



2016 Point-In-Time Report

Seven County Denver Metro Region



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Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Stakeholders:

Following you will find the 2016 Point-In-Time (PIT) report. The Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) has worked in partnership with local governments, non-profits, faith communities, foundations and volunteers to conduct the PIT survey. The annual PIT survey efforts involve hundreds of volunteers from the metro Denver region to capture the need on a single night of the year. Every year, the PIT effort is dependent upon volunteer turnout, local community organization, weather and participation of those experiencing homelessness.

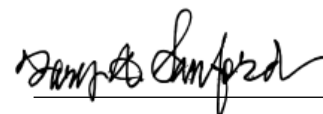
Following are some of the limitations to the Point-In-Time count:

1. The PIT is a survey every community in the nation is required to conduct in order to receive federal funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
2. PIT survey provides a **snapshot** from a single night in January of individuals and families identified as homeless (according to [HUD definition](#)) and who were willing to participate in the survey.
3. PIT only captures people who meet the HUD definition of homelessness, which doesn't include people living in motels paid for from their own pocket, couch-surfing, or who are doubled/tripled up.
4. In the this year's report, we included Colorado Department of Education numbers, which operate under a different definition of homelessness, in order to communicate a broader scope than a single data set can provide.
5. There is a move nationally to conduct more comprehensive, in-depth studies specific to different homeless subpopulations. For example, the University of Chicago's Chapin Hall is conducting a youth study in the City of Denver. As well, we are exploring similar opportunities for a more comprehensive study of homelessness among families with children in Denver Metro.
6. Periodically, HUD sends out new methodology for how to conduct the PIT count. These changes make it difficult to provide comparisons across the years, and may change who can be counted. For example, some individuals and families had been counted in the 2015 year under "Transitional Housing" were reclassified as "Rapid Rehousing" and no longer met the HUD homeless definition.
7. The PIT family numbers are a significant under count as many families do not meet the HUD definition. The [Colorado Department of Education McKinney Vento Report](#) provides a more comprehensive overview of families with children experiencing homelessness.
8. Increases or decreases in the homeless population cannot be confirmed solely by considering PIT findings.

The metro Denver region continues to have one of the tightest housing rental markets in the country. The increasing costs and competition for available housing has made it extremely difficult to house those in need even with the necessary resources.

The 2016 PIT report follows the HUD definition of homelessness. MDHI recognizes that there are others experiencing housing instability and homelessness which fall outside of the HUD definition. It is our intent to focus on both HUD defined and other populations to eliminate homelessness for future generations.

If we don't address the needs of those at-risk, we will continue to see a rise in homelessness across the region. Prevention is key to effectively prevent future generations from experiencing homelessness. Increased access to housing and services is paramount in our collective efforts. Only through collective efforts across the region will we end homelessness as we know it today. Thank you for all that you do for our most vulnerable neighbors.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Sanford", written over a horizontal line.

Gary Sanford
Executive Director

Acknowledgements

This is the fifteenth Point-in-Time study conducted by the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) since 1998, and we owe a debt of gratitude to all those who conducted PIT surveys and contributed to this report. This report would not have been possible without the assistance of Brian Garrett, a technical writer who has volunteered with MDHI for the past two years and has provided invaluable assistance with formatting the Point-in-Time report. We are glad to partner with the OMNI Institute who, in collaboration with MDHI, provided the data analysis and reporting for the 2016 Point-In-Time survey.

Every year this effort is made possible by the Point-in-Time Committee members who help modify the survey and coordinate the count for their city, county, or subpopulation. The members who contributed to the 2016 survey are as follows:

Alex Malchow, Adams County

Josh Meis and Brian Martin, Arapahoe County

Scott Medina, Boulder County

Cheryl St. Clair, City and County of Broomfield

Sharon Duwaik, City of Aurora

Josh Garland and Chris Conner, City and County of Denver

Rand Clark, Douglas County

Linda Barringer, Maryjane Carr and Mae Washam, Jefferson County

Michelle Lapidow, US Department of Veteran Affairs

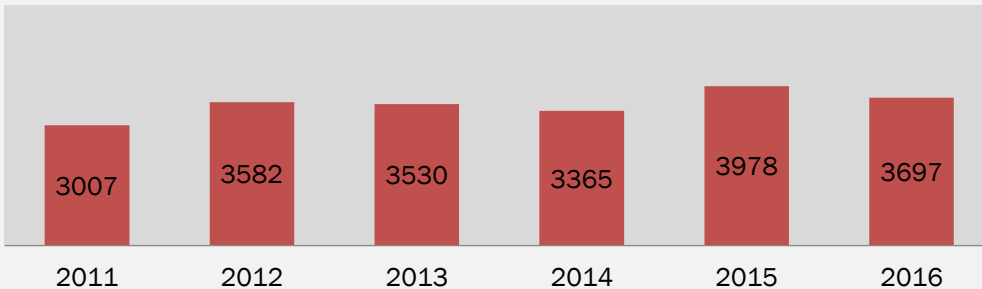
We would like to express our appreciation to all of the volunteers who administered the Point-in-Time survey and the participating agencies who supported this effort. Finally we thank our sponsors who provided in-kind and financial support to develop this report including incentive items for those who took the survey and the VISPDAT. Thank you to Sock it To 'Em, The Denver Foundation, the Governor's Office, 4imprint, Homeless Gear, City O' City, Natural Grocers, King Soopers, Bed Bath and Beyond, Safeway, Shambhala Meditation Center of Denver, Big 5 Sporting Goods, Voodoo Doughnuts, Pablo's Coffee, OMNI Institute, Denver Botanic Gardens, House of Hope-The Family Tree, and Sam's Club.



Overview of 2011–2016 Point-In-Time (PIT) Results

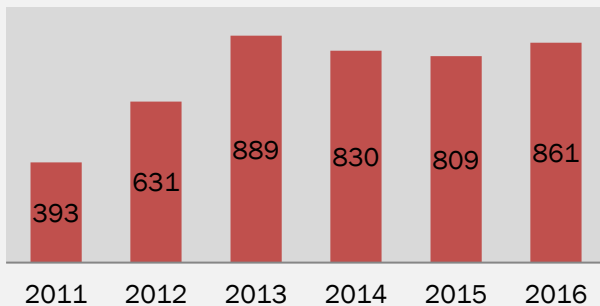
The information provides an overview of those who participated in the January 25th, 2016 PIT survey across the seven county Denver Metro region¹ and who met the [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s definition of homelessness](#). Below are comparisons of data points across the previous five years. It is important to remember that the Point-In-Time survey is a snapshot and an undercount of homeless and at-risk populations. Readers should **use caution** in comparing data across years given the nature of the PIT snapshot, as well as changes in methodology across years.

