

2023 Hennepin County, Minnesota Point-in-Time Count Report

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Executive Summary

The 2023 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count in Hennepin provides a snapshot of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and unsheltered locations. The 2023 PIT Count took place in Hennepin County on Wednesday, January 25th and included people living in emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, and places not intended for human habitation.

3,312 people were experiencing homelessness on Jan 25, 2023

▲ 24%
from January 2022



469

people were unsheltered

▼ 3.7%



2,422

people were in emergency shelter

▲ 47.2%



421

people were in transitional housing

▼ 22.9%

What does the PIT tell us about homelessness in Hennepin County in 2023?

During the pandemic, a historic low number of families lived in shelter. But that trend went into reverse when the eviction moratorium ended and the federal emergency rental assistance wound down. We saw a **79% increase in families experiencing homelessness** compared to 2022. This was the highest number since 2015. This shows that preventing evictions – especially through rental assistance – decreases family homelessness. The increase in homelessness since federal assistance ended would have been much greater if not for new programming. This includes the county’s legal representation and services in Housing Court for renters on low income.

Thanks to Hennepin County’s shelter-all policy for families, **more than 99% of these families were either in shelter or transitional housing.** This increase in families using shelter resulted in a significant increase in the **overall PIT count.** The count is up 24% in 2023. At **3,312 people total**, it is the highest overall number since 2019 (at 3,400 total).

Homelessness among adult-only households

went down by 7% compared to 2022. This helped drive a 4% decrease in the number of people who were unsheltered compared to 2022. It also drove a **27% decrease in overall unsheltered homelessness since its high point in 2020.** This is not happening by accident. Instead, it has happened through the transformation and investments in our community’s shelter and housing programs and the infusion of housing-focused case management. Other major cities continue experiencing increases year after year. It is an incredible achievement to reduce unsheltered homelessness in this environment .

Additional findings from the 2023 PIT in Hennepin County:

- **Veterans'** homelessness continued to decrease since it reached its high point in 2021. The 2023 PIT included 127 veterans, a 42-person or 25% decrease since 2021.
- **Unaccompanied children (under 18)** the 2023 PIT counted 19 unaccompanied children, a 16-person decrease from the largest count in 2020. Of the 19 unaccompanied children, the majority, 14 (74%) were in emergency shelter on the night of the PIT, while 3 were in transitional housing programs and 2 in unsheltered locations.
- **Unaccompanied youth (18-24)** 253 unaccompanied youth were counted in the 2023 PIT, a 61- person (32%) increase from 2022. Of the 253 unaccompanied youth, 88 (35%) were in emergency shelter, 92 (36%) in transitional housing, and 73 (29%) in unsheltered locations. While the number of unaccompanied youth in emergency shelter and transitional housing was relatively consistent with historical counts, the 2023 count found a 43-person (143%) increase in the number of unaccompanied youth in unsheltered locations compared to the 2022 count.
- **Parenting-youth households** accounted for 125 people in 43 households counted in the 2023 PIT, an increase of 10 parenting-youth households (30% increase) from 2022. Of the parenting-youth households, 77% were counted in emergency shelter locations and only 1 parenting-youth household was in an unsheltered location.
- **Chronic homelessness** had been steadily decreasing since 2019. However, the number of people identified as chronically homeless increased in the 2023 PIT count by 158 people compared to 2022, a 27% increase. Of the 738 people identified as chronically homeless, 124 (17%) were people in family households, and 612 (83%) were in single adult households. 254 of the 738 chronically homeless persons (34%) were staying in unsheltered locations and 484 (66%) were in emergency shelter.

Introduction

The Point in Time (PIT) count is a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that Continuums of Care (CoCs) conduct an annual count of people experiencing homelessness who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and safe havens on a single night. CoCs must also conduct a count of unsheltered people experiencing homelessness every other year (odd-numbered years). Each count is planned, coordinated, and carried out locally. This year, the count took place on Wednesday, January 25th.

While the PIT count is just one source of information, it provides an opportunity for CoCs to better understand trends over time related to the number of people experiencing homelessness in the community and who is experiencing homelessness in the community. This information is used to gain insight into the impact of implemented efforts to address homelessness as well as to inform future policy and program interventions. The PIT Count does not serve as a count of the overall number of people experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County. To better understand trends related to the overall population of people experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County, one source to reference is the [HUD System Performance Measures](https://hudexchange.info/programs/coc/system-performance-measures/#data). Find it at hudexchange.info/programs/coc/system-performance-measures/#data.

Methodology

Sheltered count

The sheltered count includes people experiencing homelessness who were staying in emergency shelter or transitional housing programs on the night of the PIT. The sheltered count includes data from agencies that participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) as well as data from non-HMIS participating programs (such as programs serving people fleeing and attempting to flee domestic violence and some youth-serving programs). For emergency shelter and transitional housing programs that enter data into HMIS, data is exported from HMIS and included in the final PIT count. For non-HMIS emergency shelter and transitional housing programs, data is collected either through surveys (see attachment) or by submitting aggregate counts of the number of people, and corresponding demographic information, for the people who were being served by the program on the night of the PIT.

The Institute for Community Alliances (ICA) is a key partner in helping to facilitate the count in Hennepin County. The institute is the HMIS lead agency and system administrator in Minnesota. Team members at ICA work to extrapolate data from emergency shelters and transitional housing programs on the night of the PIT to efficiently collect information on who received services on the night of the PIT. ICA helps create tools to gather information in PIT LIVE, including: PIT LIVE Surveys, Aggregate Data Collection forms, and Observation Tools. Hennepin and ICA collaborate to facilitate a data review process to ensure information collected in the count, and from HMIS, is accurate and deduplicated.

Unsheltered count

The unsheltered count includes people experiencing homelessness who were staying in places not meant for human habitation on the night of the PIT. The unsheltered count uses survey responses (and in rare cases, observation tools) collected from people experiencing homelessness. Surveys and observation are done by street outreach teams, school liaisons, countywide social workers, direct service staff, and community volunteers.

