

Texas Homeless Data Sharing Network (THDSN)

The Ongoing Efforts of the THDSN and Its Crucial Role in Revolutionizing Homeless Response



www.thn.org



anja@thn.org or eric@thn.org





◆ Context of the Work ◆

Since homelessness first appeared in the United States, **data** have become critical in the collective effort to ensure everyone has a safe and stable place to call home; it is very difficult to address what you cannot measure.

However, while the current system of homelessness data collection is overall effective, it is ultimately imperfect and requires reform to more accurately prevent and end homelessness.

In response to this need, [Texas Homeless Network \(THN\)](#) launched the **Texas Homeless Data Sharing Network (THDSN)**, a statewide data integration effort designed to improve service delivery and identify resource gaps in the homeless response system.

Since 2019, the THDSN has helped revolutionize homeless response in Texas. This presentation summarizes how the THDSN has leveraged Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data to improve outcomes for those experiencing homelessness.

Key Term

Continuum of Care

A Continuum of Care (CoC), or homeless response system, is a **system of services and housing interventions** designed to meet the needs of people at risk of and experiencing homelessness. The CoCs mission is to end homelessness, quickly re-house individuals and families, and optimize self-sufficiency for those who experience homelessness.

CoC Responsibilities



Operate the CoC



Designate and Operate a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)



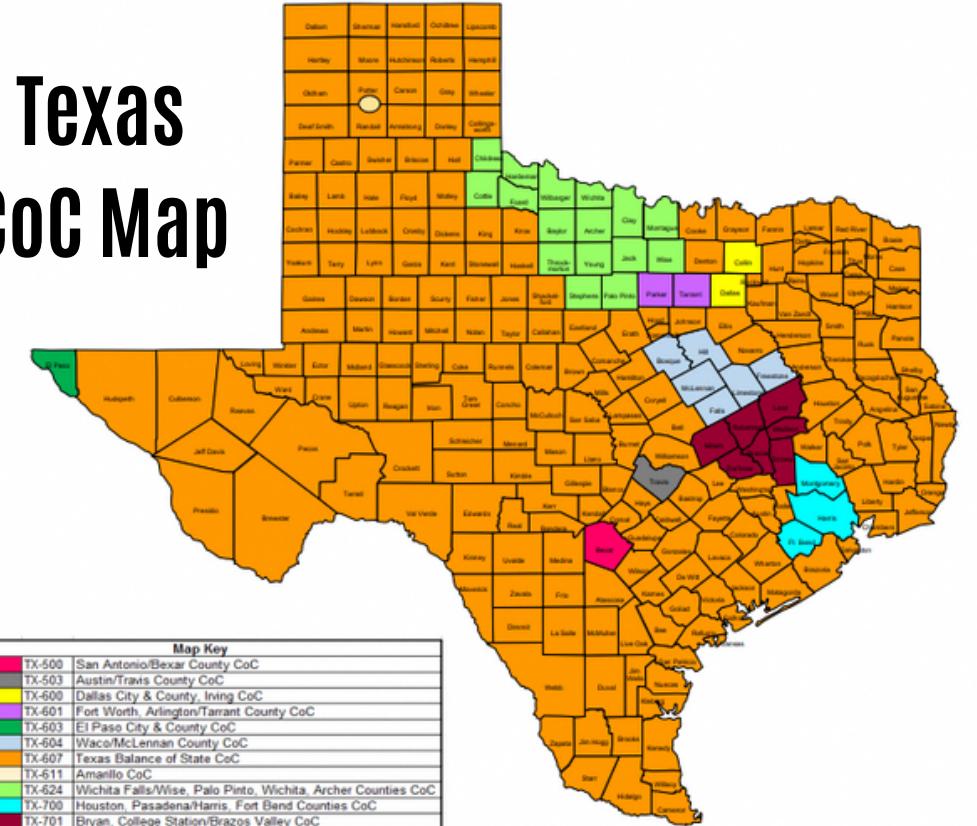
Plan and Coordinate the CoC system of services and housing interventions



Create and enact the Violence Against Women Act emergency transfer plan

Map Key		
TX-500	San Antonio/Bexar County CoC	
TX-503	Austin/Travis County CoC	
TX-600	Dallas City & County, Irving CoC	
TX-601	Fort Worth, Arlington/Tarrant County CoC	
TX-603	El Paso City & County CoC	
TX-604	Waco/McLennan County CoC	
TX-607	Texas Balance of State CoC	
TX-611	Amarillo CoC	
TX-624	Wichita Falls/Wise, Palo Pinto, Wichita, Archer Counties CoC	
TX-700	Houston, Pasadena/Harris, Fort Bend Counties CoC	
TX-701	Bryan, College Station/Brazos Valley CoC	

Texas CoC Map



Texas has eleven (11) CoC regions. CoCs are made up of service providers, advocates, local government officials, and citizens who work to eliminate homelessness.

Texas Homeless Network (THN) is the lead agency for the **Texas Balance of State Continuum of Care (TX BoS CoC)**, the largest of the eleven (11) CoCs, which covers 215 of 254 Texas counties (see *Texas CoC map*).

◆ Data Collection Efforts ◆

Three (3) primary data sets inform policymakers and advocates on demographics, trends, and the availability and usage of services among the homeless population: Point-in-Time (PIT) Counts, Housing Inventory Counts (HIC), and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) databases.



