



# SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY COMMUNITY REPORT 2024



Prepared by:

 Thurmond Consulting LLC

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Our utmost thanks to the hundreds of volunteers who enthusiastically gave their time to meet the needs of the San Luis Obispo County 2024 Point-in-Time Count. The success of the 2024 Point-in-Time Count was due in large part to strong regional collaboration. Our deep appreciation goes to the Cities of Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Grover Beach, Morro Bay, Paso Robles, Pismo Beach, and San Luis Obispo for their support. Thank you to the Point-In-Time Count Committee and the Homeless Services Oversight Council (HSOC). This effort would not have been possible without the partnership and support of the County of San Luis Obispo, along with the County of San Luis Obispo's Department of Social Services, Information Technology, Office of Education, and Board of Supervisors.*

*A special thank you to the homeless services providers and their staff who assisted with the 2024 PIT survey, including 40 Prado Homeless Services Center, 5 Cities Homeless Coalition, the Center for Family Strengthening, the Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo (CAPSLO), El Camino Homeless Organization (ECHO), the Family Care Network, Lumina Alliance, The Salvation Army, and Transitions Mental Health Association (TMHA).*

*We owe our sincere gratitude to all those with lived and former experience with homelessness who volunteered for the Point-in-Time Count, whether advising the PIT Count Committee or serving as group guides during the Count. We would also like to share our appreciation for our San Luis Obispo County neighbors currently experiencing homelessness who entrusted us with their stories and for whom we do this work.*





# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Why Are Point-In-Time Counts a Valuable Resource?</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Homelessness Defined</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>A Community Effort</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>San Luis Obispo County 2024 PIT Count</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Challenges</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Appendix: Definitions and Survey Model</b>	<b>29</b>

## INTRODUCTION

This report serves as a comprehensive overview of the findings and insights gathered during the 2024 Point-In-Time (PIT) Count conducted in San Luis Obispo County between January 23, 2024 and January 31, 2024. More than 250 volunteers gathered to count and survey people experiencing unsheltered homelessness throughout the County. Supplemental counts were conducted in Paso Robles, Morro Bay, and the Santa Maria Riverbed. Data for people experiencing sheltered homelessness was gathered from service providers throughout the county. These collective efforts provided an accurate and timely picture of homelessness in the region and highlighted the challenges faced by individuals and families experiencing homelessness, as well as the strengths and opportunities to address these issues within the community. Additional definitions used in this report can be found in the Appendix section of this report.

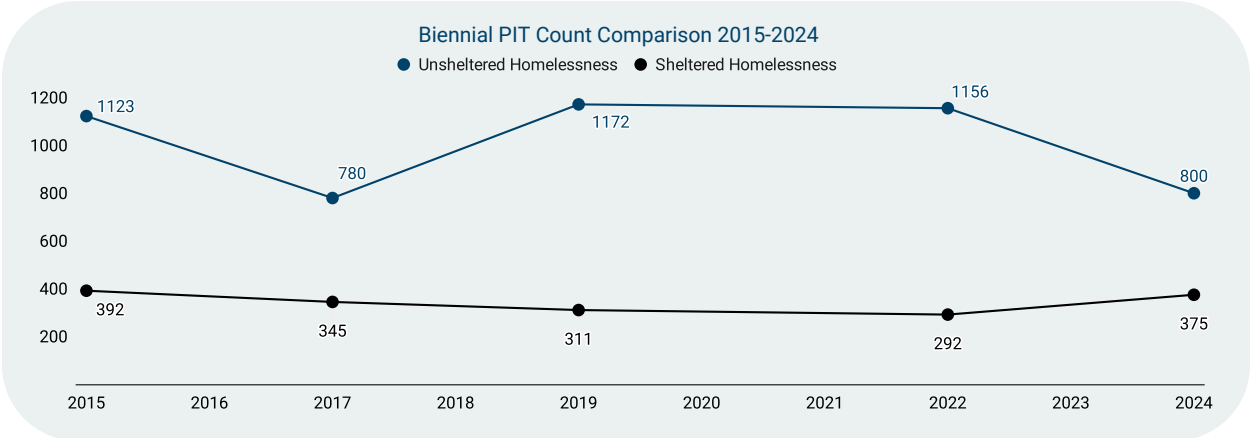
This report will explore key findings regarding the prevalence of homelessness, and the demographics and characteristics of sheltered and unsheltered populations, as well as the factors contributing to homelessness.





### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

San Luis Obispo County encompasses approximately 3,300 square miles and 7 incorporated cities along the Pacific Coast. The County’s mission is to enhance the economic, environmental and social quality of life for its residents. Point-in-Time (PIT) Counts have been conducted in the County for over a decade. These biennial counts are a collaborative effort between the County, community volunteers, service providers, and local governments, and align with the County’s mission by providing direct information from people currently experiencing homelessness to inform future efforts to better address the needs of these communities. In compliance with standards set out by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the 2024 PIT Count identified 1,175 individuals experiencing homelessness in San Luis Obispo County. These individuals were surveyed to obtain detailed demographic information to enable further assessment and evaluation of priority service areas and to inform future responses to identified needs.



Changes in methodology, including expanded outreach efforts and surveys, were made in the development of the 2024 PIT Count to improve the accuracy of collected data. The 2022 PIT Count was conducted using a sample survey methodology. In a sample survey, only a subset, or sample, of the population is surveyed. Then, the data is extrapolated for a comprehensive snapshot. For the 2024 PIT Count, a full census count was adopted to maximize accuracy and precision in the numbers and demographics of those experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness. Complete census methodology is the HUD-recommended methodology for a Continuum of Care (CoC) the size of San Luis Obispo County. This meticulous approach will ultimately provide policymakers, service providers, and community stakeholders with a robust foundation for informed decision-making, enabling them to devise tailored strategies to effectively address the diverse needs of the County’s unhoused population.

## WHY ARE POINT-IN-TIME COUNTS A VALUABLE RESOURCE?

Conducting the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count yields numerous benefits for both the community at large and those currently experiencing homelessness. Through this comprehensive assessment, stakeholders gain invaluable insight that will shape crucial aspects of policy-making, resource allocation, and service provision.

**Funding:** An accurate PIT Count is a determinant of funding levels for services to people experiencing homelessness. Both the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and HUD use data from the PIT Count to determine levels of funding for both the annual HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Competition and the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Grant Program.

**Measuring Progress:** Regular Point-in-Time Counts allow CoCs and jurisdictions to track progress in addressing homelessness, and empower elected officials and local community members to assess the efficacy of local funding and planning efforts based on the data gathered. This can lead to more impactful future policies and effective use of local funding in addressing homelessness.

**Service Needs:** PIT Counts provide information on gaps in services for people experiencing homelessness, giving households experiencing homelessness the opportunity to share what additional resources and services could help lead to housing, stability and self-sufficiency.

**Identifying Sub-Populations:** PIT Counts gather required information related to target populations. This data empowers agencies to focus on specialized services. For example, a region with a high number of veterans identified might prioritize programs like Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF), support programs, and HUD Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers.

**Service Location:** PIT Counts allow CoCs and jurisdictions to locate service areas for people experiencing homelessness accurately. This enables additional mobile and/or conventional services to target areas with a critical mass of unhoused people.



## HOMELESSNESS DEFINED

### Federal Definition of Homelessness for PIT Count

Under section 578.7 of the CoC Program interim rule, CoCs must plan and conduct, at least biennially, a PIT Count of persons experiencing homelessness within the geographic area. Section 578.3 of the CoC Program interim rule states that PIT Counts are “carried out on one night in the last 10 calendar days of January or at such other time as required by HUD.” According to HUD, homelessness includes individuals and families who:

1. Lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and
2. Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation (such as living on the streets, in cars, or in abandoned buildings), an emergency shelter, or transitional housing for homeless persons

This definition encompasses both individuals and families experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness.

**Sheltered Homelessness** refers to individuals or families experiencing homelessness who reside in emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, or safe havens on the night of the PIT Count and have accessed temporary housing assistance.

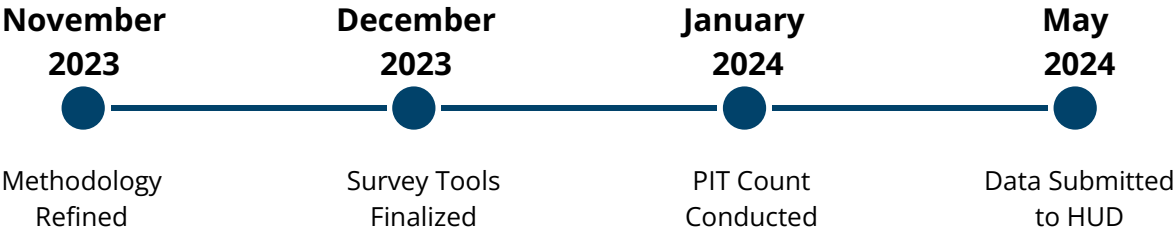
**Unsheltered Homelessness** denotes individuals or families experiencing homelessness who are living in places not meant for human habitation, such as streets, parks, abandoned buildings, vehicles, or other locations not designed for residential purposes. They lack access to emergency shelter or transitional housing.

It's important to note that for the purposes of meeting federal requirements of the PIT Count, individuals staying temporarily with others due to lack of permanent housing (e.g., "couch surfing") are not considered unhoused unless they meet the criteria outlined above. Communities conducting PIT Counts typically adhere to this federal definition while implementing local methodologies for counting and categorizing those experiencing homelessness (see the appendix for more terms and definitions.)

## A COMMUNITY EFFORT

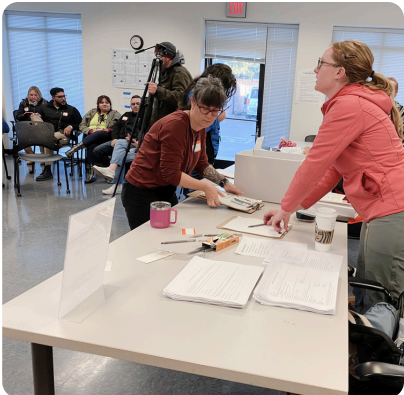
### The Planning Process

Project planning for the 2024 PIT Count began with confirming methodology, key milestones, and roles. Over the period of five months, extensive planning and outreach were conducted to homeless service providers and stakeholders. Outreach efforts established communication channels among stakeholders and incentivized participation. By November, county-wide volunteer recruitment had begun. By January 2024, training modules, including three intensive training sessions for all volunteers and guides, had been developed for survey teams to complete prior to the PIT Count.



### Community Involvement

Community support and involvement were cornerstones to the success of the 2024 Count. Media partnerships and regional collaboration maximized engagement from the community. This resulted in a historic number of community members contributing to the PIT Count by participating on the day of, providing key resources, and sharing information with friends and family. All volunteers completed a 2-hour training module, offered both in-person and virtually, prior to the Count. The training provided volunteers with a sample script for administering the survey, safety best practices, emergency contact information, and directions for utilizing the mobile app on the day of the Count.





