HOMELESS
CENSUS & SURVEY
2018
SOUTHERN NEVADA
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
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The Point-in-Time (PIT) Count, is an enumeration of both sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations, conducted annually over the course of one night during the last 10 days of January, and is required of all Continuums of Care (CoC) per the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

PIT Counts are conducted by CoCs nationwide to provide unduplicated counts and statistically reliable estimates of homeless persons in sheltered and unsheltered locations in a single night.

The 2018 Southern Nevada Homeless PIT Count identified 6,083 homeless persons in Southern Nevada. Of these persons, 36.1% (2,199 persons) were sheltered and 63.9% (3,884 persons) were unsheltered.

Methodology

The project included a comprehensive enumeration, or Point-in-Time (PIT) Count, of the homeless population of Southern Nevada. This enumeration was conducted during the night of January 24, 2018. In the weeks immediately following the PIT Count, 398 street surveys were administered to homeless persons throughout Southern Nevada.

A detailed account of the methodology for the 2018 PIT Count can be found in Appendix IV, and the 2018 Southern Nevada Homeless Survey results can be found in Appendix I.

Both the PIT Count and the Southern Nevada Homeless Survey were designed to obtain comprehensive and targeted data, highlighting the prevalence and characteristics of the general homeless population and specific subpopulations within the general homeless population. The survey was designed to unveil additional details in regards to the scope of homelessness in Southern Nevada.

2018 Homeless Census & Survey: Summary of Findings

The 2018 Southern Nevada PIT Count indicates that between 2017 and 2018, the total number of persons experiencing homelessness decreased from 6,490 to 6,083, respectively. The number of unsheltered homeless persons decreased from 4,353 to 3,884 respectively during this time period.
The 2018 annual estimate for the number of homeless people in Southern Nevada was 16,641. This represents a 33.39% decrease (8,340 persons) from the 2017 annual estimate of 24,981 persons.

It’s important to note that the HUD-approved method for determining annual estimates factors in the length of time homeless to determine annual inflow. Due to this methodology, it’s entirely possible for the annual estimate to be lower than in previous years, while sections of the PIT total may be greater.

In 2017, an estimated 1.2% of the total Nevada population was homeless. In 2018, this percentage decreased to 0.75% (based on population estimates from the State of Nevada Department of Taxation).*

**Conditions: Sheltered/Unsheltered**

63.9% of homeless persons in Southern Nevada were unsheltered.

- Between 2017 and 2018, unsheltered homelessness decreased by 10.77% (469 persons). When comparing the unsheltered totals to the overall homeless total relative to their year, there was a 3.2% decrease since 2017. In 2017, unsheltered homeless represented 67.1% of the entire homeless population (4,353 persons). In 2018, unsheltered homeless represented 63.9% of the entire homeless population (3,884 persons).

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* In 2018, the State of Nevada Department of Taxation estimated the population total for the State of Nevada to be 2,229,396, which represents a 1.6% increase (35,578 people) compared to 2017. Note: The 2016 Southern Nevada Homeless Census & Survey used a population estimate from the U.S. Department of Commerce. For this 2018 report, all population totals have been updated to the population estimates from the State of Nevada Department of Taxation.
36.1% of the persons enumerated in the PIT Count were in sheltered facilities.

- Between 2017 and 2018, sheltered homelessness increased by 2.9% (62 persons). In Southern Nevada, in the early morning of January, 25, 2018, 1,659 persons were in emergency shelters, 524 persons were in transitional housing, and 16 persons were in safe haven.

- There was an increase (1.5%, 24 persons) in Emergency Shelter utilization between 2017 and 2018, and an increase in Transitional Housing utilization (8.7%, 42 persons). Safe Haven utilization decreased by 20% (4 persons) between 2017 and 2018.

Survey Demographics

The majority of homeless individuals surveyed in Southern Nevada identified as White/Caucasian, were of male gender, and were between the ages of 51 and 60.

Gender

- 68.6% of survey respondents identified as male, 30.4% of respondents identified as female, 0.8% of respondents identified as transgender, and 0.3% of respondents reported they don’t identify as male, female, or transgender.

