



REVISITING THE SILENT CRISIS

An Ohio Human Services Data Warehouse Report

December 2018 Update

OVERVIEW

This report provides a snapshot of the 70,123 Ohioans who accessed homelessness services in 2017. Using Ohio Human Services Data Warehouse (OHSDW) data from 2012-2017, this report highlights key trends in homelessness over time.

Overall, there has been a steady increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness (Figure 1). The number of people accessing services in 2017 (70,123) was 20% higher than the number served in 2012 (58,481). The largest increases in population served have been among young children and older adults.

Data from OHSDW provide a comprehensive and detailed picture of homelessness in the state, augmenting the Point in Time Count (PIT), which counts homeless individuals on a single night during the year. The 2017 PIT identified 9,776 individuals as homeless on a single night. The 70,123 people identified using OHSDW show there is a sizable need for stable, affordable housing in Ohio, and that this need is growing.

Figure 1: Increase in Clients Served by CoCs, 2012-2017

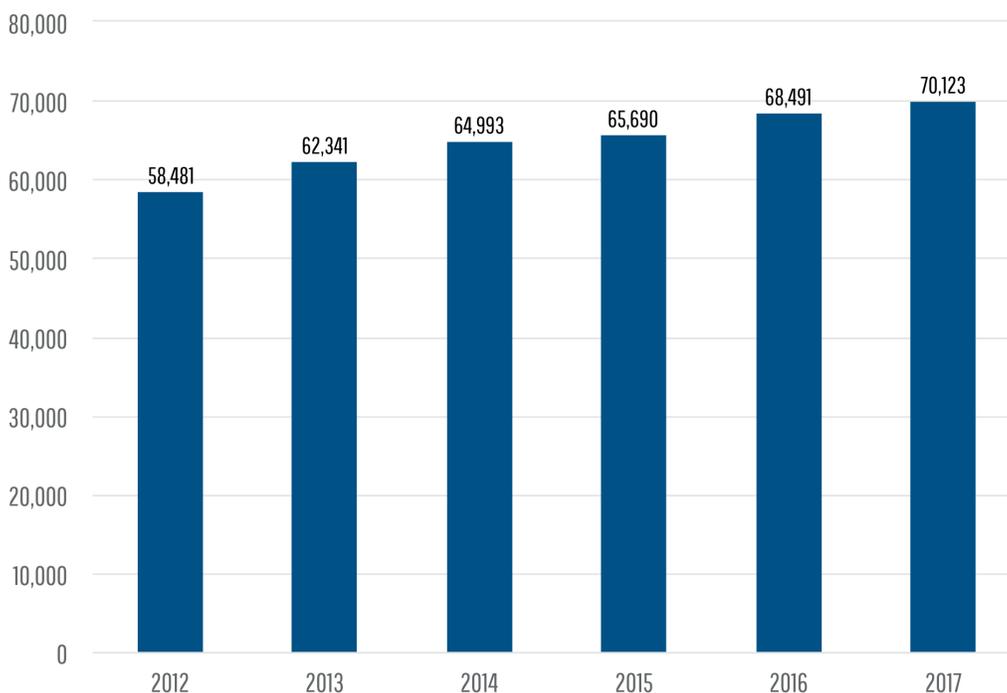
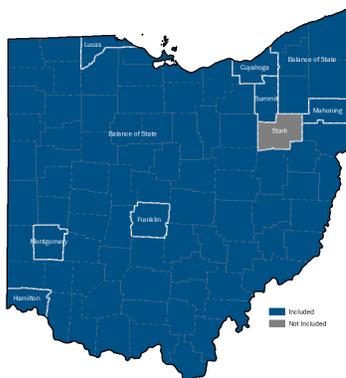


Figure 2: Map of Continuums of Care Included in OHSDW



BACKGROUND

The Ohio Human Services Data Warehouse (OHSDW) aggregates data from Ohio's nine Continuums of Care (CoCs). Currently, OHSDW has data from eight of the nine total CoCs, covering 87 of Ohio's 88 counties (Figure 2). The warehouse maintains de-identified data for individuals who accessed CoC services between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2017. Clients accessed five main services: Emergency Shelter, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Re-Housing, Safe Haven and Transitional Housing.

This report is an update to the Ohio Housing Finance Agency's first report using OHSDW data from 2012-2016: *Confronting Homelessness: Examining the Scope of Ohio's Silent Crisis and Its Local Solutions*. This updated report includes data from January 1, 2017 – December 31, 2017, as well as information from Cincinnati/Hamilton County.

