



2014 THURSTON COUNTY

HOMELESS CENSUS

Who's Homeless and Why?

Produced by a Countywide Partnership
in Conjunction with the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness

2014 THURSTON COUNTY HOMELESS CENSUS REPORT

A Snapshot of Who is Homeless and Why

May 2014

Produced by a Countywide Partnership in Conjunction with the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness

The 2014 Thurston County Homeless Census Report is the product of the annual “**Point in Time Count of Homeless Persons**” coordinated statewide by the Washington State Department of Commerce. The results of the Thurston County Homeless Census are included along with the data from all other Washington Counties on the Department of Commerce website located at: <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/site/1064/default.aspx>

This report is presented on behalf of the Thurston County Board of Commissioners and the Thurston County HOME Consortium, an eight jurisdiction inter-governmental body that governs the County’s allocation of federal HOME dollars along with the state funded Homeless Housing and Affordable Housing Programs.

Note on photographs: Unless otherwise noted, this report contains many stock photographs from the internet in order to protect the identity of local homeless people who did not want their photographs to be published.

Note to Readers: Due to potential reconfiguration of the 2014 PIT Homeless Census data by state or local officials, the total number of 599 homeless people is subject to change by as much as 5 to 10 people.

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Census Volunteers:

In addition to the people listed above, the 2014 census was staffed by approximately 85 volunteers from faith-based communities, nonprofit organizations, local and state government, business community, local high schools, and many other parts of the community:

Olympia Councilmembers Jim Cooper, Nathaniel Jones and Cheryl Selby, Olympia Police Lieutenant Paul Lower, Alice Dinerman, Amanda Lehr, Amanda Robinson, Amy Jenkins, Barbara Obena, Barrett Burr, Becky Baker, Beth Daniel, Brian Wilson, Charles Shelan, Cheryl Selby, Chris Ward, Cindy Powell, Craig Sternagel, Crystal Garcia, Danielle Westbrook, Dean Runolfson, Debra Larson, Deltha Hudson, Derek Valley, Elizabeth DeGroff, Emily Marecle, Erin Caudill, Fletcher Ward, Gary Aden, Geronimo Subia, Giovanni De Rosa, Heather Sturdevant, James Joy, James Hibbs, Jean Gowen, Jennifer Spiller, Jesi Chapin, Jessica Thomas, Jim Bellinger, John Baldwin, John Stampleton IV, Jonathan House, Kathy Cooper, Kelly Hiltz, Kris Emaus, , Lori Sanchez, Luke and Whitney Bowerman, Luke Talcott, Marshall Oatman, Mary Coppin, Mary Ybarra, Mary Selby, Mary-Louse Spence, Melinda Wolden, Mica Hoeltge, Michelle Butler, Michelle Haxton, Michelle Richburg, Morgan Mesaros, Nathaniel Jones, Nicholas Ormbrek, Pat and Warren Carlson, Paul Larsen, Paul Spivek, Preston Anderson, Rachel Newmann, Roger Horn, Safiya Crane, Shalonda James, Sheri Willan, Sierra Brown, Steve Friddle, Theresa Lirette, Tim Young, Tom Oliva, Warren Wessling, Wendy Cooper, Wendy Tanowitz, Xena Hartung, Yvonne Edwards Maria Ferris & the Olympia Barber School, Shellie Pullar & Quality Beauty School, and the Fosbre Academy of Hair Design.

Thurston County contracted with the City of Olympia to conduct the 2014 Annual Homeless Count and produce the Homeless Census Report.

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CITIZEN SUMMARY

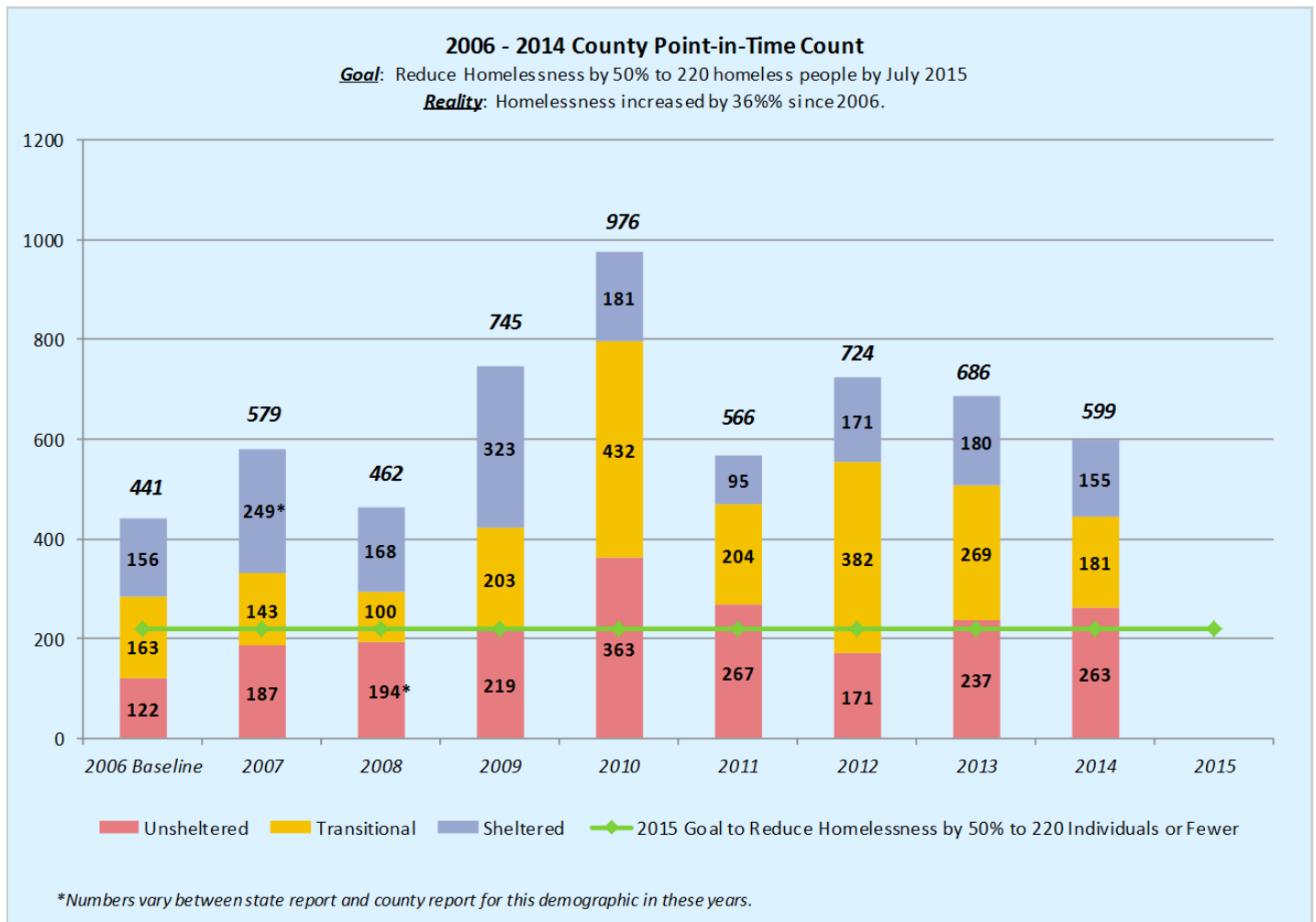
Overview

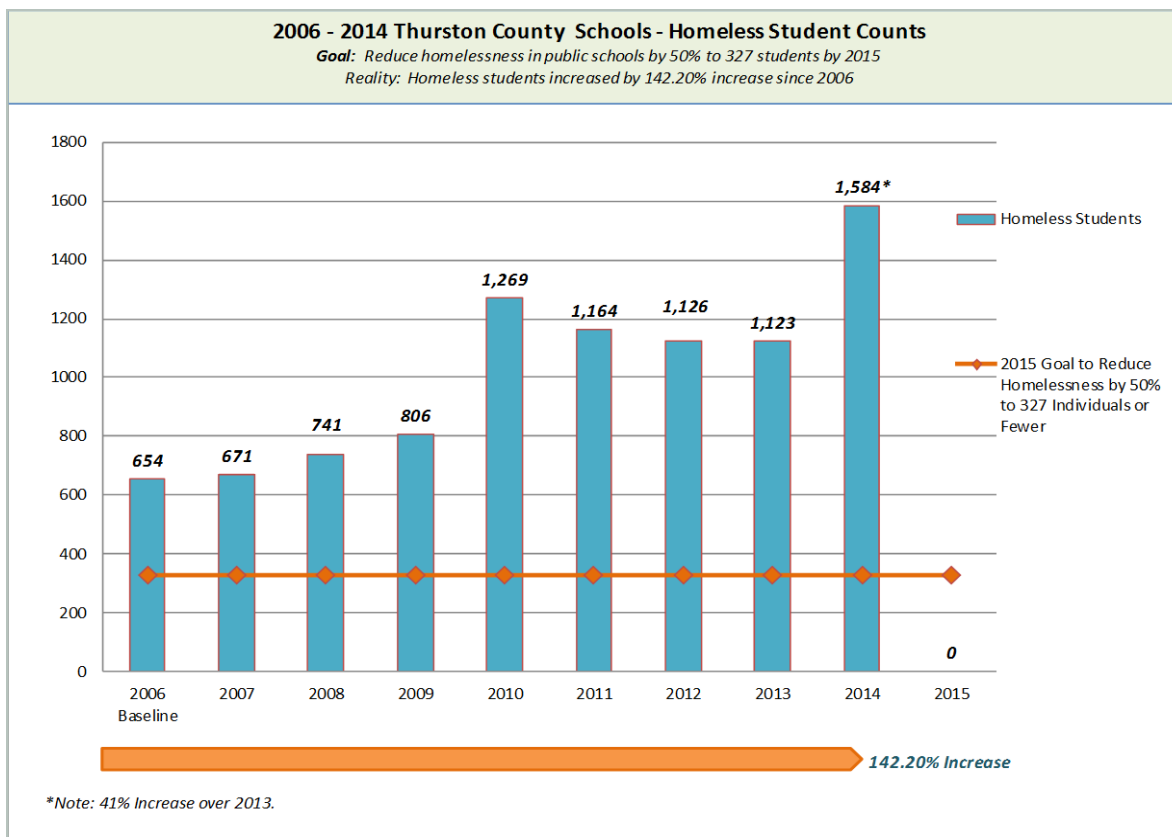


In January 23, 2014, Thurston County participated in the ninth annual statewide “**Point in Time Count of Homeless Persons**,” referred to as the “**Homeless Census**.” This census is conducted each year in January to monitor progress in the County’s 10-Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness. Census results are reported to the state and federal governments to ensure a proportionate level of public funding for local shelters, transitional housing, and related supportive services. These numbers also help to create the most accurate picture of homelessness throughout our state and across our nation.

The primary source for this initial report is the County’s 2014 Homeless Census which identified **599 homeless individuals**. This represents a **36% increase from the 2006 baseline number of 441** homeless people, but a 39% drop from 2010’s high of 976 homeless individuals and a 13% drop from 2013. Two additional sources of data include the public school count of homeless students, K-12 and a survey of homeless students at the Evergreen State College. Together, the data presented in this “**2014 Thurston County Homeless Census Report**” allows for an in depth examination of who is homeless and why, with specific data on homelessness by jurisdiction, demographics and the causes of homelessness.

Locally, census results are shared with all community stakeholders – policy makers, funders, service providers, concerned citizens and the homeless themselves. Together, we can look at who is homeless, why they are homeless, and what resources we have to offer. Analyzing these three elements allows us to develop more effective responses to homelessness, which is essential to meeting the county’s Ten-Year Plan goal to reduce homelessness by half by the year 2015.





The second source of homeless data is a parallel census, conducted by the county's school districts, that found 1,584 homeless public school students (Kindergarten through 12th grade) which is 461 more students—a 41% increase since last year and a 142% increase since the 2006 baseline of 654 students, but down 12% from 2010's high of 1,269. As presented later in this report, these data are compiled from a year-long census that includes students staying with friends and family—a demographic **not** included in the County Census. (Please see "Correlation of School District Numbers with County Census Numbers" on page 27.)

Finally, the third source for this report is a survey of "Homelessness in Higher Education" that looked at homelessness among college students. As the third effort in four years, this survey of 198 students found that 10 students, 5% of the respondents were homeless, and a total of 35 students or 18% of respondents reported they had been homeless at some point during their time at Evergreen. As a largely unexamined demographic, homeless college students are often invisible to the greater campus community. (More information on page 31)

Together these sources reflect an **increase in homelessness since 2006**, not the 50% reduction identified as the county's Ten-Year Plan goal. This report analyzes who is homeless and why. It also looks at available resources and presents priority actions from the Homeless Coordinator.

Citizen Summary: Accomplishments in Context of the Ten-Year Plan

This year's census total of 559 represents an 36% increase, or 158 more people than identified in the 2006 census of 441 people. However, this year's results indicate a significant 43% drop in homelessness from the 2010 all-time high of 976.

Once statewide data is released, the final version of this report will include some analysis of how other counties across the state are doing in their efforts to reduce homelessness.

Given the census results on page one, it appears that our county is making slow progress in reducing homelessness. Reasons are likely to include:

- 1) **Continued Leadership** from the Homeless Coordinator and the HOME Citizens Advisory Committee (HCAC).

- 2) **Better Coordinated System Entry** Local non-profit service and shelter providers continued to strengthen the work of three coordinated points of system entry: **SideWalk** (single adults) **Family Support Center** (families) and **Community Youth Services** (unaccompanied youth 17 and under and transition-age youth ages 18 to 22).
- 3) **Success via “Rapid Re-housing”** through HOME Consortium’s increased funding of rental assistance.
- 4) **Stronger Economy** with a local reduction in unemployment.

Together, these four elements are helping to slowly reduce homelessness in Thurston County.

Citizen Summary: Countywide Actions to Reduce Homelessness

Since 2006, Thurston County has invested nearly \$14 million dollars to support many successful projects and programs to reduce homelessness.

These funds have been invested in providing affordable housing, rental assistance and other essential services to reduce homelessness throughout the county.

The funding for these projects and programs is managed by the Thurston County HOME Consortium, an eight member inter-jurisdictional body composed of Thurston County, Bucoda, Lacey, Olympia, Rainier Tenino, Tumwater and Yelm. The Consortium governs the use of federal HOME funds and the two state-funded programs called the Homeless Housing Program and the Affordable Housing Program, which are funded by document recording fee dollars (collected by the County).

During program year 2014 (September 1, 2014 – August 31, 2014) the County HOME Consortium invested \$4,821,481 of federal and local funds in local projects and programs intended to alleviate homelessness (see Appendix D, page (___)).

Notable accomplishments include:

- **Homeless Coordinator Hired:** Thurston County hired a locally renowned expert - Theresa Slusher - to provide strategic coordination for the network of service, shelter and housing providers.
- **Rapid Re-housing:** 315 households were quickly “re-housed” with rental housing vouchers.
- **Rental Housing Improvement:** 32 total units of housing renovation, including 20 units by Yelm Community Services, five (5) units by Housing Authority of Thurston County and seven units (7) by Community Action Council, and seven (7) by Family Support Center.
- **Housing Rehabilitation:** Eight units of owner-occupied homes were rehabilitated (essential home repairs) in rural communities by the Housing Authority of Thurston County.
- **More Social & Supportive Services:** 10 Social service agencies received support for operations and maintenance costs, ultimately benefitting an estimated 1,464 low and moderate income people.

Together these projects and programs provided housing and essential services that helped hundreds of households across Thurston County.

The census results do show a 36% increase in homelessness since 2006. However, as shown above, a significant number of homeless and at-risk people were assisted, likely preventing them from becoming homeless. If not for the funding provided through the HOME Consortium, the rate of homelessness in Thurston County would be significantly higher.



Rapid Re-housing stabilizes families and single adults quickly, offering better outcomes

Citizen Summary: Homelessness Coordinator's Report on System Improvement in 2014

In March 2012 the HOME Consortium hired a Homeless Coordinator, fulfilling a long-term goal of local service providers.

The Homeless Coordinator provides critical leadership, guidance and coordination of a multi-faceted homeless service, shelter and housing system. In year two, the Homeless System Coordinator has been working with county staff and a broad range of stakeholders to:

- 1) Adopt a vision statement and set goals and performance standards for the homeless housing system
- 2) Improve data quality by providers using the Homeless Management Information Systems
- 3) Develop a Coordinated Entry program within the system; implementation to take place early 2014
- 4) Draft an update to the Ten-Year Homeless Housing Plan for Thurston County



Homeless Coordinator Theresa Slusher takes down census information at the Homeless Connect Event held at First Christian Church on January 23, 2014

While goals and strategies were being developed for the Ten-Year Plan update, the Homeless System Coordinator also worked with stakeholders to think in new ways about how supportive housing could be developed. Supportive housing to alleviate impact on jails, hospitals, police, fire, medics, downtown and businesses has been identified as a critical need, but is the hardest program type to fund and implement.

The HOME Consortium will consider a third year Homeless Coordination project that would include:

- Implement and improve Coordinated Entry
- Standardize Rapid Re-housing and ensure access through Coordinated Entry
- Continue improvements to data quality in HMIS
- Finalize and implement other strategies as identified in the Ten-Year Plan and monitor progress toward achieving goals

CH1: OVERVIEW OF THE HOMELESS CENSUS

Purpose of the Point in Time Count of Homeless People

Each year at the end of January, Thurston County participates in a statewide effort to conduct a census of homeless people and then produces a report examining the results. As a “Point in Time” census, this represents a finite count of people from a specific night, January 23rd, selected as the end of the coldest month of the year. The results are presented in this homeless census report which serves to:

- 1) **Examine Who’s Homeless and Why** by obtaining the most accurate census of homeless people, the causes of their homelessness, and other useful demographic information;
- 2) **Quantify Needs** by reporting the number and demographics of homeless people, which in turn brings in federal and state dollars to provide homeless shelter, transitional housing, and other services;
- 3) **Assess Resources** by tracking currently available housing and service resources; and
- 4) **Foster Analysis and Refine Strategies** by examining needs and resources and supporting the development of better strategies for local responses to homelessness.



263, or 44%, of all homeless were unsheltered, taking refuge wherever they could



Of the 263 unsheltered people 191, or 32%, of the respondents reported living out of doors, many of whom were in camps

Definitions of Homelessness

This census report is primarily based on the state definition of homelessness, which includes people living in:

1. **Emergency Shelter** - also termed homeless shelters, provides emergency housing for up to 90 days ;
2. **Transitional Housing** - a form of temporary housing assistance lasting for less than two years;
3. **Unsheltered** - places not meant for human habitation such as cars, tents, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, on the street); and,
4. **Substandard Housing** - defined as a dwelling lacking drinking water, restroom, heat, ability to cook hot food, or ability to bathe.

This definition derives from the federal definition of homelessness, which comes from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD defines homelessness as (1) an individual who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence; and (2) an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is:

- A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill);
- An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or
- A public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

For the purposes of this count, transitional housing refers to housing with a 2-year stay limit where being homeless is a prerequisite for eligibility. Transitional housing also typically offers case management services that are required as part of the program. Persons in transitional housing programs that allow them to continue living permanently in housing after a transition period (“transition in place”) are not considered homeless if participation in case management is not a condition of residency.

Other People without Permanent Homes

While the State definition of homelessness is limited to those listed above, the Homeless Census also collects information on other people without permanent homes in order to capture a more comprehensive count of people who impact social and shelter services, including:

- People staying with friends and family.
- People held in jails or medical institutions who will be released to homelessness.

These numbers are useful for understanding the impact of people in jails or institutions who will be released to homelessness. It is also helpful in looking at the people who temporarily stay with friends or family, many of whom may cycle to living in their cars or homeless shelters. This standard was used to produce the numbers referred to as the “county census” count of homeless individuals. All data presented herein will cite the standard as either “state count” or “full count.”



The Census found 113 people staying with friends & family; they often cycle through shelters and cars to living out of doors



The Census found 54 people living in their vehicles, 9% of total respondents

2014 Census Data Validity

Statewide, the Homeless Census provides the single best measure of how successful we have been at reducing homelessness. However, as with all statistical studies, it is useful to acknowledge the conditions that may compromise the validity of the Homeless Census. Following is a list of issues that may have affected the accuracy of this census:

1. Change of State’s Methodology

This year the State pivoted away from paper census forms and directed the agencies who provide shelter or transitional housing submit their data directly into the State database, called the **Homeless Management**

Information System (HMIS). Then the State pulled the homeless data directly from their agency reporting profiles for their case load. This unfortunately caused a significant drop-off of the number of respondents who answered the additional questions on topics like “last permanent residence”. This limited the collection of valuable information.

2. Organizational Capacity Data Entry in State Database

Many agencies continue to build their capacity for data management in the Efforts to improve HMIS reporting accuracy has been identified as a high priority for the new County Homeless Coordinator.

3. Non-cooperation by Some Unsheltered Homeless Populations

Some unsheltered homeless people are concerned that participation in the Homeless Census might lead to camp clearances or police harassment. Some homeless people harbor a general distrust of government. Service providers and homeless advocates confirm that this perception is prevalent among unsheltered people. These concerns stem from the fact that most unsheltered people must break either laws or rules to sleep in cars, abandoned buildings or to camp in the woods. Unsheltered parents are often reluctant to self-identify as homeless for fear of losing their children. Additionally, those with outstanding criminal warrants may fear any contact with government related activities such as a census.



Homeless people in rural areas find places hidden from view and are often less visible than those in the urban hubs, creating a perception that homelessness is primarily an urban problem.

4. Undercount of Rural Homeless People

This year's census methodology included a massive canvassing of all rural food banks and community meals, conducted over multiple days (with safe guards to protect from over-counts) as a more comprehensive effort to reach rural homeless people. In spite of this, the Homeless Census continues to under-count people who meet the definition of homeless in rural areas. Rural officials estimate there are a significant number of people living in substandard housing (lacking in heating, cooking or sanitation facilities) that would meet the definition of homeless.

Many rurally-based homeless people tend to exist "off the grid" of homeless services, often because fewer services exist in rural areas, which makes it difficult to find them. Methodologies used in urban areas – such as using homeless outreach events or field census teams – are less effective in areas with scattered-site camp locations.

5. Consistent Methodology vs. Continual Improvement

A government-conducted census effort runs into two conflicting standards. First, standard practices in social research requires consistent methodology as essential to producing accurate and comparable data, year over year. Yet, another standard dictates the need for continual improvement in government services, seeking critical feedback to be incorporated into operating procedures to ensure a continual feedback—improvement loop. Some critics have cited the change in methodology as a threat to census validity. Still other critics have challenged the scope of methodology in given years as having insufficient reach. In preparation for the 2014 Homeless Census, meetings were held with the elected officials from each HOME jurisdiction and other stakeholders to develop and confirm the proposed methodologies.

CH2: SOURCE 1 - EXAMINING THE NUMBERS

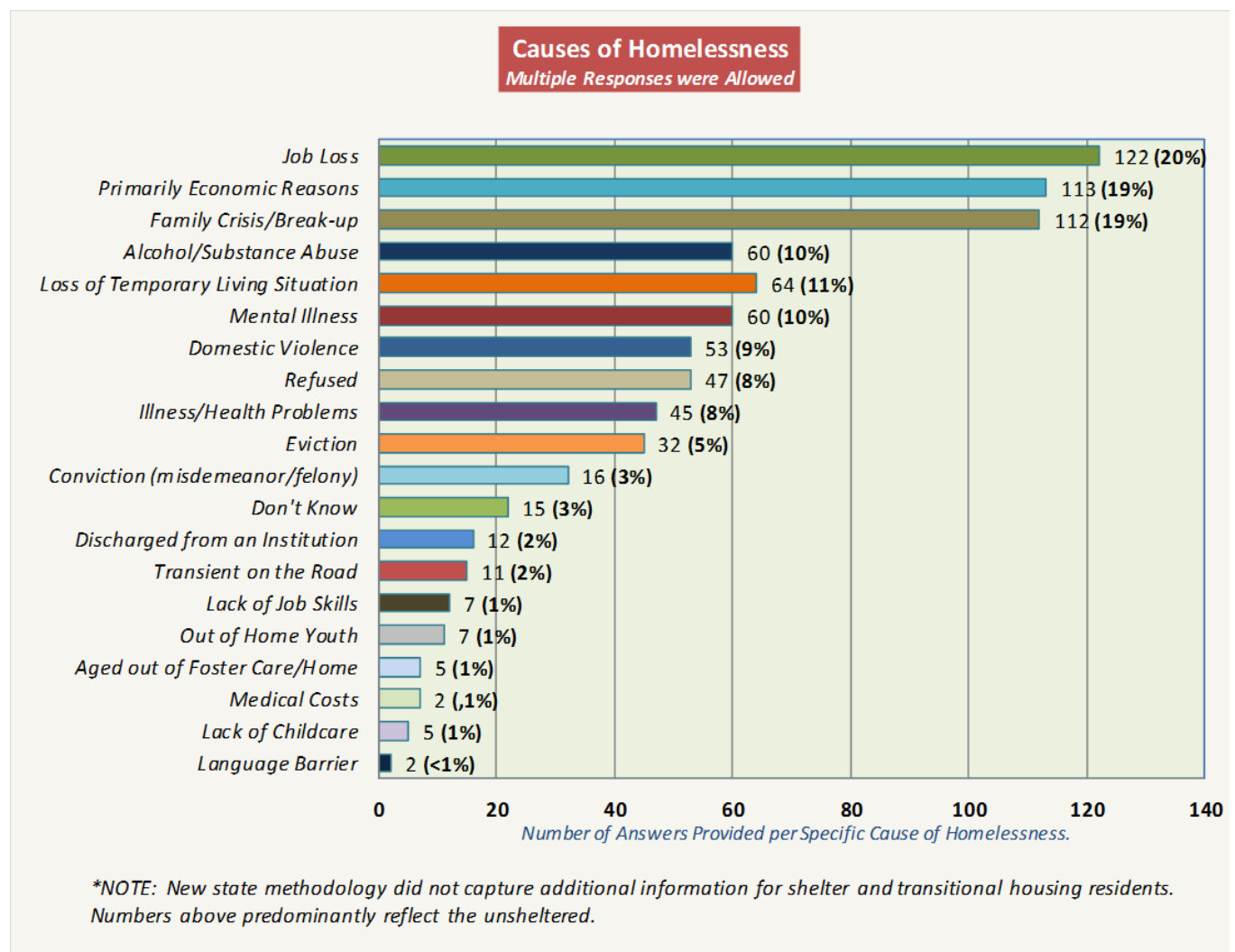
Following is a series of charts presented with background information that provide a deeper look into the results of the 2014 Homeless Census, including the causes of homelessness, the ages of homeless people, disabilities they face, and other information. *(More detailed information contained in Appendix c)*

Scope of the Data

The following information represents the results of the 2014 Homeless Census, primarily focusing on a count of homeless people that meets the state definition of homelessness. Additionally, this report presents some charts and information on people living with friends or families and people in jail or medical facilities who will be released to homelessness. Although these homeless people do not meet the state definition of homelessness, they clearly present a significant impact on local services and the community at large. Please note that due to technical constraints with the state's database, some of the totals and subtotals are off by five (5) or less.

Causes of Homelessness

Understanding the root or precipitating causes of homelessness is key to identifying the most appropriate resources. The chart below presents the self-reported causes of homelessness by respondents in the county census. Each respondent was asked to report all situations that applied, recognizing that causes of homelessness may have a multiplier effect.



The largest reported cause of **homelessness was job loss, reported by 122 people or 20% of the respondents. Tied for second largest cause was economic reasons or family crisis or break-up**, at 113 and 112 people, or 19%. (see the graph on the previous page). Third largest caused was loss of temporary living situation cited by 64 people or 11%. This statistic underscores the importance of tracking the number of people staying with friends or family—while some people ultimately get back on their feet, many slip into literal homelessness.

Mental illness and alcohol substance abuse, cited by 60 people or 10% of the respondents cited mental illness. However, this statistic may be problematic given the conflicting directives of the WA State Department of Commerce to collect names of all respondents and the federal HIPAA law (the “Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act” of 1996) that protects the medical privacy of mentally ill people and other respondents with medical conditions covered by HIPAA. In general, service providers are prohibited from releasing medical information with the names of their clients. On a different question regarding self-reported disabilities, 141, or 18%, self-disclosed mental illness, which may have been a contributing factor in their homelessness.

Where the Homeless Find Refuge

To be included in this homeless census, the respondent had to meet the definition for homelessness (see “Definition of Homeless” on page 9 on the night of January 23, 2014, when the census was conducted.

The results present a snapshot of where the homeless take shelter, which includes a broad array of formal and informal accommodations.

The graph to the right represents the range of those answers. Over one third of all homeless people reported they were unsheltered, 263 people, or 44% respondents.

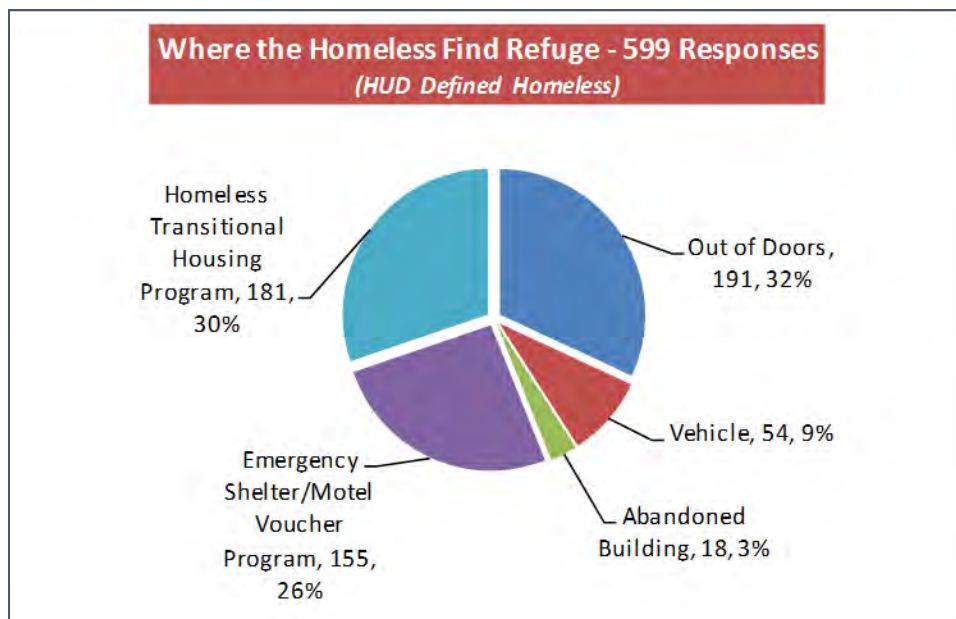
Of this number, there were 191 of the people living out of doors, 54 people living in vehicles and 18 living in abandoned buildings. Another 26% of all local homeless or 155 people spent the night in homeless shelters.

