2013
POINT-IN-TIME
Count of Homelessness in Portland/Multnomah County, Oregon

A Picture that Strengthens Our Resolve

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. The Point in Time Count is a snapshot of homelessness in Multnomah County on one night this year in January. And the picture is not good. It shows more people sleeping outside in every neighborhood. It shows families flooding shelter doors. And it shows that homelessness is greater among our neighbors of color.

It's certainly not the picture that comes to mind when people think about the beautiful, highly popular metro region where we live, work and raise our families.

And yet:

On a single night in January, more than 2,869 people in Multnomah County were homeless. They were families with children, veterans, women fleeing domestic violence, unaccompanied youth and disabled adults, men and women of every age.

Deborah Kafoury
Commissioner
Multnomah County

Dan Saltzman
Commissioner
City of Portland

The number of people who need help finding and affording a safe place to sleep at night is growing at an alarming rate. There are many reasons behind the increase including the lasting effects of the recession, joblessness, and a tight rental market. Inadequate access to health care, including treatment for addictions and mental health, makes the problem worse. While many people can rely on the generosity and support of friends and family, more and more cannot.

Yet, homelessness is not an intractable social problem. On that same January night, our community assisted more than 6,400 people into housing. And in the past eight years, more than 12,000 in Multnomah County were able to end their homelessness with our help.

Homelessness is an issue that we can solve.

This report should deepen our resolve to build on what has worked. Our community has an excellent array of tools like rapid re-housing, flexible rent assistance, and permanent supportive housing to end homelessness one person at a time. With resources - volunteers, funding, landlords, philanthropy and business – we can bring these efforts to scale and help those in our community who need it.

The Point in Time Count demands that we ask: What do we want our community to look like? How do we treat those when they hit hard times or are physically not able to take care of themselves? What should we teach our children about what a strong, healthy community looks like?

Please join us in making ending homelessness a priority. Together, we can change this picture.

The 2013 point-in-time count of homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County provides a snapshot of the individuals and families experiencing homelessness on the night of Wednesday, January 30, 2013. The data collected from the count help the City of Portland, Multnomah County and their nonprofit partners plan for the funding and services needed to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness in our community. Conducting the count also ensures our community's continued eligibility for state and federal funding.

Data for the point-in-time count come from the Street Count, which is coordinated by the Portland Housing Bureau, and the One Night Shelter Count, which is coordinated by Multnomah County. Since 2011, the findings from the two counts have been released together in a joint report.

HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS

Transitional Housing 1,572 · Unsheltered 1,895 · Emergency Shelter 974

The 2013 count identified 2,869 people who were "literally homeless" – sleeping in an emergency shelter or unsheltered – on the night of January 30, 2013. This number includes 1,895 people who were unsheltered (sleeping outside, in a vehicle, or abandoned building) and 974 people who were sleeping in an emergency shelter.

An additional 1,572 people were sleeping in transitional housing on the night of the count.

Among those who were literally homeless on the night of the count, there were 474 individuals in families with children (including 253 children), 2,361 individual adults over age 18, and 34 unaccompanied youth under age 18.

LITERALLY HOMELESS

Unaccompanied youth (under 18) 34 · Families with children 474 · Individual adults 2,361

The count did not capture comprehensive information on households who were doubled up, but an analysis of available data suggests that there may be four times as many people in that situation as are on the streets or in shelters. The count also documented 4,832 people who received rent assistance or permanent supportive housing on the night of the count who would most likely have been homeless without that support.

Due to the inherent difficulty of obtaining a complete count of everyone who is homeless on a given night, the actual number of people who were homeless in Multnomah County on January 30 is likely higher than the number documented in this report. Furthermore, many more people experience homelessness over the course of a year than on a single night. Point-in-time counts provide a useful profile of the homeless population on one night, but they are merely a snapshot in time. They do not capture the full picture of homelessness over time, and they do not enable us to understand seasonal or episodic variations in the homeless population and in service use patterns over the course of the year.
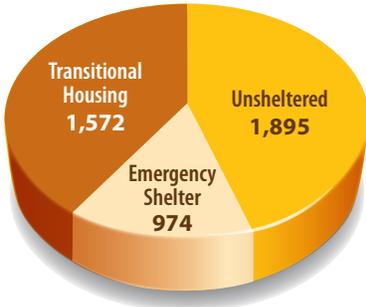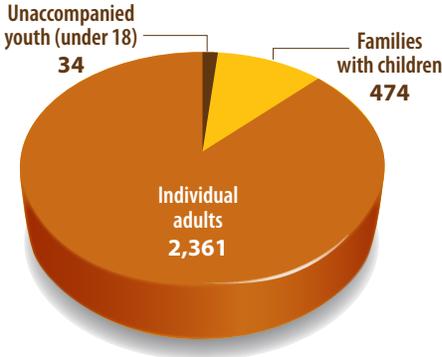
Changes in Levels of Homelessness from 2011 to 2013

The point-in-time count's findings represent an increase in the levels of homelessness in Multnomah County since the most recent combined Street Count and One Night Shelter Count took place in 2011. The extent of the increase depends on how we define homelessness:

Levels of Homelessness

Unsheltered
People who are sleeping outside, in a vehicle, or an abandoned building

Literally Homeless
All of the above plus people sleeping in emergency shelter

HUD's Definition
All of the above plus people sleeping in transitional housing for the homeless

Broadest Definition
All of the above plus people who are doubled up or couch surfing due to the loss of housing or economic hardship

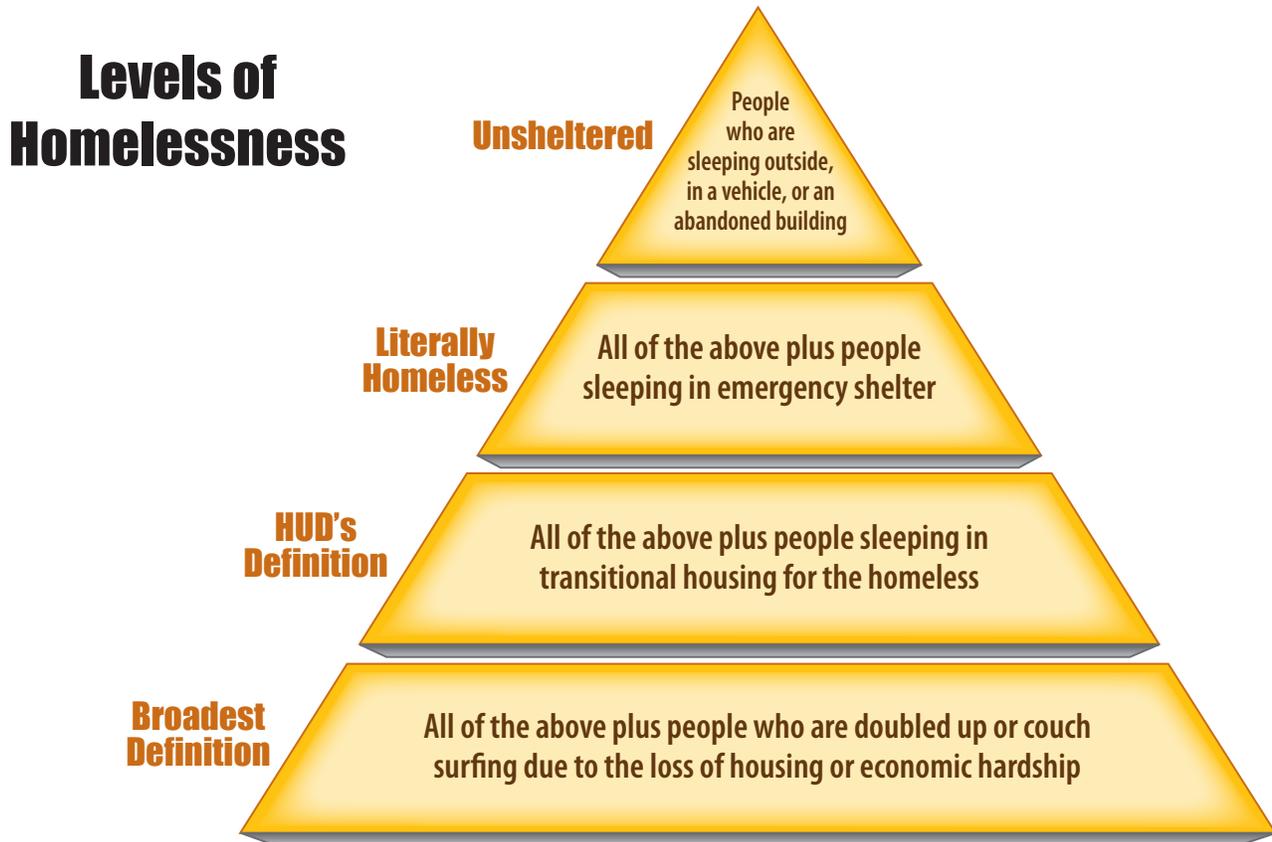◆ **Unsheltered:** The most visible homeless population is the unsheltered homeless, including people sleeping outside, in vehicles, abandoned buildings, or other places not intended for human habitation.

◆ **Literally Homeless:** The federal department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses the term "literally homeless" to refer to the unsheltered homeless as well as people sleeping in emergency shelters or vouchered into motels.

◆ **HUD's Definition:** HUD's definition of homelessness for the point-in-time count includes the literally homeless as well as those sleeping in transitional housing for the homeless. (Note: HUD's classification of transitional housing units changed between the 2011 and 2013 counts, reducing the number of people included in HUD's definition of homelessness. To enable comparisons between the 2011 and 2013 counts, this report includes figures on the number of people who would have been considered homeless under HUD's 2011 definition as well as under the current definition.)

◆ **Broadest Definition:** Some advocates and government agencies (including the Department of Education) define homelessness more broadly to include individuals and families who are sharing the housing of other persons due to the loss of housing or economic hardship. The broadest definition of homelessness therefore includes all of the above categories plus people who are doubled up or couch surfing for economic reasons.

Homelessness in Multnomah County: 2011 to 2013

Previous Point-in-Time Count (2011)

- Unsheltered: 1,718
- Literally Homeless: 2,727
- HUD's 2011 Definition: 4,655
- Broadest Definition: 15,563 (Estimate)

Current Point-in-Time Count (2013)

- Unsheltered: 1,895
- Literally Homeless: 2,869
- HUD's 2011 Definition: 4,658
- IUD's 2013 Definition: 4,441
- Broadest Definition: 15,917 (Estimate)
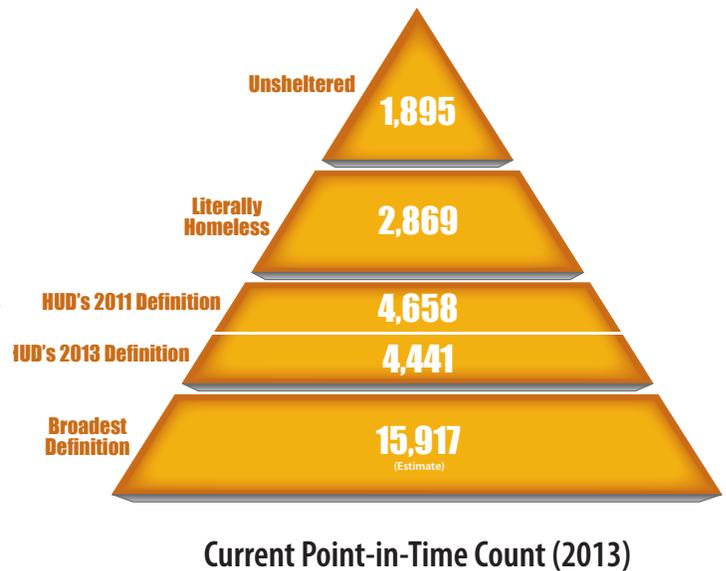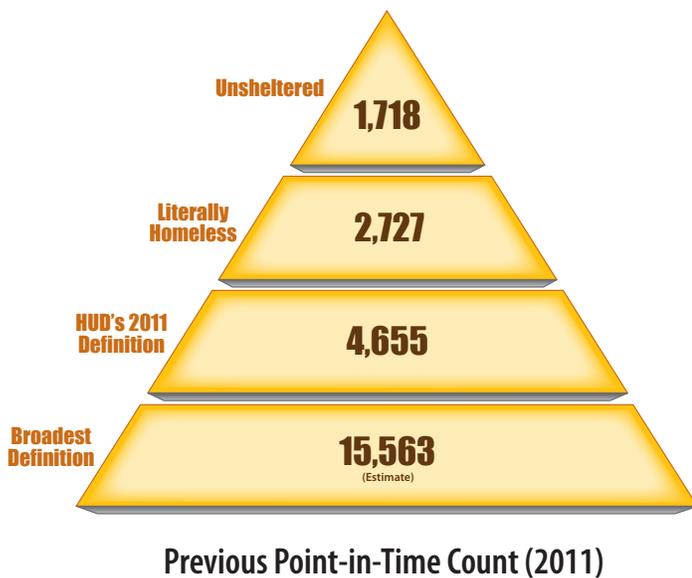
The numbers of unsheltered homeless and literally homeless were higher in 2013 compared with the most recent combined Street Count and One Night Shelter Count in 2011:

