. Table 6 below represents the affordable housing unit goals and the number of units made available since the UHNSP has been adopted and as presented in the UHNSP Quarterly Report to the TLUC on February 22, 2023.

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/mtsp.html>

<sup>33</sup> <https://shelterforce.org/2022/10/04/mid-lease-rent-hikes-surprise-affordable-housing-tenants/>

<sup>34</sup> [https://www.freddiemac.com/docs/Effects\\_of\\_Rising\\_Prices\\_on\\_Consumer\\_Households.pdf](https://www.freddiemac.com/docs/Effects_of_Rising_Prices_on_Consumer_Households.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.loudoun.gov/DocumentCenter/View/167024/Unmet-Housing-Needs-Strategic-Plan-Approved-9821-with-Appendices>

Table 6<sup>36</sup>: Loudoun Annual Attainable Housing Goals and Results

Fiscal Year	Total Units		New Units		Access to Units	
	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual
2021	250	292	200	154	50	138
2022	500	181	350	55	150	126
2023	500		350		150	
2024	500		350		150	
2025	500		350		150	
2026-2030*	750		500		250	
2031-2034*	1000		500		500	
2035-2040*	1000		350		650	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16,000</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>8,200</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>7,800</b>	<b>264</b>

\*Annual goals for these years are the same each year so shown once for summary purposes.

Developments may be funded through the County's Affordable Multi-Family Housing Loan Program, which provides gap financing to affordable multi-family rental housing projects and is funded by appropriations from the County of Loudoun Housing Trust, or through other grants such as Virginia Housing's Amazon Resources Enabling Affordable Community Housing (REACH) Program.

The UHNSP set a goal of 16,000 attainable housing units by 2040. "Attainable housing" is defined as any housing for sale or rent entering the marketplace each year affordable to families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). Attainable housing goals will be met through new units and access to existing units via a variety of programs and strategies including the Affordable Multi-Family Housing Loan Program, Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) rental and purchase programs, Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, down payment/closing cost assistance, and changes in zoning and land use ordinances. As of December 31, 2022, over 700 attainable units have become available since the beginning of UHNSP implementation. Visit [www.loudoun.gov/housingneeds](http://www.loudoun.gov/housingneeds) to read the UHNSP and track implementation.

Table 7 Recent and Planned Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Properties in Loudoun County

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.loudoun.gov/3432/Transportation-and-Land-Use-Committee>

Development	City/Town	Number of LIHTC Units	Status	Completion (*Estimated)
Stone Springs	Sterling	128	Open	Fall 2019
Ashburn Chase	Ashburn	96	Open	Fall 2020
Woods at Brambleton Town Center	Brambleton	55	Open	2021
Loudoun View Senior	Sterling	98	Open	Fall 2022
Poland Hill	Chantilly	78	Under Construction	Fall 2023
Waxpool Apartments	Ashburn	52	Under Construction	Fall 2023
View at Broadlands	Ashburn	92	Under Construction	Fall 2023
Woods at West Park	Brambleton	99	In Development	Fall 2024
Tuscarora Crossing, Phase 1	Leesburg	90	In Development	Spring 2025
Tuscarora Crossing, Phase 2	Leesburg	90	In Development	Spring 2025
Avonlea Senior	South Riding	130	In Development	Spring 2026

Loudoun CoC continues to use the COVID Homelessness Emergency Response Program (CHERP) funding through June 30, 2023. This federal funding was designed to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) among individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or receiving homeless assistance. It made it possible to support increased capacity and to implement CDC social distancing and sanitization practices and allows for the placement of vulnerable individuals experiencing homelessness in non-congregate shelters and overflow accommodations.

The Loudoun CoC and local nonprofits depend on funding programs offered by The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and local grants to provide services to assist those experiencing homeless to find stable housing and meet crisis needs. However, preventing individuals and families from entering the homeless services system is equally, if not more important. Increased funding for rental assistance such as Housing Choice Vouchers, is needed<sup>37</sup>. Keeping individuals and families housed reduces housing instability, improves health, improves outcomes for children and prevents homelessness<sup>38</sup>.

The much-anticipated opening of the Metro Silver Line train station in Ashburn has brought with it an increase of unhoused individuals traveling into Loudoun County seeking services. The pandemic served to temporarily divert many from housing loss but as assistance programs have ended, it has become evident that the need for housing stabilization services, crisis assistance and more affordable housing is becoming critical. Greater funding, increased community involvement from

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/addressing-the-affordable-housing-crisis-requires-expanding-rental-assistance-and>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/research-shows-rental-assistance-reduces-hardship-and-provides-platform-to-expand>

nonprofits and faith-based organizations, and creative solutions are required to meet the ever-increasing need in the community.

### **Year-Round and Winter Inventory of Beds**

The Housing Inventory Count (HIC) is an inventory of homeless services programs within the Continuum of Care that provides beds and units dedicated to serve people experiencing homelessness. The Housing Inventory reflected in Table 8 indicates the number of beds on the night of the 2023 Point-in-Time Count.

Table 8 2023 Housing Inventory Count (HIC)

<b>Housing Inventory Count</b>		<i>Difference from 2022</i>
<i>Year-Round Beds</i>	<i>2023</i>	
<i>Emergency Shelter</i>	57	-
<i>Overflow Beds</i>	50	<i>Not reported</i>
<i>Domestic Violence Emergency Shelter Beds</i>	12	-
<i>Hypothermia Shelter Beds (November – March)</i>	26	-
<i>Overflow Beds</i>	13	
<i>Year-Round Beds</i>	37	-
<i>Transitional Housing</i>		
<i>Rapid Re-housing Beds</i>	25	<i>Not reported</i>
<i>Permanent Supportive Housing Beds</i>	16	-

During the night of the PIT Count, the Hypothermia Shelter utilized temporary cots to provide additional space for the increased demand however, on a regular basis during winter operating months, Hypothermia Shelter provides 26 dedicated beds as listed in Housing Inventory Count.

### **Permanent Housing Inventory Count**

In addition to the year-round beds which serve those who are experiencing homelessness, Loudoun CoC provides the Rapid Re-housing (RRH) program. As described earlier, the program works to quickly house those who are literally homeless by using federal and state funding and a Housing First approach. Through a mix of funding spanning 2022 and 2023, the Loudoun CoC provides 25 Rapid Re-Housing beds to serve individuals and families. Rapid Re-housing rental assistance must meet two standards:

- Rent Reasonableness – The rent must be equal to or less than other like units in the area;
- Fair Market Rent (FMR) – The rent (including utilities) is at or below the HUD established FMR for the unit size in the area.

Loudoun CoC continues to pursue funding to support more individuals and families experiencing homelessness through the RRH program and works with landlords to establish open communication and collaboration while serving vulnerable households.

### **Making a Difference**

The pandemic has shined a spotlight on the most vulnerable within the community. The local government along with the CoC and nonprofit partners responded quickly by expanding rental and utility assistance, revising policies to be more inclusive and expand eligibility criteria for assistance to

keep individuals and families housed which reduced the number of occupants in congregate shelter, thus reducing the spread of the virus. Additional grant funding, such as the Covid Homeless Emergency Response Program (CHERP), was obtained and even redirected to areas of greatest need such as domestic violence shelter.

An individual with chronic health conditions exacerbated by years of homelessness who struggled to accept assistance was finally willing to work with outreach workers to secure housing. Although emergency health needs and obtaining personal identification and income documents delayed the process, through a collaboration of a number of programs and organizations, and the dedicated work of case managers, this individual was permanently housed in January 2023. Local organizations came together to provide furniture and household goods, food and moving assistance to make the dwelling a home. There are many such examples of individuals and families finding permanent housing or remaining housed through the efforts of dedicated case managers and programs within the CoC.

### **Lessons for the Future**

Emergency shelter is a lifesaving, crisis intervention, but quality and affordable housing, livable wages, and services such as affordable childcare, skills training, and food resources which support overall housing stability reduce homelessness in our community. Programs coordinated through the CoC have a proven track record of success but alone cannot solve homelessness. Broad community support is essential to ensure that all our residents have permanent, suitable housing where they can thrive.

Our coordinated system of homeless services is facing broader operational challenges such as shelter capacity, staffing limitations and funding limitations. The significant increase in rental rates, the persistence of historically low vacancy rates impacted by the limited amount of affordable housing has yielded ever increasing housing instability throughout the Washington metropolitan region.

The quick response of Loudoun CoC and local government along with nonprofit partners continues to be vital in preventing an even larger crisis. Many more individuals and families now have access to safe accommodations and housing resources as a result of our region's collaborative homeless services network. But there is more work to be done.

### **Call to Action**

As with CoC's nationwide, the services and programs provided depend heavily on community-based providers, such as nonprofits and faith-based organizations. The Loudoun Continuum of Care is continually seeking to expand resources by adding organizations that wish to participate in addressing homelessness in Loudoun County. Federal and state funding is available to community-based providers wishing to partner in a community-wide solution. The Loudoun CoC encourages local providers or those wishing to offer services to apply for funding. The Loudoun CoC regularly shares funding opportunities to the CoC membership via an email listserv. For more information, please visit [Loudoun.gov/CoC](http://Loudoun.gov/CoC)

# Montgomery County, Maryland

## Description of Homeless Services

The Montgomery County Homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) is a public-private partnership that includes state and local government agencies, non-profit service providers, landlords, and other stakeholders who have a role in preventing and ending homelessness. The Interagency Commission on Homelessness (ICH) serves as the CoC's governing board. The Services to End and Prevent Homelessness (SEPH) division of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services is the Collaborative Applicant/ CoC Lead.

All members of the CoC are committed to ending homelessness. There is a comprehensive response system in place that ensures homelessness is prevented whenever possible, or, if it cannot be prevented, it is a rare, brief, and one-time only experience. Montgomery County fully integrates a Housing First philosophy throughout all services and programs. Housing First recognizes that people are most successful when they have choice in housing and seeks to eliminate barriers such as sobriety requirements or treatment compliance. The Montgomery County CoC provides a full continuum of housing services to homeless persons including:

- outreach and engagement,
- emergency and transitional shelter,
- rapid re-housing,
- permanent supportive housing; and
- prevention and diversion strategies.

In January 2020, the ICH launched the new Strategic Plan to End Homelessness. This community-wide effort began in February 2019 and involved multiple stakeholders including elected officials, non-profit service providers, representatives from other systems of care, and government agencies. The plan consists of six primary strategies: Reduce Racial Disparities Across the System, Build and Support Strong and Adaptable Programs, Build and Support Affordable Housing Solutions within the Homeless Continuum, Coordinate Effectively Across Other Systems of Care, Increase and Diversify Funding, and Educate and Advocate for Change. Below are some highlights on the implementation of the plan.

### ***Strategy 1: Reduce Racial Disparities Across the System***

The Racial Disparities Work Group of the ICH has done extensive work on addressing the inequities in the homeless continuum. This work has advanced beyond simply exploring how people of color are represented in homelessness to better understand how race and ethnicity impact outcomes.

- The CoC partnered with CSH to use their Racial Disparities and Disproportionality Index (“RDDI”) to gain insight into the unique disparities in the Montgomery County homeless continuum. The RDDI compares the likelihood of one group experiencing an event to the likelihood of another group experiencing the same event. Their research tells us that Black African American households without children are 5.66 more likely to experience homelessness and Black households with children are 11.7 times more likely to experience homelessness. Once in the system, they are more likely to receive Rapid Rehousing than other groups. Additionally, White Hispanic/ Latino individuals are more likely to exit to

permanent destinations, but also more likely to return to homelessness from permanent destinations. These findings led the group to act by partnering with a local nonprofit, Identity, serving the Latino community to conduct qualitative analysis through focus groups with this group who have experienced homelessness in the county. The CoC continues to analyze these results and identify areas for improvement within the system to mitigate these discrepancies.

- In recent years, research on the Vulnerability Index- Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) has shown bias in the tool. Montgomery County continues to use the VI-SPDAT in combination with a locally developed assessment tool called the Acuity Scale. Montgomery County CoC partnered with Evident Change to evaluate the Acuity Scale for areas of bias and access. Results from this analysis are expected in 2023. This review will enable us to ensure our local tools are not causing unintentional bias in access to housing based on gender or race.
- The Racial Equity Workgroup has hosted 10 workshops for CoC members. Between these 10 trainings approximately 150 CoC members were provided a safe space to gain a deeper understanding of anti-Black racism and develop a knowledge of structural racism. Workshops provided participants with the language and foundation to continue conversations on race and racism.

### ***Strategy 2: Build and Support Strong and Adaptable Programs***

We have seen much success in initiatives around building stronger and more adaptable programs. This includes seeing a demonstrated decrease in number of people entering homelessness for the first time, with a 20% reduction from 2019 – 2022. Additionally, we are seeing a 99% retention rate in permanent supportive housing 24 months after being housed. Some of these are highlighted in later sections.

The CoC has also been able to target prevention resources to high-need areas using the Homeless Prevention Index developed in 2020. We are about to launch a medical rent relief program to support households struggling to pay rent due to a time-limited medical crisis. Centralized Intake and Diversion for adult-only households is now fully operational. Finally, our Youth Drop-in Center is now open serving youth under 24 experiencing, or at-risk of homelessness. We have also been able to secure dedicated funding for youth specific rapid rehousing ensuring that we are able to meet the distinct needs of youth. Further details on many of these initiatives is available later on in the report.



### ***Strategy 3: Build and Support Affordable Housing***

Last fall we hosted our first annual landlord appreciation event. This served as an opportunity to bring together private landlords and commercial property managers that have partnered with us to support previously homeless individuals and families access and maintain housing. The event

highlighted four dedicated landlords with the SEPH team presenting them with awards. Representatives from the Office of Landlord and Tenant Affairs were also in attendance and provided helpful information to guests.

Services to End and Prevent Homelessness staff continue to partner with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) to ensure that County funds are leveraged to support further development and access to affordable housing. This includes working with DHCA and the Department of General Services to explore using HOME funds to develop deeply affordable living quarters (ALQ). These ALQs would enable those with extremely limited income access to long-term affordable permanent housing.

In Federal Fiscal Year 2021, the Continuum was awarded bonus funds to support the opening of a new permanent supportive housing program for eight men that are experiencing chronic health conditions or physical challenges and severe mental health illness. We anticipate the facility opening this spring. And in April 2023, HUD announced that Montgomery County CoC was selected for funding as part of the Special NOFO to address unsheltered homelessness. This award will bring another \$4.8 million to the Continuum including 42 new permanent supportive housing units, supported by 30 new housing stability vouchers.

#### ***Strategy 4: Coordinate Effectively Across Other Systems of Care***

The Medical Respite Program is now fully open and operational, serving twenty individuals at any time that require more intensive on-site medical support as step down between the hospital system and emergency shelter or permanent housing.

Additionally, The CoC, namely the Systems Coordination Committee, has continued to improve the partnership with the Behavioral Health and Crisis Services division of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services with the goal of increasing access to care. This includes working with the Local Behavioral Health Authority to coordinate discharges of people experiencing homelessness from hospitals, residential rehab programs, and substance use treatment facilities; working in tandem with the new Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams to better serve the unhoused population when they are experiencing a psychiatric emergency; and coordinating advocacy efforts to improve the state's involuntary commitment process and legislation. Montgomery County has been awarded additional residential rehab beds that will also serve a much-needed gap in the system.

Additionally, Montgomery County is collaborating with neighboring jurisdictions through regular meetings to share data and collaborate on service delivery for households that regularly cross borders.

#### ***Strategy Five: Increase and Diversify Funding***

This past year has seen a tremendous growth in funds through Federal COVID Response measures, awarding of multiple bonus projects from the annual Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and the Special NOFO, expansion of the Medicaid Waiver program, and additional increases in programmatic funds from the County's General Fund Budget.

