OKC POINT IN TIME 2020 | SNAPSHOT OF HOMELESSNESS

IN MEMORY

Unfortunately, many people who experience homelessness die before they get the help they need to secure a place of their own. Dying on the street is not peaceful. Because people in the homeless population experience disproportionately high rates of stress, violence, health problems and the inability to control food and medication intake, it is reasonable to conclude this list would be shorter if the people on it had a home and regular access to health care.

William A.	Freddie H.	Johnny S.
Larry A.	Randy K.	Lisa T.
Ashley B.	Samuel L.	Larry T.
Lisa B.	Mark L.	Darren T.
Michael B.	Jack L.	Levi T.
Kevin B.	Ira L.	Sylvester T.
Marilyn D.	Daniel M.	Tony T.
John D.	Nicholas M.	James V.
Harry D.	Michael N.	Natalie V.
David F.	Junior P.	Kim W.
Toru G.	Carolyn P.	Ricky W.
Bryan G.	Robert P.	Kenneth W.
Edward H.	Charles S.	Alvin Y.

SUMMARY

This year's Point in Time report is being published during an unprecedented time of upheaval in Oklahoma City and around the world. The coronavirus pandemic and the resulting economic catastrophe have turned lives upside down. We may only begin to see the full impact on the population of people experiencing homelessness in OKC when work on the 2021 Point in Time count starts.

The snapshot in this report allows OKC to see where trends were going before the pandemic, which informs projections on what comes next. The City and service providers use the count to quantify and prioritize housing and service needs of people who are homeless. This is a difficult population to count accurately. Many factors can affect the count, like weather and counting strategies.

Based on the number of people found on the day of the count, the 2020 Point in Time shows Oklahoma City's numbers were trending in the wrong direction even before the pandemic. The number of unsheltered people counted increased by 45% to 557, and the total population of people who are homeless increased by 24% to 1,583. The number of people considered chronically homeless (continuously homeless for a year or at least four times in three years) rose to 441, 60% higher than 2019. The number of people in emergency shelter also rose by 15% to 850, and there was a 10% increase to 166 people using transitional housing.

But while the number of people counted on that single night increased, it doesn't necessarily mean homelessness has increased by the same amount. This one-day count shouldn't be considered an exclusive measuring tool. In the past year, the community has increased street outreach efforts, making counting easier and more organized this year. The increase in unsheltered people accounted for more than half of the overall increase, so better counting strategies likely contributed to the increase. Experts expect those numbers to continue to worsen by the time of the 2021 count. That fear is based in part on the stark reality of housing costs in OKC. Two people working full-time on Oklahoma's minimum wage can't afford a two-bedroom rental home at fair market value without exceeding the recommended 30% of income to be spent on housing, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition. The OKC metro is the least affordable area in the state for a working family.

Oklahoma City's future efforts will be shaped in part by Mayor David Holt's Task Force on Homelessness. Working with a consultant, the Task Force will develop a five-year strategy to address homelessness and the factors that lead to it in OKC.

Solutions

Oklahoma County lacks more than 4,500 affordable housing units. More no-barrier and low-barrier housing would help OKC meet demand, and reduce the rising population of people experiencing homelessness. With rising unemployment rates and some of the highest eviction rates in the U.S. before the pandemic, more affordable housing units will be needed to accommodate the expected swell of people in financial crisis. Experts think it could be two years or more before normal economic conditions return.

More affordable housing would also make it easier for people to get a foothold on self-sufficiency, and provide more options for people who could easily slide into homelessness without it.

Oklahoma has some of the highest national rates of mental illness, substance abuse and domestic violence that create strong headwinds.

Help is coming this decade. In December, voters approved the MAPS 4 program, which includes $50 million to fight homelessness with "housing first," affordable housing and more. Investment from service providers must continue.
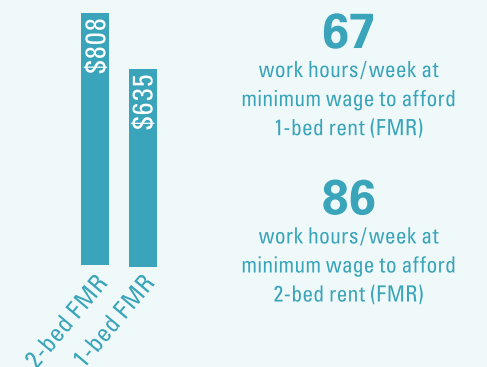
> "Two people working full-time on Oklahoma's minimum wage can't afford a two-bedroom rental home at fair market value without exceeding the recommended 30% of income to be spent on housing."

