

# HOMELESSNESS IN METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON

## Results and Analysis from the Annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness

May 2026



## **HOMELESSNESS IN METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON**

Prepared by the Homeless Services Planning and Coordinating Committee  
May 13, 2026

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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>Findings, Highlights, and Trends from the 2026 Enumeration</b>              | <b>1</b>  |
| Literal Homelessness Count   | 1         |
| Short-term JURISDICTIONAL Changes, 2025 to 2026                                | 2         |
| Longer Term Changes, 2019 to 2026  | 2         |
| Veterans Experiencing Homelessness   | 3         |
| Chronic Homelessness   | 3         |
| Unsheltered homelessness   | 3         |
| permanently housed   | 4         |
| Conclusion   | 4         |
| <b>INTRODUCTION</b>  | <b>6</b>  |
| Regional housing and economic context  | 7         |
| How We Define Homelessness   | 8         |
| Why We Conduct This Count  | 8         |
| How We Conduct This Count  | 10        |
| <b>HOW MANY LOCAL RESIDENTS ARE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS?</b>                 | <b>11</b> |
| How Has the Number of People Experiencing Homelessness Changed?                | 11        |
| <b>REGIONAL HOMELESSNESS BY TOTAL POPULATION</b>                               | <b>15</b> |
| Household Composition  | 16        |
| Family Households  | 17        |
| Children in Families Experiencing Homelessness                                 | 19        |
| Demographic Profile of the Region’s Residents Experiencing Homelessness        | 20        |
| Serving the People Most Affected by Homelessness                               | 23        |
| <b>YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS (TRANSITION AGE YOUTH) EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS</b> | <b>25</b> |
| Transition Age Youth   | 28        |
| <b>OLDER ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS</b>                                  | <b>33</b> |
| <b>INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, AND HOMELESSNESS</b>                                    | <b>37</b> |
| Income   | 39        |
| Location of the Region’s Unsheltered Single Adults                             | 41        |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Comparison of Unsheltered Homelessness by Jurisdiction                       | 43         |
| <b>CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS</b>  | <b>45</b>  |
| Single Adults Experiencing Chronic Homelessness                              | 46         |
| Families Experiencing Chronic Homelessness                                   | 49         |
| <b>VULNERABILITIES AND LIFE EXPERIENCES</b>                                  | <b>50</b>  |
| <b>VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS</b>                                    | <b>52</b>  |
| <b>SHELTER FACILITIES AND PERMANENT HOUSING SOLUTIONS</b>                    | <b>56</b>  |
| <b>FROM HOMELESSNESS TO PERMANENT HOUSING</b>                                | <b>61</b>  |
| <b>BUILT FOR ZERO PROGRESS</b>   | <b>65</b>  |
| Built for Zero and the Point-in-Time Count                                   | 65         |
| Regional Progress on Data Quality and Visibility                             | 65         |
| Regional Monthly Veteran Homelessness  | 66         |
| Regional Priorities for 2026   | 67         |
| <b>CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>  | <b>68</b>  |
| <b>APPENDIX A: EMERGENCY SHELTER AND HOUSING CRISIS RESOURCES</b>            | <b>74</b>  |
| <b>APPENDIX B: HOMELESSNESS ENUMERATION JURISDICTIONAL NARRATIVE REPORTS</b> | <b>75</b>  |
| <b>APPENDIX C: COG HOMELESS SERVICES COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>                   | <b>119</b> |

## FIGURES AND TABLES

|   |    |
|---|----|
| TABLE 1: PEOPLE EXPERIENCING LITERAL HOMELESSNESS BY JURISDICTION, 2025-2026                    | 11 |
| TABLE 2: PEOPLE EXPERIENCING LITERAL HOMELESSNESS BY JURISDICTION, 2019-2026                    | 12 |
| TABLE 3: 2026 SHARE OF POPULATION THAT IS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS                             | 15 |
| TABLE 4: HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION  | 16 |
| TABLE 5: 2026 PERSONS IN FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY JURISDICTION                     | 17 |
| TABLE 6: CHANGE IN PERSONS IN FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY JURISDICTION                | 18 |
| FIGURE 1: REGIONAL HOMELESS SINGLE ADULTS DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE                                   | 21 |
| FIGURE 2: REGIONAL HOMELESS ADULTS IN FAMILIES DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE                              | 22 |
| FIGURE 3: REGIONAL TOTAL POPULATION DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE (RACE)                                  | 22 |
| TABLE 7: HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONLY CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18 BY JURISDICTION, 2022 – 2026                | 25 |
| TABLE 8: TRANSITION AGE YOUTH (TAY) EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY JURISDICTION: 2026             | 28 |
| TABLE 9: SINGLE TRANSITION AGE YOUTH (TAY) EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY JURISDICTION: 2022-2026 | 29 |
| FIGURE 4: TRANSITION AGE YOUTH LIFE EXPERIENCES AND VULNERABILITIES                             | 30 |
| FIGURE 5: HOMELESS YOUNG SINGLE ADULT/TRANSITION AGE YOUTH SOURCE OF INCOME                     | 31 |
| FIGURE 6: HOMELESS YOUNG ADULTS IN FAMILIES/TRANSITION AGE YOUTH SOURCE OF INCOME               | 31 |
| FIGURE 7: SINGLE YOUNG ADULT/TRANSITION AGE YOUTH (RACE AND ETHNICITY)                          | 32 |
| FIGURE 8: YOUNG ADULT/TRANSITION AGE YOUTH IN FAMILIES (RACE AND ETHNICITY)                     | 32 |
| FIGURE 9: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF SINGLE ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS                           | 35 |
| FIGURE 10: EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF SINGLE ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS                         | 37 |
| FIGURE 11: EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF ADULTS IN FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS                    | 38 |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>FIGURE 12: EMPLOYED ADULTS IN FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS</b>   | <b>38</b> |
| <b>FIGURE 13: SOURCE OF INCOME FOR SINGLE ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS</b>  | <b>39</b> |
| <b>FIGURE 14: SOURCE OF INCOME FOR ADULTS IN FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS</b>   | <b>40</b> |
| <b>FIGURE 15: THE REGION'S UNSHELTERED SINGLE ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY JURISDICTION</b>  | <b>41</b> |
| <b>FIGURE 16: COMPARISON OF TOTAL SINGLE ADULTS (SHELTERED AND UNSHELTERED) TO UNSHELTERED SINGLE ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, 2022-2026</b> | <b>42</b> |
| <b>TABLE 10: COMPARISON OF UNSHELTERED SINGLE ADULTS BY JURISDICTION, 2022 – 2026</b>   | <b>43</b> |
| <b>TABLE 11: UNSHELTERED SINGLE ADULTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL SINGLE ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY JURISDICTION, 2022 – 2026</b>          | <b>44</b> |
| <b>TABLE 12: SINGLE ADULTS EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS BY JURISDICTION, 2022 – 2026</b>   | <b>47</b> |
| <b>TABLE 13: 2026 SHELTER STATUS OF SINGLE ADULTS EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS</b>   | <b>48</b> |
| <b>TABLE 14: PERCENTAGE OF UNSHELTERED SINGLE ADULTS EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS BY JURISDICTION, 2022-2026</b>                             | <b>49</b> |
| <b>FIGURE 17: LIFE EXPERIENCES AND VULNERABILITIES OF ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS</b>  | <b>50</b> |
| <b>TABLE 15: VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BY JURISDICTION, 2022 – 2026</b>  | <b>52</b> |
| <b>FIGURE 18: VETERAN SINGLE ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS: SOURCE OF INCOME</b>   | <b>53</b> |
| <b>FIGURE 19: SINGLE ADULT VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS: RACE &amp; ETHNICITY</b>   | <b>54</b> |
| <b>TABLE 16: 2022 - 2026 WINTER AND YEAR-ROUND INVENTORY OF BEDS IN METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON</b>   | <b>57</b> |
| <b>TABLE 16: 2022 - 2026 WINTER AND YEAR-ROUND INVENTORY OF BEDS IN METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON (CONTINUED)</b>                                       | <b>58</b> |
| <b>FIGURE 20: REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF BEDS BY FACILITY TYPE</b>  | <b>60</b> |
| <b>FIGURE 21: PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING BEDS BY JURISDICTION</b>   | <b>60</b> |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>TABLE 17: PERSONS FORMERLY EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN PERMANENT HOUSING</b>  | <b>62</b> |
| <b>FIGURE 22: REGION'S LITERALLY AND FORMERLY HOMELESS IN PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING, RAPID RE-HOUSING, AND OTHER PERMANENT HOUSING</b> | <b>63</b> |
| <b>FIGURE 23: PERMANENT HOUSING SOLUTIONS FOR FORMERLY HOMELESS SINGLE ADULTS, 2024 - 2026</b>  | <b>63</b> |
| <b>FIGURE 24: PERMANENT HOUSING SOLUTIONS FOR FORMERLY HOMELESS ADULTS IN FAMILIES, 2024 - 2026</b>                                       | <b>64</b> |
| <b>FIGURE 25: BUILT FOR ZERO REGIONAL MONTHLY VETERAN HOMELESSNESS DATA, AUGUST 2025 TO JANUARY 2026</b>                                  | <b>66</b> |
| <b>TABLE 18: PEOPLE EXPERIENCING LITERAL HOMELESSNESS BY JURISDICTION, 2022 - 2026</b>  | <b>72</b> |
| <b>TABLE 18: PEOPLE EXPERIENCING LITERAL HOMELESSNESS BY JURISDICTION, 2022 - 2026 (CONTINUED)</b>  | <b>73</b> |

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the 26<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Homeless Services Planning and Coordinating Committee has conducted a regional Point-in-Time (PIT) enumeration of the area's residents experiencing homelessness.

The PIT count was originally scheduled for January 28, 2026, but was postponed for one week and conducted on February 4, 2026, due to severe winter weather in the region. Snow, sleet, freezing rain, and persistent icy conditions created hazardous travel conditions, limited mobility across the region, and required jurisdictions to focus immediate attention on resident safety, shelter access, and cold-weather response. The decision to postpone the count allowed communities to prioritize urgent service needs while preserving the region's ability to complete the enumeration under safer conditions.

The annual PIT report provides a one-night "snapshot" of the region's residents experiencing homelessness within eight metropolitan Washington area jurisdictions. It is important to note that this "snapshot," by definition, provides only one perspective on the state of homelessness in the region on only one night, and the count may be influenced by numerous variables, such as weather and shelter bed availability by jurisdiction. Year-to-year changes should also be interpreted alongside local differences in outreach coverage, HMIS data quality, system visibility, and enumeration methods. In some cases, changes may reflect improved methods to identify people experiencing homelessness in addition to changes in underlying need.

Nonetheless, the PIT count remains a valuable data source because it offers a consistent, regional snapshot that enables long-term trend analysis across jurisdictions. The data collected supports resource planning, policy development, and public accountability. When combined with year-round data systems, it helps provide a more complete picture of homelessness in the region.

As in past years, most persons counted in the PIT enumeration were sheltered on the night of the count. In 2026, approximately 87 percent of people experiencing homelessness in the region were sheltered on February 4, meaning that most of the regional count was conducted electronically through local Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS).

## Findings, Highlights, and Trends from the 2026 Enumeration

### LITERAL HOMELESSNESS COUNT

- The 2026 PIT enumeration resulted in a total number of 9,790 individuals experiencing homelessness.
- The region's number of persons experiencing homelessness increased by 131 persons from 2025, a one percent increase from the 2025 enumeration.

After several years of increases from the pandemic era low in 2022, the pace of regional growth slowed in 2025 and remained modest in 2026. The regional total change was minimal, but results varied across jurisdictions. Five jurisdictions reported increases and three reported decreases

compared to last year. Household composition also shifted modestly. The number of single adults experiencing homelessness increased, while the number of persons in families experiencing homelessness declined slightly.

## SHORT-TERM JURISDICTIONAL CHANGES, 2025 TO 2026

- The District of Columbia recorded the largest numeric increase from 2025 to 2026, with 225 additional persons experiencing homelessness. This represented a modest four percent increase because the District of Columbia has the largest base count in the region.
- Prince George’s County and Loudoun County recorded some of the sharpest year-over-year increases relative to their size. Prince George’s County increased by 175 persons, a 29 percent increase, while Loudoun County increased by 63 persons, a 25 percent increase.
- Montgomery County recorded the largest decrease from 2025 to 2026, with 390 fewer persons counted, a 26 percent decline.

## LONGER-TERM CHANGES, 2019 TO 2026

The 2019 to 2026 comparison provides a pre-pandemic reference point for understanding the region’s current level of homelessness. Compared with 2019, the regional count was modestly higher in 2026, and the broader trend reflects two distinct periods; a pandemic-era decline in homelessness that reached a pandemic-era low point in 2022, followed by increases after temporary expanded federal aid and emergency protections ended.

- The metropolitan Washington region counted 9,790 people experiencing homelessness in 2026, compared with 9,508 in 2019. This represents an increase of 282 people, or three percent.
- Six of the eight jurisdictions recorded increases between 2019 and 2026. The largest numeric increases occurred in Montgomery County, Prince George’s County, and Fairfax County.
- The City of Alexandria and the District of Columbia recorded decreases between 2019 and 2026. The District of Columbia recorded the largest decline of 1,158 people.
- Over the report’s standard five-year PIT lookback period (2022–2026), the regional count increased by 2,395 people, or 32 percent, from the pandemic-era low point, underscoring the increase in homelessness following the expiration of temporary federal supports and emergency protections.

This Executive Summary and Table 2 provide a longer pre-pandemic reference point, but the body of the report follows the annual regional PIT report’s standard five-year lookback period, covering 2022 through 2026.

## VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

The region's number of veterans experiencing homelessness decreased slightly from 2025. There were 18 fewer veterans counted on the night of the count than in the previous year's enumeration.

- In 2026, the total number of veterans counted on the night of the PIT was 300, representing a decrease from the 2025 enumeration.
- From 2022 to 2026, the region experienced a net increase of 16 veterans experiencing homelessness on the night of the PIT count.
- Montgomery County recorded the largest increase over this period, with 30 additional veterans counted.
- The District of Columbia recorded the greatest reduction in the number of veterans counted between 2022 and 2026 (39 fewer counted).

## CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

The number of single adults experiencing chronic homelessness increased modestly from 2025 to 2026.

- In 2026, 2,059 single adults experiencing homelessness met the definition of chronic homelessness, an increase of 94 persons, or five percent, from 2025.
- From 2022 to 2026, the regional count of single adults experiencing chronic homelessness increased by 333 persons, or 19 percent.
- Fairfax County recorded the largest one-year increase, rising from 248 persons in 2025 to 302 in 2026.

## UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

Regionwide, the number of unsheltered single adults decreased from 2025 to 2026, continuing the decline from the 2024 peak.

- In 2026, the region documented 1,230 unsheltered single adults experiencing homelessness, a decrease of 100 people, or eight percent, from 2025.
- The District of Columbia<sup>1</sup> and Montgomery County reported the largest numeric declines, each with 74 fewer unsheltered single adults than in 2025.

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<sup>1</sup> The District of Columbia's 2026 unsheltered single-adult total was estimated rather than directly counted and is included in the regional totals.

- Prince George’s County recorded the largest increase, rising by 64 unsheltered single adults, followed by Loudoun County, which increased by 26.
- From 2022 to 2026, the region added 289 unsheltered single adults, despite the decline over the past two years.

## PERMANENTLY HOUSED

The number of individuals who are in permanent housing and no longer experiencing homelessness was nearly three times the number of people counted as literally homeless on the night of the annual enumeration. In 2026:

- 3,680 individuals were in rapid re-housing;
- 19,357 persons were in permanent supportive housing; and
- 5,852 persons were in other permanent housing.

This brings the regional total of persons previously experiencing homelessness and now in permanent housing to 28,889 in 2026, down from 34,224 in 2025. The decline from 2025 was driven primarily by lower rapid re-housing utilization, while permanent supportive housing and other permanent housing increased.

The significant number of people in permanent housing remains an important part of the region’s response to homelessness. These housing resources help residents exit homelessness, stabilize, and avoid a return to the homeless services system.

## CONCLUSION

The 2026 enumeration should be understood within both the region’s longer-term context and its more recent post-COVID-19 pandemic trajectory. Compared with 2019, the regional count was modestly higher in 2026, increasing by 282 people, or three percent. This longer view shows that the region’s current level of homelessness is slightly above its pre-pandemic level, but the path over time has not been linear.

The 2022 count marked a recent low point in people experiencing homelessness, following several years in which expanded federal resources, eviction protections, and local emergency responses helped reduce homelessness. As those supports ended, regional homelessness rose sharply in 2023 and 2024. Over the standard five-year PIT lookback period, the regional count increased by 2,395 people, or 32 percent, from 2022 to 2026. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the region’s system of care and how significant reductions can be made in reducing the experience of homelessness when increased housing and supportive services resources better meet the need.

The past two years show a more moderate pattern. After a slight decline in 2025, the regional count increased by 131 people, or one percent, in 2026. This does not reverse the broader increase since

the 2022 pandemic-era low point, but it does suggest that the pace of growth has slowed compared with the years immediately following that low point.

While two years of slower growth does not confirm a lasting shift, the recent pattern suggests that regional homelessness has been closer to level in the most recent counts than during the sharper increases that followed the 2022 pandemic-era low point. Continued progress will depend on maintaining this momentum and addressing the region's most persistent barriers to ending homelessness.

The 2026 report highlights several recurring themes across the region's efforts to prevent and end homelessness:

1. **Measurable progress in key areas.** Several key indicators improved in 2026, including the number of persons in families, veterans experiencing homelessness, and unsheltered single adults.
2. **Persistent and uneven challenges.** Despite areas of progress, homelessness continues to rise in several jurisdictions, and increased slightly across the region, underscoring the complexity and variability of local conditions. These increases reflect both systemic barriers and the limits of current resources.
3. **A critical shortage of deeply affordable housing and supportive services.** Across the region, the lowest-income households continue to face limited options for stable housing. This shortage remains one of the greatest obstacles to reducing homelessness and ensuring long-term housing stability.
4. **The importance of sustained regional coordination and collaboration.** Progress depends on shared commitment. Continued collaboration among jurisdictions, providers, and systems partners is essential to align strategies, address cross-boundary challenges, and move forward with a united regional response.

The dedication and coordinated efforts of communities across the region have produced meaningful achievements in shelter provision, comprehensive service delivery, and permanent housing placements. These results demonstrate that homelessness can become brief, rare, and non-recurring through targeted and sustained efforts.

Nonetheless, significant challenges remain evident from this year's PIT results. Continued reductions in homelessness will depend on renewed and sustained commitments to funding viable housing solutions, enhancing data quality and analytical capabilities, and developing robust service pathways that ensure long-term housing stability. These critical components must remain priorities to build upon recent gains and achieve lasting progress in ending homelessness regionally.

# INTRODUCTION

The 2026 Point-in-Time (PIT) enumeration provides information on the number of unsheltered persons in the region as well as figures on how many persons use winter shelters, year-round emergency shelters, safe havens, transitional housing, and several permanent housing solutions.

The PIT count also provides information on the extent to which persons experiencing homelessness in each jurisdiction live with disabling conditions or whose special needs are represented among various subpopulations. The region's Continuum of Care (CoCs)<sup>2</sup>, a public-private partnership designed to coordinate a response to a person's housing crisis, respond with different housing types and services to meet residents' unique needs. There is no "one size fits all" housing solution.

The metropolitan Washington region's homeless services system consists of eight jurisdictions, each representing a local CoC that receives federal funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Program to assist its residents experiencing homelessness.

The participating jurisdictions include:

- City of Alexandria, Virginia;
- Arlington County, Virginia;
- District of Columbia;
- Fairfax County, Virginia, including data from the City of Falls Church and the City of Fairfax;
- Loudoun County, Virginia;
- Montgomery County, Maryland;
- Prince George's County, Maryland, including data from the City of Bowie, the City of Greenbelt, and the City of College Park; and
- Prince William County, Virginia, including data from the City of Manassas and the City of Manassas Park.

Since the first regional enumeration in 2001, the City and County of Frederick, Maryland have participated in COG's Point-in-Time count. In 2023, Frederick's Continuum of Care (CoC) merged with the state of Maryland's Balance of State CoC.<sup>3</sup> Since that time, Frederick's PIT data is gathered and reported on at the state level, along with eight other Maryland counties (including COG member jurisdiction Charles County). To account for this change, data tables, statistics, and trend analyses covering the years 2022 to 2023 have been revised to exclude Frederick's data, ensuring consistency in regional comparisons over time.

The report includes narratives prepared by each of the respective jurisdictions. The narratives briefly describe each jurisdiction's CoC detailing their methodology, unique context, and local trends in homelessness.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/>

<sup>3</sup> For more information about the Maryland Balance of State Continuum of Care, please see <https://www.mdboscoc.org/>

All the region's CoCs use a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to count people experiencing homelessness in their respective jurisdictions, in addition to other methodologies. HMIS is an electronic data collection system that is used to produce an unduplicated count of people experiencing homelessness for the respective jurisdictions, improve program operations, measure program performance, and coordinate services community-wide.

Similar to past enumerations, the 2026 count *does not* include people who “double up” with relatives or friends, in accordance with HUD guidelines. HUD's requirements for conducting the annual PIT count can be found in its Standard and Methods for Point-in-Time Counts of Homeless Persons and the annual Housing Inventory Count updates at [www.hudexchange.info](http://www.hudexchange.info).

## Regional housing and economic context

**Cost of Living:** The high cost of living in the metropolitan Washington region directly influences the prevalence and persistence of homelessness. Research demonstrates a strong correlation between elevated living costs, particularly housing affordability, and increased homelessness rates.<sup>4</sup> Housing costs, in particular, have surged, as median home prices and rents have outpaced wage growth, creating significant financial stress for low- and moderate-income households.<sup>5</sup> As housing consumes an increasingly disproportionate share of household income, families and individuals face greater risk of housing instability, eviction, and ultimately homelessness. This economic strain contributes directly to the challenges identified by people experiencing homelessness, underscoring the critical need for housing interventions that address cost barriers.

**Regional Housing Efforts:** Addressing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region in part requires a sustained commitment to expanding the housing supply, particularly for the lowest-income residents. COG's Board of Directors set ambitious housing targets in 2019, aiming to produce at least 320,000 new housing units by 2030.<sup>6</sup> Local strategies to achieve this regional goal include zoning reforms to allow more multifamily and affordable housing development in more places, increased investment in affordable housing funds, and strategies to incentivize public-private partnerships aimed at accelerating housing construction. Despite these concerted efforts, production has not yet matched demand, particularly for deeply affordable units. The region's ability to produce and preserve affordable housing at a greater rate than the past remains a crucial factor for reducing homelessness and enhancing housing stability across metropolitan Washington.

**Federal Policy:** Federal homelessness policy and funding conditions remain an important part of the planning environment for local Continuum of Care. Because local homelessness response systems rely on federal programs for a substantial share of housing and services, changes in federal guidance, competition timelines, and funding conditions can affect regional planning, local contracting, and service delivery. While those changes are not directly measured by the 2026 Point-in-Time count,

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/blog/record-homelessness-amid-ongoing-affordability-crisis>

<sup>5</sup> <https://nlihc.org/oor>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.mwcog.org/community/planning-areas/housing-and-homelessness/regional-housing-initiative/>

they remain important context for understanding the operating environment facing the region's CoCs.

## How We Define Homelessness

The region's jurisdictions use HUD's definition of homelessness; *people who reside in emergency shelter, transitional housing, domestic violence shelters, runaway youth shelters, safe havens, or places not meant for human habitation, such as streets, parks, alleys, abandoned buildings, and stairways.*

**Literal Homelessness**, which may also be referred to as "experiencing homelessness" in this report, includes the status of people in Households without Children, Households with Adults and Children, and Households with Only Children, who may be **sheltered or unsheltered**.

**Formerly Experiencing Homelessness** in this report refers to the status of having moved into permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, or other permanent housing immediately after an experience of homelessness. This does not include persons who are able to secure other permanent housing outside of the homeless system, including a non-subsidized apartment or room, moving in with a relative or friend, or receiving a mainstream rental subsidy.

Data for the 2026 enumeration were collected in the following three categories, as defined by HUD:

1. **Households without Children.** Households without children consist of only adults age 18 or over. This report also refers to households without children as "single adults." The majority of households without children are single persons, although this category may include couples without minor children or a parent and an adult child over the age of 18. These households are counted as single adults for purposes of the PIT count.
2. **Households with Adults and Children.** Households with adults and children contain at least one adult age 18 or over and at least one child under age 18. In this report, we also refer to households with adults and children as "families" or "families experiencing homelessness."
3. **Households with ONLY Children.** Households with ONLY children contain no adults aged 18 or over, only persons under age 18, including teenage parents under 18 with at least one child, or other households with only persons under age 18.

## Why We Conduct This Count

COG's Homeless Services Planning and Coordinating Committee undertook the first effort to produce an unduplicated PIT count of adults and children experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region in 2001 with the goal of increasing understanding and supporting more coordinated, effective solutions.

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**Point-in-Time counts are valuable for gathering trend data and understanding the dimensions of homelessness. However, they provide a limited snapshot and should not be read as a complete picture of the challenges, successes, or progress of local efforts to end homelessness.**

Regional information helps inform local efforts and provides an avenue for sharing strategies to better serve the region's residents facing a housing crisis. HUD requires communities which receive federal funds (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants) to conduct an annual count during the last ten days of January. The annual count is done using electronic administrative records to enumerate people living in shelters. Unsheltered counts are only required by HUD every other year, although the participating CoCs in the metropolitan Washington region have conducted an unsheltered count annually for 26 years.

Point-in-Time counts are valuable for gathering trend data, establishing the scope of homelessness, and are necessary and essential to policymakers and community members alike in tracking progress toward the goal of ending homelessness. At the federal level, HUD uses PIT count data to inform Congress about the number of people experiencing homelessness nationwide and the effectiveness of HUD's programs and policies in achieving its goals.<sup>7</sup>

At the local level, PIT counts can assist CoCs to identify any service gaps and appropriately size its system to meet the current needs of its residents, measure progress towards ending the experience of homelessness, identify individuals who may not be known to the homeless services system, and raise awareness that may attract additional resources to help solve a community's housing challenges.<sup>8</sup>

It is important to note, however, that the PIT count provides a limited and imperfect perspective on the challenges, successes, and progress made in ending homelessness. It does not provide a complete picture of the dimensions of homelessness, or the scale of people served during a week, month, or year. It is not unusual for a jurisdiction to serve as many as four or five times the number of people during a year as are counted during one night of the PIT enumeration.

Further, many variables—bed availability, weather, surveying methodology, the willingness of people to be interviewed, and the availability of trained outreach workers—can impact the number of people counted on any given night.

To round out the limited perspective that PIT data provides, the region's CoCs use other data sources to measure the extent of the number of people experiencing homelessness and determine the best responses. These include having a quality by-name list, which provides live, up-to-date information on exactly who is experiencing homelessness; Longitudinal System Analysis reports, which provides information about how people experiencing homelessness use their homelessness response systems, and System Performance Measures,<sup>9</sup> which HUD requires of communities to measure their performance as a coordinated system of homeless assistance as opposed to programs and funding sources that operate independently.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/what-is-a-point-in-time-count/>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/system-performance-measures/#guidance>

Through the region’s participation in Built for Zero<sup>10</sup> through national nonprofit Community Solutions, monthly, de-identified data provides more timely and actionable information on overall homeless system performance. More information about this effort is included later in this report.

However, the PIT count remains a dependable source for trend data upon which the eight participating CoCs in the metropolitan Washington region can measure their efforts as a region over time to prevent and end the experience of homelessness.

## How We Conduct This Count

The methodology for the annual enumeration is conducted primarily electronically, using the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), as most persons experiencing homelessness in metropolitan Washington each year are counted while residing in some form of shelter.

For the unsheltered portion of the count, outreach workers, government staff, service providers and trained volunteers head out in teams across urban, suburban, and rural areas across the region on the same night. Trained outreach workers typically visit known areas where people may be residing outside the shelter system prior to the enumeration to prepare them for the count as well as provide the best possible information for surveyors on the night of the count itself.

During the 2026 unsheltered count, jurisdictions used a variety of methods to collect data. Some jurisdictions used digital platforms to gather, map, and track engagements in real time, while others used paper surveys with responses entered manually after the count. The District of Columbia used a modified approach for its 2026 unsheltered count and provided estimated unsheltered totals for inclusion in the regional PIT report. These estimates are included in the regional totals.<sup>11</sup>

Following the night of the enumeration, the region’s CoCs work with Day Centers and meal programs to ensure that no one was missed during the count itself. The region’s data experts then use personally identifiable information to de-duplicate any survey responses and ensure the most accurate census possible. Coordination with other programs which cannot use HMIS, such as ones that serve people fleeing domestic or intimate partner violence, is required separately to include everyone without housing on the night of the PIT count.

The 2026 PIT count was originally scheduled for January 28 but was conducted on February 4, 2026 after severe winter weather affected the metropolitan Washington region. Snow and ice created hazardous travel conditions and limited normal mobility across the region, while jurisdictions prioritized immediate safety, shelter access, and cold-weather response for residents experiencing homelessness. Conducting the count one week later allowed communities to carry out the enumeration under safer conditions.

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<sup>10</sup> More information at <https://community.solutions/built-for-zero/the-movement/>

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix B: District of Columbia jurisdictional narrative for additional information.

# HOW MANY LOCAL RESIDENTS ARE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS?

During the 2026 regional PIT count, 9,790 people throughout the metropolitan Washington region were experiencing homelessness, a slight increase from 2025. Table 1 (below) illustrates the region’s 2026 enumeration across jurisdictions compared to last year.

The region saw a slight overall increase in literal homelessness, rising by 131 people, or one percent, compared to 2025.

**Table 1: People Experiencing Literal Homelessness by Jurisdiction, 2025-2026**

| Jurisdiction               | 2025         | 2026         | Change in Number of Persons 2025-2026 | Percent Change 2025 - 2026 |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| City of Alexandria, VA     | 166          | 189          | 23                                    | 14%                        |
| Arlington County, VA       | 271          | 268          | -3                                    | -1%                        |
| District of Columbia       | 5,138        | 5,363        | 225                                   | 4%                         |
| Fairfax County, VA         | 1,322        | 1,365        | 43                                    | 3%                         |
| Loudoun County, VA         | 252          | 315          | 63                                    | 25%                        |
| Montgomery County, MD      | 1,510        | 1,120        | -390                                  | -26%                       |
| Prince George's County, MD | 608          | 783          | 175                                   | 29%                        |
| Prince William County, VA  | 392          | 387          | -5                                    | -1%                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>9,659</b> | <b>9,790</b> | <b>131</b>                            | <b>1%</b>                  |

Source: COG 2026

## How Has the Number of People Experiencing Homelessness Changed?

Three of the eight Continuums of Care recorded a year-over-year decrease in literal homelessness from 2025 to 2026. Montgomery County recorded the largest reduction, with 390 fewer individuals counted, a 26 percent decrease. Arlington County and Prince William County also recorded slight declines of one percent each. At the same time, several jurisdictions recorded increases. The District of Columbia had the largest numeric increase, with 225 additional persons counted, though this represented a more moderate four percent increase relative to its larger base count. Prince George’s County and Loudoun County recorded the sharpest year-over-year increases relative to size, rising by 29 percent and 25 percent, respectively. Fairfax County and the City of Alexandria also recorded increases.

Looking at longer-term trends from 2019 to 2026, the region recorded a modest net increase in people experiencing literal homelessness, adding 282 individuals over that period, or three percent. This longer view shows that the regional total in 2026 was slightly above the pre-pandemic level recorded in 2019, but well above the pandemic-era low point reached in 2022.

Over the standard five-year PIT lookback period (2022–2026), however, all eight participating CoCs experienced an increase and the regional count rose by 2,395 people, or 32 percent, reflecting a marked rebound from that low point following the expiration of temporary federal supports and emergency protections. This helps illustrate that local governments and service providers are operating effectively and can make substantial reductions in the number of persons experiencing homelessness when the amount of emergency housing resources increases to meet the need. Together, these comparisons illustrate that while long-term change since 2019 has been relatively modest, the region has experienced more rapid increases in homelessness in the years following the pandemic-era low point.

**Table 2: People Experiencing Literal Homelessness by Jurisdiction, 2019-2026**

| Jurisdiction           | 2019         | 2020         | 2021         | 2022         | 2023         | 2024         | 2025         | 2026         | Number Change, 2019–2026 | Percent Change, 2019–2026 |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| City of Alexandria     | 198          | 207          | 106          | 120          | 152          | 187          | 166          | 189          | -9                       | -5%                       |
| Arlington County       | 215          | 199          | 171          | 182          | 213          | 243          | 271          | 268          | 53                       | 25%                       |
| District of Columbia   | 6,521        | 6,380        | 5,111        | 4,410        | 4,922        | 5,616        | 5,138        | 5,363        | -1,158                   | -18%                      |
| Fairfax County         | 1,034        | 1,041        | 1,222        | 1,191        | 1,310        | 1,278        | 1,322        | 1,365        | 331                      | 32%                       |
| Loudoun County         | 169          | 179          | 80           | 99           | 220          | 303          | 252          | 315          | 146                      | 86%                       |
| Montgomery County      | 647          | 670          | 577          | 581          | 894          | 1144         | 1510         | 1,120        | 473                      | 73%                       |
| Prince George's County | 447          | 453          | 537          | 571          | 659          | 658          | 608          | 783          | 336                      | 75%                       |
| Prince William County  | 277          | 326          | 282          | 241          | 326          | 345          | 392          | 387          | 110                      | 40%                       |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>9,508</b> | <b>9,455</b> | <b>8,086</b> | <b>7,395</b> | <b>8,696</b> | <b>9,774</b> | <b>9,659</b> | <b>9,790</b> | <b>282</b>               | <b>3%</b>                 |

Source: COG 2026

\*Totals for 2022-2023 have been revised to reflect the regional number without the City and County of Frederick.

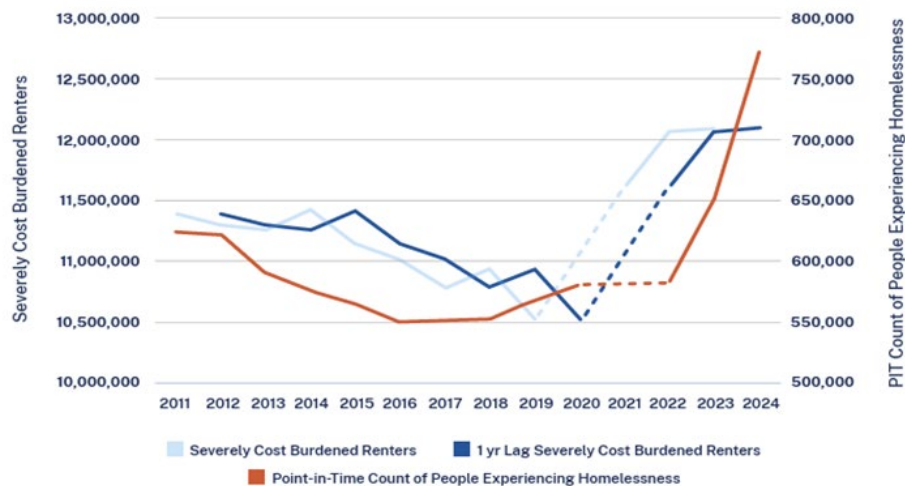
Note: Table 2 provides a longer-term reference including pre-pandemic (2019) data. The report's primary trend analysis focuses on 2022–2026

In 2026, the total number of people experiencing homelessness in the region remained relatively stable compared with the prior two years, following sharper increases after the 2022 pandemic-era low point. The longer 2019 to 2026 comparison shows that the regional total is now slightly above its pre-pandemic level, though the path over time has not been linear. The region experienced a

decline during the pandemic period, reached an all-time low point in 2022, and then increased in 2023 and 2024 before leveling somewhat in 2025 and 2026.

These trends are related to the region’s high housing costs which make it very difficult for extremely low-income households to find or maintain housing that they can afford. A shortage of living wage jobs compounds the difficulty in finding and maintaining affordable housing, particularly given the impacts of rising inflation on individuals with lower incomes.<sup>12</sup> As shown in recent data from Enterprise Community Partners, the number of severely cost burdened renters, or those paying more than half of their income toward rent, has reached record levels. The sharpest burden falls on the lowest-income households. This sustained affordability pressure is closely linked to rising homelessness, as the data show a strong correlation between cost burdens and the number of people experiencing homelessness in the following year.<sup>13</sup> (See graphic below.)

**Counts of Severely Cost Burdened Renters and People Experiencing Homelessness, 2011-2024**



Source: Department of Housing and Urban Development, Annual Homelessness Assessment Report, and calculations of the U.S. Census Bureau’s 1-year American Community Survey microdata public use file. Notes: Due to disruptions in data collection during the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 ACS data and 2021 Point-in-Time count data are estimated as the midpoint between the preceding and following years.

Further, efforts to prevent and end homelessness must include a careful examination of the structural and system-level factors that shape outcomes. Constraints in housing access, and uneven access to key supports can all affect housing stability and influence how quickly households are able to return to permanent housing.

Without careful examination of these factors and more evidence-based practices as a region, we will continue to have disparities in our systems of care.

At the regional level, local CoCs continue to focus on helping residents resolve housing crises as early as possible. This includes working with individuals and families to identify safe housing options,

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.marketplace.org/shows/marketplace-morning-report/wages-arent-keeping-up-with-inflation-hitting-low-income-workers-the-hardest/>

<sup>13</sup> Drew, R. B. (2025, March). Worsening Rental Affordability Linked to Higher Rates of Homelessness [Research Brief]. Enterprise Community Partners. <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org>

connect quickly to available services, access short-term financial or case management supports where available, and stabilize before an episode of homelessness occurs or deepens.

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**“Many of millions of renters spending thousands of dollars more than they can afford on housing are living in precarious circumstances, unable to save for a rainy day.”**

**— Enterprise Community Partners**

These efforts are often centered at the point when a household first seeks assistance. Rather than relying only on shelter entry, communities work to assess immediate needs, identify the most appropriate supports, and connect households to housing-focused services as quickly as possible. This approach helps preserve limited shelter capacity for residents with no safe alternative while also helping more households avoid the disruption and trauma of homelessness. In the context of limited shelter capacity and constrained public resources, the role of locally driven housing crisis solutions has become even more critical to maintaining stability for vulnerable residents.

Local jurisdictions have also continued to strengthen coordinated entry, outreach, and data practices to better understand who needs assistance and how to connect residents to the right level of support. These system improvements can affect PIT results by improving visibility into homelessness and by helping communities identify people who may not have been fully captured in prior years.