#### ***Strategy Six: Educate and Advocate for Change***

The CoC has continued to push for further understanding of best practices in preventing and ending homelessness. This includes partnering with the County's Intergovernmental Relations Office to create policy changes that promote housing access and security. One of these changes includes amending the State of Maryland eviction laws to codify that a government payment must be

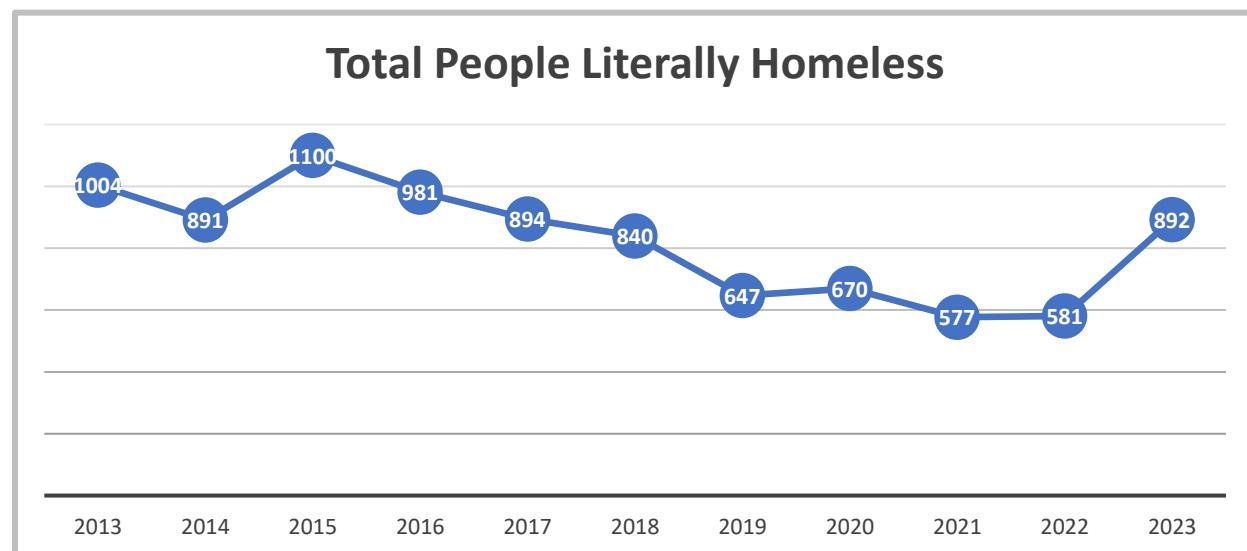
accepted as legal funds to stop an eviction, not just cash or certified checks. This has enabled the County to intervene and prevent more evictions at this critical time of housing instability.

### **Next Steps**

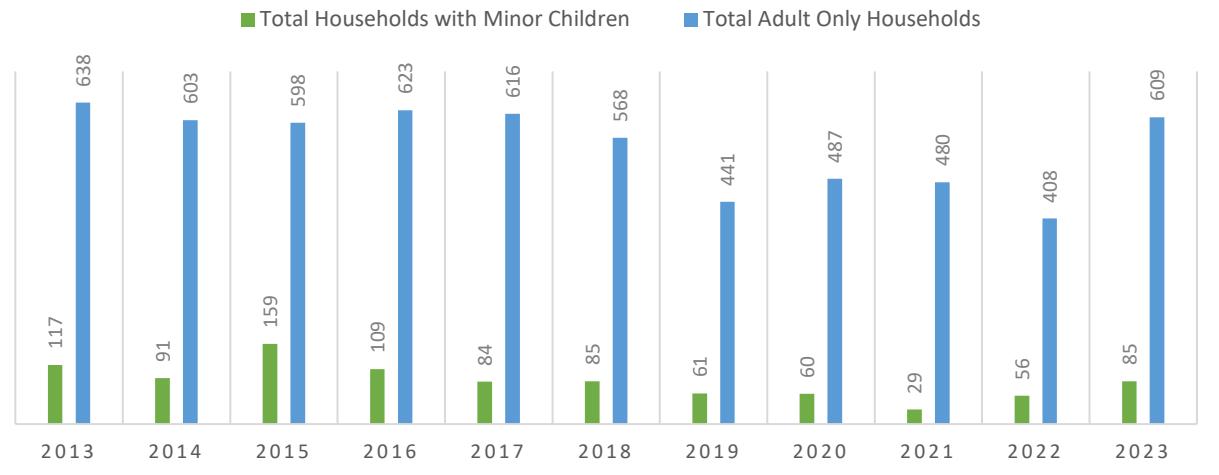
In November 2022 the ICH committed to Built for Zero's Zero for All Campaign to end homelessness for all populations. Montgomery County has committed to reach this goal by December 31, 2025. In December we gathered as a community to affirm this commitment and establish our first set of six-month milestones towards reaching functional zero for all. As of December 2022, we had 610 actively homeless adult-only and family households in our system. Therefore, to end homelessness for all, by the end of 2025 our goal is that no more than 89 individuals are experiencing homelessness at any given time in the County. In order to reach this goal, we will be updating our strategic plan this Spring/Summer into a strategic framework that allows for continual resetting of our six-month milestones and the action items needs to achieve those goals.

### **Point-in-Time Count Survey Analysis**

Montgomery County's homeless point in time survey was conducted on January 25, 2023. This represented the first count since 2020 where we returned to using outside volunteers. A total of 892 homeless persons were counted that day, an increase of 53% from 2022, yet still a decrease of 13% over the past 10 years. The greatest one-year decrease occurred between 2018 and 2019 of 22%. At the beginning of the pandemic, it was estimated that nationally homelessness was expected to increase by 40% and we are clearly seeing that increase in Montgomery County now.



## TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE AND YEAR



There are several factors contributing to this increase. We are seeing increases due to lack of access to housing due to low vacancies, prices above program allowable rents, and continued denials due to criminal and/or credit background issues; increased evictions and growing ineligibility for federal Emergency Rental Assistance Program funds; and increasing usage of our shelter by non-Montgomery County residents.

Of the 892 literally homeless counted on the night of the PIT, 209 or 23% have been unable to demonstrate loss of housing in Montgomery County or previous Montgomery County residency. Given hypothermia season, we will still provide shelter as we work to reconnect the individual to the jurisdiction where they lost their housing though they are not eligible for housing matches within the County. Additionally, another 145 or 16% have an assigned housing match, but have been unable to move into housing yet due to continued barriers with accessing housing. Just under a third of those have been searching for housing for less than 90 days. For the other two-thirds with outstanding housing matches over 90 days we continue to work with the providers to identify the barriers and work to assist the households with moving into housing. However, as noted we continue to see high levels of denials due to criminal and credit background issues, despite the passage of the Housing Justice Act aimed to reduce denials due to criminal background.

It is critical to acknowledge that the Annual Point-in-Time survey is just a snapshot of that night. As noted above, in December 2022 the Continuum set six-month goals for each of our subpopulations. As of March 2023, we have seen the following progress in these areas, most notably supporting over 280 adults in obtaining permanent housing in just over three months.

Sub-population	Goal	Baseline (12/15/22)	1/1/23	2/1/23	3/1/23
Youth	A fully operational Coordinated Entry System for Youth	No data for this measure but CES sub-committee is meeting regularly and this measure is on track.			
Families	An average length of time from ID to Move-in of 45 days	61	102	53	30
Seniors	Decreased the number of seniors entering homelessness by 50% (from 6 to 3)	6	3	8	2
Vulnerable Adults	An average length of time from Assigned to Housed of 45 days	48	No vulnerable adults housed	52	No vulnerable adults housed
Veterans	No more than 7 Veterans experiencing homelessness	10	11	11	11
Other Adult-Only Households	Housed 350 individuals (Cumulative from 12/15/2023. Exits to housed destinations)	Starting at 0	82 (+82 since baseline)	191 (+109 since prev month)	282 (+91 since prev month)

Another way to put the Point-in-Time count in context is to look at the total number of households served by type each year throughout our continuum. Using the Annual Performance Report (APR) available through HMIS, the following

Yearly Totals by Household and Individuals			
ES, TH, SH, SO	2022	2021	2020
<b>Overall Total</b>	1775	1879	1453
<b>Total Family Households</b>	200	159	181
<b>Total Single Adult Households</b>	1575	1720	1272
<b>Total Number of Persons in Families</b>	658	500	603
<b>Total Number of Adults in Families</b>	252	212	246
<b>Total Number of children in families</b>	406	288	357
<b>Total Number of single adult persons</b>	1654	1816	1375

chart demonstrates the contrast of the Point-in-Time count and the number of households who experience homelessness each year. For this CoC, the PIT reflects only half of households served as literally homeless. Of note, as federal rental assistance funds are exhausted, we are seeing an increase in the number of families experiencing homelessness and with a slightly larger household size, especially compared to 2021 numbers served.

## Vulnerabilities and Life Experiences

The effects of the pandemic are illustrated in the percentage of households reporting vulnerabilities. Of adult only households surveyed during this year's enumeration, 30% reported having a serious mental illness, 10% reported substance use disorder, and 5% reported a co-occurring disorder. While these percentages are lower than previous years, given the 40% overall increase in individuals experiencing homelessness we are continuing to see more individuals struggling with substance use, serious mental illness and co-occurring disorders. This year, compared to the 2022 enumeration saw a 68% increase in those reporting a substance use disorder and a 36% increase in reports of serious mental health illness. Interestingly, there was a 48% decrease in those reporting a co-occurring disorder. The continuum continues to work with our partnering systems of care to ensure that those experiencing homelessness have access to person-centered supportive services. As many other systems continue to rely on telehealth we are continuing to push for in-person services which are demonstrated to best align with the needs of those experiencing homelessness.

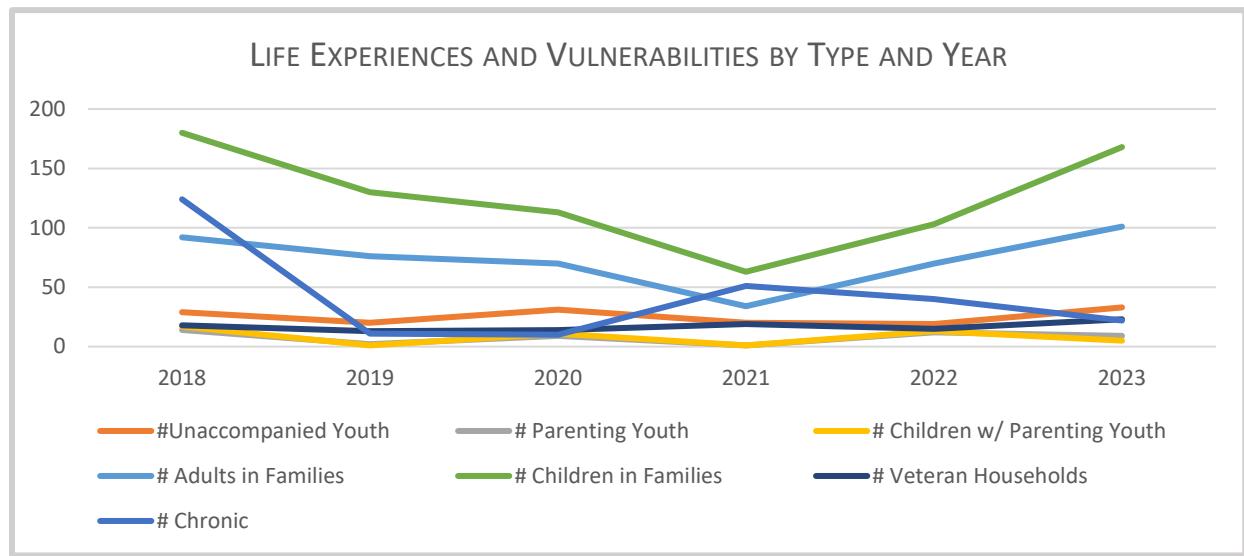
In addition, there was a prevalence of individuals reporting physical disability and chronic health conditions. The percent of individuals reporting a physical disability, or a chronic health condition has remained high over the past few years. This year 21% of those counted reported a physical disability. Due to the larger number of people counted, this is a 43% increase over last year. There is a similar trend for those reporting a chronic health condition at 13% this year, representing a 50% increase over last year.

Households without Children		
Vulnerability/ Experience	# Self Reporting	% Of Total
Substance Use Disorder	63	10%
Serious Mental Illness	188	30%
Co-Occurring Disorder	31	5%
HIV/AIDS	3	0%
Domestic Violence History (any time in the past) - DVH	80	13%
Domestic Violence (this episode) -DVC	25	4%
Physical Disability	130	21%
Chronic Health Condition	78	13%
Limited English	30	5%
Foster Care (5)	16	3%
Formerly Institutionalized	22	4%

Looking at adults in households with children, we continue to see an alarming increase in self reports serious mental illness. This year, 15% of adults in households with children reported a serious mental illness. This is an increase of 88% compared to the number of adults reporting serious mental illness in 2022. This speaks to our growing need for mental health services and furthering our capacity to support the whole family when the adult is struggling. Previously, we were seeing a rising trend in report of domestic violence, both history and current episode. This year that trend is reversing. Reports of domestic violence history have reduced by 25%. Outside of the increase in serious mental health most tracked vulnerabilities and experiences have declined for adults in households with children. This tracks with what we are seeing of more families entering homelessness given the economic challenges and continually rising cost of housing.

Adults in Households with Children		
Vulnerability/ Experience	# Self Reporting	% Of Total
Substance Use Disorder	0	0%
Serious Mental Illness	15	15%
Co-Occurring Disorder	0	0%
HIV/AIDS	0	0%
Domestic Violence History (any time in the past) - DVH	24	24%
Domestic Violence (this episode) -DVC	24	24%
Physical Disability	6	6%
Chronic Health Condition	4	4%
Limited English	7	7%
Foster Care (5)	2	2%
Formerly Institutionalized	0	0%

Montgomery County has made it a priority to focus on certain subpopulations (chronic, Veteran, unsheltered, and those with extreme vulnerability) who tend to have the most significant needs. Despite the increases in total literally homeless this year, in the last six years, the CoC has reduced unsheltered homelessness by 7% and chronic homelessness by 82%. See chart below.



## Veterans

In December 2015, Montgomery County was one of the first four jurisdictions in the Country to effectively end Veteran homelessness.

This success was confirmed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, and the Community Solutions **Built for Zero (BFZ)** campaign. At this time, “functional zero” was defined as having no more than six Veterans experiencing homelessness at any given time. For the last two years, the average number of Veterans experiencing homelessness each month has increased to eleven. The focus continues to be prioritizing Veterans for permanent housing placements and moving as quickly as possible to end

their homelessness. Between January 2015 and December 2022, we have ended homelessness for 227 Veterans.

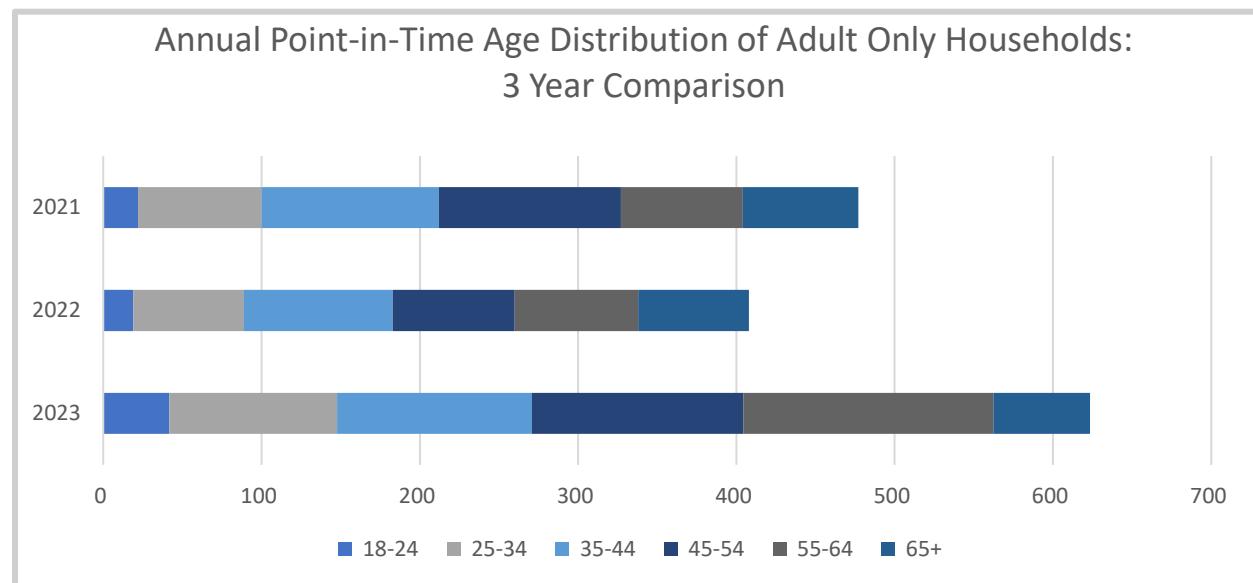
#### *Chronic and Other Vulnerable Adults*

In January 2016, Montgomery County CoC committed to the ambitious goal of ending long-term homelessness for people with disabilities. To date, more than 450 people have been housed through this initiative. Currently there are 22 individuals identified as chronic on the Coordinated Entry/By Name List. Of the 22, 16 have been accepted into a housing program and are awaiting lease up.