HUD Defined Homeless

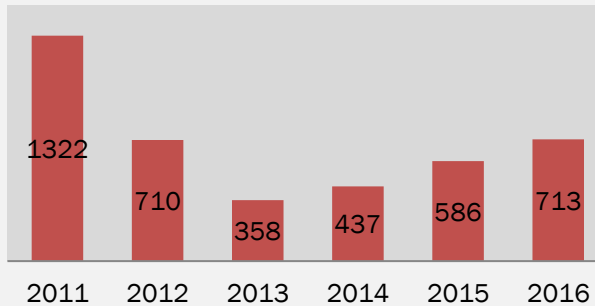


The chart at left reflects the **number of surveys** collected each year that met the [HUD definition of homelessness](#).

Chronically Homeless



Veterans

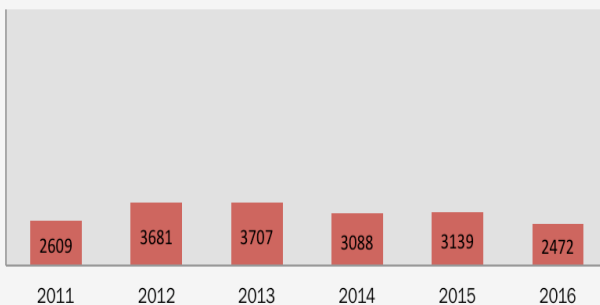


The chart at left reflects the **number of surveys** collected each year that met the [HUD definition of homelessness](#).

The veteran homeless table reflects respondents who have served in the U.S. military.

The chronically homeless table reflects all respondents and family members who meet the definition of chronically homeless.

Point-in-Time Families with Children



Denver Metro Students - McKinney Vento



A **snapshot** of those experiencing homelessness on a **single night** in January. Data is **self-reported** and given on a voluntary basis. Uses the [HUD definition of homelessness](#).

The **cumulative** number of students in a school year experiencing homelessness who were identified and served in public schools, grades PK-12. Uses the [McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness](#).

¹ Denver Metro region includes the counties of Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson.

CAUTION: The data below is a reflection of those who participated in the survey and are within the [HUD definition of homelessness](#). The data does not include: families, youth or singles who are doubled/tripled up; families, youth or singles in hotels/motels paid for by themselves; hidden families, youth, and singles and those who refused the survey.

Homeless Incidence:

- On Monday, January 25, 2016 there were 5,467 homeless individuals counted in the seven county Denver Metro area; this includes those who completed a survey as well as their family members

On the Street:

- A total of 14.4 percent or 786 people were unsheltered (living on the street, under a bridge, in an abandoned or public building, in a car, camping, etc.)

Where They Slept on Monday Night:

- Transitional housing (51.4%)
- Emergency shelters (including a hotel/motel vouchers paid for by an organization) (34.2%)
- Unsheltered (14.4%)

Newly Homeless:

- Nearly one-fifth (19.5%) of total respondents – 722 persons – were considered newly homeless (They had been homeless for less than one year and this was their first episode of homelessness)

Domestic Violence:

- 341 respondents reported domestic violence being a contributing factor to their homeless situation

Income:

- Over three-quarters (76.2%) or 2,232 respondents reported that they or someone in their household had received income in the past month

Chronically Homeless:

- A total of 804 respondents were chronically homeless, there were an additional 57 family members living with a chronically homeless individual for a total of 861 individuals in chronically homeless households.

Veterans: A total of 713 individuals identified as veterans

Families:

- 694 families completed Point-In-Time (PIT) surveys during the 2016 count; compare to the 2014-2015 school year data for the CO Dept. of Education (DOE) where 14,969 children were identified as homeless.

Youth:

- 287 unaccompanied youth less than age 25 completed PIT surveys during the 2016 count; compare to the 2014-2015 school year data for the CO Dept. of Education (DOE) where 995 unaccompanied youth were identified as homeless.

Comparisons are being made between the 2016 PIT data and the 2014-2015 school year CO Dept. of Education data to illustrate the limitations of the PIT data, which is a snapshot of one night of the year and which we know to be an undercount of those experiencing homelessness in our communities.

PIT data is collected based on one night per calendar year and only includes [HUD defined persons](#), whereas the Colorado DOE data is collected from the beginning to end of each school year and includes homeless children as [defined by the McKinney-Vento Act](#).

Demographics

Total Estimated Homeless Persons

Total estimated homeless persons includes survey respondents and their reported family members, as well as Household information from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). HMIS captures data differently than the Point-in-Time, therefore designated Head of Household was used in place of Respondent. For more details, see information in the appendix.

- Of those surveyed, **5,467 people met the HUD definition of homelessness**
- Approximately **32% of the counted Homeless persons were family members** of the respondent who completed the PIT survey.

Table 1. Total homeless

Respondents	3,697
Family members	1,770
Total Homeless	5,467

Age

Given known barriers to reaching the youth population, we can say with certainty that those under 25 years of age counted in the 2016 PIT represent only a portion of the unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness in the region.

Table 2. Ages—All homeless

	Frequency	Percent
Under 18	1,159	21.2
18-24	450	8.2
25-34	821	15.0
35-44	786	14.4
45-54	1,026	18.8
55+	931	17.0
Missing	294	5.4
Total	5,467	100.0
Mean age	35	
Median age	36	

- The **mean** age of respondents is **35 years**.
- The **median** age of respondents is **36 years**.

Gender

- Male respondents outnumber female respondents.

Table 3. Gender—All homeless

	Frequency	Percent
Female	2,112	38.6
Male	3,257	59.6
Transgender	33	0.6
Missing	65	1.2
Total	5,402	100.0%

Race

- Over half of those surveyed reported their race as White, another quarter reported their race as Black/African American. Together these races make up over 80 percent of those surveyed.