Tent observed in the Prince William County area during the 2026 Point-in-Time count. Photo credit: Prince William County Government

# REGIONAL HOMELESSNESS BY TOTAL POPULATION

The prevalence of homelessness can also be understood by determining the number of persons experiencing homelessness counted in the metropolitan Washington region as a percentage of its total population. Including the District of Columbia, there was a 0.18 percent incidence of homelessness in the region. This figure has increased from 0.16 in 2023. Excluding the District, the incidence of homelessness was 0.09 percent for the region’s suburban population, the same as in 2025.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s 2024 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress, an estimated 771,480 people were experiencing homelessness in the United States on a single night in January 2024. Based on the Census Bureau’s July 1, 2024 national population estimate of 340,110,988, this was equal to about 0.23 percent of the U.S. population, or 2.27 people per 1,000. By comparison, the metropolitan Washington region’s 2026 rate was 0.18 percent, or 1.8 people per 1,000, based on the 2025 population estimates shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: 2026 Share of Population That Is Experiencing Homelessness**

| Jurisdiction                       | 2025 Total Population* | 2026 Homelessness Enumeration | Homeless as Percent of Total Population | Homeless Persons per 1,000 People |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| City of Alexandria                 | 160,662                | 189                           | 0.12%                                   | 1.2                               |
| Arlington County                   | 243,931                | 268                           | 0.11%                                   | 1.1                               |
| District of Columbia               | 693,645                | 5,363                         | 0.77%                                   | 7.7                               |
| Fairfax County <sup>1</sup>        | 1,209,804              | 1,365                         | 0.11%                                   | 1.1                               |
| Loudoun County                     | 449,749                | 315                           | 0.07%                                   | 0.7                               |
| Montgomery County                  | 1,074,582              | 1,120                         | 0.10%                                   | 1.0                               |
| Prince George's County             | 970,374                | 783                           | 0.08%                                   | 0.8                               |
| Prince William County <sup>2</sup> | 563,858                | 387                           | 0.07%                                   | 0.7                               |
| <b>Region with D.C.</b>            | <b>5,366,605</b>       | <b>9,790</b>                  | <b>0.18%</b>                            | <b>1.8</b>                        |
| <b>Region without D.C.</b>         | <b>4,672,960</b>       | <b>4,427</b>                  | <b>0.09%</b>                            | <b>0.9</b>                        |

Source: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for the District of Columbia, Counties, Cities, and Towns in the COG region, April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2025. U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division.

1 Includes the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church  
 2 Includes the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park

The results described above are shown in Table 3 (see above). The District of Columbia has the largest local incidence of homelessness within the region’s population. Of every 1,000 people in the District of Columbia, 7.7 were experiencing homelessness in 2026, an increase from 7.3 in 2025.

Among the suburban jurisdictions, the City of Alexandria recorded the highest incidence of homelessness in 2026 at 1.2 persons per 1,000 people. Arlington County and Fairfax County each recorded 1.1 persons per 1,000 people, while Montgomery County recorded 1.0.

## Household Composition

Table 4 compares enumeration survey responses from the three main categories of households from 2022 to 2026. Regional family homelessness (the number of persons in families) declined slightly from 2025 to 2026, while the number of single adults experiencing homelessness increased by four percent. The number of unaccompanied minors also increased, rising by 15 individuals from 2025 to 2026.

**Table 4: Household Composition**

|                                   |             | Total Persons in Households without Children | Total Persons in Households with Adults and Children | Total Persons in Households with ONLY Minor Children* (Unaccompanied Minors) | Regional Total |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|--|--|--|----------------|
| <b>COG REGION**</b>               | <b>2026</b> | <b>6,349</b>                                 | <b>3,416</b>   | <b>25</b>  | <b>9,790</b>   |
|                                   | 2025        | 6,132  | 3,517  | 10   | 9,659          |
|                                   | 2024        | 6,259  | 3,499  | 16   | 9,774          |
|                                   | 2023        | 5,755  | 2,917  | 24   | 8,696          |
|                                   | 2022        | 5,120  | 2,265  | 10   | 7,395          |
| <b>2022 - 2026 Percent Change</b> |             | <b>24%</b>                                   | <b>51%</b>   | <b>15</b>  | <b>32%</b>     |

Source: COG 2026

\*Change in Households with ONLY Minor Children is shown in total numbers, not a percentage, due to the small overall number of individuals counted.

\*\*Totals for 2022-2023 have been revised to reflect the regional number without the City and County of Frederick.

However, the longer-term trend from 2022 to 2026 is less encouraging. There was a 51 percent increase in persons in families experiencing homelessness over the period. In contrast, the number of persons in households without children rose by 24 percent. The count of unaccompanied minors (households with only minor children) remained low across all years, though it fluctuated and

increased by 15 persons between 2022 and 2026. Overall, the region experienced a 32 percent increase in the total number of people experiencing homelessness across all household types between 2022 and 2026.

## Family Households

Families represent 35 percent of all people experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region. Tables 5 and 6 (below and following page respectively) illustrate the 2026 survey responses from the region’s families without a permanent home.

In 2026, a total of 1,087 family households were counted as experiencing homelessness across the metropolitan Washington region, a slight decrease from the 1,089 households reported in 2025. The number of persons in families also declined modestly, from 3,517 in 2025 to 3,416 in 2026.

Jurisdictional trends were variable. The District of Columbia recorded the largest one-year increase in the number of persons in families experiencing homelessness, rising from 1,356 in 2025 to 1,568 in 2026. Loudoun County and the City of Alexandria also recorded notable increases from the prior year. Prince George’s County increased as well. Several jurisdictions recorded year-over-year decreases in the number of persons in families experiencing homelessness.

Montgomery County recorded the largest decline, falling from 712 persons in 2025 to 378 in 2026. Montgomery County attributed much of that decline to a major investment in its Short-term Housing and Resolution Program (SHaRP). Arlington County and Fairfax County also recorded declines, while Prince William County remained level.

**Table 5: 2026 Persons in Families Experiencing Homelessness by Jurisdiction**

| Jurisdiction           | Number of Families | Adults in Families | Children in Families | Total Persons in Families |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| City of Alexandria     | 24                 | 29                 | 56                   | 85                        |
| Arlington County       | 17                 | 27                 | 38                   | 65                        |
| District of Columbia   | 530                | 597                | 971                  | 1,568                     |
| Fairfax County         | 199                | 275                | 377                  | 652                       |
| Loudoun County         | 28                 | 36                 | 63                   | 99                        |
| Montgomery County      | 113                | 160                | 218                  | 378                       |
| Prince George's County | 131                | 164                | 252                  | 416                       |
| Prince William County  | 45                 | 57                 | 96                   | 153                       |
| <b>ALL COG COCs</b>    | <b>1,087</b>       | <b>1,345</b>       | <b>2,071</b>         | <b>3,416</b>              |

Source: COG 2026

Note: Chart above does not include Households with Only Children (Unaccompanied Minors).

Between 2022 and 2026, the number of persons in families experiencing homelessness across the COG region increased by 51 percent, rising from 2,265 to 3,416 individuals. Loudoun County recorded the largest percentage increase during this period, while Montgomery County and the District of Columbia also posted substantial gains over the longer term. These trends continue to reflect substantial regional variation in family homelessness across jurisdictions.

**Table 6: Change in Persons in Families Experiencing Homelessness by Jurisdiction**

| Jurisdiction           | 2022         | 2023         | 2024         | 2025         | 2026         | Percent Change 2022-2026 |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| City of Alexandria     | 47           | 70           | 84           | 65           | 85           | 81%                      |
| Arlington County       | 50           | 66           | 74           | 88           | 65           | 30%                      |
| District of Columbia   | 1,004        | 1,170        | 1,656        | 1,356        | 1,568        | 56%                      |
| Fairfax County         | 564          | 752          | 694          | 706          | 652          | 16%                      |
| Loudoun County         | 33           | 78           | 91           | 73           | 99           | 200%                     |
| Montgomery County      | 173          | 269          | 396          | 712          | 378          | 118%                     |
| Prince George's County | 298          | 376          | 363          | 364          | 416          | 40%                      |
| Prince William County  | 96           | 136          | 141          | 153          | 153          | 59%                      |
| <b>ALL COG COCs</b>    | <b>2,265</b> | <b>2,917</b> | <b>3,499</b> | <b>3,517</b> | <b>3,416</b> | <b>51%</b>               |

Source: COG 2026

Note: Chart above does not include Households with Only Children (Unaccompanied Minors).

\*Totals for 2022-2023 have been revised to reflect the regional number without the City and County of Frederick.

In addition to program-level changes and improvements in data accuracy, broader structural challenges such as high housing costs and limited rental availability continue to place pressure on families and contribute to rising housing instability across the region.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, the Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area's (MSA) median monthly housing costs are \$2,095 and median monthly gross rent is \$1,945. Regionally, nearly half of all households, 46 percent, are housing cost burdened, meaning they pay more than a third of their incomes to satisfy these monthly housing costs<sup>14</sup>. The number of severely cost-burdened households (i.e., paying more than 50 percent of monthly income towards housing costs) varies by income level. Eighty percent of households with extremely low incomes (at or below 30 percent of the average median income) are

<sup>14</sup> Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, Renter Cost Burdens, Metropolitan and Micropolitan Areas. Accessed at [https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/ARH\\_2017\\_cost\\_burdens\\_by\\_metro](https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/ARH_2017_cost_burdens_by_metro)

severely cost burdened in the metropolitan Washington region and may face difficult decisions regarding which basic needs to prioritize for payment.<sup>15</sup> In the District of Columbia, a person earning the minimum wage (\$17.95 per hour) in 2025 would need to work 88 hours per week to afford a modest one-bedroom rental home at the fair market rent (\$2,056/month).<sup>16</sup> The region's lowest-income households face significant challenges affording housing, especially as the area's housing demand creates pressure on rental rates. This trend makes otherwise affordable units unaffordable for households, especially as they compete with the general public for housing in a highly constrained market.

These conditions underscore the importance of sustained regional action to expand affordable housing and stabilize families at risk of homelessness, in addition to continued local efforts to strengthen prevention and shelter systems.

## Children in Families Experiencing Homelessness

Children face particularly adverse effects from experiencing homelessness. When families lose their housing, children may be separated from familiar surroundings, relatives, friends, and neighborhood schools. Research shows that children experiencing homelessness have poorer academic and social engagement outcomes than similar stably housed peers, including lower attendance, lower grade point averages, and greater school mobility.

Children who experience homelessness also may have poor nutrition, increased incidence of health impairments, higher exposure to violence, and severe emotional distress as compared to their housed peers.<sup>17</sup>

Homelessness and hunger are also closely intertwined. Children experiencing homelessness are twice as likely to experience hunger as their housed peers, which negatively affects their physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. Schooling for children experiencing homelessness is often interrupted and delayed: children are twice as likely to have a learning disability, repeat a grade, or be suspended from school.<sup>18</sup> Combined, these conditions eliminate feelings of safety and predictability that are important for healthy growth. In addition to the trauma the experience of homelessness causes children, some students experience additional hardships, such as having limited English proficiency or a disability that requires special supports.<sup>19</sup>

The impacts on educational attainment for children experiencing homelessness at young ages, such as infants and toddlers, can be felt even after families are stably housed, according to research

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<sup>15</sup> National Low Income Housing Coalition, *The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Rental Homes*. <https://nlihc.org/gap/state/dc> Accessed on April 8, 2026.

<sup>16</sup> National Low Income Housing Coalition, *Out of Reach 2024*. <https://nlihc.org/oor/state/dc> Accessed on April 15, 2025.

<sup>17</sup> National Center for Homeless Education, <http://center.serve.org/nche/briefs.php>, *Domestic Violence, Homelessness, and Children's Education*: 1.

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.apa.org/pi/families/poverty.aspx>

<sup>19</sup> National School Boards Association, "Homeless Students in Schools Across America: Down But Not Out", [https://www.nsba.org/Perspectives/2021/homeless-students#:~:text=How%20Many%20Homeless%20Students%20Are,in%202019%20\(Figure%201\)](https://www.nsba.org/Perspectives/2021/homeless-students#:~:text=How%20Many%20Homeless%20Students%20Are,in%202019%20(Figure%201).). Accessed April 11, 2022.

released in March 2024 by national nonprofit organization SchoolHouse Connection.<sup>20</sup> Only one in nine children experiencing homelessness nationwide are enrolled in early childhood education programs, which can mitigate the consequences of housing instability. According to the authors of the study, “The younger and longer a child experiences homelessness, the greater the cumulative toll on their health and well-being,”<sup>21</sup>

COG’s 2026 enumeration identified 2,071 children in families experiencing homelessness, representing about 21 percent of the region’s total population of persons experiencing homelessness (9,790). Children account for 61 percent of all people in families experiencing homelessness, a slight increase from 2025.

Some of the region’s public schools have reported higher numbers of homeless children than are reported in the annual count. The primary reason for this is that area public schools track the number of unhoused children on a cumulative basis throughout the school year, compared to the one-day snapshot of the region’s homeless provided by the PIT count. Also, the self-reported information regarding the experience of homelessness used by public schools is based upon definitions provided by the U.S. Department of Education. Children counted by public schools may or may not be experiencing homelessness per the HUD definition and may be living in doubled up situations.

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**“The impacts of homelessness on young children, including on children’s school readiness, can be long-lasting, even after families are stably housed.”**

SchoolHouse Connection reported that public schools identified 1,548,191 students experiencing homelessness during the 2023-2024 school year, a 12.6 percent increase over the previous year.<sup>22</sup> The National Center for Homeless Education reported that during the 2022-2023 school year, 76 percent of students that self-identified as facing homelessness reported they were “doubled up” with family or friends.<sup>23</sup> Based upon HUD’s guidelines, local jurisdictions cannot count people who live in doubled up situations for the PIT count.

## Demographic Profile of the Region’s Residents Experiencing Homelessness

Since 2014, COG has reported questions regarding ethnicity and race in addition to age and gender. HUD specified the ethnic and racial categories included in the Point-in-Time questionnaire, which generally reflects a social definition of race recognized in this country and is not an attempt to define

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<sup>20</sup> Homeless infants and toddlers largely unenrolled in early ed programs | EdSource Accessed April 4, 2026 at <https://edsources.org/2024/homeless-infants-and-toddlers-largely-unenrolled-in-early-ed-programs>

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. <https://edsources.org/2024/homeless-infants-and-toddlers-largely-unenrolled-in-early-ed-programs>

<sup>22</sup> SchoolHouse Connection, “2026 Fact Sheet: Educating Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness,” March 2026. Accessed April 2026. <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/article/fact-sheet-educating-children-and-youth-experiencing-homelessness>

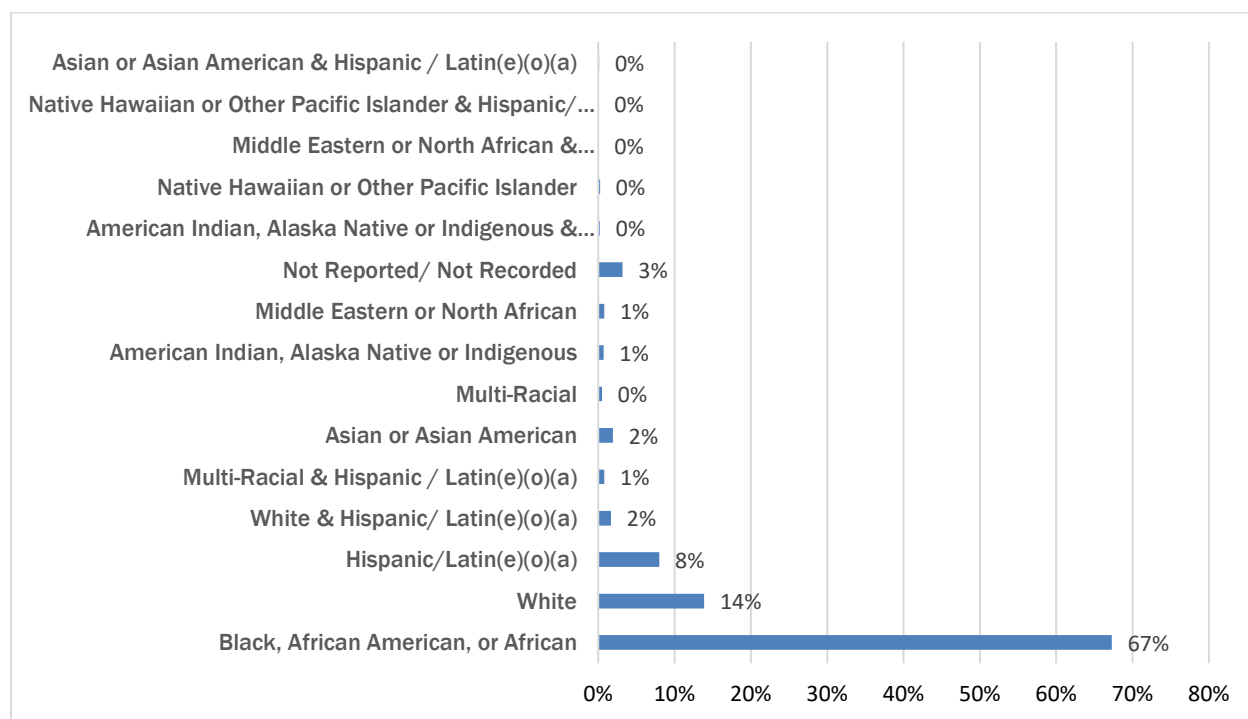
<sup>23</sup> National Center for Homeless Education, “Student Homelessness in America: School Years 2020-21 to 2022-23,” 2024. Accessed April 2026. [https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/NCHE\\_Student\\_Homelessness\\_in\\_America\\_SY\\_2020-21\\_2022-23.pdf](https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/NCHE_Student_Homelessness_in_America_SY_2020-21_2022-23.pdf)

race biologically, anthropologically, or genetically. The responses are also limited and may not fully represent the varied racial and ethnic backgrounds of all people who live in the region.

The survey question on ethnicity asks respondents to identify whether they are Hispanic or Latin(a)(e)(o). People who identify their ethnic origin as Hispanic or Latin(a)(e)(o) may be of any race. In addition, the categories in the race item are self-reported, and individuals may select “multi-racial” to indicate that their racial identity includes more than one category.

HUD introduced changes to its data standards in 2023 and revised its categories for race and ethnicity for the Point-in-Time survey as well. For the second year, respondents could select Middle Eastern or North African as an option for racial identity. It also added African as an expanded option for people who identify as Black or African American. Race and ethnicity responses were combined beginning in 2024 and therefore cannot be compared directly with results from earlier years.

**Figure 1: Regional Homeless Single Adults Demographic Profile**



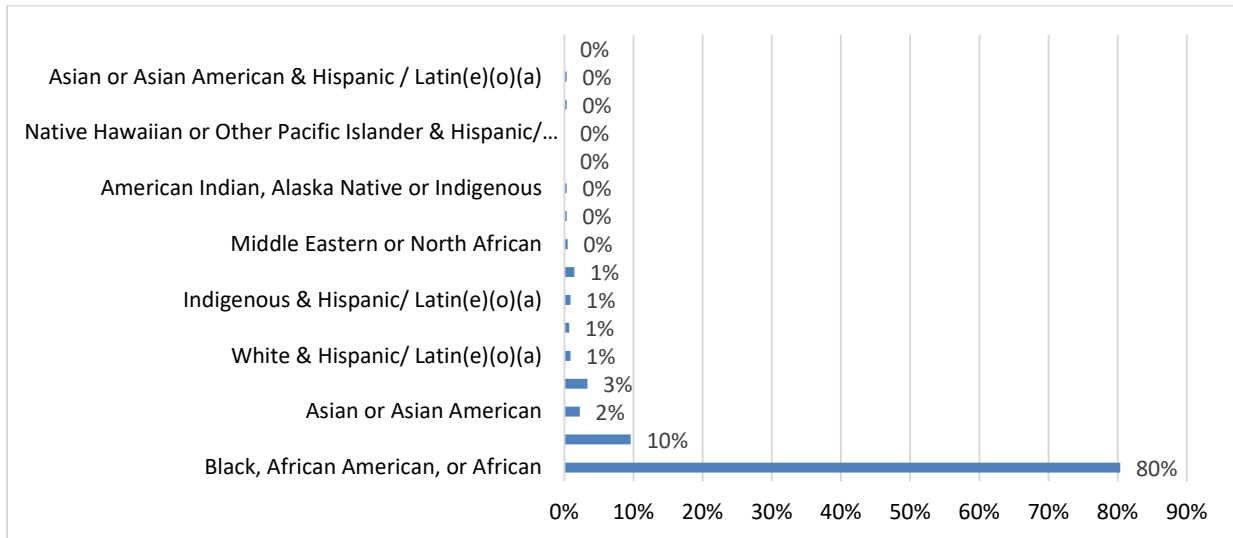
Source: COG 2026

Note: The District of Columbia unsheltered demographic counts were estimated and included in the regional totals.

Among single adults experiencing homelessness, the three largest reported racial and ethnic groups remained Black, African American, or African; White; and Hispanic/Latin(a)(e)(o). In the 2026 PIT data reflected in Figure 1, about 67 percent of single adults identified as Black, African American, or African, about 14 percent identified as White, and about eight percent identified as Hispanic/Latin(a)(e)(o). There continues to be variation across jurisdictions. In the District of Columbia, about 75 percent of single adults were identified as Black, African American, or African,

compared with about 67 percent region wide. In Loudoun County, the shares identifying as White and Black were closer in size than in the region overall. Montgomery County also reflected a more mixed racial and ethnic profile among single adults than many other jurisdictions.

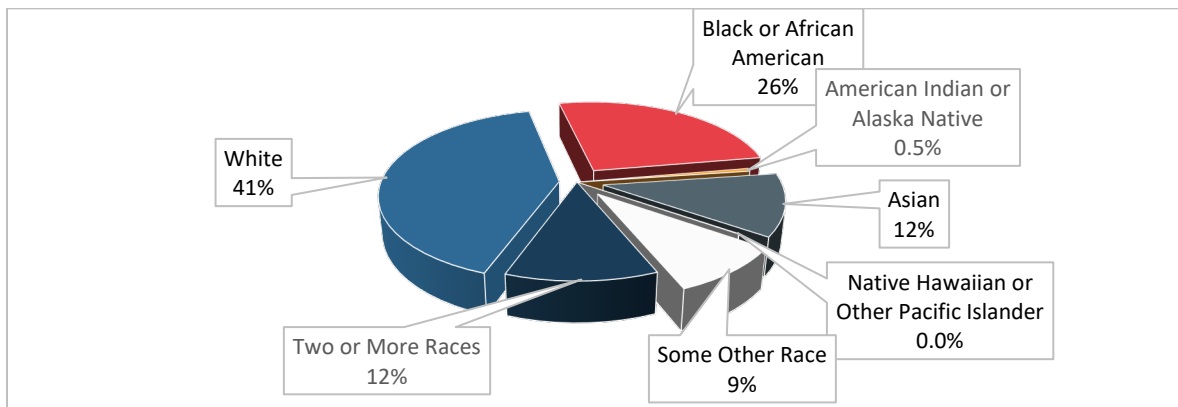
**Figure 2: Regional Homeless Adults in Families Demographic Profile**



Source: COG 2026

The demographic profile of adults in families experiencing homelessness differs from that of single adults in several key respects. Adults in families were more likely to identify as women, and the racial and ethnic profile of adults in families remained heavily concentrated among Black, African American, or African respondents. In the 2026 PIT data, about 80 percent of adults in families identified as Black, African American, or African, followed by about 10 percent identifying as Hispanic/Latin(a)(e)(o). White respondents represented a much smaller share of adults in families than of single adults. These patterns are shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 3: Regional Total Population Demographic Profile (Race)**



Source: American Community Survey 2024 5-Yr Estimates

The region's total population profile, shown in Figure 3, differs substantially from the demographic profile of adults experiencing homelessness. The regional population includes a much larger White share than the homeless population, while Black or African American residents make up a substantially larger share of adults experiencing homelessness than of the population overall. This contrast remains visible for both single adults and adults in families.

## Serving the People Most Affected by Homelessness

The demographic patterns reflected in the metropolitan Washington region's PIT data are not unique to this region. National research has documented large and persistent differences in homelessness rates across racial and ethnic groups. Although Black Americans make up 13 percent of the U.S. population, they accounted for 37 percent of all people experiencing homelessness and 50 percent of people in families with children experiencing homelessness in the 2023 Point-in-Time count.<sup>24</sup> In 2023, HUD introduced changes to its data standards and revised its categories for race and ethnicity for the Point-in-Time survey. For that reason, exact comparisons to earlier PIT results are not valid. However, these patterns are consistent with prior counts and are connected to longstanding public and private practices that shaped access to stable housing, neighborhood opportunity, wealth-building, and supportive services across generations.

In metropolitan Washington, these patterns matter because they shape who is seeking assistance from the homeless services system. As shown in the demographic figures above, a large share of adults experiencing homelessness in the region are Black, African American, or African. Effective responses therefore require close attention to who the system is serving, how people enter the system, what barriers they face, and which housing and service responses are most likely to help them exit homelessness safely and successfully. It is important to note that these disparities reflect a history of uneven access to housing, education, healthcare, and jobs that has had multigenerational impacts on entire communities, and not simply a reflection on individual circumstances.

To inform how best to serve people affected by gaps across housing, health, education, employment, and other systems, a critical aspect of this work is involving people with lived experience of homelessness in system design, planning, and implementation. Federal guidance has emphasized that communities are better positioned to identify barriers, improve service design, and strengthen access when they incorporate the perspectives of people who have directly experienced homelessness.<sup>25</sup>

The region's CoCs have also worked together in recent years to review local practices and identify where system improvements may be needed. That work has helped communities look more closely

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<sup>24</sup> U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, *Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2023*

<sup>25</sup> See HUD Exchange, "Centering Lived Experience," and U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, "People with Lived Experience Must Be Meaningful Partners in Ending Homelessness," which emphasize involving people with lived experience in planning, implementation, and system improvement.

at how people move through the homelessness response system, where barriers may emerge, and what changes may improve access and outcomes. These efforts remain relevant as the region continues to strengthen local and regional responses based on data, lived experience, and ongoing system review.



Temporary outdoor shelter observed in the Prince William County area during the 2026 Point-in-Time count. Photo credit: Prince William County Government

# YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS (TRANSITION AGE YOUTH) EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Experiencing homelessness as a child in a family can have traumatic, long-term consequences, leading to a greater likelihood of experiencing homelessness as an adult.<sup>26</sup> While the causes of youth (children under age 18) and young adults (age 18 to 24) losing their housing are complex, the CoCs in metropolitan Washington are dedicated to ensuring that unaccompanied minors and young adults who are unstably housed or experiencing literal homelessness are quickly returned to safe, stable housing.

**Table 7: Households With Only Children Under Age 18 By Jurisdiction, 2022 – 2026**

| Jurisdiction           | 2022      | 2023      | 2024      | 2025      | 2026      | Absolute Change 2022 - 2026 |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| City of Alexandria     | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0                           |
| Arlington County       | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0                           |
| District of Columbia   | 9         | 11        | 10        | 7         | 16        | 7                           |
| Fairfax County         | 1         | 3         | 3         | 1         | 2         | 1                           |
| Loudoun County         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0                           |
| Montgomery County      | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0                           |
| Prince George's County | 0         | 10        | 3         | 2         | 7         | 7                           |
| Prince William County  | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0                           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>10</b> | <b>24</b> | <b>16</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>25</b> | <b>15</b>                   |

Source: COG 2026

Table 7 provides a breakdown of households of homeless children without adults by jurisdiction. The small number of Households with Only Children counted in 2026 reflects the challenges of counting homeless youth accurately. One difficulty is the HUD definition of homelessness, which excludes persons who are “doubled up” or “couch surfing,”<sup>27</sup> a form of shelter often used by youth. Also, methods often used for counting homeless adults do not accurately capture survival strategies particularly common to youth, such as being mobile and transient, latching onto friends and staying

<sup>26</sup> National Conference on State Legislatures., *Youth Homelessness Overview*, Accessed on April 13, 2025 at <https://www.ncsl.org/human-services/youth-homelessness-overview>

<sup>27</sup> Couch surfing is typically understood to mean a temporary stay in a series of acquaintances’ homes at no cost, rather than a hotel, making use of improvised sleeping arrangements.

in groups, or trying to hide in plain sight. In addition, many homeless youths do not want to be found because they may be fleeing abuse or fear being placed in foster care. Most are not connected to formal supports such as the child welfare, juvenile justice, and mental health systems and many avoid or are unaware of available services.<sup>28</sup>

In 2026, the region counted 25 unaccompanied minors in Households with Only Children. As in prior years, the total number remained small. Most were counted in the District of Columbia and Prince George's County, with a small number counted in Fairfax County. No unaccompanied minors were counted in the City of Alexandria, Arlington County, Loudoun County, Montgomery County, or Prince William County.

There are many challenges with counting homeless youth, and because their experiences with homelessness are episodic, single point-in-time counts will always underestimate the true number. Taking note of seasonal conditions that affect whether youth will seek shelter or stay on the street, some homelessness researchers make sure they count in more than one season.<sup>29</sup>

Noting the importance of counting youth during non-winter months, Prince George's County, the District of Columbia, and Montgomery County have all held youth-only counts separately from the January enumeration.

Youth counts differ from the annual Point-in-Time census in several important ways. First, the counts take place during warmer months, when youths are more likely to be spending time outside, and potentially unsheltered. Second, the youth count generally takes place during a longer period than just one day and includes intentional enumeration by school personnel with knowledge of and connections to youth and young adults who may not be regularly attending school and would be missed in the one-day count. Third, in addition to counting youth who are experiencing literal homelessness, per the HUD definition, the youth count efforts include those who are unstably housed who may be doubled up or "couch surfing." Finally, the youth counts include a much broader series of questions designed to identify social, economic, developmental, and other contributing factors leading to youth homelessness for the purposes of strategic system design at the local level as well as to reveal opportunities for focused diversion and prevention work among youth who are unstably housed and at risk of experiencing literal homelessness.

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**Youth counts in metropolitan Washington have resulted in higher numbers of youth than were counted in the PIT enumeration of literally homeless**

The youth counts conducted in metropolitan Washington included individuals between the ages of 13 and 24 and have resulted in higher numbers of youth than were counted in the PIT enumeration of literally homeless persons in January.

Prince George's County is one of six CoCs in Maryland which has participated in the Youth REACH MD (Reach out, Engage, Assist and Count to End Homelessness) demonstration pilot since 2015 to count unaccompanied homeless youth and young adults and served as one of three regional team leaders providing technical assistance to Maryland CoCs new to conducting youth counts.<sup>30</sup> The

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<sup>28</sup> The Urban Institute, *Youth Count! Process Study*: 10.

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.healthycal.org/archives/11079>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.youthreachmd.com/>

enumeration involved surveying youth through shelter counts, service-based counts (meaning youth/young adults who used services from participating providers during the count), and kick-off/magnet events and street counts.<sup>31</sup> Further, results from this state-wide effort concluded that combining survey data and administrative data (via HMIS or Homeless Management Information Systems) result in a more accurate picture of youth homelessness than survey data alone.<sup>32</sup>

In October 2018, Maryland passed the Ending Youth Homelessness Act of 2018 (SB 1218). The Ending Youth Homelessness Act of 2018 defines unaccompanied homeless youth as individuals of 24 years of age or younger who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; makes the annual Youth REACH MD unaccompanied homeless youth count a permanent fixture under the leadership of the Department of Housing and Community Development; and, provides additional grant funding to end youth homelessness and address related disparities based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity by establishing the Ending Youth Homelessness Grant Program.<sup>33</sup>

The District of Columbia passed the End Youth Homeless Amendment Act in 2014, which not only provided expanded funding for youth-accessible services but also mandated an annual census.<sup>34</sup> The most recent of the past nine homeless youth counts took place over two weeks during September 2024. The CoC worked with The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness (TCP) to develop and implement Solid Foundations. In turn, this plan has highlighted youth service needs leading to the establishment of a 24-hour youth drop-in center, prevention and family reunification services, rapid re-housing for Transition-Aged Youth (TAYs), and extended transitional housing (ETH), a youth-specific model of transitional housing which allows for up to three years of housing integrated with a full range of intensive supportive services.



Photo credit: Ian Rideaux, Changing the Narratives Fund

Both Prince George's County and the District of Columbia received nationally competitive HUD grant funding from the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program.<sup>35</sup> The program requires convening a large variety of stakeholders, assessing the needs of special populations, and creating a coordinated community plan for youth experiencing homelessness. It also provides an opportunity to test new approaches to address youth homelessness. Building on the YHDP work, Prince George's County is also implementing a U.S. Health and Human Services Runaway and Homeless Youth Prevention Demonstration program.

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<sup>31</sup> *Maryland's First Unaccompanied Homeless Youth & Young Adult Count: Findings from Youth REACH MD Phase 2 (May 2016)*, accessed at <https://theinstitute.umaryland.edu/docs/YouthREACHMD-Phase2Report-Final.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.youthreachmd.com/>

<sup>34</sup> <https://community-partnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/TheEndYouthHomelessnessActof2014.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD Exchange, "Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program." Accessed April 2026. <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/yhdp/>

In Maryland and the District of Columbia, as well as nationwide, a key contributing factor to youth experiencing homelessness was conflict with a parent, guardian, foster parents, or other members of households. Findings from the Maryland Youth REACH initiative suggest that focused interventions on prevention among youth and young adults who identify as Black or African American, LGBTQIA+, are in high school and/or are pregnant or parenting are needed to reduce the numbers of youth and young adults who are unstably housed or experiencing literal homelessness.<sup>36</sup> These findings were reinforced by research published by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, which also found that the lack of a high school diploma or GED was a top risk factor for youth and young adult homelessness.<sup>37</sup>

## Transition Age Youth

In response to growing concerns about young adults experiencing homelessness, beginning in 2015, as required by HUD, the region’s CoCs began collecting demographic information on Transition Age Youth (TAY). Transition Age Youth are between the ages of 18 and 24 and face several unique challenges on their path to a successful adulthood, including finding employment with health benefits, as they may have become ineligible for Medicaid or SCHIP (State Children’s Health Insurance Program). Youth who may be “aging out” of foster care (reaching age 18 without returning to their birth families or being adopted) or leaving juvenile detention facilities face significant challenges in finding affordable housing and employment as well.<sup>38</sup>

**Table 8: Transition Age Youth (TAY) Experiencing Homelessness by Jurisdiction: 2026**

| Jurisdiction           | Single Adults (TAY) | Adults in Families (TAY) | Total      |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| City of Alexandria     | 2                   | 1                        | 3          |
| Arlington County       | 18                  | 1                        | 19         |
| District of Columbia   | 333                 | 123                      | 456        |
| Fairfax County         | 50                  | 18                       | 68         |
| Loudoun County         | 43                  | 0                        | 43         |
| Montgomery County      | 47                  | 6                        | 53         |
| Prince George's County | 86                  | 16                       | 102        |
| Prince William County  | 10                  | 5                        | 15         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>589</b>          | <b>170</b>               | <b>759</b> |

Source: COG 2026

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.youthreachmd.com/content/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/YRMD-2017-Report-Executive-Summary-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> Morton, M., Dworsky, A., Miranda Samuels, G., and Patel, S. (2018). *Voices of Youth Count Comprehensive Report: Youth Homelessness in America. Report to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.* <https://www.chapinhall.org/project/voices-of-youth-count/>

<sup>38</sup> <http://youth.gov/youth-topics/transition-age-youth>

The longer-term trend between 2022 and 2026, as shown in Table 9 (following page), indicates that the number of single TAYs experiencing homelessness increased by 25 percent. Arlington County, Loudoun County, Montgomery County, and Prince George’s County recorded notable increases over the period, while the District of Columbia declined modestly from its 2022 level after peaking in 2024. Fairfax County also recorded an increase over the period. Although the total numbers remained comparatively small in some jurisdictions, the regional pattern suggests that young adults continue to make up a meaningful share of the region’s homeless population.

Single TAYs have one characteristic that distinguishes them from other single adults experiencing homelessness: they are more likely to have a history of foster care involvement (see Figure 4 following page). Like their peer adults, they were also likely to have experienced institutionalization and have a history of experiencing domestic violence.

**Table 9: Single Transition Age Youth (TAY) Experiencing Homelessness by Jurisdiction: 2022-2026**

| Jurisdiction           | 2022       | 2023       | 2024       | 2025       | 2026       | Change in Persons 2022 - 2026 | Percent Change 2022 - 2026 |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| City of Alexandria     | 1          | 2          | 1          | 3          | 2          | 1                             | 100%                       |
| Arlington County       | 4          | 7          | 8          | 9          | 18         | 14                            | 350%                       |
| District of Columbia   | 351        | 362        | 410        | 367        | 333        | -18                           | -5%                        |
| Fairfax County         | 41         | 47         | 35         | 34         | 50         | 9                             | 22%                        |
| Loudoun County         | 3          | 16         | 67         | 15         | 43         | 40                            | 1333%                      |
| Montgomery County      | 19         | 33         | 39         | 58         | 47         | 28                            | 147%                       |
| Prince George's County | 47         | 85         | 74         | 91         | 86         | 39                            | 83%                        |
| Prince William County  | 6          | 15         | 11         | 8          | 10         | 4                             | 67%                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>472</b> | <b>567</b> | <b>645</b> | <b>585</b> | <b>589</b> | <b>117</b>                    | <b>25%</b>                 |

Source: COG 2026

Note: Totals for 2022-2023 have been revised to reflect the regional number without the City and County of Frederick.

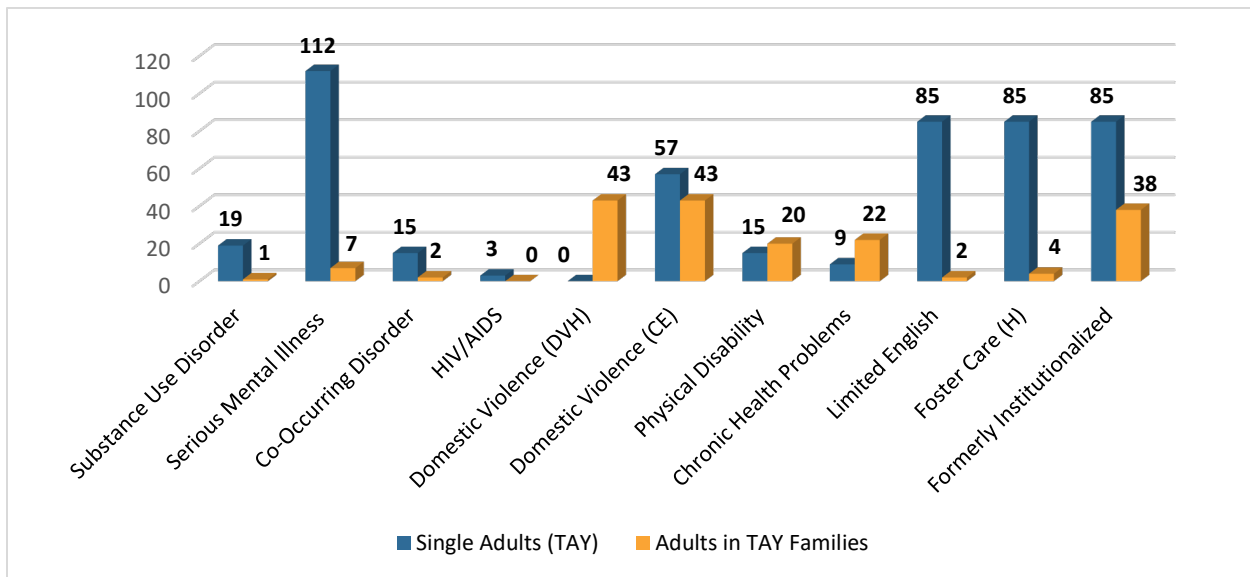
Adults in TAY families experiencing homelessness were more likely to report having experienced a past incident of domestic violence, followed by limited English and an incidence of domestic violence which led to their current experience of homelessness on the night of the count. Among single TAYs, the available 2026 PIT data also show reported experiences of domestic violence history, serious mental illness, foster care history, former institutionalization, and limited English. This is shown on the following page in Figure 4.

