



## DATA BRIEF

# Allegheny County 2023 Point-In Time Count of People Experiencing Homelessness

May 2023

### OVERVIEW

Each year, Allegheny County participates in a national effort required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to conduct a census of the number of people experiencing homelessness on a single night. The Point-in-Time count enumerates people experiencing homelessness in the County who are sheltered (residing in emergency shelters), unsheltered (residing in places not meant for human habitation) or participating in a short-term, supportive housing program (transitional and safe haven). HUD mandates that the count occurs during the last 10 days in January every year. In 2023, the count took place on January 24. The low temperature on that night was 29 degrees Fahrenheit.

Point-in-Time counts vary over time, due to changes in the number of people experiencing homelessness, in guidance from HUD in how the Point-in-Time count is conducted and in the capacity of the homeless support system.<sup>1</sup> Fluctuations in the number of volunteer surveyors, weather conditions and areas surveyed can contribute to variations from year to year that are unrelated to changes in the number of people experiencing homelessness. In addition, populations that are in unstable housing situations but not considered homeless by HUD's definition are not included in the Point-in-Time count; for example, the HUD does not include people who are in danger of becoming homeless soon, people living in doubled-up situations, or people enrolled in permanent housing programs for the formerly homeless.

This data brief provides information on how the Point-in-Time count is conducted and key takeaways from this year's count. An interactive dashboard with more 2023 Point-in-Time data, as well as trends over time, is available [here](#).

### HOW DO WE CONDUCT THE POINT-IN-TIME COUNT?

Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) manages the Allegheny County Continuum of Care's Point-in-Time count. To conduct this year's count of unsheltered individuals, DHS coordinated internal and external street outreach teams (five teams in total containing 27 outreach staff) and two volunteers to cover approximately 15 geographic regions throughout the County (See **Appendix**). As is allowed by HUD, teams surveyed individuals from January 24 through 28 and included them in the count if they were unsheltered on the night of the 24th. For individuals who were counted and who already appeared on a shared street outreach case conferencing list, DHS relied on existing administrative data to collect HUD-required information.

DHS primarily relies on street outreach workers to survey unsheltered individuals; volunteers accompany them and supplement efforts to administer a survey. Surveyors gather HUD-required information about housing

<sup>1</sup> In 2023, there were no changes in the HUD guidance from the previous count. See <https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CPD/>

[documents/2022\\_HIC\\_and\\_PIT\\_Data\\_Collection\\_Notice.pdf](#) for the latest guidelines.

situation, demographics, health, and veteran affiliation. Homeless outreach staff can provide the foundation for conducting a public places count because of their working knowledge of unsheltered individuals in the area, experience providing services to those on the streets, and availability to conduct the actual count.

DHS relies on Homeless Management Information System data to gather information about those staying in emergency shelters on the night of the Point-in-Time count as well as for those enrolled in transitional housing programs. This year the County's emergency shelter capacity increased to 895 beds, compared to 744 in 2022. Additionally, each domestic violence shelter provides the number of clients (adults and children) served on the night of the Point-in-Time count.

The data collected during the yearly Point-in-Time count is submitted to HUD, to create a yearly homelessness assessment report presented to Congress. For more information on national, state and local trends, visit HUD's website [here](#).

### WHO IS COUNTED AS PART OF THE POINT-IN-TIME COUNT?

The Point-in-Time count does not represent all individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the County. Not every geographic area is surveyed, and there may be individuals staying in abandoned buildings or secluded wooded areas who are not counted.

HUD requires that the Point-in-Time count include people who are staying in emergency shelters, those who are unsheltered, and those participating in transitional housing (temporary housing with supportive services for up to 24 months) and safe haven (temporary housing with supportive services for veterans) programs.

DHS changed how it presents Point-in-Time data by separating out those in transitional and safe haven housing from those who are staying in emergency shelters or unsheltered. This change provides a clearer picture of the number of individuals who are experiencing an immediate housing crisis versus those enrolled in programs that provide interim housing stability.

### HOW MANY PEOPLE WERE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS ACCORDING TO THE POINT-IN-TIME COUNT ON JANUARY 24, 2023?