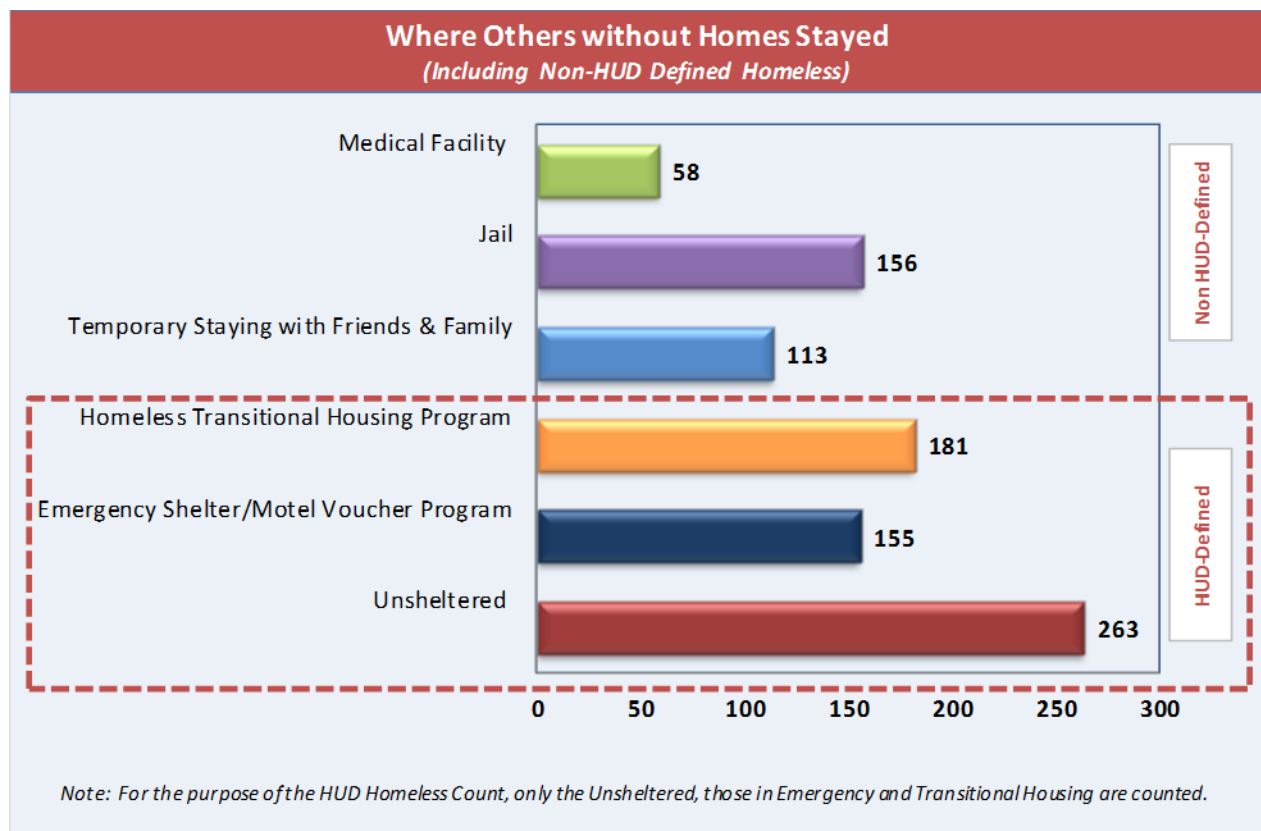
The remaining 181 people, or 30% of all homeless households, were living in transitional housing, defined as housing that is designed to facilitate the movement of homeless individuals or families to permanent housing within a reasonable amount of time, usually 24 months or less.

Other People without Homes

Beyond the HUD-defined number of homeless people, the census also collected information on individuals who “lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence” (HUD definition).

This included 156 people in jail and 58 people in medical facilities who will be released to homelessness. It also includes 113 people temporarily staying with friends or families. While these numbers are not included in the state-defined total of 599 (page 9, “Definitions of Homelessness”), these homeless people typically have a significant impact on local services such as food banks, soup kitchens and other services. Many report that they “run out of” friends and family and ultimately end up in homeless shelters.





Among this number of “other homeless people” are the unaccompanied minors who are not living with parents or guardians. These youth typically cycle from staying with friends, sometimes termed “couch surfing,” and living on the streets. One significant challenge in providing shelter for unaccompanied minors is that many avoid going into “the system” for fear of being returned to their parents or guardians as a result of Washington State’s “Becca Laws”, which are intended to keep families together.

While these categories of homelessness do not meet the state definition, the chart on page 12 “Causes of Homelessness” shows that 64 people, or 11%, became homeless after losing a temporary living situation; 16 people, or 3%, lost their homes because of criminal convictions; and 12, or 2%, were discharged from a medical institution. Clearly, these figures will have a direct impact on the local population of homeless people.

Geography of Homelessness

The geography of homelessness shows where homeless people go to find survival resources. However, the present location of homeless people shown under the “Current City” is often different than the last place they called home. To convey this migration from home to homelessness, the following chart presents

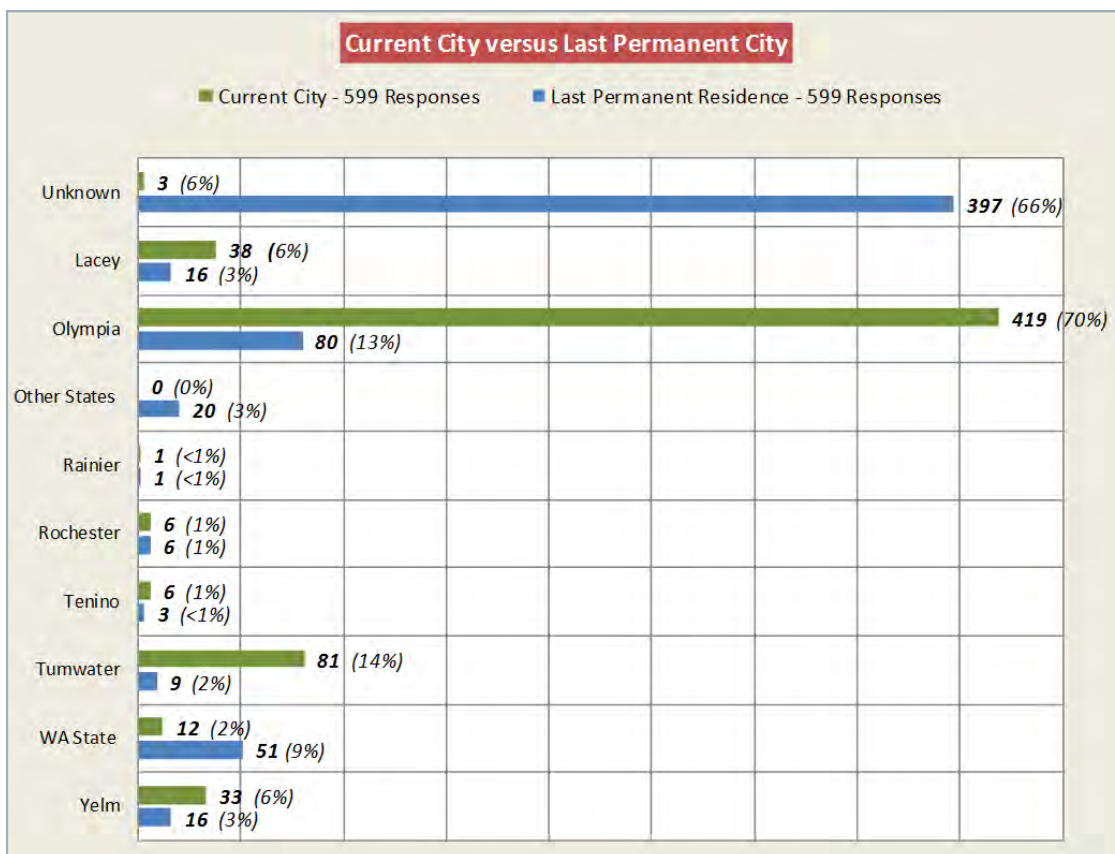
- 1) where the homeless spent the night on January 23rd; and,
- 2) where their last permanent address was.

Current City

On the night of the January 23rd Homeless Census, the vast majority – 419, or 70%, spent the night somewhere in Olympia. Tumwater was the location where 81 or 14% of the homeless were found. Lacey had only 38 or 6% of the current homeless population. An additional 33 people were found. Six people or 1% were found in both Tenino and Rochester.

Last Permanent Residence

A very different geography is presented by the answers of where the respondents had their last permanent residence, meaning a home with an address. Only 80, or 13%, of the total 599 respondents stated that Olympia was the location of



their last permanent residence. Another 16, or 3%, stated that they had lived in both Yelm and Lacey, and nine or 2% said they lived in Tumwater. Of those respondents from rural Thurston County, Only 26, or 4%, said they were from rural Thurston County (31 from Rainier, 6 from Rochester, 6 from Tenino, and 16 from Yelm—please note: Yelm natives included above too). Another 51 or 9% were from other parts of Washington while the remaining 20, or 3%, said they were from other states.

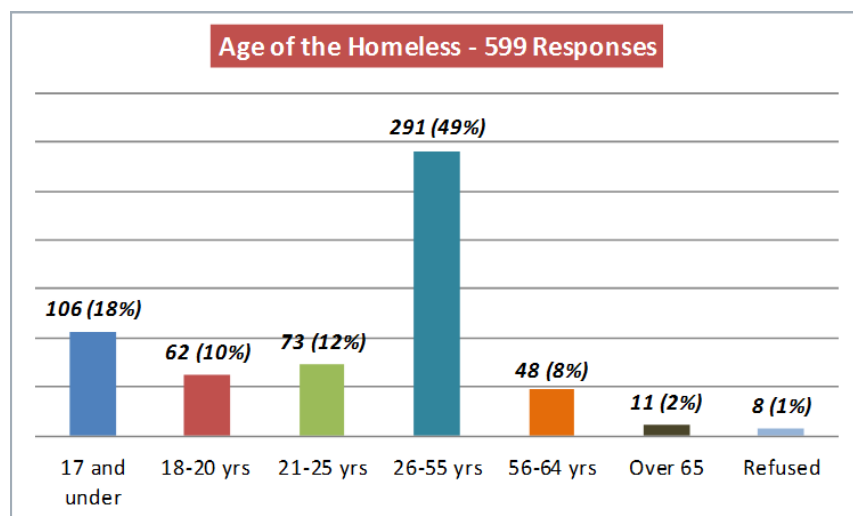
The chart above combines these two data sets—current and permanent city to show the migration of homeless people into the urban hub. This chart also suggests that limited choices in rural areas can drive homeless people into areas of more concentrated services. In a dynamic repeated across the country, homeless people from small towns and rural areas are forced to migrate to areas with higher concentrations of services, shelter and transitional housing. Once there, homeless people often feel like displaced persons, unable to build new community bonds or to tap neighborhood resources.

Age of the Homeless

The chart presents the age spread of homeless people, with the largest number of respondents, 291, or 49%, falling between the ages of 26 to 55 years old. The elderly account for only 1% or 8 of the local homeless population.

This chart also shows that 106, or 18%, of all homeless people are children 17 years old or younger. Together with those respondents who are between 18 to 20 years old, there were 168, or 28%, of the homeless are under 21 years of age. The school census data

presented on page 26 (“2006-2014 School Year Homeless Counts”) shows that this number has nearly doubled in the past eight years.



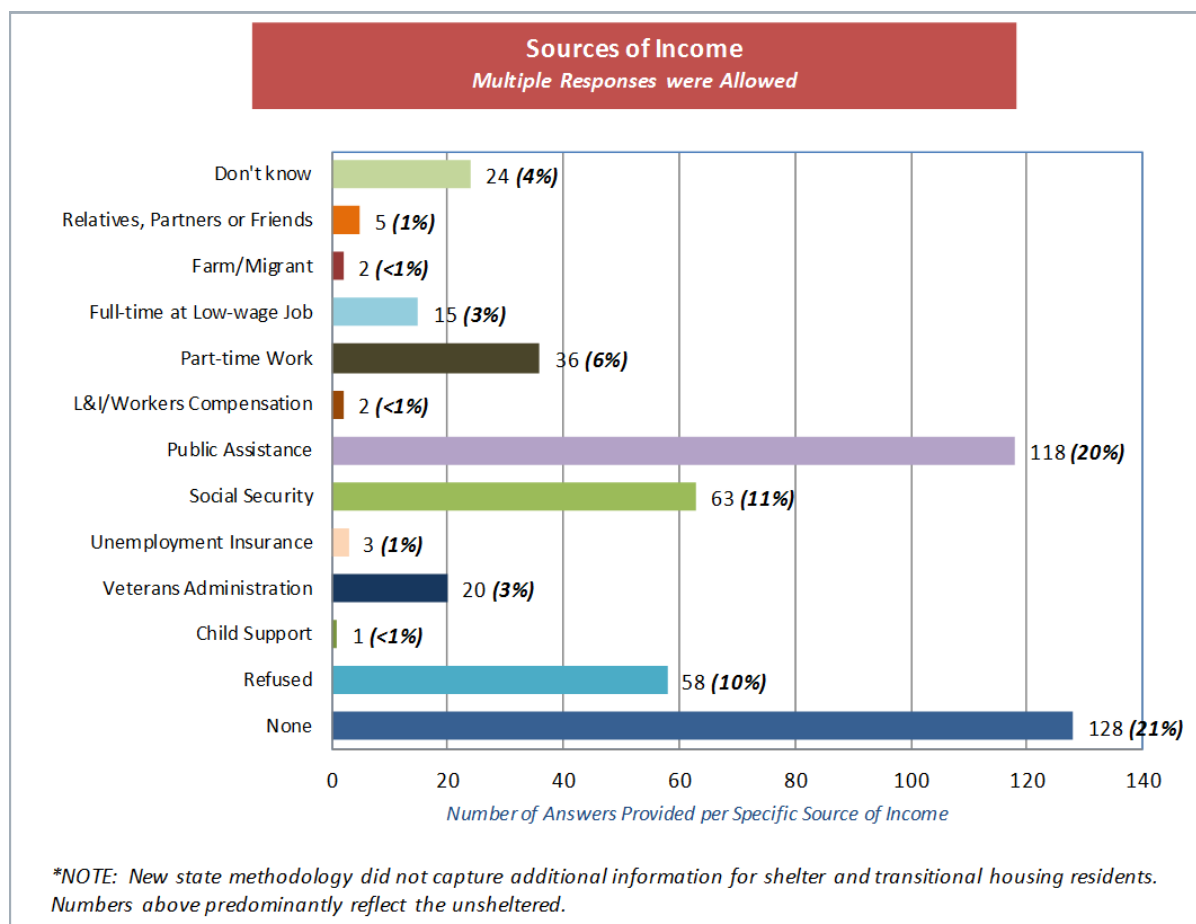
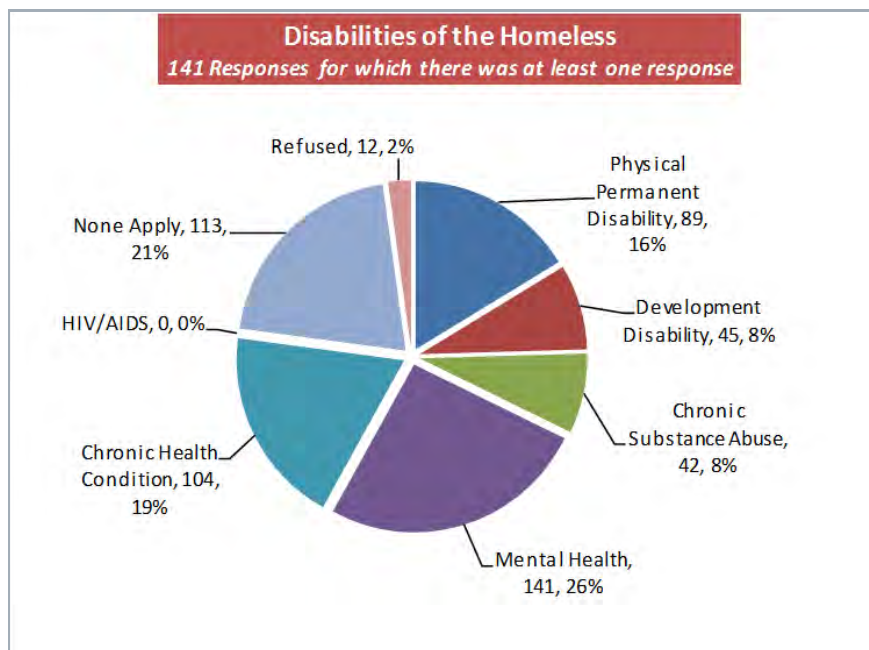
Disabilities of the Homeless

This chart presents the range of self-reported disabilities affecting local homeless people, showing that mental health impacts 141 people, or 26%, over a quarter of the local homeless population who answered that question.

Another 89 people, or 16%, reported a permanent physical disability; 42, or 8%, or respondents reported a drug or alcohol dependency.

Sources of Income for Homeless People

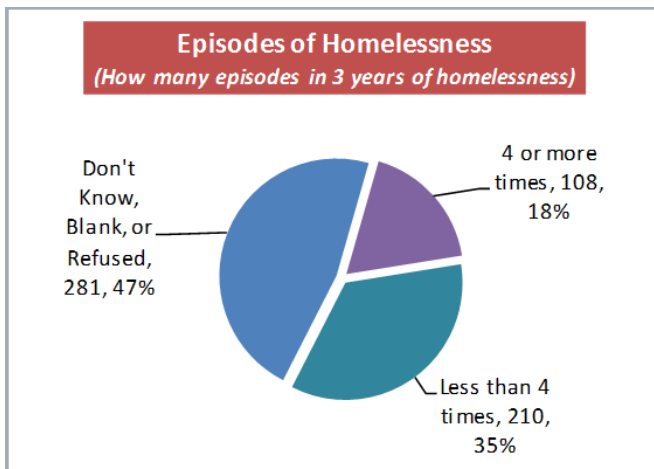
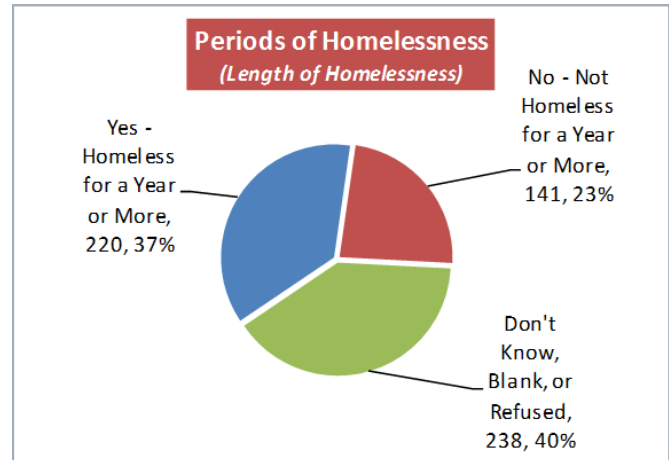
Of those who responded, the majority of the homeless, 128 or 21%, reported “no income.” The second largest group, 63 or 11%, reported public assistance as a source of income. The remainder reported a variety of income sources. Information for this question is limited by the state’s data base lack of data and by the fact that a significant number of Thurston County’s homeless people did not want to discuss their income with strangers; 58 people refused to answer questions about the source of their income. The chart presents the breakdown of sources of income.



How Long Have They Been Homeless?

HUD Defines **Chronic Homelessness** as someone with a disability who has also: 1) been homeless for over one year; or, 2) has been homeless at least four times in three years.

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, people who are chronically homeless are among the most vulnerable in the homeless population, tending to have high rates of behavioral health problems that are often exacerbated by physical illness, injury or trauma. As a direct result of these conditions, the chronically homeless are high service users, often described as the 10% of the population who use 90% of the resources. As high service users, chronically homeless people tax the system the most, draw the most attention.

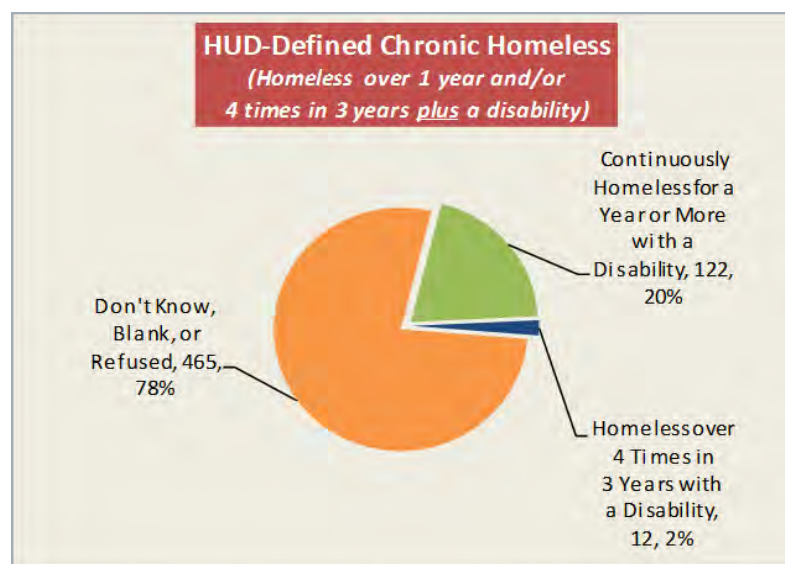


To determine the number of chronically homeless people, the census examined data on three questions.

One of the census questions asked **how long** people were homeless. Nearly half of the respondents, or 220 (37%), said they had been homeless for more than a year, which is one qualifier for being chronically homeless.

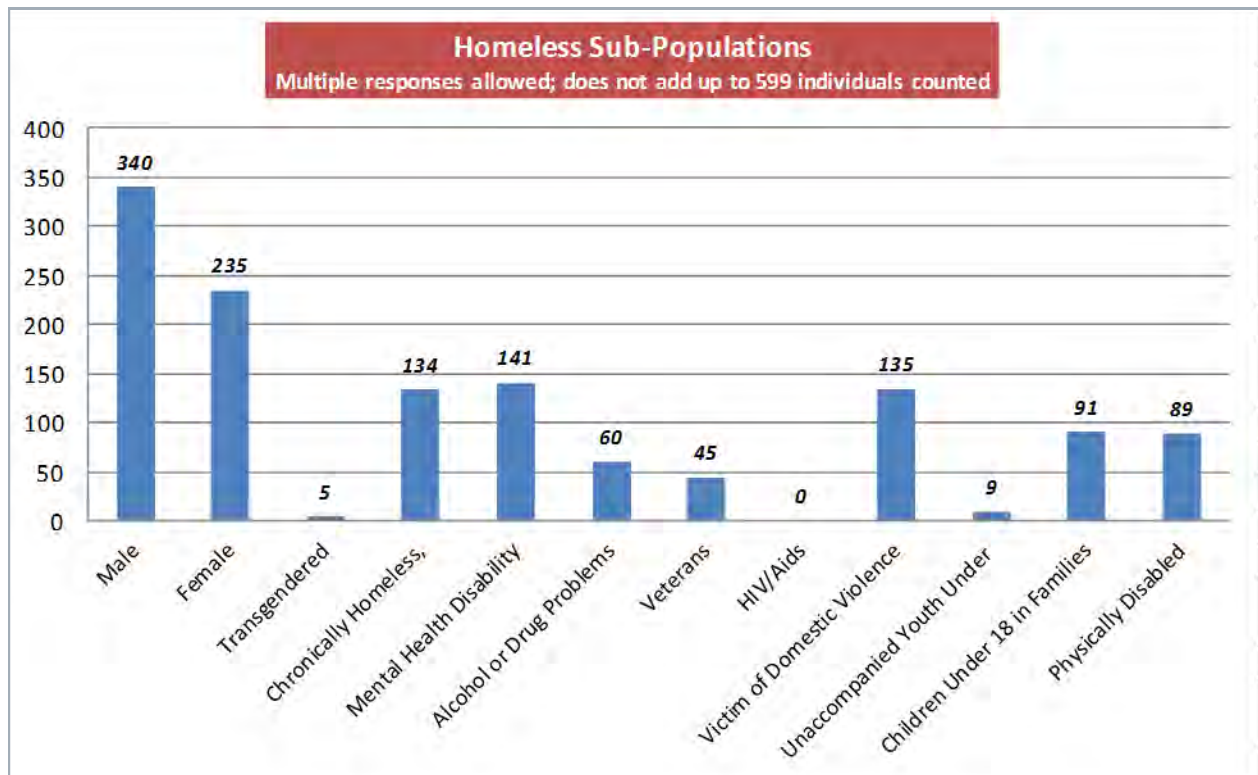
To capture the second indicator of chronic homelessness, another question asked if they had experienced **four or more episodes of homelessness in the past three years**, which is the other. The census found that 108 or 18% reported 210 (35%), said they had been homeless for four or more times in three years.

Finally, these two questions were cross-tabulated with data with information on disabilities, essentially determining who was likely to remain homeless as a result of their disabilities and lack of resources for permanent housing. By combining this data, the census found that 134 individuals fall under the category of being chronically homeless.



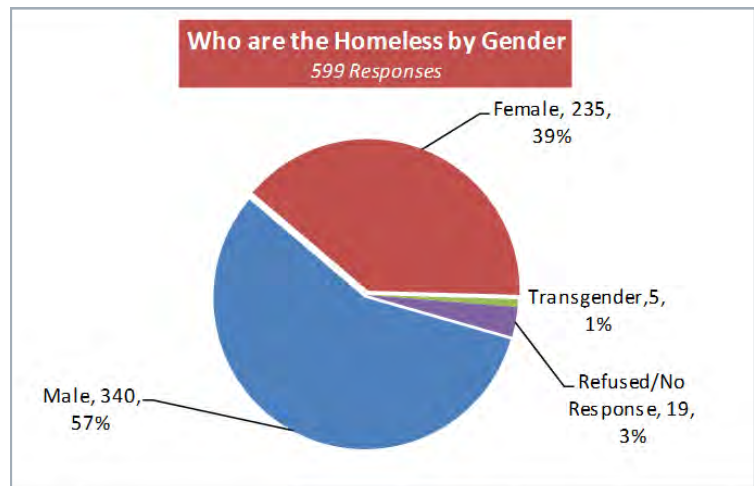
CH3: WHO ARE THE HOMELESS?

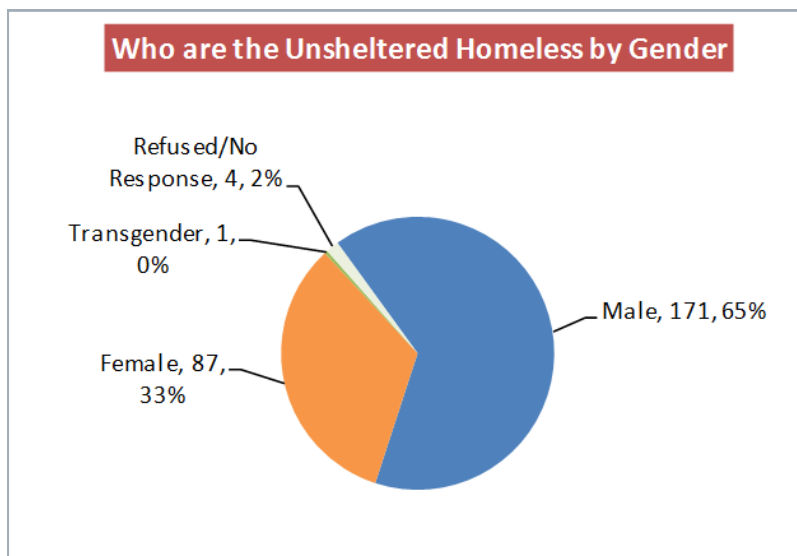
The pathways to homelessness come from many directions. This results in a broad range of sub-populations of the homeless. Because most service and shelter programs are tailored to meet the unique needs of these specific sub-populations, it is essential to understand the diverse characteristics of homeless people as individuals in order to develop successful responses. The chart below breaks out some of these distinct sub-populations. Following is a brief overview of some of these unique characteristics of the primary sub-groups of homeless people. Included is a short description of the current best practice standards for responding to their needs.



Who are the Unsheltered?

One of the key questions for inclusion in the census was gender, offering respondents three options: 1) Male; 2) female; and, 3) transgender. Respondents for the full census, (which included the unsheltered, sheltered and transitionally housed) found that a majority of the homeless are male (340 people or 57%) a lesser number were female (235 or 39%) and a very small number were transgender (5 people or 1%). The issue of gender identity is critical in that homeless shelters are not protected under the state Fair Housing laws, given that shelters do not provide a “place of regular domicile” which leaves transgender people vulnerable to discrimination by faith-based shelters.





Gender Identity and the Unsheltered

Among the unsheltered—people who are literally homeless outside the shelter or transitional housing system—the gender breakdown was overwhelmingly male (171 or 65%) with a lesser number who were female (87 or 33%). Only one of the people self-identified as transgender were found among the unsheltered.

These statistics suggest the percentages of need among the unsheltered populations, showing that we need three additional shelter beds for males to every additional shelter bed for females.

While there appears to be only four self-reported transgendered homeless people, anecdotal reports suggest there may be more, perhaps among the five people who refused to respond to the question. While transgendered people are protected by the state against discrimination in housing, the State Human Rights Commission does not have clear jurisdiction in homeless shelters.

This means that some local shelters can and do discriminate against transgendered homeless people. However, the need to maintain safety for residents is the compelling reasons stated by the Salvation Army who feel they cannot assure the safety of transgendered shelter residents in a dormitory setting.

Mental Illness and Homelessness

Mental illness is typically among the top three causes of homelessness, according to the National Coalition for the Homeless. Severe mental illness often impedes the ability to maintain employment or to manage expenses, which in turn makes it difficult to maintain stable housing. Once homeless, people with mental illnesses can find it difficult to understand or cooperate with the rules of emergency shelters. Those who are unsheltered and mentally ill may find it difficult to access services that would help them to stabilize.

In Thurston County, the numbers of the mentally disabled have decreased from a high of 407 or 42% in 2010 to the current number of 141 or 24%. Many people who are mentally ill are eligible for some form of benefits related to their mental illness. Chronically mentally ill people tend to have symptom escalation on a cyclical basis, and sometimes hospitalization may be necessary to re-establish stability. Once hospitalized, people may lose their benefits due to non-payment or abandonment. If jailed, mentally ill people may lose their housing subsidies with supportive services. Upon release from incarceration, many mentally ill people must re-establish their housing and service subsidies, a process that can take several weeks. During periods of hospitalization, landlords may evict them for non-payment and dispose of their belongings as abandoned. After several episodes of homelessness, it can be difficult to find a new landlord to accept their rental history.

Strategic Response: The primary strategy for chronically mentally ill homeless people is to provide **Permanent Supportive Housing**, or what is often referred to as “service enriched” housing, typically owned and staffed by non-profit organizations.



141 Homeless people self-reported mental illness as a disability

Housing alone, or “**Housing First**” may succeed in helping to establish initial stability, but without immediate and ongoing treatment and services, many mentally ill homeless people will fail to keep their housing.

Victims of Domestic Violence

According to the “National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty,” domestic violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness for women and children. A 2005 study commissioned by the US Conference of Cities found that domestic violence was the leading cause of homelessness for women and children in half of the cities reporting, including Seattle.



135, or 23%, of people were made homeless by Domestic Violence

Locally, there were 135 homeless victims of domestic violence (DV) in 2014, representing 23% of the total population of homeless respondents. However, there are only 28 DV shelter beds. Victims of domestic violence often have fewer options to seek temporary shelter with friends and family because their abusers would then be able to find them. As a result, they are disproportionately dependent on shelters, typically operated in confidential locations.

