THE 2020 SINGLE POINT IN TIME COUNT FOR ERIE COUNTY

A Census of Those in Need of Housing

Identifying the Erie County Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent Housing, and Unsheltered Homeless Population

Prepared by the Mercyhurst University Civic Institute for the Erie County Department of Human Services and Erie County Home Team Homeless and Housing Coalition

Contents

Executive Summary

The 2020 Single Point in Time and Housing Inventory Count was conducted the evening of Friday, January 24, 2020. This Executive Summary provides an overview of key findings from the initiative. An in-depth analysis of all portions of the Single Point in Time count can be found later in this report.

The Single Point in Time count is conducted locally for the Erie County Home Team Homeless and Housing Coalition - the HUD-designated Continuum of Care in Erie County. The Erie County Department of Human Services contracted with the Mercyhurst University Civic Institute to facilitate the process along with the Erie County Veteran's Affairs Homeless Program staff. Also assisting were staff from multiple provider agencies, as well as community-based volunteers. The Single Point in Time Count consisted of multiple components: a formal Unsheltered Street Count, which sought to identify those living in uninhabitable places during the evening of the count; a Direct Service Provider Count, which collected information on those within their program on this given night; a Causes of Homelessness survey, which asked for feedback from providers regarding what they see as the leading contributors to their clients' homelessness; and a Housing Needs survey, which sought input from clients regarding issues that led to their state of homelessness. In addition, a Housing Inventory Count (HIC) was conducted simultaneously. This count provides the number and type of bed units that clients may access throughout Erie County. The following is a summary of findings from each component of the Single Point in Time Count for 2020.

Unsheltered Street Count: A total of 8 persons was identified the evening of January 24, 2020 that were deemed unsheltered homeless. Of the 8, one was demographically unidentifiable. Of the other 7, all were male, over the age of 25, and classified as residing in households without children.

Direct Service Provider Count: Direct Service providers are those that are described as offering shelter or housing spaces for homeless individuals and families. For Single Point in Time reporting to HUD, figures for Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing are utilized. For local data collection and analysis (such as this report), Permanent Supportive Housing programs are also included in the process. Thirty programs submitted data for the night of the count. A total of 996 individuals, residing in 663 households, were identified as homeless. There was a total of 255 persons in Emergency Shelters, 75 in Transitional Housing units, 10 in Safe Haven spaces, and 656 in Permanent Supportive Housing programs. Of the total number, 167 persons were identified as residing in households with veterans, largely found in the local Permanent Supportive Housing programs. There were also 178 persons who were identified as chronically homeless.

Causes of Homelessness Survey: A Causes of Homelessness Survey was distributed to each Direct Service program that was asked to participate in the SPIT count. A total of 25 surveys were completed and returned. Respondents were asked to rate factors that are key contributors to homelessness using a Likert Scale. The three top-rated factors in 2019 were Mental Health Problems, Drug and Alcohol Issues, and Poor Money Management Skills.

Housing Needs Survey: Programs were asked to distribute a Housing Needs survey to up to 10 clients and asked them to fill it out anonymously. The Housing Needs Survey was developed to collect information from homeless individuals regarding the reasons they are homeless and what they need to improve their situation. A total of 151 surveys were filled out and returned. Clients identified not having enough money and lack of employment as the primary causes of their homelessness. When asked what the most needed skills are to help them acquire stable housing, the most common responses were those pertaining to income issues and employment. Clients also cited housing, employment and transportation as being barriers to independence.

Housing Inventory Count: Locally, there were a reported 1,112 bed spaces available during the evening of January 24, 2020. With 996 persons identified as homeless that evening, bed capacity was 90%.

Methodology

The 2020 Single Point in Time (SPIT) count of the homeless population in Erie County, Pennsylvania was conducted on Friday, January 24, 2020. This national Housing and Urban Development (HUD) initiative was overseen by the Erie County Home Team Homeless and Housing Coalition, the county-level Continuum of Care (CoC) that addresses the needs of homeless individuals and families and works toward the elimination of homelessness in our region. The Erie County Department of Human Services, member of the CoC and administrator of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), had extensive involvement with the implementation of the process. The SPIT count was conducted simultaneously with the local Housing Inventory Count (HIC), which provides data on the number of beds/slots available at local emergency shelters and transitional housing programs that serve homeless individuals.

The Erie County Department of Human Services contracted with the Mercyhurst University Civic Institute (MCI) to facilitate the process and work alongside staff that oversees the Housing Management Information System (HMIS) for gathering needed data for both HUD reporting as well as for this report. The MCI is a local university-based research and evaluation organization that has been providing services to Erie County and state-based agencies and governments in the areas of youth and family services, drug and alcohol, mental health, and criminal justice for over 20 years. Also instrumental in the administration and carrying out the process was staff from the Erie Veteran's Affairs hospital. Several other volunteers from local providers and universities also contributed and assisted with the count. Planning for the 2020 Single Point in Time count began in the Fall of 2020. There were three main data collection pieces to this year's count: a Sheltered Count, Unsheltered Count, and Housing Inventory Count.

The Sheltered Count was conducted with Direct Service providers, which are those that offer Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Safe Haven, or Permanent Supportive Housing spaces (including rapid rehousing and voucher programs) for homeless populations and individuals. These providers primarily used HMIS for tracking their clients within their program, as only a few providers use a separate 'internal' data-tracking process and generate reports from this process. They are asked to submit HUD-requested information identifying the number of homeless individuals within their programs for that evening. The data consists of demographic information as well as service-oriented breakdown to help identify the most pressing needs facing the population.

Discussions within the planning team led to a change in how to collect data more efficiently. Historically, one of the stumbling blocks in completing the process is gaining accurate data from the direct service providers. HMIS is the primary tool used by providers to collect information on each client stay. Additionally, HUD recommends that this data also be the basis for reporting in the Single Point in Time count. For 2020, MCI and HMIS staff set aside time to meet with individual program staff to conduct a brief HMIS audit and complete the forms. This not only allowed accurate data to be given immediately, but also allowed for program staff to make corrections to their data.

The second component of the Single Point in Time count consists of conducting a census of homeless individuals and families that are unsheltered on the night of the count. This effort utilizes volunteers who traverse the CoC area and attempt to locate members of the local homeless population that are residing in places not meant for human cohabitation. Once found, volunteers approach the individuals in attempt to ask them to complete a questionnaire that will gather information also found in the Direct Service survey. An observation tool is also made available for those situations when the identified homeless persons do not wish to talk to the data collector. Because of large geographic areas that the CoC covers, volunteers traditionally begin canvasing areas that are known 'hang-outs' of homeless individuals and families. The unsheltered count began at the Erie Veterans Affairs hospital as teams set out in two shifts: 10pm to 1am, and 1:30am to 3am. This year the count utilized over 50 volunteers, including those from the Veterans Affairs behavioral health program, Erie United Methodist Alliance, Mercy Center for Women, and students from the Public Health program of Mercyhurst University, as well as other concerned persons.

In addition to the primary components of the SPIT count portion, a Housing Inventory Count (HIC) was also conducted. Agencies that provide emergency shelter or transitional housing are asked to provide the number of bed slots available for the evening of the count. They also provide general census data that is reported along with SPIT count data. Historically, this count was administered by the local-level HMIS system administrator. This year the request for HIC data was included with the SPIT form.

2020 Erie County Single Point in Time Survey

The information contained in the 2020 Single Point in Time (SPIT) report is critical to understanding the extent of homelessness in Erie County, Pennsylvania. Though it is a one day 'snapshot', it allows for annual and consistent trend data to gauge effectiveness of the services offered locally. This report aims to capture the number of individuals and families that are considered homeless or near homeless in Erie County, as well as to document the causes of homelessness as described by both the program recipients and service providers.

The number of homeless including families, individuals, and children has fluctuated considerably since the beginning of the HUD-directed SPIT count. Various factors may impact the actual count, such as date of count, weather, programs offering space, and economic factors, among others. In terms of reported numbers, there is also variance that is tied to project methodology as well as the number of programs reporting data. Site reporting can be impacted by staff changes, knowledge and willingness to participate in the Single Point in Time count, accurate HMIS use, and other factors. Figures can also vary from year to year depending on the number of providers and programs being utilized throughout the county. Since the beginning of the count in Erie County, significant outreach and coordination efforts have been done to include all programs. ***The reader should understand that the annual reporting is based off figures and numbers provided by the participating agencies each year, therefore making it difficult to draw solid conclusions regarding homeless population fluctuations.***

This local report also contains additional information that is above and beyond what is required for the Point in Time Count that is submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development each spring. *Numbers seen here are significantly higher than what is submitted to HUD, as it is inclusive of Permanent Supportive and additional housing data; which is not submitted on the HUD Exchange report.* In addition, seasonal shelters (the Warming Center and Our Neighbors Place) are not included in official reporting to HUD, as they do not screen for homelessness upon entry. This information is found to be helpful in generating a complete picture of the local homeless population and how they are being served. With the adaptation of Housing First, the premise of assuring that the primary goal of serving homeless persons is to align them with permanent housing as quickly as possible. Viewing this data long-term allows for the programs and Continuum of Care to view this progress.

