

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

# 2026 POINT-IN-TIME COUNT REPORT

## **HARRIS, FORT BEND, AND MONTGOMERY COUNTIES**

**A snapshot of homelessness in the Houston region,  
informed by data and strengthened by our community.**

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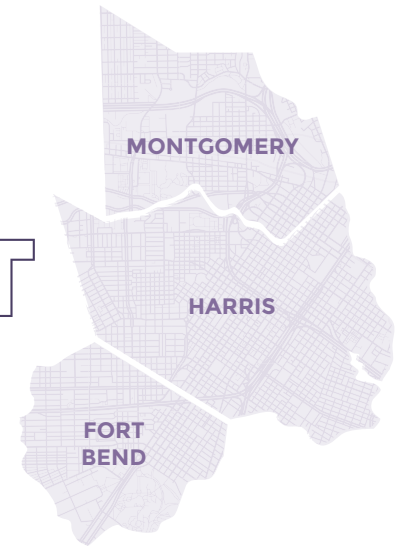
**MAKING OUR HOMELESS RESPONSE  
SYSTEM WORK — BETTER.**

**PIT COUNT**

CONDUCTED FEB 2026

# 2026 POINT-IN-TIME COUNT REPORT

**HARRIS, FORT BEND, AND MONTGOMERY COUNTIES**



Each year, hundreds of community partners, volunteers, and people with lived experience come together to conduct the Point-in-Time Count across the Houston region. The count provides a snapshot of homelessness in Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery counties and helps guide outreach, housing, and supportive services throughout the region.

## **What We Are Seeing in the Data**

- Overall homelessness remained relatively stable compared to 2025, though unsheltered homelessness continues to present challenges across the region.
- Thousands of households moved into permanent housing during 2025, while many people also experienced homelessness for the first time, highlighting the importance of both housing and prevention efforts.
- Outreach teams continue engaging large numbers of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, reinforcing the importance of coordinated regional response strategies and multiple pathways indoors.

## **How to Read This Report**

The Point-in-Time (PIT) Count provides a one-night snapshot of homelessness across Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery counties.

Additional HMIS and HUD System Performance Measures help provide broader context about:

- year-round interactions with the homeless response system,
- pathways into homelessness,
- housing outcomes,
- and long-term housing stability.

Together, these indicators help communities better understand both homelessness and system response over time.

## STABILITY AMID CHANGING SHELTER PATTERNS

### BY THE NUMBERS

**3,321** individuals identified as experiencing homelessness during the 2026 PIT Count

4-person decrease from the 2025 PIT Count of **3,325**

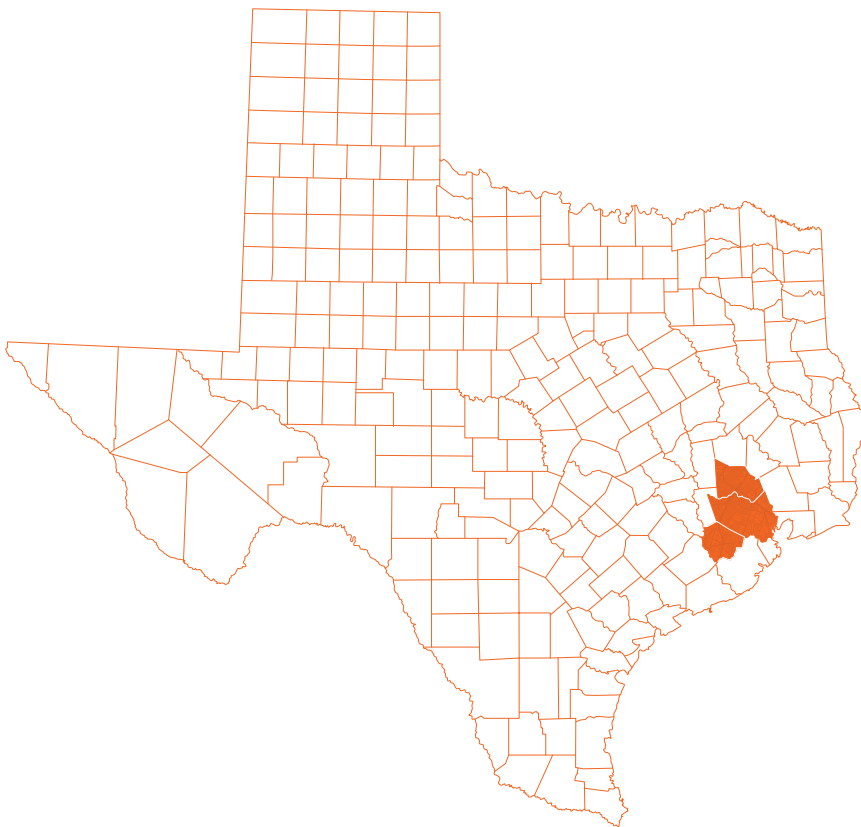
**61.8%** – **2,051 people** experiencing sheltered homelessness