## PIT Count Committee

Homeless Service Providers, nonprofit personnel, and people with lived experience of unsheltered homelessness were invited to join the PIT Count Committee to lead the implementation and planning of the Point-in-Time Count. The PIT Count Committee was tasked with a number of key responsibilities, including drafting and confirming the Count start time, recommending incentives, providing survey recommendations, and recruitment assistance. In order for a Point-in-Time Count to be a comprehensive and accurate representation of people experiencing homelessness in San Luis Obispo County, stakeholders from every sector were invited to take part in the planning process. This included:

- Homeless service providers
- Community service providers (i.e., food/clothing banks, day shelters or drop-in centers, community centers, community action agencies, detox programs, mental health providers, mainstream social service agencies)
- Homeless coalitions and advocacy groups
- Currently unhoused and formerly homeless individuals
- Outreach teams
- Local government partners
- Faith-based community partners
- Health service providers
- Law enforcement
- McKinney-Vento school liaisons
- Local colleges or universities
- Public housing agencies
- Public Libraries
- Local businesses and chambers of commerce
- Community volunteer and civic groups
- Federal Partners (HUD, VA, Dept. of Education, HHS, etc.)



## SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY 2024 PIT COUNT

The 2024 County of San Luis Obispo Point-in-Time (PIT) Count was conducted on Tuesday, January 23, 2024 beginning at 7:30 am. The final date for data collection allowed for by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was Wednesday, January 31, 2024. During the PIT Count, a total of 1,175 individuals were identified as experiencing homelessness in the County of San Luis Obispo. 800 individuals counted were experiencing unsheltered homelessness, of whom 287 were counted via observation. Data collected from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) or a comparable database identified 375 individuals who were experiencing sheltered homelessness and residing in either emergency shelter or transitional housing.

**Individuals counted were grouped into three (3) household categories: adult-only (AO), adults with children (AC), and child-only (CO). 1032 individuals were from an adult-only household, with 778 unsheltered and 254 sheltered.**





## SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY 2024 PIT COUNT CONTINUED



Out of 1,175 individuals, 32% were residing in emergency shelters or transitional housing



Out of 1,175 individuals, 68% were experiencing unsheltered homelessness



Out of 1,025 households, 27% were residing in emergency shelters or transitional housing



Out of 1,025 households, 72% were experiencing unsheltered homelessness

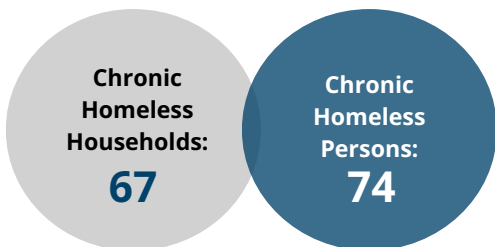
Sheltered Adults only households



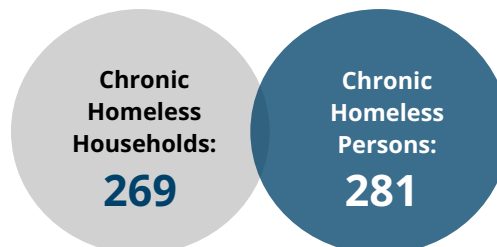
Unsheltered Adults only households



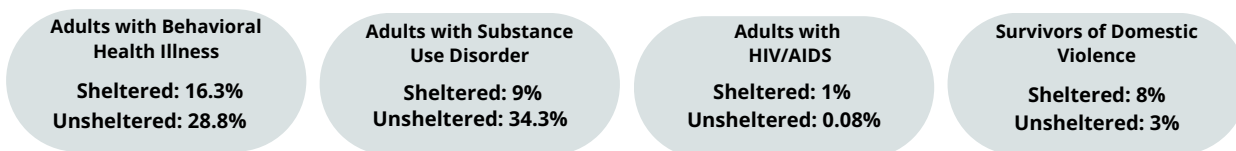
### Sheltered Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness



### Unsheltered Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

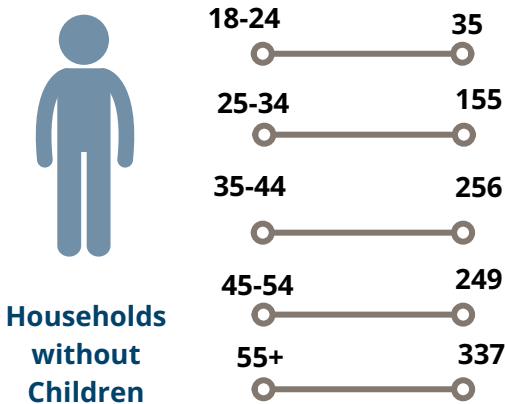
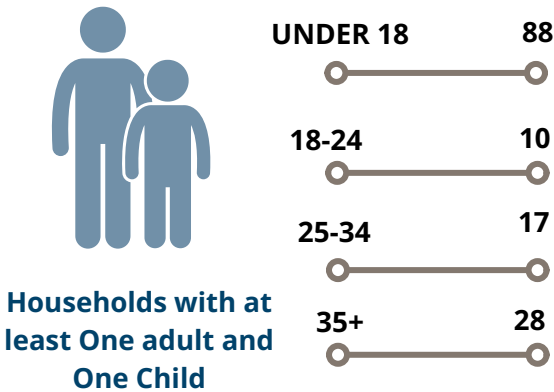


### HUD defined Sub-Populations

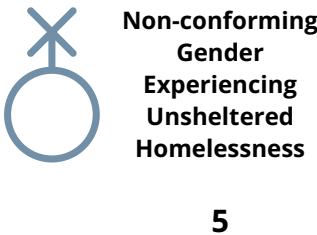
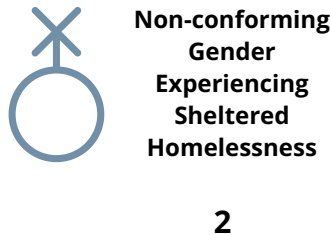


SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY 2024 PIT COUNT CONTINUED

**Age Demographics of Unsheltered and Sheltered Individuals in Adult Only and Adults with Children Households**

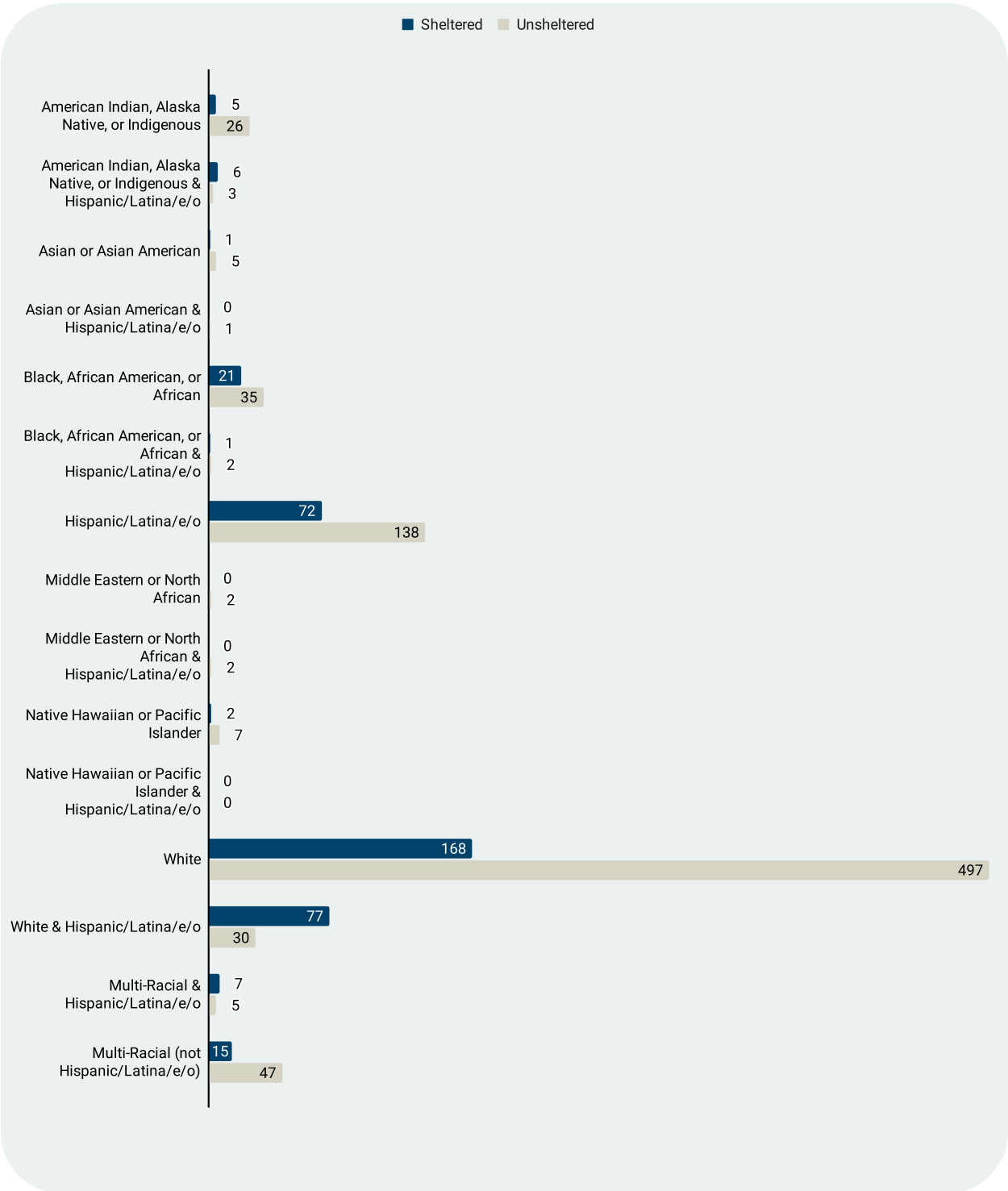


**Gender Identity for Total Populations Experiencing Homelessness**



# SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY 2024 PIT COUNT CONTINUED

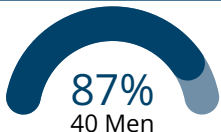
## Total Population Experiencing Homelessness by Race & Ethnicity



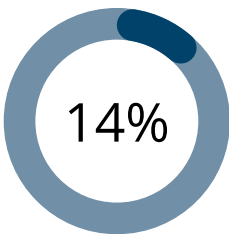


### SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY 2024 PIT COUNT CONTINUED

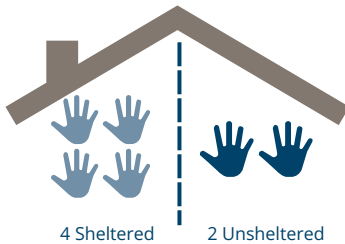
#### Veteran Gender Identity of Individuals Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness



#### Unaccompanied Youth Status



14% of the unaccompanied youth population met the definition of chronic homelessness.