Total Homeless Population

Figure 1 illustrates the total number of homeless in Erie County on the night of January 24, 2020. The figure also illustrates the total figures reported from the previous years, beginning in 2010. This number is derived from information gathered from Emergency Shelters, Safe Havens, Transitional Housing, Permanent Housing, and the unsheltered count. The current year represents the fourth highest reported figure over the comparative period. There were 1,004 persons identified as homeless within Erie County on the night of the count.

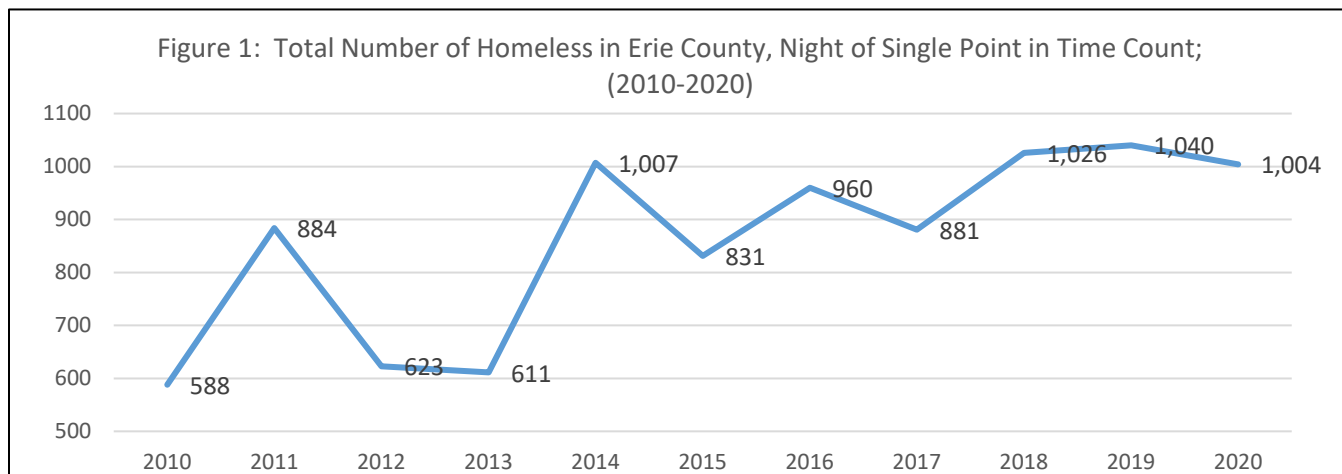Figure 1: Total Number of Homeless in Erie County, Night of Single Point in Time Count; (2010-2020)

Figure 2 illustrates the breakdown of those who were in a Shelter, Transitional Housing or Permanent Housing program (blue bars), versus those that were found to be unsheltered the evening of the SPIT count (orange bars). Of the reported 1,004 persons identified the night of the SPIT count, there were 8 individuals identified in the unsheltered count (two more than 6 identified in 2019), and 996 identified in sheltered space, 38 fewer than the 2019 count. The reader may identify a large decrease in the number of unsheltered perosns beginning in 2015 from previous years. These numbers tend to coincide with the opening of seasonal shelters in the county.

Figure 2: Sheltered vs. Unsheltered Count, Night of Single Point in Time Count; (2010-2020)
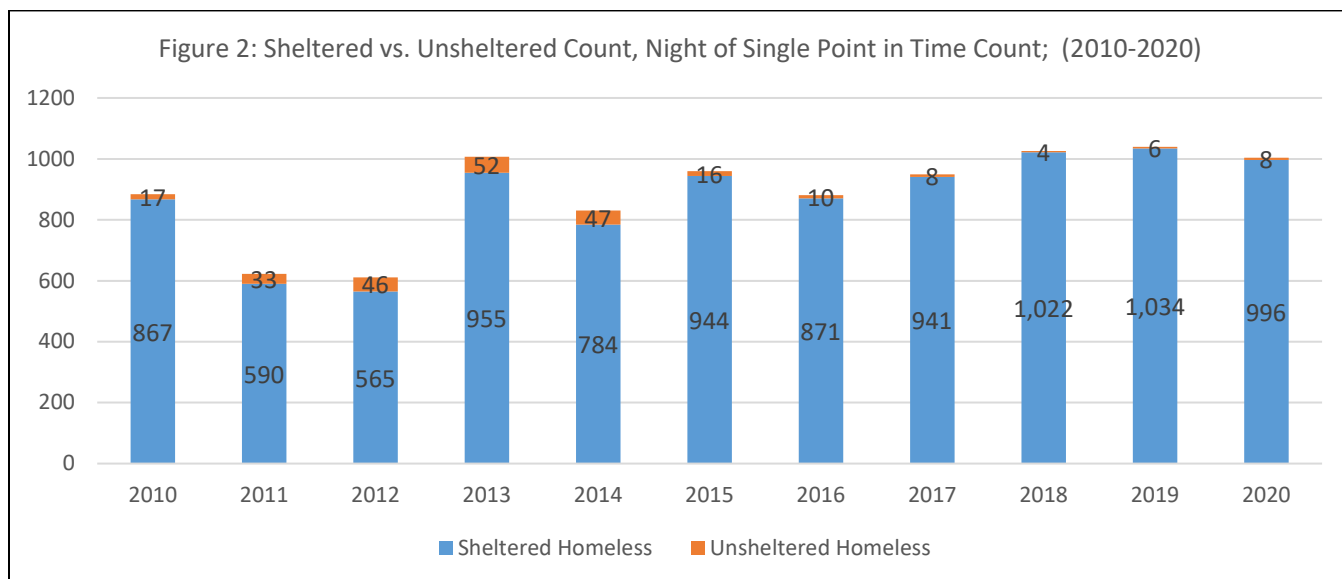
Figure 3 illustrates the total number of households counted, as well as the total number of persons, during the night of the count. This figure is broken down by the type of housing the persons were in, as well as the type of households, for that evening. The 1,004 persons counted during the evening resided in 671 households. The largest population of homeless individuals were those in households without children (555 people in 538 households).

Figure 3: Total number of Identified Homeless Persons, by Shelter Type; January 24, 2020

	Unsheltered	Shelter	Safe Haven	Transitional Housing	Permanent Housing	TOTALS ALL
	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	
Total # of Households with ADULTS AND CHILDREN TOGETHER	0	22	0	11	100	133
Of those, the total # of people residing in these households	0	71	0	24	354	449
Total # of Households WITHOUT CHILDREN	8	184	10	51	285	538
Of the households without children in row 21, the Total # of people who reside in these households.	8	184	10	51	302	555
TOTAL HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS	8	206	10	62	385	671
TOTAL # PEOPLE RESIDING IN HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS	8	255	10	75	656	1,004

Figure 4 illustrates the number of persons served by provider type over the past five years. Permanent Housing residents have seen the largest increase in population over this measured time period.