**38.2%** – **1,270 people** experiencing unsheltered homelessness

During the 2026 PIT Count, a total of 3,321 sheltered and unsheltered individuals were identified as experiencing homelessness across Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery counties (combined population: 6.9 million). This represents a decrease of four individuals from the 2025 PIT Count, reflecting continued relative stability in the region's homeless population over the past several years.

Among those counted, 2,051 individuals (61.8%) were experiencing sheltered homelessness in environments such as emergency or transitional housing, while 1,270 individuals (38.2%) were unsheltered, living in places not intended for human habitation, including streets and encampments. Variations between sheltered and unsheltered populations over time may reflect changes in system capacity and access rather than significant shifts in the overall population experiencing homelessness.





## EXPANDED SHELTER ACCESS SHAPES 2026 PIT COUNT TRENDS

Notably, the increase in the sheltered population in 2026 was accompanied by a decrease in unsheltered homelessness. This shift reflects a positive development in system capacity, driven in part by the opening of two new emergency shelter programs serving survivors of domestic violence. These additional resources expanded access to safe shelter for individuals and families in crisis.

As a result, both the proportion and estimated number of individuals identified as experiencing domestic violence within sheltered settings rose in 2026. This change should be understood as improved access to services rather than evidence of a broader rise in domestic violence.

Geographically, Harris County continues to account for the vast majority of individuals experiencing homelessness in the region (90%), while Fort Bend and Montgomery counties represent smaller shares (2% and 8%, respectively). This distribution remains consistent with prior years and reflects both population density and the concentration of available services.

### **THE HOUSTON REGION MAINTAINED RELATIVE STABILITY IN HOMELESSNESS DESPITE HISTORICALLY LARGE INCREASES REPORTED NATIONALLY.**

This continued regional stability contrasts with national trends. Recent Point-in-Time counts reported by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development have shown historically large increases in homelessness nationwide, alongside ongoing revisions to previously reported totals. Against this backdrop, the relative stability observed in the Houston region remains a notable characteristic of the local homelessness response system.

# 2026 KEY FINDINGS

## Demographics

The demographic profile of individuals experiencing homelessness in the region remains broadly consistent with prior years, with expected variation in point-in-time estimates.

### AGE

The unsheltered population continues to be predominantly middle-aged, with the majority between ages 35 and 64. In contrast, sheltered populations include a substantial proportion of households with children and youth, reflecting the predominant presence of families in emergency shelter settings.



### GENDER

Men represent the majority of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness (77%), while sheltered populations are more evenly distributed by gender. Overall, men comprise approximately 59% of the total population.



### RACE AND ETHNICITY

Black individuals remain disproportionately represented among those experiencing homelessness, accounting for 58% of the total population. White individuals represent 29%, and Hispanic individuals account for 8%. As in prior years, these disparities reflect ongoing, broader structural inequities and remain a critical focus for system response.



# 2026 KEY FINDINGS

## BY THE NUMBERS

### Total Population Experiencing Homelessness

Harris County: **2,980**

Montgomery County: **260**

Fort Bend County: **80**

### Sheltered population

Harris County: **1,791**

Montgomery County: **200**

Fort Bend County: **60**

### Unsheltered population

Harris County: **1,189**

Montgomery County: **61**

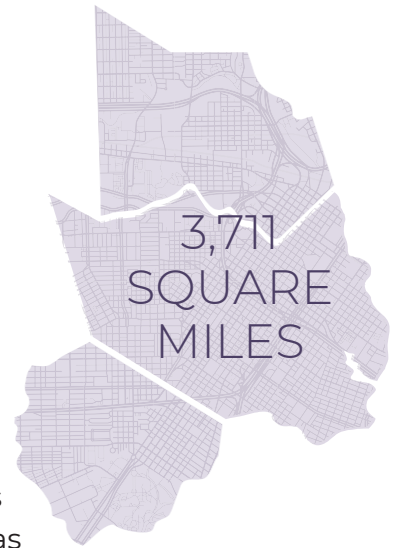
Fort Bend County: **20**

## Geographic Distribution

Homelessness in the region is heavily concentrated in Harris County, which serves as the primary hub for shelter capacity and outreach activity. This concentration is closely tied to population density and the greater availability of services compared to surrounding counties.

