2023

POINT-IN-TIME COUNT

SAN ANTONIO / BEXAR COUNTY REPORT

MAY 2023

EVERYONE COUNTS

20   23

POINT-IN-TIME

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ABOUT SARAH

The South Alamo Regional Alliance for the Homeless (SARAH) is San Antonio and Bexar County's Continuum of Care (CoC) lead agency. SARAH secures and distributes funding for direct service providers in the housing and homelessness sectors and provides guidance to improve local policies and programs. SARAH is tasked by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to conduct the annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count and submit the information collected to the HUD Homelessness Data Exchange (HDX) for national reporting.

Our Mission

We exist to ensure everyone has a place to call home in San Antonio and Bexar County.

Theory of Impact

We accomplish our mission by strengthening our coordinated system of care, promoting sustainable strategies, focusing on measurable impact, and advocating for people experiencing homelessness.

Our Values

We are **Empowering Partners**. We see the potential in people, lead with trust, embrace differences, and elevate strengths.

We are **Relentless Learners**. We strive to be subject matter experts and recognize setbacks as opportunities for growth.

We are **Resourceful Problem Solvers**. We embrace optimism, innovation, and excellence as we face adversity and tackle problems.

We are **Systems Leaders**. We cultivate collaboration and nurture the health of the whole.

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Acknowledgments

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2023 Point-in-Time Count showcases our community's effective response to the needs of people who are experiencing homelessness in San Antonio and Bexar County.

In total, 3,155 people were counted as experiencing homelessness during the 2023 PIT Count, a 5% increase from the 2022 count. Despite this overall increase, there was a 16% decrease in those experiencing unsheltered homelessness this year.

This year we streamlined our survey methodology through a continued partnership with Outreach Grid and the dedication of our community's street outreach workers, who documented known locations in the software leading up to the count.

Also, with a tremendous response to our call for volunteers and team leads, we were able to activate additional surveying zones (72 total), with larger teams in each zone. On the night of the count, hundreds of surveyors covered Bexar County's 1,256 square miles, including San Antonio's 10 City Council Districts and surrounding municipalities.

Overall, there were encouraging trends based on targeted work over the last year to reduce unsheltered homelessness. However, we are still dealing with the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent job loss, inflation, and rising housing costs impacting families.

Our community would benefit from additional federal resources similar to levels seen throughout the pandemic. SARAH and our partners will continue to prioritize advocating for homelessness prevention resources and expanding housing options that families can afford.

WHAT IS THE POINT-IN-TIME COUNT?

This information not only helps us better serve our community but also shapes national priorities on homelessness and critical funding decisions.

The Point-in-Time (PIT) Count is a one-night snapshot that provides information about those experiencing homelessness in our communities. Nationwide, Continuums of Care (CoCs) are required to conduct an annual PIT Count to collect and report essential data on the numbers and demographics of those experiencing homelessness.

CoCs utilize the local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and comparable databases to report on those experiencing sheltered homelessness, while hundreds of volunteers assist with gathering data on those experiencing unsheltered homelessness. The PIT Count attempts to include all individuals experiencing homelessness, whether unsheltered (sleeping outdoors, in encampments, abandoned buildings, etc.) or in a shelter. This information not only helps us better serve our community but also shapes national priorities on homelessness and critical funding decisions.

HUD requires that communities nationwide conduct the PIT Count on a single night in the last ten days of January, the coldest month of the year. The reason for this requirement is that people experiencing unsheltered homelessness are more likely to seek shelter, therefore, lessening the reliance on outreach and volunteer efforts to provide an accurate snapshot of those experiencing homelessness.

This report analyzes the PIT Count data captured on Tuesday, January 24, 2023, in San Antonio/Bexar County.

As the region's CoC Lead Agency, SARAH led the planning and implementation of the PIT Count in coordination with the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agency, Haven for Hope, along with local providers to verify and update the reported counts of people enrolled during the night of the PIT Count. SARAH is grateful for and inspired by the efforts and diligence of all its partners and volunteers throughout San Antonio and Bexar County.

2023 KEY FINDINGS

1

While the overall count of individuals experiencing homelessness in San Antonio/Bexar County **increased by 5.3%** from 2022, the unsheltered count **decreased by 15.6%**.

2

Chronic homelessness, or homelessness for 12 months or more with a disabling condition, **decreased by 33%** from 2022. When looking at the unsheltered count only, chronic homelessness **decreased by 55%**.

3

At **21%** of the overall homeless population, the percentage of Black/African American individuals experiencing homelessness **decreased by 1.5%** from 2022 but still is an overrepresentation proportional to the community population **by about three times**.

4

In our sheltered count, families experiencing homelessness, households with at least one child, increased for the second year in a row. Families are now up **over 60% since 2021**, coinciding with the waning of targeted, pandemic-related protections.

5

Children (0-17) represented just **0.3%** of the unsheltered count, whereas they were the highest-represented age group in the sheltered count at **25%**.

