

CITY OF ATLANTA

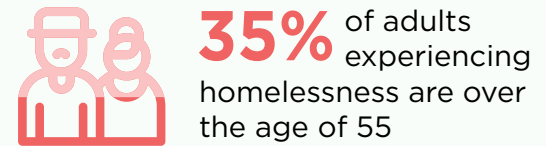
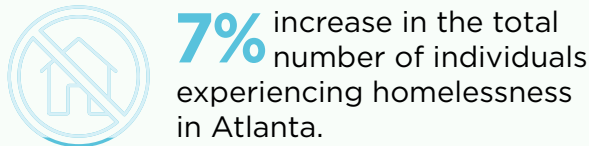
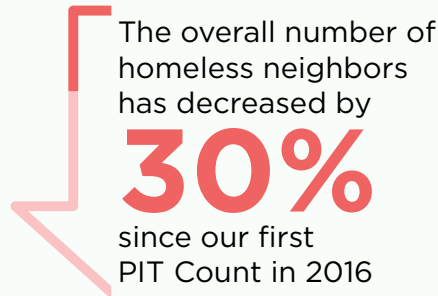
2024

POINT-IN-TIME COUNT



Since the inception of our data collection efforts in 2016, Atlanta has made significant strides in addressing homelessness. The overall number of neighbors experiencing homelessness has decreased by 30 percent since our first Point-in-Time (PIT) Count in 2016. The PIT Count is a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. HUD requires that Continuum of Care's (CoC) conduct a bi-annual count of people experiencing homelessness who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Safe Havens on a single night.

KEY FINDINGS



PROGRESS SNAPSHOT VS. FULL PICTURE

While the PIT Count provides a snapshot of homelessness on a single night, it is crucial to understand the ongoing and evolving challenges that paint the full picture. Despite the progress, there has been a rise in homelessness post-pandemic. Although numbers remain below pre-pandemic levels, annual increases have been observed, particularly among the unsheltered population.

HOUSING IS THE SOLUTION TO HOMELESSNESS

Stimulus funds enabled our system to test new rehousing strategies that systemize and create efficiencies in the rehousing process that have proven effective in exiting people out of homelessness quickly and stabilizing lives and addressing the root causes of homelessness. This strategy has been central to our efforts in reducing homelessness and providing a stable foundation for our neighbors in need. Notably, since 2016, we've housed over 12,500 neighbors, with 2,000 households housed in 2023 alone, including 800 unsheltered households.

Additionally, we are investing in a pipeline of housing solutions to create increased inventory of housing dedicated to people exiting homelessness. These new units focus on having access to the resources our neighbors need to be successful including access to food, transportation, and employment. The pipeline has over 1100 units across the city online or in development.

Unprecedented growth in the City combined with rising rents and low vacancy rates are creating a daunting challenge: preventing an increasing number of individuals from entering the homeless system. To maintain and build on our successes, we urgently need continued and sustained investments, akin to the support provided by previous stimulus funds. Without this critical funding, our ability to combat homelessness will be severely compromised.

METHODOLOGY

home-less-ness

/hōmləs-nəs/

noun

Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence

as defined by HUD



The data gathered in this report, though not without limitations, offers the most accurate estimation of the number of sheltered and unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness within the City of Atlanta (hereinafter, Atlanta). This crucial data serves as a foundation for decision-making by stakeholders at local, state, and national levels, aiming to make homelessness a rare, brief, and non-recurring experience.

For the 2024 PIT Count, Partners for HOME worked with over 300 volunteers to conduct surveys across the expansive geography of Atlanta, which encompasses 243 neighborhoods. This extensive volunteer effort was crucial to the data collection process.

Adhering to HUD's definition of homelessness, our survey targeted individuals and families in emergency shelters or unsheltered living situations, as well as those fleeing domestic violence on the night of January 22, 2024. To capture data on those potentially missed during the initial count, additional surveys were conducted from January 24 through January 29 at various partner sites. Our survey included standard PIT questions along with additional questions tailored to address specific community needs.

Data was also obtained from ClientTrack, the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) used in the state of Georgia, which records information on individuals in transitional housing and emergency shelters. Combining survey results and HMIS data, we compiled a comprehensive census of individuals experiencing homelessness in Atlanta, providing essential insights to guide interventions and policy formulation.



2,867 Persons*

counted throughout 243 neighborhoods within the city limits of Atlanta.

*sheltered and unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness

VOLUNTEER AND PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

The PIT Count in Atlanta was significantly bolstered by the unprecedented community engagement and collaborative effort involving a diverse array of partners and volunteers. Partners for HOME helped to facilitate a truly community-driven effort, with extensive involvement from local agencies, nonprofits, educational institutions, and federal entities.

This year marked the first time libraries were utilized as day site locations, providing accessible points for data collection and interaction with the community. This integration of libraries played a crucial role in extending our outreach and making the PIT Count more inclusive and comprehensive.