In 2022 Hennepin County became the responsible entity for planning and implementing the unsheltered count. Bringing this 'in house' offered the opportunity to review and enhance the methodology used for the unsheltered count. Planning groups included people with lived and living experience of homelessness, street outreach teams, healthcare, youth and veteran experts, and representatives from communities of color and LGBTQIA+ communities. Throughout planning, two primary goals were identified – full geographic coverage and a trauma-informed approach.

For the first goal of full geographic coverage of the 45 cities within the Hennepin County CoC, maps were created that identified unsheltered 'known locations,' including encampments. They also located other community-based sites such as drop-in centers and libraries that people experiencing homelessness spend time to stay warm, eat a meal, or connect with other services and basic needs. We used this tool to create volunteer shifts throughout the week of the unsheltered count to ensure greater coverage across metro and suburban communities and greater opportunities to survey all households experiencing unsheltered homelessness on the night of the count.

To ensure a trauma-informed approach we used street outreach teams and their relationships with people experiencing unsheltered homelessness to survey people where they are sleeping, in the early morning and throughout the week. Rather than wake people up in the middle of the night, we used existing partnerships and relationships to reduce the trauma of being asked sensitive questions by strangers.

Key findings and change over time

Total number of people experiencing homelessness

Overall, the total number of people experiencing homelessness in Hennepin increased by 634 people, a 24% increase, in 2023 from 2022. Historically, there had been an increasing number of people experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County since 2021. However, this increase appears exaggerated because an unsheltered count was not conducted in Hennepin County in 2021 and the total number of people experiencing homelessness in 2021 reflects **only** people in shelter (figure 1).

Of the 3,312 people experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County in the 2023 PIT, 19% identify as Hispanic, compared to 6.95% of the larger population of Hennepin County identifying as Hispanic. People who identify as Black, African American or African represent half (50%) the population of people experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County. This is true both for the 2023 PIT county and historically. But these groups represent just 13% of the larger Hennepin County population (figure 2).

Figure 1.

Total number of people experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County, 2018-2023

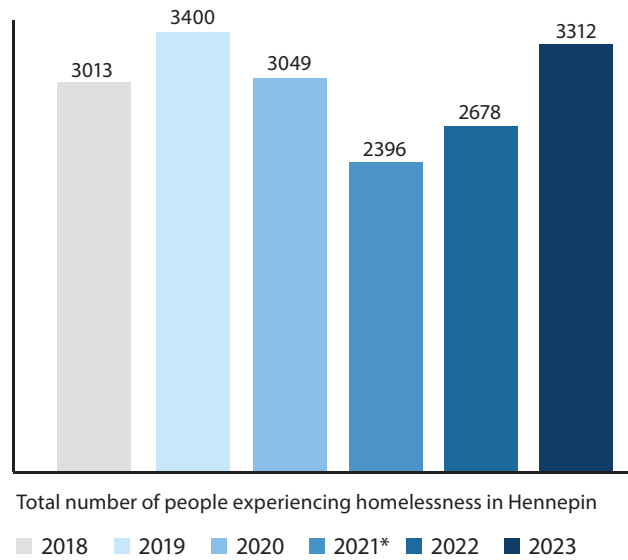
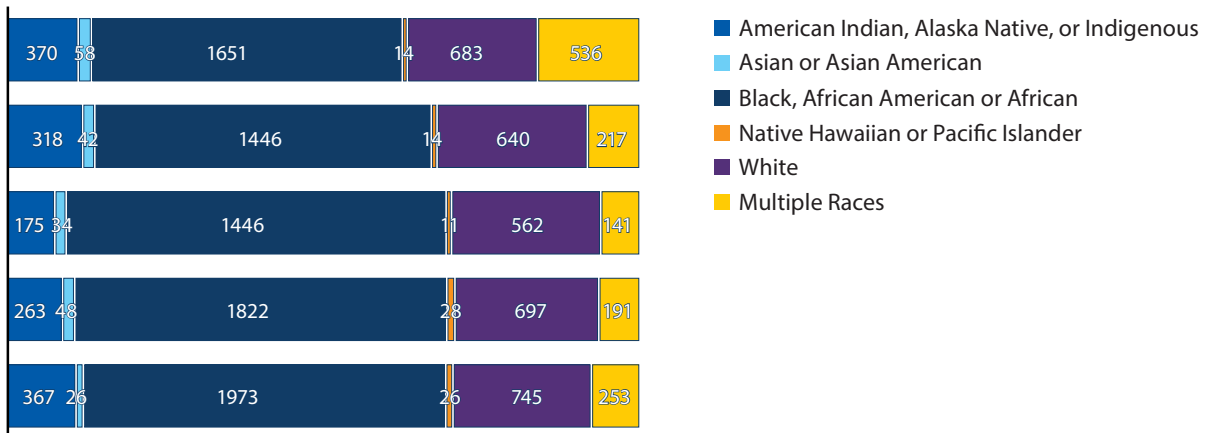


Figure 2.

Race demographics of total people experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County, 2019-2023



Sheltered homelessness

The number of people staying in shelter (emergency shelter or transitional) had been steadily going down since its high point in 2019, But there was a sharp increase in the number of persons staying in shelter in the 2023 PIT. The number of people staying in transitional housing continued to go down in the 2023 PIT. Compared to 2022, it was, a 125-person or 23% decrease. Compared to the high point in 2018, it was a 288-person or 40.6% decrease. We may be able to attribute the increase in total people staying in shelter to the increase in people staying in emergency shelters.

The 2023 PIT counted an additional 777 people in emergency shelters, a 47% increase from the 2022 PIT. Historically, the number of people staying in emergency shelter programs had been decreasing since its high point in 2019. The 2023 count of people in emergency shelter reflects a 296-person, or 14% increase since 2019 (figure 3).