6

There was nearly a **20% increase** in individuals who reported experiencing homelessness due to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.
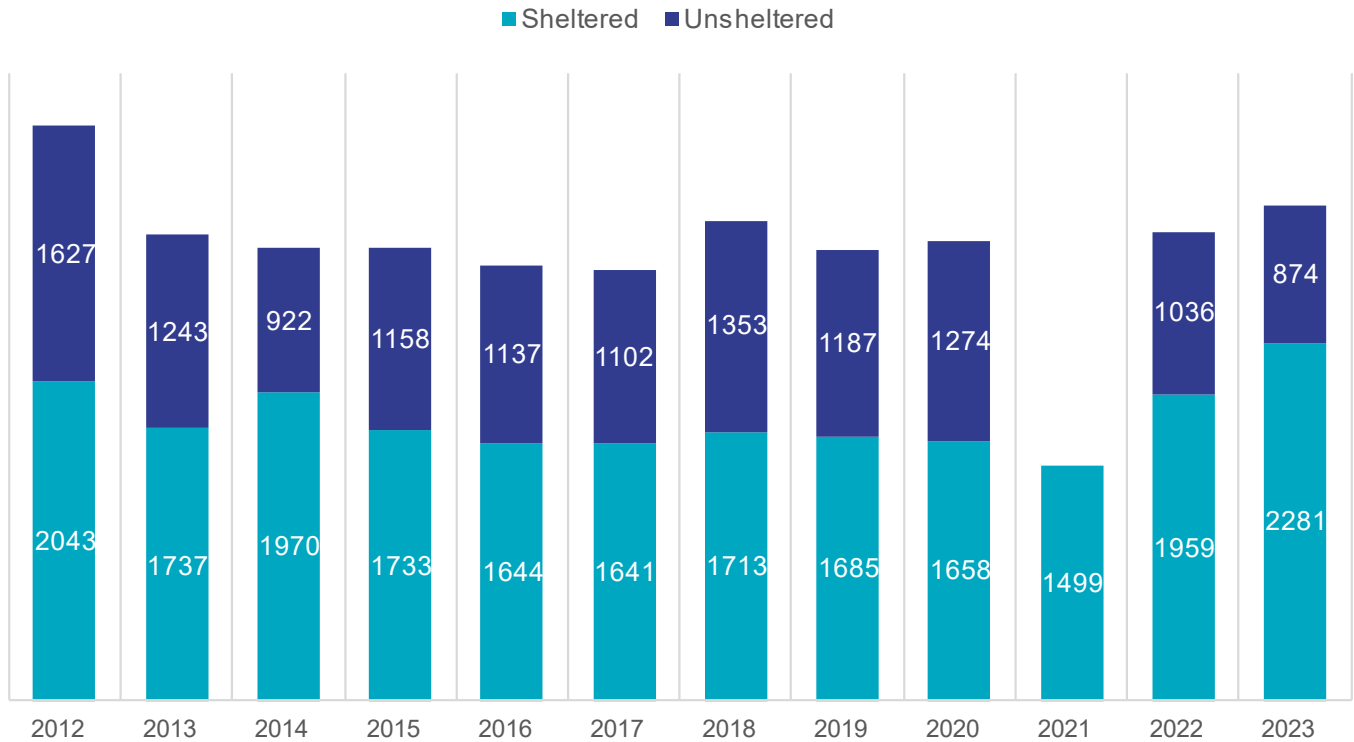
7

Out of **874 individuals** experiencing unsheltered homelessness, only **33 were veterans**, which remains the lowest reported count of unsheltered veterans in San Antonio/Bexar County since the Mayor's Challenge to Effectively End Veteran Homelessness in 2016.

8

Housing once again was the top self-identified need among those experiencing unsheltered homelessness, followed by **Food** and **General Transportation**, replacing ID Recovery and Healthcare in the top three.

CHANGE OVER TIME

For the 2023 count, **3,155 individuals** were counted as experiencing homelessness. Of that, **874 individuals were unsheltered**, and **2,281 were sheltered**.

■ Sheltered ■ Unsheltered

Year	Sheltered	Unsheltered
2012	2043	1627
2013	1737	1243
2014	1970	922
2015	1733	1158
2016	1644	1137
2017	1641	1102
2018	1713	1353
2019	1685	1187
2020	1658	1274
2021	1499	
2022	1959	1036
2023	2281	874

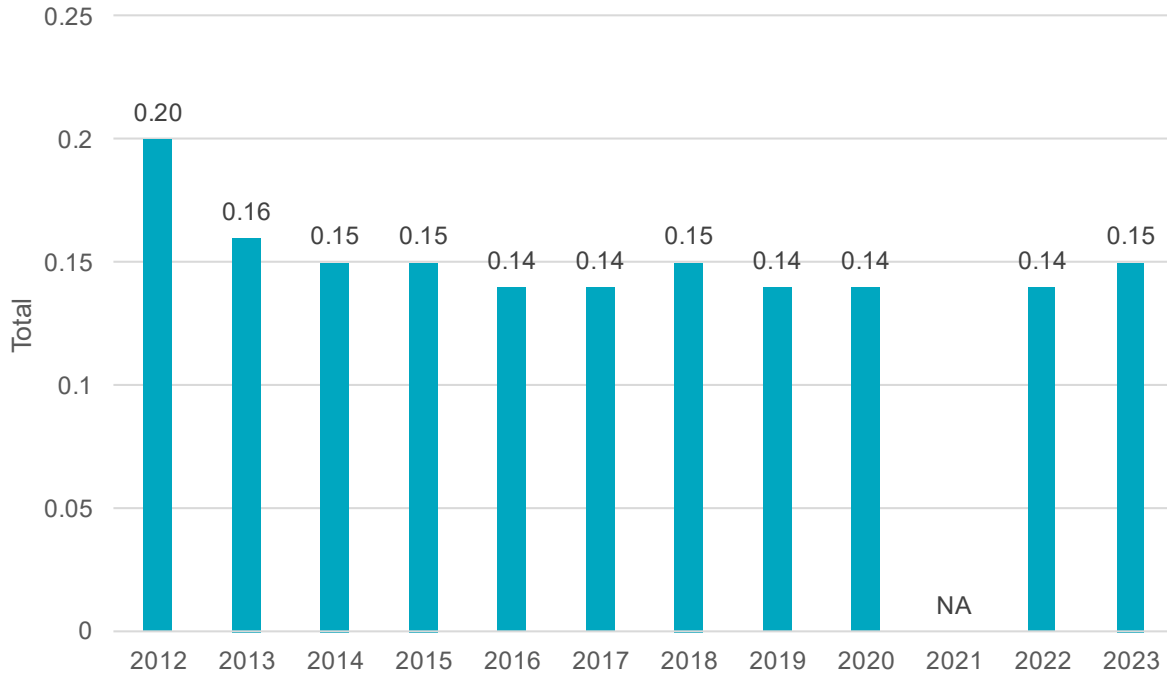*Note: An unsheltered count was not conducted in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