In February 2019, the ICH decided to shift the prioritization of permanent supportive housing from chronic to other vulnerable populations. The *Inside (not Outside)* Initiative resulted in a significant number of people with long histories of homelessness placed in permanent housing but had unintended consequences. Most notably, highly vulnerable individuals who did not meet the federal definition of chronic homelessness due to an inability to verify the length of time homeless were stuck waiting on the Coordinated Entry List while others with lower acuity were placed in high intensity permanent supportive housing. To most effectively allocate resources, the Coordinated Entry System now prioritizes all vulnerable adults for permanent supportive housing.

#### *Age Distribution of Adult Only Households*

There continues to be many older adults entering the homeless system. More than half (57%) of all adults without children are over 45 years old, 35% are over 55, and 10% are 65 years or older. The continued growth of older adults in the homeless continuum is concerning. Research states that people experiencing homelessness die an average of 30 years younger than the average person in the United States. This means that individuals with a history of homelessness age at an increased rate, so those 45 years old may have similar health issues as someone in their 70s. This necessitates increased partnership and access to medical and supportive services for older adults.



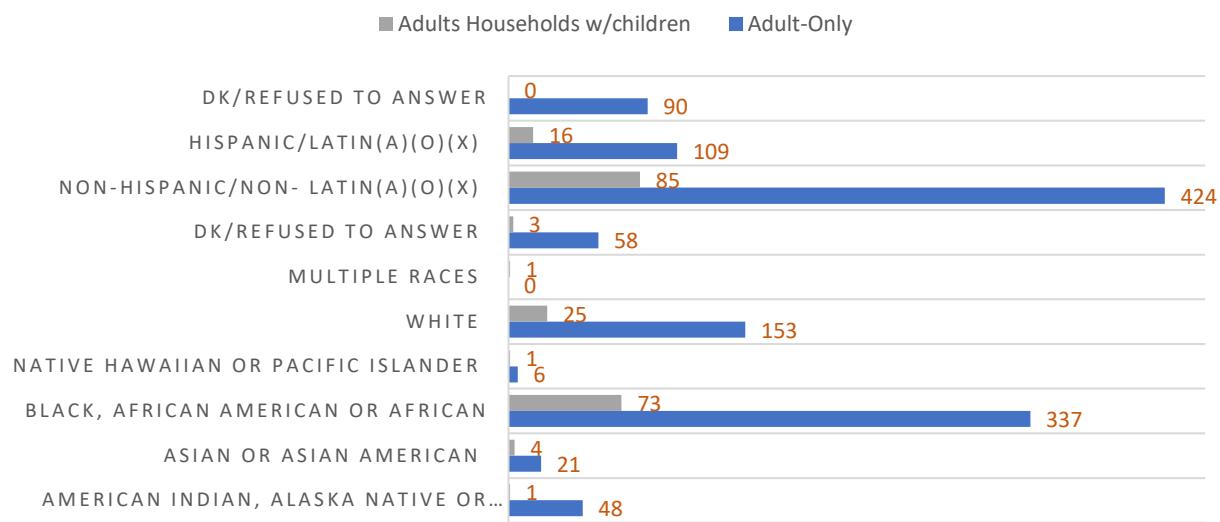
#### *Other Metrics of Note*

Notably, 37% of adult-only households and 32% of adults in households with children reported having income. For adult-only households, SSI/SSDI is the income source for almost half of those

with reported income, whereas for households with children, employment income accounts for half the household income. For adult-only households this speaks to the challenge of finding housing affordable to those on fixed, limited incomes.

We continue to see a disproportionate use of our system by individuals identifying as Black, African American or African. Fifty-six percent of adults counted on the night of the PIT identify as Black, African America, or African, despite only 19% of the County's population identifying as such at the time of the 2020 census. This continues to underscore the need for continual focus on reducing racial disparities across the system.

## ANNUAL POINT-IN-TIME ETHNICITY AND RACE ADULTS BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE



### Year-Round and Winter Inventory of Beds

The CoC continues to provide emergency shelter to households with minor children through three year-round family shelters, one domestic violence shelter, and limited hotel subsidies used as overflow. During this year's enumeration, a total of 85 households with minor children were residing in emergency, overflow shelter, or DV shelter.

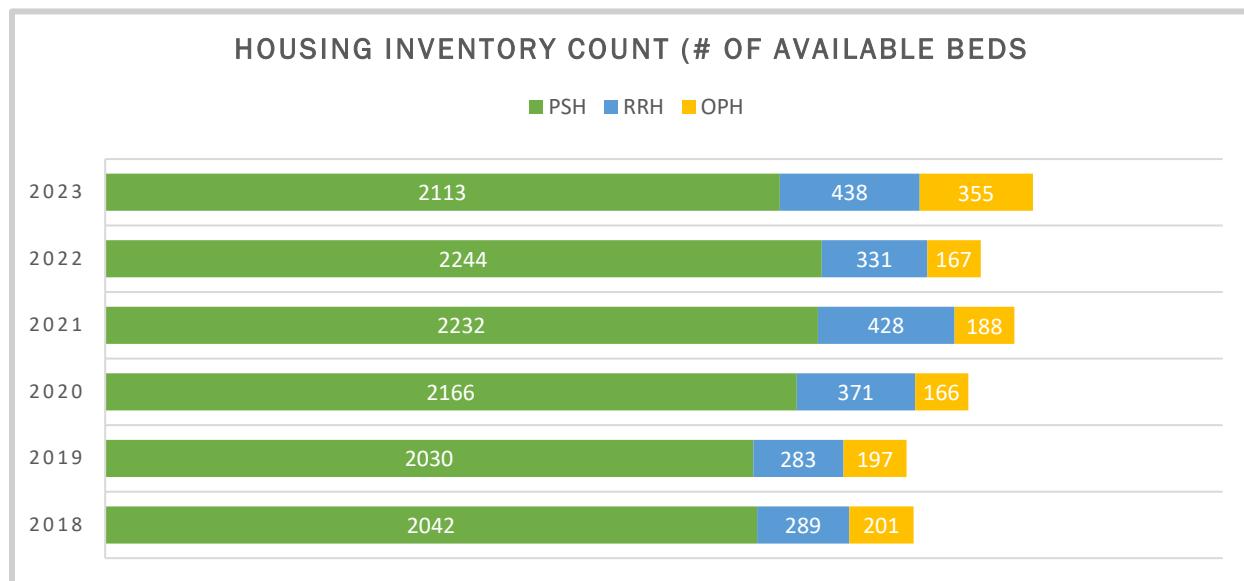
With the opening of the Nebel Street Emergency Shelter and the Medical Respite program last year, emergency shelter capacity for adults without children has increased to over 350 for year-round capacity. This includes the DV shelter with six beds designated for this household type, three designated medical beds, and two designated for older adults or people with disabilities. The increase of year-round beds was a permanent shift the CoC implemented during COVID to ensure social distancing and expanded year-round availability at all adult only shelter facilities. Additionally, we continue to leverage partnerships with local hotels to rent rooms as needed for family overflow and for adults with COVID risk factors or whom need a space to isolate while COVID positive. We do anticipate the use of overflow and COVID hotels to reduce given the upcoming public health emergency expiration in May 2023. On the day of the 2023 enumeration, there were 474 emergency shelter and overflow beds occupied by single adults and 248 beds occupied by members of households with children. In total 677/815 year-round, seasonal and overflow beds were occupied.

In 2022, Montgomery County increased the number of medical beds in shelter as well as adding 20 beds in the new Montgomery County Medical Respite Program. This is in direct response to the growing number of people with serious medical conditions and the increase in hospital discharges to shelter.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S YEAR-ROUND AND WINTER INVENTORY OF BEDS			
	Households w/o Children	Households w/children	Total Beds
<b>COVID and Overflow Hotel</b>	102	142	244
<b>Year- Round Emergency Shelter Beds</b>	353	131	484
<b>Seasonal Beds</b>	79	8	87
<b>Transitional / Haven Beds</b>	28	21	49
<b>TOTALS</b>	562	302	864

#### Permanent Housing Inventory Count

From 2018 to 2023, the number of units of permanent housing in Montgomery County increased by 14% from 2532 to 2906. It is important to note that the mix of beds available has shifted to align with the assessed needs of the households served in the CoC. However, as noted earlier we continue to struggle with moving people into housing. Many more households are matched with rapid rehousing then moved in, which is not reflected in the totals below. The housing market has become tougher to navigate even with a housing voucher. With the end of pandemic eviction protections and rent stabilization efforts, landlords are responding by raising rents, not renewing existing leases, and increasing barriers to housing despite Montgomery County laws on source of income protection and “ban-the-box” on criminal histories. On average, it is taking four months from the time of intake into Rapid Rehousing to signing a lease. Because Maryland does not have “just cause eviction” legislation, many households in permanent supportive housing must relocate due to a non-renewal of their leases. This puts additional strain on the housing locator network as vacancy rates are incredibly low.



### **Pandemic Impact on PIT Count**

As noted previously, for the 2023 enumeration Montgomery County returned to having community volunteers support the PIT in canvassing across the County. This year we were joined by over 90 volunteers, many for the first time. This support enabled us to conduct a deeper dive throughout the over 500 square miles of the County. We suspect that this deeper dive is in part to what led to the 80% increase in identification of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness compared to 2022, despite availability of the same number of shelter beds. Additionally, as also discussed previously given the continued economic struggles and challenges in accessing housing because of the pandemic we are seeing in increasing number of households experiencing homelessness. While Montgomery County has released over \$90 million in rent relief to over 12,000 households, in addition to thousands of grants provided through the County's locally funded eviction prevention programs, many households have maxed out assistance they are eligible for and have unfortunately lost their housing. We will discuss below our efforts at diversion to mitigate the inflow into the shelter system.

### **Effectiveness of Montgomery County Coordinated Entry System**

Coordinated Entry is a process developed to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed for, referred, and connected to housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs. Within a Coordinated Entry System (CES), persons are prioritized for housing based on vulnerability using data-driven, real-time process. Montgomery County's CES embraces Housing First principles across all programs and services. We provide immediate access to permanent housing without any preconditions, supporting client choice and self-determination. Additionally, supports are individualized and person-driven while focusing on social and community integration. These principles are imbedded into our work and drive new programming and program expansion.

Due to the influx of local, state, and federal resources, including flexible funding, Montgomery County was able to shift CES from only providing housing to those with the greatest needs to creating pathways to housing for everyone based on their unique needs. Notably, the CoC was able to expand the successful centralized intake and homeless diversion from just families to adult only households. Centralized Diversion has been able to assist over 500 households from entering the homeless system. Flexible funds have enabled us to pay for transportation and/or provide financial incentives directly to family/friends that have committed to supporting the household at risk of homelessness. We have also focused on tenant rights and education as many households continue to abandon housing thinking they do not have a right to stay. By informing these households of their options we can work with them while they remain housed to develop a longer-term housing plan.

We have also seen tremendous success with the continued investment in minimal support programs designed to empower households in determining the best way to end their homelessness experience.

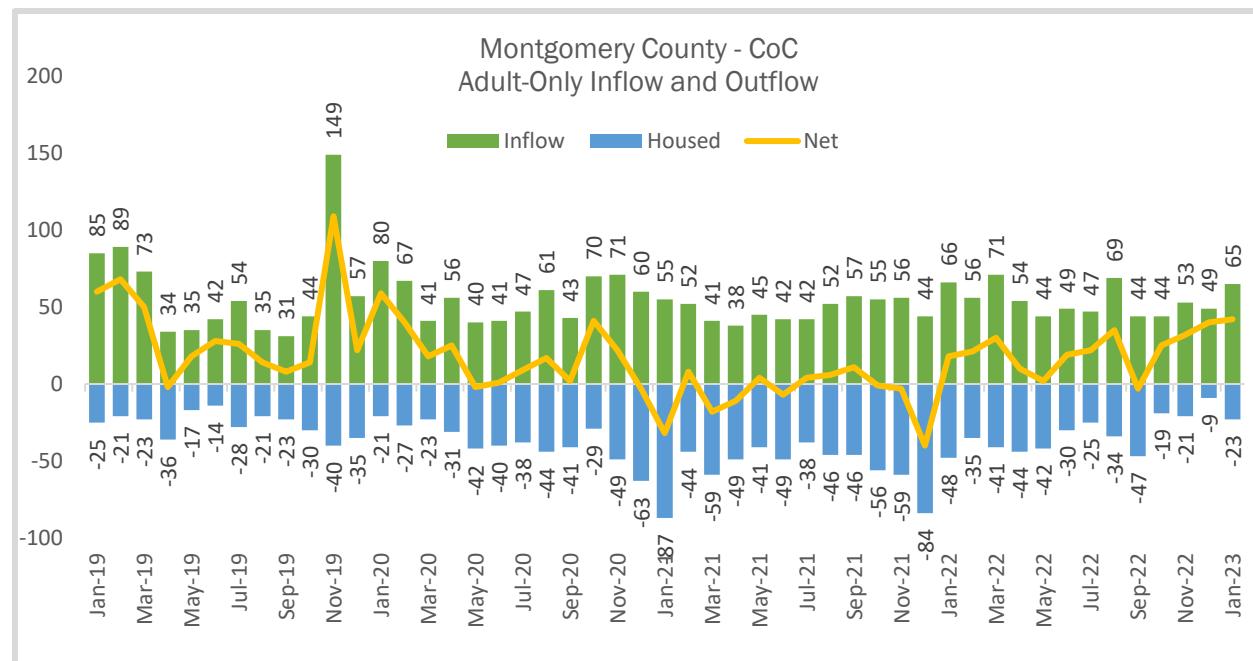
The Short-term Housing Resolution Program (SHaRP) provides security deposit, 1<sup>st</sup> month's rent and additional rental subsidy based on income-rent ratio for up to 12 months to allow households in shelter or on the street to move into housing. The program initially provided up to six months in rental subsidy, but in 2022 we were able to extend that to 12 months. No case management is provided, though navigators are now available to provide resource connections and monthly check-ins to support households in maintaining their housing. Since its inception in late 2020, SHaRP has assisted over 430 households move into their own permanent housing, with less than a 20% return rate after 12 months.

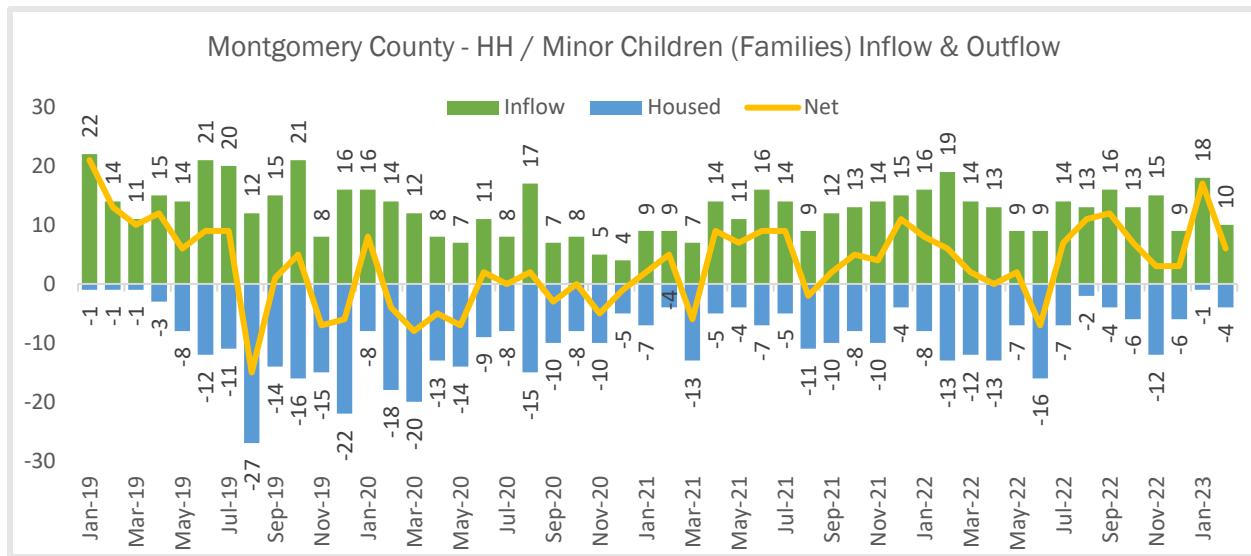
The Exit Bonus Program provides direct cash assistance to allow households to resolve their homelessness in the best way they see fit. The program offers \$5000 as a one-time direct cash assistance payment to singles/individuals exiting homelessness, or \$8000 to families. Case management is not provided. Participants agree not to return to shelter for at least twelve months and complete a monthly survey. This program was originally designed for individuals newly (less than six months) homeless with no known substance or mental health challenges. Given the interest and initial success of the program, we removed the newly homeless criteria. The CoC follows each program participant for at least 12 months and conducts regular surveys to assess their housing stability, food security, income, and other quality of life indicators including general wellbeing, use of substances, and feelings about the future. Through December 2022, 125 households have been served through the Exit Bonus program with only a 17.6% return rate.

