

Overview:

The annual Point-in-Time Homeless Count & Survey is a requirement of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the local Continuum of Care (CoC) known as The Way Home. The Count illustrates trends over time (increases or decreases) in homelessness and provides insights into the effectiveness of a community's housing programs and homeless services. The Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County serves as lead agency to The Way Home and coordinates the Count as part of those responsibilities. The Way Home encompasses Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery counties, Texas.

Key Findings:

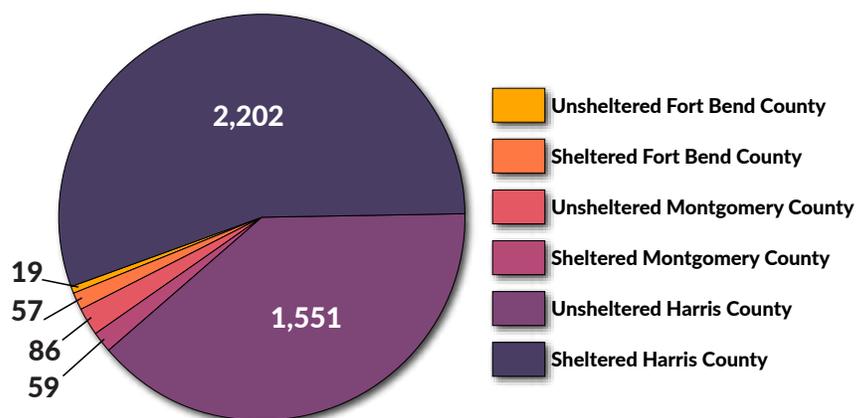
53% decrease in overall homelessness since 2011.

56,000 people touched HMIS in 2019, including 23,000 who accessed a homeless program.

42% of individuals experiencing homelessness were living unsheltered.

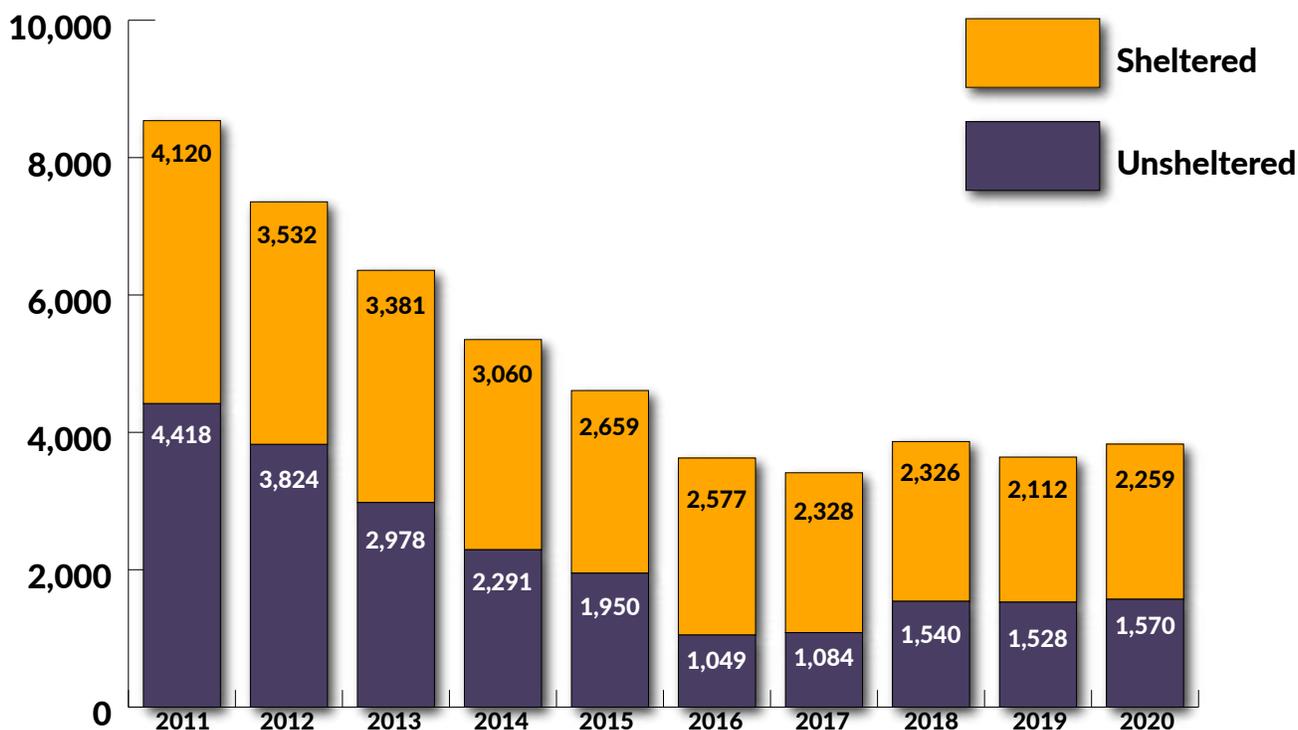
19,000 people have been placed in permanent supportive housing since 2011.