The unsheltered count **decreased by 15.6%** from the 2022 unsheltered count. The sheltered count **increased by 16.4%** from the 2022 sheltered count. The overall count of individuals experiencing homelessness, both sheltered and unsheltered, **increased by 5.3%** from 2022 to 2023, or just a 0.01% increase in homelessness as a percentage of Bexar County's total population.

Many different factors can shape fluctuations in the number of people experiencing homelessness. In the last half of 2022, our community implemented new strategies to streamline client intake. Additionally, continued education and training, as well as the expansion of street outreach capacity, ensures that clients consistently receive proper service interventions. And finally, these fluctuations may also be impacted by less strict social distancing protocols, allowing projects to serve clients at full capacity.
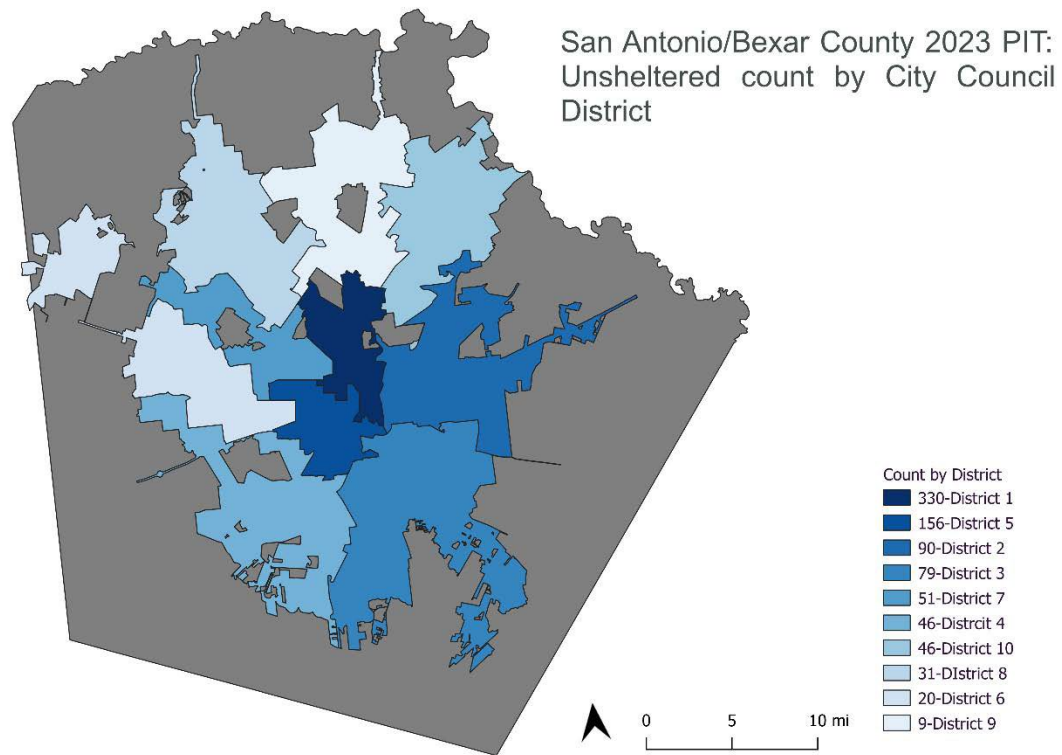
Importantly, our community also received unprecedented and continued funding through Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, and emergency housing vouchers.

All of these factors, combined with the dedicated efforts of street outreach workers, shelters, housing programs, and the coordinated efforts from the city and county, contributed to our community's success in decreasing the unsheltered count.

The figure below should be considered alongside the city and county's total population. According to census data, an estimated 2,059,530 (Census 2022 estimates since estimates for 2023 were not publicly available when this report was written) people live in San Antonio and Bexar County. This 2% increase in the total population from 2020 to 2023 results in the continued trend locally of about **0.15% of the total population experiencing homelessness or a slight 0.01% increase from 2022**.

Note: Number calculated as a percentage utilizing annual PIT Count data and Census Population Estimates.

San Antonio/Bexar County 2023 PIT: Unsheltered count by City Council District

Count by District
- 330-District 1
- 156-District 5
- 90-District 2
- 79-District 3
- 51-District 7
- 46-Distrcit 4
- 46-District 10
- 31-DIstrict 8
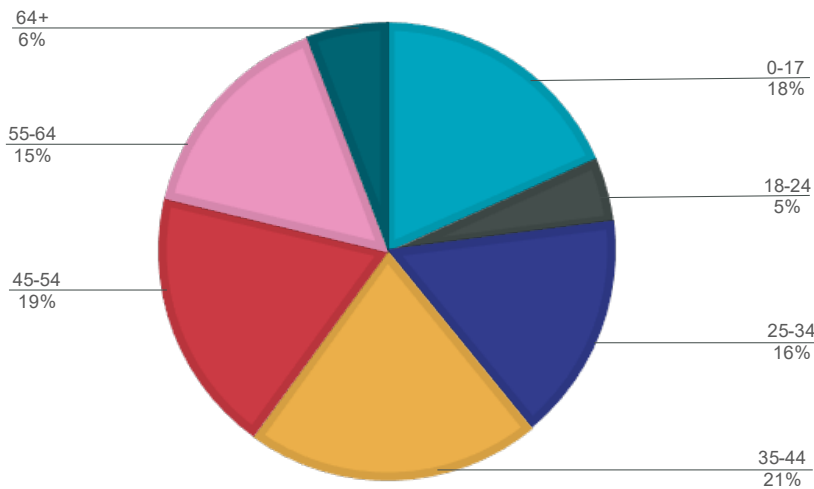- 20-District 6
- 9-District 9