On January 24, 2023 in Allegheny County, 913 individuals were staying in emergency shelters or experiencing unsheltered homelessness (compared to 736 in 2022).<sup>2</sup>

- 758 were staying in emergency shelters (83% of overall count)
- 155 were unsheltered (17% of overall count)

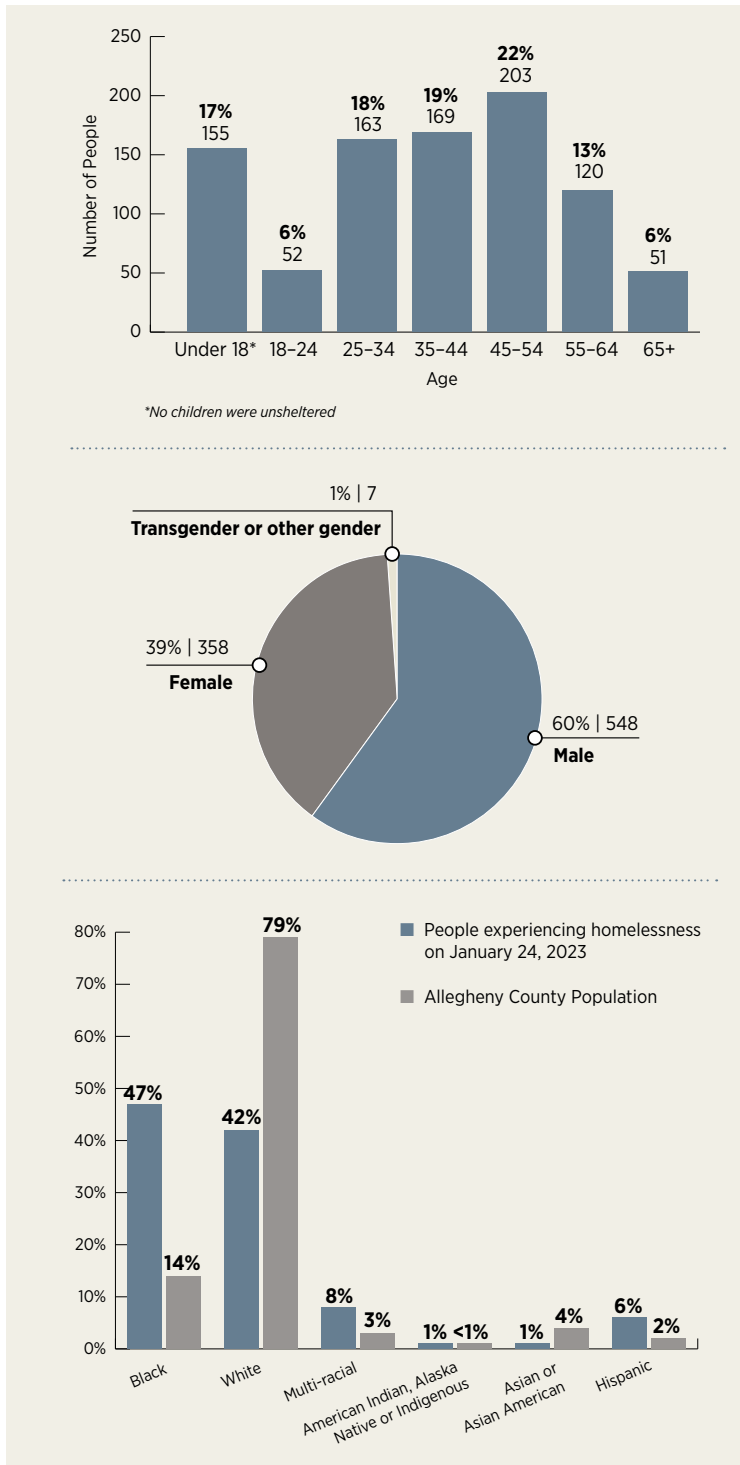
Unsheltered individuals were concentrated in Downtown (central business district), North Side, and South Side (See **Appendix**).

<sup>2</sup> In addition to those in emergency shelter and unsheltered, 105 individuals were staying in transitional housing and 11 individuals were staying in safe haven housing. HUD

includes these programs as part of the PIT count. Individuals in these programs receive housing support that typically lasts up to two years.

