JULY 2022

HOMELESSNESS IN SACRAMENTO COUNTY

Results from the 2022 Point-in-Time Count

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the results of the 2022 Sacramento Point-in-Time Count--an extensive community effort to document every individual in the county experiencing homelessness on a single night. Most communities conduct a *Homeless Point-in-Time Count* every two years, during the last week of January, to fulfill a federal funding requirement from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). They are intended to provide a comprehensive "snapshot" of the total number of people experiencing homelessness in a community, capturing information about people accessing shelters and other services and also those who are not. The 2022 Sacramento Point-in-Time Count, which was conducted in February 2022 due to the pandemic, is the latest update in three years. Consequently, this report presents a number of new findings that have emerged about the current state of homelessness across Sacramento County since the start of the pandemic.

General Findings of 2022

➔ **Similar to statewide trends, Sacramento County continues to experience substantial increases in homelessness.** An estimated 9,278 individuals experienced homelessness throughout Sacramento County on a single night in February 2022. This represents a 67 percent increase in nightly homelessness since the last Point-in-Time Count in 2019, when 5,570 individuals were estimated homeless. This is also the highest estimate of homelessness on record for Sacramento--per capita, 59 out of 10,000 residents in the county experience homelessness on any given night.

➔ **There is a marked increase in the number and size of encampments throughout Sacramento County; the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness has increased as well as their visibility in our community.** The majority (72%) of individuals experiencing homelessness each night in Sacramento County continues to be *sleeping outdoors* in tents, vehicles, or other locations not suitable for human habitation. Volunteers counted over 1,600 tents and 1,100 vehicles being used for shelter--totals that were four to five times larger than in 2019. Volunteers were also more likely to encounter individuals literally at or near an encampment than in previous years. This suggests that encampments are currently more visible than in the past (i.e., they have become larger and located closer to populated areas). This increased visibility of tents and vehicles likely reflected changes in public health protocols and guidelines surrounding how jurisdictions

addressed encampments during the pandemic. It may have also reflected decreased flows of traffic, and use of public space, in some downtown areas, during the pandemic when most business and public sectors transitioned to telework arrangements. Furthermore, as the number of people experiencing homelessness increases, more people have no other option but to camp outside.

➜ **The substantial increase in homelessness in Sacramento likely parallels a statewide trend of increasing reports of homelessness in almost every community in California since 2015.** Though many communities have yet to make the results of their latest Point-in-Time Count public, prior to the pandemic the majority of jurisdictions across California had been reporting acute increases in unsheltered homelessness between 2015 and 2019 (a total 50% increase during this time). One in four communities in California reported a doubling of unsheltered homelessness in four years since 2015, including Sacramento. These trends correlated with a housing affordability crisis that worsened during this time; notably specific housing markets in California that indicated the largest increase in rents also reported the largest increases in homelessness between 2015 and 2019.[1] Rents in Sacramento have continued to increase substantially since the start of the pandemic; on average rents increased by 20 percent between March of 2020 through November 2021. The median rent in Sacramento County is $1,402 for a one-bedroom apartment and $1,837 for a two-bedroom.

➜ **The number of individuals who report a disability and experience chronic patterns of homelessness in Sacramento may have more than doubled since 2019.** An estimated 4,314 individuals with a disabling condition and experiencing prolonged periods of homelessness currently reside within Sacramento County, suggesting a substantial increase in "chronic homelessness"[2] by as much as 162 percent since the last count. This increase coincides with a larger proportion of individuals reporting longer periods of homelessness than in the past--nearly 78% of respondents interviewed stated that they

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[1] Baiocchi, A., Curry, S., Newham, J., & Monnet M. F. (2020). *An initial assessment of California's Homeless Emergency Aid Program.* Report prepared for the Homeless Finance & Coordinating Council. Institute for Social Research: California State University, Sacramento. https://www.bcsh.ca.gov/hcfc/documents/heap_annual.pdf

[2] Chronic homelessness is a specific designation used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to indicate individuals with a documented disability and who have had a single episode, or several episodes, of homeless extending a year in duration (see Section 2 of this report for the specific definition). Because in practice the designation requires a third-party verification process, the Point-in-Time Count likely overestimates the number of individuals who would be designated as chronically homeless given its reliance on surveys in which respondents self-reports their disabilities.

had been continuously homeless a year or more (up from 56% in 2019). Moreover, 58 percent of unsheltered adults indicated that they struggled with one or more disabilities that impaired their ability to secure employment or housing (up from 40% in 2019). These patterns contribute to the estimate that nearly one out of two people experiencing homelessness in Sacramento are currently chronically homeless (43%) .

➔ **While the 2022 PIT Count highlights some challenging trends for Sacramento, some findings also point to positive developments**. Shelter capacity has substantially increased since 2019, notably through the novel use of motel/hotel rooms as "non-congregate'' shelters. This increased capacity contributed to the proportion of unsheltered homelessness to remain essentially the same since 2019 (72% vs. 70%) despite the overall increase in homelessness. The increased capacity through the use of motel/hotels likely also contributed to a specific decrease in the number of unsheltered families with children experiencing homelessness (down 31%) as well as increased engagement with individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. There were also some positive developments in veteran homelessness; despite the 67 percent increase in homelessness in Sacramento there are fewer veterans experiencing homelessness in 2022 than in 2019 (625 vs. 667, a 6% decrease),

Better Understanding of Unsheltered Homelessness

The 2022 Homeless Count resulted in 330 in-person interviews conducted with individuals sleeping in unsheltered locations throughout Sacramento County. Because the 2022 Homeless Count included a targeted effort by outreach staff to engage and interview individuals in tents, vehicles as well as in remote locations (e.g., in the American River Parkway, rural roads), surveys from this year provide better information about individuals. Consequently, this report presents a number of new findings related to unsheltered homelessness in Sacramento County.

➔ **The vast majority of people experiencing homelessness continue to be from Sacramento County, despite concern that many are from other communities.** A common misperception of people experiencing homelessness is that most are "transients," from "out of town," or "outsiders of the community." Survey responses indicate, however, that only a small percent of unsheltered adults recently moved to Sacramento County within the last six months (5%) or are only temporarily in the county (3%). Survey responses showed little variation across respondents in tents, vehicles, and other unsheltered locations. This year's results are nearly identical to what was reported in 2019.

➔ Approximately half of all unsheltered adults (49%) report having to relocate their tents, vehicles, or makeshift shelter due to a recent request from law enforcement. On average unsheltered respondents report being forced to move by law enforcement four times in the two months before the 2022 Sacramento Point-in-Time Count. Approximately 65 percent of unsheltered respondents indicated that they were forced to move their sleeping arrangements at least once in the two months before the count. When asked why they were recently required to move, most individuals cited a law enforcement action (representing 49% of all unsheltered respondents). Some also cited safety concerns (13% of respondents) and/or that the area was no longer suitable for sleeping (e.g., flooding, rain etc.) (9%).[3] On average, respondents recalled law enforcement asking them to move four times in the last two months - though it is difficult to infer the specific circumstances that precipitated these requests (as well as which agency or agencies were involved).

➔ The majority of unsheltered adults (59%) report that they have been continuously homeless for three years or longer, while in 2019 only 41 percent of unsheltered did so. This suggests that it has become more difficult for people to exit homelessness in recent years. Survey responses suggest that 78 percent of unsheltered adults have been homeless a year or longer, and 59 percent have likely been continuously homeless since the last Point in Time Count in 2019. This suggests that some individuals, and particularly those with significant disabilities, have struggled to exit homelessness during the last several years. Some individuals who were struggling with episodic or short-term homelessness in 2019, would now be characterized as experiencing chronic homelessness.

➔ Most people who indicate that this is their first experience with homelessness, report that they became homeless before 2020, while relatively few say they fell into homelessness since the pandemic. This could suggest that the pandemic temporarily slowed the rate of new homelessness in Sacramento. Among unsheltered adults who reported that this is their first experience with homelessness, 22 percent indicated that their homelessness began in the year before the start of the pandemic (February 2019 through February 2020). In contrast, a relatively small percentage of respondents (6%) indicated that they had first become homeless during the first year of the pandemic, while a slightly larger group (12%) reported becoming homeless in the last year. This pattern is suggestive

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[3] Respondents could indicate multiple answers; i.e., while respondents most frequently cited a law enforcement action as the reason for their relocation, some also cited a safety concern and a law enforcement action.

evidence that policies enacted during the pandemic (e.g., eviction moratorium, assistance for renters, extension of unemployment benefits) prevented some households from falling into homelessness. Because this evidence is only suggestive with the current survey, further research into the impacts of policies enacted during pandemic on homelessness should be conducted. [4]

In the final section of this report, we elaborate on the above issues with respect to the changing context of homelessness in our community as well as discuss some of the broader policy implications of the 2022 Homeless Count more generally. We also discuss some methodological recommendations for future research, including the next Point in Time Count.

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[4] It is important to note the survey patterns discussed above are only suggestive evidence that the pandemic may have temporarily reduced the rate of new homelessness in Sacramento (or made it more difficult for some people to exit homelessness). Because the unsheltered survey data is a cross sectional "snapshot" of a group of people at one point-in-time, it cannot accurately track respondents who may have entered and exited homelessness when the survey was not administered. There is the possibility, for example, that individuals who became homeless in the last two years recovered more quickly and are therefore underrepresented in the 2022 estimates. Additional analyses using data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) could likely track more clearly whether new homelessness and exits in fact decreased during the pandemic

About the Center for Health Practice, Policy & Research

The Center for Health Practice, Policy & Research (CHPPR) at California State University, Sacramento is dedicated to impacting community health by promoting collaboration, interdisciplinary practice, and innovation to reduce health inequities across California.

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The conclusions and recommendations expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Sacramento Steps Forward or the Sacramento Continuum of Care. While Sacramento Steps Forward and associated staff provided feedback on an earlier draft of the report, this final report was written solely, and independently, by the university researchers listed above.

Acknowledgments

The Sacramento State research team would like to thank the approximately 500 volunteers who participated in the 2022 Homeless Count and walked a combined 350 miles of canvassing routes, to talk and engage with some of the most marginalized members of our community. The team would like to acknowledge the tremendous support and resources provided by dozens of organizations and community-partners that made the 2022 Homeless Count possible.

- Anchor Initiative Grants Program, Sacramento State
- California Homeless Youth Project
- Citrus Heights Police Department
- City of Citrus Heights
- City of Elk Grove
- City of Folsom
- City of Rancho Cordova
- City of Sacramento
- CLAP Community Lead Advocacy Program
- College of Health and Human Services, Sacramento State University
- Community Engagement Center, Sacramento State University
- Continuum of Care agencies
- Del Paso Blvd. Partnership
- Department of Community Response, City of Sacramento
- Department of Human Assistance, Sacramento County
- District Councilmembers and their Chiefs of Staff
- Division of Social Work, Sacramento State
- Downtown Sacramento Partnership
- Elk Grove Police Department
- Folsom Police Department
- Homeless Assistance Resource Teams (Arden Arcade, Carmichael, Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, Fair Oaks & Orangevale, Folsom, Midtown, Rancho Cordova, South Sacramento)
- Homeless Initiatives, Sacramento County
- Hope Cooperative
- Lutheran Social Services
- Mack Road Partnership

- Mary House-Loaves & Fishes
- Mustard Seed School-Loaves & Fishes
- Point-In-Time Count Committee, Sacramento Continuum of Care
- Power Inn Alliance
- Public Affairs & Advocacy, Sacramento State University
- Racial Equity Committee Sacramento Continuum of Care
- Rancho Cordova Police Department
- Sacramento 100 Day Challenge to Tackle Youth Homelessness Team
- Roads Home
- Sacramento Continuum of Care Board
- Sacramento Covered
- Sacramento County DHA Investigations
- Sacramento County Sheriff's Office
- Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee
- Sacramento Housing & Redevelopment Agency
- Sacramento LGBT Community Center
- Sacramento Police Department
- Sacramento Regional Transit
- Sacramento Regional Park Rangers
- Sacramento Self-Help Housing
- Sacramento State Student Volunteers
- Sacramento Steps Forward Staff & Navigators
- Sacramento Youth Council (Youth Action Board)
- Shelter Inc.
- Step Up on Second Sacramento
- Women's Empowerment
- Waking the Village
- Wind Youth Service

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Introduction: The 2022 PIT Count

Every two years Sacramento County and its incorporated cities undertake an extensive community effort to document every individual in the county experiencing homelessness during a single night. This effort, known as the *Homeless Point-in-Time* Count, results in a *census* of all individuals in the county accessing shelters and transitional housing ("sheltered homelessness"). The count also estimates the total number of individuals who, in the same period, are sleeping outdoors in tents, vehicles, or other locations not suitable for extended human habitation ("unsheltered homelessness").

The official results from the Point-in-Time Count (hereafter referred to as the "PIT Count") have direct implications for federal and state funding for programs addressing homelessness. This is because PIT Counts are intended to provide a comprehensive "snapshot" of the total number of people experiencing homelessness in a community, capturing information about people accessing services as well as those that are not. Beyond summarizing the total counts and demographics of people using shelters and those continuing to sleep outside, PIT Counts can also highlight trends over time by which local stakeholders can assess efforts to address homelessness in their region. This can include information about the relative size of specific at-risk populations, such as veterans, transitional age youth, families with children, and individuals with disabilities. Moreover, hundreds of surveys conducted with individuals not using the shelter system offer unique insights into the challenges faced by individuals experiencing homelessness.

Most communities conduct a PIT Count every two years, during the last week of January, to fulfill a federal funding requirement from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The last PIT Count for Sacramento County was conducted over three years ago in 2019; the 2021 Sacramento PIT Count, originally scheduled for January 2021, had to be postponed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.[5] Though HUD accepted a postponement of the Sacramento PIT Count until 2023, growing community concerns about increasing homelessness across the Sacramento region, coupled with reports of decreasing COVID rates in Sacramento County, prompted community efforts to facilitate a special off-cycle PIT Count in early 2022. Despite some delays caused by a surge in COVID rates in January 2022 (i.e., the "Omicron-variant surge") a successful PIT Count was eventually conducted in late February 2022.

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[5] Because the unsheltered component of the PIT Count requires hundreds of volunteers to canvas the region and facilitate face-to-face interviews with individuals, concerns about the risks and dangers of community transmission of COVID resulted in an official postponement of these efforts in December 2020.

This report summarizes the collective efforts of the 2022 Sacramento PIT Count and the key findings that have emerged about the current state of homelessness across Sacramento County. As discussed below, Sacramento Steps Forward--the local organization chiefly responsible for conducting the Sacramento PIT Count--has partnered for a fourth time with faculty researchers from Sacramento State and the Division of Social Work to assist in the implementation and analysis of the 2022 Sacramento PIT Count. Sacramento Steps Forward has also commissioned these faculty researchers to conduct an independent analysis of the Sacramento PIT data and author this community report for public dissemination of findings.

Additional Background About the 2022 Effort

Sacramento Steps Forward (SSF) functions as the administrative "lead agency" for what is known as our region's *Continuum of Care* for homeless services and programs.[6] Officially known as the *Sacramento City and County Continuum of Care* (Sacramento CoC), this decision-making coalition of approximately 30 local organizations is responsible for coordinating and planning various community-level efforts to address homelessness. The Sacramento CoC is also responsible for collecting and analyzing information about the local homeless service system as well as homelessness more generally in the region, including conducting the biennial PIT Count.

Since 2019, SSF and the Sacramento CoC have maintained a standing advisory committee of community members to guide and inform collective decisions about the Sacramento PIT Count. Members of this advisory committee (aptly named the CoC PIT Committee) include representatives from homeless service organizations, K-12 schools, advocates for youth and the LGBTQ+ community, law enforcement, local governments, as well as individuals who have previously been homeless.

During the spring and summer of 2021, the PIT Committee met monthly to deliberate on when and how to conduct the next Sacramento PIT Count. While an *unsheltered* PIT Count was not required by HUD until 2023, the PIT Committee voted to recommend that SSF conduct an unsheltered count as soon as practical given community interest to better understand the current prevalence of unsheltered homelessness in the region. A key motivation to conduct the PIT Count in early 2022 was to better understand how homelessness might have increased during the pandemic, especially given the increased visibility and reports of encampments throughout the county. In August 2021, the Sacramento CoC Executive Board endorsed these recommendations and voted for SSF to conduct a special off-cycle unsheltered PIT in January

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[6] A Continuum of Care (CoC) is an official HUD designation for a local coalition or community board that coordinates local homelessness planning efforts and disperses state and federal funding to support efforts to address homelessness in the community.

2022. The Board also voted to authorize SSF to commission faculty researchers at Sacramento State (the primary authors of this report) to provide technical and analytical assistance in preparation and analysis of the unsheltered Count, given their prior experiences providing these services in the past (e.g., 2017; 2019; 2021).

While SSF held primary responsibility for conducting the 2022 PIT Count, including outreach to partners and recruiting and training volunteers, the Sacramento State research team held primary responsibility for guiding the methodology and analysis of the 2022 PIT Count. Accordingly, the Sacramento State team met each month with the PIT Committee between September 2021 and January 2022 to discuss methodological and survey design decisions for the unsheltered count. While adhering to specific HUD guidelines, the research team incorporated feedback from the community to establish the 2022 PIT Count methodology, which is summarized briefly below (and elaborated in the appendix of this report).

Generally speaking, the Sacramento PIT Count was calibrated to estimate the total number of people experiencing homelessness[7] on February 23rd, 2022 across the geography of the Sacramento CoC (i.e., Sacramento County). Accordingly, researchers worked with the SSF staff to leverage data from the *Homeless Information Management System* (HMIS), as well as other sources, to calculate the number of people accessing shelters or transitional housing programs (as well as those sheltered in motels/hotels) on this particular night across the county. To estimate the total number of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness during this same time period, volunteer teams canvassed hundreds of locations across the county, where they visually counted and surveyed individuals that were present.[8] Count and survey information provided by canvassing teams were later used to statistically estimate the number of individuals likely missed in locations not canvassed. The Sacramento State team later combined the estimate of

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[7] The PIT methodology relies on the HUD definition of homelessness, which is defined as sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (but also includes those sleeping at an emergency shelter or transitioning housing program). It is important to note that this definition excludes other experiences of homelessness and forms of housing insecurity, such as when individuals may temporarily reside in someone's home (e.g., sleeping on someone's couch) or when families double up in a single-family apartment. While these forms of homelessness and housing insecurity are significant, they are not included in the analyses of this report, per HUD guidelines.

[8] The research team established specific canvassing routes for volunteers by first compiling reports from dozens of outreach, advocacy, and civic organizations regarding homelessness as well as analyzed service call data from multiple jurisdictions (e.g., 311 calls for service, 211 informational calls regarding housing support, as well as emergency response dispatch data). This data was used to create a sampling strategy, whereby 143 geographic areas were selected to be canvassed (each approximately a quarter square mile area) while others were identified for statistical extrapolation.

unsheltered homelessness in Sacramento County with the shelter information to calculate a nightly homeless total.
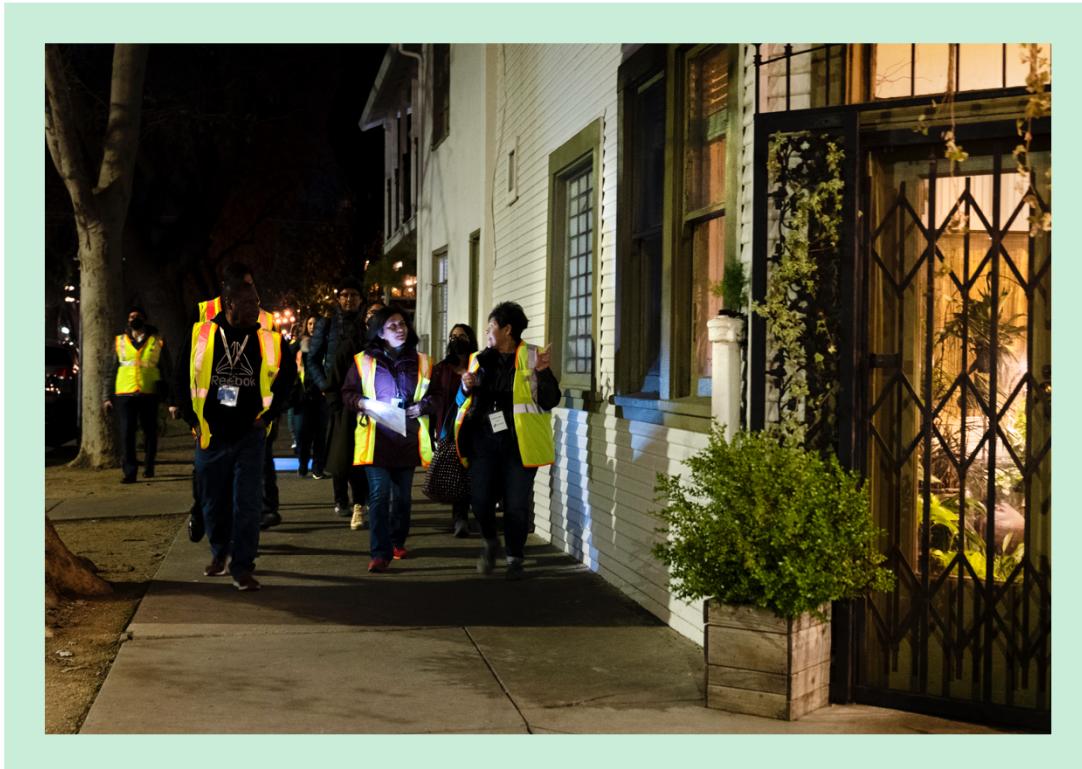
To make comparisons to previous years, the 2022 PIT Count retained most of the same sampling and fielding methodologies used in the 2019 PIT Count. Nonetheless, the 2022 PIT Count was conducted under unique circumstances, most notably the pandemic, which required some modifications. Moreover, community members expressed interest in improving and calibrating the survey fielding strategies to improve engagement with groups that are often underreported in PIT Counts. Some of these modifications are highlighted below.

- Given the ongoing pandemic, fewer community members volunteered to canvas locations than in 2019. Approximately 500 community members participated in the 2022 count compared to the approximately 900 volunteers in 2019.

- To maximize coverage, and in accordance with HUD guidelines, canvassing teams were deployed two nights (February 23 and 24th) but sent to geographically distinct regions of the county to avoid double counting. Canvassing teams were also deployed from five separate community sites across the two nights (deployment sites in the City of Sacramento, Citrus Heights, Rancho Cordova, Elk Grove, and Folsom).

- Similar to previous years, demographic surveys were conducted with a subsample of individuals encountered during the two count nights, which were later statistically

weighted with the count data to provide estimates of particular subpopulations. This year new questions about experiences in encampments, as well as about racial identity, were added to the survey tool, per recommendations of the PIT Committee.

- New efforts were also made to improve outreach with specific subpopulations that are traditionally undercounted in PIT Counts. These efforts included additional outreach with youth and families experiencing homelessness as well as organizing special outreach teams to survey individuals sleeping in vehicles and tents. Specialty outreach teams were also deployed to specific segments of the American River Parkway during the day, as navigating and locating individuals in these locations during the night can be difficult.

Report Roadmap

The goal of this report is to provide community members with a general understanding of the core findings from the 2022 Sacramento PIT Count as well as to highlight contextual factors and policy implications to consider in light of these findings. Given these goals, the report is organized in the following three sections:

Section 1 provides a general overview of the 2022 PIT Count and presents a series of statistics and estimates regarding the current state of homelessness in Sacramento County. In this section we discuss how these estimates can be interpreted within the broader context of increasing homelessness throughout the West Coast. Lastly, we present breakdowns of overall demographics and household characteristics of sheltered and unsheltered individuals.

Section 2 focuses on four key subpopulations that are at higher risk for experiencing homelessness. Specifically, we present detailed data on transitional age youth (ages 18-24), families with children, and veterans. This year's report also presents data on individuals who are disabled and experiencing chronic patterns of homelessness--the group that has experienced the largest increase since 2019.

Section 3 reviews the general trends highlighted by the various findings of 2022 PIT Count. This last section also highlights contextual factors to consider in light of these findings (such as the effects of the pandemic and the growing affordable housing crisis) as well as their policy implications. We also discuss methodological recommendations for future PIT Counts and research more generally on homelessness in Sacramento County.

In the appendix of this report we have included a **Methodology Summary** that describes the updated research design of the 2022 PIT Count. The appendix also includes a series of **Data Tables** that were submitted to HUD and summarize specific populations and subpopulations for the 2022 PIT Count. These same data points are summarized throughout this report.

Section 1: The State of Homelessness in 2022

In this section, we discuss the general results of the 2022 PIT Count, starting first with the estimates for nightly homelessness in Sacramento County. We report the number of sheltered and unsheltered individuals estimated on the night of the Count, as well as describe how different sleeping locations were distributed across the county. We also discuss these estimates in the broader context of increasing homelessness in California. Later in this section we overview the demographic profile of individuals experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County.

Estimates of Homelessness in Sacramento County

On a single night in February 2022 an estimated 9,278 individuals were experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County.

- This is the largest report of nightly homelessness on record for Sacramento County.

- The estimate of 9,278 includes the 2,614 *sheltered* individuals who accessed emergency shelters or transitional housing the night of the count, and the 6,664 *unsheltered* individuals who slept outside or in a location not suitable for human habitation (e.g., on the street, in a vehicle, or in a tent).

- This suggests that over 72 percent of individuals experiencing homelessness in the county are unsheltered as opposed to sheltered on any given night (i.e., not accessing shelters or transitional housing).

