

Homelessness in Austin/Travis County: Current Needs and Gaps Report



DRAFT

Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO)

March 1, 2019



About ECHO

The Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) is the lead agency that plans and implements community-wide strategies to end homelessness in Austin and Travis County. We are the backbone for the homeless services system and work closely with nonprofits and government agencies to coordinate assistance and housing for people experiencing homelessness in our community. ECHO manages the community-wide database on homelessness and uses research and evidence-based practices to advocate for the resources to bring the system to scale and meet the need. We believe it is the community's responsibility to provide a compassionate response and ensure homelessness is rare, brief, and only happens once.

About this Report

ECHO created this report to inform ongoing efforts to prevent and end homelessness in our community.

This report describes the current needs and characteristics of households experiencing homelessness who are in need of housing assistance in Austin and Travis County, and outlines gaps in currently available services.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following community partners who work with ECHO on a regular basis to end homelessness in Austin and Travis County:

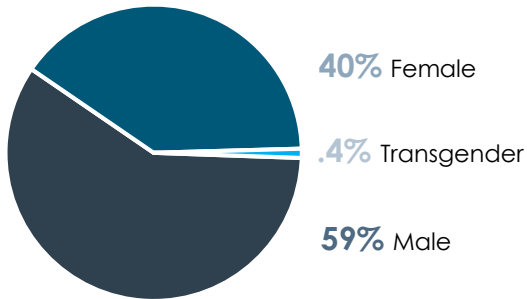
- Persons with lived experiences of homelessness,
- Services providers,
- Elected officials,
- Business leaders, and
- City of Austin and Travis County staff.

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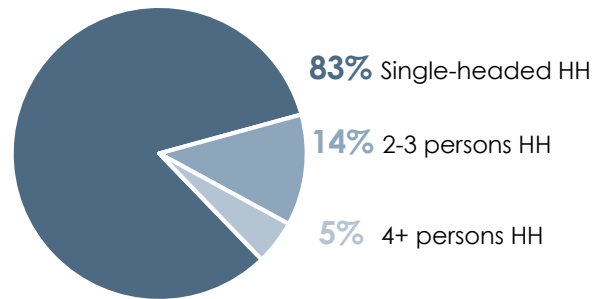
Population Characteristics

