

# January 2020 Snapshot of Panhandlers

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## Experiencing Homelessness in the Richmond Region

The following data were collected in Homeward's 22<sup>nd</sup> winter (January 23, 2020) count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in the Richmond region. A total of 479 adults and 70 children were counted, and 69.9% of adults completed the Homeward point-in-time survey. The statistics below represent the 21.5% of individuals who indicated that they had gotten money in the past year from "panhandling or asking strangers for money."

- 78.6% are males, and 21.4% are females. Most panhandlers (74.3%) are single, never married adults. 25.7% are or have been in families, including those who are married, as well as those who are separated, widowed, or divorced.
- 4.3% reported having children living with them.
- The largest percentage of respondents report that they are African-American (58.8%), followed by White (39.7%). 11.4% indicated that they are Hispanic.
- The average age for adults is 49.7 years.
- 42.9% have only a high school education or GED. 17.4% attended some college, and 15.7% have a college degree or higher.
- 14.5% are veterans.
- The majority (85.7%) 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), 57.1% reported serving time in jail, 2.9% reported serving time in prison, and 25.7% indicated that they had served time in both jail and prison. Of those who served time in jail and/or prison, 41.0% indicated that they were homeless when they last went to jail/prison, and 41.0% indicated that they were homeless upon release.
- 28.6% have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime. Of those experiencing domestic violence, 50.0% had experienced it in the past year.
- 53.5% report having a problem with alcohol sometime in their lifetime, and 63.6% report having a problem with drugs sometime in their lifetime.
- 61.4% report having received counseling for mental health problems sometime in their lifetime. Of these, 81.5% are currently being treated, and 74.1% are taking medication for mental health problems.
- 51.4% report having a long-term disability. Of those reporting a long-term disability, 55.6% indicated that their disability was drug or alcohol abuse; 77.8% indicated that their disability was a mental illness; and 50.0% indicated that their disability was a physical disability. (Note that respondents could select all, some, or none of these options.)
- 18.6% are employed.
- The median length of time respondents have lived in Greater Richmond is 3.5 years; 27.9% have lived in the area for 17 years or more.
- The majority of respondents (60.0%) reported having their last housing in Richmond. Others indicated previous housing in Henrico (5.7%) and Chesterfield (5.7%) counties. 17.1% of respondents last lived elsewhere in Virginia, and 11.4% lived in other states.
- In the past three years, most people have been homeless once (40.0%) or twice (10.0%); 50.0% have been homeless three or more times during this time period.
- Less than half (41.9%) of homeless persons have been homeless for one year or less.

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