Figure 1 | Sheltered vs. Unsheltered Individuals in the 2022 Homeless Count

Results of the 2022 Homeless Count

6,664 Unsheltered
2,614 Sheltered
9,278 Total Individuals
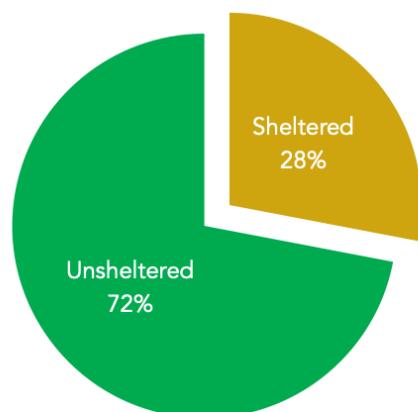
Sleeping Locations

The below table provides a more detailed summary of where people experiencing homelessness slept on the night of the 2022 count, including both those that were sheltered and unsheltered.

Table 1 | Sleeping Locations

Sheltered Locations	2,614	28%
Emergency Shelters	1,105	12%
Motel /Hotel programs*	874	9%
Transitional Housing	635	7%
Unsheltered Locations	6,664	72%
Tents	2,809	30%
Vehicles	1,782	19%
Other Locations**	2,073	22%
Total Nightly Homeless	9,278	100%

*this includes Project Roomkey & other efforts to shelter people in "non-congregate shelters"
**sleeping with tarp, under bridge, abandoned building, city warming center

With respect to sheltered locations, a total of 1,105 individuals slept in one of the approximately 30 emergency shelter programs operating across Sacramento County during the night of the count (sheltering approximately 12 percent of all individuals experiencing homelessness). Another 874 individuals (or 9%) were temporarily sheltered in a motel/hotel room paid by a homeless service provider (either the county, a city, or a program). Many of these motel/hotel rooms were aligned with the state's Project Roomkey and/or other COVID related initiatives to increase access to "non-congregate emergency shelter" for vulnerable individuals facing homelessness during the pandemic. As we elaborate in a later discussion in this section, this increased use of motel and hotel sheltering programs during the past two years substantially increased the overall shelter capacity in Sacramento County since the previous 2019 Count.

- Comparing the results of the 2019 and 2022 PIT Count, indicates that the shelter capacity of the Sacramento homeless service system increased substantially by 57 percent (increasing from 1,670 to 2,614 available shelter beds). Approximately 90 percent of this increase can be attributed to the increased use of motel/hotel shelter programs.

The remaining 635 sheltered individuals indicated in the 2022 PIT Count resided in one of the approximately 25 transitional housing programs in the county. These programs, that often focus on specific populations like transitional age youth (ages 18 to 24), also increased capacity between the 2019 and 2022 Count.

- Between the 2019 and 2022 Count, capacity in transitional housing programs increased by 20 percent (increasing from 531 to 635 beds).

- This contributed to approximately 10 percent of the overall increase in sheltered capacity for the broader homeless service system in Sacramento.

> Increased use of motel and hotel sheltering programs during the past two years substantially increased the overall shelter capacity in Sacramento County since the previous 2019 Count.

With respect to unsheltered locations, the above table highlights that almost a third of all individuals experiencing homelessness on the night of the count were sleeping in a tent outside (a total of 2,809 individuals or 30 percent of the total count). This coincided with a pronounced increase in the number of encampments (i.e., clusters of five or more tents) reported by volunteer canvassers and outreach teams.

- In total, over 1,600 individual tents were counted across Sacramento County during the 2022 PIT Count. This is five times more tents reported by canvassers than in 2019 (when approximately 300 tents were counted).

- Increased reporting of tent counts by volunteers in 2022 suggests, in part, that encampments are currently more visible than in the past (i.e., there are larger clusters of tents and in more visible and accessible locations than in the previous years). This increased visibility of encampments likely reflected changes in public health protocols and guidelines during the pandemic which reduced the clearing of encampments by jurisdictions.

Similar to the substantial increase in the number of people sleeping in tents, people sleeping in vehicles (in an RV or car) has also become much more pronounced in Sacramento County.

- Approximately 19 percent of all people experiencing homelessness (a total 1,782 individuals) were estimated to be sleeping in 1,100 vehicles during a single night across the county.

- In comparison, fewer than 200 vehicles were identified by volunteers in the 2019 PIT Count.

- Unlike 2019, volunteer canvassers in 2022 reported a number of "vehicle encampments," consisting of several, to several dozens, of vehicles parked together or along a street or road (some of which also included clusters of nearby tents and makeshift tarp shelters). Some vehicle encampments were parked along isolated county roads, industrial and business parks.

| **30%** | **22%** | **19%** |
| Tents | Other | Vehicles |
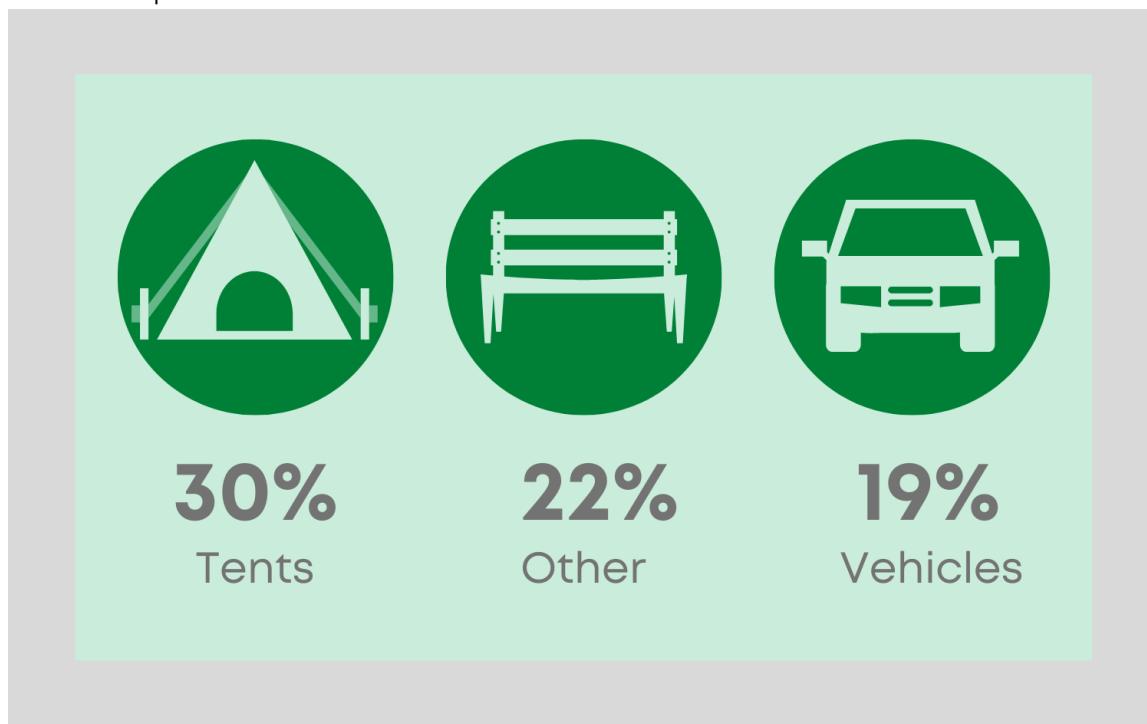
The remaining 22 percent of individuals reported sleeping in unsheltered locations other than a vehicle or tent. Survey responses,[9] as well as visual reports from canvassers, suggest that many of these unsheltered individuals used a sleeping bag, or other limited coverings (e.g., tarps or blankets), to sleep directly on the street or under a business doorway or bridge/underpass. Some

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[9] At the start of each interview, unsheltered individuals were asked where they anticipated sleeping for the evening of February 23rd (or where they had slept that night, if the survey was conducted after the 23rd)

of these individuals also reported squatting at an abandoned building or bus/light rail station. Individuals in this category also included those who accessed one of the various warming centers operational during the night of the PIT Count.

- Notably, around eight percent (8%) of respondents were unsure where they would sleep that night.

Geographic Distribution of Unsheltered Locations

The researchers analyzed the geolocation of the count data to identify the general region of the county where unsheltered homeless individuals were sleeping on the night of the count. Overall, the geographic distribution of unsheltered sleeping locations was reflective of population densities in the county, though not always proportional to the total populations within these regions.

Table 2 | Geographic Distributions of Unsheltered Locations

Areas in Sacramento County	Total Unsheltered	% of Total
City of Sacramento	4,444	67%
American River Parkway (inside City of Sac.)	594	8%
Citrus Heights	89	1%
Rancho Cordova	156	2%
Elk Grove	45	1%
Folsom	20	.5%
Unincorporated County	1,316	20%
Total Sacramento County	6,664	100%

The largest proportion of unsheltered sleeping locations were within the City of Sacramento; approximately 4,444 unsheltered individuals slept within the City and another 594 individuals resided within segments of the American River Parkway that fall within city limits.[10] This is not surprising given that the City of Sacramento is the geographically largest and most populous

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[10] The American River Parkway spans 32 miles across Sacramento County with some segments falling within the boundaries of the City of Sacramento, Rancho Cordova and Folsom, while others fall within unincorporated regions of the county. Over a dozen encampment locations canvassed by outreach teams in the American River Parkway were within the boundaries of the City of Sacramento. Because of the relatively high encampment counts of these specific segments of the parkway--which are likely not representative of the entire park--the above table presents a sub count of these areas (i.e., American River Parkway inside City of Sacramento). This is not a full estimate of all individuals residing in the entire parkway.

area in the county; it also encompasses a number of high-density census tracts. However, the City of Sacramento represents 33 percent of the total population of the county but between 67 to 75 percent of unsheltered homelessness. Rancho Cordova, on the other hand, has a rate of nightly homelessness (156 per night) that is proportional with its relative population size in the county (5% vs 6%). In contrast, the cities of Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, and Folsom have relatively small numbers of unsheltered homeless populations (89, 45 and 20 nightly homeless, respectively, or about 4 percent combined) despite their sizable overall populations (collectively making up 22 percent of the county's total population). The remaining 20 percent of unsheltered homelessness were distributed across the unincorporated parts of the county.

2022 Annualized Estimate

A common misconception of the Point-in-Time PIT Count is that it provides a total yearly estimate of all of the individuals experiencing homelessness within the community--for example, approximating the total number of individuals who fall into homelessness or access shelters across the span of the year. As the name implies, however, the Point-in-Time count provides only a snapshot of one night of homelessness in a region.

- During the course of an entire year *different* individuals enter and exit--as well as sometimes return--- to a state of homelessness in our community. In other words, the homeless population can fluctuate as different individuals enter and exit homelessness each month.

- A recent Gaps Analysis by SSF and Tom Albanese Consulting LLC estimates that during the course of a year, between 16,500 to 20,000 different individuals will experience homelessness in Sacramento County. The authors of this report believe that the results of the 2022 Count are largely consistent with this annualized estimate, though we anticipate incorporating data from the unsheltered 2022 PIT Count will adjust the range of these estimates by a modest amount.[11]

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[11] In previous years, the authors of this report used a conventional formula (Burt & Wilkins, 2005) to extrapolate an annualized estimate from responses of the unsheltered survey (e.g., the 2019 PIT Count). Similar to other techniques, the Burt & Wilkins formulas considers the number of individuals who reported becoming homeless in the past week and extrapolates that number out a year--while also discounting the proportion of individuals who were previously homeless during the year. As we discuss below, the majority of individuals interviewed during the unsheltered 2022 PIT Count reported being continuously homeless for over a year--sometimes several years. Accordingly, a relatively smaller percentage of unsheltered individuals in 2022 report becoming homeless for the first time in the past week or month, thus the annualized extrapolation would be relatively smaller than in previous years. Our

- The Gaps Analysis draws from HMIS, which is able track individuals entering and exiting homelessness over time. In contrast, the PIT Count is a cross sectional snapshot of a changing group and may over-represent individuals who have been homeless for long periods of times. We believe updating SSF's annualized estimate with the unsheltered 2022 PIT Count will provide the most reliable estimate of annualized homelessness in the Sacramento region.

> A recent Gaps Analysis by SSF and Tom Albanese Consulting LLC estimates that during the course of a year, between 16,500 to 20,000 different individuals will experience homelessness in Sacramento County.

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preliminary analysis of the unsheltered counts suggest comparable results to the SSF's recent annualized estimate of unsheltered homelessness.

Changes over Time

Comparing the results of the 2022 PIT Count to previous counts suggest a marked increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County since 2019.

Figure 2 | Sacramento PITs 2015-2022
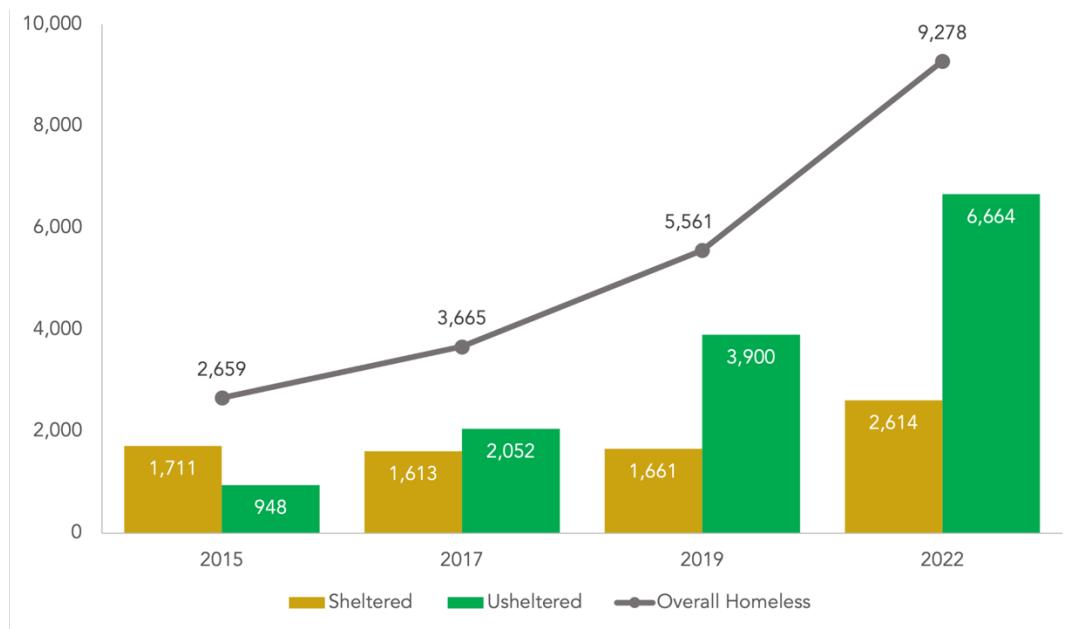
- An additional 3,708 individuals are experiencing homelessness on a single night in 2022 in contrast to 2019 (5,570 vs 9,278), representing an increase of 67 percent.

- Both the *sheltered* and *unsheltered* counts increased substantially between 2019 and 2022; the sheltered count increased 57 percent (from 1,670 to 2,744) and the unsheltered count 71 percent (from 3,900 to 6,664).

- As discussed previously, the increased shelter count reflects increased capacity of the emergency shelter system during the past two years, most notably the use of motels and hotel rooms as "non-congregate shelter."

- Because of this increased sheltered capacity, the proportion of unsheltered homelessness in Sacramento remained approximately the same since 2019 despite the overall increase

in homelessness. Seventy percent (70%) of individuals were unsheltered in 2019 and 72 percent were in 2022.

- It should be noted, however, that because much of the funding for motel/hotel programs is temporary, and many motel/hotel shelter programs are currently phasing down, it is unclear if this increased shelter capacity of the Sacramento homeless service system will be retained over time.

The 2022 results follow a consistent pre-pandemic trend of growing reports of homelessness in our region, as well as the broader West Coast, since 2015. While official estimates of homelessness are imperfect and do not capture all forms of housing instability, the consistency of trends from the last seven years nonetheless indicate a significant spike in homelessness throughout the state.[12]

- The Sacramento 2017 PIT Count estimated a 30 percent increase in homelessness since 2015—the highest increase on record at that time. The subsequent Sacramento 2019 PIT indicated an approximate 19 percent increase as well as the largest number of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness on record for our community.

- These substantial increases in the local PIT Count parallel stark increases in homelessness reported by most jurisdictions across the state during this time. Nearly 80 percent of jurisdictions in California reported double digit growth in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness between 2015 and 2019 (e.g., on average communities in California reported a 40 percent increase across those four years).[13]

- Most jurisdictions have reported acute increases in the number of unsheltered individuals sleeping outside during their last two PIT Counts (contributing to over a 50 percent increase in total unsheltered homelessness during this time). About a quarter of

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[12] Achieving an accurate count of all individuals experiencing homelessness within a geographic area is notoriously difficult for various reasons. While PIT counts may lack absolute accuracy (in terms of accounting for every person experiencing homelessness within a county), they can nonetheless provide reasonable indicators of general increases and decreases over time when they are deployed consistently across years. The consistency of trends from the last four years, across various communities, indicate strong evidence that California is experiencing a substantial increase in homelessness—though the specific amount of increase is difficult to estimate given some changes in methodology over time

[13] Baiocchi, A., Curry, S., Newham, J., & Monnet M. F. (2020). *An initial assessment of California's Homeless Emergency Aid Program.* Report prepared for the Homeless Finance & Coordinating Council. Institute for Social Research: California State University, Sacramento. https://www.bcsh.ca.gov/hcfc/documents/heap_annual.pdf

communities in California report that the number of individuals sleeping outside has more than doubled in their area since 2015.[14]

> The 2022 results follow a consistent pre-pandemic trend of growing reports of homelessness in our region, as well as the broader West Coast, since 2015.

Figure 3 | California Yearly PIT Estimates, 2014-2020[15]
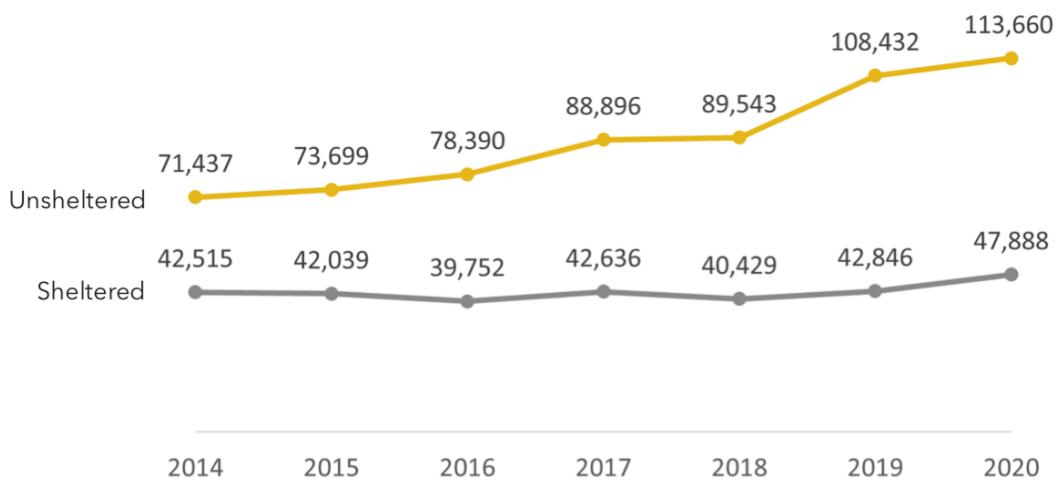
- Though PIT methodologies have varied over time, and direct comparison to previous counts can be problematic, the consistency and magnitude of the results since 2015 suggest that homelessness has been substantially increasing across California. This is consistent with statewide trends in rising housing costs that have also substantially increased in the last seven years.

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[14] HUD (2020). *2007-2020 PIT Estimates by State*. https://www. huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/ files/xls/2007-2020-PIT-Estimates- by-state.xlsx

[15] See footnote 14

The ongoing pandemic, and its impacts on the economy, will likely have continuing influence on housing and homelessness in our region. Nonetheless, and as we discuss in the next section, survey results from the 2022 PIT indicate that most unsheltered individuals in Sacramento County have been facing prolonged challenges with housing insecurity and homelessness since before the pandemic.

- The majority of unsheltered individuals surveyed (59%) reported that they became homeless three years or longer.

- Among individuals interviewed who reported first becoming homeless in the last three years (approximately 40%), the majority indicated that they became homeless before February 2020 (22%). A much smaller percentage reported falling into homeless during the first year of the pandemic (6%) and a slightly higher percentage reported becoming homeless during the last year (12%).

> Most unsheltered individuals in Sacramento County have been facing prolonged challenges with housing insecurity and homelessness since before the pandemic.

Figure 4 | Reported First Time Homeless among Unsheltered Adults (n=2,341)

3+ Years Ago	Prior to Feb 2020	First Year of the Pandemic	In the Past Year
60%	22%	6%	12%
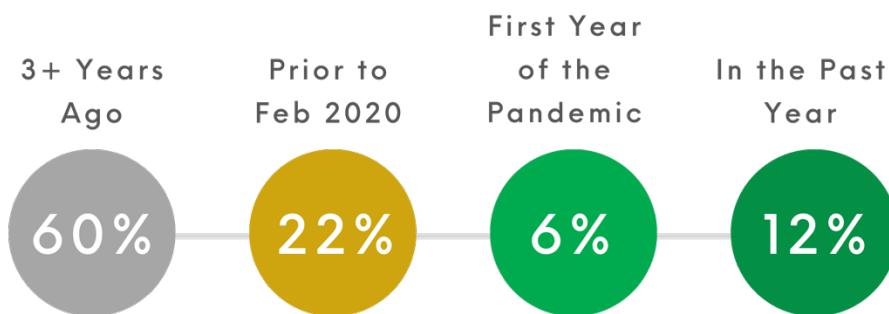
These patterns could suggest that the pandemic did not lead to an increase in *new* homelessness in Sacramento County (as one might assume with an increased 2022 PIT estimate) and may have even slowed the rate in which people fell into homelessness for a time. The above data is consistent with the interpretation that policies enacted in mid 2020, during pandemic (e.g.,

eviction moratorium, extension of unemployment benefits, family tax credit), may have temporarily reduced the number of individuals falling into homelessness otherwise typical in any given month. Though the pandemic may have made it difficult for individuals recovering from homelessness to transition into housing, it did not seem to correlate with a large increase in new homelessness in Sacramento County (i.e., people becoming homeless for the first time). A recent report by HUD similarly suggests that policies enacted during the pandemic likely contributed to a notable decrease in new families experiencing unsheltered homelessness during the last two years.[16] Moreover, the above pattern is also consistent with the interpretation that as pandemic related policies have phased out, there has been a slight uptick in new homelessness in the last twelve months.

Nonetheless, and as we discuss in the conclusion of this report, these survey results provide only suggestive evidence of these potential dynamics. Because the unsheltered survey is only a cross sectional "snapshot" of a group of people at one point-in-time, it cannot accurately track respondents who may have entered and exited homelessness when the survey was not administered. There is the possibility, for example, that individuals who became homeless in the last two years recovered more quickly and are therefore underrepresented in the 2022 estimates. Further analysis of the HMIS system could provide a more accurate assessment of whether entrance and exits of homelessness notably changed in the past two years.

> Though the pandemic may have made it difficult for individuals recovering from homelessness to transition into housing, it **did not seem to correlate with a large increase in new homelessness** in Sacramento County (i.e., people becoming homeless for the first time).

Per Capita Rate of Homelessness

Given Sacramento County's population of approximately 1.6 million residents, the estimate of 9,278 people experiencing homelessness each night suggests that approximately 59 out of 10,000 residents in the county experiences homelessness every night.[17]

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[16] The U.S. Dept. of HUD (2022) T*he 2021 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress.* Retrieved from https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2021-AHAR-Part-1.pdf.

[17] The U.S. Census Bureau (2020) reports that approximately 1,585,055 people currently reside in Sacramento County. Retrieved from https://data.census.gov/cedsci/

- This per capita rate of nightly homelessness is 67 percent higher than the 2019 estimate of 36 per 10,000 Sacramento County residents.

- These results suggest that Sacramento continues to experience substantial increases in homelessness, following statewide trends from 2015 to 2019. At the time of this reporting, however, several communities in California have yet to report the results of their 2022 Count, so it is unclear if these patterns have continued and are consistent across the state.[18]

Figure 5 | 2022 Per Capita Homelessness, by County
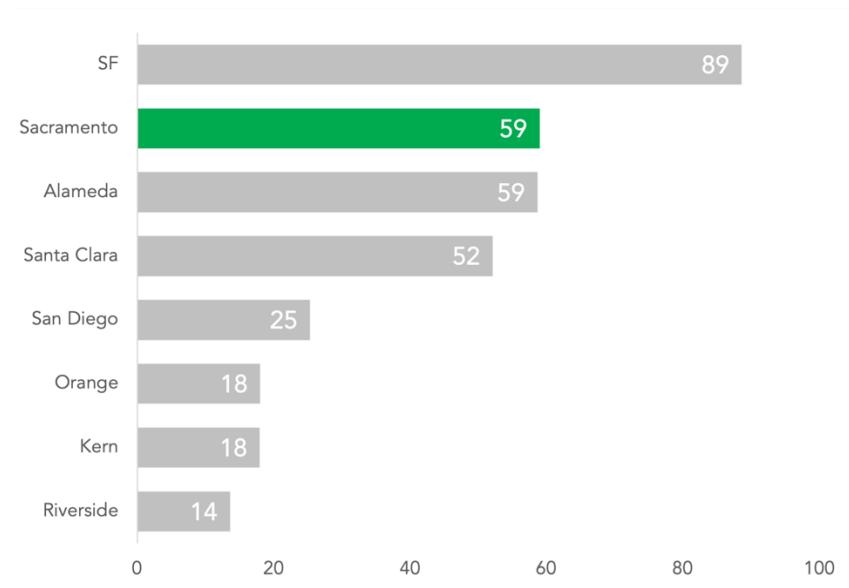
[18] As of June 2022, these percent increases were not yet official but had been reported in the media.