Single adults historically represented a slight majority of persons staying in emergency shelter programs but the 2023 PIT saw a sharp increase in the number of families staying in shelter. Single adult homelessness in emergency shelters stayed relatively consistent compared to the 2022 PIT (decreasing by 4 people), while the number of families in emergency shelter increased by 231 households. This was a 128% increase from the 2022 PIT, or 774 people, a 112% increase from 2022 (figure 4).

Figure 3.
Sheltered homelessness, 2018-2023

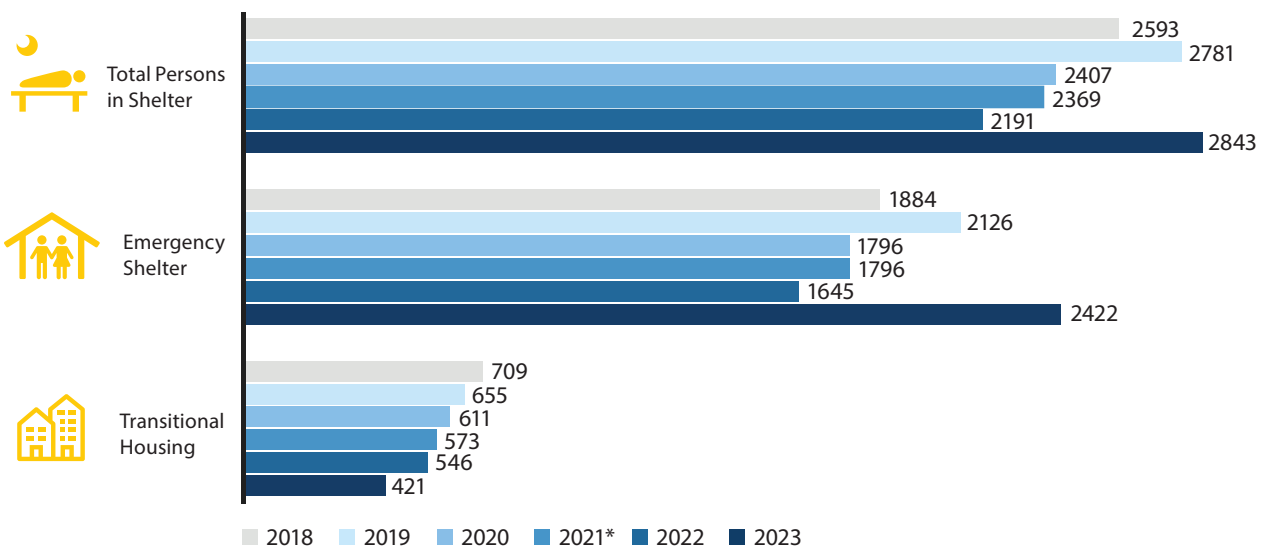
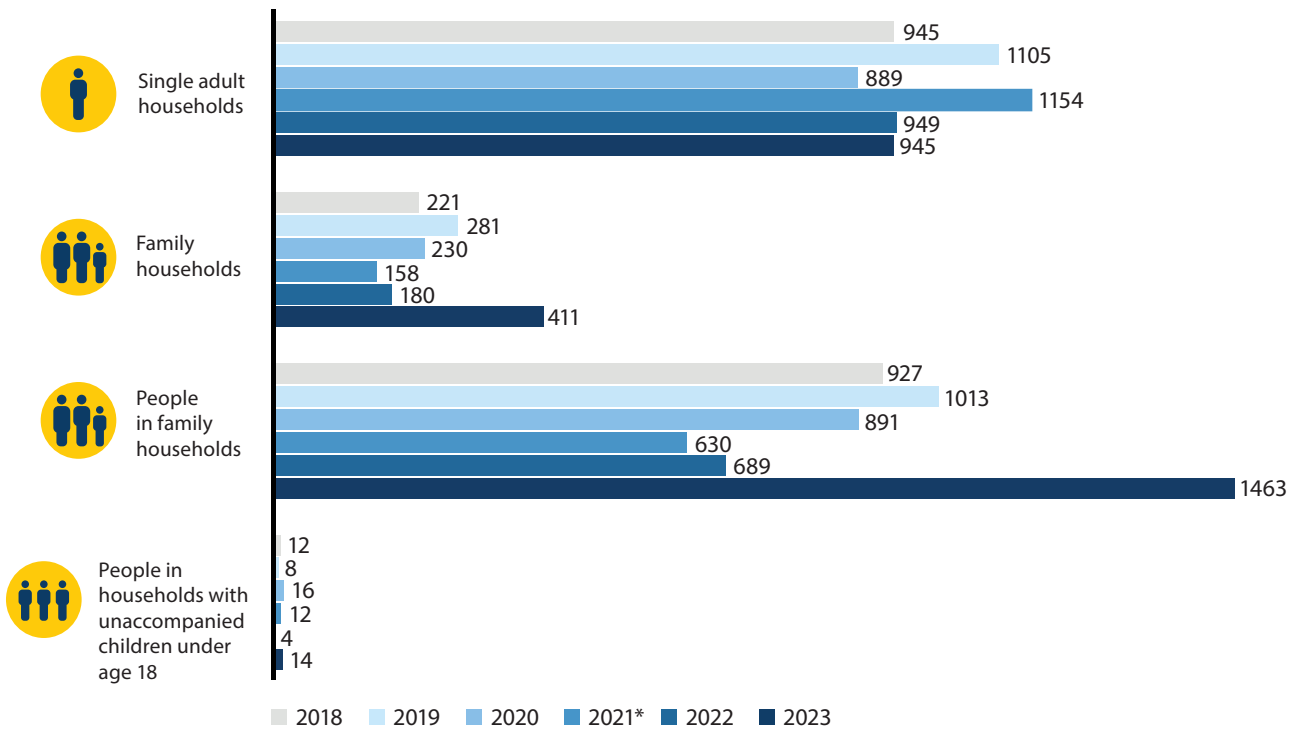


Figure 4.
Emergency shelter PIT count by household type, 2018-2023



Unsheltered homelessness

The number of people staying in unsheltered locations on the night of the PIT has steadily decreased since 2020. This resulted in 173 fewer people being counted in the unsheltered PIT in 2023, a 27% decrease over the past three years (figure 5). Of the people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the 2023 PIT, the majority (97%) were single adult households. Single adults historically make up the largest portion of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, representing 98% of the unsheltered PIT count in 2022, and 92% in 2020.