Outside of Harris County, homelessness is present at lower levels in Montgomery and Fort Bend Counties. These patterns reflect broader differences in urbanization, housing availability, and the distribution of support infrastructure across the region.

Across all three counties, variations in service capacity and outreach networks continue to shape how and where individuals are identified and supported, reinforcing the need for coordinated regional approaches.



# 2026 KEY FINDINGS

## Three-Year Trends Show Stability

Over the past three years, the total number of people experiencing homelessness has remained relatively stable, with only minor year-to-year fluctuations. In 2026, the overall count declined slightly compared to the previous year, driven primarily by a small decrease in the unsheltered population.

Despite this modest reduction, a substantial share of individuals continue to experience unsheltered homelessness, underscoring the ongoing need for outreach, housing, and supportive services, including initiatives such as the End Street Homelessness Plan.

### BY THE NUMBERS

**3,321** total people experiencing homelessness in 2026

**3,325** total people experiencing homelessness in 2025

**1,270** unsheltered individuals in 2026

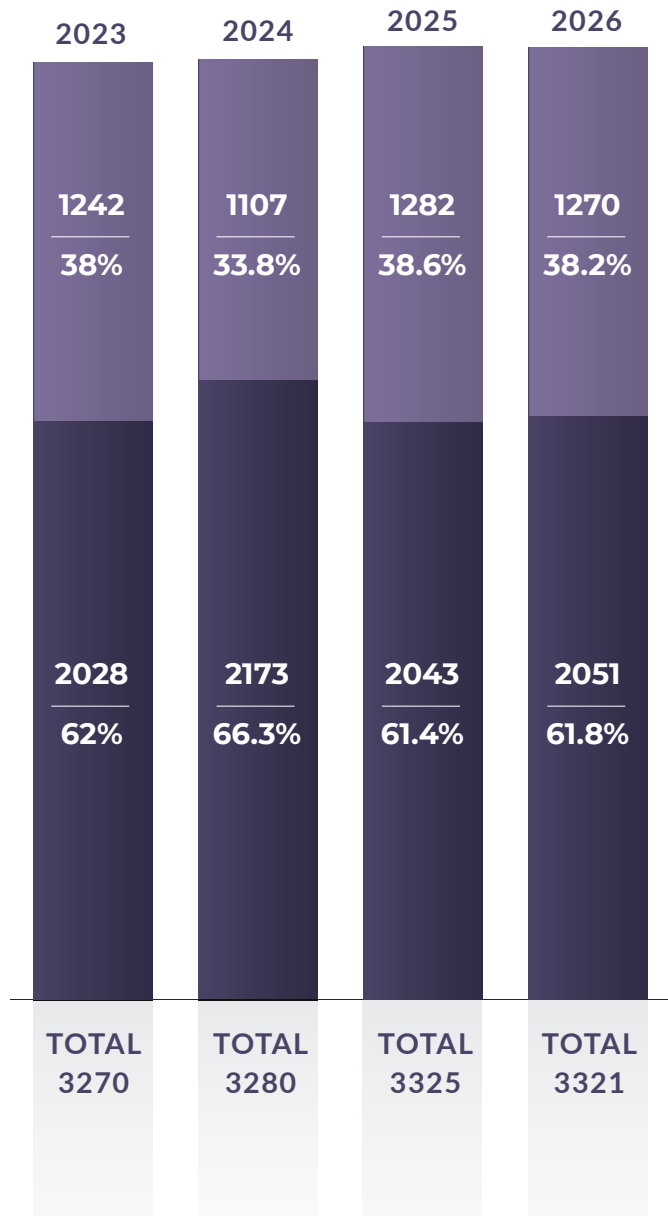
**1,282** unsheltered individuals in 2025

