

July 2019 Snapshot of People with Incarceration Histories

Experiencing Homelessness in the Richmond Region

The following data were collected in Homeward's 13th summer (July 31, 2019) count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in the Richmond region. A total of 436 adults and 57 children were counted, and 74.3% of adults completed the Homeward point-in-time survey. The statistics below represent the 66.8% of individuals who indicated that they had a history of incarceration.

- 81.3% of people with a history of incarceration are males, and 18.7% are females. Most are single, never married adults (61.0%). 39.0% have been in families, including those who are married, as well as those who are widowed, separated, or divorced.
- 5.7% have children living with them.
- A majority of people with a history of incarceration report that they are African-American (62.5%), followed by White (31.7%). 4.3% indicated that they are Hispanic.
- The average age for adults is 50.2 years.
- 43.8% have only a high school education or GED. 18.1% attended some college, and 9.0% have a college degree or higher.
- 17.5% are veterans.
- A majority have served time in jail (62.6%). 4.7% indicated that they served time in prison, and 32.7% reported that they had served time in both jail and prison. 50.4% reported having felony convictions. 27.9% reported living on the streets before incarceration, and 34.5% indicated that they lived on the streets upon release.
- 26.2% experienced domestic violence in their lifetime. Of those experiencing domestic violence, 43.2% had experienced it in the past year.
- In their lifetime, 43.2% report having a problem with alcohol, and 43.5% report having a problem with drugs.
- 47.4% report receiving counseling or treatment for mental health problems sometime in their lifetime. Of these, 76.6% are currently being treated, and 66.7% are taking medication for mental health problems.
- 41.9% report having a long-term disability. Of those reporting a long-term disability, 39.8% indicated that their disability was drug or alcohol abuse; 59.1% indicated that their disability was a mental illness; and 57.5% indicated that their disability was a physical disability. (Note that respondents could select all, some, or none of these options.)
- 26.5% are employed. Of those who are employed, 48.2% work full-time, 26.8% work part-time, and 25.0% do day labor or temp work.
- The median length of time respondents have lived in greater Richmond is three years, and 31.5% have lived in the area for 17 years or more.
- The largest percentage of respondents (61.2%) reported having their last housing in Richmond. Others indicated previous housing in Henrico (7.8%) and Chesterfield (3.4%) counties. 12.1% of respondents last lived elsewhere in Virginia, and 12.6% lived in other states.
- In the past three years, most people experiencing homelessness who also have a history of incarceration have been homeless once (40.4%) or twice (15.6%); 44.0% have been homeless three or more times during this time period.
- A little less than half (46.6%) have been homeless for six months or less.

For more information:

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