Figure 4: Persons Served by Type of Service Provider, Night of SPIT Count; (2016 - 2020)
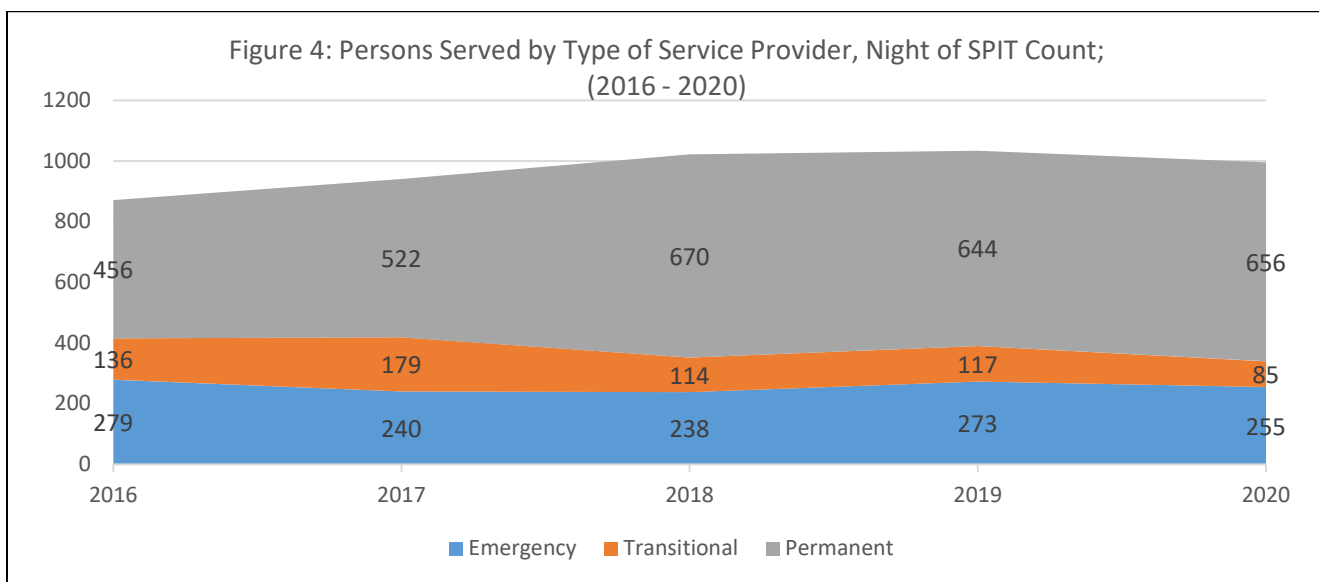
** 2020 transitional housing data is inclusive of 10 persons residing in Safe Haven category.
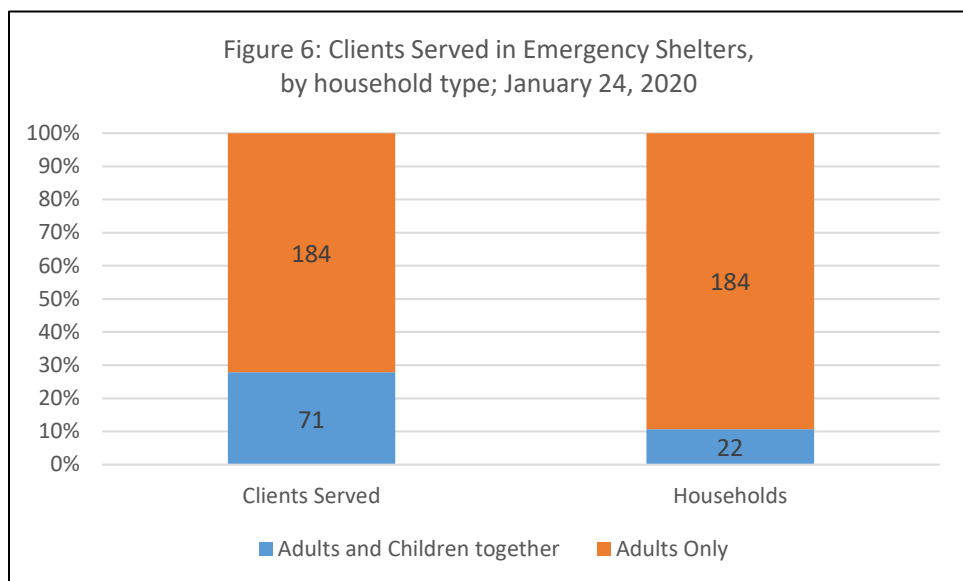
Emergency Shelters

Erie County has multiple Emergency Shelters that provide beds for clients throughout the year. Emergency Shelters are designed to house persons in need from 1 to 30 days. There were nine (9) facilities that reported clients were with them during the evening of January 24, 2020. Figure 5 illustrates the program, number of beds within the program, as well as the number of clients reported that evening. Using only those shelters that had both number of beds and clients served provided, Erie County Shelters were at 80% capacity, down from 82% reported in the 2019 report.

Figure 5: Emergency Shelter Bed Utilization Rates, January 24, 2020

	Clients Served	# Beds	% capacity
SafeNet Hospitality House	21	44	48%
Safe Journey	4	8	50%
EUMA Refuge	27	32	84%
City Mission Samaritan Care	45	56	80%
CSS Shelter	47	67	70%
St Patrick's Haven	17	24	71%
CoC Emergency Shelter	24	24	100%
CoC Mary Rose Sanctuary	8	12	67%
EUMA Our Neighbors Place	62	75	83%
MHA Warming Ctr**	0	0	
TOTALS FOR ES	*255*	*318*	*80%*

**Closed due to temperature stipulation

Figure 6, below, illustrates the number of households, by type, as well as the number of clients served within each household type, on the night of January 24, 2020.

Figure 6: Clients Served in Emergency Shelters, by household type; January 24, 2020

Seven providers reported Adults Only households. As shown in Figure 3, there were 184 households (184 persons) staying in Emergency Shelters on the evening of January 24, 2020. Of those, 173 were ages 25 or older. Eighty-two percent were male, 62% were white, and 38% were African American (demographic data not depicted in the charts and tables can be found in Appendix A).

Adult Households with Children were reported by three (3) shelters; 22 households consisted of 71 persons. Forty-eight of these persons were under the age of 17. Sixty-six percent were females. African American and White each represented 46% of the populations.

Transitional Housing and Safe Haven Programs

Erie County has multiple Transitional Housing programs (and one Safe Haven) that provide beds for clients throughout the year. These facilities house persons from 30 to 90 days. There were six facilities that reported clients were with them during the evening of January 24, 2020. Figure 7 illustrates the program, number of beds within the program, as well as the number of clients reported that evening. Using only those shelters that had both number of beds and clients served provided, Erie County Transitional Housing and Safe Haven programs were at 59% capacity (82% in 2019).

Figure 7: Transitional Housing/Safe Haven Bed Utilization Rates, January 24, 2020

	Clients Served	# Beds	% capacity
MCW	15	27	56%
City Mission NLP	30	44	68%
SafeNet TLC	10	12	83%
SafeNet Bridge House	6	28	21%
COC Transitional Housing	14	23	61%
EUMA Liberty House	10	10	100%
TOTALS FOR TH and SH	*85*	*144*	*59%*

Figure 8, below, illustrates the number of households, by type, as well as the number of clients served within each household type, on the night of January 24, 2020.

Figure 8: Clients Served in Transitional Housing, by household type; January 24, 2020
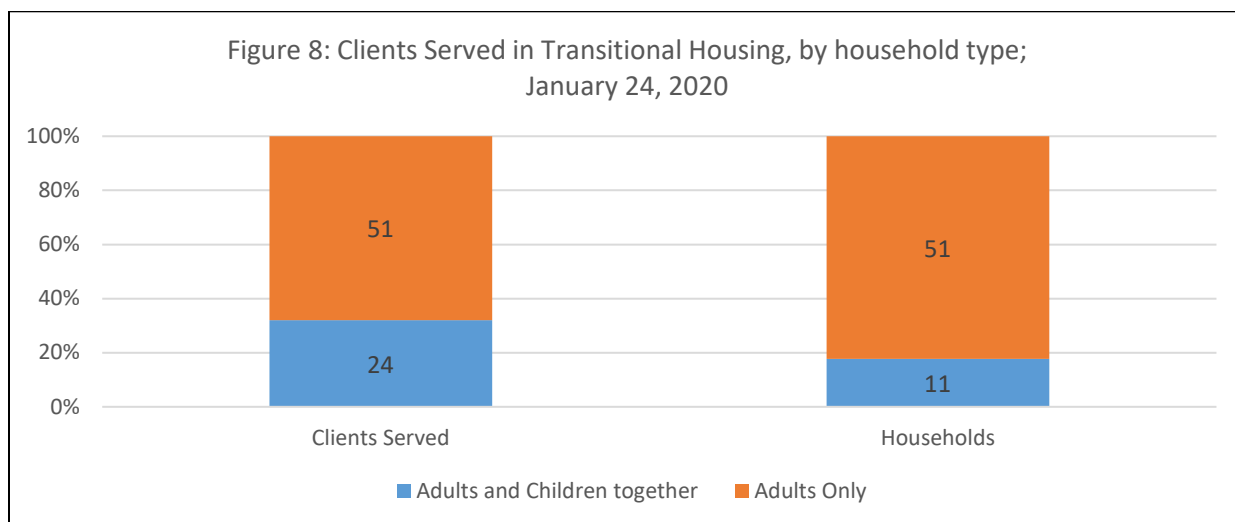
Households with Adults Only were reported by five providers on the night of the count. As shown above in Figure 8, there were 51 households (51 persons) staying in these programs. Of those, 97% were ages 25 or older. Eighty-eight percent were male; 88% were white, and 11% African American (demographic data not depicted in the charts and tables can be found in Appendix A).