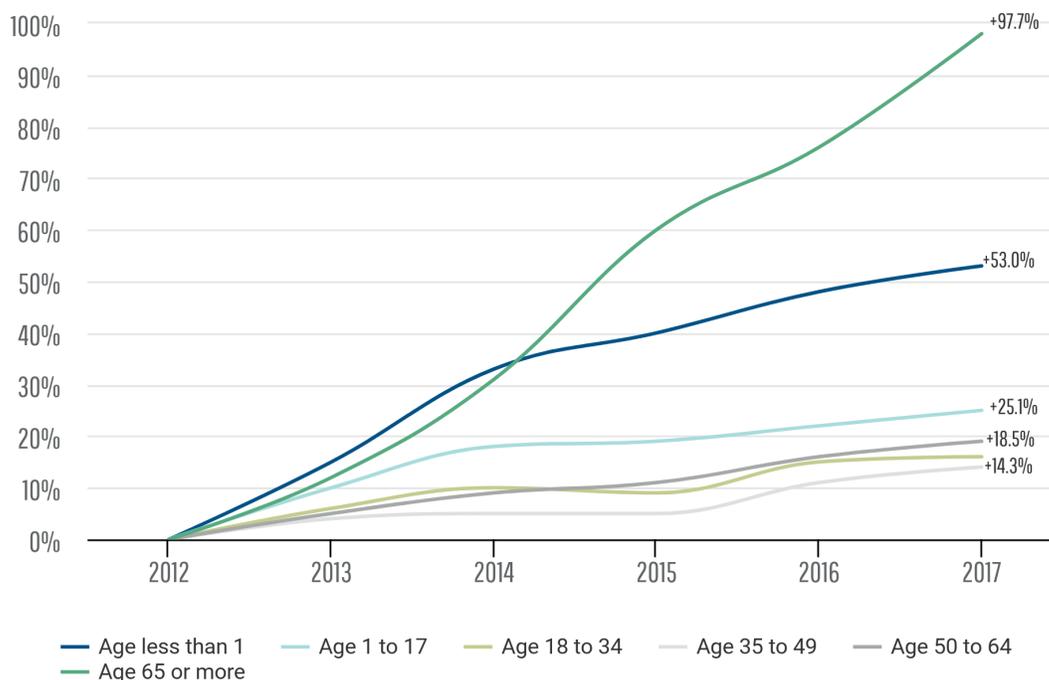
To avoid double-counting individuals, this report refers to data collected "at first entry", meaning the first time a person appeared in the dataset during the 2017 time frame. A full explanation of the procedures involved in assembling OHSDW records is included in the first report.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Client Age

The average person accessing services for the first time during in 2017 was 31 years old. This is slightly higher than the average for 2012-2016, which was 28 years old.

Figure 3: Increases in Clients Served by Age at First Entry



The fastest growing segments of the homeless population are the very old and the very young (Figure 3). In 2017, the most common age—2,943 individuals—were those aged 0, meaning that they had not yet reached their first birthday. The number of infants served by the CoCs grew 53.0% from 2012 to 2017.

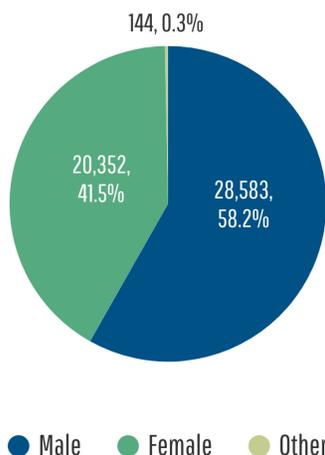
In 2017, 20,717 (29.7%) of people accessing services were children aged 0-17. This number is similar to the 23,398 Ohio students flagged as homeless in the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) Ohio School Report Cards for the 2017-2018 school year. Youth remain overrepresented in the homeless population relative to the state as a whole. According to the 2017 American Community Survey (ACS), only 22.3% of Ohioans are children, compared to almost 30% of CoC clients.

In 2017, 12,330 (17.7%) clients were adults aged 50 years or older. Of these, only 961 were aged 65 years or older. Though clients aged 65 or older represent a small fraction of those served, their numbers are growing rapidly; the number of clients 65+ increased 97.7% from 2012 (486) to 2017 (961). Despite their growing presence in the homeless population, older adults are underrepresented in OHSDW compared to the Ohio population generally. One in six Ohioans (16.6%) are aged 65 or older, while this population is only 1.4% of CoC clients.