Volunteers, who were instrumental in the planning and execution of the count, came from a wide range of organizations, exemplifying the community's commitment to addressing homelessness. Notable contributions include:

- Local and federal agencies such as HUD, CDC, Atlanta Police Department and the Atlanta Government, including the Mayor's office
- Healthcare organizations including Mercy Care and Grady
- Business Partnerships including The Home Depot Foundation
- CoC providers

These volunteers not only conducted surveys and collected data but also donated and distributed warming bags during the night count. These bags contained essential items such as hats, gloves, hygiene products, and snacks, offering immediate relief to those surveyed.

The collaboration extended beyond volunteer participation. CoC providers were heavily involved in the planning stages, ensuring that the count was well-coordinated and tailored to meet the specific needs of Atlanta's homeless population. This year's PIT Count exemplified a model of community partnership, with every agency playing a pivotal role in its success.

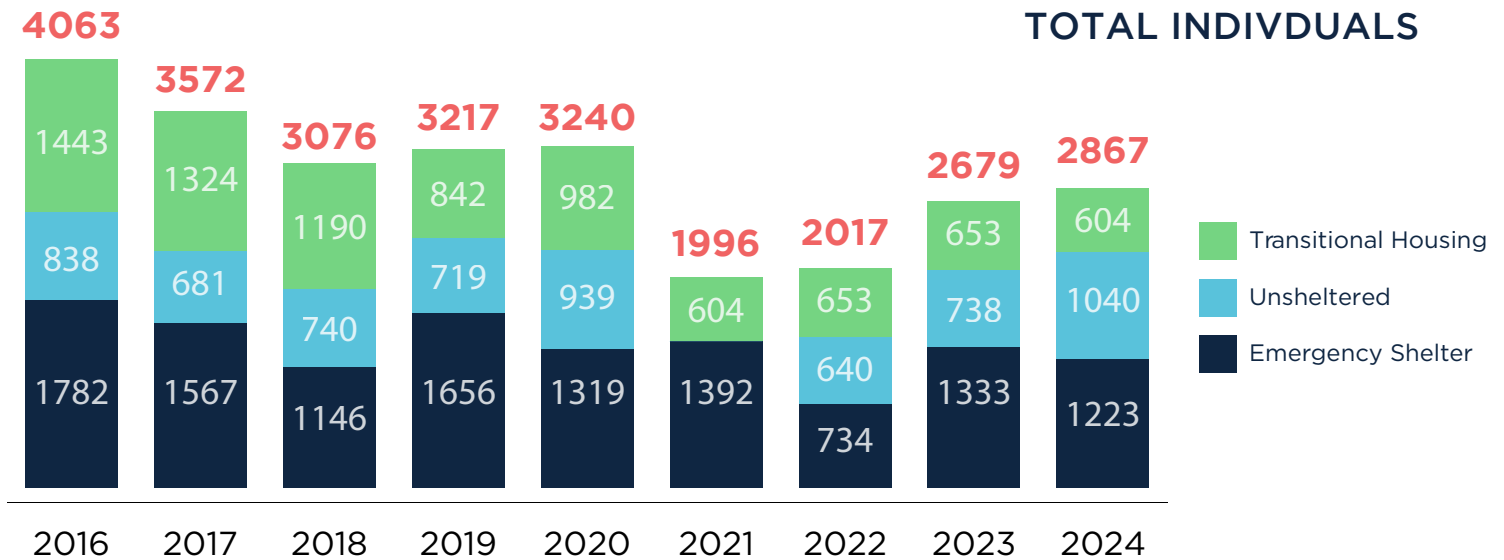


OVERALL TRENDS

Like many communities nationwide, Atlanta has seen a rise in the number of people experiencing homelessness since the onset of the pandemic. Although our current figures remain below the pre-pandemic levels, we have observed an increase since 2022, particularly among our unsheltered population. Recognizing these evolving challenges, in 2023, we implemented a strategic plan tailored to the current landscape of our community. This plan places a heightened focus on our most vulnerable subpopulations - families, youths and veterans - ensuring that our interventions are both targeted and effective in addressing the specific needs of those most at risk.



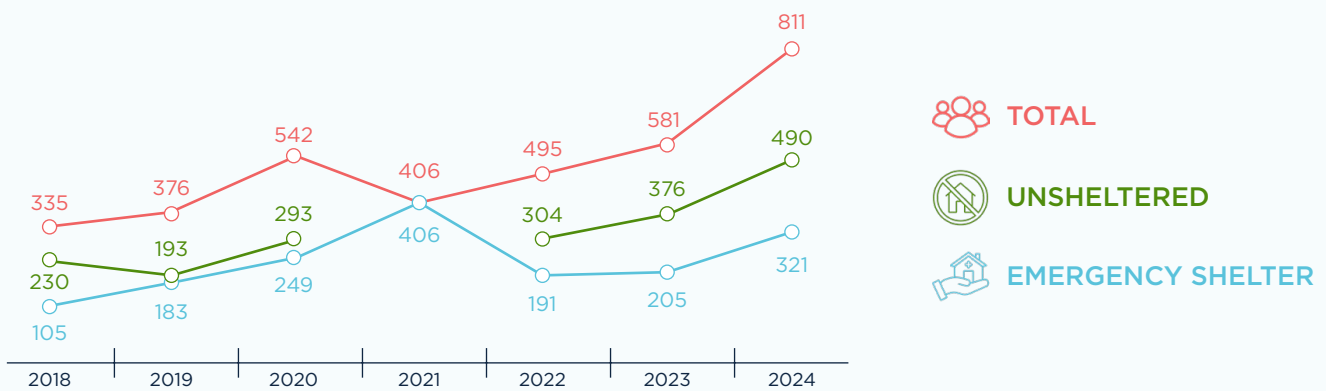
ATLANTA COC PIT COUNT
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS



CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

HUD categorizes an individual as chronically homeless if they possess at least one disabling condition—such as a substance use disorder, mental illness or chronic health condition, — and have either been homeless continuously for at least one year or have experienced homelessness four or more times within the last three years, with these episodes totaling at least one year.

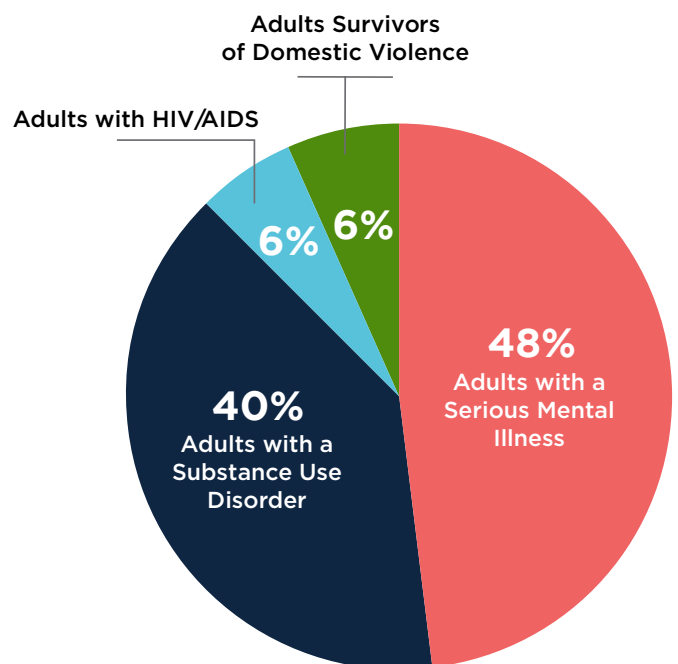
Chronic homelessness represents the segment with the largest percentage increase among subpopulations. In response, our 2023-2028 Community Plan to Reduce and End Homelessness is committed to significantly reducing unsheltered and chronic homelessness in Atlanta. Our approach includes a coordinated strategy of systematic engagement, diversion, rapid rehousing, and the provision of permanent supportive housing solutions, all designed to address the specific needs and challenges associated with chronic conditions.



OTHER CHARACTERISTIC TRENDS

The data presented in this section reflects the 2024 “other characteristics” for sheltered and unsheltered populations residing in emergency shelter or transitional housing on the night of PIT. These individuals include those with serious mental illness, substance use disorders, and HIV/AIDS, as well as survivors of domestic violence. HUD designates these groups as vulnerable due to their increased risk factors and barriers to stable housing.

From the previous year, we observed an increase in the number of individuals with serious mental illness, substance use disorders, and HIV/AIDS. Notably, the count of adult survivors of domestic violence remained consistent. It is important to clarify that some individuals may be represented across multiple categories due to intersecting circumstances and/or identities.

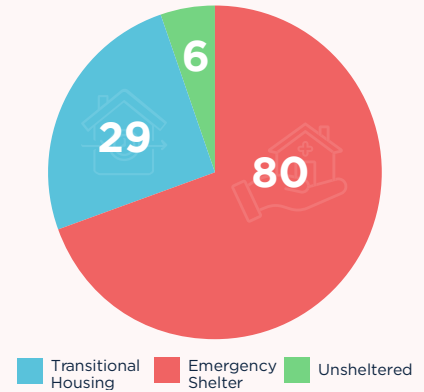


SUBPOPULATION DATA

Under the 2023 - 2028 Strategic Plan, the Atlanta CoC has defined clear priorities to address the pressing challenges of homelessness across various vulnerable populations including chronic cases, families, youth, and veterans. It is important to note that individuals surveyed can belong to more than one subpopulation.

