POINT-IN-TIME COUNT ANNUAL REPORT FOR SOLANO COUNTY

2022

Prepared By:

Simtech Solutions, inc.

Point-in-Time Count Annual Report for Solano County

Contents

Introduction

The Point-in-Time (PIT) count is an annual census conducted for the *US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)* of all people experiencing homelessness (PEH) who are living in emergency shelters, transitional housing, safe havens, or unsheltered situations on a single night. Unsheltered situations include anyone without a permanent residence found to be staying outdoors or places not designed for habitation such as vehicles, streets, parks, or abandoned buildings. The PIT Count also presents a fantastic opportunity to raise awareness of the myriad of challenges our homeless citizens face, hear firsthand experiences from those experiencing homelessness, and demonstrate the compassion and generosity of the Solano community!

The unsheltered portion of the Vallejo/Solano County PIT count is required biennially and was last slated to be conducted in January of 2021 however, the decision was made to not conduct the count due to health and safety concerns related to COVID. As a result, the last unsheltered count for regional information to compare against the sheltered count was from January 2019.

The PIT is the result of extraordinary community collaboration and includes a countywide effort to engage and assess the unsheltered population. This year's count was conducted during the early morning of February 23, 2022, with the support of 128 volunteers, who used the Counting Us mobile application developed by Simtech Solutions Inc., to gather the survey information. The PIT also requires participation by all emergency shelters, transitional housing, and safe haven projects in the region, including those that do not normally utilize the region's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for data collection. After the PIT count was completed, the data was carefully analyzed and validated to meet HUD's high data quality standards.

The count results found in this report were successfully submitted to HUD in time for April 29, 2022, deadline and have since been reviewed by and approved by HUD Technical Assistance providers. This report is a further evaluation of those count results and is being provided as a guide for which the community can measure how effectively we are addressing the needs of our homeless neighbors.

Limitations

While the primary purpose of the bi-annual Point-in-Time count is to quantify the extent of homelessness both locally and nationally, it is important to understand the limitations of this information. One of these limitations is the results represent only a quick snapshot in time and therefore this information does not reflect the total number of PEH throughout the year. Since the count is conducted on a single night in February, other factors such as weather, the number of volunteers available to conduct the count, and the prevalence of COVID may factor into the count's accuracy. As a result of these limitations, it is important to understand that the Point In Time count results is likely an undercount.
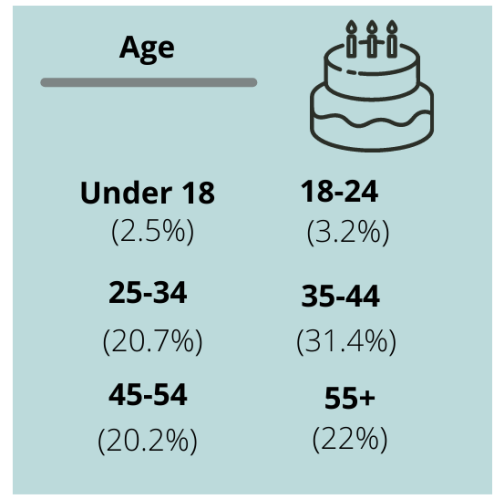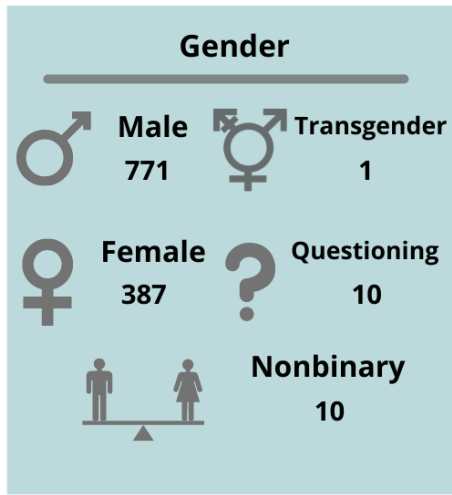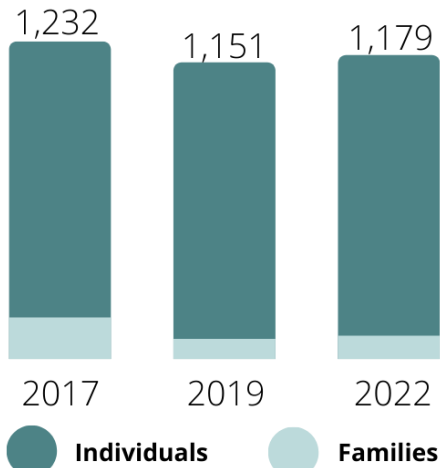
SOLANO COUNTY
Homeless Census & Survey
2022 Executive Summary

The Point-In-Time Count is a national initiative to quantify the extent of homelessness and to gather details on the characteristics of people experiencing homelessness.

The 2022 Solano County Point-in-Time Count was a community-wide effort conducted on February 23rd. For this snapshot in time, it is estimated that there were 1,179 people either in shelters or living on the streets of Solano County.
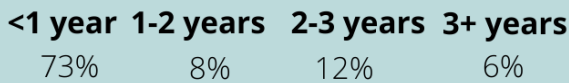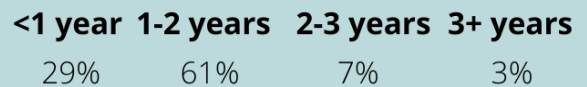
Census Trends

1,232 — 2017
1,151 — 2019
1,179 — 2022

● Individuals   ○ Families

Gender

Male 771
Transgender 1
Female 387
Questioning 10
Nonbinary 10

Age

Under 18 (2.5%)
18-24 (3.2%)
25-34 (20.7%)
35-44 (31.4%)
45-54 (20.2%)
55+ (22%)

Unsheltered 920 (78%)   **Sheltered 259 (22%)**

Length of Time Experiencing Homelessness

<1 year	1-2 years	2-3 years	3+ years
73%	8%	12%	6%

Length of Time Living in Solano County

<1 year	1-2 years	2-3 years	3+ years
29%	61%	7%	3%

Race & Ethnicity

● US Census   ○ PIT

White, Black / African American, American Indian / Native Alaskan, Asian, Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander, Multiple Races, Hispanic / Latin (a)(o)(x)

Target Populations
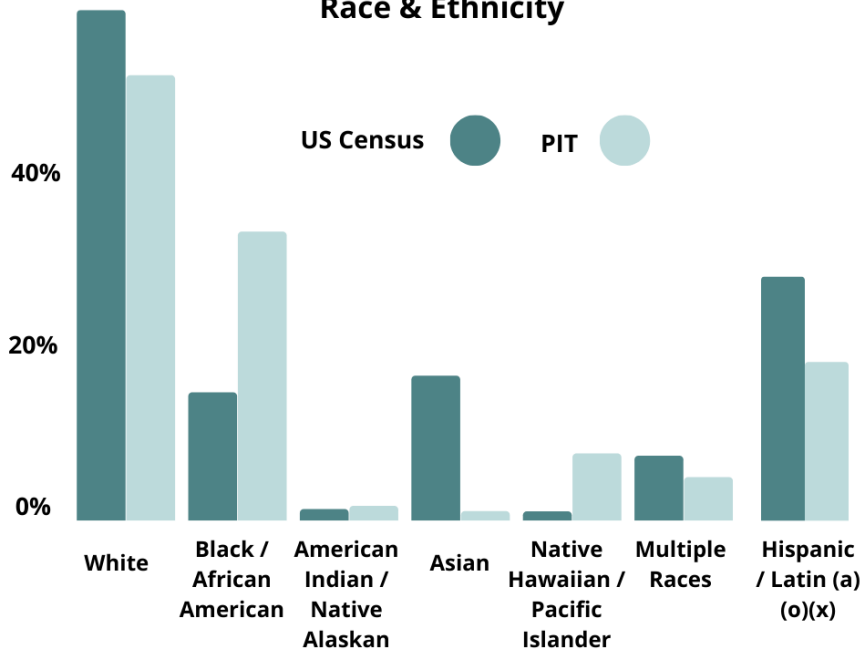
6% Unaccompanied Youth
3% Veterans
5% Domestic Violence Survivors
16.5% Chronically Homeless*
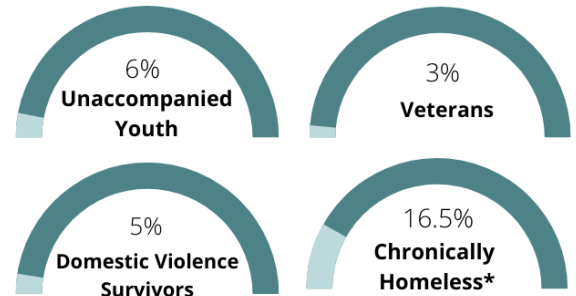
CHRONICALLY HOMELESS*
An individual with one or more disabling conditions who has been continuously homeless for 1 year or more and/or has experienced 4 or more episodes of homelessness within the past 3 years.

