Santa Clara County

HOMELESS CENSUS & SURVEY

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT

2019



REPORT PRODUCED BY ASR

ABOUT THE RESEARCHER

Applied Survey Research (ASR) is a social research firm dedicated to helping people build better communities by collecting meaningful data, facilitating information-based planning, and developing custom strategies. The firm was founded on the principle that community improvement, initiative sustainability, and program success are closely tied to assessment of needs, evaluation of community goals, and development of appropriate responses.

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Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS **4**
INTRODUCTION **6**
Project Overview and Goals 6
Federal Definition of Homelessness for Point-in-Time Counts 7
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY **8**
POINT-IN-TIME CENSUS **10**
Number and Characteristics of Homeless Persons 11
HOMELESS SURVEY FINDINGS **15**
Demographics of Survey Respondents 16
Living Accommodations 19
Duration and Recurrence of Homelessness 22
Primary Cause of Homelessness 23
Services and Assistance 25
Employment and Income 27
Health 28
Domestic/Partner Violence or Abuse 29
Criminal Justice System 30
SUBPOPULATIONS **31**
Chronically Homeless Individuals 32
Veterans Experiencing Homelessness 37
Families with Children Experiencing Homelessness 42
Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness 47
CONCLUSION **52**
APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY **53**
Street Count Methodology 54
Youth and Young Adult Street Count Methodology 57
Shelter Count Methodology 57
Challenges 58
Survey Methodology 58
APPENDIX B: DEFINITIONS & ABBREVIATIONS **61**
APPENDIX C: SURVEY QUESTIONS **63**
APPENDIX D: TABLE OF FIGURES **65**
APPENDIX E: FIGURE SOURCES **67**

Acknowledgements

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ASR would like to give special thanks to the individuals currently experiencing homelessness who acted as surveyors and guides during the count. Without their dedication and knowledge, the Homeless Census and Survey team would not have been able to conduct these efforts. They provided access and knowledge about the community that would have been unobtainable without their support. These individuals took time out of their day to participate in this effort and we owe them thanks.

PROJECT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Kathryn Kaminski, Office of Supportive Housing. Leila Qureishi, Office of Supportive Housing. Lorena Diez, City of San José Housing Department.

POINT-IN-TIME JURISDICTIONAL FUNDERS

- City of Campbell
- City of Cupertino
- City of Gilroy
- City of Los Altos
- Town of Los Altos Hills
- Town of Los Gatos
- City of Milpitas
- City of Monte Sereno
- City of Morgan Hill
- City of Mountain View
- City of Palo Alto
- City of San José
- City of Saratoga
- City of Santa Clara
- City of Sunnyvale
- County of Santa Clara

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- Bill Wilson Center
- Bitfocus
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- City of San José
- City of Sunnyvale
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- Diocese of San José
- Gardner Family Health Network
- County of Santa Clara Office of Supportive Housing
- HACSC
- HomeFirst
- Housing Choice Coalition
- PATH
- Santa Clara University
- Santa Clara County Office of Education
- St. Joseph's Family Center

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- Bill Wilson Drop-In Center
- Emmanuel House
- Salvation Army
- Gilroy Compassion Center
- City Team Ministries
- Mountain View CSA
- Opportunity Health Center

Introduction

Every two years, during the last ten days of January, communities across the United States conduct comprehensive counts of the local population experiencing homelessness. These biennial Point-in-Time Counts estimate the prevalence of homelessness in each community and collect information on individuals and families residing in temporary shelters and places not meant for human habitation, and ultimately help the federal government better understand the nature and extent of homelessness nationwide.

As required of all jurisdictions receiving federal funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide homeless services, Continuums of Care (CoC) across the country report the findings of their local Point-in-Time Count in their annual funding application to HUD. Currently, the Santa Clara County CoC receives approximately $26 million dollars annually in federal funding.

Santa Clara County has partnered with ASR to conduct its Point-in-Time Count since 2007, maintaining a similar methodology across every count and thus ensuring as much consistency as possible, from one year to the next. ASR is a social research firm that has over 19 years of experience in homeless enumeration and needs assessment, having conducted homeless counts and surveys throughout California and across the nation. Their work is featured as a best practice in the HUD publication*, A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People,* as well as in the Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago publication, *Conducting a Youth Count: A Toolkit.*

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND GOALS

In order for the Homeless Census and Survey to best reflect the experience and expertise of the community, ASR held planning meetings with local community members. These community members were drawn from City and County departments, community-based service providers, and other interested stakeholders. These individuals comprised the 2019 Planning Committee and were instrumental to ensuring the 2019 Santa Clara County Homeless Point-in-Time Count and Survey reflected the needs and concerns of the community.

The 2019 Planning Committee identified several important project goals:

- To preserve current federal funding for homeless services and to enhance the ability to raise new funds;
- To improve the ability of policy makers and service providers to plan and implement services that meet the needs of the local homeless population;
- To measure changes in the numbers and characteristics of the homeless population and track the community's progress toward ending homelessness;
- To increase public awareness of overall homeless issues and generate support for constructive solutions; and
- To assess the status of specific subpopulations, including veterans, families, youth, young adults, and those who are chronically homeless.

This report is intended to assist service providers, policy makers, funders, and local, state, and federal governments in:

- Gaining a better understanding of the population currently experiencing homelessness;
- Measuring the impact of current policies and programming; and
- Making informed decisions around community strategic planning, capacity building, and advocacy campaigns to prevent and end homelessness.

FEDERAL DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS FOR POINT-IN-TIME COUNTS

In this study, the HUD definition of homelessness for the Point-in-Time Count was used. This definition includes individuals and families:

- Living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement; or
- With a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.

Santa Clara County

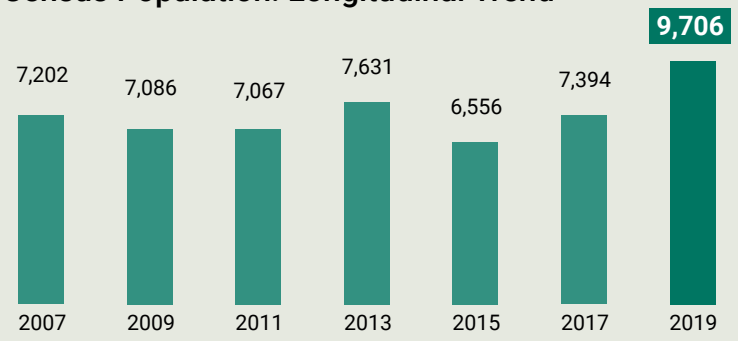
Homeless Census & Survey

2019 Executive Summary

Every two years, during the last 10 days of January, communities across the country conduct comprehensive counts of the local homeless populations in order to measure the prevalence of homelessness in each local Continuum of Care.

The 2019 Santa Clara County Point-in-Time Count was a community-wide effort conducted on January 29th and 30th, 2019. In the weeks following the street count, a survey was administered to **1,335** unsheltered and sheltered individuals experiencing homelessness in order to profile their experience and characteristics.

Census Population: Longitudinal Trend[Φ]



2019 Sheltered/ Unsheltered Population[Φ]



Age[Φ]

8% Under 18

17% 18-24

75% 25+

Gender[Φ]

62% Male

36% Female

2% Transgender

Sexual Orientation

87% Straight

6% Bisexual

3% Lesbian

2% Gay

2% Other

Residence Prior to Homelessness



Santa Clara County

Length of Time in Santa Clara County

14% < 1 Year

17% 1-4 Years

12% 5-9 Years

57% 10 Years+

Foster Care

19% of survey respondents have been in the foster system.

Justice System Involvement

27% of survey respondents spent one or more nights in jail/ prison/juvenile hall in the past year.

Race

Top Responses[Δ]

44% White

24% Multi-racial

19% Black

8% American Indian or Alaskan Native

Ethnicity

43% Latinx/ Hispanic

Subpopulation* Data[Φ]

Chronically Homeless | 2,470 Individuals



Veterans | 653 Individuals



Families | 269 Familes with 921 Members



Unaccompanied Youth & Young Adults | 1,876 Individuals



Current Accomodation

34% Outdoors/ Streets/Parks/ Encampments

22% Shelter

18% Vehicle

13% Structure not Meant for Habitation

13% Other

Primary Event or Condition That Led to Homelessness+

Top 6 Responses∆

30% Lost Job

22% Alcohol or Drug Use

15% Divorce/ Seperation/ Breakup

14% Eviction

13% Argument with Family/Friend

11% Incarceration

First Episode of Homelessess

36% of survey respondents indicated their current episode of homelessness was their first.

Interest in Permanent Housing

89% of survey respondents said yes when asked if they would accept affordable permanent housing if it became available soon.

Obstacles to Permanent Housing+

Top 4 Responses∆

66% Couldn't Afford Rent

56% No Job/ Income

40% No Housing Available

35% No Money for Moving Costs

Duration of Current Episode of Homelessness

6% 30 Days or Less

27% 1-11 Months

67% 1 Year or More

Self Reported Health+

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

42% Psychiatric/ Emotional Conditions

35% Alcohol & Drug Use

33% Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

24% Chronic Health Problems

24% Physical Disability

10% Traumatic Brain Injury

2% HIV/ AIDS Related Illness

Disabling Conditions

45% 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 stable housing.

Services and Assistance

70% of survey respondents reported receiving benefits.

Reasons for Not Receiving Any Government Assistance+

Top 6 Responses∆

37% Don't Want Government Assistance

26% Don't Think I'm Eligible

23% No Permanent Address

22% No ID

14% Never Applied

8% Benefits Were Cut Off

Services Currently Accessing+

Top 6 Responses∆

73% Meal Services

36% Bus Passes

25% Community Drop-In Center

13% Religious Based Services

12% Outreach Services

11% Job/ Employment Services

*Subpopulation Definitions

Chronically Homeless

An individual with one or more disabling conditions or a family with a head of household with a disabling condition 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.

Veterans

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.

Families

A household with at least one adult member (persons 18 or older) and at least one child member (persons under 18).

Unaccompanied Youth & Young Adults

Youth under the age of 18 and young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 years old (TAY) who are experiencing homelessness and living without a parent or legal guardian.

+ Multiple response question, results may not add up to 100%.

∆ Only displaying top responses, all response data will be available in full report.

Φ Sourced from census data rather than survey data.

Note: Some percentages have been rounded so total percentage will equal 100%.

The complete comprehensive report includes a more detailed profile of the characteristics of those experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County is available here: https://bit.ly/2MmRg3j

Source: Applied Survey Research, 2019, Santa Clara County Homeless Census & Survey, Watsonville, CA.

Point-In-Time Census

The 2019 Santa Clara County Point-in-Time Homeless Census represents a complete enumeration of all sheltered and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness. It consisted of the following primary components:

- **General Street Count:** A morning count of unsheltered homeless individuals and families on January 29-30, 2019. This included those sleeping outdoors on the street; at bus and train stations; in parks, tents, and other make-shift shelters; and in vehicles and abandoned properties.
- **General Shelter Count:** A nighttime count of homeless individuals and families staying at publicly and privately operated shelters on January 29, 2019. This included those who occupied emergency shelters, transitional housing, and safe havens.

The Point-in-Time Census also included the following supplemental components:

- **Targeted Street Count of Youth and Young Adults:** An afternoon count of unsheltered unaccompanied youth and young adults 18-25 years old on January 29, 2019.
- **Targeted COE Street Count of K-12 Students and Their Families**: A count of unsheltered homeless students and their families reported by the Santa Clara County Office of Education and their participating school districts for the night of January 29, 2019.
- **Homeless Survey:** An in-person interview of sheltered and unsheltered individuals conducted by peer surveyors in the weeks following the general street count. Data from the survey were used to refine the Point-in-Time Census estimates.

This section of the report provides a summary of the results of the Point-in-Time Census. For comparison, results from prior years are provided in order to better understand the shifting dynamics of homelessness over time.

For more information regarding the research methodology, please see *Appendix A: Methodology*.

NUMBER AND CHARACTERISTICS OF HOMELESS PERSONS

The Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey found a total of 9,706 persons experiencing homelessness on January 29-30, 2019, a 31% increase from 2017 and the highest the number that has been seen in over a decade. There were more homeless individuals who identified as male (62%) than female (36%), and as White (44%) and Black/African American (19%) than other races. Black/African American individuals experiencing homelessness were represented in the overall population at a much greater rate than in the general population in Santa Clara County (19% vs 3%). Nearly half (43%) indicated that they were of Hispanic/Latinx origin, which was much higher than the general population (26%).

FIGURE 1. PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY

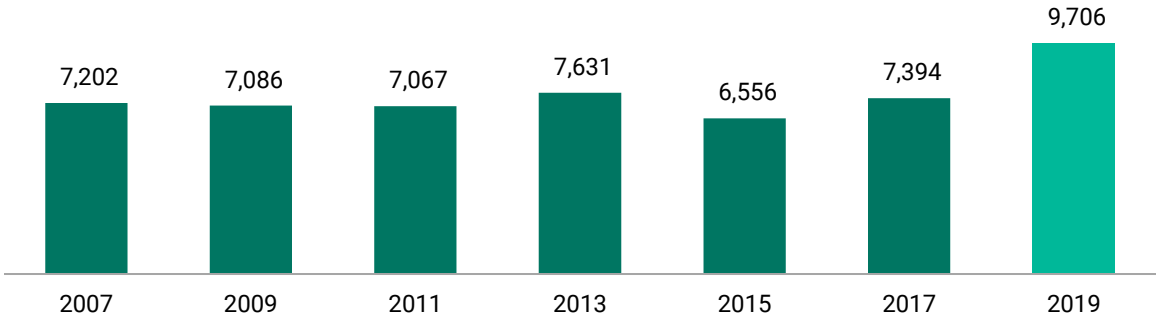
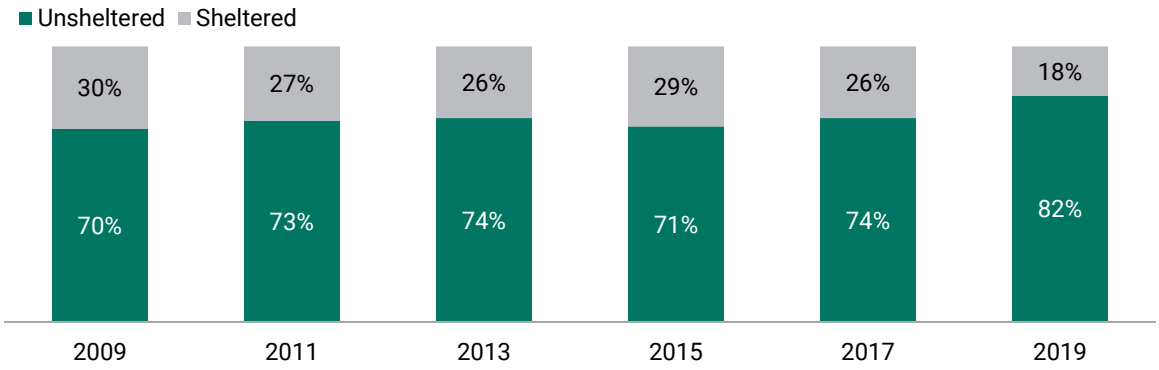


FIGURE 2. PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY SHELTER STATUS



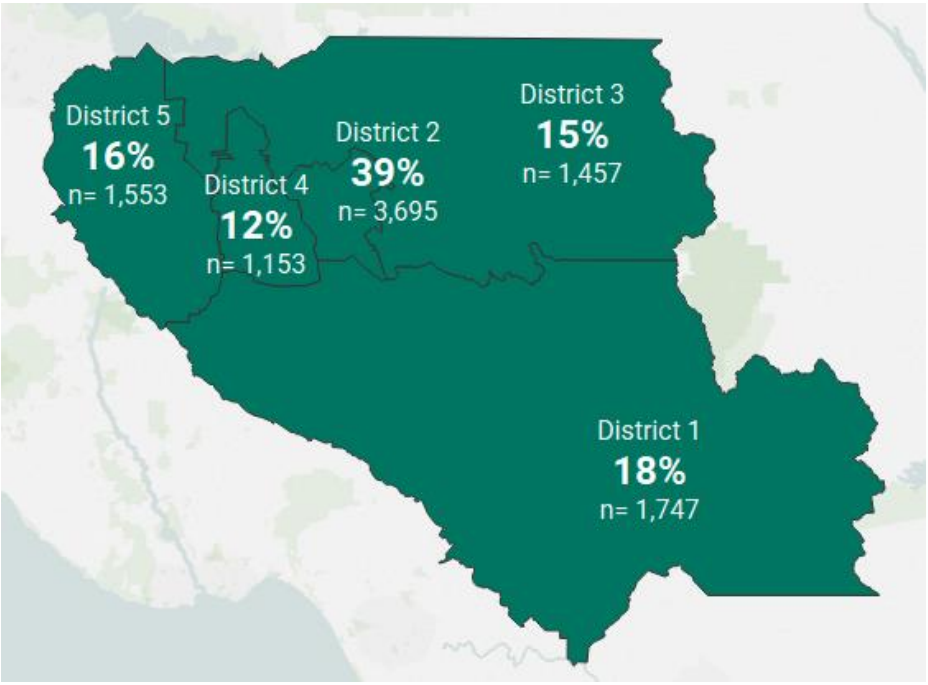
STATUS	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	'17-'19 % CHANGE
Sheltered	2,103	1,898	1,957	1,929	1,946	1,784	-8%
Unsheltered	4,983	5,169	5,674	4,627	5,448	7,922	45%
Total	**7,086**	**7,067**	**7,631**	**6,556**	**7,394**	**9,706**	**31%**

FIGURE 3. HOMELESS POPULATION BY JURISDICTION AND SHELTER STATUS

JURISDICTION	UNSHELTERED		SHELTERED		TOTAL		'17-'19 % CHANGE
	2017	2019	2017	2019	2017	2019	
Total Incorporated	5,259	7,652	1,775	1,594	7,034	9,246	31%
City of Campbell	94	74	0	0	94	74	-21%
City of Cupertino	127	159	0	0	127	159	25%
City of Gilroy	295	345	427	359	722	704	-2%
City of Los Altos	6	76	0	0	6	76	*
City of Los Altos Hills	0	2	0	0	0	2	*
Town of Los Gatos	52	16	0	0	52	16	*
City of Milpitas	66	125	0	0	66	125	89%
City of Monte Sereno	0	0	0	0	0	0	*
City of Morgan Hill	388	114	0	0	388	114	-71%
City of Mountain View	411	574	5	32	416	606	46%
City of Palo Alto	256	299	20	14	276	313	13%
City of San José	3,231	5,117	1,119	980	4,350	6,097	41%
City of Santa Clara	199	264	73	62	272	326	20%
City of Saratoga	12	10	0	0	12	10	*
City of Sunnyvale	122	477	131	147	253	624	147%
Total Unincorporated	189	270	113	89	302	359	19%
Confidential Locations	NA	NA	58	101	58	101	74%
Total	**5,448**	**7,922**	**1,946**	**1,784**	**7,394**	**9,706**	**31%**

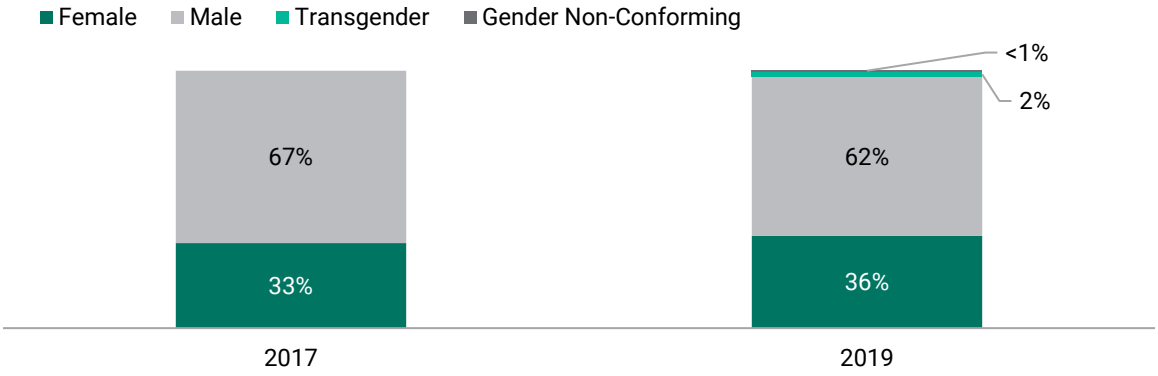
**Note: Percentage change was not calculated for rows with less than 50 individuals.*

FIGURE 4. HOMELESS POPULATION BY COUNTY SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT



Note: The 101 individuals in confidential locations are not displayed on the map of county districts.