**0.9%** decrease in unsheltered population from 2025 to 2026

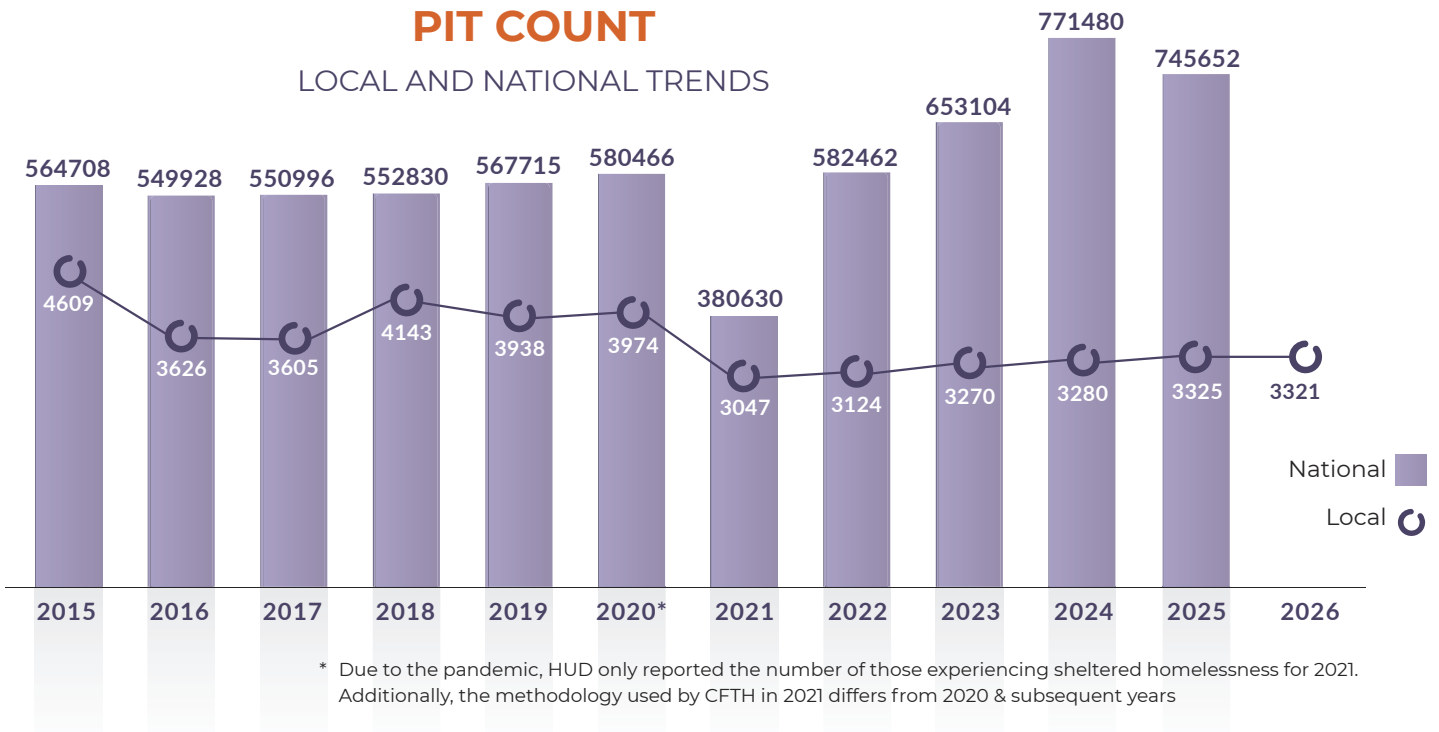
### PIT COUNT

SHELTERED AND UNSHELTERED

Sheltered population   
 Unsheltered population



# 2026 KEY FINDINGS



## Local Trends Remain Steady Amid National Increases

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the local PIT count has remained relatively stable, with a modest overall increase from 2021 to 2026 despite minor year-to-year fluctuations.

In contrast, national homelessness trends have risen more sharply over a similar period. This divergence suggests that local trends have not followed the same post-pandemic increases observed nationally, highlighting differences in scale and trajectory between the region and the broader U.S. context.

## IMPLICATIONS

The 2026 PIT Count reinforces several key conclusions about homelessness in the region:

- 🕒 The overall number of individuals experiencing homelessness has remained stable in recent years, even as the composition of sheltered and unsheltered populations shifts.
- 🕒 Investments in emergency shelter capacity, particularly for survivors of domestic violence, are having measurable effects on where individuals are counted and how many are served.
- 🕒 Persistent disparities in race, health status, and service access continue to shape the experience of homelessness and require sustained, targeted responses.
- 🕒 A substantial portion of the unsheltered population remains disconnected from formal services, underscoring the importance of outreach and engagement strategies.

Taken together, these findings highlight both the strengths of the regional homelessness response system and the ongoing challenges that require coordinated, data-informed action.