Table 4. Race—All homeless

	Frequency	Percent
American Indian/Alaskan Native	267	4.9
Asian	47	0.9
Black/African American	1411	25.8
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	35	0.6
White	3,008	55.0
Mixed Race	338	6.2
Don't know/No response	361	6.6
Total	5,467	100.0

Table 5. Ethnicity—All homeless

	Frequency	Percent
Non-Hispanic/Latino	3,908	71.5
Hispanic/Latino	1,421	26.0
Missing	138	2.5
Total	5,467	100.0%

Families

Family type is described by three different household types: households without children; households with at least one adult and one child; and households with only children under 18. Groups of adults that were part of the same family, such as adult siblings, families with adult children, or partners/spouses without children were considered to be households without children.

Although the majority of the responding households are without children this does not represent the complete picture of households with children and unaccompanied youth. Table 6 shows the number of respondent households.

Table 6. Household Type—Respondent households

	Frequency	Percent
Household without children	2,979	80.6
Household with at least 1 adult and 1 child	694	18.8
Household with only children under 18	24	0.6
Total	3,697	100.0

Employment / Income

- Almost three-fifths of respondents (60.4%) reported someone in their household had received income in the past month. When asked about the nature of the income, just over one-tenth (11.6%) reported their income was from SSI/SSDI. The highest number of responses (800) was for income that came from “other” sources. Those that reported their income amounts from working averaged about \$940 in monthly income, or \$11,280 annually. This amounts to about half (50.3%) of what can be considered [the living wage for Denver County](#) for a single adult.

Homelessness History

Duration of homelessness refers to how long a particular episode of homelessness has lasted. Number of episodes refers to the number of separate times a household has experienced homelessness, regardless of how long each of the episodes lasted.

- Over one third (**43.6%**) of respondents say their household has been homeless for less than one year, while **53.4% percent** have been homeless for one year or more (see Table 7).

Table 7. Duration of homelessness—Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 month	252	6.8
More than 1 month but less than 1 year	1,359	36.8
1 to 3 years	1,205	32.6
More than 3 years	768	20.8
I am not currently homeless	29	0.8
No response/Bad data	84	2.3
Total	3,697	100.0

Table 8. Episodes of homelessness—Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Once in last 3 years	1,445	39.1
Twice in last 3 years	514	13.9
Three times in last 3 years	261	7.1
Four or more times in last 3 years	99	2.7
Five or more times in the last 3 years	262	7.1
Not Homeless at any time in the last 3 years	63	1.7
Missing	1,053	28.5
Total	3,697	100.0

- As shown in Table 7, the single largest group of respondents (39.1%) said their household was experiencing its first episode of homelessness in the last three years. More than one in six (13.9%) had been homeless twice in the last three years, and close to 10 percent (9.8%) or 361 respondents had been homeless four or more times.

Newly Homeless

For the purpose of this study, people were considered “newly homeless” if they had been homeless for less than one year and this was their first episode of homelessness. We report persons who are newly homeless for all respondents.

- On January 25, 2016, nearly one in five (19.5%) of all persons surveyed who were experiencing homelessness, or 722 households, were considered newly homeless.

Chronically Homeless—Respondents

- In the 2016 PIT, 804 of surveyed respondents (21.7%) are chronically homeless.
- The majority of respondents who are experiencing chronic homelessness are single adults (88.2%).
- Over half (54.8%) spent Monday night, January 25, 2016 in an emergency shelter and 330 (41.0%) spent the night unsheltered – on the street, under a bridge, in a car, etc.

Where People Spent Monday Night

- On January 25, 2016, people were predominantly staying in transitional housing, followed by emergency shelters including domestic violence and youth shelters and hotel or motel rooms paid for by a voucher or by an agency. A total 13.8% or 827 people were unsheltered (see Table 9).

Table 9. Where spent Monday night—All homeless

	All homeless	Percent
Emergency shelter ¹	1,735	31.7
Domestic violence shelter	79	1.4
Transitional housing	2,811	51.4
Safe haven	56	1.0
Unsheltered	786	14.4
Total	6,004	100.0

¹ Including hotel/motel paid for by a voucher.

Table 10. County where spent Monday night

	All homeless	Percent
Adams	200	3.7
Arapahoe	456	8.3
Boulder	726	13.3
Broomfield	13	0.2
Denver	3,631	66.4
Douglas	2	<0.1
Jefferson	439	8.0
Total	5,467	100.0%

Migration and Last Permanent Residence

- Respondents were asked to indicate the county where they last lived before they became homeless. Of those respondents who answered the question, 40.3 percent or 1,342 people indicated their last permanent residence was in the City and County of Denver. A small proportion (5.0%) considered their last permanent residence to be in a Colorado county outside of the Metro area. Nearly one in five (18.1%) or 606 people considered their last permanent residence either out of state or country. The respondents in Table 11 are those who provided information about both where they spent Monday night, January 25, 2016, and the county where they last had a permanent residence.²
- The table compares the county spent Monday night (columns) and the county of last permanent residence (rows).** For example, out of the 90 surveyed respondents who spent the night in Adams County and answered the question about their last permanent residence, 55 said that Adams County was their last permanent county of residence, 15 were from Denver and 8 were from out of state or country. Conversely, of the 230 respondents who said their last permanent residence was in Adams County, 55 were still in Adams County on the night of the PIT count, and 127 from Adams County spent Monday night in the City and County of Denver.

² Note that not all respondents answered the survey question and therefore table data will not equal the total number of respondents.

