CONNECTICUT COALITION to
END HOMELESSNESS

Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH)

CT Point-in-Time Count 2020

CCEH represents more than 100 members – emergency shelter providers, housing providers, community and business leaders, and strategic partners – who share the goal of ending homelessness.

CONNECTICUT COALITION to
END HOMELESSNESS

OUR MISSION:
The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, in partnership with members and communities throughout the state, creates change through leadership, advocacy, and building the capacity of members and the field to respond to environmental challenges. Our collective mission is to prevent and end homelessness in Connecticut.

Since 2005, HUD has required applicants for "federal homeless assistance grants" to count and report the number of people experiencing homelessness in their communities on one night during the last ten days of January.

Homeless "Point-in-Time Counts" across the country are used as one of the primary data sources to inform federal funding for programs and services to end homelessness and to track progress against established goals.

Dear Friends,

Thank you for visiting our report on the 2020 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count. This federally mandated survey was a labor of love involving hundreds of volunteers coordinated by more than a dozen CCEH members. We are grateful for all the hard work that went into making this year's survey happen. Our results showed a continued, if not dramatic, decline in the total number of people experiencing homelessness as compared to the 2019 Count.

Connecticut's PIT Count shows homelessness has declined 35% since 2007, a signal that the work we have done as a coalition to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring is working. These results are a testament to the hard work of the hundreds of essential workers who labor day-in and day-out to keep people experiencing homelessness safe and connect them with housing.

In total, this year's PIT Count identified 2,904 people who were homeless on the night of the count. This included 1,947 individual adults and 305 family households including 560 children.

This year's Count documented a decrease in homelessness across most populations. Please note that this year we will publish the results of the Youth Outreach and Count in a separate report.

It should be noted that the results of the 2020 Point-in-Time Count present a picture of homelessness in Connecticut before the arrival of the COVID-19 public health emergency, which led to a rapid transformation in our state's homeless services system. While we do not know what the long-term impacts of the pandemic will be on homelessness, we may be safe in guessing that next year's results will look very different.

We stand together with, and in gratitude to, the many providers who coordinated this year's Count, and who, in the following months labored tirelessly to protect people experiencing homelessness from the pandemic and then accelerated efforts to help them obtain the safety of a true home.

A special thanks in particular to Access Community Action Agency, BHcare, Capital Region Mental Health Center, Catholic Charities of Fairfield County, Columbus House, The Connection, the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs, Emerge, Hartford Healthcare, Inspirica, Journey Home, Mid-Fairfield AIDS Project, Recovery Network of Programs, Salvation Army Waterbury, Supportive Housing Works, United Way of Southeastern Connecticut, and Windham No Freeze.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the generous support of our sponsors, the Connecticut Department of Housing, the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and the Melville Charitable Trust. We thank our funders for investing in the Point-in-Time Count year after year.

In gratitude,

Richard Cho
CEO

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Executive Summary

Overview
These findings represent a one-night snapshot of homelessness in Connecticut. They are not meant to provide a full picture of how many people experience homelessness in total, but rather to track how homelessness is increasing or decreasing from year-to-year, and to compare rates of homelessness between states and communities across the country.

To examine the full picture of homelessness in our state, we use these findings alongside other data points, namely, data from the state's Homeless Management Information System (CT HMIS), which tracks the use of homeless services year-round, from the moment an individual or family is referred to the Coordinated Access Network (via a phone call to 2-1-1) to the time they leave the system, whether to permanent housing or to another destination.

We also note that this Count is not perfect; many of the analyses and extrapolation measures may introduce unintended misrepresentations of the data. Recognizing these limitations, we strive to provide the most accurate possible measurement of a one-night count of homelessness.

Key Findings
We identified 2,904 people experiencing homelessness, a 4% decrease since 2019 and a 35% decrease since 2007.

We identified 29 fewer individuals in emergency shelter this year, a 2.1% decline since 2019. We identified 128 fewer unsheltered individuals than we did in 2019, a 28.9% decrease.

The number of families experiencing homeless remained similar to last year, with only two additional families in shelter this year for a total of 305. Only one family was found unsheltered.

We identified 45 individual veterans in emergency shelter, a decrease of 8% from 2019. We identified three veteran families in emergency shelter. We did not identify any unsheltered veteran families.

This year's PIT Count showed a 34% increase in people with chronic substance use issues in emergency shelters, but a 42.5% decrease among the unsheltered population, averaging a 6.4% net increase for 2020.

We counted 547 individuals who reported experiencing domestic violence this year, 86 of whom were male.

Additional Notes
This year's domestic violence numbers include males, which have not been previously reported. This was the first year we included Safe Haven data in our findings.

Overall Homeless Population

2,904	-4%
2020 PIT Total	*Change from 2019*

Individual Adults

1,947	-6%
2020 PIT Total	*Change from 2019*

Family Households

306	+.3%
2020 PIT Total	*Change from 2019*

Veterans - Unsheltered

12	-7.7%
2020 PIT Total	*Change from 2019*

Veterans - Sheltered

184	+1.7%
2020 PIT Total	*Change from 2019*

People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

215	+6.4%
2020 PIT Total	*Change from 2019*

Sheltered Families

305	+.7%
2020 PIT Total	*Change from 2019*

Domestic Violence Survivors

547*	+13%
2020 PIT Total	*Change from 2019**

**NOTE: The 2020 PIT domestic violence numbers include males; the 2019 PIT did not.*

People with Mental Illness

346	-17.8%
2020 PIT Total	*Change from 2019*

People with Chronic Substance Use Issues

165	-22.2%
2020 PIT Total	*Change from 2019*

People Living with HIV/AIDS

46	-24.6%
2020 PIT Total	*Change from 2019*

Demographic Composition

The following charts depict the age, gender, race, and ethnic composition of those experiencing homelessness in Connecticut during the 2020 PIT count.

