

2015 POINT-IN-TIME

Count of Homelessness in
Portland/Gresham/Multnomah County, Oregon



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This report was prepared by Kristina Smock Consulting for the City of Portland, the City of Gresham, Multnomah County and the Coordinating Board of A Home for Everyone. A Home for Everyone is a community-wide collaboration to house homeless Multnomah County residents by making smart investments in the areas of housing, income, survival and emergency services, healthcare, and systems coordination. Key partners in the effort include Multnomah County, the City of Portland, the City of Gresham, Home Forward, Meyer Memorial Trust, local nonprofits, businesses, faith leaders, and people with experience of homelessness.

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Every two years our community conducts a comprehensive survey of people who are sleeping on our streets or in temporary shelter on a given night. The Coordinating Board of A Home for Everyone has reviewed the findings and the attached report and offers the following comments and recommendations for action.

Homelessness remains a crisis: Unlike in other large West Coast cities, the overall number of people experiencing homelessness in Multnomah County did not increase from 2013 to 2015, but we remain deeply concerned that on one night 3,800 people slept on our streets, in shelter, and in temporary housing, and that an estimated 12,000 people were doubled up, many in overcrowded and often unsafe conditions, including domestic violence survivors attempting to flee their homes. We must continue to improve and expand our response to this crisis.

Some progress, but urgent concerns: It is promising that the rate of homelessness is relatively unchanged since 2013 despite a worsening affordable housing crisis and continued economic stagnation for extremely low-income people. There are also some specific areas where we have seen important progress over the past two years, including a 17% decline in chronic homelessness among individual adults, a decrease in unsheltered veterans, and a 27% reduction in the percentage of people experiencing homelessness for two years or more. However, there are also some very disturbing trends identified in this report that demand our attention and an immediate response:

- **Communities of Color:** This report identifies a dramatic 48% increase in the number of unsheltered African Americans; over the past two years, the number of unsheltered African Americans – largely single adults – grew from 267 to 396. Because of the definition of homelessness that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) directs us to use, the point-in-time count does not adequately capture the levels of homelessness in many communities of color, particularly Native Americans, Latinos, and Asians, but supplemental data indicate that levels of homelessness have increased in these communities as well. For example, as the report documents, 61% of homeless children in our schools – most of them doubled up and not counted as homeless by HUD – are children of color. Working with our culturally-specific provider partners, we must take action to reverse the growing racial and ethnic disparities revealed by this report and also ensure that our responses to homelessness do not rely on definitions and data sources that fail to capture the extent of homelessness in communities of color.
- **Women:** Over the past two years, the number of adult women experiencing homelessness grew by 15% (from 1,089 to 1,161 women). Nearly half of the women surveyed reported having been victims of domestic violence, and 67% reported having a disability. The additional vulnerability of women, and in particular women of color, to violence and severe trauma once they become homeless is well documented. It must be a priority to take action and to work with our healthcare and domestic violence system partners to provide women the housing options and services they need to reverse this trend.
- **Families with Children:** On the night of the count, 374 children under the age of 18 were identified as homeless. Nearly all were in families, and a growing percentage were in families that reported sleeping outside or in their car on the night of the count: a total of 152 people in families, including 76 children, were unsheltered on the night of the count, which is a 24% increase compared with 2013. There was also an increase in the number of chronically homeless families: 64 of the people in families on the night of the count were chronically homeless, compared with 52 in 2013, and over half of the chronically homeless families in 2015 were unsheltered. Families with children also make up a disproportionate percentage of the report's estimated 12,000 people who are doubled up or living in motel rooms on any given night. Given that homelessness can have profound negative short and long-term consequences for their lives, we must continue to prioritize ending homelessness among children.



- **Disabilities:** The percentage of people surveyed who report being disabled has not changed significantly but it remains very high (57%) and it is even higher for certain groups (for example, 67% of women report being disabled). Board members with expertise in the area of mental health point out that given the trauma associated with homelessness, a much higher percentage of the homeless population would likely qualify as having a mental health disability than is documented through the survey. It is thus essential that we prioritize access to healthcare and an adequate supply of permanent supportive housing if we are to succeed in ending homelessness.
- **Age:** Our street and shelter homeless population is aging. The number of people over the age of 55 increased by 23% – from 571 to 704 – from 2013 to 2015. As the population ages, we need to evaluate how this trend affects the types of housing and services we provide in our ending homelessness systems.
- **East County:** The geographic distribution of homelessness remained relatively unchanged from 2013, except in one area: Gresham/East County. In that area, the reported number of people who were unsheltered (sleeping outside, in parks and other areas not intended for human habitation) increased significantly, from just 65 in 2013 to 176 this year. Discussions with stakeholders in the area suggest that this increase is largely the result of improved surveying of the area; while there has been a real increase in street homelessness since 2013, the 2015 number is closer to what actually existed in 2013 than what was reported in that year’s street count.

Who and how we count: Point-in-time count data is an essential part of understanding the scope and dimensions of homelessness in our community and it should be one data source we rely on to help us shape our planning. But we cannot rely on it exclusively. We must look beyond the point-in-time count to other sources of data that more accurately capture the extent of homelessness and housing crisis in our community. Most urgently, we must look at the doubled up population and determine whether and how to better survey this group and support those in unsustainable situations.

On behalf of the Coordinating Board of A Home for Everyone, we call on our community leaders and fellow residents to treat the enclosed report as a call to action – to recommit to our efforts to end homelessness and to prioritize those who are not being adequately served by those efforts.

Sincerely,

Stacy Borke
AHFE Board Co-Chair

Matthew Morton
AHFE Board Co-Chair

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The 2015 point-in-time count of homelessness provides a snapshot of the individuals and families experiencing homelessness on the night of Wednesday, January 28, 2015 in Portland, Gresham, and Multnomah County. The count data help local jurisdictions and their community-based partners to plan for the services and funding 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.

The point-in-time count's data collection focuses on the segment of the homeless population that meets the definition of homelessness established by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Data come from the Street Count, which captures information on people who are unsheltered (e.g. sleeping outside, in a vehicle, a tent, or other place not intended for human habitation) and the One Night Shelter Count, which tallies people sleeping in emergency shelters and transitional housing for the homeless.

The 2015 point-in-time count identified 1,887 people who were unsheltered, 872 people who were sleeping in an emergency shelter, and 1,042 people who were sleeping in transitional housing. In all, 3,801 people met HUD's definition of homelessness on the night of January 28, 2015.

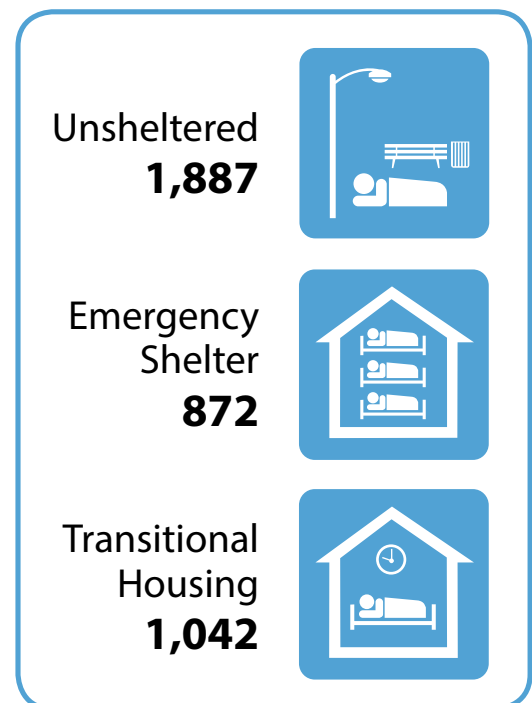
Among these 3,801 people:

- 41% were people of color
- 17% were in families with children (including 369 children)
- 31% were women
- 7% were youth ages 24 and younger
- 12% were veterans
- 57% had disabling conditions
- 46% were chronically homeless

The count did not capture comprehensive information on people sharing the housing of others for economic reasons (a situation frequently referred to as "doubled up"), but an analysis of available data suggests that there are more than three times as many people in that situation in Multnomah County on a given night than the more narrowly defined homeless population that was included in the count.

Compared to the last comprehensive point-in-time count, which was conducted in January 2013, the unsheltered number remained stable while the emergency shelter and transitional housing numbers declined. The emergency shelter and transitional housing numbers are a reflection of our system's service capacity, which has actually increased since 2013. But a change in HUD's definition meant that more than 800 people who would have been included in the count in 2013 did not meet HUD's definition of homelessness for the 2015 count.

Taking into account the shift in HUD's definition, the count shows little change in Multnomah County's overall levels of homelessness between 2013 and 2015. Within the overall numbers, however, there are some important variations. Most notably, the count shows troubling increases in homelessness for specific populations including African Americans, unsheltered women, and unsheltered families. The count data also point to some promising trends, such as a decline in the portion of the unsheltered population that has been homeless for more than two years and a reduction in chronic homelessness among unsheltered individual adults.



Key Findings

- **Levels of homelessness:** On the night of January 28, 2015, 3,801 people in Multnomah County met HUD's definition of homelessness. This figure includes 1,887 unsheltered homeless, 872 in emergency shelter, and 1,042 in transitional housing. If we also include the thousands of individuals and families who were doubled up for economic reasons, an estimated 16,344 people were homeless in Multnomah County on the night of the count. (see page 9)
- **Economic context:** Multnomah County's continuing struggles with homelessness can be attributed to the combined economic challenges of high housing costs, low vacancy rates, stagnant wages, and high levels of unemployment among some of our community's most vulnerable populations. (see pages 11-12)
- **HUD's redefinition:** More than 800 emergency shelter and transitional housing beds that were included in the 2013 count were redefined by HUD as "rapid re-housing" for the 2015 count. HUD does not consider people in rapid re-housing to be homeless. The people served by these beds are disproportionately communities of color, women, and families with children. Not including these beds in the 2015 count had a ripple effect on the numbers and percentages of these populations in the count's overall data. (see pages 12-13)
- **Communities of color:** 41% of Multnomah County's homeless population (1,477 people*) is people of color, which means that communities of color are over-represented by 11 percentage points within the homeless population compared with their percentage of the overall population of Multnomah County. (see pages 14-16)
- **African Americans:** African Americans have the highest rates of over-representation among communities of color, making up 24% of the homeless population compared with 7% of the county's population as a whole. They also experienced the greatest growth in homelessness between 2013 and 2015, with the number of unsheltered African Americans increasing by 129 people (48%) compared with the 2013 count. (see pages 14-16 & 18-19)
- **Native Americans:** The number of Native Americans decreased across all three of the point-in-time categories (unsheltered, emergency shelter, and transitional housing). This is largely due to HUD's redefinition of which beds should be included in the count. It also highlights the limitations of the definition of homelessness used for the count; as with other communities of color, Native Americans are more likely to be doubled up than to meet HUD's definition of homelessness. (see page 19)

DEFINITIONS

Unsheltered: An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including the street, doorways, parks, vehicles, and abandoned buildings.

Emergency Shelter: A facility with the primary purpose of providing temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness. The typical stay is less than a few months.

Transitional Housing: A housing program that provides a place to stay and supportive services for up to 24 months in order to facilitate the movement of individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing. Participants have a lease or occupancy agreement that is for a term of at least one month and that ends in 24 months and cannot be extended.

Rapid Re-housing: An intervention designed to help individuals and families to quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing. Services are tailored to the unique needs of the household and typically include a combination of housing identification, rent and move-in assistance, case management, and supportive services as needed. Participants typically have a lease in their own names and can remain in their housing units after their rental subsidies end.

*Most percentages in this report are calculated with the denominator representing the number of respondents with known data. In this case, race data was unknown for 207 people, so the denominator for the 41% figure is the total HUD Homeless population minus those 207 people.

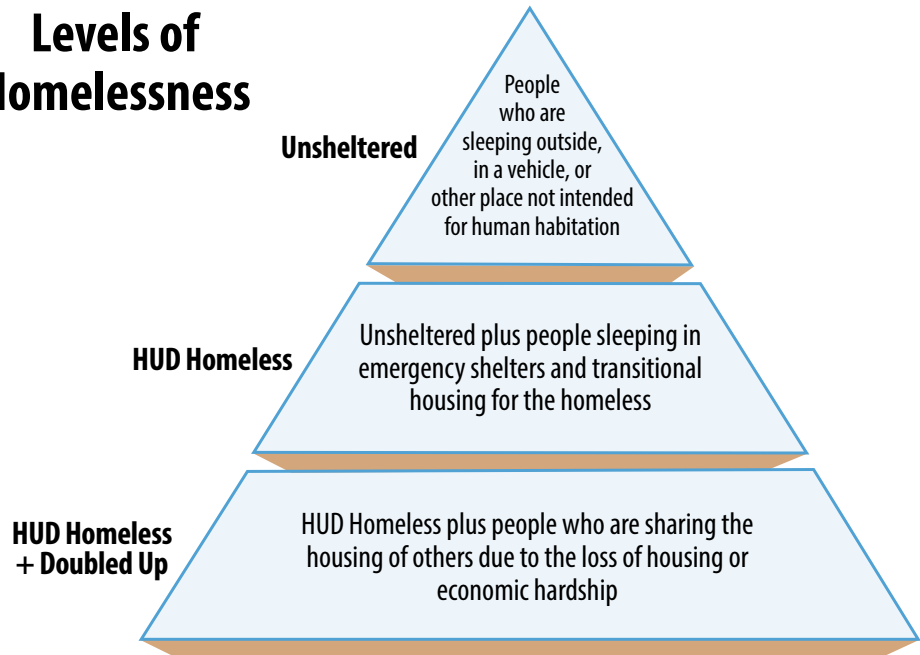
- **Families:** 17% of the county's overall homeless population and 26% of homeless populations of color are persons in families with children. The number of unsheltered families with children increased by 29 people (24%) compared with the 2013 count. (see pages 20-21)
- **Children:** There are 374 homeless children under the age of 18 in Multnomah County. More than half are children of color, and 21% are unsheltered. Five of the children are unaccompanied and the rest are in families. (see pages 22-23)
- **Unaccompanied youth:** There are 266 unaccompanied youth ages 24 and younger in Multnomah County. Thirty-eight percent are youth of color. Half are unsheltered. (see pages 22-23)
- **Women:** 31% of the homeless population is adult women, and 29% of these women are in families with children. The number of unsheltered women increased by 72 (15%) compared with the 2013 count. (see pages 24-25)
- **Disabling conditions:** 57% of the homeless population has one or more disabling conditions. The number of unsheltered people with disabling conditions decreased by 114 people (9%) compared with the 2013 count. (see page 26)
- **Chronic homelessness:** 48% of unsheltered individual adults and 25% of unsheltered persons in families with children meet the definition of chronic homelessness (see definition, page 28). The number of unsheltered chronically homeless individual adults decreased by 151 people (15%) compared with 2013. The number of unsheltered chronically homeless persons in families with children increased from 4 people in 2013 to 38 people in 2015. (see page 28)
- **Veterans:** 12% of homeless adults are veterans. While the overall number of homeless veterans has not changed significantly since 2013, the number of unsheltered veterans decreased by 16 people (7%). (see page 29)
- **Domestic violence:** 45% of homeless women and 26% of the overall homeless population have been affected by domestic violence. (see page 30)
- **Geographic distribution:** The unsheltered population is distributed throughout the county. While downtown Portland continues to be the location with the highest percentage of unsheltered homeless, the greatest increases in the unsheltered count were in Gresham and East County. These increases are largely attributable to expanded partnerships and improved point-in-time count coordination in those areas. (see pages 33-34)
- **Length of homelessness:** 50% of the unsheltered population has been homeless a year or less, including 33% who have been homeless for six months or less; 27% have been homeless for more than two years. The number of unsheltered homeless who have been homeless for more than two years decreased by 159 (27%) compared with 2013. (see page 35)
- **Migration:** 71% of the unsheltered population has lived in Multnomah County for more than two years. Among unsheltered respondents who have been here for less than two years, 224 were homeless when they came here. This represents a decrease of 159 people (42%) compared with 2013. Most of these people were drawn to Multnomah County because of friends, family ties, or perceived job opportunities. (see pages 36-37)
- **Doubled up:** The point-in-time count is guided by HUD's definition of homelessness, which only includes households who are unsheltered, in emergency shelters, or in transitional housing. Far more people in our community are without homes, living doubled up with friends or relatives for economic reasons. Supplemental data suggest the doubled up population is more than three times the size of the HUD Homeless population, and the doubled up population is disproportionately made up of children, youth, families, and people of color. (see pages 38-40)

The point-in-time count is a bi-annual effort to learn more about the individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Portland, Gresham, and Multnomah County. The 2015 count took place on Wednesday, January 28.