**WHAT ARE THE KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS YEAR'S POINT-IN-TIME COUNT?**

- An increase in the number of individuals staying in emergency shelter (+127) is largely responsible for the increase between 2022 and 2023 Point-in-Time counts. The County's emergency shelter bed capacity expanded in November 2022 with the opening of Second Avenue Commons.
- The number of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness also increased (+50).



Among those 913 individuals staying in emergency shelters or experiencing unsheltered homelessness:

- The majority were part of adult-only households (676, 74%)
- 52 (6%) were transition age (18-24) youth, an increase of 10 individuals from last year
- 155 (17%) were children (under age 18); no children were unsheltered
- 548 (60%) identified as male, 358 (39%) identified as female, 7 (1%) identified as transgender or a gender that is not singularly 'female' or 'male'
- 432 (47%) identified as Black/African American/African, 387 (42%) as White, and 75 (8%) as multiracial; those identifying as American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous or Asian or Asian American each accounted for about 1% of the count
- The number and percent of White individuals notably increased (+128, +7 percentage points) from last year's count. Despite the increase, White individuals are still underrepresented, as they make up 79% of the County's population.
- Fifty-one individuals identified as Hispanic/Latin(a)(o)(x), an increase of 23 people from last year, even though their representation within the Point-in-Time count grew just slightly (4% to 6%).



- 36 were veterans (4%)
- 136 (of those using emergency shelter only) were adult survivors of domestic violence (*18% of those in emergency shelter; surveyors did not ask unsheltered individuals this question*)
- 208 were chronically homeless (23%)<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> HUD defines the chronically homeless as those with a disabling condition who are continuously homeless (sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation or living in an emergency shelter) for four episodes in the last three years where the time homeless combined is at least 12 months, or one episode of homelessness that lasts at least 12 consecutive months.

**APPENDIX**

**Assigned Geographic Regions, Point-in-Time Count 2023**

- Allegheny Valley:** Aspinwall, Tarentum, Natrona Heights, Brackenridge, Arnold, Etna, Blawnox, Millvale, Sharpsburg, Harrison Twp
- Downtown/Strip District**
- East End Extended:** Wilkinsburg, Edgewood, Swissvale, Greenfield, Hazelwood, Squirrel Hill
- East End:** East Liberty, Homewood, Lawrenceville, Bloomfield, Highland Park, Larimer, Lincoln-Lemington, Point Breeze, Shadyside, Garfield
- East suburbs:** Penn Hills, Monroeville, Turtle Creek, Pitcairn, Wilmerding
- Hill District/Uptown**
- Mon Valley:** Braddock, Braddock Hills, North Braddock, McKeesport, Duquesne, Homestead, Glassport, Clairton, Munhall, Rankin, Forest Hills
- North Side:** Allegheny Center, Manchester, Central North Side
- North Side Extended:** Brighton Heights, Avalon, Bellevue, Marshall-Shadeland, West View
- Oakland**
- South Hills:** Castle Shannon, Bridgeville
- South Hilltop:** Allentown, Carrick, Arlington, Mt. Oliver, Mt. Washington
- South Side (Flats & Slopes)**
- West:** McKees Rocks, Carnegie, Heidelberg, Robinson, Coraopolis, Kennedy, Crafton Heights, Ingram

**Locations of Individuals Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness on January 24, 2023**

MUNICIPALITY	# OF INDIVIDUALS	LOCATION WITHIN CITY OF PITTSBURGH	# OF INDIVIDUALS
Braddock	2	Brighton Heights	2
Clairton	2	Downtown	17
McKees Rocks	5	East End	2
McKeesport	1	East Liberty	5
Natrona Heights	1	Hill District	3
Penn Hills	2	Homewood	13
<b>Pittsburgh</b>	<b>135</b>	Lawrenceville	2
West Mifflin	1	Mt. Washington	1
Wilkinsburg	1	Northside	46
Unknown (location not specified)	5	Oakland	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>155</b>	Polish Hill	3
		South of Liberty Tunnel	2
		Southside	30
		Squirrel Hill	1
		Strip District	1
		Uptown	4