The County Rental Assistance Program (RAP) is a permanent shallow subsidy for households where at least one household member is either disabled or over 55 years old. Households must be currently homeless or at imminent risk for consideration. Monthly payments based on income-rent ratio are provided jointly to the tenant and landlord up to a maximum of \$503/month. Households complete an annual renewal process to maintain access to the RAP subsidy.

While these programs are effective methods to increase outflow, it is also critical that we stem the inflow into the system. We must continue to break down barriers to housing as highlighted above, but also enhance prevention efforts so that those entering homelessness is less than the average number of households exiting to permanent housing each month.

Over the last few years, the CoC has dramatically increased the number of housing placements. In 2022 alone, we were able to house 395 adults-only households and 106 households with children. Unfortunately, we are still seeing a positive net inflow in both systems. See charts below.





These trends led the CoC to expand on our success of centralized intake and diversion for families to adult-only households. We have co-located diversion specialists with the County's Crisis Center to support adult-only households as soon as they reach out concerned about their housing. As noted previously, we have provided diversion services to over 500 individuals. Some of these are light touch mediations between various members of a household, while others are more intensive support to mitigate the underlining issue that is putting the households housing at risk.

We also were able to enroll 100 households that had recently exited homelessness in the County's guaranteed income pilot program – MoCo Boost. The pilot program is a public-private partnership that will honor a household's resilience by placing trust in their ability to make their own decisions on what is best for their path forward. MoCo Boost is the first of its kind in the State of Maryland and is supported by the Montgomery County Council, Department of Health and Human Services, Meyer Foundation, Montgomery County Collaboration Council, and UpTogether. MoCo BOOST provides \$800 a month to a total of 300 Montgomery County households for 24 months. There are no restrictions on what participants can do with the money received through the pilot. We will be tracking the success of all 300 families to maintain their housing and look at options to add this to our long-term prevention toolkit.

Additionally, as we close-out our COVID Rent Relief Program (CRRP), we are conducting focus groups to identify areas for improvement in administering eviction prevention programming. CRRP enabled us to pay rents for up to 18 months, with the average assistance per a household of over \$11,000. Prior to CRRP our eviction prevention grants were limited to \$3,000 per a household, assuming they were eligible for both local and state assistance. Historically, we also only provided the minimum to stop an eviction versus any additional funds to ensure housing was stabilized. Assistance caps and use of funds are among the areas we are looking to modify in an effort to strengthen the program. We expect to roll out new program guidance in July 2023.

# Prince George's County, Maryland

## DESCRIPTION OF HOMELESS SERVICES

The Prince George's County Continuum of Care (CoC) for homeless persons is coordinated through the County's Homeless Services Partnership (HSP); the local Homeless Advisory Board for the County Executive. The mission of the HSP is to ensure that episodes of homelessness are rare, brief and non-reoccurring and to that end, the HSP is responsible for needs assessments, gap analysis, service coordination, resource development, drafting and adoption of policy, and system performance evaluation of all homeless services. Membership includes over 100 public and private organizations, consumers and concerned citizens with expertise in relevant impact areas including homelessness, education, employment, mental health, substance use, behavioral health services, aging and vulnerable adult services, public safety, street outreach, benefit assistance, youth services, and domestic violence and trafficking which meet monthly and work collaboratively to establish strategic priorities, assess progress, and oversee full implementation of the County's efforts to end homelessness. The Prince George's County Department of Social Services is the lead administering agency for the County's CoC and serves as the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) administrator; the Collaborative Applicant (CA) for the annual HUD Homeless Assistance grant application process; and Co-Chair of the HSP.

The County has a comprehensive network of programs designed to provide a coordinated and systemic response to persons identified as at risk of, and/or, literally homeless as well as a coordinated entry system that ensures prioritization of those who are most vulnerable. All CoC services are coordinated through a central call center allowing persons in need to gain services and shelter without having to navigate multiple systems. The system currently includes:

- Street Outreach, Mobile Crisis and SOAR;
- 24/7/365 access through the "Homeless Hotline" and Coordinated Entry;
- Integrated Diversion and Homeless Prevention Services;
- Emergency and hypothermic overflow shelters including beds specifically for veterans, DV / trafficking survivors, and unaccompanied youth and young adults;
- Transitional Housing - Rapid Re-Housing combination programs;
- Rapid Re-Housing programs; and
- Permanent Supportive Housing programs.

The County's strategic plan focuses on six (6) key strategies that have proven to be effective in reducing homelessness: 1. coordinated entry, 2. prevention assistance, 3. shelter diversion, 4. rapid re-housing, rapid exit and "moving on", 5. permanent housing, and 6. improved data collection and performance measures. In addition, the County has prioritized six subpopulations to systematically target the unique barriers to housing experienced by these groups: 1. Vulnerable elderly and aging; 2. Unaccompanied youth/young adults; 3. Survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and other violent crimes; 4. Returning Citizens, 5. Veterans; and 6. Chronic homeless and other homeless with severe somatic and behavioral health challenges (SMI, SUD and COD). All strategies have been carefully designed to achieve purposeful and intentional reduction in the incidents of homelessness and collectively they form a plan that enhances system accountability, builds on current success, and provides continued flexibility to quickly shift resources to meet newly emerging needs. System success is measured in part by expansion of sustainable permanent housing resources as well as positive movement in several key indicator areas including: Change in income, Recidivism, Length of Stay in Homelessness, Exits to Permanent Housing, and Reduction in new entry of first time homeless.

	Beds for Individuals*	Beds for Families	Year-Round Beds
Emergency Shelter	119	234	353
TH / RRH	91	163	254
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>607</b>

\*includes beds for unaccompanied youth and young adults ages 13-24

## HOMELESS POINT-IN-TIME RESULTS

The Prince George's County homeless point-in-time count was conducted on Wednesday, January 25, 2023. The survey counted and interviewed unsheltered homeless persons living on the streets and sheltered individuals and families in NCS response shelters, 24-hour emergency shelters and joint transitional housing rapid re-housing programs. Due to the continued safety implications of COVID-19, this year's count continued to rely on the support of experienced providers and other professional homeless services teams to plan and develop revised strategies for conducting the count. Virtual sessions were conducted to ensure staff could be universally trained regardless of location and availability and ensured consistency of survey application on the day of the actual PIT count.

The County's homeless management information system (HMIS) was used to conduct the sheltered count and to minimize safety risks, the unsheltered count was conducted this year entirely by professional street outreach teams and paid provider staff targeting 6 County zones. The County's recent investment in the build out of a comprehensive street outreach team allowed for real time identification of "hot spot" locations within each County zone which included known encampments, shopping malls, metro stations, libraries, soup kitchens and other areas where homeless have been known to gather. Teams were disbursed from 6:00 am until midnight and included teams from Police, Fire/EMS mobile integrated health, community health workers, CoC Lead agency personnel, and CoC Street Outreach and PATH teams. In addition, a 3 day pre and 3 day post canvassing by the street teams allowed for comprehensive coverage and counting of known unsheltered homeless in this year's PIT to minimize the ongoing safety impacts of COVID-19 on jurisdictional reporting.

The unsheltered count included an interview component to gather pertinent demographic, subpopulation, employment and other relevant data used to generate comparable data for this report and a command center was established as a point of contact for team leaders to call with any questions, emergencies, supply needs or assistance during the count. The County's Continuum of Care Point-in-Time Survey (PIT) Committee in collaboration with the County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Administrator used iPads, iPhones, tablets and Survey Monkey to conduct the 2023 unsheltered count. Training sessions not only prepared PIT staff to effectively use the electronic devices but enabled them to review and provide feedback about the survey questions in advance of the count.

On January 25, 2023 a total of 659 homeless adults and children were counted in Prince George's County, Maryland; (273 single adults, 154 adults in families and 222 children in adult families, and 5 singles and 2 parents with 3 children in minor headed households) reflecting a 15.4% increase from 2022. Of this number, 557 (84.5%) were sheltered and 102 (15.5%) were unsheltered and living on the streets and public places not meant for human habitation. The following charts provide a comparison of the 2021, 2022 and 2023 counts.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HOMELESS COUNT BY CATEGORY				
Category	2023	2022	2021	% Change - 2021 to 2023
Total Number Counted	659	571	537	+15.5%
Total Number of Singles	273	273	251	+29%
Total Transition Age Youth (TAY) ages 18-24	85	47	26	+305%
Total Veterans	7	8	17	-59%
Total Number of Families	119	103	90	+32%
Total Number Persons in Families	376	298	286	+32%
Total Adults in Families	154	118	115	+34%
Total Number of Children in Families	222	180	171	+30%
Total TAY- Head of Household	14	19	15	-.7%
Total TAY- Children in Household	20	21	10	+100%
Total Veterans - Head of Household	1	0	5	-400%
Total Veterans - Children in Household	2	0	6	-300%
Total Children w/ONLY Children (under 18)	10	0	1	-100%

The following chart provides a summary of those surveyed by income type. As in prior years, the largest source of income remains employment (66.1%) for the sheltered population, followed by SSI / SSDI (21.7%). For unsheltered, a lack of income is dominant at 79.4% however of those with income, employment (36.8%) and SSI/SSDI (30%) remain the largest source of income.

HOMELESS COUNT BY INCOME TYPE – ADULTS ONLY				
Category	Sheltered		Unsheltered	
	Individuals	%	Individuals	%
Total Number of Adults	335		92	
Income	180	59.1%	19	20.6%
Employment	119	66.1%	7	36.8%
Social Security /Retirement	4	2.2%	2	10%
SSI / SSDI	39	21.7%	6	30%
TANF / Public Assistance	7	3.9%	1	5%
Other Sources *	11	6.1%	3	15%
Don't know / refused / no income	137	40.9%	73	79.4%

\*other sources include unemployment, child support, and panhandling.

This following chart provides a summary of barriers impacting sheltered and unsheltered adults surveyed on the night of the count. Of those that reported barriers, single adults reported significant somatic and behavioral health challenges (44%) and domestic violence (24%) as presenting the greatest barriers to permanent housing and independence while for adults in families, the highest barrier remains domestic violence (25%). Of particular note is that the County is currently a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program and 2023 represented the first full year of program

implementation. Unaccompanied youth and young adults represented nearly 35% of all singles served, further underscoring the continued need for programs that target young adults under the age of 25,

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY SUB-POPULATIONS -SINGLE ADULTS AND ADULTS IN FAMILIES					
Category	Adults in Families		Single Adults		Total
Population	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Sheltered	Unsheltered	ALL
Number of Adults (includes TAY)	151	3	184	89	427
Chronic Homeless *	5	1	12	12	30
Veteran	1	0	3	4	8
TAY	14	0	72	13	99
Substance Use Disorder	2	1	2	8	13
Severe Mental Illness	8	2	26	12	48
Co-occurring Disorder	0	0	1	7	8
HIV/AIDS	1	0	2	1	4
DV History ( <i>any time in the past</i> )	20	0	19	5	44
Domestic Violence ( <i>this episode</i> )	17	0	14	0	31
Physical Disability	3	2	7	17	29
Chronic Health Condition	2	1	11	26	40
Limited English	8	0	4	25	37
Foster Care**	0	0	0	3	3
Former Institutionalized***	2	0	2	11	15
Other Barriers	3	0	3	3	9
None of the above	85	0	93	0	178

\*Adults meeting the HUD definition  
time.

\*\*Adults who have been in foster care at any

\*\*\* Adults who were discharged directly into homelessness from prison or jail, hospitals, psychiatric facilities or other care facilities.

#### PERMANENT AND PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

While the County has experienced significant success with unsubsidized and non-traditional permanency efforts, there remain individuals and families who require a more structured and supportive housing plan; the greatest of which is the need for expanded rapid re-housing and new supportive housing beds for high risk singles which represent the largest population of the County's known chronic homeless unsheltered population. In addition, there is a significantly growing sub-population of people newly experiencing homelessness who are aging/elderly or have a disabling condition and for whom social security, SSI and/or SSDI benefits are insufficient to secure or maintain market rent housing in the region. In addition, the Continuum of Care continues to maintain focus on strategies to increase long term stable housing opportunities for these and other priority sub-populations; including partnerships with the local Housing Authorities, local landlords, provider partners, and health/human services agencies to maximize rental concessions, prioritize

access to public housing and vouchers, explore property ownership/project conversion for deeply affordable housing, and apply for new funding opportunities as they become available.

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	% Change
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Beds	369	319	310	310	286	29%

#### **OTHER NOTEWORTHY CONTINUUM OF CARE ACTIVITIES**

The County identified six (6) homeless sub-populations for targeted program development and has made significant progress as a result of that intentional focus:

1. *Survivors of Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking, and Sexual Assault*
2. *Unaccompanied Youth and Young Adult ages 13-24*
3. *Chronically homeless and other homeless persons experiencing severe behavioral and somatic health challenges*
4. *Veterans*
5. *Returning Citizens*
6. *Vulnerable elderly and aging*

County 2023 highlights include but are not limited to:

1. Expanded housing opportunities for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness with prior child welfare involvement through the new Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) program in collaboration with the local Housing Authority.
2. Expanded housing opportunities for vulnerable households experiencing homelessness with local housing authorities through Emergency Housing Vouchers, increased set aside programs and strategic prioritization for referrals to public housing and other affordable housing programs.
3. Launched 6 YHDP projects focused on unaccompanied youth and young adults including a drop-in center, street outreach, Joint Transitional Rapid Re-housing, Transitional Crisis, and Permanent Supportive Housing.
4. Partnered with C4 Innovations and 9 jurisdictions in Maryland, DC and Virginia to conduct a regional racial equity analysis.
5. Partnered with the County to launch the Cabinet for Children and Youth which is a cross-sector collaboration centered on Children and Youth and their families. The cabinet is charged with leading the County's efforts to become officially designated as a Child Friendly Community and supporting implementation of the CoC's YHDP Coordinated Community Plan. There are 5 youth and young adults appointed to the board to ensure youth driven leadership including the co-chair of the CoC Youth Action Board.
6. Awarded 1 new expansion Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) project and 1 new Transitional Housing – Rapid Rehousing (TH-RRH) project for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and/or human trafficking.
7. Established a Persons with Lived Experience and Expertise (PLEE) workgroup and drafted a strategic workplan to address to reduce prevalence of unsheltered homelessness and improve services engagement, health outcomes, and housing stability among highly vulnerable unsheltered individuals and families in Prince George's County.

# Prince William County, Virginia

## About Our Continuum

The Prince William Area Continuum of Care (PWA CoC) is comprised of nonprofit, faith-based, and government agencies throughout Prince William County and the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park. The Prince William County Department of Social Services (PWC DSS) serves as the lead agency for the PWA CoC and is responsible for managing the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and leading the local homeless services continuum. The PWA CoC operates a comprehensive homeless response system and works collaboratively through various committees to review policies and procedures, establish best practices, and monitor program performance.

Programs within the PWA CoC include prevention, diversion, street outreach, drop-in center, emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing, and housing location services. Providers work together to coordinate and increase access to services such as housing, employment, benefits, education, health, and wellness.

The PWA CoC uses a centralized and systematic homeless response system called the “Coordinated Entry System (CES)” to coordinate services. CES is operated by trained staff who work to assess barriers and connect persons experiencing a housing crisis with services. CES assists persons actively experiencing homelessness as well as those who may be at-risk of homelessness. CES serves as the “front door” to services, as all persons in need of assistance are prioritized for resources based on needs assessments conducted by CES staff.

The PWA CoC includes forty-five (45) member organizations and sixteen (16) funded homeless service providers; ten (10) of which contribute data into the CoC’s HMIS. The PWA CoC was recently awarded \$1.5 million dollars in HUD CoC Program funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024. This is the single highest fiscal year award in PWA COC’s history and represents a 9% increase in funding since FY23 (over \$1.4 million) and a more than 100% increase in funding since FY2020.