The definition of homelessness for the point-in-time count is established by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is limited to people who are unsheltered (sleeping outside, in vehicles, or other places not intended for human habitation), in emergency shelter, or in transitional housing for the homeless. In this report, these populations are referred to as the "HUD Homeless".

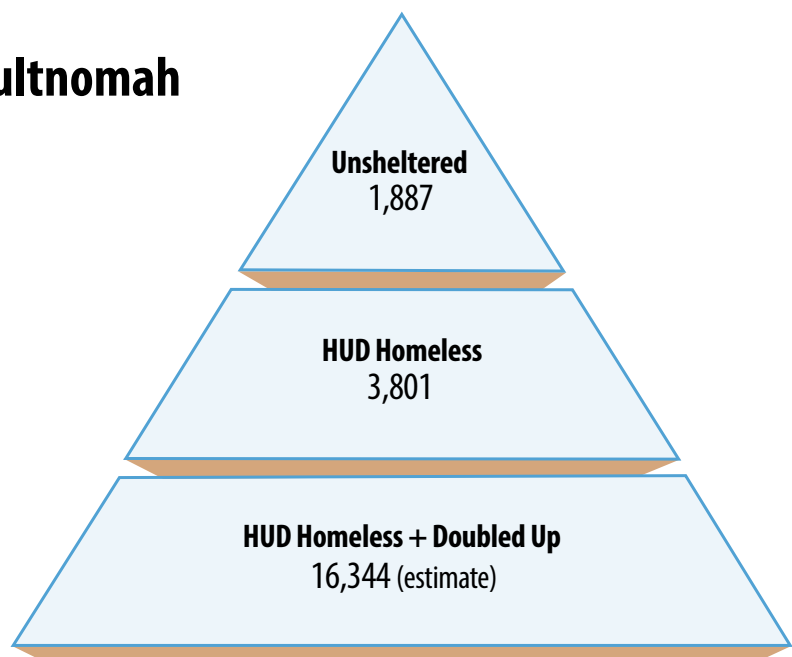
People who are sharing the housing of others due to the loss of housing or economic hardship (commonly referred to as "doubled up") are not part of HUD's definition of homelessness, but they represent a significant portion of the individuals and families experiencing housing instability in Multnomah County. The point-in-time count report uses supplemental data to create estimates of the doubled up population in an effort to provide a more complete picture of homelessness and housing instability in our community.

Levels of Homelessness



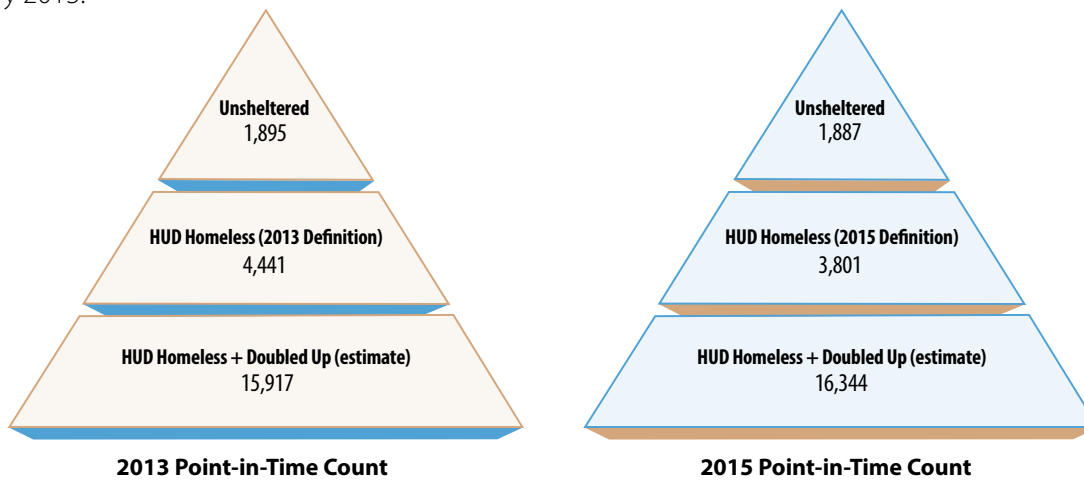
Levels of Homelessness In Multnomah County on January 28, 2015

On the night of January 28, 2015, there were 1,887 unsheltered homeless people in Multnomah County, 3,801 that met HUD's broader definition of homelessness that includes emergency shelter and transitional housing, and an estimated 16,344 if we also include the thousands of people who were doubled up that night for economic reasons.



CHANGES FROM 2013 to 2015

To understand how Multnomah County's levels of homelessness have changed over time, we can compare the January 2015 point-in-time count findings with the last comprehensive point-in-time count, which took place in January 2013.



The 2015 unsheltered count was almost identical to the 2013 count.

The number of unsheltered homeless decreased by 8 people, a less than 1% decrease.

The number of people counted in emergency shelter and transitional housing decreased compared with 2013 due to changes in HUD's definition of emergency shelter and transitional housing.

The number of people in emergency shelter declined by 102 people (10%), primarily because more than 100 family beds that were counted as emergency shelter in 2013 were redefined by HUD as "rapid re-housing" in 2015.

The number of people in transitional housing declined by 530 people (34%), primarily because 593 family beds and 96 domestic violence beds that were counted as transitional housing in 2013 were redefined by HUD as "rapid re-housing" in 2015.

As a result of the changes in HUD's definitions, the number of people meeting HUD's definition of homelessness for the point-in-time count declined from 2013 to 2015.

Based on HUD's 2015 definition, 3,801 people met the criteria for "HUD Homeless" on the night of January 28, 2015. This is 14% lower than the number of HUD Homeless in 2013.

The emergency shelter and transitional housing numbers are a reflection of our system's service capacity, which has actually increased since 2013. If we apply the definitions used in 2013 to this year's count, we get a HUD Homeless figure of 4,613, which is 4% higher than in 2013.

The per-capita rate of homelessness also declined from 2013 to 2015.

HUD defines the per-capita rate of homelessness as the number of people who are unsheltered or in emergency shelter out of every 10,000 people in the population. Due to increases in Multnomah County's overall population over the past two years and the changes in HUD's definitions, the per-capita rate of homelessness in Multnomah County declined from 37.45 in 2013 to 35.89 in 2015.

The estimated number of people meeting the more comprehensive definition of homelessness that includes people who are doubled up increased from 2013 to 2015.

The estimated size of the broader homeless population, including the HUD Homeless and the doubled up population, grew by 427 people or 3%.

While this figure is just a ballpark estimate, the increase in the 2015 estimate is consistent with local and national data showing that the doubled up population has increased in recent years.

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

The lack of overall improvement in Multnomah County's cumulative levels of homelessness between 2013 and 2015, along with the significant increases in homelessness for specific populations such as African Americans and unsheltered families, can best be understood within the economic context of the past two years. While many factors can influence an individual's likelihood of ending up on the streets, homelessness is fundamentally about an inability to afford housing. Among point-in-time count respondents who answered a question about the causes of their homelessness, the most frequent responses were "unemployment" and "couldn't afford rent."

Housing is generally considered affordable if the cost of rent and utilities totals no more than 30% of household income. Households paying more than 30% of their income on rent and utilities are considered to be "rent burdened" because they often do not have enough income left over to pay for other basic needs, such as food, transportation, and medical care. Any crisis, from a medical emergency to job loss, can put these households at risk of homelessness.

Housing costs in Multnomah County have increased at rates much higher than the national average in recent years.

Housing costs in Multnomah County have increased at rates much higher than the national average in recent years. A study by the National Association of Realtors found that rents in the Portland metro area rose 20% over the last five years, which is the sixth-fastest rise in the country.¹ At the same time, vacancy rates have remained extremely low, making it more difficult for low-income households to access housing. In the first quarter of 2015, the Portland metro area had the lowest vacancy rate in the nation.²

Multnomah County's high housing costs have resulted in a deficit of 24,845 housing units affordable to the lowest income renters.³ In today's housing market, a full time worker would need to earn an annual income of \$37,756 in order to afford a two bedroom apartment in Multnomah County without being rent burdened. This would require the worker to work 40 hours a week at \$18.15 per hour or work for 78.5 hours a week at Oregon's current minimum wage.⁴ Given these figures, it is not surprising that 89% of the county's households in poverty are paying more than 30% of their incomes on housing.⁵

High housing costs have been accompanied by stagnant wages and continuing high levels of unemployment for low-income workers. The lowest wage workers have benefited the least from the economic recovery of the past few years. Middle wage jobs that were lost during the recession have been replaced in part by high wage jobs requiring a college education, but more frequently by minimum wage jobs. Recent economic growth in the Portland metro region has been dominated by low wage industries such as retail, food service, nursing homes, and temporary employment.⁶ As a result, while incomes for the wealthiest households in Portland jumped by double-digit rates in recent years, low-income households in Portland had lower incomes in 2013 than they did in 2007.⁷ Renter households and communities of color in Portland have continued to see their inflation-adjusted wages fall, while housing costs in Portland have grown at rates faster than inflation.⁸

The decline in employment-related income for low wage workers has been exacerbated by the erosion of safety net programs. Public benefit programs intended to stabilize people in poverty have been cut or lost value to the point that most fail to bring beneficiaries above the poverty level.⁹

Multnomah County's unemployment rate is now on par with the national rate, but the county's lowest income residents still experience high levels of unemployment and under-employment. Workers with low levels of educational attainment are much more likely to be unemployed in Multnomah County than those with a college education.¹⁰ Communities of color are disproportionately affected by these dynamics. Unemployment rates among almost all of Multnomah County's communities of color are higher than among whites, with the rates for African Americans and Native Americans almost twice those of whites.¹¹

The recently released State of Housing in Portland report shows that median incomes for communities of color in Portland are significantly lower than for whites, putting much of the city's housing stock out of reach for the average household of color. On top of these income barriers, anecdotal evidence suggests that immigrants and

In light of the county's high housing costs, low vacancy rates, and stagnant wages, it is not surprising that our community continues to struggle with homelessness.

people of color in Portland may face higher barriers than whites in accessing rental units in the private rental market due to discrimination.

In light of the county's high housing costs, low vacancy rates, and stagnant wages, it is not surprising that our community continues to struggle with homelessness. However, it is worth noting that levels of homelessness have remained about the same despite

increases in the county's overall population over the past two years. In contrast, Seattle/King County experienced a 21% increase in its unsheltered population between its 2013 and 2015 counts.¹² The fact that levels of homelessness have stayed relatively stable in Multnomah County may be a testament to our community's ongoing investments in programs and services to address this crisis.

Given the critical role that economic factors play in our community's homeless crisis, significantly reducing the levels of homelessness in Multnomah County will require increased investments in homeless services and interventions, but it will also require a broad strategy to prevent new homelessness by expanding economic opportunities, increasing the supply of affordable housing, and equipping people to move out of poverty.

BEHIND THE NUMBERS

Unsheltered Homeless

While the unsheltered homeless number is almost the same as it was in 2013, this does not mean that the same people who were unsheltered in 2013 are still on the streets. Only one quarter (27%) of the people counted as unsheltered in 2015 were homeless two years ago. Half of the unsheltered population (50%) has been homeless for a year or less, including 9% who have been homeless less than one month.

While the unsheltered number is almost the same as it was in 2013, this does not mean that the same people who were unsheltered in 2013 are still on the streets.

It is important to note that the unsheltered numbers are most likely an undercount. Appendix E includes information on 635 people who were unsheltered on the night of the count but were not included in the official count number because they were unwilling or unable to provide sufficient identifying information to eliminate the possibility that they had already been counted elsewhere.

Sheltered Homeless

The count of the emergency shelter and transitional housing populations is primarily a survey of our community's service capacity. Shelter and transitional housing beds in Multnomah County are typically full in January, so the count is essentially a tally of the number of beds available on a given night.

The count of the emergency shelter and transitional housing populations is primarily a survey of our community's service capacity.

Overall service capacity in Multnomah County has increased, not decreased since 2013. The decline in the emergency shelter and transitional housing numbers from the 2013 and 2015 counts is the result of changes in HUD's definitions that pulled more than 800 beds – and the people they serve – out of the point-in-time count.

The redefinition of these beds stems from HUD's increased emphasis on rapid re-housing, an intervention designed to help individuals and families to quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing.

Housing placements that were previously defined as emergency shelter or transitional housing but which allow households to remain in their housing units after their rental subsidies end are now categorized as rapid re-housing.

As a result of this redefinition, 689 transitional housing beds and 120 emergency shelter beds that were included in the 2013 count have since been redefined by HUD as rapid re-housing. The beds provide the same services now that they did in 2013, and they serve the same number of people; those people simply are no longer considered homeless for purposes of HUD's point-in-time count.

The beds that HUD redefined as rapid re-housing primarily serve communities of color, women, families with children, and domestic violence survivors. On the night of the 2015 count, 78% of the people receiving rapid re-housing services in Multnomah County were families with children, 64% were female, and 77% were communities of color. The removal of these beds from the count has rendered these populations invisible within HUD's official point-in-time count data, creating a ripple effect on the numbers and percentages of these populations reflected in the point-in-time count findings.

The beds that were not included in the 2015 point-in-time count numbers because of HUD's redefinition primarily serve communities of color, women, families with children, and domestic violence survivors.

To address this discrepancy and allow for a more accurate comparison between the 2013 and 2015 data, this report includes supplemental data on people receiving rapid re-housing services on the night of the 2015 count.

Methodology

Due to the inherent difficulty of obtaining a complete count of everyone who experiences homelessness on a given night, the actual number of people who were homeless in Multnomah County on January 28 is undoubtedly higher than the number documented in this report. It is also important to note that 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.

Appendix B provides a detailed overview of the point-in-time count methodology. Both the Street Count and One Night Shelter Count (ONSC) used the same basic methodologies in 2015 and 2013, with a few minor modifications to the Street Count to increase the comprehensiveness, efficiency and accuracy of data collection. These included:

- Increased partnerships and coordination with government, non-profits, community groups, and the faith community in Gresham and East County to improve the accuracy of the count in those areas.
- Increased involvement of currently and formerly homeless individuals in planning and implementing the Street Count.
- Modifications to a few of the questions on the Street Count form to increase clarity.

It is uncertain how these minor modifications may have affected the point-in-time count's overall results, but they are not believed to have had a significant impact. The increased coordination with Gresham and East County did result in better data collection in those areas, and the impacts of those changes are examined in the report.

The weather on the night of the 2015 count was comparable to the weather on the night of the 2013 count; in both cases the nights were warmer and drier than is typical for late January.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND SUB-POPULATIONS OF THE HUD HOMELESS POPULATION

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 and people sleeping in emergency shelters or transitional housing for the homeless.¹³ These populations are referred to in the report as the “HUD-defined homeless population” or “HUD Homeless.”

COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

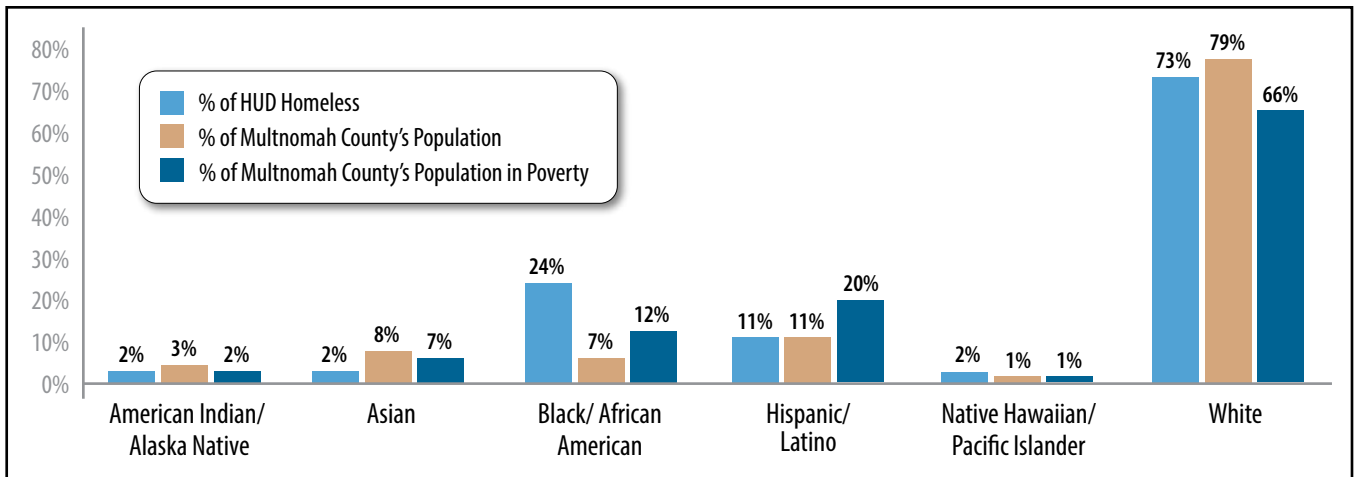
Over-representation

As a whole, communities of color are over-represented in the homeless population by 11 percentage points compared with their percentage in the overall population of Multnomah County. The table and chart below show the racial and ethnic composition of the HUD-defined homeless population compared with the total population of Multnomah County and the segment of the county’s population that is in poverty.

Communities of color are over-represented in Multnomah County’s homeless population.

Race/Ethnicity	HUD Homeless	Multnomah County ¹⁴	Multnomah County in Poverty ¹⁵
White	2,617 (73%)	82%	66%
Populations of color	1,477 (41%)	30%	54%
American Indian/ Alaska Native	82 (2%)	3%	2%
Asian	59 (2%)	8%	7%
Black/ African American	861 (24%)	7%	12%
Hispanic/ Latino	389 (11%)	11%	20%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	86 (2%)	1%	1%
Other/ Multi-racial	n/a	n/a	12%
Information not provided	207 (n/a)	n/a	n/a

Note: All race data in this report are presented as an over-count, which means that individuals were encouraged to select as many categories of race, ethnicity, or national origin as apply and they were counted within each category. For that reason, the percentages often add up to more than 100.



As the above chart demonstrates, the extent of the over-representation varies by community. African Americans are over-represented by 17 percentage points in the HUD Homeless population compared with their percentage in the overall population and by 12 percentage points compared with their representation in the county's population in poverty. Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islanders are over-represented by one percentage point compared with their representation in the overall population.

Other communities of color do not have higher representation in the HUD Homeless population compared with their percentages in the population as a whole and the population in poverty. However, if we broadened the definition of homelessness beyond the narrow definition that guides the point-in-time count, almost all communities of color would be over-represented in the homeless population.

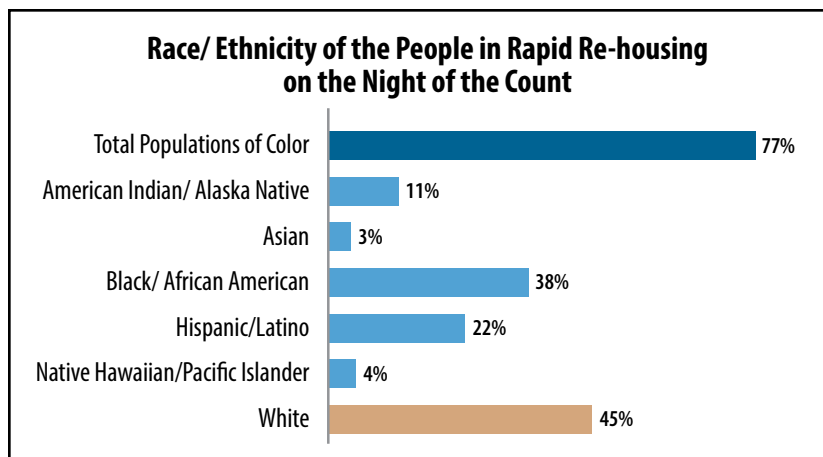
People of color in Multnomah County experience high rates of housing instability and homelessness due to their disproportionately high rates of poverty and unemployment (see pages 11-12 for more information). But homelessness within communities of color frequently does not fit the narrow definition that is used for the point-in-time count. Communities of color are more likely to be doubled up

Under-Reported Race Data

The racial/ethnic categories used by HUD and the American Community Survey do not effectively capture many people's racial identities. In an effort to address this limitation, respondents were also given the option of identifying themselves as African, Middle Eastern, or Slavic, and Street Count respondents were encouraged to add additional information to better capture their racial/ ethnic identity.

Twelve of the HUD Homeless population identified as African, four as Middle Eastern, and nine as Slavic. Among Street Count respondents who provided additional information, examples included "Apache", "Cherokee", "Cuban", "French Creole", and "Mexican/Indian/Italian."

There was a high rate of missing data, so these answers should be viewed as illustrative examples rather than as accurate reflections of homelessness in these communities. Efforts should be made in future counts to strengthen the response rates to better capture information on homelessness in these communities.



than sleeping on the streets or in shelters. Communities of color are also more likely to need and receive rapid re-housing services – a service category that is not included in HUD’s definition of homelessness (see pages 12-13 for more information). Many of the county’s rapid re-housing providers are culturally-specific organizations such as the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA), Self Enhancement Inc. (SEI), and El Programa Hispano.

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. 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.

Communities of color are more likely to be doubled up than sleeping on the streets or in shelters.

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, communities of color are disproportionately likely to double, triple, or quadruple up before allowing community members to end up on the streets or in shelters. This is reflected in the doubled up data provided by Multnomah County’s school districts. Sixty-one percent of doubled up students on the night of the count were people of color.

Being doubled up rather than on the streets or in shelter does not mean that a family’s 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.

The limited definition of homelessness that HUD uses for the point-in-time count renders invisible much of the homelessness within Multnomah County’s communities of color. The next section of the report tries to address part of this issue by analyzing the demographics of the households served by rapid re-housing. The last section of the report (see pages 38-40) provides further insights into the size and demographics of the county’s doubled up population. HUD does not collect this information, but it is essential to our understanding of the levels and conditions of homelessness within Multnomah County’s communities of color.

The limited definition of homelessness that HUD uses for the point-in-time count renders invisible much of the homelessness within Multnomah County’s communities of color.

Comparisons to the 2013 Point-in-Time Count

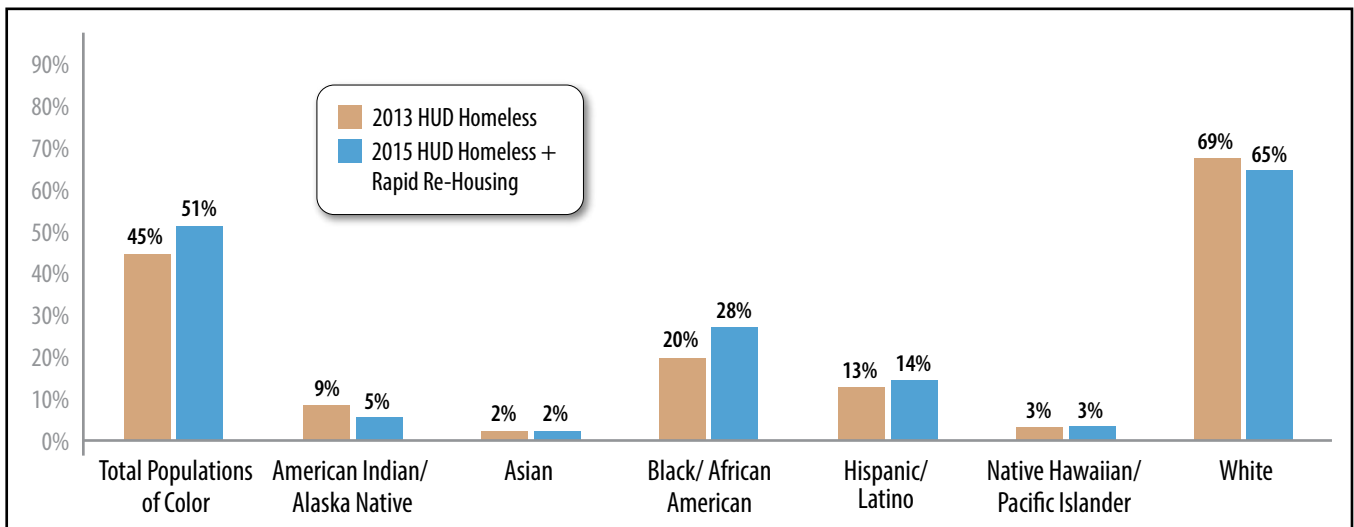
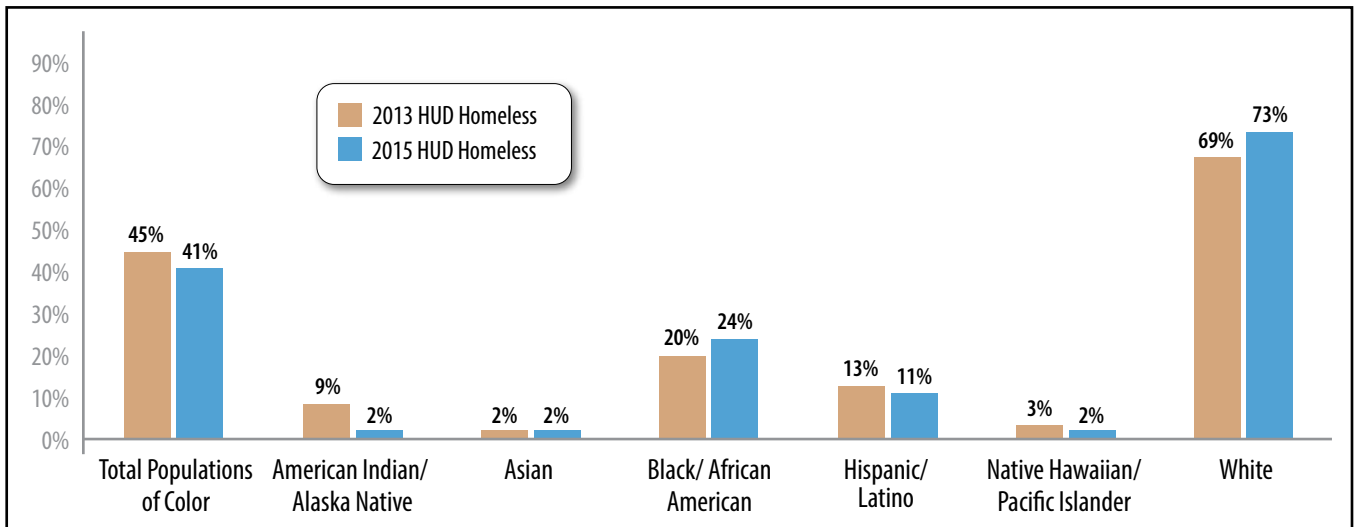
Comparing the data from the 2013 and the 2015 point-in-time counts, the overall number and percentage of people of color meeting HUD’s definition of homelessness declined from 2,001 (45%) in 2013 to 1,477 (41%) in 2015. The first chart below shows the comparisons between the two counts for total populations of color and for each racial/ethnic group. However, as noted earlier in the report, a significant number of people of color were

Data Limitations

According to the Coalition of Communities of Color, American Community Survey data 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 point-in-time count data to the Multnomah County population data. See appendix B for a more in-depth analysis of these limitations.

served by programs that were included in the 2013 count but were redefined as rapid re-housing and were therefore not included in the 2015 count.

Seventy-seven percent of the people served by rapid re-housing on the night of the 2015 count were people of color. If we add the rapid re-housing population to the 2015 point-in-time count population (essentially replicating the population that was defined as homeless by HUD in 2013¹⁶), we find a very different picture of the overall racial composition of the homeless population in 2013 and 2015, as shown in the second chart below.



Comparisons by shelter type

The table on page 18 shows the point-in-time count demographic data broken out by the unsheltered, emergency shelter, and transitional housing populations and compares these data to the 2013 count. Among the unsheltered population, there were three fewer people of color in 2015 compared with 2013 – a difference of less than one percentage point. For the emergency shelter population there was an 18% decrease and for the transitional housing population there was a 54% decrease in the number of people of color. As noted above, these decreases can be traced to the redefining of hundreds of family and culturally-specific emergency shelter and transitional housing beds as rapid re-housing.

Race/Ethnicity	Unsheltered		Emergency Shelter		Transitional Housing	
	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015
White	1,389 (75%)	1,346 (74%)	561 (61%)	548 (66%)	1,047 (67%)	723 (77%)
Populations of color	711 (38%)	708 (39%)	494 (54%)	406 (49%)	796 (51%)	363 (38%)
American Indian/ Alaska Native	144 (8%)	48 (3%)	77 (8%)	19 (2%)	165 (11%)	15 (2%)
Asian	19 (1%)	24 (1%)	20 (2%)	13 (2%)	27 (2%)	22 (2%)
Black/ African American	267 (14%)	396 (22%)	243 (27%)	239 (29%)	354 (23%)	226 (24%)
Hispanic/ Latino	237 (13%)	194 (11%)	113 (12%)	107 (13%)	222 (14%)	88 (9%)
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	44 (2%)	46 (3%)	41 (4%)	28 (3%)	28 (2%)	12 (1%)
Information not provided	41 (n/a)	67 (n/a)	60 (n/a)	43 (n/a)	7 (n/a)	97 (n/a)

Note: All race data in this report are presented as an over-count, which means that individuals were encouraged to select as many categories of race, ethnicity, or national origin as apply and they were counted within each category. For that reason, the percentages often add up to more than 100.

The most notable change between 2013 and 2015 was a 48% increase in the number of unsheltered African Americans and a 79% decrease in the number of Native Americans across all three shelter types.

Increase in unsheltered African Americans

The 48% increase in unsheltered African Americans is highly troubling and deserves immediate attention. Policy makers and service providers should work together to identify the specific reasons for the increase and to develop strategies to address this growing disparity.

Broader data about the extraordinary economic challenges faced by African Americans in Multnomah County provide insights into some of the potential reasons for the increase in the unsheltered African American population. The recently released State of Housing in Portland report indicates that African Americans in Portland have median incomes that are less than half the median income for whites. There are no neighborhoods in Portland where a two bedroom apartment is affordable to the average African American renter, and only one neighborhood where a one bedroom apartment is affordable.¹⁷ Furthermore, anecdotal evidence indicates that African Americans may experience racial bias from landlords, making it more difficult for them to secure available units even when they can afford them.

The Urban League's 2015 State of Black Oregon report documents the stark economic disparities affecting Multnomah County's African American population. Twenty-one percent of African Americans in Portland are unemployed, compared with 8% of whites. And African Americans who are employed tend to be over-represented in low wage jobs and under-represented in jobs that pay a living wage.¹⁸

The 48% increase in unsheltered African Americans is highly troubling and deserves immediate attention.

Community leaders say that insufficient resources have hindered efforts to address the stark economic disparities affecting Multnomah County's African American community. Government programs and mainstream services are unable to adequately meet the community's needs, and culturally-specific organizations lack the resources to effectively address the disparities.

Further analysis of the demographics, conditions, and experiences of the unsheltered African American population may help policy makers, community leaders, and service providers develop strategies to more effectively address the needs of this population. As a starting point, we know from the point-in-time count data that:

- 86% are individual adults; 14% are persons in families with children
- 63% are male; 36% are female
- 54% have disabling conditions
- 75% have been homeless less than 2 years
 - 52% have been homeless for less than a year
 - 30% have been homeless for six months or less
- 35% slept in Downtown/Old Town on the night of the count; 19% slept in Southeast Portland; 19% slept in North/Northeast Portland; 13% slept in West Portland; 8% slept in Outer East Portland; and 7% slept in Gresham/East County.

Decrease in Native Americans meeting HUD's homeless definition

Service providers in Multnomah County's Native American community were surprised by the decline in Native Americans across all three shelter categories of the point-in-time count. They note that the Native American community still faces significant challenges with housing instability and homelessness. As with other communities of color, Native Americans are more likely to be doubled up than on the streets or in shelter, and they are often reluctant to access mainstream homeless services.

The Native American community still faces significant challenges with housing instability and homelessness.