Safeplace, the local domestic violence shelter, offers beds that are configured into family rooms rather than being offered in a dormitory style. This means smaller families may occupy rooms without using all the beds, which can appear to be an under-utilization of the capacity. Other local homeless shelters and transitional housing facilities also provide shelter for domestic violence victims. The numbers clearly indicate a significant need for increased domestic violence shelter capacity along with training for other shelter providers.

Strategic Response: Homeless victims of domestic violence often require a continuum of care response. Initially, they are best served by domestic violence shelters, either formal or informal, or through friend networks that can ensure protection from abusers. Many domestic violence shelters seek to expand into providing service-enriched transitional housing to provide a secure stepping-stone from shelter to independence. Housing First is not always the best option in that it may reveal a survivor’s whereabouts to abusers.

Chronically Homeless



Stereotypes of homelessness are based on who is most visible

Over one quarter of the homeless are “chronically homeless,” with 134, or 22%, who meet the HUD definition as “either (1) an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for a year or more, OR (2) an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.” This represents a 30% increase over the 103 chronically homeless people who were identified in the 2006 homeless census.

The definition above derives from the recognition that when persistent homelessness is compounded by disabling conditions, it becomes exponentially difficult to overcome homelessness. Typically, people without those disabling conditions are more successful at getting the services, jobs or other support necessary to get back into permanent housing. However, in recent years, the face of persistent homelessness is changing, apparently as a result of the economy.

As shown on the “Trends of the Demographics of Homelessness” chart on page 25, the number of chronically homeless people has fluctuated between 10% - 47% of the total homeless population in the past eight years.

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, chronically homeless people comprise only 16% of the total homeless population but use nearly half of all available resources. They typically cycle between shelters, hospitals, jails and other facilities. The chronically homeless also tend to be the heaviest consumers of shelter and homeless services along with public services such as emergency medical response and police.

People who are chronically homeless are often the most visible, giving rise to many negative stereotypes. A 2006 New Yorker article infamously chronicled the price of ignoring the chronically homeless with a story about “Million Dollar Murray,” a homeless man in Reno who cost the state of Nevada one million dollars in emergency care and court costs over the course of ten years, averaging \$100,000 per year – costs which would have been cut by half or two-thirds using a Housing First approach.

Strategic Response: As illustrated by the “Million Dollar Murray” article and the 1811 Eastlake model, it’s cheaper to provide housing and services for chronically homeless people than it is to sustain the high cost of emergency service responses. Such a cost-benefit analysis approach supports the Housing First model as a strategy to stabilize chronically homeless people by getting them into housing first and then providing the essential services. Housing is a proven way to save other public funds from law enforcement in order to provide more cost-effective case management.

Veterans

In Thurston County, 45, or 8%, of the homeless self-identified as veterans. Nationwide, about one-third of the adult homeless population are veterans. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), homeless veterans are predominantly male, with roughly five percent being female.

The majority of homeless veterans are single, come from urban areas, and suffer from mental illness, alcohol and/or substance abuse, or other co-occurring disorders. America’s homeless veterans have served in World War II, the Korean War, Cold War, Vietnam War, Grenada, Panama, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Nearly half of homeless veterans served during the Vietnam era. Two-thirds served our country for at least three years, and one-third were stationed in a war zone. Unfortunately, numerous studies show that veterans are the least likely among the homeless sub-populations to be willing to work with government or other institutional services.

Strategic Response: The most effective response to homeless veterans is to ensure they are linked to all possible VA benefits, including housing, mental health care, drug and alcohol treatment, employment assistance, and other services. This linkage will ensure that a community makes the best use of these distinct revenue streams. Like most homeless sub-populations, veterans benefit from the Housing First model followed up with supportive services. For individuals unwilling or unable to cooperate with a government or non-profit housing program, the next best solution is to offer survival resources, such as outdoor clothing, camping gear, food and other supplies.

Homeless Individuals

Homeless individuals typically make up the largest sub-population of homeless people. Locally, the census revealed 404 single adults, comprising 67% of the total 599 respondents. People are considered homeless individuals when they do not have dependent children, are not expecting a child, or do not have other familial obligations that prohibit them from arranging their individual accommodations. Individuals who are not mentally ill, veterans or victims of domestic violence are



8%, or 45, local homeless people self-identify as Veterans



404, or 67%, of the homeless were single adults

generally excluded from many forms of public assistance, including housing. As a result, it can be difficult to find resources to serve them. Many chronically homeless individuals are typically in single-person households.

Strategic Response: Homeless individuals should be screened to identify their needs and eligibility for potential resources. While most homeless individuals benefit from the Housing First model, case managers may elect to utilize lighter forms of assistance such as temporary emergency shelter, shallow rental subsidies, or job referrals to help stabilize them and facilitate their return to independence. For individuals unable or unwilling to cooperate with a government or non-profit housing program, the next best solution is to offer survival resources, such as outdoor clothing, camping gear, food and other supplies.

Homeless Families

The census found 195 total people in 65 homeless families, accounting for 33% of the homeless population. However, there appears to be a much larger number of families without a home of their own who find shelter by living with friends or family members or in their vehicles, thereby eluding the census methodology and being excluded from the census count. Homeless families often cite job loss or the loss of their housing related to the economy as the cause of homelessness.

Many homeless families often choose to stay temporarily with other people, in motels, or in their cars in order to keep their families together. Families tend to avoid shelters in order to prevent potentially negative impacts on their children. As a result, many families with children are disproportionately excluded by the current HUD definition of homelessness.

In addition, many homeless families avoid shelters or the streets because parents fear losing their children as the result of potential intervention by child welfare agencies. Families also avoid the forced separation of family members in order to fit into shelter regulations that are often restrictive about the number and gender configuration of families in their facilities.



The Census found 195 homeless family members; 33% of the total population

Strategic Response: Strategies for homeless families include “Rapid Re-housing” or quickly dispersed rental assistance to stabilize them. Other responses include emergency shelters specifically for families with separate family suites that preserve family cohesion. Shelter case management should be followed by rental subsidies to allow them to secure housing as quickly as possible. It is also important to encourage families to access all potential school-based resources for their school age children.

Other useful resources are the informal networks of friends, school-based or faith community ties. These networks are often the first options pursued by homeless families. Efforts to strengthen informal networks through school associations, faith communities or neighborhood associations could be highly effective.

Homeless Youth

There were 241 homeless youth and “transitional age youth” or 40% of the 599 total who were 25 years of age and under. “Transitional Aged Youth” (defined on the next page). Nine of these children were unaccompanied homeless youth 17 or under in the census, comprising 2% of the total population. (Please note: this number appears to be significantly lower than the



While only 9 unaccompanied youth were counted, service providers indicate there are many more who are reluctant to be counted

School Census numbers addressed on page 27) The State Department of Commerce, which administers the statewide Homeless Census, considers youth homeless only when they meet the state definition of “individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.” The state definition includes youth who are living in shelters, transitional housing, out of doors in vehicles or in abandoned buildings. However, a significant number of homeless youth do not fit this state definition but they do fit the federal McKinney Vento definition because they are “migratory” and live temporarily in hotels or motels or with a succession of friends or family. As a result, the School Census presents much higher numbers deriving from a different methodology.

An additional 62 young people ages 18 to 20, and another 73, ages 21 to 25, were part of a category of young homeless people who are termed “Transition-age Youth”, or young

people aged 16 through 24. While those under 18 can’t stay in adult shelters, those who are between 18 to 24 are at high risk for victimization when placed in general population emergency shelters. Homeless youth and young adults present a significant challenge to Housing First programs in that those under 18 can’t legally sign leases and don’t fit into the adult homeless housing model.

Without appropriately focused interventions, they are likely to become part of the chronically homeless adult population. Adolescents and young adults have different biological, psychological, social, and developmental cognitive needs than adults, and may be more responsive to a structured transitional housing program.

Best practice service models are designed to focus on prevention/ intervention strategies that are geared to a young person’s developmental stages. These models utilize multiple “best practice” interventions within a harm reduction model, recognizing that one size will not fit all.

Strategic Response: “*Youth Bridge*” is an emerging service model that incorporates both shelter and transitional housing into a hybrid program that provides system entry for young people, allowing them to move from street dependence to affordable permanent housing at their own pace, assisted by supportive services. Youth Bridge and other effective shelter and housing programs recognize the need to serve both youth who are 17 and younger, as well as “transition-age youth” ages 17 to 22 who are essentially young adults. Absent shelter or housing resources, the primary service models are street outreach and drop-in centers that offer survival goods, service referrals, and general case management that emphasizes “harm reduction”.



Without intervention, many homeless youth are likely to become part of the chronically homeless adult population

Homeless Sex Offenders

Of the 233 total registered sex offenders in Thurston County, all 36 transient sex offenders are registered in Olympia. Much like other homeless people, transient sex offenders are dependent upon the services that are concentrated in Olympia.

Background on Sex Offender Registration

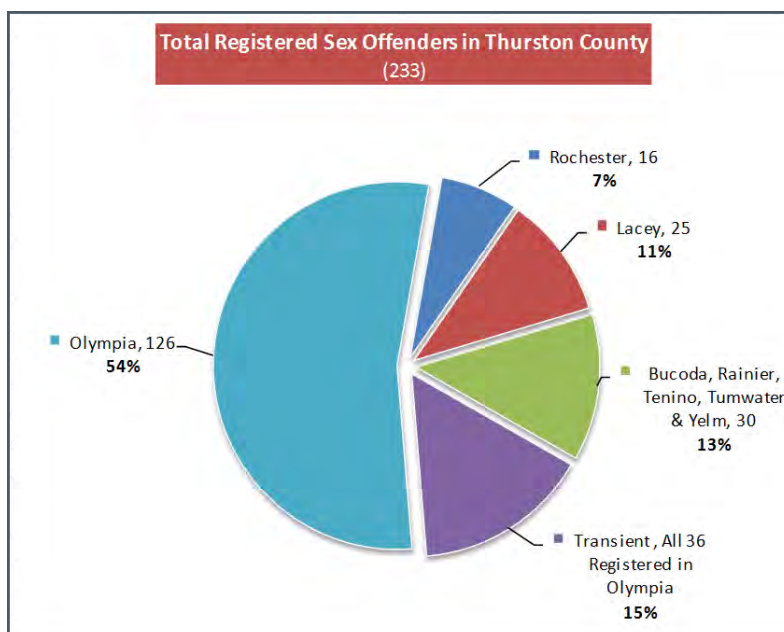
Many states have enacted some variation of a sex offender registry as a way to track sex offenders for public safety purposes. In Washington State, the law requires public notification for level two (moderate risk of repeat offenses) and level three (high risk of repeat offenses) sex offenders. Thurston County uses the “**Offender Watch**” trademarked program to “*manage and monitor the whereabouts, conduct and compliance of all registered sex offenders*” (excerpt from *Thurston County Sheriff’s website*) in the county. This online registry presents online photos, descriptions of the crime, designations of their threat level, and maps of where they live.

Supporters of housing restrictions believe that public safety is strengthened by monitoring sex offenders and restricting them from residing close to schools, playgrounds or other places that children congregate. Critics believe that such laws have unintended consequences that increase the number of transient sex offenders unable to secure permanent housing. These critics challenge the public safety value of not knowing where sex offenders reside. Locally, this debate has factored into public discourse surrounding the proposed People’s House and the potential inclusion of sex offenders among the proposed clientele.

Public debate of the value of laws restricting housing for sex offender registration was illustrated by the Florida “Tuttle Causeway

Colony”. In 2007, news reports began to surface about a makeshift homeless encampment located under the Julia Tuttle Causeway outside of Miami. Local authorities cited the highly restrictive sex offender laws in Dade County made it nearly impossible for registered sex offenders to secure housing. Ultimately, the Causeway Colony grew to 140 residents until it was shut down in 2010.

Information on homeless sex offenders is not included in the charts or narratives contained elsewhere in this Thurston County Homeless Census Report because methodology does not specifically seek information on sex offender status. As a result, the Sheriff Department’s data is presented here is likely to represent additional homeless people in Thurston County.



Trends in Thurston County Homelessness

Seven years of conducting a Thurston County census of homeless citizens offers a look into the trends of who is homeless in a given year and how that changes over time. The chart on the next page presents seven years of data on who the homeless are, where they were accommodated, and some of the issues they face. The questions that emerge in examining this data include: (1) Who are the homeless; (2) Are we making progress with certain demographics by concentrating services; and, (3) Do we have information to differentiate whether these are the same people year-over-year, or are some people overcoming homelessness while new people are becoming homeless?

The first five years show that the **total number of homeless people** appears to trend upward and then drops off radically by 2011. (Anomaly caused by administrative change in homeless definitions). Some of the fairly static populations include the chronically homeless, who appear to fluctuate between 78 and 210 people. The number of homeless veterans also seem to remain fairly static, fluctuating between 38 and 75 with two outlier years (6 homeless veterans in 2007 and 18 in 2009).

Individuals with **mental illness** trended sharply upwards in the first five years, and again, dropped radically in the sixth year, likely due to a lack of data from mental health service providers. These radically divergent numbers suggest the need to work more closely with service providers to gain the trust of unsheltered mentally ill people in order to include them in the census.

The significant drop in the number of respondents who self-reported **drug and alcohol addicted** homeless people in the past three years appears incongruent with previous year's data. In 2009 and 2010, there were 164 and 168 respondents with drug and alcohol addiction, dropping to 37 by 2012. These statistics are contrary to the anecdotal reports of street outreach workers, emergency service providers and other public employees. These low numbers seem to obscure the number of people who are chronic inebriates.

PLEASE NOTE: Further examination by community partners is needed to understand the meaning of these trends and to better utilize the census information to design more effective programs and services.

Thurston County Census 2006 – 2014: Trends in Demographics of Homelessness									
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Out of Doors	122	187	154-94*	219	363	269	171	237	263
Shelters	156	167-132*	118	123	181	141	171	180	155
Transitional Housing	163	143	100	203	432	260	382	269	181
Subtotals**	441	579	462	745	976	568	724	686	599
Jails & Medical Institutions	55	38	17	109	146	98	122	175	214
Friends	104	103	150	159	162	74	156	145	113
Total	600	720	629	1,013	1,284	740	1,110	1,006	926
Youth - <i>Total Sheltered & Unsheltered (17 & under)</i>	115	111	187	228	420	144	188	157	106
Families with Children - <i>Total Sheltered & Unsheltered</i>	151	196	151	275	289	162	121	277	195
Single Men & Women - <i>Total Sheltered & Unsheltered</i>	290	383	311	470	663	387	603	409	404
Elderly – <i>Total Sheltered & Unsheltered (65 & over)</i>	4	3	11	7	16	3	10	7	11
Veterans – <i>Total Sheltered & Unsheltered</i>	75	6	76	18	68	42	63	38	45
Mental Illness (self-reported disability)	156	292	288	356	407	249	153	222	141
Drug and Alcohol Addicted	122	149	125	164	168	41	37	80	60
Chronically Homeless	103	210	84	98	99	78	151	209	134

*Numbers vary between state report and county report for this demographic in these years.

**HUD-defined Homelessness

Homeless School Children and the McKinney Act

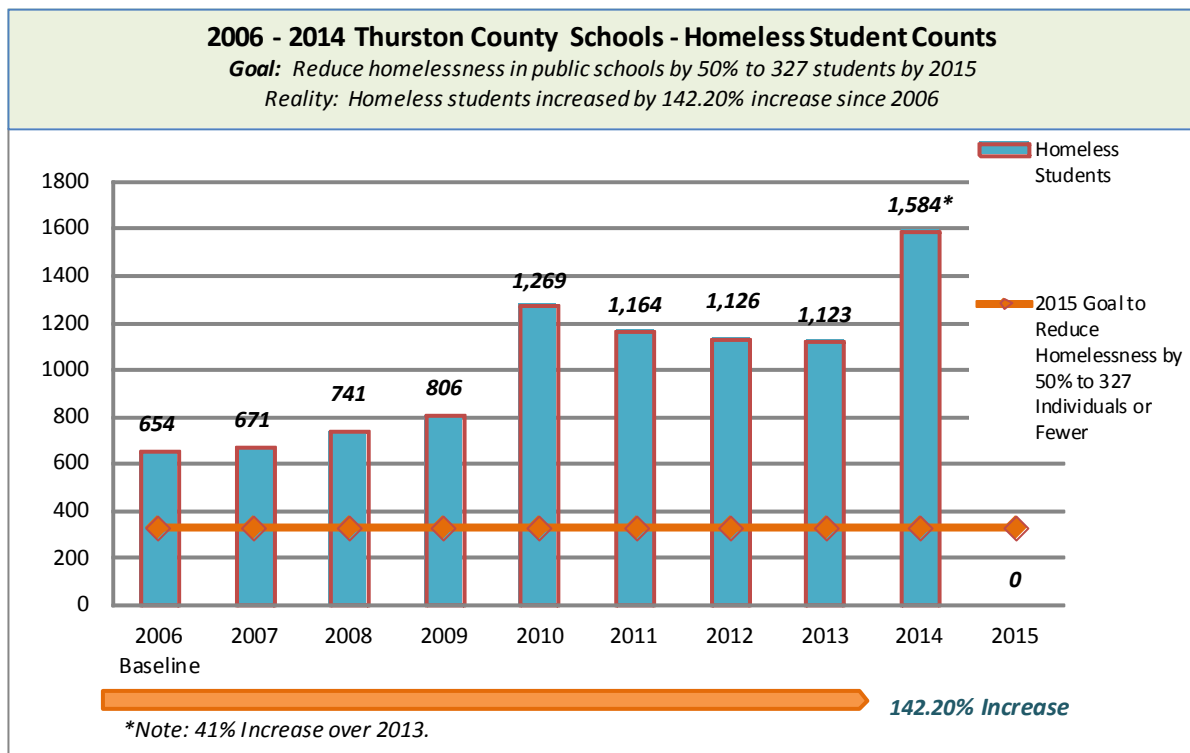
Thurston County schools are required to count homeless students, kindergarten through 12th grade, as part of the McKinney-Vento Act, which declares that homeless school children are also entitled to the protections listed under the section entitled, "Education for Homeless Children and Youths." The Act defines homeless children as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." The act goes on to give examples of children who would fall under this definition:

- Children sharing housing due to economic hardship or loss of housing;
- Children living in "motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camp grounds due to lack of alternative accommodations;"
- Children living in "emergency or transitional shelters;"
- Children "awaiting foster care placement;"
- Children whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g., park benches, etc.);
- Children living in "cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations . . ."

Each year, the State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) works with local school districts throughout the state to identify children and youth attending school who are experiencing homelessness. The purpose of this effort is to offer appropriate services to the family, child, or youth and to report the number of homeless students to federal, state, and local governments. This count does not include school-age children who are not attending school.

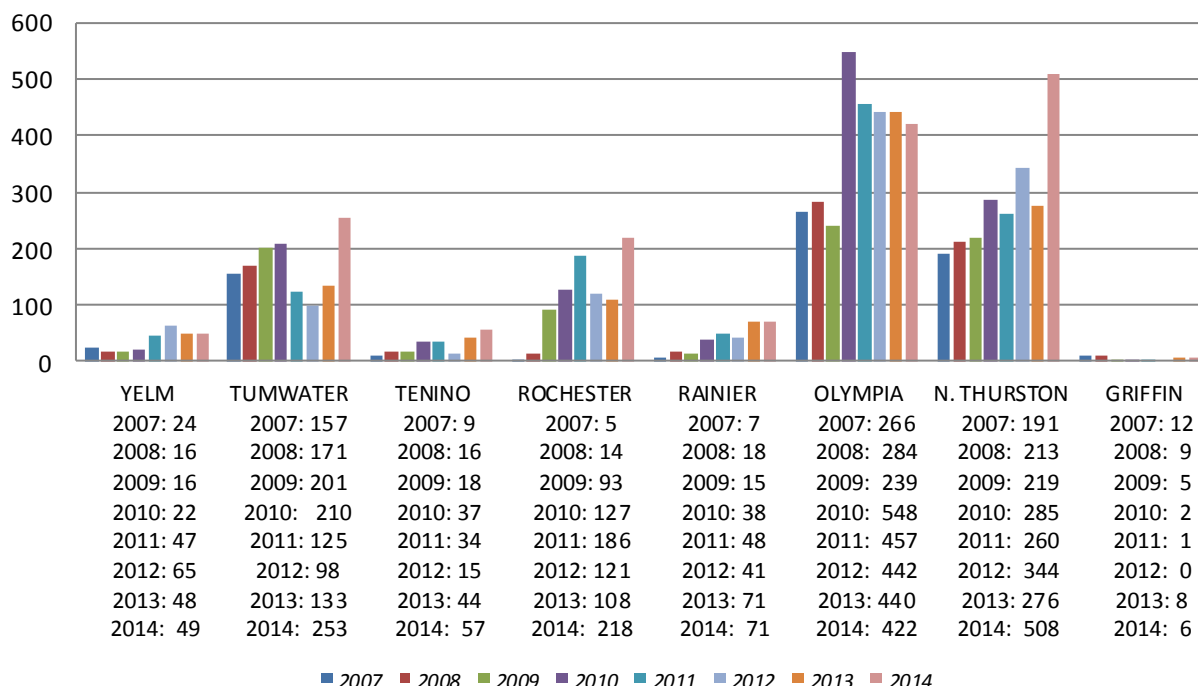
Homeless School Children in Thurston County

The chart below shows the year-over-year changes of homeless school children enrolled in the eight school districts of Thurston County. These numbers are produced by the local school districts and reported to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. *(Please note: table below presents info from the preceding school year)*



Homeless Students by District 2007 - 2014

Homeless student data is reported for the prior school year which concludes seven months prior to the Point-in-Time Census.
Data provided by the Office of Superintendents of Public Instruction.

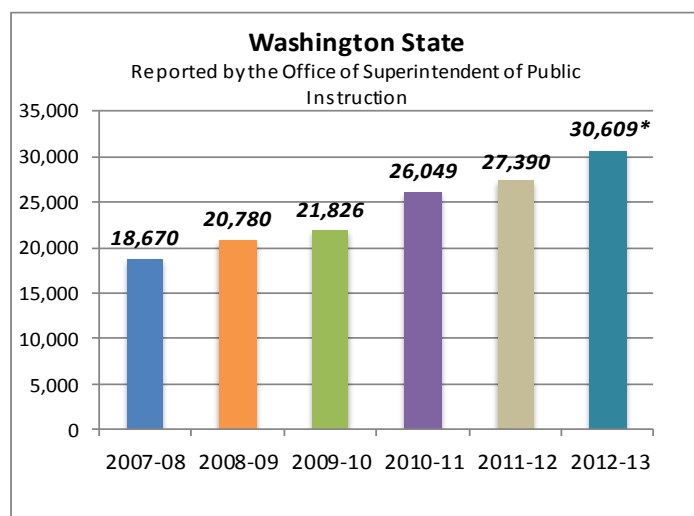


10-Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness in Public Schools

In Thurston County, the 10-year plan set the goal to reduce homelessness in public schools by 50%, to 327 students by 2015. The reality however is that student homelessness has risen 142% since 2006. At the end of the 2013 (reported as 2014 on the chart on the previous page) school year, Thurston County had 1,584 homeless students.

Prior to 2014, it appeared that school homelessness mirrored the rise and fall of the County's Homeless Census, with a steady rise to 2010 however, followed by a slight decline to 1,123. However, last year the number spiked radically up 41%. Public officials attribute some of this increase to better school reported but acknowledge an increase.

Comparatively, Washington State as a whole has seen student homelessness rise 63%, from 18,670 homeless students during the 2007-08 school year to 30,609 in the 2011-12 school year. While Thurston County may only hold 4% of the state's student population, it is also home to 5% of the homeless students.



Correlation of School District Numbers with County Homeless Census Numbers

While the two sets of homeless statistics come from different sources - the Homeless Census and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) - they do offer a composite view of homelessness. Together, they mirror a general trend of homelessness in Thurston County rising to an all-time high in 2010 and since then dropping. While the school district numbers decreased by 12%, or 146 students, since a 2010 high of 1,269, the County's Homeless Census numbers dropped radically by 30%, or 290 individuals, since 2010.

The School District homeless student numbers are collected over the prior full school year, in this case, 2011-2012, which ended seven months before the January 2014 census. A further difference is that some of the county's census numbers include homeless students who were counted by the school districts.

Last, the school district's numbers include students who live with friends or family, an accommodation not included in the county numbers. This difference in methodologies means that these figures cannot be directly added together or be directly compared statistically.

The school numbers include only students enrolled during the school year 2011-2012, but do not include their families—particularly absent are other siblings who are not school age. On the other hand, the "Point in Time" homeless census is a one-day snapshot of homelessness in Thurston County, which includes many students staying with their families in shelters, transitional housing, or out of doors. While derived from different methodologies and timelines, these two sets of numbers clearly show that the number of homeless individuals is increasing since the baseline year of 2006.



1,584 students, Kindergarten through 12th Grade were identified in the school count

Poverty in Public Schools – Other Data

Another useful source of information on poverty among public school age children is the "Free and Reduced Meal" data published by the State Office of Public Instruction (OSPI) on an annual basis.

Poverty is clearly an indicator for being at risk of homeless for families with children, so this data provides a useful perspective on how Thurston County schools are doing. Unfortunately, across the board, all seven districts show a deepening of poverty in public schools.

The eligibility of students to participate in the state's free and reduced price school lunch program is determined by federal income guidelines according to family size and regionally adjusted poverty line of household income.

The Free and Reduced lunch program serves as an index of poverty for families with children in each of the districts. Nationally, it is estimated that 1 in 29 people with income at or below the federal poverty line become homeless.

In 2012, the federal poverty level annual income for a household size of three was \$19,090.

To participate in the **reduced meals program**, a household size of three's annual income cannot be more than 185% of the federal poverty annual income, or \$35,317 annually.



The "Free and Reduced Lunch" Program offers an index of family poverty county-wide

To qualify for **free meals**, a household of three cannot make more than 130% of the federal poverty annual income, or \$24,817 annually. Statewide, 482,634 or 46% of the total 1,047,390 students enrolled in Washington State public schools participated in the Free and Reduced lunch program during the 2012-13 school year.

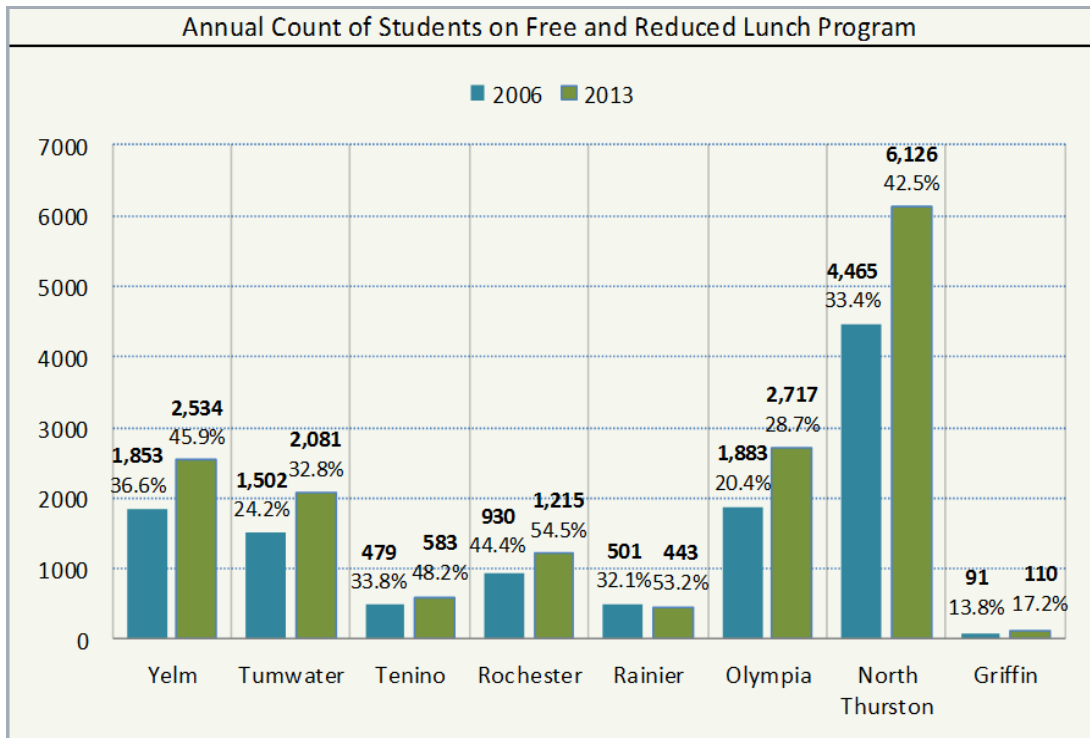
The "Free and Reduced Meal" program is funded jointly by the federal Department of Agriculture and Washington state public school system to ensure that hunger is not a deterrent to a quality education. All households with income levels below certain amounts are encouraged to apply for any or all of the following programs:

1. National School Lunch Program
2. School Breakfast Program
3. Special Milk Program

This data is included in the OSPI “Report Card”, an online database that presents statewide and district level information on K-12 students. The OSPI website also presents other information, including the number of homeless students by district. Please note: as with the homeless student data, this information is collected for school years that straddle a biennium, which falls seven months prior to the Homeless Census.

Free and Reduced Lunch in Public Schools

The chart below shows the seven-year change in poverty rates by district for the eight school districts in Thurston County as compared to the Washington statewide average.



The state average went from 36.7% to 43.7% of students in poverty. Local Thurston County school districts varied widely, with Griffin starting at 13.8% and rising to 17.7%. Rochester went from 44.4% to 51.6%. The next highest percentages were in Rainier, which went from 32.1% to 45.9%.

While not all families with children who are living at or below the poverty line will become homeless, these families are all at a much higher risk for homelessness.

Please note: Totals in the chart above represent the number of students per district who were on the free and reduced lunch program in 2006 and 2014. The percentage listed represents the relationship of the number of students on free and reduced lunch to the total number of enrolled students per district in 2006 and 2014.

Statewide, the percentage of students on the free and reduced lunch program increased significantly between 2006 and 2014. In 2006, 371,840 or (36.7%) of students were on the program; in 2014, 452,263 or (43.7%) of students were.