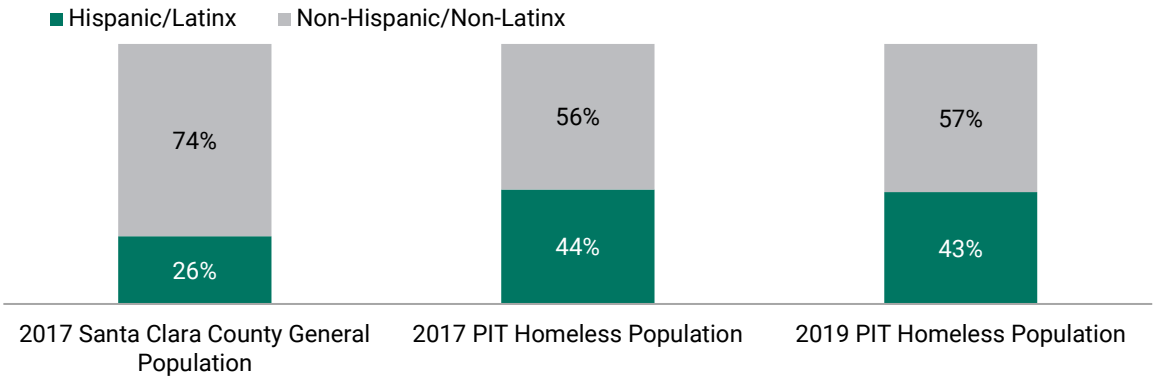
FIGURE 5. HOMELESS POPULATION BY GENDER



	UNSHELTERED		SHELTERED		TOTAL		'17-'19 % CHANGE
	2017	2019	2017	2019	2017	2019	
Female	1,672	2,778	732	705	2,404	3,483	45%
Male	3,763	4,943	1,210	1,065	4,973	6,008	21%
Transgender	13	161	4	11	17	172	*
Gender Non-Conforming (Don't Identify as Male, Female, or Transgender)	0	40	0	3	0	43	*
Total	**5,448**	**7,922**	**1,946**	**1,784**	**7,394**	**9,706**	**31%**

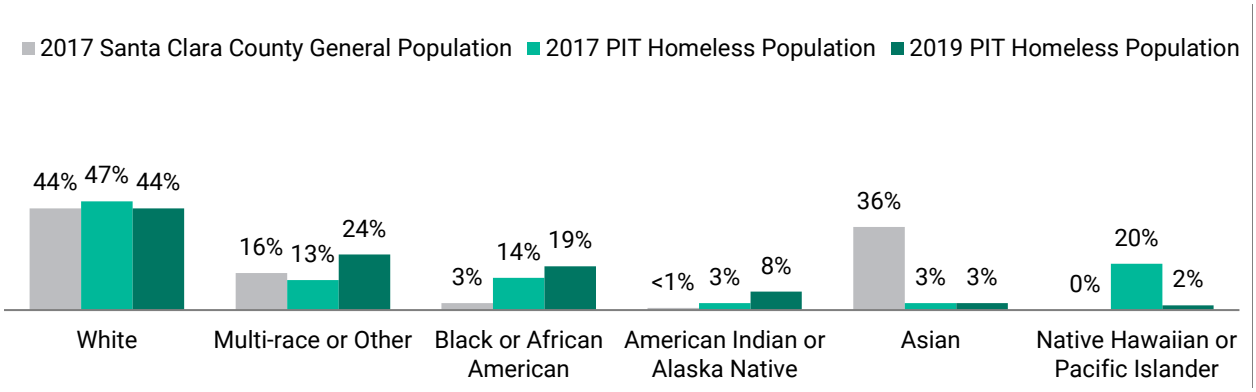
**Note: Percentage change was not calculated for rows with less than 50 individuals.*

FIGURE 6. HOMELESS POPULATION BY HISPANIC OR LATINX ORIGIN



Santa Clara County General Population: 2017 N=1,938,153; PIT Homeless Population: 2017 N=7,394; 2019 N=9,706

FIGURE 7. HOMELESS POPULATION BY RACE



Santa Clara County General Population: 2017 N=1,938,153; PIT Homeless Population: 2017 N=7,394; 2019 N=9,706

Homeless Survey Findings

This section provides an overview of the findings generated from the Homeless Survey component. In the weeks following the Point-in-Time Count, an in-depth survey was administered to collect basic demographic details as well as information on service needs and utilization. Surveys were administered between January 29 and February 28, 2019 to a randomized sample of individuals and families currently experiencing homelessness. A survey quota was developed based on location and shelter status to help ensure a greater random distribution of survey respondents. A more precise quota representing precise sampling protocols was beyond the scope of this effort. The sampling plan employed is HUD approved and consistent with previous County PIT count efforts.

The Homeless Survey effort resulted in 1,359 unique, complete, and valid surveys. Based on a Point-in-Time Count of 9,706 homeless persons, with a randomized survey sampling process, these surveys represent a confidence interval of +/-2.5% with a 95% confidence level when generalizing the results of the survey to the entire Point-in-Time homeless population in Santa Clara County. In other words, if the survey were conducted again, we can be 95% certain that the results would be within 2.5% points of the current results.

In order to respect respondent privacy and to ensure the safety and comfort of those who participated, respondents were not required to complete all survey questions. Therefore, any missing values were intentionally omitted from the survey results and the total number of respondents for each question will not always equal the total number of surveys conducted.

For more information regarding the research methodology, please see *Appendix A: Methodology*.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the experiences of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County, respondents were asked basic demographic questions including age, gender, sexual orientation, and race/ethnicity.

AGE

Sixteen percent (16%) of survey respondents were under the age of 25 at the time of the 2019 survey. Twenty-two percent (22%) were between the ages of 25 and 40, and 62% were 41 years or older.

FIGURE 8. RESPONDENTS BY AGE

AGE GROUP	2015	2017	2019
Less than 18 Years	1%	<1%	1%
18-24 Years	12%	7%	15%
25-30 Years	7%	7%	6%
31-40 Years	20%	16%	16%
41-50 Years	25%	27%	22%
51-60 Years	26%	34%	28%
61 Years or More	9%	9%	12%

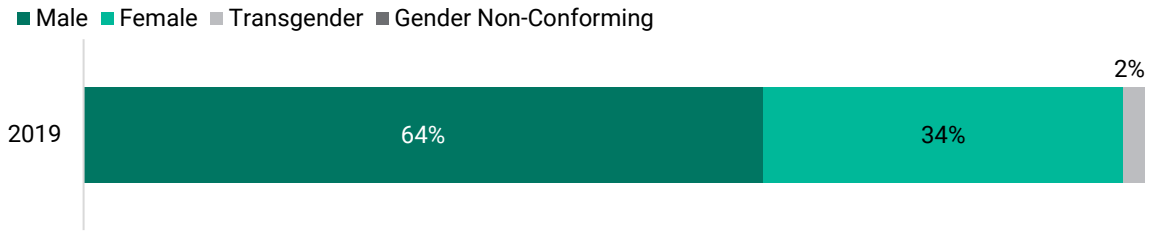
2015 N=952; 2017 N=587; 2019 N=1,359

GENDER

Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents (64%) identified as male, 34% identified as female, and 2% identified as transgender or gender non-conforming (i.e., didn't identify as male, female or transgender).

Among female respondents, 3% indicated that they were currently pregnant.

FIGURE 9. RESPONDENTS BY GENDER



2019 N=1,344

LGBTQ+ IDENTITY

While there are limited data available on the number of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) individuals experiencing homelessness, nationwide data available suggest LGBTQ+ individuals experience homelessness at higher rates, especially those under the age of 25. Thirteen percent (13%) of homeless survey respondents identified as LGBTQ+ in 2019. Of those respondents, nearly half (48%) identified as bisexual, 19% identified as lesbian, and 17% identified as gay.

FIGURE 10. DETAIL OF RESPONDENTS WITH LGBTQ+ IDENTITY

LGBTQ+ IDENTITY	2017	2019
Gay	7%	17%
Lesbian	9%	19%
Bisexual	76%	48%
Transgender	7%	13%
Queer	1%	3%
Other	5%	14%

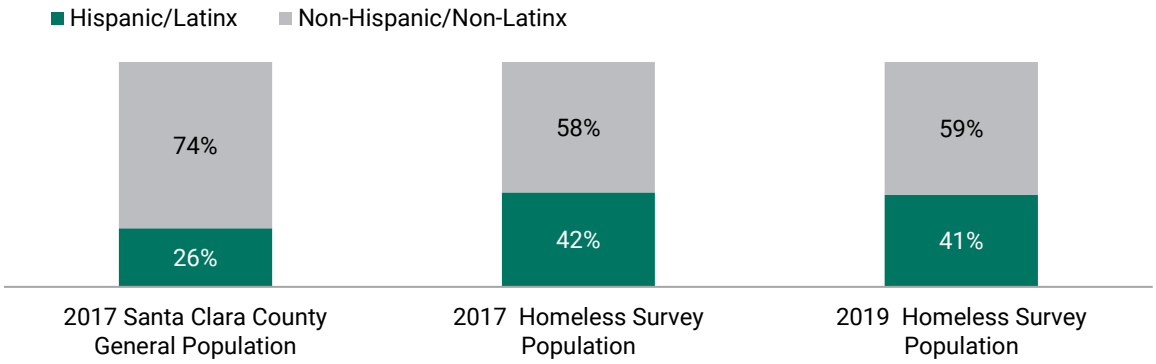
2017 N=172 respondents offering 180 responses; 2019 N=175 respondents offering 198 responses
Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100.

RACE/ETHNICITY

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) gathers data on race and ethnicity in two separate questions, similar to the U.S. Census. When asked if they identified as Hispanic or Latinx, more than half (59%) of homeless survey respondents reported they did not identify as Hispanic or Latinx in 2019. In comparison to the general population of Santa Clara County, a higher percentage of homeless survey respondents identified as Hispanic or Latinx (41% compared to 26%).

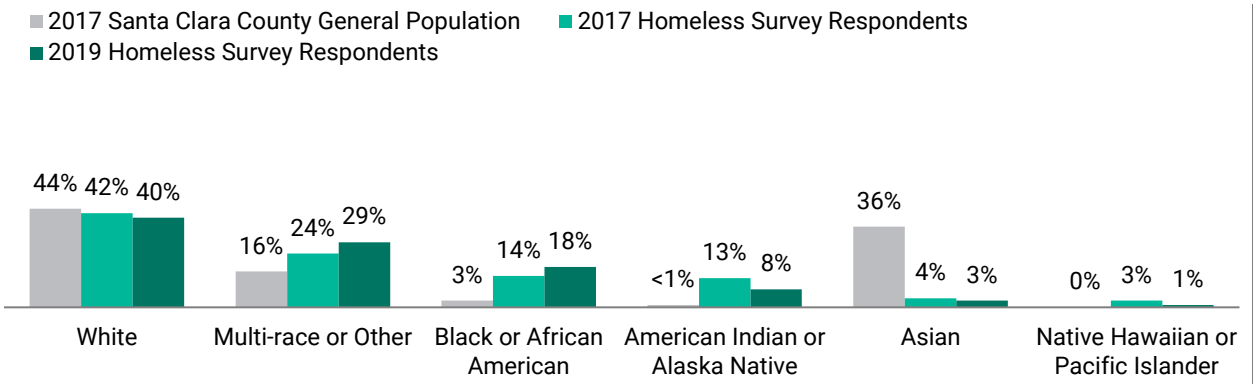
In regard to racial identity, differences between the general population and those experiencing homelessness were more pronounced. A much higher proportion of homeless survey respondents identified as Black or African-American than in the general population (18% compared to 3%), whereas a relatively small percentage of the homeless survey population identified as Asian (3% compared to 36%).

FIGURE 11. RESPONDENTS BY HISPANIC OR LATINX ORIGIN



Santa Clara County General Population: 2017 N=1,938,153
Homeless Survey Population: 2017 N=577; 2019 N=1,285

FIGURE 12. RESPONDENTS BY RACE

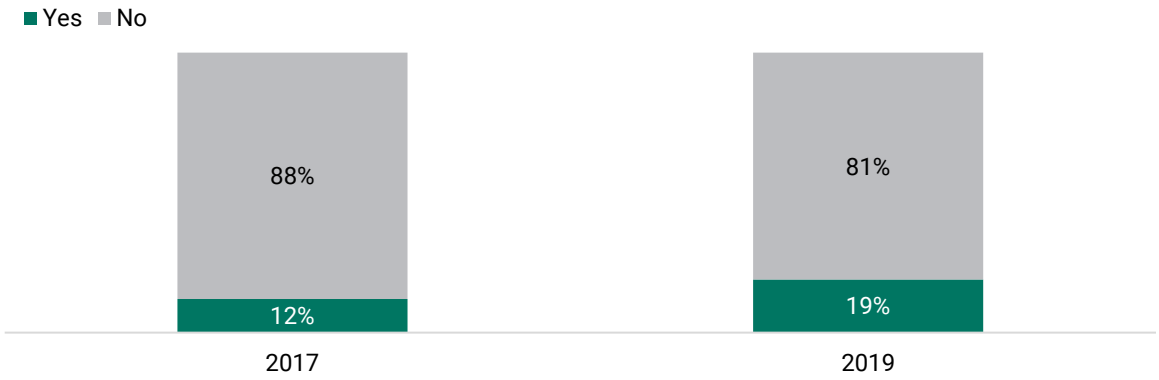


Santa Clara County General Population: 2017 N=1,938,153
Homeless Survey Population: 2017 N=521; 2019 N=1,246

HISTORY OF FOSTER CARE

Nearly one in five (19%) respondents reported a history of foster care, higher than in 2017 (12%).

FIGURE 13. HISTORY OF FOSTER CARE



2017 N= 566; 2019 N=1,314

LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS

Where individuals lived prior to experiencing homelessness and where they have lived since impact the way they seek services, as well as their ability to access support from friends or family. Previous circumstances can also point to gaps in the system of care and to opportunities for systemic improvement and homelessness prevention.

Survey respondents reported many different living accommodations prior to becoming homeless, although most lived in or around Santa Clara County with friends or family, or on their own in a home or apartment.

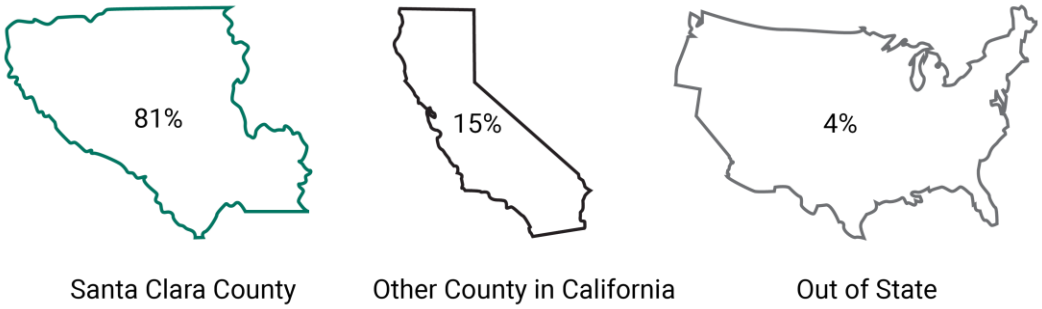
PLACE OF RESIDENCE

Knowing where individuals were living prior to their housing loss informs discussions regarding how much of the homeless population is local to the region. This information can also influence changes to available safety net systems if the Continuum of Care finds increasing numbers of individuals living locally before experiencing homelessness.

The majority (81%) of respondents reported living in Santa Clara County at the most recent time they became homeless, similar to 2017 (83%). More than half of survey respondents (57%) had lived in Santa Clara County for 10 or more years, while 14% had lived in Santa Clara for less than one year.

Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents reported they were living in another county in California, and 4% reported they were living out of state at the most recent time they became homeless.

FIGURE 14. PLACE OF RESIDENCE AT THE MOST RECENT TIME EXPERIENCING HOMELESS



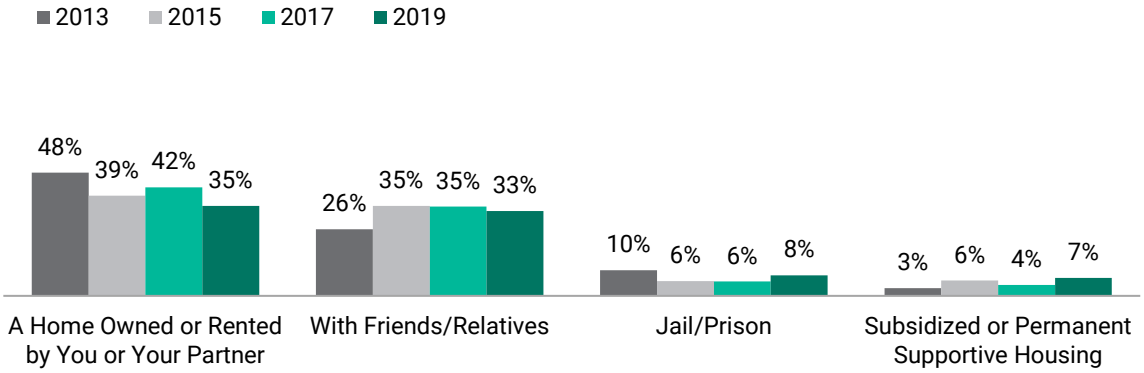
2019 N=1,326

PRIOR LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Similar to previous place of residence, the type of living arrangements maintained by individuals and families before experiencing homelessness can influence what types of homeless prevention services might be offered to help individuals maintain their housing.

Just over one-third (35%) of survey respondents reported living in a home owned or rented by them or their partner prior to becoming homeless, lower than reported in 2017 (42%). Thirty-three percent (33%) reported they were living with friends or relatives, 8% reported they were in jail or prison, and 7% were staying in subsidized housing or permanent supportive housing.

FIGURE 15. LIVING ARRANGEMENTS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE BECOMING HOMELESS (TOP RESPONSES IN 2019)



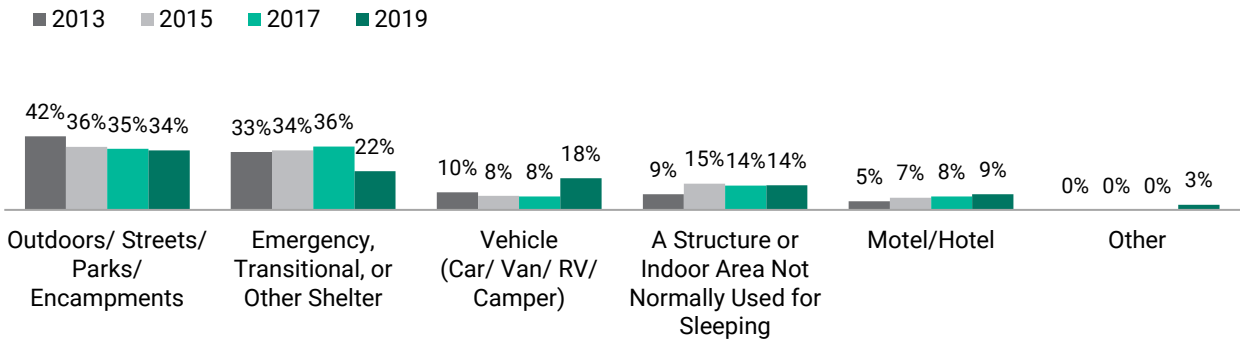
2013 N=811; 2015 N=886; 2017 N=575; 2019 N=1,311

CURRENT LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

While basic information on where individuals were observed during the general street count effort was collected, survey respondents were still asked about their usual nighttime accommodations. Understanding the types of places individuals experiencing homelessness are sleeping can help inform local outreach efforts.

One-third (34%) of survey respondents reported currently living outdoors, either on the streets, in parks, or in encampment areas. Twenty-two percent (22%) reported currently staying in a shelter or transitional housing, and 18% reported staying in a vehicle which is a substantial increase from previous years. According to census results from this, and past counts, the number of individuals staying in vehicles (cars, RVs, and vans) has increased 146% since 2015, reaching 3,655 individuals in 2019.

FIGURE 16. CURRENT LIVING ARRANGEMENTS



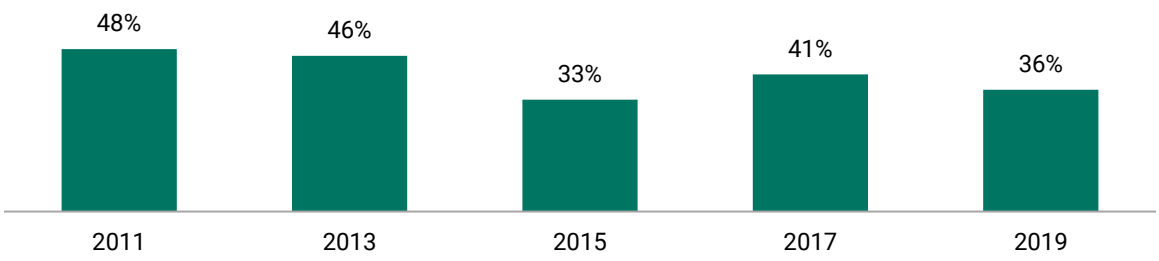
2013 N=850; 2015 N=926; 2017 N=587; 2019 N=1,359
Note: 2013 response option specified that motel/hotel was paid for by an agency.

DURATION AND RECURRENCE OF HOMELESSNESS

Unstable living conditions, poverty, housing scarcity, high cost of living, low wages, and many other issues often lead to individuals cycling in and out of homelessness. For many, the experience of homelessness is part of a long and recurring history of housing instability. Local data and reporting from outside the Census and Survey suggest that Santa Clara County sees large numbers of individuals experiencing first time homelessness. Of those surveyed in 2019, 36% reported that their current episode of homelessness was their first time experiencing homelessness. Conversely, 64% reported they had experienced homelessness previously.

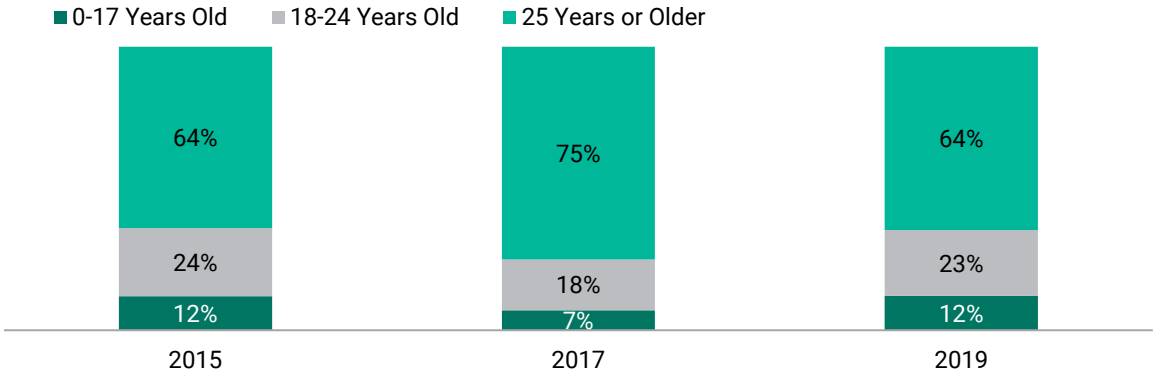
Respondents were also asked how old they were when they experienced homelessness for the first time. In response, 12% of respondents reported that they were under the age of 18, 23% reported they were between the ages of 18 and 24, and 64% reported they were 25 years or older showing a large increase in the number of first time youth and young adults experiencing homelessness versus 2017.