Adult Households with Children were reported by three transitional housing programs; 11 households consisting of 24 persons. Thirteen of these persons were under the age of 17, while five were over the age of 25. Eighty-three percent were females. Forty-two percent each were African American or white, while the rest were identified as Multiple Races (4%).

Permanent Supportive Housing

Erie County has multiple Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and voucher programs that provide beds for clients throughout the year. These facilities house persons for periods of time that exceed 90 days. There were 15 facilities that reported clients were with them during the evening of January 24, 2020. Figure 9 illustrates the program, number of beds within the program, as well as the number of clients reported that evening. Using only those programs that had both number of beds and clients served provided, Erie County Shelters were at 101% capacity.

Figure 9: Permanent Supportive Housing Bed Utilization Rates, January 24, 2020

	Clients Served	# Beds	% capacity
EUMA My Way Home	77	77	100%
CSS Lodge on Sass	46	50	92%
CSS Columbus Apartments	35	40	88%
CSS Light the Candle	68	69	99%
MHA MIAHA 1	10	12	83%
Gaudenzia Fresh Start	33	33	100%
CoC Finally Home	12	12	100%
Erie Dawn Rapid Rehousing	8	16	50%
HUD VASH	114	102	112%
Soldier On Rapid Rehousing	4	4	100%
ECCM Self Start 1	110	110	100%
ECCM Self Start 2	62	62	100%
ECCM Self Start 3	27	27	100%
ECCM Rapid Rehousing	13	13	100%
EUMA Project Independence	37	23	161%
TOTALS FOR PH	*656*	*650*	*101%*

Figure 10, below, illustrates the number of Permanent Supportive Housing households, by type, as well as the number of clients served within each household type, on the night of January 24, 2020.

Figure 10: Clients Served in PSH and other programs, by household type; January 24, 2020
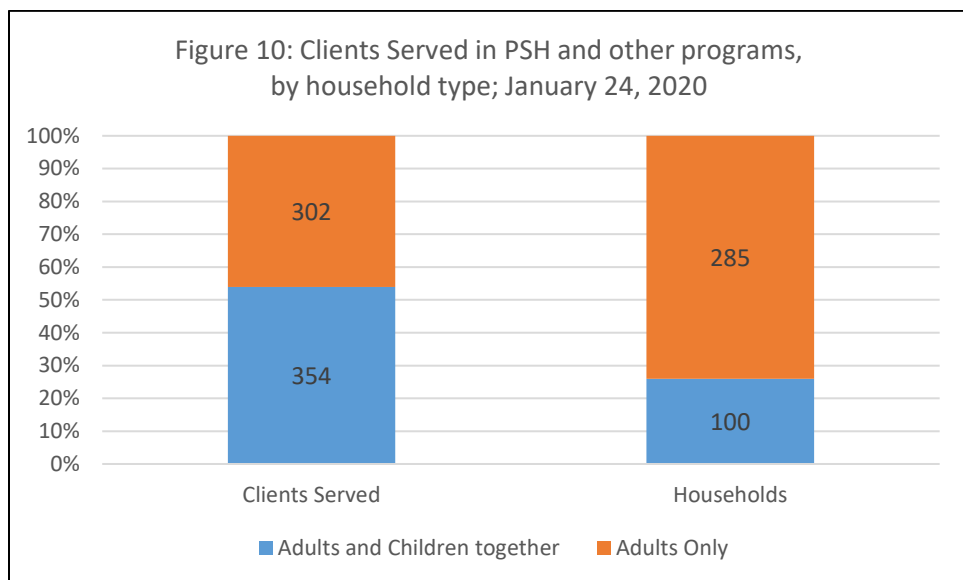
Households with Adults Only were reported by twelve providers on the night of the count. As shown prior, there were 285 households (302 persons) staying in these programs. Of those, 297 (98%) were ages 25 or older. Sixty-seven percent were male; 71% were White (demographic data not depicted in the charts and tables can be found in Appendix A).

Adult Households with Children were reported by twelve programs; 100 households consisting of 354 persons. Two-hundred and twenty-eight of these persons were under the age of 17 (64%), while 118 were over the age of 25 (33%). Sixty-three percent were females; 44% were African American, while 38% were identified as White.

Chronically Homeless, Veterans, and Additional Items of Note

The Erie County Continuum of Care follows HUD guidelines in working with priority populations and assuring they are placed in housing in an expedited fashion. Included in these subgroups are those identified as being Chronically Homeless. HUD defines this population as a person who must have a disability and living in a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or a safe haven for the last 12 months continuously *or* on at least four occasions in the last three years where those occasions cumulatively total at least 12 months. The following figure shows the number of Chronically Homeless persons within each housing type during the night of the SPIT count.

Figure 11: Chronically Homeless persons per housing type; January 24, 2020
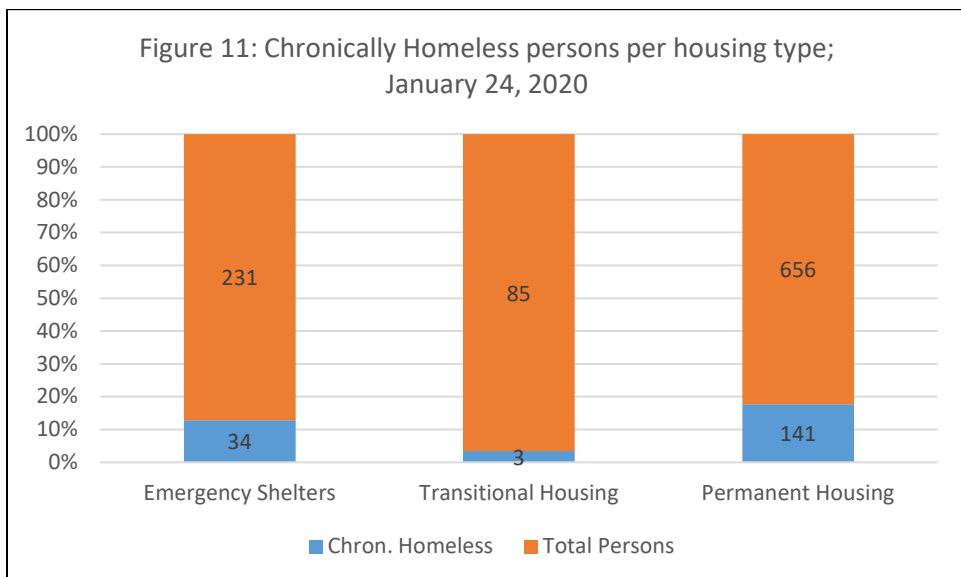
On the night of the 2020 SPIT count, there were 178 persons identified as being chronically homeless, slightly lower than the 185 identified in the 2019 SPIT count. Figure 11 shows that 34 of the 231 persons in Emergency Shelters that night were categorized as such, as were 141 of the 656 in Permanent Housing programs, and 3 of the 85 persons in Transitional Housing programs.

Veterans are also a priority population, as HUD has sought to end homelessness within this subgroup. The following illustrates the total number of persons living in veteran households the evening of the SPIT count.

Figure 12: Persons in Veteran Households; January 24, 2020
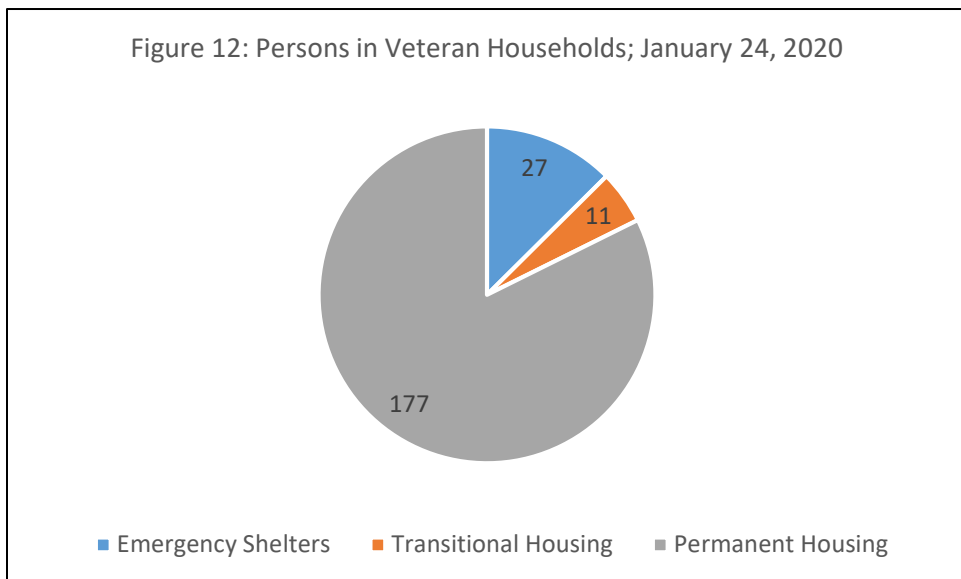
Figure 12 shows that there were 215 persons residing in a veteran-identified household; 127 in Permanent Housing programs (140 households); 11 in transitional housing programs (11 households), and 27 in Emergency Shelters (24 households).