Table 11. County where spent Monday night by county of last permanent residence—Respondents

County of last permanent residence	Where spent Monday night							Total
	Adams	Arapahoe	Boulder	Broomfield	Denver	Douglas	Jefferson	
Adams	55	21	11	2	127	0	14	230
Arapahoe	5	128	11	0	226	0	14	384
Boulder	0	3	227	0	19	0	4	253
Broomfield	0	0	10	3	7	0	1	21
Denver	15	55	42	3	1185	0	42	1342
Douglas	2	6	0	0	40	2	7	57
Jefferson	2	12	18	0	158	0	81	271
In CO—other county	3	11	46	1	98	0	9	168
In CO—unknown/invalid	0	1	3	0	11	0	0	15
Other state/country	8	28	115	2	430	0	23	606
Total	90	265	483	11	2301	2	195	3347

The data in Table 11 may provide some indication of the migration of respondents who are experiencing homelessness across the seven Metro area counties. However, while these data shed some light on migration across counties, the information has to be viewed with caution, given that we are making a number of assumptions. For example, “last permanent residence” is likely defined very differently across respondents. Further, the time frame is not articulated in these data, that is, we do not know whether a respondent’s last permanent residence occurred immediately prior to their current episode of homelessness. If it was not, the location of their “last permanent residence” and where they spent Monday night may not accurately reflect the migration from one county to another.

Veterans

Of the 3,697 respondents surveyed metro-wide, **713 (12.8%) were veterans**. There were 720 veterans within the total surveyed homeless population.

Veterans: Age/Gender

Table 12. Age—Veterans

	Frequency	Percent
Under 18	0	0
18-24	6	.8
25-34	79	11.0
35-44	73	10.1
45-54	200	27.8
55+	362	50.3
Missing	0	0
Total	720	100.0
Mean age	52.2	
Median age	55	

Table 13. Gender—Veterans

	Frequency	Percent
Female	79	11.0
Male	639	88.8
Transgender	0	0
Missing	2	0.3
Total	720	100.0

Table 14. Race—Veterans

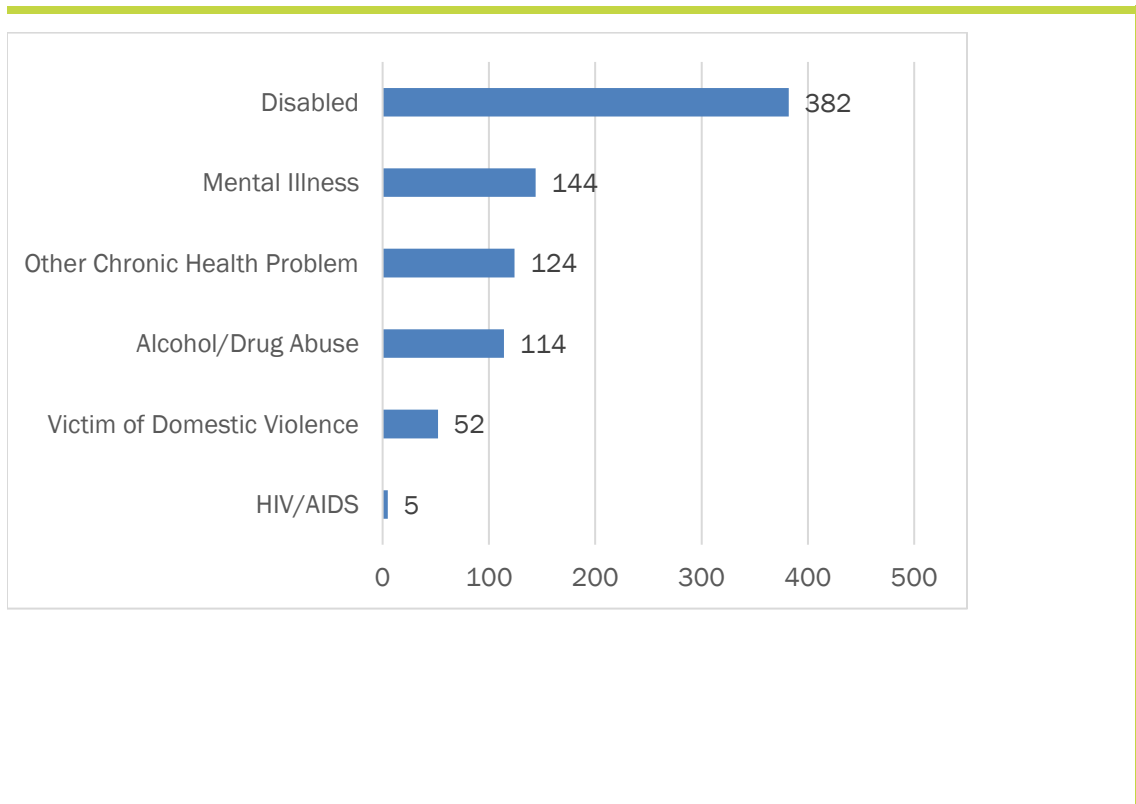
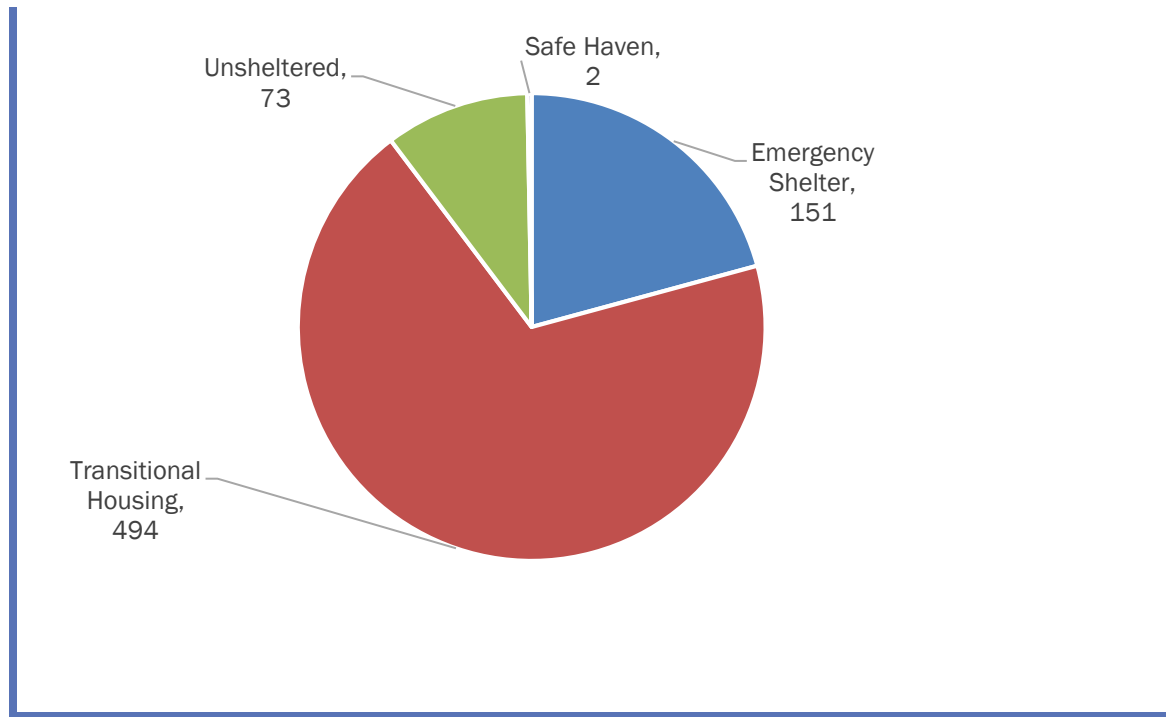
	Frequency	Percent
American Indian/Alaskan Native	25	3.6
Asian	4	0.6
Black/African American	172	24.6
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	3	0.4
White	475	66.1
Mixed Race	19	2.7
Don't know/No response	22	3.1
Total	720	100.0