Age

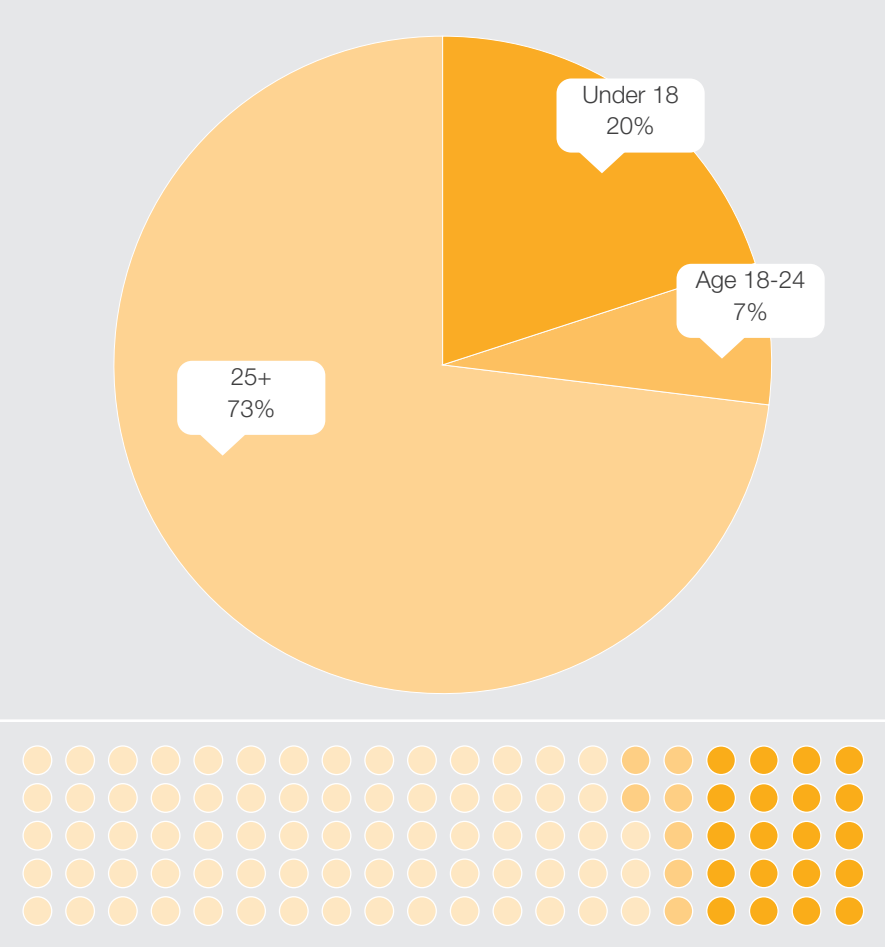


Figure 1.1: 2020 PIT Composition by Age

Gender

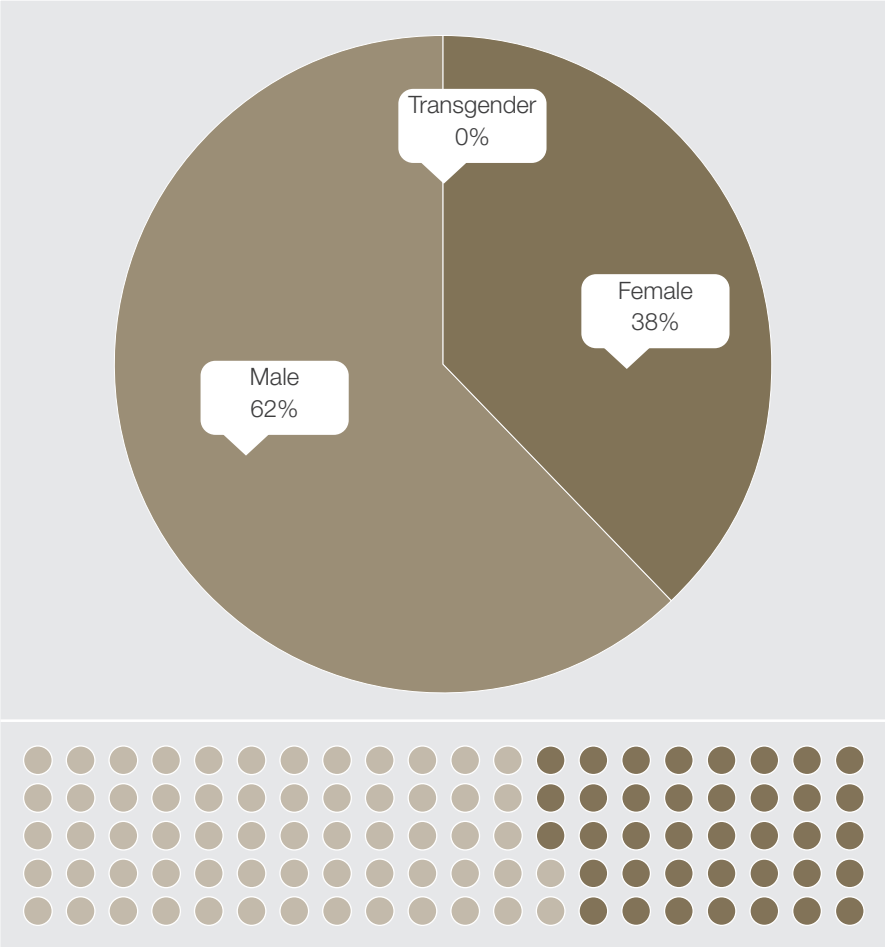


Figure 1.2: 2020 PIT Composition by Gender

Race

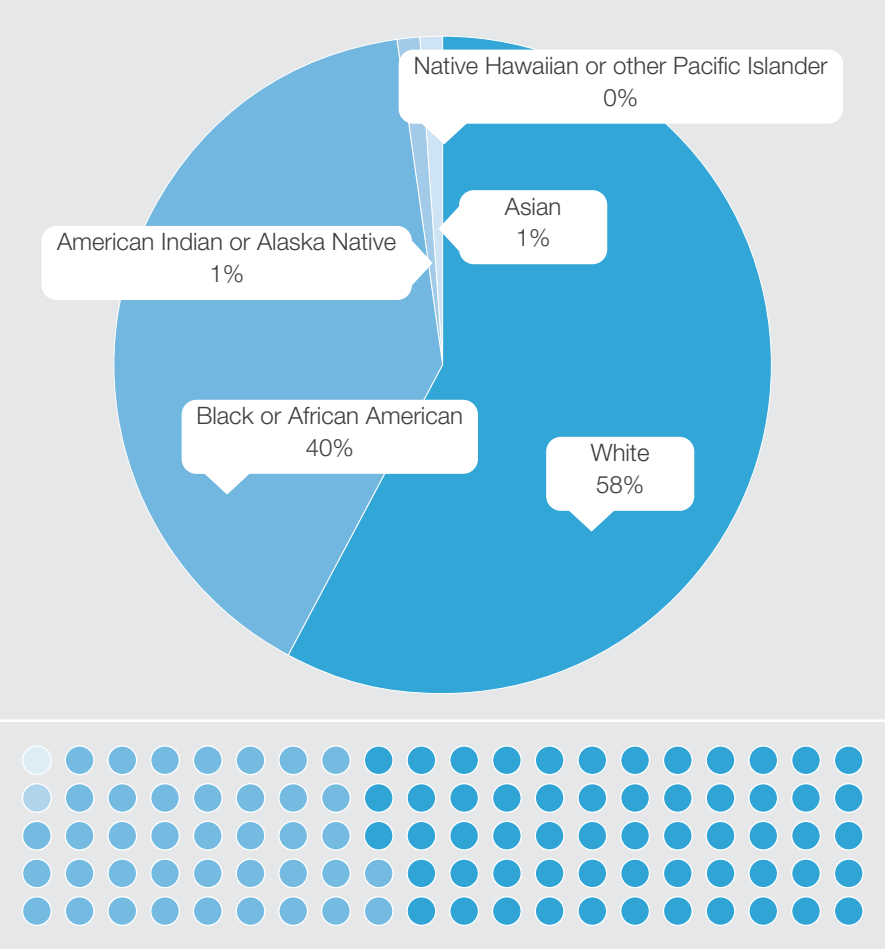


Figure 1.3: 2020 PIT Composition by Race

Ethnicity

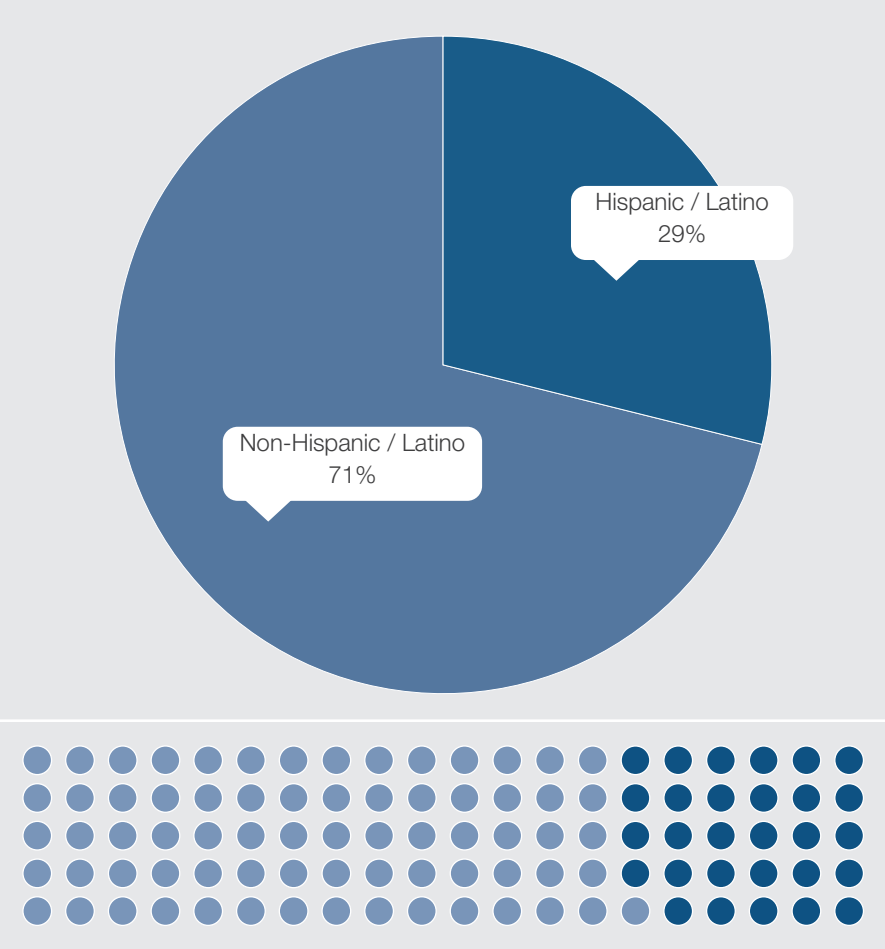


Figure 1.4: 2020 PIT Composition by Ethnicity

Point-in-Time Count 2020: Methodology

As part of the application process for federal homeless assistance grants, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that Connecticut conduct a count of the number of people experiencing homelessness.

HUD requires that every state in the country perform this Count during the last ten days in January, which typically coincides with the coldest weather of the year. Usual methods of counting people experiencing homelessness fail to capture accurate data on the number of people out on the streets during the coldest nights of the year. Although outreach workers provide services to people living on the streets, we do not yet have a systematic mechanism for collecting data on unsheltered clients over the course of the year.