In addition to receiving specific services that contribute to homelessness, many persons are identified as facing other issues that may be linked to their housing situation. The most commonly identified issues were: having a Serious Mental Illness (318), followed by Substance Abuse (174), and fleeing Domestic Violence (77), as shown in Figure 13. It should be noted that this data is most likely not inclusive of everyone who is facing each issue.

Figure 13: Persons Identified as Facing Additional Issues, as Reported by Service Providers; January 24, 2020

Issue	Count
Seriously Mentally Ill	318
Substance Use Disorder	174
Victim of Domestic Violence	77
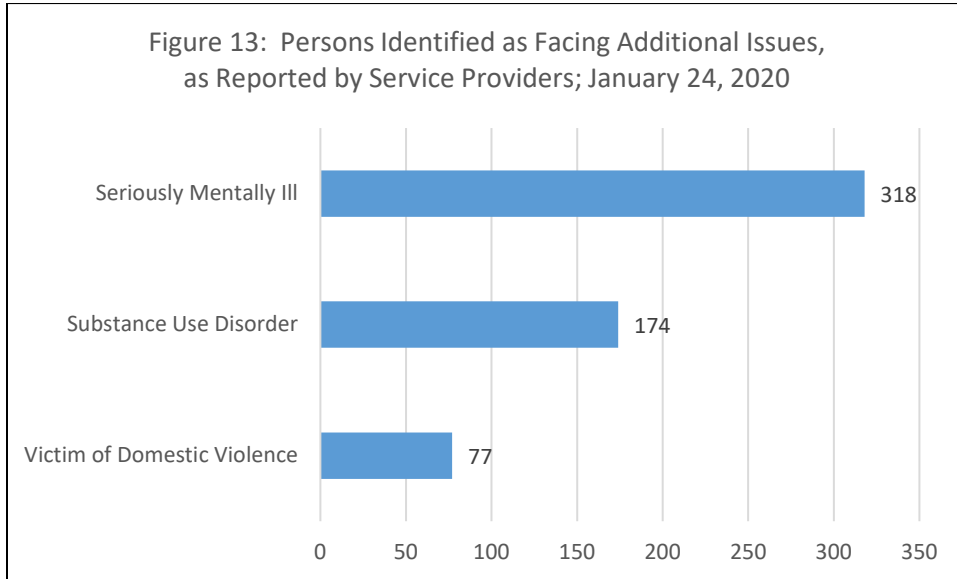
Causes of Homelessness Survey

The Causes of Homelessness survey captures the significant contributors of homelessness from the perspective of the individuals who work with the homeless within each agency. Twenty service providers returned surveys. Respondents were asked to rate a series of 29 issues that are common factors that may contribute to homelessness. By identifying on a Likert scale the Level of Significance (1- no significance, 2- little or some significance, 3- moderate impact, or 4- significant impact), mean scores were derived to illustrate what respondents felt were the primary causes. The top ten causes of homelessness rated as most significant by employees of the responding agencies are listed below from highest to lowest (Figure 14). The full results can be found in the Appendix of this document. The Appendix also lists additional responses that were noted by those that completed the survey.

Figure 14: Top identifed Causes of Homelessness, by Mean Score; 2020

Cause	Mean Score
Mental health problems	3.74
Drug and alcohol problems	3.68
Poor Money management skills	3.65
Insufficient income for family needs	3.53
Unemployed	3.53
Non-payment of rent	3.50
Lack of employment	3.47
Poor decision making skills	3.45
Lack of job skills	3.16
Medical/Physical reasons	3.16
Affected by domestic violence	3.05

The most common reason identified leading to homelessness was mental health problems. Each of the past four years this survey has been distributed, mental health problems have been noted as the top cause of homelessness. Drug and alcohol problems was the second leading cause identified, followed by poor money management skills (which has been in the top three causes in three of the past four years).

Housing Needs Survey

The <u>Housing Needs Survey</u> was developed to collect information from homeless persons (including individuals and families) regarding why they are homeless and what they need to improve their situation. The survey also gives the respondents an opportunity to report those services that have been most and least helpful to them. One hundred and fifty-one homeless individuals completed the survey. Respondents were asked to identify emergency and transitional shelters that they have stayed at during the past year. The individuals were also asked a series of questions in which they were instructed to check off all answers that apply to their situation.

Question 1. Causes of Homelessness. Not Having Enough Money was cited most frequently as the cause of homelessness (86), followed by Lack of Employment (65), Domestic Violence (55), Eviction (36), and Health Problems (36), as shown in Figure 15. In addition, individuals were given the opportunity to write in 'other' answers, which represent a wide array of responses and reasons. Those answers can be found in the Appendix.

Figure 15: The causes of my homelessness are...
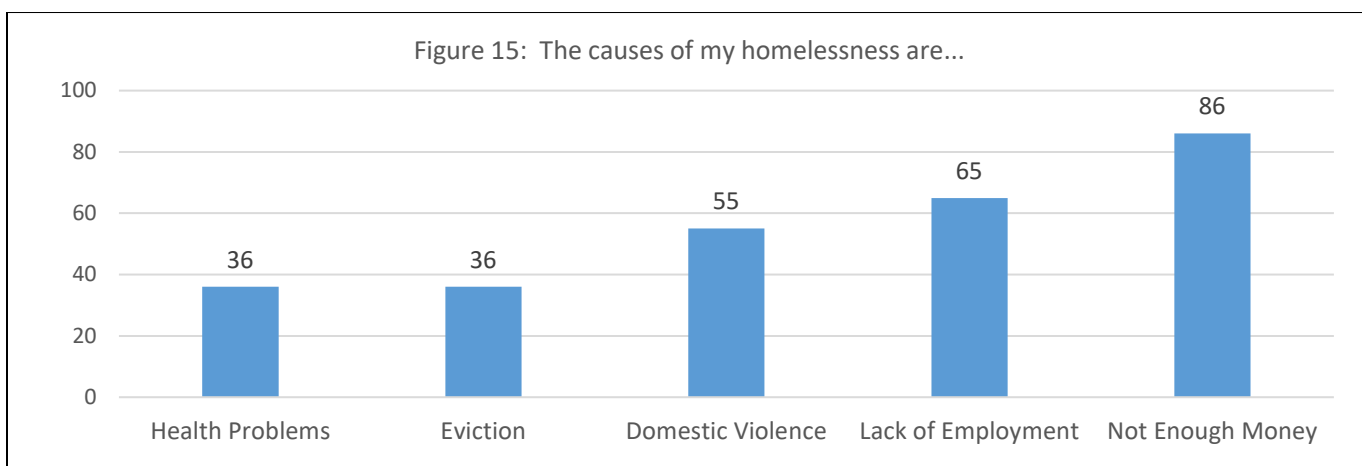
Question 2. Living Arrangements. Respondents were asked to identify what types of places they have resided in within the past 24 months. Individuals reported that in the past 24 months they predominantly lived in either a Shelter (99), in a Rental property (68), and/or with Relatives/Friends (56), as shown in Figure 16.

