Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care

2021 Winter Point-In-Time Count Report

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Summary of Key Findings

- A total of 180 individuals were identified as homeless, a decrease of approximately 13% from the prior year count of 207.
- The overwhelming majority (90%) were in emergency sheltered situations.
- Consistent with prior PIT counts, two-thirds of the homeless population were males and one-third females.
- The count included 29 children under the age of 18 (16.1% of the total group), four of whom were unsheltered.
- The largest racial group of individuals were white (51.1%), followed by black (36.1%) and mixed race (12.8%).
- The count identified 38 individuals who met the HUD definition for chronic homelessness, of whom 30 (90.9%) were sheltered. Five chronically homeless individuals were veterans.
- Twelve homeless individuals were fleeing domestic violence, one of whom was unsheltered.
- Total PIT counts have declined by 18.5% over the past two-year period.
- The percentage of homeless households with children has declined from 21% to 11% of all households since 2017.
- The number of homeless individuals who identified as having severe mental illness has increased dramatically since 2017, more than doubling from 2020 to 2021.
- The number of individuals with substance abuse challenges, although a smaller group, also experienced a substantial increase from 2020 to 2021.

Introduction

As part of its Continuum of Care (CoC) application for homelessness funding, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that jurisdictions across the nation conduct a statistically reliable and unduplicated count of the homeless for one overnight period during the last 10 days of January. This is known at the Point-In-Time (PIT) count. The Fredericksburg Regional CoC (FRCoC) conducts a Winter PIT count each year, for both sheltered and unsheltered populations, to track the number and the needs of the region's homeless population more accurately. The PIT count is planned, coordinated, and carried out locally, and the information gathered is used by our community to better allocate housing resources and services to prevent and end homelessness. The PIT Count is the only opportunity throughout the year for most communities to take a comprehensive look at the total homeless population and is especially crucial in assessing the needs of the unsheltered homeless.

The CoC annual Point-In-Time (PIT) Count provides a snapshot of homeless households in Planning District 16. The 2016 PIT Count reveals important demographic and other information about families and individuals who were homeless on the night of the count and was carried out with the help of government agencies, community-based organizations, and local volunteers.

The PIT survey is an important tool in collecting data on the number, characteristics, and service needs of individuals, families, and unaccompanied children experiencing homelessness throughout the region. The resulting data is a critical component of local homeless planning and program development. Accurate data helps communities to:

- Understand changes in trends among homeless populations,
- Adjust the types of programs and services available according to need and use resources as efficiently as possible,
- Justify requests for additional resources and/or programming modifications,
- Comply with reporting requirements from HUD, other funders, and local stakeholders,
- Raise public awareness about the issue of homelessness, and
- Measure community progress toward preventing and ending homelessness.

Nationally, the PIT count process is used as the primary data source for federal agencies to understand homelessness trends and track progress against the goals and objectives contained in *Opening Doors*, the Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness. Additionally, the congressionally-mandated Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) is prepared using PIT and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data.

Methodology

In its PIT Count, a CoC must count and report all individuals and households who meet the criteria in paragraph (1) (i) of the homeless definition in 24 CFR 91.5 of HUD's Homeless Definition Rule on the night designated for the count. This includes individuals and families who are:

> ➤ **Sheltered**, or "living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals)," or
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> ➤ **Unsheltered**, "with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated 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."

HUD defines a household as "any group of persons who, if they were able to attain permanent housing, would choose to live together; and, shared the same sleeping arrangements on the night of the count." Households include adults and children under (families), households without children (individuals), and households with only children under 18 (unaccompanied youth).

As a part of this count, CoCs are required, to the extent possible, to collect data regarding the respondent's status, including any children, age, race/ethnicity, gender, homelessness history, and other variables. In addition, HUD surveys target specific subpopulations, such as individuals fleeing domestic violence, veterans, and households experiencing chronic homelessness.
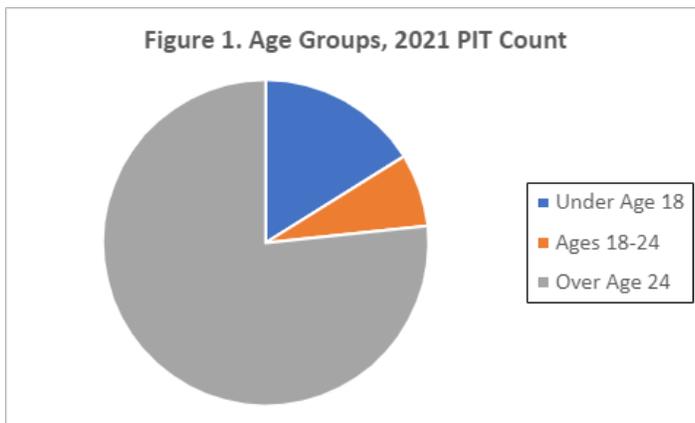
On Thursday, January 27, 2021, members of the FRCoC conducted its local PIT count of the homeless population. During this 24-hour window, service providers and volunteers visited emergency shelters, outdoor locations, and other service agencies to gather information from people who are homeless and near-homeless in Planning District 16, which includes the City of Fredericksburg and the Counties of Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania, and Stafford. McKinney-Vento homeless liaisons (social workers) from the region's school districts also coordinated with FRCoC to calculate the number of homeless children enrolled in schools.