Demographics of Homelessness in Sacramento County

Below we provide some general descriptive and demographic information of all people experiencing homelessness (both sheltered and unsheltered) in Sacramento County. These analyses combined data from HMIS as well as information collected on unsheltered individuals by canvassing teams (count reports and surveys). We start by reviewing the household composition of all people experiencing homelessness and then discuss the demographic characteristics of these individuals (e.g., age, gender, ethnic-racial identity etc.). Later in this section we focus more specifically on unsheltered individuals who were interviewed during the 2022 PIT. And in the next section of the report, we delve deeper into survey results to report on specific populations (e.g., transitional age youth, parents with children etc.)

Household Composition of Total Homelessness in Sacramento County

People experiencing homelessness can be found in various household situations; some people navigate homelessness by themselves, while others experience homelessness as a family or household. The 2022 PIT Count indicates that the majority of people experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County (79%) are *single-adults*, most of whom are unsheltered.[19]

Figure 6 | Household composition by Shelter Status (N=9,278)

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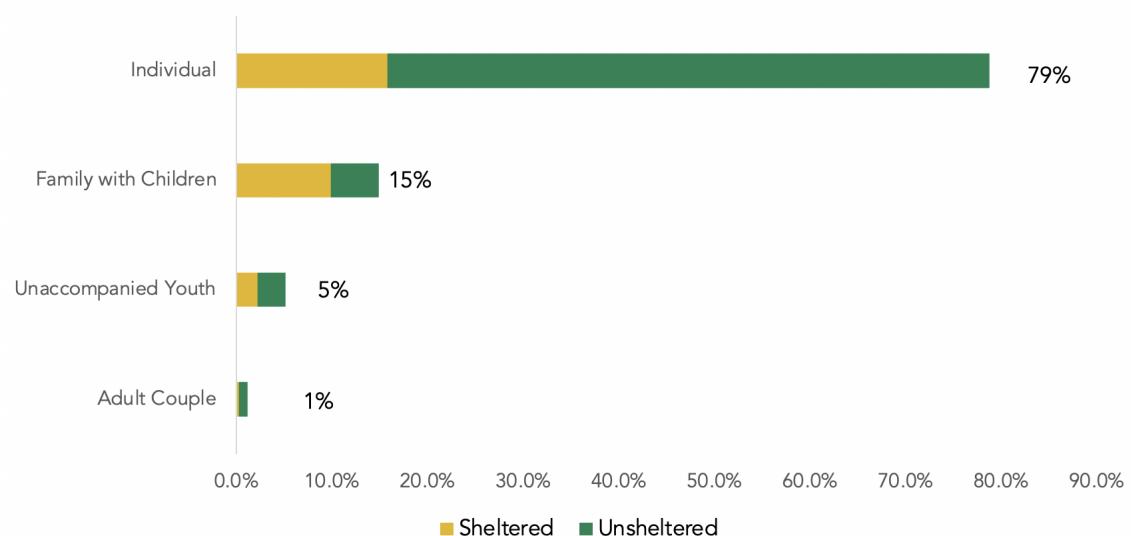
[19] Approximately 80 percent of single-adults were unsheltered.

- *Family households with children* represent 15 percent of all people experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County. Unlike other groups in which the majority were found unsheltered on the night of the count, approximately two thirds of families were in a sheltered situation. A quarter of all families facing homelessness were sheltered in a motel or hotel room (i.e., non-congregate shelter) on the night of the count.

- Approximately five percent (5%) of individuals experiencing homelessness would be considered *unaccompanied youth households*--this includes some minors (under 18) but is mostly transitional age youth (ages 18-24). Section 3 of this report also elaborates on the survey responses from this group, particularly those who are transitional age youth.

- Finally, one percent of adults experiencing homelessness were in multi-adult households, most often representing a couple (a spouse or partner) though some of these households could have also been parents caring for an adult child.

Age Groups of Total Homelessness in Sacramento County

People experiencing homelessness also represent a wide range of ages; from very young children to seniors in their late 60s. As the Figure below shows, the vast majority of people experiencing homelessness (85%) were adults aged 25 and over, nonetheless a substantial proportion were children under age 18 (8%) and transitional age youth (ages 18-24; 7%).

Figure 7 | Age Distribution of People Experiencing Homelessness (N=9,278)
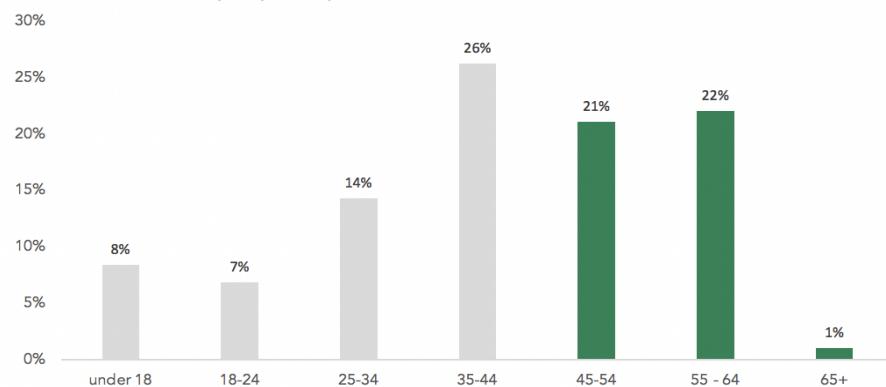
- The distribution of ages also indicates that the homeless population tends to be older; 44 percent of all people experiencing homelessness are 45 or older, and almost one-in-four are older than 54.

- The average age of people experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County was 41, with unsheltered adults reporting significantly older ages than adults staying in shelters (average age of 43 vs. 37).

- These patterns in ages among people experiencing homelessness were largely similar to those reported in the 2019 PIT Count, with just a few exceptions. Unsheltered adults, for example, reported a slightly older age in 2022 than in 2019 (i.e., about 2 years older than those reporting in 2019).

Gender of Total Homelessness in Sacramento County

The majority of people experiencing homelessness self-identified their gender as male (65%), while 33 percent self-identified as female (see Figure 8 below). The remaining two percent (2%) identified as transgender or gender non-conforming (not identifying exclusively as male or female). Notably, the number of individuals identifying as transgender or gender non-conforming substantially increased since previous years.

- Approximately 116 adults identified as transgender in the 2022 PIT Count, almost four times more than in 2019 (116 vs. 25).

- Eighty eight (88) adults identified as gender non-conforming in 2022, compared to only sixteen (16) respondents who did so in 2019.

- Despite these substantial increases, individuals who identified as transgender or gender non-conforming still represent a small percentage of the total homeless population (each representing approximately one percent). These are likely underestimates of the true proportions given that these identities are still stigmatized in society and some individuals may have not been comfortable self-reporting their gender to a volunteer interviewer.

- Young adults (ages 18 to 24) were much more likely to identify as transgender or gender non-conforming than other age groups; approximately twelve percent of young adults identified with these gender identities.

> The number of individuals identifying as transgender or gender non-conforming substantially increased since previous years.
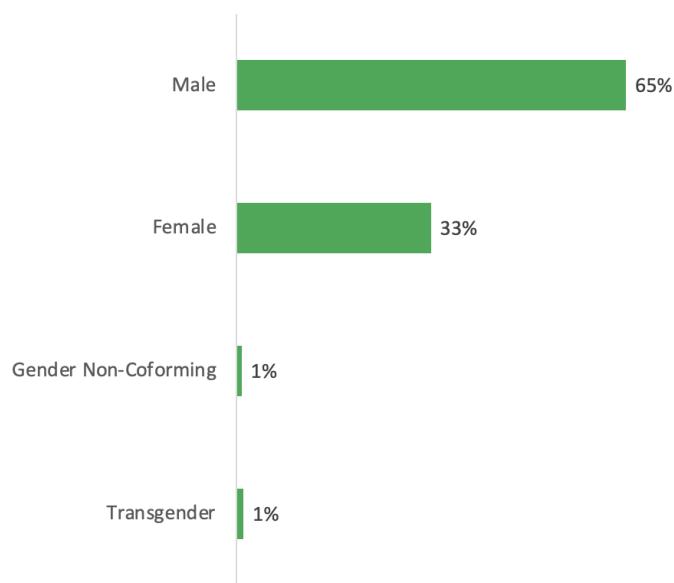
Sexual Orientation of Total Homelessness in Sacramento County

In addition to questions about gender identity, unsheltered adults were also asked about their sexual orientation during the 2022 PIT Count—information that was first gathered in 2019. Results indicate that approximately eight percent (8%) of general adults (including of individuals 18 to 69) identified as either Gay/Lesbian, Bisexual or another non-heterosexual sexual identity. More specifically, five percent identified as Bisexual (5%), two percent (2%) as Gay/Lesbian, and one percent (1%) of respondents chose to self-describe with another term or other category. These percentages are generally similar to results of the 2019 PIT Count, when 92 percent of individuals identified as straight/heterosexual and eight percent (8%) identified with an LGBTQ+ identity. However, similar to some gender identities, LGBTQ+ identities are likely being underestimated given that some individuals may not been comfortable self-reporting their sexual orientation during their interview.
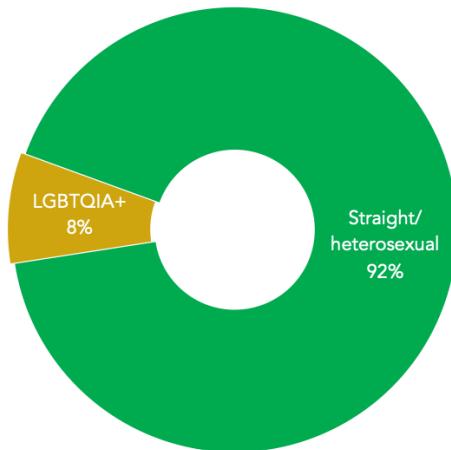
Notably, there was also a clear age pattern to these responses. As we discuss in Section 2 of this report, younger respondents, particularly those ages between 18 to 24, were four times more likely to identify as either Gay/Lesbian, Bisexual or another non-heterosexual sexual identity than older respondents (31% vs. 8%), which is consistent with recent nationwide estimates of youth homelessness.[20]

> Younger respondents, particularly those ages between 18 to 24, were four times more likely to identify as either Gay/Lesbian, Bisexual or another non-heterosexual sexual identity than older respondents.

Ethnicity and Race of Total Homelessness in Sacramento County

Approximately 20 percent of people experiencing homelessness identified their ethnicity as Hispanic, while the majority identified as non-Hispanic (80%). With respect to racial identity, the majority of individuals identified as either White (46%) or Black/African American (31%). As Table 3 shows, a substantial proportion of individuals also identified as American Indian (7%), while

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[20] Recent estimates indicate that 22 percent to 40 percent of youth experiencing homelessness in the U.S. identify as LGB or LGBTQ+ (Dworksy, Van Drunen & Gitlow, 2017; Morton, Samuels, Dworsky & Patel, 2018)

eleven percent (11%) identified themselves with multiple races or considered themselves Multiracial. Relatively few individuals identified as either Hawaiian-Pacific Islander (2%) or Asian (2%). Generally speaking, these proportions are approximately similar to how respondents have identified themselves in previous PIT Counts in Sacramento County.

Table 3 | Gender, Ethnicity, & Race of 2022 Homeless Count

Gender	#	%
Male	6,050	65%
Female	3,024	33%
Gender Non-Coforming	88	1%
Transgender	116	1%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic/Latino	1,847	20%
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	7,431	80%
Race		
White	4,311	46%
Black	2,900	31%
Asian	225	2%
American Indian	678	7%
Native Hawaiian	163	2%
Multiple Races	1,001	11%

In addition to the fixed answers listed in the previous table, this year's unsheltered survey also asked unsheltered respondents whether they would identify their race and/or ethnicity in any other way (i.e., beyond the HUD standardized terms presented above).[21] Approximately thirteen percent (13%) of unsheltered respondents indicated yes to this question and provided another racial-ethnic identity. The vast majority of these respondents (90%) described themselves in terms of a nationality (e.g. Mexican, Jamaican etc.) or a hybrid of pan-ethnic terms and nationalities (e.g., "biracial Nicaraguan," "Latino," "Mexican Caucasian"). Interestingly, individuals who also identified themselves as Hispanics were three times more likely to answer this question than non-Hispanics.

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[21] This was a new question added to the unsheltered survey following recommendations from the CoC Racial Equity Committee for the 2022 PIT to be more inclusive of different ways individuals may report their racial-ethnic identities. While the Sacramento CoC is required to report on the above ethnic and racial categories used by HUD, the researchers added two new questions to explore the frequency by which respondents may prefer other racial-ethnic identities.

Comparing the racial composition of people experiencing homelessness to the total racial composition of all residents of Sacramento County reveals some notable trends (see Figure 10 below).

Figure 10 | Racial Composition of Sacramento Co. vs. People Experiencing Homelessness (N=9,278)
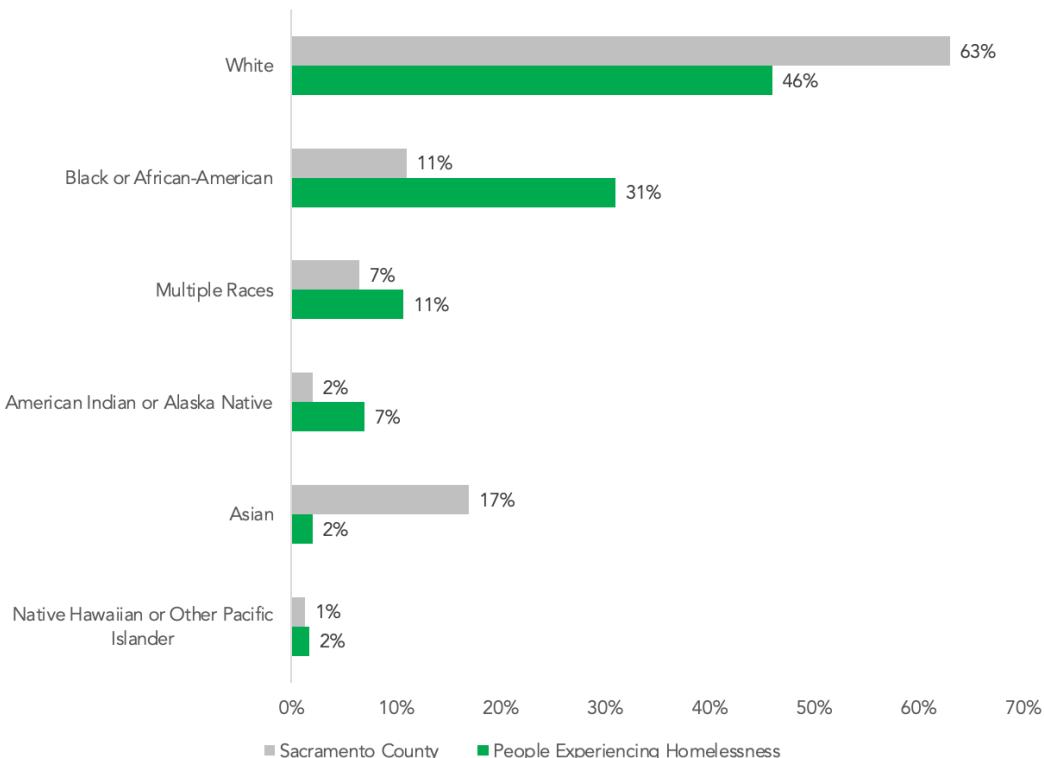
- Whites comprise the largest racial group of people experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County (46%), but are underrepresented compared to the percent of White residents in the county as a whole (46% vs 63% for Sacramento County).[22]

- Per capita, this translates to 43 out of every 10,000 White residents in Sacramento County experiencing homelessness on any given night.

- In contrast, Blacks/African Americans are disproportionately overrepresented in the county's homeless population (31% vs 11% of Sacramento County).

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[22] U.S. Census, 2021

- Per capita, this translates to 167 out of every 10,000 Black residents in Sacramento County experiencing homelessness on any given night.

- While American Indian individuals are a small (7%) percentage of people experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County, they are some of the most overrepresented given their proportion in the broader county population (2% of Sacramento County), which mirrors national trends.[23]

- Per capita, this translates to 268 out of every 10,000 American Indian residents in Sacramento County experiencing homelessness on any given night.

- In contrast, individuals who identify as Asian are substantially underrepresented in the homeless population (2% vs 17% of Sacramento County). Per capita, this translates to 8 out of every 10,000 Asian residents in Sacramento County experiencing homelessness on any given night.

Table 4 | Per Capita Homelessness by Race 2022

Race	Nightly Homeless	Per Capita	Ratio to White Per Capita
White	4,311	43 per 10K	-
Black	2,900	167 per 10K	3.9
American Indian	678	268 per 10K	6.6
Asian	225	8 per 10K	0.2
Native Hawaiian	163	79 per 10K	1.8
Multiple Races	1,001	97 per 10K	2.2

In sum, the 2022 PIT Count continues to indicate that Black and American Indian residents face significantly greater risks of experiencing homelessness compared to other groups. Relative to their proportion in the county, Black residents are three to four times more likely to experience homelessness compared to White residents. And American Indian residents are six to seven times more likely than White residents to experience homelessness on any given night. Individuals who identified with multiple races (i.e., they indicated more than one racial category) were approximately twice as likely to experience homelessness compared to Whites (similar to Native Hawaiian residents).

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[23] Biess, J. (2017). *Homelessness in Indian Country is a hidden, but critical, problem.* Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute. Retrieved from https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/homelessness-indian-country-hidden-critical-problem

It should be noted that the overrepresentation of racial minorities in the homeless population is largely consistent with trends reported across California, as well as the United States more broadly. These patterns reflect the racialized and enduring levels of inequality in our state and community.[24]

> Relative to their proportion in the county, Black residents are three to four times more likely to experience homelessness compared to White residents. And American Indian residents are six to seven times more likely than White residents to experience homelessness on any given night.

Unsheltered Homeless Experiences

Volunteers interviewed hundreds of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness for the 2022 PIT Count. Responses from 330 usable surveys[25] were combined with the count data to generate demographic estimates of the unsheltered homeless population. Below we highlight some general demographic trends revealed in the weighted survey responses[26] provided by individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness--specifically individuals sleeping outside, in a tent, or a vehicle.

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[24] The racial disproportionality of homelessness was the subject of a recent groundbreaking report by the Los Angeles County Department of Homeless Services, which offers a series of recommendations to address policies that have led to this overrepresentation. LAHSA (2018, December). Report and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness. Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. Retrieved from https://www.lahsa.org/documents?id=2823-report-and-recommendations-of-the-ad-hoc-committee-on-black-people-experiencing-homelessness

[25] While volunteers attempted to interview close to 400 individuals, some surveys had incomplete information and could not be included in these analyses. Some surveys were also excluded after the researchers checked for duplication of respondents (the same respondent interviewed at different times) as well as when individuals reported not being homeless specifically on February 23rd.

[26] As discussed in the Methodology Appendix, the research team combined data from count reports and survey responses to calculate statistical weights (inverse probability weights) for each survey based on the sleeping locations of household composition reported by respondents. Per HUD guidelines, these statistical weights were then applied to calculate specific population parameters required for HUD data reporting. These weights were also used to calculate the specific demographics estimates presented throughout these reports.

Demographic Characteristics of People Who Are Unsheltered

Analysis of the survey data suggests that the demographic composition of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness varies slightly from those who are sheltered.

- Unsheltered individuals are on average five years older than individuals staying in shelters/transitional housing (42 vs. 37).

- Individuals encountered outside were also much more likely to report themselves in a single-adult household than those in shelter/transitional housing; 89 percent of people sleeping unsheltered were single-adults compared to 57 percent of those sleeping in a shelter.

As the demographic table illustrates below, a higher proportion of individuals sleeping outside identified as male than those in sheltered situations (70% vs 52%). In contrast, individuals who identified as female represented a much larger proportion of the sheltered than unsheltered population (47% vs 27%).

- Though, in total, *more* females experiencing homelessness were counted outside of shelters than those counted in sheltered situations (1,806 vs 1,218), they were more likely to be encountered within shelters compared to males experiencing homelessness. Only 22 percent of males were encountered in shelters compared to 40 percent of females experiencing homelessness.

- This gender pattern was similarly present in previous PIT Counts in Sacramento County (e.g., 2019 and 2017).

Table 5 | Gender, Ethnicity, & Race of Total 2022 Homeless Count

	Unsheltered Count		Sheltered Count	
Gender	#	%	#	%
Male***	4,691	70%	1,359	52%
Female***	1,806	27%	1,218	47%
Gender Non-Coforming	72	1%	16	1%
Transgender	95	1%	21	1%
Ethnicity				
Hispanic/Latino	1,320	20%	527	20%
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	5,344	80%	2,087	80%
Race				
White	3,101	47%	1,210	46%
Black ***	1,870	28%	1,030	39%
Asian	167	3%	58	2%
American Indian***	614	9%	64	2%
Native Hawaiian	117	2%	46	2%
Multiple Races	795	12%	206	8%

As discussed in the previous discussion, the number of individuals who identified as either transgender or gender non-conforming (not identifying exclusively male or female) has substantially increased since 2019. And as the above table highlights, this was reflected in both the sheltered and unsheltered count equally.

- Though transgender and gender non-conforming identities represent almost identical proportions in the sheltered and unsheltered populations in 2022 (both representing 1% in each group), many more individuals are identifying with these identities than in past PIT Counts.

With respect to ethnic and racial identities, individuals who identified as Hispanic or Latino were equally represented in both the sheltered and unsheltered groups (20%). Nonetheless, some racial identities varied slightly by shelter status.

- A lower proportion of unsheltered individuals self-identified as Black/African American compared to sheltered individuals (28% vs 38%).

- A larger proportion of unsheltered individuals self-identified as American Indian compared to sheltered individuals (9% vs 2%).

Despite these differences, however, unsheltered individuals indicated similar responses with respect to ethnicity (Hispanic and Non-Hispanic), other racial identities, as well as transgender and non-gender conforming identities.

Episodes and Length of Homelessness

Adult individuals who were unsheltered were asked a series of questions about their current and past experiences of homelessness (e.g., length of time, prior experiences, and episodes). To simplify the various ways that individuals answered these questions, the researchers synthesized responses into four general categories of homelessness that we describe below.[27]

Homeless Situation 1 | First Time and Recent

Approximately two percent (2%) of individuals surveyed could be characterized as facing "first time and recent" homelessness. More specifically, these individuals had recently become homeless for the first time during the last six months and were now sleeping outside. This is a significantly smaller proportion of unsheltered adults compared to the results of the 2019 PIT Count (when 6% of respondents were experiencing first time and recent homelessness).

### Homeless Situation 2 | Episodic and Moderate-Length

Eighteen percent (18%) were experiencing "episodic and moderate-length" homelessness. This group included individuals who reported between 2-3 distinct episodes of homelessness during the last three years (with each episode lasting an average of three to 11 months). Some individuals reported more frequent, but implied briefer periods of homelessness during the last three years (e.g., four or more episodes that were under three months). This group also included individuals who reported being homeless for the first time but nonetheless had been struggling

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[27] We provide these synthesized situations because it can be misleading to present single responses to these questions without considering how individuals answered other questions about their homelessness situation. For example, approximately half (44%) of respondents indicated that this was their "first time being homeless," but in follow-up questions these same individuals reported varying lengths of time being homeless . Some "first time" individuals reported that they had just become homeless in the past few weeks, while others indicated that this single episode of homelessness had lasted over a year. In contrast, some individuals described more intermittent episodes of homelessness during the last couple of years; situations of straddling back and forth between finding and losing housing. Within this group of individuals, however, the length of these episodes varied from weeks to years. For these reasons, we present a more synthesized analysis of these questions as opposed to individual responses to single questions.

for over six months during the past year with a single episode of homelessness. This is a significantly larger proportion of unsheltered adults compared to the results of the 2019 PIT Count (when 10% of respondents were experiencing episodic and moderate-length homelessness). One possible explanation of the increase is that there was an uptick in the proportion of people experiencing more episodic homelessness during the last year; these episodes started more recently during the second year of the pandemic than the first year.