The Point-in-Time (PIT) Count enlists volunteers who traverse the state one evening and/or in the early morning hours in January to count Connecticut's homeless population. The 2020 PIT Count for Connecticut occurred the evening of Tuesday, January 21st and the early morning hours of Wednesday, January 22nd. This year, the annual event in Connecticut included more than 600 volunteers (an all-time high) who canvassed pre-identified areas across the state and completed surveys with those they encountered.

This document provides an overview of the results of the unsheltered and the sheltered homeless population.

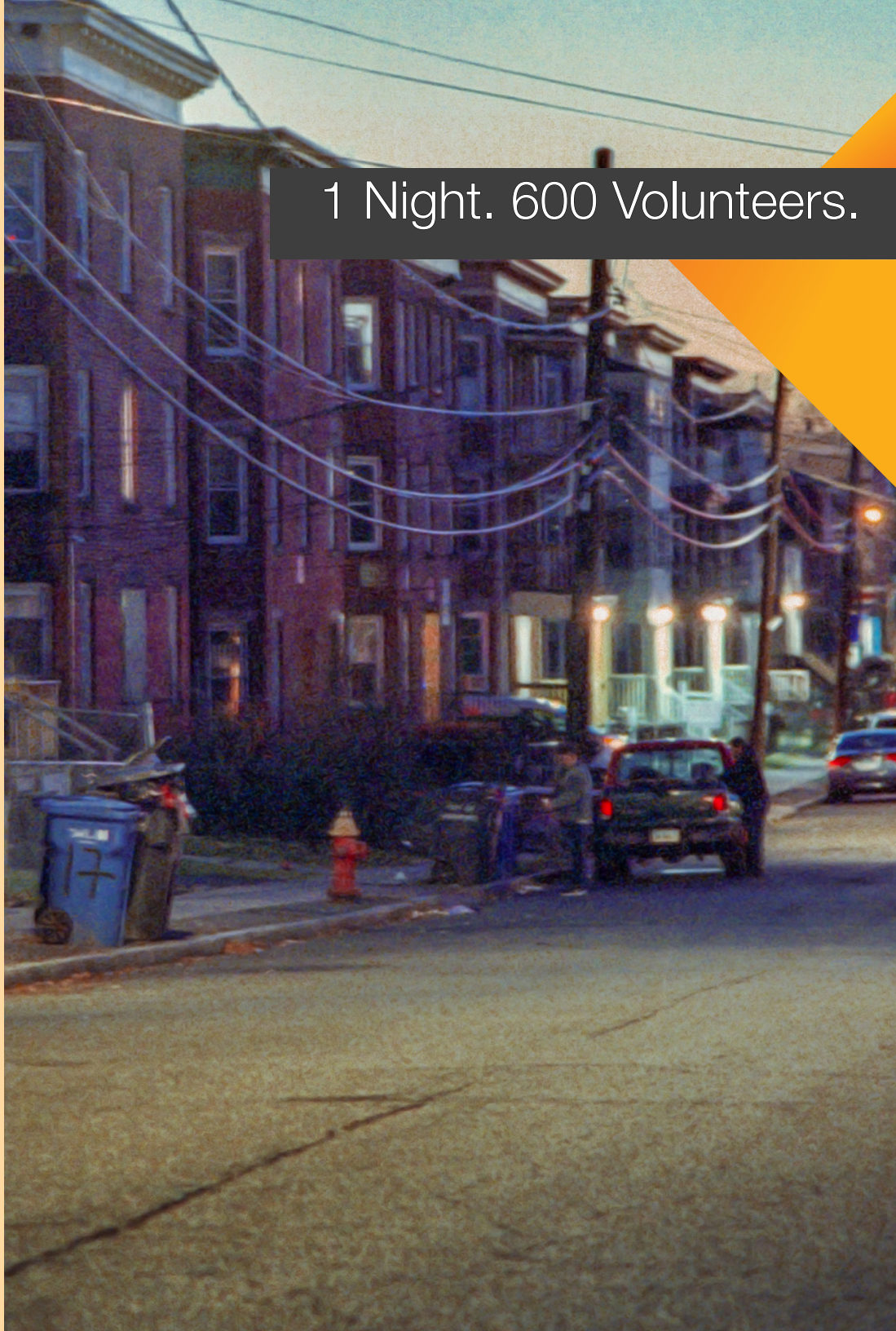
Sheltered homelessness refers to those who are staying in emergency shelters, warming centers, and transitional housing. We captured the majority of the counts for the sheltered homeless in the state's Homeless Management Information System (CT HMIS), the statewide database used to track and manage people experiencing homelessness. The system tracks clients from the time they enter the system (typically via a 2-1-1 call) to the moment they exit the system. It is worth noting that some shelters and warming centers do not enter data in CT HMIS; for confidentiality reasons, Victim Service Providers do not enter data into CT HMIS, but instead enter their data into a separate PIT database.