- ◆ **The unsheltered homeless count increased by 177 people, or 10%.**
- ◆ **The literally homeless count increased by 142 people, or 5%.**

The number of people meeting HUD's 2011 definition of homelessness was almost identical in 2013 to the 2011 count. However, because of recent changes in how HUD defines some categories of transitional housing, the number of people meeting HUD's 2013 definition of homelessness was 214 people lower than the 2011 count, a 5% decrease. This is because HUD no longer counts participants in certain types of transitional housing programs as homeless, reflecting the reality that these programs offer participants a route to permanent housing stability.

The number of people meeting the broadest definition of homelessness, including households who are doubled up or couch surfing, increased by an estimated 354 people or 2%.

The One Night Shelter Count also captures information on people who are receiving rent assistance or living in permanent supportive housing (PSH). These data provide an important context for interpreting the other numbers in the count by showing the movement of people out of homelessness into housing. Without these resources, the 4,832 people who were served by these programs would probably have been included in the homeless numbers.

As in the 2011 count, people of color are over-represented in the 2013 point-in-time count figures. Of the population meeting HUD's 2013 definition of homelessness, 45% are people of color. People of color make up 38% of the unsheltered population, 51% of the emergency shelter population, and 51% of the transitional housing population. In comparison, people of color represent 29% of the overall population of Multnomah County.

Factors Contributing to the Increase in Homelessness from 2011 to 2013

The increase in Multnomah County's literally homeless population can be attributed to the unprecedented economic challenges facing our region. While a wide range of factors influence an individual's likelihood of becoming homeless, homelessness is first and foremost an economic issue.

Throughout most of the recession, the unemployment rate for the Portland metro area has been higher than the national rate, reaching a recession-era high of 11.1 percent in 2009. The situation has gradually improved since then, but unemployment still remains high among the metro area's population, and the unemployment rate for people of color is even higher than the rate for the population as a whole. The rate of long-term unemployment has also increased since the beginning of the recession. Households who were able to survive the early years of the recession have been devastated by the impact of prolonged unemployment. Many who had savings to rely on during the initial years of the recession have now depleted those resources. And those who relied on unemployment insurance have exhausted their benefits.

> **Homelessness is first and foremost an economic issue.**

Even people with jobs often don't earn enough to support a family and keep up with the rising costs of housing, utilities, and food. Under-employment is a significant problem in the region, with many workers unable to secure enough work to make ends meet. For people able to find full-time work, many jobs don't pay a living wage. The minimum wage in Oregon is $8.95 an hour, while studies indicate that it would take $9.42 an hour of full-time work to meet the basic needs of a single adult, $19.57 to meet the needs of an adult and child, and $24.27 to meet the needs of an adult and two children.[1]

Extremely low vacancy rates, which the U.S. Census Bureau places at 3.4% in the Portland metro area, have contributed to higher housing costs and limited rental availability. This has been especially challenging for low-income households, who must compete for a limited number of affordable units. The current fair market rent for a two bedroom apartment in the Portland metro area is $912, which is 64% of the monthly income for a full-time minimum wage worker.

Housing is generally considered affordable if the cost of rent and utilities totals no more than 30% of the renter's income. Households paying more than 30% of their income on rent and utilities are considered to be "rent burdened." Any crisis, from a medical emergency to job loss, can put these households at risk of homelessness. The high housing costs also make it extremely difficult for households already experiencing homelessness to transition off the streets.

The impacts of these trends are reflected in the point-in-time count data. Among point-in-time count respondents who answered a question about the causes of their homelessness, the most frequent responses were "couldn't afford rent" and "unemployment." Ninety-one percent of Street Count respondents who answered a question about their employment status did not have a job. Service providers who participated in the point-in-time count say they are seeing more and more newly homeless individuals and families who have lost their housing due to economic reasons.

Low-income households have also been challenged by reductions to public benefit programs and human services due to state and federal budget cuts as well as the loss of federal stimulus dollars that were available in 2011. These cuts affected income support programs such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families and critical support services including mental health care and employment programs.

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[1] Glasmeier, Amy and Eric Schultheis, Living Wage Calculator, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, June 2012.

Health-related issues are significant contributors to homelessness, and cuts in services to treat and manage these problems can cause people in fragile economic situations to lose their housing. More than half of point-in-time count respondents (53%) reported having a disabling condition, including mental illness, substance abuse, physical disabilities, and/or chronic health conditions. The rate of disabling conditions among the unsheltered population was even higher – 64%. Living on the streets can exacerbate these conditions, making it even more difficult for people to end their homelessness.

Health-related issues are significant contributors to homelessness.

Key Trends in the 2013 Point-in-Time Count Data

◆ **New homelessness:** Half of the unsheltered population has been homeless for a year or less (see page 18).

◆ **Chronic homelessness:** Chronic homelessness increased by 27% since 2011 among the unsheltered population (see page 19).

◆ **Geographic dispersion:** As in 2011, the unsheltered population is distributed throughout the county (see page 17).

◆ **Homeless families:** The number of literally homeless persons in families with children increased by 72 individuals, or 18%, since 2011 (see page 23).

◆ **Homeless children:** There are 749 homeless children in Multnomah County, 264 of whom are under the age of five (see page 24).

◆ **Women:** The number of literally homeless women increased by 171 individuals, or 22%, since 2011 (see page 25).

◆ **Disabling conditions:** More than half of the homeless population has a disabling condition (see page 26).

◆ **Veterans:** Veterans make up 11% of the adult homeless population, and one-third of homeless veterans are chronically homeless (see page 27).

◆ **Domestic violence:** 19% of the homeless population and 41% of homeless females are affected by domestic violence (see page 27).

◆ **Disproportionality:** People of color are over-represented by 16 percentage points within the homeless population compared with the general population of Multnomah County (see page 29).

◆ **People of color:** The number of people of color who are unsheltered was 38% higher in 2013 than in 2011; the number of people of color in emergency shelter was 16% higher (see page 31); people of color experiencing homelessness are more likely to be families with children than the overall homeless population (see page 33).

Taken together, these trends provide important insights into who in our community currently experiences homelessness. In general, there appear to be two distinct populations. One is chronically homeless individual adults with disabling conditions; the other is more short-term and recently homeless and includes growing numbers of families with children, many of whom are people of color and/or victims of domestic violence. These distinct characteristics shape the way each group experiences homelessness as well as the barriers and challenges they face in returning to stable housing.

The point-in-time count is an effort to learn more about the individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County. The 2013 point-in-time count took place on Wednesday, January 30, 2013. It included three components: (1) the Street Count captured information on people who were unsheltered -- sleeping outside, in vehicles, abandoned buildings or other places not intended for human habitation; (2) the One Night Shelter Count (ONSC) collected information on people staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing, vouchered into motels or turned away from these services on the night of the count; and (3) the ONSC also collected information on people accessing rent assistance and permanent supportive housing who would otherwise be homeless without that assistance. Taken together, these components provide important information about the level of homelessness in our community and the need for affordable housing and homeless services.

The point-in-time count helps local governments and their nonprofit partners to more effectively allocate resources and services necessary to meet the needs of the various homeless populations in our community. Data from the counts also help us to measure how well we are meeting our community's goals to prevent and end homelessness.

Our community relies on federal, state, and local government funding to support a range of services for homeless individuals and families. Communities that receive federal funding for homeless services are required to conduct a comprehensive point-in-time count every two years in order to continue to receive funding. Data from the counts are required elements of federal competitive grants, such as the Continuum of Care, as well as the Consolidated Plan for Gresham, Portland and Multnomah County. In addition, the State of Oregon requires communities to conduct a ONSC every year to help inform the allocation of shelter and housing resources across the state. In response to these requirements, the last ONSC was conducted in January 2012 and the last joint Street Count and ONSC was conducted two years ago, in January 2011.

Methodology

The Street Count and ONSC collect similar information but use different methodologies to gather that information. The ONSC methodology is fairly straight forward because information can be collected by shelter and housing providers at the point of service; the Street Count methodology is more complex.

Street Count Methodology

The Street Count is conducted by administering a short one-page survey to individuals and households experiencing homelessness on the night of the count. Basic identifying information (first 3 letters of last name, first letter of first name, age, and gender) is collected for each respondent in order to ensure that each respondent is only counted once.

The 2013 Street Count was coordinated by the Portland Housing Bureau and 211info. Nonprofit organizations and government agencies that come into contact with people who are homeless and unsheltered across Multnomah County contributed to the count in one or more of the following ways:

(1) **Outreach:** Outreach workers from more than a dozen community organizations helped to develop a coordinated outreach strategy for the count and then worked throughout the week of the count to visit camps, canvass neighborhoods, and reach out to people sleeping outside.

(2) Data from agencies and programs that serve people who are unsheltered: Almost 150 sites that serve people who are unsheltered agreed to administer the Street Count survey. During the week of the count, they surveyed anyone who came in for services and said they had slept outside on January 30. Volunteers were recruited to assist with the count at several dozen sites that lacked the capacity to conduct the count themselves.

(3) Data from files: Agencies that had clients whom they knew slept outside on the night of the count could pull the information on those clients from their files and submit it electronically or on the survey form.

(4) Identification of camps: Key partners such as police bureaus, Multnomah County Sheriff, Portland Parks and Recreation, neighborhood crime prevention staff, River Patrol, and Oregon Department of Transportation provided information on locations of homeless camps throughout the county. Outreach workers visited all of the camps identified by partners during the week of the count in addition to their usual outreach activities.

One Night Shelter Count Methodology

The 2013 ONSC was coordinated by Multnomah County's Department of County Human Services. Every organization that provides emergency shelter, motel vouchers, transitional housing, rent/ mortgage assistance, and permanent supportive housing in the county was asked to submit information on those clients whom they served on January 30 as well as those who sought services that night but were turned away.

Agencies who participate in Service Point, the metro region's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), submitted the information for the ONSC electronically via client records. Organizations who don't participate in Service Point submitted information using paper forms. Many organizations also used paper forms to submit turnaway information.

Households who were turned away from ONSC agencies on the night of the count and said they planned to sleep outside that night were included in the Street Count numbers. As with the Street Count, basic identifying information was used to eliminate duplication across forms.

COMPARISONS TO PREVIOUS METHODOLOGIES

Both the Street Count and ONSC used the same basic methodologies as previous years, but with a few modifications intended to increase the comprehensiveness, efficiency and accuracy of data collection.

The 2011 ONSC was the first time that ONSC data were collected electronically through Service Point. The data collection methods for the 2013 ONSC were the same as in 2011, but the process was smoother and more efficient after two years of practice. The number of service providers using Service Point has also increased over time, resulting in more comprehensive electronic data collection for some elements of the ONSC, particularly for permanent supportive housing units.