Age

- Youth homelessness decreased between 2017 and 2018. In 2018, 2% of respondents were between the ages of 18 and 21, this represents a 0.7% decrease from the number of homeless persons in this category in 2017 (2.7%). 0% of survey respondents were under the age of 18. This represents a 0.3% decrease compared to 2017.

- The majority (30.2%) of respondents were between the ages of 51 and 60. This number is slightly lower for this age group than 2017 (30.3%).

Race and Ethnicity

- The majority of respondents identified their racial group as White/Caucasian (57.3%), and 32.7% identified as Black/African American. The fewest number of respondents identified as Pacific Islander (2.3%).

- 10.1% of respondents identified their ethnic group as Hispanic/Latino. 89.9% of respondents identified their ethnic group as Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino.

Residency Prior to Homelessness

- The majority of survey respondents (74.8%) reported living in Clark County when they most recently became homeless. 1.8% reported living in other areas of Nevada (outside of Clark
County), while 23.4% of respondents reported living outside of Nevada when they most recently became homeless.

**HUD-Defined Households**

In 2018, there were 106 households with at least one adult and one child; homeless Veterans comprised 0.9% (1 household) of this population. There were 5,406 households without children; homeless Veterans comprised 10.9% (591 households) of this population. There were 216 households with only children (under the age of 18). There were 21 Parenting Youth Households, and there were 1,294 Unaccompanied Youth Households in 2018.

**Households With At Least One Adult & One Child**

- In 2018, 59.3% of the homeless population living in households with at least one adult and one child were under the age of 18, 14.1% were between the ages of 18-24, and 26.6% were over the age of 24.

**Households Without Children**

- In 2018, 19.4% of the homeless population living in households without children was between the ages of 18-24, and the remaining population was over the age of 24.

**Households With Only Children**

- In 2018, there were 218 people in households with only children (under 18).

**Youth Households**

- In 2018, 21.3% (1,295 persons) of the entire point-in-time count total (6,083 persons) were Unaccompanied Young Adults (between ages 18-24) and Unaccompanied Children (under age 18).

- Out of the 21 Parenting Youths (youth parents only) enumerated, 2 were under the age of 18, and 19 were between the ages of 18 and 24. There were 26 children with these parenting youth, collectively.

- The 1,294 Unaccompanied Youth Households (1,295 total persons) were comprised of 214 Unaccompanied Children (under age 18) and 1,081 Unaccompanied Youth (ages 18-24).
Veterans

Definition

For the purposes of homeless services, the VA recommends two questions to determine Veteran status:

1. “Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces?”
2. “Were you activated into active duty, as a member of the National Guard or as a Reservist?”

Therefore, for the purposes of this report, the official HUD definition for Veteran is as follows:

...persons who have served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States. This does not include inactive military reserves or the National Guard unless the person was called up to active duty.

Survey and Point-in-Time Count Results:

- 9.8% (594 persons) of the entire point-in-time count total (6,083 persons) were Veterans.
- There was only one household with one adult veteran and one child (0.2%) included in this total, the remaining were households without children (99.8%).
- 429 (72.2%) veterans were sheltered during this count, while 165 (27.8%) were unsheltered.
- 8.0% (32) of survey respondents were Veterans. This is less than the percentage of Veteran respondents in 2017 when 12.8% of survey respondents were Veterans.
- 4 (12.5%) respondents were female and 28 (87.5%) were male. There were no Veteran survey respondents who identified as transgender.
- The majority of homeless Veterans reported they are White/Caucasian (56.3%) and 96.9% of Veteran respondents are Non-Hispanic / Non-Latino.
- 68.7% of Veteran respondents reported Honorable Discharge.
- 68.8% reported at least one disabling condition.
**Causes, Occurrence, and Duration of Homelessness**

- 56.2% survey respondents cited *job loss* as the primary cause of their homelessness, making it the primary cause of homelessness for the majority of this population. 2.5% of survey respondents cited *aging out of foster care* as their reason for homelessness.

- 51% of survey respondents reported that they were *homeless for the first time*, and 24.6% of survey respondents reported that they had been *homeless four or more times in the last three years*. 50.1% of the 2018 survey respondents reported that they had been *homeless for a year or more* since their last housing situation; this is one criterion included in the HUD definition of chronic homelessness.