We identified 183 of the 829 census tracts in Connecticut as 'High Probability' based on the count of unsheltered people in these areas in 2019. We then randomly selected 143 out of the remaining 646 'Low Probability' census tracts, using Statistical Analysis Software (SAS). We applied a weighting factor of 4.517 to the total number of people found in the randomly selected low probability areas as an approximation of the expected number of unsheltered homeless in the remainder of the state.

We assigned each volunteer to a team charged with canvassing one or more census tracts in their region and equipped them with a mobile application designed to track the exact location of each individual surveyed. Volunteers surveyed individuals in both English and Spanish.

We encouraged volunteers who observed people sleeping or unwilling to participate in the survey to complete an 'observational' survey and enter their findings into the application.

The 2020 PIT Count for Connecticut occurred the evening of Tuesday, January 21st and the early morning hours of Wednesday, January 22nd.



1 Night. 600 Volunteers.

Limitations of the Count

This Count provides a benchmark for understanding the prevalence of homelessness in the state, but has limitations.

Applying the national standard for geographic demarcations, we used census tracts to conduct the PIT Count for the first time this year. The previous geographic groupings, known as 'block groups', were approximately one-third the size of an average census tract, which meant that we needed to enlist additional volunteers for this year's count. This change in methodology will allow us to better analyze PIT Count data by comparing our findings with available census tract data, including 2020 Census data when it becomes available.

The data on sheltered clients includes a combination of information from Connecticut's HMIS and information collected through the mobile app.

Shelter staff pulled all data for the census of emergency shelters, warming centers, and transitional housing programs from bed night counts (counts of those who physically slept in a shelter) or check-in sheets for the night of January 21st. We asked staff to enter data into CT HMIS for all residents who checked into their programs that evening. We gave staff three days to confirm that all data entry was complete and accurate.

For the unsheltered count, we pre-assigned volunteers to one or more of the census tracts and asked them to enter the data via the mobile application. It is worth noting that 40 percent of the unsheltered surveys were observational, meaning that the volunteer did not actually speak with the person to obtain the data but instead entered their best guess for data fields including gender, race, and ethnicity. This made it difficult to verify the data so we employed extrapolation methods to fill in the gaps.

It was not feasible to canvass every corner of Connecticut so we employed a predictive model to provide a 'best guess' as to the actual count of people experiencing homelessness in the state. Differences in geographic regions and additional factors could also impact the accuracy of these numbers.

The Point-in-Time Count shows a 35% decline in homelessness in Connecticut since 2007.

Summary of Findings

We summarized the findings in this report by the sheltered and unsheltered populations, reporting data for individual adults, families, and youth (those aged 18 to 24). We also included findings for veterans, domestic violence survivors, and sub-populations self-reporting mental illness, chronic substance use, and HIV/AIDS.

Total Population

Overall, we saw a 4.3% decline from the previous in the total number of people experiencing homelessness in Connecticut.

The 2,904 people identified included 324 unsheltered and 2,580 sheltered individuals.

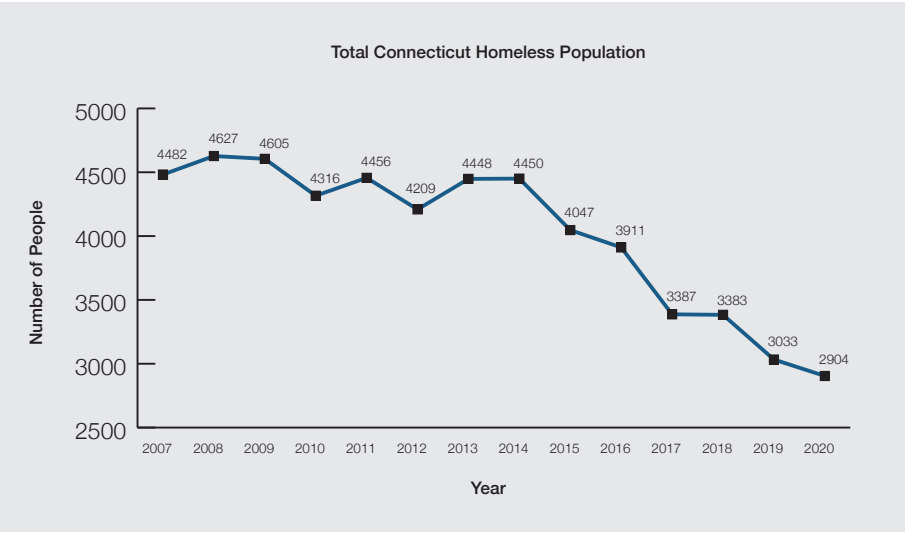


Figure 2: Total CT Homeless Population Over Time

The table below illustrates the breakdown of the total population by sheltered and unsheltered populations.

Population	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total
Individual Adults	1,632	315	**1,947**
Adults in Families with Minor Children	371	1	**372**
Children in Families with Minor Children	559	1	**560**
Child-Only Households, including Parenting Children *(unnaccompanied children < 18)*	18	7	**25**
Total	**2,580**	**324**	**2,904**

Table 1: Total Sheltered and Unsheltered CT Homeless Population

Individual Adults

On the evening of January 21st and early morning hours of January 22nd, volunteers identified 1,947 individual adults experiencing homelessness. We define households comprised of adults 18 years or older as individual adult households.

This population has decreased by 6.8% since 2019. Individual adults are consistently the largest segment of the population experiencing homelessness in Connecticut.