“Many youth and young adults experiencing homelessness who have been in foster care consider their experience in foster care as the beginning of their homelessness.”

These data were previously required to be reported to HUD but are no longer part of the national survey instrument. The CoCs in metropolitan Washington continue to include these questions in their surveys both for trend comparison and to better understand the complex vulnerabilities that can lead to homelessness as a young adult.

One of the key findings from research published by the National Conference of State Legislatures was that young adults experiencing homelessness who have a history of child welfare involvement consider their foster care experience at the beginning of their homelessness.<sup>39</sup>

**Figure 4: Transition Age Youth Life Experiences and Vulnerabilities**



Source: COG 2026

Note: These categories are not mutually exclusive; it is possible for TAYs to be counted in more than one category.

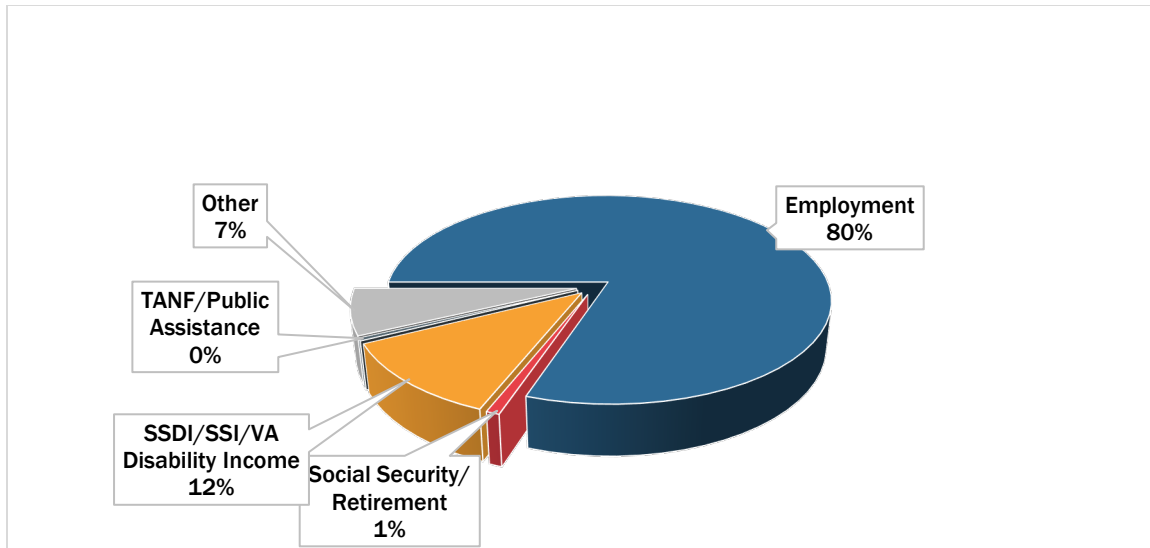
Note: The District of Columbia did not provide unsheltered single-TAY responses for most subpopulation categories in 2026.

Transition Age Youth, or young adults in Households without Children who reported having income were most likely (80 percent) to report their primary source of income was from employment. Adult TAYs in families who responded to these questions reported their primary source of income was from

<sup>39</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures, *Youth Homelessness Overview*. Accessed on April 13, 2025 at <https://www.ncsl.org/human-services/youth-homelessness-overview>.

employment at a lower level (35 percent). For another 56 percent of adults in TAY families, the primary source of income was public assistance, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and eight percent of adults in TAY families' primary form of income was from disability income. The next largest category of income for single adult TAYs was disability income (11 percent), followed by other income (7 percent). See Figure 5 and Figure 6 below.

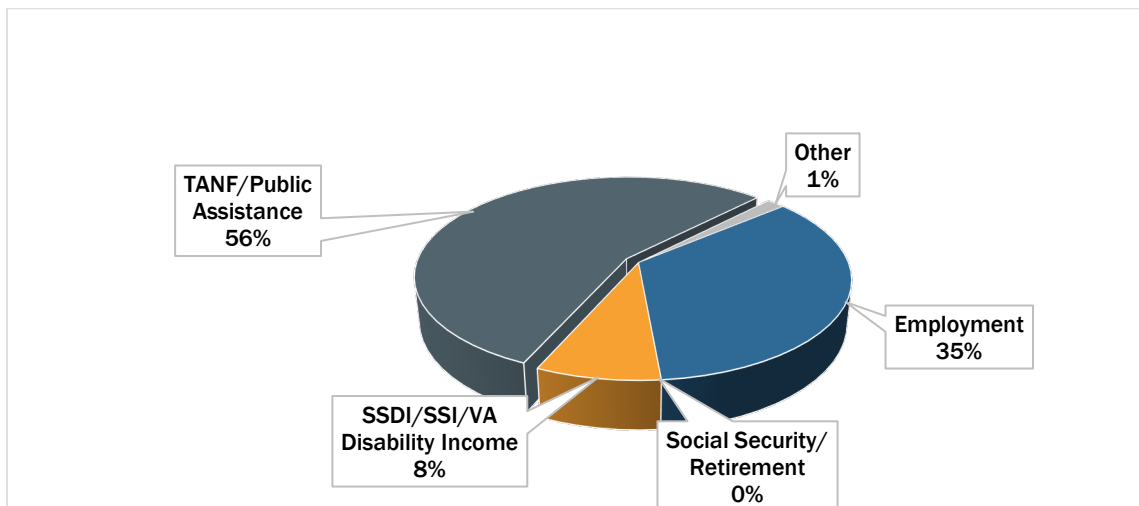
**Figure 5: Homeless Young Single Adult/Transition Age Youth Source of Income**



Source: COG 2026

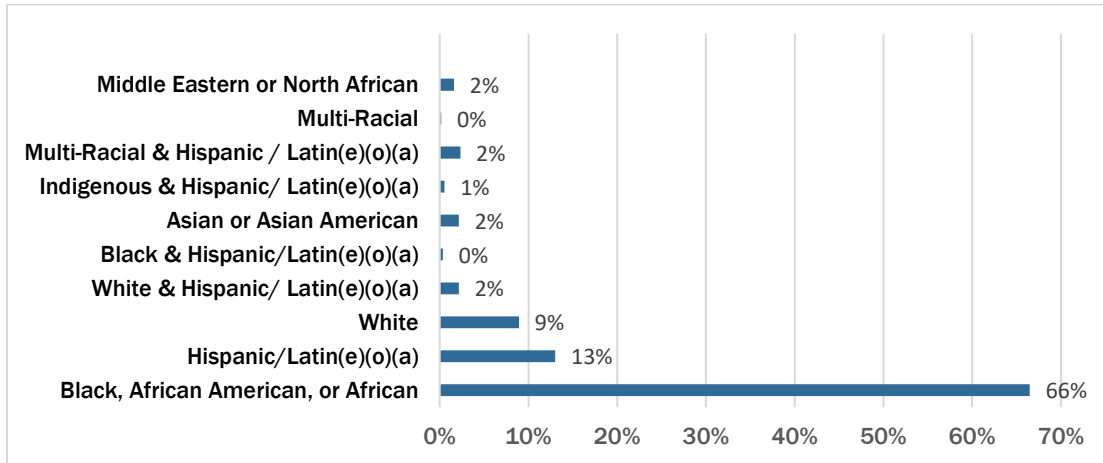
Note: Data exclude primary source of income responses for unsheltered single TAY in the District of Columbia.

**Figure 6: Homeless Young Adults in Families/Transition Age Youth Source of Income**



Source: COG 2026

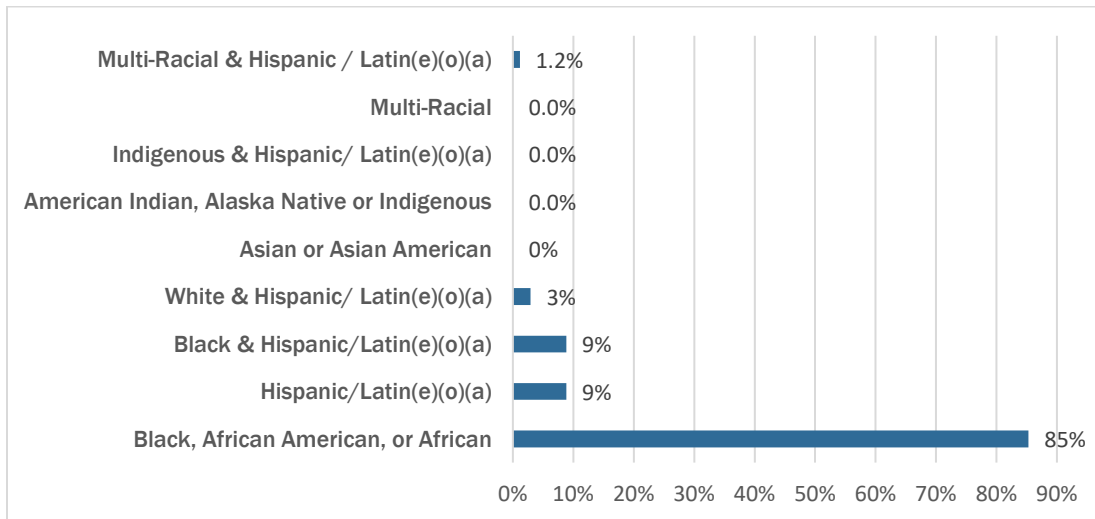
**Figure 7: Single Young Adult/Transition Age Youth (Race and Ethnicity)**



Source: COG 2026

Note: Data exclude race and ethnicity detail for unsheltered single TAYs in the District of Columbia.

**Figure 8: Young Adult/Transition Age Youth in Families (Race and Ethnicity)**



Source: COG 2026

Reflecting broader demographic patterns among people experiencing homelessness in the region, the largest reported racial and ethnic group among TAY experiencing homelessness was Black, African American, or African. This group represented 66 percent of single TAYs and 85 percent of adults in TAY families. Hispanic/Latin(e)(o)(a) respondents represented 13 percent of single TAYs and 9 percent of adults in TAY families. These patterns are shown in Figures 7 and 8.

# OLDER ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

There is concern among the region's CoCs that there may be a growing number of older adults facing a housing crisis and who are seeking emergency shelter. Nationally, older adults remain a growing segment of the population experiencing homelessness. In HUD's 2024 national estimate, about one in five people experiencing homelessness was age 55 or older, and nearly half of adults in that age group were unsheltered.<sup>40</sup>

Older adults experiencing homelessness face unique vulnerabilities due to health or mobility limitations. They may also have more significant health concerns not typically seen in homeless services systems, such as Alzheimer's disease or cancer.<sup>41</sup>



Photo credit: Wonderferret "homeless"/Flickr

It's important to note that older adults experiencing homelessness already have medical ages that exceed their biological ages. Multiple studies have demonstrated that older adults experiencing homelessness have age-related medical conditions, such as decreased mobility and cognitive decline, on par with housed counterparts who are 20 years older.<sup>42</sup> This was emphasized by Dr. Margot Kushel, a health care practitioner who has tracked the rise in older adults experiencing homelessness, and noted that, "Fifty is the new 75."<sup>43</sup> The average life expectancy of a person experiencing homelessness is estimated between 42 and 52 years, compared to 78 years in the general U.S. population.<sup>44</sup>

National demographic trends suggest that there will be a dramatic increase in the number of people aged 65 or older as the Baby Boomer generation reaches retirement age.<sup>45</sup> This means that as the aged homeless population increases rapidly during the next decade, the region's policymakers and service providers may need to adjust their systems' approach to accommodate this growing segment

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<sup>40</sup> Henderson, A., Manian, N., Rog, D., Robison, E., Jorge, E., & Al-Abdulmunem, M. *Addressing Homelessness Among Older Adults: Final Report*. October 30, 2023. Accessed at <https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/9ac2d2a7e8c360b4e75932b96f59a20b/addressing-older-adult-homelessness.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.seniornavigator.org/article/12426/special-concerns-elderly-who-are-homeless>

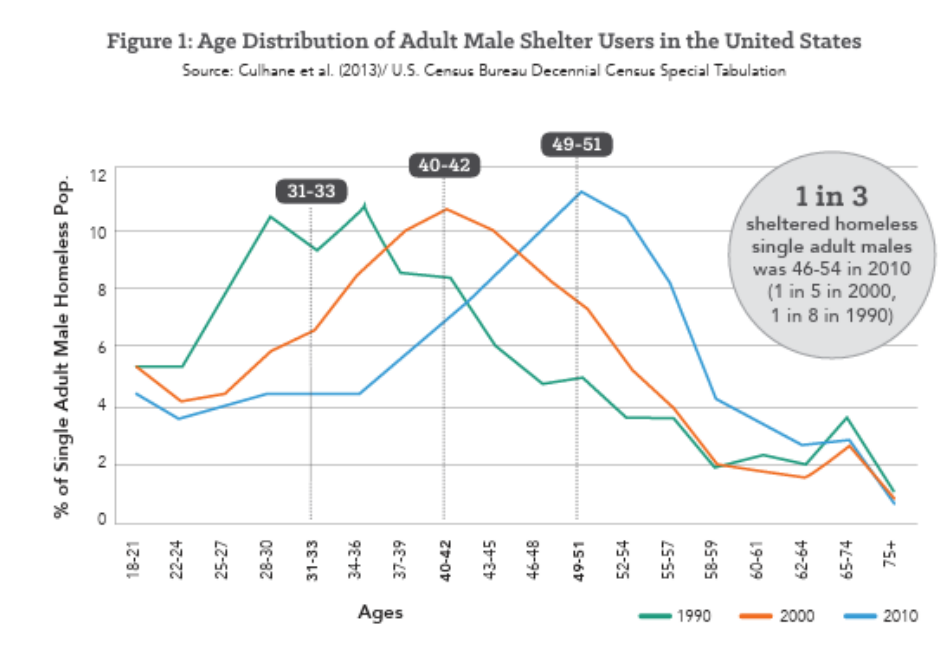
<sup>42</sup> Brown, R.T., Hemati, K., Riley, E.E., et al. Geriatric conditions in a population-based sample of older homeless adults. (2017). *Gerontologist*, 57(4), 757-766. Doi:10.1093/geront/gnw011. (n/u). As accessed in *The Emerging Crisis of Aged Homelessness: Could Housing Solutions Be Funded by Avoidance of Excess Shelter, Hospital, and Nursing Home Costs?*, <https://www.aisp.upenn.edu/aginghomelessness/>

<sup>43</sup> Thomas Fuller. "A Rising Tally of Deaths on the Streets" *The New York Times*. April 18, 2022. Accessed at <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/18/us/homeless-deaths-los-angeles.html>

<sup>44</sup> National Coalition for the Homeless, *Health Care and Homelessness*, Accessed at <https://www.nationalhomeless.org/factsheets/health.html>

<sup>45</sup> Culhane, D. P., Metraux, S., Byrne, T., Stino, M., & Bainbridge, J. (2019). *The emerging crisis of aged homelessness: Could housing solutions be funded by avoidance of excess shelter, hospital, and nursing home costs?* University of Pennsylvania, Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy. Retrieved from <https://aisp.upenn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Emerging-Crisis-of-Aged-Homelessness-1.pdf>

of persons experiencing homelessness.<sup>46</sup> In 2017, nationally there were more than 40,000 people over age 65 experiencing homelessness. By 2030, that number is expected to more than double to 106,000.<sup>47</sup> This historical trend is clearly seen in the chart below.



In 2023, HUD asked communities to provide more detailed information on age, with over 65 years of age being the highest age category. The results from the 2023 PIT count showed that one in six persons experiencing homelessness were nearing retirement age (55-64) and one in four unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness was over the age of 55.<sup>48</sup>

In the metropolitan Washington region, older adults continued to represent a substantial share of single adults experiencing homelessness in 2026. Using age 55 and older as the upper age category, about 34 percent of persons in Households without Children were age 55 or older. This remains one of the clearest findings from the 2026 age data and indicates that a large share of the region’s single-adult homeless population is in or nearing older-adult age ranges.

Figure 9 (following page) illustrates the age distribution of single adults experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region over time using a broad age 55-and-older category. This remains the most appropriate way to present the regional age data in 2026. It preserves the

**The average life expectancy of a person experiencing homelessness is estimated between 42 and 52 years, compared to 78 years in the general U.S. population.**

<sup>46</sup> “The Emerging Crisis of Aged Homelessness: Could Housing Solutions be Funded by Avoidance of Excess Shelter, Hospital, and Nursing Home Stays?” University of Pennsylvania, accessed at <https://aisp.upenn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Emerging-Crisis-of-Aged-Homelessness.pdf>

<sup>47</sup> RRF Foundation for Aging, “Home Front and Center, Supporting Access to Affordable and Quality Housing Issue Brief 4: February 2022”, Accessed at <https://www.rrf.org/wp-content/uploads/RRF-ISSUE-BRIEF-ON-HOUSING.pdf>,

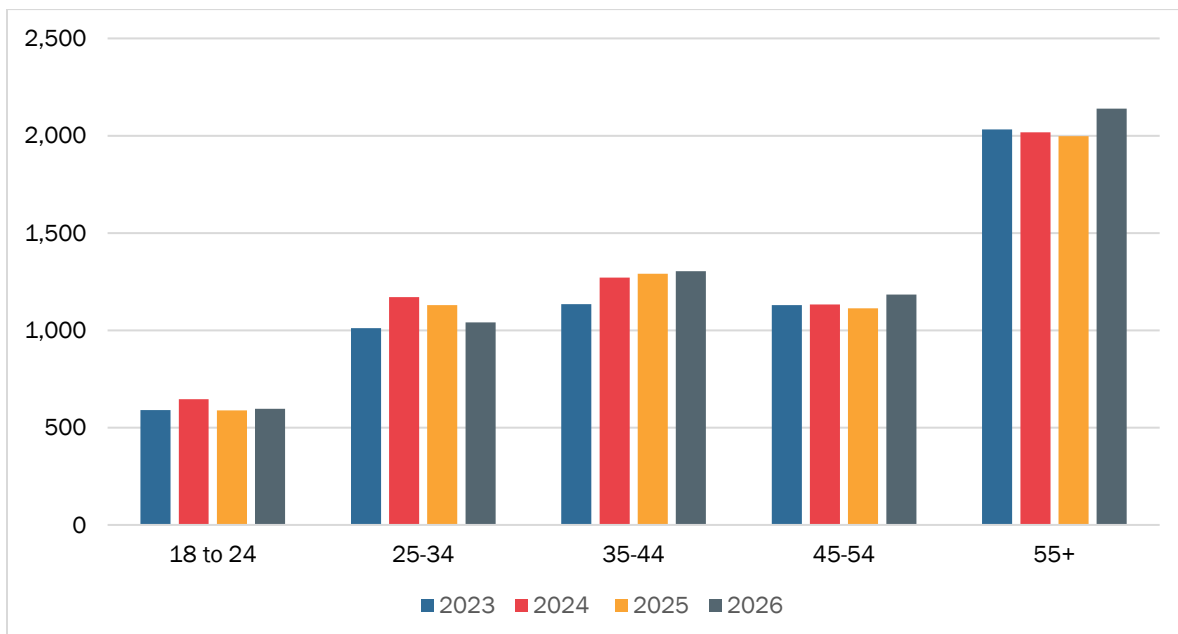
<sup>48</sup> Capps, Kriston. “The Invisible Factors Driving US Homelessness to Record Highs.” *Bloomberg*. December 20, 2023. Accessed on April 21, 2024 at <https://origin.www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-12-20/senior-homelessness-tops-concerns-as-us-unhoused-population-spikes?srnd=citylab-housing>

clearest regional finding, maintains consistency with the report’s recent age framing, and avoids implying a level of precision in the oldest age bands that the 2026 data do not fully support.

As described in the District of Columbia’s jurisdictional narrative, their unsheltered total was estimated under modified operations, and demographic counts for unsheltered persons were predicted using a multinomial regression model. The report can therefore continue to describe the broad regional age distribution, but more detailed counts for the oldest age groups should be interpreted more cautiously.

Figure 9 demonstrates that older adults aged 55 and older remain one of the largest groupings among single adults experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region. This reinforces the need to continue planning for shelter, housing, and service responses that are appropriate for an aging population.

**Figure 9: Age Distribution of Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness**



Source: COG 2026

Note: The District of Columbia’s unsheltered demographic counts were estimated and included in the regional totals.

Note: 86 single adults had unknown or not reported age.

This analysis can provide insights into the types of solutions that may be needed to assist older adults experiencing homelessness. The growing number of single adults aged 55 and above shown in Figure 9 reflects the extent to which older adults make up a substantial share of the region’s single-adult homeless population. This has important implications for how jurisdictions plan shelter, housing, and supportive service responses for an aging population.

A recent report commissioned by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service suggests strategies to address the needs of older adults experiencing homelessness. Recommendations for federal, state, and local governments include expanded state coverage for home and community-based services, such as assistance with medication and activities of daily living; identification by

HUD of older adults as a key subpopulation in its Annual Homelessness Assessment Reports; and better cross-system coordination.

Service providers can play a key role as well by training case management staff on issues specific to older adults; providing additional assistance accessing medical equipment, such as eyeglasses or hearing aids that may be lost or damaged during an individual's episode of homelessness; and documenting services available in local communities to enable older adults at risk of experiencing homelessness what resources are available and how they can access support.<sup>49</sup>

Several CoCs in the region have medical respite beds for persons discharged from the hospital who need rest to recover which elderly persons may be able to use. However, many older adults require ongoing medical assistance and lack access to adequate care. The region's CoCs are working to address the unique needs of older adults while anticipating a growing need to expand resources to assist this group of residents appropriately and safely in the future.



PIT count team members in the Prince William County area prepare for nighttime outreach. Photo Credit: Prince William County Government.

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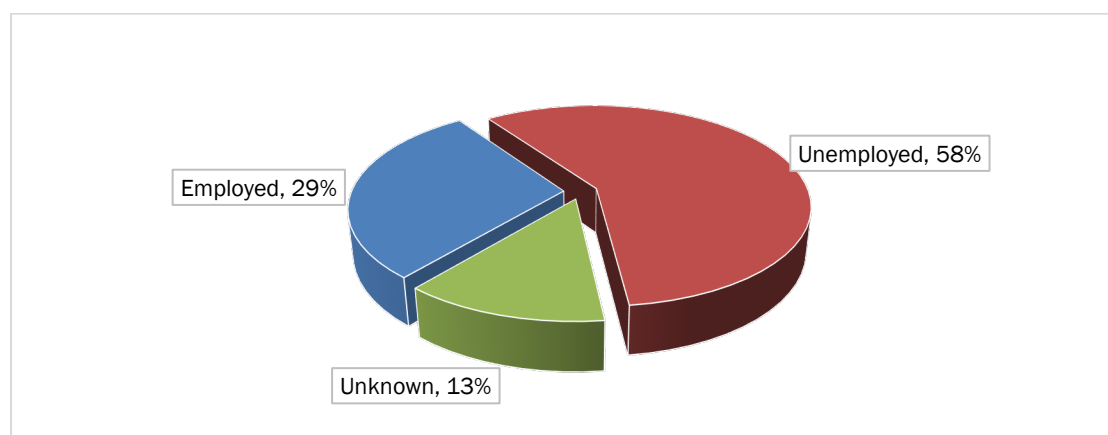
<sup>49</sup> Henderson, A., Manian, N., Rog, D., Robison, E., Jorge, E., & Al-Abdulmunem, M. *Addressing Homelessness Among Older Adults: Final Report*. October 30, 2023. Accessed at <https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/9ac2d2a7e8c360b4e75932b96f59a20b/addressing-older-adult-homelessness.pdf>

## INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, AND HOMELESSNESS

Employment, or having an adequate and reliable source of income, is crucial to a household's ability to afford housing. In February 2026, the metropolitan Washington region's unemployment rate remained moderate at 4.4 percent, near the national rate of 4.7 percent.<sup>50</sup> However, broader labor market conditions were less favorable than the unemployment rate alone suggests, as total nonfarm employment declined over the year. These conditions may heighten the economic vulnerability of residents experiencing housing instability, particularly in a high-cost region where limited savings and interrupted earnings can quickly place households at risk. Employment challenges also remain more pronounced for workers with lower levels of educational attainment.

These employment and income data should be understood in the context of systems-level conditions that shape both work and housing stability. In a high-cost region, earnings and benefits often fall short of what is needed to secure housing, while housing instability itself can make stable employment more difficult. The figures below help describe the economic conditions and service needs facing people experiencing homelessness.

**Figure 10: Employment Status of Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness**



Source: COG 2026

Note: The District of Columbia did not provide employment status for unsheltered single adults in 2026.

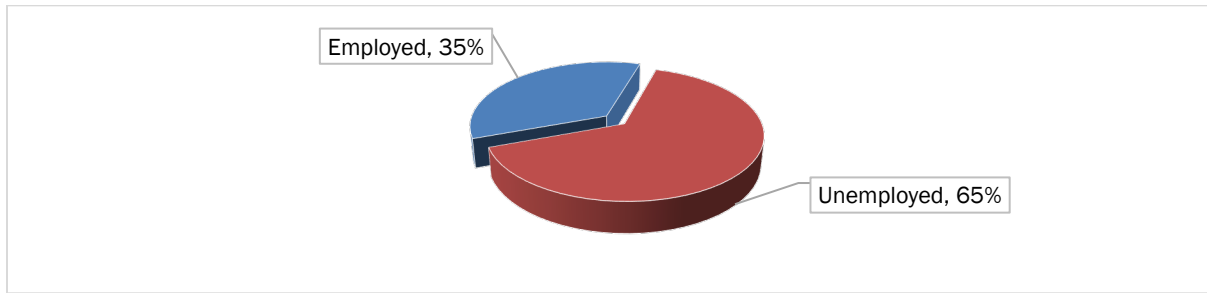
Figure 10 shows that about 29 percent of single adults experiencing homelessness were reported as employed, while about 58 percent were reported as unemployed. Employment status was unknown or not reported for 13 percent of single adults.

The lower observed rate of employment for single adults, compared to adults in families, is consistent with the higher incidence of physical disabilities, serious mental illness, substance use disorder, and other chronic health challenges among single adults experiencing homelessness. The priority the region's CoCs place on serving the most vulnerable residents is reflected in the larger share of single adults who were unemployed on the night of the PIT count.

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<sup>50</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/web/metro/laummtrk.htm>

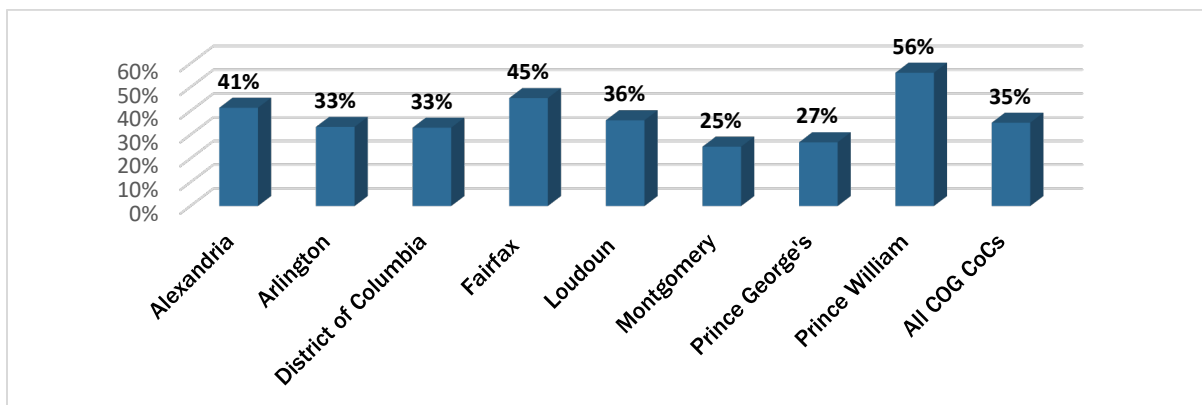
**Figure 11: Employment Status of Adults in Families Experiencing Homelessness**



Source: COG 2026

Figure 11 shows that about 35 percent of adults in families experiencing homelessness were employed in 2026, while about 65 percent were unemployed. The picture continues to vary across jurisdictions. In contrast to single households, in six of eight local jurisdictions, more than 30 percent of adults in family households were employed.

**Figure 102: Employed Adults in Families Experiencing Homelessness**



Source: COG 2026

Rates of employment for adults in families experiencing homelessness vary across jurisdictions in metropolitan Washington. In Prince William County, for example, 56 percent of adults in families were employed, compared to 25 percent in Montgomery County. Region-wide, about 65 percent of adults in families were unemployed. Improving the employment picture for some of the region's most vulnerable residents remains challenging, but CoCs will continue efforts to increase residents' earned income as a critical component of long-term housing stability.

While metropolitan Washington has traditionally enjoyed a lower unemployment rate than many other national metropolitan areas, it remains one of the country's most expensive places in which to live.

In a region where housing prices are rising faster than wages, the lowest-income workers face tremendous pressures. To afford a one-bedroom apartment at fair market rent in the District of Columbia, a person earning the local minimum wage would need to work about 88 hours per week.

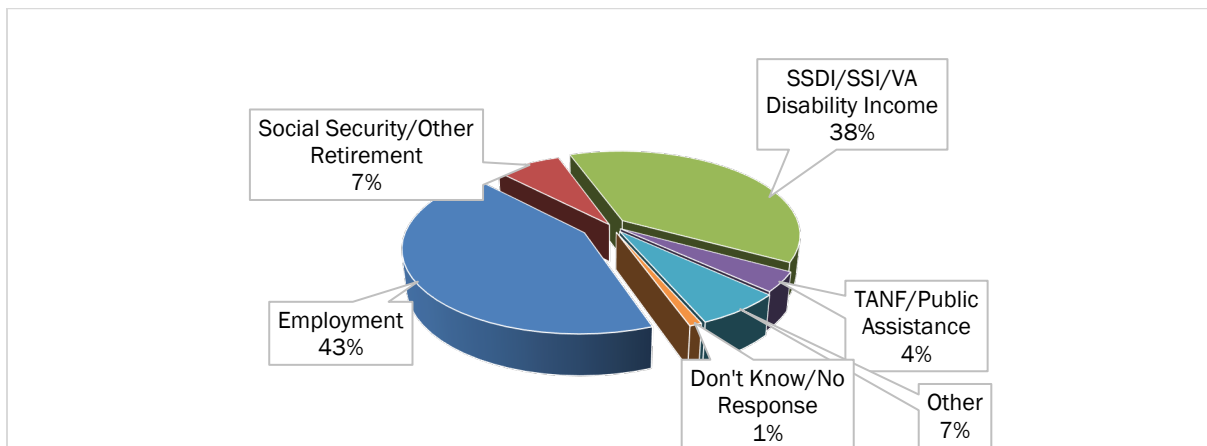
The reality remains stark for many low-income households in the region, as even modest earnings often fall short of what is needed to maintain stable housing.

Combined with the high cost of housing, the availability and stability of living-wage jobs remains a key obstacle to ending homelessness, even for those individuals who are already employed.

## Income

While a portion of the region’s population of people experiencing homelessness reports receiving monthly income, many do not receive any monthly income. In 2026, 68 percent of adults in families were reported as having income. In the available regional single-adult PIT data, 39 percent of single adults reported having income.

**Figure 13: Source of Income for Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness**

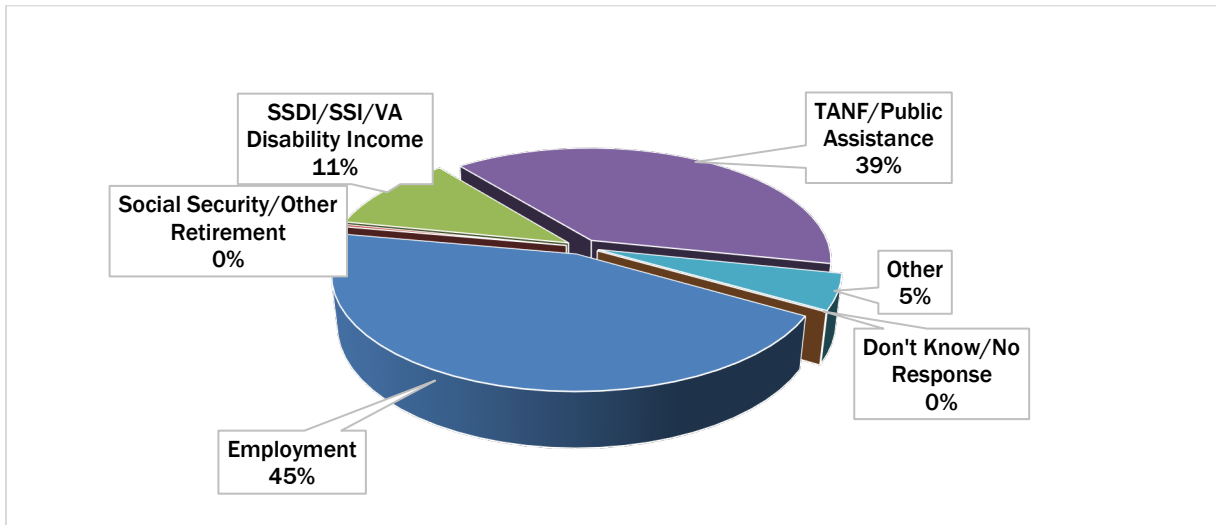


Source: COG 2026

Note: The District of Columbia did not provide primary source of income data for unsheltered single adults in 2026.

Among the available regional single-adult PIT data reflected in Figure 13, employment wages and salaries were the most commonly reported primary source of income at 43 percent, followed by disability income at 38 percent. Retirement income accounted for 7 percent of reported primary income sources, and public assistance accounted for 4 percent. Other sources represented 7 percent, and 1 percent were reported as don’t know or no response. These figures indicate that among single adults with reported income information, employment and disability income remained the two largest primary sources of support.

**Figure 14: Source of Income for Adults in Families Experiencing Homelessness**



Source: COG 2026

Among adults in families who reported a primary source of income, 45 percent reported employment as the primary source of income. The next largest primary source was public assistance at 39 percent, followed by disability income at 11 percent. These figures show that even where some income is present, many households experiencing homelessness remain reliant on low earnings, public assistance, or disability benefits.



Tent observed in a wooded area during the 2026 Point-in-Time count. Photo Credit: Prince William County Government

# UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

During the 2026 regional PIT count, outreach workers, local government staff, and experienced volunteers in most of the region’s CoCs surveyed their communities to count the area’s unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness. These efforts sought to identify people living on the streets, in alleys, under bridges, in local parks, in camp sites, and in other places frequented by people experiencing homelessness. Note that the District of Columbia’s 2026 unsheltered total was estimated for high-level reporting purposes rather than produced through a direct unsheltered count.

According to the 2026 enumeration, 1,241 persons (approximately 13 percent of the region’s 9,790 persons experiencing homelessness on the night of the PIT) were unsheltered. While almost all were single adults, 11 people were in 4 families, including 7 children, and no unaccompanied minors were unsheltered on the night of the count. The 1,230 unsheltered single persons counted represents an 8 percent decrease in the number of unsheltered adults in Households without Children counted in 2026 than in 2025 (100 fewer persons counted). Overall, regional homelessness among unsheltered single adults increased 31 percent (289 additional persons) during the period between 2022 and 2026.

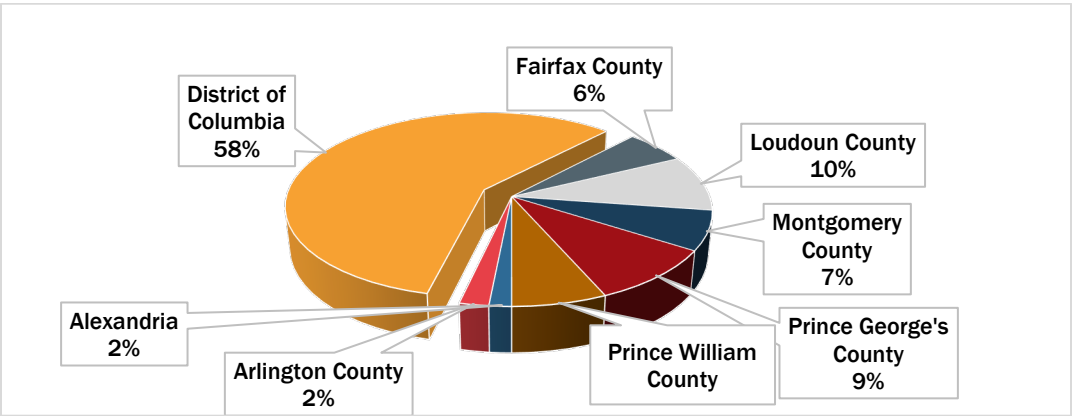
The fluctuations in the unsheltered count during the past five years may be attributed to a variety of factors. Typically, the number of individuals counted residing in places not meant for human habitation can depend on weather conditions, the number of surveyors employed for the count, methodology, and other local conditions affecting the count.

## Location of the Region’s Unsheltered Single Adults

Figure 15 (following page) indicates where persons experiencing homelessness were identified in places not meant for human habitation, such as streets, parks, alleys, abandoned buildings, stairways, and rural campsites.

The District of Columbia accounts for 58 percent of the region’s unsheltered homeless single adults in 2026.

**Figure 15: The Region's Unsheltered Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness by Jurisdiction**



Source: COG 2026

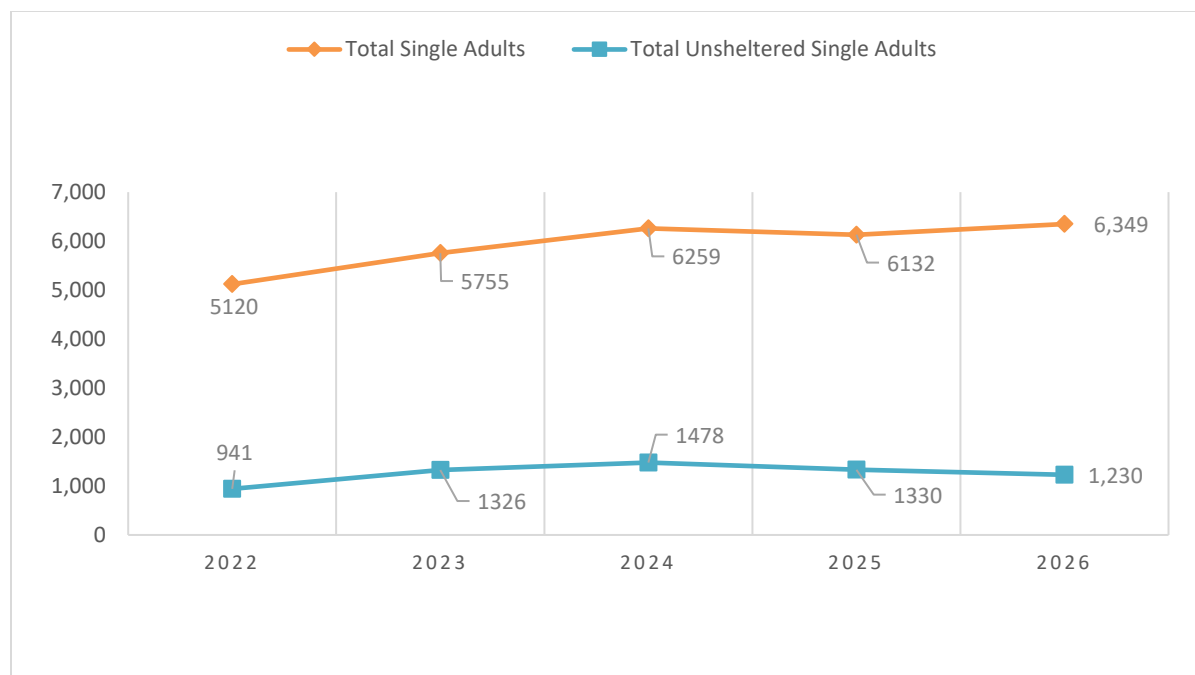
Note: The District of Columbia’s 2026 unsheltered single-adult total was estimated and included in the regional total.