OKLAHOMA HOUSING

Most Expensive	Housing Wage
Oklahoma City	$16.67/hr
Tulsa	$16.63/hr
Beckham County	$16.48/hr
Greer County	$15.33/hr
Payne County	$15.27/hr

Housing Affordability	
minimum wage	$7.25/hr
average renter wage	$14.54/hr
2-bed housing wage	$15.54/hr
number of renter households	504,505
% renters	34%

Monthly Rent	Amount
rent affordable at AMI	$1,654
rent affordable w/full time mean wage	$756
rent affordable w/full time minimum wage	$377
rent affordable at 30% AMI	$496
rent affordable on SSI	$244

$808 2-bed FMR
$635 1-bed FMR

67 work hours/week at minimum wage to afford 1-bed rent (FMR)

86 work hours/week at minimum wage to afford 2-bed rent (FMR)

FMR: Fair Market Rent   AMI: Area Medain Income

ABOUT THE COUNT

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandates that all communities receiving federal funds through McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants conduct a Point in Time (PIT) count. Each community is required to individually plan and carry out its PIT on a single day during the last 10 days in January, at least every other year.

Oklahoma City conducts our count annually, this year on Jan. 23. This one-day count is only a snapshot, and is not designed to be a complete analysis of the issues surrounding homelessness. This report provides a longitudinal analysis of the City's PIT data from the 2016 to 2020 counts. Its findings are one perspective on the state of homelessness in the city on only one day. Data gathered during the PIT and described in this report should be considered not an exact and exhaustive number, but a useful tool to understand the scope of the problem and identify areas for improvement.

The PIT collects data from three different household types:

1. households with at least one adult and one child

2. households without children

3. households of children only

The report includes a sheltered count of how many people are in shelters, transitional housing programs and an unsheltered count of how many people are living outdoors. Data from households that are "doubling up" with family or friends, incarcerated, in treatment facilities, emergency rooms or hotel rooms are not included in this report.

DEFINITIONS

Based on guidelines from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Area Median Income (AMI)
Midpoint of a region's income distribution. Half of the families in a region earn more than the median, and half earn less. Extremely low incomes are considered at or below 30% of the AMI.

Continuum of Care (COC)
Local planning body responsible for coordinating the full range of homeless services in a geographic area.

Emergency Shelter (ES)
Short-term lodging for people experiencing a housing crisis.

Fair Market Rent (FMR)
40% of typical standard-quality housing units are available at or below this price in an area.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
Computerized data collection application for capturing client-level information on the characteristics and service needs of people experiencing homelessness over time.

Housing Inventory Count (HIC)
A report on the number of program beds and/or housing units available and in use on the night of the count.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
Permanent housing with integrated wrap-around services for people who are homeless and have a disabling condition.

Sheltered homeless
People living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter temporary living shelter.

Transitional Housing (TH)
Temporary housing and services for people who have multiple barriers to obtaining housing and employment.

Unsheltered homeless
People with a nighttime residence not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation.

Location Counts

Emergency Shelters

Nearly all of OKC's emergency shelters enter information about daily usage of emergency shelter beds into HMIS and gather that data for the count. A survey gathered data on residents of shelters who don't participate in HMIS.

Transitional Housing

Transitional housing data for the night of the count comes from the HMIS database. For agencies not using HMIS, transitional housing staff completed computer-based survey forms and returned data to the PIT committee. This data was collected and counted separately to determine total counts. Duplicate entries were eliminated.

Meal Sites

On Jan. 23, volunteers visited sites where free meals were served. This site count focused on identifying and interviewing people who were homeless but did not stay in a homeless shelter that night.