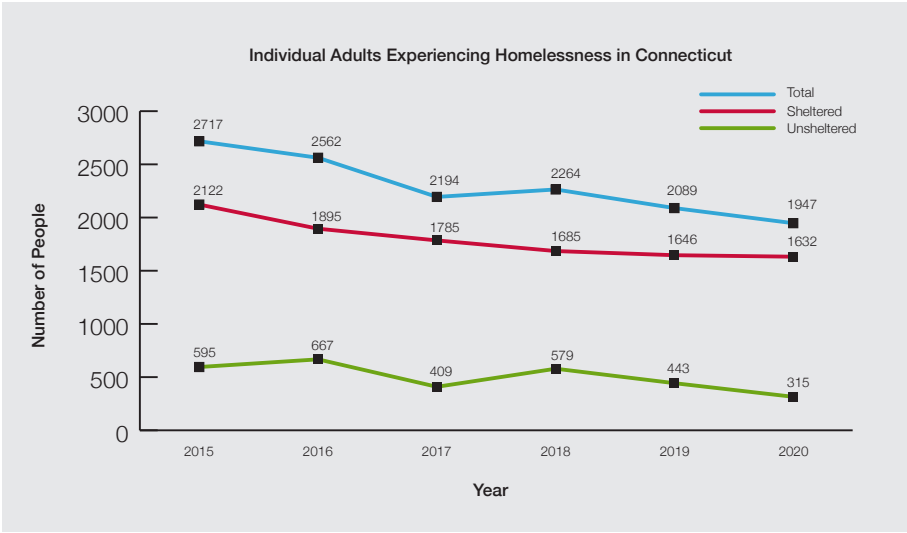
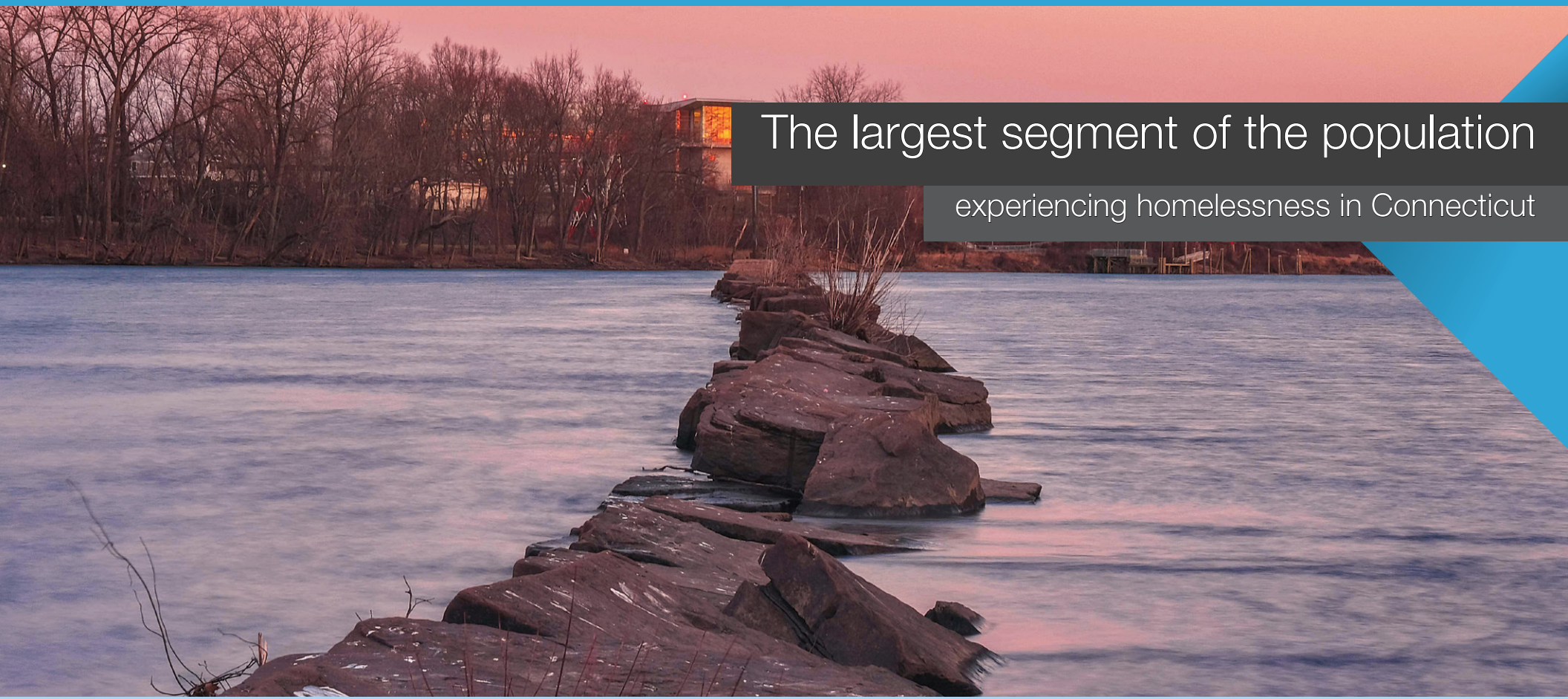


Figure 3: Individual Adult Homeless Population Over Time

Individual Adults	Sheltered			Sheltered Total	Unsheltered Total	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Safe Haven			
PIT Count 2019	1,381	265	N/A	1,646	443	**2,089**
PIT Count 2020	1,352	271	9	1,632	315	**1,947**
Year over Year Difference	-29	6	N/A	-14	-128	**-142**
% Change	**-2.1%**	**2.3%**	**N/A**	**-0.9%**	**-28.9%**	**-6.8%**

Table 2: Sheltered and Unsheltered Individual Adults



The largest segment of the population

experiencing homelessness in Connecticut

On the evening of January 21st and early morning hours of January 22nd, we identified 1,947 individual adults experiencing homelessness.

Families

We define a family as a household with at least one adult and one minor. This year's PIT Count revealed a 1% increase in families experiencing homelessness.

The number of families in emergency shelter increased by 9% since 2019. The number of families in transitional housing decreased by 26.8% during the same timeframe.

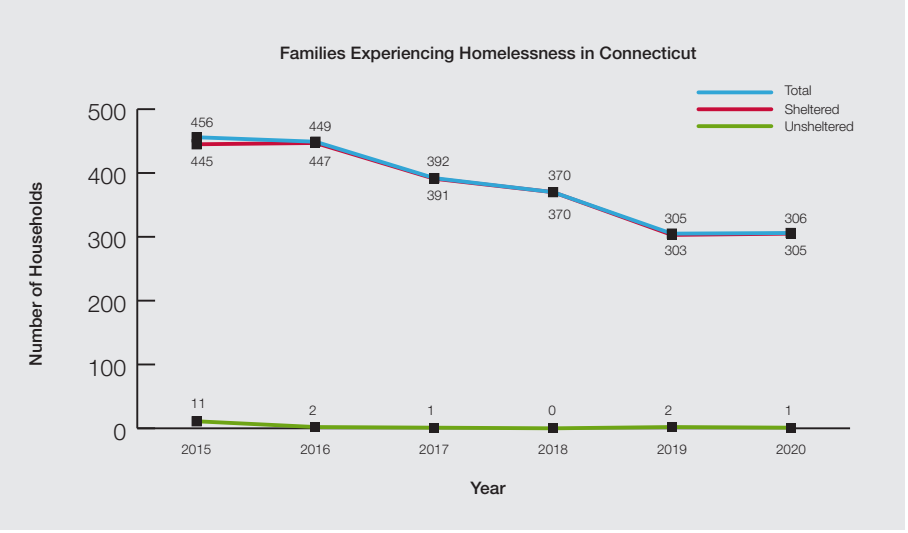
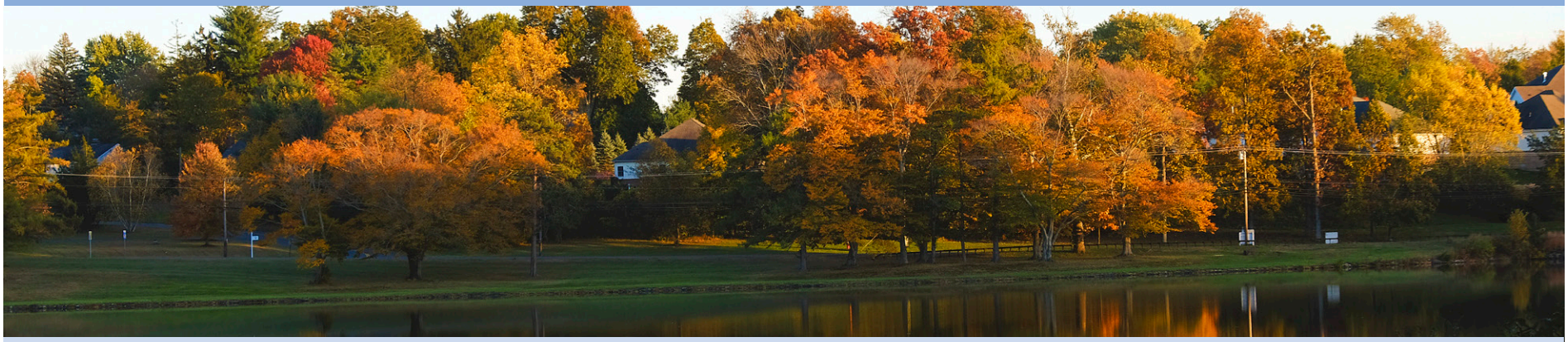


Figure 4: Family Homeless Population Over Time

Population	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total
Total Family Households	**305**	**1**	**306**
Adults with Children	371	1	372
Children	559	1	560
Total Individuals in Families	**930**	**2**	**932**

Table 3: Family Composition



The number of sheltered families increased by less than 1% from 2019. We identified only one unsheltered family.