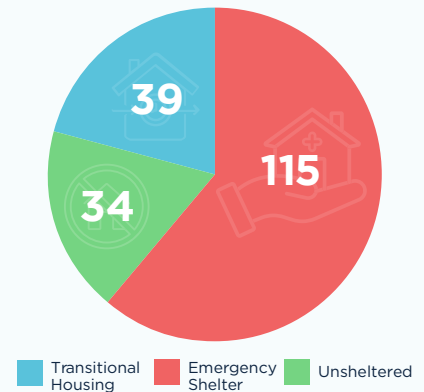
FAMILIES - 115

A family is defined as a household consisting of one or more parent/guardian(s) with at least one minor child under the age of 18. Notably, families represent the subpopulation that has seen a decrease in homelessness compared to previous years. Our strategic plan is specifically tailored to strengthen interventions that prevent homelessness and facilitate rapid exits from the homeless system for families. This includes a range of emergency interventions and sustainable housing solutions designed to ensure that all families with minor children have access to safe and stable living environments.



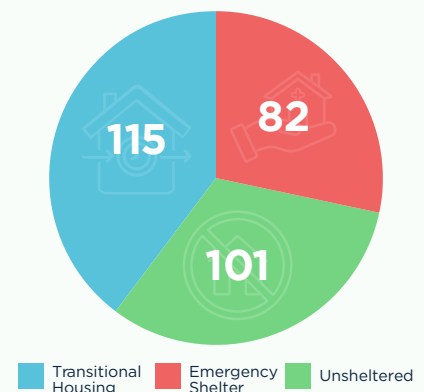
YOUTHS - 188

Youth experiencing homelessness are defined as young adults between the ages of 18 and 24, who may be unaccompanied (not under the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian) or are parenting (acting as the parent or legal guardian of a minor child under the age of 18). This demographic increased last year. To address this, our CoC's initiatives focus on providing targeted support to both unaccompanied and parenting youth. Efforts include specialized outreach programs, access to services specifically designed for young people, and housing solutions that are tailored to meet the developmental needs of individuals within this age group, ensuring that they receive the support necessary for a successful transition to stable adulthood.



VETERANS - 287

An individual is classified as a veteran if they have served in the United States Armed Forces. While the veteran population has experienced an increase, it has seen the smallest percentage rise compared to other subpopulations. Our strategic plan is dedicated to providing comprehensive housing and support services tailored specifically for veterans. Integral to this effort is our collaboration with US Department of Veterans Affairs, aimed at streamlining access to benefits and services, thus enhancing the support system for our veterans.





RACE

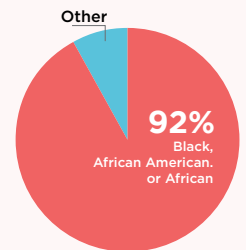
The overall data illustrates a disproportionate representation of Black, African American or African (hereinafter, Black) individuals within the homeless population at 86% of the total population experiencing homelessness, mirroring the trends observed in the special subgroups of families, veterans, and youth. This overarching trend suggests systemic racial disparities that may be contributing to the higher rates of homelessness among Black individuals. Building a service culture that promotes antiracism, diversity, equity, and inclusion is one of the guiding principles of our 2023-2028 Community Plan to Reduce and End Homelessness.

	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered	TOTAL
American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous	8	5	12	25
Asian or Asian American	10	2	2	14
Black, African American, or African	986	501	933	2420
Hispanic/Latina/e/o	21	1	23	45
Middle Eastern or North African	5	0	1	6
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	2	0	2	4
White	135	64	99	298
Multi-Racial (All Other)	56	32	33	121

The chart provides a detailed breakdown of the racial and ethnic composition across various subgroups of the homeless population in our community. This data is pivotal for understanding the broader dynamics at play and for identifying where racial disparities are most pronounced.

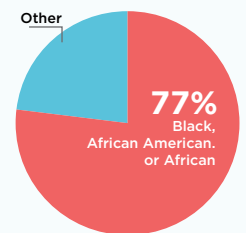
FAMILIES

92% of individuals in families experiencing homelessness are Black. This indicates a significant racial disparity within the homeless families subgroup. It suggests that Black families are overwhelmingly more likely to experience homelessness, pointing to deeper systemic issues that may include economic disparities, housing discrimination, and inadequate access to social services.



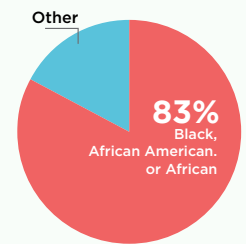
YOUTH

Within our system, a significant majority (77%) of homeless youth identify as Black, indicating a substantial racial disparity. However, it's notable that the youth demographic also shows a higher propensity than other groups to identify as belonging to races other than Black. Additionally, there is a growing trend among youth identifying as multiracial, which is now the fastest expanding racial demographic in the U.S.



VETERANS

The racial demographics of veterans experiencing homelessness in Atlanta are in alignment with the racial distribution of the overall population in our CoC for PIT this year with 83% of veterans being Black, 10% being white, 4% being multiracial, and the remaining being primarily made up of Latino/a/x, Asian, and Indigenous folks.



The racial and ethnic composition data presented in the chart is a call to action for tailored, culturally competent interventions that recognize the specific needs and challenges faced by different groups within the homeless population. By focusing on these disparities, the community can work towards more equitable outcomes and a significant reduction in homelessness.