Street

Before the count, a list of locations where people who are homeless are known to sleep and congregate was compiled. These locations included: homeless camps, parks, bridges, libraries, abandoned buildings and downtown. Teams of volunteers led by trained outreach workers visited these locations to engage people.

Day Shelters

Volunteers visited the WestTown Day Shelter and the Sanctuary Women's Development Center, and conducted surveys throughout the day.

COUNTING METHODS

In 2020, the count included standardized survey forms to collect information from people living on the streets, at meal sites, or in locations that don't participate in the local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The count employed HMIS to collect information from agencies that enter data about people who are homeless. The survey instruments were designed to mirror the HMIS data elements, allowing the survey data to be consistent with the sheltered data from HMIS. All PIT volunteers got training to properly administer the survey.

To reduce the number of duplicate surveys, the instrument included the first name, last initial and birth date. Information from the surveys was entered into a database and subsequently merged with HMIS data. Duplicates were identified electronically, then reviewed as part of a PIT Committee data quality check.

Volunteers entered the information from the surveys into an online database in real-time as survey teams returned them. Entering the data on the same day allows for staff to easily check for duplication and review preliminary numbers within a matter of days.

Coordinated Outreach

Oklahoma City has continued to refine the renewed coordinated outreach effort started before the 2019 count. Service providers can more easily help people who need it with better tracking of where outreach is needed, reduced overlap and improved organization.

The partnership between OKC Homeless Services and the Homeless Alliance, and seven other organizations, generates a color-coded map showing camps, abandoned buildings, vehicles and places where people sleep in the open. The map is the basis for planning coordinated outreach.

During the developing pandemic, teams made daily visits to assigned geographical areas. They brought meals and food bank-donated food, personal protective equipment (PPE) and items for hygiene for people in camps. It helped them remain as isolated as possible, reducing the chance infection spreads throughout the homeless population and other residents.

homelessness

A person or family who:

> lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.

> immediately loses their primary residence.

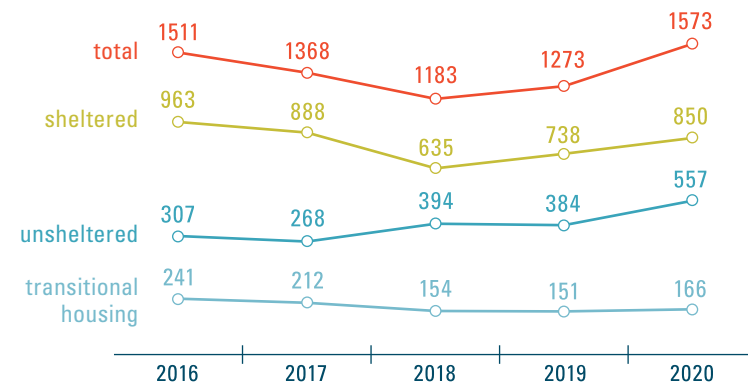> is fleeing domestic violence with no other residence, or without resources and support networks to secure one.

1,573
HOMELESS
IN OKC
JANUARY 23, 2020

"Experts expect numbers to continue to worsen by the time of the 2021 count."

— VARIABLES —

weather • counting methods
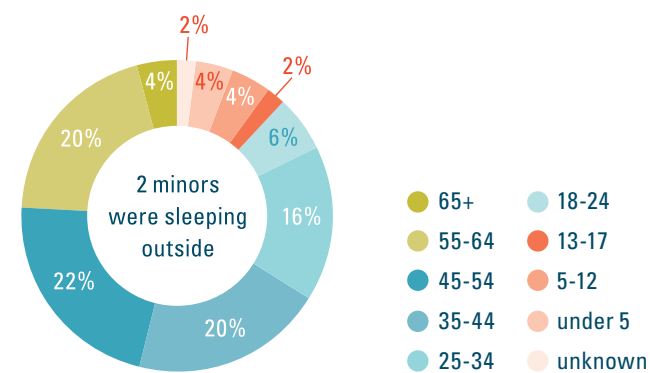housing progress • economy
service improvements

TOTAL HOMELESS

Oklahoma City's Point in Time database has records dating to 2009. Recordkeeping was inconsistent and spotty before then. But the total number of people in the 2020 count, and the number of unsheltered people counted, are the highest since 2007.