Primary Event Leading to Homelessness+

Lost job/ Reduced Work Hours
15%

Eviction
12%

Physical or Mental Health Related
12%

Divorce/ Break Up
7%

Asked to Leave by Friend/Family
6%

Alcohol or Drug Use
6%

Was this Event Related to COVID-19 or a California Wildfire?
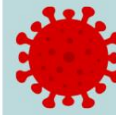
Covid-19
9%

Wildfire
2%

Self-Reported Health

Current health conditions that may affect the housing stability or employment of those experiencing homelessness

Mental Health Issues
22%

Alcohol/ Drug Use
21%

Chronic Health Issues
16%

Physical Disability
14%

HIV/Aids Related Illness
1%

Developmental
5%

Overall Disability Conditions

37% of survey respondents reported having at least one disabling condition

A disabling condition is defined by HUD as a developmental disability, HIV/AIDS, or a long-term physical or mental impairment that impacts a person's ability to live independently but could be improved with the stable housing.
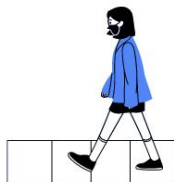
Sleeping Location+

Encampment
44%

Park
6%

Under Bridge/ Overpass
5%

Street or Sidewalk
18%

Vehicle / Boat / RV
23%

Abandoned Building
1%

Have you been treated with less courtesy or respect by homeless outreach or shelter services staff because of your race or ethnicity this past year?

75%

50%

25%

0%

Yes | No | Don't know/ Refused | N/A (no services)

Solano County
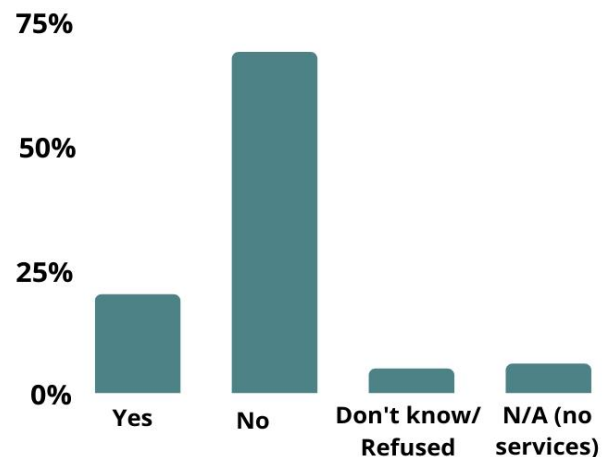
^ Multiple response question, results may not add up to 100%
+ Only displaying top responses
Note: Some percentages have been rounded so total percentage will equal 100%

Key Findings

The Point-in-Time Count data from 2022 found that 1,179 people were experiencing homelessness in Solano County. This is an increase of 28 people (or 2.4%) from the last PIT count conducted in 2019.

While homelessness in Solano County has increased since 2019, the number of people living unsheltered has declined slightly. In 2019, Solano County counted 932 unsheltered homeless individuals while only 219 were counted in shelters. In 2022, there were 920 individuals unsheltered which is a 1.3% decrease. There were also 259 people in shelters on the night of the count, an 18% increase from 2019.
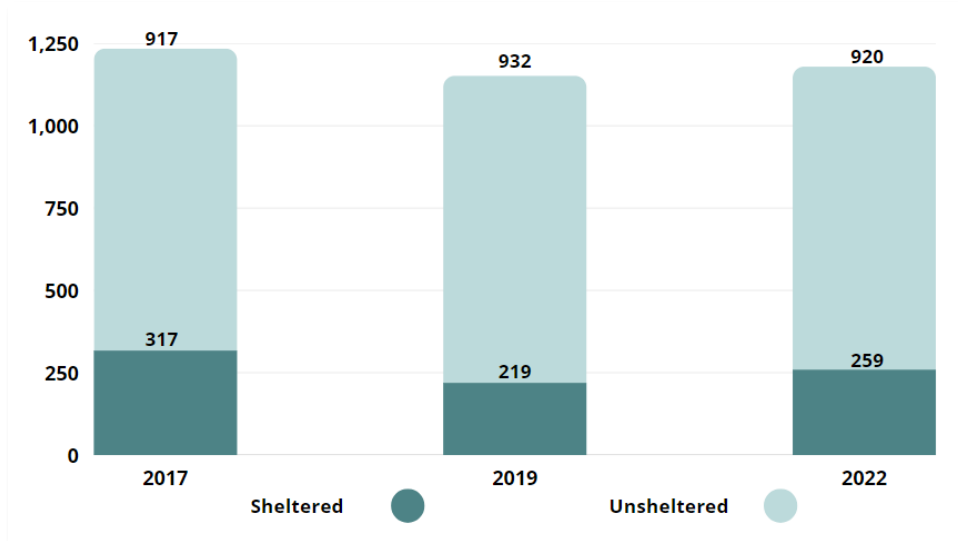

Individuals accounted for 1,088 (90.9%) of the total homeless population. The remaining 91 people (9.1%) were found in households with at least one adult and one child.

Shelter Capacity Utilization

The shelter capacity utilization is calculated by comparing the number of people who were indicated to be staying in the emergency shelter and transitional housing beds with the total number of beds indicated to be available according to the Housing Inventory Chart submitted to HUD. For the night of the count, 125 of the 236 Emergency Shelter beds (53%) were used and the remaining 47% were not.
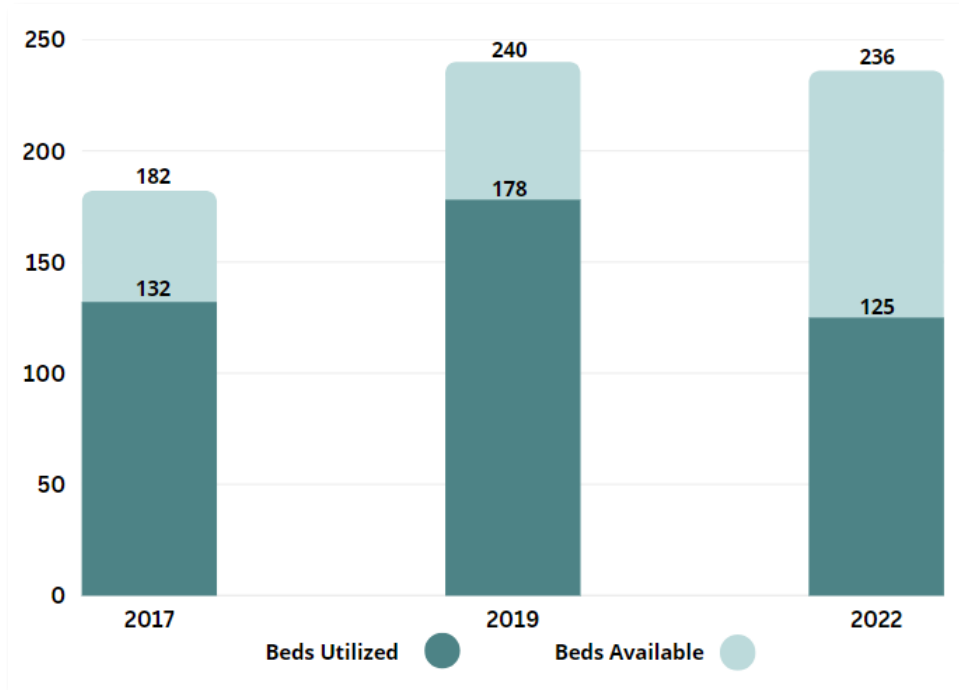
For Transitional Housing (TH), 134 of the 163 beds (82%) were utilized on the night of the count. The addition of 64 TH beds since 2019 likely contributed to the decrease in the unsheltered count.