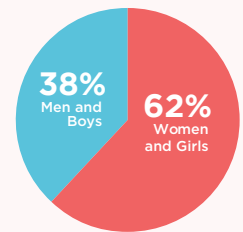


Representing a disproportionate 73% of the total population experiencing homelessness, men and boys highlight significant gender disparities within the homeless community. Women and girls account for approximately 25% of the homeless population. Making up about 2% of the population, those identifying as transgender, non-binary, multiple genders, or having a culturally specific identity illustrate the diversity within the community.

	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered	TOTAL
Woman (Girl, if child)	344	158	240	742
Man (Boy, if Child)	861	443	849	2153
Culturally Specific Identity	0	0	2	2
Transgender	10	2	8	20
Non-Binary	2	0	2	4
Questioning	0	0	0	0
Different Identity	0	0	0	0
Multiple Gender	6	1	5	12

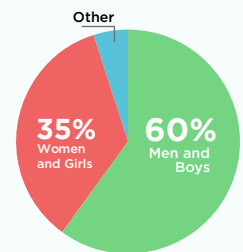
FAMILIES

Contrary to the general population, women and girls comprise a disproportionate 62% within homeless families, emphasizing a distinct gender dynamic in this subgroup. Notably, reports from families do not include any individuals identifying beyond cis-gender categories.



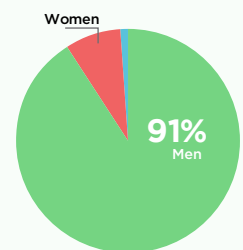
YOUTH

Shows a slight shift in gender proportions with 60% being men or boys, 35% women or girls, 4% transgender, and 2% either non-binary or identifying with more than one gender. This indicates a more diverse gender representation among the younger homeless population.



VETERANS

Men make up 91% of homeless veterans within the CoC. Women represent 8%, and individuals with a culturally specific identity account for 1%.



The overarching data reveal a substantial gender imbalance with men significantly outnumbering women in all housing categories. This disparity calls for targeted interventions to address the unique needs and challenges faced by men within the homeless population. The small yet significant presence of individuals identifying as transgender, non-binary, and other genders suggests potential underreporting and highlights the unique challenges these groups face in accessing appropriate shelter and transitional housing. While minimal, the inclusion of culturally specific identities among the youth and overall population underscores the complexity and diversity of gender identity within the homeless community, necessitating culturally competent and inclusive support services.

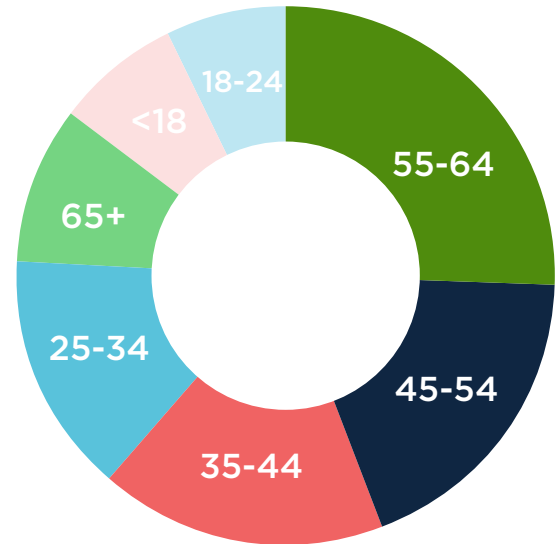


AGE

Understanding the age of people experiencing homelessness in our community allows us to create tailored interventions. Below is a narrative summarizing age demographic data.

Age Distribution:

- **Under 18:** There are 216 persons under the age of 18, indicating that children and teenagers make up a small but significant portion of the homeless population. Most of these young individuals are in emergency shelters (146), with fewer in transitional settings (54) and very few unsheltered (16).
- **18 - 24 Years:** Young adults in this age group total 211, with 128 in emergency shelters, 45 in transitional, and 38 unsheltered.
- **25 - 34 Years:** This age group totals 427, indicating significant homelessness among young adults with 187 in emergency shelters, 100 in transitional, and 140 unsheltered. This group also represents the largest percentage of parents in parenting households.
- **35 - 44 Years:** There are 501 individuals in this bracket, distributed across 191 in emergency shelters, 95 in transitional, and 215 unsheltered, showing a higher tendency to be unsheltered compared to younger age groups.
- **45 - 54 Years:** Representing one of the largest groups, there are 548 persons, with a high number unsheltered (254).
- **55 - 64 Years:** This age group has the highest count at 753, with a significant number unsheltered (354), highlighting vulnerabilities as individuals approach senior age.
- **65 and Older:** Seniors total 277, with 147 in emergency shelters, 41 in transitional, and 89 unsheltered, pointing to the critical need for adequate housing solutions for the elderly.