In 2026, three of eight CoCs recorded an increase in their unsheltered counts from 2025 to 2026, while five recorded decreases.

Overall, the region recorded an 8 percent decrease in unsheltered single adults in 2026 from 2025. This follows the decline recorded from 2024 to 2025, after the unsheltered count reached a recent peak in 2024. The largest increase during this one-year period was recorded in Prince George’s County (64 additional persons), followed by Loudoun County (26 additional persons). The City of Alexandria also recorded a smaller increase of 5 persons. Because the District of Columbia’s 2026 unsheltered total was estimated, the regional decline should be interpreted somewhat cautiously.

Figure 16 shows that while total single adult homelessness and unsheltered single adult homelessness followed similar upward patterns from 2022 through 2024, the patterns diverged in 2026. Total single adult homelessness increased in 2026 after declining slightly in 2025, while the number of unsheltered single adults continued to decline for the second consecutive year.

**Figure 16: Comparison of Total Single Adults (Sheltered and Unsheltered) to Unsheltered Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness, 2022-2026**



Source: COG 2026

Note: The District of Columbia’s 2026 unsheltered single-adult total was estimated and included in the regional total.

The number of survey volunteers and bed availability on the night of the count may have contributed to the number of people sleeping outdoors, in places not meant for human habitation. This continues to be among the many challenges the region’s CoCs are facing in keeping people experiencing homelessness safe during the winter months.

## Comparison of Unsheltered Homelessness by Jurisdiction

Shown on Table 10 (following page), the largest one-year declines in the number of unsheltered single adults were recorded in the District of Columbia and Montgomery County, each with 74 fewer individuals in 2026 than in 2025. Prince William County also recorded a notable decline, falling by 34 persons, while Arlington County declined by 12 persons. Fairfax County recorded a small decline of 1 person.

In several jurisdictions, local narratives indicate that cold-weather operations and shelter availability likely influenced these declines. Montgomery County and Arlington County reported that outreach teams encouraged people to come inside during the extreme cold, while Prince William County reported substantially higher hypothermia bed availability on count night.

**Table 10: Comparison of Unsheltered Single Adults by Jurisdiction, 2022 – 2026**

| Jurisdiction           | 2022       | 2023         | 2024         | 2025         | 2026         | Change in Number of Persons 2022 - 2026 | Percent Change 2022 - 2026 |
|------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---|----------------------------|
| City of Alexandria     | 5          | 10           | 18           | 14           | 19           | 14                                      | 280%                       |
| Arlington County       | 20         | 42           | 31           | 37           | 25           | 5                                       | 25%                        |
| District of Columbia   | 689        | 819          | 887          | 792          | 718          | 29                                      | 4%                         |
| Fairfax County         | 57         | 113          | 86           | 72           | 71           | 14                                      | 25%                        |
| Loudoun County         | 25         | 56           | 117          | 92           | 118          | 93                                      | 372%                       |
| Montgomery County      | 69         | 124          | 153          | 157          | 83           | 14                                      | 20%                        |
| Prince George's County | 49         | 89           | 97           | 51           | 115          | 66                                      | 135%                       |
| Prince William County  | 27         | 73           | 89           | 115          | 81           | 54                                      | 200%                       |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>941</b> | <b>1,326</b> | <b>1,478</b> | <b>1,330</b> | <b>1,230</b> | <b>289</b>                              | <b>31%</b>                 |

Source: COG 2026

Note: Totals for 2022-2023 have been revised to reflect the regional number without the City and County of Frederick.

Note: The District of Columbia's 2026 unsheltered single-adult total was estimated and included in the regional total.

Prince George's County recorded the largest one-year increase in unsheltered single adults, rising from 51 in 2025 to 115 in 2026, an increase of 64 persons. Prince George's County reported that

the higher 2026 figure likely reflects a more complete count than in 2025, when the county relied on a more limited methodology; in 2026, it added more than 50 trained volunteers and full nighttime coverage across catchment areas. Loudoun County increased from 92 to 118 persons, and the City of Alexandria increased from 14 to 19 persons.

Reviewing the unsheltered count for a longer period than one year provides a different perspective on the PIT count results, although there is no single pattern across jurisdictions.

From 2022 to 2026, Loudoun County recorded the largest percentage increase in unsheltered single adults, followed by the City of Alexandria, Prince William County, and Prince George’s County. Over the same period, the District of Columbia and Montgomery County increased more modestly, while Arlington County and Fairfax County also recorded increases. As above, comparisons involving the District of Columbia’s 2026 unsheltered total should be interpreted with some caution.

The regional percentage of single adults experiencing homelessness who were unsheltered declined from 22 percent in 2025 to 19 percent in 2026. Loudoun County continued to record the highest share of single adults experiencing homelessness who were unsheltered, at 55 percent, followed by Prince William County at 35 percent and Prince George’s County at 32 percent. Fairfax County and Montgomery County recorded the lowest shares, at 10 percent and 11 percent, respectively.

**Table 11: Unsheltered Single Adults as a Percentage of Total Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness by Jurisdiction, 2022 – 2026**

| Jurisdiction           | 2022       | 2023       | 2024       | 2025       | 2026       |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| City of Alexandria     | 7%         | 12%        | 17%        | 14%        | 18%        |
| Arlington County       | 15%        | 29%        | 18%        | 20%        | 12%        |
| District of Columbia   | 20%        | 22%        | 22%        | 21%        | 19%        |
| Fairfax County         | 9%         | 20%        | 15%        | 12%        | 10%        |
| Loudoun County         | 38%        | 39%        | 55%        | 51%        | 55%        |
| Montgomery County      | 17%        | 20%        | 20%        | 20%        | 11%        |
| Prince George's County | 18%        | 33%        | 33%        | 21%        | 32%        |
| Prince William County  | 19%        | 38%        | 44%        | 48%        | 35%        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>18%</b> | <b>23%</b> | <b>24%</b> | <b>22%</b> | <b>19%</b> |

Source: COG 2026

Note: The District of Columbia’s 2026 unsheltered single-adult total was estimated and included in the regional total.

# CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

The eight CoCs in the region are working to reduce the number of residents who meet the definition of chronic homelessness.<sup>51</sup> HUD's definition of an individual experiencing chronic homelessness as an unaccompanied adult or youth head of household is someone with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years; the episodes of homelessness must cumulatively equal at least 12 months.

The definition of a chronically homeless family includes an adult member of a family who has a disabling condition and meets the same time requirements as an unaccompanied adult. Persons who are not the head of the household under the age of 18 do not meet this definition in this scenario, nor are other adults in the family who do not meet the HUD definition. However, all members of the family household are counted as persons in a family experiencing chronic homelessness. Also, persons under the age of 18 who are heads of household, including unaccompanied youth and parenting youth, may be counted as chronically homeless.

It is important to note that PIT data are self-reported, and persons who may disclose being chronically homeless, upon further investigation, may not meet HUD's definition.

Numerous studies<sup>52</sup> have found that housing individuals experiencing chronic homelessness leads to greater stability and independence and significantly reduces the overall numbers of people experiencing homelessness. This helps communities reduce public expenditures, particularly for the most frequent users of medical, judicial, and other emergency services.

For example, one study, completed by the University of California Irvine in June 2017<sup>53</sup>, found that the costs incurred by a person experiencing chronic homelessness can be cut in half (from an average of \$35,500 per year) when they are provided with permanent supportive housing. More recently, a 2022 review by the National Low Income Housing Coalition found that housing programs, which prioritize providing housing without preconditions, yield a median economic benefit of \$18,247 per person per year<sup>54</sup>. However, it is worth noting that the cost of homelessness declines when someone experiencing homelessness is housed, whether someone has experienced multiple episodes of homelessness or not.

While public cost savings are an important consideration, the value of housing persons experiencing chronic homelessness should not be measured by cost savings alone. Stable housing can improve quality of life, support long-term stability, and make it easier for individuals to address behavioral and physical health challenges once they are no longer living in crisis.

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<sup>51</sup> HUD updated the definition of chronic homelessness in 2015.

<sup>52</sup><http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/supportive-housing-is-cost-effective> and <http://www.upenn.edu/pennnews/news/housing-homeless-mentally-ill-pays-itself-according-university-pennsylvania>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.unitedwayoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/united-way-cost-study-homelessness-2017-report.pdf>

<sup>54</sup> <https://nlihc.org/resource/systematic-research-review-finds-benefits-housing-first-programs-us-outweigh-costs>

## Single Adults Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

In 2026, 2,059 single adults, or about 32 percent of all single adults experiencing homelessness, met the chronic homelessness definition. This represented about 21 percent of the region's total PIT count and a modest increase from 2025.

Table 12 on the following page shows that from 2025 to 2026, the total number of single adults experiencing chronic homelessness across the COG region increased by 94 individuals, a five percent increase. The District of Columbia's count was essentially unchanged, declining slightly from 1,430 persons in 2025 to 1,425 in 2026. Fairfax County recorded the largest numeric increase, rising from 248 to 302 persons, while Loudoun County more than doubled from 27 to 60 persons. Montgomery County, Arlington County, the City of Alexandria, and Prince William County also recorded increases. Prince George's County recorded the largest numeric decline, falling from 30 persons in 2025 to 15 in 2026. Montgomery County reported that its increase in chronic homelessness was concentrated among single adults and likely reflects longer shelter stays that led more people to meet the chronic definition by count night.

Over the longer 2022 to 2026 period, the region recorded a net increase of 333 single adults experiencing chronic homelessness, or 19 percent. Results varied considerably across jurisdictions. Montgomery County, Loudoun County, and Prince William County recorded the largest percentage increases over the period. The District of Columbia also increased modestly over the period, while Arlington County and Prince George's County recorded declines.

The region's CoCs attribute the number of residents counted as chronically homeless to a variety of related factors. An ongoing challenge to making progress ending chronic homelessness is the lack of deeply affordable and available housing options, particularly permanent supportive housing, to enable more residents to exit homelessness and remain stably housed. This challenge has persisted for many years and has grown more severe as the region's housing supply has remained constrained and costs have continued to rise.

Overall, the region works tirelessly to decrease the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness. Although the regional increase from 2022 to 2026 was modest relative to some jurisdiction-level changes, the CoCs in metropolitan Washington face significant challenges finding permanent housing in a high-cost housing market for residents who may be among the most vulnerable due to having a disabling condition and experiencing the trauma of multiple episodes of homelessness.

An important region-wide strategy for ending chronic homelessness is the use of a coordinated entry<sup>55</sup> system and a by-name list<sup>56</sup> to prioritize housing for the most vulnerable residents. Several of the region's CoCs also attribute success in constraining or reducing the number of persons experiencing chronic homelessness during the longer period between 2022 and 2026 to

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<sup>55</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Coordinated Entry," HUD Exchange, <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coordinated-entry>

<sup>56</sup> Community Solutions, "What Is a By-Name List?," <https://community.solutions/what-is-a-by-name-list>

participation in several successive nationwide campaigns, such as Community Solution’s Built for Zero initiative.<sup>57</sup>

Montgomery County, Fairfax County, Arlington County, and the District of Columbia have participated in the Built for Zero effort for years. COG and all the region’s CoCs kicked off a partnership with Community Solutions in January 2024 to implement the Built for Zero methodology, with an initial focus on ending veteran homelessness as a region and immediate goals of improving coordination, collaboration and data quality.

**Table 12: Single Adults Experiencing Chronic Homelessness by Jurisdiction, 2022 – 2026**

| Jurisdiction           | 2022         | 2023         | 2024         | 2025         | 2026         | Percent Change 2022 - 2026 |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| City of Alexandria     | 18           | 5            | 18           | 26           | 28           | 56%                        |
| Arlington County       | 39           | 18           | 35           | 23           | 29           | -26%                       |
| District of Columbia   | 1,257        | 1,314        | 1,386        | 1,430        | 1,425        | 13%                        |
| Fairfax County         | 273          | 248          | 184          | 248          | 302          | 11%                        |
| Loudoun County         | 22           | 27           | 42           | 27           | 60           | 173%                       |
| Montgomery County      | 40           | 22           | 100          | 102          | 118          | 195%                       |
| Prince George's County | 46           | 24           | 114          | 30           | 15           | -67%                       |
| Prince William County  | 31           | 33           | 49           | 79           | 82           | 165%                       |
| <b>All COG CoCs</b>    | <b>1,726</b> | <b>1,691</b> | <b>1,928</b> | <b>1,965</b> | <b>2,059</b> | <b>19%</b>                 |

Source: COG 2026

Note: Totals for 2022-2023 have been revised to reflect the regional number without the City and County of Frederick.

Table 13 (following page) provides the sheltered status breakdown of the single adults experiencing chronic homelessness counted as part of the 2026 Point-In-Time Enumeration.

In 2026, 27 percent of single adults experiencing chronic homelessness across the COG region were unsheltered, with 548 individuals counted as unsheltered out of a total of 2,059. Jurisdictions with the highest unsheltered rates included Loudoun County at 62 percent and Arlington County at 41 percent. The District of Columbia had the highest number of unsheltered single adults experiencing chronic homelessness, with 409, representing 29 percent of its total. Montgomery County and Fairfax County recorded lower unsheltered rates, at 12 percent and 15 percent, respectively.

Most residents experiencing chronic homelessness face significant physical health and mental health-related impediments. Health impediments may include physical disabilities and substance

<sup>57</sup><https://www.community.solutions/what-we-do/built-for-zero>

use disorders. The problem is more acute when individuals face multiple challenges. To provide appropriate services for a person experiencing chronic homelessness, jurisdictions and service providers must ensure that individuals receive adequate screenings and are accurately and timely diagnosed. Additionally, in many cases, people need medical assistance and other regimented methods of care and counseling. People may not immediately respond to the care they receive, or their care may be required for the remainder of their lives. In such instances, proper case management services are essential.

**Table 13: 2026 Shelter Status of Single Adults Experiencing Chronic Homelessness**

| Jurisdiction           | Total Single Adults | Number of Sheltered* Single Adults | Number of Unsheltered Single Adults | Percentage of Single Adults Who Are Unsheltered |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| City of Alexandria     | 28                  | 22                                 | 6                                   | 21%   |
| Arlington County       | 29                  | 17                                 | 12                                  | 41%   |
| District of Columbia   | 1,425               | 1,016                              | 409                                 | 29%   |
| Fairfax County         | 302                 | 258                                | 44                                  | 15%   |
| Loudoun County         | 60                  | 23                                 | 37                                  | 62%   |
| Montgomery County      | 118                 | 104                                | 14                                  | 12%   |
| Prince George's County | 15                  | 12                                 | 3                                   | 20%   |
| Prince William County  | 82                  | 59                                 | 23                                  | 28%   |
| <b>All COG CoCs</b>    | <b>2,059</b>        | <b>1,511</b>                       | <b>548</b>                          | <b>27%</b>                                      |

Source: COG 2026

\*Refers to persons experiencing chronic homeless residing in Emergency, Winter Shelters, and Safe Havens and excludes Transitional Housing.

Note: The District of Columbia's 2026 unsheltered chronic homelessness figure was estimated and included in the regional total.

Table 14 below provides a longer-term view of how the percentage of single adults experiencing chronic homelessness who were unsheltered has changed over time. From 2022 to 2026, the regional percentage remained at 27 percent, after peaking at 39 percent in 2024. The year-to-year variation shown in Table 14 may reflect changes in shelter availability, unsheltered enumeration methods, local conditions, and the ongoing challenge of providing deeply affordable supportive housing in metropolitan Washington.

**Table 14: Percentage of Unsheltered Single Adults Experiencing Chronic Homelessness by Jurisdiction, 2022-2026**

| Jurisdiction           | 2022       | 2023       | 2024       | 2025       | 2026       |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| City of Alexandria     | 28%        | 0%         | 89%        | 50%        | 21%        |
| Arlington County       | 28%        | 67%        | 40%        | 43%        | 41%        |
| District of Columbia   | 35%        | 42%        | 35%        | 37%        | 29%        |
| Fairfax County         | 11%        | 27%        | 30%        | 17%        | 15%        |
| Loudoun County         | 50%        | 44%        | 62%        | 85%        | 62%        |
| Montgomery County      | 8%         | 5%         | 31%        | 22%        | 12%        |
| Prince George's County | 7%         | 50%        | 26%        | 20%        | 20%        |
| Prince William County  | 23%        | 48%        | 51%        | 59%        | 28%        |
| <b>All COG CoCs</b>    | <b>27%</b> | <b>29%</b> | <b>39%</b> | <b>36%</b> | <b>27%</b> |

Source: COG 2026

\*Refers to persons experiencing chronic homeless residing in Emergency, Winter Shelters, and Safe Havens and excludes Transitional Housing.

Note: The District of Columbia's 2026 unsheltered chronic homelessness figure was estimated and included in the regional total.

## Families Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

Most families experiencing chronic homelessness across the region resided in emergency and/or winter shelters. In 2026, there were 59 families experiencing chronic homelessness, representing 150 total persons in families. Of those 150 persons, 69 were adults and 81 were children.

The largest number of chronically homeless families was counted in the District of Columbia, followed by Fairfax County and Prince George's County. Smaller numbers were counted in Loudoun County, Montgomery County, Arlington County, and Prince William County. The City of Alexandria did not count any families experiencing chronic homelessness in 2026. No chronically homeless families were counted as unsheltered in 2026.

# VULNERABILITIES AND LIFE EXPERIENCES

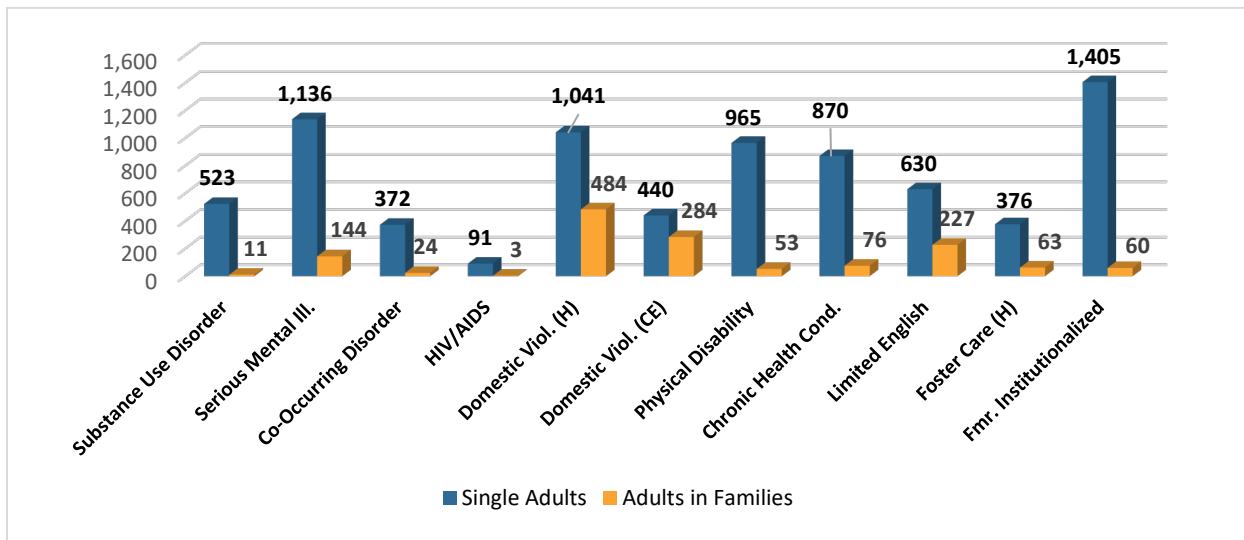
According to the 2026 enumeration, a number of the region’s residents experiencing homelessness live with chronic health conditions, physical disabilities, substance use disorders, serious mental illness, or were formerly institutionalized and discharged directly into homelessness.

Nationally, an estimated 20 to 25 percent of people experiencing homelessness live with some form of severe mental illness<sup>58</sup>, compared to only six percent who live with serious mental illness in the general population.<sup>59</sup>

While these conditions may contribute to housing instability, the experience of homelessness itself can be the cause of or exacerbate poor mental health—the stress of being without housing can contribute to anxiety, depression, sleeplessness, or lead to substance use.<sup>60</sup>

However, observers may focus on these issues and contribute to an inaccurate picture of homelessness as an intractable problem or that is something caused by individual shortcomings.<sup>61</sup> Rather, failings of multiple systems of care result in the number of people who experience homelessness.

**Figure 17: Life Experiences and Vulnerabilities of Adults Experiencing Homelessness**



Source: COG 2026

Note: The District of Columbia did not provide unsheltered single-adult responses for most subpopulation categories in 2026. Figure 17 reflects reported life experiences and vulnerabilities in the available regional PIT data.

Note: These subgroups are not mutually exclusive. It is possible for adults to be counted in more than one subgroup.

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/fixing-the-system/features-and-news/3965-research-weekly-homelessness-increases-among-individuals-with-serious-mental-illness->

<sup>59</sup> Psychology Today. “The Complex Link between Homelessness and Mental Health.” May 21, 2021. Accessed April 16, 2026. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/mind-matters-messenger/202105/the-complex-link-between-homelessness-and-mental-health> and [http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/facts/Mental\\_Illness.pdf](http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/facts/Mental_Illness.pdf)

<sup>60</sup> <http://homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/topics/mental-health>

<sup>61</sup> Center for American Progress. “Lack of Housing and Mental Health Disabilities Exacerbate One Another.” November 20, 2018, Accessed April 16, 2021 at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/poverty/news/2018/11/20/461294/lack-housing-mental-health-disabilities-exacerbate-one-another/>

Among single adults, the most frequently reported characteristic in the available 2026 PIT data was having been formerly institutionalized, followed by serious mental illness. The next most frequently reported characteristics were having a history of domestic violence, having a physical disability, and living with a chronic health condition. Other reported life experiences and vulnerabilities among single adults included limited English proficiency, substance use disorder, a current episode of domestic violence, co-occurring disorder, foster care history, and HIV/AIDS. Because The District of Columbia did not provide unsheltered single-adult responses for most of these categories, the single-adult data in Figure 17 should be understood as the available 2026 PIT data rather than a complete accounting of all regional single-adult subpopulation responses.

Among adults in families, the most defining characteristic remained an incidence of domestic violence, either as a contributing factor to the current episode of homelessness on the night of enumeration or as a history of domestic violence. Thirty-six percent of adults in families indicated having experienced domestic violence in the past, and 21 percent reported that their current episode of homelessness was related to domestic violence. This is broadly consistent with the pattern seen in recent years and remains one of the clearest findings in the family data.

Beginning with the 2013 enumeration, HUD requested data on persons who had a history of domestic violence. Although HUD no longer requires gathering data about domestic violence, both elements continue to be collected to maintain base data for trend comparison and are shown in



Outreach staff prepare for the Point-in-Time count.

Figure 17. For adults in families, the 2026 results continue to show that domestic violence remains one of the most significant life experiences associated with homelessness in the region.

The data also continues to reflect the complexity of the needs presented among adults experiencing homelessness. These subgroups are not mutually exclusive, and it is possible for adults to be counted in more than one category. As a result, Figure 17 should be understood as illustrating the range of reported life experiences and vulnerabilities present in the regional PIT data rather than a set of exclusive classifications.

# VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS



Veterans are another subset of people experiencing homelessness tracked by HUD and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This is the eleventh year that the region’s CoCs collected separate data on single adult veterans as well as veterans in families to better understand and address their unique experiences of homelessness.

Nationally, as of 2023, veterans represented five percent of the total number of persons experiencing homelessness. In the metropolitan Washington region, veterans represented about three percent of persons experiencing homelessness in the 2026 PIT count.

**Table 15: Veterans Experiencing Homelessness by Jurisdiction, 2022 – 2026**

| Jurisdiction           | 2022       | 2023       | 2024       | 2025       | 2026       | Change in Persons 2022 - 2026 | Percent Change 2022 - 2026 |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| City of Alexandria     | 2          | 5          | 2          | 10         | 8          | 6                             | 300%                       |
| Arlington County       | 6          | 6          | 13         | 4          | 3          | -3                            | -50%                       |
| District of Columbia   | 208        | 218        | 213        | 199        | 169        | -39                           | -19%                       |
| Fairfax County         | 32         | 34         | 26         | 26         | 31         | -1                            | -3%                        |
| Loudoun County         | 2          | 14         | 8          | 11         | 11         | 9                             | 450%                       |
| Montgomery County      | 15         | 23         | 32         | 42         | 45         | 30                            | 200%                       |
| Prince George's County | 8          | 8          | 18         | 9          | 20         | 12                            | 150%                       |
| Prince William County  | 11         | 11         | 16         | 17         | 13         | 2                             | 18%                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>284</b> | <b>319</b> | <b>328</b> | <b>318</b> | <b>300</b> | <b>16</b>                     | <b>6%</b>                  |

Source: COG 2026

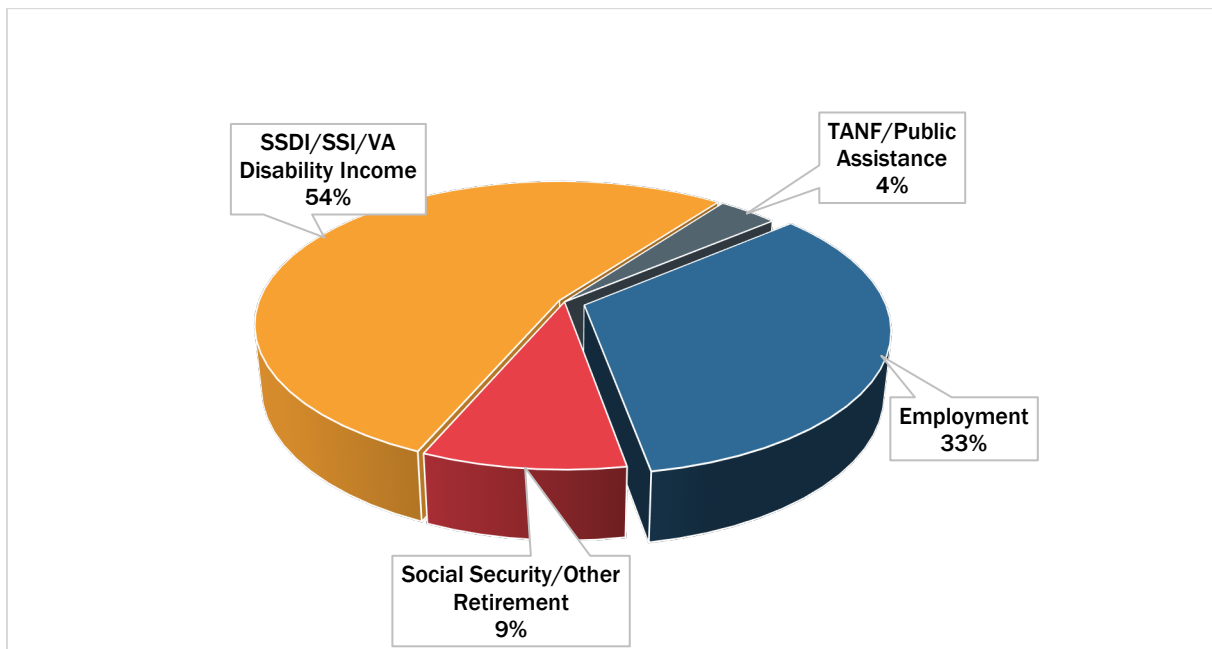
Note: Totals for 2022-2023 have been revised to reflect the regional number without the City and County of Frederick.

Between 2025 and 2026, the total number of veterans experiencing homelessness in the region decreased from 318 to 300, a decline of 18 veterans, or about six percent. The District of Columbia recorded the largest numeric decrease, falling from 199 to 169 veterans. Prince William County also declined, from 17 to 13, while the City of Alexandria and Arlington County recorded small decreases.

At the same time, several jurisdictions recorded increases. Prince George’s County had the largest numeric increase, rising from 9 to 20 veterans. Fairfax County increased from 26 to 31, and Montgomery County increased from 42 to 45. Loudoun County remained level at 11.

Over the full period from 2022 to 2026, the regional number of veterans experiencing homelessness increased from 284 to 300, a net increase of 16 veterans, or about six percent. Results varied across jurisdictions. Montgomery County recorded the largest numeric increase over the period, rising from 15 to 45 veterans, followed by Prince George’s County, which increased from 8 to 20. Loudoun County also increased in percentage terms, from 2 to 11, although from a small base. By contrast, the District of Columbia recorded the largest numeric decline over the period, falling from 208 to 169. Arlington County also declined, from 6 to 3, while Fairfax County was nearly unchanged, falling from 32 to 31.

**Figure 18: Veteran Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness: Source of Income**



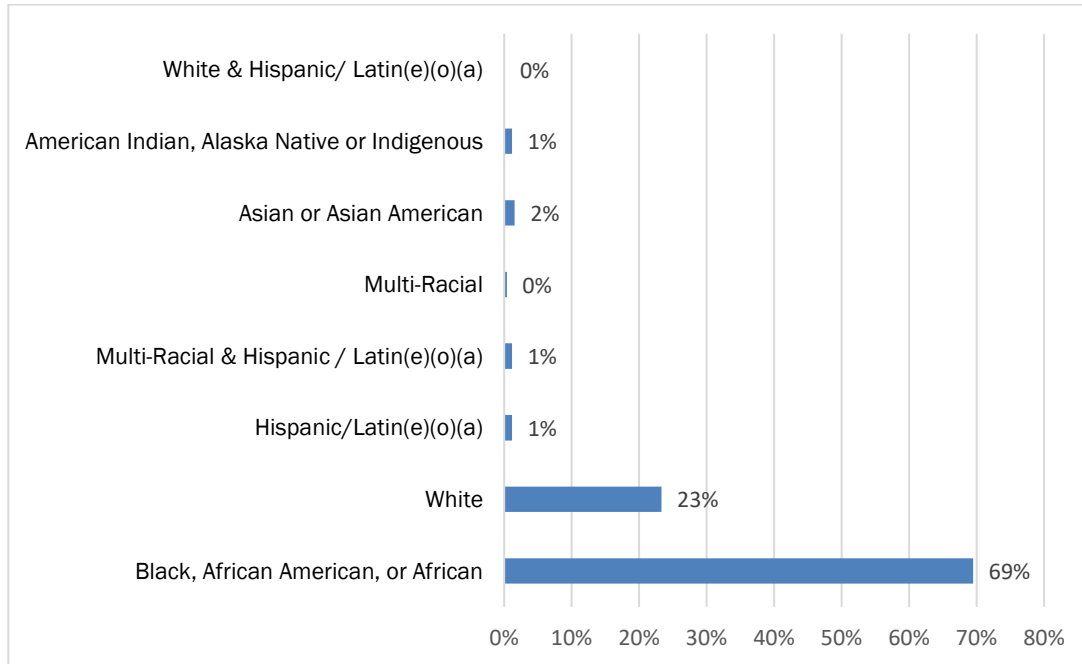
Source: COG 2026

Note: The District of Columbia did not provide primary source of income data for unsheltered single veterans in 2026.

Figure 18 reflects reported primary income sources in the available regional veteran PIT data.

Among single veterans for whom a primary source of income was reported in the available 2026 PIT data, disability income was the most commonly reported primary source at 53 percent, followed by employment at 33 percent. Retirement income accounted for 9 percent of reported primary income sources, while public assistance accounted for 4 percent. These findings continue to reflect the extent to which many veterans experiencing homelessness rely on disability-related income supports or limited earned income.

**Figure 19: Single Adult Veterans Experiencing Homelessness: Race & Ethnicity**



Source: COG 2026

Note: Data exclude race and ethnicity detail for unsheltered single veterans in the District of Columbia.

Most single adult veterans who reported their race and ethnicity identified as Black, African, or African American. In the available 2026 PIT data, about 69 percent of single adult veterans who reported race identified as Black, African, or African American, while about 23 percent identified as White. All other reported racial and ethnic identities represented much smaller shares of the total. The overwhelming majority of single adult veterans who responded to the ethnicity question identified as non-Hispanic or non-Latin(a)(e)(o).

Communities across the metropolitan Washington region use a range of coordinated strategies to reduce veteran homelessness, including eviction prevention and diversion services to keep veterans housed or identify immediate alternatives to shelter; comprehensive street outreach to engage unsheltered individuals; and permanent housing and supportive service interventions tailored to veterans' needs.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have worked together through the VA Supportive Housing (VASH) program to expand access to permanent housing for veterans experiencing homelessness. This collaboration has focused on increasing the supply and utilization of Housing Choice Vouchers specifically designated for veterans, enabling local jurisdictions to more effectively transition individuals from homelessness into stable housing environments. Coordinated regional efforts from the local to state and federal level at the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Veterans Affairs (VA) have had a positive impact on reducing the number of veterans experiencing homelessness in our region since 2020. Key elements of this success include the increased availability of permanent

housing resources (such as SSVF and VASH vouchers), tied to the use of coordinated entry to ensure that available resources are used efficiently.

COG and its participating CoCs have come together for the first time to end veteran homelessness as a region through a partnership with the national non-profit organization Community Solutions. COG and Community Solutions' partnership involves a multi-year commitment to implementing the Built for Zero<sup>62</sup> approach to preventing and ending the experience of homelessness. The methodology involves using data to help equitably drive and transform system performance to not just react to an individual's housing crisis, but act at a population level to end homelessness.

Several jurisdictions have worked with Community Solutions for many years through successive campaigns, beginning with the 100,000 Homes Campaign: the District of Columbia, Arlington County, Fairfax County, and Montgomery County. That work has helped strengthen local homelessness response systems, improve data quality, and build more coordinated approaches to identifying and housing veterans. Those jurisdictions continue these efforts while working toward other locally determined goals.<sup>63</sup>

A research study conducted by the Urban Institute on the impact of using the Built for Zero methodology in four communities found that “achieving functional zero for a population yields benefits across the entire community, including individuals both within and outside the target population; the homelessness response system; other systems (like health care, criminal, legal, and emergency systems); and the broader community.”<sup>64</sup>



Survey volunteers conducting the PIT count in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Through this innovative, region-wide coordination, the CoCs in the metropolitan Washington region are committed to leveraging real-time, high-quality data to identify, track, and rapidly respond to veterans experiencing homelessness. By employing proven strategies, including maintaining accurate by-name lists, conducting regular case conferencing, and aligning resources across jurisdictions—these CoCs work to ensure timely and lasting connections to permanent housing. This collaborative regional approach helps identify systemic gaps, streamline service delivery, and address barriers, with the goal of making veteran homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring. A later section of this report provides additional detail on recent regional progress in this work.

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<sup>62</sup> For more information about Built for Zero, please see <https://community.solutions/built-for-zero/the-movement/>

<sup>63</sup> Community Solutions' definition of functional zero accessed on April 21, 2024 at <https://community.solutions/built-for-zero/functional-zero/>

<sup>64</sup> Batko, S., Solari, C. & DuBois, N. *The Value of Ending Veteran and Chronic Homelessness in Four Communities: A Framework for Measuring Community-Wide Costs and Benefits*. Urban Institute. Accessed on April 21, 2026 at <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/104640/the-value-of-ending-veteran-and-chronic-homelessness-in-four-communities.pdf>

# SHELTER FACILITIES AND PERMANENT HOUSING SOLUTIONS

The metropolitan Washington region's multi-faceted CoC model focuses heavily on providing permanent housing solutions while continuing to provide emergency shelter for those facing an immediate housing crisis. The model for assisting persons experiencing homelessness has evolved due to the recognition that it is difficult to adequately address the systemic and individual problems that many people without permanent housing experience solely with the emergency shelter-based model. Emergency shelter alone cannot provide the intensive longer-term assistance people experiencing homelessness may need to sustain permanent housing. Housing models such as transitional, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing programs can provide this assistance, based on each individual's needs and circumstances.

Table 16 (following page) provides the region's 2026 distribution of emergency, seasonal and overflow, transitional, safe haven, rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing and other permanent housing beds for individuals, unaccompanied minors, and families experiencing homelessness. These facilities were available in the winter months during the enumeration and during the year's warmer months from April to October. It's important to note that the availability of beds for persons experiencing literal homelessness are also affected by weather conditions; during a hypothermia alert, the number of seasonal beds (shown in Table 16) increases to meet the demand for those beds.

During the 2022 enumeration, shelter capacity in all the region's CoCs had to adjust to meet public health guidelines from the CDC (Centers for Disease Control). Congregate shelters were forced to reduce bed capacity to maintain proper distancing and use existing rooms for isolation and quarantine purposes. CoCs used hotel rooms, and other public facilities (such as closed recreation centers), to accommodate the need for alternative shelter spaces and to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Capacity had to be modified not only to adjust spatial requirements, but also operationally to include staggered mealtimes, daily screening protocols, and COVID-19 testing.

During the 2026 enumeration, the region recorded 9,468 beds for persons experiencing literal homelessness, an increase of 278 beds, or three percent, from 2025. This included modest increases in emergency, seasonal and overflow beds and transitional housing beds.

The permanent housing inventory changed more substantially. The region reported 32,304 permanent housing beds for formerly homeless persons in 2026, down from 40,459 in 2025. This decline was driven by rapid re-housing, which decreased from 11,515 to 4,047 beds in use on the night of the count. Permanent supportive housing increased from 21,303 to 22,000 beds over the same period.

Rapid re-housing capacity, as reflected in the PIT count, is counted by utilization which may ebb and flow over time, while permanent supportive housing stock includes designated beds or units. A better representation of rapid re-housing bed utilization would review the number of people served during a year.

The District of Columbia recorded the largest decline in rapid re-housing beds. It reported that its family rapid re-housing HIC increased during the pandemic after COVID-19-related exit suspensions.

The 2026 decrease reflects a return to standard eligibility determinations and established time limits, contributing to the broader regional decline in rapid re-housing utilization.

Beds categorized as “other permanent housing” also represent another source of permanent housing. Persons in rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing, or other permanent housing are no longer considered to be experiencing homelessness; they are counted as “formerly homeless” persons. In 2026, the region reported 6,257 other permanent housing beds, down from 7,641 in 2025.