FIGURE 17. CURRENT EPISODE IS THE FIRST TIME EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS



2011 N=1,009; 2013 N=855; 2015 N=937; 2017 N=585; 2019 N=1,304

FIGURE 18. AGE WHEN EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS FOR THE FIRST TIME



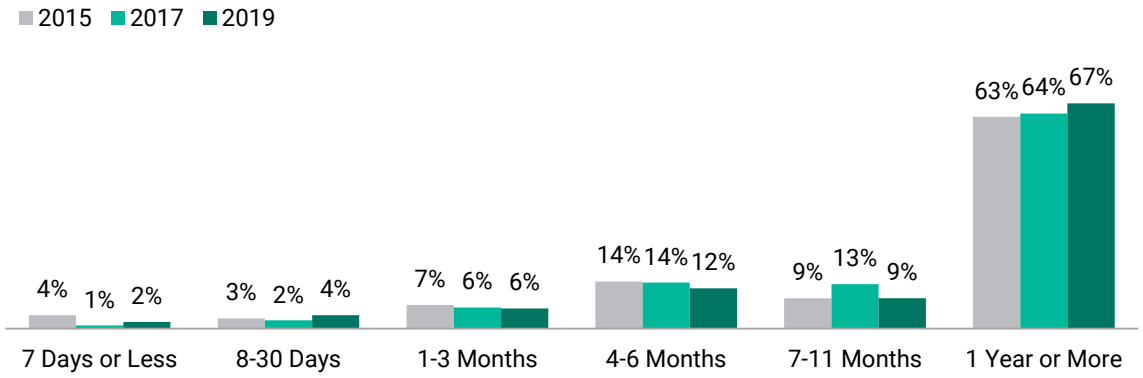
2015 N=913; 2017 N=557; 2019 N=1,325

Note: After a large increase in the youth and young adult population in 2017, there was an increased number of surveys targeted at the youth and young adult population in 2019. This may have led to the increase in numbers of individuals experiencing homelessness for the first time before turning 25.

DURATION OF HOMELESSNESS

When asked about the duration of their current episode of homelessness, two-thirds (67%) of survey respondents reported they had been homeless for a year or more. These findings are similar to 2017, when 64% of respondents reported they had been homeless for a year or more.

FIGURE 19. LENGTH OF CURRENT EPISODE OF HOMELESSNESS



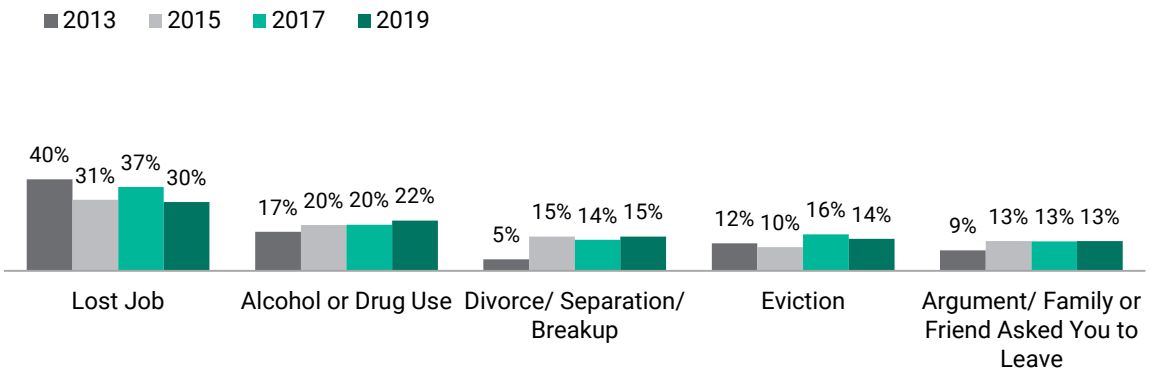
2013 N=836; 2015 N=911; 2017 N=585; 2019 N=1,335

PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS

The primary cause of an individual's inability to obtain or retain housing can be difficult to pinpoint, as it is often the result of multiple inter-related causes. An inability to secure adequate housing can also lead to an inability to address other basic needs, such as healthcare and adequate nutrition.

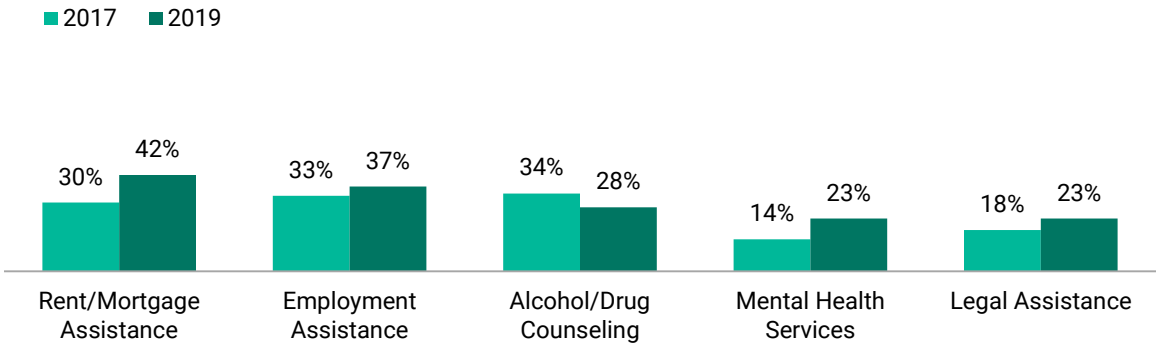
Thirty percent (30%) of survey respondents reported job loss as the primary cause of their homelessness, while 22% cited alcohol or drug use, 15% cited a divorce/separation, 14% cited eviction, and 13% cited an argument with—or being asked to leave by—a family member or friend. When asked what might have prevented their homelessness, survey respondents most commonly reported rent or mortgage assistance (42% and an increase from 30% in 2017), followed by employment assistance (37%).

FIGURE 20. PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP RESPONSES IN 2019)



2013 N=818 respondents offering 1,029 responses; 2015 N=920 respondents offering 1,326 responses; 2017 N=580 respondents offering 793 responses; 2019 N=1,339 respondents offering 1,910 responses

FIGURE 21. WHAT MAY HAVE PREVENTED HOMELESSNESS (TOP RESPONSES IN 2019)



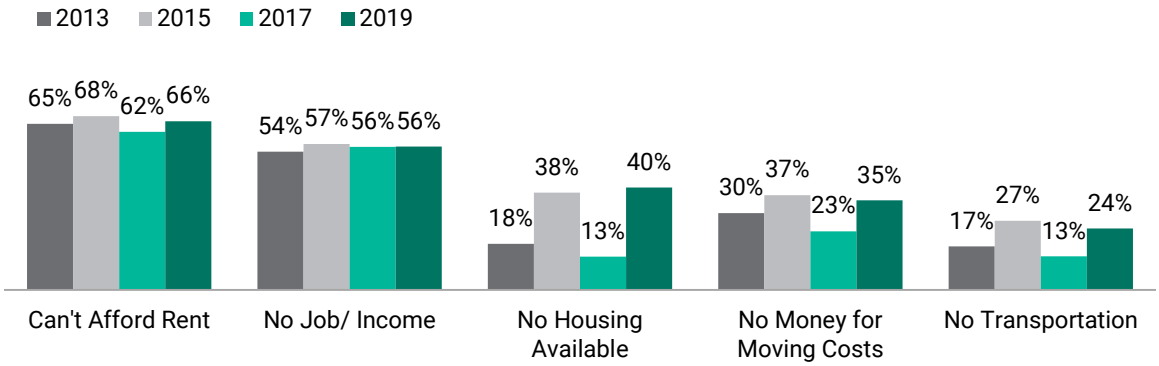
2017 N=567 respondents offering 943 responses; 2019 N=1,321 respondents offering 3,003responses

OBSTACLES TO OBTAINING PERMANENT HOUSING

Many individuals experiencing homelessness face significant barriers to obtaining permanent housing. These barriers can range from housing affordability and availability to accessing the economic and social supports (e.g., increased income, rental assistance, and case management) needed to secure and maintain permanent housing.

When asked what prevented them from obtaining housing, the most common response was "can't afford rent," reported by 66% of survey respondents. This was followed by 56% who reported a lack of job or income, 40% who reported a lack of housing availability (a large increase from 13% in 2017), and 35% who said that they had no money for moving costs.

FIGURE 22. OBSTACLES TO OBTAINING PERMANENT HOUSING (TOP RESPONSES IN 2019)



2013 N=774 respondents offering 1,831 responses; 2015 N=896 respondents offering 3,012 responses; 2017 N=571 respondents offering 1,382; 2019 N=1,328 respondents offering 4,186 responses.
Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100.

SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE

The County of Santa Clara provides services and assistance to those currently experiencing homelessness through federal, state, and local programs. Government assistance and homeless services work to enable individuals and families to obtain income and support. However, many individuals and families do not apply for services, as many believe that they are ineligible for assistance. Connecting homeless individuals and families to these support services creates a bridge to mainstream support services and can prevent future housing instability.

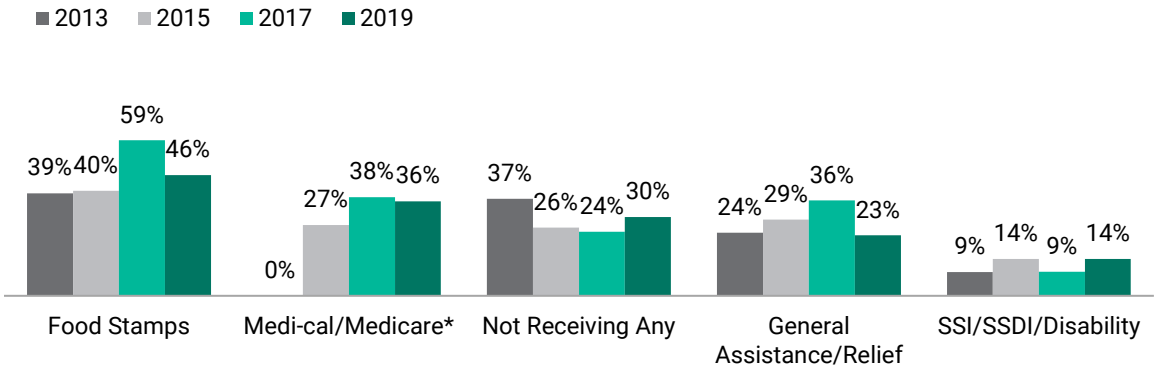
GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

There are various forms of government assistance available to individuals experiencing homelessness. However, usage of these supports is impacted by knowledge of services available, understanding of eligibility requirements, and perceived stigma of receiving governmental assistance.

The majority (70%) of survey respondents reported in 2019 that they were receiving some form of government assistance, a slight decrease from 76% in 2017. When comparing responses to 2017, there was a slight increase in persons not receiving any assistance and a smaller percentage of individuals experiencing homelessness were using food stamps (46%, down from 59%) and General Assistance/Relief (23%, down from 36% in 2017).

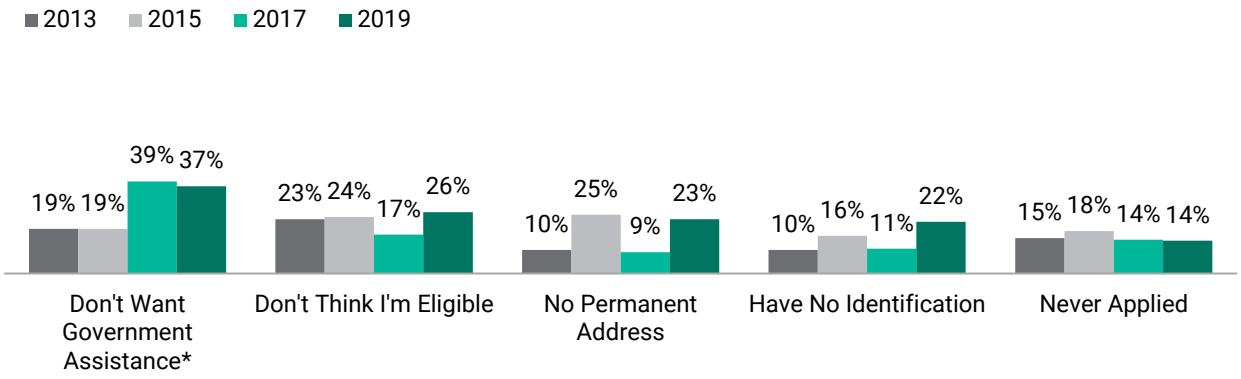
Of those who reported they were not receiving any form of government support, the greatest percentage reported they did not want government assistance (37%). Twenty-six percent (26%) did not think they were eligible. Lack of permanent address and ID both saw increases from 2017, rising to nearly a quarter of respondents, and present an opportunity for support for those experiencing homelessness who would like to receive government services.

FIGURE 23. RECEIPT OF GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE (TOP RESPONSES IN 2019)



2013 N=811 respondents offering 1,004 responses; 2015 N=883 respondents offering 1,363 responses; 2017 N=557 respondents offering 1,011 responses; 2019 N=1,274 respondents offering 2,065 responses
Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100.
** Medi-Cal/Medicare was added as a response option in 2015.*

FIGURE 24. REASONS NOT RECEIVING GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE (TOP RESPONSES IN 2019)



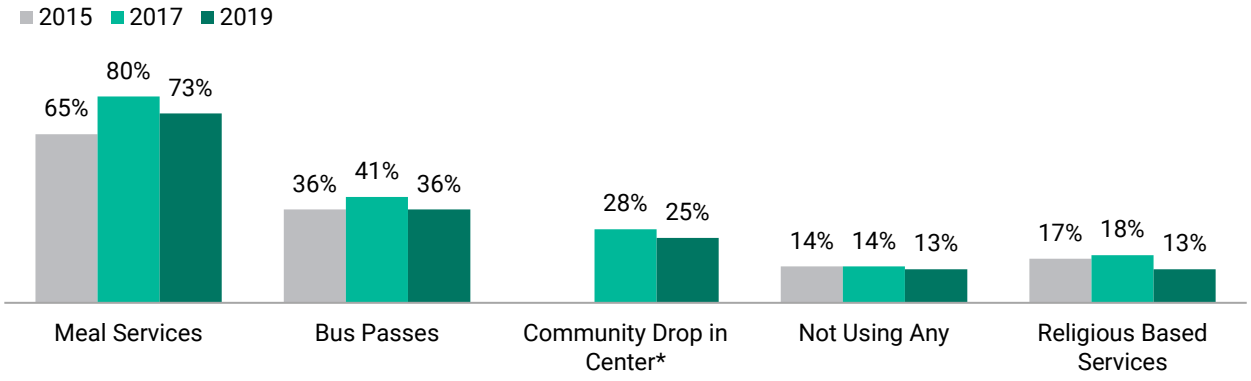
2013 N=289 respondents offering 382 responses; 2015 N=206 respondents offering 335 responses; 2017 N=133 respondents offering 164; 2019 N=394 respondents offering 655 responses.
Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100.
**In 2013 the response option changed from "do not need" to "do not want," which was an option in 2011.*

SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

In addition to government assistance, there are numerous community-based services and programs made available to individuals experiencing homelessness. These services range from day shelters and meal programs to job training and healthcare.

A large majority (87%) of survey respondents in 2019 reported they were accessing other services and assistance beyond government assistance, a higher percentage than in 2015 and 2017. The most frequently cited types of assistance respondents reported accessing were meal services (73%), bus passes (36%), and community drop in centers (25%).

FIGURE 25. RECEIPT OF OTHER SERVICES OR ASSISTANCE (TOP RESPONSES IN 2019)



2015 N=875 respondents offering 1,960 responses; 2017 N=570 respondents offering 1,247 responses; 2019 N=1,310 respondents offering 2,705 responses
Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100.
*Note: * Community drop in center response were added in 2017.*

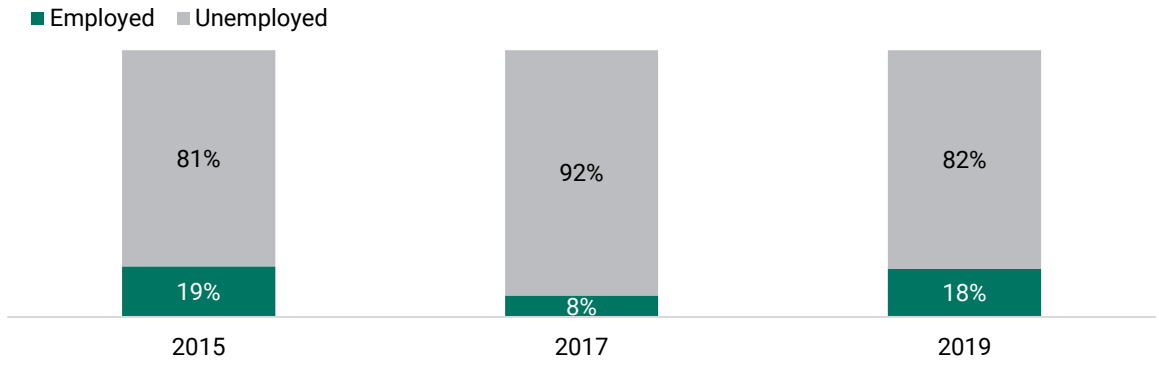
EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

The unemployment rate in Santa Clara County in January 2019 was at 2.9%, slightly down from 3.6% in January 2017.[1] It is important to recognize that the unemployment rate represents only those who are unemployed and actively seeking employment. It does not represent all joblessness, nor does it address the types of available employment.

The unemployment rate among homeless survey respondents was 82%, a decrease from 92% in 2017. Forty-seven percent (47%) of unemployed respondents indicated that they were currently looking for work, 27% indicated they were not, and 26% indicated they were currently unable to work.

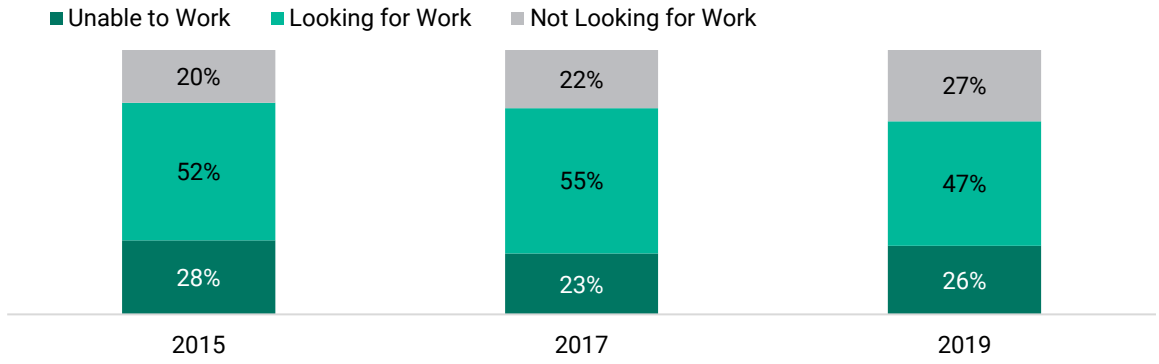
While the majority (82%) of survey respondents reported being unemployed, a number reported having part-time or seasonal/sporadic employment (13%) and even full-time employment (6%). Despite some income, data suggest that employment and income were not enough to meet basic needs. For example, of the employed homeless survey respondents, two-thirds (65%) were making less than $1,100 monthly, and unsurprisingly, even more unemployed survey respondents (91%) were making the same amount monthly. Typically, income for unemployed homeless individuals comes from government benefits, recycling, and panhandling.

FIGURE 26. EMPLOYMENT STATUS



2015 N=950; 2017 N=560; 2019 N=1,312

FIGURE 27. UNEMPLOYED BY WORK STATUS



2015 N=950; 2017 N=560; 2019 N=1,312

[1]State of California Employment Development Department. (2019). Unemployment Rates (Labor Force). Retrieved from http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov.

FIGURE 28. MONTHLY INCOME BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

	EMPLOYED		UNEMPLOYED	
	2017	2019	2017	2019
Less Than $750	61%	40%	85%	75%
$750-$1,099	14%	25%	10%	16%
$1,100-$1,499	14%	14%	4%	7%
$1,500 or More	12%	21%	2%	2%

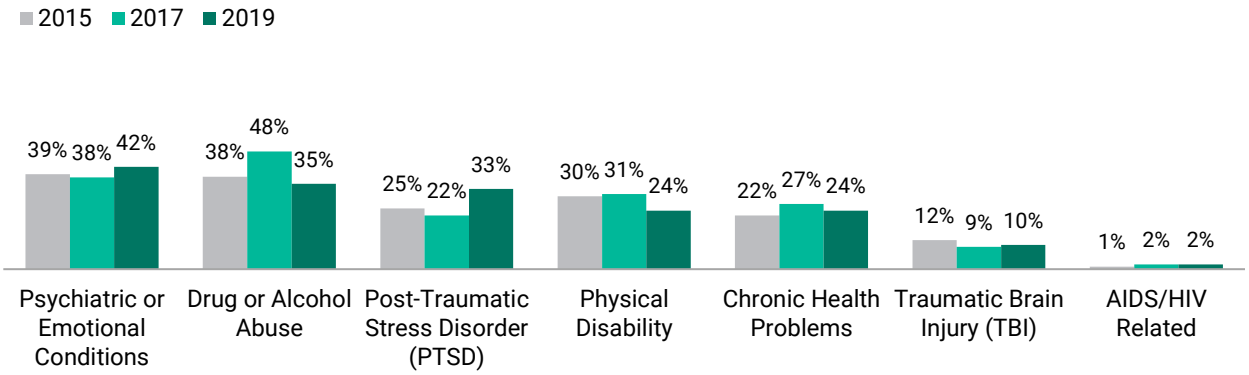
2017 N=553; 2019 N=1,297
Note: Respondents were challenged by this income question and the low response for employed income is subject to a high margin of error.