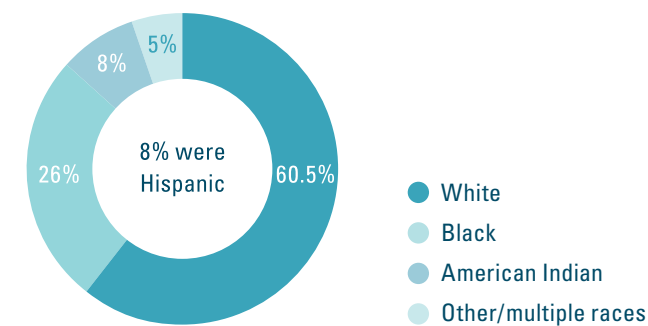|	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
total	1511	1368	1183	1273	1573
sheltered	963	888	635	738	850
unsheltered	307	268	394	384	557
transitional housing	241	212	154	151	166

AGE

Though the overall number of people in each age group may fluctuate from year to year, as a percentage of the total population, each group is fairly stable.

2 minors were sleeping outside

- 2%
- 4% 4% 4% 2%
- 6%
- 16%
- 20%
- 22%
- 20%

- 65+
- 55-64
- 45-54
- 35-44
- 25-34
- 18-24
- 13-17
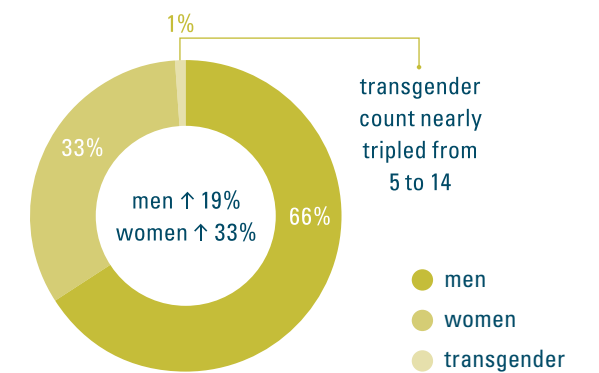- 5-12
- under 5
- unknown

RACE & ETHNICITY

Race and ethnicity changes were relatively flat from 2019 to 2020. Of groups with a large sample size, white people had the biggest percentage change, increasing from 58% to 61%. Seven were Asian and 1 was Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

8% were Hispanic

- 5%
- 8%
- 26%
- 60.5%

- White
- Black
- American Indian
- Other/multiple races

GENDER

Men are less likely to be sheltered than women. In 2019, 34% of all homeless men surveyed were unsheltered compared to 22% of women. One person was gender non-conforming.

men ↑ 19% women ↑ 33%

- 1%
- 33%
- 66%

transgender count nearly tripled from 5 to 14

- men
- women
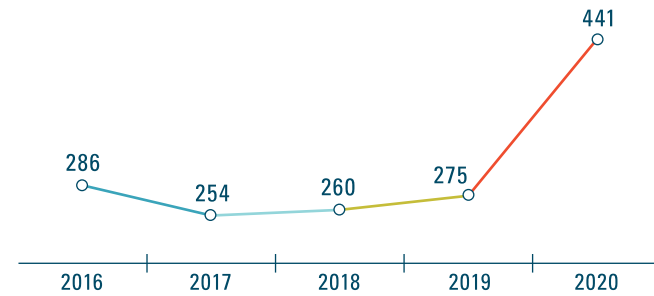- transgender

CHRONICALLY HOMELESS

chronically homeless
An unaccompanied homeless person with a disabling condition, or a family with a disabled adult head-of-household, who has either been continuously homeless for a year, or at least four times in three years with a combined total of at least 12 months.

Of all the homeless, the chronically homeless have more frequent emergency room visits, hospitalizations and contact with law enforcement. Housing greatly reduces these occurrences and the associated trauma and costs.