**Table 16: 2022 - 2026 Winter and Year-Round Inventory of Beds in Metropolitan Washington**

|  |             | Beds for Singles | Beds for Unaccompanied Youth | Beds for Persons in Families | All Beds: Winter |
|--|-------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Beds for Literally Homeless</b>             |             |                  |                              |                              |                  |
| <b>Emergency, Seasonal &amp; Overflow Beds</b> | <b>2026</b> | <b>4,611</b>     | <b>1</b>                     | <b>3,016</b>                 | <b>7,628</b>     |
|  | 2025        | 4,537            | 14                           | 2,904                        | 7,455            |
|  | 2024        | 1,124            | 4                            | 1,113                        | 2,241            |
|  | 2023        | 3,759            | 21                           | 2,162                        | 5,942            |
|  | 2022        | 4,289            | 0                            | 2,123                        | 6,412            |
| <b>Transitional Housing Beds</b>               | <b>2026</b> | <b>967</b>       | <b>6</b>                     | <b>849</b>                   | <b>1,822</b>     |
|  | 2025        | 951              | 0                            | 766                          | 1,717            |
|  | 2024        | 136              | 2                            | 1,127                        | 1,265            |
|  | 2023        | 1,039            | 8                            | 753                          | 1,800            |
|  | 2022        | 1,116            | 0                            | 820                          | 1,936            |
| <b>Safe Haven</b>                              | <b>2026</b> | <b>18</b>        | <b>0</b>                     | <b>n/a</b>                   | <b>18</b>        |
|  | 2025        | 18               | 0                            | n/a                          | 18               |
|  | 2024        | 0                | 0                            | n/a                          | 0                |
|  | 2023        | 24               | 0                            | n/a                          | 24               |
|  | 2022        | 32               | 0                            | n/a                          | 32               |
| <b>Subtotal: Beds for Literally Homeless</b>   | <b>2026</b> | <b>5,596</b>     | <b>7</b>                     | <b>3,865</b>                 | <b>9,468</b>     |
|  | 2025        | 5,506            | 14                           | 3,670                        | 9,190            |
|  | 2024        | 1,260            | 6                            | 2,240                        | 3,506            |
|  | 2023        | 4,822            | 29                           | 2,915                        | 7,766            |
|  | 2022        | 5,437            | 0                            | 2,943                        | 8,380            |
| <b>Percent Change Since 2022</b>               |             | <b>3%</b>        | <b>N/A</b>                   | <b>31%</b>                   | <b>13%</b>       |

Source: COG 2026

Note: Totals for 2022-2023 have been revised to reflect the regional number without the City and County of Frederick.

**Table 16: 2022 - 2026 Winter and Year-Round Inventory of Beds in Metropolitan Washington (Continued)**

| <b>Permanent Housing Beds for Formerly Homeless Persons</b> |             |                         |                                     |                                     |                         |
|---|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
|   |             | <b>Beds for Singles</b> | <b>Beds for Unaccompanied Youth</b> | <b>Beds for Persons in Families</b> | <b>All Beds: Winter</b> |
| <b>Permanent Supportive Housing Beds</b>                    | <b>2026</b> | <b>9,540</b>            | <b>0</b>                            | <b>12,460</b>                       | <b>22,000</b>           |
|   | 2025        | 10,097                  | 0                                   | 11,206                              | 21,303                  |
|   | 2024        | 9,862                   | 0                                   | 9,970                               | 19,832                  |
|   | 2023        | 10,315                  | 0                                   | 8,731                               | 19,046                  |
|   | 2022        | 10,067                  | 0                                   | 9,099                               | 19,166                  |
| <b>Rapid Re-Housing &amp; RRH Demonstration Beds</b>        | <b>2026</b> | <b>841</b>              | <b>0</b>                            | <b>3,206</b>                        | <b>4,047</b>            |
|   | 2025        | 887                     | 0                                   | 10,628                              | 11,515                  |
|   | 2024        | 1,273                   | 0                                   | 12,841                              | 14,114                  |
|   | 2023        | 1,209                   | 0                                   | 9,520                               | 10,729                  |
|   | 2022        | 905                     | 0                                   | 8,062                               | 8,967                   |
| <b>Other Permanent Housing</b>                              | <b>2026</b> | <b>1,283</b>            | <b>0</b>                            | <b>4,974</b>                        | <b>6,257</b>            |
|   | 2025        | 1,844                   | 0                                   | 5,797                               | 7,641                   |
|   | 2024        | 1,337                   | 0                                   | 5,833                               | 7,170                   |
|   | 2023        | 1,292                   | 0                                   | 4,959                               | 6,251                   |
|   | 2022        | 1,880                   | 0                                   | 5,409                               | 7,289                   |
| <b>Subtotal: Beds for Formerly Homeless</b>                 | <b>2026</b> | <b>11,664</b>           | <b>0</b>                            | <b>20,640</b>                       | <b>32,304</b>           |
|   | 2025        | 12,828                  | 0                                   | 27,631                              | 40,459                  |
|   | 2024        | 12,472                  | 0                                   | 28,644                              | 41,116                  |
|   | 2023        | 12,816                  | 0                                   | 23,210                              | 36,026                  |
|   | 2022        | 12,852                  | 0                                   | 22,570                              | 35,422                  |
| <b>TOTAL - All beds (literally and formerly homeless)</b>   | <b>2026</b> | <b>17,260</b>           | <b>7</b>                            | <b>24,505</b>                       | <b>41,772</b>           |
|   | 2025        | 18,334                  | 14                                  | 31,301                              | 49,649                  |
|   | 2024        | 13,732                  | 6                                   | 30,884                              | 44,622                  |
|   | 2023        | 17,638                  | 29                                  | 26,125                              | 43,792                  |
|   | 2022        | 18,289                  | 0                                   | 25,513                              | 43,802                  |
| <b>Percent Change Since 2022</b>                            |             | <b>-6%</b>              | <b>N/A</b>                          | <b>-4%</b>                          | <b>-5%</b>              |

Source: COG 2026

Note: Totals for 2022-2023 have been revised to reflect the regional number without the City and County of Frederick.

Other permanent housing is housing that is specifically targeted for persons experiencing homelessness. Examples of other permanent housing in the metropolitan Washington region includes non-profit agency partners purchasing housing units and designating them for persons who are formerly homeless and using project-based Housing Choice Vouchers to provide a longer-term rental subsidy. The data on other permanent housing are also reported to HUD and reflect a more complete picture of the number of formerly homeless beds available in the metropolitan Washington region.

The region recorded 7,628 emergency, seasonal and overflow beds in 2026, an increase of 173 beds, or two percent, from 2025. Compared with 2022, this category increased by 1,216 beds, or 19 percent. These figures can be affected by weather conditions, hypothermia operations, and the availability of temporary or seasonal shelter capacity on the night of the count.

The region recorded 1,822 transitional housing beds in 2026, an increase of 105 beds, or six percent, from 2025. Over the longer 2022 to 2026 period, transitional housing beds declined by 114 beds, or six percent. This indicates a modest recent increase within a longer-term pattern in which many communities have reduced or repurposed transitional housing resources.

The 2026 increase also shows that transitional housing remains part of the region's flexible homelessness response system. Transitional housing plays an important role for specific populations or program models where time-limited housing with services is appropriate. Such as for youth, or those fleeing domestic violence. This flexibility allows CoCs to provide housing supports that best meet the unique individual needs of people experiencing homelessness

The region had a total of 41,772 beds for residents currently or formerly experiencing homelessness across all facility categories in 2026. This was a decrease of 7,877 beds, or 16 percent, from 2025. Table 16, shown above in two parts, represents this regional inventory for persons who were literally or formerly experiencing homelessness on the night of the 2026 enumeration.

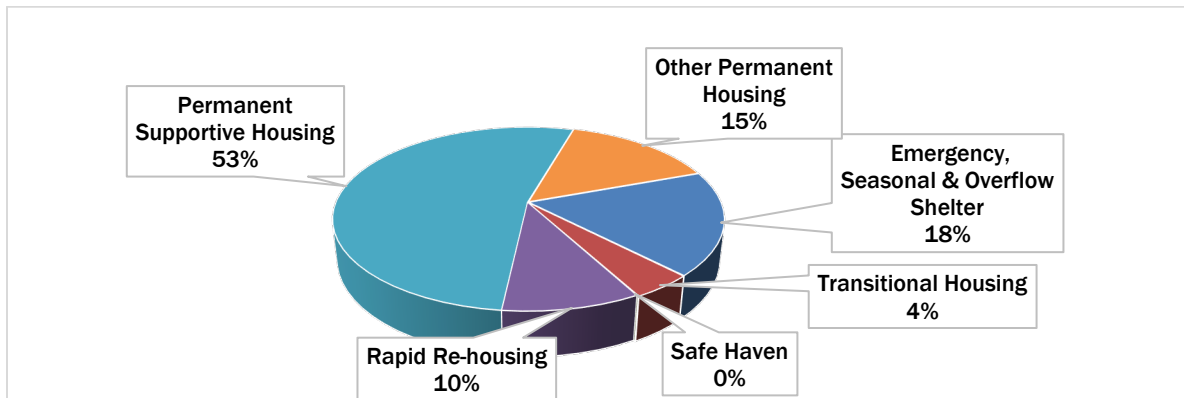
Between 2022 and 2026, the metropolitan Washington region's total bed inventory decreased by 2,030 beds, or about five percent. Permanent housing remained the largest share of the regional inventory, totaling 32,304 beds in 2026, or about 77 percent of all beds. The overall decline from 2025 to 2026 was driven primarily by the decrease in rapid re-housing beds in use on the night of the count.

According to Figure 20, permanent supportive housing accounted for the largest share of the region's bed inventory in 2026, representing 53 percent of all beds. Emergency, seasonal and overflow shelter represented 18 percent, other permanent housing represented 15 percent, rapid re-housing represented 10 percent, and transitional housing represented four percent. Safe haven beds represented less than one percent of the regional inventory.

In addition to the resources represented in Table 16, the region also has a limited supply of medical beds to provide short-term recuperative care for people who are too ill or vulnerable to use emergency shelter services, but who are not sick enough to be admitted to a hospital. These facilities provide an important short-term safety net solution for persons with significant medical needs. Some hospital systems, such as Bon Secours, recognize housing as an important social

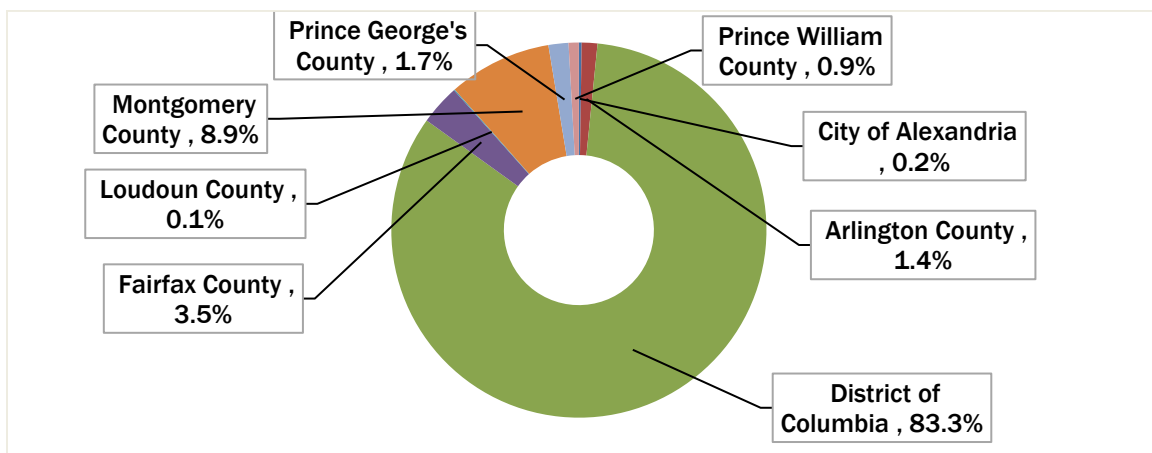
determinant of health and have partnered with housing providers to create additional permanent housing for persons experiencing homelessness.

**Figure 20: Regional Distribution of Beds by Facility Type**



Source: COG 2026

**Figure 21: Permanent Supportive Housing Beds by Jurisdiction**



Source: COG 2026

Figure 21 provides a jurisdictional view of permanent supportive housing beds, one of the region's major permanent housing resources.

In 2026, the District of Columbia accounted for the largest share of the region's permanent supportive housing beds, with 18,335 beds, or 83 percent of the regional PSH inventory. Montgomery County had the next largest inventory, with 1,960 beds, followed by Fairfax County, with 763 beds. Together, these three jurisdictions accounted for approximately 96 percent of the regional PSH inventory.

## FROM HOMELESSNESS TO PERMANENT HOUSING



Homeless service providers and government housing officials are often asked, “How many people who previously experienced homelessness are now in housing?” The question was harder to answer when governments followed the emergency shelter model of the 1980s. Under this model, people experiencing chronic homelessness comprised most of the shelter population and were less likely to access permanent housing. This happened because people who were referred on to permanent housing had to

demonstrate “readiness” for housing evidenced by completing treatment, maintaining sobriety, or otherwise successfully “graduating” from temporary housing like shelter or transitional housing.

The ultimate goal of the metropolitan Washington region’s CoCs is to help residents achieve housing stability in communities where they can thrive. This can involve a range of responses, including helping households remain safely housed, identifying immediate alternatives to shelter, providing temporary rental assistance and stabilization supports, or connecting residents to longer-term housing and services when needed.

No single intervention is appropriate for every household. Some residents may need short-term support to resolve an immediate housing crisis. Others may need emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing, or other permanent housing options, depending on their needs, circumstances, and available local resources. Across these approaches, the shared objective is to reduce the length and recurrence of homelessness and connect residents to stable housing as quickly and appropriately as possible.

Along with prevention, shelter, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, and other stabilization strategies, permanent housing remains an important part of the region’s homelessness response. Permanent supportive housing is one important resource for households that need ongoing rental assistance and services. These services may include case management, health care coordination, behavioral health supports, substance use services, life skills support, employment assistance, and other supports that help residents remain housed and live as independently as possible. The region’s CoCs, local governments, nonprofit providers, and other partners work to align housing resources and services with household needs and available local capacity.

Table 17 below provides information on the region’s residents who previously experienced homelessness and were living in different categories of permanent housing. Other permanent housing solutions, such as rapid rehousing, may meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness who do not need the level of support that permanent supportive housing provides.

**Table 17: Persons Formerly Experiencing Homelessness In Permanent Housing**

|                                |      | PSH:<br>Without<br>Children | PSH:<br>Adults and<br>Children | RRH:<br>Without<br>Children | RRH:<br>Adults<br>and<br>Children | OPH:<br>Without<br>Children | OPH:<br>Adults and<br>Children | Total<br>Housed |
|--------------------------------|------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>ALL<br/>COG<br/>CoCs</b>    | 2026 | 8,601                       | 10,756                         | 696                         | 2,984                             | 975                         | 4,877                          | 28,889          |
|                                | 2025 | 8,046                       | 9,913                          | 743                         | 10,066                            | 1,245                       | 4,211                          | 34,224          |
|                                | 2024 | 8,163                       | 7,429                          | 1,168                       | 12,788                            | 911                         | 4,431                          | 34,890          |
|                                | 2023 | 6,888                       | 6,197                          | 1,238                       | 9,569                             | 1,282                       | 3,843                          | 29,017          |
|                                | 2022 | 6,740                       | 4,631                          | 962                         | 7,917                             | 1,056                       | 3,064                          | 24,370          |
| <b>% Change<br/>Since 2022</b> |      | <b>28%</b>                  | <b>132%</b>                    | <b>-28%</b>                 | <b>-62%</b>                       | <b>-8%</b>                  | <b>59%</b>                     | <b>19%</b>      |

Source: COG 2026

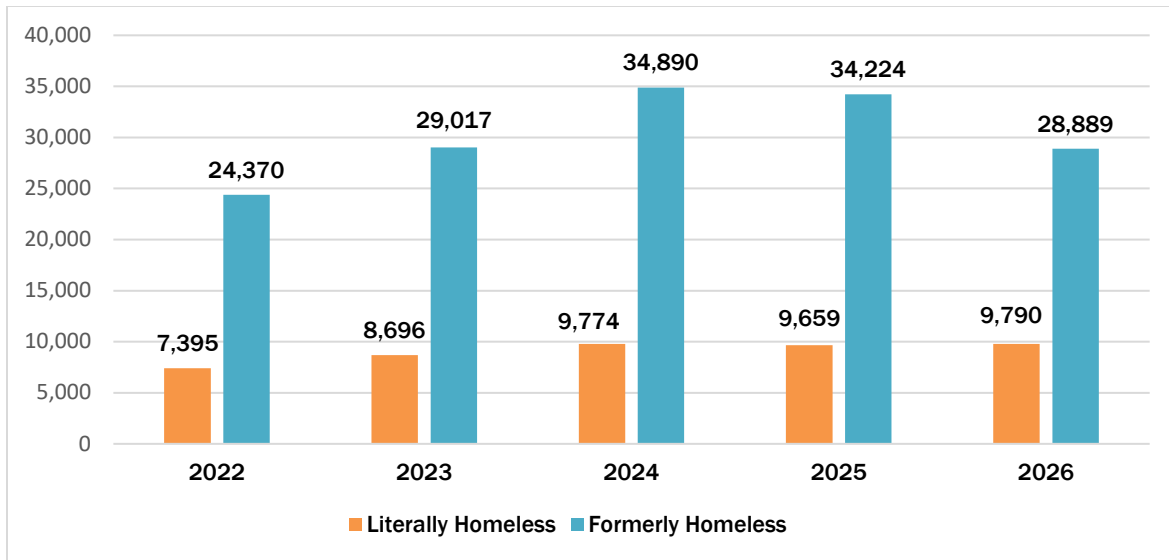
Note: Totals for 2022-2023 have been revised to reflect the regional number without the City and County of Frederick.

According to the 2026 enumeration, there were 28,889 people formerly experiencing homelessness residing in some form of permanent housing. This included 19,357 people in permanent supportive housing, 3,680 people in rapid re-housing, and 5,852 people in other permanent housing.

Table 17 shows the region’s number of people living in permanent supportive housing (PSH), rapid re-housing (RRH), and other permanent housing (OPH) by household category. From 2025 to 2026, the total number of formerly homeless persons in permanent housing declined from 34,224 to 28,889, a decrease of 5,335 people, or 16 percent. This decline was driven primarily by a decrease in rapid re-housing utilization, which fell from 10,809 people in 2025 to 3,680 in 2026. Over the same period, the number of people in permanent supportive housing increased from 17,959 to 19,357, while the number in other permanent housing increased from 5,456 to 5,852. As noted in the discussion above, part of the rapid re-housing decline reflects changes in District of Columbia family RRH utilization following the end of pandemic-era exit suspensions and a return to standard eligibility determinations and time limits.

Figure 22 compares the total number of people counted on the night of the enumeration as literally homeless with the number of people formerly experiencing homelessness who were living in permanent housing from 2022 through 2026. These categories should not be added together because they describe different housing statuses. People in permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, and other permanent housing are no longer counted as literally homeless under HUD’s PIT count framework.

**Figure 22: Region's Literally and Formerly Homeless in Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Re-Housing, and Other Permanent Housing**

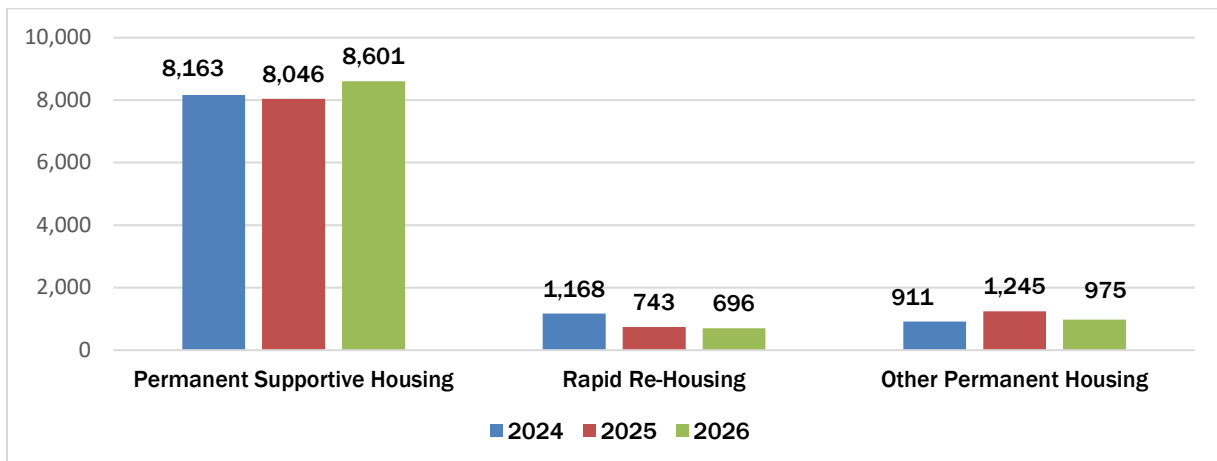


Source: COG 2026

Note: Totals for 2022-2023 have been revised to reflect the regional number without the City and County of Frederick.

By definition, people who formerly experienced homelessness include people presently living in permanent housing following a period of living on the street or in emergency or transitional shelter. Since 2014, the participating Continua of Care have gathered data on permanent housing options in addition to permanent supportive housing. Other permanent housing options include rapid re-housing, which primarily serves families experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region, and other supportive housing options.

**Figure 23: Permanent Housing Solutions for Formerly Homeless Single Adults, 2024 - 2026**

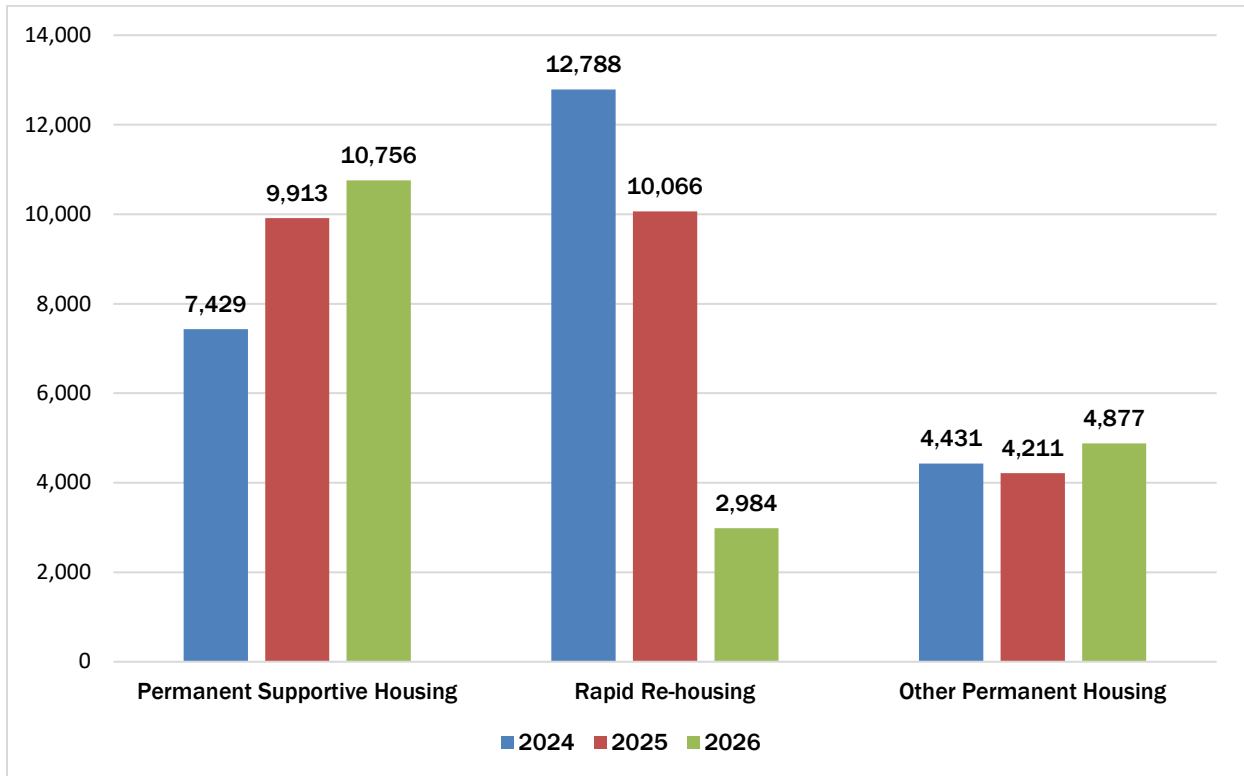


Source: COG 2026

The differences in the rates of use of permanent supportive housing and other permanent housing strategies by household type are represented graphically by Figures 23 and 24 (below) and help

demonstrate the importance of having different options to solve each person’s unique housing needs.

**Figure 24: Permanent Housing Solutions for Formerly Homeless Adults in Families, 2024 - 2026**



Source: COG 2026

As mentioned earlier in this report, it is important to note that the PIT count is only a one-day snapshot of people experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region. People face homelessness every day and this number fluctuates throughout the year. Growing pressures on the region’s competitive housing market and high rents continue to negatively impact people experiencing homelessness.

In a region where housing costs are rising faster than incomes, there are additional challenges for residents with low-wage jobs and remains a critical obstacle to ending homelessness. The region’s focus on preventing homelessness, reducing the length of time residents experience homelessness, and creating more pathways to permanent housing has contributed to the region’s efforts to reduce the number of people who experience homelessness at any given point in time.

# BUILT FOR ZERO PROGRESS

## Built for Zero and the Point-in-Time Count

As noted elsewhere in this report, the annual Point-in-Time (PIT) count provides a valuable one-night snapshot of homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region, but it also offers a limited perspective on homelessness during a single night in January. When combined with year-round data systems, the PIT count helps provide a more complete picture of homelessness and system performance in the region.

The region's Built for Zero work is one part of that broader year-round effort. Through its partnership with Community Solutions, the region's Continua of Care (CoCs) have worked to strengthen the quality and consistency of real-time homelessness data, improve understanding of changes in homelessness over time, and support more coordinated regional action. In the metropolitan Washington region, this work has focused first on veteran homelessness while also helping communities strengthen the data and practices needed for broader population-level work.

This section is included to complement, but not replace, the PIT findings presented elsewhere in this report. Its purpose is to summarize regional progress in data quality and visibility, provide a limited illustration of monthly system activity, and identify several shared priorities for the year ahead.

## Regional Progress on Data Quality and Visibility

The region made progress during 2025 and early 2026 in improving the quality and consistency of its year-round homelessness data. A central part of that work has been strengthening by-name lists, which help communities maintain more current information on who is actively experiencing homelessness and support more informed decision-making across systems and providers.

One tool used to track that progress is the quality by-name list scorecard. The scorecard provides a common framework for reviewing whether communities have the data quality, review practices, and routine workflows needed to maintain strong by-name list data. In practice, it helps communities assess whether their data is current, complete, and usable, while also providing a more consistent regional basis for improvement.

Regional progress suggests that communities are making measurable gains in this area. Scorecard results improved across the eight participating communities between March 2025 and March 2026, indicating stronger alignment with the quality standards reflected in the scorecard. Over the same period, more communities also began sharing monthly data through the Performance Management Tracker (PMT), a shared platform where communities upload monthly non-personally identifiable data so that trends and progress can be reviewed more consistently over time. By March 2026, seven of eight communities were uploading monthly Veteran data and six of eight communities were uploading All Singles data. Taken together, these changes suggest stronger regional data practices

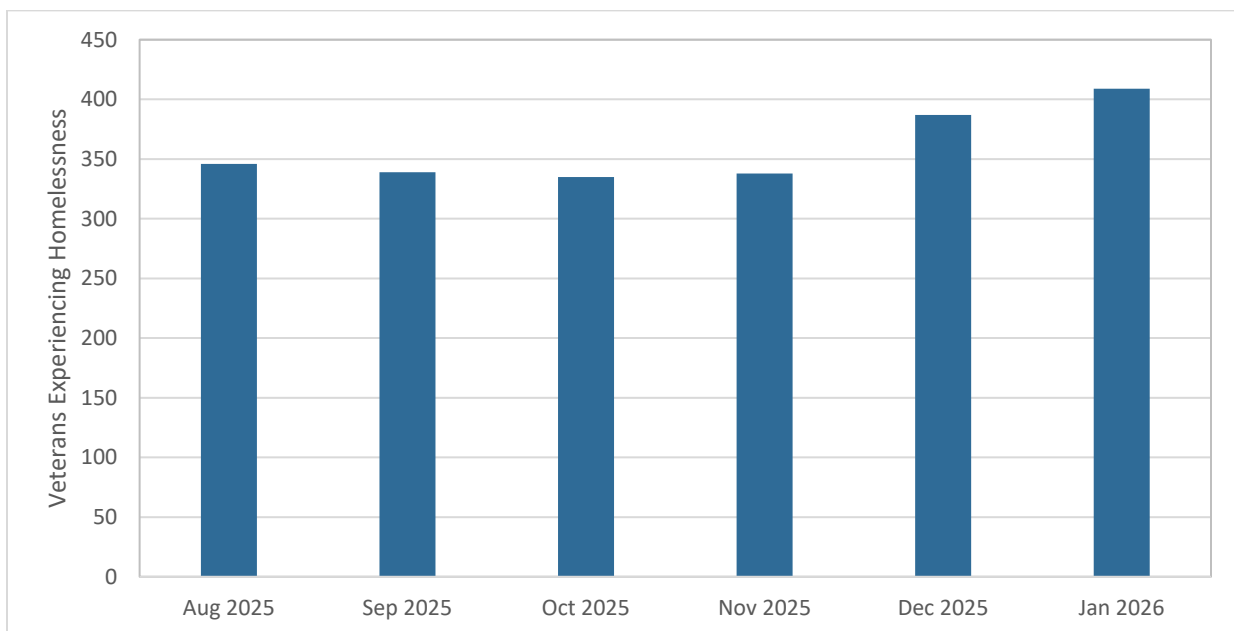
and better visibility into monthly system activity, even as communities continue working to improve consistency and completeness over time.

## Regional Monthly Veteran Homelessness

Monthly regional data provides a different but complementary view of homelessness than the annual PIT count. While the PIT count shows the number of people experiencing homelessness on a single night, monthly data can show how the total number changes over time and whether the overall trend is rising, falling, or relatively stable between annual counts.

For this reason, the region is beginning to incorporate a limited monthly illustration into the PIT report. The initial focus is on Veterans, where regional reporting is more established. Regional monthly data for Veterans shows that the total number of veterans experiencing homelessness in the metropolitan Washington region declined modestly between August and October 2025, then increased during the winter months. The regional total fell from 346 veterans in August 2025 to 335 in October 2025, then rose to 338 in November, 387 in December, and 409 in January 2026. Overall, the monthly total increased by 63 people, or 18 percent, between August 2025 and January 2026.

**Figure 25: Built for Zero Regional Monthly Veteran Homelessness Data, August 2025 to January 2026**



Source: COG 2026

Note: These monthly Built for Zero/PMT data are not directly comparable to the annual PIT veteran count. The PIT count is a one-night enumeration, while monthly PMT data reflect a separate reporting process designed to track changes in veteran homelessness over time.

These monthly data are most useful as an example of the types of questions the region can begin to ask with more consistent year-round information. For example, the increase from October 2025 to

January 2026 raises questions about whether veteran homelessness typically rises during the winter months, whether similar patterns appear in other parts of the year, and whether changes are driven by inflow into homelessness, slower exits to housing, or other local system conditions. These are questions that cannot be answered from the annual PIT counts alone.

At present, this monthly illustration is limited to Veterans because that is where regional reporting is most established. Over time, broader monthly reporting across populations would allow the region to tell a fuller and more timely story about homelessness than the annual PIT count can provide on its own. If comparable monthly data were consistently available across populations and jurisdictions, the region would be better positioned to understand changes as they occur, identify emerging pressures earlier, and interpret annual PIT results within a stronger year-round context. The region's current work to improve data quality, strengthen monthly uploads, and expand visibility beyond Veterans is an important step in that direction.

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**If comparable monthly data were consistently available, the region would be better positioned to understand changes as they occur, identify emerging pressures earlier, and interpret annual PIT results within a stronger year-round context.**

## Regional Priorities for 2026

Regional discussions in early 2026 pointed to several shared priorities for the year ahead. The clearest priority was improving data quality for single adult households through regular de-identified monthly uploads, stronger review of the data, and better regional visibility into what the data shows. Communities also emphasized the importance of helping more people exit homelessness to housing, while noting that housing supply, affordability, staffing capacity, manual processes, and funding constraints continue to limit what can be achieved in the near term.

Communities also identified several broader priorities for regional follow-up. These included improving the region's ability to review monthly data consistently, building a clearer understanding of how homelessness is changing over time, and using the COG Board of Directors' Regional Compact to End Homelessness<sup>65</sup> as a framework for coordinated action. In practice, this means continuing de-identified monthly data uploads and data quality work, especially for single adults, while local communities carry forward the improvement areas they identified for themselves.

Taken together, these priorities suggest that the region's year-round work is helping to inform and strengthen the region's data foundation, improve regional visibility, and support more coordinated discussion of homelessness system performance over time.

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<sup>65</sup> More information about the Compact can be found online at <https://www.mwcog.org/newsroom/2021/02/03/compact-expands-regional-coordination-in-effort-to-end-homelessness/>

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2026 Point-in-Time count found 9,790 people experiencing homelessness in metropolitan Washington, an increase of 131 people, or 1 percent, from 2025. Several indicators improved in 2026, including the number of persons in families, veterans experiencing homelessness, and unsheltered single adults. At the same time, results varied across jurisdictions, and several communities recorded increases. The regional picture is therefore mixed: there are areas of measurable progress, but homelessness remains a serious and uneven challenge across the region.

Annual PIT results should always be interpreted carefully. Weather, shelter availability, methodology, and local conditions can affect year-to-year counts. The 2026 count also followed a one-week postponement due to severe winter weather, and the District of Columbia used a modified approach for part of its unsheltered data. Even with those limitations, the report's aggregate findings, household composition, most jurisdiction-level totals, and broad regional trends remain strong and usable.

The 2026 results show both the importance of the longer-term view and the significance of the recent post-pandemic increase. While the regional count is only slightly above its 2019 pre-pandemic level, it remains well above the pandemic-era low point reached in 2022. This distinction is important because the region has not experienced large net growth over the full 2019 to 2026 period, but the post-2022 increase remains substantial and helps frame the challenges described below.

The significant increases in homelessness seen in recent years can be attributed, in part, to the conclusion of key federal protections and programs implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. The expiration of eviction moratoriums allowed proceedings to resume and the depletion of federal emergency rental and utility assistance has placed greater pressure on local and state governments to fill funding gaps with more limited resources. Although regional Continuums of Care (CoCs) continue to emphasize diversion and other front-end strategies to prevent homelessness, the reduced availability of deeply affordable housing and flexible rental assistance has made it more difficult to maintain housing stability. Data from the past three Point-in-Time counts reinforce the importance of targeted and timely housing resources in mitigating inflow into the homeless services system.

The 2026 enumeration suggests that the pace of regional growth has slowed compared with the sharper increases that followed the 2022 low point. The regional total increased by one percent from 2025 to 2026, after declining slightly from 2024 to 2025. This two-year pattern does not confirm a lasting shift, and results continue to vary across jurisdictions. However, it does suggest that regional homelessness has been closer to level in the most recent counts than during the earlier post-pandemic increase.

Our region faces significant challenges in its efforts to end homelessness. Several of these key challenges are not new: high rents that continue to rise every year and make it very difficult for extremely low-income households to find or maintain housing that they can afford,<sup>66</sup> and wages that

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<sup>66</sup> [http://www.urban.org/research/publication/housing-security-washington-region/view/full\\_report](http://www.urban.org/research/publication/housing-security-washington-region/view/full_report), p. 5

have not increased to keep pace with the rising cost of housing, particularly for less-educated workers.<sup>67</sup> In addition, the region's limited supply of deeply affordable and permanently affordable housing continues to widen the gap between the options available to the lowest-income households and the level of need.

These challenges are occurring in a constrained fiscal environment. Local, state, and federal resources remain essential to expanding permanent housing options, but funding availability, competition requirements, and budget constraints may affect the pace at which jurisdictions can add new permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, and other deeply affordable housing resources.

The 2026 Housing Inventory Count reinforces this resource challenge. The region's total bed inventory declined from 49,649 beds in 2025 to 41,772 beds in 2026, driven primarily by a substantial decrease in rapid re-housing beds in use on the night of the count. At the same time, permanent supportive housing increased, and beds for persons experiencing literal homelessness increased modestly. These changes underscore the importance of maintaining a flexible range of housing and service options while continuing to align resources with local needs and available funding.

During 2020, COG's Human Services Policy Committee created a Regional Compact to End Homelessness, which was adopted by resolution of the COG Board of Directors on January 13, 2021. This Compact sets forth a vision for regional cooperation to create a client-centered approach to ending the experience of homelessness by identifying and breaking down barriers to get people the resources they need.

To address these significant challenges and to implement the vision of the 2021 Regional Compact to End Homelessness, **the COG Homeless Services Planning and Coordinating Committee recommends the following:**

- 1. It is critical that housing affordable for all income levels, including subsidized housing targeted for extremely low-income households, must be available across the region for metropolitan Washington to realistically reduce and eliminate the experience of homelessness. Resources from the local, state, and federal level should be maximized with a sustained commitment to achieve an end to homelessness.**

While the provision of housing is one of the most important elements of the solution to ending homelessness, the importance of jobs that pay wages high enough to allow individuals and families to be financially stable and remain housed for the long-term is critical.

- 2. The Committee recommends that each of the region's CoC jurisdictions continuously increase its permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing and other permanent housing inventory to meet the need equitably throughout the region.** The provision of supportive wrap-around services, in conjunction with permanent housing, helps people experiencing

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<sup>67</sup><https://www.marketplace.org/shows/marketplace-morning-report/wages-arent-keeping-up-with-inflation-hitting-low-income-workers-the-hardest/>

homelessness become more confident and independent once their challenges are diagnosed and addressed.

Permanent supportive housing is one solution to ending homelessness that is particularly effective for individuals who experience chronic homelessness. However, some individuals in emergency shelter do not require the high level of care associated with permanent supportive housing. There is no “one size fits all” solution to ending a person’s housing crisis.

The greatest need in the metropolitan Washington region is permanent housing that is affordable to the lowest-income households, combined with a subsidy to be able to support the housing costs in this region and remain in housing for the long-term. Rapid re-housing is one solution in our region to ending homelessness for families and single adults facing a short-term economic crisis. However, without adequate affordable housing options, we will not be successful in assisting these families in remaining stably housed for the long-term.

- 3. Each jurisdiction should continue its efforts to reach out, assess, and house unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness.** The region’s CoCs have in place, or are developing, systems to rapidly re-house people experiencing homelessness into appropriate permanent housing.

Emergency shelters are an important resource for an immediate housing emergency, but do not provide the long-term solution to ending homelessness.

- 4. The committee further recommends that jurisdictions continue to provide job training opportunities and partner with employers to create ladders of opportunity to careers with higher-paying jobs.**

In the current high-cost environment, jurisdictions should ensure that workforce development programs are positioned to serve residents facing housing instability, including those with limited work history, lower educational attainment, disabilities, or other barriers to stable employment.

As noted earlier in this report, PIT data provides a limited, one-day perspective of the region’s progress in preventing and ending homelessness. Other data sources can also measure the extent of the number of people experiencing homelessness and help determine the best responses.

- 5. In addition to the data required by HUD, jurisdictions should continue to gather the best possible up-to-date information on persons experiencing homelessness using a by-name list and seek opportunities to share data within and across the region’s CoCs to strengthen local programs and improve outcomes for persons experiencing homelessness.**

A by-name list includes everyone in a jurisdiction experiencing homelessness, and access to housing resources is determined through a coordinated entry system and prioritized based on level of vulnerability. Jurisdictions’ use of a coordinated entry system is critical to ensure that housing resources are targeted and appropriate to end a person’s unique experience of homelessness.

These practices are also foundational to the region’s participation in Built for Zero, where real-time, person-specific data are essential for driving system-level improvements and achieving measurable reductions in homelessness.

