

**April 29, 2024 | Lancaster County Redevelopment Authority – Department of Human Services
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Updated 5/6/2024)**



Lancaster County Point-In-Time Count For 2024 Shows an Increase in Unsheltered and Sheltered Homeless Throughout Lancaster County

The Lancaster County Homelessness Coalition is the administrative entity that manages local homelessness programs, allocated funding to local service providers and conducts the congressionally mandated annual Point in Time Count.

The Lancaster County 2024 Point-In-Time (PIT) Count identified 597 sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals staying in emergency shelter, transitional housing or sleeping outside. This Count marks a 13.5% increase from the 2023 PIT Count.

“The 13.5% increase is contributed to a more sophisticated methodology using professionals in the field leading more survey teams than ever, using digital maps to guide the teams covering nearly 50% more square miles than last year, and the current economic and housing conditions”. This year’s PIT Count continues to be a more realistic representation of the population”, reported Deb Jones, Director of Office for the Homelessness Coalition.

The 2024 PIT Count occurred from the evening of Wednesday, January 24 into the morning of Thursday, January 25, 2024. 69 volunteers participated in the count as part of 23 field survey teams. Volunteers included members with lived or work experience in mental health, criminal justice, substance use disorder, or homelessness to ensure a trauma-informed and empathetic approach to the survey work.

Specifically, the 2024 PIT Count found:

- 122 total individuals were unsheltered.
- 475 individuals were sheltered with 63% staying in an emergency shelter facility and 37% in transitional housing.

- **Of the 597 total individuals**, most individuals surveyed were between 25 and 64 years old, accounting for 68% of the total count. Children under 18 were the next highest category at 22%.

Survey planning and implementation methodology was changed for 2024. A PIT planning committee was established and included representatives from 14 diverse social service agencies. All volunteers were required to attend a one-hour training session where they were briefed on expectations and responsibilities and introduced to the survey instrument.

The implementation of easier to use digital maps for survey areas enabled expansion from 2023. In 2023, volunteers surveyed 241.6 square miles of Lancaster County; in 2024 the area surveyed nearly doubled with survey team collection efforts including nearly 475 of the total 954 square miles within Lancaster County. Surveys were conducted in various municipalities including the City of Lancaster, and Columbia, Elizabethtown, Ephrata, Lititz, Manheim, Marietta, Millersville, Mount Joy, New Holland, and Quarryville boroughs.

One of the factors contributing to homelessness is the lack of affordable housing.

The housing market in Lancaster County, for both rental and owner-occupied units, continues to be tight. The 2022 American Community Survey revealed that in Lancaster County of the total 218,987 housing units only 6,971, or approximately 3%, were vacant. This indicates a slight improvement over 2021 ACS data which pointed to a 2% vacancy rate for rental units and a 0.4% vacancy rate for owner-occupied housing.

Housing cost burden is also a pervasive problem for owner and renter households in Lancaster County, regardless of income. Based on 2016–2020 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development and Research in September 2023, 53,170 renter and owner households of 204,005 total in the county, paid more than 30% of their income toward housing costs. This cost burden is worst for extremely low-income households, making at or below 30% of the area median family income for Lancaster County, with 13,120 households of 19,450 total, severely cost burdened, paying more than 50% of their household income toward housing costs.

Another key issue is the lack of a livable wage. Data from the National Low Income Housing Coalition shows that a minimum wage worker in Pennsylvania would need to work **106 hours per week** to afford a 1-bedroom rental offered at a fair market rent of \$1,002 /month. A 1-bedroom apartment would need to be offered at \$377 per month to be affordable to a full-time minimum wage worker.

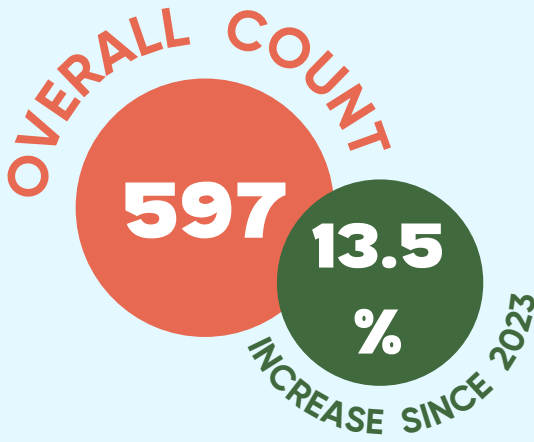
If you would like to support the work of the Lancaster County Homelessness Coalition donations can be made at <https://lchra.com/our-organizations/homelessness-coalition/donate/>. Donations will support local initiative of street outreach to unsheltered individuals, financial assistance for clients to become housed and the creation of affordable housing units.

