

2022

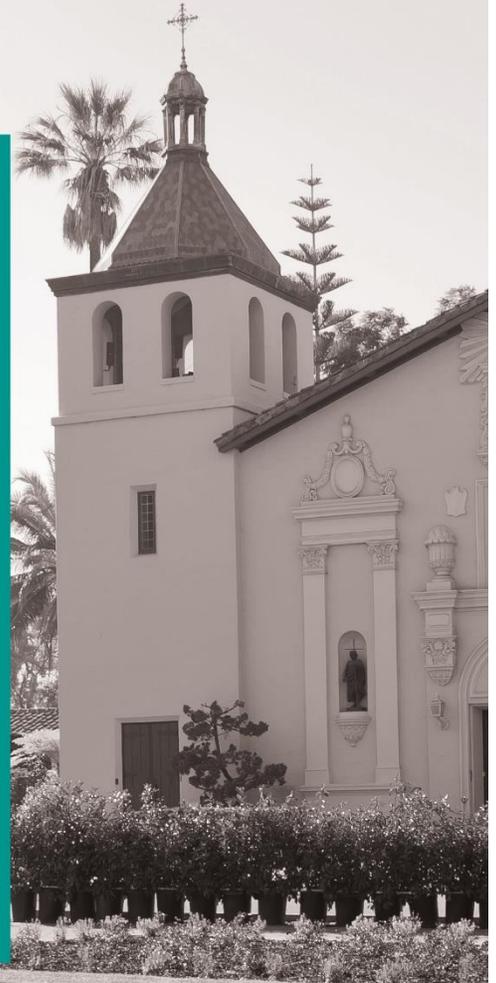
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# COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA

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POINT-IN-TIME REPORT  
ON HOMELESSNESS

Census and Survey Results



## ABOUT THE RESEARCHER

Applied Survey Research (ASR) is a social research firm dedicated to helping people build better communities by collecting meaningful data, facilitating information-based planning, and developing custom strategies. The firm was founded on the principle that community improvement, initiative sustainability, and program success are closely tied to assessment of needs, evaluation of community goals, and development of appropriate responses.

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The 2022 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey planning team would like to thank the many individuals and agencies who contributed to this project. The participation of community volunteers and partner agencies is critical to the success of both the count and survey efforts. Hundreds of community volunteers, city and county employees, and local community-based organizations assisted with all aspects of the count, from the initial planning meetings to the night of the count and to the publication of this report. This year's count was especially difficult, as COVID-19 presented many challenges to successful completion of the count. After a yearlong postponement due to the pandemic, the count had to be pushed back a month, to February, with just a few weeks' notice.

ASR would like to give special thanks to the individuals currently experiencing homelessness who acted as surveyors and guides during the count. Without their dedication and knowledge, the Homeless Census and Survey team would not have been able to conduct these efforts. They provided access and knowledge about the community that would have been unobtainable without their support. These individuals took time out of their day to participate in this effort and we owe them thanks.

## Project Planning Committee

Kathryn Kaminski, Office of Supportive Housing. Leila Qureishi, Office of Supportive Housing. Michelle Covert, Office of Supportive Housing, Steven Tong, Office of Supportive Housing, Jazmine Wong, Office of Supportive Housing. Stephanie Jimenez, City of San José. Vanessa Beretta, City of San José.

## Point-In-Time Jurisdictional Funders

- City of Campbell
- City of Cupertino
- City of Gilroy
- City of Los Altos
- Town of Los Altos Hills
- Town of Los Gatos
- City of Milpitas
- City of Monte Sereno
- City of Morgan Hill
- City of Mountain View
- City of Palo Alto
- City of San José
- City of Saratoga
- City of Santa Clara
- City of Sunnyvale
- County of Santa Clara

## Other Acknowledgements

The following organizations were involved in the planning and data reporting process:

- Abode
- Bill Wilson Center
- BitFocus
- Unhoused Response Group (URG)
- County of Santa Clara Office of Supportive Housing
- PitStop
- Destination: Home
- PATH
- Downtown Streets Team (DST)
- Santa Clara County Office of Education
- Housing Authority Santa Clara
- Sunnyvale Community Services

# INTRODUCTION

Every two years, during the last ten days of January, communities across the United States conduct comprehensive counts of the local population experiencing homelessness. These biennial Point-in-Time Counts estimate the prevalence of homelessness in each community and collect information on individuals and families residing in temporary shelters and places not meant for human habitation, and ultimately help the federal government better understand the nature and extent of homelessness nationwide.

As required of all jurisdictions (Continuums of Care - CoCs) receiving federal funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide homeless services, Continuums of Care (CoC) across the country report the findings of their local Point-in-Time Count in their annual funding application to HUD. Currently, the Santa Clara County CoC receives approximately \$30 million dollars annually in federal CoC funding, as well as additional funding from other sources.

Santa Clara County has partnered with ASR to conduct its Point-in-Time Count since 2007, maintaining a similar methodology across every count and thus ensuring as much consistency as possible, from one year to the next. ASR is a social research firm that has over 20 years of experience in homeless enumeration and needs assessment, having conducted homeless counts and surveys throughout California and across the nation. Their work is featured as a best practice in the HUD publication, *A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People*, as well as in the Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago publication, *Conducting a Youth Count: A Toolkit*.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW AND GOALS

In order for the Homeless Census and Survey to best reflect the experience and expertise of the community, ASR held planning meetings with local community members. These community members were drawn from City and County departments, community-based service providers, and other interested stakeholders. These individuals comprised the 2022 Planning Committee and were instrumental to ensuring the 2022 Santa Clara County Homeless Point-in-Time Count and Survey reflected the needs and concerns of the community.

The 2022 Planning Committee identified several important project goals:

- Preserve current federal funding for homeless services and to enhance the ability to raise new funds;
- Improve the ability of policy makers and service providers to plan and implement services that meet the needs of the local homeless population;
- Measure changes in the numbers and characteristics of the homeless population and track the community's progress toward ending homelessness;
- Increase public awareness of overall homeless issues and generate support for constructive solutions; and
- Assess the status of specific subpopulations, including veterans, families, youth, young adults, and those who are chronically homeless.
- Maintain the health and safety of all participants, and to ensure that all appropriate Covid mitigation strategies were employed
- Gain a better understanding of the population currently experiencing homelessness
- Conduct a safe count minimizing COVID-19 risk and unnecessary social contact in alignment with the recommendations and guidance of the Santa Clara County Department of Public Health.

## FEDERAL DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS FOR POINT-IN-TIME COUNTS

In this study, the HUD definition of homelessness for the Point-in-Time Count was used. This definition includes individuals and families:

- Living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement; or
- 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.

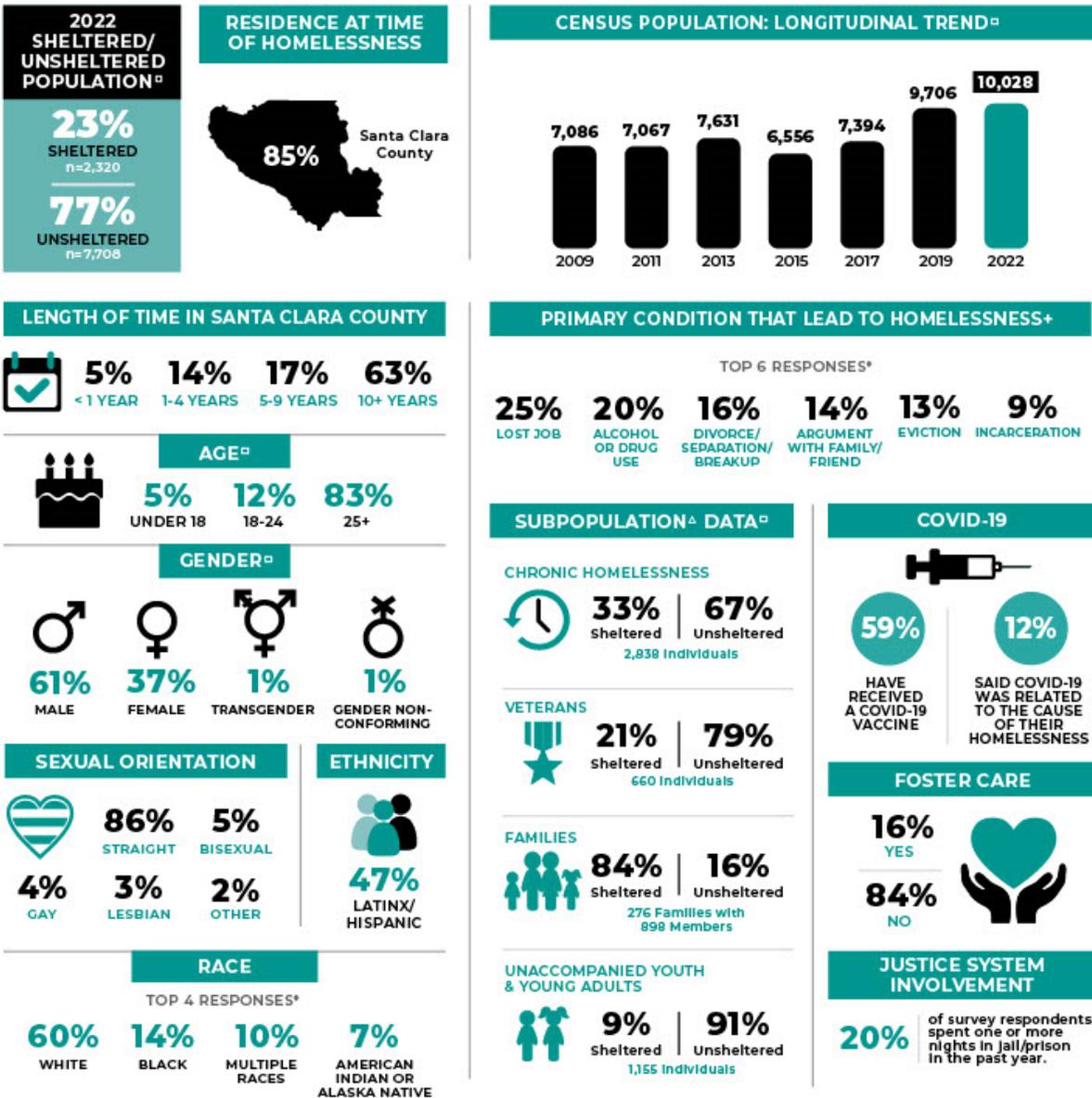
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

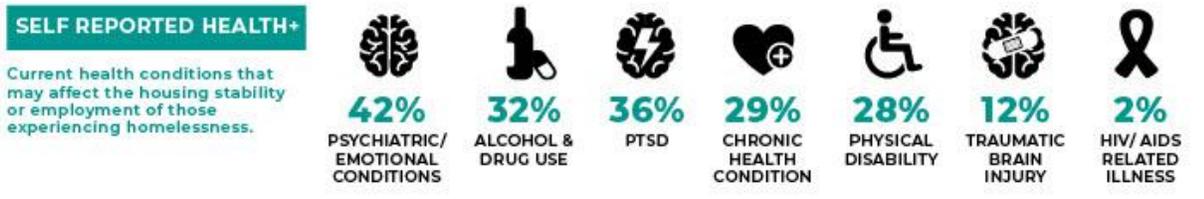
## SANTA CLARA COUNTY

### 2022 HOMELESS POINT-IN-TIME COUNT & SURVEY

Every two years, during the last 10 days of January, communities across the country conduct comprehensive counts of the local homeless populations in order to measure the prevalence of homelessness in each local Continuum of Care.

The 2022 Santa Clara County Point-in-Time Count was a community-wide effort conducted on February 23rd and 24th, 2022. In the weeks following the street count, a survey was administered to 1,118 unsheltered and sheltered individuals experiencing homelessness in order to profile their experience and characteristics.





**△ SUBPOPULATION DEFINITIONS**

**CHRONICALLY HOMELESS**  
An individual with one or more disabling conditions or a family with a head of household with a disabling condition who:  
 » Has been continuously homeless for 1 year or more and/or;  
 » Has experienced 4 or more episodes of homelessness within the past 3 years.

**VETERANS**  
Persons who have served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States. This does not include inactive military reserves or the National Guard unless the person was called up to active duty.

**FAMILIES**  
A household with at least one adult member (persons 18 or older) and at least one child member (persons under 18).

**UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS**  
Youth under the age of 18 and young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 years old (TAY) who are experiencing homelessness and living without a parent or legal guardian.

+ Multiple response question, results may not add up to 100%.  
 \* Only displaying top responses, all response data will be available in full report.  
 - Sourced from census data rather than survey data.  
 Note: Some percentages have been rounded so total percentage will equal 100%.

The complete comprehensive report includes a more detailed profile of the characteristics of those experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County is available here: <https://bit.ly/2MmRg3j>  
 Source: Applied Survey Research, 2022, Santa Clara County Homeless Census & Survey, Watsonville, CA.

# POINT-IN-TIME COUNT

The 2022 Santa Clara County Point-in-Time Homeless Count represents a complete enumeration of all sheltered and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness. It consisted of the following primary components:

- **General Street Count:** A morning count of unsheltered homeless individuals and families on February 23-24, 2022. This included those sleeping outdoors on the street; at bus and train stations; in parks, tents, and other make-shift shelters; and in vehicles and abandoned properties.
- **General Shelter Count:** A nighttime count of homeless individuals and families staying at publicly and privately operated shelters on February 23, 2022. This included those who occupied emergency shelters, transitional housing, and safe havens.

The Point-in-Time Census also included the following supplemental components:

- **Targeted Street Count of Youth and Young Adults:** An afternoon count of unsheltered unaccompanied youth and young adults under 25 years old on February 23rd, 2022.
- **Targeted COE Street Count of K-12 Students and Their Families:** A count of unsheltered homeless students and their families reported by the Santa Clara County Office of Education and their participating school districts for the night of February 23, 2022.
- **Homeless Survey:** An in-person interview of sheltered and unsheltered individuals conducted by peer and outreach staff surveyors in the weeks following the general street count. Data from the survey were used to refine the Point-in-Time Census estimates.

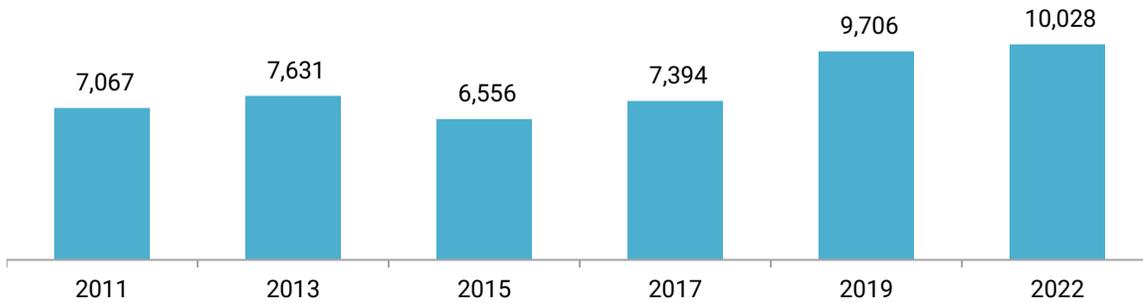
This section of the report provides a summary of the results of the Point-in-Time Census. For comparison, results from prior years are provided in order to better understand the shifting dynamics of homelessness over time.

For more information regarding the research methodology, please see *Appendix A: Methodology*.

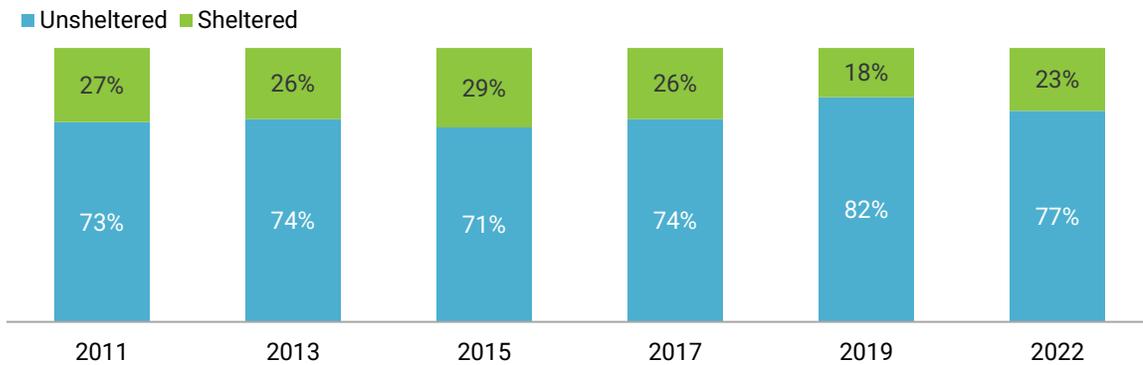
## NUMBER AND CHARACTERISTICS OF HOMELESS PERSONS

There were 10,028 persons experiencing homelessness during the 2022 PIT Count on February 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. This represents a 3% increase from 2019. The percentage of persons living on the streets decreased slightly from 2019, while the percentage of persons staying in shelters increased by 30%. This increase in persons staying in shelters is likely due to increased Covid funding allocated to shelters and increased community efforts towards increasing shelter capacity.

### PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY



### PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY SHELTER STATUS



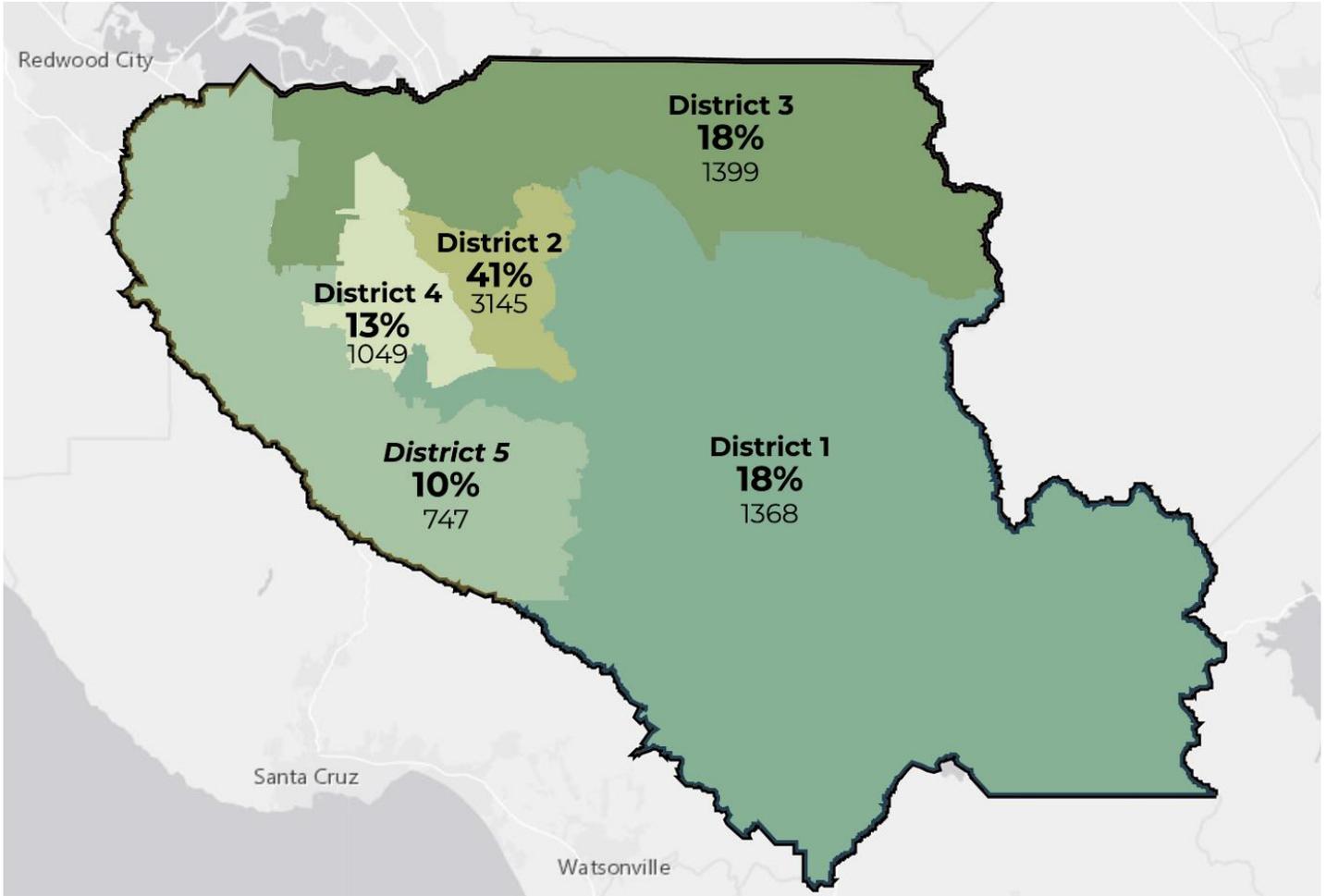
STATUS	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2022	'19-'22 % CHANGE
<b>Sheltered</b>	1,898	1,957	1,929	1,946	1,784	2,320	30%
<b>Unsheltered</b>	5,169	5,674	4,627	5,448	7,922	7,708	-3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,067</b>	<b>7,631</b>	<b>6,556</b>	<b>7,394</b>	<b>9,706</b>	<b>10,028</b>	<b>3%</b>

## HOMELESS POPULATION BY JURISDICTION AND SHELTER STATUS

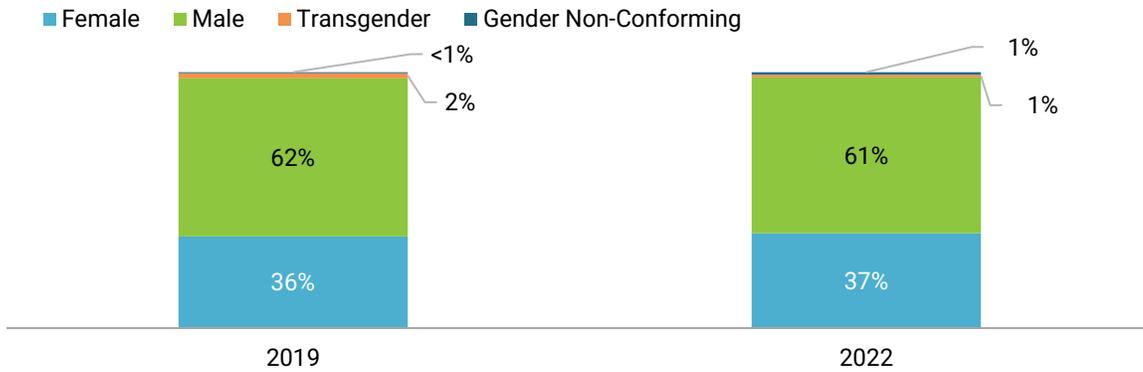
JURISDICTION	UNSHelterED		SHelterED		TOTAL		'19-'22 % CHANGE
	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	
<b>Total Incorporated</b>	7,652	7,454	1,594	2,230	9,246	9,684	5%
City of Campbell	74	216	0	0	74	216	191%
City of Cupertino	159	102	0	0	159	102	-36%
City of Gilroy	345	606	359	208	704	814	16%
City of Los Altos	76	65	0	0	76	65	-14%
City of Los Altos Hills	2	0	0	0	2	0	*
Town of Los Gatos	16	58	0	0	16	58	*
City of Milpitas	125	249	0	25	125	274	119%
City of Monte Sereno	0	0	0	0	0	0	*
City of Morgan Hill	114	60	0	0	114	60	-47%
City of Mountain View	574	206	32	140	606	346	-43%
City of Palo Alto	299	263	14	11	313	274	-12%
City of San José	5,117	4,975	980	1,675	6,097	6,650	8%
City of Santa Clara	264	375	62	65	326	440	35%
City of Saratoga	10	0	0	0	10	0	*
City of Sunnyvale	477	279	147	106	624	385	-38%
<b>Total Unincorporated</b>	270	254	89	27	359	281	-22%
<b>Confidential Locations</b>	NA	NA	101	63	101	63	-38%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,922</b>	<b>7,708</b>	<b>1,784</b>	<b>2,320</b>	<b>9,706</b>	<b>10,028</b>	<b>3%</b>

\*Note: Percentage change was not calculated for rows with less than 50 individuals.

# UNSHELTERED HOMELESS POPULATION BY SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT



## HOMELESS POPULATION BY GENDER

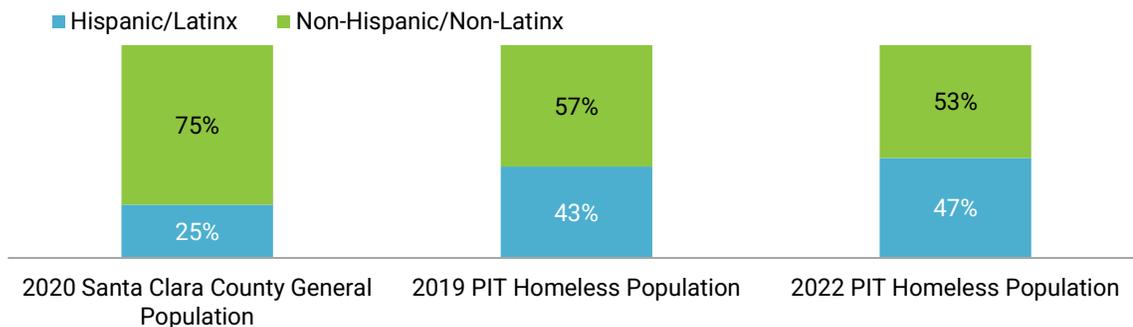


	UNSHelterED		ShelterED		TOTAL		'19-'22 % CHANGE
	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	
Female	2,778	2,812	705	910	3,483	3,722	7%
Male	4,943	4,710	1,065	1,389	6,008	6,099	2%
Transgender	161	97	11	9	172	106	-38%
Gender Non-Conforming (Don't Identify as Male, Female, or Transgender)	40	80	3	9	43	89	107%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,922</b>	<b>7,708</b>	<b>1,784</b>	<b>2,317</b>	<b>9,706</b>	<b>10,028</b>	<b>3%</b>

\*Note: Percentage change

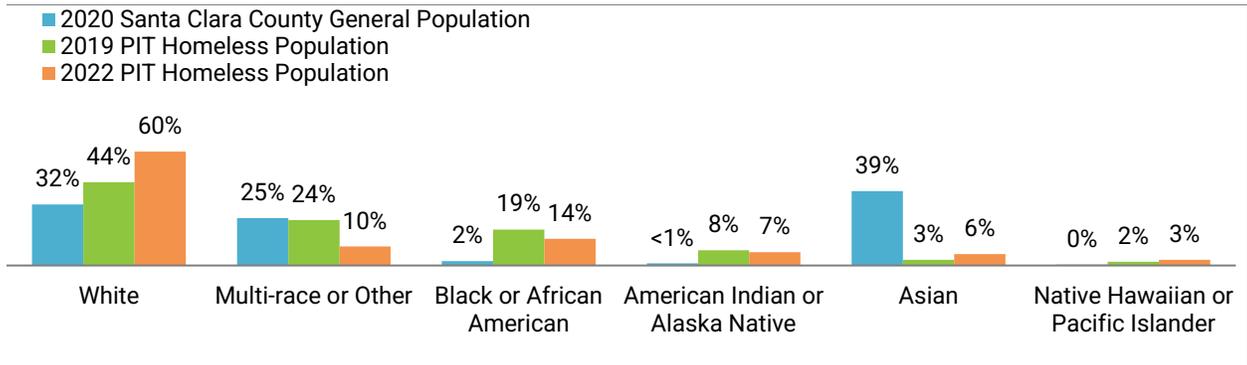
was not calculated for rows with less than 50 individuals.

## HOMELESS POPULATION BY HISPANIC OR LATINX ORIGIN



Santa Clara County General Population: 2020 N=1,936,259; PIT Homeless Population: 2019 N=9,706; 2022 N=10,028

## HOMELESS POPULATION BY RACE



Santa Clara County General Population: 2020 N=1,936,259; PIT Homeless Population: 2019 N=9,706; 2022 N=10,028

# HOMELESS SURVEY FINDINGS

This section provides an overview of the findings generated from the Homeless Survey component. In the weeks following the Point-in-Time Count, an in-depth survey was administered to collect basic demographic details as well as information on service needs and utilization. Surveys were administered between February 28 and March 25, 2022 to a randomized sample of individuals and families currently experiencing homelessness throughout the county. A survey quota was developed based on location and shelter status to help ensure a greater random distribution of survey respondents. The sampling plan employed is HUD approved and consistent with previous County PIT count efforts.

The Homeless Survey effort resulted in 959 unique, complete, and valid surveys administered. Based on a Point-in-Time Count of 10,028 homeless persons, with a randomized survey sampling process, these surveys represent a confidence interval of +/-3% with a 95% confidence level when generalizing the results of the survey to the entire Point-in-Time homeless population in Santa Clara County. In other words, if the survey were conducted again, we can be 95% certain that the results would be within 3% points of the current results. This 3% “margin of error” increases with data about sub-groups.

In order to respect respondent privacy and to ensure the safety and comfort of those who participated, respondents were not required to complete all survey questions. Therefore, any missing values were intentionally omitted from the survey results and the total number of respondents for each question will not always equal the total number of surveys conducted. Refusals and “don’t know” responses were not included in percentage calculations.

For more information regarding the research methodology, please see *Appendix A: Methodology*.

## DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the experiences of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County, respondents were asked basic demographic questions including age, gender, sexual orientation, and race/ethnicity.

Forty percent of survey respondents were over the age of 50 and 12% were under the age of 25. These percentages are similar to past years and represent a spread of respondents across all age groups. Nearly two thirds (61%) of survey respondents identified as male, while 37% of respondents identified as female. Transgender and gender non-conforming respondents were 1% and less than 1%, respectively.

While there are limited data available on the number of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) individuals experiencing homelessness, nationwide data available suggest LGBTQ+ individuals experience homelessness at higher rates, especially those under the age of 25. Fourteen percent of survey respondents identified as something other than straight. Of those respondents, 25% identified as gay, 21% as lesbian, and 7% as queer.

## RESPONDENTS BY AGE

AGE GROUP	2017	2019	2022
Less than 18 Years	<1%	1%	<1%
18-24 Years	7%	15%	11%
25-30 Years	7%	6%	10%
31-40 Years	16%	16%	19%
41-50 Years	27%	22%	20%
51-60 Years	34%	28%	24%
61 Years or More	9%	12%	16%

2017 N=587; 2019 N=1,359; 2022 N=942

## RESPONDENTS BY GENDER



2022 N=10,028

## DETAIL OF RESPONDENTS WITH LGBTQ+ IDENTITY

LGBTQ+ IDENTITY	2019	2022
Gay	17%	25%
Lesbian	19%	21%
Bisexual	48%	34%
Transgender	13%	1%
Queer	3%	7%
Other	14%	13%

2019 N=175 respondents offering 198 responses; 2022 N=134 respondents offering 147 responses

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100.

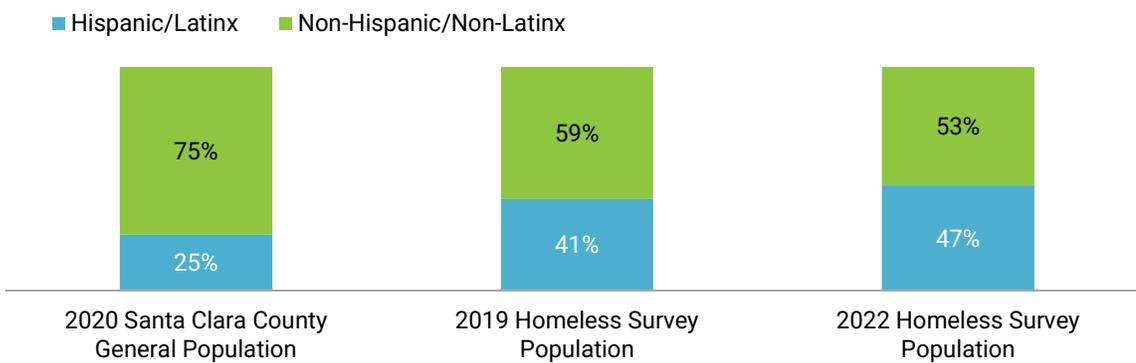
## Race/Ethnicity

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) gathers data on race and ethnicity in two separate questions, similar to the U.S. Census. When asked if they identified as Hispanic or Latinx, more than half (53%) of homeless survey respondents reported they did not identify as Hispanic or Latinx in 2022.

In profiling racial identity, differences between the general population and those experiencing homelessness were more pronounced. A much higher proportion of homeless survey respondents identified as Hispanic/Latinx than in the general population of Santa Clara County (47% compared to 25%).

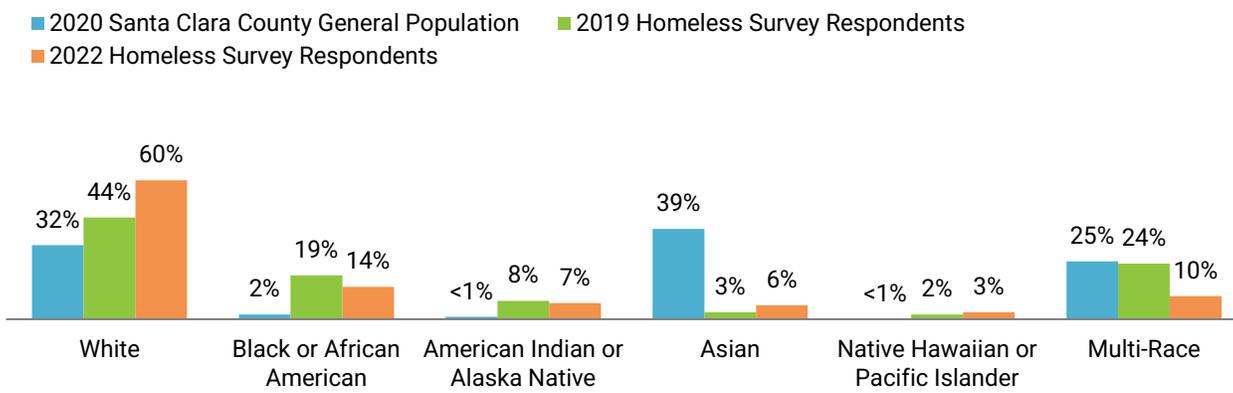
More survey respondents identified as white (60%) in 2022 compared to the 2020 general population (32%) and the survey population from 2019 (44%). Survey respondents identifying as Black or African American continued to be overrepresented when compared to the general population, with 14% identified in 2022 compared to 2% of the general population.