When analyzing the racial demographics of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, people who identify as Black, African American, or African make up the largest portion of the population at 35% in the 2023 PIT. People who identify as American Indian, Alaska Native or Indigenous (30%) and White (24%) comprise the next largest groups (figure 6). When reviewing racial demographics historically, it can be noted that the racial composition of the population of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness has been changing over time. Historically, people identifying as Black, African American or African have represented over half of the unsheltered community and have decreased to just over a third in the 2023 PIT. Conversely, people identifying as American Indian, Alaska Native or Indigenous have been increasing in the unsheltered portion of the PIT, and now represent roughly one third of the unsheltered population. The portion of people who identify as White in the unsheltered count has remained consistent at about one quarter of the population, historically and in 2023.

Figure 5.
Unsheltered homelessness, 2018-2023

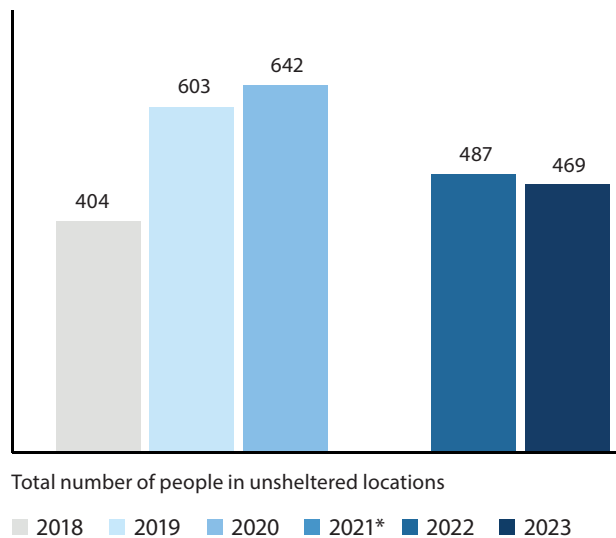
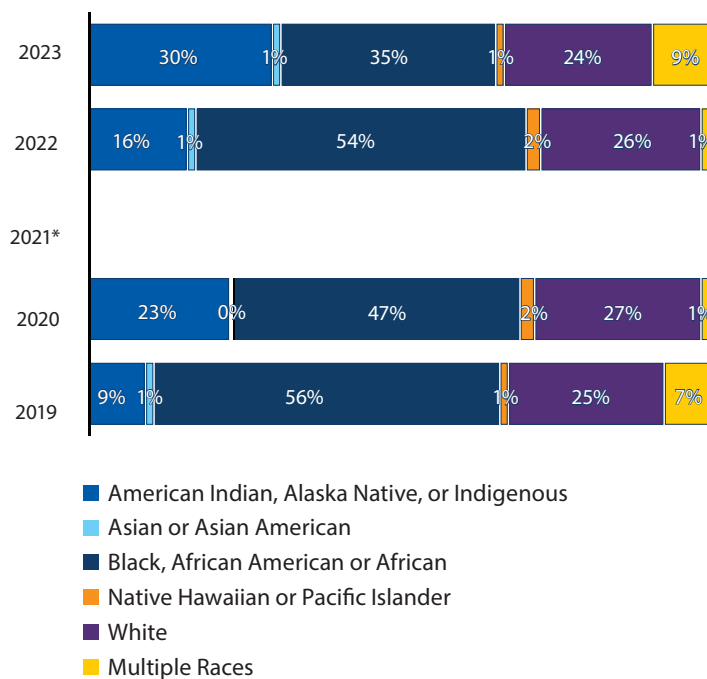


Figure 6.
Unsheltered homelessness, demographic breakout by race, 2019-2023



Household demographics

The number of family households experiencing homelessness had gone down 32% from 2019 to 2022. But the number of family households experiencing homelessness increased in 2023. In 2023, the number of family households experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County went up to 486 households. Compared to 2019, 2023 saw an increase of 100 family households, a 26% increase. Compared to 2022, 2023 saw an increase of 223 family households, an 85% increase (figure 7). Persons in families historically made up just over a third of the total persons experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County. Now they make up just over half of the total persons experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County (figure 8).

