

July 2009 Snapshot of Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness in the Richmond Region

The following data were collected in Homeward's third summer (July 23, 2009) count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in the Richmond region. A total of 906 adults and 155 children were counted. While most people experiencing homelessness in our area are staying in local shelters, 135 unsheltered individuals (all adults) were counted this year. The statistics below represent the 65.1% of adults experiencing homelessness (590 people) who completed the Homeward point-in-time survey.

- 71.5% of adults are males, 27.6% are females, and .9% are transgendered. Most homeless persons are single, never married adults (54.0%). 6.7% are married, and 46.0% of people experiencing homelessness are or have been in families, including those who are married, as well as those who are separated, widowed, or divorced.
- 12.7% of homeless persons have children living with them.
- A majority of persons report that they are African-American (63.9%), followed by White (30.1%). 3.8% indicated that they are Hispanic.
- The average age for adults is 43.8 years.
- 50.9% have a high school education or GED. 21.2% attended some college, and 9.7% have a college degree or higher.
- 18.5% are veterans.
- The majority (72.5%) served some time in jail and/or prison. Out of all individuals surveyed (including those who have not served time in jail and/or prison), 48.8% reported serving time in jail, 3.6% reported serving time in prison, and 20.0% indicated that they had served time in both jail and prison.
- 31.9% have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime. Of those experiencing domestic violence, 4.4% had experienced it in the past month, and 28.1% had experienced it in the past year.
- 51.0% report having a problem with alcohol sometime in their lifetime. Of those reporting a problem with alcohol, 76.8% are currently in recovery.
- 56.8% report having a problem with substance abuse sometime in their lifetime. Of those reporting a problem, 83.7% are currently in recovery.
- 35.0% report having a mental health problem sometime in their lifetime. Of these, 64.6% are currently being treated, 57.8% are taking medication for mental health problems, and 90.2% are receiving counseling.
- 41.7% report having a long-term disability. Of those reporting a long-term disability, 67.9% indicated that their disability was drug or alcohol abuse, and 53.2% indicated that their disability was a mental illness. (Note that respondents could select both or neither of these options.)
- 25.8% are employed. Of those who are employed, 50.0% work full-time, 36.2% work part-time, and 13.8% do day labor or temp work.
- 50.0% of respondents have lived in Greater Richmond for more than 3 years; 32.0% have lived in the area for 17 years or more.
- Most (52.8%) reported having their last housing in Richmond. Others indicated previous housing in Henrico (12.0%), Chesterfield (6.7%), and Hanover (1.8%). 17.7% of respondents last lived elsewhere in Virginia, and 8.5% lived in other states.
- In the past three years, most homeless persons have been homeless once (62.5%) or twice (22.3%); 15.2% have been homeless three or more times during this time period.
- A little more than half (50.5%) of homeless persons have been homeless for 5 months or less.

For more information:

Margot Ackermann, Ph.D. ♦ Research and Evaluation Director
(804)343-2045 x11 ♦ mackermann@homewardva.org

