

# July 2009 Snapshot of Chronically Homeless

---

## 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, and 65.1% of adults completed the Homeward point-in-time survey.

The statistics below represent the 11.5% of respondents who met the definition of chronic homelessness. Individuals who are chronically homeless must 1) be unaccompanied by a partner or children 2) have a serious disability and 3) have been homeless at least four times in the past three years or homeless for the past year.

- 83.8% of the chronically homeless are males, 16.2% are females.
- A majority of the chronically homeless report that they are African-American (69.1%), followed by White (26.5%). No Hispanics met the definition for chronic homelessness.
- The average age for chronically homeless adults is 48.3 years.
- 42.6% have a high school education or GED. 16.2% attended some college, and 16.1% have a college degree or higher.
- 25.0% are veterans.
- 82.8% have been to jail and/or prison. Among chronically homeless individuals, 50.0% reported serving time in jail, 4.7% reported serving time in prison, and 28.1% indicated that they had served time in both jail and prison. Of those serving time in jail and/or prison, 57.7% reported having felony convictions; 63.5% reported being homeless prior to their last incarceration; and 71.2% reported being homeless upon discharge from their last incarceration.
- 35.4% have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime. Of those experiencing domestic violence, 4.8% had experienced it in the past month, and 23.8% had experienced it in the past year.
- 75.8% report having a problem with alcohol sometime in their lifetime. Of those reporting a problem with alcohol, 75.5% are currently in recovery.
- 72.3% report having a problem with substance abuse sometime in their lifetime. Of those reporting a substance abuse problem, 83.0% are currently in recovery.
- 52.3% report having a mental health problem sometime in their lifetime. Of these individuals, 61.8% are currently being treated, 58.8% are taking medication for mental health problems, and 94.1% are receiving counseling.
- 12.1% are employed. Of those who are employed, 62.5% work full-time, 25.0% work part-time, and 12.5% do day labor or temp work.
- 48.4% of respondents have lived in Greater Richmond for more than 2 years; 28.1% have lived in the area for 17 years or more.
- Most (51.5%) reported having their last housing in Richmond. Others indicated previous housing in Henrico (7.6%), Chesterfield (3.0%) and Hanover (1.5%). 24.2% of respondents last lived elsewhere in Virginia, and 12.1% lived in other states.
- In the past three years, most chronically homeless individuals have been homeless once (53.8%), twice (13.8%) or three times (7.7%); 24.7% have been homeless more than three times during this time period.
- 50.8% have been homeless for 1.5 years or more.

For more information:

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