Table 15. Ethnicity—Veterans

	Frequency	Percent
Hispanic	72	9.8
Non-Hispanic	636	88.5
Don't Know/No Response	12	1.7
Total	720	100.0

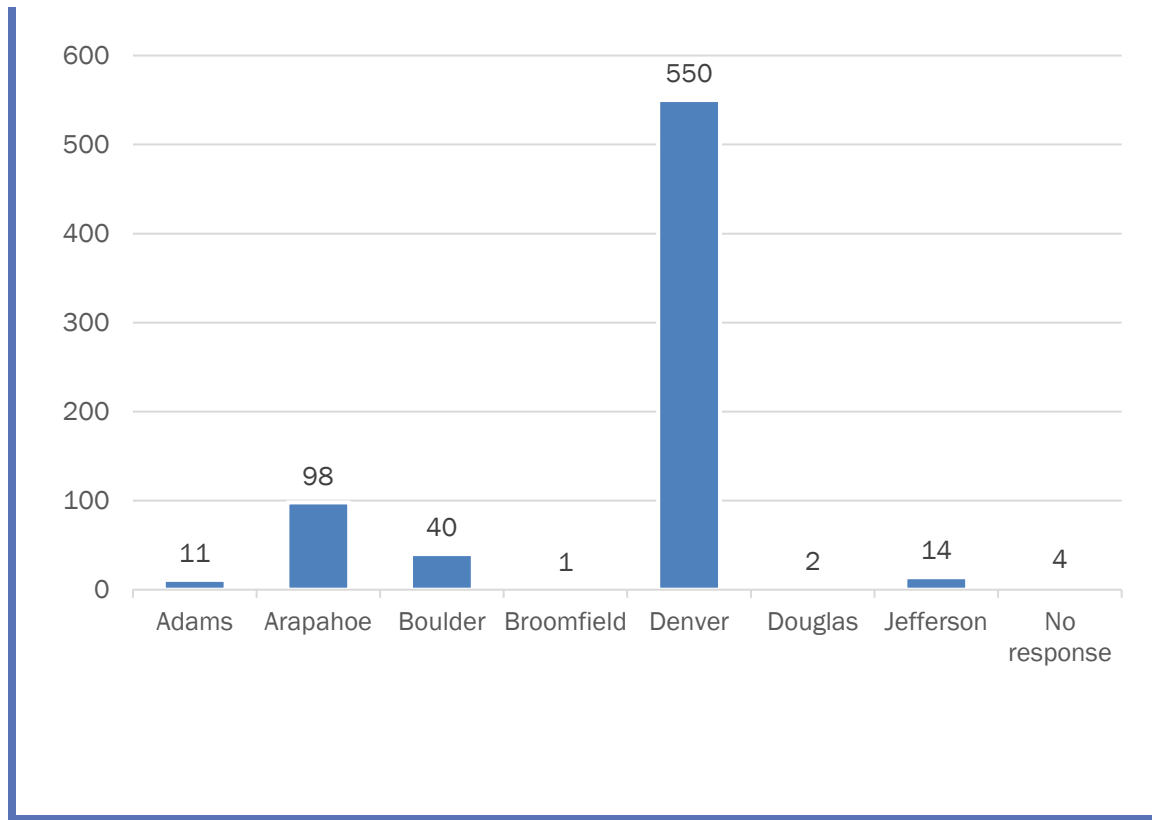
Veterans: Race/ Ethnicity

**Figure 1.
Veterans:
Where they
stayed on
January 25,
2016**



**Figure 2.
Veterans:
Disabling
Conditions**

**Figure 3.
Veterans:
County
Location**



Chronically Homeless

Of the 3,697 respondents surveyed metro-wide, 804 (21.7%) respondents were chronically homeless. There were 861 chronically homeless within the total surveyed homeless population.

Chronically Homeless: Age/Gender

Table 16. Age—Chronically homeless

	Frequency	Percent
Under 18	11	1.3
18-24	53	6.2
25-34	101	11.7
35-44	149	17.3
45-54	280	32.5
55+	261	30.3
Missing	6	0.7
Total	861	100.0
Mean age	46.7	
Median age	48.0	

Table 17. Gender—Chronically homeless

	Frequency	Percent
Female	244	28.3
Male	598	69.5
Transgender	10	1.2
Missing	9	1.0
Total	861	100.0