- The majority of survey respondents (74.8%) reported living in *Clark County* when they most recently became homeless, and the majority (62%) of survey respondents reported that they were *renting a home or apartment* prior to becoming homeless.

**Income, Employment, & Circumstances Preventing Permanent Housing**

- 88.7% of survey respondents reported they were experiencing *unemployment* at the time of the survey. *Need Clothing* was the leading barrier to obtaining employment (23.5%) closely followed by *No Transportation* (22.7%), and *No Phone* (22%).

- 15.4% of survey respondents claimed to be receiving more than $500 per month in government income benefits, and 40.4% reported to be receiving no money from government benefits. 74.9% of survey respondents claimed to be receiving no money from private non-government income sources, and 95% of survey respondents were receiving $500 or less from private non-government income sources.

- The majority of respondents cited *No Job/No Income* (67.8%) or *Inability To Afford Rent* (54.9%) as their primary obstacle to obtaining permanent housing.

**Utilization of Government Assistance & Programs**

- In 2018, the most commonly used service/assistance was *Free Meals* (55.9%).

- In regards to Government assistance and programs, 86.3% of 2018 survey respondents reported receiving some sort of government benefits.
• Of the respondents receiving government assistance, 75.8% were receiving food stamps, 10.6% were receiving SSI/SSDI assistance, and 5.4% were receiving social security.

**Nighttime Accommodations**

• 2018 census data indicated that 1,133 persons of the unsheltered (street) population was found to be living in cars/vans/RVs, abandoned buildings, encampments, and parks.

**Medical**

• In 2018, 21% of homeless respondents indicated that since they most recently became homeless, they had needed medical care but had been unable to receive it.

• From 2017 to 2018, the amount of homeless individuals reporting chronic health conditions increased from approximately 29.9% to 40.5%.

• According to *Section 223 of the Social Security Act*., multiple physical and mental conditions are considered disabling to homeless individuals, preventing them from obtaining work or housing. These conditions include:
  - Physical disabilities
  - Mental illness
  - Severe depression
  - Alcohol or drug abuse
  - Chronic health problems
  - HIV/AIDS
  - Tuberculosis
  - Hepatitis C
  - Trauma
  - Developmental disabilities

• 67.3% of homeless survey respondents reported they had at least one disabling condition. 37.9% of the population surveyed have or ever had a physical disability.

**Incarceration**

• 3.8% of survey respondents reported they were incarcerated immediately before becoming homeless this time, and 11.1% of respondents cited incarceration as one of the top three reasons for their homelessness. 9.8% of homeless respondents indicated their criminal record was preventing them from securing permanent housing, and 8.6% indicated that their criminal record was preventing them from obtaining employment.

• The majority (61.9%) of survey respondents had spent no nights in jail or prison during the 12 months prior to the survey. 10.9% spent more than 50 nights in jail or prison during the 12
months prior to the survey, 16.6% of survey respondents reported spending one separate term in jail or prison during the 12 months prior to the survey, and 3% of survey respondents reported spending six or more separate terms in jail or prison during the 12 months prior to the survey.

**HUD-Defined Homeless Subpopulations**

**Chronically Homeless Individuals**

**Definition:**
For purposes of reporting in the PIT count, a chronically homeless person: 1) is homeless and lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; 2) has been homeless and living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter continuously for at least 1 year or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years where the combined length of time homeless in those occasions is at least 12 months; and 3) can be diagnosed with one or more of the following conditions: substance use disorder, serious mental Illness, developmental disability (as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C 15002)), post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from brain injury, or chronic physical illness or disability.

- On any given night in 2018, it is estimated that Southern Nevada has approximately 505 chronically homeless individuals. This is a 14.8% (65 persons) increase since 2017 (440).

- The estimated number of chronically homeless individuals in Southern Nevada in 2018 represents 8.3% of the total 2018 Southern Nevada point-in-time homeless population.

**Chronically Homeless Veteran Individuals**

**Definition:**
Any individual who meets the definition for Chronically Homeless Individual and has served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States. This does not include inactive military reserves or the National Guard unless the person was called up to active duty.