1

Point-in-Time (PIT) Count

The Point-in-Time (PIT) Count is a count of sheltered and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. In 2024, the PIT Count identified 27,987 homeless individuals across Texas on a single night in January [1].



2

Housing Inventory Count (HIC)

The Housing Inventory Count (HIC) is a point-in-time inventory of projects within a Continuum of Care (CoC), otherwise known as a homeless response system, that provides beds and units dedicated to serving persons experiencing homelessness.



3

Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS)

A Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a software application designed to record and store client-level information on the characteristics and service needs of homeless persons throughout a Continuum of Care (CoC) jurisdiction.

[1] The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2024). *The 2024 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress*. <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/ahar/2024-ahar-part-1-pit-estimates-of-homelessness-in-the-us.html>

PIT Counts Underestimate the Homeless Crisis in America

The 2024 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count identified 27,987 people in Texas who experienced homelessness in an emergency shelter, safe haven, transitional housing program, or unsheltered location [2]. While recent data shows the rate of homelessness has continued to trend upward, annual data reveals that the homelessness crisis is even more severe than what is obtained in the PIT Count.

The annual number of homeless individuals in Texas is estimated to be 2 to 2.5 times greater than can be obtained using a PIT Count. In 2024, for example, Texas Homeless Network (THN) reported that a **minimum** of 57,685 people accessed services across 9 of 11 Texas homeless response systems [3]. The same report shows that, between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024, a minimum of 30,939 people entered homelessness for the first time, and 10,910 people exited homelessness to a permanent destination.

The broader measurement underscores the scope of homelessness in Texas and highlights the gaps left by traditional PIT Counts because they fail to account for the transitory nature of homelessness and, consequently, underestimate the housing crisis [4]. The known limitations of the PIT Count illuminate the need for a more effective way to track, monitor, and respond to the homelessness crisis, a critical effort that the Texas Homeless Data Sharing Network (THDSN) aims to fill.



[2] The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2024). *The 2024 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress*. <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/ahar/2024-ahar-part-1-pit-estimates-of-homelessness-in-the-us.html>

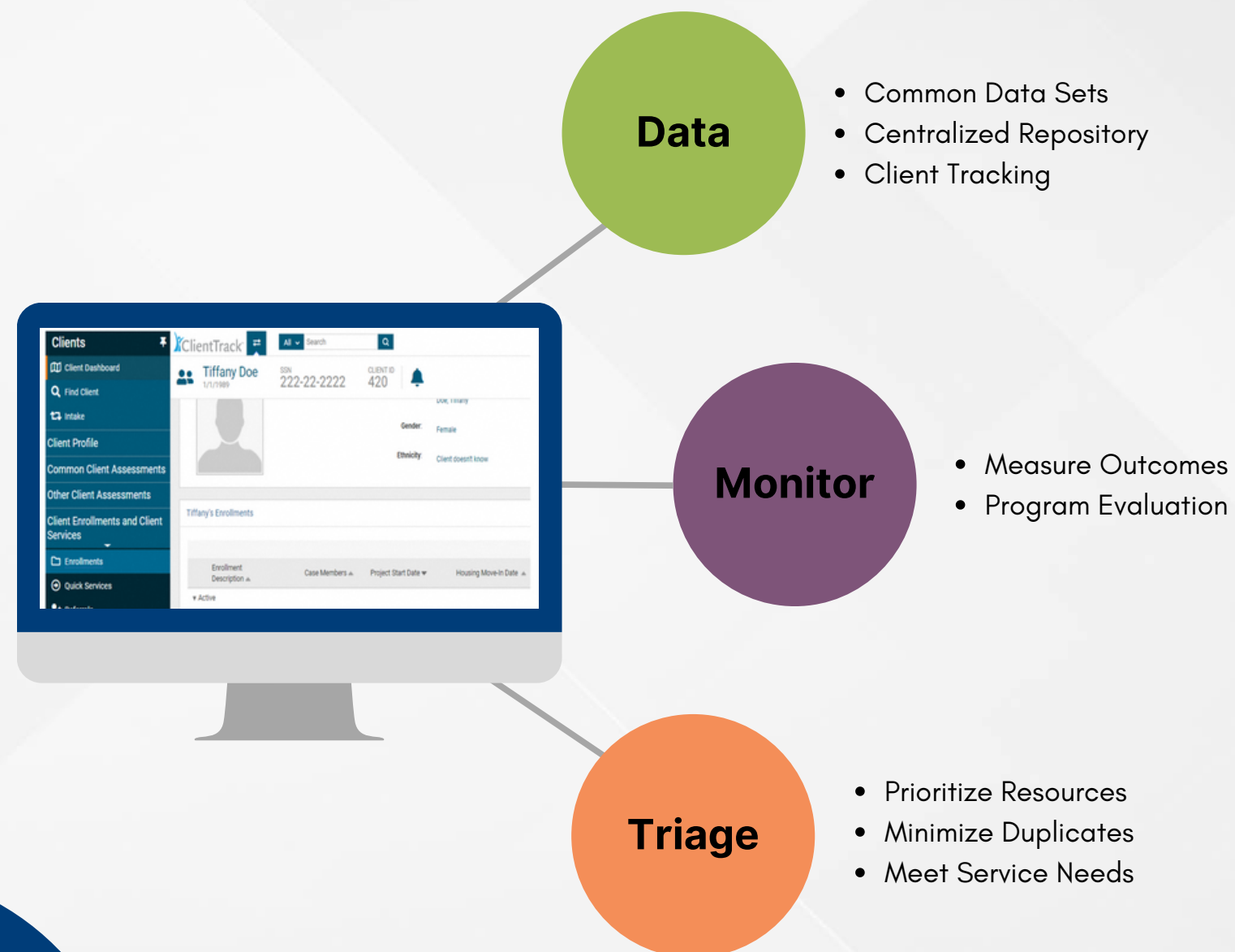
[3] Texas Homeless Network. (2025, February 7). *Texas Homeless Data Sharing Network Data Dashboard*. <https://www.thn.org/thdsn/data/>

