

County of Santa Clara

Office of Supportive Housing

3180 Newberry Dr. Suite 150
San Jose, CA 95118
(408) 793-0550 Main
(408) 266-0124 Fax



DATE: May 16, 2019

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors
Jeffrey V. Smith, County Executive

FROM: Ky Le, Director, Office of Supportive Housing

DS
kl

SUBJECT: 2018 State of Supportive Housing Report and 2019 Homeless Census & Survey

This afternoon, the Office of Supportive Housing (OSH) will issue the 2018 State of Supportive Housing Report. The report is attached and summarizes our community's efforts to develop a more effective supportive housing system and to provide housing opportunities for homeless men, women, and families. Later today, the OSH will also release several data points from the 2019 Homeless Census and Survey.

2018 State of Supportive Housing Report

Last year's report focused on describing the socio-economic causes of homelessness and the core components of our relatively new supportive housing system. This year's report focuses on the intergovernmental and public-private partnerships that have been critical to our efforts.

From the beginning of 2015 through the end of 2018, nearly 7,000 homeless households regained permanent housing. From July 1, 2015 through March 31, 2019, the County and its partners prevented homelessness for over 2,300 households.

Our community's permanent housing programs continue to be very effective. In 2018, 92% of people in permanent supportive housing programs were able to maintain their housing for at least 12 months. In 2018, 96% of households who participated in homelessness prevention programs avoided homelessness.

Equally important, primarily through the 2016 Measure A Affordable Housing Bond (Housing Bond), the County and its partners have significantly increased the development pipeline for new apartments that will be used as supportive housing. The Board of Supervisors has approved funding for 16 new construction and three rehabilitation projects that will lead to 1,437 new apartments and the rehabilitation of 484 apartments. The first Housing Bond-funded development will open later this month.

2019 Homeless Census and Survey

While the County and its partners have ended or prevented homelessness for over 9,300 families and individuals in the past 4.5 years, wages have not kept pace with increasing housing costs. And the supply of housing – especially for disabled and extremely low-income people – is wholly inadequate to meet demand. Indicators from our supportive housing system show that homelessness is increasing. For every person we help to overcome homelessness, there are three people seeking homeless services. In addition:

- The 2017 Homeless Census and Survey estimated that there were 7,394 homeless persons in Santa Clara County at any given time. This was a 13% increase from the 2015 Homeless Census and Survey.
- According to our housing assessments, between November 2015 and March 2019, more than 19,000 persons reported experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County.
- Between July 2017 and March 2019, more than 3,500 individuals requested emergency financial assistance and other services because they were at risk of homelessness, but homeless prevention programs can only assist about 900 households annually.

The 2019 Homeless Census and Survey estimates that in Santa Clara County, there are 9,706 persons experiencing homelessness at any given time. This is a 31% increase from the 2017 Homeless Census and Survey. Of the 9,706 persons, 6,172 are in the City of San José (OSH does not yet have counts for the other cities in Santa Clara County). Table 1 summarizes the other key data points.

Table 1

	County 2019	County 2017	Change
Homeless Population	9,706	7,394	31%
<i><u>Subpopulations</u></i>			
Chronically Homeless	2,470	2,097	18%
Homeless Veterans	653	660	-1%
Families with Children	921	1,075	-14%
Youth and Young Adults	1,876	2,530	-26%*
Unsheltered	82%	74%	8%
Sheltered	18%	26%	
* The decrease from 2017 to 2019 is partially due to a change in methodology for counting young people; therefore, a meaningful percentage change cannot be calculated for this subgroup.			

Biennially, communities receiving Continuum of Care (CoC) Program or Emergency Solutions Grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development must enumerate the persons experiencing homelessness on a given night (aka “Point in Time” or “PIT Count”). In Santa Clara County, the report in response to this federal requirement is the Homeless Census and Survey. Typically, the full report and associated analyses are completed and released in June or July.

For 2019, the Administration has been coordinating with the City of San Jose, Destination: Home, the City and County of San Francisco, the Alameda County CoC, and the City of Oakland to release these data points jointly and earlier than in past years. This was done to draw attention to an alarming trend of increasing homelessness despite the hard work and commitment to end homelessness in our communities.

- Alameda County reported a 44% increase in their PIT Count
- San Francisco County reported an 18% increase in their PIT Count

Summary and Next Steps

As discussed during the April 29, 2019 Joint County – City of San José meeting, as a community, we need to start addressing the long-standing structural issues that have contributed to ever-increasing poverty and homelessness. These issues include economic dislocation, reduced social safety nets, inadequate housing policy and investments, mass incarceration, structural racism, and policies that contribute to family instability. Efforts to further address these long-standing issues can coalesce around the new Community Plan to End Homelessness (2020 – 2025); the current plan sunsets on December 31, 2019.

Using the information from the Homeless Census and Survey, our Homeless Management Information System, County administrative data, and input from local leaders, policy experts, and other stakeholders, the new Community Plan would set goals for:

- Reducing homelessness by expanding and improving the supportive housing system;
- Preventing homelessness through societal and policy change; and
- Reducing the immediate crisis of unsheltered homelessness.

Please contact Jackie MacLean, Deputy Director, OSH at Jackie.maclean@hhs.sccgov.org or (408) 793-2405, for additional information or if you have any questions.

Cc: Chief Board Aides
Miguel Márquez, Chief Operating Officer
James R. Williams, County Counsel
Tiffany Lennear, Assistant Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
Jackie MacLean, Deputy Director, Office of Supportive Housing

Attachment: State of the Supportive Housing Report (PDF)