Client Gender

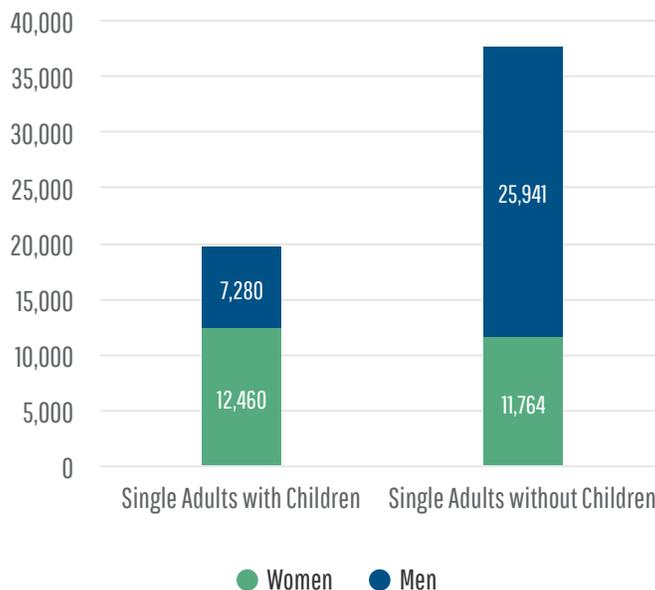
Male clients continue to represent a slim majority of those served. Among adult clients served in 2017, 28,538 men (58.2%) and 20,352 women (41.5%) were served (Figure 4). This remains in-line with the findings from 2012-2016, where 57.0% of clients served were men, 42.8% were women, and 0.2% reported another gender identity.

Figure 4: Gender Composition of Adult HMIS Clients



This ratio changes substantially when focusing on single adults with children (Figure 5). In 2017, 63.1% of single adults who entered with children but without a partner were women (12,460 people), while 68.7% of single adults without children were men (25,941).

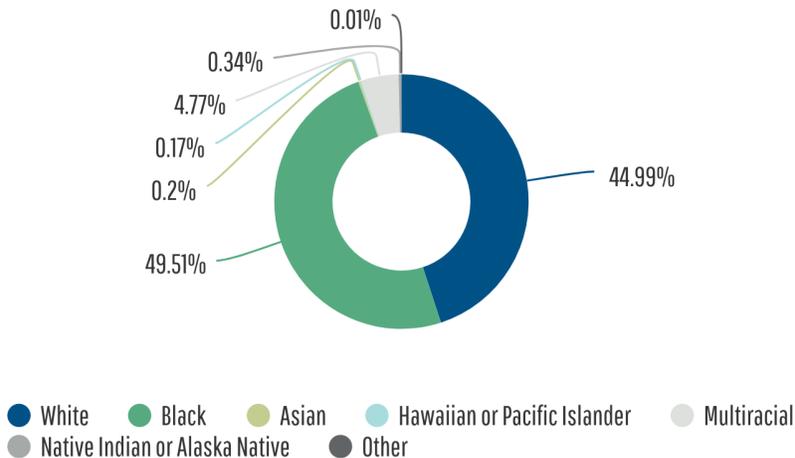
Figure 5: Gender Composition of Single Adults



While stereotypes of homelessness frequently focus on single, middle aged adults, the number of families—defined as adults with children—accessing services is increasing steadily. In 2017, more than a third of the homeless population was comprised of adults with children. This has increased steadily from about 18,000 in 2012 to 22,000 in 2017.