Parenting Youth Individuals Ages 18-24  
\*Where parent(s) is/are age 18-24, and children are under the age of 18"

#### Self-Identified Service Needs for Individuals Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness

WHEN ASKED WHAT SERVICES WERE NEEDED IN THE COUNTY , RESPONDENTS INDICATED:



Employment



Treatment



Housing



SSI/SSD



Legal Services



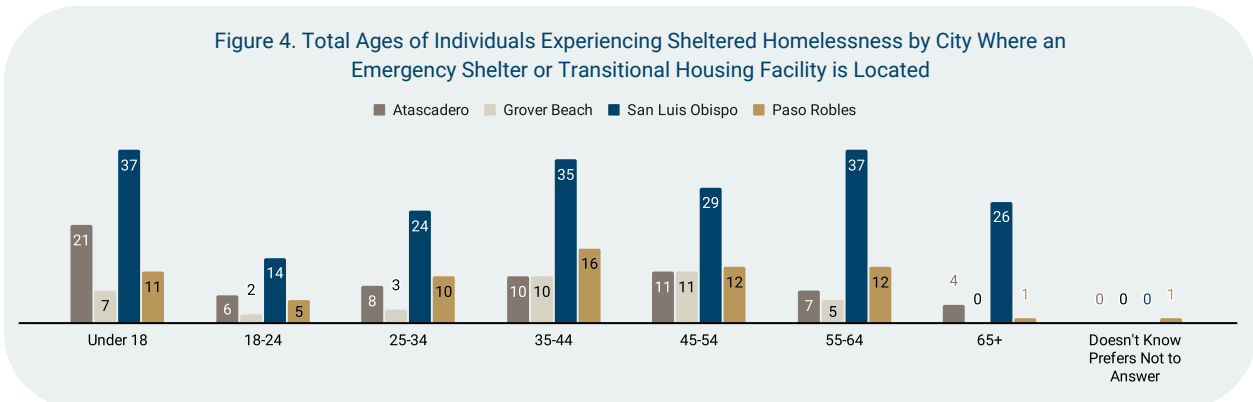
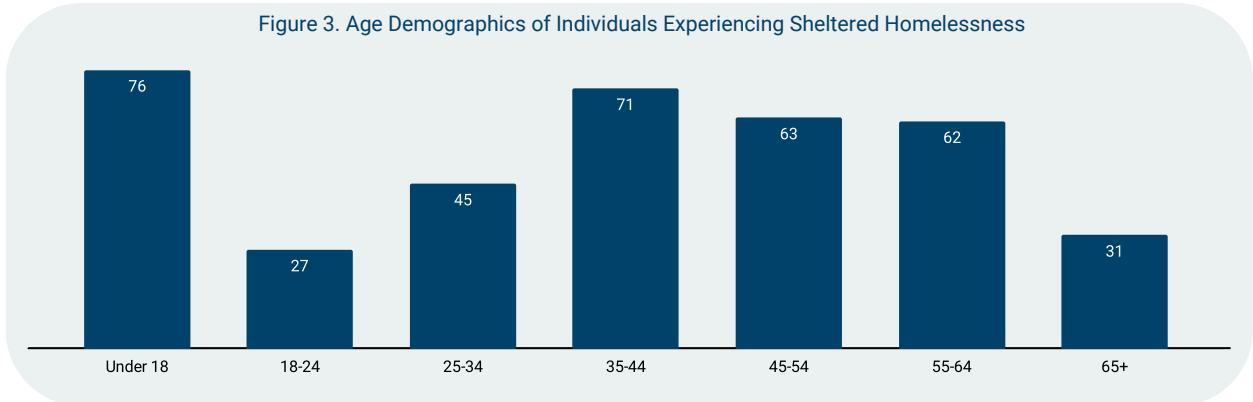
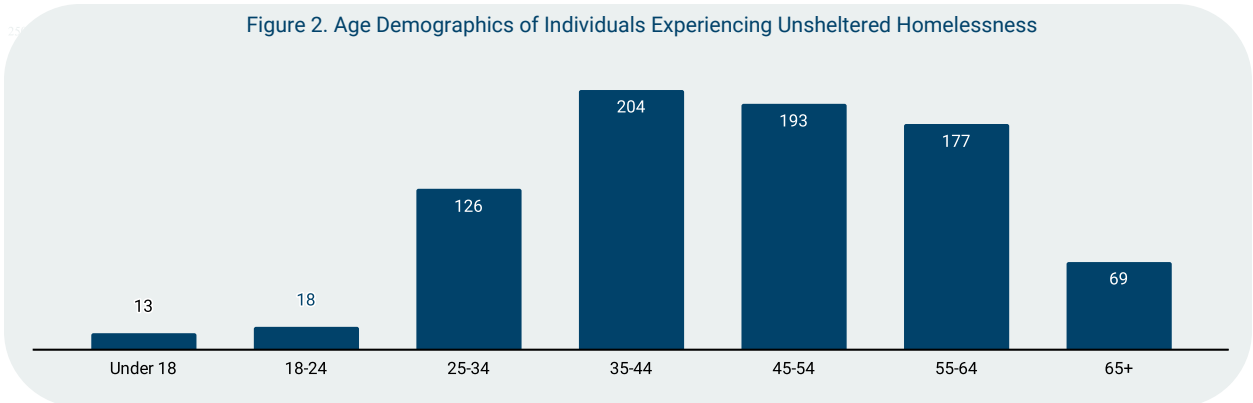
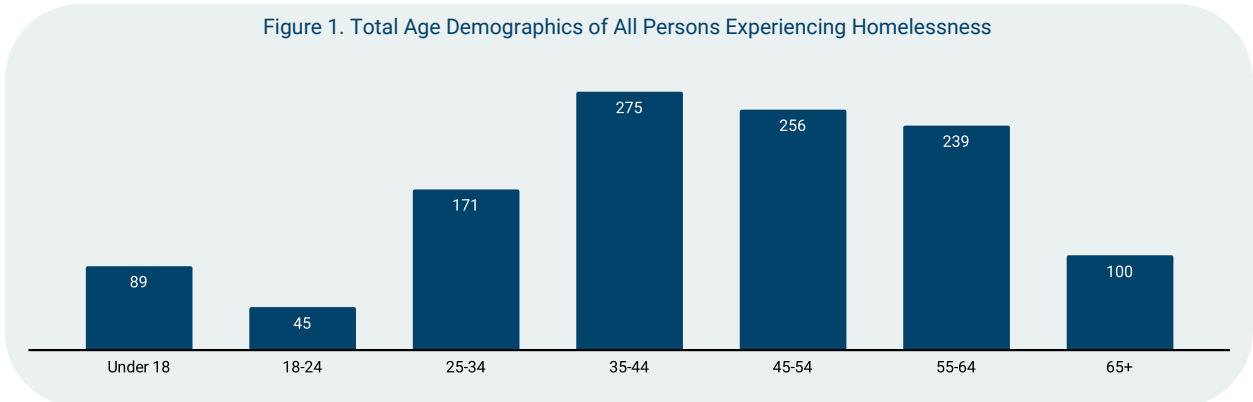
Other



Transportation Services

*Other* includes inmate services, ID assistance, counseling/therapy, storage/laundry facilities, help getting medicines/medical assistance, government cooperation, more supplies-food, sleeping bags, etc; Dental assistance, non-congregate shelter, auto repair assistance, methadone clinic, safe parking programs, access to showers/restrooms

### SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY 2024 PIT COUNT CONTINUED

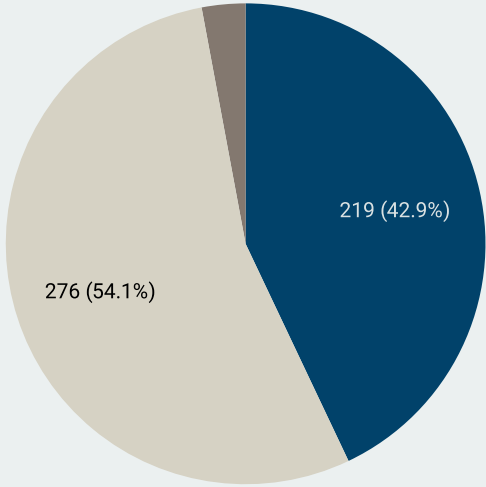


## Duration and Recurrence of Homelessness

Data on duration and recurrence of homelessness was collected from individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness through a PIT survey. There were 219 individuals (43%) who responded “yes” when asked if they were experiencing homelessness for the first time and 276 individuals (54%) who stated that they had experienced homelessness on more than one occasion (see figure 5).

Figure 5. Unsheltered Individuals Experiencing Homelessness for the First Time

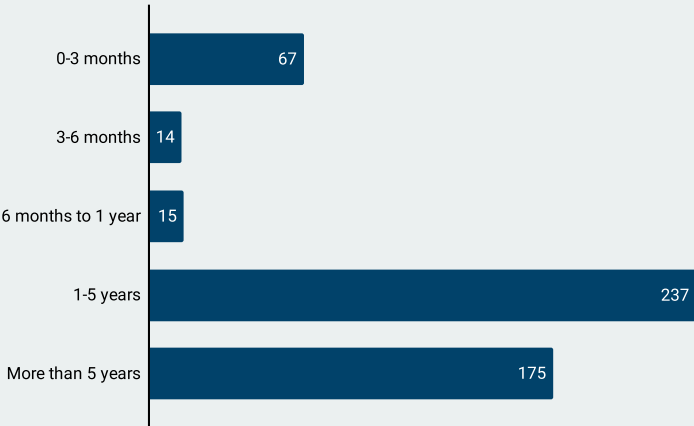
● "Yes" ● "No" ● "Client Doesn't Know/Prefer not to answer"



## Length of Time Experiencing Homelessness

The length of time an individual was experiencing homelessness ranged from 1 day to 53 years. Nearly 34% (n=175) of those surveyed have been experiencing homelessness for 5 years or longer (see figure 6).