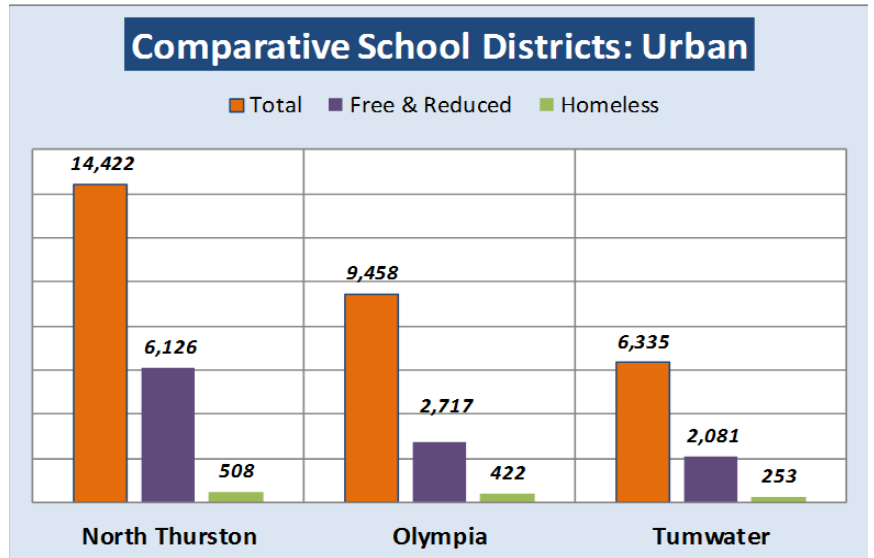
Comparing School Districts in Thurston County

Thurston County school districts range in size from the tiny rural Griffin school district with 641 students to the sprawling North Thurston School District with 14,422 students. However, raw numbers sometime have less impact the percentage that certain demographics have on the entire district. While the Rochester School District is one of the smaller districts with only 2,232 or 2% of the County’s students, nearly 55% of their student body is on free and reduced lunch. Following is some comparative data on the eight different school districts, comparing the total number of students with the number of students who are on free and reduced lunch and those whose families are homeless.

The urban school districts have the high concentration of students, with 30,215, or 74% of the population compared to 10,436 or 26% of students in the rural school districts.

However, 4,894 or 31% of the students on free and reduced lunch are enrolled in the rural school districts, documenting a significantly higher level of poverty among students.

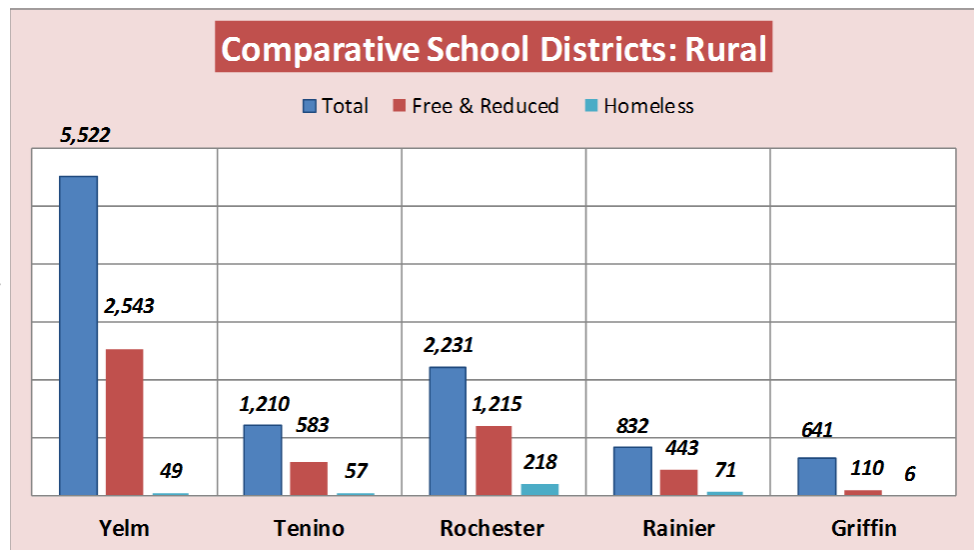
The number of homeless students is more proportional to the total student body, with 401 or 25% of the County's homeless students in the rural districts.



The Yelm District, with 5,522 students has an enrollment total similar to those within the urban hub, still has 2,543 or nearly 46% of its students participating in the Free and Reduced lunch program.

Compared to the Tumwater District, which has 6,335 students, where only 2,081 or 32.8 % of the students are enrolled in the Free and Reduced lunch program.

Although comparable in size, this is a very telling gap between the poverty levels within the rural and urban districts.



More Pre-school Aged Children at Home: According to the National Center on Family Homelessness, 42% of the total homeless children are estimated to be under the age of six, and thus not counted in the public school homeless census.

Another way of looking at that number is that school age children are only 58% of the larger total number of homeless children, ages 0-18. Taking that into consideration, it could be calculated that the OSPI total for homeless students is capturing only slightly more than half the total number of homeless children.

$$\frac{\# \text{ SCHOOL AGE HOMELESS CHILDREN } \times 100}{58} = \text{TOTAL \# OF HOMELESS CHILDREN}$$

In Thurston County, that would mean that the total number of homeless children would go from 1,584 to 2,731.

In Washington State, it could be estimated that the total number of homeless children statewide is not 30,609, but actually 52,774.

CH5: HOMELESSNESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Homelessness in Higher Education (2014):

The Evergreen State College

by Kat Sliwinska, Homeless Census Intern

Another group of people without homes in Thurston County are college students. Largely unseen and off the radar of most government reports, homelessness in higher education occurs at a much higher rate than in the general population.

In February of 2014, the third annual survey of homelessness at The Evergreen State College was conducted. Carried out for the first time in 2011, this independent survey offers a snapshot of homelessness in higher education. Apart from determining how many homeless students attend postsecondary education, the survey addressed such issues as awareness, risks of becoming homeless, and the need for services. The scan of campus services accompanying the survey also provided insight into the resources available to students in need.

Methodology: Over the course of one month, intern Kat Sliwinska coordinated the development, distribution, and promotion of the Homelessness in Higher Education Survey. The questions for the survey were based on the County's Homeless Census questionnaire, with the addition of a paragraph response prompt. To promote this survey across campus, the coordinator published an article in Cooper Point Journal, presented the project to Evergreen programs, spoke during a *Parallel University* show on KAOS radio, and organized interest meetings. The survey was released online and in paper form at a poll booth on campus. These efforts yielded 198 responses.

17.7%

Were homeless while being a student at Evergreen (35/196)

70.7%

Have been aware of student homelessness (140/198)

5.1%

Are currently homeless (10/196)

Unique Environment: Homelessness in higher education is a hidden phenomenon, surrounded by stereotypes and misconceptions. While 70.7% (140/198) of respondents were aware of homeless students, many also held the impression that homeless students at Evergreen choose their housing situation. Although certain students embrace their out of doors life by camping or couch surfing, the majority of currently homeless students found themselves without housing for reasons out of their control. Main causes of homelessness among college students, identified by 34 respondents who declared to be houseless at some point during their Evergreen education, were financial or economic reasons (79.4%), along with family crisis (32.4%), and domestic violence (17.7%). More often than not, a combination of crises contributes to homelessness, hence the question on



the survey allowed for multiple responses. These numbers show that although higher education provides unique resources such as scholarships and student loans, many students still face the hardships of homelessness primarily due to financial reasons.

Service Network: Evergreen's environment supports students in many ways; the services range from Academic Advising, Health and Counseling Centers, and housing services to a food bank, financial aid services, and even a crisis fund. Yet, these services appear to be disconnected with each other and not widely known among the student body. Many at-risk students simply do not know where to turn during a time of crisis.

Previous Findings: The surveys conducted in 2011 and 2012, yielded startling results. In 2011, the survey found that 31.3%, or 46 out of 147 respondents, reported being homeless at some point while attending Evergreen. In 2012, 15.4% of respondents (49/318) have been homeless while being a student at Evergreen. The most recent survey found that 17.7% of respondents (35/198) experienced homelessness while attending college.

Awareness: Awareness of homelessness on campus seems to stay relatively consistent throughout the years. Generally about 70% of respondents have been aware of student homelessness at Evergreen. While this statistic seems to suggest that student homelessness is a known issue, one must examine the underlying assumptions made by the respondents of the survey that were declared in the paragraph response prompt. Many students expressed knowing someone who has been homeless but being overall unaware about the issue of homelessness in higher education. A number of respondents claimed that students choose to be homeless rather than are put in a houseless situation caused by unfavorable circumstances. A large portion of the respondents expressed concern about the availability of services helpful to homeless and at-risk students. These respondents either did not know about the existence of the services or were dissatisfied with the current hours and/or the manner of operation of the service mentioned.

Impact of College Homelessness: Residential instability complicates students' lives in numerous ways. Homeless college students will struggle to balance school and other responsibilities, such as working, searching for housing, or even food. Homelessness also affects mental and physical health, hindering the students' goals of earning a higher education. For homeless students small issues can become huge problems, e.g., cost of a student I.D., or storage for important documents.

Recommendations:

- Create a community space (student lounge) and kitchen
- Set up camping grounds in the TESC forest
- Organize homelessness awareness workshops
- Enhance food resources such as the campus food bank
- Establish a point of contact



CH6: HOMELESSNESS STATEWIDE

To be updated with 2014 data upon release from State Department of Commerce

Examining Homelessness across Washington State (*Based on 2013 Data*)

Since 2006, homelessness statewide has decreased by 7.4% from 21,962 to 20,336. While this is an improvement, it falls far short of the Ten-Year Plan goal to reduce homelessness by 50% or 10,981 by 2015. Each year, the state has combined the homeless census numbers of all the counties, starting with a total count of 21,962 homeless people in 2006 and dropping almost 8% to 20,346 homeless people counted in 2011.

While each county has worked diligently to reduce homelessness, it appears that the total statewide population has remained fairly static, rising and sinking with the high number to date occurring in 2009 with 22,827 people and the 2011 low of 20,346.

However, once the final statewide numbers for the 2014 homeless census are available, these trends may change

Snapshot of Six Counties – Six Years of Census Results

The following chart presents seven years of homeless census data, 2006 through 2012, from the six most urban counties in Western Washington. What is striking is that two of the counties with the most comprehensive efforts underway to coordinate their homeless services do indeed show significant decreases in their homeless counts since 2006, with Clark County decreasing by 29.8% from 1,391 to 977 and Whatcom County decreasing by 41.2% from 838 to 493.

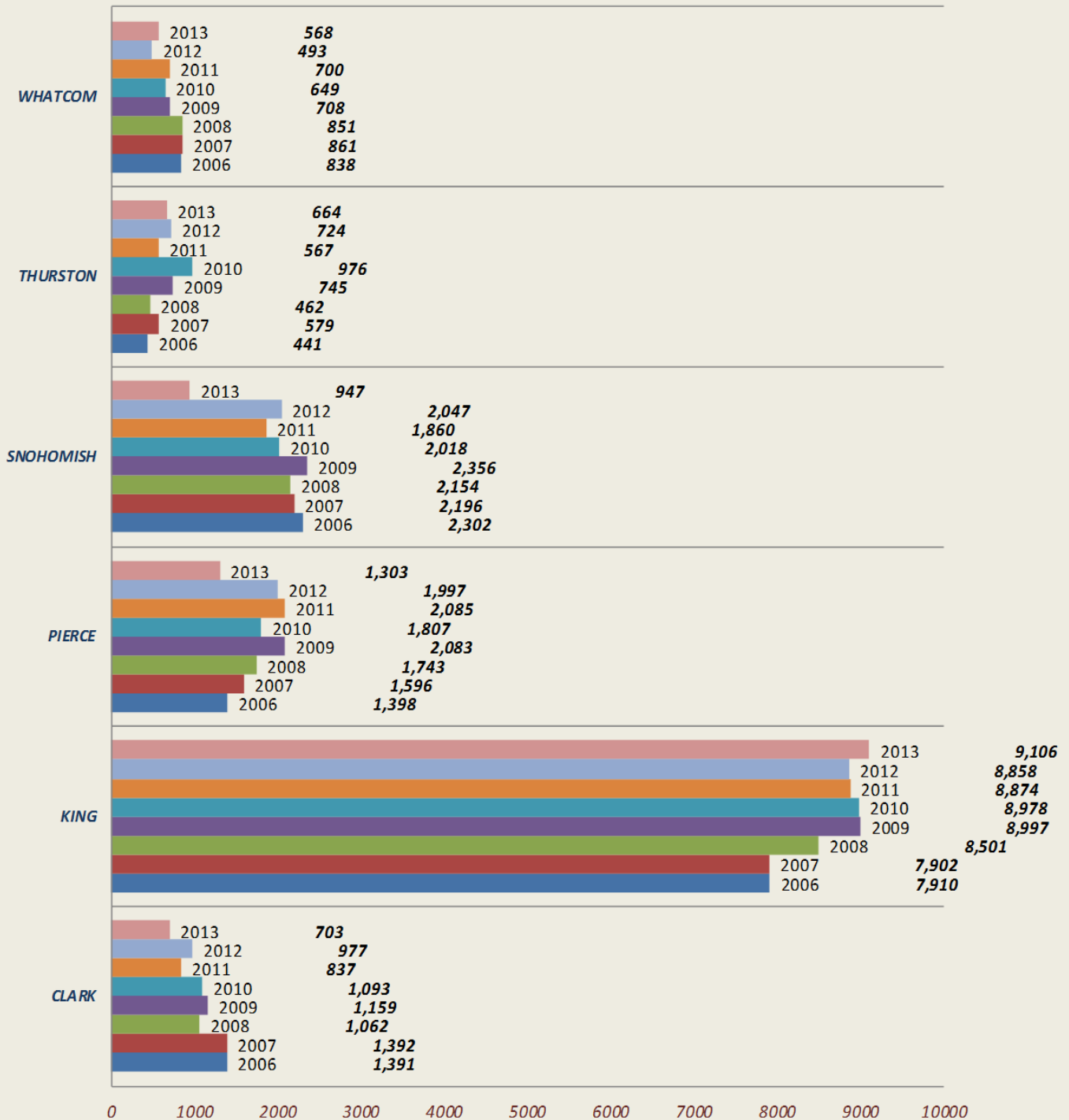
Conversely, in the same seven-year timeframe, Pierce County shows a 42.8% increase from 1,398 to 1,997 and King County shows a 10.8 % increase from 7,996 to 8,858. Pierce County has only recently undertaken a coordinated point-of-entry system. As of this time, King County still does not have a centralized or singular coordinated access and entry system for shelter and housing services. These two counties also represent the most populous areas with arguably the most extensive service and shelter resources, which may attract some number of homeless people from regions with fewer resources.

Here in Thurston County, we have decreased from our all time high in 2010, yet we still show a 64.1% increase in homelessness since 2006 from 441 to 724. In mid-2011, Thurston County began a coordinated point of intake for single adults, a new practice that is designed to maximize the utilization of services, shelter and housing resources. In early 2012, the County hired a Homeless Coordinator to analyze and improve the entire homeless resource system. It is expected that both of these innovations will work to reduce homelessness locally.

Without a comprehensive analysis of all contributing factors, it is difficult to understand these population shifts. The proximity of these six urban counties does present the opportunity for migration toward areas that may offer more comprehensive services, or simply presents a more welcoming environment.

Interns working on this census report queried the other five counties to learn what caused the decreases and learned anecdotally that camp clearances and other enforcement actions may have contributed to some of the decreases. Further examination of these trends may reveal that the effects of anti-homeless enforcement actions have a significant impact on census numbers along with effective homeless coordination programs.

2006-2014 Point in Time Census in Six Western Washington Counties



CH7: EXAMINING THE RESOURCES

Thurston County Shelter and Homeless Housing Capacity

An essential key to reducing homelessness is to maximize the use of all shelter and housing resources, and to ensure the appropriate shelter and housing resources are matched to the needs of the individuals.

In addition, shelter and housing must be supplemented with supportive services to help stabilize people and support them in becoming more independent.

The chart entitled, “**Emergency Shelter & Transitional Housing Capacities**” on the following page provides an overview of the current capacities and occupancy rates of our existing network of shelter and housing in Thurston County.

Please note: The chart on the next page presents shelter and housing resources which are grouped by type (i.e., emergency shelters or transitional housing); the demographics served (i.e., single men vs. families with children); and, the bed capacities and the household capacities.



Homeless women represent 39% of the total number of homeless people



Faith communities now host a majority of all shelter beds, with 133 beds directly hosted by faith communities and an additional 38 beds partially subsidized by faith communities for a total of 171 beds or 68% of the 253 beds available (See page 37 for “Thurston County 2014—Emergency & Transitional Housing Capacities” for more information.)

This distinction is important because the number of available beds may be configured as dormitory style or as family rooms, which means that a family of four might occupy a six-bed family room and therefore fill that room to capacity even though two beds remain open.

Thurston County 2014 - Emergency Shelter & Transitional Housing Capacities		
*Emergency Shelter Capacity (up to 90-days stay)		
SINGLE MEN 95 BEDS	Beds	Households
Salvation Army – Men	42	42
Salvation Army – Men (Cold weather)	25	25
Saint Michael's/Sacred Heart (Cold Weather Shelter)	12	12
Drexel House	16	16
SINGLE WOMEN 50 BEDS	Beds	Households
Bread & Roses	12	12
Salvation Army	16	16
Salvation Army – Women (Cold weather)	4	4
Emergency Shelter Network – Interfaith Works	18	18
FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN 88 BEDS	Beds	Households
Housing Authority of Thurston County	16	4
SafePlace	28	10
Yelm Community Services	6	1
Tenino – Episcopal Church – Hope House – NO LONGER IN SERVICE	0	0
Family Support Center - 1st Christian Church-based shelter	26	7
Emergency Shelter Network – Out of the Woods	12	3
YOUTH 20 BEDS	Beds	Households
Community Youth Services-Haven House	10	10
Community Youth Services- Rosie's Shelter (NEW 2014)	10	10
Totals: EXCLUDING cold weather capacity	212	149
Totals: Including cold weather capacity	253*	190
**Transitional Capacity (up to two years stay)		
SINGLE MEN & WOMEN	Beds	Households
Olympia Union Gospel Mission – Men in Recovery	7	7
Olympia Union Gospel Mission – Women in Recovery	3	3
LIHI Arbor Manor – Women's transitional beds	5	5
Drexel House – Single Men and Women	26	26
FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN	Beds	Households
Housing Authority of Thurston County (reduced by 56 from 2012)	120	44
Olympia Union Gospel Mission	13	4
YOUTH	Beds	Households
Community Youth Services (reduced by 6 from 2012)	58	34
Totals	232	123
Total Thurston County Capacity		
	Beds	Households
Emergency Shelter	212	149
Cold Weather Additional Emergency Shelter Beds	41	41
Transitional	232	123
TOTAL	444 – Warm Weather 485– Cold Weather	272 313

Shelter & Housing Capacity Changes

In 2014, Thurston County decreased its year-round shelter capacity to a total of 212 beds. This increase was the result of converting 18 beds for single women from cold-weather to year-round and the addition of 10 new beds for transitional aged youth, ages 18 - 22. The cold weather overflow capacity reflects the conversion of those beds to a reduced total of 41 cold weather beds, bringing the cold weather capacity to a new total of 253 shelter beds.

According to the chart above, Thurston County did not have the capacity to accommodate all of our homeless residents. While the shelters were only 61% occupied on January 23rd (180 occupants of the 253 existing shelter beds) there were 263 unsheltered people living out of doors.

While the available capacity could be better utilized, there are nearly two homeless people for every available shelter and transitional housing bed.

Shelter and Homeless Housing Capacity Compared to Number of Homeless Surveyed by Homeless Individuals				
Census Information	Date Census Completed	Number of Homeless People	Countywide Capacity	Percentage of Capacity to Meet Needs for Shelter
2006 Census	January 26, 2006	441	393*	89%
2007 Census	January 25, 2007	579	351**	61%
2008 Census	January 24, 2008	462	445***	96%
2009 Census	January 29, 2009	745	431	51%
2010 Census	January 28, 2010	976	544	56%
2011 Census	January 27, 2011	566	544	96%
2012 Census	January 29, 2012	724	463	64%
2013 Census	January 24, 2013	686	446	65%
2014 Census	January 23, 2014	599	444	74%

Percentage of Unsheltered People

The 2014 census results showed that 263, or 44%, of the homeless were unsheltered, seeking shelter out of doors, in vehicles, or in abandoned or substandard buildings.

Over the years the percentage of the total homeless population, this percentage has fluctuated between 24% in 2012 to a high point of 44% in 2014. The 48% unsheltered reported in 2011 seems to be the result of census validity issues that were addressed in the 2011 report. According to the chart on page 37, Thurston County did not have the capacity to accommodate all of our homeless residents - with 159 people in the available 253 shelter beds and another 263 unsheltered people living out of doors.

In terms of raw numbers, the number of unsheltered people has trended upwards since 2006, going from 122 in 2006 to a high point of 363 in 2010 and decreasing to 263 in 2014. In terms of percentages, the unsheltered remain roughly one quarter to nearly half of the total homeless population. We continue to have a significant percentage and number of people, including families, who are living outside the accepted continuum of care that spans from emergency shelter to transitional and permanent housing.

The Costs of Shelter

In order to evaluate the current shelter system, this report includes a “**cost benefit analysis**” of selected shelter resources to provide a side by side comparison of costs of shelter. The following chart presents a simple comparison of programs, citing the staff structure (volunteer vs. professional staff), type of facility (tent, single-family residence, or multi-story facility), along with the operational costs per year and number of clients accommodated.

The apparent tiers present the range of costs of providing shelter. Some of the cost variables include the difference between programs with volunteers vs. professional staff. Other cost variables reflect the differences in utilizing a no-cost faith community facility vs. a dedicated multi-story facility. One outlier tier is the high cost of running a homeless youth shelter, which is subject to stringent operating regulations. However, the greatest difference is between all homeless shelters and the county jail, which is included given the high number of homeless inmates included in the expanded homeless census numbers—a total of 156 people who will be released to homelessness when they leave incarceration.

However, costs are not the only factor to consider in the value of shelter. While volunteer-staffed shelters typically cost less than \$10 per night compared to the minimum \$30 per bed night for professionally-staffed shelters, but volunteers typically do not have the same capacity to provide services that trained and credentialed professional case managers and service providers. So while the bed night costs are much cheaper, the outcomes may not be as positive. The following chart presents agency budgets for shelter services divided by total capacities equals cost per bed night, a useful metric for understanding the costs of shelter.

Shelter & Homeless Services – Cost/Benefit Matrix (2014 Data)			
Shelter or Service Agency	Annual Program Budget	Total Available Capacity	Cost per day or Service Unit
Cold Weather Shelter - St. Michaels	\$6,395	12 Bed Capacity 82 Bed nights/year	\$6.50 per Bed night
Salvation Army (Professionally staffed, single-story facility)	\$323,011	58 Bed Capacity Single Adults 21,170 Bed nights/Year	\$15.26 per Bed night
Out of the Woods (Professionally coordinated, volunteer staffed, housed at Unitarian Church)	\$72,000	12 Bed Capacity 4,380 Bednights/Year	\$16.44 per Bed night
Family Support Center (Professionally coordinated, volunteer staffed, faith based facility)	\$208,780	26 Bed Capacity /9,490 Bed nights/year	\$22 per bed night
Drexel House - CCS (Professionally staffed, multi-story facility)	\$242,291	16 Bed Capacity Single Men 5,840 Bed nights/Year	\$41.49 per Bed night
Young Adult Shelter - CYS (Professionally staffed, operated inside existing facility, secured access)	\$190,000	10 Bed Capacity Transition-age youth, 18-22 3,650 Bednights/year	\$52.05 per Bed ight
SafePlace (Staffed by professionals and volunteers, multi-story facility, medium security)	\$661,643	28 Bed Capacity Domestic Violence Victims 10,220 Bednights/Year	\$64.742 per Bed night
Thurston County Jail** (Professionally staffed, high security lock-up)	\$10,465,330 (operations) \$1,499,478 (pro-rated annual facility costs)*	352 Bed Capacity	\$92 per Bed night
Haven House - CYS (Professionally staffed, converted residence, secured populations, low security)	\$757,296	10 Bed Capacity Youth 7 & Under 3,650 Bednights/Year	\$207.48 per Bed night

Shelter & Housing Cost Calculator

The Point in Time Homeless Census provides useful data on who is homeless and why. For planning purposes, public officials examine **homeless needs** and calculate what **homeless resources** are necessary to accommodate those needs. However, not all documented homeless needs translate directly into successful projects and programs because of other criteria in the funding allocation process, including the organizational capacity of applicants, project readiness, etc..

The following chart takes **raw needs** from 2014 PIT Homeless Census data and extrapolates **raw costs** per year for providing shelter and/or housing. Calculations below are based on general assumptions about the particular demographics and the costs for shelter and housing on the preceding page. **Please note:** not all people reporting mental illness require hospitalization, not all unsheltered people consent to entering shelter, etc... Costs in the "Total Annual Costs" column present a **general framework** of the costs of shelter and housing, however they **do not reflect agency capacities or annual budgets**. And are not to be confused with actual reports of agency budgets or capacities.

Shelter & Housing Cost Calculator

Demographic	#*	Cost per night / year / individual**	Total Annual Costs***	Notes
Chronically Homeless	134	\$7/ \$2,555 – Shelter	\$342,370	St. Michael's Faith based shelter – no services. 12 bed capacity.
		\$42/\$15,330 – Shelter	\$2,054,220	Drexel House Shelter plus professional case management, options to move on to transitional housing. 12 bed capacity.
Domestic Violence Survivors	113	\$65/\$23,725 – Domestic Violence Shelter	\$2,680,925	Safeplace DV shelter plus case management, legal advocacy and security. 28 bed capacity
Unaccompanied Youth	9	\$207 / \$75,555 – Haven House	\$679,995	Haven House Court or parent placed shelter, case management and security 10 bed capacity.
Homeless Families****	195	\$22 /\$8,030– Faith based shelter	\$1,565,850	Family Support Center Current family shelter - soon to move to new facility and staff model. 26 bed capacity.
Unsheltered	263	\$13 / \$4,745 – Shared housing	\$1,247,395	SideWalk Referrals for shared housing (room rental with other tenants – presumes social compatibility)
		\$34 / \$12,410 – Apartment	\$3,263,830	SideWalk Referrals for independent rental housing with utility costs – not shared
Mentally Ill	141	\$2,500 / \$912,500 – Hospitalization	\$128,662,500	St. Peter's in-patient mental health care cost metric (Homeless patients typically kept only short periods of time)
Homeless Inmates*****	156	\$92 / \$33,580 – Jail	\$5,238,480	Thurston County Jail Costs of incarcerating homeless people

* Number of people by demographic reported in 2014 Thurston County PIT Homeless Census

** Costs are presented for "bed nights" per night / per year per individual

*** Annual costs are based on multiplying bed night costs per person per year, **not based on actual agency budgets** and do not take into account indirect agency costs.

**** 2013 Family Shelter costs based on a low-cost faith community facility. Costs per bed night subject to change upon relocation to the new Family Support Center facility to be located at the City of Olympia's former Smith Building

***** Thurston County Jail reported 156 inmates who will be released to homelessness

Shelter and Housing Models

As shown in the chart on page 38, there continue to be more homeless people than capacity for shelter or transitional housing beds. As a creative response to the increased needs to accommodate the homeless, new forms of shelter and transitional housing have arisen in recent years. However, because these forms of shelter do not meet certain zoning and building code standards, their operations are subject to government monitoring to ensure that the occupants are safe and that the concerns of surrounding neighbors are addressed.

Cold Weather Overflow Shelters

For over 25 years, there has been a succession of “Cold Weather Overflow Shelters” that operate during the cold weather months, between November through March. These seasonal shelters accommodate single men and single women, on nights with dangerously low temperatures. There is no cold weather overflow shelter available for youth. At present, these overflow shelters offer up to 41 beds and are managed by several faith-based nonprofits. Historically, these cold weather shelters were open from November 1st through February 28th and only activated when the temperature dropped below freezing. The cold weather shelter system has been hampered by inaccurate weather forecasts and confusion among homeless people and case workers caused by the lack of a consistent schedule of open nights.

Recent changes have addressed these problems. The 12-bed Interfaith Works single men’s shelters have converted to being open every night during these cold weather months. The 18-bed Interfaith Works women’s shelter converted to a year-round shelter. In late 2012, the HOME Consortium altered the Salvation Army’s contract for 29 cold weather beds [25 beds for men, four (4) beds for women] to extend the cold weather period by an additional month (November 1st through April 30th) and raised the temperature of shelter activation from freezing to 38 degrees Fahrenheit.

Permanent Church-Based Shelters

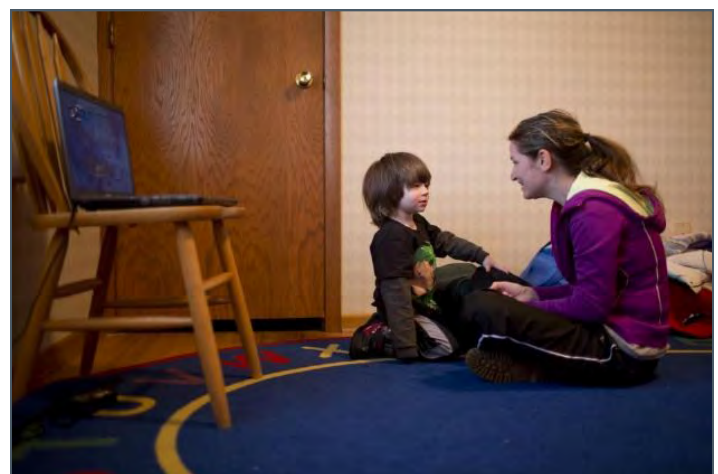
Faith communities continue to be increasingly involved in providing emergency shelter and services for homeless people. In 2006, the Unitarian Universalist Church on the far west side of Olympia opened the “Out of the Woods” emergency shelter for families with children.

Since mid-2010, the First Christian Church in downtown Olympia has hosted the Family Support Center’s year-round homeless shelter for up to 24 members of families with children.

Faith communities in Rochester, Tenino and Yelm continue to explore options to offer shelter. Other faith communities continue to explore stronger roles in providing shelter and services.



Cold weather overflow shelters rotate between faith-based hosts



A growing number of faith communities now host permanent shelters that do not rotate

Tent Camps Camp Quixote Transitions to Quixote Village – Tents to Cottages

For seven years, Camp Quixote, was a “tent city” homeless camp that rotated between faith community hosts in the urban hub. In December 2013, the tent-based camp converted to cottage-based village with the support of three million dollars in federal, state, local and private funding and land donated by Thurston County.

In the past 10 years, “tent cities” have emerged as an informal housing facility, sometimes sanctioned by local governments, other times created without sanction by homeless people or protestors. In 2007, Camp Quixote became the local tent city when it was created as an act of protest against a local ordinance to ban sidewalk sitting.

Inspired by a tent-based community in Portland, Oregon, called “Dignity Village,” Camp Quixote was created as a democratically run transitional housing camp to provide community for people who would otherwise be living in cars, abandoned buildings, or vehicles. For seven years, Camp Quixote provided tent-based shelter for up to 30 individuals without children. When first established by ordinance, the tent camp would rotate every three months to a new location hosted by a faith-based community. The ordinances in Thurston County and the City of Olympia were ultimately changed to allow the camp to be hosted for up to six months in each location.



Like other tent cities, Camp Q offers stability, concentrated service delivery and other building blocks towards independence

cottage homes.



“Tent cities” feature tents and make-shift dwellings

Camp Quixote and Panza, its non-profit support organization worked with county and City of Olympia officials to relocate the camp to a permanent location on county-owned property located inside the City of Olympia. They created a village composed of bedroom-sized cottages around a community center with a kitchen, social space, showers and bathrooms, and laundry facilities.