Modifications were made to the list of transitional housing units included in the 2013 ONSC in response to changes in the definitions used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Some units that had previously been defined by HUD as transitional housing were redefined in 2013 as rapid re-housing, a permanent housing type that is not included in HUD's definition of homelessness. These units were therefore not included in the 2013 count.

The Street Count built on the expanded partnerships that were developed for the 2011 count in a continued effort to improve outreach to outlying areas, remote locations, and culturally specific communities. As in 2011, partners from law enforcement and other government agencies also provided lists of likely camp locations prior to the count, enabling outreach workers to do more effective outreach in remote and outlying areas. An ongoing

partnership with the Coalition of Communities of Color resulted in additional changes to the way the Street Count survey form captured information on race and ethnicity and the addition of an interpretation hotline during the count.

Several new or enhanced partnerships further strengthened the 2013 count. Examples include Portland Parks, which committed their rangers to conduct the count throughout the city's parks; River Patrol, which provided information on the locations of transient boaters on the Willamette and Columbia Rivers; Prescott Terrace, which recruited a team of formerly homeless residents to help conduct outreach for the count; and Potluck in the Park, which engaged a large team of trained volunteers to conduct the Street Count survey during their weekly meal.

The weather for the 2013 count was comparable to the weather for the 2011 count, both of which were warmer and drier than is typical for late January. The timing of point-in-time counts is mandated by HUD, which requires the counts to happen during the last ten days of January in order to capture data when shelter use peaks due to weather. The counts take place at the end of the month because that is when those who cycle on and off the streets are most likely to be homeless, having depleted their monthly income or benefits. On January 30, 2013 the high temperature was 50 and the low was 45. Average temperatures for that date are a high of 49 with a low of 38. During the 2011 count, the high was 53 and the low was 35.

COMPARISONS TO OTHER JURISDICTIONS' METHODOLOGIES

Hundreds of jurisdictions across the United States conducted point-in-time counts during the last week of January, 2013. How does Portland/ Multnomah County's methodology compare with other jurisdictions' approaches?

The basic definitions and over-arching guidelines for the point-in-time counts are defined by HUD and therefore are consistent across all jurisdictions. The methodologies for the sheltered portions of the counts also tend to be fairly consistent, since most jurisdictions now use electronic data collected through HMIS for their sheltered counts. Our community has a higher rate of providers participating in HMIS than many other jurisdictions, so our electronic data collection may be more complete than some other jurisdictions.

The unsheltered count methodologies are more wide-ranging. As the National Alliance to End Homelessness explains, "unsheltered counts are estimated by outreach workers and volunteers who canvass [jurisdictions] and count the number of people who appear to be living in places not meant for human habitation; this is an imprecise science that is implemented in various ways depending upon the jurisdiction and the resources devoted to the count."

Some jurisdictions use a geographically-based enumeration method in which teams of volunteers fan out across the jurisdiction to count the unsheltered population over a discrete period of time. Volunteers canvass specific geographic areas, tallying the number of unsheltered people whom they observe. Other jurisdictions use a service-based enumeration method that focuses on counting people accessing homeless services during the day of the count. Some jurisdictions use a hybrid of these methods.

While no unsheltered count methodology is 100% accurate, based on our community's size and unique characteristics, we believe that the methodology we use is more accurate than the alternatives. Geographically-based enumeration methods miss unsheltered people who remain out of sight during the count. They also rely on enumerators' visual perceptions of whether the people they observe are homeless and unsheltered, which opens the count up to significant bias and inaccuracy. Service-based enumeration methods miss unsheltered people who don't use services at all as well as those who don't happen to access services on the day of the count.

Our community's methodology combines elements of these approaches but relies on the expertise of professional outreach workers and service agency staff who have ongoing relationships with unsheltered persons and know the areas where they are likely to sleep. Our approach also relies on a detailed interview in order to determine

whether participants meet the criteria for the count. The interview also includes questions that are used to ensure that each individual is only counted once and to gather additional information on each person's situation to better inform local planning and decision-making. Conducting the unsheltered count over an entire week (while only counting people who were unsheltered on the specific night of the count) also ensures that people accessing services get counted, even if they don't happen to access services on the specific night of the count.

METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

While the point-in-time count provides valuable information about homelessness in our community, it has some methodological limitations which are important to keep in mind:

◆ **Point-in-time data:** Many more people experience homelessness over the course of the year than on a single night. Point-in-time counts tend to over-represent people who have been homeless a long time and under-represent those whose experience of homelessness does not last very long.

◆ **Difficulty finding people:** Some people experiencing homelessness avoid accessing available services and try to hide from view. Even those who are not hiding are often difficult to locate. During the day, camps are typically not occupied. It is often hard to predict exactly when campers will return to their camps or doorways. Once they are asleep, it is general practice not to wake them, so there is a narrow window when campers can be located and interviewed for the count.

◆ **Voluntary participation:** Some respondents choose not to participate in the count for a variety of reasons. Some individuals may want to preserve their privacy or don't consider themselves homeless. Others may not want to participate due to past negative experiences with service providers. Outreach workers and participating agencies tallied 533 people who may have been homeless and unsheltered during the count but declined to participate.[2]

◆ **Inability to participate:** Outreach workers encountered many people who were clearly homeless on the night of the count but were too mentally ill, cognitively impaired, or intoxicated to provide the basic information necessary to participate in the count.

◆ **Under-counting of communities of color:** The point-in-time count does not provide a complete picture of homelessness within communities of color due to a variety of factors including language barriers, mistrust of service providers or institutions, limitations in the federally-mandated categories used for collecting data on race and ethnicity which do not recognize some culturally-specific populations, and the lack of culturally-specific organizations explicitly funded to provide homeless outreach and services.

◆ **Under-counting of families and youth:** Families who are living on the streets or in their vehicles frequently try to hide their homelessness because of parents' fears that they will lose custody of their children. Unaccompanied youth under the age of 18 often try to stay under the radar because of concerns that they will be forced to return to their parents or will be sent to foster care.

◆ **Populations not counted:** Due to HUD guidelines, certain populations are not captured at all by the count:

  • People who are doubled up or couch surfing (i.e. staying with friends or relatives temporarily due to economic hardship) are not included in the count because they do not fit within the definition of homelessness that HUD uses for the point-in-time count. (The final section of the report tries to estimate the magnitude of the size of this population based on available data.)

  • People who cycle on and off the streets may be homeless for a portion of each month, but if they aren't

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[2] This is not an unduplicated figure; since identifying information could not be collected for those people, it was not possible to eliminate possible duplication.

homeless on the night of the count, they are not counted. Families with children are especially likely to cycle on and off the streets, staying with friends and family or paying for motel rooms when they can.

- People who are staying overnight in jail or hospital beds during the night of the count who are otherwise homeless are not counted because they are not considered homeless under HUD's definition. Likewise, most people staying in emergency rooms aren't captured in the official count numbers because hospitals' confidentiality rules preclude sharing patients' identifying information.

◆ **Variations in site participation:** The point-in-time count relies heavily on the participation of social service organizations, many of which are stretched thin and have limited staff capacity. While every effort is made to ensure that all relevant organizations participate, there is inevitably some variation in the level and rate of participation by some agencies from year to year.

◆ **Timing of the count:** Holding the count in January (per HUD regulations) means the number of households utilizing emergency shelter is higher relative to the number on the streets than it would be if the count was conducted at a different time of year, or if it were a year-round count. In addition, a January count does not include people (particularly youth) who travel to warmer climates during the winter or the travelers who cycle through Portland in the summer.

Because of these methodological limitations, the point-in-time count represents a detailed estimate rather than a comprehensive enumeration of homelessness in Multnomah County. The actual number of people who are homeless in our community on a given night is probably higher than the number documented in this report.

The Street Count captures a snapshot of individuals and families who were homeless and unsheltered on January 30, 2013. This includes people sleeping outside, in vehicles, abandoned buildings, or other places not intended for human habitation.

Total Numbers

The 2013 Street Count identified 1,895 unduplicated individuals who were homeless and unsheltered on the night of January 30. This figure represents an additional 177 unsheltered individuals in Multnomah County (a 10% increase) compared with the most recent count in 2011.

The unsheltered population increased by 10% from 2011 to 2013.

Street Count	Unsheltered individuals
2005 Street Count[3]	2,355
2007 Street Count	1,438
2009 Street Count	1,591
2011 Street Count	1,718
2013 Street Count	1,895

Specific factors behind the 10% increase in the unsheltered population between 2011 and 2013 include:

◆ **New homelessness:** 48% of unsheltered individuals had been homeless for a year or less, including 9% who had been homeless for less than one month.

◆ **Persistent homelessness:** 36% of unsheltered individuals had been homeless more than two years, and 52% met the definition of chronic homelessness.

◆ **In-migration:** 28% of unsheltered individuals had been in Portland/ Multnomah County for less than one year.

◆ **Loss of shelter beds:** Portland lost 75 shelter beds between 2011 and 2013 due to the closure of a large seasonal men's shelter.

The 2013 Street Count used the same methodology as the 2011 count. As with previous counts, efforts were made to strengthen implementation through expanded partnerships and improved coordination. These efforts did not result in significant changes to the count methodology, but it is possible that incremental improvements to the Street Count implementation process could have contributed to some of the increase in the count numbers.

As noted in previous sections of this report, because of the inherent challenges in counting the unsheltered population, the Street Count numbers are most likely an undercount. Survey takers tallied an additional 533 people who appeared to be unsheltered but who either refused to participate in the count or were mentally or cognitively unable to participate. The appendix includes information on 368 individuals who were verified to be unsheltered but were not included in the official count number because they were unwilling or unable to provide sufficient identifying information to eliminate duplication.

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[3] The Street Count methodology changed significantly between 2005 and 2007 but has been fairly consistent since 2007. For this reason, it is not possible to make accurate comparisons between the 2005 and 2007 counts.

Household Composition

Most of the unsheltered population is comprised of individual adults or adults in couples without children. Six percent of the unsheltered population is individuals in homeless families with children, about half of whom are adults and half are children. An additional 1% of the unsheltered population is unaccompanied youth under age 18. Because the Multnomah County Homeless Youth System serves youth and young adults through age 24, the most accurate reflection of the number of unsheltered homeless youth may be the combined number of unaccompanied youth under age 18 and unsheltered young adults ages18-24, which is 191.

Street Count Household type	2011*	2011%	2013*	2013%
Individual adults	1,279	74%	1,424	75%
Couples without children	323	19%	334	18%
Families with children	105	6%	123	6%
Adults >18	52	3%	64	3 %
Children < 18	53	3%	59	3%
Unaccompanied youth <18	11	1%	14	1%

*All numbers represent individual persons

On a percentage basis, the household composition of the unsheltered population in 2013 was almost identical to 2011. On a numerical basis, the number of unsheltered individual adults, couples, families with children, and unaccompanied youth all increased. Most notably, the number of individuals in families with children increased by 18 people, a 17% increase over the 2011 number. The bulk of this increase was in adult family members rather than children.

The number of unsheltered individuals in families with children increased by 17% since 2011.

In addition to the unsheltered families with children, 69 respondents said that they have custody of children who did not sleep outside with them.

The Street Count survey form gave respondents an opportunity to self-identify as being part of a "street family", and distinguished street families from biological families. A total of 164 individuals (all over the age of 18) said they slept outside on the night of the count with their street family.

The survey also gave respondents an opportunity to indicate whether they slept outside with a pet. A total of 42 individuals said they slept outside with their pet on the night of the count.

Sleeping Location

Street Count respondents were asked, "Where did you/ will you sleep Wednesday night, January 30?" The most common sleeping locations were "street or sidewalk" (45%), "doorway or other private property" (18%), and "bridge/ overpass/ railroad" (12%).