Figure 11 | Length of Homelessness Report by Unsheltered Adults in 2022 (N=6,664)
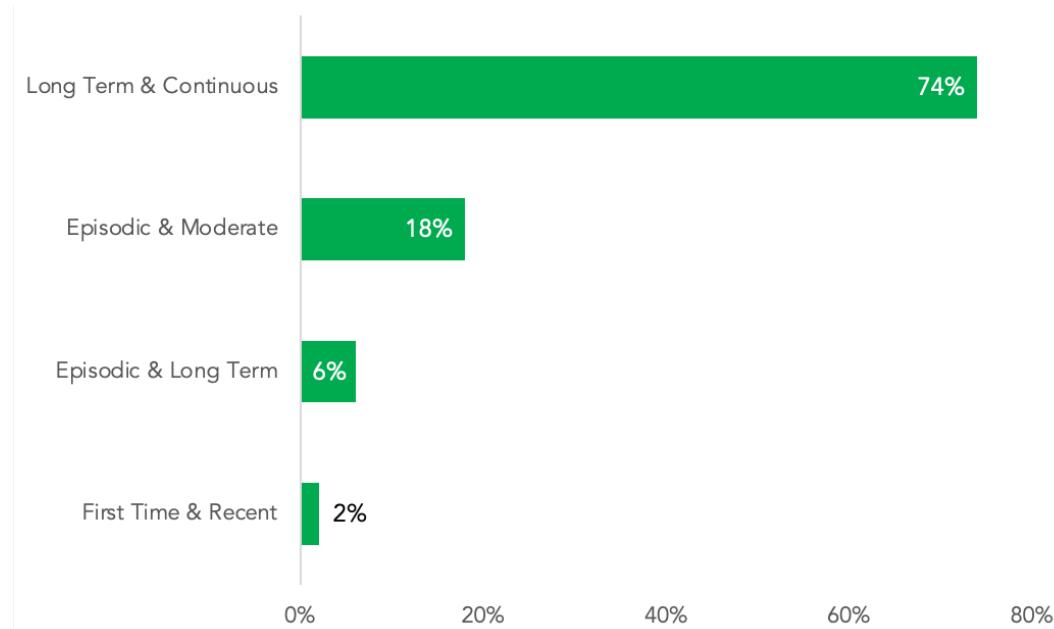
Homeless Situation 3 | Episodic and Long-Term

Six percent (6%) of adults could be characterized as experiencing "episodic and long term" homelessness. Similar to the group above, these individuals also reported experiencing 2-4 episodes of homelessness in the past three years, but indicated periods of homelessness that were substantially longer (e.g., a single period or periods that exceed a year or more). This also included individuals who stated that they had been homeless before, but that this single period had lasted approximately a year. Generally speaking, episodic and long-term homelessness in 2022 was a significantly smaller proportion of unsheltered adults compared to the results of the 2019 PIT Count (when 26% of respondents were experiencing episodic and long-term homelessness). An explanation of this decrease, similar to the explanation above, is that there was a notable reduction in the proportion of people experiencing more episodic homelessness approximately two years ago; relatively few households began having episodic homeless two

year ago, during the first year of the pandemic. Though more recently, in the past twelve months there seems to be a slight increase in first time and episodic forms of homelessness reported.

Homeless Situation 4 | Long-Term and Continuous Homelessness

Finally, almost three quarter of respondents (74%) could be characterized as experiencing a "long term and continuous" period of homelessness that has lasted over a year. The majority of this group consisted of individuals who reported being previously homeless, but were nonetheless currently experiencing one or more years of continuous homelessness (sometimes for several years). Also included were a substantial number of individuals who said they had been continuously homeless for well over two years and for the first time. A substantial proportion of individuals included in this group were characterized as chronically homeless, given their prolonged experience of homelessness (exceeding a year) and reported a disability.

In sum, the distribution of the four homeless situations described above highlight the prolonged periods of time that unsheltered individuals are reporting sleeping outside. Indeed, survey responses suggest that 59 percent of currently unsheltered adults have been continuously homeless since the last Point in Time Count in 2019. This suggests that some individuals, and particularly those with significant disabilities, may have struggled to exit homelessness during the last three years.

And as discussed previously, there seems to be a decrease in the number of recent, first time homeless--not only in the last six month but in the last two years. Among individuals interviewed who reported becoming homeless in the last three years for the first time (approximately 40%), the majority indicated that they became homeless before February 2020 (22%). A much smaller percentage reported falling into homeless during the first year of the pandemic (6%) and a slightly higher percentage reported becoming homeless during the last year (12%). This is consistent with the pattern indicated above of a substantial increase in "episodic and moderate length" homelessness but a substantial decrease in "episodic and long term" homelessness.[28]

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[28] One of the limitations of the unsheltered survey is that it was likely difficult for some individuals to accurately recall the specific month in which they became homeless, particularly for individuals who have been homeless for prolonged periods of time. This suggests some measurement error in the specificity of responses and suggests some caution in interpretation. Nonetheless, these patterns might be corroborated with a more thorough HMIS system analysis of homeless exits and entries, which could be combined with the 2022 PIT data. Moreover, an analysis of HMIS could explore if the impacts of the pandemic, with respect to changes in entries and exits, track with the above findings.

Unique Unsheltered Experiences and Challenges

Unsheltered individuals were also asked about specific experiences and challenges that may complicate their transition to stable housing.[29] Some of these questions were HUD-required and directly asked respondents about their health challenges, disabilities, and time spent homeless. Other questions asked about engagement with the foster care system and experiences of domestic violence.[30] Below we report findings that emerged from these questions.

Disabling Conditions

During the course of the unsheltered survey, volunteers read a list of common challenges and conditions that can contribute to prolonged experiences with homelessness (e.g., a chronic health condition, a psychological condition, substance use disorder, a physical disability etc.). If an adult respondent indicated that they had any of these conditions they were asked follow-up questions to assess if these conditions are severe enough to be debilitating for the individual; specifically do any of these conditions prevent the individual "from holding a job or living in a stable housing." Results of the previous 2019 PIT Count showed that a significant proportion of unsheltered adults (approximately 4 out 10) self-reported at least one debilitating condition (disability and/or health conditions). Survey responses from the 2022 PIT Count suggest that this number has substantially increased.

- Approximately 6 out of 10 unsheltered adults (58% in 2022) indicated that they *have one or more disabling health conditions* that prevent them from being employed and/or maintaining stable housing.

- For comparison, 25 percent of adults in the United States and 23 percent of adults in California have some disability.[31]

As the below table shows, a third of unsheltered adults (34%) self-reported a disabling psychological condition (which could refer to behavioral health conditions such as major depressive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia etc.). This was followed closely by adults who reported a disabling physical impairment (32%) or cognitive impairment (30%)

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[29] Some questions were HUD-required and directly asked respondents about their health challenges, disabilities, and possible use of non-medical drugs and alcohol.

[30] Other questions were age-specific and were developed to assess the unique challenges faced by transitional age youth. More general questions asked all adults about their length of residency in the county, and if they were new to the community.

[31] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Disability and Health Data System (DHDS); cited 2022 May 25. Retrieved from: http://dhds.cdc.gov

(e.g., dementia, autism, developmental delay). Fewer unsheltered adults reported having a disabling chronic medical condition (e.g. diabetes, cancer, heart disease) or a disabling condition due to the use of alcohol or drugs. Notably, one in four unsheltered adults (24%) reported having a traumatic brain injury (responses not shown below) and half of these adults (12%) indicated that this injury prevented them from maintaining employment or housing.

Figure 12 | Conditions & Challenges Report by Unsheltered Adults in 2022 (N=6,664)

58% of those surveyed reported at least one disabling condition

Condition	Percentage
Traumatic Brain Injury	12%
Uses Alchohol/Drugs	15%
Chronic Medical Condition	15%
Cognitive Impairment	30%
Physical Impairment	32%
Psychological/Emotional Condition	34%
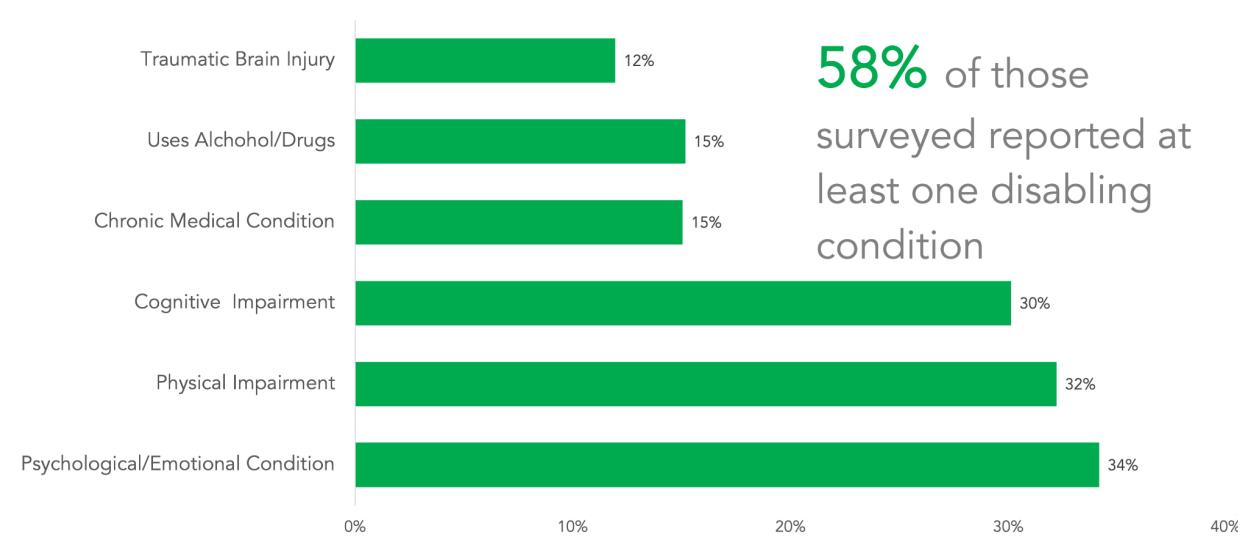
A closer look at survey responses by individuals who self-reported these conditions reveal some notable patterns.

- Four out of ten respondents indicated two or more debilitating conditions; suggesting that almost half of all adults who are unsheltered may have a comorbidity of health conditions and/or a cognitive/physical impairment.

- A quarter of all respondents reported three or more debilitating conditions.

- A cognitive impairment was strongly correlated with individuals also reporting a debilitating psychological condition, and a physical disability. Individuals with a TBI were less likely to report other conditions.

- Adults who reported one or more disabilities reported longer periods of homelessness (by 7 months on average) compared to those without a disability. The one exception to this relationship was for individuals reporting a disabling condition due to alcohol/drug use and traumatic brain injury

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Overall, the above findings are consistent with a growing body of research that finds that people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to falling into homelessness (often due to challenges in maintaining income, lack of social support, and/or challenges of independent living) as well as the fact that these conditions may worsen on the street and prolong homelessness.[32] It is notable that the increase in the proportion of individuals in the 2022 PIT Count reporting at least one disabling condition coincides with a growing proportion of individuals also reporting longer periods of homelessness, as discussed in the last section. These patterns undoubtedly contribute to the fact that one out of two people experiencing homelessness in Sacramento (43%) have at least one disability and are experiencing what HUD designates as "chronic patterns of homelessness" over many years. As is discussed in section 2 of this report, "chronic homelessness" has acutely increased by 167 percent since 2019.

> Approximately 6 out of 10 unsheltered adults (58% in 2022) indicated that they *have one or more disabling health conditions* that prevent them from being employed and/or maintaining stable housing.

Former Foster Youth

Former foster youth in the United States face relatively high risks of becoming homeless, particularly those that age out of the foster care system. Consequently, former foster youth are over-represented in most PIT counts throughout the U.S., and this is true in Sacramento County as well.[33]

- Approximately one in four unsheltered (24%) adults said that they had previously spent time in foster care before age 18. This is consistent with findings from across the country but also from the 2017 & 2019 Count reports.

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[32] Nishio, A., Horita, R., Sado, T., Mizutani, S., Watanabe, T., Uehara, R., & Yamamoto, M. (2017). Causes of homelessness prevalence: Relationship between homelessness and disability. *Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences*, *71*(3), 180-188.

[33] Berzin, S. C., Rhodes, A. M., & Curtis, M. A. (2011). Housing experiences of former foster youth: How do they fare in comparison to other youth?. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *33*(11), 2119-2126. Courtney, M.E., Dworsky, A., Brown, A., Cary, C., Love, K. & Vorhies, V. (2011). *Midwest evaluation of the adult functioning of former foster youth: Outcomes at age 26*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.Retrieved from https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/Midwest-Eval-Outcomes-at-Age-26.pdf

- Interestingly, most of these individuals are not transitional age youth (as might be presumed) but are primarily adults over 35 years old who are homeless. This is consistent with a large body of research that highlights the challenges that young people often face coming out of the foster care system but also the life-long impacts of these challenges.

Figure 13 | Experience in Foster Care among Unsheltered Adults in 2022 (n=6,664)
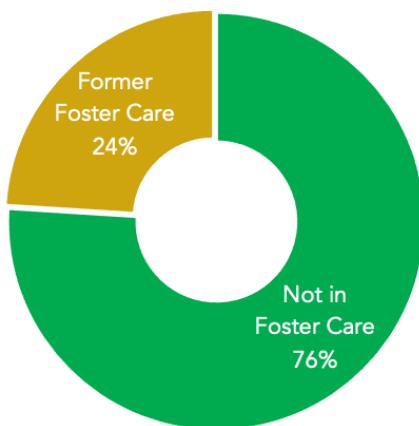
Movement of Encampments: Forced Relocation

One of the new additions to the 2022 unsheltered survey, per the recommendations of the PIT Committee, were a set of new questions regarding the frequency by which unsheltered individuals were forced to move or abandon their encampment or makeshift shelter because of law enforcement actions and/or other factors.[34] Specifically, every unsheltered adult was asked if they had been forced to move out of a location in the two months before the 2022 PIT Count. Those that indicated they had, were asked to cite the general reasons of their move (i.e., law

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[34] Community members in the PIT Committee requested that the 2022 survey include questions that specifically explore the interactions between law enforcement and individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Sacramento County. Over the course of two months, the research team worked with the PIT Committee and its members to develop a preliminary set of questions to assess the frequency by which individuals in encampments (in tents and vehicles) report being forced to move their sleeping locations by law enforcement (an issue some community members have . The goal was to begin collecting survey data on this issue from the perspective of individuals who are unsheltered and track these responses over time. Nonetheless, because this was a new set of questions, the PIT Committee should consider whether some refinement to these questions should be made in future PIT Counts.

enforcement action, safety concerns, and/or a change in the environment that made the locations no longer suitable for sleeping).[35] If individuals cited a law enforcement action, they were then ask to recall how many times this occurred in the two months before the 2022 Count

- Approximately 60 percent of respondents indicated that they were required to move their sleeping arrangements at least once in the past two months.

Figure 14 | Percent of Unsheltered Persons Forced to Move in the Last 2 Months (n=6,664)
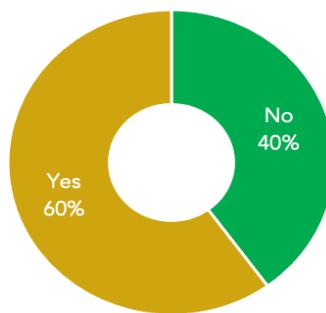
- When asked why they were recently forced to move, individuals frequently cited law enforcement actions (representing 49% of all unsheltered respondents). Less commonly, some respondent also cited safety concerns (13% of respondents) and/or that the area was no longer suitable for sleeping (e.g., flooding, rain etc.) (9%)

- Respondents who indicated that they had been forced to move by law enforcement were then asked to recall how many times in the past two months this had specifically happened. On average, unsheltered individuals reported law enforcement requiring them to move four times in the last two months (i.e., which approximates a move every two weeks), though some individuals reported having to relocate more frequently in some specific locations.

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[35] Respondents were provided three general reasons as to why they may have had to recently move their sleeping location (law enforcement action, safety concerns, and/or a change in the environment). The survey allowed individuals to indicate more than one of these reasons in their response (i.e., indicate all that apply), though law enforcement was indicated as the only factor by the majority of respondents.. The goal of this question was, in part, to prime respondents to consider various reasons why they may have had to move recently (beyond a request by law enforcement). Accordingly, when asked how often they have been moved by law enforcement, respondents would be able to more accurately recall these incidents and distinguish them from other situations when law enforcement was not involved.

- It should be noted that because this was a new question, it is difficult to infer the specific circumstances that precipitated law enforcement actions (as well as which agency or agencies were involved). This could be an area of further research and refinement in future Counts.

Figure 15 | Top Reasons for Unsheltered Persons Being Forced to Move
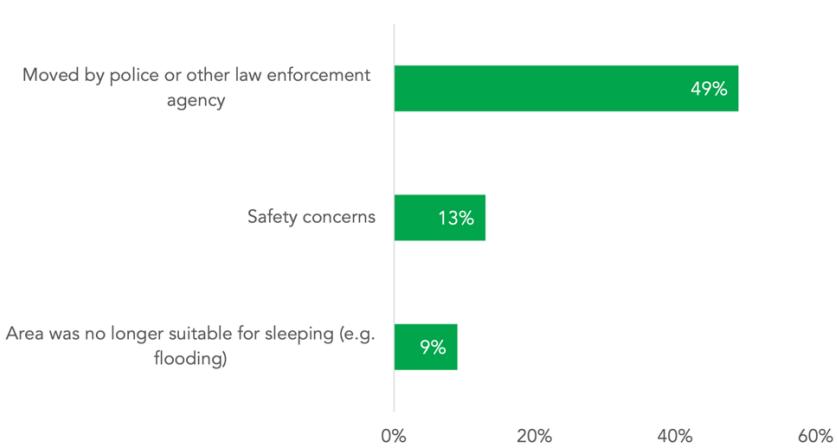
Nonetheless, qualitative responses to other open-ended questions in the survey (as discussed below) indicated that having to move one's tent or vehicle was often a source of much stress for a number of unsheltered individuals. Beyond the concerns of losing one's property during these encounters, individuals also stressed the difficulty to maintain contact with support services after relocating to a new area. Particularly for people experiencing homelessness with a disability, displacement can result in even more barriers to accessing medical, mental health, and other services.

> On average, unsheltered individuals reported law enforcement requiring them to move four times in the last two months (i.e., which approximates a move every two weeks), though some individuals reported having to relocate more frequently in some specific locations.

Voices of the Unhoused: What Could Sacramento Do Better?

To obtain a better understanding of the lived experiences and challenges faced by unsheltered individuals, every adult respondent was asked, "What two things could Sacramento do better to help people who are experiencing homelessness?" This question was intentionally designed to

elicit a short conversation between the respondent and interviewer about issues that they felt were most pressing to their experiences, to give respondents "the last word" before the survey ended. Indeed, respondents were encouraged to elaborate on whatever initiative, broad policy, or specific program changes they felt could improve the conditions of people experiencing homelessness.[36] Most individuals (77%) responded to this question.

Figure 16 | Themes of How to Better Help People Experiencing Homelessness[37]
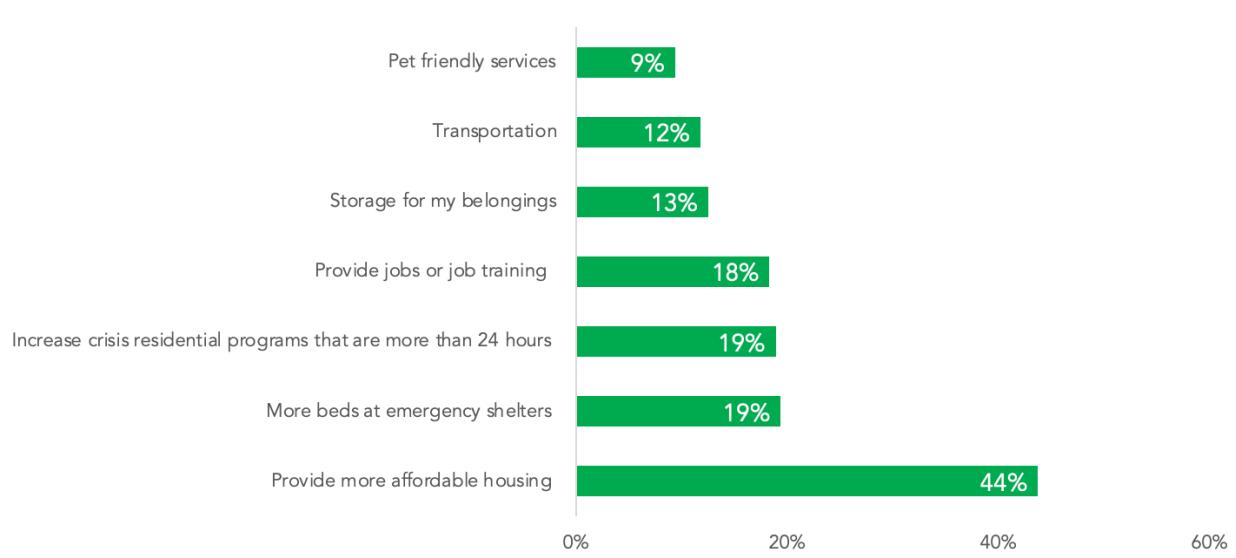
As presented above in Figure 16, the most consistent theme expressed in these discussions was the critical need for more affordable housing options and locations in Sacramento. This topic was noted by nearly half of all respondents (44%) as the primary problem that Sacramento needs to confront. Notably, this was very consistent with findings of the 2019 PIT.

A second tier of topics resonated with about one in five respondents and centered around programmatic elements of homelessness support. These included increasing the amount of beds available at emergency shelters (19%) as well as developing more crisis residential programs that

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[36] Interviewers were trained to give respondents ample space to elaborate their points, but also to gently guide the discussion to two main issues to structure the conversation. Interviewers then identified central themes discussed on the survey tool (either by typing a short descriptive narrative in the open field, or by selecting the various themes that the researcher team had pre-developed during the field testing of the survey instrument).

[37] Respondents were asked to state their top two recommendations which were then recorded into pre-existing categories at the discretion of the interviewer. Responses other than the provided categories were analyzed individually and placed into a category when possible.

provide support for more than 24 hours (19%). Providing more jobs or job training (18%) was noted by an almost equal number of participants as the final second tier topic. The remaining topics that saw a coalescence of support were, providing more storage for belongings (13%), help with accessing transportation (12%) and pet friendly services (9%). These seven topics were the most consistently noted by participants, but it is not comprehensive of all topics brought up by unsheltered individuals.[38]

Some other comments of interest mentioned by multiple respondents related to the following topics: hygiene related supports (showers/laundry/bathrooms), decriminalizing homelessness, recognizing unsheltered individuals as human and worthy of support, and stopping sweeps and " breaking down" (sic) of existing encampments. This final area of improvements was noted above as a challenge by several unsheltered individuals.

> The most consistent theme expressed in these discussions was the critical need for more affordable housing options and locations in Sacramento. **This topic was noted by nearly half of all respondents (44%) as the primary problem that Sacramento needs to confront.**

Perceptions of Being an Outsider

As highlighted above, a number of respondents discussed the need for Sacramento to be more "inclusive" and "respectful" to individuals experiencing homelessness. A number of individuals described "feeling invisible", "disregarded," and shamed by some community members. Some also spoke to a common misperception that people experiencing homelessness are mostly "transients," from "out of town," or "outsiders of the community."

Similar to the 2019 PIT, the 2022 unsheltered survey asked individuals how long they have resided in Sacramento County. Survey responses indicate that a majority of respondents (92%) are longtime residents or originally from Sacramento County; only a small percent of unsheltered adults have recently moved into the county within the last six months (5%) or are only temporarily in the county (3%). These results are nearly identical to what was reported in 2019 and challenge some of the public perceptions of homelessness discussed above. Survey responses also showed little variation across respondents in tents, vehicles, and other sheltered locations.

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[38] Approximately 33 percent of total unsheltered respondents made a recommendation that could not be easily placed into a category.

An additional question in 2022 asked respondents if they could recall the zip code of the last apartment or house in which they resided--essentially, the mailing zip code they last used when they were housed.

- Among the 214 respondents who provided an answer, the vast majority (84%) provided a zip code that falls within the four counties that surround the Sacramento Region (Sacramento, Yolo, Placerville and El Dorado).

- Four percent (4%) reported a zip code from the Bay Area, two percent (2%) from the Central Valley (e.g., Stockton, Fresno), and two percent (2%) from southern California. Interestingly, seven percent (7%) cited a zip code out of state (e.g., Oregon, Nevada, Idaho etc.).

Overall these data suggest that the majority of people experiencing homelessness in Sacramento were at one point housed residents of the county and became homeless while living in a home in Sacramento. This data also suggests that 16 percent of unsheltered individuals traveled to Sacramento while homeless; their last place of residence was outside of the Sacramento region. Interestingly, examining how these same individuals answered the residency question (discussed above) indicates that some considered themselves "originally from Sacramento," which suggests that they returned home or to family after/or before falling into homelessness. Other respondents viewed themselves as "long-time residents of Sacramento" and suggest that they have lived homeless in the county for some time (over a year or more). Nonetheless, the overall data suggests that between eight to ten percent of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness are relatively new to Sacramento County.

Section 2: Description of Subpopulations

In this section we unpack the data trends and findings for four subpopulations: transitional age youth, families with children, veterans, and chronically homeless adults. As the below figure shows, some of these groups have substantially increased since the 2019 PIT Count (i.e., individuals facing chronic homelessness), while others have remained proportionally similar to previous counts (i.e., transitional age youth), and some even indicate notable decreases (i.e., families with children, and veterans).

Figure 17 | Subpopulations Experiencing Homelessness in 2022 vs 2019
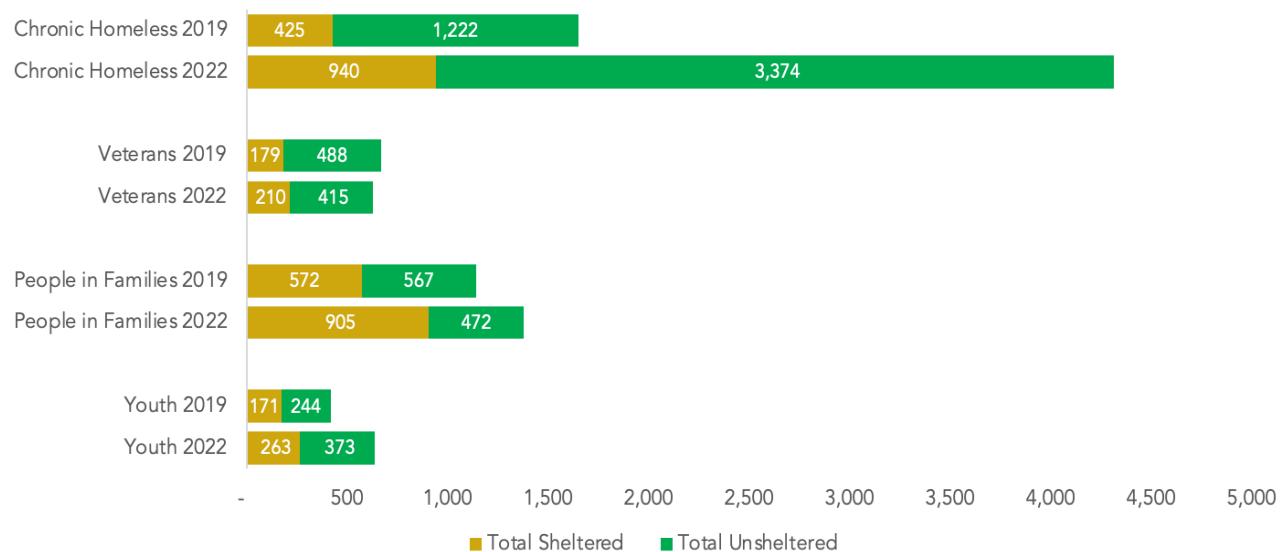
For each group, we provide some brief background and general context, drawing from recent research done on these groups. Next, we summarize the total sheltered and unsheltered counts for 2022, and draw comparisons to the 2019 Count. We also review the demographic characteristics of individuals in these groups who were homeless on the night of the 2022 Count. The last part of each subsection summarizes some of the key findings from the unsheltered survey conducted with unsheltered individuals representing these groups.