SEXUALITY

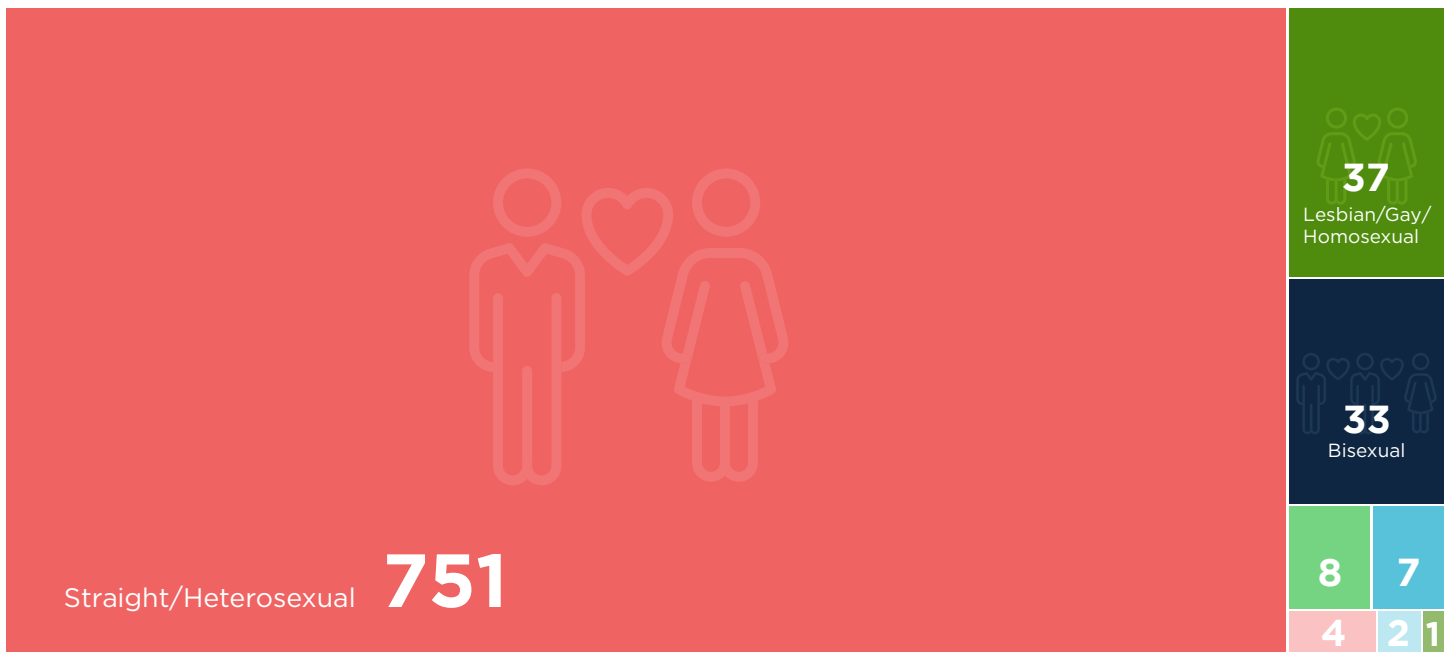
In recognition of Atlanta’s diverse and vibrant community, we incorporated questions about sexuality in our survey to better understand the dynamics within the city known for its active LGBTQ+ presence. This was a two-part question, initially gauging respondents’ comfort levels in sharing their sexual orientation. Notably, 80% of the adults surveyed were willing to disclose their sexuality, reflecting a relatively high level of openness among participants.

The majority of respondents (89%) identified as straight or heterosexual. Within the LGBTQ+ spectrum, 4% identified as lesbian, gay, or homosexual, and another 4% as bisexual, demonstrating the diversity within the community. Additionally, 1% of respondents identified as pansexual, while the remaining 3% comprised individuals identifying as asexual, queer, questioning, or unknown. It is important to note that these figures likely represent an undercount, as 20% of respondents did not feel comfortable sharing their sexual orientation, which may skew the actual representation.

Given that approximately 11% of respondents identify with a non-heterosexual orientation, it is crucial for service providers to ensure that their programs are inclusive and responsive to the needs of LGBTQ+ individuals. These findings should steer targeted outreach efforts and specialized services to address the unique challenges faced by sexual minorities within the homeless community.

Furthermore, this data lays a solid foundation for advocating more comprehensive policies tailored to the specific needs of LGBTQ+ unsheltered individuals, with a focus on ensuring their safety, dignity, and access to appropriate services. As we move forward, we aim to collect more complete data in future PIT Counts to enhance our understanding and support of this vulnerable segment of our community.