The decrease in the Native American population meeting HUD's definition of homelessness is largely due to HUD's redefinitions. Twenty transitional housing beds run by the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA) were redefined as rapid re-housing for the 2015 count. An additional 58 transitional housing beds run by the Native American Recovery Association (NARA) were pulled out of the point-in-time count in 2015 to better align with HUD criteria.¹⁹ NAYA has had an increase in resources since 2013 to serve homeless Native Americans, but those resources have been in the form of rapid re-housing, not emergency shelter or transitional housing. As a result, some Native Americans who were homeless during the 2013 count may now be in rapid re-housing and therefore wouldn't be included in the count.

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

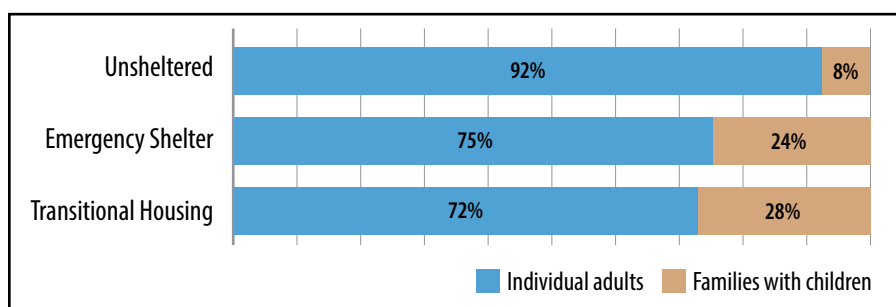
The table below shows the household composition of the unsheltered, emergency shelter, and transitional housing populations. All of the numbers reflect individual persons, not households. The percentages reflect the portions of each shelter type (each column of the table) that are individual adults (i.e. anyone in an adult-only household, including single adults, couples, a parent with an adult child, etc.), persons in families with children, and unaccompanied youth under age 18. The section of the report on children and youth provides further information on unaccompanied youth up to age 24 as well as the age composition of the children under age 18.

Household Type	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Total
Individual adults	1,733 (92%)	657 (75%)	753 (72%)	3,143 (83%)
Age 18-24	134	72	55	261
Age >24	1,577	562	691	2,830
Age unknown	22	23	7	52
Families with children	152 (8%)	213 (24%)	288 (28%)	653 (17%)
Children <18	76	129	164	369
Adults 18-24	11	12	28	51
Adults >24	65	72	96	233
Unaccompanied youth under 18	2 (<1%)	2 (<1%)	1 (<1%)	5 (<1%)

Unsheltered families with children

The proportion of individual adults to families varies by shelter type, with lower percentages of families with children in the unsheltered population. This reflects our community's commitment to provide winter shelter to all families with children who seek it. Despite this commitment, compared with the 2013 count, there was a 24% increase in the number of unsheltered families with children counted (and a 29% increase in the number of children). In 2013, the count identified 123 unsheltered persons in families with children (including 59 children) and they made up 6% of the unsheltered population; in 2015 the count tallied 152 unsheltered persons in families (including 76 children) and they make up 8% of the unsheltered population.

There was a 24% increase in the number of unsheltered families with children.



Service providers say there are increasing numbers of families sleeping in RVs and cars that prefer to sleep in their vehicles instead of the family winter shelter, particularly when weather conditions are mild (as they were on the night of the count). One-quarter (23%) of the unsheltered

families with children in 2015 slept in their vehicles on the night of the count. In comparison, 12% of the overall unsheltered population slept in vehicles.

A significant percentage of the unsheltered families with children in the 2015 count are newly homeless: 65% have been homeless for less than a year, including 42% who have been homeless six months or less and 18% who have been homeless less than a month. However, there are also 34 more people in chronically homeless families with children in 2015 compared with 2013.

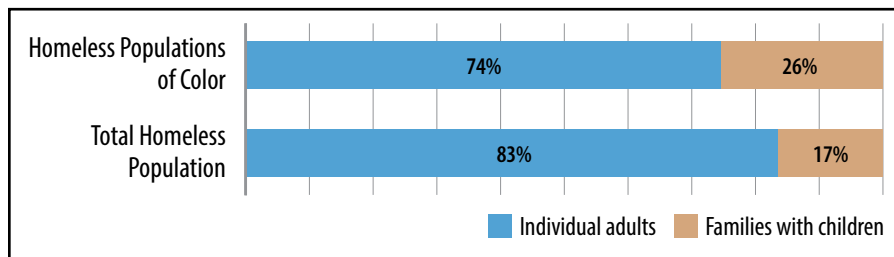
Street outreach to families with children has increased since 2013 with the expansion of the mobile outreach team model. This may explain at least part of the increase in the number of unsheltered families counted in 2015. The Street Count was also more comprehensive in Gresham and East County in 2015, adding 13 persons in families with children to the count who may have been missed in 2013.

Sheltered families with children

The number of families with children in emergency shelter and transitional housing decreased compared with the 2013 count because of HUD’s redefinition of hundreds of family beds as rapid re-housing. In 2013, 36% of the emergency shelter population was persons in families with children, compared with 24% in 2015. An even more dramatic reduction took place among transitional housing residents: in 2013, 50% of the transitional housing population was persons in families with children, compared with 28% in 2015. In contrast, 78% of the rapid re-housing population on the night of the 2015 count was persons in families with children.

Communities of color

Homeless populations of color are more likely to be families with children than the overall homeless population. Among the 2015 HUD Homeless populations of color, 26% are persons in families with children, including 140 adults and 209 children. In comparison, 17% of the overall HUD Homeless population is persons in families with children.



Additional household data for the unsheltered population

In addition to the 8% of the unsheltered population that is families with children, 7% of Street Count respondents (97 people) have custody of children who did not sleep outside with them on the night of the count. This reflects the reality that friends and family often prioritize keeping children off the streets and may find space to take in children while their parents are unsheltered.

Street Count respondents were asked some additional questions about who slept outside with them on the night of the count: 12% of respondents said they slept outside with “my friend(s)/street family”, 17% said they slept outside with “my partner/spouse”, and 3% said they slept outside with “my pet.”

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The experience of homelessness can have serious life-long consequences for children and youth. Research indicates that people who experience homelessness as children are more likely to have poor educational and economic outcomes, mental health and behavioral problems, increased exposure to violence, and a greater rate of housing instability as adults.²⁰

Children under the age of 18

There are 374 children under the age of 18 in Multnomah County who meet HUD’s definition of homelessness for the point-in-time count. More than half (56%) are children of color. Thirty-nine percent are ages 5 and younger, 39% are ages 6-11, and 21% are ages 12-17. Twenty-one percent are unsheltered, 35% are in emergency shelter, and 44% are in transitional housing.

Children	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Total
5 and younger	20	40	85	145
Ages 6-11	40	57	52	149
Ages 12-17	18	34	28	80
Total	78	131	165	374

Point-in-time count respondents were asked whether children under age 18 were attending school. The rate of non-responses was very high, so the data are not reliable, but the patterns among the responses suggest that children in transitional housing are generally able to attend school while unsheltered children struggle to attend school: 11% of unsheltered children and 84% of children in transitional housing who responded to the question are attending school (no data were available for children in emergency shelters).

Unaccompanied youth ages 24 and younger

A total of 266 unaccompanied youth ages 24 and younger meet HUD’s definition of homelessness. Half (51%) are unsheltered, 28% are in emergency shelter, and 21% are in transitional housing. Thirty-eight percent are youth of color.

Unaccompanied Youth	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Total
Under age 18	2	2	1	5
Ages 18-24	134	72	55	261
Total	136	74	56	266

Only 2% of the unaccompanied youth are under the age of 18. Multnomah County’s Homeless Youth Continuum (HYC) serves youth through age 24, so the combined number of youth up through age 24 is a better reflection of the county’s unaccompanied youth population.

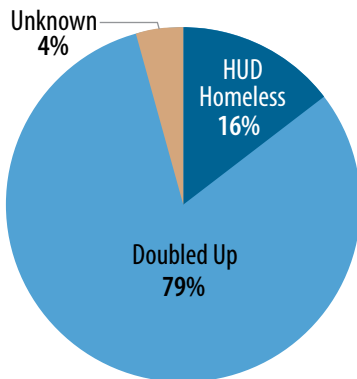
The low number of unaccompanied youth under age 18 reflects a general decline in the number of youth under age 18 accessing the HYC over the past decade. This decline can be attributed to a combination of better prevention, diversion of runaways into a separate service system, and efforts to keep youth who have other options from being acculturated into the homeless youth system. It also reflects a tendency for younger homeless youth,

particularly youth of color, to be doubled up rather than on the streets or in shelters.²¹

Unaccompanied youth under age 18 are also less likely to participate in the point-in-time count. Minor youth often try to stay under the radar because of a fear of being returned home or sent to foster care. Even when they are found by outreach workers, they may refuse to be surveyed or may misrepresent their age.

Homeless children and youth are far more likely to be doubled up than on the streets or in shelters.

Homeless Students



Children and youth who are doubled up

Homeless children and youth are far more likely to be doubled up than on the streets or in shelters. The tally of homeless students in Multnomah County’s school districts on the night of the count found 2,103 homeless students. Seventy-nine percent of the students are doubled up compared with 16% who meet HUD’s definition of homelessness (the sleeping situation for the remaining 4% is unknown). The homeless student tally includes 273 unaccompanied youth, 94% of whom are doubled up.

National studies show that homeless children and youth are one of the fastest growing homeless populations, but their growth is not reflected in HUD’s point-in-time count data because an estimated three-quarters of them are doubled up.²²

“Chances are you won’t see one of the nation’s fastest growing homeless populations camped out on a park bench or queuing up at a local shelter. One in 30 of American children is homeless—an all-time high of 2.5 million . . . But these kids are often invisible, crashing with their families on friends’ couches, sleeping in all-night diners or hopping from motel to motel from week to week.”²³

- Teresa Wiltz, *Pew Charitable Trusts*, 2014

Children and youth who are doubled up are disproportionately likely to be youth of color. Of the 1,670 doubled up students from Multnomah County’s school districts who were homeless on the night of the count, 61% are students of color.

GENDER

The gender distribution of the overall homeless population is disproportionately male, with 64% males, 36% females, 1% transgender, and 1% unknown/ other/ "Z"²⁴. The ratio of males to females varies by shelter type, with the greatest percentage of males in the unsheltered population.

Gender ²⁵	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Total
Male	1,249 (67%)	497 (57%)	657 (63%)	2,403 (64%)
Female	594 (32%)	365 (42%)	379 (36%)	1,338 (36%)
Trans	11 (1%)	5 (1%)	4 (<1%)	20 (1%)
Unknown/ Other/ Z	33 (2%)	5 (1%)	2 (<1%)	40 (1%)

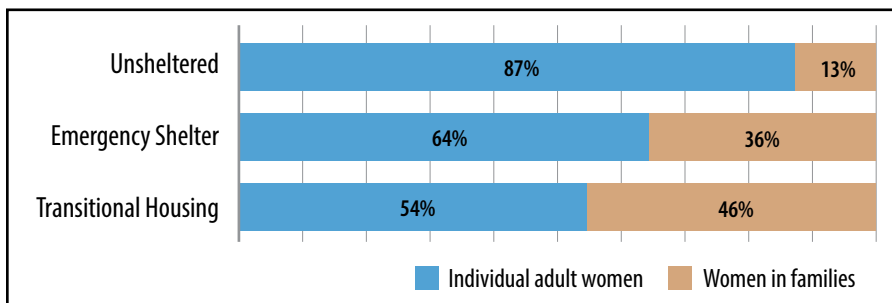
The gender figures in the above table are for both adults and children. Gender figures for adults only are as follows:

Adult Gender	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Total
Women	566	295	300	1,161
Men	1,201	436	571	2,208
Trans	11	5	4	20
Unknown/ Other/ Z	29	5	2	36

Homeless women

Thirty-one percent of the homeless population is adult women. The number of unsheltered women increased by 72 (15%) compared with the 2013 count. In contrast, the number of females in emergency shelter and transitional housing decreased compared with the 2013 count due to the redefining of family and domestic violence beds as rapid re-housing.

The increase in unsheltered women is likely due to new homelessness. More than half (54%) of unsheltered females have been homeless for less than a year, including 35% who have been homeless six months or less.



The decrease in the female population in emergency shelter and transitional housing is offset by the high percentage of women in rapid re-housing: 64% of people receiving rapid re-housing services on the night of the count were women.

Across all three categories, 71% of homeless women (824 women) are individual adults (i.e. in adult-only households, including single women, women in couples, or parents with adult children) and 29% (337 women)

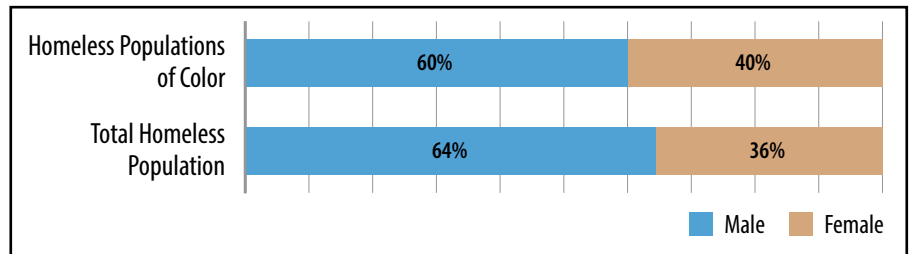
are in families with children. The proportion of women in families with children is greater for the transitional housing and emergency shelter populations than for the unsheltered population: 13% of unsheltered women (74 women) are in families with children while 87% (492 women) are individual adults; 36% of women in emergency shelter (106 women) are in families with children while 64% (189 women) are individual adults; 46% of women in transitional housing (138 women) are in families with children while 54% (162 women) are individual adults.

Sixty-four percent of homeless women (742 women) have one or more disabling conditions, and 23% (271 women) meet the definition of chronically homeless.

Studies indicate that homeless women are particularly vulnerable to being the victims of violence and trauma on the streets.²⁶ In a recent study, one-third of homeless women said they had recently experienced physical violence, two-thirds had recently been the victims of emotional violence, and slightly less than one-third said they had recently experienced sexual violence.²⁷

Communities of color

Among homeless populations of color, the percentage of females is four percentage points higher than in the overall homeless population, and the percentage of males is four percentage points lower.



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 steep medical bills. Persons with disabilities are more than twice as likely to be unemployed as the general population. Those who do have jobs tend to earn about two-thirds as much as the general population. And while some persons with disabilities may be able to access public income supports, the benefits are typically inadequate to lift households without other sources of income out of poverty.²⁸

Disabling Conditions	Individuals
Unsheltered	1,107 (59%)
Emergency Shelter	418 (48%)
Transitional Housing	652 (63%)
Total	2,177 (57%)

Living on the streets or in crowded shelters can exacerbate existing disabilities and can

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

also result in new health and mental health problems stemming from stress, injury, exposure to the elements, and living in violent and unsanitary conditions.²⁹

More than half (57%) of Multnomah County’s HUD Homeless population has a disabling condition.

Comparisons to 2013

In comparison to the 2013 count, the number of unsheltered homeless with disabling conditions is 9% lower; the number of people in emergency shelter with disabling conditions is 22% higher; and the number of people in transitional housing with disabling conditions is 17% lower.

The reduction in the number of people with disabling conditions in the unsheltered population is a bit of a mystery. It could be the result of an increased local investment in street to home placement for people with disabling conditions over the past year. Outreach workers and service providers say they continue to see high rates of disabling conditions on the streets. In light of the increased number of people with disabling conditions in emergency shelter, it is possible that local service systems are doing a better job of getting these very vulnerable populations off the streets and into shelters.

The reduction in the number of people with disabling conditions in the transitional housing population is due in part to the removal of NARA’s 58 alcohol and drug recovery beds from the 2015 count to better align with HUD’s definitions.

Types of disabling conditions

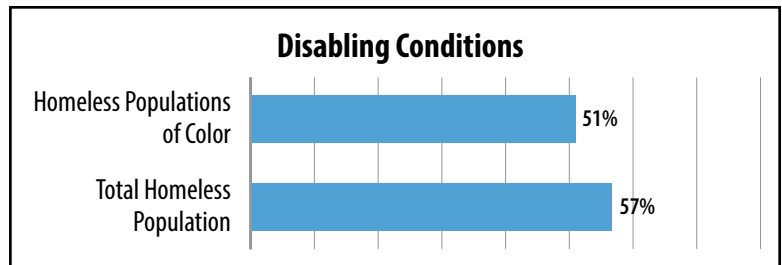
The point-in-time count attempted to collect comprehensive data on the types of disabling conditions experienced by the HUD Homeless population. Street Count respondents were asked to “select all that apply” from a list of conditions. Data for the emergency shelter and transitional housing populations were provided electronically based on client records. Because of a high non-response rate, and because the data for the unsheltered population are based on self-reports, there are undoubtedly more people with each type of disability than are captured in the table on page 27.