Transitional Age Youth

Early adulthood, generally defined as occurring between ages 18 to 24, is a phase of life during which young people often face many changes and transitions. This is a time in life when young people are establishing their own independence, developing new life skills, fostering adult/family relationships and roles, as well as navigating educational and employment opportunities. This transitional phase of early adulthood can be challenging for many young adults, but it is particularly so for young people with limited family support and resources. Indeed, the term "transitional age youth" is often used to emphasize the additional disadvantages that some young adults face during this phase of life.

A growing body of research shows that transitional age youth are at greater risk to fall into homelessness compared to other adults. While homeless, transitional age youth also face greater risk for victimization, incarceration, sexual exploitation, and substance use.[39] These experiences can have destabilizing and long term consequences on a young person's life,[40] including decreasing their chances of maintaining employment, completing formal education, securing housing, and establishing healthy relationships.[41] Further, some groups face increased vulnerability while on the street, including those who identify as LGBTQ+, youth of color, and women.[42] Given the scope and far reaching consequences of youth homelessness, it is increasingly viewed as a potential site for effective interventions to have long-term impacts. HUD, for example, continually cites youth homelessness as a key at-risk group for communities to target and understand through research. For similar reasons, HUD considers most homeless young people under 25 as "unaccompanied youth," though the term can also apply to minors.[43]

[39] Bender, K., Ferguson, K., Thompson, S., Komlo, C., & Pollio, D. (2010). Factors associated with trauma and posttraumatic stress disorder among homeless youth in three U.S. cities: The importance of transience. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, *23*(1), 161-168.

[40] Morton, M. H., Rice, E., Blondin, M., Hsu, H., & Kull, M. (2018). Toward a system response to ending youth homelessness: New evidence to help communities strengthen coordinated entry, assessment, and support for youth. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. 2010

[41] Courtney, 2009; Osgood et al.,

[42] Abramovich, I. A. (2013). *No fixed address: Young, queer, and restless*. In S. Gaetz, B. Grady, K. Buccieri, J. Karabanow, & A. Marsolais (Eds.), Youth homelessness in Canada: Implications for policy and practice. Toronto, ON: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press.
Gattis, M. N., & Larson, A. (2016). Perceived racial, sexual identity, and homeless status-related discrimination among Black adolescents and young adults experiencing homelessness: Relations with depressive symptoms and suicidality. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, *86*(1), 79.
Ensign, J., & Panke, A. (2002). Barriers and bridges to care: Voices of homeless female adolescent youth in Seattle, Washington, U.S.A. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *37*(2), 166-172.

[43] The term "unaccompanied homeless youth" refers to young people who are homeless and who are not in the supervision of a parent or guardian. The term can also be applied to youth who are under 18

Youth | Nightly Estimate

During the night of the 2022 Count, approximately 636 transitional age youth were experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County, which represents approximately 7 percent of the total homeless population.

- Overall, the estimated number of transitional age youth experiencing homelessness in Sacramento increased by 53 percent since the 2019 PIT Count (636 vs. 415).

Figure 18 | Sheltered vs. Unsheltered Transitional Age Youth in 2022 PIT Count
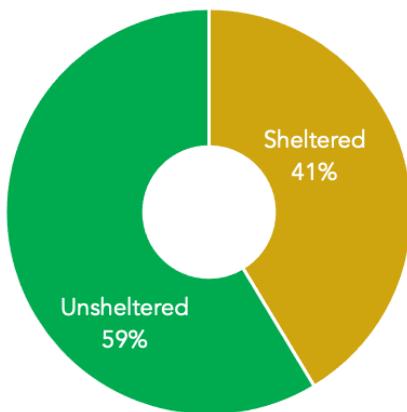
- Similar to other groups, the majority of transitional age youth (hereafter referred to as youth) were experiencing *unsheltered* homelessness on the night of the count (59%).

- In contrast, 41 percent of youth were experiencing sheltered homelessness--a slightly higher rate than other age groups, with the exception of families.

- Analysis of sleeping locations revealed that most unsheltered youth slept in either a tent (31%) or a vehicle (23%).

("unaccompanied minors"), though the majority of unaccompanied youth who experience homelessness are between ages 18-24

Morton, M. H., Dworsky, A., Matjasko, J. L., Curry, S. R., Schlueter, D., Chávez, R., & Farrell, A. F. (2018). Prevalence and correlates of youth homelessness in the United States. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *62*(1), 14-21.

- Notably, unsheltered youth were also significantly less likely to report sleeping in other outdoor locations compared to older adults (ages 25 and older), such as squatting at an abandoned building or sleeping on the street with a sleeping bag or tarp (5% vs. 32%).

Youth | Demographic Characteristics

The below table summarizes how youth reported their gender, ethnicity and racial identity. With respect to gender, most youth self-identified as either female (42%) or male (40%). A significant proportion of youth (nearly one in five) identified as either transgender (9%), or Gender non-conforming (not singularly female or male) (8%).

Table 6 | Gender, Ethnicity, & Race of Youth (n=636)

Gender	#	%
Male	256	40%
Female	269	42%
Gender Non-Coforming	54	8%
Transgender	57	9%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic/Latino	142	22%
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	494	78%
Race		
White	310	49%
Black	211	33%
Asian	3	1%
American Indian	8	1%
Native Hawaiian	8	1%
Multiple Races	95	15%

- Notably, youth were *less likely* to identify as male compared to older adults (ages 25 and older) (40% vs. 69%).

- In contrast, youth were much *more likely* to identify as either transgender or Gender non-conforming compared to older adults (17% of youth identified with one of these identities vs. 1% of older adults).

It also notable that almost a third (31%) of youth identified their sexual orientation as either Gay/Lesbian, Bisexual or another non-heterosexual sexual identity (responses not shown above), which is consistent with recent nationwide estimates of youth homelessness.[44]

- Transitional age youth were four times *more likely* to identify with an LGBTQ+ identity sexual orientation compared to adults ages 25 and over (31% vs. 8%).

Most youth identified their race as either White (49%), or Black/ African American (33%) and fifteen percent (15%) identified as "Multiple Races." About one quarter (22%) of youth also identified their ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino. When youth were asked if they prefer to describe their ethnic or racial identity in other ways, they were more likely than other groups to indicate yes and elaborate on a variety of hybrid ethnic and racial terms.

> Almost a third (31%) of youth identified their sexual orientation as either Gay/Lesbian, Bisexual or another non-heterosexual sexual identity (responses not shown above), which is consistent with recent nationwide estimates of youth homelessness.

Youth | Length of Homelessness

As described in Section 1, during the course of the unsheltered survey respondents were asked a series of questions about their experiences with homelessness (e.g., prior experiences, length of time, prior episodes, etc.). We synthesized four general homeless situations that describe respondents' combined answers to ease interpretation of how individuals answered these questions collectively (see earlier discussion in Section 1 for how these situations were operationalized).

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[44] Dworksy, Van Drunen & Gitlow, 2017; Morton, Samuels, Dworsky & Patel, 2018

Figure 19 | Length of Homelessness Reported by Unsheltered Youth (n=373)
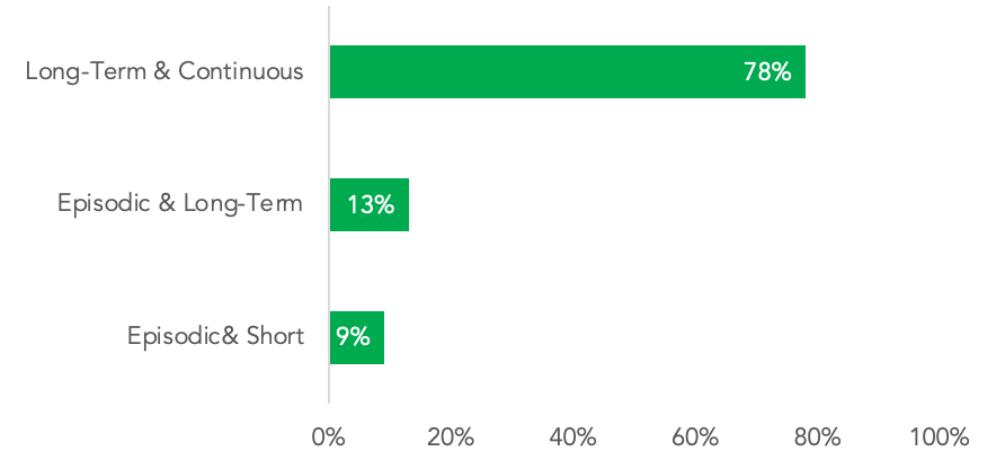
- The majority of unsheltered youth surveyed (78%) reported that they were experiencing "long-term and continuous" homelessness, meaning that they had faced over a year of continuous homelessness (sometimes for several years).

- The remaining youth respondents reported more episodic experiences with homelessness the past three years. Approximately thirteen percent (13%) of unsheltered youth described "episodic and long-term periods of homelessness," meaning that they reported experiencing 2-4 episodes of homelessness in the past three years, and indicated periods of homelessness that were long (a single period or periods that exceed a year or more).

- Another nine percent (9%) had episodic and short-term homelessness patterns of homelessness, meaning that they experienced several but relatively brief periods of homelessness during the past three years.

- No youth respondents said that they had become homeless during the last six months (i.e., they did not meet our criteria for experiencing "first time and recent" homelessness). In general, very few youth indicated that this was their first time being homeless (11%) and among these respondents all indicated that they had first become homeless over two years ago.

Youth | Unique Experiences and Risk Factors

Similar to other groups, youth were asked about specific experiences and challenges that may complicate their transition to stable housing (e.g., challenges with behavioral health conditions, a physical disability, chronic health conditions etc.). But youth were also asked additional questions about educational attainment and early parenting. These youth-specific questions reflected recommendations from the PIT Committee as well as youth service providers for the unsheltered survey to explore these topics.. Analyses of these questions revealed the following:

- Eight percent (8%) of unsheltered youth indicated they were currently pregnant or expecting to become a parent within the next nine months. An additional nine percent (9%) reported that they were already a parent to a child, though, notably, over half of these youth parents reported that they were not living with at least one of their children due to their housing status.

- Forty three percent (43%) of unsheltered youth reported that they were fleeing a domestic violence situation. This was a higher proportion than among adults ages 25 and over (13%).

- Approximately half (49%) of unsheltered youth indicated that they had been in foster care or a group home before the age of 18, compared to 22% of adults ages 25 and over.

- Forty two percent (42%) of youth reported having a mental or learning disability (e.g., ADHD, autism, developmental delay) that prevented them from holding a job or living in stable housing. Over half of these youth also reported being in foster care.

> Approximately half (49%) of unsheltered youth indicated that they had been in foster care or a group home before the age of 18.

Figure 20 | Challenges Report by Unsheltered Youth (n=373)

Figure 20 | Challenges Report by Unsheltered Youth (n=373)
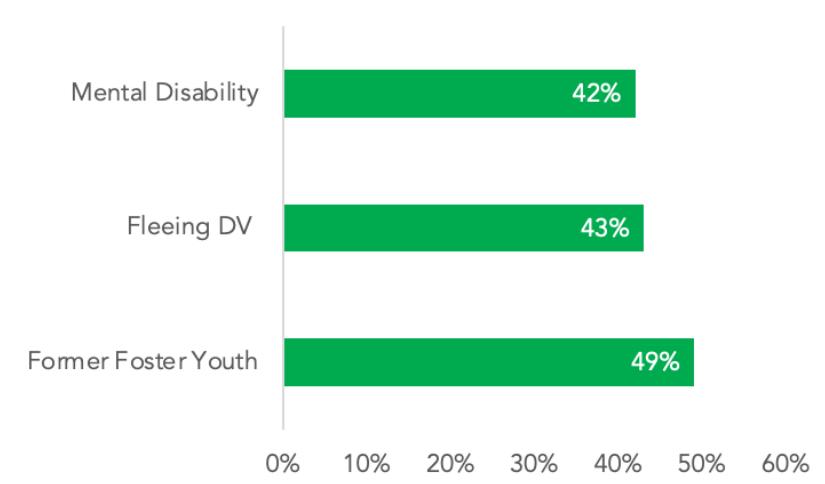
Unsheltered youth were also asked specific questions about their education. While most (59%) reported having a high school diploma or GED, a third (33%) had left school between 9th and 11th grades, and eight percent had only completed the 9th grade or less. This means that about 41% of unsheltered youth in Sacramento County left school before earning a high school diploma or equivalent.

Figure 21 | Educational Attainment of Unsheltered Youth (n=373)
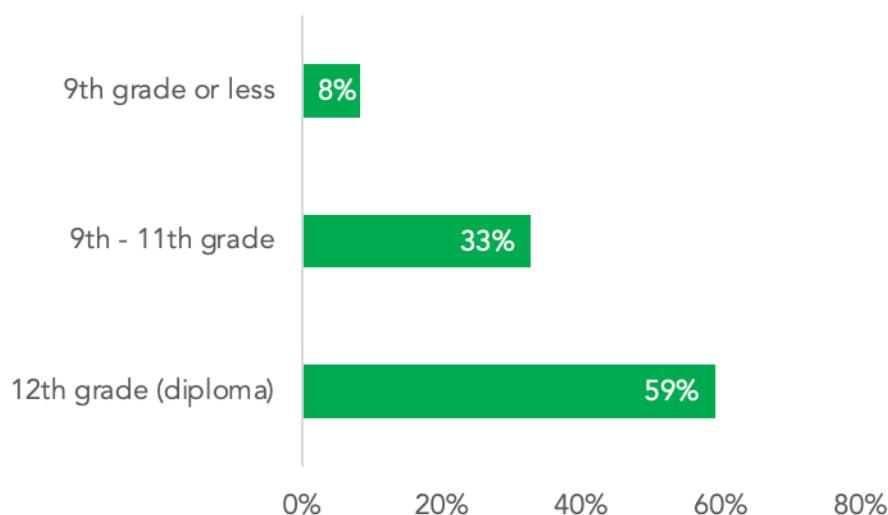
- The majority of unsheltered youth reported that they were not currently attending or enrolled in school (89%).

In an open-ended question related to education, youth were asked what could help them either return or stay in school. An analysis of the responses to this question revealed that most youth were seeking to establish some sense of "stability" in their lives (particularly in terms of housing and reliable transportation) before re-engaging with school. Some also cited needing logistical help enrolling in school as well as figuring out how to pay for it. Others discussed that they needed help with motivation.

Voices of Youth | What Could Sacramento Do Better?

When asked how services and resources could be improved for youth experiencing homelessness in Sacramento, youth most commonly discussed the general need for more affordable housing in the community (mentioned in 43% of discussions). Some of these same youth elaborated that Sacramento should make tiny homes available more quickly.

Figure 22 | Themes of How to Better Help Youth Experiencing Homelessness (n=373)[45]
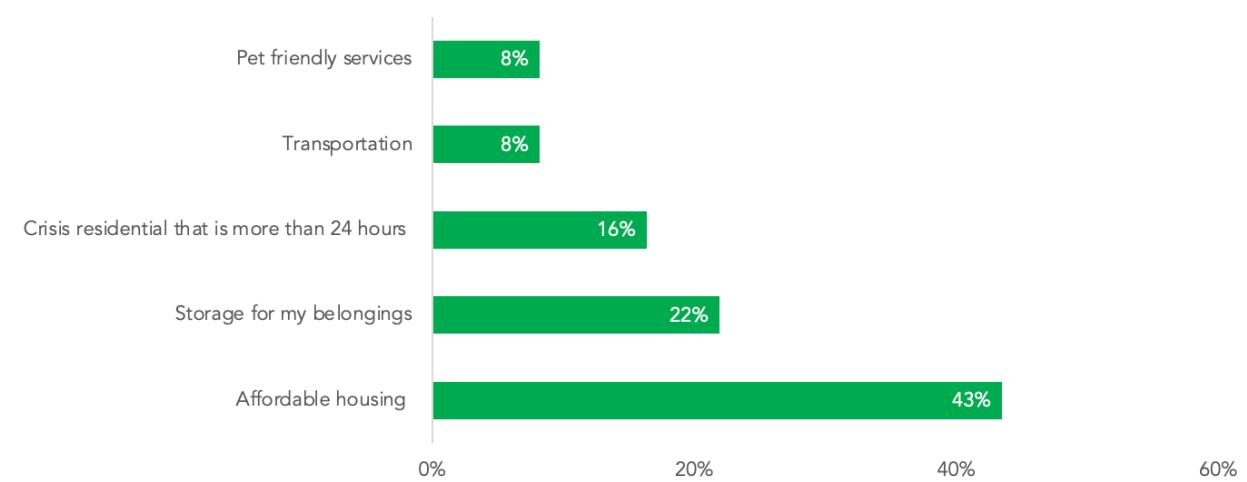
Other common topics discussed by youth touched on the need for more storage options for their belongings when they use a shelter or enter a housing program (22%)--one individual discussed that they needed a place to store their RV before they would enter a transitional program. A number of youth also indicated that Sacramento needed more "crisis residential [beds] that are available for more than 24 hours" (16%). These youth also discussed that youth services should have fewer restrictions and be more flexible with age limits. Finally, a few youth

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[45] Respondents were asked to state their top two recommendations which were then recorded into pre-existing categories at the discretion of the interviewer. Responses other than the provided categories were analyzed individually and placed into a category when possible.

discussed wanting the broader community to have more compassion, respect, and dignity for all people experiencing homelessness. These particular youths described feeling invisible by the broader community.

Families with Children

Families with children represent approximately 30 percent of people experiencing homelessness in the United States.[46] In 2020 it was estimated that 56,000 family households were homeless on a single night (representing a total 172,000 individuals). A disproportionate proportion of families facing homelessness are in California (approximately 15% of the nationwide total).[47] The Sacramento 2019 PIT Count estimated that families with children accounted for 20 percent of all people experiencing homelessness in Sacramento county.[48] This relatively high rate of homelessness among families likely reflects the ongoing challenges related to housing affordability in the Sacramento region, which is correlated with increased homelessness amongst families in particular.[49]

Families experiencing homelessness are vulnerable to a variety of perilous situations and negative outcomes that often impact both parents and their children.[50] Homelessness is associated with increased prevalence of parental depression, a decreased sense of control, as well as greater parenting difficulties.[51] These factors can contribute to increased behavioral

[46] National Alliance to End Homelessness (2021). Children and families. Retrieved from https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/who-experiences-homelessness/children-and-families/

[47] Henry, M., Sousa, T. D., Roddey, C., Gayen, S., & Bednar, T. J. (2021). *The 2020 annual homeless assessment report (AHAR) to congress.* The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2020-AHAR-Part-1.pdf

[48] Sacramento Steps Forward. (2021). *Homelessness in Sacramento*. Retried from https://sacramentostepsforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Homelessness-In-Sacramento.pdf

[49] Fargo, J. D., Munley, E. A., Byrne, T. H., Montgomery, A. E., & Culhane, D. P. (2013). Community-level characteristics associated with variation in rates of homelessness among families and single adults. *American Journal of Public Health*, (103), S340-347.

[50] Bradley, C., Day, C., Penney, C., & Michelson, D. (2020). 'Every day is hard, being outside, but you have to do it for your child': Mixed-methods formative evaluation of a peer-led parenting intervention for homeless families. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, *25*(4), 860-876. DOI: 10.1177/135910452092624

[51] Obradović, Jelena. (2010) "Effortful control and adaptive functioning of homeless children: Variable-focused and person-focused analyses." Journal of applied developmental psychology 31.2: 109-117.

problems and mental health challenges for children.[52] This, coupled with potentially unsanitary and/or unstable living conditions is likely why children who have been homeless are more likely to report poorer general health and mental health compared to other low-income children who are housed.[53] These challenges to child wellbeing can often persist even after a family obtains housing.[54]

Families experiencing homelessness can also face a variety of unique stressors navigating service agencies and/or accessing welfare benefits, which can often be prolonged and exhausting processes.[55] Homeless parents often report facing stigma and greater scrutiny of their behaviors when they seek assistance.[56] These stereotypes often intersect with racism, sexism, and classism and imply that homeless parents, and more specifically mothers, are unfit to care for their children.[57] Some parents are also reluctant to engage with services due to fear of becoming involved with the child welfare system and potentially becoming separated from their children. For these and other reasons, researchers suspect that the numbers of families experiencing homelessness are underestimated in many regions, particularly in California. Given this, the last two PIT Counts in Sacramento have deployed a number of strategies to better reach families with children experiencing homelessness--possibly contributing to a higher count of families than other regions.[58]

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[52] Mcguire-Schwartz, M., Small, L. A., Parker, G., Kim, P., & McKay, M. (2015). Relationships between caregiver violence exposure, caregiver depression, and youth behavioral health among homeless families. *Research on Social Work Practice, 25*(5), 587-594

[53] Bradley, C., Day, C., Penney, C., & Michelson, D. (2020). 'Every day is hard, being outside, but you have to do it for your child': Mixed-methods formative evaluation of a peer-led parenting intervention for homeless families. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 25*(4), 860-876. DOI: 10.1177/135910452092624

[54] American Psychological Association (APA). (2011). *Families with children and homelessness.* https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/homelessness-children.pdf

[55] Shinn, M. B., Rog, D. R., & Culhane, D. P. (2005). *Family homelessness: Background research findings and policy options.* The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. https://repository.upenn.edu/spp_papers/83

[56] Reppond, H. A. & Bullock, H. E. (2020). Reclaiming "good motherhood": US mothers' critical resistance in family homeless shelters. *Feminism & Psychology, 30*(1), 100-120.

[57] Cosgrove, L., & Flynn, C. (2005). Marginalized Mothers: Parenting Without a Home. *Analyses of Social Issues & Public Policy, 5*(1), 127-143. doi:10.1111/j.1530-2415.2005.00059.x

[58] Both the 2019 and 2022 Sacramento PIT Counts included collecting additional surveys with parents in the morning at a specific program site that provides educational and child care services to families experiencing homelessness (i.e., a "service-based" strategy that HUD recommends for families and youth). Accordingly, volunteers interviewed a number of parents dropping off their children who reported being homeless the night before. In addition, in 2022 liaisons at some K-12 schools helped increase awareness of the PIT Count to families experiencing homelessness by creating flyers that included a phone number in which parents could call in to do the survey over the phone. Finally, there

Families with Children | Nightly Estimate

On a single night in February, approximately 420 families with children were experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County.

- These 420 households consisted of 632 adults and 745 children under the age of 18 (1,377 in total), representing approximately 15 percent of all persons experiencing homelessness in the county.

Figure 23 | Sheltered vs. Unsheltered Family Households with Children in 2022 PIT Count
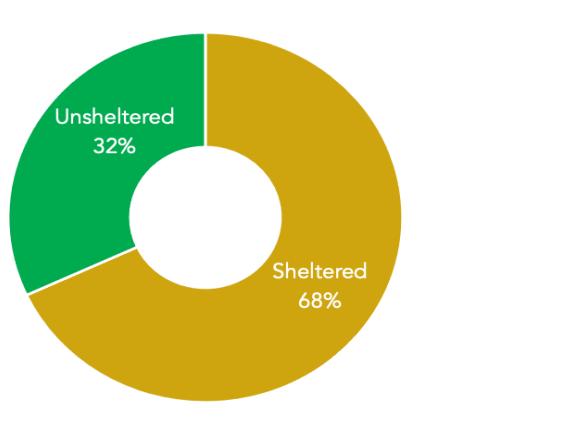
- In contrast to other groups, most families (68%) were sheltered on the night of the count.

- Only one third of family *households* with children were unsheltered (32% or 134 households). This is a significant improvement from the 52 percent of families reported unsheltered in the 2019 PIT Count.

- The increased use of motel/hotels to shelter families in non-congregate shelters, as well as increased investments in other family shelters, likely contributed to a decrease in unsheltered families in Sacramento.

- Surveys conducted with unsheltered families with children revealed that most unsheltered families reported sleeping in a vehicle (16%) or tent (11%). Compared to other unsheltered adults, families were far less likely to report sleeping somewhere other than a vehicle or tent (4%).

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was a more concerted effort by specific outreach teams to survey households using vehicles for shelter (RVs and cars) .