HEALTH

Without regular access to healthcare and without 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.[2]

The top health conditions survey respondents reported experiencing in 2019 were: a psychiatric or emotional condition, such as depression and schizophrenia (42%); drug/alcohol abuse (35%), and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD (33%).

FIGURE 29. HEALTH CONDITIONS



2015 N=880-902; 2017 N=548-570; 2019 N=1,267-1,292.

[2] Sharon A. Salit, M. E. (1998). Hospitalization Costs Associated with Homelessness in New York City. New England Journal of Medicine, 338, 1734-1740.

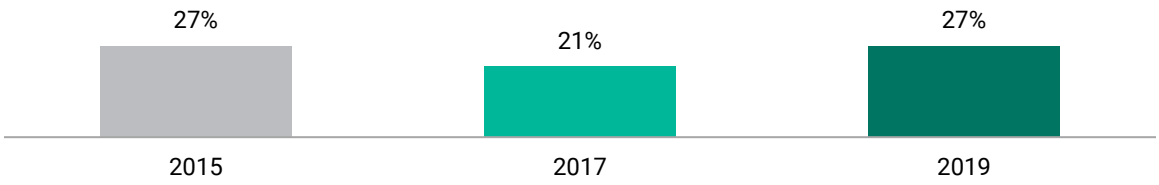
DOMESTIC/PARTNER VIOLENCE OR ABUSE

Histories of domestic violence and partner abuse are prevalent among individuals experiencing homelessness and can be the primary cause of homelessness for many. Survivors often lack the financial resources required for housing, as their employment history or dependable income may be limited.

Six percent (6%) of all survey respondents reported currently experiencing domestic/partner violence or abuse. When asked about experiences of *ever* being physically, emotionally or sexually abused by a relative or another person they have stayed with (spouse, partner, sibling, parent) in their lifetime, 27% indicated that they had.

Domestic violence varied by gender, with 10% of female respondents reporting current experiences of domestic violence, compared to less than 4% of male respondents. Looking at domestic violence across the lifetime, 46% of female and 17% of male respondents reported previous experiences of being physically, emotionally or sexually abused by a relative or another person they had stayed with.

FIGURE 30. HISTORY OF BEING PHYSICALLY, EMOTIONALLY OR SEXUALLY ABUSED



2015N=892; 2017 N=575; 2019 N=1,359

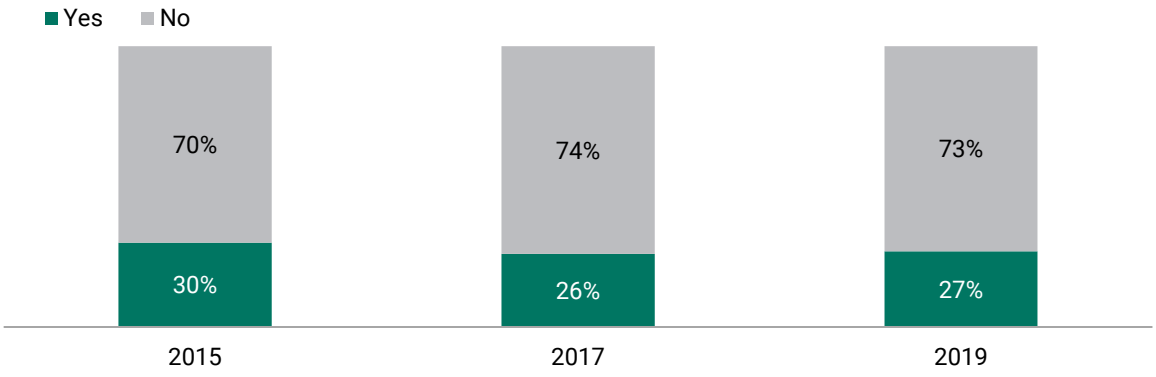
CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Homelessness and incarceration are often related. Persons without stable housing are at greater risk of criminal justice system involvement, particularly those with mental health issues, veterans, and youth and young adults. Individuals with past incarceration face significant barriers to exiting homelessness due to stigmatization and policies affecting their ability to gain employment and access housing opportunities.[3]

INCARCERATION

When asked if they had spent a night in jail or prison in the last 12 months, one in four (27%) survey respondents reported that they had, similar to 2017 findings (26%). Seventeen percent (17%) of respondents also reported being on probation or parole at the time of the survey. Thirteen percent (13%) of respondents indicated they had accessed re-entry services.

FIGURE 31. SPENT A NIGHT IN JAIL OR PRISON IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS



2015 N=903; 2017 N=573; 2019 N=1,277

[3] Greenberg, GA, Rosenheck, RA. (2008). Jail Incarceration, Homelessness, and Mental Health: A National Study. Psychiatric Services, 2008 Feb;59(2): 170-7.

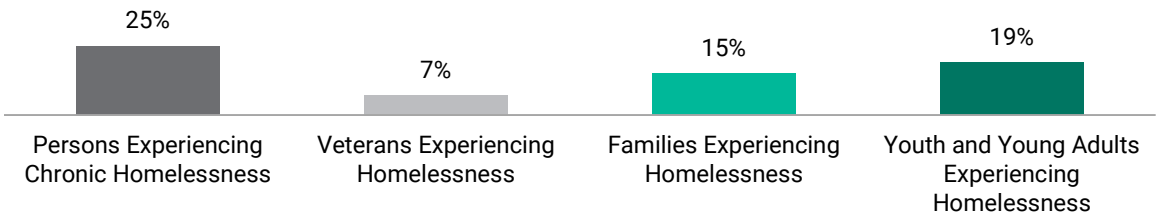
Subpopulations

Home, Together: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness outlines national objectives and evaluative measures for ending homelessness among all populations in the United States. In order to adequately address the diversity within the population experiencing homelessness, the federal government identifies four subpopulations with particular challenges or needs, including:

- Chronically homeless individuals with disabilities;
- Veterans experiencing homelessness;
- Families with children experiencing homelessness
- Youth and young adults.

These subpopulations represent important reportable indicators for measuring local progress toward ending homelessness. The following sections examine each of these four subpopulations.

FIGURE 32. SUBPOPULATIONS AS A PERCENTAGE OF OVERALL POPULATION



CHRONICALLY HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS

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 and their families. Individuals experiencing chronic homelessness were those who self-reported meeting the above conditions, as well as those who were identified during the shelter count.

The chronically homeless population represents one of the most vulnerable populations on the street; the mortality rate for those experiencing chronic homelessness is four to nine times higher than that of the general population.[4] Data from communities across the country reveal that public costs incurred by those experiencing extended periods of homelessness include emergency room visits, interactions with law enforcement, incarceration, and regular access to social supports and homeless services. These combined costs are often significantly higher than the cost of providing individuals with permanent housing and supportive services.

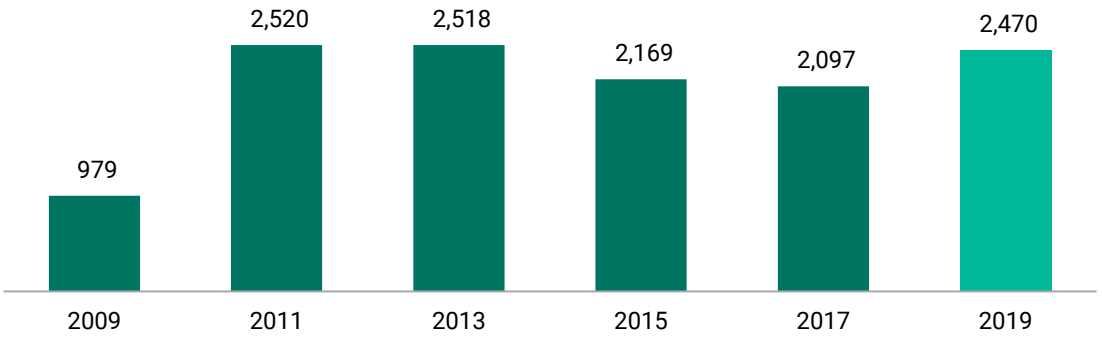
In 2017, HUD reported that 86,962 individuals, representing 24% of the overall homeless population, were experiencing chronic homelessness.[5] Chronic homelessness has been on the decline in recent years as communities across the country increase the capacity of their permanent supportive housing programs and prioritize those with the greatest barriers to housing stability.

[4] United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2010). Supplemental Document to the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness: June 2010. Retrieved 2017 from https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/BkgrdPap_ChronicHomelessness.pdf
[5] Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2017). Annual Assessment Report to Congress. Retrieved 2018 from https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2017-AHAR-Part-1.pdf

ESTIMATES OF CHRONICALLY HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS

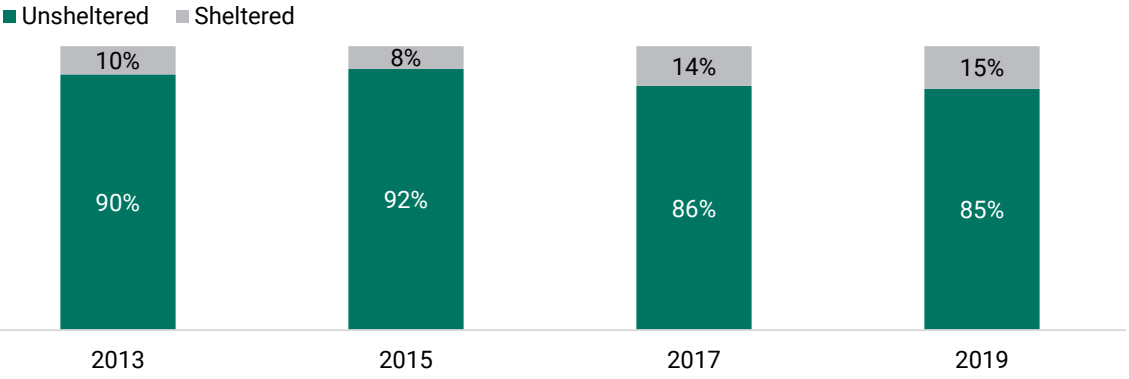
The estimate of individuals in Santa Clara County experiencing chronic homelessness had been on a steady decline since 2011, though there was an increase in 2019. There were a total of 2,470 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness in 2019, representing 25% of the overall Point-in-Time homeless population in Santa Clara County. While the overall number of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness increased in 2019, they decreased as an overall percentage of the population (down from 28% in 2017). The percentage of chronically homeless individuals who were sheltered increased from 14% to 15% between 2017 and 2019.

FIGURE 33. CHRONICALLY HOMELESS SUBPOPULATION WITH TREND



Note: 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.

FIGURE 34. CHRONICALLY HOMELESS SUBPOPULATION BY SHELTER STATUS

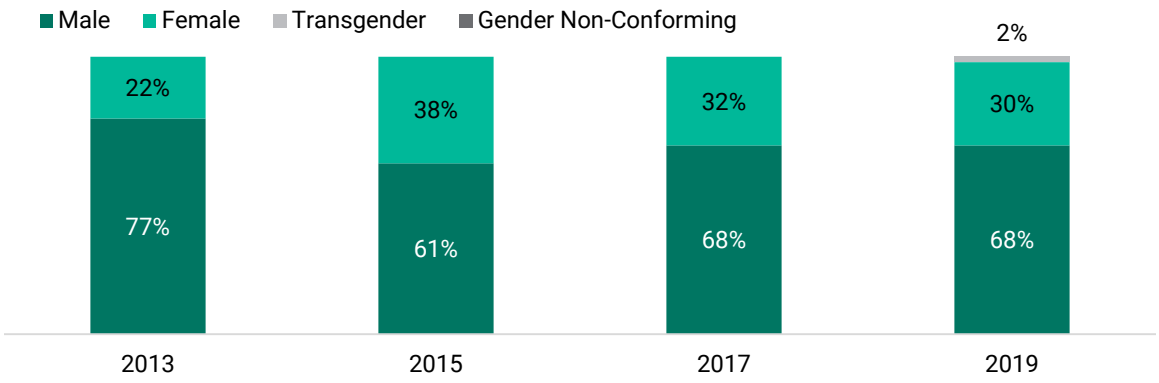


2013 N=2,518; 2015 N=2,169; 2017 N=2,097; 2019 N=2,470

DEMOGRAPHICS OF CHRONICALLY HOMELESS SURVEY RESPONDENTS

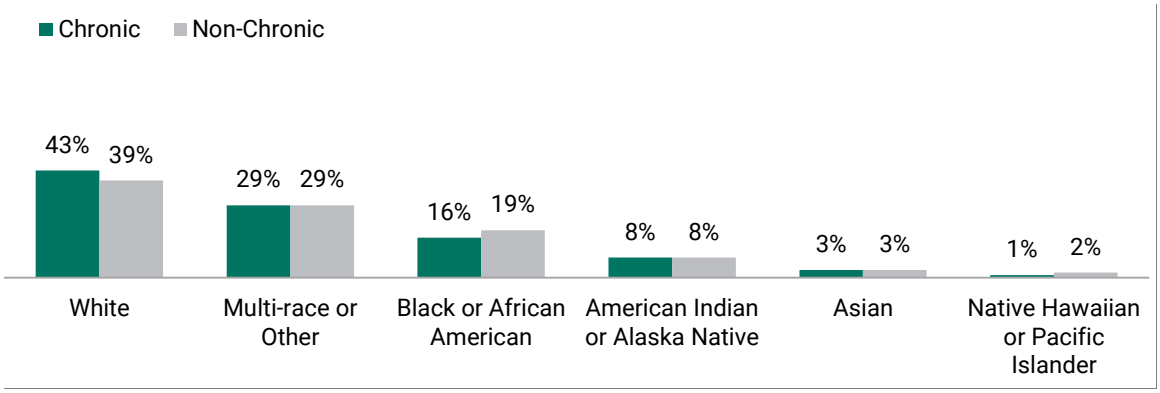
Over two-thirds (68%) of chronically homeless survey respondents identified as male, slightly higher than the non-chronically homeless population (63%). A similar percentage of chronically homeless respondents identified as Hispanic or Latinx compared to non-chronically homeless respondents (36% and 41%, respectively). Further, 14% of chronically homeless individuals were veterans.

FIGURE 35. CHRONICALLY HOMELESS SUBPOPULATION BY GENDER



2013 N=2,518; 2015 N=2,169; 2017 N=2,097; 2019 N=2,470
Note: Values less than 1% are not shown. Percentages may not add up to 100.

FIGURE 36. CHRONICALLY HOMELESS SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY RACE

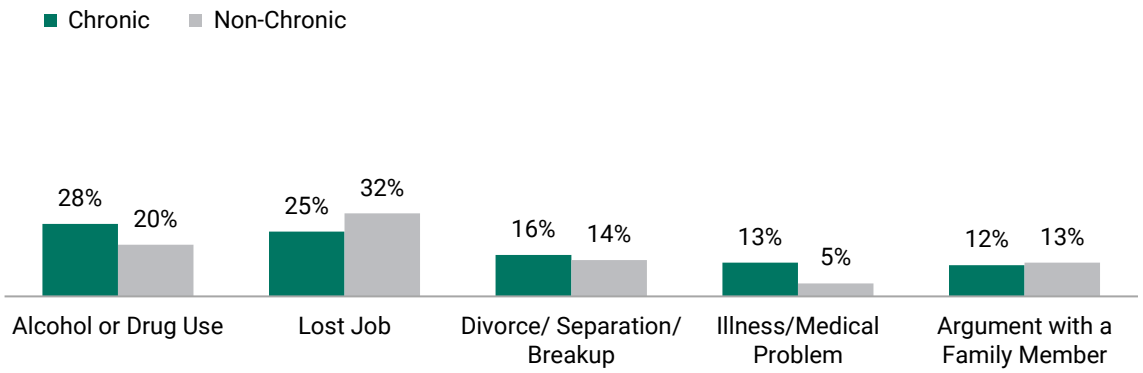


Chronic N=336; Non-Chronic N=910

PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS AMONG CHRONICALLY HOMELESSNESS RESPONDENTS

Alcohol and drug abuse was the most common cause of homelessness cited by chronically homeless survey respondents (28%) and was more commonly cited than by survey respondents who were not chronically homeless (20%). The next most frequently cited responses were job loss (25%) and a divorce/separation (16%).

FIGURE 37. PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP RESPONSES)



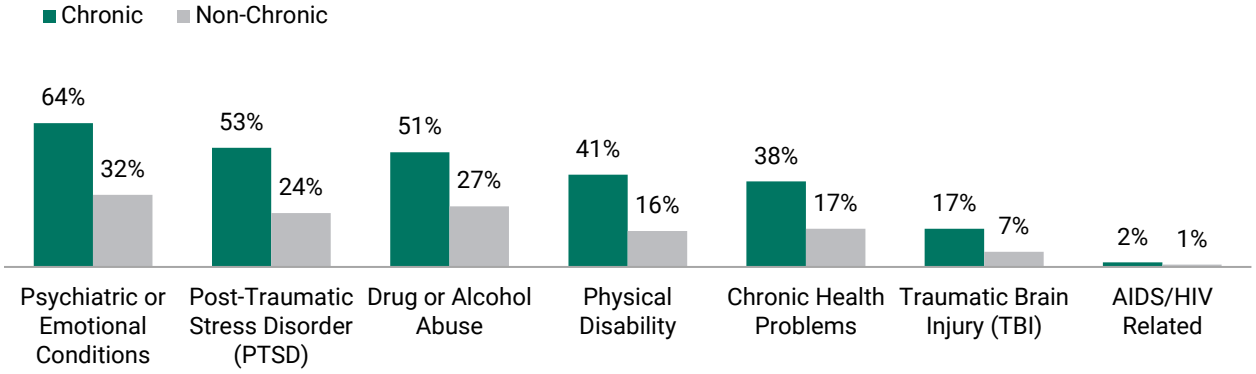
Chronic N=347 respondents offering 525 responses; Non-Chronic N=992 respondents offering 1,385 responses

HEALTH CONDITIONS AMONG CHRONICALLY HOMELESS RESPONDENTS

To meet the definition of chronic homelessness, an individual must be experiencing at least one disabling condition. In general, higher rates of health conditions were reported among those who were chronically homeless compared to their non-chronically homeless counterparts.

Of the chronically homeless survey respondents, nearly two-thirds (64%) reported experiencing a psychiatric or emotional condition, 53% reported experiencing PTSD, and 51% reported experiencing drug/alcohol abuse.

FIGURE 38. HEALTH CONDITIONS



Chronic N=348; Non-Chronic N=1,011

ACCESS TO SERVICES AMONG CHRONICALLY HOMELESS RESPONDENTS

A lower percentage (9%) of chronically homeless respondents reported they were not using any local homeless services such as food and shelter services, compared to 15% of those who were not chronically homeless.

In terms of government assistance, over one-quarter (28%) of chronically homeless respondents reported they were not receiving any assistance. However, 45% reported receiving food stamps, 40% reported receiving Medi-Cal/Medicare, and 24% reported receiving social security/disability benefits (SSI/SSDI).

Of chronically homeless respondents who were not receiving any form of government assistance, well 38% reported that they did not want government assistance and 34% reported they didn't think they were eligible.

INCARCERATION AMONG CHRONICALLY HOMELESS RESPONDENTS

A higher percentage of chronically homeless respondents reported having spent one or more nights in jail or prison in the 12 months prior to the survey (33%), compared to those who were not chronically homeless (25%). On the other hand, similar percentages reported being on probation or parole at the time of the survey (18% and 17%, respectively).

VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Many U.S. veterans experience conditions that place them at increased risk for homelessness. Nationwide, veterans are at risk for 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 street than in shelters, and often remain on the street for extended periods of time.

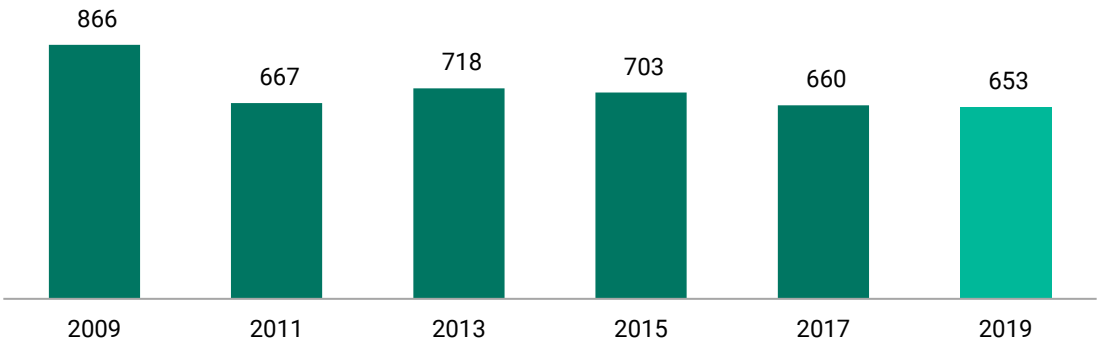
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs provides a broad range of benefits and services to veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces. These benefits can involve different forms of financial assistance, including monthly cash payments to disabled veterans, health care, education, and housing benefits. In addition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

Between 2007 and 2018, there has been a 38% decrease in the number of homeless veterans nationwide. According to data collected during the national 2018 Point-in-Time Count, 37,878 veterans experienced homelessness across the country on a single night in January 2018.[6]

ESTIMATES OF VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

There were 653 veterans experiencing homelessness identified in Santa Clara County in 2019, representing 7% of the total Point-in-Time homeless census. Over two-thirds (68%) were unsheltered, while the remaining third (32%) were sheltered.