Disability Type	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Total
Mental Health	363 (33%)	163 (39%)	261 (40%)	787 (36%)
Substance Abuse	351 (32%)	143 (34%)	570 (87%)	1,064 (49%)
Developmental Disability	12 (1%)	8 (2%)	1 (<1%)	21 (1%)
HIV/ AIDS	14 (1%)	6 (1%)	12 (2%)	32 (1%)
Chronic Health Condition	120 (11%)	27 (6%)	51 (8%)	198 (9%)

Note: The denominator for the percentages is all persons who answered "yes" to having a disabling condition within each shelter category (each column of the chart). Percentages do not equal 100% because not all respondents identified a specific disabling condition and some identified more than one.

Communities of color

The rate of disabling conditions among HUD Homeless people of color is slightly lower than for the overall homeless population: 51% of HUD Homeless people of color have disabling conditions, compared with 57% for the overall HUD Homeless population.



CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

HUD defines chronic homelessness as an unaccompanied individual or persons in households with children where one of the adults has a disabling condition and has been either continuously homeless for a year or more or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. To count as chronically homeless, a person has to currently be either unsheltered or in emergency shelter.

In 2015, 48% of unsheltered individual adults and 25% of unsheltered persons in households with children meet the definition of chronic homelessness. Compared with 2013, there are 151 fewer chronically homeless unsheltered individual adults, but 34 more chronically homeless unsheltered people in families.

Compared with the 2013 count, there are 151 fewer chronically homeless unsheltered individual adults, but 34 more chronically homeless unsheltered people in families.

Eighteen percent of the emergency shelter population in 2015 meets the definition of chronically homeless, including 20% of individual adults in shelter and 12% of persons in households with children. Compared with 2013, there are 22 more chronically homeless individual adults in emergency shelter and 22 fewer chronically homeless people in families in emergency shelter.

Chronically Homeless	2013 Unsheltered	2015 Unsheltered	2013 Emergency Shelter	2015 Emergency Shelter
Individual adults	988 (52%)	837 (48%)	110 (18%)	132 (20%)
Persons in households w/children	4 (<1%)	38 (25%)	48 (14%)	26 (12%)
Total	992 (52%)	875 (46%)	158 (16%)	158 (18%)

VETERANS

Nationally, veterans are over-represented in the homeless population. Veterans make up about 7% of the general population in the United States, but they make up 11% of the country’s adult homeless population.³⁰ In addition to the typical factors that influence all homelessness, many veterans live with

the lingering effects of service-connected post-traumatic stress disorder, health problems, and substance abuse.³¹

Veterans make up 12% of the adult homeless population in Multnomah County. In comparison, 7% of Multnomah County’s adult population is veterans.

Veterans	2013	2015
Unsheltered	215 (12%)	199 (11%)
Emergency Shelter	50 (7%)	58 (8%)
Transitional Housing	148 (13%)	165 (19%)
Total	413 (11%)	422 (12%)

Consistent with national trends, veterans are over-represented in Multnomah County’s homeless population. Twelve percent of the homeless adult population, or 422 people, are veterans. In comparison, 7% of Multnomah County’s adult population is veterans.³²

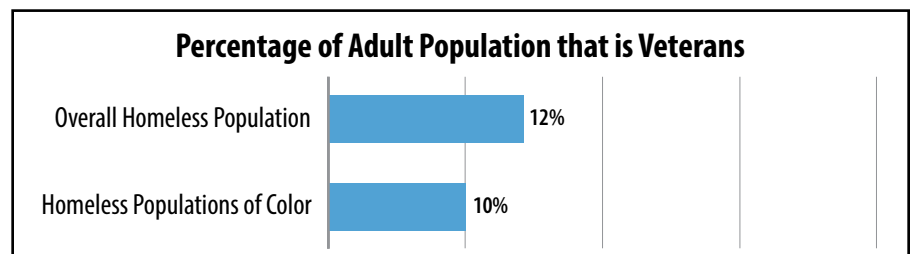
The total number of homeless veterans is about the same as it was in 2013 (there were nine more homeless veterans in 2015 than in 2013 – a 2% increase). Fewer homeless veterans are unsheltered, and more are being served by shelters and transitional housing than in 2013. There was a 7% decrease in the number of unsheltered homeless veterans, a 16% increase in the number of veterans in emergency shelter, and an 11% increase in the number of veterans in transitional housing.

Forty-four percent of Multnomah County’s homeless veterans in 2015 meet the definition of chronic homelessness, compared with 49% in 2013.

The recent focus on addressing veterans’ homelessness both locally and nationally has been accompanied by expanded outreach to veterans and increased resources for veterans’ services. This may have resulted in an increased number of homeless veterans being identified for the count. While some veterans have been able to get off the streets because of these new services, federal resources for homeless veterans rely on a definition of veteran eligibility which is narrower than the questions about veteran status used for the point-in-time count. People who may identify themselves as veterans for purposes of the count may not meet the eligibility criteria for these services.

The percentage of homeless veterans among populations of color is slightly lower than the percentage for the overall HUD Homeless population: 10% of HUD Homeless people of color are veterans, compared with 12% for the overall HUD Homeless population.

The Street Count survey asked whether unsheltered veterans had 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. Sixteen percent of the unsheltered veteran population reported serving after 2001. However, it should be noted that 42% of unsheltered veterans didn’t answer the question.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is a leading cause of housing instability and homelessness. Domestic violence survivors are often faced with the choice of returning to an abusive home or sleeping on the streets.³³ Women who experience domestic violence are four times more likely to face housing instability than those who do not experience domestic violence.³⁴ For example, a study in Multnomah County found that 73% of domestic violence survivors reported they were forced to live in unacceptable housing situations and 27% reported being homeless because of domestic violence in the prior six months.³⁵

Domestic Violence	# and % of Women
Unsheltered	231 (41%)
Emergency Shelter	163 (55%)
Transitional Housing	158 (53%)
Total	552 (45%)

Consistent with these studies, 45% of the women in the 2015 HUD Homeless population said they had been affected by domestic violence in the past year.

Compared to 2013, this reflects an increase in the number of unsheltered

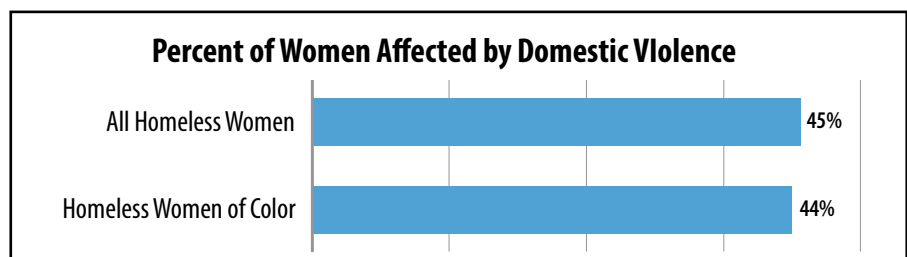
Forty-five percent of homeless women in Multnomah County are affected by domestic violence.

women affected by domestic violence, and a decrease in the number of women in emergency shelter and transitional housing affected by domestic violence.

The increase in the unsheltered number is most likely due to a change in the wording of the domestic violence question on the Street Count survey which inadvertently resulted in respondents interpreting the question to include various forms of violence, not just intimate partner violence. In 2013, the question asked, "Have you or your family experienced domestic violence in the past year?" In response to feedback that the question wasn't clear enough, the re-worded question asked, "In the past year, has someone abused or threatened you or your dependent in a way that made you afraid to remain where you are staying?" Many respondents ended up interpreting this to include a wide range of situations that were beyond the intended scope of the question.*

The decrease in the number of women in emergency shelter and transitional housing who reported that they have experienced domestic violence is a direct result of the redefinition of 593 family beds and 96 domestic violence beds from transitional housing to rapid re-housing between the 2013 and 2015 counts. In addition, the YWCA Yolanda House domestic violence shelter closed in between the two counts, removing 25 domestic violence emergency shelter beds from the count. While the closure of an emergency shelter was a loss, the overall impact of the closure was a positive one, with resources moving to upstream services to help domestic violence survivors increase safety and maintain their housing. As a result of this program change, more than three times more survivors are receiving services that help them to avoid becoming homeless. But the shift has resulted in fewer domestic violence survivors being counted in the point-in-time count.

Forty-four percent of HUD Homeless women of color are affected by domestic violence – a rate that is almost identical to the rate among the overall homeless population.



*The total percentage of Street Count respondents (male and female) who answered yes to this question (28%) provides an indication of the percentage of the unsheltered population affected by violence and the threat of violence. This is useful information, but not the intended purpose of the question.

Service providers note that the domestic violence data is likely an under-count. Homeless women affected by domestic violence are frequently doubled up with friends and family, and therefore would not be included in the point-in-time count. Local studies indicate that 55% of domestic violence victims have lived with family or friends.³⁶ Point-in-time count respondents may also not be comfortable sharing information about their domestic violence experiences, resulting in an under-count.

While women tend to be disproportionately impacted by domestic violence, people of all genders can experience domestic violence. More than a quarter (26%) of the total HUD Homeless population (including women, men, and transgender persons) report being affected by domestic violence.

AGE

The table below shows the age distribution of Multnomah County’s HUD Homeless population. The percentages reflect the portion of each shelter category (each column of the table) within each age range.

Age	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Total
<18	78 (4%)	131 (15%)	165 (16%)	374 (10%)
18-24	145 (8%)	84 (10%)	83 (8%)	312 (8%)
25-44	783 (42%)	291 (34%)	353 (34%)	1427 (38%)
45-54	525 (28%)	189 (22%)	217 (21%)	931 (25%)
55-69	324 (17%)	139 (16%)	211 (20%)	674 (18%)
70+	10 (1%)	15 (2%)	5 (<1%)	30 (1%)
Unknown	22 (n/a)	23 (n/a)	8 (n/a)	53 (n/a)

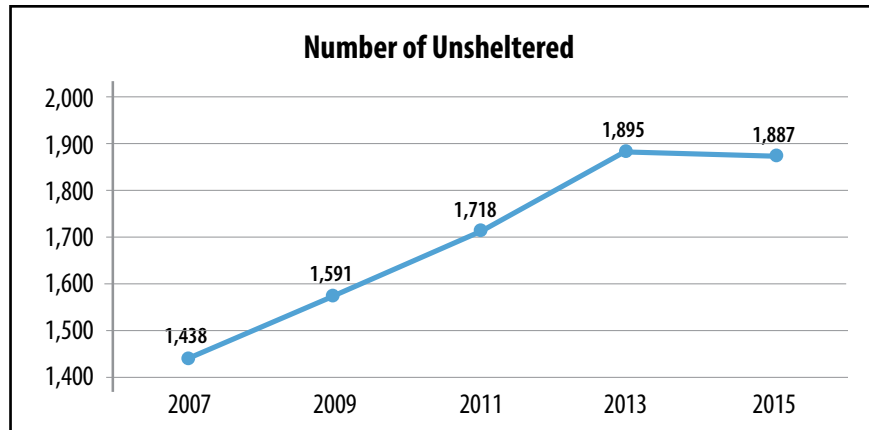
The table indicates that there is significant age diversity among the homeless population. The majority (63%) of the homeless population is adults between the ages of 25 and 54. Ten percent of the homeless population is under age 18 and 8% is 18-24. At the other end of the age spectrum, 19% is age 55 and older.

The most notable difference in the age composition of the homeless population between 2013 and 2015 is a 23% increase in the number of people over the age of 55 – from 571 to 704. This includes a 10% increase in the number of unsheltered people over age 55, from 303 to 334. The over 55 population represented 19% of the overall homeless population in 2015, compared with 13% in 2013. The percentage of children under age 18 declined between 2013 and 2015, but that is a function of the redefinition of hundreds of family beds as rapid re-housing. The percentage of other age categories remained relatively stable between the two counts.

ADDITIONAL STREET COUNT (UNSHELTERED) FINDINGS

This section of the report provides additional data on the unsheltered (or “Street Count”) population.

The 2015 Street Count numbers reflect a slight decline in the unsheltered population following steady increases since the 2007 count.



SLEEPING LOCATION

Street Count respondents were asked, “Where did you/will you sleep Wednesday night, January 28?” The most common sleeping locations are “street or sidewalk” (42%), “doorway or other private property” (11%), and “vehicle” (12%).

The most common sleeping locations are street or sidewalk, doorway or other private property, and vehicle.

Among respondents that selected “other”, the most common responses were Dignity Village or Right to Dream Too (31% of “other” respondents), tent or campsite (9%), garage or parking lot (6%), and awake all night or walking around (5%).

Sleeping Location	# and % of Respondents
Street or sidewalk	696 (42%)
Doorway or other private property	185 (11%)
Vehicle (car, truck, van, camper)	195 (12%)
Abandoned house/ building	48 (3%)
Park	74 (4%)
Woods/open space	144 (9%)
Bridge/ overpass/ railroad	150 (9%)
Boat	11 (1%)
Other unsheltered location	161 (10%)
Unknown	223 n/a

The distribution of sleeping locations was similar to the 2013 count, but with a slight increase in the percentage of respondents who slept in a vehicle and a slight decrease in the percent of respondents who slept on or under a bridge/overpass/railroad.

A higher percentage of unsheltered women and families slept in vehicles compared with the overall unsheltered population – 16% of women and 23% of families. A slightly lower percentage of women (6%) and none of the families slept in woods/open space. As with the overall unsheltered population, the most common sleeping location for women (42%) and families (71%) was street or sidewalk.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Street Count respondents were asked, “What part of town did you/ will you sleep in on 1/28?” The responses indicate that the unsheltered population is distributed throughout the county. More than a quarter of respondents (28%) slept in downtown Portland/Old Town/Pearl, 19% slept in southeast Portland, 19% slept in north/ northeast Portland, 16% slept in northwest and southwest Portland outside of downtown, 8% slept in outer east Portland, 9% slept in Gresham, and 2% slept in East County outside of Gresham.

The geographic distribution of the unsheltered population for the 2013 Street Count was within two percentage points of the 2015 distribution for

Where People Slept on the Night of the Count	# and % of Respondents
Downtown Portland/ Old Town/ Pearl	448 (28%)
SE Portland (river to 82nd)	309 (19%)
Inner NE Portland (river to 33rd)	155 (10%)
Gresham	138 (9%)
NW Portland	125 (8%)
Outer East Portland (82nd to 182nd)	126 (8%)
SW Portland (outside downtown)	133 (8%)
North Portland	92 (6%)
Central NE Portland (33rd to 82nd)	50 (3%)
East County	38 (2%)
Unknown	273 (n/a)

all geographic locations except Gresham and East County.

Among all the geographic locations where people slept on the night of the count, the greatest increases since 2013 occurred in these two locations.

Among all the geographic locations where people slept on the night of the count, the greatest increases occurred in Gresham and East County.

Gresham and East County

In the 2013 count, the Gresham and East County numbers were counted together, with a total of 65 people in Gresham/East County compared with 176 in 2015.

This increase is the direct result of better coordination and implementation of the count in Gresham and East County in 2015. Through the newly formed Gresham Homeless Action Team (GHAT), a coordinated group of government, non-profit, faith, and community leaders worked together to provide oversight for the count planning and to support its implementation. GHAT members say that the 176 figure is a much more accurate reflection of their community’s homeless population than the 65 counted in 2013. It is still an undercount, but a much closer reflection of reality than previous counts.

The increase between the 2013 and 2015 counts may reflect an actual increase in homelessness in Gresham and East County over the past two years but, while

homelessness has increased, local faith leaders and service providers say it hasn't doubled in that time. They attribute the bulk of the increase to the improved partnerships and coordination around the count.