[4] The Senate of Texas (2025). *Senate Committee on State Affairs Interim Report*. https://senate.texas.gov/cmtes/88/c570/c570_InterimReport_2024.pdf

Understanding the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

A Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a **locally administered**, electronic data collection system that stores longitudinal person-level information about individuals who access the homeless service system.

The [United States Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#) and other federal, state, and local policymakers use aggregate HMIS data to obtain better information about the extent and nature of homelessness over time.



Required by the CoC Program & Federal Partners

HMIS is the information system designated by the CoC to comply with HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards. HMIS stores client-level information and data on the provision of housing and services to unhoused persons, families, and those at risk of homelessness.

Informs National Policy & Local Planning

HMIS is used as a resource in the effort to end homelessness. From a client perspective, it provides a way to coordinate care across organizations in the CoC, process [Coordinated Entry](#) referrals, and record essential information. HMIS also helps support CoC performance and informs decision-making in funding, capacity and scale, outcomes, and other system-wide challenges.

Enhanced Coordinated Entry & Case Management

HMIS access represents a strategic advantage for service providers. The CoC selects HMIS software, which allows for multi-level client data sharing between organizations, client case coordination, and electronic referrals. This information-sharing model can help prevent service duplications and enable collaboration between homeless service providers across the CoC.

What Type of Information is Collected in HMIS?

Universal Data Elements (UDEs)

- Required for all projects participating in HMIS regardless of funding source
- Include demographics, household composition, and homeless status



Program-Specific Data Elements

- Collected to meet requirements of federally funded programs using HMIS
- May help CoCs in monitoring and planning service delivery and identifying client outcomes



Future Directions for Homelessness Data

Despite the many benefits of HMIS, there are multiple HMIS vendors across Texas CoCs, and CoCs are siloed by their limited jurisdiction, making information-sharing difficult. This lack of communication hinders statewide and regional data sharing and cross-agency collaboration and, thus, impacts the overall effectiveness of homeless response efforts.

To improve data-informed response to the homelessness crisis, Texas Homeless Network (THN) launched the **Texas Homeless Data Sharing Network (THDSN)**. Since 2019, the THDSN has played a pivotal role in the state's comprehensive strategy to assist Texans at risk of or experiencing homelessness by helping connect them with the supportive services they need to succeed.

By leveraging annual PIT Count and HMIS data, the THDSN helps paint a clearer, more accurate picture of the scope of homelessness in Texas. The next section of this presentation offers an in-depth overview of the project and provides a behind-the-scenes look at the processes that make the THDSN a critical resource in the collective effort to prevent and end homelessness.

Value-Added Benefits of the THDSN

- >> The THDSN allows for information-sharing across CoC jurisdictions, which improves service delivery and helps illuminate resource gaps in the homeless response system (thus opening doors to efforts to fill those gaps).
- >> The THDSN facilitates information-sharing across data systems, such as healthcare institutions, which helps address system obstructions and identify frequent users so that they can be targeted for service interventions.
- >> The THDSN enables homelessness data to be analyzed in real-time for the first time, which has significant advantages in terms of research and strategic planning that helps inform policy at the state level and programming at the local level.

Without the THDSN



With the THDSN



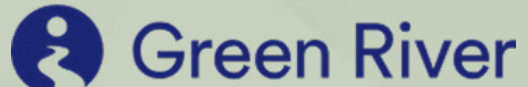



Texas Homeless Data Sharing Network (THDSN)

*Leveraging data to revolutionize
homeless response*


Design Model

The THDSN is a central data repository for all eleven (11) Continuums of Care (CoCs) in Texas. The THDSN increases data sharing and collaboration across Texas CoCs, helps inform planning decisions, and supports the coordination of resources to effectively prevent and end homelessness. Texas Homeless Network (THN) uses [Open Path](#), an open-source software platform developed and maintained by [Green River](#), to administer the THDSN.