A guiding principle in all these efforts is to ensure that the homeless services system does not compound existing structural inequities of people experiencing poor housing outcomes.

- 6. The committee recommends that each of the region's CoC jurisdictions aim to close gaps in systems of care that lead to disproportionality and disparities. To understand the impacts of those gaps and identify appropriate and effective responses, communities should consult the people most impacted in their planning, design, and implementation.<sup>68</sup>**

The CoCs in the metropolitan Washington are committed to ensuring that system transformation is not only grounded in the principles of racial equity, but that it involves people with lived experience and expertise of homelessness to advise and inform how best to assist people experiencing a housing crisis.

Further, to maximize the impact of these actions, the committee also recommends coordinating with state agencies, advocates, legal and health care professionals, philanthropic organizations, and other stakeholders to address any gaps in the region's systems of care. The eight jurisdictions comprising COG's CoCs worked hard over the past year to respond to homelessness, strengthen system performance, and limit further growth.

However, housing availability and funding challenges at all levels of government will have a direct impact on whether the region's CoCs are able to prevent an increasing number of people experiencing homelessness in coming years.

The availability of federal stimulus funds provided during the COVID-19 pandemic provided an opportunity for innovation at the local level and to demonstrate that the region's CoCs can make progress towards the goal of reducing the number of residents who experience a housing crisis, given additional tools and resources. As those resources have ended, continued progress in preventing and ending homelessness in metropolitan Washington will require sustained commitment.

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**“This year’s Point-in-Time Count shows that progress is possible. Our region saw encouraging decreases in veteran and family homelessness, reflecting the value of sustained coordination across jurisdictions. But homelessness remains a serious regional challenge, and continued progress will require strong partnership, effective housing strategies, and ongoing commitment.”**

**—Christine Hong, COG Homeless Services Committee Chair**

Despite the many complex and unique challenges the region faced during the past year, member jurisdictions and their partners continued to help many residents return to permanent housing. The region must build on these efforts, preserve and expand effective housing pathways, and continue working toward the goal of providing permanent, affordable homes for all residents in addition to managing immediate crises through the emergency shelter system. Housing is the foundation for a safe and healthy life. No one should have to live without a place to call home.

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<sup>68</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness et al., The Framework for an Equitable COVID-19 Homelessness Response, Version 4, October 19, 2020, <https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-Framework-4.29.2020-1.pdf>

**Table 18: People Experiencing Literal Homelessness by Jurisdiction, 2022 – 2026**

| Jurisdiction/Year               |      | Households Without Children | Unaccompanied Youth/<br>Households with Only Children | Households with Adults and Children | All Persons |
|---------------------------------|------|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| City of Alexandria              | 2026 | 104                         | 0   | 85                                  | 189         |
|                                 | 2025 | 101                         | 0   | 65                                  | 166         |
|                                 | 2024 | 103                         | 0   | 84                                  | 187         |
|                                 | 2023 | 82                          | 0   | 70                                  | 152         |
|                                 | 2022 | 73                          | 0   | 47                                  | 120         |
| <b>2022-2026 Percent Change</b> |      | <b>42%</b>                  | <b>N/A</b>  | <b>81%</b>                          | <b>58%</b>  |
| Arlington County                | 2026 | 203                         | 0   | 65                                  | 268         |
|                                 | 2025 | 183                         | 0   | 88                                  | 271         |
|                                 | 2024 | 169                         | 0   | 74                                  | 243         |
|                                 | 2023 | 147                         | 0   | 66                                  | 213         |
|                                 | 2022 | 132                         | 0   | 50                                  | 182         |
| <b>2022-2026 Percent Change</b> |      | <b>54%</b>                  | <b>N/A</b>  | <b>30%</b>                          | <b>47%</b>  |
| District of Columbia            | 2026 | 3,779                       | 16  | 1,568                               | 5,363       |
|                                 | 2025 | 3775                        | 7   | 1356                                | 5,138       |
|                                 | 2024 | 3,950                       | 10  | 1,656                               | 5,616       |
|                                 | 2023 | 3,741                       | 11  | 1,170                               | 4,922       |
|                                 | 2022 | 3,397                       | 9   | 1,004                               | 4,410       |
| <b>2022-2026 Percent Change</b> |      | <b>11%</b>                  | <b>78%</b>  | <b>56%</b>                          | <b>22%</b>  |
| Fairfax County                  | 2026 | 711                         | 2   | 652                                 | 1,365       |
|                                 | 2025 | 615                         | 1   | 706                                 | 1,322       |
|                                 | 2024 | 581                         | 3   | 694                                 | 1,278       |
|                                 | 2023 | 555                         | 3   | 752                                 | 1,310       |
|                                 | 2022 | 626                         | 1   | 564                                 | 1,191       |
| <b>2022-2026 Percent Change</b> |      | <b>14%</b>                  | <b>100%</b>   | <b>16%</b>                          | <b>15%</b>  |
| Loudoun County                  | 2026 | 216                         | 0   | 99                                  | 315         |
|                                 | 2025 | 179                         | 0   | 73                                  | 252         |
|                                 | 2024 | 212                         | 0   | 91                                  | 303         |
|                                 | 2023 | 142                         | 0   | 78                                  | 220         |
|                                 | 2022 | 66                          | 0   | 33                                  | 99          |
| <b>2022-2026 Percent Change</b> |      | <b>227%</b>                 | <b>N/A</b>  | <b>200%</b>                         | <b>218%</b> |

Source: COG 2026

**Table 18: People Experiencing Literal Homelessness by Jurisdiction, 2022 - 2026 (Continued)**

| Jurisdiction/Year               |      | Households Without Children | Unaccompanied Youth/<br>Households with Only Children | Households with Adults and Children | All Persons |
|---------------------------------|------|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Montgomery County               | 2026 | 742                         | 0   | 378                                 | 1,120       |
|                                 | 2025 | 798                         | 0   | 712                                 | 1,510       |
|                                 | 2024 | 748                         | 0   | 396                                 | 1,144       |
|                                 | 2023 | 625                         | 0   | 269                                 | 894         |
|                                 | 2022 | 408                         | 0   | 173                                 | 581         |
| <b>2022-2026 Percent Change</b> |      | <b>82%</b>                  | <b>N/A</b>  | <b>118%</b>                         | <b>93%</b>  |
| Prince George's County          | 2026 | 360                         | 7   | 416                                 | 783         |
|                                 | 2025 | 242                         | 2   | 364                                 | 608         |
|                                 | 2024 | 292                         | 3   | 363                                 | 658         |
|                                 | 2023 | 273                         | 10  | 376                                 | 659         |
|                                 | 2022 | 273                         | 0   | 298                                 | 571         |
| <b>2022-2026 Percent Change</b> |      | <b>32%</b>                  | <b>N/A</b>  | <b>40%</b>                          | <b>37%</b>  |
| Prince William County           | 2026 | 234                         | 0   | 153                                 | 387         |
|                                 | 2025 | 239                         | 0   | 153                                 | 392         |
|                                 | 2024 | 204                         | 0   | 141                                 | 345         |
|                                 | 2023 | 190                         | 0   | 136                                 | 326         |
|                                 | 2022 | 145                         | 0   | 96                                  | 241         |
| <b>2022-2026 Percent Change</b> |      | <b>61%</b>                  | <b>N/A</b>  | <b>59%</b>                          | <b>61%</b>  |
| COG REGION                      | 2026 | 6,349                       | 25  | 3,416                               | 9,790       |
|                                 | 2025 | 6,132                       | 10  | 3,517                               | 9,659       |
|                                 | 2024 | 6,259                       | 16  | 3,499                               | 9,774       |
|                                 | 2023 | 5,755                       | 24  | 2,917                               | 8,696       |
|                                 | 2022 | 5,120                       | 10  | 2,265                               | 7,395       |
| <b>2022-2026 Percent Change</b> |      | <b>24%</b>                  | <b>150%</b>   | <b>51%</b>                          | <b>32%</b>  |

Source: COG 2026

# APPENDIX A: EMERGENCY SHELTER AND HOUSING CRISIS RESOURCES

The information below is designed to assist a person experiencing a housing crisis with an emergency solution. Additional shelter resources may become available during the winter months (typically November through March each year) when a hypothermia alert is issued. In addition to the information below, regional resources may be found online via the Interfaith Council of Metropolitan Washington's Emergency Services Directory at <https://ifcmw.org/resources/emergency-services-directory>.

## ALEXANDRIA, VA

(703) 746-5700 Homeless Services Assessment Center (Monday through Friday, 8 A.M. to 5 P.M., except holidays). After hours, persons needing emergency overnight stay should contact the Alexandria Community Shelter (703-746-3660) or Carpenter's Shelter (703-548-7500 ext. 228).

## ARLINGTON, VA

(703) 228-1300 during business hours or (703) 228-1010 (24/7)

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

(202) 399-7093 (24/7) or 311 in DC. Youth under the age of 18, call Sasha Bruce Youth Hotline: (202) 547-7777

## FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA

(703) 222-0880 (Households with Adults and Children), Coordinated Services Planning; Adults Only Households: (703) 820-7621 (Baileys), (703) 799-0200 (Kennedy), and (703) 437-1975 (Embry Rucker)

## LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

(703) 777-0420 weekdays 8:30 AM - 5 PM - Coordinated Entry Services. After hours, call (571) 258-3033 (Adults only households), (703) 724-1555 (Households with Adults and Children, single women, and single mothers), (703) 777-6552 (survivors of domestic violence)

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD

(240) 907-2688 or 240-777-4000 Montgomery County Crisis Center (24/7) (TTY 240-777-4815)

## PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD

(888) 731-0999 (toll free in Maryland) or (301) 864-7095 (24/7)

## PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VA

(703) 792-3366, Coordinated Entry System (CES), 7 days a week, 9 AM - 9PM

## **APPENDIX B: HOMELESSNESS ENUMERATION JURISDICTIONAL NARRATIVE REPORTS**

This section provides each of the eight participating Continua of Care the opportunity to provide additional details regarding the Point-in-Time count conducted in their jurisdiction as well as an overview of the activities of their respective CoCs during the past year.

# CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

## Introduction and CoC Overview

The Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness in the City of Alexandria (The Partnership) is made up of public and private non-profit homeless, housing, and mainstream service providers, faith-based and educational institutions, advocates, former homeless consumers, and other community stakeholders serves as the homeless services Continuum of Care (CoC). The Partnership develops and implements the Strategic Plan to End Homelessness in the City of Alexandria and coordinates and oversees the delivery of prevention and homeless services to residents experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. Success for the Partnership includes 1) reductions in the number of homeless experiences; 2) shortened lengths of homelessness; and 3) exits from homelessness to permanent housing.

The Alexandria CoC provides a combined total of 124 year-round emergency shelter beds, 40 for households without children and 84 for households with adults and children. Combined, the transitional housing inventory consisted of 21 beds for households with adults and children. The Domestic Violence Program Shelter provided 20 undesignated year-round beds to serve people in imminent danger of domestic or sexual violence. From November 1 to April 15, the Winter Shelter Program provided an additional 50 undesignated seasonal beds to protect unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness from exposure-related conditions such as hypothermia and frostbite during cold weather months.

## Local System Context and PIT/HIC Interpretation

The 2026 Point-in-Time process includes information from the Homeless Management Information System, which collects data from individuals and families housed at homeless service programs such as the Emergency Shelter, Winter Shelter, Transitional Housing, as well as unsheltered residents. Data from the Domestic Violence (DV) Shelter was also collected. The 2026 PIT Count, conducted on February 4th, identified 189 people experiencing homelessness, a 14% increase from the 2025 PIT Count (166), and a 1% increase from 2024 (187). This number only includes persons meeting HUD's homeless definition and does not include those who are couch-surfing and doubling up, as they are outside the purview of the Count.

The 2026 PIT included 104 households without children, a 3% increase from 2025. There were 68 single men and 36 single women identified, which is a 3% increase for both men and women from the 2025 count. There were 24 households with adults and children, two more than last year, and none were chronically homeless. With a similar number of adults experiencing homelessness, the overall increase was due to a high number of children on the 2026 PIT where 56 kids were counted, compared to 36 in 2025. In 2026, there was also a 26% decrease in the number of households that reported experiencing homelessness due to fleeing domestic violence, 23 in 2025 down to 17 in 2026. The 2026 PIT included 19 individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness, an increase from 14 in 2025. It also identified similar number of people with a chronic health condition, compared to an increase in those experiencing chronic homelessness. The 53% decrease from 2025 to 2026 in limited English speakers correlates with a broader reduction in service access for the population, anecdotally, although the number of Spanish speakers counted in this population has largely remained the same (8 in 2025, 6 in 2026) what has decreased are the number of Amharic speakers (7 in 2025 to 2 in 2026) which largely accounts for the difference year-to-year.

Aligning with the City's priorities of belonging, the CoC sorted the data by race, finding that 133 or 71% of those experiencing homelessness identified as Black, African American, or African in 2026;

this is a notable increase from the 64% recorded in 2025. To address disparities, the CoC's Pathways to Opportunity and Access Committee (POAC) was established to mitigate disparities through education, awareness, and centering the voice of those with lived experience of homelessness through compensating them in program and policy discussions.

While the number of those experiencing homelessness increased from 2025 to 2026, the count was nearly identical to that conducted in 2024 and is still slightly below pre-pandemic counts from 2020. Unfortunately, that decrease can be attributed to superficial changes, including reclassification of some homeless service programs, and fluctuating family sizes in shelter, including the DV shelter which had no children in 2025 but served 13 of the 20 people served in 2024 and 6 of the 11 served in 2026 PIT counts. Without these changes, Alexandria PIT count would be at or above pre-pandemic levels. One factor that impacts the increase in those experiencing homelessness is Alexandria's housing market where costs are so high that the existing funding subsidies do not go as far as they once did, ultimately serving fewer households. Another factor is the continuing economic spikes in housing, food, and transportation costs. Without additional resources and policies like those established in response to the pandemic, the impact of CoC services has been limited to reactive solutions.

In the context of the past 5 years, the 2026 PIT Count further illustrates the rebound to pre-pandemic numbers that was predicted since COVID specific resources and tenant protections have sunset. It also highlights the efficacy of the CoC system and its providers for succeeding in service delivery when emergency funds were available, through strategic planning and system design. While these strategies have helped the CoC address increased housing instability over the past year, community needs continue to rise.

### **Built for Zero and Continuous Systems Improvement**

The Alexandria CoC is one of the four COG region communities that is new to the Built for Zero Initiative, signing on in 2024 when the cohort began. While the CoC already has internal mechanisms for tracking homeless system entries and exits, not all policies and processes have been formally documented to the data quality standard mandated by the Built for Zero initiative, so much of Alexandria's improvement to date has been around memorializing that work within CoC governance structures. Documents including Client Deactivation and Client Engagement policies were drafted and approved in 2025, pushing the CoC closer towards its data quality goals. In 2026, the CoC aims to achieve quality by name data for veterans and begin uploads of data for all single adults.

Alexandria is smaller than our neighbors in geography and population, so our PIT counts are expectedly lower, and our annualized inflow of homeless residents is as well. Veterans remain the best resourced subpopulation within homeless services and have served as a great starting point for Alexandria's Built for Zero efforts. As the exercise is scaled up to track all single adults this year, more necessary improvements will be made to the CoC's housing crisis response system.

### **Conclusions and Lessons Learned**

The CoC identified solutions for shortfalls at all points on the housing continuum, from prevention to shelter to housing. The work of the Eviction Prevention Task Force and Rapid Rehousing programs have directly resolved housing crises for Alexandrians. Still, neither are without unique challenges including:

- Households still struggle to find affordable units for which they qualify;
- One fifth of residents seeking access to emergency shelter reported eviction as the reason for homelessness at the time of the PIT;

- The community need for rental assistance consistently exceeds available financial resources; and
- Eligibility guidelines of most available financial resources prioritize those already in crisis and precariously housed; and
- Grantors' guidelines for rapid re-housing funding assistance dictate that rental subsidies do not exceed fair market rents, which creates a barrier for households to access limited affordable housing.

During this past year, the CoC has employed creative strategies to address the rising need for housing crisis support, such as:

- Collaboration with community partners such as the Alexandria Health Department, Community Services Board, and Neighborhood Health to support residents in a holistic way, taking into consideration both medical and behavioral health needs; and
- Carpenter's Shelter was awarded \$600,000 in Rapid Rehousing funds to move Alexandrians from homelessness into stable housing through the Homeless Reduction competitive grant process.
- Utilizing low-income housing tax credit programs to develop affordable housing such as the Waypoint, the Spire, and Square 511.
- Units funded by the Department of Behavioral Health and Development Services (DBHDS) and operated in tandem by the Alexandria Office of Housing and the Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) as permanent supportive housing for residents with incomes below 50% of the Area Median Income. These units are prioritized for those discharged from state psychiatric facilities, experiencing chronic homelessness, frequent users of hospital and criminal justice interventions, and residents of City operated group homes.

Moving forward, the CoC will continue to advocate for data informed best practices, such as adding more positions to solve homelessness, and growing resources for subsidizing housing for residents living with low incomes.

# ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

## Introduction and CoC Overview

Arlington County is an urban county home to approximately 244,300 residents within the County's 26.1 square mile radius in 2026. The Arlington County Continuum of Care (CoC) works to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring by providing affordable and sustainable housing, tailored services, and by centering the voices and expertise of people with lived experience of homelessness. Arlington's CoC is led by the Arlington County Department of Human Services (DHS). The CoC's work is guided by [Arlington County's Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. A Way Home for All](#) which is implemented across collaborative committees, workgroups, and programs under its CoC governance model.

The Arlington County CoC includes the following interventions and core services:

- A Centralized Access System (CAS): that provides a core intake process for households and residents to access a variety of human services across the entire Arlington CoC. The Arlington County CoC's CAS matches households as quickly as possible with the interventions that will most effectively and efficiently prevent or end their homelessness and lead to long-term stability.
- Street Outreach and Engagement: Outreach workers connect with individuals living outside or in other places not meant for human habitation to help navigate them towards a path of stability and housing. Outreach teams include social workers, behavioral health clinicians, and nursing staff.
- Targeted Prevention: Targeted efforts to provide acute housing crisis intervention services to persons most at-risk of homelessness are an integral part of the Arlington CoC.
- Shelters: Four Arlington County homeless shelters provide a safe, structured environment for singles and families who are experiencing homelessness as well as survivors of intimate partner violence. The Arlington CoC includes 97 single adult shelter beds, 48 family shelter beds, and 32 overflow shelter beds for families. An additional 25 shelter beds are available for survivors of intimate partner violence, operated by an Arlington County-based domestic violence partner.
- Hypothermia Shelter: Arlington County provides low-barrier access to hypothermia shelter through the winter months (November – March) and is included in the Point-in-Time Count with all other shelters. Unlike the traditional emergency shelter options, people experiencing homelessness often utilize hypothermia shelter to take refuge from inclement weather and may be less interested in long-term shelter services. During Hypothermia seasons shelter staff utilize this opportunity to build rapport and relationships with individuals and households that experience homelessness to encourage them to engage in on-going services. This year's capacity included 25 hypothermia beds and 15 overflow beds.
- Transitional Housing: The CoC has two transitional housing programs. Fourteen (14) single adult transitional housing beds for persons in early stages of their recovery. The program assists adults by providing short-term housing assistance with therapeutic and social supports to assist residents in their recovery goals while assisting them in identifying permanent housing for the long-term. The CoC also has seven (7) non-congregate beds prioritized for persons who would otherwise experience unsheltered homelessness. This transitional housing project functions like emergency shelter and is part of the Supplemental Notice of Funding Opportunity (SNOFO) grant for a Joint Transitional Housing-Rapid Rehousing awarded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

- **Rapid Rehousing:** Rapid Rehousing programs move households quickly out of shelter into housing with term-limited rental support and services to help families maintain housing.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH):** Permanent supportive housing programs provide rental assistance and case management services for households who are homeless and have (or a family member has) a disabling condition. Arlington’s CoC includes federal, state and locally funded PSH programs to provide multiple pathways to long-term, supportive housing.

The Arlington County CoC is also a proud member of the Built for Zero community. Arlington County has been a long-term participant in the Built for Zero initiative, starting in 2015 with ending Veteran homelessness. Since then, in addition to sustaining an end to Veteran homelessness, Arlington County joined efforts to reach functional zero for all, and in 2023 incorporated ‘Zero for All’ goals and milestones throughout its priorities. Recent efforts have been made to improve data quality and to utilize a comprehensive By-Names List to identify all people actively experiencing homelessness in Arlington. This list is used to prioritize people experiencing homelessness for housing resources as they become available. These efforts also aide the Arlington CoC in monitoring the “inflow and outflow” of the system: the monthly number of people entering homelessness in the CoC, the monthly number of people actively experiencing homelessness in the CoC, and the monthly number of people exiting homelessness.

## Point-in-Time Count and Systemic Trends

As in years past, the 2026 Point-in-Time (PIT) was an important marker for Arlington County’s CoC to measure the impact of the continuously shifting dynamics happening across the country and in the region in respects to housing and homelessness. Arlington County’s CoC conducted its 2026 PIT Count on the overnight of February 4, 2026 to February 5, 2026. Teams of surveyors including CoC staff, outreach teams, and County leadership conducted surveys with emergency shelter and transitional housing program participants, as well as people who were identified as experiencing unsheltered homelessness on the night of the count. People experiencing unsheltered homelessness received bagged meals, a backpack of supplies, a gift card for completing a survey, and other supplies upon request. Surveyors were provided with Narcan and Fentanyl awareness training, including lifesaving and harm prevention supplies while canvassing the county.

In 2026, the Arlington County CoC surveyed 268 people on the night of the PIT Count. This reflects a 1% decrease (or a reduction of three (3) people) as compared to the 2025 PIT Count. Of the 268 people surveyed, 25 people were unsheltered as compared to 37 people in 2025. This reflects a decrease of 32% (or a reduction of 12 people). In 2026, 243 people were residing in emergency shelter and transitional housing. This reflects a four percent (4%) increase (or an increase of nine (9) people). As shown in Table 1, overall reductions in the 2026 PIT Count were driven by reductions in family homelessness and unsheltered homelessness but tempered by increases in single adult homelessness. Factors contributing to these shifts include weather events leading up to the 2026 PIT Count and changes to shelter utilization and capacity of Arlington County resources.

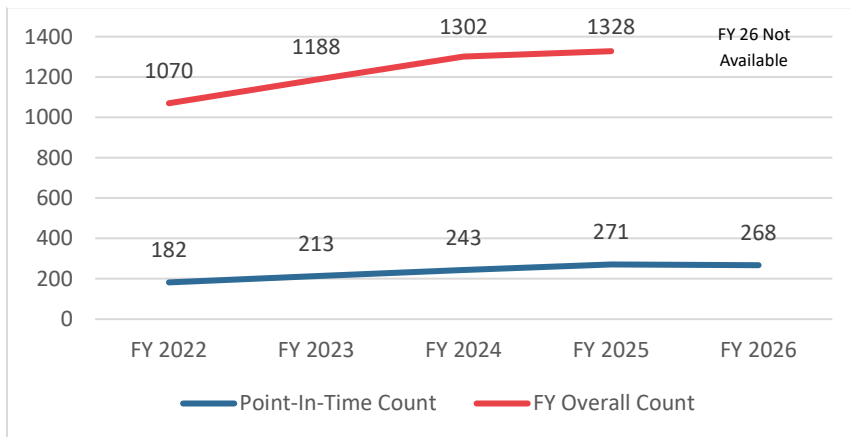
**Table 19: 2025-2026 PIT Count Trends for Arlington County**

| Population                              | 2026 Number | Pct % of Total | 2025 Number | Pct % Change Between '25-'26 |
|---|-------------|----------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| Total Population: persons               | 268         | 100%           | 271         | -1%                          |
| Unsheltered: persons                    | 25          | 9%             | 37          | -32%                         |
| Sheltered*: persons                     | 243         | 91%            | 234         | 4%                           |
| Single Adults: persons                  | 203         | 76%            | 183         | 11%                          |
| Families: persons (households)          | 65 (17)     | 24%            | 88 (33)     | -26%                         |
| Veterans: persons                       | 3           | 1%             | 4           | -25%                         |
| Aged 18-24: persons (households)        | 20 (19)     | 7%             | 12 (10)     | 67%                          |
| Domestic Violence: persons (households) | 27 (19)     | 10%            | 18 (11)     | 50%                          |
| Chronic Homelessness: persons           | 31          | 12%            | 23          | 35%                          |

\*Includes Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing

The 2026 PIT Count is the first time since 2022 Arlington County experienced an overall reduction in people experiencing homelessness on the night of the PIT Count. Since 2022, Arlington County experienced annual increases in homelessness as the community began to observe returns to pre-Covid pandemic levels of need. This is consistent with overall fiscal year-end (July 1-June 30) counts of people served across the Arlington County’s CoC’s homeless response system (including street outreach, shelter, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing). Between FY 2022 and FY 2025, nearly 300 additional people were served across the CoC. (See Figure 1.)

**Figure 11: Arlington County PIT Counts & Overall FY Count of Persons Served (FY2022 - FY2026)**



## Unsheltered Homelessness

On the night of the 2026 PIT Count, there were 25 people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. This reflects a 32% reduction in unsheltered homelessness when compared to the 2025 PIT Count. Those experiencing unsheltered homelessness represent just under 10% of those experiencing homelessness in Arlington County on the night of the PIT Count. The reduction in unsheltered homelessness contributed to the overall decrease in homelessness experienced during the 2026 PIT Count. The reduction in unsheltered homelessness was largely a result of the significant weather events around the entire Washington DC metropolitan leading up to and during the 2026 count. This included a severe winter storm which delayed the PIT Count by one week. Conditions were not remarkably better even with the delay. Temperatures remained extremely cold (dropping into the

teens overnight) and prevented snow and ice from melting thereby resulting in slippery conditions and inaccessible surveying areas. Surveyors used the snowy conditions to identify potential encampments where foot traffic could be seen in the snow. Leading up to the storm, outreach teams were also encouraging people to seek shelter and services, warning people of the dangers of sleeping outside in snowy and frigid conditions. Shelters expanded warming capacity for those willing to come inside during this time.

## Sheltered Homelessness

Despite the overall one percent (1%) decrease of people experiencing homelessness during the 2026 PIT Count, the sheltered count increased by four percent (4%). This was largely attributed to an increase in single adults sheltered on the night of the PIT Count. Single adults experiencing sheltered homelessness increased by 22% (an increase of 32 people). Five (5) additional people were residing in Transitional Housing, and an additional 27 people were residing in emergency shelter as compared to the 2025 PIT Count. An additional nine (9) people were served in the hypothermia shelter; eight (8) additional single adult survivors of domestic violence (DV) were served in the DV shelter; and seven (7) additional transition-aged youth households without children were served in shelter traditionally offered to families. These trends align with other population-level increases observed in PIT Count trends and reflect the high demand for shelter space during the winter weather experienced in the region.

Families experiencing sheltered homelessness decreased by 26%. This decrease was largely a result of changes to family shelter capacity and utilization. In 2025, Arlington County provided hotel/motel resources for families experiencing homelessness in response to the loss of family shelter capacity that year. (An area non-profit had repurposed its family shelter for safe-housing options for survivors of DV.) This service ended mid-calendar year in 2025, at which time overflow for family shelter shifted to master-leased units in the community which are operated by a local non-profit organization. This shift resulted from a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process led by Arlington County for the operations of emergency shelter and overflow emergency shelter in non-congregate settings. On the night of the 2025 PIT Count, 46 people in 19 households were being sheltered in hotels or motels provide by Arlington County. During the 2026 PIT Count, only 14 people in five (5) households were accessing overflow shelter, reflecting a decrease of 32 people or 14 households. With added capacity in supportive services and an emphasis on rapid resolution of homelessness, this program is sheltering fewer households overall and at any given point in time.

## Other Priority Sub-Populations

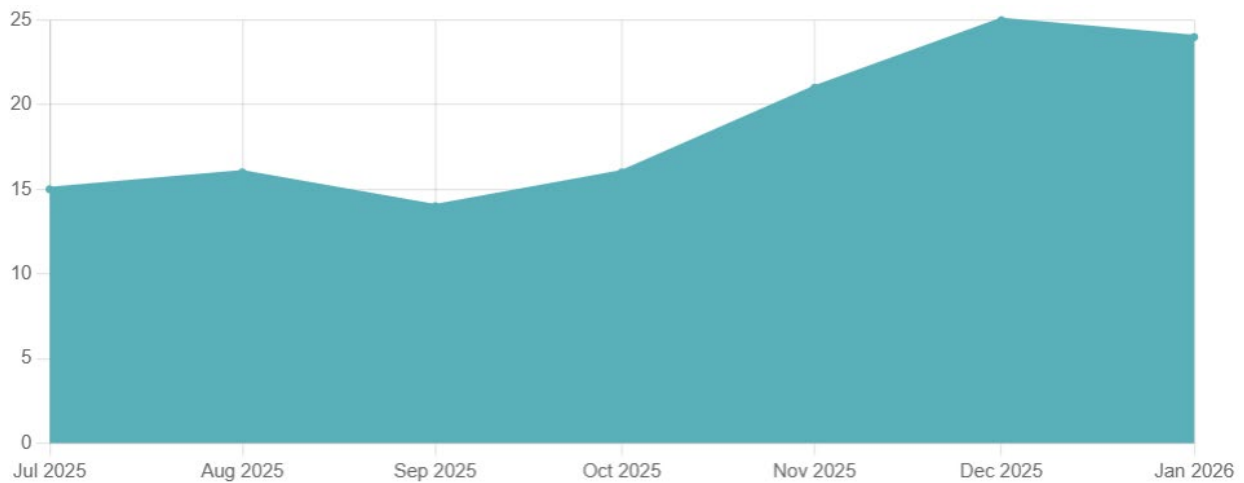
During the 2026 PIT Count, **70 people surveyed were aged 55 and older**. Of the 70 people counted in the 2026 PIT Count, five (5) people were unsheltered. Nineteen (19) people were over the age of 65 and three (3) were over 80, continuing to represent a group of highly vulnerable individuals experiencing homelessness in Arlington County. There were no individuals surveyed on the night of the PIT Count who were over 90 years of age.

The 70 people aged 55 and older counted during the 2026 PIT Count represent 26% of the overall count. In 2025, 32% of people surveyed were 55+. This year's count reflects an anomaly as compared to overall trends experienced across the CoC which reflect the growing population of older adults experiencing homelessness. In 2026, the Arlington County CoC began its third year of operating its only Joint Transitional Housing-Rapid Rehousing project funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through its Supplemental Notice of Funding Opportunity

(SNOFO) for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. This project includes a unique set-aside of transitional housing units in partnership with Arlington County’s DHS Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD) for older adults who would otherwise experience homelessness without these services. The operator of the program provides housing in master-leased units and housing-focused supportive services, and ADSD staff provide services specialized for older adults, including home-based medical care, food assistance, and referrals to assisted living or other supported housing. This model serves as non-congregate emergency housing and is designed to quickly stabilize and find alternative permanent housing for these participants.

On the night of the 2026 PIT Count, 20 people in 19 households were **Transition-Aged Youth (TAY)** households (between the ages of 18-24). Most of these households were single adult households apart from one (1) family household. This year’s PIT Count is an increase of 67% or eight (8) people. TAY households are also a sub-population of the Built for Zero initiative. Arlington County has also experienced an increase of TAY households experiencing homelessness since September 2025 as measured by its “active” homeless counts (the number of people on the Arlington County CoC’s By-Names List) (see Figure 2). There was a slight reversal of this trend in January of 2026. The CoC continues to prioritize this population for available housing resources, including Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Rehousing. The CoC also partners closely with Arlington County’s Housing Grants Program to refer eligible young adults to its pilot program for working TAY households.

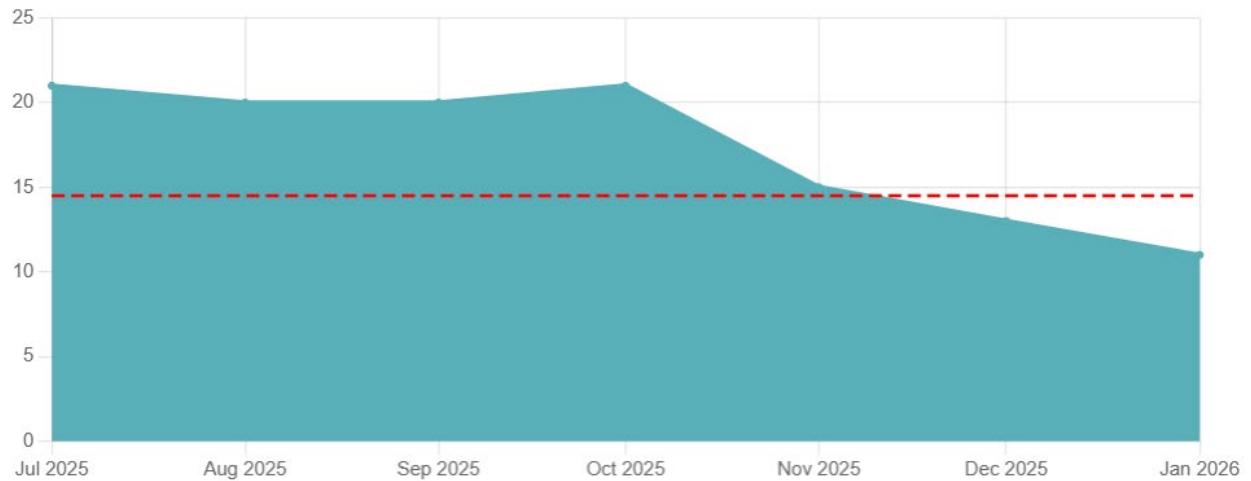
**Figure 12: Arlington County Monthly Active Transition-Aged Youth Count (Built for Zero)**



On the night of the 2026 PIT Count, there were 27 people in 18 households who reported experiencing homelessness because of **domestic violence (DV)**. This is a 50% increase from the 2025 PIT Count. Only one DV shelter operates within Arlington County. On the night of the PIT Count this DV safe-housing program, served 24 people, which was nine (9) more people than in 2025. This is consistent with upward trends reported by the operator of Arlington County’s DV services, as well as other homeless service providers in the Arlington County CoC. The Arlington County CoC is working to meet this increased need and has been successfully awarded HUD funding to expand Rapid Rehousing for survivors of DV over the past three years. These resources also support more survivors to more quickly exit DV situations and shelter to permanent housing.

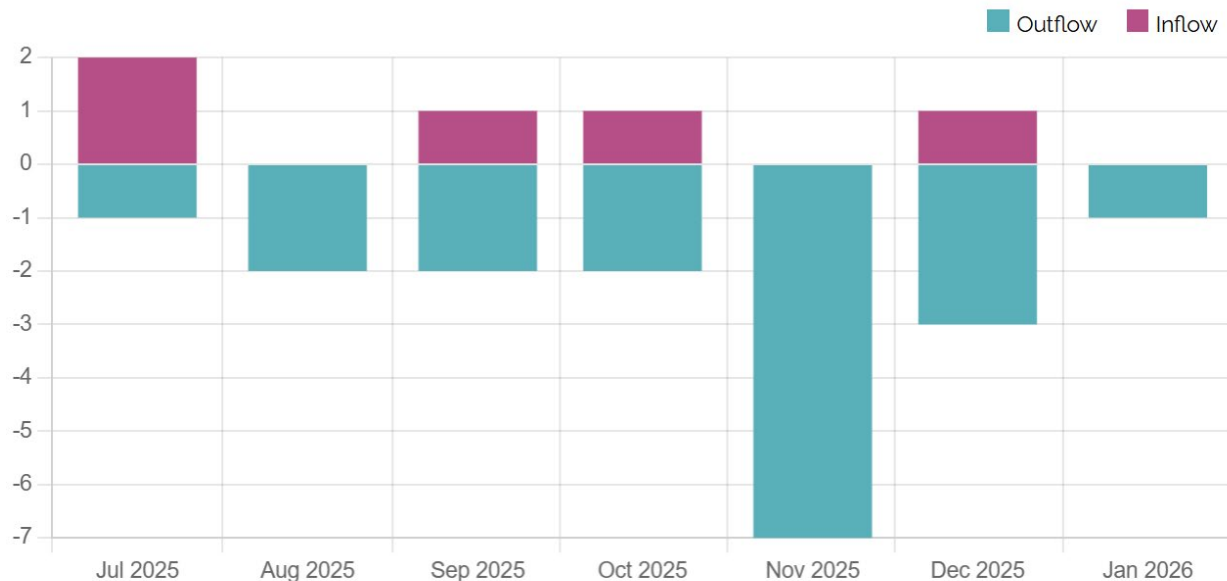
People reporting **chronic homelessness** increased from 23 people surveyed in 2025, to 31 people surveyed during the 2026 PIT Count. This is an increase of 35% or eight (8) people. Per the CoC's active homeless counts, the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness is much lower. Between July 2025 and January 2026, the number of people actively experiencing chronic homelessness ranged between a high of 21 people to a low of 11 people. (See Figure 3.)

**Figure 13: Arlington County Monthly Active Chronic Homelessness Count (Built for Zero)**



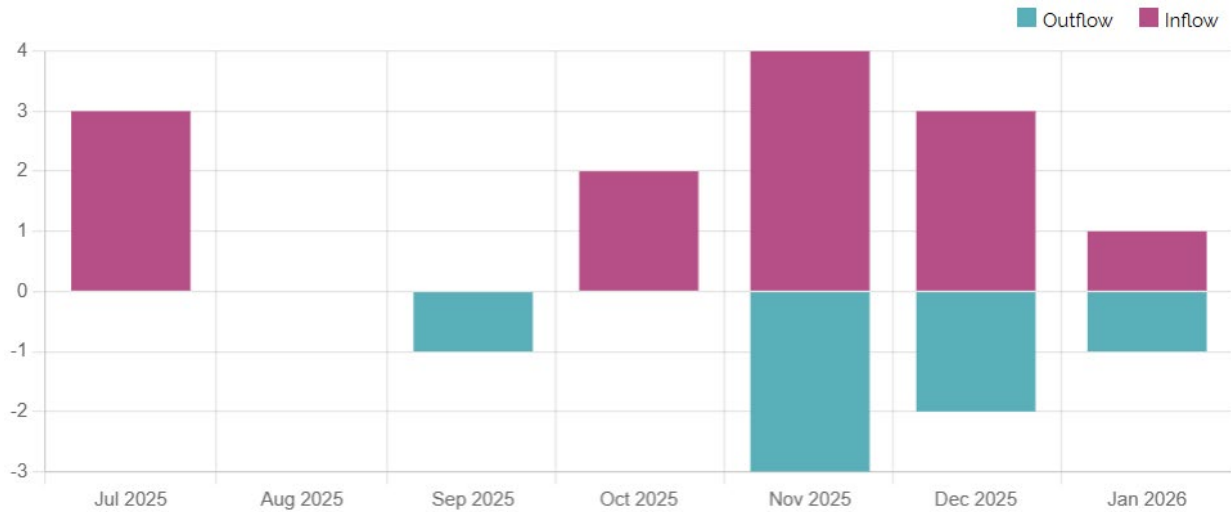
The Arlington County CoC continues to prioritize its chronically homeless population for available housing resources, including Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Rehousing, averaging two (2) to three (3) housing placements per month between July 2025 and January 2026. (See Figure 4.)