### RESPONDENTS BY HISPANIC OR LATINX ORIGIN



Santa Clara County General Population: 2020 N=1,936,259  
Homeless Survey Population: 2019 N=1,285; 2022 N=901

### RESPONDENTS BY RACE

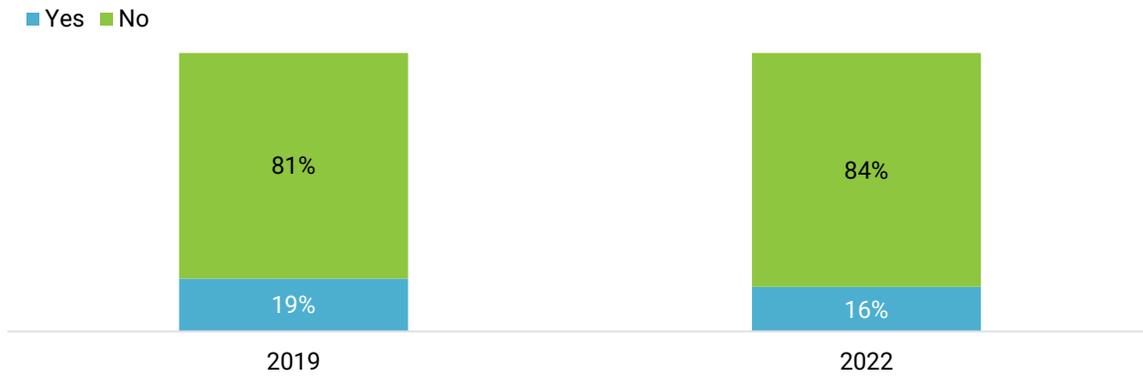


Santa Clara County General Population: 2020 N=1,936,259  
Homeless Survey Population: 2019 N=1,246; 2022 N=789

## History of Foster Care

Similar rates of survey respondents reported a history of foster care in 2022 as they did in 2019. Sixteen percent reported a history in 2022, while 19% reported one in 2019.

## HISTORY OF FOSTER CARE



2019 N=1,314; 2022 N=938

## LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS

Where individuals lived prior to experiencing homelessness and where they have lived since impact the way they seek services, as well as their ability to access support from friends or family. Previous circumstances can also point to gaps in the system of care and to opportunities for systemic improvement and homelessness prevention.

Survey respondents reported many different living accommodations prior to becoming homeless, although most lived in or around Santa Clara County with friends or family, or on their own in a home or apartment.

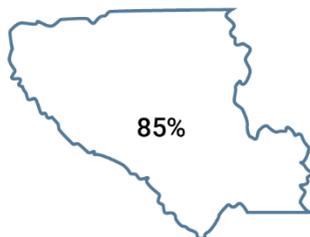
### Place of Residence

Knowing where individuals were living prior to their housing loss informs discussions regarding how much of the homeless population is local to the region. This information can also influence changes to available safety net systems if the Continuum of Care finds increasing numbers of individuals living locally before experiencing homelessness.

The majority (85%) of respondents reported living in Santa Clara County at the most recent time they became homeless, similar to 2019 (81%). More than half of survey respondents (63%) had lived in Santa Clara County for 10 or more years, while just 5% had lived in Santa Clara for less than one year.

Ten percent (10%) of respondents reported they were living in another county in California, and 5% reported they were living out of state at the most recent time they became homeless.

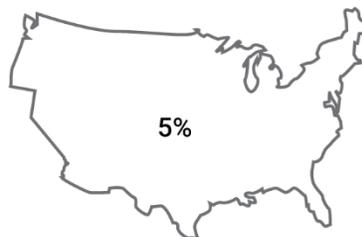
## PLACE OF RESIDENCE AT THE MOST RECENT TIME EXPERIENCING HOMELESS



Santa Clara County



Other County in California



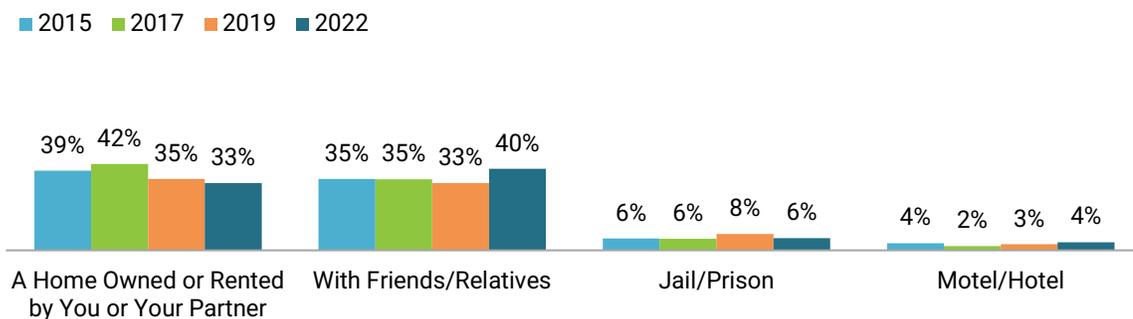
Out of State

2022 N=962

## Prior Living Arrangements

Most survey respondents were staying in a home owned or rented by friends or family (40%) or owned or rented by themselves or their partner (33%) before they experienced homelessness. These were both similar to previous years, though the percentage of persons staying with friends or family before their current episode of homelessness increased from 33% in 2019 to 40% this year.

### LIVING ARRANGEMENTS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE BECOMING HOMELESS (TOP RESPONSES IN 2022)



2015 N=886; 2017 N=575; 2019 N=1,311; 2022 N=933

## Current Living Arrangements

While basic information on where individuals were observed during the general street count effort was collected, survey respondents were still asked about their usual nighttime accommodations. Understanding the types of places individuals experiencing homelessness are sleeping can help inform local outreach efforts.

Forty-four percent of survey respondents were living outdoors, on the streets, in parks or in tents and encampments in 2022, an increase from 34% in 2019. The percentage of respondents staying in shelters fell from 22% to 9%, while the percentage staying in vehicles continued to increase from 2017, reaching 21% in 2022.

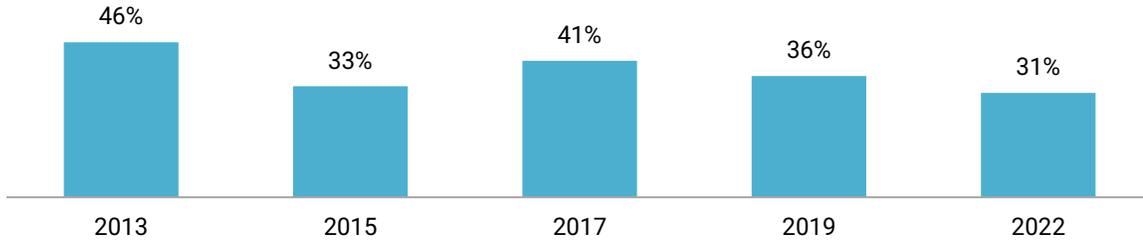
Data on living arrangements based on the PIT count data was unavailable to due technical issues. While survey data provide data on living arrangements, this year’s survey was not administered in as many shelters in the past, in part based on concerns relating to Covid. Data on persons staying in shelters should be read with caution.

## DURATION AND RECURRENCE OF HOMELESSNESS

Unstable living conditions, poverty, housing scarcity, high cost of living, low wages, and many other issues often lead to individuals cycling in and out of homelessness. For many, the experience of homelessness is part of a long and recurring history of housing instability. Of those surveyed in 2022, 31% reported that their current episode of homelessness was their first time experiencing homelessness.

Respondents were also asked how old they were when they experienced homelessness for the first time. In response, 12% of respondents reported that they were under the age of 18, 27% reported they were between the ages of 18 and 24, and 61% reported they were 25 years or older. All three are similar to the results in 2019.

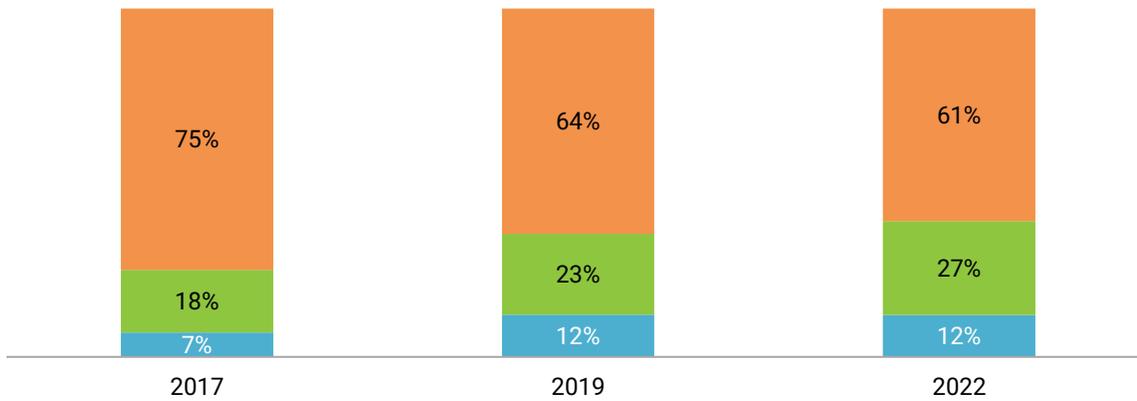
## CURRENT EPISODE IS THE FIRST TIME EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS



2013 N=855; 2015 N=937; 2017 N=585; 2019 N=1,304; 2022 N=967

## AGE WHEN EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS FOR THE FIRST TIME

■ 0-17 Years Old ■ 18-24 Years Old ■ 25 Years or Older



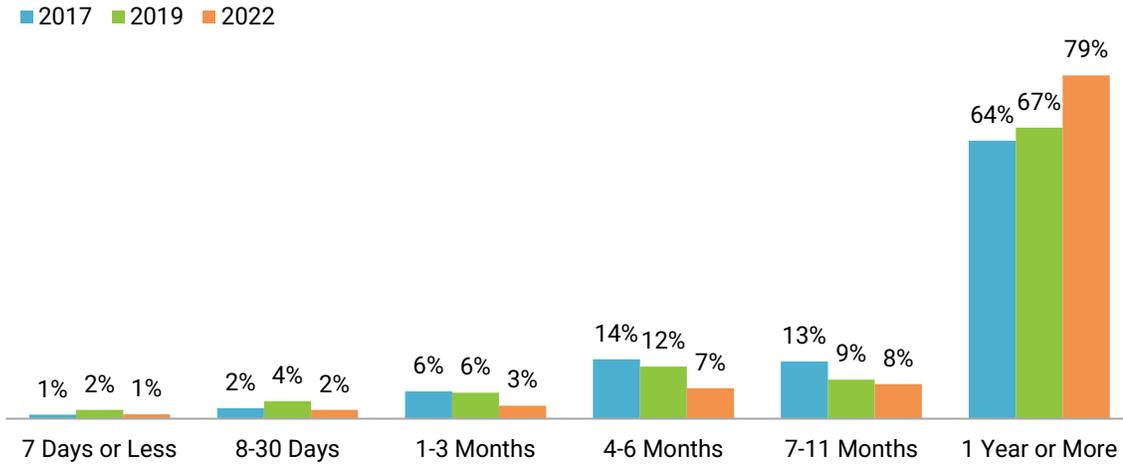
2017 N=557; 2019 N=1,325; 2022 N=964

Note: After a large increase in the youth and young adult population in 2017, there was an increased number of surveys targeted at the youth and young adult population in 2019. This may have led to the increase in numbers of individuals experiencing homelessness for the first time before turning 25.

### Duration of Homelessness

When asked about the duration of their current episode of homelessness, two-thirds (79%) of survey respondents reported they had been homeless for a year or more. These findings are an increase compared to 2017 and 2019, when 64% and 67%, respectively, of respondents reported they had been homeless for a year or more.

#### LENGTH OF CURRENT EPISODE OF HOMELESSNESS



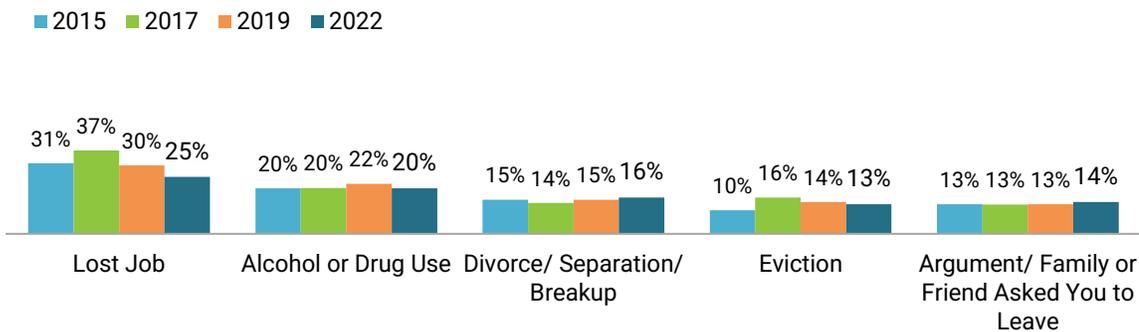
2017 N=585; 2019 N=1,335; 2022 N=950

#### PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS

The primary cause of an individual’s inability to obtain or retain housing can be difficult to pinpoint, as it is often the result of multiple inter-related causes. An inability to secure adequate housing can also lead to an inability to address other basic needs, such as healthcare and adequate nutrition.

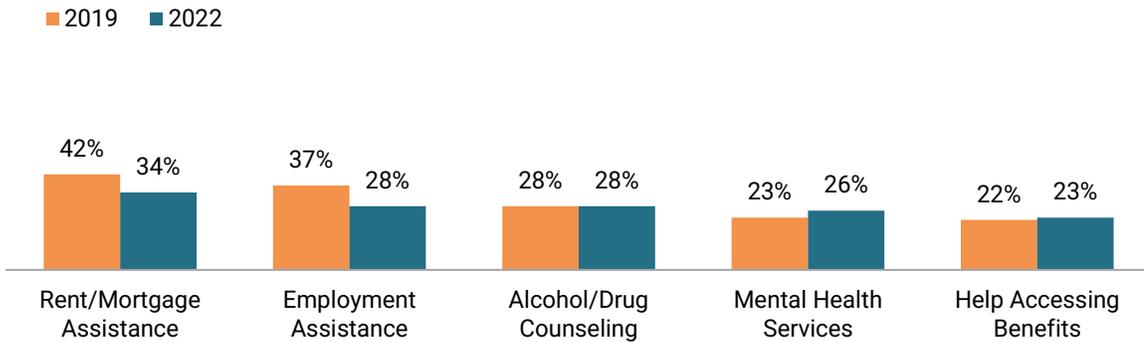
A quarter (25%) of survey respondents reported job loss as the primary cause of their homelessness, while 20% cited alcohol or drug use, 16% cited a divorce/separation, 13% cited eviction, and 14% cited an argument with—or being asked to leave by—a family member or friend. When asked what might have prevented their homelessness, survey respondents most commonly reported rent or mortgage assistance (34%), followed by employment assistance (28%).

#### PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP RESPONSES IN 2022)



2015 N=920 respondents offering 1,326 responses; 2017 N=580 respondents offering 793 responses; 2019 N=1,339 respondents offering 1,910 responses; 2022 N=956 respondents offering 1,352 responses

## WHAT MAY HAVE PREVENTED HOMELESSNESS (TOP RESPONSES IN 2022)



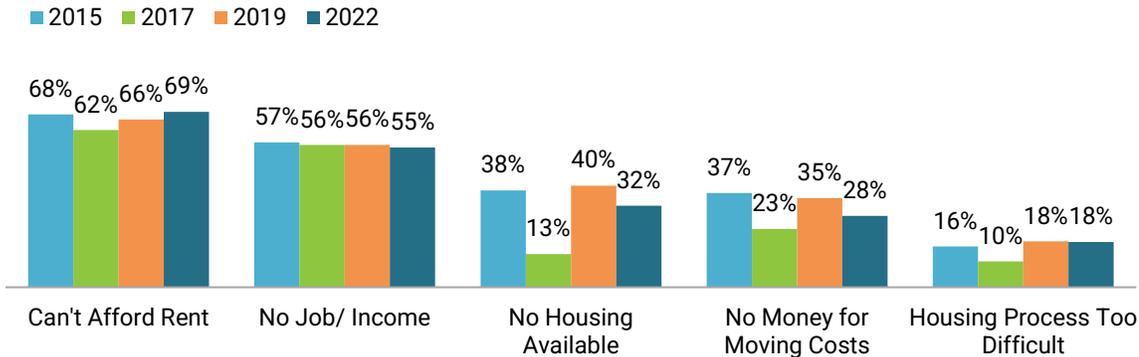
2017 N=567 respondents offering 943 responses; 2019 N=1,321 respondents offering 3,003 responses; 2022 N=922 respondents offering 1,885 responses

### Obstacles to Obtaining Permanent Housing

Many individuals experiencing homelessness face significant barriers to obtaining permanent housing. These barriers can range from housing affordability and availability to accessing the economic and social supports (e.g., increased income, rental assistance, and case management) needed to secure and maintain permanent housing.

When asked about obstacles to obtaining permanent housing, survey respondents in 2022 gave similar responses to respondents in 2019, with almost 69% of respondents indicating an inability to afford rent as the number one concern.