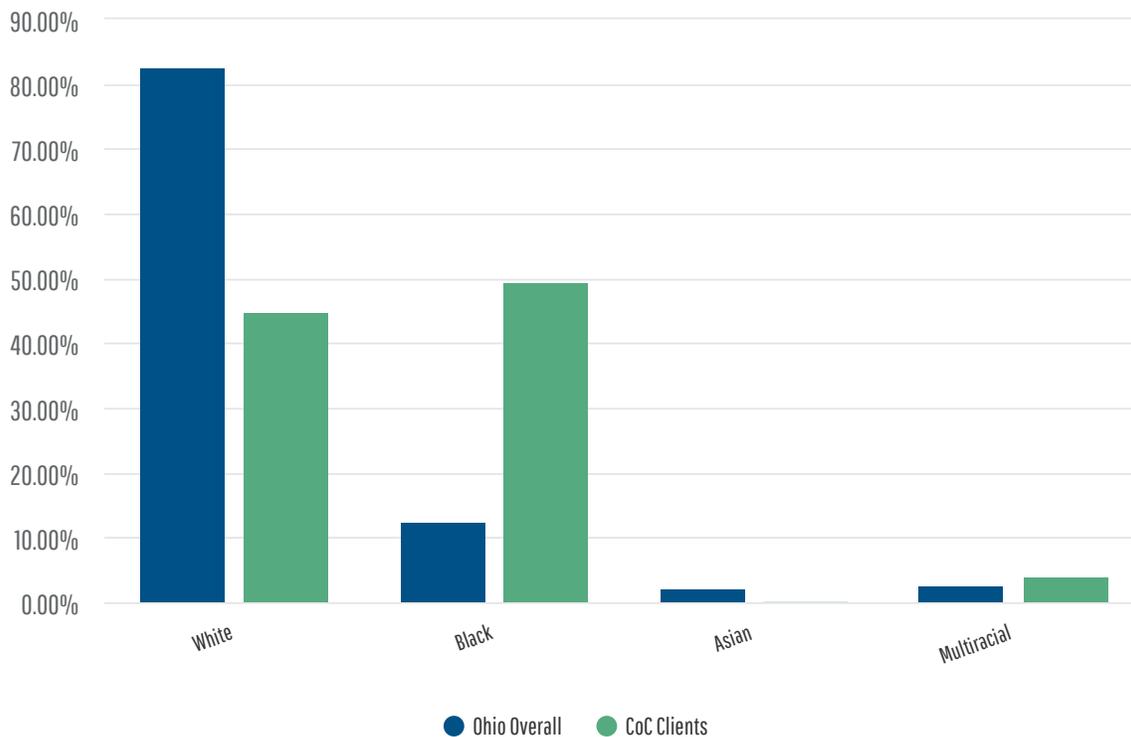
Client Race

Figure 6: Client Race, 2018



In 2017, 34,521 black clients accessed services (49.5%) compared with 31,322 white clients (44.9%). These ratios are similar to the findings in 2012-2016 data. These racial disparities are influenced by broader forces of poverty and access to homeownership that exist throughout the state. The [FY2019 Ohio Housing Needs Assessment](#) reported that black Ohioans are nearly three times more likely to live in poverty as white Ohioans (33% and 12%, respectively). Homeownership, which may act as a buffer against housing instability, is far more common among white Ohioans (72%) than among black Ohioans (36%).

Figure 7: Race of CoC Clients compared to Ohio Overall, 2017



Client Ethnicity

Only 3.8% of the total client population serviced in 2017 reported Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, which is roughly equivalent to ACS data that shows 3.7% of Ohioans overall.

Special Populations

CoC data track which clients report having previously served in the military. Overall, 4,898 veterans (10.0% of adults) were served in 2017. Ninety percent of veterans were male. Veterans are slightly overrepresented in OHSDW, as only 7.9% of Ohio adults report prior military service, according to the 2017 American Community Survey.

Similarly, individuals are asked to identify whether they have survived domestic violence; 11,222 adults (24.2%) who received services in 2017 identified as being survivors of domestic violence. A large majority, 83%, of survivors were female. The number of individuals who report surviving domestic violence is far higher in the homeless population than the Ohio population overall. The 2016 Domestic Violence Report from the Ohio Attorney General's Office reported the victimization rate as 601 victims per 100,000 people.