**Figure 14: Chronic Homelessness Inflow & Outflow (Built for Zero)**



During the 2026 PIT Count, Arlington County surveyed three (3) **Veterans**. This is one (1) less Veteran from the 2025 count. Month-to-month, Arlington County may experience more Veterans entering homelessness, however this group remains a priority population for available resources. As reflected in Figure 5, newly identified Veterans are experiencing homelessness at a faster rate than they are exiting the CoC between July 2025 through January 2026. During this period, roughly an average of two (2) Veterans were entering homelessness each month but exiting at an average of one (1) Veteran per month.

**Figure 15: Arlington County Veteran Inflow and Outflow (Built for Zero)**



The Arlington County CoC partners with regional Veteran service providers, including the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) to quickly identify, connect, and re-house Veterans experiencing homelessness. Starting in the spring of 2026, the VA and regional Veteran partners will visit emergency shelters in Arlington County to assist people in gathering their documentation and more quickly access veteran services.

## Built for Zero and Continuous Systems Improvement

**By-Names List:** For the past two years, Arlington County has adopted and implemented a By-Names List that includes all people actively experiencing homelessness in Arlington County. This list is utilized for monthly meetings where people are connected to available resources. This list is a powerful tool to understand and monitor local needs and quickly connect people with available resources using local prioritization policies.

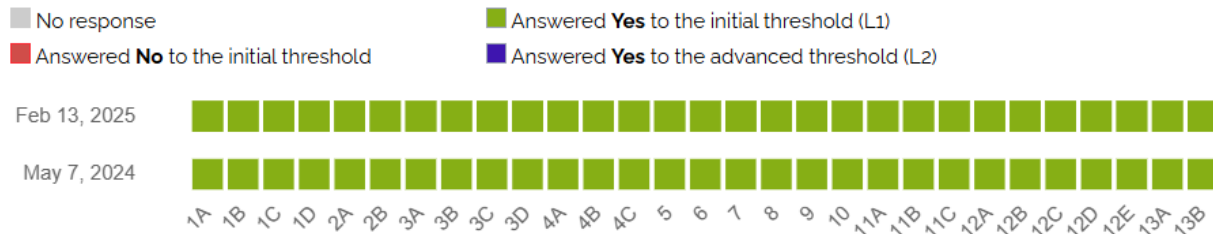
**Quality Data:** Arlington County is committed to data quality and data integrity. As part of the CoC's activities and governance, the following activities are undertaken to improve confidence in high quality data:

- Delegated authority to CoC governance bodies who oversee system performance measurement.
- Publicly shared data which views outcomes by program, project-type, and at the systemic-level.

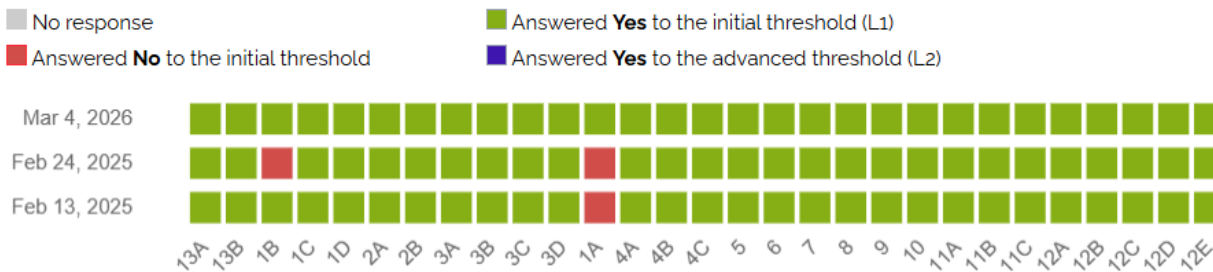
- Monthly and quarterly reporting cycles to include data standards reviews using standardized data completeness and data validation reports.
- Monthly, targeted data quality coaching and HMIS Office Hours provided by Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Administrators.
- Monthly community reviews of By-Names List reports to ensure accuracy and data completeness

**Population Scorecards:** Arlington County has successfully reached “YES” for Single Adult and Veteran Built for Zero Scorecards. These scorecards reflect systemic improvements that address collaboration, access, and integration of key Built for Zero indicators. Arlington County is actively working to ‘get to ‘yes’ for Families and Youth.

**Figure 17: Arlington County Single Adult Scorecard (Built for Zero)**



**Figure 16: Arlington County Veteran Scorecard (Built for Zero)**



## Conclusion

The 2026 PIT Count is an annual event that assists communities in monitoring and understanding emerging or ongoing trends in homelessness. In 2026, Arlington County’s CoC experienced an overall one percent (1%) decrease in homelessness. While a negligible reduction, it reflects important dynamics and efforts underway within the CoC. The 2026 PIT Count is the first time since 2022 Arlington County experienced an overall reduction in people experiencing homelessness on the night of the PIT Count. Since 2022, Arlington County has experienced annual increases in homelessness in both their PIT Counts and overall counts of people served across the CoC.

Unsheltered homelessness counts decreased significantly between 2025 when 37 people were surveyed, to 2026 when 25 people were surveyed. This 32% PIT Count reduction reflects the impacts of the harsh weather conditions in early February 2026 and the acceptance of shelter and services as an alternative to sleeping outside. As a result, sheltered homelessness increased four percent (4%) between the 2025 and 2026 PIT Counts as more people accessed hypothermia resources, in particular. The increase in sheltered homelessness was tempered by reductions in

family homelessness, all of whom were surveyed in emergency shelter on the night of the PIT Count. With the elimination of hotel/motel shelter resources in Arlington County and modest increases in shelter overflow capacity, which emphasizes rapid resolution of homelessness, fewer family households were sheltered on the night of the PIT Count. People identifying as Transition-Aged Youth and reporting chronic homelessness and domestic violence increased between the 2025 and 2026 PIT Counts; whereas Veterans and families experiencing homelessness decreased.

Arlington County is committed to systemic improvements, as evidenced by identifying ways to add targeted capacity and resources for its most vulnerable community members. Arlington County is also committed to aligning its approaches with emerging and evidenced-based best practices, including quality data and utilizing a By-Names List of all people actively experiencing homelessness. With the 2023 adoption of Arlington County CoC's Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, the CoC incorporated Built for Zero goals across all population groups. However, the CoC's effectiveness is only as strong as its surrounding economic and social environment. Ending homelessness for all is dependent upon sufficient affordable housing, flexible and long-term rental assistance programs, and community-based services to assist people in sustaining stability in the long-term.

# DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## 2026 Point-in-Time Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness

### Introduction and CoC Overview

The District of Columbia's Continuum of Care (CoC) includes more than 200 provider agencies that deliver services to individuals and families who are facing housing loss, experiencing homelessness, or who have formerly experienced homelessness. This programming serves families with children, adult couples, and/or unaccompanied individuals, and many programs tailor their service delivery to key subpopulations like youth or veterans. In addition to street outreach, emergency shelter, and transitional housing, the CoC offers meals, day services, medical respite, prevention and diversion assistance, and a variety of housing types—permanent supportive housing (PSH), rapid rehousing (RRH), or targeted affordable housing (TAH)<sup>69</sup>—which households are prioritized for based on need.

The District's Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) sets the strategic framework for the CoC with the vision of making homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring, and the District of Columbia Department of Human Services (DHS) administers local funding to develop a system focused on prevention, diversion, connection to housing, and economic mobility supports. DHS and its prime contractor, The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness (TCP), the U.S. Dept. Of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) designated Collaborative Applicant, acquire federal support for the CoC along with providers who receive funding directly from other federal agencies like the U.S. Departments of Veteran Affairs (VA) and Health and Human Services (HHS).

Throughout fiscal year 2025 (FY25), the CoC's emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, and programs for unsheltered persons—the provider types that comprise the Point in Time Count—served 8,818 unaccompanied individuals and 1,308 families. More than 2,220 of these households successfully moved to permanent housing in FY25, the highest number of lease-ups ever completed in a single year. This is due to cross-CoC partnerships that streamlined processes, reduced barriers, and implemented housing-focused case management practices. In addition to assistance for households with longer lengths of time experiencing homelessness, the District leveraged programs like the Homeless Prevention Program, Project Reconnect, DC Flex, and the Emergency Rental Assistance Program to keep those facing housing loss in their homes or provide quick exit from shelter.

Additionally, last year the District implemented an eligibility change to the Family Re-Housing Stabilization Program (FRSP), ending the practice of exiting all families from shelter to FRSP in order to support more sustainable and appropriate exits. While the CoC anticipated that this change could increase lengths of stay in shelter and thereby increase shelter occupancy at a given time it has not led to increased entries into shelter over time. Instead, shelter entries in FY25 have decreased by 30 percent compared to the previous fiscal year.

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<sup>69</sup> Targeted affordable housing is a permanent subsidy that provides quarterly case management services, targeted to those living with a disabling condition, who do not require the level of intensive services associated with permanent supportive housing.

## Local System Context and PIT/HIC Interpretation

TCP conducts the PIT Count on behalf of the District and has since 2001. TCP's leadership on the PIT Count stems from their role as administrator for the District's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). HMIS is the primary repository for information on individuals and families receiving services through the CoC. More than 90 percent of the programs operating in the District use the HMIS which enables TCP to produce much of the data that informs the PIT Count. Programs that do not use the HMIS submit de-identified rosters of program participants or aggregate participant counts for the night of PIT so that all programs operating in the District are represented in the overall count.

Although inclement weather at the end of January 2026 led TCP to obtain approval from HUD to move PIT to February 4<sup>th</sup>, lingering cold temperatures and difficult road conditions in the District meant that some modified operations for the unsheltered portion of PIT were still necessary. Historically the CoC has worked with teams of outreach professionals and volunteers to canvass the District to engage with unsheltered persons on the night of PIT. This has been augmented by surveys conducted the day after PIT in meal programs and drop in centers where participants are asked about where they spent the previous night.

Because of the weather and road conditions the canvassing effort had to be limited to certain areas and to key staff from provider organizations. However, TCP was able to produce an estimated citywide count using information gathered at night, during the day of PIT and the following morning, and by employing an autoregressive integrated moving average (ARIMA) that used PIT data dating back to 2020. ARIMA is a moving average that emphasizes more recent data in the time series to predict the next total in a series, meaning that information on the number of people counted during previous PIT Counts helped inform the 2026 number. TCP arrived at an estimate of 718 unsheltered persons for February 4<sup>th</sup>. This estimate was in line with an unsheltered count conducted in summer 2025 which found 764 unsheltered persons in the District. Demographic counts of unsheltered persons were predicted using a multinomial regression model to achieve predicted proportions within each demographic category. These proportions were then held to the predicted total of 718 to produce the final counts.

DHS's Comprehensive Street Outreach Network (CSON) providers were integral to system operations throughout the January weather emergency and their efforts also impacted where and how many people were counted on PIT. CSON teams worked to connect individuals to warming centers and emergency shelters, which meant that many who may have been unsheltered on PIT were ultimately served in shelter instead. CSON teams also provided more anecdotal information about some individuals who they normally see outside but who are known to be able to stay with friends or family during events like the cold weather emergency.

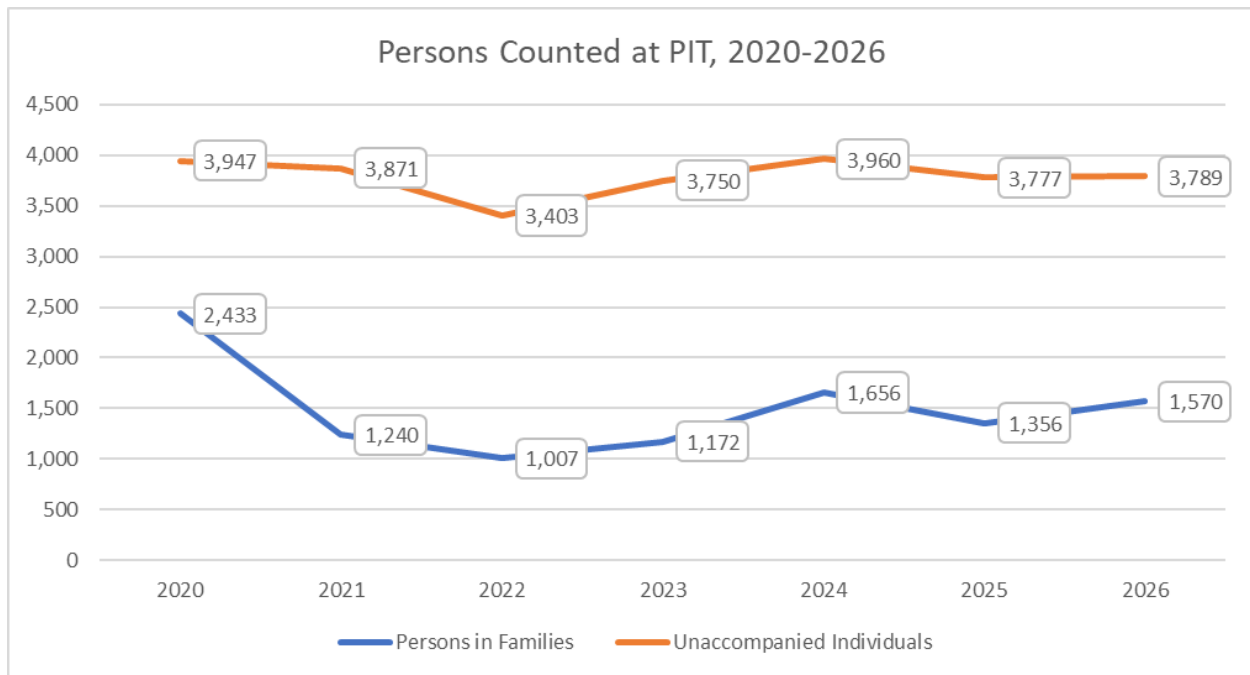
TCP also sent volunteers to select shelter sites to aid with the collection of PIT related information as many sites were dealing with increased capacities because of the weather. This effort helped to gather stronger survey information that might have been unavailable during the usual engagements done outside. This information helped to augment data already in HMIS for individuals served at the select sites.

All other PIT related activities went as planned on the rescheduled date.

As shown in the chart below, there was a 4.4 percent increase in persons experiencing homelessness from 2024 which was driven by a 214 person (15.8 percent) increase among persons in families. The count of unaccompanied individuals was relatively flat from year to year, increasing

by just 12 persons (0.3 percent).

Additional sites serving families which opened between PIT 2025 and 2026 and increased occupancy at sites serving unaccompanied individuals accounted for the 4.4 percent increase in the overall PIT Count. Additionally, DHS’s renewed focus on matching families with the housing resources that best met their long-term needs meant some families spent more time in shelter to secure the most sustainable option, rather than a resource that could increase their risk of reentry. With this, the CoC saw an anticipated increase in the average length of stay in shelter from an approximate average of 90 to 111 days. While the increased length of stay led to greater daily occupancy of shelter at a given time, the CoC saw approximately 30 percent fewer families enter shelter in FY25 compared to FY24.

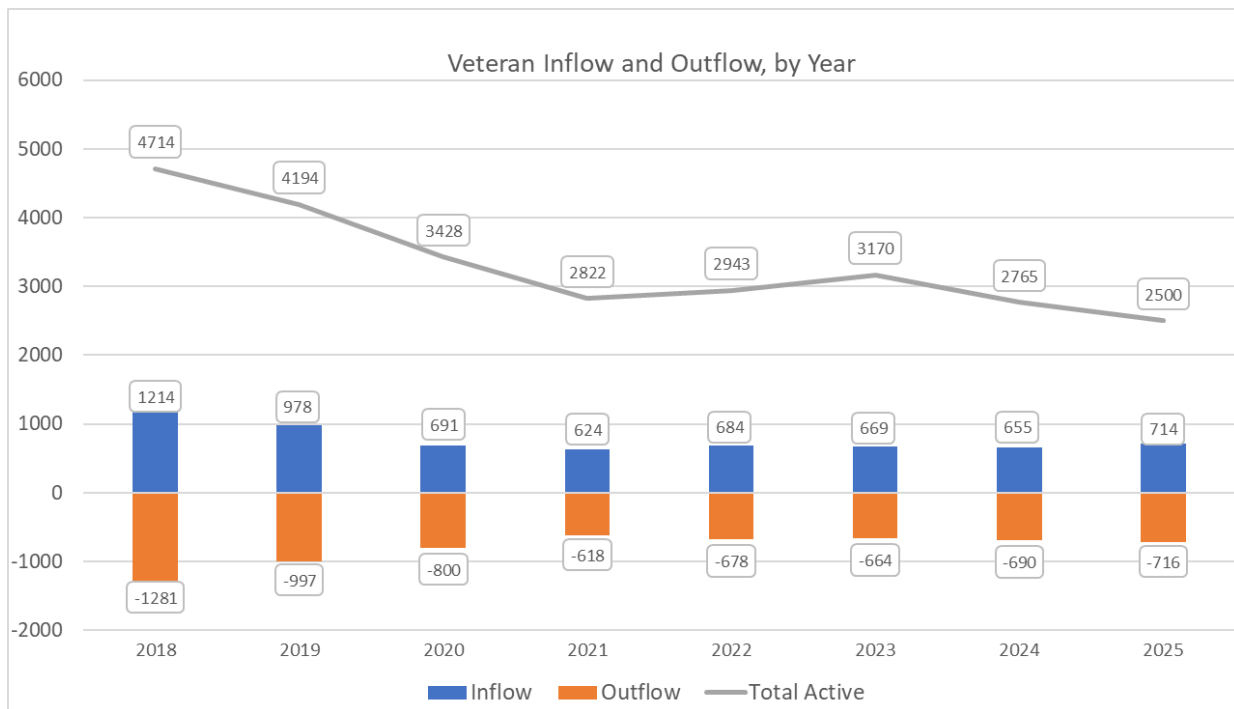


The District of Columbia was one of the first communities to adopt Build for Zero practices, joining the initiative in 2015 and setting early goals to measurably reduce homelessness among veterans and chronically homeless adults as part of its inaugural year. By applying methods promoted by the initiative, the District achieved “Quality By-Name” data—a comprehensive real-time list of all persons experiencing homelessness—for both veterans and chronically homeless adults in 2017.

TCP’s Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement (CAHP) team, who operationalize the District’s Coordinated Entry System and represent the District in Built for Zero participation, developed monthly data dashboards comprising nearly ten (10) years of data on veterans and two (2) years of data on unaccompanied individuals. These monthly data have helped the community better understand trends in inflow, outflow, and service utilization. In the current period of Built for Zero participation, the CAHP team has a goal to compile similar monthly data dashboards on all subpopulations so that data on all persons experiencing homelessness is readily available at any given time. To that end, the CAHP team began work on a data dashboard of Transition Age Youth, ages 18 to 24, in mid-2025.

The importance of maintaining Quality By-Name data and tracking these data to make informed decisions is exemplified by the District’s reduction in the number of veterans experiencing homelessness by over 50 percent since first joining the Built for Zero initiative.

Furthermore, tracking these data has allowed the CAHP team, along with the network of veterans service providers, to identify what action steps the community should take to get closer to functional zero. While the community has made commendable progress in reducing veteran homelessness, inflow remains a top barrier to further decreases in the number of veterans seen every month. In 2025, the average monthly inflow and outflow was both 60 persons, resulting in similar total active counts of veterans between the months of January 2025 and January 2026, with 219 and 217 veterans respectively.



The results of the 2026 PIT Count echo trends observed in monthly data tracked by TCP for both veterans and unaccompanied individuals, where fluctuations may be seen month-to-month, but remain relatively flat over the course of a year.

By participating in regular coaching with Built for Zero, the District is connected to a network of other communities grappling with the same challenges. These peer-to-peer connections have fostered new and emerging best practices for system management. Additionally, grant funding provided by Community Solutions, the Built for Zero initiative’s parent organization, has allowed TCP’s CAHP team to bring on new staff which has resulted in increased capacity and more resources for data monitoring and maintenance.

### Conclusion and Lessons Learned

To better ensure the thoroughness of the count and survey in future years, TCP plans to continue its practice of using volunteers at shelter sites to gather better information from program participants. The survey information collected at PIT is useful for program planning and higher response rates to

key questions provide a more complete understanding of service needs. TCP also plans—weather permitting—to return to its longstanding practice of relying on volunteer and professional outreach teams to conduct the citywide canvass for the unsheltered portion of the count. While the ARIMA method helped to produce a solid estimate in 2026, TCP would like to use it only to test the completeness of future results and does not intend to replace the historical methodology.

The 2026 PIT Count results showed increases, albeit to varying degrees, among unaccompanied individuals and families. These occurred despite increased emphasis on exit and prevention assistance because of increased shelter use among persons experiencing homelessness which as described above is an anticipated result of the Districts increased intentionality on matching families with the housing resources that best met their long-term needs. During the COVID-19 public health emergency there was a large influx of prevention and diversion resources as well, though their impacts did not show up in the PIT Count until 2022. The CoC is hopeful that the FY25 and FY26 efforts will be able to continue and more readily show in the next PIT Count.

# FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA

## Introduction and CoC Overview

The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness, the community's Continuum of Care (CoC), is comprised of non-profit and governmental partners, faith-based communities, advocates, those with lived experience of homelessness, and other community stakeholders. The Fairfax CoC is guided by the CoC Board, which serves as the governance of the CoC, and communitywide vision that every person in the community can access and maintain safe and affordable housing.

The homeless services system is comprised of a spectrum of homeless service interventions, all of which are designed to achieve the goal of ensuring homelessness is prevented whenever possible and, when it occurs, it is rare, brief, and only once. This includes the following project types:

- Street Outreach
- Homelessness Prevention
- Emergency Shelter
- Transitional Housing
- Rapid Rehousing
- Permanent Supportive Housing

The project types are all connected to the continuum's Coordinated Entry system, which was developed to standardize the access, assessment, and referral process across the Fairfax County CoC to make rapid, effective, and consistent client-to-housing and service matches.

### **Fair Ridge Shelter Opening Highlights Activities Since the 2025 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count**

The first week of April 2025 saw the first guests arrive at the new Fair Ridge Shelter in Fairfax County, as families with children began moving into the facility's 85 units. The Shelter was made possible through the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority's purchase of a hotel and the Fairfax County government's ongoing operational support. The Fair Ridge Shelter accommodates families from the Embry Rucker Community Shelter, former Patrick Henry Family Shelter, and scattered hotel locations throughout the county, reducing the number of hotel rooms needed for overflow capacity and creating a safer, more effective shelter facility. The Embry Rucker Community Shelter, having vacated the space used by families with children, added 46 beds for adult-only households.

### **System Improvements include Awarding of New Emergency Shelter Operations and Associated Programs Contracts**

Fairfax County's Office to Prevent and End Homelessness (OPEH) awarded contracts the fall of 2026 with new providers delivering County-funded services, specifically emergency shelter, homelessness prevention, rapid rehousing, street outreach, medical respite, homeless healthcare, temporary employment, and permanent supportive housing.

### **State-Funded Permanent Supportive Housing Program Being Implemented**

After the 2025 PIT Count, the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development and the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB) continued its partnership with the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) in the implementation of a Permanent Supportive Housing program that provides a stable living environment and supportive services for individuals with serious mental illness leaving state hospitals or chronic homelessness. Funding through DBHDS is enabling the program to serve up to 300 individuals through rental assistance vouchers, with the CSB and a nonprofit organization, Pathway Homes, delivering case management services.

## **Fairfax County and PIT/HIC Interpretation**

### **Point-in-Time Count Survey Analysis**

The 2026 Point-in-Time Count was conducted on February 4, 2026, in coordination with the Metro DC region. This annual count, organized in accordance with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development guidelines, included people who were literally homeless – those in shelters, in time-limited transitional housing programs, as well as those who were unsheltered and living on the street. Conducting the enumeration required extensive efforts by a wide range of community partners, involving dozens of staff from public and private nonprofit organizations that work with people experiencing homelessness in the Fairfax-Falls Church community.

There were 1,365 people experiencing homelessness on the night of the 2026 Point-in-Time Count, which is an increase of 3 percent (43 people) from the 2025 Point-in-Time Count. The overall increase is primarily driven by the higher number of adults accessing emergency shelters, which increased by 16 percent (84 individuals) between the 2025 and 2026 counts. Out of the additional 84 individuals accessing emergency shelter on the night of the count, 79 of them were in the Hypothermia Prevention Program. This increase can be attributed to the severe weather and extremely cold temperatures that were experienced on the night of the count. In 2025 Fairfax County transitioned one of its emergency shelters from serving households with children to adult-only households. This added an additional 45 adult-only shelter beds, which were mostly filled the night of the count.

The 2026 count saw a decrease of 8 percent (54 people) in family shelter. The opening of the new Fair Ridge Shelter contributed to the overall decrease of families in shelter, as it reduced the number of people in families staying in overflow motels by 57 percent (178 people) and provided a safer, more effective shelter program.

The overall increase in homelessness is attributed to inflationary pressures on lower-income households, particularly in terms of basic needs like rent, food, childcare, and transportation, as well as the relatively slower wage growth in common professions among lower-income households, such as retail and food service.

### **Permanent Housing Inventory Count**

Increasing permanent housing capacity dedicated to people experiencing homelessness, including rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing, remains a critical strategy in preventing and ending homelessness in Fairfax County. Access to permanent, affordable housing that matches the needs of families and individuals experiencing homelessness influences the overall homeless services system's performance. Housing is critical to ending homelessness.

- **RAPID REHOUSING:** The Fairfax CoC's number of rapid rehousing beds decreased by 4 percent between the 2025 and 2026 counts. Local providers' challenges in recruiting and retaining staff, as well as transitions to new providers, contributed to fewer people in rapid rehousing in 2026.
- **PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING:** The number of permanent supportive housing beds in this year's count increased by one percent from the previous year. This increase can be attributed to an increase in Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers for adult-only households from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Most of the permanent supportive housing dedicated for people experiencing homelessness in the Fairfax CoC is funded through the HUD Continuum of Care program. The Virginia Housing Trust Fund and Fairfax County support local permanent supportive housing. Fairfax County is integrating permanent housing into its shelter redevelopment strategy. In 2016, a public finance bond was passed that includes \$48 million to renovate or replace four existing shelters. The first facility delivered under this new approach, Bailey's Shelter and Supportive Housing, delivered 18 new units of permanent supportive housing in 2019. The Embry Rucker Community Shelter, Patrick Henry Shelter, and Penn Daw project are being developed with a similar trauma-informed, service-enriched model that includes co-located shelter and housing.

In response to the pressing need for permanent supportive housing for individuals with serious mental illness, the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS), the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) and Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board are providing rental assistance with comprehensive support services for up to 300 individuals with serious mental illness and a history of housing instability.

- **OTHER PERMANENT HOUSING:** The number of other permanent housing beds increased by 3 percent in the 2026 count due to an increase in federal Emergency Housing Vouchers awarded.

## **Built for Zero (BFZ) and Continuous Systems Improvement**

Fairfax County continued its work toward overall improvements in data quality and in reaching functional zero for veterans as part of the Built for Zero (BFZ) initiative. Over the past year, Fairfax observed fluctuations in the total number of households identified across the community. The number of single individuals, including veterans and those experiencing chronic homelessness, saw rises and falls over the course of the year with seasonal increases present during the winter season (November – March) with the expansion of shelter beds through the Hypothermia Prevention Program. Households with children have remained relatively steady or decreased over the year.

In August 2025, Fairfax County convened a Veterans System Mapping event with Community Solutions at the Fairfax County Government Center to establish a goal of reaching functional zero for veterans in 2026. With collaboration from local providers, County departments, and regional veteran services (including VASH and Supportive Services for Veteran Families), goals to strengthen community collaboration, track inflow trends, and increase housing placement rates for veterans were established. The Office to Prevent and End Homelessness coordinates biweekly veteran “By-

Name List” meetings with community partners, housing and service providers, US Department of Veterans Affairs representatives, and other County department staff to identify veterans entering and receiving services across the Fairfax-Falls Church community.

Fairfax has undergone numerous changes to its BFZ Improvement and Coordinated Entry Teams in 2025-2026. These changes in both personnel and membership representatives have led Fairfax to reorganize its BFZ Improvement Team and build new approaches to ensure improvements in system function. Fairfax is working toward a re-evaluation of its BFZ Scorecard and to reach quality data for all singles, including increased activities focused on improving By-Name data through street outreach activities, service mapping, and strengthening strategic relationships with key government, emergency services, and human service personnel.

## **Conclusion and Lessons Learned**

The total number of people experiencing homelessness in Fairfax County has trended upwards since 2017, when the total count was 964 people. The most significant increases occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the total count increased from 1,041 people in 2020 to 1,310 people in 2023 – an approximately 26 percent increase in three years. Since then, the total count has increased by only 4 percent, with 55 additional people counted. The increase in 2026 is primarily driven by a higher number of adult-only households in emergency shelters.

In contrast to the Point-in-Time Count, it is important to note that the number of people experiencing homelessness over a full year is higher than a single night’s count. Fairfax County reported to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for federal fiscal year 2025 ending in September that the total number of sheltered homeless persons, not including dedicated domestic violence shelters, was 3,572 people. Meanwhile, Fairfax County Public Schools report that a total of 1,342 students has been identified as homeless over the school year so far as of April 7, 2026, as defined by the U.S. Department of Education’s broader “homeless” definition.

Much work is being done to address the issues of homelessness now and into the future. The Continuum of Care Board is strategically supporting this work. This group is directing an inclusive community engagement and strategic planning process using the services of a consultant. A draft strategic plan is due to be finalized in 2026.

# LOUDOUN COUNTY, VIRGINIA

## Loudoun Continuum of Care Overview

The Loudoun Continuum of Care (CoC) is a collaborative network comprised of individuals, public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other community-based organizations interested in preventing and end homelessness in Loudoun County (County). The Loudoun CoC's mission is carried out through coordinated programs and services across core areas of crisis intervention, housing, and prevention services.

The Loudoun County Department of Family Services (DFS) currently serves as the lead agency for the Loudoun CoC, and in that capacity has taken responsibility for the administration, coordination, and oversight, of Loudoun County's coordinated response to homelessness. DFS provides staffing, administrative support, strategic leadership, and oversight of the Loudoun CoC's activities. DFS also prepares and submits the annual Continuum of Care Consolidated Application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), securing critical federal funding that sustains local homeless and housing programs. Through this role, DFS helps ensure regulatory compliance, fiscal stewardship, and the continued advancement of a data-driven, community-wide response to homelessness.

The Loudoun CoC is designated to provide a continuum of services that addresses both immediate housing crisis and long-term housing stability. The Loudoun CoC's homeless response system begins with coordinated entry, which serves as the primary access point to interconnect services and housing resources. Crisis response services include emergency shelter, seasonal hypothermia sheltering, drop-in day services, and outreach to unsheltered individuals. Longer-term housing stability is supported through homelessness prevention, rapid re-housing, and transitional housing programs. Specialized services are also available for survivors of domestic violence, veterans, and youth experiencing housing instability. Across the system, CoC utilizes the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to collect data, monitor program outcomes, and assess overall system performance.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2024 estimate, Loudoun County's population was 443,380. The population was split nearly equally between males and females (49.8% and 50.2%, respectively), with a median age of 39.3 years. Approximately 33.7% of the population was under the age of 24.

## Shelter Capacity and System Pressures

Loudoun County partners with Shelter House to manage an emergency shelter and associated hoteling projects, which offer a year-round capacity of 109 beds. The County and Shelter House also manage a hypothermia shelter with 61 beds from mid-November to the end of March. CoC members operate two additional shelters with 39 beds (combined) in the County. Even with these seasonal increases, shelter capacity remains limited, requiring the system to prioritize households with the greatest vulnerability through its Crisis Prioritization List (CPL).

The CPL includes both sheltered and unsheltered individuals seeking access to emergency shelter. Depending on an individual's prioritization and the availability of appropriate shelter beds, households may remain on the CPL for an extended period before receiving placement.

Within the shelter continuum, there is consistently less capacity available for single adult males, despite this population accounting for approximately 50–60% of overall shelter demand. For example, the County-funded shelter housed 258 individuals in calendar year 2025, and the average wait time for a bed through the CPL was 57 days.

## **Role of ARPA Funding**

In addition to its shelter and housing response, Loudoun CoC member organizations have relied on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, disbursed separately through Loudoun County (County), to strengthen both shelter capacity and homelessness prevention/diversion efforts.

Since fall 2024, the nonprofit organization operating the County's emergency shelter has used ARPA funds to provide short-term emergency shelter overflow through hoteling, increasing the County's shelter capacity by 11 beds. Loudoun County's 2026 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count identified 23 individuals staying in ARPA-funded shelter overflow on the night of the count.

Another local nonprofit has used ARPA funding to help prevent households from entering the homeless response system by providing rental relief and eviction-avoidance assistance. In 2025, this organization distributed \$4,405,255 in ARPA funding to 437 Loudoun households, along with associated case management services.

In both cases, ARPA funding is scheduled to expire in December 2026, creating significant concern about the sustainability of these interventions.

## **Strengthening Partnerships and System Coordination**

In anticipation of the expiration of ARPA funding, the Loudoun CoC has spent the past year strengthening collaboration with existing partners and expanding engagement with new community stakeholders to maximize available resources. The CoC outreach team secured two new partnerships in 2025 through expanded community engagement efforts. Cornerstones is based in Fairfax County but is looking to expand its permanent supportive housing services into Loudoun in connection with a housing project scheduled for construction in 2027. Cornerstones accepted the CoC's invitation due to its intention to operate in Loudoun and one of its Executive Directors now serves on the CoC Board. Second Story also became an active CoC member in 2025 to increase their funding options, should they choose to expand their Loudoun-based services in the future.

These efforts were particularly evident during the 2026 PIT Count, when increased community participation improved the CoC's ability to identify and document individuals experiencing homelessness across the County. For example, Mobile Hope, a youth services partner played a significant role in identifying and surveying unsheltered youth and young adults. As a result, the 2026 PIT Count identified 38 youth, compared with 10 youth in 2025—an increase of 280%.

While this increase does not necessarily indicate a 280% rise in youth homelessness, it does reflect improved outreach, stronger collaboration, and a more complete baseline from which the CoC can measure future trends among unsheltered youth.

## **Housing Affordability and Local Conditions**

The 2026 PIT Count reflects continued challenges related to housing affordability in Loudoun County. Eviction trends also underscore the level of housing instability facing local households. In January 2026, there were 170 eviction filings in Loudoun County. While this figure does not equate to 170 completed evictions or 170 newly homeless households, it is an important indicator of the number of households at risk of entering the County's homeless response system. Given the ongoing pressure on shelter capacity—even with ARPA-supported overflow—and the limited availability of affordable housing, prevention and diversion programs will remain increasingly important in helping Loudoun households avoid homelessness.

## **Local System Context and PIT/ Housing Inventory Count (HIC) Interpretation**

The PIT Count provides a one-night snapshot of homelessness within a community and should be interpreted within the broader context of system capacity, operational conditions, outreach coverage, and local economic pressures.

The 2026 PIT Count was conducted on the night of Wednesday, February 4, 2026. Loudoun County identified 315 individuals experiencing homelessness, representing a 25% increase over the 2025 PIT Count.

While this increase reflects growing housing instability, it also appears to reflect improved community engagement and stronger field outreach, which allowed CoC partners to more accurately identify and document homelessness throughout the County.

## **Weather and Count Conditions**

Weather conditions likely influenced the PIT count in both 2025 and 2026. The overnight low temperature on February 4, 2026, was 27 degrees, compared with 9 degrees during the 2025 PIT Count.

Sub-freezing temperatures often lead individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness to seek temporary refuge with friends, family members, or in locations that are not easily visible to outreach teams. As a result, the actual number of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness may have been higher than identified during both PIT counts.

At the same time, the higher overnight temperature in 2026 may have contributed to a higher number of unsheltered individuals being identified. The 2026 PIT Count recorded 129 unsheltered individuals, compared with 101 in 2025.

## **Operational Improvements and Data Collection**

Operational improvements and expanded community collaboration strengthened the CoC’s ability to identify individuals experiencing homelessness during the 2026 PIT Count.

A total of 10 outreach teams, made up of community volunteers and partner organizations, administered surveys using both electronic and paper forms. These efforts resulted in the collection of demographic data for 68 unsheltered individuals who may not otherwise have been fully represented in the count.

The Continuum’s ability to identify both individuals’ experiencing homelessness and those receiving services through housing programs in the County was enhanced through increased community collaboration. Beyond the impact of Mobile Hope’s participation on identifying unsheltered youth that was previously discussed, the Good Shepherd Alliance participated in data collection by completing PIT surveys for individuals residing in their shelter. This additional data helped the CoC understand the evolving demographics of people utilizing housing-related services and solidify the baseline against which to measure future PIT outcomes.

### Table.7;.Data.Highlights

| Indicator  | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 |
|--|------|------|------|
| Unsheltered individuals reporting chronic homelessness                             | 26   | 23   | 35   |
| Unsheltered individuals reporting at least one mental or physical health condition | 38%  | 25%  | 49%  |
| Family households experiencing homelessness  | 27   | 22   | 28   |
| Total number of minor children experiencing homelessness                           | 53   | 40   | 63   |

The 2026 PIT data indicate a growing number of individuals experiencing homelessness who also report a history of housing instability, disabling conditions, and health-related needs. When viewed in the context of the Loudoun CoC’s Housing Inventory Count (HIC) of 301 available beds across all programs, this data supports the argument for an investment in additional supportive housing programs. The HIC reflects availability of 19 permanent supportive housing beds – five of which are VASH vouchers and not available to the general public – a number that has not increased in recent years despite the growing percentage of unsheltered individuals whose homelessness is compounded by a disability or mental health struggle.

## System Strain and Emerging Risks

The increase in the number of families and minor children experiencing homelessness in 2026 may reflect rising housing costs, eviction pressures, and broader economic challenges affecting household stability.

Approximately 38% of unsheltered individuals reported having some form of income, though these amounts were often insufficient to secure stable housing in Loudoun County’s high-cost housing market. In 2025, HUD’s Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment in Leesburg was \$2,330 per month. Only 5.5% of individuals reported earning more than \$2,000 per month, and 16% reported receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

These data illustrate a widening gap between household income and the cost of housing—and the cost of living more broadly—in Loudoun County.

The 2026 PIT data demonstrate the significant impact that the scarcity of affordable housing is having on Loudoun County’s homeless response system, which is already strained by demand that exceeds available capacity.

External economic factors, including changes affecting the federal workforce and restrictions on public benefits—may further increase housing instability in the near term. These conditions, combined with the scheduled expiration of ARPA funding and ongoing uncertainty surrounding HUD homeless assistance funding, reinforce the urgent need for additional housing support and sustainable system investments.

## Conclusion and Lessons Learned

The 2026 PIT Count highlights both the strengths and the ongoing challenges of Loudoun County’s homeless response system.

The Loudoun CoC and its partners continue to demonstrate strong coordination, collaboration, and commitment to addressing homelessness through a housing-focused approach. Expanded outreach efforts, strong nonprofit partnerships, and the continued operation of emergency shelter and housing programs have enabled the system to respond effectively to many individuals and families experiencing housing crises.

At the same time, the 2026 PIT Count underscores several areas of continued challenge. The increase in overall homelessness, particularly among unsheltered individuals, families with children, and youth—demonstrates that housing affordability remains a significant barrier to stability. The growing number of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and those reporting mental or physical health conditions also points to the need for additional supportive housing resources and more integrated service delivery.