Families - Household Counts	Sheltered			Sheltered Total	Unsheltered Total	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Safe Haven			
PIT Count 2019	232	71	N/A	303	2	**305**
PIT Count 2020	253	52	0	305	1	**306**
Year over Year Difference	+21	-19	N/A	+2	-1	**+1**
% Difference	**9.1%**	**-26.8%**	**N/A**	**-0.7%**	**-50%**	**0.3%**

Table 4: Sheltered and Unsheltered Families

Veterans

Connecticut remains committed to maintaining a functional end to veteran homelessness. Our coalition aims to connect veterans with services (including avenues for entering permanent housing) as soon as they enter the system.

The following numbers represent self-identified veterans. Whenever possible, records are checked to confirm veteran status including those with evidence of an honorable discharge and DD-214 form.

This year, we identified 184 sheltered veterans, a 1.7% increase from the previous year.

It should be noted that in the 2019 Count, Safe Haven data was included under transitional housing numbers, whereas in 2020 this data is broken out separately.

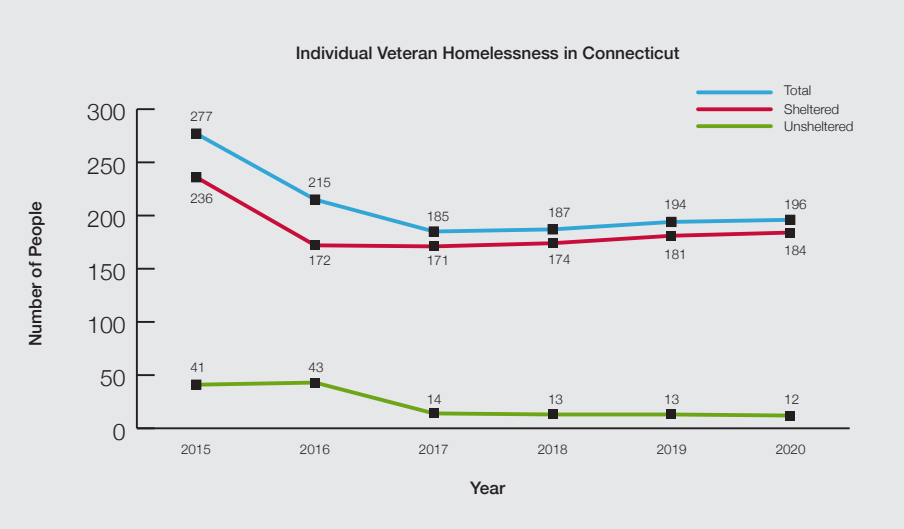


Figure 5.1: Individual Veteran Homeless Population Over Time

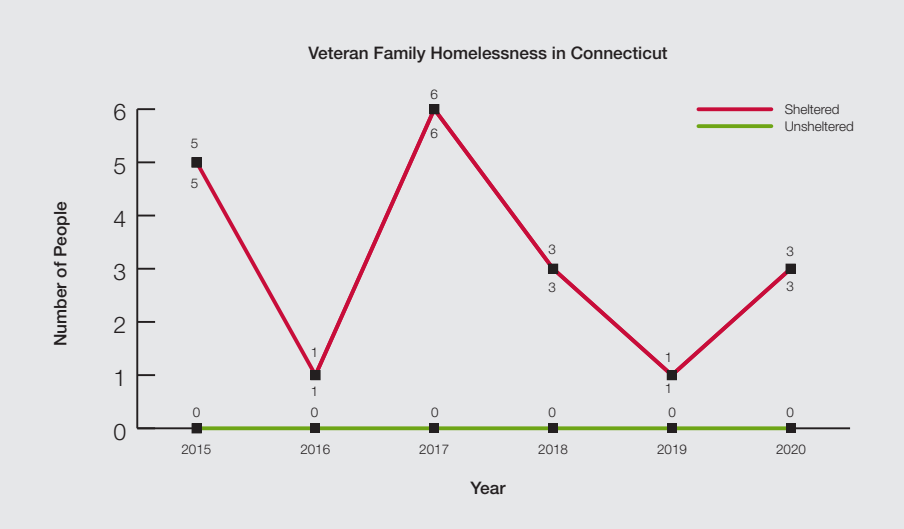


Figure 5.2: Veteran Family Homeless Population Over Time

Veterans - Individuals	Sheltered			Sheltered Total	Unsheltered Total	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Safe Haven			
PIT Count 2019	49	132	N/A	181	13	**194**
PIT Count 2020	45	130	9	184	12	**196**
Year over Year Difference	-4	-2	N/A	+3	-1	**+2**
% Difference	**-8%**	**-1.5%**	**N/A**	**1.7%**	**-7.7%**	**1%**

Table 5: Sheltered and Unsheltered Individual Veterans

This year's Count identified 45 veterans in emergency shelters, an 8% decrease from the previous year.

The table below highlights data on veteran families. Consistent with last year, there were no unsheltered veteran families identified in Connecticut on the night of the 2020 PIT Count. We identified three veteran families living in emergency shelters the night of the 2020 PIT Count.

Veterans Families	Sheltered			Sheltered Total	Unsheltered Total	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Safe Haven			
PIT Count 2019	1	0	N/A	1	0	**1**
PIT Count 2020	3	0	0	3	0	**3**
Year over Year Difference	**+2**	**0**	**N/A**	**+2**	**0**	**+2**

Table 6: Sheltered and Unsheltered Veteran Families

People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

This year's PIT Count showed a 34% increase in chronically homeless individuals in emergency shelters, but a 42.5% decrease among the unsheltered population, averaging a 6.4% net increase for 2020.

People who are chronically homeless have experienced homelessness for at least a year – or repeatedly – while struggling with a disabling condition such as a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, or physical disability. Given their disabling conditions, chronically homeless individuals typically require supportive services in addition to rental assistance in order to maintain ongoing housing stability.