Other Pansexual Asexual Unknown Queer



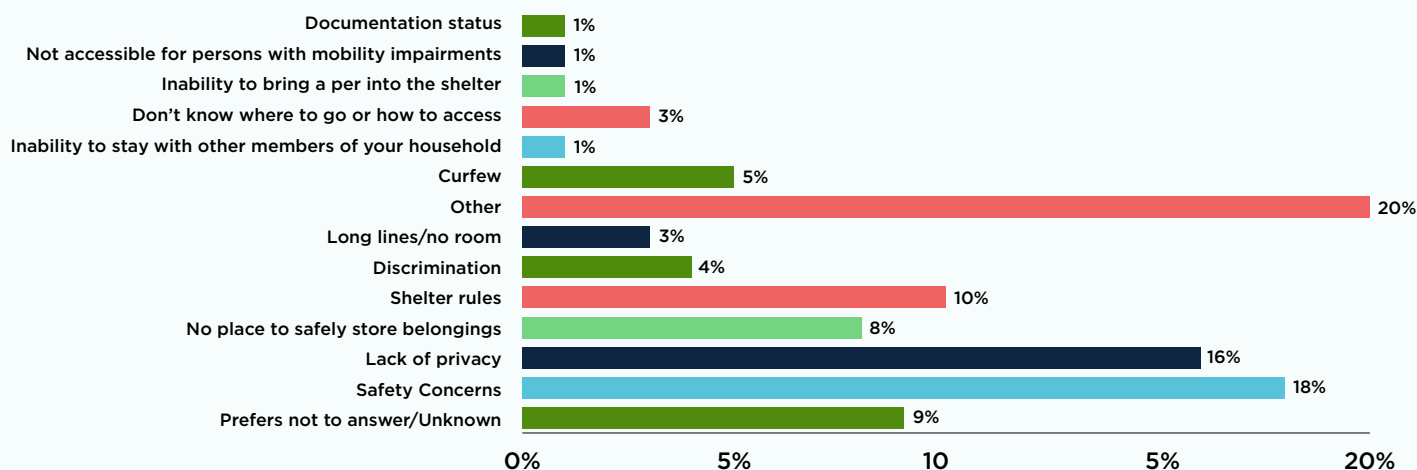
80% of adults surveyed – 839 out of 1,053 – were comfortable sharing their sexual orientation



PREFERENCES AND BARRIERS TO SHELTER

As part of our ongoing commitment to understanding and addressing the multifaceted challenges of homelessness, we integrated supplemental questions into our unsheltered survey to deepen our insights into why some community members remain outside the shelter system. Recognizing the diversity of needs and preferences within our homeless population, these questions aim to pinpoint specific barriers and perceptions that hinder the use of available shelter and housing programs. This tailored approach allows us to strategize more effectively and adapt our services to meet the actual conditions and concerns of those we aim to assist.

Our strategic plan is committed to reducing and ultimately ending unsheltered homelessness in the city. We are actively implementing initiatives specifically designed to house our unhoused neighbors. Recent encampment efforts have shown that many unsheltered people prefer to go directly from the street into housing. Lessons learned from the pandemic suggest non-congregate shelter with private space and safety is highly desired and without which, many people will decline traditional shelter as an interim solution while awaiting housing. As a result, we are amplifying our coordination with partners to seamlessly move individuals directly to housing from the street. In 2023, only 11% of our households made this direct transition. The majority first moved through emergency shelters (77%) or transitional housing (12%).



Despite the availability of these services, they do not meet the needs or preferences of all community members. This year, we explored community willingness to use shelter services if readily available. Results indicated that while 61% of the surveyed individuals would use such services, 34% would not, and an additional 5% were unsure. Among the deterrents, safety concerns were the most significant barrier, cited by 18% of respondents. The “Other” category, also accounting for 20%, included specific grievances such as “Bed Bugs” and concerns over crowding. Issues such as stringent shelter rules and lack of privacy were also significant barriers.

Beyond these, some respondents expressed a preference for living outdoors, which highlights the complex personal and psychological challenges faced in transitioning to sheltered environments. Mental health issues were frequently noted as obstacles in both accessing and maintaining sheltered living. Moreover, concerns about documentation status prevent about 1% of our respondents from qualifying for housing programs, as typical requirements include social security identification and a birth certificate.

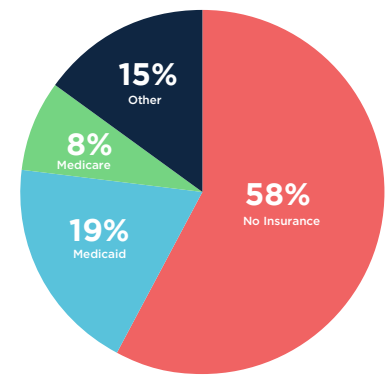
Recognizing some individuals’ preference for outdoor living, we are tasked with a dual approach: improving our shelter system to such a standard that it becomes a preferable alternative to living outdoors, and concurrently, addressing the broader systemic issues that lead to homelessness. This involves a commitment to refining our outreach and support services to engage effectively with those hesitant to utilize traditional shelter options in order to rehouse them quickly.



Healthcare and homelessness are inextricably linked, impacting one another in profound ways. To deepen our understanding of the health-related challenges faced by the homeless population, we conducted PIT surveys for the second consecutive year in partnership with Grady Hospital. These surveys were conducted in the emergency department and inpatient units — both critical access points for many experiencing homelessness.