80%
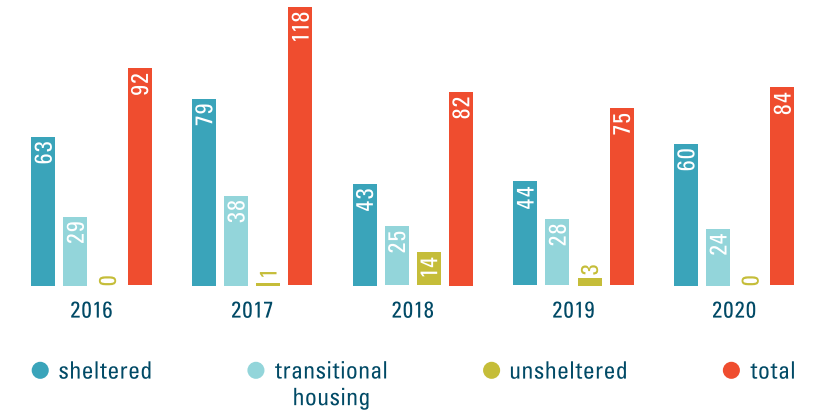ARE UNSHELTERED

Permanent supportive housing is a proven solution to chronic homelessness.

Chart:
- 2016: 286
- 2017: 254
- 2018: 260
- 2019: 275
- 2020: 441

FAMILIES

families
Homeless household living with at least one minor.

17% of homeless population

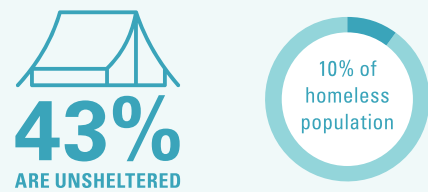NONE WERE UNSHELTERED

2 in 3 members of homess families are **minors**

Homelessness during infancy and toddlerhood has been linked to later child welfare involvement and early school failure. OKC addresses this using the Emergency Solutions Grant and the Supportive Housing Program. These programs help struggling families stay in their homes and provide services to re-house those who are homeless. There were 264 people in 84 households in this year's PIT family count.

Chart:
- 2016: sheltered 63, transitional 29, unsheltered 0, total 92
- 2017: sheltered 79, transitional 38, unsheltered 1, total 118
- 2018: sheltered 43, transitional 25, unsheltered 14, total 82
- 2019: sheltered 44, transitional 28, unsheltered 3, total 75
- 2020: sheltered 60, transitional 24, unsheltered 0, total 84

● sheltered   ● transitional housing   ● unsheltered   ● total
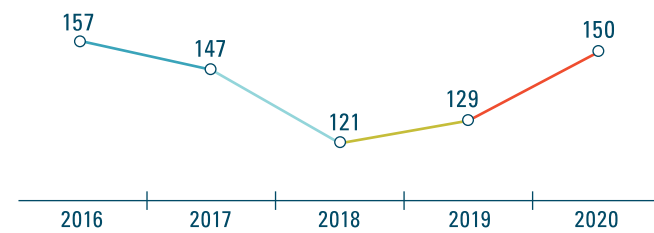
VETERANS

veteran
Someone who has served on active duty in the U.S. armed forces. This doesn't include inactive military reserves or National Guard, unless the person was called to active duty.

43%
ARE UNSHELTERED

10% of homeless population

39% are chronically homeless

each 🧍 = 10 cases

To address the problem of veteran homelessness, housing providers together with the Veteran's Affairs Supportive Housing Program (VASH), Supportive Services for Veteran's Families (SSVF) and other providers of veteran services meet several times a month for Veteran's Coordinated Case Management (VCCM).