Household Composition

Within the overall homeless population, individuals accounted for an estimated 1,088 (90.9%) of the homeless population whereas the remaining 91 (9.1%) were from 28 households with at least one adult and one child. The averag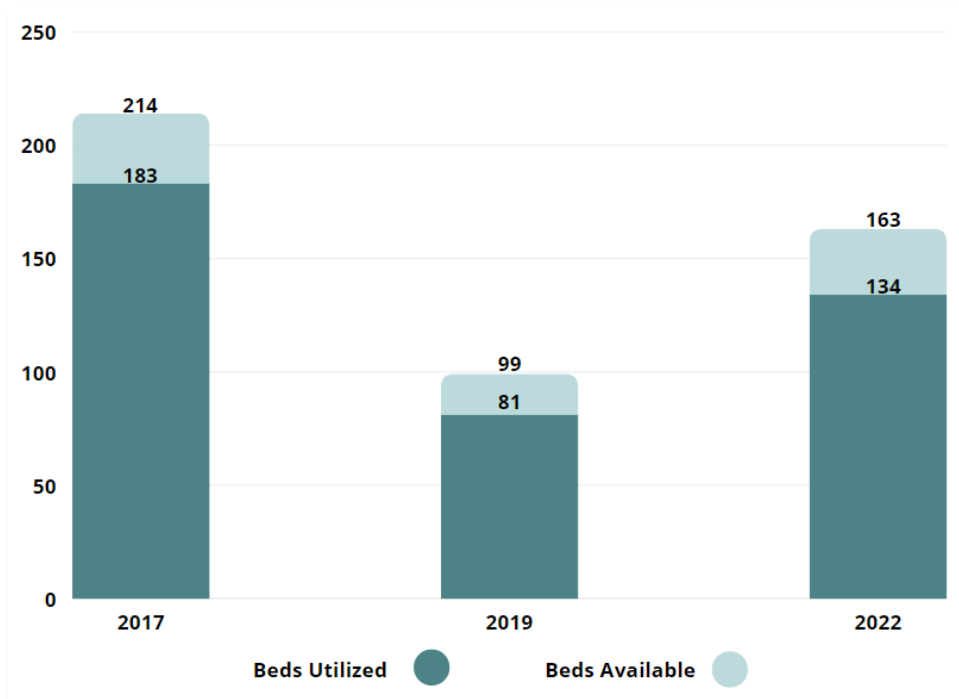e household size from the US Census for Solano County was 2.87 people however the average household size for homeless families was 3.25 people.

While the number of families experiencing homelessness declined by 6.7% from 2019 to 2022, the number of people in families increased by 15.2%.

According to HUD, a family or household is simply one or more individuals who live together. Members of the family do not need to be related by blood, marriage, or in any other legal capacity.

Within Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing projects, there were *28 households with both adults and*
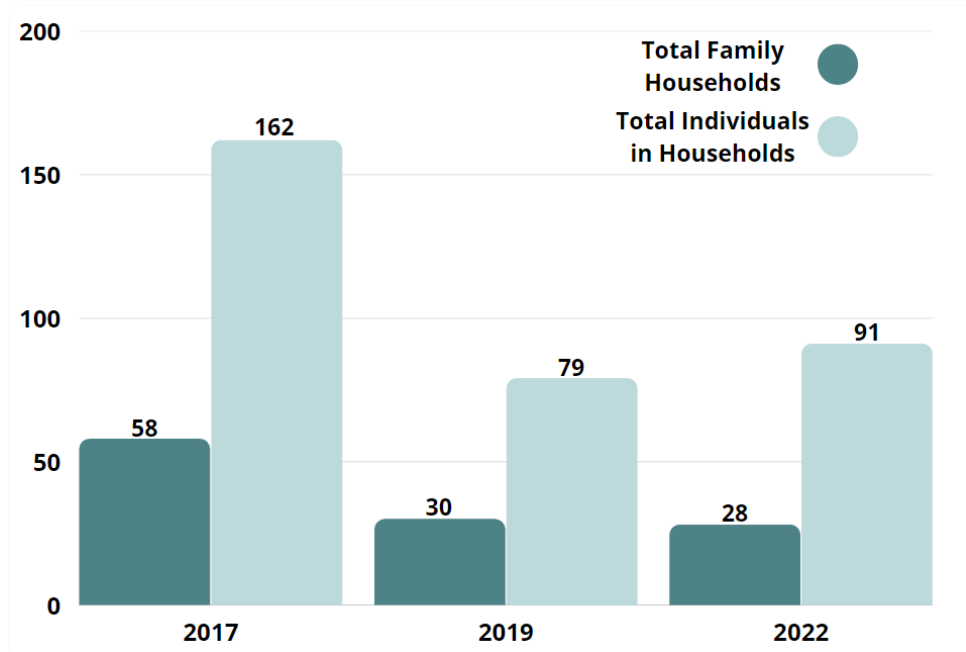
children. 28 percent of the individuals making up these households were adults over the age of 25, 8 percent were young adults 18-24, and the remaining 64 percent were children under the age of 18.

The emergency shelter and transitional housing projects also served 199 *households without children*. Of these, 17 percent were young adults (those between the ages of 18 to 24) and the remaining 83 percent were adults over the age of 25. Young adults used 30% of the Transitional Housing beds however only occupied 6% of the Emergency Shelter beds.

The household composition for the unsheltered count found an estimated eight (8) *households with both adults and children* with a total of 32 household members Within these households, 34.4 percent were adults over the age of 25, 65.6 percent were children under the age of 18, and no one between the ages of 18-24 was represented.

Age Demographics

The age characteristics vary depending on both the household composition as well as whether those being counted were in shelters or unsheltered.

Within the sheltered population in Solano County, there were 180 persons of the age 25 or older, 42 persons between the age of 18-24, and 37 persons under 18. The number of adults saw an 8% increase, while those between the ages of 18-24 increased by 2% and children under 18 saw a 10% decrease between 2017 and 2022.

There were *28 households with both adults and children* and within these households (64%) were children under the age of 18, (8%) were young adults 18-24, and 28% were adults over the age of 25. The average household size was 3.25 people.

There were *199 households without children* with 17% being young adults and the remaining 83% being adults over the age of 25. Young adults used a greater percentage of the Transitional Housing beds (30%) than the 6% used by young adults in Emergency Shelters.
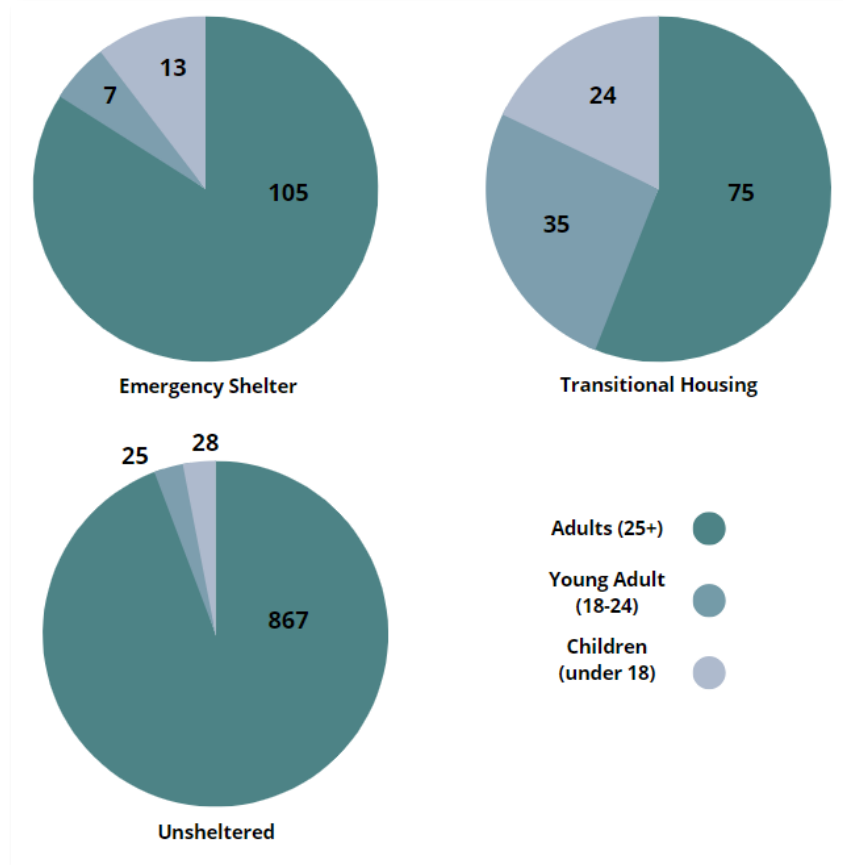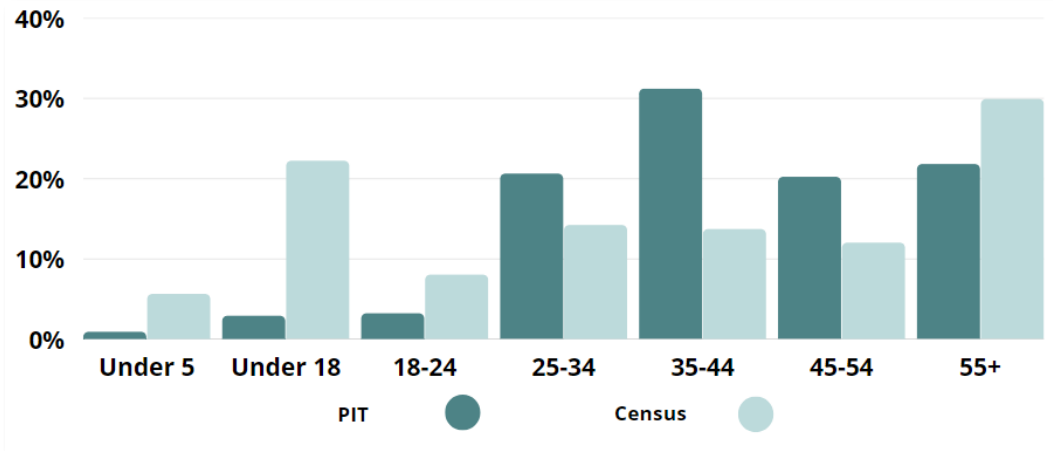