Persons Experiencing Homelessness Represent a Diverse Population

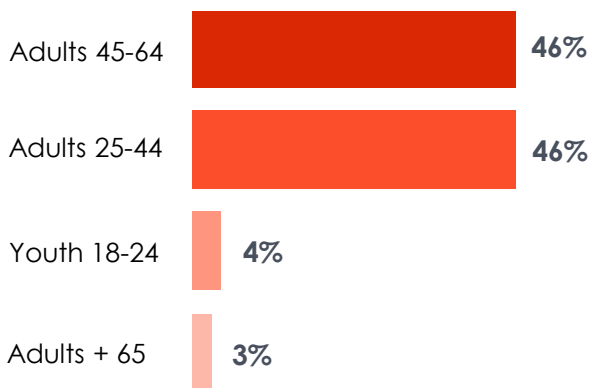
Gender



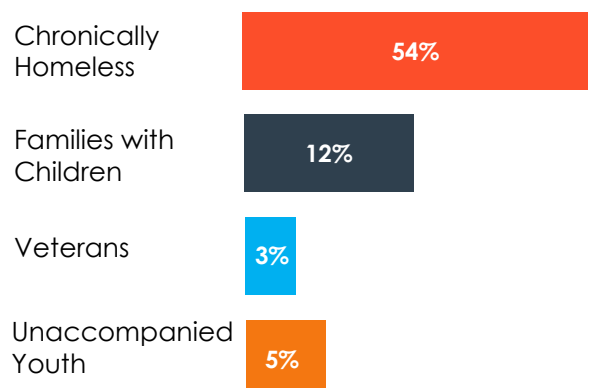
Household (HH) Size



Age



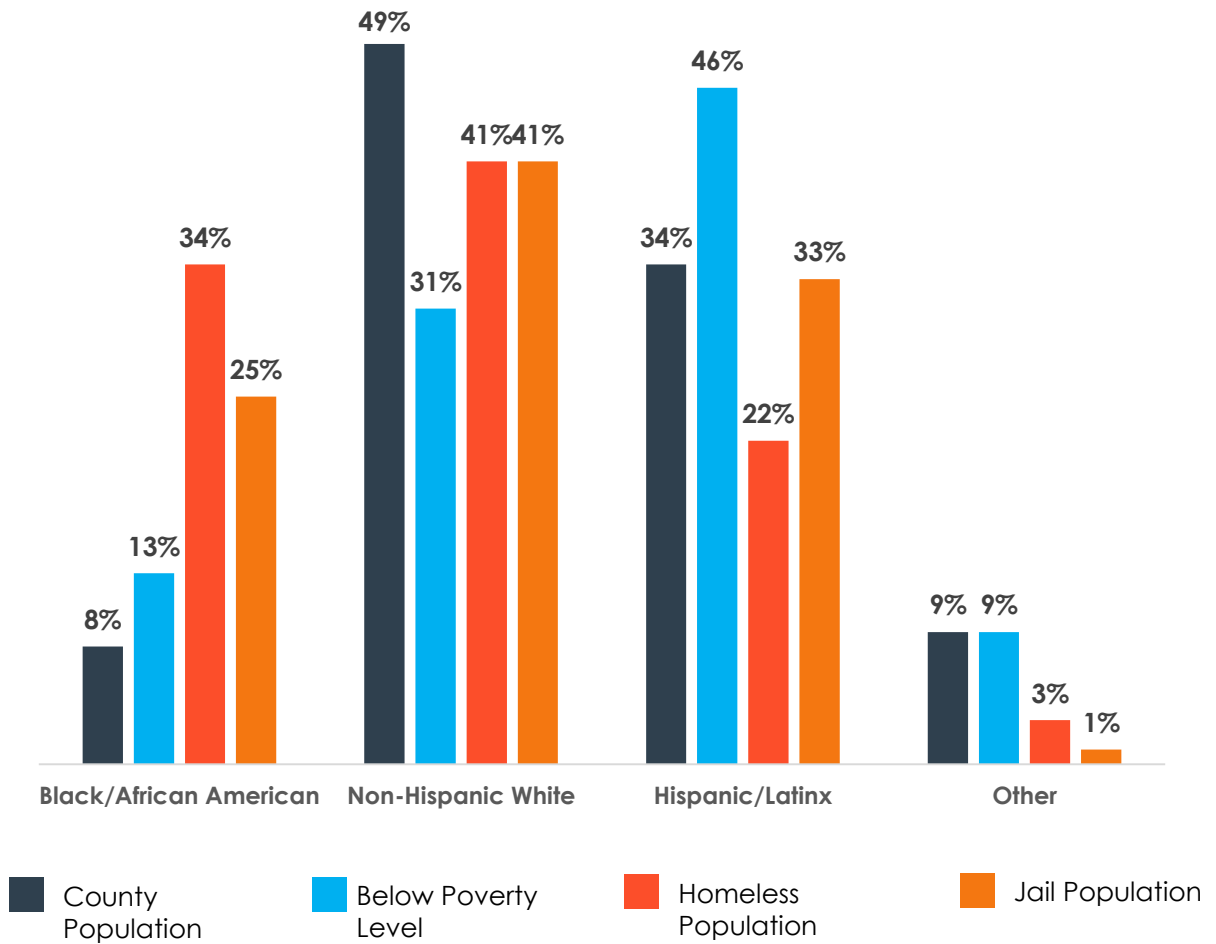
Subpopulations



- Data reported for heads of household only.
- Categories not mutually exclusive.
- Based on Coordinated Entry assessment data through February 2019.

Black/African American Individuals Face Disparities Across Systems

Black/African American individuals are incarcerated and experience poverty at significantly higher rates compared to their makeup in the general Travis County population and are disproportionately represented in the homeless population.



Sources:

- US Census Bureau. "Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months." 2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, S1701; US Census Bureau. "Hispanic of Latino Origin by Race." 2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, B03002.
- Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO). Analysis of Coordinated Assessment Surveys of 4,717 Households. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), 29 Jan. 2018.
- Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO). Analysis of Travis County Sheriff's Office Booking Data for 2017. 30 Jan. 2018.
- Harris, Chris. (2017). Travis County Jail in 2015: Data Points to racism and longer confinement of African Americans. Retrieved from Grassroots Leadership website: <https://grassrootsleadership.org/sites/default/files/reports/racist-jailing-report.pdf>

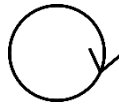
Persons Experiencing Homelessness Face Many Challenges

Persons experiencing homelessness often have many inter-related health, social and economic challenges that make it difficult to end homelessness on their own.



