

January 2010 Snapshot of Chronically Homeless

Experiencing Homelessness in the Richmond Region

The following data were collected in Homeward's twelfth winter (January 21, 2010) count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in the Richmond region. A total of 881 adults and 131 children were counted, and 77.2% of adults completed the Homeward point-in-time survey. The statistics reported below represent the 71 individuals who met the definition of chronic homelessness. Individuals who are chronically homeless must 1) be unaccompanied by a partner or children 2) have a serious disability 3) not be staying in a transitional shelter and 3) have been homeless at least four times in the past three years or homeless for the past year.

- 88.4% of the chronically homeless are males, 11.6% are females. Most are single, never married adults (51.4%). 48.6% have been in families, including those who are married, as well as those who are widowed, separated, or divorced.
- A majority of the chronically homeless report that they are African-American (63.4%), followed by White (33.8%). 4.5% indicated that they are Hispanic.
- The average age for chronically homeless adults is 46.8 years.
- 55.1% have only a high school education or GED. 15.9% attended some college, and 4.3% have a college degree or higher.
- 24.3% are veterans.
- 85.2% have been to jail and/or prison. Of those serving time in jail and/or prison, 74.5% reported having felony convictions, and 66.0% reported being homeless before incarceration.
- 39.3% have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime. Of those experiencing domestic violence, 34.8% had experienced it in the past year.
- 82.0% report having a problem with alcohol sometime in their lifetime. Of those reporting a problem with alcohol, 81.6% are currently in recovery.
- 72.6% report having a problem with substance abuse sometime in their lifetime. Of those reporting a substance abuse problem, 84.4% are currently in recovery.
- 46.8% report having a mental health problem sometime in their lifetime. Of these, 75.0% are currently being treated, and 62.1% are taking medication for mental health problems.
- 65.2% of chronically homeless adults indicated that their disability was drug or alcohol abuse, and 51.7% indicated that their disability was a mental illness. (Note that respondents could select both or neither of these options.)
- 3.2% are employed.
- 47.5% of respondents have lived in Greater Richmond for 10 years or more; 52.6% have lived in the area for 20 years or more.
- Most (50.8%) reported having their last housing in Richmond. Others indicated previous housing in Henrico (14.3%) and Chesterfield (4.8%). 7.9% of respondents last lived elsewhere in Virginia, and 19.0% lived in other states.
- In the past three years, most chronically homeless individuals have been homeless once (50.0%), twice (25.0%), or three times (10.3%); 14.7% have been homeless more than three times during this time period.
- 47.1% have been homeless for two years or more.

For more information:

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