

Homelessness in the District of Columbia: The 2015 Point in Time Enumeration



The Community Partnership
For The Prevention
of Homelessness

On January 28, 2015, The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness (TCP) conducted the annual Point in Time (PIT) census and survey of homeless persons in the District of Columbia. This single-day enumeration of the homeless services continuum of care gives TCP and our partners in District Government an opportunity to identify gaps in the current portfolio of services and informs future program planning. TCP has conducted PIT on behalf of the District since 2001, and does so in accordance with the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) reporting standards.

Homelessness in the District

- **7,298** persons experiencing homelessness were counted during PIT 2015 including:
 - **544 persons who were unsheltered**, i.e. living on the street or places not meant for habitation (all persons were unaccompanied, no persons in families were found to be unsheltered at PIT);
 - **5,085 persons in Emergency Shelters** (2,612 unaccompanied individuals and 2,473 people in 768 families); and
 - **1,669 persons in Transitional Housing** (665 unaccompanied individuals and 1,004 people in 363 families).
- The number of persons experiencing homelessness at PIT **decreased by 5.8 percent** from 2014
 - The number of unaccompanied homeless individuals counted **decreased by 3.3 percent** from last year, and the number of families also **decreased by 8.1 percent**.

| PIT COUNT BY CATEGORY | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|----------|
| Category | 2015 | 2014 | % Change |
| Total Number Counted | 7,298 | 7,748 | -5.8% |
| Total Number of Individuals | 3,821 | 3,953 | -3.3% |
| Total Number of Families | 1,131 | 1,231 | -8.1% |
| Total of Persons in Families | 3,477 | 3,795 | -8.4% |
| Total Adults in Families | 1,428 | 1,559 | -8.4% |
| Total Children in Families | 2,049 | 2,236 | -8.4% |

- During PIT, **1,593 unaccompanied individuals** and **66 persons in families** counted met the federal definition of “chronic homelessness” – meaning that they were living with disabilities and had lengthy or repeated episodes of homelessness. The count of chronically homeless individuals **decreased by one percent** from 2014 but the count of chronically homeless persons in families **decreased by more than 50 percent** from last year.

Permanent Housing and the Formerly Homeless

On the night of PIT there were **4,415 individuals** and **6,129 people in 2,016 families** residing in Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, or other permanent housing for persons who had previously experienced homelessness. If not for these critical resources, individuals and families residing in these programs would be at great-risk of homelessness.

The decreases seen in the 2015 PIT count are largely due to the District's continued investment in permanent housing solutions for both individuals and families. While the CoC continues to see more new individuals and families enter the system, Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Rehousing resources have helped increase the rate of exits from homelessness, especially among the chronically homeless.

The District's work around coordinated assessment and housing placement – a system through which homeless persons are assessed and prioritized for housing based on their needs – has also been impactful for exiting homeless persons from shelter and connecting them with appropriate housing resources as they become available.

Quick Facts from DC's 2015 Point in Time

- Median age of unaccompanied homeless persons was **50 years** while median age among adults in homeless families was **25**.
- **7 unaccompanied minors** were counted in shelter and transitional housing; this is up from 5 counted during PIT 2014; **2,049 children in families** were residing with their parents in family Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing programs on PIT, down from 2,236 counted last year.
- **No minor children or families with children were unsheltered on the night of PIT.**
- **10 percent** of homeless adults surveyed reported having served in the United States Armed Forces.
- **63 percent** of unaccompanied homeless adults and **14 percent** of adults in families reported that they have no income.
- **One in five** homeless adults surveyed have histories of substance abuse or mental illness; **nine percent** reported living with both conditions.
- **Eight percent** of adult homeless persons reported a chronic health problem, and **13 percent** reported a physical disability.
- **15 percent** of homeless adults reported that had histories of domestic violence, with **six percent** stating that domestic violence had directly caused their homelessness.