Ian Kozak
CEO, Partner



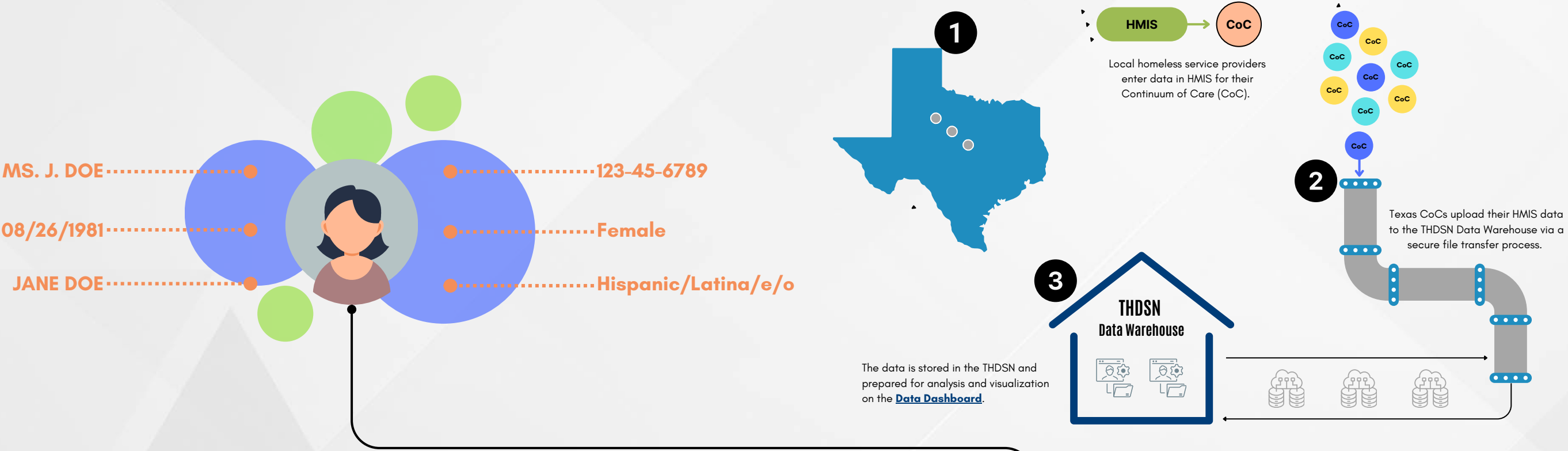
Sarah Ryder
Technical Project Manager



Anthony Hogg
Partner Success Manager

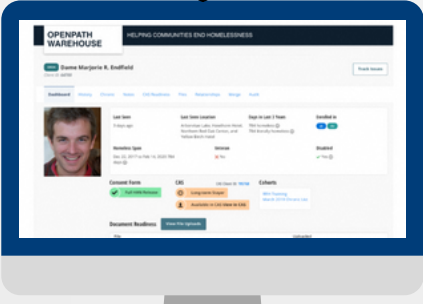



Angela Gougherty
Software Analyst



Universal Data Elements (UDEs)

All projects that use HMIS software must collect [Universal Data Elements \(UDEs\)](#). UDEs provide the ability to record unique, unduplicated client records, establish client participation in a project within a specific date range, and identify clients who meet time criteria for chronic homelessness.





- Name
- Social Security Number
- Date of Birth
- Race and Ethnicity
- Gender
- Veteran Status
- Disabling Condition
- Project Start Date
- Project Exit Date
- Destination
- Relationship to Head of Household
- Enrollment CoC
- Housing Move-in Date
- Prior Living Situation

Project Status

CoC Cohort 1

- Houston/Harris County (TX-700)
- Tarrant County (TX-601)
- Texas Balance of State (TX-607)

CoC Cohort 2

- Amarillo (TX-611)
- Dallas County (TX-600)
- Waco (TX-604)