- 2018 census data indicated that 10.3% of Veterans experiencing homelessness on the night of the PIT count (61 persons) identified as chronically homeless.

- Of the chronically homeless Veteran individuals, 34.4% (21 persons) were unsheltered.

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* United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. (September 2017) Notice CPD-17-08: Notice for Housing Inventory Count (HIC) and Point-in-Time (PIT) Data Collection for Continuum of Care (CoC) Program and the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program.
Adults with Serious Mental Illness

**Definition**
This subpopulation category includes persons with mental health problems that are expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration and substantially impairs the person’s ability to live independently.

- 44.7% of survey respondents reported experiencing mental illness, of which 75.7% responded that it prevents them from obtaining work or housing.
- 54.3% of survey respondents reported experiencing Depression, of which 70.9% responded that it prevents them from obtaining work or housing.
- 21.2% of survey respondents reported experiencing PTSD, of which 69% responded that it prevents them from obtaining work or housing.

Adults with Substance Use Disorder

**Definition**
This category includes persons with a substance abuse problem (alcohol abuse, drug abuse, or both) that is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration and substantially impairs the person’s ability to live independently.

- 38.9% of the survey respondents reported to be currently experiencing alcohol or drug abuse at the time of the survey. This represents an increase compared to 2017, when 35.7% of respondents cited problems with alcohol/drug abuse.

Co-Occurring Disorders

**Definition**
Although this category is not considered a HUD-defined homeless subpopulation, it is still of great concern and interest to the community and policymakers. This category includes persons who experience substance abuse paired with mental illness, depression, PTSD, or any combination thereof, that keeps them from obtaining work or housing.

- 18% of survey respondents reported suffering from co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse and that this co-occurring disorder prevented them from obtaining work or housing.
- 20% of survey respondents reported suffering from co-occurring depression and substance abuse and that this co-occurring disorder prevented them from obtaining work or housing.
- 10% of survey respondents reported suffering from co-occurring PTSD and substance abuse and that this co-occurring disorder prevented them from obtaining work or housing.

**Adults With HIV/AIDS**

**Definition**

*This subpopulation category includes persons who have been diagnosed with AIDS and/or have tested positive for HIV.*

- Of the total 2018 Southern Nevada point-in-time homeless population, 1.3% were experiencing HIV or AIDS related illnesses. This percentage is higher than the percentage reported in 2017 (0.6%).

**Victims of Domestic Violence**

**Definition**

*This subpopulation category includes adults who have been victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking at any point in the past.*

- Of the total 2018 Southern Nevada point-in-time homeless population, 11.4% were considered victims of domestic violence. This represents a decrease from 2017 (13.5%).
Conclusion

The 2018 Southern Nevada Homeless PIT Count identified 6,083 homeless persons in Southern Nevada. Of these persons, 36.1% (2,199 persons) were sheltered, and 63.9% (3,884 persons) were unsheltered.

Inherent difficulties are associated with any methodology that is applied to enumerating homeless persons, and these difficulties warrant careful consideration when evaluating totals such as those presented in this report. For example, many homeless persons (especially women and children) are eliminated from the total count as they typically are afraid of being located, often for safety reasons. Thus, many reside in locations that make them undetectable to enumeration teams. Even the most systematic and comprehensive methodologies fall short of gathering entirely representative numbers that reflect the true homeless population.

The same careful consideration should be applied to the analysis of the Homeless Survey data. While the extrapolation method has proven to be reliable, and is considered the standard method of estimating the subpopulation totals, it must be emphasized that this method produces estimates that vary in their representativeness of the actual sample population.

However, despite these challenges, the 2018 Southern Nevada Homeless Census and Survey provides both valid and useful data, creating a more comprehensive view of the nature and scope of homelessness in Southern Nevada in 2018. The fact that the same methodology (with minor adjustments), characterized by the same difficulties, has been used since 2007 enables Southern Nevada to continue tracking key patterns and trends amongst their homeless population. This consistent approach continues to highlight the changing conditions of homelessness in this region, so that necessary action can be taken to improve the livelihood of these homeless persons. Through its impact on the policy-makers in Southern Nevada, this report will allow for more constructive and innovative solutions to be applied to the problem of homelessness.