With everyone in the same room, they use a combination of resources to house clients from the community's by-name list of veterans who need housing. Throughout 2019, this collaborative put a roof over the heads of more than 300 veterans.
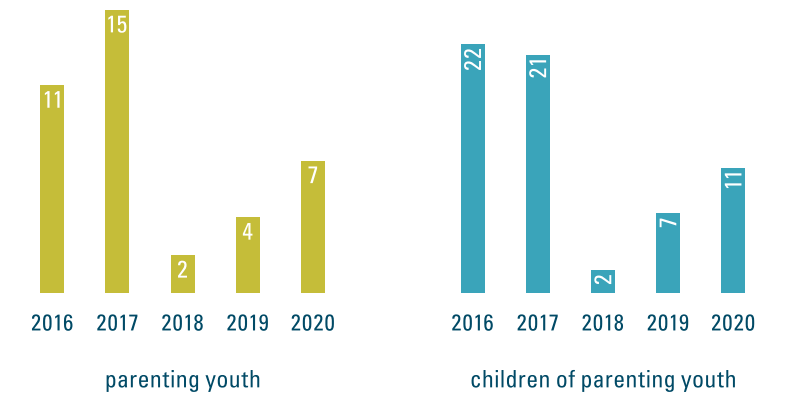
Chart:
- 2016: 157
- 2017: 147
- 2018: 121
- 2019: 129
- 2020: 150

PARENTING YOUTH

parenting youth
Youth who identify as the parent or legal guardian or one or more children who are present with, or sleeping in the same place as, the youth parent, and where there is no one over age 24 in the household.
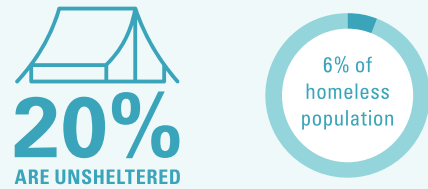
Pregnant and parenting youth experiencing homelessness face many common challenges, although each has a unique story. Helping young parents provides stability for two generations.

"All parenting youth were ages 18 - 24. No parenting youth households were unsheltered."

Chart - parenting youth:
- 2016: 11
- 2017: 15
- 2018: 2
- 2019: 4
- 2020: 7

Chart - children of parenting youth:
- 2016: 22
- 2017: 21
- 2018: 2
- 2019: 7
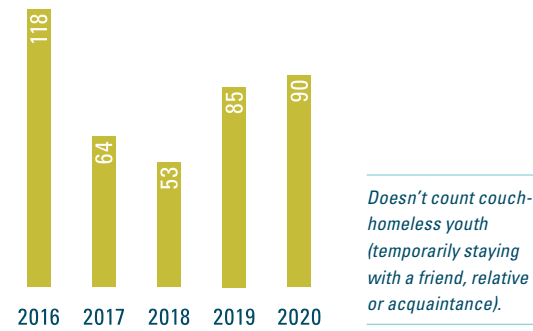- 2020: 11

unaccompanied youth

People under age 25 who aren't presenting or sleeping in the same place as their parent or legal guardian, including single people, couples and groups. Most are ages 18-24.

20%
ARE UNSHELTERED

6% of homeless population

MORE LIKELY TO BE INVOLVED IN OR EXPERIENCE
> violence
> sex assult
> crime
> physical illness
> severe anxiety & depression

special needs

Someone living in an emergency shelter, transitional housing or living outdoors who has one or more disabling conditions.

This includes adults who self-reported living with mental illness, alcohol or drug addiction, HIV/AIDS or are experiencing homelessness because they're fleeing domestic violence.

53%
OF THOSE WITH HIV/AIDS WERE UNSHELTERED

percent of homeless population
2%
8%
26%
33%

- HIV/AIDS
- domestic violence
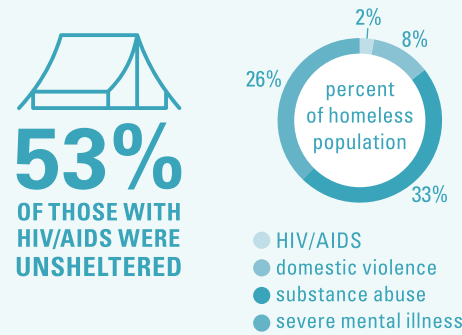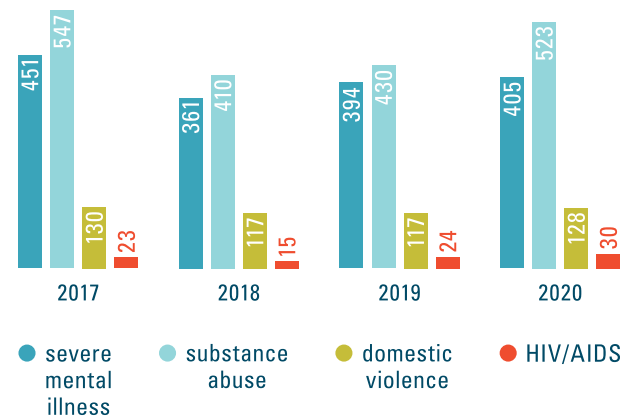- substance abuse
- severe mental illness

UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH

It's harder to count unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness because they often try not to be located. Some also don't access services because they don't know about them. Many may be nervous about mandated reporting to parents or guardians, or about perceived rules for accessing the services. Oklahoma City Public Schools counted 2,474 homeless students at the end of the 2019-20 school year. Of those, 2,075 were couch homeless.

118 | 64 | 53 | 85 | 90
2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020

Doesn't count couch-homeless youth (temporarily staying with a friend, relative or acquaintance).

SPECIAL NEEDS

People who reported having more than one condition are included in more than one category. Before 2018, people were included in the domestic violence count if they reported ever experiencing it. But for the last 3 years, HUD requires the data reported on domestic violence survivors be limited to those who are currently experiencing homelessness because they are fleeing domestic violence.

451 | 547 | 130 | 23
2017
361 | 410 | 117 | 15
2018
394 | 430 | 117 | 24
2019
405 | 523 | 128 | 30
2020

- severe mental illness
- substance abuse
- domestic violence
- HIV/AIDS

BED COUNTS & USE RATES

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Program & Organization	Total Beds	PIT Count	Use Rate
Pershing Center / City Care	60	54	90%
Westlawn / City Care	24	23	96%
Westlawn 2 / City Care	26	17	65%
CEC-302 Community Enhancement Corp.	28	17	61%
CEC-602 Community Enhancement Corp.	12	12	100%
CEC-702 Community Enhancement Corp.	24	17	71%
Building Foundations for Families Homeless Alliance	85	85	100%
Journey Home PSH / Homeless Alliance	60	58	97%
Hope Chronic 32 / HOPE	32	39	122%
Hope Housing Plus / HOPE	17	26	153%
Hope Partners in Housing / HOPE	31	39	126%
Shelter Plus Care - 39 / HOPE	39	39	100%
LTS OKC Apartments Mental Health Association OK	10	10	100%
MHA Supportive Housing Mental Health Association OK	70	61	87%
MHAO Home Now Mental Health Association OK	8	6	75%
Palo Duro I & II Neighborhood Services	36	34	94%
Firstep Graduate Housing OKC Metro Alliance	7	6	86%
Lodges Red Rock Behavioral Health Serv.	14	11	79%
Park Side Red Rock Behavioral Health Serv.	12	10	83%
*VASH / VA	276	270	98%
Total	**871**	**834**	**96%**

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

Program & Organization	Total Beds	PIT Count	Use Rate
Winds House / AIDS Support Program	12	12	100%
Transitional Housing / Catholic Charities	18	14	78%
Hope House / Hope House OKC	32	28	88%
Carolyn Williams - Transitional Neighborhood Services	11	10	91%
Gatewood / Neighborhood Services	8	9	112%
Martha's House / Neighborhood Services	28	28	100%
Phoenix House Phoenix Recovery Institute	19	19	100%
Transitional Living Program / Pivot	3	3	100%
Bungalows / RAIN OK	7	4	57%
Park View Place Red Rock Behavioral Health Service	26	23	88%
VA / Friendship House	16	16	100%
Total	**180**	**166**	**92%**

EMERGENCY SHELTER

Program & Organization	Total Beds	PIT Count	Use Rate
Emergency Shelter / City Rescue Mission	510	407	80%
Emergency Shelter Grace Rescue Mission	80	62	78%
Emergency Shelter / Jesus House	97	97	100%
Carolyn Williams Shelter Neighborhood Services	6	4	67%
First Step for Men / OKC Metro Alliance	4	4	100%
First Step for Women OKC Metro Alliance	8	8	100%
Emergency Shelter / Pivot	3	3	100%
Park View Place ES Red Rock Behavioral Health Services	6	5	83%
Shelter / Salvation Army	109	145	133%
Youth Shelter / Sisu Youth	20	20	100%
Emergency Senior Shelter Sunbeam Family Services	11	5	45%
HCHV/EH - Serenity Recovery Outreach Community / VA	10	10	100%
YWCA ES / YWCA	136	80	59%
Total	**1,000**	**850**	**85%**

The VASH program is not required to enter into HMIS. Data is collected and aggregated with supportive housing programs.