Figure 6. Length of Time an Individual Has Been Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness

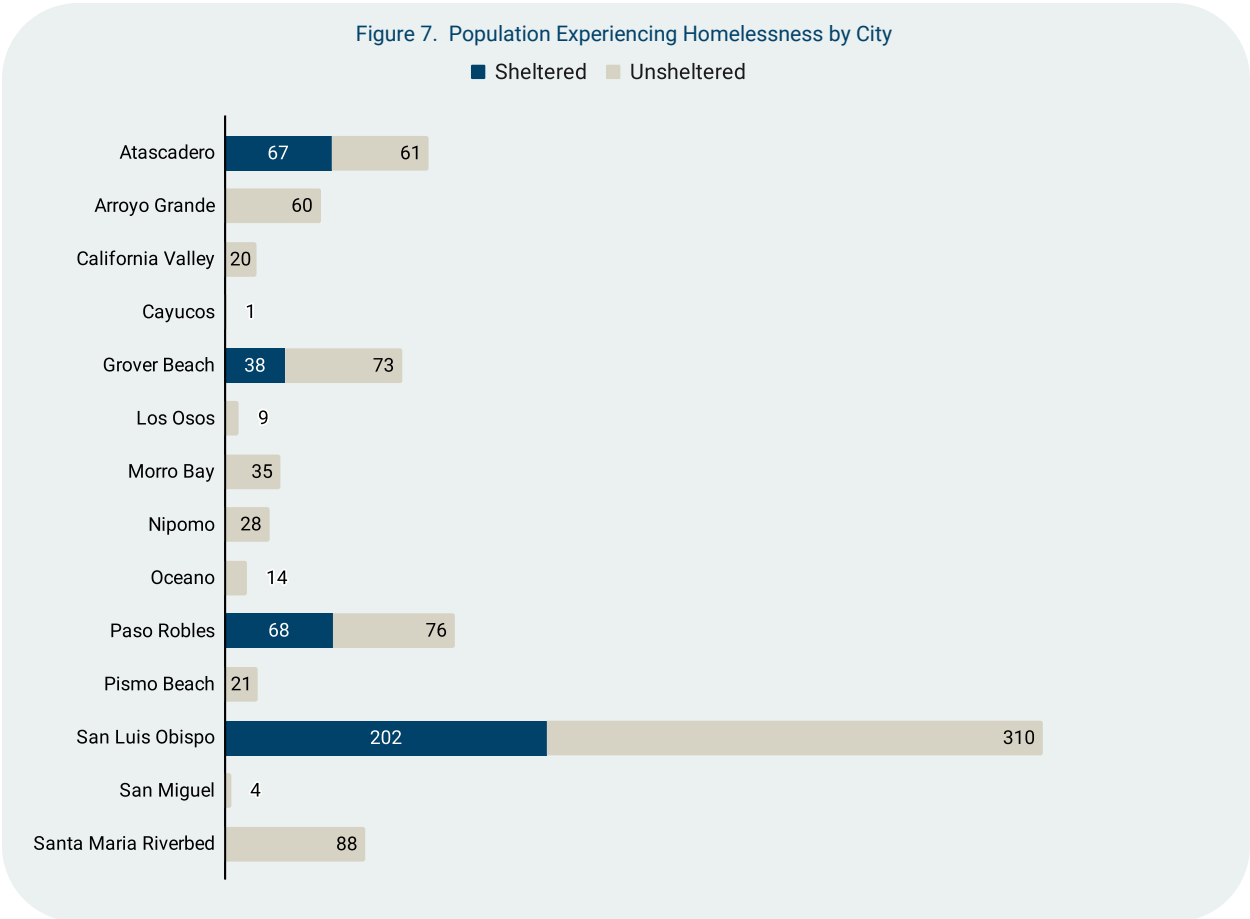




## Location and Duration of Residency

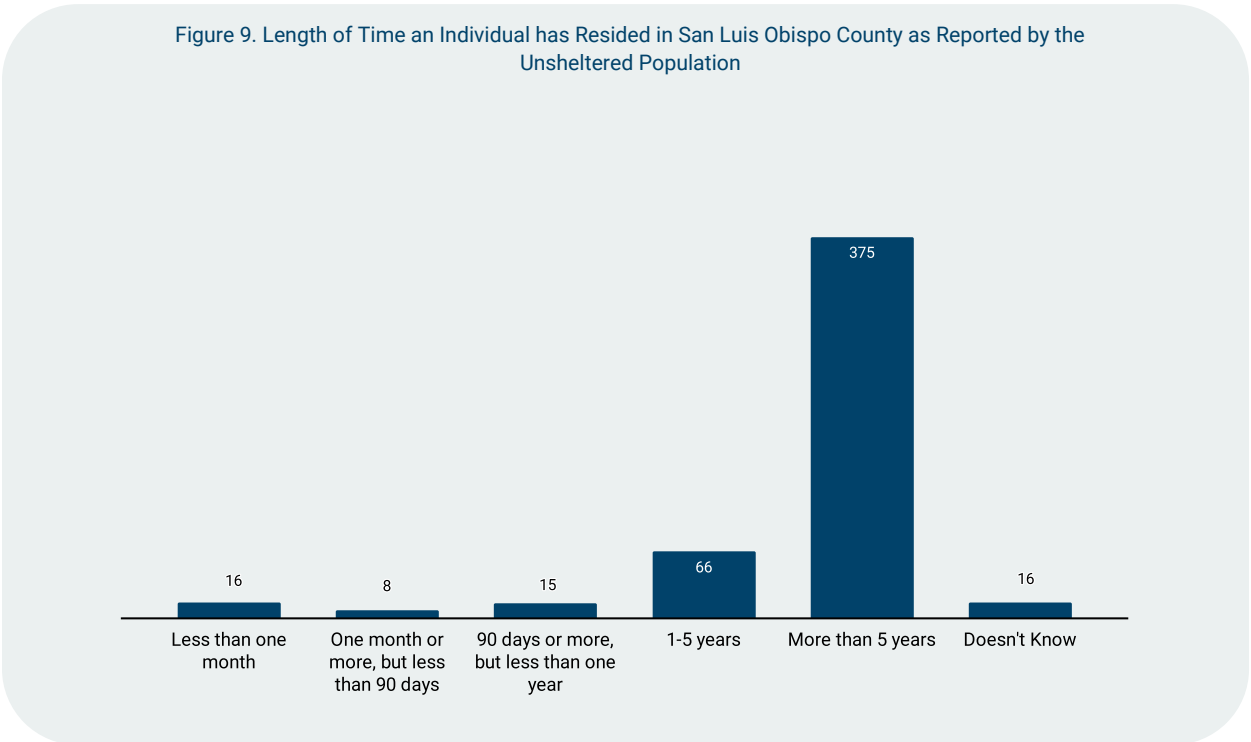
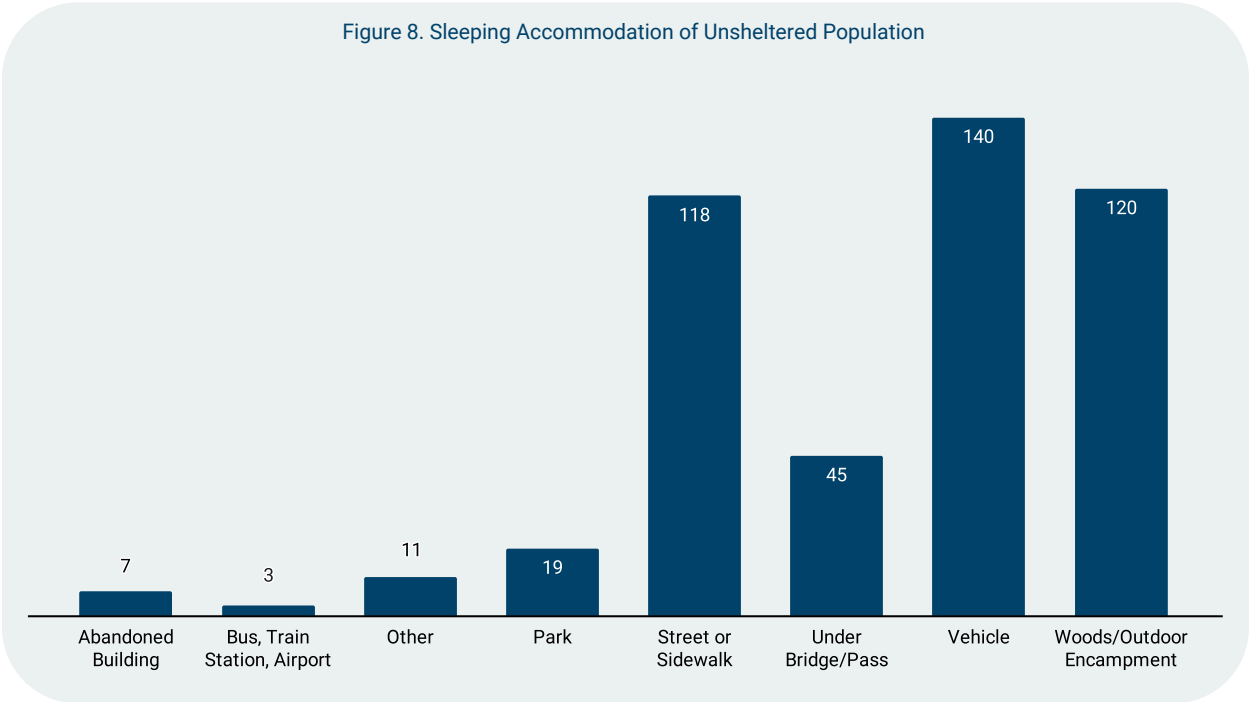
The majority of those surveyed, reported sleeping within the City of San Luis Obispo (n=310). Santa Maria Riverbed had the next largest population experiencing unsheltered homelessness with 88 individuals counted. The city with the third largest number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness counted was Paso Robles with 76 individuals, followed by Grover Beach (n=73), Atascadero (n=61), Arroyo Grande (n=60), and Morro Bay (n=35). Additionally, 28 individuals experienced unsheltered homelessness in Nipomo on the night of the PIT Count, as well as 21 in Pismo Beach, 20 in the California Valley, 14 in Oceano, 9 in Los Osos, 4 in San Miguel, and 1 person in Cayucos (see figure 7).

According to data provided by HMIS or a comparable database for the sheltered portion of the PIT Count, 202 individuals experiencing sheltered homelessness stayed at an emergency shelter or transitional housing facility in the City of San Luis Obispo. 67 individuals stayed in Atascadero, 38 in Grover Beach, and 68 in Paso Robles.



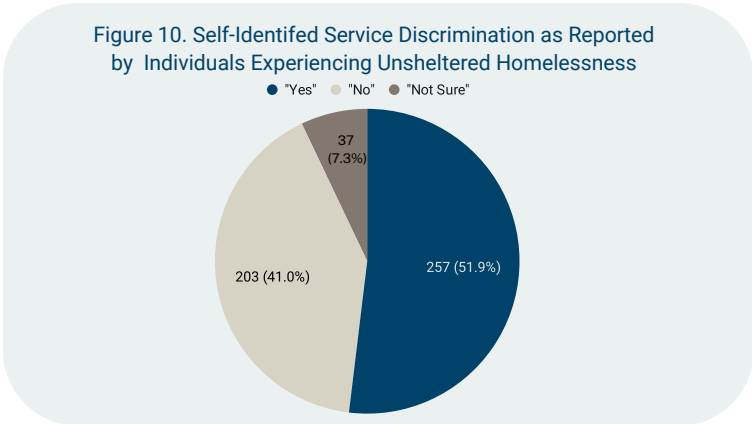
## Location and Duration of Residency Continued

Within the survey instrument, individuals were asked where they slept on the night of January 22, 2024. Of the 513 unsheltered individuals surveyed, 463 answered this question (see figure 8).