Street Count Sleeping Location	2011			2013		
	# of individuals	% of total (n=1,718)	% of responses (n=1,598)	# of individuals	% of total (n=1,895)	% of responses (n=1,725)
Street or sidewalk	780	45%	49%	755	41%	45%
Doorway or other private property	235	14%	15%	315	17%	18%
Bridge/ overpass/ railroad	193	11%	12%	213	11%	12%
Vehicle (car, truck, van, camper)	150	9%	9%	162	9%	9%
Woods/ open space	127	7%	8%	143	8%	8%
Park	74	4%	5%	70	4%	4%
Abandoned building	39	2%	2%	47	2%	3%
Other/ unknown	120	7%	n/a	170	9%	n/a

The distribution of sleeping locations in 2013 was almost identical to the 2011 count. The percentage of respondents who slept on the "street or sidewalk" in 2013 was four percentage points lower than in 2011, but this was balanced out by the percentage of respondents who slept in a "doorway or other property", which was three percentage points higher in 2013 than in 2011. The percentages for the other categories were within one percentage point of the 2011 percentages.

Multnomah County River Patrol identified 28 transient boats on the Willamette River during the week of the count, with at least 16 individuals known by River Patrol to live on the boats. Most of the boaters were not able to be reached in order to be interviewed for the count, though it is possible they were interviewed at service agencies. An additional transient boater was interviewed on the Columbia River and is included under the "other/unknown" category in the table.

Geographic Location

Street Count respondents were asked, "What part of Portland/ Multnomah County did you/ will you sleep in?" The responses indicate that the unsheltered population is distributed throughout the county. About a quarter of respondents (28%) slept in downtown Portland/ Old Town, a little more than a quarter (30%) slept in inner northeast and southeast Portland, 18% slept in northwest and southwest Portland outside of downtown, 21% slept in other parts of Portland's east side, and 4% slept in east county.

The unsheltered population is distributed throughout Multnomah County.

A comparison with data from the 2011 count indicates a somewhat higher percentage of respondents in downtown/ Old Town and a lower percentage in inner southeast Portland. Outreach workers reported that many homeless camps in inner southeast were swept by police in the days prior to the count, which may have moved some southeast campers to downtown/ Old Town or other neighborhoods during the count. The percentages of respondents who slept in other geographic locations are all within two percentage points of the 2011 count.

Street Count Geographic Location	2011			2013		
	# of individuals	% of total (n=1,718)	% of responses (n=1,560)	# of individuals	% of total (n=1,895)	% of responses (n=1,707)
Downtown Portland/ Old Town	347	20%	22%	474	25%	28%
SE Portland (river to 82nd)	394	23%	25%	305	16%	18%
Inner NE Portland (river to 33rd)	149	9%	10%	205	11%	12%
NW Portland	189	11%	12%	170	9%	10%
Outer East Portland (82nd to 182nd)	103	6%	7%	153	8%	9%
SW Portland (outside downtown)	152	9%	10%	139	7%	8%
North Portland	89	5%	6%	134	7%	8%
East County (East of 182nd)	92	5%	6%	65	3%	4%
Central NE Portland (33rd to 82nd)	45	3%	3%	62	3%	4%
Unknown	158	9%	n/a	188	10%	n/a

Length of Homelessness

Respondents were asked, "How long has it been since you were in stable housing?" Their responses indicate that significant portions of Portland/ Multnomah County's unsheltered population are newly homeless. Almost half of

Almost half of the unsheltered population had been homeless for a year or less.

respondents (48%) had been homeless for a year or less, including 9% who had been homeless for less than one month and 28% who had been homeless six months or less. In comparison, in the 2011 count, 36% of the unsheltered population had been homeless for a year or less.

While a significant portion of the unsheltered population is newly homeless, 36% have been homeless for more than two years, indicating that they were homeless during the 2011 count.

It should be noted that point-in-time data tend to over-represent people who have been homeless for a long time and under-represent those whose experience of homelessness does not last very long. If we looked at data on length of homelessness for everybody who was homeless over the past year, the percentage of people who had been homeless for a relatively short time would be higher than the percentage of people in that situation during a single point in time.

Street Count How long since you were in stable housing?	2011	2011 % of responses	2013	2013 % of responses
Less than 1 month	52	3%	151	9%
1-6 months	234	15%	313	19%
7-12 months	271	18%	326	20%
1-2 years	280	18%	269	16%
2-5 years	365	24%	351	21%
5-10 years	228	15%	143	9%
> 10 years	106	7%	99	6%

Chronic Homelessness

Until 2011, HUD defined chronic homelessness as an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has been either continuously homeless for a year or more or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. In 2011, HUD expanded this definition to include

Street Count Chronically homeless	2011	2011 % of total Street Count	2013	2013 % of total Street Count
Individual adults	643	37%	896	47%
Persons in households without children	126	7%	92	5%
Persons in households with children	13	1%	4	<1%
Total	782	46%	992	52%

all homeless adults (including those in households without children) as well as all individuals in households with children where one of the adults in the household meets the above definition.

Chronic homelessness increased by 27% since 2011 among the unsheltered population.

More than half (52%) of the unsheltered population met the definition of chronic homelessness in 2013.

The number of unsheltered chronically homeless persons increased by 210 people, or 27%, between the 2011 and 2013 counts. The percentage of the unsheltered population that is chronically homeless increased by six percentage points between the two counts. The entire increase was in chronically homeless individual adults; the number and percentage of chronically homeless persons in households with and without children decreased between the two counts.

Migration

The Street Count survey form included questions aimed at better understanding the migration patterns of the local homeless population. Respondents were asked "How long have you been in Portland/ Multnomah County?" The responses indicate that a significant portion of the local unsheltered population is relatively new to the area. More than a quarter (28%) of respondents had been in the area for less than a year. However, an even larger portion of the population, 59%, had been here for two years or more.

The answer choices for this question were somewhat different on the 2011 Street Count form, making direct comparisons across all of the answer choices impossible. An overall comparison indicates that there were fewer newcomers to the area among 2011 Street Count

Street Count How long have you been in Portland/ Multnomah County	#	% of total (n=1,895)	% of responses (n=1,529)
<1 year	423	22%	28%
1-2 years	203	11%	13%
2-5 years	739	39%	48%
> 5 years	164	9%	11%
No response	366	19%	n/a

respondents: in 2011, 14% of respondents had been in the area for less than one year, and 78% had been here more than two years.

The fact that many of the Street Count respondents are not originally from Portland/ Multnomah County mirrors the migration patterns of the population as a whole. Oregon is one of only a dozen states where the majority of its residents are originally from somewhere else.[4] The Portland area in particular has become a popular destination for

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[4] Templeton, Amelia (2011), "History Hinders Diversification of Portland, Oregon," National Public Radio. http://www.npr.org/2011/02/16/133748144/history-hinders-diversification-of-portland-ore.

people from other parts of the region and the country. The population of the Portland metro region grew 1.6% per year from 2000-2010, a reflection of consistent in-migration.

Among the Street Count respondents who said they had been in Portland/ Multnomah County for less than two years, 383 (20% of all Street Count respondents) said they were homeless when they came here. The Street Count survey did not ask respondents where they moved from, but service providers note that most of the unsheltered homeless people they serve who moved recently to Portland/ Multnomah County and were homeless when they arrived came here from other parts of the metro area.

Respondents who were homeless when they came to Portland/ Multnomah County were asked why they came here. It should be noted that only 216 respondents answered this question, so the responses may not be representative of the entire population of unsheltered persons. The question included several multiple choice options as well as "other." Respondents were asked to check all of the answer choices that applied, and most respondents selected multiple answers. The most frequently selected answer choice was "family/ friends." This was closely followed by "other" and "access to services and resources", and then "job opportunities" and "like it here/ good weather." Among those who selected "other", the most frequent responses were "traveling" and "passing through." Other common responses included "from here originally", "escaping domestic violence", "escaping abuse", "school", and "wanting to start over."

No data are available describing the numbers of people who have left Portland and Multnomah County and subsequently experienced homelessness in other places. This limits our ability to comprehensively understand net migration patterns. Local service providers report that they frequently hear anecdotal information about people who have experienced homelessness in Multnomah County migrating to other West coast cities.

The One Night Shelter Count (ONSC) provides a snapshot of individuals and families who are staying in emergency shelters, vouchered into a hotel or motel, or staying in transitional housing, as well as households seeking services and turned away on the night of the count. The ONSC also counts households receiving rent assistance or living in permanent supportive housing on the night of the count who might otherwise be homeless.

The ONSC is primarily a survey of our community's service capacity. Shelter beds in Multnomah County are typically full in January, so the ONSC provides a count of the number of shelter beds available on a given night, as well as the resources available for hotel/motel vouchers and transitional housing. The data on rent/ mortgage assistance and permanent supportive housing provide an indication of our community's investment in transitioning people off the streets into permanent housing.

Total Numbers

The 2013 ONSC identified 2,546 people who fit HUD's definition of homelessness (i.e. who stayed in emergency shelters or transitional housing or were vouchered into motels.) In addition, 4,832 people received rent/ mortgage assistance or permanent supportive housing. A total of 148 individuals sought services but were turned away.

The table below shows the number of individuals and household units counted within each shelter category. A single individual is counted as one household unit; a family with children is also counted as one household unit. The next table provides more information on household types.

The emergency shelter/motel voucher and transitional housing numbers were lower in the 2013 count than they were in 2011, while the rent assistance and permanent supportive housing numbers were larger. The shifts in the ONSC numbers between 2011 and 2013 can be explained by the following factors:

One Night Shelter Count	2013 Individuals	2013 Households
Emergency Shelter + Motel Vouchers	974	729
Transitional Housing	1,572	1,022
Rent/ Mortgage Assistance	2,449	989
Permanent Supportive Housing	2,383	1,776
Turnaways	148	60

◆ **Emergency shelter:** The closure of one of Portland's men's shelters resulted in the loss of 75 shelter beds between the 2011 and 2013 counts. In addition, two shelter providers who participated in the 2011 count declined to participate in 2013; this meant the people staying at those shelters on the night of January 30 were not included in the count.

◆ **Transitional housing:** As noted earlier in the report, the primary reason for the reduction in the transitional housing numbers between 2011 and 2013 is HUD's recent change in the definition of transitional housing. This change resulted in the reclassification of 285 beds that were previously defined as transitional housing to rapid re-housing, which HUD does not include in its definition of homelessness.

◆ **Rent/mortgage assistance:** The increase in rent/mortgage assistance numbers reflects both an actual increase in the numbers of people receiving assistance as well as increased rates of ONSC data submission by rent/mortgage assistance providers and improved electronic data quality, which resulted in more complete point-in-time count numbers.

- ◆ **Permanent supportive housing:** The increase in permanent supportive housing (PSH) numbers reflects an actual increase in PSH units as well as more comprehensive data due to increased participation by PSH providers in Service Point and improvements in the methods used for identifying units in Service Point as PSH.

The changes since 2011 also reflect a continuing shift in public funding priorities away from emergency shelter and towards more permanent solutions such as rent assistance and permanent supportive housing.

Household Composition

The table below shows the household composition of the ONSC and Street Count populations by shelter type. All of the numbers reflect individual persons, not households. The percentages reflect the portions of each shelter type (each column of the table) that are individual adults, families with children, or unaccompanied youth.

Household type	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Rent Assistance	Permanent Supportive Housing
Individual adults	1,758 (93%)	603 (62%)	785 (50%)	473 (19%)	1,554 (65%)
Age 18-24	165	107	76	51	55
Age >24	1,593	496	709	422	1,499
Families with children	123 (6%)	351 (36%)	784 (50%)	1,956 (80%)	824 (35%)
Children < 18	59	194	459	1,124	469
Adults 18-24	12	28	73	191	69
Adults >24	52	129	252	641	286
Unaccompanied youth under 18	14 (1%)	20 (2%)	3 (<1%)	20 (1%)	5 (<1%)
Total	1,895 (100%)	974 (100%)	1,572 (100%)	2,449 (100%)	2,383 (100%)

The proportion of individual adults to families varies widely by shelter type, with the people in the most tenuous shelter situations disproportionately comprised of individual adults and those in the more stable shelter situations disproportionately comprised of families (the exception to this pattern is permanent supportive housing). The unsheltered population is almost entirely individual adults, whereas the emergency shelter population is about 2/3 individual adults and 1/3 families, the transitional housing population is 1/2 individual adults and 1/2 families, and the rent assistance population is about 1/3 individual adults and 2/3 families. The permanent supportive housing population is about 2/3 individual adults and 1/3 families.