Within the unsheltered population in Solano County, 867 individuals were reported as 25 or older, 25 were between the ages of 18-24, and 28 were reported as children under 18. This represents a 16% increase in unsheltered adults above 25 years old, a 15% decrease in the number of people between the ages of 18-24, and a 1% decrease in the number of children under 18 experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

Within the total homeless population, including both sheltered and unsheltered individuals, Solano County saw a 14.8% increase in homelessness among adults while the population under 18 decreased by 41.4% from 2017 to 2022. Young adults declined from 209 in 2017 to 67 in 2022, which was a 67.9% decrease.

When comparing the Solano County 2022 Point-in-Time count of PEH to Census information, individuals under 18 represent 2.9% and 22.2% respectively. In opposition to this comparison, those experiencing

homelessness between the ages of 35-44 make up 31.2% of the homeless population while they represent 13.7% of the greater populace.[1]

Within Solano County individuals over 55 years old made up 16.5% and 42.5% of sheltered and unsheltered populations, respectively. Within the overall homeless population, individuals over 55 accounted for 21.8% of those recorded as PEH while representing 29.9% of the general population. At a national level, over 33% of the homeless population is made up of individuals over 50 years old.[2]
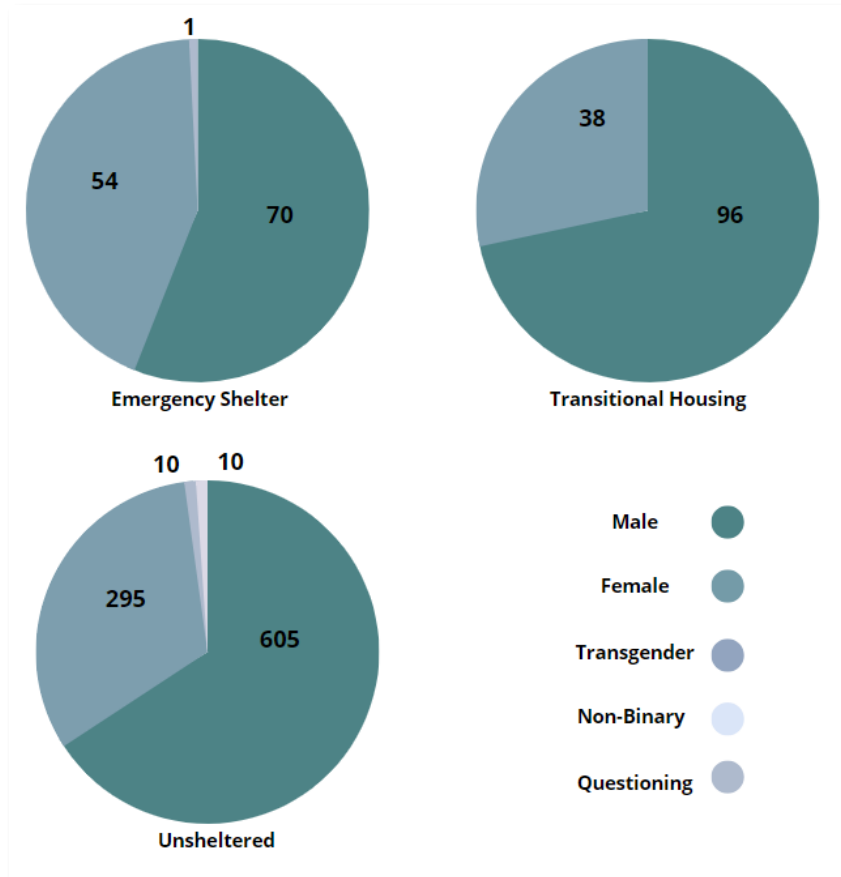
[1] The U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). American Community Survey: Demographic and Housing Estimates.
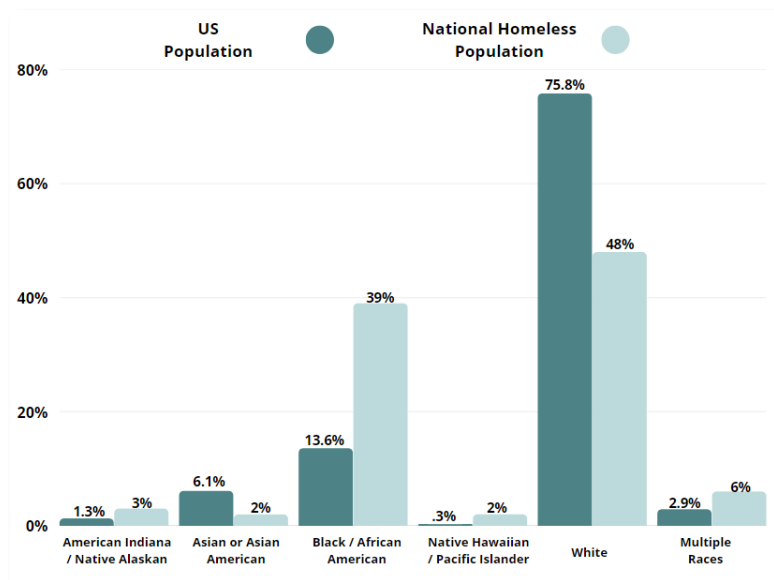
Gender

Males comprised the majority of the homeless population with 771 (or 65%) of the total population whereas females accounted for 33% and transgender accounted for less than 1%. Compared to census information, 49.75% of the population was recorded as male and 50.25% was recorded as female. The census demographic findings did not present the percentage of individuals reporting as transgender, non-binary, or questioning.

Within Family Households, the survey findings showed that 62% of respondents identified as female and 38% identified as male. There were no other genders identified on the night of the PIT.

Emergency Shelter

1
54
70

Transitional Housing

38
96

Unsheltered

10   10
295
605

Male ●
Female ●
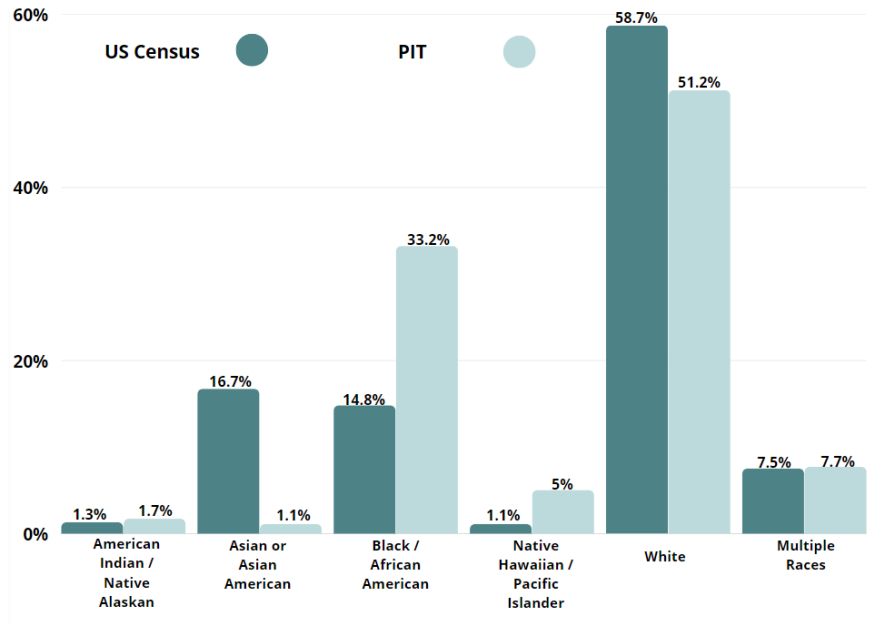Transgender ●
Non-Binary ●
Questioning ●

Racial Disparities in the Homeless Population

Most Black, Indigenous, (BIPOC) groups, especially African Americans, experience homelessness at higher rates than people who are White. According to the 2019 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR), African Americans accounted for 40% of all PEH in 2019 and 52% of PEH as members of families with children, despite being 13% of the U.S. population.[3]

US Population ●   National Homeless Population ●

80%
60%
40%
20%
0%

American Indiana / Native Alaskan	1.3% / 3%
Asian or Asian American	6.1% / 2%
Black / African American	13.6% / 39%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	.3% / 2%
White	75.8% / 48%
Multiple Races	2.9% / 6%

[3]The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2020). The 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress.