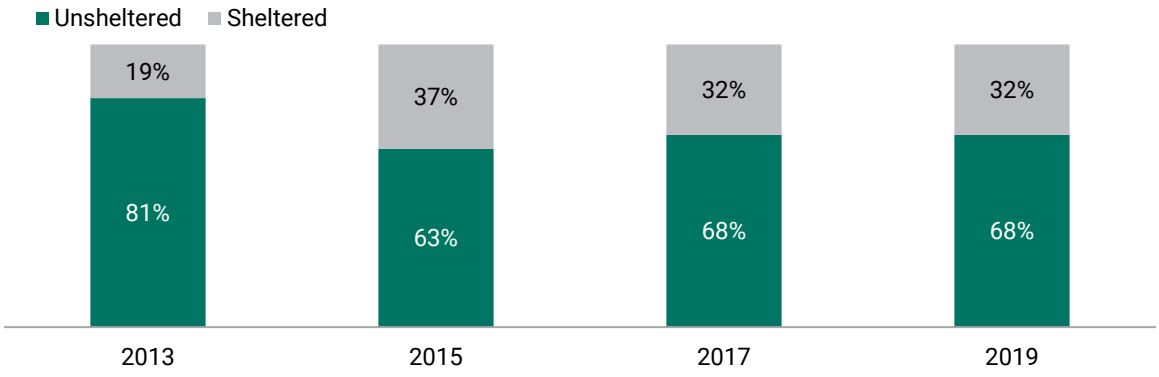
FIGURE 39. VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS



Source: Applied Survey Research. (2009-2019). Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey.

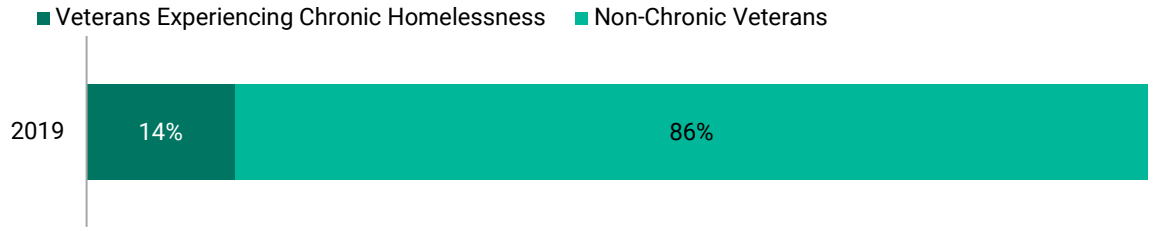
6 Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2018). Annual Assessment Report to Congress. Retrieved 2019 from https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2018-AHAR-Part1.pdf

FIGURE 40. VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY SHELTER STATUS



2013 N=718; 2015 N=703; 2017 N=660; 2019 N=653

FIGURE 41. VETERANS EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

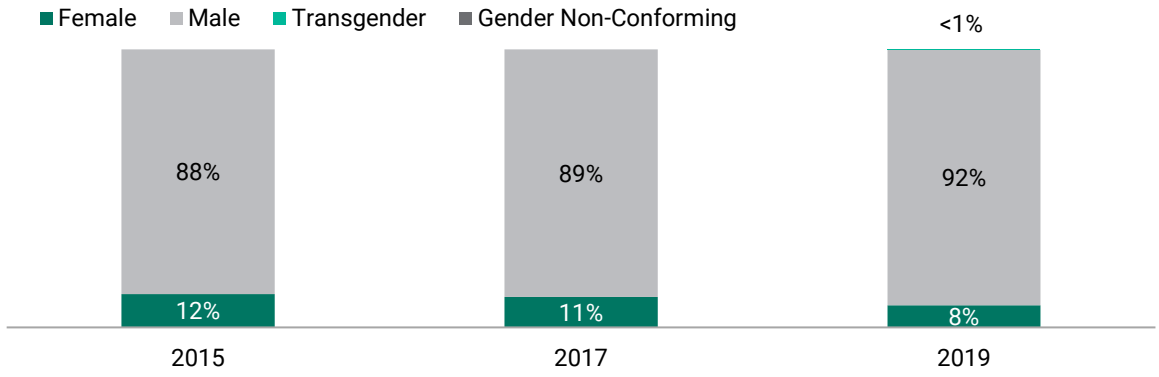


2019 N=653

DEMOGRAPHICS OF VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

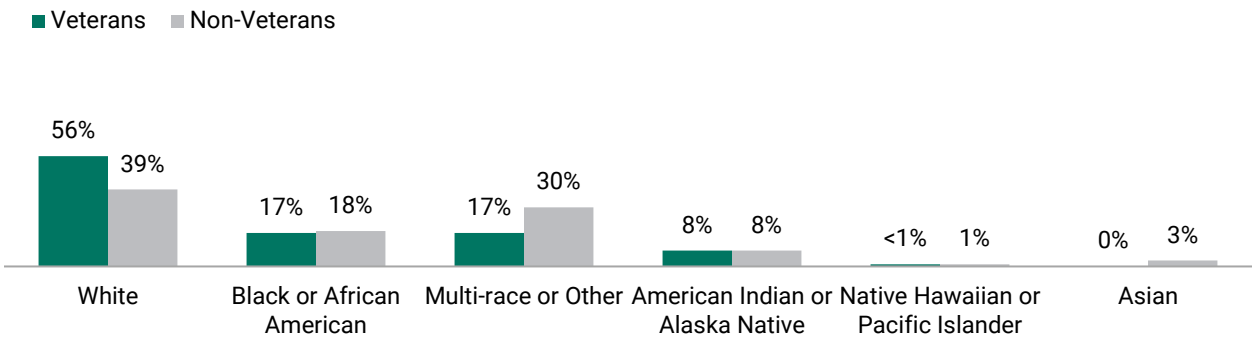
A large majority (92%) of veterans experiencing homelessness identified as male and one-third (33%) identified as Hispanic or Latinx. In terms of racial identity, more than half (56%) identified as White, while 17% identified as Black/African American and another 17% identified as multi-race or other.

FIGURE 42. VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELSSNESS BY GENDER



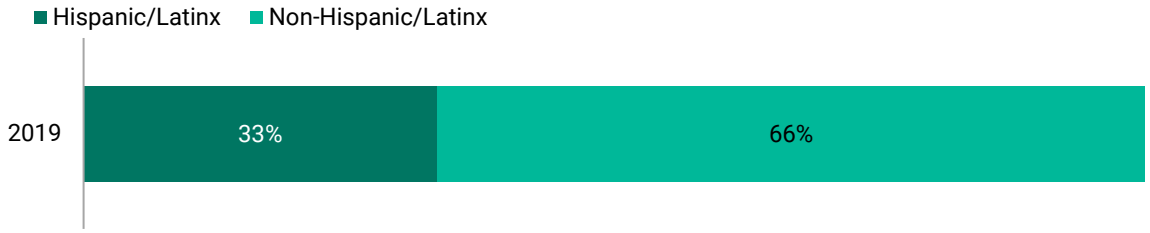
2015 N=703; 2017 N=660; 2019 N=653

FIGURE 43. VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY RACE



Veterans N=86; Non-Veterans N=1,152

FIGURE 44. VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY ETHNICITY

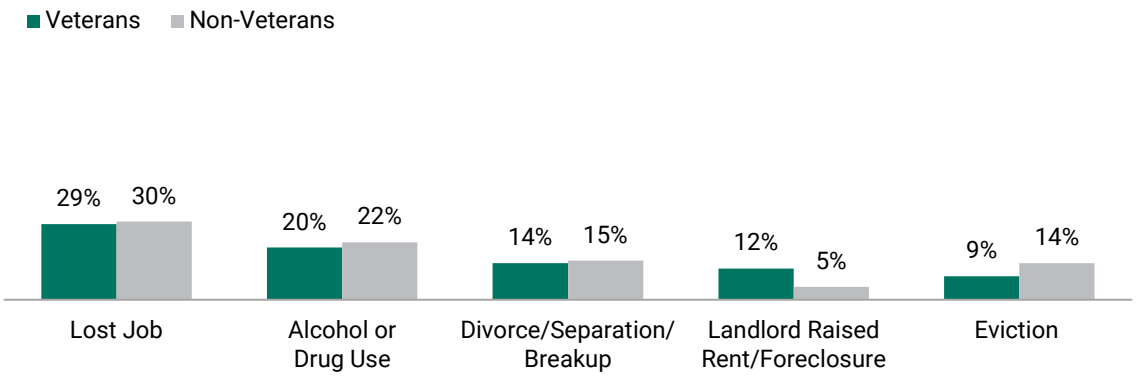


Veterans N=83; Non-Veterans N=1,152

PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS AMONG VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Job loss was the most frequently cited cause of homelessness among veterans experiencing homelessness, reported by 29% of respondents. Further, 20% cited alcohol/drug use and 14% cited a divorce or separation as what led them to experience homelessness. A greater percentage of veterans cited an increase in rent/foreclosure (12%) than the non-veteran population (5%), and a lower percentage of veterans cited eviction (9%) as the primary cause of homelessness than the non-veteran population (14%).

FIGURE 45. PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP RESPONSES)

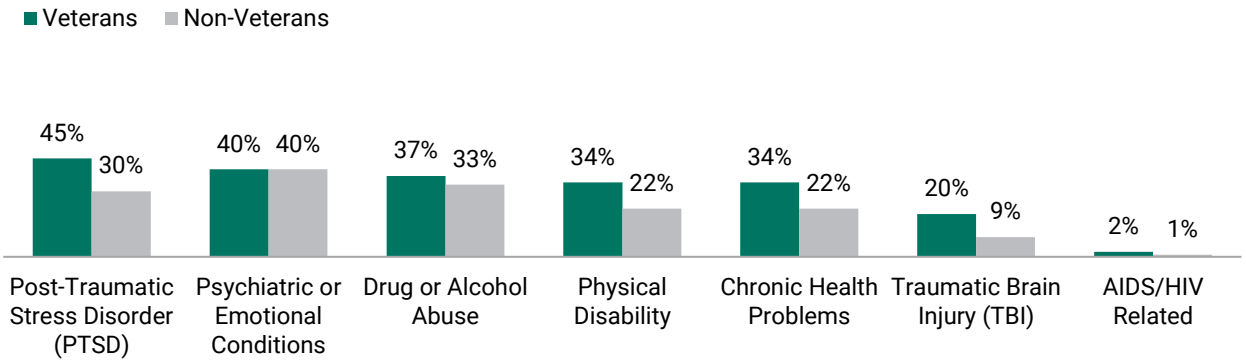


Veterans N=85 respondents offering 106 responses; Non-Veterans N=1,245 respondents offering 1,793 responses

DISABLING CONDITIONS AMONG VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

In general, veterans experiencing homelessness reported higher rates of health conditions than their non-veteran counterparts. Almost half (49%) of homeless veteran survey respondents reported having one or more disabling conditions. Not surprisingly, the most commonly reported condition for veterans experiencing homelessness was PTSD (45%). This was followed by a psychiatric or emotional condition (40%), drug/alcohol abuse (37%), a physical disability (34%), and chronic health problems (34%). When compared to the non-veteran population, veterans reported higher rates of physical disability, chronic health problems, and traumatic brain injury.

FIGURE 46. HEALTH CONDITIONS



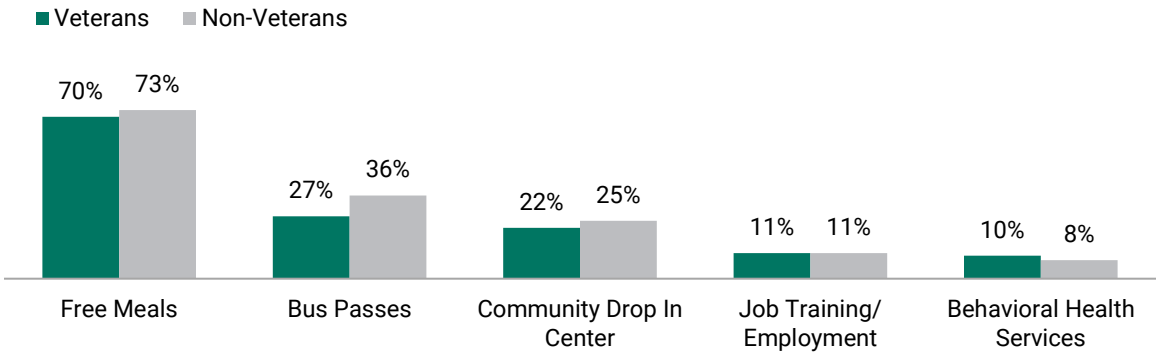
Veterans N=87; Non-Veterans N=1,263

ACCESS TO SERVICES AMONG VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

The percentage of veterans experiencing homelessness connected to any form of government assistance was similar to the non-veteran population (68% compared to 70%, respectively). Only one in ten (12%) homeless veteran respondents reported receiving VA Disability Compensation.

When asked about which non-government services they were accessing, the most frequent responses were free meals (70%), bus passes (27%), and a community drop-in center (22%).

FIGURE 47. ACCESS TO SERVICES



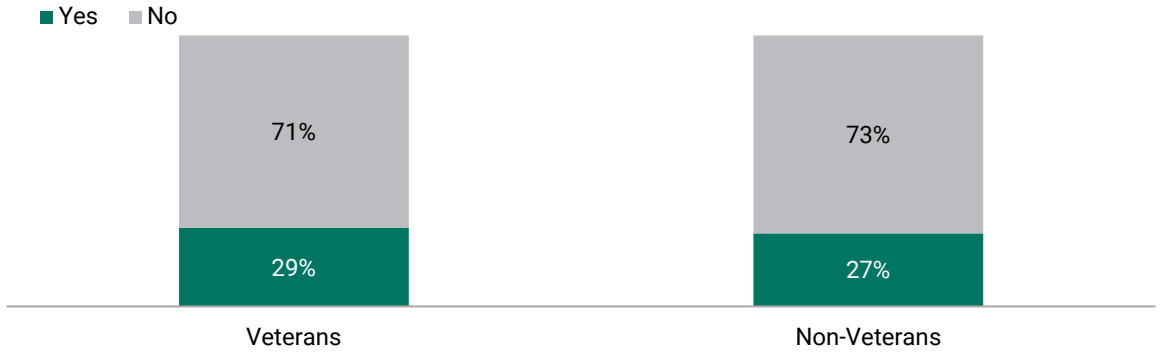
Veterans N=83 respondents offering 157 responses; Non-Veterans N=1,218 respondents offering 2,529 responses

INCARCERATION AMONG VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Nationally, among those who are incarcerated, veterans are more likely than non-veterans to be first time offenders, to have committed a violent offense, and to receive longer prison sentences. Veterans who are incarcerated may also face the loss of various VA benefits during this time.[7]

Twenty-nine percent (29%) of veteran survey respondents reported having spent a night in jail in the last 12 months, slightly higher than non-veterans (27%).

FIGURE 48. SPENT A NIGHT IN JAIL OR PRISON IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS



Veterans N=77; Non-Veterans N=1,191

[7] Military Benefits. (2014). Incarcerated Veterans. Retrieved 2017 from http://www.military.com/benefits/veterans-benefits/incarcerated-veterans.html.

FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

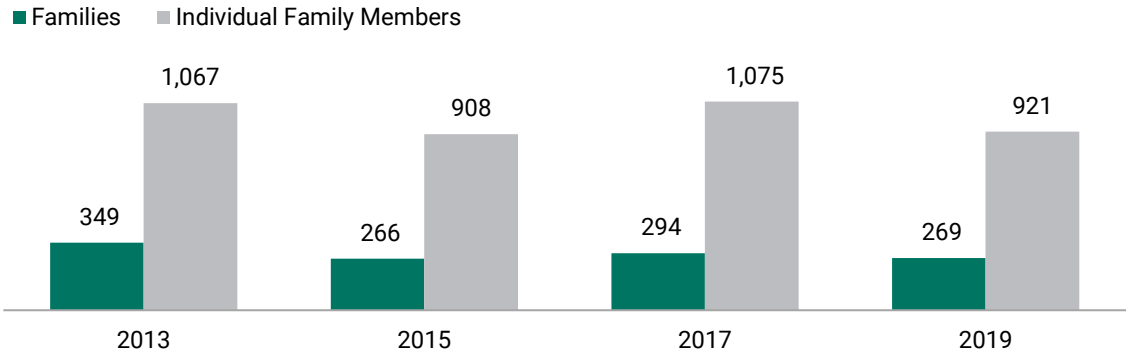
National data from 2018 suggest that 33% of all people experiencing homelessness are persons in families.[8] Very few families experiencing homelessness are unsheltered, as public shelters serve 90% of homeless families in the United States; this is a significantly higher proportion of the population compared to other subpopulations, including youth and young adults. Data on families experiencing homelessness suggest that they are not much different from other families living in poverty.

Nationally, the majority of homeless families are households headed by single women and families with children under the age of six.[9] Children in families experiencing homelessness have increased incidence of illness and are more likely to have emotional and behavioral problems than children with stable living accommodations.[10]

ESTIMATES OF FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

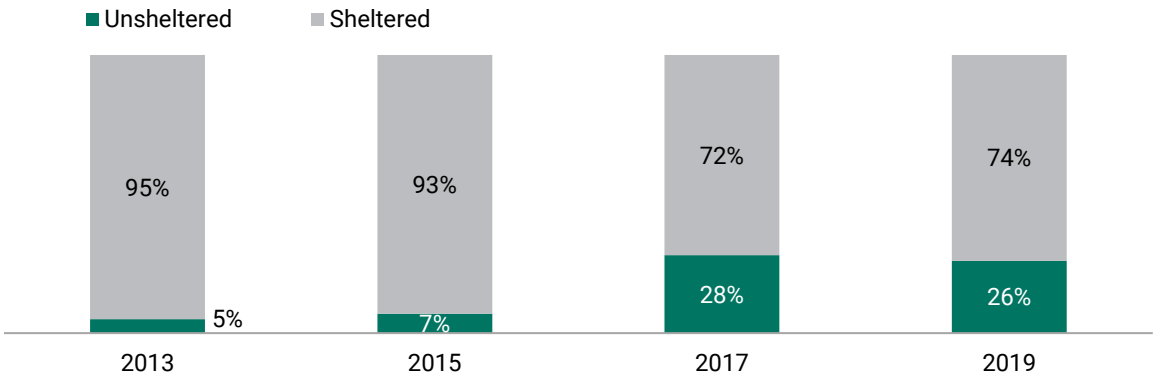
There were a total of 269 families consisting of 921 individual family members experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County in 2019. Families experiencing homelessness represented 9% of the Point-in-Time homeless population, a decrease from 2017 when the represented 15% of the overall population.[11] The majority (74%) of families experiencing homelessness were sheltered, while the remaining 26% were unsheltered, a slight decrease from 28% in 2017.

FIGURE 49. FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS



[8] U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2019). The 2018 Annual Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress. Retrieved 2019 from https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2017-AHAR-Part-1.pdf
[9] U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). Characteristics and Dynamics of Homeless Families with Children. Retrieved 2015 from http://aspe.hhs.gov/
[10] U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2015). Opening Doors. Retrieved 2015 from http://www.usich.gov/
[11] There is a significant population of homeless families in "double-up" situations. These families may or may not fall within the HUD PIT count definition of homelessness and could not be identified due to their typical location on private property.

FIGURE 50. FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY SHELTER STATUS

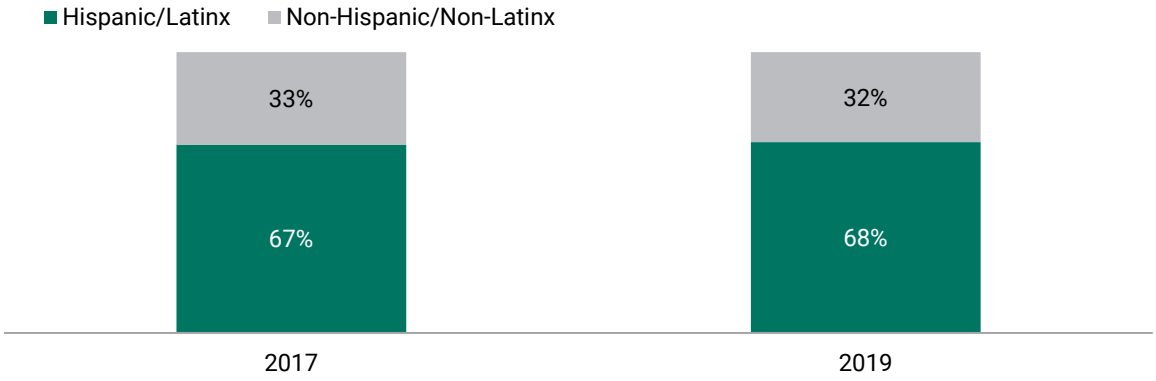


2013 N=1,067; 2015 N=908; 2017 N=1,075; 2019 N=921

DEMOGRAPHICS OF FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

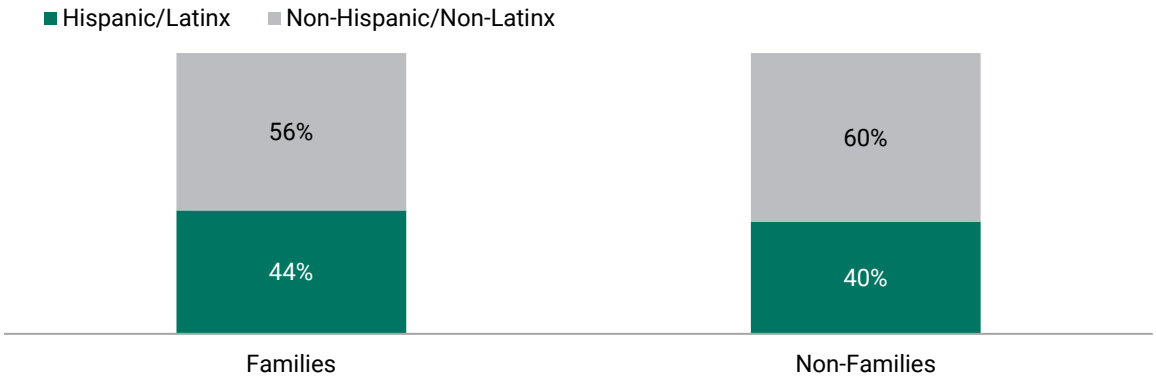
Female family members accounted for 61% of families experiencing homelessness, while males accounted for 38%. Further, more than two-thirds (68%) identified as being of Hispanic/Latinx origin, and 70% identified as White, both higher than the non-family homeless population.