> **The proportion of individual adults to families varies widely by shelter type, with the people in the most tenuous shelter situations disproportionately comprised of individual adults.**

The percentage of the homeless population that is families with children is significantly higher among populations of color than among the overall homeless population. Among the overall HUD-defined homeless population (including the unsheltered, emergency shelter and transitional housing populations), 28% are families with children; in contrast, among homeless populations of color, 42% are families with children.

Compared with 2011, the household compositions of the transitional housing and rent assistance populations are very similar to the previous count. Among the emergency shelter population, there was an 18% increase in the number of persons in families with children, and the percentage of all emergency shelter households that are families with children increased by eight percentage points. According to providers, this reflects increased use of the winter warming shelter by families in 2013 as well as an increase in the use of motel vouchers for families by domestic violence providers. The proportional increase in the percentage of the emergency shelter population that is families vs. individual adults is also due in part to a reduction in available shelter beds for single adults because of the closure of a large seasonal men's shelter.

The number of literally homeless persons in families with children increased by 18% since 2011.

Among the literally homeless population, which includes the unsheltered population plus those in emergency shelter, the number of literally homeless persons in families with children increased by 72 individuals, or 18%, since 2011.

The percentage of the permanent supportive housing population who are families with children decreased by 17 percentage points between 2011 and 2013. This decrease may be connected to the overall changes in reporting of PSH numbers, as noted above.

Homeless Youth

The number of unaccompanied youth under age 18 that were counted on January 30 is quite low, but because the Multnomah County Homeless Youth System serves youth through age 24, a better reflection of the number of homeless youth on the night of the count may be the combined number of unaccompanied youth under age 18 and young adults ages 18-24:

Homeless Youth	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Rent Assistance	Permanent Supportive Housing
Unaccompanied youth and young adults through age 24	191 (10%)	155 (16%)	152 (10%)	262 (11%)	129 (5%)

The relatively small number of unaccompanied youth under age 18 who were counted suggests that most homeless youth under age 18 are either couch-surfing, doubled up or may avoid being counted. Youth under age 18 who are runaways may also refuse to be surveyed or may misrepresent their age because of the fear of being returned home or sent to foster care.

Multnomah County School District Homeless Liaisons reported 157 unaccompanied homeless students on the night of the count; 136 of these students were doubled up or couch surfing and therefore would not have been included in the point-in-time count figures.

Most unaccompanied homeless youth under age 18 are either couch-surfing, doubled up or may avoid being counted.

This section of the report provides a more detailed analysis of the characteristics of the populations experiencing homelessness in Multnomah County on the night of the count. It focuses on the categories of the point-in-time count that fit with HUD's definition of homelessness – the unsheltered population (i.e. Street Count) and people sleeping in emergency shelter or transitional housing for the homeless. HUD's definition also includes people who are vouchered into motels, but because the sample size for that category is so small, those figures are folded into the emergency shelter figures.

Age

The table below shows the age distribution of Portland/ Multnomah County's homeless population. The percentages reflect the portion of each shelter category (each row of the table) within each age range. The table indicates that there is significant age diversity among the homeless population. Seventeen percent of the homeless population is under the age of 18. At the other end of the age spectrum, 13% of the homeless population is over age 55. Sixty-nine percent of the homeless population is distributed between the ages of 18 and 54.

Age	<18	18-23	24-44	45-54	55-69	70+	Unknown
Unsheltered	73 (4%)	146 (8%)	802 (42%)	546 (29%)	298 (16%)	5 (<1%)	25 (1%)
Emergency shelter	214 (22%)	121 (12%)	343 (35%)	167 (17%)	97 (10%)	5 (1%)	27 (3%)
Transitional housing	462 (29%)	113 (7%)	541 (34%)	272 (17%)	162 (10%)	4 (<1%)	18 (1%)
Total	749 (17%)	380 (9%)	1686 (38%)	985 (22%)	557 (13%)	14 (<1%)	70 (2%)

Unaccompanied Youth

The population under age 18 in the above table includes 712 children and youth living with their families and 37 unaccompanied youth. As noted earlier, the Multnomah County Homeless Youth System serves youth through age 24, so the most accurate count of unaccompanied youth includes all unaccompanied youth under age 18 plus young adults ages 24 and younger. For the unsheltered, emergency shelter, and transitional housing populations, this figure is 498.

Homeless Children

There are 749 homeless children under the age of 18 in Multnomah County. This includes 264 children under the age of five, 298 children ages 6-11, and 187 children ages 12-17. The majority of the children (62%) are in transitional housing, 29% are in emergency shelter, and 10% are unsheltered.

The Street Count and ONSC attempted to collect data on whether homeless school-age children are attending school. Unfortunately, data were only

Children	<5	6-11	12-17	Total
Unsheltered	19 (26%)	34 (47%)	20 (27%)	73 (10%)
Emergency shelter	74 (35%)	82 (38%)	58 (27%)	214 (29%)
Transitional housing	171 (37%)	182 (39%)	109 (24%)	462 (62%)
Total	264 (35%)	298 (40%)	187 (25%)	749 (100%)

available for a small sample of children in emergency shelter and transitional housing. Data were available for the majority of the unsheltered children, and these data indicate that a substantial portion of those children (69% of the 58 children for whom data were submitted) were not attending school.

Gender

The gender distribution of the overall homeless population is disproportionately male, with 61% males, 38% females, 1% transgender, and 1% unknown/ other/ "z"[5]. The unsheltered population is even more heavily male, while the emergency shelter and transitional housing populations are majority male but with higher percentages of females.

The total gender distributions by percentage are almost identical to the gender distributions in the 2011 count, but there

Gender	Male	Female	Trans	Unknown or "Z"
Unsheltered	1,334 (70%)	531 (28%)	11 (<1%)	19 (1%)
Emergency shelter	527 (54%)	427 (44%)	8 (1%)	12 (1%)
Transitional housing	845 (54%)	718 (46%)	6 (<1%)	3 (<1%)
Total	2,706 (61%)	1,676 (38%)	25 (1%)	34 (1%)

were some notable shifts in the gender distributions within specific categories. The number of literally homeless men (unsheltered or in emergency shelter) decreased slightly, while the number of literally homeless women increased by 22%, from 787 in 2011 to 958 in 2013. This was off-set by a four percentage point decrease in the percentage of women in transitional housing.

It is important to look at the gender composition of the sheltered population in light of the available beds for men and women in the emergency shelter system. During 2013, 42% of the year-round and winter shelter beds in Portland/ Multnomah County were designated for men, 21% were designated for women, 26% were designated

for families, 5% were domestic violence shelter beds designated for families or women, and 6% were designated for youth. (These figures do not include severe weather beds, since the night of the count was not a night when severe weather beds were open.)

The gender composition for the emergency shelter population during the night of the count was as follows: 40% were male individual adults over age 18 (32% were males over age 24), 22% were female individual adults over age 18 (18% were females over age 24), 36% were persons in families, and 2% were unaccompanied youth under age 18 (13% were unaccompanied youth up to age 24).

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[5] The Street Count form included an option of "z" for individuals who do not identify with any gender.

Disabling Conditions

National studies indicate that disabling conditions are a significant cause of homelessness as well as a frequent consequence of being on the streets. An injury, illness, or chronic health condition can lead to job loss and, without health insurance, steep medical bills. For households with low incomes and limited personal savings, the high medical costs can eventually result in homelessness. Living on the streets or in crowded shelters can exacerbate existing medical conditions and can also result in new health and mental health problems stemming from stress, injury, exposure to the elements, and living in violent and unsanitary conditions.[6]

More than half of Multnomah County's homeless population has a disabling condition.

More than half (53%) of Portland/ Multnomah County's homeless population has a disabling condition. The percentage of the unsheltered population with a disabling condition is even higher – 64%. Service providers caution that because these data rely on self-reports, they are likely an undercount.

Disabling Conditions	2011 Individual #s	2011 % of total	2013 Individual #s	2013 % of total
Unsheltered	937	55%	1221	64%
Emergency shelter	429	43%	344	35%
Transitional housing	979	51%	787	50%
Total	2,345	50%	2,352	53%

For the first time, the point-in-time count also collected comprehensive data on types of disabling conditions. Street Count respondents were asked to "select all that apply" from the list of conditions below; most respondents only selected one condition from the list. Data for the emergency shelter and transitional housing populations were provided electronically based on client records.

These data suggest that the unsheltered population is somewhat more likely to experience chronic health conditions and physical disabilities compared with the emergency shelter and transitional housing populations. In contrast, the transitional housing population appears more likely to experience alcohol abuse, drug abuse, and chronic substance abuse. This may be because the transitional housing numbers include data from programs designed for people in recovery. The comparisons may also be of limited validity because outreach workers and agency staff who conducted the Street Count survey said they questioned the accuracy of the unsheltered population's responses to these questions. Respondents might not be willing to share such private information with a stranger, particularly since

Disability Type	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing
Mental health problem	383 (20%)	185 (19%)	329 (21%)
Alcohol abuse	303 (16%)	92 (9%)	426 (27%)
Drug Abuse	340 (18%)	126 (13%)	473 (30%)
Chronic Substance Abuse [7]	516 (27%)	150 (15%)	567 (36%)
Physical Disability	324 (17%)	131 (13%)	225 (14%)
Developmental Disability	88 (5%)	43 (4%)	70 (4%)
HIV/ AIDS	21 (1%)	3 (<1%)	31 (2%)
Chronic Health Condition	324 (17%)	24 (2%)	80 (5%)

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[6] National Health Care for the Homeless Council, Fact Sheet, June 2011, http://www.nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Hln_health_factsheet_Jan10.pdf.
[7] Unduplicated count of individuals who identified alcohol and drug abuse.

many respondents were being interviewed in public places where others could overhear. In addition, relying on self-reports for this information means the information is not necessarily based on a professional diagnosis or consistent set of criteria.

Veterans

Veterans continue to be slightly over-represented in the homeless population. Eleven percent of the homeless adult population, or 413 people, are veterans. This includes 49 female veterans. About a third (34%) of the veterans are chronically homeless.

In comparison, according to the American Community Survey 2006-2010 estimates, 8.7% of Multnomah County's population is veterans. The over-representation of veterans within Multnomah County's homeless population is not surprising; nationally, nearly 13% of the homeless adult population is veterans.

Veterans make up 11% of the adult homeless population.

For the first time, the Street Count also asked whether veterans served after 2001, in an effort to better understand the portion of the unsheltered population that is made up of veterans from recent conflicts versus those who served in earlier conflicts. Twenty-five unsheltered veterans, or 12% of the unsheltered veteran population, answered yes to this question. However, it should be noted that slightly more than half of veteran Street Count respondents did not answer the question at all; it is unclear whether this was because their answer was "no" or because they chose not to answer the question.

Veterans	2011 Individual #s	2011 % of adults	2013 Individual #s	2013 % of adults
Unsheltered	221	13%	215	12%
Emergency shelter	135	16%	50	7%
Transitional housing	108	8%	148	13%
Total	464	12%	413	11%

Domestic Violence

A significant portion of Portland/ Multnomah County's homeless population – 19% of all homeless persons and 41% of homeless females -- report they have been affected by domestic violence. The percentage of homeless females affected by domestic violence increased by six percentage points between 2011 and 2013. The bulk of this increase was in the transitional housing population, which saw a 14 percentage point increase. This may be partially explained by improvements in the way domestic violence is identified and tracked in HMIS.