People living in permanent supportive housing are not considered to be homeless and are not included in the total count numbers.

Client level data regarding victims of domestic violence is de-identified before aggregate reporting.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Oklahoma City Continuum of Care Point in Time Planning Committee is grateful for all of the people and agencies who contributed time, staff, resources and effort to the count. It could not be completed without support and dedication from many service providers working daily to provide safe housing for people experiencing the crisis of homelessness in OKC. We owe a distinct acknowledgement to the volunteers who administered the Point in Time survey, the Data Committee of the Coalition to End Poverty for developing this year's survey, the Coordinated Outreach Team for helping to map street count locations, and to The Homeless Alliance for helping to recruit and train volunteers.

Finally, this report would not have been possible without the people who completed surveys and shared their experiences and reasons for homelessness. Together, they provide us with a better understanding of the local magnitude of homelessness and inspire us to continue working to ensure that homelessness in OKC is brief, rare and non-recurring. Contributors of the 2020 Point in Time count are listed below.

City Care

Catholic Charities

City Rescue Mission

EMBARK

Goodwill Industries of Central OK

Grace Rescue Mission

Heartline 211

Homeless Alliance

HOPE Community Services

HopeHouse

Jesus House

Joe's Addiction

Mental Health Association Oklahoma

Metropolitan Library System

Neighborhood Services Organization

NorthCare

OKC Metro Alliance

OKCPD Homeless Outreach Unit

OKC Housing Authority

OKC Public Schools

Oklahoma Department of Corrections

Oklahoma Department of Human Services

Oklahoma Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse

Oklahoma County Social Services

Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency

Oklahoma VA Healthcare System

Pivot

Positive Tomorrows

Red Rock Behavioral Health Services

Salvation Army of Central OK

SISU Youth

Upward Transitions

Urban League of Greater OKC

U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development - OK Field Office

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

YWCA of OKC

LOCAL RESOURCES

Heartline • Dial 2-1-1
They will refer you to one of the resources listed

Catholic Charities
catholiccharitiesok.org

City Care
citycareokc.org

City Rescue Mission
cityrescue.org

Grace Rescue Mission
(405) 232-5766

Greater Oklahoma City Urban League
urbanleagueok.org

Homeless Alliance
homelessalliance.org

HopeHouse
hopehouseokc.com

HOPE Community Services
hopecsi.org

Jesus House
jesushouseokc.org

Latino Community Development Agency
lcdaok.com

Neighborhood Services Organization
nsookc.org

OKC Metro Alliance
okcmetroalliance.com

Oklahoma AIDS Care Fund
okaidscarefund.com

Phoenix House
(405) 525-0201

RAIN OK
rainoklahoma.org

Red Rock Behavioral Health
red-rock.com

Salvation Army of Central Oklahoma
salvationarmyokcac.org

SISU Youth
sisuyouth.org

Sunbeam Family Services
sunbeamfamilyservices.org

Upward Transitions
upwardtransitions.org

Winds House
windshouseokc.org

Pivot
pivotok.org

YWCA
ywcaokc.org

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"Homelessness & Health: What's the Connection?"
National Heath Care for the Homeless Council (2011)

HUD Homeless Data Exchange
hudhdx.info

National Center on Family Homelessness,
American Institutes for Research
familyhomelessness.org

"Oklahoma City Affordable Housing Strategy"
Oklahoma City Housing Authority (2017)

"Out of Reach 2019"
National Low Income Housing Coalition (2019)

PHOTO CREDITS

Nathan Poppe & Curbside Chronicle

"As long as poverty, injustice and gross inequality exist in our world, none of us can truly rest."

-Nelson Mandela-