Figure 16: In the past 24 months, I have resided...
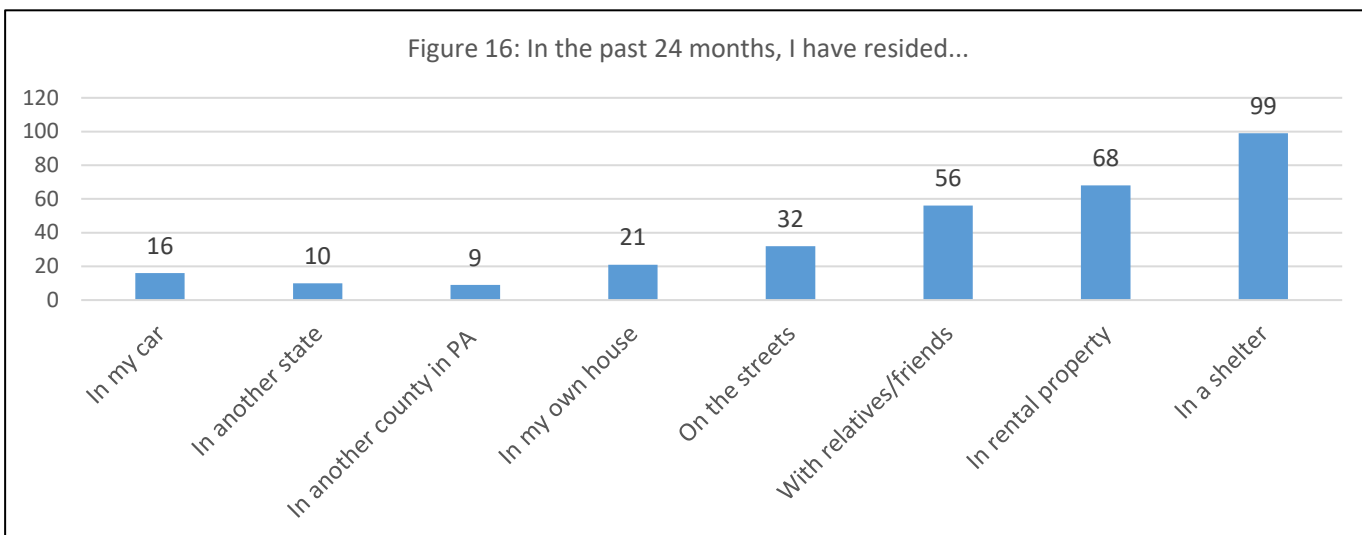
Question 3. Skills to Get Back on their Feet. Skills related to Income Issues (98) were listed as the most commonly reported need for the respondents to get back on their feet. This was followed by Employment Skills (72), and Decision-Making Skills (54), as shown in Figure 17.

Figure 15: I need the following skills to get back on my feet...

Category	Value
Parenting skills	23
Conflict resolution skills	27
Education skills	41
Decision-making skills	54
Employment skills	72
Income skills	98
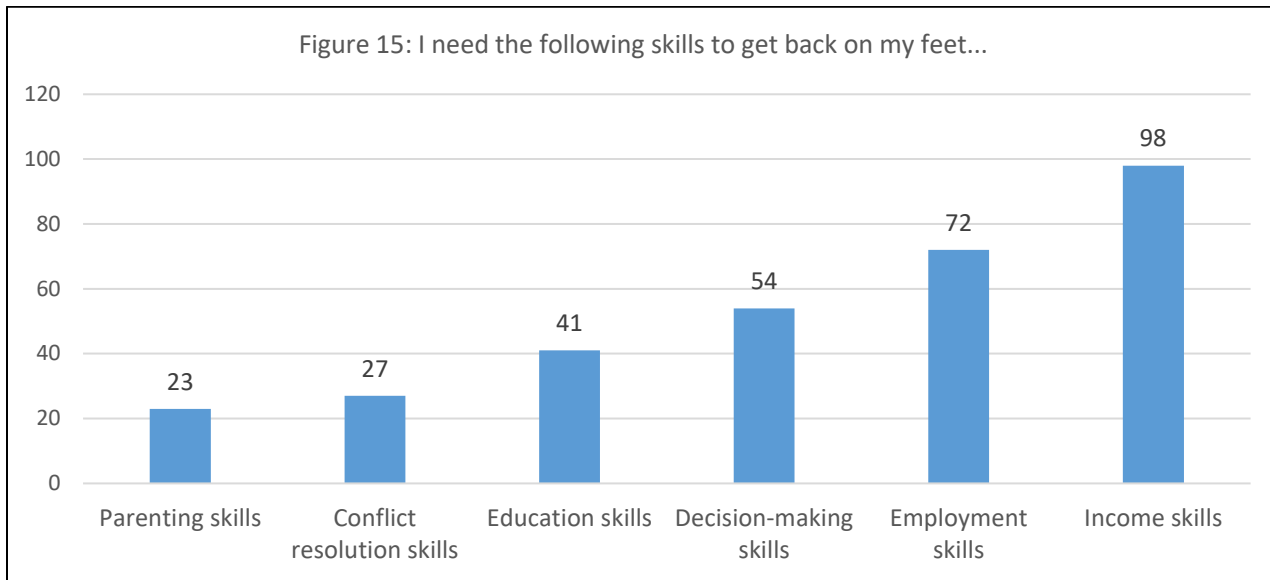
Question 4. To Gain Independence. The majority of the respondents reported that they needed the following to gain independence: Housing (88), Employment (87), and Transportation (81), as shown in Figure 18.

Figure 18: I need the following to be independent....

Category	Value
Child Care	36
Clothing	42
Food	42
Transportation	81
Employment	87
Housing	88
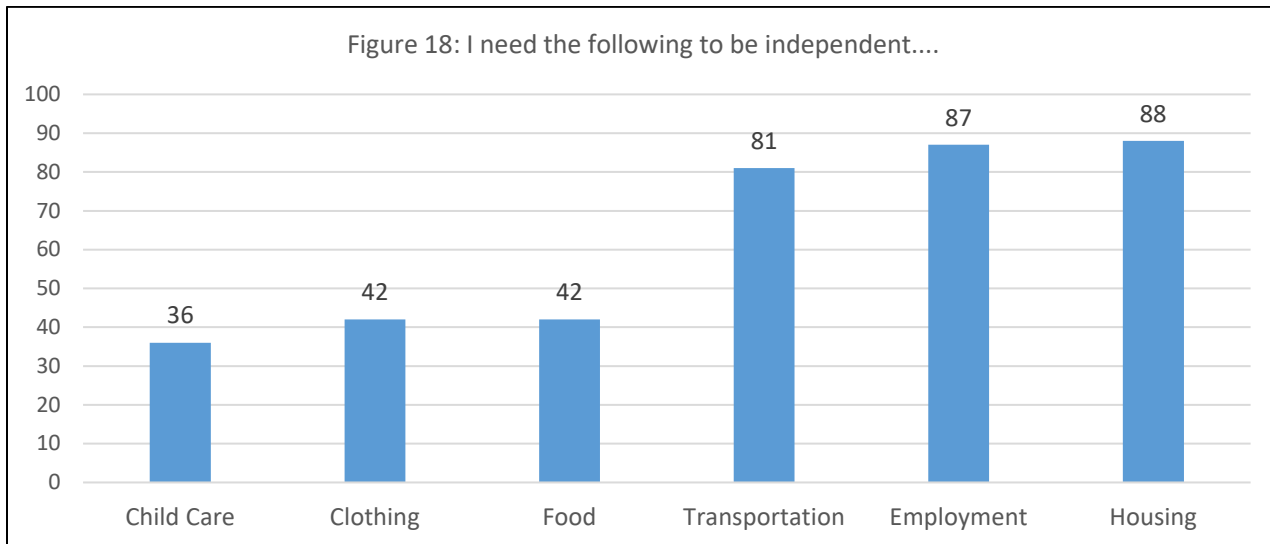
Making Everyone Count: Conclusion

The issue of homelessness is nothing new to our community, or any community for that matter. The issue of finding sustainable, affordable housing for those in need has been a challenge for several decades. This has always been an issue that communities (and societies at large) have had to grapple with and, likely, will have to for years to come. The ongoing debate regarding who is at fault, and what the common reasons are behind homelessness, continue to evolve. Common drivers of the situation, such as drug and alcohol usage, mental health issues, and poor education/employment conditions, continue to be at the forefront of reasons persons and families find themselves in need of shelter or housing. Recently, however, there has been some questioning of the state of homelessness and its causes.   Though the issues mentioned above are consistent, some are looking at the data a bit deeper and asking some difficult questions. In 2019, the Council of Economic Advisers published *The State of Homelessness in America*, which describes how homelessness varies across the states and communities in our country.   While this is an issue every city and county must address, the extent and direction each takes may, and likely should, differ. Erie, Pennsylvania's homeless problems are not Miami's problems, nor are they Los Angeles' problems, nor are they Peoria's problems. One of the notable changes that has been pushed on a macro-level national scale is to address the root causes of homelessness while expanding self-sufficiency. Though looking at causes of homelessness has always been important, this new approach addresses other variables that it suggests have been talked about to a lesser extent in previous approaches. When released, the report had caused concern by many who have long worked to address homelessness. Though the discussion and topic has made some uncomfortable, this may be of benefit. Asking experts and leaders to take an introspective look at what they have been doing for some time is difficult, but it may lead to methods of solving the homelessness issue. No matter the approach, it is imperative that communities work together to address this topic. While much headway has been made, there are still many families and people in our communities that are lacking safe, stable housing.