Of the unsheltered population counted in Gresham and East County:

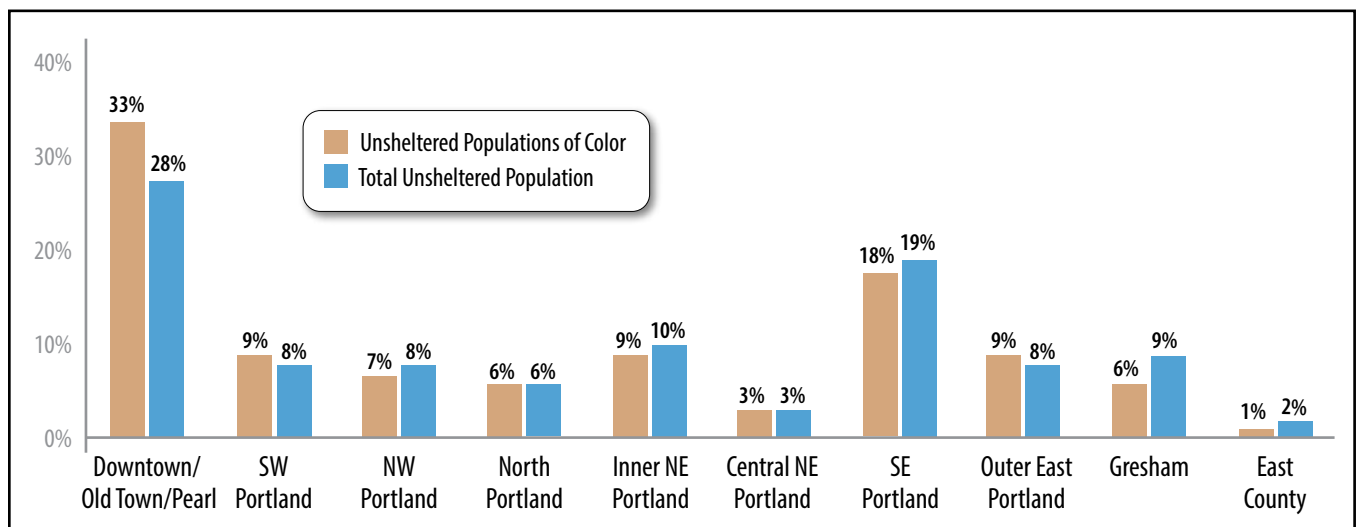
- 53% are chronically homeless
- 93% are individual adults and 7% are families with children
- 24% are people of color and 86% are white
- 65% are male and 35% are female
- 10% are veterans
- 55% are affected by domestic violence
- 62% have one or more disabling conditions
- 50% have been homeless for less than a year
- 64% have lived in Gresham or East County for more than two years

Sixty-four percent of the unsheltered population in Gresham/ East County has lived in Gresham/ East County for more than two years.

For more information on the homeless population in Gresham and East County, see appendix C.

Communities of color

The geographic distribution of unsheltered communities of color is very similar to the geographic distribution of the overall unsheltered population. The most notable differences are higher percentages in downtown Portland and somewhat lower percentages in Gresham and East County.



LENGTH OF HOMELESSNESS

Street Count respondents were asked, "How long has your current episode of homelessness lasted?" Their responses indicate that Multnomah County continues to have high numbers of newly homeless.

Length of Current Episode of Homelessness	# and % of Respondents
Less than 1 month	136 (9%)
1-6 months	378 (24%)
7-12 months	265 (17%)
1-2 years	332 (21%)
2-5 years	266 (17%)
5-10 years	114 (7%)
> 10 years	54 (3%)

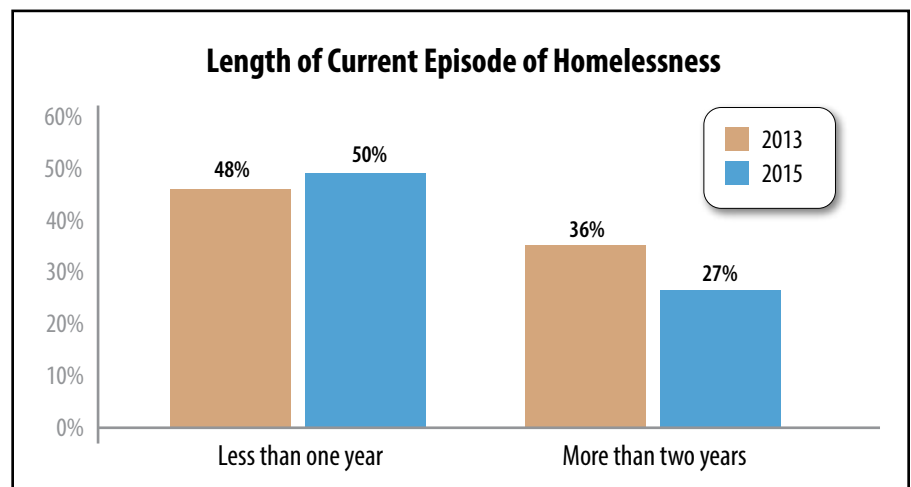
Fifty percent of respondents have been homeless a year or less (compared with 48% in 2013). This includes 9% who have been homeless for less than one month and 33% who have been homeless for six months or less.

The responses show that Multnomah County also continues to have high numbers of long-term homeless, but those numbers are decreasing. Twenty-seven percent of the unsheltered population has been homeless for more than two years. In contrast, in 2013, 36% had been homeless for more than two years. Compared to the 2013 count, the number of unsheltered homeless who have been homeless for more than two years decreased by 159 people (27%).

There was a 27% decrease in the number of people who had been homeless for more than two years.

The decrease in long-term homelessness suggests that services and interventions are effectively transitioning more people off the streets. The increase in shorter term homelessness indicates that Multnomah County's economic challenges continue to put low-income individuals and families at ongoing risk of losing their housing.

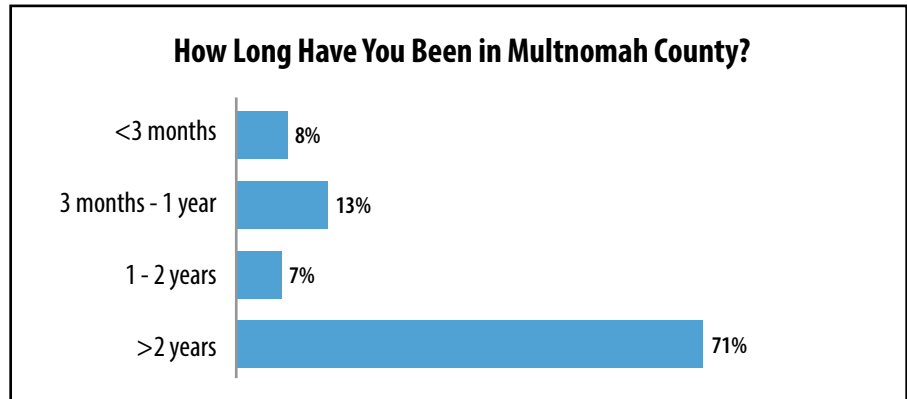
It should be noted that point-in-time data tend to over-represent people who have been homeless for a long time and under-represent those whose experience of homelessness does not last very long. If we looked at data on length of homelessness for everybody who was homeless over the past year, the percentage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



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?” (Respondents in Gresham and East County were asked, “How long have you been in Gresham/ East County?”) About one-fifth of the unsheltered population is new to the area: 21% of those who responded to this question have lived here for less than a year, including 8% who have been here less than three months. (In 2013, 28% had been here less than a year.) In contrast, 71% of respondents have lived here for more than two years, indicating they were here at the time of the 2013 Street Count.

The fact that one-fifth of the Street Count respondents are relatively new to 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. The Portland area in particular has become a popular destination for people from other parts of the region and the country. From



2013-2014 alone, 74% of Oregon’s population growth was attributed to net migration (more people moving here than moving out). During this time period, Multnomah and Washington Counties added the highest numbers of persons in the state. And as the economy continues to improve, migration to Oregon has increased.³⁸

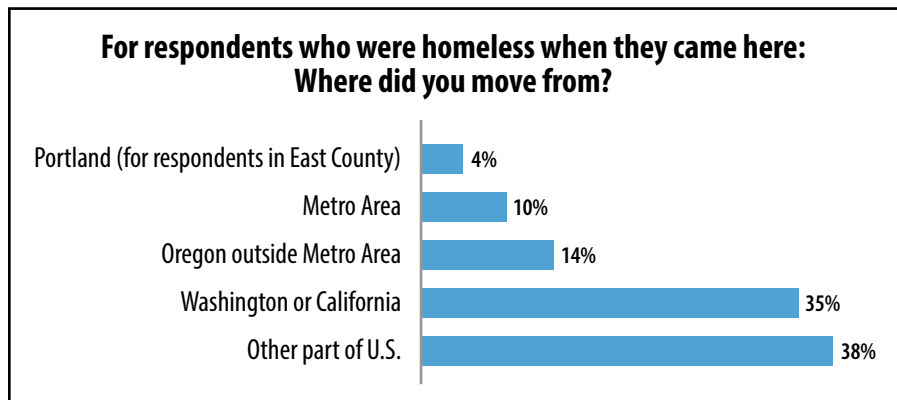
Respondents were asked, “Were you homeless when you came to Portland/ Multnomah County?” (or when you came to Gresham/ East County). Among Street Count respondents who have lived here for less than two years, 224 (12% of the total unsheltered population) were homeless when they came here. In comparison, in 2013, 383 respondents who had lived here for less than two years were homeless when they came here -- 42% more than the number in 2015.

Among Street Count respondents who had been in Multnomah County for less than two years:	2013	2015
# that were homeless when they came here	383	224
% of total unsheltered population	20%	12%

People who move to Multnomah County when they are homeless appear to come here for largely the same reasons everyone else does: friends, family ties, and job opportunities.

People who move to Multnomah County when they are homeless appear to come here for largely the same reasons everyone else does: friends, family ties, and job opportunities. Respondents who were homeless when they came here were asked, “What brought you here?” The question included several multiple choice options as well as “other.” Respondents were asked to check all of the choices that applied, and many respondents selected multiple answers. The most frequently selected reasons were family/friends (37%), “other” (25%), and job opportunities (16%). Among those selecting “other”, the most common reasons were “from here originally”, “fresh start”, and “fleeing abuse.” The remaining answer choices were “access to services/resources” (13%) and “like it here/good weather” (9%).

Among respondents who were homeless when they came here, approximately one-third moved from other parts of Oregon (including 14% from the metro area, defined as Clackamas, Washington, or Clark counties), one-third from Washington or California, and one-third from other parts of the U.S.



No data are available describing the numbers of people who have left 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 sometimes assist their homeless clients to relocate to other communities where they

have friends or family, and they frequently hear anecdotal information about people who have experienced homelessness in Multnomah County migrating to other West Coast cities.

EMPLOYMENT

The Street Count survey form asked adult respondents if they were employed or attending school. Employment was defined to include full-time or part-time work:

- 11% of respondents who answered the question said they were employed (23% of Street Count respondents didn't answer the question)
- 3% of respondents who answered the question said they were attending school (27% of Street Count respondents didn't answer the question)

The low levels of employment reflect the primary role that unemployment plays as both a cause and consequence of homelessness. At the same time, the fact that 170 people in Multnomah County are sleeping on the streets even though they have employment demonstrates our community's dual challenge of low wages combined with high housing costs.

The fact that 170 people are sleeping on the streets even though they have employment demonstrates our community's dual challenge of low wages combined with high housing costs.

The point-in-time count is guided by HUD's definition of homelessness, which only includes households who are unsheltered, in emergency shelters, or in transitional housing. A far larger number of households in our community are without homes, living doubled up with friends or relatives due to economic reasons.

In the course of a year, the estimated odds of a doubled up person ending up on the streets or in a shelter are one in ten.³⁹ 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 under age 18.⁴⁰ Many communities of color are unlikely to utilize mainstream emergency shelters because of cultural barriers, mistrust, and/or cultural norms that lead families and neighbors to reach out and house people in distress. 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.

On the night of the count, 40 people who sought housing assistance but were unable to obtain it said they would spend the night in doubled up situations. Eighty-three percent of these people were in families with children (including 48% who were children). Seventy-six percent were people of color. (Multnomah County's winter family shelter has a no turnaway policy, but these families chose to remain in their doubled up situations rather than accessing the shelter.)

Compared with the HUD Homeless, a far larger number of households in our community are without homes, living doubled up with friends or relatives due to economic reasons.

Estimates of the size of the doubled up population

There is no accurate, comprehensive 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. A 2008 study by the National Alliance to End Homelessness estimated 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.⁴¹ Local sources of data on sub-sets of the homeless population suggest that the number of people who are doubled up is two to five times larger than the number of people who meet HUD's definition of homelessness. The following sections provide an overview of these local data sources.

Oregon Department of Human Services data

The Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) reported that 11,028 of the 68,992 households in Multnomah County enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) on January 28, 2015 identified themselves as homeless. This figure includes households who were sheltered, unsheltered, and doubled up (as well as 50 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 point-in-time count (a conservative assumption), the number of households who were doubled up would be 2.9 times the number of HUD Homeless.

While all SNAP participants must meet federal income thresholds to qualify, the average monthly income reported by SNAP participants who identified themselves as homeless was \$80, compared with an average of \$727 for non-homeless SNAP participants.

The SNAP 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 like SNAP than whites. The following 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	7,268	66%
Populations of Color	3,137	28%
Asian/ Pacific Islander	151	1%
African American	2,026	18%
Hispanic	538	5%
Native American	268	2%
Multi-Racial	154	1%
Unknown	623	6%

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, Hispanics, and Multi-Racial populations are under-represented.

211 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 the 532 callers who were willing to provide a response, 159 indicated they did not have stable housing. This includes 106 callers who were doubled up with friends and family; 35 who slept in a motel, shelter, or transitional housing; and 18 who were unsheltered. This means that of the callers with unstable housing, 33% met HUD’s definition of homelessness, while 67% were doubled up. The number of doubled up households was therefore two times the number of HUD Homeless households. This ratio may under-represent the proportion of doubled up households since households who have the support of family and friends may be less likely to call 211 seeking services.

School district data

In contrast to HUD, the federal Department of Education uses a definition of homelessness that includes households who are doubled up for economic reasons. As a result, school district data provide one of the only comprehensive and consistent sources of information about the doubled up population. The homeless liaisons for most of Multnomah County’s school districts* conducted a tally of all homeless students in their districts on the night of the count. These data offer a snapshot of the students in Multnomah County who were unsheltered, in shelters or transitional housing, and doubled up on the night of the count.⁴²

*Reynolds School District was unable to produce point-in-time data from its database, so the school district numbers include all Multnomah County districts except Reynolds.

Homeless Students	Unsheltered	Shelter/ Transitional Housing	Hotel/ Motel	Doubled Up	Other/ Unknown
Unaccompanied homeless students	0	14	0	257	2
Homeless students living with their families	2	216	109	1,413	90
Total homeless students	2	230	109	1,670	92

Total Homeless Students	Unsheltered	Shelter/ Transitional Housing	Hotel/ Motel	Doubled Up	Other/ Unknown
American Indian/Alaska Native	0%	1%	1%	5%	1%
Asian	0%	1%	0%	3%	0%
Black/ African American	0%	29%	19%	21%	12%
Hispanic/ Latino	0%	25%	29%	27%	32%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	1%	0%	3%	0%
Multi-racial	0%	2%	0%	2%	3%
White/ Caucasian	100%	42%	51%	39%	53%

The number of students experiencing homelessness on the night of the count who were doubled up was 4.9 times the number who met HUD’s definition of homelessness (unsheltered, in shelter, transitional housing, or a hotel/motel).⁴³

The school districts’ data also suggest that people of color are significantly over-represented in the doubled up population. Sixty-one percent of the doubled up students are students of color. This is 22 percentage points higher than the percentage of the HUD Homeless population of Multnomah County that is people of color, and 32 percentage points higher than the population of Multnomah County as a whole that is people of color.

Local estimates

These local data suggest the number of people who were doubled up in Multnomah County on the night of the 2015 count is somewhere between two and 4.9 times the number of HUD Homeless. If we average the figures from the three local studies, we get 3.3. If we apply this figure to the HUD Homeless figure from the point-in-time count, it yields a ballpark figure of 12,543 people who were doubled up on the night of the count. Adding this figure to the HUD Homeless population, we get an estimated 16,344 people.