FIGURE 51. FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY HISPANIC/LATINX ORIGIN



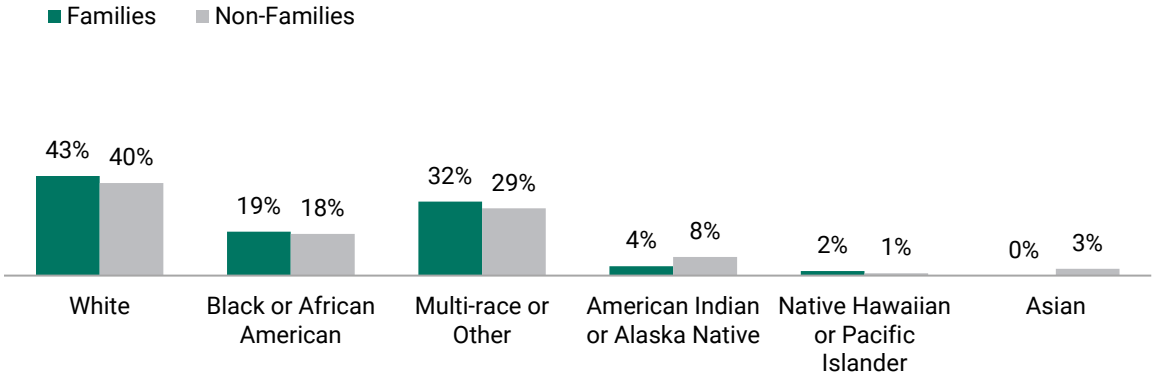
2017 N=1,075; 2019 N=921

FIGURE 52. FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY HISPANIC/LATINX ORIGIN



Family N=50; Non-Family N=1,259

FIGURE 53. FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY RACE

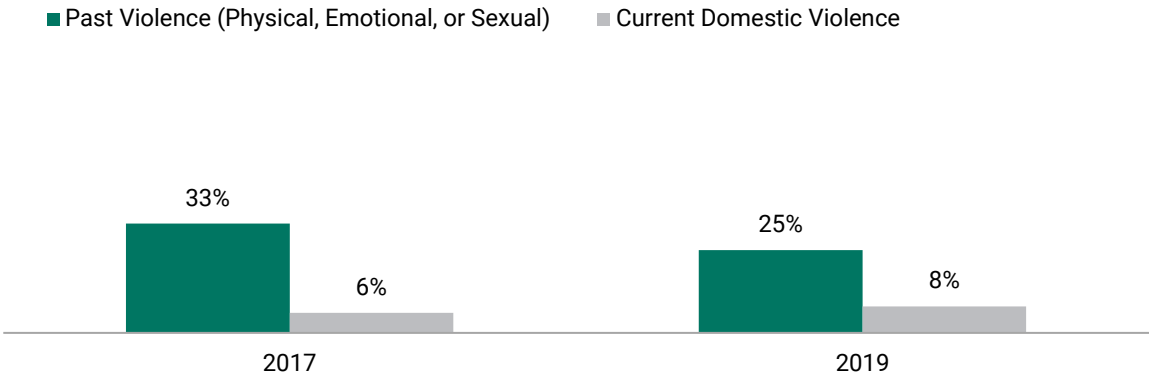


Family N=47; Non-Family N=1,199

EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE AMONG FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

A quarter (25%) of respondents in homeless families reported that, in their lifetime, they had been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused by a relative or another person they had stayed with (spouse, partner, sibling, parent). This represents a decrease from 33% in 2017. Eight percent (8%) reported they were currently experiencing domestic violence, which is a very slight increase from 2017.

FIGURE 54. PAST/CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE AMONG FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

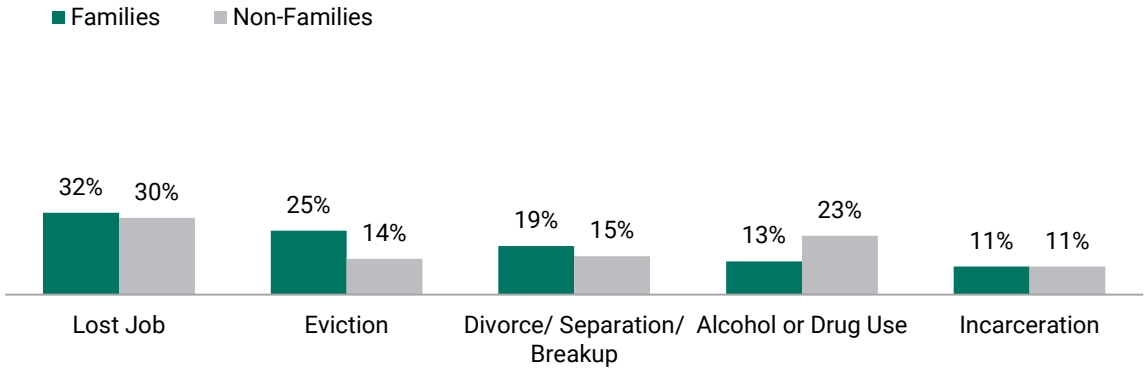


2017 N=19; 2019 N=53
Note: Due to the small number of respondents, caution is advised when interpreting this data.

PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS AMONG FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

The top three causes of homelessness reported by families experiencing homelessness were job loss (32%), eviction (25%), and a divorce or separation (19%). Lower percentages of non-families cited these same causes. Survey respondents in families experiencing homelessness reported alcohol or drug use as the primary cause of their homelessness less frequently (13%) than not in families with children (23%).

FIGURE 55. PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP RESPONSES)

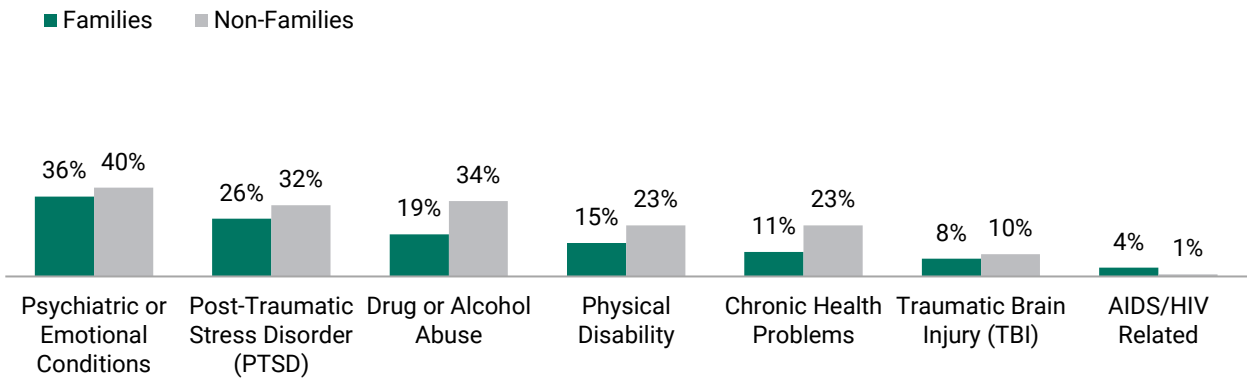


Families N=53 respondents offering 75 responses; Non-Families N=1,286 respondents offering 1,835 responses

HEALTH CONDITIONS AMONG FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Among homeless families, a psychiatric or emotional condition was the most frequently reported health condition (36%), followed by PTSD (26%) and drug/alcohol abuse (19%). In general, families experiencing homelessness reported lower rates of health conditions than their non-family counterparts, with the exception of HIV/AIDS-related conditions.

FIGURE 56. HEALTH CONDITIONS



Families N=53; Non-Families N=1,306
Note: Multiple response question, percentages may not add up to 100%

RECURRENCE AND LENGTH OF HOMELESSNESS AMONG FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Half (50%) of family respondents reported experiencing homelessness for the first time, compared to 36% of non-family survey respondents. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of families had been experiencing homelessness for one year or longer, compared to 67% of non-family respondents. In terms of where they were living prior to becoming homeless, over half (55%) reported they were living in a home owned/rented by them or a partner compared to 25% of the general survey population, and 19% were staying with friends or family, compared to 33% of the general survey population.

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE AMONG FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Seventy-one percent (71%) of family members indicated they were receiving some form of government assistance. Well over half (57%) were receiving food stamps, and 37% were receiving Medi-Cal/MediCare.



YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Due to the challenges of street outreach and access to youth and young adults experiencing homelessness, available data on them are limited. Although largely considered an undercount, nationwide estimates from 2018 suggest there are at least 36,361 youth and young adults on the streets and in public shelters, an increase of 14% over 2016.[12] This increase may be due, in part, to the focus on youth and young adults during the 2017 Point-in-Time Count.

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 youth and young adults. As part of this effort, HUD placed increased focus on gathering data on youth and young adults during the Point-in-Time Count. The results of this effort contribute to HUD's initiative to measure progress toward ending youth homelessness by 2020.

Young people experiencing homelessness have a harder time accessing services, including shelter, medical care, and employment. This is due to the stigma of their housing situation, lack of knowledge of available resources, and a dearth of services targeted to young people.[13]

ESTIMATES OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

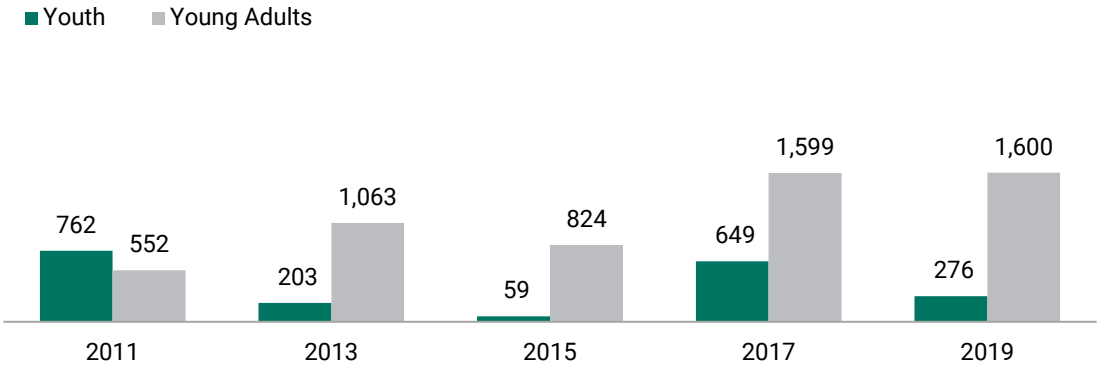
Homelessness among youth and young adults is a difficult problem to identify. Youth and young adults are less likely to be found among the adult population experiencing homelessness, preferring locations and times of day that make traditional efforts at enumeration difficult. Accordingly, a separate youth count effort was put in place, relying on knowledge gathered from youth currently experiencing homelessness as well as their participation in the count itself.

In 2019, the general shelter and street count, combined with the targeted youth count, identified 1,876 youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. This represents a 26% decrease since 2017 but is still the second highest in the past decade. It should also be noted an alternative method of calculation was used in 2019 that contributes to this percentage decrease (see methodology section for more discussion.)

The majority (95%) of these youth and young adults were unsheltered. In 2019, the youth and young adult subpopulation represented nearly one-fifth (19%) of the overall homeless population in Santa Clara County.

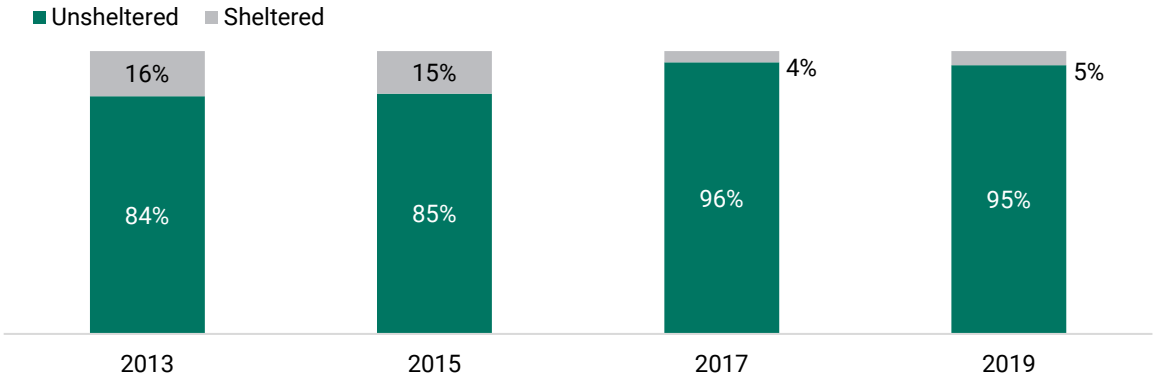
[12] U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2017). The 2018 Annual Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress. Retrieved 2019 from https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2018-AHAR-Part-1.pdf
[13] National Coalition for the Homeless. (2011). Homeless Youth Fact Sheet. Retrieved 2011 from http://www.nationalhomeless.org.

FIGURE 57. YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS



Note: In 2019, methodology in calculating the numbers of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness changed. For comparative purposes, the 2017 data was recalculated and displayed in this chart. For further information regarding the methodology change, please see Appendix A.

FIGURE 58. YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY SHELTER STATUS



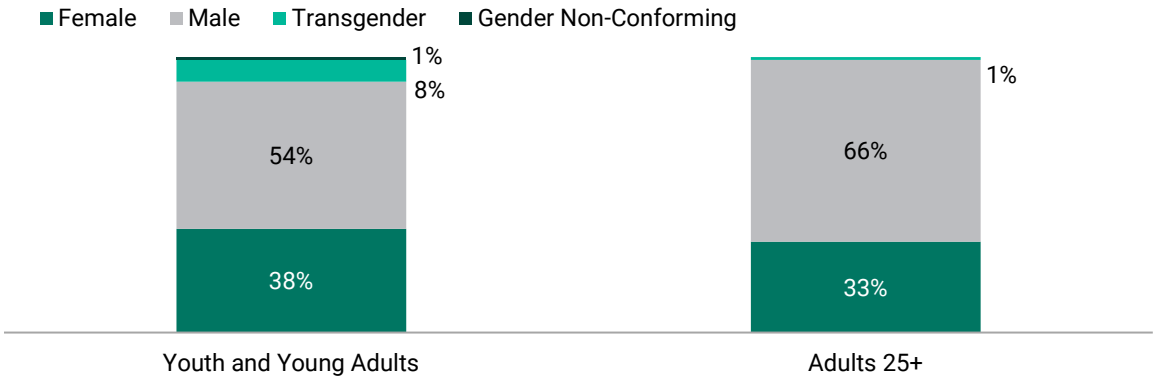
2013 N=1,266; 2015 N=883; 2017 N=2,530; 2019 N=1,876

DEMOGRAPHICS OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Over half (54%) of youth and young adults identified as male. Nearly half (49%) identified as being of Hispanic/Latinx origin, an increase from 38% in 2017, and larger than the adult population (38%). Thirty percent identified as White and 25% identified as Black/African American.

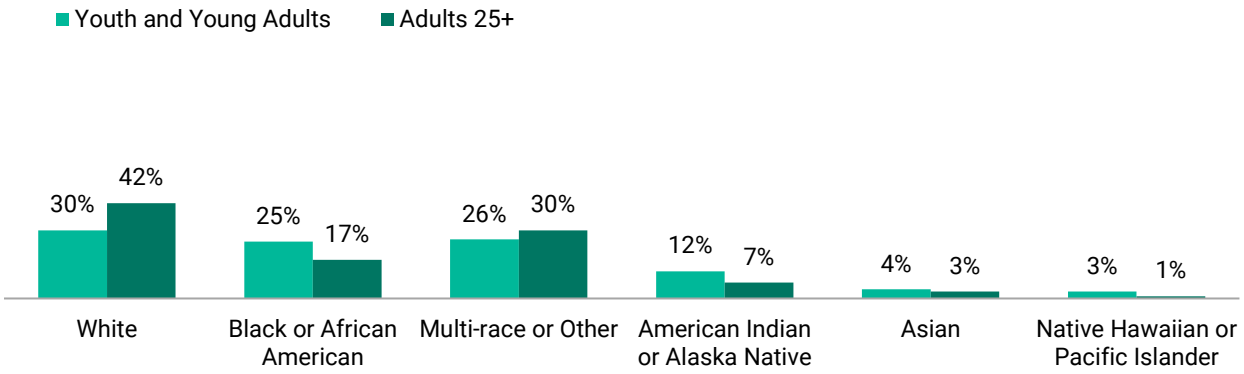
Gathering data on gender identity and sexual orientation on hard to find populations like youth and young adults can pose difficulties. Past years have made every effort to be as representative as possible, but caution should still be used when interpreting past data around gender identity and sexual orientation. In 2019, 30% of youth survey respondents identified as LGBTQ+, greater than the 10% of adult respondents who did so.

FIGURE 59. YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS BY GENDER



Youth and Young Adult N=210; Adults 25+ N=1,134

FIGURE 60. YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS BY RACE

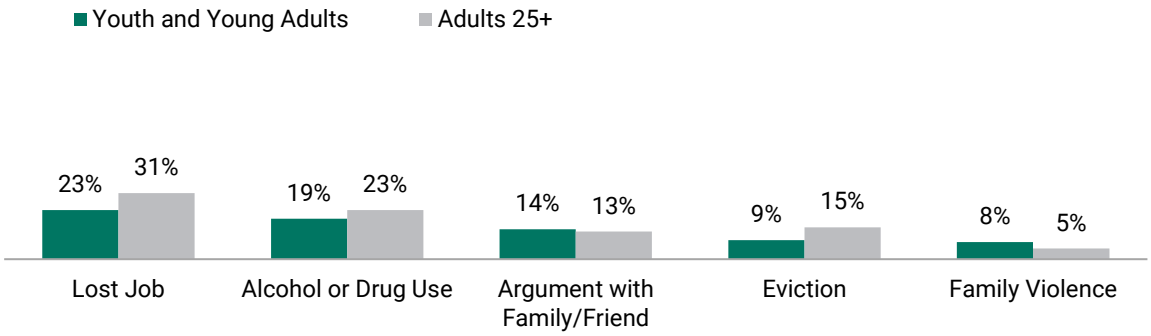


Youth and Young Adult N=194; Adults 25+ N=1,052

PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS AMONG YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

Youth and young adult respondents cited similar causes of homelessness compared to adult respondents. The most commonly reported causes among children and youth were job loss (23%), alcohol/drug use (19%), and an argument with family/friend (14%).

FIGURE 61. PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP RESPONSES)

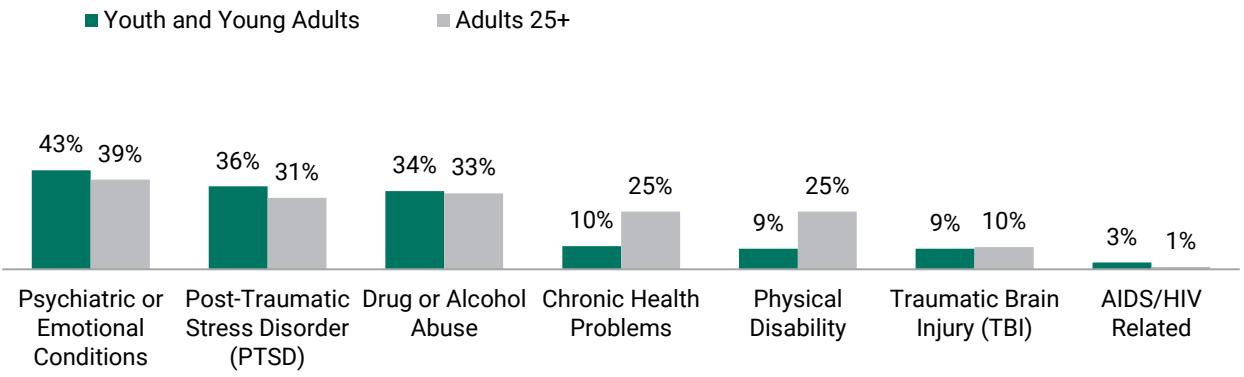


Unaccompanied Children/Youth N=211 respondents offering 243 responses; Adults N=1,128 respondents offering 1,667 responses

HEALTH CONDITIONS AMONG YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

A substantial number of youth and young adult respondents reported experiencing health issues, and in some cases at higher rates than their adult counterparts. Forty-three percent (43%) of respondents under age 25 reported experiencing a psychiatric or emotional condition, 36% reported experiencing PTSD, and 34% reported experiencing drug/alcohol abuse. Youth and young adults had lower rates of chronic health problems and physical disabilities than adults 25 years of age and older.