Within Solano County, people who are Black or African American constitute 14.8% of the overall population yet comprise 33.2% of the homeless population. While the numbers are smaller, there is also a higher prevalence of people who are American Indian or Native Alaskan as well as those who are Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders. While the US Census data indicates American Indian / Native Alaskans comprise 1.3% of the overall population this group accounted for 1.7% of the homeless population. Similarly, 1.1% of the population in Solano County is Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders yet 5% were found to be experiencing homelessness during the census.

People who are White, as well as Asian Americans, are well under-represented in the homeless population both nationally and locally. Within Solano County, the census data indicates 58.7% were White and 16.7% were of Asian descent and yet comprised 51.2% and 1.1% of the homeless population, respectively.

Racial Composition for Sheltered and Unsheltered

A comparison of the racial composition with both the unsheltered and sheltered populations revealed that people who are Black or African American are nearly twice as likely to be served in shelters as people who are white. Of the PEH interviewed, 28.3% were indicated to be Black or African American (111 out of 392) and resided in a shelter bed during the night of the count whereas only 15.2% (92 of the 604) of PEH who are white were counted in a shelter bed.
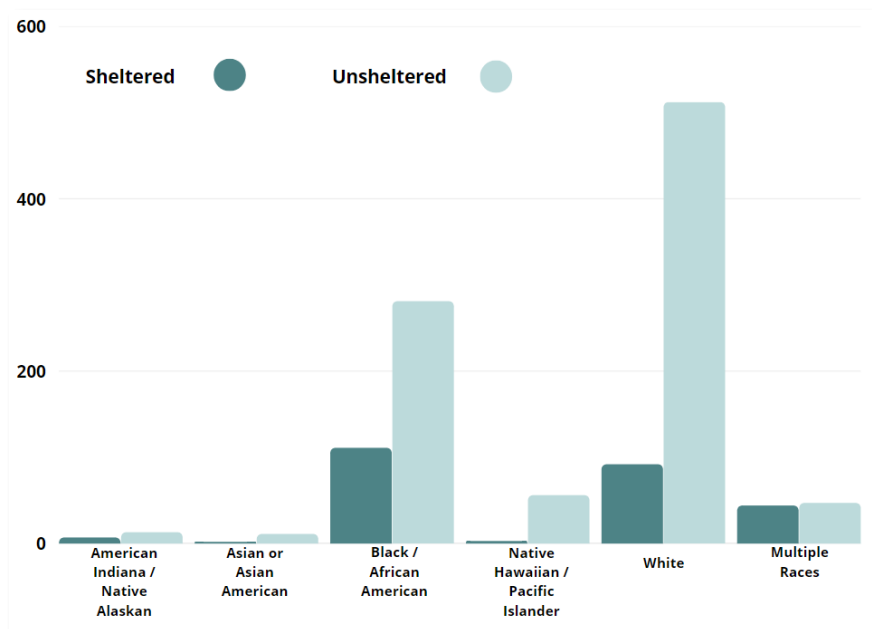
Ethnicity

According to the results from the PIT census, an estimated 219 out of the total 1179 (18.6%) people experiencing homeless identified as Hispanic or Latino. This included 49 of 259 (18.9%) in shelters as well as 170 of the 920 (18.5%) who were unsheltered.
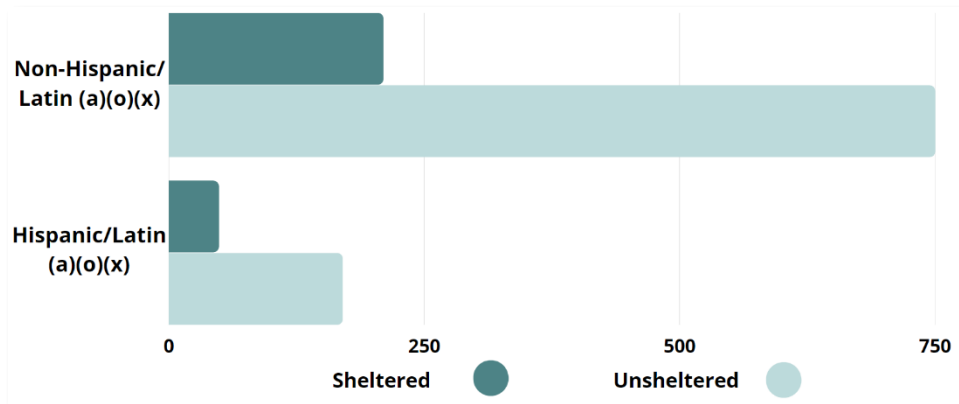
According to data from the 2020 US Census, 28.6% of the population estimate of 451,716 people identified as Hispanic or Latin(a)(o)(x).
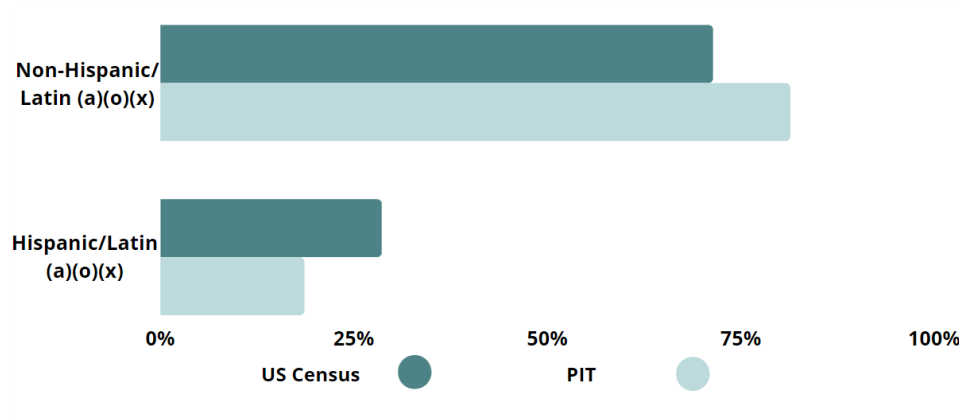
The lower prevalence rate of people who are Hispanic and homeless in Solano County contrasts with what is seen nationally.
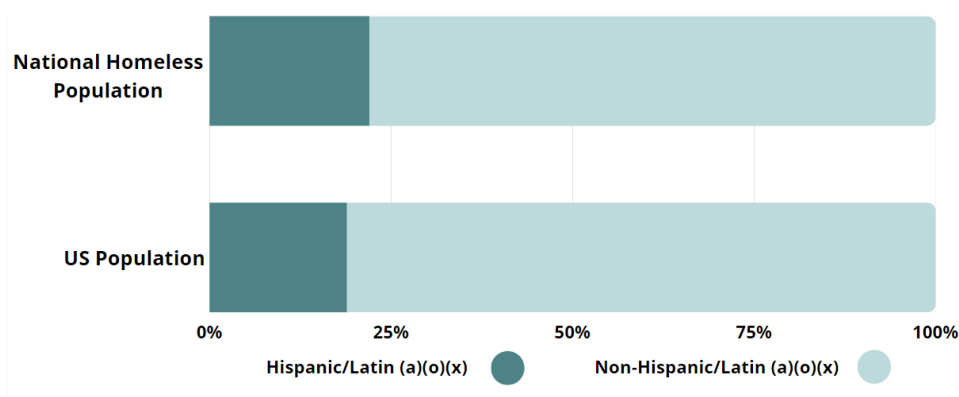
Health & Wellness

According to the *National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC),* the average life expectancy for individuals experiencing homelessness is 25 years less than those in stable housing. Without regular access to healthcare and safe and stable housing, individuals experience preventable illness and often endure longer hospitalizations. It is estimated that those experiencing homelessness stay four days (or 36%) longer per hospital admission than non-homeless patients.[4]