This estimate is an increase over the 2013 point-in-time count estimate of the doubled up population.⁴⁴ While the estimates are too imprecise to accurately compare the figures, the increase is consistent with national data that show that homelessness is growing faster among the doubled up population than the HUD Homeless population.⁴⁵

On the night of January 28, 2015, 3,801 people in Multnomah County met HUD's definition of homelessness.

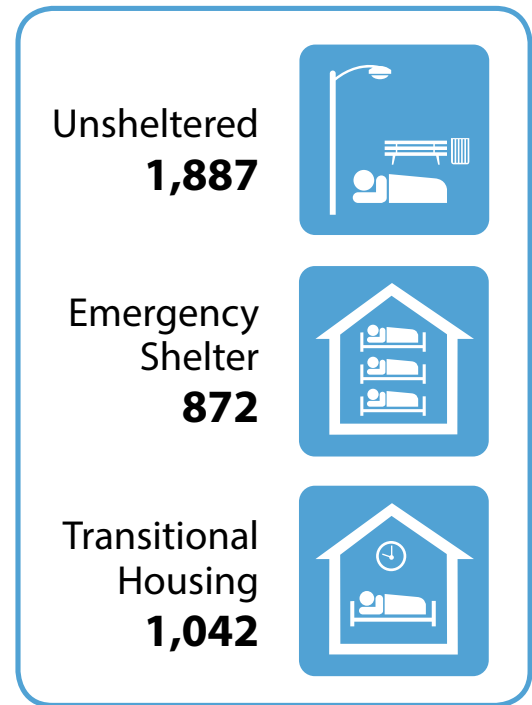
There are many factors that contribute to an individual's likelihood of becoming homeless, but homelessness is first and foremost an economic issue. High housing costs, low vacancy rates, and stagnant wages put our county's most vulnerable residents at high risk of ending up on the streets.

The homeless population tallied on the night of the point-in-time count included 1,887 people who were unsheltered (sleeping outside, in a vehicle, or other places not intended for human habitation), 872 people who were sleeping in an emergency shelter, and 1,042 people who were sleeping in transitional housing.

The point-in-time count did not capture comprehensive information on people sharing the housing of others for economic reasons (a situation frequently referred to as "doubled up"), but an analysis of available data suggests that if we included the doubled up population in our definition of homelessness, the size of Multnomah County's homeless population on a given night would be more than 16,000 people.

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. These members of our community include disproportionately high numbers of people of color; they include men and women of every age, unaccompanied youth, and homeless families with children; they include veterans, people with disabling conditions, and women fleeing domestic violence.

Over the past decade, our community has made ending homelessness a priority. This commitment was strengthened with the launch of A Home for Everyone, a community-wide, cross-jurisdictional effort to house homeless Multnomah County residents. These efforts have helped to stabilize the numbers of people who are without homes in our community. But in the face of significant economic challenges, we will need to strengthen and deepen this commitment in order to ensure that everyone in our community has a place to call home.



The Street Count and One Night Shelter Count would not have been possible without the contributions of the many agencies and volunteers who helped to plan, organize, and implement the counts.

Outreach and Engagement Workgroup

Brittney Boddington, 211info; Dana Brandon, Central City Concern CEP; Ken Burns, Portland Fire & Rescue; Anna Cale, SAFES; Quinn Colling, JOIN; John Easom, Agape Church; Megan Fernandez, Catholic Charities; Molly Finnegan, Veterans Administration Homeless Outreach; Alisa Fowler, Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare; Troy Hammond, 211info; Marc Jolin, JOIN; Judy Jones, Agape Church; Karras Kalivas, Portland Park Rangers; Carl Knudson, Portland Homeless Family Solutions; Jeremy Koehler, Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare; Sky Lipold, Yellow Brick Road; Michael Merrick, Central City Concern; Erica Parkinson, Catholic Charities Housing Transitions; Katie Robar, Catholic Charities Housing Transitions; Anna Sage, Central City Concern CEP; Marifer Sager, Transition Projects; Neal Sand, Yellow Brick Road; Bettina Sanders, Yellow Brick Road; Mike Savara, Central City Concern RCP; Shannon Singleton, Portland Housing Bureau; Steve Trujilo, Can We Help; Carissa Williams, Central City Concern OTC; Janice Yarbrough, Transition Projects

Gresham Homeless Action Team

Peter Blaine, No One Left Behind; Kimberly Carl, East Hill Church; Mary Carroll, Multnomah County Chair's Office; Jean DeMaster, Human Solutions; Dina DiNucci, Wallace Medical Concern; Diane Hernandez, JOIN; Lanette James, Greater Gresham Baptist Church; Larry Jorgenson, Trinity Lutheran Church; Steve Kimes, Anawim Christian Community; Shane Kinnison, First Baptist Church; Jay Marquess, Rosewood Initiative; Dustin Pattison, JOIN; Lori Stegmann, Gresham City Council; Barbara Stevens, Universalist Recovery Church; Joe Walsh, City of Gresham; Sara Wise, St. Henry's Church

Street Count Partners

211info; Adventist Medical Center; Agape Church of Christ; Anawim Christian Community; Blanchet House; Bridgetown Ministries; Care Oregon; Cascade AIDS Project; Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare; Catholic Charities El Programa Hispano; Catholic Charities Housing Transitions; Centennial School District; Central City Concern; The Chapel; City Team; Clackamas Service Center; Community Transition School; Confederated Tribe of Siletz Indians; Crossroads Cupboard; David Douglas School District; Department of Human Services; Dignity Village; Dinner & A Movie; Downtown Clean and Safe; East Hill Church; East Side Church of Christ; EMO HIV Day Center; EMO Northeast Emergency Food Program; Elm Court Loaves and Fishes; Emanuel Hospital Emergency Department; Fairview Police Department; First Baptist Church (Gresham); First Baptist Church (Portland); Fish; Free Hot Soup; Gateway Center for Domestic Violence; Gresham Police Bureau; Gresham-Barlow School District; Head Start-Mount Hood Community College; Holladay Park Church of God; Home PDX; Human Solutions; Imago Dei; Impact NW; Janus Youth Programs; Johnson Creek Watershed Council; JOIN; La Clinica de Buena Salud; Legacy Good Samaritan Emergency Room; Legal Aid Services of Oregon; Lifeworks NW STRIDE; Living Hope International; Macdonald Center; Manna Ministries; Mercy Corps Reentry Transition Center; Metro Church of Christ; Mid County Health Center; Mt. Scott Church of God; Multnomah County Sheriff; Multnomah County Developmental Disabilities; Multnomah County HIV/HEP Community Program and Needle Exchange; Multnomah County EMS; Multnomah County Library (Belmont, Central, and Gresham libraries); Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest; Native American Youth and Family Program; New Avenues for Youth; New City Initiative; No One Left Behind; Oregon Department of Transportation; Office of Neighborhood Involvement Crime Prevention Program; Northeast Health Center; Oregon Health Sciences University Social Workers; OHSU Family Medicine at Richmond; Operation Nightwatch; Outside In; Pacific Patrol Services; P:ear; Parkrose School District; Pongo Fund; Port of Portland; Portland Fire & Rescue; Portland Homeless Family Solutions; Portland Adventist Community Services; Portland Bureau of Environmental Services; Portland Parks Rangers; Portland Police Bureau; Portland Rescue Mission; Portland Public

Schools; Portland Water Bureau; Potluck in the Park; Rahab's Sisters; Reynolds School District; Right to Dream Too; River Patrol; Rockwood Community Health Center; Rose Haven; Rosewood Initiative; St. Henry's Church; Sanctuary Presbyterian Church; Southeast Health Center; Salvation Army Family Services Department, Gresham; Salvation Army Moore Street Food Pantry; Salvation Army Portland Tabernacle; Salvation Army SAFES; Salvation Army West Women's and Children's Shelter; Self Enhancement Inc.; Senior Community Service Employment Program; Sexual and Gender Minority Youth Resource Center; Sisters of the Road; Snow Cap; Saint Andre Bessette Catholic Church; Sgt. McDowell's Military Relief of Oregon; St. Francis Dining Hall; St. Mark's Lutheran Church; St. Stephen's Episcopal Parish; Street Roots; Sunnyside Methodist Meal Program; Transformation Network – Can We Help; Transition Projects; Transitional Youth; Trinity Cathedral; Troutdale Police; Union Gospel Mission; University of Western States; Veterans Administration (VA) Homeless Outreach; VA Community Resource and Referral Center; Voz Day Labor Center; Wallace Medical Concern; William Temple House; Zarephath Kitchen

Street Count Volunteers

Lisa Achilles, Belisa Adorno, Michael Boldt, Tabitha Boschetti, Robin Boyce, Mike Boyer, Karen Brown, Melody Burton, Stella Butler, Cheryl Bistah, Mary Carroll, Josh Carrillo, James Carter, Catherine Caruso, Melissa Cerrillo, John Chavez, Sandra Clark, Jeri Clement, Deb Constans, Liz Smith Currie, Anika J Curry, Ryan Deibert, Jennifer Devlin, Christopher Dorin, Dylan Dow, Melissa Egan, Deven Edgerton, Karen Eichler, Monae Elliott, Serena Emerson, Tessa Endencia, Sally Erickson, Casey Felice, Rachel Fetters, France Fitzpatrick, Chrystal Fortugno, Kirk French, Scott Gibson, Kristina Gore, Bertrand Gosselin, Matthew Gough, David Green, Amanda Grier, Nick Guerrero, Catie Hankins, Brandon Hardaway, Sandra Hart, Pat Hayes, Acacia Heffner, Jacob Heitzman, Danita Henry, David Hernandez, Judy Holmes, Leslee Humphrey, James Hutton, Lindsay Jenkins, Aulani Johnson, Deborah Kafoury, Parkes Kendrick, Dylan Krueger, Carly Laney, Stephanie Leschber, Christine Lewis, Wendy Lin-Kelly, Jackie Magee, Anna Marble, Jay Marquess, Dawn Martin, Karen Martinek, Kim McCarty, Amanda McDonald, Kai McMurtry, Javier Mena, Catie Miller, Rachel Ringenberg Miller, Gail Monahan, Alice Murphy, Emily O'Brien, John O'Connell, Samantha Petty, Craig Plasse, Anna Plumb, Deb Przepasniak, Anita Punja, Jeannie Ragatz, Laure Rawson, Camela Raymond, Joseph Renhard, Sue Renhard, Ivette Rivera-Guisti, Bob Robison, Anne Rotherth, John Sage, Margaret Salazar, Sarah Santner, Kristen Sartor, Blair Schaeffer-Bisht, Bethany Schaffner, Charri Schairer, Emily Schelling, Kelly Schuman, Lydia Slocum, Lara Spangler, Julian Spires, Annette Steele, Lori Stegmann, Kim Strand, Paul Strand, Sascha Strand, Jeremy Swanburg, Briggie Thomas, Kim White, Jennifer Vinsonhaler, Carla Waring, Jake Warr, John Wasitynski, Jennifer Wilde, Wendy Wright

Participating One Night Shelter Count Organizations*

Blanchet House, Bradley Angle, Cascade AIDS Project, Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare, Catholic Charities, Central City Concern, City Team, Human Solutions, Impact Northwest, Insights Teen Parents, Janus Youth Programs, JOIN, Luke-Dorf, My Father's House, 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, Volunteers of America, YWCA of Greater Portland

Multnomah County

Mary Carroll, Tiffany Kingery, Kathy Knapp, Julie Latimer, Mary Li

Portland Housing Bureau

Hunter Belgard, Sally Erickson, Antoinette Pietka, Bimal RajBhandary, Shannon Singleton, Wendy Smith, Ben Yeager, Carrie Young

A Home for Everyone

Marc Jolin

*This list includes organizations that submitted data on emergency shelters, transitional housing, and rapid re-housing.

The point-in-time count is an effort to learn more about the individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Portland, Gresham, and Multnomah County. The 2015 point-in-time count took place on Wednesday, January 28. 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 rapid re-housing 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.

Purpose of the point-in-time count

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 HUD's 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 2014 and the last joint Street Count and ONSC was conducted two years ago, in January 2013.

Definitions used for the point-in-time count

The point-in-time count is based on guidelines established by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD's definition of homelessness for the point-in-time count is limited to people who meet one of the following criteria:

- **Unsheltered Homeless:** "An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground."
- **Sheltered Homeless:** "An individual or family 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)."

People who are doubled up represent a significant portion of the individuals and families experiencing housing instability in Multnomah County. However, HUD's definition of homelessness for the point-in-time count does not include those populations. The point-in-time count report draws from data collected by partner organizations to provide estimates of the doubled up population in an effort to provide a more complete picture of homelessness and housing instability in our community.

Timing of the count

Multnomah County's point-in-time count always takes place during the last ten days of January, typically on the last Wednesday of the month. This timing is mandated by HUD, which requires homeless counts to happen during the last ten days of January in order to capture data when shelter use peaks due to weather. HUD requires the counts to happen 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.

HUD notes that "because it is easier to count people in shelter than on the street . . . conducting the count on a night when the shelters are most full will lead to the most accurate count. HUD recognizes that, while this approach may improve the overall accuracy of the count, a January PIT count is not intended to represent the extent to which people may be unsheltered at other times during the year or over more than a one-night period."⁴⁶

The weather for the 2015 count was comparable to the weather for the 2013 count, both of which were warmer and drier than is typical for late January. On January 28, 2015 the high temperature was 56 degrees and the low was 48 degrees, with no precipitation. Overnight temperatures ranged from 51 degrees at 6 p.m. to 43 degrees at 6 a.m. During the 2013 count, the high was 50 and the low was 45.

How the data are collected

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

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 Street Count is conducted during a one-week period, but surveys are only filled out for respondents who were unsheltered on the night of the count.

The 2015 Street Count was coordinated by the Portland Housing Bureau. 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 twenty 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 programs or organizations 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 28. 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 the camps identified by partners during the week of the count in addition to their usual outreach activities.

One Night Shelter Count

The 2015 ONSC was coordinated by Multnomah County's Department of County Human Services. Every organization that provides emergency shelter, motel vouchers, and transitional housing in the county was asked to submit information on those clients whom they served on January 28 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.

Comparisons to previous counts

Both the Street Count and ONSC used the same basic methodologies as in 2013, with a few minor modifications to the Street Count:

- Increased partnerships and coordination with government, nonprofits, volunteer groups, and the faith community in Gresham and East County to improve the accuracy of the Street Count in those communities.
- Increased involvement of currently and formerly homeless individuals in planning and implementing the Street Count.
- Modifications to a few of the questions on the Street Count form to increase clarity.
- Modifications to the timing of the count: In response to new guidelines from HUD, the 2015 Street Count week began on the Wednesday of the count and continued through the following Tuesday. In previous counts, the count week began three days prior to the actual night of the count and then continued for three days after the count.

None of these changes had a significant effect on the point-in-time count results. The increased coordination with Gresham and East County did result in better data collection in those areas, and the impacts of those changes are examined in the report.

Comparisons to other communities' methodologies

Hundreds of jurisdictions across the United States conducted point-in-time counts during the last ten days of January, 2015. 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 experienced 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.
- **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 Multnomah County in the summer.
- **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. Many camps in remote locations are difficult to find unless outreach workers know to look for them. Some camps known to outreach workers were swept right before or during the count, scattering the inhabitants to new locations unknown to the outreach teams. 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.
- **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:** 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.
- **Under-counting of youth:** Unaccompanied youth often try to hide from enumerators or otherwise avoid participating in the count. They are often fleeing abuse, have a fear of being forced to return to their parents or placed in foster care, and may want to avoid accessing local services which are frequently required by law to turn youth under age 18 over to police or social service agencies. Many youth may not consider themselves homeless and therefore, even if they are contacted during the count, don't respond in a way that results in their data being included.
- **Populations not included:** Due to HUD guidelines, certain populations are not captured at all by the count:
 - People who are doubled up 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.
 - People who cycle on and off the streets may be homeless for a portion of each month, but if they aren't 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, detox facilities, or hospital beds during the night of the count who are otherwise homeless are not counted.
- **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, distrust of government, concerns about what will be done with the information, or a fear that identifying themselves as homeless campers will result in their camp being swept. Outreach workers and participating agencies tallied 561 people who may have been homeless and unsheltered during the count but declined to participate.⁴⁷
- **Inability to participate:** Outreach workers encountered some 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.
- **Vacancies:** Some transitional housing units that were in use for almost the entire month of January were vacant on the night of the count because the units had recently been vacated and were being prepped for the next household to move in. As a result, these units and the households waiting to move into them weren't included in the point-in-time count.