Families with Children | Demographic Characteristics

The composition of families experiencing homelessness can vary substantially (e.g., single parent with between one to four children vs. two-parent household with one child). The results from the 2022 PIT Count revealed that a majority of families were single headed households (60%), with between two to three children. As might be expected, parents were more likely to be female than non-parents, though some male parents, as well as some single-male parents were interviewed. The average age of a parent was 37 years old, though it varied widely among participants (the youngest parent was 17 and the oldest was 60 with an adult child). About one quarter of families indicated that they were fleeing a domestic violence situation. About half of parents surveyed reported that they had prior experience in foster care as youth.

Table 7| Gender, Ethnicity & Race of People in Families (n=1,377)*

Gender	#	%
Male	549	40%
Female	828	60%
Gender Non-Coforming	-	0%
Transgender	-	0%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic/Latino	288	21%
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	1,089	79%
Race		
White	529	38%
Black	595	43%
Asian	26	2%
American Indian	91	7%
Native Hawaiian	15	1%
Multiple Races	121	9%

*People in 420 family households (including 632 adults and 725 children)

With respect to the general composition of families more generally (inclusive of children), members of these households most commonly identified as Black/African America (43%), and White (38%) and seven percent (7%) as American Indian.

- Black families experiencing homelessness continue to be overrepresented given their proportion in the broader county population (11%). However, the disparity has decreased since 2019, when Black family members represented 55 percent of all people in families experiencing homelessness (compared to now 43% in 2022).

- This parallels recent nationwide trends recently reported by HUD; Black families showed the biggest decline with respect to families accessing shelters last year.[59] Nonetheless, Black families in Sacramento County are still three times more likely to experience homelessness compared to White families.

- Similarly, American Indian families are also overrepresented in the 2022 Count, given their small proportion in Sacramento County (2%).

> Black families experiencing homelessness continue to be overrepresented given their proportion in the broader county population (11%). However, the disparity has decreased since 2019.

Families with Children | Length of Homelessness

Most unsheltered parents interviewed on the night of count (83%) reported "long-term and continuous" homelessness lasting over one year. Though some families (13%) also indicated having two or three distinct episodes of homelessness the last couple of years, these same families reported that these episodes were relatively long and lasted almost the entirety of the last three years.

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[59] HUD recently reported in its 2021 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress, that sheltered family homelessness among people who were Black or African American decreased by a larger percentage than any other race; a 19 percent reduction between 2020 and 2021.

Figure 24 | Length of Homelessness Reported by Unsheltered Families (n=134 families)

Episodic &
Long-Term
13%

Long-Term &
Continuous
87%
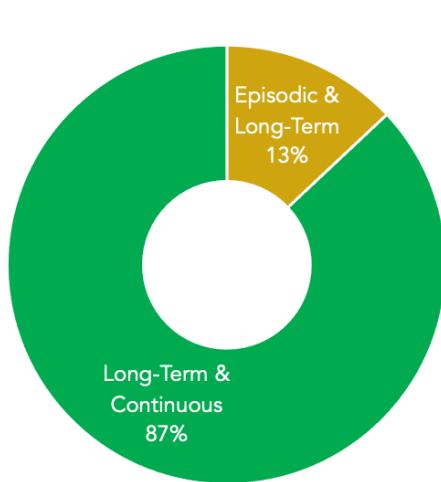
Voices of Families | What Could Sacramento Do Better?

Like other unsheltered groups, parents with children primarily stressed the need for more affordable housing that they can access in Sacramento County. Other common answers also suggested the need for more services in Sacramento that are "pet friendly." Some parents also cited the need for more reliable public transportation. Other parents discussed wanting more job training and employment opportunities as well as access to financial services.

Figure 25 | Themes of How to Better Help Families Experiencing Homelessness

Affordable housing	44%
Pet friendly services	31%
Transportation	30%
Provide jobs or job training	22%
Storage for my belongings	15%

0%   20%   40%   60%
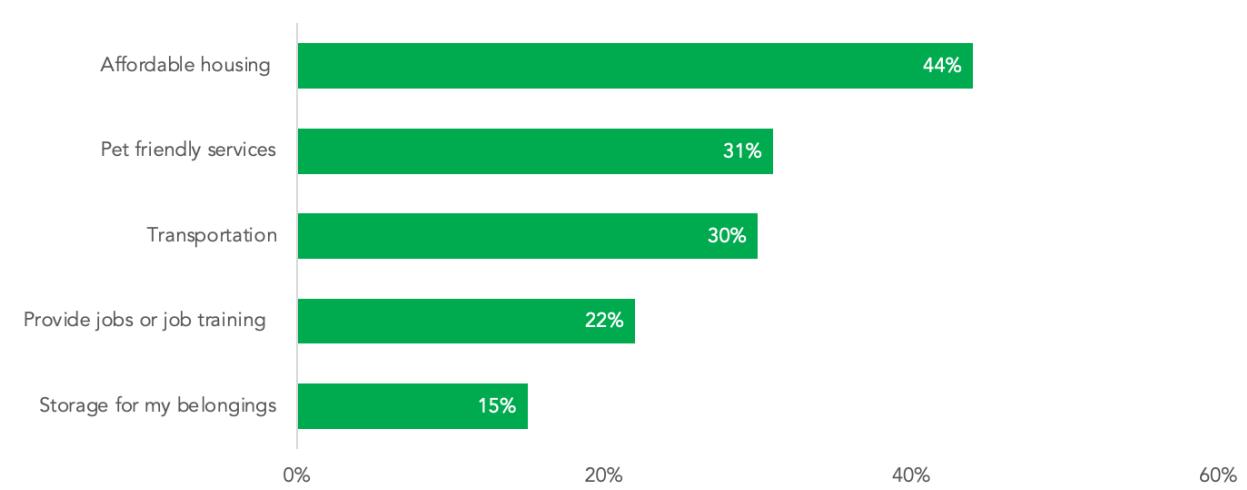
While less common than other open-ended answers, some parents discussed that park services in Sacramento could be improved, particularly in terms of better access to open and clean bathrooms. Some parents wondered if Sacramento could provide access to portable showers near a park or community center. Some also described the need for more effective navigation assistance in identifying existing resources in the community.

Finally, a few parents discussed that policy makers often have difficulty understanding the needs and experiences of families experiencing homelessness. In particular, these parents described the importance of being treated with dignity and respect and the difficulties that occur when vehicle encampments are threatened with removal.

Chronically Homeless

Individuals who experience long bouts of homelessness, often due to a chronic condition, are sometimes described as being "chronically homeless," which is a specific HUD designation. Per HUD guidelines, individuals are designated chronically homeless if they meet two conditions, one pertaining to their length of time experiencing homelessness and the other to having a disability. Specifically, a person experiencing chronic homelessness:

- Has been continuously homeless for at least 12 months OR has had four (4) or more episodes of homelessness in the past three years, in which the combined duration of homelessness equals a year or more.[60]

- AND they have a physical, developmental, or mental illness or disability.

This HUD definition[61] highlights how people with the longest histories of homelessness are often those with significant disabilities (such as having a substance use disorder, mental health

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[60] It is important to note that per this HUD definition, it is assumed that a chronically homeless individual has not had a significant "break in homelessness" during the past year. A break in homelessness in this context refers to staying seven (7) or more consecutive nights in a housed situation (i.e., in a situation other than emergency shelter or location not suitable for long term habitation. Notably, this does not include a stay at an institutional care facility (e.g., a jail, substance use disorder or mental health treatment facility, hospital, or other similar facility) if the person was there fewer than 90 days.
[61] Some have argued that this definition of chronic homelessness has several limitations due to its specificity and documentation requirements, which prevents some people with significant needs from accessing programs and supportive housing. Additionally, obtaining evidence to prove chronic homelessness status requires third-party documentation

condition, and/or a physical disability). This is because people with disabilities are at much higher risk of falling into homelessness (often due to challenges in maintaining income and/or independent living) as well as the fact that these conditions may worsen on the street and complicate the transition into housing.[62] Indeed, chronic homelessness has received significant attention from policy makers, and HUD specifically, during the last two decades because some individuals with disabilities are frequent users of emergency services and resources but nonetheless remain perpetually homeless.[63] Relatedly, policy focus into prioritizing chronic homelessness stems, in part, from the observation that a large share of emergency resources are often used by a small minority of people experiencing homelessness in a community.[64]

Chronic homelessness can deteriorate one's well-being over time and accelerates the aging process substantially, with some researchers suggesting that chronically homeless individuals age twice as fast as those securely housed.[65] A recent study suggests that by the time a chronically homeless adult reaches 50 years old, they already present with geriatric conditions more typical for someone over 80 years old.[66] Moreover, exposure to long term homelessness is associated with a much higher prevalence of interrelated health problems, including hypothermia, sleep deprivation, dehydration, infectious diseases (e.g., tuberculosis), osteoarthritis, and osteoporosis.[67] Homelessness in later age is also associated with the early

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[62] Nishio, A., Horita, R., Sado, T., Mizutani, S., Watanabe, T., Uehara, R., & Yamamoto, M. (2017). Causes of homelessness prevalence: Relationship between homelessness and disability. *Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences*, *71*(3), 180-188.

[63] Rickards, L. D., McGraw, S. A., Araki, L., Casey, R. J., High, C. W., Hombs, M. E., & Raysor, R. S. (2010). Collaborative initiative to help end chronic homelessness: Introduction. *The journal of behavioral health services & research*, *37*(2), 149-166.

[64] Byrne, T., & Culhane, D. P. (2015). Testing alternative definitions of chronic homelessness. *Psychiatric Services*, *66*(9), 996-999

[65] Bazari, A., Patanwala, M., Kaplan, L. M., Auerswald, C. L., & Kushel, M. B. (2018). "The thing that really gets me is the future": Symptomatology in older homeless adults in the Hope Home study. Journal of Pain & Symptom Management, 56(2), 195–204.

[66] Brown, R. T., Hemati, K., Riley, E. D., Lee, C. T., Ponath, C., Tieu, L., Guzman, D., & Kushel, M. B. (2017). Geriatric conditions in a population-based sample of older homeless adults. *Gerontologist*, 57(4), 757–766.

Grenier, A., Sussman, T., Barken, R., Bourgeois- Guérin, V., & Rothwell, D. (2016). 'Growing old' in shelters and 'on the street': experiences of older homeless people. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 59(6), 458-477.

[67] Fazel, S., Geddes, J. R., & Kushel, M. (2014). The health of homeless people in high-income countries: descriptive epidemiology, health consequences, and clinical and policy recommendations. *The Lancet, 384*(9953), 1529-1540. doi:10.1016/s0140-6736(14)61132-6

onset of cognitive and mental health challenges as older adults struggle to manage the "symptom burden" of living with insecure housing.[68]

Sadly, California still retains one of the highest rates of people experiencing chronic homelessness; in 2020 it was estimated that one in three people experiencing homelessness in California met the criteria outlined in the definitions of chronic homelessness.[69] Relatedly, California has the largest overall number of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness in the country.

Chronically Homeless | Nightly Estimate

During the night of the 2022 Count, approximately 4,314 adults were experiencing chronic patterns of homelessness in Sacramento County.[70]

- Notably, the number of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness more than doubled both in the sheltered and unsheltered count since 2019.

- This represents a **162 percent increase** from 2019, when only 30 percent of the homeless population was indicated as chronically homeless (1,647 out of 5,570).

- This was the most substantial increase of any subgroup and significantly more than the 67 percent overall increase from the 2019 to 2022 count.

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[68] Martins, D. C., and Sullivan, M. A. (2006). Vulnerable older adults: Health care needs and interventions, 123-144.New York, NY: Springer.

[69] AHAR, 2021

[70] In 2015, HUD clarified that all individuals within a household should be considered chronically homeless if the head of household meets the above criteria (i.e., children in a family in which a parent is chronically homeless, would also be considered chronically homeless). To simplify the analysis, the above discussion focuses generally on the adults of these households.
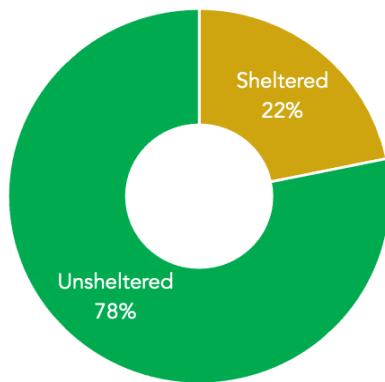
- Notably, sheltered individuals designated as chronically homeless more than doubled between 2019 and 2022. This likely reflected recent efforts to engage and shelter particularly vulnerable individuals during the pandemic in non-congregate settings (i.e., in motels and hotels). Project Roomkey, for example, targeted single-adults with chronic health conditions and/or other risk factors (like being older) that made them particularly vulnerable during the pandemic. These motel/hotel sheltering programs are often low-barrier, meaning that requirements for entry are minimal, and individuals are often allowed to stay for extended periods of time.

Despite these positive developments, the majority of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness were nonetheless unsheltered on the night of the 2022 Count (78%).

- Analysis of unsheltered sleeping locations revealed that most people experiencing chronic homelessness reported sleeping in a tent (37%) or a vehicle (17%).

- However, nearly a quarter of all chronically homeless individuals (24%) slept in a variety of other unsheltered locations as well, such as sleeping directly on the street or under a business doorway with just a sleeping bag, or other limited coverings (e.g., tarps or blankets). Some also reported squatting at an abandoned building or bus/light rail station.

> Notably, sheltered individuals designated as chronically homeless more than doubled between 2019 and 2022. This likely reflected recent efforts to engage and shelter particularly vulnerable individuals during the pandemic in non-congregate settings (i.e., in motels and hotels).

Chronically Homeless | Demographic Characteristics

Analysis of surveys conducted with unsheltered individuals who were experiencing chronic homelessness shows that they share some demographic characteristics with the broader unsheltered population in Sacramento.

Table 8 | Gender, Ethnicity, & Race of Chronically Homeless (n=4,314)

Gender	#	%
Male	2,795	65%
Female	1,449	34%
Gender Non-Co	34	1%
Transgender	37	1%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic/Latino	949	22%
Non-Hispanic/N	3,365	78%
Race		
White	2,007	47%
Black	1,267	29%
Asian	106	2%
American Indian	437	10%
Native Hawaiian	77	2%
Multiple Races	420	10%

- The sizable majority of chronically homeless individuals identified as male (65%).

- Nearly half of adults reporting chronic homelessness identified as White (47%) and a third identified as Black (29%).

- People who identified as American Indian made up ten percent (10%) of people experiencing chronic homelessness (which is larger than their representation among people experiencing non-chronic homelessness).

- The average age of a person experiencing chronic homelessness was 45 and a third were 55 years of age or older.

> The average age of a person experiencing chronic homelessness was 45 and a third were 55 years of age or older.

Chronically Homeless | Length of Homelessness

As described in Section 1, all unsheltered respondents were asked a series of questions about their experiences with homelessness (e.g., prior experiences, length of time, prior episodes, etc.). The overall increase in people experiencing chronic homelessness reflects, in part, the fact that most unsheltered people are now reporting longer periods of continuous homelessness.

- Almost four out of five (78%) adults interviewed indicated that they had been continuously homeless for over a year. This is a higher proportion than indicated in the 2019 PIT Count, in which 59 percent reported being homeless for over a year.

- Over half of adults (59%) stated that they have been continuously homeless since before 2019.

This suggests that more unsheltered people now meet the criteria for chronic homelessness because of their length of homelessness. Closer analysis of the responses of chronically homeless individuals reveals that most have been continuously homeless for some time.

- A large majority of chronically homeless individuals (87%) reported "long-term and continuous" patterns of homelessness, meaning that they were experiencing several years of continuous homelessness. These individuals reported an average of 7.5 years being continuously homeless.

Figure 27 | Length of Homelessness Reported by Unsheltered Chronically Homeless Adults (n=3,374)
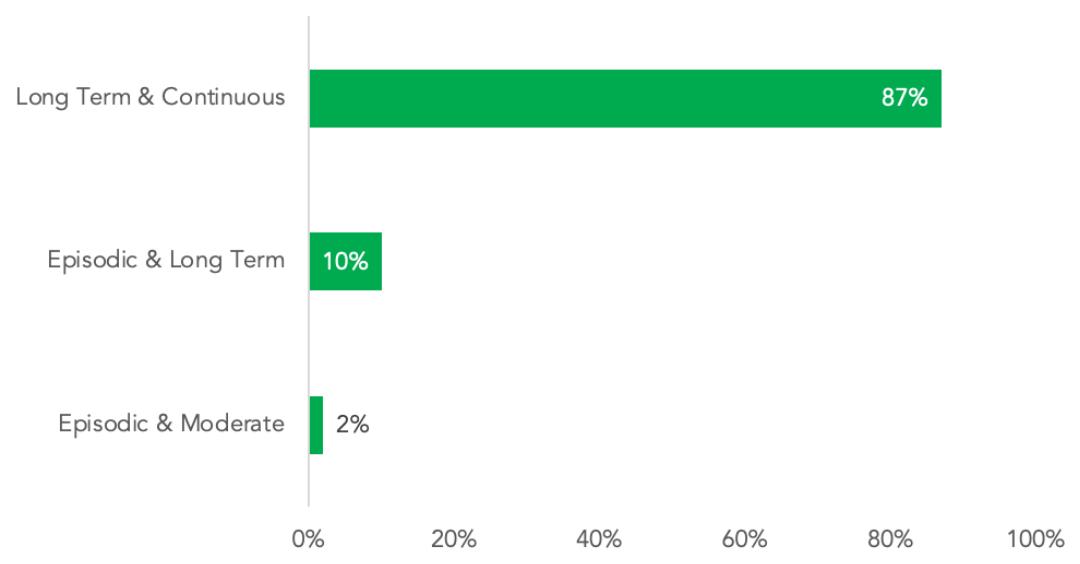
- A smaller proportion of chronically homeless individuals (10%) reported "episodic and long-term" patterns of homelessness, meaning that they reported experiencing 3-4 episodes of homelessness in the past three years, and indicated periods of homelessness that were long (a single period or periods that exceed a year or more). Most of these individuals also reported longer bouts of general homelessness that on average exceeded 6 years.

- A very small proportion of chronically homeless people (2%) could be characterized as experiencing episodic and moderate patterns of homelessness.

Chronically Homeless | Unique Experiences and Risk Factors

All individuals were asked about their specific experiences or challenges that may complicate their transition to stable housing.

- Individuals experiencing chronic homelessness most commonly cited a disabling mental health condition (61%), followed by a physical disability (54%), or an ongoing medical condition (37%) as conditions that make it difficult to remain stably housed.

- Additionally, only 24 percent said they could not work or find stable housing because of substance use, which was nearly equivalent to the number of people who said they could not work or find stable housing due to a traumatic brain injury (23%).

- Most chronically homeless individuals (70%) reported 2 or more disabling conditions.

As discussed in Section 1, the 2022 PIT survey asked individuals about how often they were forced to move their sleeping location in the two-month period leading up to the 2022 PIT Count.

- Approximately three out of four people experiencing chronic homelessness (75%) reported that they had been forced to move their sleeping location by law enforcement in the last two months.

- On average people experiencing chronic homelessness reported being moved by law enforcement five times in a two-month period.

Follow-up conversations with individuals experiencing chronic homelessness highlight the physical labor and stress of being forced to continuously relocate. Some respondents described the challenges of continually relocating their tents, such as losing property and medications, being unable to carry everything to a new location, and the chaotic nature of these moves. Individuals also discussed the loss of connections that can occur to services, healthcare, outreach workers, and navigators. For people living with a disability, it can be even more difficult to stay connected to mental and physical health services after they are forced to move.

> Some respondents described the challenges of continually relocating their tents, such as losing property and medications, being unable to carry everything to a new location, and the chaotic nature of these moves.

Chronically Homeless | What Could Sacramento Do Better?

People experiencing chronic homelessness provided a variety of responses to the question, "What two things could Sacramento do better to help people who are experiencing homelessness?"

Figure 29 | Themes of How to Better Help Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness
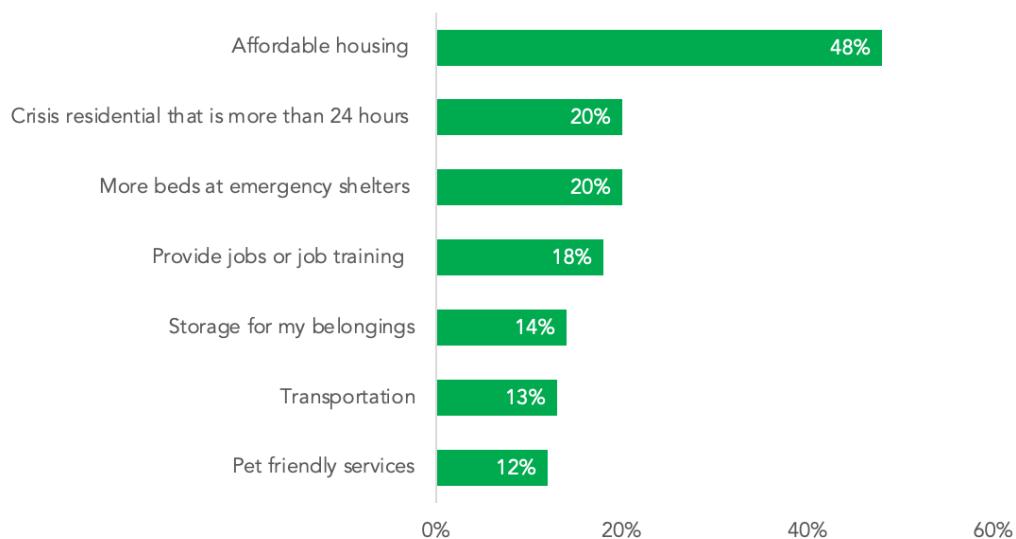
- The most commonly mentioned area for improvement noted by people experiencing chronic homelessness was "more affordable housing" (48%), "more beds at emergency shelters" (20%), and "crisis residential [beds] available for more than 24 hours" (20%).

- Other notable suggestions included those related to access to jobs or job training (18%), storage for belongings (14%), and assistance with transportation to appointments (13%).

- Suggestions that did not fall into pre-identified categories included improving access to "bathrooms and showers", "funding more navigators", reducing "police harassment''. Some respondents also discussed the importance of the community fostering more" respect and dignity" toward people experiencing homelessness, as well as promoting greater empathy for the challenges that people face on the street.

Veterans

Approximately 37,000 veterans experience homelessness on any given night in the U.S., accounting for eight percent (8%) of people facing nightly homelessness in the country.[71] Veterans are individuals who have served active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, the National Guard, or as Reservists.[72] Compared to the general population, veterans are more likely to fall into homelessness for a variety of factors. These can include being more likely to face economic hardship, live in social isolation, and experience family conflict after a deployment. During the last two decades the U.S. has been involved in prolonged and active military engagements around the globe, thus veterans have become more likely to experience trauma, mental health challenges, and/or substance use disorder, any of which can contribute to housing instability and homelessness.[73]

National estimates from the HUD PIT Count (2009-2020) have shown a steady reduction in homelessness among veterans by as much as half during the last decade (decreasing from 73,367 homeless veterans in 2009 to 37,243 veterans in 2020).[74] This reflects targeted national efforts by HUD and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, as well as various advocacy entities, to specifically expand supportive housing programs and assistance to veterans experiencing

[71] Henry, M., de Sousa, T., Roddey, C., Gayen, S., Bednar, T. D., & Abt Associates. (2020). The 2020 annual homeless assessment report (AHAR) to Congress. Retrieved from https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2020-AHAR-Part-1.pdf

[72] United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) issued a federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness among veterans in five years. (2010). Opening Doors: Federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness. Retrieved from https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/USICH_OpeningDoors_Amendment2015_FINAL.pdf.
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (2010). Veteran homelessness: a supplemental report to the 2009 annual homeless assessment report to congress. https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2009AHARVeteransReport.pdf.

[73] Tsai, J. & Rosenheck, R.A. (2015) Risk factors for homelessness among U.S. veterans. *Epidemiologic Reviews, 37*(1) 177- 195.

[74] Henry, M., de Sousa, T., Roddey, C., Gayen, S., Bednar, T. D., & Abt Associates. (2020). The 2020 annual homeless assessment report (AHAR) to Congress. Retrieved from https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2020-AHAR-Part-1.pdf

homelessness.[75] However, veteran homelessness remains prevalent, especially in California.[76] Almost a third of all the veterans experiencing homelessness in the U.S. reside in our state (11,401 veterans), most of whom are unsheltered (53% or 7,996 veterans).[77]

Veterans | Nightly Estimate

On a single night in February of 2022, 625 veterans were experiencing either sheltered or unsheltered homelessness in Sacramento County. This was a notable decrease since the last 2019 count, suggesting that fewer veterans are experiencing homelessness in 2022 than in 2019 Count (625 vs. 667). This is particularly notable given the overall increase in homelessness of the 2022 Count, as well as the larger increases in chronic homelessness.

- Veterans represent approximately seven percent of all persons experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County in 2022—half the proportion of veterans reported in 2019 (14%).

> Fewer veterans are experiencing homelessness in 2022 than in 2019 Count (625 vs. 667).

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[75]The decrease in veteran homelessness likely reflects the ongoing expansion of the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program, which combines HUD's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance for homeless Veterans with case management offered by the VA or Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF). These programs provide case management and supportive services to prevent homelessness or to rapidly re-house Veterans and their families who are homeless and might remain homeless without this assistance.

[76] Tsai, J., Pietrzak, R. h., Szymkowiak, D. (2021). The problem of veteran homelessness: An update for the new decade. *The American Journal of Preventive Medicine.* 60(6):774–780. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0749379721000660.