98% of unsheltered surveys were conducted within the 504 square miles of San Antonio's ten City Council Districts. The majority (55.6%) of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Bexar County on the night of the PIT Count were surveyed in either District 1 or 5.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The following pages detail key demographic breakdowns. These numbers comprise both the sheltered and unsheltered populations unless otherwise noted. Additionally, these counts only include the data we were able to collect, so there is missing data, especially among those experiencing unsheltered homelessness. We discuss data limitations and considerations further on page 17 of this report.
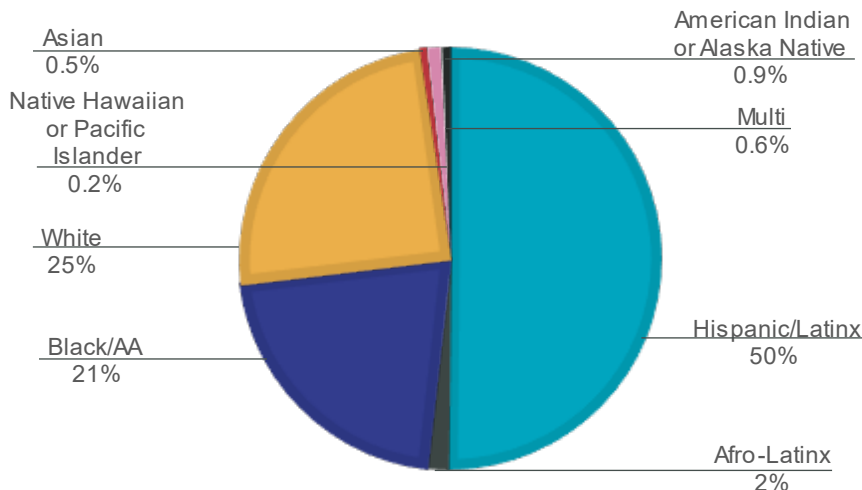
Age

64+
6%

55-64
15%

45-54
19%

0-17
18%

18-24
5%

25-34
16%

35-44
21%

At 21%, the **35-44 age range represents the largest group**, followed by 45-54, and under 18 in the combined Unsheltered and Sheltered totals.

Children (0-17) represented **0.3% of the Unsheltered Count**, whereas they were the highest-represented age group in the **Sheltered Count at 25%**. Alternatively, Adults 64 and older represented **3% of the Unsheltered Count** and **7% of the Sheltered Count**.

Race/Ethnicity

Asian
0.5%

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
0.2%

White
25%

Black/AA
21%

American Indian or Alaska Native
0.9%

Multi
0.6%

Hispanic/Latinx
50%

Afro-Latinx
2%

Latinx/Hispanic individuals represent 50% of people experiencing homelessness (47% in 2022), which is about proportional to the community population.
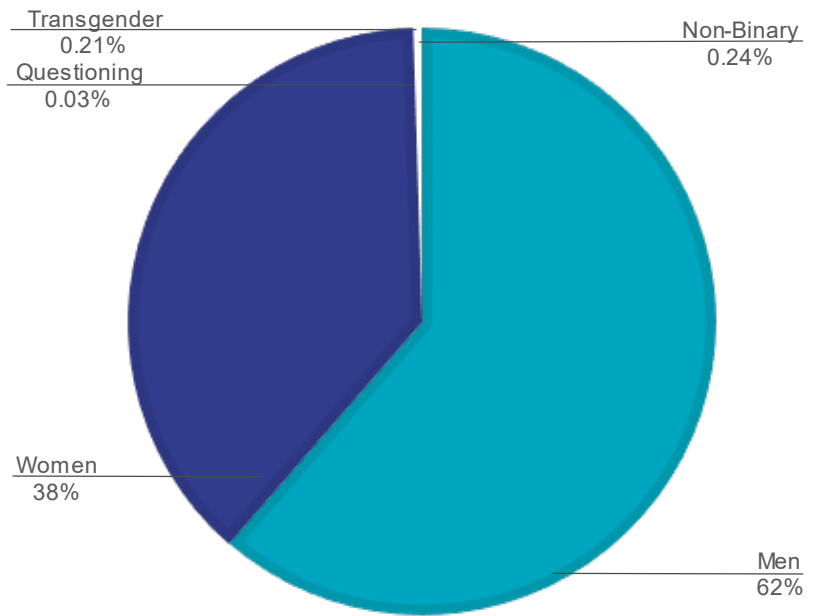
Black/African American individuals represent 21% of people experiencing homelessness (22.5% in 2022), still an **overrepresentation** proportional to the community population **by about three times**.

Gender

Proportions remained consistent with 2022, with a 1% or less change in each gender identity.

Men continue to be **overrepresented at 62%** of overall homelessness.

6 people identified as Transgender or Non-Binary, but this may be an undercount due to stigma or fear of violence shaping the ways people choose to disclose this identity or even present for such a count.

Transgender 0.21%
Questioning 0.03%
Non-Binary 0.24%
Women 38%
Men 62%

Sexual Orientation

We asked those experiencing **unsheltered homelessness** if they identified as part of the LGBTQ+ community.