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.

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 Census race 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. However, 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.

- **Blurring of specific identities:** 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.
- **Missing data:** Data on race/ethnicity were not provided for 207 respondents. This could be the result of a variety of factors: some point-in-time count 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.

Definitions of terms

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 episodes of homelessness in the past three 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.

Household types

- *Individual adults* are people in adult-only households including single adults, couples, adults with adult children, or multiple-adult households.
- *People in families* are people in households that have at least one adult and one child.
- *Unaccompanied youth* are people who are not part of a family during their episode of homelessness and who are under age 18 or, in some cases, age 24 and younger.

Shelter Types

- *Emergency Shelter:* A facility with the primary purpose of providing temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness. The typical stay is generally less than a few months.
- *Hotel/ Motel Vouchers:* Payment vouchers given to people experiencing homelessness to provide them with temporary shelter in a hotel or motel. (Data for people using vouchers are incorporated into the emergency shelter data.)
- *Transitional Housing:* A housing program that provides a place to stay and supportive services for up to 24 months in order to facilitate the movement of individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing. It is generally intended for participants in recovery from disabling conditions, such as addictions and behavioral health issues. Participants have a lease or occupancy agreement that is for a term of at least one month and that ends in 24 months and cannot be extended. (Does not include Section 8 and HUD-subsidized housing.)
- *Rapid Re-Housing:* An intervention designed to help individuals and families to quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing. Services are tailored to the unique needs of the household and typically include a combination of housing identification, rent and move-in assistance, case management, and supportive services as needed. Participants typically have a lease in their own names and can remain in their housing units after their rental subsidies end.

Homeless Management Information System/ Service Point

HUD requires that the point-in-time count aligns with a housing inventory count of all beds and units dedicated to providing shelter and transitional housing to people meeting HUD's homeless definition. Data for the sheltered point-in-time count and the housing inventory are collected through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a data collection and reporting system 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.

APPENDIX C: GRESHAM AND EAST COUNTY DATA

The 2015 Point-in-Time Count of Homelessness report captures information on people who were homeless throughout Multnomah County -- including in Gresham and other parts of East County -- on the night of January 28, 2015. This supplemental appendix provides additional insights into the unsheltered and emergency shelter populations in Gresham and East County.⁴⁸

Gresham/ East County Count	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Total
Individual persons	176	129	305
Household units	163	41	204

Household Type	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Total
Individual adults	163 (93%)	9 (7%)	172 (56%)
Age 18-24	19	2	21
Age >24	142	6	148
Age unknown	2	1	3
Persons in families with children	13 (7%)	119 (92%)	132 (43%)
Children <18	8	69	77
Adults 18-24	0	6	6
Adults >24	5	44	49
Unaccompanied youth <18	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	1 (<1%)

Race/ Ethnicity	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Total
American Indian/ Alaska Native	5 (3%)	4 (3%)	9 (3%)
Asian	1 (1%)	2 (2%)	3 (1%)
Black/ African American	22 (13%)	61 (49%)	83 (28%)
Hispanic/ Latino	11 (6%)	24 (19%)	35 (12%)
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	2 (1%)	11 (9%)	13 (4%)
White/ Caucasian	148 (86%)	63 (50%)	211 (71%)
No response	3 (n/a)	4 (n/a)	7 (n/a)

Age	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Total
<18	8 (5%)	70 (55%)	78 (26%)
<5	4	20	24
6-11	2	28	30
12-17	2	22	24
18-24	19 (11%)	8 (6%)	27 (9%)
25-44	79 (45%)	39 (30%)	118 (39%)
45-54	34 (20%)	8 (6%)	42 (14%)
55-69	32 (18%)	3 (2%)	35 (12%)
70+	2 (1%)	0 (0%)	2 (1%)
Unknown	2 (n/a)	1 (n/a)	3 (n/a)

Gender	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Total
Male	112 (65%)	59 (46%)	171 (57%)
Female	60 (35%)	70 (54%)	130 (43%)
Trans	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (<1%)
Unknown	3 (n/a)	0 (n/a)	3 (n/a)

Veterans	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Total
Veterans ⁴⁹	16 (10%)	1 (2%)	17 (7%)

Domestic Violence	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Total
Females affected by domestic violence	33 (55%)	19 (27%)	52 (40%)

Disabling Conditions	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Total
Persons with one or more disabling conditions	109 (62%)	26 (20%)	135 (44%)

Length of Current Episode of Homelessness ⁵⁰	Unsheltered
0-3 months	37 (22%)
4-6 months	20 (12%)
6-9 months	7 (4%)
10-12 months	20 (12%)
12+ months	86 (51%)
No response	6 (n/a)

Chronically Homeless	Unsheltered	Emergency Shelter	Total
Individual adults	93 (57%)	0 (0%)	93 (54%)
Persons in families with children	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	2 (2%)
Total	93 (53%)	2 (2%)	95 (31%)

How Long Have You Been In: <i>(unsheltered respondents only)</i>	Gresham	East County Outside Gresham	Total
<3 months	8 (9%)	4 (25%)	12 (11%)
3 months-1 year	11 (12%)	2 (13%)	13 (12%)
1-2 years	13 (14%)	0 (0%)	13 (12%)
>2 years	58 (64%)	10 (63%)	68 (64%)
No response	4 (n/a)	0 (n/a)	4 (n/a)

Service Sites Where Street Count Forms Were Completed <i>(unsheltered respondents only)</i>	Respondents Who Slept in Gresham	Respondents Who Slept in East County Outside Gresham	Total
Anawim (Gresham)	39	10	49
East Hill Church (Gresham)	5	0	5
First Baptist Church (Gresham)	6	1	7
Gresham Library (Gresham)	11	1	12
JOIN (East County outreach/ East Portland day space)	19	8	27
Mid County Health Center (East Portland)	6	0	6
No One Left Behind (Gresham outreach)	6	1	7
Zarephath Kitchen (Gresham)	19	4	23
Various Gresham/ East County-based agencies (less than 5 forms each)	6	3	9
Various Portland-based agencies (less than 5 forms each)	14	7	21
Location unknown	7	3	10
Total	138	38	176

Stories of Gresham and East County's Homeless

Judy is a 51 year old who became homeless two years ago due to domestic violence. She was born and grew up in East County and has lived in Gresham for the past three years. While she was homeless, she connected with volunteers from No One Left Behind, a Gresham-based outreach ministry, who supported her in entering a Co-Dependants Anonymous program, provided life skills mentors, purchased a trailer for her to use, and found a trailer court on which to park it. She is now employed and working towards her GED.

Source: No One Left Behind

Ray is a 70 year old whose luck changed years ago when he suffered a heart attack and then had to cope with the death of his wife. His work history following those events was unsteady, eventually leading him to sleep under a tarp at the Sandy River Delta. Facing deteriorating health, he is determined to get an apartment so that he can once again sleep inside.

Source: Portland Tribune, July 4, 2014, "Homeless and Human: People living on the streets face social stigma."

Joe is a 37 year old army veteran who was born in Oregon and has been homeless in Gresham for over a year. He became homeless shortly after returning home following eight years in the army. Once on the streets, he started more heavily abusing drugs and alcohol. He is now working to address his substance abuse issues and turn his life around, with support from Gresham-based organizations.

Source: No One Left Behind

Pat never expected to be homeless. She had a steady self-contracting business for over 11 years. But after an accident left her with a disability, she found herself homeless and penniless, living out of her car with her three dogs.

While living out of her car, Pat found sanctuary and support from Anawim Christian Community in Gresham. Pat is working to get back on her feet and trying to survive on the streets while waiting to have what she needs to get back into an apartment. She is no longer able to work in the same capacity that she did before her accident. She is waiting for disability benefits and is currently volunteering her time to help others in the homeless community who come to Anawim.

Source: Anawim Christian Community (<http://anawimcc.org/>)

Amber, who has mild autism and a seizure disorder, experienced abuse and child molestation as a child. She receives Social Security disability income, but half of her monthly income goes to support her mother. Unable to afford an apartment, Amber rotates between a friend's couch and a tent. She stays in Gresham rather than trying to access emergency shelter services in Portland because, to her, Gresham has always been home.

Source: Portland Tribune, July 4, 2014, "Homeless and Human: People living on the streets face social stigma."

APPENDIX D: ADDITIONAL DATA ON COMMUNITIES OF COLOR (HUD HOMELESS)

Household Composition	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander
Individual adults	71 (87%)	43 (73%)	636 (74%)	268 (69%)	56 (65%)
Persons in families with children	11 (13%)	15 (25%)	224 (26%)	120 (31%)	30 (35%)
Unaccompanied youth <18	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	1 (<1%)	1 (<1%)	0 (0%)
Total	82	59	861	389	86

Chronically Homeless	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander
Individual adults	33 (46%)	8 (19%)	183 (29%)	86 (32%)	27 (48%)
Persons in families with children	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (1%)	3 (3%)	0 (0%)
Total chronically homeless	33 (40%)	8 (14%)	185 (21%)	89 (23%)	27 (31%)

Gender	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander
Male	36 (44%)	30 (51%)	505 (59%)	237 (61%)	50 (58%)
Female	45 (55%)	27 (46%)	344 (40%)	143 (37%)	33 (38%)
Trans	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	4 (<1%)	4 (1%)	2 (2%)
Unknown	0 (0%)	2 (3%)	8 (1%)	5 (1%)	1 (1%)

Sub-Populations	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander
Veterans	8 (10%)	4 (7%)	78 (9%)	18 (5%)	11 (13%)
Domestic violence	33 (73%)	14 (51%)	150 (44%)	49 (34%)	15 (45%)
Disabling condition	58 (71%)	26 (44%)	445 (52%)	176 (45%)	47 (55%)

Household Composition	HUD Homeless Populations of Color 2013	HUD Homeless Populations of Color 2015	Total HUD Homeless Population 2015
Individual adults	57%	74%	83%
Persons in families with children	42%	26%	17%
Unaccompanied youth < 18	1%	<1%	<1%

Gender	HUD Homeless Populations of Color 2013	HUD Homeless Populations of Color 2015	Total HUD Homeless Population 2015
Male	58%	60%	64%
Female	42%	40%	36%
Trans/"Z"/ other	<1%	1%	1%

Sub-Populations	HUD Homeless Populations of Color 2013	HUD Homeless Populations of Color 2015	Total HUD Homeless Population 2015
Veterans	8%	10%	12%
Domestic violence	43%	44%	42%
Disabling conditions	43%	51%	57%

APPENDIX E: SURVEY FORMS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Contents:

- A. Additional Street Count Data on Unidentified Individuals
- B. Street Count Participation
- C. One Night Shelter Count Participation
- D. Street Count Survey Form
- E. One Night Shelter Count Survey Form

Appendix E is available online at:
<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/61358>

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- ⁵ Oregon Housing and Community Services. (2013). Multnomah County housing profiles. Retrieved from: <http://www.oregon.gov/ohcs>.
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- ⁸ Portland Housing Bureau. (2015). The state of housing in Portland, phase one, April 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/article/528253>.
- ⁹ Kristina Smock Consulting. (2014). 2014 poverty in Multnomah County. Multnomah County Department of County Human Services. Retrieved from: <https://multco.us/file/34343/download>.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness. (2015). 2015 Street Count results. Retrieved from: http://www.homelessinfo.org/what_we_do/one_night_count/2015_results.php.
- ¹³ 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.
- ¹⁴ Multnomah County population data are based on American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates (2009-2013). The data are presented using an over-count methodology. The "populations of color" figures in the table are arrived at by adding up all of the race categories except white.
- ¹⁵ American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates (2009-2013). The Multnomah County in Poverty data are not available in a format that allows for a complete application of the over-count methodology, which is why that column includes an "other/ multi-racial" category.
- ¹⁶ The combined 2015 HUD Homeless + Rapid Re-Housing population does not perfectly match the 2013 HUD Homeless definition because the 2015 Rapid Re-Housing population includes people served by programs that were already defined as Rapid Re-Housing in 2013.
- ¹⁷ Portland Housing Bureau. (2015). The state of housing in Portland, phase one, April 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/article/528253>.
- ¹⁸ Urban League of Portland. (2015). Executive summary: State of Black Oregon 2015. Retrieved from: <http://ulpdx.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/SOBO-2015-ES.pdf>.
- ¹⁹ NARA's transitional housing beds serve many people experiencing homelessness, but they are not exclusively reserved for people experiencing homelessness. Increased clarity from HUD led the Portland Housing Bureau to decide that these beds should not have been included in past point-in-time counts.
- ²⁰ Aratani, Yumiko. (2009). Homeless children and youth: Causes and consequences. *National Center for Children in Poverty*; Zugazaga, Carole. (2004). Stressful life event experiences of homeless adults: A comparison of single men, single women, and women with children. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 32(6).
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- ²⁴ The Street Count form included an option of "Z" for respondents who do not identify with a specific gender. Two respondents selected this option.
- ²⁵ Includes male and female children.
- ²⁶ Heslin, KC, et. al. (2007). Community characteristics and violence against homeless women in Los Angeles county. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 18(1).
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- ³⁰ 2014 HUD Point-in-Time Count data cited by Perl, Libby (2014). *Veterans and homelessness*. Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from: <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL34024.pdf>.

- ³¹ National Coalition for Homeless Veterans. (n.d.) Background and statistics. Retrieved from: http://nchv.org/index.php/news/media/background_and_statistics/#facts.
- ³² Source for Multnomah County veteran population data: American Community Survey (ACS) 2009-2013 estimates; source for Multnomah County adult population data: ACS 2014 population estimate. Data retrieved from U.S. Census. (2015). State and County QuickFacts: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/41/41051.html>.
- ³³ Oregon Alliance to End Violence Against Women. (n.d.). Facts on homelessness, housing, and domestic violence.
- ³⁴ Pavao, Joanne et. al. (2007). Intimate partner violence and housing instability. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 32(2).
- ³⁵ Clough, Amber. (n.d.). Domestic violence: A different kind of homelessness. Results from the SHARE study.
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- ⁴⁰ Wright et. al. (1998). Factors associated with doubled-up housing – a common precursor to homelessness. *Social Service Review*, 72(1); Moses, Joy. (2010). The new housing normal for low-income families. Center for American Progress. Retrieved from: <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/housing/news/2010/06/15/7952/the-new-housing-normal-for-low-income-families/>; Curry-Stevens, A., Cross-Hemmer, A., and Coalition of Communities of Color. (2010). Communities of color in Multnomah County: An unsettling profile. Retrieved from: <http://www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org/docs/AN%20UNSETTLING%20PROFILE.pdf>.
- ⁴¹ National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2008). Data snapshot: Doubled up in the United States. Updated March 2008. Retrieved from: <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/data-snapshot-doubled-up-in-the-united-states>.
- ⁴² Homeless student numbers include all Multnomah County school districts except Reynolds School District, which was unable to produce point-in-time figures from its database. Race data were not available for David Douglas School District.
- ⁴³ HUD's definition of homelessness includes households vouchered into a hotel or motel but does not include households who paid for a hotel or motel using their own resources. The school districts' data do not make this distinction so all households sleeping in a hotel or motel are included in the HUD Homeless figure in this report.
- ⁴⁴ The 2013 point-in-time count report used the same methodology to estimate the doubled up population, with one difference. In 2013, the available data made it possible only to compare the doubled up to the literally homeless (unsheltered and emergency shelter) populations, so the calculations were applied to the literally homeless point-in-time count numbers to arrive at the doubled up population. In 2015, the available data allowed for a more complete comparison of the HUD Homeless population to the doubled up population, so the calculations were applied to the HUD Homeless population to arrive at the doubled up population.
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- ⁴⁷ This is not an unduplicated figure; since identifying information could not be collected for those people, it was not possible to eliminate possible duplication.
- ⁴⁸ Because a significant portion of transitional housing beds are not facility-based, address information is not available to enable us to isolate and analyze the transitional housing populations in Gresham and East County.
- ⁴⁹ Percentage is out of adults.
- ⁵⁰ Data not available for emergency shelter population.