

January 2008 Snapshot of Veterans

Experiencing Homelessness in the Richmond Region

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, and 73.8% of adults completed Homeward's point-in-time survey. The statistics reported below represent the 146 individuals (22.5% of adults who completed the survey) who indicated that they were veterans.

- 93.8% of veterans are males, 6.2% are females.
- A majority of veterans report that they are African-American (67.6%), followed by White (25.5%) or American Indian or Alaskan Native (2.8%). Hispanics comprised 3.6% of the sample.
- The average age for adult veterans is 48.9 years. Of veterans, 45.3% are of age to have served in combat in Vietnam, 45.3% are of age to have served in combat in the first Gulf War, 46.0% are of age to have served in combat in Afghanistan, and 45.3% are of age to have served in combat in the Iraq War. (*Note: Ages used to calculate whether individuals might have served in a particular war or conflict were 17 – 42, based on the current Army age criteria. It is also important to note that the survey did not include a question about whether individuals had served in combat.*)
- 76.1% were honorably discharged. 9.8% of all discharges were medical.
- 50.7% have a high school education or GED. 34.0% attended some college, and 7.7% have a college degree or higher.
- 77.9% have been to jail and/or prison. Of those serving time in jail and/or prison, 64.3% reported having felony convictions, and 33.3% reported being homeless before incarceration.
- 18.4% have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime. Of those experiencing domestic violence, 8.7% had experienced it in the past month, and 21.7% had experienced it in the past year.
- 59.7% report having a problem with alcohol sometime in their lifetime. Of those reporting a problem with alcohol, 73.8% are currently in recovery.
- 59.0% report having a problem with substance abuse sometime in their lifetime. Of those reporting a problem with substance abuse, 81.9% are currently in recovery.
- 31.5% report having a mental health problem sometime in their lifetime. Of these, 60.0% are currently being treated, and 53.3% are taking medication for mental health problems.
- 34.8% report having a long-term disability.
- 33.8% are employed. Of those who are employed, 48.9% work full-time, 34.0% work part-time, and 17.0% do day labor or temp work.
- 50.4% of respondents have lived in Greater Richmond for 2.5 years or more; 30.2% have lived in the area for 17 years or more.
- Most (47.2%) reported having their last housing in Richmond. Others indicated previous housing in Henrico (6.3%), Chesterfield (5.6%) and Hanover (2.8%). 19.0% of respondents last lived elsewhere in Virginia, and 19.0% lived in other states.
- In the past three years, most homeless veterans have been homeless once (58.1%), twice (15.4%), or three times (15.4%); 11.1% have been homeless more than three times during this time period.
- A little more than half (50.8%) have been homeless for 4 months or less.

For more information:

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* Data gathered at the January 24, 2008, Point in Time Count & Survey. Final report date: June 30, 2008. © Homeward 2008