Domestic Violence	2011				2013			
	All DV	% of Total	Female DV	% of Females	All DV	% of Total	Female DV	% of Females
Unsheltered	299	17%	161	38%	305	16%	173	33%
Emergency shelter	187	19%	157	43%	201	21%	198	46%
Transitional housing	367	19%	279	30%	329	21%	318	44%
Total	853	18%	597	35%	835	19%	689	41%

According to domestic violence advocates, these figures are likely an undercount. Homeless women affected by domestic violence are frequently doubled up with friends and family, and therefore would not be included in the count. Respondents may also not be comfortable sharing information about their domestic violence experiences, which could also contribute to artificially low numbers.

Forty-one percent of homeless females are affected by domestic violence.

National studies indicate that a significant percentage of homeless women (up to 100% in some studies) have experienced domestic or sexual violence at some point in their lives, and between 22% and 57% of homeless women report that domestic or sexual violence was an immediate cause of their homelessness.[8] Local studies indicate that 90% of domestic violence victims in Multnomah County have difficulty meeting their basic needs, 79% have difficulty making rent payments, 27% have been homeless, and 55% have lived with family or friends.[9]

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[8] National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, "Some Facts on Homelessness, Housing, and Violence Against Women", n.d.
[9] Local Public Safety Coordinating Council, "Domestic Violence in Multnomah County", November 2010.

This section of the report analyzes the racial and ethnic composition of the HUD-defined homeless population and the characteristics of homeless populations of color. Like the previous section, it focuses on the unsheltered/ Street Count population as well as those sleeping in emergency shelters, vouchered into motels, and staying in transitional housing. The data on the population vouchered into motels are folded into the emergency shelter data.

Over-Representation

People of color are over-represented within the homeless population compared with the general population of Multnomah County. The table below shows the racial and ethnic composition of the homeless count population and the population of Multnomah County as a whole. All numbers are presented as an over-count, which means that individuals were encouraged to select as many categories of race, ethnicity or origin as apply and their responses were each counted once within each category. For that reason, the percentages add up to more than 100. The data for Multnomah County and Multnomah County's population in poverty are based on 2010 Census figures and American Community Survey 2007-2011 estimates, respectively, analyzed using an over-count methodology to be consistent with the rest of the numbers.[10]

Race/Ethnicity	2011 HUD Homeless	2013 HUD Homeless	Multnomah County	Multnomah County in Poverty
White	2,955 (67%)	2,997 (69%)	81%	66%
Populations of color	2,054 (46%)	2,001 (45%)	29%	53%
Asian	52 (1%)	66 (2%)	8%	7%
Black or African American	788 (18%)	864 (20%)	7%	12%
Hispanic/ Latino	522 (12%)	572 (13%)	11%	19%
Native American or Alaska Native	393 (9%)	386 (9%)	2%	3%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	78 (2%)	113 (3%)	1%	1%
Other/ Multi-racial	221 (5%)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Information not provided	210 (n/a)	108 (2%)	n/a	n/a

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[10] The American Community Survey data are not available in a format that allows for a complete application of the over-count methodology. The 12% of the population counted as "Other/Multi-racial" includes respondents who selected "Some Other Race" or "Two or More Races".

As a whole, people of color are over-represented by 16 percentage points in the homeless population compared with the total population of Multnomah County. The extent of the over-representation varies by community. All communities of color except Asians are over-represented, with the greatest levels of over-representation among Native Americans and African Americans. Local service providers note that while Asians as a whole are not over-represented in the count numbers, it does not mean they don't experience homelessness. Levels of homelessness and poverty vary widely among different Asian communities and between recent immigrants and those who have been in the United States for longer periods of time; these variations are masked by the data. Furthermore, in many Asian communities, families will triple or quadruple up before allowing a community member to end up on the streets or in shelters, rendering their homelessness largely undetected based on the current Street Count methodology and HUD's definition of homelessness.

> **People of color are over-represented by 16 percentage points within the homeless population.**

People of color are also over-represented in the populations receiving rent assistance and permanent supportive housing. Among permanent supportive housing recipients, 61% were white and 38% were populations of color. Among rent assistance recipients, 40% were white and 59% were populations of color.

As the above table indicates, people of color are highly over-represented among people in poverty in Multnomah County: 53% of people in poverty are people of color while 29% of the county's overall population is people of color. The percentage of the homeless population that is people of color (45%) is slightly lower than the percentage of the population in poverty that is people of color (53%).[11] This may reflect the tendency for some communities of color to take community members in rather than letting them face literal homelessness. As the chart below demonstrates, while Asians and Latinos are under-represented in the homeless population compared with Multnomah County's population in poverty, African Americans, Native Americans, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders are over-represented.
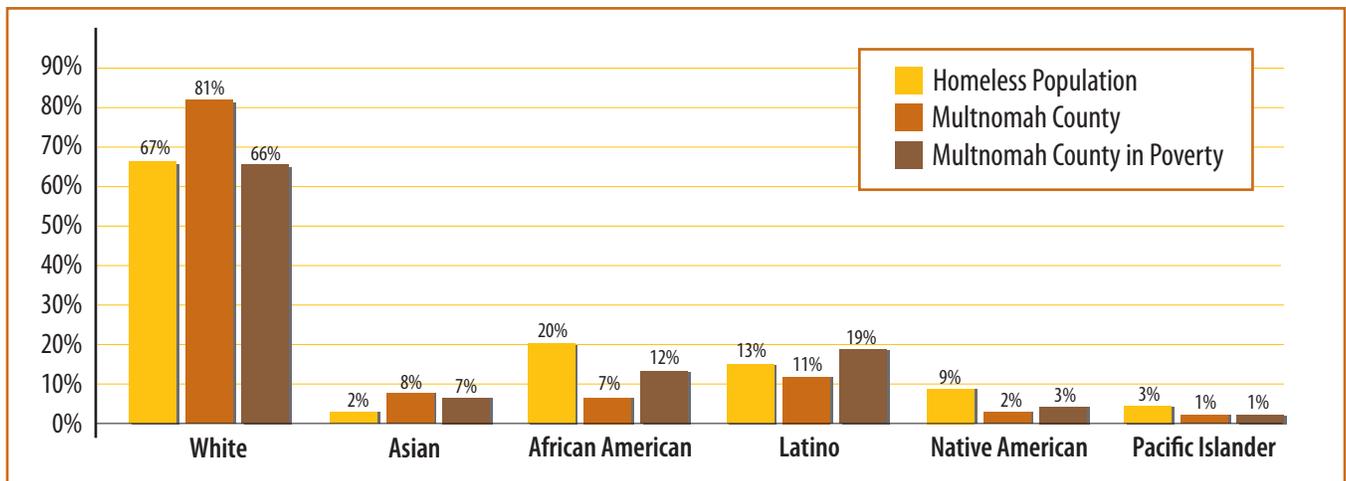
According to the Coalition of Communities of Color, the Census and American Community Survey tend to undercount communities of color. The extent of the undercount ranges from 5% to 40% depending on the community. This caveat should be kept in mind when comparing the homeless count data to the Multnomah County population data. However, the point-in-time count may also undercount communities of color, an issue that is addressed later in this section.

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[11] There are several potential methods for calculating the populations of color figure from Census and American Community Survey (ACS) data, and alternative calculation methods result in an over-representation of populations of color even when compared with the Multnomah County populations in poverty figure. The "populations of color" figure in the chart is arrived at by adding up all the race categories except White. For the Census and ACS data, the alternative method for arriving at this figure is to count as White only non-Hispanic Whites and to calculate populations of color by subtracting this figure from the total population. For the total population of Multnomah County, this results in a "populations of color" figure of 28%. For the population of Multnomah County in poverty, this results in a "populations of color" figure of 43%.

Comparisons to Previous Counts

The table below shows the racial/ ethnic data separately for the unsheltered, emergency shelter, and transitional housing populations and compares these data to the 2011 count. Among the unsheltered population, the number of people of color was 38% higher in 2013 than in 2011, with a particularly striking increase in the number and percentage of African Americans and Latinos. For the emergency shelter population, there was a 16% increase in the number of people of color, most notably among African Americans and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders. In contrast, the number and percentage of the transitional housing population who are people of color decreased slightly between 2011 and 2013.

> **The number of people of color in the unsheltered population was 38% higher in 2013 than in 2011; the number of people of color in the emergency shelter population was 16% higher.**

Race/Ethnicity	Unsheltered		Emergency Shelter		Transitional Housing	
	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013
White	1,150 (76%)	1,389 (75%)	715 (71%)	561 (61%)	1,090 (57%)	1047 (67%)
Populations of color	517 (34%)	711 (38%)	427 (42%)	494 (51%)	1,110 (58%)	796 (51%)
Asian	12 (1%)	19 (1%)	13 (1%)	20 (2%)	27 (1%)	27 (2%)
Black or African American	155 (10%)	267 (14%)	188 (19%)	243 (27%)	445 (23%)	354 (23%)
Hispanic/ Latino	154 (10%)	237 (13%)	115 (11%)	113 (12%)	253 (13%)	222 (14%)
Native American or Alaska Native	143 (9%)	144 (8%)	57 (6%)	77 (8%)	193 (10%)	165 (11%)
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	24 (2%)	44 (2%)	17 (2%)	41 (4%)	37 (2%)	28 (2%)
Other/ Multi-racial	29 (2%)	n/a	37 (4%)	n/a	155 (8%)	n/a
Information not provided	210 (n/a)	41 (n/a)	n/a	60 (7%)	n/a	7 (<1%)

The significant increase in the number and percentage of people of color in emergency shelter may be partially due to improved coordination between culturally specific providers and the emergency shelter system. Shelter providers within the family shelter system note that they saw more referrals from culturally specific providers over the past winter than in previous years.

Limitations of Data on Race and Ethnicity

Due to limitations in collecting accurate data on race and ethnicity, the point-in-time count may under report people of color experiencing homelessness. These limitations include:

◆ **Limited categories:** The federal government requires communities to use the above categories for collecting information on race and ethnicity. These categories do not accurately reflect the wide range of racial and ethnic identities within the population. For example, African communities are considered to be "Black/ African American" within these categories, and Slavic and Middle Eastern communities are counted as "White" – both categories fail to reflect the distinct identities of these groups.

In an effort to address this issue, the point-in-time count questionnaires encouraged respondents to identify themselves as African, Slavic, and Middle Eastern in addition to the federal race categories, when appropriate. The data that were collected in response to this question are incomplete and should therefore be viewed as only a preliminary effort to more accurately reflect the identities of these populations. While emergency shelter and transitional housing providers who contract with the Portland Housing Bureau and Multnomah County are in the process of adding these categories to their ongoing Service Point databases, the process is still in a transitional stage. Consequently, few emergency shelter and transitional housing providers included these data in their point-in-time count reporting. Among the HUD-defined homeless populations, 9 people identified as African, 7 as Middle Eastern, and 12 as Slavic.

◆ **Race Categories:** Requiring respondents to define themselves using the federal categories renders some populations invisible. For example, the category "Asian" encompasses many diverse cultures and nationalities, and the category "Native American" does not reflect individual tribal identities. In an effort to at least partially address this issue, the Street Count questionnaire offered respondents an opportunity to provide more detail on their racial and ethnic identities in an open-ended response format as well as by asking them to identify themselves as "refugee/ immigrant/ asylee" or "indigenous",

> **Requiring respondents to define themselves using the federal race categories renders some populations invisible.**

when appropriate. Eight respondents identified as refugee/ immigrant/ asylee and five identified as indigenous. Responses to the open-ended question included Jamaican, Cuban, Blackfoot Apache, Lakota, Navajo, Chicano, Guatemalan, Haitian, and Jewish.

◆ **Other/ Multi-racial:** Prior data collection practices used an umbrella category of "other/ multi-racial" to capture information on anybody with more than one racial or ethnic identity. This practice does not accurately reflect respondents' distinct identities and results in an undercount of populations of color. The Street Count and One Night Shelter Count addressed this limitation by eliminating the "other/ multi-racial" category on the questionnaire and instead encouraged respondents to select as many categories as apply. However, for the 2011 data that are included in the above table, because information for some respondents was submitted electronically based on previous data records, the information still includes the "other/ multi-racial" category.