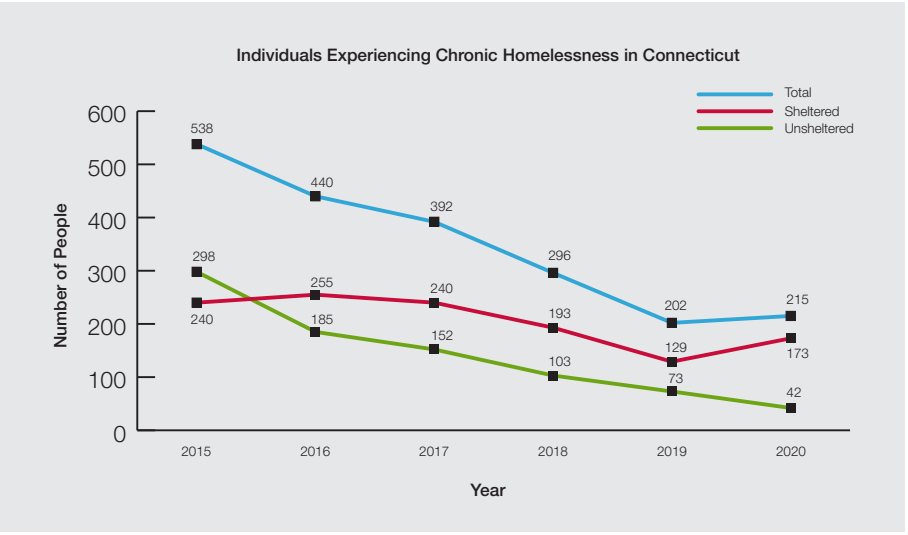


Figure 6: Chronically Homeless Population Over Time

Chronically Homeless Individuals	Sheltered			Sheltered Total	Unsheltered Total	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Safe Haven			
PIT Count 2019	129	0	N/A	129	73	**202**
PIT Count 2020	173	0	0	173	42	**215**
Year over Year Difference	+44	0	N/A	+44	-31	**+13**
% Change	**34%**	**0%**	**N/A**	**34%**	**-42.5%**	**6.4%**

Table 7: Sheltered and Unsheltered Chronically Homeless Individuals

Domestic Violence Survivors

We capture self-reported domestic violence data during the intake into the homeless system for the sheltered population and via the surveys for the unsheltered population.

This year marks the first year we are reporting data on domestic violence for males. The increase in the numbers for the 2020 Count reflect this addition and should be taken into account when viewing the overall numbers.

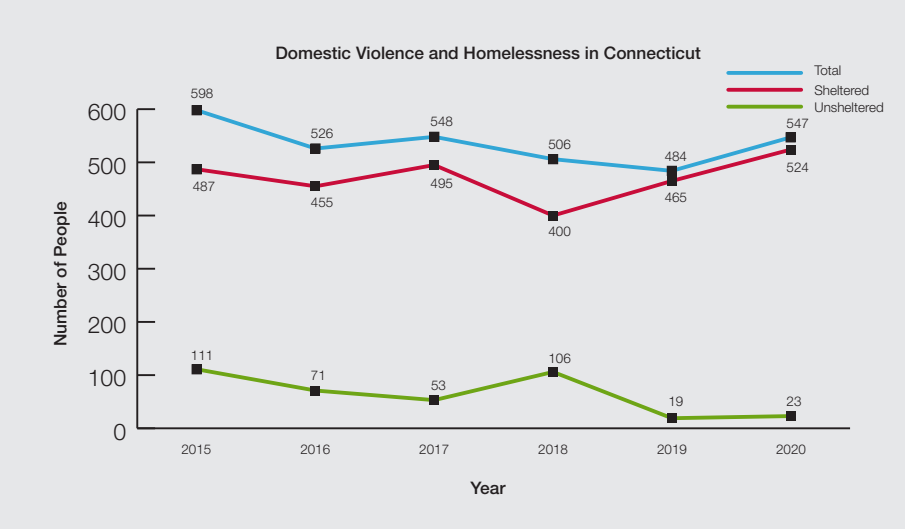


Figure 7: Survivors of Domestic Violence Homeless Population Over Time

Survivors of Domestic Violence	Sheltered			Sheltered Total	Unsheltered Total	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Safe Haven			
PIT Count 2019	357	108	N/A	465	19	**484**
PIT Count 2020	444	80	0	524	23	**547**
Year over Year Difference	+87	-28	N/A	+59	+4	**+63**
% Change	**24.4%**	**-25.9%**	**N/A**	**12.7%**	**-21.1%**	**13%**

Table 8: Sheltered and Unsheltered Domestic Violence Survivors

People with Mental Illness

The total number of people self-reporting mental illness decreased across sheltered and unsheltered populations this year.

Overall, the rate declined by 17.8% from 2019.

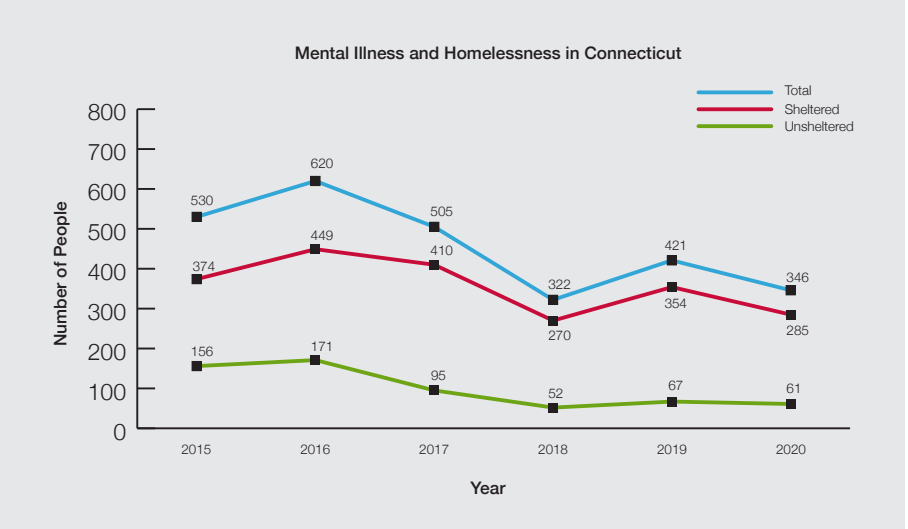


Figure 8: Homeless Population Self-Reporting Mental Illness Over Time

Mental Illness	Sheltered			Sheltered Total	Unsheltered Total	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Safe Haven			
PIT Count 2019	303	51	N/A	354	67	**421**
PIT Count 2020	226	56	3	285	61	**346**
Year over Year Difference	-77	+5	N/A	-69	-6	**-75**
% Change	**-25.4%**	**9.8%**	**N/A**	**-19%**	**-9%**	**-17.8%**

Table 9: Sheltered and Unsheltered Individuals Self-Reporting Mental Illness

People with Chronic Substance Use Issues

The total number of people self-reporting chronic substance use decreased across sheltered and unsheltered populations this year.

Overall, the rate declined by 22.2% from 2019.

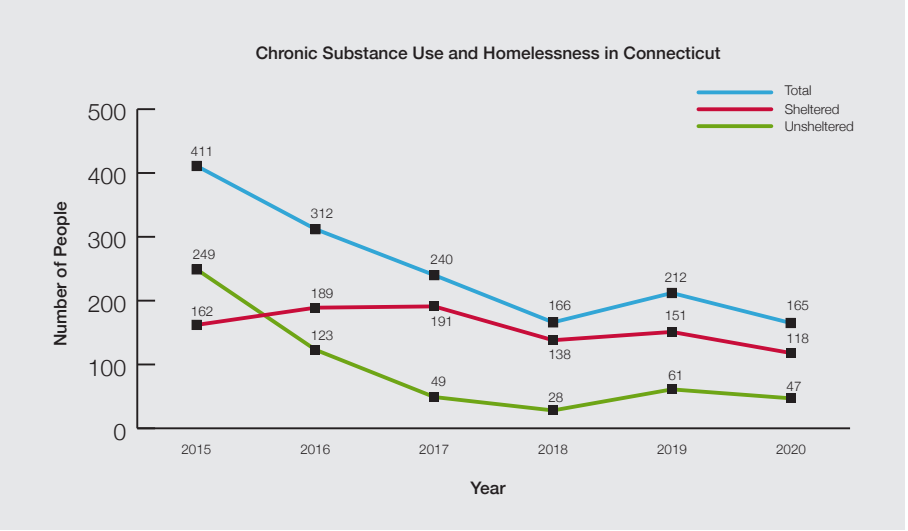


Figure 9: Homeless Population Self-Reporting Chronic Substance Use Over Time

Chronic Substance Use	Sheltered			Sheltered Total	Unsheltered Total	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Safe Haven			
PIT Count 2019	121	30	N/A	151	61	**212**
PIT Count 2020	93	22	3	118	47	**165**
Year over Year Difference	-28	-8	N/A	-33	-14	**-47**
% Change	**-23%**	**-26.7%**	**N/A**	**-21.9%**	**-23%**	**-22.2%**