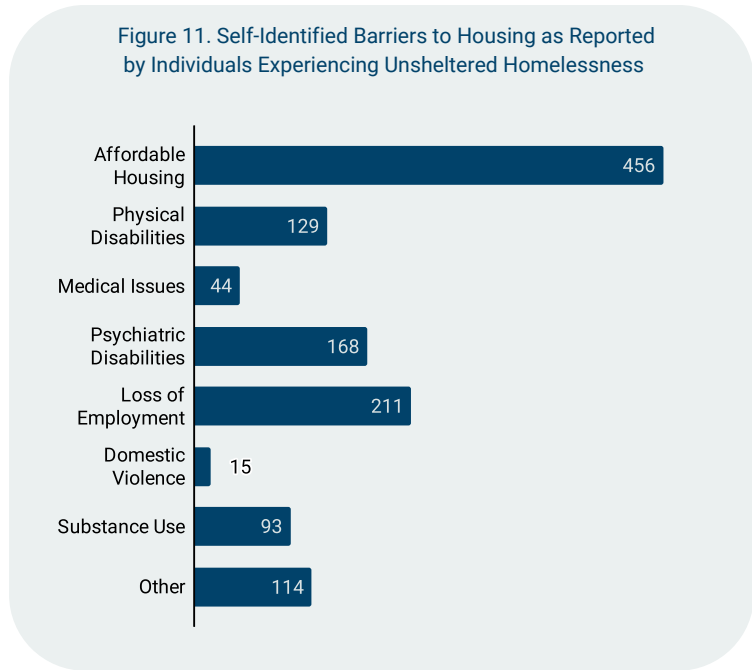
## Service Discrimination, Barriers to Housing and Preferred Language

Of the unsheltered individuals surveyed, 497 answered the service discrimination question, with nearly 52% stating they felt discriminated against when needing services (see figure 10).



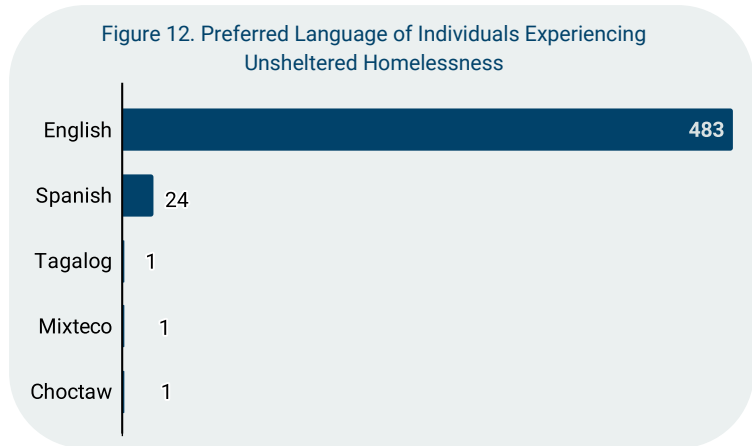
### Barriers to Housing

More than 500 unsheltered individuals responded to the housing barrier question, with the majority providing several barriers. The most prevalent barrier to housing reported was the lack of affordable housing, followed by lack of employment opportunities, psychiatric challenges, physical challenges, “other” (includes criminal record, lack of transportation, and citizenship status), substance use issues, medical issues, and domestic violence (see figure 11).



### Preferred Language

Nearly 95% of unsheltered individuals listed their preferred language as English, and almost 5% preferred Spanish. An additional 3 individuals listed Tagalog, Mixteco, and Choctaw as their primary language (see figure 12).





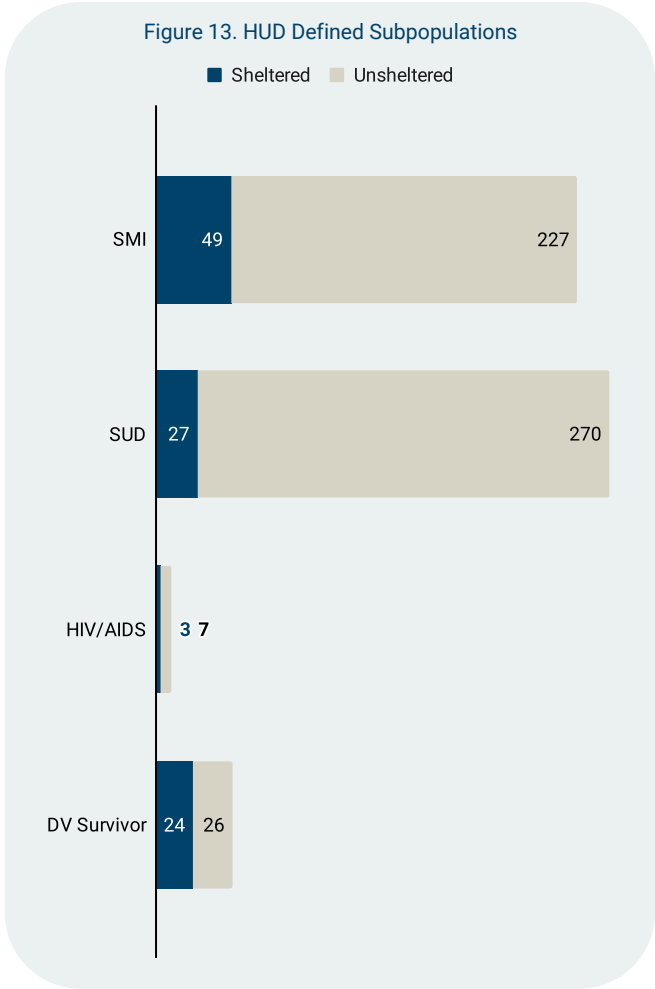
## HUD-Defined Subpopulations

In addition to the three primary HUD-defined populations experiencing homelessness, HUD also prioritizes data collection from several sub-populations, including Veterans and Youth, which will be addressed later in the report. A subset of data is collected on those with Serious Mental Illness (SMI), Substance Use Disorder (SUD), HIV/AIDS, and/or survivors of Domestic Violence (DV) who are also experiencing homelessness (see figure 13). This data was self-identified by individuals over the age of 18 who chose to respond to the questions. Respondents were able to identify with more than one data point. Of the 510 unsheltered adults surveyed:

- 227** identified as having a SMI
- 270** identified as having a SUD
- 7** identified as having HIV/AIDS
- 26** identified as being a survivor of Domestic Violence

Of the 299 adults over 18 identified as experiencing sheltered homelessness via Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) or an HMIS-comparable database, the following responses were received:

- 49** identified as having a SMI
- 27** identified as having a SUD
- 3** identified as having HIV/AIDS
- 24** identified as being a survivor of Domestic Violence



## Chronic Homelessness

In order to meet the definition of chronic homelessness (CH), the head of the household must have been experiencing homelessness for at least one year and have a disabling condition. This year-long requirement can be 12 consecutive months, or at least 4 separate occasions within the last 3 years where the total number of days add up to 1 year.

There were 281 individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness who met the definition of chronic homelessness, 35% of the total unsheltered population (see figure 14). 74 individuals (20%) experiencing sheltered homelessness also met the definition of chronically homeless. Of the sheltered individuals, 38 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness were in San Luis Obispo, while the remaining individuals were split between Atascadero, Grover Beach, and Paso Robles (see figure 15).

Figure 14. Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness as Defined by HUD