Findings

Demographics

Overall findings from the 2021 Planning District 16 PIT Count are summarized in Table 1. A total of 180 individuals were identified as homeless, a decrease of approximately 13% from the prior year count of 207. As in previous counts, the overwhelming majority were in emergency sheltered situations (90%). No individuals or families were in transitional housing due to an absence of these types of housing units. Consistent with prior years' counts, two-thirds (66.7%) of homeless individuals were male and one-third (33.3%) female. No individuals identified as transgender or gender non-conforming.
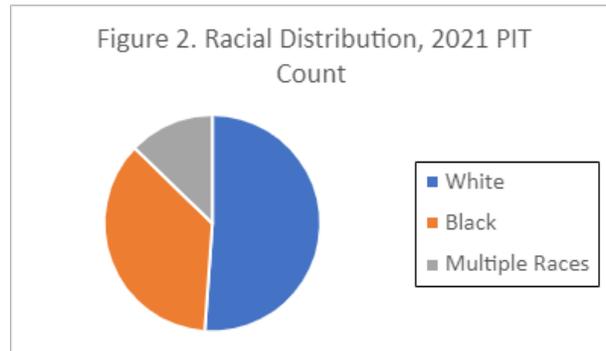
Table 1. Fredericksburg Regional CoC 2021 Point-In-Time Results				
Persons in Households with at Least One Adult and One Child (Under Age 18)	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional		
Number of Households	13	0	2	15
Number of Persons (Adults and Children)	46	0	8	54
Number of Persons (Under Age 18)	25	0	4	29
Number of Persons (18-24)	3	0	2	5
Number of Persons (Over Age 24)	18	0	2	20
Persons in Households without Children	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional		
Number of Households	111	0	10	121
Number of Persons	116	0	10	126
Number of Persons (18-24)	8	0	0	8
Number of Persons (Over Age 24)	108	0	10	118
All Households/All Persons	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional		
Total Households	124	0	12	136
Total Persons	162	0	18	180
Number of Persons (Under Age 18)	25	0	4	29
Number of Persons (18-24)	11	0	2	13
Number of Persons (Over Age 24)	126	0	12	138

Figure 1. Age Groups, 2021 PIT Count

- Under Age 18
- Ages 18-24
- Over Age 24

The count included 29 children under the age of 18 (16.1% of the total group), four of whom were unsheltered. Thirteen young adults ages 18 to 24 (9.3%) and 138 adults over 24 (76.7%) were also identified (see Figure 1). The largest racial group of individuals were white (51.1%), followed by black (36.1%) and mixed race (12.8%) (see Figure 2). No other racial groups were represented. Thirteen (7.2%) identified as Hispanic.

Chronic Homelessness

HUD defines "chronically homeless" as: (1) A homeless individual or head of household with a disability that meets the HUD definition of a disability who (a) lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and (b) has been homeless and living in one of these places continuously for at least 12 months or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years, as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months and each break in homelessness separating

Figure 2. Racial Distribution, 2021 PIT Count

- White
- Black
- Multiple Races

the occasions included at least 7 consecutive nights of not living in one of the aforementioned places. The 2021 P{T Count identified 38 individuals who meet the HUD definition for chronic homelessness, of whom 30 (90.9%) were sheltered. Five chronically homeless individuals were veterans.