## What is the Point in Time (PIT) Count?

The Point in Time (PIT) Count is an annual count of persons experiencing *literal homelessness* on a single night in January each year and is conducted by homeless services continuums across the country as required by the Dept. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD). The PIT provides a “snapshot” of the nature and extent of homelessness and provides valuable information used to inform funding decisions, support service and resource planning, as well as to raise public awareness about homelessness on the local and national level. Persons that are *literally homeless* would be those living in emergency shelter, transitional housing programs, or places not meant for human habitation (such as a vehicle or somewhere outside) the night of the conducted count.

## How is the Point in Time Count Conducted?

The annual Sheltered Count was conducted throughout the day and night of Wednesday, January 25, 2023. The Unsheltered Count was conducted the night of the 25<sup>th</sup> with supplemental counts occurring through Tuesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

The Sheltered Count is completed by the staff of each participating emergency shelter and transitional housing program. The following organizations and programs participated in the 2023 Sheltered Count:

- Action in Community Through Service – Beverly Warren & Domestic Violence Shelters

- Good Shepherd Housing Foundation – Housing Partnership Program
- Manassas Baptist Church – Hypothermia Shelter
- Northern Virginia Family Service – SERVE Shelter
- PWC Adult Protective Services – Overflow Emergency Shelter
- PWC Child Protective Services – Overflow Emergency Shelter
- PWC Dept. of Social Services – Ferlazzo Shelter & Hilda Barg Homeless Prevention Center
- PWC Office of Housing & Community Development – Dawson Beach Program
- Streetlight Community Outreach Ministries – Hypothermia Shelter, Supportive Shelter, & Transitional Housing Program

The Unsheltered Count is completed through the support of CoC members, community organizations, and, most importantly, volunteers. In 2023, more than fifty members of the community came together to complete this count. Volunteers worked with experienced Street Outreach staff to canvass the continuum to complete surveys with persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness. The Unsheltered Count is also an opportunity for Street Outreach staff to ensure the safety of those sleeping outside as well as connect them to available services. The following organizations participated in the 2023 Unsheltered Count:

- 3MT, LLC
- City of Manassas Dept. of Social Services
- City of Manassas Park Dept. of Social Services
- Dept. of Housing & Urban Development
- Friendship Place
- Manassas City Police Dept.
- Manassas Hope for the Homeless
- PWC Board of County Supervisors
- PWC Community Services
- PWC Dept. of Fire & Rescue
- PWC Dept. of Social Services
- PWC Office of the Public Defender
- Prince William County Community Foundation
- Saved Hands Foundation
- Serving Our Neighbors
- Streetlight Community Outreach Ministries

PIT Count methodology was updated this year in an attempt to better count our literally homeless population as well as to ensure more accurate data outcomes. The PWA CoC continued to ensure best practices by providing Personal Protective Equipment, safety equipment, and online training for all participating volunteers and staff.

***Shelter Count Methodology:*** In the past, PIT data for sheltered projects was largely pulled from our Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). This year sheltered projects entered their survey data into a separate analysis tool, so all data is based on client response as of the night of the count rather than what is most recent in our system. Additionally, we are now collecting data for our

hypothermia shelter projects in HMIS and have also included counts of persons in hotel/motel shelter paid for by the Prince William County Adult & Child Protective Services departments.

**Unsheltered Count Methodology:** In the past, a supplemental count (known as the “Service-Based Count”) was conducted the day after PIT in an attempt to capture anyone missed the night before. This year the PWA CoC decided to expand these efforts and conducted supplemental counts over a 7-day period ending on January 31<sup>st</sup>. Volunteers visited locations such as libraries, fast food restaurants, local malls/business centers, community dinners, and our homeless drop-in centers to complete surveys. Homeless Services staff also visited known encampments multiple times over this period. The PWA CoC also successfully recruited several Spanish-speaking volunteers and also employed a person with lived experience to assist with completing surveys. Lastly, survey participants were provided hot meals as a result of partnerships with The Prince William County Community Foundation and 3MT LLC, as well as \$10 gift cards to local restaurants for their participation.

## Point in Time Count Outcomes

### 1. Persons Served

The literally homeless count increased by 35% from 2022 to 2023. The count of persons in emergency shelter increased by 21% and the count of unsheltered persons increased by more than 100%. There was no change to the count of persons in transitional housing programs.

There are several factors that contributed to this increase. Emergency shelter bed capacity increased as one shelter was reopened after needed repairs, social distancing requirements were lifted bringing beds back online, and additional beds were added due to the onboarding of new projects. The unsheltered count increased due to improved PIT Count methodology as well as continued CoC efforts to expand street outreach services. The lifting of the national eviction moratorium as well as the winding down of additional funding are also believed to be contributing factors.

Table 1.0 below reports the count of persons from 2019 – 2023 while Table 1.1 reports the percent change from 2022 to 2023.

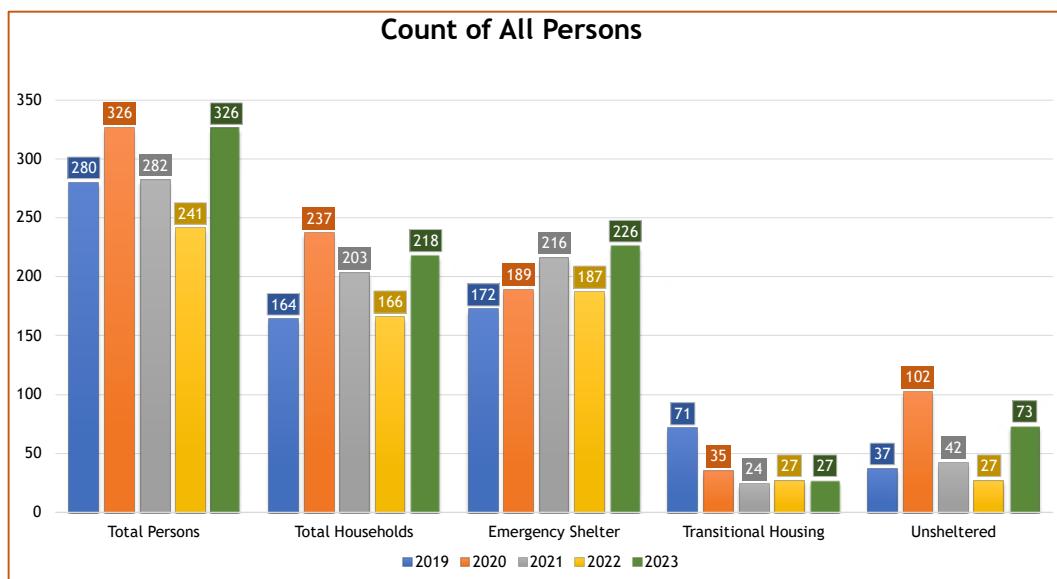


Table 1.0 – Count of All Persons (Five Year Comparison)



Table 1.1 – Percent Change from Previous Year

## Unsheltered Homelessness

The unsheltered count increased by more than 100% from 2022 to 2023. One of the CoC's priorities over the past few years has been to improve and expand street outreach services. This increase is indicative of the success of these efforts as well as the success of the improved PIT Count methodology.

Expanding the count over the 7-day period allowed the CoC to accommodate the transient nature of this population as street outreach providers have noted the encampments persons sleep at can change from night to night. Additionally, some persons simply are not at their camp the night of the count as they are at work.

## Households with Children

The number of persons in households with children increased by 42% from 2022 to 2023, and the household count increased by 67%. This is the first time this population has increased since 2019. The PWA CoC continues to not encounter unsheltered households with children during the count.

Table 1.2 below reports the counts of households with children from 2019 – 2023, while Table 1.3 reports the percent change from 2022 to 2023.

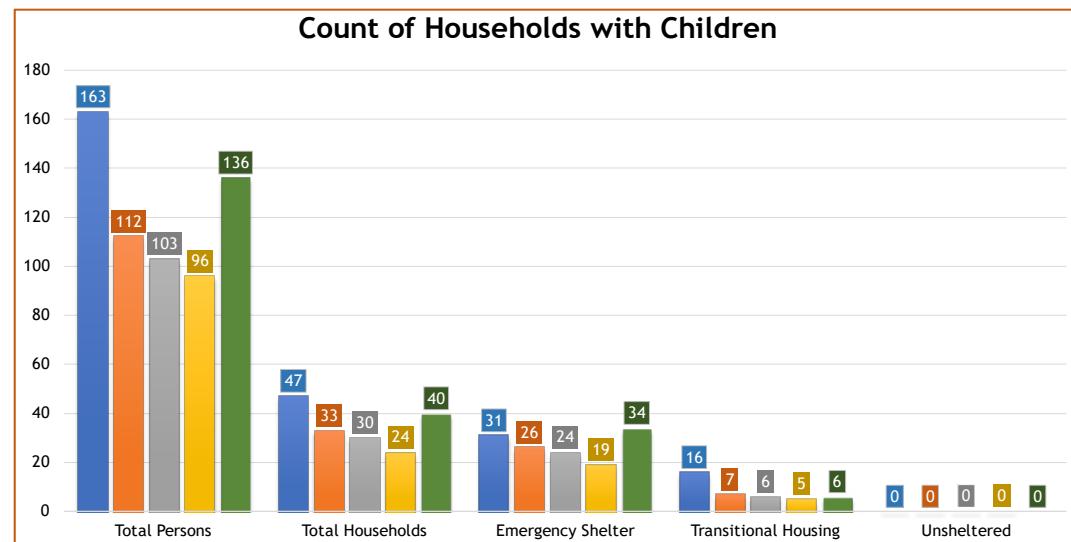


Table 1.2 – Count of Households with Children (Five Year Comparison)



Photo of an encampment located in the Prince William Area CoC



Table 1.3 – Percent Change from Previous Year

### Adult-Only Households

The number of persons in adult-only households increased by 31% from 2022 to 2023. Adult-only households continue to be a vulnerable population in the PWA CoC and represent 100% of the unsheltered population and 81% of all households counted. Table 1.4 below reports the counts of adult-only households from 2019 – 2023, while Table 1.5 reports the percent change from 2022 to 2023.

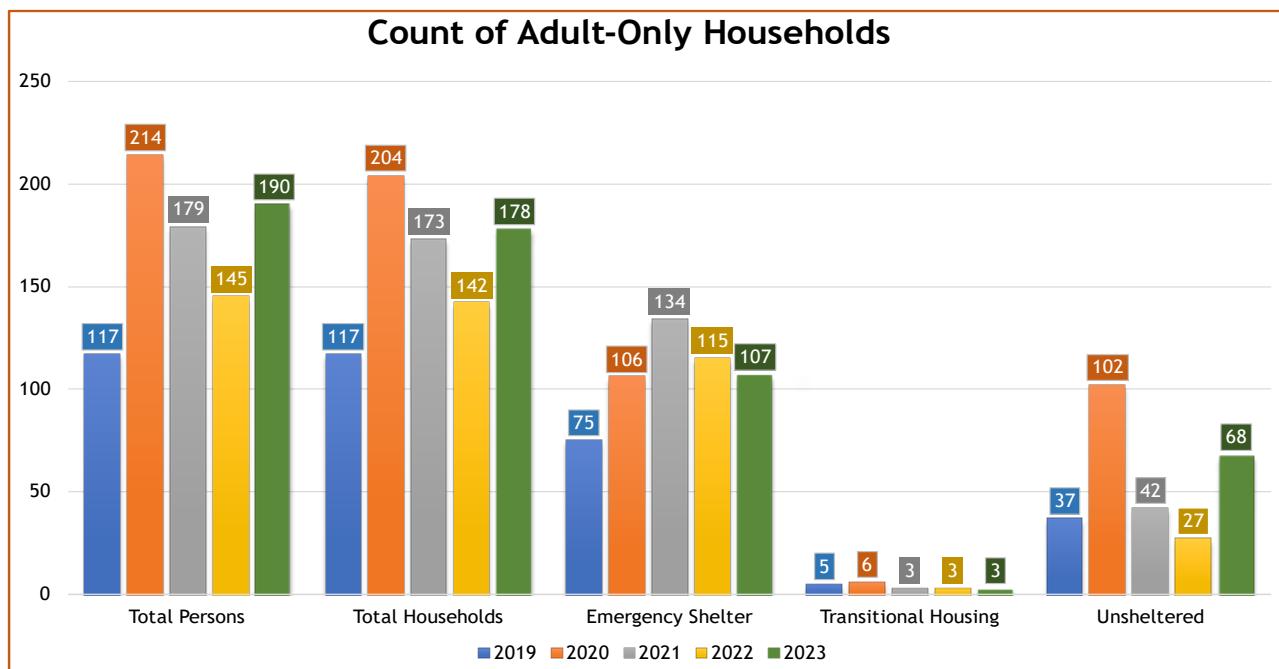


Table 1.4 – Count of Adult-Only Households (Five Year Comparison)



Table 1.5 – Percent Change from Previous Year

### **Race & Ethnicity of Persons Served**

The PWA CoC strives to provide services in a manner that is equitable and free of discrimination and has conducted extensive work over past years to address systemic racial inequity to include participating in a regional “Racial Equity Project” in collaboration with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and supported by a project consultant, C4 Innovations. This project

provided valuable insight and improved methods for delivering homeless services through an equitable lens.

The distribution of race and ethnicity remains consistent with previous years. The greatest disparity in the PWA CoC's PIT data exists among persons identifying as Black, African American, or African, as they represent 56% of all persons counted.

This disparity is concerning when compared to 2020 US Census Data as only 20% of the PWA CoC's general population identifies as Black, African American, or African. This means persons in this racial category are 2.7 times more likely to experience homelessness in the PWA.

Table 1.6 below reports the percentage of persons counted by race while Table 1.7 reports the percentage of persons counted by ethnicity.

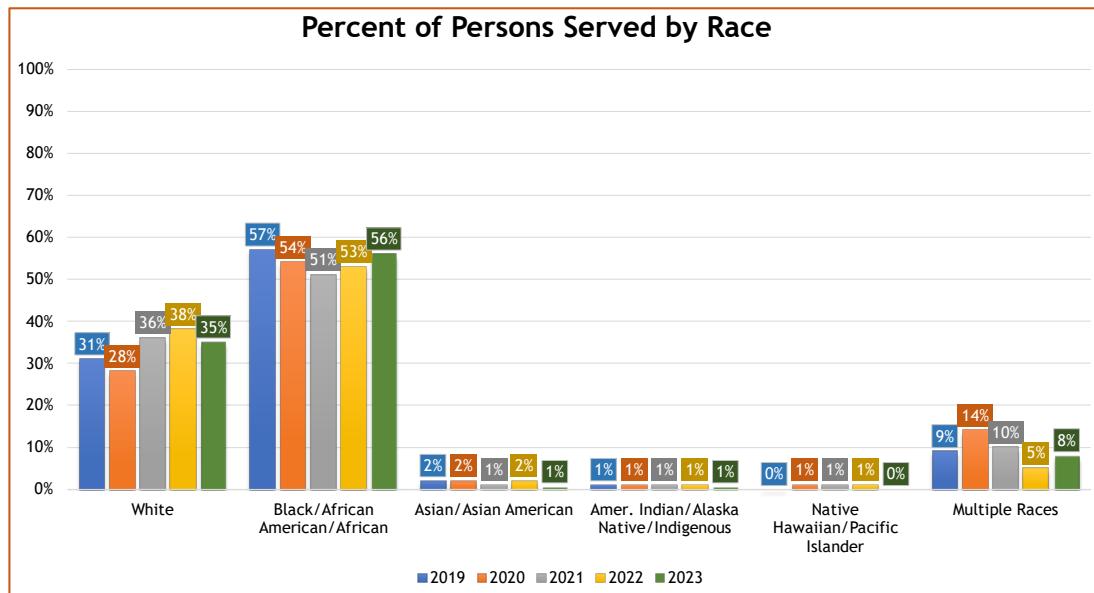


Table 1.6 – Percent of Persons Served by Race (Five Year Comparison)

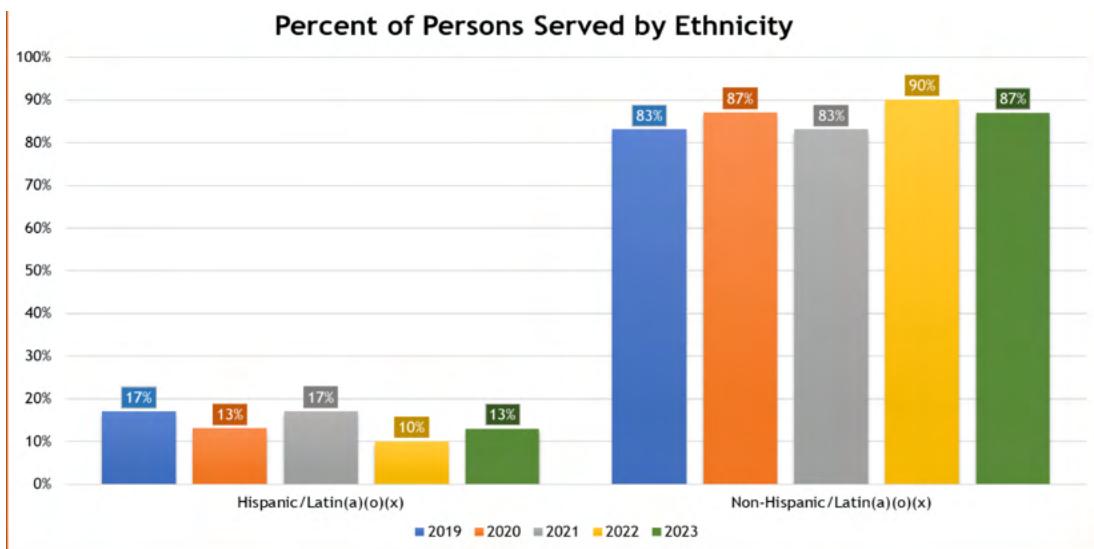


Table 1.7 – Percent of Persons Served by Ethnicity (Five Year Comparison)

## Income & Employment

Data on income and employment is provided for all adults (18+) counted the night of PIT. The count of persons reporting income decreased by 21% from 2022 while the count of persons who are employed decreased by 13%. Table 2.0 below reports the percentage of adults reporting any type of income while Table 2.1 reports the percentage of adults who are employed.