57%

Have no earned income



70%

Report having no planned activities that bring them happiness or fulfillment



51%

Are unable to take care of basic needs like bathing, using a restroom, or accessing clean food and water



70%

Report their homelessness is connected to previous trauma or abuse



36%

Report currently experiencing a mental health issue that would make it difficult to live independently



47%

Report having legal stuff going on that may result in them being locked up or having to pay fines



36%

Report having spent at least one night in jail



39%

Report being a survivor of domestic violence



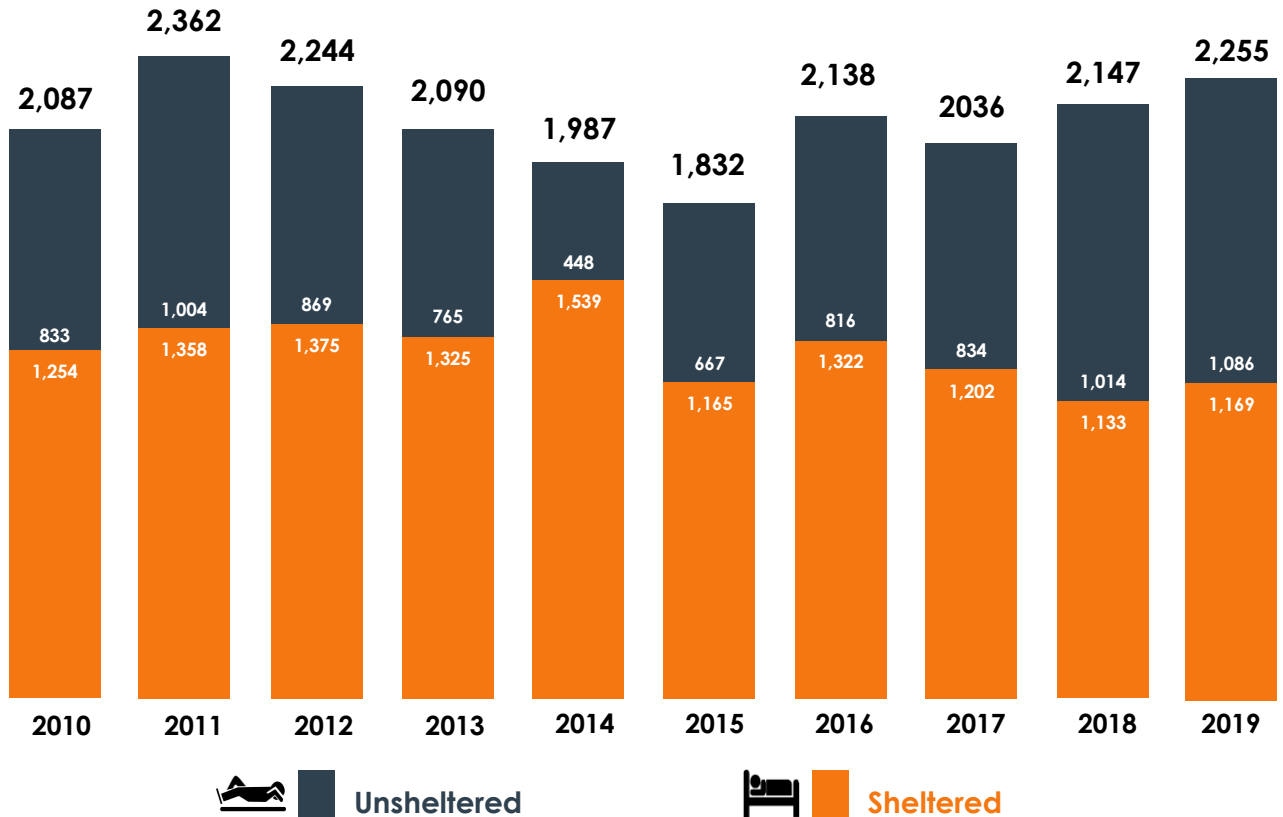
13%

Report that drug or alcohol use will make it difficult to maintain housing

-
- Categories not mutually exclusive.
 - ECHO Coordinated Entry assessment data, February 2019.

Literally Homeless Population in Austin/Travis County

Persons counted experiencing homelessness in a given day



- The count of sheltered individuals includes people in shelters and transitional housing per HUD guidance.
- ECHO Point in Time Count data, January 2010-2019.

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Current Assets & Gaps

3,116 Households are Currently Experiencing Homelessness

Our community maintains a by-name list of people who are assessed as experiencing homelessness and are in need of housing and other support services. Our current list identifies 3,116 households (HHs) in need of support.

Affordable and Low Barrier Housing Units Needed

Since the majority of the persons who experience homelessness are single-person households, the greatest housing need is for studios or one bedroom units.