Figure 7.
Total PIT comparison by household type, 2018-2023

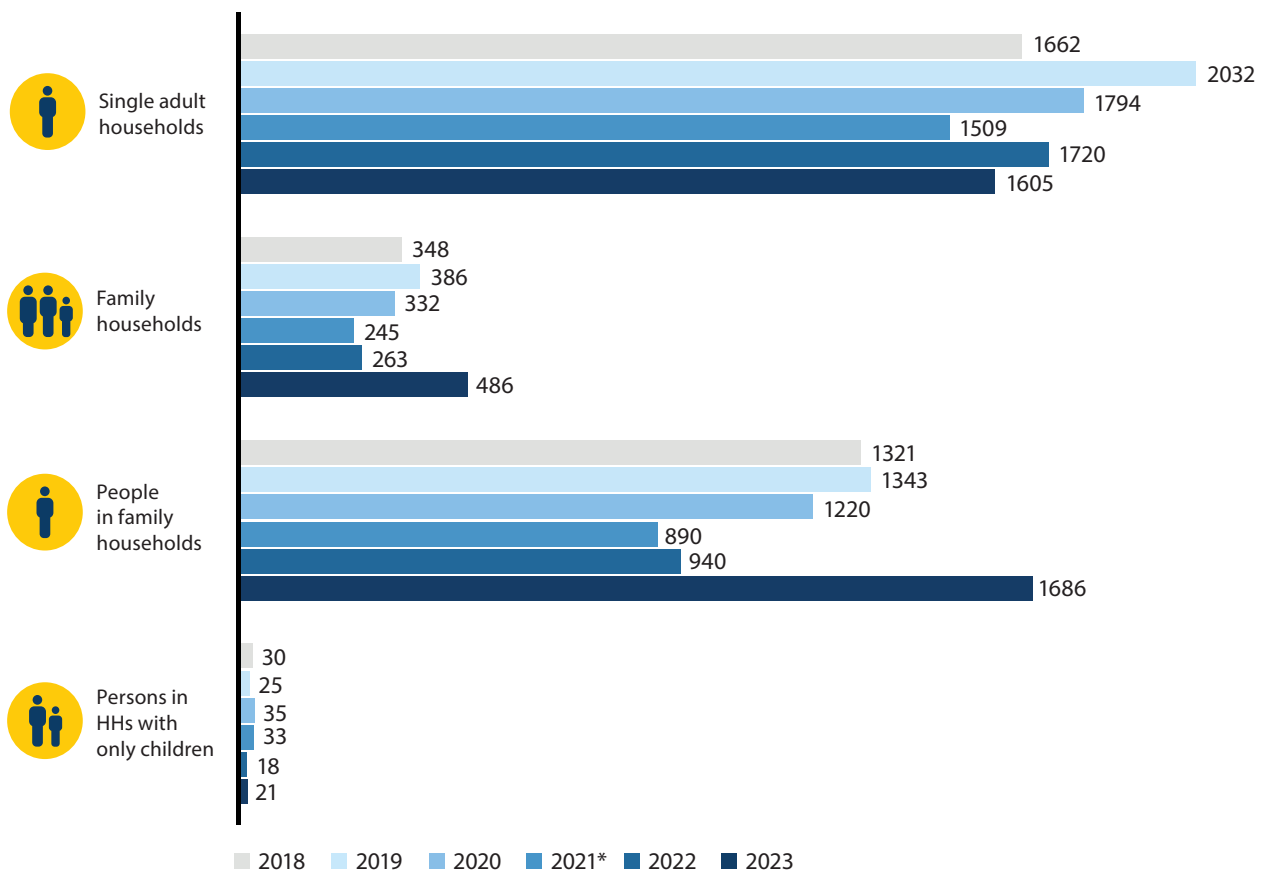
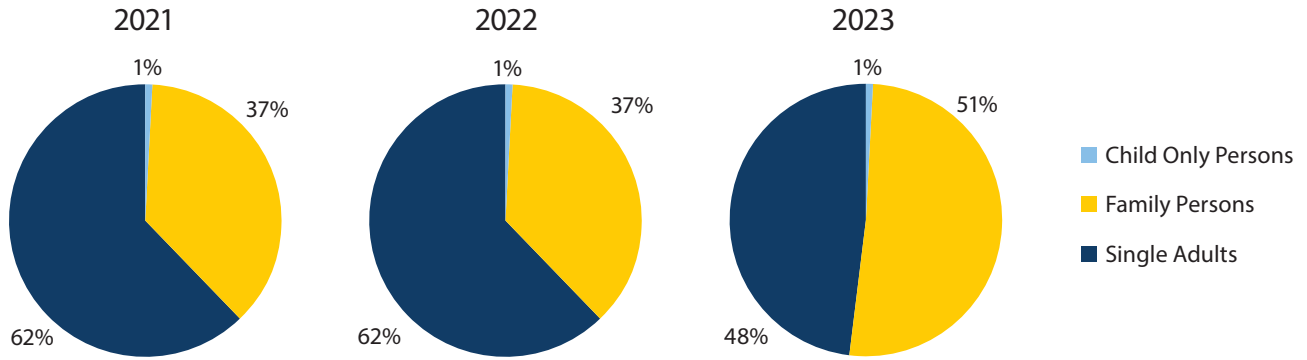


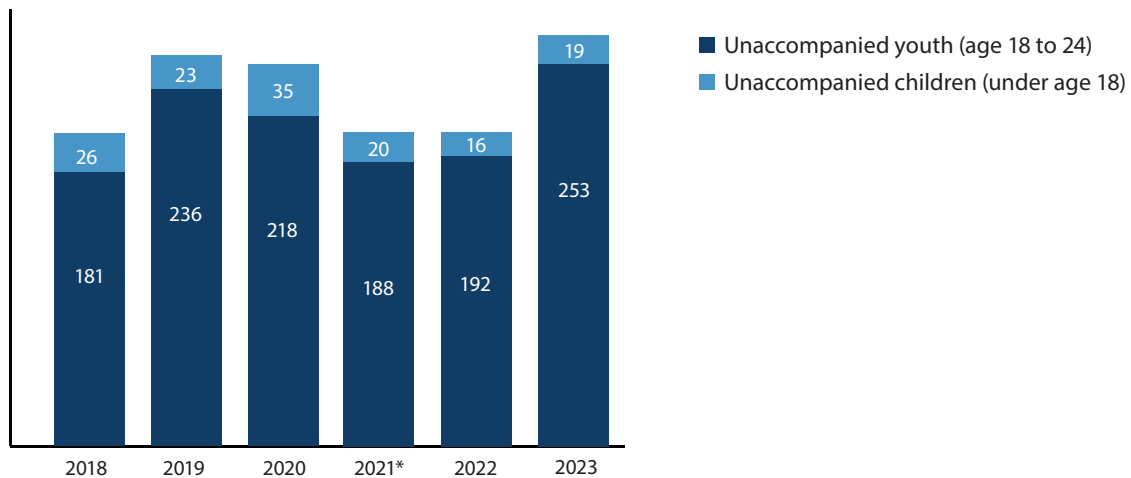
Figure 8.
PIT count distribution, percent of persons, by household type, 2021-2023