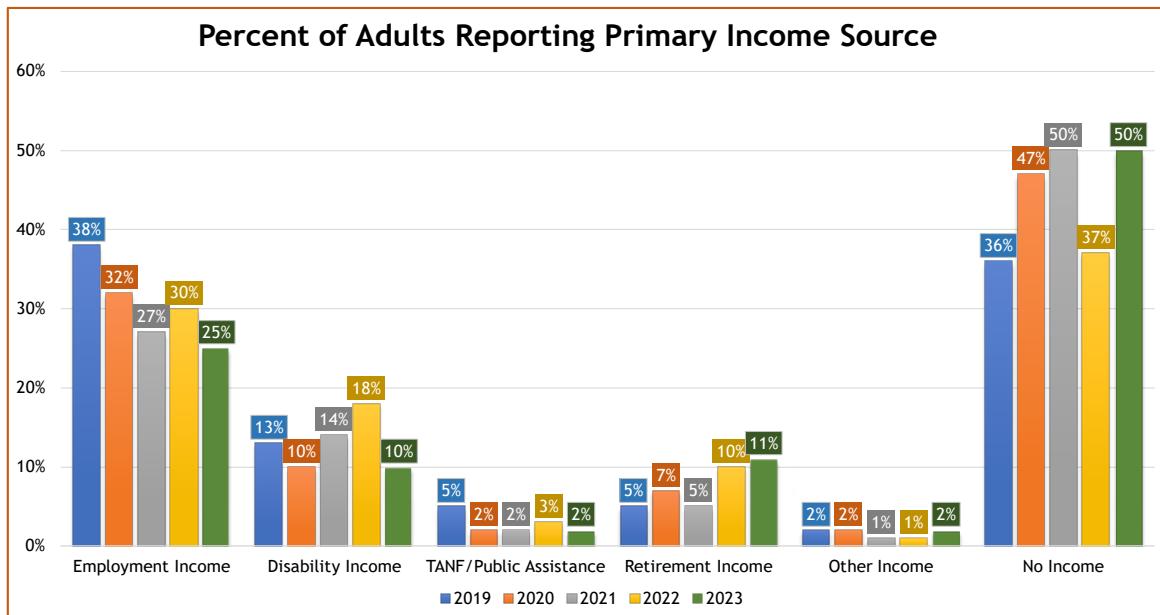


Table 2.0 – Percent of Adults Reporting Income (Five Year Comparison)

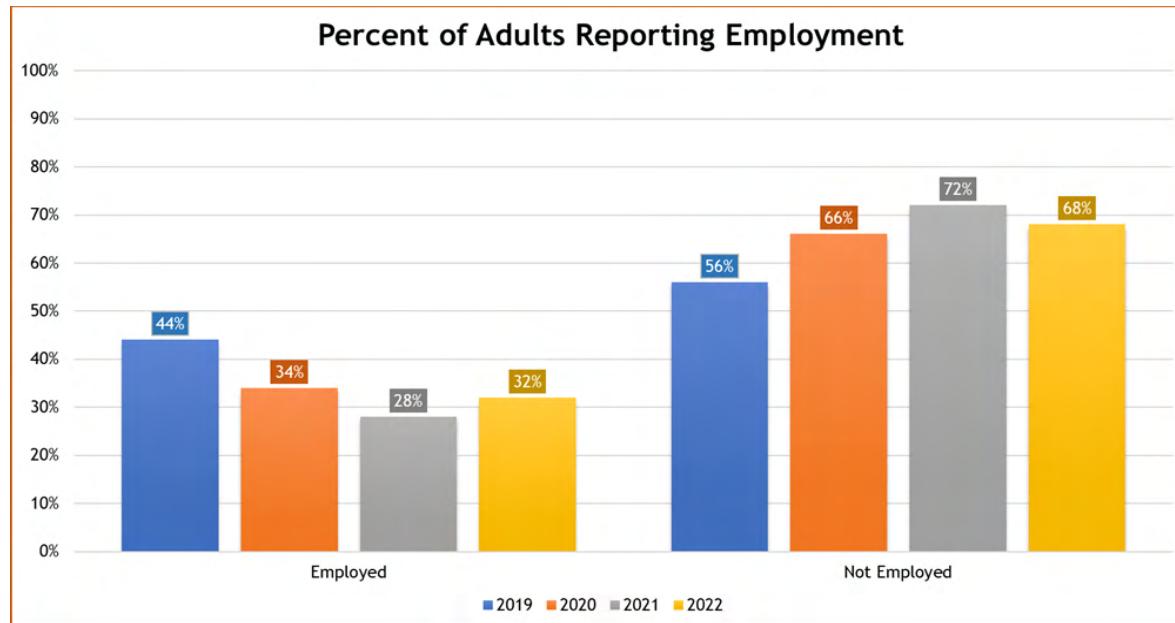


Table 2.1 – Percent of Adults Reporting Employment (Five Year Comparison)

Table 2.2 below reports the “primary income source” for all adults surveyed. There is a 20% decrease in adults reporting employment as their primary source and an 80% decrease in adults reporting disability income as their primary source. No source of income was reported for 50% of

all adults surveyed.

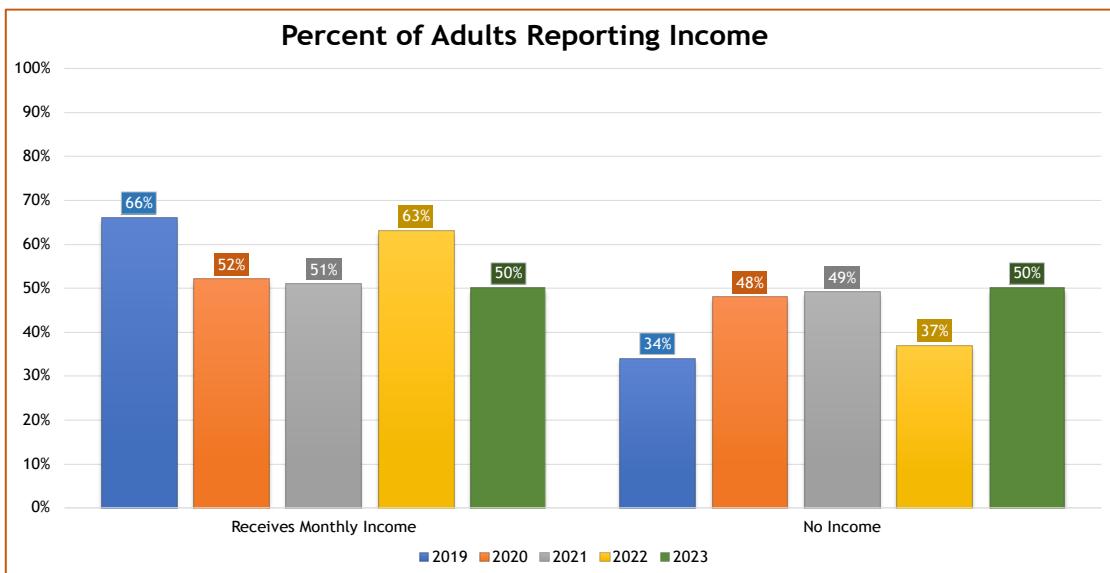


Table 2.2 – Percent of Households Reporting Primary Income Source (Five Year Comparison)

### 3. Priority Populations

Priority Populations are additional homeless populations that are overrepresented in the CoC's overall homeless population when compared to national and/or local averages.

Table 3.0 below reports common “reasons for homelessness” experienced by homeless adults. This data helps the CoC shape which populations they will work to prioritize:

*Disabling Condition(s):* Person reports living with one or more disabling condition that impacts their day-to-day life; with or without a formal diagnosis.

*Domestic Violence Survivor:* Person experienced domestic violence recently or any time in the past.

*Foster Care History:* Person was in foster care recently or any time in the past.

*Formerly Institutionalized:* Person is homeless due to a release from an institution which includes medical/psychiatric facilities, substance use facilities/detox centers, jail/prison/juvenile detention facilities, long-term care/nursing facilities, and foster care/foster care group homes.

*Limited English Proficiency:* Person has limited or no ability to understand/read/write the English language.

There has been a 25% decrease in adults reporting one or more disabilities, a 35% decrease in adults reporting a domestic violence experience, and a more than 100% increase in adults reporting limited English proficiency.

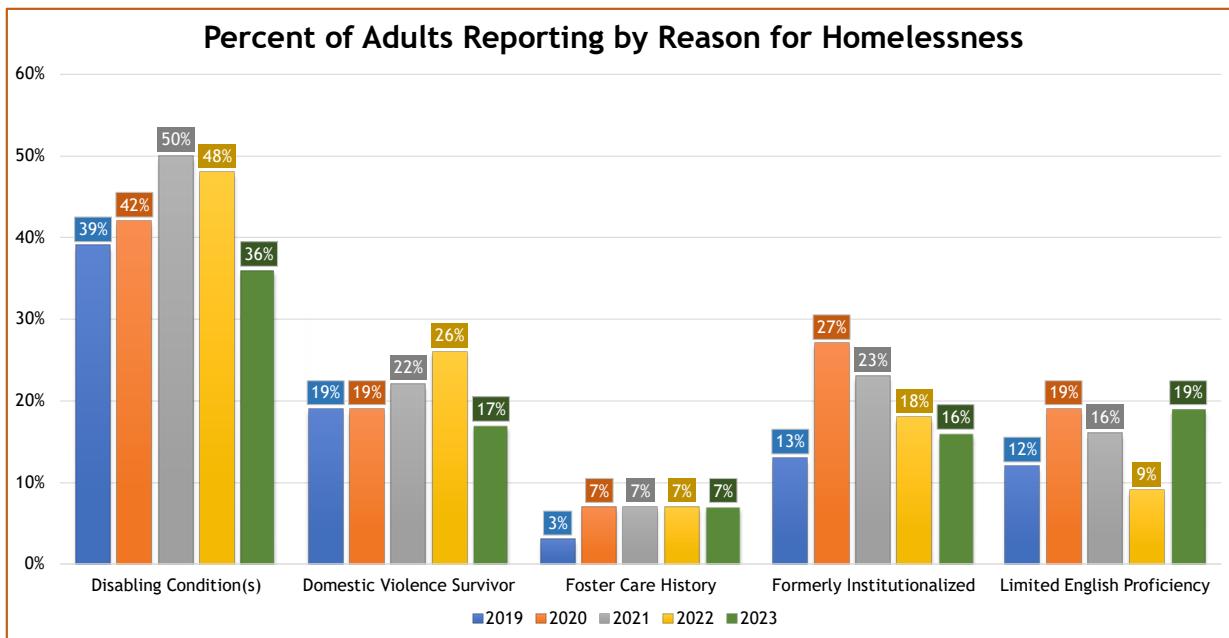


Table 3.0 – Percent of Adults Reporting by Reason for Homelessness (Five Year Comparison)

### Disabling Conditions

Table 3.1 below reports the percent of adults reporting one or more disabling conditions by project type (emergency shelter, transitional housing, and “unsheltered”). On average, 43% of adults report living with one or more disabling conditions each year. There was a 24% decrease in the number of adults reporting disabling conditions in emergency shelter and a more than 100% increase in the number of unsheltered persons reporting disabling conditions.

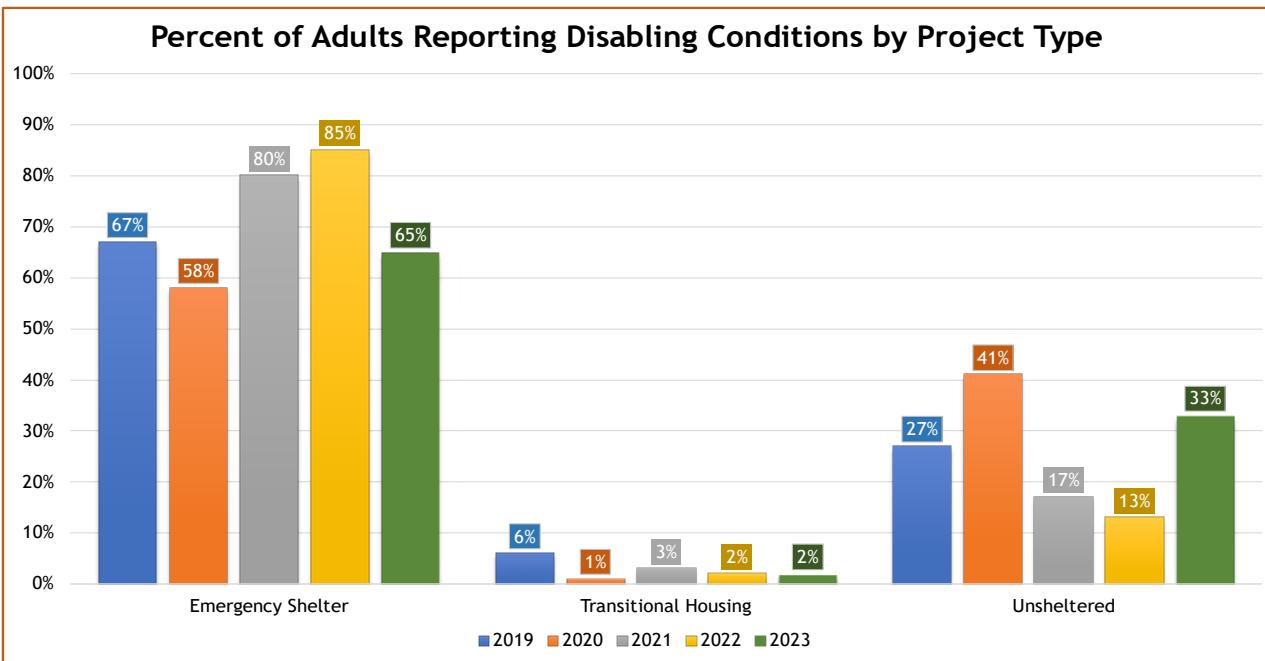


Table 3.1 – Percent of Adults Reporting One or More Disabling Conditions (Five Year Comparison)

Chronically homeless persons are those with a diagnosable disability in combination with long-term episodes of literal homelessness. Persons that meet the definition of chronically homeless are

typically prioritized for long-term housing with supportive services such as the CoC's Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program. Table 3.2 below reports the percentage of persons that were chronically homeless as of the PIT Count by project type. Table 3.3 reports the total percentage by reporting year. On average, 15% of persons counted are chronically homeless each year. It is important to note that persons in transitional housing programs are excluded from these datasets as they do not qualify as chronically homeless based on the HUD definition of literal homelessness.