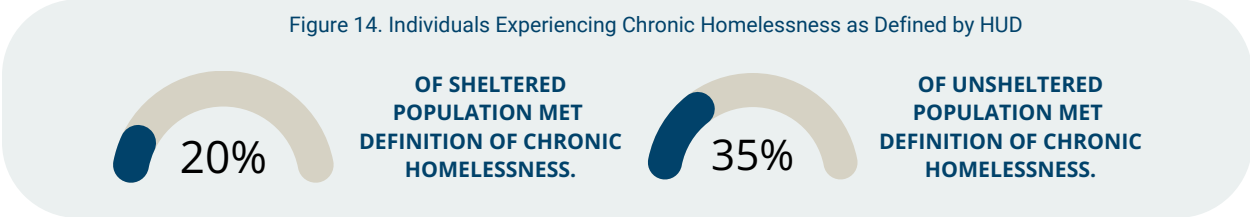
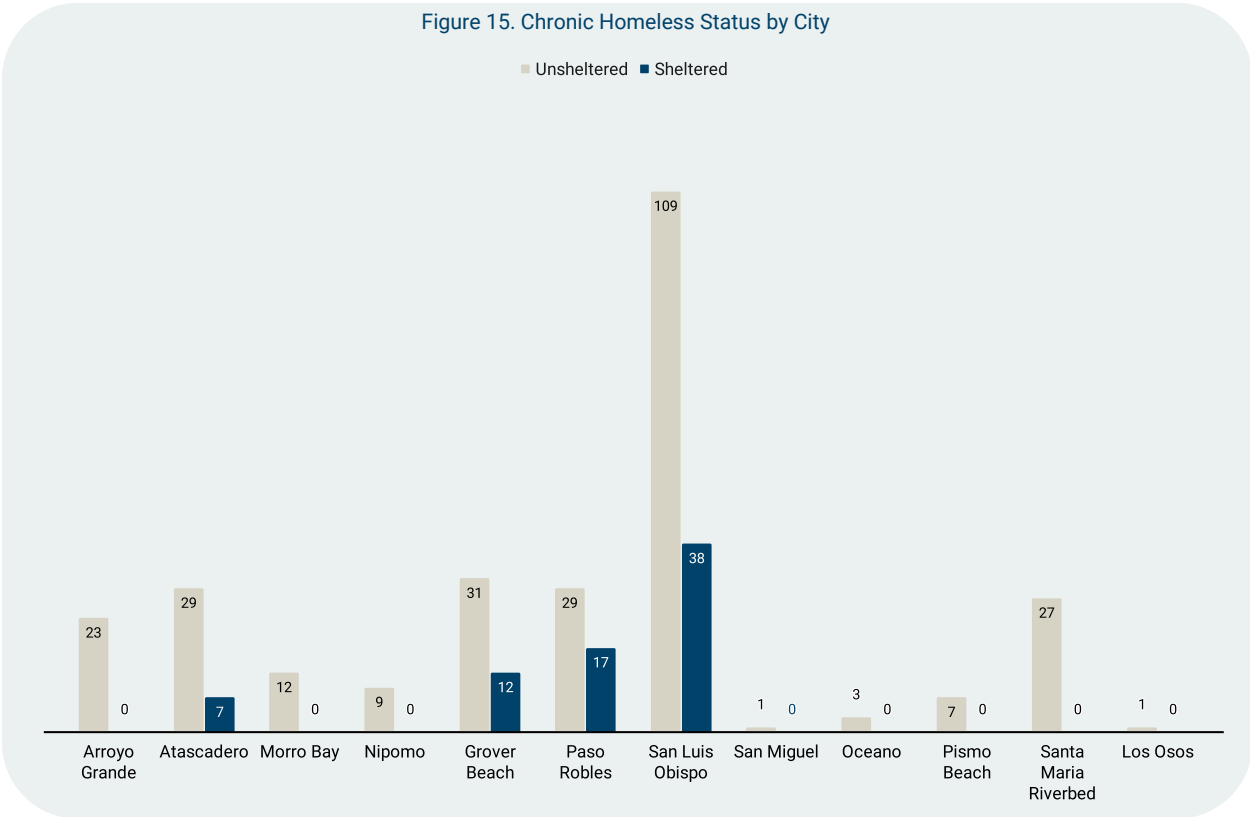
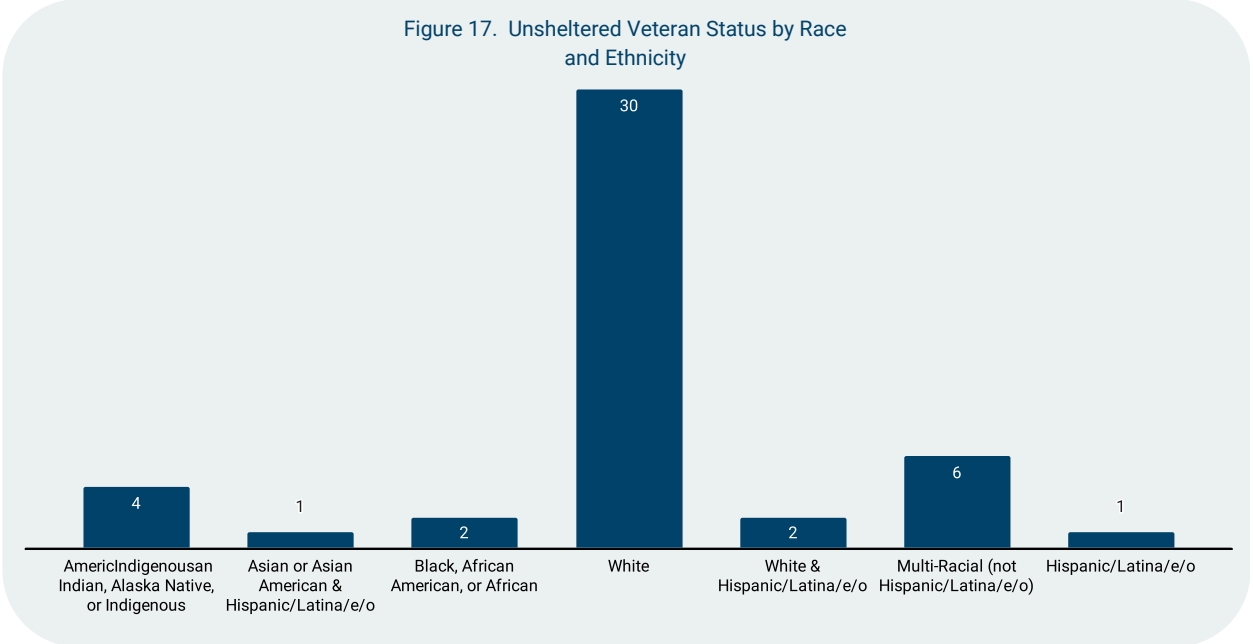
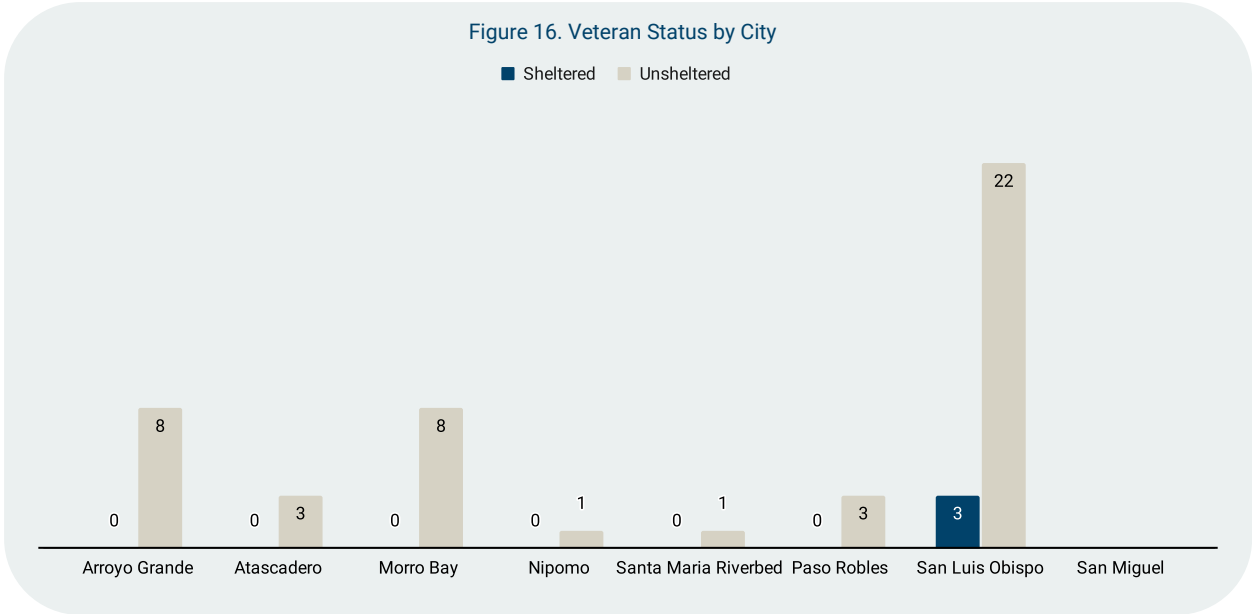


Figure 15. Chronic Homeless Status by City



## Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

To identify veterans experiencing homelessness, a series of questions were asked, as some veterans do not self-identify due to common stigmas in the veteran community. An individual is considered a veteran if they were enrolled in one of the armed services, including the United States Coast Guard, Marine Corps, etc. and regardless of the type of service, front line or otherwise. From these questions, 46 individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness were identified as veterans, and 22 met the definition for chronic homelessness. 3 additional veterans were found to be experiencing sheltered homelessness.





## Families with Children Experiencing Homelessness

On the night of the PIT Count, 7 families with children were experiencing unsheltered homelessness, accounting for a total of 22 individuals (see figures 18-20).

Figure 18. Age Demographics of Unsheltered Individuals in Households with Children

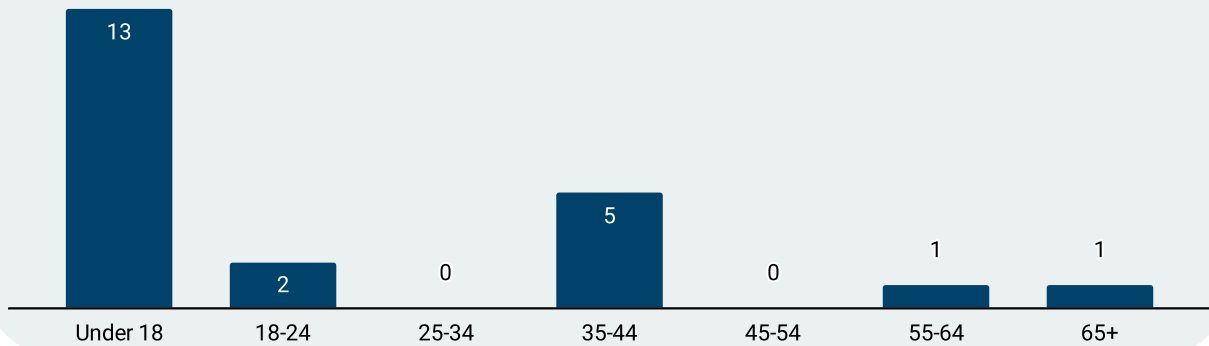


Figure 19. Gender Identity of Unsheltered Individuals in Households with Children