Unaccompanied youth and parenting-youth households

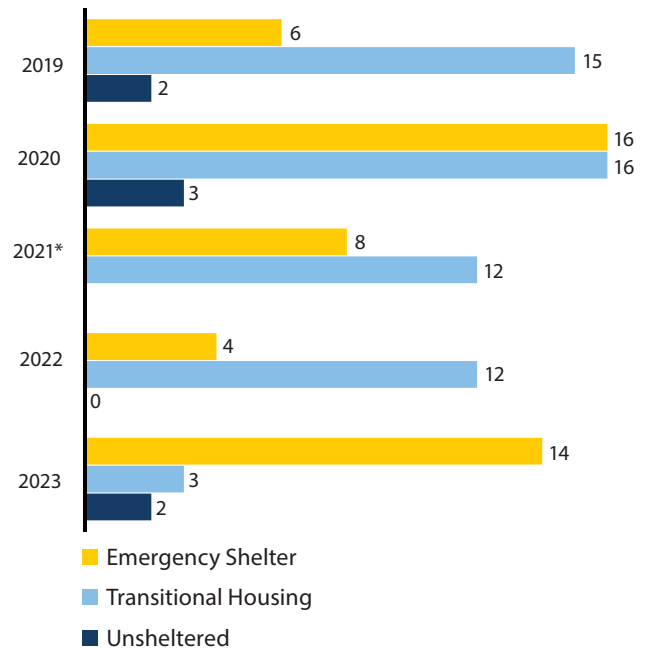
The total number of unaccompanied youth and minors (0 to 24 years) had been going down since 2019 through 2022. But this group saw an increase in the 2023 PIT. We counted 64 more unaccompanied youth and minors compared to 2022, a 31% increase. And the number has now surpassed the count for unaccompanied youth and minors from 2019. Within this population, the number of unaccompanied children (under 18 years) has remained relatively stable since 2021. The number of unaccompanied youth (18 to 24) has been going up since 2021 and saw an increase of 61 persons since the 2022 PIT (figure 9).

Figure 9.
Unaccompanied youth homelessness 2018-2023



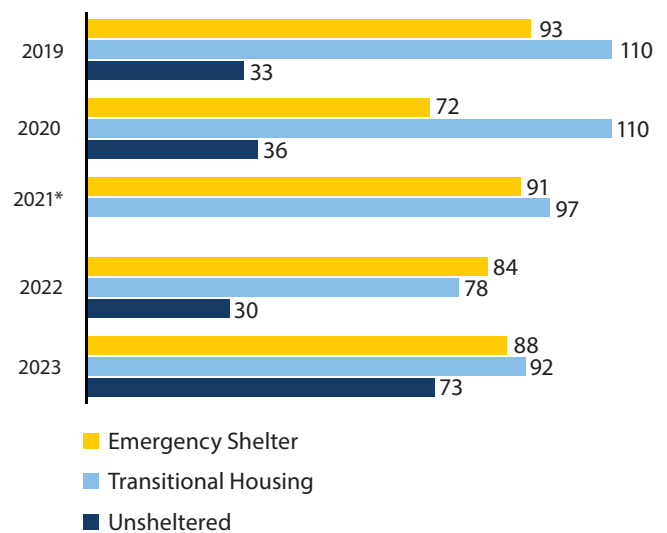
Of the 19 unaccompanied children (under 18), the majority (74%) were counted in emergency shelter (14 persons). This was an increase from the 2022 count by 10 people. The number counted in transitional housing programs went down from 12 to 3 between the 2022 and 2023 counts. The number of unaccompanied children staying in unsheltered locations has remained relatively consistent historically. They represented just 2 people in the 2023 count (figure 10).

Figure 10.
Unaccompanied children (under 18) homelessness by location 2019-2023



Of the 253 unaccompanied youth (18 to 24), 88 were counted in emergency shelter (35%), 92 in transitional housing (36%) and 73 in unsheltered locations (29%). The number of unaccompanied youth staying in emergency shelter and transitional housing has stayed relatively consistent historically. The number of unaccompanied youth counted in unsheltered locations went up by 43 people, a 143% increase from the 2022 count (figure 11).

Figure 11.
Unaccompanied youth (18-24 years old) homelessness by location 2019-2023



People who identify as American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous historically represented just 5% of unaccompanied youth in 2020. This proportion has been steadily going up ever since. It now represents 17% of unaccompanied youth in the 2023 PIT (figure 12)

In comparison, there were 125 persons in 43 parenting youth households counted in the 2023 PIT. This is an increase of 49 people, a 58% increase from 2022. It's also an increase of 10 parenting youth households, a 30% increase. Parenting-youth households were mostly counted in emergency shelter on the night of the PIT (33 households, or 77% of parenting-youth households), with 9 households (21%) counted in transitional housing, and 1 household in an unsheltered location (2%) (figure 13). Of the 43 parenting-youth households, 4 households met the definition of chronically homeless.

Veterans

In comparison, there were 125 persons in 43 parenting youth households counted in the 2023 PIT. This is an increase of 49 people, a 58% increase from 2022. It's also an increase of 10 parenting youth households, a 30% increase. Parenting-youth households were mostly counted in emergency shelter on the night of the PIT (33 households, or 77% of parenting-youth households), with 9 households (21%) counted in transitional housing, and 1 household in an unsheltered location (2%) (figure 13). Of the 43 parenting-youth households, 4 households met the definition of chronically homeless.