In August 2012, the City of Olympia approved a “conditional use permit” to allow a permanent cottage based community to be located in a light industrial area. Although several neighboring property owners challenged this conditional use permit in Superior Court, Quixote Village prevailed and on Christmas eve, December 24, 2013, 30 residents moved into their new

CH8: BACKGROUND OF THE HOMELESS CENSUS

The Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness

The Thurston County Ten-Year Plan, first adopted in 2005 and revised in 2010, requires that we track progress toward the goal of reducing homelessness by half. Since 2006, the first year of the Ten-Year Plan, homelessness in Thurston County has instead increased by 56%.

The Ten-Year Plan was a product of the 2005 State Legislature’s “Homeless Housing and Assistance Act” as a way to guide statewide efforts to reduce homelessness in Washington State by fifty percent by July 1, 2015. The creation of the “Ten-Year Plan” approach marked a significant change in how Thurston County, much like other counties across the state, responds to homelessness.

Historically in Thurston County a small group of homeless housing and service providers had collaborated to manage homelessness with limited resources. The Ten-Year Plan now requires all counties in Washington State—including Thurston County—to work toward ending homelessness.

In addition to the Ten-Year Plan, the act provided funding generated by surcharge fees on recording documents in each county, with some funds retained by the state. These surcharge monies fund the Thurston County Affordable Housing and Homeless Housing Program.

Specifically, the act requires the county to:

- Develop a Ten-Year Homeless Plan to reduce homelessness by 50% by the year 2015.
- Use a portion of local document recording fees to reduce homelessness.
- Conduct an annual Point-in-Time Homeless Census.
- Implement the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- Report annually to the state legislature.

Ten-Year Plan Accomplishments: 2006 - 2014

In the first five years, Thurston County spent more than \$13 million in federal and local funds on affordable and homeless housing, including shelter and transitional housing projects that assisted 613 homeless families and individuals and for housing support services. The target goal in 2005 was to create 300 new units of permanent housing by 2015. In the first half of the Ten-Year Homeless Plan, 180 new units were completed.

In addition, 223 at-risk households were provided transitional housing under the Tenant-based Rental Assistance Program and over \$900,000 was provided to local housing agencies to support operations and maintenance costs.

Ten-Year Plan Revised Housing Goals: 2011 – 2015

Despite significant gains made during the first five years, Thurston County’s homeless population has grown from 441 persons in 2006 to 686 in 2014—an increase of 56%. This growth in population necessitates the need for a renewed focus on the county’s homeless problem, requiring new and higher benchmark goals, housing strategies, and supportive services.



The 10-Year Plan goal is to reduce homelessness by half to 220 people. Instead, it has increased by 36% to 599.

The first half of the Ten-Year Plan (2006 - 2010) called for 225 new permanent housing units and 16 new shelter beds being built. The new target goal for housing is to create 690 units of low-income and affordable housing by creating 150 homeless units, 200 affordable units, and providing 340 new housing rental assistance vouchers. The plan will be updated later in 2014 to ensure that it is consistent with the federal strategies identified in the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.

Following is a summary of the 2010 revision of the Ten-Year Plan goals:

1. Expand the Supply of Homeless Housing Units: 150 new units (39 new units by 2014).
2. Expand the Supply of Affordable Housing Units: 200 Affordable Housing Units (137 new units by 2014).
3. Expand the Supply of Rental Assistance: Rental assistance for 340 homeless and at-risk households.
4. Preserve Existing Subsidized and Low-income Housing.
5. Consolidate Homeless Resources and Improve Service Delivery.
6. Maximize Housing Funding Opportunities.
7. Enhance Supportive Housing Services and Prevention.
8. Establish a Coordinated System for Discharging Clients Leaving Jail and Treatment Facilities.
9. Conduct Adequate Data Collection and Planning to Efficiently Manage Limited Resources for Homelessness.
10. Change Policy, Law and Legislation Where Necessary.

Information above excerpted from the original 2005 Thurston County Ten-Year Plan and the "Thurston County Ten-Year Homeless Housing Plan Revision" dated December 2010, prepared in collaboration of the Thurston County HOME Consortium and the HOME Citizens Advisory Committee.

History of Thurston County's Census

Thurston County pioneered the concept of the "point-in-time" homeless census now practiced statewide. This innovation arose from over 25 years of collaborative efforts between non-profits, local governments, and faith communities.

In the early 1990's, there were initial efforts by John Walsh of the Community Action Council and other local service providers to enumerate the number of local homeless people.



Outreach programs link homeless people to services



Enhanced supportive housing services and prevention are part of the 10-Year Plan

In 2002, Selena Kilmoyer, of the Thurston County Housing Task Force, recognized the problem of serving an undefined population. The solution to this problem was to find out how many homeless people there were by counting them.

Kilmoyer presented this idea to the Thurston County Housing Task Force, and proposed that Task Force members conduct a homeless census to determine how large the homeless population was. Theresa Slusher of the Thurston County Housing Authority, now the County Homeless Coordinator, further developed this idea into a viable work plan. Drawing on Housing Authority staff resources and Housing Task Force representatives from all local service and shelter providers, the Task Force launched the first comprehensive census of homeless people in the county in 2003.

This approach was recognized by Tedd Kelleher of the State Department of Community Trade & Economic Development (CTED, now known as the Department of Commerce) as a valuable way to evaluate efforts to end homelessness and apportion funding. The 2005 state “Homeless Housing and Assistance Act” codified this practice, and created a mandate for all counties that received state and federal homeless and housing funds to use the census as a way to measure performance and document needs for continued future funding.

Aside from the value of the **product** of the statewide “Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons,” which produces highly valuable data, the **process** of developing the census underscored the value of collaboration between faith-based communities, non-profits and the government. The problem of homelessness spills over/across all parts of the community; linking these diverse elements to work together is essential to making progress. This collaboration between government, non-profits, and faith-based communities was a guiding principle in making the homeless census successful.



A “Point-in-Time” count of homeless persons helps us to know who’s homeless and why

Federal Government’s Role in Census

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reports to Congress on the number of homeless people in the United States. HUD directs federal McKinney grant recipients to perform a point-in-time count of homeless persons during the last full week of January.

In order to avoid duplication of efforts, the state-mandated count is conducted on the fourth Thursday in January. This year the count occurred on January 24, 2014.

HUD uses the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to track data and locally implemented homeless counts to arrive at the number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless people and the characteristics of homeless people living in shelters.

The report offers a baseline for reports that explore patterns of homelessness over time. Homeless service providers across the country, such as emergency shelters and transitional and supportive housing programs, collect information about their clients to match it with information from other providers to get accurate counts of homeless clients and the services they need.



Washington State’s Role in Census

The 2005 State’s “Homeless Housing and Assistance Act” requires an annual count of homeless persons in Washington State. The purpose of these guidelines is to define the common elements required of all local counts, to ensure that data is comparable between counties, and to ensure that confidentiality is protected. Communities are encouraged to adapt this basic framework for the annual census to the specific conditions and infrastructure of their community.

Local government is directed to make every effort to count all homeless individuals living outdoors, in shelters, and in transitional housing, coordinated, when reasonably feasible, with already existing homeless census projects including those funded in part by HUD under the McKinney-Vento homeless assistance program. The department determines, in consultation with local governments, the data to be collected. All personal information collected in the census is confidential, and the department and each local government is to take all necessary steps to protect the identity and confidentiality of each person counted.



Thurston County's Role in Census

Thurston County is the local unit of government mandated (RCW 43.185C) to count the county's homeless population annually. The County is also the lead jurisdiction in administering federal HOME Program dollars along with the state recording fee dollars intended to fund homeless and housing projects.



The results of this count are reported to both the state and federal governments. Additionally, the county's census report includes an expanded definition to include people living with friends or family, people in jail and mental or other health facilities that will be released to homelessness. This information helps local governments, non-profits, faith communities, and others to understand the extent of homelessness, its impact on local resources, and helps to develop strategies to reduce the number of people without permanent homes.

The County plays a crucial role in ensuring a comprehensive census that identifies all local homeless people, including rural areas surrounding Bucoda, Rainier, Tenino and Yelm.

Homeless people from beyond the urban core often find refuge "off the grid" of traditional shelter and services, which can limit the usefulness of urban-oriented census methodologies.



*While homelessness is a regional problem,
70% of the County's homeless come to Olympia
to find services and shelter*

City of Olympia's Role in Census

Thurston County contracts with the City of Olympia to coordinate the annual homeless census, analyze the results, and to produce a final report.



Olympia has a unique role related to Thurston County's homeless population. While homelessness is a regional problem, its locus is concentrated in Olympia because it is the urban core of the county. Federal, state, and local funds support a vibrant continuum of services, shelter and housing, most of which are located within Olympia.

This means that homeless people from more rural areas like Bucoda or Rochester gravitate towards the urban core where 90% of the shelter, housing and service resources are located. As shown in this report, the number of homeless people exceeds the number of shelter beds and transitional housing units, which means that unsheltered homeless people must resort to car camping on the streets, sleeping in public parks, using libraries as warming centers, and other areas not primarily intended to serve as de facto homeless facilities. As a result, Olympia becomes a focal point in addressing many local homeless policies and strategies.

CH9: OFF THE GRID - WHERE DO THEY GO?

Off the Grid - Where Do They Go?

In 2014, the majority of homeless people were in either emergency homeless shelters (155 people) that offer shelter for up to 90 days, or transitional housing (181 people) that offer more secure housing for up to two years. Shelter and transitional housing represent two of the core strategies of the Ten-Year Plan to end homelessness.

Yet over one third of the people in this census, a total of 263, were unsheltered, or living “off the grid”, limiting our understanding of who they are and how best to respond to their homelessness.

The “unsheltered” find refuge by sleeping on the streets, camping in the woods, living in substandard or abandoned buildings or living in vehicles. The census was able to find some of the unsheltered, particularly those located in the urban core. But, according to anecdotal reports, many more go unseen, working diligently to avoid detection, particularly in rural areas where there are more limited services to draw them out.

Some homeless people remain unsheltered because they don’t fit into traditional shelter programs or transitional housing programs for numerous reasons:

- Dogs are not allowed in most shelters (many homeless consider dogs their family);
- Drug and alcohol addiction;
- Severe mental illness;
- Lack of age-appropriate shelter for youth (only 10 shelter beds for youth); and
- Lack of family shelter that maintains family cohesion (homeless families often choose car camping over dormitory style facilities).

Such barriers make it nearly impossible for entry into the system. Living unsheltered makes it very difficult to stabilize an addiction problem, seek medical treatment for mental health conditions or participate in case management.

Looking at how the unsheltered accommodate themselves will help to identify new strategies to strengthen the Ten-Year Plan to reduce homelessness. Following is an examination of the ways that the unsheltered homeless seek refuge.



Many unsheltered people are reluctant to go into shelter, fearing the loss of pets and possessions



Street dependence is a hallmark of homelessness in the urban core

Snapshot: Unsheltered on the Streets in the Urban Core

Mirroring the national geography of homelessness, Thurston County’s homeless population is concentrated in the urban hub of downtown Olympia. Like population centers everywhere, Olympia draws many people to its downtown core, including the homeless. According to Thurston Regional Planning, this area is home to 1,557 residents and many street-level businesses. These businesses include entertainment (restaurants, live theaters, bars with or without live music and dancing), retail (shops offering a broad range of goods), professional offices, government offices and numerous non-profit agencies. To visitors and some residents, downtown Olympia serves as the easiest-to-find, most visible “living room” for the entire county.

Characteristics of Homelessness in the Urban Hub: The most visible of all homeless people are concentrated in the urban hub of Olympia, followed secondly by homeless people holding signs at the entrances of nearby shopping centers. In particular, there are specific demographics that are predominant in the urban hub, including: homeless youth or transition-age youth; mentally ill homeless people; and homeless “travelers” who appear during the summer months. According to homeless people and their advocates, downtown is the only place they can gather for a sense of community, to access services or to seek shelter. A more limited number of people actually sleep, rest or sit on the sidewalks, presumably from a lack of other accommodations.



Urban businesses and street dependent people are often in conflict over the sidewalks

Given this range of visitors to the downtown core, there are ongoing conflicts of use of the sidewalks as a public space.

According to homeless people and their advocates, the downtown core serves as a critical hub to access services. The urban hub offers one of the very few public spaces in which homeless people can gather for social purposes. Sidewalks often provide refuge from the elements under the numerous overhangs and building nooks. According to business owners and others, business suffers as a direct result of the high concentration of homeless people in the downtown core and incidents, real or perceived, of anti-social behavior by homeless people. City officials continue to explore options to create a safer, more welcoming downtown for all.

Shelter, Housing and Services Network: Olympia contains the highest concentration of homeless resources (90%) with the downtown hub containing approximately half of all shelter, transitional housing and social services in the County. The organizations that provide some level of service to homeless people and those at risk of homelessness include: Community Youth Services, Partners in Prevention and Stonewall Youth – all of which serve youth and transition-age youth; Salvation Army and the Union Gospel Mission, both of which serve predominantly single adults; Capital Clubhouse which serves people with mental illness; Family Support Center which serves families with children; and, SafePlace, which serves victims of domestic and sexual violence. Other less formal service providers include faith-based organizations like City Gates Ministries, which serves low-income and homeless people; Covenant Creatures, which provides food and supplies for the pets of low-income and homeless people; and, the First Baptist Church that provides a weekly meal for homeless and very low-income people. Additionally, there are secular service providers that include the “Emma Goldman Youth Homeless Outreach Project” (EGYHOP) which distributes supplies, and “Food not Bombs”, which provides volunteers for mobile food kitchens.



A disproportionate number of street dependent homeless are youth under 17 - for whom there are only 10 shelter beds available

Other public or non-profit facilities also provide accommodations not found or welcoming elsewhere for the homeless and those at risk, including the YMCA (showers and restrooms); Percival Landing and the Olympia Community Center (public showers and lobby areas); Intercity Transit (transportation and a de facto community center on wheels); and, the Olympia Timberland Library (day center offering shelter from the elements).

Unique Challenges: Downtown sidewalks are a public facility with competing uses. For businesses, the public sidewalks offer access to potential customers. For non-profit organizations, the public sidewalks offer centralized access to potential clients. For homeless people and those at risk, the public sidewalks offer de facto social service accommodations, functioning as a drop-in center and offering sleeping accommodations. There are no identified public areas where homeless people are accepted in the downtown core. As a result of complaints, they are often displaced from specific sidewalks or parks without clear options of where they could go.

Collateral Impacts of Urban Homelessness: The primary impact of urban homelessness is the potential severing of community ties caused by service models that target “homeless people” rather than “community members”. The most successful programs emphasize community ties and responsibilities, while less successful programs emphasize individual responsibility or simply provide shelter.

The chart on page 17 shows that while only 80 or 13% of the homeless stated the last permanent residence was in Olympia, 419 or 70% of them are now located in Olympia, presumably to access shelter, transitional housing and the high concentration of services. This phenomenon of population transfer supports the belief that homelessness is primarily an urban problem.

A secondary impact of urban homelessness is that the real or perceived high concentrations of homeless people who gather on sidewalks have a negative impact on local businesses.

This real or perceived negative impact has been the impetus for ongoing efforts by Olympia officials to enact laws and policies that discourage sitting and lying down on the sidewalks; aggressive panhandling; panhandling near ATM machines and parking pay stations; and, remove certain low-cost, high-alcohol content products in the urban hub.

Strategic Responses:

- Designate Homeless-friendly areas: Identify areas that are appropriate gathering places for homeless people with reasonable accommodations, i.e. benches or overhangs.
- Homeless-friendly public restrooms: Identify restrooms and/or hygiene centers that are welcoming to homeless people. Explore policies and programs that encourage positive behavior in the downtown core, and penalize only illegal behavior.
- Downtown Community Dialogue: Create more opportunities to bridge the gaps between business owners, the homeless and their advocates and service providers.
- Build partnership approaches: Foster partnerships between the business sector, homeless service providers and local government to present a more integrated approach to service referrals, litter control, and encouraging civility standards.
- Incentivize positive behaviors: Negotiate a balance of programs to incentivize desired behavior and laws that penalize anti-social behavior with safeguards to avoid abuse of penalties.

Snapshot: Unsheltered in Urban Parks and Greenbelts

The urban hub of Thurston County has numerous parks, greenbelts intended for recreational use, and greenbelts intended to serve as buffers adjacent to public right-of-ways like freeways and rail lines. These areas include 39 parks in Olympia, 24 in Lacey and 12 in Tumwater.

Additionally, there are numerous greenbelts that connect public facilities like the Washington State Department of Ecology and St. Martin’s University.

Many of these areas, intended for recreation or to serve as buffers, are increasingly being used as campgrounds for homeless people. Particularly areas that are located adjacent to major shopping areas where homeless people can hold signs asking for money or within some proximity to social services. These campgrounds were previously included in the PIT Homeless Census through a “Field Census” of known camp



90% of all shelter and services are concentrated in the urban hub



Parks in the urban hub often serve as de facto day centers for homeless people

sites. However, this practice has been discontinued for safety reasons and is now replaced by a central “**Homeless Connect Event**” intended to reach unsheltered people.

There is an outer ring of parks and green belts occupied by homeless campers who have significantly less reliance on services. In particular, the Capitol Forest contains an unknown number of campsites that were historically too remote to include in the census.

Service Network: There is no dedicated social service network for public parks and greenbelts. Instead, there is proximity to services located in the urban hub. The staffing for these natural areas is predominantly oriented toward grounds maintenance and conducting recreation programs. The current mandate for most parks and grounds staffing is to clear out homeless campers and clean up all camp sites. There are similar although less frequent efforts to patrol and clear greenbelt areas and right-of-way areas adjacent to the freeway.

Unique Challenges: While there are 253 shelter beds (212 year-round and an additional 41 cold weather beds) dedicated to specific population groups in the urban hub, there remain a persistent number of homeless people who camp in the surrounding areas. Many of these homeless campers are people who can’t find shelter or housing because of their criminal backgrounds, particularly for sex-offenders. At the time of the Homeless Census, there were 33 registered sex offenders listed as transients.

Others are unable or unwilling to cooperate with the formal rules of shelters like the Salvation Army, or the requirements of government subsidy programs like state and County veterans assistance programs. Still others simply prefer to live entirely “off the grid” and are homeless by choice, although many of these individuals qualify for mental health services they do not access. Given their disconnect from formal services, it is difficult to accurately assess their needs.

There is a significant impact on public and other resources to clear camps and then clean up the campsites. One example is in the City of Olympia where Parks staff to regularly patrol all Olympia parks to discourage homeless campers. Additionally, there are some volunteer neighborhood groups that patrol and sometimes clear camps.



Homeless camps in public parks raise concerns about garbage, untreated human waste and safety

Collateral Impacts of Homelessness in Parks and

Greenbelts: While many of these areas go undetected, an increasing number are discovered by park officials, park users or neighbors who complain to the local jurisdiction about safety concerns, garbage, human waste and the cumulative negative impacts on the environment. Significant public resources are expended in camp clearances.

Strategic Responses:

- Public camping areas: Identify areas where homeless people can legally camp and provide for garbage removal and latrines.
- Park outreach: Expand upon “street outreach” programs to parks and green belts to provide intervention and referrals to community-based services.

Snapshot: Unsheltered on a College Campus

Evergreen is a small, liberal arts state college located northwest of Olympia in an unincorporated area of the County. As with other colleges, Evergreen has many buildings that are open late and have many seating areas intended to support higher education. These areas are minimally patrolled by campus police.

The school property is heavily wooded with nearly 1,000 acres of second growth forestland and trails.

The undergraduate student population is typically low-income and dependent upon low-wage jobs, loans and other subsidies to support their studies. With rising tuition costs and increased competition for low-wage jobs, some students find themselves unable to pay for both tuition and living costs.



Homelessness on college campuses is a growing trend, although under-reported

This equation results in a small and hidden percentage of students who remain enrolled but live in their cars, the woods or “couch-surf” with friends. In 2011, 2012 and again in 2014 student interns conducted a survey of homeless students at the Evergreen campus and presented their findings in the 2012 Homeless Census report. In 2011, the Evergreen survey found that 46 out of 147 respondents, or 31%, reported that they had been homeless at some point while attending college. In 2012 the Evergreen survey found that 11% or 35 out of 318 respondents reported that they are **currently** homeless and an additional 15% or 49 students reported they were at risk of homelessness. In 2014, a survey of 198 students found that slightly over 5% or 10 students were currently homeless and another 35 or almost 18% said they had been homeless at

one time during their time at Evergreen. (the 2011, 2012 and 2014 “Homelessness in Higher Education Reports are available online.) The Evergreen survey was not conducted in 2013.

Service Network: Evergreen is served by a number of student organizations that provide traditional support to assist students with housing, eating and social networking. Evergreen does not host traditional non-profit organizations on campus, although staff will provide referrals where possible. There is an informal network of services through loosely configured organizations like “Food not Bombs” to provide food and through socially-based networks to identify temporary shared housing, parking areas to live in a car or places to camp in the woods. The latter two accommodations are euphemistically termed “Z Dorm”, as a reference to the formal dormitories labeled by the alphabet. Students also use community-based resources, such as the Olympia Food Bank.

Unique Challenges: Homelessness in higher education is a hidden phenomenon. As with many other homeless people, homeless students are keen to avoid the stigma of being identified as such. They are further disinclined to reveal their informal accommodations given that car-camping and tent-camping violate campus rules. Given the typical age of undergraduate students, many students at risk of homelessness have limited life experiences to equip them to negotiate service agencies or other resources. Older students may be returning to school due to economic hardship and unable to access sufficient employment or subsidies to maintain a home. Evergreen is somewhat geographically and socially isolated from the social service agencies based in the urban hub, although there is excellent access to public transportation.



Many homeless college students are “doubled up” with friends

Collateral Impacts of College Homelessness: The primary impact of college homelessness is upon the affected college students who face significant stress in addition to the traditional demands of academic life. College level students do not have the support of a McKinney-Vento Act-funded program to monitor their well-being, count them annually or otherwise take action to ensure that there will be no student left behind.

Strategic Responses:

- College-based housing and shelter: Evergreen possesses institutional resources to set aside blocks of housing units to serve as emergency housing for homeless students.
- Exchange program for homeless students: College housing officials could explore programs to encourage a domestic “Student Exchange” that would match low-income students from out-of-state with host families associated with the school.

- Partner with community-based service providers: Administrators could expand upon current staff practices of referrals to community-based services or faith-based communities.

Snapshot: Unsheltered in Rural Yelm

Yelm is a rural community of 6,848 (2010 US Census) based in southeast Thurston County that serves as a regional hub for homeless and other social services, including both formal and informal services. As the largest municipality among the smaller cities, it offers a useful model for understanding homelessness in a rural setting.



Homeless people in rural families are less visible due to the lack of formal shelters and services

Characteristics of Rural Homelessness: There are very limited numbers of existing shelter beds in rural areas. As a result, homeless people more typically live in vehicles or substandard structures that do not meet housing standards. These substandard structures include abandoned houses, former barns and agricultural buildings or other substandard buildings lacking heat, lighting or the means to cook or bathe, which meets the federal definition of homelessness. Rural homeless people tend to rely on informal networks of services for food, shelter or other needs and therefore fall beyond the radar of service providers or the state’s HMIS data collection system. As a result, there is less information on or understanding of homelessness in rural areas.

Service Network: The Yelm network of social services are anchored by the Yelm Community Services Center and supported by a number of faith-based efforts and civic organizations. Key faith communities include the Emanuel Lutheran Church (provides an evening meal and food bank) and the Covenant Crossroads Community Church (provides an evening meal and food bank).



People in substandard housing in rural areas are considered part of the homeless census

In addition, the Yelm Rotary and the Yelm Lion’s clubs each participate in food programs. There are a total of 6 formal shelter beds supplemented by additional shelter resources offered informally in faith-based facilities.

Unique Challenges: Yelm, like other rural communities, is challenged by a lack of locally based resources. Rural community leaders express concerns about not receiving a proportionate share of available public funding. Rural areas are further challenged by limited public transportation resources for rural people in need who have to travel to access services in the urban hub.

Collateral Impacts of Rural Homelessness: The primary impact of rural homelessness is that rural homeless people are often forced to migrate toward services and lose their community ties. As shown in the chart on page 15, the census reveals a lopsided distribution showing lower numbers of homeless people were found in the rural areas and concentrated numbers in the urban areas. This phenomenon of population transfer supports the belief that homelessness is primarily an urban problem.

Strategic Responses:

- Proportionate funding for rural areas: Rural homeless advocates call for proportionate fiscal support for rural service providers.
- Partnering with faith communities: Faith community resources may offer the single greatest opportunity to expand the service network.
- Zoning reforms: Local governments could support faith-based efforts through a reconfiguration of zoning regulations that would allow for an expansion of shelters and service centers within existing faith community facilities.

CH10: NATIONAL MODELS MADE LOCAL

BEST PRACTICE RESPONSES TO HOMELESSNESS

Across the nation, experts, public officials and concerned citizens continue to explore new responses to homelessness, identifying “best practices” that do a better job of getting people off the street and into some form of housing, if not full independence.

Locally, service providers, policy makers and others have explored these new trends while also examining ways to strengthen traditional models.

Following are a series of articles submitted by local agencies who have successfully brought these national models home to our County.





SideWalk—Rapid Re-Housing in Action; *100 Homes Campaign*

By Phil Owen, Program Director

Editor's Note: *Of the many nationally recognized strategies to be adopted locally, “rapid re-housing” prioritizes getting homeless people directly into their own homes versus cycling them first through either shelter or transitional housing. By using the equivalent of shelter bed-night costs to provide housing, this approach can stabilize people more quickly.*

The only **permanent** solution to homelessness is **housing**. To that end, in 2013 SideWalk launched a “100 Homes” campaign to help people leave homelessness with keys to their own home. SideWalk’s success was primarily measured by getting 128 people into their own homes. However, it was also measured by the robust community-wide dialogue this campaign sparked - - engaging landlords, low income and homeless people business leaders, non-profits and public officials all to discuss the concept known as “Rapid Re-housing”.

SideWalk is a volunteer operated organization that serves childless, adults. We move people who have been living on the streets or in shelters to permanent homes through a nationally used best practice called rapid rehousing, a combination of rental assistance and case management.

The average total cost for each person housed using rapid rehousing is \$1200, with the majority of clients requiring an initial investment in a rental deposit and/or first month’s rent. Other clients receive a shallow rental subsidy for up to a year.

SideWalk is a young program building towards a lofty goal; to end homelessness. We’re now two and a half year’s old; at SideWalk’s one-year birthday, we decided to set ourselves a goal of housing 100 people within a year’s time. We made that goal in eleven months. Of the people who were housed in the 100 Homes Campaign, we found a lot of hope for the possibilities rapid rehousing can offer:

the 100 Homes Campaign, we found a lot of hope for the possibilities rapid rehousing can offer:

- 71% of clients were unsheltered at program entry
- 37% of clients were chronically homeless
- 67% had a disability
- 44% had mental illness
- 24% had *more than one* disability type (physical, mental, subst. abuse)

In 2013, SideWalk used rapid rehousing to house 128 people. In 2014, we’re on track to house more than that, with community support, engagement, and partnerships with other organizations with whom we walk side by side. Together, we can end homelessness.

SideWalk is a program of Interfaith Works, started in 2011 with a grant from the City of Olympia in partnership with Community Youth Services and Family Support Center. Together we form the Homeless Prevention Partnership.

For more about SideWalk, please visit www.walkthurston.org.



Quixote Village;

From Tents to Tiny Houses—Becoming a Permanent Cottage Community

By Jill Severn

Editor's Note: Started as a protest in 2007, Camp Quixote was a rotating tent encampment hosted by faith communities in the urban hub of Thurston County. In late 2013, this tent-based community transformed to a cottage-based community of tiny houses. Recognized in a recent *New York Times* article, Quixote Village offers a new model for housing homeless people – tiny houses making a big impact on homelessness.

The recent opening of **Quixote Village** illustrates the potential of tiny houses to reduce homelessness. After seven years as an itinerant tent camp for homeless adults, residents of Camp Quixote moved into Quixote Village on December 24, 2013. The Village is now a self-governed community of 30 tiny homes with a large community center on the edge of Olympia. Working with faith communities, builders, government officials and others who care about homelessness, Camp Quixote residents developed an intentional community that both ended their own homelessness and offered up a model for other communities to consider.

It typically costs between \$200,000 and \$250,000 to build a studio apartment for a low-income renter in western Washington. The total development cost for Quixote Village was just under \$88,000 per unit. Clearly, our society could afford to build more housing at \$88,000 per unit than at \$200,000. So, there's a lot of excitement about micro-housing as a way to build more housing for more people by radically reducing costs per unit.

Olympia is not the only city where this is happening. In Madison, Wisconsin, Austin, Texas, and Eugene, Oregon, people are engaged in projects that feature even smaller houses with fewer amenities at even lower costs. (In fact, Quixote Village is the most "upscale" among micro-housing developments for people who've been homeless that we know of.)

But there is more to the story of Quixote Village than lowering costs, and it begins with the seven-year tradition of Camp Quixote's self-governing community.

The most important feature of the Village is that it was conceived of and largely designed by the founders and residents of Camp Quixote. It was their idea to build tiny houses and a community

building with shared showers, laundry, kitchen, and social spaces. It was Camp residents who, in the Village's design phase, chose to give up some interior space in their cottages in order to have sociable front porches. The design grew from their own judgment about how to find the right balance between the need for solitude and the need for community. They were enormously fortunate to have an architect – Garner Miller of MSGS Architects – who listened to them. (Garner knew the Camp well because he'd been a host volunteer when it was on his church's grounds.)

So when the national media cite Quixote Village as a template for tiny house developments as a solution to homelessness, we hope the deeper idea – the idea of a self-governing, self-created community – doesn't get lost in the enthusiasm for the Village's adorable, visually appealing little houses and its beautiful and welcoming community building.

And we hope that the idea of tiny house communities spreads beyond its use as a solution to homelessness. Already there are conversations about self-governing tiny house communities for single parents, for retirees, and for the growing legion of working poor who struggle to pay high rents.

Finally, we also hope that the Village offers a powerful lesson about what each of us really needs, and about what environmentally sustainable development might look like in our increasingly crowded world.



Sheltering for the Health & Safety of All



A Program of Interfaith Works

ThePeoplesHouseOly.org

The People's House: *Low Barrier Shelter*

By Meg Martin, People's House Program Manager

***Editor's Note:** People's House is developing program, funded by the HOME Consortium, the City of Olympia and private funders to provide up to 40 shelter beds with a service model of low barrier / high management. Currently seeking space in the urban hub, People's House represents a local adaptation of a national best practice geared toward getting the unsheltered off the street and stabilizing them with shelter first, services second.*



Some homeless people refuse to be separated by gender from significant others, choosing instead to remain unsheltered

Low-barrier shelter is intended to provide the **maximum** shelter with the **minimum** barriers to get the **most** people off the street and into shelter. Often mistaken as “no-barrier”, low barrier shelter is a proven service-model that right-sizes the rules to safely help the most vulnerable of the unsheltered come in out of the cold. This helps the homeless, business owners and housed residents who are negatively impacted by unmanaged homelessness and it helps the community reduce homelessness. This service-model has been shown to drastically reduce the cost of public money in communities on the hospital system and criminal justice system.