FIGURE 62. HEALTH CONDITIONS



Unaccompanied Children/Youth N=211; Adults N=1,306

SERVICE UTILIZATION AMONG YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

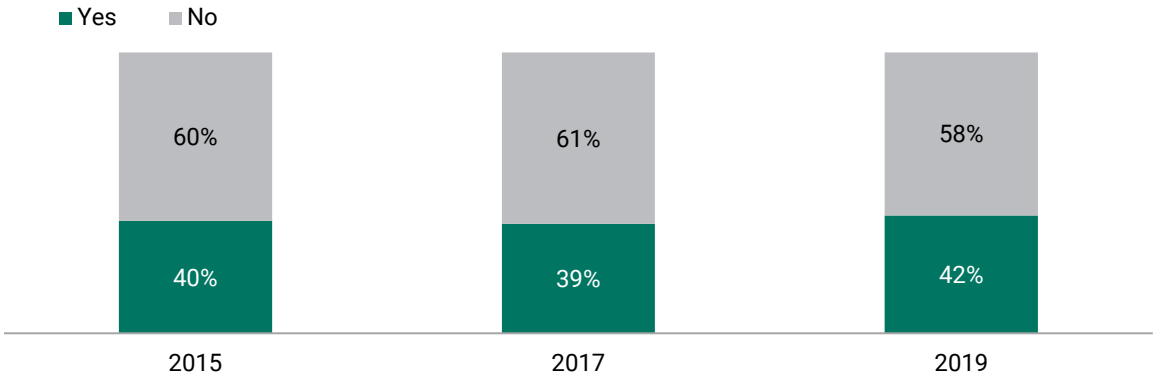
Two-thirds (68%) of youth and young adult respondents reported currently receiving different types government assistance, similar to the adult population at 70%. The most common benefits received were food stamps (51%) and Medi-cal/Medicare (27%), each similar to the adult population. Four in five (82%) youth and young adults also reported accessing other non-government services, including free meals (68%), bus passes (37%), and the community drop-in center (27%).

FOSTER CARE AMONG YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Nationally, it is estimated that at least one-third of foster youth experience homelessness after exiting care.[14] In the state of California, many foster youth are eligible to receive extended care benefits as they transition into adulthood, up until their 21st birthday. Implemented since 2012, the aim of extended foster care is to assist foster youth with the transition to independence and prevent them from experiencing homelessness.

Forty-two percent (42%) of youth and young adult respondents reported they had been in the foster care system, and 4% cited aging out of foster care as their primary cause of homelessness.

FIGURE 63. HISTORY OF FOSTER CARE



2015 n= 101, 2017 n=113, 2019 n=209

[14] Dworsky, A;, Napolitano, L.; and Courtney, M. (2013). Homelessness During the Transition From Foster Care to Adulthood. Congressional Research Services, Am J Public Health. 2013 December; 103(Suppl 2): S318–S323. Retrieved 2018 from 10.2105/AJPH.2013.301455.

Conclusion

The 2019 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey was performed using HUD-recommended practices for counting and surveying the homeless population. Data summarized in this report provide many valuable insights about the unique and diverse experiences of homelessness in Santa Clara County. A few data highlights include:

- The Point-in-Time Homeless Count identified a total of 9,706 persons experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County in 2019, an increase of 31% from the count conducted in 2017.
- More than four in five (82%) persons experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County were unsheltered, living in places not intended for human habitation.
- More than one-third (36%) of homeless survey respondents indicated they were experiencing homelessness for the first time, and 67% had been homeless for one year or longer.
- When asked what might have prevented them from becoming homeless, the top answers among survey respondents were rent/mortgage assistance (reported by 42% of respondents), followed by employment assistance (37%), and alcohol/drug counseling (28%).
- The biggest obstacles to obtaining permanent housing were the affordability of rent (66%), a lack of a job/income (56%), and a lack of available housing (40%).
- Homeless survey respondents also reported having these health conditions: a psychiatric or emotional condition (42%); drug/alcohol abuse (35%), and PTSD (33%).
- The estimated counts of the four HUD-identified subpopulations in Santa Clara County were: chronically homeless individuals with one or more disabling condition (2,470 persons), homeless veterans (653), members of homeless families with children (921), and youth and young adults (1,876).

In summary, the 2019 Santa Clara County Homeless Count and Survey provides valid and useful data that help create a more comprehensive profile of those experiencing homelessness. Data presented in this report fulfill federal reporting requirements for the CoC and will continue to inform outreach, service planning, and policy decision-making by local planning bodies over the year to come.

There are still many challenges to overcome in achieving the goal of eliminating homelessness in Santa Clara County and helping homeless individuals and families access necessary services and support. The dissemination and evaluation of this effort will help the CoC and all Santa Clara County stakeholders continue to produce and refine constructive and innovative solutions to end homelessness and make it a rare, brief, and one-time occurrence. Through innovative and effective housing programs and services, Santa Clara County remains committed to moving homeless persons into permanent housing.

Appendix A: Methodology

OVERVIEW

The 2019 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey was performed using HUD-recommended practices and using HUD's definition of homelessness. The primary purpose was to produce a point-in-time estimate of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County, a region which covers approximately 1,312 square miles. The results of several components were combined to produce the total estimated number of persons experiencing homelessness on a given night. A detailed description of these components follows.

COMPONENTS OF THE HOMELESS CENSUS & SURVEY

The methodology used in the 2019 Point-in-Time Census and Survey had five components:

1) **General Street Count:** A morning count of unsheltered homeless individuals and families on January 29-30, 2019. This occurred from approximately 4:30 AM to 10:00 AM and included those sleeping outdoors on the street; at bus and train stations; in parks, tents, and other makeshift shelters; and in vehicles and abandoned properties. In order to canvass all areas within Santa Clara County, the general street count was spread over two days with Interstate 880 serving as the dividing line between day 1 and day 2. The general street count was designed to take place before shelter occupants were released. In areas with shelters, the immediate area surrounding the shelter was prioritized to eliminate potential double counting of individuals.

2) **General Shelter Count:** A nighttime count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness staying at publicly and privately-operated shelters on January 29, 2019. This included those who occupied emergency shelters, transitional housing, and safe havens. All shelter data were gathered either from Santa Clara County's Homeless Management Information System or directly from the shelter.

3) **Targeted Street Count of Youth and Young Adults:** An afternoon count of unsheltered youth and young adults on January 29, 2019. This occurred from approximately 2:00 PM to 7:00 PM and was led by special youth teams who canvassed specific areas where youth and young adults were known to congregate. Upon completion, data from this targeted count was carefully reviewed against the results from the general street count to ensure that any possible duplicate counts were removed.

4) **Targeted COE Street Count of Students and Their Families:** A count of previously-identified unsheltered homeless students and their families conducted by the Santa Clara County Office of Education for the night of January 29, 2019 in conjunction with participating school districts. Demographic and geographic detail from the COE count was then compared to census data to check for possible duplication, however, no duplicates were found.

5) **Homeless Survey:** An in-person interview with 1,359 unique sheltered and unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness conducted by peer surveyors between January 29 and February 28, 2019. Data from the survey were used to refine the Point-in-Time Census estimates and then used to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the demographics and experiences of homeless individuals.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

To ensure the success and integrity of the count, many county and community agencies collaborated on community outreach, volunteer recruitment, logistical plans, methodological decisions, and interagency coordination efforts. ASR provided technical assistance for these aspects of the planning process. ASR has over 19 years of experience conducting homeless counts and surveys throughout California and across the nation. Their work is featured as a best practice in the HUD publication, *A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People*, as well as in the Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago publication, *Conducting a Youth Count: A Toolkit*.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Local homeless and housing service providers and advocates were valued partners in the planning and implementation of this count. Thanks to local efforts, the count included enumerators with a diverse range of knowledge, including expertise regarding areas frequented by homeless individuals, individuals living in vehicles, and persons residing in encampments. Community partners were also key in recruiting individuals with lived experience of homelessness to participate in the street count and survey efforts.

STREET COUNT METHODOLOGY

DEFINITION

For the purposes of this study, the HUD definition of unsheltered homeless persons was used:

> An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train stations, airport, or camping ground.

METHODOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENTS

The 2019 street count methodology followed an established, HUD-approved methodology used in counts since 2007, with the addition of dedicated youth outreach beginning in 2015. The 2019 census also saw a change in methodology regarding the extrapolation of demographic detail on tents and vehicles. Challenges were presented in 2019 by a large number of tents and vehicles that were identified as inhabited, but without demographic detail available, combined with large numbers of identified youth from the youth count. To prevent overrepresentation of youth when resolving demographic detail on tents and vehicles, a methodological change in the extrapolation of age and gender was implemented.

VOLUNTEER AND GUIDE RECRUITMENT

Many individuals who live and/or work in Santa Clara County supported the county's effort to enumerate the local homeless population. In 2019, over 250 community volunteers and homeless guides participated in the general street count.

Extensive outreach efforts were conducted, including outreach to local non-profits and volunteer agencies that serve individuals experiencing homelessness. Local shelters and service providers recruited and recommended the most knowledgeable and reliable homeless individuals to participate in the count.

Homeless guides were paid $15 for attending an hour-long training as well as $15 per hour worked on the day of the count.

Volunteers and guides served as enumerators on the morning of the count, canvassing the county in teams to visually count homeless persons. County of Santa Clara, City of San José, and ASR staff supported each of the five dispatch centers in San José, Palo Alto, Gilroy, and Mountain View, greeting volunteers and guides, distributing instructions, maps, and supplies to enumeration teams, and collecting data sheets from returning teams.

In order to participate in the count, all volunteers and guides were requested to attend an hour-long training before the count. Trainings were held in multiple locations throughout the county. Training covered all aspects of the count, including the definition of homelessness, how to identify homeless individuals, potential locations of homeless individuals, how to safely and respectfully conduct the count, how to use the tally count sheets and maps to ensure the entirety of the assigned area was covered, as well as other tips to help ensure an accurate count. If individuals were unable to attend a training in person, a YouTube training video was also made available.

STREET COUNT TEAMS

Teams were typically comprised of at least two individuals, one volunteer from the community and one guide who was generally an individual currently experiencing homelessness. Each team was assigned 1-4 census tracts, depending on the size of the tracts. Teams were responsible for covering all areas accessible to the public, including parks, streets, business fronts, and wherever the guide believed there might be individuals experiencing homelessness. Teams were encouraged to have their community volunteer drive their vehicle, while the guide acted as a navigator and enumerator during the process. All teams were given a brief refresher training before heading out into the field.

STREET COUNT DISPATCH CENTERS

To achieve complete coverage of the county within the morning timeframe, the planning team identified five areas for the placement of dispatch centers on the morning of the count: the Opportunity Center in Palo Alto, Compassion Center in Gilroy, Salvation Army in San José, City Team in San José, and the CSA in Mountain View. Volunteers selected their dispatch center at the time of registration based on their familiarity with the area or their convenience. The planning team determined the enumeration routes and assigned them to the dispatch center closest or most central to the coverage area to facilitate the timely deployment of enumeration teams into the field.

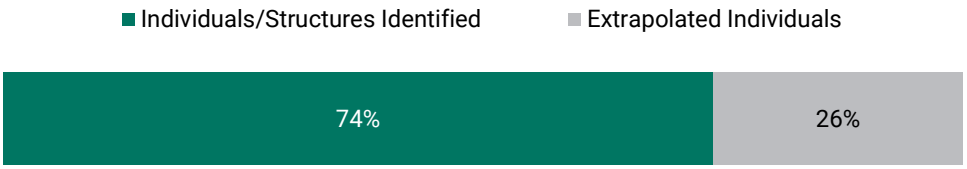
SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Every effort was made to minimize potentially hazardous situations. Law enforcement agencies were notified of pending street count activity in their jurisdictions. In census tracts with a high concentration of homeless encampments, specialized teams with knowledge of those encampments were identified and assigned to those areas. Enumeration teams were advised to take every safety precaution possible, including bringing flashlights and maintaining a respectful distance from those they were counting.

LOGISTICS OF ENUMERATION

All accessible streets, roads, parks, and highways in the enumerated tracts were traversed by foot or car. Homeless enumerators were instructed to include themselves on their tally sheets for the street count if they were not going to be counted by the shelter count. Dispatch center volunteers provided each team with tally sheets to record the number of homeless persons observed in addition to basic demographic and location information. Dispatch center volunteers also verified that at least one person on each team had a cell phone available for their use during the count and recorded the number on the volunteer deployment log sheet. Teams were asked to cover the entirety of their assigned areas.

To ensure that the privacy of individuals experiencing homelessness was respected and that safety concerns were kept as a priority for enumeration teams, teams were asked to conduct observation-only counts and to not have any contact with individuals experiencing homelessness. When they encountered a structure or vehicle that they believed to be inhabited, they had the option to indicate that it was inhabited but that they didn't know the number or the demographic detail (age and gender) of its residents if this could be determined by the team. In order to determine the number of residents of these dwelling types, ASR uses the survey data from over 450 survey respondents who indicated they stayed in the named dwelling type. Demographic detail for those inhabitants is gathered from count data.



"Individuals identified" are those whom enumeration teams were able to clearly identify as persons experiencing homelessness. "Structures identified" indicates structures (tent, vehicle, abandoned building, makeshift shelter, etc.) enumeration teams saw that they believed to be inhabited. Data suggest that some structures have more than one person staying inside and survey data is used to determine a multiplier for each structure type. Individuals that are added to the count as a result of that multiplier are referred to as extrapolated individuals in the chart above.

SANTA CLARA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION COUNT

In the days following the street count, representatives from seven school districts called households known to have recently experienced homelessness to ascertain where they stayed on the night of count. This is a significant effort, as many school districts have hundreds of calls to make to ensure that families counted fit the HUD definition of homelessness and were, in fact, experiencing homelessness on the night(s) of the count.

Participation from school districts was not as extensive in 2019 when compared to 2017 and may have had an impact on the number of unsheltered families that were identified in this year's count. In 2017, 12 districts participated in the COE count, while only 7 participated in the 2019 COE count. Once data were gathered, they were then compared to count data to check for duplication. Using demographic and geographic detail, families were cross-checked for duplication and any duplicates are removed.

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT STREET COUNT METHODOLOGY

GOAL

The goal of the 2019 youth and young adult count was to include accurate representation of youth and young adults under the age of 25 in the Point-in-Time Count. Many youth and young adults experiencing homelessness do not use homeless services, are unrecognizable to adult street count volunteers, and may be in unsheltered locations that are difficult to find. Therefore, traditional street count efforts are not as effective in reaching youth.

RESEARCH DESIGN

As in all years, planning for the 2019 youth and young adult count included homeless youth service providers and youth and young adults with lived experience of homelessness. Local service providers identified locations where youth and young adults experiencing homelessness were known to congregate and recruited youth and young adults currently experiencing homelessness with knowledge of where to locate homeless youth to serve as guides for the count. Late afternoon and early evening were the ideal times recommended by advocates to conduct the youth count.

A focus group was held with currently and previously homeless youth to identify areas to canvass for the supplemental youth count. The Bill Wilson Center took the lead on recruiting 26 youth to work as peer enumerators in addition to 10 youth service provider staff members who accompanied and transported the youth around the county.

Youth workers were paid $15 per hour for their time, including time spent in training prior to the count. Youth and service provider staff members were trained on where and how to identify homeless youth as well as how to record the data.

DATA COLLECTION

It was determined that homeless youth would be more prominent on the street during daylight hours rather than in the early morning dawn timeframe when the general count was conducted. Youth worked in teams of two to four, with teams coordinated and supervised by street outreach workers.

HUD and the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness recognize that youth do not commonly comingle with homeless adults and are not easily identified by non-youth. For this reason, these agencies accept and recommend that communities count youth at times when they can be seen rather than during traditional enumeration times.

STREET COUNT DE-DUPLICATION

Data from the supplemental youth count and general street count were compared and de-duplicated by assessing location, gender, and age. In total, 24 persons under the age of 25 were identified as duplicates and removed from the data set.

SHELTER COUNT METHODOLOGY

GOAL

The goal of the shelter count is to gain an accurate count of persons temporarily housed in shelters across Santa Clara County. These data are vital to gaining an accurate overall count of the homeless population and understanding where persons experiencing homelessness receive shelter.

DEFINITION

For the purposes of this study, the HUD definition of sheltered homelessness for Point-in-Time Counts was used. This definition includes individuals and families living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement.

RESEARCH DESIGN

All shelter data were gathered either directly from the shelter or from Santa Clara County's Homeless Management Information System.

DATA COLLECTION

To collect data on individuals staying in shelters, ASR worked with BitFocus, the HMIS system administrators for Santa Clara County. BitFocus collected data on all emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, and Safe Havens operating in the county. Data was collected on household status, age, gender, race and ethnicity, veteran status, chronic status, and whether individuals had certain health conditions. There were a small, limited number of shelters that do not participate in the HMIS system. To gather their data, ASR collected the same data using a web-based system of reporting.

CHALLENGES

There are many challenges in any homeless enumeration, especially when implemented in a community as large and diverse as Santa Clara County. Point-in-Time Counts are "snapshots" that quantify the size of the homeless population at a given point during the year. Hence, the count may not be representative of fluctuations and compositional changes in the homeless population seasonally or over time.

For a variety of reasons, some homeless persons do not wish to be seen and make concerted efforts to avoid detection. Regardless of how successful outreach efforts are, an undercount of the homeless population will likely result, especially of hard-to-reach subpopulations such as families and youth.

The methods employed in a non-intrusive visual homeless enumeration, while academically sound, have inherent biases and shortcomings. Even with the assistance of dedicated homeless service providers, the methodology cannot guarantee 100% accuracy. Many factors may contribute to missed opportunities, for example:

It is difficult to identify homeless persons who may be sleeping in vans, cars, recreational vehicles, abandoned buildings, or structures unfit for human habitation.

Homeless families with children often seek opportunities to stay on private property, rather than sleep on the streets, in vehicles, or in makeshift shelters.

Even though the Point-in-Time Count is most likely to be an undercount of the homeless population, the methodology employed—coupled with the homeless survey—is the most comprehensive approach available.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The data collected through the survey are used for the McKinney-Vento Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance funding application and are important for future program development and planning. The survey elicited information such as gender, family status, military service, duration and recurrence of homelessness, nighttime accommodations, causes of homelessness, and access to services through

open-ended, closed-ended, and multiple response questions. The survey data bring greater perspective to current issues of homelessness and to the provision and delivery of services.

Surveys were conducted by peer survey workers with lived homeless experience. Training sessions were facilitated by ASR, Santa Clara County staff, and community partners. Potential interviewers were led through a comprehensive orientation that included project background information as well as detailed instruction on respondent eligibility, interviewing protocol, and confidentiality. Peer survey workers were compensated at a rate of $7 per completed survey.

It was determined that survey data would be more easily obtained if an incentive gift was offered to respondents in appreciation for their time and participation. Socks were provided as an incentive for participating in the 2019 homeless survey. The socks were easy to distribute, had wide appeal, and could be provided within the project budget. The incentives proved to be widely accepted among survey respondents.

SURVEY SAMPLING

Based on a Point-in-Time Count estimate of 9,706 homeless persons, with a randomized survey sampling process, the 1,359 valid surveys represented a confidence interval of +/-2.5% with a 95% confidence level when generalizing the results of the survey to the estimated population of individuals experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County.

The 2019 survey was administered in shelters, transitional housing facilities, and on the street. In order to ensure the representation of transitional housing residents, who can be underrepresented in a street-based survey, survey quotas were created to reach individuals and heads of family households living in these programs.

Strategic attempts were also made to reach individuals in various geographic locations and of various subset groups such as homeless youth, minority ethnic groups, military veterans, domestic violence survivors, and families. Quotas used for geographic locations, youth and young adults, as well as shelter status. For other subpopulations (veterans, ethnic groups, and domestic violence survivors) peer-to-peer surveyors from those groups were recruited and asked to survey their peers. Empirical data that can be used as the basis for sampling is limited to narrow age categories, geography, and shelter type and status. Further details that would enable better profiling of subpopulation characteristics, such as gender identity and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, veteran status, and various health conditions are not available for sample planning and are broadly informed by previous PIT count results.

During the survey administrator training process and during surveyor trainings, every attempt was made to recruit a diverse group of capable surveyors who represented a broad range of experiences and backgrounds in order to reduce implicit bias, though full elimination of bias is beyond the scope of this effort. Since 2009, the ASR survey methodology has prioritized a peer-to-peer approach to data collection by increasing the number of currently homeless surveyors.

In order to increase randomization of sample respondents, survey workers were trained to employ an “every third encounter” survey approach. Survey workers were instructed to approach every third person they considered to be an eligible survey respondent. If the person declined to take the survey, the survey worker could approach the next eligible person they encountered. After completing a survey, the randomized approach was resumed.

DATA COLLECTION

Care was taken by interviewers to ensure that respondents felt comfortable regardless of the street or shelter location where the survey occurred. During the interviews, respondents were encouraged to be

candid in their responses and were informed that these responses would be framed as general findings, would be kept confidential, and would not be traceable to any single individual to ensure privacy.

DATA ANALYSIS

The survey requested respondents' initials and date of birth so that duplication could be avoided without compromising the respondents' anonymity. Upon completion of the survey effort, an extensive verification process was conducted to eliminate potential duplicates. This process examined respondents' date of birth, initials, gender, ethnicity, length of homelessness, and consistencies in patterns of responses to other survey questions. Outlier surveys were further examined and eliminated if they were thought to be inauthentic.