Of those who answered, **3% identified as LGBTQ+. This is a 4% decrease from 2022.** Again, stigma may lead to an undercount of those identifying as such for this survey.
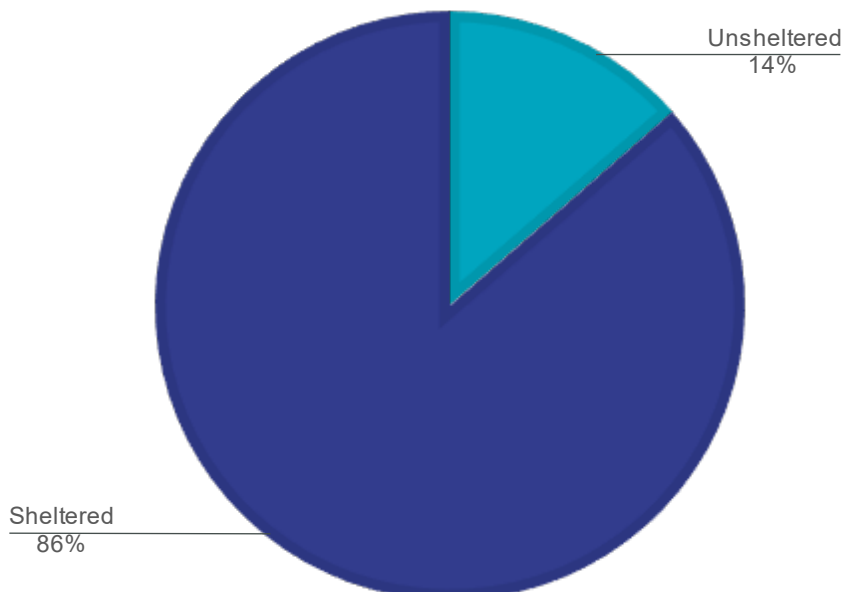
Of those who identify as LGBTQ+, **23% reported that their sexual orientation affected their current experience of homelessness.**

Veteran Status

33 unsheltered veterans (Same total that was reported in 2022)

211 sheltered veterans (a 12% increase from 2022)

The 2023 reported count of **unsheltered veterans remains the lowest number** since we began closely monitoring this population for the Mayor's Challenge to Effectively End Veteran Homelessness in 2016.
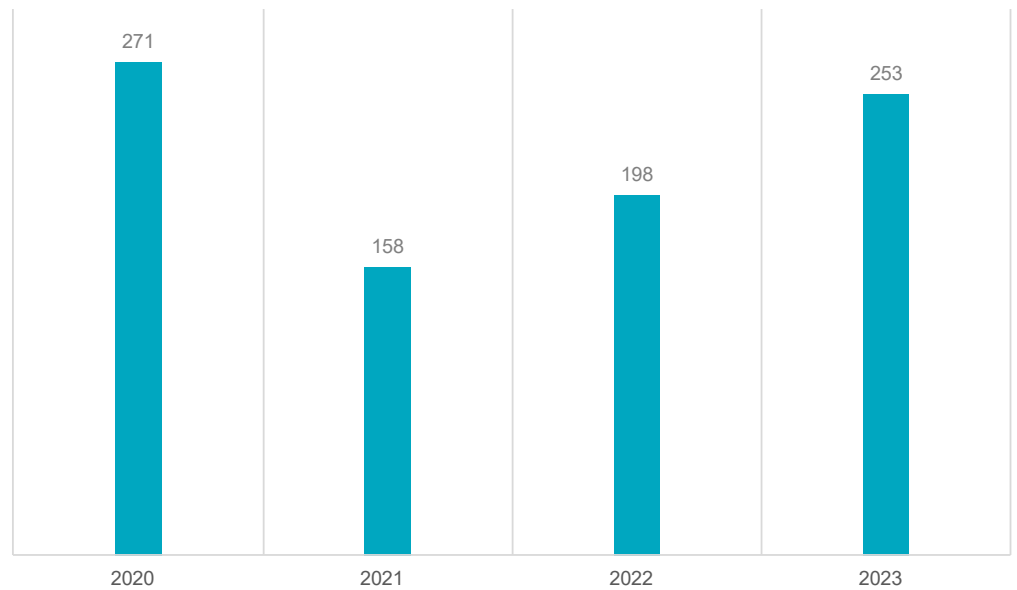

Unsheltered 14%
Sheltered 86%

Families

253 sheltered families

28% increase from 2022

Families in the sheltered count include households with at least one child.

Families come in all forms and can also include chosen families. Among households experiencing unsheltered homelessness, 57 self-reported as families, none of which included children.

Sheltered Families

Year	Families
2020	271
2021	158
2022	198
2023	253

Our community saw a drop in families experiencing homelessness in previous years due to the expansion of federal resources. However, now we are beginning to struggle as evictions pick up and funding for Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing (RRH) returns to normal, pre-pandemic levels.

For example, SARAH's Rapid Rehousing capacity based on the 2022 Housing Inventory Count (HIC) **increased by around 31%** (221 new RRH beds) due to federal funding provided by the CARES Act in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2023, San Antonio and Bexar County saw around a **16% decrease** in RRH beds (145 fewer) as the federal pandemic funding began to wind down nationwide. As federal assistance declined, homelessness for families began to increase in our emergency shelters. Our homeless response system has demonstrated that declines in family homelessness are possible when resourced adequately.

There also may be an undercount among families and children, which can be explained by The McKinney Vento Act, which utilizes an expanded definition of homelessness compared to HUD. In October 2022, local education entities reported a total of **3,660** children and youth experiencing homelessness in San Antonio & Bexar County identified as McKinney-Vento eligible to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). This number is likely to increase as additional identifications are made throughout the academic school year. Final counts will be reported to TEA in the summer of 2023.