Figure 12. Unaccompanied youth and children homelessness, demographic breakout by race, 2019-2023

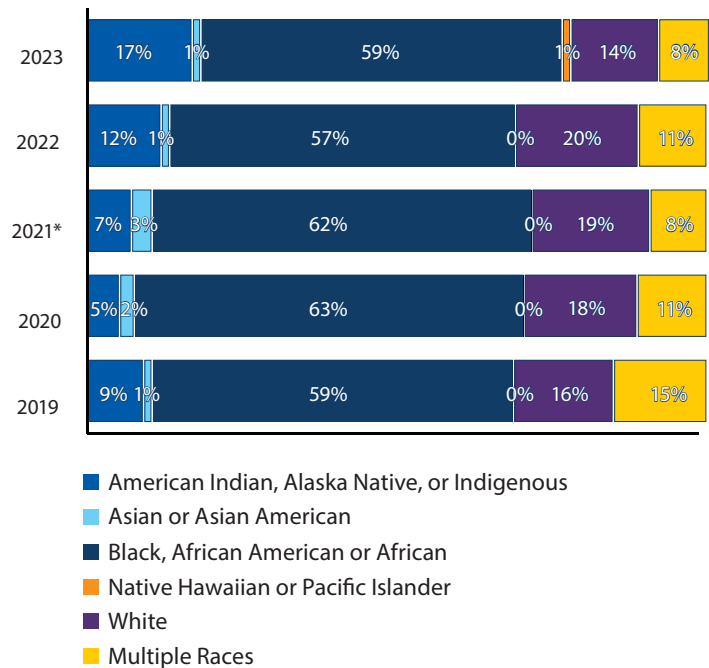


Figure 13. Parenting-youth households, by location 2019-2023

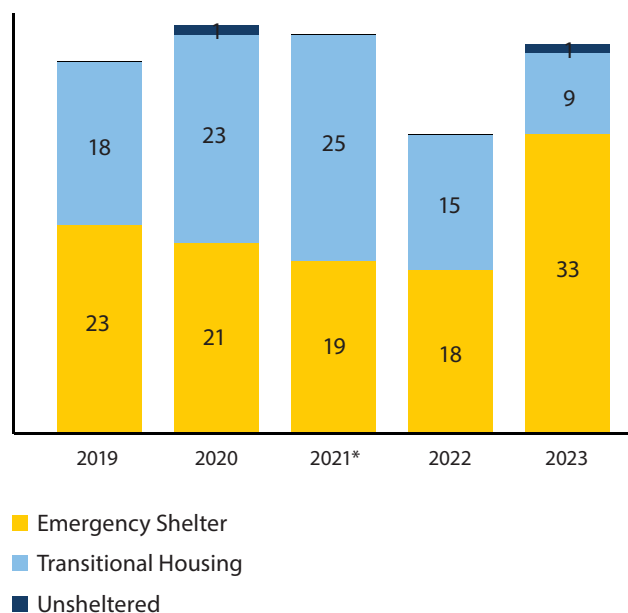
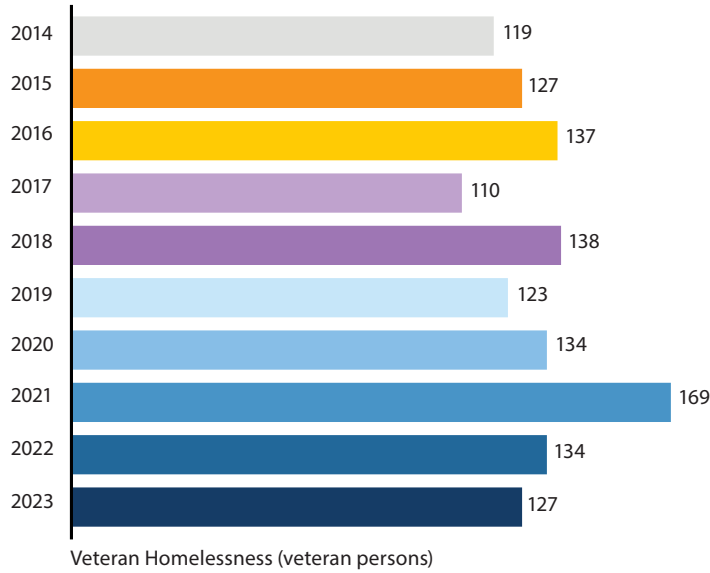
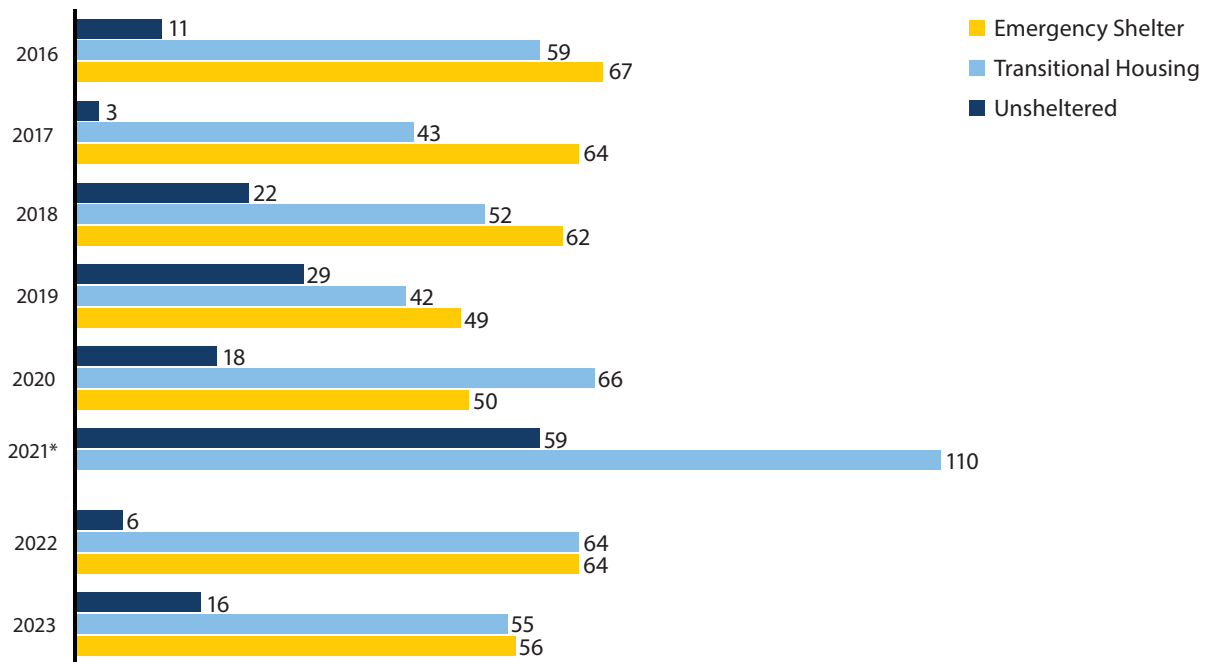


Figure 14.
Veteran homelessness, 2018-2023



Of the total veterans counted, 56 (44%) were staying in emergency shelter on the night of the PIT, 55 (43%) stayed in transitional housing, and 16 (13%) were in unsheltered locations (figure 15).