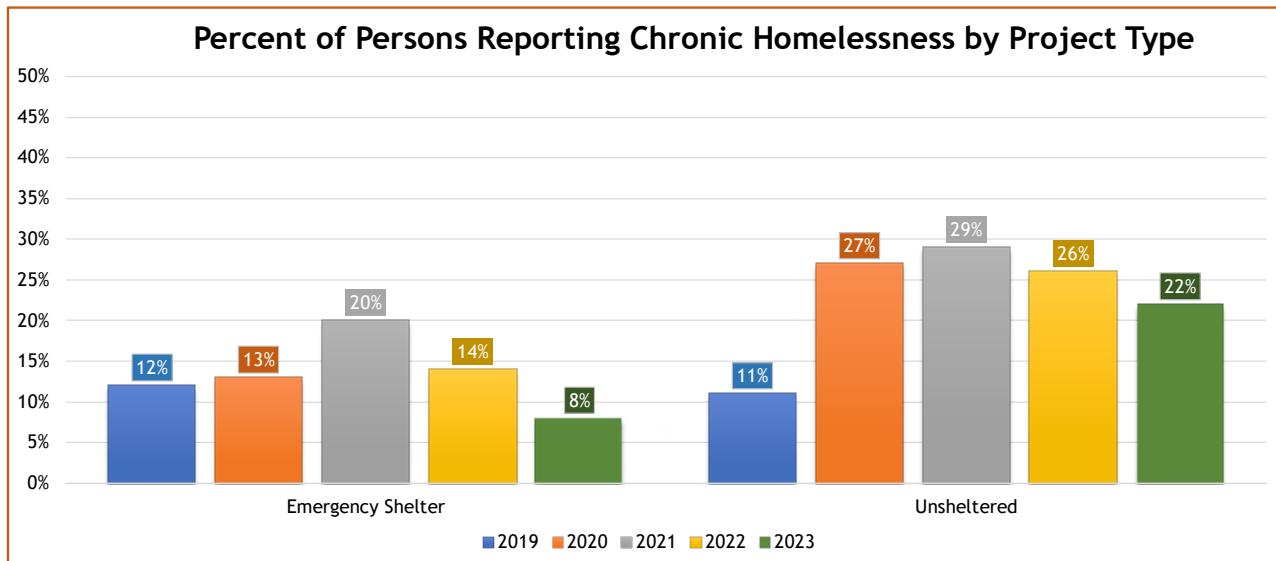


Table 3.2 – Percent of Adults Reporting Chronic Homelessness by Project Type (Five Year Comparison)

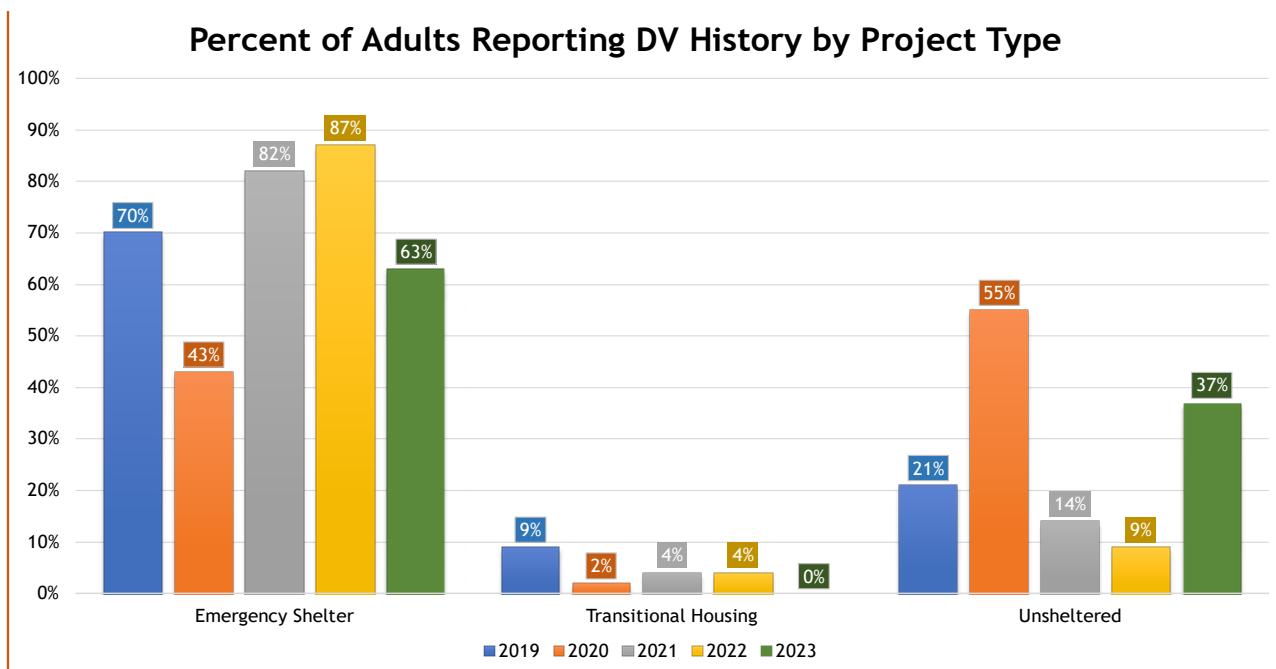


Table 3.3 – Percent of Adults Reporting Chronic Homelessness (Five Year Comparison)

## Domestic Violence Survivors

Table 3.4 reports the percentage of adults reporting a domestic violence experience recently or any time in the past by project type. On average, 21% of adults report a history of domestic violence each year. There was a 28% decrease in adults reporting domestic violence history in emergency shelter and a more than 100% increase in adults reporting domestic violence history in the unsheltered population. The PWA CoC was awarded funding to begin a Rapid Rehousing program dedicated to domestic violence survivors in October of 2022 which could account for the reduction in the emergency shelter count.

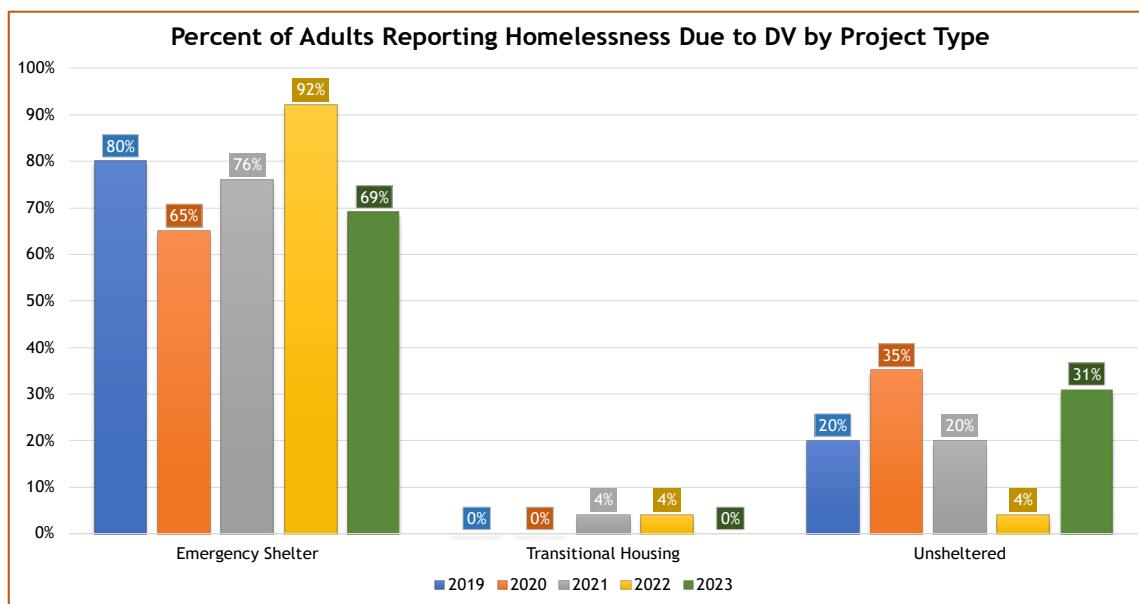


Table 3.4 – Percent of Adults Reporting Domestic Violence History by Project Type (Five Year Comparison)

Table 3.5 reports the percentage of adults reporting their current episode of homelessness is due to fleeing a domestic violence experience by project type. On average, 46% of adults reporting a history of domestic violence are homeless due to fleeing a recent experience. There was a 25% decrease in adults reporting in emergency shelter and a more than 100% increase in adults reporting in the unsheltered population.



Table 3.5 – Percent of Adults Reporting Homelessness Due to Fleeing Domestic Violence by Project Type (Five Year Comparison)

## Other Populations

Other priority populations of focus are:

*Transitional Age Youth (TAY): Adults 18 to 24 years of age*

*Veterans: Adults who have served in any branch of service regardless of discharge status*

*Aging Adults: Adults who are age 55 or older*

Table 3.6 below reports the percentage of adults reporting under one or more of the above priority populations over the past five years. There was a 100% increase in transitional age youth since 2022. The 2023 count for transitional age youth represents the highest count for this population type in the past five years.

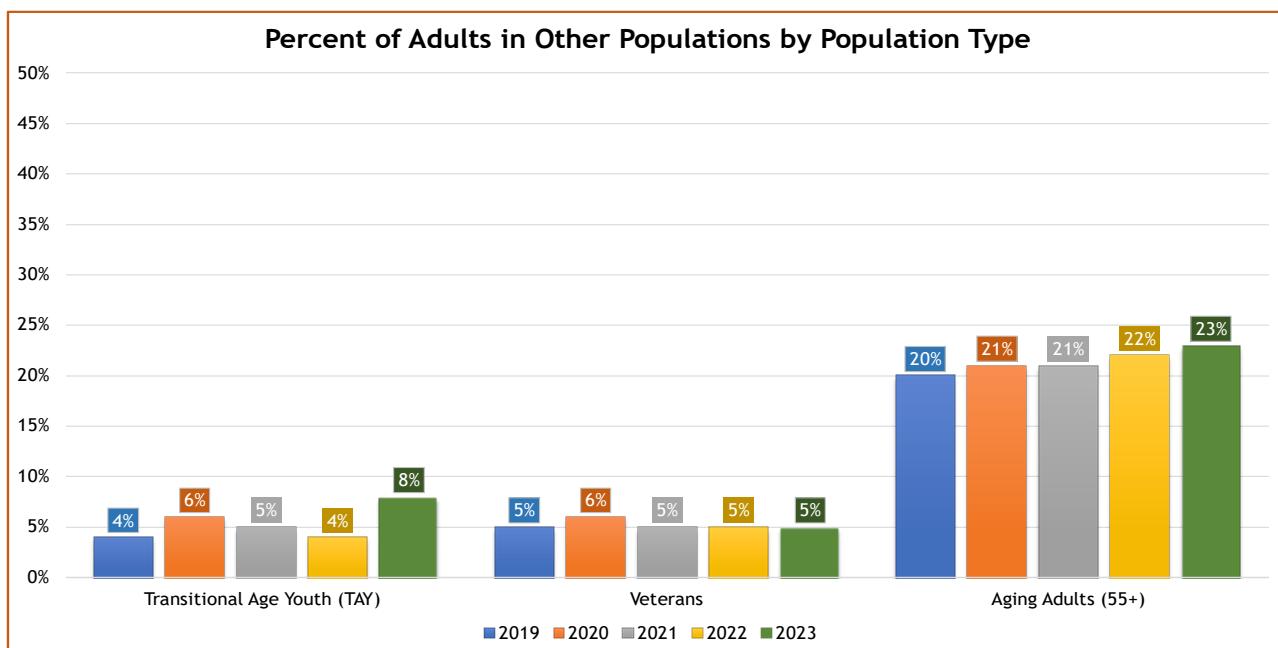


Table 3.6 – Percent of Adults Reporting in Other Priority Populations by Population Type (Five Year Comparison)

## 4. Inventory and Housing Outcomes

### Sheltered Inventory

The PWA CoC had a total of 322 sheltered beds (emergency shelter and transitional housing) available the night of the 2023 PIT count, which represents a 21% increase from 2022 and is the highest count of sheltered beds available the past 5 years. This results in a utilization rate of 79% based on the 253 persons served in sheltered projects (compared to 78% in 2022) Bed utilization by project type is consistent with 2022 outcomes: 80% of emergency shelter beds were in use (compared to 81% in 2022) and 66% of transitional housing beds were in use (same as 2022).

Table 4.0 below reports the total available beds by year, project type, household type, and availability (emergency shelter only) as well as the change in beds and the percent change from the previous year.

Project Type	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change in Beds 2022 - 2023	Percent Change 2022 - 2023
<b>Emergency Shelter (ES)</b>							
<b>Total Beds</b>	204	270	277	232	281	49	21%
<b>Beds for AO HH</b>	78	120	148	126	136	10	8%
<b>Beds for AC HH</b>	126	150	129	106	145	39	37%
<i>Domestic Violence (DV) Shelter</i>							
<b>Total Beds</b>	21	21	23	23	18	-5	-22%
<b>Beds for AO HH</b>	3	3	5	5	3	-2	-40%
<b>Beds for AC HH</b>	18	18	18	18	15	-3	-17%
<i>ES Beds by Availability</i>							
<b>Year-Round Beds</b>	204	230	211	180	235	55	31%
<b>Overflow Beds</b>	0	0	2	2	0	0	0%
<b>Seasonal Beds</b>	0	40	64	50	44	-6	-12%
<b>Transitional Housing (TH)</b>							
<b>Total Beds</b>	78	41	33	41	41	0	0%
<b>Beds for AO HH</b>	6	6	3	3	3	0	0%
<b>Beds for AC HH</b>	72	35	30	38	38	0	0%
<b>Total Beds</b>	282	311	310	273	322		

Table 4.0 – Sheltered Inventory (Five Year Comparison)

### Positive Exits from Sheltered Projects

The PWA CoC's HMIS data for sheltered projects reports that 74% of persons exiting these projects since the beginning of the fiscal year (7/1/2022) have gone to a positive housing destination. Positive housing destinations include any form of permanent housing and long-term stays with friends or family. This is consistent with the positive exit destination rate for the first half of FY2022 (73%).

HMIS data also shows that 74% of persons exited to positive destinations other than PSH or RRH (compared to 70% in 2022). Last year, Housing Choice and Emergency Housing Vouchers accounted for more than 50% of these exits. In 2023, that number has reduced to 7% as the Emergency Housing Voucher program came to a close in Spring of 2022. Overall, the highest percentage of positive exits are long-term stays with friends or family (37%) with the second highest being some form of rapid rehousing (26%).

### Permanent Housing

The PWA CoC receives federal and state funding to operate multiple Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and Rapid Re-housing (RRH) projects. The PWA CoC also collaborates with the Veteran's Administration and the Office of Housing to identify eligible participants for their programs such as VASH and Housing Choice Vouchers. Additionally, the PWA CoC collaborates with several nonprofit and faith-based organizations that operate affordable housing programs within the community.

There were 233 persons physically in housing the night of PIT compared to 277 persons in 2022 which represents a 16% decrease.

Table 4.1 below reports the total available permanent housing beds by year, project type, and household type as well as the change in beds and the percent change from the previous year.

Project Type	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change in Beds 2021 - 2022	Percent Change 2021 - 2022
<b>Other Permanent Housing (OPH)</b>							
<b>Total Beds</b>	0	9	9	9	9	0	0%
<b>Beds for AO HH</b>	0	9	9	9	9	0	0%
<b>Beds for AC HH</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)</b>							
<b>Total Beds</b>	39	46	41	41	41	0	0%
<b>Beds for AO HH</b>	30	36	36	37	37	0	0%
<b>Beds for AC HH</b>	9	10	5	4	4	0	0%
<b>Rapid Rehousing (RRH)</b>							
<b>Total Beds</b>	156	133	156	132	82	-50	-38%
<b>Beds for AO HH</b>	33	39	50	45	25	-20	-44%
<b>Beds for AC HH</b>	123	94	106	87	57	-30	-34%
* Table excludes HUD/VASH program							

Table 4.1 – Permanent Housing Inventory (Five Year comparison)

### Other Permanent Housing

The PWA CoC operates two (2) “other” permanent housing projects that are privately funded. These projects offer 9 permanent housing beds to single individuals with or without a disability as well as supportive services. There were 8 persons in these project beds the night of the count which results in a utilization rate of 89% (compared to 100% in 2022).

### Permanent Supportive Housing

The PWA CoC operates six (6) permanent supportive housing projects that receive funding from the HUD CoC Program. These projects offer 41 permanent housing beds to chronically homeless persons and their families as well as supportive services. There were 39 persons in these projects beds the night of the count which results in a utilization rate of 95% (compared to 100% in 2022).