The presence of a disabling condition, which can be exacerbated by homelessness, can hinder a person from being able to obtain employment and maintain stable housing. In Solano County, 37% of those who completed the Point-In-Time survey were found to have at least one disabling condition. The prevalence rates of disabling conditions for the PEH who were surveyed are shown below.
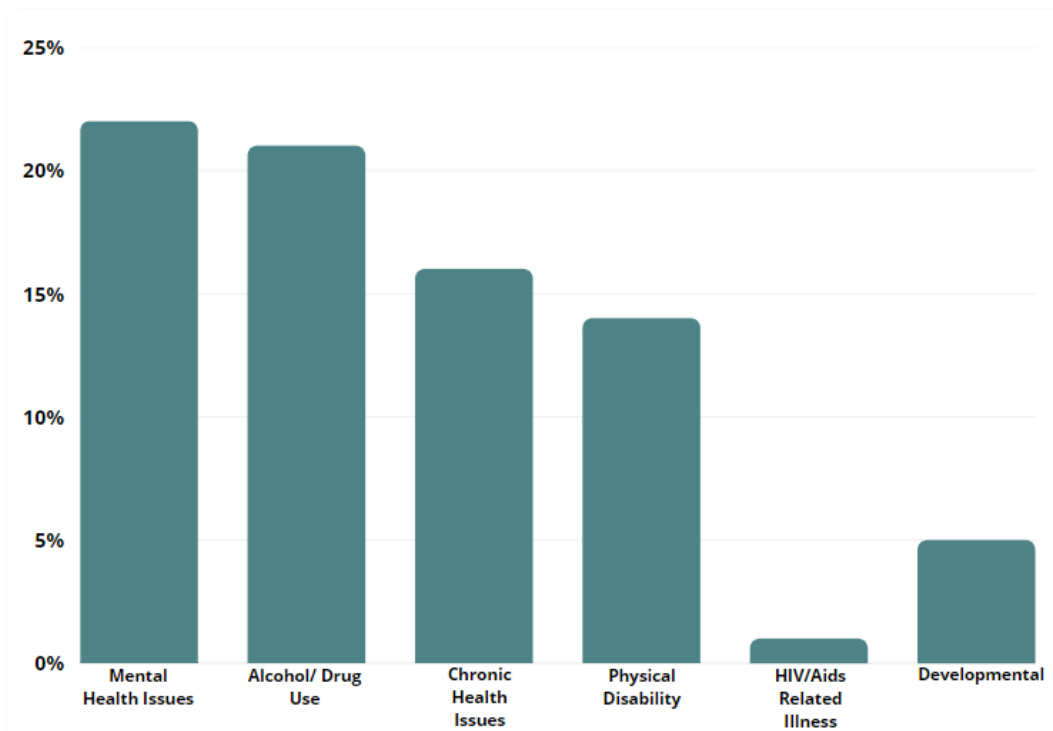
The NHCHC found that PEH are at a greater risk of symptomatic infection and mortality from COVID-19. After collecting reports from 18 different city and county health departments as well as local reports, NHCHC found that by December 2020, at minimum 226 PEH had died from health-related issues attributable to COVID-19.[5] Of the PEH surveyed on the night of the count, 9% stated that the primary event that led to their homelessness was related to COVID-19. In January 2022, the number of new daily cases in Solano County peaked at 1,260. This rapidly declined to 192 new daily cases by February 2022, which was attributed to the high vaccination rate (71%).[6]

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[4] National Health Care for the Homeless Council. (2020). National Homeless Mortality Overview.
[5] The Lancet. (2020). COVID-19: a potential public health problem for homeless populations.
[6] Solano County Government. (2022). Press Release.

Key Subpopulations

As homelessness is a complex issue, it is often beneficial to focus the conversations on particular "subpopulations." Three of these key subpopulations are:

1. Chronic homelessness
2. Veterans
3. Unaccompanied children and transition-age youth

Local progress toward ending homelessness can be evaluated broadly as well as by each of these subpopulations. The following evaluation utilizes data gathered from local Point In Time counts as well as results from the national count.

Chronic Homelessness

HUD defines a chronically homeless individual as someone who has experienced homelessness for a year or longer—or who has experienced at least four episodes of homelessness totaling 12 months in the last three years—and also has a disabling condition that prevents them from maintaining work or housing. This definition applies to individuals as well as heads of household who meet the definition.

The chronically homeless population represents one of the most vulnerable populations experiencing unsheltered homelessness; the mortality rate for those experiencing chronic homelessness is four to nine times higher than that of the general population[7]. The chronic homeless population tends to have higher costs attributed to emergency room visits, interactions with law enforcement, incarceration, and regular access to social support and homeless services. These combined costs are often significantly higher than the cost of providing individuals with permanent housing and supportive services. In Solano County, the PIT count found that 70 sheltered individuals and 125 unsheltered individuals were categorized as experiencing chronic homelessness.

In 2019, HUD reported that the estimated number of persons experiencing long-term, chronic homelessness increased by 8.5% between 2018 and 2019. This increase was concentrated on the West Coast, with the largest increases in California. Chronic homelessness had been on the decline between 2007 and 2019, largely due to the increased supply of permanent supportive housing that was prioritized for those with the greatest barriers to housing stability. This trend shifted in the 2020 count which saw a 15 percent increase and was the first time since 2011 that the number of people considered to be chronically homeless exceeded 100,000.[8]

In Solano County, 70 of 259 people (27%) in shelters were determined to be chronically homeless whereas 125 of the 920 (13.6%) from the unsheltered count were determined to be chronically homeless.

In the 2020 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR), HUD found that 110,528 individuals were experiencing chronic homelessness, which is just over one-quarter of all homeless individuals. Within Solano County, 157 of 1081 (14.5%) individual adults were estimated to be chronically homeless. For households, the percentages are higher with 38 of the 91 (41.7%) people in households with at least one adult and one child considered to be chronically homeless.
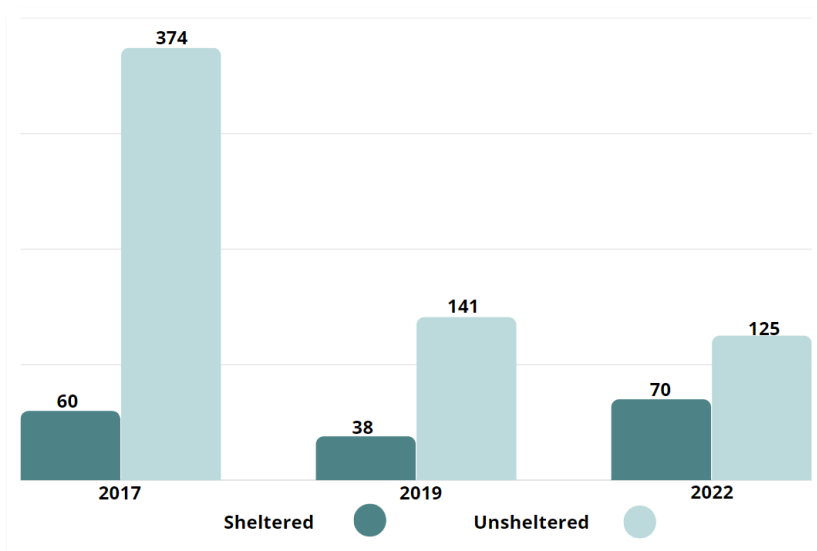
[7]USICH. 2010. Supplemental Document to the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.
[8]U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2021). HUD Releases 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report Part 1 *Homelessness Increasing Even Prior to COVID-19 Pandemic*.
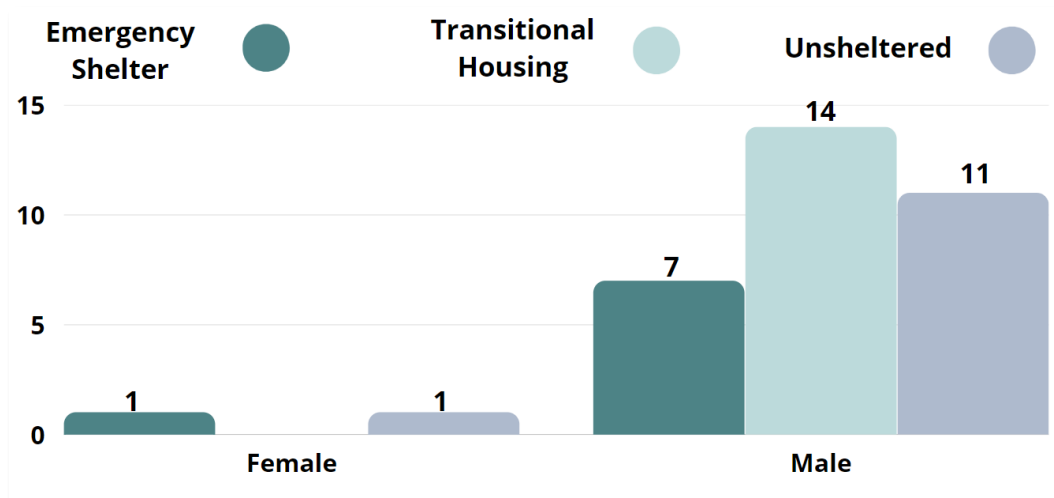
Veterans

U.S. veterans experience conditions that place them at increased risk for homelessness. Veterans experience higher rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), sexual assault, and substance abuse. Veterans experiencing homelessness are more likely to live on the experiencing unsheltered homelessness than in shelters and remain unsheltered for extended periods.[9]

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides a broad range of benefits and services to veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces. These benefits can involve different forms of financial assistance, including monthly cash payments to disabled veterans, health care, education, and housing benefits. In addition to these supports, the VA and HUD partner to provide additional housing and support services to veterans currently homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Within Solano County's PIT count, 34 persons identified as a veteran were counted. This represents 3.2% of all adults found on that night. There were no households or children found to be affiliated with any veterans. In contrast to National findings, there were almost three times the number of veterans within shelters versus those found to be unsheltered. Males made up 94% of the population with only two females total between sheltered and unsheltered groups.