Studies show that the unsheltered homeless are predominantly considered chronically homeless. This means that they have been homeless for a long period of time and are living with a disability. A significant number of the chronically homeless in our community are living with complex mental health and substance abuse challenges. Un-managed, the chronically homeless in our community are often part of the visible urban problems cited by critics. Well managed low-barrier shelters eliminate these problems by getting people off the street and connected to services. Moreover, they provide a starting point to stabilize people facing multiple co-existing disorders.

Interfaith Works has managed two low-barrier shelter programs in Olympia for over 22 years. One is a 12-bed seasonal shelter for men and the other is an 18 bed shelter for women. Both have been supported and housed in churches across Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater. These informal, low-barrier shelters are volunteer- run, do not require ID, do not require sobriety and do not perform background checks on their guests. The only barrier to service is being identified as a level 2 or 3 sex offender.

As the **first formal** low-barrier shelter, People's House has encountered significant community debate. However, People's House constitutes just another of many low-barrier programs in the community. In addition to the Interfaith Works emergency shelter network, from 2001 – 2005, Bread and Roses ran the Devoe Road Shelter, sheltering over 50 single men every night in an old building. The success of the Devoe Road shelter led to the creation of the Drexel House Program in the same location. The Devoe Road Shelter started without a formal process to approve the location and there was no public funding to impose requirements, yet for nearly five years this shelter was operated with virtually no problems.

The People's House will provide a fixed-site shelter for homeless adults. It will offer night shelter and day services to meet the basic needs of the street community and connect people to a coordinated network of vital social services.

Low-barrier shelter for adult individuals has been identified in the Thurston County updated ten-year plan as one of 5 top priorities and one of two identified as immediately needed to fill a vital gap in services. Low-barrier shelter programs are widely identified as best practices for shelter management programs. According to the Best Practices for Entry into Emergency Shelters by the 100K Homes Campaign:

“To end chronic homelessness and homelessness among vulnerable people, communities must be able to provide low-barrier entry into the homeless and housing placement system. Dozens of communities have demonstrated that emergency shelters can be well-run and safe without requirements that either keep many homeless people from entering shelter or that cause them to be asked to leave before they find permanent housing. By making your community's safety net for chronic and vulnerable homeless people maximally accessible, you will have taken a substantial step toward ending homelessness.”

Recommended best practices for eligibility and continued stay emergency shelter criteria:

- Homeless (HUD Definition)
- Age 18 or older
- Ambulatory and not requiring hospital or nursing home care
- Agree to be nonviolent
- Agree to not use or sell drugs or illegal substances on the premises
- Agree to treat other clients, staff and the property with respect
- Agree to obey fire and other safety regulations

Eligibility criteria **NOT** recognized as best practices:

- Sobriety and/or commitment to be drug free
- Requirements to take medication if the client has a mental illness
- Participation in religious services or activities
- Participation in drug treatment services (including NA/AA)
- Proof of citizenship
- Identification
- Referral from the police, hospital or other service provider (as opposed to self-referrals)
- Payment or ability to pay (though saving plans are encouraged)



High barrier shelters can exclude homeless people who don't meet threshold requirements

In addition, the 100K Homes Campaign recommends that emergency shelter attempt to reserve each person's bed each night for as long as they continue to meet the eligibility criteria for the program. This allows both for a more stable program and for clients and staff to work toward permanent housing placement.



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Community Youth Services - Youth Bridge Facility; Launching Brighter Futures Youth Center

By Keylee Marineau

Director of Services for High Risk Youth
Community Youth Services Brighter Future Youth Center

Editor's Note: *In the 2013 Homeless Services Gaps Analysis, the Homeless Coordinator identified "Youth Bridge" facilities as essential for providing a hybrid of youth street outreach, drop-in and shelter services into a singular but multi-faceted program. Such programs are necessary to meet youth where they are rather than impose threshold requirements for services. The recently opened "Brighter Futures Youth Center" serves as Olympia's first stand-alone youth bridge facility.*

Community Youth Services (CYS) launched a new facility in March 2014 called the "Brighter Futures Youth Center" (BFYC) which brings together three distinct programs that serve homeless and street dependent youth.

CYS has been meeting the needs of street dependent and homeless youth and young adults for more than four decades. Our mission is to empower youth at-risk and their families to meet their goals for safety, stability, belonging, and success by providing a continuum of individualized services and advocacy. CYS and its community partners have helped thousands of runaway and homeless youth (RHY) find safe and stable housing through 19 programs that provide a continuum of care.



Street dependent youth, unable to access shelter because of reporting laws often create street families to survive.

Along this continuum of care, three programs provide essential services that meet RHY where they are at through *Street Outreach*, *Rosie's Place* Drop-In Center, and *Young Adult Shelter*. These three services provide a low-barrier, high-expectation point of entry for RHY to access services that address basic needs.

On March 3rd, 2014 *Street Outreach*, *Rosie's Place* and *Young Adult Shelter* relocated to a stand-alone facility on the corner of Pear and Legion Way in downtown Olympia. The *Brighter Futures Youth Center* (BFYC) houses these three programs, providing a safe, autonomous, comfortable environment for our community's most vulnerable. This program brings together three distinct programs:

1. **Street Outreach** CYS outreach workers are often the first point of contact for youth who are vulnerable, homeless or at-risk for homelessness. Through initial contacts with trained Street Outreach



www.communityyouthservices.org



Advocates, homeless and street dependent youth may be referred onto the next level of services at CYC: *Rosie's Place Drop-In Center* and/or *Young Adult Shelter*.

2. **Rosie's Place** This CYC drop-in center serves youth ages 12-24 who are vulnerable, homeless, or at-risk for homelessness. Youth from throughout Thurston County gravitate to Olympia because of the accepting nature of the community; availability of and access to an established infrastructure of services and resources; greater numbers of youth with shared experiences of homelessness; accessibility to public transportation; and increased likelihood of anonymity, blending in, and being able to survive on the street. As the only daytime shelter for at-risk, homeless, and runaway youth in the area, Rosie's Place sees close to 1,400 (unduplicated) youth annually who come from a wide geographic area. In 2013 the total number (unduplicated) of youth served was 1,376 and the average daily attendance was 34.
3. **The Young Adult Shelter** (YAS) is a low barrier emergency shelter for at-risk, vulnerable, and homeless youth ages 18-24. YAS provides 10 overnight shelter beds and supportive services seven days a week, 12 months per year – over 3,600 bed nights of care. This program aligns with the Thurston County HOME Consortium goal a): Support inclusive, interim housing (shelter and transitional housing) for families, youth, and individuals throughout Thurston County.

BFYC provides for the basic needs of homeless youth: food, clothing, hygiene supplies, showers, laundry, and a safe place to sleep. Trained, caring staff supervise the shelter, and as appropriate, also refer participants to supportive services. Youth at the Young Adult Shelter can access all of the services provided through Rosie's Drop-In Center and other CYC programs, including case management, employment and training programs, independent living skills programs, transitional housing, parenting, substance abuse treatment, and mental health programs, and they can also be referred to other providers in the community.



CYC Youth participate in downtown clean-ups

The BFYC is often a first introduction for youth to Community Youth Services and the many supportive programs and services available to them that seek to:

- Increase safety and well-being of at-risk, homeless youth by 1) meeting their immediate needs for shelter, food, clothing, and 2) beginning to form trusting and meaningful relationships between staff and youth.
- Provide education, prevention, and access to intervention services on issues related to youths' well-being by 1) referring youth to support services dealing with domestic violence, sexual abuse, exploitation, and LGBTQ; 2) providing preventive and therapeutic services, 3) providing strong role models who demonstrate strength of character, good decision making, and high self-esteem, 4) providing referrals for medical and dental services.
- Increase self-sufficiency for at-risk and homeless youth by 1) providing case management to work with youth to develop individual goals for stability and independence, and 2) working with public educators, vocational training programs, and employment programs to facilitate access for youth.
- Assist youth in building permanent connections with caring adults by 1) utilizing proven strategies for working with at-risk youth, 2) providing a continuum of supportive services that are coordinated using the wraparound model, and 3) maintaining connections with youth through after care.



A United Way Member Agency

www.communityyouthservices.org

2014 Census Methodology

A comprehensive census of homeless people is challenging—it's hard to find people without a permanent home address. Many who are unsheltered strive to avoid detection by census workers and public officials alike. A continuing number of respondents refuse to participate in the census, either fearing criminal warrants or claiming that local government uses the information to clear homeless camps or step up harassment of street-dependent people. While these clearances and police enforcement actions are typically initiated in response to complaints, the perceived linkage between the Homeless Census and clearance activities caused many unsheltered homeless people to conceal their camps, move their cars, and otherwise take steps to hide, making census work more challenging.

HMIS Data Entry: This year the state expanded the use of their Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to collect the data, with all state-funded agencies directly reporting their data online. The unsheltered homeless were surveyed collected via paper census forms that were entered by Census workers. Unfortunately, this change in methodology resulted in a overwhelming drop off of respondents information on what are called “additional questions” i.e. last permanent residence; disabilities, etc. As a result, much of the data contained herein overwhelming comes from unsheltered populations.

List of Methodologies

Following is a listing of methodologies used to conduct the census. Generally, homeless people in shelter or transitional housing were captured by agency staff who directly reported data on their homeless clients using the standards of eligibility for their services. Unsheltered populations were surveyed using paper census forms completed by volunteer census workers who fanned out through out the County. The standards of eligibility for the surveys used by the census workers was to allow people to self-identify as homeless unless they obviously did not fit the criteria.

Following is an overview of the processes used to survey the homeless:

- **Housed & Sheltered Homeless —Agency Direct Reporters:** The state directed each agency providing shelter or transitional housing to directly enter their data as part of their HMIS reporting. Approximately 56% of the homeless were in shelter or transitional housing. Approximately 36% of this data was successfully entered directly entered into the HMIS database by agency staff. The remaining 20% of the sheltered/housed homeless data was entered into HMIS with the assistance of state Commerce or Homeless Census staff. The remaining 44% was gathered by paper surveys and directly entered by Homeless Census staff. A growing number of service providers are becoming trained and proficient as necessary to be direct reporters. Ultimately, the County's goal is to encourage all providers to utilize HMIS to make it a comprehensive database on all service, shelter, and housing capacities and occupancies.
- **Homeless Connect Events:** This year the Census featured three “Homeless Connect Events”. The first HCE was held on December 7, 2013 at the Olympia Community Center and served over 350 homeless and street dependent people through out the day. Held on one of the coldest days of the year, this event also served as a warming center. This event was held as a promotional event to encourage participation in the upcoming Homeless Census. The other two Homeless Connect Events were held during the actual Homeless Census day—January 23, 2014. One was held at the



Three Homeless Connect Events provided a wide range of services—food, haircuts, medical, coats— for nearly 500 homeless and street dependent

Yelm Community Center the other was held at the First Christian Church in downtown Olympia. All three events offered hot meals, social services, hair cuts, commodities, music and a drop-in center environment. As the largest of the three events, the Olympia event also offered valet storage of bicycles and back-packs, pet care, medical services and an extensive array of coats and warm clothes.

Developed from the earlier homeless outreach events hosted in previous years, these events drew hundreds of people. As a replacement for the camp census (see below) these events create a draw for unsheltered populations. Future events are planned to reach more of the rural homeless populations.



Homeless census workers teamed up with seasoned street outreach workers to conduct a "Street Census" in the urban hub, surveying street dependent and homeless people

- **Street Outreach:** Teams of volunteers and experienced outreach workers fanned out through the urban hub to areas frequented by homeless people to find and survey homeless people. A total of four teams were sent out: dawn, lunch, dinner and late night.
- **Youth Census:** Community Youth Services (CYS) conducted several activities to reach unaccompanied homeless youth, 17 years and younger as well as transition age youth, ages 18 - 24. These efforts included a small scale Homeless Connect Event at the Rosie's youth drop-in center; a survey of youth in the two CYS shelters (Haven House and Rosie's Place), special street outreach teams along with other activities.
- **Roving Census Teams:** Teams of "rovers", or car-based census workers were sent out twice (mid-morning and mid-afternoon) to shopping areas where homeless and street dependent people hold signs seeking donations. These teams were deployed through-out the urban hub, including Olympia's Westside, Tumwater's shopping areas and Lacey's three shopping hubs.
- **Site-based Census:** Census workers were stationed at numerous locations or regularly scheduled events likely to host homeless people, including the Salvation Army meal service (breakfast, lunch and dinner); the Union Gospel Mission's meal service (breakfast and lunch); the Olympia Downtown Library; all eight regional food banks; and, the Olympia Community Service Office (state's social services center).
- **Rural Census:** The City contracted with Yelm Community Services to assist in the canvassing of rural areas to find homeless people in and around the Yelm/Rainier hub and the Tenino/Bucoda hub. Activities included the Yelm Homeless Connect event listed above as well as site visits to every rural food bank and community meal held between January 23rd and January 31st. This effort mobilized nearly 20 teams of census workers to survey all users of these rurally based services.
- **Field Census of Homeless Camps Suspended:** The Homeless Census has formally abandoned the Camp Census or field survey of known homeless camps. Reasons include the personal security of homeless camp residents and the safety of census workers. Prior to 2012, census volunteers were sent out in teams to survey the areas of known homeless camps and other wooded areas in and around the urban core. This methodology has been controversial among many homeless people and their advocates as being invasive and potentially leading to camp clearances. Safety concerns stem from 2012 when there were five homicides involving transient assailants, with two of the victims being attacked in homeless camps.

APPENDIX A—State Mandate: A Point in Time Count of Homeless People

The State Department of Commerce provides the guidelines for the “Point in Time Count of Homeless Persons,” also known as the Homeless Census. In short, the directive is to count individuals found living unsheltered (out of doors, in vehicles, or abandoned buildings) or in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and specifically defined permanent housing with supportive services. *“The department shall annually conduct a Washington homeless census or count consistent with the requirements of [RCW 43.63A.655](#). The census shall make every effort to count all homeless individuals living outdoors, in shelters, and in transitional housing...”*

The Department of Commerce website posts the results of past homeless census numbers across the state for individuals, not households, as evidenced in the below-listed link.

<http://www.commerce.wa.gov/site/1064/default.aspx>

APPENDIX B – Index of Thurston County HUD Defined Homeless Point-in-Time Data for January 23, 2014

Total Count Numbers by Individual					
Individuals	599		Children 17 & under	106	18%
Males	340	57%	Adults 18-20	62	10%
Females	235	39%	Adults 21-25	73	12%
Transgendered	5	1%	Adults 26-55	291	49%
Unaccompanied Minors	9	10	Adults 56-64	48	8%
Veterans	45	8%	Adults 65+	11	2%
Disabilities as Indicated by Individual* (599 Responses)					
Physical (permanent)	89	16%	Developmental Disability	45	8%
Mental Health***	141	26%	HIV/AIDS	0	0%
Chronic Health Problem	104	19%	Alcohol or drug abuse	42	8%
None apply	113	21%	No Reply/Refused	12	2%
Current Living Status by Individual (599 Respondents)					
Emergency Shelter/ Motel Voucher Program	155	26%	Permanent Supportive Housing	0	0%
Transitional Housing	181	30%	Vehicle	54	9%
Jail or Medical Facility *	n/a		Abandoned Building	18	3%
Friends or Family *	n/a		Out of Doors	191	32%
Situations that caused Homelessness for Households* (599 Responses)					
Domestic Violence****	53	9	Alcohol or Drug Use	60	10%
Job Lost	122	20%	Family Break-up	112	19%
Evicted-Non-payment	32	5%	Convicted-Misdemeanor/Felony	16	3%
Lack of Job Skills	7	1%	Discharged Institution/Jail	12	2%
Lack of Child Care	5	1%	Loss of Temp Living Situation	64	11%
Medical Costs	2	1%	Out of Home Youth	7	1%
Mental Illness ***	60	10%	Aged out of Foster Care	5	1%
Illness/Health Problems	45	8%	Language Barrier	2	0%
Economic Reasons	113	19%	Don't Know	15	3%
Transient on the Road	11	2%	Refused	47	8%
All Sources of Household Income** (599 Responses)					
None	128	21%	Employed at low wage job	15	3%
Social Security	63	11%	Relatives, Partners, Friends	5	1%
Unemployment Insurance	3	1%	L & I Payments	2	0%
Part-time Work	36	6%	VA Benefits	20	3%
Public Assistance	118	20%	Don't know	24	4%
			Refused	58	10%
Length of Time Households Have Been Homeless (599 Responses)					
More than 1 year	220	37%	Less than 1 year	141	24%
Episodes of Homelessness in Past 3 Years (599 Responses)					
More than 4 episodes of homelessness in 3 years	108	18%	Less than 4 episodes of homelessness in 3 years	210	35%

*HUD Defined "Homelessness" does not include people staying with friends & family or those in jail or medical facilities without a permanent address to be released to.

**More than one answer is possible. Summation of percentages will not equal 100%.

***While 60 reported mental illness as a cause of their homelessness, 141 reported it as their disability.

****While 53 reported domestic violence as the cause of their homelessness, 135 reported that someone in their family was a victim of domestic violence.

APPENDIX C – Index of Thurston County Homeless Point-in-Time Data for January 23, 2014

Total Count Numbers by Individual					
Individuals	926		Children 17 & under	119	13%
Males	402	43%	Adults 18-20	83	9%
Females	301	33%	Adults 21-25	94	10%
Transgendered	10	1%	Adults 26-55	352	38%
Unaccompanied Minors	14	2%	Adults 56-64	57	6%
Veterans	57	6%	Adults 65+	15	2%
Disabilities as Indicated by Individual* (926 Responses)					
Physical (permanent)	118	13%	Developmental Disability	60	6%
Mental Health***	186	20%	HIV/AIDS	0	0%
Chronic Health Problem	139	15%	Alcohol or drug abuse	58	6%
None apply	121	13%	No Reply	404	7%
Current Living Status by Individual (926 Responses)					
Emergency Shelter/ Motel Voucher Program	155	17%	Permanent Supportive Housing	0	0%
Transitional Housing	181	20%	Vehicle	54	6%
Jail or Medical Facility *	214	23%	Abandoned Building	18	2%
Friends or Family *	113	12%	Out of Doors	191	21%
Situations that caused Homelessness for Households** (926 Responses)					
Domestic Violence****	69	7%	Alcohol or Drug Use	74	8%
Job Lost	159	17%	Family Break-up	167	18%
Evicted-Non-payment	60	5%	Convicted-Misdemeanor/Felony	28	3%
Lack of Job Skills	25	2%	Discharged Institution/Jail	18	2%
Lack of Child Care	6	1%	Loss of Temp Living Situation	80	9%
Medical Costs	9	1%	Out of Home Youth	12	1%
Mental Illness ***	79	9%	Aged out of Foster Care	7	1%
Medical Problems	56	6%	Don't Know	25	3%
Economic Reasons	159	17%	Refused	48	5%
Transient on the Road	11	1%			
All Sources of Household Income* (926 Responses)					
None	146	16%	Employed at low wage job	18	2%
Social Security	104	11%	Relatives, Partners, Friends	17	2%
Unemployment Insurance	4	0%	L & I Payments	2	0%
Part-time Work	46	5%	VA Benefits	23	2%
Public Assistance	179	19%	Don't know/no response	32	3%
			Refused	58	6%
Length of Time Households Have Been Homeless (926 Responses)					
More than 1 year	293	32%	Less than 1 year	189	20%
More than 4 episodes of homelessness in 3 years	149	16%	Less than 4 episodes of homelessness in 3 years	280	30%

*HUD Defined "Homelessness" does not include staying with friends & family or being jails or medical facilities without a permanent address to be released to.

**More than one answer is possible. Summation of percentages will not equal 100%.

***While ## reported mental illness as the cause of their homelessness, ## reported it as their disability.

****While ## reported domestic violence as the cause of their homelessness, ## reported that someone in their family was a victim of domestic violence.

Introduction

Homelessness is a concern that affects virtually every community in the United States. The homeless sleep in streets, in cars, underneath bridges, or at the homes of family and friends. They include adults and children, individuals and couples, mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers. They are homeless for a variety of reasons, such as mental illness, a physical disability, substance abuse, unemployment and low wages.

Homelessness takes a heavy toll on these individuals and their local communities. Homeless people are less able to find social services and jobs when their lives are eclipsed by the need to find shelter. They are also more likely to need costly emergency services because of the ravages of weather and crime, the inability to pay for preventative care and – in many cases – their own physical and mental disabilities. Communities with high rates of homelessness are also concerned about the character of their communities and the affect on nearby businesses.

This Ten-Year Plan is designed to reduce homelessness in Thurston County even further -- by 50 percent by July 2015. The Plan calls for creating 300 new permanent housing units, and guiding more people into services before they become homeless.

Ten-Year Plan Revision Excerpts

In order to reduce the homeless population, we need to examine new models or approaches that allow the community to strategically allocate federal, county, and local housing resources to get people off the streets, out of the shelters, and into appropriate permanent housing linked with comprehensive supportive services. This Plan recommends variety of new initiatives and strategies that targets resources more efficiently and effectively. The major recommendations of the plan fall into four broad areas of need:

The Need to Increase and Preserve the Supply of Affordable Housing

The Thurston County Consolidated Plan identifies small and large families as having the greatest housing problems in the county because they experience the greatest housing cost burden (paying a disproportionate share of their income for housing). Additionally, there is a significant affordability mismatch, with higher income persons occupying lower income housing units, which contributes to the shortage of affordable and available housing for low and very-low income persons.

The Need for a Housing First Approach and a Flexible Rental Assistance Program

While the chronically homeless make up only 10% of the county's homeless population, they consume a disproportionate share of the county's homeless funds and housing resources because they generally require a higher level of comprehensive support services.

Historically, the county has relied on the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program (TBRA), paired with extensive case management services and the emergency shelter system, to meet this need. TBRA has been successful in reducing the number of homeless who would otherwise have been on the streets and in providing much needed transitional housing. However, an excessively long Section 8 waiting list (up to five years) and the shrinking availability of federal funded housing vouchers makes it extremely difficult to move people off transitional housing into permanent housing.

The Housing First approach (also referred to as Rapid Re-housing) provides the missing link between the emergency shelter and transitional housing systems by quickly moving people into permanent housing first to provide housing stability and then providing them

with the non-mandatory supportive housing services they need. This model is particularly effective and more appropriate for persons with long-term special needs and the chronically homeless. This plan also recommends that the county design a rental assistance program to compliment the TBRA Program that is flexible enough to meet the both short-term and the long-term needs of residents.

The Need for Better Coordination of Housing Resources and Services

A major component of this plan is to strategically target homeless resources more effectively and improve the community's capacity to coordinate and deliver homeless services more efficiently. The Home Citizens Advisory Committee will formulate a plan to coordinate resources and placement.

The Need to Strategically Target Funds to Meet the County's Housing Goals

Currently, the county distributes its federal and local housing funds through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process that targets funding primarily based on the needs of service providers, and to a lesser degree, the housing needs of the county. This plan recommends a change in funding strategy by moving towards a needs-driven process that ensures that the county's housing funds are strategically targeted to meet the prioritized housing needs of the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The target goal is to create 350 new housing units and provide 340 new rental vouchers by 2015. The following is a summary of the ten objectives and short-term activities identified in the plan. Short term activities are defined as projects that are anticipated to be completed by 2013.

❖ **OBJECTIVE 1 – Expand the Supply of Homeless Housing Units**

Housing Strategy: Develop 150 housing units for homeless families, individuals, and special needs Populations (39 units to be completed by 2013)

- **Behavioral Health Resources**
The B&B Apartments in Olympia will add 11 new units onto the existing complex of 16 units. The units will serve persons suffering from a mental illness.
- **Community Youth Services**
Maternity/Parenting Housing Program in Olympia will develop 24 beds for homeless pregnant and parenting young adults (ages 18-23) experiencing multiple barriers to independence or are fleeing domestic violence.
- **SafePlace**
Community Service Center and Permanent Housing Project in downtown Olympia will provide 4 units of permanent supportive housing and administrative offices for victims of domestic and/or sexual violence and their children.

❖ **OBJECTIVE 2 – Expand the Supply of Affordable Housing Units**

Housing strategy: Develop 200 Affordable Housing Units (137 units to be completed by 2013)

- **Mercy Housing**
Senior Housing Project in Olympia – 50 units
Activity: Section 202 mix-use housing project in the downtown

- **Housing Authority of Thurston County**
Littlerock Road Housing Project in Littlerock – 32 units
Activity: Acquire 1.75 acres to construct a 32-unit (2 and 3 bedrooms-four buildings) rental housing complex that targets 6 units to homeless families /children, 5 to family members w/ disabilities, and 5 that will serve veterans. The remaining 16 are targeted toward workforce housing households.
- **Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties**
Salmon Run Apartments Project in Yelm – 40 units
Activity: Develop 40 low and very-low income rental housing units.
- **South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity**
Shepherd's Grove Cottage Community – 5 units
Activity: Develop 5 units of owner-occupied housing for low income homeowners.
- **South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity**
Affordable Housing Cottage Community in Tumwater – 10 units
Activity: Develop 10 units of owner-occupied housing for low income homeowners.

❖ **OBJECTIVE 3 – Expand the Supply of Rental Assistance**

Housing Strategy: Provide rental assistance for 340 homeless and at-risk households (340 new vouchers issued in 2010). Provide on-going annual evaluation of community rental assistance needs to determine the amount of new vouchers needed each year.

- **Community Youth Services**
Echo Transitional Housing Project – Olympia
Activity: 18 vouchers for young adults (ages 18-24) who are exiting the state correctional system, or are pregnant or parenting, or are adjudicated sex offenders.
- **Housing Authority**
Activity: 50 housing vouchers for families with children (Foster Care)
- **Family Support Center**
Activity: 30 housing vouchers for families with children
- **Thurston County Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program**
Activity: Salvation Army – 80 household vouchers for prevention
Activity: Salvation Army – 32 household vouchers for Rapid Re-housing
Activity: Community Action Council, Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties – 43 household vouchers for prevention
Activity: Community Youth Services – 23 vouchers for youth for Rapid Re-housing
Activity: Family Support Services – 49 family vouchers for prevention and 15 family vouchers for Rapid Re-Housing

❖ **OBJECTIVE 4 – Preserve Existing Subsidized and Low-Income Housing**

Housing Strategy: Preservation of Section 8 Housing Units

- **Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties**
Killion Court in Yelm - Section 8 Apartments
Activity: Acquisition and substantial rehabilitation of 20 affordable senior housing apartments.
- **Low Income Housing Institute**
Magnolia Villa Apartments
Activity: Substantial rehabilitation of 21 subsidized units.

Housing Strategy: Preservation of Affordable Housing Units

- ***Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties***

Tenino Housing Rehabilitation Project

Activity: Rehabilitation of 10 owner-occupied single-family houses.

- ***Housing Authority of Thurston County***

Thurston County Housing Rehabilitation Project

Activity: Rehabilitation of 8 (minimum) owner-occupied single-family houses in Bucoda, Rainier, Tenino, Yelm, and the unincorporated county.

❖ ***OBJECTIVE 5 – Consolidate Homeless Resources and Improve Service Delivery***

Planning Strategy: Coordinating homeless services, resources, funding, and marketing

- Activity: Expand community capacity to more effectively coordinate homeless housing resources and services with housing and service providers.
- Activity: Create a leadership and accountability structure for implementing the Ten-Year Homeless Housing Plan.
- Activity: Create organizational linkages and partnerships with service providers.
- Activity: Co-sponsor the Homeless Veterans Stand Down Event.
- Activity: Develop a public awareness and media strategy.

❖ ***OBJECTIVE 6 – Maximize Housing Funding Opportunities***

Housing Strategy: Streamlining and strategically target housing funds

- Activity: Develop policy/needs-based Request for Proposals funding system that distributes the county's housing funds based on county housing needs.
- Activity: Link projects to the most appropriate funding source.
- Activity: Strategically allocate homeless funding to support the ten-year homeless goals.
- Activity: Develop a policy and long-term plan for funding essential housing programs.
- Activity: Develop new and flexible private funding resources.

❖ ***OBJECTIVE 7 – Enhance Supportive Housing Services and Prevention***

Housing Strategy: Improve access to rental assistance and other support services

- Activity: Develop a comprehensive resource and service guide.
- Activity: Increase employment education and training opportunities.

Housing Strategy: Integrate Health Care with Housing

- Activity: Continue building successful service delivery models that evidence best practices
- Activity: Continue availability of behavioral health services
- Activity: Continue accessing child and family services

Prevention Strategy: Provide Resources and Support to Prevent Homelessness

- Activity: Create a Housing First Program.
- Activity: Develop a Homeless Prevention Services Program for Veterans

- Activity: Provide operational and maintenance (O&M) support for housing services.
- Activity: Develop a landlord retention plan.

❖ **OBJECTIVE 8 – Establishing a Coordinated System for Discharging Clients Leaving Jail and Treatment Facilities**

Housing Strategy: Increase collaboration between discharging institutions and service providers

- Activity: Improve communications and coordination with institutions to identify at-risk clients who may be homeless.
- Activity: Develop a housing step-up plan.

❖ **OBJECTIVE 9 – Conduct Adequate Data Collection and Planning to Efficiently Manage Limited Resources for Homelessness**

Planning Strategy: Improve HMIS reporting

- Activity: Consolidation of program and financial data to improve consistency and accuracy in report data.
- Activity: Train new service providers
- Activity: Create a standardized client assessment form.

❖ **OBJECTIVE 10 – Change Policy, Law and Legislation Where Necessary**

Planning Strategy: Reduce homeless and affordable housing development costs

- Activity: Identify county intra-jurisdictional Barriers

Point In Time Count

January 2014

UNSHELTERED/LIVING WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS

DV survivors and households with an individual with HIV/AIDS: do not provide name, birth month or birth day

ONE FORM PER HOUSEHOLD

Batch Site/Program Name _____

Location: Where did you stay last night? (choose one - applies to entire household)	
<input type="radio"/> Out of Doors (street, tent, etc)	<input type="radio"/> Temporarily Living w/ Family or Friends*
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle (car, travel trailer, RV)	<input type="radio"/> Currently in Hospital/Detox/Other facility*
<input type="radio"/> Abandoned Building	<input type="radio"/> Currently in Jail*
<input type="radio"/> Sub-standard Housing	*Indicates not considered homeless for PIT by HUD; Optional

City/Town: _____

Have you been continuously homeless for a year or more? ☐ Yes ☐ NoHow many episodes of homelessness have you had in the past three (3) years? ☐ Less than 4 ☐ At least 4

Household Information														
(Please enter each HH member below. Use additional forms if needed.)														
How many people are in your household? Adults: _____ Children: _____										Disabilities				
Last Permanent Home - City _____ ZIP _____										Check all that apply to each client				
Relation to Head of Household (if applicable) Spouse/ Partner/ Child/Etc.	First Name	Last Name	Birth Date (or if DOB refused; Year of Birth)	Gender *	Race** (enter all that apply)	Ethnicity (Hispanic (H) or Non-Hispanic (N))	Domestic Violence Survivor (check if yes)	Veteran (served in Armed Forces)	Chronic Substance Abuse	Physical Disability (Permanent)	Developmental Disability	Mental Health (Substantial & Long-Term)	Chronic Health Condition (Permanently Disabling)	HIV/AIDS (do not include names)
Self														

*Gender: F - Female, M - Male, T - Transgender

*Race: White (W), Black or African-American (B), Asian (A), American Indian or Alaska Native (I), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (H)

Circumstances that Caused Your Homelessness (check all that apply)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol/Substance Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> Primarily Economic Reasons	<input type="checkbox"/> Displacement/lost temp. living sit.	<input type="checkbox"/> Language Barrier
<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence	<input type="checkbox"/> Job Loss	<input type="checkbox"/> Aged out of Foster Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Out of Home Youth
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Illness	<input type="checkbox"/> Eviction	<input type="checkbox"/> Discharged from an Institution	<input type="checkbox"/> Transient on the Road
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Crisis/Break-up	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Childcare	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Job Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/> Illness/Health Problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Costs	<input type="checkbox"/> Conviction (misdemeanor/felony)	<input type="checkbox"/> Refused

Source(s) of Household Income and Benefits (check all that apply)			
<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Farm/Other Migrant Agricultural Work	
<input type="checkbox"/> Veterans Administration Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> L&I/Workers' Compensation	<input type="checkbox"/> Relatives, Partners or Friends	
<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/> Part-time Work	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Support	
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Security	<input type="checkbox"/> Employed Full-time at Low-wage Job	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/> Refused

I agree to the inclusion of my household's information for count purposes described in the release on the back of this form.