Total Number of those Experiencing Homelessness by Interview Location, N = 3,974



PIT Counts 2011-2020*

*includes data from Houston, Pasadena, Harris County, and Fort Bend County only for comparison purposes with previous years



2020 Homeless Count Notes

The annual Homeless Count & Survey does not provide an absolute number – it does not show exactly how many people are experiencing homelessness at any given second. That would be impossible to do when canvassing over 3,700 square miles. Also, the number of people experiencing homelessness in our region fluctuates multiple times every day.

What the Count is really good at is illustrating trends over time, since the Count has been conducted in the same way each year since 2011. In 2019, the Homeless Count shows a 54% decrease in overall homelessness since 2011.

Additional resources needed to further progress and prepare for the impacts of COVID-19

The 2020 Homeless Count results also prove that The Way Home’s programs work. Permanent housing combined with supportives services is the key to solving homelessness and our community’s progress in this area has been tremendous compared to other major cities. However, The Way Home has plateaued in its progress for the past three years, which confirms that the demand for permanent housing is greater than our region’s supply. More than 1,600 people sleeping on the street at any given time is not acceptable, and we won’t be able to make further progress without a considerable influx of resources.

Our permanent housing programs are more important now than ever for several reasons:

1. Getting people experiencing homelessness into permanent housing protects them from COVID-19 and limits community spread. For them, housing is healthcare.
2. We expect an increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness as the economic effects of the pandemic are felt over the coming months and we want to be prepared to meet their needs.
3. Reducing the number of people experiencing homelessness will make our community more resilient no matter what disaster comes to our community next.

Racial Disparity

African Americans are disproportionately represented among people experiencing homelessness in our community. People who identify as Black or African American make up 19.9% of the population of Harris County, but 56.2% of those experiencing homelessness in our CoC. This disparity is the result of decades of structural oppresion and systemic racism. The Coalition as lead agency to The Way Home CoC is committed to improving racial equity within our local homeless response system – both in terms of access to services and positive outcomes.

Race/Ethnicity ¹	Harris Co. population 7/1/2019	Total population experiencing homelessness	Sheltered people experiencing homelessness	Unsheltered people experiencing homelessness	Young Adults experiencing homelessness
White	69.6%	39.9%	32.6%	49%	29%
Black/African American	19.9%	56.2%	62.1%	47.5%	65.1%
Asian	7.4%	0.05%	1.1%	1%	1.2%
American Indian/ Alaska Native/ Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	1.2%	0.4%	0.9%	0.7%	0.6%
Multiple Races	1.9%	2.4%	3.3%	1.2%	4.1%
Hispanic*	43.3%	14.1%	14.5%	13.5%	14.5%

Table 1

**asked separately from racial identity*

1 <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/harriscountytexas,US>