Table 10: Sheltered and Unsheltered Individuals Self-Reporting Chronic Substance Use

People Living with HIV/AIDS

The total number of people self-reporting living with HIV/AIDS decreased across sheltered and unsheltered populations this year.

Overall, the rate declinedby 24.6% from 2019.

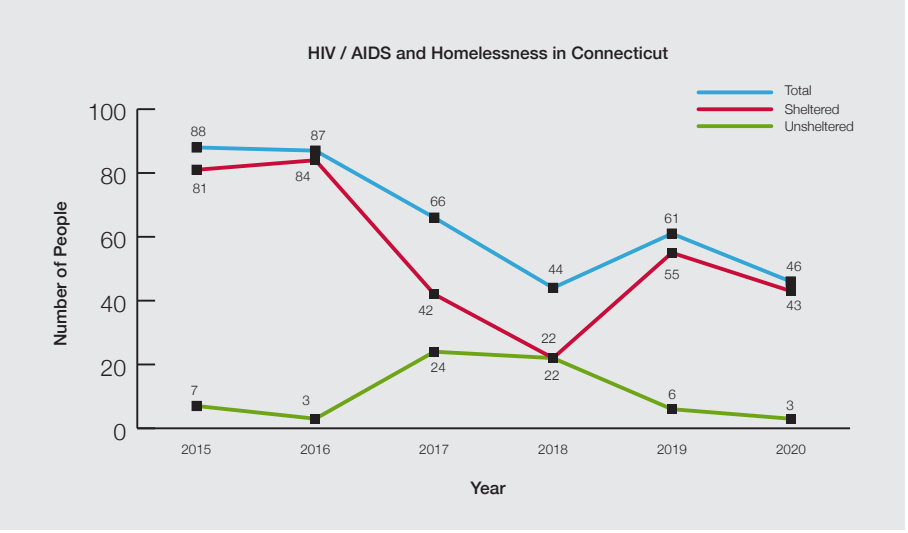


Figure 10: Homeless Population Self-Reporting HIV / AIDS Over Time

HIV / AIDS	Sheltered			Sheltered Total	Unsheltered Total	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Safe Haven			
PIT Count 2019	30	25	N/A	55	6	**61**
PIT Count 2020	21	22	0	43	3	**46**
Year over Year Difference	-9	-3	N/A	-12	-3	**-15**
% Change	**-30%**	**-12%**	**N/A**	**-21.8%**	**-50%**	**-24.6%**

Table 11: Sheltered and Unsheltered Individuals Self-Reporting HIV / AIDS

More than 2,900 people are homeless on any given night in Connecticut. Nearly 1 in 5 are children.

CONNECTICUT COALITION to

END HOMELESSNESS

Our collective mission is to prevent and end homelessness in Connecticut.

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS!

CONNECTICUT Department of Housing

dmhas

Hartford Foundation FOR PUBLIC GIVING Together for good.

Melville Charitable Trust

Acknowledgements

We would like to recognize the State of Connecticut Department of Housing, State of Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Housing Innovations, CT HMIS Steering Committee, HUD Continuum of Care, Simtech Solutions, Nutmeg Consulting, and the hundreds of volunteers and Homeless Service Provider agencies and staff who made this year's CT PIT Count possible.

Although the Continuua of Care (CoCs) require all grant recipients to provide volunteers, many additional staff and volunteers joined regional coordinators in participating in the Count.

We are grateful to everyone for their hard work and wish to thank the following agencies for providing regional coordination this year:

- Access Community Action Agency
- BHcare
- Capital Region Mental Health Center
- Catholic Charities of Fairfield County
- Columbus House, Inc.
- The Connection, Inc.
- CT Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services
- CT Department of Veterans' Affairs
- Emerge, Inc.
- Hartford Healthcare
- Inspirica, Inc.
- Journey Home
- Mid-Fairfield AIDS Project
- Recovery Network of Programs
- Salvation Army Waterbury
- Supportive Housing Works
- United Way of Southeastern CT
- Windham No Freeze

About Us

The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, in partnership with members and communities throughout the state, creates change through leadership, advocacy, and building the capacity of members in the field to respond to environmental challenges. Our collective mission is to prevent and end homelessness in Connecticut.

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Questions

Any questions about the content of this report can be directed to Linda Casey at lcasey@cceh.org.

Definitions and Acronyms

Chronically Homeless (CH)
People who are chronically homeless have experienced homelessness for at least a year – or repeatedly – while struggling with a disabling condition such as a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, or physical disability.

Continuum of Care (CoC)
A regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals.

Coordinated Access
A standardized assessment and referral process to access community resources within a geographic region for people experiencing a housing crisis or homelessness. Connecticut has seven regional Coordinated Access Networks.

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
The U.S. government agency which supports the housing market and homeownership.

Domestic Violence (DV)
A felony or misdemeanor crime of violence committed by a current or former spouse of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.

Emergency Shelter (ES)
A facility whose primary purpose is to provide temporary or transitional shelter for people experiencing homelessness.

Episode
A period of homelessness.

Family
A household with at least one adult and one minor.

Individual
A person 18 years of age or older who presents for services alone.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
An intervention that combines affordable housing assistance with voluntary support services to address the needs of chronically homeless people. The services are designed to build independent living and tenancy skills and connect people with community-based health care, treatment and employment services.

Provider
An agency which offers services to people experiencing homelessness.

Safe Haven
A form of supportive housing that serves hard-to-reach homeless persons with severe mental illness who are on the street and have been unable or unwilling to participate in supportive services.

Self-Reported
Identifying as having a certain condition or status. The condition or status is not necessarily verified with documentation.

Serious Mental Illness
A diagnosable mental, emotional, or behavioral disorder that meets criteria to determine functional impairment.

Severe Disability
Refers to at least one of the following disabilities that impairs the ability to live independently: physical disability, developmental disability, mental health condition, HIV/AIDS, chronic health condition, and substance abuse.

Subpopulation
A specific demographic characteristic within the entire population.

Transitional Housing (TH)
A supportive, temporary accommodation meant to bridge the gap from homelessness to permanent housing by offering structure, supervision, support (for addictions and mental health, for instance), life skills, and, in some cases, education and training.

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth
An individual person under the age of 24 experiencing homelessness.

Unaccompanied Minor
An individual person under the age of 18 experiencing homelessness.

Unsheltered
Living in a place not meant for human habitation.

Veterans
A person who served in the US military.

CONNECTICUT COALITION to
END HOMELESSNESS

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