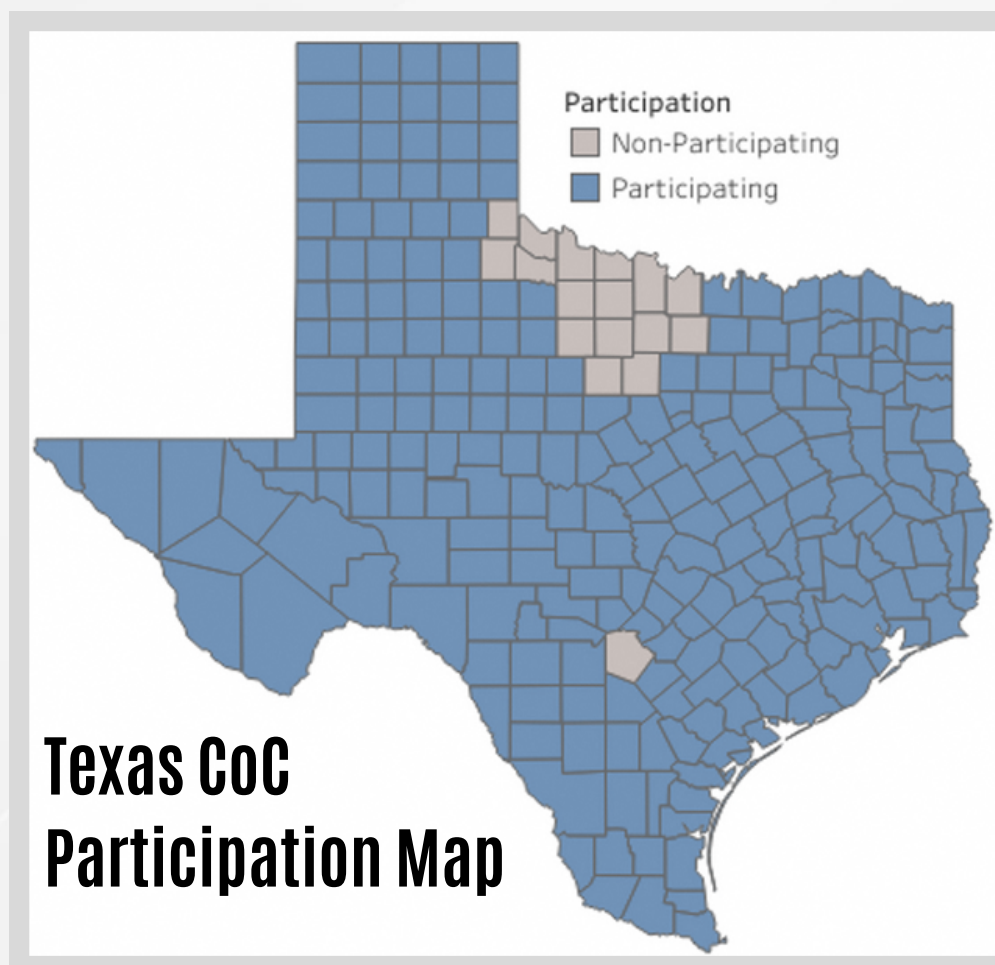
CoC Cohort 3

- Austin/Travis County (TX-503)
- Brazos Valley (TX-701)
- El Paso County (TX-603)



1,032,500

unique client records across Texas
CoCs (2012-present)



The nine (9) CoCs currently contributing data to the THDSN Data Warehouse represent **93% of all Texas counties**. As of 2024, the THDSN covers **237 of 254 Texas counties** (see *Texas CoC Participation map*).

Governance Structure

The **THDSN Board**, in collaboration with Texas Homeless Network (THN), drives the development, implementation, operation, and policy direction of the Data Warehouse. In addition, the Board conducts research and analytics on the data collected and maintained in support of policy initiatives with respect to homelessness in Texas. Board members also serve as liaisons between THN and the counties and sub-populations they represent.



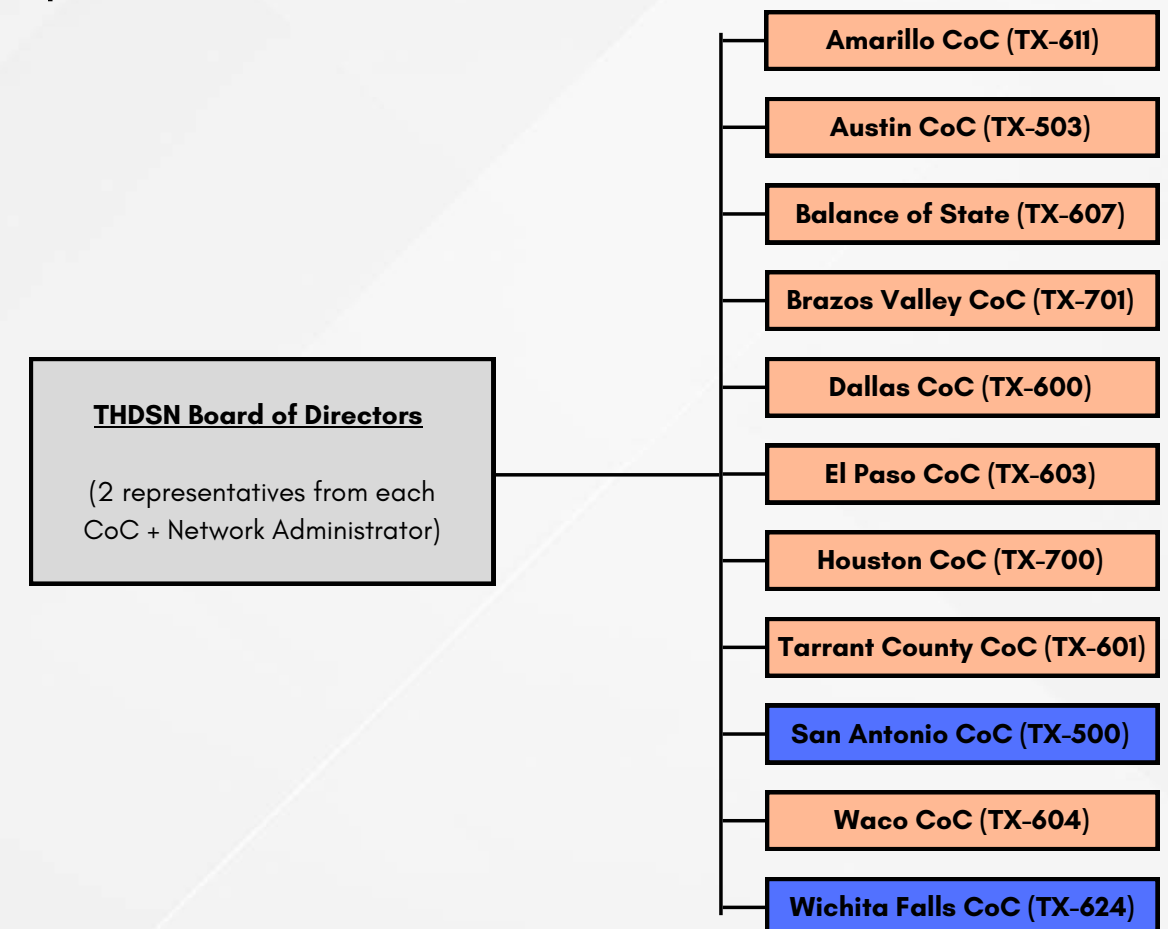
Membership comprises key staff from each CoC jurisdiction. The THDSN Board also includes one (1) Network Administrator (or THN) representative.