● Women/Girls ● Men/Boys

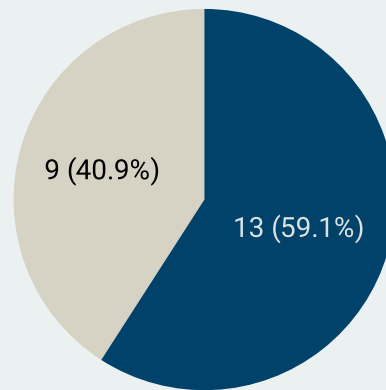
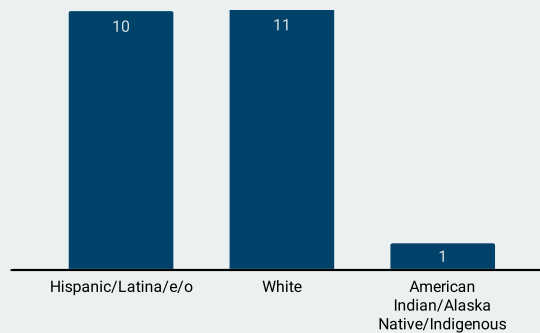
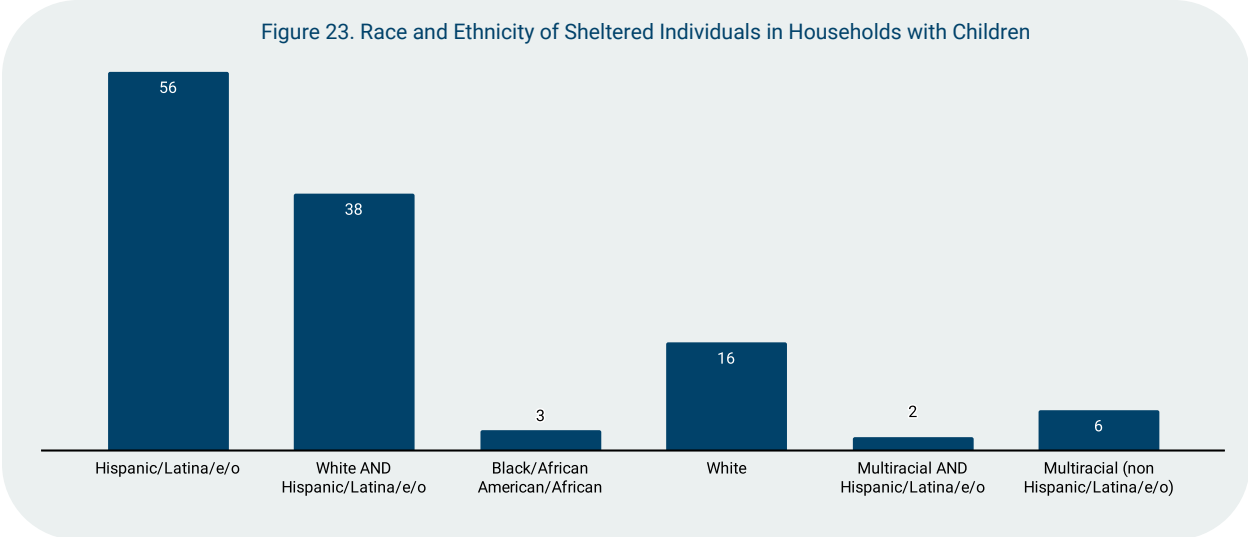
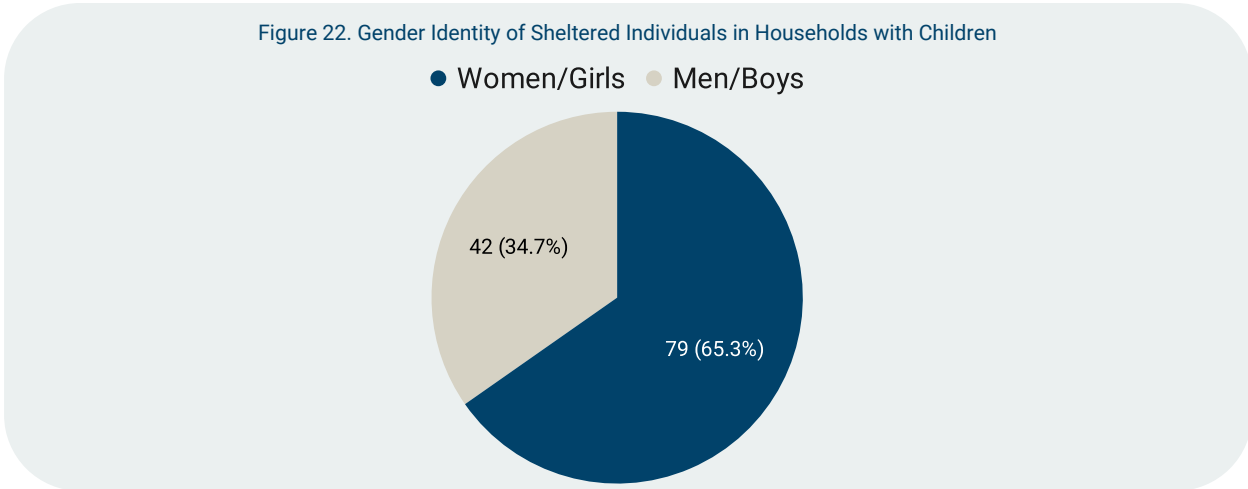
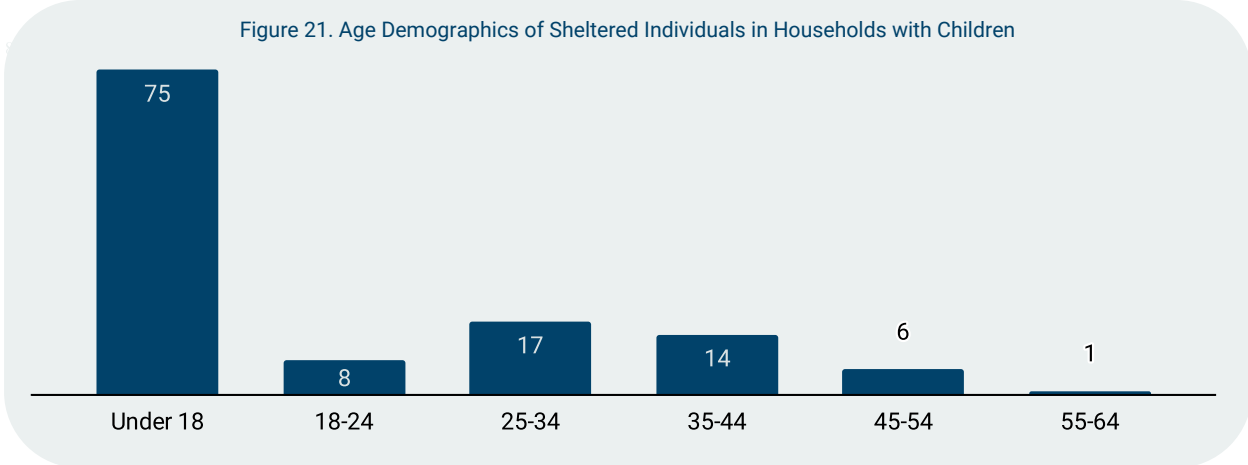


Figure 20. Race and Ethnicity of Unsheltered Individuals in Households with Children



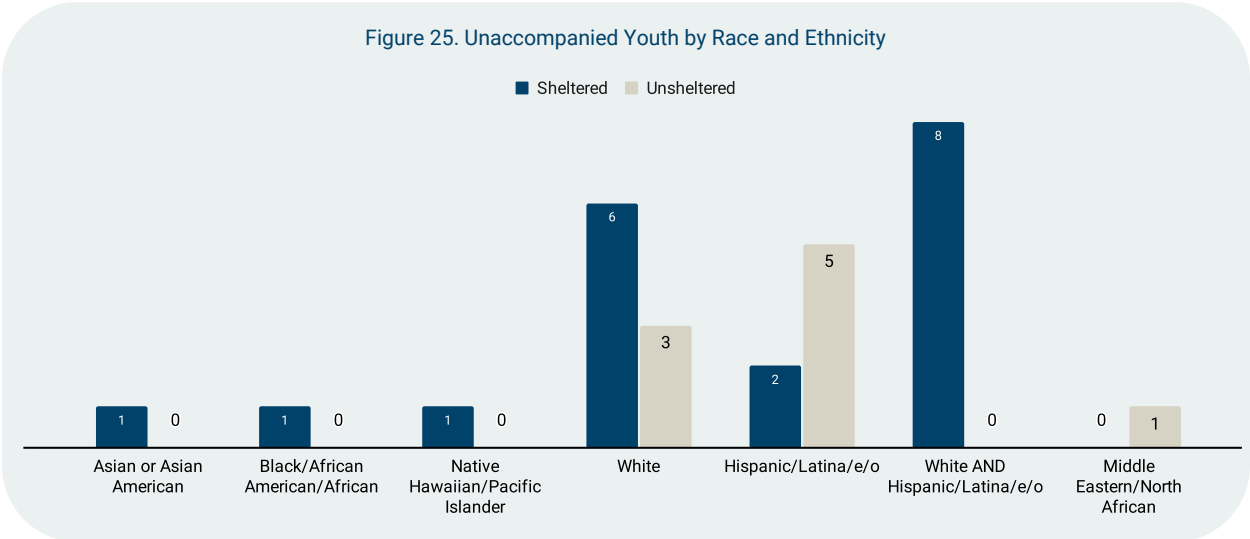
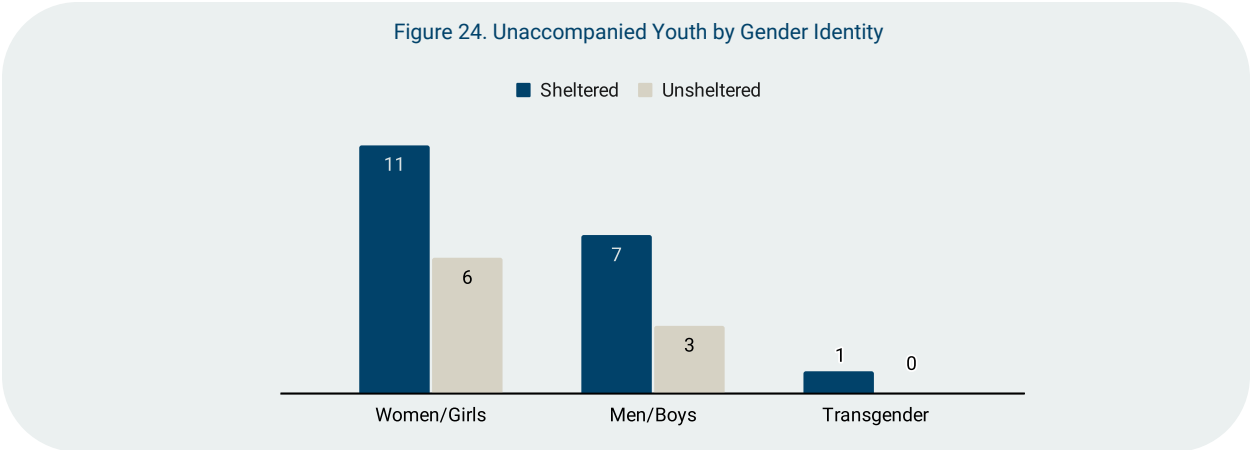
## Families with Children Experiencing Homelessness

There were 119 individuals residing in either an emergency shelter or transitional housing facility, accounting for 36 households (see figures 21-23).