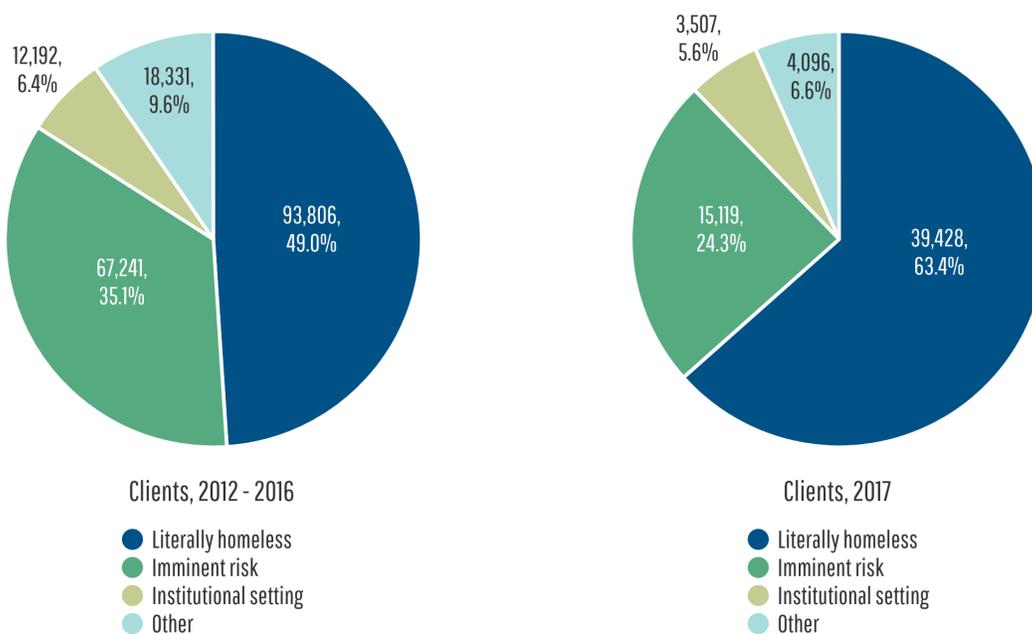
ENTRY AND EXIT

Prior Residence

The living conditions experienced by a client immediately prior to their entry into the CoC system provides insight on the immediate location clients lived in prior to accessing homelessness services. Overall, 39,425 (56.2%) were recorded as being literally homeless at initial entry (Figure 8). Literally homeless is a HUD designation that includes individuals living in a setting not meant for permanent habitation, including shelters, on the streets, and transitional housing, among others. A larger share of clients were literally homeless at initial entry in 2017 than in 2012-2016 (63.4% compared to 49.0%).

Another 15,119 clients (21.6%) were considered to be at imminent risk, meaning they were residing in a more precarious setting. Imminent risk designations include staying temporarily with friends or family, or in a hotel. About 3,507 (5.0%) had previously been living in an institutional setting, such as a jail or hospital. The remaining clients either lived in other types of residences, including rental housing with or without subsidies, owning a home with or without a subsidy, or in another form of subsidized housing.

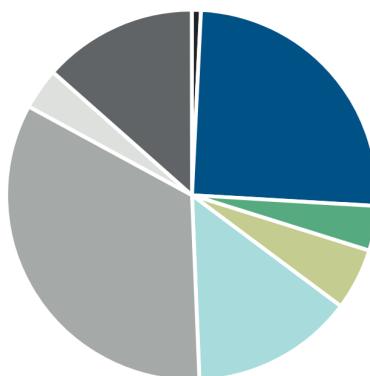
Exhibit 8: Prior Residence of Entering HMIS Clients



Destination

CoCs track where clients go after receiving homelessness services. This is a challenging field for data collection, as many individuals do not report an exit destination. About 36% of clients have no recorded exit destination. About 14,950 clients move into an unsubsidized home of their own (21.3%). A larger set moves to a less permanent housing situation; about 16% move in with friends and family and 8.5% move into temporary housing. About 9.7% receive a housing subsidy. A small portion of clients were deceased—346 people—and about 2,400 clients exited to a place not fit for habitation. These findings are comparable to the data from 2012-2016.

Exhibit 9: Destination of Exiting HMIS Clients



- Deceased
- Staying with Friends or Family
- Institution
- Not meant for habitation
- Own or rent with a subsidy
- Own or rent without subsidy
- Other
- Temporary

CONCLUSION

This report highlights a series of trends related to housing instability and homelessness within Ohio. Findings indicate that the number of individuals served by homelessness services has increased over time, affecting many vulnerable populations, including infants, children, older adults, veterans and survivors of domestic violence.

The prevalence of these populations within the homelessness system relate to broader challenges of housing affordability throughout Ohio. The [FY2019 Ohio Housing Needs Assessment](#) reported that in 2017 there were only 42 affordable and available rental units per 100 extremely low-income renter households in Ohio (those earning less than 30% of the Area Media Income), meaning there simply are not enough affordable homes for Ohio's population.

Maintaining safe and affordable housing is particularly challenging for lower and middle income Ohioans, who face high housing costs. About a quarter of all renting households--390,000 households—experience severe housing cost burden, meaning they spend at least half their income on utilities and rent. Those who have high housing costs relative to their income are more susceptible to periods of housing instability, as unexpected costs, such as a car repair or medical bill, may force them to decide between staying in their home and other needs.

Ohio's children and older adults are particularly susceptible to these challenges of housing insecurity. Children are more likely than adults to live in poverty; 20.4% of all children live in households below the poverty level, compared to 14.5% of the overall population. Older adults are also more likely to experience housing cost burden than their younger counterparts (52% of renters and 25% of homeowners are cost burdened, compared to 42% of younger renters and 19% of younger homeowners).

Safe and affordable housing is critical for maintaining the health and prosperity of our state. Addressing the growing need for those who experience homelessness is a key challenge for Ohio.