At least three (3) members with lived experience are recommended to serve on the THDSN Board. Each CoC has the opportunity to present member nominations for consideration.

Advisory Committee



The **Advisory Committee** consists of volunteers elected by the THDSN Board to assist in the policy direction and expansion of the Data Warehouse. While Advisory Committee members may offer their help, services, or advice to the Board, they cannot vote on critical decisions or elections.



Meet the THDSN Board



Angela Snow

Amarillo (TX-611)



Shaira Joyce

Amarillo (TX-611)



Whitney Bright

Austin/Travis Co. (TX-503)



Joseph Montañó

Austin/Travis Co. (TX-503)



Lindsay LaGrange

Balance of State (TX-607)



Paula Dewey

Balance of State (TX-607)



David Stanley

Brazos Valley (TX-701)



Freda Nelms

Dallas City & Co. (TX-600)



Lisa Heise

Dallas City & Co. (TX-600)



Erol Fetahagic

Houston/Harris Co. (TX-700)



Loretta Ray

Houston/Harris Co. (TX-700)



Renee Cavazos

Houston/Harris Co. (TX-700)



Nina Gall

San Antonio (TX-500)



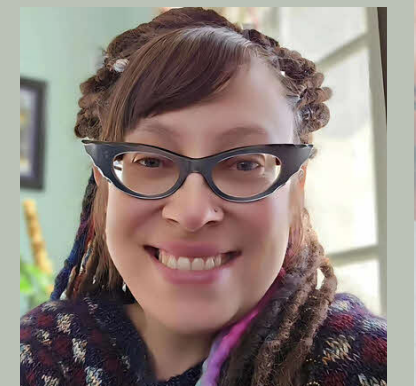
Lori Stewart

San Antonio (TX-500)



Ashley (Ash) Campbell

Tarrant Co. (TX-601)



Nicole Wiscombe

Waco/McLennan Co. (TX-604)



Eric Samuels

Balance of State (TX-607)



Anja Taylor

Balance of State (TX-607)

Our Work

Client Care Coordination



Through the THDSN, CoC representatives now have access to data that will help identify frequent users of homeless response systems so that they can be more quickly targeted for service interventions.