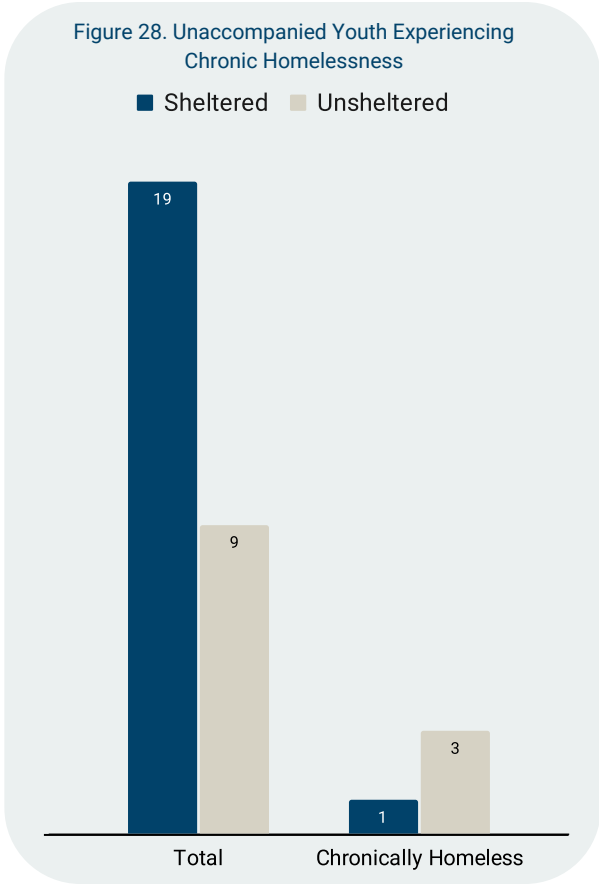
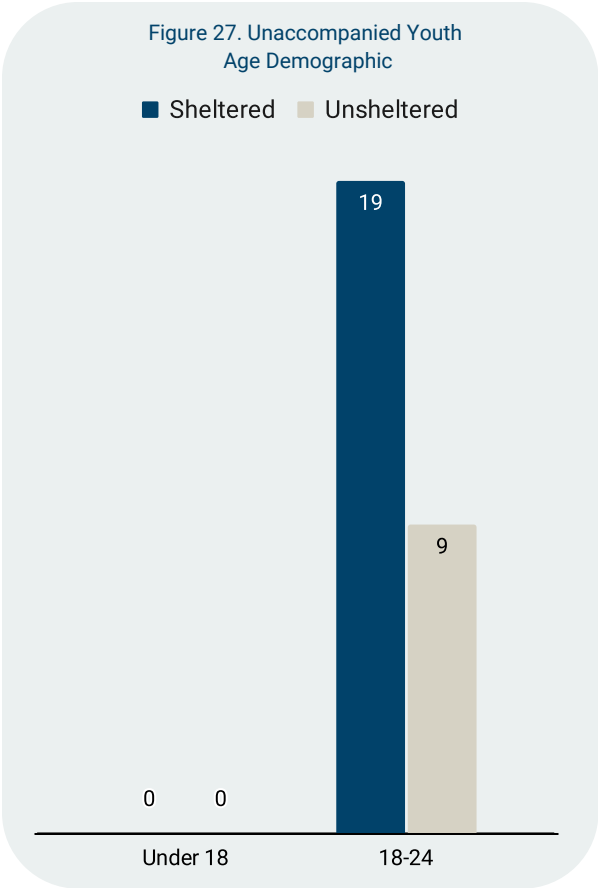
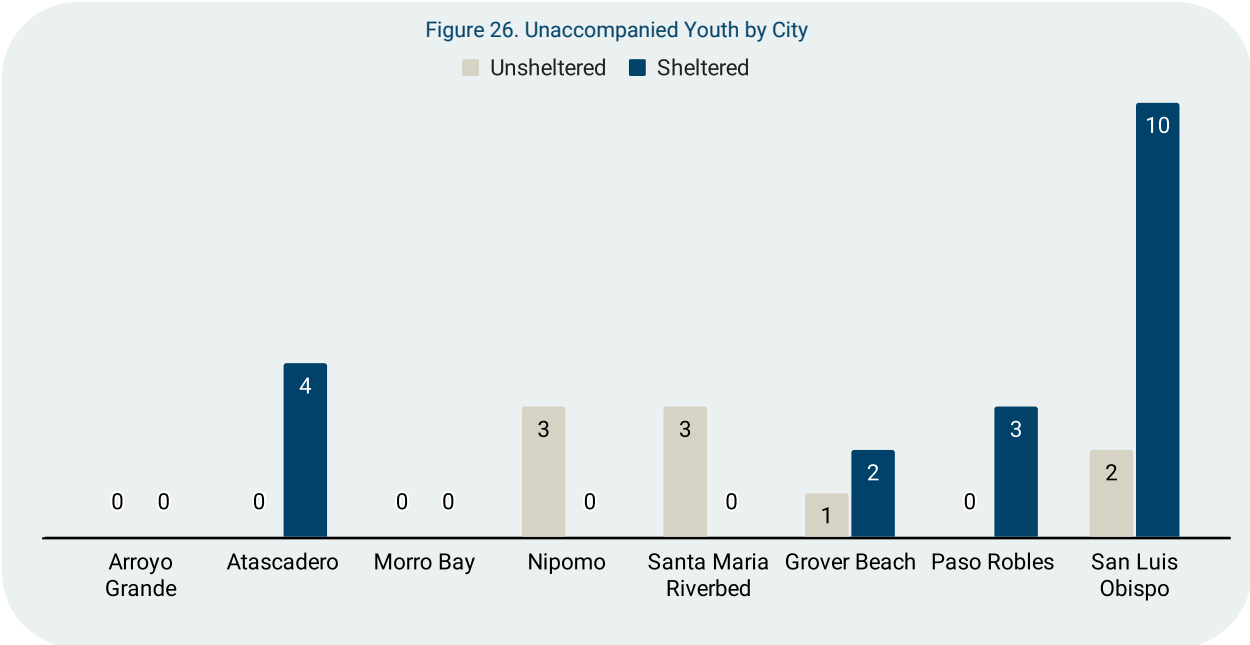


## Unaccompanied Youth Experiencing Homelessness

For the purpose of this report, an unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness is defined as any individual under the age of 25 – without a parent or legal guardian – and whose primary nighttime residence is a public or private place not normally used as a regular sleeping accommodation (including emergency shelter and transitional housing). This definition does not include “couch surfing.” HUD’s definition of unaccompanied youth also includes parenting youth under the age of 25. Unaccompanied youth have unique developmental needs and challenges, which require different service approaches. Youth obfuscate the standard definition of “homelessness” by moving from house to house and staying with friends and relatives. This makes it difficult to identify unaccompanied youth for services. Additionally, many youth become disconnected from education, the workforce, and social support networks, resulting in unemployment or underemployment and a sense of isolation. Youth often face additional challenges navigating services, connecting to healthcare, and obtaining appropriate housing.



# Unaccompanied Youth Experiencing Homelessness



## CHALLENGES

Conducting a Point-in-Time Count in any region presents a multifaceted challenge, requiring careful coordination, methodological precision, and adaptation to local circumstances. In San Luis Obispo County, these challenges were particularly pronounced due to several factors, including the large geographic area, the adoption of a new methodology and survey app, and the impact of potential encampment sweeps.

San Luis Obispo County's expansive geographic area posed a significant obstacle to conducting an accurate PIT Count. Covering diverse landscapes and communities, ranging from urban centers to extremely rural regions, required extensive logistical planning and resource allocation.

Adopting a new methodology and survey application also introduced an additional layer of complexity to the PIT Count process in SLO County. Personnel participating in the 2024 Count were presented the challenge of navigating the learning curve associated with unfamiliar tools. They underwent training to learn the new methodology and survey app, which required additional time and resources. The changes also impacted the ability to assess trends over time.

The previous methodology relied heavily on sampling and observation, whereas the 2024 count adopted a full census count. A complete census covering such an expansive geographic region called for community participation at an increased rate compared to previous years. The new methodology also meant an earlier start time, which added the challenge of locating individuals who may be especially mobile during the morning or early daytime.



## CHALLENGES CONTINUED

Precise geo-location was an added benefit of the new survey tool, however, this also resulted in changes to the regional data. Regions may see an increase or decrease in numbers of those experiencing unsheltered homelessness based on the exact location of where an individual was surveyed.

During the PIT Count, volunteers and providers familiar with local communities experiencing homelessness shared that an encampment “sweep” may have been conducted within the County before and during the Count, which may have impacted final numbers. The occurrence of sweeps, where individuals or groups experiencing homelessness are subjected to displacement or relocation by authorities, can have a significant impact on the accuracy of a PIT Count. Such interventions disrupt the stability and visibility of unhoused populations and could potentially lead to an underrepresentation in the Count. Strategies to mitigate the effects of sweeps, such as conducting concerted outreach in affected areas and adjusting survey methodologies accordingly, were completed and essential to minimize the impact on the accuracy of the Count. It is important to note that there can be safety or environmental reasons that may lead authority or jurisdiction to complete a sweep despite outreach efforts and regional partnerships.

Adhering closely to the methods preferred by HUD presented its own set of challenges for the 2024 PIT count in San Luis Obispo County. Aligning with HUD guidelines is essential for consistency and comparability across jurisdictions, and it requires rigorous attention to detail and adherence to established protocols. It takes a concerted effort to balance local context with national standards. Any deviations from HUD guidelines could compromise the validity of the Count results and have implications for future funding allocations and programmatic decisions. As such, maintaining fidelity to HUD-preferred methods was paramount.



## CONCLUSION

Improvements in methodology for the 2024 PIT Count allowed for increased detail and accuracy in depicting the diverse experiences of homelessness within the region. The combination of conducting a full census and the historic number of participants and day-of volunteers afforded key insights into the living situations of persons experiencing homelessness.

Conducting a PIT Count in San Luis Obispo County presented a series of unique challenges, but the hard work and commitment of the community collaborators ensured the validity of the Count results. Thanks to the implementation of innovative data collection methods, the County of San Luis Obispo will be able to use the 2024 PIT Count as a new baseline with more robust data captures by which to measure future years' data, secure future funding allocations, and prioritize programmatic decisions.



## APPENDIX: DEFINITIONS AND SURVEY MODEL

### Definitions

- **Adult Only Household (AO)** - a household where all individuals are adults over the age of 18 with no children or dependents under the age of 18.
- **Census Count** - a methodology where an enumeration of all homeless people is conducted. This approach provides a direct and complete count of all people and their characteristics, does not require any estimates, and can be used as a benchmark for future PIT counts.
- **Child Only Households (CO)** - a household where the head of household is under the age of 18, and all members of the household are under the age of 18.
- **Continuum of Care (CoC)** - a regional or local planning body recognized by HUD that coordinates housing and services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and self-sufficiency.
- **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)** - a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
- **Households with at Least One Adult and One Child (AC)** - a household where the head of household is an adult over the age of 18, and the children or dependents are under the age of 18.
- **Parenting Youth** - a youth who identifies as the parent or legal guardian of one or more children who are present with or sleeping in the same place as that youth parent, where there is no person over the age of 25 in the household.
- **Point-in-Time Count (PIT)** - a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in the last 10 days of January.

## APPENDIX: DEFINITIONS AND SURVEY MODEL CONTINUED

### Definitions

- **Random Sample** - a sampling method where people are randomly selected from the entire homeless population in the region. Data from a random sample may then be extrapolated to estimate the number or characteristics of all people experiencing homelessness in the region.
- **Sample Count** - a methodology where a partial enumeration is completed, and the data is used to estimate the number and characteristics of the entire homeless population in the region.
- **Sheltered** - an individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels/motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals.
- **Unaccompanied Youth** - a person under the age of 25 who is not accompanied by a parent or guardian or any other household member age 25 or older, and who are not a parent presenting with or sleeping in the same place as his/her/their child(ren). Unaccompanied youth are single youth, youth couples, and groups of youth presenting together as a household.
- **Unsheltered** - an individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport or camping ground.
- **Non-Random Sample** - a sampling method where individuals are selected based on the convenience of gathering information. A non-random sample does not statistically represent the entire population, but extrapolation can be used if reliable data is present for 80% or more of the clients surveyed.

## APPENDIX: DEFINITIONS AND SURVEY MODEL CONTINUED

### **Survey of People Experiencing Homelessness**

San Luis Obispo County utilized a survey application for the 2024 Unsheltered Point-in-Time Count, Esri ArcGIS Survey123. ArcGIS is a software used by counties and cities for the purpose of digital mapping and analytics. With the County of San Luis Obispo already using the software for other mapping purposes, it was decided to use this method of developing the unsheltered survey. The app was available on both Google and Apple devices under the name "Survey123." This app allowed the County to use geolocation for the purpose of seeing areas where unsheltered homelessness is prevalent.

In the event where a volunteer was unable to access the app on his/her/their phone, a paper version of the survey was made available to all the volunteers. This paper survey contained all questions found within the app, both HUD-required data elements and supplemental questions recommended by the committee, and followed the same flow of questioning.

The Sheltered Count was conducted using San Luis Obispo County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), or an HMIS-comparable database from Victim Service Providers (VSP). Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing facilities utilize HMIS on a daily basis, already collecting the universal data elements as required by HUD. These data elements include household size, age, gender identity, race and ethnic identities, and chronic homeless status. Unfortunately, HMIS does not collect supplemental survey questions that had been recommended by the PIT Committee. These questions include service discrimination, barriers to housing, whether an individual grew up in the county, etc.

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