

January 2008 Snapshot of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness in the Richmond Region

Who Have Lived in Subsidized or Public Housing

The following data were collected in Homeward's tenth winter (January 24, 2008) count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in the Richmond region. A total of 920 adults and 153 children were counted. Of the 679 adults surveyed, 24.1% indicated that they have lived in subsidized or public housing. The data reported below describes this population.

- 56.5% of adults are males, 42.0% are females.* Most people are single (64.2%), and some (14.2%) have children in their care.
- A majority of persons report that they are African-American (86.0%), followed by White (8.8%).*
- The average age for adults is 43.21 years.
- 50.4% have a high school education or GED. 18.2% attended some college, and 5.8% have a college degree or higher.
- 14.7% are veterans.*
- The majority (73.9%) served some time in jail and/or prison. Of those serving time in jail and/or prison, 65.7% reported having felony convictions, and 39.2% reported being homeless before incarceration.
- 43.8% experienced domestic violence in their lifetime.* Of those experiencing domestic violence, 14.5% had experienced it in the past month, and 32.7% had experienced it in the past year.
- 43.1% report having a problem with alcohol sometime in their lifetime. Of those reporting a problem with alcohol, 69.5% are currently in recovery.
- 68.8% report having a problem with substance abuse sometime in their lifetime.* Of those reporting a problem, 79.8% are currently in recovery.
- 41.3% report having a mental health problem sometime in their lifetime. Of these, 68.4% are currently being treated and 64.9% are taking medication for mental health problems.
- 42.3% report having a long-term disability.*
- 37.7% are employed. Of those who are employed, 54.9% work full-time, 33.3% work part-time, and 11.8% do day labor or temp work.
- 51.1% of respondents have lived in Greater Richmond for 9 years or more; 42.0% have lived in the area for 17 years or more.
- Most (70.3%) reported having their last housing in Richmond.* Others indicated previous housing in Henrico (6.5%) or Chesterfield (2.9%). 9.4% of respondents last lived elsewhere in Virginia, and 10.9% lived in other states.
- In the past three years, most homeless persons have been homeless once (49.1%) or twice (20.9%); 30.0% have been homeless three or more times during this time period.
- A little more than half (50.5%) of homeless persons have been homeless for 5 months or less.

*Compared to homeless individuals who have not lived in subsidized or public housing, those who have are significantly more likely to: be female, be African-American, have experienced domestic violence, have had a substance abuse problem in their lifetime, have a long-term disability, and report their last permanent residence as Richmond city. Individuals who have lived in subsidized or public housing are significantly less likely to be veterans than those who have not lived in subsidized or public housing.

For more information:

Margot Ackermann, Ph.D. ♦ Research and Evaluation Director
(804)343-2045 x11 ♦ mackermann@homewardva.org