SURVEY CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

The 2019 Santa Clara County Homeless Survey did not include an equal representation of all homeless experiences. The smaller the subpopulation is, the harder it can be to ensure that it receives full exposure during the survey process. For example, finding families experiencing homelessness presents a challenge and can lead to underrepresentation in the survey results. The same applies to youth and young adults, though care is taken to ensure that youth surveyors are involved, to increase the response rate of youth survey respondents. Locating and surveying individuals who identify as transgender, who have a sexual orientation other than straight, who are experiencing specific health conditions such as AIDS and TBI, and others can pose difficulties and their experiences may not be fully represented in this process.

There may be some variance in the data that individuals experiencing homelessness self-reported. However, using a peer interviewing methodology is believed to allow the respondents to be more candid with their answers and may help reduce the uneasiness of revealing personal information. Further, service providers and county staff members recommended individuals who would be the best suited to conducting interviews and these individuals received comprehensive training about how to conduct interviews. Service providers and county staff also reviewed the surveys to ensure quality responses. Surveys that were considered incomplete or containing false responses were not accepted.

Appendix B: Definitions & Abbreviations

COE – The County Office of Education

Chronic homelessness – Defined by HUD as an unaccompanied individual or head of a family household with a disabling condition who has either continuously experienced homelessness for a year or more or has experienced at least four episodes of homelessness totaling 12 months in the past three years.

Disabling condition – Defined by HUD as a physical, mental, or emotional impairment, including an impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, Post-traumatic stress disorder, or brain injury that is expected to be long-term and impacts the individual's ability to live independently; a developmental disability; or HIV/AIDS.

Emergency shelter – The provision of a safe alternative to the streets, either in a shelter facility or through the use of stabilization rooms. Emergency shelter is short-term, usually for 180 days or fewer. Domestic violence shelters are typically considered a type of emergency shelter, as they provide safe, immediate housing for survivors and their children.

Family – A household with at least one adult and one child under the age of 18.

Homeless – Under the Category 1 definition of homelessness in the HEARTH Act, includes individuals and families living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements, or with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.

HUD – Abbreviation for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Sheltered homeless individuals – Individuals who are living in emergency shelters or transitional housing programs.

Single individual – An unaccompanied adult over the age of 18.

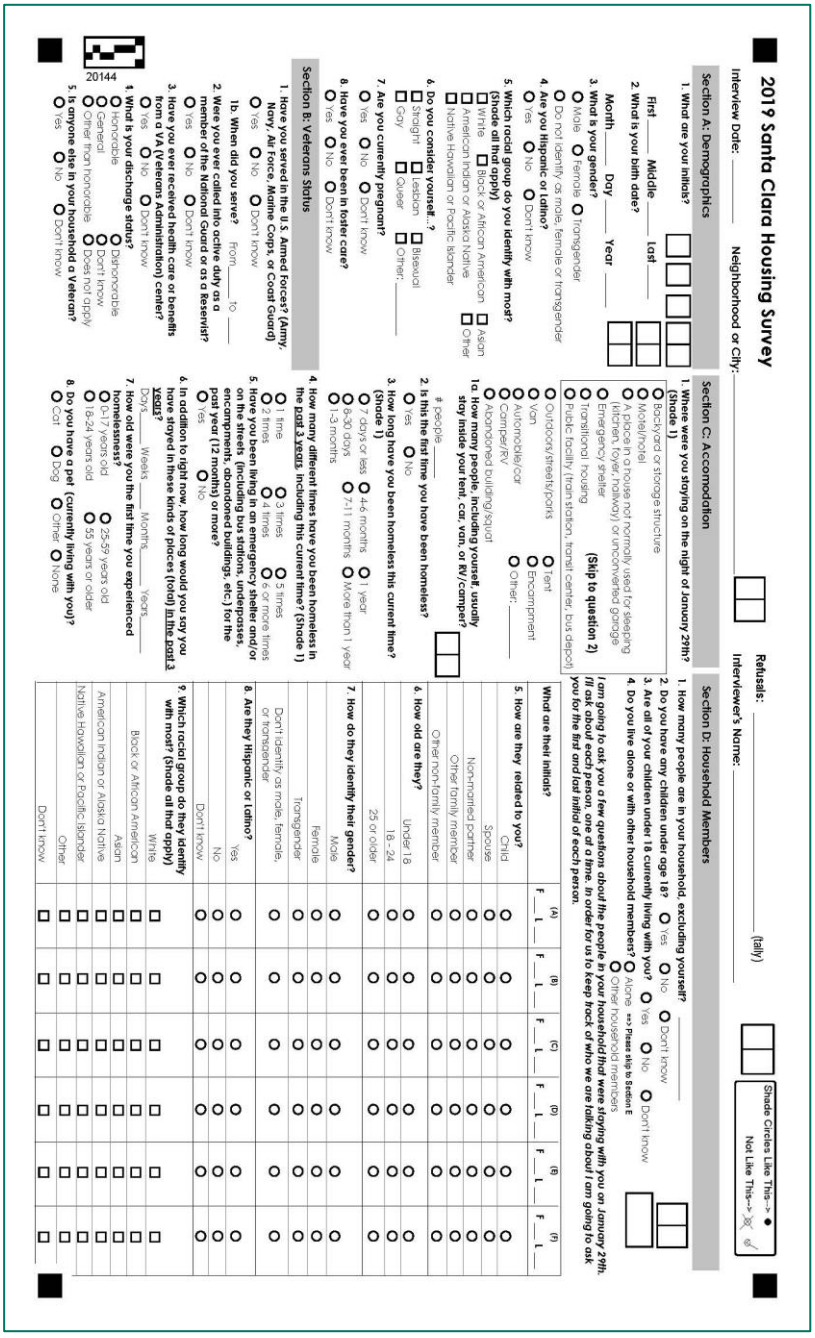
Transitional housing – Housing in which homeless individuals may live up to 24 months and receive supportive services that enable them to live more independently. Supportive services – which help promote residential stability, increased skill level or income, and greater self-determination –may be provided by the organization managing the housing, or coordinated by that organization and provided by other public or private agencies. Transitional housing can be provided in one structure or several structures at one site, or in multiple structures at scattered sites.

Unaccompanied youth – Children under the age of 18 who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian and are not a parent presenting with or sleeping in the same place as their own child(ren).

Unsheltered homeless individuals – Individuals who are living on the streets, in abandoned buildings, storage structures, vehicles, encampments, or any other place unfit for human habitation.

Youth and Young Adults – Young people between the ages of 0-17 (youth) and 18-24 years old (young adults) who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian and are not a parent presenting with or sleeping in the same place as their own child(ren).

Appendix C: Survey Questions



2019 Santa Clara Housing Survey

Interview Date: _____ Neighborhood or City: _____ Refusals: _____ (tally) Interviewer's Name: _____

Shade Circles Like This-> ● Not Like This-> ⊗ ✓

Section A: Demographics

1. What are your initials? First ____ Middle ____ Last ____
2. What is your birth date? Month ____ Day ____ Year ____
3. What is your gender? ○ Male ○ Female ○ Transgender ○ Do not identify as male, female or transgender
4. Are you Hispanic or Latino? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Don't know
5. Which racial group do you identify with most? (Shade all that apply) ☐ White ☐ Black or African American ☐ Asian ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander ☐ Other
6. Do you consider yourself...? ☐ Straight ☐ Lesbian ☐ Bisexual ☐ Gay ☐ Queer ☐ Other: _____
7. Are you currently pregnant? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Don't know
8. Have you ever been in foster care? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Don't know

Section B: Veterans Status

1. Have you served in the U.S. Armed Forces? (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard) ○ Yes ○ No ○ Don't know
   1b. When did you serve? From ____ to ____
2. Were you ever called into active duty as a member of the National Guard or as a Reservist? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Don't know
3. Have you ever received health care or benefits from a VA (Veterans Administration) center? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Don't know
   4. What is your discharge status? ○ Honorable ○ General ○ Other than honorable ○ Dishonorable ○ Don't know ○ Does not apply
   5. Is anyone else in your household a Veteran? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Don't know

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Section C: Accomodation

1. Where were you staying on the night of January 29th? (Shade 1)
   ○ Backyard or storage structure ○ Motel/motel ○ A place in a house not normally used for sleeping (kitchen, foyer, hallway) or unconverted garage ○ Emergency shelter ○ Transitional housing ○ Public facility (train station, transit center, bus depot) ○ Outdoors/streets/parks ○ Van ○ Automobile/car ○ Camper/RV ○ Abandoned building/squat ○ Other: _____ ○ Tent ○ Encampment
   (Skip to question 2)
   1a. How many people, including yourself, usually stay inside your tent, car, van, or RV/camper? # people____
2. Is this the first time you have been homeless? ○ Yes ○ No
3. How long have you been homeless this current time? (Shade 1) ○ 7 days or less ○ 8-30 days ○ 1-3 months ○ 4-6 months ○ 7-11 months ○ 1 year ○ More than 1 year
4. How many different times have you been homeless in the past 3 years including this current time? (Shade 1) ○ 1 time ○ 2 times ○ 3 times ○ 4 times ○ 5 times ○ 6 or more times
5. Have you been living in an emergency shelter and/or on the streets (including bus stations, underpasses, encampments, abandoned buildings, etc.) for the past year (12 months) or more? ○ Yes ○ No
6. In addition to right now, how long would you say you have stayed in these kinds of places (total) in the past 3 years? Days ____ Weeks ____ Months ____ Years ____
7. How old were you the first time you experienced homelessness? ○ 0-17 years old ○ 18-24 years old ○ 25-59 years old ○ 55 years or older
8. Do you have a pet (currently living with you)? ○ Cat ○ Dog ○ Other ○ None

Section D: Household Members

1. How many people are in your household, excluding yourself? _____
2. Do you have any children under age 18? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Don't know
3. Are all of your children under 18 currently living with you? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Don't know
4. Do you live alone or with other household members? ○ Alone ⇒ Please skip to Section E ○ Other household members

I am going to ask you a few questions about the people in your household that were staying with you on January 29th. I'll ask about each person, one at a time. In order for us to keep track of who we are talking about I am going to ask you for the first and last initial of each person.

	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)
What are their initials?	F__ L__	F__ L__	F__ L__	F__ L__	F__ L__	F__ L__
5. How are they related to you?						
○ Child	○	○	○	○	○	○
○ Spouse	○	○	○	○	○	○
○ Non-married partner	○	○	○	○	○	○
○ Other family member	○	○	○	○	○	○
○ Other non-family member	○	○	○	○	○	○
6. How old are they?						
○ Under 18	○	○	○	○	○	○
○ 18 – 24	○	○	○	○	○	○
○ 25 or older	○	○	○	○	○	○
7. How do they identify their gender?						
○ Male	○	○	○	○	○	○
○ Female	○	○	○	○	○	○
○ Transgender	○	○	○	○	○	○
○ Don't identify as male, female, or transgender	○	○	○	○	○	○
8. Are they Hispanic or Latino?						
○ Yes	○	○	○	○	○	○
○ No	○	○	○	○	○	○
○ Don't know	○	○	○	○	○	○
9. Which racial group do they identify with most? (Shade all that apply)						
☐ White	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Black or African American	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Asian	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Don't know	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section E: Residency

1. Where were you living at the time you most recently became homeless? (Shade 1)
○ Santa Clara County ○ Other County in CA ○ Out of State

2. How long have you lived in Santa Clara County? (Shade 1)
○ Less than 1 year ○ 1-4 years ○ 5-9 years ○ 10 years or more

3. Immediately before you became homeless, where were you living? (Shade 1)
○ A home owned or rented by you or your partner
○ Subsidized housing or permanent supportive housing
○ Hospital or treatment facility
○ A home owned or rented by friends/relatives
○ Foster care
○ Jail or prison
○ Motel/hotel
○ Other: _____
○ Juvenile Justice Facility

Section F: Cause and Prevention

1. What do you think is the primary event or condition that led to your homelessness? (Shade 1)
○ Lost job
○ Eviction
○ Incarceration
○ Alcohol or drug use
○ Illness/medical problem
○ Divorce/separation/break up
○ Family violence
○ Argument with family or friend who asked you to leave
○ Spousal/partner violence
○ Mental health issues
○ Landlord raised rent or foreclosure
○ Aging out of foster care
○ Other: _____
○ Don't know

2. What might have prevented you from becoming homeless? (Shade all that apply)
☐ Mental health services
☐ Health insurance/services
☐ Legal assistance
☐ Alcohol/drug counseling
☐ Transportation benefits
☐ Help accessing benefits
☐ Employment assistance
☐ Rent/mortgage assistance
☐ Case management after leaving hospital/jail/prison/juvenile justice facility
☐ Other: _____

3. What is keeping you from getting permanent housing? (Shade all that apply)
☐ Can't afford rent
☐ No job/not enough income
☐ No money for moving costs
☐ No housing available
☐ No transportation
☐ Having children
☐ Criminal record
☐ No ID/Paperwork
☐ Medical/health issues
☐ Bad credit
☐ Eviction record
☐ Immigration issues
☐ Restrictions from probation/parole
☐ Housing process is too difficult
☐ Child care costs
☐ Other: _____

4. If you are not using any type of shelter service, why not? (Shade all that apply)
☐ They are full
☐ They are far away
☐ They are too crowded
☐ Germs
☐ Bugs
☐ I can't stay with my partner/family
☐ I can't stay with my friends
☐ There is nowhere to store my stuff
☐ There are too many rules
☐ They don't accept my pet

5. If affordable permanent housing became available tomorrow, would you accept it ?
○ Yes ○ No ○ Don't know

Section G: Income and Employment

1. What is your total monthly income from all sources?
○ $0-$99
○ $100-$449
○ $450-$749
○ $750-$1,099
○ $1,100-$1,499
○ $1,500-$3,000
○ More than $3,000

2a. What is your current employment status? (Shade 1)
○ Unemployed
○ Employed full-time
○ Employed part-time
○ Employed seasonal/sporadic
==> Skip to Section H

2b. Are you currently...
○ Unable to work
○ Looking for work
○ Not looking for work

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3. In the last 6 months have you....(Shade all)
☐ Lived in long-term housing ☐ Been employed

Section H: Health

1. Do you experience any of the following:

				2. Does it keep you from holding a job, living in stable housing or taking care of yourself?		
a. Any chronic health problem or medical condition(diabetes, cancer)	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse
b. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse
c. Any psychiatric or emotional conditions (depression, schizophrenia)	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse
d. A physical disability	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse
e. A traumatic brain injury to your brain from a bump, blow or wound to the head?	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse
f. Drug or alcohol abuse (including prescription drugs not prescribed for you)	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse
g. An AIDS or an HIV related illness?	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse	○ Yes	○ No	○ Refuse

3. If you live with a spouse, a significant other or parent, do any of the following conditions prevent them from maintaining work or housing? (Shade all that apply)
○ Chronic health problem
○ PTSD
○ Drug or alcohol abuse
○ Dementia/Alzheimers
○ Physical disability
○ Traumatic brain injury
○ Psychiatric or emotional condition
○ Developmental disability
○ HIV/AIDS
○ None of the above

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4. Are you currently experiencing home/domestic violence or abuse? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Decline to state

5. Have you ever been physically, emotionally or sexually abused by a relative, or another person you have stayed with (spouse, partner, sibling, parent)? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Decline to state

6. Do you recieve any disability benefits such as Social Security Disability Income, or Veterans Disability Benefits? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Decline to state

7. Where do you usually go for medical care?
○ VHHP/Homeless Clinic/Mobile Van ○ Emergency Room
○ Primary care ○ VA Hospital/clinic ○ None of the above

8. How many times have you seen the same medical provider in the last 12 months? _____ times

9. Have you taken the VI-SPDAT/Coordinated Entry? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Don't know

Section I: Services and Assistance

1. Are you currently using any of the following services/assistance? (Shade all that apply)
☐ Free meals
☐ Bus passes
☐ Job training/employment services
☐ Community drop in center
☐ Legal assistance
☐ Immigration services
☐ Behavioral health services
☐ Religious based services
☐ Outreach services
☐ Other: _____
☐ Not using any services

2. Are you currently receiving any of the following forms of government assistance? (Shade all that apply)
○ General Assistance (GA)/CAAP
○ Food Stamps/SNAP/WIC/CalFresh
○ Any VA Disability Compensation
○ Other Veterans benefits (GI, Health)
○ Social Security
○ SSI/SSDI/Disability
○ Medi-cal/Medicare
○ CalWORKs/TANF
○ No receiving any form of government assistance

3. If you are not receiving any government assistance, why not? (Shade all that apply)
○ Don't think you are eligible
○ Don't have ID
○ No permanent address
○ Never applied
○ Benefits were cut-off
○ Immigration issues
○ Paperwork too difficult
○ Don't know where to go
○ Turned down
○ Applied and waiting for response
○ Other: _____
○ Don't want government assistance

Section J: Criminal Justice System

1. Have you spent a night in jail in the last 12 months? ○ Yes ○ No

2. Are you currently on probation or parole? ○ Yes ○ No

3. Have you accessed re-entry services? ○ Yes ○ No

Appendix D: Table of Figures

FIGURE 1. Persons Experiencing Homelessness in Santa Clara County 11
FIGURE 2. Persons Experiencing Homelessness by Shelter Status 11
FIGURE 3. Homeless Population by Jurisdiction and Shelter Status 12
FIGURE 4. Homeless Population by County Supervisorial District 12
FIGURE 5. Homeless Population by Gender 13
FIGURE 6. Homeless Population by Hispanic or Latinx Origin 13
FIGURE 7. Homeless Population by Race 14
FIGURE 8. Respondents by Age 16
FIGURE 9. Respondents by Gender 16
FIGURE 10. Detail of Respondents with LGBTQ+ Identity 17
FIGURE 11. Respondents by Hispanic or Latinx Origin 17
FIGURE 12. Respondents by Race 18
FIGURE 13. History of Foster Care 18
FIGURE 14. Place of Residence at The Most Recent Time Experiencing Homeless 19
FIGURE 15. Living Arrangements Immediately Before Becoming Homeless (Top Responses in 2019) 20
FIGURE 16. Current Living Arrangements 21
FIGURE 17. Current Episode Is the First TIme Experiencing Homelessness 22
FIGURE 18. Age When Experienced Homelessness for the First Time 22
FIGURE 19. Length of Current Episode of Homelessness 23
FIGURE 20. Primary Cause of Homelessness (Top Responses in 2019) 23
FIGURE 21. What May Have Prevented Homelessness (Top Responses in 2019) 24
FIGURE 22. Obstacles to Obtaining Permanent Housing (Top Responses in 2019) 24
FIGURE 23. Receipt of Government Assistance (Top Responses in 2019) 25
FIGURE 24. Reasons Not Receiving Government Assistance (Top Responses in 2019) 26
FIGURE 25. Receipt of Other Services or Assistance (Top Responses in 2019) 26
FIGURE 26. Employment Status 27
FIGURE 27. Unemployed by Work status 27
FIGURE 28. Monthly Income by Employment Status 28
FIGURE 29. Health Conditions 28
FIGURE 30. History of Being Physically, Emotionally or Sexually Abused 29
FIGURE 31. Spent a Night in Jail or Prison in the Last 12 Months 30
FIGURE 32. Subpopulations as a Percentage of Overall Population 31
FIGURE 33. Chronically Homeless SubPopulation with Trend 33
FIGURE 34. Chronically Homeless SubPopulation by Shelter Status 33
FIGURE 35. Chronically Homeless SubPopulation by Gender 34
FIGURE 36. Chronically Homeless Survey Respondents by Race 34
FIGURE 37. Primary Cause of Homelessness (Top Responses) 35
FIGURE 38. Health Conditions 35

FIGURE 39. Veterans Experiencing Homelessness 37
FIGURE 40. Veterans Experiencing Homelessness by Shelter Status 38
FIGURE 41. Veterans Experiencing Chronic Homelessness 38
FIGURE 42. Veterans Experiencing Homelssness by Gender 38
FIGURE 43. Veterans Experiencing Homelessness by Race 39
FIGURE 44. Veterans Experiencing Homelessness by Ethnicity 39
FIGURE 45. Primary Cause of Homelessness (Top Responses) 40
FIGURE 46. Health Conditions 40
FIGURE 47. Access to Services 41
FIGURE 48. Spent a Night in Jail or Prison in the Last 12 Months 41
FIGURE 49. Families Experiencing Homelessness 42
FIGURE 50. Families Experiencing Homelessness by Shelter Status 43
FIGURE 51. Families experiencing Homelessness by Hispanic/Latinx Origin 43
FIGURE 52. Families Experiencing Homelessness by Hispanic/Latinx Origin 44
FIGURE 53. Families Experiencing Homelessness by Race 44
FIGURE 54. Past/Current Experience of Violence Among Families Experiencing Homelessness 45
FIGURE 55. Primary Cause of Homelessness (Top Responses) 45
FIGURE 56. Health Conditions 46
FIGURE 57. Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness 48
FIGURE 58. Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness by Shelter Status 48
FIGURE 59. Youth and Young Adults by Gender 49
FIGURE 60. Youth and Young Adults by Race 49
FIGURE 61. Primary Cause of Homelessness (Top Responses) 50
FIGURE 62. Health Conditions 50
FIGURE 63. History of Foster Care 51

Appendix E: Figure Sources

All Point in Time Count Data: The figure source is ASR, Santa Clara County Homeless Count and Survey, for the years varying from 2005 to 2019.

All Homeless Survey Findings: The figure source is ASR, Santa Clara County Homeless Count and Survey, for the years varying from 2005 to 2019.

All Subpopulation Data: The figure source is ASR, Santa Clara County Homeless Count and Survey, for the years varying from 2005 to 2019.

All Census Data: U.S. Census Bureau. (January 2017). American Community Survey 2015 1-Year Estimates, Table DP05: ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates. Retrieved from http://factfinder2.census.gov



Santa Clara County

HOMELESS CENSUS & SURVEY

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT

2019