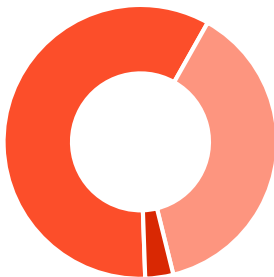
2,585 Studios or 1 Bedroom (BR) Units needed for single-person HHs

380 1-2 BR Units needed for 2-3 person HHs

151 3+ BR Units for 4+ persons HH

Types of Services Needed According to Vulnerability Level

The types of services required by persons experiencing homelessness varies according to their vulnerability.



59% Households need Rapid Re-Housing services, including housing location, limited rental assistance, + some supportive services

38% Households need Permanent Supportive Housing services, including housing location, ongoing rental subsidies, + supportive services

3% Households need Minimal Housing Assistance and minimal support

• ECHO Coordinated Entry data, February 2019.

2018 Community Assets and Gaps

1,035 Permanent Supportive Housing Beds

365 Rapid Rehousing Beds

812 Emergency Shelter Beds

331 Transitional Housing Beds

Based on the current need for services, population inflow, and bed turnover rates, ECHO estimates that the following additional units are needed to achieve functional zero in Austin/Travis County by 2022:

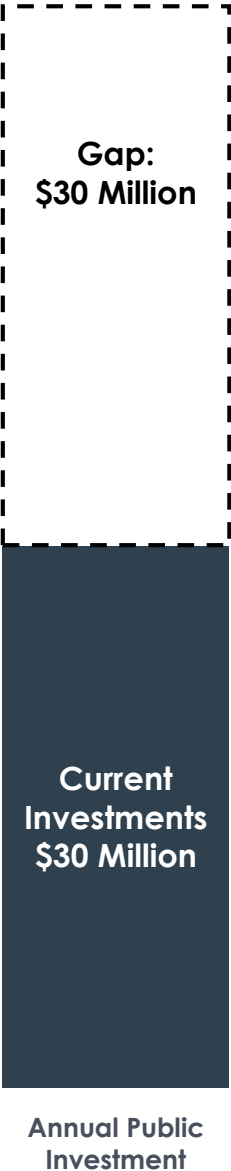
Interventions – Four Year Functional Zero	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Shelter Beds								
<i>Additional</i>	100	250	250	0	0	0	0	0
Persons Housed via RRH								
<i>Additional</i>	200	500	500	215	65	80	100	120
Persons Housed via PSH								
<i>Additional</i>	150	500	500	304	216	224	230	237

Point in Time data indicates that around 1,000 people experience unsheltered homelessness on a given night. This number approximates the number of additional shelter beds that the community would need to create in lieu of additional permanent housing services.

• ECHO 2018 Housing Inventory Count.

Estimated Gap in Yearly Investments to End Homelessness in Austin/Travis County

To achieve functional zero, ECHO projects an additional \$30 million of system investment per year is needed to appropriately scale the response system for current and projected needs. Refer to Austin's Action Plan to End Homelessness for more details on this investments gap.



• Current investments include City, County, state, and federal investments.

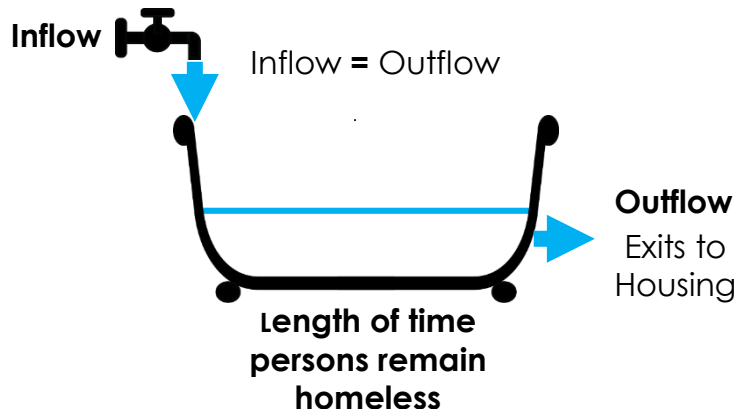
Ending Homelessness: Reaching Functional Zero

Ending homelessness does not mean individuals and families will never again experience homelessness. Instead, it means that as a community we will have a systematic response that can address immediate needs, quickly connect people to housing, and provide services to ensure long-term stability.

Current System



Desired System



Target

- Reduce inflow of newly homeless through targeted prevention
- Reduce inflow of persons returning to Homelessness
- Reduced length of time each person remains homeless
- Increased exits to housing so outflows equals inflow

Questions or Comments?

For questions or for more information, please contact Ann Howard, ECHO Executive Director at annhoward@astinecho.org or Tim Long, ECHO Director of Research and Evaluation at timothylong@astinecho.org.