## OBSTACLES TO OBTAINING PERMANENT HOUSING (TOP RESPONSES IN 2022)



2013 N=774 respondents offering 1,831 responses; 2015 N=896 respondents offering 3,012 responses; 2017 N=571 respondents offering 1,382; 2019 N=1,328 respondents offering 4,186 responses; 2022 N=947 respondents offering 2,755 responses.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100.

## SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE

The County of Santa Clara provides services and assistance to those currently experiencing homelessness through federal, state, and local programs. However, many individuals and families do not apply for services, as many believe that they are ineligible for assistance. Connecting homeless individuals and families to these support services creates a bridge to mainstream support services and can prevent future housing instability.

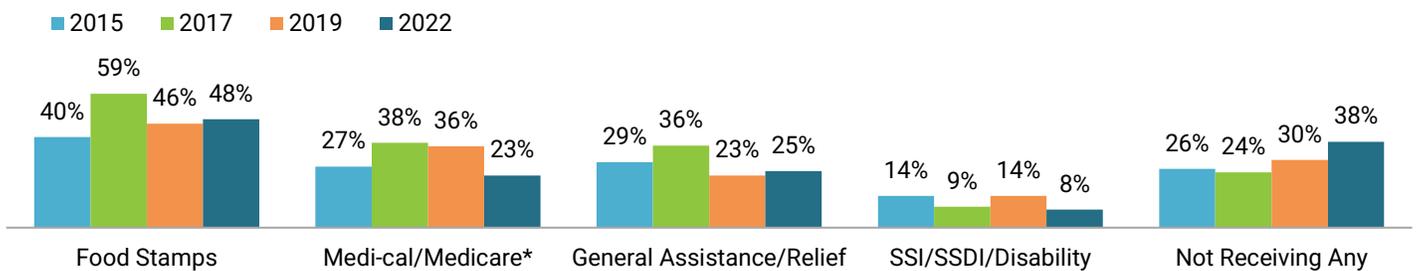
## Government Assistance

There are various forms of government assistance available to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. However, usage of these supports is impacted by knowledge of services available, understanding of eligibility requirements, and perceived stigma of receiving governmental assistance.

There was a large increase of persons experiencing homelessness who did not receive any form of governmental assistance, moving from 30% in 2019 to 38% in 2022. However, 48% of respondents did indicate receiving food stamps, indicating that there is perhaps some confusion on if they were considered governmental assistance.

Of those who reported they were not receiving any form of government support, the greatest percentage reported they did not want government assistance (33%). Fourteen percent (14%) did not think they were eligible, a decrease from 26% in 2019. Lack of permanent address and ID both saw decreases from 2019, falling 17% and 15%, respectively, to and present an opportunity for support for those experiencing homelessness who would like to receive government services.

### RECEIVING GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE (TOP RESPONSES IN 2022)

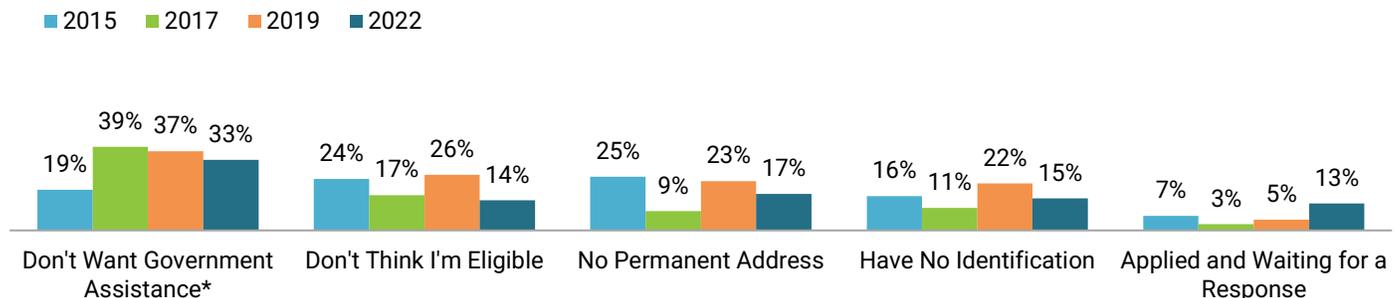


2015 N=883 respondents offering 1,363 responses; 2017 N=557 respondents offering 1,011 responses; 2019 N=1,274 respondents offering 2,065 responses; 2022 N=925 respondents offering 1,641 responses

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100.

\* Medi-Cal/Medicare was added as a response option in 2015.

### REASONS NOT RECEIVING GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE (TOP RESPONSES IN 2022)



2015 N=206 respondents offering 335 responses; 2017 N=133 respondents offering 164 responses; 2019 N=394 respondents offering 655 responses; 2022 N=596 respondents offering 827 responses

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100.

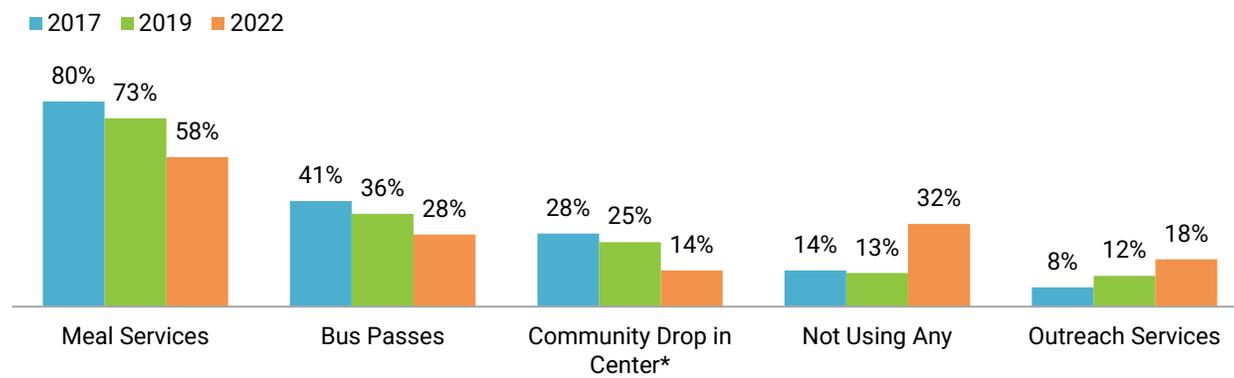
\*In 2013 the response option changed from "do not need" to "do not want," which was an option in 2011.

## Services and Programs

In addition to government assistance, there are numerous community-based services and programs made available to individuals experiencing homelessness. These services range from day shelters and meal programs to job training and healthcare.

A majority (68%) of survey respondents in 2022 reported they were accessing other services and assistance beyond government assistance, lower than in 2019 when it was 87%. The most frequently cited types of assistance respondents reported accessing were meal services (58%), bus passes (28%), and community drop in centers (14%). However, all three continued a downward trend of usage from 2017.

### RECEIVING OTHER SERVICES OR ASSISTANCE (TOP RESPONSES IN 2022)



2017 N=570 respondents offering 1,247 responses; 2019 N=1,310 respondents offering 2,705 responses; 2022 N=928 respondents offering 1,689 responses

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100.

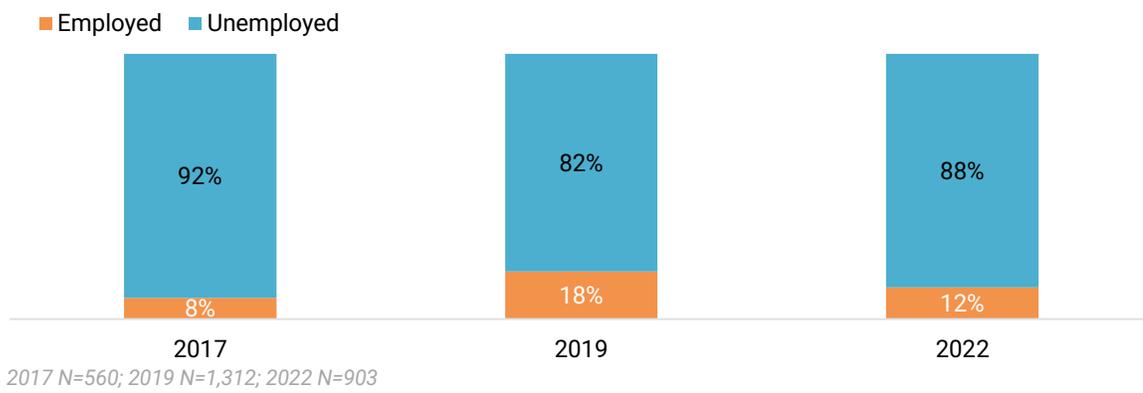
Note: \* Community drop in center response were added in 2017.

# EMPLOYMENT

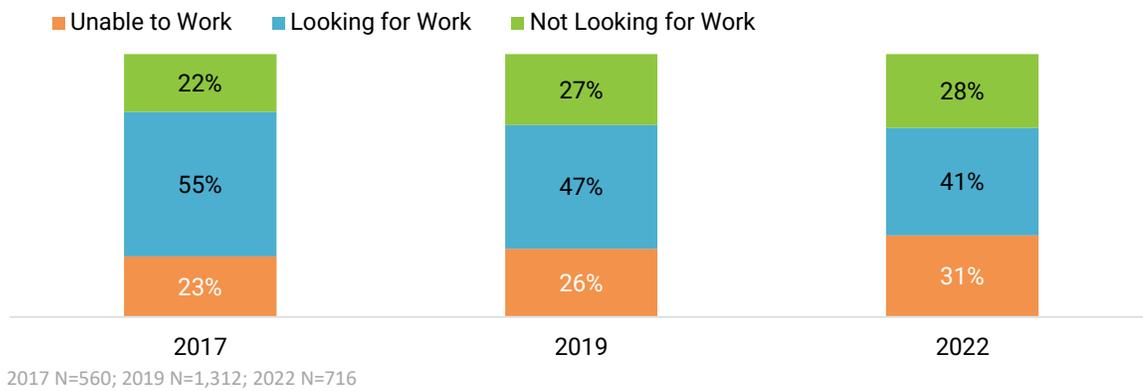
The unemployment rate in Santa Clara County in February 2022 was at 3%. It is important to recognize that the unemployment rate represents only those who are unemployed and actively seeking employment. It does not represent all joblessness, nor does it address the types of available employment.

The unemployment rate among homeless survey respondents was 88%, a slight increase from 82% in 2019. Forty-one percent (41%) of unemployed respondents indicated that they were currently looking for work, 28% indicated they were not, and 31% indicated they were currently unable to work.

## EMPLOYMENT STATUS



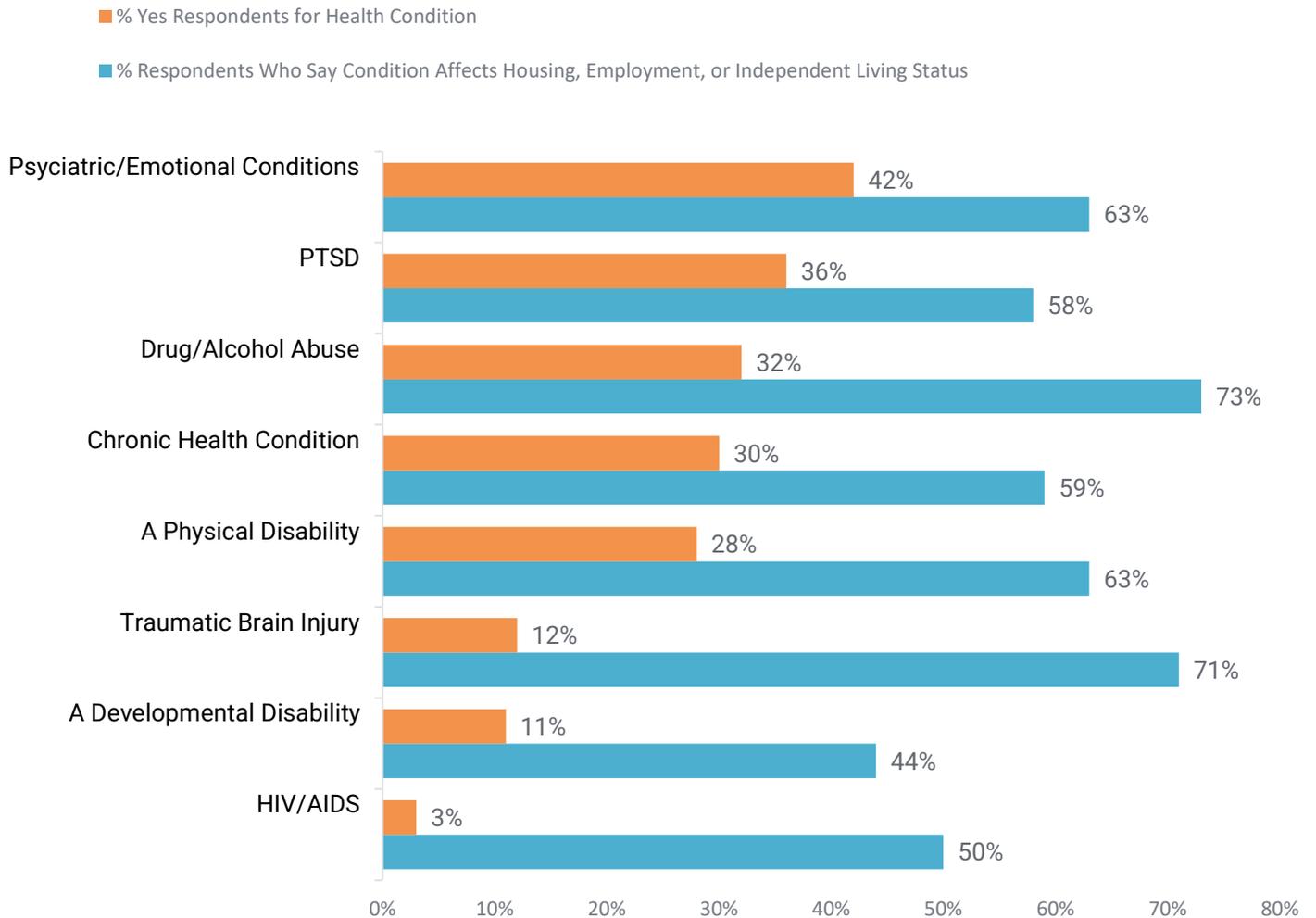
## UNEMPLOYED BY WORK STATUS



# HEALTH

Survey respondents reported suffering from psychiatric or emotional conditions as the most common health condition, at the same percentage (42%) they did in 2019. Respondents suffering from drug or alcohol abuse went down slightly to 32%, while respondents indicated slight increases in the rates of PTSD, physical disability, TBI, and chronic health problems.

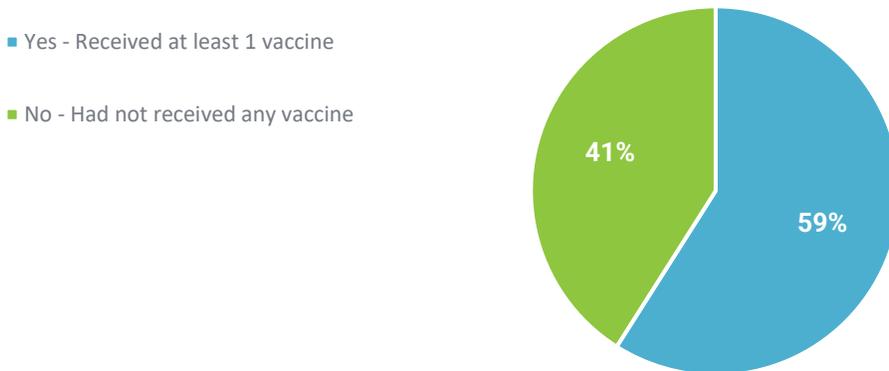
## HEALTH CONDITIONS



HEALTH CONDITION = 856 - 904 RESPONDENT; DISABLING CONDITION = 18 - 307 RESPONDENT

## COVID 19

When asked about their Covid 19 vaccination status, 59% of survey respondents indicated that they had received at least one dose.



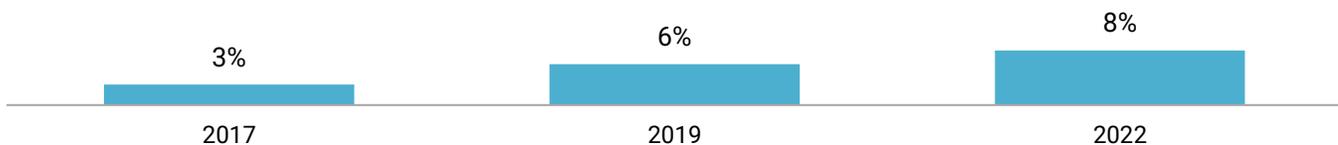
2022 N=932

## DOMESTIC / PARTNER VIOLENCE OR ABUSE

Histories of domestic violence and partner abuse are prevalent among individuals experiencing homelessness and can be the primary cause of homelessness for many. Survivors often lack the financial resources required for housing, as their employment history or dependable income may be limited.