Domestic Violence

PIT count data collection on survivors of domestic violence (DV) is optional. HUD's category four definition of homelessness includes any individual or family who: (i) is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence; (ii) has no other residence; and (iii) lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing. According to HUD's Coordinated Entry and Victim Service Providers FAQ document, "fleeing or attempting to flee" includes domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous life-threatening conditions. The FRCoC 2021 PIT count identified 12 homeless individuals experiencing DV, one of whom was unsheltered.
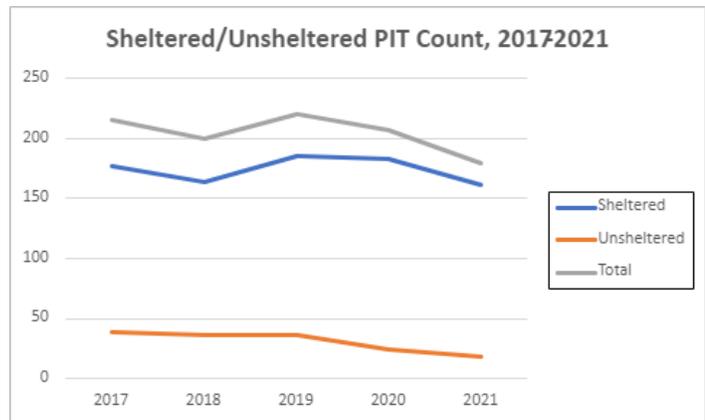
Other Vulnerable Populations

Other vulnerable populations included in the 2021 PIT count included individuals with severe mental illness (SMI), substance abuse (SA) issues, and individuals infected by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or having Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Individuals identified with these challenges are presented in Table 2. It is notable that 40.0% of all individuals in the PIT count self-reported as having a history of SMI and 12.8% having a history of SA.

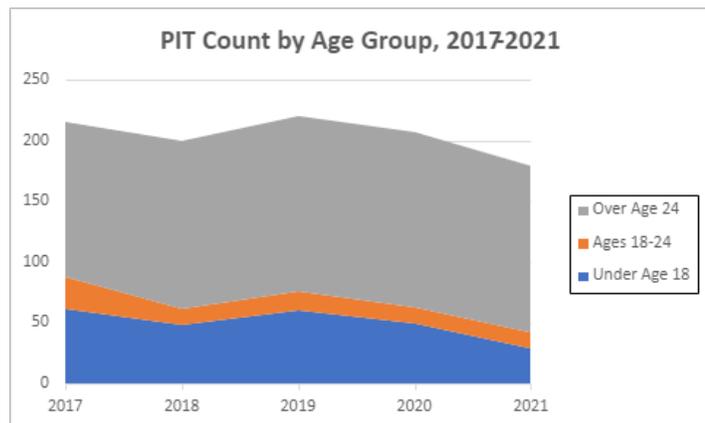| Table 2. Counts of Other Vulnerable Populations			
	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total
SMI	70	3	72
SA Issues	23	0	23
HIV/AIDS	0	0	0

Five-Year Trends
Total PIT Count

The 2021 PIT count indicates a continuation of the prior year's decrease in the homeless population. Total counts have declined by 18.5% over this two-year period.
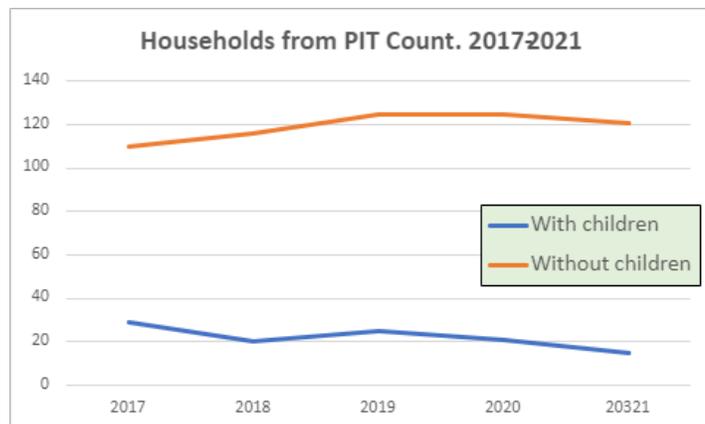

Age Groups

While overall homelessness rates declined, the percentage of young adults (ages 18-24) and children under 18 have declined. Currently, 77% of all identified homeless individuals are over age 24

Households

Since 2017, the percentage of households with children has declined from 21% to 11% of all households experiencing homelessness.

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Vulnerable Populations

The number of homeless individuals who are identified as having severe mental illness (SMI) has increased dramatically since 2017. more than doubling from 2020 to 2021. Individuals with substance abuse (SA) challenges, although a smaller population, also experienced a substantial increase during this period.

Vulnerable Populations, 2017-2021