Appendices

Appendix A: Table of Identified Persons Included in SPIT count, including Sheltered and Unsheltered Counts

Appendix B: Causes of Homelessness Survey – 2020

Appendix C: Housing Needs Survey – 2020

Appendix D: Agencies that Responded to the 2020 SPIT Survey

Appendix A: Table of Identified Persons Included in 2020 SPIT count, including Sheltered and Unsheltered Counts

2020 SPIT Results	Unsheltered		Shelter		Transitional Housing		Safe Haven		Permanent Housing		TOTALS ALL	
	Total	Vets	Total	Vets	Total	Vets	Total	Vets	Total	Vets	Total	Vets
Total # of Households with *ADULTS AND CHILDREN TOGETHER*			22	2	11	0	0	0	100	10	133	12
Of those, the total # of people residing in these households			71	5	24	0	0	0	354	32	449	37
# of People 17 or younger			48	3	13	0	0	0	228	11	289	14
# of People 18-24			0	0	6	0	0	0	11	0	17	0
# of People age 25 and older			23	2	5	0	0	0	118	17	146	19
			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Female			47	4	20	0	0	0	222	17	289	21
Male			24	1	4	0	0	0	132	11	160	12
Transgender			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unspecified			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Hispanic			60	5	12	0	0	0	312	26	384	31
Hispanic			11	0	12	0	0	0	42	2	65	2
			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White			33	2	10	0	0	0	134	18	177	20
Black/African American			33	3	10	0	0	0	155	10	198	13
Asian			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Indian/Alaska Native			0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander			1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Multiple Races			4	0	4	0	0	0	66	0	74	0
			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total # of Households that are Chronically Homeless (see definition of chronically homeless)			2	0	0	0	0	0	14	0	16	0
Of the households in row 18, the total number of people who reside in these households (adults and children combined)			9	0	0	0	0	0	43	0	52	0

2020 SPIT Results	Unsheltered		Shelter		Transitional Housing		Safe Haven		Permanent Housing		TOTALS ALL	
Total # of Households *WITHOUT CHILDREN*	8		184	22	51	1	10	10	285	95	538	128
Of the households in row 21, the Total # of people who reside in these households.	8		184	22	51	1	10	10	302	107	555	140
# of people age 18-24	0		11	0	2	0	0	0	5	0	18	0
# of people age 25 or older	7		173	22	49	1	10	10	297	104	536	137
	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Female	0		43	2	7	0	0	0	98	20	148	22
Male	7		141	20	44	1	10	10	203	87	405	118
Transgender	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Unspecified	1		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Hispanic	6		170	21	50	1	9	9	292	106	527	137
Hispanic	0		14	1	1	0	1	1	8	1	24	3
			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	4		108	13	41	1	10	10	215	82	378	106
Black/African American	2		65	7	7	0	0	0	75	28	149	35
Asian	0		0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	3	0
American Indian/Alaska Native	0		4	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	5	1
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Multiple Races	0		7	1	2	0	0	0	9	1	18	2
			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total # of Households that are Chronically Homeless (see definition of chronically homeless)			25	5	1	0	2	2	85	29	113	36
Of the households in row 18, the total number of people who reside in these households (adults and children combined)			25	5	1	0	2	2	98	29	126	36

NOTE: All numbers reported are from Direct Service Providers, except for those in the Unsheltered Count. Figures returned to the Mercyhurst University Civic Institute on SPIT forms were reconciled against HMIS data, and if adjustments were made, they were edited on the forms and recorded in the table above. There are some instances in which certain providers do not have all demographic information available; therefore, there are some instances where categories such as race, age, etc. do not equal the total numbers for each.
The Vets column denotes the number of identified veterans that were inclusive of the Total for each housing type.

Appendix B: Causes of Homelessness Survey – 2020

Respondents were asked to rate each statement using the following scale regarding the impact each cause of homelessness has on clients. Results for the past three years are shown. Red scores identify the top three for each year.

4 = Significant Impact; 3 = Moderate Impact; 2 = Little or Some Significance; 1 = No Significance

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Employment Issues	**Mean**	**Mean**	**Mean**	**Mean**
Lack of employment	3.53	3.23	3.48	3.47
Lack of job skills	3.25	3.45	3.32	3.16
Unemployed	3.25	3.29	3.44	3.53
Unobtainable public transportation	2.4	2.32	2.63	2.55
Lack of childcare	2.9	2	2.54	2.4
Income Issues	**Mean**	**Mean**	**Mean**	**Mean**
Insufficient income for family needs	3.53	3.64	3.71	3.53
On waiting list for public housing	2.75	2.95	3.13	2.84
Change in family structure (divorce, separation, jail)	2.68	2.81	3.04	2.95
Loss of welfare from non-compliance	1.8	1.67	2.13	1.84
Loss of welfare from got a job	1.78	1.86	2.38	2.11
Loss of welfare from maxed out	1.65	1.62	2	1.63
Benefits change	2.87	2.1	2.42	2.47
Pregnancy	1.93	2.14	2.4	2.32
Aging issues	1.87	1.81	2.12	2.11
Death—Loss of income	2.03	1.57	1.84	1.53
Eviction	**Mean**	**Mean**	**Mean**	**Mean**
Poor money management skills	3.68	3.55	3.8	3.65
Poor decision-making skills	3.65	3.68	3.76	3.45
Non-payment of rent	3.31	3.43	3.4	3.5
Poor housekeeping skills	2.5	2.76	2.68	2.7
Non-renewal of lease	1.87	2.24	2.48	2.15
Damage of rental property	2.03	2.19	2.56	2.6
Code enforcement	1.68	1.76	2.24	2.1
Landlord sells property	1.37	1.71	2	1.79
Domestic Violence	**Mean**	**Mean**	**Mean**	**Mean**
Individual/Family affected by domestic violence	2.83	2.76	2.88	3.05
Health Issues	**Mean**	**Mean**	**Mean**	**Mean**
Mental Health problems	3.67	3.76	3.8	3.74
Drug & Alcohol abuse	3.16	3.57	3.48	3.68
Medical/Physical reasons	2.45	2.71	3.04	3.16
Other	**Mean**	**Mean**	**Mean**	**Mean**
Just got out of jail/prison	2.5	2.84	2.52	2.47
Natural disaster	1.33	1.52	1.42	1.22

Appendix C: Housing Needs Survey – 2020

Results are based on 151 surveys returned. The following section contains the questions posed to clients of homeless programs. Numbers shown by each answer identify the number of clients who marked this response. In addition, respondents were also asked various open-ended questions. These responses are provided verbatim on how they were given.

EMERGENCY SHELTERS respondent is currently staying at and/or has stayed during this past year.

Shelter	# responses
City Mission	34
Community of Caring	32
Community Shelter Services	19
Crisis Residential Unit	4
St Patrick's Haven	18
Safe Horizons (Union City)	2
SafeNet/Hospitality House	25
Salvation Army	0
The Refuge	19

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING respondent is currently staying at and/or has stayed during this past year.

Transitional Housing	# responses
City Mission	29
Community House	6
Erie Dawn	4
Hope House	0
Liberty House	4
Mercy Center	5
SafeNet/Bridge	4
SafeNet/TLC	7
Stairways	2

Causes of respondent homelessness are:

Causes	# responses
Health Problems	36
Eviction	36
Domestic Violence	55
Lack of Employment	65
Not Enough Money	86

Respondents were asked to note additional causes of homelessness. The following reasons were given:

- Addiction
- Alcohol
- Child support
- D&A Treatment
- Dads house burnt down; always went there if having issues; addiction
- Diabetic, born with leg un-normal and kidney, bad eyes, bad back
- Did not want to live with people
- Disabled
- Drug addiction
- Due to male
- Family
- Fled to a new city
- Health issues for self and son
- Incarceration
- Landlord failed housing inspection
- MH Issues
- Mom did not have enough room for me
- Mother put me out
- Needed to get away from girlfriend who was using him and putting in bad situations
- Over administration of compliance ordinances
- Prison
- Slum landlord
- Street games
- Transition back into the community
- Unstable MH
- Was living w/ great grandmother and she passed away and we became homeless
- Was staying w/ male friend until he got petty and was treating me wrong; had to keep repeatedly
- Was too busy drinking than taking care of business

Places where respondent has lived in the past 24 months: Note: respondents were able to select more than one answer.