The McKinney-Vento Act defines "homeless children and youth" as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." This definition includes children and youth who are:

- sharing housing due to economic hardship or loss of housing, such as doubling up or "couch-surfing"
- living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds
- living in emergency or transitional shelters
- sleeping in places not fit for human habitation, including but not limited to, living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, etc.

This definition differs from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) standard definition of homelessness, which generally doesn't count people living in hotels, motels, and doubled-up situations. This expanded definition has allowed the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) to identify more than a million students experiencing homelessness in the 2020–21 school year, possibly uncounted previously, in its annual Student Homelessness in America report.

Note: The current McKinney Vento Data (2022-2023) is based on PEIMS information, which are the numbers that every school district/charter reports to TEA in October. These numbers are subject to change since school/districts charters must report final numbers in the summer.

Chronic Homelessness

346	**273**	**73**
total	sheltered	unsheltered

Chronic homelessness, or homelessness for 12 months or more with a disabling condition, **decreased by 33%** from 2022. This dramatic decrease can be attributed to the following factors:
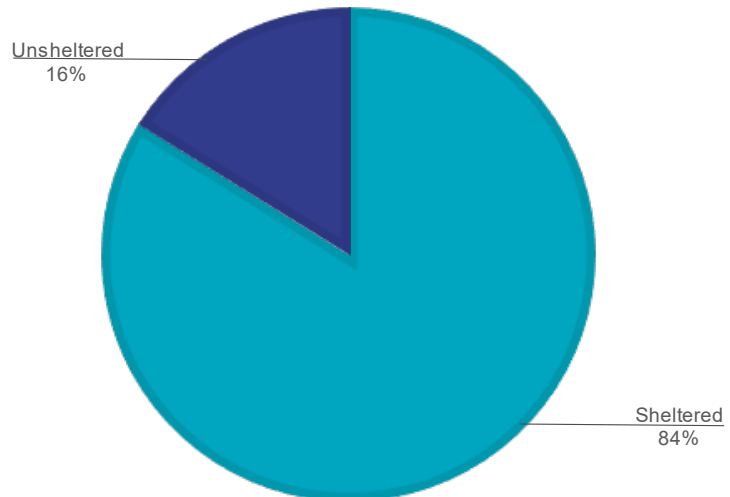
1. Implementation of the Bridge program to connect people experiencing chronic homelessness to Rapid Rehousing programs in addition to referring them to Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), a more limited resource.
2. An increase in connections to shelter and housing for the unsheltered population experiencing chronic homelessness due to expanded street outreach and low-barrier shelter options.
3. Thorough review of chronically homeless records in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and a subsequent clean-up of records. The requirements for chronicity are highly detailed and require individual monitoring of records to correct.
4. Improved training and data quality in HMIS.

Domestic Violence

347 individuals counted were experiencing homelessness due to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

The overall count from 2022 **increased by about 20%**. The sheltered count **increased by 16%**.

78 Individuals in sheltered conditions were currently fleeing a domestic violence situation, while **20** individuals in unsheltered conditions were currently fleeing a domestic violence situation.

Unsheltered
16%

Sheltered
84%

Note: In the 2022 PIT report, those reported as experiencing a domestic violence situation and fleeing were combined into a single count, which may have been overreported as the two questions within the survey are dependent upon each other. For instance, you must be experiencing a domestic violence situation to be fleeing a domestic violence situation, but you cannot be fleeing a domestic violence situation without experiencing one. The "fleeing" question is conditional to the "experiencing" question. In the 2023 count, we've corrected the 2022 count to reflect accurate changes from 2022-2023.

Disabling Conditions

Among individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness, there was a low response rate for answering more in-depth questions. For example, on average, only 39% of people surveyed answered the following questions

about disabling conditions. Data collected from our shelters is updated throughout the year by case managers and thus is more robust than the unsheltered survey conducted by volunteers the night of the PIT Count.

Unsheltered Individuals

151	**200**	**137**	**65**
Chronic Health Condition	Mental Health Condition	Physical Disability	Developmental Disability
69% say it affects their homelessness*	**74%** say it affects their homelessness*	**74%** say it affects their homelessness*	**65%** say it affects their homelessness*

Note: The survey questions are phrased, "Does [this condition] make it hard for you to keep a job or live on your own? Respondents can select more than one condition.

Sheltered Individuals

35%	**32%**	**19%**	**3%**	**24%**
Disabling Condition	Mental Illness	Physical Disability	Developmental Disability	Chronic Illness