Media Contact: press@lchra.com

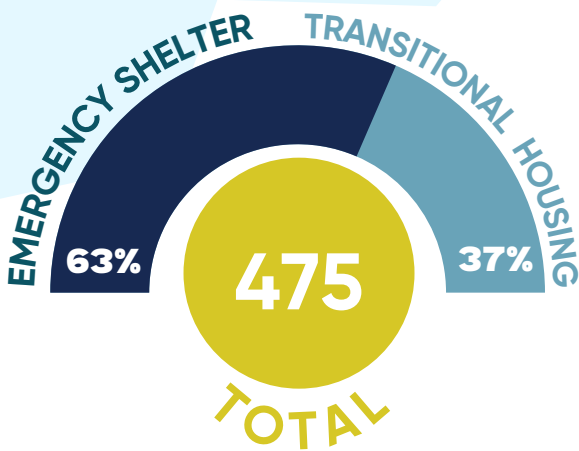
POINT IN TIME COUNT

The national Point-in-Time count is an actual count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January.

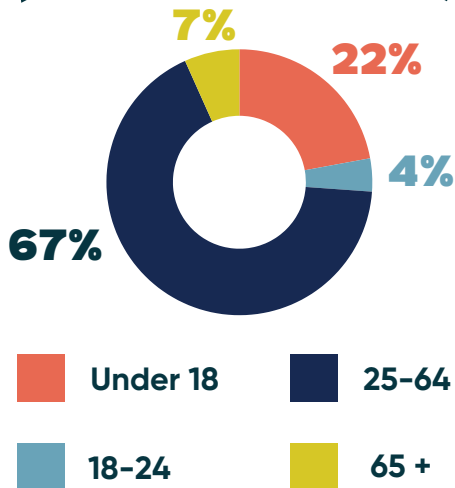
JANUARY 24, 2024 SURVEY



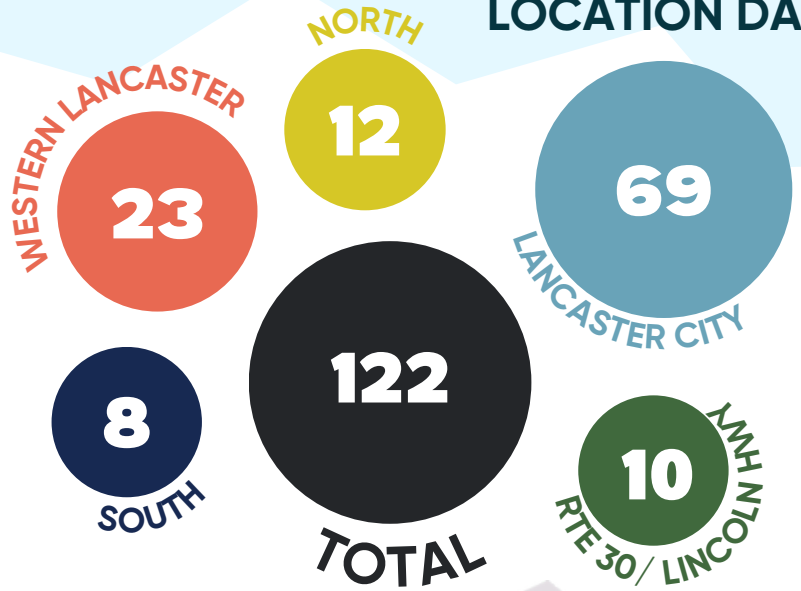
SHELTERED PIT COUNT SUMMARY



AGE BREAKDOWN



UNSHELTERED PIT COUNT LOCATION DATA



2023-2024 TREND OVERVIEW

- 10% more people in Emergency Shelter
- 20% more people in Transitional Housing
- 14% more unsheltered people counted
- 8% more people age 65 and older



OFFICE FOR THE
**Homelessness
Coalition**