◆ **Missing data**: As noted in the table, data on race/ ethnicity were not provided for 108 respondents. This could be the result of a variety of factors: some Street Count survey forms were incomplete and did not include answers to all of the questions; some respondents may have chosen to not provide information on their race/ ethnicity; some survey takers may not have felt comfortable asking these questions. For official counts like the Census, non-response rates are often believed to be higher for people of color. It is not clear whether this pattern holds true for homeless counts.

Racial and Ethnic Disparities

The Coalition of Communities of Color's report, "Communities of Color in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile" documents deep and broad racial and ethnic disparities in a wide range of local systems and institutions. These include the foster care system, juvenile and adult corrections system, housing markets, and access to education and occupations – all of which have an impact on poverty and homelessness. To better understand how these disparities may affect rates of homelessness within populations of color, this section compares the characteristics of homeless populations of color to the total homeless population (as defined by HUD) within specific sub-categories.

People of color experiencing homelessness are disproportionately likely to be families with children.

The most notable distinction between people of color experiencing homelessness and the overall homeless population is that people of color are significantly more likely to be families with children and slightly more likely to be female.

Household Composition	Homeless Populations of Color	Total Homeless Population
Individual adults > 18	57%	71%
Families with children	42%	28%
Unaccompanied youth < 18	1%	1%

Gender	Homeless Populations of Color	Total Homeless Population
Male	58%	61%
Female	42%	38%
Trans	<1%	1%
Unknown or "Z"	<1%	1%

Chronically Homeless	Homeless Populations of Color	Total Homeless Population
Veterans	8%	11%
Domestic violence (all respondents)	19%	19%
Domestic violence (females only)	43%	41%
Disabling conditions	43%	53%

Geographic Location

Information on geographic location is only available for Street Count respondents. The table below shows the areas of the county where unsheltered homeless people of color slept on the night of the count. It suggests that the geographic distribution of populations of color as a whole is relatively consistent with the distribution of the overall unsheltered population, but the sample sizes within each category are too small to draw valid conclusions about patterns.

Geographic Location (Unsheltered)	Asian	African American	Latino	Native American	Native Hawaiian-Pacific Islander	Total Populations of Color	Total Unsheltered Population
Downtown Portland/ Old Town	5 (26%)	68 (29%)	68 (31%)	44 (35%)	14 (33%)	199 (31%)	474 (28%)
N/NE Portland (to 82nd)	5 (26%)	50 (21%)	26 (12%)	19 (15%)	4 (10%)	104 (16%)	401 (23%)
SE Portland (to 82nd)	4 (21%)	38 (16%)	30 (14%)	37 (30%)	10 (24%)	119 (19%)	305 (18%)
NW/ SW Portland	4 (21%)	51 (22%)	55 (25%)	17 (14%)	11 (26%)	138 (22%)	309 (18%)
Outer East/ East County (E of 82nd)	1 (5%)	27 (12%)	39 (18%)	3 (6%)	3 (7%)	73 (11%)	218 (13%)
Total	19	234	218	120	42	633	1707

Note: Percentages in the table are out of the number of respondents who provided location information.

Beyond the Count Numbers

Even though communities of color are over-represented in the homeless count compared with their representation in the overall population of Multnomah County, the count does not accurately capture the actual levels of homelessness within those communities because they are disproportionately likely to be among the invisible homeless.

According to the Coalition of Communities of Color, many culturally-specific communities are unlikely to be counted in the point-in-time count because of cultural barriers that prevent people of color experiencing homelessness from utilizing mainstream services. Many culturally-specific communities are reluctant to turn to mainstream and government agencies for assistance due to legacies of distrust, a lack of cultural responsiveness by mainstream service providers, as well as cultural norms that lead many people to try to keep their homelessness hidden.

Many culturally-specific communities are unlikely to be counted in the point-in-time count.

Some communities also have difficulty navigating complex safety net systems and are reluctant to disclose personal information in order to receive assistance. These barriers are exacerbated by the lack of culturally-specific organizations explicitly funded to focus on homeless outreach and services in Multnomah County.

As a result of these patterns, many people of color tend to rely on churches, family, friends, and the broader community for help rather than accessing mainstream service systems. Because of cultural norms that emphasize the importance of helping community members in need, households will often double and triple up rather than allowing a member of the community to become literally homeless. However, this does not mean that their housing is safe or stable. Culturally-specific providers frequently find multiple families crowded into substandard one-bedroom apartments, creating overcrowded, unsanitary and unhealthy conditions. Providers report that families living in such conditions are at greater risk of domestic violence and sexual abuse. The unstable and overcrowded conditions can also make it difficult for adults to maintain ongoing employment and can cause children to disengage from school.

Both the Street Count and One Night Shelter Count are guided by HUD's definition of homelessness, which only includes households who are "literally homeless" (unsheltered, in emergency shelters, or vouchered into motels) or in transitional housing in the point-in-time count numbers. A far larger number of households in our community are without homes, living doubled up with friends or relatives or "couch surfing" due to economic reasons.

Studies indicate that these populations are at high risk of becoming literally homeless. In the course of a year, the estimated odds of experiencing homelessness for a doubled-up person are one in ten.[12] Furthermore, people who are doubled up often live with households who are themselves cost burdened, contributing to greater housing instability among those households.

Populations disproportionately likely to be doubled up include families, communities of color, and unaccompanied youth.

Populations disproportionately likely to be doubled up include families, communities of color, and unaccompanied youth under age 18.[13] As noted in the previous section, many culturally-specific populations are unlikely to utilize shelters because of cultural barriers, mistrust, and/or cultural norms that lead families and neighbors to reach out and house people in distress. According to local service providers, families with children and unaccompanied youth under age 18 are also more likely to be doubled up because it is more difficult for children to live on the streets or in shelters, and family and friends may be more willing to provide help when children are involved.

Estimates of the size of the doubled up population

There is no accurate methodology for enumerating how many households in our community are doubled up, but the available research suggests the size of the doubled-up population is considerably larger than the size of the HUD-defined homeless population. The National Alliance to End Homelessness conducted a national study in 2008 that estimates that if we included the doubled-up population in our overall count of homelessness, it would increase the size of the homeless population by a factor of five.[14] Local sources of data on sub-sets of the homeless population suggest that the number of people who are doubled up is at least four times larger than the number of people who are literally homeless:

Department of Human Services data

The Department of Human Services (DHS) reported that 11,846 of the 74,006 households in Multnomah County enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) during the week of the count identified themselves as homeless. This figure includes households who were sheltered, unsheltered, and doubled up (as well as 166 households who did not self-identify as homeless but who listed a shelter as their address.) If this figure included all of the sheltered and unsheltered households counted in the Street Count and ONSC (a conservative assumption), the number of households who were doubled up would be 4.13 times the number who were literally homeless.

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[12] Sermons, William and Peter Witte, (January 2011), State of Homelessness in America. Washington, D.C.: National Alliance to End Homelessness and Homelessness Research Institute.

[13] Wright et. al., (1998), "Factors Associated with Doubled-Up Housing – a Common Precursor to Homelessness." Social Service Review, Vol, 72, No.1; Moses, Joy (2010), "The New Housing Normal for Low-Income Families." Washington, D.C.: Center for American Progress; Curry-Stevens, A., Cross-Hemmer, A., and Coalition of Communities of Color (2010). Communities of Color in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile. Portland, OR: Portland State University.

[14] National Alliance to End Homelessness (2008), "Data Snapshot: Doubled Up in the United States. Updated March 2008." Washington, D.C.: NAEH.

The DHS figures also provide some potential insights into the demographic composition of the overall homeless population, including the doubled up population. However, the generalizability of the data is limited, given that culturally-specific communities are less likely to participate in mainstream service systems than Whites. This table shows the race/ethnicity of the SNAP recipients identifying themselves as homeless.

Race/ Ethnicity	Number of Homeless SNAP Clients	Percentage of all Homeless SNAP Clients
White	8,027	68%
Populations of color	3,345	28%
Asian/ Pacific Islander	177	1%
African American	2,227	19%
Hispanic	502	4%
Native American	302	3%
Multi-Racial	137	1%
Unknown	474	4%

The data suggest that African Americans and Native Americans are over-represented among homeless SNAP recipients compared with the overall population of Multnomah County, while Asian/ Pacific Islanders and Hispanics are under-represented.

211info data

The region's human services hotline, 211, asked anyone who called seeking information about human services in Multnomah County during the week of the count where they would or did sleep on the night of the count. Out of 1,721 callers, 221 indicated that they did not have stable housing. This includes 138 callers who said they were doubled up with family and friends, and 83 who said they would be in a shelter, unsheltered, or in a hotel or motel. In other words, of the population with unstable housing, 62% of households were doubled up while 38% were literally homeless. Put another way, the number of doubled up households was 1.66 times the number of literally homeless households. This ratio may under-represent the proportion of doubled up households since doubled up households may be less likely than literally homeless households to call 211 seeking services.

School district data

The homeless liaisons for most of Multnomah County's school districts completed the Street Count form for all unsheltered students and also provided more comprehensive data on the number of students experiencing housing instability on the night of the count:

Unaccompanied Youth	LIVING SITUATION						
	Unsheltered	Shelter	Transitional Housing	Hotel/Motel	Doubled Up	Other/ Unknown	Total
White/ Caucasian	0	5 (83%)	1 (33%)	0	59 (43%)	3 (25%)	68 (43%)
Populations of color	0	1 (17%)	2 (67%)	0	77 (57%)	9 (75%)	89 (57%)
Hispanic/ Latino	0	0	2 (67%)	0	31 (23%)	1 (8%)	34 (22%)
Black/ African American	0	1 (17%)	0	0	33 (24%)	8 (67%)	42 (27%)
Native American/ Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	6 (4%)	0	6 (4%)
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	3 (2%)	0	3 (2%)
Asian	0	0	0	0	4 (3%)	0	4 (3%)
Total	0	6	3	0	136	12	157

Youth Living with their Families	LIVING SITUATION						
	Unsheltered	Shelter	Transitional Housing	Hotel/Motel	Doubled Up	Other/ Unknown	Total
White/ Caucasian	5 (38%)	69 (45%)	29 (39%)	52 (49%)	426 (41%)	22 (26%)	603
Populations of color	8 (62%)	86 (56%)	46 (61%)	54 (51%)	610 (59%)	64 (74%)	868
Hispanic/ Latino	1 (8%)	20 (13%)	13 (17%)	26 (25%)	242 (23%)	41 (48%)	343
Black/ African American	5 (38%)	60 (39%)	27 (36%)	21 (20%)	251 (24%)	11 (13%)	375
Native American/ Alaskan Native	2 (15%)	6 (4%)	2 (3%)	0	50 (5%)	3 (3%)	63
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0	0	0	6 (6%)	22 (2%)	8 (9%)	36
Asian	0	0	4 (5%)	1 (<1%)	45 (4%)	1 (1%)	51
Total	13	155	75	106	1,036	86	1,471

The number of students experiencing homelessness on the night of the count who were doubled up was 4.19 times the number who were literally homeless (unsheltered, in shelter, or in hotel/motel).