The PWA CoC also operates the HUD/VASH program which offers 75 units to disabled veterans and their families as well as supportive services. There were 58 veteran households in housing the night of the count which results in a utilization rate of 77% (compared to 69% in 2022).

Table 4.2 below reports the HUD/VASH program counts for the current year.

HUD/VASH Program Counts	Total Units	Total Beds	Total Households	Total Persons	Total Adults	Total Children	Utilization
<b>All Households</b>	75	125	58	104	71	33	77%
<b>AO Households</b>	50	50	43	46	46	0	86%
<b>AC Households</b>	25	75	15	58	25	33	60%

Table 4.2 – HUD/VASH Program Counts (Current Year)

### *Rapid Rehousing*

The PWA CoC operates seven (7) rapid rehousing projects that receive funding from various sources such as the HUD CoC & ESG programs and the state CHERP & VHSP programs. Inventory for rapid rehousing is calculated differently than other projects as there are typically not a set number of units and beds. In the table above (Table 4.1) the number of beds for rapid rehousing reflects the number of persons physically in housing the night of the count while the number of units reflects the number of households.

Utilization for this project type is calculated by reviewing the number of persons enrolled in the project versus the number of persons that are physically housed by the project. There was a 38% reduction in the number of persons physically in housing in rapid rehousing projects since the 2022 count. This reduction may be a result of several factors such as continued challenges in identifying affordable housing, securing and/or increasing household income, and the winding down of additional funding awarded during the pandemic.

## **5. Local Measurements**

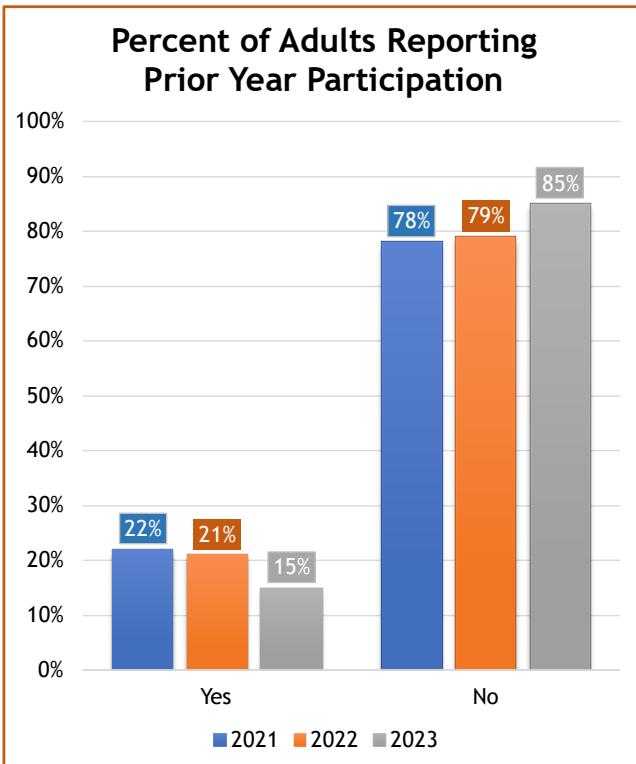
The PWA CoC collects certain data for local use in addition to data collection requirements set forth by the Dept. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG). This data helps the PWA CoC better understand the experiences and needs of their homeless population.

### **Prior Year Participation**

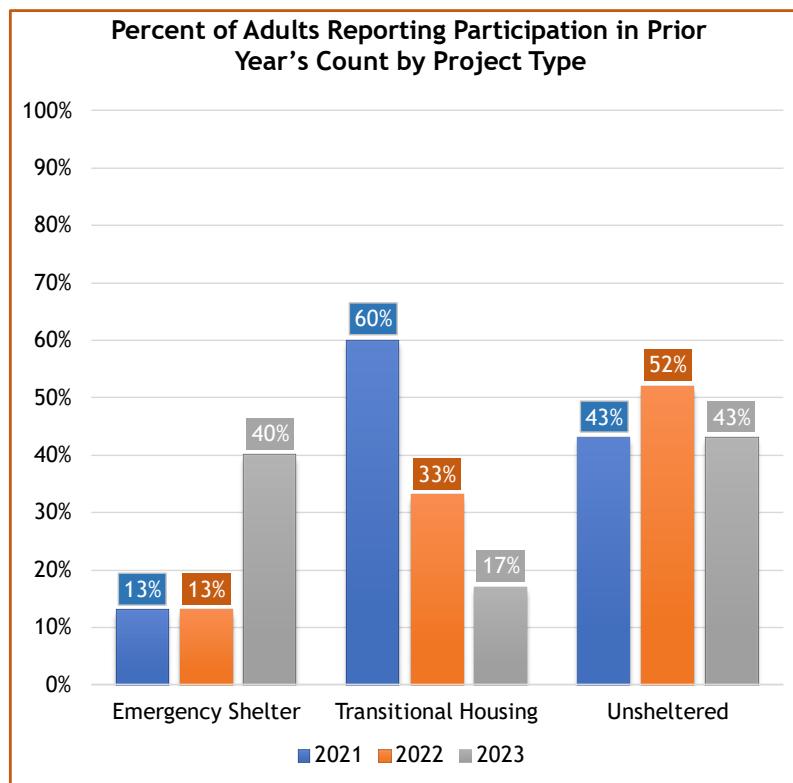
This measure collects information from all adults (18+) on whether or not they participated in the prior year's count. This information is important as it indicates the effectiveness of PWA CoC efforts to quickly move persons from homelessness to housing as well as concerns with rates of housing retention/recidivism.

Table 5.0 below reports the percentage of adults (18+) that participated in the prior year's count. There has been a 29% decrease in the number of adults reporting they participated in the prior year's count.

Table 5.1 below reports the number of adults (18+) that participated in the prior year's count by project type. It is important to note that even though there was an overall reduction of 29%, the number of adults reporting prior participation who were in emergency shelter the night of the count increased by more than 100%.



*Table 5.0 – Percent of Adults Reporting Prior Year Participation (Three Year Comparison)*



*Table 5.1 – Percent of Adults Reporting Prior Year Participation by Project Type (Three Year Comparison)*

## Permanent Residence Prior to Homelessness

Table 5.2 below reports the last permanent residence of adults (18+) where they lived for 90 or more consecutive days prior to their current episode of homelessness. Permanent housing is defined as any form of rental (including rooms) with or without subsidy, home ownership, or long-term stays with family or friends. Data suggests that 85% of adults surveyed in 2023 reported living in permanent housing within the PWA prior to becoming homeless which is a 12% increase from 2022. It is a common misconception that persons experiencing homelessness are largely transient, when, in reality, they are usually residents of the CoC from which they request services.

Table 5.3 below reports the last permanent residence by specific area. Most adults surveyed (73%) reported living in Prince William County prior to their current episode of homelessness. Manassas City represents 11% of this data and Manassas Park represents 1%.

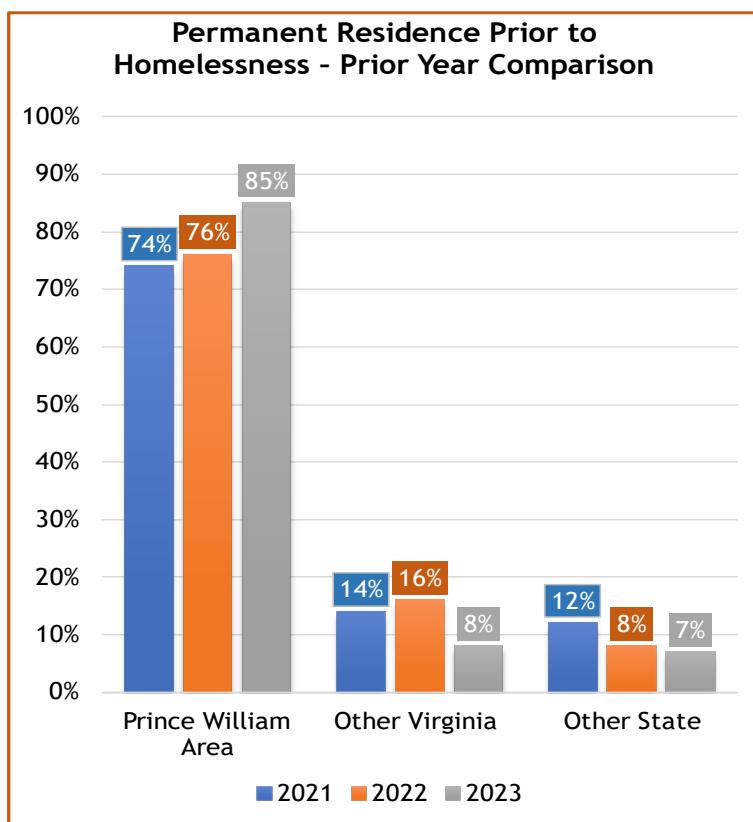
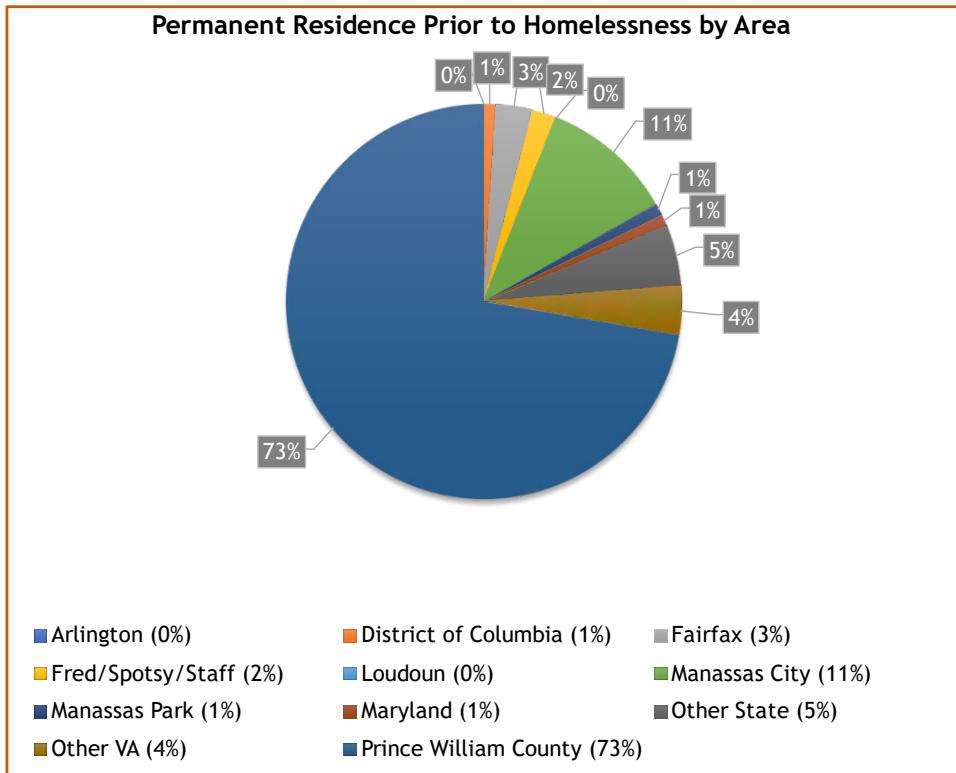


Table 5.2 – Percent of Adults Reporting Permanent Residence Prior to Homelessness (Three Year Comparison)



*Table 5.3 – Count of Adults Reporting Permanent Residence Prior to Homelessness by Area (Current Year)*

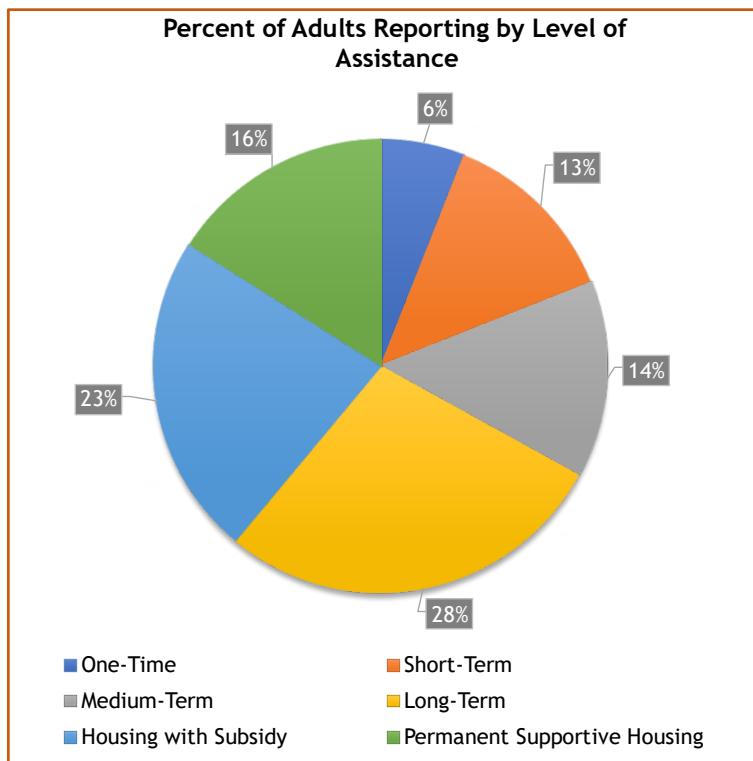
### Level of Housing Assistance Needed to Resolve Homelessness

This question was added to the 2022 PIT Survey with the intention of better understanding the level of housing assistance persons would need to resolve homelessness and regain independence. This data is reported for all adults (18+) surveyed.

The levels of housing assistance are defined as follows:

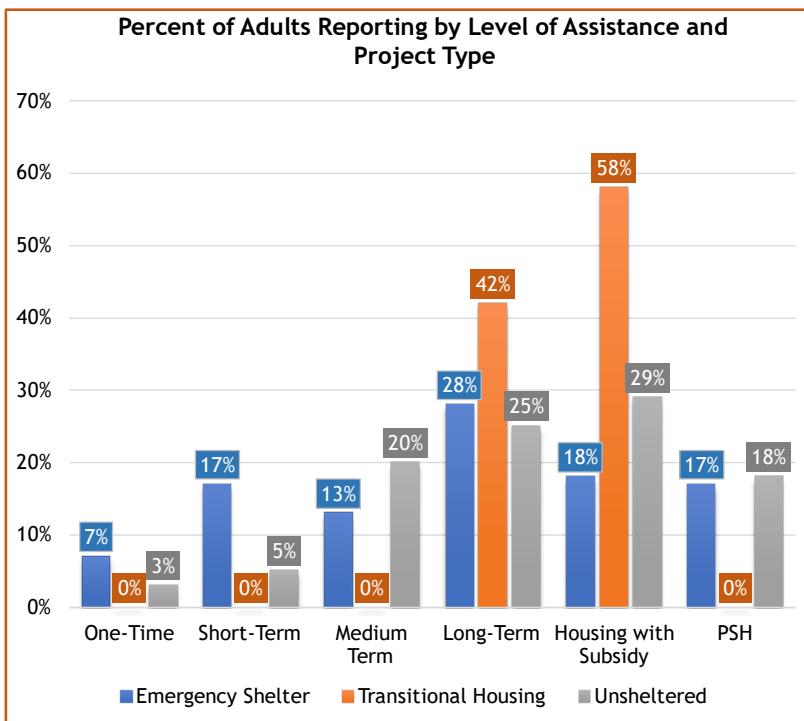
- One-Time Housing Assistance (deposit & 1st month's rent)
- Short-Term Housing Assistance (up to 3 months of rental assistance)
- Medium-Term Housing Assistance (up to 6 months of rental assistance)
- Long-Term Housing Assistance (up to 18 months of rental assistance)
- Housing with Long-Term Subsidy (e.g., Housing Choice Vouchers)
- Permanent Supportive Housing (long-term subsidy & supportive services for disabled persons)

Table 5.4 below reports the level of need for households by assistance type. Data suggests persons would benefit most from some form of housing with long-term subsidy (28%) and benefit least from one-time rental assistance (6%) which is consistent with 2022 data. Response data to this question supports the notion that there is not a “one-size fits all” solution to resolving homelessness.



*Table 5.4 – Percent of Households Reporting Level of Housing Assistance (Current Year)*

Table 5.5 below reports the level of need for households by assistance type and project type. The data suggest responses vary greatly depending on the project type.



*Table 5.5 – Percent of Households Reporting by Level of Assistance and Project Type (Current Year)*

# **APPENDIX C: HOMELESS SERVICES COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

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