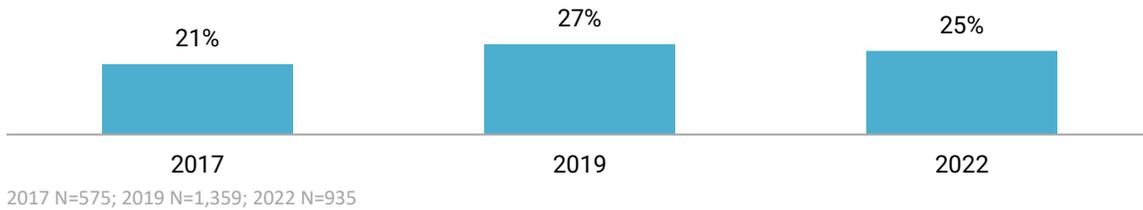
Eight percent (8%) of all survey respondents reported currently experiencing domestic/partner violence or abuse, a slight increase from 6% in 2019. When asked about experiences of *ever* being physically, emotionally or sexually abused by a relative or another person they have stayed with (spouse, partner, sibling, parent) in their lifetime, 25% indicated that they had.

## CURRENTLY BEING PHYSICALLY, EMOTIONALLY OR SEXUALLY ABUSED



2017 N=532; 2019 N=1,236; 2022 N=898

## HISTORY OF BEING PHYSICALLY, EMOTIONALLY OR SEXUALLY ABUSED



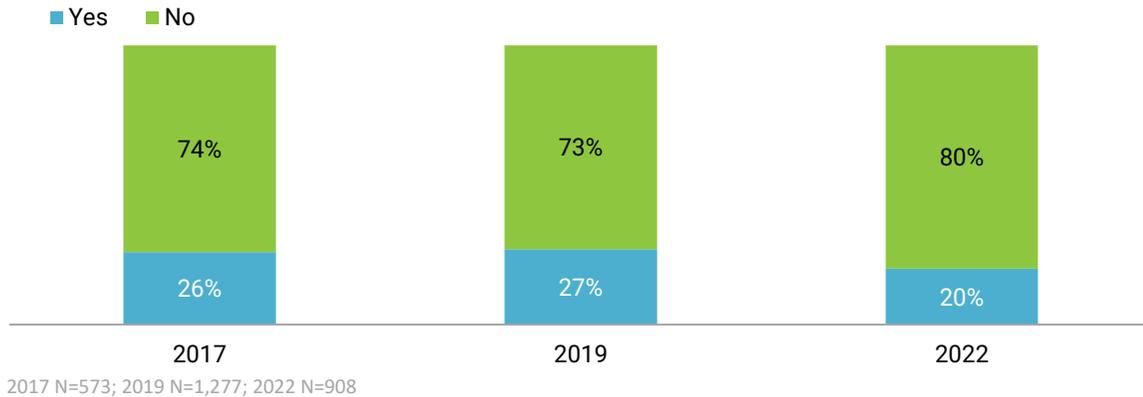
## CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Homelessness and incarceration are often related. Persons without stable housing are at greater risk of criminal justice system involvement, particularly those with mental health issues, veterans, and youth and young adults.

### INCARCERATION

One-fifth (20%) of survey respondents indicated they had spent a night in jail in the 12 months previous to taking the survey. Eleven percent indicated that they were on probation or parole.

## SPENT A NIGHT IN JAIL OR PRISON IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS



# SELECT POPULATIONS

*Home, Together: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* outlines national objectives and evaluative measures for ending homelessness among all populations in the United States. In order to adequately address the diversity within the population experiencing homelessness, the federal government identifies four subpopulations with particular challenges or needs, including:

- Chronically homeless individuals with disabilities;
- Veterans experiencing homelessness;
- Families with children experiencing homelessness
- Youth and young adults.

These subpopulations represent important reportable indicators for measuring local progress toward ending homelessness. The following sections examine each of these four subpopulations.

## SELECT POPULATIONS AS A PERCENTAGE OF OVERALL POPULATION



N=10,028

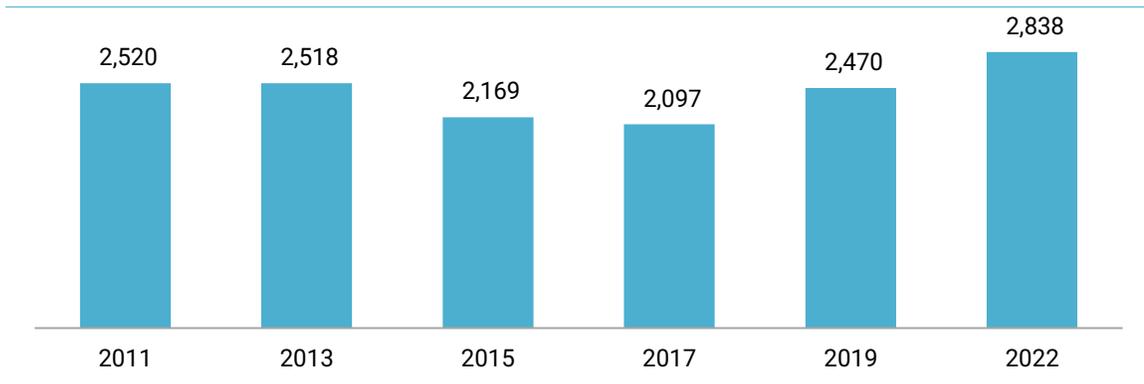
# CHRONICALLY HOMELESS PERSONS

HUD defines a chronically homeless individual as someone who has experienced homelessness for a year or longer—or who has experienced at least four episodes of homelessness totaling 12 months in the last three years—and also has a disabling condition that prevents them from maintaining work or housing. This definition applies to individuals as well as heads of household who meet the definition and their families. Individuals experiencing chronic homelessness were those who self-reported meeting the above conditions, as well as those who were identified during the shelter count.

## ESTIMATES OF PERSONS EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

The estimate of individuals in Santa Clara County experiencing chronic homelessness in 2022 has continued to rise since 2017. There were a total of 2,838 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness in 2022, representing 28% of the overall Point-in-Time homeless population in Santa Clara County. The percentage of chronically homeless persons who were sheltered increased from 15% to 33% between 2019 and 2022.

## CHRONICALLY HOMELESS POPULATION WITH TREND



Note: HUD defines a chronically homeless individual as someone who has experienced homelessness for a year or longer—or who has experienced at least four episodes of homelessness totaling 12 months in the last three years—and also has a disabling condition that prevents them from maintaining work or housing.

## CHRONICALLY HOMELESS POPULATION BY SHELTER STATUS



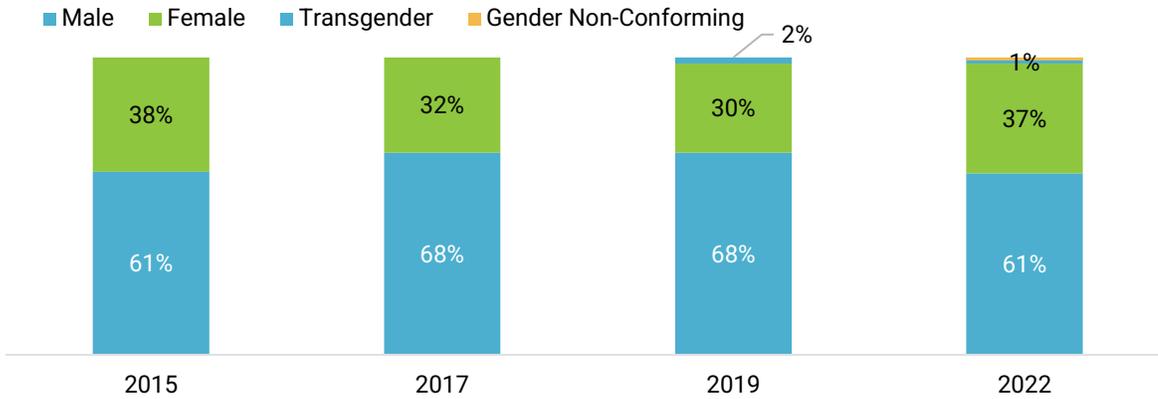
2015 N=2,169; 2017 N=2,097; 2019 N=2,470; 2022 N=2,838

## Demographics of Chronically Homeless Survey Respondents

The race and gender of chronically homeless persons in 2022 remained relatively similar to 2019. In 2022, 61% of chronically homeless persons identified as male, compared to 68% in 2019. Persons identified as female rose from 30% in 2019 to 37% in 2022.

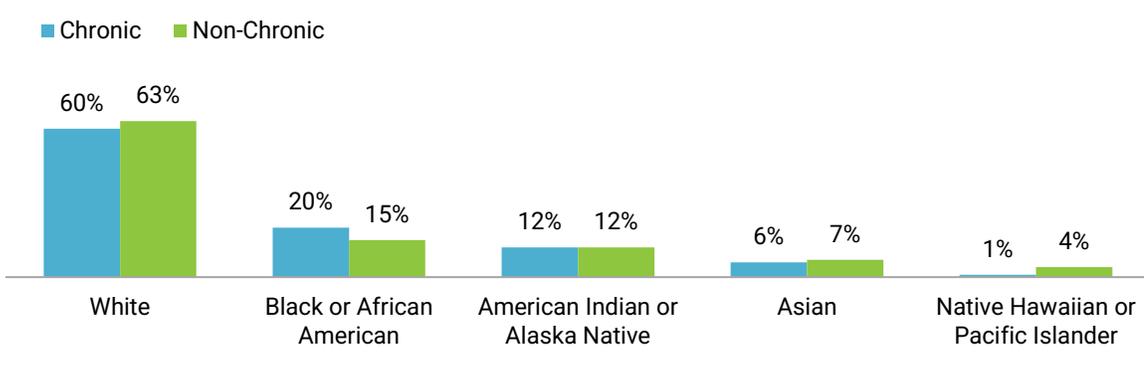
Chronically homeless persons in 2022 identified their race at similar percentages to those non-chronically homeless persons. In 2022, 63% of chronically homeless persons identified as white, similar to the 60% of those who were not chronically homeless. There was a large difference in amongst ethnic identification, where 57% of chronically homeless persons identified as Hispanic/Latinx compared to 49% of non-chronically homeless persons.

## CHRONICALLY HOMELESS POPULATION BY GENDER



2015 N=2,169; 2017 N=2,097; 2019 N=2,470; 2022 N=2,838  
 Note: Values less than 1% are not shown. Percentages may not add up to 100.

## CHRONICALLY HOMELESS POPULATION BY RACE

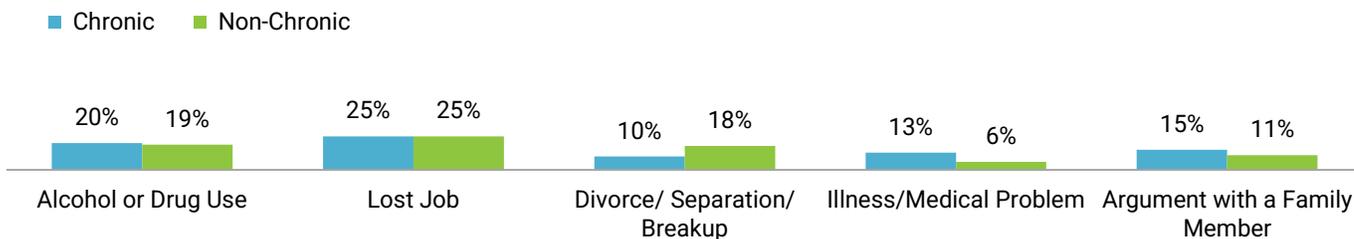


Chronic N=211; Non-Chronic N=662

## Primary Cause of Homelessness Among Chronically Homelessness Respondents

When compared to their non-chronically homeless peers, persons experiencing chronic homelessness identified their primary cause of homelessness at roughly the same rates. The loss of a job was the most common response, at 25% for both groups. The largest difference between the two was illness or medical problem, where 13% of chronically homeless persons identified it as the primary cause of their homelessness compared to 6% of the non-chronically homeless persons.

## PRIMARY CAUSE OF CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS (TOP RESPONSES)

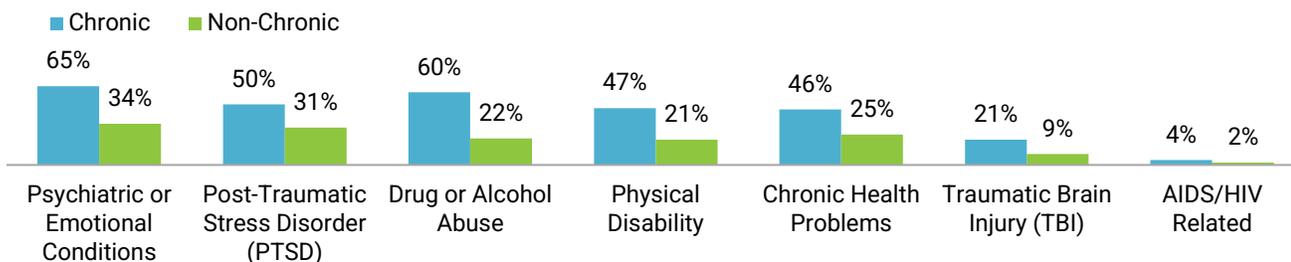


Chronic N=240 respondents offering 343 responses; Non-Chronic N=716 respondents offering 1,009 responses

### Health Conditions Among Chronically Homeless Respondents

To meet the definition of chronic homelessness, an individual must be experiencing at least one disabling condition. In general, higher rates of health conditions were reported among those who were chronically homeless compared to their non-chronically homeless counterparts. The most common health condition for chronically homeless persons to experience was psychiatric or emotional conditions, where 65% of chronically homeless persons indicated they were suffering from that condition. Drug or alcohol abuse was the second most common (60%), followed by PTSD (50%), physical disability (47%), and chronic health problems (46%).

## HEALTH CONDITIONS



Chronic N=232-234; Non-Chronic N=661-682

### Access to Services Among Chronically Homeless Respondents

Chronically homeless respondents reported using non-governmental assistance at similar rates to non-chronically homeless persons. In terms of government assistance, over one-quarter (27%) of chronically homeless respondents reported they were not receiving any assistance.

Of chronically homeless respondents who were not receiving any form of government assistance, 25% reported that they did not want government assistance and 15% reported they didn't think they were eligible, a decrease from 38% in 2019.

### Incarceration Among Chronically Homeless Respondents

A slightly higher percentage of chronically homeless respondents reported having spent one or more nights in jail or prison in the 12 months prior to the survey (22%), compared to those who were not chronically homeless (19%). There was slightly more of a gap when respondents were asked if they were on probation or parole (16% and 9%, respectively).

# VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

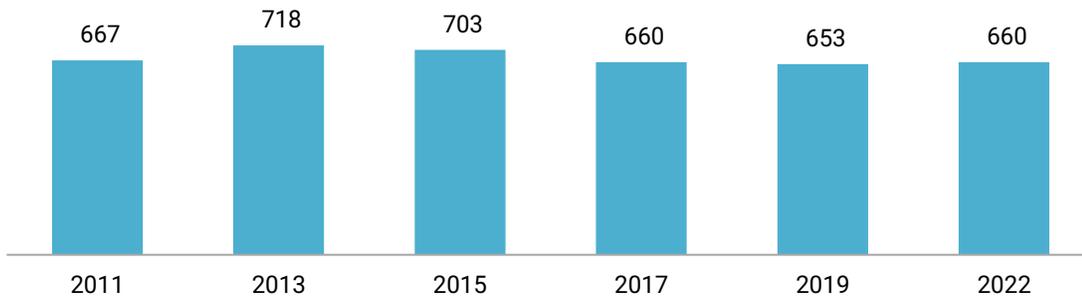
Many U.S. veterans experience conditions that place them at increased risk for homelessness. Nationwide, veterans are at risk for higher rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), sexual assault, and substance abuse. Veterans experiencing homelessness are more likely to live on the street than in shelters, and often remain on the street for extended periods of time.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs provides a broad range of benefits and services to veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces. These benefits can involve different forms of financial assistance, including monthly cash payments to disabled veterans, health care, education, and housing benefits. In addition to these supports, the VA and HUD partner to provide additional housing and support services to veterans currently experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homeless.

## Estimates of Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

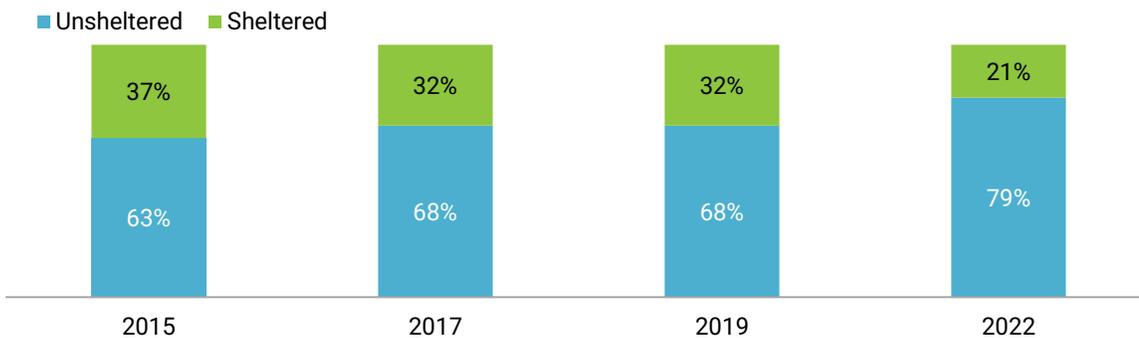
The number of veterans experiencing homelessness was very similar to previous years, with 660 veterans identified in 2022. Veterans represented 7% of the overall homeless population, the same percentage as in 2019. There was a decrease in the percentage of veterans who were sheltered, falling from 32% in 2019 to 21% in 2022.

## VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS



Source: Applied Survey Research. (2009-2022). Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey.

## VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY SHELTER STATUS

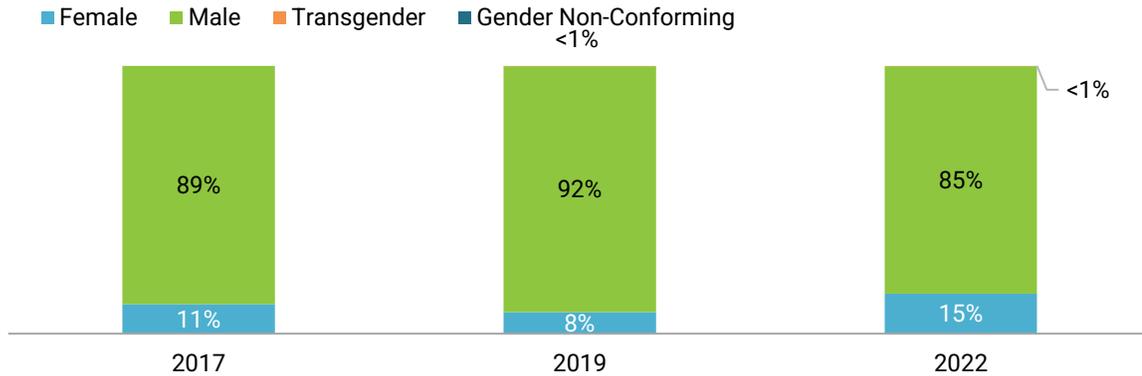


2015 N=703; 2017 N=660; 2019 N=653; 2022 N=660

## Demographics of Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

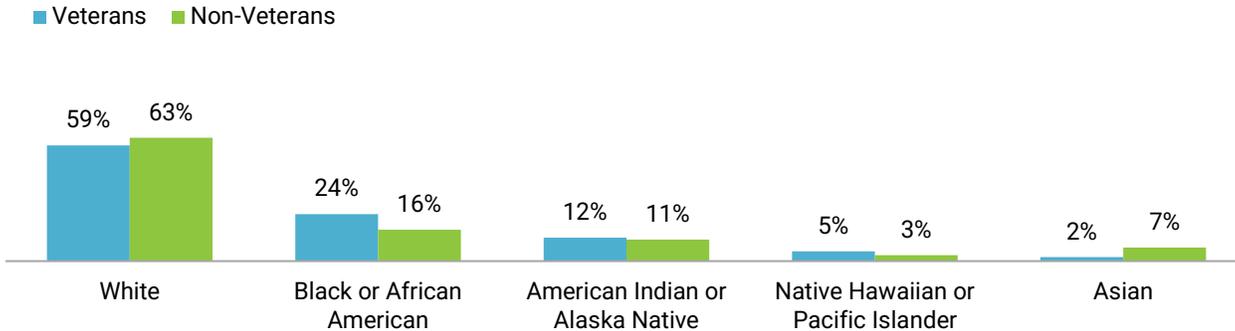
There was a slight increase in the percentage of veterans who identified as female in 2022, rising from 8% in 2019 to 15% in 2022. When compared to non-veteran homeless persons, there were more veterans who identified as Black or African American in 2022 (24% compared to 16%). Forty-one percent of veterans identified as Hispanic/Latinx, similar to the non-veteran percentage (45%).

### VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY GENDER



2017 N=660; 2019 N=653; 2022 N=642

### VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY RACE



Veterans N=63; Non-Veterans N=808

### VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY ETHNICITY

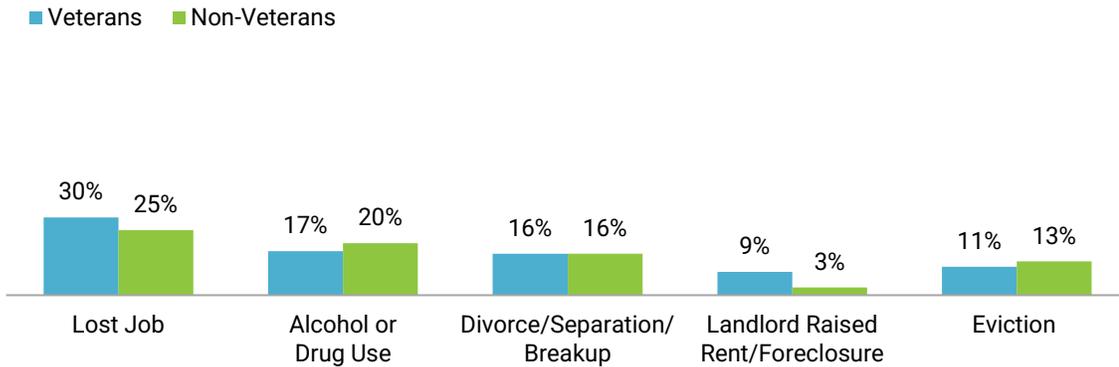


Veterans N=58; Non-Veterans N=841

## Primary Cause of Homelessness Among Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

The primary cause of homelessness amongst veterans experiencing homelessness was the loss of a job, followed by alcohol or drug abuse. Both of these were also similar to the rates at which non-veterans indicated their primary cause of homelessness.

### PRIMARY CAUSE OF VETERAN HOMELESSNESS (TOP RESPONSES)

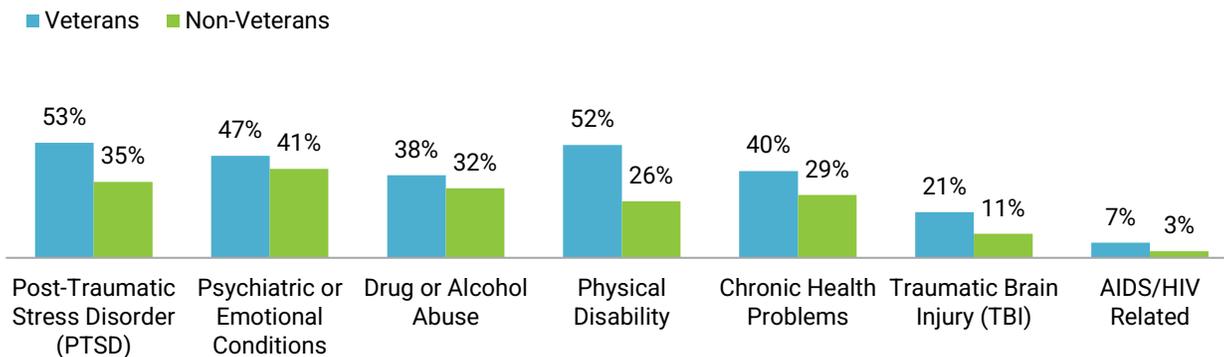


Veterans N=64 respondents offering 89 responses; Non-Veterans N=890 respondents offering 1,259 responses

## Health Conditions Among Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

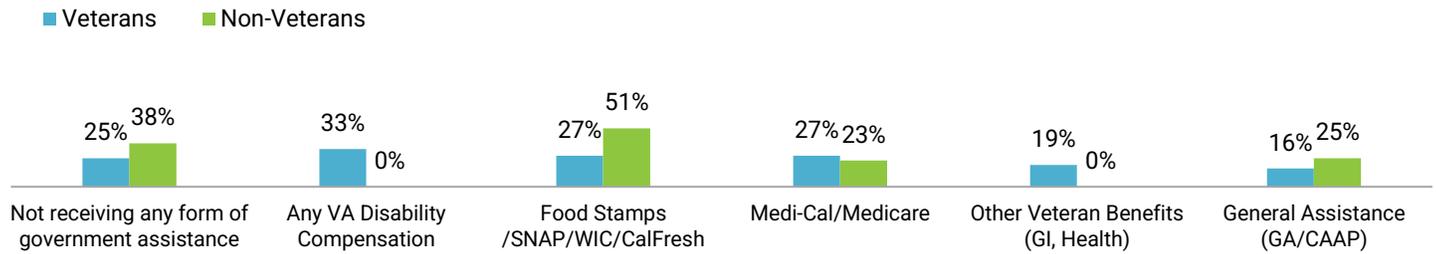
Veterans experiencing homelessness suffered from health conditions at a greater rate than non-veterans. Veterans indicated suffering from PTSD more often than the non-veteran population (53% to 35%). Physical disability was also a common condition experienced by veterans, with 52% percent indicating they suffered from it, also much greater than the non-veteran population (26%).

### HEALTH CONDITIONS



Veterans N=60-62; Non-Veterans N=843-850

## GOVERNMENT BENEFITS – TOP 5



Veteran N=64 respondents offering 131 responses; Non-Veteran N=857 respondents offering 1,504 responses

# FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

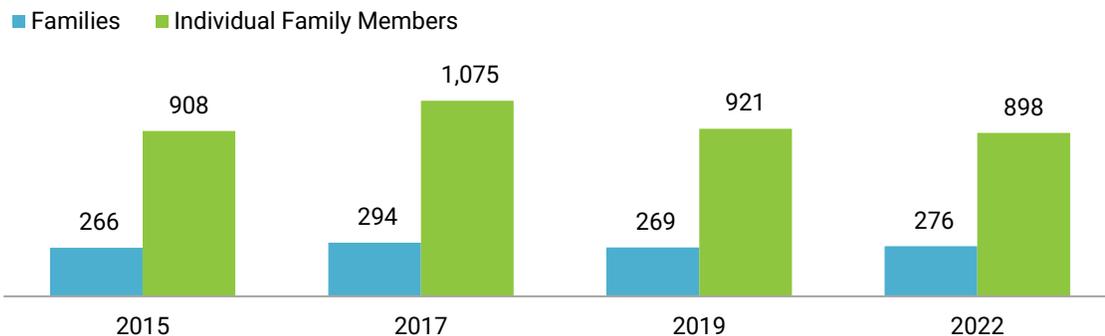
Very few families experiencing homelessness are unsheltered using the narrow HUD PIT count definition of homelessness, as public shelters serve 90% of homeless families in the United States; this is a significantly higher proportion of the population compared to other select populations, including youth and young adults.

Nationally, the majority of homeless families are households headed by single women and families with children under the age of six.<sup>1</sup> Children in families experiencing homelessness have increased incidence of illness and are more likely to have emotional and behavioral problems than children with stable living accommodations.<sup>2</sup>

### Estimates of Families Experiencing Homelessness

There were a total of 276 families consisting of 898 individual family members experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County in 2022. Families experiencing homelessness represented 9% of the Point-in-Time homeless population, the same as in 2019.<sup>3</sup> The majority (84%) of families experiencing homelessness were sheltered, while the remaining 16% were unsheltered, a decrease from 26% in 2019.

## FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

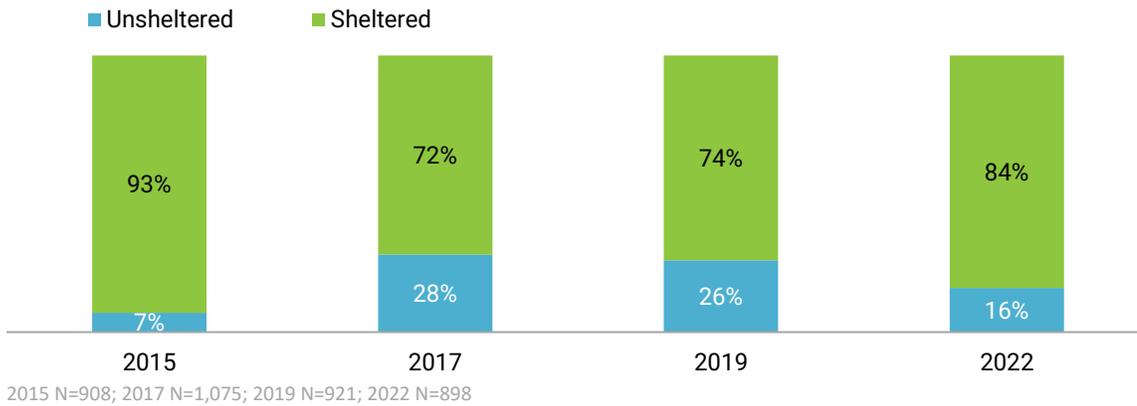


<sup>1</sup> U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). Characteristics and Dynamics of Homeless Families with Children. Retrieved 2015 from <http://aspe.hhs.gov/>

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2015). Opening Doors. Retrieved 2015 from <http://www.usich.gov/>

<sup>3</sup> There is a significant population of homeless families in “double-up” situations. These families may or may not fall within the HUD PIT count definition of homelessness and could not be identified due to their typical location on private property.

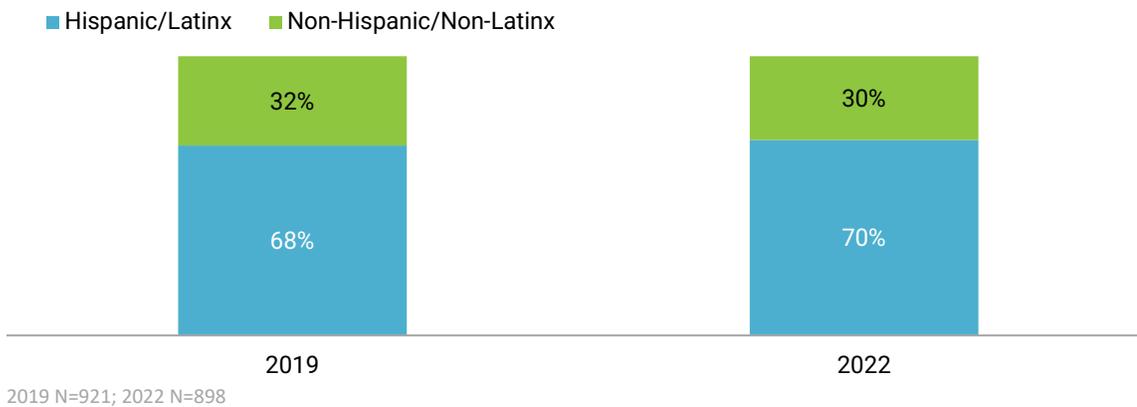
## FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY SHELTER STATUS



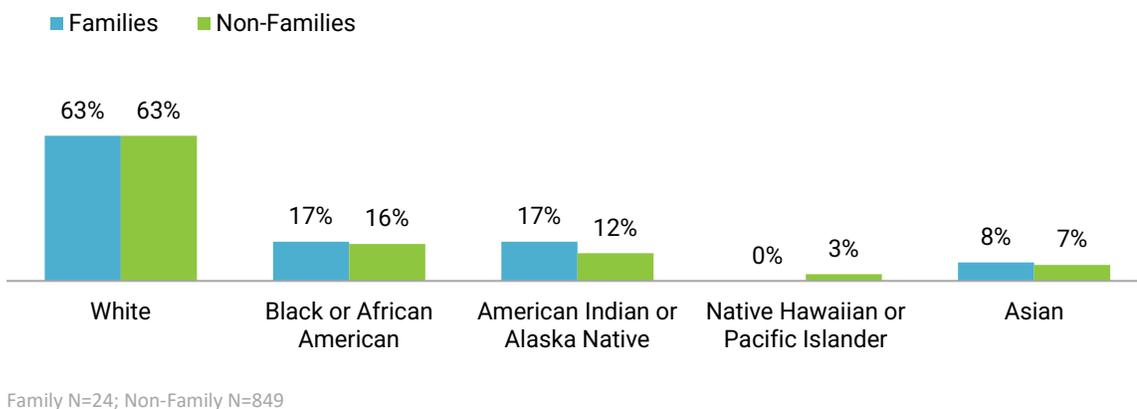
### Demographics of Families Experiencing Homelessness

Female family members accounted for 56% of families experiencing homelessness, while males accounted for 44%. Further, more than two-thirds (70%) identified as being of Hispanic/Latinx origin, and 63% identified as White.

## FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY HISPANIC/LATINX ORIGIN



## FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY RACE



### Experience of Violence Among Families Experiencing Homelessness

Survey respondents in families experiencing homelessness were much more likely to indicate past and/or current experiences with domestic violence. Forty-two percent of family respondents indicated experiencing violence in the past, up from 25% in 2019. While 17% indicated they were currently experiencing domestic violence, up from 8% in 2019.

#### PAST/CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE AMONG FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

■ Past Violence (Physical, Emotional, or Sexual) ■ Current Domestic Violence



2019 N=53; 2022 N=24

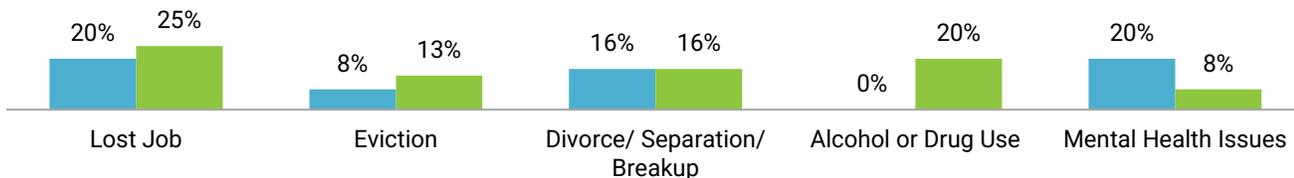
Note: Due to the small number of respondents, caution is advised when interpreting this data.

### Primary Cause of Homelessness Among Families Experiencing Homelessness

The primary cause of homelessness for survey respondents in families was the loss of a job (20%). While persons not in families experiencing homelessness indicated the primary cause of their homelessness was alcohol or drug use at a rate of 20%, no person in families experiencing homelessness indicated that was the case.

#### PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP RESPONSES)

■ Families ■ Non-Families

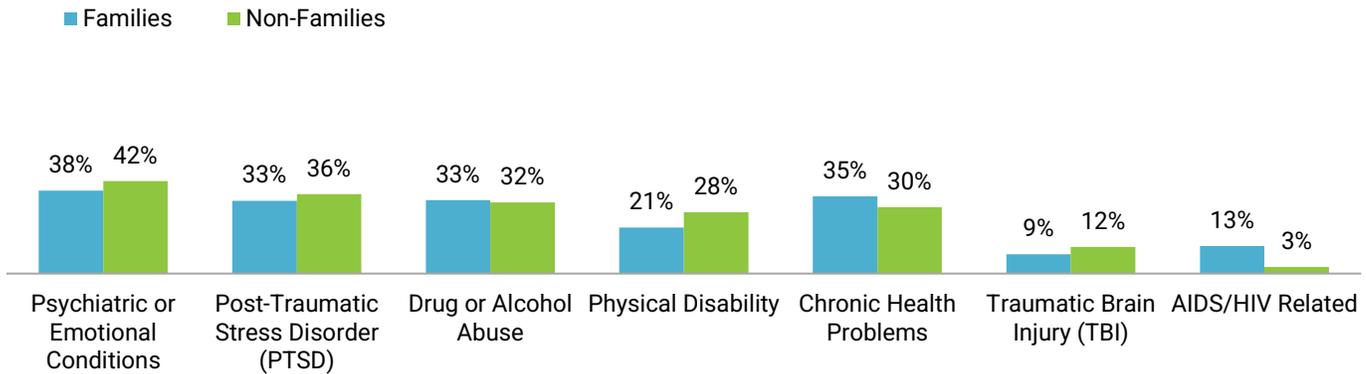


Families N=25 respondents offering 30 responses; Non-Families N=931 respondents offering 1,322 responses

## Health Conditions Among Families Experiencing Homelessness

Generally speaking, respondents in families indicated experiencing health conditions less frequently than non-family persons. The most common health condition experienced by persons in families was psychiatric or emotional conditions (38%), followed by a tie between PTSD and drug or alcohol abuse (33%).

### HEALTH CONDITIONS



Families N=25; Non-Families N=878-951

Note: Multiple response question, percentages may not add up to 100%

## Recurrence and Length of Homelessness Among Families Experiencing Homelessness

A third (36%) of family respondents reported experiencing homelessness for the first time, compared to 23% of non-family survey respondents. Sixty percent (60%) of families had been experiencing homelessness for one year or longer, compared to 75% of non-family respondents. In terms of where they were living prior to becoming homeless, slightly under half (46%) reported they were living in a home owned/rented by them or a partner compared to 55% of the general survey population.

## Government Assistance Among Families Experiencing Homelessness

Sixty-five percent (65%) of family members indicated they were receiving some form of government assistance. Over half (52%) were receiving food stamps, and 23% were receiving Medi-Cal/MediCare.

# YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

In 2012, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness amended the federal strategic plan to end homelessness to include specific strategies and supports to address the needs of youth and young adults. As part of this effort, HUD placed increased focus on gathering data on youth and young adults during the Point-in-Time Count.

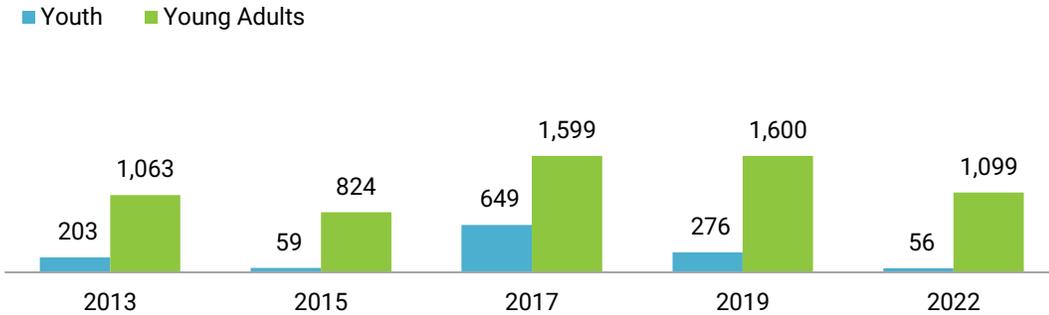
## Estimates of Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness

A separate youth count effort was put in place, relying on knowledge gathered from youth currently experiencing homelessness as well as their participation in the count itself in order. This is considered a national best practice approach and is very useful in more densely populated communities where there is a large unsheltered youth culture.

In 2022, the general shelter and street count, combined with the targeted youth count, identified 1,155 youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. This represents a 38% decrease since 2019.

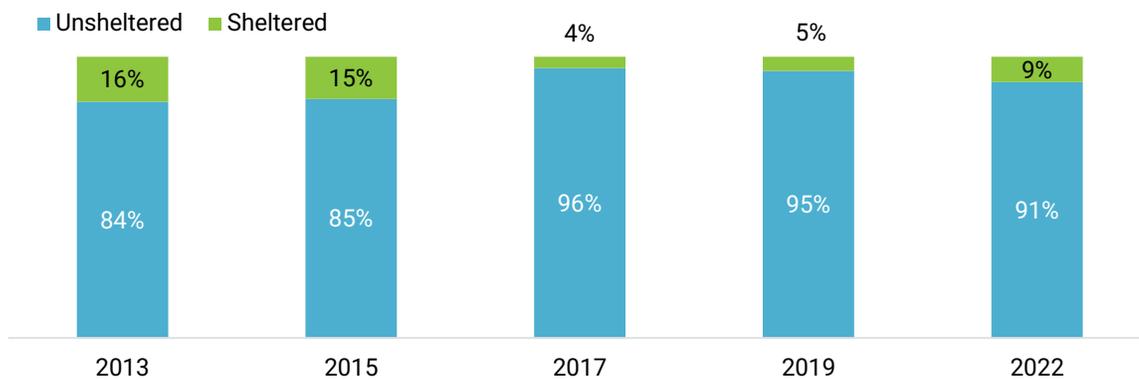
The majority (91%) of these youth and young adults were unsheltered. In 2022, the youth and young adult subpopulation represented slightly more than one tenth (12%) of the overall homeless population in Santa Clara County.

## YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS



Note: In 2019, methodology in calculating the numbers of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness changed. For comparative purposes, the 2017 data was recalculated and displayed in this chart. For further information regarding the methodology change, please see Appendix A.

## YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY SHELTER STATUS



2013 N=1,266; 2015 N=883; 2017 N=2,530; 2019 N=1,876; 2022 N=1,155

### Demographics of Youth And Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness

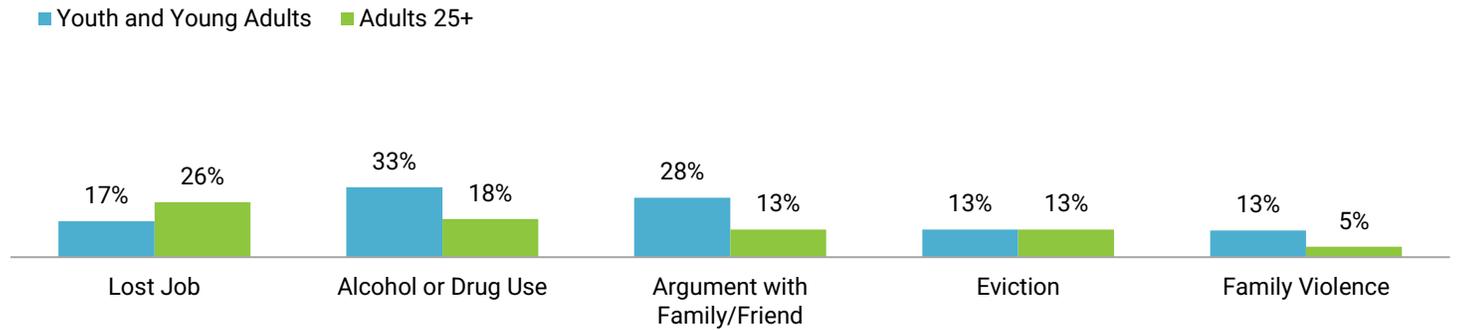
Over half (51%) of youth and young adults identified as male. Nearly half (52%) identified as being of Hispanic/Latinx origin. Sixty eight percent identified as White and 17% identified as Black/African American.

Gathering data on gender identity and sexual orientation on hard to find populations like youth and young adults can pose difficulties. Past years have made every effort to be as representative as possible, but caution should still be used when interpreting past data around gender identity and sexual orientation. In 2022, 13% of youth survey respondents identified as LGBTQ+, similar to the 13% of adults respondents.

### Primary Cause of Homelessness Among Youth and Young Adults

The most common cause of homelessness amongst youth and young adults was alcohol and drug abuse, at 33%, and it also represented the largest gap between the cause of homelessness amongst adults over the age of 25 (18%).

## PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP RESPONSES)

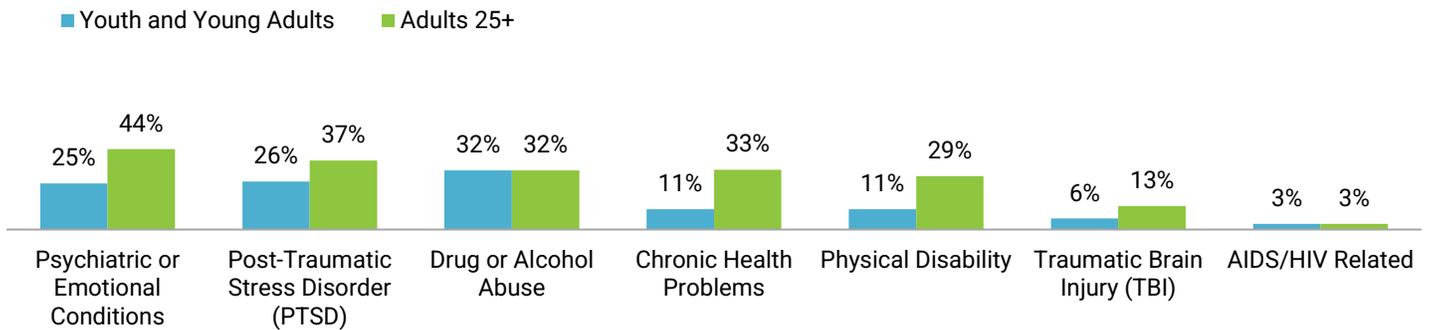


Unaccompanied Children/Youth N=103 respondents offering 164 responses; Adults N=853 respondents offering 1,188 responses

### Health Conditions Among Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness

Similar to families, unaccompanied youth and young adults experienced health conditions less often than did their adult peers. The most common health condition experienced by youth and young adults experiencing homelessness was drug alcohol abuse (32%) followed by PTSD (26%).

## HEALTH CONDITIONS



Unaccompanied Children/Youth N=95-97; Adults N=

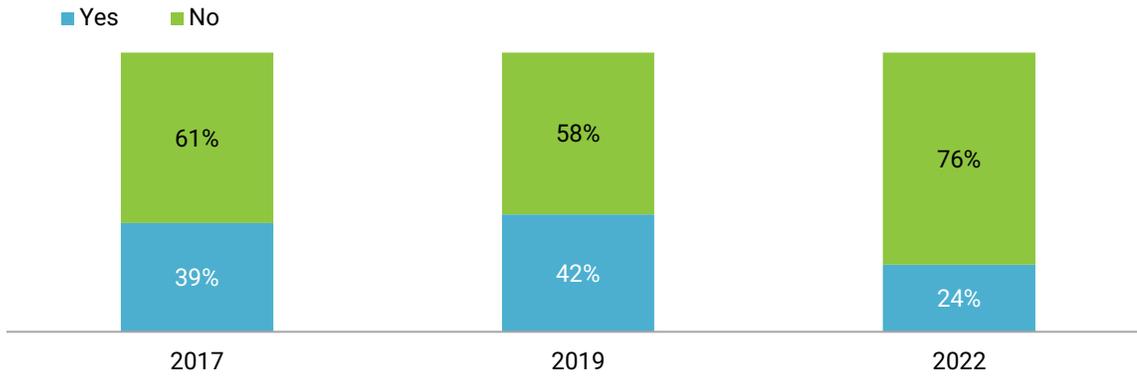
### Foster Care Among Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness

Nationally, it is estimated that at least one-third of foster youth experience homelessness after exiting care.<sup>4</sup> In the state of California, many foster youth are eligible to receive extended care benefits as they transition into adulthood, up until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. Implemented since 2012, the aim of extended foster care is to assist foster youth with the transition to independence and prevent them from experiencing homelessness.

Twenty-four (24%) of youth and young adult respondents reported they had been in the foster care system, representing a decrease from 42% in 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Dworsky, A.; Napolitano, L.; and Courtney, M. (2013). Homelessness During the Transition From Foster Care to Adulthood. Congressional Research Services, Am J Public Health. 2013 December; 103(Suppl 2): S318–S323. Retrieved 2018 from 10.2105/AJPH.2013.301455.

## HISTORY OF FOSTER CARE



2017 N=113; 2019 N=209; 2022 N=105

# CONCLUSION

The 2022 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey was performed using HUD-recommended practices for counting and surveying the homeless population. Despite a Covid-caused delay from 2021 to 2022, and a further, shorter delay from January to February, homeless service providers, outreach staff, and lived experience persons all came together in February 2022 to go across the county and participate in the PIT count. Data summarized in this report provide many valuable insights about the unique and diverse experiences of homelessness in Santa Clara County. A few data highlights include:

- The Point-in-Time Homeless Count identified a total of 10,028 persons experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County in 2022, an increase of 3% from the count conducted in 2019.
- Slightly more than three-quarters (77%) of persons experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County were unsheltered, living in places not intended for human habitation. This represents a drop from 82% in 2019.
- Slightly less than one-third (31%) of homeless survey respondents indicated they were experiencing homelessness for the first time, and 67% had been homeless for one year or longer.
- Twelve percent (12%) of homeless survey respondents said their episode of homelessness was caused by COVID-19. More than half (59%) of respondents indicated they had received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- When asked what might have prevented them from becoming homeless, the top answers among survey respondents were rent/mortgage assistance (reported by 34% of respondents), followed by employment assistance (28%), and alcohol/drug counseling (28%).
- The biggest obstacles to obtaining permanent housing were the affordability of rent (69%), a lack of a job/income (55%), and a lack of available housing (31%).
- Homeless survey respondents also reported having these health conditions: a psychiatric or emotional condition (42%); PTSD (36%); and drug/alcohol abuse (31%).
- The estimated counts of the four HUD-identified subpopulations in Santa Clara County were: chronically homeless individuals with one or more disabling condition (2,838 persons), homeless veterans (660), members of homeless families with children (898), and youth and young adults (1,155).

In summary, the 2022 Santa Clara County Homeless Count and Survey provides valid and useful data that help create a more comprehensive profile of those experiencing homelessness. Data presented in this report fulfill federal reporting requirements for the CoC and will continue to inform outreach, service planning, and policy decision-making by local planning bodies over the year to come. Trend data presented should be viewed in the context of a 3 year change from 2019 to 2022 rather than the more typical interval of 2 years. Also, it is critical to remember the 2022 PIT count was conducted in the shadow of COVID-19 including an Omicron surge period that affected outreach and logistics very significantly. Also, very noteworthy in 2022 was the use of the smart phone app field tools on PIT day for observation documentation and the effort in pre-planning where all routes were pre-assigned prior to count day.

There are still many challenges to overcome in achieving the goal of eliminating homelessness in Santa Clara County and helping homeless individuals and families access necessary services and support. The dissemination and evaluation of this effort will help the CoC and all Santa Clara County stakeholders continue to produce and refine constructive and innovative solutions to end homelessness and make it a rare, brief, and one-time occurrence. Through innovative and effective housing programs and services, Santa Clara County remains committed to moving homeless persons into permanent housing.

# APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

## Overview

The 2022 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey was performed using HUD-recommended practices and using HUD's definition of homelessness. The primary purpose was to produce a point-in-time estimate of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County, a region which covers approximately 1,312 square miles. The results of several components were combined to produce the total estimated number of persons experiencing homelessness on a given night. A detailed description of these components follows.

## Components of the Homeless Census & Survey

The methodology used in the 2022 Point-in-Time Census and Survey had five components:

- 1) **General Street Count:** A morning count of unsheltered homeless individuals and families on February 23-24, 2022. This occurred from approximately 5:00 AM to 10:00 AM and included those sleeping outdoors on the street; at bus and train stations; in parks, tents, and other makeshift shelters; and in vehicles and abandoned properties. In order to canvass all areas within Santa Clara County, the general street count was spread over two days with Interstate 880 serving as the dividing line between day 1 and day 2. The general street count was designed to take place before shelter occupants were released. In areas with shelters, the immediate area surrounding the shelter was prioritized to eliminate potential double counting of individuals.
- 2) **General Shelter Count:** A nighttime count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness staying at publicly and privately-operated shelters on February 23, 2022. This included those who occupied emergency shelters, transitional housing, and safe havens. All shelter data were gathered either from Santa Clara County's Homeless Management Information System or directly from the shelter.
- 3) **Targeted Street Count of Youth and Young Adults:** An afternoon count of unsheltered youth and young adults on February 23, 2022. This occurred from approximately 2:00 PM to 7:00 PM and was led by special youth teams who canvassed specific areas where youth and young adults were known to congregate. Upon completion, data from this targeted count was carefully reviewed against the results from the general street count to ensure that any possible duplicate counts were removed.
- 4) **Targeted COE Street Count of Students and Their Families:** A count of previously-identified unsheltered homeless students and their families conducted by the Santa Clara County Office of Education for the night of February 23, 2022 in conjunction with participating school districts. Demographic and geographic detail from the COE count was then compared to census data to check for possible duplication, however, no duplicates were found.
- 5) **Homeless Survey:** An in-person interview with 959 unique sheltered and unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness conducted by peer surveyors between February 28 and March 28, 2022. Data from the survey were used to refine the Point-in-Time Census estimates and then used to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the demographics and experiences of homeless individuals.