Data Integration



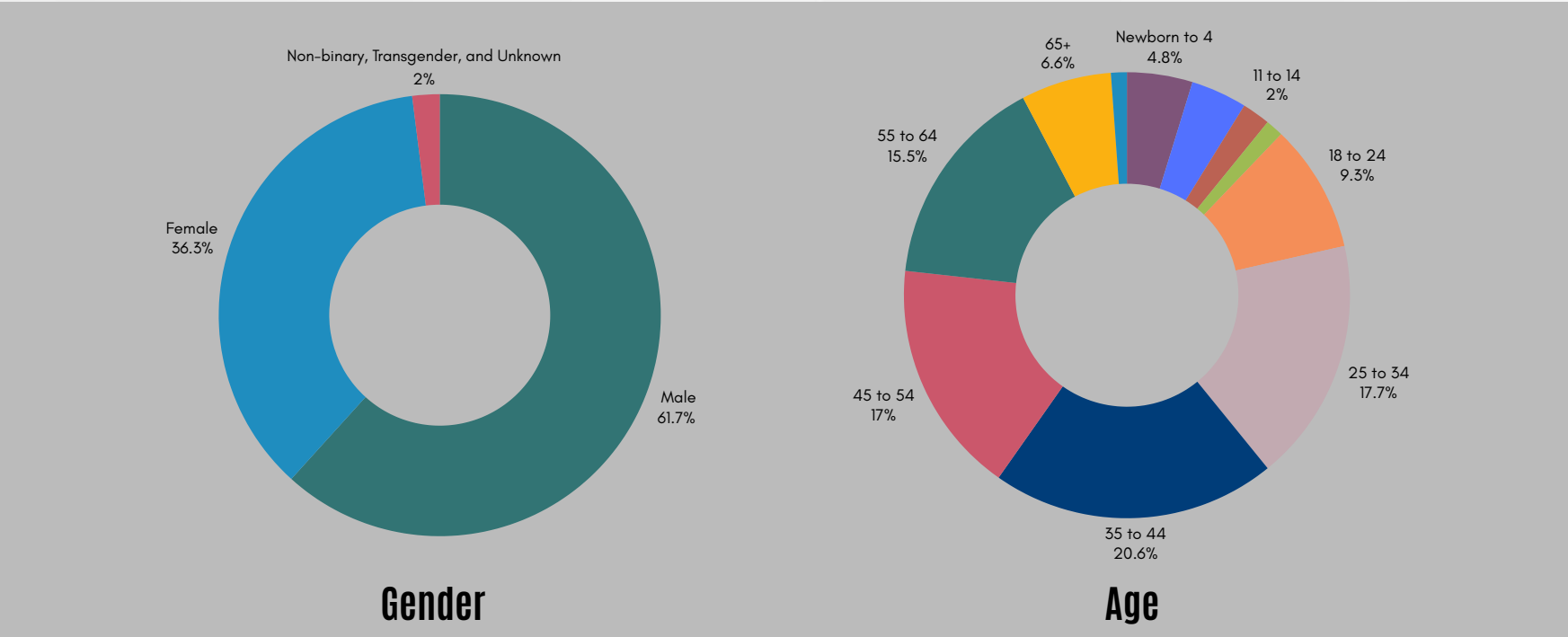
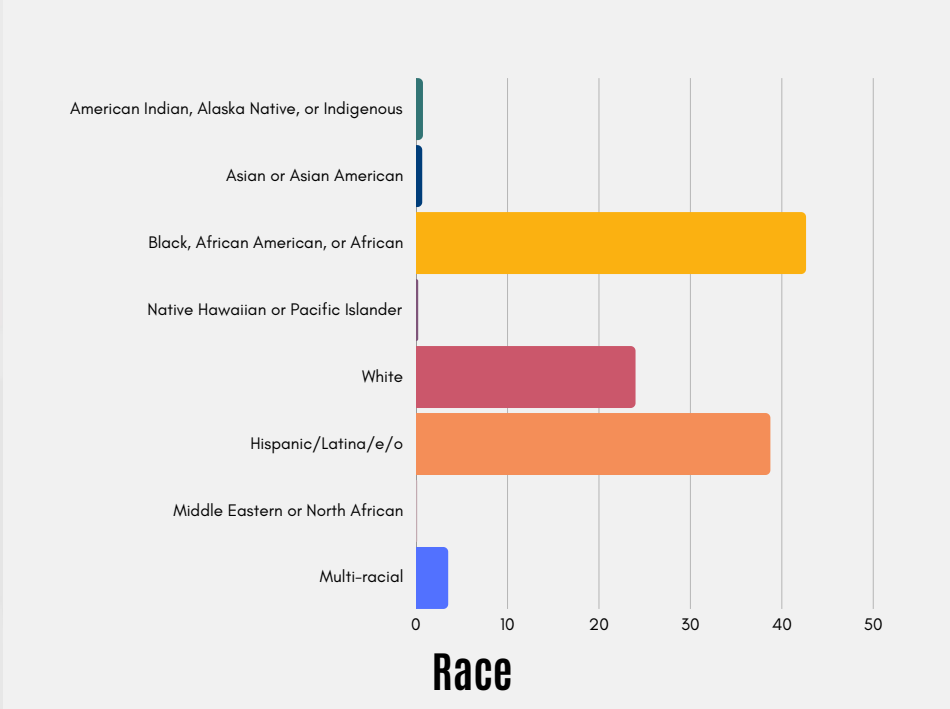
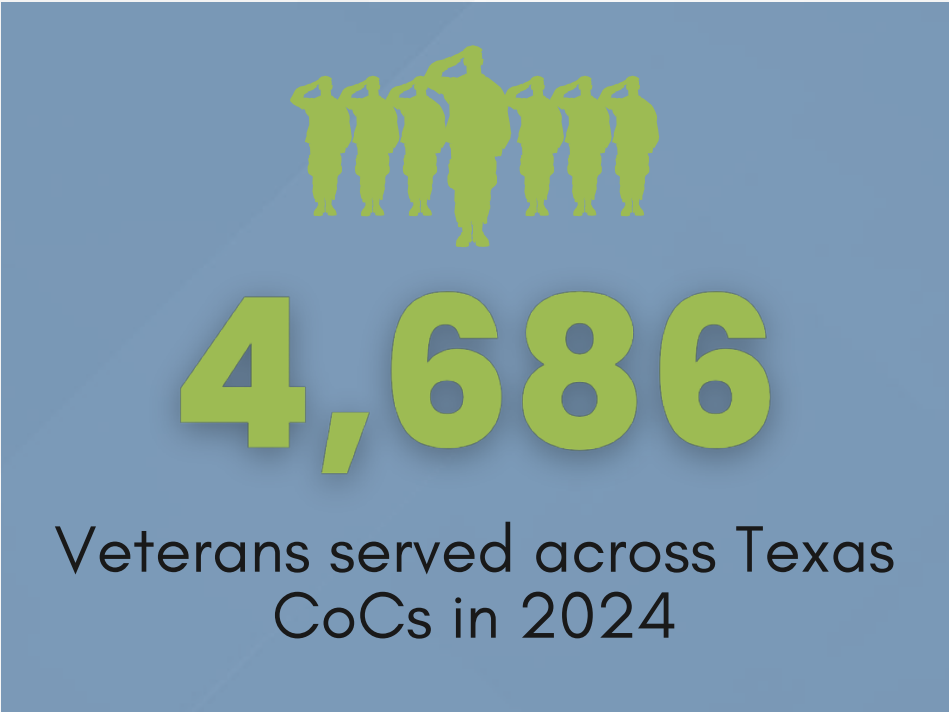
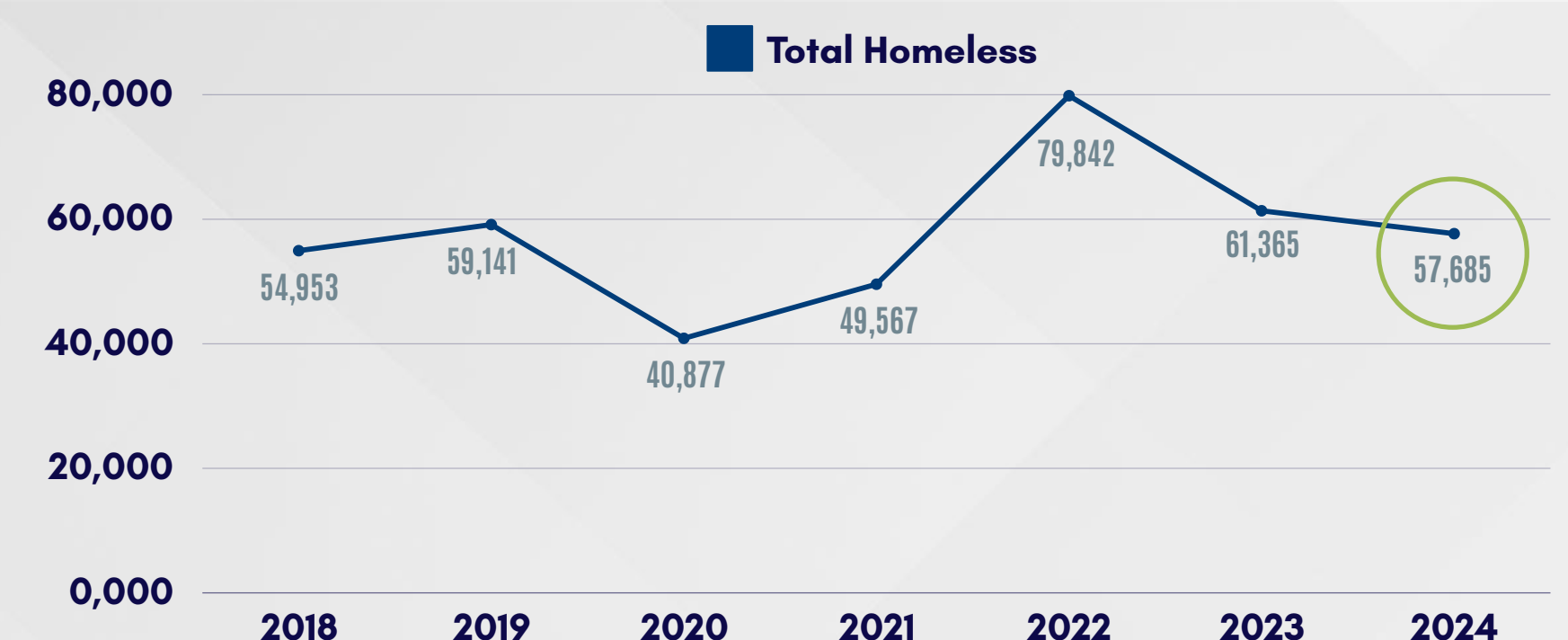
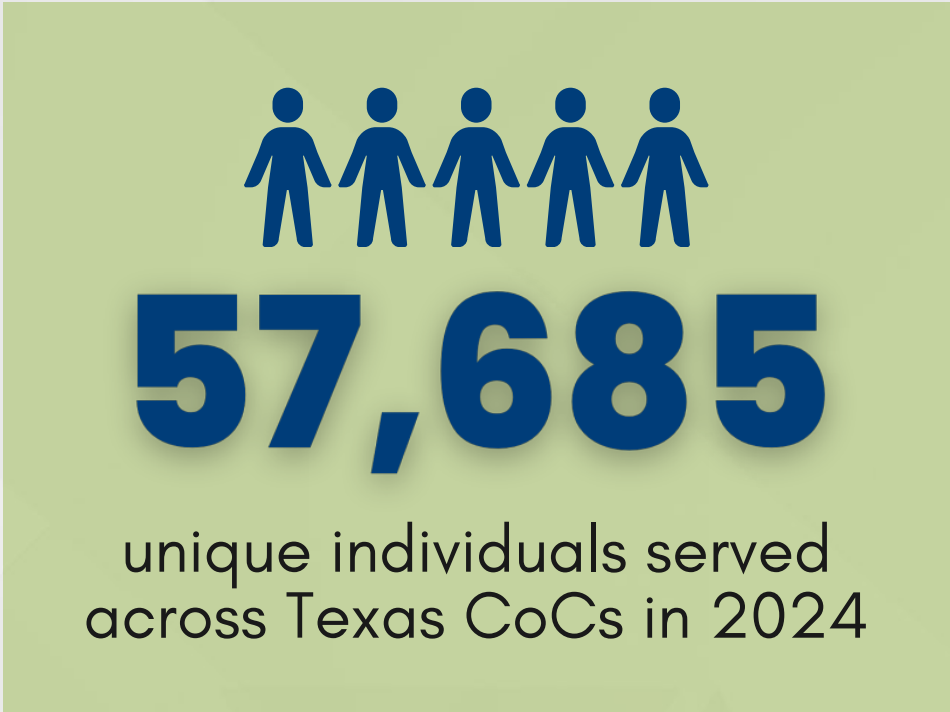
In 2022, THN partnered with [Superior HealthPlan](#) to identify, house, and provide supportive services to high-utilizers of both healthcare and homeless systems. To date, 7,200 client matches have been made.

Research & Analysis



While the Point-in-Time Count offers a snapshot of homelessness on a single night in January, it only captures a small portion of those who experience homelessness. The THDSN, which collects annual data on homelessness, aims to fill this knowledge gap.

A Snapshot of Homelessness in Texas



2024 Data Dashboard

SCAN ME

QR code linking to the 2024 Data Dashboard.



Thank You!



Eric Samuels
Texas Homeless Network



Anja Taylor
Texas Homeless Network



www.thn.org



anja@thn.org or eric@thn.org