

# January 2011 Snapshot of Panhandlers

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## Experiencing Homelessness in the Richmond Region

The following data were collected in Homeward's thirteenth winter (January 27, 2011) count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in the Richmond region. A total of 943 adults and 159 children were counted, and 75.2% of adults experiencing homelessness (709 people) completed the Homeward point-in-time survey. The statistics reported below represent the 12.4% of adults who indicated that they had gotten money in the past year from "panhandling or asking strangers for money."

- 84.1% are males, 14.8% are females, and 1.1% are transgender. Most panhandlers (61.4%) are single, never married adults. 1.1% are married, and 38.6% have been in families, including those who are married, as well as those who are separated, widowed, or divorced.
- None reported having children living with them.
- The highest percentage of respondents report that they are African-American (50.0%), followed by White (38.6%).
- The average age for adults is 43.8 years.
- 54.5% have only a high school education or GED. 25.0% attended some college, and 5.6% have a college degree or higher.
- 20.7% are veterans.
- The majority (88.6%) served some time in jail and/or prison. Out of all individuals surveyed (including those who have not served time in jail and/or prison), 44.3% reported serving time in jail, 5.7% reported serving time in prison, and 38.6% indicated that they had served time in both jail and prison. Of those who served time in jail and/or prison, 55.1% indicated that they were homeless when they last went to jail/prison, and 69.2% indicated that they were homeless upon release.
- 38.4% have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime. Of those experiencing domestic violence, 34.4% had experienced it in the past year.
- 67.4% report having a problem with alcohol sometime in their lifetime. Of those reporting a problem with alcohol, 62.1% are currently in recovery.
- 62.8% report having a problem with substance abuse sometime in their lifetime. Of those reporting a problem, 67.9% are currently in recovery.
- 51.1% report having a mental health problem sometime in their lifetime. Of these, 46.7% are currently being treated and 46.7% are taking medication for mental health problems.
- 62.1% report having a long-term disability.
- 9.2% are employed.
- 19.5% have lived in subsidized or public housing.
- 32.2% reported that they have been evicted from a property at which their name was on the lease.
- 52.9% of respondents have lived in Greater Richmond for more than four years; 29.9% have lived in the area for 15 years or more.
- The highest percentage (51.1%) reported having their last housing in Richmond. Others indicated previous housing in Henrico (8.0%), Chesterfield (2.3%), and Hanover (1.1%). 23.9% of respondents last lived elsewhere in Virginia, and 13.6% lived in other states.
- In the past three years, most homeless persons have been homeless once (43.2%) or twice (22.7%); 34.1% have been homeless three or more times during this time period.
- A little more than half (53.0%) of homeless persons have been homeless for eight months or more.

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