Table 18. Race—Chronically homeless

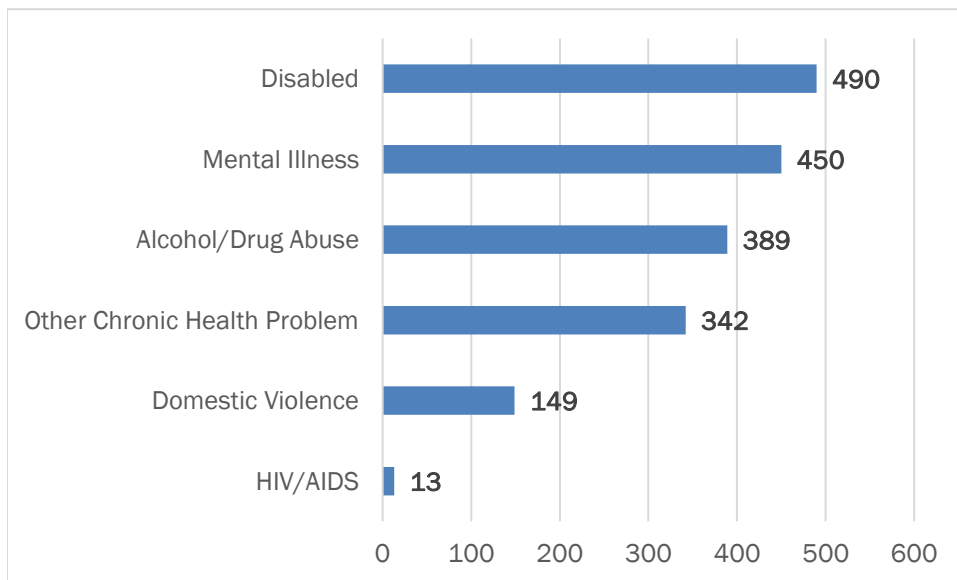
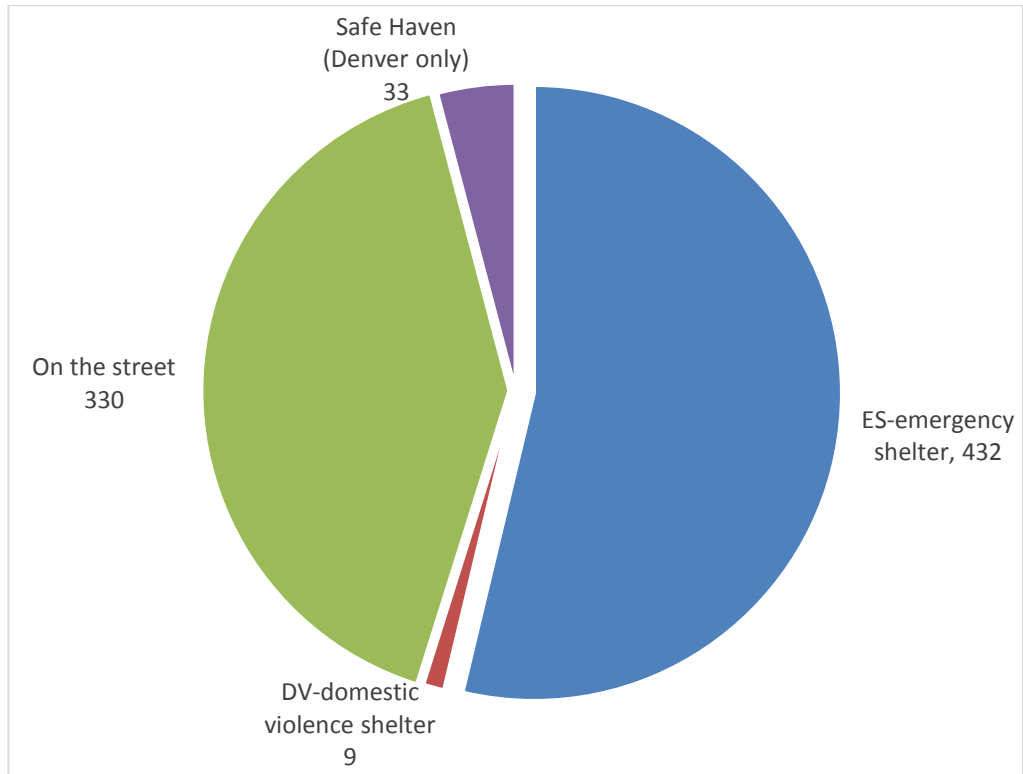
	Frequency	Percent
American Indian/Alaskan Native	87	10.1
Asian	1	0.1
Black/African American	145	16.8
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	4	0.5
White	528	61.3
Mixed Race	52	6.0
Don't know/No response	44	5.1
Total	861	100.0

Table 19. Ethnicity—Chronically homeless

	Frequency	Percent
Hispanic	159	18.5
Non-Hispanic	679	78.9
Don't Know/No Response	23	2.7
Total	861	100.0

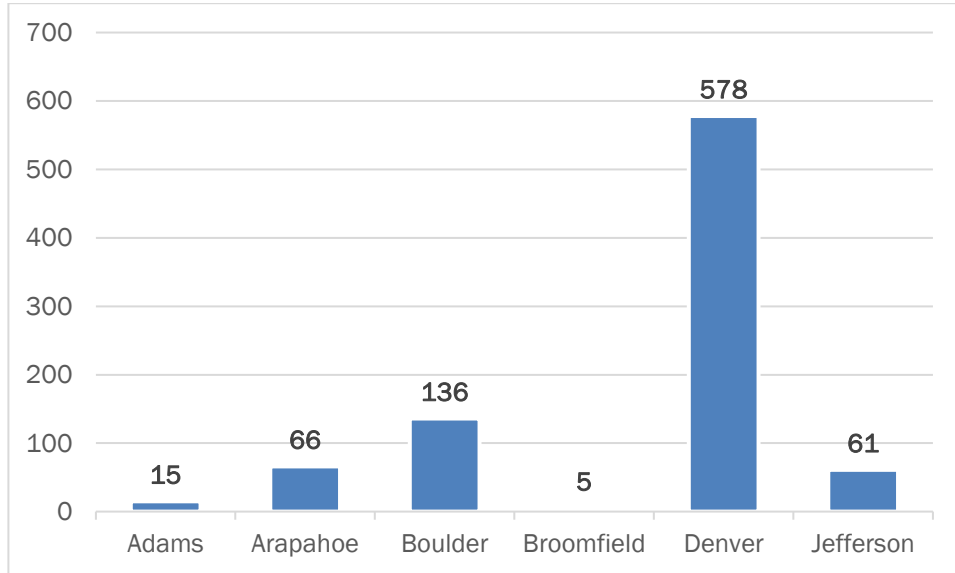
Chronically Homeless: Race/Ethnicity

**Figure 4.
Chronically Homeless:
Where they stayed on
January 25,
2016**



**Figure 5.
Chronically Homeless:
Disabling
Conditions**

**Figure 6.
Chronically
Homeless:
County
Location**



Appendix

About the Point-In-Time

The Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) conducted a Point-In-Time (PIT) study of people experiencing homelessness in the seven-county Metropolitan area with the help of volunteers, service providers, staff, and outreach workers. MDHI is a coalition working with homeless assistance agencies across the Metro area to coordinate the delivery of housing and services to homeless families, individuals, youth, veterans and persons with disabilities. MDHI seeks to provide the leadership, support and structure necessary to develop and sustain this coordinated system of housing and services. Referred to as the Continuum of Care (CoC), this system encompasses Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson Counties.