## The Planning Process

To ensure the success and integrity of the count, many county and community agencies collaborated on community outreach, volunteer recruitment, logistical plans, methodological decisions, and interagency coordination efforts. ASR provided technical assistance for these aspects of the planning process. ASR has over 22 years of experience conducting homeless counts and surveys throughout California and across the nation. Their work is featured as a best practice in the HUD publication, *A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People*, as well as in the Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago publication, *Conducting a Youth Count: A Toolkit*.

## Community Involvement

Local homeless and housing service providers and advocates were valued partners in the planning and implementation of this count. Due to COVID-19 and the public health risks, the organizing team made the decision, supported by the County Public Health office to limit participation levels in the count by the public and by persons currently experiencing homelessness out of COVID-19 transmission concerns. As a result of significant expansion of outreach services by jurisdictional and local community organizations, the organizing team felt that appropriate, safe and thorough outreach could be achieved by using outreach staff as the primary enumerators in the field. Some lived experience persons could be integrated by outreach staff as in previous PIT count efforts, but this would be selective and subject to compliance with public health requirements.

## STREET COUNT METHODOLOGY

### Definition

For the purposes of this study, the HUD definition of unsheltered homeless persons was used:

An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train stations, airport, or camping ground.

### Methodological Improvements

The 2022 street count methodology followed an established, HUD approved approach commonly called a blitz method followed by a sample survey. Very significantly, a change was made in the use of GPS enabled smartphones in data collection. An ESRI Survey 123 application was developed and customized by ASR to conform to HUD data collection requirements and as a tool to verify the compliance with the COVID-19 safety precautions established by the planning team. Also, improvements were made in pre-planning efforts to deploy count teams virtually, wherever possible, thereby avoiding the need for centralized deployment centers where COVID-19 transmission risks would be greater. Outreach organizations, program staff, county, and city staff along with selected community members were able to select areas for enumeration from an interactive GIS planning map tool that enabled planning for complete coverage of the County with prioritization of high-density homeless routes to outreach staff and personnel with direct service experience.

### Volunteer and Guide Recruitment

As noted above, there was a planned effort to reduce the number of persons directly involved in field work and outreach in the 2022 PIT count due to COVID-19 safety concerns. In 2022, over 250 outreach workers, community volunteers and homeless guides participated in the general street count.

Outreach and program staff did limited recruitment of persons with lived experience to act as guides in order to conduct the count in 2022. Homeless guides were paid \$20 for online training as well as \$20 per hour worked on the days of the count.

In order to participate in the count, all volunteers and guides were requested to view a 20-minute training video before the count. Training covered all aspects of the count including:

- Definition of homelessness,
- How to identify homeless individuals,
- How to safely and respectfully conduct the count, how to use the smart phone app and also access the smartphone app training video,
- How to use the route maps to ensure the entirety of the assigned area was covered,
- Tips to identify vehicles, and other tips to help ensure an accurate and safe count.

### **Safety Precautions**

Every effort was made to minimize potentially hazardous situations. Law enforcement agencies were notified of pending street count activity in their jurisdictions. In census tracts with a high concentration of homeless encampments, specialized teams with knowledge of those encampments were identified and assigned to those areas. Enumeration teams were advised to take every safety precaution possible, including bringing flashlights and maintaining a respectful distance from those they were counting.

### **Logistics of Enumeration**

On the morning of the street count, teams of two or more persons deployed to enumerate designated areas of the county for the street count. Each team was composed of any combination of outreach workers, lived experience guides, program staff and service experienced community volunteers. Each team had a lead and prior to the count were provided with their assigned census tract maps, smart phone access information and training, field observation tips and guidelines, including vehicle identification criteria. Teams were all assigned a unique team number and were instructed to text a central PIT count dispatch center to confirm they were enroute and on task for enumeration of their route assignment.

All accessible streets, roads, parks, and highways in the enumerated tracts were traversed by foot or car. The Santa Clara County Survey 123 smartphone app was used to record the number of homeless persons observed in addition to basic demographic and location information. Dispatch center volunteers also verified that at least one person on each team had a cell phone available for their use during the count and recorded the number on the volunteer deployment assignment sheet. Teams were asked to cover the entirety of their assigned areas.

To ensure that the privacy of individuals experiencing homelessness was respected and that safety concerns were kept as a priority for enumeration teams, teams were asked to conduct observation-only counts and to not have any contact with individuals experiencing homelessness. When they encountered a structure or vehicle that they believed to be inhabited, they had the option to indicate that it was inhabited but that they didn't know the number or the demographic detail (age and gender) of its residents. In order to determine the number of residents of these dwelling types, ASR uses the survey data from over 450 pre-count "place" survey respondents who indicated they stayed in the named dwelling type. Demographic detail for those inhabitants is gathered from count data.

### **Santa Clara County Office of Education Count**

In the days following the street count, representatives from seven school districts called households known to have recently experienced homelessness to ascertain where they stayed on the night of count. This is a significant effort, as many school districts have hundreds of calls to make to ensure that families counted fit the HUD definition of homelessness and were, in fact, experiencing homelessness on the night(s) of the count.

Participation from school districts was not as extensive in 2019 when compared to 2017 and may have had an impact on the number of unsheltered families that were identified in this year's count. In 2022, 9 districts participated in the COE count. Once data were gathered, they were then compared to count data to check for duplication. Using demographic and geographic detail, families were cross-checked for duplication and any duplicates are removed.

## YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT STREET COUNT METHODOLOGY

### Goal

The goal of the 2022 youth and young adult count was to include accurate representation of youth and young adults under the age of 25 in the Point-in-Time Count. Many youth and young adults experiencing homelessness do not use homeless services, are unrecognizable to adult street count volunteers, and may be in unsheltered locations that are difficult to find. Therefore, traditional street count efforts are not as effective in reaching youth.

### Research Design

As in all years, planning for the 2022 youth and young adult count included homeless youth service providers and youth and young adults with lived experience of homelessness. Local service providers identified locations where youth and young adults experiencing homelessness were known to congregate and recruited youth and young adults currently experiencing homelessness with knowledge of where to locate homeless youth to serve as guides for the count. Late afternoon and early evening were the ideal times recommended by advocates to conduct the youth count.

The Bill Wilson Center took the lead on recruiting 16 youth to work as peer enumerators in addition to 8 youth service provider staff members who accompanied and transported the youth around the county.

Youth workers were paid \$20 per hour for their time, including time spent in training prior to the count. Youth and service provider staff members were trained on where and how to identify homeless youth as well as how to record the data.

### Data Collection

It was determined that homeless youth would be more prominent on the street during daylight hours rather than in the early morning dawn timeframe when the general count was conducted. Youth worked in teams of two to four, with teams coordinated and supervised by street outreach workers.

HUD and the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness recognize that youth do not commonly come along with homeless adults and are not easily identified by non-youth. For this reason, these agencies accept and recommend that communities count youth at times when they can be seen rather than during traditional enumeration times.

### Street Count De-Duplication

Data from the supplemental youth count and general street count were compared and de-duplicated by assessing location, gender, and age. In total, 2 persons under the age of 25 were identified as duplicates and removed from the data set.

## SHELTER COUNT METHODOLOGY

### Goal

The goal of the shelter count is to gain an accurate count of persons temporarily housed in shelters across Santa Clara County. These data are vital to gaining an accurate overall count of the homeless population and understanding where persons experiencing homelessness receive shelter.

### Definition

For the purposes of this study, the HUD definition of sheltered homelessness for Point-in-Time Counts was used. This definition includes individuals and families living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement.

## Research Design

All shelter data were gathered either directly from the shelter or from Santa Clara County’s Homeless Management Information System.

## Data Collection

To collect data on individuals staying in shelters, ASR worked with BitFocus, the HMIS system administrators for Santa Clara County. BitFocus collected data on all emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, domestic violence shelters, and Safe Havens operating in the county. Data was collected on household status, age, gender, race and ethnicity, veteran status, chronic status, and whether individuals had certain health conditions. There were a small, limited number of shelters that do not participate in the HMIS system. To gather their data, ASR collected the same data using a web-based system of reporting.

## CHALLENGES

There are many challenges in any homeless enumeration, especially when implemented in a community as large and diverse as Santa Clara County. Point-in-Time Counts are “snapshots” that quantify the size of the homeless population at a given point during the year. Hence, the count may not be representative of fluctuations and compositional changes in the homeless population seasonally or over time.

For a variety of reasons, some homeless persons do not wish to be seen and make concerted efforts to avoid detection. Regardless of how successful outreach efforts are, an undercount of the homeless population will likely result, especially of hard-to-reach subpopulations such as families and youth.

The COVID-19 pandemic was an especially challenging issue faced by the PIT Count planning committee for a number of reasons, not the least of which was the Omicron variant surge that peaked in the last two weeks of January 2022 and which necessitated a delay to the end of February. The inability to better integrate persons with lived experience as route guides was a challenge, though mitigated by an increased use of outreach staff.

The methods employed in a non-intrusive visual homeless enumeration, while academically sound, have inherent biases and shortcomings. Even with the assistance of dedicated homeless service providers, the methodology cannot guarantee 100% accuracy. Many factors may contribute to missed opportunities, for example:

- It is difficult to identify homeless persons who may be sleeping in vans, cars, recreational vehicles, abandoned buildings, or structures unfit for human habitation.
- Homeless families with children often seek opportunities to stay on private property, rather than sleep on the streets, in vehicles, or in makeshift shelters.

Even though the Point-in-Time Count is most likely to be an undercount of the homeless population, the methodology employed—coupled with the homeless survey—is the most comprehensive approach available.

## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

### Planning and Implementation

The data collected through the survey are used for the McKinney-Vento Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance funding application and are important for future program development and planning. The survey elicited information such as gender, family status, military service, duration and recurrence of homelessness, nighttime accommodations, causes of homelessness, and access to services through open-ended, closed-ended, and multiple response questions. The survey data bring greater perspective to current issues of homelessness and to the provision and delivery of services.

Surveys were conducted by peer survey workers with lived homeless experience. Training sessions were facilitated by ASR, Santa Clara County staff, and community partners. Potential interviewers were led through a comprehensive orientation that included project background information as well as detailed instruction on respondent eligibility, interviewing protocol, and confidentiality. Peer survey workers were compensated at a rate of \$10 per completed survey.

It was determined that survey data would be more easily obtained if an incentive gift was offered to respondents in appreciation for their time and participation. Socks and gift cards were provided as an incentive for participating in the 2022 homeless survey. The socks and gift cards were easy to distribute, had wide appeal, and could be provided within the project budget. The incentives proved to be widely accepted among survey respondents.

### Survey Sampling

Based on a Point-in-Time Count estimate of 10,028 homeless persons, with a randomized survey sampling process, the 959 valid surveys represented a confidence interval of +/-3% with a 95% confidence level when generalizing the results of the survey to the estimated population of individuals experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County.

The 2022 survey was administered in shelters, transitional housing facilities, and on the street. In order to ensure the representation of transitional housing residents, who can be underrepresented in a street-based survey, survey quotas were created to reach individuals and heads of family households living in these programs.

Strategic attempts were also made to reach individuals in various geographic locations and of various subset groups such as homeless youth, minority ethnic groups, military veterans, domestic violence survivors, and families. Quotas used for geographic locations, youth and young adults, as well as shelter status. For other subpopulations (veterans, ethnic groups, and domestic violence survivors) peer-to-peer surveyors from those groups were recruited and asked to survey their peers. Empirical data that can be used as the basis for sampling is limited to narrow age categories, geography, and shelter type and status. Further details that would enable better profiling of subpopulation characteristics, such as gender identity and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, veteran status, and various health conditions are not available for sample planning and are broadly informed by previous PIT count results.

During the survey administrator training process and during surveyor trainings, every attempt was made to recruit a diverse group of capable surveyors who represented a broad range of experiences and backgrounds in order to reduce implicit bias, though full elimination of bias is beyond the scope of this effort. Since 2009, the ASR survey methodology has prioritized a peer-to-peer approach to data collection by increasing the number of currently homeless surveyors.

In order to increase randomization of sample respondents, survey workers were trained to employ an “every third encounter” survey approach. Survey workers were instructed to approach every third person they considered to be an eligible survey respondent. If the person declined to take the survey, the survey worker could approach the next eligible person they encountered. After completing a survey, the randomized approach was resumed.

## Data Collection

Care was taken by interviewers to ensure that respondents felt comfortable regardless of the street or shelter location where the survey occurred. During the interviews, respondents were encouraged to be candid in their responses and were informed that these responses would be framed as general findings, would be kept confidential, and would not be traceable to any single individual to ensure privacy.

## Data Analysis

The survey requested respondents' initials and date of birth so that duplication could be avoided without compromising the respondents' anonymity. Upon completion of the survey effort, an extensive verification process was conducted to eliminate potential duplicates. This process examined respondents' date of birth, initials, gender, ethnicity, length of homelessness, and consistencies in patterns of responses to other survey questions. Outlier surveys were further examined and eliminated if they were thought to be inauthentic.

## Survey Challenges and Limitations

The 2022 Santa Clara County Homeless Survey did not include an equal representation of all homeless experiences. The smaller the subpopulation is, the harder it can be to ensure that it receives full exposure during the survey process. For example, finding families experiencing homelessness presents a challenge and can lead to underrepresentation in the survey results. The same applies to youth and young adults, though care is taken to ensure that youth surveyors are involved, to increase the response rate of youth survey respondents. Locating and surveying individuals who identify as transgender, who have a sexual orientation other than straight, who are experiencing specific health conditions such as AIDS and TBI, and others can pose difficulties and their experiences may not be fully represented in this process.

There may be some variance in the data that individuals experiencing homelessness self-reported. However, using a peer interviewing methodology is believed to allow the respondents to be more candid with their answers and may help reduce the uneasiness of revealing personal information. Further, service providers and county staff members recommended individuals who would be the best suited to conducting interviews and these individuals received comprehensive training about how to conduct interviews. Service providers and county staff also reviewed the surveys to ensure quality responses. Surveys that were considered incomplete or containing false responses were not accepted.

# APPENDIX B: DEFINITIONS & ABBREVIATIONS

**COE** – The County Office of Education

**Chronic homelessness** – Defined by HUD as an unaccompanied individual or head of a family household with a disabling condition who has either continuously experienced homelessness for a year or more or has experienced at least four episodes of homelessness totaling 12 months in the past three years.

**Disabling condition** – Defined by HUD as a physical, mental, or emotional impairment, including an impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, Post-traumatic stress disorder, or brain injury that is expected to be long-term and impacts the individual’s ability to live independently; a developmental disability; or HIV/AIDS.

**Emergency shelter** – The provision of a safe alternative to the streets, either in a shelter facility or through the use of stabilization rooms. Emergency shelter is short-term, usually for 180 days or fewer. Domestic violence shelters are typically considered a type of emergency shelter, as they provide safe, immediate housing for survivors and their children.

**Family** – A household with at least one adult and one child under the age of 18.

**Homeless** – Under the Category 1 definition of homelessness in the HEARTH Act, includes individuals and families living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements, or 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.

**HUD** – Abbreviation for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

**Sheltered homeless individuals** – Individuals who are living in emergency shelters or transitional housing programs.

**Single individual** – An unaccompanied adult over the age of 18.

**Transitional housing** – Housing in which homeless individuals may live up to 24 months and receive supportive services that enable them to live more independently. Supportive services – which help promote residential stability, increased skill level or income, and greater self-determination – may be provided by the organization managing the housing, or coordinated by that organization and provided by other public or private agencies. Transitional housing can be provided in one structure or several structures at one site, or in multiple structures at scattered sites.

**Unaccompanied youth** – Children under the age of 18 who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian and are not a parent presenting with or sleeping in the same place as their own child(ren).

**Unsheltered homeless individuals** – Individuals who are living on the streets, in abandoned buildings, storage structures, vehicles, encampments, or any other place unfit for human habitation.

**Youth and Young Adults** – Young people between the ages of 0-17 (youth) and 18-24 years old (young adults) who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian and are not a parent presenting with or sleeping in the same place as their own child(ren).

## APPENDIX C: FIGURE SOURCES

**All Point in Time Count Data:** The figure source is ASR, Santa Clara County Homeless Count and Survey, for the years varying from 2005 to 2022.

**All Homeless Survey Findings:** The figure source is ASR, Santa Clara County Homeless Count and Survey, for the years varying from 2005 to 2022.

**All Subpopulation Data:** The figure source is ASR, Santa Clara County Homeless Count and Survey, for the years varying from 2005 to 2022.

**All Census Data:** U.S. Census Bureau. (January 2020). American Community Survey 2020 1-Year Estimates, Table DP05: ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates. Retrieved from <http://factfinder2.census.gov>