HIV/AIDS Status

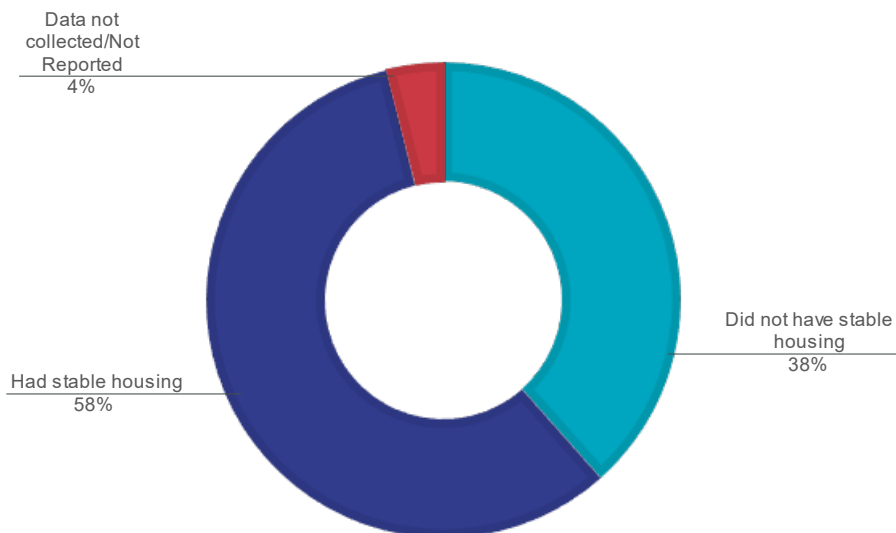| **Unsheltered**	**Sheltered**
7	35

42 individuals reported being told by a doctor that they have HIV/AIDS, a **4.5% decrease** since 2022. This is another metric that is difficult to accurately report due to stigmas that may lead to an undercount of those identifying as such for this survey, among other reasons such as access to proper medical care and testing for clients.

Foster Care Experience

78 (9%) people experiencing unsheltered homelessness had been placed in foster care. A **32% increase** from those that reported for this metric in 2022.
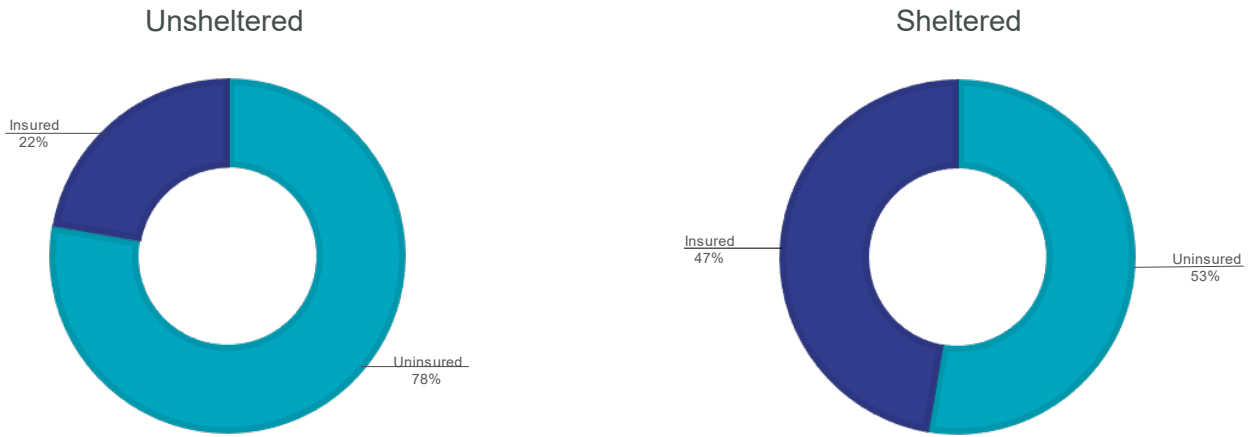
38% of them reported not having a stable place to live upon exit.

Data not collected/Not Reported 4%

Did not have stable housing 38%

Had stable housing 58%

Note: "Data not collected" represent those not willing to answer the conditional follow-up question about having been placed in foster care.

Health Insurance/Medical Care

Health Insurance

Unsheltered

Insured
22%
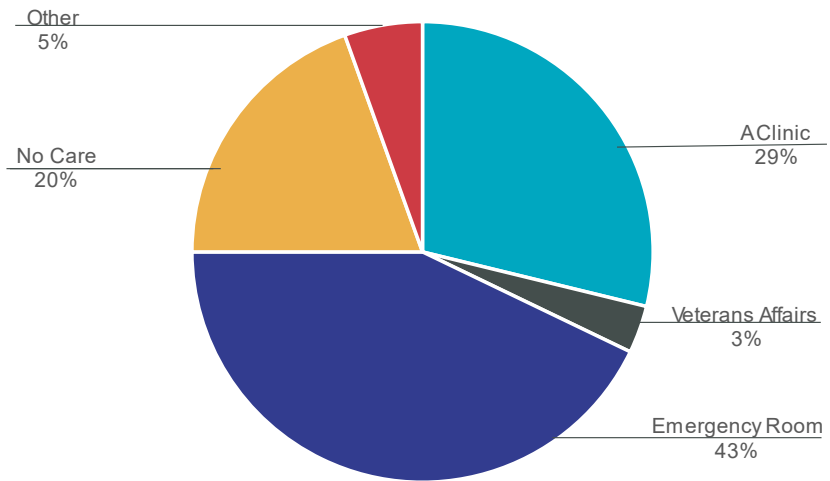
Uninsured
78%

Sheltered

Insured
47%

Uninsured
53%

Of sheltered individuals reporting medical insurance status, **47% are insured**, nearly a 3% increase from 2022. Among individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness, just **22% are insured**, a decrease of over 3%.

Unsheltered Medical Care

43% of unsheltered individuals receive their medical care from an emergency room.

Nearly **63%** reported either going without any medical care or relying on emergency rooms.

Of unsheltered individuals that reported medical insurance status, **22%** are insured.

Other
5%

No Care
20%

A Clinic
29%

Veterans Affairs
3%

Emergency Room
43%

San Antonio and Bexar County have lower rates of people who are medically insured compared to national statistics and other major cities in Texas, an issue that is heightened when you look at the population experiencing homelessness, where a lack of regular medical care and housing can quickly lead to deteriorating health. Connecting people experiencing homelessness to medical benefits enhances their quality of life, leads to long-term permanent housing opportunities, and reduces the strain on emergency response systems.