[77] See footnote 62

Figure 30 | Sheltered vs. Unsheltered Veterans in 2022 PIT Count
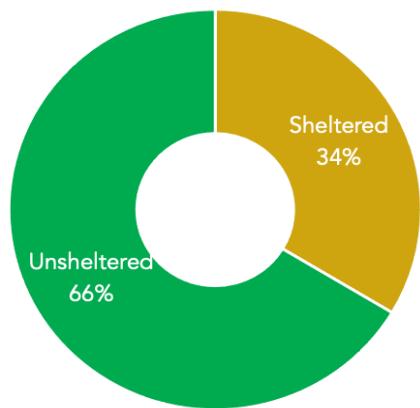
- The majority (66%) of these veterans were unsheltered – slightly less than the unsheltered proportion of the overall homeless population in Sacramento County (72%).

- Almost a third (32%) of all veterans reported sleeping in tents. Twenty percent (20%) reported staying in a vehicle, and fifteen percent (15%) reported sleeping in another type of location.

Veterans | Demographic Characteristics

The majority of veterans experiencing homelessness identified as male (83%) while 15percent identified as female, and approximately one to two percent identified as either gender non-confirming or transgender. Veterans were more likely to identify as White (59%) and non-Hispanic (93%) than other groups (59% and 93%, respectively).

Table 9 | Gender, Ethnicity, & Race of Veterans (n=625)

Gender	#	%
Male	519	83%
Female	96	15%
Gender Non-Coforming	1	0.2%
Transgender	9	1%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic/Latino	42	7%
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	583	93%
Race		
White	367	59%
Black	111	18%
Asian	2	0.3%
American Indian	35	6%
Native Hawaiian	52	8%
Multiple Races	58	9%

Unsheltered veterans were on average approximately two years older than non-veteran adults experiencing unsheltered homelessness (46 versus 44 years old respectively). And of the veterans surveyed, 19 percent reported that they had served active duty in the National Guard or a Reservist.

Veterans | Length of Homelessness

Like other unsheltered groups, unsheltered veterans were also asked about experiences with homelessness (e.g., prior experiences, length of time, prior episodes, etc.). Analysis of how veterans answered these questions revealed the following:

- Approximately 4 percent (4%) of unsheltered veterans could be characterized in a "first time and recent" homeless situation.

- About a third of unsheltered veterans (33%) were in an "episodic and moderate length" homelessness situation, making them as a group more likely to report episodic periods of homelessness than other unsheltered groups.

Figure 31 | Length of Homelessness Reported by Veterans (n=373)
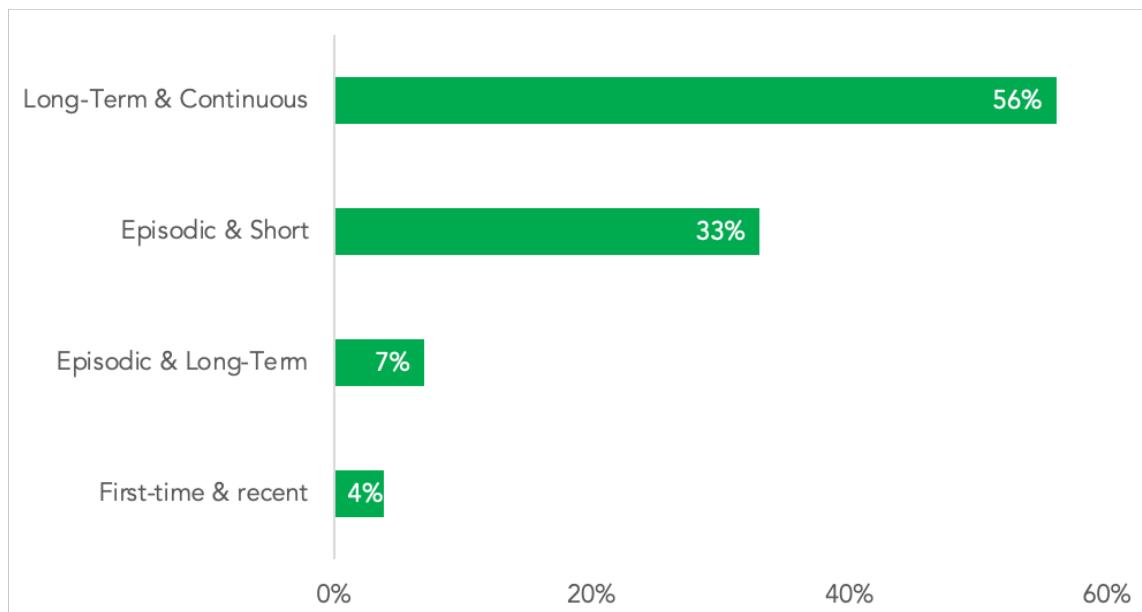
- Seven percent (7%) were in a situation that could be characterized as "episodic and long term" homelessness. Like other groups, the highest proportion of unsheltered veterans (56%) could be characterized as experiencing a "long term and continuous" bout of homelessness that has lasted over a year.

Veterans | Unique Experiences and Risk Factors

Nearly half of all veterans interviewed outside (48%) reported at least one disability and/or debilitating health condition, which prevented them from being employed or maintaining stable housing. Specifically, 38 percent of unsheltered veterans reported a disabling cognitive impairment and 35 percent a physical disability. A nearly equal percentage of veterans reported a severe psychiatric disorder (34%), while 28 percent report an ongoing "medical disability" (a condition such as disabling diabetes, cancer or heart disease).
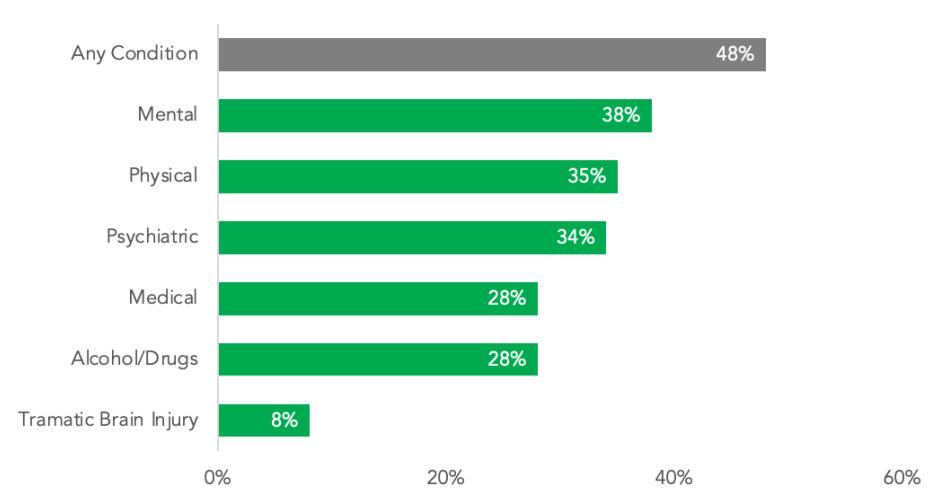
- Given the high level of need reported by veterans interviewed outside, as well as their prolonged experiences with homelessness, it is estimated that sixty percent (60%) could be designated as chronically homeless.

Voices of Veterans | What Could Sacramento Do Better?

When veterans were asked what Sacramento County could do better to help people experiencing homelessness, the most common response--as was the case with most groups interviewed--highlighted on the need for more affordable housing in the county. The issue of affordable housing was cited in almost half of all the responses given in this open-ended question. A high percentage of responses also touched on the theme of improving the broader homeless service system – 31 percent mentioned a need for more beds at emergency shelters and 27 percent suggested increasing the capacity of crisis residential programs that provide more than 24 hours of support. Over a quarter of unsheltered veterans (27%) also discussed the need for more jobs or job training for veterans.

Figure 33 | Themes of How to Better Help Veterans Experiencing Chronic Homelessness
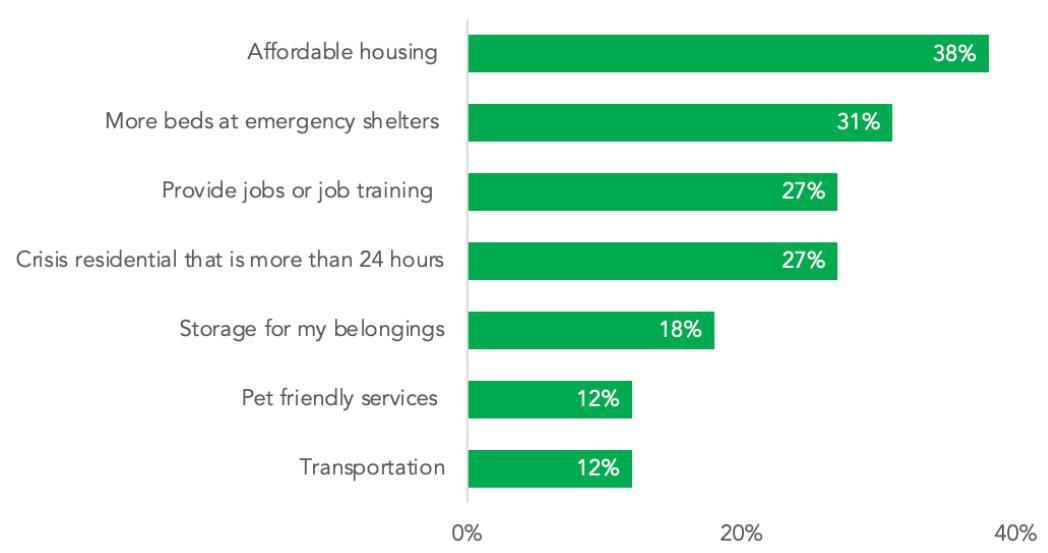
Other comments and suggestions focused on the logistic hurdles of accessing services in the county, for example improving the process of arranging appointments with county workers (e.g., have open drop-in hours when individuals can visit county offices, require staff to be more responsive to phone calls and/or voicemails). Some veterans also discussed their own ideas of how the county should turn empty buildings into housing units (for example, converting unused office space downtown or at the McClellan campus). Others also discussed ideas of the county providing mobile shower stations near encampment as well as charging stations for their electronic devices.

Section 3: Conclusions and Implications

This report reviewed the results and key findings of the 2022 Sacramento Point-in-Time (PIT) Count--the first complete homeless count conducted in three years in Sacramento County and since the start of the pandemic. On a single night in February 2022, an estimated 9,278 people experienced homelessness throughout Sacramento County, most of whom were unsheltered (72%), meaning they slept in a tent, vehicle, or other outside location during one of the coldest nights of the year. Overall, these results indicate a significant increase in the number of people experiencing nightly homelessness in Sacramento County since the 2019 PIT (a 67% increase). These results also represent the highest per-capita estimate of homelessness on record for our community.

As discussed throughout this report, many more individuals in 2022 report living with a disability and experiencing chronic patterns of homelessness, compared to previous years. An estimated 4,314 individuals (or 43 percent of all people experiencing homelessness on any given night in Sacramento) likely meet HUD's formal definition of being chronically homeless. This 163% increase in chronic homelessness since 2019 coincides with a growing proportion of individuals reporting longer periods of homelessness than in the past--nearly 80% of respondents interviewed outside stated that they had been homeless continuously for over a year (up from 56% in 2019). Moreover, 58 percent of unsheltered adults indicated that they struggled with one or more disabilities or chronic health conditions that impaired their ability to secure employment or housing (up from 40% in 2019). These findings suggest that individuals with disabilities have struggled to recover from homelessness during the last couple of years and that exits from long term homelessness have likely become more difficult and less frequent than in the past.

> These findings suggest that individuals with disabilities have struggled to recover from homelessness during the last couple of years and that exits from long term homelessness have likely become more difficult and less frequent than in the past.

In contrast, a relatively small percentage of individuals (less than 10%) reported becoming homeless in the past two years, and a smaller proportion of these individuals stated that this was their first time experiencing homelessness. This suggests that fewer people fell into homelessness for the first time during the pandemic--likely reflecting the positive impacts of policies associated with eviction moratoriums, emergency rental assistance, and extensions of unemployment benefits on reducing entries into homelessness. A recent report by HUD similarly suggests that these policies at the national level have likely helped some subpopulations avoid homelessness, such as families with children, which saw substantial reductions in sheltered homelessness in the last two years. Indeed, families with children experiencing homelessness as well as veterans, saw some notable reductions in the 2022 Sacramento PIT Count despite the overall increases in homelessness described above.

Other findings of this report highlight how racial inequities in our society continue to shape the disproportionate impact that homelessness and housing instability has on communities of color in Sacramento County. Individuals who identify as Black/African American and American Indian continue to be overrepresented among most of the groups highlighted in this report (e.g., youth, families with children, and individuals experiencing chronic homelessness). While a lower proportion of families identified as Black or African American than in past years, they are still three times as likely to experience homelessness as White residents given their overall proportion in the broader population. And even though American Indians represent less than one in ten people experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County, their risk for falling into homelessness are six times higher than White residents. Nonetheless, the report also highlights some universal experiences with homelessness that all groups reported. Regardless of one's racial and ethnic identity, for example, many individuals relayed their struggles to find affordable housing in the county, the challenges of navigating services, as well as the stigma and shame that they sometimes perceive by the broader community.

> Other findings of this report highlight how racial inequities in our society continue to shape the disproportionate impact that homelessness and housing instability has on communities of color in Sacramento County.

Contextual Factors

It is important to consider the above findings in the context of broader trends affecting homelessness across the West Coast, most notably the affordable housing crisis and the evolving impacts of the pandemic.

The 2022 rise in homelessness in Sacramento County reflects the continued challenges with housing affordability locally and across the state. As discussed in Section 1 of this report, the substantial increase of the 2022 Sacramento Count parallels an ongoing trend of unsheltered homelessness growing across the West Coast since 2015. Moreover, these trends correlated with a worsening housing crisis in these communities that predated the pandemic.

- Community levels of *housing affordability*,[78] which a number of studies suggest are the strongest community-level predictors of homelessness, worsened in many of the most populous regions in California between 2014 and 2019 (the last year most communities conducted a complete PIT Count). Currently, the nation's three most expensive rental markets are in California,[79] where rents increased an average of 24 percent between 2015 and 2019. These same communities also reported the largest increases in homelessness between 2015 and 2019.

- Sacramento also saw major increases in rental rates during this time. From January 2017 to April 2019, for example, the median rent in Sacramento rose 14 percent, compared to a five percent (5%) increase nationally. More recently, rents have continued to increase throughout much of the West Coast as well as in Sacramento County. Between March of 2020 through November 2021 the average rent increased 20 percent in Sacramento

[78] Housing affordability generally refers to the ratio of housing costs to income; which is often calculated by comparing median income levels to median housing costs. Households that spend more than 30% on these costs are designated as burdened renters. Researchers have found that community measures of housing affordability (i.e., the percent of burdened renters in a community) to be one of the strongest and consistent predictors of community-levels of homelessness. See for example: Byrne, Thomas, Ellen A. Munley, Jamison D. Fargo, Ann E. Montgomery, and Dennis P. Culhane (2013)."New perspectives on community-level determinants of homelessness." Journal of Urban Affairs, 35 (5): 607-625.

[79] These three rental markets included San Jose (median rent of $3,318 per month in 2020), San Francisco ($3,150), Los Angeles ($2,614). Residents in these three metropolitan areas not only report some of the highest ratios of rent to income in the country (e.g., in Los Angeles the median rent represents 44% of the median income), but these communities represented the largest share of Californians experiencing homelessness (a combined 74,000 residents in these metro areas experience homelessness on any given night)

County.[80] The median rent for a one-bedroom apartment currently is $1,402 and $1,837 for a two-bedroom.

- A number of recent studies highlight that a large share of households in California cannot find housing they can afford. The average price for a house in California is 2.5 times the national average, making homeownership inaccessible to many Californians. Rents are also 50 percent higher in California than the rest of the country. An estimated 55 percent of renters in the state spend more than 30 percent of their total household income on housing (excluding the cost of utilities). In addition, nearly 30 percent of renters in California spend over 50 percent of their income on rent (i.e., 30 percent of households in California are what HUD describes as "severely rent burdened").

- While production of housing and rental units is increasing in the state, much of the growth has been in the sector of single-family homes and higher end rental properties. Economists note that the overall share of *low-cost* rental units has declined substantially during the last three decades. A recent study suggests that there is a severe shortage of affordable housing options for low-income households in Sacramento County; the region needs an additional 78,000 affordable housing units to meet the needs of low-income households in the county.[81]

Though individuals can fall into homelessness due to a variety of personal challenges--which can include mental illness and substance use disorders --research shows that these challenges worsen and become more difficult to manage in communities with a worsening affordable housing crisis. Additionally, individuals who have a disability or geriatric condition often live on a fixed income and are particularly vulnerable to experiencing homelessness when rents quickly increase. Moreover, individuals are simply more likely to struggle to maintain housing stability and to recover from homelessness when the availability of affordable housing units is severely restricted.

In sum, the lack of affordable housing is likely to be a primary driver of increasing homelessness rates in Sacramento and across the West Coast more broadly. While a number of promising state and local initiatives to increase affordable housing have been recently proposed (e.g., substantial state investment for affordable housing developments, conversion of state and private office space into housing, etc.), the homeless crisis is likely to continue, and worsen, until housing affordability is effectively addressed in Sacramento County.

[80] Xu, J. & Hale, D. (2022). December Rental Data: Rents Surged by 10.1% in 2021. *Realtor.com* Retrieved from https://www.realtor.com/research/december-2021-rent/

[81] National Low Income Housing Coalition. (2022) *The Gap: The shortage of affordable homes.* Retrieved from https://nlihc.org/gap

While the homeless crisis in California and Sacramento County predates the pandemic, changes to public policies during the last two years changed the landscape of homelessness and intervention in our community. As discussed throughout this report, it seems unlikely that the pandemic in of itself contributed to the increase of homelessness observed in the Sacramento 2022 Count--though the full economic impacts of the pandemic remain to be seen and will likely be ongoing for some time. Nonetheless, specific policies enacted during the pandemic--both at the national and local levels--have undoubtedly shaped the homeless crisis in Sacramento County.

- Changes in public health guidelines during the pandemic likely contributed to an increased visibility of encampments, and homelessness more broadly. In March of 2020, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) issued explicit guidelines for jurisdictions to avoid "clearing out encampments" in an effort to reduce the dispersion of marginalized individuals from healthcare providers during the pandemic as well as to reduce the community spread of COVID-19. While some encampment clearings continued during the last two years, anecdotal reports from community members also indicate that many encampments became larger and more embedded in specific locations. Also, decreased flows of traffic, and use of public space, in some downtown areas, when most business and public sectors transitioned to telework arrangements, likely contributed to individuals relocating encampments to more visible areas of the community. During the 2022 Count, tent and vehicle encampments were notably larger and more accessible for volunteers to identify than in previous years. In addition, the survey data collected suggest that long term homeless individuals who may have been camped in more remote and rural areas of the county have congregated closer to population centers in Sacramento County where they were more likely to be counted and interviewed.

- During the pandemic, the CDC also encouraged communities to shelter unhoused individuals in "non-congregate" settings to reduce the spread of Covid. As a response to these guidelines, counties across California launched Project Roomkey, an ambitious initiative to shelter vulnerable individuals in unused hotel/motel rooms during the pandemic. While the practice of leasing motel/hotel rooms to shelter individuals and households is not a new strategy, particularly in Sacramento County, Project Roomkey substantially increased the scale of this approach to "non-congregate shelters" across the state; an estimated 50,000 Californians have been sheltered in hotel/motel rooms

since the start of the pandemic.[82] These and similar policies substantially increased the shelter capacity in Sacramento County during the pandemic, as evidenced by the 62% increase in the number of shelter beds available between the 2019 and 2022 PIT Counts. As discussed in the report, this increased capacity is why the unsheltered rate of homelessness remained essentially the same as in 2019 (72% vs. 70%), despite the overall 67 percent increase in homelessness. Moreover, analysis of who was sheltered in hotels/motels during the night of the 2022 Count suggests that some of the most vulnerable adults experiencing chronic homelessness in Sacramento County were targeted and benefited from these non-congregate shelter arrangements. Many more chronically homeless individuals were sheltered in 2022 than in 2019 and many of these individuals have likely resided in these hotel/motel rooms for relatively long periods of time and stability. This is particularly notable given the challenges of engaging chronically homeless individuals[83]. Moreover, the broader use of hotel/motels by providers in Sacramento County also included some programs that intentionally targeted families with children, households that greatly benefited from these policies as well--many more families experiencing homelessness during the count were sheltered in a hotel/motel room than in 2019.

- A recent report by HUD suggests that various policies to assist families and individuals during the pandemic (i.e., rental assistance, eviction moratorium, tax credits, extension of unemployment benefits) likely contributed to a large decrease in family homelessness reported across the US. Moreover, a number of communities reported to HUD a substantial decrease in the number of new families/households entering their local shelter systems for the first time between 2020 and 2021. These trends were also present in Sacramento County; the 2022 PIT revealed a smaller proportion of individuals/households reporting that they had become homeless in the last two years and a recent analysis of the Sacramento Homeless Management Information System also suggests that the number of new clients is significantly lower than in previous years. These patterns are consistent with an interpretation that these various mitigation strategies, particularly around emergency rental assistance and eviction prevention implemented and increased at the local level, reduced the number of households from falling into homelessness during the past two years.

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[82] https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4521

[83] Because of the emphasis to shelter health-compromised individuals, many of these hotel/motel programs functioned as low barrier shelters, requiring minimal entry requirements. Some also offered clients extended lengths of stay. These conditions likely contributed to some clients who have been reluctant to use shelter to be more engaged with services.

In sum, while some pandemic policies may have increased the visibility of homelessness, others likely prevented the crisis from becoming even worse than it is currently. Nonetheless, it is important to note that many of these policy interventions were temporary and have been gradually phasing out during the last year. The large-scale use of hotel/motel rooms as non-congregate shelters remains uncertain and may discontinue in the future. Similarly, it is not clear if eviction prevention and assistance programs will continue to be implemented at the levels they were in the past two years. Consequently, there is a possibility that Sacramento will begin to see increases in new households falling into homelessness in the coming year--particularly as rents continue to increase at their current rates. Notably, the 2022 Count revealed a larger percentage of respondents becoming homeless in the last year, than in 2020. Some researchers estimate that impacts of a post-pandemic economic recession could lead to a 68 percent increase in homelessness in California during the next two years.[84]

Policy Implications

Given the above findings, and unique context described above, the authors of this report encourage policy makers and stakeholders in Sacramento County to consider some of the policy implications of 2022 PIT Count.

Shortage of permanent supportive housing in Sacramento County

The 2022 findings that there is a large and growing number of chronically homeless individuals in Sacramento County highlights the need to redouble efforts to scale and increase permanent supportive housing (PSH) programs in our community. Many of the individuals struggling with a disability and homelessness, including those staying in hotels/motels, are unlikely to transition into stable housing independently and be successful over time without the type of ongoing support that PSH programs are designed to provide. While there are a number of high-quality PSH programs in Sacramento County, there are too few units to address the level of need indicated in this report. Most of the approximately 3,700 PSH units in Sacramento County are already occupied by residents who were previously homeless.

Notably, California's new Project Homekey program provides unprecedented levels of funding to help communities convert motels/hotels into PSH programs; $800 million in new funding was provided in 2021-2022 and up to $1.5 billion may be available in 2022-2023. Leveraging some

[84]Flaming, D., Orlando, A., Burns, P., & Pickens, S. (2021). Locked out: unemployment and homelessness in the COVID economy. *Economic Roundtable*, Retrieved from https://economicrt.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Locked-Out.pdf

of this funding, Sacramento County has already converted and redeveloped 331 new PSH units in the past year. Authors of this report encourage local leaders to continue identifying existing motels and/or underutilized building spaces to be converted into PSH programs using Project Homekey and other funding sources.

Beyond creating more PSH programs, the Sacramento CoC should also explore ways to maximize the capacity of existing programs. This includes examining whether some current and long term PSH residents may be ready and interested to transition into lower levels of support by moving into subsidized housing; thereby opening up units for individuals currently homeless and waiting for housing. As part of its priority to end homelessness, HUD encourages communities to explore various transitional strategies for clients in PSH programs who may no longer need or want the intensive services offered in these types of programs but would likely benefit from continued rental assistance and/or subsidized housing. While It is important to recognize that some long term residents in PSH programs will need life-long assistance and should not transition out of supportive housing, others may be ready for lower levels of assistance. Identifying and transitioning some residents into subsidized housing will help narrow the gap between the capacity of PSH programs in Sacramento and the level of need in the community.

Strategies to mitigate the risks of unsheltered homelessness

Individuals experiencing prolonged periods of homelessness undoubtedly face risks to well-being and safety—risks of harms that often worsen over time the longer individuals remain unsheltered. Findings from the 2022 PIT Count indicate that a greater proportion of unsheltered adults are reporting significantly more health conditions and impairment than previous levels. Moreover, the longer an individual has been living unsheltered, the more reluctant and wary they may be to engage with assistance and housing programs. Individuals experiencing long bouts of homelessness will remain a reality for some time in Sacramento County. Consequently, more and ongoing direct interventions with individuals living in large encampments will be needed in the coming year. This includes the deployment of integrative outreach teams, street medicine programs, and other interventions that bring services directly to where individuals are currently residing (as opposed to requiring individuals to seek out and navigate these services themselves). Moreover, continued investments in hotel/motel shelter programs, as well as other low barrier shelter programs like Navigation Centers, can help provide some chronically homeless individuals a basis of stability, and respite from the daily challenges, from which they can begin their engagement with services and eventual transition into housing.