Within shelters, two veterans were determined to be chronically homeless and nine of the unsheltered veterans were determined to be chronically homeless.

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[9] National Coalition for Homeless Veterans. *Veteran Homelessness.*

Unaccompanied Children and Transition Age Youth

Young PEH have more difficulty accessing services, including shelter, medical care, and employment. Potential reasons for this include the stigma of their housing situation, lack of knowledge of available resources, and a dearth of services targeted to young people.

In 2012, the *U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness* amended the *Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness* to include specific strategies and supports to address the needs of unaccompanied homeless children and transition-age youth. As part of this effort, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development placed increased focus on gathering data on unaccompanied homeless children and transition-age youth during the Point-in-Time Count. Due to the often-concealed nature of youth homelessness, limited data are available on unaccompanied children and transition-age youth experiencing homelessness.

Although largely considered an undercount, nationwide estimates from 2020 suggest there is about 34,000 unaccompanied youth experiencing unsheltered homelessness and in public shelters, with most being between the ages of 18 and 24. According to the 2020 AHAR *"Compared to all individuals*
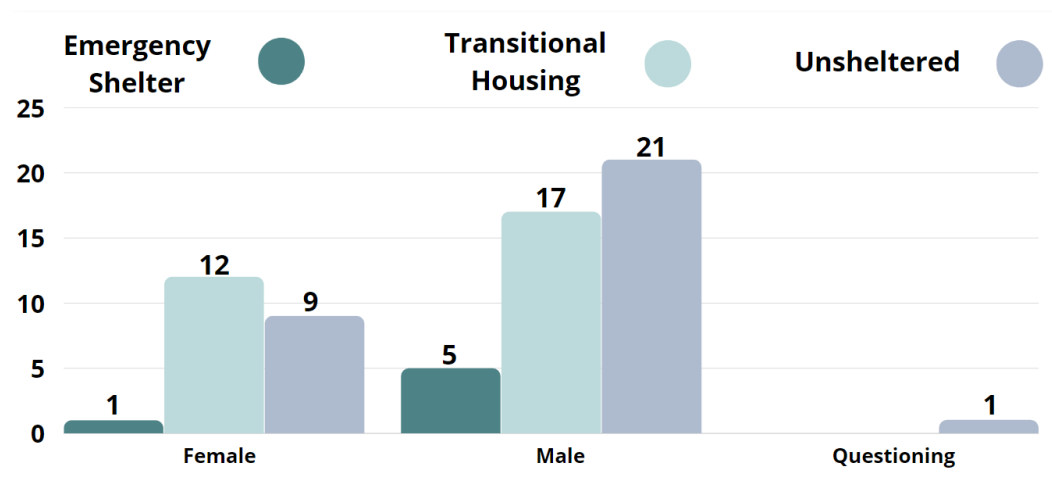
experiencing homelessness, unaccompanied youth were more often non-white (52% of youth vs. 46% of all individuals), Hispanic/Latino (25% vs. 20%), female (39% vs. 29%), or identifying themselves other than as male or female (4% vs. 1%)".[10] In comparison, females only represented 22% of the Solano County findings, and 1 person identified as other than male or female. The sheltered unaccompanied youth represented 53% of the population with 29 of the 66 total being found in Transitional Housing.

While there was not a full 2021 count due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the sheltered count for that year did find that there were 15,763 people under the age of 25 which represented a 9% decrease from 2020.[11] In 2022, Solano County counted 132 unaccompanied youth under 25 were found while in the most recent previous full PIT count in 2019, there were 283 persons under age 25. This represents a 53% decrease between counts. Additionally, 10.6% of unaccompanied youth were counted as under 18.

[10] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2021). HUD Releases 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report Part 1
[11] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2022). HUD Releases 2021 Annual Homeless Assessment Report Part 1

The Unsheltered Count

Solano County's estimated unsheltered population for the night of the count was 920 people which comprised 78% of the total homeless population of 1,179. The incoming survey results were gathered by 124 count volunteers.
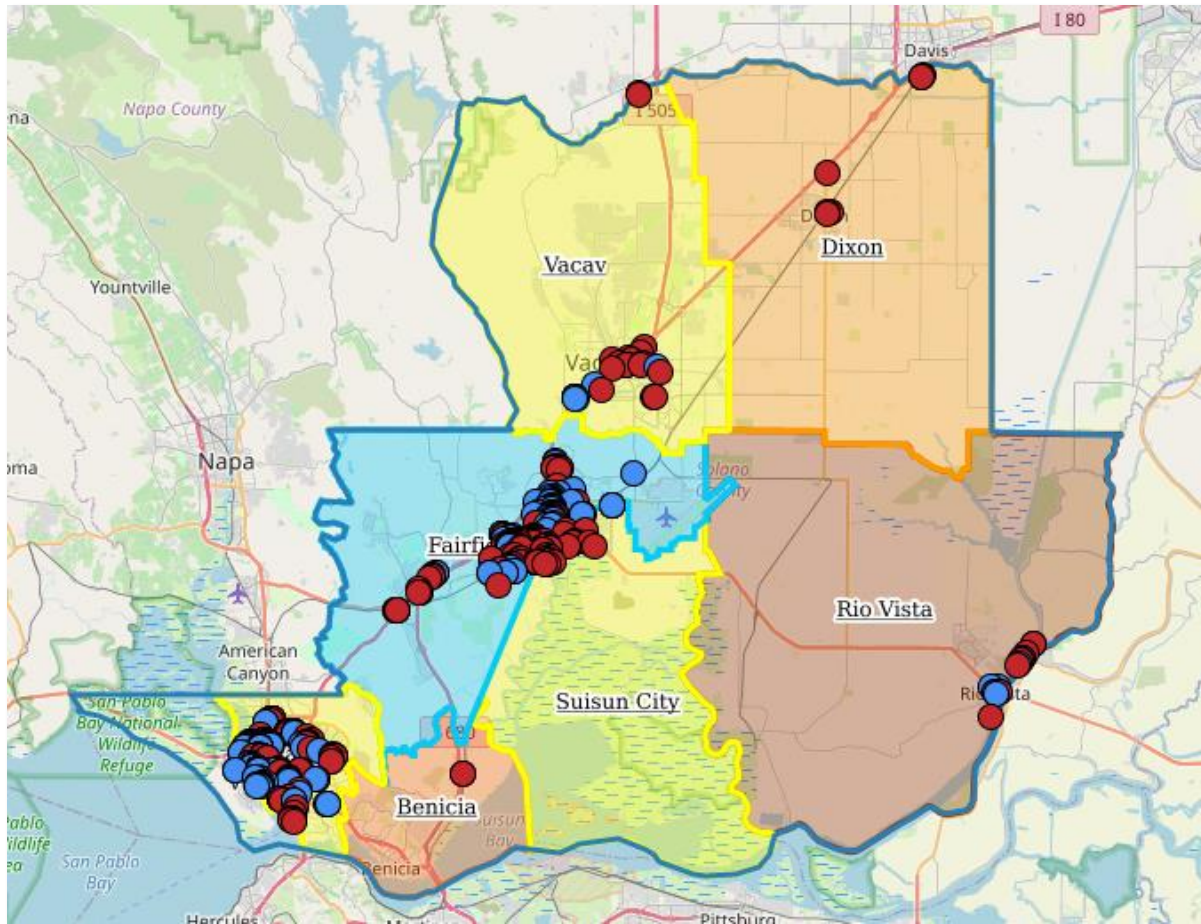