Signature(s) (each adult or unaccompanied youth must sign): _____

Adult #2 (if applicable): _____

Client Release of Information

Washington State HMIS for Annual Point in Time Count

Data for this point in time count is entered into the Washington State Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) which collects information, over time, about the characteristics and service needs of men, women, and children experiencing homelessness.

To provide the most effective services in moving people from homelessness to permanent housing, we need an accurate count of all people experiencing homelessness in Washington State. In order to make sure that clients are not counted twice if services are received by more than one agency, we need to collect some personal information. Specifically, we need: **name and birth date**. Your information will be stored in our database for 7 years.

- We will guard this information with strict security policies to protect your privacy. Our computer system is highly secure and uses up-to-date protection features such as data encryption, passwords, and identity checks required for each system user. There is a small risk of a security breach, and someone might obtain and use your information inappropriately. If you ever suspect the data in HMIS has been misused, immediately contact the HMIS System Administrator at (360) 725-3028.
- The data you provide will be combined with data from the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) for the purpose of further analysis. Your name and other identifying information will not be included in any reports or publications. Only a limited few staff members in the research division who have signed confidentiality agreements will be able to see this information.
- Your decision to participate in the HMIS will not affect the quality or quantity of services you are eligible to receive from any service provider, and will not be used to deny outreach, shelter or housing. However, if you do choose to participate, services in the region may improve if we have accurate information about homeless individuals and the services they need.

By signing the front page of this form you are consenting to the inclusion of your household information in HMIS and authorize information collected to be shared with partner agencies. Your personal information will not be made public and will only be used with strict confidentiality. You may withdraw your consent at any time.

Thank you for helping us improve services to homeless persons.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEYORS

All information in the survey is required. Forms will not be used if *location, gender or year of birth* is missing. If someone refuses to answer questions for the survey, please make sure to fill in at least these three fields for them. If you do not know the exact birth year of a household member, guesses are OK.

****Important: DO NOT provide name, birth day, or birth month for households with an individual who is: 1) in a DV agency; 2) currently fleeing or in danger from a domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking situation; 3) has HIV/AIDS or 4) anyone you do not have written informed consent from (signature on first page).** ** However, a signature is not needed to collect other information. All homeless households and individuals should have a form filled out.

The purpose of this survey is to help with the planning of providing services and housing to homeless individuals and to identify the types of assistance needed. It is also a requirement to receive funding from HUD and the WA State Dept. of Commerce.

Disabilities: Please make sure to record applicable disabilities for each household member. If a household member has no disabilities please select NONE APPLY. If the disability section is blank we will assume the question wasn't asked or the client refused to answer.

All unsheltered homeless persons should complete this survey. "Unsheltered" means individuals and families with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground (this includes "Tent Cities"). People living temporarily with family or friends due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (often referred to as "doubled-up" or "couch surfing") should complete the survey, although it is not required. Individuals in Jail will not be counted as homeless; therefore counties are not expected to count this population.

Persons staying in a homeless housing program should not complete this form. Instead, they should fill out the 2014 *HOUSING PROGRAMS* form at their housing program.

Each member of a household should be listed in the Household Information section. **A single person is considered a household** (i.e., "a household consisting of one person"), so **single individuals should complete the Household Information section.**

If you have any questions about how to fill out this survey or how this data will be used, please don't hesitate to call Commerce at (360) 725-3028.

HOUSING PROGRAMS (EMERGENCY/TRANSITIONAL)

DV survivors and households with an individual with HIV/AIDS: do not provide name, birth month or birth day

ONE FORM PER HOUSEHOLD

*unsheltered households should instead use *Unsheltered/Living with Family or Friends* form

Program Name: _____

☐ Emergency Shelter☐ Transitional Housing Program (only required if client is not already in HMIS)Have you been continuously homeless for a year or more? ☐ Yes ☐ NoHow many episodes of homelessness have you had in the past three (3) years? ☐ Less than 4 ☐ At least 4**Household Information**

(Please enter each HH member below. Use additional forms if needed.)

How many people are in your household? Adults: _____ Children: _____										Disabilities					
Last Known Permanent City _____ ZIP _____										Check all that apply to each client					
Relation to Head of Household (if applicable) Spouse/Partner/Child/Etc.	First Name	Last Name	Birth Date (or if DOB refused; Year of Birth)	Gender *	Race** (enter all that apply)	Ethnicity (Hispanic (H) or Non-Hispanic (N))	Domestic Violence Survivor (check if yes)	Veteran (served in Armed Forces)	Chronic Substance Abuse	Physical Disability (Permanent)	Developmental Disability	Mental Health (Substantial & Long-Term)	Chronic Health Condition (Permanently Disabling)	HIV/AIDS (do not include names)	
Self															

*Gender: F – Female M – Male T - Transgender

**Race: White (W), Black or African-American (B), Asian (A), American Indian or Alaska Native (I), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (H)

Circumstances that Caused Your Homelessness (check all that apply)

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol/Substance Abuse | <input type="checkbox"/> Primarily Economic Reasons | <input type="checkbox"/> Displacement/lost temp. living sit. | <input type="checkbox"/> Language Barrier |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence | <input type="checkbox"/> Job Loss | <input type="checkbox"/> Aged out of Foster Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Out of Home Youth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Illness | <input type="checkbox"/> Eviction | <input type="checkbox"/> Discharged from an Institution | <input type="checkbox"/> Transient on the Road |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Crisis/Break-up | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Childcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Job Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illness/Health Problems | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Costs | <input type="checkbox"/> Conviction (misdemeanor/felony) | <input type="checkbox"/> Refused |

Source(s) of Household Income and Benefits (check all that apply)

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Farm/Other Migrant Agricultural Work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans Administration Benefits | <input type="checkbox"/> L&I/Workers' Compensation | <input type="checkbox"/> Relatives, Partners or Friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment Insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Child Support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security | <input type="checkbox"/> Employed Full-time at Low-wage Job | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/> Refused |

I agree to the inclusion of my household's information for count purposes described in the release on the back of this form.

Signature(s) (each adult or unaccompanied youth must sign): _____

Adult #2 (if applicable): _____

Client Release of Information

Washington State HMIS for Annual Point in Time Count

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To provide the most effective services in moving people from homelessness to permanent housing, we need an accurate count of all people experiencing homelessness in Washington State. In order to make sure that clients are not counted twice if services are received by more than one agency, we need to collect some personal information. Specifically, we need: **name and birth date**. Your information will be stored in our database for 7 years.

- We will guard this information with strict security policies to protect your privacy. Our computer system is highly secure and uses up-to-date protection features such as data encryption, passwords, and identity checks required for each system user. There is a small risk of a security breach, and someone might obtain and use your information inappropriately. If you ever suspect the data in HMIS has been misused, immediately contact the HMIS System Administrator at (360) 725-3028.
- The data you provide will be combined with data from the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) for the purpose of further analysis. Your name and other identifying information will not be included in any reports or publications. Only a limited few staff members in the research division who have signed confidentiality agreements will be able to see this information.
- Your decision to participate in the HMIS will not affect the quality or quantity of services you are eligible to receive from any service provider, and will not be used to deny outreach, shelter or housing. However, if you do choose to participate, services in the region may improve if we have accurate information about homeless individuals and the services they need.

By signing the front page of this form you are consenting to the inclusion of your household information in HMIS and authorize information collected to be shared with partner agencies. Your personal information will not be made public and will only be used with strict confidentiality. You may withdraw your consent at any time.

Thank you for helping us improve services to homeless persons.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEYORS

All information in the survey is required. Forms will not be used if *location, gender or year of birth* is missing. If someone refuses to answer questions for the survey, please make sure to fill in at least these three fields for them. If you do not know the exact birth year of a household member, guesses are OK.

****Important: DO NOT provide name, birth day, or birth month for households with an individual who is: 1) in a DV agency; 2) currently fleeing or in danger from a domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking situation; 3) has HIV/AIDS or 4) anyone you do not have written informed consent from (signature on first page).** ** However, a signature is not needed to collect other information. All homeless households and individuals should have a form filled out.

The purpose of this survey is to help with the planning of providing services and housing to homeless individuals and to identify the types of assistance needed. It is also a requirement to receive funding from HUD and the WA State Dept. of Commerce.

Disabilities: Please make sure to record applicable disabilities for each household member. If a household member has no disabilities please select NONE APPLY. If the disability section is blank we will assume the question wasn't asked or the client refused to answer.

Shelter Programs: Surveys should be collected at a shelter program (emergency, transitional or permanent supportive). Please make sure to write the name of the shelter program and batch them together when submitting to lead PIT agency.

Individuals and families in **Permanent Supportive Housing** programs are not required to fill out a complete survey. However, each agency will be required to submit to Commerce the number of clients staying in their programs on the night of the count. This survey is a great tool for that tally.

Only persons staying in one of the homeless housing programs listed above should complete this form. Unsheltered persons or persons living with family or friends should complete the 2014 *UNSHELTERED/LIVING WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS* form.

Each member of a household should be listed in the Household Information section. **A single person is considered a household** (i.e., "a household consisting of one person"), so **single individuals should complete the Household Information section.**

If you have any questions about how to fill out this survey or how this data will be used, please don't hesitate to call Commerce at (360) 725-3028.

Conteo Actual De Personas Sin Hogar **PROGRAMA DE VIVIENDA**

Enero 2014

Victimas de Violencia Domestica y los hogares con una persona con VIH/SIDA: no proporcione su nombre, ni el mes o el día de nacimiento

UNA FORMA POR HOGAR

Nombre de Programa: _____

- ☐ Refugio de emergencia/Programa de Vale de Motel
 ☐ Programa de Transición de vivienda para personas sin hogar (no es necesario si el cliente ya está en HMIS)

¿Ha estado continuamente sin hogar por un año o más? ☐ Si ☐ No

¿Cuántos episodios de falta de vivienda han tenido en los últimos tres (3) años? ☐ Menos de 4 ☐ Por lo menos 4

¿Alguien en su familia es una víctima de violencia doméstica? (Si si, deje en blanco la columna del nombre) ☐ Si ☐ No

Información del Hogar

(Por favor apunte a cada miembro de su hogar en el espacio abajo. Use formas adicionales si las necesita.)

¿Cuántas personas están en su casa? Adultos: _____ Niños: _____

Ultima Ciudad permanente _____ **Código Postal** _____

Discapacidad

Marque todo lo que aplique para cada cliente

Relación al cabeza de familia (si aplica) Esposo(a)/ Pareja/niño /Etc.	Nombre	Apellido	Fecha de Nacimiento (Fecha de nacimiento o si se negó, año de nacimiento)	Genero *	Raza ** (marque todas las que se aplican)	Etnicidad (Hispano (H) o No Hispano (N))	Sobreviviente de Violencia Doméstica (marque si si)	Veterano (si/n) (servio en las fuerzas armadas)	Abuso Crónico de Sustancia	Discapacidad Física (Permanente)	Discapacidad del Desarrollo	Salud Mental (Sustancial y de largo plazo)	Condición crónica de Salud (Incapacidad Permanente)	VIH/SIDA (No incluya nombres)
Yo														

*Genero: M – Mujer H – Hombre T - Transgenero

** Raza: Blanca (B), Negra o Africana Americana (N), Asiática (A), India Americana o Native de Alaska (I), Nativa de Hawaii or otra de las islas del Pacifico (H)

Las circunstancias que causaron su falta de Vivienda (marque todas las que se aplican)

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcoholismo | <input type="checkbox"/> Principalmente Razones Económicas | <input type="checkbox"/> Problemas de Salud |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abuso de Sustancia | <input type="checkbox"/> Nueva Llegada | <input type="checkbox"/> Violencia Domestica |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transitoria en el camino | <input type="checkbox"/> Desplazamiento | <input type="checkbox"/> Enfermedad Mental |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis Familiar | <input type="checkbox"/> Desalojo | <input type="checkbox"/> No Se |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Juventud fuera de Casa | <input type="checkbox"/> Enfermedad | <input type="checkbox"/> Se Niega a Contestar |

Fuente(s) de los Ingresos del Hogar y Beneficios (marque todas las que se aplican)

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ninguno | <input type="checkbox"/> Asistencia Publica | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultivo/Otro Trabajo de Agricultura Migrante |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beneficios de la Administración de Veteranos | <input type="checkbox"/> Labores y Industrias Compensación de Trabajadores | <input type="checkbox"/> Parientes, Socios o Amigos |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seguro de Desempleo | <input type="checkbox"/> Trabajo de Tiempo parcial | <input type="checkbox"/> Manutención de los Hijos |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seguro Social | <input type="checkbox"/> Empleado de tiempo completo en un empleo de bajos ingresos | <input type="checkbox"/> No Se <input type="checkbox"/> Se Niega a Contestar |

Estoy de acuerdo con la inclusión de la información de mi hogar para los propósitos del conteo que se describen en la liberación en la parte posterior de esta forma.

Firma(s) (cada adulto o joven sin acompañante tiene que firmar): _____

Adulto #2 (si aplique): _____

Libерación de la información del Cliente

Conteo Anual en el Punto de Tiempo de HMIS del Estado de Washington

Los datos de este conteo en el punto de tiempo se introduce en el sistema de manejo de información de personas sin hogar del Estado de Washington (HMIS) que colecciona información, a través del tiempo, sobre las características y necesidades de servicio de hombres, mujeres, y niños que atraviesan la falta de vivienda.

Para proporcionar los servicios más efectivos en mudar a personas que están sin hogar a una vivienda permanente, nosotros necesitamos un conteo preciso de todas las personas que atraviesan la falta de vivienda en el Estado de Washington. Para asegurarse de que clientes no sean contados dos veces si los servicios son recibidos por más de una agencia, es necesario coleccionar algunos datos personales. Específicamente, necesitamos: su nombre y la fecha de nacimiento. Su información será almacenada en nuestra base de datos por 7 años.

- Protegeremos esta información con políticas estrictas de seguridad para proteger su privacidad. Nuestro sistema de computadoras es sumamente seguro y utiliza características de protección que están al día como la encriptación de datos, contraseñas, y verificación de identidades es requerida para cada usuario del sistema. Hay un pequeño riesgo de una brecha de seguridad, y alguien podría obtener y utilizar su información de manera impropia. Si usted sospecha que los datos de HMIS han sido usados de manera impropia, contacte inmediatamente a la Administración de Sistema de HMIS al (360) 725-3028.
- Los datos que usted proporcione serán combinados con datos del Departamento de Servicios Sociales y de Salud (DSHS) con el propósito de un análisis adicional. Su nombre y otra información de identificación no se incluirá en ningún reporte o publicación. Solo unos miembros del personal en la división de investigación que han firmado acuerdos de confidencialidad podrán ver esta información.
- Su decisión de participar en el HMIS no afectará la calidad ni la cantidad de los servicios que usted es elegible para recibir de cualquier proveedor de servicios, y no será utilizado para negar alcance, refugio o vivienda. Sin embargo si usted elige participar, los servicios en esta región pueden mejorar si tenemos información precisa sobre las personas que están sin hogar y los servicios que necesitan.

Con la firma de la primera página de esta forma, usted consiente a la inclusión de la información de su hogar en HMIS y autoriza que la información que es coleccionada sea compartida con agencias asociadas. Yo comprendo que mi información personal no se hará pública y solo se utilizará con estricta confidencialidad. También entiendo que puedo retirar mi consentimiento en cualquier momento.

Gracias por ayudarnos a mejorar los servicios a las personas que están sin hogar.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEYORS

All information in the survey is required. Forms will not be used if *location, gender or year of birth* is missing. If someone refuses to answer questions for the survey, please make sure to fill in at least these three fields for them. If you do not know the exact birth year of a household member, guesses are OK.

****Important: DO NOT provide name, birth day, or birth month for households with an individual who is: 1) in a DV agency; 2) currently fleeing or in danger from a domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking situation; 3) has HIV/AIDS or 4) anyone you do not have written informed consent from (signature on first page).** ** However, a signature is not needed to collect other information. All homeless households and individuals should have a form filled out.

The purpose of this survey is to help with the planning of providing services and housing to homeless individuals and to identify the types of assistance needed. It is also a requirement to receive funding from HUD and the WA State Dept. of Commerce.

Disabilities: Please make sure to record applicable disabilities for each household member. If a household member has no disabilities please select NONE APPLY. If the disability section is blank we will assume the question wasn't asked or the client refused to answer.

Shelter Programs: Surveys should be collected at a shelter program (emergency, transitional or permanent supportive). Please make sure to write the name of the shelter program and batch them together when submitting to lead PIT agency.

Individuals and families in **Permanent Supportive Housing** programs are not required to fill out a complete survey. However, each agency will be required to submit to Commerce the number of clients staying in their programs on the night of the count. This survey is a great tool for that tally.

Only persons staying in one of the homeless housing programs listed above should complete this form. Unsheltered persons or persons living with family or friends should complete the 2014 *UNSHeltered/LIVING WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS* form.

Each member of a household should be listed in the Household Information section. **A single person is considered a household** (i.e., "a household consisting of one person"), so **single individuals should complete the Household Information section.**

If you have any questions about how to fill out this survey or how this data will be used, please don't hesitate to call Commerce at (360) 725-3028.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOUSING PROGRAMS (EMERGENCY/TRANSITIONAL)

*if program is not a designated domestic violence program please use regular "Housing Programs" form to receive written consent to include name

*unsheltered households should use *Unsheltered/Living with Family or Friends* form

ONE FORM PER HOUSEHOLD

Program Name: _____	
<input type="radio"/> Emergency Shelter	<input type="radio"/> Transitional Housing Program (<u>only required if client is not already in HMIS</u>)

Have you been continuously homeless for a year or more? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How many episodes of homelessness have you had in the past three (3) years? ☐ Less than 4 ☐ At least 4

Household Information

(Please enter each HH member below. Use additional forms if needed.)

How many people are in your household? Adults: _____ Children: _____							Disabilities					
Last Permanent Home - City _____ ZIP _____							Check all that apply to each client					
Relation to Head of Household (if applicable) Spouse/Partner/Child/Etc.	Birth Year	Gender*	Race** (enter all that apply)	Ethnicity (Hispanic (H) or Non-Hispanic (N))	Domestic Violence Survivor (check if yes)	Veteran (served in Armed Forces)	Chronic Substance Abuse	Physical Disability (Permanent)	Developmental Disability	Mental Health (Substantial & Long-Term)	Chronic Health Condition (Permanently Disabling)	HIV/AIDS
<i>Self</i>												

*Gender: F – Female M – Male T – Transgender

**Race: White (W), Black or African-American (B), Asian (A), American Indian or Alaska Native (I), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (H)

Circumstances that Caused Your Homelessness (check all that apply)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol/Substance Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> Primarily Economic Reasons	<input type="checkbox"/> Displacement/lost temp. living sit.	<input type="checkbox"/> Language Barrier
<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence	<input type="checkbox"/> Job Loss	<input type="checkbox"/> Aged out of Foster Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Out of Home Youth
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Illness	<input type="checkbox"/> Eviction	<input type="checkbox"/> Discharged from an Institution	<input type="checkbox"/> Transient on the Road
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Crisis/Break-up	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Childcare	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Job Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/> Illness/Health Problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Costs	<input type="checkbox"/> Conviction (misdemeanor/felony)	<input type="checkbox"/> Refused

Source(s) of Household Income and Benefits (check all that apply)		
<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Farm/Other Migrant Agricultural Work
<input type="checkbox"/> Veterans Administration Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> L&I/Workers' Compensation	<input type="checkbox"/> Relatives, Partners or Friends
<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/> Part-time Work	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Support
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Security	<input type="checkbox"/> Employed Full-time at Low-wage Job	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/> Refused

This form is only to be used at Domestic Violence agencies or other sites that do not collect personally identifying information (name and date of birth). Please use the regular 2014 PIT Survey Form (with signature line and release of information) for other locations in order to avoid duplication.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEYORS

All information in the survey is required. Forms will not be used if *location*, *gender* or *year of birth* is missing. If someone refuses to answer questions for the survey, please make sure to fill in at least these three fields for them. If you do not know the exact birth year of a household member, guesses are OK.

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Disabilities: Please make sure to record applicable disabilities for each household member. If a household member has no disabilities please select NONE APPLY. If the disability section is blank we will assume the question wasn't asked or the client refused to answer.

Shelter Programs: Surveys should be collected at a shelter program (emergency, transitional or permanent supportive). Please make sure to write the name of the shelter program and batch them together when submitting to lead PIT agency.

Individuals and families in **Permanent Supportive Housing** programs are not required to fill out a complete survey. However, each agency will be required to submit to Commerce the number of clients staying in their programs on the night of the count. This survey is a great tool for that tally.

Only persons staying in one of the homeless housing programs listed above should complete this form. Unsheltered persons or persons living with family or friends should complete the 2014 *UNSHELTERED/LIVING WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS* form.

Each member of a household should be listed in the Household Information section. **A single person is considered a household** (i.e., "a household consisting of one person"), so **single individuals should complete the Household Information section.**

If you have any questions about how to fill out this survey or how this data will be used, please don't hesitate to call Commerce at (360) 725-3028.

Finding the Hidden Homeless;

Selective methodologies for reaching veterans, homeless families, unaccompanied youth, mentally ill and rural homeless populations

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Abstract

This document is an exploration of the research methodologies best suited for the enumeration of selective subpopulations of people experiencing homelessness. The subpopulations concerned are people experiencing homelessness in a rural setting; U.S. military veterans experiencing homelessness; mentally ill people experiencing homelessness; unaccompanied youth (age 17 and under) experiencing homelessness; and families with children experiencing homelessness. The document highlights include 'At a Glance Matrix Tables' by subpopulation; a brief description of each subpopulation; a brief description of each enumeration methodology identified; an enumeration cross reference table; a summary table of the best enumeration methodologies by subpopulation; and a complete bibliography of sources consulted.



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There is a lot that happens around the world we cannot control. We cannot stop earthquakes, we cannot prevent droughts, and we cannot prevent all conflict, but when we know where the hungry, the homeless and the sick exist, then we can help.

Jan Schakowsky

❖ Introduction

In the United States, people experiencing homelessness is a microcosm of the general population at large. People experiencing homelessness, as a population, is composed of multiple subpopulations and any given individual within that population may belong to one or more subpopulations.

In the past certain subpopulations of individuals experiencing homelessness have been underrepresented in the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandated Thurston County Point in Time (PIT) Homeless Census for unknown reasons. Identified underrepresented subpopulations (IUS) of people experiencing homelessness in past Thurston County PITs are people experiencing homelessness in a rural setting, U.S. military veterans, the mentally ill, families with children and unaccompanied youth, age seventeen and under. A common theme across all five of these subpopulations, with the possible exception of families with children, is the fact that they all can be said to be a kind of ‘hidden homeless’ and in one way or another they either blend into the larger population of people experiencing homelessness or into society at large. In an effort to better enumerate these hidden populations of people experiencing homelessness this report explores possible enumeration methodologies for each of these IUSs.

Features of this document provides ‘At a Glance Matrix Tables’ for each of the subpopulations outlining findings and methodologies; general background on each subpopulation; descriptions of each methodology uncovered; and an enumeration methodology cross reference by subpopulations.

❖ Key Terms

In an effort to be empathetically correct toward the homeless population this report will endeavor, whenever possible, to use the phrase ‘people experiencing homelessness’ instead of the term ‘homeless,’ ‘homelessness’ or ‘homeless person.’ This report will also use the key term Emergency Shelter instead of ‘homeless shelter’ for the same reason.

❖ Methodology

This study was charged with doing an online survey of comparative enumerated methodologies for the each of IUS. Online key word searches included, but was not limited to, rural, veterans, children, youth, and mentally ill: homeless/homelessness enumeration methodology/methodologies and homeless/homelessness counting methodology/methodologies.

Key points from the collected qualitative data are displayed in the table in the next section entitled: “At a Glance Matrix” for easy access, thereafter each IUS has its own narrative of findings and references.

❖ Glossary of Terms

Doubled-up: People who live with family or friends and who are not a normal part of that household.

Key Informant: Individual in possession of key information solicited by a researcher.

Hidden Homeless: A subpopulation of people experiencing homelessness that blends in with society at large such as people experiencing homelessness in a rural setting or youth experiencing homelessness.

Hot Spot: Location where people experiencing homelessness congregate.

Safe Haven: A public location where a person experiencing homelessness may go to rest and relax in safety.

Service Count Methodology: A methodology where a service provider enumerates a homeless individual by entering that person into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) database or by some other means.

Sheltered: People experiencing homelessness who live in shelters or transitional housing.

Snowball Research Methodology: Ethnographic research methodology where one 'key informant' directs the researcher to a new 'key informant.'

Stand Down: Military term which refers to a unit being taken out of combat to rest, recuperate and resupply. It refers to a gathering sponsored by the veteran support community to engage veterans experiencing homelessness and to provide support activities such as social services, counseling, emotional support etc.

Stealth Camp: A clandestinely hidden camp where the general idea is not to be seen, smelled, or heard.

Unsheltered: People Experiencing Homelessness who live on the streets, camp outdoors, or live in cars or abandoned buildings.

❖ Abbreviations

DVA: Washington State Department of Veteran Affairs

HMIS: Homeless Management Information System

IUS: Identified Underrepresented Subpopulations

HUD: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

LGBTQ: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning

PIT: Point-in-Time Homeless Census

PTSD: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

SMI: Severely Mentally Ill

VA: U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs

❖ At a Glance Matrix Tables

People Experiencing Homelessness in a Rural Setting

Findings

- Commonly referred to as the 'hidden' homeless.
- Very hard to enumerate because of rural culture; do not 'self-report' or identify as homeless; fear enumeration for fear of authority; hard to locate due to squatting or stealth camping on private property; do not stay in one place long enough to be noticed; and property rights and topography inhibits blind searches without local representation.
- Traditional homeless enumeration methodologies do not work well.

Methodologies

- Involve the wider community in the PIT early and often.
- Use local knowledge, contacts and networking to identify known locations of stealth camps, squatting locations, and vehicle parking locations.
- Engage and partner with local service providers and emergency services.
- Identify local 'safe havens' and 'hot spots.'
- Utilize local schools effectively and coordinate with local homeless liaison to identify homeless student(s)/families.
- Consider a, IUS specific, micro Project Homeless Connect event in conjunction with PIT.
- Consider expanding the rural area unsheltered count period over a greater period of time.
- Recruit homeless or formerly homeless individuals from the community to act as 'key informants' and to 'introduce' enumerators to unsheltered IUS.
- Recruit homeless or formerly homeless IUS to be enumerators for the unsheltered count.
- Recruit local 'homeless guides', with local street knowledge, to assist in identifying local unsheltered homeless IUS and assist in conducting/planning the PIT.
- Train enumerators to utilize a 'Snowball Research Methodology.'
- Hold specific IUS magnet events in conjunction with the PIT.
- Use social media to raise awareness and outreach among the IUS.
- Engage and partner with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Organizations to identify and enumerate IUS.

U.S. Military Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

Findings

- Very hard to enumerate because, but not limited to, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other service related issues resulting in veterans isolating themselves; mistrust of ‘outsiders’; and mistrust of government and authority figures.

Methodologies

- Involve the wider community in the PIT early and often.
- Engage and partner with local U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Representative and ask to participate in scheduled ‘stand downs.’
- Engage and partner with local VA Medical Center department staffs who works with local homeless veterans.
- Engage and partner with state Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) representative.
- Engage and partner with local veteran service organizations (e.g. American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, etc.)
- Identify local ‘safe havens’ and ‘hot spots.’
- Engage and partner with local service providers and emergency services.
- Use local knowledge, contacts and networking to identify known locations of stealth camps, squatting locations, and vehicle parking locations.
- Consider a, IUS specific, micro Project Homeless Connect event in conjunction with PIT.
- Train enumerators to utilize a ‘Snowball Research Methodology.’
- Recruit homeless or formerly homeless individuals from the community to act as ‘key informants’ and to ‘introduce’ enumerators to unsheltered IUS.
- Recruit homeless or formerly homeless IUS to be enumerators for the unsheltered count.
- Recruit local ‘homeless guides’, with local street knowledge, to assist in identifying local unsheltered homeless IUS and assist in conducting/planning the PIT.
- Hold specific IUS magnet events in conjunction with the PIT.

- Use social media to raise awareness and outreach among the IUS.
- Engage and partner with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Organizations to identify and enumerate IUS.

Mentally Ill People Experiencing Homelessness

Findings

- National Coalition for the Homeless cites the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration that 20 to 25% of the homeless population in the United States suffers from some form of mental illness.
- Subpopulation overlaps across population demographic.
- Hidden characteristic consequently without clinical diagnosis is

Methodologies

- Involve the wider community in the PIT early and often.
- Use local knowledge, contacts and networking to identify known locations of stealth camps, squatting locations, and vehicle parking locations.
- Consider a, IUS specific, micro Project Homeless Connect event in conjunction with PIT.
- Recruit homeless or formerly homeless individuals from the community to act as ‘key informants’ and to ‘introduce’ enumerators to unsheltered IUS.
- Train enumerators to utilize a ‘Snowball Research Methodology.’