Findings revealed that a significant 67% of the respondents reported having a disability, highlighting the heightened health needs within this vulnerable group. Alarmingly, only 37% of those individuals are currently receiving treatment for their reported conditions. This gap underscores a critical barrier to health equity for the unsheltered population, where health issues are often exacerbated by the lack of consistent and adequate medical care.

Moreover, the survey indicated that nearly 60% of the respondents lacked health insurance, further complicating their access to necessary healthcare services. Among those who did have insurance, the majority were covered by Medicaid and Medicare, reflecting reliance on public health insurance programs designed for low-income individuals and the elderly or disabled.

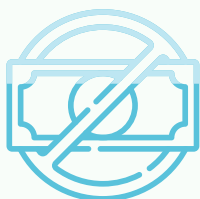


This data provides a stark illustration of the healthcare challenges faced by Atlanta’s unsheltered residents. The high prevalence of disabilities and the substantial lack of treatment highlight the urgent need for targeted health services that are accessible and responsive to the needs of those without shelter.

INCOME AND BENEFITS

In our ongoing efforts to address and mitigate homelessness in Atlanta, understanding the financial landscape of those affected is crucial. This year, we decided to collect supplemental information on income and benefits as part of our unsheltered survey to gain deeper insights into the economic challenges faced by the homeless population. Recognizing that financial stability is a key component in the journey towards securing stable housing, this additional data helps us to identify the specific needs and barriers that prevent our unsheltered residents from accessing necessary resources.

From the survey, it is evident that a significant portion of the unsheltered population, 61%, reported having no income at all, highlighting a critical area of concern in terms of economic vulnerability. Among those who do have some form of income, earned income (i.e., employment income) was reported by 7%, indicating that a minority are able to obtain some level of regular earnings despite their housing situations. The utilization of benefits, shows a staggering 72% reported receiving no benefits, underscoring the severe lack of support or barriers to accessing available social services. For those accessing benefits, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps) was reported by 23% as well, indicating a reliance on this program for basic nutritional needs.



61%
don't earn income
of any kind



72%
don't receive benefits
or additional support



HOUSING

In line with our strategic commitments outlined in the 2023-2028 Community Plan, our assessment of people experiencing homelessness extends beyond immediate needs, focusing on the broader housing inventory within Atlanta. This includes tracking the number of beds available and utilized during the Housing Inventory Count (HIC) and analyzing housing placement trends by intervention type to better understand the dynamics of our local homeless system.

The Housing Inventory Count is a critical tool within our Continuum of Care, providing a snapshot of available resources dedicated to serving people experiencing homelessness. It categorizes housing resources into four primary types:



Emergency Shelter



Transitional Housing



Permanent Supportive Housing



Rapid Re-Housing

These resources are crucial in addressing the varying needs of our unhoused neighbors population, from immediate shelter to more stable, long-term housing solutions. Significant underutilization of both shelter and transitional housing reflects the barriers and access challenges reported by unsheltered individuals.

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The utilization rates for 2024 are as follows:

- **EMERGENCY SHELTER - 67% UTILIZATION**
- **TRANSITIONAL HOUSING - 76% UTILIZATION**
- **PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING - 91% UTILIZATION***
- **RAPID RE-HOUSING - 100% UTILIZATION**



**9% underutilization reflects those people who have a voucher or referral in hand but are searching for a unit in the application process*

Overall, low utilization of temporary solutions, like shelters, and high utilization of permanent solutions continues to highlight the need to lower barriers in emergency shelter and increase investments in permanent housing.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The current housing market continues to influence our strategic planning significantly. Despite challenges such as the increasing cost of rental units and a competitive market, our strategy focuses on maximizing housing placements and enhancing the quality of housing solutions. This year, following the insights from our strategic plan, we aim to:

- **Enhance Housing Placements:** Building on the rapid rehousing placements during the pandemic, we continue to innovate our approaches to housing the homeless, aiming to exceed the LIFT 2.0 1,500 households housed goal by the end of 2024.
- **Expand Housing Options:** Collaborating with Atlanta, we are developing a range of housing solutions including semi-permanent and permanent units. This initiative leverages publicly owned land and alternative housing products such as containers to scale permanent housing quickly and cost effectively. The first of these innovative housing solutions in the City, the Melody, opened earlier this year.
- **Focused Street Outreach:** In our commitment to addressing homelessness directly at its most visible and vulnerable points, we have initiated tailored street outreach programs aimed at decommissioning bridge encampments. This strategic effort involves building strong partnerships with city authorities to ensure a coordinated approach. With nearly 350 households already benefiting from these focused interventions, which include enhanced navigation and case management, we are expanding our outreach initiatives to connect more individuals with the necessary support and facilitate their transition into stable housing environments.

As we move forward, the Atlanta CoC and Partners for HOME is committed to refining and expanding our strategies to end homelessness. By aligning our housing inventory with strategic community needs and leveraging both governmental and private resources, we aim to create a more inclusive and effective framework for addressing homelessness in Atlanta. This approach not only meets immediate needs but also builds a foundation for sustainable solutions that will benefit our community in the years to come.