Homelessness in Chester County at one Point in Time.

POINT-IN-TIME COUNT

January 24, 2024

On the evening of Wednesday, January 24 and early hours of Thursday, January 25, 2024 the Chester County Department of Community Development (DCD) facilitated the annual Point-in-Time Count (PIT). This is a national effort sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and data from the count is included in the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR), which is presented to Congress. The purpose of this initiative is to determine the number of people currently experiencing homelessness on a given night, to better understand homelessness in Chester County and across the nation, and to support the Chester County Partnership to End Homelessness’ efforts to prevent and end homelessness.

Total PIT Count

213 people were experiencing homelessness in Chester County on Wednesday January 24, 2024. Over the last five years, the Point-in-Time Count has counted fewer people experiencing homelessness, from 517 people in 2019 to 213 people in 2024 (a 59% decrease). In this year’s PIT report, the total number of people counted as experiencing homelessness is much lower than past years.

The County’s goal is to decrease the total count over time, and the PIT only shows a small part of the much bigger reality of homelessness in our community. Part of the decrease this year could be attributed to the many prevention efforts across the county, including eviction prevention case resolution, the expansion of housing first training programs, an increase in affordable housing groups, and our fair housing education and prevention efforts specifically for migrant workers. Our communities also experienced fewer natural disasters this year; and in September 2023, families displaced by the Oxford fire were rapidly rehoused through the tremendous efforts by so many in that community.

Additionally, there are other factors that explain why there was such an unexpected decrease in this year’s count. The two Grant and Per Diem transitional housing organizations, Fresh Start and the Veterans Multiservice Center, closed their programs at the end of their lease with the Coatesville Veterans Affairs Medical Center on March 31, 2023. In last year’s PIT report, these programs accounted for 141 Veterans.
We know that PIT data relies on a manual count of homelessness and only shows a snapshot of homelessness in our community. Because each year the numbers vary, we utilize and present this data jointly with our Continuum of Care System Performance Data [Link to performance data dashboard] for a more holistic view of homelessness in Chester County. Together, both sets of data serve as an important tool for educating the public about homelessness, improving housing services, and advocating for the development of more affordable housing.

Demographic Breakdown

Race

Systemic racism has created disparities and inequities within our community that contribute to disproportionately higher numbers of Black people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity. People who identify as Black or African American make up just 6% of Chester County’s population, yet they make up 31% of people experiencing homelessness in our community. 43 people or 20% identified, at least in part, as Hispanic/Latina/e/o.

On any given night, people of color make up 62% of those experiencing homelessness in our community.

Households With Children

On any given night, 30% of people experiencing homelessness in Chester County are children. The 2024 PIT counted 63 children staying in emergency shelters or transitional housing.

101 individuals or 47% of people experiencing homelessness are part of families with children.

Children

30% (or 63) are children under age 18

Families with Children

47% (or 101) individuals are in families with children

Identify as Female

34% (or 51) adults identify as female

Chronically Homeless

11% (or 23) individuals were identified as potentially chronically homeless
Women and Homelessness
51 individuals or 34% of adults experiencing homelessness identify as female.

Chronically Homeless
23 individuals or 11% of people experiencing homelessness have been identified as potentially chronically homeless, defined by HUD as someone who is currently homeless or has been residing in an institutional care facility for less than 90 days, has a disability, and has been homeless for 12 months or more, including families where the head of household—whether the head of household is an adult or a minor—has been homeless.

Veterans
6 individuals or 4% of adults in emergency shelters identify as Veterans.

Identify as Veterans
4%
(or 6) adults in emergency shelters identify as Veterans

Veteran status of unsheltered individuals is unknown.

Sheltered Homelessness
194
people were living in a public or private temporary shelter, including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels

Veterans
6 individuals or 4% of adults in emergency shelters identify as Veterans.

Sentryed Homelessness by Type and Household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emergency Shelter</th>
<th>Transitional Housing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
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<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>in Households</td>
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<td>Individuals</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>without Children</td>
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Unsheltered Homelessness
19
people were sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, or camping ground

Unsheltered Homelessness
By Location

Get involved
See how you can partner with us to end homelessness in Chester County. Connect with @ChescoPartership on Facebook.