SARAH serves as the community's local lead for SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, & Recovery (SOAR). SOAR is a program designed to increase access to Social Security Administration (SSA) disability benefits, including Medicaid, for eligible individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness with a mental illness, medical impairment, or substance use disorder. SARAH has led two training cohorts on the SOAR process, with plans to expand the program in San Antonio and Bexar County over the next several years to concentrate on people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, so that they can access needed benefits.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Unsheltered individuals were asked to rank their **top 3 needs** from the following list:

- Shelter/Housing
- ID Recovery
- Healthcare
- Substance Use/Mental Health Treatment
- Food
- Access to Benefits (disability, food stamps, etc.)

- Employment Readiness (job training, job placement, transportation, etc.)
- General Transportation
- Navigating Resources
- Family Reunification
- Other/Open-Ended Response

TOP-RANKED	SECOND-RANKED	THIRD-RANKED
Housing/Shelter	Food	General Transportation
26%	22%	11%

Many people did list other necessities with the open-ended response option. Their answers included a range of specific needs, such as:

- Need for Safety
- Access to Technology (computers and phones)
- Employment (ranging from temporary positions to the need for full-time positions)
- Affordable Housing
- Clothing
- Someone to Talk With (companion and/or health professionals)

These insights illuminate the possibilities for meeting our community needs, including additional **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)** with wraparound, **comprehensive services**, **accessibility** in shelter/housing, safety in both sheltered and unsheltered settings, a robust medical needs response, and helping clients access their entitled **benefits**. These benefits include general resources that improve quality of life, like access to technology, which is constantly evolving and becoming further out of reach for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Allowing people to tell us, *in their own words*, what their needs are, reveals the scope of needs among our neighbors experiencing homelessness. Additionally, this needs assessment allows us to follow the lead of those experiencing homelessness when coordinating efforts and developing solutions.

DATA LIMITATIONS

This data empowers our community with the insight to make critical decisions in responding to the needs of those experiencing homelessness. However, data alone cannot give us a complete picture — it must be interpreted carefully. There are a few factors to keep in mind as we take these insights and act upon them.

The Point-in-Time (PIT) Count is a one-night snapshot. As a result, the data does not tell the complete story of homelessness in San Antonio and Bexar County.

As a community, we are progressing towards collecting and processing more accurate and timely data that we can report more frequently. Having regular data points throughout the year will give us insights into future PIT Counts and point to further opportunities for data collection.

Some opportunities for this sort of data include collecting the same data points for both sheltered and unsheltered clients. For example, only unsheltered clients were asked about their three top needs.

Compared to the 2022 count, we moved back to the usual date for the PIT Count during the last 10 days of January. For context, in 2022, the community rescheduled the PIT Count to early March 2022 due to the Omicron wave of COVID-19 spreading through the community early in the year. With the 2023 report, we aim to set the new norm for the Post-COVID Era PIT Count report in having a goal of maintaining the continuity and confidence of questions asked to participants as well as the data reported across unsheltered and sheltered populations.

Another factor to consider when interpreting this year's data is that the weather in San Antonio/Bexar County on the night of January 24, 2023, was particularly cold and windy, with some precipitation, which could have caused a percentage of the population experiencing homelessness to shift to indoor settings.

Despite these areas for growth and other contextual factors, this data provides critical information for our community as we work to ensure everyone in San Antonio and Bexar County has a place to call home.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A

Adults
Individuals who are 18 years or older or minors under the age of 18 who have been emancipated to act on their own behalf, including the ability to execute a contract or lease.

C

Children
Individuals who are 0-17 years old.

Chronic Homelessness
An individual experiencing homelessness with a disability, who:

- Lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and
- Has lived as described for at least 12 months or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years, as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months.

Continuum of Care (CoC)
A local or regional planning body that coordinates housing and services for those experiencing homelessness.

D

Disability
An individual with one or more of the following conditions:

- A physical, mental, or emotional impairment, including an impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, or brain injury;
- A developmental disability, as defined by the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000; or
- The disease of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or any condition arising from the etiologic agent for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV).

Domestic Violence Survivor
An individual fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous, life-threatening conditions.

F

Families
This reporting includes sheltered households with at least one child. Families can also include one or more individuals who self-report as a family.

L

Latinx
Those of Hispanic or Latino/a descent and/or nationality. A gender-neutral alternative to Latino or Latina.

LGBTQ+
Individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and/or with other historically marginalized sexual or gender identities.

P

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
A housing intervention combining affordable housing with indefinite leasing or rental assistance, paired with supportive services to assist those with a disabling condition.

R

Race/Ethnicity
Race refers to one's racial background (White, Black, Asian, Indigenous, etc.), while ethnicity refers to one's ethnic background. In the United States, Latinx is an ethnicity (one can be White Latinx, Indigenous Latinx, Afro-Latinx, etc.). Our reporting presents race and ethnicity together, as Latinx people in the United States are a culturally significant population.

For HUD reporting, race, and ethnicity are reported separately.

For this reporting, White Latinx are documented in the Latinx/Hispanic category, and Afro Latinx are documented in the Black/African American category. Indigenous Latinx are included in the Indigenous category. In this report, no other racial categories are included in the Latinx/Hispanic ethnicity.

Indigenous includes those who reported American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous. Black/African American consists of those who reported as Black, African American, or African.

S

Sheltered Homelessness
People living or sleeping in an emergency shelter, safe haven, or transitional housing.

U

Unsheltered Homelessness
People living or sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation, such as the street, sidewalk, park, abandoned building, etc.

V

Veterans
Those who have served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States of America. This does not include inactive military reserves or the National Guard unless the person was called up to active duty.

Y

Youth & Young Adults (YYA)
Youth and Young Adults are ages 18-24.

San Antonio is a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) community and has a comprehensive local plan and dollars available specifically for young adults, ages 18-24.

sarah

Alliance to House Everyone