Listening to the voices of the unhoused and their daily needs

Given the persistently high rate of unsheltered homelessness in Sacramento County, and in the context of a gap in shelter beds to meet the need, we also anticipate growing tensions in the community over the issue of encampments, individuals sleeping in parked vehicles, and the use of public spaces more generally. We recommend that local leaders give careful consideration about how to appropriately and humanely protect the rights and safety of those who are living outdoors while also addressing other citizen concerns related to sanitation and public safety. Our community needs to address these goals simultaneously and avoid excluding individuals experiencing homelessness as legitimate members of the community. As we heard from various individuals interviewed on the street, people experiencing homelessness often feel " invisible," "ignored," and "looked down upon," when local policymakers and the broader public discuss and debate new programs and policies addressing homelessness. Authors of this report encourage local leaders to consider the perspectives and voices of the very people that should be at the center of these conversations.

We also encourage leaders to consider some of the policy suggestions made by respondents in the unsheltered survey; one notable suggestion was establishing more designated spaces where individuals can securely set up an encampment or park their vehicles (i.e., safe parking programs). As respondents discussed, it is important that these spaces have access to basic amenities (e.g., restrooms, water), are securely monitored, but are also centrally located to nearby community resources. These arrangements do not "solve homelessness" directly, as some individuals themselves attest, but they can mitigate the immediate risks and dangers that individuals and families face every night while homeless. They also allow service providers to provide more consistent assistance and healthcare services, which can contribute to helping individuals eventually transition into housing.

Growing need for more preventative and rehousing strategies in the future. If our community enters an economic recession, Sacramento County should anticipate a substantial increase in new households falling into homelessness during the next two years. Some economic forecasts suggest that homelessness will continue to rise and peak until the end of 2023 in California.[85] Previous programs associated with rental assistance, the child tax credit, and expansion of unemployment insurance, likely assisted many households to avoid homelessness during the pandemic. However, without these types of assistance programs in place, and at the same scale as before, it is likely that many households, particularly families with children, will struggle to manage increasing housing costs. Preventative measures, such as providing emergency and

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[85] See footnote 73.

flexible subsidies, or rapid rehousing assistance, to individuals and households struggling with housing insecurity will likely need to be significantly increased in the near future in Sacramento County. Preventing individuals and families from falling into homelessness has various long term benefits for the specific individuals, as well as the community more broadly.

The authors of this report acknowledge that some of the policy implications discussed above are not unknown to many local policymakers, and that some of the direct suggestions we described are already being deliberated and implemented at the local level. Indeed, much of what has been discussed already aligns with the *Sacramento Local Homeless Action Plan* recently developed and being certified by key stakeholders of the Sacramento CoC. We encourage community members not familiar with the Sacramento Local Homeless Action Plan to learn about the five core strategies and specific action steps that the Sacramento CoC and its local partners are planning to undertake during these next five years to address homelessness in our community.[86]

Research Recommendations

Finally, the authors of this report suggest the following considerations for further research into homelessness in Sacramento County.

Leverage existing service data to track entries and exits from homelessness
While the PIT Count provides important insights into the experiences and challenges of people sleeping outside, it is not the only data source that stakeholders can leverage to understand trends in homelessness in Sacramento County. For example, SSF currently publishes a regularly updated online dashboard that presents data trends from their Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). This service database compiles information from various housing and outreach programs participating in the Sacramento CoC and is a rich data source on clients engaging in programs each month. Indeed, SSF recently analyzed HMIS data, as well as other data sources, to conduct a Systems Gaps Analysis to identify and calibrate specific strategies Local Homeless Action Plans. Because the PIT Count is a resource-intensive activity, requiring several months of planning and coordination, the authors of this report encourage stakeholders to consider using these types of data sources and analyses more regularly to make data-informed decisions regarding strategies and policies. The dynamics of homelessness change over time and there are seasonal periods throughout the year when more or fewer people may be engaging with services. One particular indicator we recommend to track in the next year will be

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[86]To view the Sacramento Local Homeless Action Plan, please visit the Sacramento Steps Forward website: https://sacramentostepsforward.org/2022-sacramento-local-homeless-action-plan

the number of new clients that engage the Sacramento CoC seeking assistance. Monitoring these trends will help stakeholders understand when homelessness may be increasing in Sacramento County and when adjustment of strategies and policies may be needed. Moreover, the state of California has recently launched its own service data dashboard (called the Homeless Data Integration System-HDIS) which pools together HMIS data from communities across the state. Local stakeholders should leverage the HDIS to provide comparative context, and broader interpretation of the various service trends that might emerge in Sacramento County during the next two years.

It is important to recognize, however, that the HMIS database (as well as the broader HDIS) only includes individuals who engage with services and programs and is as such an incomplete representation of all people experiencing homelessness in a community. Many people experiencing homelessness, for example, do not access any services. And those that do may not engage with services consistently. And so it is important to know and recognize the limitations, scope, and strengths of any data source.[87] Moreover, in our experience as researchers working with HMIS data from various communities we know that these types of data sources can have significant data quality issues (e.g., incomplete data, missing outcome observations, data censoring, inconsistent integration of field etc.) Consequently, we recommend that Sacramento CoC continue to make continual investments into improving the integration and data quality of HMIS. We also recommend exploring ways to integrate and coordinate these efforts with the biennial PIT Count.

Conducting additional research into the increase in homelessness in Sacramento

The net increase in the total number of individuals experiencing homelessness indicated by the 2022 PIT Count (representing an additional 3,708 individuals) is difficult to interpret in light of the findings that a relatively small proportion of individuals reported first becoming homeless in the last two years. This substantial increase could reflect three interrelated dynamics that are difficult to decipher with the current data and require additional research. First, there could have been an increase in the number of people falling into homelessness the year before the pandemic, which our surveys suggest but cannot definitively indicate.[88] A second, different factor

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[87] While service data may not be representative of all individuals in need of these services in a community, they can provide insights into general trends with respect to the number and demographics of people seeking assistance on any given month, the type of assistance that they received, and ultimately the number of people and households that transition into housing.

[88] It is important to note the survey patterns discussed above are only suggestive evidence that the pandemic may have temporarily reduced the rate of new homelessness in Sacramento (or made it more difficult for some people to exit homelessness). Because the unsheltered survey data is a cross sectional "snapshot" of a group of people at one point-in-time, it cannot accurately track respondents who may

could be an increased visibility of homelessness which improved the accuracy of the 2022 PIT Count; because there are now larger encampments nearer populated areas, volunteers were able to access some chronically homeless individuals otherwise missed/undercounted in previous years. Finally, an increase in the number of people currently homeless could also reflect a notable decrease in the number of people exiting from homelessness during the last several years (fewer people recovering from homelessness than typical). Because these dynamics are not mutually exclusive (i.e., they could all be true) and all are consistent with the 2022 PIT Count, additional research is needed into these issues.

In sum, it is important that researchers, along with stakeholders, continually strive to improve the scope and breadth of information about the various factors and dynamics underpinning the unprecedented rise in homelessness in our community. While findings from the 2022 Count highlight somber findings, we believe it is only by confronting these difficult realities, with honest and accurate information, that we as a community can address them effectively.

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have entered and exited homelessness when the survey was not administered. There is the possibility, for example, that individuals who became homeless in the last two years recovered more quickly and are therefore underrepresented in the 2022 estimates. Additional analyses using data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) could likely track more clearly whether new homelessness and exits in fact decreased during the pandemic

Appendix A: 2022 Count Methodology

Per HUD requirements, the PIT Count is technically a *census* of all individuals within the geography of a CoC (in this case, Sacramento County) experiencing homelessness during a single night. Accordingly, CoCs are required to account for all individuals residing in emergency shelters or transitional housing on the night of the PIT (i.e., the sheltered count). In addition, CoCs are responsible for conducting a robust canvassing of all areas where those experiencing unsheltered homeless are likely to be sleeping (i.e., the unsheltered count). As in previous years, the canvasing portion of the 2022 PIT Count employed a "known location" sampling methodology (also known as the known location strategy), which is a HUD recommended procedure most commonly used in urban areas. HUD recommends that CoCs commission researchers trained in survey and sampling methods to use information collected from HMIS, surveys, and canvassing reports, to calculate demographic estimates of particular homeless subpopulations in their community (e.g., the number of homeless families, veterans and chronically homeless, and the respective composition of each group in terms of race, gender and age). Below, we provide a general overview of this research process, starting first with how the sheltered count was conducted and then elaborating on the methodologies used by the Sacramento State team for estimating the unsheltered count.

Estimating Sheltered Homelessness

The sheltered portion of the homeless count is typically accomplished by aggregating data from HMIS[89]--essentially a service and client database which SSF coordinates for all HUD-funded and county-funded homeless service providers. For the 2022 Count, SSF compiled and analyzed HMIS records of all individuals accessing shelter/transitional housing on the night of February 23, 2022. This data captures demographic information for persons and households residing in a shelter or transitional housing on the night of the count, as well as includes individuals' homelessness and service histories. Because some individuals and households have missing data elements in HMIS (e.g., some individuals may prefer to not report their race or gender), HUD recommends that CoCs use a specific extrapolation data tool, available on its technical assistance website, to calculate complete demographic counts for every sheltered person. This tool essentially uses available information from records with complete entries for a specific data field (e.g., gender) to extrapolate counts for records with incomplete entries. HUD states that these

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[89] As a reminder, HMIS stands for Homeless Management Information System

extrapolated counts are calculated within a reasonable degree of statistical certainty as long as data fields have at least 80 percent complete data.

It should be noted that because not all programs serving individuals experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County provide data to HMIS, SSF also does a follow-up survey of these programs, after the Count, to compile aggregate counts of individuals who were served in non-HMIS programs the night of the 2022 Count. This information was combined with HMIS data and imputed into the extrapolation tool to calculate the total sheltered count and associated demographics.

Estimating Unsheltered Homelessness

The Sacramento State team uses a combination of fielding and survey methodologies recommended by HUD to estimate the number of persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness (those sleeping outside of a shelter) on the night of the count. The process can be generally described in five components.

1. Identifying known locations and establishing a sampling frame
2. Sampling areas to canvas and establishing walking routes
3. Collecting information via canvassing reports and surveys
4. Additional efforts to collect data in challenging situations
5. Calculating count estimate and survey weights

Identifying known locations and establishing a sampling frame

In the two months prior to the 2022 PIT, SSF worked with various community stakeholders to identify "known areas," locations where individuals experiencing homelessness are likely sleeping during the night. In total, SSF provided the Sacramento Team detailed geospatial mapping data on over 2,000 locations either as addresses or geocoordinates where homeless encampments, sleeping bags, or sleeping individuals had been spotted. In addition to knowledgeable stakeholder data, this information also included summarized 311 and 211 call data which tracked service requests from the community related to homelessness (e.g., calls about encampments, noise violation but also calls requesting information about homeless assistance). Combining all information allowed the Sacrament State team to plot all points of reported homeless activity on a map. "In the next stage of the process, specific search zones of approximately ¼ square miles were drawn in such a way that the total area of all zones combined

enclosed all identified points within the minimum number of zones. In total, 242- zones were identified as eligible for sampling.

It should be noted that Sacramento County comprises approximately 965 square miles (excluding the approximate 30 square miles of lakes, rivers and other bodies of water).Given the logistical challenges of canvassing all areas of a county, HUD allows CoCs to limit their sampling frames if they can articulate a rationale for excluding areas that are "extremely unlikely" to find anyone experiencing unsheltered homelessness during the time of the count, such as remoteness and population density. Similar to previous years, the 2022 Count excluded remote areas of the county with low population density where reports of homelessness are near nonexistent. Our exclusion criteria lead to the exclusion of approximately 500 square miles. Accordingly, the sampling frame of the 2022 Count included all 242 zones, located within a 465 miles area of Sacramento County.

Sampling areas to canvas and establishing walking routes

HUD recommends that large CoCs leverage some type of sampling strategy when there are insufficient volunteers to canvas every area in their jurisdiction where individuals experiencing homelessness are likely residing. Sampling in the context of the PIT Count generally means collecting information from a select set of zones (i.e., conducting visual counts and surveys of individuals experiencing homelessness within a specific area), and using that information to estimate the number and demographics of individuals that were likely missed in areas that were not canvassed. In preparation for sampling, the Sacramento State team classified the 242 pre-identified zones, described above, into two sampling tiers: 1) anticipated high-count zones that would be completely canvassed (i.e., census sampled), and 2) anticipated medium-count zones that would be randomly sampled[90] for extrapolation purposes.[91]

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[90] Unlike the PIT count in 2019, this was a pure random sample, not a geographically stratified random sample. Both pure random and stratified samples are expected to give, on average, the same point estimate. The main difference is that geographically stratified sampling can lead to less statistical uncertainty as long as 1) the geography can be divided into heterogeneous segments, and 2) there are enough canvassing teams deployed to each segment to negate the statistical uncertainty associated with the smaller sample sizes. Given the uncertainty of volunteer recruiting during the pandemic, the researchers did not believe the second condition could be fulfilled so a pure random sample was used instead.

[91] The reason for attempting to do a full census in the zones with the most expected homelessness as opposed to randomly selecting these zones is that it leads to a smaller extrapolated population while not necessarily increasing statistical uncertainty.

Zones classified into the first tier included the following regions:

- 35 zones with reports of high homeless density – The research team assigned zones for census sampling if community reports indicated an anticipated high-count of 25 or more people experiencing homelessness in the zone. Zones were also designated as high-count zones if they were associated with nine (9) or more separate reports in the last three months.

- All 24 "Downtown" zones – A review of past PIT Counts indicates that City of Sacramento's downtown area is completely canvassed every cycle. The research team decided to continue this practice of doing a complete census sampling of these zones given the high levels of reports associated with this region, as well as the fact that doing so allows for direct comparisons of the changes in this area across time.

- 7 "American River Parkway" zones within the City of Sacramento – Information from various sources in the community suggested that many unsheltered individuals, and large encampments more generally, currently reside within specific segments of the American River Parkway. The research team identified seven high-count zones along the American River North of Sacramento's Downtown area and South of South Natomas associated with approximately 80 percent of reported activities from community members.

The remaining 176 zones in the sampling frame were designated for random selection. Based on the anticipated number of volunteers, the research team randomly selected 77 out of the 176 zones in this tier for canvassing.

In total, 143 zones were ultimately selected for canvassing (66 for census sampling and 77 for random sampling). The research team next examined each selected zone carefully and designed suggested walking routes for volunteers to follow on the deployment nights of the count. Walking routes were approximately 2.5 miles long and were designed to bring canvassing teams to all of the known locations and encampments previously reported by community members. Based on feedback from SSF, the Sacramento State team attempted to provide as much visual detail as possible in maps and direction to help volunteer teams navigate their respective location and sufficiently and efficiently to cover the sampled areas.

Collecting information via canvassing reports and surveys

In the month preceding the 2022 PIT Count, SSF staff conducted a series of online training workshops for all community members and outreach staff who volunteered for the event. While this training covered a number of logistical areas and topics (e.g., scheduling, how to download

and use the smartphone application etc.) it also summarized the two data collection efforts that volunteers would be conducting during their deployments; reporting visual counts and conducting in-person surveys. Both pieces of information were collected via a new smartphone platform, developed and managed this year by a third-party vendor called Outreach Grid. The Outreach Grid platform provided separate reporting functions for recording visual counts and collecting surveys.

With respect to visual counts, volunteers and outreach staff were trained to the reporting standards set by HUD for enumerating individuals likely experiencing homelessness as well as sleeping structures likely being used for shelter (e.g., vehicles, tents, etc.). For example, volunteers were trained to examine parked vehicles for clues of habitation such as: a vehicle with a running engine and windows partially open or fogged over, a high level of personal items visible through the windows, and other signs. If individuals were present either in the vehicle or within proximity of a tent, volunteers were asked to report the approximate number of people observed. The Outreach Grid platform also allowed volunteers to record the number of people, tents and vehicles present in a specific location, as well as record their assessment of whether tents and vehicles appeared recently used or abandoned. The count reports also allowed volunteers to record general demographic information of people that they encountered (whether individuals appeared to be in groups/households as well as their approximate ages).

With respect to the demographic survey, volunteers were trained on a survey instrument that largely aligned with the tool established by HUD. Generally speaking, this standard instrument includes questions about respondents' sleeping arrangement for that specific night, their household composition, as well as their age, gender, and ethic-racial identity. The HUD tool also asks individuals about their current and recent experiences with homelessness, as well as specific challenges and conditions that may have contributed to their experiences with homelessness (e.g., a severe health condition, physical disability). As we discuss below, demographic survey responses were later combined with the count data to create statistical weights for each survey, which accounted for the location and type of sleeping arrangement reported by individuals (i.e., inverse probability weights). These weights were then used to estimate the population parameters of specific groups required by HUD (e.g., demographics of single-adults, households with children, veterans, etc.)

As discussed in the first section of this report, the research team worked closely with the PIT Committee this year to also develop additional survey questions that community members were interested to explore. Some of these questions were originally developed in 2019 and were redeployed in 2022 per the Committee's recommendations (such as questions about individuals'

sexual orientation, and their residency in Sacramento County), while a number of new questions were also developed this year (such as questions about encampments).

Approximately 500 volunteers were ultimately trained and deployed across all 143 sampled zones. At each zone, volunteers used the Outreach Grid platform to record visual reports of individuals and sleeping structures that they encountered as they followed the canvassing route. In addition, volunteers were asked to randomly approach between five to ten individuals during their route and deploy the survey instrument. Volunteers were trained to read a standard statement, which introduced the purpose and structure of the survey, as well as asked for individuals' verbal consent to participate. Individuals who agreed to participate were given a $10 incentive (Subway card) irrespective if they skipped some questions and/or decided to end the survey early. Surveys were designed to take approximately seven to ten minutes to deploy.

To maximize volunteer resources, and in accordance with HUD guidelines, the research team scheduled deployments of canvassing teams over two nights (February 23rd and February 24th) and across distinct geographies of Sacramento County (to avoid the risk of double counting). Specifically, volunteers were deployed to 90 canvassing zones throughout the Northern and Eastern regions of Sacramento County on the night of February 23rd. On the following night (February 24th), teams were deployed to 46 zones in the Southern region of the county.

Additional efforts to collect data in challenging situations

Volunteers were trained not to approach individuals to do a survey under three general situations: 1) individuals were inside a tent; 2) individuals/households were using a vehicle as shelter, 3) people were residing at large encampments (clusters of four or more tents). Because it was known that tent and vehicle encampments were much more present in 2022 than in previous years, the research team anticipated that some canvassing groups would collect a low-number of surveys (i.e., given the protocol not to collect surveys in the three situations described above). To address the anticipated shortfall of surveys, as well as to address the biased survey sampling that would result if respondents in tents and vehicles were not systematically interviewed, SSF and the research team developed a follow-up survey sampling strategy, in which ten encampment sites would be revisited in the week following the night count portion of the 2022 PIT Count. Specifically, the research team used the count data collected by community volunteers on February 23rd and 24th to verify and identify a sampling frame of medium-to-large tent and vehicle encampments throughout the county. From this dataset of verified encampments, the research team sampled a total of ten encampment clusters for a team of professional outreach staff to later visit and survey during the day (and within ten days of the

night counts).[92] Outreach teams visited these encampments and were asked to collect at least ten interviews from each site. Surveys were collected at these locations based on the assumption that individuals residing in a large encampment during the day had likely been homeless on the night of the count and were at that same location--which the survey verified. These additional surveys collected at encampments sites not only ensured a more representative sample of survey respondents, but it also allowed the outreach team to collect more accurate count information on the number of people residing in tents and vehicles.[93]

This year, SSF and the research team, in consultation with the PIT Committee, decided to also conduct day counts in remote locations where it would be particularly difficult to navigate during the night. These included zones within the American River Parkway, as well as specific county roads in remote areas; the research team assumed that these locations are so remote that it would have been unlikely that individuals encountered in the zones would have been in other areas and double counted during the night counts. Similar to the survey sampling discussed above, these day counts were conducted by professional outreach teams.

Finally, it should be noted that in addition to the above, SSF also coordinated special efforts to collect surveys from groups that are often underrepresented in PIT Counts. Per HUD guidelines, SSF worked with service providers that work with families with children, as well as those that work with transitional age youth, to collect surveys in the morning after the night count (what HUD describes as service-based or site-based data collection). Parents dropping off their children at a school for homelessness families, for example, were approached to do the survey, which specifically asked respondents where they had spent the night of February 23rd. A similar approach was undertaken at an organization that provides drop-in services to transitional age youth. In addition, liaisons at a K-12 school created and distributed a flyer to students/parents describing the PIT survey; the flier contained a call-in number in which parents and students could call to do the survey over the phone. It should be noted that these additional surveys did not contribute to a higher count (as these individuals could have been doubled counted) but were instead used to refine the demographic estimates of specific groups.

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[92] It should be noted that in some large urban CoCs collect counts and surveys at different time points, which HUD allows as long as the two data sources are collected within a two week period

[93] Because it is not always feasible to accurately count the number of individuals residing in tents or vehicles, HUD recommends that professional outreach teams be used to interview individuals in a random sample of vehicles and tents, to determine an accurate statistical weight (average count) that can be applied to all tents and vehicles enumerated. Using this method, the average persons per tent was calculated as 1.87 and the average persons per vehicle was 1.73. These numbers were subsequently substituted into any tents and vehicles respectively when an exact count was not available. If a tent or vehicle was found to be abandoned a zero count was designated)

Calculating count estimate and survey weights

After all fielding data had been collected (including datasets for count report and surveys), the research team spent several weeks processing, cleaning and validating the different datasets downloaded from the Outreach Gird platform. This included assessing the integrity of the data and filtering out data duplication (either caused by data entry issues, interviews with the same individuals by different teams, or download issues). Next the research team analyzed the distribution of counts within the random sample of zones, to estimate the number of individuals, tents, and vehicles likely missed in the 99 zones not sampled/canvassed during the various deployments of volunteers and outreach workers. Because zone selection was based on a simple random sample, the extrapolated number for these zones was determined by equating the mean in the unvisited zones to the mean of the visited zones. Using this methodology, led us to extrapolate that 1,720 people were experiencing homelessness in these unvisited zones.

The research team then spent several weeks combining the count and survey data to establish statistical weights (inverse probability weights) by which population parameters could be eventually estimated. In short, weights account for the fact that not every person experiencing homelessness was surveyed, and allow researchers to approximate the responses of 6,664 experiencing unsheltered homelessness on the night of the count. Surveys were compared to the overall count data in terms of sleep locations (tent, vehicle, other) and family structure (singles and multi-person families) to account for the different probabilities that individuals in these varying situations had of being approached to do the survey. Ultimately, each survey was given a weight ranging from 9 to 25 in order to achieve better representativeness. All analyses based on the survey information utilized these weights.

Appendix B: 2022 Data Tables

Total Households and Persons

	Sheltered			Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional	Total		
Total Number of Households	1,486	430	1,916	5,586	**7,502**
Total Number of Persons	1,979	635	2,614	6,664	**9,278**
Number of Children (under age 18)	380	182	562	216	**778**
Number of Young Adults (18 to 24)	133	130	263	373	**636**
Number of Older Adults (over age 24)	1,466	323	1,789	6,075	**7,864**
Gender					
Female	956	262	1,218	1,806	**3,024**
Male	1,001	358	1,359	4,691	**6,050**
Transgender	11	10	21	95	**116**
Gender Non-Conforming	11	5	16	72	**88**
Ethnicity					
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	1,589	498	2,087	5,344	**7,431**
Hispanic/Latino	390	137	527	1,320	**1,847**
Race					
White	938	272	1,210	3,101	**4,311**
Black or African-American	755	275	1,030	1,870	**2,900**
Asian	51	7	58	167	**225**
American Indian or Alaska Native	48	16	64	614	**678**
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	40	6	46	117	**163**
Multiple Races	147	59	206	795	**1,001**
Chronic Homelessness					
Total number of persons	940	-	940	3,374	**4,314**

Persons in Household with at Least One Adult and One Child

	Sheltered			Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional	Total		
Total Number of Households	193	93	286	134	**420**
Total Number of Persons	617	288	905	472	**1,377**
Number of Children (under age 18)	370	177	547	198	**745**
Number of Young Adults (18 to 24)	35	30	65	51	**116**
Number of Older Adults (over age 24)	212	81	293	223	**516**
Gender					
Female	386	184	570	258	**828**
Male	231	104	335	214	**549**
Transgender	-	-	-	-	**-**
Gender Non-Conforming	-	-	-	-	**-**
Ethnicity					
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	445	205	650	439	**1,089**
Hispanic/Latino	172	83	255	33	**288**
Race					
White	209	82	291	238	**529**
Black or African-American	288	145	433	162	**595**
Asian	22	4	26	-	**26**
American Indian or Alaska Native	11	8	19	72	**91**
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	13	2	15	-	**15**
Multiple Races	74	47	121	-	**121**
Chronic Homelessness					
Total number of persons	147	-	147	212	**359**

Persons in Household Without Children

	Sheltered			Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional	Total		
Total Number of Households	1,284	332	1,616	5,443	**7,059**
Total Number of Persons	1,352	342	1,694	6,174	**7,868**
Number of Children (under age 18)	-	-	-	-	**-**
Number of Young Adults (18 to 24)	98	100	198	322	**520**
Number of Older Adults (over age 24)	1,254	242	1,496	5,852	**7,348**
Gender					
Female	565	76	641	1,530	**2,171**
Male	766	251	1,017	4,477	**5,494**
Transgender	11	10	21	95	**116**
Gender Non-Conforming	10	5	15	72	**87**
Ethnicity					
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	1,136	288	1,424	4,887	**6,311**
Hispanic/Latino	216	54	270	1,287	**1,557**
Race					
White	724	189	913	2,863	**3,776**
Black or African-American	466	126	592	1,690	**2,282**
Asian	29	3	32	167	**199**
American Indian or Alaska Native	37	8	45	542	**587**
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	27	4	31	117	**148**
Multiple Races	69	12	81	795	**876**
Chronic Homelessness					
Total number of persons	793	-	793	3,114	**3,907**