In order to be consistent with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), MDHI will report on homeless individuals and families using only the HUD definition. In previous years, the MDHI Point-in-Time report combined the data for those experiencing homelessness (as defined by HUD) and those at-risk of homelessness. As a Continuum we understand the critical importance of continuing to provide information about persons who could fall into homelessness due to one unexpected bill, the loss of a job, an illness, a death, absence of social supports or countless other financial crises and life circumstances. However, based on data collected from the 2014 PIT effort, we feel that collecting information on both homeless (as defined by HUD) and those deemed “at-risk” did not give an accurate enough picture of either population given the amount of resources expended. Therefore the Continuum of Care’s Point-in-Time committee recommended that the 2015 PIT effort (and beyond) focus solely on the homeless population, and as a result we implemented changes in terms of the survey instrument (this year’s survey is about one-third shorter) and data collection (data for clients in transitional housing projects was extracted from the continuum’s Homeless Management Information System). As we move forward, we will continue to look at methods for collecting more accurate and useful data to inform our community’s decision making processes regarding the issue of homelessness.

A Point-in-Time count provides a **snapshot** of homelessness by interviewing those who are homeless at a particular time. Ongoing collection and analysis of data on the number, location and demographic characteristics of persons experiencing homelessness and who need access to emergency shelter, supportive housing, permanent housing and specialized services is critical to designing, implementing and maintaining a Continuum of Care homeless service delivery system. HUD, the primary source of federal funding for housing support for homeless populations, requires that each Continuum of Care across the country conduct a Point-in-Time survey during the last ten days of January. HUD, MDHI, local governments and service providers use information collected by the Point-In-Time survey to assess, project and plan strategies and services to prevent and eliminate homelessness.

Limitations of the PIT

It is difficult to count people who are experiencing homelessness; the one consistent finding in research on homelessness is that surveys undercount homeless populations. It is easy to “miss” individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness—as they might not receive services at the agencies where persons experiencing homelessness are counted on the night of the PIT. Additionally, people enter and leave homelessness frequently and may become homeless shortly after the Point-In-Time survey.

Certain subpopulations of people experiencing homelessness present particular difficulties to being counted. By definition, unsheltered individuals are not in places where they can easily be located, as compared to people staying in transitional housing and homeless shelters. Often, they simply cannot be found when they are staying in automobiles and other kinds of unsuitable living situations. This fact may have been particularly relevant during past PIT counts when the weather was unseasonably warm, meaning that homeless individuals may have been more likely to be unsheltered compared to other years where colder weather resulted in additional shelter space opening and individuals presumably making the decision to stay sheltered.

Other groups who are difficult to include in the PIT count are unaccompanied youth, those who are experiencing domestic violence, as well as undocumented persons. Unaccompanied youth tend to avoid systems of care and do not often access “adult oriented” services due to concerns about detection and safety. They also tend to be more mobile throughout the day than

are homeless adults. Victims of domestic violence are undercounted largely due to confidentiality and safety concerns, and may hesitate to complete surveys. Understandably, undocumented individuals and families are afraid of the repercussions of being identified.

The comprehensiveness of a sheltered homeless count is entirely dependent upon the level of participation of agencies and organizations that serve homeless individuals and families, another limitation of the PIT. Every year MDHI recruits as many service providers, volunteers and outreach workers as possible to conduct the count. It uses an extensive network of trained agency staff and volunteers to collect the survey data so that, where possible, volunteers and staff assist homeless (or assumed homeless) individuals to complete the two-sided survey. Nevertheless, participation in the process naturally varies from year to year.

Given these differences across years in participation and survey administration practices, changes in the numbers of homeless individuals counted from year to year should not be interpreted as true increases or decreases in the homeless population. Instead, these numbers should be used to look at aggregate trends, for example, shifts in the relative proportion of different homeless sub-populations.

Although certain populations of people who are experiencing homelessness are difficult to find and count, and despite the difficulties of locating and engaging people who are experiencing homelessness, the PIT count is important as it is the only measure that captures the scope of people experiencing homelessness.

Definition of Homelessness

For the 2016 PIT survey MDHI used the definition of homelessness in [24 CFR 91.5 of the Homeless Definition Final Rule](#). This includes individuals and families “living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals) on the night designated for the count. This includes persons residing in Safe Haven projects.

Specifically, persons are identified as homeless if they are staying in the following locations:

- Sleeping in places not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, or abandoned or condemned buildings
- Sleeping in an emergency shelter or safe haven
- Living in transitional housing
- Staying in a hotel or motel paid for by a voucher

Priorities in the 2016 PIT efforts included:

- Involvement of formerly homeless individuals to assist with planning, training and interviewing
- Strategic identification of touch points where the HUD defined homeless were most likely to be found
- Use of Homeless Management Information System data to count those living in Transitional Housing
- Emphasis on surveying unsheltered persons, veterans and unaccompanied youth
- Increase in resources to improve PIT efforts

MDHI recognizes that the annual Point-In-Time count is only a snapshot of the overall picture of homelessness. We encourage stakeholders and others interested in homelessness to read this report with the understanding that homelessness is difficult to measure. While we may be challenged to measure it and determine the most effective priorities and interventions, we recognize that it is not acceptable for homelessness to occur in our neighborhoods, cities, state and country. Nationally, statewide and locally, ending homelessness is an unprecedented priority. Together, we can prevent homelessness for future generations.