Within the 7 locales, there were a total of 124 volunteers with 40 in Vallejo, 38 in Fairfield, 17 in Vacaville, 11 in Dixon, 9 in Benicia, 5 in Suisun City, and 4 in Rio Vista. The volunteers used the Counting Us app developed by Simtech Solutions to canvas and survey people experiencing homelessness in the areas they each were designated to canvas.
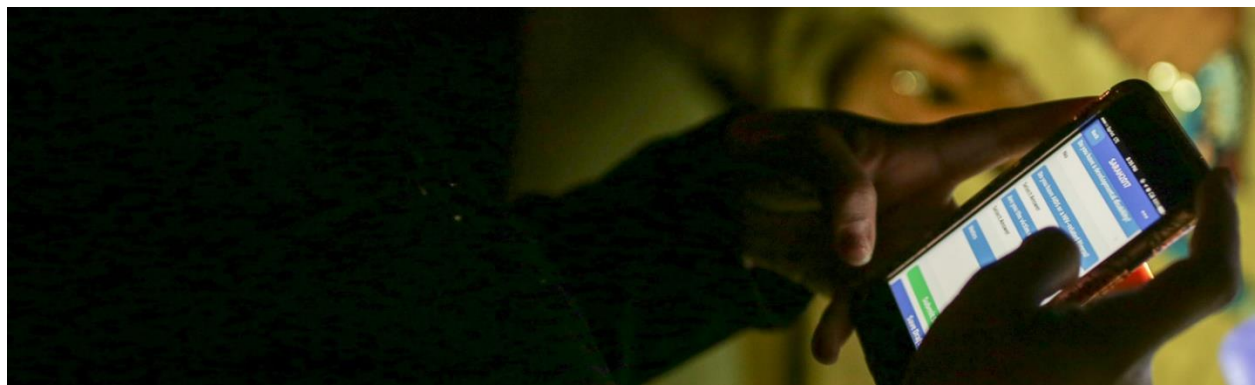
The Unsheltered Count Methodology

With HUD's guidance, the Community Action Partnership Solano, Joint Powers Authority ("JPA") revised its methodology for the unsheltered portion of the count to utilize an approach known as geographic sampling and enumeration. This HUD-endorsed approach enabled the region to derive a statistically reliable count estimate with the aid of fewer volunteers. Below is an excerpt from HUD's [How to Use Sampling within a Continuum of Care (CoC) to Conduct an Unsheltered Point-in-Time (PIT) Count](#) guidance and provides an overview of the approach used to conduct the 2022 count in Solano County.

The setup and configuration of the sampling approach were performed within the Regional Command Center developed by Simtech Solutions Inc. and hosted at https://www.PointInTime.info. Outreach staff used a "Known Location Survey" found within the Counting Us mobile application to identify the areas within the CoC likely to contain PEH. A total of 165 Known Location Surveys were submitted and used to form the designation of certainty subareas. The information gathered from the known location surveys led to 73 of the 297 (24.5%) census area block groups being designated as having a high probability of containing PEH. This left a sample size of 224 low-probability *census area block groups* to be randomly sampled.
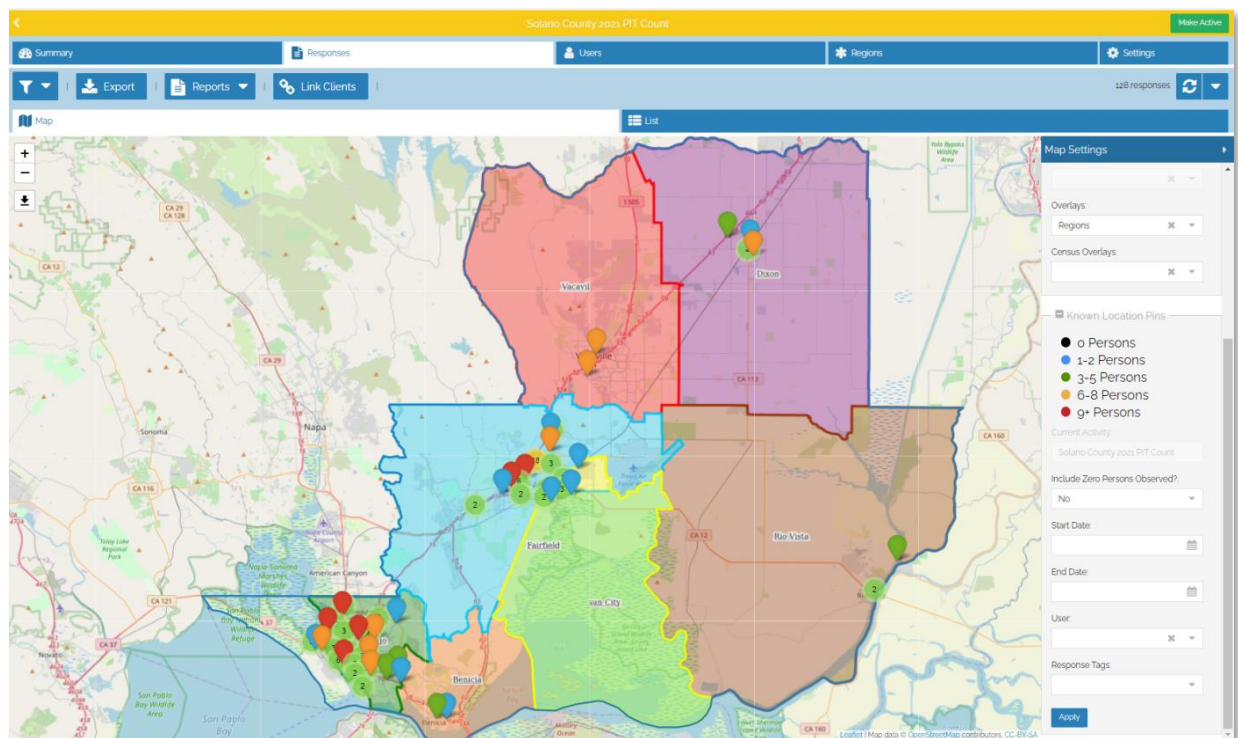
Based on the size of this sample, it was determined that a minimum of 67 randomly selected low-probability block groups would need to be canvassed to maintain a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 10. This approach requires canvassing 73 high-probability block groups, along with 67 low-probability block groups, out of the total of 297 block groups, or 47.1% of the CoC. This geographic sampling and enumeration approach enabled a statistically reliable count to be produced while reducing the coverage area for the count to 47.1% of the census area block groups found within the CoC.

The volunteers used the GPS-enabled surveying tools found within the Counting Us mobile app to conduct surveys and observation tallies in all census area block groups designated as likely to contain PEH, along with a random sample of the census area block groups that were less likely to contain PEH. In total, there were 324 people surveyed along with 231 observation tallies submitted. The tallies were used for times when a person believed to be homeless could not be engaged, and details of any vehicles or makeshift shelters believed to contain PEH were also captured.

After the survey data was reviewed by the count administrators, a weighting factor was applied to derive a statistically reliable count estimate for the areas that were determined to be a low probability of containing PEH and were not randomly selected to be canvassed. The count results from the high-probability areas were subsequently added to these count estimates from the low-probability areas. These figures were added to the estimates from a tally of vehicles and makeshift shelters to derive a final count estimate for the Continuum of Care.

Counts of Vehicles and Makeshift Shelters

Solano County followed the *Counting People in Structures for the PIT Count* guidance provided by HUD to sample each type of sleeping situation. A local weighting factor was first produced for each vehicle and structure type by asking people who were surveyed, that had indicated they were sleeping in a vehicle or structure, and the number of people sleeping with them during the night of the count.

Any Vehicle and Makeshift shelter surveys that indicate the structure was abandoned or does not meet the criteria established by HUD as to whether it should be counted were archived. Of the 195 Vehicle and Makeshift Shelter surveys that were conducted, twenty (20) indicated the Vehicle or Structure appeared to be abandoned. These surveys were excluded from the estimation. An additional 40 vehicles and structures were counted in low-probability areas not to be sampled. As a result, these vehicles and structures were also excluded from the sample. The breakdown of the 135 vehicles and structures, and the local weighting factor applied to derive an estimated number of people associated with each vehicle/structure type, can be found in the chart below.

Vehicle and Makeshift Shelter Stats

Vehicle/Structure Type	Avg. People per Vehicle/Structure	# Vehicles/Structures - High Prob. Areas	Est. # People - High	# Vehicles/Structures - Low Prob. Areas	Est. # People - Low
Car	1.1	17	18.7	5	5.5
Makeshift Shelter	1.4	21	29.4	7	9.8
Other	1.3	1	1.3	0	0
RV	1.7	33	56.1	4	6.8
Tent	1.2	31	37.2	7	8.4
Van	1.9	9	17.1	0	0