



**SACRAMENTO
STEPS FORWARD**

Ending Homelessness. Starting Fresh.

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Point in Time Count: Nearly 9,300 Experienced Homelessness on a Single Night

***Chronic individual homelessness rises while rate of
veterans and unsheltered families experiencing homelessness falls***

***New Local Homeless Action Plan identifies coordinated actions and investments
in targeted prevention, diversion & permanent housing solutions***

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The number of people experiencing homelessness on a given night in Sacramento County rose by 67 percent compared to the 2019 Point in Time Count (PIT), according to results released today by Sacramento Steps Forward (SSF), the region's lead agency for coordinating and planning unified community-level efforts to end homelessness.

A total of 9,278 individuals experiencing homelessness were identified on the night of either Feb. 23 or Feb. 24, 2022, 72 percent of whom slept outdoors, not in shelters. This compares to the 2019 overall Point in Time Count of 5,570 people experiencing homelessness. The sheltered count increased 57 percent (from 1,670 to 2,744) and the unsheltered count increased 71 percent (from 3,900 to 6,664). It represents an increase in per capita homelessness, with an estimated 59 out of every 10,000 residents experiencing homelessness on a single night. The proportion of sheltered to unsheltered is similar to the 2019 PIT. As in 2019, those experiencing homelessness largely come from within the Sacramento region.

The report *Homelessness In Sacramento* was prepared by the Division of Social Work and the Center for Health Practice, Policy and Research at the California State University, Sacramento from a census and interviews performed four months ago by over 500 community volunteers who participated in a collective effort to understand the degree of homelessness in the Sacramento region. The PIT count is conducted every two years but due to COVID-19 the 2021 PIT was postponed to 2022.

"Homelessness is a complex issue with no single driver," said Lisa Bates, SSF Chief Executive Director. "However, the extreme housing shortage and lack of affordability is one significant contributor to the

increase in homelessness in California, and Sacramento is emblematic of that. Key to changing the trajectory will be continued work among decision makers to align and coordinate strategies, resources and increased funding for prevention and housing with appropriate levels of service.”

Sacramento’s localities and the Sacramento Continuum of Care (CoC) have continued to increase investments and coordinate resources to address the crisis, including 9,070 individuals obtaining permanent housing between the 2019 and 2022 PIT. Since the last PIT Count, the shelter capacity has increased 57%, providing shelter to 10,459 persons over three years.

The City invests an estimated \$33 million a year for shelter and other services. The City operates approximately 1050 emergency shelter beds and supports a variety of community based organizations that provide housing and shelter programs. Its Department of Community Response works daily to provide those experiencing homelessness with resources and housing options.

The County in the last year alone has allocated \$50 million in addition to its long running programs that address, prevent, or divert homelessness, including targeted help for mental health needs, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, rehousing assistance, sheltering and other programs.

Recently the City of Sacramento, County of Sacramento and CoC approved a combined \$13 million to support development and implementation of a new Coordinated Access System, which will streamline and improve access to resources for people experiencing homelessness.

“Existing investments to address the homeless crisis are having a great impact, and we are well positioned to maximize our ongoing and future unified investments through our regional Local Homeless Action Plan that will focus on preventing homelessness, diversion of those at risk, and increased permanent housing,” said CoC Chair Erin Johansen. The County and CoC Board recently adopted the regional Local Homeless Action Plan. It goes before the Sacramento City Council for adoption this afternoon.

Other key findings of the report are as follows:

- ✓ A total of 1600 tents and 1100 vehicles were identified, four times higher than in 2019. Some 72 percent of all those experiencing homelessness were found in tents, vehicles or other locations not considered suitable for human habitation.
- ✓ The rate of individuals reporting a disability and or being chronically homeless has more than doubled since 2019, with 4,314 individuals reporting high needs and prolonged periods of homelessness. More than 80 percent of those interviewed living outdoors said they had been continuously homeless over a year, up from 56 percent in 2019. And 58 percent of those interviewed indicated they struggled with one or more disabilities or chronic health conditions that impaired their ability to secure employment or housing, up from 40 percent over 2019.
- ✓ While homelessness has risen, in two sectors the rate of homelessness dropped. Veterans’ homelessness decreased by 6 percent, and unsheltered homelessness by families with children was down by 31 percent since the 2019 PIT. Researchers suggest that the federal emergency rental assistance during the pandemic coupled with the advent of additional motel and hotel rooms as non-congregate shelters has contributed to the decline.
- ✓ Blacks/African Americans continued to be disproportionately overrepresented in the county’s homeless population, representing 31 percent of those experiencing homelessness, while

Blacks/African Americans represent 11 percent of the population countywide. American Indian/Alaskan native individuals are also overrepresented, with 7 percent being homeless, while this demographic group represents 2 percent of the county's population.

"Despite challenges of conducting a count during a pandemic, this year's count continues to improve the accuracy of findings and deepened insights into homelessness in Sacramento", said Arturo Baiocchi, Ph.D. Associate Professor at Sacramento State University's Division of Social Work, Center for Health Practice, Policy, and Research."

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