Understanding the PIT Findings

For the homeless data, we report the findings for **respondents** and **all homeless**. Respondents are those individuals who completed a survey or who are designated as the Head of Household (HoH) in HMIS. The “all homeless” category is the sum of respondents and their household members. Findings are reported in one or both of these two categories, depending on which category is most informative and whether the variable can logically be imputed to all homeless. For example, military status can be reported for respondents only, while it makes sense to report where people spent the night of the count for all homeless (respondents and their family members). Findings are also reported across counties for purposes of geographic comparison.

Additionally, some respondents did not answer every question. As a result, the *percentages represent only those people who answered the question and not the total number of respondents*. Unless otherwise noted, the percentages do not include missing responses. Therefore, when adding up responses in various categories, *the numbers typically do not sum to the total number of “respondents” or “all homeless” due to missing data elements*.

As described earlier, the focus of the 2016 PIT effort was narrowed to more intentionally capture information only on individuals meeting the HUD criteria for homelessness, and not on individuals at-risk for homelessness. In 2015, of the total number of surveys completed, 0.6 percent were identified as not homeless, that number increased to 4.7 percent in 2016 (See Table 20). While the CoC made strides in focusing on the data collection effort to the homeless population, other challenges in the data collection process emerged. A notable issue from the 2016 PIT effort to that need to be addressed for the 2017 PIT includes developing plans to utilize technology to produce a more comprehensive and accurate count, especially in the large shelters.

Table 20. Summary of Excluded Data

Total PIT surveys & HMIS households	5,086
Observation/Refusal	318
Duplicate	332
Not homeless	238
Homeless status could not be determined	254
Insufficient PIN/identifying information	196
Outside metro area	7
HOH less than 15 years old or invalid/missing DOB	22
Removed due to other data quality issues	22
Total surveys/households removed	1,389
Total surveys/households kept in dataset	3,697

Notes:

- Not homeless includes:
 - 1) program changing from “Transitional Housing” to “Permanent Supportive Housing – Rapid Re Housing” in HMIS
 - 2) # of times homeless = 0 (not homeless - Prevention only) in HMIS
 - 3) Selecting I am not currently homeless for Q5 AND I have not been homeless at any time in the last three years to Q6 on PIT Survey
- Homeless status could not be determined includes the following:
 - 1) No response to Q2, Where did respondent sleep on night of PIT count on PIT Survey.
- Removed due other data quality issues includes:
 - 1) households that appear to be partial families (i.e., Household ID does not have an instance of “Self”) in HMIS

Table 21. Final household count breakout

PIT	2695
HMIS	1002
Total	3,697

Methodology

MDHI volunteers throughout the Metro Denver counties collected PIT data during the last week in January, referencing the Point-in-Time as the night of Monday, January 25, 2016.

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was developed by the Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI), in consultation with their research partner, OMNI Institute. The survey was revised based on input from MDHI's PIT Committee, on PIT data from previous years, on Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements, and on the fact that HMIS³ data would be used to complement PIT surveys. The majority of the questions remained the same compared to prior years with two primary goals: 1) to prioritize the collection of HUD required questions and focus data collection on individuals meeting the HUD definition of homelessness, and 2) to collect more accurate information on the family composition of homeless individuals.

Data Entry and Cleaning

MDHI subcontracted Network Exposure, a data entry consultant to enter all PIT survey data. HMIS data for transitional housing programs was utilized to complement the survey data, and all HMIS data was provided in a single data extract for individuals that were staying in transitional housing on the night of the PIT. The research team performed numerous procedures to ensure that data could be combined across PIT and HMIS datasets, and completed significant cleaning and checking procedures to identify data entry, data extract and logic errors. For example, researchers examined datasets for missing data patterns, out of range/incorrect values, and conducted logic checks on all variables included.

Duplicates

A unique PIN number was created for each individual using information provided for name, date of birth, and SSN (or the SSN of their head of household/primary respondent). PIT and HMIS data files were merged, and duplicate cases were identified using the unique PIN number. Several iterations of duplicate identification were then performed based on varying combinations of name, date of birth, and SSN to further identify duplicate cases that did not end up with the same PIN number due to different spelling of name or mis-typed information on any of the data fields used to create the PIN. Duplicates were also flagged based on respondents indicating that they had already completed a survey during this PIT administration.

Variable Creation

Several variables were created during the cleaning process. These included:

- **Chronically Homeless Individual** - An individual who:
 - A) Is homeless and lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and
 - B) Has been homeless and living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter continuously for at least 1 year or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years where the combined length of time homeless in those occasions is at least 12 months; and
 - C) Has a disability.
- **Chronic Family:** identified all members in a family with at least one or more chronically homeless family member
- **Family status:** develop family categories based on information provided about family members staying in the same place as the respondent, the relationship of those family members to the respondent, the number of family members who provided

³ A Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a software application designed to record and store client-level information on the characteristics and service needs of homeless persons. Homeless assistance providers use HMIS to coordinate care, manage their operations, and better serve their clients.

information in the family matrix, and the number of children that respondents indicated that they had custody of who were sleeping in another location.

- **Households without children:** Households with adults only. This includes households composed of unaccompanied adults (including unaccompanied youth age 18-24) and multiple adults (including households with multiple youth ages 18 to 24).
- **Households with at least one adult and one child:** Households with (at least) one adult (including youth ages 18 to 24) and one child.
- **Households with only children:** Households composed exclusively of persons under age 18, including one-child households, multi-child households or other household configurations composed only of children.

Identifying County

This report includes analysis of results by county, as well as analysis of migration between counties. We used the following procedures to assign county if respondents did not indicate a county on the survey.

To identify where the respondent spent Monday night:

- If a respondent indicated the city that they spent Monday night, the corresponding county was assigned. For example, if the respondent said they spent the night in the city of Boulder, they were assigned Boulder County.
- If the respondent did not indicate a city or county, they were assigned the county that the survey was conducted in (the county in which the agency administering the survey was located).
- If either of the above scenarios resulted in a city that lies in more than one county, the county was applied proportionally based on respondents where the county was known. For example, the city of Aurora lies in three counties: Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas counties.

To identify county of last permanent residence:

- County was assigned based on designated city or county information provided by the respondent.
- If the city provided was a part of multiple counties, county was applied proportionally using the same methodology as above. If the respondent did not provide a last city or county, the county of last residence was marked as missing.