Figure 15.
Veteran homelessness by location, 2016-2023

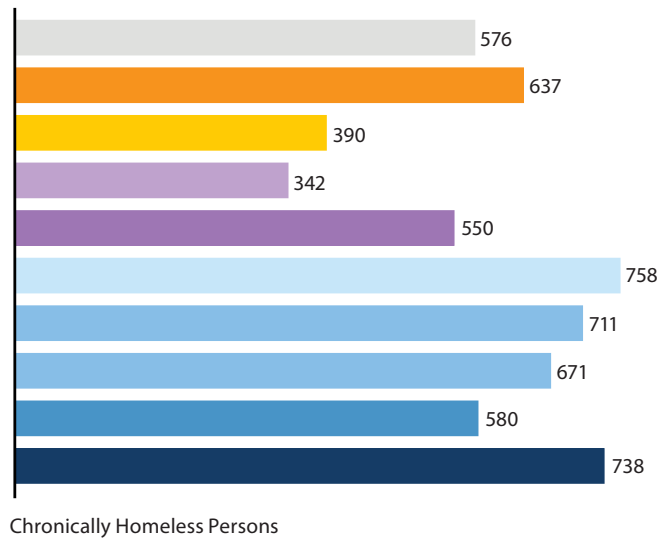


Chronically homeless

Individuals and families defined as chronically homeless in the PIT count meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) criteria. To be considered chronically homeless by HUD's definition, a person must have a disability and experienced homelessness continuously for at least one year or on four separate occasions in the last three years, where the combined length of time homeless during those occasions totals at least 12 months. HMIS data and the PIT Count Survey both have specific questions that allow analysts to determine if individuals and families meet this HUD definition.

The number of people identified as chronically homeless in the PIT count had been steadily going down since 2019. However, between the 2022 and 2023 counts, the number of chronically homeless persons went up by 158 people, a 27% increase (figure 16). Of the 738 people identified as chronically homeless, 124 (17%) were people in family households, and 612 (83%) were in single adult households. Of the 738 chronically homeless persons, 254 (34%) were staying in unsheltered locations and 484 (66%) were in emergency shelter.

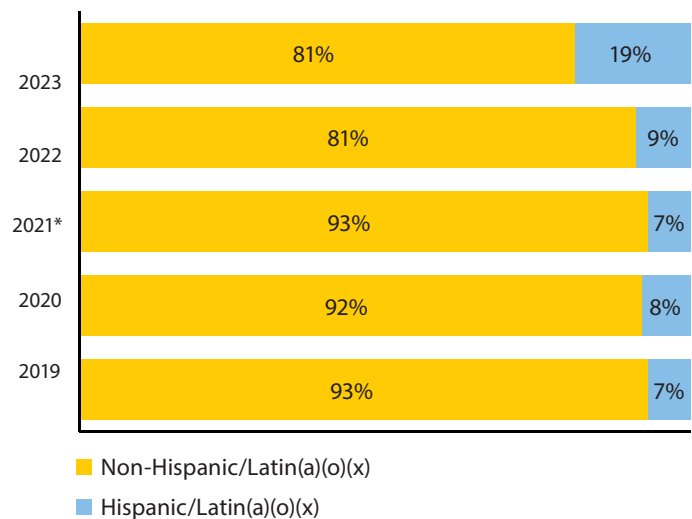
Figure 16.
PIT Count Chronically Homeless, 2014-2023



Race and ethnicity

The 2023 PIT saw a large increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County who identify as Hispanic. Historically people who identify as Hispanic made up between 7-9% of the population experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County. In 2023 people who identify as Hispanic/Latin(a)(o)(x) went up to 19% of the homeless population (figure 17).

Figure 17.
PIT count distribution, percent of people, by ethnicity, 2019-2023



Historically people who identify as Black, African American, or African have represented, and continue to represent, the largest portion of the population of people experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County. In 2023 the portion of people who identify as Black, African American or African decreased from 61% to 50% compared to 2021. The proportion of people who identify as multiple races doubled between 2022 and 2023 (8% to 16%) (figure 18). People who identify as Black, African American, or African make up a smaller portion of people staying in unsheltered locations (35%) but still make up 52% of the population of people staying in shelter (emergency shelter or transitional housing) on the night of the 2023 PIT. Of the 1,651 people identifying as Black, African American, or African in the 2023 PIT,

164 (10%) were in unsheltered locations, 1,248 (76%) in emergency shelter, and 239 (14%) in transitional housing (figure 19).

The proportion of people identifying as American Indian, Alaska Native or Indigenous compared to the larger population of people experiencing homelessness, had been going down in 2020 and 2021 (no PIT count was done in 2021). The proportion has gone up to 11% in 2023 (the same as in 2019) (figure 18). Of the 370 people who identify as American Indian, Alaska Native or Indigenous in the 2023 PIT, 139 (38%) were in unsheltered locations, 199 (54%) in emergency shelter, and 32 (8%) in transitional housing (figure 19).

Figure 18. PIT Count Distribution, Percent of Persons, by Race, 2019-2023

	2019	2020	2021*	2022	2023
American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous	11%	9%	7%	12%	11%
Asian or Asian American	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Black, African American or African	58%	60%	61%	54%	50%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
White	22%	23%	24%	24%	21%
Multiple Races	7%	6%	6%	8%	16%

Figure 19.

Share of people in each location on the night of the PIT, by race, 2023