Location	# responses
In my car	16
In another state	10
In another county in PA	9
In my own house	21
On the streets	32
With relatives/friends	56
In rental property	68
In a shelter	99

Clients were asked to note any additional places they have lived within the past 24 months. The following answers were given.

- Community house
- D&A Treatment Facilities
- Family member
- House of Healing
- Jail
- Moms house
- Prison
- Snow House

Needed skills to get back on respondent's feet: Note: respondents were able to select more than one answer.

Needed Skill	# responses
Parenting skills	23
Conflict resolution skills	27
Education skills	41
Decision-making skills	54
Employment skills	72
Income skills	98

Clients were asked to note any additional skills they need to get back on their feet. The following answers were given.

- Affordable living opportunities
- Anger Mgmt.
- Consistency
- Discrimination skills
- ECCM is in the process of helping find a place to live
- Financial skills
- Health Issues
- Improve mental health
- Maintaining mental health
- Maintaining sobriety
- Not let people live with me
- Need to improve health
- New Steps
- Organization
- Stay sober
- Staying at job
- Behavioral health

Identified Needs to be independent: Note: respondents were able to select more than one answer.

Identified Needs	# responses
Childcare	42
Transportation	119
Employment	105
Housing	130
Clothing	58
Food	64

Respondents were asked what other things they needed to become independent

- Ability to continue job
- Counseling
- Currently awaiting disability decision
- Food, AA
- Full time employment
- Health
- Mental health support
- More money
- Need to get disability
- Relocation

Least helpful services current organization has provided.

- Addiction education
- Being treated un-accordingly from the same staff member, who will never let someone talk to her
- CoC - unwarranted cessation of shelter
- Counseling
- Counseling at shelters for MH; female apartments, security of shelters
- CSS - they did nothing to help me about coordinated entry or anything.
- Disrespectful staff that is less than pleasant and who were abusive of their position
- Employment training that went nowhere
- Erie Housing Authority
- GECAC
- GECAC; Housing Authority (on wait list)
- Having someone steal from me in the overflow
- It's hard to get in a shelter
- Lack of access to information and resources from providers
- Lack of connection to resources - did not know where to go for help
- MCW's overbearing religious views
- MH Services; feeling unsupported by professionals
- Not enough help in Erie
- Not enough immediate housing
- OCY
- OCY; Project First Step
- People not going by the rules
- Section 8
- Social Security was not helpful
- Telling me last minute that rent was due
- There aren't any programs that help people with getting to work
- Thieving bitches in the shelters
- TLC
- Total
- Transportation
- Waiting and not getting the right info or help needed from other places
- Waitlist for housing in Erie
- When asking questions no one seems to know answers
- Work therapy through VA

Most helpful services current organization has provided.

- A place to stay while I figure out my problems and find a place to live
- An address
- BCM and MH services at Stairways, MCW staff
- BCM; my apartment
- Being able to get food/clothes
- Breakfast, lunch, shelter
- Bus tokens or fare
- Case Mgmt.; CoC
- Case worker
- CoC - all staff have been very helpful; they treat you like a real human being
- CoC center
- CoC Finally Home
- CoC Finally Home program
- CoC helping to pay rent; food stamps
- CoC; BCM from Stairways
- Counseling has been the best
- Counseling; having people here for your child and to help you grow when all was lost
- Counseling; somewhere to go when I was helpless
- Counseling; wrap services
- CSS; ECCM PSH
- CSS; ECM; Finally Home
- D&A treatment; tools to retrain my thoughts
- DV shelter I was at (SafeNet) and all the staff at MCW, Stairways and Safe Harbor
- ECCM
- ECCM - bus fares, transportation to appointments, rapid rehousing, food pantries
- ECCM has a program to help people get places
- ECCM help
- ECCM PSH; CSS; Shelters; OCY
- ECCM PSH; MH services; SafeNet
- ECCM PSH; Refuge
- ECCM PSH; SafeNet
- ECCM PSH; Shelter
- Emergency Shelter
- Erie Dawn
- EUMA RRH; ECCM PSH
- Finally Home, Lakeshore Community Services
- Finally Home; BCM stairways
- Finally Home; LIHEAP

- Finally Home; VA Health Care
- Food
- Food clothing banks; shelters
- Food pantry; shelter plus; bus pass; LIFT for medical appointments
- Food stamps, insurance, housing assistance, D&A assistance
- Food Stamps, medical
- Food, shelter
- Food/Housing Assistance
- Fresh Start
- Fresh Start, Therapy at Esper, all led to stability and less stress
- Fresh Start; SafeNet
- Gaudenzia Fresh Start and Erie Family Center
- Gaudenzia getting me in apartment
- Gaudenzia has been fantastic; Free store helped with clothing; welfare office, food stamps, Stairways for helping w/ MH
- GECAC
- GECAC funding
- Getting help w/ welfare, school, and WIC
- Getting the opportunity to get back on my feet and establish sobriety
- Giving me a place to stay
- Have been helped with domestic violence issues, how to handle, and have peace of mind
- Having a storage facility
- Having shelter
- Help and ideas for housing
- Help getting a place to live and assistance getting a job; GECAC
- Help with legal and custody; help w/ transportation, counseling, and childcare
- Housing w/ Fresh Start; employment at St Bens; Early Learning Resource Center
- Housing/Rent
- Housing; Food
- Hygiene
- Infinity Resources
- Info on how to obtain assistance for housing of different sorts
- Kept me in a safe environment
- Legal advice from Public Defenders office
- Low EBT and SSI amount

- Manager has been very helpful, went to Infinity Resources and they helped very much
- MCW
- MCW gave me a place to stay to get on my feet and gave me moral support, help, guidance I could not find anywhere else
- MCW has a case worker that works with you to help get you back on your feet; she's been very helpful with applying for housing
- MIAHA apartment
- MIAHA program is the reason I am not homeless; Stairways has been very helpful
- MIAHA; Blended Case Management; OP therapy
- MIAHA; Outpatient psych care
- Mission, soup kitchen
- Most helpful service has been MCW
- My apartment with CoC Finally Home
- My counselor at SafeNet listens
- New Life Program is helping me get my life back
- Nice clean environment
- Only City Mission; working in plastics shops
- Placement at the Refuge
- Recommendations to D&A facilities
- Referrals; talking
- Rent assistance is a big stress reliever
- Rent money
- Resources and time that the emission helped me with
- Roof over my head and working around my work schedule
- RRH
- RRH program
- Safe Harbor; MCW
- Safe shelter; meals, caring people
- SafeNet
- SafeNet counseling, help with housing, domestic violence info
- SafeNet; Erie Dawn
- SafeNet; Therapy
- Shelter
- Shelter, food and people that care
- Shelter, food, substance abuse treatment
- Shelter, RRH, GECAC
- Shelter; counseling
- Shelter+; MCW
- SNAP, temp agencies
- Stairways; Shelters; Rehab for addiction
- Staying at Refuge
- Support with counseling at SafeNet
- The Mission has helped tremendously; got me back on my feet 1 day at a time
- TLC
- TLC SafeNet helped w/ transportation and coping skills
- TLS/Bridge Programs
- Transitional Housing; MH Services; Parenting Skills; budgeting
- Welfare office, OVR, MCW
- Working with the VA; helping with cleaning the shelter

Appendix D: Agencies that Responded to the 2020 SPIT Survey

HOUSING SERVICE PROVIDERS (Agency and Program)	
Community of Caring	*Emergency Shelter*
	Finally Home
	Mary Rose Sanctuary
	Transitional Living Center
Community Shelter Services	*Columbus Apartments*
	Emergency Shelter
	Lighting the Candle
	Lodge on Sass
Erie City Mission	*New Life Program*
	Samaritan Care
Erie County Care Mgmt.	*Self-Start I, II, and III*
	Rapid Rehousing
Erie Dawn	*Rapid Rehousing*
Erie United Methodist Alliance	*Liberty House*
	My Way Home
	Our Neighbors Place
	Project Independence
	The Refuge
Erie Veterans Affairs Medical	*HUD VASH*
Gaudenzia	*Fresh Start*
MHA of NWPA	*Make it a Home Always*
Mercy Center for Women	
Safe Journey	
SafeNet	*Bridge House*
	Transitional Living Center
Soldier On	
St. Patrick's Haven	

For more information on the Erie Home Team Homeless and Housing Coalition

and the efforts to combat homelessness in Erie County, PA,

visit www.eriehometeam.org