The increase in youth identified through outreach efforts also highlights the limited availability of housing and supportive services for transition-aged youth. While improved outreach and data collection contributed to a more accurate understanding of youth homelessness in 2026, the findings suggest a need for more targeted interventions and housing pathways for this population moving forward.

In response to these trends, the Loudoun CoC has identified several priorities to strengthen the local response to homelessness:

- Expand access to diverse housing options, including rapid re-housing and other voucher support options, to better serve individuals and families with varying levels of need.
- Sustain and strengthen outreach and engagement efforts to ensure that unsheltered individuals can connect to shelter, housing, and supportive services.
- Develop targeted interventions for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness to prevent long-term housing instability.

- Strengthen prevention strategies to reduce inflow into the homeless response system, particularly as ARPA funding sunsets.

The Loudoun CoC must also continue to navigate broader structural conditions that shape homelessness at the local level, including rising housing costs, limited affordable rental inventory, and continued population growth. Addressing these challenges will require sustained collaboration among housing providers, policymakers, service organizations, and community stakeholders.

Despite these challenges, the Loudoun CoC remains committed to strengthening the local homeless response system and pursuing innovative, data-informed strategies that expand access to housing and supportive services. Through continued collaboration, strategic investment, and system-wide coordination, Loudoun County can continue making progress toward ensuring that homelessness becomes increasingly rare, brief, and non-recurring.

# MONTGOMERY COUNTY

## Introduction and CoC Overview

The Montgomery County Homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) is a public-private partnership that includes local and state government agencies, non-profit service providers, people with lived expertise, elected officials, landlords and many other stakeholders who have a role in preventing and ending homelessness. The CoC's governing board is the Interagency Commission on Homelessness (ICH), and the CoC Lead is Services to End and Prevent Homelessness (SEPH), a division of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services. As the CoC Lead, SEPH serves as the Collaborative Applicant for CoC grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Members of the CoC and ICH work in partnership with one another and are deeply committed to ending homelessness. Montgomery County has a comprehensive response system that aims to prevent homelessness whenever possible. If it cannot be prevented, the goal is to support households in regaining housing as quickly as possible. The CoC seeks to eliminate barriers to obtaining and maintaining housing and it works to uphold each person's choice related to services and housing.

The Montgomery County CoC provides a full range of services to fulfill its mission:

- Prevention and Diversion Services
- Street Outreach and Drop-In Centers
- Emergency and Expanded Hypothermia Shelters
- Medical Respite, Primary Healthcare, Psychiatric and Dental Services
- Short-term Housing, Rapid Re-Housing and Transitional Housing
- Permanent Supportive Housing

Though the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count provides a valuable snapshot of the number of people experiencing homelessness in the county on any given night, the CoC, serves many more people throughout the year. In FY2025, the CoC served approximately 28,000 people across all programs, including about 21,000 in prevention programs. Of the total served, 3,303 individuals were served in street outreach, emergency shelter, safe havens, and transitional housing, and were considered literally homeless. In FY2026, through the night of the PIT count, the CoC had served approximately 25,000 people across all programs. Of these, about 18,000 were served in prevention programs, while 2,604 individuals were served in street outreach, emergency shelter, safe havens, and transitional housing.

Noteworthy system improvements over the past year have relied on a number of important collaborations including the regional data sharing and case conferencing between Montgomery County, the District of Columbia and Prince George's County; enhanced landlord recruitment efforts led by Bethesda Cares with the expansion of the RentSelect database; youth outreach and engagement efforts led by the Collaboration Council and Pathways to Housing; and fair housing testing and enforcement through partnerships with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs, the Equal Rights Center and the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights.

Additionally, a new county policy that supports the CoC's efforts to prevent more households from entering homelessness is Expedited Bill 31-25, which was enacted December 15, 2025. This

legislation's intent is to provide households more time to prepare for and possibly avoid an eviction by requiring landlords to provide tenants 14 days' notice prior to an eviction being executed. Landlords must also provide a listing of county resources, including SEPH Housing Stabilization Services as well as legal services. The 14 days' notice supplies crucial time needed for tenants to seek assistance to pay off arrearages, to find legal representation, or to relocate. The Sheriff's Office, the Department of Housing and Community Affairs and SEPH are collaborating on the implementation of the new law.

## Local System Context and PIT/HIC Interpretation

Montgomery County's PIT Count was conducted on the night of February 4, 2026. It was postponed by one week due to a weather event the previous week that included snow, ice and extreme cold. The county is so thankful for the support and collaboration of the 140 community volunteers who braved icy conditions and cold temperatures to canvas more than 500 square miles in the county. The teams consisted of experienced outreach workers and the many volunteers who signed up to

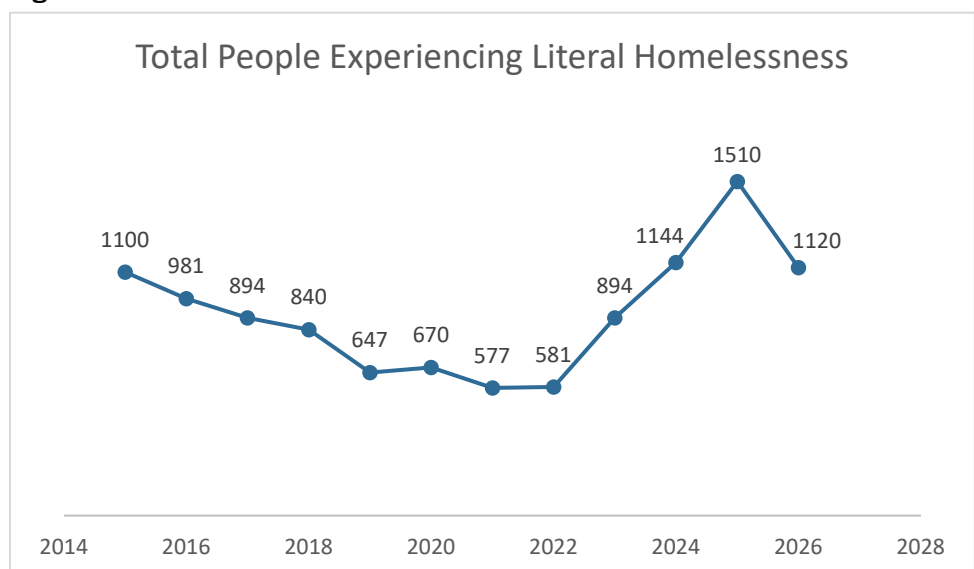


Downcounty PIT volunteers after training (Peter Sinclair)

participate. Training was provided on the night of the count to prepare the teams to conduct the unsheltered survey. Shelter and housing partners also counted all the people served in their programs on the same night.

A total of 1,120 unsheltered individuals were counted in Montgomery County that night. This is an overall decrease of 26% from 2025. Though there were reductions in nearly all subpopulations (individual adults, families, transition aged youth, veterans and unsheltered individuals), the largest reductions were counted among families and the unsheltered population.

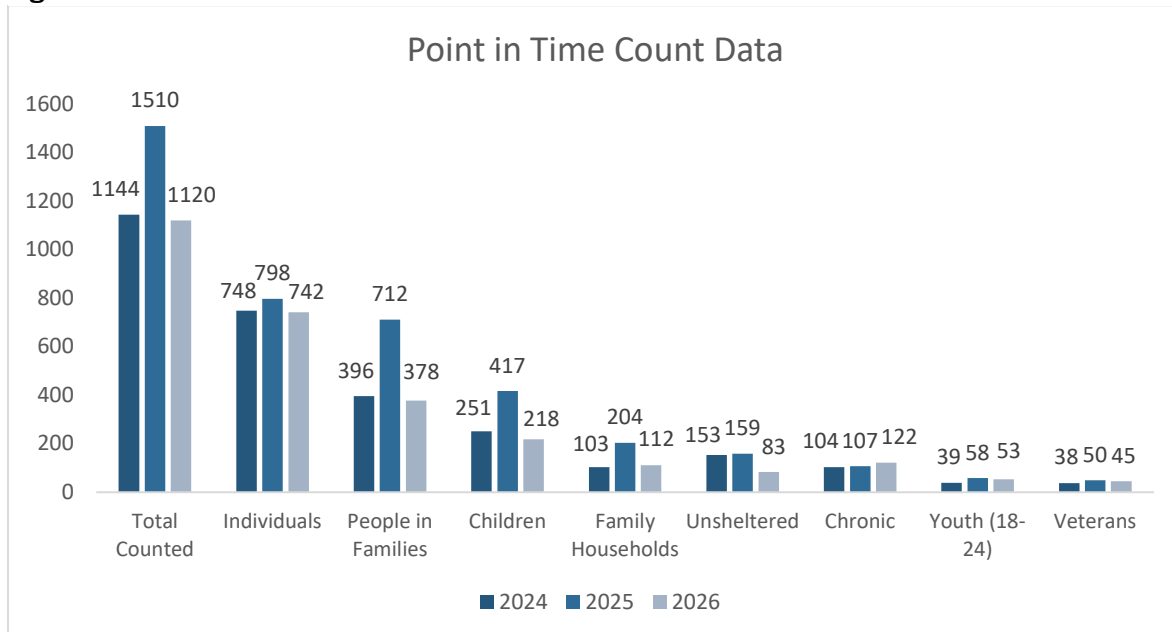
**Figure 18**



Source: Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services

There was a 47% decrease from the prior count in the number of people in families (adults and minor children) and a 45% decrease in family households. This significant reduction was largely achieved through a major investment by the county in the Short-term Housing and Resolution Program (SHaRP), which specifically targeted families due to the alarming increase in family homelessness in the previous two years. The SHaRP program provides 12 months of rental assistance and navigation services to families. SEPH's Homeless Services for Families, the family shelter partners, and the domestic violence shelter worked collaboratively with the SHaRP team to house 270 families, accounting for 919 adults and minor children during the time between the 2025 and 2026 PIT Counts.

**Figure 19**



The total counted is the sum of individuals, which are adult-only households, and people in family units. Unsheltered, chronic, youth, and veterans may be part of family units or individual adult-only households. Source: Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services

To help families quickly locate and secure housing, housing locators and case managers identified units listed in the RentSelect database, which is composed of units available for households exiting homelessness. Landlords listing units in this database were eligible for enrollment and lease-up incentives, which reduced barriers to placement for families using subsidies.

There was also a 48% decrease from 2025 to 2026 in the number of people surveyed who were unsheltered. The extreme cold was likely a significant factor in counting fewer people, as the outreach partners had made exhaustive efforts encouraging individuals who had been sleeping rough to seek shelter. The county has also made progress in housing unsheltered individuals through the Street to Home program, provided by Bethesda Cares in partnership with The Coordinating Center, the Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) and SEPH. The program was funded by HUD through the Special Unsheltered Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

SEPH and its outreach partners have also worked collaboratively with local stakeholders, the county's Regional Services staff and other county departments and agencies to respond to public concerns about encampments. The goal has been to offer services and resources using a person-

centered, trauma-informed approach, with outreach partners taking the lead on these efforts to avoid criminalization of unsheltered individuals.

This year, 3,254 permanent housing beds were counted in the Housing Inventory Count (HIC). This is a 23% increase from 2024 to 2025, which is closely correlated with the increase in housing available for families through the SHaRP program. In addition to CoC housing programs available, the housing planning process for individuals and families working with case managers also includes applying for housing vouchers through HOC, the primary Public Housing Authority in the county. These vouchers, which are not included in the HIC, continue to be an important means for some households to obtain housing.

## **Built for Zero and Continuous Systems Improvement**

Montgomery County has collaborated with Community Solutions for more than 10 years on the Built for Zero approach to ending homelessness, which is a data driven strategy to continuously improve system-wide efforts to reduce homelessness. By consistently tracking the number of people entering and exiting homelessness for different subpopulations, the CoC has been able to target resources where it is most needed. These efforts contributed to the targeted investments this past year that significantly increased exits to housing particularly for families, but also for the unsheltered population.

In early 2025, the county's ICH partnered with the Corporation for Supportive Housing and Community Solutions to revise its strategic plan so that it could effectively respond to the current landscape of challenges. A series of improvement meetings were conducted with community partners, people with lived expertise and other stakeholders, with the aim of strengthening system performance. These sessions focused on identifying what was working well and where improvements were needed across the CoC, from initial engagement with individuals experiencing homelessness to achieving and sustaining housing.

The CoC successfully targeted the county-funded SHaRP program to increase exits to permanent housing and reduce the length of shelter stays for families. This intervention focused on quickly resolving homelessness by providing 12 months of rental assistance combined with state-funded resource navigation services. This effort resulted in a measurable decrease in family homelessness, reflected in monthly outflow data and this year's PIT results.

Last year, the county invested in an outreach team comprised of peer specialists based at Progress Place in downtown Silver Spring, which has the largest concentration of unsheltered individuals. The goal was to improve engagement and access to services. Additionally, to improve the coordination and consistency of outreach efforts, the CoC has made progress on developing standardized outreach procedures and workflows across all outreach providers. Alongside increased housing resources through the HUD CoC Special Unsheltered NOFO award, all of these efforts likely contributed to the reduction in unsheltered homelessness that was observed in this year's count.

Montgomery County is partnering with the District of Columbia and Prince George's County on a data sharing warehouse that enables the three CoCs to coordinate services and access to housing resources for veterans that have been served in more than one of the CoCs. The three jurisdictions and the Department of Veteran's Affairs have monthly case conferencing meetings to determine which CoC engages most with veterans on the shared list. This regional collaboration has

significantly improved efforts across these jurisdictions to house veterans. The case conferencing is a model the three CoCs plan to use to improve housing efforts for other subpopulations as well.

Over the past year, the CoC has focused on building service provider capacity to improve data quality through education and training. This undertaking helped providers understand how to use data effectively to inform program improvements and to strengthen the system overall. These efforts have led to more consistent and timely data entry and reporting.

The CoC is also strengthening overall system functioning by improving how prevention and diversion efforts are tracked, ensuring these programs effectively reduce inflow into homelessness. These efforts will continue in the coming year.

## Conclusion and Lessons Learned

This year's count demonstrated that targeted investments in housing like the SHaRP and Street to Home programs are critically important to reducing homelessness for a significant number of people. Though the number of families counted this year was 92 families fewer than the previous year, with more families becoming homeless each month, the SHaRP program actually housed approximately three times as many families between the 2025 and 2026 PIT counts to reach this outcome. This is why policy changes like Expedited Bill 31-25 are so important. Preliminary 2026 eviction data indicates that the legislation has led to a significant decrease in evictions, which in turn should reduce inflow into homelessness.

It is noteworthy that the only subpopulation that increased in Montgomery County is the chronically homeless population. Nearly all of the people counted in this subpopulation were individual adults. Analysis of the length of stay in shelters indicates that this increase was likely caused by people timing into chronic status. Although the CoC continuously houses individuals, it is evident that more housing resources are needed.

With cuts in federal resources including SNAP, Medicaid, and possibly HUD-funded permanent housing, it is likely that more people will face housing instability and homelessness in the coming year. Given these challenges, the CoC must rely more heavily on county and state resources. With the success of the SHaRP program in housing families, the CoC is looking toward the possibility of housing individuals with the program.



PIT volunteers after the count (Kristin Mink)

Among important state initiatives, HOC has committed to providing 71 housing vouchers funded by the state to people experiencing homelessness in the county. Maryland is also expanding its Medicaid 1115 Waiver Program, Assistance in Community Integration Services (ACIS) to offer supportive services to Medicaid enrolled individuals experiencing homelessness. SEPH has been an ACIS Lead Entity since the program started, to provide supportive services in conjunction with the county-funded Housing Initiative Program (HIP). SEPH is seeking 100 more participant spaces through the ACIS expansion.

The Montgomery County CoC will continue undeterred in its collaborative, data driven efforts to prevent and end homelessness. This past year has demonstrated that Montgomery County can make significant reductions in homelessness even in the face of considerable challenges.

# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

2026 Jurisdictional Narrative | Point-in-Time Count

## Introduction and CoC Overview

Prince George's County Continuum of Care coordinates homeless services through the County's Homeless Services Partnership (HSP), the local Homeless Advisory Board for the County Executive. The Department of Social Services serves as the lead administering agency, HMIS administrator, and Collaborative Applicant for the annual HUD Homeless Assistance grant process. The system includes street outreach, mobile crisis, coordinated entry, emergency and hypothermic overflow shelters, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing.

As of the 2025 Housing Inventory Count, the CoC operated 38 programs with 1,120 total year-round beds: 377 emergency shelter beds, 205 transitional housing beds, 146 rapid re-housing beds, and 392 permanent supportive housing beds. The system includes 269 beds designated for chronically homeless persons, 117 youth-designated beds, and 96 beds targeted to domestic violence survivors. At the time of the 2026 PIT count, 535 formerly homeless persons were housed in permanent housing across 337 units.

## New Administration Investment in Homeless Services

County Executive Aisha N. Braveboy took office in June 2025 with housing stability as a clear administration priority. That commitment extended directly to this year's count. County Executive Braveboy engaged personally with volunteers and staff on count night, and her administration participated directly in count operations.

## A Community Framework for Ending Homelessness

Over the past year the CoC completed a community planning process defining its priorities for preventing and ending homelessness through 2035. More than 350 individuals participated across eight planning meetings and two full-day community sessions. Workgroups organized around housing, healthcare, access and outreach, and data. People with Lived Experience and Expertise shaped the process from the start. The process produced seven shared priorities, including expanding affordable and supportive housing, strengthening behavioral health services, preventing homelessness before it starts, improving data quality, and securing sustainable long-term funding.

## Youth Homelessness

Prince George's County holds dual designation as a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) community. The Youth Advisory Board (YAB) maintained active representation in CoC program meetings throughout the year, moving beyond attendance to direct policy influence. That engagement has produced concrete results, including clearer pathways for youth to access stable housing, employment, and education, and program policies that more accurately reflect what young people experiencing homelessness actually need. The 2026 count identified 86 unaccompanied youth and 16 parenting youth households. In coordination with DHCD's 2026 Youth REACH statewide count, the YAB partnered with DSS, the County Communications team, and Parks and Recreation to identify youth ages 13 to 24 experiencing homelessness. Outreach at Youth Drop-In Centers, the YES Center, Bruce Empowerment Zone, Sasha Bruce Youthworks, CASA, and local universities identified 61 additional youth in February 28 through March 12 count window.

## Local System Context and PIT/HIC Interpretation

The 2026 count was conducted on February 4, 2026. The total number of persons counted was **783**, compared to 606 in 2025. The unsheltered count more than doubled, from 55 to 115.

## What Changed About the Count

The 2026 count was the most methodologically rigorous Prince George's County has conducted in several years. For the first time, over 50 trained community volunteers joined professional outreach staff for a structured nighttime count. In prior years, the unsheltered count relied primarily on paid provider staff. Adding volunteers expanded coverage significantly. All catchment areas were fully covered. Shelter transport was available throughout the night. Count teams had more supplies and Narcan kits than in any prior year. Volunteer training was offered in multiple formats, including in-person on count night and on-demand video.

## What the Numbers Tell Us

More than doubling the unsheltered count requires context. The 2025 figure of 55 was almost certainly an undercount. Encampment sweeps in the weeks before last year's count, combined with a more limited methodology, suppressed that result. This year's count covered more ground with more people and better tools. The higher number reflects a more accurate picture of unsheltered homelessness in the County. Communities that count more honestly are better positioned to respond.

Severe weather and icy road conditions delayed the count by one week. On count night, conditions remained harsh and drove more people into shelter. The County's hypothermia and extreme weather policy created additional emergency shelter capacity that was fully activated. People who would not have been in shelter on a typical January night were counted because the system expanded to meet the need. That is the policy working as designed.

**Families remained fully sheltered.** No unsheltered families were identified on count night. The County counted 131 adult-and-child households totaling 416 persons, all sheltered. That outcome reflects a family shelter and transitional housing system that absorbed the demand.

Of the 783 persons counted, 467 were in emergency shelter, 201 were in transitional housing, and 115 were unsheltered. Every unsheltered person was a single adult. No families and no children were identified unsheltered on count night.

The County is pursuing approval for an expansion of 300 concurrent participant spaces through the Assistance in Community Integration Services (ACIS) program, using the Maryland 1115 Medicaid Waiver to fund supportive services. ACIS eligibility requires two or more chronic medical conditions. The count data makes the case clear. Among single adults counted this year, 107 had a serious mental illness, 76 had a chronic health condition, 60 had a physical disability, and 46 had a substance use disorder. Those numbers are undercounts. The PIT count does not ask about hypertension, diabetes, or other cardiovascular conditions that are endemic among people experiencing homelessness. The medical need in this population is larger than any PIT snapshot can capture. The most medically vulnerable people are concentrated outside of shelter: 67 of the 107 adults with serious mental illness were unsheltered, as were 51 of 60 with physical disabilities and all 46 with substance use disorders. HUD funds housing through programs like rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing. ACIS fills the gap by allowing the County to bill Medicaid for the intensive case management that 107 people require. Together, HSP covers rent and ACIS covers services, extending the County's reach to people whose medical complexity has kept them outside the system.

The PIT count is voluntary and relies on self-report. Much of this year's unsheltered count was based on observation only, meaning enumerators recorded individuals without completing a full survey. As a result, chronic homelessness status and other vulnerability indicators, including substance use,

chronic health conditions, and mental illness, are likely undercounted in the unsheltered population specifically. The subpopulation figures reported here should be read as a floor, not a ceiling.

**Joint Outreach with Law Enforcement.** Street outreach in Prince George’s County now includes a formal joint outreach effort with law enforcement that began in August 2025. Outreach staff collaborate primarily with Division VIII and Division I officers. Since launch, the team has engaged 51 people experiencing homelessness. Of those, 21 accepted resources: 16 received shelter placements and 3 accepted inpatient treatment for alcohol and substance use disorders. The joint effort includes regular visits to the powerlines encampment alongside police, Pepco, and the Department of Permits, Inspections and Enforcement. This partnership has improved rapport between outreach staff and law enforcement and expanded the County’s knowledge of unsheltered locations, directly strengthening its capacity to conduct a complete count.

## Built for Zero and Continuous Systems Improvement

Prince George’s County participates in Built for Zero (BFZ), a national movement led by Community Solutions, as part of the MWCOC regional cohort alongside DC and Montgomery County, formalized through COG Resolution R12-2021. The goal is functional zero, the point at which monthly housing placements consistently exceed new inflow. The County’s current BFZ focus is on veterans and the broader single adult population.

### Veteran Homelessness

The actively homeless veteran count fell from a peak of 25 in June 2024 to a low of 9 by September 2025, a 64 percent reduction. The BFZ team meets weekly and includes CoC staff, nonprofit partners, police, street outreach workers, people with lived experience, and data staff. Regular case conferencing has improved identification, accelerated placements, and reduced the risk of veterans cycling off the list without resolution.

The 2026 PIT count identified 20 veteran households, higher than in prior years. That increase reflects improved identification capacity as much as any change in veteran homelessness levels. A count that reflects 20 veteran households is more credible than one that reflected 7. Figure 1 shows the monthly housing equation since June 2024. The system has proven it can house veterans. Reaching functional zero requires outflow to consistently exceed inflow, which is the work of 2026.

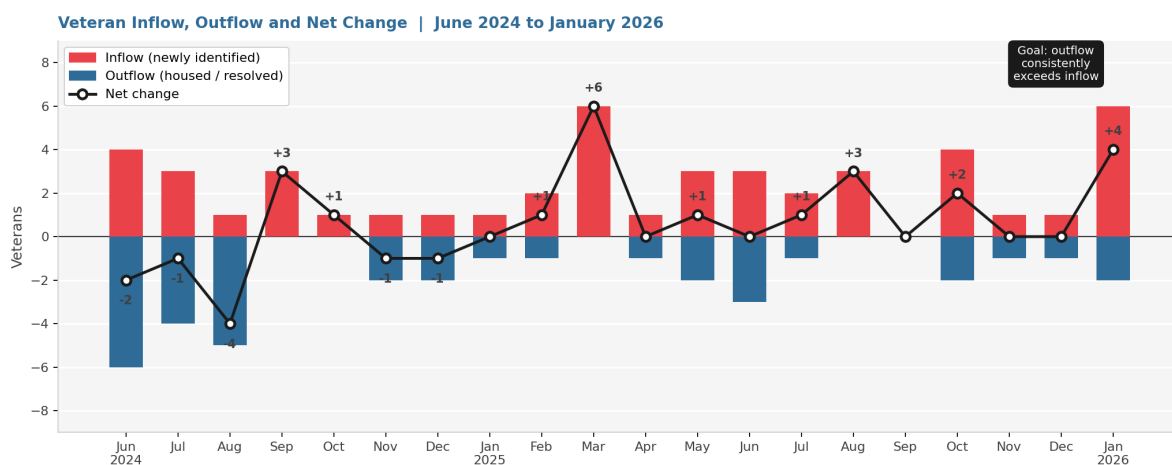


Figure 1. Veteran Inflow, Outflow, and Net Change | June 2024 to January 2026. Source: Prince George’s County CoC By-Name List, HMIS.

## Scorecard and Data Quality

In June 2024, Prince George's County scored 6 out of 30 on the BFZ quality scorecard. By September 2025, that score had climbed to 22 out of 30. More than 92 percent of by-name list records now meet BFZ quality standards. That improvement came from three concrete changes: a formal inactive policy with clear criteria for when someone leaves the active list, including specific definitions for veterans in institutions beyond 90 days; a process for generating the by-name list directly from HMIS rather than manually; and weekly case conferencing that keeps the list current.

At the March 2026 MWCOG regional learning session, Prince George's County committed to achieving quality data for all single adults by September 30, 2026. The plan targets proactive outreach coverage, fuller system enrollment for people currently invisible to funders, and accountability structures that sustain progress across staff and grant cycles.

## Conclusion and Lessons Learned

The 2026 count produced a more complete picture of homelessness in Prince George's County than any recent count. The methodology improvement, including the first structured nighttime volunteer count, is the primary driver of the increase in unsheltered persons counted. Counting more accurately is a prerequisite to responding effectively.

**What worked:** The hypothermia policy expansion housed people on count night who would otherwise have been unsheltered. The family system was held. BFZ case conferencing accelerated veteran placements. Volunteer training flexibility increased preparedness. Joint outreach with law enforcement expanded coverage and improved trust with the unsheltered population.

**What did not work as intended:** Street outreach capacity remains insufficient to consistently identify and engage the unsheltered population. Inflow into the veteran by-name list continues to replenish the list faster than the system can resolve cases in most months.

**Priorities before the next PIT:** (1) Expand street outreach capacity and geographic coverage for the unsheltered single adult population. (2) Complete ACIS expansion approval and align HSP rapid re-housing funding with service dollars. (3) Sustain BFZ data quality improvements and achieve quality data for all singles by September 2026.

# PRINCE WILLIAM AREA, VIRGINIA

## Introduction and CoC Overview

The Prince William Area Continuum of Care (PWA CoC) is a network of government, nonprofit providers, faith-based organizations, outreach organizations, citizens at large, and persons with lived experience of homelessness. The Prince William County Department of Social Services serves as the lead administrative and fiscal agency, managing the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) as well as the Coordinated Entry System (CES).

Programs within the PWA CoC include prevention, diversion, street outreach, drop-in centers, emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing. The PWA CoC has forty-five (45) member organizations and seventeen (17) funded homeless service providers; eleven (11) of which contribute data into the CoC’s HMIS.

The PWA CoC promotes a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness. The CoC’s goal is to quickly re-house homeless households to minimize trauma and dislocation. The CoC promotes access to effective utilization of mainstream programs and optimizes self-sufficiency among households experiencing homelessness.

Since the 2025 count the CoC has celebrated growth and success across their system from new staff positions to support street outreach and HMIS needs, strengthened partnerships with the county’s Office of Community Safety and victim service providers, a new initiative to raise public awareness about panhandling, the launch of the Veteran and community-wide By-Name Lists, new permanent housing opportunities from programs funded by the American Rescue Plan and the Virginia Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, increased hypothermia shelter inventory, and a new collaboration platform (Civic Roundtable).

While the PIT Count is a valuable data source, it is also important to examine annualized data to ensure the community has a fuller, more actionable picture of their homeless system that highlights the prevalence, as well as the incidence, of these experiences.

The table below (Figure 1) provides a comparison of the PWA CoC’s PIT Counts to its annual counts of persons in emergency shelter (ES), transitional housing (TH), or street outreach (SO) programs in HMIS over the past 5 years (utilizing the 10/1 – 9/30 report period).

| Fiscal Year | PIT Count | Annual Count |
|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| FY2025      | 392       | 1095         |
| FY2024      | 345       | 1066         |
| FY2023      | 326       | 972          |
| FY2022      | 241       | 863          |
| FY2021      | 282       | 750          |

**Figure 20: PIT Counts & Annual Counts of persons in ES, TH, or SO in HMIS over the past 5 years**

## Local System Context and PIT/HIC Interpretation

PIT Count methodology remained consistent with prior years as the CoC continues to refine effective strategies. This year, 10 teams and over 50 volunteers participated in these efforts. Smaller teams

Source: PWC DSS Homeless Services Division

efficiency, and engagement with persons experiencing homelessness.

improved  
coverage,

For the first time in over a decade, the CoC delayed the PIT count due to severe weather conditions. The winter storms that struck the region at the end of January led to immense challenges that would have impacted on the accuracy of the unsheltered count and the safety of volunteers. Delaying the count allowed conditions to stabilize and ensured the CoC could focus efforts on the safety of persons outside in the dangerous conditions. Increased hypothermia inventory and extended hypothermia hours were in place in anticipation of an unprecedented winter in Northern Virginia.

The total number of persons counted remained stable in 2026 (-2%, or 6 fewer persons). However, the emergency shelter count increased (+11%, +27 persons) while the unsheltered count decreased (-30%, -34 persons). This shift is likely influenced by the 34 additional hypothermia shelter beds available on the night of the count.

Household composition remained stable. Adult-Only households (AO HH) represent 84% of PIT households and continue to make up most of the households served annually. Among households with children (AC HH), there was a decrease in adults (14%) and an increase in children (9%), suggesting larger family sizes or more single-parent families. Child-only households (CO HH) remain rare and were not identified during PIT.

The table below (Figure 2) provides a breakdown of the household types counted during the PWA CoC's PIT in comparison to the household types served in emergency shelter (ES), transitional housing (TH), or street outreach (SO) programs in HMIS over the past 5 years (utilizing the 10/1 - 9/30 report period).

**Figure 2: Household Types Counted During PIT in Comparison to Household Types Served in ES, TH, or SO in HMIS over the past 5 years.**

| Fiscal Year | PIT Count |       |       | Annual Counts |       |       |
|-------------|-----------|-------|-------|---------------|-------|-------|
|             | AO HH     | AC HH | CO HH | AO HH         | AC HH | CO HH |
| FY2025      | 83%       | 17%   | 0%    | 87%           | 13%   | 0%    |
| FY2024      | 83%       | 17%   | 0%    | 87%           | 13%   | <1%   |
| FY2023      | 82%       | 18%   | 0%    | 85%           | 15%   | 0%    |
| FY2022      | 86%       | 14%   | 0%    | 86%           | 14%   | 0%    |
| FY2021      | 85%       | 15%   | 0%    | 83%           | 17%   | 0%    |

Source: PWC DSS Homeless Services Division

The PWA CoC believes in building a crisis response system that works for everyone and leaves no one behind. Therefore, it is essential for the CoC to analyze demographic data collected from persons experiencing homelessness; not only to better understand those experiences, but also to identify overrepresented populations and tailor services to specific needs. The typical person counted is a single adult over age 45, staying in emergency shelter, identifying as male and Black, African American, or African.

Racial composition shifted in 2026, with an increase in persons identifying as Black, African American, or African (+9%) and a decrease in persons identifying as White (non-Hispanic) (-14%).

Gender distribution remained stable, with most persons identifying as male (56%). Notable differences in gender appear when analyzing by household type:

- Adults in households with children are more likely to identify as female (81%)
- Single adults are more likely to identify as male (69%)
- Households with more than 1 adult are all couples (50% male, 50% female)

The CoC continues to see an aging population with an upward trend in adults between the ages of 45 and 64. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of adults are 55 or older, and the oldest person counted was 79, residing in emergency shelter.

The CoC analyzes key populations with higher vulnerability or service needs (i.e., “priority populations”), including chronic homelessness, disabling conditions, domestic violence survivors, transition age youth (TAY), and Veterans. Analyzing data on priority populations is critical to understanding the unique, high-risk needs of these groups and helps address systemic inequalities.

Adults reporting at least one disabling condition remained stable (<2% decrease); 50% of adults reported living with one or more conditions in 2026 with the average being 45% over the past 5 years. The most common conditions reported were physical disabilities (42%), mental health disorders (41%), and chronic health conditions (33%). There were increases in reported substance use disorders (+57%) and developmental disabilities (+83%). Reports of disabling conditions among adults in transitional housing also increased significantly (more than 100%).

This year the CoC conducted a deeper analysis of reported conditions to better understand the level and severity of need for persons living with said conditions. The table below (Figure 3) provides a breakdown of the number of reported conditions by “project type” (emergency shelter, transitional housing, and unsheltered situations).

**Figure 3: Number of Disabling Conditions Reported in 2026 by Project Type**

| Project Type         | 1 condition | 2 conditions | 3 conditions | 4+ conditions |
|----------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Emergency Shelter    | 45%         | 33%          | 14%          | 9%            |
| Transitional Housing | 40%         | 40%          | 20%          | 0%            |
| Unsheltered          | 48%         | 24%          | 24%          | 3%            |
| <b>All Adults</b>    | <b>45%</b>  | <b>31%</b>   | <b>17%</b>   | <b>7%</b>     |

Source: PWC DSS Homeless Services Division

Chronic homelessness increased to 30% of adults (up from a 5-year average of 22%). Rates were similar among adults in emergency shelter (30%) and adults experiencing unsheltered homelessness (34%). Nearly all chronically homeless adults are single adults. Chronic homelessness in emergency shelter increased (+43%) while unsheltered chronic homelessness decreased (-17%); likely due to expanded hypothermia shelter capacity.

The share of Domestic Violence (DV) survivors decreased by 19% since 2025; 21% of adults reported they are a survivor with the average being 22% over the past 5 years. The number of survivors reporting their current episode of homelessness is due to fleeing a life-threatening situation has increased by 21% since 2025; 57% of adult survivors reported they are homeless due to DV with the average being 49% over the past 5 years.

Transition Age Youth (TAY) increased by 67% (or 8 more persons), reversing a prior downward trend. Most were single adults (67%) in emergency shelter (93%).

Veteran homelessness decreased by 33% (or 4 fewer persons), continuing a downward trend since 2024. Most Veterans were single adults (85%) in emergency shelter (62%).

## **Built for Zero and Continuous System Improvement**

Since joining the Built for Zero (BFZ) initiative in 2024, the PWA CoC has strengthened real-time data tracking, coordination, and system alignment. Key advancements include the implementation of community-wide and Veteran By-Name Lists, updated assessment tools, and regular case conferencing.

The CoC recently completed a system realignment in collaboration with community partners and adopted five priority goals:

- Goal 1: System Prioritization
- Goal 2: Street Outreach Expansion
- Goal 3: Fair Housing Awareness
- Goal 4: Documentation Optimization
- Goal 5: Public Awareness & Community Partnerships

While still in the early phase, improved data visibility has increased the number of identified persons experiencing homelessness. This reflects better system coverage rather than a definitive rise in homelessness. The current data is still shifting, and more time is needed before the CoC can measure the full impact of the changes made under this initiative.

The table below (Figure 4) provides counts for “inflow” (i.e., persons entering the crisis response system who are newly homeless or that are returning during the report period) and “outflow” (i.e., persons leaving the crisis response system for any reason during the report period) from August 2025 through January 2026 in comparison to the “actively homeless number” (i.e., the monthly total of persons experiencing homelessness who have not yet moved into housing).

**Figure 4: Actively Homeless Number and System Inflow/Outflow from August 2025 to January 2026**

| Report Period | Actively Homeless Number | Inflow      |                  |                       |                        | Outflow     |                    |                   |
|---------------|--------------------------|-------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|
|               |                          | All Persons | Newly Identified | Returned from Housing | Returned from Inactive | All Persons | Housing Placements | Moved to Inactive |
| AUG2025       | 730                      | <b>126</b>  | 82               | 19                    | 25                     | <b>114</b>  | 49                 | 65                |
| SEP2025       | 741                      | <b>135</b>  | 92               | 17                    | 26                     | <b>126</b>  | 59                 | 67                |
| OCT2025       | 790                      | <b>165</b>  | 98               | 25                    | 42                     | <b>106</b>  | 55                 | 51                |
| NOV2025       | 880                      | <b>195</b>  | 141              | 27                    | 27                     | <b>99</b>   | 40                 | 59                |
| DEC2025       | 945                      | <b>168</b>  | 130              | 18                    | 20                     | <b>103</b>  | 39                 | 64                |
| JAN2026       | 1050                     | <b>162</b>  | 117              | 19                    | 26                     | <b>57</b>   | 22                 | 35                |

Source: PWC DSS Homeless Services Division

## Conclusions and Lessons Learned

The past year reflects not a single shift, but rather a series of coordinated improvements that, taken together, are strengthening the community’s ability to respond effectively and equitably. The 2026 PIT Count and accompanying system data illustrate a system that is evolving – one that is expanding capacity, refining its use of data, and deepening collaborations across partners.

The relative stability in overall PIT numbers, paired with a meaningful decrease in unsheltered homelessness and an increase in emergency shelter inventory, suggests that targeted interventions can have immediate and measurable impacts. At the same time, rising rates of chronic homelessness, reported disabling conditions, and shifts in demographic trends underscore the growing complexity and intensity of need among those experiencing homelessness. These patterns reinforce the importance of sustained investment in permanent housing solutions, supportive services, and tailored interventions for vulnerable populations.

The 2026 PIT findings highlight the need to strengthen both data accuracy and system insight as the CoC continues to refine its understanding of homelessness. Expanding and sustaining street outreach coverage will be critical to more accurately capturing unsheltered homelessness, particularly given the impact of seasonal shelter capacity on PIT results. Improved alignment between PIT, By-Name Lists, and HMIS data will enhance data reliability and provide a clearer picture of system trends and population needs. In parallel, continued public engagement and volunteer recruitment will support more effective PIT implementation while helping to reduce stigma and increase community awareness.

The CoC’s participation in the Built for Zero initiative and the implementation of By-Name Lists represents a significant advancement in how the community understands and responds to homelessness in real time. Improved system visibility and data quality are enabling more informed, data-driven decisions and supporting a shift from reactive crisis management to more strategic, proactive solutions.

Several key lessons have emerged over the past year. Data-driven decision making, when paired with strong community partnerships, leads to more responsive and person-centered outcomes.

Reducing barriers within the system - whether through streamlined documentation, improved prioritization, or expanded outreach - is essential to accelerating exits from homelessness. Centering equity and persons with lived experience in system design remains critical, both for fairness and for effectiveness.

Looking ahead, the PWA CoC is well-positioned to build on this momentum. By advancing its newly established goals, the CoC can continue to move toward a system where homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. Achieving this vision will require ongoing collaboration, adaptability, and a



PWC Staff & Volunteers (Keith Walker/PWC Office of Communications & Engagement)



Encampments in PWA CoC (Lynn Fritts/PWC Community Services; Damien Quesada/PWC DSS)

continued

commitment to learning from both data and persons with lived experience.

# APPENDIX C: COG HOMELESS SERVICES COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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