The school data also suggest that people of color are significantly over-represented in the doubled up population. Fifty-nine percent of the doubled up students are students of color. This is 11 percentage points higher than the HUD-defined homeless population of Multnomah County that are people of color, and 30 percentage points higher than the population of Multnomah County as a whole that are people of color.
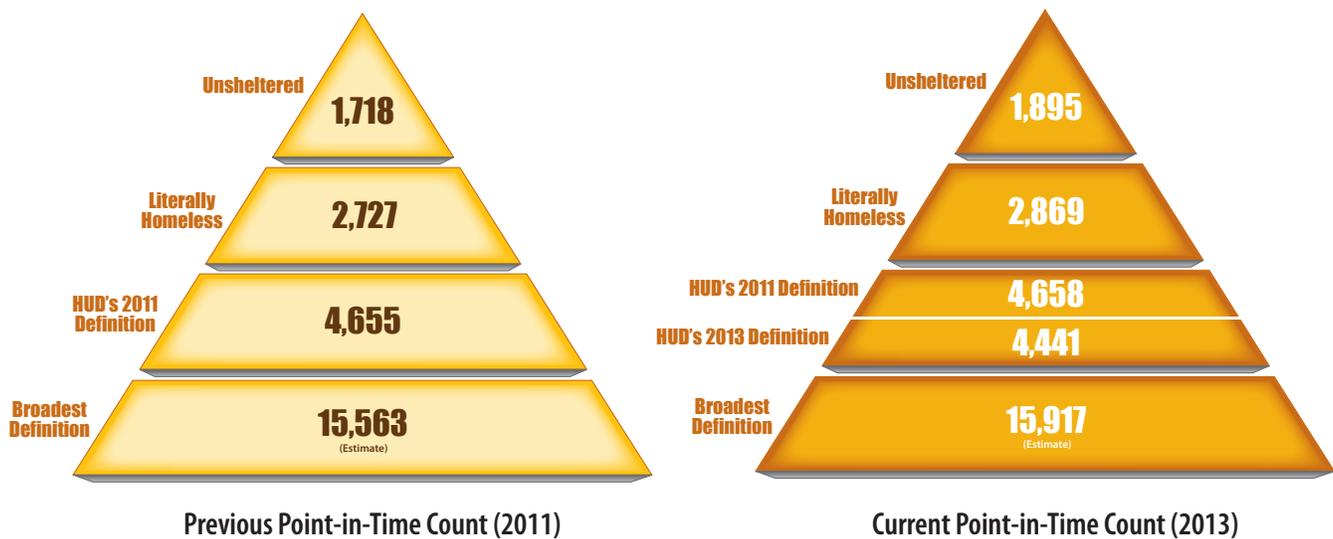
Local estimates

The data from these local and national studies suggest the number of people who were doubled up in Multnomah County on the night of the 2013 count may be more than four times the number of people who were literally homeless. Applying this rough estimate to the literally homeless figure from the point-in-time count yields a ballpark figure of 11,476 people who were doubled up on the night of the count. If we add these people to the HUD-defined homeless population, the total count would be 15,917.

The number of people who were doubled up in Multnomah County on the night of the count may be more than four times the number who were literally homeless.

There were 2,869 literally homeless people in Multnomah County on January 30, 2013, including 1,895 who were unsheltered. This represents a 10% increase in the unsheltered population and a 5% increase in the literally homeless population compared with the most recent count in 2011 – an increase that occurred despite our community's continued investment in strategies to end homelessness, as demonstrated by the 4,832 people receiving rent assistance and permanent supportive housing on the night of the count who would otherwise have most likely been homeless.

Previous Point-in-Time Count (2011)
Unsheltered **1,718**
Literally Homeless **2,727**
HUD's 2011 Definition **4,655**
Broadest Definition **15,563** (Estimate)

Current Point-in-Time Count (2013)
Unsheltered **1,895**
Literally Homeless **2,869**
HUD's 2011 Definition **4,658**
HUD's 2013 Definition **4,441**
Broadest Definition **15,917** (Estimate)

The increase in Multnomah County's literally homeless population is most likely a result of increased rates of long-term unemployment, the expiration of unemployment benefits for many of the long-term unemployed, high levels of underemployment, increased housing costs, low vacancy rates, and cuts to a wide range of social service and public benefit programs.

Communities of color, which have been disproportionately impacted by the recession, are over-represented within the homeless population compared with the overall population of Multnomah County as a whole.

Behind the point-in-time count numbers are thousands of people in our community who are struggling to survive in the face of great uncertainty and intense vulnerability. This includes individual adults, unaccompanied youth, and increasing numbers of homeless families with children who are disproportionately people of color and victims of domestic violence.

The reality of what it means to be homeless in our community is made dramatically clear in the findings of the medical examiner's recent review of deaths among people experiencing homelessness in Multnomah County in 2012. At least 56 people experiencing homelessness died in Multnomah County in 2012, with an average age of 46 – far below the county's average life expectancy of 71. Many of these deaths were violent or painful, and almost all of the deaths could have been avoided. These losses represent the ultimate price of living without adequate shelter, and they highlight the importance of working together to make our community a place where everyone has a safe, stable place to sleep.

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Outreach and Engagement Workgroup Participants

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Participating Street Count Agencies

211info, Adventist Medical Center, Agape Church of Christ, Anawin, Better People, Black Parent Initiative, Blanchet House, Bridgetown Ministries, Can We Help, Carpenter's Food Bank, Cascadia, Cascade AIDS Project, Catholic Charities, Centennial School District, Central City Concern, Community Transition School, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, David Douglas School District, Department of Human Services, Dignity Village, Dinner and a Movie, Disability Action Advocates, East Side Church of Christ, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Elm Court, Fairview Police Department, First Baptist Church, FISH, Good News Health Clinic, Gresham Police Department, Gresham-Barlow School District, Highland Church, Holiday Park Church of God, Human Solutions, Imago Dei, Impact Northwest, Janus Youth Programs, JOIN, Julia West House, Legal Aid Services of Oregon, Loaves and Fishes, Macdonald Center, Manna Ministries, Mercy Corps, Multnomah County Developmental Disabilities, Multnomah County Health Department, Multnomah County Libraries, Multnomah County Sheriff's Office, Multnomah County STD/HIV/Hepatitis C Program, NARA NW, Native American Youth and Family Center, New Avenues for Youth, Northwest Pilot Project, Operation Nightwatch, Oregon Department of Transportation, Oregon Law Center, Outside In, P:ear, Parkrose School District, Port of Portland, Portland Fire and Rescue, Portland Homeless Family Solutions, Portland Parks and Recreation, Portland Police Bureau, Portland Public School District, Portland Rescue Mission, Portland Water Bureau, Portland Women's Crisis Line, Potluck in the Park, Reynolds School District, Right to Dream Too, Road Warrior, Rose Haven, Salvation Army, Sanctuary Presbyterian Church, Self Enhancement Inc., Sexual Minority Youth Resource Center, Southeast Works, Sisters of the Road, Snow Cap, St. Andree Church, St. Francis Dining Hall, St. Henry's Catholic Church, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Street Roots, St. Stephen's Episcopal Parish, Sunnyside Methodist Church, Transformation Network, Transition Projects, Transitional Youth, Trinity Cathedral, Troutdale Police Department, Union Gospel Mission, University of Western States, Veterans Administration, Voz, Wallace Medical Concern, Westside Health Clinic, William Temple House, Worksource Oregon, Zarapeth Kitchen

Street Count Volunteers

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Participating One Night Shelter Count Organizations

Blanchet House, Bradley Angle, Cascade AIDS Project, Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare, Catholic Charities, Central City Concern, City Team, Friendly House, Human Solutions, Impact Northwest, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization, Janus Youth Programs, JOIN, Luke-Dorf, My Father's House, Native American Rehabilitation Association, Native American Youth and Family Center, Neighborhood House, New Avenues for Youth, Northwest Pilot Project, Outside In, Portland Rescue Mission, Portland Women's Crisis Line, Raphael House, ROSS, Salvation Army, Self-Enhancement Inc., Transition Projects, Union Gospel Mission, Volunteers of America, YWCA

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Definitions

The point-in-time count is based on guidelines established by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for enumerating homeless persons.[15] Though HUD has recently adopted broader regulatory definitions of homelessness[16] that affect eligibility criteria for some HUD-funded homeless assistance programs, HUD's guidelines generally limit persons counted in homeless point-in-time counts to people within the following categories:

◆ **Unsheltered Homeless:** individuals and families 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 on the night designated for the count.

◆ **Sheltered Homeless:** All adults, children and unaccompanied youth living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals).

Increasingly, HUD requires that the sheltered point-in-time count aligns directly with a housing inventory count of all beds and units dedicated to providing shelter, transitional housing and permanent housing to people meeting HUD's homeless definition.

Recent changes to HUD's broader definition of homelessness are summarized by the National Alliance to End Homelessness as follows:[17]

The new definition includes four broad categories of homelessness:

• People who are living in a place not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelter, in transitional housing, or are exiting an institution where they temporarily resided if they were in shelter or a place not meant for human habitation before entering the institution. The only significant change from existing practice is that people will be considered homeless if they are exiting an institution where they resided for up to 90 days (it was previously 30 days), and were homeless immediately prior to entering that institution.

• People who are losing their primary nighttime residence, which may include a motel or hotel or a doubled up situation, within 14 days and lack resources or support networks to remain in housing. HUD had previously allowed people who were being displaced within 7 days to be considered homeless. The regulation also describes specific documentation requirements for this category.

• Families with children or unaccompanied youth who are unstably housed and likely to continue in that state. This is a new category of homelessness, and it applies to families with children or unaccompanied youth (up to age 24) who have not had a lease or ownership interest in a housing unit in the last 60 or more days, have had two or more moves in the last 60 days, and who are likely to continue to be unstably housed because of disability or multiple barriers to employment.

• People who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening situations related to violence; have no other residence; and lack the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing. This category is similar to the current practice regarding people who are fleeing domestic violence."

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[15] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013 HIC/PIT Data Collection Guidance, December 2012, https://www.onecpd.info/resources/documents/2013HICandPITGuidance.pdf

[16] For more information, see National Alliance to End Homelessness, "Changes in the HUD Definition of 'Homeless'", http://b.3cdn.net/naeh/579e3b67bd7eeb3fc3_q0m6i6az8.pdf.

[17] Ibid

Doubled up and couch surfing:
HUD's definition of homelessness for the point-in-time count specifically excludes people without homes who are doubled up for economic reasons with friends and relatives. The exclusion of the doubled-up population from HUD's point-in-time counts has been contested by some advocacy groups. Other definitions of homelessness do include this population. For example, the definition of homelessness used by the U.S. Department of Education includes the categories from the HUD definition, plus also includes, "children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations."

Chronically homeless:
HUD defines "chronically homeless" as an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more OR has had at least four (4) episodes of homelessness in the past three (3) years. A disabling condition is defined as a diagnosable substance abuse disorder, serious mental illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions. In the past, couples and people in families experiencing homelessness were excluded from this classification. In 2011, HUD changed its definition to include adults in couples or families who meet the definition of chronic homelessness, along with family members living with that adult at the time of the count.

Definitions from One Night Shelter Count:
The One Night Shelter Count includes emergency shelters, transitional housing, vouchers, rent/ mortgage assistance, and permanent supportive housing. These are defined as follows:

- ◆ **Emergency Shelter:** A facility providing short-term (30-days stay), emergency accommodation for homeless persons.

- ◆ **Hotel/ Motel Vouchers:** Vouchers used to provide temporary shelter in a hotel or motel.

- ◆ **Rent or Mortgage Assistance:** Homeless prevention program that provides short-term financial assistance to prevent eviction or foreclosure for people at risk of being homeless.

- ◆ **Transitional Housing:** A housing program that provides temporary stabilized housing with supportive services up to two years for persons who are transitioning to community living after being homeless. (Does not include Section 8 and HUD-subsidized housing.)

- ◆ **Permanent Supportive Housing:** Long-term housing that provides supportive services for homeless persons with disabilities. Permanent housing can be provided in one structure or several structures at one site or in multiple structures at scattered sites.

Homeless Management Information System/ Service Point:
Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) are data collection and reporting systems required by and meeting uniform standards set by HUD for all communities receiving federal homeless assistance funding. The Portland Housing Bureau implements a regional HMIS using Service Point, a web-based data system that allows agencies, coalitions, and communities to manage real-time client and resource data. Service Point is a product of Bowman Systems, Shreveport LA.

Contents:

A. Additional Street Count Data On Unidentified Individuals

B. Additional Data On Communities Of Color

C. Street Count Participation

D. One Night Shelter Count Participation

E. One Night Shelter Count Survey Form

F. Street Count Survey Form

Appendix B is available online at:
https://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/62553