

July 2009 Snapshot of Veterans

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 18.5% of those adults surveyed who indicated that they are veterans.

- 96.3% of veterans are males, and 3.7% are females.
- A majority of veterans report that they are African-American (64.5%), followed by White (29.0%) or two or more races (2.8%). Hispanics comprised 2.8% of the sample.
- The average age for adult veterans is 49.8 years.
- 68.3% were honorably discharged. 18.3% received a general discharge.
- 54.2% have a high school education or GED. 29.0% attended some college, and 13.0% have a college degree or higher.
- The majority (72.7%) served some time in jail and/or prison. Out of the individuals surveyed, 48.5% reported serving time in jail, 3.0% reported serving time in prison, and 21.2% indicated that they had served time in both jail and prison. Of the individuals who served time in jail or prison, 57.1% reported having felony convictions; 32.4% indicated that they were homeless prior to their last incarceration; and 47.8% reported being homeless upon discharge from their last incarceration.
- 20.6% have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime. Of those experiencing domestic violence, 5.6% had experienced it in the past month, and 16.7% had experienced it in the past year.
- 58.4% report having a problem with alcohol sometime in their lifetime. Of those reporting a problem with alcohol, 72.4% are currently in recovery.
- 55.4% report having a problem with substance abuse sometime in their lifetime. Of those reporting a problem with substance abuse, 80.4% are currently in recovery.
- 46.0% report having a mental health problem sometime in their lifetime. Of these, 56.5% are currently being treated, 60.9% are taking medication for mental health problems, and 97.8% are receiving counseling.
- 44.9% report having a long-term disability. Of those reporting a long-term disability, 69.0% indicated that their disability was drug or alcohol abuse, and 59.0% indicated that their disability was a mental illness. (Note that respondents could select both or neither of these options.)
- 24.5% are employed. Of those who are employed, 45.5% work full-time, 22.7% work part-time, and 31.8% do day labor or temp work.
- 50.0% of respondents have lived in Greater Richmond for more than 5 years; 37.6% have lived in the area for 17 years or more.
- Most (51.0%) reported having their last housing in Richmond. Others indicated previous housing in Henrico (12.7%), Chesterfield (4.9%) and Hanover (1.0%). 22.5% of respondents last lived elsewhere in Virginia, and 6.9% lived in other states.
- In the past three years, most homeless veterans have been homeless once (54.7%), twice (28.4%), or three times (6.3%); 10.6% have been homeless more than three times during this time period.
- 50.0% have been homeless for more than 5 months.

For more information:

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* Data gathered at the July 23, 2009, Point in Time Count & Survey. Final report date: September 16, 2009. © Homeward 2009