<p>impossible to enumerate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage and partner with local service providers and emergency services. • Identify local ‘safe havens’ and ‘hot spots.’ • Hold specific IUS magnet events in conjunction with the PIT. • Use social media to raise awareness and outreach among the IUS. <p>Engage and partner with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Organizations to identify and enumerate IUS.</p>
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Unaccompanied Youth (Age 17 and Under) Experiencing Homelessness

Findings	Methodologies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very hard to enumerate because, but not limited to, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental health related issues resulting in children not wanting to be found and isolating themselves due to fleeing abuse or fear of placement into foster care; mistrust of ‘outsiders’; and mistrust of government and authority figures; and most are not connected to formal supports (child welfare, juvenile justice, mental health system, etc.) and typically avoid services or are not aware of their availability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve the wider community in the PIT early and often. • Use local knowledge, contacts and networking to identify known locations of stealth camps, squatting locations, and vehicle parking locations. • Utilize local schools effectively and coordinate with local homeless liaison to identify homeless student(s)/families. • Consider a, IUS specific, micro Project Homeless Connect event in conjunction with PIT. • Recruit homeless or formerly homeless individuals from the community to act as ‘key informants’ and to ‘introduce’ enumerators to unsheltered IUS. • Train enumerators to utilize a ‘Snowball Research Methodology.’ • Engage and partner with local service providers and emergency services.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify local ‘safe havens’ and ‘hot spots.’ • Engage and partner with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Organizations to identify and enumerate IUS. • Hold specific IUS magnet events in conjunction with the PIT. Use social media to raise awareness and outreach among the IUS.
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Families with Children Experiencing Homelessness	
Findings	Methodologies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No unique enumeration methodologies noted for this subpopulation therefore traditional enumeration methodologies should be used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve the wider community in the PIT early and often. • Use local knowledge, contacts and networking to identify known locations of stealth camps, squatting locations, and vehicle parking locations. • Engage and partner with local service providers and emergency services. • Identify local ‘safe havens’ and ‘hot spots.’ • Utilize local schools effectively and coordinate with local homeless liaison to identify homeless student(s)/families. • Consider a, IUS specific, micro Project Homeless Connect event in conjunction with PIT. • Recruit homeless or formerly homeless individuals from the community to act as ‘key informants’ and to ‘introduce’ enumerators to unsheltered IUS. • Recruit homeless or formerly homeless IUS to be enumerators for the unsheltered count. • Recruit local ‘homeless guides’, with local street knowledge, to assist in identifying local unsheltered homeless IUS and assist in

conducting/planning the PIT.

- **Train enumerators to utilize a ‘Snowball Research Methodology.’**
- **Hold specific IUS magnet events in conjunction with the PIT.**
- **Use social media to raise awareness and outreach among the IUS.**

❖ People Experiencing Homelessness in a Rural Setting

Nine percent of the national general population experiencing homelessness is thought to live within a rural area.¹ The rural homeless are commonly referred to as the “hidden homeless” and are notoriously hard to enumerate for a variety of reasons. These reasons include, but are not limited to, rural culture often does not associate these individuals as homeless consequently they are not reported as, or do not self-report, homeless: homeless individuals within a rural community are usually life-long residents so are therefore seen by their homed counterparts as valid community members and the “one of their own” mentality prevails; rural homeless often do not stand out from their homed counterparts; homeless individuals often avoid being counted for fear of the authorities; homeless who stealth camp or squat in abandoned buildings are often hard to locate; property rights and the topographical nature of rural areas inhibit blind searches without local representation; or rural homeless generally have greater mobility than the urban homeless and thus do not stay in any one location long enough to be noticed.

According to the Council for Affordable and Rural Housing, rural homelessness tends to have a very distinctive profile. They believe that most people in rural areas that would otherwise be experiencing homelessness live in cars, double up, or in reside in grossly substandard housing. Rural areas have fewer shelters or resources for people to turn to, although individuals in these areas tend to have larger extended family and social networks.²

Most individuals who are experiencing homelessness in a rural setting are experiencing it for the first time and tend toward shorter episodic periods of experiencing homelessness. Demographically they tend to be married, white, working females often with their families.³ Rural areas rate of unsheltered homeless families is almost double that of urban areas.⁴ Housing instability in these areas also adversely affect significant numbers of Native Americans and migratory farm workers.

Traditional homeless enumeration methodology does not work well with the rural homeless. These traditional methodologies include:

- **Service Count Methodology:** This methodology is where a service provider enumerates a homeless individual by entering that person into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) database or by some other means. This methodology is negated in rural areas by the absence of a significant amount of service providers (such as emergency shelter or homeless street advocacies).
- **Annual Point in Time (PIT) Homeless Census Enumeration:** Rural areas do not typically have places where homeless naturally congregate (Soup Kitchens or Emergency Shelters, etc.) Since the rural homeless are basically “invisible” this methodology is essentially null and void. Searches within rural areas are pointless, unless the enumerators are “local,” has an intimate knowledge of where to look and has permission to go there.

¹ National Alliance to End Homelessness (2007)

² Council for Affordable and Rural Housing (2007, January/February). .

³ Council for Affordable and Rural Housing (2007, January/February).

⁴ National Alliance to End Homelessness (2009)

Below is a list of enumeration methodologies for this IUS culled from online sources:

- Involve the wider community in the PIT early and often.
- Use local knowledge, contacts and networking to identify known locations of stealthcamps, squatting locations, and vehicle parking locations.
- Engage and partner with local service providers and emergency services.
- Identify local 'safe havens' and 'hot spots.'
- Utilize local schools effectively and coordinate with local homeless liaison to identify homeless student(s)/families.
- Consider a, IUS specific, micro Project Homeless Connect event in conjunction with PIT.
- Consider expanding the rural area unsheltered count period over a greater period of time.
- Recruit homeless or formerly homeless individuals from the community to act as 'key informants' and to 'introduce' enumerators to unsheltered IUS.
- Recruit homeless or formerly homeless IUS to be enumerators for the unsheltered count.
- Recruit local 'homeless guides', with local street knowledge, to assist in identifying local unsheltered homeless IUS and assist in conducting/planning the PIT.
- Train enumerators to utilize a 'Snowball Research Methodology.'
- Hold specific IUS magnet events in conjunction with the PIT.
- Use social media to raise awareness and outreach among the IUS.
- Engage and partner with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Organizations to identify and enumerate IUS.

❖ U.S. Military Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

U.S. military veterans are classically hard to enumerate and usually undercounted in local PITs. The reasons for the under enumeration of homeless veterans include, but are not limited to, veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and isolating themselves, mistrust of government, mistrust of 'outsiders', and/or mistrust of authority figures.

Below is a list of enumeration methodologies for this IUS culled from online sources.

- Involve the wider community in the PIT early and often.
- Engage and partner with local U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Representative and ask to participate in scheduled 'stand downs.'
- Engage and partner with local VA Medical Center department staffs who works with local homeless veterans.
- Engage and partner with state Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) representative.
- Engage and partner with local veteran service organizations (e.g. American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, etc.)
- Identify local 'safe havens' and 'hot spots.'
- Engage and partner with local service providers and emergency services.
- Use local knowledge, contacts and networking to identify known locations of stealth camps, squatting locations, and vehicle parking locations.

- Consider a, IUS specific, micro Project Homeless Connect event in conjunction with PIT.
- Train enumerators to utilize a ‘Snowball Research Methodology.’
- Recruit homeless or formerly homeless individuals from the community to act as ‘key informants’ and to ‘introduce’ enumerators to unsheltered IUS.
- Recruit homeless or formerly homeless IUS to be enumerators for the unsheltered count.
- Recruit local ‘homeless guides’, with local street knowledge, to assist in identifying local unsheltered homeless IUS and assist in conducting/planning the PIT.
- Hold specific IUS magnet events in conjunction with the PIT.
- Use social media to raise awareness and outreach among the IUS.
- Engage and partner with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Organizations to identify and enumerate IUS.

❖ Mentally Ill People Experiencing Homelessness

The National Coalition for the Homeless website cites the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration statistic that 20 to 25% of the homeless population in the United States suffers from some form of mental illness. Obviously, this percentage would diminish if you are only talking about the severely mentally ill (SMI).

Except in some cases of the SMI it is virtually impossible to distinguish mentally ill individuals from the general homeless population. Accordingly without clinical diagnosis from trained professionals it is also impossible to accurately quantify their numbers.

Only those people previously identified or diagnosed and receiving services can logically be enumerated. Enumeration of the mentally ill receiving services via their service providers is problematic due to state and federal privacy laws.

Below is a list of enumeration methodologies for this IUS culled from online sources.

- Involve the wider community in the PIT early and often.
- Use local knowledge, contacts and networking to identify known locations of stealth camps, squatting locations, and vehicle parking locations.
- Consider a, IUS specific, micro Project Homeless Connect event in conjunction with PIT.
- Recruit homeless or formerly homeless individuals from the community to act as ‘key informants’ and to ‘introduce’ enumerators to unsheltered IUS.
- Train enumerators to utilize a ‘Snowball Research Methodology.’
- Engage and partner with local service providers and emergency services.
- Identify local ‘safe havens’ and ‘hot spots.’
- Hold specific IUS magnet events in conjunction with the PIT.
- Use social media to raise awareness and outreach among the IUS.
- Engage and partner with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Organizations to identify and enumerate IUS.

❖ Unaccompanied Youth Experiencing Homelessness (Age 17 and Under)

Generally speaking homeless youth ages are considered age twenty-four and younger. For the purpose of this paper homeless youth is considered ages twenty-four to eighteen and homeless children are considered to be ages seventeen and under. This paper only looks at homeless children.

Homeless youth are very hard to enumerate and usually undercounted. Homeless children are especially difficult to find. The reasons for the under enumeration of homeless children include, but are not limited to, hiding from a street count because their minors, reluctance to admit their age or be identified, being a run-away or a throw-away and not wanting to be returned home, and/or fear of authority.

Below is a list of enumeration methodologies for this IUS culled from online sources.

- Involve the wider community in the PIT early and often.
- Use local knowledge, contacts and networking to identify known locations of stealth camps, squatting locations, and vehicle parking locations.
- Utilize local schools effectively and coordinate with local homeless liaison to identify homeless student(s)/families.
- Consider a, IUS specific, micro Project Homeless Connect event in conjunction with PIT.
- Recruit homeless or formerly homeless individuals from the community to act as ‘key informants’ and to ‘introduce’ enumerators to unsheltered IUS.
- Train enumerators to utilize a ‘Snowball Research Methodology.’
- Engage and partner with local service providers and emergency services.
- Identify local ‘safe havens’ and ‘hot spots.’
- Engage and partner with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Organizations to identify and enumerate IUS.
- Hold specific IUS magnet events in conjunction with the PIT.
- Use social media to raise awareness and outreach among the IUS.

❖ Families with Children Experiencing Homelessness

A cursory online search revealed no unique methodologies for enumerating families with children experiencing homelessness. Therefore traditional methods, excluding people experiencing homelessness in a rural setting, should be used in enumerating this subpopulation. These traditional methods should include service count methodology and the Thurston County PIT homeless census. As well as the below listed of enumeration methodologies for this IUS.

- Involve the wider community in the PIT early and often.
- Use local knowledge, contacts and networking to identify known locations of stealth camps, squatting locations, and vehicle parking locations.
- Engage and partner with local service providers and emergency services.

- Identify local ‘safe havens’ and ‘hot spots.’
- Utilize local schools effectively and coordinate with local homeless liaison to identify homeless student(s)/families.
- Consider a, IUS specific, micro Project Homeless Connect event in conjunction with PIT.
- Recruit homeless or formerly homeless individuals from the community to act as ‘key informants’ and to ‘introduce’ enumerators to unsheltered IUS.
- Recruit homeless or formerly homeless IUS to be enumerators for the unsheltered count.
- Recruit local ‘homeless guides’, with local street knowledge, to assist in identifying local unsheltered homeless IUS and assist in conducting/planning the PIT.
- Train enumerators to utilize a ‘Snowball Research Methodology.’
- Hold specific IUS magnet events in conjunction with the PIT.
- Use social media to raise awareness and outreach among the IUS.

❖ Description of Enumeration Methodologies

Enumeration methodologies can be divided into two different classes: general and specific. General enumeration methodologies are common across all four categories of IUSs. Specific enumeration methodologies are specific to the individual IUS but not necessarily exclusive of it. Listed below are descriptions of the enumeration methodologies listed in the At a Glance Matrix of this report:

➤ **Involve the Wider Community in the PIT, Early and Often** (general):

Get the wider community involved in the PIT Homeless Census early on via networking, public news releases, posted documents, scheduled public meetings, and social media. Solicit public input in the PIT planning process and develop a volunteer network for the PIT itself.

➤ **Use Local Knowledge, Contacts and Networking to Identify Known Locations of Stealth Camps, Squatting Locations, and Vehicle Parking Locations** (general):

Use local knowledge through community involvement to develop an informational database as to known locations of stealth camps, squatting locations and vehicle parking locations.

➤ **Utilize Local Schools Effectively and Coordinate with Local Homeless Liaison to Identify Homeless Student/Family** (Rural/Children):

Engage and partner with county schools and districts to develop better picture of children attending school who are, by definition, experiencing homelessness. Effectively coordinate with local schools and those schools designated homelessness liaison in order to identify the student(s), and their families, who are currently experiencing homelessness.

- **Consider a, IUS specific, micro Project Homeless Connect event in conjunction with PIT (General):**

Consider a specific magnet event in the form of a Project Homeless Connect event orientated toward people in each of the IUS categories currently experiencing homelessness county wide.

- **Consider Expanding the Rural Area Unsheltered Count Period Over a Greater Period of Time (Rural):**

Consider extending the allowed enumeration period for rural areas to approximately one week instead of twenty-four hours.

- **Recruit homeless or formerly homeless individuals to act as ‘key informants’ and to ‘introduce’ enumerators to unsheltered IUS (General):**

Recruit people experiencing homelessness or people who have formerly experienced homelessness to act as key informants; help gain trust and admission into homeless societies; or introduce enumerators to individual’s currently experiencing homelessness.

- **Recruit Homeless or Formerly Homeless IUS to be Enumerators for the Unsheltered Count (Rural/Veteran/Families):**

People who are culturally connected have common ground. Recruit people currently experiencing homelessness or people who have formerly experienced homelessness to train as enumerators for the PIT.

- **Recruit Local ‘Homeless Guides,’ with Local Street Knowledge, to Assist in Identifying Local Unsheltered Homeless IUS and Assist in Planning/Conducting the PIT (Rural/Veteran/Families):**

Recruit people currently experiencing homelessness or people who have formerly experienced homeless, who possess local ‘street knowledge,’ to act in the advisory capacity as ‘homeless guides’. These individuals will assist in planning/conducting the PIT by serving on focus groups, survey pretest, and by acting as guides to the local homeless population.

- **Train Enumerators to Utilize a ‘Snowball Research Methodology (General):**



Train enumerators to, as part of their script, to ask the individuals their interviewing where other youth experiencing homelessness might be found. Where ever possible the individual being interviewed should introduce the enumerator to the new interviewee directly. This method is known as a ‘Snowball Research Methodology.’

➤ **Engage and Partner with Local Service Providers and Emergency Services (General):**

Wherever possible, engage and partner with local service providers (medical, behavioral health, housing, etc.). However, due to the nature of state and federal privacy laws this might be challenging.

Wherever possible, engage and partner with local emergency services (police, fire, Medic One, etc.). Local emergency services are in a unique position, in that they have a broad macro view of the area's population of people experiencing homelessness; who they are, their status; and where they can usually be found.

➤ **Engage and Partner with Local U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) to Representative and Ask to Participate in Scheduled 'stand downs' (Veteran):**

Local federal VA representatives work hard to reach local veterans experiencing homelessness and are uniquely positioned as 'key informants.' While limited by state and federal privacy laws, these professionals can still provide valuable information about individuals as well as the subpopulation as large. If possible, become involved in their magnet event they call a 'stand down' in conjunction with the PIT. These events give the enumerator a unique opportunity to identify and enumerate members of this elusive and underrepresented subpopulation.

➤ **Engage and Partner with Local VA Medical Center Department Staffs Who Works with Local Homeless Veterans (Veteran):**

While VA medical personnel are limited by state and federal privacy laws about what they can or cannot tell us about their patrons they can tell us how many veterans experiencing homelessness reside in this area and where they can generally be found.

➤ **Engage and Partner with State Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) Representative (Veteran):**

Similar to their federal counterparts these state DVA representatives work hard to reach local veterans experiencing homelessness and are also uniquely positioned as 'key informants.' While limited by state and federal privacy laws, these professionals can still provide valuable information about individuals as well as the subpopulation as large.

➤ **Engage and Partner with Local Veteran Service Organizations (e.g. American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, etc.) (Veteran):**

Veteran service organizations provide emergency and support services to local veterans and are also uniquely positioned to know who the local veterans experiencing homelessness are and where they can be found.

➤ **Identify Local ‘Safe Havens’ and ‘Hot Spots’ (General):**



‘Safe Havens’ are places where people experiencing homelessness feels safe and can relax and decompress. Closely related, ‘hot spots’ are popular places to hang out or resource hubs. These places attract people experiencing homelessness for rest and relaxation; shelter or resources; and/or socialization. These places include, but are not limited to: transportation hubs; all-night cafes and restaurants; food banks and feeding programs; health care facilities and hospital emergency rooms; libraries, recreation centers; shopping malls; specific street locations (such as the 4th Avenue artesian well in Olympia); stealth camps; abandoned buildings; and/or parks.

➤ **Engage and Partner with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Organizations to Identify and Enumerate IUS (General):**

It’s been previously stated that people who are culturally connected have a common ground. Therefore LGBTQ organizations should be engaged and partnered with to help identify and enumerate LGBTQ youth and children experiencing homelessness.

➤ **Hold Specific IUS Magnet Event (General):**



Hold specific IUS magnet events similar to the VA’s ‘stand down.’ Ideas include, but are not limited to: movie night or sleep over event for youth and children experiencing homelessness; a barbecue for the mentally ill, developmentally challenged and/or intellectually challenged experiencing homelessness; or an area specific mini-connect for people in rural areas experiencing homelessness.

➤ **Use Social Media to Raise Awareness and Outreach Among the IUS (General):**

Utilize social media to get the message out, raise awareness and outreach.

❖ Enumeration Methodologies Cross Reference Table

Enumeration Methodology	Rural	Veteran	Mentally Ill	Youth (17 & Under)	Families W/ Children
Involve the wider community in the PIT early and often.	X	X	X	X	X
Use local knowledge, contacts and networking to identify known locations of stealth camps, squatting locations, and vehicle parking locations.	X	X	X	X	X
Utilize local schools effectively and coordinate with local homeless liaison to identify homeless student(s)/families.	X			X	X
Consider a, IUS specific, micro Project Homeless Connect event in conjunction with PIT.	X	X	X	X	X
Consider expanding the rural area unsheltered count period over a greater period of time.	X				
Recruit homeless or formerly homeless individuals from the community to act as ‘key informants’ and to ‘introduce’ enumerators to unsheltered IUS.	X	X	X	X	X
Recruit homeless or formerly homeless IUS to be enumerators for the unsheltered count.	X	X			X

Enumeration Methodology	Rural	Veteran	Mentally Ill	Youth (17 & Under)	Families W/ Children
Recruit local ‘homeless guides’, with local street knowledge, to assist in identifying local unsheltered homeless IUS and assist in conducting/planning the PIT.	X	X			X
Train enumerators to utilize a ‘Snowball Research Methodology.’	X	X	X	X	X
Engage and partner with local service providers and emergency services.	X	X	X	X	X
Engage and partner with local U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Representative and ask to participate in scheduled ‘stand downs.’		X			
Engage and partner with local VA Medical Center department staffs who works with local homeless veterans.		X			
Engage and partner with state Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) representative.		X			
Engage and partner with local veteran service organizations (e.g. American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, etc.)		X			
Identify local ‘safe havens’ and ‘hot spots.’	X	X	X	X	X

Enumeration Methodology	Rural	Veteran	Mentally Ill	Youth (17 & Under)	Families W/ Children
Engage and partner with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Organizations to identify and enumerate IUS.	X	X	X	X	X
Hold specific IUS magnet events in conjunction with the PIT.	X	X	X	X	X
Use social media to raise awareness and outreach among the IUS.	X	X	X	X	X

❖ Summary

Methodologies for enumerating people experiencing homelessness can be classified as either general (general unsheltered population) or specific (relative to only a few subpopulations). Identified key enumeration strategies are listed in the table below.

Rural	Veterans	Mentally Ill	Youth (Age 17 and Under)	Families with Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Utilize Local Schools Effectively and Coordinate with Local Homeless Liaison to Identify Homeless Student(s)/Families. •Engage and Partner with Local Service Providers and Emergency Services. •Identify Local 'Safe Havens' and 'Hot Spots.' •Recruit Homeless or Formerly Homeless from the Community to Act as 'Key Informant' and to 'Introduce' Enumerators to Rural Unsheltered Individuals and Families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Engage and Partner with Department of Veteran Affairs and Participate in their 'Stand Downs.' •Engage and Partner with Local Veteran Service Organizations. •Identify Local 'Safe Havens' and 'Hot Spots.' •Recruit Homeless or Formerly Homeless from the Community to Act as 'Key Informants' and to 'Introduce' Enumerators to Unsheltered Veterans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Engage and Partner with Local Service Providers and Emergency Services. •Recruit Homeless or Formerly Homeless Individuals from the Community to Act as 'Key Informants' and to 'Introduce' Enumerators to Unsheltered Mentally Ill Individuals. •Hold Specific Mentally Ill Magnet Events in Conjunction with the PIT. •Identify Local 'Safe Havens' and 'Hot Spots.' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Utilize Local Schools Effectively and Coordinate with Local Homeless Liaison to Identify Homeless Student(s)/Families. •Hold Specific Youth (Age 17 and Under) Magnet Events in Conjunction with PIT. •Recruit Homeless or Formerly Homeless from the Community to Act as 'Key Informants' and to 'Introduce' Enumerators to Unsheltered Homeless Youth. •Engage and Partner with Local LGBTQ Organizations to Identify and Enumerate Unsheltered Youth (Age 17 and Under). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Utilize Local Schools Effectively and Coordinate with Local Homeless Liaison to Identify Homeless Student(s)/Families. •Engage and Partner with Local Service Providers and Emergency Services. •Hold a Family Specific Magnet Event in Conjunction with the PIT. •Recruit Homeless or Formerly Homeless from the Community to Act as 'Key Informants' and to 'Introduce' Enumerators to Unsheltered Homeless Families.

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APPENDIX G - GLOSSARY OF HOUSING & HOMELESS PROGRAM TERMS

*[Adapted from Pierce County Affordable Housing Consortium website (affordablehousingconsortium.org),
which was adapted from HDC, Seattle]*

Affordable Housing	Housing should cost no more than 30% of your total income, including utilities. Affordable rental housing usually has a maximum income limit of 60% of median income. In Thurston County, this equates to an annual income of \$29,580 for one person or \$38,040 for three persons. Homeownership programs generally allow up to 80% of median or \$39,400 for one person or \$50,700 for a three-person household.
Chronically Homeless	Chronically homeless people are defined as "an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who have either been continuously homeless for a year or more, or have had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.
CHG	Consolidated Homeless Grant Program, state funding administered by the County to support a variety of activities, including: operation of homeless shelter and transitional housing units, rental assistance, data collection and reporting.
ESG	Emergency Shelter Grant Program, federal funding administered by the County for homeless prevention assistance to households who would otherwise become homeless and to provide assistance to rapidly re-house persons who are experiencing homelessness. The funds are intended to target individuals and families who would be homeless but for this assistance.
HEN	Housing and Essential Needs Grants Program, state funding administered by the County that are limited to providing rental assistance, utility assistance and essential needs for medical service recipients whose eligibility is determined by the State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).
HUD	Abbreviation for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
HOME Consortium	The HOME Consortium is the Thurston County inter-jurisdictional body that governs the use of federal HOME funds and the two state funded programs called the Homeless Housing Program and the Affordable Housing Program. This eight member body is composed of one appointed representative from each jurisdiction in Thurston County, including Bucoda, Lacey, Olympia, Rainier, Tenino, Tumwater, Yelm and Thurston County.
HOME Citizens Advisory Committee	The HOME Citizens Advisory Committee is a committee established by the HOME Consortium composed of appointed members who represent service providers, non-profit housing developers, private sector housing industry, faith-based communities, homeless people and other stakeholders in local homeless and affordable housing policy and funding issues.

Homeless	<p>The federal definition of homelessness, which comes from United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD defines homeless as (1) an individual who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence; and (2) an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill). • An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
Homeless Coordinator	Newly created Thurston County one-year position funded to provide strategic coordination to the countywide network of service, shelter, and housing providers. Key goals for the Homeless Coordinator include; 1) Assessment of the Current System, 2) Ten-Year Plan Update, 3) Enhanced Data Management, and, 4) Implementation of a Revised Ten-Year Plan
Housing Authority	Housing authorities are public corporations with boards appointed by the local government. Their mission is to provide affordable housing to low- and moderate-income people. In addition to public housing, housing authorities also provide other types of subsidized housing such as the federal HUD-subsidized Section 8 program.
Housing First	<p>Housing First is a recent innovation in human service programs and social policy in responding to homelessness. It is an alternative to the a system of emergency shelter/transitional housing progressions known as the Continuum of Care, whereby each level moves them closer to "independent housing" (for example: from the streets to a public shelter, and from a public shelter to a transitional housing program, and from there to their own apartment in the community)</p> <p>Housing First moves the homeless individual or household immediately from the streets or homeless shelters into their own apartments.</p>
Housing Task Force	The Thurston County Housing Task Force is an ad hoc association formed in 1988 to address issues of affordable housing and homelessness in Thurston County. For many years this body managed the "Continuum of Care" for Thurston County. It was originally composed of service providers, advocates, government housing program staff and elected officials and served as an networking and advocacy group to promote local housing policy. In recent years it has become a coalition of homeless shelter, housing and service providers who meet monthly to network homeless services and address current issues.
Income Limits	<p>Income limits for households to qualify for subsidized housing opportunities are based on the Area Median Income (AMI) for a family of four. In Thurston County the 2010 AMI is \$68,100. Specific household sizes are used to determine eligibility for each household.</p> <p>Low-income: 80% or less of AMI = \$56,300 for household of 4</p> <p>Very-low-income: 50% or less of AMI = \$35,200 for household of 4</p> <p>Extremely-low-income: 30% or less of AMI = \$21,100 for household of 4</p>
Low Income Housing Tax Credit	Government authorized tax credits issued to both for-profit and nonprofit-developed rental properties to develop affordable housing. The Washington State Housing Finance Commission allocates these credits to developers to build or fix up low-income housing. Large corporations, institutions, pension funds, and insurance companies invest in the housing as a method to gain the tax credits and reduce their income tax obligations. These apartments must serve residents below

60% of median income and must accept Section 8 vouchers.

Market Rate Rent

The prevailing monthly cost for rental housing, also called “street rents”. It is set by the landlord without restrictions.

Median Income

This is a statistical number set at the level where half of all households have income above it and half below it. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Regional Economist calculates and publishes this median income data annually in the Federal Register. See the Washington State Median Income and Income Limit figures for 2009-2010, at <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il/il2009/st.odb>

Mixed-Income Housing

A multi-family housing property that contains both market-rate units and subsidized units for low income residents.

Nonprofit Housing

Nonprofit housing is developed by nonprofit corporations with a community board of directors and mission. Most housing developed by nonprofit developers is affordable with rents or prices below market-rate. Income generated from the housing is put back into the mission of the organization, rather than being distributed to stockholders or individual investors.

Nonprofit Housing Developer

A nonprofit organization with a mission that involves the creation, preservation, renovation, operation or maintenance of affordable housing.

Overflow Shelters

Overflow shelters are informal emergency shelters operated by non-profit organizations or faith communities inside their facilities to accommodate the “overflow” of homeless people who are turned away from traditional emergency shelters. Typically, overflow shelters rotate on a cyclical basis in order to be compliant with local zoning and building codes. Staffing is typically offered by trained volunteers.

Permanent Housing

Rental apartments or ownership homes that provide individuals and families with a fixed street address and residence.

Privately Developed or For-Profit Housing

This housing rents or sells at market-rate and is developed and owned by for-profit individuals, partnerships, or corporations. Most housing in Thurston County is privately developed.

Project-Based Section 8 Housing

A federal HUD program initially based on 20-year commitments of rent subsidy to developers of privately owned rental housing stock in the community to encourage them to build affordable housing.

Many Section 8 contracts have expired or will expire soon, and the property owners must now decide whether to renew their contract or leave the program ("opt out"). Most of these contracts are now renewed on a one-year basis. Projects with high risk of opting out typically have rents set by the Section 8 contract below the prevailing market rents for comparable units. Owners thus have an incentive to leave the program and convert their property to private market rentals.

Public Housing

Public housing is housing owned and run by a local housing authority under the oldest federal housing program—the Housing Act of 1937. To be eligible to live in public housing, you must be low income and meet certain other requirements. In most cases, rent including utilities can comprise no more than 30% of your income.

Rapid Re-housing	Rapid Re-housing is a new housing program model is based on the "housing first" approach. Rapid Re-housing differs from other housing models by having an immediate and primary focus on helping families access and sustain permanent housing as quickly as possible. Rapid Re-housing is funded by a new HUD initiative called "Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP)".
Section 8 Vouchers	This federal HUD program that is administered by the local Housing Authority of Thurston County. Eligible tenants receive vouchers they can use to help them pay for apartments in the private market. Vouchers pay that portion of the low income tenants rent that is above 30% of their monthly income.
Shelters	Also called emergency shelters, provides temporary overnight living accommodations for homeless people. Shelters are typically dedicated to specific populations, i.e. single males, families or domestic violence victims. Shelters are operated by both non-profit organizations or faith communities, with each shelter being administered under a unique set of rules. Generally, shelter guests must leave the facility during the day.
SRO	Single room occupancy units. The traditional SRO unit is a single room, usually less than 100 square feet, designed to accommodate one person. Amenities such as a bathroom, kitchen or common areas are located outside the unit and are shared with other residents. Many SROs can be found in renovated hotels. SRO housing serves a variety of people by providing three types of settings: 1) Emergency housing for homeless people, including the elderly. Occupancy is usually on a nightly or weekly basis. 2) Transitional housing for previously homeless or marginally housed persons, including older people, who are progressing to permanent housing. 3) Permanent housing for older people who will move to this setting and often live here until their death or until their increasing frailty forces them to move to a more supportive setting.
Subsidized Housing	A generic term covering all federal, state or local government programs that reduce the cost of housing for low- and moderate-income residents. Housing can be subsidized in numerous ways—giving tenants a rent voucher, helping homebuyers with down payment assistance, reducing the interest on a mortgage, providing deferred loans to help developers acquire and develop property, giving tax credits to encourage investment in low- and moderate-income housing, authorizing tax-exempt bond authority to finance the housing, providing ongoing assistance to reduce the operating costs of housing, and others.
Supportive Housing	Combines affordable housing with individualized health, counseling and employment services for persons with mental illness, chemical dependency, chronic health problems, or other challenges. Generally it is transitional housing, but it can be permanent housing in cases such as a group home for persons with mental illness or developmental disabilities. Supportive housing is a solution to homelessness because it addresses its root causes by providing a proven, effective means of re-integrating families and individuals into the community by addressing their basic needs for housing and on-going support.
Transitional Housing	This housing provides stability for residents for a limited time period, usually two weeks to 24 months, to allow them to recover from a crisis such as homelessness or domestic violence before transitioning into permanent housing. Transitional housing often offers supportive services, which enable a person to transition to an independent living situation.

Tent City

“Tent City” is a newly minted term for a long standing practice where homeless people develop informal communities composed of tents and other temporary structures. During the Great Depression, these communities were derisively termed, “Hoovervilles” after then President Hoover in a negative reference to the failed federal efforts to revive the economy.

Present day tent cities are often created by homeless people for needed shelter on public or under-utilized lands. Sometimes tent cities are created by homeless advocates as a form of protest. In recent years, local governments have struggled to find ways to balance regulatory compliance with the need for shelter and community provided by Tent Cities.

Questions, comments, or to request a digital copy of this report please contact:

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